## Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk: A Novel

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"Transporting...witty, poignant and sparkling."

-People (People Picks Book of the Week)

"Prescient and quick....A perfect fusing of subject and writer, idea and ideal."

-Chicago Tribune

"Extraordinary...hilarious...Elegantly written, Rooney creates a glorious paean to a distant literary life and time-and an unabashed celebration of human connections that bridge past and future.

-Publishers Weekly (starred and boxed)

"Rooney's delectably theatrical fictionalization is laced with strands of tart poetry and emulates the dark sparkle of Dorothy Parker, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Truman Capote. Effervescent with verve, wit, and heart, Rooney's nimble novel celebrates insouciance, creativity, chance, and valor."

-Booklist (starred review)

"In my reckless and undiscouraged youth," Lillian Boxfish writes, "I worked in a walnutpaneled office thirteen floors above West Thirty-Fifth Street..."

She took 1930s New York by storm, working her way up writing copy for R.H. Macy's to become the highest paid advertising woman in the country. It was a job that, she says, "in some ways saved my life, and in other ways ruined it."

Now it's the last night of 1984 and Lillian, 85 years old but just as sharp and savvy as ever, is on her way to a party. It's chilly enough out for her mink coat and Manhattan is grittier now-her son keeps warning her about a subway vigilante on the prowl-but the quick-tongued poetess has never been one to scare easily. On a walk that takes her over 10 miles around the city, she meets bartenders, bodega clerks, security guards, criminals, children, parents, and parents-to-be, while reviewing a life of excitement and adversity, passion and heartbreak, illuminating all the ways New York has changed-and has not.

A love letter to city life in all its guts and grandeur, Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk by Kathleen Rooney paints a portrait of a remarkable woman across the canvas of a changing America: from the Jazz Age to the onset of the AIDS epidemic; the Great Depression to the birth of hip-hop.

Lillian figures she might as well take her time. For now, after all, the night is still young.

## An Amazon Best Book of January 2017:

This is a novel about an 85 year-old woman who wends her way to a party. I may have lost you already, but Kathleen Rooney and her delightful Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk will not. Turns out, Ms. Boxfish is a fascinating woman who has led a fascinating life, the details of

which she teases out before bidding adieu to the year 1984. One of the most talented and successful ad women for R.H. Macy's in the 1930s (the character is based on real-life ad woman and author, Margaret Fishback), Ms. Boxfish was once the toast of New York. She reminisces about the time she asked her boss to pay her the same as her less accomplished male counterparts. Seeing as though that's a battle still being fought today, you can guess how that went, but this incident hints at the kind of woman our feisty flill neuse is. You will learn more about Lillian's life as a "Mad Woman," and the one she didn't anticipate as a wife and mother...Her story takes a dark turn or two as well, and you will root for her as she responds with her signature wit and mettle.

There are beloved works in the canon of great literature featuring famous walkers (James Joyce's Ulysses and Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway immediately come to mind). One of the joys in reading them is the motley cast of characters our heroes and heroines encounter along the way, and Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk is no exception. Whether it's a bartender, a bodega employee, or a group of thugs, Lillian confronts them with the same infectious curiosity, compassion, and pluck. It's a testament to Rooney's writing chops that you'll want to walk with Lillian as she ponders, all the while paying homage to New York in its gritty glory. --Erin Kodicek, The Amazon Book Review

KATHLEEN ROONEY is a founding editor of Rose Metal Press and a founding member of Poems While You Wait. She has been recognized as one of Newcity Lit's "Lit 50: Who Really Books in Chicago 2018." Her previous work includes poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, and has appeared in The New York Times Magazine, Allure, Salon, The Rumpus, The Nation, the New York Times Book Review, the Poetry Foundation website, and the Chicago Tribune. Kathleen was named "Best Novelist" by the Chicago Reader in 2017. She is married to the novelist Martin Seay.

## Other Books

Buildings Without Murders, Our future is increasingly blurry and Dan Gutstein and his work may well be part of it. -- Cathy Wagner, author of Of Course Dan Gutstein lives in the future and has returned from then to give you this book, now. --Matthew Salesses, author of The Hundred Year Flood A bookshelf without Dan Gutstein is like a building without murders--perfectly serviceable, but not as haunted as it could be. That's why you should probably get Buildings Without Murders and put it on your bookshelf. --Kathleen Rooney, author of Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk Gutstein thinks questions are the answer, in a format full of unpleasant surprises, but he's super into this randomization kind of thing. -- Terence author of Deed Buildings Without Murders is lightning verbiage and wit, violence, love, and mourning in a wild future haunted by the crackle and hope of the God-booths, that singularly touching Gutstein response (or not) to the mortal coil. --Patricia Saraffian Ward, author of Skinner Luce Dan Gutstein's last legitimate job was writing fortune cookie fortunes in a damp basement off Canal. A customer got one that said "You Could Be Eating Korean, (lucky number 43)," after which he began sleeping rough under the shrubbery. --Chris Whittey (Dan's former boss), Alan F. Rothschild Distinguished Chair of Art, Columbus State University When the Civil Illumination Authority of an overbuilt American city solicits bids for a lucrative contract, the ensuing competitive efforts of one multinational corporation eventually unleash a morbid act of violence--one that affects a number of lives orbiting each other, including feisty redhead, LaRousse. A young woman who charges ahead, provokes, and yields to tenderness, LaRousse negotiates the

intellectual and physical spaces between her stormy father. Wiry Strength, her activist romantic partner. Vermont Values, and her dopey street-kid chums, Docile and Pockets. The world of Buildings Without Murders subscribes, in part, to James Lovelock's "Gaia hypothesis," in that the earth is a living organism, and is trying to decipher how it might repair itself. Phenomena abound, including the ghost rockets, GPS pins, jazz holograms, and loose lightning. En route to turning eighteen, LaRousse encounters the beguiling phenomenon of the God Booth Project, and her trips to this novelty attraction reverse a lifelong assumption in life-changing fashion.

2 2 2 2 . Our future is increasingly blurry and Dan Gutstein and his work may well be part of it. --Cathy Wagner, author of Of Course Dan Gutstein lives in the future and has returned from then to give you this book, now."