



# **Bite Every Sorrow: Poems (Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets)**

*Barbara Ras*

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# Bite Every Sorrow: Poems (Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets)

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**Bite Every Sorrow: Poems (Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets) Barbara Ras**

"This is a splendid book, morally serious, poetically authentic, spiritually discerning." -- C. K. Williams, from his judge's citation for the 1997 Walt Whitman Award Barbara Ras, a poet exquisitely heedful of nuance both physical and visceral, cinches deserved renown with this prize-winning debut collection. *Bite Every Sorrow* invites the reader to embrace beauty, loss, outrage, and the world in all its particular heartbreaks and hilarities, because, as Ras asks, "What's life without the details?"

Her ability to tap the ordinary and draw forth profundity is brilliantly displayed in "You Can't Have It All:"

But you can have the fig tree and its fat leaves like clown handsgloved with green. You can have the touch of a single eleven-year-old finger on your cheek, waking you at one a.m. to say the hamster is back. You can have the purr of the cat and the soulful look of the black dog, the look that says, If I could I would bite every sorrow until it fled

Whether honoring a dead friend or reveling in the lustful music of insects, Ras's poems poke into unlikely nooks and invented crannies, uncovering questions that matter to everyone -- how to laugh, how to hope, how to love.

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