

more cheerful colours would cover a woman's body just as well! When the report was published, I was called to the university's Moral Committee and received a written warning that I would be suspended if I continued my activity. They spied on my personal life and entered into the most private spheres of my life. I was used as a tool to put more pressure on my parents so as to stop their work. To me, the guards' invasion of my private life was like physical and emotional rape. That very day, I made up my mind to leave my country as soon as I could. From that moment on, I was no longer the silent observer, but rather a silenced but angry rebel.

I left my homeland just two months after my graduation in November of 1999. I came to Canada with a visitor visa and two thousand dollars in my pocket. I landed in my new home, Canada, where I had no friends or acquaintances or any plans in my head except that I would not go back to my homeland until I secured a life in a democratic country where my private life did not become a tool in some political game. I survived the hardships of living as a young non-status woman and was used as cheap labor for many months. Meanwhile, my mother was arrested six months after my departure due to her women's rights activities. While in prison, she developed an aggressive breast cancer. Overnight, while I had no roof over my head or life security in Canada, I became the voice of advocacy for her abroad. Finally, with the help of international pressure, my mother was permitted to leave Iran in September 2001 in order to receive better treatments in the United States. She has been living there in exile ever since. Soon after her departure, in November 2001, my 70-year-old father was kidnapped by the secret police and kept in secret and undisclosed prisons for months. He was tortured and forced to confess to crimes he had never committed. Later on, in spring of 2002, he appeared on the Iranian state television. He had lost over 40 kilograms and we barely recognized him. On the television, he confessed to whatever his interrogators had wanted him to. We never saw him again as he was not allowed to leave the country and we were not allowed to go back for safety reasons. Finally, in April 2011, he ended his life at the age of 80 by throwing himself off the sixth-floor balcony of his apartment in Tehran where he was under house arrest.

I, Lily, a "daughter of the revolution," lived and will be living the life my grandmother predicted for me 35 years ago. I survived a revolution, a war, political violence in public and private and a very difficult migration. I lived an extraordinary life just like thousands and millions of other children who lived and grew up amidst revolution, war or political conflicts around the world. Many of them do not have the ability to tell us about their lives and survival.

I will always remember my grandmother's words: "A

revolution will highjack the ordinary life of a nation, generation after generation."

Lily Pourzand was born and raised in Iran. She migrated to Canada in 1999 and obtained her Women's Studies degree from York University in 2006, and then her LL.M. with a special focus on Gender Equality and Law from Osgoode Hall Law School in 2010. She works as a Women's Individual and Transitional Support Counsellor at the Women's Centre of York Region. She has lived in Toronto since 2000.

RENEE NORMAN

Dreaming Grandchildren

I look at those sweet faces
your granddaughters
a photo
I know how fortunate they are
your devotion lit
by the ways you support women
you shine more than a camera lens
on feminisms

and I remember my daughters
vibrant toddlers
joy and chaos
different now of course
still flashes of opalescent colors
some temporary darkness

I am dreaming my own grandchildren
into focus
hazy visions
small dear ghosts
in the space between
note to daughters: no pressure, understood?
I have dresses, little ponies, flaming room
in my mother's heart
ah, granddaughters!
gender is not an issue
I promise
my two miscarried babies
taught me patience
how to release plans
like so much gossamer

some day I will show photos too

Renee Norman's poetry appears earlier in this volume.