Watering the Dead

Many gray sprinklers twisting round around
Groundskeepers turn faucets on, water sprays
"Look mom, is that man watering the dead?"
"Hush up! Your grandmother is buried there"

The headlines read, “CATASTROPHE! ALL DEAD!”
Five times twenty, dawn, noon, and eleven
Pale-faced monotone reporter reads cue
“This just in, man shot to death on highway”

Mother skips heartbeat, no name given
Jeff, Jason, Justin, Joe? No, false alarm
Jonathan Joseph James face down, pavement
“Turn faucet off dear, no one important”

On a bench “TRAGEDY” rustles in wind
“A NATION SHAKEN” executives shrug
Old beggars wrap fish in “SUSPECT ON RUN”
Crayons color up “STOCK MARKET CRASHES”

Black ink bleeds on tombstones, paper crumbles
Rain erodes limestone, but the stain remains
Black covered trees, phonics, letters, font leaves
Litter on sidewalk, necropolis news

Measured doses of tragedy displayed
On the boobtube, CNN channel 4
They would rape your heart, and so you let them
No time for toons, we’re watering the dead
Millions press faces to the TV screen
Royal car accident, fatality
Two dead in Paris, France, with fancy names
Better ratings than Mother Theresa

Friday, on November 22nd
12:30pm, children stop schooling
My mother was twelve, she saw on TV
Constant water since 1963

Pigs in the parlor, Watergate reports
Shameful acts of men behind doors displayed
Corruptions, murder, rape, and violence
It's just another day on NBC

Terrorists in Saudi Arabia
Jogger advertises child sweat shops
Billboard above reads "UNITED WE STAND"
City park, near the business district

Headlines read again, "NEW YORK IN RUBBLE"
One year later they pull out the buckets
Drench the churchyard afresh, all for ratings
Man leaps to death, repeat. I cannot cry.