

## **PART ONE—THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN**

### **1—A State of War**

*London—September 3, 1939*

Lord Philip Carlyle leaned on the elegant mahogany wireless that stood in the parlor of their townhouse in the fashionable Queen Anne's neighborhood of London. At the appointed moment of 11:15 AM the rest of the family gathered around as the dial of the station selector started glow warmly as the tube amplifier crackled to life.

They were joined by millions of other British households who were also tuning in to listen to the voice of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain as he announced the reaction of the Nazi government to the British ultimatum requiring them to withdraw from Poland, which had been invaded two days earlier. Many realized that the very fate of the British Empire hung in the balance. At the appointed moment, the twelve-inch speaker crackled a bit, and then Chamberlain's high-pitched voice uttered those fateful and discouraging words . . .

*This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final note stating that unless we heard from them by eleven o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany.*

Philip Carlyle glanced at his watch and then reached out to turn the radio off, even though Chamberlain wasn't finished with his entire text. "I just can't listen to the man justify his

poor handling of Germany,” he said with contempt. His wife, Claire, jumped when the air was shattered by a deep growling sound that grew quickly in intensity.

“What’s that?” Claire asked anxiously.

“An air raid siren,” Philip replied. “I can’t believe it! Hitler’s sending his bombers!”

“What do we do?” Claire asked in a panic.

“It’s all right, dear. Even if they’ve sent a wave of bombers it will take a few minutes for them to arrive. We need to get everyone to the cellar and wait for the all clear signal.”

“Come on, children,” Claire said, hustling them up and out of their seats. “We’ve got to hurry!” Their seventeen-year-old son Dominic groaned, but Claire would have none of it.

“Will you gather up the staff and get them downstairs?” Philip asked to the butler. Soon the group was huddled anxiously in the cellar, waiting to hear the concussions that would indicate an attack. Whenever anyone would start to talk, Claire would shush them. “I want to hear what’s happening.” But everything was silent.

After a wait of just twenty minutes, the all-clear siren sounded, indicating that it had been a false alarm.

They tromped up the stairs to the dining room, where the cook hurriedly prepared some sandwiches. Philip picked up the conversation where it had left off. “Well, that’s perhaps the sorriest thing I’ve ever heard. After two decades of appeasement we’re at war again. And this time Germany is stronger than ever while we’re so unprepared.” No one replied, because they’d heard all this before.

A disciple of Winston Churchill, Lord Philip Carlyle was one of the few politicians to speak out consistently for action against Germany when she was still militarily weak and while it was within the rights of the Allied victors of the Great War to supervise the German people. But

under the Chamberlain government, and even under the Stanley Baldwin government before it, precious time had slipped away as the Nazis had rearmed Germany right under the Allies' noses.

“But surely France is prepared, Philip,” his wife Claire said hopefully. “They have the largest army in the world and have fortified the Maginot line across the entire length of their border with Germany. Certainly the Nazis don't want to tackle both Britain and France. Don't you think they'll sue for peace now that they have what they want?” It was this exact sentiment—that a reasonable person would eventually be satisfied—that had emboldened Chamberlain to sign away Czechoslovakia's freedom at Munich just over a year earlier, right on the heels of the forced takeover of the Sudetenland and the bloodless Anschluss in Austria. But Hitler was not a reasonable person. All these compromises made the borders of Nazi Germany look like a puddle of black ink spilled on a map of Europe. The compromises had been accepted out of a desperate desire by the Allies to avoid another Great War. Hitler kept promising that if he was just given enough *Lebensraum*—enough breathing room—the Germans would settle into their rightful place as one of the great nations of the world and finally become a responsible member of the international community. Except that each demand led to yet another, and then another, with each one being more unreasonable and outrageous. Finally he had gone too far, even for Chamberlain.

“But he wants Poland, mother, and we guaranteed her borders.” Michael, the older Carlyle son said. “We have no choice but to go to war. Hitler has never backed down, and we certainly can't give in again.”

Claire turned to look at Michael. The sight of his earnest, nineteen-year-old face made her wince, and instinctively she raised a handkerchief to her face as though to suppress a cough,

while trying to hide the alarm on her face. Home on leave from the Royal Naval College in Greenwich, Michael would be one of the first to be called into active service.

“Perhaps when Hitler sees that we really mean it this time, he’ll withdraw,” Claire replied helplessly.

“I don’t see why Poland has anything to do with us,” Dominic said fiercely.

