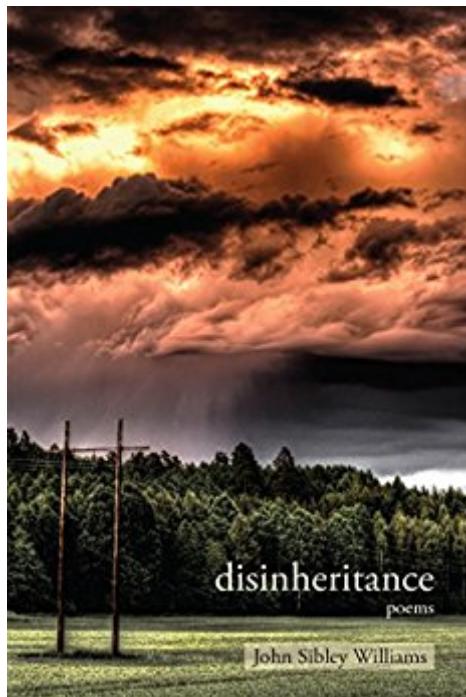


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Disinheritance: Poems



Synopsis

A lyrical, philosophical, and tender exploration of the various voices of grief, including those of the broken, the healing, the son-become-father, and the dead, Disinheritance acknowledges loss while celebrating the uncertainty of a world in constant revision. From the concrete consequences of each human gesture to soulful interrogations into "this amalgam of real / and fabled light," these poems inhabit an unsteady betweenness, where ghosts can be more real than the flesh and blood of one's own hands.

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Customer Reviews

These poems are lyrically exquisite, touching the truest, most mysterious depths of human emotion. The deft touch Williams has with words -- which are powerful in their simplicity -- belies what must have been a slow, thoughtful act of writing. There is an artful use of metaphor in dealing with loss, and the search for meaningfulness in this world. Beautiful.

WOW. This is the second collection of poems that I've read by John Sibley Williams and, once again, I'm blown away by the beauty and depth of his work! This collection is amazing, emotional and

so incredibly well written! I highly recommend this book to anyone who is looking for some great poetry that makes you feel and think and leaves you in awe!!

John Sibley Williams' *DISINHERITANCE* is a startling and profoundly original poetry collection. The poems seem almost choreographed rather than written. The poet's use of long, energetic sentences combined with others that are short and terse; his exquisite sense for where to break lines, where to indent and how much; even his choices of where to start and end stanzas contribute to a light, airy, bold, ballet-like feel throughout the writing. The energy produced by this style contrasts sharply with the subject matter. This may be the most consistently and deeply mournful poetry collection I have read. The grief is almost paralyzing. Only a very gifted poet would be able to face such feelings and speak of them beautifully. Losing a mother to death is a recurrent theme, but other losses pervade this book too, including those of infants who have died before birth. In several poems, a dead boy does the speaking. There is also a yearning for faith in the divine, or at least in finding some meaningful reason to go on living in the relentless shadow of death. This yearning is coupled with the observation that faith can lead to a living death: we see a grandmother's eyes "hollowed by belief," a religious procession where "The flower's remedy is the same/ as the flower's poison." Still, some poems end with a note of optimism, such as "what sustains/ is no longer the same blood that is in me, but/ my veins can taste it/ how we still know it as song" and "our children do not listen/ and may finally/ save us." The narrator, despite near hopelessness, remains ready to welcome hope onto the stage, hope being the more powerful dancer. This is unusually sure-footed work. I look forward to more from this poet.

This deeply impactful and haunting full-length collection from poet John Sibley Williams is an extended and lyrical meditation on mortality and grief, a journey through the à œdeep unreturnable winter.â • The poems included here all have the flavor of à œSomething like prayer/but without the certainty.â • John has a real talent for inviting readers into the poetic/linguistic spaces he creates so that (despite the very personal place from which these poems arise) they do not read as obscure private mythologies or unfiltered emotional outbursts. All of us have (or will have) experienced loss and moments of despair and in those times, many turn to poetry to put into words that which is unspeakable in prose. Williams takes us gently by the elbow and walks us through his imagistic landscape where faith à œhas forever been rendered/a shallow cup/ inches from our lips.â • Yet there is a chastened hope in these poems as well, an affirmation of the balm of art to sanctify memory and experience. There are no easy or flippant answers to grief in these poems. But there is

an honest, clear-eyed swimming upstream à œtoward the temporary holiness of knowing.â • Williams never tells us WHAT to believe. He is the opposite of a didactic poet. Instead, he SHOWS us through his artful words a multitude of pictures that help us feel and imagine what he has felt and imagined. This is a book of poems that truly invites rereading because its depths are almost as inexhaustible as the rivers and ghosts that run through it.

This group of poems will go deep to your heart. You will keep thinking of them long after you've finished the collection. All of us occasionally think of how long will you or your loved ones live and when they finally go to rest, the hurt and sadness you feel in the pit of your stomach and your heart goes cold. Often times a poem or so will ease some of that pain so that it's not quite so hard, at least for a moment or two. You find no solutions to your grief in poetry but are there any real solutions? Just a temporary fix! You can sometimes look into the solace of family, but too often, family isn't or can't be there. This group of poems will give you vivid images that you can lose yourself in, at least temporarily. I felt that some of the poems were extremely dark but then being "disinherited" from your loved ones is dark. Loss is hard for everyone, just more so for some. For some it's unbearable and through these poems your heart will bleed, your eyes will cry, you will have vivid images and most of all, you will THINK! I received a complimentary copy of this book from the author, and PUYB in exchange for my unbiased and honest review.

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