



The Promise

Laurie Galbraith Weckstein

Caved, bayoneted chest
 once . . .
 an embryo so transparent
you can see its fluttering heart.

Shattered eye (obliterated) by shrapnel,
 resting blind in its infant orb,
 still growing a fragile eyelid.

Metallic blood-tang mingled
with pieces of tooth in a gun-butted mouth
 and soft seeds of teeth;
promises planted in fetal gums.

Crack from a mudcovered steel-toe, snapped
ribs tore sheaves of muscle,
 where the spidery shadows of baby ribs
 begin.

Lone arm, blown away fifty yards
from the stump,
 its unborn thumb sucked-
 peaceful in the watery womb.

Crushed helmet cradled gore, the remains
 of a small skull
 already protecting an essence

beyond us.