Song of the Andoumboulou: 108

Nathaniel Mackey
One thing I could say about ring was as it went around I felt uprooted. Ring was all I knew if I knew anything, acolyte 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, pretend, there but not there, grudging intimate, blasé abandon, remote. Her faraway look he’d have seen up close, offhand intimate, nose dilated more by her own smell than his, reluctance 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

behind 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, Andoumboulou, 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
dawning 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 Zâr 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, trombones 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, doubling’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
was more than one, unspun am-
biguous witness, wound unecstatic stump… Antiphonal whimsy why
y they
were so up and me reluctant, fist
in my chest, remote, low brass’s
consort, contrapuntal straw
coughed up… The concept slid
and
we slid with it, weeping wrung one
with sweat. Wizened voices’ rough
concupiscence, toll and tolling’s
es-
cort, the chorusing horns’ condo-
lences glum… We made a game
of
it, parallactic hub to ring’s rim,
rung’s perimetric slough. The
concept slid and came back and
we
came with it. Not to get one’s
hopes up I warned and the horns
also, also and as much and all
the
more
But my second body said otherwise. Visitor from planet Whiff, gnostic doorpeep, sniffed an imagined musk where there was none, lived in what let hope have its way… My second body put off by body one’s complaint said not so. The one thing I could say was more than one, my second head said, first head’s hard reflex not all there was of it, first head’s boast and re-buff
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