On Strike

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Abstract

I saw them there The other night, These men Who live no more...
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Winner First Prize—Poetry—Freshman Writing Contest

I saw them there
The other night,
These men
Who live no more.

I saw their tortured faces,
Dark,
Burdened down with pain;
Their fevered lips,
Pain full eyes;
Their souls within them burn.
I saw them there,
These men
Who live no more.

I saw their tired shoulders,
Bent;
Their weary hearts;
I saw their lagging step,
Listened to their unheard cry,
These ghosts who walk,
These men
Who live no more.

I saw them walk each street,
Each factory yard
Where machines are idle;
Where furnaces are banked.
They pace each floor
Where workers sleep
Who do not work tomorrow,
These men
Who live no more.

"My torn and bloated body lies
Beneath the sands of Tunis."
"My bleeding tortured body,
Upon Bataan."

[25]
“My torso cut and knifed;  
My limbs severed from their sockets,  
Buried deep  
On Guadalcanal.”

“Beneath a cross,  
Beneath a star  
On a beach  

In France I lie.”  
“And I who died  
At Anzio.”

“Have you forgotten so soon?  
Don't you remember me?  
I fought;  
I died in the ‘Bulge!’”

“I stormed that beach.  
I fought that mile.  
Remember?  
I won't forget.  
I died.”

“For whom I fought?  
For whom I died?  
For you my son,  
My wife,  
My father,  
You, unborn;  
For you  
Who do not work  
Tomorrow.”

“The right of life,  
Prosperity  
To every man;  
To have a home,  
Children,  
Plenty to eat,  
Little things of life;  
To send his son to college;  
The rights of every man.”
'We cannot rest
This night,
Beneath our cross,
Our star.
Have you forgotten us?
We haven't forgotten.
We can't forget.
We walk with you
Who do not work
Tomorrow.'

—Robert Gold, Eng.

**A Matter of Belief**

"**No!**" he said, sharply, "I'm *not* going." In the quiet of the little kitchen his voice was so loud and harsh that it startled him. My God, he thought, it's starting again. Another fight. He stabbed at his half-finished dessert, then changed his mind and laid his fork down on his plate. Just the thought of the coming quarrel made him lose his appetite.

"But William." His mother spoke gently, pleading. "This is the last night that Rev. Johnson will be here. He'll be gone tomorrow." She was sitting stiffly in her chair now, her hands folded in her lap. Only his father kept on eating, saying nothing, seemingly unconcerned.

But he was concerned, Bill knew. These bitter quarrels, that had come up so frequently in the last few weeks, hurt both his parents. And they were about such little things. Things like going to church tonight. He could avoid them so easily. All he had to do was just pretend a little, that's all. Just hide his beliefs deep inside himself and become the obedient son he'd been when he left for the army three years ago.

He clenched his fists under the table. No! He couldn't do it. Not anymore. He'd tried, but something inside him wouldn't let him lie to himself.

"Your father is going with me," his mother said. "This is the most important meeting of the series, you know." She picked up her fork again and began picking at her food.