

Dulce et Decorum



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Fastaval 2013

Dulce et Decorum, Game Master's Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to *Dulce et Decorum*. The introduction describes the game in general terms. The section on tools outlines the parts of the game and explains the rules and principles that shape the game. The flow section provides a handbook for running the game. The characters and cards are important; read them after tools, before flow. Also, there are checklists, handouts and whatnot for the game master attached.

Presentation

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori

"It is sweet and fitting to die for your country"

-Horace

For very different reasons, three young English soldiers and a nurse have volunteered for service on the Western Front during World War I. They cope with the horror of war through friendship, and will come away forever changed – or die. This game explores belief and doubt, and meaningful connection in the face of death, set against a backdrop of barbed wire, gas masks, and broken hearts.

Dulce et decorum uses ensemble play, storytelling and story game techniques to support immersive character drama. Through collaborative storytelling, the group builds up the reality of war and life on the front and uses that to pressure the characters. A simple mechanical system shapes and follows the fiction. The players wield the tools of the game – cold facts and authentic trench poetry.

Duration: About 4½ hours

Number of players: Four plus one game master

Genre: War tragedy

Player type: You want to invest in both the fiction and your character, and enjoy a degree of uncertainty delivered by the game mechanics. And you think that English poems about poison gas attacks and doomed youth sound lovely.

Game master type: You love the players, and enjoy both pushing them and helping them support and push each other. Mud and barbed wire roll off your tongue like silk, and you can be a little mean.

About the author: Troels wishes his name were Erich Remarque. Or possibly Euripides. In any case, he's borrowed the plot from Euripides. He believes fiercely in roleplayers as co-creators.

What Dulce et Decorum is about

The game is about war, obviously. About using and losing faith, religious and otherwise. About friendship as a necessity. About using art (in this case poetry) to make sense of things.

What Dulce et Decorum does

The game presents the players with a horrors-of-war setup, populated by powerful images of the Western Front, one of our culture's most potent symbols of futile suffering. It asks them to join in as co-creators through description, and also protects their primary characters from sudden "meaningless" death and gives them an option for making heroic, quintessentially meaningful sacrifice. The

NPCs are unpleasant, but sort of cool or funny. Then, as the game progresses, the horrors ramp up and the primary characters find themselves the targets of not just horrors but also unfairness. The nastiness of the NPCs renders any funniness merely creepy, and the primary characters' capacity for taking heroic action is worn down. The possible coping actions get less and less pleasant. In the last set out of five, the characters are hip deep in the months-long battle of the Somme, and the players lose the power to describe things other than their characters, the mechanical heroic option and the special protection from pointless death. At the end of the game, the players should be looking mortality straight in the face, and thinking about how much it is or isn't worth changing to survive. The mechanics shape and focus play, provide uncertainty and present hard choices. The poetry is a mirror for the fiction produced, as well as a source of inspiration.

Where Dulce et Decorum comes from

Game-wise, *Dulce et Decorum* builds on themes and techniques from my earlier game *Torture*. And like *Torture*, it is inspired by Peter Fallesen's *Auto de fe*. I can't seem to write serious games that don't draw heavily on *Auto de fe*. It has set structure, poetry and delicious pain. Also, story games like Ben Lehman's *Polaris* have been an influence, as well as good old *Call of Cthulhu*.

Literarily, my primary inspiration has been the trench poetry of Sorley, Sassoon, Owen and many more. The title is taken from Wilfred Owen's poem *Dulce et Decorum Est*. Also, I can warmly recommend the novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Remarque. It's a brilliant book, and less than 200 pages long. Go read it if you haven't already. I've taken the plot of the game more or less directly from the ancient Greek tragedy *The Trojan Women* by Euripides, possibly the most unrelentingly horrible tragedy ever. It outlines the failure of Western civilization's entire intellectual, spiritual and emotional toolbox to adequately deal with difficult reality. Yes, that was some 2.400 years ago, and it is as fresh and relevant as ever.

Musically, this game runs on PJ Harvey's album *Let England Shake*, which I listened to over and over again while writing the game.

And finally, my thanks to a great many lovely people: My editor and sparring partner Anne Vinkel Hansen, my English language consultant Lizzie Stark, my rhetor Anissi Thorndal Abu Ghazaleh, my wife and advisor Christina Goddard Christensen, as well as my playtesters Peter Fallesen, Dennis Gadgaard, Søren Gormsen, Anne Vinkel Hansen (again), Mads Egedal Kirchoff, Charlotte Lehmann, Marie-Luise Lubich, Lærke Hvid Pedersen, Niels Ladefoged Rasmussen, Marie Skouenborg, Danny Wilson and Jakob Zimmermann.

Historical accuracy

In the context of this game, historical reality is a treasure trove to be plundered for cool stuff, not museum halls that we reverently tip-toe through. All the game materials are as historically correct as reasonably possible, but player contributions are important to the game. It would be bad for the players to be paralyzed by fear of saying something wrong, so when there's doubt, lay down that a degree of historical imprecision is all right. Also, you don't need a degree in Military History to run *Dulce et Decorum*. If you've read the Wikipedia entry on trench warfare, you'll do fine.

Tools

A number of tools and effects will have to mesh and work together to make the game come to life. I've considered music for the beginning and end, but decided against because there's already so much going on. Should you really, really want to use music for the game (as some are wont to do), I suggest starting and ending with the same song, and not involve music during the running of the game. Use either "Let England Shake" or "In the Dark Places" by PJ Harvey, or something sad and solemn like Henry Purcell's funeral march for Queen Mary.

Physical ingredients and other practical matters

Obviously you'll need a copy of this, the game master's text. Also, handouts. Printed cards for coping cards, facts and Heroic Effort cards. A character map. Character sheets. Five poetry booklets. Paper clips for use as track markers. Needful things not included with the game:

- **Marking pens or highlighters** in red, green, yellow and blue, and a black pen, for marking on the character map.
- **A deck of ordinary playing cards** for use as casualty cards.

When you set up the play area, there should be a table for playing at, with five chairs, and also another table where you can lay out facts, special coping action cards and so forth sorted by set, so you don't have to fumble and rummage around for things while you play.

Important game master responsibilities

This might be obvious for some, but here we go for good measure:

- **Teach the game** and help with mechanics and procedures as needed.
- **Evoke the war zone.** Make it real, and help them make it real. Also, cut the individual scenes to keep them short and tight.
- **Push the players.** By enforcing the pushy mechanics, by evoking worse and worse stuff at them, by playing your NPCs as arrogant, authoritarian assholes and by getting in their faces with "So what do you do?"
- **Assure the players.** If they aren't messing up horribly, let them know that they're doing OK. Do this subtly by meeting eye contact if they seek it, and nodding slightly. Don't laugh and don't buddy up to them; be a bit cold and solemn -- but only downright mean when you are in character as NPC.
- **Step in** and do something if the game is in trouble. Or if a player is.

Safety

There's quite a bit of ugly stuff in the game, a lot of it sadly relevant still. For this reason, the players get a safety phrase:

"Stop the game"

When it is said, the game stops of course, and then you discuss what can be done to continue the game without anyone experiencing more discomfort than they feel like handling. It is a possibility that the game won't continue.

I haven't set a strict age limit, as I'm counting on the presentation text and the subject to scare off players who aren't prepared to handle the game in a reasonably mature manner. However you should consider making sure that players under 18 years know what they're getting into.

Reading materials and reading technique

Often, one or more players will be required to read a piece of poetry or prose aloud at the table. For most, a little technique will improve clarity and help make the reading un-boring for the audience. The warmup and the prologue include reading training for the players. Here's what this means in this game:

- **Preparation.** First, read for comprehension, overall and word for word. You don't have to explain the meaning of every word to your audience, but *you* will sound better and more interesting if you understand what you're saying. Then read again, still silently to yourself, but this time with mouth movements. This helps you not stumble over pronunciation and rhythm when you read out.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Read out a little slower than you feel like. It will sound better and be easier to understand. Also, when reciting poetry, don't overfocus on the rhythm and go DAM-da-DAM-da-DAM-da-DAM! If there's supposed to be rhythm, it's there in the words already, and there's no need to force it.
- **Audience technique.** Listen attentively when others read out, without planning ahead or thinking about other matters. You'll get more out of the reading if you focus. Also, the game will include some simple meditation exercises for those who wait while others prepare. Use them to keep the mood and your focus. As game master, you can plan mischief, or use the meditations if that works better for you.

In case of prose, there will be 4-8 lines of text, and everyone will have something to do, so no need for meditation. In case of poetry, there won't be reading materials for everyone past the prologue. There's a meditation exercise for each poem in the poetry booklet.

Poetry option for the game master: If you like, you can reintroduce the three Rupert Brooke poems from the prologue later, for artistic emphasis and as a sarcastic effect. Use them to cut a scene, simply by starting to read out poetry.

Read it out yourself, don't pass it out. You can read out the first stanza or the whole poem, as you like. **For example:** Charles has just sold out the last remains of his belief in Christ. Perhaps this might be a good time to cut the scene with the poem *Peace*, which starts: "Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour..."

Dramatis Personae

There are four kinds of people in the fiction: Primary characters, of whom each player controls one, secondary characters, of whom each player controls three plus one, faceless cast-of-thousands extras told by the game master or the players, and then the properly game master-controlled characters that the game master uses to pressure the players.

Primary characters

There are four primary characters. Read them and get to know them before the game; they are quite central. Four young Britons have volunteered for service on the Western Front. The three young men have volunteered because they believe in something: Charles in Jesus, Rupert in England and Tom in friendship and *doing your bit*. Camilla has volunteered as a nurse out of boredom and a need for adventure rather than idealism, but even so she isn't conceived as an evil, stupid or tacky character. The primary focus of the game is what these four do to handle the stress that broke so many.

