

MARTIN KOVAN

Tristes Tropiques

Marketplace oneiry written on tinted
gaze of Mercedes Benz sharkish in dirt
roadsides where the eldest of the women
collect cardboard and rusted wire. To hang
salted fish on like shriveled abandoned
newborns in the sun-baked,
sunken canals.

The wonder of stench in all the
byways of the breeding city, grafted rhizomic
in their upward panting high-ways to a
napping nabob in a penthouse
condo in the sky.

Snappish theology between stray dogs and
limpet men on a *samsara* barge, herding
bobbing coconuts to future lives. The night
train shoots a mystery star, snaking through
palm-oil groves, on the way to somewhere by a
smelting-works and a colony of children from
over the border, camped in a defunct
housing-project deep among dryleaf
teak trees.

They hunt in rounds, musical and far
from roaring roadsides, tintinnambulatory, like
these sunstruck temples, the car-wrecks sighing
in the filmy open air, a birth of beehives
bursting the compromised womb, its
tropical tears piled saltier
than a sea.