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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

WAR SEQUENCE

PRELUDE

I thought—

Surely, of those in battle, one, bearing the impulse of the
years before—the splendid sunset—would create a song,
A song of war!

But none—not one has spoken. And the singers die, fighting
in silence, comrade by comrade—fall, leaving above their
death no Marseillaise.

I thought—

My people, finding perhaps their freedom in a war for free-
dom, might find also utterance, singing of the rite of
hecatombs offered to greater than a god.

But none—not one has spoken . . . Over France—the voice
of France is Rheims, a threnody graven in silence. Yet
the song to break the anguish of that silence, the life-
song uttered, not the dirge of Rheims?

THE MARNE

Within that secret place—

Waste land where the rivers run red

Cloyd Head

Bearing the blood of the dead
To the charnel sea—
They build a temple and a mystery:
A freedom such as none may ever share
Who have not lived with Death,
Who have not killed.

Untempered passion, building as earth must build
Through uttermost destruction, reaching toward new life
Blindly, as if aware that out of death may rise
Fulfilment to whatever veiled will
Created conflict—a master-soul unknown.

Such freedom has no voice: it dares not own
The abyss, the horror, of a life made free;
The grandeur which it cannot understand.

Therefore the curtain and the mystery;
Therefore the silence that is No-man's Land.

THEY MARCH THROUGH THE STREETS OF PARIS

America . . .
Can it be, my country, that in you
The dream men dared not dream, is true?
I know not what the old men seek: