

Aljanat fi Alkharab (“Heaven in Ruins”)

By Selam Weimer

11th grade, Woodrow Wilson High School, DC

After Moises Saman's photo in "Iraq's Post-ISIS Campaign of Revenge" by Ben Taub



A year and a half after the battle, Mosul's Old City is still in ruins, and unexploded bombs regularly kill people. Ten million tons of rubble remain. Image by Moises Saman / Magnum for *The New Yorker*. Iraq, 2018.

Anonymous being runs through the rubble street

The fog muffles the water in violent silence

Half demolished staircases, leading to half demolished heaven

The ruins of the city's soul on display

The phantoms of the past collide with the angels of the future

Painted with a wink of white in the present

The afterlife tastes of the ashes of deja vu

The promise of peace always an echo away

The afterlife tastes of the ashes of deja vu

“Old City” dies up to its name

A diamond of history

Pressure forever present

Temperature at all time high

Truth brought to surface by eruption

Unexploded bombs and unexploded dreams

Refugees pregnant with anxiety

Fear of tomorrow more paralyzing than trauma of today

A time bomb triggered

Numbers blurred

Silent breath under water

In pursuit of a heartbeat

Timeless tension of ascent and freefall

What was, obliterated

What IS IS

The questions are asked, after the bullet's released

All are suspect and the enemy

Victim of politics plus tears of the paradox

Resistance equals death

Labeled by the world as collateral damage

Mourned by the voiceless as martyrs

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Selam Weimer is a junior at Woodrow Wilson High School. This is her first year as a member of the Motley Society Poetry Club at her school. She loves soccer and cultural events.