Green Sun

Once an old bird-watcher told me
of the songs of Spanish birds.
Apart from this
I know little of that land.
Huge bulls, ancient churches,
great wars and wooden warring ships.
Nothing to interest me.

I, who prophesy
by reading the stars and the wind,
now think of that country.

And of you seated on a bench
in an unknown park.

Over the phone you ask me the time;
through you, I hear that place.
Without your knowledge, the wind creeps into your phone
reaching my village.

I mark the time of the sun with the sap
of a green leaf from the western ghats,
so that you can read it.

May your lips
that resemble the setting sun of Spain
be reborn green
from a touch of Dravidian language.
Below the Sun, Above the Sea

From one star to another, a bird flew
in search of a space to build her nest.
One by one she arranged the words.

Under the bird’s weight
stars slid from the night sky.
Taking note, the moon entered a tumble of clouds and closed the door.

Next morning, the blue sea observed
another sun in the tears of the bird,
so offered her a space beside its glowing flag,
along a stretched dream sailing its way to Nazareth.

Below the sun, above the sea,
connecting alphabets together,
she made her nest.
There she sat,
a tiny spot of elegance.

Through flickering eyelids,
she beheld the beginning of a life.

Water and Earth

she wishes ...
to carve a sculpture from stone and wood

in the rain she carves letters,
under the full moon she carves the dance of tripurasundari,
into rivers, clouds and waterfalls she carves purity, light, simplicity,
within the ocean she carves movements

from each ray of the sun she carves a man
and into each of his eyes the pulse of the sun,
drawing the blueprints on the leaves of palms and the sands of streams
she carves the ages in memories
in fire she carves butterflies;
still the city edges on madness
and hunger hides on the other side of night;
she carves depth in the figureless,
food in the figured,
and the cry of a child in the heart

now she wishes ...
to carve a ship from stone and wood

a sailor with unshadowed face arises from the ship,
long arms bearing the sun, he swims
over sunken sculptures
through mighty waves
seeking his sculptor

with his fingers in hers
she draws a new orbit for the moon

Annual Meeting

Wild Dogs were
the lords of howl
that day

Cat led the inaugurator Rat
to the dais

prayer by Hens,
suddenly
a blackout

Wolves held aloft
overflowing flames

voice of the Striped
intoxicated the Spotted

Frog, the pickpocket,
paddled into darkness

welcome, felicitation, vote of thanks

Syam Sudhakar. Five poems: 'Green Sun', 'Below the sun, Above the sea', 'Water and Earth', 'Annual Meeting', 'Kaaladeepakam'.
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droned in couplets

Fox playing on Tortoise-tabla
ignored
Rabbit playing on Crocodile strings

electricity returned
for the entertainments
Crickets prepared for dance
Owls tightened the death beat
Bats applauded feverishly
from the audience

curtain was brought down
light and sound were wrapped up
all left

as always
the ants
remained.

Kaaladeepakam

Here goes the procession of death
through the ribs of dry leaves.

Quietly yawned
the sleeping heart of the peacock.

The blue-neck of writhing death.
Snakeskin entangled the legs.

A rusty vel.

Note: Kaaladeepakam is an ancient Indian text of astrology. Vel is the spear-like weapon held by Lord Muruka, the son of Siva, who is considered to be the lord of astrology. He rides on a peacock.

Syam Sudhakar