

Creative Writing Piece

JULY 12TH 1913

It happened again. I hate my sister so much. Hetty just doesn't get it, I mean she is only 9 but still, it's my birthday, not hers. I'm 15 now, that's an important age you know? I need a break from her; a nice holiday. Somewhere with less rain than boring old Wiltshire, as much ice cream as I would like, a beautiful sea to swim in when it gets too hot, and definitely, DEFINITELY no Hetty!

AUGUST 5TH 1914

I've figured it out. My big break. The streets are covered with these cool posters, there's a man on them, pointing at me, saying my country needs me. I think he's right. Everything I've ever done in life has never meant anything, and this is my chance to change that. To make a real difference. And it's in France, it could be the perfect holiday I've been dreaming of – I get to go abroad with all of my mates, it's going to be such a laugh, and who knows I might even meet a French girl while I'm there!

Technically I'm not old enough to enlist, as they call it, but come on I'm 16, that's basically an adult. I mean I'm sure they won't mind. Danny has already signed up, and he said they told him 'The more the merrier'. And besides, I'm a man now, I can handle this. I hope mum and dad won't miss me too much, and I know for certain Hetty won't. They've said we'll be home by Christmas, and hey who knows I might even bring that French girl with me!

SEPTEMBER 28TH 1914

Guess where I'm going next month? France! I'm over the moon, it still doesn't seem real. It's going to be so much fun. I have to say, I'm quite surprised more people didn't enlist though, I guess there's always next time for them. Granny says I'm a fool, that I'm good as dead. But that doesn't worry me, she used to say she could see the future, and speak to cats, and predict the weather with her knees, and I know that's not true. I'll let you know how it goes; I really can't put into words how excited I am.

DECEMBER 17TH 1914

I was wrong.

APRIL 24TH 1915

This is nothing like a holiday. There's just as much rain as back home, except it doesn't usually rain in my bed. And I've not had any ice cream, or chocolate, or anything with even a hint of flavour. And the sea looks dark, and dirty in the distance, but I've not got close. And I've not met a single girl, never mind a nice French one. And I really, really miss Hetty. I bet you never thought you'd hear me say that, me neither.

SEPTEMBER 27TH 1915

This isn't getting any easier. I've been here for nearly a year now, and I'm still terrified every time I close my eyes; the nightmares I have leave me quivering with fear, and when I open my eyes, it only gets worse. There's no escape. The only thing getting me through this torture is Danny. We came in together, from day one, and that's how we'll leave. All I can think about is leaving this place of horror.

JUNE 4TH 1916

How could this have happened? I'm coming home with only one leg. But I'm the lucky one, because Danny is not coming home. It was all so fast. A dozen of us were sent to get some supplies, Danny wasn't even meant to be there, but I asked him to tag along. Me. It was my fault. This wasn't meant to happen. What am I going to tell his family? So much for doing something to make a real difference, help my country, I've just made everything worse than it could have possibly been. I feel like such a failure.

JULY 21ST 1916

They've sent me to a hospital in England. Everyone is asking me how it feels to be home, but I'm not home. I may as well still be out in those trenches, and I think a part of me always will be. Bombs are going off left, right and centre. A layer of mud hides the rubble that used to be schools and shops and houses. They're still searching for the missing bodies. I don't understand how everything has gone this wrong.

Hetty came to visit me yesterday. I thought it would be like it used to, annoying each other, and laughing until we couldn't stand up. I thought it would be a nice break from the looks of sympathy and sadness I get from everyone else. But it was different; Hetty was different. She seemed so much older, and wiser and there was no sign of the mischievous little girl I left behind. I could hardly recognise her.

NOVEMBER 18TH 1918

The war is over. Everyone is celebrating. Millions of people flooded the streets to smile and cheer and be happy for the first time in years. But I'm not. I don't know what I'm expected to do now. I can't pretend that it didn't happen, that it hasn't broken me. I just can't live with myself. I can't put on a smile like the others, because Danny is gone. There is nothing I can do to bring him back. I need to accept that, but I can't. I can't do this.