CATHARSIS

A Poetic Memoir of Becoming



From the author of
Sonder : You're not alone in the cosmos of universe

AKSHITA SINGH

BlueRose ONE .com
Stories Matter
New Delhi • London

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS
India | U.K.

Copyright © Akshita Singh 2026

All rights reserved by author. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author. Although every precaution has been taken to verify the accuracy of the information contained herein, the publisher assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions. No liability is assumed for damages that may result from the use of information contained within.

BlueRose Publishers takes no responsibility for any damages, losses, or liabilities that may arise from the use or misuse of the information, products, or services provided in this publication.



For permissions requests or inquiries regarding this publication, please contact:

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS
www.BlueRoseONE.com
info@bluerosepublishers.com
+91 8882 898 898
+4407342408967

ISBN: 978-81-6744-158-4

Cover Design: Deepak Katheria
Typesetting: Manisha Rawat

First Edition: September 2026

For everyone who mistook survival for living.

A Note to The Reader

Some poems are in English, some in Hindi. I left them in the language they first arrived in because translation often explains what poetry simply lets you feel.

Every blueprint
must fracture
before its scars
start healing
to unfold a lesson of a lifetime.

Contents

I. The Blueprint 1

Borrowed Blueprints 3

Borrowed Reflections 7

Things in My Life Come in Twos 9

Semicolon 12

Dear First Teacher, ... 15

बचपन 19

Flatlined 21

23,64,300 Miles 23

Almost There 25

Our Generation 29

II. The Fracture 31

What Good Will It Do? 33

The geography of an escape 37

Petrichor 41

The weight of remembering 43

Sandglass 47

The art of falling apart 49

Museum of Memories 51

आईना 55

When even ink refused me 57

III. The Scar 59

Between two selves 61

First Love 65

The virtue of patience 69

You....73
तेरे आने के बाद....77
Between Time Zones....81
इरादें....85
Sporadic Occurrences....89
Torn....93
Beware of a poet....95

IV. Healing....97

Take up space....99
Those Two....101
महरूम इबादत से तेरी....105
When I chose healing....107
Beyond Blood and Bones....111
The Anatomy of Becoming....115
Dear Change....119
To the Corner of My Memories....121
Vanilla & Fries....123
Home....125
संगम....127
आज़ादी....131
My younger self....133

V. The Unfolding....135

Unnamed Years....137
1001 Complete Poems....139
To Be Seen....141
The Silence That Grows....145
रह-गुज़र....147
The life I owe myself....149

Discharge Summary 150
Epilogue- I chose me. 155
Acknowledgements 157
Author Biography 165

I. The Blueprint

the life that was written even before i ever held a pen.

I lived inside
borrowed blueprints

and mistook
borrowed reflections

for the **life**
that always came **in twos.**

Until
a semicolon

became
my **first teacher**.

I searched
for **बचपन**

only to find it
flatlined

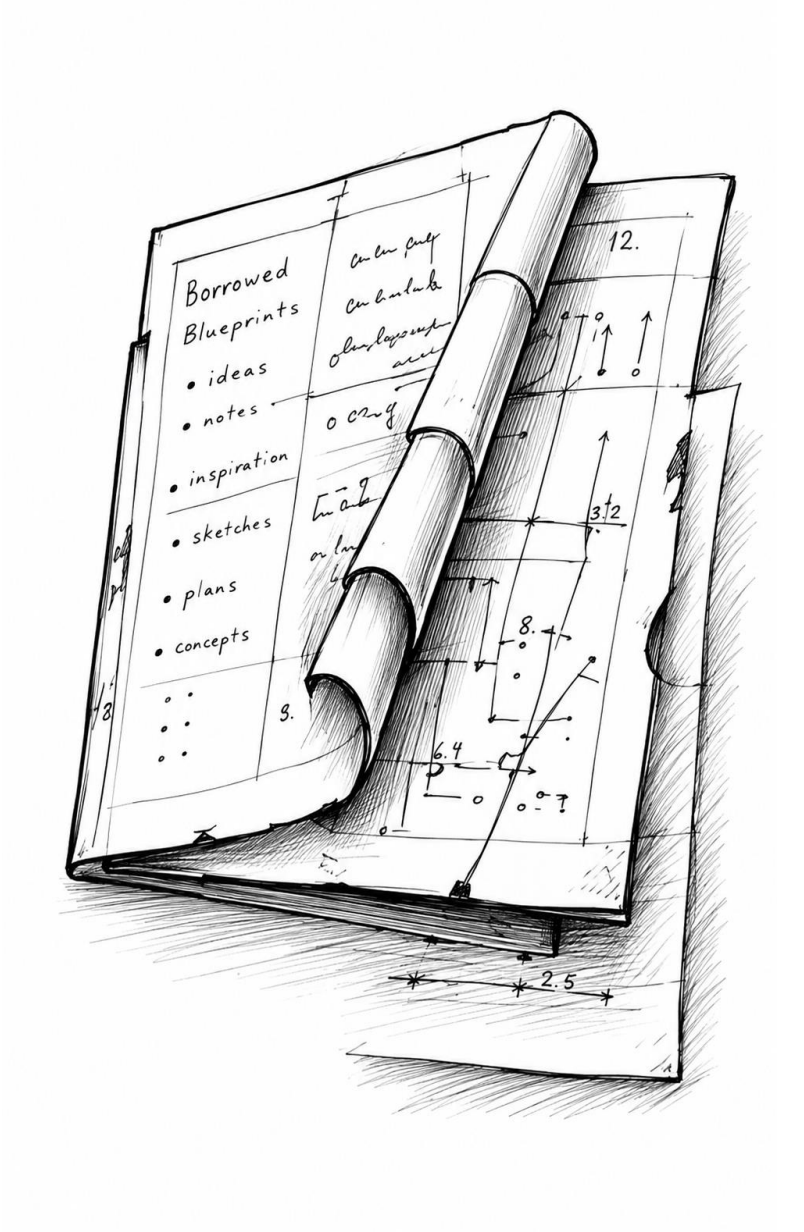
23,64,300 miles
away from home.

Now I am
almost there

finding myself

among

our generation.


Borrowed
Blueprints
• ideas
• notes
• inspiration
• sketches
• plans
• concepts
12.
3.2
8.
6.4
2.5

Borrowed Blueprints

For as long as I am alive, I shall rise again.

I was *seven*,

when I learned to iron my wings flat.

Apparently, birds that don't flutter much are easier to keep.

I was *eleven*,

living inside a greenhouse, watched, watered and rotated towards the light,

told that it was for my growth,

never asked if I preferred the wild.

At *thirteen*,

I became a blueprint of perfection,

inked red till my edges bled redemption,

controlled measurements of the whispered hustle,

corners sanded smoother so I would fit the pre-approved borders.

Fifteen,

found me building fortresses out of paper,

spines of books stacked high enough,

to let no intruder enter

and muffle

the sound of my own becoming.

After all,

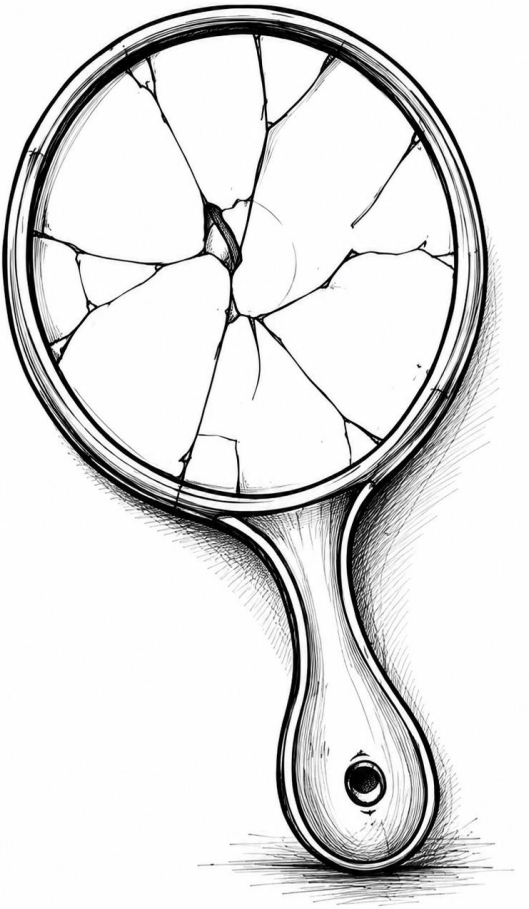
Ink made better company than mirrors.

Seventeen was a slow eclipse,

constellations I memorized, rearranged themselves without warning.

Some stars don't fall. They just move out of your sky, once they take all your light.

At *nineteen*,
I mastered elasticity, how to bend without appearing broken,
how to become water in any container,
how to call erosion adaptability,
molded enough to fit their palms,
but never quite enough to keep my shape.
Twenty-one turned me into a trophy on my own shelf,
polished and positioned,
I became proof of the system that works,
while the glass around me grew thicker.
And at *twenty-three*, I became tectonic,
traced their cracks back to the tremors,
Watched old patterns crumbling, baseless architecture.
For as long as I am alive,
I will restart
till I leave the patterns that aren't mine,
till the borrowed blueprints burn to ash, and I sit in the embers, sifting for what was always mine,
till the echoes loosen their grip,
till what stands in the silence is only ***me, myself, and I.***



Borrowed Reflections

Who am I without the noise of comparison,

when the room is quiet and it's just me and a page?

Who am I without borrowed reflections,

when no one is watching me become?

I sit with ink like it understands me, like it has been waiting patiently for me to stop performing and start confessing.

Because paper doesn't rush me, it doesn't measure me, it doesn't ask why I'm not someone else.

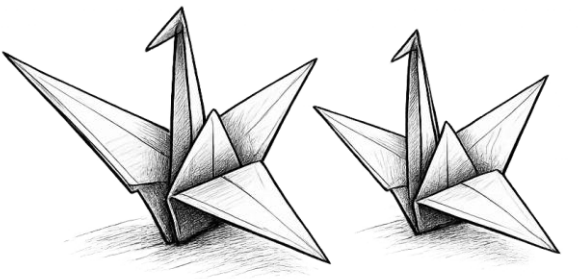
It just listens to the trembling truths, to the half-formed thoughts, to the parts of me I keep hiding in daylight.

And somewhere between the first word and the last hesitation, I begin to meet myself not the version I compare, but the version I am.

Maybe that's the quiet magic of it

that I don't need a mirror when I have honesty.

Because in the end, no crowd will ever know me the way my own words do.



Things in My Life Come in Twos

things in my life come in twos

like how i always have a backup or two

like how i buy two pairs of socks
just to be square
what if i lose one
without one to spare
it was considered "safe"
to always know what life has next

things in my life come in twos

like how i used to keep a pen for my exam
but another for a friend
who may forget
and need my help in their despair
how i was prepared for the worst
even when, it wasn't mine to care

things in my life come in twos

the dream of mine
and the troubled inherited reality of life
how i aspired
the road not taken
but the risk was too high
to be taken
so i was left with the latter
a shattered mirror
of a deformed pattern

things in my life come in twos

the mind
so weak
to doubt itself.

the heart
so brave
to keep going anyway.

things in my life come in twos

one blueprint
that everyone applauded.
one soul
quietly disappearing inside it.

things in my life come in twos

the life i was expected to build.
the life
i kept meeting
only in poems.

one version of me
that survived.

another
that silently waited
to thrive.

things in my life come in twos

one path
that looked beautiful
from the outside.

another
that kept calling me home.

and somewhere
between the two

i forgot

that i was allowed
to draw a third.

one that wasn't yours.
one that wasn't theirs.

one that,
for the very first time,

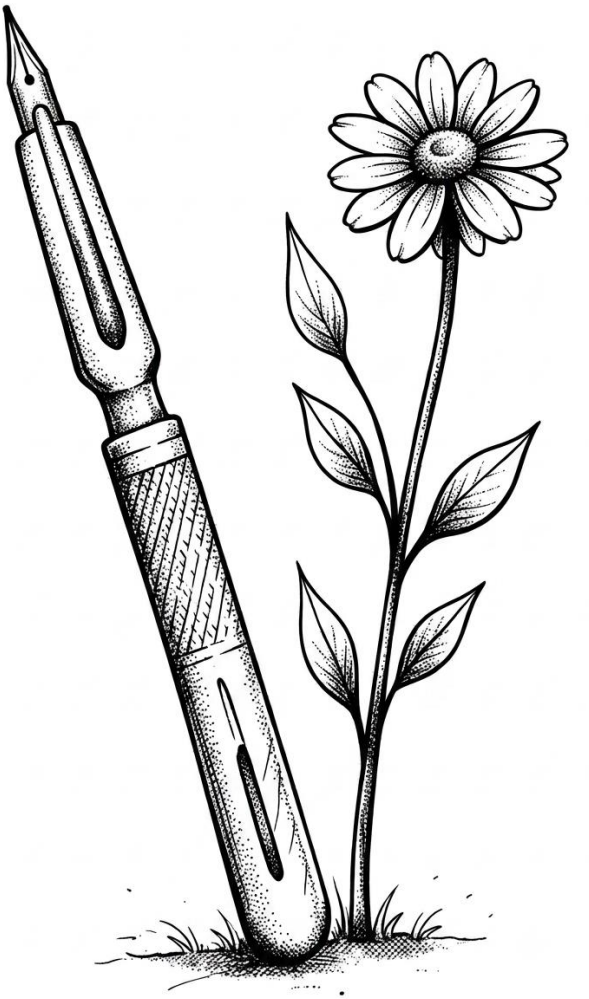
was only mine.



