

## Reflections: The Magic Beyond the Pain

**Dalia**

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To read the poems of Dalia is to be brought into the great circle of survivors; her words call up memories of arduous journeys and celebrations of victories won. In her poem, *Time to Write*, Dalia shares that she “once yearned for death, unimaginable, and sad...” yet she is also able to affirm “...here I am, amazingly mighty and strong.” The best of the poems in this collection are marked by a strong rhythmic pulse that makes them ideal to be spoken aloud, accompanied by beating drums, clapping hands, and bodies swaying in the moonlight, while others in this same collection labor to make rhyme and rhythm work together.

There is wisdom in Dalia’s poetry, some of it hard-won and some seeming to sprout naturally and gently from the poet’s soul, like a flower opening in its time. Yet even the wisest words need to be formed and shaped with care before being presented to the world in printed form. Poetry is an art form with a long tradition of craftsmanship, and those who attempt it must be unafraid of the hard work and discipline involved. Dalia’s poetry would benefit greatly from the collaboration and support of a group of working writers and poets; such collaboration can provide the objectivity needed to shape and prune the work as well as being an ongoing source of encouragement for an aspiring poet. The contribution of a skillful editor is also invaluable in preparing a book for publication; a trained eye would not allow for incorrect punctuation, (two commas in a row, for example, as found frequently in this book), or incorrect word usage, (the use of the word “hew” when the obvious word to use in the context of color is “hue”).

The cry of this poet’s heart is a call to be present in each moment—to live consciously and with abandon in the belief that each human life is “significant” in its own way. “The Journey Back,” a poem that is almost rap-like in its hypnotic use of rhythm, is one such call. The merit of Dalia’s work lies in its expression of the human need for connection and meaning, even in the darkest of times. Being fully human means to wipe the tears of the sorrowful, dance with the joyful, and capture and squeeze the juicy essence from each moment one is given. At the end of it all, one may have the privilege of seeing the flame one has ignited in other hearts carrying the message of what it means to be truly alive to the precious gifts each day brings.

KRISTINE MORRIS (March 25, 2008)

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