



Unseen Poetry

WORKSHEET

The Dead Beat

Wilfred Owen

He dropped, - more sullenly than wearily,
Lay stupid like a cod, heavy like meat,
And none of us could kick him to his feet;
-just blinked at my revolver, blearily;
- Didn't appear to know a war was on,
Or see the blasted trench at which he stared.
'I'll do 'em in,' he whined. 'If this hand's spared,
I'll murder them, I will.'

A low voice said,
'It's Blighty, p'raps, he sees; his pluck's all gone,
Dreaming of all the valiant, that aren't dead:
Bold uncles, smiling ministerially;
Maybe his brave young wife, getting her fun
In some new home, improved materially.
It's not these stiffs have crazed him; nor the Hun.'

We sent him down at last, out of the way.
Unwounded; - stout lad, too, before that strafe.
Malingering? Stretcher-bearers winked, 'Not half!'

Next day I heard the Doc's well-whiskied laugh:
'That scum you sent last night soon died. Hooray!'



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Exam Question

What is the poet saying about the nature of war, and how does he convey this to the reader?

HELP BOX



What is the poem about?

Why has he compared the man to “a cod” and “meat”?

“kick him to his feet” what does this show about life in the trenches?

How do the medical staff react to the patient? – What do you think about this reaction?

What effect does “Horray” have?

What do you think about the title?

****How is the attitude of the narrator different from the attitude of the Poet****