

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa

An Analysis of "Facing It" by Yusef Komunyakaa: Unveiling the Vietnam Veterans' Trauma

The stark, haunting imagery of Yusef Komunyakaa's "Facing It" leaves a lasting impression. This poem isn't just a reflection on a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; it's a visceral exploration of trauma, memory, and the lasting impact of war. This in-depth analysis will delve into the poem's intricate layers, examining its use of language, symbolism, and structure to reveal the complex emotional landscape of a Vietnam veteran confronting his past. We'll explore the poem's powerful themes of grief, guilt, and the enduring struggle to reconcile with a harrowing experience. Prepare to uncover the profound meaning behind Komunyakaa's masterpiece.

I. The Power of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a Setting

Komunyakaa masterfully utilizes the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as more than just a backdrop; it becomes a character in itself. The polished black surface acts as a mirror, reflecting both the physical and emotional states of the speaker. The poem opens with the speaker physically facing the wall, a seemingly simple action that carries immense weight. The highly reflective surface forces a confrontation with the past, literally and figuratively. The black granite symbolizes the darkness and pain associated with the war, a stark contrast to the vibrant life the soldiers once knew. This setting immediately establishes the poem's somber tone and foreshadows the emotional turmoil to come. The impersonal nature of the memorial – a list of names etched in stone – further emphasizes the dehumanizing aspects of war and the speaker's struggle to connect with his lost comrades.

II. The Use of Imagery and Sensory Detail

Komunyakaa's poetic skill shines through his evocative use of imagery. The poem is rich with sensory details that draw the reader into the speaker's experience. He doesn't just see the names; he feels the cold of the black granite, hears the whispers of the wind, and even smells the "fragrance of lilac" – a jarring juxtaposition of beauty and death. These sensory details heighten the emotional impact, allowing the reader to almost physically experience the speaker's emotional journey. The use of "white" to describe the faces of the soldiers in the speaker's mind, contrasted with the dark granite, further enhances the ghostly and unreal quality of his memories. The blending of the present (the physical presence at the wall) and the past (the vivid recollections) creates a powerful sense of disorientation and the lingering effects of trauma.

III. The Theme of Grief and Loss

The poem's central theme revolves around the profound grief and loss experienced by the speaker and other Vietnam veterans. The sheer number of names etched into the wall represents an unimaginable scale of loss, while the individual names represent the loss of specific lives and relationships. The speaker's struggle to reconcile his memories of fallen comrades with the present moment underscores the enduring nature of grief. The poem suggests that the process of mourning is not linear; it's a continuous cycle of remembrance and struggle. The speaker's internal conflict—between remembering the faces of his fallen comrades clearly and seeing only blurred images—represents the fragmented nature of trauma and the difficulty of fully processing the experience.

IV. The Exploration of Guilt and Survivor's Guilt

Beyond grief, "Facing It" subtly explores the complex issue of guilt, particularly survivor's guilt. The speaker's emotional turmoil isn't solely focused on the loss of his comrades but also a sense of self-questioning. The poem hints at a personal struggle with the weight of survival and the moral ambiguities of war. The act of "facing it" is not just about confronting the past; it's about confronting his own role within that past and grappling with his own survival amidst the death and destruction. This internal struggle adds another layer of complexity to the poem's emotional depth. The fragmented memories and blurred faces symbolize the difficulty of fully confronting the guilt and trauma associated with war.

V. The Poem's Structure and Form

The poem's free verse structure mirrors the fragmented and nonlinear nature of memory and trauma. The lack of a rigid structure reflects the speaker's emotional state, mirroring the disjointed and chaotic experience of war and its aftermath. The poem's shifts in perspective, from the impersonal observation of the wall to the deeply personal recollections of his comrades, underscore the complexities of the veteran's emotional landscape. This fragmented structure effectively conveys the jarring and disorienting experience of processing trauma. The lack of a clear narrative arc emphasizes the ongoing nature of the veteran's struggle.

VI. The Symbolism of the Mirror-Like Surface

The reflective surface of the memorial acts as a powerful symbol, highlighting the speaker's confrontation with his own reflection, both literally and metaphorically. He sees his own image reflected alongside the names of the fallen, blurring the lines between the past and the present. This blurring symbolizes the difficulty of separating his own experience from the collective trauma of the war. The reflection becomes a symbol of the enduring impact of war, showcasing how the past continues to haunt the present. The seemingly simple act of looking at the wall becomes an act of intense self-reflection and confrontation with the painful realities of his past.

