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## Danish Poets Today

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## Danish Poets Today

The Danish poet, playwright and novelist Pia Tafdrup read from her work *Queen's Gate* and presented some of her other poems at the session *Danish Poets Today*. With the author's permission we are able to present one of the poems from *Queen's Gate*.

### My Mother's Hand

Bathing in a drop's quiet light  
I remember how I came into being:  
A pencil stuck in my hand,  
my mother's cool hand around mine, it was warm.  
And then we wrote  
in and out between coral reefs,  
an undersea alphabet of arches and apexes  
of snail-shell spirals, of starfish points,  
of gesticulating octopus arms,  
of cave vaults and rock formations.  
Letters that vibrated and found their way,  
dizzy over the white.  
Words like flat fish that flapped  
and dug themselves into the sand  
or swaying sea anemones with hundreds of threads  
in quiet motion at the same time.  
Sentences like streams of fish  
that grew fins and rose,  
grew wings and moved in a rhythm,  
throbbing like my blood, that blindly  
beat stars against the heart's night sky,  
when I saw that her hand had let mine go,  
that I had long ago written myself out of her grasp.

From *Queen's Gate*, 1998, Bloodaxe 2001, translated by David McDuff.

See also [www.tafdrup.com](http://www.tafdrup.com)