

## 2.8 Thunder off Palermo (1997)

Deep I saw the sea  
in dream realms  
and struggled with the thunder in my bed.  
Great clouts mounting high in heaven  
which cracked the roof of mind –  
from bank to bank of cloud, they passed like whit-  
fire  
rolling far away from land,  
to places where the sea-face will not sleep  
nor the dark debate will die,  
where great lights leap and flash,  
and silent run the compass round.  
They witness wars we cannot fight:  
it isn't cities burning there,  
no Carthage no Jerusalem with turrets falling,  
flames arising high behind the sea:  
it's an anger fit to sink Atlantis,  
and there it is I've watched these hours,  
breathing through the needle's eye,  
and echoed that debate.

And still I cannot rest  
though dawn's glint came up upon the sea  
and the thunder grumbling died away.

Palermo – 1997