

MY SON CAME BACK

The day was rather a pleasant one. I had lunched with a group of business associates, and we had discussed the war situation and the part our sons were playing in this great battle and of our final victory. We even told a joke or two about Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito. I went back to my desk in my office feeling happy about life and its future. When I had finished my routine work I started a letter to my son telling him of my love for him, and how proud I was of him and all his buddies over there who were giving their all for this great cause of freedom. I even mentioned a few plans I had for us - him and me - when he came home. My letter wasn't finished, for there were so many things I had to tell him, when my secretary came in and told me that Washington was calling. I took the phone, nonchallantly, for I often received calls from Washington. I must say, however, that this was my first call of its kind. The call was from Army Headquarters regretfully notifying me that my son, not someone else's son, was missing in action.

True, the letter was unfinished that day. I put it away hoping and praying that there still was a chance that I could, some day, finish it, as I had finished so many others.

I didn't run away from what had struck me. I couldn't get up, I couldn't think straight, I couldn't find myself at all. The sunlight was missing from my life.

I don't know how long I sat there - time was nothing anymore. But, finally, I got control of myself, and as I sat there my boy came back to me, not as he was as I remembered him in our farewell in London, but as a new born baby. Then I followed him all through the normal process of his growth - his first faltering steps to steadier ones, the first time he walked across the room into my arms, the first time he said Daddy, the first fishing trip we took together, his first pony, his first day at school, his first bicycle, his first fight with a pal, his first girl, our first serious talk as father and son, His graduation from high school, his going away to Culver, his decision to join the **A**rm**y** **A**ir **C**orps, his receiving his wings - and how proud he and I were - finally of our reunion in London, and then of our farewell. And now I was thinking of this message again, the first of its kind I had received. - my son was missing in action. This picture of life was not so intriguing now - something was missing, and that was my boy.

I left my office for my club and more thinking. I couldn't give up - I wouldn't give up the idea that my boy was forever gone. I called here, I wired there, but they told me my son was still missing.

Of course I knew that I was not individual, that

other sons just as dear to their Mothers and Dads as was mine to me were missing, but somehow I couldn't realize before my message came just how deeply crushed they were. No one does, because it is a feeling one can't imagine. I was realizing now more than ever just how cruel that fellow, Hitler, and his "rat" followers are, and how much sorrow, pain, and suffering they were causing by their greed and ruthlessness. And then I got to thinking of another Son who was made to endure such hardships, grief, suffering, and death by another heartless, cruel, and wicked mob. This Son was the Son of God, and the fact that he came back gave me courage. Somehow it seemed now I was not alone in my sorrow.

I went on doing my daily tasks, because life must go on, even though it can't be as one would have it. I was at my desk again, several days later when my secretary repeated again, "Washington is on the wire". I took the phone with a prayer in my heart that it would be news of my son. It was Army Headquarters again saying - my Son had been located - yes, he was still alive, but in a Nazi prison camp. I was jubilant. My son was still living, and I pray to God that he is receiving fair treatment. Yes, my son came back as I had last seen him - young, strong, a lover of life and Liberty. Now I can finish the letter to my Son!