

Drowning in Fire (Sun Tracks)

By Craig S. Womack

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Josh Henneha has always been a traveler, drowning in dreams, burning with desires.

As a young boy growing up within the Muskogee Creek Nation in rural Oklahoma, Josh experiences a yearning for something he cannot tame. Quiet and skinny and shy, he feels out of place, at once inflamed and ashamed by his attraction to other boys. Driven by a need to understand himself and his history, Josh struggles to reconcile the conflicting voices he hears—from the messages of sin and scorn of the non-Indian Christian churches his parents attend in order to assimilate, to the powerful stories of his older Creek relatives, which have been the center of his upbringing, memory, and ongoing experience.

In his fevered and passionate dreams, Josh catches a glimpse of something that makes the Muskogee Creek world come alive. Lifted by his great-aunt Lucille's tales of her own wild girlhood, Josh learns to fly back through time, to relive his people's history, and uncover a hidden legacy of triumphs and betrayals, ceremonies and secrets he can forge into a new sense of himself.

When as a man, Josh rediscovers the boyhood friend who first stirred his desires, he realizes a transcendent love that helps take him even deeper into the Creek world he has explored all along in his imagination.

Interweaving past and present, history and story, explicit realism and dreamlike visions, Craig Womack's *Drowning in Fire* explores a young man's journey to understand his cultural and sexual identity within a framework drawn from the community of his origins. A groundbreaking and provocative coming-of-age story, *Drowning in Fire* is a vividly realized novel by an impressive literary talent.

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Drowning in Fire (Sun Tracks) By Craig S. Womack Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal
Womack's sensual first novel is the coming-of-age story of Josh Henneha, a Muskogee Creek Indian growing up in Oklahoma in the 1970s. Studious, thin, and effeminate, Josh is ridiculed by the other boys in his small town except the athletic and popular Jimmy Alexander, who includes the outcast in basketball games and swimming in the nearby lake. Josh yearns for Jimmy's friendship and is attracted to the basketball player's maturing body. He fantasizes that he has secret powers of swimming underwater and flying through the air that will bring them closer together. Given Josh's strict upbringing, his sexual attraction to another boy confuses him. But his Creek heritage, as transmitted by his grandfather and great-aunt's tales, sanctions being different. When Jimmy actually introduces Josh to sex, it repels him. But a chance meeting 20 years later between the two former friends eventually develops into a loving relationship. Womack (Native American studies, Univ. of Lethbridge, Alberta; Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism) has fashioned a satisfying and well-written novel. Recommended for most public library collections. Joseph M. Egan, Enoch Pratt Free Lib., Baltimore
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Review

2002 Wordcraft Circle Writer of the Year Winner!

"Womack is as skillful at capturing the gritty textures of an Indian settlement in 1902 as he is at conveying the abstract loneliness of a present-day Oklahoma City gay bar. Seamlessly weaving together past and present, dreams and reality, and populated by a large cast of eccentric, sharply drawn characters, *Drowning in Fire* is a provocative novel of sexual and cultural identity, filled with the best traits of the people it portrays: wisdom and compassion." —*Rain Taxi*

"A satisfying and well-written novel. Recommended for most public library collections." —*Library Journal*

"There is much to praise in Womack's rendering of the uneasy dawning of gay sexuality within the competitive world of teenage boys, the stark reality of small town life and the multiple frustrations of racist and cultural politics, and the sustaining power of storytelling and memory." —*Lambda Book Report*

"Melding memory and poetic vision, grim conflict and sly humor, Womack provides in this novel a powerful, richly crafted evocation of tribal specificity and same-sex love." —*Gay and Lesbian Review*

"A review can only praise rather than convey adequately the complexity of the structure and the language—words are seen as objects, mirrors, weapons—and the imagery of fire and water central to the novel. Dozens of critical articles are sure to analyze the artistry of this first novel by a new and distinctive Native American voice." —*Southwest Book Views*

"Sets the artistic standard for all writers who take seriously the call to give something meaningful back to their communities." —*Studies in American Indian Literature*

"Drowning in Fire looms like spring thunderclouds on the plains. It sets on the horizons of a new Indian literature and the new American studies as part of an emerging genre of texts that truly evoke the reciprocity between life and land and between past and future." —*American Indian Quarterly*

From the Inside Flap
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mike Jones:

As people who live in the modest era should be change about what going on or information even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which is always change and make progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what one you should start with. This Drowning in Fire (Sun Tracks) is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Terrance Hutchins:

Now a day folks who Living in the era where everything reachable by connect to the internet and the resources inside it can be true or not involve people to be aware of each data they get. How many people to be smart in having any information nowadays? Of course the correct answer is reading a book. Reading a book can help men and women out of this uncertainty Information mainly this Drowning in Fire (Sun Tracks) book because book offers you rich information and knowledge. Of course the info in this book hundred per-cent guarantees there is no doubt in it as you know.

Anthony Moss:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always aim to and must have the spare time or they will get wide range of stress from both lifestyle and work. So , if we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not only a robot. Then we inquire again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer will probably unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative throughout spending your spare time, often the book you have read is actually Drowning in Fire (Sun Tracks).

Enrique Boggs:

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