



I have never liked the phrase, “History is written by the victors.” I understand the idea behind it—that those in power will tell and retell stories in whatever ways flatter them best, until those stories harden into something called “history.” But just because stories are unwritten for a time, it doesn’t mean they’ll be unwritten forever. And just because stories don’t get written down, it doesn’t mean they’re ever lost. We carry them in our minds, our hearts, our very bones. We honour them by passing them on, letting them live on in others, too.

That’s exactly what this anthology does. It takes stories our people have been forced to pass on quietly, to whisper behind hands like secrets, and retells them loudly and unapologetically for our people today. It finally puts our people front and centre on our own lands. Inside these pages are the incredible, hilarious heroics of Annie Bannatyne, who refused to let settlers disrespect Métis women in Red River. There’s the heartbreaking, necessary tale of Nimkii and Teddy, heroic youth in care who fight trauma and colonialism as hard as they possibly can in impossible circumstances. And there are many more—all important, all enlightening. All of these stories deserve to be retold, remembered, and held close.

As I was reading, I thought a lot about the idea of apocalypse, or the end of the world as we know it. Indigenous writers have pointed out that, as Indigenous people, we all live in a post-apocalyptic world. The world as we knew it ended the moment colonialism started to creep across these lands. But we have continued to tell our stories; we have continued to adapt. *Despite everything, we have survived.*

Every Indigenous person's story is, in a way, a tale of overcoming apocalypse. The Canadian laws and policies outlined at the beginning of each story have tried their hardest to beat us down, to force us to assimilate and give up our culture, yet here we are. We have survived the apocalypse. When you think about it that way, every Indigenous person is a hero simply for existing. The people named in these stories are all heroes, inspired by love of their people and culture to do amazing, brave things—but so are the unnamed people who raised them, who taught them, who supported them, and who stood with them. Our communities are full of heroes.

That's why this anthology is so beautiful and so important. It tells tales of resistance, of leadership, of wonder and pain, of pasts we must remember and futures we must keep striving towards, planting each story like a seed deep inside of us. It's our responsibility as readers to carry and nourish those seeds, letting them grow inside as we go on to create our own stories, live our own lives, and become our own heroes. As you read, consider: how are you a hero already? And what will your story be?

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