For Tom Way

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FOR TOM WAY

The spoken and unspoken "whys" will not be answered...

To men death is never timely...

In battle... and violent... and poking the full flush of youth, it abhors the sensitive, ridicules the statesman, oppresses the philosopher, strains the theologian, confounds the scientist, mocks the smiling promise of a youth time given to lights, stifles with all-conquering darkness a youth time given to lights... and joy... and hope.

And yet how better bear the burden of penultimate despair than summon Him whose death seized ultimate hope, whose symbols all proclaim that death's not all nor life... here...

To Him death is never untimely!

SITTING ON CANNON SQUARE WHEN YOUNG

We are all turning khaki green from washing our clothes in red cross puddles from sitting on cannon square when young and smoking scientific parakeets with memorial mounds of chocolate éclairs.

We are all turning khaki green from cutting naked army mess lines from playing tap on civilian coat hangers and thinking soldiers are only stout men in summer reruns of jambalaya.

We are all turning khaki green from pulling dead tops of exagugated votes from singing the penguin of conscience and cooling our tired feet in a bucket of preprogrammed poker cards

We warm our hands in our armpits waking up stung from a wet dream of peace asking with our dark eyes to the GI Joe when his black hand will freeze the air.

We warm our hands in our armpits staring in horror through reflecting windows asking with our dark eyes to the GI Joe when he will send his saggy package of care.

We warm our hands in our armpits we gather our shrinking skin we wait we wait on the comlink rack of natural causes we wait for the homecoming of our wasted generation we wait for generals to melt their stars and recast a cannon plaque to; his reign was mild.

All war hero museums should be treated as jealously consigned and drowned in ten cent comic books

Thomas Hughes