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A View From the Dark

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A View From the Dark

ANONYMOUS

IT IS NIGHT IN A WOOD. SEVERAL MEN ARE SEATED AROUND A VERY SMALL FIRE. THE VERY OLD ONE WITH THE LONG BEARD IS TIRESIAS. HE IS CALLED UPON TO SPEAK. AFTER HE DOES SO A WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MAN REPLIES TO HIS WORDS. THE OLD ONE SPEAKS AGAIN, THE FIRE DIES OUT, AND ALL IS DARK.

O tell the tale of Apollo's temple
That Trophonius built before the god's
Reward of death, the tale of Delphic rights
Our fathers knew before the land was rent
And rendered unto Caesar and the Lord
Called Yahveh by the Jews.

Yes tell, O tell
Of Oedipus, who when sighted was blind,
But when blinded saw. Then tell of
Themistocles who knew that "wooden walls"
Were ships, and saved the world of civil men.
Forget not Socrates, who knowing less
Than most knew more than all . . .

The fires burn low,
The hearth at Delphi gives cold condolence
To dead Zeus' aging virgin sister.
I dare not resurrect in tales those gods
And cross the resurrected God who reigns.
Forget your fathers' fathers, mind your sons,
And live that, dying, you may never die;

Worship the great and love the good:

Let sleeping gods lie, that wakeful lied like dogs.

You are bitter for lost sight, soothsayer,
But in your blindness know that Apollo,
Whose serpent interference cost him dear
As yours did you, still haunts Parnassus' side
And speaks to Pythia the fates of men.
Would you know why the old gods die? "I say
The killer you are seeking is yourself!"

**Mock not my words to Laius' son. The blind
Must strive to lead the blind. Python is dead,
As are the snakes I cleft so long ago.
—Though blind I know our forest hearth burns low;
That none can see and all must darkly go.**

* * * *

AGAIN A FIRE IS BURNING LOW. THERE IS A RED AND
WHITE STRIPED TENT, ITS INTERIOR EXPOSED. MEN
SLEEP OUTSIDE BY THE FIRE. WITHIN A YOUNG MAN
IN FINE ARMOR SPEAKS WITH A BEARDED OLD MAN.

Perhaps the peasants will not fight. Perhaps we shall be
welcomed as saviors.

**It cannot be. Seeing that we care not for our own salvation,
they will hardly expect us to care for theirs. Fear not. They
will fight—and would so even if we brought salvation in place
of an earthly monarch.**

We bring the rightful king. Do they not wish for justice?

**Rightful? He shall be that when we have conquered the land.
Victorious he shall wear on earth a crown by grace of God.**

It seems that here on earth God's work must truly be our
own. If only we were not opposed tomorrow, God's work might
have moral means as well as righteous ends.

**Justice is flux. A nation must adjust its lands to match its
power and always will. It is the losing side which, opposing
nature, fights for ill, seeing as they slaughter where they can-
not win. God's work is performed by victory.**

The sun begins to rise. It will be a fair day . . .

**When Christ died it was a fair day for the Jews. Victory is
always fair. In His fair death did Christ fairly vanquish the
Father. Tomorrow shall indeed be fair, no matter who shall win.**

The wind is from the East. We shall conquer Albion today,
with God's grace.

Ah, Sire, is there none other grace with you? Then keep yourself!

ATTENTION IS SHIFTED TO THE SOLDIERS OUTSIDE THE TENT. AS TWO BUILD UP THE NEGLECTED FIRE A THIRD ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.

Should we pity the Saxon as we stand
Here on his meadow, invading his land,
And must we accept the shame he felt
When he drove out the Pict and Celt?
Have we not an ancient right
To shape our lands to match our might?
Apollo's eclipsed by our God-head;
The Druid sun-god is long dead.
Albion shall soon be ours,
But not by prayer to aged Mars.
As man now reigns by evolution
And God by immortal revolution,
So shall William England win,
The Saxons toward the sunset driven.

A TRUMPET SOUNDS AND ALL EXIT. ENTER, WITH A LONG BEARD, CHARLES AUGUSTUS DARWIN, OUT OF A WHIRLWIND. HE READS TO HIMSELF FROM A YELLOWED MANUSCRIPT.

Man did not evolve from apehood; monkeys were men before there were men; Victoria is not the first monarch, nor is the King of Kings. This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an everliving Fire, with measures of it kindling and measures going out.

THE END

**AUTHOR ANONYMOUS
(tanto nomini nullum
par elogium)**