

Joe Lunchbox Went to War

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Rifles were made of wood and steel
Cars had fins and iron engines
Dad could still recite his General Orders
and the World Made Sense.

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Men wore cotton utilities and leather boots
And kids said Yes, Sir and Yes, Ma'am
Took their hats off indoors
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Marilyn and Jack were still burning memories
Hope still clung to a college diploma
Nametags were black on white
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Babuschka spoke Polish around the house
And every kid could swear in Eye-talian or Erse
Metal buttons cuffless sleeves yellow chevrons
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Grampa glowered martial from his doughboy photo on the wall
Mom wore an apron all day long
Black porcelain panthers stalked unseen prey atop every teevee set
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
The spirit of the bayonet was "Kill!"
Rick Nelson was Ricky Nelson then
Girls still didn't do it or even say it
but the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
You talked to officers in the third person
You carried a comb
You cuffed your dungarees
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
He took Dad's blessing and his teacher's

The first Hondas took gingerly to the American road
The bestowal of a high school ring was a consecration like Communion
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
The neighbor pressed his hand and said "Give 'em hell, boy!"
Bob Zimmerman was pillaging Woodie Guthrie
A fella had the Draft to look out for
but the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
Squa'leader said to shutthefuckup and hump the A-6
It weighs 33 fucking pounds but it's worth 20 guys in a fight
So hump it and keep it clean and don't fuck with it O'Ryan will do the firing
and the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
His belly got knotted up with some kinda worms
He had to swallow these big gelatin capsules full of kerosene
And then slug down a canteencuppa mineral oil to flush the dead bugs out
but the World Made Sense

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
He watched a dozen guys die right in front of his eyes before he ever saw a dink
Pathetic little bundle of rags liceinfested thick darkish froth at his lips
Knees pulled up to his chest like a small child sleeping
and the World Made

When Joe Lunchbox went to war
A B-40 slammed into a tree near him showered him with frags
His chest his face his hands he gasped for breath wiped a thick darkish froth from his lips
Stumbled rolled smacked into a tree howled sobbed railed wailed begged wimpered
and the World

When Joe Lunchbox came home from war
Dad looked up from the teevee Mom didn't live there no more
Men wore highheeledshoes women did
America was losing
and