***Letter of a godmother to an Italian soldier***

Dear Francesco,

I am so pleased that I received your letter today. Since I wrote you, I waited and hoped every day for your answer.

I want you to know that I give my best to imagine the terrible days in which you are surrounded by mud, snow and rats, the days in which death and coldness are omnipresent.

I also can see hard your time in the trenches must be since you have left home for the first time.

Additionally you told me about all the dreadfulness which happened to the soldiers around you. I feel really sorry that self-scratching and suicide between the soldiers created an emotional distance to your companions.

I know how much your suffer since you told me about the five days filled by the sounds of exploding bombs near the austrian area which were followed by four days full of blood.

Even if my life is also not too easy, there is nothing to be compared to yours and in contrast to your suffering my life is calm and peaceful. Since my husband died I am also an independent women ans I will never need a male authority anymore after I will have survived this horrible war.

There have been some days in which I had the opportunity to meet other women who support soldiers. With those I had a long talk about your lifes at the front. Because of this I am able to know that the war will end soon.

So I am the one to tell you that you will return home in near future. I don’t know an exact day but I am sure it twill not take long anymore.

But I will not stop to send you little parcels, even if I could. I promise to you one of those parcels will include food, as well as an novel called « Journey to the center of the earth » by Jules Verne.

Maybe you will not have enough time to read this book completly, but I would like to let you take part in my lecture.By the way, I got a work as a wartress in a good restaurant called « Le Vendéen » and the payment is not bad. I often visity a small café were I hear rumors about the dreadfulness of war.

Your suffering and depression touch my hears. But your bravery and your determination will not let you fail. I will be there to give you confidence and I always will be there to motivate and support you. I can not tell you when this horrible time will end but just think about where you will be afterwards !

I send you this letter in hope that i twill give you some minutes of happyness and pleasure in the tranches. You stay always in my heart and I will wait impatient for your next answer.

The war will end soon and, dear Francesco, always think about that finally we will be together.

Marie Montaigne,

7 November 1916