

A Wish Unfolds

by T.A. Dugan

I'm here for some cognitive restructuring,
Please help me before I leap into the abyss,
I've tried the doctors peddling their medication,
Their solutions so vague I drown in the excess,
They've given me your name and you're all that's left,
Drawn to a dark summer sill accentuated by sunlight,
She politely asks me to sit, closes the shades and we begin.

The convo is like an exorcism,
Prizing those who refuse to concede,
Out into the light so they can dissipate,
In the exposure of ubiquitous insight,
Reliving the scenarios over and over,
'Til everything gets deathly still,
Building the tension to a climax,
Where it's exhausting just to continue.

And we do this for weeks on end,
In attempts to partially patch the rifts,
Although they still thrive embedded in the neural beehive,
Subdued, ready to rise, beyond plain view
Targeting the chambers inside, predominately at night,
Incredulous eyes wide towards the catastrophic terrors that comprise,
Of the terse racket of the M60s,
The rats and their slimy bellies,
Feeding on the overspray of grey,
From the bomb debris that blasted through and by,
A best buddy while you were trying to tie a bandage,
And these are where the flashbacks coincide,
With the deep residual fractures of the mind,
And in the convalescence of a hospital bed,
Where the folding of a thousand origami cranes,
Unfolds a wish—and that wish is for death.

And, as suggested each day, I meditate,
Transferring into a prolonged theta state,
Now dreams are the only place I can't escape from them,
Who were once my closest friends,
I thank you for the work done here,
Please forgive me if I interfered with your psyche.

A native of Kansas who enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1992 and served in the 101st Airborne, 1/187 Infantry Regiment, **Thaddeus Alan Dugan** now lives in Topeka, Kansas. Currently he is a junior at Washburn University and is attempting to complete his bachelor's degree in English Literature with an emphasis on writing. He has a morning ritual which includes sitting in a morning meditation and then writing, where he is joined by his cat Arrya, who has him trained to open the window at his desk so she can chatter at the birds while he writes. After suffering from PTSD for many years and living life haphazardly, he decided to take up Buddhism and, in this process, mastered the art of meditation. This has enabled him to stop all medication and to live in the moment, the only time anyone is truly alive. Since then he has decided that you only have one shot at this life so make it count.