

## Notes for my Husband

By Shadab Zeest Hashmi

I showed Yousuf to the amethyst  
Morning when he was born

Kettledrums play four at a time  
Each tuned to play its own note  
Each he would swallow whole  
With my vertical voice in Urdu

And watch with his cardamom eyes  
The slow flare of Van Gogh's Sun Flowers  
The silk ascent to Victoria's Peak  
The concave shine of mango *achar*

He is slender like pine nuts  
And keen on butter

Yaseen prefers honey  
And tells me the sun on the front door  
Smells like library soap  
I feel the light lathering the knob  
As I open it

The house is filled  
With jazz and bag-pipes  
Iqbal's poems  
On marble construction paper

We weep in both languages  
And anything round is a planet