

1981

In Mrs. N's Palace

Honor Moore

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Louise Nevelson retrospective
Whitney Museum, 1980

An hour I waited for you. And her. Gold. Black. *First Personage*. Shreds of what would happen here would piece with how we had loved, altering it. Waited. Black boxes, black finials screwed to knobs and buttons, naked spools, gold fluted columns. Waited until you came, until there were three to walk the black rooms. *Night Presence, Cascade* feeling you all mine: *Dawn's Wedding*, white air as I would kiss and kiss. Now her presence: lids pulled from barrels, tops without baskets, black hooks lifted, poised, painted to the sides of so many black boxes — nothing to fasten. You loved her first. Shapes tilt. Harsh ripple of washboard white makes serene. Red silk blouse, light in the room like moon. Slats cut from white wood pleat until they drape. We could have been serene. You move toward her, your face toward me. I wore red to stand out. In gold, whispering, you repeat I want you; in black, I want her. Spools, finials, chaos flattened with paint. You shimmering in profile, she at an angle looking. It looks like a breastplate. If it weren't art, I could take it, wear it. Black boxes stacked, teeth on a stem. Buttons. Brushes. All this in boxes held. Hold. Out of black to free standing black on white so black looks saw-tooth sharp. Hold me. Edges. Is it light spilling or are we crying? Wood feather-shaped, swirl of tools screwed still, black. Knob without a door. I show you black reeds bending from barrels, a knob shaped like your breast. *Royal Tide*. No door

to prepare us. *Moon Garden*. We've come this far. Bend
with me, loosen your shoes. Let your feet fall
with mine, naked to the black mirror floor.

*First Personage, Night Presence, Cascade, Dawn's
Wedding, Royal Tide, Moon Garden: titles of
Nevelson sculpture.*