



## Grow Long, Blessed Night: Love Poems from Classical India

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*Like red earth and streaming rain,*

our loving hearts merged

all by themselves.

Captured in these centuries-old verses are the intoxication of new love, the romance of courtship, and the longing of separated lovers. Here are the voices of older women advising their younger friends, the words of messengers conveying secrets between lovers, and the musings of lovers to themselves. Culled from large anthologies that date from as early as the first century CE to as late as the eighth, Martha Ann Selby's masterful translations allow the poems to stand on their own in English while still maintaining the flavors of the original verses as reflected in idiom and structure. The book's 200 erotic poems are composed in India's three classical languages: Old Tamil, Maharastri Prakrit, and Sanskrit, and grouped according to themes, with annotations provided whenever a brief gloss is necessary. After opening with several informative essays on the poems and how to read them, their origin, and the languages in which they were composed, the book proceeds with the delicate images, voices, and emotions of the verses themselves.

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