The Masses
Also by Giles Goodland

Objects on Hills
Littoral
Overlay
A Spy in the House of Years
Capital
What the Things Sang
The Dumb Messengers
Gloss
Giles Goodland

The Masses
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In memory of Helen Kidd,
friend, teacher, enemy of the semi-colon.
The Slow Worms

She kept an old piece of carpet over the compost and when you lifted it the pipework recoiled into intestinal heat. Longated potentates graved ceramic silvers upon the molded potato, among ash heavings they forthcame to ingest hummus-crumbs. When musics branched in this might of eye, unlooking faces were named: asker blet slayworm slew slorry or slow cripple. Retained as a ghost word: properly slawerm, or from schleichen, to creep, from soi-distant slaha the smiter. Singleleggedly down herepaths they wended the stews past madameve's. This was not blindness to be in coil with, coiting in a wood of desire, the intercourse in their case of long duration, breath held head for sense where surged the risk-averse photophobe, beakerfolk of darkfold, spoking through their sleep-crowned masks upearthing the groundwound, viewing the light of a stone that comes apart, glottus of molehill-hole, nostrilled flute of the sorepoint they smelt of sleep through eating out the edges of time, where sifted the raingodsent clouds even without the night-criing shrews that grubbed where onions bulbed and moles degraded underlawn, where coldcocked worms sophistically browsed under henbane and sludged in-death splendours, within leg of loveamour as duskrain eyedammed the blackbird-crowned sky at ringing of raindusk they strayed themselves askew in forms grosser than huge, plumping with stained tactility. Then she moved house again, and they remained.
Silverfish

I.

You are the ghost of a soul: ghoul, undertile sliver, quickthinking bringer of decay: you have scale and flourish in cadastral lines.

Fishscale, skinflake, atom of neglect, dust aliving and burst silence fits this keyhole, idea of flight has ego of a bird inside. Scaled and feathered up, you might fly from other moons.

A seep through which events unhappen is widening. You arrive from an unparallel world, disjoint in code operating against protocol, language of legs, the meant-to-be unseen moment fleshing under the skirting.

Zipped into fridgelit chitin you prepare tomorrow’s decay, already building on the not-yet torn down. In its place, a person leans to the side. All skin, he wants everything.
II.

The wallpaperpasteating cattle of the future will break letters to see what they contain. Imirage this tined externite, in its secreative niche-inch of finishy shimmmaterial alloyed of liquick. It flowrests its fungible tuning fork in twilist of metal-illness like a scalextrix sleepulchre ungumming in derivulets, thusly it earlies its fantennae, distrusks, wraparounds the suturistic wordproofing connecting sinuses & sunrises, synapses & pinnacles. Home is where the Hoover moans, and the sugar-guest camps in the map. When they built the first house it was already there, underearth salt flake, subaltern of gristle flecking our floors. Speake machinese? In the city are signs of habitation. To grow nameless locate spacefolk in full slivery for whom light is a faint material that points us in to a room and pulls substantial ghosts inwards. These are family, they can be touched and will not retract when they come to grains of sense. The dust exceeds the progeny we understood the dream to mean.
Mantis

I.

He laughed his head off then he laughed her head off. His fishhook arms ran inhere behind the headline to a zoo of coughs, a soukh of sky. Beware the intellect of hunterland the blublooded arm of state that razor bleeds thumbends when the upstart shadow break snickers on a lostlit subway stone like the separate poor, harmless to leaves but strippedown for a fight. Grand but unsubstantiated claims were made, empires lost at toss of coin, ownlabel productlines postponed. He was disinterpreter of dreams in the light that takes place behind the eyes. He felt broken into syllables a novel aspiring hornlike across his skin fleshwilled its uncountable midnights into words to ask what was it that had been sleeping inside me? He woundup the flowerboned blackjacks and angeltrod the log of the totenbuch. Death gathered under the eyes of the soothsayer in the deathheaded staffcar strutting the very-legged tonguestone to build the new world in your eyes he tendered his forerearms and titular head statued in giacometrized highstep the christaline hormoniums clickclacked in his notwithstandingless rostrum: wounded by music the failed objects rise from thoughts’ torsion. Time is our metaphor, flightpath, refuture.
Stop in the law of the name, opal-eyed
zoomorph I saw you handle that
metaforkknife, selfmake a mantic
remandible, jackknife a clerical
gesture, bury an incisive scalpel
in an unindexed future stakeholder,
stick to the script as treed females
command above reglistening cars.
You shot the serif but vulnerable
to thought’s weaponry faced retaliation
ships scabbards kerned the cochleal evertheless
the civil world stuck the black bone down
the throat fired a transtantric cellcall
encysted the twiglit stingerend
to widerstand godswill in timescore
as a lifeskills orchestrator who
folksung the eyeshot sleepartist’s revery-
thing, wind out praise sequent to intention
to write up reflection, engage pulse’s
witness with Dante’s intuitive head.
Here are the details of the song. A too
regular form beats on itself a grave
for the sake of symbol the quotes set
repulsion into coalescence
untouching a thrustable supper
clothed in the surfacaces of words, their
upprearances could be inceptive.
You are slender but must be vicious
to hold up the sky, the mind swings by
a grass-blade; irons while the heat is struck.
Stick Insect

