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MASTER AND MAID

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A bony charred woman works at my place.
Ragged red printed sarees she drapes,
Wears wild flowers in her hair,
And a crippled smile on her face.

She stays with her old mother and children,
Her husband goes around with different women.
She sweeps the garden, mops the floor,
Cleans utensils and washes clothes.

Her daughter goes to school,
Narrate stories of cock and bull,
Books, copies, bag torn and full,
Baa, baa, black sheep
Have you any wool?

I teach theories, doctrines and -isms in school,
Her daughter blinks open-mouthed,
Her eyes so hopeful.
She paints pigeons and sketches vultures,

She reminds me Ivan Illich and Sisyphus.
Her elbow grease, battle and struggle,
Engage more than any discourse or lecture.

However,
I wonder,
Why they call her 'the maid's daughter',
And I am called the master!
Her mother dusts the pulpit,
I hold the chalk - duster!



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