This drew an immediate sigh from Philip, who turned to look at his seventeen-year-old. Dominic’s words sounded too much like what Chamberlain had said in a speech in 1938 when he was about to abandon Czechoslovakia to the Nazis. Even now the words made Philip’s blood boil. “*How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing.*” He shuddered at recalling Chamberlain’s words, followed by remembering something Churchill had replied with at the time with his rapier wit: *An appeaser is one who feeds the crocodile, hoping it will eat him last.*

As Philip looked at Dominic, he saw him facing him squarely, as if hoping for a fight. In spite of his best effort not to prejudge Dominic’s comment, Philip couldn’t help but feel that it was said in selfishness, as with so many things in Dominic’s life. At seventeen years old, he was just months away from being draft age himself, which might account for his lack of patriotism.

“This is our fight, Dominic,” Philip said evenly. “Tyranny is never content to live within its boundaries and always seeks to extend its influence.”

Dominic smiled mischievously, “Well, at least Sub-Leftenant Carlyle here will get his chance to go to war. It’s what you’ve been training to do for the past four years,” he giped, purposely exaggerating the British habit of pronouncing the word as “Sub-Leftenant.”

Michael flared up, as expected. “Nobody wants war, but I’ll be proud to serve!”

“Perhaps you’ll have the distinction of firing the first shot,” Dominic replied pleasantly. He’d always known how to get his older brother’s goat and loved to egg him on. “Why, who knows, maybe you’ll even be the first to be wounded or killed—imagine what an honor that would be!”

“That will be enough, Dominic!” Philip reprimanded, and the boy shrunk at his father’s retort. Michael had actually started to rise out of his chair as if to hit Dominic, but he settled back in when Philip took control. Claire and their fifteen-year-old daughter Grace simply looked miserable. It was almost always like this when Michael and Dominic were together.

Dominic wasn’t quite finished. Turning to Michael, he said, “Well, it may be your fight, but it certainly isn’t mine. We’re Americans, and Europe’s wars have nothing to do with us. Why would you want to serve with the British instead of your native country?”

It was an old argument. All the Carlyle children had been born in Salt Lake City after Philip Carlyle accompanied his American friend Dan O’Brian home from England after the ending of the Great War in 1918. Philip had rescued Dan when he was wounded by a German gas attack on the American trenches and had ultimately brought him to Carlyle Manor to recuperate. As a chaplain for the Church of England, Philip had felt it his duty to help the earnest young American who had lost so much on the fields of France.

Philip recalled the memories of the last war, with all its carnage and horror flooding his mind.

The sound of Michael’s voice brought Philip back to the present. “It’s a matter of honor, Dominic. England can’t turn her back on an ally. We guaranteed Poland’s borders, and now they’ve been violated. And you know as well as I do that we’re both British and American.” he said with exasperation that was typical of these discussions.

Having accomplished his goal of stirring things up, Dominic changed tack without even acknowledging the British-vs.-American argument. It had been fought so many times in the past that it was no longer interesting. “Mr. O’Dyer says that the whole Polish thing was just a bluff on the prime minister’s part to get Germany to back down. Now that his strategy has failed, Mr. Chamberlain will find another reason to give in again, and real war will be avoided.” Then, to add drama to what he said, he spoke the ultimate controversial argument. “And perhaps Germany will give some decent leadership to Europe.”

That lit another fuse, and Philip inhaled slowly. Mr. O’Dyer was an instructor at the public school where Dominic now boarded, having been expelled from the more prestigious academy where he had been educated for the previous eight years before the most recent incident of cheating had finally caught up to him.

“Mr. O’Dyer is Irish,” Philip said as evenly as possible, “many of whom believe that their interests are more closely allied with Germany than with England. It’s no wonder that he’d say that.” Then, before Dominic could respond, Philip asserted, “But he’s wrong. We are allies of the Poles because the Nazis have proven they have no scruples. It’s past time to stop them before they carry their hatred across all of Europe and England.”

“Well, it’s got nothing to do with me, because Germany has done nothing to America.”

Philip bit his lower lip until the salty taste of blood caused him to ease up.

“Please,” Claire said. “Certainly we don’t need to argue at a time like this. These events are larger than all of us, and there’s nothing we can do anyway.”

“There’s something I can do,” Michael said quietly. “I can request transfer to the active duty roster. And that’s exactly what I want to do.”

“But it’s too soon,” Claire replied quickly. “You should finish school and see how things develop. You’re only a term away from completion.” Then, choking back the emotion, she said, “You’re too young.”

