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Forgetfulness

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Forgetfulness

I desire a name that fits everything I do not understand. The mechanics of this unlovely thing, this unwieldy word of all things unknown, is a veritable Rube Goldberg of vowels and consonants. To say that I want a word for what I do not know is to say that I mean to forget what I already know. I want to speak the name of the first soldier, a boy really, who first took his life, or the friend who never came back from patrol, the IED took everything from him that anyone could recognize, and have it pulled from my memory as one pulls a loose thread from a button on a shirt, and pulling, watches as the button rolls away under the couch and is forgotten and instead of sewing a new button, the shirt is relegated to the pile of forgetful shirts that are deemed useless and set out on the curb to be picked up by Goodwill.

About Sean McLain Brown

Sean McLain Brown is a disabled Gulf War former Marine and a member of the Veteran's Writing Workshop led by renowned author Maxine Hong Kingston. He teaches writing at De Anza College. His poetry and fiction has appeared more than 50 publications including, the San Francisco Chronicle, EM, First Intensity, Fourteen Hills, Indiana Review, LUNA, Sentence, Paragraph, Transfer and others. His work is also featured in two anthologies: An Introduction to the Prose Poem (Firewheel Editions), and Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace (Koa Books).