

“Coffee” and “Preparing to Go”

By
Virginia Kiernan
Read and analyzed by
Cadet Privates Tsien, Gonzalez, Turner and Moore

“Coffee”



Background Info

- ▶ Verner and Virginia Kiernan
- ▶ Six kids
- ▶ Verner is an artillery officer, 101st Airborne division. Official unit: Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment. “Balls of the Eagle”
- ▶ Military family

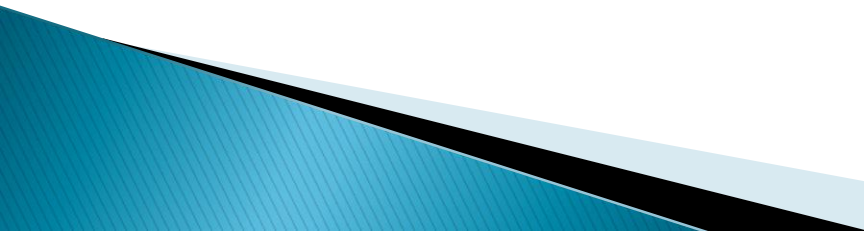


Summary



- ▶ Sherry and 2 boys have lost their husband and dad
- ▶ The author is at the funeral and begins to think about what if she is next, and about her husband's first near encounter with deployment.
- ▶ Her husband, Verner, is artillery attached to infantry, and he tells her to go to a meeting with other wives, the "Coffee".
- ▶ At one of these meetings Holly Hodges breaks the news that 101st is going to Iraq.
- ▶ One wife states "I don't think I can do this alone."
- ▶ Can the author do it alone with six kids? Uncertainty develops.

Analysis

- ▶ The theme is the feeling of being lost when family members are deployed.
 - ▶ The author isn't the only character to experience change but she still feels alone as she wonders if she can do it all by herself.
 - ▶ The audience is mainly civilians that are unfamiliar with the Army and the hardship of an Army family. It is also geared towards army wives.
 - ▶ The author draws pathos from the audience by getting them to sympathize with the feeling of being lost, flustered, and confused when a family member is being deployed.
 - ▶ It is about the wars fought by those at home.
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Response

- ▶ Enables the reader to look at the family's aspect on deployment, and the emotion they feel.
- ▶ Brings forward the idea that the family is fighting a war of its own when one of its members is deployed.
- ▶ Makes you remember that when you are hurting, so are those that care for you.
- ▶ Effective writing causes the audience to sympathize with the author and other Army families.
- ▶ I think this project will help the author because she will be able to see if her point was captured by the reader.



Preparing to Go

By

Virginia Kiernan

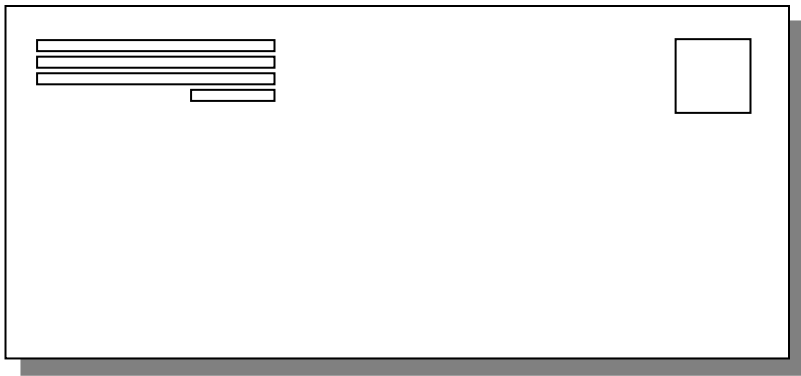
Summary

The deployment announcement is made and Virginia is busy preparing for a life without her husband for the next year.

Verner prepares to deploy. Virginia prepares to take care of her six children.

Virginia becomes involved with the Family Readiness group for communication.

