

D O R I A N S Ā R M Ă Ş A N

Rising She

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Dorian Sarmășan', positioned below the main title.

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Rising She

Embodying Resilience

Rising She is a celebration of the modern woman—*Her* resilience, transformation, and unparalleled complexity. The series delves into the intricate layers of femininity, each painting symbolizing the multifaceted roles and emotions that define contemporary female identity. These layers mirror the depth and intricacy of today's women, whose lives are far more complex than those of women a century or even a few decades ago.

Through symbolic and minimalist lines and shapes, Dorian's works contrast past limitations with the evolving, diverse identities of the present, inviting viewers to reflect on the beauty, strength, and ever-changing essence of femininity. Each piece becomes a journey through these layered narratives, symbolizing different attributes or emotions of a woman, capturing the profound transformation of the evolving self across time.

By incorporating roses and ropes in select works, this series delves into the dualities of femininity—beauty and pain, freedom and constraint, love and loss. The roses, with their delicate petals and sharp thorns, embody the intricate balance between allure and sacrifice, a testament to the silent struggles endured by women throughout history. The ropes, on the other hand, speak of societal and personal limitations—ties that bind, restrict, or even protect, reflecting the tension between individuality and external expectations.

Together, these elements weave a poignant narrative of resilience and vulnerability, inviting the viewer to explore the complex layers of contemporary womanhood. Each painting becomes a space where fragility and strength find their voice, inviting us to reflect on the boundaries of freedom and the resilience required to transcend them.





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Solace

In *Solace, She* is captured in a moment of quiet reflection, her delicate form seen in a rear view as she looks over her shoulder to the right, her gaze cast downward in an air of gentle resignation. *Her* bare shoulders and back portray vulnerability, while her messy black hair adds a sense of raw authenticity, as if she is caught between moments of strength and surrender.

Rendered entirely in black and white, the painting's abstract, overlapping lines form the contours of her figure, symbolizing the layered intricacies of her inner world. These lines suggest the complexity not only of her character but also of the life events that have shaped her—a labyrinth of experiences, emotions, and choices that are both deeply personal and universally resonant.

The minimalist monochrome palette enhances the emotional weight of the piece, stripping it of distraction and allowing the viewer to focus on the tension between fragility and resilience.

Solace invites us to find beauty in stillness and introspection, reminding us that moments of pause are where strength often resides.

Name:	Solace
Number:	#001
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024

Confidence

In *Confidence*, *She* is rendered with striking elegance and poise, portrayed through minimalist overlapping lines that define her features with both precision and subtle abstraction. *She* gazes directly into the viewer's eyes with a calm, serious expression, exuding an air of balance and stability. *Her* composed demeanor invites confidence, a quiet strength that transcends any external pressures.

Her formal elegance is accentuated by long, glamorous earrings and neatly styled hair, with one rebellious strand falling gracefully to one side. There is an undeniable sophistication to *Her* appearance, yet a surprising element disrupts the norm—on her cheeks, large tribal tattoos stretch across *Her* face in an art nouveau style. These tattoos are bold, feminine, and intricate, creating a contrast that challenges societal expectations and the concept of "normality."

This juxtaposition of elegance and nonconformity is central to the painting's narrative. The tattoos, traditionally symbols of rebellion, are here integrated with refinement, suggesting that confidence arises not just from adherence to society's standards but also from embracing one's individuality and breaking free from prescribed roles.

Confidence speaks to the power of authenticity and the courage it takes to transcend societal expectations, combining prestige with the courage to stand apart.



Name:	Confidence
Number:	#002
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024



Loyalty

In *Loyalty*, the painting captures a moment of deep affection and tenderness as *She* holds a dog in her arms, kissing it gently on the snout. Viewed from the side, they face each other, and her gesture is filled with warmth and love, reflecting the profound connection between them. The dog remains still, seemingly unaware of the exact nature of the moment but clearly feeling the depth of her affection.

Despite its stillness, the dog exudes a quiet sense of trust, sensing the love that surrounds it. When sadness or uncertainty overwhelms *Her*, it is in these moments that *She* turns to this faithful companion, whose gentle presence anchors her and reminds her of the quiet strength that loyalty can offer. *Her* soft smile, a fleeting expression of peace, speaks to the comfort that comes from knowing *She* is not alone. The dog, though unaware of *Her* inner world, mirrors the loyalty that grounds *Her*, providing an unspoken refuge from the chaos of life.

