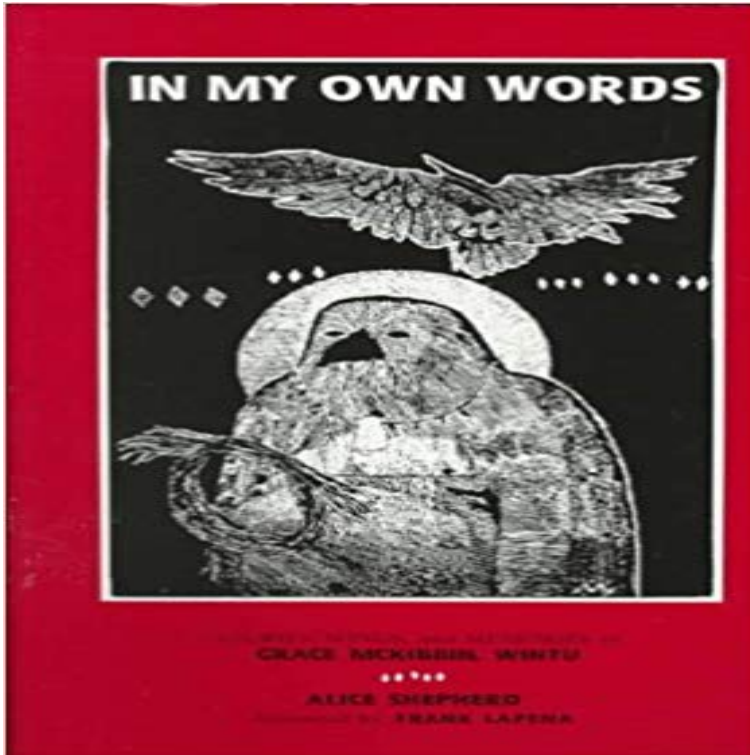


In My Own Words: Stories, Songs, and Memories of Grace McKibbin, Wintu



In 1894, when Grace McKibbin was born, Wintu Indian families of northern California still gathered together in summer encampments, the men to hunt deer, the women to harvest plants. In September they migrated to the banks of rivers to spear salmon. At nights they spoke among themselves in the wonderful Wintu language, telling stories, singing songs, and discussing their dramatically changing life. Grace McKibbin grew up within that old world, and until her death in 1987 she still loved to speak Wintu—a language whose subtleties and complexities have long tantalized linguists. In the last years of her life she shared her prodigious knowledge with linguist Alice Shepherd, dictating a large body of songs, stories, and reminiscences in the Wintu language. Currently, there are only two native speakers of the Wintu language still alive, making the recording of these materials even more invaluable. *In My Own Words* presents a selection of 19 authentic, extraordinary, and often humorous tales, translated into readable and enjoyable English prose and accompanied by important background information on the languages structure and storytelling devices. The original Wintu words are preserved as well, allowing even the nonlinguist to catch something of the flavor and sound, the flexibility, exactitude, and fine nuances of Wintu language and thought.

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