

Allies came in I would go to them and find my old bunch, get word to my wife, all the things I dreamed about.

But you never know what you'll do, for you don't always act with your brain. The nerves of Paris grew tauter as the Allies came closer. French, American and British flags began to be seen in windows, and patrolling Jerries, getting desperate, emptied their guns in the windows and sometimes went inside to drag out the flag-showers. I even saw a cyclist riding along with an American flag fluttering from his bike.

Then the tight nerves of the city cracked. I saw possibly the first open eruption of that wild week in which the French people won back their capital. A big German staff car swept down the avenue in front of my apartment, two machine-gun-armed Jerries standing on the running boards. Another big car approached from the opposite direction. Across its sides was emblazoned "FFI." The cars fired as they passed—a lurid scene out of a gangster movie. The French car jammed on its brakes until it humped like an angry cat, made a U-turn and took off after the German car with guns roaring from the windows.

That began, for me at least, a string of blazing days and nights. I saw a German officer stop a little French car, driven by a woman, and order the woman and her small boy out of the vehicle. He was "requisitioning" it. The woman protested a little. The man ripped open the door with fury, pulled his gun and shot the woman and her child dead, dragged out their bodies, got in and drove off.

I guess that was when I knew I couldn't hole up any longer in the place with the soft bed and wait for personal liberation.

By the next day I was a street fighter. A truckload of twenty Germans moved

ments, too. One night toward the end I crawled behind a barricade where a small radio had been set up, and over the set we heard a news broadcast, telling us that Paris was liberated. The rapturous voice of the announcer was immediately drowned out by a long burst of machine-gun fire from the German armored car down the street.

"Roosevelt has sent a message of congratulations to General de Gaulle," the announcer said, and we all hit the street as a German shell landed near by.

And there was cold horror . . . The abandoned Gestapo torture chamber I inspected. The bodies of twenty or thirty men and women lay about one ghastly room, most of them stripped. They had no fingernails. The hands of many of them had been broken in vises. They had all been whipped until lacerated. Some of the bodies had been bayoneted systematically around the abdomens. The breasts of four of the women had been cut off. The organs of most of the men were hacked away.

I went into the corner of the room and was sick for a long time and then went out in the air and swore to God that somehow, with what little influence I might have, I would find some way to bring this horror to the attention of the men who will frame the peace with the monsters who were capable of it.

Well, you know the rest of the Paris story. But no matter whose account of it you read, there is no way you can really know unless you were there. It is like trying to describe the sound of a gun to a man who has never heard a gun, or music to a man who has been deaf all his life, or color to a blind man. It was Mardi Gras, amplified a million times. It was Times Square on Armistice night, enlarged a million times—with shots from

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