

## GREY GHOSTS

By: Nana

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The following is inscribed on the monument to the dead of the Confederate States Army in Arlington National Cemetery. I think it appropriate for the men and women who fought in World War Two as well.

*Not for fame or reward,  
Not for place or for rank,  
Not lured by ambition,  
Or goaded by necessity,  
But in Simple Obedience  
To Duty  
As they understood it,  
These men suffered all,  
Sacrificed all,  
Dared all – and died.*

For my twin sister, Bebe, who loved the characters of Combat!  
and the American Civil War battlefields  
as much as I do.



Acknowledgements: This is my second finished fanfic story, written especially for Recon 2006. Like "Double Trouble" it is a blend of fact and fiction, reflecting my love of all things Combat! and my fascination with the American Civil War.

I want to thank my amazing beta-reader, Doc II, for without her initial idea this story probably would never have been written.

Thank you, Doc, for your encouragement, your expert beta-reading and your wonderful suggestions, especially on how to complete the story when my mind drew a complete blank.

Most of all, though, thank you for your friendship.

Nana  
August, 2006

"It's no good, Doc. I'm gonna have to leave you here with Cajé and go for help, OK? Just stay hidden and try to keep him quiet. I'll be back as soon as I can," whispered Sergeant Saunders as he gently patted his unconscious scout on the shoulder and then climbed to his feet.

Doc's worried face reflected his anxiety. "He's pretty bad, Sarge. Make it fast, huh?"

The sergeant nodded grimly and, picking up his Thompson, he turned and disappeared into the night.

Doc settled down beside his squad mate, carefully checking the bloodstained bandage on Cajé's temple. Feeling the cold clamminess of his patient's skin, he quickly removed his own jacket and added it to the one already covering the Cajun. It was little enough to provide some modest warmth in an attempt to prevent Cajé from going into shock.



As Doc sat shivering in the cool damp darkness, he tried to get some idea of where they were. He knew they were completely hidden from the road by thick bushes and a rough stone wall so he felt fairly safe from detection by roaming Germans. He figured they couldn't be more than a couple of miles from the American lines. All he knew was that on their way home at dusk the squad had been surprised by a roving Kraut patrol and Sarge had ordered them to pull back to find better cover. Somehow, during the confusion, he, along with Cajé and the Sarge, were separated from everyone else. Cajé had taken a bullet graze to the forehead during the ensuing skirmish and had been unconscious ever since. With the Kraut patrol eventually wiped out, Doc had stayed with Cajé, while the Sarge searched unsuccessfully for the rest of his men. When darkness fell a short time later, they tried to make their way home.

Avoiding the road, Saunders and Doc stumbled awkwardly through tangled undergrowth and over ploughed fields, at times losing their sense of direction and having to backtrack. Finally, exhausted from carrying their wounded companion, they had crept into a small copse of trees to rest. Both of them knew that it was futile to try to carry Cajé any further. Apart from all the jostling which was certainly not helping his condition, they were exhausted themselves. Reluctantly, the Sarge had made the decision to leave Cajé with Doc and go for help alone.

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Doc was getting more worried by the minute. Cajé had been unconscious for a long time and still showed no signs of coming to. *Where was Sarge? It seemed like hours since he'd slipped silently away. Cajé needed a hospital!* Lulled into drowsiness by the shadowy silence of the night and his own fatigue, Doc had no idea of how long they'd been waiting when he was jerked to full awareness by a loud shout from Cajé. Startled, Doc quickly turned to his friend. If he hadn't known it was impossible, Doc could have sworn Cajé had just hollered a rebel yell!

Cajé was thrashing around, throwing his covers off, head moving restlessly from side to side, shouting, "10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana! ADVANCE!"

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Caje's eyes slowly flickered open and, as consciousness gradually returned, his confused brain tried to focus on the face that hovered over him. Anxious blue eyes stared at him from beneath tousled fair hair. He could vaguely hear gentle words being spoken. He couldn't recognize the face or comprehend what was said, but that voice seemed familiar. *Yeah, he knew! It was a southern drawl!*

"You with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Arkansas, Private?"

"Huh?"