Michael didn’t reply, but he also didn’t back down.

“I suspect they’ll truncate your program and transfer you anyway,” Philip said. “Having made the decision to go to the Naval College, you’re bound to active duty. So I’d just go back to school and see what they have in mind.”

Dominic didn’t like having the spotlight turned to Michael, so he interjected, “Well, I’m not joining anything.”

“No, I suppose you wouldn’t think that it has anything to do with you, Dominic,” Michael said coldly. “Maybe you should return to America until it’s over, since I’m sure you wouldn’t want to run any of the risks of living here when hostilities break out.”

Even Dominic was unnerved by this rebuke and started to reply, “It’s not that I’m a coward or anything . . .”

“That’s enough.” Claire interrupted. “It’s bad enough the English and the Germans are at war. We don’t need to be at war here in our own family.”

“I’m sorry,” Michael said, going quiet.

Philip sighed. “We’ll have time to talk about what this means for each of us in the days to come. Nothing has to be decided right now. In the meantime, I should go up to Parliament, since I imagine that there will be a flurry of activity there that I should be part of.” He gave Claire a quick kiss, hugged Grace, and then put on his coat. There was an early chill in the air—perhaps even nature was subdued by the unhappy turn of events.

As he stepped out onto Dartmouth Street to begin the four-street walk to the Houses of Parliament, the dark reality settled in that England was at war yet again.

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“I’m sorry that I lost my temper with Dominic. I’d promised myself that I wouldn’t, and there I was angry again.” Philip was staring at the ceiling as Claire snuggled over to his side and laid her head on his shoulder.

Claire reflected on how Philip was one of the most even-tempered men she had ever known, showing incredible patience regardless of whatever provocations he faced, and he’d faced many since their marriage in 1920. His father, the previous Lord Carlyle, was furious when Philip had joined the LDS Church, threatening to disown him if he didn’t renounce his “lunatic” affiliation with the Mormon culture. Because of primogeniture, the English law that says family property is held in trust from one generation to the next, he couldn’t legally disinherit Philip. Since Philip was their only child, it was unthinkable to allow the title to lapse. But Lord Carlyle did make it clear that Philip wasn’t welcome at home as long as he remained outside the Established Church. It wasn’t that his father had doctrinal qualms, never having shown much interest in religion, but rather that it was a political and social faux pas that he viewed as foolish and selfish. For his part, Philip had been content to live the life of a professor of religion at the University of Utah and would have happily raised his family there in relative poverty without any thought for what he had left behind in England had his mother not implored him to come home and claim his title when Lord Carlyle died unexpectedly in 1930. It was a proud name, long affiliated with the Carlyle estate which had been given to the family by a Royal Grant more than a century ago. Philip’s mother, Lady Carlyle, had also come from a prominent family and was anxious to maintain the long traditions that Philip’s birthright conveyed upon him. Even

though she'd shown little motherly affection for Philip through the years, as was common in that level of society, he still felt the burden of duty that she imposed on him with her appeal. And so he'd returned reluctantly to claim his title and take his place in the Lords, even though he'd faced a religious bigotry at first from some of the more zealous Lords. "And yet you've never complained in spite of it all," she said quietly into the darkness.

"What?" Philip asked. "I was just apologizing for losing my temper with Dominic."

"I know. And I was just thinking of all the times when you should have lost your temper in this stuffy little country of yours, and yet you haven't. It's a puzzle why you can tolerate so much from others yet lose your patience so easily with our boy."

"If that was meant to comfort me . . ."

"I become exasperated with him, too," she said. "I don't know why he never puts himself in other people's shoes to act in their best interest."

Now it was Philip who smiled. She was right. Dominic seemed to lack the empathy. Dominic's self-interest always came first, putting him totally at odds with the character traits that Philip most admired: selflessness, duty, and honor. It was disturbing that Dominic seemed to relish dominating younger, weaker children while feigning an injury when competing with his equals. It caused both fear and anger within Philip as he thought about what it all meant for his son's future.

They lay quietly for a few moments before Philip said, "Well, I suppose that Dominic is right that this isn't his quarrel. He is an American, after all, and has every right not to join the British. Particularly since our laws will never bestow our title or property on him." In spite of himself, Philip took comfort from that thought, since Dominic was not well suited to managing the complex affairs of the estate. Then a cold chill went down his spine, settling into an

uncomfortable knot in his stomach “. . . Unless something happens to Michael . . .” Philip whispered.

