

White - A Ghazal

BY: SAM

These couplets share deeply personal experiences that the writer has undergone within medical settings and/or at the hands of medical personnel. The ghazal is a format with a rich history and some fixed rules and techniques. These include the 'kafiya' (rhyming pattern of words before the refrain), the 'radif' (the constant refrain), the maqta (poet's pen name used in the last sher). The poet has chosen to use the form of a ghazal to express complex emotions and sensations and communicate experiences that may be regarded controversial.

Each dental visit invites recurrent nightmares of being
frozen under the lights of blinding white.

You have to just 'ignore' the deafening sound of the drill
for the privilege of healthy teeth, strong and white.

The receptionist watching me fill the form asks loudly
"Girl, uh?" after my pen has ticked the box on the right.

The blue and black letters on the paper blur before my eyes,
all I can see is muddy spots polluting the white.

They told me, "The doctors always know best,
they will cure you at the hospital", when I was a child.

Obedience is not requested but demanded by these
gods of medicine granting lies of pristine white.

They scoff at my questions and order me
to lose weight to fit the ideal range of my height.

When I was a child, they used to smile at me,
these big and important men in coats of white.

The medical student passing by my room suddenly
stops and lecherously peers inside.

Binded in a cuff of inflating air, I avoid his lustful eyes
and stare at the walls, painted in blinding white.

The nurses whisper and giggle together, my
presence here is their exciting secret tonight.

The hospital-mandated robe offers no protection;
the icy fingers of the AC piercing my fibers of thin white.

Why this fear of people and places whose
only purpose is to aid, to cure, to heal, Abhi?

What can I say except my rainbow-drenched body
is forbidden from sipping their grail of pure white?

AID AND SHADE

BY: VRIDHI JAIN

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Vridhi aspires to create conversations with their art on @vidsistrance through art, photography and all forms of media they can attempt.