

Mr Outside

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During a time of restricted movement, the narrator of *Mr Outside* visits his reclusive father Thomas who is packing up to move into a care home. As father and son grapple with the task, long-buried conflicts resurface. Thomas, a poet and former radical priest, slips between affection and fear, while the narrator struggles to find the words he's been holding back. Yet amidst confusion and grief, moments of humour and connection emerge, as both men discover new ways to understand each other and let go.

Told through a striking combination of text and image, Klaces' distilled novel explores the stories we tell about our lives, the limits of intimacy, and the fragile line between reality and delusion. Based on the life of his own father, *Mr Outside* is poignant, profound, and unexpectedly funny; a tender meditation on endings, the limits of understanding, and the act of letting go.

Mr Outside follows on from Klaces' acclaimed debut novel, *Fatherhood*. Where *Fatherhood* was focused on the beginning of a life, *Mr Outside* is interested in the end; where *Fatherhood* was a hybrid of poetry and prose, *Mr Outside* draws on images, situating itself in a lineage that includes Susan Sontag, John Berger, Javier Marias, WG Sebald. The novel's pared-back prose is inspired by the distilled intensity of Annie Ernaux's *A Woman's Story*, Elena Ferrante's *The Lost Daughter*, and Natasha Brown's *Assembly*.



Caleb Klaces is the author of the novel *Fatherhood* (Prototype, 2019), which won a Northern Writers Award and was longlisted for the Republic of Consciousness Prize, and the poetry collections *Away From Me* (Prototype, 2021) and *Bottled Air*, which won an Eric Gregory Award and the Melita Hume Prize. He grew up in Birmingham.

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PRAISE FOR *MR OUTSIDE*

'I can't remember the last time a book moved me to tears, but *Mr Outside* did so more than once. With each page awash in bittersweet detail, Klaces evokes the raw and distant intimacy between fathers and sons with tenderness and insight and captures the inevitable yet cataclysmic rupture of the loss of a parent as honestly and effectively as anything I've ever read. It's heartbreaking and beautiful and comforting all at once. I could not recommend it more highly.'

– Kevin Powers

'I was utterly absorbed by this riveting, wonderful book, and thought about little else during the days I read it. The prose is unsparing – clear yet enigmatic, clipped yet voluminous. Every page carries a startling moment or detail. By the end of it, you're left with a sense of the turbulence and bewildering beauty of a whole life. *Mr Outside* is a major achievement.'

– Martin MacInnes

PRAISE FOR *FATHERHOOD*

'A brilliant, charming, and weirdly alarming poem-novel about the time-bending strangeness of being a parent. I love Caleb Klaces' writing.'

– Max Porter

'This writing is fierce and gorgeous. It is an antidote to ennui, the opposite of despair. I have never read something so alive.'

– Katharine Kilalea

ABOUT PROTOTYPE

Founded in 2019, Prototype is a publisher of fiction, poetry, anthologies and interdisciplinary projects. With an emphasis on producing unique and beautiful books, we are committed to creating new possibilities in publishing and championing the work of both emerging and established voices in contemporary literature.

Recent prose titles include *The Seers* by Sulaiman Addonia, longlisted for the RSL Ondaatje Prize and Republic of Consciousness Prize, *Prairie, Dresses, Art, Other* by Danielle Dutton, longlisted for the Gordon Burn Prize, and *Lori & Joe* by Amy Arnold, shortlisted for the Goldsmiths Prize. Recent titles from House Sparrow Press, an imprint of Prototype, include a facsimile edition of Derek Jarman's only poetry collection, *A Finger in the Fishes Mouth*, which has long been unavailable.

Other recent poetry collections include *rock flight* by Hasib Hourani, a Poetry Book Society Recommendation and shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney First Collection Poetry Prize; a new edition of Sascha Aurora Akhtar's *The Grimoire of Grimalkin*, and Bhanu Kapil's *Incubation: a space for monsters*, in its first UK edition. Previously, we published *Journeys Across Breath*, the first volume of collected poems by Stephen Watts, and Lucy Mercer's debut collection *Emblem*, which was the Poetry Book Society's Summer Choice for 2022, and Lavinia Singer's collection *Artifice*.