

## Play Ebony Play Ivory

play ebony play ivory  
play chords that  
    speak primeval  
    play ebony play ivory  
play notes that  
    speak my people . . .

play ebony play ivory  
play til air explodes  
play til it subsides  
    play ebony play ivory.

for the songless, the dead  
who rot the earth  
all these dead,  
whose muted sour tongues  
speak broken chords,  
all these aging people  
poison the heart of earth.

they cannot sing  
they cannot play  
they cannot breathe the early rhythm  
they never heard the pulse of womb

so up! you bursting lungs  
you spirits of morning breath  
up! and make fingers  
and play long and play soft  
    play ebony play ivory.

play my people  
all my people who breathe  
the breath of earth  
all my people who are keys and chords . . .

now touch  
and hear and see  
let your lungs scream  
til they explode  
til blood subsides  
and flesh vibrates . . .

make chords that speak  
play long play soft  
    play ebony play ivory  
    play ebony  
    play ivory

## The Coming of the Eagles

Let us have eagles!  
Let us have eagles  
among my people!

The hot wind has melted  
ice and the ice has fallen.  
The cold wind has chiseled mountains  
and they have fallen.  
The dry wind has gnawed  
away stone and stone is sand.  
The cruel winds have cut  
feathers, skin and bone,  
and the sparrows have died.

Let us have new wings  
among my people!  
Let us have bones  
among my people!  
Let us have visions  
among my people!

Let us ride the wind  
into the high country.  
Let us have eagles!

## Rite

Vodu green clinching his waist,  
obi purple ringing his neck,  
Shango, God of the spirits,  
whispering in his ear,  
thunderlight stabbing the island  
of blood rising from his skull.

Mojo bone in his fist  
strikes the sun from his eye.  
Iron claw makes his wrist.  
He recalls the rites of strength  
carved upon his chest.  
Black flame, like tongues of glass,  
ripples beneath a river of sweat.

Strike the island!  
Strike the sun!  
Strike the eye of evil!  
Strike the guilty one!

No power can stay the mojo  
when the obi is purple  
and the vodu is green  
and Shango is whispering,  
Bathe me in blood.  
I am not clean.

## Hunt

antelope falls

i watch

jakqula cut

i watch

titio cut

i watch

yakub lift

i watch

all carry

i leg beneath

i tongue

falling blood

i am butang

dog