

The Battle

Based on the zen parable – Samurai and the fly

A samurai sat, in Kimono black,
Armoured and helmed, sword at his back.
He sought to bring ease to the war in his mind
With hope beyond hope that peace he would find.

He ventured within and found there were nought
But enemies slain and battles he'd fought.
As he went deeper, beyond his mind's eye,
A new foe arrived, in the shape of a fly.

He tried to ignore it, this pesky distraction,
The warrior showing no outward reaction.
But inside, his anger, sparked by the fly,
Boiled, then erupted, this nuisance must die!

He drew his katana, sprang to his feet,
And carved the small bug in two pieces neat.
They fell to the ground, he sighed with relief,
Then watched as they stirred, in great disbelief.

Each half formed a new fly, both buzzed round his head,
With a flick of his wrist, the creatures were dead.
Four rose around him, he slashed as before,
But only succeeded in making four more.

His struggle continued, the swarm of flies grew.
Defeated, exhausted, the samurai knew
That all of his strength, his prowess, his skill,
Meant nothing when he could not bear to sit still.

So, he sat with the flies, the battles, the ghosts,
With gratitude towards these most gracious of hosts.
His spectres forgave him, the flies became one.
Peace filled his heart and his battle was done.



by Neil Dennehy