

1971

# Lovers

Lewis Turco

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## LOVERS

The bed frames them. Their eyes  
tell little of the story. Some old passion  
has been eroded. Rivulets of time have  
eaten their cheeks until their faces

lie flat against linen  
landscapes—or against each other in a dark  
room, on a night empty even of owlcries.  
Their flesh is a sophistry of shadow:

nothing is hidden. They  
must therefore film their eyes in order not to  
notice there is nothing there to see. They sang  
songs once, to each other, in moon light.

Now, not even night hawks  
call out to the lovers in their still stead. Not  
even sleep lifts the veils from their sight, returns  
each other's image for an hour's dream.

And if the world wheel, what then?  
The grim creature of the mind stunned  
by the spaces of stars hung silently  
among the dumb regions where death dwells  
in an old house, watching from twin windows,

snuttering among pebbles  
like a hag made of pimples and  
sacks. She will stow her hours in odd chinks,  
fondle each old thing on her ticking  
as night whines beneath the bed and her roof

trembles with light. Then, at last,  
when least she needs his flesh—when least  
they know each other in their age, the stars  
will smash their windows, their roof vanish,  
and the world come burning while they make love.