"Jang"

Anne Elezabeth Pluto

Lesley University, apluto@lesley.edu

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*Jang in the hands of the Mujahideen
Father
born on the eve of World War
I live your conscience
daily reminders that
the world is a frightening place
you never dreamed as you spent
the Second World War traveling west
landscapes away from your home
that New York would be the site
of terrorist activities
on the day of your 50th
wedding anniversary
in the third millennium,
in your second century.
As a soldier,
you lived central asia,
traveled the middle east
belyorussian, in a british
uniform, having escaped death
in a soviet prison
the names of cities
roll off your tongue like turkish
delight, now ruined
Beirut, beleaguered Damascus
starving Baghdad
mysterious Alexandria
and bleeding Jerusalem
I played store with your war
souvenir coins
turning over the bas relief of pyramids
and camels
my kingdom for a beggarly denier
I see the world is round
and hold it in my child's hands
well traveled in your stories
I pray now that we can realign
against the evil
religion brings to the oppressed
that magi lift their hearts to god
and climb the mountains of Babel
holding words instead of weapons,
and as their voices reach
heaven
God hears the faithful ask forgiveness
for themselves and all of history.
amen and amen

*Jang- a Dari Afghan word for war
Anne Elezabeth Pluto
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