VII. Conclusion: The Enduring Legacy of "Facing It"

Yusef Komunyakaa's "Facing It" is more than just a poem; it's a powerful testament to the lasting impact of war and the complex emotional journey of Vietnam veterans. Through its evocative imagery, poignant symbolism, and fragmented structure, the poem offers a profound insight into the struggle to confront trauma and reconcile with the past. The poem's lasting power lies in its ability to connect with readers on an emotional level, forcing us to confront the often-unseen consequences of war and the enduring resilience of the human spirit. It reminds us that the wounds of war extend far beyond the battlefield and continue to resonate long after the fighting has ceased.

Detailed Outline: Analysis of "Facing It" by Yusef Komunyakaa

I. Introduction:

Hook: Engaging opening highlighting the poem's impact.

Overview: Brief summary of the analysis's scope and focus.

Thesis Statement: Claim about the poem's central themes and significance.

II. Main Chapters:

Chapter 1: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Setting (analysis of setting and its symbolism).

Chapter 2: Imagery and Sensory Detail (analysis of sensory language and its impact).

Chapter 3: Theme of Grief and Loss (exploring the poem's depiction of grief).

Chapter 4: Exploration of Guilt and Survivor's Guilt (analyzing the element of guilt).

Chapter 5: Structure and Form (examining the poem's structure and its significance).

Chapter 6: Symbolism of the Mirror-Like Surface (deep dive into the reflective surface).

III. Conclusion:

Restatement of thesis: Summarizing the key findings.

Concluding thoughts: Reflecting on the poem's lasting impact and broader significance.

Article Explaining Each Point of the Outline:

(The above sections I-VII fulfill this requirement, providing detailed analysis for each point outlined.)

FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of "Facing It"? The central theme is the lasting impact of the Vietnam War on veterans, specifically focusing on grief, loss, and the struggle to reconcile with traumatic experiences.

1. How does Komunyakaa use imagery in the poem? Komunyakaa employs vivid sensory details—visual, tactile, olfactory—to immerse the reader in the speaker's emotional state and create a visceral experience.
1. What is the significance of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the poem? The memorial serves as a central character, reflecting the speaker's emotional journey and acting as a mirror reflecting both the physical and emotional states of the speaker.
1. What role does guilt play in "Facing It"? The poem subtly explores survivor's guilt and the moral ambiguities associated with war, adding layers of complexity to the speaker's emotional struggle.
1. How does the poem's structure contribute to its meaning? The free verse structure mirrors the fragmented and nonlinear nature of memory and trauma, effectively conveying the disorienting experience of processing war.
1. What is the symbolism of the reflective surface of the memorial? The reflective surface symbolizes the speaker's confrontation with his past, blurring the lines between memory and present, highlighting the enduring impact of war.
1. What makes "Facing It" a powerful poem? The poem's power comes from its emotional honesty, its evocative use of language, and its ability to connect with readers on a deeply personal level.
1. How does the poem use juxtaposition? The poem juxtaposes the serene imagery of nature with the harsh realities of war, creating a powerful contrast and enhancing the emotional impact.
1. What is the significance of the poem's title, "Facing It"? The title indicates the act of confronting one's past and the ongoing struggle of processing trauma related to war.

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analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Dien Cai Dau* Yusef Komunyakaa, 1988-09-01

This collection by the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet is "a major contribution to the body of literature grappling with Vietnam" (Poetry). Yusef Komunyakaa is renowned for his ability to blend memory and history with strikingly evocative poetic imagery. Born in the rural community of Bogalusa, Louisiana, Komunyakaa served in Vietnam as a correspondent and editor of *The Southern Cross* and received a Bronze Star for his service as a journalist. In *Dien Cai Dau*, he applies this unique sensibility to his experience of the Vietnam War. The resulting poems have been called some of the finest Vietnam testimony ever documented in verse or prose. "So finely tuned are Komunyakaa's images, so faultless his vision, that the reader sees precisely what the poet recalls . . . A powerful must-read for those who have forgotten those days." —Booklist

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analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *The Curse of Kehama* Robert Southey, 1818

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Song of Napalm* Bruce Weigl, 1994 *Song of Napalm* is more than a collection of beautifully wrought, heartwrenching, and often very funny poems. It's a narrative, the story of an American innocent's descent into hell and his excruciating return to life on the surface. Weigl may have written the best novel so far about the Vietnam War, and along the way a dozen truly memorable poems. -- Russell Banks

