



The Book of Questions

By Pablo Neruda

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The Book of Questions By Pablo Neruda

A best-selling volume of Pablo Neruda's poetry in an English-Spanish edition.

Pablo Neruda is one of the world's most popular poets, and in *The Book of Questions*, Neruda refuses to be corralled by the rational mind. Composed of 316 unanswerable questions, these poems integrate the wonder of a child with the experiences of an adult. By turns Orphic, comic, surreal, and poignant, Neruda's questions lead the reader *beyond* reason into realms of intuition and pure imagination.

This complete translation of Pablo Neruda's *El libro de las preguntas* (*The Book of Questions*) features Neruda's original Spanish-language poems alongside William O'Daly's English translations. In his introduction O'Daly, who has translated eight volumes of Pablo Neruda's poetry, writes, "These poems, more so than any of Neruda's other work, remind us that living in a state of visionary surrender to the elemental questions, free of the quiet desperation of clinging too tightly to answers, may be our greatest act of faith."

When Neruda died in 1973, *The Book of Questions* was one of eight unpublished poetry manuscripts that lay on his desk. In it, Neruda achieves a deeper vulnerability and vision than in his earlier work-and this unique book is a testament to everything that made Neruda an artist.

"Neruda's questions evoke pictures that make sense on a visual level before the reader can grasp them on a literal one. The effect is mildly dazzling [and] O'Daly's translations achieve a tone that is both meditative and spontaneous."
--*Publishers Weekly*

Pablo Neruda, born in southern Chile, led a life charged with poetic and political activity. He was the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, the International Peace Prize, and served as Chile's ambassador to several countries, including Burma, France, and Argentina. He died in 1973.

II.

Tell me, is the rose naked
or is that her only dress?

Why do trees conceal
the splendor of their roots?

Who hears the regrets
of the thieving automobile?

Is there anything in the world sadder
than a train standing in the rain?

XIV.

And what did the rubies say
standing before the juice of pomegranates?

Why doesn't Thursday talk itself
into coming after Friday?

Who shouted with glee
when the color blue was born?

Why does the earth grieve
when the violets appear?

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The 74 poems in this collection consist entirely of questions. These questions appeal to the reader to supply images not answers. Exploiting the lag between perception and understanding, the Nobel laureate's poems evoke pictures that make sense on a visual level before the reader can grasp them on a literal one. The effect is mildly dazzling: "Where did the full moon leave / its sack of flour tonight?" Composed during the final months of a fatal illness, these poems are also pervaded by an autumnal atmosphere: "Why do leaves commit suicide / when they feel yellow?" Yet Neruda's characteristic depiction of life and death as cyclical allows him to be inquisitive and even playful toward his own mortality instead of despairing: "Will your worms become part / of dogs or of butterflies?" O'Daly's translations achieve a tone that is both meditative and spontaneous. His introduction, however, fares less well, in yielding to the misconception of Neruda (Still Another Day) as a kind of South American shaman rather than representing him as the shrewd and ironic poet he demonstrated himself to be even in minor works such as this.

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From Library Journal

Once called "a one-man Renaissance," Nobel laureate and Chilean poet and statesman Neruda (1904-1973) wrote these 74 poems and 316 playful questions about death, nature, and rebirth in the last year of his life. Cryptic and intriguing, these brief answerless riddles, like Roethke's visionary poems, ask the sophisticated question of the innocent child--"Is the sun the same as yesterday's/ or is the fire different than that fire?"--and probe what it means to be human: "Whom can I ask what I came/to make happen in this world?" This volume is the last in a series of seven bilingual translations from this publishers of Neruda's late and posthumously published work. American poetry and readers benefit by having excellent English-language translations of all Neruda's complicated, prolific work.

- *Frank Al len, SUNY at Cobleskill*

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Review

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Debbie Luken:

The book The Book of Questions gives you the sense of being enjoy for your spare time. You may use to make your capable far more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem with your subject. If you can make looking at a book The Book of Questions being your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You can know everything if you like open and read a publication The Book of Questions. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this reserve?

Kimberly Lunceford:

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Kevin Lewis:

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Ana Vela:

Some people said that they feel weary when they reading a book. They are directly felt this when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose often the book The Book of Questions to make your reading is interesting. Your current skill of reading proficiency is developing when you including reading. Try to choose basic book to make you enjoy to see it and mingle the sensation about book and reading especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to open a book and learn it. Beside that the publication The Book of Questions can to be your brand new friend when you're feel alone and confuse with the information must you're doing of the time.

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