**Five Ways to Kill a Man**

**Edwin Brock**

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There are many cumbersome ways to kill a man.  
You can make him carry a plank of wood  
to the top of a hill and nail him to it.  
To do this properly you require a crowd of people  
wearing sandals, a cock that crows, a cloak  
to dissect, a sponge, some vinegar and one  
man to hammer the nails home.

Or you can take a length of steel,  
shaped and chased in a traditional way,  
and attempt to pierce the metal cage he wears.  
But for this you need white horses,  
English trees, men with bows and arrows,  
at least two flags, a prince, and a  
castle to hold your banquet in.

Dispensing with nobility, you may, if the wind  
allows, blow gas at him. But then you need  
a mile of mud sliced through with ditches,  
not to mention black boots, bomb craters,  
more mud, a plague of rats, a dozen songs  
and some round hats made of steel.

In an age of aeroplanes, you may fly  
miles above your victim and dispose of him by  
pressing one small switch. All you then  
require is an ocean to separate you, two  
systems of government, a nation's scientists,  
several factories, a psychopath and  
land that no-one needs for several years.

These are, as I began, cumbersome ways to kill a man.  
Simpler, direct, and much more neat is to see  
that he is living somewhere in the middle  
of the twentieth century, and leave him there.

<http://www.davidpbrown.co.uk/poetry/edwin-brock.html>