



News from

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## Bristol Bay and Other Poems

by

Gary Lemons

Bristol Bay is the easternmost part of the Bering Sea and the site of the largest Salmon run in the world. It is also home to some of the highest tides and roughest water on the planet. In winter, ice storms freeze the riggings of fishing boats and the added weight of the ice, if not chipped off and thrown overboard, is sufficient to sink all but the largest of boats. The working conditions are brutal and the Bay itself as unforgiving as it is lovely. If it were a town, its name would be Deadwood or Tombstone, a place where life is measured in sunrises, not years.

The poems in the book are thematically aligned with the title poem in that they share a willingness to explore the potentially fatal, often unknown body of the individual. Homelessness, war, the blue collar work ethic, the love of all things opposed by the hatred of one thing—mothers and fathers—all of these become touchstones through which greater awareness may be experienced as a spiritual participation in building and sustaining human communities.

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*Bristol Bay and Other Poems*

Poetry by Gary Lemons

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96 pages

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Gary Lemons is a man who has worked most of his life with his hands. His discovery is that the act of writing poetry is little different than the act of building any structure. In the same way farmers contour a field in their imagination as they shape it with implements, Lemons explains, so do poets create with the mind and hand in harness. Lemons spent two years at the Undergraduate Poetry Workshop at the University of Iowa, studying poetry with Donald Justice, Norman Dubie, and former Poet Laureate Marvin Bell. Here he learned the suitable lessons that would later serve as foundation for insights wrangled from experience. He spent six years on the Assiniboine reservation in Wolf Point, Montana and is an honorary member of the Assiniboine tribe.

### Praise for *Bristol Bay*

Gary Lemon's new collection of poems, *Bristol Bay*, is a brilliant coming together of formal experience of lyric poetry and all the surprising voices that have scored his work over the years. Often my sense of this poetry is that it fearlessly goes out to meet the previously unattempted—that strange telegraphing that has spooked this nation's verse since Emily Dickinson.

—Norman Dubie