Response to pain

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She is lying there behind a glass wall
too covered in white: air too white,
people too white crowded around her
funeral chorus of ridiculous moves:
her arm is raised and left to fall
her eyes are opened and left to close
her blood is food to a machine
that turns it white, its sins forgiven.
White coats, birds of prey!
where have you taken her?
my faith in you has vanished like a hunted animal
you seek to give your prisoner the gift of pain
so she would rise in screams above
the whiteness of that stiffening bed. In vain!
you absurd creatures!
what can you hope to save in violence?
A soul? not possible. The body alone? not possible.
What is the body alone but the cadaver
of both body and soul? The stench of violence
defeats the victor. You stand before life and death helpless
just as before me now, behind that glass wall,
mere animals at the zoo, locked away in unspeakable questions
transparent shadows walled up between us
and no one hears your screams...

The right to be tormented belongs to a different world.
I feel my body slowly vanishing, my breath
parting my lips in weightless sounds, sent to their death:
What have you done to her? I hear the words
digging holes in me to get out and swing
in the air around like hung bodies
glaring through the glass wall.

A soft, calm voice next to me speaks
as the white army carries on its assault:
“She is still there.” This voice
comes from the depths where my life began,
I shared the same womb with it, still there...
Air breaks through the strangled regions in me
and the white ghosts disappear, the glass wall disappears
and the black army inside me too,
and everything is well beyond ends:
there is me and her beyond “yes” and “no,”
beyond all things possible.

A faint moan breaks through her sleeping lips
as my savage look begins to soften,
to come back from the dead.

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