

Wilderness House Literary Review 1/4

PANAMA TEN

Two political prisoners were sitting
In their jeep with two
Panamanian National Guardsmen
Outside a bar in town

The two Panamanian Nationals
Went inside to check the bar
Leaving the two men
Handcuffed outside alone

Once inside the guardsmen spoke
To the bartender
In a language
I couldn't understand
When suddenly there was an explosion
Coming from outside the bar
And without looking the
Two guardsmen laughed
And downed their tequila and beers
While outside you could see the
Flames engulf the jeep
The two prisoners lit up
Like two scarecrows
Tossed into
A bonfire

PANAMA MEMORIES

The young Panamanian girl
Sitting alongside
Her sister dressed only
In panties and bra
Reading a comic book
And chewing on bubble gum
At a brothel called the
Teenage Club
Waiting for the first
GI's to arrive

Six girls lined-up
Like bowling pins
Rooted to the long
Wooden bench with
Zombie like stares
Doing a woman's thing inside
A child's body

RETURNING HOME FROM PANAMA

They had this bar at Ocean beach
Called the Chalet
It used to be a hangout for vets
The American Legion boys
Most of them fat and balding
The years piling up like litter
One so old that
He claimed he was gassed in
WW 1
You never knew whether
To believe him or not
He just sat there staring
Talking into his beer
Humming a song:
OVER HERE OVER THERE
And using terms like
Dough Boy and Pill Box
And you just somehow knew
He had to have been there
Was still there would always
Be there

A.D.Winans

*** These poems were first published in a chapbook (This Land Is Not My Land) by Presa Press.