

AUNT CHLOE

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Toward Tomorrow

Fire and brimstone all right, but hidden in lacy groves.
— Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Iron, *full of baby's venom*,
Locks, unlocks
Necks wrists ankles.

Blood on the shed
Floor walls throat.
Salvation-sweet.

For what is freedom
If not a womb
Opening, closing, closed?

A point of no return.
A killing before the killing.
“Hush”

A song alights in the harbor –
“Somebody's calling our name.”
Even the winged foliage sings,

“Oh my Lord, Oh my Lord, what shall I do?”
Every soul is a chorus,
A prayer untangling

Toward tomorrow,
The wished-for stars
In a mother's eye.