

# Lapis Lazuli

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POETRY

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**IQRA RAZA**

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**For Agha Shahid Ali**

Last night rained hard on me.  
 The "massacred town" of your dream, was my own.  
 No more wrong turns, no longer nameless,  
 All the people were my own  
 Shrieking through the hollow of their bones,  
 Clinging on to each other, like maggots  
 Feeding on the misery and, dying  
 Under half- blown ceilings, more naked  
 Than their exposed souls.

I looked at the sky groaning with pain,  
 Crying rain tears that hit us harder than pellet guns.  
 Drones crowding into a little space, above my roof,  
 That we left open always, for some fresh air and sunlight.  
 As my nostrils flooded, with iron stench  
 Anaemia crouched to earth, with a renewed hunger,  
 Only to find my own crumbling limbs turn to ash.  
 I saw violence break heavier than the night,  
 While I lay bleeding into an already saturated earth;  
 And counting the bones, casually  
 Tossing some into my memory.

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**Eulogy**

Mother, will you forgive me?  
 I smothered the face I could not see  
 Strangled it within closed brackets of my body  
 Till I could hear the violence, like rusted knuckles cracking.

Mother, there is blood on my hands,  
 A lump in my throat, harder to swallow  
 Than the cries I hum into songs, late at night.  
 My stomach heavy with someone else's pleasure  
 That lasted less than a season's worth of fallen berries.

Mother, my body is a graveyard,  
 A burial ground for my sins  
 It is the stench of bones rotting inside me

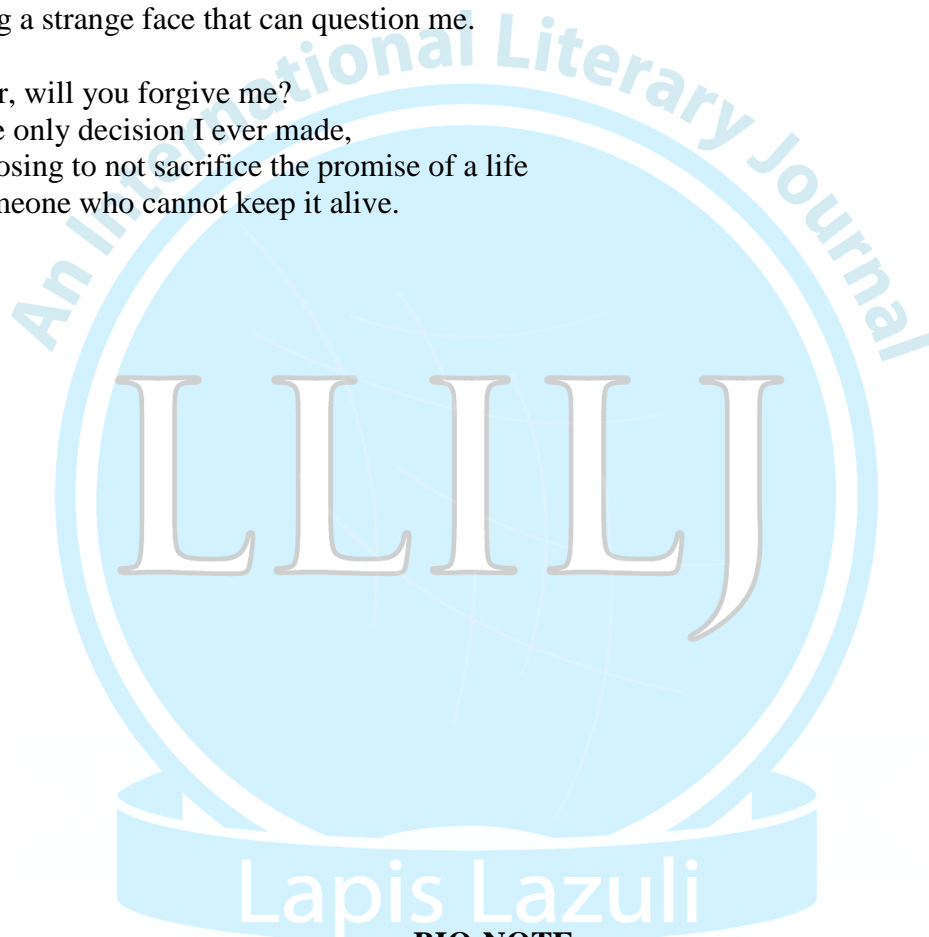
The cadavers sprouting tiny teeth.

Mother, my body is the home  
To blood- soaked marks of little hands  
Struggling against the walls I forced  
To crumble into a heap of skin, blood and bones.

Mother, my body is a sunken ship  
Where old treasures sprout dead leaves.  
Even at the ocean floor, the current is too strong  
For a crumbling wreck to sustain itself.

Mother, will you forgive me?  
For the childhood, I can no longer see  
In my baby photos, you diligently preserved,  
Fearing a strange face that can question me.

Mother, will you forgive me?  
For the only decision I ever made,  
In choosing to not sacrifice the promise of a life  
To someone who cannot keep it alive.



**BIO-NOTE**

Iqra Raza is a final year student of MA English at Delhi University's St Stephen's College. She is a haikin, an artist and a poet and has been published in various journals and anthologies, (both online and in print) including but not limited to *Teenage Wasteland Review*, *Dilliwali*, *Expressions*, etc. She has also won two international awards for her haiku and has been widely published in Haiku journals and anthologies like *Modern Haiku*, *Cattails*, *Failed Haiku*, *Wishbone Moon*, *Naad Anunaad*, etc.

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