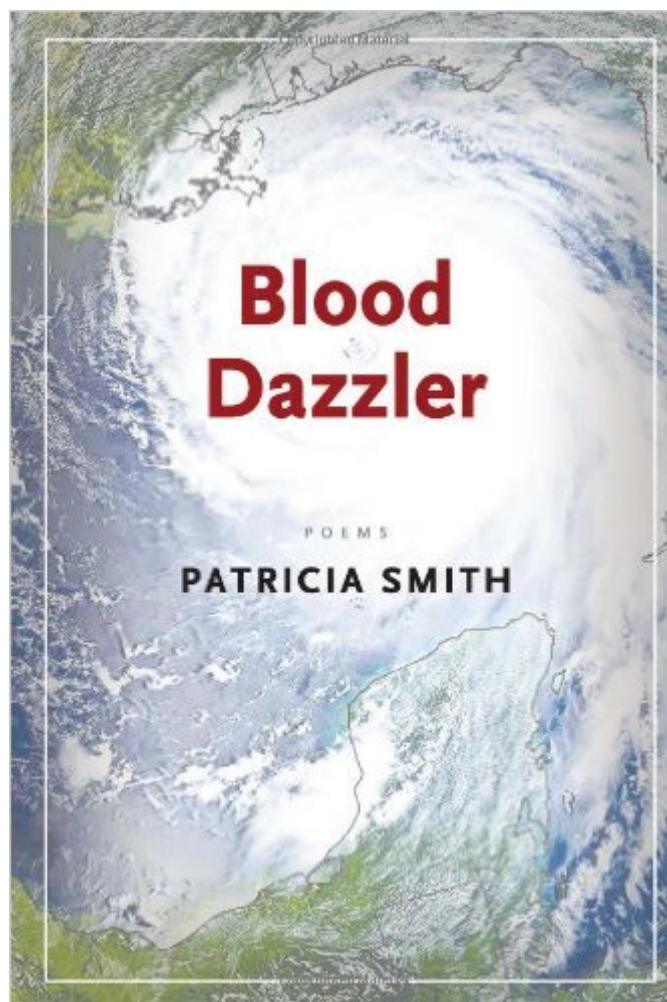


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Blood Dazzler



Synopsis

In minute-by-minute detail, Patricia Smith tracks Hurricane Katrina as it transforms into a full-blown mistress of destruction. From August 23, 2005, the day Tropical Depression Twelve developed, through August 28 when it became a Category Five storm with its â œscarlet glare fixed on the trembling crescent,â • to the heartbreaking aftermath, these poems evoke the horror that unfolded in New Orleans as America watched it on television. Assuming the voices of flailing politicians, the dying, their survivors, and the voice of the hurricane itself, Smith follows the woefully inadequate relief effort and stands witness to families held captive on rooftops and in the Superdome. She gives voice to the thirty-four nursing home residents who drowned in St. Bernard Parish and recalls the day after their deaths when George W. Bush accompanied country singer Mark Willis on guitar: The cowboy grins through the terrible din, *** And in the Ninth, a choking woman wails Look like this country done left us for dead. An unforgettable reminder that poetry can still be â œnews that stays news,â • Blood Dazzler is a necessary step toward national healing. Patricia Smith is the author of four previous collections of poetry, including Teahouse of the Almighty, winner of the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award and the Paterson Poetry Prize. A record-setting, national poetry slam champion, she was featured in the film Slamnation, on the HBO series Def Poetry Jam, and is a frequent contributor to Harriet, the Poetry Foundationâ s blog. Visit her website at www.wordwoman.ws.

Book Information

Paperback: 90 pages

Publisher: Coffee House Press (September 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 156689218X

ISBN-13: 978-1566892186

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.3 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #75,149 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Atmospheric Sciences #296 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > United States #15442 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > United States

Customer Reviews

I'll start this review with a little background: I majored in creative writing in college with a focus on poetry. Of those four years of classes, I read (both for class and on my own) around 100 poetry

books. Thanks to Good Reads, I can tell you that since 2010 I've read 436 books. I very rarely re-read books, believing there are too many written to continue with the same, so of those 436 I've re-read a total of 6 (and 5 of those were part of a series I was familiarizing myself with again). Taking that into account, Blood Dazzler is the #1 poetry book I remember from college and I have read it four times. I could stop this review here and let those numbers speak for her work themselves, but I think you want more than that. Blood Dazzler is a work of art in a rare and naked form. It's a story of Hurricane Katrina, beginning at the time she was named a tropical depression and taking the reader on a journey through the force and eye of the storm to the aftermath. There are so many different points of view and all of them are incredible, though my favorites are ones from the POV of Hurricane Katrina. Those poems are so strong and unique, but written as if Smith knew the hurricane personally, as if Smith was Katrina's conscious and was the only one able to put in words what Katrina thought as she laid waste to New Orleans. The other POV that stayed with me was Luther B, the dog left behind, and it was heartbreaking to read his thoughts of the storm as he stayed alone and trapped by a chain to a tree as the wind howled and rain beat him like God's own angry fists. Even just having these original ideas would have been enough for me, but Smith is amazing with her writing and each line written is perfection.

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