The Night AN LTI

...Guards under black ...ed at chairs. Their ... were ordered expectantly. ... on a long cot lay ... man in shirt-sleeves. ... spots were on the mattress. ... man had a thick round ... and a swarthy, waxen and gray ... eyes. He eyed me coldly. ... know who I am?" he ...

"... sir."

"I am Inspector Radam. Your comrades wish I'd burn alive in ... I'm the best friend of Prose... Bosch of the Special Tribu... Radam grinned broadly.

"In 1922, you were a communist. ... that right?"

"Yes, sir."

"I believe in the slogan ... the Fascist wherever you ... him. Is that right?"

"The Party has always rejected ... theory of individual terror," ... answered. "We believed in win... over an antagonist by discus...."

"Ah," Radam said, "the famous ideological weapons! About two hundred of our brave boys were slaughtered in 1922. Do you mean to say they died of discussions? Or ... old age?"

From a shoe-box at the end of ... cot Radam drew a sheaf of ...tostographs. He handed them to ... trooper. One after another the ...sioner held them in front of my ... They were the pictures of ...ilations of murdered storm troop...

"Tell me all about the murders ... committed," he said with sud... ferocity.

"I've committed no murders."

"Don't talk like a lawyer."

"I'm no murderer."

"Clout him," said Radam. "Take off his pants and clout him."

The troopers ripped away my trousers and shackled my hands to the bars of the window. Then they ... me until a trickle of blood ran down my legs. At first I moaned. ... gritted my teeth and tried to think how far my hatred was, but ... moaning came anyway. The ... blows were like the strokes of a ... whip-saw biting deeper and deeper into my flesh.

Things began to whirl around my head. The walls, the bars of the window, the cot, Radam, my manacled hands. The floor rushed up ... and gyrated in a jumble of black ... red clouds.

"Everything is going to hell," I thought. The essence of oblivion gave me a remote feeling of happiness. But then I heard a distant voice:

"Stop!"

A basin of water was dumped over my head like a steel helmet. ... my unshackled me. Again I stood ... the center to the cell. From the ... down I was naked. The blood ... between my toes was getting sticky.

"Two murders," said Radam.

"Two?"

"Tell me about the murders."

"I don't understand. No, no murders."

Radam rose to his feet and poked ... swishy finger at my throat.

"Listen, you," he said. "I think ... you're tough. I can tell you the names of the toughest comrades in the land and how they got soft, oh, soft and tractable. Thought they were tough, but they were not. Those who don't get soft, are dead, ... see? Do you think you're tough, boy?"

"No, I'm not tough."

He continued quietly. "Here's your choice. Either you confess, ... then your head will come off. One stroke with the big ax. Sast! Like that. Quick! But till then you're ... Or you don't confess. Then we'll take the meat off your bones ... inch by inch, gently, and you'll ... and you'll die anyhow."

"I think such a cell is a man does not think. I had no thought and my conscious will to keep alive. There was only a dark, overpowering urge. Hate—hate. "Hate him ... you're lost!"

"Hate in the phonograph," Radam ordered.

"The phonograph is busted," a trooper reported. "They'll hear him scream."

"Get a towel round his head." Radam directed, "and jam a steel helmet over his face, and then all you fellows sing. Let him yell to his heart's content."

The whips started to crash and waves of fire curled and slashed through every muscle. At first a human sound and tore its way from ... mouth into anything they can get hold of. Then he howls into the helmet and the shrieks pound back ... thunder into his own ears. And ... after that he can't scream any more. He groans . . . a long groan... intermingled with sharp gasps for air. A sonorous voice counted. ... seventeen . . . eighteen . . . nineteen. . . ."

Things went red and black again. ... twenty-four . . . twenty-five . . . he did not hurt any more. Only ... legs were out of control and ... kicking wildly in the air. The singing voices receded as if they be... muted by a detachment way down ... a long street.

A dash of cold water came zip... ping into the silence. My eyes were open again. First thing they saw ... were boots to right and left, and ... in between the bright yellow ex... hoods of Inspector Radam. I was ... naked and utterly weary. The ... brain hammered: "Tell them noth...ing." The blood was pounding ... everywhere close under my skin and my whole body seemed studded ... with pieces of hot iron. The electric light was turned on. Through the ... window I saw that it was getting ... dark outside. Again I stood in the ... center of the cell. In a corner sat ... a young girl behind a small table. ... On the table was a typewriter.

"What happened to you?" asked Radam.

"Nothing," I said.

"Did anybody hurt you?"

"Nobody hurt me."

"All right," said Radam, turning to the typist. "Write: Everything I am saying now I offer voluntarily ... of my own accord I am making this confession freely, without ... compulsion of any sort."

