



In 1977 Buenos Aires, fourteen mothers walked in circles after their children were disappeared by the state. With white scarves and stitched names, they moved in silence - called mad, some vanished too. But they kept walking. Not in protest, in presence. The plaza still remembers.

fig. Migrant Mother is a photograph taken in 1936 by American photographer Dorothea Lange during her time with the Resettlement Administration.

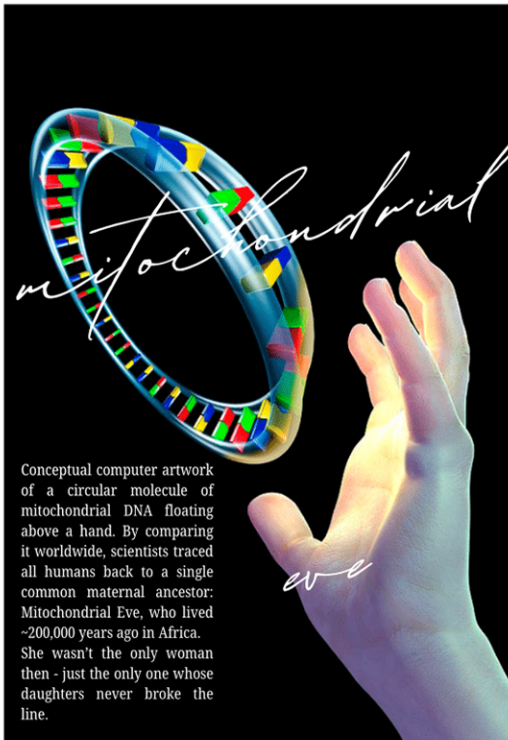


fig. four year old nani's hand

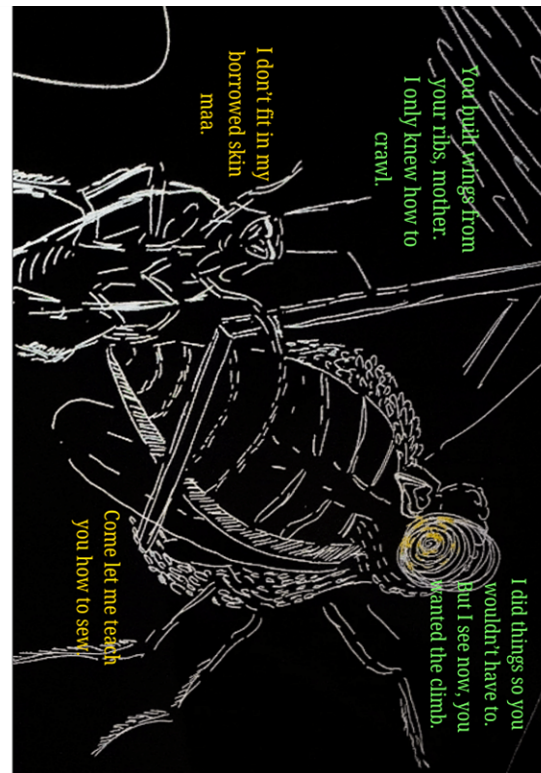
Once, I was just a speck. Tucked inside my mother, who was tucked inside hers. A future folded twice. A lineage in waiting.

If you feel like saying anything after reading all my mumbo jumbo, mail me: pavinprivate@gmail.com (or just drop a DM @pavavinii) This was made with delhizine, (ILOVESM) a constellation of people putting feelings on paper. GO CHECK THEM OUT Instagram: @delhizine

Wanna read more cool stuff or join in? Visit: delhizine.in



Conceptual computer artwork of a circular molecule of mitochondrial DNA floating above a hand. By comparing it worldwide, scientists traced all humans back to a single common maternal ancestor: Mitochondrial Eve, who lived ~200,000 years ago in Africa. She wasn't the only woman then - just the only one whose daughters never broke the line.



I don't fit in my borrowed skin
maa.
You pull wings from
your ribs, mother.
I only knew how to
crawl.

I did things so you
wouldn't have to.
But I see now, you
wanted the climb.
Come let me teach
you how to sew

If your gods
dream /
my mother is in
it.

for reMembering a little
for regurgitating a little



ILLUSION.



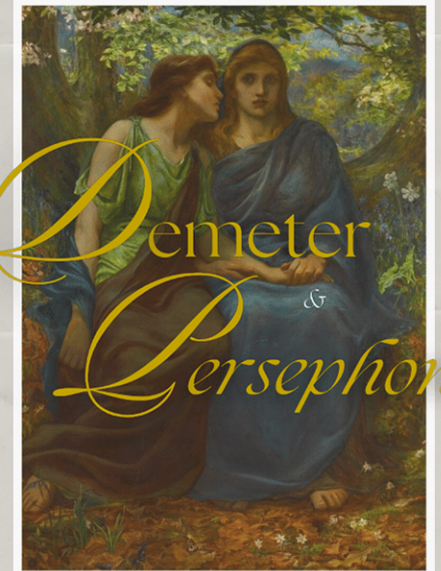
Description:
Trying to hold
hands with dadi.
(2023)



sewn flowers don't wilt

A NEEDLE AGAINST TIME

Demeter stopped the seasons when her daughter Persephone was taken.



by JOHN BATON

“In this rain we are moved to anecdotes, that people float candles out to the river.

