



MEMOIR
VAGABONDAGE

Beth Spencer, UWA Publishing, \$25
Reviewer: Susan Johnson



We've all heard of grey nomads. But there's another kind of nomad, a more permanent wandering sort, adrift from convention.

The year Beth Spencer turned 50 - unmarried, childless, no longer able to afford a house - she bought a "cubby house on wheels" (aka a campervan) aiming to explore not only the idea of home but The Big Questions: love, family, the whole catastrophe.

Styled as a "verse memoir", this slim volume displays Spencer's talent for catching moments in

time and transforming them. A passing feeling, a wash of joy or pain, "in service to freedom", Spencer's poems reveal the secret at the heart of us: despite money, marriages, houses, the accumulation of "stuff", all of us pass out of this life unadorned. Spencer trains her writing eye on all the moments between here and there: "I am a whisper of butterflies," she writes, reminding every one of us that we too are just passing through.

Verdict: Dreamy.