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Immortality

By Alan Feldman

University of Wisconsin Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Immortality, Alan Feldman, "Drop the personal," Alan Feldman's best friend advises. But what else does he have? Feldman takes his title from Zhivago's interpretations of the afterlife: "Your soul, your immortality, your life in others." In a collection where the dead do speak, Feldman's poems in his first segment, "Self-Portraits," are more likely to be about others than about himself. The segment "Partners" reflects on marriage and divorce, the latter an "uncontested victor over marriage, / the way the flood is champion over the flood plain." In the section "Offshore" Feldman writes about travel to Uruguay, his impractical love of sailing, and his wonder at Walter Cronkite's obtuseness about Vietnam. In his final segment, "What Now?," he asks about meaning itself. Babysitting his tiny granddaughter, he thinks of sailing--hours of boredom punctuated by moments of terror--and wonders if even this suggests something world-encompassing he's "still hoping to find a name for. / If it isn't joy."



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