

Soldier

I felt
The soldiers fear
And at the same time
Felt good
About myself
About my life
Though afraid
I was not scared
The excitement
Gave me confidence
In what I am doing
What I must do everyday
If we are to win this war
People will die
Yet I feel it is naïve
To blame God
For my violence
In his name
Both sides believe
But this of course
Is man's fault
That it came to this
Bringing me here
To this mountain
To kill another
But for me
I am a soldier
And the fear
Means I am alive
This is real
Life or death
Me or him
And I chose me
With no regrets
Only pride
In country
And the honor
Of walking off the mountain
Though I no doubt left
A part of my soul there

—Lt. Col. Walt Piatt
Afghanistan 2004