Loyalty becomes a meditation on the quiet healing power of unconditional love—the kind that does not need to be spoken, but is felt deeply. It is in these moments of shared stillness that *She* finds the strength to face *Her* struggles, a reminder that sometimes the greatest comfort lies in the most loyal of companions.

Name:	Loyalty
Number:	#003
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024

Untamed

In *Untamed*, the painting presents a powerful and intimate portrayal of *Her* vulnerability and defiance. The composition focuses on her crossed legs, positioned deliberately with *Her* ankles intertwined, while the upper body remains obscured in shadow. The darkness surrounding *Her* torso contrasts sharply with the delicacy of *Her* exposed feet, hands holding *Her* knees in a gesture of quiet strength. *She* is both vulnerable and resolute, caught in a moment of decision.

Her feet—bare and grounded—are the focal point, showing the intricacies of *Her* toes, soles, and arches, all rendered in precise, layered lines. The delicate details of *Her* legs are drawn with the same abstract minimalism that characterizes the series, accentuating both the fragility and power inherent in the human form. Though seemingly vulnerable, *Her* posture speaks of a quiet but firm refusal to be controlled by whatever circumstances may be unfolding in *Her* life.

The presence of an engagement ring on *Her* finger suggests an underlying tension within a relationship—an inner conflict between personal autonomy and external expectations. This small, symbolic detail becomes a contrast to *Her* physical stance, as if the ring represents both a promise and a potential restraint.

Untamed explores the delicate balance between commitment and personal freedom, a moment of defiance against the constraints of love or life's expectations.



Through the use of shadow and light, the painting speaks to the complexities of the self, capturing a powerful yet intimate decision: to say no, to step back, and to reclaim control over one's own path, despite the darkness or pressure that may surround *Her*.

The viewer is left in a state of quiet uncertainty, unsure of the path *She* has chosen.

Name:	Untamed
Number:	#004
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024



Stillness

Stillness captures a moment of profound restraint, where the silence of the subject reflects both internal and external forces at play. *She's* exposed, vulnerable neck and lack of facial expression evoke a sense of surrender, yet there is an underlying tension.

The rope wrapped tightly around *Her* eyes symbolizes the societal constraints that once blinded women to their potential, stifling their ability to see, understand, and express themselves freely. The rope, stretched under tension, suggests an invisible hand that binds her, limiting *Her* perspective and potential.

This powerful imagery draws a stark contrast between *She* of today and the one of the past—just a century ago, and even as recently as 20 or 30 years ago, *She* was often confined to narrow roles, restricted in her aspirations and desires.

Stillness becomes a meditation on the progress of *She* in modern society, where the constraints of the past have loosened, and the freedom to express oneself has expanded. The painting invites us to reflect on how far the contemporary *She* has come and the stillness that sometimes accompanies the weight of these past limitations.

Name:	Stillness
Number:	#005
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024

Betrayal

In *Betrayal*, Dorian conveys the crushing weight of treachery through a poignant and haunting depiction of the female form. The painting captures the profile of a nude torso, rendered with both vulnerability and strength.

Two roses—at once alluring and cruel—pierce through *Her* back, their stems traveling along *Her* spine and emerging violently from the front. One rose exits at *Her* abdomen, symbolizing the rupture of her generative power, a loss tied to fertility, creativity, and potential. The second rose erupts from her chest, striking at the heart of her essence, embodying the devastation of vitality, trust, and will.

The roses, delicate yet armed with thorns, embody the paradox of betrayal: something once cherished that turns to inflict profound harm. Their presence evokes funeral imagery, underscoring the death of trust, love, or perhaps an intrinsic part of the woman herself.

Through this striking imagery, Dorian explores the silent violence of *Betrayal*—how it tears through both body and soul, intertwining beauty with destruction, and leaving us to question the fragility of trust and the resilience of the human spirit.



Name:	Betrayal
Number:	#006
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024



Afterglow

In *Afterglow*, Dorian presents a serene yet suggestive moment, intertwining themes of intimacy, desire, and reflection about what just happened and what may expect to happen further.

Her legs, poised confidently in high heels, exude sensuality, while *Her* relaxed stance hints at an unspoken satisfaction. Below *Her*, the cat gazes upward, its watchful presence a symbol of loyalty and connection, yet also a metaphor for her own sensuality and sexual inner desires.

The feline, often associated with mystery and independence, mirrors the complexity of *Her* sexual condition—playful yet self-possessed, tender yet untamed.

In her left hand, a rose dangles with its bloom facing downward, its posture a subtle metaphor for the aftermath of passion—something cherished and fleeting, leaving behind both tenderness and thought.

