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## The Two Monasteries

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## The Two Monasteries

Two monasteries, two lives in the infinite half-dark. A pink sea lifts towards one, each wave resolving into myriad hands, all severed, or all stretching forth from a single source—a single intelligence—into the great French curve gravity extorts, each flesh-colored wave grasping blindly at the blank cloister, the empty chapter house. We would call it a ruin were not each of its lines clean and clear. In the infinite half-dark, we choose between the various teams of the dead, defined by their degrees of presence and hunger. Trials of vocal athletes follow, for which the rain serves as judge. In the hallway a beautiful young woman accosts you: no, she's gone, the first thunderstorm of spring lingering in her electric wake. There are no beds here, no chairs, no furniture of any kind—only stone and sea, plaiting like rime. There are two monasteries, in sight of each other. We live in one, but—which? Our stumps draw the chill, the ache from the sea-air. No one is here, except for our most intimate friends and lovers. It is private, in that way. You may do whatever you like with whomever you like, if you do it quickly, with every benefit of a common tongue.

G.C. WALDREP