

L I S A G R A Y F I S H E R

The Double

A young soldier, ordered to search
a farmhouse, kicks open the door
with pistol cocked. Flattening his back
to the wall, as he's been trained to,
he jumps inside and smacks straight
into his double: a young soldier,
white-faced, weapon aimed at him.
In the shock-pause before they blow
each other to bits, the first man nearly
fails to recognize his reflection. The
hallway mirror does not recall to him
anyone he's been. What he sees is the
gun pointed at his head, his own gun,
death, the enemy, well-armed.

My father told this story of how he
almost killed himself, adding that
in any conflict we come to resemble
most closely those we oppose, the
essence and the irony of war.
Afterward, he carried his alien
reflection, that alter-image, with him
into battle, knowing himself doubled,
and knowing the double, one.

LISA GRAY FISHER'S poems, short fiction and essays have appeared in a variety of journals. Her debut novel, *Full Body Wag*, was published in 2011. Her father, J. Glenn Gray, based his renowned philosophical work, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*, on his service in World War II.