

*Brother*

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Brother, you left me behind  
To live in crowded isolation  
Wide-eyed and headstrong and  
alone

Brother, you left me behind  
In a derelict town where no one spoke  
No one listened  
And no one but me could hear the roaring silence

Brother, you left me behind  
To walk streets of crystal  
Burning under a blazing sun  
And brutalized under a daffodil star

Brother, you left me behind  
With girls as much like orphans as those with living parents could be  
While train tracks and strangers in black  
Stole our families from our sides

Brother, you left me behind  
To slave my gullible youth away  
Making German grenades, detonated with irony  
Fueled by a fruitless and desperate optimism

Brother, you left me behind  
Under siege from a downpour of explosions  
A rain of carnage  
On a parched landscape

Brother, you left me behind  
To hold my wasting form upright  
With the barrel of a gun in my side  
While courage taunted from behind the façade of a brave face

Brother, you left me behind  
Until I was left with near to nothing

A void where my vibrant heart should have been pounding  
Left to barter hope for my survival

Brother, you left me behind  
And when we were liberated  
I was no more than oxygen rasping its way through an unwilling host  
I had freedom but lacked someone with whom to share it

For you escaped long before me, and, Brother, you left me behind  
But, Brother, I wish you'd left alive