Ahila Sambamoorthy, “South of Ganges”

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SOUTH OF GANGES

Massive sandstone and granite carved melons, mango breasts. Arching backs, dazzling phalluses. Priests invoke the lord of dancers, destroyer of demons, in pentatonic melodies.

Cinnamon skinned women in paint box coloured saris, their lips wide across betel stained teeth. A snake charmer plays a bamboo violin. Vishnu on a palanquin serenaded by drums, bells, horns.

Under the banyan rooted in heaven, its branches of ether, fire, water and earth, shriveled black Kali awaits her meal of human tongues, her skull necklace drooping over crossed legs.