Semicolon

not a lot of people know this,
but the tattoo on my right arm
is the only reason
my story
didn't end
mid-sentence.
a semicolon,
where i almost stopped.
and a feather,
because somehow,
i kept choosing
ink
over endings.
every time
my mind got loud,
i wrote it
quieter
on paper.
every time
i felt like disappearing,
i left pieces of myself
inside poems
instead.
it doesn't point north.
it doesn't point south.
it doesn't point
anywhere
the world understands.
it only points
away
from the version of me

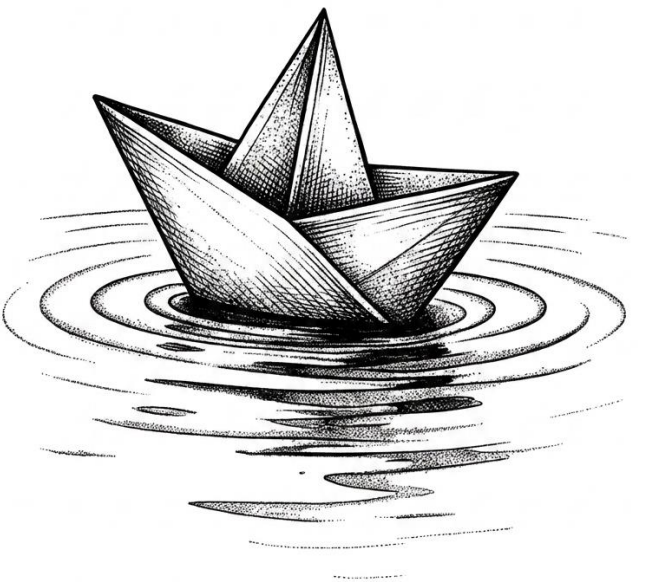
that didn't make it.
sometimes,
surviving
is a direction enough
to follow.



Dear First Teacher,

i'm sorry
the first thing
i learned about you
was your anatomy.
i wish
i had known
your favorite song.
whether you preferred
tea
or coffee.
whether your children
miss you now
or if you even had children.
whether you laughed
with your whole body
or just your eyes.
instead,
i learned
the course
of your arteries, veins, and nerves.
the layers
beneath your skin.
the places
where nerves
refuse
to forgive mistakes.
and somehow,
through all of it,
you taught me
the most humane lesson
medicine ever could.
that even after death,
someone
can spend
their whole body

making sure
another person
learns
how to save one.
thank you.



बचपन

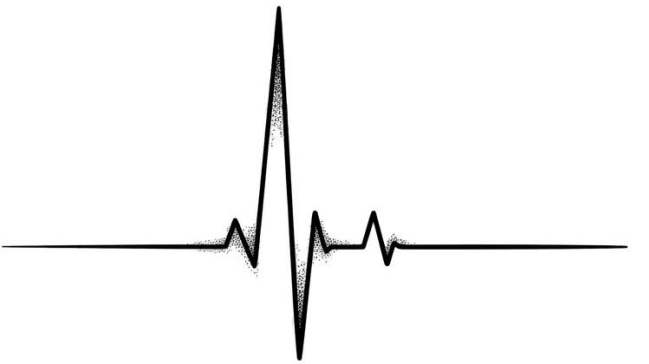
न जाने कब मैंने बेमतलब की बातें करते-करते
मतलबी ज़माने का यूँ ही मतलब समझ लिया।

कि मेरे ज़ेहन से उठता हर शब्द अब,
सिर्फ़ मेरे ख़यालों में गुम होकर रह जाता है।

ज़िंदगी के भार में लिपटे हुए हर ग़म से वाक़िफ़ हूँ,
ऐसा क्यों लगता है मुझे?
कि उस ग़म में गुम हो जाऊँ,
तो भी पता नहीं लगता है मुझे।

कब खो दिया मैंने वो हँसता रूमानी चेहरा मेरा,
कि अब पिछली यादों के डब्बों को
खोलने से भी डर लगता है।

कोई तो रूबरू करवाओ
बेख़ौफ़ हुए बचपन से
मेरा फिर से
बेवजह मुस्कुराने का मन करता है।



Flatlined

This exam was different.
I thought I'd be scared,
or panicking,
or at least feeling something.

But there was just
silence.
Utter, dire, complete stillness.

It didn't just exhaust me;
it dipped me and flatlined me.

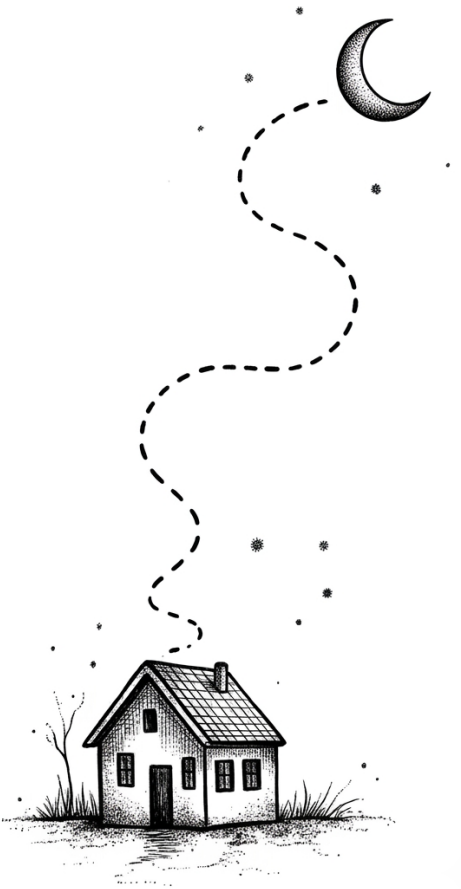
It somehow drained my capacity,
and then pushed me beyond that.

Beyond fear.
Beyond stress.
Beyond who I was
and who I am.

I've reached this plateau
where nothing feels extreme,
where even breaking down feels like effort.

And that's the scariest part
not the exam

but the moment you realize
you had to lose the ability to feel
just
to
survive
it.



23,64,300 Miles

I travelled 23,64,300 miles away to complete a dream that was never mine,

Away from the comfort space of home and the familiar warmth of faces I've left behind.

The echoes of laughter now fade into whispers,

Replaced by the hollow hum of machines and time.

My soul wanders, lost in the maze of ambition,

Chasing shadows that vanish at the break of dawn.

The dream I carry is heavy and cold,

A burden I never chose, yet cannot release.

Each mile stretches further into the void,

And every step feels like a betrayal to myself,

As I drift further from who I used to be.

I look back, but the path is gone,

Swallowed by the distance and the darkness of regret.

Home is just a memory, a fleeting illusion,

And I, a stranger in a world I never wanted.

But there's no turning back, no solace in return,

For the dream is all that remains,

A cruel reminder of what was lost,

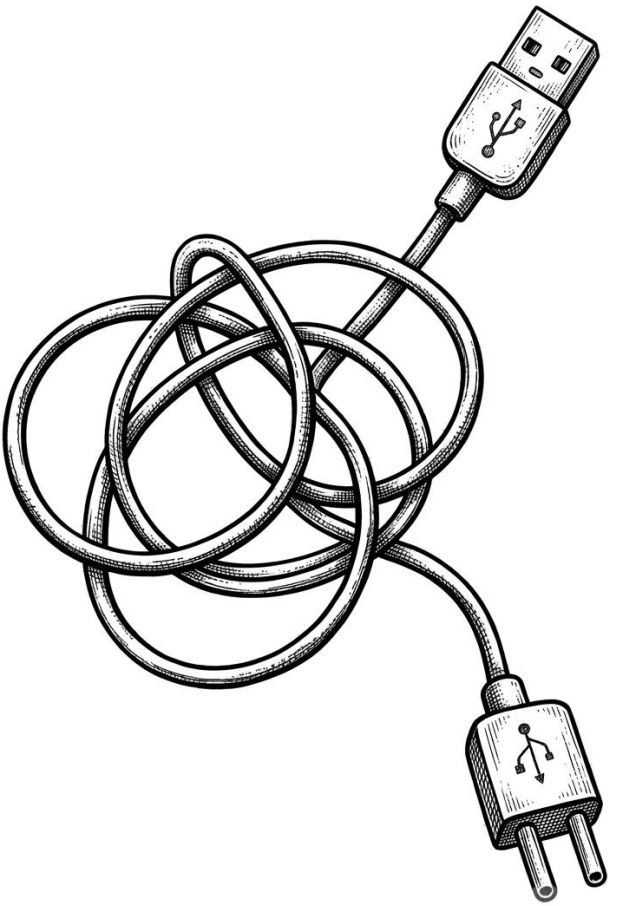
In the pursuit of something that was never mine.


The Heart:
A pump. It's only job.
To push blood through...
I. to arteries.
II. to lungs.
Then rest... wait.
Rest... The heart must
Wait. Wait for the
lungs to do their job.
Wait for the blood
to come back.
Rest... then repeat.
blood repeat.
It's just a pump.
Rest... The heart must
Wait. Wait for the
to come back.
Rest... then repeat.
Rest... then pump.

Almost There

No one tells you how quickly time slips in med school
how four years can feel like a lifetime and still not feel like enough to save someone's lifeline
One day you're flipping through your first-year notes,
terrified of pronouncing "anconeus" wrong,
and the next, you're standing in a ward,
taking clinical history of the patient
even when you still feel like a kid playing pretend.
It's surreal.
It's raw.
It's real.
Between long nights and early postings,
I made memories that medicine could never teach.
Trips that felt like breath;
mountains, oceans,
broken sandals, shared maggi, strong filter coffee
conversations at 2 a.m. that made the chaos make sense.
I've loved
softly, stupidly, sometimes deeply.
I've lost
more than I thought I could bear.
But somehow, I paved my path.
Now I'm here,
with final year looming like a closing chapter
I'm not ready to end.
I've learned more than just medicine and surgery.
I've learned how to be exhausted and still show up.

How to stay soft in a system that asks you to be steel.
How to listen
really listen
to silence, to suffering,
to people and sometimes, to myself.
But the truth knocks late,
while uncertainty claws at my neck.
I don't know what comes next.
Even when I try my best.
There's no map for this part.
No syllabus, no seniors with answers.
Just a blurry idea of who I want to be,
and the weight of everything I've seen and survived.
It's terrifying to not know where I'm going,
to not know who I'll be outside these hospital walls.
But still somewhere deep beneath the nerves,
I'm excited.
Excited for what's waiting.
To carry these four years with me;
the lessons, the people, the nights I wanted to quit,
and the mornings I didn't.
To show up in the world
with what this place has made of me.
Maybe I won't have it all figured out.
Maybe I'll stumble.
But I'll walk forward anyway
heart open,
head high,
ready for whatever this next chapter brings.



Our Generation

My generation is going to be known for wanting to die
and making memes on how to die
I'm sorry if I sound a little dry
But this generation has made me tough enough
to not cry
And ask for help whenever I feel wry
My generation is going to be known for growing up too fast
Making memories in a way that won't last
And breaking promises like it’s meant to be broken
And live a life with made-up patterns of devoid attention
Where social media has more power on our minds
Where ads will somehow control our grind
But my generation
is going to be known for breaking stereotypes
For finally realizing the real lies that relays behind the real eyes.
My generation is going to manage out of its own mess with time
And to those who say that
this is a generation full of confused minds lonely hearts and broken people,
i ask which one was not?
So don't worry about us,
we too will find our ways
to live,
to love and
to heal,
as time passes by.

II. The Fracture

where certainty gave way to survival.

What Good Will It Do?
to lie in
The Geography of an Escape,
as **Petrichor**
rejuvenates my senses.

The Weight of Remembering
brings me closer,

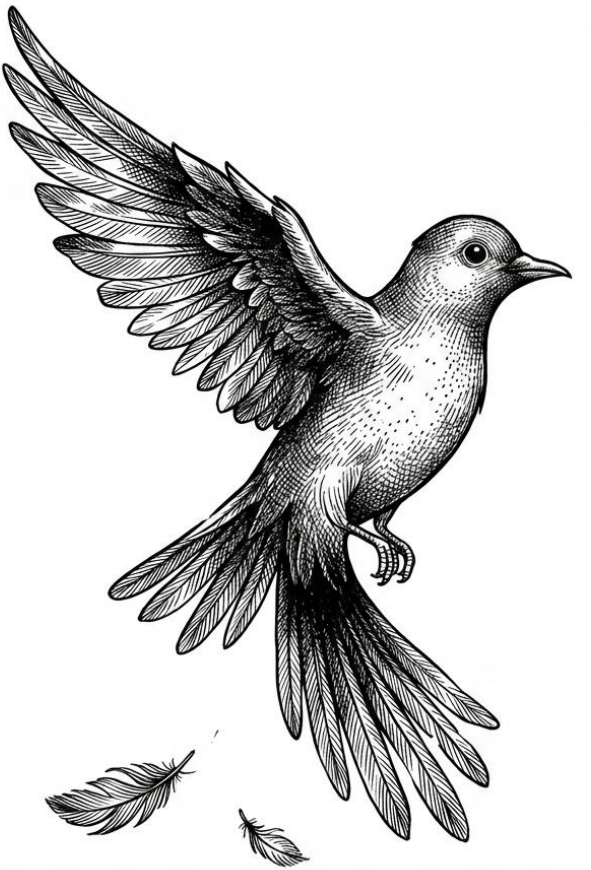
but the **Sandglass**
follows **The Art of Falling Apart.**

I am left with nothing but
An Unfinished Sentence

and a **Museum of Memories,**

reflecting back on a time (**आईना**)

When Even Ink Refused Me.



What Good Will It Do?

what good will it do,
if by the end of five and a half years,
i'm no longer alive
in all the ways that mattered?
what good will it do,
if all that's left of me
is a degree
hanging on a wall,
while the person who dreamt of it
quietly disappeared?
what good will it do,
if every morning
feels borrowed,
and every tomorrow
feels heavier
than the one before?
i always wanted to fly.
instead,
i watched my own wings
become prerequisites.
attendance.
internals.
competencies.
exams.
another checklist.
another year.
another piece of me
left behind.

i wanted to see the world.

now the world
fits inside lecture halls,
hostel rooms,
libraries,
and hospital corridors.

i wanted to write poetry.

now all i know
is how muscles begin,
where arteries end,
and all the different ways
a human body can fail.

nobody ever taught me

what happens

when it's your own.

i keep telling myself

just one more exam.

just one more posting.

just one more year.

as though
the version of me
waiting at the finish line

hasn't already
walked away.

they tell me

it'll all be worth it.

i wish

i knew
what "it"

was.

because every time
i look in the mirror,

i meet someone
who looks a little more like me,

and feels
a little less.

maybe this is what becoming is.

maybe you're supposed
to lose yourself

before you find yourself.

or maybe

some people
are simply better
at getting lost.

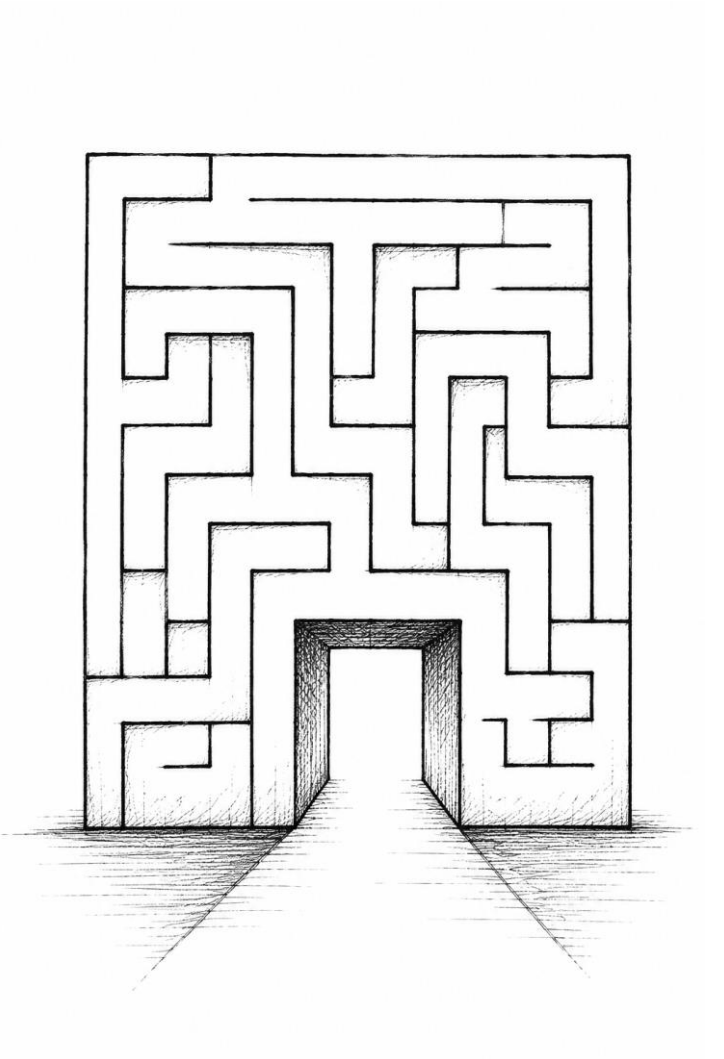
what good will it do,

if one day
i finally become
everything i worked for,

only to realize

i wasn't there

to become it.



The geography of an escape

And yet I find myself at the same crossroads again.
Clawing at the walls of "the unknown," I begged
to enter.
Wanting out,
but every exit looks like a different kind of
prison.
And still, I knock just to surrender.
It's that time again,
when anything,
absolutely anything;
feels better than this room I know too well.
The walls hum with routine.
and the ceiling stares like it knows my name.
Everything outside seems softer, lighter,
as if the air is easier to breathe in every place I've never been.
Like the sky bends different for other people.
Like joy is a house just across the street,
but I'm not on the guest list.
I hope to make it out of here someday
but someday is cruel,
it stretches thin like skin too tight on bone.
I want to run,
but I don't know where my legs should go.
I want to scream,
but nothing comes out that isn't already silent.
My fear follows me like a second skin.

I fight it on the outside
but let it hold me close when I'm alone.
It knows me.
It tucks me in at night.
Sometimes, it's the only thing that stays.
Hope comes and goes.
Most days, it's too loud to believe in.
Other days, it's the only sound keeping my ribs from caving.
I am tired of loving the idea of escape
more than I've ever loved a place.
Tired of carrying hope
like it's a curse that keeps me upright just enough to fall again.
And maybe this is the truth:
I don't want to be anywhere.
I just don't want to be here.
Maybe the answer lies in ceasing to exist.
But apparently, no one cares.



PETRICHOR

Rain brings back my old friend
melancholy
The sweet-smelling petrichor,
recently summoned by a spell of rain
Reminds me of the time when
Tranquillity wasn't bought with money or dime
where the hues of sky weren't pale grey
and the moon wasn't blinded by the fluorescent shine
where peace was as natural as breathing
And time flew by,
without even thinking twice.

The sweet smelling petrichor,
recently summoned by a spell of rain
makes me think,
that if we could turn back time
And see the world blue, bright
Would we be the same,
walking down those weary lines?

They say that, change is the only constant thing in life
And I agree with it, without even thinking twice
But,
when rain hits at night
And I'm walking by the lonesome Nile
Makes me wish, that we could all just hit a
Pause, skip, and rewind



The weight of remembering

If life doesn't kill me, nostalgia will.
Because some nights, it hits me
like a wave I didn't see coming,
like a memory that still smells like rain,
and I swear, I can feel my sixteen-year-old self
sitting beside me,
legs crossed on the floor,
telling me, "This isn't what we imagined."
And she's right.
It isn't.
And I wish I had the courage to tell her,
that it gets better,
But I stopped giving myself fake promises
As I grew bitter and older.
I'm twenty-two,
and I'm supposed to be young and wild and free,
but mostly I'm tired,
half-alive between deadlines and daydreams,
trying to remember when I stopped feeling like a kid.
Somewhere between heartbreak and rent,
between losing touch and losing faith,
I grew up.
And I hate it.
Because adulting is this,
doing your best and still feeling behind,
missing people who are still alive,

missing yourself like she’s a city you can’t go back to.

And I do.

I miss her.

I miss the version of me that didn’t flinch before laughing,

that didn’t measure her worth in productivity,

that believed in forever

with people, with dreams, with herself

Who loved fiercely, wholeheartedly and didn't think twice before giving,

Who wore heart on her sleeves and did not know the definition of "breadcrumbing" and "situationships".

Now, nostalgia sits on my chest like a weight,

like the ghost of every “what if” I didn’t chase.

And I keep wondering

if I’m this nostalgic at twenty-two,

what the hell will I be at sixty?

A walking scrapbook?

A graveyard of golden days?

A soft ache with wrinkles and tea stains?

I joke about it,

but it terrifies me

how I can miss moments

even as I’m still living them,

how I can look at my friends laughing

and already feel the sting

of knowing this won’t last forever.

Sometimes I just want to pause it all

the light, the noise, the faces

just so I can breathe and say,

“Remember this.”

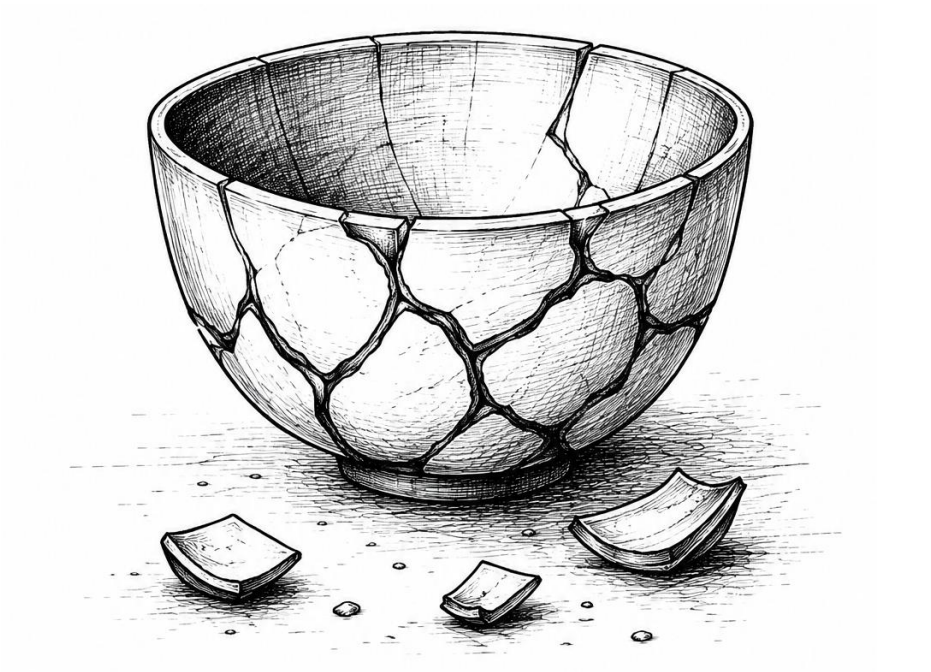
Because I know one day,

I'll ache for this too.
And I hate that.
I hate how everything beautiful
already feels like it's slipping away,
like nostalgia is always one step behind me,
collecting pieces of the present
before I even have the chance to hold them.
If life doesn't kill me, nostalgia will
the slow, tender kind of death,
where you keep living but every heartbeat
echoes something you've already lost.
And maybe that's what growing up is
learning how to carry ghosts gently,
learning how to love what's gone
without breaking every time, you remember.
I'm twenty-two,
and I don't have it figured out.
But I'm learning that missing things
means I felt them deeply,
means I lived.
So, if nostalgia kills me,
at least it means I was alive enough
to be haunted



Sandglass

वक़्त रेत की तरह
ऐसा बह गया हाथ से
कि
हमने खुद को आज,
कल की फ़िक्र में खो दिया।
दो पल रुक न सके मगर,
कल की सुबह के कारण
आज की रात यूँ ही बिता दिया।
चैन ढूँढ़ा आज में मगर,
कल की चिंता सताने लगी,
और इसी कल की चिंता में
न जाने कब खुद को भी भुला दिया।



The art of falling apart

बिखरना शायद हमारी फ़ितरत में लिखा है, जनाब।
क्योंकि इंसानियत से भरे सैलाब को
तुम डोर समेत कब तक रखलोगे
बाकी,
उस सैलाब में डूब जाना
या तैरना सीख जाना
अब तुम्हारी मर्ज़ी है
क्योंकि
छोर से बंधी नाव मैंने
इस तलक मीलों दूर बांधली हैं।



Museum of Memories

I am a museum
of everything
I don't
want to
talk about.

Glass cases full of almosts,
of almost said, almost stayed, almost healed.
Each memory pinned like a butterfly
that forgot how to fly the moment I named it.

There's a room
where laughter echoes too loudly,
because it was used
to drown something out.

There's another
that smells like antiseptic and regret
where I learned how to stitch myself shut
without anaesthesia.

Do not touch,
the signs say.
But it's not for you.
It's for me.

Because some things,
if handled too roughly,
start breathing again.

In the west wing,
I keep the people
I never became.

Versions of me
who chose softer exits,

louder voices,
less forgiveness.

They stand still
not because they're at peace,
but because I left them there
mid-sentence.

And the darkest corner?

That's where I keep
the things I pretend
didn't hurt.

No lighting.
No labels.
Just a quiet understanding
that if I ever look too closely,
I might have to feel them properly.

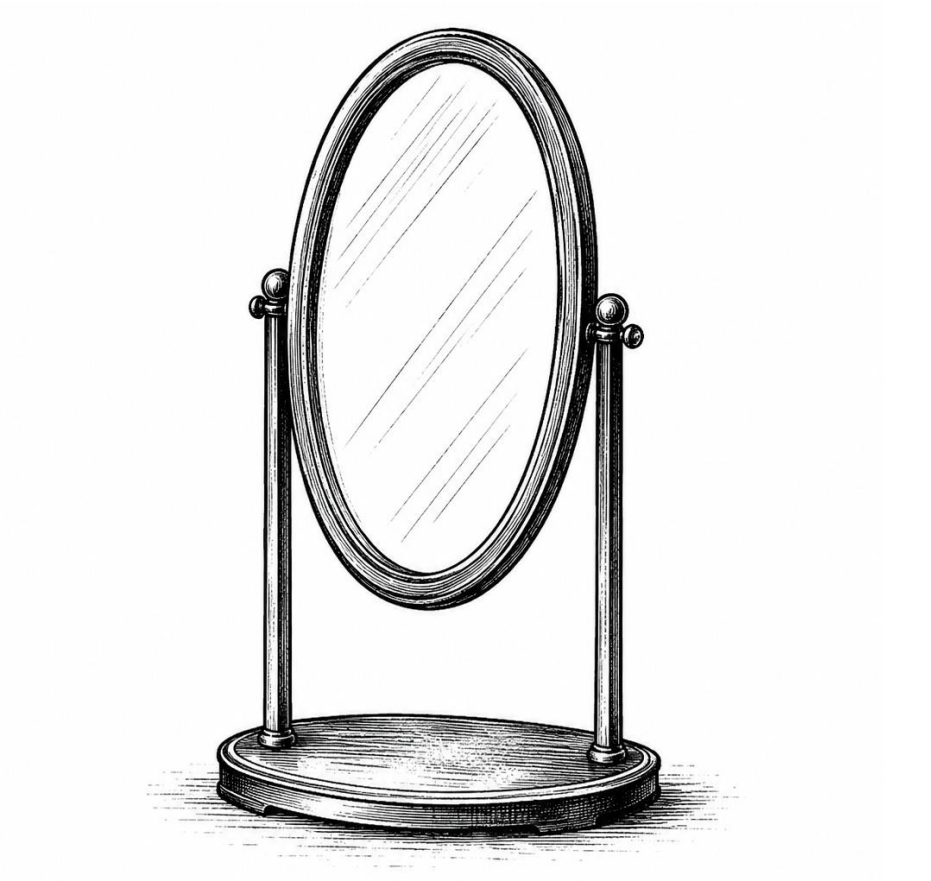
And I'm not sure
I'd survive that
on a random Tuesday.

So, I walk through myself
like a careful visitor.

Not too fast.
Not too curious.
Not too honest.

Just enough
to remember
what I've buried

and just little enough
to keep calling it
history
instead of
wound.



