

Sharin F. Ali

TRIGGER WARNING: Sexual assault, suicidal ideation, physical abuse, sexual abuse, disordered eating.

Authors Note:

I wrote Everybody's Daughter before Roe Vs. Wade was overturned. I now look at this piece of art and political proclamation bound by pages as the only freedom people with a uterus may have left. For now.

I don't feel right publishing this without saying how horrific and terrifying this is. How so many people are/will suffer. I am scared for my safety, scared for the safety of all people with a uterus. I feel like it gives men the ok to ravage our bodies and leave us with the consequences.

I know this zine is very cis-female oriented but acknowledge that anyone may go through the things written between these pages. I wrote this as a protest, a fuck you, to the patriarchy and my own personal experiences with not only my own suffering but the suffering of the "women" around me.

With that being said, the content in this zine is heavy and has a heavy trigger warning label as stated in the page before this one.

Please take care of yourself and if this material is too triggering, please put it down and do something to ground yourself.

IT'S ADRENALINE
RUSHING THROUGH

when the
unexpected
becomes pleasure.

FEELING **good**

Navigating
by Touch

in the fullness in my hips,

When

Finding
home

YOU
COME
FIRST!

"come and get it"

the big o

your first kiss.

loving

Ritual

LUST.

Hips

My hips are a ship
holding in the red sea
that sloshes around
a tea readers cup
they are a valley that hold my internal organs
as if they were mountains
they are an incubator for all the unhatched children
that lay in my draw string pouch
waiting to be chosen.
sometimes my hips ache when the weight of the world
lays itself across my hips like a lover who will not let go
but as always they are the laurels
that entice men to attempt to dethrone me.

Hollow

my hips ache like teeth coming in

wanting to come up for air

they're like a creaky door i'm waiting to hear

wanting to hear

but all the space occupied fulfills the fact i will be left waiting

for sound to fill the room.

Ouija

I was told to never play with an ouija board
but what if my body became one?
as i lay my hands on top of one another
they drag against my torso and all the demons
that dare me to release them
persuade me
the untamed burden of grief
that lays between my breasts
asked to be released
as my nails draw blood down my stomach
guilt growls in hunger
of something it doesn't understand
something it'll never know
and my hands now tender leaving my thighs blushing
never been grazed that way
leading to uncharted territory
pulling apart lips that tremble
anticipating solidarity in a place that is hollowed out by a grim future
my womb births ghosts every month
in efforts to reminder me of my failure to thrive
it invites me often, swoons me
to visit her
but i know if i do intermittently
its like playing with an ouija
letting the demons win
staining my hands with sins
allowing my hips to unhinge
and be torn apart by the evil in me.

Hands

Im tired of placing my hands inside me
trying to fill myself up
plug up all the sadness
only to spill out all my feeling between my legs
where someone should be
to fill me up with love
touch my core
tap into what it is to be a woman
because I just don't know anymore.

Touched

I run my tongue over the cave of my teeth
wondering where you will touch me first
my lips dry out
wilt knowing you won't parch my thirst anytime soon
my mouth is a mirage
a place where kisses don't fall upon my lips.

Lipstick Stains

In the garden resides a flower
that resembles all the crumpled napkins
stained with my lipstick
of all the nights my lips were lonely
and tired of waiting
for their first kiss.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

