

# Now Or Never

By RetroXPunk

Submitted: March 7, 2010

Updated: March 7, 2010

*I originally wrote this for History but after my teacher marked it i handed it in to my English teacher and she said i could use it in my Folio so i redrafted it and here it is :)*

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/RetroXPunk/57682/Now-Or-Never>

**Chapter 1 - Trenches**

**2**

# 1 - Trenches

Machine gun fire rained down upon us. Heavy artillery shells exploded close by, showering us with earth and embers. Explosions, so near, made us temporarily deaf. Moonlight shone over our backs, lighting up the battlefield just enough so that we, allies and enemies, were visible, causing tension, fear, a sense of vulnerability, as though we were fugitives, escaping Alcatraz with guns and search lights trained on our every move.

I crouched behind the sandbags, heartbeat in my ears, gasping, groping for any shred of hope that I'd make it through the night. The man next to me, a Corporal was screaming something at me, but I couldn't hear him. My ears were ringing from the explosions, my head thumping from adrenaline. I stared back at him, unable to attempt to hide the panic on my face.

Slowly, I began to understand the Corporal, the high pitched screaming beginning to subside before the next too-close explosion.

"DID YOU HEAR ME, SOLDIER? GROW SOME BLOODY BALLS AND CHECK THE SITUATION OUT THERE! WHAT THE F\*\*\* ARE THEY DOING NOW?!"

He had to be joking. There was no way I was popping my head up to see. I stared at him, my eyes wide, incredulous. His eyes were filled with hate, bloodlust and complete and utter seriousness.

I tried to swallow the golf ball-sized lump in my throat and focus. There was no disobeying a superior. I braced myself; trying to muster up what little courage I could and slowly rose up till just my eyes were over the defences of the sandbags. What I saw made my heart stop. My mind screamed at me to get back down immediately but my body was frozen by a sick fascination and sheer, gripping terror at the sight in front of me.

Shells were exploding everywhere, leaving no squared metre go unturned. Thousands of flashes of gunfire per second imprinted themselves on my retinas. In the distance, there were millions of little horns, poking above the German sandbags. It was a haunting sight, terrifying. Disgustingly beautiful...

"WELL, WHAT DO YOU SEE?!" The Corporal's voice tore me from my reverie. I ducked back down to cover.

"THERE'S A SH\*\*LOAD OF GERMAN HELMETS VISIBLE, SIR! AND THEY'RE GIVING US JUST ABOUT ALL THEY'VE GOT!" I screamed back as clearly as I could, but my voice shook, betrayed my already evident fear.

"TO HELL WITH THIS!" The Corporal's rage could not be suppressed any longer. He jumped up with his Lee Enfield and started shooting blindly at the enemy trenches.

"PATHETIC!-BLOODY!-COWARDLY!-SNEAKY!-GERMAN!-BASTARDS!" He yelled, firing every time he shouted a single word.

But before he could utter another word, before he could pull the trigger again, a single bullet lodged itself deep into his skull, straight through his right eye. As if in slow motion, the Corporal dropped his rifle, swayed a little as if he had had a little too much to drink, collapsed onto his knees and then finally onto his front, blood flowing in torrents from the new hole in his face.

I stood motionless, cold sweat glazing my face and palms. My heart battered against my ribs, threatening to break through them, desperate to get away from this horrible place. I was unable to do anything but whimper, staring at his face, horror-struck. As soon as i could move again, i crawled back as fast as i could, away from the body, my eyes fixed on him. I just couldn't tear my eyes away.

Several things happened at once then. Someone shouted with a loud booming voice that seemed to shake my very bones, that we were going over the top. The Germans had paused just long enough for us to gather ourselves and get a chance to get over there to end this. As i retreated from the dead Corporal, i backed into something hard. Before i could turn to investigate, sweat pouring down my face, i was being hauled up by a red-faced Colonel and shoved forcefully back to my position.

Dazed and confused, i saw that there was a line forming behind me as men pushed and shoved, forcing me up and over into No-Man's Land. I took a deep breath, tried to regain my balance. I stared at my rifle then after a few seconds, clutched it to my chest and ran straight toward the opposite trenches, screaming my heart out. I ran towards my glory. I ran towards my demise.