

AISHA SASHA JOHN / Two Poems from *The Shining Material*

self-portrait self-hugging

elegance being a favourite escape
elegance itself always wanting
it felt true and that's elegance, grace
like a calm
wind I am
happy to know such elegance and
scared, maybe, to show all my elegance
how time didn't halt it.
over a season having passed
and I'm ripe here still with elegance
I'm ripe here still with elegance
and it isn't a lack of grace
that's got me
and I haven't anything to be short of
or flush-faced about
this all here bodaciously wetly
elegant. so elegant
I'm elegant now: not hiding, not
covering all the stuck want
it's elegant even to name it:
oh silk, feathers, clouds
blush and rub soft elegant smooth
all of his elegant slimness I hate him
I want him it's superior it's famous it's elegant
hating want what
waste

I'm still soft.
and what if he knew and he pushed hard
and what if he knew and he
scoffed and smirked and moved
elsewhere uncaring uncaring inelegant
what is left here to want he's in-
he's inelegant for days

but to resist makes the tension mountains, so
I'm valley elegant
I'm rolling green and billowing breezes
short flowers, lost petals: there's elegance to a small flower half-bare
its stem bent elegant and elegant it's okay it's fine
I won't end
up like her
I'm much more, modes more elegant
moving with gobs. dripping wet
grace.

he can't take that from me.

elegant he frustrates, switching
shit around
ignoring me inelegant, so

may I Lord please have some grace?

and if he's not there can I so elegant move unawkwardly
and if he is I'll drink the juice of that sight
mister, don't say anything please inelegant. don't be inelegant.

maybe, I still want him everyday.

well, yes.

yes times forty and so
how to perform frost?

never.

that is so inelegant.
let any warm wind blow. let warmth go that's grace.

and what if I cry?

what if.

guess what you're a red-blood a human girl.
guess what. and so what.
you're a red blood, a human woman and strong.
and the tears would be all elegant.

Celia

immediate portable
eternal
very very cheap
fast
thought being good
is
fire
how much of it do you stock?
is long
I would have some
café
and I would have it would cream
and I would take it with honey
and I would drink it
with slow
and I would thence wolf food with grace
and I would aftersip some water
and I would return to the beast and prattle
a sinner
I wrote and in that's light
lava
a cartonful
each tap of the broom singing to me
celia
celia
celia
that isn't my name but said it's my song
the soft of the ce and lia, what is more feminine
endings in ah stand open
and last
the cilia

you cost so many times
I'll crisp up to leave you tenderly
you perfect shawl
you
you tenderoni you
you delicious mistake you
you
shining
this place
tamer than shorn hair