

10,000 Maniacs, Anthem For Doomed Youth

[music: John Lombardo/lyric: John Lombardo adapts Wilfred Owen]

for whom the bells toll
when sentenced to die
the stuttering rifles
will stifle the cry
the monstrous anger
the fear's rapid rattle
a desert inferno
kids dying like cattle

don't tell me
we're not prepared
i've seen today's marine
he's eighteen and he's eager
he can be quite mean

no mock'ries for them
no prayers or bells
the demented choirs
the wailing of shells
the boys holding candles
on untraveled roads
the fear spreads like fire
as shrapnel explodes

i think it's wrong
to conscript our youth
against their will
when plenty of our citizenry
really like to kill

what sign posts will lead
to armageddon's fires
what bugles will call them
from crowded grey shires
the women sit quiet
with death on their minds
a slow dusk descending
the drawing of blinds

make the hunters all line up
it's their idea of fun
and let those be forgiven
who never owned a gun
was it him or me
or the wailing of the dead
the laughing soldiers
cast their lots
and you can cut the dread