

The Leaving

Fish

In the gnawing bite of winter;
the winds, bone chilling, howl
Pale skies of swirling snowflakes
lay a shroud upon the ground
To a scarred and shattered landscape
some brief dignity is shown
Where the dead remain unburied
on the dark and blood-stained earth
The fronts inch slowly forward the battalions follow on
The new blood marches to the Caissons song
Strangers fill the spaces join the beleaguered rank and file
Resigned to further battles further up the line,
But the ground will be retaken, the offensives bogging down
Countering attacks they stall and fail
The stalemate still continued
and the guns still took their toll
And the generals counted casualties
as the soldiers vainly fell
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It had to end, the armies broken
One side had lost but who had won
The ravaged land, the decimation
So hard to bear, the loss and pain
The men returned, the war was over
The bells rang out, a country cheered
Behind their eyes they stored the horrors
Behind their smiles they hid their fears
The medals and the honours were handed out
to those who served
The letters of condolences were kept
Reminding generations of the sacrifices made
The suffering and the torment
of the men most never knew,
Lest we forget