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Opening extract from

Respect!

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For all the unsung heroes

With thanks to our readers:

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CHAPTER 1
THE CHILDREN'S HOME

This is a true story.

The truth.

The whole truth.

And nothing but the truth.

Listen.

It's all about a boy called Tully.

His full name was Walter Tull but his friends called him Tully. So that's what we'll call him.

He was 7 when his mum died. It wasn't very long before his dad married again. His new step-mum and her kids came to live in Tully's house. There wasn't much room.

Then 2 years later, his dad died too.

So at 9 years old Tully was an orphan.

His step-mum kept her own kids at home with her but Tully and Eddie, his 4-year-old brother, were taken away from their house by the sea and sent off to a Children's Home.

The Children's Home was in the East End of London – far away from where Tully had grown up. He didn't have any friends in London. Not one. All Tully had was his little brother Eddie.

It was hard to get used to the sounds and the smells of a town like London. And some of the other kids were mean.

Tully and Eddie looked different. They came to the Home in old clothes – they were just rags really. Some of the bigger kids made fun of them. One of the biggest kids was Harry.

Harry took every chance to make life hard for the new kids. He was a bully.

Other kids stayed away from Tully and Eddie – they didn't want to get on the wrong side of Harry.

One day someone sent a box of apples into the Home. "So what!" you're thinking. "Apples! Big deal!" But it was a big deal to the kids in the Home. It was a very big deal.

The kids were told they could have just one apple each and the big kids (Harry's gang) could have the extra "windfalls".

Little Eddie picked his apple. "What's a windfall?" he asked. Eddie was still only 4 and Tully had to explain lots of things to him.

"A windfall is an apple that's fallen to the ground," Tully told him.

"So if an apple falls to the ground, it's mine!" said Harry and he stuck out his long leg and tripped little Eddie up.

The small boy went flying and so did the apple. Up into the air it went and Harry

waited for it to fall to the ground so he could have it.

But the apple never landed on the ground.

Tully stuck his foot out and the apple landed on his toe. Then he flicked it to his knee and passed it from knee to knee, foot to foot, onto his head, onto his back and then onto his head again. Harry made a grab for it, but Tully was too quick for him. Tully was brilliant at this game of Keepy Uppy. He could do it for ages.