

Intermediate Essay 3rd Place

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Zone G-5

Regrets

I felt horrible that day. September 30th, 1940, will be remembered as the worst day of my life. Not because of what happened, but because of what I did, what I said. My brother went off to war. I didn't care what happened to him at that time, we had a big argument the day prior. I can remember it like it was yesterday.

"You will never be MY hero," I said to him. "You're going to fight a battle, so what?". I honestly can't believe I said that. I wasn't alive when World War One happened. I had no idea what the consequences of war were on a human. I just didn't get it.

"I'm not asking you to consider me a hero," he replied, "I'm asking you to consider my health and well being! Can't you just do that?"

"You'll be fine!" I said. Then I stormed away. The thought of never seeing him again never did cross my mind.

After our fight, he left home, leaving my mother in tears. He went with our next door neighbour. Like my brother he was tall, 18 years old, and called to France to help Canada and our allies. We learned from letters that they were both in a fighter squadron together. That is what made November 7th, 1941 all the more scarier.

A man with an army suit came to the house next door. He gave them the worse thing you could give a parent, a death notification. According to the letter, he was shot down in a dogfight, and the eject seat malfunctioned, causing him to crash. I knew that very well could've been my brother. It could have been my brother who was shot down, with the ejection seat not working. I cried myself to sleep that day. I was so mad at myself for not caring.

My family was working on a letter to send back to him the next day, and they all put their hearts into it. I knew what I wanted to write. "Are you still mad at me?". While my sisters and parents were writing long paragraphs about how much they missed him and sending their prayers to make sure he was ok, I wrote a whole six sentences. I knew, though, that was all that was needed to be said.

Thankfully, we won the war, and he came back in one piece. I was the first one to get to him.

"I'm sorry." I said.

"I'm sorry too." he said back.

Everyday, I think to myself how lucky he and I were. But I also think to myself how this may not have happened. My brother very well could have died in the dogfight that took our neighbour. I know that countless others perished in the war. That is why I don't wear a poppy only on Remembrance Day, but every other day. For the sacrifice, and for the freedom they gave. Lest We Forget.