THE ROMAN LYRICAL POET HORACE ONCE WROTE, ‘DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO PATRIA MORI’.

IN ENGLISH, THIS MEANS ‘IT IS GLORIOUS AND HONOURABLE TO DIE FOR ONE’S COUNTRY’...
‘DULCE ET DECORUM EST’

BY WILFRED OWEN.

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.

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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 AS UNDER A GREEN SEA,
AND THICK GREEN LIGHT, I SAW HIM DROWNING.
IN ALL MY DREAMS, BEFORE MY HELPLESS SIGHT, HE PLUNGES AT ME, GUTTERING, CHOKING, DROWNING.
YOU TOO COULD PACE
IF IN SOME SMOTHERING DREAMS
BEHIND THE WAGON
THAT WE FLUNG HIM IN,
YOU TOO COULD PACE
IF IN SOME SMOTHERING DREAMS
BEHIND THE WAGON
THAT WE FLUNG HIM IN,
YOU TOO COULD PACE
IF IN SOME SMOTHERING DREAMS
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 OBSCENE AS CANCER, BITTER AS THE CUD FROM THE FROTH-CORRUPTED LUNGS, 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.

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