

THE PASSING BELLS
EP.1 UK TX
POST PRODUCTION SCRIPT



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MUSIC IN 5M02(TITLES)10:00:00 **OPENING TITLES SEQUENCE**

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**DIRECTED BY
BRENDAN MAHER**

**THE
PASSING BELLS**

TO BLACK

MUSIC OUT 5M02(TITLES)10:00:33 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY
MUSIC IN 1M02 10:00:33

Fade up to a close up of long grass on a brilliant summer's day. A young man, MICHAEL lays in the grass kissing and petting his girlfriend KATIE, though it's all a bit fumbled, inexperienced. MICHAEL'S obviously trying to move a bit faster but KATIE is reluctant.

MICHAEL
Just a little bit...

KATIE
No! It doesn't feel right.

MICHAEL
It does to me.

They smile and kiss again.

KATIE
Mum says I should wait until I'm eighteen before I do any funny business.

MICHAEL
That's a whole year.

They giggle.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'll explode!

KATIE
Haven't you heard the best things are always worth waiting for.

KATIE stands and runs away from him playfully as he gives chase up the grassy bank.

He takes a detour and catches her. A moment between them, unspoken, beautiful, innocent eyes, full of love and wonder. They kiss. The kiss becomes more frenzied, this time they won't be able to stop, this time KATIE wants him too. They fall to the floor. Suddenly...

HELEN (O.S.)
Katie!

KATIE
Coming!

She breaks away and runs towards her MOTHER'S voice.

MICHAEL watches her start towards the voice and sighs - thwarted again.

HELEN (O.S.)
Katie!

The camera pans over the bank to find KATIE'S FATHER and MOTHER as they lead a hay wagon along a path.

10:02:31

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY

KATIE'S father PETER and KATIE'S mother HELEN lead a hay wagon down the road.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Katie!

KATIE (O.S.)
Coming!

She runs over the bank to greet them. PETER not far behind joins them. He greets her PARENTS.

MICHAEL
Mr Fisher.

He grunts back as his response.

MICHAEL turns to KATIE and winks.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Bye.

KATIE

(self conscious)

Bye.

They turn and walk away from each other. KATIE continues with her PARENTS.

10:02:57

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY

MICHAEL runs through the long grass.

10:03:02

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE. STABLE. DAY

MICHAEL passes through the stable, a spring in his step.

10:03:10

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE. DAY

MICHAEL takes his shoes off at the door as his MOTHER SUSAN serves a large supper. His father WILLIAM is bent over a newspaper and joins MICHAEL'S younger sister SARAH at the table.

MUSIC OUT 1M02 10:03:12

WILLIAM

Austria-Hungary have accused the Serbs of murder.

HELEN

(to MICHAEL) Wash your hands.

WILLIAM

They issued an ultimatum last night at 6 o'clock with the full backing of Berlin...

MICHAEL heads to the bowl of water nearby and washes his hands. SUSAN puts a plentiful supper on the table. MICHAEL sits down and digs in.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

...48 hours to arrest those responsible for the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand and deliver them up or face the consequences. They must also publicly condemn all propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian people and remove the same from all Serbian schoolbooks and public documents.

SUSAN

Can they do that?

WILLIAM

Doesn't really matter what they can and can't do, the point is they want the Serbs to kiss their arses.

SUSAN

William!

WILLIAM

They'll hear worse, if it turns to war.

SUSAN sits.

MICHAEL

Will we have to fight?

SUSAN

There won't be a war. Eat your food.

WILLIAM

It's no use lying to the boy.

SUSAN

You've only got one good leg and he's too young, so, there'll be no more talk of anyone going anywhere to fight.

MICHAEL

I'm not scared.

SUSAN

Well you should be!

WILLIAM

If it comes to it, we'll have to defend ourselves.

SUSAN

If there is a war, then we'll stay on the farm and grow food to feed the army, but I will not send them my children.

MUSIC IN 1M03 10:04:17

Michael, can you help your sister please.

MICHAEL and his FATHER exchange a male bonding expression. MICHAEL then leans over to help SARAH.

10:04:18

EXT. STREET. DAY

THOMAS rides a grocery delivery bicycle with some gusto in a quite well-to-do street. He passes by a group of WELL DRESSED WOMEN and rings his bell as he does so.

10:04:28

EXT. LARGE HOUSE. DAY

THOMAS arrives at a large house. A BUTLER cleans the car as THOMAS makes a delivery to a cheery ELDERLY WOMAN in a cook's uniform, who puts a coin into his hand.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Thank you.

