

Visions of Clara

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In the shadows of the guardrails he sat on a box
in the dirt shoulder—his cami parka unzipped, flapped
like crow's wings hopping toward road kill,
victims of landmines and ambush.

He was anxious for a ride that never stopped. His moment
out of context. His mind left behind in sand
and hot shells, rounds emptied, burning jeeps—
His eyes were excited by visions or tanks or
flags flapping like his coat and metal zipper pulls
tinkling like dog tags. He was not in Tennessee.
Who is Clara? Who was he?

He was anxious for a ride that never stopped. A destination
that never arrived but only in night sweats
and screams. —N.O.K. —where is Clara?
He could not be touched and didn't know why—N.O.K.—
where is Clara?