आईना

मैंने तुम्हें घंटों आईने के सामने
खुद को निहारते देखा है।

बेफ़िज़ूल रुस्वाइयों में
खुद को धकेलते देखा है।

हालाँकि, आत्मिक लापरवाही
खूब होती है तुम्हारी,

लेकिन खुद को तुम ही से लड़ता
देख मैंने न जाने कितनी बार

तेरे अधूरे हिस्सों को
बटोरा है।



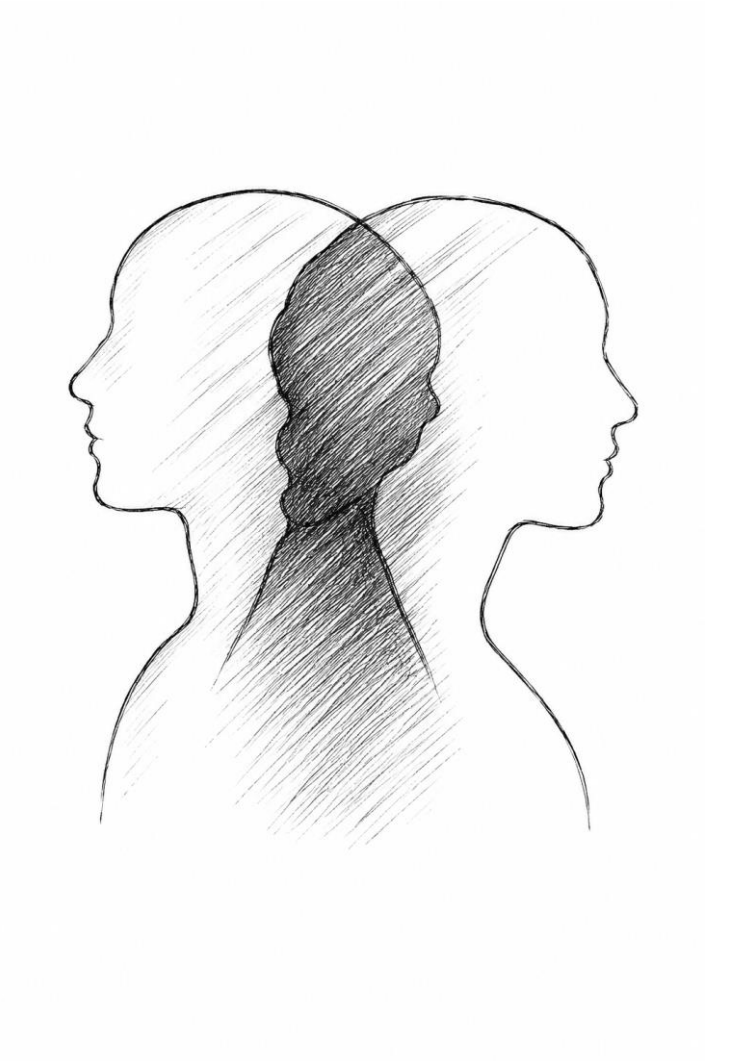
When even ink refused me

I cannot bring myself to pen down the emotions I've been feeling lately
I sit here with endless stories,
It's as though my internal chaos has finally reached the brim.
Where even ink isn't able to save the day
No,
not without making me dim
What happens when you lose the only thing that helped you SURVIVE?
What happens when even your words fail to suffice
Maybe,
not every wound
arrives
asking
to become
a poem.

III. The Scar

every wound leaves a language behind.

Between Two Selves,
my **First Love**
taught me the
Virtue of Patience
by recognizing **You**
because **तेरे आने के बाद,**
I found myself **Between Time Zones**
trying to understand my **इरादें**
among the **Sporadic Occurrences** that kept us alive
I was **Torn**
until I learnt to
Be(come) aware of a Poet.



Between two selves

I often wonder
how life came to this

how I became something
that exists in fragments,
like a sentence
no one finished writing.

I exist in bits and pieces
a laugh here,
a breakdown there,
a version of me
left behind in every city
I ever called home.

And if you ask me honestly?

I exist in the duality
of my own choice.

Not fate.
Not circumstance.
Not bad luck.

Me.

I am the hand
that built both doors
and the fear
that refuses to walk through either.

One life calls me softly
steady, respectable, safe
a life that fits neatly
into expectations,
where I heal others
and slowly forget
how to feel myself.

The other
it roars.

It asks me to burn,
to write like I'm bleeding,
to live like I might lose everything
and still call it worth it.

And I
I stand in between,
splitting myself
into something survivable.

Because choosing one
feels like betrayal.

Because choosing one
means admitting
the other version of me
was never meant to live.

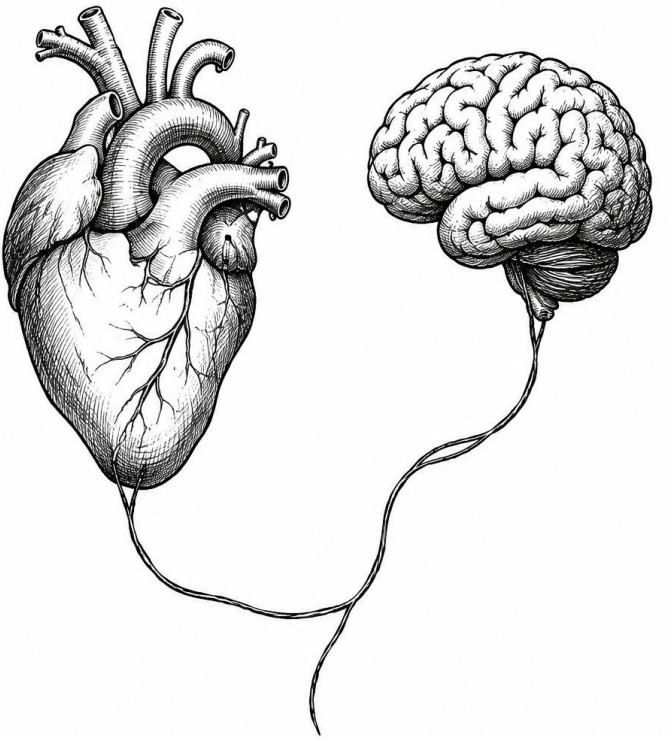
So I don't choose.

I linger
in the almost,
in the nearly,
in the what-if.

And the chaos?
God, the chaos

it doesn't consume me.

It sustains me.
It is the only place
where all my versions
are still breathing at once.



First Love

they asked me once,

if i still think about psychology.

and i laughed,

because that's like asking

if i still think

about my first love.

of course i do.

i knew her

before medicine knew me.

before anatomy
borrowed my mornings.

before pathology
borrowed my afternoons.

before medicine
quietly borrowed
everything else.

i thought,

there was only room

for one dream.

so i folded one carefully,

placed it somewhere safe,

and promised

i'd come back.

i didn't.

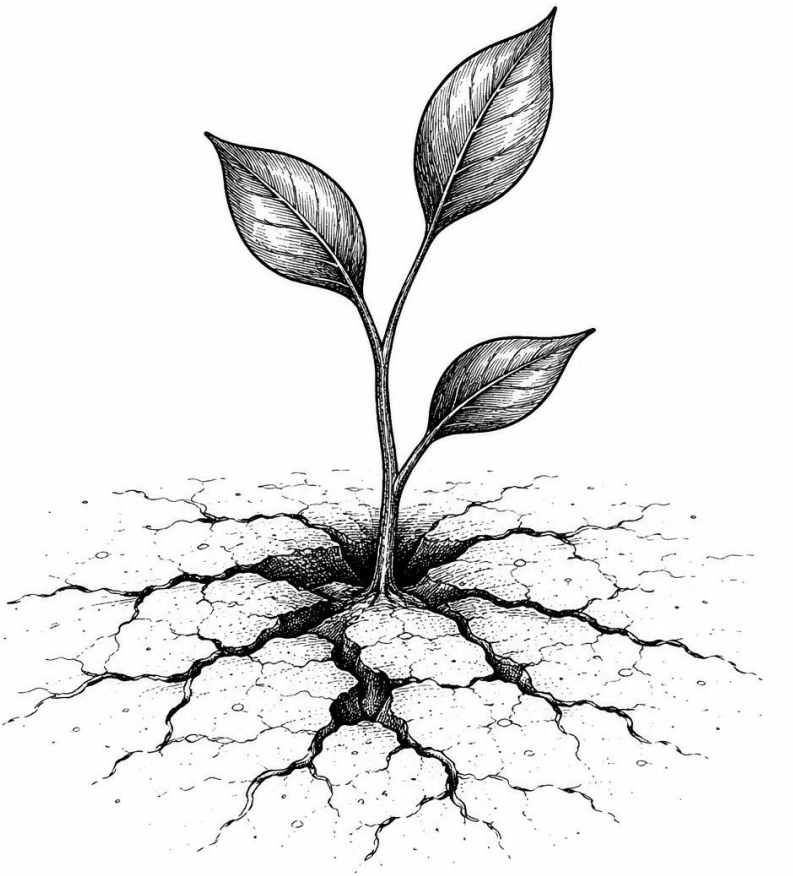
instead,

i learned

how to hear
a murmur.

how to recognize
a stroke.
how to deliver
a child.
and somewhere,
between nineteen subjects,
night duties,
and becoming
someone else's doctor,
i stopped asking
what happened
to the girl
who wanted
to understand
the mind.
i think
i mourned her
for a while.
i mistook
missing her
for failing her.
but grief
has a funny way
of teaching you
that love
doesn't disappear
just because
life
changes direction.
because every patient
who sits

a little longer,
every silence
i choose not to interrupt,
every story
i listen to
before i look
at the investigations,
she is there.
the girl
who wanted psychology.
she never left.
she just found
another way
to stay.
and maybe
you don't always
end up
with your first love.
but if you're lucky,
it teaches you
how to love
everything
that comes after.



The virtue of patience

Patience is a virtue
that I am not used to.
If I ever want an answer
I usually just get it
eventually.

Time has taught me everything I know
but patience is something
that doesn't come to me that naturally.
I am used to chasing my goals
perfection,
dreams,
and ambitions.

Well,
until I met you.

Now I am stuck in between
the probability of having you
and not having you
at all.

It sounds selfish, I know
but for the first time in my life
this isn't a checklist I'm waiting to complete,
not a goal I want to finish
but a never-ending experience.

I want to wait
for as long as it takes
if it means that it's you
whose side I'm walking on
at the end of the day.

I am impatient
with high dreams to achieve
and you scare me to my core.

You're everything I hope for
and everything that terrifies me.

You're my paradox
that I get to love
with my free will.

Yet, I keep replaying
tangential scenarios in my mind
ones where you *stay*
and ones where you let go,
and somehow
you let go more than you stay.

What else do you expect
but the heart to be crushed
by the very person
it has loved with all its strength?

It's something I am used to.

But the probability of you staying
is what truly scares me.

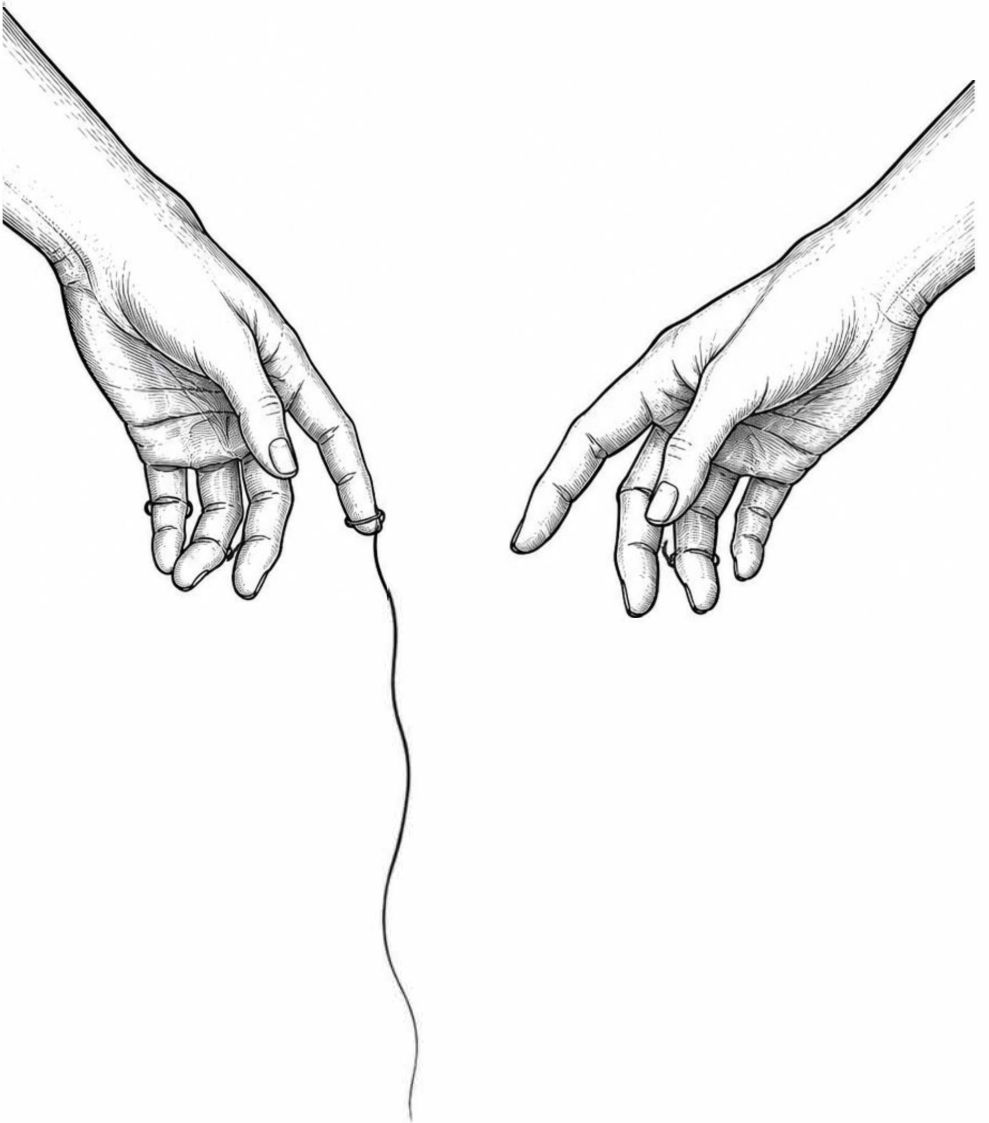
That the peace of you staying
might not surpass
my fear of abandonment.
That you'll see me for who I am
and not the person
you wish to care about.
That you'll know
my monsters cannot be killed.