The composition juxtaposes the intimate connection between *Her* and the cat with the evocative symbolism of the rose, weaving a narrative of femininity that is at once grounded and ethereal.

Afterglow invites viewers into this layered moment, reflecting on the delicate interplay of longing, fulfillment, and self-awareness in the quiet aftermath of intimacy.

Name:	Afterglow
Number:	#007
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024

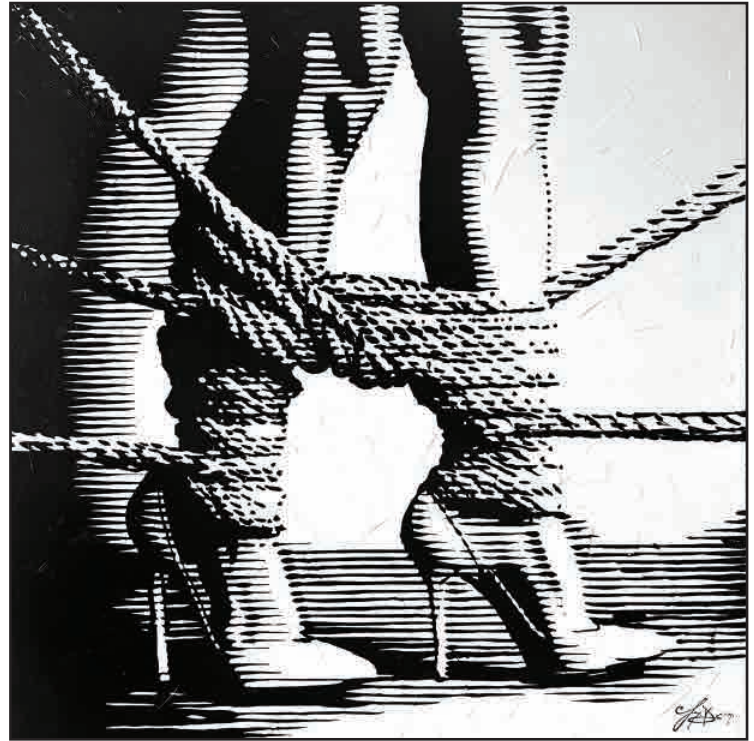
Resilience

Resilience captures a poignant moment of resistance and determination. Depicting only *Her* legs from the knees down, *She* is bound tightly with ropes at the ankles, the tension palpable as the ropes pull in opposite directions, their ends disappearing beyond the canvas.

These bindings symbolize external forces—societal norms, expectations, or personal struggles—that seek to restrain *Her*.

Yet, despite the constraints, *She* takes a decisive step forward. *Her* movement is elegant and firm, defying the forces that aim to hold *Her* back. The act of stepping becomes an emblem of resilience and agency, a refusal to be subdued. Through the interplay of tension and grace, the painting evokes a narrative of strength in the face of adversity, urging the viewer to reflect on the courage it takes to advance when seemingly bound by external pressures.

Painted in the series' signature minimalist black-and-white style, *Resilience* encapsulates both struggle and triumph, emphasizing the delicate yet powerful act of moving forward when the odds seem insurmountable.



Name:	Resilience
Number:	#008
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2024



Restrain

Restrain captures a moment of unspoken communication between silent figures, painted in platinum-like tones that reflect the surrounding environment. The reflective surface symbolizes the myriad of external influences—events, emotions, and circumstances—that shape and reflect their shared existence.

Her hand delicately holds his with two fingers—the ring finger and the pinky—suggesting a fragile yet hopeful connection. His hand, bearing the subtle absence of will, offers only one finger in return, his posture marked by restraint and detachment, introducing a layer of ambiguity, a subliminal whisper of unspoken truths or silent deceit. The gesture is simple, yet profound, juxtaposing her yearning for deeper intimacy against his emotional distance.

This amplifies the tension between presence and absence, connection and withdrawal, truth and pretense.

Restrain is a poignant metaphor for the complexities of relationships, capturing the delicate interplay of desire, vulnerability, and the weight of unfulfilled promises. Through its minimalist yet evocative composition, the painting invites the viewer to reflect on the invisible dynamics that bind and separate us.

Name:	Restrain
Number:	#009
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush
Year of Creation:	2024

Silence

Silence is an evocative exploration of the silent struggles many women face, encapsulating themes of resilience, self-awareness, and liberation. The subject, with *Her* mouth aggressively bound by tightly wrapped ropes, confronts the viewer with an unflinching gaze.

