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# The Enemy Below

By Wendell Mayes

- Evenin', doc.  
- Hello, Rimfire.  
Doesn't the navy ever  
run out of potatoes?  
This ship sure don't.  
- Evenin', Doctor.  
- Ellis. Johnny. Hot below.  
Sure is. I'm gonna sleep  
topside tonight.  
Not for long. We're getting  
the tail end of a storm in the midwatch.  
A man can't plan much ahead  
at all, can he?  
Not much.  
All right, break it up.  
Make room for a workin' sailor.  
Just keep workin', man.  
You're lucky you don't get it  
on your heads.  
Come and get it, you hungry buzzards.  
Here's another one.  
Who's got a light?  
Those sharks.  
- Ain't they nasty things?  
- They're just fish.  
Corky, what do you think of the captain  
they sent to take old Pinky's place?  
I ain't supposed to think.  
You know somethin'? He ain't left  
his cabin since we left Trinidad.  
What's he doing?  
Playing acey-deucey by himself?  
I'll tell you what he's doin'.  
He's seasick!  
That's what the navy's comin' to.  
Seasick feather merchants  
takin' the place of regular navy.  
Man, I just hope this guy knows  
port from starboard, that's all.  
You know what I'd do if I was you,  
Robbins?  
I'd just put in for the skipper's job  
if I was you.  
All right. Did you have your laugh?

Well, now I'm gonna tell you somethin'.

The guy who walks that bridge  
has got your neck in his hands,  
and don't you forget it.

Thanks, Salvador.

- You've got us down 200, partner.

- Sorry, sir.

- Six spades.

- I thought I could do it, sir.

- Well, don't go off half-cocked again.

- No, sir.

- Any sign of the weather, doc?

- Filling up in the east.

Jolly, jolly. And I've got the watch.

- I pass.

- What? Haven't you got anything?

- Why don't you just look at his hand?

- Well, I have to help him along.

- I suppose I could try a heart, sir.

- He supposes he could try a heart, sir.

- Two clubs.

- Captain Murrell still holed up, doc?

- Far as I know.

- Three diamonds.

They might have sent us

a captain who had his sea legs.

I guess they do the best they can.

I don't see why they didn't move Ware up,

He's been exec long enough.

Mackeson, the only craft I ever commanded

was a yawl in the Miami yacht races.

The nearest I ever came to winning

was 29th.

The navy was desperate enough

to take me,

but not foolish enough

to let me sail away by myself.

- Beats me how I ever got this far.

- Money.

- I know you're rich.

- Don't be bitter, grandpa.

Your bid, Mackeson.

- Four spades.

- I'm not bitter. I just wanna go home.

When I've bought a ranch in Nevada,  
I never expect to see water again.

- Ensign Merry?

- Sir?

Your bid.

- Careful.

- Yes, sir. I'm thinking about it.

- Your mouth's open, Ensign.

- Sir?

- Are you gonna bid?

- Six diamonds.

- Six diamonds?

- I'm just backing you up, sir.

You are deliberately  
distracting my partner.

Pass and double.

All right, Mr. Merry. Dummy.

This Murrell seems like  
a cold sort of a fish.

Captain Murrell oughtn't to be here at all.

He's as weak as a kitten.

A man who gets his ship torpedoed  
and spends 25 days on a raft  
in the North Atlantic  
oughtn't to have to hit the ball again  
with only a few weeks in the hospital.

I guess there aren't enough  
commanding officers to go around.

Well, at least they gave him  
an easy ship.

Boy, easy's no word for it.

Listen, he'll get more rest on this boat...

- Ship.

- Ship, boat. What's the difference?

He'll still get more rest here  
than he would if he were in a feather bed.

Now, me, I'd like something  
to happen once in a while.

If the navy ever gets a load of this crew  
in battle, they'll send us back to boot camp.

I'll look ridiculous  
with my head shaved.

Kid, couldn't you have indicated clubs?

Then I could have gone to no-trump.

We are going down again. And doubled.

Sorry, sir.

All right.

- Your lead, Mackeson.

- Now hear this.

Lay before the mast

all eight o'clock reports.

Darken ship. The smoking lamp

is out on all weather decks.

We'll slow her down a little.

All engines ahead two-thirds.

Bridge, Radar. I've got a spook.

- Radar contact, Mr. Ware.

- What?

- Radar contact.

- Good heavens.

- Bridge, aye?

- Definite spook, sir.

- Strong enough to plot?

- **Range:**

- Get on the plot, Mackeson.

- Captain, aye.

Radar reports a contact

off starboard bow, sir.

- Run a plot on it.

- Plot's working, sir.

- Then head for the target.

- Aye aye, sir.

- Zigzag, sir?

- What would you say, mister?

Me? Well, negative zigzag, sir.

Give the plot a chance to steady on.

That's right, mister.

- Give me that again, Radar.

- Did you get it?

Estimated target's course 140,

speed ten knots, bearing 124 true.

Bring her around to 124.

All engines ahead flank.

- Can't seem to make up his mind.

- Maybe he wants to see if I'm awake.

- What's the rush? - I don't know,

but we're sure juicin' it up.