That you'll see
I am my biggest cheerleader
and my worst enemy.
That I am a paradox
just like you

holding up a mirror to your wounds,
showing them exactly
how it feels.

That I am not lovable.
Not even to me.

Oh,
but the probability of it all
is a virtue of patience
that I am slowly learning
to live with.



YOU

I tell myself I don't need love.
That I don't need reassurance.
That I don't need anybody's hands to hold me up.
I am an independent woman with absolutely no trust.

But that's a lie.
A survival trick.
A second skin I stitched on so the world
wouldn't see me starve.
A need so deep, you could carve me hollow and it'll still beat my heart.

With you,
I don't want tricks.
I don't want masks.
I want to want you out loud.
I want to stretch my hands toward you
and not watch them fall back, empty.

I crave your patience like oxygen.
I crave your voice like water.
I crave your understanding like shelter.
But what you give me
is silence.

And silence
silence is a graveyard I know too well.
Every love I ever held
died there.
Every part of me that believed in forever
was buried there.

But not you.
I can't bury you.

Because somewhere,
against every instinct I've ever trusted,

you make the little girl inside me feel safe.
The girl who shakes at shadows,

who flinches at teeth,
who lives in a world too sharp to hold her
you make her believe she's finally safe.

So when you go quiet,
it splits me open.
It claws me raw.
It makes me want to scream loud enough
to rattle the silence out of you.

I want to etch my longing into your skin
until it leaves scars.
I want to shatter my ribs
just so you can hear how your absence
echoes inside them.

One word.
One touch.
One proof that you are not another mirage.

And,
I would burn myself down for that.
Because your silence isn't empty.
It's a knife.
And I am still bleeding with all the ichor that is left in me.



तेरे आने के बाद

तेरे आने के बाद
ना जाने क्यों
मैं तेरी फ़िज़ा से डरता हूँ।

बेवजह नहीं,
मैं तेरी बदलती रज़ा से डरता हूँ।

भरे ज़ख्मों पर
फिर खरोंच लग जाने से डरता हूँ।

लेकिन उन सबसे ज़्यादा,

तुझे अब पाकर,

फिर से खोने से डरता हूँ।

ना कभी मेरा हक़ था तुझ पर,

ना ही कभी हो पाएगा।

लेकिन मैं ज़रूर

तेरी आस में लिपटी सलाहों में,

तेरी फ़िज़ा-ए-गुज़ारिश में

खो जाता हूँ।

ना चाहकर भी,

तेरे बेपरवाह इरादों पर

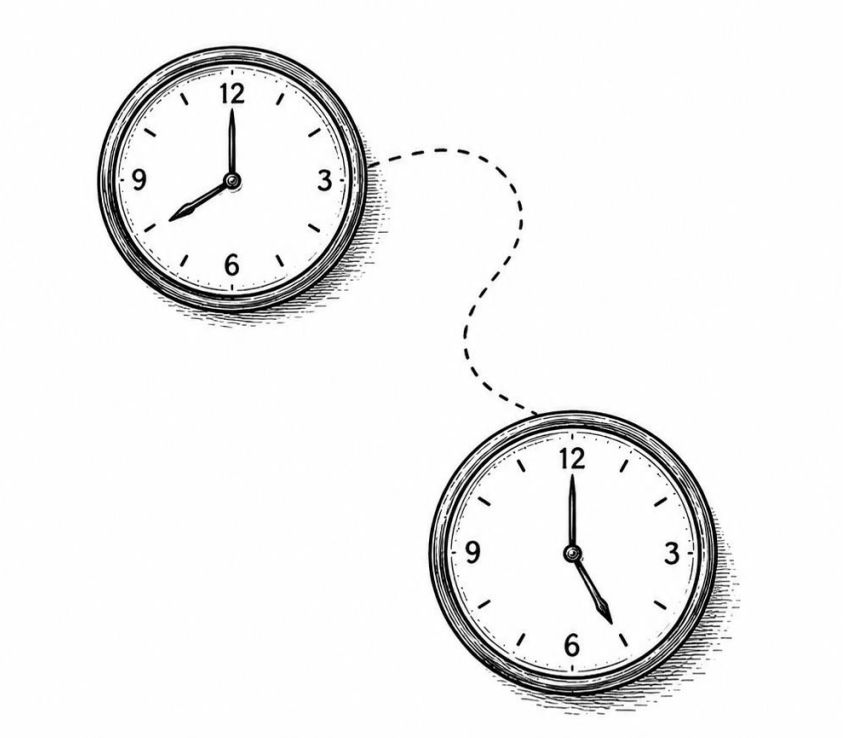
यूँ ही मर जाता हूँ।

शायद

तू कभी समझ नहीं पाएगा,

लेकिन

मैंने तेरी उल्फ़त की तपिश में
इस जहाँ को
अपना दिया जलाते देखा है।
तू माने या ना माने,
मगर
तू अपना होकर भी,
पहले
इस मशरूफ़ ज़माने का
कहलाएगा।


12
9
3
6
12
9
3
6

Between Time Zones

we exist in fragments,
in time zones and typos,
between the echoes of
"I miss you"
and the silence that follows.
Our passion waits in the queue
of patience,
lined up like messages never sent.
we live in the space between
a text read
and one replied.
waiting for your three little
dots
feels like a morse code made in
heaven.
each flicker feels like hope
taking a breath,
each vanishing
a quiet heartbreak.
You utter "hey"
and the world softens.
Yet the ache of goodbye
lurking behind the red button stays
underneath our pretence that
goes unnoticed.
we hold each other through

screens,
we kiss in metaphors
& touch-through voice notes.
I memorize the way you
pause
before saying goodbye,
the way you exhale like
leaving me is a quiet war
I lose each night.
This has never felt so cruel.
To choose someone every day
without knowing if
there's a finish line
& what do we call that?
A gamble?
A prayer?
A slow bleed?
A reverie?
I don't know where this goes.
But I know,
that even imagining a world
where you're not in it
feels like my body
forgetting how to breathe.
This connection,
in this form,
is both devotion
& destruction,
a sacred ache
we keep choosing

because the pain
of not having you
hurts more than
the pain of waiting.

And so,
all we do
is
WAIT.


N
W
E
S

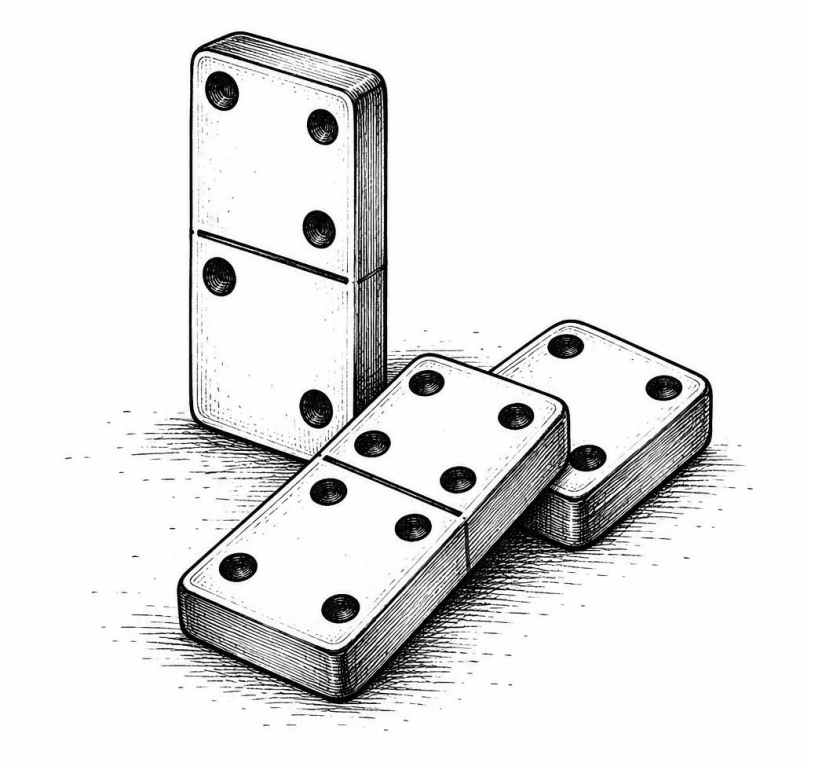
इरादें

(the plans my heart made, before courage arrived)
I meant to love you
in silence
and in empty glances.
I was meant to hold you,
and never let you
touch my heart.

WHAT A FOOLISH PLAN IT WAS

to hold you,
without touching you,
to be held
without being seen.
You came like
a breath of fresh air,
and I couldn't breathe.
The air was too fresh for me
I'm used to Delhi air, my love,
and you were that fresh Pahadi air,
too good to breathe.
So, I don't know when
or where,
my guards fell so low
that you crossed
my blood-brain barrier.
Now my इरादें (*intentions*)

are simple;
to love you
until you let me
WITHOUT BREAKING ME IN THE PROCESS.



Sporadic Occurrences

I usually don't listen to my mom, but that day, I somehow did

She said, that no matter how hard you try to keep someone in your life you'll have to leave some behind

In order to move forward without a strife

I usually don't overthink, but that day, I somehow did

Trying to fit pieces of myself into a meaningless puzzle space

Hoping to follow an advice without knowing its impact on my life

My mom once told me that if you repeat something over and over again

It'll lose its meaning, and won't ever regain

its strength over your feelings like it used to, ever again

For example,

Sunrise,

sunrise,

sunrise,

sunrise,

sunrise,

See? Nothing

Our lives she said, are the same

if you try to hold on to something more than its duration

it will leave without any contemplation

don't go

don't go

don't go

don't go

don't go

see, nothing

Maybe it was time for me to let go

Maybe it was time for me to cut off some cords

But I did not know where to start and where to end in the very first place

Felt a thin line of difference between choosing peace and making amends in the very first place

Torn between choices to make,

maybe I was grasping for something that was not mine to hold,

in the very first place

Maybe it was too hard for me to let go

Maybe I was not ready to cut off some of the cords

But a question kept hanging like rope of death around my neck

I did not know

Whether it was okay to keep changing just to fit into an unsolicited puzzle space?

I did not know

Until when I had to bend and break and smoothen the edges, just to fit in

I did not know,

How to be rigid and strong and un-adaptive in some ways

I did not know

Where to begin from, in the very first place

I'm a 21-year-old injured handyman now,

I work with words and play with their meanings to give someone else a satisfaction towards their feelings

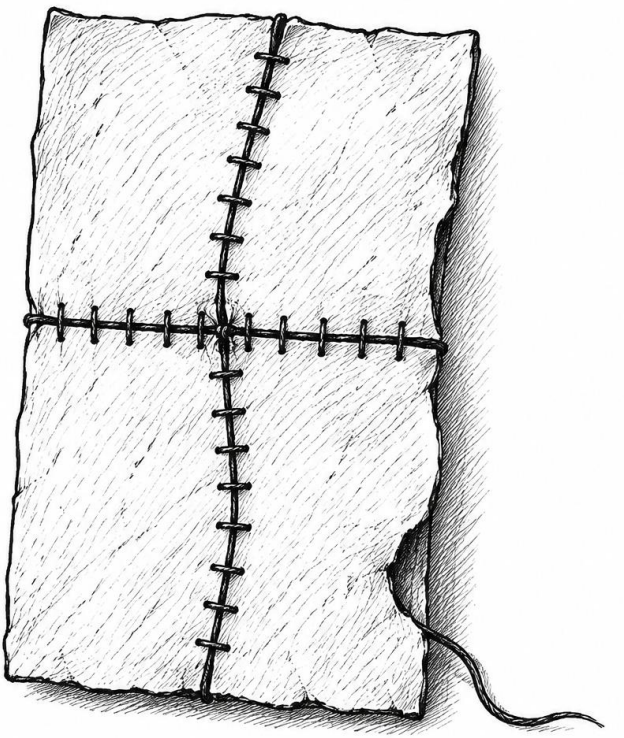
Ironic, isn't it?

I usually don't pay heed to my thoughts, because it sometimes hinders my progress

But that day,

I somehow did and it hasn't been the same, since that very,

first day.



Torn

I have pasts inside of me, that I did not bury properly

Those furious little moments
of life's "could’ves"
and "would've beens”.

Of a constant reminder, that sandwiches me between

The past of recurrent dreams and a future with weary seams.

That tears me apart and sews me with hopeful gleams

Because Torn is a simple word with 4 letters

With meaning only a few could decipher

It is a simple word, with only one syllable

A feeling i hope no one has to feel, ever

Because, some nights i tear myself apart yet heal in the morning

Knowing about life's continuous cycle of torment

That I've to exist with

So, I exist.

In thousands of agonies

I exist.



Beware of a poet

Everyone's aware of the poet's undying love,
But what if it's the other way around?

"Beware of a poet."

Beware of a poet; they have a way with words.
They'll pick one, and you won't know which one hurts.
Nothing really stays at a writer's dismay

Due to their ability to word-play

A poet's wrath is deemed inexplicable

due to its existence in monosyllabic variables

Each word they choose, a weapon they wield,

Cutting deep, leaving wounds that refuse to heal.

Beware of a poet, their words hold sway,

With blood-stained ink, their tears ricochet.

They play with language, a master's game,

Crafting lines that can bring joy or put you to flame.

A single phrase, a twist of the tongue,

Can leave you wounded, feeling helpless and hung.

Their pen, a sword, their mind the sharpened blade,

Carving out truths that cannot be swayed.

So, tread carefully, when in a writer's lair,

For their words possess a power beyond compare.

Beware of a poet. Not because they'll seek revenge,
But because they'll find the wounds
You've hidden even from yourself.

They'll hand them back as poetry,
Folded between verses and white space,
Until one day you recognise your own reflection
Staring back from the page.

And by then,

You'll never know
Whether it was the poet's words

Or your own truth

That hurt more

IV. Healing

not the absence of pain, but the return of hope.

