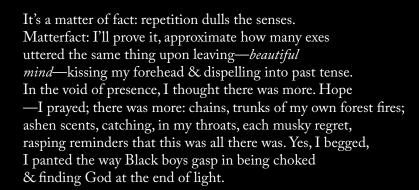
## Rhapsody, or Revelation, or Cerberus to the Fireflies after Nicole Sealey, after Alysia Nicole Harris, after Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon

D'Angelo, "Send It On"

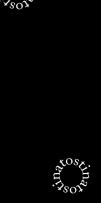






In the beginning, I would not call me pious; I would call me country, a backwood muhfugga enjoying the shadow of their own howling. In the beginning, I spoke & the dark rebelled. I sat & the dark rebelled, threatened to extinguish the light from the singular Brilliance I housed in the jar of my own body. I spoke & broke open for Brilliance—my pen pal, my own scattering conscience in the void of presence—& barked to assume multiplicity. Sure, my mind works as a hive, a clusterfuck of blinking moments trying to isolate loneliness.







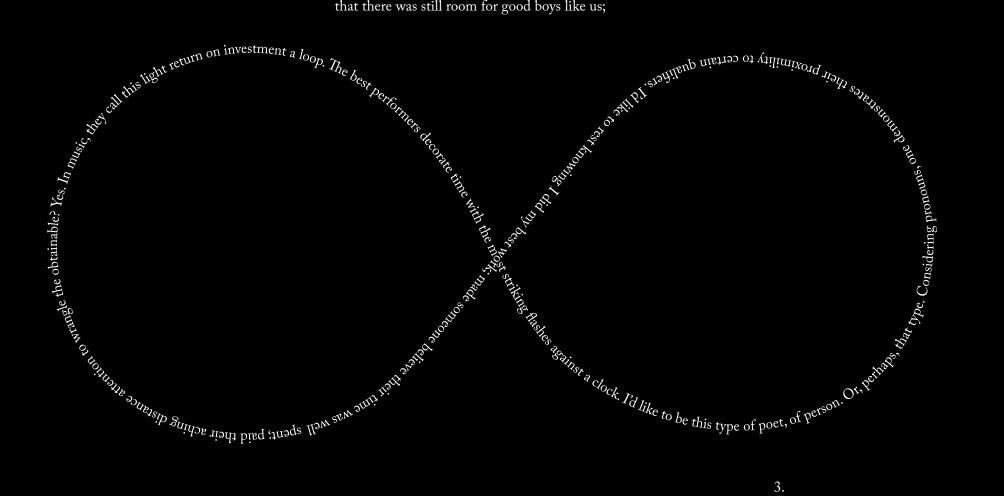


Funny, isn't it—how even *compartmentalize* means separation, means division, & yet, means structuring against dissonance, to make a wheel of one's demons so convincing they mimic Old Testament angels? Yes, I'd be right to think I have no place amongst them, but at a quarter inch away from ending the epilogue that some will tell my children of, when it is all done & there be no more cinders left burning in my throat to call Love by its name or beckon for Joy in this song, if You be watching:



1.

Baptize me by the barrel that held my moon -shine, across from the bucket that I burned my lovers in, buried my tongue in deep after kissing their dust & sending them on their way to meet a man that only promised them a one-room shack on the East Side of Hell, but swore to them that there was still room for good boys like us;



put my pennies in my favorite niggas' pockets & send 'em sailing 'cross the Jordan, &, in the event they don't make it all the way there, feast; shatter my boys, forward their fragments to the Other Side, back into the grounds they kept their paws on, their bellies bloated & striped as Christ from, & my eyes darkened for, rolling up in praise;

let my testament be the will to outlast my candles. Pour me into the mold of a beast that dare be braver, love harder than I ever did, stronger than the silences between me & everything I could interrupt, dare live fuller every moment flying inside my mason jars, glowing without knowledge of an ending, but shining anyway, swearing noisily without regret.