

Dear Luanna

Hailey Bybee
Mrs. Jensen
Olds Junior High
899 words
8th grade

Dear Luanna,

You most likely don't really know who I am. Stories maybe, but the truth, unlikely. I should start from the top. I was given a last request, and it was to write a letter to you. Why? Because I couldn't bear the thought of you never knowing the truth about me. But I guess I'm rambling. Alright. I'll try again.

Hi. I've had a crush on you since 6th grade. I'm Ryan Dalziel. Please don't stop reading now that you know who I am. You probably read it in the papers, heard it on the radio. I'm guessing it has become a huge scandal, the boy who almost blew up his camp, shot his commanding officer and a private right along with him. But that's not what happened. I'll tell you the real story.

The day I turned 18, me and my buddy Eugene enlisted into the army. You would know him, he was pretty popular, and real nice. We were shipped out pretty quick, and ended up in-wait, I can't tell you, I don't want the letter censored. Well, anyways, soon through a series of attacks that we were ill prepared for, we were promoted rather quickly, because so many of our officers were killed in action.

Soon, the fighting in our area stopped, and we got a new shipment of boys. Eugene was promoted up pretty high, he being athletic and over all charming. But that is when the trouble started. Some of the new ones weren't happy someone who had been out only a few months longer than them was giving them orders.

But I was happy for him. I was only slightly under him, but I didn't care. He had been born for this. He was so proud of his position, I didn't tell him he was questioned. A mistake on my part. But I figured nothing would come of it, boys like to make talk. I was wrong.

Here is the part that it gets really bad. I'll spare you the details, Luanna, but this is where it all starts to collapse.

This one kid, a Private First Class called XXXXXXXXXXX, was angry someone not much older than him was giving him orders. I was with Eugene in his tent, talking about home, and what we thought tomorrow would bring, when the that kid walked into the tent, and pulled the pin out of a grenade and dropped it. I was up on my feet in an instant. I belted the kid, grabbed it, and threw it as far away as I could, but we were in the center of camp. They said three boys were killed and another five wounded, but I tell you that if it had gone off there, far, far more than three would have been killed.

After I threw it, I turned back into the tent, just in time to see Private XXXXXXXXXXX raise his gun and shoot Eugene in the head. Oh Luanna, he looked so shocked. He loved every one of the boys under him, and one had just shot him.

Then the boy turned to me but I was ready. I had no choice. I shot him. It hit me hard when I realized what I had done, but I still I stumbled over to Eugene. He was sprawled on the floor, already dead.

The sound of gunfire drew in a crowd, and everyone ran into the tent to the sight of me holding a gun, with Eugene and Private XXXXXXXXXXX dead at my feet. Many of them had seen me throw the grenade. And you can guess what conclusion they came to.

They put me in cuffs and locked me up, despite my pleadings of innocence. That morning a general arrived from the main camp base, 50 miles away. I was not allowed to speak to him, but others were. I was driven to the main camp later that day. I appeared before a court martial, were I was finally allowed to speak on my defence, but so were the 50 odd men who held a

grudge against me and Eugene, and they were claiming that I was the murderer. 50 testimonies against me, and only one for me, and dead men can't talk.

You can guess what happened next. I was charged with five counts of murder af varying degrees. And I would pay dearly. This... this is the part... that's hard to write. It's my sentence. Death by firing squad. For trying to save the camp, for trying to save Eugene. For self defence and a murder I didn't commit.

I can try to see the logic. Someone needed to be punished, be made an example, but they are making the wrong one. They'll be coming for me soon. I hope this reaches you. Try to find my family and tell them I love them.

I think I'm OK with this. To tell the truth, I cried the first night after they told me. Not only because I was going to die, but because it was for the murder of my best friend. But now I'm OK. I've accepted what is going to happen, and now someone knows I'm innocent, not a murderer.

I hear footsteps. Good-bye Luanna. Hopefully someday we'll meet again. Remember my story, share it, and one day I will be able to thank you.

Love,

Ryan Dalziel

I, Hailey Bybee, give Cavalcade of Authors
full permission to use my story, put it on
their website, and all that other stuff

2/27/18

Hailey Bybee