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In The Desert Dry Flats



Written by Avani Chhaya.

Graphic by Quynhmai Tran

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The miles of hurt – s t r e t c h –
through the deserted terrain,
exposed to the relentless sun

Baked and cracking
beneath this oppressive heat
bearing down upon us

Accumulated like airline mileage,
I stack hurt away
in a beaten, worn-down suitcase

The hurt elongates
shape-shifting with ambiguous intentions
taking the form of believable promises, of naive hope

Hurt fractures the seams,
ripping and bursting apart the fabric,
puncturing the dilapidated brown leather

Leaping and crouching with long limbs
The hurt climbs behind the last piece of greenery,
already beginning to wither in the weary sun

Hurt hurries
plunging into the tempest waters
of the forsaken mirage

Carnivorous vultures flock overhead
circling, feeding on carcassed memories
resurrecting those remembrances

Just like that, hurt feels immortal
radiating bigger than itself
seeming to extend into the infinite

I ignore the futility, flailing
the busted suitcase to detract the vultures
throwing handfuls of streaming sand
seeking to extinguish hurt

And whoosh...
it dissolves like a sand storm

Blinking through the haze of hurt,
I crinkle my eyes at the prospect of a new beginning.

Avani Chhaya is an avid reader, writer, traveler, and dreamer. Her work has been featured in the [Library Love Story](#) and the [Common Ground Series](#) on KUT, [ORANGE Magazine](#), [VISIBLE Magazine](#), [Reappropriate](#), [Wilderness House Literary Review](#), and in Elisabet Ney's Suffrage Now Exhibit.



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