

Sweet as a battleaxe,  
the tang and splinter  
of metal on metal.  
The hand that holds it  
tough as the amethyst  
embedded in its shaft.

The cold lightning flash  
in the blade of history  
as one more atom is split,  
the sweet intimacy  
of knuckle to gut  
no longer necessary.

A foretaste of blood in  
the voice of a Nicaraguan mother  
her bone-thin body  
swallows itself,  
chokes on bright  
African cottons,  
blue lilies,  
sweet blossoms  
bigger than her fists.

In China, women's feet  
are bound and broken,  
baby girls clothed in  
weeds, river stones with  
sweet eyelashes.

The virgin flag of surrender,  
as across the earth's  
rough front line,  
sweetness turns to rust.