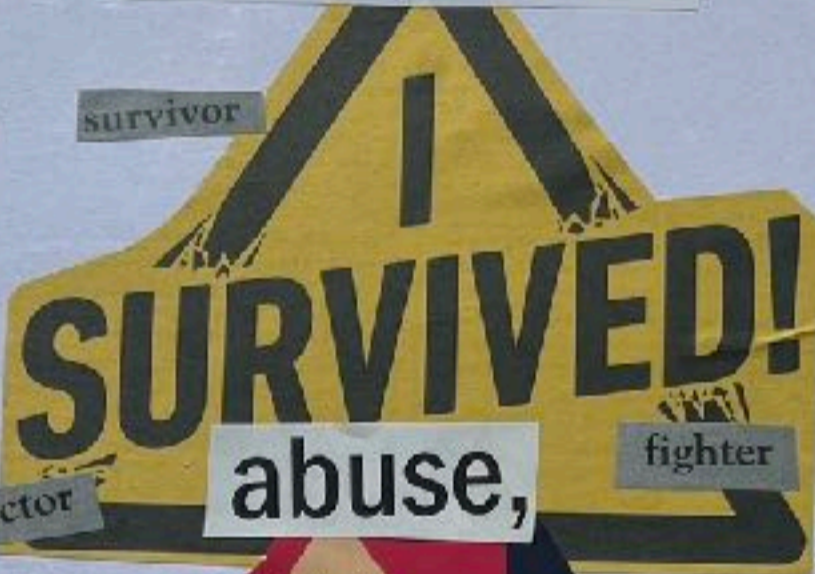
now i see

PHYSICAL ABUSE

survivor

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER



VIOLENCE

abuse,

fighter

victor



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

sexual assault

victim,

Tread Lightly

FINANCIAL ABUSE

complex

TRAUMA

a nightmare replayed

OF SURVIVAL

Siren

Sometimes i feel like a siren

my cries sound like another man's song of loss

they flock to me like i'm an oracle

like i'm the answers to their misfortune

but i'm not

just because the consonants and vowels sound like aching melodies from my

mouth

doesn't mean i was meant for you

so stop coming for me

as i know i should probably choose how to speak

without spilling songs

out of the crook of my jaw.

Calling my Name

I stopped asking for men

i begged them to stop calling my name

it's not theirs and it doesn't belong to them

i don't belong to anyone.

Seeds of Change

Remember that time you forced me to eat your seeds years ago?
when i didn't understand the consequences as well as you did
years later the reminder that you made me swallow
found its way to my kitchen table in brown paper bags
telling me to let love grow
after you made me eat your seeds
that would never grow.

Bruises

Bruises stain my skin like tie dye
as i run my fingers over them as if they were a mood ring
trying to understand the feelings you felt
when you said you loved me
but the tenderness of my skin
tells a different truth.

Claws

My cousin bore his claws into my sides
to mark me a difficult future
called no man's land
owls and wolves reside in the faded earth
that once was an abundant field of youth.
my body howls when i attempt to burn away the history
of a man who rode his fingers down the thighs of an eleven year old girl
you'd think a decade would bring change
but the facade remains the same,
as my swollen belly is the river
carrying the child who was stillborn
and ceased to exist.

Kerosene

Your fingers are keys
that open up the memories of a past
that lit me on fire
when i was twelve
i doused myself in kerosene
so the next time he touched me
we'd burn
but that bastard
backed away
licked his lips
and watched me combust.

School Counsellor

I tried to tell the elementary school counsellor
that my cousin touched me where my womanhood lay
i tried to tell the elementary school counsellor
that my cousin snatched my woman hood
and feasted on my soul
i tried to tell the elementary school counsellor
that my family glazed over the abuse
i tried to tell the elementary school counsellor
that this isn't a cultural thing
the elementary school counsellor said its a typical thing
in the south east Asian community
she shuffled me out the door
and shut it behind me
locking up the courage
i didn't have until my twenties.

Markers

My body is a pregnant cavity
of a hoarder who could not let go
of the memories that furrow silver down my sides.
i learned in biology
that all the stretch marks i wear are small tears
and those tears are markers that i survived
a brutal war
of all the men that carved my innocence away
leaving me to stuff myself
with liquid gold.

Water

I stand in the shower
wait for it to bless my body
cleanses me from everything i shouldn't carry
i feel my body tremble beneath me
blur into the water
remember something i thought i intended to forget but it's back
haunting me in the clarity of my shower
it's no longer safe for me
safe for me to shower
because i remember
when you took my love for water
and salivated for my body
like it was meant to be yours.

Price to Pay

The price i pay is way more than you
all the blood
the marrow
my heart
my sanity is the price i pay
to live
to exist
in a world i should exist in.

'Patriarchy,

Hear Me Roar



FEMINIST

WOMEN

Are Still

ON A
MISSION

To BREAK THE BIAS

Bridging the gap

BEYOND XX AND XY

SEX AND GENDER

We ha **ve**

VISIONS of EQUITY

Reframing the Disappointment

When i was born

someone told my mother

“better luck next time”

because i did not carry the same vitality as a boy

what i think they meant was

good luck saving your daughter from the patriarchy.

Rights?

What gave men the right
to tell a woman how to own her body
that she could be prettier if she was skinner
maybe if she shoved celery up her ass
she would be more appealing to you
did you ever stop to think her body was wounded
hurting
bloating
botulizing
oozing
from not being taken care of
by a patriarchal, colonial world.

Choices I

I have as much choice
as the man who chose to follow the sacred doctrine
of holding women captive
in this invisible ownership
we call the patriarchy.

Choices II

I was just trying to be proactive
making choices for me and my body
but all you wanted me to do
was be held captive by tradition
because that's how its always been
and we shouldn't change
what is apparently working
a majority silenced by gender.

Patriarchy's Bitch

Because i am a woman
when i feel uncomfortable
and open my mouth to say my peace
society places a gag in my mouth
silences me
makes me bend over
and take patriarchy in the ass.

Maybe...

If you believed her she wouldn't be wounded
maybe...

if you treated her better
She wouldn't be tortured
maybe...

if you loved her
she wouldn't be scarred
maybe...

if you listened to her
she wouldn't be angry
maybe...

if you stopped to look at yourself
and stop projecting your insecurities onto her
she wouldn't walk away and hate you.

Appetite

We have the same appetite
but i have to hide my satiety
because its not woman like
i have to hide my appetite because it threatens the man
i have to hide my appetite because it makes me a slut
i have to hide my appetite because i'm a good girl
how about you hide your appetite and swallow the bones whole
so we wont have to be reminded
that we are designed to feed you.

Pride

There is pride when you make love
but when i make love
its shroud in shame
that i let a man i love
lay between my legs
let him inside
and enjoyed it.

Pants

You think you wear the pants
but i carry the world between my hips
birth life into existence
and all you wield
is a tiny little dick
that shoots its shot once
and its done and over with.

Respect

Can we go back to the days when women were revered
seen as keepers of the world between the earth and birth
instead of being policed into being told they are wrong
for existing.

(I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN YOUR HEAD.)



LET'S TALK IT OUT!

Land of ice and fire

Have a heart?

It's all your fault,

'I will never forget the way my heart sank.

when I say WE'RE over

your heart BROKEN'

Games

I am too tired for games
too mature for play
i am ready to make a home
on solid foundations
not some stained, sagging mattress
that's seen more girls than women
i am ready to come home
to a man
not a boy
who still plays house
i am not the archetypal woman your mother was
i am the woman your mom wished she was
i know my worth
know my value
and you won't ever match my currency
because you don't see your problems.

My Body

You just wanted my body
to be there
a vessel for your disposal
the way your dad disposed of you
left you with no answer
you leave me with no answers
so i leave too
because i know i'm worth more
than just being a body.

Abuse Me

You abuse me

tear me

because you can't tear yourself

can't look yourself in the eye

and see it's you that's hurting.

Touched

This is the most i've been touched in twenty nine years
i detach myself from your touch
because i don't want to be hurt again
when you go.

Hold On

I held on to you for so long
because you gave me so many firsts
every first
became our last
until i let go.

Needs

My needs will never be met
because i don't matter
i've never mattered
if i mattered
my needs would be met
i wouldn't be aching, begging to be loved
believing any attention is love
if i was just loved in the first place.
i wouldn't be left begging for thread
unravelling at the seams
when i don't get what i need.

Searching

I went searching for all the wrong reasons
found all the wrong people
tried filling up a void with something not meant to be filled
now it becomes a bleeding ache
a rotting tooth, death and decay
i try to unpack it
and all the feelings come flooding at my feet
rises to my knees
pulls me into a rip tide
of unfelt emotions
i tried to forget
i drown in all my choices
fight against the tide
and learn how to swim
in all my mistakes.

Hindsight 2020

In hindsight you were bad for me
i may have dodged a bullet once
but the second time you blew through me
shattering everything i knew
everything i wanted
i'm left picking the shards of glass out of me
more blood than there needed to be
i bleed for the two of us
bleed for the pain you carry and left me with
i didn't ask for this baggage
i'm left in the middle of nowhere without a map

how will i get back to civilization?
how will i get back to loving again?
who will i be able to love if i can't even love myself?

after you cut me
i cut myself
angry over pouring every last ounce of myself to save you
you took me for granted
knew i would always be there
now i'm not even here for me.
you took every essence of energy i saved for love
and lit it on fire
left me with the ashes
only to choke.

Moon Temple

I let him into my moon temple
let him leave a trail of destruction between my legs
the traces of him still lingering in my womb
i wish i never let him in
let him leave a mark on the walls
that he was there
i feel phantom pangs of children running through the halls
of what could've been
what should have been
if it was love.

Temple

If my body is a temple
why do the men desecrate it?
instead of worshipping my body
they put their hands where they shouldn't be
taint the holiest part of me
tear the innocence rooted deep in the halls of my temple
leave the statue of the goddess weeping
a sacrilege
you preformed the devils work inside me
stained my womb with sin
my temple stands sorely in the distance
waiting for the strength to rebuild.

Lust and Greed

You got greedy with her
took every ounce of her life for granted
until you couldn't squeeze out anymore
you begged her for more but she just couldn't.
indebted to herself she dipped into her future love
scooped out love for you
handed it to you
thinking she would reap the benefits from you
but you devoured it
hungrily her love
the ambergris she carried for years
consumed by someone who was greedy for lust
and not the love she carried.

Sugar

I crave sugar because the world is nothing but bitter
i eat sweets to fill the hollow
where a man reached his fingers in me
carved out the cave where my sacral chakra should be
the richness feeding the void that is never satisfied
spoiled by the loss of innocence
no amount of decadence can fill up
the more purest, sweetest thing in me.

Soul Ties

How do i tie off my soul
the dead things
that keep me bound
how do i sever this umbilical bind
keeping me in the dark
holding me hostage
to everything i don't want to be anymore.

Love Again

I want to love again
but my soul is beyond repair
i gave love my all and got nothing but pain and regret in return
what man will love a woman who is afraid of the world?
who is afraid of men?
who can no longer trust anyone?
no man will want a broken woman
whose soul she carries in her palms
bruised and bleeding
along with her heart that lays at her feet
gutted by the last man
i pull my sweater tighter to keep what i have left of me together
unable to let a man in
let alone a friend
it will have to take a miracle
to love again.

Sometimes

Sometimes i wish i was gay

bi even

women treat me like goddesses

worship my body the way it should be

with their eyes

with their lips

they spill compliments

that moisturize my skin

men salivate all over me

can't keep their mouths shut

drown me with their comments

tell me "you'd be prettier if..."

and dissect my body in public.

sometimes i wish i was gay

bi even

so i could be held

without having to put out

be expected to kneel beneath you

repeal my womanhood

my sanctity

for your scarcity

to worship the power i wield.

Touch II

I want to grab your hands
trace your fingers over where it hurts
show you the map of my body
the borders that blur into one another
can you read my scars
see where it hurts
read a history i don't speak
can't speak
won't speak
until you
dilute this pain
tear the edges of this map
and draw me anew.

Hallmark Happiness

You only wanted to be there for the happy bits
the hallmark movie moments of motherhood
singing in the kitchen to childhood tunes with your daughter
the only time you were close was when you'd mix the dough together
all the elements you'd want in a daughter
sugar and spice and everything nice
but what happens when she cries and needs you most
you slink away and retreat
afraid of water
you refuse to melt into a mother
instead turning to stone
exiling your daughter for feeling
for oozing emotion
she becomes a biohazard you weren't prepared for
you quarantine her in her room until she's done
you tell her to cry alone
you don't want to catch feelings
you don't want to feel anything
other than being happy.

Why dad?

I asked my mom

why dad?

and she told me she loves men of colour

said that vanilla is too vanilla for her

and i stood there horrified

hearing the words come out of her mouth.

does she realize what she has done?

fetishizing people of colour

does she realize

what her people have done to my dad's people? to anyone who isn't white?

does she not remember when her people stole our jewels, our spices, our people

wrote over our history in their favour

introduced systems of oppression to people who were not oppressed

made them think that they had to work to be productive

enslaved us to do to their dirty work

so they could reap the benefits of the blood we spilled

in the fields

does she not know

that breathing me into existence

i would be fetishized

by my people

that i would become the mirror

her mirror of ignorance

and that i would pay the price

for her doings

and carry the burden of being both the oppressed and the privileged

but get the latter of the two.

BEWITCHED

girlfriend

BEWILDERED

wife

friend

daughter

sister

grandmother

WOMEN **H**OOD

mother

THE

BIRTH OF *some* *thing*
TRULY BEAUTIFUL

She/Me

Who is this person i see blurred between my eyes
she wears the world so well
laughs in the face of adversity when she's failing to get by
where did she find this grace?
when she lays at the bottom of a lake
watching the light refract images of an alternate reality
when she lies in the mud
deliriously exhausted of every possibility
to feel ok.

Woman

Sometimes there are two people in my head
the person i am and the woman i want to be
she runs and carries the weight of her growing soul
losing everything that kept her from becoming new
every negative thing
evaporates from her skin
and turns her into a wise stream
helping her along
sometimes i want to ask her how to struggle
take every ache as a marker for strength
each time i breathe it becomes a story
a tombstone for every somber feeling
i encounter on my way
to opening my eyes
and becoming the woman i see in my head
unapologetic and unashamed.

Carry Me

I am carrying myself
a stillborn child who wanted to grow
wanted to live
i carry her in my womb
the weight i carry for the two of us
stretches my body
breaks the bond between flesh and bone
i can't tell you i'm carrying her between my heart and lungs
without bated breathing leaving my lips
she is a secret i carry
until i can heal myself.

Hourglass

I don't need an hourglass to tell me times running out
or that my internal clock keeps ticking
and passing its deadlines
that the lines of latitude that fill my forehead
become an abacus
lined with dormant volcanoes
new and old united
the hair that cascades down my head
is now laces with threads from the moon
it weights me down
along with my uterus that reminds me
i'm losing my currency
every month
another pearl disintegrates in a red tide
with the stench of decay and the end
it's no longer summer for me
and i'll slowly have to go
will somebody at least accompany me?
on this biological journey
we can never control.

PCOS

I feel like i've failed my womb
let the past poison her garden
and the flowers no longer bloom
no matter how much she tends to it
the chemicals deep through the soil
choke the seeds
lays barren with weeds
she weeps when she can feel
raspberry dew drops
on the mounds of graves
that should've been her children
she mourns the chance of ever becoming a mother
she sees the fruits of her labour
expelled
before they could be born.

Spoons

I used up all my spoons today

i'm lying in bed

dreaming of spoons

growing on trees too tall to climb

i cling to the trunk begging for mercy

for a spoon to fall from its branches

please today can i have one more spoon so i can function

please

i just need one more spoon

to survive.

Binge

I was a binge eater once
contemplating whether or not to eat apart the house
tear the walls down like they were made of the ingredients i need to fulfil me
the basic need failed me
and instead consumed me
and the feelings that keep me hungry multiply under my skin
tattoo my torso with fault lines
and i can't tell whose fault it is
when i become full from guilt and starved from pain
how do i feed myself enough?
and pull myself away
when it's enough?

Month

Every month

when i get sick

i hear your voice among the others

as the pangs of nausea

let me slip into the future.

if my blood is the ocean

casting another pearl

that would never be

and your voice a light house

does that mean our bodies are ships

and we will meet (again)?

Mystic

When the fog hangs over the river
like a soul over a body of water
i feel like two entities
trying to pull away.

The Shadow Side of Privilege

I am the face of privilege
in the hollow of the margin
i'm not allowed to exist in the bias
i am oil and vinegar repelling from one another
in this exhausted vessel of a body
when i speak i feel the words bend away any meaning of importance
when i told the school counsellor i was being sexually assaulted
she told me that it's normal in the south East Asian community
and i sat there
in the light a shadow
barely existing.

My Privilege

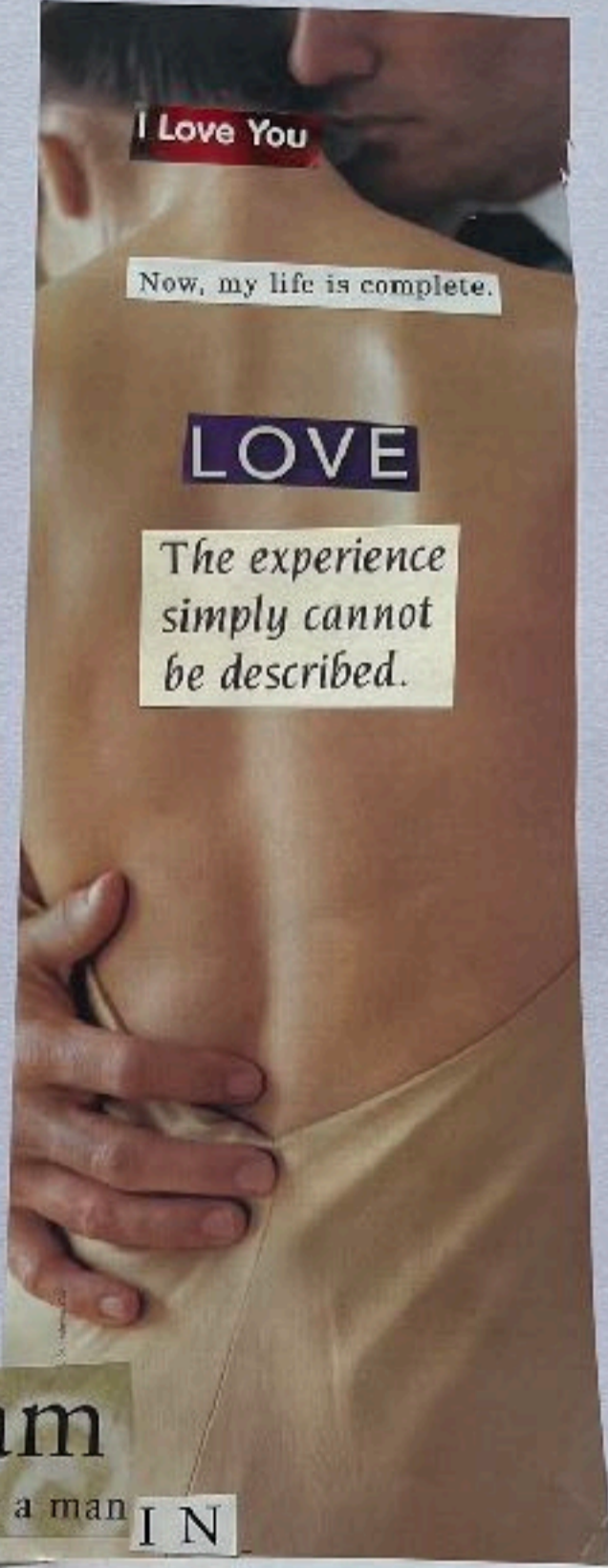
My privilege ends
at my first middle and last name
on paper i am “ethnic”
in person i am white
on the inside i’m a twist cone
an amalgamation of European and Indo-Fijian decent
depending on the person
i am a heathen, a dirty sinner or not supposed to exist
that my parents broke an unspoken rule
that they aren’t meant to be together
there is no place for me
on either side
i walk a fine line between the two
when i dip more into one side
the other kicks me out
tells me to go home
that i don’t belong here
then where do i belong?
if i don’t belong on either side?
its so lonely being homeless
when nobody wants to claim you
make you theirs
accept you as you are
a beautiful being made of up of a mixture of people
both painful and raw.

