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After the War

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Harel: After the War

AFTER THE WAR

Jared Harel

My grandpa got a job at a munitions factory
with a female/male ratio of ten-to-one.
So many men had been killed in action
and my grandpa, a POW, just happened to survive.

He escaped with a friend and fellow soldier
Nazis shot in the head while crossing the creek.
For some reason the Nazis took only
one shot, and when at last he stopped running,

my grandpa was alone. He mentions this last bit
with little emotion, as if recalling a lotto ticket
two digits off. But that old factory
had so many women. So many widows

still filling ammo, blending gunpowder
just to be safe. Each week, he insists,
he was with another woman who'd hold him
like a ghost before going back to work.