

From Here to There and Back Again: Some Notes From the Journey

By Jim Carlton

A Long Journey

I've walked a long, arduous journey.
I'm dusty, weary, needing a place to rest.

My mouth is parched, lips dry and cracked, eyes are red.
My muscles ache, joints hurt, skin burns as my spirit tries to pass this test.

I see a mirror of clear, blue water rising in the distance far away.
I navigate toward it; the more I walk, though, the further it seems to be.

The light yesterday was bright, leading me the right way, I thought.
But no such brightness to guide me today, no path in this hostile wilderness to see.

I keep on walking, persisting, as if blind going through a dark, dangerous jungle.
I'm always bumping into something, it seems, that shifts my course, whirls me around.

What is it that keeps bouncing me here and there and everywhere, I wonder.
There's no one else nearby, so could it just be my own self that's always slowed me down?

Bio

Jim Carlton has participated in the Veteran's Writers Group in Lincoln, Nebraska, since its inception in 2014.

Jim is an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. Navy where he served onboard the aircraft carrier USS Ticonderoga, which was involved in Naval combat operations off the coast of Vietnam and in the Gulf of Tonkin during the Vietnam War.

Jim is retired and lives in Lincoln with his wife and dog, Maggie. He has written these poems over a span of years. They have all been presented at the VA Writer's Group and have been edited and rewritten based on feedback and suggestions from the group.