

## POETRY

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### **In Therapy**

I narrate my whole story in a monotone rhythm  
like when I auditioned for the school choir  
And the pianist just shook his head in disappointment.  
I don't shed a tear. I smile  
wearily like I'm tired of having to explain why the water doesn't fall from the earth into the space  
to fifth graders for the hundredth time.  
It remains.  
It's contained.  
Why?  
I don't acknowledge my therapist nodding like I nodded much too many times in the history  
class.  
I say I don't feel anything anymore.  
I don't know where to begin feeling.

*Like that's even possible. Lol.*

And like I recited the pledge all those years ago,  
Chronologically all incidents begin taking shape of miseries in circles like in the geometry class.  
But these are incalculable.

I sigh. I'm done.

I've written the essay. My therapist starts to speak. I look down.  
At night, I cry.

## **Don't Judge Me by My House**

The pale-yellow walls  
are peeling at the corners.  
Soot-like marks adorn  
the centre.  
One plastic wall  
amongst four walls stands  
bright orange,  
Ganesh resides, papered and flimsy.

Please don't judge me by my house,  
the plaster in the last room  
Peeling and falling.  
The paint came off long ago,  
Bed creaks  
each time you sit on it.  
It reminds you,  
How old the furniture is.

Please don't judge me by my house,  
One tap in the bathroom  
drips and drips,  
You close it with a firm grip.  
The only plastic tub  
has lost its colour.  
The mug has no handle.  
Red rimmed oven smells,  
of roasted chicken.

Please don't judge me by my house,  
A few doors have  
no latch,  
to keep the wind out.  
The curtains worn out,  
Showing colour only when you  
stand close.  
Doormats made of torn clothes,  
the sink, broken.

Please don't judge me by my house,  
It stands tall,

the bricks intact.  
And I am bright  
in the sun.

### **Far-away lands**

I find myself dreaming of a white picket fence around a large garden where my dogs can roll in the grass while I sit with my legs stretched, soaking the sun but my country doesn't build such houses and I realize how borrowed my dreams have become, lifted from the flitting images of Modern Family and Adult Fiction I read in school, knitting fantasies of prom to universal healthcare with crocheted borders of my brownness hanging loose on the sides.

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### **BIO- NOTE**

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Pragya Anurag is a research scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi. She has been writing poetry since a very early age. She explores themes that she has lived and experienced.