

Michael Simmons

The Wall

*Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem
mortalia tangunt.*

Aeneid, Book I

The tears of things fall not like rain
But flow like blood in pulses slow.
All minds are touched by mortal pain,
No matter from how long ago.

Long, long ago a wall I found
In ruins upon a Persian plain,
Which once a paradise did bound,
Raised high in a forgotten reign.

Within the mud brick wall there lay
A chamber of some purpose lost.
On its low ceiling made of clay,
A workman's handprint was debossed.

Upon the print, I placed my hand
And then across two thousand years,
By that small gesture simply spanned,
I felt the flowing of the tears.

The hand that placed that brick is dust,
As dust my hand must someday be,
But someone yet unborn, I trust,
Will one day shed some tears for me.

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But flow like blood in pulses slow.
All minds are touched by mortal pain,
No matter from how long ago.