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Razed

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Cover Page Footnote

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Razed **-Kevin Allen**

The baby settled in the throbbing womb,
a human stone sunk in a bucket of oil;
a birth placed between death and
life, soldier and civilian.
Blood and skin fused inside of her
while blood and skin blew apart in her face.

This infant dropped in obscurity
as his father's body
was being dumped in a ditch
in a heap of other fathers.
The mother was the village outcast
and the baby a disgrace to the Republic;
her future lie wrapped in a blanket and garbage bag.

On her back she carried a terminal regret
through the rubble labyrinth,
and in the maze of distress
lost her infant in the thick of civilization;
a boy not old enough to guess where she went to
nor where he was.

In the imperial city of a million refugees
sat the little witness empty of memories.
Nothing to play with but the foam mattress
and lice filled blanket lining the crib.
The roots of his misfortune had begun
to climb like jungle vines on the
well-gnawed bars.

Soon, from the arms that gave him
away to the arms that received him,
he dropped into the strife-rich soil
of the Land of Stars and Bars,
fruitcakes and bulldozers,
and he grew the sour fruits of loyalty.

The native pollinated his mind
with Italian sausages and
multiplication tables,
eased the thought of his mother's birth pangs by
constructing a Beltway memorial

for those angels who fell
like coconuts on the beach.

What bad blood has dripped out of my rage
lands on the floor next to my wastebasket
half-filled with balled-up paper
on which empty kisses were imagined.
With a one word I am gone.

