

“The Forgotten Poppy”

Essay by Somtochukwo Akabogu, Branch #24 Cranbrook

In a small, quiet village nestled between lush green hills, twelve-year-old Evan discovered an old, weathered diary in his grandmother’s attic. Curious, he flipped through its pages, finding entries written by his great-grandfather, a soldier during a time of great conflict. The last entry caught his attention. “I plant a poppy for every friend I’ve lost. Their memory blooms with each spring.”

Fascinated, Evan ran outside to the garden, searching for poppies. To his surprise, he found only one, struggling to thrive among the weeds. Determined, he decided to care for this lone flower, imagining the stories of bravery behind each petal. As days passed, Evan tended to the poppy, watering it carefully and pulling weeds. He often talked to it, sharing his dreams and hopes, as if the flower could hear him. He felt a deep connection to his great-grandfather, realizing that each petal represented a life filled with love and sacrifice.

One afternoon, while watering the poppy, Evan overheard a group of children playing nearby. They were making fun of the flower’s solitary existence, calling it “lonely.” Evan felt a surge of anger. “It’s not lonely!” he shouted. “It carries the weight of our heroes’ memories!”

The children paused, intrigued by his passion. Evan approached them and explained the significance of the poppy. He shared stories from his great-grandfather’s diary, how each bloom honoured a friend who never returned home. The children listened intently, their laughter fading into respect.

Inspired, they joined Evan in caring for the poppy. Together, they planted more seeds, learning about the importance of remembrance and the sacrifices made by those who served.

As spring arrived, vibrant red poppies began to dot the garden, each flower a symbol of courage and friendship. On a sunny afternoon, as they gathered around the blooming flowers, Evan realized that the memory of his great-grandfather and his friends had united the village, creating a bond of understanding that would be cherished for years to come.