

New Poetry by Joshua Folmar: “Sudoku”



A REMOTE DETONATION / image by Amalie Flynn

Sudoku

Death? She's your final lover, playing
the numbers of this cosmic game-set
between lines on an overlaid map

of patrol routes winding through *wadis*
deserted in Iraq—here's shrapnel
fragment: zone 3, row 2, column 1.

The first time she came, she was like fire-
crackers: pounding down the dirt, skirting
the stack with sweat and AK rounds.
Chute down and right 2 columns. Death swears
she'll never betray me; promises we'll
be together soon—gives me dysentery.

She keeps me at a distance, shitting

in Gatorade buckets on post. She's
such a tease not to finish me off.

Humbling me, she pulls the ego from
my chest: a puzzle I tried to solve,
but I couldn't get the numbers right.
The 9's looked like electrical wire
sticking out sandbags of IEDs—
she was a remote detonation

at the town square's edge, jacking my head
off at block 8, row 7, column 6—
click. We made the news at 5 today.
The TV in this dusty bardo
switches from news to daily numbers—
Play? What for? Where are you, *Habibti*?