

## **Dead Bodies**

Dead Bodies are emerging  
On the thin air heights  
Of Everest.

Every day newcomers come in view  
Effuse from melting ice  
And slippage of the Khumbu Glacier  
After all these years.  
The non-survivors of the climb.

Five thousand made it to the top  
Three hundred failed  
Crushed by an avalanche  
Slipped on the ice  
Or simply too damn tired to take another step  
Ran out of oxygen . . . or luck.

Dead bodies everywhere  
No way to get them down  
Removal would be delicate  
And dangerous, as much as going up  
Expensive, not to mention legal matters.

After decades of their frozen peace  
What fate awaits them now  
Amidst the litter left by passers by  
On their way up  
Because it's there.

## **Falling down Everest**

Final thrill  
Much more than reaching summit  
This great falling  
Arcing into space  
Let go of life, and limb  
And rope  
This falling with no hope.

This final freedom  
Effort un-required

In this phenomenal relax  
More time to think than I expected  
Memories flashing at the speed of thought  
Jet stream of images  
Old friends and lovers  
Marriage  
Children laughing  
Moments of my life in final retrospect  
As flailing limbs outstretch to catch  
Onto the snowy white below  
Reflexive  
Years of training  
Just to get me  
To this final climb as yet unfinished  
Soon to be.

No fear of ending  
These last breaths come easily and deep  
With more relief than holding on  
To something that was never permanent.

The bottom hit  
Impact almost unnoticed . . . silent  
just a thump  
then sliding painless  
under final blanket  
White and warm beyond my expectations  
Time to sleep forever in this frozen place.

Do not awaken what has passed  
For it has been  
More than enough to last  
Forever.