

WILLIAM HUDSON

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## After Nam

“Welcome home.”

—President Barack Obama

Forty-six years later  
My smug words uttered  
In some otherworld of righteousness  
Cause me pain I can only  
Imagine was felt at hearing them.

Far from welcome  
I offered scorn

Far from welcome  
I struck at wounds  
Whose scabs were still forming

Far from welcome  
I offered indifference  
To the wince my words induced

Far from shame  
I have blanked from memory  
What those words were.

—To Mike Kavanaugh

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**WILLIAM HUDSON** was born in Arkansas, grew up both there and in Illinois, lives now in Spokane, where he worked many years for a community action agency. He has appeared in *The Caribbean Writer*, *HEArt Journal*, *Review Americana*, *DMQ Review*, *The View From Here*, *New Madrid Review*, *The Honey Land Review*, *Pif Magazine*, *The Other Journal*, and elsewhere.