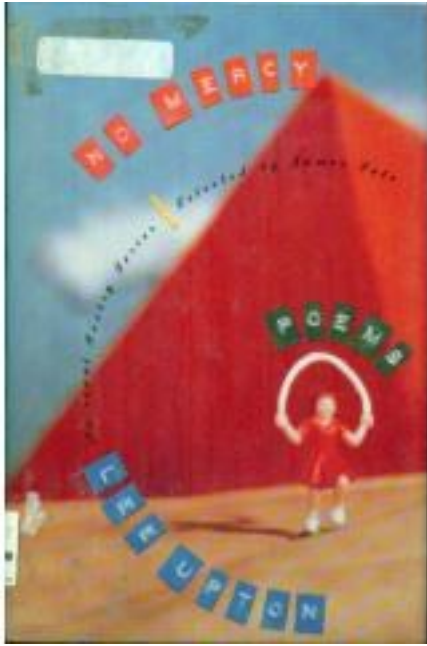


No Mercy: Poems National Poetry Series



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Selected by poet James Tate for inclusion in the National Poetry Series, this collection reveals Upton as a gifted poet with a soft-toned but exacting sensibility. An explorer of minutiae, she creates in her best poems unforgettable, precisely rendered microcosms that suggest a quiet lyricism pervading everyday life. In a pond she finds "the nerves of water, the freshwater whelk's red / jelly eggs, the roots of a flossy lily." In a friend's collection of decorative miniatures--where "life requires / tweezers, a beauteous order"--are observed "pears so delicate they float / as if a breath might fling them / against the tiny windows." Poems often follow an incident of apparently modest significance--a train ride, buying a piano--to its quixotic conclusion, subtly measuring the inevitable distance between real and ideal, beloved and lover. The poems founder only when witticisms obtrude or abstractions and rhetorical questions become

unhappily jumbled.
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