

## MESSENGER OF DEATH

Rasheedah Tyler

Watching my father's body  
lying parallel between life and death  
brought tears to my eyes.

Tubes running everywhere  
from his mouth, arms and neck  
wishing I could trade places with him

The preacher comes into the room  
radiating with grief to give my burning  
heart some ease  
bible clenched in hand

"the book of Matthew always helps"  
I begin to read aloud how Gabriel will  
come  
to take you to Zion  
but before you go you will see the sun.

Reading to his motionless body  
hoping that he could hear me and  
my voice brought comfort in a foreign  
place

Reflecting in silence  
until my time was up  
his life on hold  
my life must move on

A little past ten the phone rings  
the sound different than ever before  
bouncing against the wall as if  
the phone rang in a tunnel

Gabriel  
Messenger of Death

"Daddy died", my brother said,  
holding my hand,  
"he opened his eyes  
took a deep breath,  
squeezed and passed"

the feeling of a chapter already written  
and a purpose fulfilled  
I am

