



Barbed wire, and soldiers . . . the exercise ground of a German Nazi concentration camp.

# I MARRIED A NAZI!

## Blight of The Swastika Falls on Romance

(Continued from page one.)  
to ourselves. Life in the tropics can be very dull, but I was too much interested in a new environment to be bored. Also I was too much in love with my husband.

Little differences based on nationality and rearing cropped out occasionally, but the intimations of storms to come were slight. Karl had long since decided that he would end his connection with the exporting firm that employed him and would seek to make a place for himself in America.

We left in September for Chicago, where we visited for three weeks. In October we sailed for Germany. Karl maintained that it was only for a honeymoon. I am sure he meant just that, and I was glad to travel to his homeland. Had I only known how the German environment would affect him, how it would make him into a thoroughbred Nazi, I think I would have remained in the United States.

We had been happy. We were still happy as we left the ship at Cuxhaven and boarded the boat train for Hamburg. I knew that there would be hardships for an American girl in a strange land, but I was determined to readjust myself, to understand this old country that was Karl's and by marriage mine, too.

At first all was easy. Our welcome was warm. In the Hamburg station Karl's mother was waiting for us, and so was his sister Else, a hearty young woman with red cheeks, black hair, and flashing brown eyes. Karl went forward for the first greeting from his mother, while Else hugged me with sincere warmth. They rejoiced at the return of the family's youngest son from the tropics, and they were unstintingly glad to see me again. Three bouquets were thrust into my arms as we left the station.

In the comfortable home where three generations of Reinkes had lived, coffee and cakes and good will awaited us. I still treasure the scene in the old-fashioned dining and living room. It is so easy to bring its

clear lines into memory. Under the fierce light of the old lamp I can still see white-haired Mother Reinke, smiling, unceasingly active, serving us all and chatting in an amazing mixture of English and German. I can see Father Reinke, speaking his German sentences slowly, that I might understand a little, and smiling constantly to let me know that he approved of me. There were, besides, Sister Else and jolly Aunt Mida and sedate Aunt Anna—and Karl and myself.

No talk of politics was brought into that family circle. There was no mention of the troubles that had overwhelmed Germany after the war, nor of the misfortunes of the Reinkes. They were simply, these good, kindly folk, striving to make a strange girl from America welcome. They were showing me how gracious life in Germany might be. If it could have been like that always!

Already I knew a little of the restricted standard of living in my husband's country. So I ate sparingly of the butter. It is rationed strictly; each family gets just so much each week. Most of the good butter, I learned later, was reserved by the Reinkes for guests.

Late that night, when Karl and I were tucked into beds under great feather quilts, a secret was disclosed. From the darkness he told me in quiet tones that his brother Friedrich had been released that very day from a Nazi prison camp. It was a story typical of Germany today. Friedrich had been seized without warning and locked up without trial for ten weeks. For a time his parents could not discover even where he was. Now, as inexplicably, he was at liberty again.

We wondered why Friedrich had been singled out for persecution. He was a patriot. He had served in the World war, had been wounded five times, and had won the iron cross. Why? There was but one plausible answer. Friedrich, who had achieved success as a stage producer and director in Berlin, was in disfavour because he had refused to join the Nazi party.

That night I began to under-



A performance at the opera. German opera performances are almost uniformly good . . . disciplined German opera goes display real pleasure in the music. (Acme photo.)

stand a little more of Germany. No one could appeal for justice in my husband's brother's case. His parents could only bow to the brute strength of government and hope that luck would be with him. I began to feel that I, too, had been trapped. It was as if the Nazis had discovered me, an alien who had married into Deutschland, who must be whipped into line. This experience of Friedrich's seemed a personal warning—young Frau Reinke must bend herself to every German's lot.

In the morning these dark premonitions vanished. We settled down to family life, visited friends, went sightseeing. Karl was delighted to be at home. I do not think my life held any happier period than the next week.

Mother Reinke began teaching me how to be a good German hausfrau. I helped her grind the coffee, beat the eggs, stir the batter for the marvelous dishes she prepared. And as I tended the soup pot or the oven I listened to her talk gayly of her youth, of her marriage nearly fifty years before, of the war years, and of Karl, whom we both loved.

An idyl soon to end.

Karl and I went to Berlin. We arrived at night and put up in a large hotel. The morning after our arrival I awoke early. The sun was shining, and I stepped out on the balcony of our room. Across the way, in a parklike space surrounded by a high brick wall, a man in black shorts was running around a cinder track. I called Karl to the window.

"Look," I said. "I wish I could exercise like that."

Then I noticed something that had escaped attention at first. There was barbed wire at the top of the wall, and a soldier with a rifle in his hands stood guard in a clump of bushes. The exercise ground belonged to a concentration camp.

Soon Friedrich arrived. He was active, blustery, bubbly. Conversation poured out of him. Karl, quiet and gentle, was quite overshadowed. He idolized this elder brother. Friedrich took this as his due. And he refused to be impressed by the view from our window.

"Those men over there," he said in his sharply clipped Oxford English, "are probably Nazis, being disciplined for small party irregularities. You should have seen the place where they put me."

Thus lightly he dismissed the episode of his imprisonment.

Friedrich devoted the day to our entertainment. He loaded us into his little car and drove us to Potsdam to see the palace of Sans Souci. A marvelous place, but to me its most appealing feature was the view of the old farm windmill from the terrace.

Once Frederick the Great had claimed that old windmill, but the sturdy farmer who owned

it went to law and after a great battle won. Frederick, the story goes, accepted his defeat gracefully and became the firm friend of the farmer. Who in Germany would oppose authority now?

Returning to Berlin, we checked out of the hotel and moved into a little pension that Friedrich had recommended. It was shabby, depressing, and I suggested after a few days that we leave it. Karl's feelings were wounded and he replied bitterly.

"You dare accuse Friedrich of bad taste!" he said. "You are a trouble maker. You speak English on the streets, in restaurants, so people will think that I—a German—am a silly foreigner. Like all Americans, you are extravagant, bent only on spending money. You cannot cook, you cannot keep house like a real frau. You wish only to travel, to hide your lack of ability that a wife should have."

There was more of this, and none of it complimentary. It was the first time Karl had shown me his true opinion of womankind. And for the first time I began to wonder whether my marriage had been a wise one.

His fit of temper passed and we moved soon to a more satisfactory pension on the Buda-pesterstrasse. The tension slackened, and I began to hope that that was nothing but surface irritation to account for that quarrel. We settled down to a round of exploration and of operagoing. There at least we were on common ground.

The opera performances were almost uniformly good. I appreciated all of them. But the audiences, their appearance and their behavior, interested me even more. Only the foreigners dressed in evening clothes. The German men wore dark suits or the omnipresent gray-green uniforms; the women, plain silk dresses or white blouses with black skirts.

During the long intermissions the custom was to promenade two by two around the corridors and foyers. It was here the contrast with the American opera-goer was most marked. The German crowd was less adorned, less on its party manners. The faces of the women were shiny; few were rouged. But they were good and honest countenances, displaying steady strength, in-born courage, and real pleasure in the music.

These Germans were disciplined, in the opera house as everywhere else. Never was an artist interrupted by applause during a number; the rule—adhered to closely—was to applaud only at the end of the acts. Then the clapping was thunderous. The system is a help to the artists.

During the long operas of the Ring trilogy, which begin at 6 and last to midnight, the intermission promenaders stopped in supper rooms to consume beer, wine, sandwiches, and salads—another excellent custom.

No matter where one meets

the Germans, they seem (unless politics is involved) modest and well behaved. They are serious, almost sad, if one can generalize about a race. But there are extremes of character beneath the stolid exterior. In trouble or discouraged, your German tends to drop into despair's depths. In success he becomes a superman, fired with furious energy and pride.

It is Hitler's strength that he understands that this people wants most of all prestige and honor.

In spite of all our activities in Berlin, constraint was growing between my husband and me. I tried to be calm, to see that he was trying, just as I was, to adjust himself to an unfamiliar life. But it became increasingly difficult to listen to his biting remarks without some come-back. Karl was becoming obsessed by his belief that Germany was the victim of monstrous cruelty growing out of the peace treaty at Versailles.

"You do not know what suffering is." "You take nothing seriously." "You are unhappy



The harbor at Hamburg.

over unimportant things while Germany suffers." These are but samples of the strange things he said to me. He and Friedrich and Deutschland, it seemed, were being martyred, and I was in some way responsible.

I wondered, there in a foreign country, what had become of the two persons who had loved each other enough to cross oceans, to give up home ties, that they might be together and build their own lives anew.

I rejoiced when we could leave Berlin. After a short visit to relatives in Stettin we returned to Hamburg, where we leased a small apartment. Karl selected it. There was a kitchen, a bedroom, a living room with a music alcove, and a bathroom. There were no closets, kitchen cabinets, or refrigerator. German housewives buy their own wardrobes and keep most of their foodstuffs in open-air pantries.

Many of the pieces with which we furnished the little flat came from Mother Reinke's attic. Others were purchased in second-hand stores. In the end we had an odd conglomeration of many styles of furniture. But we liked things as they were. Karl was less critical now, and I was again hopeful that things



Butter shop under guard. Germany's food supply is restricted, and purchasers must register with the police as consumers.

would turn out well in the end. I renewed my efforts to become a good hausfrau.

That was not so easy. Germany's food supply is restricted. Before we could get our ration of butter Karl had to take both our passports to the police and register us as consumers. Twice a week a half pound was delivered. Tuesday's butter was adulterated with margarine and was often strong. Saturday's came from Denmark and was delicious. The Danes could have sent more, but the import regulations forbade. There was also a small allowance of cooking margarine, which wasn't very good, to speak conservatively.

Eggs were scarce; often we had none for weeks. When the milkman had any he rationed them, two or three to a household. There is a law that no family may keep more than seven chickens, because chickens are grain fed, and there is not enough grain to supply the human population with all it needs. Mother Reinke shared with us the eggs that her little flock laid, so we were really better off than many of Hamburg's folk.

