

BRAVE LIKE MY BROTHER

MARC TYLER NOBLEMAN



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Summary: When Charlie's older brother Joe is called up in 1942, Charlie learns about the tedium and dangers of war through Joe's letters—and his brother's bravery in dealing with a spy as D-Day approaches, finally gives Charlie the strength to stand up to the local bully.

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JUNE 6, 1942
CLEVELAND, OHIO

Dear Joe,

If there wasn't a war on, you'd kill me for this.

I know I'm not supposed to touch your stuff without asking. You've said it only about 10,000 times. But by the time you read this, I'll be far away. Well, you'll be far away. And anyway, you have bigger things on your mind now. So I'm not worried that

you'll be sore with your kid brother for sneaking into your bag to hide this letter.

But that doesn't mean I'm not worried. I didn't want to tell you this before you left, but I AM worried. A lot. Who wouldn't be? Dad and Uncle Fred's World War I stories are pretty scary. I just don't want you to go to England. I wish the Japanese hadn't bombed Pearl Harbor. Then maybe America wouldn't have gotten caught up in this cockeyed war and you wouldn't have to go anywhere farther than work (and the movies, when Mom forces you to take me).

I know I get on your nerves, so I bet you won't miss me as much as I'll miss you. But something tells me that you WILL miss me.

You give me a hard time sometimes just because that's what big brothers have to do. But if you didn't like having me for a brother, you wouldn't have stuck up for me those times when Jed was making fun of me because I'd rather read than run around causing trouble like he does. I probably didn't thank you for that before you left, or ever; so thanks, Joe. I couldn't believe when you told me that Jed was one of the only guys from your class who wasn't drafted. Why didn't they take him instead of you?

Even though you think you'll be no good as a soldier, I'm already proud of you. Now is my chance to try to make you proud of me. I'm going to do my best to do what you asked

me to do when you're gone. And I hope you
will do something for me, too.

Come back the same.

Love,

Charlie