



## Indelible in the Hippocampus is the Laughter

- Christine Blasey Ford, testifying about her sexual assault to the Senate

*Sialkot 1969*

*Anytown, Anytime*

Silk of girlhood  
raw thread snapped

adolescence, womanhood

he was the one who had tied  
the, *rakhi*, run his fingers on  
the *linea negra* while she was still  
in her mother's womb

the only safe place

to awake  
straddled  
by a huge and heavy staleness,  
*unable to move*

why does she think of chess?

cornered  
pinned, trapped, drugged, addled  
a toxic maleness

the corpulent assaulter  
on top of her,  
one hand stuffing  
a kerchief in her mouth and the other  
holding her down while stabbing  
bulbous penis, malignant root, digging in  
call a spade a spade  
and not

behind, beside, inside

others

took a section of pipe

edible pawnography

blood,

where  
copious, ephemeral, indelible everywhere

her insides, were

terrified and still  
*unable to move*, she stares  
up into the high Victorian ceilings  
with their dark ominous beams  
All the while  
the clink, clink, clink  
of water dripping  
in the metal bucket

spilling

After wards, (*gauze, iodine, sedative*) she finds

behind the bathroom door

words, too have power  
*sutra*, the cotton from which  
turning the wheel

to rearrange  
suture  
she will be queen

the pieces  
spun  
again.

## Splitting Screens

Broken gram, her  
weight and balance, beam, repeat  
doesn't miss a single beat

Woman as splitting  
headache, bad apple, spittoon for seed,  
bossed from on high, sifting

Through shifting feelings, fear  
like a clot of flour in the cake  
no one would know the measure

Of that furtive cupping, unread blood  
would boil over, yet remain  
hallways in the marrow, dread

Hollow as a bone to pick  
and pick it up she did, knowing  
those hated eyes that held

Her pittance hostage like a soft  
summer peach biting  
her lips to keep an angry dam

From spilling the beans  
because par for the course  
men were golfers, women holes.

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### ***Current Affairs***

It doesn't matter what  
you are wearing, whether headgear  
squarely in the left-right crosshairs  
or a slit across your throat

You could strip  
the blush blood leaves from Eve's  
Fall trees, skirt the subject  
from head to henna red toe

Pull the wool, thick as a load  
shedding night over eyes and mouth  
and arm your legs with leather  
fast and furious too

And still the tentacles  
would find you, bump  
and grind right behind you  
octopi to occupy

Each crack and crevice  
so tiresome to be  
female-as-fortress  
what would you give to float

Possess an infinite moat, a mote that blinds  
aggression of the regressive stripe  
this is your dream as you swim  
hooked in a sea of fishing eyes

That the voltage of women's verse will rise  
versus a weaponized gaze, unfazed  
by curses or cursor, a current to shock  
unlock the dark chokehold

Until #MeToo sings the body electric.

*\*Poems excerpted with permission from Indelible In the Hippocampus is the Laughter; one of 5 movements in Zero Period, Sophia Naz's latest poetry manuscript.*