

The Next Thing Always Belongs



P O E M S

Chris Anderson

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Press

### The Next Thing Always Belongs

In a voice both down-to-earth and elusive, narrative and leaping by turns, these poems seek out the hidden connections beneath randomness and loss, from merit badges to galaxies, border collies to gravesides. In their irony and their playfulness, in what they say and what they don't, they help us to experience for ourselves the mystery that keeps interrupting our lives, a mystery finally deeper than words.

"This collection brims with the mysteries, the epiphanies of startling, compelling juxtaposition and coexistence. Minor key, major key, dissonance, harmony: in these pages, we hear the odd, audible question; we're blessed with the longed-for answer. Chris Anderson's poems open their arms in an embrace so wide they astonish and buoy us. His is a world in which anything could really happen, and does. No matter how quirky, how unexpected, the next thing—and the next and next—always *does* belong in the luminous life of his remarkable work."

Paulann Petersen, poet laureate of Oregon

"Odd, thoughtful, darting, swirling, funny, poignant, startling—this is the most unusual book of poemstories and singingdreams you will ever read, period. Wrestlers and ukuleles, angels and spiders, the precision of rain, Mister Rogers and Abe Lincoln in heaven together . . . I mean, wow, and whoa, and for heaven's sake shell out the fifteen bucks and go sit in the sun and read this straight through, marveling. You'll smile and pray. Trust me."

Brian Doyle, author *Leaping: Revelations and Epiphanies*

"Chris Anderson asks the big questions in *The Next Thing Always Belongs*, and answers them the way only poetry can: with the ineffable incense of confession, and wild leaps of juxtaposition. These poems are parables, told in the impossible logic of dreams. The result is a collection that circles the incomprehensible, and manages a grasp both fleeting and everlasting—a collection that demands to be read and reread over the course of a lifetime."

Tim Green, editor of *Rattle* and author of *American Fractal*

"These poems are written with the confidence of a writer who can explore the capacity of language without fear. The title, taken from Richard Hugo, tells us something about Chris Anderson's approach: let the poem find its way through the complications and confusions of translating experience into verse; believe that each seemingly reckless transition is in fact a leap of faith in the oldest, most profound sense. And it works. This is the direct indirection of enduring poetry."

Richard Wakefield, author of *East of Early Winters*

**Chris Anderson** is a professor of English at Oregon State University and a Catholic deacon. He is the author of a number of previous books.



  
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