

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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Fixer.

By Edgar Kunz

Aug. 2023. 80p. Ecco, paper, \$17.99 (9780063288591); e-book (9780063288607). 811

Kunz's outstanding second collection, following *Tap Out* (2019), is a concentrated chronicle of survival at the margins of today's economy. These narrative poems are haunted by memories, some tragic, some funny, some stunningly beautiful. The title poem, and the longest in the book, is made up of couplets that build on themselves, poignantly registering a father's unwinding into depression and alcoholism. "He was like tissue paper / coming apart in water. / Like smoke in my hands." Two brothers are left sorting through the complexities of their father's life both tangible and ungraspable. In the briskly humorous "Account," a brief marriage ends with an offer of compensation: "she had covered / most of the wedding" and now "she wrote to say we could forget it / if I would let her claim me" as a tax deduction. These exacting poems pay homage to everyday workers, from a food taster in "Tester," to a human mannequin in "Model," Kunz captures the nicked-and-dimed realities of trying to make ends meet. An unsparing yet buoyant collection.

— Raúl Niño