Secondary characters

The players each control four secondary characters. Of the four, one is the friend or beloved of a primary character and stays back home, appearing in the prologue and the epilogue. The other three are in the war zone. The secondaries first and foremost serve to support the primaries and adapt to serve their needs.

Much of the game revolves around the primaries' intense friendships with these people, fear of losing them, and the consequences when they become casualties of war.

Game master characters

You, game master, have something else entirely. Your characters are not good people. It's not possible to really be friends with them. They're menaces. Funny or grim, competent or incompetent, each and every character played by you is callous, arrogant and authoritarian. They are part of the hierarchy and the outside world that applies pressure. Don't like them. Don't let the players like them beyond the first set or two. Your characters only have last names.

- **Captain Whitford-Blythe** is an upper-class twit and utterly incompetent to lead. His twittiness should be amusing at first, with borderline ridiculous upper-class language, but he's a menace for two reasons: His incompetence gets people killed, and he doesn't consider the lives and dignity of the lower classes to be of any value. In the late part of the game, he starts breaking down, but the menace of his command position should make this horrifying rather than pity-inducing. He says things like "jolly good!", "good chap!" and "carry on!"
- **Sergeant Jones** is a grizzled veteran sporting a couple of sawn-off shotguns and lots of scars. He's been in the army since the Boer War. He's competent and picks up the captain's slack, making him pretty much indispensable to the battalion (and the player characters), but he's also made out of hate and rage. The two fourth-set special coping actions, *Hate* and *Inhumanity*, describe what he is. He hates and despises not only the enemy, but all (perceived) weakness. This includes recruits, civilians, women, homosexuals and anyone expressing emotions other than rage, hate and possibly greed. The only way to gain his respect is to take *Hate* or *Inhumanity*.

- **Major Vaughn** is a fat, jolly old man who haunts the Casualty Clearing Station (and battalion headquarters, but those aren't really in play). His main business seems to be writing clichéd letters to the families of the fallen, and some vague logistics. He's got a great big walrus moustache that he strokes a lot, a habit of sneaking up on people and he speaks in nothing but clichés and platitudes. Also, he's a sexual predator. In the game, he takes the part of "Chekov's rapist", testing Camilla's boundaries, escalating, looking for weakness and opportunity. Once he's established as a threat, the point is made and it's unnecessary to actually follow through. Poor Chekov.

Make more as needed. Head nurse, replacement chaplain? Just remember, only last names, and callous, arrogant and authoritarian. You do not get to play good people.

Mechanics, overview

The mechanics are simple, and concerned with survival rather than action. They don't care if you hit or miss with this particular bullet. These aren't universalist simulation mechanics that cover the experiences of everyone ever; they shape the stories of this particular game. There are two main sub-systems, casualty selection and psychological survival. They interact with each other, and one or the other is in contact with pretty much every bit of fiction in the main section, and much of the prologue and the fifth set. The mechanics shape and focus play, provide uncertainty and present hard choices.

Shape and focus: The rules tell you, for instance, that this is a coping scene where you make friends with some secondary character, so you go straight to making friends. You don't have to fumble around to see whether you're going to be friends or not.

Uncertainty: The players can sort of partially plan out their arcs, but not really. Will something terrible happen to your dear friend who has been supporting you? That might really throw you off your game.

Hard choices: OK, so maybe right now only using a special coping action would keep you safe from harm. Say, the ones available on the table at the moment are sex and hate. Would you rather go gay and cheat on your fiancée back home, profess a passionate, genocidal hatred of the germans, or maybe do something that involves sucking up some pain? If you take one of the former, that action becomes part of who your primary character is. Do you want to be someone like that? And which would you rather?

Mechanics, casualty selection

In each set, two or three people (as specified set by set) are supposed to be eliminated as casualties, dying or invaliding out. The game master picks out two or three red cards from a standard deck of playing cards (one of them being the ace of hearts), and fills in black cards to represent people who will be safe, up to the number of characters under threat. In the main part of the game, this means all the secondary characters. At the end of the main scene of the set, the cards are shuffled and laid face down on the characters on the character map. The players each turn over the cards in their column, and the characters with red cards become casualties. A brief casualty scene is played to say goodbye and present the immediate consequences of each casualty's disappearance from the front and the game.

Flourish: Before the main scene, each player reads out a fact from a fact card. During the main scene, they each have to get the fact into play through description. If they don't, at the end of the main scene, the game master will briefly and nastily throw the fact into the fiction, AND a black casualty card will be replaced with a red one. Example: A player has the fact Shell Shock. During

the main scene, they can describe shellshocked soldiers, have one of their characters bring it up in conversation, or the like. Then, obligation discharged, they can hand in their fact card.

Flourish: In the main scenes, the primary characters can play the action "heroic effort". The player of the primary character being heroic gets to briefly describe how that character is being heroic and giving it their all. Then a red card that isn't the ace of hearts is exchanged for a black one. The heroic character takes harm (see psychological survival). So if two red cards are on the table (one of which will be the ace of hearts), one character can be heroic. Heroism cannot prevent the fallout of unplayed facts, because heroism has to be played during the main scene, and the fallout comes from the facts *not* being played during the main scene.

Flourish: If a player insists on doing something that would obviously get their primary character killed or otherwise eliminated, the game master should say: If you go ahead and do that, you're going to get killed, you know. If they go ahead and do it anyway, kill them dead. The character, I mean.

Mechanics, psychological survival

On each character sheet, there are two tracks, one for tracking the strength of the primary characters lust for life, one for tracking the strength of their belief. Lust for life comes in the steps strong, weak/weakened, broken and destroyed. Belief (always in something specific, it's never abstract) comes in the steps strong, weak/weakened and destroyed. If a character's lust for life is destroyed, the character commits suicide, breaks down completely or stands up in the line of fire. If a character's belief is destroyed, it's gone and not coming back. Some characters start with weak lust for life or belief.

When you take harm, you can choose to lose a level from your lust for life or your belief. Move down the paper clip on the track to the next lower level. In *coping scenes*, you can play coping cards to avoid or manage harm. These can be reused set after set, except for the special coping actions which can only be used once in the game. When a player has used a special coping action, it's spent and noone else can use it.

When do you take harm? When the GM or a card says so. The GM will say so if it's a curveball scene for that character, or if they do something that would obviously cause them terrible suffering. In the latter case, say that they're going to get hurt if they do that. If they go ahead, tell them to take harm.

Card sources of harm: *Heroic effort*. The coping cards *Strengthen your belief* and *Find new friendship*. The special coping action *Love*.

After harm has been done, ask the player to take a moment and read up on their changed character -- harm changes the character description text.

Set checklist

There's a set checklist for everyone. Here's what it says, slightly *embellished*. There are **five** sets, plus prologue and epilogue.

1. **The game master introduces the set.** *What's the season, what's been going on?*
2. **Fact cards are passed out**, the players prepare, and those who don't have "It's Not All Bad" read out their facts. *In every set someone new gets it, so that everyone has had "It's Not All Bad" by the end of set four. The purpose of it is this: By making not-bad a player position and giving everyone else bad stuff to bring to the table, it's highlighted, but outnumbered and outgunned by the bad stuff. Less singing kumbayas and bonding over how much we're all making everything suck, more ouch.*

3. **New Special Coping Cards** are put on the table and briefly explained. Casualty cards are laid out, red and black, according to the number of characters under threat.
4. **War scene.** The fact cards must be brought into play, and "Heroic Effort" can be played. Tell and play your primary and secondary characters. The main scene takes about 12 minutes, with a warning to play facts now after 10.
5. **The casualty cards** are shuffled and put face down on the threatened characters on the characters overview. Everyone turns over the cards in their own column. Characters with a red card die, receive crippling injuries or break down. *Put black crosses by the casualties on the character map.*
6. **Casualty scenes.** Brief scenes about the fate and consequences of each casualty. *Have them set by the players or a primary friend if they have one. If they haven't been befriended, set in the CCS and have Major Vaughn be there composing the same "gave his life for his country, bullet to the heart, never felt a thing" letter, possibly before they're even quite done dying.*
7. **Coping scenes.** On your turn, play coping cards. The coping scenes should be brief: Go straight to the point, play the point, cut. *Have the players take turns playing coping scenes. Camilla's player should be sitting two seats from you. Start the turn with the player between you and Camilla's player on odd-numbered sets. She needs a slight edge regarding access to special coping actions, and this is it.*
8. **A poem.** Prepare the indicated piece from your booklet of poetry, or do the associated meditation exercise. Then, reading out of poetry. *Shift the reading responsibilities around a bit. Sometimes take on a piece yourself. Make sure that players who didn't do well in the prologue poetry only get the short, simple bits from the first and second sets.*

Curveball scenes

These are interlude scenes in which you single out some primary character for special and especially unfair treatment. The first two curveball scenes target Tom and Rupert, respectively, and subject them to abuse specifically through their membership in marginalized groups. That would be low class and homosexuality. The third curveball hits Charles, and he's not marginalized in any meaningful sense, so now it's just life being horrible to specific people. Because it is, sometimes. There's an implication, in the game structure and in the conduct of Major Vaughn, that Camilla will be targeted for being a woman, but this doesn't actually have to be carried out once the threat is properly established. Also, late in the game a curveball might well kill Camilla outright, and that would not be great. The curveball scenes provide unpredictability and dread, and underscore that war (and life) is not just background noise horror but gets specifically and unfairly bad.

Flow

This section contains systematic notes on the phases of the game. Good to have handy when playing.

Warmup and casting

Welcome all. Make sure people are on board with playing the game. There's all sorts of bigotry and abuse of power as well as suicide and thoughts of suicide. If the players have read the presentation text or are otherwise on board, fine. Once you've said hello, put on your game master's mask. As long as the game is in progress, you are not their buddy. Be a bit cold and solemn.

