

In the past, I have released my annual poem several days in advance of Remembrance Day, but I have chosen to release this year's contribution early. I have done so in the hope that people might think a bit longer about what this sacrifice means and the simple fact that "freedom isn't free", someone always pays a price. Never forget.

My Poem for Remembrance 2023

The soldier holds his breath as the battle rages on, he doesn't want to die, but he knows in his heart his time has come, he doesn't understand just why. It isn't because he's afraid of death, or that he thinks it's someone else's time, he knows his mates would happily take his place, even though they're in their prime.

As a soldier he knows there is no way out and that he is soon to lose his life, that he won't be there to see his kids grow old, or to support his loving wife. These thoughts rip through his heart, as he watches his life flash by, like a movie playing out before his eyes on a canvass in the bright blue sky.

When the mist of battle settles, the casualties are gathered and heroes laid to rest, so many have given their lives for the cause, shown to be our very best. Young lives have been sacrificed, but those that survive are sure we'll meet again, on the shores of Valhalla where the souls of warriors walk, and forever will remain.

The sadness felt by those that survive ensures we live our lives, not just for us alone, but also for those that never came home, they'll never be on their own. We think about them often, of their families and their friends, of the suffering this loss has caused them, of the pain it always sends.

For those that lie in foreign lands, so far away from home, they know they will never be forgotten, wherever their souls may roam. A part of them will be stay with us, residing in our hearts for as long as we may live, they made the ultimate sacrifice, so that's the least that we can give.

Our nation holds them in their hearts, with the greatest sense of pride, they are proud to visit our Arboretum, where they can stand side by side. Monuments inscribed with the names of heroes, stretch as far as the eye can see, it brings a tear to the toughest heart to think, these heroes died for me.

But it's not sympathy we look for, we just did what we thought was right, we went off to war as soldiers, we were proud to stand and fight. To die wasn't part of the plan of course, it was a simple case of fate, but to give your life for others is the sign of a hero, of someone truly great. That's why we hold them in our heart and are thankful that we met, why we remember and thank them every year, lest we should forget.

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