

The Dead of Peleliu Speak

—William Lincoln Simon

On Peleliu no poppies grow, between the
crosses row on row,
But only coral, rock, and sand. Each
cross a muted sentry, stands
A guardian of those hallowed sands
That drank our blood.

On Peleliu we fought and died. We're restless lying side by side,
Who gave our all. And now we wait,
too worn to rest, too tired to hate.
We are the earth's repatriate,
Who crave long peace.

On Peleliu in coral sand, we lie and
wait our sleep disturbed.
Have we, like others, died in vain,
and shall we have to rise again
And hear once more the wild refrain
Of bursting shell?

Oh the dread to hear us rise again, to fight
on earth, in skies again,
Nor listen full of fear and dread,
to footsteps of the marching dead.
Remember promises you said!
We restless lie.

Make well the peace, oh men of state,
for we the dead were taught to hate.
We learned to hate and do it well,
and make of life a living hell
For those who break our sleeping spell.
So falter not.

But bring the peace of God to man!
Here us who lie beneath the sand,
White sand, and damp with morning dew.
We cannot but remember you,
We men who died on Peleliu.
Oh let us sleep.

*Written at Peleliu in WWII, 1944