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Everyday Mojo Songs of Earth* Yusef Komunyakaa, 2022-06-14 A selection of new and previously published poems from the celebrated poet--

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analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *My Forbidden Face* Latifa, 2008-09-04 Latifa was born into an educated middle-class Afghan family in Kabul in 1980. She dreamed of one day of becoming a journalist, she was interested in fashion, movies and friends. Her father was in the import/export business and her mother was a doctor. Then in September 1996, Taliban soldiers seized power in Kabul. From that moment, Latifa, just 16 years old became a prisoner in her own home. Her school was closed. Her mother was banned from working. The simplest and most basic freedoms - walking down the street, looking out a window - were no longer hers. She was now forced to wear a chadri. *My Forbidden Face* provides a poignant and highly personal account of life under the Taliban regime. With painful honesty and clarity Latifa describes the way she watched her world falling apart, in the name of a fanatical interpretation of a faith that she could not comprehend. Her voice captures a lost innocence, but also echoes her determination to live in freedom and hope. Earlier this year, Latifa and her parents escaped Afghanistan with the help of a French-based Afghan resistance group.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Unlikely Warrior* Georg Rauch, 2015-02-24 Previously published as *The Jew with the Iron Cross: a record of survival in WWII Russia*. New York: iUniverse, 2006.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *The Weave of My Life* Urmila Pawar, 2009-07-15 My mother used to weave aaydans, the Marathi generic term for all things made from bamboo. I find that her act of weaving and my act of writing are organically linked. The weave is similar. It is the weave of pain, suffering, and agony that links us. Activist and award-winning writer

Urmila Pawar recounts three generations of Dalit women who struggled to overcome the burden of their caste. Dalits, or untouchables, make up India's poorest class. Forbidden from performing anything but the most undesirable and unsanitary duties, for years Dalits were believed to be racially inferior and polluted by nature and were therefore forced to live in isolated communities. Pawar grew up on the rugged Konkan coast, near Mumbai, where the Mahar Dalits were housed in the center of the village so the upper castes could summon them at any time. As Pawar writes, the community grew up with a sense of perpetual insecurity, fearing that they could be attacked from all four sides in times of conflict. That is why there has always been a tendency in our people to shrink within ourselves like a tortoise and proceed at a snail's pace. Pawar eventually left Konkan for Mumbai, where she fought for Dalit rights and became a major figure in the Dalit literary movement. Though she writes in Marathi, she has found fame in all of India. In this frank and intimate memoir, Pawar not only shares her tireless effort to surmount hideous personal tragedy but also conveys the excitement of an awakening consciousness during a time of profound political and social change.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *The Mansion of Happiness* Robin Ekiss, 2009 Robin Ekiss's meditations on memory and mortality are a canary in the coal mine of imagination. With disembodied dolls, dank Parisian catacombs, the gilded interior of a Fabergé egg, and the unfathomable edge of Niagara Falls as the dominion of these poems, reading Ekiss's work is like peering into the perfectly still world of a diorama or daguerreotype: an experience both uncanny and uncompromising.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Here, Bullet* Brian Turner, 2014-09-01 A first-person account of the Iraq War by a soldier-poet, winner of the 2005 Beatrice Hawley Award. Adding his voice to the current debate about the US occupation of Iraq, in poems written in the tradition of such poets as Wilfred Owen, Yusef Komunyakaa (Dien Cai Dau), Bruce Weigl (Song of Napalm) and Alice James' own Doug Anderson (The Moon Reflected Fire), Iraqi war veteran Brian Turner writes power-fully affecting poetry of witness, exceptional for its beauty, honesty, and skill. Based on Turner's yearlong tour in Iraq as an infantry team leader, the poems offer gracefully rendered, unflinching description but, remarkably, leave the reader to draw conclusions or moral lessons. Here, *Bullet* is a must-read for anyone who cares about the war, regardless of political affiliation.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *No Ordinary Sun: Poems* Hone Tuwhare, 1973

