

*Why must a woman
pick up the pieces,
the bodies, the bones,
the blood and the faeces
the turds of her men,
her children and pets?
men miss when they piss
she cleans up the mess.
she wakes in the night
to a crying child
nappy filled with dribbling shite.*

She cleans it up.

*Her husbands, her brothers,
her lovers and sons
are called to war and go to fight
she doesn't understand
- try as she might.*

*She shares their fears
hides their fright
hears their cries
alone in the night.
She cleans their wounds,
buries her dead,
mourns their loss
and screams her dread.*

*She ponders and wonders
the why of it all.
But the pain, the loss, the grief
take their toll
the tears and the fears
of all those years
are wearing and tearing.*

*She bears it, perhaps,
because
only a mother has
such love, strength, caring,
compassion and commitment
to be able to cope
- but still
she doesn't understand the waste.*

*Let's confess
Men need to learn
they make less mess
if they have to clean up afterwards.
What a pity war is not like that -
especially mines and minefields.*

*Politicians should have to clean up
their own mistakes
and stop committing
our sons and daughters
to fateless wars
- and who will take
the gun runners, pirates
and drug smugglers to account?*