

## Three Poems · *George Bilgere*

### CEREMONY

Cremation's aftermath  
is not ash, but boney  
stones, a gravel sharp  
enough to cut the palm.  
It is the weight my mother  
held against me as we walked  
on the beach last month  
gathering small, empty shells.

Now I strew the dead  
seeds in a field,  
shards of that vessel  
I am freed of again.

### ALERT

All day the blue fairways of the bombers  
rumbled with take-offs and approaches  
though we grew used to it on our rambles  
into the valleys full of orange groves  
and eucalyptus trees where even owls  
slumbering there in daylight no longer  
flew when the gray smoldering angels broke  
the sound barrier into shaking leaves.  
At home we glued together model planes  
and on the longest, heat-stunned days at school  
the air drill sounded like rain, to set us  
dreaming of a lone pilot looking down  
at still cities ringing bells as he came  
and we assumed the foetal position.