

## **Of Arms and the Man**

**I first saw you in history books.  
They said the Chinese discovered  
You by accident -- marrying  
A firecracker to a pipe.  
Your birth was someone else's  
Death.**

**Then there was no stopping. You  
Quickly became famous; moving  
Westward, knocking knights off  
Horses forever -- going places  
Doing things no sword or arrow could.**

**You shot forward, filling cemeteries  
With evidence of your expertise.  
Even then the barrel, sight and  
Trigger were more than enough.  
But you weren't satisfied.**

**Through early battles, verified  
By skeletons, you began to improve  
Upon yourself, firing faster,  
Shooting farther, a larger bullet into  
A deeper wound. Such successes  
Made your reputation.**

**It was then I was introduced  
To you. Remember the day we met,  
In bootcamp, when they handed you  
To me and said,  
"Take care of this as though it were  
Your life." You were my life,**

**Much less for others far away.**

**We were trained and sent off.  
The two of us became inseparable.  
We would lie together on a windy  
Hilltop or balance motionless**

In the warm branches of a tree:  
Me theorizing, you deciding.  
When to act out what I could only  
Dream of doing. Those times  
Were soon over. Now there is no  
More need of you. Each day  
I read of your relatives exploding  
In suicides, murders, weird  
Crimes of every sort, but  
It'll never be like it was.

That is why I take you down  
From time to time and shove  
A cartridge in your chamber,  
To remind you, dear, what sort of  
Lovers we once were.