He steps on to his bicycle and pedals away, waving at the WOMAN as he goes.

10:04:42

EXT. STREET. DAY

He cycles through a group of MEN. They all greet him.

He cycles past some WELL DRESSED WOMEN. He doffs his cap.

THOMAS
Ladies!

He continues on through the streets.

10:04:56

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. ENTRANCE HALL. EVENING

THOMAS enters through the front door and passes by a room where his FATHER is.

THOMAS' FATHER
Hello Tom!

THOMAS
Hello Dad.

He passes his MUM ANNIE in the hallway.

ANNIE
Hello love.

THOMAS
Hello mum.

10:05:02

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. BEDROOM. EVENING

THOMAS enters his bedroom and reaches up to a small handmade shelf, on which are some tatty books. Beside them is an old battered tin which he takes down. He opens the lid and looks inside. He sits on his bed and reaches in his pocket to take out the farthing given to him by the COOK. He puts it into the tin and puts the tin down, smiling to himself.

10:05:21

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

DAVID and ANNIE go about their evening. THOMAS cleans his shoes. DAVID reads from a newspaper and passes it to THOMAS.

MUSIC OUT 1M03 10:05:25

DAVID

If Germany invade France, they're gonna have to go through Belgium. Looks like they're having none of it.

ANNIE

That's good isn't it?

DAVID

Not if they decide to march through anyway.

On ANNIE - a look of concern.

10:05:31

EXT. BACK YARD. NIGHT

DAVID fixes a puncture on his bicycle in the back yard, THOMAS sits with him.

THOMAS

D'you think there'll be a war, Dad?

DAVID

Looks like things are moving that way.

THOMAS

But it's not us, is it? I mean it's Austria and Germany and that, but they're miles away over the channel.

DAVID

Well the thing is, Germany might invade Belgium. And they're our friends, and you have to stick up for your friends.

THOMAS

If it comes to it, I'll go and fight.

DAVID

I know you will son.

THOMAS

I'm not scared.

DAVID

Course you're not.

(beat)

But it won't come to that.

MUSIC IN 1M04 10:06:06

If there is a war, it'll be over in a month.

THOMAS considers.

10:06:09

INT. THOMAS' BEDROOM. NIGHT

THOMAS in his pyjamas goes to his bookshelf and grabs an old battered atlas. He sits on his bed and opens it to show a map of Europe.

With his finger he traces the outlines of Belgium, then Germany.

10:06:26

EXT. VILLAGE. DAY

MICHAEL and KATIE sit on a bench eating cakes from a basket. KATIE wears a shop uniform.

MUSIC OUT 1M04 10:06:32

MICHAEL

What if I get killed? You can't let me die before we've done it.

KATIE

It was in the newspaper this morning, that anyone who signs up to fight now, won't see any action. The war will be over by the time you've finished training.

MICHAEL

What if the training kills me?

KATIE

You're definitely signing up then?

MICHAEL

D'you want me to?

KATIE

Course I do. Everyone else's boyfriend's going to.

They laugh.

MICHAEL

You just don't wanna be stuck with a coward?

KATIE

I didn't say that.

MICHAEL

No, no, I get it, I get it. Two worst things in a boyfriend. Being a coward and a virgin.

She laughs. Then leans over and kisses him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

So I was thinking....

KATIE

Mmm...

MICHAEL

When I sign up, I'll get wages, proper wages. More than I get working down the farm anyway. So I thought, if you wanted...I could buy a ring?

KATIE

An engagement ring?

MICHAEL grins as the church hall clock chimes.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I'm late!

She gets up and scurries away towards the bakers shop.

MICHAEL

(after her)

You, you didn't answer me!

She stops and looks back. A beat, she smiles and nods.

MUSIC IN 1M05 10:07:35

Then turns and runs into the bakers shop. MICHAEL watching her, he beams.

10:07:42

EXT. STREET/THOMAS' HOUSE. FRONT DOOR DAY

THOMAS rides his bike on the way home.

As he cycles up to the door, there is a CROWD OF PEOPLE clustered there including his MOTHER and SIBLINGS listening to his FATHER DAVID read the newspaper to those gathered.

DAVID

(reads)

"....His Majesty's Government declared to the German Government that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany as from 11 p.m. on August 4, 1914".

THOMAS watches the reaction of the ADULTS around him and smiles. His MOTHER sees his reaction.

10:08:09

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

A contrite MICHAEL sits opposite his FATHER. His MOTHER stands in the doorway.

