



# **A Peculiar Feeling of Restlessness: Four Chapbooks of Short Short Fiction by Four Women**

*Amy L. Clark , Elizabeth Ellen , Kathy Fish , Claudia Smith*

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Fiction. The four chapbooks collected in A PECULIAR FEELING OF RESTLESSNESS, three of them finalists and one of them the winner of the Rose Metal Press first annual short short chapbook contest, all revel in the succinctness of their form, the underlying tension anchored beneath each story of 1,000 words or less. These stories are peculiar; they resonate with restlessness. They are deft, they are gritty, and they are lyrical. *Laughter, Applause. Laughter, Music, Applause* by Kathy Fish, *Wanting* by Amy L. Clark, *Sixteen Miles Outside of Phoenix* by Elizabeth Ellen, and *The Sky Is a Well* by Claudia Smith combine four multi-layered portrayals of beautiful uneasiness into a collection rich with wit, grace, and originality.

## A Peculiar Feeling of Restlessness: Four Chapbooks of Short Short Fiction by Four Women Details

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# **From Reader Review A Peculiar Feeling of Restlessness: Four Chapbooks of Short Short Fiction by Four Women for online ebook**

## **Rusty says**

My gawrsh. I knew of the work of 3/4 of these women before beginning, so I expected, frankly, a lot, but I'm stunned by the intricacies of detail, disarming frankness, and altogether *skilled* prose in this book. If you want to see how words hit hearts, start here.

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## **Pia says**

The four unique chapbooks that make up A Peculiar Feeling of Restlessness are disarmingly, unabashedly intimate collections by women who know how to tell a story and aren't afraid to drag the unspoken out into the light of day.

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## **Jayne says**

This is a wonderful collection of short fiction, full of intimacy and surprise. The characters, particularly the children, are ones that stay with a reader long after the last page is read. Highly recommend.

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## **Jason Jordan says**

This book is great, both in premise and execution, providing you enjoy short shorts. The authors' work varies, but their contributions fit together quite well. I can't say who my favorite is, though Claudia Smith technically won the chapbook contest.

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## **Tara says**

This book is one of the reasons I chose Rose Metal to publish the flash field guide. I love the innovative work that they are publishing and the way they present it. Putting the winner and three finalists into one book? Brilliant. Designing the running feet so that the little dingbats reflect what chapbook you are in? Wonderful detail.

My personal taste makes me appreciate Kathy Fish's and Claudia Smith's work more, but still, there are brilliant stories in the other two chapbooks, like Clark's "The Exact Reason There Has Been a Car in Our Front Yard for Four Years" and Ellen's "Before You She Was a Pit Bull" to make me rate this 5 stars overall. A must read for flash fans.

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## **Simon A. says**

This was a very good read. Four chapbooks by four very talented ladies. I sort of felt like I was getting a glimpse into the multi-layered, fragile and sometimes ferocious psyche of women here... and I must say it was equal parts enlightening, fascinating and scary, which are pretty much the ingredients for good fiction anyway.

I truly did like all of the collections that made up the book, but I think my favorite may have been Kathy Fish's "Laughter, Applause. Laughter, Music, Applause." First off, what an interesting and damn fine title! And also, I really fell for her characters. It's hard to construct lasting, complex and sympathetic characters in under 1,000 words but Kathy (and everyone else, too) did a real bang up job here. Nicely done.

Buy it. Read it. Support independent presses.

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## **Alina Stefanescu says**

I don't think I could love this book enough. Or maybe I did. Maybe I loved it so hard the spine cracked. And now I have to order another copy.

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## **Kathy says**

Review of A PECULIAR FEELING OF RESTLESSNESS by Paul D'Agostino at American Book Review:  
<http://americanbookreview.org/PDF/Lin...>

Review at Quick Fiction: <http://quickfiction.org/features/stor...>

Link to Time Out Chicago article by Jonathan Messinger:  
<http://www.timeout.com/chicago/articl...>

Link to interview with Kelly Spitzer on the Quick Fiction website: <http://www.quickfiction.org/features/...>

Link to interview with Rose Metal Press by Jim Ruland at Elegant Variation:  
<http://marksarvas.blogs.com/elegvar/2...>

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## **Debbie says**

I've been locked in my den with my bulldog while my stairwell is being painted. It was a good time to read a book titled. "A PECULIAR FEELING OF RESTLESSNESS." I had read and loved Claudia Smith's flash

collection. Her voice is soft yet powerful and her stories of childhood and coming of age linger with you long after the read. I was very anxious to read the others, particularly Kathy Fish.

Like Claudia, Kathy Fish looks intently at childhood. Children center many of her stories, children who survive in funny, smart and tolerant ways. No wimps in Kathy's stories. No, these kids manage just fine. It's the adults we worry about. And when she brings her camera over to our adult universe, we are amused, worried, saddened all at once. Her lens is clear and yet opaque at the same time. The writing in all of these stories is layered and complex. Kathy can put a character on a page in a mere breath of words. A moment is captured with tremendous skill and power, and then she leaves us, as if to say, here is one moment, figure out the life.

I also enjoyed Amy Clark and Elizabeth Ellen, who concentrate on youthful relationships and quirky participants. The voices are restless and sometimes out of control. Both of these writers have a sense of irony, wit, and both seem to love to experiment. Fun, lively reads. I really enjoyed both of them.

A great collection. Fast read. It can fit inside a brief case, or pocket book. Take it anywhere.

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### **David says**

tiny little stories that cast huge shadows over everything. you might be hurtling through tunnels in new york city or driving along concrete highways in dallas and sentences stay with you, illuminating and making every crack in the sidewalk stand out. every lightpost with anti-war graffiti shine. overflowing public garbage cans become still-lives. you get to elizabeth ellen's story, how the homeless funambulist and lonely somnambulist met and shared a melon, and you shut the book and take in the light that comes in through your dirty rented window and settles perfectly in a square on your rented hardwood floor. you stop for one moment and everything falls away. a breath. before it all comes crashing back to you. a cold radiator or the chugging of the window air conditioner.

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### **Jeff says**

It's such a good book because the voices are so different, but all four writers write these funny, heartbreaking, smart, fast, well-detailed, odd and beautiful stories. I've already read the whole thing twice, and I'm sure I'll read it again.

It's fun to read, even when it's breaking your heart.

Kudos!

Kudos to all!

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### **Myfanwy says**

Please check out my review at Quick Fiction: <http://quickfiction.org/features/stor...>

thanks!

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### **Tom says**

If you're a fan of flash fiction, this book is essential. *A Peculiar Feeling of Restlessness* collects in one volume four different short-short chapbooks from four different writers, all remarkably different, all remarkably adept at the craft. There isn't a weak one in the bunch. My very favorite is Kathy Fish's "Laughter, Applause, Laughter, Music, Applause," alone worth the price of the book. If J.D. Salinger wrote flashes, they'd be somewhat like hers. But this comparison might be doing her work a disservice; her voice is entirely and uniquely her own.

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### **Kathleen says**

Abby Beckel and I published this, so I'm biased, but this is a fantastic anthology.

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### **Tara says**

Fantastic. They are as stated, short, short stories, so the inclination is to whip through them because they are such wonderful reads.

But, as is the case with most shorter works, savoring them and sitting with them a bit is ideal. Thus far I can only say this is a great collection of work. I am so glad I got this book.

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