

By Saheli Khastagir

Closedopens

The absolute lack of physical touch is what strikes you first. Struck *me* much later.

When she got lost behind a closed door to his peeing blood, struck me unusual, and why unusual and why the door closed only now? Why the door remained open all this while, and all the while later, and why our beds interspersed like egg-whites with no hope of separation or joining or of sprouting an egg of a new day. I see the woman in him, and wonder if it isn't the man in me he seeks, or the man in me he reflected and made, if I shouldn't be all femme if he was all homme, and how these duals that rip in me, and why shouldn't I be single if he could only be whole. His was the first shock of masculinity I got, and every man after should be only re-re-re-images of himself, and did he write my story my pattern in his careless throwing of his maleness which hid the woman in him. And how hers was written by *hers*, and are we both stuck now, nailed on the pedestal in the centre of our circle rotating us, around us. And why shouldn't I choose my own circle, and as they rip inside me, or should I let fate... but is *he* my fate then. Is *he* the centre I am nailed to, and why circle, why always the blasted circle, why not have a triangular life, or straight *straight* like snakes whose mouths can't be seen, lost in the unseen about-to moment, riding on the tails of never-ending to-be, or a spiral, where the start never touches the finish, only making fresh starts running up to fresh finishes that never come, why these closed circles closing on us, or is it just me carrying a compass drawing arcs everywhere I go, arcs that close, and if I didn't nail myself after all. And why should in this house, where doors don't close, mine should be the only one shut, and how behind *my* closed door, I open like an offering.

Sacrifice me, instead of your goats, your widows. Sacrifice me - I am opening untouched unannounced.