

NATHANIEL MACKEY

SONG OF THE ANDOUMBOULOU 156

—*trans am visitation*—

Heaven found in their faces they made
their bodies move to, aspect and er-
rancy wed of late. I wanted to believe
the
psalm they floated, I wanted to be of
that disposition, two Andoumboulou I
dreamt I rode with for a moment, broken
mo-
ment, bodily abode they wanted back and
had gotten back... The overpass took
us high above Low Forest. Prospect and
ex-
panse it appeared. We looked out to-
ward the rim of the world and it seemed we
rode it, long since out of sync with the
road
we sped along, we looked out over noth-
ing but green... It was a dream of the dead
in cars again I noticed, a dream come to life
it seemed, all the signs, all the semblances I
could-
n't keep quiet, in tongues when they spoke
they'd speak. Momentary appeal to the lipless
dead, boon moment. I wanted their take on
what
if it added up it added up to. A figural endow-
ment I felt it was, maybe more... I sat between
them in the front seat as in the old days. They
felt
it was good to know breath and body again,
I could feel it. "Something seen in a face," I mut-
tered, my words ratcheted upward, "some-
thing looking out untouched." Green earth
slop-
ing away on all sides, none of us knew what

it meant, the overpass ratcheted up as well...
We were in my mother's '58 Pontiac, who
they
were I had no idea. The overpass went higher,
hoist-
ed by hydraulic
pumps

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We were exiting 15-501 onto Martin Luther
King. Bright sun, blue sky, green earth a
binge of spirit, whisked away I'd have sworn
we'd
be. The radio was up loud as it would go but
it made no sound. All sonance accrued outside...
Not since light married heat had it been so
riven. All the leaves' exhalation welled up in
my
chest, an offhand gift. It cost us breath we
began to cry, such the way dreams had been it
was again, broke as we began to revive...
The
wide-awake look light gave us faded, our
faces warmer even so. Climb seconded clime,
chime followed, bells the out sound our
ra-
dio gave its tongue to, a church it might've
been
we drove
thru

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We knew nothing but a soft hammering we
 heard, a climate of soul it seemed and such
 we called it, elegiac bodies we were born to

we

swore by, the two dream travelers and I.
 Steel string, padded mallet, felt-headed mallet.
 A piano's chime the bells might've been...

What

was it I saw made it seem so at one I wanted
 to know, an afterthought I shooed away
 quick as I could, spirit's expense it seemed.

Fur-

therance out of bodily bond what soul was,
 all that either that so what it was, ancillari-
 ty itself, arced as well as far the farther we
 looked. As were we, over it whatever the it

was,

arced as the pass we took's tenuity, spirit's
 expense's high chime... Huff could be
 heard speaking from the backseat. He told

me

not to turn around. Rusty nails punctured the
 back of my head and protruded like locks,
 nailheads on the ends of them, themselves

thus

headed Huff said... Not since Anuncio and
 Anuncia walked arm-around-waist, he went
 on, had it so aligned, dreamt entablature the

sky

rested on. It was unlay's day begun, land's lay
 such as it was all the earthier, love's licen-
 sees we were... It was all we could've seen or

said,

all we could've wanted, the accord zone it was
we were in. Whatever of majesty about it there
wasn't we had no use for, scoured, part sheen,
part
scuff

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So this was the way it was done these days
 I was thinking. Picture-postcard sky, picture-
 postcard landscape, swing low sweet Pontiac...
Not

since kept injecting itself. Not since Anuncio
 lay busted up had it been so clear. Crystalline
 scruff the way I thought to describe it, pastoral
dis-

play discrepantly stretched out all around...
 Steeped in St. Sufferhead's remand even so,
 draped in St. Sufferhead's raiment, clarity so
tac-

tile, clothlike, a see-thru silhouette clung to it
 all. The car took the curve of the overpass
 ever so smoothly, the Andoumboulou on both
sides

of me stolid, nonplussed, eyes on the road, no
 matter mine wandered. Their eyes feasted on
 what was in front of them, mere sockets were
there

nothing there. Straightahead was something they
 could taste, curved as well, altitude a light brew,
 lift an elixir, ravaging the thirst of the dead...
The

Andoumboulou's eyes devoured whatever the
 road presented. The curve was a rib cut they stuck
 tight to, tires lifting up as they began to notwith-
 standing, the air itself an off ramp we took. What
a

boon mobility was, motorability was, I could
 feel them feeling. Not since the song was first
 heard had the air so conducted itself. *Not since*
took

so's place it seemed. It was a *Book of Not Since*
 we wrote our names in, bordering on a *Book of*

Not So... The pages turned my head. Was it
out
or farther in I wanted to be I couldn't say, two
books or the two Andoumboulou's book. They
sat on either side of me like bookends. Was I theirs
or
the *not since* book I couldn't say. *Can't say* tore
a page from *not so's* book, a book at all or not I
couldn't say... The car was caroling, *not since's*
prod-
igal, a book of blue, a book of white, a book of
green, an aroused hymnal, the rim of the world
chorusing it seemed. It upgraded to a Trans Am,
rear spoiler, pure pony, a Firebird the stronger it
sang.
Why the change I had no idea nor why a car to
begin with. Snide epiphany I thought the more I
thought, gasoline elysium, sweet dream's antithe-
tic wit. So it was I laughed it off, shrugged it off,
en-
joyed the ride, *The Book of So* back in good
standing, *The Book of Not So* to the side... All the
light, the white clouds, the clarity pounded my
eye-
lids, eyes clamped shut so bright it was. Heaven's
haunt seen in a face I could feel them feeling,
the two Andoumboulou I sat between. Knowing
we
were soon to return, I wanted to linger, look at
all there was to see, eyes open, something seen in a
face the earth and the sky grew linked and aglow
with,
abidance they were drawn to
most

Everything grew precious, filled with
portent, knowing we were soon to
return. I had the scarecrow feeling I'd

read

about. My bones were sticks beneath
my skin... I awoke not knowing who
the two were, none the wiser what dress
the world wore. I took Itamar aside and

told

him. He said beware of auto-elevation,
no such easy out would be had. I told
him I knew and he said maybe but not
enough... I told him enough was only a

word,

next to nothing, he'd have to go more
like how the green had gone, more
the way blue went on, more the way the

clouds

banded white
about

Huff too I took aside and told. What
was he doing there I asked. He laughed.
Damn if he knew he said... Quag was in
the
backseat with him he said, Quag was
the condition we set out from. Was he
the wind we were lifted by I wondered,
Quag
an exigent clime he codedly alluded to,
elegiac appeal we had no way not to hear...
Nod would know he said, reading my mind
it seemed, Nod would know. Requisite lift
other-
wise not to be known he surmised, he and I
stand-
ing there, let
loose