

# Soldier Songs

## Libretto

### Part One: Child

#### I. Real American Heroes (Age 6-12)

I wanna be a "Real American Hero"  
I wanna be just like my toy soldiers  
Killing All the Bad Guys with the Funny Names.  
I'm gonna grow up and be a toy soldier.  
Big bad machine guns makin' big bad noise.  
Killing all the bad guys with the funny names  
Good Guys, Bad Guys,  
Get to Choose, Who will die

#### II. Boom! Bang! Dead! (Rated "T" for Teen) (Age 13-17)

Boom! Bang! Dead!  
I shot you motherfucker!  
Boom! Bang! Dead!  
I shot you in the head!  
I shot you in the face,  
so your mother will not recognize you  
put a gun in to your mouth and  
blew your brains out the back of your head.  
If I get shot, I'll just start over,  
if I get shot, it doesn't really hurt any,  
if I get shot, I'll play the game again  
Boom! Bang! Dead!  
I shot that evil-deer...  
Boom! Bang! Dead!  
and earned ten thousand points.

#### III. Counting the Days (Age 18-21)

I turned eighteen the other day,  
I had to sign a paper,  
That should my country ask me to,  
I'd go and fight and maybe die.  
I signed a paper yesterday,  
that 'til I'm twenty six years old,  
I could belong to the government, if they call me.  
Now that I'm in, I count the days again.  
But differently, down from the top.  
Hoping that I make it to one.

### Part Two: Warrior

#### IV. Still Life with Tank and iPod (Age 22-24)

When I enter combat, in my Abrams Tank,  
I like to bring my iPod, to keep me entertained.  
When I enter combat, in my Abrams Tank,  
I listen to Metallica to keep me in a rage  
It cooks my blood, and makes me feel, like I can conquer any thing.  
It brings me back to when I was a boy ...  
"A week ago, I was in Jersey."  
Push the button, aim on-screen.  
Shoot the moving Pixels (not a man)  
Shoot the moving Pixels (kill 'em all)

#### V. Old Friends with Large Weapons (Age 25-27)

Old Friends  
High School Friends  
In fatigues  
Marching.  
Marching in,  
Mile rows, behind  
Giant Flags,  
Waving.  
Old Friends  
with Large Weapons  
Marching in  
Mile Rows  
Death Machines on their shoulders,  
these soldiers,  
Black Metal,  
Heavy Black Machines.  
Flat  
Black Metal  
Death Metal, on their backs,  
my friends,  
My Dear Old Friends,  
with Large Weapons.

#### VI. Hollywood Ending (Age 28-29)

Outside our base,  
Car bomb blasted,  
Thirty-five dead or wounded, Moaning.  
A ghastly movie scene,  
without the action hero.  
Just Blood and Smoke,  
from the bodies blown to pieces. Outside our base,  
Car bomb blasted.  
Crater making shells,  
Inside a nice new Mercedes.  
I ran out...  
Grabbed my Gun.  
What can I do,  
To help the bleeding, the dying?  
When I saw the carnage there,  
I was held with grief  
and Shock and Awe.  
Bodies writhing  
with missing parts  
Blood-soaked ground.  
Smoke filled air.  
I didn't know what to do.  
These People are dying right here at my feet.  
I feel as if there is just nothing to do.  
This is not what I wanted.  
Never what I imagined.  
Someone yell "cut!"  
Someone yell "cut!"  
This has all gone terribly wrong  
Some one yell "cut!"  
This movie's out of control!  
This movie's out of control!  
Where's the Director?  
Someone yell "cut!"  
Someone yell "cut!"  
This whole thing has got to stop.  
This whole mess has got to end and now!

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### VII. Steel Rain (Age 30-31)

In the military we call incoming ordnance Steel Rain.

"The first thing you feel is non-belief; this can't be what I am hearing; You break out in gooseflesh immediately, and without thinking, you start running. Technically, you are supposed to drop, face down, to the ground, in an effort to get below flying shrapnel. But when you hear that whistle, with a slight vibration beneath it, you can't help but try to run from it. You can feel your heartbeat in your head, and your breathing and footsteps become all you can hear. You run as fast as you can, waiting to hear that explosion, knowing that if you hear it, it means you are still alive... because if it lands close enough to kill you, you wouldn't even hear it go off. When it does impact, you feel the percussion in your back and legs, and for a second you stop breathing. Your legs go numb and you begin to run faster, or maybe it just seems that way. When you reach safety, you immediately turn to watch, and look for others that might still be caught out there. Finally when the whistling stops, and the last explosion has rocked, and the sirens wail out the all clear, your heart returns to a normal cadence, and you return to work... business as usual." (Sgt. Justen Bennell)

In the military we call incoming ordnance "Steel Rain." And believe me, when it rains, it pours.

### Part Three: Elder

#### VIII. Hunting Emmanuel Goldstein (Age 32-43)

They say we've got to catch him,

The man who can't be caught;

They say that he's a threat,

A danger to our liberty.

They show him on TV,

For the two-minute hate.

We never see that all this hunting

Is what keeps us down.

#### IX. Every Town Has a Wall (Age 44-52)

They say that good fences make good neighbors,

I guess you could say the same thing about strong walls.

In medieval days every town had a wall.

A wall for keeping certain people out, and protecting those inside

A wall from which they dropped hot Oil

Through things called "murder holes".

Hot Oil!

Now we use the wall

For listing the names

Of the dead when they fall,

Protecting the wall.

#### X. Two Marines (Age 53-57)

Two Marines

Came to my house

To tell me that

My son...

A letter from

the President, "Regretfully..."

My son...

I did not

answer the door

I knew the speech,

heard it before.

"Bravely fought..."

In combat fell...

For liberty...

My son...

I took my grief  
Out to the yard and  
While they knocked,  
I doused their car  
With gasoline

I lit a match

Set it ablaze

My grief to see

as burning flames.

Take this to

The President, and

Tell him that,

His letter can't,

Not even signed

By human hand,

Not even written

By a person,

This letter won't,

Nor uniforms,

Not folded flags,

Nor victories won,

Your practiced words,

From scripts well learned,

Cannot bring back

My son...

"Ten million soldiers to the war have gone

who may never return again.

Ten million mothers' hearts must break,

For the ones who died in vain.

Head bowed down in sorrow in her lonely years

I heard a mother murmur through her tears:

I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier,

I brought him up to be my pride and joy,

Who dares to put a musket on his shoulder,

To shoot some other mother's darling boy?"

(Al Pinarossi and Alfred Bryan -

"I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," 1915)

Bring me back my son.

#### XI. War After War (Age 58-66)

King Fighting King

Defending a Queen

Using the Bishops to

Rally the Pawns.

(Rally the pawns and

Send them to Die.)

When will the king

fight his own fight?

I wish I could tell you,  
that everything will be alright.