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Castro's Conscience

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CASTRO'S CONSCIENCE

Larry Turner

In those years - they have called us the dud generation -
after the fall of McCarthy but before Vietnam,
at the university we heard little
of what was happening in the world,
and little was. So isolated were we
that I knew Christmas was approaching
only when surprised by a decorated tree in the cafeteria.

It chanced a magazine described Castro and his rebels
hiding in the hills of Cuba.
It was as if an angel had appeared to me with the message:
Go to Cuba; join him; serve as his conscience.

As when David was sent against Goliath
or when 300 under Gideon faced the host
of Midianites as thick as locusts,
my lack of qualification validated the call.
With one year of high school Spanish
and never yet south of Cincinnati,
at five-foot eleven and 115 pounds
I was an unlikely guerilla.
I acknowledged the call, but did not go.

What would have happened in Cuba
it was not mine to know,
it is not mine to speculate.
Instead

I acquired education, wife and family, career,
lived years of uneventful days
like some instrument custom-ordered
but never called for or delivered.