AND IN THE SPRING THE FLOWERS BLOOM

The child crept
through the woodland playground
like the lion stalking his prey,
His toy weapon held steadily,
aimed at his unsuspecting friend.
The child screamed his delight as
his friend fell to the ground.

The young man smiled, recalling
his early childhood,
But the chilly, wet evening
brought the boy-man to his main
occupation of the time—
Keeping warm.

The ball fell away from the rim,
    he grabbed it,
    passed it off to his friend.
The ball came back to him,
    the fans screamed, banshee-like
    in their vain attempt to stop the clock.
He shot,
    the ball arched and swished
    through the basket
    as the buzzer sounded with
    the winning point.

Again the night cold and dampness
    returned his thoughts
    to their immediate problem—
    getting warm and comfortable.
    Comfortable once more . . .

He rushed into the church,
    already late,
    and hurried to the front.
They laughed about it,
    Shirley and he did,
    But she was worried that he
    had forgotten—or
    had chickened out.

The child was hiding in the
    small foxhole
    waiting for his friend
    to find him.
They were moving up the hill
    throwing their toy grenades
    ineffectively in his direction.
Suddenly one of his friends
leaped to the top of the
foxhole, yelling . . .

He was wide awake
and there was
standing over his foxhole,
not his friend—
but the enemy.
Chills, fear, ran through him
as he raised his hand and screamed,
"Help me, God!"
BANG! BANG! BANG!
The man screamed as he bumped
to the ground,

His body deformed by the bee-like
bullets; in agony
he writhed, then lay still.

His wife and child, whom he had
never seen, mourned his death
quietly.
And in the Spring the flowers bloom,
the birds sing
and the sun warms the earth.

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