

There's No I in Debris

There's No I in Debris

Except This One!

Poems by
C. SCOTT KINDER-PYLE

Foreword by
CAROL HOWARD MERRITT

Photography by
DAVID S. LORBER

RESOURCE *Publications* • Eugene, Oregon

THERE'S NO I IN DEBRIS
Except This One!

Copyright © 2018 C. Scott Kinder-Pyle. All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical publications or reviews, no part of this book may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission from the publisher. Write: Permissions, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3, Eugene, OR 97401.

Resource Publications
An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers
199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3
Eugene, OR 97401

www.wipfandstock.com

PAPERBACK ISBN: 978-1-5326-6062-7
HARDCOVER ISBN: 978-1-5326-6063-4
EBOOK ISBN: 978-1-5326-6064-1

Manufactured in the U.S.A.

10/16/18

For Sheryl Kinder-Pyle

“...And it speaks in notes struck
or caressed or blown or plucked
off our own bodies: remember
existence already remembers
the flush upon it you will have been,
you who have reached out ahead
and taken up some of the black dust
we become, souvenir
which glitters already in the bones of your
hand.”

—GALWAY KINNELL, “THERE ARE THINGS I TELL TO NO ONE,”
FROM *SELECTED POEMS*

“The reality of God is always present only in subjective anticipation of the totality of reality, in models of the totality of meaning presupposed in all particular experience. These models however are historic, which means that they are subject to confirmation or refutation by subsequent experience.”

—WOLFHART PANNENBERG, *THEOLOGY AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE*

“Therefore, every scribe who has been trained in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

—MATTHEW 13:52 (NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

“I am a broken vessel, Lord—
Rubble where a soul should be,
This body that I bleed away
For heaven’s sake, or sympathy’s,
And wreckage never to be found. . .”

—JILL ALEXANDER ESSBAUM, “KENOSIS,” FROM *HEAVEN*

Contents

Foreword by Carol Howard Merritt | ix

Acknowledgements | xi

One: Call to Worship

Edict | 2

The Coming In The Clouds Drama, Revised | 4

Eye-Witnesses | 6

The Call for the Other | 8

Three Mysterious Strangers Come Into My Delicatessen | 10

Tomato Ripening on September 11th | 12

Blazing New Trails on the Fire Lane | 14

Two: Prayer of Confession

On the Agenda: the 'Do Not Gather Seaweed' sign | 18

Mischief Night | 20

The Casual Dress of the Dead | 22

Sasquatch, 1967 | 24

The Anti-Freckle Cream Container Found on Nikumaroro | 26

As To Whether Playing Golf Is Recreation: the Verdict | 28

Post-Patriarchal Pictures | 30

Three: Assurance of Pardon

News You Can't Pronounce | 34

Quid Pro Quo | 36

Interview for Job—Paying for Seminary | 38

Homage to the Infinite Mildred Jukes | 40

Hermeneutics | 48

Testimony Transplant | 50

Could've Been A U.S. Senator | 52

Four: Passing the Peace

Time Management Before the Prophecy Seminar | 56

Film Scene of My Father Who Dies Without a Camera in Sight | 58

After Adjunct Teaching, I Say Grace Over Oysters Rockefeller | 60

Jonah, First Person Redux | 62

Exposé | 64

Under a Pseudonym | 66

Among the Lichens | 68

Foreword

REV. CAROL HOWARD MERRITT

GEORGIA O'KEEFE INFORMED US that no one ever sees a flower: "[T]o see takes time, like to have a friend takes time."¹ O'Keefe must draw the petals out of their fields, magnify the colors, and amplify the folds to a size that demands my attention. Then when I stand in stunned awe before the canvas, O'Keefe pries my eyes open to all of the wonder of this tiny thing. The flower—no longer a splotch of confetti color that I barely notice in the corner of my eye as I speed along the highway getting from one job to the next—becomes vibrant and sensual when I see it as a friend.

This is often the artist's mission: to slow us down, waking us to the cruelty, delight, and wonder of our world.

I forget this. I live in a culture of quick consumption that taught me how to commodify everything, especially the minutes that make up a day. I inhabit this odd reality where hours are billable, food is fast, and productivity is measured. I became too busy for the novel, then the blogpost felt too cumbersome. Now the 240-character status update is just long enough for me to consume. I devour newspaper headlines as I run on a treadmill, in order to get a bite-size taste of my world. I never quite savor any of it.

Until the artist reminds me that I must stop. I have to stand before the canvas for a soul-stirring moment. I must learn to become so immersed that I forget that time is money, and I must delight, savor, and linger.

Painting, music, liturgy, poetry, and photography demands that I stop and look through the lens of another person, noticing the curves until I have a stunning portrait of the world around me that is just close enough so that it is recognizable, but different enough so that it is completely and utterly strange.

1. Georgia O'Keefe wrote this for an exhibition catalogue of the show *An American Place* (1944).