Poems

Amílcar Sanatan

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COOLIE BELLE

The crackled hours sound
the disappearance of women.
I hear your tired bones
encased in barrels, gold rings on your arms.
Your unsurrendered eyes
burning eighteen hundred fires.
The cutlass swung
too close to the cheek.
Vessels of violence, disorderly fields in the shadow of empire.
Colonies, fabricated in postcards for posterity in a Frenchman’s propaganda to mute and make pornography of your history.
MITERA

Beasts rest outside rum shops
counting down the years left
for sugar and old men
holding onto diabetic histories
to die. A bittersweet inheritance
in every taste.
Time is the bison,
the coolie moves his load,
perpetual creature
that dreams of galloping.
I too am struck by sweet things:
the scent of tamarind
behind your ear;
the rhythm you make
when you walk by,
a Sundar Popo verse
from Mitsubishi Lancer loudspeakers,
You fallin from a plane gyul
you fallin from above.
Listen to me dahlin
and don’t fall in love.
Mitera,
not a field
in this sluggish land’s memory
devoid of your sugar.
FESTIVAL LIGHT

Smudged mehndi,
taste of Manzanilla
coconut
on your neck.
We crawled
under the festival
to a festival,
wooden house
holding acrylic gods,
you and I entering
the floor of undressed hibiscus.
In the arms of your gold dupatta,
I thumbed
a river’s mouth
between your thighs.
Reckless ritual
like a box of matches
struck beneath the bed
in your father’s house.
Muffled breathing
as not to out the light
of deyas enkindled at prayers,
the night the epic of the sky expanded.