

Toy Soldiers

by Tom Frazier

Toy soldiers count their cadence
on a foggy Monday morning of fall—
up and down uneven sidewalks;
road guard out;
dogs barking, trailing close behind;
breakfast lights and curses
at “them damned college kids”—
but on and forward they set in their heels,
fighting away fear soon gone,
challenging enemies yet to be
to meet them at the corner
before reversing direction for the trip home.
They march. They count loudly
to the moon and sing group songs
about Jody’s having their “gal and gone,”
gung-ho, young, “being all they can be”
until the real world calls them back
to breakfast in the campus dining hall.