

# how to play god: a step-by-step guide

by Sophia Pandit

**i. the nagpur orange**  
pluck the mottled sun  
drooping low from overgrown orchards  
and shed his rind,  
a waxed riddle of oedipal green  
weaved with cadmium hubris.  
shed until pulp rays dribble down,  
making the blistered burn.  
let sour verbiage lick writhing flesh,  
and while she hemorrhages in the street,  
claim to her father the wounds are clean.

**ii. opium song**  
and so it begins!  
fields of flaming poppies,  
with pupils shriveled like my brethren's bodies,  
often find themselves susceptible to nervous failure;  
jar the milk tears spilling forth  
and cure them dry.  
smoke for blackened lung valleys  
and nosebleed rivers,  
both of which prelude  
the cacophony of pale blues rolling back in their heads.

**iii. death by drainage**  
to bear witness to lakeside kingfishers  
is a travesty in itself.  
laws of nature dictated by the self-serving state  
forbid their guttural songs  
from melding with the mellow burbles of oars  
gliding atop the waters.

