

Ghazal to Womanhood

Divya Mehrish, Stanford '25

I dig for salvation in the crater of womb—
pelvis pounding temple empty of God, swallowed in unbroken womb.

Born from body to birth body into body, we are vessels of deliverance—
Matryoshka dolls. Seed sunk into desiccated soil, fruit sinks head into walls of womb.

Unfurling skin, I drape shield over cage of ribs, curving stone.
I hide from the gravedigger's shovel, spurning earth, refusing to enwomb.

My spine crinkles against leaf—the same blood oozes through our veins:
larva crystallizes into chrysalis, not ready to cocoon. Choking in womb,

I remember waves were once my home, water osmosing through temples
as salt seeped into bone. Are you ready to become ocean, weave flesh—loom into womb?

Meet the piece: My piece explores the nuances of womanhood, motherhood, and maternity by delving deep into the image of and meaning associated with the womb. My poem also examines the notion of physical and spiritual exchange and generational translation through the constant, cycling process of birth.