SUSAN
(to WILLIAM)
He's too young! He's too young!

WILLIAM
The army says he's old enough to volunteer.

MUSIC OUT 1M05 10:08:19
SUSAN
So we just handed over our job as parents to the army? We let them decide what's best for our son?

WILLIAM
No...

SUSAN
That's what you've just said. They said he's old enough so it's alright...

MICHAEL
Why aren't you asking me what I want?

WILLIAM nods and looks at SUSAN. She turns to MICHAEL and snaps at him.

SUSAN
Because I don't wanna hear you telling me that you've become a man overnight and that you want to go and join the army so you can kill other men!

MICHAEL
There's a war, we have to fight.

SUSAN
Don't be ridiculous! You've had one fight in your entire life, you were nine years old and you came home crying with a bloody nose!

MICHAEL
(strides out)
Don't worry, this time I won't!

SUSAN
MICHAEL!

SUSAN turns to WILLIAM.

MUSIC IN 1M06 10:08:57
SUSAN (CONT'D)
Do something!

But WILLIAM avoids eye contact, there's nothing he can do. She turns to leave, leaving WILLIAM alone at the table.

10:09:06
INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY

The family are heard in the b/g chatting.

THOMAS enters the hallway and looks into the kitchen as he passes.

MUSIC OUT 1M06 10:09:17

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY

He can see his mother, ANNIE serving up a generous breakfast to the FAMILY. His FATHER is at the table reading the newspaper.

ANNIE (O.S.)
You'd better give Tommy another shout.

10:09:24

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY

He quietly makes a run for the front door, unnoticed.

MUSIC IN 1M07 10:09:26

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL approaches the queue of YOUNG MEN signing up to fight. At the desk sit TWO MIDDLE-AGED MEN.

10:09:31

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

THOMAS approaches a SOLDIER in uniform who ushers him inside.

THOMAS
Thank you sir.

10:09:35

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL joins the queue.

10:09:40

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

In the background, THOMAS is in the queue. MEN are already being given a medical.

DOCTOR
Breathe in.

THOMAS looks nervous. A MIDDLE AGED man at a desk is registering.

10:09:48

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL now at the front of the queue.

MIDDLE AGED MAN
Name?

MICHAEL
Michael Lang, sir.

10:09:50

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

It's THOMAS' turn. He puts on his FATHER'S hat, which is too big for him and looks at the MAN behind the desk.

MAN BEHIND DESK
Name?

THOMAS
Thomas Edwards, sir.

Hearing the young voice, the MAN BEHIND THE DESK looks up and studies THOMAS.

MAN BEHIND DESK
Age?

THOMAS
Eighteen sir.

MUSIC OUT 1M07 10:10:03

MAN BEHIND DESK
Do you mean nineteen?

The MAN stares at THOMAS, who is a little bemused, but eventually cottons on that he needs to be nineteen.

THOMAS
Yes sir?

The MAN signs and stamps a form then hands it to THOMAS.

MAN BEHIND DESK
Over there.

THOMAS looks 'over there' and moves along.

10:10:13

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL'S form is stamped by the MAN.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
Wait over there.

MICHAEL takes the sheet of paper and moves away to another queue indicated by the MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

10:10:19

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

THOMAS is in the line behind CYRIL. CYRIL turns to THOMAS.

CYRIL
You have to be nineteen to go overseas.

THOMAS
Oh.

CYRIL
Not much point signing up and not going anywhere is there?
(offers hand)
Cyril Griffiths.

THOMAS
Thomas Edwards. Tommy.

CYRIL
Can't shorten my name...
Not that it matters, everyone calls me wing nut.
No idea why.

THOMAS looks at his ears.

CYRIL (CONT'D)
I'm joking.

MUSIC IN 1M08 10:10:38

CYRIL points to his ears. They laugh.

10:10:39

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL hands his sheet of paper in to yet another MAN. He stamps it and MICHAEL moves on.

10:10:44

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

THOMAS is handed his army uniform.

OFFICER
That's for you. Keep moving.

10:10:48

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

A row of bare legs, all holding a registration form, all in a queue to see the MEDIC.

MEDIC (O.S.)
Next please.

10:10:51

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL is naked and looking anxious.

10:10:54

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

THOMAS also naked is in a queue to see the MEDIC.
He turns to look at the YOUNG MAN behind him.

10:10:57

Cut to a 'SHORT SERVICE' form being stamped.

10:10:58

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

A row of NAKED YOUNG MEN queue for a medical. A
DOCTOR at the front examines the FIRST YOUNG MAN.

10:11:00

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

Forms are stamped. Camera travels down the row of
YOUNG NAKED MEN waiting for their medical.

Cut to SHORT SERVICE form being stamped.

10:11:04

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

The row of YOUNG MEN waiting.

10:11:05

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

A form is stamped.

10:11:06

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

The row of YOUNG MEN waiting.

MEDIC (O.S.)
Turn around please.

10:11:08

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

Cut to a form being stamped.

10:11:09

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

The camera travels down the row of YOUNG MEN
waiting.

MEDIC (O.S.)
Breathe in.

10:11:11

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

The camera travels down the row of YOUNG MEN
waiting.

MEDIC (O.S.)

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Say Ahhh.

10:11:12

A form is stamped.

10:11:13

The camera continues to travel down the row of YOUNG MEN waiting.

MEDIC (O.S.)

Breathe out.

10:11:14

A form is stamped.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Next please.

10:11:15

The camera continues to travel down the row of YOUNG MEN waiting.

MEDIC (O.S.)

Turn around for me.

10:11:17

A form is stamped.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Move along now. Next!

10:11:19

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

MICHAEL gets dressed into his uniform.

10:11:21

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY

THOMAS steps out wearing his uniform, looking pleased as punch. He puts his cap on proudly.

FX: Applause.

10:11:28

INT/EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

All the SOLDIERS now in uniform walk down a corridor towards an open door. A CROWD applauds them.

10:11:29

CAPTION OVER: Woolwich, England

10:11:31

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

As the new SOLDIERS spill out onto the street, PEOPLE outside applaud.

10:11:33

EXT. CHURCH HALL. DAY

CAPTION OVER: Quedlinburg, Germany

MICHAEL proudly steps out of the church hall wearing a German army uniform. PEOPLE applaud. He looks very proud.

10:11:36

EXT. QUEDLINBURG VILLAGE. GERMANY. DAY

A BAKER turns a sign around from OPEN to CLOSED. The shop signs are in German. KATIE comes out of the German bakers.

She smiles at what she sees.

10:11:40

EXT. CHURCH HALL. DAY

The SOLDIERS file out.

She runs across as she sees MICHAEL and beams with pride. MICHAEL sees her and they kiss. She admires his uniform.

10:11:48

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

The SOLDIERS file out of the town hall to be greeted by an applauding CROWD. CYRIL and THOMAS see the TWO WELL DRESSED WOMEN from earlier smiling at them. He doffs his cap as they giggle flirtatiously.

10:11:58

EXT. CHURCH HALL. DAY

KATIE spins MICHAEL round in pride.

KATIE
Turn around.

They kiss again and walk off together.

10:12:06

INT. THOMAS' BEDROOM. NIGHT

THOMAS sits on his bed. His little brother JOHN and little sister FAITH both sit on the bed watching him. He puts his cap on JOHN'S head and they salute one another. He then puts it on SARAH'S head and they salute.

DAVID (O.S.)
It'll be all over before he's finished his army training.

10:12:12

EXT. THOMAS' HOUSE. NIGHT

ANNIE is in the back yard having a cigarette. DAVID sits in the back doorway.

MUSIC OUT 1M08 10:12:21

ANNIE

Don't, David.

Our little boy is gonna fight in a war.

Against grown men.

Grown men who will be trying to kill him. So don't think that saying everything will be alright is enough. Because it isn't. Nothing you can say to me will be enough, or will make it alright, or will make me understand or will make me feel any different to the way I do now...So just...don't.

DAVID

You can't stop him.

ANNIE

Yes we can!

DAVID

For how long Annie?

ANNIE

He's seventeen.

DAVID

And then what? He runs away?

He goes over there anyway, all on his own?

Without knowing his family love him, that we're waiting for him..?

MUSIC IN 1M09 10:13:08

A moment.

DAVID (CONT'D)

This time tomorrow he'll be gone. And all you'll be able to think about are the things you'd say to him if he was still here. Well he's here now.

A moment, before DAVID gets up and goes back inside.

Out on ANNIE alone.

10:13:30

INT. THOMAS' HOUSE. HALLWAY/BEDROOM. NIGHT

From the hallway we see THOMAS sleeping in bed. ANNIE appears and enters. She looks down at him. She goes to sit on his bed as he sleeps.

She sees his bird encyclopedia open beside him and picks it up and smiles. She closes it and looks around the room: it's a child's room, pictures of birds on the wall. She touches his uniform, a look of desperation on her face.

