

DOES GRIEVING EVER END OR DO ITS INSTANCES JUST GROW FURTHER AND FURTHER APART

Natasha Chopra

the indigo dye of my new dupatta
rubs off on my fingertips, turning
the white strips of my nails a faded
royal blue; i wonder if dadi ever wore
this color, wonder if her hands ever
looked like mine, wonder if she knew
the last time we spoke would be
the last time we spoke; i remember
in college, i learned that every time you
think of a memory, you only think
of the last time you remembered it,
you remember only its ghost.

after scrubbing at my fingertips in
the sink of some restaurant, bhujji
tells me this is the nature of the indigo
dye—if you do not wash it first, it will
bleed into your skin. if you wash it
too much, it will fade completely.

i did not realize that choosing this
dupatta led to such a strict cleaning
regiment, did not realize i had to ration
out my laundry, dirty it only so much
before it started fading, slipping
through my royal blue nails, the weight
of commitment rests heavily on my
lungs; i wonder if dadi ever cringed
when i called her sarees dupattas or
the other way around, but the more
i think about her, the more she fractures,
the more she fades, i didn't realize i had
to ration out my grief, didn't realize i had
such a strict schedule to mourn her, i
wonder if she's even there at all
or if she washed out over time, becoming
only a ghost i wish i could be haunted by.