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Book Review: A Necklace of Bees: Poems

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Book Reviews

Powell, Danyne Romine. *A Necklace of Bees : Poems*. Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 2008. ISBN 978-1-55728-879-0 1-557288-879-8. \$16.00

Sitting by her husband, Lew Powell, the Manager of the Letters to the Editor at the Charlotte Observer, she seems petite and elegant in her long skirt and colorful necklace of precious stones. She clutches a cell phone as she walks to the podium to deliver an author's talk about becoming a writer.

With a soft strong voice that carries us into her life's story, she explains she is awaiting a call from the hospital to tell her that a grandchild is born. "Never", she said, "Did I think he would come tonight when I committed to be with you!"

Yet, here she is and from deep inside she connects with us as she tells of her love of words. Reciting lines from poems we immediately repeat silently with her, she speaks of her mother's insistence that she memorize and recite poetry and read aloud to her. We learn she takes reflection as a tool to understand the challenges that life brings to her and to those around her.

Many of us know her as a newspaper columnist, book reviewer, and successful journalist; however, as she talks to us about her life's journey as a writer, we come to know her as a wordsmith who pulls at our emotions as well. In *A Necklace of Bees*, she gives us an inside look at loss in its many forms—loss of innocence, loss of loved ones, loss of dreams unfilled, loss of connectedness, and loss of youth. Poems take us where we'd rather not go but we must and Danyne Romine Powell takes us there and lets us be thankful for her presence among us. Her poetry helps us to see those things we'd rather not see but once there, deepens our understanding of our own losses.

October 16, 2008, Friends of the Library, Queens University of Charlotte, Fall Event.

Dr. Carol Walker Jordan

Everett Library, Queens University of Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina