

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

A Dramatic Reading

By
Eric Maria Remarque



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This is a cutting from the story arranged by R. D. Fahey. ISBN 1-60045-020-2

STAGE DIRECTION: The performer should be a young man who well could have served in the German Army in World War I. Even though young, he has been severely tempered in combat. He is home on furlough and has gone to his school and the classroom he left just a year before. His teacher had been a highly militant, patriotic war fanatic.

As the scene opens, "Paul" is seated in front of the class. He is obviously nervous, tense and ill-at-ease.

OPENING COMMENT: I have selected an edited cutting from "All Quiet on the Western Front" by Eric Maria Remarque. In this scene, Paul, a young German soldier home on leave has been asked by his teacher to tell of the glory of the war he has experienced since leaving school the year before.

(Turn, go to chair upstage and assume character, rise and address the class.)

Have, have I seen the glory that is Germany, Herr Professor? Have I---have I felt the grandeur of the---of---God's war? Yes, Professor, I have seen it all. I have been to the front as you told us to do. For the glory of the Kaiser---the Fatherland---Deutschland uber alles!

(Pause and answer a question from the teacher.)

My classmates? Your students? Yes, some are well. Those who aren't? How, how did they die? In glory? Yes, every day we see their "glory." We see men living with their skulls blown open--We see them run on stumps, their two feet blown off. They stagger into the next shell hole and bleed to death---They stagger into aid stations, holding their bulging intestines in their hands---Praising the name of the Kaiser and the Fatherland---Happy to offer their entrails for the glory of the royal family---They come in without arms, without faces---without minds. Minds made animalistic by the glory of the krieg---

--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---