

# Red and Blue Lines of the German Painter, Otto Dix

*by* Tantra Bensko

**Across candles waxing up the table**

**They tell war stories. They say**

**Whores were always matronly  
When there were soldiers.  
I remember a whore brutally  
In the mirrored room.  
She was ugly as a child would find her.  
My friends can see bright red and blue lines  
Of my story bend  
In simple lines like the designs  
I painted for years  
Over Dresden's doors.**

**I tell them about my paintings  
They have on their walls.  
They have noticed there is often a child  
In my stories. He reaches up perhaps  
To the meat market counter  
Where the boarish, tattooed butchers  
Are actively not getting over the Great War.  
He watches cripples,  
Just head, chest, arms, on sleds, asking  
For alms before a display of ivory legs.  
I describe the child so clearly,  
The watching eyes so well, they believe  
He was there.**

**The painting of the mirrored room  
Is like fighting: clothed,  
The whore and I ram into each other  
Making cruel angles.  
I turn her St. George icons  
And frayed prints sideways. They can't help  
Seeing a child even there  
In the crude brushstrokes.  
They say it is me. The whore  
Smells like figs. She warbles,  
Rapping her throat. I tell her  
Of the little boy twisting around corners  
To stare at whores' enormous bosoms.  
She shakes her breasts at my child's eyes.  
I stare, naming her colors.**

