

Veterans Day

—Dick Hattan

Old warriors in crumpled suits
wearing tarnished medals from a distant war,
Color guard with weathered guns
firing volleys into rapt attention.

Retelling stories with foreign names
changing with the march of time,
Attentive to the bugler's call,
remembering names of ageless youth.

Agent Orange with malaria pills
eating the bodies of bygone heroes,
Shouldered weapons with the smell of fire,
recalling images of sweltering jungle heat.

Belated thanks from faceless crowds
rising with latte-filled goblets,
Toasting the lives stolen from death,
hailing the feast day of citizen soldiers.