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 horded 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.