"Your unit was on our flank, along the Hagerstown Pike north of Sharpsburg. You lost? Stay with me. I need every man I can get! Those Yankees...." Caje's eyes closed for a moment and his head slumped to one side, but then his urgent whisper continued, "...They've crossed Antietam Creek... they're bringing up reinforcements... we gotta hold 'em... give our boys a chance to pull back to a better defensive position... in those woods over to the west... HERE THEY COME! Steady boys...." His voice faded as consciousness deserted him yet again.

Alarmed and confused, Doc hurriedly checked Caje's pulse again and felt his forehead. *Sharpsburg? Yankees? He must be hallucinating—he thinks he's a confederate soldier back in 1862! God, I wish the Sarge would get back here on the double!*

Caje was drifting in and out of consciousness. When he was awake, he rambled incoherently, giving sharp orders to unseen men, then wandered off into an unknown space, eyes closing, back into oblivion. When his senses briefly returned to lucidity, someone was kneeling nearby whispering to him. *The face looks vaguely familiar—but who is it? What is this man wearing? His uniform is a strange brown colour and he's got some kind of metal helmet on his head... he'd never seen a soldier, either Confederate or Union, wearing such an outfit. His men of the 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Infantry wore grey or butternut homespun and kepis or slouch hats. Didn't they? And where was his musket?* His muddled brain couldn't grasp anything clearly. It was too much effort to think and slowly he stopped trying to understand what was happening and drifted off again.

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Lieutenant Paul LeMay, Company C, 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Volunteer Infantry, C.S.A., crouched among the cornstalks of Farmer Miller's forty-acre field. His lean dark-bearded face and aquiline nose revealed his aristocratic New Orleans Cajun ancestry; his thick black hair tumbled from under his sweat-stained slouch hat and clung to his damp brow. Evidence of countless campaigns and skirmishes, his threadbare grey uniform was crumpled and dirty, its brass buttons and CSA belt buckle, once shiny and bright, were now tarnished beyond recognition. The frayed braid on his sleeves bore no resemblance to its original gold colour, and his shoes, worn down by miles of marching, were covered with dried mud; one bearing a length of string in place of the shoddy army issue laces.

The day was hot, the sun beating down mercilessly on the men waiting quietly behind Paul.



They were keeping as low as they could to the rich soil but there was no escaping the heat. Perspiration ran in rivulets down their backs and soaked through the thin cotton of the shirts under their jackets. Company C was a ragtag bunch; a blend of men from the bayous and farms of Louisiana and the green fields of Ireland. As well, there were several others who had fled poverty and persecution in their European homelands. All were clad, like their young lieutenant, in ragged grey or butternut homespun. Those that still had boots were the lucky ones. Most of the men and boys—and several *were* still boys—one fresh-faced youngster's perpetual good humour and naivety made him appear no older than sixteen—held their Enfield rifled muskets in hands that were not quite steady and stared ahead, dirty faces tense with foreboding and tired eyes reflecting both fear and determination. Another man, slim and wiry and older than the rest, sat a little apart in the trampled grass, grimacing as he cradled a bare foot in one hand. He seemed almost oblivious to the Yankee threat, concerned only with his blistered toes.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana had arrived on the field during the evening of September 16<sup>th</sup>, having marched the seventeen miles from Harper's Ferry during the previous night and all that day. They crossed the gently flowing and shallow Antietam Creek at Snavelly ford a mile or so to the south and followed the dirt road along the creek bank through the rolling Maryland countryside to the sleepy small town of Sharpsburg. Farmers and their families watched with trepidation as the long grey line marched by well-kept and prosperous fields. Eventually they left the outlying farms behind and entered Sharpsburg itself. Weary now, the tattered soldiers moved slowly along the rutted main street of substantial veranda-fronted homes and businesses. They trudged down a slight hill, past an old graveyard and a Gothic-towered Lutheran church to the northern end of the town, and bivouacked for the warm dark night in some woods to the west of a sturdy whitewashed Dunker church along the Hagerstown Pike.

At dawn they prepared for battle while the early morning mists rose from the hollows and high ground of the surrounding autumnal farmland as though to conceal what the day would bring.

