

THE SMELL OF RAIN ON DUST

— Grief and Praise —

MARTÍN PRECHTEL

"Here Martin Prechtel sends us an invitation to peace: to personal, village-level, and world peace. His indigenous wisdom gives us much-needed insights into the reverberating impact of not grieving our heart-rending losses. Most poignantly, he shows us the devastating inheritance of our ever more voracious wars and the misunderstood burden of ghosts that swirl around our modern warriors. Yet, instead of leaving us more despondent, every chapter holds out a new seed, breaking into new life. Martin coaxes us through funny and quirky turns of the ordinary and the miraculous to leave us inspired to wake up singing to the beauty of our rising sun and live in praise of this complex and gracious world."

—Inge Hindel, MD/PhD, family and integrated medicine doctor at Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, Oregon

"Martín Prechtel's genius takes many forms: painting, music, a continuously evolving learning community, and thank God, *books* like this one. I get so excited reading it, I cannot stay in one place. I sit reading on my porch... then back to my living room to make a fire and watch Martín's gorgeously alive prose burn inside me. His ideas and language are so enlivening my impulse is to quote great sections of it. I'll just touch on a few of his brilliant insights around how animals help us to grieve, and to make our way out of grief into the beauty of praising. As he says, animals help us grieve our loss of naturalness. And we have mostly forgotten 'the very old worldwide tribal custom of having a "grief relative" from the wild living together with us in our houses.' Caring for animals is a sacred responsibility. To truly grieve and to weep deeply is something the animals really do help us with. And O they help us praise too, to accomplish that most marvelous art of turning the grief into praising. Martín tells us, 'Let the world jump up and live again,' and he makes that happen with his delicious sentences. Read this necessary, very beautiful book, and then read it again."

—Coleman Barks, author of *Rumi: Soul Fury*

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Grief and Praise



MARTÍN PRECHTEL
Author of *The Unlikely Peace at Cuchumaquic*

A leading thinker, writer and teacher in the search for the Indigenous soul in all people, Martín Prechtel is a dedicated student of eloquence, history, language and an ongoing fresh approach. In his native New Mexico Martín teaches at his international school Bolad's Kitchen: a hands on historical and spiritual immersion into language, music, ritual, farming, cooking, smithing, natural colors, architecture, animal raising, clothing, tools, story, grief and humor to help people from many lands, cultures and backgrounds to remember and retain the majesty of their diverse origins while cultivating the flowering of integral culture in the present to grow a time of hope beyond our own.

Previous Books By Martín Prechtel

Stealing Benefacio's Roses • *The Disobedience of the Daughter of the Sun*
Long Life, Honey in the Heart • *Secrets of the Talking Jaguar*
The Unlikely Peace at Cuchumaquic

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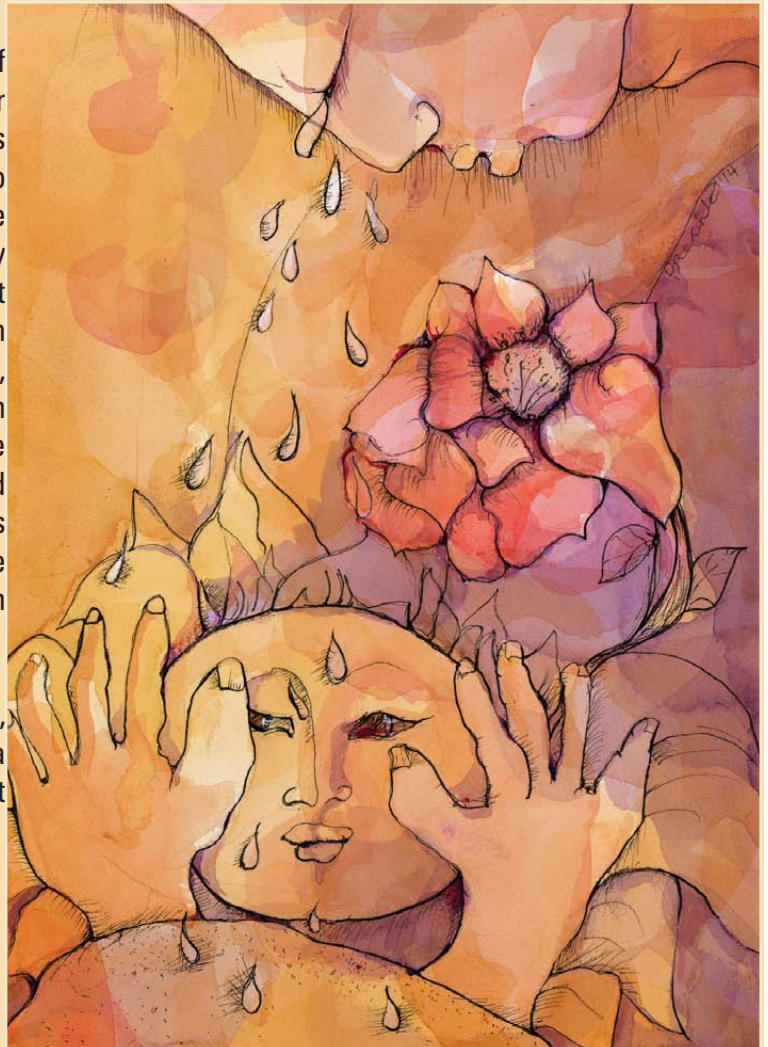
Grief and Praise