What's the word?

Radar's got somethin'.

We're going after it.

- What's up?

- He says they got a bogey.

Hurry. Come on, wake up.

- We're going after it.

- You don't wanna miss it.

Gangway.

Gangway, please.

I was here first. Gangway yourself.

Excuse me, sir.

Break it up. Let the captain in.

- What's all the crowd about, sailor?

- Well, sir,

I guess we don't get much excitement  
aboard this ship.

- Keep your seat. What's your name?

- Andrews, sir.

- What do you make of it?

- I don't know, Captain.

- Our speed's rattling the set.

- Guess. You're the operator.

It's doing ten knots.

It's got some power, but it's  
too small a spook to be a heavy vessel.

It might be a fishing smack, or it  
might be the conning tower of a sub, sir.

- Bridge. Lieutenant Ware.

- Mr. Ware.

We're about to lose radar contact  
at the rate we're going.

Reduce speed to speed of target  
and get on its tail.

At this distance,  
we'll make visual contact at daybreak.

- Shall I shake the ship out for a standby?

- Not much shaking out to be done.

But ready underwater search gear.

If this spook is a U-boat,  
he might pull the plug,  
and we'll have to go after him.

- Who's the senior radarman, Andrews?

- That's me, sir.

You track the target.  
Any turn or change in speed,  
no matter how small, don't miss it.  
I'll stick on him,  
don't you worry, Captain.  
All right, I won't.  
If anybody's gonna be caught  
with his pants down, it oughtn't to be us.  
Seems like he knows his business, to me.  
Feather merchant,  
that's all I got to say.  
Signal is to stern,  
Herr Kapitn. 8,000 meters.  
It's either a ship or a false echo.  
You've lost it.  
It comes and goes.  
The sea return makes it difficult  
to keep the image.  
There, Kapitn. There it comes.  
Port 20 degrees, Schwaffer.  
- Target's course changing to port.  
- Target's turning left, Captain.  
25... 20 degrees.  
Maintain your present speed.  
Steady as you go.  
May I ask what your procedure is, sir?  
If this is an enemy ship,  
our signal may be on his oscillator  
and he's trying to feel us out -  
make a couple of turns,  
see if we change position.  
If we can hold  
an unchanging position behind him,  
he may mistake us  
for a ghost echo on these heavy seas.  
- The signal does not change, Herr Kapitn.  
- Starboard 40 degrees.  
- Target's turning sharp starboard, sir.  
- Can you estimate the degree, Andrews?  
- 40... 45 degrees, Captain.  
- All engines stop.  
You think it might be a U-boat, sir?  
Wiggling like one. He may take the bait.  
- If he doesn't, he'll crash-dive.

- Excuse me, sir.  
It holds the same place, Herr Kapitn.  
Resume course 140.  
Yes?  
He's on the hook.  
He's come back into course 140.  
- All engines ahead two-thirds, steer 140.  
- Aye aye, sir.  
Good, Andrews. The target won't  
be satisfied with one check.  
Look for him to make a turn.  
Or he may slow down  
or speed up. Thank you.  
- Sir?  
- Well?  
- Do you wanna send a dispatch, sir?  
- Why? Are you anxious to take one?  
- No, sir. I just thought...  
- We have to keep radio silence tonight.  
We might tip our hand to the target.  
But I'll get one out in the morning, OK?  
Yes, sir.  
This is the captain. I guess you're all  
waiting for some kind of word.  
We're tracking an unidentified ship.  
We're going to try to stay  
on his tail until morning.  
We will breakfast early,  
and go to battle stations at 0530.  
Don't be surprised if we tangle  
with a pig-boat a little after dawn.  
Do your jobs efficiently and we'll  
chalk one up for the Haynes. That's all.  
I reckon we'll just drop an egg  
right down his periscope.  
That'll be the end  
of one more Nazi, huh?  
Or he'll just pop a fish right in our guts,  
and that'll be the end of this tin can.  
- Man, a sub ain't no match for us.  
- They ain't?  
Then how come they hunt U-boats  
with three destroyers  
workin' together

up in the North Atlantic?  
Yeah. How come?  
Your bet.  
- Whose watch is next?  
- Lieutenant Kunz, Herr Kapitn.  
Have him come here.  
Lieutenant Kunz, report forward.  
You wanted me, Herr Kapitn?  
Ja, Kunz.  
Yours is the next watch on topside.  
We have a signal on the FMB.  
I think it's a false echo.  
But to check its reaction, you will  
zigzag twice an hour until daybreak.  
If it moves in closer,  
you will awaken me immediately.  
Schwaffer.  
Come in, Heini.  
That Kunz annoys me.  
Remind him that we do not salute at sea.  
He is new, Herr Kapitn.  
He will tire of it.  
He is new?  
Like our new Germany. A machine.  
Herr Kapitn. You think we are wise  
in risking that image to be a false echo?  
Wise? Expedient.  
Time is important, Heini,  
and we would travel  
too slowly underwater.  
In 48 hours, we rendezvous  
with Raider M.  
We take the captured British code book  
and we go home with it.  
And this is the important thing.  
Not the code book,  
but because, when we have it,  
we can go home.  
Tastes like oil and bilge  
and green mold.  
Sit down, Heini.  
Tastes like a U-boat.  
I've been in the U-boats  
too long, Heini.