1: Talking about The Great War. What does World War One and the Western Front mean to them? What associations and images are in their heads? Make sure that everyone gets a say. For your part, be clear that this is not a history exam. We're plundering the treasures of history here, not tiptoeing through museum halls. Take maybe five to ten minutes. And while you're at it, watch them like a hawk for signs of who's introverted and who's extroverted, in this particular social setup. The extroverts will be doing a lot of talking, some of it unprompted, and will take up a lot of space, physically and socially. The introverts will be doing less talking, especially unprompted, and will be taking up less space with their bodily posture and their stuff.

2: Counting to thirteen. Ask them to close their eyes and count to thirteen together. The rules are: No one can say to numbers in a row, and if they speak over each other or fall into a pattern, they have to start over. This helps them pay attention to each other and make space for each other.

3: Word association exercise. You say a word, and then the player to your left says the first thing to come to mind, without stopping to think about it. And the next. Let it pass around the table four or five times. Start off with "machinegun." This warms up the little grey cells and helps the players react freely to each other.

4: Description. Building on each other's description is a skill. Teach it. Tell them to take turns describing a summer day in a green river valley in England.

- For one thing, each should say a couple of sentences, not hold a speech.
- For another, they should refrain from passing aesthetic or moral judgment by calling things pretty or ugly, good or bad. Let matters speak for themselves. It's just a field of flowers or a dead sheep.
- For a third, they should always incorporate some element of what the previous speaker described, for continuity.

Let them go around the table maybe twice after you set them going, say with brown water flowing sluggishly past lush green banks.

5: Reading out facts. Hand out facts A-D. Teach them basic read-out technique. Reading once for comprehension, once for pronunciation. Then read out when it's time, and not too fast. Also, this puts important facts on the table, and gives you a first hint if someone is not good at reading out.

6: Safety. If a player feels bad or needs to stop the game, the safety phrase is "Stop the game!" (Or, stop the game as game master if someone is obviously in trouble.)

7: Guided meditation. Ask the players to lie on the ground and close their eyes. Lower the lights. Tell the players that they might respond very intensely to the guided meditation, and if they like they can reduce the intensity a bit by opening their eyes. Work off the script provided (found at the end of the game master's guide).

Casting

No, this is not a game for self casting.

First, cast **Camilla**, since having the right Camilla is crucial. Camilla's player should be someone capable of playing her as neither a naughty nurse slutty slut-slut nor a feminist living saint. If a female player fits that description, good.

Women can get away with playing a wider range of Camilla, including stuff that would seem tacky if a man played it (this kills me a bit, but the test results were quite clear). If you need more information to decide, give her to someone neutral-ish on intro to extro.

Then, cast **Rupert** and **Charles**. Give Rupert to the most introverted player left, and Charles to the most extroverted. All else being equal, give Rupert/Charles to the better reader and Tom to the worse, if you have two equally intro/extroverted choices.

Give **Tom** to whoever is left. Tom isn't a bad role, just the most flexible one.

Be all decisive and deliberate as you hand out characters. Don't make Tom seem like an afterthought. Tell them to read the primary character description but hold off on the secondaries. Explain that the bolded parts of the bottom half are the things that are true now, the fine print is potential truth. Give them a little time to read and reflect.

Prologue

From now on we're mostly in character.

Nightmares! -- in which the psychological survival mechanics are demonstrated. Start by saying that it's around Christmas, 1915. Tell how Charles Forrester has been having terrible nightmares for weeks, as his date of deployment is approaching. He's threatened by harm, but he has his fiancé Elizabeth, so he goes to her for support and comfort. Hand out the players' sets of coping cards, and after giving them a moment, tell Charles' player to read out the card "Confirm your belief in Christ", and then have Charles and Elizabeth (that would be Tom's player) set the scene. Help them get started: So it's around Christmas. Where are they? What are they doing? What do they look like? Tell them to start with the point and play the point. Cut when they've made the point.

Farewell scenes. Have each player frame the scene in which their primary says goodbye to their friend at home. Tell them that this is training for framing scenes. Also, we get to see the three others for the first time. Where are they, doing what, looking how? Keep it short but don't press them too hard, they might need a moment to find their character. End with Charles.

The train leaves. A large train station in London full of trains, soldiers and families. It's winter. Have them describe the chaos, bustle and changing of trains, and their primaries in it, picking up on something the previous teller said like in the river valley. This time, though, not in turn order. Sometimes cut to a player out of order and ask about their character. Let it run for maybe five minutes. This is training for the war scenes.

Making friends on the train. Lay out the character map on the table. Tell everyone to pick a coloured marker -- red, green, blue or yellow -- and mark their primary character's name with it. Then have them pick a secondary character

played by someone else to make friends with on the train, and mark that character. Have each player very briefly present their war-zone secondaries (remember, we're on the train) so people have something to choose from. It is possible for multiple primaries to have the same secondary friend if they like. Then they take turns framing a scene in which they make friends. Again, brevity is key! Like, "Make friends, you have two minutes."

Going to war poetry. Tell them to pick up their poetry booklets and re-hash the guidelines for reading out, adding that they don't have to focus hard on rhythm. Tell them each to prepare one of the sections 1 to 4, and do the first and last yourself. Look carefully to see if one or more of them mangles the poetry badly. Rupert Brooke isn't the easiest, so this is poetic trial by fire! Consider putting them on light duty when you hand out poetry reading assignments later. Also, enjoy this. Rupert Brooke may have had naïve ideas about war and sacrifice, but he was a fine poet! Also, ask the players of Rupert and Charles if this is something that they could have written.

--This would be a decent time for a brief break.

First set

January-february of 1916. Two red cards. The game isn't really showing teeth yet. Our Heroes are sent to a section of the front somewhere in Northern France (the district is called Somme, but you don't need to volunteer that).

Go by the set checklist. The facts of this set merely establish the physical nature of the front, with two for the trenches and one for the Casualty Clearing Station. Make sure *not* to hand the CCS fact to Camilla's player. Before the first main scene, explain the casualty selection mechanic and lay out the cards, two red (one, as always, the ace of hearts) and ten black, since there are twelve secondary

characters on the chopping block. Outline the obligation to bring the facts into play, and hand out the heroic action cards. Introduce and lay out the special coping actions *Gallows Humour* and *Homesickness*. Then go.

For your part, rain down the occasional enemy grenade and introduce the idea of sniper fire, as well as the badness of the cold. Also, introduce the three main NPCs. Merely introduce Sergeant Jones. Give a bit more time to Major Vaughn; specifically have him spout some platitudes in the CCS and give Camilla a skeezy elevator gaze or some such mild hint of boundary trouble. Give Captain Whitford-Blythe some time, strutting about the trenches all spick and span.

Introduce an abandoned but working dispatch rider's motorcycle. At some point cut to Camilla running supplies to a Regimental Aid Station in the combat zone, so as to underscore that she's mobile and not demurely ensconced in the CCS.

Coping scenes: Tell them that the special coping actions are a precious, limited resource. If they pick them for kicks when ordinary coping actions could serve their needs, someone will suffer for the lack later. Remember, Camilla should be sitting two places from you. Start the turn at the player between you and Camilla's, so she's sure-sure to have a special action available. Unused special coping actions always stay on the table.

The poem is "In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae. The short middle section is good for less skilled readers. This is a fairly war happy poem, full of flowers and birds, duty and sacrifice. Remember to ask the players of the two poets if they might have written this.

First interlude: Curveball for Tom Fenton

This is where the game starts showing teeth for real. You should frame the scene and stay in control of it. It's cold but there's still a stong smell of latrine as the three soldier primaries happen to be standing together near the latrines (they're large pits full of human waste, in case you were wondering). Captain Whitford-Blythe walks up to them, looking upset. He explains that he's lost his gold pocket watch, and this is most unfortunate, since it's very precise and the close coordination of infantry and artillery is crucial to succesful assaults. So he starts talking to Private Forrester (Charles), pauses and remarks that he has many fond memories of the old boarding school. Why yes, he's read it in his papers: They went to the same school. Now, Private Kent (Rupert), why your uncle spoke highly of your merits in the club. I'm sure there's an officer's commision somewhere in your future! Now, Private what was it? (Tom!) You look like a strapping young fellow; would you like to take on an important mission for your country? The point is, he orders Tom to fetch the gold watch that was dropped in the latrine, because Tom is a lower-class nobody. Tom takes harm, to his belief in friendship or his lust for life, as he prefers. Remember to have him read up on his updated character description.

Second set

March-april of 1916. Two red cards.

The facts here are patrols & raids, flares and shell shock. Remember to rotate "It's Not All Bad." The special coping actions are *Sex* and *Chemical comfort*. That's a little less harmless, and also, questions of gender and orientation will be a lot more important, as well as a lot more open. The players are *not* obliged to stick by their primaries' stated preferences.

Hopefully the players will get going on their own with nighttime deeds of derring-do. For your part, foil their nighttime activities a bit with mud and annoying enemy wire, but mostly, focus on pounding them with a relentless artillery bombardment. If they aren't going out at night at own, have the merry captain give the order to prepare for action tonight (while the grenades rain down). If they spend too long on the raiding, cut to the next day, possibly Camilla at a Regimental Aid Station? Make sure she gets a little time, if it isn't happening of it's own accord. Oh, and that artillery? Pound them! Let the shell shock player bring the human consequences. When shell shock comes up, possibly have Sergeant Jones drop a remark about how deserters and weaklings come to grief. Yes, we have ways of dealing with those people. Maybe a trial, or maybe bad things just happen in wartime.

Coping scenes: This time start at the other side. Most likely it still won't be a problem for Camilla, but it might.

The poem is "Bombardment" by Richard Aldington. All the bombardment should give it a lot of resonance. Also, this one has nice short and simple pieces. Remember to ask the players of the two poets if they might have written this.

