

## Fortunes Of War

Fish

Rosebuds scattered across the lawn like the squares at Waterloo  
With bayonets of thorns repelling small children in search of lost tennis balls  
Imaginary cannonballs that were fired at the legs of galloping cavalry  
Resting their dreams in the shade of the apple trees  
Toy soldiers drunk on warm lemonade  
And the children dream of glory and Fortunes of War  
Safe in bed with stories of Fortunes of War, Fortunes of War

As the sun sets low on these playing fields  
An army returns bearing swords and shields  
Dustbin lids and raspberry canes they'll live to fight another day  
For warriors medals, milk bottle tops  
Battle flags fashioned from mother's old table cloths  
Bright colours run in the summer rain

Sometimes when they fall they will pretend that their hankie is  
a bandage to stop the bleeding  
And imagine city streets and desert storms and foreign fields  
There's bullets flying, these are the Fortunes of War

I heard a wheelchair whisper across a stale, stagnant gymnasium  
Trailing an ivy league jacket like a matador  
Through the jitterbug steps of the night before  
I followed him down to the church parade  
Where he makes his peace every armistice day  
I watched him fade away, melt in the autumn rain

For sometimes when they fall they can't pretend  
That the hankie is a bandage that can't stop the bleeding  
They're out in city streets and desert storms or foreign fields  
With bullets flying, these are the Fortunes of War  
While their children dream of glory and Fortunes of War  
Safe in bed with stories and Fortunes of War  
Of uniforms and glory, Fortunes of War, Fortunes of War