

THE WATERS OF OUR TIME



Thomas Roma and Giancarlo T. Roma

Most mornings I wake up with a song running through my head. I know I've heard it before, I just don't remember where or when.

Let the river rock you like a cradle

As the sun makes its way into my eyes I force myself awake to try to hang on to it, but it only partly works—the harder I try to remember, the more it slips away. All I get to keep are a few words at a time.

Climb to the treetops, child, if you're able

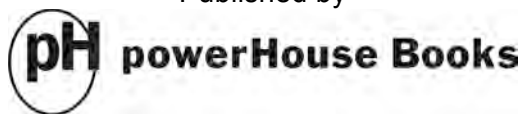
It's always the same song—a man is singing, sounding the way I always imagined my father would. I'm told I met my father, but if I did I wasn't old enough to remember him. It seems silly at this age

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THEIR BOOK *THE SWEET FLYPAPER OF LIFE*, WHICH INSPIRED THIS ONE,
AND TO RICHIE HAVENS FOR HIS MUSIC.

THE TEXT OF THIS BOOK IS ENTIRELY FICTIONAL. ALL NAMES USED IN
THE STORY ARE FICTITIOUS, AND ANY RELATION TO PERSONS
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For Mary

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to be thinking of myself as someone's daughter, but I guess I still do.

Let your hands tie a knot across the table

Sometimes the music seems to fade and I feel like he's whispering in my ear.

Come and touch the things you cannot feel

I don't know when exactly it all started, but it was only recently—maybe because I don't have much time left. I just hope it doesn't stop. There's still a lot I have to make sense of.

And close your fingertips and fly where I can't hold you



I've spent my whole life in Brooklyn. I traveled a bit but I never even thought of leaving for good —the most you could accuse me of is moving from one neighborhood to another, which I did more than a few times, so many in fact I've almost lost track.

Let the sun-rain fall and let the dewy clouds enfold you

Sometimes I feel like I'm trying to remember something that never happened, or at least never happened to me.

And maybe you can sing to me the words I just told you

At this point it seems I mostly remember the stories I've heard other people tell over and over.



If all the things you feel ain't what they seem

And that's when I have to stop and ask myself, which is more real — more important — more me?

Then don't mind me 'cause I ain't nothin' but a dream



But a time came when he decided there wasn't enough for him here. All he talked about was getting out. He couldn't say exactly what or where he was going to, but he wanted me to come with him. I tried to convince him to stay. I tried to make him see that everything he needed was here. But it was no use. His mind was made up, and I suppose mine was, too.

Each song has wings – they won't stay long

I once heard, the first time you fall in love, you fall so far you spend your whole life trying to dig your way out. When my turn came I was all in. It was as though I couldn't hear anything that didn't come out of his mouth, Roy's that is. And I think it was the same for him, at least for a while.

The mockingbird sings each different song





In the end,
we really wanted
the same thing,
and that was to
be someplace.
For him, it was
anywhere else
and for me, it
was here.



I stayed behind, and everything that happened after, I can
trace to that moment—that decision.

While the church bell tolls its one-note song

Do those who hear think he's doing wrong?



There's something to it though — staying.



The cold, gray schools and the run-down apartment buildings, the faded storefronts you pass on your way — the places where everything that was supposed to happen, and some things that weren't, happened — they're all still there. But depending on the order you see them on any given day, your story is told back to you in a different way.





At a certain point, you realize you can't recall your own life as neatly as you thought you could.

Bumping into pieces of your past every time you change your route from here to there shuffles everything.





And the school bell is tinkling to the throng
I know it's strange but even still I feel homesick at times,



like something's missing.





Maybe that's why I'm always looking around and asking so many questions. Sometimes people lose patience with me, and I think it's because they suspect I'm not so interested in their answers. They're probably right, I do care more about questions than answers—questions stay true, answers don't always.

Come here where your ears cannot hear



it's pointless.



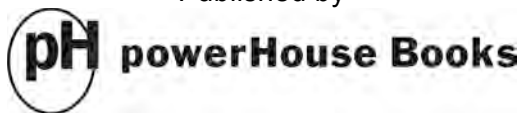
Just because you hold on tight to something doesn't mean you can keep it from changing. It's like when you see a parent trying to run alongside a carousel to keep their child in sight—



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