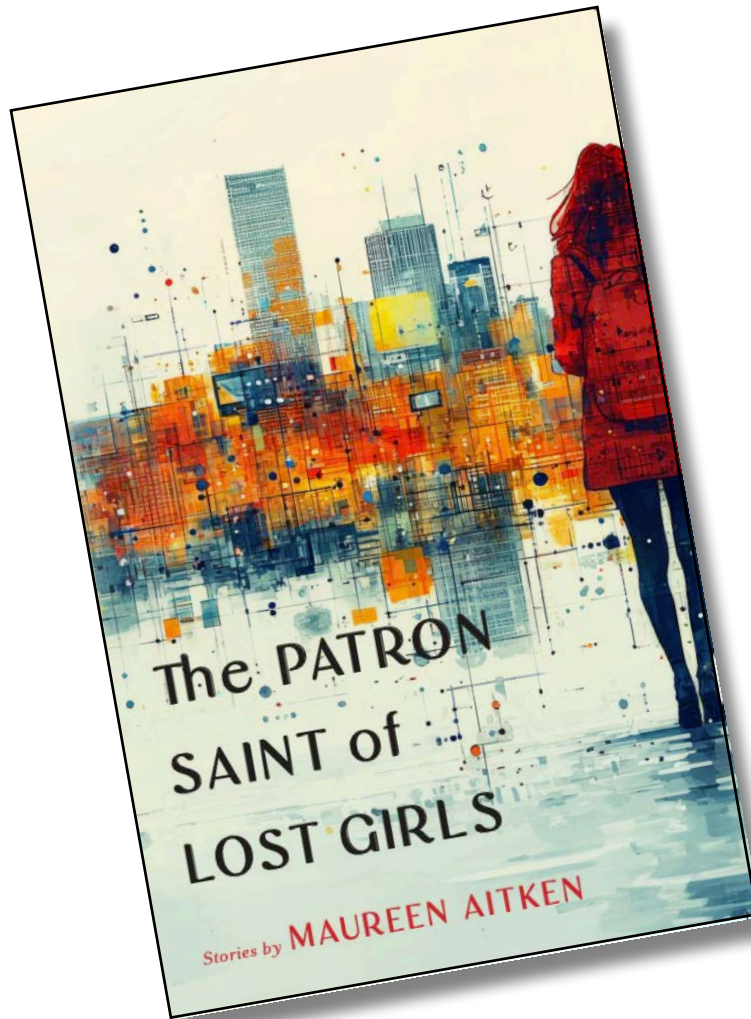


PRESS KIT



TITLE:	The Patron Saint of Lost Girls
AUTHOR:	Maureen Aitken
PUBLISHER:	Wayne State University Press
ISBN #:	9780814352465
PUBLISH DATE:	September 2025
WEBSITE:	https://wsupress.wayne.edu/9780814352465/

PRESS RELEASE

A Time of Upheaval in American History Captured Eloquently in University of Minnesota Writing Teacher's Short-story Collection

The Patron Saint of Lost Girls Set for Release in September 2025

(Minneapolis) – Presently, many cities across the United States are wrestling with what seems like an unending economic downturn, increasing violence and white exodus to the suburbs. This may seem like a new development, but it has happened before.

The 1970s and '80s were a particularly tough time for people who lived in Detroit, Michigan. Back then, they faced a sharp increase in gas prices, the moving of factory jobs to other countries, and corporate cost cutting that caused big problems for the city's auto industry. Thousands lost their jobs.

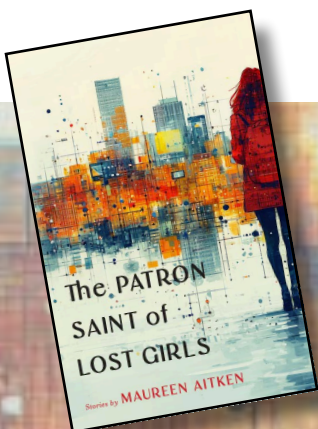
The departure of thousands of wage earners left behind a city suffering from an inadequate tax base, racism, too few jobs, and high unemployment. Among the sufferers, Mary, the main character in award-winning Minnesota author Maureen Aitken's short story collection, *The Patron Saint of Lost Girls*, which is set for release by Wayne State University Press in September 2025.

In this collection of linked stories, we follow Mary as she seeks to cope with and withstand hardship and confront her fears of exploitation, abuse and death. Along the way, she delves into the complex yet nurturing relationships with her family and friends who teach her to love better, live fuller and question power. *The Patron Saint of Lost Girls* presents an unflinching tale of life in the late twentieth-century postindustrial Midwest.

"During tough economic times, people need creativity and community to survive. Art and relationships help people know that they belong. They also help people question power and find inspiration," said Aitken.

The 14 stories weaved into the book were inspired by observations Aitken made while living in Detroit in the 1970s and '80s.

