

GROUNDED, SIDE #2

...

I report to my Commander
 He's happy to see me
 Was waiting for me
 Tells me I'm needed now more than ever
 Pilots pilots are the most needed
 It's a new desert now Iraq is done stick a fork in it
 I tell him fine different desert same war
 I am ready to suit up
 Tiger I want Tiger back she must have missed me she
 will embrace me and lift me back up into the blue
 Commander smiles a funny smile
 He says, "New plane"
 I say new plane?
 But Tiger
 The funny smile again
 He says, "Forget Tiger. New plane, the newest."
 Fuck
 A new
 I think of breaking it in
 The seat the stick the pain in my ass but then I think
 I do think
 I'm sorry Tiger but I think
 It's new
 Brand new
 It's the latest
 I think of the speed
 The firepower
 That I will be the first to fly her
 That she will be mine all mine

I think of all that and a smile sneaks out
 I nod and say can I see her?
 That funny smile again
 He pulls a picture out of a folder
 I think it's a joke
 I say this is a drone
 "No," he says, "it's a Reaper"
 I say it's a drone
 He says, "It's the newest we have, the best we have"
 I say this is a drone
 You want me in the Chair Force
 He tells me careful, that is not its name that I know
 better that that is not its name
 I say you want to stick me in the Chair Force
 I am a real pilot a fighter pilot I can help let me help
 He says, "This is how you help
 This is what we need
 This is the war"
 I say bullshit
 A million dollars to train me
 You don't spend a million dollars so I can fly a remote
 control plane
 You need fighter pilots
 You always need fighter pilots
 I say is this punishment?
 He says, "What?"
 I say for getting pregnant is this how you punish me?
 He says, "No, no," he says, "listen. You'll be hunting
 down the real bad guys, conducting personality strikes"
 I say sir –
 He says, "Just try it for a few months, and we'll
 see –"

I say sir no one ever comes back from the Chair Force
it's the Bermuda Triangle no one ever comes back

He says, "I realize it's an adjustment"

I say sir with all due respect –

He says, "Major? Shut the fuck up."

He says, "I know how it is

I know all you F-16s love being worshipped I know you
love being top shit

I know

So listen to me

Carefully

I am not asking you to give that up

Because top shit will come top shit is on its way

There was a time the bomber pilot was top shit you're
too young you wouldn't remember

It's use

Use

Which one is useful

Which one gets the job done

They're not making F-16s anymore Major

The F-16s are dinosaurs

Put out to pasture

Used for drone target practice

The drones?

Can't make 'em fast enough

Five years, tops

Two

Fuck one

In one year

The drone will be king

And you

Patience

You will be top shit again

Dismissed"