

In Memoriam

by Linda Simoni-Wastila

Perfect day dawned in brilliant blue,
shocking canvas of contrast: planes
fly black against far-flung heaven.
Even unbelieving prayer
muttered with quiet resigned breaths
can not foretell or forestall stains
 gouging ground, splintering sky, staining
steel, scuttled lives, exhaling blue,
imploding in hydraulic breaths
screaming through city, hill, and plain.
Common words, sweet sacred prayers
lip-synched by believers heaven
 sent from hell to transform heaven
marked by the golden crescent, stain
of a singular god and prayer,
cloaked in cheap polyester blue,
costume of the West, boarding planes
inhaling, exhaling, one breath
 holy comingling with all breaths,
lifting as one to make heaven
on earth, to be done, in the plane.
It is foretold, on pages stained
sepia older than time, blue
ink and red seeping in prayer.

Father, mother, children all - pray
the ancient songs with soft breaths,
for God cannot hear in this blue
twilight; sing who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy love stained
by unseen portents, for the plane
 is a steel-bound casket, the plane
pulses with souls insistent, prey

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trembling, mortal flesh and smoke-stained,
metal-wrapped in a dragon's breath.
For the meek, the blessed, to heaven
will float ashen to brilliant blue.

Blue sky trailed by white plane flumes
marking a heaven all pray exists;
God's breath stained by metal and fire.

