

## Phoenix Grief

Hit from underneath  
The right wing flares, oscillates  
Wildly. Within the cockpit, attempting  
To deflect, the pilot reflexively puts  
Up a hand. How sudden is blood-----

The window a cleft, split lengthwise,  
Dispensing splinters...  
Two hundred feet up, breeze, flames  
& glass choreograph frailty.  
The flesh is a dance partner, air-borne  
But sinking in a vacuum of onyx.

It's for this we set red corsages  
Like pin wheels  
On look alike stone groves,  
For this black arm bands are tied on biceps,  
Clot innocuous. Circulation doesn't get  
Cut off, only begins to tingle, tug  
Pulses visible along Adam's apples.

Those throats grow hard, swallow bile,  
Spurn patriotism for a minute,  
Then, tasting hot ash,  
Torch half mast flags,  
Croak anthems in private