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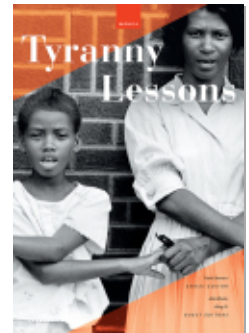
A Manifesto for the Murderers, and: The Mighty Man, and: The Heavy Air

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Manoa, Volume 32, Number 1, 2020, pp. 22-24 (Article)

Published by University of Hawai'i Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/man.2020.0021>



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Three Poems

A MANIFESTO FOR THE MURDERERS

Yes, we know
how sly and wily we are
We know
how many lies we've told
We know
how many people we've killed
how many beaten
how many bullied without reason
And no,
we haven't spared the women or children

When people weep and whine
we rob their homes
Our hustle goes on in plain sight and out of sight
No one knows better than us
the gory details of our deeds

That's why we don't worry
about those who know the truth about us
We know our strategy depends on the many
who know very little about us
or have no idea at all
And the many who do know
agree that what we do is for the best
And wish that they themselves
could do the same.

Translation from Hindi by Daisy Rockwell

THE MIGHTY MAN

When the mighty man said
he wanted even more might
I saw my weak and perishable body
which come evening
was worn out and wanted to rest

When the mighty man said
he was born to a poor mother
and had made it till here
I remembered that mother of mine
who is no longer in the world
and to become worthy of whom
I spent all my life

When the mighty man said
all the people are pleased with him
I saw an abundance of faces floating in the air
that seemed more or less cross with me
pointing to some wrong I had done

When the mighty man almost in tears said
he renounced home and didn't marry
for the sake of the country
I thought how fortunate I had been
to have had a place to return to at night
and to have found a kind wife
who expected nothing in return
for her humble love

When the mighty man said
he hates enemies of the nation
many of them hiding within the country
I became deeply concerned
that the love for others which dwells in me
should begin to dwindle

When the mighty man said
scores of people are after his life
and want to kill him
I thought about my trifling existence
which many hands helped make tidy

When one night the mighty man broadcast the message
that he wants to rule for many more years
I awoke in the morning and prayed to someone unknown
that this blurred life of mine be preserved for one day

Translation from Hindi by Sarabjeet Garcha

THE HEAVY AIR

Tyrants there's no place for you here
Rulers there's no throne here for you to sit on
Governors there's no chair vacant for you
Heavyweights you wouldn't even be able to stand here
Plunderers you can't step on this earth even once
Despots there's not a single man here
who will endure your cruelty
Interlopers you'll be hounded out of here in the end
Cannibals no matter how pointed your teeth and nails are
you won't be able to wipe out humans

I say exactly all this when I am in a fix and restless
The air around is heavy and hot like iron
evening a wilderness spread over a long distance
where nobody listens
or having listened gives no answer
Perhaps only this earth and its trees listen
which have given me shelter for long
Perhaps this sky which stretches overhead
like a light hope each morning listens
Perhaps that daughter of mine listens

who is spotted going somewhere towards the future
and who sometimes turning around says

Papa are you saying something to me

Translation from Hindi by Sarabjeet Garcha