

## Million Dead

### "Carthago Est Delenda"

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To Carthage then I came as a young boy lost in the  
promise,  
of the steady beating heart of the metropolis.

But I spent so long beneath the dim street lighting  
that I strained my eyes and lost the finesse of my fine  
hand-writing.

It's not like I need it these days - my letters home have  
been getting shorter.  
I can't concentrate if I can't secure a source of clean  
water.

But there's never a drop to drink in the concrete  
furrows.  
My anger is Vesuvius casting its shadow.

I spent too long walking across bridges failing  
to appreciate the sweating river's flow escaping,  
leaving the city streets tinderbox-dry and oh-so-  
tempting.  
My fatigue is San Andreas shuddering slow.  
Shuddering slow.

I mark my lintel with bloodstains  
and dream of suburbs up in flames.

Every evening when I arrive back at home  
and finally lock my front door,  
Carthago Est Delenda,  
and the pavements are beaches once more.

But in the morning when my alarm wakes me,  
the concrete is back in its place.  
As I trudge through the streets at the break of day,  
it's the river that calls me away.

The river flows outside of town,  
away from dirt,  
away from crowds,  
and if I could follow it to the sea

I'd wash the sweat right off of me.

So break my legs and weigh me down,  
throw me in,  
but I won't drown,  
I'll float away, go down the stream.  
The river flows outside the city.

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