

## Iniquity

# "Poets Of The Trench Part II"

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[Lyrics: Fagerlind]

I remember sitting in the train.  
Though it seems ages ago, I figure that  
No more than a couple of weeks have elapsed since  
then.  
I also remember the thoughts racing in my mind. I'd  
read that before going  
Into battle, even the most ardent veteran soldier feels  
the pangs of fear,  
And I wondered why I only felt a sense of numbness in  
my stomach and legs.  
Premonition perhaps?  
During training we'd been told by our senior officers  
always to keep our  
Carbines clean of grime. 'Cleansed mine for what might  
have been the fiftieth time, whilst rolling  
Through the French countryside listening to the distant  
thunder. By then I didn't realise that it was the mellow  
booming of  
The Germans'  
Heavy artillery, shelling our line. Or, maybe, ours  
shelling theirs?  
I'd heard that even if you're dug in, in a shelter, the big  
howitzers  
Could get you.  
In the train I split a cigarette with a guy from back  
home. This was his  
Second trip to the front. He told me how his former  
company was set to dig  
Out a bombed cellar, and how the people they found  
had been uninjured by  
The shrapnel and fire. They had been crushed by the  
pressure of the  
Detonation - their lungs had been pushed through their  
mouths. He also told me to swap my bayonet for a field  
shovel at any  
Given moment.  
"When you're at close quarters, a sharpened field  
shovel can lob the head  
Off a mans shoulders. And it won't break or get stuck in  
the ribs like a

Bayonet." That's what he said. His name is Liam, or was  
Liam. As I'm writing this, I can hear him  
Screaming. I can just barely make him out in a crater  
next to the German  
Trench. Horribly entangled in barbwire. He's not  
screaming for his mom or  
Anything. Just screaming. Maybe his throat has been  
lacerated. It sounds  
Kind of gurgling. And he's lost both his legs... Guess he  
won't be screaming  
Much longer...  
God I wished that I had a grenade or something, so I  
could end his misery  
Right now.  
Well, even if I had a grenade, I doubt that I would be  
able to hurl it to  
Him. I've been holding most of my entrails back with  
one hand, since darkness  
Fell. Irony of ironies - the German that opened my  
stomach knew the trick with  
The field shovel, too. Or maybe he wasn't German at all.  
They have a Hungarian penal legion  
Posted along the line. Maybe he was one of them?  
I crushed his head with my respirator canister. Never  
thought of that as a  
Weapon, but in the heat of close combat, anything will  
do... I've seen  
Soldiers gouge each other's eyes with bare hands...  
And I saw a boy, no more  
Than fifteen or sixteen, rip a German's throat out with  
his teeth.  
It is madness! Mere animals clawing at each other.

Now in the breaks between the drumfires, I can hear  
the enemy mustering in  
Their trenches. I can hear the sucking sound of boots  
being yanked out of  
The knee-deep clay, and the dry clanging of a water-  
cooled MG being  
Reloaded. The next charge can't be far off, and yet still  
fear eludes me. For the  
First time in weeks, I'm certain of what's going to  
happen.  
When the sun rises and hardens the clay, I'll be here no  
longer. The same  
Numbness I felt in train has returned, and I know my  
time is at hand.  
Guess I'll be screaming no more...

