



# In Praise of the Unfinished: Selected Poems

*Julia Hartwig*

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## **In Praise of the Unfinished: Selected Poems** Julia Hartwig

Hailed by Czeslaw Milosz as “the grande dame of Polish poetry” and named “one of the foremost Polish poets of the twentieth century” by Ryszard Kapuscinski, Julia Hartwig has long been considered the gold standard of poetry in her native Poland. With this career-spanning collection, we finally have a book of her work in English.

The tragic story of the last century flows naturally through Hartwig’s poems. She evokes the husbands who returned silent from battle (“What woman was told about the hell at Monte Cassino?”) and asks, “Why didn’t I dance on the Champs-Élysées / when the crowd cheered the end of the war? . . . Why was I fated to be on the main street of Lublin / watching regiments with red stars enter the city.” But there is also a welcoming of new experience in her verse, a sense that life, finally, is too beautiful to condemn. She seeks a higher peace, urging us to hear other voices: “an ermine’s cry, moan of a dove, / complaint of an owl—that remind us / the hardship of solitude is measured out equally.”

Hartwig’s compassionate spirit in the face of destruction and suffering, her apparent need to live in the moment, make her poems monumental and deeply touching and the introduction of her work here long overdue.

### **Return to My Childhood Home**

Amid a dark silence of pines—the shouts of  
young birches calling each other.

Everything is as it was. Nothing is as it was.

Speak to me, Lord of the child. Speak,  
innocent terror!

To understand nothing. Each time in a different  
way, from the first cry to the last breath.

Yet happy moments come to me from the past,  
like bridesmaids carrying oil lamps.

*From the Hardcover edition.*



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#### **Aida Zambrana:**

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? May be reading a book is usually option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the reserve untitled In Praise of the Unfinished: Selected Poems can be good book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

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