

# If You Must Go to War

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If you can march with calmness in your bearing,  
While chaos reigns and courage seems undone,  
If you can face the fear and keep from swearing,  
And hold your ground though all the others run;  
If you can take the orders without question,  
And yet retain a mind that's free and clear,  
If you can steel yourself, without concession,  
Against the pull of dread or draw of fear;

If you can hold your grief and quiet anger,  
When brothers fall and friends are torn away,  
If, seeing death, you step a little closer,  
And learn to greet it in a steady way;  
If you can bear the silence in the waiting,  
Or stand alert when no attack's in sight,  
And keep your soul from bitter calculating,  
While knowing that the cost may not seem right;

If you can hold to duty, firm and steady,  
Though peace may seem so distant, faint, and far,  
If you can fight each day and still be ready,  
To walk with pride and leave behind each scar;  
If you can rise from dreams of home and laughter,  
And place your feet in mud and dust and pain,  
If you can bear the weight of what comes after,  
And carry strength in honor's heavy chain;

Yours is the honor forged in steady weather,  
And victory's the least of what you'll claim—  
If you can live through war and still remember  
The worth of life, you'll not have fought in vain.