About the Book

Inspiring hope, solace, and courage in living through our losses, author Martín Prechtel, trained in the Tzutujil Maya shamanic tradition, shares profound insights on the relationship between grief and praise—how the inability that many of us have to grieve and weep properly for the dead is deeply linked with the inability to give praise for living. In modern society, grief is something that we usually experience in private, alone, and without the support of a community. Yet, as Prechtel says, “Grief expressed out loud for someone we have lost, or a country or home we have lost, is in itself the greatest praise we could ever give them. Grief is praise, because it is the natural way love honors what it misses.”

Prechtel explains that the unexpressed grief prevalent in our society today is the reason for many of the social, cultural, and individual maladies that we are currently experiencing. According to Prechtel, “When you have two centuries of people who have not properly grieved the things that they have lost, the grief shows up as ghosts that inhabit their grandchildren.” These “ghosts,” he says, can also manifest as disease in the form of tumors, which the Maya refer to as “solidified tears,” or in the form of behavioral issues and depression. He goes on to show how this collected unexpressed energy is the long-held grief of our ancestors manifesting itself, illuminates the work that can be done to liberate this energy so we can heal from the trauma of loss, war, and suffering.

At base, this “little book,” as the author calls it, can be seen as a companion of encouragement, a little extra light for those deep and noble parts that inhabit us all.



Additional Praise for: *The Smell of Rain on Dust: Grief and Praise*

"Alchemy, by definition, metabolizes and transmutes. A reading of *The Smell of Rain on Dust* is alchemical. If the shredding of the glorious web of life has you sinking into a depth of despair, read this book; your grief can metabolize and transmute such wrongness. Deep and delightful, *The Smell of Rain on Dust* is also instructive. It will charm you into wanting to live life more fully, to walk in beauty even amongst modernity's polarized spiritual failures."

—Randy Hayes— Director of Foundation Earth, Rainforest Action Network Founder

Once again, Martin Prechtel is up to his old tricks... "Making medicine out of poison." Taking grief, pain, strife and other elements of a society in distress and concocting a potion that actually heals those who have ears to listen. *The Smell of Rain on Dust* does exactly that. In a world that needs to grieve its wrongdoings but has lost its ability or forgotten its ancient wisdom, Mr. Prechtel has been selected as a spokesman to reunite modern man with ancient wisdom. Not an enviable position!

—H. Bruce Coslor— Vietnam Vet, Nebraska Cattle Rancher, Songwriter, Musician and Grandfather

I love Martín's book. It was amazing reading it aloud to the Ocean. At one point I moved up the coast assuming the listening birds, seals and whales would stay, but they moved with me. The waves listened and the wind. Read this magical book as it takes you into the courtyard of the heart.

—M. Bacon— International Award winning documentary films, director, producer

I held my personal grief for decades until, with the help of the author, I ceremonially metabolized my grief into a thing of beauty. Like a magic genie, I popped out of the bottle I had crawled into with a renewed love of life. In *The Smell of Rain on Dust: Grief and Praise*, Prechtel leads the reader down this same trail of animals and life in the womb while revealing that grief is the sister of praise. Like Prechtel's other books, this astonishing book will draw me back often to re-examine the beauty of a life lived well.

—Wick Fisher— retired postmaster, Vietnam era Vet and orator at soldier funerals

This wonderful book, *The Smell of Rain on Dust*, not only addresses this culture's lack of grief but it discusses in poignant ways how our inability to grieve has created many of our culture's delirious, fast paced, toxic, constant state of emergency symptoms where depression, addiction and mediocrity reign. As a mother, daughter, teacher, and farmer I found this book to stir up a deep prayer, that as a people we might one day through being with the depths of our grief find so much love and deliciousness in being alive that we praise this life so genuinely nothing is left unloved.

—Melanie MacKinnon— teacher, farmer/owner 'Frog Belly Farms'

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Many Veterans are now banding into "Warrior Societies" but do not know what direction to go. In my work, I see on a daily basis many new patients (veterans) coming in for help: some with traumatic brain injury (TBI), substance abuse treatment (mainly alcohol), post traumatic disorders, and the all too often "suicidal attempt" where a new generation of warriors kick off the repressed memories of Vietnam era warriors remembering what was suppressed for so many years, their minds desperately making an often failed attempt to resolve an un-grieved, ghost ridden past. *The Smell of Rain on Dust* beautifully addresses the possibility of a "Society of Warriors" so changed by having killed that they become a society of healers to heal those wounded in war, both old and new.

—John Ishmael— RN BSN, Inpatient Medicine, Nurse Physician Liaison and Discharge planner; Salt Lake City Veterans Hospital

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