

21/4/1942

The War That Brought The Family Back Together

Soldiers surrounded the house, all dressed in army uniforms and armed with weapons. There was no escape. My younger brother Anthony and I, bawling our eyes out. Mother crying in front of father as he packs all his belongings, but also pictures of us, lots of parchment, loads of pens, nibs and stamps, as he gets ready for the great adventure and dangers ahead of him. There was nothing any of us could do, he was being used, maybe even killed and worst of all he was being taken from his family that loves him.

We all gave him big tight hugs and lots of kisses, he promised he would write as often as he could, but he couldn't say when, he said the war was very unpredictable. We held onto him tightly until he walked through the door and onto his own cots, but maybe for the last time. We waited at the door until all we could see was our destroyed cot, destroyed by thousands of soldiers come to collect one person, my Father.

As much as I wish everything could go back to normal, I just have to go with what's happening around me. World War Two is going on, my Father is fighting, my younger brother Anthony, actually crying! My mother has never been the most supporting or understanding person, but every day I feel like she understands me less and less. Ever since I was little, I have never felt close to my Mother, but in truth, I have always felt closer to Father than anyone on Earth. And now, he's gone.



I used to have two younger brothers, but my youngest brother, Vincent, was only two years old when he passed away of a severe liver problem, since then, Mother has been cranky, less supportive and understanding and not her own self. I guess it would be hard to lose such a young child, but I just wish she would at least smile occasionally. Now that father's gone, mother isn't even speaking to us, she's just upset and still shocked from the reason father had to leave, but I'm starting to think, getting mother to smile, is just going to have to take a back seat, while we try to get her to speak first.

It feels like it's been forever since father left, but it's only been a few hours. My brother and I, baked a splendid cake, using the recipe that has been passed down from oldest child to oldest child, on my father's side. My father had just passed the recipe down to me, so I thought I would put that knowledge to use. I couldn't tell my brother the recipe, so it was mainly just me who baked the cake. We cut and plated the cake very nicely and gave it to mother, we thought us working together would make her smile, but it didn't. Nothing did.



Minutes felts like hours, hours felt like days, days felt like months. It's now the 29th/04/1942, time has done the opposite of flown, the eight days that have passed, have felt longer than a hundred centuries, nothing intriguing has happened since Father left, well we did write Father a letter, but he might not reply seeing that it's a World War, and no one knows where the soldiers are going to go, or when they are going to go there. Anthony and I wished and wished and wished that we would get a reply, but seven days have passed and we haven't received anything *yet*.

Have you ever felt so nervous and excited when you hear the annoying postman *buffeting* on the door?

I never have, though I guess that's because there's never anything for me, but today I had a very firm feeling that the telegram or letter actually might be for me or for all of us. Anthony and I took a deep breath before swinging the door open causing the postman to freeze half-knock. The postman handed us an odd shade of yellow telegram, bowed his head ever so slightly and turned and walked away. Anthony shut the door behind him as we rushed inside, eager to open the telegram. Mother called down to us from upstairs, *'Don't open anything until I come down.'*

We immediately obeyed seeing as if we didn't, we both knew we were practically asking for an hour lecture, (Mother would speak only for those.) As Mother walked down the stairs, it felt like days had passed, but as soon as Mother was down, she motioned for us to open the telegram which was almost singing to us to rip it open. I had to let Anthony open it to stop me ripping it open, (which I would've done but I really didn't want an hour lecture from Mother!) As Anthony *unsealed* the letter, suddenly got this feeling it wasn't a happy telegram, but I locked the thought up in my head, I couldn't bear any bad news. Thankfully it was Anthony who first read the telegram, but as he first scanned the page, he shouted, *'What does MIA mean?'*

I was first to react, I snatched the telegram of him, I read the letter eight times before realising what it meant, *Father was missing, maybe dead.*

Days passed as if each day was longer than the last, we were all shocked, Mother comes out of her room only to cook, clean, and eat. It was torturing. Anthony cried and cried and cried as soon as he learnt what MIA stood for.

'At least he might not be dead,' Anthony had said, *'But he might be.'*

Knowing Father might be dead, it was as if there was a sadness blanket on top of the house, keeping us all captive in sadness. Letters from family arrived day after day expressing their grief. All the letters basically all said the same thing. We were starting to get sick of it. Strangely enough, we received another telegram that Anthony thought was another letter, so he threw it out while collecting the post one morning, but when I was throwing out the rubbish I noticed it and took it out. I asked Anthony what it was, Anthony simply said it was another letter, but I knew it was more than that.

I called Mother explaining that there was another yellow telegram, for this she actually came down, and in a hurry too. Again, she didn't speak but motioned for us to open it, but quickly. Anthony handed it to Mother and said she should read it first. *Killed In Action.*



We have received nothing in the past three years about Father, we couldn't have a funeral, and we never got to see him after he went to fight in the War. Unfortunately, the War is still going on and after Father died of malaria, it almost seems as if the War is never every going to end. Life is still strange, even though it has been three years and three months since Father died. Anthony and I have been studying a lot, but schools are still not up and running again, and we don't know when it'll start up again, which is sad, because Anthony and I really really really want to see our friends again.

One of Father's great friends also went to War and was in the same troop as Father, and he sent us a letter, in it he told us that they were travelling to Burma when Father caught malaria, everyone knew he wouldn't survive so they moved on. That was when they received a telegram saying Father was dead. It was then that the letter said that there is still a chance Father was alive! We were over the moon, but then the *but* came in, the letter said, '**but don't get your hopes up, he may or may not be alive.**'

There was still a chance Father was alive!

Two months later we received a telegram saying Father was actually alive! We were more than over the moon that we didn't read the rest of the telegram, but that didn't really matter. All that mattered was that Father was alive! Apparently, he came as a surprise attack or something and he has survived so far which is such a relief! I am so so so so so happy! Mother is actually laughing, crying and actually giving Anthony a hug. As happy as I was, I wanted to read the rest of the telegram, so I went to the table where the telegram was, and read the rest of the letter out loud, '*The World War Two War office is also extremely happy to announce, **THE WAR IS OVER!***'

This was even better news, the war was over, Father was alive and also it said that Father was one of the two most fortunate people in his troop. He and one other soldier had survived, and Father was presented with a Japanese Samurai Sword in recognition of his work of defeating the Japanese! It had to be the most terrific time since the war started, and best of all Father was coming home!

'That exact Samurai Sword that was presented to my Great Grandfather, Captain VP Lazar, is still hanging on the main wall of my grandfather's house. It is my Grandfather's and the whole family's most prized possession and we all honour it as much as we honour the great soldier, Captain VP Lazar.'

