

# New Poems by Rachel Rix: “Experimental Simulation of Joint Morphology During Desiccation;” “Second Deployment;” and “CO’s Canon”



HAIR OF THE WOMAN / image by Amalie Flynn

## Experimental Simulation of Joint Morphology During Desiccation

In the dried-up river bed of the Helmand the body of a husband  
lies dead on the

hot cracked dirt. The hair of the woman married to the husband  
hasn't been

washed in days. Her arms flex and hook the husband's lower  
limbs. Dragging

him makes each step the woman takes heavier than the last.  
Vultures hover her

salt trail. Vast is what they see surround her. The daymoon  
watches too. Night

never comes only more heat magnified by the hours, searing the  
thin flesh

between vertebrae C-6 and C-7. The woman knows she's  
blistering. Letting go

of her husband is not an option she thinks of.

## **Second Deployment**

Our agreement was  
only one. I have  
difficulty carrying myself,

I—weightless. Rising  
to the crags. Old world vulture  
alone I sail for hours in the sky.

I eat my home. A pile of bones.  
I've learned to crack open  
what I cannot swallow,  
a lamb's femur. I am

bone breaker. Soft tissue drinker.

I eat his words.  
I'm now dust bather.  
Silent blood tracer.

I am burial maker.  
Tossed knuckle  
scraper. Someday he'll find me  
by the bed  
in a pile.

There will be a hovering  
and a hollowing.  
No welcoming home.

## **CO's Canon**

*If the cadence may be regarded as the cradle of tonality, the  
ostinato patterns can be considered the playground in which it  
grew strong and self-confident.*

His green duffel bag  
could have carried two of me inside.

Near the opening a faceless angel,  
I try: Dearest,

because I'm tumbleweed,  
but he never reads me.

There are more important things  
to do, shake hands with soldiers

going out on mission,  
because when you're the commander

it's about survival.

I didn't need to take  
that last glance.

Suddenly tyrannosaurus.  
Angel's sepia teeth baring.