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What Do I Do about My Country

J. Truer

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What Do I Do about My Country

While my wife tried on dresses
in a small shop on the warren streets of Chora,
Naxos, the shop girl talked
about her boyfriend, how she wanted to marry,
but it would be a life on army bases,
moving every eighteen months.
And she is an island girl,
her whole life spent on one thousand square
kilometers of mountainous verdure.

I asked how high in rank was he.
One-point-seventy-five meters, she said.
Then, after a pause, *What do you do about your
country?* How do I answer that one?
How do I account? I shrugged, attempting
to convey an Old World sense of resigned
bewilderment and fear.
But all she wanted to know is
how tall are American soldiers.