

# Digging for Fools' Gold

There is no sweet lark song  
here, to temper dying moans  
and the mad alarms of battle  
as we dig into sticky wet mud  
to only lose more ground  
around already rotting feet.

And, after it all,  
we're still only the silly sum  
of what we can see  
from where we're at;

and as we sink deeper  
into the hell of its absence,  
the earth is showing us  
just how tall we are –  
what big fools we are –  
without its presence;

and when we no longer  
have the bold brass necks  
to see beyond the surface  
of all that glitters (or doesn't)  
above the worms  
and decaying leaf mould,  
we know that one day soon  
we will be face to face with  
the shells of our own brothers

and we know that even Mother  
Nature can't turn them into gold  
within the dark lonely graves  
we have all dug for ourselves.

***John D. Kelly***