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## Lands

Mrinal Kanti Ghosh

And when the last kite of the western sky was being pulled down,  
We were crossing the river embroidering the forest.  
We were three- a black woman, a white man, and me;  
I, after my three sisters were born, was a covetous child,  
Like in any other Indian family.

As we touched the narrow water lain still, the Englishman  
Said to the black woman, “The water in the river bed is looking  
Like the brassiere covering only the nipples of your huge breasts.”  
She retorted, “Are you aroused by my butt and breasts?”  
The white man fell silent.

Then we crossed the river, the wide field, and reached a bazaar;  
There we saw rich temples, bulls, goats, beggars, palmists,  
Parents-without-son, hotels, few whores, liquor shops etc.  
I needed to phone one of my friends’ mother as we were  
Supposed to stay there for the night.

The telephone conversation began... “How many are you?”  
“Three...two men and a woman...the man is from England.”  
“That’s fine!” excitement got mixed with her adoring voice.  
“And the woman is from Nigeria.” ...silent thumps of her receiver...  
“Ok, come, ‘NO’ isn’t a nice word.”