

## Two Poems

By Rizwan Akhtar

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*Broken-in*

*for Zulfqar Hyder*

On ground broken doors were like unidentified corpses  
clumsy bolts and gauze portals showed nail scratching  
in the compound our car was untouched and a layer of dust  
sat secure on its roof, no fingerprints except a cat's excrement.  
On floor scattered clothes showed an epic quest of undressing  
us for leaving our house to mere faith and that stretch of bond  
hidden in photographs and my son's books and cupboard  
ransacked, what we hoarded was taken away with a primitive  
glee; men smelt each corner of the house, each room combed  
where a legacy compelled us to huddle, this spectacle put us  
in a war with invisible antagonists who took away my memory  
cast in my mother's jewelry, her trinkets of pride she passed on  
now gone to a no-place rattling with robbers' risqué laughter;  
I make plans to compensate covering my daughter's face  
with weak fingers the custodian of the home scattered  
like many reflections thinking that our history is not in  
the family graveyard but in this house exposed to silence.

*Form*

It was such a close thing to feel  
your body unaware of its  
beauty and the space  
it occupies like sparrows  
transgressing rooms and  
passages carrying on their  
feathers muddy bits of a dug-  
up earth flitting mad waves  
of recognition through  
crevices under eyelashes, you  
mutter something I can only  
surmise such was the quick  
departure elbowing  
me to jot down to structure  
and to frame your visit,  
perilously leaning on me  
while the noisy world  
continues without cantos and  
stanzas and freak meters  
you bring the desire to write  
in couplets and silence that  
called you afterwards.