

Birth of Child

My mother walks through her rooms
excitedly, because a granddaughter is born.
She telephones my brothers and their wives.
My sister has had a child
and I am its uncle.
I watched the womb grow full
and the gentleness of my nephews
grow to ease their mother's carriage.
My sister spoke of my mother's pain
when I was born,
the birthblood flowing with the child's debris.
I listened knowing of my ease, then answered:
"But you suckle your child and
are closest of all. That is what
we males lack."
I think of my daughter or my son to be
and my arms around them.
My wife will feel the sharp cut of their nails
and the squirming from within.
She will later give them milk.
I will give them infinity.

-- Samuel L. Blumenfeld

The Dead: Inhabiting the Fields

I would have never known the smell
of death
had I not gone to Italy
and rode across the valley.
And surely it is peculiar
for I had never seen dead bodies before
and I had always held my breath
when a hearse crossed my path.
But in the valley
I could not close my eyes or steal past the dead,
nor could I hold my breath,
for death filled the air
and was soaked in the fields, and its odor
was sweetly mixed with that of the soil,
and when darkness fell
the land and sky became so arranged
that the living were undistinguishable
from the dead
and the dead placed their arms around all
that slept into the night.

B. H. H. H.

Short Poems

**

I wandered into the crowd
And saw among the distant faces
the greatness of Athens and Rome.
And when the people spoke and gestured
I saw the tombs and the drifting sands
settling slowly on the stones.

*

Now never goes
Now is here all the time
Now is all that's ever left.
When now ends,
It ends now.

*

The sun sets.
It does not wait
For souls to beat
The finished chords
Of day's work.
The sun sets,
Leaves the sky dumbfounded
To make us think
That man has reached an end.

*

This world is dark
And men grope in its darkness,
Collide with each other,
Feel each others limbs,
Stab each other
And stare in agony
Through the darkness
In stupidity.

Voices.
Dust that whisper
Toward and round my senses.
Feel them,
Voices
Sleepy unknown sounds
That close my eyes
And wander off.

Shunpen

Things are crystal clear
this morning.
The sky has no end
And I have never seen it so deep.
The sun is of true color
and with so tender a brilliance
that its shadows are blue
and cooler than soft voices.
And everywhere color bursts and floods
relentlessly with mad living genius
And bodies become loose with excitement
and purity.
This day rings
like the great reason
for living.
And becomes the good
repose between philosophies,
the kingdom of simplicity,
the uncontestable.

~~by S. S. S.~~ *Bump*

(About the war)

I

The hand clutched the mud
As if it were a doorknob
Or a ball, or even another hand.
The head was face down
And one could not have seen
Whether the eyes were blue,
Or brown or grey.
And the hair fluttered
Like tall grass.
I do not know how long
The body lay there,
(That unseeing soldier)
I do not know if they carted
Him away and buried him...
I do not even know his name.

II

Once we captured many enemies
And we marched them
Through the drizzle
To the rear.
And when we stopped
I could see that one was sick.
I gave him one of my biscuits
And he smiled to me,
But I turned my face
And walked away.

III

One day I came to Anzio ✓
And saw a field
Filled with crosses.
And there were so many
That my eyes could
Not see beyond their whiteness.
And when I left this meadow
And rode many miles beyond
Even pasted the hills of Florence,
I could still see the crosses
Stretching and stretching
Before me
To the very end of the horizon.

(About nothing in particular)

I

The sun sets.
It does not wait
For sould to beat
The finished chords
Of day's work.
The sun sets,
Leaves the sky dumbfounded
To make us think
That man has reached an end.

II

This world is dark
And men grope in its darkness,
Collide with each other,
Feel each others limbs,
Stab each other
And stare in agony
Through the darkness
In stupidity.

III

Voices.
Dust that whisper
Toward and round my senses.
Feel them,
Voices,
Sleepy unknown sounds ✓
That close my eyes
And wander off.

IV

I look at life
And say I have not lived.
For the sun creeps coldly
From the mountains
And brings nothing but shadows,
Strange faces,
Motionless voices,
And fumbling fingers,
To bring this living
But still no life,
No life,
To dissolve all this.

I would ~~know~~ have never ~~known~~ the smell
of death

had I not gone to Italy
and rode across the valley.

And surely it is peculiar

for I ~~have~~ ^{had} never seen dead bodies ^{before}
and I ~~have~~ ^{had} always held my breath
when a hearse crossed my path.

But in the valley

I could not close my eyes or steal past the dead,
~~I could not~~ ^{or} hold my breath.

for death ~~was~~ filled the air

and was soaked in the fields, and its odor
was sweetly mixed with ^{death} the soil

and when darkness fell

the land and sky ~~were~~ ^{became} so arranged

that the living ~~became~~ ^{were} undistinguishable

from the dead

and the dead ~~embraced~~ ^{placed their arms around} all that slept into the night.

clutches

The hand holds the mud

as if it were stone or another hand.