The typewriter clattered.

"The statements presented to me ... you present at a conference of the ... leaders of the Party units of the ... Reich district. The leaders of de... tachments of the Red Front ... were also present. This con... fession is directed against ... the counter-revolutionary storm troop... headquarters on the Schaar... ... event took place the next morning, shortly after midnight. The storm trooper Heinelmann was stabbed to death, six others were seriously wounded. During the conference in question, you proposed that a Nazi had to be murdered in order to frighten off further attempts of the National Socialist Party to gain a foothold in the harbor districts. Right?"

"No."

The typewriter clattered while Radam spoke. It recorded question and answer.

"You were a leader of the seamen's union?"

"Yes."

"You've fought the growing Nazi influence on the ships and on the docks?"

With each question came a swift hail of blows and kicks.

"Yes."

"Told your followers to brave overboard any Nazi who might board a German ship?"

"No. I fought them in the press, by leaflets, in meetings."

"In demonstrations?"

"Yes, also in demonstrations."

"With guns and knives?"

"That's not right."

"You've never shot or stabbed a storm trooper?"

"Never."

"You were wise. You preferred to have your rank and file do the shooting and stabbing. You sat back in the dark, pulling the wires, and now you're afraid of punishment, and you deny it. That's right, yes?"

"No, I do not believe in terrorism."

"You believe in revolution?"

"Yes."

"You organized strikes?"

"Yes, I have."

"Were any people killed in those strikes?"

"There was some fighting with police and scabs."

Radam approached me closely. He stretched out a finger and traced a swastika in the slime of sweat, dust and blood which covered my belly.

"You are intellectually responsible for those murders. You're more guilty than those who did the direct killing. You said at that meeting that storm troopers had to be murdered. That that would drive the Nazis out of the workers' quarters. Right?"

"That's not right."

"So you organized the strikes, but you did not do the actual killing?"

I did not answer.

"The accused is silent," said Radam. Then: "Do you believe in the thesis: 'Kill the Nazi wherever you meet him?'"

"No."

"You don't wanted to win over Nazis by discussions?"

"I did."

"And those who could not be convinced had to be murdered; that was your conviction, yes?"

"No."

"Are you a pacifist?"

"No."

"So you're a man who believes in violence. It'll cost you your head, friend." Radam turned toward the troopers: "Take this dog out for exercise and bring me Dettmer, Wehrenberg, Hoppe and Koopmann."

Two Elite Guards took me out into the dark yard. I was naked. They kicked me and told me to run. I ran across the yard and the Elite Guards ran beside me, and hit me with their rubber clubs, shouting: "Run faster! Faster!"

After that I stood still in the cold, with arms raised. Five minutes, ten, sixty—I do not know. I had ceased to be a man. I was a living chunk of meat without ambition, hope, will. I did what I was told to do, and only once did I fall into the merciful cry: "Finish it! Shoot me, shoot!" A shot in the back of the neck would have been sudden paradise. The troops laughed. They slapped my face with belts. Then they made me run around the yard on all fours.

From a window sounded Radam's voice: "Bring the swine back!"

In the four corners of the cell stood four men, nudes and torsos. In the wall and beneath the window stood a fifth. As I entered the cell, they twisted their faces sideways to see. Their faces were gray and blue and crusted with dirt and bristly beards. They had had no chance to wash or shave in months. I knew they were comrades and knew that I knew them, that they were workers who had gone with me through battle and distress, and yet I was not able to recognize a single face, so much had they changed.

A long silence followed. My four unwilling accusers stood in their corners like mummies propped upright by a joker's hand. More troopers crowded into the cell. About me was a ring of grim young faces under black steel helmets. Painted in white on each helmet was a skeleton head and two crossed bones. The silence was broken by the clatter of the typewriter. Inspector Radam dictated: "The accused, confronted by the Schutzhaftgefangenen Dettmer, Wehrenberg, Koopmann and Hoppe still persists that he had nothing to do with the assassination of Storm Trooper Heingelmann. The four above-mentioned prisoners, however, stated voluntarily and in the presence of witnesses that the accused has played a leading role in the meeting in which the plan to murder National Socialists was hatched." Turning to me, Radam said quietly:

"What do you say now? Are these four not your good comrades? Are you coward enough to let them take the sole blame for a crime in which you were a partner?"

"I had nothing to do with street murders," I replied dully.

The four other prisoners were led away. Again my wrists were shackled to the bars of the window. From under the cot one of the Death Head guards extracted a length of chain. He doubled it into a fight and wrapped the loose ends around his right fist.

"Ready," he said.

"Clout him," Radam ordered. "clout him to death."