Turning to glance at his men, Lieutenant LeMay, seeing their grim, scared, but resolute faces, was suddenly acutely aware of his respect and affection for them. Some of them had been with him since 1861, and they had proven staunch and plucky soldiers, loyal to their State, their unit, and their officers. If you had to fight a war, then these were good dependable men to be with.

Eyes ever alert, he tried desperately to peer through the shadowy forest of cornstalks obscuring his view to the west. Somewhere there, among those acres of mature corn, were hidden thousands of Union soldiers, about to try, once again, to push the Confederate troops out. Heart pounding, he swallowed convulsively and steeled himself for the ordeal he knew was to come. He glimpsed the tall hulking private beside him straighten his back and square his wide shoulders. The others took their huge comrade's lead and stood steadfast despite their obvious fear; he knew they were ready to follow him, no matter what.

The battle had been raging back and forth for hours, with the field changing hands countless times before the 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana was ordered to reinforce the Rebel lines. Many from both sides had fallen and now lay in almost perfect rows just as they had advanced in their ranks. Most lay still; their wretched sprawling corpses already beginning to bloat in the hot sun. Among the sheared-off corn, amidst fluttering cartridge paper and discarded weapons, the wounded moaned or shrieked in pain as they tried to crawl back to their own lines, or cried pitifully for their mothers.

The murderous Union artillery barrage began again with increased ferocity, the noise deafening and the shells exploding with deadly effect. A blizzard of shrapnel, canister, and minié balls screamed among the waiting Confederates. The air was



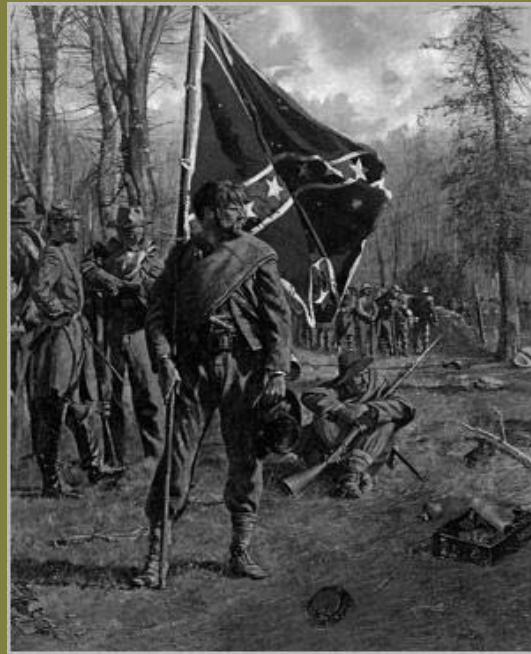
suddenly filled with the stink of cordite and powder and the anguished cries of the wounded.

Paul felt something like comfort when the crash of shells from Colonel Lee's battery along the Hagerstown Pike started taking a toll of the men in blue and, on his order, Company C opened fire with their rifled muskets. He heard Captain Monier's cry, "ADVANCE 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana, ADVANCE!" Without hesitation, the men of Company C scrambled to their feet behind their young lieutenant and moved forward into the maelstrom.

They were frantically tearing off cartridge paper with their teeth... Load... Aim.. FIRE! Again, and again! Faces black with powder, eyes streaming from the acrid smoke, on they pushed, stumbling over prostrate men and sharp corn stalks destroyed by savage gunfire so thick it had cut them down to mere stubble. The hurricane of sizzling shot and whirring shrapnel felled men by the dozens... hundreds... thousands!

All around him Paul felt, rather than saw, the bloodied bodies of his comrades and those in Union blue. Strangely, he felt disembodied and alone on that smoke-filled field of horror. *Hell surely could be no worse than this!*

Something plucked at his sleeve and threw him to the ground. His arm went numb, his weapon spinning violently from his hands. Desperately, he pushed himself up, feeling someone grab his collar and drag him to his feet. Fighting panic, he unsteadily staggered forward once again, firing wildly. He could hear shouts of "Withdraw! Pull back! Company C, PULL BACK!" and then realized that it was his own voice yelling. His men were being slaughtered. *Better to pull back. Re-group and try again.*



(Painting by Don Troiani)

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"I lost half my men that time, but we were sent in again. It was slaughter. Pure slaughter! The next time there was only me and my sergeant and maybe a half dozen men left. The numbness in my arm soon faded and then the pain began... it felt white hot and the blood running down my arm made my hands slippery... hard to fire my rifle... felt dizzy and disoriented... couldn't stop though... we had to hold those Yankees...."

