


Untitled

Anthony Roberts

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Boys play at war
while their fathers who have gone before
who thought they would see it no more
now know that hope is forlorn
that for their sons it's always only a game
but new threats now grow and remain

— the world seems to have other plans

despite how hard we fought
despite the peace we sought
despite our strength displayed
despite the ones we slayed
the wolves still do prey

So while tonight to God you pray
the prayers I taught you to recite each day
know that God doesn't work that way
that your enemies still have a say
remember you were taught to love
remember you were taught to play
remember in those games
the lessons of the killing way



Anthony Roberts is a writer and veteran who has taught at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Seton Hall University, and Rutgers University. His poetry has been published in *Southerly Literary Journal*, *The Other Voices* poetry anthology, and *Vox Poetica*, and has been translated into Persian, Italian, Bengali, and Czech. His book *Pigtown* (2017) was selected by Old Dominion University for inclusion in their writing program. His latest book, *The Clearing Barrel*, was published by Blue Jade Press in 2021. He is on Instagram @varangiwriting.