



Press Release
THE BEDS/ MARTHA RHODES
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Autumn House Press announces the publication of *The Beds*, a collection of poems by **Martha Rhodes**. To arrange a reading, interview, conference or festival appearance, please contact publicity@BridgetKBell.com.

In *The Beds*, award-winning poet Martha Rhodes skillfully navigates a tonally complex terrain. Rhodes' fourth collection mixes form and free-verse, specifically using the rondelet's tight, obsessive repetition as a means to harness and modulate frenetic content. In just three lines of "Anticipation," we encounter methodical constraint as a vehicle to control the difficult: "She climbed the stairs / wanting to find them, and she did. / She climbed the stairs." A master of the poem of longing, Rhodes deftly explores this theme ("I ask little but do ask this: Praise."), as well as anger ("Hell / was where I wanted him, / next minute not soon enough"), resilience ("I claim Baker River as it opens in a rush. A saddle of rock holds me."), and even humor ("this bed may just represent my Grand Contribution after all"). Ultimately these are poems that "recognize what it is you want," to assert, "*that should be mine now. / And then it is.*"

Past Praise for Martha Rhodes:

for *At the Gate*

"The power of this first collection derives from an intense emotional time-line compressed and forced into spare, incantatory poems." – Mary Jo Bang, *Boston Review*

for *Perfect Disappearance*

"The poems in Martha Rhodes' evocative second collection, *Perfect Disappearance*, persistently press against the thin membrane that separates outward calm and concealed chaos..." – Rebecca Weaver, *Rain Taxi*

for *Mother Quiet*

"Weird, dark, hilarious, direct, otherworldly—these poems display a poet in command of every note the English language is capable of sounding. They will not be silenced: they are unforgettable." – James Longenbach (back cover)



Martha Rhodes is the author of *At the Gate*, *Perfect Disappearance* (Green Rose Prize), and *Mother Quiet*. Her poems have been published in such journals as *Agni*, *Columbia*, *Fence*, *New England Review*, *Pleiades*, *Ploughshares*, and *TriQuarterly* and anthologized in *Agni 30 Years*, *Extraordinary Tide: New Poetry by American Women*, *Poem in Your Pocket* (a publication of the Academy of American Poets), and *It's Not You, It's Me*. She teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. Martha Rhodes is the director of Four Way Books in New York City.

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Excerpt from *The Beds*:

THE JADE PLANT

I want to go to the room
where the jade plant thrives

on the white pine floor. I want
to sit next to the plant all day

against the white plaster wall.
I want the room available all days

and evenings, it just one of the several
in my house arranged by me

for peaceful times. I want to go
to the room now though it does not exist

in my life yet. It is several hundred miles away
in a small town cottage by the river.

A friend who knows me best might say,
I can see you in this house with its contained yard.

I sit in the white room often. The plant
is old and thick. Its leaves are shiny deep green.

My sister arrives soon from Maine
and I'll give her this room for the week.

The jade, actually, our mother's—
what she last bought the eve she lost

all memory of what it is to buy something,
to recognize what it is you want, to point

to it and say *that should be mine now.*
And then it is.

Praise for *The Beds*:

"Martha Rhodes, in her searing new collection with steady gaze and moments of humor, journeys through the dark caverns of heartbreak. Yet even so, "true hope" can arrive in a flash: "It is golden here for this demi-second. Bright. / You won't be frightened away." – Dana Levin

"I can assure you that Martha Rhodes' unflinching manner of address in *The Beds* will make you flinch...what's so brilliant about this book is how steadfastly it refuses closure. These poems, grim and wise, never arrive in the guise of the Good Girl. And for that brand of honesty, I am most grateful." – Cate Marvin