

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

André O. Hoilette: Two Poems

André O. Hoilette · Tuesday, July 21st, 2020

water became currency

when water became currency
 the skin of our lips peeled and split
 bled and splashed regret to caked mud
 whose crevices tore land the way glaciers used
 to, unearthed lakes, moraine the language of conquest.
 the rich had water tanks long before the waters spoiled
 billionaires with water towers to dictate your planting
 real trickle-down economics to enrich their soil first and
 maybe yours or for most of the harvest. some, from the air,
 pull ice, but the salt shores shrivel the skin, sinks the
 tender pulp of eyes to the skull's interior, the loose skin
 of the dehydrated and me
 before, not seeing a thirst building,
 vomiting bile and ash

*

love in the time of covid: spell casting

how to love in this time?

first:

admit how

alone

you are. that you haven't
 been touched or touched anyone

in months

how your eyes,

traitorous,

begin to weep

at the thought of this truth,
 that you've done it before,
 foolishly—
 in the celibacy between
 painters, poets,
 punks, scientists,
 cellists, queers

how you wish for any hand to extend to you
 in the dark, to touch your ear, the way you like, to volunteer to be the big spoon

to let themselves be cared for without fear of overwatering.
 admit that you are seeing the poets face
 in the windows of salt houses,
 under the threat of city rains.

that your brooding may be too much
 even if the poet came
 that there is a convenience, a kindness in having a virus to blame.
 last alone
 this alone
 the year of your mother's birth
 when she was a wish fulfilled
 and you a possibility the year watson found
 a double

helix,
 and salk believing every virus was an universe,
 that would collapse on itself,
 then injected the vaccine for polio,
 into his love, their children, then himself, knowing he would cripple or save them.

how he wept at their bare arms,
 thrusting where scars would be.

touch becomes a sin
 on your face,
 their face,
 bellies and inner thighs,
 sin in the way your teeth grazes the ear lobes
 a whispering prayer
 sews close the distance
 for two, apart

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