



Anthology

poetry
leaves

2019 Adult Contemporary Volume

The Healing Book
By Dustin Grinnell

The doctor moved to a cabin in the mountains with his wife.
To write a book for her, the incurable patient.
A novel he could prescribe after the drugs or surgery no longer worked,
A story not for the mind or body, but literature for the soul.

He took apart novels in his library, decoded religious-spiritual texts, learned how to
build a book that would act as psychological elixir, a spiritual cure.
A novel that would soothe his wife's worries, help her feel less alone, spark
answers to the question: How should I live?
And so he mined the books, found their secrets, and built and built,
And wrote and wrote,
The Healing Book.

The book was a masterpiece, perfectly crafted.
But the doctor had taken the texts too seriously,
His work was an obstacle, not liberation.
To solve her melancholy, he had thrown himself into action.
The power to heal her distress wasn't in a book, but in presence, touch, connection.
She was sensitive, a deeply feeling woman.
She needed care, attention, love,
Her husband, not a story.

And yet, every night, the doctor read to her from his masterpiece.
Her eyes would brighten, but still she withered, her health declined.
He studied more books, scripture, classics,
He wrote and read, wrote and read.
And one night, while studying in his library, her breath gave out, and she passed,
without pain, without struggle, quietly. Alone.

The good doctor wrapped his beloved in his arms and held.
And he wept.
In all his searching for a literary cure, he had missed what mattered most.
All those books, all their wisdom, were nothing,
Without love. Without him.