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Black Snake Visitation

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Black Snake Visitation · *Nathaniel Mackey*

—hendrix poem—

A black tantric
snake I dream
two days to the

morning I die
slipping up
thru my throat,

slithers out
like the vomit I'll
be choked by

can't, gigantic
seven-headed
snake, sticks out

one head at a
time. Must
be this hiss my

guitar's been
rehearsing
sits me down by

where the salt
water crosses the
sweet. Self-

searching twitch,
the scrawny
light of its

carriage, broken
sealit stark-
ness, furtive

sea of regrets.
But not re-
duced by what

I knew would not
matter, woke
to see no one

caress the arisen
wonder's dreamt-of
thigh. Death

enters a slack
circle whispering,
slapping hands,

beauty baited
like a hook, hurt
muse at whose

feet whatever
fruit I'd give goes
abruptly bad.

*Must be this
hiss my
guitar's*

*been rehearsing,
lizardquick
tongues like*

*they were
licking the sky.*

*Must be this
hiss my
guitar's been*

*rehearsing, these
lizardquick tongues
like they*

*were licking
the sky.*

*Down on my
knees testing
notes with*

*my teeth, always
knew a day'd
come I'd*

*put my wings out
and fly.*