

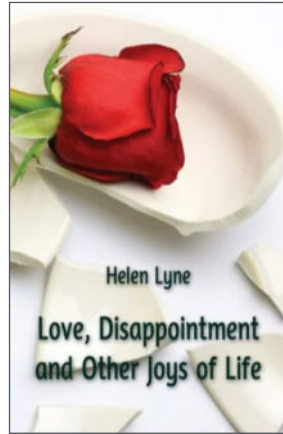
# Women's Ink!



Spring/Summer 2022

The Society of Women Writers NSW Inc.  
[www.womenwritersnsw.org](http://www.womenwritersnsw.org)

# REVIEWS



**Pip Griffin** is a Sydney poet. She has published three poetry collections and three verse novels, two of which have won awards. Her poems appear in journals and anthologies. Her latest poetry collection is *The Climb Back: poems for Ted* (Ginninderra Press, 2021).

## Love, Disappointment and Other Joys of Life

by Helen Lyne

### REVIEW BY PIP GRIFFIN

It is a pleasure to review Helen's book of thirty-one short stories, many of which have deservedly won awards. She is a performance poet who has taught French and English in Australian secondary schools and these experiences are reflected in her skilful, insightful and often humorous writing. A keen and compassionate observer of people and situations,

Helen gives us well-crafted stories of human relationships mostly focussed on women, often off beat, sometimes erotic, surprising and always satisfying. As a poet, I revelled in Helen's lyric style, use of metaphor and her many evocative passages.

Some of the standout stories for me are: 'Lemon Meringue Pie' with its portrait of a neglected little boy: His grey shorts are too short for him and his thighs are mottled with cold; 'Children's Hands', which uses very short sentences to add tension and atmosphere - we feel the narrator's fear; 'Goodbye Atlanta, GA', which delights with descriptions of the place she is leaving: The ceiling of my hotel room is weeping ... Southern diphthongs warmed in molasses flow into my ear; 'Small Man Big Man', which uses dialogue to build the story in an edgy account of bullying; 'Conversations Far and Near', the story of a teacher's intense relationship with her French student, keeps us guessing and 'Your Last Winter' is a very moving account of an elderly dying woman being taken surfing by her carer. Like all good storytellers, Helen seizes and holds our attention. Her final story, 'Noisy Neighbours', is a gem that will make you gasp, then laugh out loud!