

(Tempest)

*after Safiya Sinclair & Aimé Césaire*

comes sigh shuddering fronds

new potency in sea's swells  
stirred drafts of feathers    dry leaves in gusted swirls

hear shifts in breaker's tones    foam's hiss on sands    pebble's clatter

echoing words of language made elsewhere    says frigate birds  
name like white sails    plumes black as wood lightning chars  
they alight    grasp turbulent air    taste it pressing

wings diffuse this isle's tongues    rustle bodies' diffracted speech

comes wavelets on rocky pools    urchins gather their flowers in

annunciate shivering terrestrial    submarine    muscle-sensed  
ripples vibrating out distant atmospheres read by nerves

by what's come before    remembered    scarred    forgot  
inscribed in every beach    swamp    gully  
annotated by leave's flutter in afternoon breezes

where morning finches gather    frogs sing in evening

creatures anticipating with sighs    chirps    croaks  
each reading a sign    awaiting a new after

know it    far beast taking a breath    capricious lord of isles  
who shatters    who spares    never grieves  
radial portent scraping towers against sky  
mocks definitions    shreds    drowns all utterances in tides

what's a book a staff a dominion    what's law under a tempest's crown

no aerial servant to task with weather    with plots  
gone    melted into airs again    along with them all

no sciences or devices left      only methods mother-taught  
learned listening to earth's speech      waves  
rooted intelligence      harmonics of isle's mind      whispers  
of soil and water      displace those volumes he brought  
cave full of them      lamp to light      instructed  
in his snaring speech      learned to curse him with it  
why do else      named monster by his monsterring tongue  
animaled by his definitions      banished for being animal  
given a denying a taking name given name to be banned  
arrogant fantasist of legitimacies      as if he carried civility itself  
himself a city      isle a domain      this body his only subject  
made brutal by lack of titles      no bloody claims to rule

gone      returned to dukedoms      now an unwinding of wounds  
burnt shells borne within a body still seeking care

residues of sweet isle turned tormental phantasmagoria  
fright-dreams swarm      sting      terrible faces within fogs

why

not willing to become his

moans through grasses and reeds      wind clapping banana leaves  
arrival begins to alter      splinter driftwood      break on corals  
crack foundations make new sands of stones

some part clings his texts      why      terms all wrong      sought lineages  
generalities      fitting every subject into a chain's causes  
hissed this body into madness      made an enemy from tender isle  
saw no legitimacy in this flesh      no could be of son within this face  
his heritage his methods blinding      so bound this loving body  
lashed it to himself      flesh without liberty never to prosper

whatever this mouth speaks      arises beyond      he      history  
heir to none but isle's voices      calved from moon      birthed  
out sea's salt      membered in her belly's cradle  
shaped not by words but storm's churned enigmas

surge thrashings      shriekspirits come raging      skinrasp and eyestear  
dooming agendas shear raptural noises time to flee too late time to crawl

comes upon      cannot turn it back      cover rage a deluge comes no  
no no no no no no no no no no no no breath      does not suffice

stumble to hill's top plant bare feet his carved station's vacant throne

comes setebos comes blast comes engine's infernal screaming

druggedeep slammed dark shut crisshout hissafroth limbsgroan a gale  
falling falsenight howls burningboils blisters strikes twists spinesaback  
succulates devilish teethwounds foam brack grasping at rattled stones  
toes clungrocks hands gripparock speak obliterator shout in its hurl  
shore's calms made maw spume's ironcloud leadcloud foamturn grind  
dismemberedremembereddismembereddremmembereddismembedd  
rememberdissememberememberoryembmemeberorydissmemory  
dismemorydismalmemremeberedmemorisimalreimbemberlimemory  
wailing choirs screech tumult delve wreck drown agendas silence time  
left limbs vineflayed limbs canebroken limbs shellstruck cursescattered

no roar like this in all his volumes body struck by rain's lances  
ears burst not mythic verdant isles no idylls in pentameters  
roars hecatomb wrack charnel salt charred bone slaughtered cry  
not calm words no terms no lineage rests a wet wing flaps  
tossed body hurled down trees broken laid shattered to dirt  
holy erratics torn of seasons grind moancrush ecstatic  
dragsing see it know sea's rise under storm's sucking  
displaces every cove's water see it wrenches up  
burnt ship's rot their chained dead coral fused haunt airs anew  
rips out of earth unburied unmourned decimate  
pestilences of idylls plantationed bodies worn down exterminate  
sacrifices curses what's there else curses whatever terms  
whatever language anoints this his cool expediences  
legitimacy authorizing subjugation's cursed geography gaping death

