

# Danny Deever

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**by**  
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## Danny Deever

*Rudyard Kipling*

‘What are the bugles blowin’ for?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘To turn you out, to turn you out,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
‘What makes you look so white, so white?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘I’m dreadin’ what I’ve got to watch,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
For they’re hangin’ Danny Deever, you can hear the Dead  
March play,  
The Regiment’s in ’ollow square—they’re hangin’ him to-day;  
They’ve taken of his buttons off an’ cut his stripes away,  
An’ they’re hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’.

‘What makes the rear-rank breathe so ’ard?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘It’s bitter cold, it’s bitter cold,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
‘What makes that front-rank man fall down?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘A touch o’ sun, a touch o’ sun,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin’ Danny Deever, they are marchin’ of ’im round,  
They ’ave ’alted Danny Deever by ’is coffin on the ground;  
An’ ’e’ll swing in ’arf a minute for a sneakin’ shootin’ hound—  
O they’re hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’!

‘Is cot was right-’ and cot to mine,’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘E’s sleepin’ out an’ far to-night,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
‘I’ve drunk ’is beer a score o’ times,’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘E’s drinkin’ bitter beer alone,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin’ Danny Deever, you must mark ’im to ’is place,  
For ’e shot a comrade sleepin’—you must look ’im in the face;  
Nine ’undred of ’is county an’ the Regiment’s disgrace,  
While they’re hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’.

‘What’s that so black agin the sun?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘It’s Danny fightin’ ’ard for life,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
‘What’s that that whimpers over ’ead?’ said Files-on-Parade.  
‘It’s Danny’s soul that’s passin’ now,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.  
For they’re done with Danny Deever, you can ’ear the quick-  
step play,  
The Regiment’s in column, an’ they’re marchin’ us away;  
Ho! the young recruits are shakin’, an’ they’ll want their beer  
to-day,  
After hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’!

## Ocean Tao

*Chris Yan*

Stories from the center are lined with all manner of religion.  
Someone gave them icons.  
Silver crucifixes, stars and crescents, yins and yangs of the *Tao*.  
The center, which we call truth, is what we talk about now from  
the fringes of a neglected splendor  
we don’t have the patience to live in.  
For my friend and me, a steel pot stews  
below a robed man, a picture inscribed  
*Dalai Lama*, 1962. Wisdom for our Chinatown dish of beef and  
garlic. Who distinguishes truth from superstition? Still the *Tao* of  
a name gets to me, rendering me lost in places I never realized.  
*Dalai*, meaning “ocean,” *Lama*, meaning “teacher.”  
We go on, eating, consuming.

A golden Buddha sits with quarters piled in his lap,  
heaping someone’s version of luck on the cash register.  
His name was once *Siddhartha*, meaning “achieving  
what is searched for.” Truth found him waiting under a bodhi  
tree. Perhaps waiting is a wonderful thing.  
My friend disagrees, tells me about taking LSD,  
and seeing an ocean, infinite—circles of expanding light. And on  
the edge, strings of light. “That’s all we are,” he says. Spirituality  
just a chemical imbalance,  
a science statues and symbols can’t achieve.  
And I realize what ravenous beings we can be,  
filled with our lust for meaning,  
from which we built this silly world and everything in it.  
Perhaps faith is to be patient, the way a man under a tree waits  
for a God who may never come, or the way a man and woman in  
love let the slow evening run its course.  
Once, my wife drowned in the ocean, and I waited,  
gasping white sand, before she woke again.  
Once, my mother with radioactive atoms in her blood  
waited before the doctor told her the cancer was gone.  
Once, my father waited outside the operating room, contemplat-  
ing the center of my mother’s womb before he heard my cry.  
We are dust and atoms, we agree. And in those, atoms, spaces,  
protons and electrons. Part the stars of our bodies,  
and science is the gap where we must wait  
to understand this wonder,  
how the boundless can occupy the bounded; *Tao* of ocean, and  
strings of light.

## Blood Moon

*Fernando Esteban Flores*

Like an old rusty bottle cap  
Someone nailed to a tree  
The long awaited blood moon  
Bears up all the fears  
Projected upon its eerie countenance  
With the fanfare of a messianic  
Superstar heralding  
An end or a beginning  
Perhaps more like a sudarium of Christ  
It looks down upon  
The bloody mess  
The world is  
Under its shattered face  
A tattered reflection  
Of just how much human history  
Has remained unchanged  
How life here hinges  
On the smallest things  
As if by looking up or looking down  
We might steal a glimpse  
Of what may be  
Before our real concerns  
Eclipse all imagined horrors  
Still to come