

Dreaming the Jungle

In the jungle the sun always shines
green through ten stories of leaves.

In the jungle the radio is fuzz.
There are no piles of newspapers.

You never need to pee, you sweat it out.
The jungle is moist, shake and shower.

There's no overcrowding
of eyes in the jungle, only roots.

No grill or boil
leave the fish in the sun to steam.

You can't tell where the main stream begins
or ends, it bends. No pavements next to no roads.

No filing cabinets, no records
in the jungle there is no bottom drawer

no scratched CDs, cutlery, tea towels or turtles.
No high heels, only transsexual

flowers, racy butterflies and prehistoric
larger than your head frogs. Kiss the jungle.

A travel writer takes a walk through the jungle

The touring party was a cesspool of disease. I drank from someone else's cup, and in a fever lost the crowd.

In a dip by the bank of a river I went into a tense sweat, into a pile of myself.
Flapping my loincloth's edges cooled my fever. The crinkle cooed at my heart.

In the dark's dark, flannel palms folded me, grew fond of me and fronds around me – vines like dressing gown cords.

They call the river Noah. After a sudden rain he will rise, burst, then leave taking with him all who stood on the bank, boats and reeds, goats and girls.

In the morning light I flared, flung off my twiggy cloak and struggled up out of the grave I had scooped in the night. I sleep as thick as a stick, as deep as a spade.

In the jungle rumours, false or full, spread like fire to a lake's edge.
In the jungle the body is adored, cuddled by claws, bones, fur, feathers, teeth, and shells.

I re-wove my hat and set out to find 1.toilet 2.coffee.
Downstream a dilapidated sign suggested westward. And so I went.

A knotted raft with a crew of rats was departing. I bought my way aboard with rolled oats and roast almonds, with cous cous and gold.

In the jungle man can picture himself as a jaguar, a bird or an elephant.
In the jungle mirrors are made of metal and hard to polish fully.

On the way downstream I caught some sun, as I talked to the bar staff about nibbles, the moon came out quick as the carpet from under foot.

I waited to pull into the arms of a city. I wanted to pull on to solid ground.
I was far from sure. We pasted by the welcoming wood of many, too many piers.

On the river fish is caught.
On the river squid are caught up in fish nets.

We passed spa pools and the steaming mouths of the sauna-gators.
We passed off my map. I had been taken for all I was worth. I was stuck aboard with minus grains and zero gems.
I inspected my devices. In the deck air I knotted the vessel's dirty laundry.

Stained and starched, a small craft appeared. Son of a paperclip daughter of a dart. I rode the family of folds. I made my way ashore.
Some animals shed skin, others change their colour. Beaks open.
In the jungle the bark of trees feels like Braille.

I was without my luggage. My precious rings and phone were gone. My favourite piece of obsidian, ancient and shaped like nail clippers, would be black in my hand no more.

Gone was my shaver, spare sandals, compass and candles.
All I had was a hole in my pocket, and ears on my sides.

My head felt black as a match. I felt unshaven. I felt like a can of tuna.
The jungle is only sap and plants with pep. The jungle is only raindrops and their pets.

A travel writer tries to get out of the jungle.

Dusk is falling and the fire that keeps the water buffalo warm at night will soon be lit. They huddle around a pond, behind them is clutter to the horizon.

Water falls like ice cubes would pelt. These few days
I've managed to spend dry, I've spent nostalgic.

The jungle's finery is vast but chipped. The animal kingdom blends into the vegetable kingdom. Who know what's in such soup.

In the jungle, the art of human finery is king. Torsos draped in necklaces. I ask the locals why they stare at me so. I try on their heavy breast plates. They say nothing.

After a life time of reaching for berries, their fingers have deformed knuckles like knots. Who can tell if their lips are naturally bloody.

I spend my days recalling every funeral I have attended during my life.
I yearn for a study [sturdy?] roof under which to note down such recollections.

As I lie in the night's armpit, a veil of eczema spreads out of my joints.
The sharp grass has trellised my calves in cuts. I am a dreadful uniformity of itchiness and regret. I dream of home scarred by my absence.
Home will become tattooed with my stories, will be a sanctuary away from snakes.

Each day my teeth are filed a little more canine by this sandy food. The finest china will be brought out for my arrival. Teacups as fine as a rooster's crow with colour as rich as a parrot. I dream of the sweet song of the telephone. The brightness of butter, the kindness of a clock, the clink of metal on glass. The straight line of life.