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Gritty Residue

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Photo by Kevin Parkhurst

Gritty Residue

Justin Short

What are these negatives that are burned onto my soul

They haunt and write and dissolve so slow

They are memories

From times ago

The beasts on tracks they trudge through the sand

The sharp chop of the blades I can no longer stand

The bombs bursting in air, only Hells fury could compare

The blood of the innocent I can no longer bear

With sharp lines of tragedy

And blurred images of home

Innocence is my agony

This froth turns to foam

Why won't this scab heal

The VA gives me candy to help me deal

My mind wonders if it was all in vain

Why didn't I ride on that long black train

Death and I, we go way back

Back to Nebraska street, before Iraq

He is swift even when he is slow

Our names are all tattooed on his soul

he's called me by my name, and I have his

Through the death of Brothers Freedom Lives

Surrounded by sand

Surrounded by time

Surrounded by images

They are mine

Semper Fi