

One, two, three, four, five...

Mosslike their faces among the rubble look at me.

Their eyes lost into memories forever out of reach, just out of reach. The light leaving a drop at the time. They are now the ashes of war, the dust that refuses to settle. The soot grimes the living with a stench that can't be washed of. I reek with taint that sullies at touch.

Their faces perfectly still, mouth slightly opened. Their colourless bloodless faces, I feel the cold even when I don't touch them, I feel the cold of the dead kissing my forehead.

What do they want from me?

Battlefields woven of their joys and cares, of the hunger and sorrow. The years had given them kindness, the sun, dawn and earth.

There was light and wine and sweethearts. Known slumber and waking; loved; friended; they touched flowers and furs and cheeks and felt the caress of the sunlight in the morning. All this is ended.

What passing bells for those who died as cattle? What to show of the way they looked proudly at death and the panic in their bones?

Now no one left to ply the drums of war.

Six, seven, eight and nine...

Now The Keeper has us to thank, for we seeded his arboretum with our own, and watered and fed them with the best we had. We grew the trees as strong as we could to make them face and impossible task. They were to find their peace in war.

Oh, we grew them alright, and we sang them lullabies and praises and warnings. We prepared them against the creatures of the night when they should have kept their eyes most open in the day. For the Rakshasa are not to scoop you from bed stark at night when nobody's peeping and paint your parents faces with sorrow and salty water but face you under the shining sun in clad armor wearing the face of one of thy neighbors. Their craftsmanship so bright against the sun you might wonder, are these the gods we usually pray? Why has Onatar meddled with the life of the commons?

And we harvested, for the Sovereign Host, we did. Our hands forever soiled. How can we cure with such hands that no glove could insulate? How can their bodies mix not with the corruption? We harvested for him that which he now displays in splendor, for we could stop the bleeding but not the Death, we could clean but not sterilize. We saw everything, as the light of their eyes and the color of their cheeks melted into cinders.

Ten, eleven, twelve ...ninety-nine...

Who to spare a thought for the dreams stolen, for their cries and laughter? About the way we buried them with the same arm we decorated them, the same arm we pronounced them dead with, the same arm we amputated them with, the same arm we saluted as we saw them marching; not marching -but dragging themselves back into battle. Where they someone anymore? No, just mindless cogs, back in the trenches.

Not a wish could be sighed out of their swollen meat, not a birthmark recognized from their restless skeletons. Life had gifted them kindness but war had broken it into the rags of society. They as well as us, puppets in the sick show those with power, real power, make out of our lives. Meat for the meat grinders, blood for the bloodthirsty gods. In some distant table tiny wooden pieces danced across a model battlefield and shared as many thoughts as the armies we saw. Would the trees think the same of those pieces as us from those battalions?

Reformed, repurposed.

Gone with the wind those who knew how to be someone's everything. The knights of lowborn families, the prides, the joy, the frustrations, the sorrow. The long nights along a lantern looking through the window waiting, wanting to hear steps who wouldn't come again. The next knock on the door wouldn't be the return of the prodigal offspring but another numbered leather from the state, the same monster that churned through our enemies did unto us. Scorch, balls of fire, swords, maces and else for them, conscription, letters, famine for us.

A hundred, two hundred, three hundred, four...

How can blood awake us when red has been all we have ever seen. The ulcers of the decaying body of our civilization, we have kept alive, all through the night. How can we ask society for help when it is us who has been administering its slow death through the sweet calm of peace?

The whisper of morphine, the meticulously administer blessed drip. Kiss your brethren goodbye as they fall into dreams and pray for them to stay away from the nightmares. Can we keep the farce going when the shadows of all those whose life have come through to lie around? Can we keep lying when the stench of death smells enough for the living to know when to run? When all is said and done, we became the true House of Spies, allied with the living but serving the dead.

