

Ten paces from this doorway  
a hollow of stone  
not so much shelter  
as a wall against which  
to flatten my back  
continue to count  
a breath of a pause, six round burst  
two second hold, one  
single crack  
and twenty more paces  
from this wall to his body,  
his body to doorway, my back  
to that wall.

The T-shirt reads Kill 'em all. Let God sort 'em out; skull on black cotton, 3XL. They say 20,000 to 100,000 were killed, the exact number in dispute. What makes this a crusade, what number a massacre? In 1209 AD crusaders asked how to tell Catholics from heretics—the response, from the Latin, Kill them all. God—will know his own.

[ Definitions

- Enucleation:* Complete surgical removal of the eyeball.
- Evisceration:* Surgical removal of the contents of the eyeball with retention of the sclera or cornea and sclera.
- Exenteration:* Surgical removal of all the eyeball contents which may include the removal of the eyelids.
- Ocular Prosthesis:* A plastic or glass fabricated eye that replaces volume of the enucleated eye socket. ]

Flash a body reduced to beads of glass  
fused in sand at the blast point's edge.  
Filigree

the lace of an exposed cheek  
over tooth and jaw;  
impossibly white.

Pause the space between light  
and the rush of sound that crushes breath  
from Kevlar and rib;  
a moment of clarity

before the market erupts, before  
the Humvee pitches, then drops to its side.

Afterimage  
a thickening of scar tissue, the absence  
of expression, of an eardrum,  
of an iris.

[ Emergency Condition Responses

- Code Green:* cut hand, scrape, broken arm, nausea, and headache.
- Code Yellow:* decreased level of consciousness, chest pain, unconsciousness for unknown reason, loss of feeling/motor skills in an extremity.
- Code Red:* penetrating trauma to the torso, severe loss of blood, severe head injury, and chest pain followed by unconsciousness.
- Code Blue:* no breathing/no heartbeat.
- Code Black:* Rigor mortis, Post mortem lividity, decapitation, decomposition, etc. ]

WAR  
RUG

How do you move 1,000 pounds of concrete,  
separate bodies from debris,  
twisted as steel bar  
at the exposed edge of a wound;  
in the expanse of aftermath, broken pieces  
a uniform shade of red,  
how do you know your own;  
how do you reconcile  
the hand held is no longer attached, phantom pain  
is the body missing limb, not the reverse;  
that you still wake in your clothing  
between adrenaline and exhaustion,  
that the year begins as it ended, will end  
as it began?

It begins with a photograph and a rug; that so much can be woven into both, one in dyed wool, the other scar tissue against the undisturbed surface of her hand. It's in her eyes. I know it's cliché but look, there is something there—unsaid. Resignation, resolve, or just "God damn it, we've planned this since high school, you will not take this away from me too." She is in white, he a dress uniform, three-quarter view. The eye facing the camera is glass—impenetrable.

The rug is tribal, meant for prayer. It is one of the few things I kept. They say the weaving of bombs into its borders, machine guns and tanks began during the Russian occupation; now the images are of planes en route, buildings on fire, the flag—American.