

Some ordinary place of common sights
 Will vanish in a martyr's zeal. Another
 Jeep dismembered, human limbs strewn on
 The road with burning stuff once part of life,
 The incidental noncombatants, children,
 Some unborn, the innocent, the old,
 All offered up to make a pointless point.

Jihad condones the things believers do.
 Beneath a belt, a burkha, wagon seat,
 A bag of rice, or maybe just a fist
 Are instruments of death awaiting victims.
 A corpsman's corpse, a legless female sergeant
 In the dirt await evacuation.

No end in sight, and we are here again
 Supposed to halt destruction and dissension,
 Ancient hates and fears with origins
 In Ishmael and Isaac, both from seed
 Of Abraham. Will God provide a new
 Genetic pool with wisdom? Are we destined
 To repeat the carnage endlessly?

Some days seem almost tranquil, but the brain,
 The gut too long rehearsed in damages,
 Refutes all hopeful thoughts, recalling how
 The enemy will use a slight relaxing
 For a chance to blow another bomb.
 In June I learned the harpist reenlisted.
 We planned to get together but before
 We could, he occupied a body bag.

Baghdad Mosul Basra Kirkuk Sunni
 Shia Bathist places people isms,
 Incompatible beliefs, ambitions,
 Needs. And none about to change a word
 Of text or texture in a shredded land.
 No desert spring can quench my raging thirst,
 No river make my body clean, untainted.
 The waters here are vile with rot and blood.

(cont.)