

Thoughts on Violence

Such a normal morning
Turn on the TV
Insanity leaps out like an oil-well fire
Hypnotic and excrescent
A stark counter-point to the work-day world
Throbbing outside my window
And I'm not too numbed to notice
That newsman's reading death tolls
As if he's giving us the time

My head pumps full of sound bites
Facts and figures, lobby groups, interviews, apologists
Calls to arms and rhetoric
All spoon-fed by satellite
Overload of stimuli

I want to burst
Burst out at the man on the screen
Tell him those numbers all had names
They laughed, they loved, they cried
They lived
They lived

It seems in every shape the spirit walks this earth
Someone's always there to kick mud in his footsteps
And it seems a waste to contemplate rebirth
If we cannot see how precious our own is yet

You who make this carnage
I could swallow my bite
If I could make you confront your madness
With one simple question:
How could you do it?
How could you snuff out lives
As if they were candles

Or would these words dry on my lips?
Stilled by the guiltless challenge in your eyes
Which marks me a fool for asking
Because people don't kill people
They kill objects
When they let themselves hate so deeply
And justify a rage
That strips the victim of their humanity

Yes, no matter what you say
The reasons that you give
Proclaim they're twice slain
First in your mind
Second in the flesh
Just faceless cardboard targets
In the shooting gallery
Of a petty, personal war

No matter in what shape the spirit walks this earth
There's always someone to kick mud in his footsteps
And it seems a waste to contemplate rebirth
If we cannot see how precious our own is yet

Ode to the young dead

Lonely teenagers
With nothing to do around the farm;
Nothing but wander . . .
Playing games

Nothing to do!
No, nothing.
Tired of sitting around
Perched on the little hill
Behind the house.
Looking at the dreary countryside
Nothing moves . . .
It's ghastly bore, it is!

What do you do
In such a little town?
Where nothing new
By the day turn up?
What do you do in this dreary place?
What is there of youthful craze?

Get in the car
And drive; just drive . . .
For it is fun;
And why must it escape the youth?
The careless joy of a summer's end ride?
Take the car out on the road, and drive.

So they take the car;
For a drive - that's all.
But fate this day must prove them wrong
For now they are dead.
The car,
After rounding the curve
Hits a trailer . . .
And now they are dead

Mark Ireland

Trial of Errors

Fall deaf to my ears
Silent sounds of sorrow,
I blame myself no longer
For this internal lament.
The fault is of my father,
And of my father's fathers;
The ones who created and mutated
The minds of our limited perfection.

The thoughts of pale untruths
Slowly fade into blindness,
Guilty is the innocence
Of our maturing dumb intelligence.
The lazy guiloteen of imperfection.
A leper snail on a dulled razor blade
Dragging itself in two
Separate ideologies,
As different as life and birth.

Geoffrey Brown

One judgement follows the next,
Each time we find ourselves not guilty,
And choose to ignore the findings
Of nature, both victim and judge,
Who, not by choice, is forced to tighten
The knoose around our suicidal acts,
And slowly suffocates what precious little
We have left.

Jason Meldrum

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