

Bloody April

Metal birds pierced the crimson sky and fell to the earth
whilst others danced with bullets;
the last of dusk followed their trail.

The sun was a perfect disk,
cut in half by the edge of the world.
It sank into the background
as the night slowly crept in.

Sparks of projectiles jabbed the clouds,
shattering the silence with a sharp bang.

All the birds were scratched and dented
- from the battles that had been won and lost.
Their wood truss wings, frail from the damage,
kept the birds in the air at a steady pace.

One of the riders for the metallic creatures was a relatively short man.

Gunshots whizzed over his head,
almost hitting the beast held together by nuts and bolts.
For a second he was disconnected from everything
but the ever-present sound of his drumming heart.

The thundering in his chest was almost unbearable.

Clouds shrouded around with enemies closing in,
nipping and biting at the birds tail.
His fellow comrades, the friends he had only known for a while,
sunk down onto the earth in a fiery blaze.

He wanted to go out brave,
to be remembered and be praised for his acts of duty.
But he was trembling and scared,
he felt like a coward.

Sweat drenched his skin;
he couldn't hear his rapid breathing over the creatures' screams
but he could feel the oxygen flooding in and out of his lungs.
The churning in his stomach made him feel queasy
as fear engulfed his conscience.

Bullets clawed and scratched away at the belly of the bird.
Lead and copper dug into its body.
Its wooden wings spewed out smoke.
Flaps of skin shredded off and sinewy wires dangled out,
leeching onto the bird in the harsh wind.

The man was stiff, rigid and afraid to move.
He knew his companion had given up on him
as the metal bird's propellers slowed down.
Its wings drooped as smoke clung onto the creature.
Ammunition shattered the creature's eyes,
glass flung out in all directions.
Glittering daggers and shards seeped into the man's body.

He couldn't scream.
The wind in his face made it hard to breathe,
gusts of air grabbed his neck and choked him.
He felt like he'd suffocate before he'd hit the ground
and the bird's body twirled and jerked as it fell.

Spiraling down,
descending into the hellish landscape below,
beads of water flew from his eyes
as he got closer and closer to the harsh earth.

He closed his eyes.

The loud shriek of metal resonated for miles around.

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Kayleigh
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