



## Skin Like Mine

*Garry Gottfriedson*

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## **Skin Like Mine** Garry Gottfriedson

Poetry. Native American Studies. SKIN LIKE MINE presents a suite of poems that peel away the skin of contemporary first nations society to reveal an inside view of individual experience. Today's youth, Gottfriedson says, are "afraid of themselves." He finds that both individuals and bands end in "tangles," that they write "nonsense words in the sand" or exploit images painted on rocks, those "the postmodern Indian calls / visual poetic expression." As the collection continues, however, his love for the land emerges. He draws attention to the rape of the natural environment through clear-cut logging. He speaks of the damage caused by the pine beetle, of "forests being / eaten from the inside out." And here it is that Gottfriedson introduces the mysterious Horsechild, who is to prepare the drying racks for the returning salmon "so that beneath your skin / the mountains will be forever abundant": a prayer for us to protect the migrating salmon with their multi-year cycles, to protect the bears and eagles that feast upon them, so as to assure that the transformations will continue, that there will be abundance for both humans and the earth itself.

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