

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

That burning sky. Tentative title.

Mann, Erika

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THAT BURNING SKY

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[tentative title]

By ERIKA MANN

"Strange war, ^{this} ~~that~~" thought ^{Bob} Stanhope while listening to the news in German. "Here I am ^{in London}, ~~he thought~~, five floors under the ground, in this tiny, sticky B.B.C.-studio, surrounded by Germans who ^{and they're} are not my prisoners, whereas I am not theirs, either, thank heavens. Outside, the show is on again; ~~the show~~ it started out ^{enough} pretty vividly tonight, and quite ^{right on schedule} on time, at eight o'clock sharp. Lots of ^{them blasted} silly things flying around out there; lucky I got here the way I did, ^{might've been hurt. But it's still there} unhurt. But how I ~~hate~~ ^{it's worse than the fire itself} that red, burning sky; I can't stand the ~~way~~ sight of it; ^{I think I hate it more than} hate it more than the fires themselves, even more than those Nazi-planes, or their pilots, or the bombs they're dropping. Probably because it reminds me of ^{there} there. What did that doctor say? Nervous (find medical expression!); unfit for military service till further notice! Well, that's why I am here, supervising those enemy-aliens in their efforts to help the foe of their country. They're 'friendly enemy-aliens', though; that's their official classification; they're H okay, I suppose. Alf certainly is; it's him I like best..."

He looked over the papers in his hands, ^{across} across the table where ^{Count Nendek} Alf ~~was~~ sat behind one of the ^{two} ~~two~~ microphones, reading the news.

"Das Kriegsministerium gibt bekannt..." said Alf ^{Nendek a Gen} ~~was~~.

^{Bob} Stanhope - Corporal ^{Robert} ~~Stanhope~~ Stanhope - ^{was supposed to} compare the text before him with the bulletins read by ~~was~~ Alf. No word must be altered by the ^{German} newscaster who was to stick literally to his ~~HEHEHE~~ censored manuscript. But ^{Bob} ~~was~~ knew Alf ~~was~~ to be reliable. Besides he was bored with the news and preferred to listen drowsily to Alf's pleasant voice, while thinking his own private thoughts.

"Yes", he thought, returning to what he termed "the show outside"; "that bloody sky always reminds me of ^{out} there. Why don't I ever pronounce the name of the damned ~~HH~~ place, not even in my mind? I don't ^{even think of it as} call it hell, either, or any other suitable name. It's just 'there'. There..."

It was Dunkirk, ^{Bob} Stanhope kept on referring to in his thoughts; Dunkirk, where he had distinguished himself as a "transport-swimmer" during the big evacuation. There hadn't been enough of those tiny barges to get the wounded out ^{him} into the sea, where larger boats ^{De} waited ^{here and over} for them. So, ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~, whose ^{fore} head was bleeding from some minor injury, but who was ^{Who was} tough by nature and able to swim for hours, had volunteered to carry the boys - how many of them, and for how many hours? - through the waves, and the deadly rain of bullets, shrapnel, and bombs, aboard the ships. Forth and back, forth and back, under that burning sky. When Johnnie died, just a few hundred yards from their common goal, ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~ didn't notice; true, the burden got awfully heavy all of a sudden; also, it was a terrific job to drag the wounded boy into the boat. But ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~ was fond of Johnnie, and quite happy to carry him off to comparative safety. Then someone said calmly, "don't bring us any more dead, will you?"

It wasn't meant in a nasty way to be sure; it was just that there wasn't enough space of help for the living. Yet it was the last thing ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~ heard before he fainted. ^{The last thing he saw was that burning sky,}

Now he was here. They'd found out that he spoke some German and understood it well. So they'd made him a liaison-officer, ^{and occasional speaker} in the German Department of the B.B.C. He hadn't really wanted the job. "What's the good of it, anyway?" he asked, when ^{informed of} ~~assigned to~~ his new duties; "we've got to beat the hell out of ^{those} ~~these~~ hunks; talking to them won't get us anywhere!"

But Ted Fergusson who was in charge of the German department and knew all about propaganda talked him into the thing, God knows how. ^{This} ~~It~~ was highly important, responsible work, Fergusson insisted; ~~and~~ anyone participating in it had a better chance to get at Adolf than a mere army-corporal ^{at} ~~would ever have~~. To help break the enemy's moral ^{a thing} ~~was~~ certainly worthwhile. ^{doing} Didn't ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~ agree? ^{Bob} ~~Ray~~ agreed; but, though

Bob had been here for almost two months now, he still didn't feel quite at home. He was a soldier, he felt and belonged at the front with the other boys.

"On this single day" he heard Neudeck saying, "the Luftwaffe lost 135 machines."

"Funny, that little pause after 'lost'" Bob thought; "quite effective, though; makes you sort of curious. He sure knows his trade, old ^{boy} ~~man~~ Neudeck; I also like his way of stressing things that don't seem at all important, till you hear him stress them. Yet, he never sounds like a man eager to convince; he just sounds convincing. The news is almost over, he thought; what's next? Fisch, I suppose, Fisch with the unpronounceable christian name; what's it, still? Let's see: here: Zacharias; Zacharias Fisch. He'll read German poetry again; Goethe, Nietzsche and so on. He's crazy about German literature; says it's grand stuff; bound to remind the Hun of his better self. Maybe, maybe not. Still, I like him better than my neighbour here, Lutz Mayer, with his ~~SHREKINGLY DIRTY~~ dirty fingernails. He's a red, I suppose, ^{es} ~~hating~~ ^{Hitting} Hitler and his ~~SHREKINGLY DIRTY~~ generals more bitterly than does ~~any~~ ^{one} of us. Kind of suspicious for a German; accusing his own people of having started the war. But then, he's probably a Jew; wonder whether he'd hate them that much if he wasn't. Possibly. Zach ~~HH~~ Fisch admits loving Germany, though he's definitely Jewish. It's Hitler, he says, who's brought all the bad things to the surface, and buried all the good ones. Sure, I said, Hitler and the ~~K~~aiser and Bismarck and old Frederic and who-else-do-I-know. Then he started talking about Bavaria where he comes from. 'It's so beautiful' he said, his brown eyes darkened with homesickness; 'the Isar-river, icily green like a glacier; the forbidding forests and inviting hamlets; the narrow country-roads, running through the mountain-meadows,

like small rivers..' and went right on describing the ^{bloody} ~~darned~~ place to me. He's a dreamer, I suppose; decent in his way. Maybe Mayer is decent, too. Sort of difficult for him to prove it. How can you prove that you'd have left of your own free will, when you've been thrown out, anyway? Alf wasn't thrown out. He's different. In fact, he could have become a Nazi bigwig, if he'd wanted to. Looks like Hitler's own wishdream of an 'Aryan'; just ~~didn't~~ like the whole ^{darned} ~~bloody~~ Nazi-mess; kept on fighting it ^{secretly} ~~underhand~~ till they caught him, way back in 1936. I hardly knew Hitler existed, ~~at that time~~; ^{at that time} he existed alright; sent Alf to a cam, old nasty; lucky, ^{that} ~~one of the~~ S.A. ^{that former Butler of his father's} men let him escape; lucky he came here. Why the hell doesn't he use the switch, when he's got to clear his throat? That's what the switch is really here for, ^{your lordship, it's} ~~not~~ ^{off} here so that you may turn the mike, ~~WHENEVER~~ whenever you wish to make any noises that don't belong to

the program. You're getting a bit vane, ^{your highness} ~~not~~ ^{apt to think anything's good propaganda as long as you're doing it} ~~not~~ a bit of a star, I suppose. ^{again} Never mind; I'll tell you later. Here we go: that's the last item. Poor Mayer ^{again} ~~didn't~~ have a chance. Lousy job, his; just sitting around here, waiting for Alf to get hoarse or be put out of commission by enemy action. Mayer is 'second announcer', though; bound to read the news sometimes; or is he?"

There was a rumbling all of a sudden; ~~not~~ very strong; just like furniture being moved upstairs; ^{yet} ~~but~~ still ominous enough; for it happened but rarely that the ^{raids} ~~bombings~~ made themselves heard down here. All except Alf looked up. Both, table and microphones ~~WHH~~ were shaking. The boys on their chairs felt the ~~WHHWHHWHH~~ explosion like a slight earthquake. There it was again; more rumbling, more shaking. They all knew: a stick of bombs; pretty nearby, too. And they all wondered, how they'd get home after the broadcast; if they'd better stay here for the rest of the night; if they'd find their houses still standing, their people still living, and whether they themselves would be here, tomorrow, no one missing.

Nudeck
Alf ~~was~~ finished his last sentence, without (mit der Wimper zu zucken?).

Zacharias Fisch got ready to take over.

"Hier ist der Londoner Rundfunk", Alf said with his ~~pleasant~~ pleasant, convincing voice. "Wir brachten Ihnen die Nachrichten."

Bob
~~Stan~~ Stanhope raised his hand; looking at ~~the~~ *his* stop-watch ~~he~~ *he* let three seconds pass, before he gave Fisch the ~~go-ahead~~ *go-ahead* signal.

Although, in order to avoid disturbances, it was customary for all speakers to stay at their places till the end of the transmission, ~~Alf~~ *Nudeck* was about to leave the studio. He noiselessly ~~left~~ *pushed* his ~~chair back~~ *chair back* and, ~~when~~ *when* took leave from Mayer ~~by~~ *slapping him* friendly ~~on~~ *on* the shoulder. Fisch was already reading; so Alf just bowed slightly before ~~Stan~~ *Bob* Stanhope. "May I go?" his smile seemed to ask. And, "of course, you may; you may do anything!", replied the Britisher by smiling on his part.

~~in the corridor~~
~~When~~ *When* Alf run into a group of Frenchmen all of whom seem to be talking simultaneously, accompanying their words with elegant little gestures. ~~The~~ *one* Englishman among them could hardly participate in ~~their~~ *their* rapid conversation; or was it an argument that was going on? ~~Mais non, mais non~~ *they shouted,* "je vous en prie!", - "êtes-vous foux mon vieux?", *Enfin, sans blague!"*; ~~they were throwing sentences at each other like~~ *little* ~~balls.~~ *balls.*
~~Alf knew: it's the Free French waiting for~~ *the* ~~studio B.~~ *studio B.*
They're on, as soon as we're through in there. ~~The~~ *the* ~~English~~ *English* ~~liaison~~ *liaison*
~~Amazing, he thought, how well they are doing,~~ *Amazing, he thought, how well they are doing,*
~~For all their~~ *that so on* ~~lack of disciplin;~~ *lack of disciplin;* ~~chattering and arguing till~~ *chattering and arguing till*

Out in the corridor Alf HHHHHHHH, for the fourth time today, stumbeled over the high threshold of one of the many iron-doors which cut the long gangway(?) into many short ones. If there was a fire in any of them, it could be easily isolated by closing both doors in that sector.

"What's the hurry about?" Somebody asked him in French. He HHHHHHHH rushed on, without answering. "Alice" he thought, - "she may be waiting for me at the house; last Friday she did; I have'nt seen her for five days;

what an eternity! Too bad I've got to ^{talk to} ~~see~~ old man Fergusson before ^{running} ~~going~~ home. Well, - duty first!" He smiled.

at a small table in the background of the canteine, ^{jammed in between} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ eating and talking people; ^{the day concentratedly} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ but concentratedly reading as though he were alone.

Alf flou^ght his way through the crowd; ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ "watch it, pardon, Verzeihung, prego, I am sorry," he said, while trying not to hit any of the trays ~~WHH~~ people balanced over their heads. There was no free seat at Fergusson's table. So, Alf just hockte down ^{on the floor} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ next to him, crossing his legs ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and looking up at ^{his} ~~the~~ boss from ^{below} beneath.

"Well" said Fergusson, closing his book, "did you give it to them alright?"

Alf ^{put} ~~XXXXXXXX~~ the pile of news-sheets he'd brought along ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ on the table.

"No" he said, "of course not; most assuredly not; nobody could 'give it to them' in this queer sort of a language.

How often must I tell you that we've got to talk German to the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ not esperanto, or whatever Germans; ~~WHH~~ this unholy mess of a tongue. In fact, ~~XXXXXXXX~~ "he said, ^{you call}

~~WH~~ throwing his head deeper in his neck, "I won't stand for it any longer; how do you expect me ~~HH~~ to sound convincig when I'm ashamed of every word I say? It's useless!" he exclaimed angrily, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ "You can't beat Hitler with red tape; and it's nothing but red tape that ^{produces this trash} ~~forces me to read sentences nobody~~ ^{will} ~~WHH~~ understand;

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ but I am sick of it, sick and tired, I ~~WH~~ tell you!"

"Now, now, come on." fergusson ^{didn't sound} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ displeased with Alf's ^{outburst} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~. "What do you want me to do anyway? You know perfectly well that we are getting the news just in time to have them translated, roughly and litterally; no ^{chance} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ to produce works of art; ^{but} no need either, it seems to me. This doesn't ^{at all} ~~read WHH~~ badly " he said, looking into Alf's manuscript, "it's perfectly ~~WH~~ clear/ so, calm down, will you?"

"No, I won't." said Alf. "There is a war on and I ~~will~~ ~~for~~ once won't 'calm down' in the midst of a battle.

There are lots of things you know more about than I, that I grant you; but this, -" he pointed at the sheets on the table, - "this is my dish. You've got to believe me, you've just got to, that those sentences do not read well, that they are not clear, and above all that they are not German..." He paused, without lowering his voice, ~~but~~ waiting for an answer.

"Shoot" said Fergusson "what do you want me to do?"

Alf replied by asking another question. "It's me who is reading the stuff isn't it?" he asked; "alright, then; it ~~will~~ should be me who's editing it as well; all I ask for is that I get the news ^{May 15} twenty minutes before I go on the air; that I be given permission to correct ^{the worst} ~~the~~ mistakes in grammar or style; ~~will~~ ~~that~~ I be allowed to make the darn thing speakeable; ~~that~~ is that asking too much?"

Fergusson ^{shook} ~~nodded~~ his head. "The censor" he said "would have to see your script after you've made your alterations; ^{though,} ~~that~~ that can be arranged, I suppose. I wish the hell I could let you do your own version altogether; ~~but~~ ^{alas,} I can't, ~~will~~ Sorry old boy. At any rate you'll get the news twenty minutes before transmission-time, from now on. Satisfied?"

"Thanks a million!" Alf smiled ^{a forced smile} ~~smiled~~. "This is more important than you think;" he added seriously, taking a deep breath of the thick, smoky air.

jumped to his feet, taking
"Thanks a million!" Alf ~~took~~ a deep breath of the smoky air, on;
he said in conclusi
"And from now on I'll give it to them, I promise." ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XX~~

~~XXXX~~ "Must ~~be~~ you go?" Fergusson sounded disappointed;
"there were quite a few things I wanted to discuss with you;
let's get together sometime tomorrow, then."

Alf bowed. "At your service, boss" he said.
Fergusson looked at him with a sigh. "I'll ~~only~~ ^{your lordship would} get that boss-
idea out of your stubborn head!" he suggested; "you're very German;"
he added pensively; "in a way that's what I like about you. Well,
take care of yourself! Stormy weather outside; so long."

He ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ^{run} through the long corridor, Alf, and this time
managed to jump over those treacherous thresholds like a Hindernis-
Renner(?) ^{what was the time?} Eleven o'clock; he'd better rush. ~~XXXX~~ ^{Alce} was not the type
of girl to wait for him till the cows came home. Too bad he had to
~~see~~ that news-translator for a second, just to tell him about the new
arrangement. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ He'd probably ^{be} in the concert-hall,
~~XXXXXXXX~~, since he hadn't been in the restaurant and wasn't ~~XXXX~~ likely
to go home ~~XXXXXX~~ tonight.

Wherever one looked in this ~~XXXX~~ ^{enormous} and complicated
building there were posters adorning the walls announcing:
"Your Refuge is the Concerthall!" ~~XXXX~~ It was ^{also} quite impossible
to miss "your refuge", as ~~dozens~~ ^{a multitude} of red arrows showed you the way.
Every night at ten, ~~XXXXXX~~ ^{when} the ~~days~~ ^{XXXXXX} ~~XXXXXX~~ ^{XXXXXX} last orchestra-concert ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ had concluded with the national anthem, the huge
concerthall was being converted into a men's dormitory. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
In no time at all ^{hundreds of} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXX~~ The ground was covered with blankets, mattresses or cots; anyone
who had been on duty until after the ^{night-}raid started had a right to
sleep here and a chance not even to notice what was going on outside.

"Your bed: concert-Hall number 174" Alf read on his ticket for to =
night; "please fold your blanket in the morning." Well he wasn't
going to do any such thing. Rather brave hell, than miss Brenda he
thought. I love her, he felt; it's not just that I am fond of her,
or that I'm liking her looks and her courage; ~~HHH~~ ich liebe sie, -
he thought in German, I love her very much.

It took him quite some time to ^{discover} ~~find~~ his man in the concert-
hall. There ^{were} ~~was~~ but a few dim lights penetrating the darkness; ~~HHH~~
he ~~HHHHHH~~ ^dstumble over dozens of sleepers before found him, sand-
wiched in between the snoring orchestra-leader, ^{whom he knew} and ^{some} ~~HH~~ Chinese
he'd never seen before.

"Alright, alright" the translator nodded sleepily,
when Alf had explained his case; "God knows I 'm doing a louzy job
~~with~~ ^{old man,} these translations, but only a magician could do better. Thanks
for waking me up, when I was just getting a ~~HHH~~ drop of sleep for the
first time in days."

He turned over ^{to} ~~on~~ the other side and ^{had} ~~was~~ already
~~HHHHHHH~~ joined the snoring-concert of the orchestra-leader, when
Alf stepped on somebody's hand, three cots ~~HHHHHHH~~ away.

^{going to the ground floor}
~~going~~ up (in the elevator meant to be flying
^{bad}
from good to bad and from ~~HHHHH~~ to worse. ~~HHHHHHHHH~~ Silence turned
into rumbling; rumbling into thunder; thunder into the terrific
battle-noise produced by ^{firing} ~~HHH~~ anti-aircraft -guns, falling and explo-
ding bombs, collapsing buildings, breaking glass, ^fscaring sirens
and the irregular ~~HH~~ humming and roaring of the low flying German
bombers. There was also the minor but irritating sound produced by
small pieces of shrapnels falling ~~down~~ on roof-tops and pavement.

entrance
In the sand-bagged ~~entrance~~ Alf hesitated ~~before~~ before hurling himself into the fight. The cigarette between his lips was not lit. "Fire?" The sentry offered him a match, which was against black-out-regulations. ~~Never mind~~ "Never mind" he said, when Alf ~~covered~~ covered ~~open~~ open the flame with his hat; "it's ~~very~~ bright and shiny out here anyway; ~~the eastern rain;~~ ~~there's a blast to, I past it on my way here. Heerio, take care of yourself."~~

was to
But how ~~one~~ one take care of oneself in a night like this? ~~Of course there was no taxi;~~ Of course there was no taxi; ~~there never was, once the "show" had started;~~ there never was, once the "show" ~~had started;~~ ^{was on} there wasn't even a steal-helmet ~~on~~ on Alf's ~~unprotected~~ ^{bare} head; ~~there was nothing but the irrational notion~~ there was nothing but the irrational notion ^{as a boy} that you couldn't be hit, as long as you kept on running. When he had the same crazy idea, ^{had the same crazy idea,} had been out in the rain without a raincoat he had ~~remembered;~~ remembered; always thought, if he'd only run fast enough, run faster than the drops fell, he couldn't possibly get wet. ~~Hell,~~ Hell, that one might be meant for him; stop running, fool, throw yourself ^{flat} down on your belly; that's it. There ~~was~~ ^{were} three different ~~noises~~ noises ~~to~~ to a bomb-hat. At first it sounded ~~very~~ ^{ed} very much like a rapidly approaching train; the whistling ~~quite~~ ^{started} quite some time later and you'd better get ready for ~~the explosion once~~ ^{it had set in} the explosion once ~~the explosion is~~ ^{over} ~~is~~. The detonation was terrific; so, for that matter, was the shock. Alf made himself as heavy as he could; ~~desperately~~ ^{clung} he clung to the spot where he had thrown himself. His hands ^{with sweat, warm sweat, curious enough;} were wet, ~~or was~~ ^{he} he bleeding? Sure ~~he~~ ^{it} was, there was ~~also a sudden pain in his hands.~~ ^{has already} He ~~wound~~ ^{was already} running again,

hands up, like a man ~~HE~~ forced to surrender; it's the glass, he thought, well, again, I've thrown myself into a lot of broken glass; ~~frustrated~~; here we go; ~~THUNDERING~~ There was a doorway this time for him to take cover ~~up~~.

There was also the phantastic spectacle of a burning snow-storm, fire- of millions of ~~flaming~~ flocks ~~falling~~ falling from the sky. ~~Wait!~~ Wait! Alf advised himself. What's this? ~~What's a new one to me?~~ what have they hit there, ~~anyway?~~ ~~When he realized it was~~ the big record-factory that ~~was~~ ablaze; the explosion must have thrown thousands of records high up into the air, ~~from where~~ ^{now} they ~~were~~ coming down in bits and pieces, illuminated by the blasting fire.

~~normally~~ The way home which took ~~him~~ about 10 minutes, cost Alf more than twenty, tonight. ~~THUNDERING~~ ~~THUNDERING~~ ~~THUNDERING~~

~~THUNDERING~~ When he finally arrived in the vestibule of ~~his~~ his near Regent's Park ~~boardinghouse~~ ^{stopped} he had to catch his breath before ~~he~~ ^{he coughed} ~~his hands still bleeding,~~ ^{shirt and} moving any further. His suit ~~bloostained~~ ^{his hands still bleeding,} his fair hair ~~falling~~ ^{restively} into his forehead, ~~he~~ he felt that ~~looked~~ ^{he} frighthening.

"Don't get scared; it's nothing, nothing at all!" he shoutet before knocking at his own door.

He found ~~Alce~~ ^{Alce} bent over a large map on his desk. The room was ~~dark~~ ^{black}, safe for the desk-lamp in whose ~~illuminated~~ ^{Alce} light ~~looked~~ ^{Alce} like a bright picture carved out of the darkness.

~~THUNDERING~~ Alf remained standing near the door for a moment, just watching the friendly vision. "Darling" he said, "you are so lovely and I am so awful, - I look so awful, I mean." ~~Alce~~ ^{Alce} couldn't see him.

she swiftly and neatly; then Brenda folded her map and put it into the large pocket of her uniform. "This is nothing for you to look at, Jerry", she said teasingly.

Alf turned the main light on. He was already very pale; his hands hurt; a small lake of blood had accumulated at his feet; he must have lost quite a bit of blood. with anger and injured pride;

"No" he said, his voice hoarse; "of course maps are nothing for me; but this is for me," he raised his wounded hands; "why shouldn't Jerry be permitted to bleed his soul out for the common cause, as long as he doesn't look at any secret maps?"

"Heavens!" Alice Brenda was on his side, before he knew how. his neck "Darling!" she said, throwing her arms around him. "Alf, my dear, I didn't know; don't be angry, please, stay where you are; or, rather, sit down here; you're quite exhausted; wait I'll fix you up; o, darling, how terrible! does it hurt?"

She rushed to the bath-room. Within a few minutes and covered him with the cuts were washed, disinfected, and covered with snowwhite bandages which made Alf's hands look, both, appetizing, and moving. it along "Good thing I brought it along" Alice shouted, she was packing bottles, bandages and plasters into her first-aid-kit(?) (case?)

There had been a ^{short} drill in the bombing, but now the noise set in with renewed fury.

tomorrow; that's when the convoy leaves for Glasgow. Imagine, hundreds ~~HH~~ and hundreds of them! And we've got to see them off safely, we've got to! They may mean the world to our soldiers, somewhere in Lybia; ~~HH~~ they may win a decisive battle for us! And it's us, girls, who ^{are} get them from all over the country, who ^{are} watch them at the depot and drive ^{are} them right into the arms of the navy! Imagine! That's what makes us really part of the whole thing. Wonderful, isn't it? But awfully responsible, too!"

There was an express -train approaching the earth from the sky with terrifying speed; while an air'plane circled slowly over their heads, peacefully humming.

"Hell!" Alf grabbed ^{the girls's} ~~mine's~~ arm. They lay on the floor, even before the whistling ~~st~~ in. The place turned dark, this time, which was only fortunate as the windows were blown into the room and, with them, the entire black-out apparatus, curtains, shades and timer (Latten?) sitting on the floor, Alf put his arm around ^{his friend} ~~the~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~. "Okay?" he asked; "Never felt better in my life." She ^{leaned} ~~put~~ her head on his shoulder. He didn't move; just pressed his chin against the silkiness of her hair. "Are you fond of me?" she asked; "if so, say something nice, please; say three nice things, right away!"

Alf hauchte (?) three little kisses on her hair.

"I couldn't think of anything nicer;" he declared. Alice said: "You've no imagination; ^{that's} the trouble with you, ~~Henry~~; besides, it tickled."

Somebody knocked at the door; a woman's voice said "are you alright?"

The voice spoke in German.

Alice jumped to her feet.

"Sure!" Alf shouted; "and we don't remember having called for help, either!"

Alice frowned in the darkness. "You needn't bark at Betty." she

told him; "better ask her to come in; ^{have} ~~let~~ me meet your girl friend.
Too bad I won't be able to see her. Is she pretty?"
More bombs were falling.

"Let's go to the shelter!" Alf suggested; "to
ours~~x~~, of course." They never used the cellar; too many people down there;
the spot they favoured was a ~~HHHHH~~ cave beneath the stairway, narrow, but
made homely by a piece of carpet and many cushions Alf had deposited there.

"Right, let's go!"

There wasn't much of an introduction. "Somewhere here "
is Alice Sloan; ~~"Huh? Who's Alice Sloan?"~~ Alf said;
and somewhere else is Betty Schuhmacher; where is Waldi?"

Waldi had to be caught, first. Then all four of them crowded into
the "shelter".

It was Betty who did most of the talking during the long hours
to follow. Her light voice sounded like ~~HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH~~ a bird's twittering,
Alice felt: gay, summerly, and very musical. Of course, she is pretty, she
thought; besides she's Austrian; she speaks German; she's close to him;
closer than I could possibly be; why do I love him so ~~HHHH~~? She grübel-
te (?). Why don't I love someone who's like me; someone who talks my lan-
guage; not just English; Alf speaks English well; my inner language, I mean.
Stop it, she thought; don't get pompous, now; better try and do something
about it; find out for sure ^{Hhehehe} ~~if~~ he loves you or not.

"This ought to be the 'finale'", Alf said, as the uproar outside
reached a new climax. It's almost 5 o'clock; so, they're simply throwing
down all that's left; it will be over in a few minutes."

The all-clear-signal and the velvety silence that followed
made them feel like people in ^{pa}is who've been given some soothing drug
after hours of agony. It was the same ^lundescribable relief every morning.

"See you tomorrow?" Alf asked before Alice's door.

shook her head.

The girl ~~shook her head.~~ ~~and she said, "Sorry", she~~ "Sorry", she said, "I'm on duty, tomorrow; in fact I'll have to leave in a couple of hours."

"The day after tomorrow, then? ~~on Sunday, then~~" he urged. "You're not on duty the day after tomorrow, are you?"

Alice hesitated, ^{but} finally told him that she was free that day. "Still, I won't be seeing you the day after tomorrow" she said;

"I've an appointment with... well, with a boy I know; some officer; some British 'Betty' of mine, if you don't mind."

"Alice!" He sounded ^{excited} ~~upset~~. "Where? I mean, with whom? When are you leaving the depot?" His questions came like machine-gun-fire.

She smiled. "Don't shoot me!" she said; "he's a grand kid and they're having a dance where he's stationed; so, I'll drive out there, tomorrow night, when I'm through at the depot; and I won't be back before Sunday late, get that!"

Trying desperately to recognize her face in the dawn, Alf saw nothing but her wide, cat-like eyes. "How can you..." he said, but didn't finish the phrase.

"How dare I?" she asked.

Alf grabbed her hand. "Darling" he said ^{fervently} ~~urgently~~; "tell me the truth, please! aren't you needed at the depot, the day after tomorrow?"

She withdrew her hand. "I am not;" she said firmly; "I'm needed at the dance. So, don't call me up and don't spy after me, understand?"

He bowed. Alice opened her door. Blasts of wind came through the broken windows. The morning sky was pale and clear. He could see her face now.

"I love you!" he said.

When he woke up he knew that Alice had left. It was almost noon. He had to hurry to be in time for his luncheon appointment. Mayer had been reading the news in the morning. It occurred frequently that Alf wasn't on till 4 o'clock, when Germany's women were to be addressed. ~~There was a short~~ German newscast at seven ; and then, of course, the most important one of the day at nine.

"Helloh, Betty! " ~~running into her~~ "Helloh, Alf " she said with her gay, summerly ~~voice~~ he said, ~~passing him~~ on his way to the door. "Why on earth" he thought, "doesn't she do something about her skin? She's looking awful with all those pimples. How old may she be? 38? Never mind."

The little Spanish restaurant in Soho was rather unknown. So, Alf was surprised to notice Bob Stanhope at a table near the entrance, talking animatedly to a girl, without seeing him. He hesitated for a moment, before he passed by.

The four middle-aged Englishmen whom he'd come to see were in high spirits. "Ceerio!" they shouted, raising their glasses. "Jolly nice wine this Pommard; rather drinkable indeed! Vive la France! What's the news, old man?"

Alf took his seat between a thick-headed man with a beef-stake-face who displayed the red ribbon of the legion d'honneur in his button-hole, and a gay looking fellow whom he addressed as Sir Philip. The luncheon was delicious and must have been ordered in advance. You rarely found such meat, such a variety of fruit, and so many imported tid ~~anywhere~~ bits in war-time-London.

Alf didn't drink, nor did he seem to care much about the food. He talked and he listened. Time passed quickly. Everybody enjoyed himself. The place was entirely empty, when the party finally dissolved.

Bob Stanhope was already there, when Alf arrived at the studio at a quarter to four.

"What the hell" he said, "are you fooling around for with that awful crowd?" but then answered the question himself. Alf didn't get it. "What crowd?" he asked;

~~REPLY TO HIM~~

"Oh, the tipsy ones at ~~the Royal~~ ^{Fraser's}!" he said;

~~MY DEAR~~ "my dear, they're fooling around with me, not vice versa; ~~still,~~ what can I do? They're a friendly silly bunch of chaps and exceedingly kind to me; so, I'm seeing them once in a while. What's so awful about them, anyway?"

"Nothing" said Bob; "it's just that they're a friendly silly influential bunch of appeasers, if you know what I mean; calling themselves 'pacifists' of course; just don't care for bloodshed; just want peace, peace at any price, peace with Hitler at any price. That's what's ^{so} awful about them, if you ask me!"

Alf, his face red ~~with~~ with surprise, caught his breath.

"What?" he shouted; "appeasers? Influential appeasers? Those harmless, unpolitical drunkards? That couldn't be true. Why, I'd rather die right here on the spot than see them again - ever ^{if it were} ~~where~~ ^{Where} on earth did you get that crazy idea? You've got to tell me, Bob! This is important!"

Bob shrugged his shoulders. "It's rather well known;" he said; "of course, you wouldn't know and they wouldn't tell you, either."

"You bet, they wouldn't!" Alf crashed his fist on the table; "In fact" he said; "on the whole they're telling me nothing but dirty stories; but whenever ~~the war~~ ^{the war} is mentioned they ~~are~~ ^{sound} perfectly alright; a bit tory-like maybe; ~~but~~ ^{yet} utterly patriotic; ~~you must~~ you must be mistaken!" he exclaimed, obviously remembering some of the conversations he had had with his friends; "they loath Hitler; Loath him at least as much as we do!"

There were Fisch and Mayer, ~~bringing~~ bringing the conversation to a close.

"Go t my alterations straight?" Alf asked his colleague,

passing him ~~him~~ the news-sheets. ~~There were~~ ^{Here} but a few minutes left for
Mayer to transfer Alf's corrections into ~~his~~ ^{their} own script. "Quite ~~an~~ ^{some} improvement, isn't it?" ~~Alf asked~~ ^{really} proudly. Mayer ~~didn't~~ ^{didn't} know. "Reads a bit complicated at times" he suggested; "too many
'however's and 'whereas'!" ~~Alf said, "I don't think it's too complicated."~~
~~Alf~~ Alf shrugged his shoulders. "What do you want?" he said
"that's precisely what makes it good German!"

[illegible]

After the transmission he had a chat with Fergusson whom he found in his office, wondering about Meyers political past. Somebody had told him, Lutz Mayer was a communist. Alf said that he wasn't. "he is not even a Jew" he said, "but the son of a protestant clergyman, - in case that matters." "Fine!" Fergusson sounded pleased; "you'd be entirely sure of him, then, in any respect?"

" Alf didn't quite know what to say." I don't see too much of him" he finally answered, "but for all I see he's a decent chap."

[illegible]

Time passed slowly that afternoon; in fact, Alf found it hard to get it over with. He went to a movie and saw some news reels which reminded him of Alice: not that he needed to be reminded; but those A.T.S.-girls on the screen made her absence almost unbearable. "I love her" he thought in German: "Ich liebe sie" Where was she now? Still at the depot, or already enroute to the dance? It hurt to think of the dance, despite... Despite what? Don't think too much! He admonished himself but his mind kept on working feverishly.

all of those girls at the depot.
She hasn't ever told me much about her friends, he thought; ~~she's~~ ^{one is fond of}
probably very fond of them; ~~the people one is~~
working with, ⁱⁿ ~~general~~, at least. What ~~did~~ ^{mean} when he
asked ~~me about Meyer?~~ Nothing, I guess; just wanted to be reassured;
suspicious fellow; never mind.

He returned to Broadcasting-house for the seven-o'clock
news and ~~fooled around there till it was time to~~
get his text ready for the nine-o'clock transmission. The translation was
particularly poor tonight; it cost him half an hour of concentrated
work to make it a readable piece of prose. ~~he didn't feel well, either;~~ ^{quite} shaky and nervous; was he running
a temperature? His ~~bandaged hands were rather hot;~~ so was his
head! "We're getting too little sleep, all of us," he said, when Stanhope
commented on his ~~paleness.~~ ^{paleness.}

V22a But, though he spent the night in the concert hall

he was unable to sleep. ~~He got up at dawnright after the all-clear and found the sky~~

~~still burning.~~

~~He got up at dawnright after the all-clear and found the sky~~

He got up at dawnright after the all-clear and found the sky
still burning.

"This was one of the worst nights we had" said the sentry;
"don't look now, but Leicesters⁹ square is afire."

Alf walked through rivers of glass; there wasn't a window
left in any of the buildings he passed. He shivered under his heavy
topcoat. What's the matter with me? He thought angrily; this is a fine
morning; ^Reverything's fine; nothing to shiver about. But his teeth ~~chattered,~~
~~schlugen gegeneinander(?)~~ ~~chattered against each other?~~

~~When~~ He decided not to go home for the night, but to stay ~~HHHH~~ in the Concert-Hall.

Whereever one looked in this enormous and complicated building there were posters adorning the walls, announcing: "Your refuge is the Concert-Hall". It was also quite impossible to miss "your refuge" as a multitude of red arrows showed you the way. Every night at ten when the day's last HH orchestra-concert had concluded with the national anthem, the huge concerthall was converted into a men's dormatory. In no time at all the ground was convered with hundreds of blankets, mattresses and cots. Anyone who had been on duty until after the night-raid started, had a right to sleep here and a chance not even to notice what was going on outside. "Your bed: Concerthall number 174" Alf read on his ticket for tonight. "Please fold your blanket in the morning." It took him quite some time to discover his cot. ~~There were~~ But a few dim lights ^{here} penetrating the darkness; he stumbeled over dozens of sleepers H before he found it, ~~HHHHHHHHH~~ sandwiched in between that of the snoring orchestra-leader he knew and some Chinese he'd never seen before.

But though he was tired beyond descritption he was unable to sleep.

[back to 22!]

There were big, screaming headlines in the papers when he walked toward the B.B.C. the next ~~evening~~^{evening}. He ~~didn't~~^{still} care what the news was; he felt miserable ~~anyway~~^{anyway}. V 23a

As the studio was still occupied by the Free French from he stepped into a neighbouring room where ~~he~~^{he} ~~was~~^{was} ~~reading~~^{reading} ~~the news~~^{the news} of the home-service. ~~He~~^{He} ~~before~~^{before} he opened the door, "What a shock" he heard, "occurred at dawn". ~~He~~^{He} ~~found~~^{found} both of whom looked pale and bewildered. In there he found Bob Stanhope and Lutz Mayer. "What's the matter?" he asked; A Bob swallowed, before answering. "Zach is dead" he said finally; "Lutz saw him burn to death before ~~his~~^{very} eyes."

Alf went and shook Mayer's hand. "Last night?" he asked; "that's terrible; I am so sorry;"

"Poor kid!" said Bob; "poor, brave, decent chap! You say you tried to stop him? Why the hell didn't you?"

Lutz, his eyes red and hot ~~when~~ⁱⁿ the glasses, ~~was~~^{was} hardly able to speak. "My voice ~~was~~^s gone" he said helplessly; "it's the smoke, I suppose; I swallowed too much of it. Why ~~I~~^I didn't stop him, ~~when~~² ~~I~~^I couldn't, I tell you; he was strong as a lion at that moment; ~~we~~^{we} could hear the child cry in the midst of the noise; it was all alone up there; ~~he~~^{he} surrounded and trapped by the flames; ~~he~~^{he} ~~was~~^{was} ~~alive~~^{alive} obviously; ~~he~~^{he} ~~was~~^{was} ~~still~~^{still} ~~alive~~^{alive} ~~when~~^{when} ~~I~~^I ~~tried~~^{tried} to stop him; I don't know how he ~~managed~~^{for} to get into that inferno; but he did; all of a sudden he appeared at the window, the little girl in his arms. They had a blanket ready (S, anntuch?) for her on the street; ~~he~~^{they} ~~caught~~^{caught} her alright; she wasn't even badly burned.

23 - a

Good thing, he thought,
that they are skipping
the German morning news
on Sundays; ~~but~~^{today} that they've
even skipped the four o'clock
newscast ~~today~~, for the
sake of some show they've
put on instead. I don't
know how I'd have
managed; in fact I don't
know how I'll manage
now.

I back to 23!]

his suit~~s~~ was ablaze ^{her}
But Zach was; in fact ~~he~~ while he threw ~~the~~ out of the
window; he tried to kill the flames, I could see~~ed~~ him struggling desperately,
then the burning ^{just} ~~cut~~ ^{reins} came down on him ~~when~~
~~he~~ ~~he~~ he ~~climbed~~ ^{red} climb^{ed} the window ^{shelve} ~~shelve~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
Once more I saw his head, his poor head, its hair gone ^{the} but fire
eating itself into it as into a candel; he was like a human torch;
he was.... " my G_od..."

~~Bob~~ Bob said: " He was very brave."
Lutz Mayer cried; thick tears ~~streamed~~ ^{streamed} down his cheeks. He didn't move to ~~wipe~~ ^{wipe} them away.
"I know how you feel" Bob continued, " When Johnnie died, I fainted, he
he died, as Zach did, and for the same cause. ~~He~~
thought, ~~he~~ could see Zach's gentle face, his brown eyes, ~~darkened~~
with ~~homesickness~~ homesickness, his black hair surrounded by flames as by a
halo. But, strangely enough, Zach was in uniform; ~~it was an English~~
uniform he wore; ~~he~~ ^{his slender silhouette} looked rather like Johnnie's,
as he'd seen it last ~~time~~, - there, under that burning sky.
"I know exactly how you feel" he repeated in a low voice, as if talking
to himself.

Alf, slightly embarrassed by the scene, ~~listened~~ ^{listened} to the
news. "Won't you join me?" he asked, ~~when Bob and Lutz had stopped~~
~~listening~~

"The fatal attack" said the announcer, "occured at dawn at the
very moment when the ^{huge} ~~convoy~~ was ready to leave the ^{A.T.S.} ~~depot~~. Half an hour
later ~~hundreds of vehicles would have~~ hundreds of vehicles would have
been enroute, one following the other in the prescribed distance, each
of them presenting but a poor target to the enemy. However, as it went,
his blows struck at the concentrated mass. ~~despite heavy A.A.~~
fire from a neighbouring forest ~~the enemy planes succeeded in~~
~~the~~ ^{a fairly strong low flying formation of} ~~the~~ ^{bombers} ~~planes~~ ^{auxiliary territorial} ~~succeeded in~~

t succ

during this whole announcement there had been something in Alf's expression that attracted the attention of both, Bob Stanhope, and Lutz Mayer. His blue eyes, narrowed with tension, were staring at nothing; his strong handsome features were motionless in a strangely inhuman way; a vein on his pale forehead was red and swollen like an ugly scar. But what his colleagues thought most bewildering was the frozen smile on his lips.

A longish list of names came over the radio in alphabetic order. "Corporal Jane Ralley" said the announcer.

obeying/ At this point Lutz Mayer suddenly left the room, as if
~~obeying~~ an imperative order. "Second Lieutenant Ann Saunders" he
 heard, while opening the door: "Junior Commander Alice Sloan..."

heard, while opening the door; "Junior Commander Alice Sloan..."

~~NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN~~ The name meant nothing to him.

He slammed the door and run down the corridor like haunted,
but couldn't escape the terrifying ~~noise~~ ^{noise} ~~aspiria~~ ^{aspiria} that followed him from Studio
B, ^{a noise} ~~sound~~ produced by a human voice, - Alf's voice, - though hardly
human in ~~any~~ ^{any} sound.

When he returned to the studio a few minutes later he was accompanied by Ted Fergusson.

They found Bob Stanhope ^{standing} near the door, gray like ashes, but obviously ^e determined to guard the exit against any possible ^{to escape} attempt on Alf's part .

There must have been a short but violent struggle;
Bob's left eye showed traces of it; so did his ^{lips.} bleeding ~~mouth~~. Alf
~~XX~~
~~XXXXXX~~, the upper part of his body thrown over the table sat motionsless,
burying his face in his arms. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ None of them spoke.
The silence grew more and more unbearable.

~~XXXX~~ Ted Fergusson finally broke it. "Has he confessed,"²¹
he asked without looking in Alf's direction.

Bob nodded. "He hadn't known the girl was on
duty today" he said in a voice cold with contempt; "so, he started
shouting and ~~calling~~ ^{calling} when ~~he heard she had died~~ ^{he heard she had died} ~~he hadn't meant~~ ^{he hadn't meant}
to do this, - not this! That's when I knew. My God, I should have known
all along!"

Lutz Mayer looked at his stopwatch. "We're on" he said;
"Here's the original text of today's news, the one without HIS 'improvements'. That's what I went to get, when matters became clear to me, during that announcement. And that's why I had to tell Fergusson. I'd rather not have been the one to tell him; it tasted foul and rotten in my mouth; I felt sick in my stomach; I still do; Pfui!" he said, without looking at Alf; "PFUI!"

"We're on" ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ said Bob; ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ "let's go, Lutz." They left.

Fergusson, too, turned toward the door. "Follow me please!" he said; "the police will be here shortly."

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In Studio B. Lutz Mayer was reading the news, as best he could. His voice didn't yield much sound, but the words came clear and distinct. Bob listened to them without grasping their meaning. I should have known! He thought, my God, I should have known! His strange intonations! His stressing of words! His pauses! His caughing! His personal versions of our bulletins! Codes all of it, dirty, slimy codes! And his friends at Frasquitta's, those harmless peace-at-any-price-drunkards! Idiot I am! Bloody, unsuspecting fool! Not to notice! Never to get suspicious! He's told them about the convoy before my very ears! He's murdered hundreds of girls in my very presence! He's been giving information to the hun ever since he came here, -vital information, fatal information! We've let him do it. We ^{we} trusted him; trusted him more than any of the others. Why? Not because of his title to be sure; his being a count didn't mean a thing. ~~Wasn't~~ Did it not, really? Didn't it make some slight difference after all? Be honest, now, he thought; Zach was a Jew and Lutz is a ~~simple~~ ^{simple} fellow whose fingernails aren't even always clean. But HE was different; not ~~just~~ ^{just} because ~~he~~ ^{but 'cause} he was a count, he could have become a Nazi bigwig, looked like Hitler's own wish-dream of an Aryan, ~~but~~ ^{yet} was still ~~kind~~ ^{kind} enough to come here and work with us. That's what we liked, that's what got us. All of us, Fergusson and myself and the rest of them.

~~Even Zach and Mayer didn't trust him. Even they seemed to be sort of proud of him. Did we ever check on his ~~past~~ ^{past}? Never thought of it. ~~most~~ ^{most} thoroughly~~

✓ You bet Zach and Lutz've been investigated; in fact they told me so.

Why are we always investigating the ~~wrong~~ ^{people} ~~people~~? Always trusting the wrong crowd? Is it ~~because~~ ^{that} we haven't yet - even now - caught the ~~real~~ ^{true} meaning of this ~~war~~ ^{struggle}? That ~~we don't feel it~~ ^{we don't feel it} deep down in our bones, some ~~of us~~ ^{of us} are still ~~nationalists and imperialists~~ ^{nationalists and imperialists} and racists and snobs, ~~which means that~~ ^{which means that}

who don't know an ally when they see him; or even mistrust him, 'cause he's a Jew or a simple fellow; but who fall for a rat like Neudeck, 'cause he comes from their own nationalistic, imperialist, racist and snobbish background? Sure! That's what it is! And that's what we've got to get rid of, - all of us, lest we'll loose out in the end.

HHHHHHHHHH The news was almost over; Lutz Mayer tried desperately to

clear his throat. ~~NNNNN~~
Bob
~~NNN~~ got ready to take over. The script in his hands was Zach's script,
Zach's
~~NNN~~ part of today's broadcast. He'd have enjoyed reading it, Bob
thought, + but died instead, ^{while} saving a little girl; an English girl.

Here we go,- he thought;this is the last item,!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[illegible][illegible]

ДЕЯТЕЛИ И РАБОТНИКИ НАУКИ И КУЛЬТУРЫ
МЕДИЦИНСКИЕ РАБОТНИКИ

Slight rumbling set in . HHHHHH 'The show' had started.
Accompanied by ^{armed}~~many~~ ^{TWO} men in civilians Alf Neudeck passed the sentry
for the last time in his life. The cigarette in his mouth was not lit.
"Fire?" said the sentry; HHHHHH Alfnodded, but couldn't protect the flame with
his cuffed hands ;it died,before the sentry HHHHHHHHHHHH.Alf HHHHHHHHHH
police-
HHHHHHHHHH walked toward the car HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH which
was waiting for him.His head thrown in his neck,he looked toward the
HHHHH burning sky.

In Studio B. Bob Stanhope finished his broadcast. "Hier ist der Londoner Rundfunk" he said; "London speaking."

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