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# "In the Middle of the Burning," and "This that We Have"

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## In the Middle of the Burning

notice now pictures of awful things on top our head the freight that barricades this view, how enough how the law batter down the dogged tide we make the world shoring its dark scars between seasons as though to hold it together only by a flame is here a voice to please enough the blunt borderlessness of this grief turning our heads to rubble the lunacy of nothing so limning as death in the streets in these vibrating hours where the corners talk back need I simply run my tongue along the granite sky and live

to know how lost the millionth life somewhere today the swift shape of roads new names combust, the sum of anthems flooding the world with the eye's sudden and narrow saltwater and streets ziplined with screams at the pitch of cooking pots then tear gas, then pepper spray, then militarized lies unzipping body bags, oh, our many many there, our alive and just born, and that is how to say let's fuck it up, we the beat and we the loud tuning forks and the help arriving empty-handed propping the hot news of new times on our head

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days like these pleat whatever the hollow year must offer between the not-yet-dead and those just waking up it will not be the vanished thing that we remember it will be what we exchanged close to midnight like smugglers high-wiring the city, hoarding the thoughts of ours we interrupted midway to discovering the velocity of the burning world below of our language in the lateness of our stuck and reckless love

where the forces who claim they love us level our lives to crust-the centuries-wide dance of swapped shackles for knees their batons and miscellany thrown at our whole lives demanding our mothers raise from their separate rooms, separate graves, today to save who and me? I open the book to a naked page where nothing clatter my heart, what head what teeth cling to broadside, roll alias after alias with a pen at their dull tribunes and shrines imagine our heirlooms of shot nerves make a life given to placards and synergies and elegies, but more

> last things: where letters here where snow in May where the millennium unstitches the quartered earth in June, how many today to the viral fire the frosted rich and their forts, but not the fulsome rage of my people unpeaced mute boots with somber looks appear a fearsome autumn ending spring, though we still hear

I dare not sing

another song to dig a hole this time for the lineages of magnolias where the offspring bring a hand to cover our mouth, our heaping lives, who sit who burn who drop three feet to the tar, who eat and demolish the thing that takes our head, the thing that is no more the place that never was except a burning learned

just once and not again when the darker working's race

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## This that We Have

call the year anything / call it 3020-something

the maps can tell us nothing everything what of this electric world where doors open the expanse of memory freeing itself into the diaphragm of oceans, soils we find bearable

like life or maybe language a liquid thing we lock our heads around & hearts what to do with these flesh-chambered engines we widen widen like the sea like a morning no more invisible than a black shoe on a Black foot than two black hands laced before a windowed, night-hued city bright cluster on fingernails enclosing the day we come to these cracked spaces tuned,

to the lifetimes of extinctions swimming in our mouths white-noised as the future-a figure of speech

we are past hidden our lives, ourselves hinged to winged things like middays and shadows ruined cities crowding at our feet to watch what is rehearsed the waywardness of crowds

to meet again in the convoy on our way to anything blue and scorching just as to arrive

un-fleshed

we who sound the Atlantic's long rage call the year anything; call it 1492 every sunset, an emergency in this world, captives

*bellying* their sense of the dark

as day splits open a danger though we bow to everyone who brings a drum

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a fiddle for the frenzied ringing in our bones

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we practice saving

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ourselves from the quadrupling intoxication sudden, inconsolable as anything the elephant's stolen tusk			
the frozen plane below must crack like cymbals in this knowledge but who can hear what we do not the fevered incantations of the dew			
way up here the chorus tonight [we know by now] is the gurgling of seahorses & the starfish giving up their placentas to the wideness of the sea just as the barking dog a country away enters its cracked femur into the log marked for saving this world			
more intimate now to us is the flammable language of maps the silence we admire in the birth of things the effusive doctrine of birds			
above us, such incandescence we move with the desiccated graces and stones and roses the lines we inherit the error of floating houses			
do we petition the summoners of our preventable catastrophes whoever claims to cleanse the village without picking sides is not believed until the tongue pulls us together			
in the middle of repetitions the shared sutures dissolving in our eye			
amid our flight, our voices splotch the distance our resplendent songs blackening			
like a hurricane refusing a boat to wreck the wounded map we dance upon we danced it here			
to the plantations at the sea's beginning bend tell everyone the matter is not the self which we have always had nor the caves that in their damp and dark, know themselves but the maps we'd move the world to make			
like healers,			

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& crickets, to disorient down to bush and flock the lengths and breadths we come back to; papered	the cartographe to sunsets that h		
with no even sense of the invisible even empty as clay pots we want the repaired century			
nested, stained and carried in our heads then loosed to the tall grasses where frenetic servants' visions			
are ledgers of our semblance the timbre for our reunions	es a clearing		
look, <i>call the year anything</i> bring a place to point to	we should when we a	8	