Second interlude: Curveball for Rupert Kent

You frame the scene. Let him interpose little reactions and observations, but keep control of the narrative. Rupert is standing guard at night on a firing step in the front trench. He hears steps on the duck boards in the bottom of the trench behind him -- not unusual. Then just as there's something that might be enemy movement out in the darkness, someone grabs his ankles and sends him tumbling into the bottom of the trench. Suddenly there are several people around him, and kicks and blows are raining down on him. Voices hiss and whisper about the damn fairy and how he should be punished. Then the blows stop, but there's tittering in the darkness. Warm liquid splashes over his stunned body, and the

smell of piss hits his nostrils. A brief scuffle and they're gone. What does he do? Moments later, whatever he does, Sergeant Jones walks along and orders Rupert to stand up properly at his post. Jones wrinkles his nose in disgust before he walks on. Note that it's kind of important that Rupert have no actual proof against the sergeant. Needless to say, Rupert takes harm, to his patriotic belief or his lust for life, as he prefers. Remember to have him read up on his updated character description.

Third set

May-june of 1916. Three red cards.

The facts are trench food, (bad) hygiene and chlorine gas. Remember to rotate "It's Not All Bad." The special coping actions are *Love* and *Recklessness*.

Mention rumours of an offensive being prepared. Captain Whitford-Blythe hasn't quite been keeping up with his shaving, and has developed a tendency to stutter. At some point, have Sergeant Jones be all "inspirational" at Rupert, asking him if he's ready to go bayonet-rape some damn German sodomites. Hopefully the game is pretty much running itself by now. If you need inspiration on how to gory up gas casualties, consult Wilfred Owen's poem! Make sure to have Major Vaughn be predatory if you haven't followed up on that previously, in the war scene or in casualty scenes. Move to physical action like unwelcome but plausibly deniable jovial bottom slapping. If it's happening by the bed of someone dying of gas inhalation or gangrene, so much the better.

Casualties: Pick out a soldier casualty, if one exists. Preferably one not played by the player of Charles. If you should be so lucky, a casualty who is a friend of Charles. Break off any attempt to frame a casualty scene for him, saying that he went missing on a patrol, and that's that.

Coping scenes: Start at Camilla's side. By now the special actions might well be seeing heavy use.

The poem is Wilfred Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est." Only draw in skilled readers: This is as difficult as the poetry gets. This is a seriously angry poem. Asking the players of the two poems if any of them might have written this is no longer an idle question!

Third interlude: Curveball for Charles Forrester

By now, Camilla's player will probably be bracing for impact. That's still not being forced, though.

Take a look at Charles' tracks. Would a single instance of harm kill him? If it would, skip this. Even if this is my favourite scene of the game. Hand the handout "In the wire" to the player of the casualty that you picked out in the third set (or someone else if necessary). Then frame the scene. Charles is out on a nighttime patrol and gets separated from the patrol by wire. As he's alone in the maze of german wire too strong for his wire cutters, he hears a harsh whisper and feels a presence in the darkness. Let the wire player take over, lean back and enjoy the show. Push them to finish if they get long winded, possibly with german flares. Charles takes harm, to his belief in Christ or his lust for life, as he prefers. Remember to have him read up on his updated character description.

--This would be a decent time for a brief break.

Fourth set

July of 1916. This is the start of the battle of the Somme. Three red cards.

The facts are undermining, phosgene gas and "bully beef." Remember to rotate "It's Not All Bad." After this, everyone should have had it. The new special coping actions are *Hate* and *Inhumanity*, stuff that it stings to pick.

Start on the night before the first of July, the morning before the big push. They're going over the top at dawn, along with tens of thousands of reinforcements. The French are hard pressed to the south at Verdun, and we have to do something to divert the Huns. When the players have had a chance to play with preparations, the captain inaudibly stutters his way through an inspirational speech, drowned out by the thunder of artillery, while the sergeant takes care of the actual preparations. Maybe this would be a good time for mines? At least you could send a meaningful look at the player with that fact. Then, the whistles blow and it's time to go. The artillery goes on as the charge builds, only to bog down in the wire that hasn't been blown away by artillery like it was supposed to, just turned into a frightful tangle. The artillery mostly suppresses the Germans, but a few shells, both British and German, land among the massed British infantry. A few German machinegun crews refuse to be suppressed, and they wreak slaughter on the charge that's slowed to a crawl. Then we're in the trenches, and it's all hand grenades and bayonets and sharpened shovels and carnage.

At some point, maybe seven or eight minutes in, cut to the next day. It goes on, with artillery duels and gas and mines and trench systems behind the first, and desperate German counterattacks. And the next day. And a week later. And another. The carnage just refuses to stop. This is probably a good time for heroic effort, and the primaries' resources are probably getting dangerously low.

Casualty scenes: There's a horrible thing about phosgene gas. You can get a lethal dose and be sort of OK for hours and hours, but you're going to die within 24 hours. Someone's friend trying to dictate a letter to his mother in the infirmary while he's waiting to die of the gas is heartbreaking. To make it grotesque, throw in Major Vaughn composing yet another generic "bullet to the heart, never felt a thing" letter before the patient is even dead.

Coping scenes: Counter-Camilla.

The poem is Charles Sorley's "When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead." It is utter nihilistic horror, denying all the beliefs in play. Could they have written it?

Fourth interlude: Friends?

Not Camilla's curveball that's never coming. Instead, the rules are changing. Those bits about how only secondary characters get hit by random shrapnel, and how primary characters can make a great difference while charging the machineguns? They're going away now. Also, it's possible for primaries to be friend with each other, if they like. They get a set of special coping scenes in which they can make friends, and only make friends, without taking harm. If two primaries make friends, this uses up both players' friend-making opportunity. As always, keep them short but sweet. This is a moment for the players to wonder if their primaries actually do have something in common. They don't *have* to make new friends. Maybe that just won't make any sense.

Updated rules: A coping scene between two primaries takes up the coping scene for both. On the other hand, both can benefit from the same special coping action -- if they want to. Give the player whose turn it is a chance to offer, and the other a chance to refuse, before demanding a coping action.

The fifth and final set

September-november of 1916. Two red cards. Remember that the primary characters are now targets! So fill up with black cards until the total number of casualty cards is equal to the number of non-eliminated characters on the map.

This time there are no facts and no niceness, only you throwing horrors at the players. Also, no "heroic effort", so tell the players to put that away. The new special coping actions are *Anger against the war* and *The Crown of Thorns is barbed wire*.

It's a couple of months later, and despite hundreds of thousands of casualties, the battle is still going on, house by house, tree by tree and molehill by molehill. The entrenchment is less tidy. It's fall, and there's rain and mud. Now, description falls to you mainly. Make the landscape and the action absurd and nightmarish. Have them walk through forests reduced by artillery to piles of giant splinters. There are broken cannons and broken tanks (yes, this is the debut of the tank; what it does at this point is mostly break down in the mud) here and there. The houses of the villages are shattered shells. There are corpses everywhere, in varying states of mutilation and decay. The battle is sluggish, with little ammunition to spare on either side, and in many places the positions are close enough for shouting. If this starts to seem too normal, throw in an eviscerated but still living horse trashing and trying to scream through its gas mask. Maybe there's a naked man trying and failing to run through the mud, floundering, incapable of speech. Get creative if you feel like it. If someone took *Hate* or *Inhumanity* in the last set, even Rupert, have Sergeant Jones show them some appreciation. He's feeling right at home, of course. The captain is a wreck kept together only with rum. Ignore the major, he's served his purpose. Cut fairly rapidly between the players. Sometimes ask them what they do, sometimes ask them how they look in the middle of the nightmare.

Casualty scenes: There's a pretty good chance that one or even two primaries will get red cards. Have them tell their terrible fate. It will be memorable.

Coping scenes: Remember the updated rules for coping scenes between primaries. This is where they finally decide who to be.

The poem is Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women." It's angry with the civilian war enthusiasts at home, but not without compassion, even for the enemy. Could the primary poets have written it?

Epilogue

First, ask survivors what they'll be doing for the rest of the war, now that they have seen the very worst and survived. If they aren't obviously unfit, they might be offered positions of responsibility. They might get wounded and go home. They might just go on doing what they do.

Second, play homecoming scenes, in which they are reunited with their friends back home. Or if they're dead, have the player of the dead primary frame a scene of the friend at home, and the player of the friend tell and play it. I'm rather wondering, are Jack and Kate together now? How will the believers at home receive the possible unbelievers returning? What's more important, connection or ideals?

Third, you read out "My sweet old etcetera" by e. e. cummings. It's horrible in a funny, bittersweet sort of way, and delightfully orientation-ambiguous. Meditation on the homecomings, if you need time.

Debriefing

Ask them to share their impressions of the game. Say that if anyone feels a little weird about some things, that's cool, and if they're completely comfortable, that's cool too. If a consensus starts forming at the table that we're too cool to feel uncomfortable things over a mere game, possibly break in to comment on some bit that made you a little queasy.

Game Master's Set checklist

There's a set checklist for everyone. Here's what it says, slightly *embellished*. There are **five** sets, plus prologue and epilogue.

