

# Hashish flip-flops & rockets

Mohammed was very high  
heavy blankets of curling smoke  
hung around him like wet dresses to dry.

All morning long he smoked American cigarettes  
packed with Hashish and watched American tanks roll by.  
A Tigris & Euphrates sun bounced off their dull dust caked angular  
armor, growling behemoth dinosaurs shrieked & screeched a grinding clankity clank  
of the tracks & their high pitched rotary whine of gas turbine engines  
poured a belly dance of scorching heat waves out the tanks backs  
like angry dragons  
it just made all the dogs in the neighborhood  
mad with howling & incessant barking.

Mohammed wanted to tune out this defecation of noise  
this imported eye sting of burning diesel  
smoke some more of this good brick the Syrian fighters  
had brought in with rockets.

Mohammed loved his motorbike of dented fenders  
dirty old rust & spokes  
second only to his girlfriend  
and swimming in the river on days like these.

Five years and the base was only getting bigger,  
its tanks digging deeper ruts into all the roads nearby.

It was only 100 degrees  
not hot enough yet  
even muddy water  
is cooler than air.

His brother had given him the bombs  
Mohammed had paid two boys on  
bicycles to hide them in piles of trash near the road  
they scurried about stoned brown rats on flip-flops  
as they dug them in & fused them up.

Mohammed liked the soldiers' sunglasses  
and he wanted a pair.

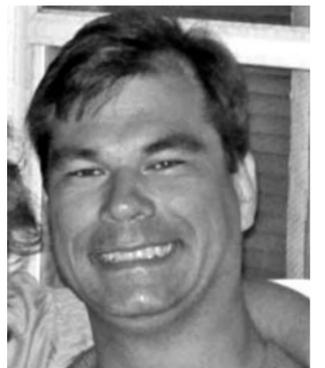
It was three or four huge thunderous concussive blasts  
ricocheting off mud plaster walls  
the dogs shrieked and yelped & howled uncontrollably.

Mohammed cowered fetally in hidden shadows of  
cinderblock. He was so stoned he pissed himself soaked  
or, he was just afraid.  
A thick pallor of black & talcum dust rose & pushed over him  
like a cloud of molasses and he fell into a nod of sleep for awhile  
slipped into a dream of Egyptian rock stars crazy about  
darbuka drums and his latest habibi.  
he awoke & much later, after swimming in the Tigris  
& riding his motorbike helter skelter  
through endless twisting alleyways  
and making love to his girl.

Wandering home under a crescent 3am moon  
he would find a pair  
of rip-off Pradas next to a shard  
of metal and a puddle of caked mud  
& dried blood.

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