

**WRITTEN IN THE WATERS****A MEMOIR OF HISTORY, HOME, AND BELONGING**

On sale 1/28/2025

Tara Roberts

6 × 9 | 400 pages | 100k words

Hardcover

\$30.00/\$41.00 CAN

“Tara Roberts is a pioneer and an inspiration.”—Elizabeth Gilbert, best-selling author of *Eat, Pray, Love*

This lyrical memoir is the epic story of one woman’s life-changing journey across four continents to reconcile the past with the present—and find her place in the world.

When Tara Roberts first glimpsed a picture of the underwater archaeology group Diving With A Purpose, it called out to her: here were Black women and men exploring the wrecks of slave ships long lost in time. Inspired, Roberts joined them—and started on a path of discovery that would take her to locales including Thailand and Sri Lanka, South Africa and Senegal, Benin and Togo, St. Croix and Costa Rica.

But for Roberts, the journey was also intensely personal. Inspired by the stories of those who lost their lives during the Middle Passage, she decides to plumb her own family history. With the honesty of Elizabeth Gilbert, the rawness of Cheryl Strayed, the courage of Tara Westover, and the poetry of Jesmyn Ward, Roberts interweaves the voices of the past with her own present to confront the realities of the slave trade—and tell a deeper story of Black identity.

KEY AUDIENCES:

- Women’s memoir enthusiasts, including fans of Elizabeth Gilbert, Jesmyn Ward, Tara Westover, and Imani Perry
- Black history enthusiasts, including fans of Nikole Hannah-Jones’ 1619 project, Clint Smith’s *How the Word Is Passed*, and Isabel Wilkerson’s *Caste*
- Adventure enthusiasts, including fans of Cheryl Strayed’s *Wild* and Bob Ballard’s *Into the Deep*

TARA ROBERTS is a National Geographic Explorer in Residence who reports on shipwrecks that once carried captive Africans during the transatlantic slave trade. Her research has led to the award-winning podcast series *Into the Depths*, downloaded more than a million times and featured in more than 100 media outlets. The first Black woman explorer to grace the cover of *National Geographic* magazine, the 2022 Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year, and a former fellow at MIT's Open Documentary Lab, Roberts has worked as an editor for publications including *Essence* and *CosmoGirl*. She lives in Atlanta, Georgia.



ADVANCE PRAISE

"Tara Roberts is a pioneer and an inspiration. Her work does not so much 'unearth' the past as pull it respectfully out of the depths of the sea and the shadows of history. I am deeply moved by this book, and by her journey."

—Elizabeth Gilbert, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Eat, Pray, Love*

"Tara Roberts' *Written In the Waters* is a gift— a visceral exploration of the submersed history of the Middle Passage through the eyes of an intrepid, feminist world traveler. In lyrical prose, her riveting account of the history of sunken slave ships—as she negotiates the challenges of midlife—makes this book an indelible read and a significant contribution to Black literary life."

—Michael Eric Dyson, the *New York Times* bestselling author of *What Truth Sounds Like*

"Tara Roberts is a force of nature and a beautiful storyteller. *Written in the Waters* is deeply personal and moving: a tale of identity and conviction."

—Robin Roberts, co-anchor, *Good Morning America*

"*Written in the Waters* will be forever written on my soul. Tara Roberts is fearless yet vulnerable, adventurous yet grounded. This memoir does the hard, necessary work of generational healing. With her words, Roberts charts a path to spiritual renewal."

—Tayari Jones, *New York Times* bestselling author of *An American Marriage*