

“The Colors of Courage”

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Our Lady of the Elms

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495 words

Red is for two bloodshot eyes,
And white is for steam clouds and little white lies.

Blue is for lips in the cold,
And yellow's the star, but it's nothing like gold.

Brown is for dirt floors and wood,
And green is for grass--it would grow if it could.

Purple is eyebags, no rest,
And orange is sunsets stretched out in the west.

But the sunsets are nothing like those long ago;
They bring darkness, like always, but ever so slow.
In the golden sky's closing, in its dying breath,
Black is the night that bears grieving and death...

But

Purple is tired eyes and bruises,
Of the rescuer fighting for the side he chooses.

Green is the evergreens, stoic,
Through which rescuers risk their lives, brave and heroic.

Brown is for sharing the bread,
With the people they took in, not turned in instead.

Yellow is warm lights inviting,
In the houses that welcome and aid in the fighting.

Blue is for ink on the line--
For the signature forged and the fake passport signed.

White is for bandages, gauze,
And medical supplies gathered quick for the cause.

Red is the sunrise, the dawn of the day,
And reflections on waves as the clouds float away.
It is lips no more freezing and hearts beating loud,
And for blood in the veins of a people still proud.

Blue is for new clothes and curtains
Bought by neighbors and saviors; their kindness is certain.

Yellow is for hopes and dreams,

Of a sun that still shines and makes golden light stream.

Brown is for soil and seed,
For an old life restarted by those who were freed.

Green is for grass and new sprouts
Of another new life from the ground that breaks out.

Purple is tired eyes once more,
But this time finally feeling safe and secure.

Orange is enough produce to grow,
And the warm light emitting from the kitchen's glow.

Yellow is stars both discarded and kept,
Signifying identities for which they wept.
Persistent spirits, even now have not dwindled,
Like the strong golden light from a yellow flame kindled.

Grey had once painted the sky full of smoke.
It was once in the eyes of the spirits that broke.
It brought numbness and dullness, no end to the day,
And the ashes of lives then were all hues of grey.

Brown is the soil where innocents lie;
They were prisoners, rescuers, those left to die,
On account of their captors “condemning their sins,”
But brown is for soil where new life begins.

Black is for grieving those who risked their lives,
But the fruits of their work means a nation survives.
Though prisoners and rescuers lie underground,
In their stories, admirable courage is found.

Red and black make up the flag of despair,
Of a symbol once used to mean peace everywhere,
But the red of the bloodshed and black of the night
Make the colors of courage shine evermore bright.

Works Cited

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