

2015

Walking Point

Terry Hertzler

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hertzler, Terry. "Walking Point." *The Iowa Review* 45.1 (2015): 165-165. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.7606>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

Walking Point

He's probably 13 or 14, matchstick thin,
dressed in black pajamas like so many
Vietnamese, flip-flops, thick black hair:

but startled now, wild headlight eyes.
(He'd been walking the narrow jungle
trail, rifle casual over his shoulder, like

a 14-year-old carries a baseball bat,
when the American soldier stepped
into his path.) And the boy stands

frozen for a moment, then drops his
weapon and runs. The soldier snaps
his rifle to his shoulder, sights square

on the boy's back, then hesitates. *Do it*,
he thinks. But in that second, the whisper
in his head—half-remembered words

from childhood wedged for weeks now
in some itchy corner of his brain—begins
its tuneless buzz: *tongues of men*,

*tongues of angels, sounding brass, tinkling
cymbal.* And as the boy vanishes, he lowers
his weapon, no longer a soldier.