10:14:48

INT. HAY BARN. NIGHT

MICHAEL and KATIE lay on the hay in the barn.

KATIE

MUSIC OUT 1M09 10:14:59

It's funny to think that wherever you go, you'll be able to see the same stars as me.

KATIE turns to look at him.

KATIE (CONT'D)

We'll both be looking at them at the same time. When I'm looking at them, you'll be able to see them too.

MICHAEL

Hmm.

KATIE

Are you frightened?

MICHAEL

No! (beat) A little bit.

He strokes her hair.

KATIE

I do love you.

MUSIC IN 1M10 10:15:32

She kisses him.

10:15:44

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

SUSAN sits in his room and adds personal items to MICHAEL's canvas bag.

10:15:56

INT. HAY BARN. NIGHT

KATIE and MICHAEL make love.

10:16:02

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

SUSAN packs MICHAEL'S bag. Every item she picks up has a memory attached to it. She picks up his blanket and puts it to her face to inhale his scent. She begins to cry.

10:16:14

INT. HAY BARN. NIGHT

KATIE and MICHAEL make love.

10:16:17

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

As SUSAN packs she fights the tears.

10:16:35

INT. HAY BARN. NIGHT

KATIE and MICHAEL make love.

10:16:38

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

SUSAN breaks down and the tears come.

10:16:47

INT. THOMAS' BEDROOM. DAY

MUSIC OUT 1M10 10:16:53

THOMAS lies asleep in bed. He wakes up.

MUSIC IN 1M11 10:16:58

He turns to see that his canvas bag has been repacked. Extra clean clothes and underwear are also folded and placed on top together with his bird encyclopedia. He smiles, knowing this represents his mother's acceptance.

10:17:04

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

Chaos as an old bus waits to transport new RECRUITS to the army training camp. YOUNG MEN and their FAMILIES are saying their farewells. THOMAS, in uniform, and his FAMILY are among them.

THOMAS looks at ANNIE.

ANNIE

Whatever you have to do, you come back to me, do you hear?

THOMAS

I'll be alright Mum, stop worrying.

ANNIE

Promise me.

THOMAS

I promise. Dad!

THOMAS turns to his DAD who gives him a hug.

DAVID

Come here!

The hug goes on for a moment too long. THOMAS' sister, FAITH gives him a flower.

FAITH

It's for you!

THOMAS

Thank you it's beautiful!

He ruffles the hair of his BROTHER.

THOMAS

Alright I've gotto go mate, see you mate.

THOMAS gets onto the bus. He looks back and positively beams.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I've never been on a bus before!

ANNIE laughs through the tears as she watches THOMAS climb onto the bus and sit.

10:17:47

EXT. CHURCH HALL. DAY

A slightly less frantic scene as a large horse-drawn cart is waiting outside the church hall to collect the new RECRUITS in uniform. FAMILIES say their farewells. MICHAEL picks up his SISTER SARAH and gives her a kiss.

MICHAEL

You stay out of trouble!

MICHAEL turns to his FATHER, watched by SUSAN.

WILLIAM

I'm proud of you.

MICHAEL smiles before turning to embrace his MUM.

SUSAN

I've packed you gloves and extra wool socks in case you get cold at night. Oh and there's a scarf, I don't know if they'll let you...

MICHAEL

(interrupts) Mum!

SUSAN

...wear it, but maybe if you have it under your tunic...

MICHAEL

Mum, I'll be fine.

A moment between them, as she takes his face in her hands.

SUSAN

You don't have to be a hero you know.

MICHAEL kisses and embraces her.

10:18:19

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

The NEW RECRUITS are being waved off. THOMAS waves excitedly through the window. ANNIE, DAVID and the SIBLINGS walk alongside the bus as it leaves and wave.

10:18:28

EXT. CHURCH HALL. DAY

KATIE approaches MICHAEL as he gets into the back of the cart.

MICHAEL
(grins)
At least I won't die a virgin.

KATIE
Ssshhh!

They kiss.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Write every day!

MICHAEL
Be back before you know it.

The cart starts away.

KATIE
Bye!

The CROWD run after the cart and an OLD LADY gives him a flower.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

MICHAEL then removes a flower from his button hole and kisses it. He throws it to KATIE who catches it and kisses it. The cart continues on.

10:19:02

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TAINING CAMP. DAY

The bus pulls into the camp. A slightly bewildered THOMAS looks around him.

CAPTION OVER: Maidstone Barracks

The NEW RECRUITS get off the bus to be greeted by the booming voice of CORPORAL HORACE GREEN.

