

Massacre at R'wanda

They were banished from their homelands
and forbidden to stay here,
so they hid within the forest,
and lived with constant fear.
They found hate with every footstep,
and just why, they did not know.
In want of home, in need of care,
they had no place to go.

It was fear that drove them forward,
from here, and then to there,
toward empty lands, forgotten shores,
and no one seemed to care.
Then came a point of no return,
when the young just couldn't run,
and the knowledge rippled through the crowd,
there was work that need be done.

The evil was upon them;
there could be no more debate.
They knew their journey ended,
so they stood to meet their fate.
It came crowding all around them,
in the air and on the ground.
The noise was overwhelming,
as it began to gather 'round.

They played their part from memory,
for the young were pushed to center,
and the males stepped boldly outward,
to challenge their tormentor.
The mothers formed a circle,
and with their bodies made a shield.
They'd protect their precious offspring,
until death would force their yield.

They issued forth the challenge,
standing bold, and very proud.
Every male cried out in anger,
with defiance so outloud.
Above the cries, there came a shot,
then the holocaust began,
and it slaughtered all defiant ones,
yet not a single of them ran.

And then the wrath was shifted,
to those huddled by the side,
and the horror turned against them,
to increase the blood-red tide.
First the mothers were the target,
'till none were left to stand,
and then bewildered young ones,
'till their blood had scarred the land.

And in the death, and carnage,
there were noble beings lost,
but the evil was unflinching,
and unknowing of the cost.
Yet even worse, than all of this,
was that nowhere, even here,
was felt a tiny bit of shame,
or shed the smallest tear.

Were Redmen here the victims,
or were Blacks the ones to fight?
Were the Yellows slaughtered endlessly,
or was their color white?
No, the world would never cry,
they weren't men who died today.
To them it didn't matter
that their color had been gray.

They had been merely animals,
just elephants some would say,
and they had to be eliminated,
for they stood within our way.
Yet what about the future,
can we afford to wait 'till then,
when the holocaust begins again,
and the horror shifts t'ward men?

by Stephen Brown

poetry

Two Poems

by John Flanagan

1

Excerpted From: THIS RITUAL

Last night I slept in frustration
And woke in anger
At too early an hour,
Going outside to let
The cool morning breeze
Wash some of the anger
From me
I watched the robins,
Early morning diviners
Of subterranean movement,
Peck living nourishment
From the earth.
And I thought of how
Nature sleeps in contentment
And wakes in anticipation,
And of how the earth
Sustains.
If there is to be faith,
At all,
Plant it firmly,
Here, in the earth
To sustain the body,
The soul can never truly
Know sustenance
Nor ever have peace,
An unrelenting will
Beyond comprehension
Condemns it.

2

NEITHER WHIMPER NOR BANG

And the pink clouds are gone from the sky.
Evening, which all day seemed
So far away, settles silently.
A black shroud, corners held fast
In the east and shaken into the sky,
Settles silently.

The world completes its upward climb
And just before it rolls off
To spin through night
Stands paused, poised, as if
To gather a final breath,
Then falls.

The illusion of stillness
About this moment,
The ease of passage,
Conceal the stark fact
Of mortal movement.