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Renuka and Parasuram

A.P.Govindankutty

Water-filled earthen pitcher
Balanced on her waist,
Her left hand around its neck,
Renuka, on her way back,
After her morning dip in the river,
To the Ashram, on the right bank of Narmada,
Saw, a little upstream,
Young men and women of the warrior tribe,
Playing naked in the flowing waters.

Coals of desire,
Yet not dead in her heart,
Reddened at the sight,
Like her still youthful cheeks,
Heart throbbing, heaving a sigh,
She couldn't pull back her eyes
From the frolics of the lusty, playful youth,
Her body became taut,
Toes digging into the sand,
A rush of blood turned her body warm
And wet with secretions of irrepressible desire,
A river of desire gushing through her;
Ere she knew what was happening
The pitcher fell down,
Broke into several pieces,
Like her own dreams and desires.

Wedded to a sage
Of rigorous penance
And extreme self-control,
For him she was just a vessel
To plant his seed, at chosen time,
To beget sons, four in all;
The sacrificial fire
Of her ever-burning desire
Left to smoulder,
In the holy fire-holder,
Her body aching for a caress,
Blood slowly turning cold,
Sleep sitting reluctantly on her eye-lids,
Her nights were indeed long.

Pitcher broken,
She walked as if in a dream,
Her gait gained a sexy sway,
Face lit up, like a red lotus
Kissed open by soft rays of rising sun,
Skin glowing, eyes dancing,
Blushing now and then,
She reached the Ashram;
The sage measured her
From head to toe,
Could see she stood before him
Embodiment of carnal desire.

The sage then called
His grown up sons,
One by one,
Asked them to quench her lust,
The first three refused,
Said they wouldn't commit the sin,
But the fourth, Rama, said
He would do it, though sin,
As ordered by his father,
Killing in his mind
The idea she was his mother.

From the moment Rama was told
It was her Kshatriya lineage
That made her burn with desire,
In him raged hatred towards them,
He went around and decimated them,
Such was his sense of guilt
He offered oblations to her mother
With their blood
And himself remained celebrate
Rest of his life.