

Body Politic

By Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury

I

Her body is a land
of new beginnings, made of
thundershowers
and pale, breezy moonlight,
smelling of shadows
and laughter, and the freshly mown grass
of endless summer.
The gentle ebbs and flows of time
braid the night
of her hair, weaving it
with the first rays
of the sun, while the dew
on her skin mingles
with the desire
of innocent love, shivering
in the eye
of the storm, vulnerable,
before the first plunge
into the whirlpool of desire.

II

Her body is a land of agony.
The terrain haunted now
traversed with
purple, yellow bruises
distended, shaped
like little islands, floating
on her flesh. Tired flesh,
tired, tired, flesh
lusted after and devoured,
devoured and destroyed.

Contusions of invasion
line the smooth globe
of her forehead, electricity
convulses the body
that once set lust on fire,
ignited the monster
that entered her five-foot two
domicile, without invitation;

Plundered
Ravaged

Till reality and self

s-p-l-i-t
like curdled milk.
Clumpy bits of reason,
floating around
in a translucent sea
of madness
in the cell,
of the hell,
of the day after sanity.

III

She hears the voices
raging inside her. Pleading
for the death of oppressive
nightmares. Lamenting
the altered landscape. Weeping
over the mutilated geography.
Warm, parallel creeks of
salty compassion;
parting
and meeting, meeting and
parting
down the dazed
lines of her body politic,

Writing Raw

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soothing
smoothing
erasing.

She stares at the voices
with sedated un-focus
forming the words
in braille on her tongue –

“Can you rescue me from this pretty body?
It’s a country of pain,
it hurts here,
it hurts there.
It’s a hurt-land of everywoman, everywhere.”

At Sea

By Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury

Set adrift,
a shore in sight or a mirage again?
Myopic, manipulated memories,
of your trusted, lying fingers weaving poignant patterns
on my foolish flesh.

I

The waves,
lap gently at my cracked, blistered ankles,
They trace the contours, fill the crevices;
Gain in body and salt
With the sensuous glide down the cheekbones you once loved;
one slow drop at a time.

II

The sun,
blinds my dream-misted eyes.
Slick sweat runs down the nape of neck,
while the soul freezes over.
Will it ever thaw?
I shiver in anticipation.

III

The sand,
engulfs in passionate embraces,
tactile promises, amorphous
And then...
a lingering, intimate, coarse slipping away.
Look, touch, feel: don't hold on.

Writing Raw

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Tossed about at sea
Set adrift.
I won't drown, no
I am saving that for the next life
Next love.

Let Me Keep You A Secret

By Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury

Let me keep you a secret,
closely guarded
in the unconscious of the supine mind.
You come when I expect you least.

You are only little after all,
how would you ever escape my vow of secrecy,
if I am not rid of you altogether?
From your claim on my body,
the hold on my mind;
echoes - that reverberate off hidden nooks,
memories - that surface for air,
before a dive back into the recesses again.
That's your weapon, and my nemesis.

Shrill shrieks bounced off the musty, yellow walls.
The paint peeling, the air sweating,
a hot, balmy day in a bustling clinic.
Just another day at work for the nurses.
I made a bet with myself that I wouldn't scream,
won the wager, lost consciousness.

Pain is colourful –
white with red spots,
neon green, neon pink.
I faded in and out with the colours.

A surfeit of emptiness now,
You have left the building
confusion on your as yet unformed face.
The alarm went off, too late, too late
the soul has been robbed,
efficiently.
I keep rubbing my hands and feet together,
it's much too cold to feel.

Writing Raw

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You loved me,
in that intimately distant way of yours.
As I loved you,
with unmade promises to each other.

We can't un-entwine.
Our collective breaths will keep fogging the voyeur air.
Till we meet again,
let me keep you a secret.

Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury bio: Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury is in her third year of PhD at Durham University. She is the co-editor of the journal, Postgraduate English, Durham University's online peer-reviewed literary journal and has published academic articles in peer-reviewed journals. Her poem 'Half-Past Ennui is due to be published in the Literary Journal 'The Poeming Pigeon' in October, 2015.