Lesson Un-Learned

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LESSON UN-LEARNED

Marvin Sosna

The War is over. Done.
Did we win? We did not lose, we’re told.

The screams ended, cries of horror
only echoes now across the land
drenched in human fluids, a flood
of blood and mucous and urine exuded
in the spasm of life’s last gasp.

All silence, everywhere. Hushed.
Are we smiling? There should be joy, yes.

They are home now, legs and arms severed, eyes blinded, brains twisted,
memories overflowing with roadside bombs, sniper’s guns, children turned into weapons of mass destruction.

Behind, a wasteland. Does anything grow there?
Only hate.

Around lie the banners, the slogans,
three-word wisdom that captures the minute,
leaves the mind numb, the intellect in coma,
the heart in thrall for the leaders who carry us to the next crusade.