



Daughter of Immigrants

First edition

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Graphic design & Cover

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Funded by

ARMA Anti-Racism Media Activist Alliance

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ISBN 9789528035176

Printer

BoD – Books on Demand, Norderstedt, Germany

Publisher

BoD – Books on Demand, Helsinki, Finland

because my voice

is our voice

and our voices

have been silent

for centuries

for millennia

for entire generations and generations beyond

and now

it will be silent no longer.

...but first, thank you

Anti-Racism Media Activist
Alliance

Josephine Wong

K.S Nathan

Kai Kuusisto

and all those that
came before me, who
paved the way...

Thank you.

Foreword

When most people think of anti-racism media activism, they think of people who speak up online for justice after cases of racist violence. But racism is more than acts of individuals. It's also historical, global and systemic. For centuries racist ideas have shaped societies, established cultures, informed politics and shredded souls. Anti-racism media activism is, then, many types of expression on many forms of media available against the many consequences of racist histories on so many of us. That's why we feel so much joy and pride to see Tania Nathan's warm, soothing, unapologetic and razor-sharp poetry and prose out as a book. A book that, as a medium, allows us the quiet and the time to smell and savour the marvellous food for the soul and the thought Tania has so carefully and intensely prepared. Tania's well-crafted words invite us to join her in releasing pain and anger without being bitter; in celebrating one's own worth without being egoistic; in sharing her story without neglecting our (shared) histories. Racism is so perverse and pervasive that caring for the heart and soul is a fundamental form of activism. We see Tania Nathan's "Daughter of Immigrants" as a powerful

example of anti-racism media activism because it
heals.

Leonardo Custódio

Monica Gathuo

Anti-Racism Media Activist Alliance (ARMA Alliance)

Acknowledgements

This book is a culmination of many things. The desire to tell my story, of being a brown girl, a brown woman in a world that pushes back on the things that I am. Pushes back the things I love.

This was supposed to be a poetry book, until the spring of 2020 when the Corona virus forced us all indoors. And so, the stories so long under my skin, burst free. Stories of home, of my mother and father, of love lost, modern day slavery, cooking and eating things, patriarchy, privilege, strength, and being alone but not lonely. I never thought that one day, I would write them all out into the world. But here we are.

This book would not have been possible without the support of Anti- Racism Media Activist Alliance, the existence of POC Open Mic (along with the incredible team made up of Arvind Ramachandran and Monica Gathuo), my dyslexia for teaching me to love words, my partner Kai Kuusisto who taught me the value of dreaming while awake, my Foochow mother who gave me strength, and my Ceylonese father who loved me unconditionally

and believed in me. My brother Matthew who always took the time to dream up dream worlds with me when we were kids. My dear friend artist Sasha Huber who created the amazing cover, and also Kati Mayfield, Vidha Saumya, Anneli Aaltonen, Arvind Ramachandran that read, critiqued, corrected and supported me. Also my Malaysian high school Sri Aman Girls School that inadvertently showed me the value of not fitting in, *Cosmic Latte* by Sonya Lindfors that inspired me so very, very much. Thank you.

Not forgetting the friends, and loves that inspired me along the way that are with me no longer. Thank you, for you were all lessons too. Who would have thought, the rage and the sorrow, the heartbreak and all the things that were stacked against me, would give birth to something quite so beautiful?

Finally, to all the Finnish publishers that said to me *No*, I say to you now, *Yes*.

2018, 2019, 2020

The angry brown girl that has lived
unsettled
and
unsatisfied
In my skin, inside my bones,
Between my lips and my teeth my
Blood and my organs
Will not be quiet anymore.

#thisis2020

#wearestillhere

#andwearecomingforyou

W o m a n ' s w o r k

To prepare a Japanese curry, you need a lot of onions. Enough to make you cry, two times over. Chop the onions, and prepare the carrots. Slip their skins off, chop into manageable chunks. Peel the potatoes too and slip their slippery bodies into a bath of water to keep them from darkening.

We wouldn't want that now, to sully your curry. *Chi-chi**.

Then take the proteins of your choice, perhaps some chicken, slice that into medium sized chunks, and marinade them with a large pinch of salt. Wash the chopping board and remember to use the other knife now that you used this one to cut the raw meat. The clean and the dirty, you must separate. The suitable and the unsuitable.

You forgot the garlic, didn't you? *Stupid girl*. Smash two cloves with the flat of the blade, and slide them out of their papery white dresses. The acrid smell of the unstable *allicin* that the garlic releases quickly changes into *diallyl disulfide* as the knife divides the garlic into

Tania Nathan is a writer, poet and journalist who lives and works in the capital region of Finland. In her free time, she likes to smash the patriarchy and upset the status quo. She also likes Olympic weightlifting, foraging for wild foods and camping whenever time and the weather permits.

She works as an educator and youth worker, produces poetry events and artists all over the greater Helsinki region. Thank you for taking the time to dream on the page, with her.



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