



## In Praise: Poems

*Ray Amorosi*

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## **In Praise: Poems** Ray Amorosi

Sometime in the spring of 2007, Ray Amorosi, from whom I had not heard in twenty-five years, called and read one of my own poems into my answering machine. I called him back. He called me back. This went on for a couple of weeks until, once when he called he announced that he'd written a poem, and then he read it. It began, God, it's Ray. Thank you for the storm that passed north of us and for the thought of lime. Never have our tomatoes been so sweet. The poem just melted me and I said so. He mailed me a handwritten copy (his hands have suffered some damage and it's hard for him to type). The following week two more arrived, and a week or so later there were two or three more. All had the totally original slant and language I remembered so well from the earlier work, but all of them, too, had this great embracing sense of gratitude for both life's darkness and its light. I began typing the poems as they came in, sending them back to Ray for proofing, and sometimes sending them out on his behalf to journals, where they were quickly snapped up. After some months it was clear that we had the makings of a coherent and spectacularly unusual book. This book. A phoenix of a book rising out of the ashes of long silence as though there were no tomorrow. And there isn't; the poems say this again and again: there's today, refreshed, troublingly and laughably bemused, trickster-ish, reverent, irreverent, glowing and infused with the world's ironic loveliness. This book will make you happy. --Christopher Howell

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