

Sound and Cerement

— *“mu” thirty-eighth part* —

Caught in coastal weather, came
 in from the rain, they the two,
 we who will have been none. . .
 It wasn't an epic we sang had
 there been a song we sang, heroic
 waste
 around us though there was. The
 beloved's long-distance voice
 was what it was. Muse meant lost
 in thought it reminded us, erstwhile
 epiphany, snuffed. . . It was all
 a wrong
 turn or we took a wrong turn. All the
 roads ran off to the side and we as
 well, we of the interminable skid. . . We
 were they of the imagined exit,
 he
 and she of the adaptable tongue,
 teeth, lips, mind's own sacred
 ass-cleft and crotch, we of the
 exiguous
 fit. . . Erogenous mind's dilated aperture. . .
 Cloth tore, ground gave way. . .
 World being anything but, we
 retreated, each the other's remnant
 wisp,
 remnant caress kept only in sleep. . .
 Fleet release the embrace made myth
 of, arms' tight winding and wrap a
 kind of cloth, cerement the skin itself.
 A spun sound answered us inside
 and
 out, revenant, runaway love the least
 of it, run though we did even so. . . The
 lost one's attenuated kiss was what
 it
 was, the beloved's long-distance
 breach

and bedevilment, beckoning we broke
loose from. There was fold on fold of
cloth and it was us, caress claiming
myth a burial of sorts, cerement the
spin we rode rode us, raveling arrest
un-
done. . . A republic of none the one included
us,
no word to speak it with, dumbstruck. . .

Beginning to be the end it seemed. . .
Ending begun to be come to again. Ending
going on and on. . . Wanting the world,
what of it was ours not enough. The

sun
rose, night notwithstanding, came up,
hung deep in the wet sky. A kora's
tight strings assisted it, launched it,
held it for us to see. The sun was one of
us it said. What it meant by us lay
cloaked
in peal, ping, fado, world wanted only
for the sound it shook loose, Portuguese
tremor,

trill. . . What wasn't us we had no way of
knowing. What it meant by us was
unclear, us included so much, sun
seemed an alternate cloth. . . Beside
ourselves all night, no sleep. We

were
they whose bed was anything but. They
lay

awake in our sleep, we in theirs they
intimated, a song of song's end had there
been one, a broken song we'd have sung
had

there been
a song

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Stark light the day I saw thru. I
too spoke with a shell on my
voice, tongue a thick worm in
my throat. I was at the beginning

again,

wanting to undo and redo what was
done. I was only what was left. . .

Nub was being what was left, I
was Nub. Nub was being remnant,
regret. I was debris, I was what

was

left. I wore a mask made half my
face

numb. One side hairless, the other
unshaven, talked, ate, drank

with

one side of its mouth, numb side
confounding what the quick side
felt. I was only what was left. . .

I wore

a mask made half my face grow
stubble, stubble side scrambling
what the slick side felt. I was only

what

was left. . . Of late looked at from another

side,

all sides. . . Out, over, either, both, I

was

what was
left

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It was getting to be the end again,
day done up in black, night white,
edge along which we fell, thought,
falling, this is what the songs all
meant. . .

All the songs were ecstatic,
lovestruck.
Hearts bled. . . Violins. . . A worm was in
my brow, bit me, heart's own target,
toyed with, I was only what was left. . .

Abbey Lincoln sang a Sufi lament.
Truth blurred if not blue, blue, bereft,
face never seen they say. . . Lookless,
faceless, voice heard in hell, life love
alluded
to lifted, love's
laryngitic
address