CORPORAL GREEN
Buses 1 to 3, barracks seven and eight. 4-6, tents row A to D.

THOMAS turns to see CYRIL bounding up to him.

CYRIL

We're together, come on...

OFFICER

Find your tents as quick as you can.

They head off towards the tent together.

10:19:50

INT. THOMAS' TENT. DAY

They enter a circular tent. Some MEN already inside playing cards.

MUSIC OUT 1M11 10:19:51

ANTHONY (O.S.)

Don't worry I'll give you a chance to win it back.

ANTHONY looks up at THOMAS.

ANTHONY

(holds out hand)

Anthony... AJ.

THOMAS

(shakes hand)

Tommy.

ANTHONY

You play cards?

THOMAS

Not really.

ANTHONY

Oh, don't worry, I'll teach you.

BEN calls over from the next bed.

BEN

Just give him whatever money you've got now, save you the time.

ANTHONY

That's Ben, he thinks he's funny. How old are you?

THOMAS

Seventeen.

ANTHONY

I've got a brother your age, me Dad had to lock him in the bedroom.

THOMAS

(grins)
I'd have climbed out the window.

ANTHONY
Good man.

He nods at the next bed.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
That's Kev. Just don't introduce him to your sister.

BEN
Or your Mum.

They laugh.

THOMAS
This is Cyril. People call him wing nut.

CYRIL
Don't know why.

ANTHONY, BEN and KEVIN all look at CYRIL, he points to his ears. All five then laugh.

10:20:25

EXT. GERMAN ARMY TRAINING CAMP. DAY

A group of SOLDIERS march along.

Cut to a GROUP OF NEW RECRUITS, including MICHAEL already lined up.

10:20:27

CAPTION OVER: Grafenwöhr training area

CORPORAL BIERMANN, addresses the NEW RECRUITS.

BIERMANN
Attention! Over there, the Allied army is gathering. They've been working and training hard. You must do the same if you are to defeat them.

The camera pans down the line of RECRUITS and stops on MICHAEL.

10:20:50

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TAINING CAMP. DAY

THOMAS, CYRIL and the rest of the tent are now on the square being addressed by CORPORAL GREEN.

CORPORAL GREEN
While you're here, it's my job to try and kill you.

Those of you that survive will be sent to France to fight the boche. The logic being that if I can't kill you neither can they.

On THOMAS.

10:21:08

EXT. GERMAN ARMY TRAINING. DAY

BIERMANN barks orders as MICHAEL and the others are doing exercises on the square.

BIERMANN

SHOULDER ARMS! PRESENT ARMS! EYES RIGHT! EYES FRONT! SHOULDER ARMS! LEFT TURN! FORWARD MARCH! LEFT! LEFT!

The GROUP march away, watched by BIERMANN.

MUSIC IN 1M12 10:21:37

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. BANK. DAY

THOMAS is alone down a bank. He watches a bird on a branch and seems mesmerized by it. THOMAS has deviated from the GROUP to watch the birds.

10:21:42

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. COUNTRY PATH. DAY

Above him, on the path, his FRIENDS are in a training exercise. They run cross country holding wooden sticks for guns.

10:21:45

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. BANK. DAY

As THOMAS moves he disturbs a group of birds - they flap and soar above him.

10:21:46

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. COUNTRY PATH. DAY

ANTHONY, BEN and KEVIN pass, fooling around.

They don't see THOMAS.

10:21:56

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. BANK. DAY

THOMAS watches the birds fly away.

10:22:04

INT. MICHAEL'S BARRACKS. NIGHT

In the barracks, some of the RECRUITS polish their boots or write letters home. MICHAEL sits and looks out of the barracks window.

10:22:17

EXT. MICHAEL'S BARRACKS. NIGHT

From outside the window we see MICHAEL look up at the sky.

10:22:21

EXT. NIGHT SKY. NIGHT

Close up of the night sky.

10:22:25

EXT. THOMAS' TENT. NIGHT

THOMAS looks up to the trees as he reads his book of birds. He then places it to one side and begins to draw one of the birds he saw earlier.

10:22:40

INT. MICHAEL'S BARRACKS. CORRIDOR. DAY

MUSIC OUT 1M12 10:22:41

A sense of chaos as all the SOLDIERS run around in different directions. MICHAEL runs down the corridor.

The GERMAN CORPORAL barks orders.

GERMAN CORPORAL (O.S.)

Take all your personal possessions.

MICHAEL'S FRIEND FREDDIE comes out of a room and to join him.

