

THE BROKEN PROMISE

I live in Western Australia and I am signing up to become a soldier. I'm 16 but you have to be over 18. I lied.

Right now I'm in Adelaide doing training to become a soldier. It's hard work and the food is not as good as my ma's but I keep working hard.

Tomorrow we are getting checked by the doctor. He is a kind fellow, but he sticks to the rules like glue. "Nope, you're not ready! Nope, not strong enough! Nope, not healthy!" I'm next in line and I'm starting to sweat. First they checked my height. I'm 5 feet tall which is right in the middle of the acceptable range. It's not my weight I am worried about, given I am not the legal age, it's my strength... but I proved to them and myself that I could do it. I walked into the tent of all the people who passed the health check. My mates were there as well as many others and they were as happy to see me as I was them.

I need to get a good night's sleep because tomorrow we are in full training carrying 60 kg boxes for 20 kilometers. This will serve me well when I am posted off to Osnabruck to fight the German artillery next month.

The time has come to say our goodbyes and I promise Mrs Smith that I'll look after her son David.

The bombs are exploding all around me but I'm focused on a sniper hidden in the bush... BANG! Got him! But later that night I started thinking about that sniper that I shot earlier in the day and I remember his face, the color on his face slowly fading away until he was as pale as a ghost. Why did I sign up to this war? Why do we even have war? What happiness does it bring? I thought about leaving, but then I remembered the promise that I had made to Mrs Smith to look after David and so I shut my eyes and went to sleep. colour

I was woken by the shouting of men and the feeling that my promise had been broken. At the rising of the sun I could see the body of my mate, David and forever I will remember him. I had broken the promise to Mrs Smith. David was dead and I wasn't even able to help him.

Later on in the day I went to David's funeral with Michael, Johnny and Frank. All the men's eyes were red and their faces were wet with tears. That's one of my mates gone and three left with me. David was my closest friend.

But, tomorrow is a new day and I'm going to fight harder than ever for David and for Mrs Smith. Michael, Johnny Frank and I all shared our ideas about war. They think the same as I did the other night. We had a discussion for about ten minutes before a bomb came hurtling through the air and smashed on Johnny's leg. Someone shouted "Grab a compression bandage, we can't lose another."

With David's funeral yesterday we weren't ready for Johnny's today.

Rumor has it that we are leaving for home in two days and that rumor is true - YAAAAAY!

I promise to come home if I can ...



Minnie,

This is an excellent recount
of how a young soldier would
feel & act in war. I loved your
ability to recreate a character
from your reading of "Gallipoli".
Thankyou for sharing this with me
Lee.

By minnie