

Second Try

In cyberspace
“SWF, DWM, SBF”
are understood
But the B in DBM
stands for black, not brown.
This time, my heart
adorns my sleeve.
and I beg someone
will steal it
like a rusty
but well-insured car.

If this were my first
entry into grihasthashram¹,
my father would
be leaning over my shoulder,
inviting correspondence for
 “a very handsome,
 well-educated, athletic,
 Indian IT Security Engineer,
 born and raised in the UK,
 blend of East-West Culture.”
And my mother and all the aunties
would approve another “slim Indian girl
 very beautiful, never married,
 working as a vice president,
 family oriented.” She’d have
 long black hair.

But their duty’s done and failed,
I’ve lost cousins, aunts, uncles,
nieces and nephews to whom I was related
for seven years.

 And now
I’m inviting correspondence from
strangers, preferably Indian.
Another slim girl with long black hair?

Shall I risk adding to the online ad
that logic flow and encryption algorithms
cannot rescue me?

 I could enter
that I need
someone to listen
without judgement or payment.
 Someone to hold me
 in the dark and say, “I see.”

Shauna Singh Baldwin

¹ Householder stage of life