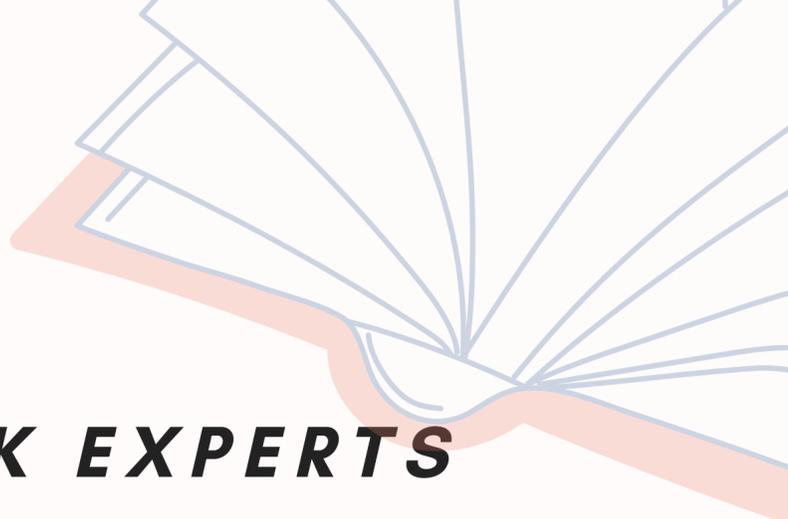




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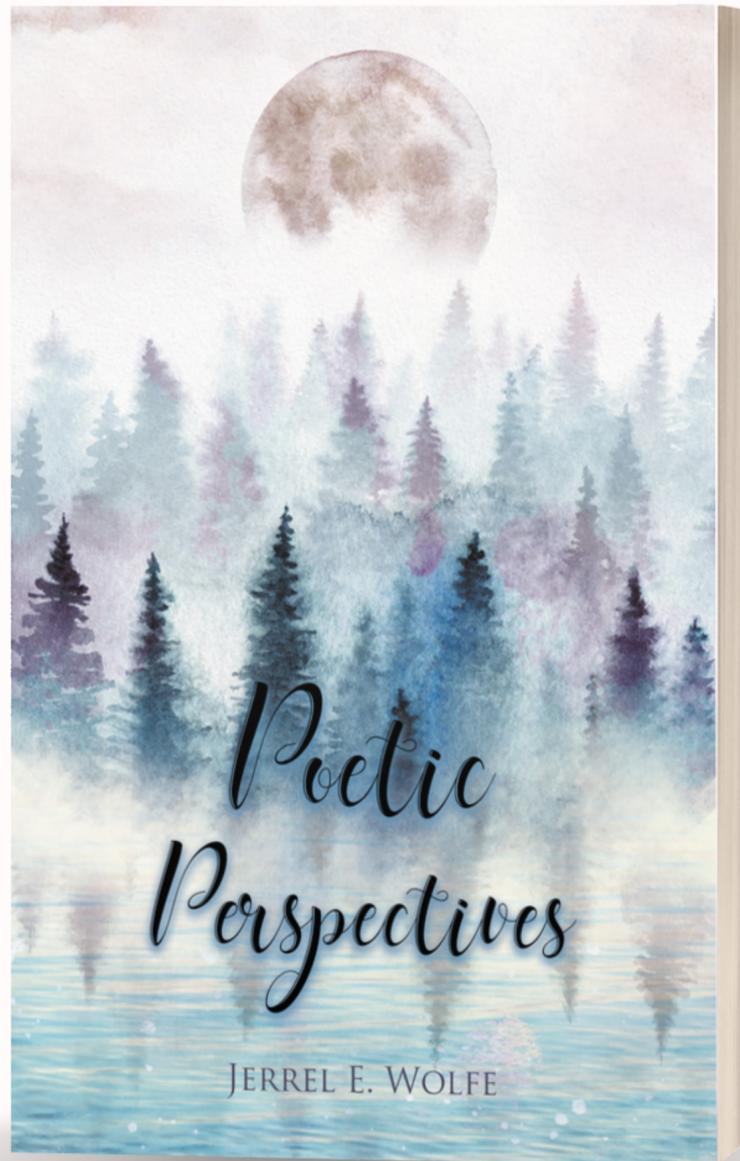
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PACIFIC BOOK REVIEW

In partnership with Bookside Press



*Poetic
Perspectives*

JERREL E. WOLFE

Reviewed by: Barbara Bamberger Scott



BOOKSIDE Press





Poetic Perspectives

JERREL E. WOLFE

Observant, sensitive, empathic poet Jerrel E. Wolfe is able to encase in verse a wide variety of thoughts, feelings, fears and pleasures common to all.

In this latest collection, *Poetic Perspectives*, his subjects range from war, to romance, to simple, fanciful occurrences, framed as stories like "Escape," the poignant tale of a boy who "never had a family" and so resolves to leave for new adventures one Christmas Eve on a passing train, where he met a dying hobo named Bo Baggins, who says he is taking his final ride. After drifting off, the boy awakes. "Bo had moved on from this life" and had left the boy a gift: "A shiny golden pocket watch / with an inscription that did read... / Eternal Life Awaits Thee."

Wolfe has a special place in memory for soldiers, having served in the US Army in his twenties. In "Today's War" he asks his reader: "Did you go to bed and think last night / Did you take the time to pray / For the soldiers that sacrifice their life / That have just been blown away."

Many of Wolfe's poems probe the experience of being an orphan who did not know for many years that he had been adopted. Such musings cause him to urge adopting parents to share the truth with their new children. He launches delicate speculation of the pain a mother might feel at giving a child away, feelings that the adopted child can only imagine. And, in another perspective on being "Abandoned" he tells of delivering a gift to a woman aged "one hundred three": "Each wrinkle on her smiling face, / Had a story to tell / And I, a recent retiree / Could see it all so well."

The dear old woman quietly laments that her children and grandchildren no longer find time to visit her. The bouquet the poet is able to present to her is given with the assurance that it came from her estranged family, and he leaves with love in his heart for her.

Several vignettes offer an emotive view into the world of black Americans, such as the journaling of a man who declares "I Led the Black to Battle" as a Union soldier, and "Selma," exploring the thoughts of someone preparing to take that fated walk across the Pettus Bridge: "Tomorrow we make history / we'll march across that span / We'll take our case to Montgomery / And do the best we can."

Wolfe, the creator of these simple, mostly rhyming gems has received awards and recognition from his fellow wordsmiths. He has published other poetic collections and is an Associate Member of the International Society of Poets. This latest grouping of insights and gently veiled opinions and counsel to readers will be welcomed by his fans, and doubtless garner a new group of appreciative lovers of words well-chosen and thought pictures well painted.

Reviewed by:

Barbara Bamberger Scott, Pacific Book Reviews