

## White Lies

Rats scuttle, maggots crawl as my wrinkled hands fix a bayonet to my rifle. Hair and furrowed eyebrows blend in the strong gusts of wind. Gun fire overhead fills my ears, as I sit in a trench full of sorrow and despair. Guilt and fear rush through my veins as I contemplate the appalling crime I have committed. What will be the consequence of my unforgivable actions?

Theft. The word makes my hairs stand on end, and throat dry with anxiety. I think back to that fearful moment on a bleak, cloudy night. Trembling, I had scooped a handful of the nauseating, vile stew; we had been starved of food for days and my empty stomach could take no more. I ate and ate until I could consume nothing else. As I gulped, the taste echoed on my tongue and a cold night breeze brushed my cheeks. A scary silence allowed guilty memories to attack my conscience, creating a fear far greater than that of being killed.

What started off as a white lie now leaves me feeling a suspect to a much greater crime. How could I have done this to my colleagues? Who my life may depend on, when we go over the top. We are all as hungry, tired, scared and cold. Now more than ever the realisation that trust plays a major role in our lives, while together in this bog. Sweat drips from my forehead and my heart pumps swiftly. Never shall I let this happen ever again.

Vague clouds begin to fade, my scarlet lips dry and crinkled slowly lose colour. Beige, mud stained uniforms line both sides of the trench. Teeth chatter and hands shake. Wooden ladders are propped up against the walls leading to an uncertain future. I have never seen such a mass of fear in pale, drained faces. I feel like I couldn't tell even the closest of friends, though a confession at this moment would be an unnecessary waste of time.

Unlike myself, food isn't likely to be a great importance to another soldier at this time.

Hush fills the air and a stench fills our noses. My hands tremble like an earthquake. The Field Marshal's eyes glare at his snowy-white wristwatch and a silver whistle shines brightly between his colourless lips. I trim my nails with my teeth just before I take a deep breath to quell my anxiety. Expanding cheeks leads towards a strong, shrill sound which pierces the air. All hell breaks loose as we clamber up the ladders.



Find the meaning for the following words:  
furrowed  
contemplate  
realisation  
Vague  
What does the phrase 'White Lie' mean?



1-The setting of the story is not clear although there are clues. Using evidence from the text suggest where and when the story may be taking place.  
2- The author talks about feeling guilty. Why does he feel guilty?  
3- Why does the author think trust matters a great deal?



'a cold night breeze brushed my cheeks.' This is an example of which type of figurative language?



'I trim my nails with my teeth just before I take a deep breath to quell my anxiety.'  
Which word in this sentence suggest that the character is nervous?

## Answers

- I- 1- The story is taking place in a trench, probably during the first world, and it is daytime as the narrator talks about seeing the clouds.
- 2- He stole food which they all needed to share and lied about it
- 3- Because people rely on each other and he betrayed their trust in him
  
- V- Personification.
  
- V- Anxiety