*Monday 23rd March 2020*

*Narrative: Normandy landings.*

*The churning waves crashed against the metal hull of the landing craft. The looming, grey clouds circled menacingly overhead, sweat dripped down my face. I knew everyone on board felt the same as me; I could sense it. Feelings of terror and nausea swept across my panic stricken face “This was it,” I thought as the hulking ship pulled roughly onto the beach.*

*Thud! The ramp fell onto the ground and the deafening sound of steel toed boots hitting the soggy beach sounded like a herd of elephants in the contaminated morning air. I, like many other fellow soldiers, stormed the enemy stronghold, but little did I know that many of the people that came here with me would never see the light of day again.*

*We charged across the beach like sitting ducks. As soon as I heard the first gunshot ring out and the soft thud of a soldier hitting the ground, I knew it was going to be a massacre, and not in our favour. More and more of my friends fell. I raced over to the front lines my heart set on vengeance and determination to avenge them ; their efforts would not have been in vain.*

*Cries. Horrible skull-splitting cries pierced the mournful atmosphere as the Germans gathered their forces for a final assault. I looked to my left but I could not bear to look at the sight that lay upon the blood soaked battlefield and to my right, a fellow comrade taking a fatal blow to the face. Fighting back tears in an unwinnable war, I gazed in horror at the body that lay before me. How would we ever win this?*

*I dashed for cover behind one of the many tattered Czech hedgehogs that appeared to be helping us but intended for anything but that. Surrounded from all angles, we had seldom chance of making it out of this alive. A mortar exploded mere inches from my face, I could feel the shockwave and its sheer incredible force ripping across my face. I was back, sent airborne by the explosion, and I found myself sprawled out helplessly in the open struggling to keep conscious as the darkness wrapped me in its cold embrace.*

*I remember it so vividly as my grandchildren stare at me in disbelief and amazement, their thankful eyes gazing up at me. They’d never before known of my feats of bravery out there on the battlefield, and that my life was nearly ended by the Germans many decades ago. As I laid down the withered helmet I tried not to remember that fateful day, the day so many of my friends where lost to the bloodshed and fighting. I quickly dismissed the thought from my head and I strode out of the room closing the door on all those painful memories.*