



*presents*

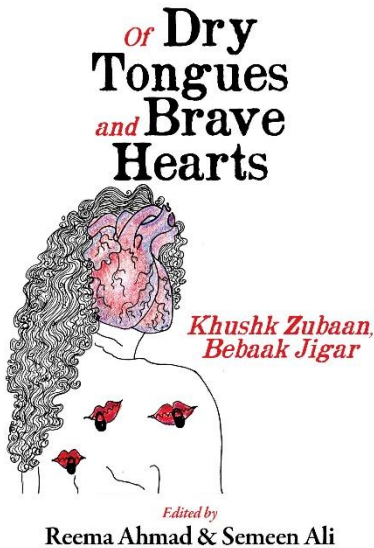
## *Of Dry Tongues and Brave Hearts*

Edited by Reema Ahmad and Semeen Ali

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*My name not worth mentioning  
In a gleaming list of feminists  
Nor worth adding in margins beneath  
Flashy lives speeding past like reels*

*My volition doesn't take me anywhere  
I go only where there is some space  
Where I squeeze myself in  
Making room in dark nights  
Digging corners for myself  
With the two tools I have*

*This dry tongue  
And this brave heart*

The anthology — *Of Dry Tongues and Brave Hearts* — brings together a collection of voices that uses various mediums to depict the issues/concerns that surround them at an individual level. The book highlights the dynamics of the ghar-bahir — and tries to look into the varied ways in which the world has been depicted and to what extent is the self, able to face/deal with the ever-changing demands of the world.

*Featuring* Debolina Dey; Sneha Biswas; Amrita Singh; Sonali Pattnaik; Adrita Mukherjee; Pallabi Konwar; Daisy Zacharia; Shreyasi Sharma; Chirantana Mathkari; Neha Chaturvedi; Fatima Hijas; Shikha Thakur; Sangeetha Bhaskaran; Manmeet Narang; Sukla Singha; Namita Bhatia; Samreen Sajeda; Ketaki Datta; Kulsoom Javed; Sreetanwi Chakraborty; Sneha Roy; Aratrika Das; Yashasvi Vachhani; Nida Zehra; Naomi Jahan; Bijaya Biswal; Poornima Laxmeshwar; Jerin Anne Jacob; Rituparna Sengupta; Dipali Taneja; Teena Gill; Jinju S; Upasana Chakraborty; Upasana Das;

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Zehra Naqvi; Pushpanjana Karmakar; Michelle Ann James; Sarmistha Roy; Shrubaboti Bose; Zeenat Khan; Witch Woodstocky; Amanda Basaiawmoit; Kusum Choppra; Basudhara Roy; Smriti Verma; Aashna Jamal; Vasundhara Singh; BN Neelima; Shamayita Sen; Sonali Punja; Mehnaz Hussain; Namita Bhatia; Shikha Thakur; Rajni Mishra; ; N Urja; Smruti; Sushma Madappa; Reetuparna Dey; Praniti Gulyani; Aslesha Kadian; Aisha Shafi; Sneha Biswas; Shrubaboti Bose; Ima Faisal; Prachi Sharma; Mehnaz Hussain; Zeba Rizvi; Aslesha Kadian; Tanya Dayaram; Sehar Iqbal; and Bianca Ghose

REEMA AHMAD is an NLP Life Coach, Mental Space psychologist and people worker. She is a writer, speaker, and systems thinker. She is a facilitator and co-founder of Candidly, [www.candidly.in](http://www.candidly.in), a platform that aims to develop and drive conversations on gender, abuse, sexuality and how these manifest in media and through culture.

SEMEEN ALI is the author of four books of poetry and has edited a few poetry anthologies with national and international publishers. She reviews books for leading Indian journals as well as is the Fiction and Poetry editor at *Muse India*.

### *Comments from the editors*

Reema Ahmad says, “Between the many pegs of unlimited tasks that define the existence of an ordinary woman, the extraordinariness of her being seeks and finds expression. And as fleetingly as that expression takes form in thought, vision and voice, it disappears for lack of a label, a place, a corner and a home. This book hopes to be that home, even if its reach is limited because of the language it speaks in and the people it was able to reach — people whose lives found a place in it and those who may shelter it in their lives. Thus, a young woman who knew that butchering ran in her veins walks beside an emotionally broken mother standing over her dying daughter’s body. And a young artist who looks at women as if through a sieve of nightmarish dreams, sits in the sun with a woman who sheds the skin of gender in her writing and redefines her trans-ness. And these women embrace all the others in this book with an acceptance seldom granted to those who do not fit the popular description of what it means to be a strong woman, a purposeful woman, a useful woman. We have our value, all of us, even if that value is not recognised by the world.”

Semeen Ali says, “For me, every book that I have worked on has been an eye opener. I think editing is a cathartic process for me as I live and breathe through each work that finds its way in the book. In this book — through every writing or art work — I have discovered a part of me lurking about or simply just right there. To edit an anthology in the Year of the Covid was an altogether new experience and all of us who have been a part of this book have been through a lot. And survived. This book is not just a collection of voices but nurtures a thread that runs across this book. I want the readers to find that thread — it is a beautiful one. Delicate and full of life.”

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