

7 Little Words solution – Puzzle on page 20B

Puzzle 1

1. HOMECOMING 2. REPELLED 3. RECLOSABLE 4. MASCOT  
5. RETRACE 6. LOMBARDO 7. CUTER

Puzzle 2

1. COLORADANS 2. VERSATILE 3. CLASSY 4. PICKETERS  
5. BOTHERS 6. AISLEWAYS 7. ORATORS

Puzzle 3

1. BOLL 2. UNDERWRITERS 3. BELLE  
4. ALOOFNESS 5. MASSEURS 6. STAMOS 7. SEVENTIETH

Crossword solution – Puzzle on page 21B

D	E	D	N	A	S	E	N	O	L	T	A	S	S	E	N	E	R
V	M	G	I	N	E	S	E	T	O	N	B	L	E	T	V	A	O
G	N	I	D	D	K	L	N	O	S	A	S	I	S	V	A	T	
E	O	B	O	S	R	S	R	E	F	L	I	F	A	U	C	H	
			S	O	I	A	D	I	K	E	J	O	K	E	M	A	
E	M	V	L	A	G	F	O	O	R	R	E	R	V	A	R		
T	V	M	A	E	R	C	S	D	S	I	D	S	E	R	I	S	
			R	O	T	C	A	F	H	G	U	L	A	E	L	H	
E	T	C	A														
			N	E	M	A	H	C	A	D	A	S	E	O	T	C	
	N	V	A														
D	E	N	O	R	A	D	O	S	T	O	T	O	P	I	A		
E	N	E	B	E	S	E	I	S	E	B	E	G	B	E	S	I	
L	R	I	A	P	R	O	R	M	U	H	F	O	S	E	N	S	
L	P	A	L			S	D	B	A	R	D	S	I	N	O	P	
			S	A	N	S	A	D	A	M	E	M	A	D	A	S	
E			O	R	D	I	E	F	U	N	N	F	R	E	S	T	
O			A	G	E	R	T	I	R	E	S	E	N	T	I	R	
T			N	A	V	A	N	T	S	H	S	A	T	S	H	A	
A			R	I	C	A	N	A	U	T	U	M	N	A	L	A	
D			R	A	C	A			B	A	S	T	U	B	A		

BEAUMONT ANIMAL CARE

PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Clyde, a male black and white domestic house cat weighing about 12 pounds. Clyde came to the shelter on Christmas Eve 2017, where staff was told he had an owner. Sadly, the owner never came for Clyde. He is very sweet, loving and a little lazy. He loves attention and will let you know when he needs an ear rub. Clyde has been at the shelter too long and needs to be with a loving family or individual for companionship. Clyde is meowing for YOU! Adoption fee for cats is \$90, which includes vaccinations, spay or neuter, worming and flea treatment. Go fall in love with Clyde at Beaumont Animal Care! No. 32060



All animals are held at Beaumont Animal Services a minimum of 24 business hours before becoming available for adoption. Anyone interested in adopting an animal should fill out an adoption application at [www.beaumonttexas.gov](http://www.beaumonttexas.gov) or pick up one at 1884 Pine St. Any rescues that would like to pull an animal, call (409) 838-3304.

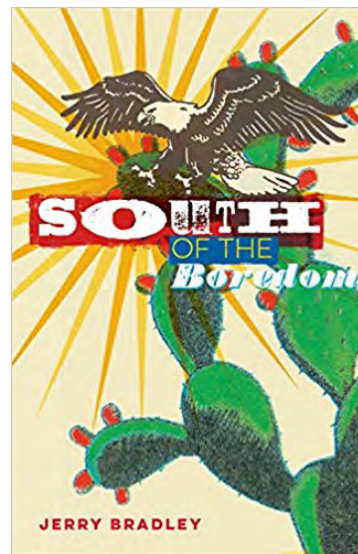
# ‘South of the Boredom’

Poetry collection by Lamar English professor Jerry Bradley

The holidays are over. As we settle into the humdrum of our daily lives again, perhaps you’re longing for something different, something exciting, some escape from the ennui. Jerry Bradley’s latest poetry collection, *South of the Boredom*, offers such an escape from the realities of life to what almost seems like a different world from our beloved Beaumont, south of the border to Mexico. On the surface, these poems revel in the exotic wonder of our southern neighbor and give readers a wide-eyed tourist’s perspective of the culture and landscape. Linger, though, and you’ll learn that there’s more to this journey than meets the eye.

