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Selected Poems: Folklore & legend: Kaundinya & Soma; The Mekong to Mundus Novus; The Tonle Sap; Touching Water; Water the Goddess

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Selected Poems

by

Peauladd Huy

Folklore & legend: Kaundinya & Soma

When sacred wandered into the serpent's nest
a race emerged & a nation forged—a lifetime's bound by nectar
& poison in increments—amongst the half-blood
offspring: the half upright & half slither
inching from Khorat highlands to the lowlands of the Mekong.

No sooner than step did shadow
burn white as a midday
glinted sabers and mercenary paths.

Hundreds of years, foreign doubts divided & denied
truth merged
molding the golden peninsula
shifting water & land
Chenla villages into a stone metropolis,
visible from NASA above. Legacy & some

proven legends. Stone etched conquests & kingly
gratifications in foundation of a bygone empire.
Transcribed & more to be
completely deciphered. Enthusiasts & make-believe
playing gods and secular,
imagining hypotheses (*only if we were there*)
to mechanize each cold-stone character into events
could or not have taken place. Could they have
help mobilizing beyond their earthly
strength & body weight into celestial realm,

rendering this race to outdo
its greatness amongst jealous gods and opportune neighbors?



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Touching Water

1

Here, where the moon touches the water
 & the current
 rapids like malleable
 flooding cervixes
 of shore roots & eroded stone images
 & ancient inscriptions proclaiming royal deeds & offspring
 pushing from shadow & harems
 onto the open vista. Image the sky after bondage
 opens up for the disinherited siblings.

2

Here, where once through the old fig, the sun penetrated
 deep to the precious
 luminance at the bottom of clear Kulen falls.
 Deflected & projected angle: in shallow creek
 water, dotting shadows & honored locus
 erected from hips of god & creation. Imagine standing
 images on the horizontal plane.

3

Here, where once Khmer ancients stationed
 awaiting dragon stars & sunset
 glow languished over heavy canopy
 has since upturned foundation
 stones & kingdom reshuffling
 between the permanent & illegitimated
 usurps of half-blood kings.

4

Here, where the water is like a mirror
 opening up to new air & light is gradual
 where residual settles after each entry.

5

Here, you can still see at the bottom of the falls
 where all the waters pool
 & the pool is a holding mirror
 where the others see through dull light &
 in the light the original tribes
 wheel the sun to harvest
 hour then capture the old king
 of rains to feed the million rice fields.

Water the Goddess

If you are from here, you know. Each year
From June to October, the Mekong rises & the Tonle Sap
Buckles like a goddess teased. Warm. Accepting.
Willing. Dispense. Rush. Meniscus
Curvature. Edge. Cylinder. Molecular Tension. Droplets. Solid.
Solvent legs. Incremental wonder. Gauging. Engage. Let.
Possibilities. Meander. Leisure of a backstroke. Floaty. Sky.
Leafy. Light. Random shades. Sweet & salted.
Ocean-cradled. South China Sea.

About the Author



Peauladd Huy was born in Phnom Penh. Her latest work, published by Connotation Press—*An Online Artifact*—was nominated for the Sundress "Best of the Net," the Dzanc "Best of the Net," and the Pushcart Prize. And with deep gratitude to Connotation Press she'll have a book, forthcoming sometime in April.



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