



# Hastings-Sunrise

*Bren Simmers*

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## **Hastings-Sunrise** Bren Simmers

*Hastings–Sunrise* is a love letter to a fleeting place and time. Bren Simmers’s second collection captures her old East Vancouver neighbourhood in the midst of upheaval. As it is colonized by tides of matching plaid and diners serving pulled-pork pancakes, condo developments replace the small businesses and cheap rentals that once gave the area its charm.

Much like opening a set of nesting dolls, leafing through the collection exposes further layers of depth and intimacy. Within the context of cultural change, Simmers explores the meaning to be found in everyday things: the making of a home, the life built from daily routines. At the same time, she reveals the dissonance that can occur between personal and large-scale change: “Twitter feed of melting sea ice, / colony collapse / while we picnic under pink ribbons, / kiss again like we mean it.”

Throughout the collection, the poet’s eye unfailingly lights on the perfect details to evoke a scene: “On Mr. Donair’s spit, / the earth rotates. Papal smoke emits / from Polonia Sausage, semis shunt / downtown.” Visual poems forming maps of Christmas lights and autumn colours further bring the Hastings–Sunrise neighbourhood to life, illustrating the interweaving of human and natural spaces and locating “home” in between.

Like a tree clothed in multicoloured yarn or a miniature house filled with free books, *Hastings–Sunrise* is a gift to readers, beautiful in its simplicity.

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