

Nixon at the Threshold of the Lincoln Memorial

13 January 2019

Something that is completely clean can also be completely sterile

- Richard Nixon, Dictabelt 75, May 1970

What language could there have been
between that tiger, battle-scarred,
and these young cubs, German-tongued
and fearful offspring of Philosophy in ruins?

Ah, one tries to merge with Being as the sky collapses.
Those with thorny crowns spy deep oppression.

Nixon mutters, "What is there to save?"
allows no motion, grins a grin that says
"All shall be well, stop feeling."

This has happened before.

I stood there as a child
repeating "up steps!" in innocence,
for I had not yet learned what there is said
of History or Freedom,
or the other vague ideas men have died for.

I was born too late for that,
and though things have not changed
some hope, yes, even now,
though with less force,
for some renewal,
this time unendorsed.

It will not come on wings
or save us, probably,
but it could make things better,
keep them moving.

And as for the children, well,
they've never mattered much to us,
and who could build a home from such raw material?