

*The Always Broken Plates of Mountains* / Rose McLarney

**PRESS RELEASE:** Four Way Books announces the publication of *The Always Broken Plates of Mountains*, the debut collection of poetry by Rose McLarney. Publicity measures include readings, conference & festival appearances, and radio appearances. For information, e-mail publicity@fourwaybooks.com

“Though thick with fences, barns, and livestock, *The Always Broken Plates of Mountains* is not a book about a way of life; it’s a book about life beyond a single lifetime, the whole, continuous life of one place and the generations of human fidelity to it. Pinched with grief, then soothed with beauty [...] McLarney observes a world charged with the ‘magic of slowness,’ a phrase that pulses with the truth...”

—Maurice Manning

“Rose McLarney’s poems are work of the first order. Unsentimental, empathic, informed by her unerring eye and ear, they are rooted in a specific quarter of the earth and speak to the complexities of fidelity, devotion, desire, and the force of time...”

—Jane Brox

Set in the Appalachian landscape, Rose McLarney’s debut collection, *The Always Broken Plates of Mountains*, gives voice to a chorus of speakers, who are at once plainspoken, reverent, and musical. “There is a tenderness that persists” as McLarney explores what it means to be faithful—to the land, to one’s heritage, to one another. “I’ll choose a love, as I choose my home,/ an old white farmhouse, not far from where I grew up,” one speaker declares. And while the poems often feel as if they exist outside of time, they possess a quiet immediacy, “Love always shot/ with the feeling this is the last of it./ Always told to outgrow/ the mountains that would block your view.”

McLarney, a deft storyteller and graceful observer of the lyric moment, leads us into this “country for the ones who have stayed/ true to self sufficiency and silence,” and guides us through what is so lovingly built and what is left behind, what we hold onto and what we cannot keep from changing. “We are so harmed we are beautiful,” she writes, “the buildings abandoned by paint, the now unfarmed fields,”—but even through divorce and drought, even as the cattle market is turned into condos and the family land is clear-cut for the interstate, poem after poem reminds us “it’s only after the freeze/ that the trees can keep their needles, / no matter how you shake them.” *The Always Broken Plates of Mountains* honors the people who live and love and lose on the land, trying to preserve it by telling their stories while “leaving no/ fingerprints, making no mark.”

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## The Always Broken Plates of Mountains

ROSE McLARNEY



### Domestic

The sows are in heat, squealing and pink.  
The wild boar comes from the forest  
to batter at their pen.

I go out and smash the ice  
on the trough. The water  
breaks free. This takes  
a pick ax. Wielding it, I feel wild.

But the only strength in this story  
is the fences'. Not even boars are wild—  
imported for hunting a hundred years ago,  
crossing the sea in a rich man's crate.

When I hang up the pick ax  
it freezes to the nail, clinging as I do,  
making my living elsewhere and

returning to farms after sunset,  
the barns symbols  
just discernable in the dark.



Photo Credit: Naomi Johnson Photography

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rose McLarney was awarded *Alligator Juniper's* 2011 National Poetry Prize and the Joan Beebe Teaching Fellowship in 2010; was a finalist for the Poetry Foundation's Ruth Lilly Fellowship this year; and is currently a nominee for the Pushcart Prize. Her poems have appeared in publications including *The Kenyon Review*, *Orion*, *New England Review*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Provincetown Arts Magazine*, and others. McLarney earned her MFA from Warren Wilson's MFA Program for Writers and teaches writing at the college. She grew up in rural western North Carolina, where she continues to live on an old farm.