

Freedom Is Not Free

I watched the flag pass by one day
It fluttered in the breeze.
A young marine saluted it
And then he stood at ease.
I looked at him in uniform
So young, so tall, so proud
With hair cut square and eyes alert
He'd stand out in any crowd.
I wondered how many men like him
Have fallen through the years:
How many died on foreign soil;
How many Mothers' tears.
How many pilots' planes shot down,
How many died at sea;
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves;
No, Freedom is not Free.

I heard the sound of Taps one night
When everything was still.
I listened to the bugler play
And felt a sudden chill.
I wondered just how many times
Taps had meant "Amen".
When a flag had covered a coffin
Of a brother or a friend.
I thought of all the children
Of the Mothers and the Wives
Of Fathers, Sons, and Husbands
With interrupted lives.
And I thought about the graveyard
At the bottom of the sea
Of unmarked graves in Arlington
No, Freedom is not Free.

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