

I AM



Vandana Parashar



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Title IX Press

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*this chapbook is a salute  
to the spirit of womanhood*



ultrasound probe  
my mother's longing  
hangs in the air

working mom  
when will papa learn  
to part my hair right



family picnic  
an uncle shows me  
his hidden snake

nightfall  
a splash of red  
between the dolls legs

rearranging itself around me patriarchy

cancelled engagement  
was I wrong in asking to keep  
my maiden name

arranged marriage  
an aunt hands me  
fairness cream

missed period reordering my priorities

how many more  
clouds will pass before it rains —  
miscarriage

pregnancy report  
dad's face flushes  
with my happiness



post-partum  
the sky finally clears  
of last night's storm

soiled diaper  
I look at my hands  
that once held trophies

party animal  
I now watch cartoons  
with my kids

multiple tabs  
my husband opens solitaire  
as I enter

first day of school  
I cry louder  
than my daughter

summer camp  
I tell my daughter  
about good and bad touch

overworked can a mom ever play possum

fishbowl  
is there a world  
outside home



soldier's home  
days on the calendar crossed  
with crayons

broken crockery  
my child draws stick figures  
of a happy family

single mom  
fraying at the seams  
day and night

windstorm  
I wonder if I still  
have a voice

cousin's wedding  
mother frowns  
at my backless gown

autumn dawn...  
I get on the wrong side  
of forties

salt and pepper  
I color my hair before  
signing in on tinder

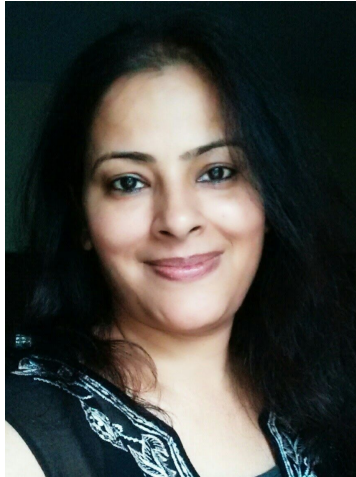
reincarnation  
how many of us want  
to be women again



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**Vandana Parashar** is a microbiologist, a teacher and a haiku enthusiast. Her love for brevity made her fall in love with haiku and related Japanese forms of poetry. Her work has been published in *cattails*, *A Hundred Gourds*, *Creatrix*, *Naad Anunaad*, *Sonic Boom*, *Prune Juice*, *Asahi Haikuist Network*, *Failed Haiku*, *Atoms of Haiku*, *Frameless Sky*, *#FemkuMag*, *Human/Kind Journal*, *Ribbons*, and *Haibun Today*, to name a few.

She has a Grand Prix in *8th Setouchi Matsuyama Photo Haiku Contest*, 2018 to her credit and prizes and honourable mentions in some other contests like *Skylark Nest contest*, 2016; *Johny Baranski Memorial Haiku Contest*, 2018; *Fujisan Tanka Grand Prix Contest*, 2018; *Marlene Mountain Haiku Contest*, 2018.

She lives in Panchkula with her husband and two daughters.