



Bindy's Moon

Lloyd Ratzlaff

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In a series of reflections focused on his hard-working Mennonite family and touching on childhood exploits from shoplifting and go-kart racing to the fear of dying (which arises during the rehearsal for a school Christmas concert), Lloyd Ratzlaff takes readers on a journey from youth to philosophical maturity.

Combining elegy and joyful nostalgia in these poetic essays, Ratzlaff recounts his youthful struggles before going on to analyze his first marriage and his time in seminary and as a minister, and examining life as the parent of adult children and confidante to a terminally ill friend.

Never straying far from his spiritual probing, Ratzlaff's essays are informed by nature and the changing seasons which influence his life in seemingly magical ways. Small enlightenments arise from interactions with the natural world, ranging from a spring equinox on the seventh anniversary of his father's death to the author's waking to the songs of a robin who comes each spring to live on the riverbank across St. Henry Avenue. Even a small gopher scurrying off and standing like a signpost between graves prompts an exploration of mortality.

Humour and honesty define this spiritual journey, as the boy who grew up speaking an ethnically Mennonite language discovers that the rigidity and unease of this tongue will become, in part, the catalyst for his own writing and an impetus to spiritual movement. Bindy's Moon invites readers to explore the challenges posed by scepticism and the simultaneous desire to believe, weighing the gravity of doctrinairism against the spirit's boundless energy. Ratzlaff offers a unique example of what many others have experienced, combining humour and quiet reflection in a poignant prairie coming-of-age autobiography.

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