

Second Prize

FINAL REPORT

A credit to the team

Decreasingly distinct
to night vision scopes,
the dying corporal fades
from bright to dark
as he surrenders heat.

Must try harder

Twelve hours on
his looted body lacks its eyes.
Cashless, a discarded wallet
spills two photographs:
a girl wearing a paper hat;
a soldier from another war
sitting, headless, in the snow.

Nil for conduct

He did two months in Colchester
for decking a sergeant.
Knocked a girl up in Exmouth
and promised to marry her.
And now the dwarf headmasters
dance their fury
as he leads his platoon
up over the rooftops,
waving new banners,
and singing new songs.

Duncan Brewer