

VOLUME: 3

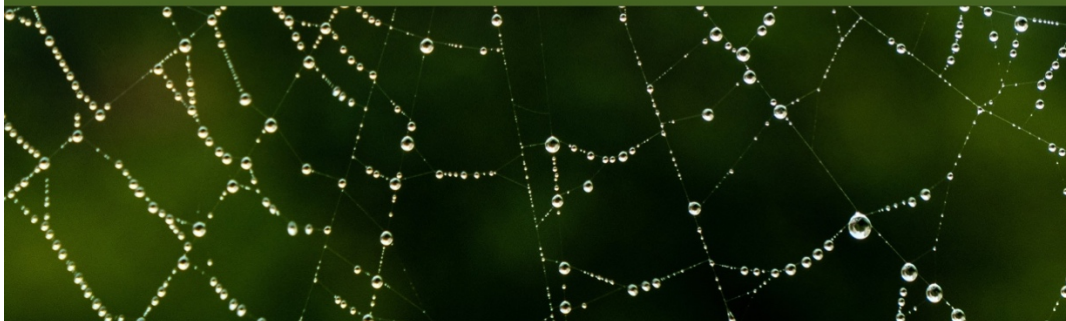
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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FEAR STUDIES

Theme: Navigating Ecofear through Diverse Cultures

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Poems

Precaution

She lost her shack to the seething, gurgling waters.
That slithering night still raises its hood in her dreams.
Her man beats on his chest and cries, “Curse of the Mother Earth!”
Maybe the earthworms,
Which had thrived for generations on the hilltop-
*displaced by human greed, transported in
heaps of sand,
piled on trucks
and driven off,
from atop the hill-*
had cried out to the heavens for vengeance!

Floods are divine tears washing away the sins of our land,
her toothless grandmother mumbled.
This time it effaced
her one-room shed,
washing away with it, the memories of the family.

Two years...
and now the two of the four, who had come of her womb,
somehow survive the memories of the youngest ones-
the twins,
who were inseparable even when the deadly chariots sped across the land.
Yesterday,
she spent the last of her monthly savings to buy two bottles of hand sanitisers and N 95 masks
from the town-
her womb and breasts cannot afford another loss this year. Schools have reopened, partially.

*At night, like the earthworms,
her heart wriggles for her lost homeland,
which now recur as sand dunes in her dreams.*

- **John, Nithya Mariam**