

Work of a Reader

by Ann Bogle

A lot of new work has come out in the last week or so—I am enjoying it at a clip, in particular *UnlikelyStories 2.0: The Cross-Media Issue* and collaborations in *Sugar Mule*. Now broadsides and experimental chapbooks and *ars poetica*. Appreciating those in my office with its desktop is going well. Reading fiction in bed is not going well at all. I avoid the cozy room where physical books surround my bed in wait for me—books by fiction authors that I bought or checked out of the library—all due or recalled before I get to them.

In one of the greatest bookstore moments of my life, I bought the collected short stories by Chekhov (Ecco) and began with volume 1 (of 13). “The Darling” is how far I got, but I had already read it. That is followed by an essay by Tolstoy about women, called “Tolstoy’s Criticism on ‘The Darling’,” not to be missed! I ended up snubbing George Orwell (*Down and Out in Paris and London*) like neglecting to meet a train. I bought that book for its flowing brief sketches of lives of real people. Then it gets worse—this reading of books—I go to the café and can only read a minimalist there, one crouton at a time.

My three Emily Dickinsons are in storage, but the boxed biography is here. My Collected H.D. is at *his* house, a thousand miles away. Then I get E.D. and H.D. from the library and read and quote and I forget the other books. At the library, there are three areas: Children’s, Fiction, and Non-Fiction. Poetry is in Non-Fiction. I read for a week at the Academy of American Poets. I mean to but forget to get the Collected May Swenson from the library, but I read her online. Then I go back to *The Cross-Media Issue* and see how much there still is to see and try to buy an item at eBay for *Rain Taxi*, but the auction must be over. Then I read the Norman Mailer article at the kitchen table while eating beans.

