



Beautiful Nerve

Sheila Squillante

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The poems in Sheila Squillante's debut collection, *Beautiful Nerve*, are meant to unsettle. They draw on our anxieties and fears—somatic, linguistic, metaphoric—leading us somewhere somehow calming in its familiarity but troublingly unsteady: a bridge that ends abruptly as you cross it, the doomed deck of a haunted ship, a three-cornered room, the cutlery drawer, a table where you lie still beneath the surgeon's knife. Miscommunications and disorientations abound in these poems. Memories and dreams collide with nature and media, creating something superficially simple, but too unstable for us to ever get comfortable. "Look at the landscape for a while," they tell us. But then "pull out and be on your way."

In these stunning poems filled with the weight and hungers of milk, honey, and sensuous blood-pulse, Sheila Squillante deftly slips between exterior and interior spaces of embodiment and intellect, quotidian and sublime, dream and wakefulness. With a painterly eye and an impeccable ear for linguistic sound and phrasing, the keenly-thrumming poems in *Beautiful Nerve* will rivet you with their quirky precision, and make you swoon with their wild and gorgeous music.

—Lee Ann Roripaugh, author of *Dandarians*

Beautiful Nerve Details

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Author : Sheila Squillante

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From Reader Review Beautiful Nerve for online ebook

Melissa Reddish says

All cut myelin and beckoning horizons, these poems radiate through you. Read them immediately.

Lisa Kelsey says

I'm not very good at explaining why I like poetry, and I'm not really sure I ever understand it in a literal sense. I just sort of...eat it, I guess you could say. And this little volume was quite nourishing and tasty. I did catch one reference (I think!) to one of my favorite shows ever, Six Feet Under--I hope I am right. :)

Sharon says

This small, squarish volume with its dreamy trees is the perfect little package for Squillante's strangely haunting collection. These poems, prose-poems, and nanofictions create an intimate place lit with precise, musical language where everyday thoughts bump anxiously against surreal scraps to make their own kind of irrational logic. One of my favorites is a weirdly metafictional prose piece called "Scenic" where "bang—you're a novelist and someone says *I wish I had such a plot as you.*" An imagined woman with a life "strung like wire across a three-cornered room" comes to represent "your tragic figure." Whether this figure is yourself, an imagined self, or some uneasy blend of the real and imagined isn't clear. And maybe that's the point; life, art, and dreams blend all selves in this lovely, nervy book.
