don't shoot! I have a camera
Arji Manuelpillai

A home, a deer, a mother,
cannot be differentiated
in an explosion,
a car bomb, a shopfront,
a baby's body becomes
a fruit bowl, a vase
a smidgen left…left
a girl weaves necklaces
out of bullets.
In a long list of horrible,
you wouldn't have guessed
burnt flesh would cut
such wonderful shapes.
Black as pupils,
the perfect crop
curled like it's trying
to remove its wings.
Shift it right slightly
I need to catch
the smoke trail,
that flag in the foreground.
I need it to stare
longingly back
into the lens.
Our brothers, fathers,
our grandfathers
all looking back at us.
The war, the war

is still happening.

Arji Manuelpillai

Arji Manuelpillai is a poet, performer and creative facilitator based in London. His debut pamphlet *Mutton Rolls* was published with Out-Spoken Press in 2020, and his debut collection *Improvised Explosive Device* was released with Penned in the Margins. This highly acclaimed book was noted in *The Telegraph*'s Top 20 poetry books of the year, as well as in *The Guardian*'s best recent poetry section. It was also the Winter PBS selection and Shortlisted for the Derek Walcott Prize.

A recording of this piece can be found at writersmosaic.org.uk

© Arji Manuelpillai