

Saptaparni

A poem by Aishwarya Jha

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They call you Devil
and I don't know why
ancient incantations
whorling
in your boughs
in your triviums and
quadriviums the sillage
of a slumbering iridescence
hands joined and hands
lost, a fever
dream of smoking heads
whispers of hours
spent and still
unspent
from your bark a lyre for
crustacean cupids
drawing melodies of grass and milky
ways, a gauze-wrapped city
unknown and familiar
a ballroom, I remember there was a ballroom
fitted with cream and swingin' boards
feet stilled long before
I ever knew them
you drop me in folds of sepia rain, a carfull of
feasts, dalmations on Christmas day
misplaced with velveteen dresses and
dreams and fathers and grandfathers
and other selves and home
and suddenly I wake drenched
in chypre
haemorrhaging memories in
indistinct tongues
sheets soaked in dew from lost forevers
loves almost kept and lives
almost lived
like scents from a passing
ficus
Devil, they call you Devil
and I know why.