

# “Unrest”

by Colin D. Halloran

Sometimes I have nightmares  
that I'm back at war

that I'm engulfed in chaos  
that bullets are once more flying.

Sometimes I have nightmares  
that war is back  
and I'll be asked once more  
to do those things I did

the things that give me nightmares  
that make me want to kill  
myself now  
not others.

Because in nightmares  
I am the enemy.

Always.

Sometimes I have nightmares  
that I'm back at war

that chaos is everywhere  
that buildings are burning  
that knees are on necks

that armored men are rounding up  
the innocent

that men with guns march  
through simple neighborhoods  
shouting incomprehensible orders

*no, you cannot be on your own property  
no, I cannot tell you why  
no, I will not refrain from firing my weapon at you.*

Sometimes I have nightmares  
that I'm back at war

and sometimes I remember

that I'm not sleeping.

That this is not Afghanistan  
that these armored men  
are not my soldiers.

That we are not destroying  
someone else's nation

but ours.

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**Colin D. Halloran** served as an infantryman with the US Army in Afghanistan. He has since published three collections of poetry about war and PTSD, *Shortly Thereafter*, *Icarian Flux*, and *American Etiquette*. He is pursuing a PhD with a focus on war poetry and war as a cultural object. More information can be found at [www.colindhalloran.com](http://www.colindhalloran.com) and [www.warpoetrymap.com](http://www.warpoetrymap.com).