

INCIDENT IN BERLIN

BY MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY
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Few spies make a mistake and live. But this spy was an amateur—and he made an amateur's mistake about a beautiful woman

SOMEONE once said to him that the moment after he crossed the frontier into Germany must be the worst of all, the moment when he felt the door shut behind him, but that was not the worst, he thought now; this was the worst, the moment before he crossed the frontier.

For now there was still time to turn back. He did not have to cross that boundary. There was no compulsion but his own will to make him go on. Although he had come to know well this last-minute revolt, it had never been so sharp in him before, so hard to resist. He had a feeling now that his luck had run out.

But he made himself step forward in his turn and present his papers. The flickering hope that something might be found to be out of order died; the substitution of photographs had been well done, and as Henrik Olson, Swedish commercial traveler, Peter Freeman Brown passed from Switzerland into the Third Reich. The agony of the last moment of safety was over.

Now he felt only anxious carefulness tinged with the wonder that was always present in him, a wry, faintly quizzical wonder, that he, of all men in the world, should be involved in these experiences. He disliked subterfuge and was afraid of risk. Adventure had never appealed to him; even in business he had been careful and conservative.

And now, here he was. . . .

Peter Brown was an American, born near Boston. When he was a boy, his family had sent him to school in Switzerland where he had learned to speak French and German so well that later, after college, an uncle in the jewelry business sent him abroad as buyer. He had fallen in love with a Swiss girl and married her and gone to work for his father-in-law, head of a firm of manufacturing jewelers, traveling over Europe as their representative. He liked his life in Switzerland, and ordinarily so many Americans came there that, until the United States entered the war, he had never felt isolated from his own country.

This matter of being a "source man" for his government—the Nazis would call him a spy—had come about gradually. In the beginning he had not been able to say no to the German refugees who were frantic for news of families left behind. He had been making frequent trips for his firm then—those were years when jewelers did a good business in the Reich, and it had not been too difficult to make cautious inquiries.

As time went on he had begun to be asked, confidentially, by people in authority for certain information. He was observant and practical, with a pleasant knack for getting along with people, so what he reported was clear and uncolored. It had become a regular thing for him, after a trip, to talk over conditions with a man from Washington.

Then his wife, Marguerite, died. That was just before the fall of Norway. After that he had taken risks he would not have thought fair to take before, nothing spectacular, but dangerous, nonetheless. A contact with the underground. Messages. Letters.

When America came into the war he had thought his usefulness, such as it was, had ended, but actually it was more important than ever to know current conditions in Germany and a sensible businessman made a good scout, so Peter Brown had been asked to go again behind the lines.

He had gone several times, as a Swiss, on forged passports. Now he was going to Berlin as a Swede—as Henrik Olson, repre-

senting Swedish paper mills. He did this; his Swedish, though fluent, was spontaneous as his French and German. The matter of Swiss passports was involved, so the agent from Washington arranged these things had procured the passport of a Swede who would lie low in Switzerland until Peter Brown returned. If he not return the man would report his loss.

In Berlin, Peter Brown was to go to a certain address and contact a man in the city there. The man knew something about the secret weapon. What he could report on seemed to Brown worth the risk he was going to take, but he was going because it appeared only fair to do what he could when so many young men were doing so much more. He had a horror of falling into Nazi clutches, so he carried capsules about him. In the end he had to raise his hands, to raise them quickly, he kept one capsule beneath his coat on the back of his neck.

He felt of it now and, as the train came at last, he wondered whether he would be on one that would bring him out of Germany many.

"SO, YOU are Swedish?"

That was Herr Hauser, from whom Brown had rented a room. The three of them—Hauser and his wife and Brown, were in the Hausers' small sitting room which was also the dining room.

He had been fortunate to find the room. The small hotel where he had intended to stay had been half wrecked by bombing, and the proprietor had given him two addresses.

"How are things in Sweden?" Brown wanted to know. He was a short fellow, thin, who had once been fat but was now thin, his round face crisscrossed with lines, like a deflating balloon. His wife looked like a muscled, a small, brown, square woman, like a figure in wood. She picked up her glass and sat down, looking at their lodger with sharp, suspicious curiosity.

