Name:

(**Do not lose you will need this in Yr10)**

Yr 9

Power

&

Conflict

Poetry

Summer 2020

Summer Term

Kamikaze

By Beatrice Garland

Her father embarked at sunrise  
with a flask of water, a samurai sword  
in the cockpit, a shaven head  
full of powerful incantations  
and enough fuel for a one-way  
journey into history  
  
but half way there, she thought,  
recounting it later to her children,  
he must have looked far down  
at the little fishing boats  
strung out like bunting  
on a green-blue translucent sea  
  
and beneath them, arcing in swathes  
like a huge flag waved first one way  
then the other in a figure of eight,  
the dark shoals of fishes  
flashing silver as their bellies  
swivelled towards the sun  
  
and remembered how he  
and his brothers waiting on the shore  
built cairns of pearl-grey pebbles  
to see whose withstood longest  
the turbulent inrush of breakers  
bringing their father’s boat safe

– yes, grandfather’s boat – safe  
to the shore, salt-sodden, awash  
with cloud-marked mackerel,  
black crabs, feathery prawns,  
the loose silver of whitebait and once  
a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous.  
  
And though he came back  
my mother never spoke again  
in his presence, nor did she meet his eyes  
and the neighbours too, they treated him  
as though he no longer existed,  
only we children still chattered and laughed  
  
till gradually we too learned  
to be silent, to live as though  
he had never returned, that this  
was no longer the father we loved.  
And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered  
which had been the better way to die.

War Photographer

By Carol Ann Duffy

*In his dark room he is finally alone*

* *with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.*
* *The only light is red and softly glows,*
* *as though this were a church and he*
* *a priest preparing to intone a Mass.*
* *Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.*
* *He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays*
* *beneath his hands, which did not tremble then*
* *though seem to now. Rural England. Home again*
* *to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel,*
* *to fields which don’t explode beneath the feet*
* *of running children in a nightmare heat.*
* *Something is happening. A stranger’s features*
* *faintly start to twist before his eyes,*
* *a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries*
* *of this man’s wife, how he sought approval*
* *without words to do what someone must*

*and how the blood stained into foreign dust.*

* *A hundred agonies in black and white*
* *from which his editor will pick out five or six*
* *for Sunday’s supplement. The reader’s eyeballs prick*
* *with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.*
* *From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where*
* *he earns his living and they do not care.*

Three days before Armistice Sunday  
and poppies had already been placed  
on individual war graves. Before you left,   
I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals,  
spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade   
of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

Sellotape bandaged around my hand,   
I rounded up as many white cat hairs   
as I could, smoothed down your shirt's   
upturned collar, steeled the softening  
of my face. I wanted to graze my nose  
across the tip of your nose, play at   
being Eskimos like we did when  
you were little. I resisted the impulse   
to run my fingers through the gelled  
blackthorns of your hair. All my words  
flattened, rolled, turned into felt,

slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked   
with you, to the front door, threw   
it open, the world overflowing  
like a treasure chest. A split second   
and you were away, intoxicated.   
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom,  
released a song bird from its cage.  
Later a single dove flew from the pear tree,   
and this is where it has led me,  
skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy  
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without   
a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

On reaching the top of the hill I traced   
the inscriptions on the war memorial,  
leaned against it like a wishbone.   
The dove pulled freely against the sky,   
an ornamental stitch. I listened, hoping to hear   
your playground voice catching on the wind.

Poppies

By Jane Weir

Suddenly he awoke and was running- raw

Bayonet Charge

by Ted Hughes

In raw-seamed hot khaki, his sweat heavy,

Stumbling across a field of clods towards a green hedge

That dazzled with rifle fire, hearing

Bullets smacking the belly out of the air –

He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm;

The patriotic tear that had brimmed in his eye

Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest, -

In bewilderment then he almost stopped –

In what cold clockwork of the stars and the nations

as he the hand pointing that second?

He was running Like a man who has jumped up in the dark and runs

Listening between his footfalls for the reason

Of his still running, and his foot hung like

Statuary in mid-stride. Then the shot-slashed furrows

Threw up a yellow hare that rolled like a flame

And crawled in a threshing circle, its mouth wide

Open silent, its eyes standing out.

He plunged past with his bayonet toward the green hedge,

King, honour, human dignity, etcetera

Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm

To get out of that blue crackling air

His terror’s touchy dynamite.