Their eggs arrived in midchildhood, swapped at school in tissue-filled matchboxes and never hatched until they bled time under our feet for estar is metalegged. You have to stare through these words, their feelimbs to see how in the leaflost eyeset’s emboniments they across the intimeless florever. Now in thorn wornaments the mystery shopper triggerfingers her undigits. Making strange is the chisel she lifts to chip sky away, leave skins like crisp-packets. Absence tolls its bells inside her, and magic pulls strings to which nothing attaches. Attached to that nothing are the black flowers, expending in the losts of time. Daring to stand under the stars each week the dream lessens the skeletons from their leaves. Sleepwinds the contradiction torn shadow-bank, dreamputated anatomic menacles. The clash of two nothings makes a kind of motion: bluebell-tremble, shadode of blood is the tree we uphold so that it may flower in packed senses of malware. Then the car alarms will sing to us in our states.
Harvestman

Stalking over the gas barbecue when I unshroud it its body balances be tween moments as a collector of shadows through stone fields picks off windrows I am shown how meanings cling in secret bodies cadenced in those outliens of the dead. A spidersplinter lunglost as ashheaps the blown hairvest of scriptype errorglyphs. It is found in illinear camerangles that threadeye the ether ways. Cornquistadors of the eggcase-helm are eldoradoing to the farfuture on antennable shimmerachinery. Their strutlegs tarnish the nonentropic toraveller in godments of musicoskeletal duskguise thru saharanges that skirr to selfloss. Thus the pholcid wobbleans thitherworld. Scuttling the vestment nights connect is a vacancy in the mold thru which the moon caves and gives me crumbs. Puppet, we cut thereads that moved you, the queried leaf is here to dissociate you howaver you felt still shadows sleep at your foot, steps akin to skin, thin figurations asking your thoughts. Allelbowed terr or fist hehesitate on the podium apprehensile of wherevery spiderung is thicketting to painstake. Eitherway there will be no cost to you the consumer, myth that you are, slur of impulpable ego. Think that faster.
Chrysalis

Teleology has ended, tautology remains:
the sleeping child is in the sleeping bag.
This green casque outdoes elegance, has nothing
to wait for but flesh’s remission; nor
does she void excrements, nor eat unless
moved as a kayaker through sapid canyons
betworlds, the one seeping, the other
resembles that not properly awake, yet
her arm in its sleeve shifts, when matter
cries in caves of albumen, in dense aspects
we replace stars by hand in red: start
from where we are not and climb from there to
tweentime, self-urge scars into prose as
she rises songless through dark pushes
perhaps smoke hears her tottery frame
untogether and nothung, the eyes of
the dead are ring-pulls and their content spares
her bracketted ears and mezuzah-scrolled
skin. Uturn about face all that is sullied:
erasure of margin, elision, phase-out that
sleeprids the creditroll. Grave imaggots
make falsidles, unlessen by unctuation
until pappy or permeaty. Inside is novel
made of armies clashing on television,
novel of ideas destroyed by the act of reading.
Beyond its meanings wrapt in white sameness
in rolypolymorphous peeing under
the fern’s ribcage or deadleaf: she waits to tell
the future what the future cannot bear.
The Moths

I.

Once the moths had been twin rulers of the earth along with their day-brothers the butterflies although in fact the moths held primacy because at this period most things happened in moonlight and they were the bearers of souls’ breaths. There were legends written on the hills then, and tainted substances of thought. When a scale fell from a moth, stone happened, owls screamed names of god as the forest winked. In day-time the world slept and only the butterflies went anywhere, among bluish blush of bush or shrub, anthered paper machines, unseeable illuminations. No one noticed how they blinked their blackberry-black eyes and plotted. Soon a belief started that wings are an expression comparable between species, and the moths then adorned themselves but never approached the secret beauty the butterflies candled to them, magnificent in their richness, it was said, as the Tyrian. In those days the sun was black and about the size of an egg, few knew what it was for. (When the first clouds had stormed love it had come to nothing save this, issue of dust, brainball). It hummed under its breath, perhaps with sarcasm, or malice. A gang of butterflies could smother it, they thought, not knowing it was gravity’s centre. Each with one wing stuck they opened and closed like fans, futilely, flypapered, massing until the sun heaved with shuttering wings. Then a moth flew up with an ember at its ferntongue tip, and the butterflies
fireballed. Sun was now day-God.
From that time the moths would seek any light but sun, while the free butterflies basked in the solace their ancestors were, like kings.

II.

All it is is in its tricky construction, a mathematical ghost precisely not there as it unleaves the trees erring on the sides of error, it dusts a door or silts over a wall is nothing but that which the name is full of like a leaf failing to fall or a hand walking across a page sense is held at arm’s length fettered to the lettered wings it flattens on alighting. Touch is to its palp a flex nerve-ending its feel. Ferntip of the tongue thing gone spiral, gone fishing, done thirsting.