Brown was tired. The journey had been long and cold and uncomfortable, a day full of difficulties, but the time when people were inclined to take things said that things were not too hard in Sweden, that they had nothing to complain about.

"I should think not," said Frau Hauser. "Are you not ashamed, you Swedes, to be neutral in this war against the Bolsheviks?"

"Na, na—" said her husband reproachfully.

Brown rubbed his chin. He had seen the do that and it seemed a good, charitable gesture. "No one," he said mildly, "is in danger of his government for trying to keep the peace. . . . We like peace, we Swedes."

The woman said abruptly, "My husband is at the Russian front. They are bombing those Russians!"

"They are hard people," Peter agreed.

"And the English! They also are hard-barians! Killing civilians, women and children! Did you ever hear of such things? What can their hearts be like, to do such things?"

"They are devils," said Hauser in an ancholy voice.

Their lodger rubbed his chin again, perhaps because of revenge," he suggested in the careful tone of one who wishes to be just to all sides. "Yes, revenge makes people strike back like that."

"Revenge? What have they to revenge? Her small dark eyes flew open like lightning. "When we bombed England we bombed only military objectives. Never a home, never a hospital. Our Fuehrer said so. But it will be different. Since they are killing innocent civilians, we shall strike back."

"Yes, that is natural. . . . Have many been killed in the raids here?"

"I do not know," said Hauser. "No great harm has been done except to homes."

"I hope they don't come over tonight."

"First, there is always the shelter. I must go at once to the shelter. I will show you the way. It is a good shelter, in the cellar. Anyway, we have got them here. . . . But let us talk of Sweden. When will you come home, Herr Olson?"

So Peter Brown told about Olson's home in Engelholm and the paper mills and the difficulties of exchange and the govern-

ment and government regulations. He went to his room and brought out two cigars from the supply furnished by the man from Washington, and some chocolates for Frau Hauser and she brewed some ersatz coffee, and he said the lack of coffee was the hardest thing the Swedes had to bear, and for a moment the lack of coffee was a bond between them. Once or twice a plane passed overhead and then the talk paused while they listened; but there was no alarm.

Herr Hauser leaned forward and fingered the lapel of Brown's coat. "That is good stuff, English?"

"Perhaps. It is old but my best now." "I used to like good stuff. When things were going well I got clothes made to order. But all that matters now is that our soldiers have good clothes."

Frau Hauser said, "I sent my fur coat to the Front."

"That is how I should feel," said Brown.

"You have no sons?"

"Only a daughter. Ten years old."

He brought out a picture of a little girl. It was not his Marguerite's picture. Inventing a daughter for Olson was a way to keep close to his own character and experience. He told them, "She is at Engelholm with her grandparents. When spring comes I shall take her to Skelters, a resort near us." He wondered if he would be able to take little Marguerite again to Lucerne.

"With her grandparents? Then your wife?"

"She died four years ago."

"That is sad."

Frau Hauser said, "Yes, a man is lost without a wife."

"Oh, it is not so bad to be a bachelor," said Hauser in a slightly malicious tone. He winked at Peter. "A traveling bachelor, eh?"

"Well, we must do something to make it pleasant for you, he said. Elsa would be just the one to bring a little life to our guest's stay—eh, Mother?" He had a great air of just having thought of this but Brown thought the air was forced. Hauser explained, "The Frau in Kimmeler is a neighbor. A very attractive young woman."

Brown's protest was unfeigned. "Oh, a young woman—I am a quiet sort."

Hauser seemed about to say more but his wife rose and said, "Our guest is tired. Heinrich. Show him how to get to the shelter and then let him go to his room. Sleep well, Herr Olson."

THERE was no made that night. In the morning Brown made no immediate effort to look up the address he was to go to. Surveillance, if there was surveillance, would be most vigilant the first days. So he reported himself to the police as he was required to do daily, then went about the business of looking up the firms that wanted Swedish paper, trudging long blocks, riding on crowded busses and trams, seeing how sharply now people were divided into classes, the driven, shabby workers and the overlords of government, who rolled in swift cars. He saw long queues waiting before the food shops, and he saw the big crater holes in Unter den Linden, and the squares of demolished buildings with restorations going on. He saw a battalion of forced labor marched through the streets, thin, ragged Frenchmen and Belgians, and soldiers, full-fed, with young and arrogant faces, and he saw a line of ambulances. He saw trucks of families, evidently from bombed areas, with babies and baggage and the odd impedimenta that people save.

