

# Poetic DISTRESS

SHREYOSI ENDOW

Winter mornings made me crave for coffee and poetry. Mother said I was too young for coffee, and I couldn't waste another single second behind something as trivial as poetry when I was already half an hour late for school. If only she knew of all the times I'd wake up at 4AM in the morning just to make myself a cup of black coffee. If only she knew of the jars of coffee beans underneath my bed. If only she knew how much I loved poetry, how much I could connect to it, and how much I hated school.

After my tutor complained yesterday, there really wasn't any way I could argue and skip school for the third day in a row. She hates it when my teachers complain. It makes her feel small and defeated because she knows that she raised me well and now I'm just trying to embarrass her. Because that's just what I am. "Evil and lazy, and with a lot of potential but never smart enough to let it show."

It wasn't like I didn't like maths and science. I honestly did enjoy solving countless problems of algebra and literally going through all the books in the library because I wanted to make the perfect notes on photosynthesis. Isn't it fantastic how plants live off our waste and give us the core ingredient of life in return? Sometimes I feel like that's the most selfless act among living beings.

I didn't know it was results day today. I remember sitting for the exams, although I don't remember what I wrote if I actually wrote something. I still couldn't fathom what happened to me during the exams. I knew all the answers. I knew the type of bonding between sodium and chlorine in sodium chloride, I knew that I had to use Pythagoras' theorem to find the length of the unknown side, I knew every little answer. But I couldn't bring myself to write it. I guess I just didn't feel like it. I kept staring at it, and I kept mumbling one of Sylvia Plath's poems. It was one of my favourites and I couldn't get it out of my head.

I prayed that mother would not be home when I went back, so that I would have time enough to hide this report card along with the other ones that I hid from the last few exams. But she was there, in the dining room, waiting for me. The school made a new rule of calling our parents every time our results came out. See why I hate my school now.

Her eyes looked vacant as they scanned the grades marked in red. I guess no mother likes seeing all Fs in her child's report card. She closed the report card, sighed and got up. She wore this orange saree and her cascade of luscious, black hair fell ever so naturally down to her waist and even though I hadn't said it out loud in the last few years, she was a beautiful woman. And I don't know whether it was the vacancy in her eyes, or just feelings that I had bottled up for way too long, I finally managed to say it?

"I think I should change subjects, you know. Try English literature or arts or something in that field and be a poet or something. It wouldn't be bad to get all As and I think I can get them once I, you know, change majors."

I hadn't seen her so infuriated as at that moment since the last six years. Tears glistened in her bloodshot eyes and her face seemed almost distorted and as if in a moment, her beauty was gone. And I felt so tiny and guilty; I couldn't even look at her.

I shouldn't have told her I wanted to be a poet. The last poet she knew was evil and lazy and with a lot of potential but never smart enough to let it show. And he left her and her child six years ago for another woman because she wasn't his muse anymore.

## WORDPLAY

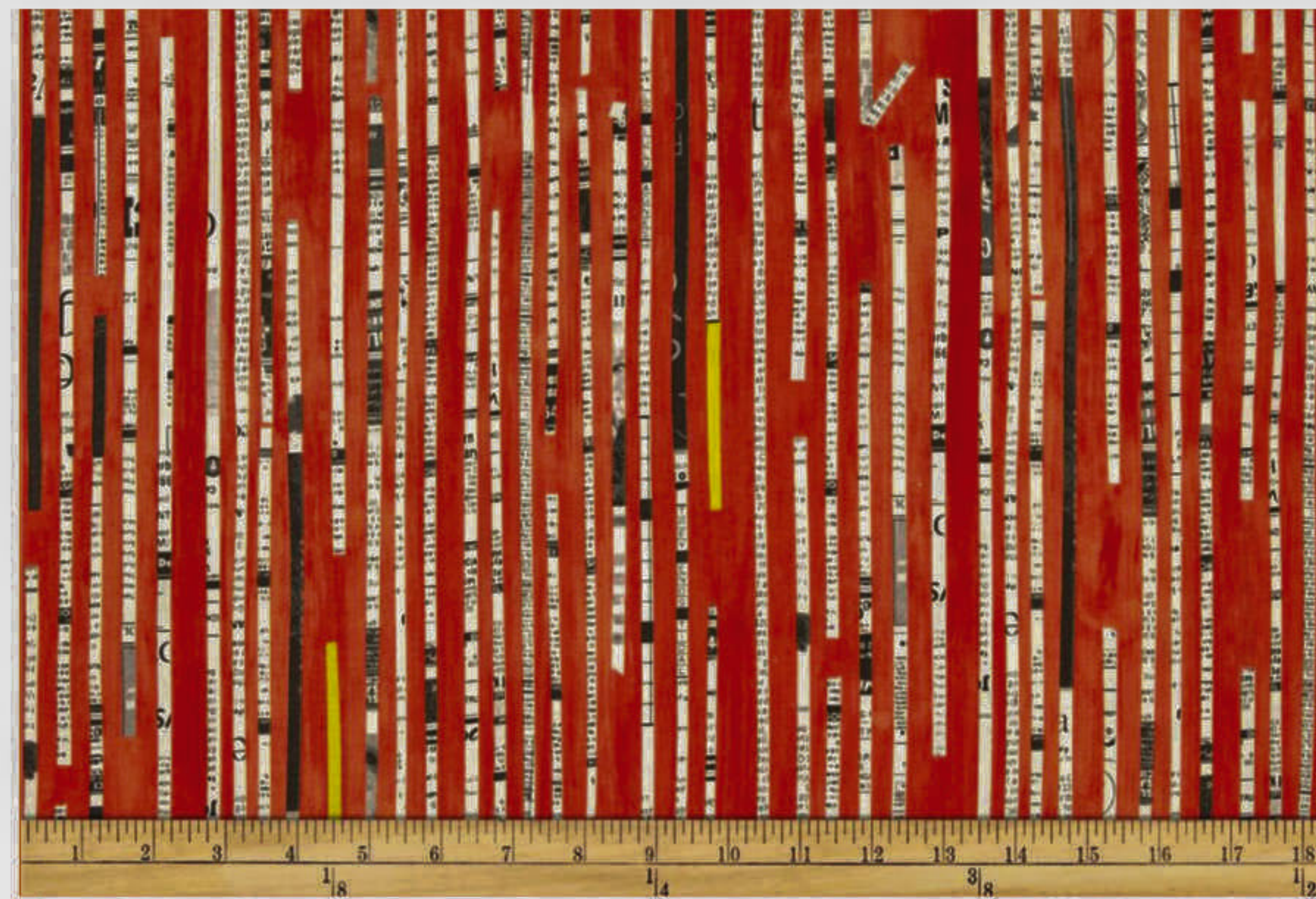
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A sharp pull embraced the closing of my lips; smokes ranting, translating her smile into infinite meanings, as misleading thoughts perturbed my lungs - "a flicker of joyous ambiance had peeked from the edges of her eyes."

I breathed out my lies.

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## Don't Read the Newspaper

R.M.

Don't you read the newspaper.  
Don't you go down that road.  
Don't drown yourself in events of yesterday.  
Let a few things go.

Who cares about the person killed last night?  
Or if a village of people was slain?  
Who gives a damn if someone lost their father?  
Or if someone stole everything you saved?

WE DON'T WANNA KNOW HOW HE GOT THAT SCAR.  
Or why there's a hole in his head.  
We don't care if they also raped his daughter.  
He's just lying there; he's already dead.

So never read the newspaper.  
These things, you don't need to know.  
After all, they're not happening to you or your loved ones,  
So it's probably all just a show.

The writer is the founder of Thought Kitchen,  
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