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Lostness

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Lostness

by Tania Haberland



About the Author

Tania Haberland is a Mauritian-German-South African poet and activist born in Africa, raised in Arabia, miseducated in America, and “matured” in Europe, with water as her enduring home and muse. She has presented her intercultural “carnal poetics” and ecopoetic rituals internationally. Her debut collection, *Hyphen*, won the Ingrid Jonker Prize in 2010, and her poem “Resurrection” was shortlisted for the Gerald Kraak Award in 2016. Her bilingual book *Water Flame / Fiamma d’acqua* appeared in 2019. She is currently moving from Mauritius to South Africa, continuing her projects *CreatiVita* and *The Technology of Tenderness*, alongside activism to Free Palestine, Free Us All. youtube.com/@taniainaapeagreenboat

Lostness

Tania Haberland

Swim through a lagoon of dead coral
remembering all the losses of your life,
piles of bones

reach the edge where some corals are still breathing colours
and hear the reef's promise of a kiss in the coral crushing waves
and weep on your knees in the crashed sand

remember the wind of a wing
caressing your cheek
a red cardinal blessing you
with the memory of flying alive

fly back to the shore on the back of a current
feel the trickle of water
fall from your body
make the sand below
slide along the soles of your feet
tickling them alive to the possibilities of the sensual

Later scroll on social media
flying past images of genocide and fitness programmes, starvation and recipes
to notice piles of bones
at a destroyed cancer hospital in Gaza

piles of bones in the sea, on your screen
in a land far away and rattling close, here
in your heart's

cage of memories
piles of bones

forgotten, lost
piles of bones
remembered
alive
beating
like a bird
like your heart
like a drum
dance to the feeling of lostness
and remember the life you can honour
with love and rage, joy and grief