

Woman/Man

She sat on the edge of the bed braiding my hair. I played with a red ribbon weaving it through my fingers, waiting for my mother to call for it, to twist it 'round the end of the braid which sat at the top of my head and then to make a bow.

At first we weren't sure we heard an explosion at all. But when we heard him move quickly to the door and heard it slam, we moved swiftly to the window pulling back the curtain to get an uncluttered view of the street below. The smoke had still not cleared and a crowd had gathered, so it was difficult to see. But, after a few minutes, as the smoke cleared, as the crowd moved back, I pulled away from her grasp and sped to the street below. She could see it was Lilly. There wasn't much left of her, a black-brown metal now, her windows and windshield now shattered and scattered across the street, her seats stripped of their insides but miraculously still in place. And then she saw him. Saw him fall to his knees, saw him raise his hands in the air then clutch his head. Then she heard him scream.

Hazelle Palmer is the Managing Editor of Healthsharing, a national health magazine for women. She is working on her first collection of short stories to be published by Sister Vision Press. She lives in Toronto with her partner Alfred and their daughter Ashae.

In the market economy
of relationships
the currency of passion,
love, commitment
giving you the ownership
of my being
from top floor
to the basement
of my deepest emotions.

As my foundations
shook
you put me up
under Power of Sale
You going bankrupt?
Yeah?

Okay
this is the deal
I buy me
with the currency of passion,
love, commitment
I buy me

You in your comfortable
cushy bed
still seething
that I
buy myself back
to hand me over
to new owners

What an illusion
my friend
Do you know?
from top floor to the basement
I was only a pretend house
a pretend property

In real life
I am a wild flower
owned by the soil
water and the warmth of the sun
growing in my own
backyard of wilderness

Fauzia Rafiq is a member of the editorial collective of DIVA and is currently working on a collection of short fiction.

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