

Tekst 5

Het volgende fragment is het begin van het boek Make Your Home Among Strangers, geschreven door Jennine Capó Crucet.

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- 1 CANALS ZIGZAG ACROSS THE CITY I used to call home. Those lines of murky water still run beside and under expressways, now choked by whorls of algae – mostly hydrilla, a well-known invasive, though that's likely the only algae I ever saw growing up in Miami. Even just ten years ago, before it took over, you could float tangle-free down those waterways from neighborhood to neighborhood, waving to strangers from your inner tube as they would wave back and wonder whether or not you needed rescuing.
- 2 While they were married, my parents used the canal across from the house they owned until just before I left for college in ways that make my current research group howl. Every Tuesday, at the weekly lab meetings I help our principal investigator run, each of us in the group is supposed to catalog the slow progress we're making toward understanding the demise of coral reef systems everywhere. But being one of the institute's lab managers means I've been working on this project longer than any of the postdocs or graduate students we hire, so my segment of the meeting has another goal: I try each week to make our PI laugh at least once by revealing, like a prize behind a curtain, some new and highly illegal thing my mom or dad tossed into that canal's water.
- 3 My dad: every single drop of motor oil ever drained from any of the dozen or so cars he's owned and sold over the years; a stack of loose CDs I once left on the couch and forgot, for days and days, to put away, each of them dotting the water's surface like a mirrored lily pad; an entire transmission. My mom: a dead hamster, cage and all, the failed project of my older sister Leidy, who was charged with keeping it alive over Christmas break when she was in fifth grade; any obvious junk mail, before I knew to grab the brochures from colleges out of her hands lest she send them sailing from her grip; dried-out watercolors, homemade tape recordings of her own voice, parched hunks of white clay – any and all signs of an attempt to discover some untapped talent she hoped she possessed wound up in the water. Too many things got dumped there. I know this was wrong – knew it then. Still, I say to my drop-jawed colleagues when they ask how we could've behaved so irresponsibly, what do you want me to tell you? I'm sorry, I say, but it's the truth.