

Poems by Nithya Mariam John

At the Station

Your attention please. Train No.12624 Chennai-Thiruvananthapuram Superfast Mail will arrive shortly on Platform No.1.

The man next to me,
engrossed in a YouTube video
which had satisfied his fantasies,
slowly unplugged his headset
and looked up.

The old woman who had been complaining of the heat
adjusted her saree and gathered the black handbag
on to her lap,
sat straight,
like a kangaroo with her little one
safe in her pouch.

The little boy and girl
playing with empty 7-Up cans
threw them on the rails
and ran to their mother
shouting excitedly,
“Train! Train!”

The janitor who cleans the rails
jumped on the platform,
and the cans clinked in his white sack.

I closed Milan Kundera
and stood up to admire
the doves,
who have not yet left their posts,
but were still pecking
at the leftovers
on the rails.

Human-birds

i wish
we will grow wings
and perch on the tallest tree in the field
and admire the beauty of the longest train which hitchhikes
to the nearby station; children dressed in every colour will point at us,
watching them from the tallest

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N Tree.

Story

Nobody told me stories.

Neither my mother

nor my grandmother.

All I heard was

a mob

furious,

yet slow

silently eating

the fringes of our cot,

where at night

I clung on to

my sister

whose vagina

narrated

an epic of violence.

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