

# The Last Dust Storm



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Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel's poems bear powerful witness to one of the nation's most dramatic sagas, the Dustbowl exodus of the 1930's Depression era, and chronicle the lives of workers in California's hot Central Valley towns over the decades. Born to an Oklahoma sharecropping family, and part Cherokee, McDaniel began writing when she was eight, and has kept on through a lifetime of working on farms, even when poverty forced her to write on old envelopes and brown paper bags. In THE LAST DUST STORM, her third book from Hanging Loose Press, McDaniel's poems continue to surprise: Their work is done through what AMERICAN BOOK REVIEW has described as "scraped-clean language." Beneath their calm surface lie profound feeling, insight, sophistication, and often a sly humor at the expense of those who would patronize working people. The title of Tulare County poet laureate, recently bestowed on this extraordinary writer, has real meaning.