

Morning Dialogue

Babs Gons

*Imagine your Island|
oerol.nl Tuesday, June 16, 2020*

if you've ever seen an orca swim
with a child held tightly on its skin
a voice that narrates
the child has been dead for days
suffocated in plastic
it will never leave your memory
no one wants to see its child die
an orca doesn't either

not a soul wants a sea of plastic
a forest illegally cleared to its roots
exhausted grounds
oil pipes leaking through a landscape
fresh water poisoned
no one wants forest fires
and extreme heat

what were we thinking all this time?
we have educated children
that now feel anger towards us
who will no longer accept it
who show us our true selves
a son who corrects me
when I present a useless plastic toy
what was I thinking
don't you know its impact?
don't you understand that someone's child
might suffocate in it?



no one wants to see its child die
no one wants its child to suffocate

neither did the mother of George Floyd
suffocated by the knee of the system
taking the breath of black and coloured
bodies away

while nature had some time to recover
the air taking a much-needed breath
from smothering industrial fumes,
the canals had the clearest water ever seen
and bees slightly grew their population

we heard them louder than ever
in this new silence

the devastating calls of mothers
who for centuries mourned their
black sons and daughters
now we hear loud and clear
the moment someone can't breathe

while empty streets get filled
with speeches
freedom songs
and clenched fists
the voices are louder than ever before...

...and this is where my poetry ends
because I am angry, coloured and woman
and don't know how to this in a poem on climate
I am an angry, coloured woman
who has spent days finding the right metaphors
to use soft and intelligent words to make
subtle connections
between a fight for better climate
and the fight for racial equality

all the while seeing how the world stands up
and gathers in mass on the streets of Amsterdam, Zwolle, in Tilburg,
in Berlin, in Parijs, in Minnesota,
in Monrovia, Rio, Seoul
and even in the middle of the rubble of Idiib in Syria

I am coloured and angry
mother of a son
daughter of a man
who bears the scars of all the violence
his dark skin endured
not only carried on his belly
but mostly on the inside of his mouth
in his declining sight
who calls me to ensure me to be careful
after he saw me on a photo of a Black Lives Matter protest
his fear as an inheritance of his time and his land

I am an angry, coloured woman
who has been hearing Black Lives Matter
as a mantra in her head for weeks
who cannot afford herself a moment
to give a fuck about the climate
because some of us are poisoned slowly
not by the polluted air
not by the contaminated drinking water
but by a society
a system
a world
that objects to us,
keeps us small
and makes us secondhand citizens

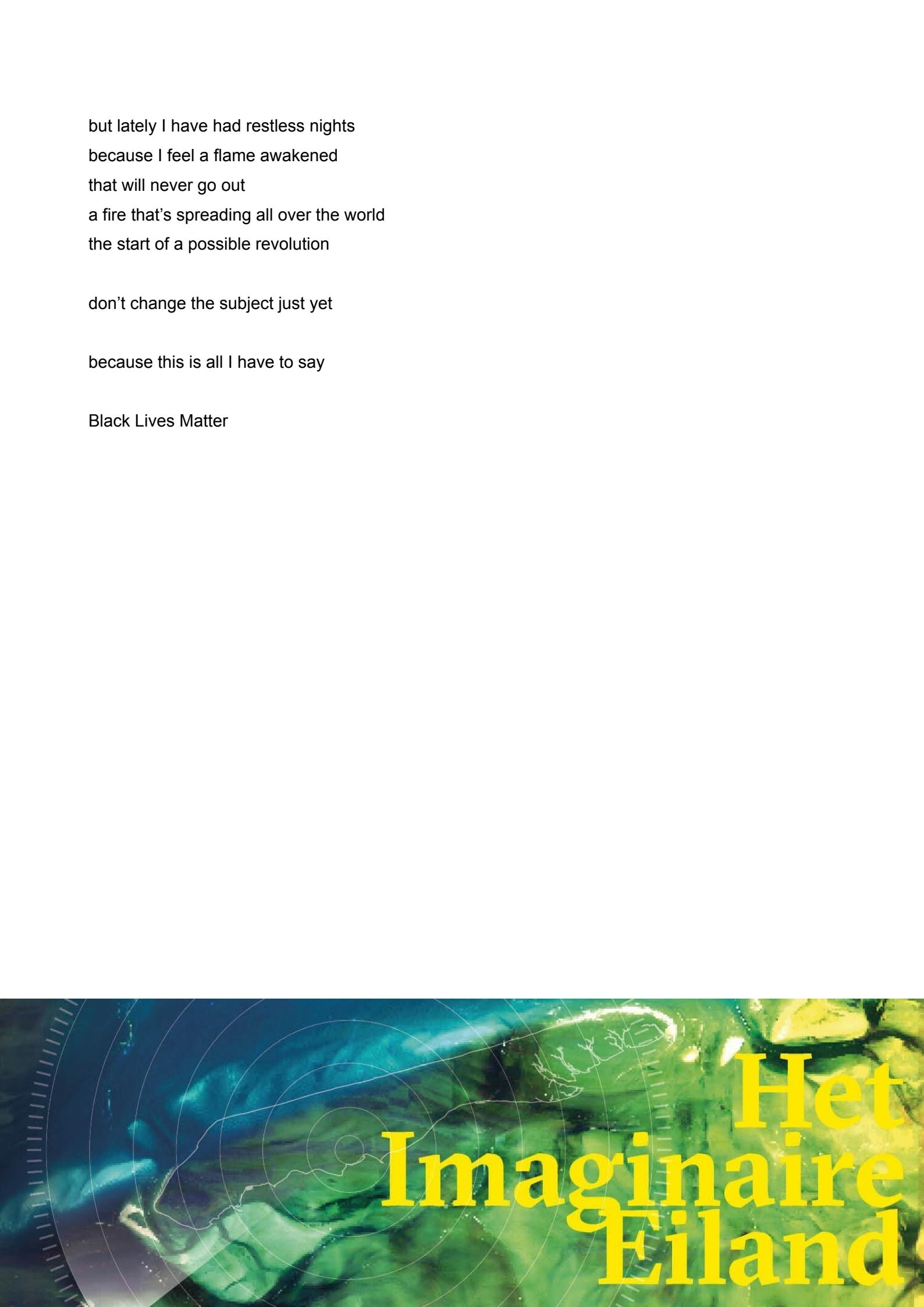
I am coloured
and angry and I dream of freedom
in a country
where we change the subject constantly
so that nothing has to change

but lately I have had restless nights
because I feel a flame awakened
that will never go out
a fire that's spreading all over the world
the start of a possible revolution

don't change the subject just yet

because this is all I have to say

Black Lives Matter



Het
Imaginaire
Eiland