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Lovers

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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.