

"Brats"- The Little Soldier

By Diane Dillard Broadnax

Nice to meet you. Where are you from?
Nowhere and everywhere, until my dad's job is done.

My belongings in a box, my life behind a gate,
Deployments and decorum shape my fate.

I'm cultured and spunky, courteous and bright,
You see my resilience, but my true self's not in sight.

My view expands the globe; my nation a strange land,
I pledge allegiance to my distant country, with lifted hand

My community is the Corps; my neighborhood a melting pot,
I adapt, I move, say "hale and farewell" to friends- a lot

I have no insignia, but I serve all the same,
My tour of duty unseen, outside my last name.

Born to serve, enlisted at birth,
The cost of my service, how much is it worth?

My race is black, brown, red or white- I am your kin,
But I'm defined by my experiences and not my skin.

I seek to show you my world, its privilege and pain,
You see, children of the Cold War, to us we all look the same.

I'll tell you of my world, my life, my wrath,
But I'm not sure you'd understand unless you'd traveled the path.

When security and war defines your existence,
Your childhood, wrapped in duty, meets with resistance.

I'm glad I have a shared code; you see we brats recognize our own,
I'll try to explain but unless you truly care, I'll leave it alone.

I love my country, my father for his sacrifice, my mother for her duty,
When our forces come together, it's surely a thing of beauty.

I was born with a pride difficult to describe,
At times I rebel, my pain I no longer can hide.

I'm vulnerable yet tough; I don't easily let you in.
In my world that's hard, because I have to start over again.

I am part of a heritage, shared by a few,
For I am the little soldier you never knew.

