POETRY

The explosion at a Glock Plant in Georgia

Dedicated to Rep. Gabrielle Giffords of Tucson, Arizona

Left one man dead, though he arrived at Grady Hospital,
"in critical condition," another man in "satisfactory,"
according to the spokesman, and a woman, unhurt
though dazed, like the witness to a sniper's spree
awake for everything; it is most likely she
who will develop "post-traumatic stress"
so much later than one might ever guess —

But after the explosion's hour on *Yahoo!*
all news of it vanished into the ether.
Only the *Augusta Chronicle* wrote it up,
while the *Michigan Shooter* never asked:
When an explosion takes out a gun plant,
how many lives are saved?
Instead, the magazine laments
the airlines' lack of armed pilots
and crows that a bill to ban assault rifles
would slowly be left to die — as it did.

What was the name of the man
who died that day, in the Glock plant?

I scour the web for more news of this explosion,
and finding none, news of explosions at other gun plants,
all the thousands of them, the glimmering origins
of somebody's death, functioning and whole.

In other news: in California, the dough-muscled
Austro-American Action Star turned governor
campaigns against automatic weapons
as though he had never seen a single one of his films,
or maybe, having seen them to the point of nausea,
devoted his political life to repentance.

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The Glock plant in Georgia is gone, or maybe it's
been rebuilt and enlarged, joining its fellow plants
for whose music some must suffer a lacerated bowel
or undergo surgery to lift a shattered bit of skull
or spend weeks under fluorescent lights
as a trauma counselor attempts
to restore her sanity, her voice.

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This poem is included in Ron Charach's new book, *Forgetting the Holocaust* (Frontenac House, 2011).

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