That in a field there is crickets’ grief. It could be colder just now but it isn’t. [...]”

Elegy by Mary Jo Bang

I don't remember my childhood too well,
but if I try to find it, I see a city of marble floors and a soft
bed with a flower bent backwards,
as if unblooming.

How do you regurgitate memory?
force it up, half-digested, bitter, sudden.
What does the god of my childhood look like?
A clay idol in the veranda?
in the overwatered plants,
leaves drowned in salt, brine folded in creases or
wrinkles. It wasn't the sort of god that did things.
It just was. Like dampness in walls.

I dream of a place far away,
but when the clock strikes midnight,
I'm nothing but a mush of flesh,
My mother with her hands of prayers,
stands still with the same dream.

She waits beside a seat she saved for me,
but doesn't remember herself anymore.
A soft bed with a flower bent backwards,
as if unblooming.

(It could be colder just now but it isn't.)

The Event Horizon of my Mother's Silence.

(Recorded during a typical heat transfer at 2300 hours, amid domestic interference | 2022)

My house is really loud during nights. Not just the usual ceiling fan hum or the offbeat chorus of distant dogs — no, it's actually loud. Which feels absurd, considering I'm mostly silent and still live with my parents. Thanks, in part, to my father, we have TV buzzing with laughter tracks no one's laughing at or pressure cooker hissing the post-dinner sighs with random popcorn at 2 am. The chaos is consistent. In the middle of all this, I have been taking my night-time summer showers reluctantly since 2016. I'm not a fan of cold water. Never have been. I'll take lukewarm even in June, thank you. Call it weakness or warmth dependency but a cold shower feels like DEATH. If I wanted to suffer like this, I'd have chosen to be ectothermic. At least reptiles don't pretend they're safe in showers that demand slow acclimatization.

So I go in. Tap on. Water falls. Skin flinches. And I realize: the exhaust fan was still on. It's always the small things that undo you. One missed switch, and suddenly the room is colder than it should be. The warm air dragged out methodically, by a machine designed to be efficient, not kind. Back in 7th grade, I couldn't understand how cooler fans blow air in and exhaust fans pull it out. They both were just blades spinning back then. Blade differences, negative space and all that. Like think of a spoon in water. Tilt it one way - you push water towards, tilt it the other and its away. Even then, you'd find most lint on something that's moving so much. Charges and all that.



Standing there, soaked and shaking, I remember thinking about god, and my long blue towel. Not the loud kind of thinking, not the booming sky type. But in the pulsing way a phone rings in another room, and you wait, silently hoping someone else will pick up before the call dies. So, I start to scream.

Screaming is just prayer without syntax.
MUMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
(times 200, in increasing decibels, sometimes in the
tune of happy birthday.)

But she doesn't come. I know where she was, the kitchen, probably. Elbows deep in water. Lost in her world of metal spoons and static, oil on her hands. I like to think her hands are wet too. That maybe we are both submerged, just in different places. The sound of me doesn't reach her. I am a small voice inside a tiled box. There are no acoustics for grief in a home that's still awake. Me and mumma never meet in sound anyways.

This, I think, is what it feels like to love people who no longer know how to receive you. Former lovers, distant friends, even mothers. You cry out through sound, memory, through everything you think you still share, hoping the outline of your voice still maps onto their world. That somewhere in their atmosphere, your signal still gets through. But it doesn't. Not because they've stopped caring (maybe they have, sorry mumma if you reading), but because life is loud & sometimes, kindness echoes back as silence.

The air was thinner, heat's long gone, and standing under the shower felt like auditioning for a documentary on mild hypothermia. But I was already wet. Already committed. And the switch was 23x3 inches away. One can't really live inside old equations for a long time. Systems change. Stepping outside naked ?????? Making peace with cold ?????? Oh my non-existent mammalian pride. She never came. I had to tip-toe out. 'Witness is a magnitude of vulnerability' and my 4 BHK flat of a home houses 9 people. It was a risky decision. I swear I'm not spoilt.

Maybe that's how god visits, like mothers in the rooms adjacent, beyond the belief in sound, always on the brim. And you keep shouting because hope, like habit, has momentum.

When the water turns cold, and the switch remains untouched, you learn something no theology ever warned you about: the distance between help and helplessness is exactly one wet step on cold tile. Trembling, soaked, a flip & the world stirs back to life. Not with thunder. But with a low, mechanical hum of blades dimming down, as if to remind you: silence has its machinery. Maybe faith isn't in the scream. It's in the quiet that follows, and the hands that move anyway. I'm adapted to exhausts being on in showers now. Thanks mother goose and the guy who put switches far outside my washroom.

from when i hated her

I think she still sings
on some branch of a violet tree,
I hear her when I'm alone,
somewhere far.

uprooting weeds-to-be,
precarious canines of
a precautionary mother.

wise know what are deaths on stage,
wise know who starves behind,
knows obscene, knows outlines,
it's not what we came for.

'what can you do for love'
she signs off -



holds my palm like a breath held
making circles, I prayed,
'Can I cut the fate a little'
for love hits the ankle,
for who could ever own the words -
'you're mine',
she signs off - dear daughter

might it be for her love

like that day midwife separated us
'when will you do it for love'
at my best



then sometimes I can't see you
so in silence and smiles
I mirror back ridicule,
returning if I owed,
with love
at my worst.