

Old Soldiers

By Marilyn Reeves

I see pictures of old soldiers –
Fathers, brothers, lovers, and friends
Who fought in the Second World War.
And later were sent across the world
To Korea and Viet Nam.

Handsome and slim, steadfast and strong –
Brave, muscular, virile young men.
They liberated others from the Nazi regime
And from the terrors of Ho Chi Min.

I look out my window today
And see an old man
Hobbling along on his cane.
And I whisper to him,
“Could you have been one of them?”

As I recall the days of my youth,
I see myself with my friends –
All of us happy, carefree and young.
With our glossy hair and silk-smooth skin,
I remember the way we were then.

Now I look in the mirror at the way I am –
With thinning hair and sagging skin,
And I wonder where it's all gone.

Yet when we all come together
To enjoy one another,
I see past the wrinkles and wear.
I see people still vital and glowing
From a light that still shines from within.

Though age may impair us
It doesn't define us.
There's still beauty inside us.
We remain who we are
To the end.