

Dear Anaïs: My Life in Poems for You

Diana M. Raab

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Reviewed by Irene Watson for Reader Views (10/08)

Diana M. Raab is an artist with words as she creates a tribute to late diarist Anaïs Nin, whose journals span several decades and profoundly explore insight into her personal life and relationships. Although Raab had never met her, she admires her work and offers a tribute, not only to the diaries but to Anaïs Nin herself.

Paralleling lives, Nin and Raab both started journaling at a young age as a healing process for losses in their lives. Now Raab shares her writing with readers, not only to express her own thoughts and feelings but to encourage the reader to look within themselves and find comfort and peace.

I found every poem of great meaning to me and resonated with much of Raab's writing. I particularly liked "Luggage":

From our past
We carry
Rusty cars
Holey socks
Leaky pens...
Caked soap dishes...
Scratched sunglasses...
TV dinners with uneaten vegetables...
And dreams of unknown futures.

I smiled as I read this piece and read it again. How true. We carry many memories of things like leaky pens and probably remember how many times the ink was smeared on our clothes or hands because we didn't notice the pen was leaking – such mundane memories yet those we remember with significance. And, we always hang on to "the dreams of unknown futures" putting as much time and energy into the thoughts, dreaming of experiences we are to have, as we did with the leaky pen.

Diana M. Raab is a miracle worker with words. Every piece she's sharing with us reflects intimacy and her personal memories. "Dear Anaïs" is not only her life in poems for herself, but for us, the reader, to put our lives into her words and reflect. Poignant.