



## THE WAR TO END A WAR

*A narrative about a young girl's first encounter with war*

Katherine O.

It was an October day in Washington DC, I was perfectly happy staying inside twiddling my thumbs as I did at this time every weekend. I would've stared out the window onto the big five sided building where my father left to work every morning, it would've been all the same if I hadn't had any interruptions. The chilled air breezed through the small crack in the open window, blowing my brown hair is swirls like streamers around my rosy cheeks. I could smell the sweet aroma of my mothers cooking in the next room over. The evening was shaping out to be a quite lovely one.

Just as twilight fell, almost on cue, my sister Trent came bursting through the door so loudly I thought if she had used any more force the door would've knocked right off the hinges. The immediate hushing from my mother is followed with a comment from my sister in a voice that I wouldn't classify as an indoor one. "There's people marching right outside!" Trent is 17, four years older than I am. "We're gonna go down and check it all out." She feels the need to follow up on the previous statement. Trent always thinks she can do whatever she wants without even a passing remark to my mother. I decide that now it is my duty to inform my mother about her soon to be whereabouts.

"MOM! TRENT THINKS SHE CAN GO TO THE DEMONSTRATION!" My mother does not address my sisters obvious act of mutiny in a way that is appealing to me in the slightest.

"You can go as long as you take Mindy with you." I know that an argument will not do any good on my part. So the best and only option is comply with a frown on my face. I don't even know what this stupid thing is about. It seems like a lot of hippies to me, I think I might form my own march for better hygiene for hippies.

We make our way through the crowd for a good twenty minutes before I think the smell of body odor is getting to even my sisters upturned nose. "Hey I think we might be able to get up onto the lawn." She suggests. Maybe for the first time in my life Trent and I are on the same page. We climb up to a big grass lawn elevated about six feet above the all the action below. The ripples of the cool wind blowing through the grass mimics the rise and fall of the ocean of protestors beneath. The chants come in and out of synchronization. I could hear many different clever remarks being repeated in rhythm.

"Hell no we won't go!" I don't think any force no matter how big could make all those people leave. "Hell no we won't go!" I know I would never try to make them leave. Even though everything seems peaceful, I can tell the cause is very important to them, I can't think of anything that I care about as much as they care about this. Certainly not anything political.

"Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" This one was more disturbing.

I couldn't say I was a fan of the war, but I couldn't say I knew very much about it. I knew my father was a lieutenant in the air force during World War II, and worked in the Pentagon as of now. I knew that he would not be a fan of these hippies marching to chants that would make the hair on the back of his neck stand straight.

My train of thought is broken by my sister, "Who the heck are they?" None of us know. A bunch of men joining, all in the same uniform. At first sight I think it could be the police, but the uniform isn't the same. Before I can wonder any more about the strange group our question is answered by a woman about five feet to our left. "My god, it's the American Nazi Party!" Now I know who Nazis are and I know they were not people you wanted be involved with. I was thinking it might be time to go, by I couldn't tear my eyes away from the spectacle. The Nazi's were provoking the hippies and they were all getting into scuffles. First a small fight here, then two more over there, and what had started as a peaceful march was quickly mutated into a violent clashing of opinions of the Vietnam War.

The next thing I saw was the familiar policeman uniform that I was thinking about earlier. They rode in on horses. Big Clydesdales, the kinds we kept in our stables at the country home. Our horses did not seem as frightening as the ones I saw riding in now. I don't remember exactly what happened next, just that there was a lot of smoke and my eyes started to sting. This I knew was our cue to head home, and there was no argument from my sister, making it the second time today we agreed on something. As we walked home, eyes still a little raw from the teargas, I knew that this would be the talk of the dinner table, but when I told my dad about what had happened he did not seem at all excited, so I dropped the topic, and we didn't speak of it again that night.

## GONE LIKE THE WIND

*On the path to a better future*

Daniela O.

Many people always use the term, "don't get too close to the fire, or you'll burn yourself". I guess my term was, "don't get too close to the river, or else you'll drift off with the water and drown". Or at least that was the term my grandmother used to use with the baby chicks. She lived in this house made of thick, strong brick, right by where the fresh river water passed by, and right by where my grandmother's baby chickens would dive to their death. I guess this little event is what changed my life, those baby chickens were the reason why my parents decided to make my grandmother a house at the top of a hill, where her baby chicks could never drown. And so the house was built, and I, along with the baby chickens, followed my grandmother to her new home, leaving my parents and sibling behind. Life was great, for a while, until she got sick and was moved to Mexico City. I was very young, and so I was forced to move back with my parents, to their sun-bleached house. It was beautiful, surrounded by so much land, and so much life. Green, tall growing, leafy life, which soon enough, I'd be attending to every day.

Life was great, once again, but only for a while. There's a saying that goes, "a dead man starts to stink within three days", and so that was me. Within a week that I had been there, I had gone from being treated like a princess, to Cinderella before she found her prince. My father was a very hardworking, strict man. He had my siblings working the fields alongside him at a very young age, and now that I was under his command, I was going to be one of his fellow workers as well. At first, I started doing things on my own will, due to the stories my mom would tell me. We would sit down and talk, and she'd tell me, "Antonia, when I was your age, I'd be awake long before the sun came up, just working hard to make breakfast, and as soon as the crack of dawn hit, breakfast would be done! I would be done making a stack of tortillas so big, it would feed my whole family and more! And