

Zachary Willey



Afghan Dust

Oh, this hot Afghani sun-
who would live here, anyone?
"Move your base there way on down
you're building on our future town"
through rotten teeth and peppered hair
says the shriveled Bandar Mayor.

I'm sure he wonders why we're here-
he wades in our wake a lake of fear.
He cannot see we'll do what's right
that peace is why we're here to fight.
Too proud to speak what's on his mind-
is it culture, or pride, that makes him blind?

I say, "hey wait, let's talk a while"
and flash my white, American smile
My boyish grin and short cropped hair
is a credible look most anywhere.
His laugh and hands say otherwise-
a different world under Afghan skies.

He walks away-slurs goodbye.
Is it dust, or tears, that sting my eyes?
I tell myself I don't care-
I've worries enough being fresh out of school
and told my degree
is a certification to set the world free.

So, I'm sorry about your little plot
of land, it's not a lot to give
in return for America's best try
led by me, your average guy.