



On the Cusp of a Dangerous Year (Crab Orchard Series in Poetry)

Lee Ann Roripaugh

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Lady Murasaki wrote in *The Tale of Genji* that thirty-seven is “a dangerous year” for women. Evoking the styles of Murasaki and other women writers of the Heian-period Japanese court, Lee Ann Roripaugh presents a collection of confessional poems charting the course of that perilous year. Roripaugh, in both an homage to and a dialogue with women writers of the past, explores the trials of women facing the treacherous waters of time while losing none of the grace and decadence of femininity. Often calling upon the passing of the seasons and revelations of nature, these lyrically elegant poems chronicle the dangers and delights of a range of issues facing contemporary women—from bisexuality and biracial culture and identity, to restless nights and lingering memories of the past. The pleasures of the senses collide with parallels of time and the natural world; tangible solitude lies down beside wistful memories of relationships gone by. What is ultimately revealed is both heartbreaking and illuminating. At once provocative, humorous, and bittersweet, *On the Cusp of a Dangerous Year* is a pillow book for the twenty-first century, providing a candid and whimsical look into the often tumultuous universe of the modern woman.

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