

The Tea-plant

Udoi Kumar Baruah

We're tea-plants,
Though we grow sideways for the grafting
Of our feathered hopes

The ancestral fetters of bondage
Round our ankles
The document of the dungeon in the pale eyes
Green blood streams forth through the veins

We're the centre of a world of artifice
Would you listen to the woeful ballad of those bearing only deceit
After their loyalty to our service from dawn to dusk

Whose blood - sweat - toil are used as fuel by a few narcissists
To run the train of their dreams

Though our green sensation is kept nailed,
The two-leafed sprout of love totally shattered,
We know everything, understand everything
With whose sweat of the brow does the chrysanthemum bloom
In whose courtyard

On the Karam Puja night
Emerging out of the hollow of yellowish silence
I ask the God of stone:
Where's the path of our freedom
In the countless lines of oblation in our skin and flesh
Is there the lost tip-off of sky-gazing dreams.

Translated by **Krishna Dulal Barua**

Udoi Kumar Baruah is a senior Assamese poet based in Guwahati. He has three collections of poems to his credit.

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