

# “Fallujah”

by Jerry Staub

We fly into Kuwait City  
Dusty and hot; it isn't pretty.  
On the bus, hearts in our throats;  
we hear “Gas!” But, it's just a hoax.  
Our bus pulls in to Camp New York  
off we step, feeling hot and torqued.  
All week we prep for our trip up North,  
before, to Fallujah, we set forth.  
Fully equipped, we hop into Humvees,  
hot as hell; no fucking breeze.  
We cross the border into Iraq,  
two battalions of grunts, keen to attack.  
Along Route Jackson we make our way  
when a huge explosion rocks our day.  
One Humvee is ripped to shreds,  
three of our soldiers now lie dead.  
Our convoy stops, security's tightened,  
stress and BP levels now are heightened.  
We probe for mines and IEDs in our way,  
waiting by the roadside the whole damn day.  
At midnight our convoy starts up again  
creeping at a snail's pace with great disdain.  
At 0200 we see village lights nearby;  
we stop as explosions brighten up the sky.  
I get a sinking feeling within my gut  
as automatic weapons, close-by, now erupt.  
Armored vehicles, gun trucks pass on my right,  
while troopers light up insurgents in the night.  
By 0400, mop-up's begun, prior to our BDA,  
then, on the move again, after much delay!  
I see pick-up trucks to our right, up ahead;  
a silhouette with an RPG aimed at my head!  
I brace for a blast to our Humvee  
as the road explodes right in front of me.  
Our windshield implodes and I black out;  
later I wake, a nasty headache from the clout.  
Small shards of glass to face and neck,  
but all limbs and junk are intact—what the heck?!

“Snap out of it!” The Sergeant yells. “Man the SAW,”  
as rounds zip by and explosions rock us all.  
I pick up my SAW and light up the trucks;  
they explode, incinerating all inside—poor schmucks.  
My vehicle’s destroyed, but that threat’s contained,  
I hitch a ride with Sarge; we’re on the road again.  
We roll into Fallujah just after noon; I hit the rack.  
Only 350 more days till my tour’s up,  
... and I can leave fucking Iraq.

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**Jerry Staub** served in the California National Guard from 1969 – 1975. He is retired and he and his wife of forty-four years reside in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho with their two four-legged children, Lola, and Jed. He has published three books of poetry, *Patriot Songs*, *Whispering Winds*, and his most recent book, *They Bravely Fought – Tales of Brave Deeds and Bells that Toll*. His primary interest is writing patriotic and military-themed poetry to honor the brave men and women who have protected us throughout our history, while discussing the realities and negative impact of warfare.