Our first stop in our journey through Mexico is, of course, the border. Bradley ushers his readers to this space with his opening poem, “The Kentucky Club, Juarez,” and allows his readers to witness the birth of the country’s most famous drink, the margarita, born “just across the Santa Fe bridge / where Jack Dempsey stumbled out on all fours / where Marilyn celebrated her last divorce / where mescal still masks the thirst of desire.” We visit Zócolo, the central town square of Mexico City where “every September, El Presidente recites the Grito / and pronounces Mexico free again.” We’re whisked away on a train ride through the popular tourist destination of Copper Canyon to witness its majestic, natural beauty, the “ringtailed babasuris amid the branches of ironwood / and amapas,” “emerald hills,” and “pipe-organ cacti.” We spend a little time in “Boys’ Town, Ciudad Acuña” where women dispense “penny-candy besitos / to Texans in stenciled belts / and embroidered shirts.” We linger on the beach, complete with “a marina teeming with yachts,” “a thatched palapa,” and semi-naked dancers who “twirl / flaming chained batons.” The place seems like a veritable paradise upon first glance!

Bradley, though, is quick to



remind his readers of the dangers of idealism. After the highlighting the beauty of a trip to a rainforest aviary, the poet reflects that he just paid to see creatures “once free in the wild.” That trip to Boys’ Town leaves the speaker dissatisfied and with a “dead dove twisting” in the grill of his car. That train ride through Copper Canyon ends with a haunting image of a lynx on a fencepost “no longer in possession of its own

hide.” In that same Zócolo square, the poet reminds us of the horrors that happened there, too, the stark reality of striking teachers “beaten with metal pipes.” And even in that bar in Juarez, which might seem like a fun, historic hangout to grab an iconic drink becomes a place where “the jukebox / like the killing never wants to stop.” Under this poet’s sharp gaze, Mexico reveals a more complex and nuanced image, at once beautiful and dangerous, flourishing and fading, a utopia and dystopia all at once.

To paint a more holistic picture, the poet delves into Mexico’s rich history and mythology. In “A Mayan Valentine,” a story of jealousy between gods fuels the serenades of today’s young swains singing to their “amorcitas.” He recounts the tale of La Llorona, connecting it to the story of

Cortes and Malinche, “the conquistador’s mistress / who betrayed her tribe by loving their conqueror.” We meet Frida Kahlo, the celebrated muralist who painted “blood, skulls, even death itself” to contrast the “sunny image of imperialism she had stood against.” By exploring these moments in history, the poet also explores the complexities of present day Mexico, showing that the country has always been a place of nuance, contradiction, and wonder.

At the end of the book, I’m left with a simple, stark realization: Mexico, like any country, is made of both beauty and truth. And really, there is no such thing as an escape. Though we may be lured away from our lives for a moment by the outward beauty of a place, by beaches and lovely people, that age-old adage always rings true: wherever you go, there you are. Still, this journey is one worth taking, especially with an apt guide like Bradley at the helm who isn’t afraid to glance into the dark alleys, to go off the beaten path, and taste all the country offers its visitors, both the sweet and the bitter. As he says in his poem “Chapulines,” “I’m as brave as any starving Spaniard — there’s nothing a michelada won’t wash down.” That’s the kind of guy I’d like to travel with!

So, for a brief escape from the humdrum of life, head *South of the Boredom*. This intelligent, honest and crafted collection of poetry is just the quick trip to wake you from that slumber without ever having to leave your living room, get a passport, and buy a plane ticket. Though the land might be foreign and the scenes exotic to some of us here in Southeast Texas, you’ll find that the wisdom offered by this fun journey applies to the universal human experience.

*South of the Boredom* is published by Angelina River Press. The book is available on Amazon.com and at Barnes and Noble.

Lamar University Literary Press publishes literary fiction, poetry, and nonfiction right here in Beaumont.



Beaumont Book Beat

by Katherine Hoerth