I learned to
Take Up Space
because of
Those Two.

महरूम इबादत से तेरी

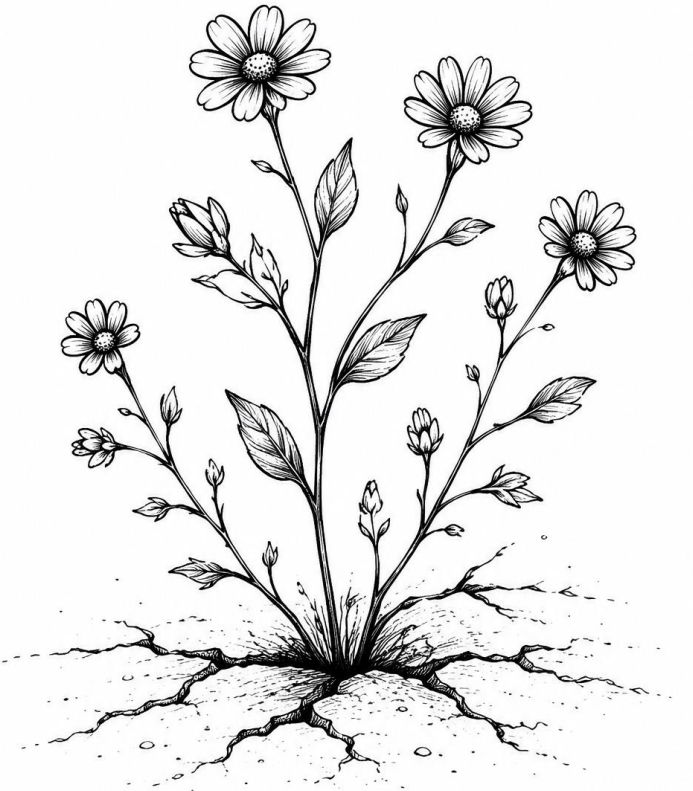
reminded me of the time
When I Chose Healing.

Beyond Blood and Bones,
The Anatomy of Becoming
taught me to welcome
Change.

In
The Corner of My Memories,
with **Vanilla & Fries,**
I remembered
why **Home**
had always been
a **संगम**

of **आज़ादी**

leading me back
to **My Younger Self.**



Take up space

बेखबर, बेसबर, तरबदर।

"I'm used to people telling me, how I take up a lot of space.
Space in the crowds, lines, sofas and their crippled faiths.

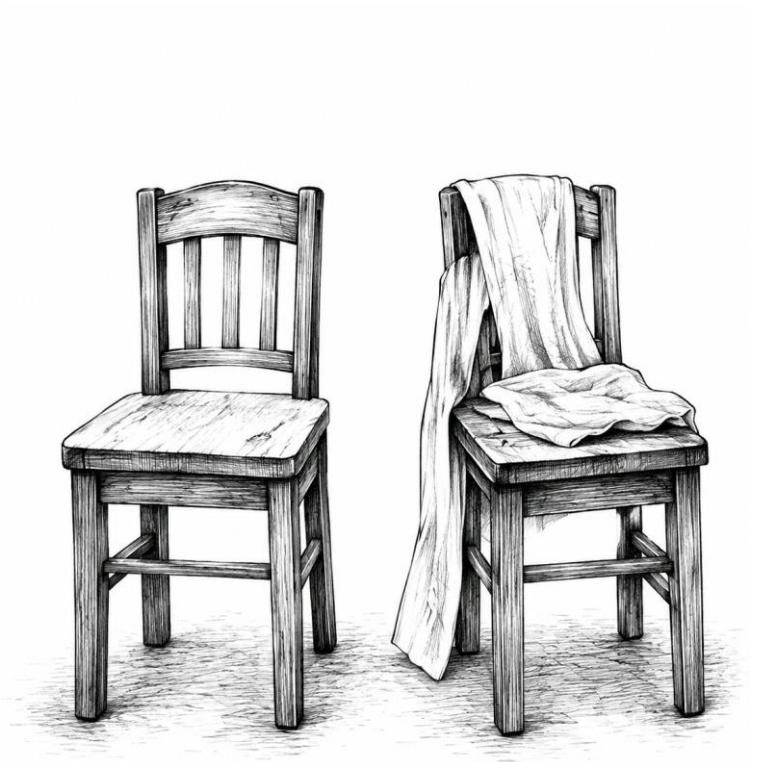
Sometimes they forget how,

We're all atoms with incongruent spaces,
A little far-fetched, yet in different traces.
An over-conditioned mind to fit into places,
Without standing apart for once.

But I refuse to shrink or hide,
My presence demands to be recognized.
For in this world of conformity and strife,
I choose to embrace my unique space and life.

I am not just a body, but a soul that shines,
Occupying the world in my own defined lines.
So let them stare, and let them judge,
I'll continue to take up the space I need to trudge.

For in this vast universe, we all have a place,
A spot to call our own, where we can grow and embrace.
So, I'll stand tall, and I'll stand proud,
Carving my path, unbowed and unbound."



Those Two

and at the end of the day,

it's those two.

the ones who notice
the silence in your voice

before you even realize
you've gone quiet.

the ones who know
you're drowning

before you feel
the water rising.

they don't wait
for you to ask.

they just reach out,

like loving you
was never a decision,

just something
wired into them.

and you break
a little,

because you don't know
how they do it.

how they hold you up

when you didn't even know
you were falling.

it's those two.

always

those two.
and God,
i don't know
who i'd be
without them.



महरूम इबादत से तेरी

महरूम इबादत से तेरी,
आज मैं उस मुक़ाम आ पहुँची हूँ।

चाहत से ज़्यादा तुझे,
तुझपे दिल लुटा बैठी हूँ।

कई सजदे किए
तेरे इश्क़ के, ऐ बेपरवाह मुसाफ़िर।

लौट बैठी हूँ मैं
अपने ही आँसुओं के सहारे।

मुझे इश्क़ है तुमसे,
इसमें कोई झूठ नहीं।

मुझे ख़ुद से ज़्यादा
यक़ीन है तुझपे,

इसमें मेरी ईमानियत रूठी ही सही।

लेकिन तेरे बाद
शायद मेरा

इस ज़माने में

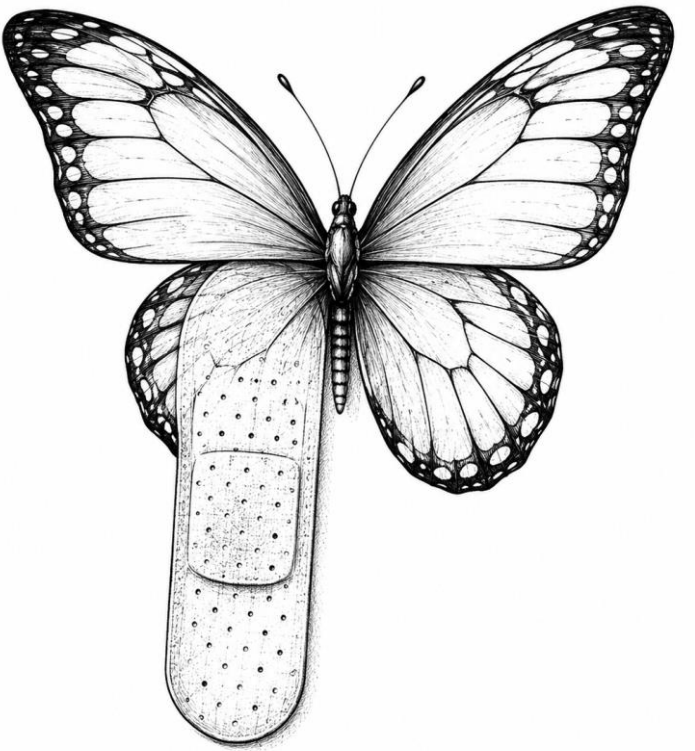
अपना कोई नहीं।

कि मेरी सारी सौग़ातें
अधूरी ही सही,

तेरे दीदार को तरसता

मेरा इंतज़ार ही

मेरा हमसफ़र सही।



When I chose healing

when i first stepped towards healing

i thought intentional action
would replace all the grief
i carried.

like healing
was a pill
for an invisible illness.

like getting out of bed
would somehow
teach my heart
how to stop hurting.

little did i know

healing was laughing
a little too hard
with my friends
at two in the morning,

then crying
under the shower,

because joy
felt unfamiliar.

it was telling my mother

"dinner was amazing"

while surviving

on tea,

thin air,

and hope

borrowed from tomorrow.

it was opening

old playlists

without skipping

the songs

that once knew
my name.

it was sleeping

without bargaining
with my thoughts.

reading poetry again.

dancing,

alone,

without checking

if anyone

was watching.

and then,

one day,

i stopped waiting

to feel healed.

because healing

was never

the day

the pain disappeared.

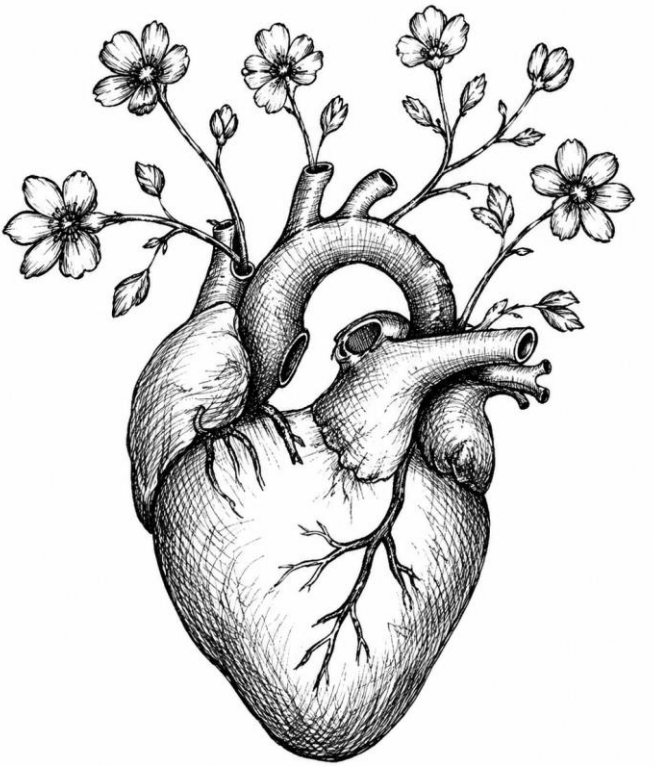
it was the day

i realised

my life

was no longer

revolving around it.



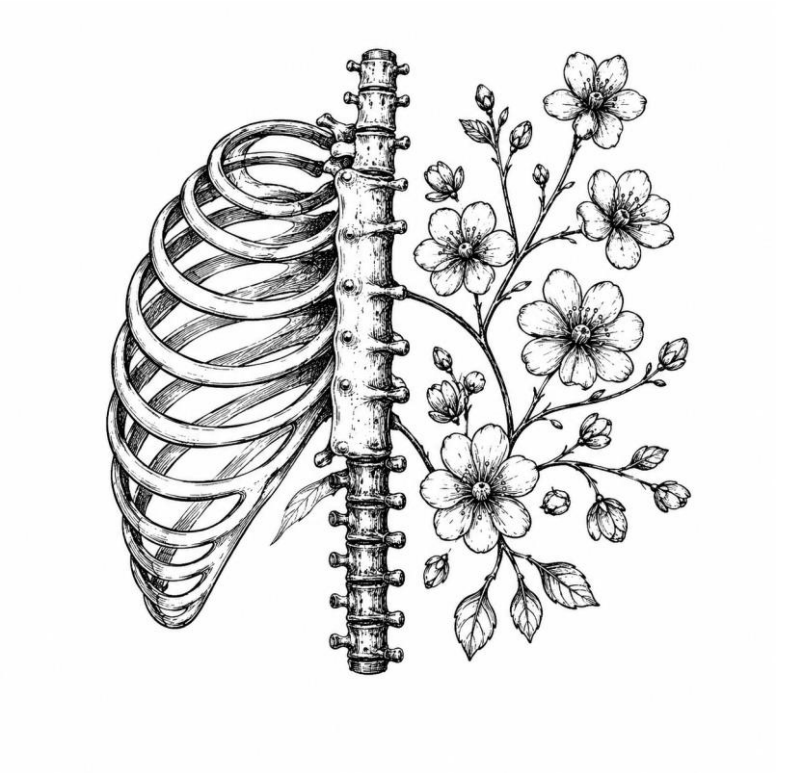
Beyond Blood and Bones

when medicine stopped becoming a punishment,
i didn't notice.
it happened quietly.
when a patient smiled
after listening
to my broken Tamil
because trying
mattered more
than getting it perfect.
when medicine
stopped becoming
knowing everything,
and became
knowing enough
to help.
when i realized
half the pain
sometimes leaves
when someone
simply stays.
when i stopped seeing
cases.
facts.
blood.
bones.
and started seeing

someone's whole world.

when i suffered enough
to understand
that healing
was never about
having all the answers.

sometimes,
it was simply
refusing
to let someone
suffer alone.



The Anatomy of Becoming

I have spent my brightest years,
the golden ones they call 'youth',
locked away in textbooks and sterile rooms,
learning how hearts fail
in order to specialize in making them beat again.
I've memorized the language of suffering,
translated pain into numbers,
read grief like open wounds,
and saw strangers getting stitched back to life
even as parts of me quietly unraveled.
There are days; I look back
at who I used to be.
carefree, curious and wild.
A person who believed the world was hers to touch,
who chased sunsets, poetry, and music, and thought healing was just a word,
not a war with herself.
It's painfully easy to slip
to crave that old life,
where my hands weren't calloused from cannulas,
where sleep wasn't rationed,
where joy wasn't a guilty luxury.
Because this path,
doesn't just take your time.
It takes you.
It reshapes you in ways you never consented to.
There were nights I whispered

"Am I even worthy of this?"

"Is this degree a crown or a chain?"

When the imposter in me screamed louder than any monitor in the ICU.

And yet,

every single time the doubt claws deep into my ribs,

fate handed me a moment too thin.

A moment where a patient, once drowning in illness, rises from their sickness and breathes; making their family smile.

