

Poems and Songs to begin *All Quiet on the Western Front*

Naming of Parts Henry Reed

Today we have naming of parts. Yesterday,
We had daily cleaning. And tomorrow morning,
We shall have what to do after firing. But today,
Today we have naming of parts. Japonica^{1*}
Glistens like coral in all of the neighboring gardens,

And today we have naming of parts.

This is the lower sling swivel. And this
Is the upper sling swivel, whose use you will see,
When you are given your slings. And this is the piling
swivel,

Which in your case you have not got. The branches
Hold in the gardens their silent, eloquent gestures,
Which in our case we have not got.

This is the safety-catch, which is always released
With an easy flick of the thumb. And please do not let
me
See anyone using his finger. You can do it quite easy
If you have any strength in your thumb. The blossoms
Are fragile and motionless, never letting anyone see
Any of them using their finger.

And this you can see is the bolt. The purpose of this
Is to open the breech, as you see. We can slide it
Rapidly backwards and forwards: we call this
Easing the spring. And rapidly backwards and forwards
The early bees are assaulting and fumbling the flowers:
They call it easing the Spring.

They call it easing the Spring: it is perfect easy
If you have any strength in your thumb: like the bolt,

^{1*} a Japanese quince or fruit belonging to the rose family that resembles a hard-fleshed yellow apple.

And the breech, and the cocking-piece, and the point of
balance,

Which in our case we have not got; and the almond-
blossom

Silent in all of the gardens and the bees going backwards and
forwards,

For today we have naming of parts.

Gun Shy Natalie Merchant

I always knew that you would take yourself far from home as soon as,
as far as you could go. By the 1/4-inch cut of your hair and the Army
issue green, for the past eight weeks I can tell where you've been. For I
knew, I could see, it was all cut and dried to me. There was soldier's blue
blood streaming inside your veins. There is a world outside of this room
and when you meet it promise me: you won't meet it with a gun.

So now you are of the brave few; it's awful sad we need boys like you.
I hope the day never comes for "Here's your live round son. Stock and
barrel, safety, trigger, here's your gun." Well I knew, I could see, it was
all cut and dried to me, there was soldier's
blue blood streaming inside your veins. There is world outside of this and
when you meet it promise me: you won't meet with your gun taking aim.
For I don't mean to argue, They've made a decent boy of you and I don't
mean to spoil your homecoming, but baby brother you should expect me
to. "Stock and barrel, safety, trigger, here's your gun." So now does
your heart pitter pat with a patriotic sound when you see the stripes of Old
Glory waving? Well I knew, I could see, it was all cut and dried to me
there was soldier's blue blood streaming inside your veins. There is a
world outside of this room and when you meet it promise me you won't
meet it with your gun taking aim. I don't mean to argue. They've made a
decent boy of you and I don't mean to spoil your homecoming my baby
brother Jude and I don't mean to hurt you by saying this again, they're so
good at making soldiers but they're not as good at making men.

In peace children bury their parents: War violates
the order of nature and causes parents to bury their
children. **Herodotus**

In Flanders Fields

By: Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD (1872-1918)

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

**Armed Forces Recruitment Day
Albuquerque High School, 1962 by Leroy V. Quintana**

After the Navy,
the Air Force, and
the Army,
Sgt. Castillo,
the Marine Corps
recruiter,
got a standing ovation
when he walked up
to the microphone
and said proudly
that unlike
the rest, all
he could promise
was a pack,
a rifle, and
a damned hard time.
Except for that,
he was the
biggest of liars.

1916 Words & Music: Kilmister

16 Years old when I went to war
To fight for a land fit for heroes
God on my side, and a gun in my hand
Counting my days down to zero,
And I marched and I fought and I bled
and I died.
And I never did get any older
But I knew at the time that a year in the line
Is a long enough life for a soldier,
We all volunteered, and we wrote down our names
And we added two years to our ages,
Eager for life and ahead of the game,
Ready for history's pages
And we fought and we brawled and we
Whored 'til we stood
Ten thousand shoulder to shoulder,
A thirst for the Hun, we were food for the gun.
And that's what you are when you're soldiers,

I heard my friend cry, and he sank to his knees,
Coughing blood as he screamed for his mother.
And I fell by his side, and that's how we died,
Clinging like kids to each other.
And I lay in the mud and the guts and the blood,
And I wept as his body grew colder,
And I called for my mother and she never came.
Though it wasn't my fault and I wasn't to blame,
The day not half over and ten thousand slain,
And now there's nobody remembers our names,
And that's how it is for a soldier

"Anthem for a Doomed Youth" by Wilfred Owen

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
--Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,-
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

The first casualty when war comes is
truth.

