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One Sunday the men were playing soccer as usual. And as usual I was walking near the corner of the camp, looking down over the fields in the hope of seeing Sue.

I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw someone coming towards the camp along the railway lines. I could tell it was Sue from the way she walked and moved, as I had watched her so many times at the Clayton building site. She was still quite a distance away.

I quickly ran to find Seppie, who I knew was waiting in the barracks in case I needed him. I whispered to him that I needed his help at the fence. He came right away. Then I walked over to tell Heinz whom I spotted watching the soccer game. The stage was set. Both of them would keep a look out for the guards or any one who was likely to report me.

As I got closer to the barbed wire and saw Sue coming up the embankment towards me, I suddenly realized that this was the very first time we would actually be able to talk with each other, even though the coils of wire on each side of the fence kept us at least 6 feet apart. Seppie and Heinz had taken up positions behind me, facing the camp. I went as close to the barbed wire as I possibly could on my side, and so did Sue on the other side.

I could tell that Sue was very nervous, and so was I. At first we just looked at each other. She looked absolutely beautiful to me. For a moment I completely forgot that I was standing inside a prison camp behind barbed wire. Then Sue said, "Hi Karl, how are you?"

With a shaky voice I answered, "Hello Sue, I am fine, I can't

believe you actually found the camp and I am so pleased to see you.” I warned her to be careful that no one saw us and added that two friends of mine were keeping a look out for guards.

She reached into her handbag, took out a letter, and threw it over the fence. I picked it up and hid it under my jacket. After the letter followed a packet of cigarettes and some sandwiches. Then she told me that she came to the camp two weeks before, with her cousin Lorna. However, it took them a long time to find it, so when they saw the camp in the distance they went back home, as it was getting late. Sue had so much to tell me and she was talking so fast that I had to ask her to speak more slowly.

I could hardly believe that we had actually talked for over five minutes. Sue told me that her mother knew she had come to visit me and had seen my letters, but her father did not know about me. She kept looking around nervously for fear someone would see her. She then said, “I came by bus and got off at the bus stop in front of the hotel which you mentioned in your letter. It took me almost two hours to get here”. Finally she said, “Oh Karl, I am going to have to go back home, I will come again.”

I thanked her for the cigarettes and sandwiches and asked her to give my greetings to her mother. She then blew me a kiss through the fence and turned to leave. As she went down the embankment I called out to her, “I love you, please come back soon”.

She turned around to say, “I love you too Darling.”

As I watched her going back along the railway lines I felt I was in seventh heaven. Now I knew that she loved me. She turned to wave once more, and then she was gone.

My two friends joined me and we looked for a quiet corner to share the sandwiches. I thanked them for their support. They were almost as excited as I was that everything had gone according to plan. Heinz remarked, “Man, is she ever pretty.”

“You were supposed to look out for guards, not look what Sue was like,” I replied. I was certainly very glad I had them as friends.

I could hardly wait to read my letter. So while Seppie and Heinz went to watch the soccer game, I made my way to the barracks. The men were busy making toys and did not take much notice of me. I lay down on my top bunk and read my letter several times over. When I

didn't understand a word, which happened quite often, I reached for my dictionary and tried to figure out the correct meaning.

I was in love with a girl I knew practically nothing about, except that her name was Sue Ridgway, she lived on Pasture Lane, Clayton, and she was in nursing. I had no idea about her age or her birthday. Come to think of it, she knew even less about me. And yet she had come 20 miles to a POW camp, at the risk of being caught. So she must be in love too.

The thought scared me a little, because of the difficulties that were still ahead of us.

My English was gradually improving. Whenever I had the chance, I would study and teach myself. Once a week one of the men in our barracks would read and translate the newspaper to us. That way, we got to know what was happening beyond the barbed wire. I envied the man who could read and translate at the same time. I made up my mind to learn the language well enough that I could express to Sue the way I really felt.

In the evening of that eventful Sunday I answered Sue's letter. Now I could tell her how much I really loved her, and how I longed to be close to her, as far as my limited vocabulary allowed.

It was almost a year now since I had been taken prisoner, and also a year since the war ended. I wondered when we would be repatriated. I was almost hoping it wouldn't be too soon. If I was back home in Germany we could write to each other without restrictions, but how would we be able to see each other?

The following day I asked our yard supervisor, John, if he would buy some postage stamps for me. I told him that I had the money to pay for them from making and selling toys at our camp. He promised to bring them the next day. A postage stamp at that time cost tuppence ha'penny [two and a half pence].

The next day John brought me the stamps I asked for. He was a man of few words. Except for things to do with the job he never asked me any questions. However, I sensed that he was not prejudiced towards us Germans. I asked him one day if he had any family. He replied that he had a wife and a son who was in the army and stationed in Germany. His son did not have bad things to say about my country. I told him that I had a father and three sisters and he asked if he could

mail something for me, which caught me by surprise. I had planned to go outside the camp during the night to mail my letter, but this would be less risky for me. So I said I would be grateful if he mailed a letter for me and hoped for the best.

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Two weeks went by and I wondered if Sue had received my letter. I was so deeply in love and could hardly wait to see her again.

During my walks around the camp I noticed a small opening in one of the freight cars where the straw was kept for our sleeping bags. If we were able to talk to each other through that opening there would be less chance of being seen. No one had mentioned to us that it was forbidden territory.

The freight cars had no doors facing the camp. They were both filled with straw, one was packed to capacity and the other was about three quarters full. I went inside the second one and looked through the small window. It would be ideal. There was enough room for Sue to stand on top of the embankment and I was hidden from the guardhouse. However, I could easily be seen from the area where they played soccer.

I decided to rearrange the bales of straw. I took some of them away from the corners and stacked them up in the middle so as to narrow the gap in the door opening. I left just enough room for me to get in and out easily. Then I put two bales below the small window, which I could stand on and see out comfortably. After I was done I walked over to the soccer field to make sure it was properly