

## The Wound, Day and Night

Age by default: in some way this must  
be solved. The covenants that bind  
into the rock, each to the other  
are for this, for the argon dating

by song as echo of the world.

O it runs sweetly by, and prints over  
the heart; I am supremely happy,  
the whole order set in this, the  
proper guise, of a song. You can hear  
the strains from so far off: withdrawn  
from every haunted place  
in its graveness, the responsive  
shift into the millions of years.

I am born back there, the plaintive chanting  
under the Atlantic and the unison of forms.

It *may* all flow again if we suppress the  
breaks, as I long to do,  
at the far end of that distance  
and tidings of the land;

if we dissolve the bars to it and let run  
the hopes, that preserve the holy fruit on the tree,  
casting the moist honey, curing the poppy of sleep.

"And in variety of aspects  
the sum remains the same,  
one family" —

that it be too much with us, again as  
beyond that enfeebled history: that we be  
born at long last into the image of love

## The Glacial Question, Unsolved

In the matter of ice, the invasions  
were partial, so that the frost  
was a beautiful head

the sky cloudy

and the day packed into the crystal  
as the thrust slowed and we come to  
a stand, along the coast of Norfolk.  
That is a relative point, and since  
the relation was part to part, the  
gliding was cursive; a retreat, followed  
by advance, right to north London. The  
moraine runs axial to the Finchley Road  
including hippopotamus, which isn't a  
joke any more than the present fringe  
of intellectual habit. They did live as  
the evidence is ready, for the successive  
drift.

Hunstanton to Wells is the clear  
*margin*, from which hills rise into  
the "interior"; the stages broken through  
by the lobe bent south-west into the Wash  
and that sudden warmth which took  
birch trees up into Scotland. As  
the 50° isotherm retreats there is  
that secular weather laid down in pollen  
and the separable advances on Cromer (easterly)  
and on Gipping (mostly to the south).  
The striations are part of the heart's  
desire, the parkland of what is coast  
*inwards from which*, rather than the reverse.

And as the caps melted, the eustatic rise  
in the sea-level curls round the clay, the  
basal rise, what we hope to call "land".

And the curving spine of the cretaceous  
ridge, masked as it is by the drift, is  
wedged up to the thrust: the ice fronting  
the earlier marine, so that the sentiment  
of "cliffs" is the weathered stump of a feeling  
into the worst climate of all.

Or if that's too violent, then it's the closest balance that holds the tilt: land/sea to icecap from parkland, not more than 2°-3° F. The oscillation must have been so delicate, almost each contour on the rock spine is a weather limit

the ice smoothing the humps off, filling the hollows with sandy clay as the litter of "surface". As the roads run dripping across this, the rhythm is the declension of history, the facts in succession, they *are* succession, and the limits are not time but ridges and thermal delays, plus or minus whatever carbon dates we have.

We are rocked in this hollow, in the ladle by which the sky, less cloudy now, rests on our foreheads. Our climate is maritime, and "it is questionable whether there has yet been sufficient change in the marine faunas to justify a claim that

the Pleistocene Epoch itself has come to an end." We live in that question, it is a condition of fact: as we move it adjusts the horizon: belts of forest, the Chilterns, up into the Wolds of Yorkshire. The falling movement, the light cloud blowing in from the ice of Norfolk thrust. As the dew recedes from the grass towards noon the line of recession slips back. We know where the north is, the ice is an evening whiteness. We know this, we are what it leaves: the Pleistocene is our current sense, and what in sentiment we are, we are, the coast, a line or sequence, the cut back down, to the shore.

## References

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