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Dialogue in a Cellar

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by lips of frost
I create your image:
in the hollow of vowels
air trembles,

limitless
blue january,
starless moonlit night
but feeling in the light

like burnished copper,
along the outline of the body
the clock’s hand
stencils

the monogram of being

**DIALOGUE IN A CELLAR**

the river’s mouth swells and floods cellars,
gravel, herbs smelling of iodine—
the bed of the sleeping traveler
wrapped in his sunny dream,

who cares about him, who cares about an amphora
recovered from the holds of a foundered ship
near dardanelle’s straits,
a closed form in itself, not taking root
in the squares of rooms and the frames
of pictures? there are many aesthetics,
says the professor, and the strangest one
is under care of powers
that abhor us
I accept your challenge, replies the poet,  
I am not handsome, my voice  
is monotonous and colorless,  
I am no troubadour  
with a codpiece, a sword at my side,  
but nevertheless I am loved

*other times*, the traveler says, taking leave,  
we descend deep into underground vaults,  
we write on damp walls words  
we don’t want to see  
let’s drink again and godspeed

**TWO THOUSAND YEARS**

surrounded by woods a burning city:  
open gates through which  
for two thousand years gray legions pass  
every time I returned carrying you  
every time spears of jealousy  
would pierce the prey: the young Kshatriya warrior  
with no right to eternal life

and indeed I would die before dawn  
on the day of the funeral you would disappear  
or change your voice: you would turn into Martha  
or Mary or the pregnant suburban queen  
only my ashes fertilizing the roots of your hair  
tell of our bond