PARADE OF CONSCRIPTED SOLDIERS

Bodenheim, Maxwell, 1892-1954

One soldier’s face is like a mirror
In which a dying child dangles from a string.
One soldier’s face is flat stone
With bitter hieroglyphics of silence
Cut deeply into it.
Another soldier’s face is a twitching white bird
Suddenly clawed by a long-taloned question.
And still another soldier’s face
Is that of a grave clown awkwardly bowing to death.
O silent stiff-fingered people on the curbstone,
You do not see this, but you feel
Unspoken words from the marching conscripts
Striking your faces like weakened fists.