

AVANT GARDE

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Myth-Making

In the pre-dawn stillness you wake up screaming
Sweat mixed with tears you are paralyzed by what was and what should have been—the weight
in your chest might as well be a wound

You were only children your making too innocent to be an unmaking, but it's how you learned to
silently scream

You watch him drown—the beautiful boy weighed down by demons of his own making. You
know it was his choice—if only because it is all he knows, but that is just in hindsight.

His death becomes a myth for you—changing who he was, becoming what he could not have
been...oh how a child's mind makes up significance where there was only pain

Dancing in the fire light, afraid to hop fences, data turned to dust in our hands—what was is
because it could not be love

Hours of unsaid words

Mistakes.

You are across the screen now and all I recognize is what I made you out to be and what I saved
myself from, but why, as the lid shuts on time, can I still hear you screaming?

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Future Sight

To be in league with the future is to see me as I am—to dance as this transubstantial pageant
fades and weep amidst the sand

To be in league with the past is to enjoy what the slave masters reaped—not this land or its soil,
but the blood and the bodies piled high at your feet

If in me you feel the thrum of the future instead of the rage of the past

Take back this country with me—leave the confederacy of violence worshipers in the past.

For ours is the land that dreams are made of and theirs will forever remain asleep.

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Unmaking

It's not the right word. It's not enough.

On television there a girl who thinks she's a woman now because she's seen the other side of this. There is one tear, one kiss, and it's over. She's made new like smoke from a fake log—manufactured poison to the rest of us.

I don't know what I could have missed—am I missing? Is this what it feels like to be so totally gone your pain makes you unrecognizable to the one you think you love

I was here. I felt everything with every cell, every breathe, I was wringing my hands trying to appease the madness in strangers trying not to buckle from the weight of your presence. I was here where the fuck were you?

And then it's again. Month after wretched month. Hour after excruciating hour. I am here in this room with you as you leave me. I know you were here I can still feel you—even though I shouldn't—even though the doctors don't know why.

You've reached my algorithm. There's no better marker for a 21st century existence than an empty promise of a law suit, than advertising dollars weaponized to remind me of what I will never know.

Miscarriage. It's not the right word for it. It isn't enough. I didn't miss anything. I was unmade by your image, by your lack of sound, by their lack of care...

She'll be back next season—the girl in the show. And nothing and no one will be better for it. This process, this “medicine” born from the torture of Black women, is a breaking. It is an unmaking.