

In her afterword, McLain includes statistics about foster care, kidnappings, sexual assault, and police procedures that put much of the novel into context. McLain obviously did a lot of research into missing persons cases. The real-life details of the Klaas case cast a pall over the proceedings of the book, though the story ends before Klaas' did in real life. *When the Stars Go Dark* did not go in any predictable direction for me, which made it even more compelling to read. Anna and her partner, Will, alongside the citizens of Mendocino, are all fully-developed characters I would love to read more about. I am not sure if McLain is interested in making this into a series, but I would definitely read more about Anna Hart.

REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, OHIOANA'S LIBRARY SPECIALIST

## POETRY

### Gunter-Seymour, Kari. *A Place So Deep Inside America It Can't Be Seen*.

Sheila-Na-Gig Editions (Russell, KY) 2020. PB \$16.

On a recent walk, I took a copy of 2020 Ohio Poet of the Year, Ohio Poet Laureate, and founder and executive director of the "Women of Appalachia Project" Kari Gunter-Seymour's *A Place So Deep Inside America It Can't Be Seen*. I took these poems with me outside because, after reading the first few pages of this collection, I sensed these poems needed room to breathe, or maybe it was me that needed more air to digest the living and the dying, the echoes of grieving, the captive blur of suffering, silence, disbelief, and beauty. But as I kept reading, the surprise was that these compassionate and concise lines offer—alongside woe and wounds—a heavy breath of "wing-fluttering" and "feathers," the shapes of light, and the hard and grace of "each new rain." Walking the streets in my neighborhood, reading line by line, dead brown leaves crunched beneath my feet as if cringing or ringing alongside Gunter-Seymour's alliterative sounds: "mind a buzz / of song, psalm and sonnet." "...sorrow lifted in wisps and moans / to the mouth of the wind." "...pain-



ripened sun, / swayed to the pitch and pluck of sky." At times it felt like I matched my stride with the pace of the form, the short and long syllables, full descriptive middles of stanzas, and last lines resigned and worthy of rereading with pause and more thought. And along the way, every so often I stopped near a light post to notice the outdoors Gunter-Seymour takes great care in describing. However, the smell and the literal taint of crisp air is of course different in the city than what Gunter-Seymour often describes in her writing of rural Ohio. She makes poems that offer the reader something hard and beautiful, ephemeral and concrete. Her writing offers an opening—outlines of a life, a geography, a culture, history, and ancestry—filled in with objects, movement, time, light, shadows, and space. She writes in a voice, in a life shaped by open fields, hills, water, roots, sky, bird song—a throat full of Appalachia.

After visiting her website and reading more about her work, I discovered Gunter-Seymour's poems found their way out of an assemblage of arts and creative training—including a fine arts degree in graphic design and a master's degree in photography, along with writing and craft workshops, mentoring, and guidance from other "distinguished poets." This collective and expansive training, stitching together of disciplines, shows up in the work as a gathering of creative tools, intense notes. She writes a whole of emotion and imagery, a glimpse inside of a rich and vibrant frame: "...trees flexing and knotting their bodies." "A rainbow of zinnias swayed the sidewalk, / moonlit," "Out of the side of her eye / the soft blur of rabbit, / and watchful dusk, / air ripe with herbs and tinctures, the echo / of gasping roots." The lines of these poems often feel like immense grieving, as well as finding their way to sounding something like freedom.

At dusk, the sky darkens, the temperature lowers, and I wonder why I did not bring a pair of gloves. Still, I held the book open in both hands feeling for uneven earth beneath my feet. I cannot get the image of the barn out of my mind, "the hot breath," the "whiskey," the way pain echoes in bodies. How hurt looks for a way out through the wishes of little girls underneath a makeshift fort.

"Trace the ruthless shadows of December's moon," Gunter-Seymour writes. While reading this line, I found myself under a near-December moon, stunning, almost full, in between the branches, as I walked and sunk deeper into the book: "...She reminds me / how a seed

case splits, exposes backbone / but also vulnerability.” The works pull into its “rich Ohio soil”—a deepening commentary on the land, the breeze, identity, captivity, struggle, migration of people and climate, depletion, the precariousness of a fertile environment, substance abuse, the social and the political, and time.

There was a point where I lost most of the daylight. Using the lights from porches and storefronts, walking against the glow of headlights, I was persistent in the reading. Then I headed home to finish the book. The shapes of these poems continued to reveal their waking. Increasing the image and volume of loss, mourning, absence, ache, wisdom, strength, desire, the last line in “Once I Had Wings,” is intimate and resonant: “I have grown to crave even your silence.”

In the final lines of “Because The Need To See Your Daughter Overcame All Sense Of Reason,” Gunter-Seymour writes:

*“I know soon the dark above the clouds  
will do everything it can to turn us.  
But for now there is this—  
a star-carted sky, a trickle of grace,  
our uneasy peace unwilling to unknot.”*

These lines, the cold evening air, the wise clear-eyed imagery, float as remnants, bright crumbs, sorrow, will, treasure, and complexity. This collection of poems draws their fragments and dreams on the blank page, as if following the journey of a bird in the sky. Or like salt in the eye, a sting and watering, a rub, a sharp thing, so deep you cannot quite reach, or as the title of this collection testifies in memory and lyric, cannot see.

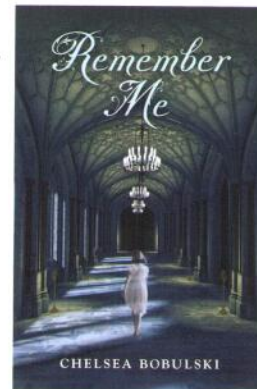
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## YOUNG ADULT & MIDDLE GRADE

### Bobulski, Chelsea. *Remember Me*.

Feiweil & Friends (New York, NY) 2019. HC \$17.99.

Living in a hotel would seem a strange concept to most teenagers, but to Nell Martin, it’s nothing unusual. Her father has been in the hospitality business her whole life, and since her mother passed away, she’s been used to traveling to wherever he can find work. But even Nell has to admit that her father’s newest gig, working at the Winslow Grand Hotel built in 1878, is a bit different. Built right on the seaside with a private beach and lots of shops and restaurants, the Winslow is expansive and full of history.



At first, Nell spends her time diving deep into this history, cleaning out the hotel’s cluttered storeroom to prepare an exhibit of the hotel’s life. Soon, though, she starts having strange dreams and running into the hotel’s repairman—Alec Petrov—who seems a bit *off*. As she delves further into the Winslow, Nell finds that the hotel’s history hasn’t always been squeaky clean, that it has the tendency to repeat, and that a dark secret may threaten her.

*Remember Me* has the unique benefit of feeling like several great stories in one. The novel’s genre can be accurately described as historical fiction, ghost story, romance, and a coming-of-age tale, and yet it is all balanced skillfully. The majority of the novel switches between two narrators—Nell and Lea—who are both clear and empathetic voices. The setup and story-building in the beginning of the novel do a great job at creating a world that feels timeless and lush. The dual narratives keep the plot moving quickly, and that—along with the mystery and intrigue—will have readers flying through the story. It’s a great book to devour over the course of a weekend or a few evenings.

Despite having so much going on in terms of plot, *Remember Me* is also full of characters that are sympathetic, enjoyable, and even enjoyably villainous. The setting of the Winslow hotel seems to be a character