

Pick Up A Gun

Ralph McTell

The adverts in the papers solicit soldiers for the army
But they never tell you nothing about the girls in the garrison
towns
Like how they will mistreat you and how old friends will see yo
u
When you trade your name for a number and a uniform of brown
When you pick up a gun
And you say goodbye to Mama
And away from home you run

And the way that Sergeant shouted it's just to drive you crazy
I was luckier than many for I got released in time
Now they tell me I'm a free man but sometimes I still doubt it
For the more I think about it freedom's just a state of mind
That they keep with the gun
Thank you for the gift of your son
Praise the Lord and praise the bomb

The politician tells the people you've got to have an army
And the soldier tells the writer the pen is mightier than the s
word
But sticks and stones can break my bones and words will never h
arm me
Said the poet and the writer to the soldier with his words
"Thy will be done"
Said the preacher man
Lowering another poor boy down

And I can see the soldiers dying watch the writer vainly trying
His pen dipped in their blood when he writes that the dead have
got the glory
You can play with the words but you won't change the story
Put a gun in their hands
Fill their heads full of lies
Put strength in their hearts and fear in their eyes

Old soldiers never die they only fade away
But the young ones do not die, no they are cur down instead
And someone pulled the trigger, gave the order, held the sword
And some one wrote the advert in the paper that they read
Thy will be done
But you won't get your hands on my son
You can wait till kingdom come