## a cento for contact sub rosa

The SOUND of bodies touching, the beginning of things, then...

...another sound rising -- from afar -- the SOUND of waves crashing, rushing onto shore.



## В

```
i.e. I

will sub rosa afford you my best
assistance: that is I

will privately / secretly / in confidence: below
the rose

watch: your eyes
brighten as you eat
the lingering tingle of unlanguage. }
```

## R

Easily thrown I want to be thumbed and wished upon I sink in—a single dream

the pebble

before enveloping the lake

containing the content of my soul spilling

throughout your sleep. Where are you now? Who lies

beneath your spell tonight? Whom else from rapture's road will you expel tonight?

My hand remembers treading your watery room just behind the rose-veiled eyes of memory—where everything I long for

I long for using my mouth.

These are my arms, your shaking lungs.

Some fires kindle freedom. Some consolidate your bondage.

In order to touch there first must be space to do so

after the city is destroyed I will touch you on the surface of everything. You can't stay a fantasy / more flesh than plum lips breaking a plum

skin I will take you / in my mouth as you steam into speech : say : ocean with the paddle

of your tongue fire in the dark

: open : my little animal

cage

touch me where my grin shines brightest

in a noxious guilt. I would make for you the barest of sounds wing against wing

—there at the point of articulation: cold wood turned to coal in the fine flame.

## M

If you would only walk

into this room again and touch me anywhere I swear

I would make a burnishing of you—the naked salt of your

far gone hips breaking the skeleton within us. All above us is the touching lips

of yes -now beholden to heat

like dawn.

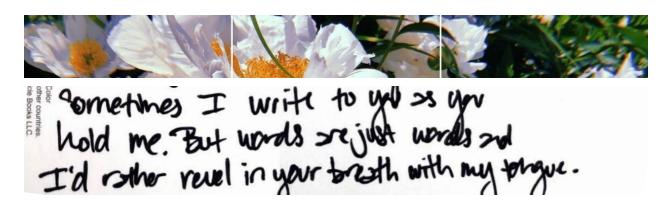
No more doubting

the active space between : my hands at your high tide dare me to be untruthful

—our bodies light —harnessed

light -thrashed

bruising: bilirubin bloom.



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*** in order of emergence:
Black & Kevin in Moonlight under moonlight at the end, a beginning
a blue blue sea
R
definition of "sub rosa" - unknown
"The Peaches" - Jericho Brown
In the Dream House - Carmen Maria Machado
"alleyway" - Aziza Barnes
"So Many Dreams" - Essex Hemphill
"Tonight" - Agha Shahid Ali
"The Aureole" - Nikky Finney
"Between the Meat World and the Real World" - Angie Sijun Lou
Dub - Alexis Pauline Gumbs
"The Undressing" - Li-Young Lee
"tongues3" of The Lonely Letters - Ashon T. Crawley quoting Jean-Luc Nancy
"The Yellow House" - Chiwan Choi
"What Lovers Do" - Alex Isley
"By Tuesday, I Am Fading" - andie millares
"Water, I want you" - Lo Kwa Mei-en
"ars pasifika" - Craig Santos Perez
"Little Red Plum" - Safiya Sinclair
"Between the Plumage We Were Everything" - Muriel Leung
"Love Poem: Centaur" - Donika Kelly
"The Tree of Fire" - Ada Limón
M
"A Poem for Haruko 10/29" - June Jordan
"Love Poem: Centaur" again
"Untitled" (Last Love) - Rachel McKibbens
"The Yellow House" once more
"Elegy" - Aracelis Girmay
"love life, with stitches" - Evie Shockley
"Object Permanence" - Nicole Sealey
"Active Space" - River Spirit
"On a Night of the Full Moon" - Audre Lorde
"For Audre" - Pat Parker
"Skin-Light" - Natalie Diaz
flowers at the park on a day with Nikki Giovanni* after a new moon
ink in the morning before I wrote a good omelet* and ate a hot poem, after loving you
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