

## **THE TERRIBLE BATTLE**

What I saw that time was something so impressive and incredible that I could hardly describe.

Lifeless bodies of soldiers lying here and there, piled on each others in bulk. They were of different kinds, mostly in camouflage combat dresses, but few of them in solemn and elegant uniform - I could'nt easily say exactly from which nations.

Some were grasping weapons in their hands. A black trumpeter still clutching his trumpet; a rider still clinging to his fallen horse. It was as if they had been struck by a violent tornado, as if a sudden unexpected typhoon had caught them off guard. In addition, pieces of anything anywhere: guns, cannons, pots and pans, little umbrellas and dresses, shreds of papers and magazines, and fragments of any whatsoever. A couple of cars in the most unnatural locations and positions. One of them, upside down, had still its wheels spinning and the engine on: its buzz seemed the only life sign in such an unnatural silence. Further on, across, seemed me to glimpse an abandoned fireman lorry.

I was shocked. I thought to my house, to how I had left it in the morning and to how now, in front of my eyes, I could hardly recognize it. Fortunately it was still standing upright, as far as I could see.

I moved slowly and carefully, watching where I put my feet. Turning the light on that chaos, I verified that the electric power was still working. But at once, so unnatural and horrific, jumped out to my eyes the little wrecked arm of little Giuditta, perhaps my daughter' dearest friend. My daughter. A sudden painful, fulminating thought. Where was she now, my dear little sweet treasure? Whas she all right, and safe? And where? With whom?

"Elisa! Elisa!". Worried and in concern, I called her many times but had no answer. I looked in all the rooms of the house: nobody. Then I remembered. That morning I had left Elisa with a very lively little friend of hers, and with her grandparents. Now they should be by her aunt: it's all right, I thought.

I picked all the little soldiers and the other toys up, and tidied up the room. But what a pity for Giuditta, Elisa's favourite doll.