



Body Bereft

Antjie Krog

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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. *Body Bereft* is a fearless and ecstatic exploration of consciousness on the edge of decay and dissolution. The taboos within the tidal moods of the menopause are described with anger and verbal intensity in a voice that is uniquely Krog's. Close relationships are searingly explored, occasionally seeking conflict, often searching for resolution. In the final meditative section, the personal intensity is tempered, fantastically almost, by contemplations of Table Mountain as a looming, symbolic and androgynous godhead, echoing Adamastor, an abiding presence that endures as it suffers witness - an ostensibly inscrutable, ironically nurturing mirror to self and personal despair. These dramatic, even reckless poems, translated from the simultaneously published Afrikaans Collection, *Veweerskrif*, bring an altogether new and unique energy to South African English-language poetry.

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