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XI

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XI*

by Édouard Glissant

And you the salt of the kingdom of my hands, here. I am as one,
Stupefied, who plunges in the sea, watching them perish
Around him the night and the shores, the discourse
Of torches, flowering, and the flood falling silent.
And which is reborn in the first morning. He knows
The sparkling night, the bonfires, the only fruit.

—translated by Mary Ann Caws

* “XI” was originally published in French in *Sel noir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983). The English translation is published with permission from Gallimard.