You’re Never Ready

By

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EXT. STREET-DAY

TRISTAN strolls down the cobbled road, dust and autumn leaves fly everywhere. He’s barely a teenager, rash and unsatisfied by his countryside life.

A sparrow takes off above his head and it captivates his attention. He is jealous of the sparrow.

Free to go wherever it wants, whenever.

The sound of horses distracts TRISTAN’s attention. He sprints to it’s direction, which is behind him.

There are only two horses, both with a man on each. These men are officers from the army.

One of them is HENRI, ostentatious, 45. The other is ALEX, shy, 39.

TRISTAN is fascinated by the thought of the officers’ freedom.

HENRI
You, boy! Do you know where we can find some eager men to fight for our country in the war?

TRISTAN
You’re looking at one. I am-

Confused, ALEX butts in.

ALEX
You’re just a child.

TRISTAN sticks out his chest proudly.

TRISTAN
I’m 18, old enough to fight.

ALEX
Listen son, war isn’t playing with guns; people die out there. Trust me, don’t lie.

TRISTAN’s shackles rise.

TRISTAN
Now, what are you talking about lying? I’m not lying! I am 18 and I want to fight for my country.

(CONTINUED)
HENRI
Hold it there. Don’t be rash.

TRISTAN
I’m not! I know what I want to do and that is get out of this village and see the world-

ALEX holds up a commanding finger.

ALEX
You’re not gonna see the world through war.

TRISTAN
I’m gonna see more than this village and that’s enough for me.

HENRI
What about your family?

TRISTAN
I only have a mum and she’s never in.

A beat. HENRI and ALEX study TRISTAN.

ALEX
Fine. But if your head gets blasted off it’s not my fault.

TRISTAN grins with pride.

TRISTAN
Thank you sir!

HENRI
Report for duty tomorrow in Paris at the army headquarters, there your role will be decided. After which you’ll be shipped out somewhere for training. Understand?

ALEX looks at HENRI as though he’s gone mad. TRISTAN is oblivious to this, he nods with zeal.

TRISTAN
Yes sir. You won’t regret giving me this opportunity!

TRISTAN sprints off, kicking the autumn leaves into the air, making a whirlwind of orange.
ALEX
What did you just do?

HENRI
Humoured him.

ALEX
He’s gonna get killed.

HENRI
Maybe.

Without a second thought about Tristan, HENRI and ALEX continue their journey down the road.