



Tar and Feathers: Tragedy in the Oil Sands

James Newland Tanner

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Tar and Feathers, exposes the truths behind the dirty oil from the Tar Sands of northern Alberta. The author provides an inside look at the effects of these huge mines on the small communities of Dene and Cree Peoples living beside these mines. The stories are fictional but the themes are part of everyday life close to the largest industrial project in the world. The cancer controversies fill Canadian and international newspapers and but it is hard if not impossible to understand the plight of the peoples in the region with an oppressive free market government. There have been attempts by the government at whistle blower character assassination, paid advertisements to cover up truth and indifference to the grave cancer threat. Tar and Feathers is a story about concerned women attempting to protect their language, culture and health from the effects of world oil greed and the resulting destruction. Review by Anne Green, Founding Director WordFest: Banff-Calgary International Writers Festival "Tar and Feathers is a great choice for those wanting an interesting read with an element of mystery, a look at the environmental issues of energy development set against the day to day background of a northern community. In Tar and Feathers, Jim Tanner engages the reader on a variety of levels; a good tale set within a current topical context - the presence of "Big Oil" in the everyday lives of an aboriginal community, and the element of an unsolved mystery. Tanner draws one into the lives of the people of a small northern community as they contend with the realities of a changing world. Their environment is shifting and they struggle to find a balance between potential benefits of energy development and potential risks; is anyone actually sure of all the potential risks? As he moves through the action, Tanner weaves in the background and legends of aboriginal peoples of the region and their customs. He explores how traditional values are challenged and impacted by outside influences, not just of energy exploration but also of non-traditional big city aboriginal points of view. What sets Tar and Feathers apart is that the elements are interwoven on a level which clearly indicates the author's working knowledge of the cultural challenges and intricacies of the relationships between the First Peoples and oil resource development. Tanner's fist-hand experience is evident." Review by Nikki Phillips, Arts Editor, Carteret County News-times Tar and Feathers is not just an engaging mystery story, but an accurate and compassionate depiction of the challenges facing the Aboriginal peoples of the developing oil sands region of northern Alberta, as they struggle to balance the loss of their culture and the realities of survival in modern day Canada. This is a must-read for anyone trying to understand the conflicts and challenges experienced by two diverse cultures in a changing world.

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