Learn more about Maureen Aitken's work on her author website: MaureenAitken.com. A presale page for the book is live on the publisher's website: Wsupress.wayne.edu/9780814352465/



The PATRON SAINT of LOST GIRLS

Stories by **MAUREEN AITKEN**

Press Release
RMA Publicity

TESTIMONIALS

"Overall, the author delivers these stories with poetic grace, resulting in a book that will linger in the reader's mind long after the final page. A moving work that demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the human condition."

Kirkus Starred Review

"Metaphors, dialogue, playful cynicism, and suspense spur plots, characters, and relationships toward their unexpected (but, in hindsight, inevitable) conclusions."

Linda Thorlakson, Foreword Starred Review

"A provocative novel crackling with adversity, danger, courage, survival and transcendence."

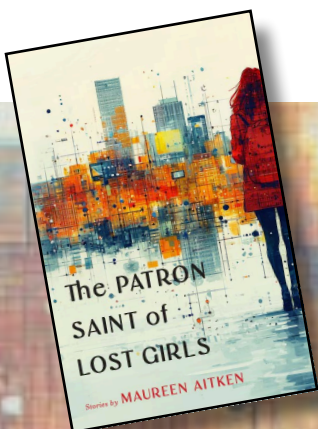
Valerie Miner, author of The Low Road and Traveling with Spirits

"Maureen Aitken has a keen eye for piercing detail and the stamina to render relationships in all their messiness, in all their glorious complication. These fourteen beautifully crafted stories of art, lust, love and family vacations will delight your ear and open your heart."

Pam Houston, author of Contents May Have Shifted

"In this heartbreaking and exquisite collection of linked stories, Maureen Aitken reveals the numinous beauty in ordinary lives...With uncommon grace and wit, Aitken vividly evokes Detroit, the industrial Midwest, and a nation at a moment of transformation and trial, in which lives are ultimately redeemed by small acts, enduring love, and language."

E.J. Levy, author of Love, In Theory and Amazons



The PATRON SAINT of LOST GIRLS

Stories by **MAUREEN AITKEN**

Testimonials
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maureen Aitken of Minneapolis was born into a family of writers. Her grandmother was a reporter for the Grosse Pointe News; her great grandfather was editor of the now defunct Detroit Times, both papers in Michigan.

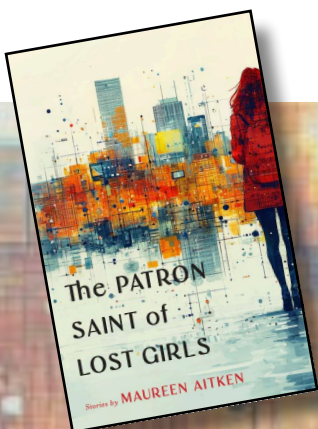
After graduating from Wayne State University in Detroit, Mich., with degrees in English and Journalism, she too pursued a journalism career, working first for a newspaper in Jackson, Michigan, then moving on to Kalamazoo, Michigan. The next stop on her writing journey was at the University of Minnesota where she earned an MFA degree in creative writing, then transitioned to a career in teaching.



She is also an accomplished author. Maureen's short-story collection, *The Patron Saint of Lost Girls*, received a Kirkus star, the Nilsen Prize, and the Foreword Review INDIE Gold Prize for General Fiction. It will be reissued in September 2025 by Wayne State University Press.

Her stories have earned a Minnesota State Arts Board's Artist Initiative Grant, a Loft Mentor Award, an award from Ireland's Fish Short Story Prize, and two Pushcart Prize nominations. The book was a finalist in the Minnesota Book Awards. Her stories have been published widely in journals such as *Prairie Schooner* and *New Letters*.

Most recently, she was a finalist for *The Missouri Review*'s Perkoff Prize and will be published there. She is an award-winning writing instructor who teaches at the University of Minnesota and Hamline University. She also regularly teaches writing workshops in the literary community.



The PATRON SAINT of LOST GIRLS

Stories by **MAUREEN AITKEN**

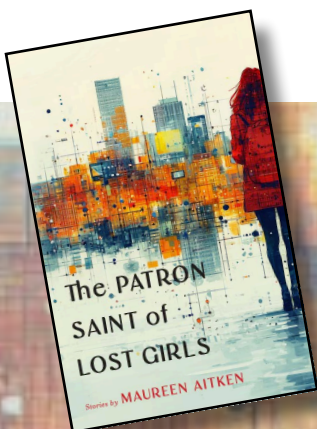
About the Author
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SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the stories in *The Patron Saint of Lost Girls* about?
- 2) Why is creativity so important during tough economic times?
- 3) What was your inspiration for short story collection?
- 4) Your stories are set in the past, but they seem very current. With America on the cusp of another recession, what do you hope readers will learn from your characters' experiences?
- 5) I understand this book was originally published in 2018 and Wayne State University Press decided to reissue it. What does it mean to be published by Wayne State University Press?
- 6) What will you be working on next?

*EDITOR'S NOTE: To request a review copy of *The Patron Saint of Lost Girls*, or to arrange an interview with author Maureen Aitken, please contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, at 952-240-2513 or rachel@rmapublicity.com.*

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The PATRON SAINT of LOST GIRLS

Stories by **MAUREEN AITKEN**

Suggested Questions
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