

L I S A B E R N S T E I N ( L I S A B )

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## The New War

The new war has started.  
Photos of caskets  
disappear the next day from the newspapers.  
The new wounded come home  
with nano-reels of film curled  
in their cells, inscriptions  
for their children,  
genetic messages for the living world.

The civilians recall their airtight homes  
as one frame appears on the news  
and another:  
the man with the hood over his head  
and wires strung from his extended arms,  
the man crouched naked before the dogs...

The new war has started.  
The new wounded come home  
with hidden inscriptions for their children...

Do you hear the singing far below us, the stirring  
in the soft dirt?

I won't walk again on that darkening ground.  
I can still taste the rotten fruit  
where the dead keep turning  
and the sweet honey I found near it.  
Let the fruit fall here in the open light  
where we can see it and eat it.

But the veterans will go down again, Persephones,  
every winter,  
and if they're lucky, only then.

The new war goes on.  
The soldiers send messages, digital snapshots  
like bright, strange apples fallen to earth—  
the red blood, the randomly arranged bodies.

Sickening fruit—may it fall  
into the light  
and be seen by the world.

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Poet and singer **LISA BERNSTEIN** (Lisa B) has released five CDs on her own label, including “Christmas Time Is Here (and Chanukah and the Solstice)” in 2011 and “The Poetry of Groove” in 2009, all available from iTunes, Amazon, and CDBaby. Her poetry book *The Transparent Body* was published in 1989 by Wesleyan University Press. Recent poems are in *Caliban Online* Nos. 2, 4, and 7. She lives in Oakland, CA. Her father, a much-decorated WWII vet, is still thriving.