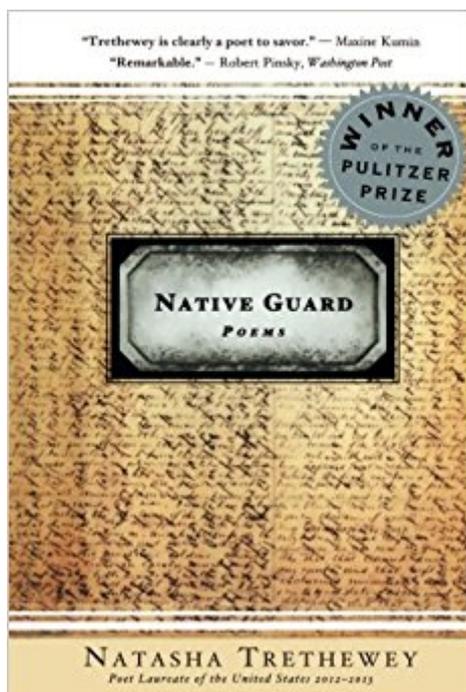


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Native Guard: Poems



Synopsis

Through elegiac verse that honors her mother and tells of her own fraught childhood, Natasha Trethewey confronts the racial legacy of her native Deep South -- where one of the first black regiments, the Louisiana Native Guards, was called into service during the Civil War. Trethewey's resonant and beguiling collection is a haunting conversation between personal experience and national history.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (57 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Native Guard by Natasha Trethewey is filled with poems about American History and Natasha Trethewey's personal history. I asked myself this question. Is it possible to separate myself from history larger than life or is it a part of my smaller world? Ms. Trethewey gives a quote spoken by Frederick Douglass. "If this war is to be forgotten, I ask in the name of all things sacred what shall men remember?" I think my question has been answered by an ancestor who is still alive in my soul every time I read The Narrative of Frederick Douglass. Other poems in the book seem to be weaved of red silk ribbon. So that in this landscape of poetry I will not lose my way. These poems are braids of love and hate, beauty and ugliness. These words are woven as tightly as a rag rug of different textures and shape. I did not count the number of times Natasha Trethewey wrote about photographs. She remembers the Civil war by looking at a picture. "Some send photographs - a likeness in case/ the body can't return." Here is another piece of American History in a photograph. "From the arch, / from every corner of the photograph, flags wave down, and great bales of cotton rise up from the ground./ I wonder if Natasha Trethewey might have used a photograph as another

name for memory. Our mental memories are never snatched from our hands by another person. These memories can not become torn up by a jealous man or woman. I have heard when death approaches our past, the photos in our mind, moments we lived each day become more distinct than any present time. I like knowing my past will come to revisit me again during those last hours on earth before death proves itself the winner of my spirit. "Death stops the body's work; the soul's a journeyman.

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