

## The Room

It is dim. It grows dark as I stand in a room.  
Something is with me. I don't dare to look  
Through the space of such quiet. There is a voice,  
A voice I can't hear. I stumble: a book  
Is here with me. It rests on the floor; near it, a face  
Turns slowly towards me. I search for the volume:

Down in the dark there are words without volume.  
I don't stand alone with the voice in this room —  
The book is below me — between us, the face  
Hovers darkly before me and dares me to look  
Through the grate of its eyes, and reach for the book.  
The book makes a sound: it's the sound of a voice.

I'm alone in a room with a face and a voice.  
I kneel without looking and grope for the volume;  
Nothing is safe here: I must have the words of this book.  
Silence fills volumes of dark in this room,  
And silent, I move: my fingers must look  
Alone, through the blackness, to pierce through that face.

I can feel it: that pulsing, unseeing blank face.  
The book weeps beneath it — a still, quiet voice.  
I open my eyes, not meaning to look,  
And swoon in the nothingness — space without volume;  
Nothing, dissolving; a void without end — It's No Room  
I Am In . . . I bow down and cry for the book.

I stretch out my hands in the dark for the book,  
Just to feel the gold words impressed deep in its face,  
How the binding holds tight all the words of this room,  
When — almost behind me — the sing of a voice:  
I slump to the floor. Beneath me, the volume  
Is safe — and I weep. Softly, it begs me to look.

I tremble; a movement beyond me; I look  
Through pages of darkness: then, clutching the book,  
I rise through the dark. But I slip . . . and the volume  
Falls . . . with a sound. And around me, the face  
Is mumming: how strange, that I know it — its voice  
Belongs to this space: I belong to this room . . .

I look to the silence: it covers the book.  
I turn to the face; I swallow its voice,  
And I swell through the room till it screams with the volume —

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