

The Easter Rising.

“That is ridiculous!” boomed my father. He made all of us jump. He was holding a newspaper and staring at it disgust. I dropped my needle in surprise, as I was mending my mother’s velvety, beige Sunday best. “What’s so ridiculous, Father?” asked my little sister, Maggie. “The Irish were planning to rebel against our king today! Read it, this nonsensical piece!” “Let all actions for the Irish Republican Army today be cancelled”, Maggie read. “That’s just code for rebellion! And today of all days! Easter Sunday! Thank God it’s been cancelled!” yelled James, my brother.


Father was fighting for England (who ruled Ireland, where we lived) in the war against Germany. But soldiers were allowed to go home for a while then, for Easter. Father was very hard-working and patriotic (about Britain). James and Patrick, my brothers, were just like him. Mother supported the Irish rebels but never told Father.

After a few hours, he left for a walk with James and Patrick. I soothed Maggie and baby Nellie to sleep, and then helped Mother make some stew. We lived in a tiny tenement on Sackville Street, with one dirty, freezing room. All our belongings were packed in there, two rickety iron bedsteads, one ancient armchair, our wobbly-legged table and Mother’s battered chest of drawers.

“Eoin Mac Neill is a traitor!” Mother blurted out while we were peeling some delicious potatoes. “Why?” I asked. “We could have got our freedom back with this rising! Everything was planned. But Eoin Mac Neill cancelled it!” She ranted on for ages. I had no interest in Eoin Mac Neill or a rising.

The next day, Easter Monday, was a bank holiday. I was at home, helping my parents with Maggie and Nellie. Suddenly, my best friend, Maura, raced in the door. “The Easter Rebellion is back on!” she yelled, tapping me deftly on the arm. “Everyone is distracted! We can go to any shop and take anything we want! Come on Bess!” I leapt up. “Don’t go, Bess!” Mother ordered. “I’ll be back soon!” I called.

There was a riot outside. Furious soldiers were running around with guns. Children and adults were trashing shops. Some people were just lying still in the street in pools of crimson blood. They were dead. Maura and I looted all the shops. We grabbed handful of scrumptious sweets and ate them. I stole a pretty, porcelain doll with shiny, chestnut-coloured hair and a dress made of lilac silk with lovely, lacy cuffs at her neck for Maggie, a large, honey-coloured,



furry teddy with a scarlet bow for Nellie, a soft, black top hat for James, a book on philosophy for Patrick, a pair of small, comfortable white dancing shoes for Mother and leather boots for Father.

Maura and I put on feathered hats, flowing capes and colourful gowns over our rags. We were leaving a jewellery shop, covered in rings and necklaces when we heard loud gun shots. People were screaming and babies were crying. Men were shooting everyone in their path. Suddenly, I spotted a tall woman in a torn, filthy shawl walking through the chaos. "Bess!" she was calling frantically, over and over again. "Mother!" I shouted.

Suddenly, a whole load of women ran into my mother. She fell back, tripped over a dead body and dropped into a puddle of blood. I ran to her with Maura. Her eyes were closed and blood was trickling down her cheeks. But her heart was still beating for now.

"Maura, run back home and tell Father to hurry to the end of Talbot Street!" I told her, and she ran off. A few minutes later, Father appeared and carried Mother back home. We laid her on the bed.

Father had to go and help the English Army fight off the rebels and James went with him. I sat silently and held Nellie. "Is Mother dead?" whispered Maggie, pushing away strands of my jet black hair from my tear-stained cheeks. "I think so. It's my fault!" I replied. We all wept, even Patrick. Maggie put some flowers that I stole in Mother's hair. We just stared at Mother. I started to cry again. "What are you all crying for?" someone said. Suddenly, Mother just sat and smiled. We all gasped and gave her a big hug. I was thrilled that she was still alive. Now, as an adult, I realize how lucky I was that she lived and am very grateful for it.

The End. By Alicia Mc Cormack.