

# Uncast Shadow of a Southern Myth

Parquet Courts

I'd seen the bloodlands of Antietam  
The shotgun shack in Tupelo  
But a brick circumference left hollow by Sherman  
Crumbling before me how it moaned

His shape swallows my recollection  
That phantom silhouette implied  
Strange fruit rotting from an airborne and hotter than hell  
Is this the king's last man I've spied?

I stood there beside my companion  
Scratching a rumor he had heard  
Do you have a gun?  
What? He said, yeah, you mean this one?  
Straight down the barrel was his word

And I smelt the fumes he inhaled swiftly  
Each word was hinged upon his choke  
Like kudzu creeping up a state tree discretely  
Forever bending as it broke

And I heard the jangling keys of Graceland  
Ring from his teeth stained brown from coke  
Drunk and stumbling like a man of distinction  
They clamored shaking as he spoke

Of droves of pilgrims at his doorway  
Of Reagan, Carter, Clinton, Gore  
Fortunes offered them, refused routinely  
This ain't no damn auction house he swore

Black male standing around 6 foot something  
Ebbs through the waves of small town blight  
A minute coldly from southern affection  
Collides secretly into night

Forgive those who trespass against us  
Began as the dead intruders plea  
Into the very muzzle I'd once peered into  
He gives the last words he will speak

But that broken glass supports forced entry  
Reminds his lawyer through the phone  
What southern judge do you know, comforting gently  
Who jails white men who defend their home

No souls were present for the moment  
His bombed out brick walls finally fell  
Lying face down in the throes of atonement  
Checked out of the Heartbreak Hotel

He was the uncast shadow of a southern myth [x5]