

a poem by Sukanya Menon



BRAVEVOICESMAG

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CW: murder // rape

To be a woman is to be uncomfortable in your own skin. So uncomfortable, you hide your body underneath baggy outfits, afraid, lest you grab the attention of that stranger on the opposite side of the road; who you imagine wants to use you as his plaything.

To be a woman is to make it to the headlines for having been stabbed to death in the middle of a busy street, 25 times to be precise, by her husband nonetheless, only because she wanted to be a doctor and not somebody's wife.

It's not "safe" to be a woman they say. It isn't enough that we harbour life within wombs, we must still be aware during that cab ride back home, clutching onto our phones while conceiving the perfect exit strategy.

To be a woman hardly means to be free. We cannot be who we want to be, or roam alone on empty streets, or even show our legs or let down our hair.

Eight out of ten women are broken in body, mind, and spirit, never to be whole again.

What else? What more?

Third-World Woman