1. **The game master introduces the set.** *What's the season, what's been going on?*
2. **Fact cards are passed out**, the players prepare, and those who don't have "It's Not All Bad" read out their facts. *In every set someone new gets it, so that everyone has had "It's Not All Bad" by the end of set four. The purpose of it is this: By making not-bad a player position and giving everyone else bad stuff to bring to the table, it's highlighted, but outnumbered and outgunned by the bad stuff. Less singing kumbayas and bonding over how much we're all making everything suck, more ouch.*
3. **New Special Coping Cards** are put on the table and briefly explained. Casualty cards are laid out, red and black, according to the number of characters under threat.
4. **War scene.** The fact cards must be brought into play, and "Heroic Effort" can be played. Tell and play your primary and secondary characters. The main scene takes about 12 minutes, with a warning to play facts now after 10.
5. **The casualty cards** are shuffled and put face down on the threatened characters on the characters overview. Everyone turns over the cards in their own column. Characters with a red card die, receive crippling injuries or break down. *Put black crosses by the casualties on the character map.*
6. **Casualty scenes.** Brief scenes about the fate and consequences of each casualty. *Have them set by the players or a primary friend if they have one. If they haven't been befriended, set in the CCS and have Major Vaughn be there composing the same "gave his life for his country, bullet to the heart, never felt a thing" letter, possibly before they're even quite done dying.*
7. **Coping scenes.** On your turn, play coping cards. The coping scenes should be brief: Go straight to the point, play the point, cut. *Have the players take turns playing coping scenes. Camilla's player should be sitting two seats from you. Start the turn with the player between you and Camilla's player on odd-numbered sets. She needs a slight edge regarding access to special coping actions, and this is it.*
8. **A poem.** Prepare the indicated piece from your booklet of poetry, or do the associated meditation exercise. Then, reading out of poetry. *Shift the reading responsibilities around a bit. Sometimes take on a piece yourself. Make sure that players who didn't do well in the prologue poetry only get the short, simple bits from the first and second sets.*

Game Master's Session Checklist

--Welcome all

--Warm-up

1: Talking about the Great War

2: Counting to thirteen

3: Word association exercise

4: Description of a river valley

5: Reading out facts

6: Safety

7: Guided meditation

--Casting

--Prologue, warm-up in play

1: Nightmares!

2: Farewell scenes

3: Toget forlader stationen

4: Nye venner på toget

5: Going to war poetry

--Perhaps a brief break?

--**First set**, two red cards

--Curveball for Tom Fenton

--**Second set**, two red cards

--Curveball for Rupert Kent

--**Third set**, three red cards

--Curveball for Charles Forrester

--Perhaps a brief break?

--**Fourth set**, three red cards

--Friend?

--**Fifth set**, two red cards

--Epilogue

1: Resten af krigen

2: Hjemkomstscener

3: my sweet old etcetera

--Debriefing

The Officers

Remember, not good people. Callous, arrogant, authoritarian. Last names only.

- **Captain Whitford-Blythe** is an upper-class twit and utterly incompetent to lead. His twittiness should be amusing at first, with borderline ridiculous upper-class language, but he's a menace for two reasons: His incompetence gets people killed, and he doesn't consider the lives and dignity of the lower classes to be of any value. In the late part of the game, he starts breaking down, but the menace of his command position should make this horrifying rather than pity-inducing. He says things like "jolly good!", "good chap!" and "Carry on!"
- **Sergeant Jones** is a grizzled veteran sporting a couple of sawn-off shotguns and lots of scars. He's been in the army since the Boer War. He's competent and picks up the captain's slack, making him pretty much indispensable to the battalion (and the player characters), but he's also made out of hate and rage. The two fourth-set special coping actions, *Hate* and *Inhumanity*, describe what he is. He hates and despises not only the enemy, but all (perceived) weakness. This includes recruits, civilians, women, homosexuals and anyone expressing emotions other than rage, hate and possibly greed. The only way to gain his respect is to take *Hate* or *Inhumanity*.
- **Major Vaughn** is a fat, jolly old man who haunts the Casualty Clearing Station (and battalion headquarters, but those aren't really in play). His main business seems to be writing clichéd letters to the families of the fallen, and some vague logistics. He's got a great big walrus moustache that he strokes a lot, a habit of sneaking up on people and he speaks in nothing but clichés and platitudes. Also, he's a sexual predator. In the game, he takes the part of "Chekov's rapist", testing Camilla's boundaries, escalating, looking for weakness and opportunity. Once he's established as a threat, the point is made and it's unnecessary to actually follow through. Poor Chekov.

Guided meditation

Ask the players to lie on the ground and close their eyes. Lower the lights. Tell the players that they might respond very intensely to the guided meditation, and if they like they can reduce the intensity a bit by opening their eyes.

I want you to relax. Think about yourself and where you are right now. Are you feeling tense? Sad? Hung over? Let your shoulder blades relax and press into the ground. Relax your legs and let them get loose. Relax your neck. Let your arms go limp and melt into the floor.

Think of yourself as a young man. A young man with a restless fire in your belly, a need to do something. Feel the fire. Think about your place in the world, your country. Think about the scary people who want to hurt your country. Think about the scary people doing something violent to people that you love. They must be stopped.

Where are you when you decide that you have to help stop the bad people, the enemy? Are you sitting at the table eating? Are you walking down the street? In the bathroom, shaving, looking at yourself in the mirror? You make the decision. You sign up. You train for weeks. You put on a uniform. You look good in that uniform. Strong, decisive.

You get on a train with other people in uniform. There are so many of you. People you know wave goodbye. Some are crying, but they say that they're proud of you. You travel, by train, by ship, by train. You get to the front. To the war. As you approach, you can hear the distant thunder of the cannons. How does that make you feel? Excited? Afraid? Angry?

The explosions are so loud. The screech of incoming fire isn't so loud, but every time you hear the screech, your gut tightens in fear. You can't help it. You flinch at the explosions. It keeps you awake at night. When you don't hear anything, you're still listening for incoming grenades. You are so tired.

There's a lot of dirt. It's been a long time since you were really clean, even under the shower. The dirt is in everything. The food tastes of dirt. Your uniform feels dirty against your skin.

You're in a trench. It's very early in the morning, and the battle gear is heavy on your back and shoulders. The explosions are very loud. The people next to you have tight, grey faces. You're waiting for the order to attack. The whistles blow and over the top you go. Somewhere, machineguns are stuttering.

(...stay silent for 5-10 seconds at least...)

When you feel ready, open your eyes and slowly sit up.

In the Wire

Important: Keep a straight face while reading this

You got lost during a nightly patrol and fell into the barbed wire. You're hopelessly entangled, snagged on barbs worked deep into your flesh, and you're not going anywhere without help from someone with bolt cutters. You've been hanging there for many days, and you really should have died by now. Really! You can reach a dirty puddle of water with one hand, but pain, fever and despair have just about driven you mad. Screaming has worn your voice into a harsh whisper.

- **Beg** to be released. Promise him anything.
- **Curse him** if he tries to leave without having helped you. Curse him if he tries to "help" you with a mercy killing -- you want to live, not die!
- **Beg some more.** Maybe cry a little?
- Curse **the army** (fools and cowards, the lot), curse **England** (that filthy whore!) and curse **God** (who allows all this with his "plan").

1a: Gallows Humour, strong, dark and bitter

--Coping card--

Conditions: Only if your lust for life is strong, and you have a friend.

Scene: You share a horrible joke with a friend.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

Here's one:

Question: What's eighteen inches long, stiff, and makes women scream at night?

Answer: Crib death

1b: Homesickness, wallowing in memories of home

--Coping card--

Conditions: You must have a friend.

Scene: You share pictures of home with a friend.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

2a Sex, finding bodily, erotic comfort with another person

--Coping card--

Conditions: You must have a friend.

Scene: The moment when you both realize that you're actually going to have sex.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

2b: Chemical comfort, rum, stolen from the rations, or the like

--Coping card--

Conditions: You can't have strong belief, and you must have a friend.

Scene: You share chemical comfort with a friend.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

3a Love, romantic, passionate and secret

--Coping card--

Conditions: You must have a friend.

Scene: When you tell your beloved friend that you couldn't live on alone.

Effect: You suffer no harm. If your friend dies, you suffer harm.

Or, your beloved is your idol. Your belief suffers harm but your lust for life increases. Both must be possible. If your friend dies, you suffer harm.

Draw a heart by your friend's name.

3b Recklessness, taking foolish chances to feel alive

--Coping card--

Conditions: You can't have strong belief, and you must have a friend.

Scene: You take a reckless chance, and a friend admires you. Playing with a live hand grenade, mooning the enemy snipers, jumping your motorcycle over the reserve trench. Doesn't it sound exciting?

Effect: You suffer no harm.

4a Hate, dehumanizing and genocidal hatred of the enemy

--Coping card--

Conditions: You can't have strong lust for life, and you must have a friend.

Scene: You share your intense urge to wipe out the German vermin down to the last baby. They're *not* people, they only pretend in order to fool the rest of us. The war is utterly necessary. Your friend agrees.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

4b Inhumanity, perceiving yourself as monster or machine

--Coping card--

If you're not a person, but only look like one on the outside, you don't have to feel soft, weak things. The war is your element, you wouldn't fit anywhere else.

Conditions: You can't have strong lust for life, and you must have a friend.

Scene: Your friend accepts, confirms and admires your inhumanity.

Effect: You suffer no harm

5a Anger against the war and everyone who justifies it

--Coping card--

Conditions: You can't have strong belief, you can't have chosen *Hate* or *Inhumanity*, and you must have a friend.

Scene: You share your anger with a friend, who doesn't have to fully share it, but who accepts and respects it.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

5b The Crown of Thorns is barbed wire, a religious experience

--Coping card--

Conditions: You can't have strong belief in England or friendship, and you must have a friend.

Scene: You describe your religious experience to a friend, who accepts and respects it.

Effect: You suffer no harm, and gain strong belief in Christ.

oo

Heroic effort

- use in the main scene

You give everything you've got. You give what you didn't know you had. You give what you can't really do without. You make a difference, and save a life, for now. And you pay the price.

Conditions: You can make a heroic effort once per set, in the war scene, by laying down this card and describing your heroic effort.

Scene: As part of the main scene, take a minute to describe how your heroic effort makes a difference.

Effect: One red card that isn't the Ace of Hearts is replaced by a black card. You take harm to belief or lust for life, as you choose and as possible.

oo

Heroic effort

- use in the main scene

You give everything you've got. You give what you didn't know you had. You give what you can't really do without. You make a difference, and save a life, for now. And you pay the price.

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oo

Confirm your belief in Christ

--Coping card--

It's horrible, but everything that happens is part of God's plan, and the thought brings you comfort. A friend confirms that this is so.

Conditions: You must have strong belief in Christ, and a friend.

Scene: You and your friend agree that Christ hasn't abandoned His children, despite the latest tests.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

Find new friendship

--Coping card--

The war zone is no place to be alone with your thoughts. You make a friend.

