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Receive Her Gently, There Is Much to Learn

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They speak primly of abandonments:

Repent. Come unto the fold of the Lord . . .

Confess. Dissolve abnormal consternation . . .

But they are saying:

"Repent logic and mumble platitudes . . ."

"Confess insight and throttle rebellion . . ."

Barren dunes implore the venturer back.

Dramatic palm leaves wave the venturer back.

For this is the naked, the lonely, the terrible with awe.

But one in exile clings to his prints on the sand.

Surfbathers take the causeways back

To stonescape crystallized in ethic sloth.

LE GARDE S. DOUGHTY

RECEIVE HER GENTLY,
THERE IS MUCH TO LEARN

Receive her gently, there is much to learn
In years that will dissolve like snails to clay:
You shall become each other, turn by turn.

The dark dark roots are where the trees sojourn,
Make you no feast of proverbs, love her way:
Receive her gently, there is much to learn.

Divided from each other being born,
Attend her wisely, for she moves to stay:
You shall become each other, turn by turn.

Deny the showboat and the apple worm;
Be in each other, let the horses neigh:
Receive her gently, there is much to learn.

Not wood, touch time: not have but wishing warn:
Neither witches nor dead mouths prophesy.
You shall become each other, turn by turn.

Then learn to flower and to feed like corn:
Seed each in other in the sweet delay.
You shall become each other, turn by turn.
Receive her gently, there is much to learn.

ALLEN KANFER

SONG WILL NOT POUR

We drown, who breathe river:
Song will not pour
Through the dredged sluice,
Across the mud floor.

Perhaps if we listened
For snow at the crest,
For forest falling,
For ebb of ice—
But could we dam beaver
Or scatter
The rubble of mice?

Perhaps if we trapped it,
Chained dogs in the narrows,
And slept fully clothed at floodwatermark—
But could we schedule
The jam at the pebble,
And the oarlock
From Porlock
Across the wet dark?

ALBERTA T. TURNER