

CAN'T ESCAPE THE RED

By Richard Paul

A year in this carnage has made every dream

A shrieking mad shadow of bloodshed.

The mind gives new life to every old scream

From the lungs of the fortunate dead.

And when I awake I reach for my sword,

And no longer shake as I step out my door,

New redness to make in this silliest war,

For red's vile sake evermore.

More come every day, always soft and so young,

Boldly they stride through the gate we cannot close.

They wish to slaughter us, every last one,

All for lies, as the whys, no one knows.

They fight the same way, they're all trained the same,

Too easy to slay, so free with their pain,

Their souls howl and bray as their bodies we flame,

The redness will stay, and everything stain.

By ancient lore shall my sword never dull.

By our sorcerers' skill do my wounds never last.

By our stubborn resolve, we shall not be culled,

Nor deign to deny our endless red task.

The blade through the neck and the strength of the bone,

The piecemeal wreck from the battlements thrown,

The unsightly flecks 'neath a catapult stone,

Our realm is bedecked by such ghastly red tones.

If I tarried to count all those I've killed

In what might as well be merely a year,

Would I find there are tears left to me still?

Or nothing more than redness, as I fear.

By red repetition, my brain is reshaped,

Tis nature's condition in this hell-scape,

To stand in perdition, to shoulder my fate,

To crave such ignition, I'll not escape.

***- = Suggested Stressed Syllables**