

**Defenders' of the Fortress,
Last Stand**

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Like flares drifting, sputtering and
flaming out, Another Brother Fell. Echo
not yet faded ...
Another Flight is called.

Melancholy. Sad. Tearful, I'll admit.
Fewer now our brotherhood, though
stronger we still get. Honoring and
Guarding 111's fame, as doth
Three Warriors guard the Wall of
Names.

Remember when we came home from
war to hostile hoorahs, and learned to
keep silent to all, except those who
had been there? And how decades
followed, and life moved on, with its
ups and downs throughout life's song?

By night ... we dreamt of dark mêlées
when danger slammed the wire and
Rockets streaked the clouds.

Does it matter we once held back
clashing tides that smashed against
perimeters wide; or held firm
through the fracas night...
though death but a misstep away?

Or how we survived when brothers
fell, their blood still fertile in that
foreign hell, and the newly fallen rest
in hallowed ground? We honor one
and all.

Now we are summoned to dust by the
score in answer to trumpet's call.
Who will last stand before the breach
and sally forth into the light?

Then who will remember the 20,000
defenders, who safeguarded eagles
through war's long nights?