Witness

by Lynn Harrigan

Driving down a country road
elated by the sun’s warmth and rolling corn fields
I glimpse an old woman shuffling down a gravel lane
toward the roadside mailbox
a red coat thrown over her housedress

Rising through the dust of distant memory
a little girl dark hair spilling over the shoulders of
her red jacket unbuttoned and flapping
as she flies beneath rifles through Warsaw streets
into a deserted apartment building disappearing beneath a bed

She reappears in a wheelbarrow full of lifeless bodies rag doll twisted

In the careless rush toward burial the red jacket flutters and
this idyllic morning splits wide open