

## PSALMS FOR BABYLON (4-5)



*Four-eyed Scream* by John Elkerr  
11.5" x 12"  
Ink on paper

iv.

why do we shoot our loads across visions of spread-eagled Kansas farmgirls conjured from dusty, vibrating crates of M-240 bravo machine gun ammo, why is it always one more braided seaborne daughter of Shinar, who sets off the wingjob handload Mach-19 face load, whose millet-polished fingers draw down and down to some hot little red M-4 rifle scope hole in our heads where the swine strings blow and blow *the concentrated work of generations?* listen and your wife's lovely kohl-painted eyes will not be found inside a footprint on the moon. *Selah (fella, before the flies sing your praises).*

v.

why is it always a trashpile in Baqubah, in Adhamiya, in Nassiriya, the carcass of a flyblown mongrel in Tikrit, in Dorah, down Haifa Street, why the roundabout zig-zag whine of a toy car in Taji, in Falluja, in Balad just before we ride up a clusterfuck of bluegray RPG trails into the fiery lake erupting around a half-ton angel of PE-4 *neighbor and surround the lost with love?* listen and your great-great-grandchildren will not be named after birds. *Ziyah (booya, anybody got a smoke?).*

Text by Stephen Eric Berry