Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year competition 2023

The night of the Blitz

I looked out of the window and I could not believe my eyes. The full moon – the bombers' - moon shone at its brightest, highlighting the sleeping city. Suddenly, an ear-splitting siren rang in my ears – the wale of the banshee. My heart missed a beat. A crowd of citizens scuttled past my house, trampling over each other and attempting to find refuge. I looked up at the sky once more and narrowed my eyes as the German Luftwaffe came into vision. As my stomach turned, I rushed down the stairs, wishing that mum was safe wherever she was.

There was a deafening boom and the glass shattered. I crashed to the floor. Quickly recovering from the fall, I scrambled out the door, only to discover the chaos Hitler was causing. A wall of inferno surrounded Coventry as the searchlights scanned the skies. Bombs dropped like pennies from afar. Seconds turned into hours as a I stood there, daring myself to go on. Another whump and I fell onto the ground, my black curls of hair wrapping around my face. Lifting myself up, I experienced unimaginable agony. My brain felt like it was going to burst. 'Pull yourself together', I thought, 'get a grip!' I turned my body and lay on my back. It was easier to breathe this way. I was helpless to try and get up. Not far away, an air raid shelter stood. I was so close. Unfortunately, another bomb hit the ground. I flinched. Slowly, I opened my eyes to witness a building collapse. A building that was ever so close. I was immersed in rubble, as the pieces fell. My vision faded away and everything turned black. I remember no more.

I shielded my eyes as the cathedral was set ablaze. The sky flared red, and I listened to the screams of fear and sorrow. As smoke enveloped the city, another building was destroyed, and my heart gave a loud thud. As an air raid warden, it was my job to protect the people. On the battlefield, at least, I could jump, and shout and I heard the bullets. Here, I must remain calm and steady, even though every part of me was longing for safety.

After hours, the droning of the planes disappeared and Coventrians emerged from the shelters. The sky turned blue and a feeling of relief courses through my body. I hurry to a nearby rubble to rescue survivors, then I see her. A fragile girl with black curls of hair lies peacefully with her pale hands at her side. I turned to touch her, but I already knew that life had escaped her limp body. I carried the girl that reminded me of my daughter.
I placed her by the line of corpses and stood with my arms folded, staring at the sky.

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