



# East of the Great Valley: The Story of Merab McCreary

*Sylvia Ross*

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EAST OF THE GREAT VALLEY is a historical novel of Gold Rush California. It is set in the Sierra during the 1856-1876 period. The book tells the story of a child, the survivor of a slaughtered Indian band, and the white family who adopted her.

"If it is true, that a good writer begins in the silences--then once again we have Sylvia Ross to thank for writing us out of that silent place in California's past and into this cacophony of voices, where history and fiction are blurred, where those seemingly quiet secrets we sometimes call folktales, such as this epic and authentic story of Merab McCreary, are written out into the light. Under Ross's careful and wise hand, and filtered through her own unique visionary lens, we get the history of the Great Central Valley, as told through this singularly original tale, which goes far beyond mere coming-of-age, for this is a document-of-change. What Ross has essentially captured here is a tectonic shift in motion; through her words we are brought to witness an anthropological slab of sediment rise up and forge what we now call the Great Valley--indeed, that beautiful and hideous place I know and love and loathe all at once. In the end, there are only a small handful of writers whose work I return to time and again when I want to remember--I mean really remember--who I am. *East of the Great Valley* by Sylvia Ross is not only among those works, but it is simply one more vital book by a writer who I consider to be one of our finest gems."

--Tim Z. Hernandez

Author of *Breathing, In Dust*



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