

“A Soldier’s Dream”

by
Jenny Craiger and Pvt. Elmer Reeves

- What** In this monologue, the actor focuses on sacrifices that were made so that Americans can celebrate patriotic holidays. Written for Memorial Day, it could also be used for Veteran’s Day, July 4th, or any related event.
- Themes:** Independence Day, Veteran’s Day, Memorial Day, Soldier, Sacrifice, 4th of July
- Who** Actor or Actress
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** Letter
Envelope
Flowers
Bench
- Why** John 15:13, 1Thessalonians 5:18
- How** The actor should speak naturally and avoid rushing through the monologue. He is seated facing the audience during the monologue, but is careful that the conversation is reflective rather than directed toward the audience. “Memorial Day” in the script can be changed to coincide with another patriotic holiday or event.
- Time** Approximately 3 to 4 minutes

The Actor is holding the envelope, letter, and flowers as he enters the stage. He walks midway to center stage and turns back as if hearing someone.

Actor: *(calling out in response)* Hold on! I'll be back in a second, Aunt Mary. I have something to do. Tell Uncle Frank to keep a burger warm for me!

Turns back toward center stage and slows steps as he comes to the bench. Actor sits down slowly, takes a deep breath as if settling in, and becomes more reflective.

Well, Great Uncle Elmer, I think it's about time that I formally said, "thank you." *(Laughs a little self-consciously)* If any of the family caught me here talking to myself, or to you for that matter, I'd guess they'd think I was a little crazy. But I just can't let today go by without taking a moment to remember you. *(Pause)* I know what you're probably thinking...how can a person remember someone they've never even met?

I guess I should start at the beginning. Up until recently, I never really understood Memorial Day. The picnics and parades. The flags and fireworks. I always knew it was important to be patriotic, but I really didn't know what the day actually MEANT. At least, not until I was going through grandma's old letters and I found this one *(taps envelope)* from you.

To be honest, before then, you were only a picture on grandma's wall to me. A black and white photograph of a soldier in a brass-colored oval frame. Someone who died in a war long before I was born. *(Pause)* And then, I opened the letter with the poem. The one you mailed to grandma when you were stationed at Normandy. The last letter that you ever sent.

Opens the envelope, takes out the letter, and begins reading:

A Soldier's Dream. A soldier lay dreaming in a dugout all alone. Jerry shells were bursting, but his thoughts were all of home. He was dreaming of his mother and other things so dear. His mind was so full of thoughts, there was no room for fear. He was thinking of the day he would sail the sea of foam to the days of happy living and all the folks at home. He was thinking of a cottage with shade trees in the yard, but all his dreams were shattered when the sergeant hollered "Guard!"

Folds the letter and reflects quietly.

After I read your letter, it became so clear. You were someone just like me. Someone who had a family. Who had feelings and hopes and fears. Someone who was missed by his sister and his parents. Someone who

just wanted to come back home to everything familiar and loved. To a safe place.

Pause

I later learned that you fell at Normandy a few days after your letter was written. You put aside everything you cherished and ultimately sacrificed your life for your country...for your family...for me, someone who wasn't even born yet. So today I want to remember you and every soldier who has sacrificed their own freedoms, dreams, and even their life so that I can go to a picnic today with my family without fear.

Thoughtfully puts flowers down on bench.

Thank you, Great Uncle Elmer. Thanks for putting aside your soldier's dreams for mine. Thanks for sacrificing your life for my freedom. I won't take it for granted again.

Lights down.

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