No … *After You, I Insist*© January 2013, by Don Poss

Too many years to think, and wonder  
why I lived and you died.

I don’t think we planned it to happen;   
it’s just that we suddenly were there  
and suddenly I fired and you did not.

*I wonder why?*

You were alone.  
I was on point.

Unexpected. But that is silly  
considering the fact we were only  
there because of the war and  
searching each other out.

Still,   
I knew you could be there,   
but you had never just appeared  
like a sudden slap.

If I could undo it …  
If I could be certain you would  
never kill my friends, and  
If I could believe you,  
I think I would undo it all.  
I’ve wished for that so many  
sleepless nights.

I’ve seen you fall…  
blown backwards really,   
and not get up nor  
breathe again.  
Too many holes to even  
think of trying to stop your  
life draining away, even if I had   
wanted to.

I didn’t.

Your spirit fled so fast and  
your eyes took on that look only dead  
eyes can acquire to mock the irony of life…  
and so easily give up the ghost without  
any fight to live.

No *by your leave…*No *sorry’bout the mess*…  
No … *just deal with it*.  
Just … *gone*.  
Checked out.

Did God see you fall, like a sparrow, that day?

*Pats on my back…  
defensive laughter…  
cursing your body and believe me,  
many did that.*

Going through your stuff,   
discarding photos with rude  
remarks.  
  
Posed photos … as if you were a  
hunting trophy.  
I could not bring myself  
to throw mine away after  
all these years. Until finally,  
I realized my eyes looked more  
and more like yours. So I left  
your crinkled black'n white soul  
at a Buddhist temple in LA.

*They were scared and  
I was terrified at what  
just happened to you …  
what had just happened to me.*

How easily I had fired in reflex, and how  
easily you fell, just like the movies, and  
I oh how easily I just walked away,  
forced grin … macho,  
forever changed.

*Better you than me*,  
so I’ve told myself Lord knows  
how many times.

Would you have felt the same?  
Would you have still wondered why?

*What the hell were you doing  
out there alone?*