

## **A COLLECTION OF POEMS: IDENTITY VERSUS FAMILY**

**KASHIF YAMIN CHOWDHURY**  
**B.A. Candidate in Oriental Studies (Japanese)**  
*University of Oxford, Class of 2023*

### **Guilty Strings**

*written a year after having left Islam as my father leads the pre-iftar dua during Ramadhan, asking  
Allah to make me religious again.*

bellies raw and throats dry  
they're chanting spells at the table again.

my head swims,  
they offer me up

I go,  
    'fill him with holy things'  
'pure things'  
    'your things';

my father orgasms,  
and everyone moans  
God's name.

### **The Bunny Butcher**

*written in my university accommodation where over the phone, my mother asks about the 'halal'  
foods I've been eating.*

slithering hand down my throat,  
you slide into me.

'what  
can I help you with today?',  
I say,  
smiling,  
greens red  
with rot.

### **The Kaguya Ritual**

*written after Ramadhan, ever an intense period, where I decide to craft another persona to cope with  
my religious, traditional parents. Took inspiration from Isao Takahata's 'The Tale of Princess  
Kaguya', particularly the final scenes.*

I'm sending you to the moon,  
away from this heart;  
away from  
these puppeteered parts.

and though we never wished  
to be so unfree,  
we'd always be un  
happy,  
as long as you were with me.

and so now I break  
all  
our bonds,  
mind and body free,  
the moon my witness

and thus:  
I cease to be.