

## Does granite continue to crystallise under the heat of the afternoon sun?

The kitchen counters in our house are made of a brown granite. Counters that I remember being quite high but over the past years they've shrunken.

Does granite continue to crystallise under the heat of the afternoon sun?

Superimposed permanently in my memory of Kitchen, is my mother, standing, never seated. The memory inevitably evolves, and my understanding of Kitchen and Mother occupy new definitions. Belonging, ownership, necessity, obligation, habit. A play of time for the both of us.

Ritualistically, my mother lies down for sometime in the afternoon.

The sunlight is hushed out by curtains,  
The ceiling fan on a sweet speed,  
Just right to imitate  
That surprising summer breeze.

Like any other ritual, in principle, it feels wrong to interrupt, even though I have at times and she never minds.

“તું સૂતી હતી?” (were you asleep?)

“ના, આંખો બંધ રાખીને પડેલી હતી” (no, just lying down with my eyes closed)

An important distinction. After all, sleep loves to elude the ones who need it, sleep remains extraordinary.

But lying down is mundane.  
Absolute passivity,  
Like your everyday beige,  
A voluntary submission to earth and the earthen.

She rests, as the rest of us clamour towards a collective dream estranged in banality. Hers is a rest less spoken of, just like the soil she learns from. She protects her feet from dust, daughters of the same soil, a grey brown composite of dead skin and more.

She loves lying on the floor, without a pillow or a sheet separating her hair from this same invisible dust.

Things go rusty and dusty and musty when they age and decay. Time smirking at the illusion of robustness and attachment.

Brown is duration, just right or slightly overdone, deposited with the slowness of silt, and before you know it, is burnt like toast. The smell of alarm, burning.

It is a colour cooked and savoured,  
With the sweetness of cardamom  
And a prickle of the chillies  
That dried in the same afternoon heat.

Brown, known for her obedience to the sun,  
Luxury, painted on skin  
Or labour, rubbed on  
she is the dirt  
on the well preserved purity  
of their white collars.  
And what their ashen failure  
Looks for to dissolve in.

Brown, the colour I am to perform.