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *It's Always the Husband* Michele Campbell, 2017-05-16 A suspenseful, absorbing novel that examines the complexities of friendship, *It's Always the Husband* will keep readers guessing right up to its shocking conclusion.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Fault Lines* Meena Alexander, 2020-11-17 In this evocative memoir, an acclaimed Indian poet explores writing, memory, and place in a post-9/11 world. Passionate, fierce, and lyrical, *Fault Lines* follows one woman's evolution as a writer at home—and in exile—across continents and cultures. Meena Alexander was born into a privileged childhood in India and grew into a turbulent adolescence in the Sudan, before moving to England and then New York City. With poetic insight and devastating honesty, Alexander explores how trauma and recovery shaped the entire landscape of her memory: of her family, her writing process, and her very self. This new edition, published on the two-year anniversary of Alexander's passing in 2018, will feature a commemorative afterword celebrating her legacy. Alexander's writing is imbued with a poetic grace shot through with an inner violence, like a shimmering piece of two-toned silk. —Ms. Magazine Evocative and moving. —Publishers Weekly "One of the most important literary voices in South Asian American writing and American letters broadly writ, Meena Alexander's close examination of exile and migration lays bare the heart of a poet." —Rajiv Mohabir, author of *The Cowherd's Son*

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Dulce Et Decorum Est* WILFRED. OWEN, 2018-10

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: *Talking Dirty to the Gods* Yusef Komunyakaa, 2000 A collection of poems in which the Pulitzer Prize-winning author examines and evaluates each of the seven deadly sins.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Collected Poems of Howard Nemerov Howard Nemerov, 1977 The former Poet Laureate of the United States, Nemerov gives us a lucid and precise twist on the commonplaces of everyday life. The Collected Poems of Howard Nemerov won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize in 1978. Howard Nemerov is a witty, urbane, thoughtful poet, grounded in the classics, a master of the craft. It is refreshing to read his work. . . .

—Minneapolis Tribune The world causes in Nemerov a mingled revulsion and love, and a hopeless hope is the most attractive quality in his poems, which slowly turn obverse to reverse, seeing the permanence of change, the vices of virtue, the evanescence of solidities and the errors of truth.—Helen Vendler, New York Times Book Review

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: No Sign Peter Balakian, 2022-03-21 Peter Balakian's *No Sign*, the centerpiece of this book, is the third multi-sequenced long poem in a trilogy begun in *A-Train/Ziggurat/Elegy* (2010) and *Ozone Journal* (2015). The three poems follow a persona whose journey is informed by a series of experiences set in New York and the surrounding Jersey Cliffs from the 1970s to the present. In the mix of a dialogue between two lovers over decades, reminiscent of an eclogue updated via the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959), we see an evolution of kaleidoscopic memory—from the haunted history of the Armenian Genocide to the AIDS epidemic, to climate change and the erosion of the planet—that gives the trilogy a unique historical power and psychological depth. The poems in the trilogy are defined by inventive collage-like fragmentation and elliptical, granular language. In the tradition of the American long poem from Walt Whitman and Hart Crane to Charles Olson, Balakian has created something new, what one critic has called, a panoramic work of contemporary witness...of an unprecedented magnitude of violence and dissociation, as well as transcendent vision. Balakian rounds out this new collection with his signature lyrics and narrative poems, where seemingly minor, personal moments in one life expand into the vastness of our messy, shared history--

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: War is Kind Stephen Crane, 1899

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: She-Wolf Cristina Mazzoni, 2010-03-29 Since antiquity, the she-wolf has served as the potent symbol of Rome. For more than two thousand years, the legendary animal that rescued Romulus and Remus has been the subject of historical and political accounts, literary treatments in poetry and prose, and visual representations in every medium. In *She-Wolf: The Story of a Roman Icon*, Cristina Mazzoni examines the evolution of the she-wolf as a symbol in western history, art, and literature, from antiquity to contemporary times. Used, for example, as an icon of Roman imperial power, papal authority, and the distance between the present and the past, the she-wolf has also served as an allegory for greed, good politics, excessive female sexuality, and, most recently, modern, multi-cultural Rome. Mazzoni engagingly analyzes the various role guises of the she-wolf over time in the first comprehensive study in any language on this subject.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: The Fatal Sisters Anon, Thomas Gray, 1999

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: What Work Is Philip Levine, 2011-08-31 Winner of the National Book Award in 1991 "This collection amounts to a hymn of praise for all the workers of America. These proletarian heroes, with names like Lonnie, Loo, Sweet Pea, and Packy, work the furnaces, forges, slag heaps, assembly lines, and loading docks at places with unglamorous names like Brass Craft or Feinberg and Breslin's First-Rate Plumbing and Plating. Only Studs Terkel's *Working* approaches the pathos and beauty of this book. But Levine's characters are also significant for their inner lives, not merely their jobs. They are unusually artistic, living 'at the borders of dreams.' One reads *The Tempest* 'slowly to himself'; another ponders a diagonal chalk line drawn by his teacher to suggest a triangle, the roof of a barn, or the mysterious separation of 'the dark from the dark.' *What Work Is* ranks as a major work by a major poet . . . very accessible and utterly American in tone and language." —Daniel L. Guillory, Library Journal