There was a time when  
I went to sea with a fresh heart.  
That was many years ago.  
Now I can only think of going home.  
- You want more?  
- No more, Herr Kapitn.  
You think I take too much?  
Just enough to sleep.  
I cannot rest without it.  
I think too much.  
Never think, Heini.  
Be a good warrior and never think.  
You pay a penalty for thinking.  
You cannot rest.  
I taught these sons of mine  
to be good warriors.  
Country. Duty. Ask no question.  
One is at the bottom of the sea,  
and this one is a cinder  
in a burned airplane.  
And I'm glad.  
That's the way for warriors to die.  
Young, and with faith.  
I have lived too long.  
- We are friends, Heini?  
- I have been with you since I was a cadet.  
That's not what I asked you.  
I do not know.  
Sometimes I am afraid of you.  
Many times I do not understand you.  
- I am not certain we are friends.  
- We are friends. Believe that.  
We are friends. Because we are friends,  
I'll tell you something.  
I am sick of this war.  
It's not a good war.  
You don't remember the first one.  
I was a Fhnrich in the U-boats.  
And how proud I was!  
We went out  
in those little sardine tins,  
and if we submerged, we couldn't  
always be sure we'd come up again.  
It was a good game we played.

The captain would look through  
his periscope and sight a target,  
and then he did arithmetic in his head  
and said "Torpedo los."  
And you know something? Sometimes  
the torpedo wouldn't even leave the tube.  
And if it did, we were  
most lucky to hit something.  
And now I look in the periscope and  
it gives me the distance and the speed.  
I pass this information  
to the attack table,  
and the machinery turns and  
the lights flash, and we get the answer.  
The torpedo runs to its target,  
and there's no human error in this.  
They've taken human error  
out of war, Heini.  
They've taken the human out of war.  
War was different then.  
It put iron in the country's backbone,  
gave them brave memory.  
And even in defeat, it gave them honor.  
There is no honor in this war.  
The memories will be ugly,  
even if we win.  
And if we die,  
we die without God.  
You know that, Heini?  
I listen to what you say, Herr Kapitn.  
It's a bad war.  
Its reason is twisted.  
Its purpose is dark.  
It's not for a simple man.  
Lieutenant Crain is coming up, sir.  
Port side.  
What's your best time  
on reloading depth charges?  
It's not so hot, Captain.  
Some of my boys are pretty green,  
but I'd say three minutes, or four.  
- Well, you've got to do better than that.  
- I can try, sir.  
That's not good enough.

It might be the difference  
between stopping the enemy  
and getting stopped ourselves.  
If that's the case, sir,  
we'll be good enough.  
I'll depend on it.  
Mr. Ware? I'd like you  
to stick with the plot  
in the pilot house  
for the time being, please.  
Aye aye, sir.  
Looks like we've run out of the squall.  
Yeah.  
Why don't you lay  
in your cabin for a while?  
I'm all right, Doctor.  
You getting the feel of a ship again?  
Either that, or that pig-boat  
out there is strong medicine.  
I don't see how you can know  
it's the enemy.  
Well, call it a sixth sense  
if you want to.  
I always know when a mind is working  
the other end of that radar beam.  
Interesting. I've heard  
hunters say the same thing.  
They can sense the presence of game.  
In any case, this is going to be  
a disappointed ship if it isn't the enemy.  
Yes, they all seem to be  
a bloodthirsty crew.  
The men would like a chance  
to do what they're here for.  
Not much other reason for existence.  
Not now, anyway.  
No, I sometimes wonder  
if there ever was another reason.  
I know what you mean.  
I had a baby clinic up in Ohio.  
It was pretty important to me.  
Now it seems like something  
that happened  
on another planet

and in another century.

- What was your work, Captain?

- This. The sea.

- You were a sailor?

- Third officer on a freighter  
out of Boston, to Liverpool,  
Le Havre, and back again.

Some of our crew will be glad  
to know that.

Our saltiest boys were complaining  
mightily about getting a civilian skipper.

- Feather merchant, I think they call it.

- Well, I am a feather merchant.

- Well, yes, but not exactly.

- No, exactly.

On the freighter, we were men against  
the sea. Here, we're men against men.  
Like every other civilian in the war,  
I had to learn a new way to think.

Why did you change over to the navy?

The freighter I was on  
was cut in half by a torpedo.

Thought I'd be  
on the shooting end for a change.

Captain.

- Captain, aye?

- Target's increased speed to 13 knots, sir.

Ring up a compensating speed, Mr. Ware.

Aye aye, sir. All engines  
ahead standard, 203 rpm, sir.

Very well.

Well, in time we'll all  
get back to our own stuff again.

The war'll get swallowed up  
and seem like it never happened.

Yes, but it won't be the same as it was.

It won't have that feeling of permanency  
that we had before.

- We've learned a hard truth.

- How do you mean?

That there's no end  
to misery and destruction.