MICHAEL

Where d'you think we're going?

FREDDIE

They say run, we run, they say pack, we pack.

MICHAEL veers off into his dormitory.

10:22:48

INT. MICHAEL'S BARRACKS. DORMITORY. DAY

MICHAEL goes over to his bed.

GERMAN CORPORAL (O.S.)

I want this place spotless before we go.

He grabs his jacket and photo of KATIE.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Forward march.

10:23:00

EXT. HAMMELBURG ARMY TRAINING CAMP. DAY

The RECRUITS march out of the camp with horses and equipment.

OFFICER (O.S. - CONT'D)

Left, left, left.

The Passing Bells - Ep.1
10:23:10

EXT. CARTETON ARMY TRAINING CAMP. DAY

THOMAS, CYRIL, ANTHONY, BEN and KEVIN run from their tent.

BEN

We're going. We're actually bloody well going.

ANTHONY

Germans won't know what hit 'em.

KEVIN

Aye as soon as they get a whiff of Wing Nut's socks...

CYRIL

Oi!

They clamber into the back of a van.

BIERMANN

HURRY UP BOYS...THE BOCHE ARE WAITING!!

They sit in the back of the van and THOMAS takes a last look at the Union Jack flag flying high above the camp.

THOMAS

D'you think we'll come back?

The question hangs for a moment, then.

KEVIN

Bloody right we will.

A moment before BEN breaks the pensive silence:

BEN

Does it matter that I don't speak French?

They all laugh now, horseplay, YOUNG MEN on an adventure. EVERYONE in the trucks starts to sing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary". THOMAS looks at the camp disappearing behind them. Thoughtful, not knowing what the future holds

SINGING IN 10:23:38

ALL

It's a long way to Tipperary,

It's a long way to go.

It's a long way to Tipperary

To the sweetest girl I know!

Goodbye Piccadilly,

Farewell Leicester Square!

It's a long long way to Tipperary,

MUSIC IN 1M13 10:23:57

The Passing Bells - Ep.1
SINGING OUT 10:24:05

But my heart's right there.

10:24:06

EXT. FIELD. YPRES. DAY

Establishing shot of a green battlefield.

MICHAEL and FRIENDS - RUDI, FREDDIE, LANZO and STEFAN are among the soldiers being led through the field.

10:24:24

CAPTION OVER: Western Front, Northern France

10:24:28

EXT. FIELD / BRITISH TRENCHES. YPRES. DAY

BRITISH SOLDIERS march along the field.

THOMAS, CYRIL, KEV, AJ and BEN follow CORPORAL KENNY BOND.

MUSIC OUT 1M13 10:24:34

CYRIL

Someone was telling us about the third light rule, Corporal, is that true?

BEN

What's that?

CYRIL

When you spark up, sniper sees the first light, takes aim on the second, and shoots on the third.

CORPORAL BOND

If you're stupid enough to stick your head above the sandbag and spark up I'll shoot you myself.

AJ slaps CYRIL's head.

CYRIL

Ow!

They pass SOLDIERS making 'ticklers'.

THOMAS

What are those corporal?

CORPORAL BOND

Ah ticklers... The Germans have real bombs, we don't. So we're improvising.

THOMAS

With jam tins?

CORPORAL BOND

Welcome to the war, son.

They continue.

CORPORAL BOND (CONT'D)

We're at stand down now, but reconnaissance reckons the Germans have got a load of reinforcements in, so it looks like it's gonna be a busy day. Morning hate starts in five minutes.

They all look at him blankly.

CORPORAL BOND (CONT'D)

They've been carrying out morning raids, so we are gonna let them know that we are here and ready. Now get to your dug-outs.

10:25:18

EXT. GERMAN TRENCHES. YPRES. DAY

The SOLDIERS move along the trench.

GERMAN CORPORAL

You're responsible for your own equipment, so keep your weapons clean, if your rifle doesn't fire when you need it to, then you or the man next to you is dead. The enemy is less than two hundred feet in front so keep your heads down!

10:25:33

EXT. BRITISH TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

Establishing shot of the battlefield just above the trench.

10:25:37

Down below THOMAS and his FRIENDS wait as other SOLDIERS run past to their stations.

ANTHONY

Wonder what it's like getting shot?

BEN

If you find out, let me know...

ANTHONY

Does anyone fancy a bet?

THOMAS

What on?

ANTHONY

Who gets shot first.

BEN

He's actually serious.

ANTHONY
Why not?

KEVIN
Be good though wouldn't it?