Successful

When a woman becomes brave and successful
fear the wrath of removing marginalization
and all the barriers
created be crushed
with determination and wisdom
for all the time she was imprisoned
she bloomed.

Halo

From the distance i see the halo highlighting your head
you make the mornings majestic
when the sky is all bruised up before the sun comes
and remedies us from the night
you resemble all my past mistakes redone but undone
and i feel ready again to try.



I Love You

Now, my life is complete.

LOVE

The experience simply cannot be described.

i dream
of meeting a man

IN

UNITY

Haemorrhaging

You stopped the haemorrhaging
put your hand on my heart
pulled me into your chest to heal me
with the sound of comfort muffled beneath your shirt
i breathe in with every drum beat and try to sync with your rhythm
and forget about who started the bleeding
in the first place.

Exist

Remember when you lay your head on my thighs
recollecting how to life begins
you love how gentle our love is as you fall asleep
comforted by the security that i can bring life into existence with you
your finger apologize for the injustices mankind brings to women
allowing them to break apart their bodies
ache when it's illegal
you apologize for what you will do to me sometime soon
cry a little for the independence i will lose over my body
cry for the institutionalization you know i protest against
and i forgive you because you respect life and the power i hold
for the both of us.

To my future daughter:

I feel you close to me but so far away

my womb aches to hold you

cradle you until your ready to meet me

i want to meet you

but i haven't met your maker

i am indebted to my pain and don't have the strength to look for him

my body is in disarray and dysfunctional

not an ideal place for you to grow just yet

i hope one day i'm able to feel you flutter beneath my skin

but my dreams are crushed when the world comes crashing down around me

it's not the most ideal place for you baby

the ones who help breathe life into existence

are threatening your very existence

and i don't want this the world you enter

everything is falling apart

i am falling apart

i don't want this to be all you know

i want to be healthy for you

ready for you with open arms

but until then my love

you'll lay waiting inside me

until the time is right

and everything heals

we will meet

one day.

Women are emotional in order to feel the divine energy at the highest levels and be supreme healers and lovers and mothers. Not to drive men insane. Her deep spiritual connection to feelings is to inspire a man to his spiritual heights as well.

She is not a nag, she is an oracle.- Raja Khan

Picture yourself

GODDESS

You have y

in the

ALL BY HERSELF

rarely to

the grou



FIND YOUR PATH.

**your
strength.**

'THE PERSON

organic & raw

SHE IS BEAUTY

PERSONIFIED,

ALLUREMENT

IN CLOTHED

FORM,

ENCHANTMENT

ITSELF.

n myself for a
e hated myself
ng time.'

N

ng me I
fat. I was
conscious

'I su
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THANK YOU

I have so many people to thank for helping me create my first zine ever. First and foremost, thank you Heather P. for inspiring me and giving me the push to finally do the thing.

Thank you Riley F. for all the technical help. I would be nothing without your help, Miigwitch friend!

To all my counsellors, thank you for helping me grow and work through my trauma. I cannot stress how crucial counselling is in healing.

To all the women in my life that have raised me and taught me to be the badass I have become, thank you.

To everyone else who is in my life, thank you for your patience, encouragement and belief in me and my work.

And to my readers, thank you for reading this incredibly vulnerable piece of work and coming out of it on the other side. Please take care of yourself and do something that makes you happy after reading this zine.



Sharin F. Ali is a biracial poet and multimedia artist. Born to an Indo-Fijian father and European- Canadian mother, her unique upbringing heavily influences her work. She currently resides in Surrey, B.C.

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