

# **PTSD**

## **COMPASSIONATE AMNESIA**

How kind the mind

anesthetizing memories

compassionately fictionalizing

sorting out and

compartmentalizing

wounds

too deep

to bear

How wise the eyes

sealed tight against the

morbid sights of

traumatizing acts;

sterilizing, cauterizing

facts

too raw

to heal.

## ANOTHER MOTHER

she howled and hissed like a fighter plane  
cutting savagely through the cold,  
stiff branches of the old, oak tree  
tugging and tearing violently  
at the yellow ribbon  
until it came free  
then reaching down suddenly, she scooped  
a handful of sand from His old sandbox  
and hurled it fiercely against my face –  
stinging my eyes until I could barely see.

I fumble frantically for my keys  
wishing I were already inside –  
inside where I can hide.  
I enter, then slam the door shut  
against her face –  
rubbing my eyes, I grope blindly through  
the storm-darkened room  
toward my favorite chair –  
the chair where I'd held Him and  
rocked Him and

stroked His cheeks with my fingertips and  
kissed His forehead –  
the chair where we'd shared  
a thousand secrets and  
a thousand dreams.  
limp and lifeless, I sink down and stare  
without blinking  
just stare, at the ghostly memories of twenty years,  
as the clock ticks slowly  
and the sand burns.

then suddenly the room explodes  
as she thrusts a blazing sword of lightening  
into the earth – outside my window  
startling me – forcing me to blink  
the first tear  
then darkness and shadows again –  
those ghostly shadowy memories  
my eyes filling like a river when the snow is melting  
mixing with the grains of sand that she put there  
sharp pains shooting downward  
piercing me to my very soul like  
bombs from the fighter plane He flew

I hear her whining like an animal in a trap –  
howling and shrieking and crying –  
and then I thought I heard Him cry, too –  
my precious, innocent, Soldier Boy –  
too young to die –  
and finally I cried –  
as violently and convulsively as the storm outside  
in one wrenching burst of tears and rain  
we wept together  
Mother Nature and I.

and another mother  
the Mother of All Wars  
LAUGHED.

# **PAIN**

Pain –

Sadistic shadow

Who waits

Behind every door

And watches

For every opportunity

To be close

To me.

Jealous companion

Standing between

My soul and everything

I need.

Holding my life

In your greedy,

Empty hands –

Smothering me

In your darkness,

Determined to be

My only companion –

The aura of my life

The emptiness

In my eyes.

Do you believe  
That someday  
I will love you  
As you love me?  
For only you  
Remain  
Unchanged,  
Eternally vigilant:  
My husband  
My wife  
My companion  
For life.  
Perhaps someday  
I will –  
And then,  
We both shall die.



# **SOLDIER**

Soldier –

you're out late

tonight,

have the desert storms

returned?

You're standing

alone

outside the door,

tired, sad

and worn.

When they shook your hand

did you have to lie

and did their smiles

burn your eyes?

And when they speak of you

with so much pride,

do

you

feel

dead

inside?

Memories –



can be unbearable,  
when you're forced  
to remember  
alone.

Soldier –  
don't your loved ones know  
enough  
to let you  
go home?

Soldier –  
it's cold tonight.

Soldier –  
come inside.

# INVITATION TO THE GRAVE

Enter the darkness of loneliness, of fear

The fog that surrounds you when no one can hear

Or see

Completely.

Enter the mist of anger, of hate

The shroud of consumption that covers the weight

Of love

Imperfect.

Enter the prison by force, by will

Where no one can touch you, a refuge to kill

The pain

Immediately.

Enter the grave, it's yours, it's mine

To bury our sins until we can find

The reason

Inwardly.