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BOOK NEWS

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Poet Explores Father-Daughter Relationship in New Collection

Ava Leavell Haymon's Eldest Daughter Available from LSU Press in August 2013

"What I find most impressive about Ava Leavell Haymon's Eldest Daughter is the poet's voice—equally at home with the Holy Ghost and basketball moves, at times extremely funny, at times devastatingly frank about horrendous realities, always making the most of what language has to offer."—Jacqueline Osherow

"Haymon presents us with the protestant projection of St. Theresa's passions into contemporary America. Her fruits of spirit and flesh are exquisitely halved on the communion/collection plate: Go ahead, eat them. I mean it."—Andrei Codrescu

Baton Rouge—In *Eldest Daughter*, Ava Leavell Haymon displays her mastery of the craft and engages us with the poetic gifts we have come to expect from her. As in previous collections, she combines the sensory and the spiritual in wild verbal fireworks. Concrete descriptions of a woman's life in the mid-twentieth-century American South mix with wider concerns about family lies and truths, and culture that supports or forbids clear speech.

Haymon's poems encourage us to revel in the natural world and enjoy its delights, as well as to confront the difficult realities that would keep us from doing so.

Ava Leavell Haymon is the author of the poetry collections *Why the House Is Made of Gingerbread*, *Kitchen Heat*, and *The Strict Economy of Fire*. She teaches poetry writing in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and directs a writers' retreat center in the mountains of New Mexico.

August 2013

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