The face is buried in the ground

and one cannot see the color of the ~~yes~~ eyes.

And the hair flutters like grass.

I do not know how long he will lie there

before they ^{come to} take him away.

I do not know the moment ^{that} he stopped

nor the feeling of his death,

I do not know who he was.

The dawn is a lovely thing
And my body has never taken one for granted.
Instead it awakes each day
With eyes that speak
Lightly to the grayness and notice
the specks upon the ceiling.
The ears uncounsciously listen
to many small things
that make dawn.
Sometimes I lay quietly with a hand
between the warmth of my thighs
And I protest from within.
Here is the dawn I think
And soon the covers ~~shall~~^{will} be
thrown aside and the coolness of
the world will strike my flesh
And cause me to wonder of the
many things I shall not do.
But now, as yet, the beginning of day
hovers around me as if it were my dog.
My feet spell words upon the blanket
stretching curiously to feel the living
in its untouched state,
still warm, adolescent and beautiful.

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Is she red or is she green
This first lady, Billy's queen?

She looks okay
In her blondish way.
But so politically correct
Reminds me of Berthold Brecht.

She's an all-American girl
Giving socialism a whirl.
The collective suits her style.
The social village by a mile.

Did she read Marx at Yale?
Has she been seduced by Baal?
She and Bill go to church.
But they'd rather dine with Gorbie than John Birch.

She loves the burgeoning state.
Who needs freedom at this date?
Brave New World is her favorite book.
Evita Peron--that's her look.

Both blonds, you know.
But tell me it isn't so.
I'd hate to think that Hillary
Loves power as much as Billary.

Is she red or is she green?
Does she really want to be our queen?

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

Bill Clinton, 1998

What gives with this guy?
He's our President,
White House resident,
Anything but shy.

He loves sex, they say,
As much as he can get.
But now he's got a pet
Who's neither sexy nor gay.

What gives with this guy?
Always in trouble,
Running on the double,
Spinning out a lie.

A strange President he,
Without morals or remorse.
He's never wrong, of course.
That's the way he be.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

On Reaching 72

Seventy-two years,
No sign of tears
Or regret.

Happiness reigns,
Not many pains
To forget.

A silvery new car,
A destination far
To enjoy.

A condo serene,
Yellow and green,
None to annoy.

Troubles? Yes.
A vexing mess.
But I shall prevail.

Life is doing,
Satisfaction ensuing,
Never to fail.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

Ode to Robert Welch

Robert Welch knew the game of life,
Manufactured candy, married a Wellesley wife,
Revered America's fight for honor and good --
Freedom, civility, God's brotherhood.

He did not like Ike -- so much for that!
He proudly wore the anti-communist hat.
Less government was his theme
So that all could enjoy the American dream.

He despised the evil empire, the red conspiracy.
The insiders, he said, were no paranoid's fantasy.
He gathered an army of like-minded souls.
The truth, he said, would win us our goals.

The man was a genius, as anyone can see.
He knew history, man's struggle to be free.
Our founding fathers gave us liberty.
But we could lose it, embracing security.

Play it safe, some say, kiss the tyrant's hand.
He'll give you favors, a constitution of sand.
But Robert Welch was of a different kind.
Preserving our children's legacy was in his mind.

They too must know our nation's glory,
Washington, Jefferson, and the rest of the story.
Can we restore what made us great?
That, he would say, must be our fate.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

We Love You Pete

We love you Pete, the small sign reads,
Beside the road, where the car speeds.
He died right here on Friday night.
There's a cross, some flowers, a tearful sight.

A high school kid out on a date
Going to a movie, no sense of fate.
McDonald's and Disney fill the brain,
Pizza and Pepsi, touch football in the rain.

We love you Pete, athletic and straight.
You were the best that Mom and Dad did create.
Honest and true, you were a friend,
Helpful, caring -- you'd want our hearts to mend.

We never know when the end will come.
Mysterious life taunts us, and then some.
Death is always in our future, that we know.
But when the young die, tell me it isn't so.

We love you Pete, who was too young to die.
It was much too soon to say goodbye.
Your smile, the shake of your hand, your voice,
In those remembrances we rejoice.

-- Samuel L. Blumenfeld

On the Death of Frank Sinatra

He was one of us,
Whether in limo or bus,
Pulling our strings
With all the right things,
Crooning a note
Like a tantalizing quote.
Words spoken like a bell,
Stories that only he could tell.
Stories about us
Without mystery or fuss.
He sang our favorite tunes
Across a hundred Junes.
His soul has flown this earth.
But his voice will play on
Long after you and I are gone.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld