

Name: _____
Current Unit

Date: _____
Team: _____

The Diary of Anne Frank

APRIL 15, 1944 – May 1, 1944

[I] keep trying to find a way to become what I'd like to be and what I could be if . . . if only there were no other people in the world.

Tensions in the annex run high after the break-in, and no one can shake the feeling of impending doom. On top of that, Peter forgets to unbolt the front door, so Mr. Kugler has to smash the window to get in. The air raids on the city are incredibly heavy. The Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in The Hague is bombed, requiring new ration cards to be issued.

On April 15, 1944, Anne gets her first kiss. Although Peter only kisses her “half on [her] left cheek, half on [her] ear,” Anne suddenly feels she is very advanced for her age. She writes that the longer the war drags on, the more difficulty she has imagining ever being liberated. Anne talks to Peter about female anatomy, which she has wanted him to do for a while. She then daydreams about trying to have a fairy-tale published in a magazine.

Anne writes about her schoolwork and also includes the family’s war-ration recipe for potato kugel in her diary. She asks Peter if he thinks she should tell her father about their relationship, and he believes they should. Mr. Frank says that he thinks it is not a good idea to carry on a romance in the annex, and he asks Anne if Peter is in love with her. Mr. Frank tells her not to take it too seriously and that it is her responsibility to show restraint.

Anne wonders about the point of the war and is frustrated that money is being spent on fighting rather than on medicine, the poor, and the arts. She reflects on human nature and concludes that until all of humanity undergoes a deep change, people’s tendencies toward violence will lead to endless wars and destruction. Anne writes that she is “young and strong and living through a big adventure.” Her father complains that she is going upstairs to see Peter too much. Anne wants to explain why she visits Peter a lot, so she writes her father a letter, which makes him very upset. He tells her it is the most hurtful letter he has ever received. Anne feels deeply ashamed and decides to try to improve herself.

Anne tells her diary the story of her family, including her parents’ biographies. She writes that her wish is to become a famous journalist and writer. Mr. Frank has lost a bet with Mrs. van Daan about when the war will end, so he has to give her five jars of yogurt in payment. Anne hears that anti-Semitism is becoming more common among the Dutch, and she is deeply discouraged. She grows depressed again and wonders if it would not have been better to suffer a quick death rather than go into hiding. She counteracts this thought by writing that they all love life too much.

On June 6, 1944, D-Day, the BBC announces that the Allied invasion of France has begun. The residents of the annex are very excited. Anne turns fifteen and writes that the liberation is going “splendidly.” Her mood improves, and she contemplates her love for nature and the question of why women are thought of as inferior to men. Near the

end of July, Anne writes about an assassination attempt on Hitler and hopes it is proof that the Germans want to stop the war themselves. On August 1, 1944, Anne describes her new insights into her own character and thinks that perhaps she could become the kind of person she wants to be “if only there were no other people in the world.” Anne’s diary ends abruptly.

Analysis

It’s difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality.

In this section we see a marked shift in Anne’s writing, as she appears to be writing primarily for other readers rather than just for herself. She begins to think of herself as a writer and of her diary as a book. She also sees herself as more of an adult, though at times she is still writing from a child’s perspective. Anne’s final entries are a mixture of personal reflection, philosophical inquiry, humor, and complaints about her dissatisfaction with her family life and the way she is treated. In many ways, the end of the diary reads as a more self-conscious mixture of the ideas she presented earlier: a portrayal of an imaginative, ambitious teenager blended with evidence of the extraordinary and devastating circumstances of her life.

Though she maintains an optimistic innocence throughout, Anne clearly has matured over the time in which she keeps her diary. She becomes interested in love and sex, as can be seen in her feelings for Peter, and must reconcile those feelings with her desire to maintain a happy relationship with her father. But in addition to the normal psychological and physical changes associated with puberty and aging, Anne is deeply affected by the confinement, fear, guilt, anger, and sadness the war brings upon her. Faced with the life that has been forced upon her, Anne must enlarge her concept of the world and examine herself not only within the confines of her small family but in relation to a world that is demonstrating an implacable hatred of her. In her final entry, she begins to explore larger social issues, setting goals to become a successful woman and overcome obstacles she might encounter.

Although Anne clearly did not plan to end her diary where she did, it does serve as an appropriate ending to her account of her thoughts and experiences: a summation of her character and the struggles she has endured in trying to become the kind of person she imagines she can be. She takes a long, deep look at herself and is upset that people only know her public side. Anne is still afraid of sharing her more personal, sentimental inner self.

Anne’s last sentence is a powerful statement, which is even stronger because it is the last we ever hear from her. She writes, “[W]hen everybody starts hovering over me, I get cross, then sad, and finally end up turning my heart inside out, the bad part on the outside and the good part on the inside, and keep trying to find a way to become what I’d like to be and what I could be if . . . if only there were no other people in the world.” This passage conveys Anne’s struggle with her inward and outward selves. Because she knows that there will always be both good and evil people in the world, she concludes that for only good to exist, there must be no other people at all. Anne realizes that she has tremendous potential but that it is stifled and contorted. Because of the evil that she faces—and that everyone in the world faces—no one can be exactly who he or she wants to be. Anne’s words have an eerie prediction. Thus, the diary culminates with a bright insight into human nature and a stinging sadness.