

SHAVA

SADHANA

WARNING

This practice involves interactions with a dead body.
It is accurate and required. Please do not read if this
may offend you.

shava sadhana

drinking a bottle of vodka
isn't easy when you have
to drink it under pressure.
no spewing
no enjoyment
the body
laying on the ground
in front of me.

this is shava sadhana.

it is required only once in a lifetime.

i started drinking at about midnight
awake now after the initial
swoon of sleepiness
earlier.
i don't know what time it is now
but all good people
are deep in their sleep.
funny.

the bottle is hard to finish
but even then
drunkenness won't come
because the body waits at my feet
fresh and patient.

i throw the empty bottle away
as if the evidence
can be hidden.
there is still no stagger in
my legs.

i walk around the naked body and
chant my mantra
then kneel down to
the ropes made of dried grass.

first i spread the legs and
bend the knees
the stiffness of the body
beginning to tell.
tie the two big toes together
keeping the knees bent.

up at the other end
bend the elbows above
the head and
tie the thumbs.

a body with two diamond shapes top and bottom.

i put my fingers into the mouth
and force the lips apart.
fill the throat with grasses
and push down
hard until it fills the space.

keep repeating the mantra
but the vodka makes
me brave.

i place the wax candle
in the mouth and light it.

i take all my clothes off
and sit on the groin of the body
one diamond behind me
and one in front.

the candle light flickers into the
face of the body and the eyes
forced open glimmer
and glisten
back at me.

i pass my hands over the torso
and repeat the mantra
over and over until
the rhythm makes
me swing slightly back
and forth.

the business end
of this sadhana
is to call kali ma
and be filled with the energy
of her
through the bridge
that is the corpse.

the circle drawn around me
at the start
is the boundary now
beyond which i
cannot pass
or anything or anyone
can now enter.

i can see the tiger
outside,
kali ma in her
several poses.
and now the bright green eyes
coming closer and passing around

the circle
hungry
hungry and desiring.

“kali ma” i call her
there is no need for long speeches now
as i massage the corpse
and rhythmically
rub my body on it.

the mantra dies on my throat
it has done its job and
is not needed anymore.
the trance is complete
the green lean eyes
of a hungry devi
splitting through
the confines of the circle.

“will you die?”
the eyes ask me.
“i am” i answer.
“will you die?”
i smile.
“will you die?”
“i am” this is clear
“i am” she repeats
and i am.

i open the ties of the toes and
spread the legs wide apart
her vagina is dry.

i open the thumb ties and spread the arms
out wide

as if she is beseeching.
i walk around on the inside of the circle
my eyes glowing green
with the hunger
merging with kali ma
to see what should not be seen
by anyone who
cannot enter the circle
who cannot sit on a corpse
who cannot
drink a bottle of vodka.

kali ma points to the tree nearby
and opens the branches with her
thoughts.
i touch them from a distance
no need to go there
and touch.

“your request....”
“yes” i reply.
she drips water from
an invisible hand and
gives me the life of the tree
the thirst of the water
and the immortality of the corpse.