Interlude

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Abstract

Who said “living does not need to hurt?” You did. Their juke-box-chant is cute, you said, For where are we sad in this moment...
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Who said “living does not need to hurt?”
You did.
Their juke-box-chant is cute, you said,
For where are we sad in this moment
   in the smothered down warmth
   in the soundless soft
   of our loving, on an afternoon.
I know, I know . . .
But something will not stop hurting here.
    Somewhere on the first night or the first afternoon, in
    the deepest dark there ever was, God said — Everything
    must end.
You may sweep this little pain of ours
Under the broad howl of the sea,
Or scatter it amongst the confetti
Of the wishes and hours and chatter
Out there on the street.
You may refuse to hear it as now
By calling your long caresses through me “forever.”
But you must, you must know how my weeping will sound
When I will wind white waters about your deadness
And see the last white foam sucked down through the mud
And the mud folded over in the trench.
The hurt is between us even now.
I cannot bear it, even now, no . . .
But rest.
I cannot leave either, you see.
I am here my love.
I am here, for you, now.

However frail

SETTLE DOWN, FRIEND. Unpack the suitcase with the
airline stickers and names of strange hotels framed in palm
trees. Take off those worn shoes, polished in every shoe shine
shop between Boston and Bangkok. Stretch your stocking
feet toward the fire—we don’t mind the holes or the darned