

## Baghdad April



Who would have thought even minutes ago  
Black Hawk swept from the taupe  
Medieval California Kuwait to the quiver-  
ing sandust of Talil  
Sweat, Al-Hilah, Marine bird, older than  
damp crew, machine  
Smell, vibration ammo cammo scraped  
paint web belts, still  
Tighten gray roar and chaos, nose down  
brown. Just get us there.

Now green. For ten thousand lives this  
river ran brown with blood  
Helping reeds limber bodies once passed as  
blind. Just get us there.

Down, then BIAP, destruction for glory  
Spurts and unthinking tremors, the shakti  
of nonduality,  
Bills unpaid as crushed planes kneel lame,  
Torn tarmac shattered with dust  
Fade, then the comic book, cantos: a prince  
of Babylon, sword of Assyria, builder of  
Ur, heavens perturbed,  
Trauma hung close in crumbled glass, a  
façade (yet more)  
Meaning deep to those who looted that  
brief cosmic day  
Missed by those who watched.

Stories, reprise, thunder run  
Endless dust nights of expendable men  
Blind (they must have been)  
To spin a rusty truck against a tank  
With only, what? passion? hate?  
fear?  
Perhaps no thought at all  
Except to hope the engine would start (or  
not)  
and no one else would see.  
No matter. They are now mist, counters in  
a game.

We hurry, are watched, relief, no love and  
Bomblets are toys, slipping through dry  
canals with a last black smoke  
To please a small hand as  
Green towers turn red, mating in the night.  
Somehow, we must have known (even a  
first summer wind will dry the eye). Yet  
Rank on file is an army shrouds, mist,  
And hot days turn gray, crafting wry  
smiles.

Then fade. Finally,

to destroy and build, Shiva in web gear  
While somewhere a bridge is lost. But  
what?  
Who is destroyer, who a builder? Who  
know  
Often great power is only owning the  
detritus.  
Still there is BIAP, flight out, home, strong  
shoulders and  
Hiphop, path to insanity and relief.  
And then, a tiny point of blood receding on  
the glass.

—Dr. Steven Metz, U.S. Army War College  
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