



DESIGN: FAISAL BIN IQBAL

CHRONOLOGY

SHANUM SARKAR

I: Fear

Your fingers delineate maps
In attempts at enveloping all of you.
Ache to have a face of your own:
You wear an ancestor's face.

Look down in the bath and they stare back,
Deforming slowly within the ripples.
Shut your eyes tight and gauge them out
Yet, you dance with resemblant ghosts.

II: Doubt

Toss memories out on the road,
Ignite gasoline on the grounds behind you
Yet, they crawl right back into your veins.
Will you look after them?

Blanket the ghosts in you for insulation,
Ask to hold hands for comfort?
Stifle the wrench,
Because you'll never hold your very own?

III: Acceptance

Sit there in deafening silence,
With the unfathomable ghosts of ancestry
That linger around in your children, and theirs
Long after you're gone.

House a body for eighty-something years.
Ache for it to someday feel like your own.
Hope for resemblance to fade away,
But you'll always wear an ancestor's face.

*Shanum closely resembles a raccoon, send her reasons to cut down
on caffeine at shanumsarkar18@gmail.com*

The Stolen Attire

AHNAF AKHIYER TASIN

My mom called from the bottom of the stairs,
"Hurry, the bus will be here any minute now!"

I sighed, put the cap on my glue stick, and eyed the pair of pants peeking out of the white antique dresser handed down from my grandmother. The slacks were a glorious shade of fuchsia, embroidered with white flowers that shimmered in the right light. Although these enviable threads belonged to my sister, but since I shared a room with her, I didn't think anyone could blame me for borrowing them.

There were several obstacles to overcome if I was going to pull off the greatest heist in history and wear this piece of clothing to school. The pants were obviously not tailored for my eight-year-old self because my sister was three years older than me. I also had to sneak out of the house without anyone noticing my ensemble. After all, I was not going to fool anyone with my "just threw on whatever was around" excuse.

The first hindrance was merely a formality. I pulled on seven pairs of underwear, one on top of the other, to help slip into the pants. I yanked open the dresser drawer and put on the hot pink finery. I chose a light pink sweater to help tie the outfit together.

The second problem, however, was more of a challenge. I considered pretending that our class was having a costume party, just so I could rummage through the Halloween box for something to hide the pants with.

Time was ticking. A long skirt caught my attention from inside the closet. After smoothing the skirt out, I rolled up the pants high to make sure they are tucked away and below the skirt.

I ran down the stairs, grabbed my lunch, shoved it into my backpack, and hustled out the door. As I arrived at school, ready for my big

reveal, I heard a buzz from inside the classroom. My friend Shayna skipped over and said apprehensively, "I heard we have to run the mile today," referring to the endurance test we were required to take twice a year in gym class.

"Oh man, I think I wore the wrong outfit," I whispered to myself. I peeled off the skirt, slumped into my chair, and spent the next few hours alternating between loving every fascinating minute of third grade, and dreading the inevitable run.

When it was time for gym class, we lined up under the sweltering sun on the school's dusty gravel track. The teacher blew the whistle, and I started at a half-hearted pace, uncomfortable from all of the underwear. As I ran, I could feel my trouser gradually begin to slide down. My friend Shayna saw me and hung back from the pack while I caught up. Shayna jogged beside me as I made my way around the track four times as required, shielding me from the crowd gathered at the finish line. Because of my friend's proximity, no one noticed my pink knickers and tail full of vibrant underwear as we trotted across the finish line.

Once I caught my breath, I said to Shayna, "Thanks, I really owe you one."

She giggled and said, "Ariba, you're always trying to make your crazy ideas work."

When I got home to an empty house, I threw the garment into the hamper, flopped down on our purple bedroom carpet, and stared up at the ceiling. The afternoon light streamed in through the window and cast geometric rays across my latest cardboard art installation.

The writer is a 12th grader at Bangladesh International Tutorial.

