

courage. She was a brave woman they'll say when they look back, but a woman like me has to take life seriously. I have a child who depends on me, he needs to be fed and clothed. I can't afford to be brave.

CLAUDIA: I don't know that you're not more courageous than me, after all.

By Winsome Pinnock

A Christmas Truce

It is 4pm on Christmas Eve 1914 in No Man's Land on the Western Front. Across the empty space of No Man's Land, a German voice shouts, sounding far away to start with and then becoming nearer. It is WERNER, a German private soldier. He is heard by JOSLING, an English private soldier.

WERNER: *(Distant)* Hullo, Tommy.

(No response)

Hullo, Tommy.

JOSLING: *(Shouting)* 'Ullo, Fritz.

(A silence)

'Ullo, Fritz.

WERNER: Why you English not come out?

JOSLING: Why don't you?

WERNER: If I come out, I get shot.

JOSLING: No, you won't.

(No response)

Come on, Fritz.

(No reply)

Come and get some cigarettes.

WERNER: Nein. You come halfway and I'll meet you.

JOSLING: Stop your fellows shooting and I'll think about it.

WERNER: If you stop yours.

(Both voices are heard shouting back into their respective trenches)

JOSLING: Lay off shooting up there.

WERNER: Hort auf zu schiessen, da oben.

JOSLING: Calling again. Fritz.

WERNER: I listen, Tommy.

JOSLING: If I come out, promise you won't shoot me.

WERNER: Promise.

JOSLING: On the Bible.

WERNER: That right.

JOSLING: Say it then.

WERNER: Say what?

JOSLING: I promise on the Bible.

WERNER: That right.

JOSLING: That's not saying it.

WERNER: I promise.

JOSLING: On the Bible.

WERNER: On the Bible.

JOSLING: And that goes for all the other Fritzes, I 'ope.

WERNER: I not understand.

JOSLING: If I come out, I don't want no-one shooting at me. You nor nobody else, neither, get me?

WERNER: You not speak the English that I learn at school.

(Laughter from the German trenches)

JOSLING: You're funny, ain't yer?

WERNER: All right, Tommy. We not shoot you...no-one of us.

JOSLING: All right. And God 'elp you if you do.

WERNER: And you not shoot, like we not shoot.

JOSLING: We not shoot.

WERNER: Promise.

JOSLING: Promise.

WERNER: On the Bible.

(More German laughter)

JOSLING: On the Bible.

WERNER: Goot.

JOSLING: All right, I'm starting now.

WERNER: You only?

JOSLING: Yes, me only. What about you?

WERNER: To start...yes, Me only.

JOSLING: All right.

(Lieutenant Wilson, JOSLING's officer, is heard speaking, off stage. There's a pause)

Hold it just a second.

WERNER: I not understand...hold what?

JOSLING: My officer. You get me...officer.

WERNER: Ja.

JOSLING: Good. He wants to know if yours is with you.

WERNER: Ja.

JOSLING: And he's not against it?

WERNER: He is for it.

JOSLING: Great. So's mine. Right, off we go.

(There is silence. Then, after a while, JOSLING appears from through the wire. He moves upstage and stops looking upstage. WERNER appears upstage, walks towards his enemy and stops. They stand looking at one another for a long time)

Tom Josling.

WERNER: Bernhard Werner.

JOSLING: 'Ullo.

WERNER: Hullo.

By William Douglas-Home