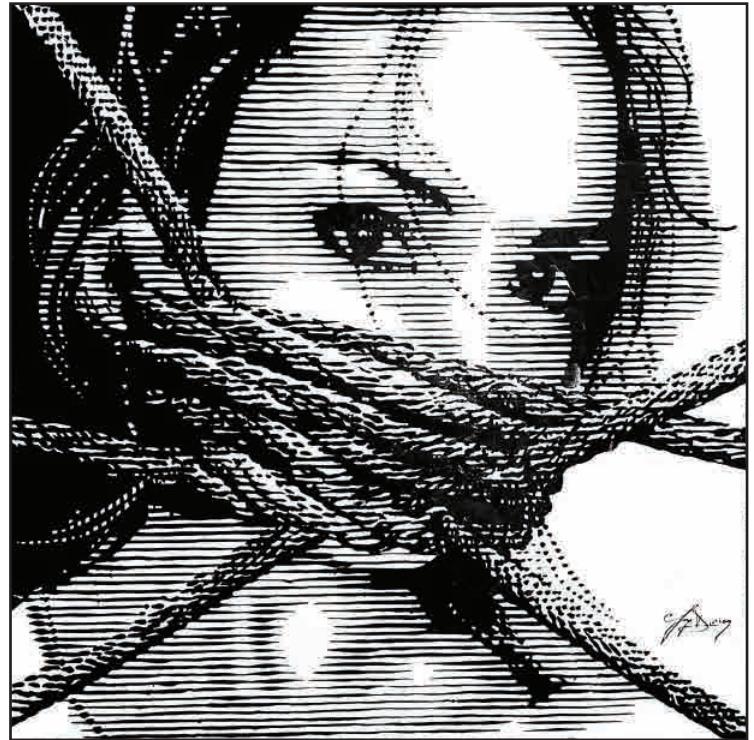
Her penetrating eyes tell a story of determination and defiance, offering a sharp contrast to the oppressive constraints that attempt to silence *Her*.

The ropes—tense, frayed, and extending beyond the edges of the canvas—symbolize the myriad limitations imposed upon *Her*: fears, societal expectations, past toxic relationships, and self-doubt. These external and internal battles intertwine, representing the complex web of struggles that have sought to confine *Her*. Yet, *Her* direct stare reveals not resignation but a profound awareness of her condition and an unyielding resolve to break free.

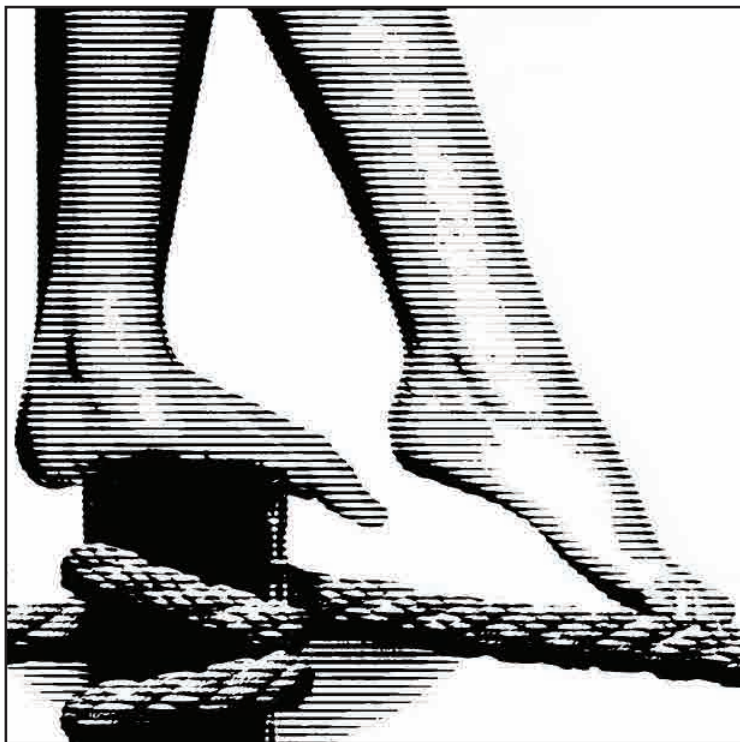
By framing *Her* struggle within the universal narrative of *She*, the work transcends individual identity, inviting viewers to reflect on the resilience inherent in all women.

It is a testament to the inner battles *She* fought in silence and the strength it takes to confront and overcome them.

Silence is not merely a portrait; it is a mirror of empowerment, challenging women to see, acknowledge, and celebrate the journey toward freedom and self-reclamation.



