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## Excerpts From A Work In Progress

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EXCERPTS FROM A WORK IN PROGRESS

GEOFFREY HILL

III

*Wild desire* (Pound) conjured to be *black lightning*  
Take these strange-willed odes as of his clairvoyance  
Stilted offspring tripped by electric discharge  
Kicking themselves up

Or as some tell Munchhausens syndrome hauling  
Self from grimpen by your own tight-stitched hairpiece  
Welcome lost brother of eternal credit  
Knew you from Adam

Something scarce-caught instance we have abiding  
As with first love though there are other windows  
Infinite starlight yet a key to purpose  
Stark beyond hazard

Tacitus self-willing the Emperor  
Trajan makes one template of definition  
Also holds clouds ropy and barred together  
Through which Jove chunters

Truces pacts ruins fix the pledge of stalling  
Time · Advances made thus against infarction  
I would not have you in another time frame  
Raging your heart out

Belting a tocsin better left imagined  
Metaphors grand bell in its trope of towers  
Out of temper—taking wild swings at people—  
Sullenly dumbled down

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IV

Have I cloned Horace or reduced myself to  
Weeping plasma • Never again so rightly  
Not again those *marvellous early poems*  
Lately acknowledged

How the sea-lightning with a flash at hazard  
Cleft the lanterned yard into pelting angles  
Had we been there had you then turned towards me  
By this remembered

O my sad love clad in our dark declensions  
Never once naked to the other given  
Honey milk spices of that night forgathered  
Lost in summation

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Mirrors fading where the bright-brutish roses  
Held themselves royally akin their nature  
Berkeley could have granted us our existence  
Had we but known him

Still suffices language its constitution  
Solipsist somehow must acknowledge this • Not  
Quite enough said when what was said is nothing  
To this recital

Here is my good voice you may well remember  
Making up these things • It is what I do • Hark  
Love how cross-rhythms are at stake to purpose  
From the beginning

V

I could not name Jericho what she stands for  
Call it stubborn harlotry crass denial  
Let her walls tremble to the aggro trumpets  
Braying the mortar

Hides from our eyes God in a certain placement  
Worries his self-satisfied bulk the indis-  
Criminate vengeance of the Flood and blithely  
Switches the Rainbow

*Ruach* cried up but it is *racha* taunts me  
Earthly things fall back upon Sheol sometime  
How redeem live prophecies thence good question  
Short of an answer

Nominating Israel here as rogue state:  
So it must be justified though unwisely  
Some slur Abram Chaldee incorporate his  
*Horror of darkness*

Striking praise songs Judith and Deborah spanned  
And the dancers · Prophecys tunnel vision  
Full rendition zeroing lethal flashes  
Children of Canaan

*Ruach* cried up but it is *racha* haunts me  
Earthly things fall back upon Sheol sometime  
Best avoid Yahweh not to have Jehovah  
Riddle the whirlwind