Conditions: Access to potential friends.

Scene: You become friends. Play the decisive moment.

Effect: You suffer harm, to your belief or lust for life (as you choose and as possible), and make a friend.

Strengthen your belief in Christ

--Coping card--

You're in crisis. Your worldview is reeling, and you with it. A friend reminds you why you once put your fate in God's hands.

Conditions: You have weakened belief in Christ, weak lust for life, and a friend.

Scene: You share your doubts with a friend, who restores your faith.

Effect: You suffer harm to your lust for life, but your belief in Christ improves to strong.

Take special coping action

--Coping Card--

With help from a friend, you get through the day.

Conditions: You must have a friend, and there must be a special coping card on the table that you can meet the conditions for.

Scene: See the special coping card.

Effect: You take the card from the table and play it. Afterwards, leave it by your character sheet. It is now part of your personality.

Confirm your belief in England

--Coping card--

It's horrible, but you're doing this for your country, and the thought brings you comfort. A friend confirms that this is good and right.

Conditions: You must have strong patriotic belief, and a friend.

Scene: You and your friend agree that England's strength and happiness is worth any sacrifice.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

Find new friendship

--Coping card--

The war zone is no place to be alone with your thoughts. You make a friend.

Conditions: Access to potential friends.

Scene: You become friends. Play the decisive moment.

Effect: You suffer harm, to your belief or lust for life (as you choose and as possible), and make a friend.

Strengthen your belief in England

--Coping card--

You're in crisis. Your worldview is reeling, and you with it. A friend reminds you why you once decided to dedicate your life to your country.

Conditions: You have weakened patriotic belief, strong or weakened lust for life, and a friend.

Scene: You share your doubts with a friend, who restores your belief in England.

Effect: You suffer harm to your lust for life, but your patriotic belief improves to strong.

Take special coping action

--Coping Card--

With help from a friend, you get through the day.

Conditions: You must have a friend, and there must be a special coping card on the table that you can meet the conditions for.

Scene: See the special coping card.

Effect: You take the card from the table and play it. Afterwards, leave it by your character sheet. It is now part of your personality.

Confirm your belief in friendship

--Coping card--

It's horrible, but you're in the brotherhood of arms, protecting your own and the thought brings you comfort. A friend confirms that this is good and right.

Conditions: You must have belief in friendship, and a friend.

Scene: You and your friend agree that the fight is right and the bonds of friendship strong.

Effect: You suffer no harm.

Find new friendship

--Coping card--

The war zone is no place to be alone with your thoughts. You make a friend.

Conditions: Access to potential friends.

Scene: You become friends. Play the decisive moment.

Effect: You suffer harm, to your belief or lust for life (as you choose and as possible), and make a friend.

Strengthen your belief in friendship

--Coping card--

You're in crisis. Your worldview is reeling, and you with it. A friend reminds you that life is only worth living when you're willing to lay it down for your brothers.

Conditions: You have weakened belief in friendship, strong or weakened lust for life, and a friend.

Scene: You share your doubts with a friend, who restores your belief in brotherhood.

Effect: You suffer harm to your lust for life, but your belief in friendship improves to strong.

Take special coping action

--Coping Card--

With help from a friend, you get through the day.

Conditions: You must have a friend, and there must be a special coping card on the table that you can meet the conditions for.

Scene: See the special coping card.

Effect: You take the card from the table and play it. Afterwards, leave it by your character sheet. It is now part of your personality.

Find new friendship

--Coping card--

The war zone is no place to be alone with your thoughts. You make a friend.

Conditions: Access to potential friends.

Scene: You become friends. Play the decisive moment.

Effect: You suffer harm, to your belief or lust for life (as you choose and as possible), and make a friend.

Take special coping action

--Coping Card--

With help from a friend, you get through the day.

Conditions: You must have a friend, and there must be a special coping card on the table that you can meet the conditions for.

Scene: See the special coping card.

Effect: You take the card from the table and play it. Afterwards, leave it by your character sheet. It is now part of your personality.

Fact A: Machineguns

A **machinegun** is a fully automatic belt- or magazine-fed firearm of a caliber between 6,5 and 14,5 millimeters, commonly mounted on a tripod or a vehicle. Unlike semiautomatic weapons, which require a new pull of the trigger for every shot, machineguns keep firing as long as the trigger is pressed. The introduction of effective machineguns in the early twentieth century massively increased the firepower of infantry forces, and particularly enhanced their defensive strength.

Fact B: Recruiting Campaigns

Before The Great War, the British armed forces consisted solely of volunteers. In august 1914, when it was clear that the standing army and ordinary reserves would prove inadequate, the British War Minister Lord Kitchener started a grand recruiting campaign under the slogan "For King and Country". Over the next year or so, more than two millions signed up, but towards the end of 1915 it became clear that it wasn't enough, and the draft was instituted in january 1916 for all men of ages 18 to 41.

Fact C: Artillery

Artillery are heavy weapons that fire grenades over a long distance. The grenades can be high explosive grenades, fragmentation grenades that kill with shrapnel, or gas grenades. Often, many artillery pieces fire together, coordinated in firing patterns. The most often used is a line, which can form a barrier of grenade strikes in the landscape or target an enemy trench. This is called a "barrage". Artillery is directed by observers, on the ground, in planes or balloons.

Fact D: Antibiotics

Antibiotics are chemical compounds which kill or inhibit the growt of microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi and amobae. They are best known as medicine against infections that cause fever, inflammation and more. The earliest well observed antibiotic was penicillin, developed by Alexander Fleming in 1928. Antibiotics became available on the market in 1932. World War One lasted from 1914 to 1918.

Fact 1a: Trenches

Trenches are three to four meters deep. They never go in a straight line, but zig-zag every ten meters or so in order to minimize the effect of fragmentation grenade strikes in the trench, and to prevent intruders from firing at too much of the trench right away. In the front side are elevated firing steps, where soldiers can stand and shoot through "loopholes" in the parapet of sandbags at the edge of the trench. In the bottom of the trench are "duckboards" for walking on.

Mission: *Put something about trenches in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 1b: Trenches

In The Great War, defensive systems consist of two to four trenches, connected by communications trenches. Most of the defenders usually stay in the rear trenches, where there are dugout shelters. In no man's land before the front trench, belts of barbed wire are laid down, repaired and maintained in fog or the dark of night. The distance between enemy front trenches is usually a couple of hundred meters, but can in some places be as little as thirty meters.

Mission: *Put something about trenches in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 1c: Casualty Clearing Stations

A **Casualty Clearing Station** (CCS) is the British army's term for a field hospital behind the front line, outside of the reach of enemy artillery, used to treat wounded soldiers. A CCS receives its patients from **Regimental Aid Posts** in the combat zone. Patients who are so badly wounded that the Casualty Clearing Station can't provide adequate treatment are stabilized before being sent on to a military hospital. Casualty Clearing Stations are often set up in monasteries, manors or schools.

Mission: *Put something about the local CCS in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 2a: Patrols and Raids

British forces on the Western Front often carry out patrols at night in no man's land, as well as more large scale "raids" that break into enemy trenches after intensive artillery bombardment to secure prisoners and "booty" in the form of papers with plans and procedures, before retreating under covering fire. These attacks are supposed to press the enemy and maintain morale by delivering concrete victories, and deny no man's land to the enemy. In practice they're both difficult and dangerous, and often yield modest rewards.

Mission: *Put something about patrols and raids in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 2b: Flares

Flares are small objects that burn fiercely but not explosively, and for some time emit strong light. They are sent up as rockets proper or projectiles fired out of a tube, and glide down on little parachutes that unfold when they are set off high in the air. In The Great War they are used to light an area at night, and are usually sent up over an area where enemy activity is suspected. The types utilized use magnesium, and send out a powerful, pale white light. These days flares are used mostly as fireworks or distress signals.

Mission: *Put something about flares in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 2c: Shell Shock

No soldier should be allowed to think that loss of nervous or mental control provides an honourable avenue of escape from the battlefield, and every endeavour should be made to prevent slight cases leaving the battalion or divisional area, where treatment should be confined to provision of rest and comfort for those who need it and to heartening them for return to the front line. *-from Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into "Shell-Shock", 1922*

Mission: *Put something about shell shock in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 3a: Trench Food

Every battalion has two enormous metal vessels for cooking. Most food and hot drink is prepared in them. As they are rarely cleaned completely, things soon start to taste the same. If you've had pea soup with horse meat, there's a good chance that your tea will taste of peas and horse. Transport from the rear to the front trenches is a problem: Even though soldiers and cooking personnel hasten the food forward through the communications trenches in buckets, gas cans or the like, it is rarely more than lukewarm when it arrives at the front. Because of fuel shortages, being able to heat your own food at the front is a rare luxury.

Mission: *Put something about trench food in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 3b: Hygiene

Hygiene in the trenches is not good. Sanitary facilities (toilets) are not clean, and common infections include dysentery, typhoid fever and cholera. Many soldiers suffer from fungal infections such as *trench foot* and *trench mouth*, and vermin, especially body lice, are a common and painful problem driving the soldiers to distraction. As antibiotics are unavailable, infection and disease are not much less dangerous than the enemy's artillery.

Mission: *Put something about bad hygiene in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 3c: Chlorine Gas

Chlorine is highly oxidizing and reacts strongly with many substances, which can be extremely harmful for humans and animals. At normal temperatures, chlorine is a gas, and so easily breathed in. If the gas comes into contact with water in the eyes or the mucous membranes of throat and lungs, it reacts with the water. This produces chloric acid, which is locally irritant, or in sufficient amounts, acutely corrosive. The smell of chlorine is described as "a mix of pepper and pineapple". We know it as the smell of swimming pool.

