I am going to write a letter from a kiwi soldier from WW1 to his one and only sweetheart back in New Zealand. I am going to write one short letter that he sends when he first arrives at Gallipoli where he idealises war and tells his sweetheart, Bernadette, that if he was to die on the battlefield that he will die a hero. I will then include a second poem which will be sent a year after the first poem was sent: in this poem he will be expressing signs of fear and regret and the fact that he was understanding the realism of the war. My narrator is 19 years old and is a private in the war (lowest ranking). His friends get killed in battle and soon its just him, a few other privates around his age and the higher ranked soldiers fighting against the enemies. I am not going to include a happy ending to this letter: this is because I want to increase the intensity and fear of the poem and want to make the reader really feel what the 19 year old soldier feels.

28 September 1914

Dearest Bernadette,

“You are, and always have been, my dream.” I will love you to the day I die and if I am to die here on this battlefield, I want you to know that I will die thinking only of you. I will die not only a hero for our country, but I will die a hero for you. I don’t want you to fear for me as we have God on our side: if I were to leave earth, God would take care of you for me. Words cannot describe how much I love you.

With endless love,

William xxxx

28 September 1915

My lovely Bernadette,

Things are happening so fast here: one minute we are all cooking our own breakfast and the next we are bombarded with flying shells. You’d think they would at least be considerate of time and let us grown men have a meal first?! Alongside that, I’m the only survivor left out of my close friends on this neck of the woods: the two Harrys and Michael died a couple of weeks ago from Malaria, John B and Andrew died from an attack of mustard gas last Tuesday, James is absent as he has a severe case of trench foot and is getting treated, and John W and Alan got shot yesterday morning. Now I’m surrounded by sergeants, majors, generals and only a handful of soldiers my rank whom I’ve slowly gotten to know better. I’m scared my sweet Bernie, I’m fearing for my life, and for yours: I just want to be with you forever, physically. I want this whole horror to be over and done with so we can get on with our lives and all have a happy ending. But the reality is slowly taking over me and I’m starting to think that I may not ever have that happy ending: maybe I’ll end up like the two Harrys or the two Johns, or like the rest of the soldiers whose lives have been cut short: maybe I’ll end up alone, deadly cold, deep blue in colour and completely lifeless like the rotting bodies lying on the floor of the battlefield. I’m sorry if I’m scaring you, I just don’t know what else to think about these days. I keep your photo in my inner left-handed side pocket, near my heart. I look at it every time I am scared, feeling lucky and every time in-between.
I find that your beautiful full smile gives me courage to get back up and save my country. But the courage doesn't stay long and soon I'm cowering in fear again and my heart feels like it's been stabbed, the blunt knife pulled out and then stabbed repeatedly again in different places of my heart. My thoughts of you are still clear, but thinking about anything else is like not thinking at all. It's so hard for me to not think bad things of you, of us: a beautiful, smiley woman having to wait at least a couple years until her lover comes home with no physical love or affection, or no one to tell her she's beautiful every morning, it's so hard not to believe that some handsome young lad has taken you under his wing and that when I am finally released for home, that the both you will be waiting on your doorstep to tell me what we had is over. I can't help the negative thoughts, everything is negative here and it's so hard not to be with you and tell you my exact feelings and get that confirmation that you are still in love with me too. Anyway, I've got to get back now. I love you and always will. . .

William xxxxxx