



Body Bereft: Poems

Antjie Krog

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The taboos within the tidal moods of the menopause are described with an anger and a verbal intensity that are uniquely Krog's. Close relationships are searingly explored, occasionally in a confrontational way, more often searching for resolution. In the final meditative section, Table Mountain, a looming, symbolic and androgynous godhead is contemplated as an abiding presence and witness to the transience of human life. These dramatic, even reckless poems, reaffirm Antjie Krog's status and bring an altogether new and unique energy to South African English-language poetry. Antjie Krog's iconic status as one of South Africa's most popular and critically acclaimed poets began when she was eighteen, with her first collection, *Dogter van Jefta* (1970). Almost four decades later, this very different collection will confirm her reputation with poems that blur and ravage the boundaries between the lyrical and confessional, the private and public. From *Body Bereft*, p.62 fossil alphabet the found fossil does not describe how my blue eyes look past your eyes how your black eyes look away from my eyes how my white forearm does not simply rest next to your black forearm how my sleek hair sleeps next to your frizzy hair the fossil does however describe in the finest vertebrae how the coast blindingly kept on shouting after the continent that once was part of her how the fynbos undisputedly sniffed for her torn-away friends how the rusted rock along the coast longed for the drifted bloodbrother but the fossil knows that once everything was linked that we broached our hearts for one another only we don't know why we now sit with this stoney one-ness and so much furious aversion

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