

# Unveiling the Second Skin: An Intimate Look at Ricki Stefanie Tannen's Poetic Vision

In the ethereal realm of contemporary literature, Ricki Stefanie Tannen emerges as a visionary poet, weaving intricate tapestries of words that probe the depths of human experience. Her debut collection, "Second Skin," invites readers on a profound journey through the complexities of identity, questioning societal norms and unveiling the transformative power of language.

## Layering the Self: Body Politics and Identity

Tannen's poetry unflinchingly delves into the intricate relationship between the body and the self. In "The Anatomy of an Idea," she explores the politics of female bodies, laying bare the ways in which society shapes and defines the female form. Lines like "my body is not a vessel / but a battlefield" evoke a sense of struggle and resistance against the confining expectations thrust upon women.



### **Second Skin** by Ricki Stefanie Tannen

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1473 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 93 pages
Hardcover	: 540 pages
Item Weight	: 3.09 pounds



Through surreal imagery and fragmented narratives, Tannen challenges the traditional binary of mind and body. In "The Skin I'm In," she writes: "I am a shadow / cast on the wall / the ink that stains / the page." Her words blur the boundaries between the physical and the psychological, suggesting that our identities are fluid and ever-evolving.

## **The Transformative Power of Language**

Language serves as a central pillar in Tannen's poetic universe. She harnesses the transformative power of words to reshape and redefine reality. In "The Word," she proclaims: "there is a language / that speaks in tongues / a word that cuts / a word that heals." Through her poetry, Tannen attempts to subvert conventional language and create new modes of expression.

Her use of vivid imagery and unexpected metaphors transports readers into a surreal realm where ordinary objects take on profound meanings. In "The House of Mirrors," she writes: "I am a labyrinth / a house of mirrors / where every reflection / is a lie." This line exemplifies Tannen's ability to craft evocative imagery that lingers in the mind long after the poem has been read.

## **Questioning Societal Norms and Expectations**

Tannen's poetry boldly confronts societal norms and expectations, particularly those surrounding gender and sexuality. In "The Perfect Woman," she challenges the idealized image of femininity, exposing the suffocating pressures women face to conform. She writes: "I am not the

perfect woman / I am a woman who bleeds / a woman who desires / a woman who fights." Through her poetry, Tannen empowers women to reclaim their own narratives and defy societal constraints.

Her work also explores the complexities of queer identity and the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. In "The Closet," she writes: "I am a secret / hidden in the shadows / afraid to embrace / who I truly am." Tannen's poetry provides a voice to the marginalized, offering both solace and a platform for self-expression.

### **: Unveiling the Unseen**

Ricki Stefanie Tannen's "Second Skin" is a captivating collection of poetry that weaves together themes of identity, body politics, and the transformative power of language. Her surreal imagery and fragmented narratives challenge readers to question societal norms and delve into the complexities of the human experience.

Through her bold and evocative language, Tannen unveils the unseen layers of our existence, exposing the vulnerabilities, struggles, and triumphs that shape our lives. "Second Skin" is a testament to the power of poetry to transcend boundaries, spark critical dialogue, and ultimately, liberate the human spirit.



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