Mission: *Put something about chlorine gas in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 4a: Undermining

Undermining means to dig tunnels under the enemy's lines, pack them with explosives and then detonate them at some critical time. Aside from a large crater, the explosion sets off an artificial earthquake which can make trenches and dugout shelters collapse and bury the occupants alive. Mines in progress can sometimes be discovered, usually by means of listening devices. If enemy mining is caught in time, it can be stopped by digging a counter-mine and detonating it to collapse the enemy's tunnel. Mines can contain more than twenty tons of explosives, and can send debris more than a kilometer into the air. Countermines don't need that much power.

Mission: *Put something about cundermining in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 4b: Phosgene Gas

Phosgene, or carbonyl dichloride, is a colourless, chlorine-based gas which is 18 times as deadly as common chlorine gas. Phosgene damages proteins in the lungs and interrupts the blood-air barrier, ususally causing death by suffocation within 24 hours of inhalation. The gas smells like musty hay, but if you can smell it, you've already received a dangerous dose. 85% of all gas-related deaths in The Great War are caused by phosgene. Often it is mixed with the lighter chloride gas, which helps spread the heavier phosgene gas. Phosgene gathers in low places, such as trenches.

Mission: *Put something about phosgene gas in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact 4c: "Bully Beef"

"Bully beef" is a key ingredient in British military field cuisine. It consists of the less delicate parts of the cow, salted, boiled and finely chopped, and then packed in a tin with gelatine. The name is derived from the French "boeuf bouilli", boiled beef. Bully beef is used in stews or cut in slices and fried. Or if you're very hungry and don't have fuel, eaten cold out of the tin. As the British army grows, and the German submarine blockade gets more effective, less cow and more gelatine is put in the tins.

Mission: *Put something about bully beef in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. Constraint: You're not allowed to kill named individuals with description. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Fact: It's Not All Bad

Sunshine. Birdsong when the guns are silent. The flowers of the season, perhaps. Rum warms the belly. A cigarette to calm the nerves, and maybe even a steady hand with a match.

Mission: *Put some little thing that makes life OK for a moment in play by telling and describing, and put this card on the table when you do. If you don't carry out your mission in the course of the main scene, a black card will turn red.*

Main Character: Charles Forrester

Charles is a talented 21-year-old poet who studies Theology at Cambridge. A fervent Christian, he comes from a respectable but unremarkable middle class background.

Death has fascinated Charles for as long as he can remember. His eyes see the skull under the skin of people's faces, and his thoughts often turn to suffering, death and the hereafter. Such thoughts bring him an odd comfort in the midst of the frustrations of ordinary existence. He's in no hurry to die, though, and his Christian faith gives him obligations in the here and now. Charles is a product of the boarding school system. It was in the smell of cabbage, wet wool and old books that he grew from boy to man.

He's engaged to marry Elizabeth Joyce. She's a 22-year-old French teacher from a respectable family. She's also somewhat fragile and anxious, and a passionate Christian. Charles has volunteered for army service to protect Elizabeth, England and God from the schemes of the Devil, in the form of the Germans.

Think visually: *In the trench. A thin, pale young man in uniform looks along his rifle towards the enemy's lines, but his eyes are focused on eternity.*

Weak lust for life: Life gives Charles a dubious taste in the mouth. His sleep is uneasy. He worries about the future or chooses not to think about it. Hope lives yet: A beautiful sight can bring a shadow of a smile to his lips, and not all his dreams are nightmares.

Broken lust for life: Life tastes of blood and ashes. Days and nights flow together into one blurry gray mass of discomfort. Sometimes Charles thinks about ending it, but finds excuses to carry on. The future doesn't exist, or at least he can't feel it. There are only gray days and isolated moments of comfort.

Destroyed lust for life: Charles can't go on. At the next opportunity he takes his life, breaks down regardless of the consequences, or stands up in the line of fire.

Strong belief in Christ: Charles has a shining ideal, a comfort to reach for when the world is grim and unfair. His belief keeps him warm at night, and the thought of dying for it doesn't seem horrifying. God has a plan for everything, including Charles.

Weakened belief: Charles has an idea that Christ is true, good and right. He can remember that his belief once seemed worth giving his life for, and he longs to get that certainty back.

Destroyed belief: All lies! Shadows and ashes. Never again will Charles believe that Christ is worth killing, suffering and dying for.



Secondary Characters

Three secondary characters in the field and one back home. The one back home appears in the prologue and epilogue.

Important rule: If a primary character makes a mechanically valid move with a secondary, it is up to the player of the secondary character to justify it. That is, we "discover" something about the secondary character that wasn't obvious until now. For instance if a male primary takes the action "romantic love" with a soldier secondary, this soldier is into men (too?), and he has been all along. Now we know too.

You don't have to give much attention to secondaries who don't have primary friends yet.

Back home: Sybil Morris, girls' boarding school friend of Camilla Kiefer. Upper middle class, 27 years. A romantic, engaged to marry to a boring banker.

Private **John Kendall**. Working class, 18 years. Thin but tough. Curses when he's nervous, and always apologizes.

Connection with:

Private **Bert Smith**. Farm hand, 20 years. Large, loud and cheerful, and quite a handsome fellow.

Connection with:

Private **Robert Leigh**. Middle class, 40 years, bank manager. Red-haired, freckled and nervous. His younger sister back home knits for him and is convinced that he's a mighty hero.

Connection with:

Main Character: Rupert Kent

Rupert is 22 years old and studies History at Cambridge. He's also a poet of some talent and passionate English patriot, he's upper middle class and has attended an exclusive boarding school. Rupert's best friend Gerald Harlow also studies History, but is unfortunately flat-footed. So Rupert has joined the army for both of them, so to speak. Gerald and Rupert are more than friends, they are lovers: Rupert is homosexual (which is sort of secret in the game, but not at the table). In his uniform, handsome, athletic Rupert looks the very image of a young hero. He will not let it remain mere appearance!

Rupert would rather live for his country than die for his country, but the thought is not without it's own bittersweet beauty, which appeals to the poet in him. In his life so far, he's been largely successful with everything he's tried. Rupert hopes that he is also capable of dying well, if it comes to that.

Think visually: *Rain. An athletic young man in uniform, with a crooked smile, sets his helmet at a jaunty angle, turns and trudges off through the mud with firm, measured steps.*

Strong lust for life: Rupert has appetite for life. He has ambitions and dreams of the future. He sleeps well at night. There's spring in his step and his back is straight.

Weakened lust for life: Life gives Rupert a dubious taste in the mouth. His sleep is uneasy. He worries about the future or chooses not to think about it. Hope lives yet: A beautiful sight can bring a shadow of a smile to his lips, and not all his dreams are nightmares.

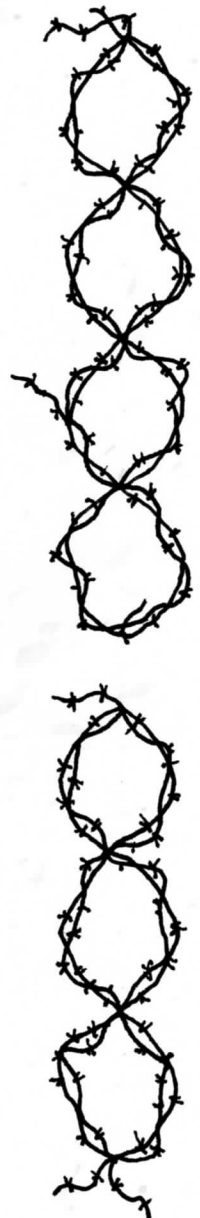
Broken lust for life: Life tastes of blood and ashes. Days and nights flow together into one blurry gray mass of discomfort. Sometimes Rupert thinks about ending it, but finds excuses to carry on. The future doesn't exist, or at least he can't feel it. There are only gray days and isolated moments of comfort.

Destroyed lust for life: Rupert can't go on. At the next opportunity he takes his life, breaks down regardless of the consequences, or stands up in the line of fire.

Strong patriotic belief: Rupert has a shining ideal, a comfort to reach for when the world is grim and unfair. His belief keeps him warm at night, and the thought of dying for it doesn't seem horrifying. Rupert's blood is sprung from the soil of England. His country was there long before he was born, and with his help, England will be strong and free forever.

Weakened belief: Rupert has an idea that fighting for England is true, good and right. He can remember that his belief once seemed worth giving his life for, and he longs to get that certainty back.

Destroyed belief: All lies! Shadows and ashes. Never again will Rupert believe that mere dirt is worth killing, suffering and dying for.



Secondary Characters

Three secondary characters in the field and one back home. The one back home appears in the prologue and epilogue.

Important rule: If a primary character makes a mechanically valid move with a secondary, it is up to the player of the secondary character to justify it. That is, we "discover" something about the secondary character that wasn't obvious until now. For instance if a male primary takes the action "romantic love" with a soldier secondary, this soldier is into men (too?), and he has been all along. Now we know too.

You don't have to give much attention to secondaries who don't have primary friends yet.

Back home: Jack Wilson, Tom Fenton's best friend. Working class, 19 years, works in an ammunition factory. Too nearsighted to join the army. Has promised to keep an eye on Tom's anxious ex Kate.

Private **Bill Morton**. Farm hand, 38 years, tall, thin and serious.
Connection with:

Nurse **Lucy MacFarlane**. Middle class, 28 years. Lots of cool professional distance, and a bleeding heart behind the facade.

Connection with:

Private **Ken Simmons**. Working class, 18 years. Ash blond. Paper factory worker and a pessimist.

Connection with:

Main Character: Tom Fenton

Tom is a young, adventurous, working class bloke of nineteen years. Tom is tough enough to take on most of what life throws at him. At twelve years old, he started working in a textile factory as a sweeping boy, running under the great, grinding, whirling pieces of machinery to sweep up wool residue. Danger and exertion aren't news for Tom. Now he's joined the army, mostly to do his bit. If someone doesn't stop these Germans, they'll end up coming over the Channel and bothering the folks at home! Also, he'd like to see the world, and they say there's a draft coming soon anyway.