Hiram W Johnson

Three Poems on the Iraq Conflict
Wounds that Never Heal by Richard E. McGintry

In the blood red sunset I hear the sound.
 It resounds, resounds, resounds
 with the lonely bugle call that brings
 each soul from the hell that was there,
 together again as comrades in despair.
 In the darkness that follows the sun
 a new day is born, begun
 with pearl pink streaks of light
 that cannot be seen at sunset or night.
 I touch my wife, my sleeping grandchild,
 and think awhile.
 Perhaps these wasted dead are heroes
 that have made
 God smile.

HERE, BULLET by Brian Turner

If a body is what you want,
 then here is bone and gristle and flesh.
 Here is the clavicle-snapped wish,
 the aorta's opened valves, the leap
 thought makes at the synaptic gap.
 Here is the adrenaline rush you crave,
 that inexorable flight, that insane puncture
 into heat and blood. And I dare you to finish
 what you've started. Because here, Bullet,
 here is where I complete the word you bring
 hissing through the air, here is where I moan
 the barrel's cold esophagus, triggering
 my tongue's explosives for the rifling I have
 inside of me, each twist of the round
 spun deeper, because here, Bullet,
 here is where the world ends, every time.

ASHBAH by Brian Turner

The ghosts of American soldiers
 wander the streets of Balad by night,
 unsure of their way home, exhausted,
 the desert wind blowing trash
 down the narrow alleys as a voice
 sounds from the minaret, a soulful call
 reminding them how alone they are,
 how lost. And the Iraqi dead,
 they watch in silence from rooftops
 as date palms line the shore in silhouette,
 leaning toward Mecca when the dawn windblows.

All wars are civil wars, because all
 men are brothers.

Francois Fenelon

DULCE ET DECORUM EST (skip if doing next class)

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
 Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through
 sludge,
 Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
 And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
 Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
 But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
 Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
 Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,
 Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
 But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
 And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .
 Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
 As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
 In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
 He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
 If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
 Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
 And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
 His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
 Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
 Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
 Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
 To children ardent for some desperate glory,
 The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est
 Pro patria mori.

Wilfred Owen

8 October 1917 - March, 1918

Only the dead have seen the end of
 the war.

George Santayana

***Everywhere* - Words and Music Billy Bragg**

Dig in boys for an extended stay
 Those were the final orders to come down that day
 Waiting to be saved in the Philippines
 You'll wait forever for the young Marines

Now I believe to be here is right
 But I have to say that I'm scared tonight
 Crouching in this hole with a moth full of sand
 What comes first, the country or the man

Look at those slanted eyes coming up over the hill
 Catching us by surprise, it's time to kill or be killed

Over here, over there, it's the same everywhere
 A boy cries out for his mama before he dies for his home

All my life I wanted to be
 As clever and strong as my best friend Lee
 We grew up together along half Moon Bay
 Lee was Japanese, born in the U.S.A.

When Tommy [British] was fighting Jerry [Germans] along
 River Seine
 Me and Lee we wanted to do the same
 Then they bombed Pearl Harbor at the break of day
 I was headed for these islands when Lee was hauled away

They said look at his slanted eyes, he's guilty as
 guilty can be²
 Sent here as enemy spies to sabotage the Land of
 the Free

I never got home, my platoon was never saved
 That little fox hole became my island grave
 Lee got out of jail but a prisoner he remained
 Till he ended his own life to lose that ball and chain

And they said, Oh Little Slanted Eyes can't you forgive
 and forget
 And he said, Oh Mr. Friendly Ghost
 Can you catch water in a net?

² This refers to the time during World War II when all Japanese-American (even the majority who where US citizens) we rounded up and put in determent camps.

A Song On the End of the World By Czeslaw Milosz

On the day the world ends
A bee circles a clover,
A fisherman mends a glimmering net.
Happy porpoises jump in the sea,
By the rainspout young sparrows are
playing
And the snake is gold-skinned as it
should always be.

On the day the world ends
Women walk through the fields under
their umbrellas,
A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of
a lawn,
Vegetable peddlers shout in the street
And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer
the island,
The voice of a violin lasts in the air
And leads into a starry night.

And those who expected lightning and
thunder
Are disappointed.
And those who expected signs and
archangels' trumps
Do not believe it is happening now.
As long as the sun and the moon are
above,
As long as the bumblebee visits a rose,
As long as rosy infants are born
No one believes it is happening now.

Only a white-haired old man, who
would be a prophet
Yet is not a prophet, for he's much too
busy,
Repeats while he binds his tomatoes:
No other end of the world will there be,
No other end of the world will there be.

The Hollow Men by T.S. Eliot

Mistah Kurtz—he dead.

A penny for the Old Guy

I
We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless

As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
Remember us—if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.

II
Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer—

Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom

III
This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Waking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone.

IV
The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
We grope together

And avoid speech
Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
The eyes reappear
As the perpetual star
Multifoliate rose
Of death's twilight kingdom
The hope only
Of empty men.

V
Here we go round the prickly pear
Prickly pear prickly pear
Here we go round the prickly pear
At five o'clock in the morning.

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow
For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow
Life is very long

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow
For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the

This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.

All war is deception.

Sun Tzu