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## Song of the Andoumboulou: 108

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NATHANIEL MACKEY

*Song of the Andoumboulou: 108*

One thing I could say about  
ring was as it went around I  
felt uprooted. Ring was all  
I knew if I knew anything,  
aco-  
lyte of not-know of late...  
Circling, put upon by he,  
she, they and we, Itamar, Mrs.  
P, all the pronouns, all the  
names,  
Anuncio and Anuncia not  
the least. I wasn't Anuncio  
but felt I was, Anuncia's  
hip  
against his his would-be  
world  
without end, thigh rolled up  
on thigh, heavenly her atop  
him... Nut she might've been  
or he'd have had her tease,  
pre-  
tend, there but not there, grudging  
intimate, blasé abandon, re-  
mote. Her faraway look he'd  
have  
seen up close, offhand inti-  
mate, nose dilated more by  
her own smell than his, re-  
luctance their upstart muse...  
Nut  
she might've been, arced over  
him, loin musk opening her  
nose but uncommitted, above it  
all,  
Egyptian sky... It was the rim  
of the well or the ring of the  
world. The well of the ring

it  
 might've been... Thought after  
 thought after thought, arc in  
 all of them, Nunca's abstract  
 be-  
 hind his hands grabbed at,  
 reaching past the one that was  
 there... Ring's farthest reach  
 of mind it might've been.  
 Round and round, mindless,  
 I  
 went... I wore lensless wirerim  
 specs,  
 closed my eyes, not to see what  
 he saw, so put upon I was, not  
 to see him and her looked at...  
 They were the same, Andoum-  
 boulou, in each other's face,  
 faces  
 where their legs met, neither  
 knowing up from down. Ring  
 was helical shout, the hill  
 they went up and down, all its  
 choric  
 urgency theirs again, not to  
 know so they might have  
 their way, their gambit, shed their  
 regret, have their shot... A  
 dawn-  
 ing sound they wanted but  
 dark and without corolla, solace  
 at their beck, they thought, tugged  
 from under them, a forwarding  
 they  
 felt taken back... They felt the  
 verge they were on, the welling  
 up, the wet lid, noquat lift and  
 relinquishment, verge they wanted  
 wiped  
 away

•

They'd walked in circles  
 holding signs, up with this,  
 down with that, dream their  
 suzerainty the slogan said. A  
slow  
 dervish it wasn't but was, a  
 demonstration, a protest  
 in love's republic, love no  
 republic yet... Mind at large,  
feet  
 following, home where whim  
 took them, newly named Fasa,  
 strewn since who could say  
when,  
 sought city farther off than  
 God... The glad work of  
 getting there they called it,  
 no matter how grim they  
were,  
 peripatetic stress of blood  
 what there was of it, mind un-  
 attached, feet hemorrhaging,  
blown  
 grit peppering their skin...  
 Around and around they  
 went holding placards, cir-  
 cling some lack they protested,  
Nub's  
 embassy undone... It wasn't  
 Nub's collapse or lost money  
 they were mourning, elegiac  
birth-  
 right's lurch and repercussion,  
 it wasn't as attributable as  
that...  
 Blue sky lay above, ostensible  
 benefice, Nut's light disguise  
they  
 thought

---

A subdued cry caught in  
their throats leaked out, breath  
packed in cracks in dry mud...  
It wasn't Zār they were in  
but  
it might've been, Dread Lakes  
diaspora they'd come thru  
they thought, nothing no matter  
where  
they looked, flat cabinet, heaven's  
cracked integument coming  
down... Glimpse and departure  
love's  
currency they'd read, each the  
other's alternate book, lids heavy,  
the  
look they gave going  
away

•

One thing I could say about  
ring was as it came around I  
said keep out of it, the we or  
the  
would-be we truly them, no  
tune lifted my feet... There  
was the world I reminded  
myself, Nub's new entropy  
not  
to be dismissed, I nursed a  
low moan in my throat. Leaflets  
and confetti came down from  
the  
clouds, rain the ushering  
horns would have none of, trom-  
bones bolted my feet at ring's  
edge, the one thing I could  
say  
stuck to my tongue... Ring  
was  
none other than rung, low  
brass expounded, lift I'd not  
be given to. I gathered my  
anguish in a bag, sucked wind  
and  
hiccupped, coughed and  
coughed again, coughed up  
straw...  
Rung's doubling back, dou-  
bling's bolt it seemed it was,  
orbit arbiting light it might've  
been.  
Orbit arbiting light was another  
Nub was all I could see, Anuncio  
and Anuncia Quag's two backs...  
So  
it was the one thing I could say





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I was love's own distant  
lover, first body and first  
head I kept at bay. First  
body,  
one foot at ground level,  
walked with a hitch, the  
other foot underground...  
Be sold on hope, it seemed  
I  
heard Sophia say. Why  
*sold* I wondered, quick to  
correct. Be souled on  
hope, Sophia said...  
Rung  
was to rim as ring was  
to rut. My second body  
leapt  
and leapt  
on