

The Soldier

By Rupert Brooke

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Poetry Out Loud Note: This poem has had two titles: "The Soldier" and "Nineteen-Fourteen: The Soldier". The student may give either title during the recitation.

Source: Poetry



When Rupert Brooke died at the age of 27, he was immortalized as a charismatic poet whom W.B. Yeats called "the handsomest young man in England," and as a symbol of what would be known as the "Lost Generation." His patriotic poetry strengthened support for World War I, although he did not see much combat.