You cut the head off a snake,  
it grows another one.

You cut that one off, you find another.

We can't kill it because

it's within ourselves.

You can call it the enemy if you want to,  
but it's part of us. We're all men.

I suppose there is some reason  
to lose hope, but I reject it.

I have a family,

and I want something better for them  
than war, and I think it's possible.

Have you any children, Captain?

- No.

- Married?

I married a girl in England.

She was killed.

Bombers?

No. When the war broke out, I got passage  
for her on my freighter for home -  
the one that was torpedoed in half.

I was aft when it happened. I watched  
the other half of the ship just slide away.

There wasn't anything

I could do about it.

I saw her run out on the foredeck,  
and I heard her call my name,  
then that half of the ship  
just turned over and went down.

We hadn't been married very long.

Ring up the fire room.

Tell 'em we're making smoke.

- I don't wanna see that at dawn.

- Aye aye, sir.

You got more reason than the rest of us  
to wanna catch this submarine.

- It might be the one that... - It might be,  
but this isn't my private war.

I'm just doing what I have to do.

Like that German captain out there.

I don't like the job,

and maybe he doesn't either.

- Weather from Fleet Weather Control, sir.

- Thank you.

We're moving into a high-pressure area.

We're going to have a clear day.

Set ASW condition one.

All hands, man your battle stations.

All repair parties manned and ready.

Condition able.

- Quartermaster Quiroga at the helm.

- Quartermaster Spencer on annunciator.

Engineering spaces manned and ready.

All boilers on the line.

Maximum speed available, 24 knots.

- Sonar gear manned and ready.

- Magazines manned and ready.

Sky one, mount 33, manned and ready.

Sky one, mount 32,

manned and ready, sir.

- 41, manned and ready.

- Mount 31, manned and ready.

- All guns manned and ready.

- Very well.

- The ship is smart and quick, Mr. Ware.

- We've a willing bunch of boys.

Messenger.

When that U-boat pulls the plug,

code this dispatch for Fleet Operations.

"Have tracked U-boat 130 miles,

bearing 140. Now engaging enemy."

And give our grid position.

Let's get after the target.

Mr. Merry, ring up flank speed.

All engines ahead flank.

I've got him, sir! A conning tower!

Where away?

Three degrees off

the starboard bow. 6,000 yards.

- Main batteries ready?

- Reported ready, sir.

We might get close enough for a shot

before he pops under.

Ship off stern, Herr Schwaffer.

Alarm.

Target diving.

Right ten degrees rudder.

Steady up on 170.

Slow to two-thirds speed.

Slow to two-thirds speed, sir?

It's not necessary  
to repeat the order, Quartermaster.

- Aye aye, sir.

- Zigzag, sir?

- Negative zigzag.

- Aye aye, sir.

170 at ten knots.

We're a sittin' duck,  
that's what we are.

- We're presenting our beam to the enemy?

- I'm giving him a shot with the stern tubes.

You can't reload those tubes.

We can attack up his tail when we want.

Yes, sir. How will we know  
when he's firing, sir?

I'll give him five minutes  
to get to emergency depth,  
three to come up to periscope depth,  
another two minutes  
to get us in his sights.

If he's any kind of a captain, he'll spit  
the fish out ten minutes from now.

Level.

Seal.

Engine room clear. Forward torpedo room  
clear. Aft torpedo room clear.

U- boat all ready for action.

Silent routine.

He is crossing our stern  
to starboard, Herr Kapitn.

He does not approach.

I do not understand, Herr Kapitn.

He doesn't zigzag,  
and he holds course away from us.

Give them to me.

He is clever, or he is a fool.

Maybe he is too clever, or too foolish.

We'll see. Bring the ship  
up to periscope depth.

18 meters, Herr Kapitn.

American escort destroyer.

One stack.

Three-inch guns fore and aft.

Antiaircraft midships. No tubes.

Buckley class destroyer escort.  
Maximum speed 25 knots.  
Carries stern racks and K-guns.  
Capable of dropping 17 patterns.  
Carries latest underwater  
detection gear.  
I think we use the stern tubes.  
Ready stern tubes for underwater attack.  
Target red 90.  
Range 1,000.  
- Torpedo speed 30 knots.  
- Red 90. 1,000. Speed 30.  
Firing position six degrees,  
torpedo deflection ten.  
Running speed 30, depth two meters.  
Fire both torpedoes.  
On.  
- Yeah.  
- On.  
On.  
- Yeah.  
- On. Standing by.  
Port six degrees.  
Firing position, Herr Kapitn.  
Torpedoes ready?  
Ready.  
- Count.  
- Ten, nine, eight, seven, six,  
five, four, three,  
two, one, zero.  
Torpedoes running.  
Running time?  
One minute, 40 seconds, Herr Kapitn.  
Left full rudder.  
High-speed propellers  
coming in from port side.  
Stop port engine.  
Starboard engine ahead full.  
Torpedoes off the port bow.  
All ahead standard.  
Stop your swing and steady up.  
The Miami yacht races  
were never like this.  
Hey, Corky. How do you suppose

