



**ROYAL  
DE LUXE** NANTES

Liverpool  
July 2014

## Letter N°3

Diary

Thursday 15th August 1916

Grandfather, today is my birthday.

I have been made lance corporal in the trenches at last. They sewed a small stripe to my shoulder and then played a typical army trick on me by offering me up a skewer of 15 dead rats.

It is true that the rats live here with us buried in the ground. There are as many rats as there are foot soldiers. Rats and lice are our closest neighbours. Sometimes we put rats in small cages and keep them as companions and pets.

In any case, as soon as we see one looking worse for wear, we know that means that the mustard gas has been deployed. It kills the lungs and blinds the soldiers.

It is a signal to put on our gas masks.

We are unrecognisable in all this mud and we dance around in it as though we were in a ballroom.

Then the captain blows his whistle.

This is the signal to go out, bayonets in our rifles and run through the smoke.

We are so frightened but we go all the same.

It is a veritable feast for the earth.

We see a firework display of surgical cuttings. Arms, legs, toes and even heads roll around like bowling balls. One head finished its journey in my arms.

It's strange, the lips were still moving and they told me the story of a swan wrapping him in snow. Meanwhile, the other parts of his body lay 50 metres away and listened on.

I dove into the enemy. My heart stronger than a rhinoceros.

A bulldozer from another world.

Rage had awaked in me an animal instinct and I skewered about fifteen soldiers for my birthday.

Death had become nothing more for us than a surreal daily slog.

(She folds the letter)

The Grandmother:

“It’s not the birthday we wish for our boys, that’s for sure.

From up there I could see thousands of meteors plunging into the ground, shaking fields, kneading the earth to bring up the skeletons of the long-time dead from their graves.

It was a plain pierced by impact craters, murdered by giant pistons that churned up earth, bodies and minds into a gigantic mayonnaise that was served up to savages from the next world.

I watched these savages from the next world, sat in front of the Planck wall, stuffing their faces with this human warmth which was still tepid.

14 billion light-years away, they were swallowing up this other life.  
Dishes and delicacies piled up at their feet like pyramids.

A feast for the Gods who were still hungry after their last meal: a tragic appetizer more horrible than that of vultures over a carcass.

They stretched out on loungers in front of a transparent sea where one could make out the wonderful colours of fish.

They swallowed human flesh whilst discarded entrails were heaped to one side: like Romans with flaccid stomachs, letting it all hang out, lying like dead whales on the ground.

In short, these gargantuan guts filled up the dining room; where servants tried to make a path through without touching an inch of these stretched out dinosaurs.

The feast was subject of chatter amongst bankers down on earth, those who were swallowing the money of the poor.