Summary - The Briefs



- ▶ Many new domestic issues arise
- ▶ Legal issues to deal with now that her husband is gone. (getting ID cards, selling a house, pay raises)
- ▶ Mail - the length of time it would take (2 to 4 weeks)

Summary – Verner's Business



- ▶ Loading equipment until the late nights and waking up in the wee hours (5AM – 10 PM) and PT
- ▶ Problem: Quality time put on hold even as deployment date nears.
- ▶ More meetings, briefs, late nights, and prepare the Humvees

Summary – Anxieties

- ▶ Watching the news (Kurds getting gassed in past war) *Will it happen to our soldiers?*
- ▶ Kids responding differently.
 - Younger kids worried about missing b-days and fighting the bad guys
 - Next oldest son thinks war is cool but realizes the danger
 - Eldest daughters have fears and legitimate questions



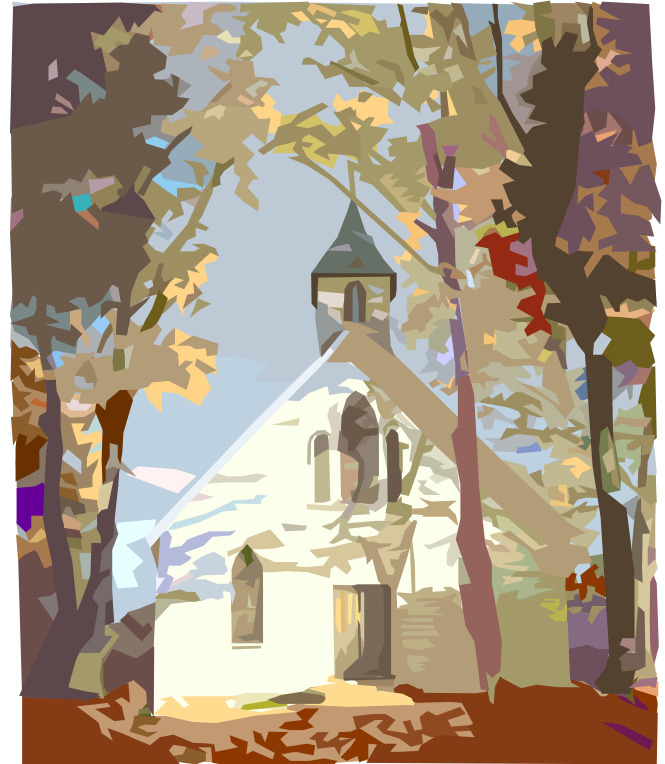
The Poem

- ▶ *I am a small and precious child, my dad's been sent to fight. The only place I'll see his face, is in my dreams at night. He will be gone too many days for my young mind to keep track. I may be sad, but I am proud. My daddy's got your back.*



Summary – Problems

- ▶ Army wives – expecting kids, tending to babies
- ▶ Young faces – all who would be alone after deployment
- ▶ The what if's
 - He doesn't come back
 - He gets hurt
 - Something happens to me
- ▶ Finally she draws her strength from God



Analysis

Ethos: audience → other women in her position, friends, family, perhaps even civilians

Pathos: she is clearly nervous, anxious, and scared about her husband leaving. Draws on that to elicit emotion from her audience

Logos: she is writing about a personal experience, she can make sense of it, her conclusions are therefore logical

Revision

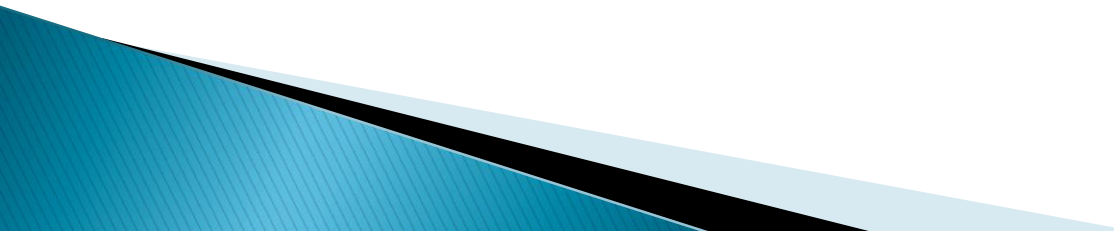
Italicized technique – captures thoughts, personalizes it

Good quote integration and usage – “I don’t think I can do this alone”

Leaves no details out. Doesn’t leave the audience pondering.

Gives the wives' perspective – what you haven’t heard

Improvements

- ▶ Kiernan's anecdotes about other military families – takes away from her own story?
 - ▶ Sometimes we felt it wasn't too important to include some of the details she did.
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Deployment – what it means to wait...Military Families, Wives

- ▶ [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZq4gvo
uRig](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZq4gvo<u>uRig</u>)

Works Cited

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