

From out of his grave the drummer, when midnight's chime has tolled

Rises and wanders nightly, the drum within his hold
With arm bones white and fleshless he moves the drumsticks two
Plays many a wild reveille and many a weird tattoo

And through the dark loud calling, the drum-taps beat and shake
And the dead forgotten soldiers from out of their graves awake

Those buried in the northlands under the ice and snow
And those whose bones are swelt'ring Italia's earth below
And those who the Nile-stream cover, and the Arabian sands
All from their graves are rising with weapons in their hands

Then from his grave the trumpeter at midnight rises slow
And ever at the midnight the ghostly trumpets blow

Next come the prancing horses, the brave dead cavalry
The bloody shot-pierced squadrons all weaponed diversely
Skulls grin beneath the shadows each dented helm affords
Arms white and fleshless brandish long and rusty swords

And last his grave forsaking when chimes of midnight sound
Comes the general riding with his phantom staff around

Small and cocked the hat he wears and his coat is grey and wide
And he bears a short sword hanging in the sheath at his left side

The moon with yellow glances over the wide plain shines
The general watches mutely; the troops they form in line

The ranks present and shoulder their arms right soldierly
And with regimental music the army marches by

The marshals and the general gather around him near
A word the general whispers into Caesar's ear
The word goes round the circle, resounding over the plain
"La France!" the ringing password, the answer "St Hélène!"

Thus at the hour of midnight in the Champs Élysées
The long-dead Caesar holds his weird review, men say