



Where I Live

Arundhathi Subramaniam

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Where I Live combines Arundhathi Subramaniam's first two Indian collections of poetry, *On Cleaning Bookshelves* and *Where I Live*, with a selection of new work. Her poems explore various ambivalences – around human intimacy with its bottlenecks and surprises, life in a Third World megalopolis, myth, the politics of culture and gender, and the persistent trope of the existential journey. They probe contradictory impulses: the desire for adventure and anchorage; expansion and containment; vulnerability and strength; freedom and belonging; withdrawal and engagement; an approach to language as exciting resource and desperate refuge. Her new poems are a meditation on desire – in which the sensual and sacred mingle inextricably. There is a fascination with the skins that separate self from other, self from self, thing from nothing. These are poems of dark need, of urgency, of desire as derailment, and derailment as possibility. 'This is writing that creeps up on the reader quietly, sometimes with just the whisper of a sari, or the taste of a lullaby, and yet spins suddenly on the edge of stark recognition. Arundhathi Subramaniam's is a strong new voice' – Imtiaz Dharker 'A marvellous collection, wonderfully varied and rich' – John Burnside 'Subramaniam's poetry is one of illumination. She flashes a pencil-torchlight on a subject, and suddenly you feel you are the richer for it... Even more than precision, what defines her verse is its subtlety and the angle of vision from which she sees life' – Keki Daruwalla

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