

The Piano

The solitary sounds of his frail fingers making contact with the ivory of the piano keys is the only sound to be heard in the desolate, barren emptiness of the room. As a beautiful, timeless melody is created, waves of memories - both joyful and melancholy - fill his head and remind him of the ebbs and flows of his life.

A familiar figure greets him out of the corner of his eye. Hands intertwined: the ghostly figure of a long lost love compliments his melody as she had complimented his life for fifty blissful years. She places a tender kiss on his pale, gaunt cheek - a kiss of hope, trust and love. What joy it gives him until he glances up with tears in his eyes. He catches a glimpse of his reflection; a sad, lonesome soul.

He is transported back to the battlefield. His brother, who was exhausted yet hopeful, trudging through the mud by his side. Gunshots, blood, explosions. He signals to shoot (but it is too late). He helplessly holds his brother, lying motionless in a pool of midnight red. Dead. He feels an all-consuming pain deep within him and jolts back to the present - a stream of guilt rippling through his body.

He gazes up, desperately searching for a happier memory. As the key changes, his mind drifts back to himself as a boy. The excitement of a newly-wrapped gift. The carefree nature of childhood. Of happier times from days gone by.

Suddenly, hearing laughter, he remembers where he is and throws a wide smile at the child sitting next to him. In harmony, they play the last couple of keys on the grandiose piano. They look at each other, grandfather to grandson, and he knows that happy memories are still to be made.