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I Again Awake

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I Again Awake

Red blood platelets encompass
my feeble view of creation as
the dogeared pages of war-torn
books flap delectably and languidly in
the salty air of wickedness.
I stir and lift myself from the red-clay
mud of the deserted field and
walk slowly north on the black
paved highway leaving red-clay footprints
weaving and playing with the
broken-yellow line.
The blue chevy van swishes past and
swerves as it notices my nakedness
and the speeds up when
it sees my blood. The blood
pouring from the wounds on my hands
and feet and head and from the
tears in my happy flesh –

I fall onto the darkness and
fighting the blue-brown pain, I
 rise again and walk toward
the Elysian Fields that lie to either
side of the long highway.

 I fall once again at the rocky edge
of the road, my hand falling into the downy
 neck-hair softness of the field.

 The flowers of the field begin
to glow yet before I can grasp their
 beauty and message, I awake
in the trench-hole in the fields of France in 1943,
and I again awake in the tepid jungle of Vietnam in 1969
and I again awake in the tank in Panama, 1989, and I again awake . . .

Shannon Salser