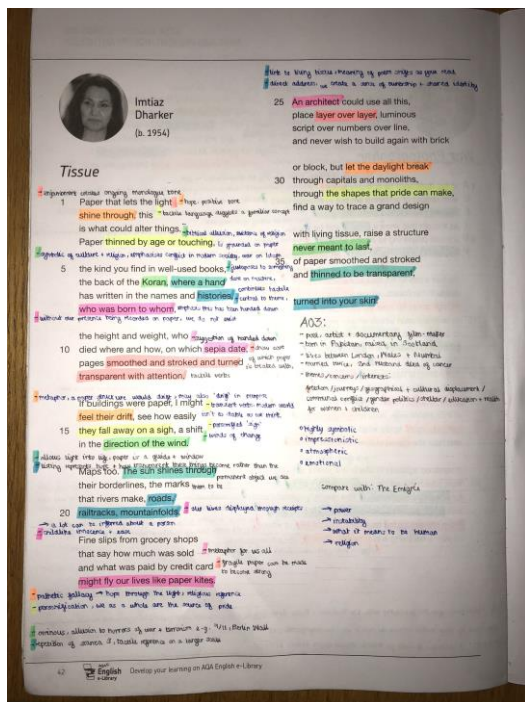


TISSUE



● **Context:** Imtiaz Dharker describes herself as a Scottish Muslim Calvinist and the theme of religion, and religious language, is often reflected in her poetry. Dharker was born in Pakistan and raised in Glasgow. It is these experiences which help to inspire her works.

● **“Paper that lets the light/shine through, this/is what could alter things”** - in this phrase, we see the powerful effect and impact that light can have on our lives. In this case, light could be a metaphor for Allah, due to Dharker’s Muslim background and Pakistani heritage. The narrator describes how paper allows light to shine through, much like how **Gods and the presence of a religion** can cast **truth** on our lives, if we allow them to. Gods are often a **symbol of hope**, and this particular phrase connotes images of a

stained-glass window in a holy place, such as a church. Taking this further, we could suggest that Allah is the one who **“could alter things”** due to his **all-powerfulness**.

Similarly, we all have the opportunity to let people shine into our lives and bring us wisdom. Dharker could - vaguely - be encouraging the reader to let people into their life. The **theme of paper and skin** is also reflected here - as we get older, our skin becomes thinner and perhaps life experiences and new people could be what **“alter[s] things”**. Cryptically, we do not know whether this is for the better or the worse.

- **“Credit card/might fly our lives like paper kites”** - this simile conveys how money controls our lives, however the use of **“paper kites”** may suggest that perhaps, despite our apparent freedom, we are all actually tethered down by material goods and possessions (and the responsibilities in our daily lives, perhaps). This may suggest that humans are never totally in control of their own lives and that we are all - to some extent - controlled by things like **“capitals”**. The speaker appears to want to **break free** from these restrictions, as she believes that they are **worthless** and that we should collect experiences, not goods (due to the short and impermanent nature of human life). This would also appear to reflect Biblical ideology.

KEY THEMES, FORM AND STRUCTURE

- Dharker does not give the narrator a **name**, which may suggest that this poem is more broad and applies to humanity as a whole. **Enjambment** is also used