



Four Fathers

Tom Williams, Dave Housley, Ben Tanzer

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A collection of flash fiction (Tanzer), bookend short stories (Williams), a novella (Housley), and poetry written from father to daughter (Pawelek), *Four Fathers* is a hard-hitting definitive work that seeks to uncover what it takes to be a parent. These subjects are not easy, and through these introspective fathers, often agonized by the daily tensions of care-taking, we come to appreciate our own experiences more fully, or, at least prepare ourselves for what may lie ahead.

Four Fathers, and each of its authors, delivers fatherhood in a multitude of thought-provoking, heartfelt ways: from Tom Williams' pair of long short stories which define a man by who he is as a son in relation to his father, and who he is as a father in relation to his son; to BL Pawelek's poetry, dedicated to his daughter, Abbey Road. Then you have Ben Tanzer's flash fiction pieces, which all seem to reflect up on the idea of "I'm a dad...what the heck do I do now?" and Dave Housley's novella begging the Osbornesque question "What the f*** is a 'Bieber?'"

ADVANCE PRAISE:

"Nothing can prepare us for the heart-wrenching mess that being a parent entails, but these stories and poems about fatherhood make me feel less lonely in the endeavor. At times gut-busting hilarious, devastating to the point of tears, and just plain beautiful, I'm so grateful this collection is in the world." -Paula Bomer, author of *NINE MONTHS* and *INSIDE MADELEINE*

"*FOUR FATHERS* made me want to impregnate my wife all over again. Becoming a dad wouldn't be half as stressful with these powerful voices in my ear. From four of the sharpest literary minds on the planet, *FOUR FATHERS* is a quadruple helping of the wit, honesty, fear and beauty of being a dad. I can't wait to help a father-to-be throw away all the bullshit parenting books in his stack and replace it with this one amazing collection. I can't wait to tell him: 'This is what fatherhood really is.'" -Patrick Wensink, bestselling author of *BROKEN PIANO FOR PRESIDENT*

"What a remarkable debut from Cobalt Press! This impressive collection of fiction and poetry is as varied in form as it is in content. But no matter the subject, one thing remains consistent throughout: these four authors shine a brilliant light onto one of the central conundrums of contemporary fatherhood, exploring what it means to be a man who is at once a role model, a law giver, a boo-boo soother (in short: this huge figure in his child's life) and yet also struggles to feel like a competent, responsible, stable grown-up. In language that will have you simultaneously chuckling and tearing up, *Four Fathers* gets to the heart of what it means to be a dad today." -- Brian Gresko, Editor of *WHEN I FIRST HELD YOU*

"Replete with fathers, sons, daughters, fairy tales, gunfire and Justin Bieber songs, *FOUR FATHERS* is a collection that resonates not just with parents, but with anyone who has ever felt the burning pull of unconditional love. Far from rehashing familiar tropes, these authors prefer to examine what makes their subjects unique. Their focus on memory and moment illuminates the connections between childhood and parenthood: these are both times of growth, learning, doubt and, perhaps, the eras in which we make the most mistakes, and find the most forgiveness." -Aubrey Hirsch, author of *WHY WE NEVER TALK ABOUT SUGAR*

"The anguish and joys of modern fatherhood - the shock of seeing your father's face in the mirror while you're shaving, the horror of watching your son succumb to Bieber Fever, the embarrassment of knowing the meaning of the term venti, the suicidal thoughts that follow the crime of clipping your child's nails too closely, the worrying about how to provide and protect - they're all here, in this absorbing volume, rendered in four genres and four unforgettable voices." -Susan Muaddi Darraj, author of THE INHERITANCE OF EXILE

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