

1-1-2016

## Language of the Common War

Anika N. Jensen  
Gettysburg College, jensen02@gettysburg.edu  
Class of 2018

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mercury>

 Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

**Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.**

---

Jensen, Anika N. (2016) "Language of the Common War," *The Mercury*: Year 2016, Article 19.  
Available at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mercury/vol2016/iss1/19>

This open access poetry is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact [cupola@gettysburg.edu](mailto:cupola@gettysburg.edu).

---

## Language of the Common War

### **Author Bio**

Anika Jensen, class of 2018, is an English major with a writing concentration and a CWES/MEIS double minor. Some of her favorite things include feminism, yoga, and goats. She also goes by the name John Cena.

# Language of the Common War

Anika Jensen

A spontaneous overflow of smoke to the lungs and powder to the teeth,  
spitting black tar dust onto my knee accidentally.  
I vomited daffodils at the edge of the trench.  
We are not your Vatican ceiling.

The blunt end of my rifle ended life whose face had more color,  
more property than a sand-toned silence.  
He did not raise his arms to divinity;  
the blood bubbled in the back of his throat.

He couldn't breathe,  
he couldn't breathe,  
he couldn't breathe.

La Belle Dame holds a rifle to my head,  
a Grecian Urn shatters in my brain.  
The Rime of the Ancient lie of war:  
War is always, war is courage, war is hell.

War is there, sitting at the wrong park bench with the wrong toy gun  
that one man wants so desperately to be real.  
Excuses are piled higher than the bodies of the battles  
that should not be.