



The Collected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers: Volume One: 1920-1928

By Tim Hunt

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Robinson Jeffers (1887-1962) is not only the greatest poet that California (and indeed the American West) has produced but a major poet of the twentieth century who occupies a prominent place in the tradition of American prophetic poetry. Jeffers consciously set himself apart from the poetry of his generation?by physical isolation at his home in Carmel, by his unusual poetic form, and by his stance as an "anti-modernist." Yet his work represents a profound, and profoundly original, artistic response to problems that shaped modernist poetry and that still perplex poets today; how to reconcile scientific and artistic discourses and modes of vision; how to connect present-day experience to myths perceived as lying at the origins of human culture; how to renew the poetic language and how (or whether) to present art's claim to moral, spiritual, or epistemological seriousness within representations of modern phenomena. For Jeffers, as for no other important modern American poet, there has never been a collected poems, not even a truly representative selected poems?the current *Selected Poetry*, first published in 1938, contains no work from the last three volumes published during Jeffers' lifetime or from his posthumous volume. Now, for the first time, all of Jeffers' completed poems, both published and unpublished, are presented in a single, comprehensive, and textually authoritative edition. The first three volumes of this four-volume work, will present chronologically all of Jeffers' published work from 1920 to 1963. The present volume consists of poems published between 1920 and 1928, and includes some of his greatest and best-known poems? *Tamar*, *Roan Stallion*, *The Women at Point Sur*, and *Cawdor*?as well as a recently discovered long poem, "Home." There is also an Editorial Note and a General Introduction.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

The contemporary of Pound and Eliot, Jeffers conscientiously chose not to go the route of "modernism." This single decision determines not only the structure and themes of his poetry but how we read it. Both scientific and religious, Jeffers's vision is rooted in nature coupled with his antimodernist stance was the choice to flee the city for beautiful Carmel and Big Sur. Today the poetry stands isolated, at times grand, and somewhat forgotten. This first effort to publish the complete poems affords the reader not only the pleasure of Jeffers's engaging style and iconoclastic subjects but also a rich matrix for studying an alternative to what has now become the modernist tradition. Ivan Arguelles, Univ. of California, Berkeley, Lib.
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Review

"These five volumes, handsomely produced, do full justice to Jeffers's powerful work." (*Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*)

"Jeffers' material is uncompromising, yet perspicacious and notable. This collection is one worthwhile volume of five in a single comprehensive edition of his work." (*Journal of the West*)

From the Back Cover

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