



Photo credit: Alessandra Capodacqua

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Erik Lindner | I remember | A stairway leads into the sea | Ostend | If I'm
lost for words

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I remember the ground shaking and how you stood there waving
all those tattooed birds squawking on your arms
the lower the thunderclouds loomed the fiercer the waves
you schlepped handfuls of wet sand across the wide beach
your elbows' wipers plastering the wall.

Once the wind drops I know your birds will be quiet
your lugged-along starfish will softly fall off the wall
and I know how pale your legs stretching wide
I see the pieces of shell sticking up between your toes
all you can hide is your body in the sand.

A stairway leads into the sea
a wave breaks across a step

a ship pulling against its chains
its hull bulging

a driver opens the door of the moving car
and spits the betelnut onto the receding ground

a rolling cigarette sprays a circle of sparks

leaves patter against the passing carriage
on the metro a man's still wearing his helmet

there's the rain that's putting out the fire

there's a dog guarding two sheep
and trotting up and down the field

walk down a stairway

push off from a step.

Ostend

1. A bone lies in the sand
of an island that won't stay still

fixed is the form
the history of the wind
the drift of core and stone

the wind gets lost at sea
no wave has the same dimensions

sand blushes red in the sun
on the racecourse where dust billows
and the hooves beat the same rhythms
the hooves beat the sand to smithereens

the wind runs across an island
where it works its former imprints
the corestone of the beach
the racecourse by the coast
the rain in the sea.

2. The sea is the size of the wind
it flows over the corestone
worked by the wind for the sea

a sandpiper runs along the wind
and counts with its steps 5

the free patches of sand
and the crests of sea blowing free
and the clumps of wind tumbling free

rolling creeping sliding pieces

of an island that briefly stands still
on the edge of the sea

hooves pound down the stone
the sea carries the bone ashore
the sand cools in the wind

clumps of foam measure the size
of an island appearing for a little while
under a sandpiper's footsteps

beyond the wind above the sea.

If I'm lost for words,

or his voice that blocks them rings out,
the child's hair is cut

before the spread of her tresses,

know then
that a hand

rarely pushes and stops.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Erik Lindner

Erik Lindner is born in 1968 in The Hague, The Netherlands. He published five volumes of poetry and the novel *Naar Whitebridge*. His poetry has appeared in translated books in France, Germany and Italy. Lindner is editor of *Terras* magazine [www.tijdschriftterras.nl] and lives and works as a freelance writer in Amsterdam. In January 2018 *Zog* will be published, his sixth collection, at Van Oorschot. In 2012 he was a stipendiat of the Berliner Künstlerprogramm from the DAAD. Erik Lindner is literary advisor at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht.