

“What to Wear?”

Death
Rises,
Yawns,
Opens his closet.
What to wear today?

Traditional black?
Or colors more chic?
In white-hooded robe,
A scythe on his shoulders,
Death knocks politely, ever so politely.
No rush.
No hurry.

On a windy day,
In pale pinks and blues,
Death,
Like a playmate,
Puts away the toys and departs, but not alone.

A father pleads,
Take me instead,
But Death ignores his plea,
tightens his grip on an only son,
Leaving behind a man bathed in tears.

Death has seen this before:
A father and his daughter
Saying goodbye,
Heartbeat visible
Beneath a cotton sheet.

Drums roll, trumpets blare, the battle is joined.
From atop a red mount,
Death
Harvests heroes
From both armies.

I’m your flight steward.
Window seat or aisle?
Buckle your seatbelts.
Your captain today
Is Mortality.”

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Wayland Bryant Jackson
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