the captain knew when to turn this old tub?  
Because he's the captain,  
and that's the reason he is and you ain't.  
All right, let's go get 'em. All engines ahead  
full. Ring up 18 knots. Steady as you go.  
All engines ahead full.  
Ring up 18 knots. Steady as you go.  
Aye aye, sir.  
Down to 100. Emergency.  
Steer 140.  
I do not see how we missed  
at that range.  
We shouldn't have.  
I think this American captain  
is no amateur.  
Well, neither am I.  
Sonar, Captain.  
Commence underwater search.  
Make sure it's piped through  
onto the bridge speaker.  
Aye aye, sir. Lowering sonar projector.  
Sonar searching beam to beam, sir.  
- Who's on sonar, Mr. Ware?  
- Lewis, sir. He's good at the job.  
That's him.  
Got him, sir.  
Keep that open.  
Target's still on the old course of 140.  
We'll turn to 140  
when we're astern of him.  
Sonar lash, Herr Kapitn.  
He has made contact.  
- Do you wish to change course?  
- No, not yet.  
We wait until he thinks  
he has our depth.  
- We're gonna be on him pretty quickly, sir.  
- Depth-charge party wants depth setting.  
Set to 75. But I may want  
to alter that before we fire.  
Set pattern for 75.  
- Set.  
- Load.  
Loaded.

Range 500, closing fast.  
- 300 yards, sir.  
- Pattern set to 75, sir.  
Stand by to fire.  
Port red three. Down to 150.  
He's going deeper.  
Mr. Ware, reset depth charges to 150.  
Aye aye, sir.  
Reset at 150.  
Secure it.  
Fire one.  
Fire two.  
Come on, Ellis. Get the lead out.  
Get up off your dime.  
- Casualty here.  
- Fire three.  
Mr. Ware.  
Stand by.  
- Time the reload.  
- Aye aye, sir.  
Get a replacement.  
Port red three. Release Bold.  
Sonar, Captain. He's using some kind  
of a decoy. Can you pick him out of it?  
He's coming out of it now, sir,  
heading about 080 degrees.  
Left ten degrees rudder.  
Reset depth-charge pattern to 150.  
Increase rudder to 30 degrees left.  
Steady up on 080.  
Reverse course and take it up to 50.  
Level.  
Echo faded. I've lost contact.  
- Lewis can't find him, sir.  
- Secure underwater search.  
Reduce speed to two-thirds.  
Mr. Mackeson.  
- I'm giving you a hypothetical problem.  
- Aye, Captain?  
Take our last contact  
with the target as a start.  
Our course was 164, sir.  
Give the target a course of 260,  
keep him on it for 30 minutes

at a speed of four knots.  
260, 30 minutes, four knots.  
Bring him back on course 140  
for 30 minutes at a speed of eight knots.  
140, 30 minutes, eight knots.  
We'll hold our present course  
and speed for half an hour.  
30 at 18.  
From there, give me a course  
and speed to intercept the target.  
Will we make a lost-contact search?  
We won't catch this bird  
in a search pattern.  
I'm sure he's come off our keel  
and scooted in the opposite direction.  
Our course would be 239 degrees,  
speed 19 knots.  
We would intercept in 28 minutes  
from the beginning of the run, sir.  
All right, we'll try it.  
Target might not come back  
on course 140.  
I think he will.  
He's got an important mission.  
Nothing'll stop him short of being sunk.  
Pass the word to battle stations:  
stand easy.  
Aye aye, sir.  
He fades, Herr Kapitn.  
He goes away.  
You think he's given up, Herr Kapitn?  
It's possible.  
But, to be certain,  
we hold this course for a while,  
before we turn again to 140.  
- Captain, sir?  
- Well?  
- How're we doin'?  
- You're doin' all right, sailors.  
That guy Robbins is 180 out.  
- This guy is no feather merchant.  
- You said it.  
I had to amputate his fingers.  
What was your time on reloading,

Mr. Crain?  
Three minutes three, the first time.  
Two minutes 40, the second.  
Right on. Give your crew  
a "well done" for me.  
Thank you, sir.  
Lie still, sailor.  
You're out of the war now.  
Is it bad?  
You've lost your fingers. It's my fault.  
I shouldn't have tripped  
the racks so quickly.  
No, sir. I oughtn't  
to have had my hand on the rail.  
I guess I got excited, sir.  
We'll get you flown stateside  
as soon as we put back into Trinidad.  
You'll be back in your  
civvy job in no time at all.  
I was a watchmaker.  
Operational priority dispatch  
coming in, sir.  
Ask the executive officer  
to join me in the crypto room.  
Well, you won't be  
making any watches again.  
No, sir. But I'll make out all right.  
I'd bet on that.  
- All right, let's get him to bed.  
- Did we get the sub, sir?  
No, we missed him.  
I'd have given my fingers  
to get that sub.  
I don't know anything about sub-chasing,  
but I rather think  
our new captain does. Joe.  
If that U-boat is still in the ocean.  
I wouldn't give a plugged duck  
for its chances.  
The dispatch is just  
coming through the decoder, sir.  
"Destroyers Luckman, Wald, Green,  
detached to aid you."  
"Anticipate U-boat may be attempting to

rendezvous with German Raider S, U or M."

