

# The Dare

by David P. Gontar (August 2016)



Storming over the steep crest we bounded,  
a pack of slick, scorched faces  
charging the crazed foe,  
swirling about our heads stems of tall grasses  
to hurl the muddy boluses against our enemies.  
And as we tumbled in the bowels of battle,  
we met a gash in earth,  
deep and fathomless as hell.  
A blink told all  
who dared to leap across would be the victor.  
They gaped at me.  
I heard my mother's bell, but louder rang my fate,  
and heedless of extinction flung

my small bones in air.

Darkness swallowed me around

and cold winds swept below.

Now am I old, and withered to the boy I was.

A rebel blood turned royal jelly usurps my heart.

The doctors, weary of my plight, are going home.

There'll be no pain.

But I must jump again.

---

David P. Gontar's latest book is [Hamlet Made Simple and Other Essays](#), New English Review Press, 2013.

To comment on this poem or to share on social media, please click