

the fridge

Sehar Moughal

Abstract

'the fridge' portrays the unattended parts of my soul, my being. Most days, I am exhausted because I do too much for too many people: I am a mother, I provide for my family financially, I am a graduate student, I work in the mental health sector, and I am a teacher at a university. People tell me that I have it all, that I am "passionate", and I am a "force to reckon with". But some days, I am just tired. On those days, I want to hide away, be "normal", neither passionate nor a force, but merely human. This poem was written on one such day, a day where feeling more than, being more than, was not enough and too much. 'the fridge' is not just a poem; nor is it just a metaphor. It is my reality of how exhausting it is to try to live up to whom I am meant to be, never carving enough space for who I am. 'the fridge' is my surrender and also my (be)coming of home.

Keywords

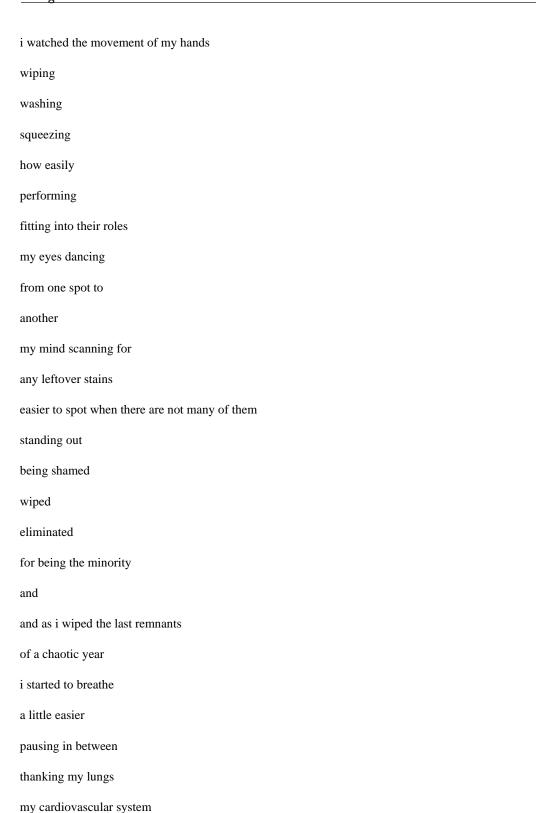
poetry, reflections, BIPOC, Brown exceptionalism, trauma, hero worship

the fridge must be revelling in the attention given that it hasn't been cleaned in months housing a dead fly was it licking the spilt milk? ignoring the cold being greedy a shrivelled-up broccoli sauce stains dried herbs am i ashamed? for not doing what i am meant to do no not really but today was special as i wiped away the grime and fuzzy fungi i thought about the chaos within me around me the instability needed surely

for stability

for order to ensue

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| and everything in between |
|---|
| for doing it's job |
| letting me come back home |
| after a hard day |
| or a week |
| maybe a year |
| and as i put the half-empty milk bottle |
| no no |
| half full |
| does it really matter? |
| back into its space |
| i swear i heard it sigh |
| it was home |
| and so |
| was i |

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Thank you to my sister, Mehwish, for encouraging me to be brave and show my vulnerability to others.

Author Biography

Sehar Moughal is a 1.5-generation Muslim immigrant born in Pakistan who has resided in Aotearoa, New Zealand, for the last two decades. Sehar is a registered psychologist, a board-certified behaviour analyst, a doctoral student, and a professional teaching fellow at the University of Auckland. Sehar's doctoral research explores a therapeutic model for people of Asian ethnicity with family violence trauma using a feminist and contextualist methodology. Sehar is also a mother to a 4-year-old. Sehar's passion for work and research stems from her own lived experiences.