Name:	Silence
Number:	#010
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush
Year of Creation:	2025



Balance

Balance captures a moment of quiet determination, where risk and control exist in perfect tension. *She* stands barefoot on the edge of a pillar, a rope tied to it extending before her—an uncertain path demanding both courage and composure. With one foot hovering above the tightrope, *She* prepares to step forward, embracing the challenge of maintaining equilibrium.

This painting speaks to the delicate act of navigating life's uncertainties, where strength is found not in resistance, but in the ability to adapt, to trust, and to move forward despite the ever-present possibility of falling. It is a tribute to resilience, to the quiet confidence required to walk the fine line between fear and faith, hesitation and action.

Through *Balance*, Dorian explores the profound interplay between vulnerability and strength, illustrating how every step toward the unknown carries both hesitation and determination.

It reminds us that true stability is not the absence of risk, but the mastery of it—the ability to adapt, to regain footing after each misstep, and to find grace even in the face of imbalance.

Name:	Balance
Number:	#011
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2025

Unbound

Through an intricate weave of tensioned ropes, *Unbound* captures the unwavering gaze of a woman who refuses to be confined. The ropes, tightly intercrossed like the bars of a cage, symbolize the many forces that seek to restrain *Her* — social expectations, internalized doubts, and the invisible yet ever-present barriers imposed by others. Yet, despite these constraints, *Her* eyes remain sharp, focused, and filled with quiet defiance. *She* does not avert *Her* gaze, nor does she blink; instead, *She* stares forward with an undeniable sense of certainty, a silent declaration that *She* will not be subdued.

The tension in the composition mirrors the tension in *Her* existence — between restriction and liberation, between imposed limits and self-determined freedom. The ropes may enclose *Her*, but they do not define *Her*. They serve as a reminder of the struggles faced by women throughout history, yet *Her* expression challenges the very notion of captivity.

Unbound is a testament to resilience and self-awareness, a portrait of a woman who knows what *She* wants and refuses to be diminished by the circumstances around *Her*. *She* is not trapped—*She* is watching, waiting, and preparing to break through. The painting invites us to reflect on our own boundaries, both real and imagined, and to consider the power that lies in defying them.



Name:	Unbound
Number:	#012
Series:	Rising She
Artist:	Dorian Sărmășan
Original Artwork:	Yes
Certificate of Authenticity:	Included
Size:	1 x 1 m
Medium:	Oil on Canvas
Technique:	Brush & Knife
Year of Creation:	2025



Dorian Sărmășan, 1989, Bucharest

On his full name Sărmășan Dorian Oliviu (SDO), Dorian is an emerging painter, designer, and creative director whose work blends creativity with conceptual depth.

As a graduate of the Mastering Design Thinking program at MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management in the United States, Dorian brings a unique, interdisciplinary approach to his art, merging design, human centered innovation, and visual storytelling.

He is also the founder of Karpathic® (est. 2011) and the creator of the educational Word Colony® Games Series, launched globally in 2024.

To understand Dorian's art, one must first understand the world he was born into—a world shaped by the presence and sacrifices of women. Raised in a family of strong, resilient women, Dorian's journey was sculpted by the unwavering support and silent struggles of his mother, grandmother, and aunt, whom he all called *Mother*.

He grew up witnessing their battles—social, professional, and personal—yet, despite their challenges, they carried the weight of the world with grace and strength.

His life has been deeply intertwined with the stories of the women around him. From his mother's unwavering courage to rebuild her life for the sake of *Her* children to his cousin's resilience after betrayal, Dorian has seen, firsthand, the duality of femininity—its tenderness and its strength, its burdens and its triumphs. These experiences did more than just shape his perspective; they became the foundation of his artistic vision.

Through his *Rising She* series, Dorian does not just paint women—he paints their journeys, their battles, their silent victories. Each stroke carries the weight of unspoken struggles, each shadow whispers the resilience of those who have fought against limitations imposed by society, tradition, or even their own fears. The women in his works do not simply exist; they rise.

Minimalist yet profoundly symbolic, *Rising She* is a tribute to the ever-evolving identity of the modern woman. Through ropes that constrict but do not define, through roses that wound yet bloom, Dorian weaves a narrative of transformation. His paintings invites the viewer to feel it, to see in each piece a reflection of their own resilience, their own silent revolutions.

For Dorian, art is not merely an expression of creativity; it is an act of recognition, a way of immortalizing the strength of the women who shaped him and the countless others who continue to rise.