And in that smile,

I remember,

This is why we bleed years into books.

Why our prime is traded for promise.

Because in this life

the returns aren't money, momentary respect or fame, but the sacred privilege of standing between someone and the end, and saying, "Not today."

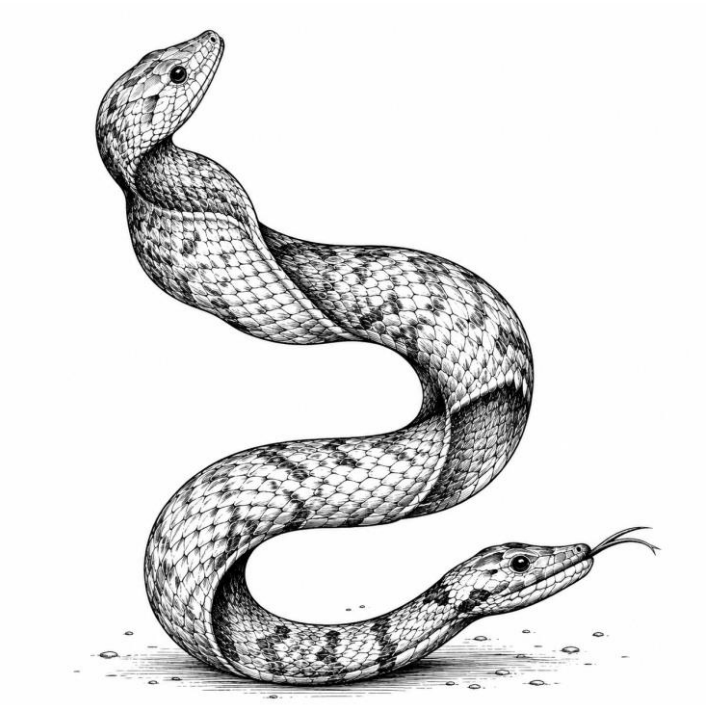
It is excruciating. It is relentless. It is merciless.

But it is the purpose.

It is grace disguised as grind.

And though the road has devoured so much of me,

I'd never, never want it any other way.



Dear Change

Dear change,
You flood my thoughts, persistently.
In this flow of life,
I hold on dearly to this chair of fear;
Yet the only thing I hold on to
becomes chaotically clear:
that dying several deaths in a lifetime,
waiting for the change,
sticking to the same familiar patterns
will only end in stringent tears.
The mirror mocks me with yesterday's eyes,
Each day is a blur, each night a lie.
Hope knocks, quiet and unsure,
But I shut the door, making comfort feel more secure.

Oh dear change, you sit in silence near,
While I scream in circles,
only can I hear.
Yet maybe, just maybe
in all this mess,
The chaos is the seed of something less,

Predictable.
Controlled.
Defined.

And maybe, through chaos,
I'll finally find
A version of me untouched by fear,
Brave enough to say:
Change, I'm here.



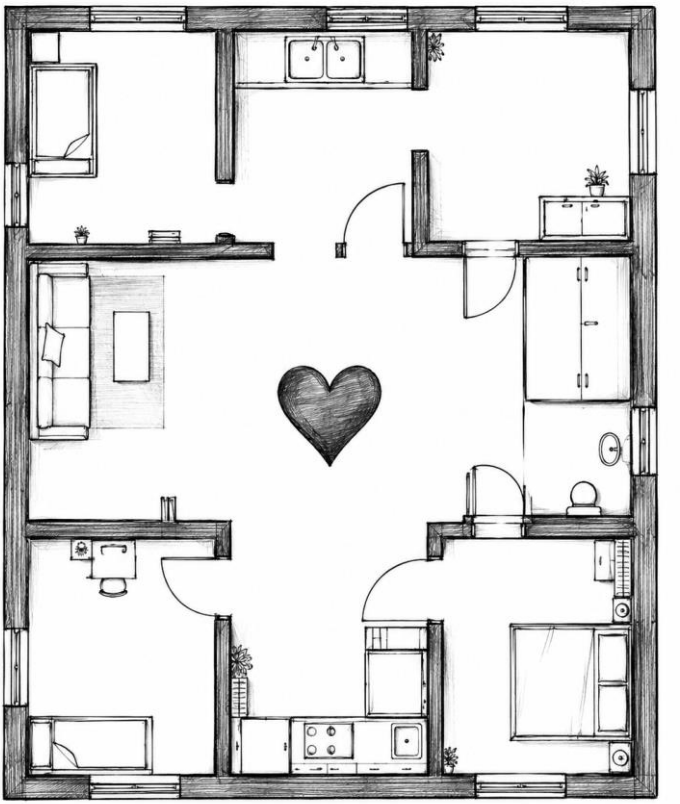
To the Corner of My Memories

To the corner of all my memories,
Where I hang the loveliest bits of my life piece by piece.
To the corner that reminds me of how I find home
In every person I love, in every heart I've known.
To the corner that keeps me rooted to my core,
A silent witness to all that I am and more.
To the corner that has seen my worst and stayed through dust,
Holding my truths, my chaos, my trust.
To the love I pour every time I soar,
And the tears that stain when someone walks out the door.
To the corner I often forget about, yet it remains
A quiet keeper of my laughter, my losses, my gains.
To the corner that never wavers, never fades,
That shelters my soul in light and in shade.
My ever-steady ground,
Thank you for picking my pieces up and keeping them safe and sound.



Vanilla & Fries

She's always been lucky in friendships,
but never in love,
Maybe the mold was too rigid for one who never fit enough.
Or maybe the timing was never quite right,
Believe me, she always tried.
Starved herself just to belong,
Shrank her soul to prove them wrong.
But at least she found the ones who saw beyond her skin,
Even if their love came wrapped in jokes too thin.
It didn't matter
she was used to that kind,
A love, sharp yet confined.
Dinner was served with a side of shame,
A reminder her body was never the same.
"Hide your waist, cover your thighs,
No one loves what cellulite hides."
"Eat too much, you're out of control,
Eat too little, you lose your soul."
She's always been lucky when choosing her friends,
But love,
Love left her chasing loose ends.
She tried not to take up too much space,
But still, they left, without a trace.
A vessel of warmth, maybe once, maybe twice,
They drained her dry, yet nothing sufficed.
And all she was left with was a cup of vanilla with the side of fries.



Home

I need to be home,
where the walls still recall
The laughter, the sorrow, the weight of it all.
To stand with my family in times of their plight,
Yet I wander too far, lost deep in the night.
I need to be healthier just to breathe right,
But the air feels too heavy, the chest too tight.
I need eight hours of sleep to silence my mind,
Yet rest is a stranger I never can find.
I need my freedom before I can blink,
Before I'm shackled to choices that force me to sink.
I need a degree that doesn't kill me inside,
A path that won't leave me devoid of my pride.
I need a life.
One I don't have to fight
for every small moment that feels warm and bright.
I need certainty by my side, without second thought,
Not fearing the cost of the battles, we once fought.
I need a free mind, my friends at my side,
To share in the chaos, to live, not just hide.
I probably just need rest, to keep this in sight
But for now, I'll just whisper
Good night.



संगम

With everything unraveling inside me, i didn't need answers i needed stillness, and Rudraprayag became that stillness.

Wrote something nadi kinare,

संगम

शांत मंदाकिनी का चंचल अलकनंदा से

मेरे अशांत मन का इस शांत अस्तित्व से

संगम

मेरे भीतर के शोर से इस बाहरी सन्नाटे का

संगम

भाग-दौड़ वाली ज़िंदगी में थोड़े छूटे अरमानों से

संगम

थोड़े बिखरे ख्वाबों से

थोड़ी अधूरी मुस्कानों का

संगम

जहाँ एक धारा थमती है दूसरी बहना सिखाती है

जहाँ शोर भी लोरी बन जाए

और खामोशी भी बात बताती है

वहीं कहीं थके हुए कदमों की आहट का उम्मीद की हल्की दस्तक से

बीते कल की परछाइयों का आने वाले कल की रौशनी से

संगम

मैं,

जो टूटकर भी जुड़ता रहा

मैं,
जो खोकर भी खुद को ढूंढता रहा
उस एहसास का
संगम
मेरा खुद से वापिस मिल जाने का
संगम।।



आज़ादी

धूप की जलती तपिश से,
मैं अक्सर छाँव चुरा लाती हूँ,
ज़िंदगी के रुस्वों से थक कर,
अक्सर मैं,

घर की ओर लौट आती हूँ।

एक दिन किसी अपने ने सही कहा था
"ज़िंदगी कभी उस मोड़ पर नहीं रुकेगी,
जहाँ से तुम आगे बढ़ चुके हो।"

कैसे बताती उन्हें, कि,

मेरी ज़िंदगी तो उन लम्हों के दामन में सिमट के रह गई है,

जहाँ से लम्हे भी यादें बन गुज़र जाते हैं।

कैसे बताती उन्हें, कि

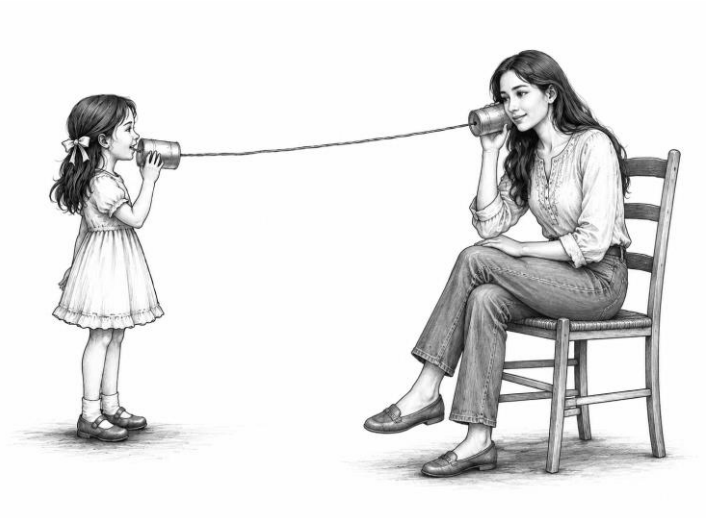
मेरे घर से घर तक एक मोड़ आता है,
और मैं उसी मोड़ पर अटकी रह गई हूँ।

कामयाबी की आज़ादी थी जो कभी,
अब उन ही ज़िम्मेदारियों के बोझ में घिरी हूँ।

इस जाल से मुझे, मेरे सिवा,
कोई नहीं छुड़ा सकता है।

पर कब, कैसे

यह सिर्फ़ वक़्त के पहिए को मालूम है।



MY YOUNGER SELF

Dear younger me,

I remember how you stood at the edge of yourself,

one hand clutching a pen,

the other trembling over a stethoscope you weren't sure you deserved.

You thought you had to choose.

As if dreams were jealous things.

As if loving words meant betraying medicine,

or healing bodies meant abandoning the quiet ache of poetry.

But listen,

you were never meant to be one thing.

You can hold a pulse and still write about the way it falters.

You can learn the language of disease and still speak in metaphors that make pain softer to carry.

You can be both the one who treats,

and the one who feels.

I know there were nights when the syllabus felt heavier than your bones,

when the mirror asked you questions you didn't know how to answer.

I know how close you came to folding into silence.

But you didn't.

And that quiet refusal to disappear,

that stubborn, trembling decision to stay

that made all the difference.

You are only just beginning to see it now, aren't you?

How the two worlds don't tear you apart

they complete you.

How your words make you a better doctor,

and your wounds make you a better writer.

It was never about choosing.

It was about becoming.

And you are slowly, beautifully, becoming everything, you were afraid you couldn't be.

Stay.

You're closer than you think.

With a kind of love you'll grow into,

Your older self.

V. The Unfolding

the person i was becoming all along.

Unnamed Years
became
1001 Complete Poems.

I learned
To Be Seen,
even when
The Silence That Grows
searched for a
रह-गुज़र.

I chose
The Life I Owe Myself,
and signed my own
Discharge Summary.

I chose me.


2019
2021
2020
2022

Unnamed Years

In twenty-two, the mirrors wept,
soft edges bled through fractured steps.
She whispered dawn in borrowed tones,
but found the sun had left her bones.

By twenty-three, the clock stood still,
a marionette with severed will.
She danced in echoes, spun in haze,
a shadow stitched to nameless days.

And twenty-four, a hollow tune,
moonlight trapped in wilted bloom.
She traced the gaps where laughter lay,
learning loss was just the way.

By twenty-five she skimmed through her weary pasts,
just to be haunted by the woes of her unknown paths.
She stitched her dreams with threads of fleeting hope,
Yet,
in the silence,
did she heal,
or
merely cope?


Poems

1001 Complete Poems

I've written 1001 complete poems
and nearly a thousand more that trail off,
unfinished, like thoughts lost in a breath.
But somehow, within each finished verse,
I try to tuck in those broken lines, those hesitant pauses, those unsaid signs.
Maybe that's the quiet beauty of being incomplete:
a space, a gap, a hush, an idea suspended mid-thought.
Perhaps the ache
between my polished edges and my fraying seams
is born from the doubt of never quite being enough.
Just an almost.
A maybe.
A half-step into someone else's storm.
A reflection in a glass not made for me.
It feels like I've always been a fragmentation of someone's unhinged reality
Where it's easier to understand than to be understood.
Where my kindness always arrives before my solitude does.



To Be Seen

To be seen is a privilege I'm not well versed with.

I have understood a thousand souls in my lifetime,

but nothing compares to being understood by another.

You never think your superficial actions are comprehensible

Until someone fluent in the language of silence, long glances, and the quiet shudder of your breath when words abandon you

knocks at your door.

They speak it like it's their first tongue

that sacred dialect of aching restraint,

of pretending you're fine when your voice trembles at the edges.

They catch it. They see it.

And suddenly, you're not invisible anymore,

you're bare.

And it's terrifying.

To have someone tilt their head just slightly and ask,

"Are you okay?" and for the first time in forever, you don't have the energy to lie.

You realize that being seen feels a lot like being set on fire.

Every layer you've built the layer of false pretense and calm composure,

the practiced indifference

burns to ash under their gaze.

