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“Rudaali, the Female Mourner”

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She was dressed in black, in
her tattered ebony saree,
Laying down her catnapping infant
on the cradle of ragged cloth,
Joined the lass, the women in black,
to the haveli of opulence,
in the murky dawn, to mourn for the deceased,
for the first time but
it was not going to be the last;
Her flock illuminated her that
She had to wail, she had to shed tears,
She had to whirl on ground,
even if she did not want to,
Owing to the fact, she had
to earn bread out of her tears,
She had to be a performer,
She had to be a rudaali, the female mourner;

A task so onerous, to mourn
the demise of the one too unknown,
So she ruminated the sulky fate,
the excruciating life of her own;
Her father never gave her his name,
Nor did her lover gave his
name to her son,
Left with the women in black and her tears
to earn a leftover chapatti or a coin of five,
So she yelled, drubbed her breasts,
Throbbled the ground, sang a monody,
By and by, she became a performer,
She became a rudaali, indubitably.