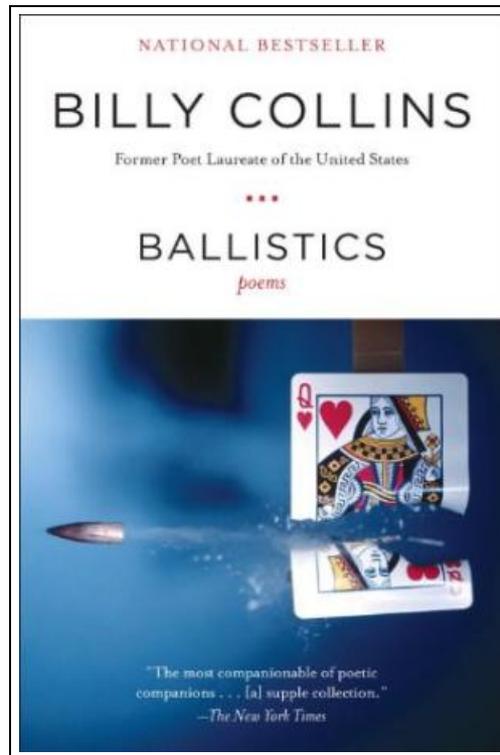


## Ballistics: Poems



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Random House. 1 Paperback(s), 2008. soft. Book Condition: New. Two-time U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins follows up *The Trouble with Poetry and Other Poems* with this 2008 collection, touching on an unusually wide range of subjectslove, death, solitude, youth, and agingwith moving yet playful takes. His simple, accessible language and his often self-deprecating charm nonetheless contain eye-opening insight and real passion. "If I lived across the street from myself / and I was sitting in the dark / on the edge of the bed / at five o'clock in the morning, / I might be wondering what the light / was doing on in my study at this hour."Collins is a jester and a double agent. A poet readers flock to, he gets the laughs and the applause, he paces and bows, concealing his weapons and serious mien. His self-portraiture is mordant, his drollery preemptive, his insouciance camouflage, his intelligence of the stealth kind, and his intricately constructed poems detonate as they blossom in the reader's mind. Collins is fanciful and mindful, cocky and prayerful, blissful over ordinary things and intimate with dread and loneliness. Here he is morose in Paris, staring down a fish staring back on a plate in Pittsburgh, rain-harried in Dublin, awake and repentant at the fringe of night in a bright bathroom, loitering with intent in the kitchen. Collins' seductive poems are decoys drawing us into deep waters where memories waft like tangled weeds and death lurks in the cold spots. Wryly philosophical, caustically whimsical, disarmingly beautiful, Collins' covertly powerful lyrics deftly snare all that is fine and ludicrous about us, from the old habit of poetry itself to the spell of love and the long, rolling song of the self."Booklist 113.



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