Sunset on the Mekong River

I have, unexpectedly, forgotten why I came here—
in a minute, I was filled with emptiness, submissive
to the feast of the skies.
Among so many rivers and beguiling dreams,
how come I claimed the Mekong at the first sight?
It surges between Vientiane and Nong Khai,
erasing time and space in my blood.

“Burning so hot, the transient setting sun.
You play a magnificent film on the earth’s screen.
You, with your gold tinsel betrayed by the world, merge into the Pacific.”

Unrestrained

In loving someone, nothing is better than
giving all of yourself, body and soul, to him,
unafraid of withering from sprouting to blossoming,
feeling like you're a fire and, by chance, so is he.
You hold each other: a fiery tree with silver flowers
that keeps burning and burning and turns into ashes.

Death of an Elephant

Little by little, I fail to keep pace with them.
I'd better get some rest by the brook, pretending to drink, trying to recall:
In this life, did I ever taste mad honey?
If not,
my imagination can help. Since the onset of this rainy season,
an unknown déjà vu has increasingly clung to my flesh
like a wanderer returning from afar,
sitting on a swing, singing the ballad I once heard in my mother's belly.

That song unites beginning and aging, longing for a limit.
Eternity has become crisp and light, and, thus, unimportant.
Passion, fading too soon, keeps surprising me,
while weariness outweighs hope
by a crucial milligram.

My only wish is to die at my birthplace.
Human ignorance has dirtied the earth.
The rainforest, my secret orphanage,
still retains a decent cleanness.
I understand its profound fertility and sorrow.
Let me see, once more, the sunset on the Mekong River
and find a cave just small enough to contain my plain life,
lying in there,
dreaming of a starry sky. In my dream, I'll grow up again
with my bones, my tusks, my smiles,
immortalized as a gene of the forest.