

## FIELD NOTES

### "The Boxer Dog"

There was a boxing match between an American dog and Iraqi dog in Jadiriyya, Baghdad. The Iraqi dog was scrawny, hungry, and utterly pathetic looking. The American dog on the other hand had a glossy coat of fur, was beautifully groomed with firm muscles, and a fierce growl.

The match began. After the first round, it seemed the Iraqi dog was winning, knocking the American dog to the mat several times. The same thing happened for two more rounds, with the American dog gasping and shying away from his adversary. By the end of the 5th round, the Iraqi dog had knocked out the American animal. He was declared victor.

The American trainers were astonished and wanted to know what was the secret of the miserable Iraqi dog. So they brought a lie detector machine to question the Iraqi. The American machine asked it, "What's the secret of your victory. You look so emaciated, hungry and without any energy at all.

The Iraqi animal replied: "It's because of the embargo that I became a dog. Do you know what I was before?"

Now, the American machine was very excited and it asked, "Tell us the truth. What were you?"

The Iraq dog answered: "Ah Sir; before the embargo, I was a lion!"

"Some Children"

Some children in Iraq--

kids,

died.

I am sad about that, because

I'm their language.

[Rami, age 10. March, 1991, New York]

"Night Sky"

She pleads, "Just imagine our lives".

Tilting my head to the night sky

I watch the stars shine calmly

over our small world.

From wherever we are,

Baghdad is not so far.

[by Lisa Suhair Majaj, from Geographies of Light, a book in progress, October 2006]

"My Mother's Shawl"

I'll tie my mother's shawl

to the muzzle of my rifle

and carry the laughter

and happy looks of children

in my pack.

[Unknown soldier 1, 1991, Iraq]

"Two Camels at the Border" A short story

Two camels met each other at the Iraqi border with Turkey, one on his way into Turkey, the other coming from Turkey into Iraq.

"Why are you coming to Iraq asked the Iraqi camel to the Turkish camel?

"Don't you know? We have so much terror in Turkey; if they suspect I am Kurd, it is worse. I am sure Iraq will be safer.

But what about you in Iraq? We heard things are getting better; you have more food, you are even using cell phones, and you have a few computers nowadays. Why are you heading for Turkey?" asked the camel from there.

"Well you know life is hard," replied the camel for Baghdad. No one trusts anyone here. Saddam has declared that all camels with three testicles are under suspicion."

The Turkish camel looked under the belly of the Iraqi camel and said, "but you have two balls; that is the normal number! You have nothing to worry about."

"Ah," answered the Iraqi camel. "We in Iraq, we kill first, and then we count."