POETRY

History Book

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"Clarice" by Leslie Benigni

Tint Journal, no. (), www.tintjournal.com

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(Biafra War)

war was a grater that shredded off the skin of this city.

i stand, a monolith, in front of the armored tank,

every part of this robot reminds me of yesterday’s decay.

in the history class, i count casualties like stones;

yet every page of this war book requires a turn-over

that is to say, there’s more wounds to bleed

on the white sheet — the pus blotting out letters of bliss.

my mother’s mother said the black and white TV was a zombie:

its mouth dripped blood of soldiers and starved children —

the leftovers of war. starlings emptied of hymns.

look, the war began where my forebears ended in ashes.

every index finger on a trigger haunts me like a fleeting shadow in catacombs.

silence becomes the only spoken language where fire already said much.

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