

## **Poem for the image of the Cahill Expressway**

**By Alana Hall**

Standing under the spotlight  
so far from centre stage,  
under the watchful eye of stone heroes.  
The clock of the Watchtower  
ticking in time  
with the rest of the world.

He'd imagined the uniform,  
the rows of medallions  
across his left breast.  
The homecoming kiss  
from the pretty young thing  
with the ruby lips and doting eyes,  
standing in the crowd by the docks.

Now he stood on the corner,  
listening to baby killer lullabies  
sung by those who never saw  
to those who never stop.  
Feeling the void of an arm  
his country had taken  
in payment of services rendered.

There's pissing in jars  
and flinching at needles,  
utopian visions  
of nuclear families  
in commercial sized packages.  
A new carpet cleaner to bring you  
immediate undiluted satisfaction.

The unfading wet slap of gunfire  
followed by a wetter wail.  
Nightmares of boys  
destined to never be men,  
dart in the shadows  
and climb from the cracks.

He can hear the clock  
ticking,  
and behind it  
he hears the echoes, of other  
clocks  
which have counted off  
the seconds of his life before.  
He can hear everything  
he has ever heard,  
but behind the ticking, behind the sound,  
he can hear the other;  
Clean and sterile and cold.  
He can hear the something of nothing  
and it won't  
go away,  
and now;  
It's all that's left of all there was.