

Dulce et Decorum

Poetry

Fastaval 2013

Prologue: i Peace, iii The Dead, v The Soldier

GM: Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love!

Word list: Dreary – trælde (om sangene)

1 S: Oh! we, who have known shame, we have found release there,
Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
Naught broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there
but agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.

Word list: Mending – heling, naught – intet, agony – smerte

2S: Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhop'd serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

*Word list: Bugles – horn (udtales bjugels), rarer – kosteligere,
serene – fredfyldte*

3S: Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

*Word list: Bugles – horn (udtales bjugels), dearth – nød/mangel,
heritage – arv*

4S: If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

*Word list: Concealed – skjult, bore – bar (var gravid med), roam –
strejfe omkring, blest – velsignet*

GM And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England gi-
ven;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

First set: In Flanders Fields

Meditation: The smell of gunpowder smoke

Part 1: 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.

Word list: Poppies – valmuer

Part 2: 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.

Part 3: 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.

Word list: Quarrel – strid, poppies – valmuer

John McCrae



YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS

YOU

ALFRED LEE



Second set: Bombardment

Meditation: The feel of muscles burning with fatigue

- Part 1:** Four days the earth was rent and torn
By bursting steel,
The houses fell about us;
Three nights we dared not sleep,
Sweating, and listening for the imminent crash
Which meant our death.
- Part 2:** The fourth night every man,
Nerve-tortured, racked to exhaustion,
Slept, muttering and twitching,
While the shells crashed overhead.
- Part 3:** The fifth day there came a hush;
We left our holes
And looked above the wreckage of the earth
To where the white clouds moved in silent lines
Across the untroubled blue.

Richard Aldington

Third set: Dulce et Decorum Est

Meditation: The taste of blood

Part 1: 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.

Word list: Knock-kneed – kalveknæede, hags – hekse, flares – lysraketter, trudge – traske, shod – skoet

Part 2: 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.

Word list: Floundering – tumlende, lime – læsket kalk (ætsende), panes – ruder, guttering – spruttende

Part 3: 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.

Word list: Froth – fråde, cud – udflåd, zest – iver, ardent – brændende

Wilfred Owen

Fourth set: When you see millions of the mouthless dead

Meditation: The smell of damp earth

Part 1: When you see millions of the mouthless dead
Across your dreams in pale battalions go,
Say not soft things as other men have said,
That you'll remember. For you need not so.
Give them not praise. For, deaf, how should they know
It is not curses heaped on each gashed head?
Nor tears. Their blind eyes see not your tears flow.
Nor honour. It is easy to be dead.

Word list: Gashed – såret

Part 2: Say only this, "They are dead." Then add thereto,
"Yet many a better one has died before."
Then, scanning all the o'ercrowded mass, should you
Perceive one face that you loved heretofore,
It is a spook. None wears the face you knew.
Great Death has made all his for evermore.

Word list: Heretofore – førhen, spook – spøgelse

Charles Sorley





Fifth set: Glory of Women

Meditation: The taste of salt

Part 1: You love us when we're heroes, home on leave,
Or wounded in a mentionable place.
You worship decorations; you believe
That chivalry redeems the war's disgrace.
You make us shells. You listen with delight,
By tales of dirt and danger fondly thrilled.
You crown our distant ardours while we fight,
And mourn our laurelled memories when we're killed.

Part 2: You can't believe that British troops "retire"
When hell's last horror breaks them,
and they run,
Trampling the terrible corpses – blind with
blood.
O German mother dreaming by the fire,
While you are knitting socks to send your
son
His face is trodden deeper in the mud.

*Word list: Ardours – anstrengelser, laurelled –
laurbærkransede, retire – trækker sig tilbage
(flygter)*

Siegfried Sassoon

Epilogue: My sweet old etcetera

GM: my sweet old etcetera
aunt lucy during the recent
war could and what
is more did tell you just
what everybody was fighting
for,
my sister
Isabel created hundreds
(and
hundreds) of socks not to
mention fleaproof earwarmers
etcetera wristers etcetera, my
mother hoped that
i would die etcetera
bravely of course my father used
to become hoarse talking about how it was
a privilege and if only he
could meanwhile my
self etcetera lay quietly
in the deep mud et
cetera
(dreaming,
et
cetera, of
Your smile
eyes knees and of your Etcetera)

E. E. Cummings

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori:
mors et fugacem persequitur virum
nec parcat inbellis iuventae
poplitibus timidoque tergo.

**Q. Horatius Flaccus, Odes
(III.2.13-16)**