

# War Torn

Hasan  
Namir

*poems*

# War / Torn

Hasan Namir

BOOK\*HUG PRESS 2019

FIRST EDITION

Copyright © 2019 by Hasan Namir

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

The production of this book was made possible through the generous assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council. Book\*hug Press also acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund and the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Book Publishing Tax Credit and the Ontario Book Fund.



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts  
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO  
an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Financé par le  
gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada

Book\*hug Press acknowledges the land on which it operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Title: War / torn / Hasan Namir.

Other titles: War slash torn

Names: Namir, Hasan, 1987– author.

Description: First edition. | Poems.

Identifiers: Canadiana (print) 20190075325 | Canadiana (ebook) 20190075333

ISBN 9781771664936 (softcover)

ISBN 9781771664943 (HTML)

ISBN 9781771664950 (PDF)

ISBN 9781771664967 (Kindle)

Classification: LCC PS8627.A536 W37 2019 | DDC C811/.6—dc23

PRINTED IN CANADA

## THE STORY OF A MAN

This is 1990

This is the Gulf War

This is the story of a man  
who dresses like a man

who talks like a man  
who eats like a man

This is 2011

This is another war

This is the story of a man  
who dresses like a man

who talks like a man  
who eats like a man

This is 1990

This is when I held on to you

in the story of a man

who walks like a man  
who pees like a man

This is 2011

This is when I hoped you would  
in the story of a man

who farts like a man  
who drives like a man  
who shits like a man

This is 1990

This is when I struggled for you  
in the story of a man

who pays like a man  
who drinks like a man  
who comes like a man

This is 2011

This is when you fought with them  
in this story of a man

who drives like a man  
who cries like a man

## THE WORST

My legs were hanging in the air.

Words were like the chafe of a rope against the throat. I hadn't understood what it meant to be different, to stand out as the worst of humanity, worse than the gutter, worse than the worst sin. Like a dagger in its scabbard, pushing at the skin, I saw half my soul, waiting

on the other side. I had committed the worst sin, worse than marrying a Christian. I was a Shath, a fucking queer. And a Lotee, a damned faggot. I want to have a family. How hard can that be?

A man and a man and a baby.

## PAIRS

Two pairs of legs  
Over the bed  
Lotee & Shath  
Faggot & Queer  
Fuck each other  
Sodomites in saffron  
Too many gazes  
Masjid yawning in almond  
Two cock-sucking angels  
The Caspian Sea glistens  
By a broken window  
A mother watches  
Two boys come on each other  
A breeze sifts their eyes open  
A God can't watch  
Allah can't watch

## THE PIANO

Hold my piano hands and blow

Slurp my semen and my children

Push deeper and make me soar

Fuck me kindly and make me torn

Taste this milky blood and inhale

Make me a man. Make me home

Bend me in half and blow

Let me, Lotee, jump and send my Salam

Make me snort and fly high



## LOTEE & SHATH

1.

Do you remember?  
Summer  
2003  
Mesopotamia

2.

Today is holy Friday  
We must all be pure and clean  
We must wash our sins and grime  
Because in Iran we don't have  
Homosexuals like your homosexuals

3.

The rays of the sun  
Fighting the young soldiers  
Lotee & Shath

4.

The hellish hairs of fire  
Leave no rash on me

5.

You're a man  
What's a man?

6.

Halal is just a word  
Back chest arm

7.

Because today is holy  
We must wash our crimes  
You are a man  
Am I a man's man?

8.

The desert horses neigh  
Friends jump into the unknown  
Land on the Fire of Allah  
The scent of saffron

9.

If you remember  
their eyes  
fear and jealousy

10.

Allahu Akbar  
Bang Bang Bang

11.

I'm the Lotee  
Lonely hand  
Bloodied heart  
Grip the flag

12.

Then I remember to remember

Lotee & Shath  
Envy their namesakes  
Needles and pink

## JUST ANOTHER LOTEE

Karar Nushi's hair was blond  
Long straight green eyes  
Glowing on social media  
Shot in the head twice

Muhammad Al Mutairi was Shia  
Not that it mattered  
He was just another Lotee  
Stabbed to death

The other man was anonymous  
Shot within two days  
People of Lut be damned  
Kill all the Lotees & Shaths

It could have been me  
I am just another Lotee

I could have been stabbed to death  
I could have been shot within two days  
I could have been shot in the head

I want to see my mother

## KHUSRAH

[Through a fractured window  
I am overwhelmed by the revolt.  
Close the window.]

[This is my mother war-stricken and restless,  
carrying a photo album in her hand.]

[A book of coloured spaces,  
I look through these photos,  
forced to choose. I let out a sigh  
over the flag gagging the pole.]

[Mama, you knew.  
*Help me, son, I want to see your kids.*  
She poses like a wax mannequin,  
stunned near the radiator.]

[Through her eyes I am consumed  
by years of family history.  
I am about to claw the roots  
of the olive tree.  
I am now a Khusrah.]