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poem

Conscious

A hospital poem by Wilfred Owen

His fingers wake, and flutter up the bed. His eyes come open with a pull of will, Helped by the yellow may-flowers by his head. A blind-cord drawls across the window-sill . . . How smooth the floor of the ward is! what a rug! And who's that talking, somewhere out of sight? Why are they laughing? What's inside that jug? 'Nurse! Doctor!' 'Yes; all right, all right.' But sudden dusk bewilders all the air — There seems no time to want a drink of water. Nurse looks so far away. And everywhere Music and roses burnt through crimson slaughter. Cold; cold; he's cold; and yet so hot: And there's no light to see the voices by — No time to dream, and ask — he knows not what.

Chosen by Alistair Stewart.

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