Jack Wilson, Tom's nearsighted best friend, can't join the army. Jack is 19 too, and has taken a job at an ammunition factory. After an evening of drinking, they made a deal to win the war together: Jack will make the bullets and Tom deliver them. Tom recently broke up with his girlfriend Kate. Not because he doesn't like her, but because she's the kind who would take it terribly hard if she had to sit at home and worry about her boyfriend, and Tom wouldn't do that to her. He's asked Jack to keep a discreet eye on her.

Think visually: *A strong, stocky young man in uniform gets up from a crouch, folding shovel in hand, wipes sweat and dust across his face with one sleeve, and grins a broad and friendly grin.*

Strong lust for life: Tom has appetite for life. He has ambitions and dreams of the future. He sleeps well at night. There's spring in his step and his back is straight.

Weakened lust for life: Life gives Tom a dubious taste in the mouth. His sleep is uneasy. He worries about the future or chooses not to think about it. Hope lives yet: A beautiful sight can bring a shadow of a smile to his lips, and not all his dreams are nightmares.

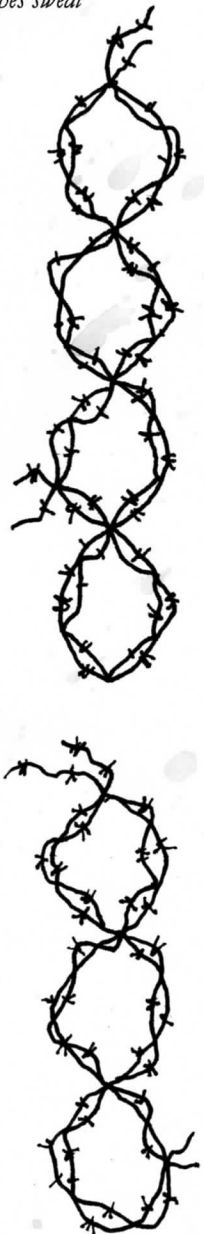
Broken lust for life: Life tastes of blood and ashes. Days and nights flow together into one blurry gray mass of discomfort. Sometimes Tom thinks about ending it, but finds excuses to carry on. The future doesn't exist, or at least he can't feel it. There are only gray days and isolated moments of comfort.

Destroyed lust for life: Tom can't go on. At the next opportunity he takes his life, breaks down regardless of the consequences, or stands up in the line of fire.

Strong belief in friendship: Tom has a shining ideal, a comfort to reach for when the world is grim and unfair. His belief keeps him warm at night, and the thought of dying for it doesn't seem horrifying. There are people that Tom understands and loves, and who understand and love him. As long as those who have bled with him are alive, he will live in them. And as long as he is alive, they will live in him.

Weakened belief: Tom has an idea that friendship is true, good and right. He can remember that his belief once seemed worth giving his life for, and he longs to get that certainty back.

Destroyed belief: All lies! Shadows and ashes. Never again will Tom believe that friendship is worth killing, suffering and dying for.



Secondary Characters

Three secondary characters in the field and one back home. The one back home appears in the prologue and epilogue.

Important rule: If a primary character makes a mechanically valid move with a secondary, it is up to the player of the secondary character to justify it. That is, we "discover" something about the secondary character that wasn't obvious until now. For instance if a male primary takes the action "romantic love" with a soldier secondary, this soldier is into men (too?), and he has been all along. Now we know too.

You don't have to give much attention to secondaries who don't have primary friends yet.

Back home: Elizabeth Joyce, Charles Forrester's fiancé. 22 years old, middle class, French teacher. A somewhat fragile and anxious person. Passionate Christian.

Private **Edward Keith**. Middle class, 20 years old, stocky and well groomed, cultured.

Connection with:

Private **Harry Lester**. Working class, 18 years old, dashing daredevil and a very handsome man.

Connection with:

Private **Carl Hale**. Middle class, 21 years old. Tall, thin and a bit melancholy. Wants to survive so he can go home and become a schoolteacher and marry his Mary.

Connection with:

Main Character: Camilla Kiefer

Camilla is 25 years old, and she's bored. Her life is a gilded cage, or possibly a velvet prison? Upper middle class in the most boring way. Really she's a terrible tomboy who smokes and rides a motorcycle. She's also in a bit of a bind.

Camilla's best friend from the Boarding School for Young Ladies, 27-year-old Sybil Morris, is a sad romantic with a boring banker for a fiancé. To avoid ending up in poor Sybil's situation (one that Camilla's nearest and dearest find admirable and would love to press her into), she has made a drastic decision. Camilla has experience nursing from her hospital volunteer work, and now she's signed up as field hospital nurse on the front in France! Once she announced it loudly enough at a dinner party, mommy and daddy could do nothing. Between France, a war and a couple of millions of men in uniform, it's sure to be exciting! Not that Camilla is in any great hurry to throw herself into anything amorous, but it's still nice to have a view. Yes, war is terrible, but she's got to go. She has to break free -- and maybe even help a couple of people along the way.

She's bright and strong and has a good grasp of nursing, and her somewhat roguish smile will brighten the day of many a patient. Now if only she could get hold of a motorcycle...

Think visually: *From the mist, on a snarling motorcycle, a figure emerges, wearing a nurses' uniform and a gas mask.*

Strong lust for life: Camilla has appetite for life. She has ambitions and dreams of the future. She sleeps well at night. There's spring in her step and her back is straight.

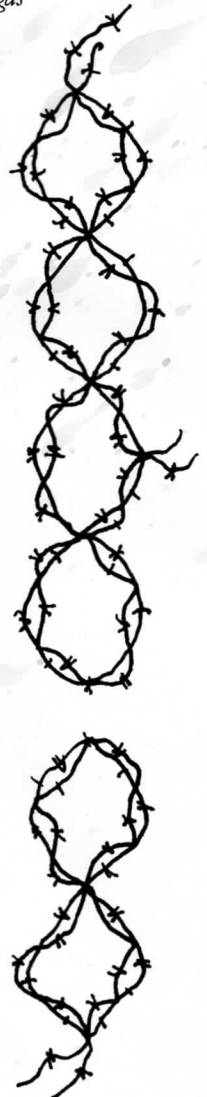
Weakened lust for life: Life gives Camilla a dubious taste in the mouth. Her sleep is uneasy. She worries about the future or chooses not to think about it. Hope lives yet: A beautiful sight can bring a shadow of a smile to her lips, and not all her dreams are nightmares.

Broken lust for life: Life tastes of blood and ashes. Days and nights flow together into one blurry gray mass of discomfort. Sometimes Camilla thinks about ending it, but finds excuses to carry on. The future doesn't exist, or at least she can't feel it. There are only gray days and isolated moments of comfort.

Destroyed lust for life: Camilla can't go on. At the next opportunity she takes her life or breaks down regardless of the consequences.

Weak patriotic belief: Camilla has the slogans right on her lips, all ready to go, about how one's country is worth suffering and dying for. She doesn't believe all that strongly. Camilla's patriotic belief is weak and cannot become strong.

Destroyed belief: All lies! Shadows and ashes. Never again will Camilla believe that mere dirt is worth killing, suffering and dying for.



Secondary Characters

Three secondary characters in the field and one back home. The one back home appears in the prologue and epilogue.

Important rule: If a primary character makes a mechanically valid move with a secondary, it is up to the player of the secondary character to justify it. That is, we "discover" something about the secondary character that wasn't obvious until now. For instance if a male primary takes the action "romantic love" with a soldier secondary, this soldier is into men (too?), and he has been all along. Now we know too.

You don't have to give much attention to secondaries who don't have primary friends yet.

Back home: Gerald Harlow, Rupert Kent's friend and lover. 20 years old, upper middle class, studies History at Cambridge. Not in the army on account of being flat-footed. Admires Rupert for both his military courage and his poetry. Ardent patriot.

Private **Jim Talbot**. 19 years, working class. A compact, energetic man who believes in chivalry and bare-knuckle boxing.

Connection with:

Chaplain **Sebastian Eldon**. Middle class, 36 years. A large, strong, gentle man in more doubt about his vocation than he cares to admit.

Connection with:

Private **Barry Jamison**. 18 years, coal miner. Irrepressibly optimistic chain smoker (when possible) with a nasty cough.

Connection with:

Charles Forrester

Theology student, 21 years, poet, faithful Christian. Fascinated by death.

Rupert Kent

History student, 22 years, poet, ardent English patriot.

Private **John Kendall**. Working class, 18 years. Thin but tough. Curses when he's nervous, and always apologizes.

Private **Bill Morton**. Farm hand, 38 years, tall, thin and serious.

Private **Bert Smith**. Farm hand, 20 years. Large, loud and cheerful, and quite a handsome fellow.

Nurse **Lucy MacFarlane**. Middle class, 28 years. Lots of cool professional distance, and a bleeding heart behind the facade.

Private **Robert Leigh**. Middle class, 40 years, bank manager. Red-haired, freckled and nervous. His younger sister back home knits for him and is convinced that he's a mighty hero.

Private **Ken Simmons**. Working class, 18 years. Ash blond. Paper factory worker and a pessimist.

Tom Fenton

Adventurous factory worker, 19 years, believer in the brotherhood of arms.

Private **Edward Keith**. Middle class, 20 years old, stocky and well groomed, cultured.

Private **Harry Lester**. Working class, 18 years old, dashing daredevil and a very handsome man.

Private **Carl Hale**. Middle class, 21 years old. Tall, thin and a bit melancholy. Wants to survive so he can go home and become a schoolteacher and marry his Mary.

Camilla Kiefer

Volunteer nurse, 25 years. Upper middle class woman gone to war to escape boredom and alienation.

Private **Jim Talbot**. 19 years, working class. A compact, energetic man who believes in chivalry and bare-knuckle boxing.

Chaplain **Sebastian Eldon**. Middle class, 36 years. A large, strong, gentle man in more doubt about his vocation than he cares to admit.

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