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Pemmican Eaters, The



THE PEMMICAN EATERS
POEMS
MARILYN DUMONT



Synopsis

A picture of the Riel Resistance from one of Canada's preeminent Métis poets. With a title derived from John A. Macdonald's moniker for the Métis, *The Pemmican Eaters* explores Marilyn Dumont's sense of history as the dynamic present. Combining free verse and metered poems, her latest collection aims to recreate a palpable sense of the Riel Resistance period and evoke the geographical, linguistic/cultural, and political situation of Batoche during this time through the eyes of those who experienced the battles, as well as through the eyes of Gabriel and Madeleine Dumont and Louis Riel. Included in this collection are poems about the bison, seed beadwork, and the Red River Cart, and some poems employ elements of the Michif language, which, along with French and Cree, was spoken by Dumont's ancestors. In Dumont's *The Pemmican Eaters*, a multiplicity of identities is a strengthening rather than a weakening or diluting force in culture.

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Customer Reviews

I don't often start a review by saying that a book reminded me of something else, but this gorgeous book of poetry was accompanied by a haunting song that I heard sung live several years ago. The

Wailin Jennys introduced a song that they had recently written called "Starlight." The women explained that, in their native province, scandal had broken when it had been revealed that police were picking up First Peoples' women late at night, and leaving them to die in the cold miles from home. The words of Marilyn Dumont's *THE PEMMICAN EATERS* feel like the pull of the bow across the string of the fiddle, the high notes hit by a woman in childbirth, the clutch at one's heart when one hears bad news. The words are gorgeous as the matters they call to mind are hard to think with, hard to let in; for me, I needed the melody of someone else's song so that I could try to translate how Dumont's words made me feel. Rather than quote from a poem out of context, even though the words are capable of standing on their own, I will suggest that you purchase this book and support the work of this artist.

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