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Carrying the Darkness William Daniel Ehrhart, 1989 An anthology of Vietnam War poetry, featuring the work of seventy-five poets.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: The Unredeemed Captive John Demos,

2011-05-04 Nominated for the National Book Award and winner of the Francis Parkman Prize. The setting for this haunting and encyclopedically researched work of history is colonial Massachusetts, where English Puritans first endeavoured to civilize a savage native populace. There, in February 1704, a French and Indian war party descended on the village of Deerfield, abducting a Puritan minister and his children. Although John Williams was eventually released, his daughter horrified the family by staying with her captors and marrying a Mohawk husband. Out of this incident, The Bancroft Prize-winning historian John Devos has constructed a gripping narrative that opens a window into North America where English, French, and Native Americans faced one another across gulfs of culture and belief, and sometimes crossed over.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Lenin's Tomb David Remnick, 2014-04-02 Winner of the Pulitzer Prize One of the Best Books of the Year: The New York Times From the editor of The New Yorker: a riveting account of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which has become the standard book on the subject. Lenin's Tomb combines the global vision of the best historical scholarship with the immediacy of eyewitness journalism. Remnick takes us through the tumultuous 75-year period of Communist rule leading up to the collapse and gives us the voices of those who lived through it, from democratic activists to Party members, from anti-Semites to Holocaust survivors, from Gorbachev to Yeltsin to Sakharov. An extraordinary history of an empire undone, Lenin's Tomb stands as essential reading for our times.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Night Animals Yusef Komunyakaa, 2020-06-02 The poems in Night Animals, by Yusef Komunyakaa, climb so deeply into the being of various beasts, from cricket to leopard to snowy owl, that we read them with an uncanny shiver of recognition. Without ever fully abandoning his human skin, Komunyakaa inhabits both the outer and inner lives of these creatures. The images are a brilliant match for the poems, each of Rachel Bliss's surreal animals populate a realm somewhere between our two species—birds with teeth, men with antlers, a duck wearing suspenders. Both image and word are dense and dark, intensely focused around a kind of hunger. The poet has been startling us with his rich, disturbing, and important poems for many years. Night Animals extends Yusef Komunyakaa's remarkable oeuvre.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Notes from the Divided Country Suji Kwock Kim, 2003 Offers poems of family, history, love, and vision.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Well Done, Those Men Barry Heard, 2005-04-04 In this intensely personal account, Barry Heard draws on his own experiences as a young conscript, along with those of his comrades, to look back at life before, during, and after the Vietnam War. The result is a sympathetic vision of a group of young men who were sent off to war completely unprepared for the emotional and psychological impact it would have on them. It is also a vivid and searingly honest portrayal of the author's post-war, slow-motion breakdown, and how he dealt with it. Well Done, Those Men attempts to make sense of what Vietnam did to the soldiers who fought there. It deals with the comic absurdity of their military training and the horror of the war they fought, and is unforgettably moving in recounting what happened to Barry and his comrades when they returned home to Australia. As we now know, most Vietnam vets had to deal with a community that shunned them, and with their own depression, trauma, and guilt. Barry Heard's sensitive account of his long journey home from Vietnam is a tribute to his mates, and an inspiring story of a life reclaimed. PRAISE FOR BARRY HEARD 'Well Done, Those Men is a human, moving, and brutally honest account of one man's emotionally racked journey from naive country boy to jungle soldier, psychologically scarred veteran, and ultimately triumphant victor over the demons within.' The Herald Sun 'Heard gives meaning and sense to overused cliches such as "stolen youth", "buried horrors" and even "mateship".' The Age

