

Nallamma.

Nallamma's decaying limbs
and the tapioca she bred
spoke equally of her
resistance.

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Once an exotic poetry loving white lady asked Nallamma
to describe her orgasm.

"odour of endosulfan wouldn't give me one "

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She's no goddess.

To conceal her embarrassment and avert collapse,
a pair of shoes for her distorted feet
is all that Nallamma needs.
Not your superlatives.

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Nallamma never taught her kids self respect.

She just took them for a mile walk
over the ploughed fields
where she refined her tumbling steps,
let them see her breast feed her frail co-worker's infant,
and the daily war she waged against patriarchs
for her harvest-share, survival and self-respect.

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"to cook dinner after sunset is blasphemous"

Nallamma told her children.

They grew up to find amma served them food cold for it is less consumed.

They survived. All of them.

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She's not a painting, a poem or an anthropology research material.

You can't dissect her wounds.

You can't exhibit her shadows.

You can't confine her
to your arthouses and laboratories.

She ain't surreal.

She's an intense reality.

Nallamma is a tapioca farmer.

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