

INKING SOULS

Warm Soup for the Heart

POEMS AFTER BETRAYAL

A small book for the longest nights.

WARM SOUP FOR THE HEART

Poems After Betrayal

Written by Inking Souls

A journey through discovery, fury, grief and the quiet work of returning to yourself. Made to be kept close and reopened whenever the heart needs company.

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Content note: strong language and references to betrayal and sexual intimacy.

THE COLLECTION

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Read in order, or open the book wherever the heart needs company.

Ma Chamunda

I have got a drop of her,
inky black - dissolving in me.

She is the lightning
that splits the dark sky,
entering through
my third eye.

I cease to exist.
There is only she:
Frightening
Terrifying
Loving.

मा चामुण्डायै नमः

- Inking Souls

Redrawing the Map

I will have to redraw
the map of my life -
the one I was
holding tight.

He and his lover
snatched it from my hands,
shredded it,
and it settled like dust
all over me.

They laughed at me.
I was the ghost
now all could see.

02 • CONTINUED

And then one day,
from somewhere inside me,
someone whispered -

Let it be.
Let it be.

No person
and no work
can be
my whole identity.

02 • CONTINUED

I am more
than whom I love
and more
than what I do.

- Inking Souls

03 • GRATITUDE

I am lucky

I hope you are old enough to know
that

I am lucky 'cause I am old, and I am
old 'cause I am lucky.

- Inking Souls

All Wild Me

Self love

is it the perfume I bought,
floral and spicy?

Or is it the massage I got,
after which I slept
like I hadn't
in a long time?

Is it the three glasses
of orange juice
I drink every morning?

04 • CONTINUED

Or the comfort of munching
on a Subway sandwich,
skipping the cooking?

It is all this
and more.

It is being bold.
Being erotic for myself
not for men.

Accepting my age
and not swallowing my rage.

04 • CONTINUED

My self love
is all of me

wild and passionate.

- Inking Souls

The Bitch from Bidding

She is the bitch from bidding
Alone with your husband in his car
Driving through Friday darkness
On the sleepless roads of NCR
She feels entitled to dinner in some
Lovely quiet place,
To midnight calls and private
pictures,
To slowly take up all the space.

05 • CONTINUED

But space does not disappear
It is cleared chair by chair
A husband moves his wife aside,
Then says nobody was ever there
He calls the pictures an accident,
The midnight call coincidence,
The dinner work,
The secrecy nothing.
And asks you to abandon common
sense.

She may be the bitch from bidding,
But he is the man who let her in,
She did not enter through a crack
He opened the door wide from
within.

- Inking Souls

What Is Life?

He looks at women
And sees pleasure,
Like cakes in a pastry shop.
Each one, to him, is another flavour
He feels entitled to taste.

He eats the cake and says,
What else is there to life?
I have the money.
I have the drive.
Why shouldn't I have them all
While I am alive?

06 • CONTINUED

Maybe, in his world,
He is right.
But why is grief
Always our plight?
Why must the pleasure
He calls his life
Pass through our hearts
Like a sharpened knife?

- Inking Souls

In His Dreams

His impish smile,
the mischief in his eyes

the innocence of his questions,
the hunger to learn
my thousand quiet lessons.

I wonder if he knows I write,
if he dreams, as I do,
of slow, unhurried days
in a brown cabin
high in the blue mountains,

07 • CONTINUED

where jasmine blooms by the
window,
and we lie on warm sheets
through cold, fragrant nights.

We both know, I suppose,
how ephemeral this life is,
seconds ticking,
years slipping quietly by.

Yet we have not met,
and perhaps we never will.
One day, we will die.

07 • CONTINUED

But tonight he lives in my words,
and I, in his dreams.

- Inking Souls

Men Cheat Because They Can

Men cheat because they can.

It isn't because she nags.

It isn't because she is ugly.

It isn't because she is loud.

It isn't because she is quiet.

It isn't because she hates her
in-laws.

It isn't because she earns.

It isn't because she doesn't.

08 • CONTINUED

It isn't because she is hot.

It isn't because she is cold.

It isn't because she doesn't listen.

It isn't because she listens.

It isn't because she is smart.

It isn't because she is dumb.

It isn't because she is lazy.

It isn't because she works too hard.

Men cheat because they can,
because they want to.

08 • CONTINUED

When women break apart,
men simply walk away,
as though nothing happened at all.

They go on enjoying every season,
winter, summer, spring and fall,
while the women they betrayed
are left carrying it all.

- Inking Souls

Because of You

I asked him
why he had lied
and not shared anything
about his sleazy tryst
with the secret little miss
from his office.

“I never could,”
he replied.
“I don’t share
my things
with you.”

09 • CONTINUED

Perhaps by things
he meant this -
his lips were on hers,
their legs tangled tight.
Fuelled by Viagra,
they made out all night.

What else was there
he could not share -
his gels and potions,
his skincare lotions?

09 • CONTINUED

He couldn't simply say,
"I was bored.
I wanted
someone new."

Instead, he accused me -
my temper,
my questions,
my suspicious view.

He wagged his finger at me.
His nostrils flared,
his eyes glared,
his jaw clenched.

09 • CONTINUED

“You!” he roared.
“You’re an old hag.
All you ever do
is nag, nag, nag.

It is all
because of you.”

“And that,” he said,
“is the reason
I could never share
anything with you.”

- Inking Souls

How a Child Sees

Father gave other women
his emotions and care,
dinners and dreams.
When he came home,
it was all spent,
and he was oblivious
to his wife's silent screams.

10 • CONTINUED

It is so sad -
it is the mother who loses
when she breaks down
into a million pieces.
A father looks calm and collected,
and the mother looks
mad and devastated.

A child hears
and sees her pain,
but the lies and betrayal
of his father
hide behind
a thick curtain.

10 • CONTINUED

Perhaps he thinks
his father is calm
and his mother mad.

Because betrayal knows
how to hide
a mother's heart and soul,
cut out bloody and wide.
And a child is witness
to his mother -
how all night she raged and cried.

10 • CONTINUED

And perhaps he thinks
his father is fine,
but his mother is mad
and has crossed every line.

- Inking Souls

Dear Office Wife,

A letter about what an affair leaves behind for the people who never consented to be part of it.

PART 1

May I request you to attend my son's school project presentation?

Since you have replaced me everywhere except in the housework and the responsibility of raising my child, perhaps you can take this on too.

I am devastated and exhausted. I can barely move around the house, let alone go to school and face everyone. You may not know this, but our family is ruined. We haven't been able to support my child with his studies at home, and I cannot bear to face his school.

You have killed parts of me I cannot even begin to describe.

OPEN LETTER • CONTINUED

PART 2

For you and my husband, this affair may have felt like a high-school game between two teenagers. And you behaved exactly like one - unable to control your impulses.

After four years of enduring my husband's emotional detachment, angry outbursts, taunts and harassment, I can no longer simply get up and function as if nothing happened.

Yet he wants me to go to school. He wants our son to study. The two people who could not control themselves are now pointing fingers at me and saying that I have no control over my grief.

THE AFTERMATH IS NOT A LACK OF CONTROL.

- Inking Souls

INKING SOULS

I write what silence tried to bury.

I write through betrayal, healing and hope - turning lived experience into poems, open letters and honest conversations.

These pages are for anyone who has felt useful but unseen, surrounded but alone - and is slowly learning that her life is still her own.

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