Dan Tympkin had been beaten to death with chains. I closed my eyes and waited. I was going down, down.

"Clout him," Radam said.

In that instant I gave up the hopeless fight. I was not conscious of a decision or a definite act of will. I had suffered more than most of my comrades. I had fought with all the skill, all the tenacity, all the loyalty and hatred that was in me. I could do no more. A strange voice said clearly: "All right, I was at the meeting." A moment later I realized that it had been my own voice.

My shackles were unlocked. Death Head guards placed me gently on a cot. Some one handed me a cup of strong coffee. Some one else stuck a cigarette between my lips and struck a match. I smoked ravenously; nothing else mattered. Inspector Radam dictated in a subdued voice and the typewriter rattled at high speed. I heard him mention my name repeatedly, but that was all. He thrust a pen into my hand and indicated several typewritten sheets on the table.

I signed.

Radam grabbed my hand and shook it vigorously. "Now, there's a sensible fellow, he rumbled. "Any time you want to tell me more, just ask the guard on duty to telephone."

I was led back to my cell. The first pale light of dawn welled up in the eastern sky. I was put into irons. I received clean sheets and clean blankets and a package of tobacco.

"Sleep as long as you like," the ...rd guard said. "When you've slept long enough, bang on the door. We'll give you a bath and a haircut, and a shave."

Sleep would not come.

(Continued Tomorrow)

Abbot Taylor Heads Group

Elected President by Benedictine Educators

BELMONT. — The Most Reverend Abbot Vincent G. Tayler, OSB, president of Belmont Abbey College, was elected to be active president of the Benedictine Educational Association by the delegation as they concluded the 24th annual meeting here at Abbey College.

The convention accepted the resolutions committee report which included plans for an anniversary convention next year, to be held at St. Vincent's Archabbey in Pennsylvania, where the association was first organized 25 years ago. The theme of that convention will be "A Benedictine Monastery is God's greatest Missionary for Good," and papers will be read, amplifying the subject.

With Abbot Vincent Taylor of Belmont, the convention elected the Rt. Reverend Abbot Lambert Burton of Washington, secretary-treasurer, and the Reverend Sylvester Schmitz, of Atchison, Kas., as the member of the executive board.

Catawba County's USO Quota Passed in Drive

NEWTON—Catawba County exceeded its quota by more than $500 in the United Service Organization's drive for funds, headed in the county by Senator J. Henry Hill and in Newton by J. W. Abernethy. Figures showed that the quota was $1,750, but $2357 was raised, $1,749 in the city of Hickory and $607 in Newton, Conover, Maiden and Catawba.

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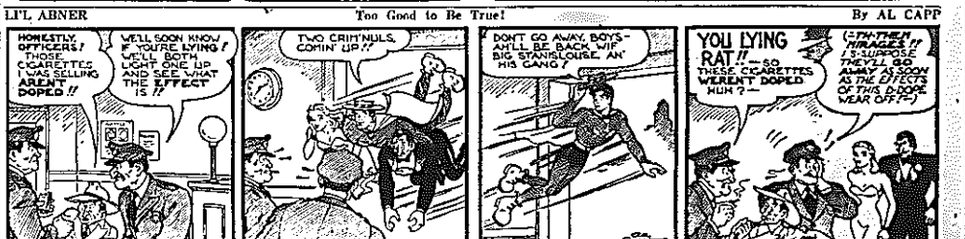
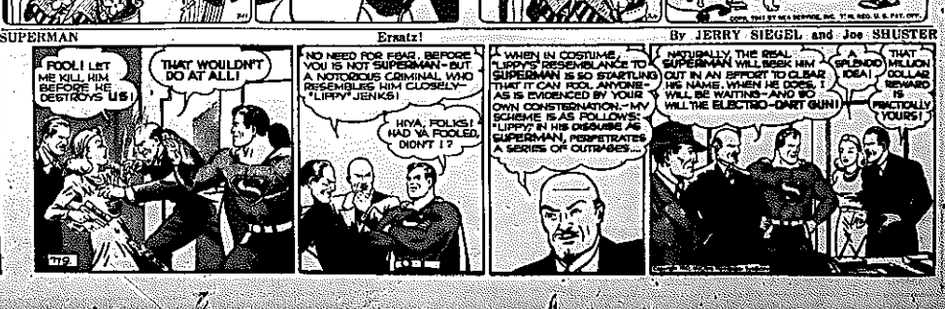
BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES — Very Embarrassing — By MARTIN

LI'L ABNER — Too Good to Be True! — By AL CAPP



WASH TUBBS — J. P. Can't Take It — By ROY CRANE

SUPERMAN — Ersatz! — By JERRY SIEGEL and Joe SHUSTER