Caje's sudden words made Doc jump. The faint whisper sounded so loud in the silence of the woods that he peered nervously about, hoping against hope that no one was within earshot. He watched the Cajun's ashen face wrench with emotion. He seemed to be semi-conscious and was recalling something that had badly shaken him. *What was he talking about? What men were slaughtered? Some of those Caje was describing sounded much like the men of 1<sup>st</sup> Squad! Where did he think he was—France? Maryland?*

"Take it easy, Caje. You're gonna be just fine. We'll get ya back", Doc soothed, sounding more confident than he felt. But Caje had already lapsed into unconsciousness once more. *Hurry up, Sarge!* Doc prayed.

During the next hour, even though Caje was only semi-conscious, he spoke

almost lucidly at times. Doc, by leaning close to him, could occasionally understand his barely audible words and so managed to piece together what Cajé was reliving in his mind.

After the last disastrous attempt to advance in the cornfield, the remnants of the 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana were ordered to retire and regroup. Paul paused long enough to let a medical orderly with kindly blue eyes tie a kerchief around his arm to stem the bleeding and then he and his remaining men were ordered to take positions with what was left of several other decimated infantry units at the centre of the Confederate line.

They found themselves in a sunken lane between the Piper and Roulette farms. Worn down by decades of use by farm wagons, it was only a few feet below the level of the fields on either side, but it provided a good defensive vantage point. The men crouched down behind the split rail fence that snaked along its entire length and prepared for the inevitable Union onslaught.



They came all right. Repeatedly. Paul could see the faint line of blue-coated Union troops appearing over the low rise in the field before them, sun glinting on their muskets and their standards blowing in the slight breeze. He heard their bugler sound the charge and then suddenly they were within range. It was a daunting sight... thousands of Yankees inexorably moving closer and closer to the outnumbered Confederates waiting for them.

Once the two sides closed in battle, Paul lost all sense of time. He only knew that wave after wave of Yankees hurled themselves at the Rebel ranks. They advanced slowly over the sloping field, stepping around and over their fallen comrades who lay in great numbers where they had fallen in the face of the lethal fire from the desperate men in grey.

For three hours, the battle at the sunken road raged. The rail fence was shattered into splinters; nearby trees denuded of their early fall multi-hued foliage. There was a ghastly carpet of dead and wounded half-filling the dusty lane. The lung-searing smoky air was filled with shrieking metal; minié balls slammed into the far bank and ricocheted back to find the softer target of a man's back, flinging him forward onto the bodies of his fellow rebels. The noise from the Union cannonade was indescribable, the shells bursting amidst the riflemen, shredding and tearing them apart. The carnage was unbelievable.

Paul saw the sergeant at his left suddenly gasp and lurch towards him. His kepi flew off, revealing thick blond hair. As he crumpled at Paul's feet, a great blossom of red appeared on his chest and the light in his blue eyes blazed momentarily in the sun's brilliant glare before slowly fading into eternal night.

At the same time, Paul quickly realized to his horror that some Yankee soldiers who had somehow flanked the Confederates in the sunken road were firing furiously along its entire length, mowing down the mostly unsuspecting rebels as they desperately engaged the advancing enemy troops to their front. His stunned mind seemed slow to understand what was happening... *they've flanked us! We're sitting ducks in this narrow place....* He opened his mouth to yell but his warning was cut off immediately when something struck him a tremendous blow to his head. His world spun crazily, his senses dimming until he could feel nothing at all. Paul LeMay's battle was over.

The battle of Sharpsburg eventually just petered out at sundown, with no clear victor. Both sides were too battered and exhausted to continue the fight. Paul LeMay

was carried unconscious from the bloody lane after the fighting died down, mercifully unaware that Company C had been virtually wiped out. Most of his men stayed where they fell in the cornfield or in the farm lane, never to see the light of day again. They, along with many thousands of other Americans, had died that day for what they believed in.

