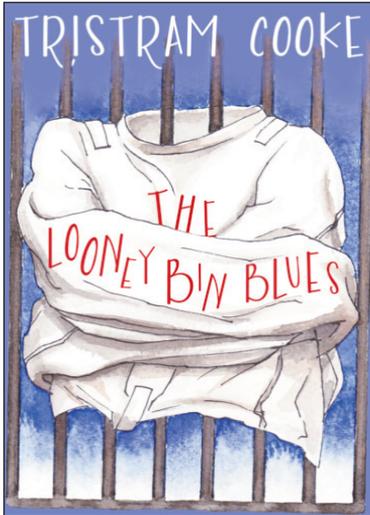




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AN ALTERNATIVE TAKE ON MENTAL ILLNESS...

The Looney Bin Blues takes
Tristram Cooke's poetry in
a different direction

A RECIPE FOR RIOTS

Riots in the inner city

Are the Tory recipe.

They call 'security, stability and opportunity',

All the privilege of exclusivity.

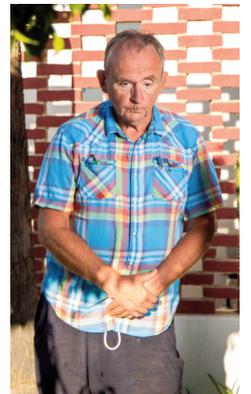
Tristram Cooke's fourth collection of poetry, *The Looney Bin Blues*, was inspired by both his current country of residence, Mexico, and his previous hometown of Watford in England. "I lived in Watford for 34 years," explains Tristram. "I was very happy there but I am even happier in Mexico in retirement! However, whilst both places formed my jumping-off point for *The Looney Bin Blues*, it also has wider Latin American and UK influence."

The collection covers a broad range of subject areas and themes, from the forming of Mexico's Constitution after its 1917 Revolution, to Cooke's take on secularism, to a tribute to his former place of study, Thames Valley University, and a touching ode to his partner, Maricruz, and her two sons.

It also takes a controversial attitude to prejudice and discrimination against mental illness, citing examples of great figures in history who were also mentally ill, such as the poet William Blake and the singer Amy Winehouse.

"I believe that calling the attitudes towards mental health 'stigma' is too gentle," explains Tristram. "It should be called prejudice. I would like my poetry to encourage people to take a step back and really examine the way in which people affected by mental illness are treated."

Tristram Cooke enjoyed a successful career as a lecturer. He has previously published three other collections of poetry: *Staggering Through*, *Welcome to the Third World* and *The Lanes Also Remember* (all Matador, 2016). He currently lives in Mexico.



PUBLICATION DATE 28TH AUGUST 2016

ISBN: 9781785892271

PRICE: £8.99

PRESS PACK

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