

Bird-Monk Seding



Published:	October 9th 2017 by Deep South
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ISBN13:	9780994710406
ISBN10:	0994710402
Goodreads Rating:	4.00

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"This place is called SEDING, short for Leseding, place of light. Quite ironic given the darkness throbbing at its core and spilling out bubbling in the blackest rage when least expected. Surrounded by farmland in all directions, it is a settlement of about 700 households crammed in tiny structures. There are an average 7 souls per hovel. It used to be made up of ramshackle corrugated iron shacks that seemed tossed down regard of aesthetics. Then the new administration's housing program kicked in. Man in the bush in quest of Bosman's ghost. Finding AWB rabidity. Tranquillity so deep it kills. Hate-hounds. Beneath the surface quiet, such racist rotten-heartedness. & children dying. Starvation abounds. Raw sewage in the water supply. Crap in the taps. Skin matters. Ancient white beards sexing black teens for tins, food exchange. The soul's impoverishment. The starved get their humanity halved. And weekends of sex-tourism. Alcoholic stares everywhere. Deep fear too." ***Lesego Rampolokeng is a poet and performance maestro, and the author of 12 books, including two plays and three novels. He has collaborated with visual artists, playwrights, film-makers, theatre and opera producers, poets and musicians. His no-holds-barred style, radical political-aesthetic perspective and instantly recognizable voice have brought him a unique place in South African literature. His third novel, Bird-Monk Seding, is a stark picture of life in a rural township two decades into South Africa's democracy. Listening and observing in the streets and taverns-narrator Bavino Sekete, often feeling desperate himself-is thrown back to his own violent childhood in Soweto. To get through, he turns to his pantheon of jazz innovators and radical writers. [Subject: Fiction, South African Literature, African Studies]