

ILLUSION

I jogged
Weighted down by endless
Argument
Along dusty winding roads of
Narrow difference.
Rifle of prejudice in hand
I crept under
Bloody imagined fences of
Ideological? conflict— a
Powerless, powerful pawn in
A perpetual game.
I waded through
stagnant lakes of
Ethnic hostility
Swung from branch to branch
Like a trapeze artist,
Learned to shoot the perfect
Target.

I trained to be
Another word for killer
Though I was never really
Concerned at all

...YESTERDAY AT A WELL ATTENDED CEREMONY, SEVERAL
WIVES AND MOTHERS OF SERVICEMEN KILLED IN
OPERATION — WERE COMPENSATED BY THE MINISTER OF —
“THOSE WERE MOTHER LANKA’S TRUE PATRIOTS, HER
HEROES” HE ADDED.

Did tears mingle with pride
When you bowed your silver-streaked head
Reverently
As the minister paid you for my life ?
In that desert of wasted
Youth
And dried up blood
Isolated— torn apart I
Died screaming, terrified
Yearning to live
You know
Mother
I was never
Really a hero at all

Vivimarie
October 1992