

## ***Clocking Out: Empty Strollers in Lviv Square***

*(after Emily Dickinson's "It feels a shame to be alive" - F524A)*

*Al Salehi*

The day they died,  
there was no mid-night,  
for who could sense  
the halfway point?

We cried,  
as the stars shone darkly.  
The moon was full,  
but eclipsed by *mourning*.

Polaris,  
the "North Star,"  
lay cloaked behind lead-lined clouds  
of gunsmoke; embarrassed

that it may  
en-compass false hope.  
That night, Silence filled  
the absence of Time,

as the Hours  
called in sick  
from their positions  
on the clock.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Empty strollers sit in a Lviv square (Ukraine), representing children killed in the war it has endured with Russia in 2022.*