CYRIL
Yeah right, good idea, let's all get shot.

KEVIN
Na, just winged a bit, to go home with.
Just a little scar to show the girls...
(indicates his groin)
Right here..

The others laugh, THOMAS smiles, though just a hint of shock by the bawdy nature of the conversation. The CORPORAL walks by.

CORPORAL
Come on then! Let them know we're here!

OFFICER
Positions!

A couple of SOLDIERS light the fuses and throw over ticklers.

The BRITISH SOLDIERS all lay their rifles over the top and fire.

10:26:47

EXT. GERMAN TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

MICHAEL, RUDI, FREDDIE, LANZO and STEFAN in their trench as the ticklers explode. The bombardment intensifies and they become terrified and disoriented.

MUSIC IN 1M14 10:27:06

They fire back, but undisciplined, manic.

10:27:07

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE. DAY

SUSAN and WILLIAM go about their day but something has clearly unsettled them.

10:27:13

EXT. GERMAN TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

MICHAEL squeezes his eyes shut and fires over and over.

10:27:20

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE. DAY

SUSAN sits preparing some vegetables, staring into space.

The Passing Bells - Ep.1
10:27:27

EXT. GERMAN TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

MICHAEL continues to fire aimlessly.

10:27:29

EXT. BRITISH TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

The SOLDIERS fire at the enemy.

10:27:37

INT. THOMAS' BEDROOM. DAY

ANNIE alone in THOMAS' room. She picks up a drawing.

10:27:44

EXT. BRITISH TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

A bomb explodes near the SOLDIERS, rubble and mud fly everywhere. THOMAS keeps on firing. Chaos ensues.

10:28:01

INT. THOMAS' BEDROOM. DAY

ANNIE alone in THOMAS' room. She stares at his empty bed.

10:28:03

EXT. BRITISH TRENCH. YPRES. DAY

A SOLDIER is hit and killed beside THOMAS and falls to the floor. THOMAS turns to see and pushes the SOLDIER onto the floor of the trench.

The first time he's seen a dead body. He stares down at it, distraught.

10:28:34

TO BLACK.

MUSIC IN 5M01 10:28:36

TEASER IN

CAPTION OVER: Next Time

FREDDIE (O.S.)
We're getting leave!

MICHAEL
When?

CUT TO:

MUSIC OUT 1M14 10:28:38

The GERMAN SOLDIERS file out into the snow on their way home.

FREDDIE (O.S.)
Soon!

CUT TO:

10:28:39

FRANK and THOMAS run for cover from the gas cloud.
Shells explode nearby.

THOMAS (V.O.)
Was anyone else hurt?

CUT TO:

10:28:41

THOMAS (CONT'D)
My friends...

THOMAS, bandages around his torso.

JOANNA
I'll ask...

CUT TO:

10:28:43

THOMAS runs with his mask on. There's an
explosion just in front of him.

CUT TO:

10:28:44

CORPORAL BOND lowers his binoculars, looks
concerned.

SUSAN (V.O.)
He seems so...

CUT TO:

10:28:46

KATIE runs towards MICHAEL. He lifts her off her
feet in an embrace and they kiss.

SUSAN (V.O. - CONT'D)
...much older.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
He's home.

CUT TO:

10:28:48

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
That's all that matters.

CUT TO:

10:28:49

THOMAS
Where are you from?

THOMAS looks at JOANNA - bemused.

JOANNA
I'm Polish. We're fighting everyone.

The Passing Bells - Ep.1

CUT TO:

10:28:52

A RUSSIAN SOLDIER appears in front of the GERMAN's and shoots. The GERMANS run for cover before more RUSSIANS attack.

:

KATIE (V.O.)

I know you don't want me to worry...

CUT TO:

10:28:55

MICHAEL and KATIE are together in the barn. He's pensive, she studies him.

MICHAEL

There's really not much to tell.

CUT TO:

10:28:56

MICHAEL and FREDDIE run inside. A RUSSIAN SOLDIER jumps in their way so they veer off down a passageway.

CUT TO:

10:28:57

THOMAS and FRANK run from the gas cloud.

CUT TO:

10:28:58

MICHAEL takes cover. He hides to one side of the archway.

CUT TO:

10:29:00

THOMAS struggles to hold onto his emotions. He holds his bird encyclopedia close. Shells and gunfire around him.

10:29:01

TO BLACK.

MUSIC IN 5M12 10:29:02

END CREDITS

MUSIC OUT 5M01 10:29:06

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MUSIC OUT 5M12 10:29:32