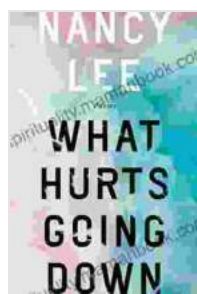


# What Hurts Going Down: A Poetic Exploration of Exile, Loss, and Identity

Dunya Mikhail's "What Hurts Going Down" is a powerful and evocative collection of poems that explores the complex and often painful experiences of exile, loss, and identity. Through her lyrical and deeply personal verse, Mikhail gives voice to the marginalized and displaced, capturing the essence of their struggles, their hopes, and their resilience.



## What Hurts Going Down by Dunya Mikhail

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1112 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 95 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported



Born in Baghdad, Iraq, Mikhail was forced to flee her homeland during the Gulf War. The experience of exile and displacement profoundly shaped her life and work, and her poems bear witness to the profound sense of loss and longing that accompanies such a journey.

In "What Hurts Going Down," Mikhail explores the physical and emotional toll of exile. She writes of the "ache in the bones" that comes from being forced to leave one's home, and the "sorrow that sits heavy" in the heart.



But Mikhail's poems are not only about the pain of exile. They are also about the search for a new home and the struggle to find a sense of belonging in a foreign land.

In the poem "My Grandmother's House," Mikhail writes of her longing for the familiar sights and sounds of her childhood home. She remembers the "smell of cinnamon" that filled the air and the "sound of her grandmother's

laughter." These memories are a source of both comfort and pain, as they remind her of all that she has lost.

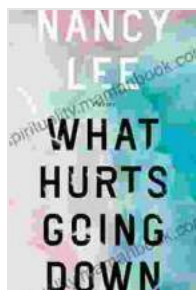
Despite the challenges she faces, Mikhail also finds moments of joy and hope in exile. In the poem "The Orchard," she writes of the beauty of the natural world and the solace it can provide.

Mikhail's poems are not only about her own experiences of exile. They are also about the experiences of all those who have been forced to flee their homes, whether due to war, persecution, or economic hardship.

In the poem "The Displaced," Mikhail writes of the "long lines of refugees" and the "faces of loss." She bears witness to the suffering of those who have been forced to leave their homes and the challenges they face in building a new life.

"What Hurts Going Down" is a powerful and moving collection of poems that gives voice to the marginalized and displaced. Through her lyrical and deeply personal verse, Mikhail captures the essence of the struggle for identity and belonging in a world that is often hostile to outsiders.

[Dunya Mikhail is an Iraqi poet and writer who writes in Arabic and English. She is the author of several books of poetry, including "What Hurts Going Down" and "The Iraqi Nights."](#)



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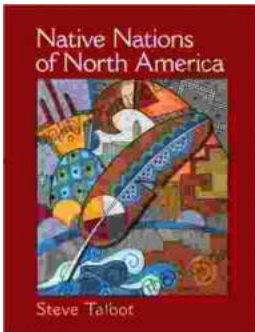
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