A War Story

Little wound
I am sat now, to tend to you.
(As is the norm.)

You ought to know, the world operates on rituals.
To heal, to grow, to renew, you must be one of Us.
To Belong is to be baptized with a Name
And the trappings of Paraphernalia— posh, posher, poshest—
The value of your life.
But you’re tiny—
Perhaps you’d settle for less. The same old list,
And your desires modest.
You trickle down—
For that is where you belong
Had you been etched in flesh and blood,
You would know how to levitate.

You are reborn, fresh and glistening red.
(As is the norm)
Host of rituals must tend to the newborn.
Wash her—
The wound on my right little toe,
And the cold, curled-up aftertaste from last week’s blow
Dry her—
The sanitized hurt on my right little toe,
Rub them—
Scrub them—
Your gaze like rashes on whatever is left of this unfed winter skin.
Dress her— in white.
Clothe them like a gift—
Wrap their raw and red—
And lock them in our Father’s history of honour, shame and hymen.
Little wound, I can hear you pulsate.
Your throb, like morse code,
Reads: Untend.
I tug.
I scrape.
Undoing the smother of warmth and vigilance.
You are reborn —
A naked — raw and red.

Don’t hide them— a fresh hurt, your battle scar,
Every wound is our weapon of protest.

Hiccups

I don’t wait for first rains
It’s earthy scent and memories of bygone lanes
Dust coated volumes —
The leaves greying with browned yellow stains
Perched high up lighting the night of some godforsaken loft
I care not for its truth and lies— its moth eaten remnants
In drudgery’s grand scheme of things, I am told, I should shut my eyes.
Pick up your life, pick up speed, I let the humdrum set in—

I rise—
When on a busy morning hiccups set in.
Random spasms of choke and lock
An elder’s blessing, a lover’s gift
They set me free from formula’s trap.
I shut my eyes
Only to open them
Somewhere between pale and vivid
A glimpse of growing up unfolds—
The past of paper boats and flying kites, the beauty of sibling fights
my first tryst with the pen’s might
I was a child, a sister, a poet once.
Hic. — with every twitch a new sense prevails.
The sacred taste of Sunday feasts, green mango pickles and home-made Bengali sweets,
A festival borne out of mother’s love.
Hic. — The scent. A jolt—
I stare into the distance as it begins to rain,
The smell of fresh earth draws me toward soul drenching roads.
I sigh— the long drawn air upto to its mundane trick
draws me back to life.
I rise.
To pick up the scattered jigsaw of routine, clockworks and reminder notepads.
Shutting my eyes to the past that my present holds in contempt.
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