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When Paul LeMay regained his senses he was assailed by the incessant buzzing of flies and a strange quietness. He felt disoriented and nauseated. His head seemed to be exploding with blistering pain and when he tried to move dizziness almost overwhelmed him. Reaching up with a shaky hand, he gingerly fingered the sticky lint bandage wrapped tightly around his forehead and traced the dried blood which covered the whole left side of his face and collar. His arm stung abominably too. The foggy recesses of his mind vaguely recalled a memory of getting nicked by a minié ball before. He tried desperately to focus... *a cornfield? No, we were somewhere else.... I remember the Yankees' enfilading fire... the sunken lane was filled with bodies... the Confederate line was beginning to give way!*

It was hushed where he lay—apart from the steady drone of the multitude of flies, he heard no horrendous noise from cannon and small arms fire, no thunder of horses' hooves galloping by, no shrill screams of agony... all he could hear was the low sounds of whispered words and tortured moaning. *Was the battle over? Where were his men? Where was he?*

Even when Paul's vision finally cleared a bit he still could see very little. Lanterns flickered uncertainly, casting dull gleams of light over a large room filled to overflowing with hundreds of wounded lying everywhere around him. He gradually grasped that the hard surface he was lying on was a wooden church bench. It seemed like every pew in the old building harboured an injured man, as did every inch of straw-covered floor in the aisles as well. Among them, silent orderlies moved carefully, while several local women with bloodied aprons covering wide-hooped skirts offered water for parched throats. A few feet away from him a silver-haired lady in a billowing lilac gown knelt beside a boy in grey and sobbed over and over "My boy! My poor boy!"

Above him, Paul could just see the dark smoky sky that was partially visible through a huge ragged shell hole in the roof. He was feeling suffocated by the stale air in the church which was filled with a miasma of appalling smells from blood and dirt and sweat.

Realizing he was insatiably thirsty, Paul called out weakly for water and an exhausted-looking orderly held his head gently so he could swallow the tepid liquid. It was the same fair-haired fellow who'd put the kerchief on his arm in the cornfield. *Was he with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Arkansas?* Paul asked where his men were, but the orderly didn't answer. The compassionate, infinitely sad look in the man's blue eyes gave the young lieutenant the response he dreaded.

"No, No! Mon Dieu! They're all dead... they're gone. We've lost 'em all!"

"What?" Doc gasped. "Who's dead, Cajé?" Cajé's unexpectedly clear words sent a cold shiver down the young medic's back.

"All of 'em! They didn't stand a chance... we were outnumbered two to one...."

"You're just dreamin', Cajé! The guys'll be here real soon, don't worry, huh?"

"No! I saw 'em... Kirby, Littlejohn... Sarge!" Cajé's panic-filled words trailed off as his eyes closed and he drifted off again.

Doc tensed as he abruptly became aware that he and Cajé were no longer alone. Frozen, he watched with something akin to terror as several shadowy shapes emerged



from among the trees. The leaves and twigs under the newcomers' boots rustled in the darkness and tree branches creaked as shoulders brushed past. Then to his overwhelming relief he recognized Kirby, followed a second later by the Sarge and Nelson. Behind them Littlejohn's huge shape came into view, toting a folding litter over his broad shoulder.

"Did I hear someone call for ole Kirby?" quipped the BAR man, his grin disappearing when he was close enough to see Doc's strained and anxious face. Without another word, he quickly stood aside to give his companions room to gather around the medic and their unconscious scout.

Saunders swiftly knelt beside his Cajun friend. "Not too good, huh Doc?"

Doc looked at him solemnly, "Not so good, Sarge. He's been delirious since you left... bin having hallucinations. He thinks he's back in the civil war!"

"You're kidding!" piped up Billy, his round baby face a picture of incredulity. "Why would he do that?"

