

Sempiternal: To the Future of a Crescent City

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ending with a variation of a line by Frank O'Hara

Again, we are not simple. Say, it is a privilege to see our city this way: a bowl tuned to the sound of singing hands—the city that refuses to run from the mouth that will unmake it. Say, for right now, the towels are still, and above us, life grows from wine. Say, we will water it. Our mouth is the God that transcribes the drowning: *Who's been spoken for? Who keeps on the light? Who owns the door that holds a hole as small and significant as the prey of a meadowhawk?* We can see them. Trying to live is such a practice. Not far ahead, the swiftest of men will sprint on the painted field: A body knocks another. They cannot look back from the future, after their stiffness causes surgeons to hungrily split their skulls like swollen peaches. Tell us what to name our future. Have we taken from ourselves? What have we denied our teeth? Because we are speaking, the future turns its head like a misbehaved witness. Look back at us. *We no longer have to lie to each other to be immediate.*