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Life on MarsPoemsGraywolf Press

Considers the nature of change, the qualities of the divine, and the origins of contemporary civilization, citing how divergent paths stemming from specific historical events subsequently converged in the modern world.

A landmark anthology envisioned by Tracy K. Smith, 22nd Poet Laureate of the United States American Journal presents fifty contemporary poems that explore and celebrate our country and our lives. 22nd Poet Laureate of the United States and Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy K. Smith has gathered a remarkable chorus of voices that ring up and down the registers of American poetry. In the elegant arrangement of this anthology, we hear stories from rural communities and urban centers, laments of loss in war and in grief, experiences of immigrants, outcries at injustices, and poems that honor elders, evoke history, and praise our efforts to see and understand one another. Taking its title from a poem by Robert Hayden, the first African American appointed as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, American Journal investigates our time with curiosity, wonder, and compassion. Among the fifty poets included are: Jericho Brown, Natalie Diaz, Matthew Dickman, Mark Doty, Ross Gay, Aracelis Girmay, Joy Harjo, Terrance Hayes, Cathy Park Hong, Marie Howe, Major Jackson, Ilya Kaminsky, Robin Coste Lewis, Ada Limón, Layli Long Soldier, Erika L. Sánchez, Solmaz Sharif, Danez Smith, Susan Stewart, Mary Szybist, Natasha Trethewey, Brian Turner, Charles Wright, and Kevin Young.

Poems by RichardFontinha

Even the men in black armor, the ones. Jangling handcuffs and keys, what else. Are they so buffered against, if not love's blade. Sizing up the heart's familiar meat? In Wade in the Water, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Tracy K. Smith's signature voice - inquisitive, lyrical and wry - turns over what it means to be a citizen, a mother and an artist in a culture arbitrated by wealth, men and violence. The various connotations of the title, taken from a spiritual once sung on the Underground Railroad which smuggled slaves to safety in 19th-century America, resurface throughout the book, binding past and present together. Collaged voices and documents recreate both the correspondence between slave owners and the letters sent home by African Americans enlisted in the US Civil War. Survivors' reports attest to the experiences of recent immigrants and refugees. Accounts of near-death experiences intertwine with the modern-day fallout of a corporation's illegal pollution of a major river and the surrounding land; and, in a series of beautiful lyrical pieces, the poet's everyday world and the growth and flourishing of her daughter are observed with a tender and witty eye. Marrying the contemporary and the historical to a sense of the transcendent, haunted and holy, this is a luminous book by one of America's essential poets.

'A poet of extraordinary range and ambition . . . convincing in both the grand gesture and the reverent contemplation of a humble plate of eggs' The New York Times US Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith has gathered this selection spanning her entire remarkable career. From the private experience of desire to the devastations of political strife, these poems enlarge our vocabulary for what it means to live, struggle, grieve and love. 'Smith's poetry is an awakening itself' Vogue 'Deftly, Tracy K. Smith, the reigning poet laureate of the United States, illuminates America's generational wounds' New York Magazine 'Smith is a storyteller who loves to explore how the body can respond to a lover, to family, and to history' Hilton Als, New Yorker

A selection of poems by the novelist, poet, and essayist deal with the approaching end of the century and the pleasures and problems of modern life

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