but i remember driving from atlanta
to the city with stone & featherstone
& cleve & on the way feather talked
about ambushing a pair of klansmen
& cleve told how they hunted
chaney's body in the white night
of the haunted house in the mississippi
swamp while a runaway survivor
from orangeburg slept between wars
on the back seat.
times like this
are times when black people
are with each other & the strength flows
back & forth between us like
borrowed breath.

In Orangeburg My Brothers Did

in orangeburg my brothers did
the african twist around a bonfire they'd built
at the gate to keep the hunkies out. the day
before they'd caught one shooting up
the campus like the white hunter
he was. but a bonfire? only conjures
up the devil. up popped the devil from behind a bush
the brothers danced the fire
danced the bullets cut their flesh
like bullets. black death
black death black death black
brothers black sisters black me with no white blood on my hands
we are so beautiful
we study our history backwards
& that must be the beast's most fatal message
that we die to learn it well.
Aswelay

weary was when coming on a stream
in hidden midst the amberadornment
of falls birth here near edge
aripplingsoundless
leaves and eddy eyes withtrickling
forest thighs in widenings
youthful nippling scenic creakless

in this boundlessvastly hours wait
in gateless isn’t fleshly smelling
muchly as a golden
on the crustishunderbrush of where
no one walked were
unwindishrustlings mustingthoughts
of illtimed harvests

and as we lay and as
welay and as welay
andaswelay
aswelay aswelay
and aswelay

above a bird watching we knew not
what cause his course of course we
lay we lay in the rippling
soundlessbundlessvastly
of a firthing
duty leaving welay
wanting noughtless

and then it seemed
as from the air he left
the bird who watched
what would be called
a dream
Alcoved Agonies

Below
Cooper Square,
the January lateness
lies cold in doorways.
Men alcoved in agonies
sprawl
their lives
outwardly upon
an inward
World,
as if bottled
in a dream preferred.
Often, dreams (however
holy watered)
are unable to pass through doorways
like the cold of January lateness
and the anointed agonies of men.
Parcy Jutridge

in thin where utters coast the light
few trace their mirrors on a fuel

OVO