sudden it softens comes cloud's wall  
crenellate vaporous surface by stars illuminate

by glow of night mesmerize dreamt materials flaring  
this body lay down in soft mosses isle's warmth under  
what stuff what dreams made of urchin shows fish scale shimmer

see it there behind eyes know it air's sweet again awhile

stilled

waves lapping at shore's sand taste a little rippling

eyes open luxuriate in this firmament's open lung

glittering framed constellations learned his names  
learned them to see them forget them not  
kingdoms no dominions there light and dust

this dreaming doesn't reach to mastery wants to whisper  
speak in calms of what won't last breathing to deepen  
to soften caressed idly in tongues of spirit's bells

isle trembles scurry flutter burrow shelter before comes again

tongues all tongues of creatured earth muscle their language

let them wrap around  
speak welcome them  
breathe this body  
fragrance it  
an exhalation

with this hand trace constellation's shapes for this meridian  
give them treasured names setebos flung spiral  
lord of hurricanes mutable engine who swipes a tattered wing  
dancing limbs of eshu miscreant lord of tongues confusion's friend  
lides on wind's quick wakes nonsensing mastery by laughter's bell  
sycorax braids woven thick tender of creatures gardens  
touch of care for this isle's bodies teacher of birdsong and tidal  
banished motherer of exiles love's warm palms pressed to skin

eyes widen to this pause of bliss

such air wondrous bright sky

may this tongue inscribe these names into what celestial libraries there are

hear it comes on again spirits shuddering in canes again

pipes and squeals an isle tuning gusts pull across a heaving shroud  
blot out what's history memory only dark's ink now  
screams return where's explain what terms his words for these noises  
takes another language guttural takes moaning with what moans  
unlatching throat's howl streaming out pain's threads on currents

this body flat gripped to weeds feel what sculpts earth by rages  
volcanic spews out terrestrial wounds quake shatters raises

colossal arcs of stone    cliff face mountain crag    solidities leap  
made rubble dredged up again    crunched piles of reef and breaker  
sensory harmonics altering stuff of dreams    flagellations of gales  
prosperity in ruins    laws of a churning orb spare no isle    know  
not term    not ratio    fury's havoc more than sound's spectacle  
here's things bludgeoning crackling burgeoning into unfamiliar    know  
storm's cannon blasts    riddled awash on flood's torn renderings  
waterfalls down gullies rush backwards    their flows choked spit retching  
tree's lush emeralds moss laurel pine stripped their structure bare

edifices    artifices of powers now obscured by no illusions  
what seem's what is    no more grim plotted fantasias of totality  
what made monster of this body to fill a text's need of monstrous  
tempest's wreckage by a tempest torn away    what of those works  
he    all those like him built    monuments to possession  
ripped drowned burnt shaken tumbled down    then

what then

gasping breath between wind's assaults

how's life raised out this abandoned margin's ruins

shriek diminishing    raise this head    softer groans  
on shores no thrash    less turbulent roar    light diffusing  
out into gulfs a deep wall passing    rustlings from thickets

hear creatures begin to stir    croak    squawk  
flutters of red and green fluorescing between trees

call out    warbling to them    murmur mutual assurance

all's we that's still living comforts mourns cares in mourning

shredded poinsettias float in settling foams

see branches' naked cataclysm    they know it    not ratio it

learned arts of return    what words could spell this

what terminologies could encompass this living isle

fields scythed    chopped heads of flowers strewn  
flesh aching for ravaged gardens    dead creatures strewn on sands

to be this body still living in a world destroyed      where's rest  
turmoils come    famine following upon drought    there's no charm  
no worded potency against    no scribed law    know it    not term it  
there's within

not ordered      not past      not above being mutual creatures

this trembling sensing body among bodies      some of breath some inert

as seas take back their dead      ghosts return to coral bones

warm sun falls on what's shatter      morning but no monuments  
unmastered languages of isle itself      songs of no belonging  
sweeter music than authority's ever heard      or made

their dominions kingdoms properties      torments and pestilences all

it'll come it'll undo these too there'll be another kind of living

uncivilized if what civil's meant was tortures      exhaustions  
no care to any body      all his volumes      useless

power's felt elsewhere

tongues in lapping waters      urchins waking      unfolding their blossoms

creaturely delights in dreaming dreams      canes speaking their whispers