The Casualty

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Survival in a field hospital was slim. Doctors sometimes had to help those with no hope to die in peace.

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The Casualty

The officerâ s whistle opened the door,

the pain of mortar did greet the damned

and I did nap with death in no manâ s land.

.

In cold of night the stretcher did wake

from peace to hell and burning pain.

These eyes will see the stars no more,

no comrades smile for me.

The darkness has won

for light has abandoned me

and my face is for others to see.

.

Am I alive? The pain agrees,

my hand can feel this fevered brow.

What will home think?

to only half a man

and will England still respect this man?

.

The sound of an angel, who talks with God,

a poor soul for sale,

could that be me?

And God condemns

that I am not worthy,

for others deserve better

than half of me.

.

And in my darkness

Opiumâ s womb enters my veins

the pain chased away by foetal claim,

while the music of war in shrapnel fragment

screams a tortured lament.

And youth will queue to die in vain

among the ranks of nightingales reign.

.

These deities who tend this holy fodder

grow distant with bloody rags.

My mind feels the heat of shrapnelâ s breath,

the thought of box in foreign field

the feel of sun and breeze denied

and claustrophobia feeds my fear.

Lonely is the grave with no goodbye

and I do not want to die.

.

But god is my surgeon and he is beat,

the angel will deliver mercy

and death will get his degree.

.

For compassion was hers to give,

the touch of her hand

will wipe this brow.

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The cold of the scissors will cut the tag

and I will join a corpseâ s march

obeying the ghost of captains orders

uniting friend and foe in melting borders.

.

In death I will believe

and hope will leave this earth with me.

My reward is tempered by sword and cross

epitaph is poured over another loss.

And country prepares to count the cost

.

The drone of the letter

this paper of man

typed in halls by Vatican whores,

delivering their knock on motherâ s door.

.

This pain of Englandâ s son

will lie in empty bed,

silence will be hers to see.

A candle for me in winterâ s light

but death will play in motherâ s night.

.

Her tears will wash this wooden cross,

the house will cry for little boy lost

and the dog will sit with eye on door,

never to wag his tail no more.

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