

American Warrior

Autumn's Wall: My November journey to The Wall

The National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, [Constitution Gardens](#), Washington, D.C.

I find myself at the Nurses' sculpture, and know the work is in recognition of the eight women named on The Wall, and of the countless women who served in Vietnam. I study their expressions. Compassion is etched heavily upon their strained faces. One searches the sky for the medivac, but no chopper can be heard. Another cradles the fallen warrior, and by her drawn expression you know what she *knows* will happen soon, but she will comfort him with a fellow warrior's love until that moment. Perhaps she too has journeyed to this place since then. The wounded man is fading, yet peace and composure marks his acceptance, and reluctance, that he will never taste life in its fullness. The third nurse kneels, tending her bandages, and you can almost hear her unspoken

prayer: . . . *Please*
God . . . not
too late . . . not
too late again



Shadows grow long and I realize that time has slipped away. I know to that I am unlikely to cross this path again. I turn slowly and rewalk The Wall for one last good-bye to my friends . . . and as I pass the flag and Fighting Men, I understand their gaze also falls upon the many families, veterans, and friends of fallen warriors.

Together . . . *they* are The Wall.

Please God . . .
not too
late . . . not
too late again.

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