

# 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*?