* *Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knife us...*
* *Suddenly he awoke and was running- raw*
* *In raw-seamed hot khaki, his sweat heavy,*
* *Stumbling across a field of clods towards a green hedge*
* *That dazzled with rifle fire, hearing*
* *Bullets smacking the belly out of the air –*
* *He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm;*
* *The patriotic tear that had brimmed in his eye*
* *Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest, -*
* *In bewilderment then he almost stopped –*
* *In what cold clockwork of the stars and the nations*
* *as he the hand pointing that second?*
* *He was running Like a man who has jumped up in the dark and runs*
* *Listening between his footfalls for the reason*
* *Of his still running, and his foot hung like*
* *Statuary in mid-stride. Then the shot-slashed furrows*
* *Threw up a yellow hare that rolled like a flame*
* *And crawled in a threshing circle, its mouth wide*
* *Open silent, its eyes standing out.*
* *He plunged past with his bayonet toward the green hedge,*
* *King, honour, human dignity, etcetera*
* *Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm*
* *To get out of that blue crackling air*
* *His terror’s touchy dynamite.*

By Ted Hughes

* *Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent...*
* *Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient...*

Exposure

By Wilfred Owen

* *Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,*
* *But nothing happens.*
* *Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire.*
* *Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.*
* *Northward incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,*
* *Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.*
* *What are we doing here?*
* *The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow...*
* *We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.*
* *Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army*
* *Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of gray,*
* *But nothing happens.*
* *Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.*
* *Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,*
* *With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause and renew,*
* *We watch them wandering up and down the wind's nonchalance,*
* *But nothing happens.*
* *Pale flakes with lingering stealth come feeling for our faces –*
* *We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,*
* *Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,*
* *Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.*

*Is it that we are dying?*

* *Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires glozed*
* *With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;*
* *For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;*
* *Shutters and doors all closed: on us the doors are closed –*
* *We turn back to our dying.*
* *Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;*
* *Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.*
* *For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;*
* *Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,*
* *For love of God seems dying.*
* *To-night, His frost will fasten on this mud and us,*
* *Shrivelling many hands and puckering foreheads crisp.*
* *The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking grasp,*
* *Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,*
* *But nothing happens*
* *1.*

Charge of the Light Brigade

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

* *Half a league, half a league,*
* *Half a league onward,*
* *All in the valley of Death*
* *Right thro' the line they broke;*
* *Cossack and Russian*
* *Reel'd from the sabre stroke*
* *Shatter'd and sunder'd.*
* *Then they rode back, but not*
* *Not the six hundred.*
* *5.*
* *Cannon to right of them,*
* *Cannon to left of them,*
* *Cannon behind them*
* *Volley'd and thunder'd;*
* *Storm'd at with shot and shell,*
* *While horse and hero fell,*
* *They that had fought so well*
* *Came thro' the jaws of Death*
* *Back from the mouth of Hell,*
* *All that was left of them,*
* *Left of six hundred.*
* *6.*
* *When can their glory fade?*
* *O the wild charge they made!*
* *All the world wondered.*
* *Honor the charge they made,*
* *Honor the Light Brigade,*
* *Noble six hundred.*
* *Rode the six hundred.*
* *"Forward, the Light Brigade!*
* *"Charge for the guns!" he said:*
* *Into the valley of Death*
* *Rode the six hundred.*
* *2.*
* *"Forward, the Light Brigade!"*
* *Was there a man dismay'd?*
* *Not tho' the soldier knew*
* *Someone had blunder'd:*
* *Theirs not to make reply,*
* *Theirs not to reason why,*
* *Theirs but to do and die:*
* *Into the valley of Death*
* *Rode the six hundred.*
* *3.*
* *Cannon to right of them,*
* *Cannon to left of them,*
* *Cannon in front of them*
* *Volley'd and thunder'd;*
* *Storm'd at with shot and shell,*
* *Boldly they rode and well,*
* *Into the jaws of Death,*
* *Into the mouth of Hell*
* *Rode the six hundred.*
* *4.*
* *Flash'd all their sabres bare,*
* *Flash'd as they turn'd in air,*
* *Sabring the gunners there,*
* *Charging an army, while*
* *All the world wonder'd:*
* *Plunged in the battery-smoke*

*On another occasion, we got sent out*

*to tackle looters raiding a bank.*

*And one of them legs it up the road,*

*probably armed, possibly not.*

*Well myself and somebody else and somebody else*

*are all of the same mind,*

*so all three of us open fire.*

*Three of a kind all letting fly, and I swear*

*I see every round as it rips through his life –*

*I see broad daylight on the other side.*

*So we’ve hit this looter a dozen times*

*and he’s there on the ground, sort of inside out,*

*pain itself, the image of agony.*

*One of my mates goes by*

*and tosses his guts back into his body.*

*Then he’s carted off in the back of a lorry.*

*End of story, except not really.*

*His blood-shadow stays on the street, and out on patrol*

*I walk right over it week after week.*

*Then I’m home on leave. But I blink*

*and he bursts again through the doors of the bank.*

*Sleep, and he’s probably armed, and possibly not.*

*Dream, and he’s torn apart by a dozen rounds.*

*And the drink and the drugs won’t flush him out –*

*he’s here in my head when I close my eyes,*

*dug in behind enemy lines,*

*not left for dead in some distant, sun-stunned, sand-smothered land*

*or six-feet-under in desert sand,*

*but near to the knuckle, here and now,*

*his bloody life in my bloody hands.*

Remains

By Simon Armitage