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Michael Rutter

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Tent Flaps

Michael Rutter

A wind tugged at the flaps of my tent; night long
I've heard the lyric
Before as other battles came, with dawn, and went;
The frozen earth's floor
Stained with soldier's blood, having been rent
The earth is sapped with jagged wounds,
For death loomed,
Bringing vision
Of cool winds on mountain lakes
And flowing fields of dry-land wheat
Near a childhood home
On the Salt River, Starr Valley;
Then, the Ghent Wind,
The frozen body, face up, pale,
And a jammed rifle
Told of nations sinning
And not caring for their sin—
The carrion flower;
The wind's power
Tugged at the flaps of my tent,
And morning was dashed by cannon fire.

Michael Rutter, a poet from American Fork, Utah, is a master's candidate in English at Brigham Young University.