



The Nomads, My Brothers, Go Out to Drink from the Big Dipper (The Africa List)

Abdourahman A. Waberi

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Few of us have had the opportunity to visit Djibouti, the small crook of a country strategically located in the Horn of Africa, which makes The Nomads, My Brothers, Go Out to Drink from the Big Dipper all the more seductive. In his first collection of poetry, the critically acclaimed writer Abdourahman A. Waberi writes passionately about his country's landscape, drawing for us pictures of "desert furrows of fire" and a "yellow chameleon sky." Waberi's poems take us to unexpected spaces—in exile, in the muezzin's call, and where morning dew is "sucked up by the eye of the sun—black often, pink from time to time."

Translated by Nancy Naomi Carlson, Waberi's voice is intelligent, at times ironic, and always appealing. His poems strongly condemn the civil wars that have plagued East Africa and advocate tolerance and peace. In this compact volume, such ideas live side by side as a rosary for the treasures of Timbuktu, destroyed by Islamic extremists, and a poem dedicated to Edmond Jabès, the Jewish writer and poet born in Cairo.

"With Waberi, the juxtapositions—surprising, provocative, and original—form a good part of the thrill themselves."—Words Without Borders



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