Suppressing a tired smile, Doc answered, "Well Billy, you never know how head injuries can affect a man. He's got a concussion for sure, and maybe something more serious like a skull fracture. Looking over Caje's still form to the Sarge, he added, "We've gotta get him outta here, Sarge, and as fast as we can"

"Yeah, I know, Doc. C'mon guys, let's get 'im on the stretcher and move out. Kirby, take the point. Littlejohn and Billy, you carry Caje. I'll cover the rear. Everyone keep your eyes open, huh?"

"Hey, Sarge?" Doc queried as he hurried alongside the litter, "where did the rest of the squad get to when we lost 'em?"

"Not sure... they must've taken a parallel path to us and made it back to the CP with no trouble. When we didn't turn up, they got Lieutenant Hanley to agree to let them come look for us and I ran into them on the way."

"Good thing, Sarge. The quicker we get Caje to a doctor, the better I'll feel!"

"You and me both, Doc."

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General Lee's battered Army of Northern Virginia withdrew across the Potomac during the evening of September 18<sup>th</sup>, making its way back to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. The bedraggled grey column of infantry, led by Jeb Stuart's cavalry, was intermingled with ambulance wagons by the scores, artillery caissons, supply and sutlers' carts, and all the other paraphernalia and detritus that follow a great army in the field.

Afterwards, Paul could barely remember that journey. Squeezed with a dozen other wounded men into one of the long line of horse-drawn open wagons that served as ambulances, it had seemed to him a never-ending nightmare. As the wagon lumbered slowly along the rough Virginia roads he was wracked with fever, having periods of semi-consciousness alternating with total nothingness. When he was awake he was beset by the odious smell of suppurating and gangrenous wounds, clouds of flies, and the low agonized moans of his fellow wounded. At one point Paul was vaguely aware of a southern voice murmuring that they had reached Front Royal and then being lifted none-too-gently from the wagon and carried into a hospital tent.

Over the next few days as his wounds began to heal, his conscious periods increased and his vision cleared so that he began to take more notice of where he was. He realized early one morning that the blue-tinged mist he could see to the east signaled the northern reaches of the Blue Ridge, and the stately white portico-ed building nearby was the main house of a lush Virginia plantation.

As he recuperated, his sleep became less restive, his fever vanished and his dreams began to evoke more pleasant memories of his happy, privileged childhood growing up as the eldest son of a wealthy New Orleans banker. The magnificent townhouse on St. Charles Street, in the old French Quarter; long lazy summers at the family's cotton plantation on Bayou Teche, with its avenue of live oaks clad in their cloaks of Spanish moss. The exquisite gardens around the great house, bordered with cypress trees in their hundreds and the sweet fragrance of abundant magnolia blossoms. The tantalizing tang of jambalaya and gumbo; the feasts of crawfish and shrimp and the rustic back-country hunting lodge on the Mississippi, where he learned to become an expert hunter and marksman and to fish from a pirogue. Placid afternoons spent sitting languidly on the cool verandah, watching and listening to the sights and sounds of his beloved Louisiana. Accompanying Miss Emma to picnics and balls and once, in the early summer of 1862, calling on her at her grandparents' home in Georgia before leaving to join his unit on its march to the north.

Emma. The war was almost a year old when last he saw her. She and her parents had managed to get out of New Orleans before the Yankees took the city a month or so earlier. They were living with her grandparents on Peachtree Street in Atlanta. He could still see her clearly as she looked that day. She was beautiful in a becoming pale-blue hooped gown that complimented her lovely green eyes and the pretty be-ribboned sunbonnet she wore over her long dark brown hair to protect her fair complexion. She had sat beside him on the porch swing, fanning them both with the fan she held in one dainty lace-gloved hand. He held her other hand gently... it felt so small and delicate in his big rough one. Mostly he remembered his feeling of protectiveness towards her... how much he cared for her... how he hated to leave her.

They were watching a long procession of a CSA infantry regiment marching past to continue on their long journey north. Colourful standards fluttered bravely in the light breeze and Company drummers beat a steady cadence for their step. With heads held high and shoulders back, their buttons and insignia glinting in the bright sunshine, the men looked so young... so eager... so proud.  
*So doomed.*

It seemed as though half of Atlanta lined the street to bid them farewell. They cheered and clapped loudly as the soldiers passed by, but Paul's heart was heavy. He was ready to do his duty and uphold the honour of the South, but he did not relish fighting against his fellow Americans. He knew that many of those boys would never see their homes again. Would he one day return to his much-loved New Orleans? Perhaps he would not come back to Emma? She seemed to understand what was in his thoughts, gently squeezing his hand in silent comfort while turning her head so that he would not see the unshed tears that glistened in her eyes.