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: The Poem Is You Stephanie Burt, 2016-09-12 The variety of contemporary American poetry leaves many readers overwhelmed. The critic, scholar, and poet Stephen Burt sets out to help. Beginning in the early 1980s, where critical consensus ends, he presents 60 poems, each with an original essay explaining how the poem works, why it matters, and how it speaks to other parts of art and culture.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Neon Vernacular Yusef Komunyakaa, 1993-04-30 This Pulitzer Prize-winning collection pairs twelve new poems with work from seven previous volumes by "one of the most extraordinary poets writing today" (Kenyon Review). The poetry of Yusef Komunyakaa traverses psychological and physical landscapes, mining personal memory to understand the historical and social contexts that shape experience. Neon Vernacular charts the development of his characteristic themes and concerns by gathering work from seven of his previous collections, along with a dozen new poems that continue the autobiographical trajectory of his previous collection, Magic City. Here, Komunyakaa shares an intimate and evocative life journey, from his childhood in Bogalusa, Louisiana—once a center of Klan activity and later a focus of Civil Rights efforts—to his stormy relationship with his father, his high school football days, and his experience of the Vietnam War and his difficult return home. Many of the poems collected here are drawn from limited editions and are no longer available.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Out of the Blue Simon Armitage, 2014-04-11 This book brings together three verse form pieces each of which was created to be part of a broader form. 'Out of the Blue' itself is a powerful, award-winning, poem-film created five years after the attacks which destroyed the twin towers in New York. With a title from a speech of Churchill, 'We May Allow Ourselves a Brief Period of Rejoicing' was a Channel 5 commission for a broadcast celebrating the 60th anniversary of VE Day. The third, 'Cambodia', comes from the radio drama The Violence of Silence set 30 years after the Khmer Rouge

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: The Sunflower Simon Wiesenthal, 2008-12-18 A Holocaust survivor's surprising and thought-provoking study of forgiveness, justice, compassion, and human responsibility, featuring contributions from the Dalai Lama, Harry Wu, Cynthia Ozick, Primo Levi, and more. You are a prisoner in a concentration camp. A dying Nazi soldier asks for your forgiveness. What would you do? While imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, Simon Wiesenthal was taken one day from his work detail to the bedside of a dying member of the SS. Haunted by the crimes in which he had participated, the soldier wanted to confess to--and obtain absolution from--a Jew. Faced with the choice between compassion and justice, silence and truth, Wiesenthal said nothing. But even years after the way had ended, he wondered: Had he done the right thing? What would you have done in his place? In this important book, fifty-three distinguished men and women respond to Wiesenthal's questions. They are theologians, political leaders, writers, jurists, psychiatrists, human rights activists, Holocaust survivors, and victims of attempted genocides in Bosnia, Cambodia, China and Tibet. Their responses, as varied as their experiences of the world, remind us that Wiesenthal's questions are not limited to events of the past.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: If I Die in a Combat Zone Tim O'Brien, 2011-08-24 A classic from the New York Times bestselling author of The Things They Carried One of the best, most disturbing, and most powerful books about the shame that was / is Vietnam. —Minneapolis Star and Tribune Before writing his award-winning Going After Cacciato, Tim O'Brien gave us this intensely personal account of his year as a foot soldier in Vietnam. The author takes us with him to experience combat from behind an infantryman's rifle, to walk the minefields of My Lai, to crawl into the ghostly tunnels, and to explore the ambiguities of manhood and morality in a war gone terribly wrong. Beautifully written and searingly heartfelt, If I Die in a Combat Zone is a masterwork of its genre. Now with Extra Libris material, including a reader's guide and bonus content.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: Leadbelly Tyehimba Jess, 2005 National Poetry Series winner makes compelling poetry from the tumultuous life of blues singer Leadbelly.

analysis of facing it by yusef komunyakaa: The Chameleon Couch Yusef Komunyakaa, 2012-03-27 A Boston Globe Best Poetry Book of 2011 | Finalist for the National Book Award for Poetry An intimate collection from one of America's most important poets The latest collection from one of our preeminent poets, The Chameleon Couch is also one of Yusef Komunyakaa's most personal to date. As in his breakthrough work, Copacetic, Komunyakaa writes again of music as muse—from a blues club in the East Village to the shakuhachi of Basho. Beginning with Canticale,

this varied new collection often returns to the idea of poem as hymn, ethereal and haunting, as Komunyakaa reveals glimpses of memory, myth, and violence. With contemplations that spring up along walks or memories conjured by the rhythms of New York, Komunyakaa pays tribute more than ever before to those who came before him. The book moves seamlessly across cultural and historical boundaries, evoking Komunyakaa's capacity for cultural excavation, through artifact and place. The Chameleon Couch begins in and never fully leaves the present—an urban modernity framed, brilliantly, in pastoral-minded verse. The poems seek the cracks beneath the landscape, whether New York or Ghana or Poland, finding in each elements of wisdom or unexpected beauty. The collection is sensually, beautifully relaxed in rhetoric; in poems like Cape Coast Castle, Komunyakaa reminds us of his gift for combining the personal with the universal, one moment addressing a lover, the next moving the focus outward, until both poet and reader are implicated in the book's startling world.

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