

I.

delta soil was born on some prehistoric spine;
i am kin with obsolete skeletons. buried within
this body are their violent histories. i am flotsam
in the bloodied Ganges. the sundial ticks.
i cannot cross oceans to find myself
because i was lost the same way, pieces split
into the churning seas, but the shifting carcasses
between my skin and sinew tell me about
the flatlands and mountains and Sundarbans
and perhaps it'd be nice to fossilize there,
so i pack a satchel and ride to the edge of the world.
between the mangroves, i desiccate ripe fruit
until they're as withered dry as i am. maybe
my displaced soul is a bog body too — dead and decayed.

II.

my sister was born with all the impatience of
a restless ilish — unwound umbilical cord, unused
to conformity. Bangla drips in my tear tracks but
it fumbles on her tongue. her blood's as brown as mine
but her walk was learned in American streets.
when we bleed i touch my wound to hers and
our blood crosses continents and confluences.
my sister shared our womb seven years late; in
seven years, the human body cycles all its cells anew.
are we tapestries of our ancestry
or the northern snows that incubated us?

III.

veins braided like river
distributaries run deep
and brown into the earth.
a dinghy afloat in the
mire of Chittagong Port.
i'll be buried
in a foreign cemetery
no matter where i die.
kneeled before a Mughal
king, return me my
self-sovereignty.