We kept their casket in bed with all our strength. Believe me I bled my soul, barely more than mush anymore. I wish I had an ounce of life left to rise through the darkness of death. I have become savior of the weak I've become a cog in the wheel. Whenever life gives a turn it will say that I'm no more than a note at the end of the page. I wished to change the world, but I became a note on it. No one will sing a chapter of praises for me, just an asterisk among the dead and whose hand put them to rest.

The pressure sores were alleviated with our hands, but the bleeding is our own. When the keeper comes running through the hills atop their undead it is us who fix their ride. How come I was learnt to breathe life into the world that I am found in this position.

Five hundred, six hundred, seven hundred....

Who's to have lived if they haven't seen looked love at their eyes in their death bed
How can you say you have even wanted when you knew salvation was just past your capabilities?

When you smiled at them knowing no lie was enough.

When you said the I love you knowing no word else was to fill that pit.

How many domino pieces fell into place the second loneliness painted life with glee showed me the limits of my will. The place where wishes met with fate and daydreams grow shadows into falsehoods.

I've known nowhere that felt safe enough to be called home after the dead beathed their goodbyes to my ears.

I know life is a place where kisses met with darkness but where are people to meet in the night when they can't see each other's faces?

How are the "I love yous" to reach safe harbor without a light to guide them?

I know I was meant to risk it all in a game that summer night.

When you told me what you felt and it sent shivers down my spine.

I know I was meant to risk it all when the morning was nigh.

But I just couldn't quite, I apologize.

The cold stark had sent it's creatures past my bones and into my mind. I wish I had more to give but barely a glimmer in the dark

You froze up hugging the armor of the fallen under the shimmering light of the blazing exploding from the sky.

What's the difference between you and I.

Me alive with nothing forever to hug you forever wronged under the peaceful sky.

I'll reach you before end has spoken my name,

I will reach there where names are lost with ease.

I'll reach you even if it means forgetting where I come from and what it means to have survived death.

I'll reach you because laughter is all I've learnt to say to death.

Father forgive me for your voice I cannot forget

Father forgive me for all the pain I wasn't meant to create

I'm still awoken by the chills your passing has left unto my mind.

That place where nothing is left to cry about.

Keeper take my soul before the shadows mingle with mine

Keeper take me before my mind descends into the under dark.

I'm not ready I'm barely a man- I'm not ready just give me more time

I wish you had taken my life instead

I wish you had ripped my heart instead.

I'm barely old enough to say goodbye to my soul

I'm barely old enough to forget I come from.

Take my hand remind me my favorite pastries. Take my hand remind me the cakes of my infancy. The plum cake my grandmother used to make me will never taste the same.

I wish I could fill me with mercy. Forgive myself if your memory starts to fade. Forgive myself for knowing no one will love me the way you did, how your eyes danced across the room and

we could only see each other. Forgive me for those eyes are mixed with the other, the
withered ones, the ones that I stitched into closing.
Where will my heart rest when I know you are gone?
I'll ride through my weakness like a worm into obscurity
Back to reality I'm nothing but searching for me
Where are you in my plan
Where am I when you are gone back into nothing.
I wish I could go back into nothing, so much left to do.
Feed my meat into the poverty of self, I'll feed them until I run dry.
I'm not a god I'm barely a person
I'm not forgotten I'm barely a memory
I'll kiss you goodbye when the night is still day
Forgive me for all the details I've missed, forgive me then for not meeting you at that place
we promised each other. Just before the sun set.
Where the I love you were more than memories
I'm not a machine I'm just a cog
I'm not reality I'm just the memory of the life gone by
Of the memories turning into the ashes of war
Give me back a puff of life I'm barely a skull
I'll gladly run the night into the sunset
Who am I to bring it back from afar? When all I've done is mixed with the opiates.

Eight hundred, nine hundred, a thousand.

A thousand faces look at me on a daily basis.

They whisper slowly their unfinished business.

A thousand stories live in me waiting for nevermore. A thousand, but none is you.