"Reduce radio traffic to position signal once every hour. End."

But it'll take 14 or 15 hours for the destroyers to catch up with us.

Yes. If we're lucky enough to find that U-boat, he may tow us up against a raider before help comes, and that wouldn't be so lucky. Those murdering wolves can outgun and outrun us.

How do you feel about it, Mr. Ware?

We're closing the triangle in 14 minutes, sir.

Well?

Let's push our luck.

- Alert battle stations, Mr. Ware.

- Aye aye, sir.

Voltage is low on port generator.

- I'll call the LE.

- More soup, Herr Kapitn?

More power on the port generator.

It does not taste

like tennis shoes, Herr Kapitn?

It's very good.

The men mistreat you, Cookie.

They make jokes when they are happy.

I don't mind.

- Are they happy now?

- They are proud of you, Herr Kapitn.

Thank you, Cookie.

- It's now nearly 50 minutes, Herr Kapitn.

- Kunz.

Bring the ship up to periscope depth.

Herr Kapitn, the maneuvers

were brilliant.

The Fhrer would be pleased.

Herr Kapitn? Propellers. 1200 meters.

- Which quarter?

- Port.

- 18 meters.

- Be ready for emergency dive.

Emergency. Down to 80.

The American has read my mind, Heini.

- Water bombs.  
- Port red three, down to 150.  
- Target turning left.  
- Left standard rudder.  
Set depth charges to 150.  
- Where is the bottom?  
- A plateau, Herr Kapitn.  
About 310 meters.  
It's not possible, Herr Kapitn,  
to go that deep.  
The pressure would crush the hull.  
Port red three. Release Bold.  
- The bottom.  
- Herr Kapitn...  
Level.  
Stop engines.  
We build them good in Germany, Heini.  
He's given me the slip again.  
I'm only getting bottom echoes.  
Sonar's lost him, Captain.  
Give me a Fathometer reading.  
150 fathoms, sir.  
That's 310 meters.  
That's over a thousand feet.  
Can he go that deep?  
He might like us to think he can't.  
Slow down turbines easy until stopped.  
I want absolute silence on this ship.  
Sonar, this is the captain. Secure, but keep  
a close listening watch on the hydrophone.  
If he is down there,  
I don't think he'll have time to linger.  
His engines are fading.  
He's not circling?  
He's gone, Herr Kapitn.  
We will listen for a while.  
Doc, this is really a hot one.  
At least they're keeping cool  
down there.  
- "A painted ship on a painted ocean."  
- What's that, doc?  
I was reminded of "The Ancient Mariner."  
It rather fits us right now.  
Something unreal about this

waiting out here on a deserted sea.

It'll be real enough

if that pig-boat puts a fish in us.

- Any luck, Rimfire?

- No, sir.

Them fish are afraid

they'll make some noise if they bite.

Here, let me try it.

I guess you're finding this sun

hard to take after the North Atlantic.

It doesn't matter. It's always either too cold or too hot wherever there's a war on.

- Well, have a salt pill.

- Thanks.

We've been floating around

for quite a while.

Think the U-boat's

gotten away from us again?

No, he's down there all right.

- Beats me how they get men to do it.

- Do what?

Go and sit in that coffin down there.

They're not so bad off.

Actually, they stand a better chance than we do, in this case.

Pretty hard for one ship

to surprise them.

Their commander might be able

to knock us off if he's smart enough.

- D'you think he is?

- What, smart enough?

We'll know that when it happens.

I wonder what sort of man he is.

Well, he's got his share of guts,

I know that.

If he weren't so bullheaded

about coming back on course 140,

he could have kissed us goodbye

a long time ago, that's all I know.

I have no idea what he is,

or what he thinks.

I don't wanna know the men

I'm trying to destroy.

Yes, I know.

The American must be far away  
by this time.  
It's a curious thing,  
but I know he's there, waiting.  
All right, we go. Silent routine, 140.  
Level.  
Course will be 140.  
Continue silent routine.  
Lewis, get up. We got somethin'.  
- Bridge, Sonar.  
- Go ahead, Sonar.  
- Propeller cavitation, deep and slow.  
- Can you get a heading?  
Can you figure a heading?  
Lewis thinks he's moving southeast.  
Coming back on 140 again.  
Alert battle stations.  
Commence underwater search.  
Give me minimum rpm  
on both shafts. Steer 140.  
Propellers, Herr Kapitn.  
He's a devil, Heini.  
Somehow...  
somehow we must lose him.  
Or kill him.  
- He's pinpointed.  
- Ready to close in?  
No. Pass the word:  
I want a conference with all officers  
and chiefs in the wardroom.  
Boatswain's mate. Pass the word.  
All officers and chiefs  
in the wardroom on the double.  
We're at a disadvantage  
because he can turn sharper than we can.  
We can shake him up,  
but a death blow'd be pure luck.  
We've expended a third  
of our depth charges.  
The U-boat can stay underwater  
for another 24 hours if he wants to.  
If we run out of depth charges,  
the offensive will be theirs,  
and we'd have to break contact

