

War Wound

1965.

It was a small sore.
A puncture wound.
More like a pin-prick
on my right hand.
But it swelled,
blistered,
reddened,
as shooting pains
penetrated
my arm,
my chest.

1968.

My body
a bulbous mass,
inflamed and split.
The sutures could not
keep the blood
from dripping
onto the floor.
Putrid shades of green,
bordered by black
oozed
as the infection continued
to spread.

1971.

I bombarded,
defoliated,
liquidated,
expatriated.

Everything,
but liberated.

And I heard them talk.

I was losing,
my hand,
my body,
my spirit.

1973.

The swelling
contained.

The pain
subsided.

I could feel my fingertips.

The fever had broken.

1982.

I went for a walk.

Testing.

To get some air.

Testing.

And came to the

long,

black

wall.

A small spasm,

only a flinch,

minor pain

as I reached

to place

the red

carnation.

1990.

It was a small sore.

A bloodless wound.

But it swelled,

reddened,

blistered.

Shooting pains

penetrated

my arm,

my chest.