German milk seems to be without cream, but we were glad to get it as it was. About the breakfast rolls, or *brötchen*, there could be no complaint. These were placed each morning in a little basket hung on the doorknob. They were of a sandy color, made (a legal regulation) of a mixture of wheat and corn flour. Actually they were delicious, and the Germans never seem to be worried about the disappearance of white bread from their diet.

Our usual breakfast consisted of rolls with hot chocolate and cheese, sausage or jam. We ate supper at home, too, and supplies in the stores were varied enough to let us have what we needed except in the way of fresh vegetables, which are seldom found in winter. We dined out, and the menus in the restaurants, while not so extensive as in America, were adequate and the cooking was good.

Nothing in Germany is wasted. Garbage is carefully sorted. Potato peelings and other food scraps are fed to hogs. Newspapers are cleaned, pressed, and used again in paper making; tooth paste tubes as well as tin cans are melted down and reworked; bottles are collected by the Hitler Youth. It was not unusual for a storekeeper to ask if the buyer would take the package unwrapped so he could save paper.

Germans take these economies as a matter of course. They have long been accustomed to privation. What they are undergoing now is nothing to the conditions during and after the war. Karl recalled that for days he had eaten nothing but turnips. Then the inflation came and wiped out the little fortune of the Reinkes. They had left not even enough money to give him violin lessons, which he wanted passionately as a boy.

Invariably his reminiscences led up to bitter talk of politics. Karl was like the other millions of Germans who had been humiliated and had suffered. The memories destroyed the influence of the pleasant years he had had in the tropics.

"The world shall be made to pay for the degradation and disgrace of the Versailles treaty," he said. "You will see that French and British diplomacy can no longer imprison the German Reich. Hitler will soon make an end of their tricks."

He told me, too, what he thought of the Jews. His view, harsh and illogical though it was, was typical of the German masses.

"We regard Jews as commu-

nists and international agents of revolution," he said. "They control most of the world's money, but seek to become still richer at the expense of Aryans. We want law and order. We are gradually ridding ourselves of these leeches. They have no country, no loyalty, and can never be patriots. We are finished with them."

Then he lectured me on the injustice done Germany at Versailles. We could never see eye to eye on the invasion of Belgium. He maintained that the world understood no argument but force. To listen was difficult when no reply was permitted. My counteropinions were always torn in pieces and tossed back to me. The wisest thing to do, if I was to stay his wife, was to maintain silence.

My husband no longer criticized the Nazis for the way they had treated his brother. The party was now beyond opposition. And I—I was still an American. I could not remake myself into the mold of a German hausfrau. How far apart we were!

The first Sunday of December, 1937, we went to tea in the home of some wealthy cousins of Mother Reinke. One of the guests was the head of a large Hamburg shipping firm, who informed me without qualification that Germany intended to have back her African colonies and that "nothing can prevent it." Another was a heavy man in a full Nazi uniform, with a red swastika on his left arm.

The refreshments were delicious. When we had finished eating our host rose and made a long and seemingly serious speech. I understood only a little of it, but its purport was friendly. There were highly complimentary references to Karl and to me. He was trying obviously to give us a good send-off with the other guests.

Then he introduced the Nazi, who walked dramatically to the head of the table, saluted in the familiar Nazi gesture, and said loudly, "Heil Hitler!" It seemed hardly the occasion for a political harangue, but he gave one. He talked vigorously of peace and war, justice and injustice, of truth and loyalty and their opposites. In hushed, almost reverent words he spoke of Hitler the Fuehrer.


To give the others justice, I do not believe the speech was expected. Perhaps the Nazi gentleman, who had been a chaplain during the war, had been asked to make a genial little talk and had been carried away by his opportunity to proselyte. Whatever the explanation, the little gathering was changed. No longer was it a friendly social group. This heavy man in uniform had made them all (myself excluded) awed, blank-faced conformists to the national pattern.

I noticed the change at once. From a scene that was gay and light-hearted the atmosphere became tense and heavy. When the Nazi chaplain finally finished the host motioned us all into the drawing room. The guests stood around in stiff groups, hardly speaking. No one smiled. I was puzzled and a little frightened. I found my way over to Karl and begged him to leave.

"You will stay until the rest of us are ready to leave," he said sharply. Again he was distant and formal, without sympathy.

"But you don't like this party, either, do you?" I ventured. Karl frowned, started to speak, then stopped. Evidently this wasn't the right thing to say. I was to regret it.

(Next Sunday: Austria's shadow falls across honeymoon path.)



**He's HERS—for keeps!**

IT TOOK her best effort to snatch this prize from rival hands. Now they're off, honeymoon bound, and he's hers for keeps.

Now that the struggle's over, she'll gladly admit the help she got from Camay, the Soap of Beautiful Women. "He liked my skin," she said. "For every man prizes a clear, satin-smooth complexion in the girl he loves. It's the first thing he notices. And Camay's gentle cleansing gets a large share of the credit for mine."

Many happy brides echo her words. "If your own man is still 'just out of reach,' try Camay!"

**CAMAY** THE SOAP OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN

Trade Mark Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.