

The Side That Wins the War...

A Monologue by Dan Kehde

Selected from his collection, "1400 Boxes of Jello and Other Monologues"

Cast: 1

Length: 4 pages of dialogue (1100 words)

Performance time: About 6 minutes

The Story

A Yankee soldier describes his dread before and during a fierce battle against waves of Reb soldiers. The sounds, the sights, and even the smell of battle assault him as he tries to survive while shooting from a small hole in a low rock wall. He wonders what is the difference between bravery and sheer stupidity.

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THE SIDE THAT WINS THE WAR ...

I saw them coming. We all did. We had spent that night behind a low rock wall on the far side of the field; bedded down every which way so that some of us were resting our heads on the legs of others with our arms still wrapped around our muskets, just in case the mist cleared and the moon came up and the patrols went out again. But it never cleared. And all night long you could hear the sound of the whole regiment as it slept – that half-silent roar a whole bunch of sleeping men make with a kind of a half-breathing, half-snoring, coughing, moaning sound that keeps the crickets silent and makes you wonder if you should dare nod off if everyone else in the company is already asleep. I had a crease in the wall where two rocks had been joined for a long time and then knocked apart sometime in the last few days so that there was a small crack about the size of my fist that I could just slide my barrel through.

All through that night I'd wake up and look out through that crease over the field to the side where the Rebs were. The mist started getting real thick along about dawn so all you could see was this low-hanging cloud stretched over the corn that kind of glowed by the light of the clouds in front of the moon. And down behind the Reb lines I could see their campfires painting the mist orange and red all along the distant hills. And then the sky started to get bright and I looked back at the regiment and the Sergeant Major roused us back to our own fires so we could get some coffee in us and those of us who'd foraged on the march maybe some breakfast other than hardtack.

End of Freeview

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