Perspective Of A Nun In 1348 Who Is Infected By The Black Death: Creative Essay

The nun's name is Elisabeth.

14th of July 1348 (158)

Dear Journal, word has come through our nunnery that the town across from us has been affected by the deathly sickness. Our sisters are praying for them. We do not know much about this sickness but it has been affecting so many places and people around us and although I do not want to believe it, our townspeople are starting to think that the plague is God punishing the world, but why? Hopefully none of our town gets affected because there has been news that most affected by the plague have ended in tragedy. News has also said that some of the symptoms include a fever, congested or runny nose, vomiting, dry coughs and horrible headaches. I Assume this is just the tip of the iceberg because if the sickness is deathly then surely there would be more. Also since the amount of people that are dying, there are fewer workers in the town across, meaning less trading.

1st of September 1348 (200)

Dear Journal, it’s what I have been dreading, what I have been frightened of! The plague has come to our town! I am greatly devastated as my friend Mary was one of the first to be affected we think it was carried by one of traders who was working between our town and the village affected a few weeks ago. Mary’s father was also a trader, he must have caught it and passed along. Poor Mary! We pray for her fast recovery. Word has also been passed along and some of the symptoms she has been experiencing must be causing her much irritation. Some symptoms include a high fever and mild weakness. Now that the plague is in our town the symptoms are a little more clear and just like a predicted there are more! Some of them include a mild discomfort in the chest, and after further discovery it is actually the flooding of the lungs and breathing problems. With the doctors skeptical of what the cause is but the townspeople have stopped eating sea fish, probably because that is what they think is causing the illness. The town also smells awful, like vomit and blood awful. How gruesome!

12 of September 1348 (216)

Dear Journal, now my worst nightmares have come true. The nunnery has been affected! Sister Elizabeth, Sister Susanne and Sister Margret were the first to be affected. Oh how I pray for their strong recovery. A devastating message was given out this morning that told us that 50% of our village had been wiped out but this cruel plague. There is an uncomfortable-looking wooden cart that goes around every morning to collect the dead bodies! They proceed to dump the bodies in giant pits in the ground...how inhumane! The remaining townspeople are going to horrid lengths to try to prevent themselves from contracting the plague such as; some families being very scared of the plague that when someone starts to experience symptoms the family members leave them in a dark room, sometimes in their basements, to live out their last days, ALONE! Sister Sarah, Sister Ann and I went to the hospital to visit the doctors and they kindly

explained some symptoms, how to spot them, treatments they recommend, but the frightful news we received was that the doctors had no idea what was happening, in relation to the illness, they do not know where it is coming from! They say they are not able to figure out much because everyone has been experiencing varying symptoms.

15th of September 1348 (133)

Dear Journal, I am starting to believe that God is punishing us, what have we done wrong? Although I have been praying multiple times a day…. I have contracted the plague! I see why people say it is so painful! I have been to the doctors but they are no longer accepting the Plague victims, but I did get some advice and some possible cures. So here are some; eating lettuce and alternating sleeping on the left and right side to help regulate body temperature. I am embarrassed to admit it, but I have been vomiting non-stop! It seems as if anything I eat I throw up immediately. The symptoms my friend Mary experienced included flooding of the lungs and now that I think about it, I have been experiencing mild breathing problems...

17th of September 1348 (139)

Dear journal, I am getting sicker, I have nearly lost all my motor skills. I have met the lowest point in my life, I continued to pray and seek God for help. The possible cures the doctors gave me haven’t been working and just like the others I am starting to lose hope. Another embarrassing symptom has risen, they are buboes! They are swelling in my armpits have begun to turn purple and even black, they are incredibly painful and some are beginning to burst! The buboes are filled with yellowish-greenish pus and bleed when popped. I understand now why the hospital stopped accepting people with the sickness into treatment, the doctors could get infected, they wouldn’t be able to save anyone and they didn't know anything about it! Anyways i’m on bedrest now, I will journal again tomorrow.

11th of October 2015 (215)

The Black Death contributed to the fall of the feudal system some 300-500 years later, the feudal system was already weak with the Crusades taking many lives of the knights, so when the Black Plague broke out there was even less, the balance was thrown off. Peasants began to run away from their homes, to get away from the plague, to new towns and the monarch started to lose power, this is called changing balance in power and this greatly weakened the feudal system. The short term impacts led to a chain reaction of events; first starting with less peasants working in the fields due to the amount of death, fewer workers meant elevated wagers. With the tremendous amount of people dying off, more land was available, people started to think for themselves and raided other houses to have parties and such. The lower class-men became less reliant on the monarch and monarch became more reliant on them. The Black Death was a deadly sickness that killed 30-60% of Europe’s population. The plague is thought to have originated from China in the early 1330’s and was carried by merchants along the silk road or by merchants on ships. The plague comes from a flea or rodent bite on the human skin and was/is highly contagious.

Bibliography

1. The Black Death- As It Happened, video shown in class
2. Easton M, et al (2016)- Oxford Big Ideas, Oxford Press
3. The End of the Feudal system, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra4IwfHO_z4