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Poems

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When the mortars fell
By Joe Merritt

I wished to lay down
in the dirt and catch them with my tongue
Stare up at grey blue skies and sink
into the ground that never seems to still
wind stirring sand into clouds of earth
Find a tree that offers more shade than cover
Its leaves are never red

Kalishnekov
By Joe Merritt

Today I was fired
20 times before
Mortar shells responded

Falling from the sky
My fat, drunken cousins
Landing at my tripod's feet

Force fed belts of lead
I can not spit out death
Fast enough

I am old now
Born from the Warsaw pact
Raised in alleyways and ambush

When chunks of human flesh
And shrapnel clogged my throat
They sent for a gunsmith

they will not take me from
the front lines.

I can hold no allegiances
Or ideals in a war
that makes me invaluable

No matter how many times
They abandon me
Someone new will find me

Generations of Neverland

By Joe Merritt

What happens when your children grow into the lost boys
When the adventures have grown dark
And villains are not the only ones losing limbs?
When you hit the age
where talking of mermaids and fairies
gets your shoe strings taken away--

That's not the way the world works

Flying around the same old cove
Fighting the same wars has left you with questions
When you stood over Mr. Smee as he bled out
and prayed for his family
Maybe Neverland is just as fucked up
and brutal as the places you ran
There to escape
Regardless a part of you will always love it
But it will move on without you, Peter
Long after you fold that green uniform for the last time