

A Manageable War

Are we to believe that there is one?

A soldier takes a break to peel
a dragon fruit, then resolved
to take a vacation in the jungle.

Some may say this is desertion
but the colors of the fruit
lures him to taste
what is different.

In Laos, smiling women bring
flowers in their home to brighten
what they see as dark. If
they happen to cross the soldier,
he would calm their fright
and say his bullets are not for them, pleads
with them that they, women,
are in fact sacred.

They offer him a shower
with water shimmered from their stove.
On the other burner, they cook
a hearty meal for his hunger. In the
remaining time, he trips over
a bamboo ledge on the floor and
finds what has been missing in his life.
He falls for one of the women and is elated
in her charm and custom.

So much like the dragon fruit, he allows
himself. Then, in the finality,

years after, bearing joy, offspring and all,
he slips back into the jungle, manages
what was not an abandonment
and embraces what
was and is war.



Ted Bernal Guevara is a freelance writer from Speedway, Indiana. Although he delves in an array of themes—always looking for the unusual—he tends to adhere to the plight of the disabled and the helpless, their profound richness. His upcoming collection, *Tonto & Destinata*, hopefully will provide such tools for life. Ted has been published in *Suisun Valley Review*, *Elbow Lane*, *Anaphora Literary Press*, *Ely Two* and *Vending Machine Press*.



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