

Rachel Vigil

Charlie Company Barracks Before Dawn

The need for love,
has woken and just begun to move,
has stretched its arms above us.
Its shadow
lays haphazardly building
over all of us.
Though passersby are oblivious,
the prophecy is true.
We all perform the same tasks together, alone.
A shade, an isolation is here inside all of us,
familiar enough than I can see its subtle manifest
in the darting of the eyes
as we pass in the communion of a shared hallway.
Behind the door, each has developed
his own opinion of it. Some,
I draw my theories from the eyes—
have taken it in hand
when the blinds are drawn,
caressed it as the only child of a deceased father.
The rest of us, lay it back down
in the soft nest already inside of us,
think quickly of something better.
Lace our boots and adjust
our faces for work.

As if I were the Father

Dear father,
how strange our roles,
that I was there and not you.
You were off tending a foreign war
protecting borders beyond our
sight with your body,
while I was here
tending the towels.
You tapped your magazine on your helmet
and loaded it.
I held your wife's hand
then her knee, then her foot
as she battled your baby into this world.
I counted the seconds out to her
until she could suck in one good breath
and struggle again
I iced and wiped the sweat from her face
I stole your feeling of elation
and skipped through the hospital
as if I were the father myself,
to bring her cool ripe strawberries.
You, scanning the horizon for the next attack,
Me, bursting to tell how fragile and how strong,
how purple, how alive, how quivering, how peaceful
how changed.

Beware the Jackal

5" blade,
stainless steel for minimal cleaning,
the Jackal is 9" overall of whispering death.
It will make you the one they are talking about.
The Jackal prepares you for terrorism,
food shortages, mercenaries, vigilante resistance,
monetary collapse, a dictatorship, and gun confiscation.
You'll have your finger in the frosting.
Equipped with blood gutters, hollow waterproof handle
for storage of emergency items,
venom insertion ring, and compass in handle.
Hang the cape of History from your shoulders.
Sheath has steel retaining spring, and clip
for boot and belt carrying.
Defend your home and family.
Death from behind, beside, above and under—
even wraparound.
Perfect for throwing out the money changers.
Hands-on combat power throwing
from mercenaries and professional assassins.
Used by the Basder-Meinhoff Group, the Basque
Separatists,
and the Irish Republican Army.
This silent death-dealing piece of lethal exotica
is a wild goose laying an egg.
15 ounces without sheath.
It's a penny from the top of the Empire State Building.
Knuckle-buster grip available.
Kill or get killed.

Order the Jackal today.
Your blood will boil.
You'll be a yellow taxi.
You'll laugh your head right off.

RACHEL VIGIL has been a steelworker on a bridge in Seattle, a gold miner in Nevada, and a linguist and soldier for the U.S. Army. She speaks Arabic, French, German, and English and is now working on her MFA in Creative Writing and Poetics at the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado.