

*Kyle Torke*

## Two Poems

### Attention

The General left his four stars on the bench  
Beside his trousers and marched to the shower,  
Towel pressed neatly against him like a flag  
Draped across the coffin. The others already  
Installed wanted to salute, to raise soapy hands  
And snap to attention, but the General turned  
His back to them and reached his towel  
To the hook, nearly too high, and swiveled  
Toward the farthest spigot, chrome and solid  
And solitary. Each man completed his mission,  
Did not smile, passed without looking. Finished,  
The General reached for his towel as if hung  
Among the stars, grabbed a small piece of heaven,  
And cinched the clouds tightly around his waist.

### War Planes

Ft. Carson's fifteen rows of train tracks, fallopian tubes hosting  
Tanks and personnel carriers and howitzers, lose their edge  
Beneath the dusting of snow and appear from the road like anacondas  
Freshly slaughtered and presented for market. Men in camouflage  
Twirl whistles, finger M-16s, monitor the corpses, surveying for openings,  
Ants who could be squeezed to death if any muscle twitched.  
With their rotors removed, strapped to a flatbed like amputated arms,  
The helicopters cluster on their hosts like dragonflies pinned for exhibition,  
The bulging front eyes lifeless as statuary under the snow. Tomorrow,  
The train-yard will empty one track at a time, like sperm in an orderly swim  
To the coast, and sweet-talk a battleship until her thighs yield. Inside  
The womb, the snow will melt, and all the great metal will gleam  
As if polished, and then, in stillness, the birth.

**Kyle Torke** publishes poetry and fiction, and his screenplays have won awards. Gorsky Press released *Archeology of Bones*, a collection of poems, in 2001.