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Mystified, Caje lay still for a few moments and looked around the unknown room. He had regained consciousness suddenly, still vividly caught up in his nightmares. He

found himself lying in a soft cot, covered with a clean blanket and with a pillow under his badly aching head. *Where am I? What's this contraption I'm hooked up to? The place smells so... clean? No filthy buckets or bloodstained floors... no reek of pus or shrieks of pain; no hordes of flies.* He closed his eyes, trying hard to make sense of what had happened to him.

Reality slowly returned. *I must have been dreaming that I was in the Civil War! Was there a girl called Emma? The last thing I remember, we were ambushed by Krauts. What happened to me? Where's the Sarge and the guys? Are they okay?*

Without realizing it, Cajé had spoken the last words aloud and Doc, slumped tiredly beside him, smiled and breathed a sigh of relief. The medic's grin transformed him, the battle-weary years falling away to reveal the young, optimistic man he really was.

"Hey, Cajé! They're all just fine—hoverin' about outside waitin' for ya to wake up." Doc rested one hand briefly on the Cajun's shoulder, fingers squeezing gently for a moment and then releasing him. "You had us all worried there for a while! Welcome back to 1944!"

Cajé turned his head to look at the medic, wincing at the pain the movement caused but determined to really SEE Doc's reaction to his words. "What do you mean, welcome back?"

"Well, I, uh...." Doc's voice trailed off as he frowned, eyebrows knitted together in thought. He glanced over his shoulder at the nurses and medics moving among the other patients, waiting for an especially pretty young woman in Army olive drab to move away. He lowered his voice and leaned toward Cajé.

"You were kinda talkin' like you were back in the Civil War, Cajé. Sounded like you were gettin' the worst of it, too." Doc shrugged. "A bad dream, I guess."

Cajé settled back, forcing his muscles to relax before his pounding head exploded. *A dream... just a dream.* He reached for his bicep, expecting to find a bloody kerchief but there was nothing. Closing his eyes, he addressed his friend, voice no louder than a thought. "Just a dream, Doc. Just a dream."

"Dream, hell, Cajé! Who's Miss Emma?" Doc demanded, his words tempered with another grin.

Stunned, Cajé's dark eyes opened again, one brow arching in a silent question. He chanced a glance at the medic again, knowing it would hurt. *It does.*

Doc's grin grew wider. "Oh, a gentleman don't hear things like that an' repeat 'em, Cajé. You know that." He settled back in his chair, crossing his arms across his chest.

Cajé relaxed into the bedclothes, aware he hadn't answered the medic's question. Eyes once again lidded, he let a smile turn up the corners of his mouth. Just before sleep overcame him, he spoke once more.

"She was just someone I used to know, Doc, a girl I used to know."

end

*Lt. Colonel Henry Monier wrote this poem in honour of the 10<sup>th</sup> Louisiana, sometime before 1875*

Reader, one sigh for the gallant Tenth,  
One sigh for the fallen brave;  
Their tale is told, their deeds at length  
But a line in history crave  
Where are the dead, and who have wept?  
Full many are their graves;  
Alas! who comes where they have slept,  
Alone, where the willow waves?  
Far from their homes, in a distant clime,  
Most from beyond the sea;  
Unknown their fate, untold by time,  
Buried in mystery.  
From the Rhine and Rhone, from foreign land,  
From Northern icy shore;  
Their hearts beat warm, a noble band,  
For the Southern cause full sore.  
From Britain Isle, from sunny France,  
From Erin dear they came;  
And fiercely fought the North's advance,  
And for our Southern fame.  
Devoted to death for Southern right,  
Fighting in freedom's cause,  
Can country e'er their deeds requite,  
Or honour by the laws?  
No more exists the gallant Tenth  
With us no more in name  
But though extinct and gone in strength  
Shall perish not in fame.