

What are they Doing to our Beautiful Cape?

In the days of our guilty innocence
 we lay on the sun-warmed sand
 we looked out and away to the curved edge
 where the dark-blue sea reached light-blue sky
 we gazed afar at the distant changeless
 ever-changing lovely mountains.

We absorbed the breathtaking beauty
 and the ache when beauty took our breath away —
 then breathed again.
 We did not know
 when violent death takes breath away
 all breathing ends.

Now reddened grey smoke of fires
 consuming pitiful shelter
 blots out hazy blue of mountain
 obscures purer blue of sky.
 Cries of suffering victims
 shouts of courageous defiance
 pierce through our deaf-willed ears:
 our eyes dragged unwillingly back
 from contemplation of distant beauty
 perceive at last the horrors about our feet.

Crossroads on the face of the mountain
 black shadow that won't go away
 shroud enfolding mutilated beauty
 spoilt for ever for us
 for us never unsullied again.

Yet we know that a future people
 with their banner of black, green and gold
 will lie relaxed on the sun-warmed sand
 gazing afar on the distant changeless
 ever-changing blues of mountain sea and sky;
 they will absorb the breathtaking beauty
 and the ache when beauty takes their breath away
 then they'll breathe again, deep contented breaths,
 in the days of their unblemished innocence.

Barbara Grace