He talked a little with people here and there, with the men at the paper firms, and with men at the small, out-of-the-way restaurants where he took his lunch and dinner of soup, sausage and black bread. Here only the officials and their families and their favorites were well served. Very different from the last time he had been here, after the fall of France. Then a very chambermaid had sheer French silk stockings.

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Brown was afraid they would begin to beat him. He felt desperate with his hands tied. Then Elsa came in with her gay air of being at ease and one of the Nazis greeted her laughingly





NEVER can I describe to you the emotions I felt on the arrival of the armored column of General Leclerc southeast of Paris. Having just returned from a patrol which scared the pants off of me and having been kissed by all the worst element in a town which imagined it had been liberated through our fortuitous entry, I was informed that the general himself was just down the road and anxious to see us. Accompanied by one of the big shots of the resistance movement and Colonel B, who by that time was known throughout Rambouillet as a gallant officer and a *grand seigneur* and who had held the town ever since we could remember, we advanced in some state toward the general. His greeting—unprintable—will live in my ears forever.

"Buzz off, you unspeakables," the gallant general said, in effect, in something above a whisper, and Colonel B, the resistance king and your armored-operations correspondent withdrew.

Later the G-2 of the division invited us to dinner and they operated next day on the information Colonel B had amassed for them. But for your correspondent that was the high point of the attack on Paris.

In war, my experience has been that a rude general is a nervous general. At this time I drew no such deductions but departed on another patrol where I could keep my own nervousness in one jeep and my friends could attempt to clarify the type of resistance we could encounter on the following day between Toussus le Noble and Le Christ de Saclay.

Having found out what this resistance would be, we returned to the Hotel du Grand Veneur in Rambouillet and passed a restless night. I do not remember exactly what produced this restlessness but perhaps it was the fact that the joint was too full of too many people, including, actually, at one time two military police. Or perhaps it was the fact that we had proceeded too far ahead of our supply of Vitamin B₁ and the ravages of alcohol were affecting the nerves of the harder guerrillas who had liberated too many towns in too short a time. At any rate I was restless and I think, without exaggeration, I may truly state that those whom Colonel B and I by then referred to as "our people" were restless.

The guerrilla chief, the actual fighting head of "our people," said, "We want to take Paris. What the hell is the delay?"

"There is no delay, Chief," I answered. "All this is part of a giant operation. Have patience. Tomorrow we will take Paris."

"I hope so," the guerrilla chief said. "My wife has been expecting me there for some time. I want to get the hell into Paris to see my wife, and I see no necessity to wait for a lot of soldiers to come up."

"Be patient," I told him.

The Eve of the Fateful Day

That fateful night we slept. It might be a fateful night but tomorrow would certainly be an even more fateful day. My anticipations of a really good fight on the morrow were marred by a guerrilla who entered the hotel late at night and woke me to inform me that all the Germans who could do so were pulling out of Paris. We knew there would be fighting the next day by the screen the German army had left. But I did not anticipate any heavy fighting, since we knew the German dispositions and could attack or by-pass them accordingly, and I assured our guerrillas that if they would only be patient, we would have the privilege of entering Paris with soldiers ahead of us instead of behind us.

This privilege did not appeal to them at all. But one of the big shots of the underground insisted that we do this, as he said it was only courteous to allow troops to precede and by the time we had reached Toussus le Noble, where there was a short but sharp fight, orders were given that neither newspapermen nor guerrillas were to be allowed to proceed until the column had passed.

The day we advanced on Paris it rained heavily and everyone was soaked to the skin
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Two captured Germans who wish they had never seen France are marched off to prison by exultant men of the Maquis

HOW WE CAME TO PARIS

BY ERNEST HEMINGWAY
RADIOED FROM PARIS

The guerrillas had liberated too many towns in too short a time. Now, incredibly, they were told to wait for General Leclerc's armored column to precede them into the French capital

General Jacques Leclerc stops to talk with men of a tank crew

