

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

**BRANDON
COURTNEY**

—BAGHDAD, IRAQ (CNN): “American and British soldiers report orders given to add weight to coffins in order to disguise high rates of blast injuries and amputations.”

One granite slab for every limb blown
into reddening horizon,
every misplaced bootfall.
Two dozen pumice stones for every finger
sheared during interrogation;
a thousand grains of sanded alabaster
for every pliered tooth.
Three rocks of obsidian for every hand
that cut the bomb's trigger wire.
Four reed of limestone for every soldier
oiled into Baghdad dunes.
Five stones of basalt for every Blackwater
driver and Halliburton boy who rolled
over buried incendiaries.
Six fistfuls of Desert Rose for every jarhead
measured for prosthetics.
Seven gross of gritsone, basanite, and quartz
for every amputated leg, phantom
by improvised devices.

Hundredweight of flint for every match
struck against skin.

Mudstones and sandbags, as many as you can
carry, as many as your able arms allow.