

An AWOL God

—Dick Hattan

Where were You at the lottery of unsought soldiers
When celebrations and despair spared no youthful face?
Where were You as the typewritten commands
Sent jungle-clad children on missions of murder?

But the Lord was not in the wind.

Where were You when sappers and punji sticks
Destroyed limbs of all-American hope?
Where were You as protesting playmates decried the horror,
During the year-long sentence of death?

But the Lord was not in the earthquake.

Where were You as the spray of orange poison
Rained from heaven with cancerous consequences?
Where were You as the newly armed warrior
Spent a magazine of fire at unseen enemies?

But the Lord was not in the fire.

Where were You during the rape of black silk daughters,
Begging for life during the respite from combat?
Where were You when the warbirds' noise
Muffled Your small, still voice?

Were You there? Did you hear me?