

# Turning Into Stone



April 5, 2018

Emily Isaacson will be launching her new poetry book in April titled *Hallmark: Canada's 150 Year Anniversary*. This commemorative edition by Dove Christian Publishers released December 16 showcases the select poetry of the Canadian poet, from her simple pieces to the epic. Seamlessly blending old and new poems, it includes 130 new poems, with over thirty new sonnets.

Isaacson has added an iconic influence to an old art with her chapter headings depicting interior design concepts. She is both glamorous and reticent. This work surrounds the guillotine of the recession that has influenced Canadians over the past decade. What motivated her own survival was a central theme to this book. There was much of her life to draw from, ranging from her childhood with eggs scrambled in bacon grease to the current decade where she might find herself working to make ends meet. She describes her ambivalence over this in *Section VI: Dancing in the Dark* where she is an artist who takes another job.

Isaacson's readers, even those who don't like poetry, will appreciate her nuances, wording, and structure, including her own invention "the eclipsed poem." She modifies

the found poem, until it becomes an eclipse of the author and the original material. As these two intersect, she crafts an epiphany moment. We are rarely left unmoved.

Isaacson has overcome many obstacles in life to become a writer, including an eating disorder at 14, where she plummeted to 75 pounds, which led to her diagnosis of osteoporosis at 25. She recovered in 2009 with her first clear bone scan, and has even been able to help others suffering from nutrition-related conditions. Opening a nutrition clinic on First Avenue in Mission B.C. in 2016, she has offered support to women and teenagers suffering from eating disorders and obesity, using her nutritional education from the Harvard of Natural Healing, Bastyr University, where she received her Bachelor's degree in Nutrition. Still she kept up her writing: her dedicated voice over the last decade of writings has become something of a Canadian staple to her many online readers, celebrating over 1 million visits to her sites this year.

Isaacson's poignancy and lyricism move her readers. She traverses a range from poverty and scarcity to the ornamental. Motivated by her impressions of Pippa Middleton's wedding, Isaacson tells of us leaving the medieval superstition we have of the internet to enter the Baroque era. She writes, "This is the Baroque period/if we have our own opinions/on corsages, buns, and bobby pins/and how it should be done with grace./We are married again,/the reverence sounded,/we are irregular jewels." (This Is Where You Keep Me, p.24, Hallmark.) Isaacson has given some of her poetry books as gifts to the Royal Family, including *The Fleur-de-lis*, dedicated to Prince William and Victoriana, dedicated to Princess Charlotte.

Isaacson noted a superstition associated with the internet early on in her career; yet she was determined to use the web as an art form and began a blog called Solitary Unicorn about her writing experiences. Her prolific verse and multimedia art began to spark poetry with life. She shared with her readers themes of the sea, healing, forgiveness, and reparation including poems on colonization and the First Nations People. Her multimedia art included 50 videos of her poetry, as well as blogs, and book websites.

Isaacson has a way of answering the art of others in her art. She volunteers at local art gallery, The Reach. She immerses herself in the finer notes of modern art, and from it draws postmodernism—re-drawing the lines and re-aligning the stars. She is water to the discerning art-goer; she will stay, pointing her finger like a stone statue in one direction. She taps the creativity necessary for survival with a wisdom depicting her age; her maturity as a person has settled nicely in her work.

The book launch will be held April 9, 2018 at 7 PM at the Clearbrook Library in Abbotsford, in conjunction with the Fraser Valley Poets Society. Refreshments will be served.

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