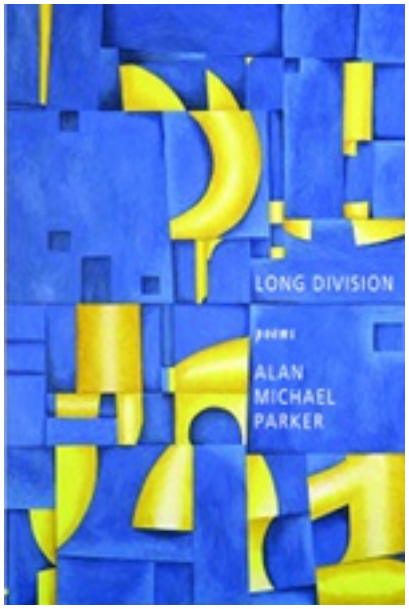
LONG DIVISION
poems
ALAN
MICHAEL
PARKER

Long Division by Alan Michael Parker

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"Alan Michael Parker possesses a mind completely unlike any poet at work in America today, finding in the clutter around us not just sources of sadness, wit, and playful irony—but also profound ambivalence about a world in which our past is not recoverable, in which the work of the mind upon the landscape is the true source of meaning, in which we all inhabit 'the arc of Story graphed upon the axes of Love and Death.' I have long considered Parker to be one of the most brilliant poets at work in America today. *Long Division*, his best book yet, confirms that."
—Kevin Prufer

"Alan Michael Parker, in style and in stance ('Sadness remains my politics,' he writes), demonstrates that wit and irony have much more to offer us than we've known. In one masterful poem after another composed with luminous attention to the poetic line, Parker conducts the long divisions toward reconciliation between contentment and the necessity of asking more from ourselves, each other, and the world. He assures us our redemption, but proves that it requires the cunning and exuberance only a poet of his talent can muster for the rest of us. I feel blessed by these poems in *Long Division*, the work of a poetic troubleshooter intent on spreading grace on everything before him."
—Khaled Mattawa

In his seventh poetry collection, Alan Michael Parker aims to surprise. Recombining lists, fables, and mathematical equations, *Long Division* is formally playful, wielding irony as a lever of political resistance. Here is a writer fascinated by comedy, by sadness, and by the unexpected ways that poetry makes both possible at once. When was the last time you laughed outloud reading poems? Parker's new work is truly funny, exposing the impossibility of realism in a world where imagination is more trustworthy than experience.

In addition to his five books of poems, Alan Michael Parker has published two novels and served as editor of the whimsical anthology, *The Imaginary Poets* (Tupelo, 2005). His poems have appeared in *The New Yorker, The American Poetry Review, Paris Review, The Best American Poetry 2011,* and elsewhere. He teaches writing and literature at Davidson College and in the Queens University low-residency MFA program. He lives in Davidson, North Carolina, with the artist Felicia van Bork.