

Blood & Bone, Ice & Stone

Glen Sorestad's latest collection, *Blood and Bone, Ice and Stone*, is characterized by self-confidence and control, the kind of poetry one might expect from an experienced poet who has spent many years honing his craft. Sorestad, a long-time Saskatchewan resident and a vital if understated force behind the province's literary and cultural scene, moves in these poems with grace and perception across landscapes both close to home and abroad. Some are set in his ancestral Norway, some in Italy, some on the Canadian coasts or the Gulf of Mexico. Many are set in the prairies. The poems are populated as much by magpies and herons as they are by famous writers and musicians. The apt synecdoches of the collection's title recurringly assert themselves in the many poems that explore kindred relationships between the elements of the body and the landscape. Whether Sorestad is examining his grandfather's house and the stone fences in Norway, or feeling his way across the blueberry patches or mist-shrouded waters of Theriau Lake in northern Saskatchewan, his acute perception and description of the elements often leads to intellectual and aesthetic insight. One or two poems bend our perception and responses in some interesting and surprising ways, and the second-person lines about the tragic death of Lawrence Wegner, "On the Outskirts of Saskatoon," tread a razor's edge of tone. Overall, many of the poems have the feel of effortless anecdotes or vignettes, the stories of an old friend, ordinary enough to begin with but subtly smoothed and shaped into polished epiphanies. — *Canadian Literature*