

## Collected, Standing the Test of Time

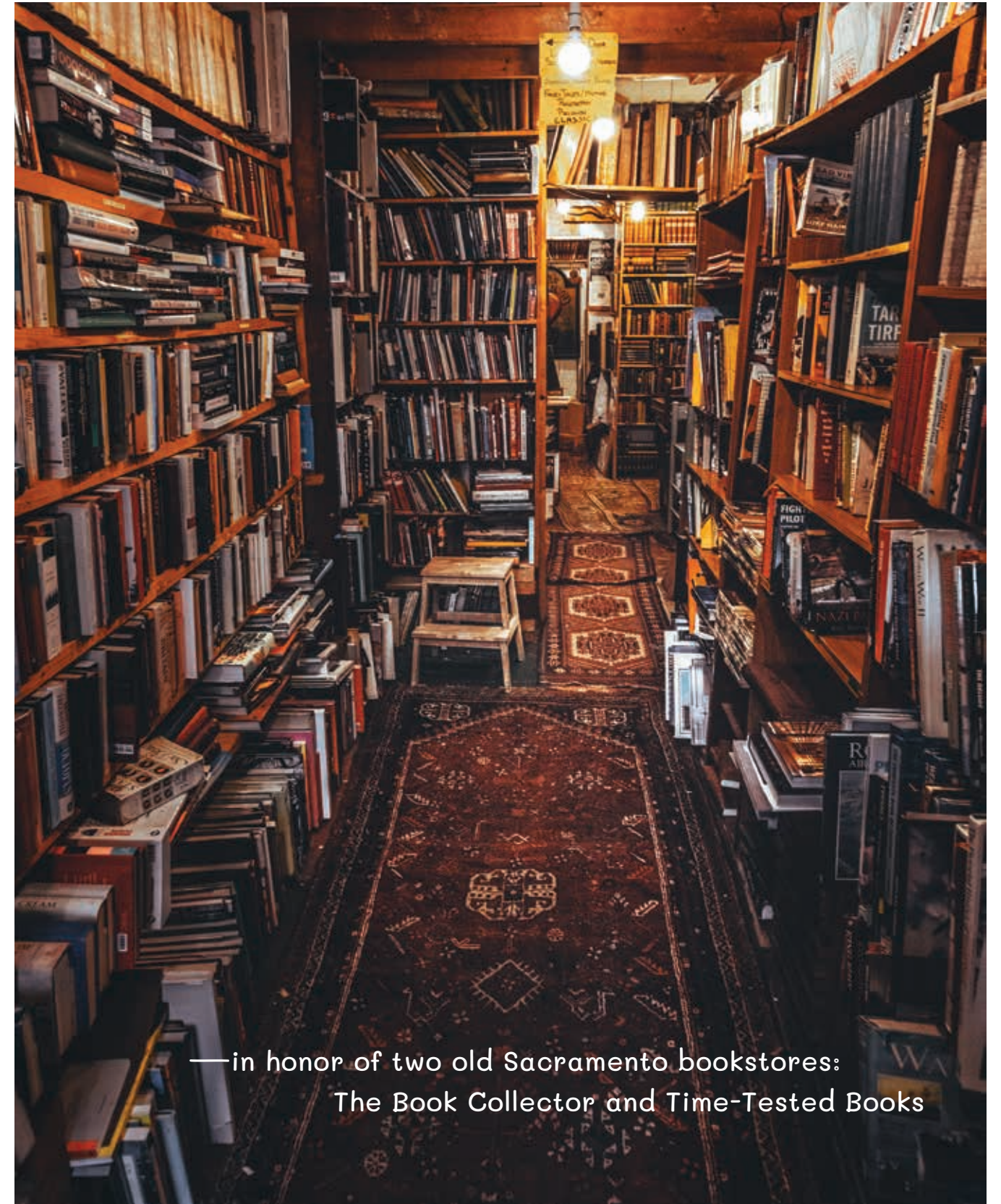
by Shawn Aveningo-Sanders

This is the place  
where novels come to rest;  
where poetry can mingle  
with how-to manuals; and  
where business journals can swap  
tales with Aesop while Grimm  
laughs at the irony, knowing  
very well who ended up happy  
after all.

This is the place  
where a bearded man, cap  
askew with plaid cardigan,  
slumps sleepy-eyed over  
his ledger, cup of chamomile  
cooled by a blustery breeze  
carelessly let in like an alley cat.

This is the place  
where a girl like me can  
lose track of time, remain  
unnoticed, unapproached,  
free to ramble the rows, shelves  
stacked high with stories, find  
rhyme with no reason, and perch  
on a worn wooden stool.

This is the place  
where there exists no cappuccino  
machines or laptop computers,  
no alphabetized apothecary-style  
drawers, or markers on endcaps,  
labeling fiction from science from  
philosophy, where judgment isn't  
for sale, and truth  
isn't already bookmarked for me.



—in honor of two old Sacramento bookstores:  
The Book Collector and Time-Tested Books