

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