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## Liberal Dirge #1

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# Liberal Dirge #1

Dysfunction, you said,  
is a state of mind  
from all you've heard --  
"If it ain't broke, don't fix it,"  
(and if it is, pretend it's not).  
Insanity, you said,  
is a relative term  
so who's to judge?  
on a scale of Gandhi to Hitler  
which is crazier, the martyr or the murderer?  
Survival, you said,  
is the quest of the weary spirit  
towed under by the current  
in this our sea of troubles;  
We live to catch the sun and not be burned.  
Death, you said,  
is not to be feared,  
a place of ultimate sleep  
(discounting the worms and decay)  
like a gorgeous featherbed six feet below.

I believed you until  
I saw you (as in a dream)  
wrapped  
in a hundred icy rosaries,  
stifled  
by a thousand prayers,  
choked  
by a million flowers,  
drowned  
by pine and third-rate satin,  
grounded  
by four men you barely knew.  
Could I lie with you  
once again  
and ask you sweetly  
"Have you changed your mind, my dearest?"  
I learned the difference  
between reality and desire  
even as my tongue  
found your throat  
and I pressed cold steel  
into your chest  
and felt the sticky-salty-liquid-heat  
cover me.

Dysfunction  
was closer than you thought.  
Insanity  
slept beside you every night.  
Survival  
is a beautiful thing.  
Death  
may surprise you.  
Sleep well, my darling.

-Charis Brummitt '96

