

The Photo

Present Oklahoma :

When the ancient burnt photograph that was almost as old as Jake's brother's vintage gum, floated down from the attic, only Jake saw it. He picked it up delicately and examined it. There were two young men in a smart dark navy uniform with a shining officer's badge on their chests. Framed behind them, was a huge battleship called the USS Arizona. Jake squinted at the photo and with a jolt, he realised that the man on the right had his grandfather's (James) sea grey eyes. The other one was a friend perhaps? Or a senior officer he thought absentmindedly. Jake felt a great sense of loss when he saw the ship behind his younger version of his grandpa but he couldn't put his mind onto it. Then he remembered something from his many history lessons on the World Wars. That ship, the USS Arizona had sunk in Pearl Harbour in 1941 in the attack and about 1170 people were lost in the battle. He sat there consumed with awe and shock and wanted to keep it quiet but eventually, his curiosity got the better of him and he went to ask his father what happened in the photo.

1941 Pearl Harbour:

Me and William had just finished taking the photos for the press and were eating lunch when the dreaded call of "Bandits Bandits" rang through the ship. I rushed along with William to our Anti-Aircraft posts just as the first of the wave of planes came into sight. The rumble of the many engines filled the air as I wheeled the gun around and I shot so many bullets that my gun barrel became red hot. Soon, the smell of cordite and blood filled the air. I was thinking we would win when all of a sudden, a Zero fight swooped down like a majestic bird of prey and opened fire. William was shot and as the ship began to shudder, I had to abandon my friend and I jumped off the ship. It would be the last time I saw one of the best friends I ever had. With one last explosion the ship disappeared beneath the waves. The next day even though life continued to go on and I was transferred to a new ship, when I held the photo it had a scent of acidic smoke no matter how many times I sprayed perfume onto it.

Present day Oklahoma:

Jake felt an overwhelming wave of pity for his grandfather as his dad told his grandfather's story. "No wonder he was so distant from us. If that happened to me, I would curl up and cry

forever.” Jake thought. The hardship and destruction of war had hit him hard and he knew his life would never be the same. Then he stole a glance at the aged photo. The photo felt like it was alive, like something was imprisoned within it. The thing in the photo waited. Like it wanted something. Like it was waiting for its story to be told once again.