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# **Breach: Poems**

Nicole Cooley



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#### Breach: Poems Nicole Cooley

In Breach, New Orleans native Nicole Cooley recalls Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath in gritty, poignant detail, bearing witness to the destruction of a region and to its recovery. Ranging from the urgent to the reflective, these poems speak not only to the horrors of the immediate disaster, but also to family dynamics in a time of crisis and to the social, political, and cultural realities that contextualized the storm and its wake. In the title poem, Cooley invokes the multiple meanings of the word "breach"—breach of the levees, breach of trust—which resonate with survivors in the Crescent City, and in "Evacuation," she recounts her efforts to encourage her parents to leave the city and her harrowing three-day wait to hear from them after they refused. A number of poems, including "Write a Love Letter to Camellia Grill," "The Superdome: A Suite," and "Biloxi Bay Bridge Still Out," offer a broad range of voices and experiences to expand the perspective beyond Cooley's own family. With language and images both powerful and precise, this compelling collection dares us to "watch the surface of the city tear like loose skin."

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