to get away from his torpedoes.  
But we can't follow him  
and wait for our ships to join us  
because we might get pulled into a trap  
with a German raider before they get here.  
What we're going to do  
is to fight a delaying action.  
The enemy's about  
a thousand yards ahead.  
We'll hold this distance  
for a little while.  
Then we'll run in,  
lay one pattern of charges,  
drop back, wait for one hour,  
and attack again.  
We can keep this routine up  
for seven hours.  
He can't get anywhere very fast,  
and our ships should be here  
by the end of that period.  
He might even surface.  
Being inside a submarine under attack  
is the worst experience you can imagine.  
After they see what we're doing,  
they might prefer to surrender,  
or at least shoot it out.  
I want you all to get  
as much rest as you can.  
Stand easy at your stations,  
but be ready every time we lunge.  
It's going to be a long, dull job, but it's  
a damn sight worse for the Germans.  
We'll begin the routine at 1500.  
Herr Kapitn, aft torpedo room.  
We've got trouble here.  
Take command.  
Stay away from me.  
We can do nothing with him,  
Herr Kapitn.  
Come here, son.  
Give me the wrench.  
Give it to me.  
You will come to attention.  
It's a part of our work to die.

But we are not going to die.

Do you believe me?

He gets more accurate.

He will tear us apart the next time.

- What do you suggest, Kunz?

- Surface, Herr Kapitn. Surrender.

- Holem?

- I am not concerned, Herr Kapitn.

- Schwaffer?

- I say go on.

- The condition of the ship?

- We are not yet hurt.

But we cannot escape.

It will be your privilege to die for the new  
Germany. Put this on the ship's turntable.

But the sound will carry, Herr Kapitn.

It will help the American  
to know our position.

Put it on.

- Herr Kapitn, you cannot do this.

- Sing it, Heini.

For you, my friend, and you...

Sing it, Heini.

...all of us together, here's a toast  
to life and to laughter and song  
Good beer, my friend...

Sing it, Kunz. Sing it, Holem.

Sing it, everybody.

...as we sing loud and strong

Fill up the flowing steins again  
with foam on every lip

We'll give a skol and shout "Jawohl!"  
in lasting fellowship

And when we eye a Lorelei  
with captivating ways

May we drink to love  
all our livelong days

To you, my friend, and you, my friend,  
and all of us together

Here's a toast to life  
and to laughter and song

Good beer, my friend, good cheer,  
my friend, through every kind of weather  
Make the welkin ring

as we sing loud and strong  
Fill up the flowing steins again  
with foam on every lip  
We'll give a skol and shout "Jawohl!"  
in lasting fellowship  
Bridge, Sonar. I'm getting  
screwy noises from the hydrophone.  
Sonar reports screwy noises  
from the target.  
Tell him to cut it  
in on speaker, Ensign.  
Put it on the line, Lewis.  
And when we eye a Lorelei  
with captivating ways  
They're havin' a ball down there.  
I don't think our psychology's working,  
Captain.  
No, it's working all right.  
I almost wish it wasn't.  
All ahead for attack, Mr. Ware.  
Maybe we can rip him open  
in the middle of a waltz.  
Schwaffer.  
Secure oil valves two and three.  
Number four.  
The valves will not  
contain the oil, Herr Kapitn.  
Empty belly tanks into the sea.  
Oil slick off the starboard quarter, sir.  
It's a big one.  
Sonar, we may have hit him hard.  
Are his props turning?  
Sorry, sir, he doesn't seem  
to be a bit dead.  
He's going away  
at a good clip to starboard.  
- Right ten degree rudder.  
- Stand by to fire, sir?  
No, we'll ride his tail again.  
Let him digest that last one.  
He can't stay down much longer.  
Come back on 140.  
- Schwaffer?  
- Yeah?

Ask Braun which way  
the American turned after the attack.  
He turned to starboard, Herr Kapitn.  
Now I will show you something.  
Each time he has attacked,  
we have turned off to port  
or starboard to avoid the attack.  
He drops his water bombs  
and runs on for 300 or 400 meters,  
and then turns,  
to fall back on our stern.  
He doesn't always turn  
the same way, but twice he did,  
to run parallel with our course  
for a very few minutes.  
In those minutes he was vulnerable.  
If he does it again, we will be ready.  
There will not be time  
to come up to periscope depth.  
But it's possible.  
If we spread the four bow torpedoes,  
fired all at once,  
angled a few degrees apart,  
one may hit.  
One will be enough.  
But if he does not turn parallel  
to our course, what can we do?  
We will survive until he does.  
Weather from Fleet Weather Control, sir.  
- Mr. Ware.  
- Yes, sir?  
The weather's gonna get worse  
before dawn. There's wind in it.  
It's gonna be difficult to keep  
a fix on the target in the heavy sea.  
- We may as well try to finish him off.  
- Immediately?  
Immediately. Inform Mr. Crain we'll throw  
everything we have left at the target.  
- You understand?  
- Herr Kapitn, the destroyer is closing.  
- He comes early.  
- We are ready, Herr Kapitn.  
You understand

there will not be the usual routine?

Seal torpedo.

