

LIVING IN DISGUISE

Today in this pilgrim's guesthouse,
the demon's hair covers the discus-wielding
goddess's face. No rainy day, in secretive
feet: hunger, the summit of hell.
Are the *peepul*-tree's roots here?
Here, living in disguise, the pot of oblivion.
Here, there is never a return.
Here, rain's shadow, unwashed mouth.
The lightless roots of the *peepul*-tree.

Note: The “discus-wielding goddess” refers to Durgā, one form of Kālī the Destroyer. Durgā is portrayed with ten arms, each holding a symbolic weapon (one of which is the discus) which she used to slay the demon Mahishāsurā.

*Translated by Pāramitā Banerjee and
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