You think you'd want this, right?

To be understood.

To be known.

But when it happens your first instinct is to hide.

Because you remember what happened the last time someone saw you.

You remember how your truth became a weapon.

How closeness became a wound.

And now, your body remembers too.

Thanks to the nervous system that remembers everything.

Trained to protect you in your flight or flights,

It flinches before your mind even registers safety.

It doesn't trust the new, doesn't welcome the warmth,

because it's been taught that even sunlight burns if it stays too long.

It's hard, so hard,

to let yourself experience new things when your body has built its home inside old pain.

To crack open your skin for the sunlight to enter,

knowing it might leave again,

knowing it might not stay long enough to heal you.

But still, some reckless part of you wants to try.

Wants to risk it.

To stand there trembling, heart first, and say, "See me."

Because despite the fear,

despite the way your chest tightens and your hands shake;

there is something holy about being known.

Something unexplainable about being looked at and not having to explain yourself. About being understood in ways that feel like invasion, but taste like relief.

You'll think you're repeating past mistakes

that letting someone this close is just history circling back with sharper teeth.

Until slowly you realize, this is not destruction.

This is the human experience.

This trembling, burning, terrifying exposure is what it means to be alive.

To be felt. To be seen.

And maybe being understood isn't a mistake, it's just a mirror showing you parts of you that you're too afraid to see.

Maybe this time, being seen won't break you.

Maybe it will remind you you're still here

and that someone, somewhere, saw through the chaos

and chose to stay long enough to make it feel like sunlight on skin that had forgotten warmth.

And somehow, that was enough.



The Silence That Grows

There's a silence that grows
where love once bloomed,
a hush that hums beneath the skin.
You ask me
how I carry it so well?
The scars of loving too much
while knowing how it ends?
I say, it's an art you learn with time, how grief makes you stronger just before it commits its crime.
Life moves on,
as life always does, but the love I carried still flails against time,
still clings to echoes that no longer reply.
And though the world continues to move on,
faster than the heart can mend,
I stitch my ache into quiet poems
so something of it never ends.



रह-गुज़र

बीतते वक़्त को मैं यूँ ही
गुज़रता देख गया,

ना मैंने कभी किसी की सुनी,
ना ही कभी किसी को कुछ सुना पाया।

भटकते मुसाफ़िर की तरह
जब मैंने खुद को चौराहे पर पाया,

तब न चाहते हुए भी मैंने
खुद को शौक़िया रह-गुज़र बनाया।



The life I owe myself

i owe myself a life
where i do not disappear
inside people i love,
places i outgrow,
or versions of me
that survive by staying small.

this time,
i will choose softly
without abandoning myself.

i will not confuse
being needed
with being loved.
i will not break my own heart
trying to keep everyone else whole.

and if life changes me,
let it be into someone
more honest,
more alive,
more mine.

because after everything,
the one promise i intend to keep
is this:
i will never lose myself again.

Discharge Summary

Patient Name:
The girl who thought "becoming" had an *endpoint*.

Age:
Young enough to believe life came with a blueprint.
Old enough to know it doesn't.

Hospital Number:
Redacted.

Some wounds deserve privacy.

Chief Complaint(s)

Progressive loss of self, over 5½ years.

Associated with perfectionism, burnout, homesickness,

grief,

and an inability

to ask for **help**.

History of presenting illness:

Patient was apparently asymptomatic 5.5 years back after which she presented with a belief that she had to *earn rest.*

It was insidious in onset, but gradually progressive.

Associated with chronic fatigue, PCOS, Sleep Apnoea (PND), Insomnia and maladaptive coping mechanisms.

Aggravating factors: Symptoms worsened during prolonged exposure to comparison,

expectation,

and silence.

No relieving factors.

Past History:

Patient denied any history of knowing herself.

On examination:

Patient is conscious, oriented to time place and person (everyone but herself)

Patient is overly nourished. Normal Built.

Bilateral pitting oedema present due to long sitting hours

No pallor, icterus, cyanosis, clubbing, lymphadenopathy.

Systemic Examination:

CVS: S1 S2 heard, no murmurs

Heart: Intact. Scarred. Sadly, still functional.

RS: NVBS

Able to breathe again, without apologizing.

CNS: NFND

Mind: Thoughts no longer

actively at war

with themselves.

Abdomen: Soft, non-tender, no organomegaly. Central obesity due to chronic stressful binge eating.

Investigations

No blood test

could explain

the emptiness.

Poetry remained

the only positive finding.

Diagnosis

Still under evaluation.

It's difficult
to diagnose yourself
when you've spent years
learning to treat
everyone else.

Differential(s)

Perhaps burnout.

Perhaps grief.

Perhaps growing up.

Perhaps *becoming*.

Treatment Given

Supporting Family.

Two best friends.

One impossible love.

Endless Experiences.

Multiple patients, to remind what she started, why she started.

Thousands of pages. Scribbled poetry in Medicine classes.

Time.

Note: Avoid prolonged exposure of lifestyle in Pondicherry. Do not postpone joy
until achievement & Rest before your body writes the prescription *for you.*

Condition At Discharge

Stable enough
to leave.

Human enough
to *return*.

Advice

Take life

one day

at a time.
Return if hope
begins to disappear.
Continue writing
as prescribed.

Follow-Up

As needed.
Preferably
before
forgetting herself again.

Doctor's Signature

(Pending.
The poet
is still
becoming one.)



Epilogue- I chose me.

When I began writing these poems, I thought I was documenting my life. I mean half the time it only felt like an escape and a means of survival.

But,

Somewhere along the way, I realised I was trying to find it (*life*).

For years, I believed that *becoming* looked like a straight line.

A checklist.

One achievement after another.

Good grades. A medical degree. Leadership positions. Certificates. The next milestone. Then the next.

Then another. Then another.

Until, there was NOTHING.

I kept believing that if I reached far enough, I'd finally arrive at the version of myself I had imagined as a child.

I never did.

Instead, I found something far more ordinary, and far more beautiful.

I found that becoming isn't a **destination**.

It's the quiet *decision* to keep showing up for yourself, even on the days you don't recognize the person in the mirror.

Medicine taught me how fragile a body can be.

Poetry taught me how resilient a soul can become.

Somewhere between anatomy dissections, night shifts, missed phone calls, friendships that became family, a love that softened me, and patients who unknowingly stitched pieces of me back together,

I stopped asking, *"When will I finally become someone?"*

I had been ***becoming*** all along.

If this book has taught me anything, it's this:

There is no correct blueprint for a life.

There are detours that will feel like failures until years later,

when you realise,

they were the only roads that could have brought you home (in retrospect a little closer to yourself).

There are dreams you won't choose, but they'll never stop shaping the person you become.

There are people who will leave, people who will stay, and a few who will save your life without ever knowing they did.

And there will be days when all you can do is survive.

Please don't mistake survival for failure.

It counts.

More than you'll ever know.

If you've found even one piece of yourself hidden somewhere between these pages, then these poems have already done everything I hoped they would.

Thank you for carrying my younger selves with such gentleness.

I hope, when you close this book, you leave believing something I spent years trying to learn

You were never meant to fit perfectly into someone else's blueprint.

You were always allowed to write one, on your own.

Acknowledgements

If you have made it here after reading every page, thank you.

Even if you haven't, thank you nonetheless.

There are countless books in the world, and somehow, you've chosen to hold mine.

I don't take that lightly.

Catharsis wasn't written for a single reason. It was written across seasons of me; the one who broke quietly, the one who kept pretending she was okay, the one who healed in fragments, and finally, the one who found the courage to write about all of them.

No book is ever written by one person alone. It carries every hand that steadied the author when the pen became too heavy to hold.

So, this is a thank-you letter; ***for the ones who held my hand***, especially when it became too heavy to hold the pen. And imagine how heavy it must have been, because the girl who always believed the pen was mightier than the sword one day found it slipping from her own hands.

Dear Maa,

Thank you for holding the version of me that my pen couldn't carry.

You've seen me break and stitch myself back together more times than I can count through this unsteady path of medicine. Thank you for placing the very first pen in my hands, the same pen that held me together on the days you couldn't.

Thank you for teaching me that love can be gentle without ever being weak.

Every dream I've dared to chase has rested first on your belief in me. Whenever I forgot who I was beneath the exhaustion, you somehow remembered for me.

Dear Popsie,

Thank you for showing me that discipline is another language of love.

You've quietly shaped more of who I am than words could ever explain. I know you've always wanted the very best for me, but more than discipline, Papa, thank you for holding the parts of me that couldn't hold themselves.

Thank you for reminding me, every single time I forgot, exactly who I am and what I am capable of.

Thank you for your faith, your patience, and your unwavering belief that I can make it.

I still don't know exactly what comes next, but I do know this as long as I have you and Mumma by my side, somehow, everything will work out.

Tu hai toh i'll be alright

Dear Sauru,

These past five years have been extremely difficult, you know,

Without you.

What happens when your only partner in crime slowly grows into a young adult?

Every time I came home, you were somehow an inch taller and a whole lot smarter. Ughhh!

I still can't believe how much you've grown.

Thank you, Chuuha, for managing things on your own while I was away chasing mine.

Thank you for always holding me through my storms without ever asking me to stop raining.

I love you.

You still irritate me just as much though.

Dear Dadu and Dadi,

Thank you for all your blessings and your never-ending unconditional support.

Dadi, thank you for always reminding me that my degree is a *Tapasya.*

And Dadu, thank you for believing I was capable of becoming a good doctor long before I believed it myself. I still remember you saying it when I was in third year... hahahah!

Dear Nanu,

Thank you for your support and your blessings.

Forever grateful for your stories and your antics that never fail to bring a smile to my face.

Somehow, every conversation with you reminds me that happiness has always lived in the smallest moments.

Dear Dr. Aditya (Vikku) & Dr. Ankuj,

If you both haven't realised it already...

The chapter "those two" belongs to you both.

I genuinely think the greatest thing Pondicherry gave me wasn't a degree.

It was a *home away from home*.

I am so grateful to have found friends I proudly call family.

Vikku, I probably still would've been stuck inside my own self-sabotaging patterns if it weren't for you.

And Ankuj, I probably would've never known what it feels like to always have someone firmly in your corner if it weren't for you.

Thank you both for reminding me that home isn't always a place.

Sometimes,

it's people.

Beyond grateful.

Dear Gogoooo,

I like to think the *universe* was quietly working *in my favour* when our paths crossed.

Because honestly,

How else do I explain what we have?

Thank you for surviving every version of this book with me.

Thank you for *showing up* tired.

Thank you for showing up happy and energetic.

Thank you for *always* showing up.

Thank you for helping me design a cover that somehow managed to say everything this book hoped to, before a single page was turned.

Thank you for reading the very *first* draft. Thank you for asking the *difficult* questions.

Thank you for reminding me, often without saying much, that this story deserved to exist.

More than anything,

Thank you for becoming a place of quiet certainty through seasons that rarely felt certain.

Thank you for becoming my safest space.

Some people arrive and leave footprints.

You quietly became part of the road.

I don't think I'll ever be able to thank you enough. <3

Dear Dr. Meenakshi,

MEEEEENOOOOOOOOOOOO.

Life was okay till I met you.

Then it became happier.

Just like that.

One girl.

A savvy smile.

Some ramen.

And *Brooklyn Nine-Nine.*

I genuinely don't think I would've made it this far if it wasn't for you feeding Pharmacology into my sleep-deprived brain at two in the morning while I was busy writing yet another proposal for L&D.

Nor would I have survived if you hadn't force-fed Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Medicine into my exhausted brain when there was absolutely no space left.

Thank you for believing in me on the days I was too tired to believe in myself.

Thank you, Meeno.

For absolutely everything.

Dear Ridhi,

I am so happy to have you as my therapist.

Thank you for listening without judgement, for helping me untangle thoughts I couldn't make sense of on my own, and for reminding me, gently, every single time, that healing was never meant to be linear.

Dear Manvika, Lavanya, Aaryan & Anshika,

Thank you for being my constants.
You've known me long before I ever called myself an author.
Thank you for choosing me through every version I've become since then.

Love you, with all my heart <3

Last, but certainly not the least...

Thank you to every mentor, professor and teacher who taught me lessons that reached far beyond classrooms.

Dear Dr. Nalini Y. C.,

Thank you for teaching Physiology beyond books.

Long before I knew what kind of doctor I wanted to become, you showed me what kind of person medicine could shape me into.

You made learning feel less like memorising and more like understanding.

You believed in me when I was still figuring myself out, and somewhere along the way, you became much more than a professor.

You became a mentor.

Thank you for making me fall in love with medicine far beyond its syllabus.

Dear Dr. Prahan Kumar,

Thank you for not only making Community Medicine interesting, but for making it deeply human.

Somewhere between health, conversations, and meditation, you quietly taught me that caring for others begins with learning how to care for ourselves.

Those lessons have stayed with me far longer than any examination ever will.

Thank you for teaching me ***beyond medicine***.

And finally,

To every person who unknowingly became a chapter in this story,

Thank you.

Some of you held my hand. Some of you held my silence.

Some of you held hope for me until I could carry it again myself.

Whether you realise it or not, every one of you exists somewhere between these pages.

And to the person holding this book,

I hope these poems find you exactly when they are meant to.

If even one page reminds you that healing is rarely linear, that feeling deeply is never a weakness, and that surviving is sometimes enough,

then

every difficult day spent writing this book was worth it.

With all my heart,

Akshita Singh

Author Biography

Akshita Singh writes from the place where medicine and poetry stop being two different languages.

A Doctor in the making, author of *Sonder: You're not alone in the cosmos of universe*, and several other anthologies and creator of **prescribedbypoetry**, she is fascinated by the stories that live beneath diagnosis, silence, and the versions of ourselves we learn to perform.

Her work explores the emotional architecture of being human: identity, grief, love, healing, ambition, and the slow, often invisible act of becoming. Rather than offering answers, her writing lingers in questions, inviting readers to sit with uncertainty long enough for it to transform into understanding.

Catharsis: A Poetic Memoir of Becoming is her second book.

She still believes that some wounds ask for medicine.
Others ask for words.