

Reflections

Kathleen James a.k.a “Strong”
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A first reading of this collection leaves an impression of strength, pride of heritage and a knowledge of how deeply Black history has been absorbed by the author. These poems grip the reader, bringing a depth of feeling, empathy, sympathy, and, for this white reader, a sense of shame.

Reflections is an extremely readable poetic history of those who made great contributions to Canada over the years – explorers, inventors, writers, soldiers, farmers, railroad workers, domestics, an endless list!

As one re-reads many of the poems, the struggles that have been endured shine forth. Documentation of events seen from the perspective of those who were in the thick of them shows the lack of concern by those in charge or in office, and the utter disregard for this segment of our fellow man.

The author has included personal feeling as well. She has let us see into her inner feelings, thoughts on love, caring, grief and aspirations. The hope she maintains for her people is steadfast and obvious. Along with all of these things, James gives thanks for the blessings she has in her life and the abilities she has been granted. Extremely learned, she continues to use her knowledge to further Black History to not only to educate others, but to make the present generation fully aware of the great efforts made by those who have gone before, of the obstacles still existing which must be overcome so that Blacks may take their rightful place in our social structure.



Bonna Rouse