- Mr. Ware, set depth charges to 100.

- Aye aye, sir.

- Target turning to port, sir.

- Stand by to fire.

Left ten degrees rudder.

Fire.

He fires too shallow. Up to 50.

Now, American, turn the right way  
and I'll give you a pretty present.

Plot reports he's off our stern.

Course still 140.

Give her a right 15 degree rudder.

We'll make a beam attack.

He is turning. Starboard 20 degrees.

Halt course.

Go ahead, Sonar. High-speed  
propeller effect, all on starboard side.

Stop port engine. Left full rudder.

It's a hit.

Silence.

Come on now. Under both arms, man.

- He's only got one arm, sir.

- Get him to starboard. Easy, boys.

We took the fish to forward fire room.

Fore and aft bulkheads, blown out.

- Fire room and engine room, flooded.

- Can the pumps keep us afloat?

- If they can, it won't be for long.

- Well, make it as long as you can.

- Aft engine, what's your damage?

- A few valves loose,

and we're taking water,

but we're still getting steam.

- How long before you flood out?

- 30 minutes, maybe a little more.

Stop your engines,

but be ready to give me all the power

you have the instant I ask for it.

Mr. Ware, get a party and light some fires

on deck. Use mattresses and gasoline.

I want it to look

as if the ship is burning.

The pumps are operating,  
but it's hopeless.

I'm sure it is. You go along with Ware  
and see if you can give him a hand.

Radio, this is the captain. Send this  
emergency dispatch to Operations.

"Hit by torpedo.

Request immediate assistance."

His engines have stopped.

We'll go up to periscope depth.

- Periscope depth.

- 18 meters.

That's enough. Get out of here.

Attention, everyone. This is the captain.

I want all of you to listen carefully.

They got one in where it would do the most  
damage and we're going to lose the ship.

But we still have a kick left.

We're going to try to use it.

I am hoping that playing dead and the fire  
will bring the enemy to the surface.

Except for securing crew and the gun crew  
of mount 31, I want you all to abandon ship.

**Repeat:**

Get as far away as quickly as you can.

It's possible the enemy will put  
another fish into us without warning.

Now get going. Good luck.

- 18 meters, Herr Kapitn.

- Steady keel.

We torpedo on the surface. Take it up.

- Captain.

- Submarine off starboard bow.

This side.

I'm half-surprised he took the bait.

The first foolish thing he's done.

That makes us even.

Tell him that in five minutes

I will finish off his ship.

Ready, Herr Kapitn.

He's given us five minutes. Signalman.

Take this message. Say

"Message understood." Add a "thank you."

Mount 31, this is the captain.  
That sub'll come close abeam.  
As soon as he's broadside,  
give him a shell in the stern.  
If we're lucky,  
we oughta have a sitting duck.  
Your second target is his deck gun,  
but be quick,  
'cause he'll start shooting when we do.  
When I give the command to fire,  
continue at will.  
Signalman, no point in you and the talker  
staying aboard any longer.  
Aye aye, sir. Good luck, sir.  
Mr. Ware. Your papers say you were  
captain of a racing yacht before the war.  
You must have a good eye  
for speed and distance.  
- I think I do.  
- Would you like to take the helm?  
My pleasure, Captain.  
This will not take long.  
Use only one torpedo, Schwaffer.  
Engine room, this is the captain.  
Can I still depend on you?  
Say the word,  
and I'll give you all we've got.  
- Crack your throttle wide and get out.  
- Turn it on full and get outta here.  
Fire.  
Fire, Kunz.  
Secondary, fire at the bridge.  
Set the automatic detonators  
and get the men out of the ship.  
Get going.  
- Where's Schwaffer?  
- I don't know, Herr Kapitn.  
- But the detonators are set, Herr Kapitn.  
- Get overboard.  
I'll take you up, Heini. Come on.  
- Hurry up.  
- Come on, let's go.  
Come on, Heini.  
- All clear. The boat's laying off

stern for us. - Right behind you.  
Can't you get in closer?  
The captain's behind me.  
The captain's still aboard.  
There, on the deck.  
- We gotta help him. Get in there.  
- Those U-boats have detonators.  
I don't care what they have.  
Take this boat in - now.  
There's no fire on the port side.  
We go over that way.  
Do you understand English? Port side.  
Not much time. You go.  
I'll bring this man.  
Can't you see? This man's dying.  
He is my friend.  
Stay where you are, Captain.  
Come on, you guys, let's get up there.  
This way. Get up there.  
Hurry, sir,  
I'm double-parked downstairs.  
- That's it, Mr. Ware. That's everybody.  
- OK, get this thing outta here.  
Remember our talk on the bridge,  
the weighty one? Death and destruction?  
You might be interested to know  
that I've seen another reason for hope.  
Found it in a funny place, too.  
In the middle of an ocean,  
right in the middle of a war.  
You had to come a long way to find it,  
didn't you, doc?  
It was worth the trip.  
Maybe.  
I should have died many times, Captain,  
but I continue to survive, somehow.  
This time, it was your fault.  
I didn't know. Next time,  
I won't throw you the rope.  
I think you will.