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Veterans, in Their Own Words

Published: May 8, 2009

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We are not statues

Standing among the trees,

A tribute to what has passed.

We are not statues,

Though our faces are stone,

Chiseled by time, shaped by history

That we are now part of,
As it is part of us.

We are living monuments,
Stoic in the shadows
As the world around us moves.

Colin Halloran, 23, senior
Central Connecticut State University

Fallujah, a Sunny Day

In a mosque,
In the City of Mosques,

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A rivulet of light shines through mortared roof
Onto the corpse of a newly dead insurgent

And flecks of tobacco ash
Pepper the ground nearby.

Outside:

AK47 rat-a-tats paradiddle in stride
With Saint Michael's march,

Allah's wrath inflames
The nearby hell house again,

Death sits on its roof handing
Out cigarettes to the combatants,

Charon beaches his craft
Off the serpentine Euphrates,

And the Marlboro Marine smokes another;

All

Before

Going back in.

Dario DiBattista Jr., 25, senior

Central Connecticut State University

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Stand Down

They came in large numbers

With stooped gait and weathered skin,

puckered and scarred

With wheelchair, cane and walker

USMC, USN, USA, USAF

They all came to represent

They smoke cigarettes like true vets

with squinted eyes between brown-stained fingers

as though they are still

in trenches and foxholes

They smoke quickly, taking deep drags

Overhand

not under like a sissy

All the black men

remind me of my Korean vet father

Stationed in quarters at Calverton;

a U.S. Army Private

at continual parade rest

Line up in single file

for free clothes and socks

A meal and a sweet treat

All have been taught

eat all you want, but eat what you take

Line up in single file

For the public defender

For child support enforcement

Explain your sins and seek for them

to be erased

At least for one day

Lisa Smith-Overton, 39, graduate student

Western Connecticut State University

For Vivi

I

When the heavy-metal click starts the day

Florescent fairies dance in their tubes

Reflections of my eyes into my eyes

While hands rest on the white porcelain sink.

A dream, so real, sticks with me

Memory of gentle breezes with summer smells

Wet coolness tries to wash away the haze.

It seemed I had just rested my head on feather down...

II

Finding my eyes adjusting to a bright azure ceiling

Body quivers at the breezes cool, gently shake

A dream, so real, lingers

Stale smells and blue and red flash

The siren's call

Almost real

It seemed I had just placed my head down

On nature's serene, bluegrass bed...

III

Are we the ones who dream?

Sean T. Richmond, 25, senior

Eastern Connecticut State University

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