“You can’t think that way,” Claire said. “The future is reserved for God to see. We have to go on as best we can in the present.”

Philip relaxed. Claire’s common sense always seemed to calm him. Perhaps it was the practicality of her American upbringing or just a reflection of her personality, but it always seemed to work. “Well, what should we do with Dominic and Grace then? When the Germans attack London, it won’t be safe here. Besides, when Dominic reaches eighteen, it will provoke a scandal if he fails to enlist like the other boys his age. Perhaps they should go to America.”

Claire ignored the last part of his comment. “Do you think it would be safe out at the manor?” she asked. Philip knew that she preferred living in their townhouse in London since it gave her people to talk with. There was a vibrant branch of the Church in London where Claire served in the Relief Society. Carlyle Manor was safely out in the country, but it was a large old house surrounded by endless rolling hills that were tended by tenant farmers. Most of the landed gentry of their social standing enjoyed plenty of social activity, as the various families of the aristocracy visited one another for galas and dinners, but Claire had two strikes against her—she was an American and a Mormon. Some called her Lady Carlyle only grudgingly, and very few invitations or visitors ever came. It made living at the manor lonesome for her and the children.

“Who knows where we’ll be safe,” Philip said, trying to sound as confident as possible. “I doubt that many bombs would fall out in the countryside, but if the Germans actually invade the country, they’d consider Carlyle Manor perfectly situated as a garrison for a German general and his staff. No, I think we need something more permanent for the children.” His voice betrayed even more strain when he said, “. . . and perhaps for you.”

Claire sat up in bed. “You can stop that thought right there, Philip. I will not go back to America without you. I didn’t marry you for time and all eternity, except for the times when there are challenges. We will stay here together.”

Philip relaxed again. On the one hand he hated the thought of his wife exposed to danger. But the thought of being without her was even worse. Seizing on the moment, he said, “So are we agreed that Dominic and Grace should go to Arizona?”

There was a rustling sound in the darkened corridor near the drawing room where they were talking. Philip and Claire looked up to see Grace peek her head around the corner. “I don’t want to go to America.” There was a defiant look in her eyes.

“How long have you been listening?” Philip asked.

“Long enough to know that you’re trying to send us out of the country. Well, I don’t want to go.” Claire stretched out her arms, and Grace came running to her mother’s arms.

“It wouldn’t be forever,” Philip said tenderly.

“It might be if something happens to you or Momma.” Grace stiffened as he tried to comfort her. With all the uncertainty about the war, he wanted to protect her more than anything in the world and wished she could see it that way. But he knew better.

“You still think I’m a silly little girl who doesn’t understand the danger. But I do understand, and I can take care of myself. The last thing I want is to be stuck in Arizona with Aunt Karrie, worrying about what’s happening to the two of you. That would be the worst thing of all!”

Philip didn’t want to be unkind, but he needed her to understand the seriousness of the situation. “I know you’re growing up, Grace, and becoming a woman. But I also know that you have no idea how horrible this thing can get. If the Germans decide to invade, they’ll first drop

bombs by the hundreds of thousands of pounds, just as they did in Poland. And then, heaven forbid, if they do manage to land troops, they'll take whatever they want from whatever houses they capture." He stopped for a moment to get control of his breathing. "And I can promise you that a young girl would not be safe in such circumstances." He let the words hang heavily in the air to make sure their full meaning had time to sink in. "Do you understand what I'm saying, Grace?"

She was quiet for a few moments. "I understand—but I can't believe it would ever come to that. England beat the Germans in the last war. Why should it be different this time?"

"I wish it were the same, but many things have changed in the past twenty years. Germany is armed and ready for war while we're not. And in those days the aircraft were small and fragile with hardly the range to even reach our shores. But it's not like that now. Today the English Channel is just a minor obstacle. Besides, the Germans are out for revenge," he said, frowning. "No, it's not like the last war—not at all."

"Then why don't you and Mother come with us? If it's so dangerous, why must you stay?"

Philip sighed. The answer seemed impossible to convey. How do you teach your daughter about obligations that were created hundreds of years before her birth? Fortunately, Claire stepped into the conversation.

"Your father is part of Parliament, and we have to be here to share in the country's trouble. I'm not British, but I have to stay with him—because I love him. There will be much to worry about in the days to come. It would be such a relief if we didn't have to worry about you and Dominic."

Philip saw Grace suppress a sob. He reached his arm around her shoulder and drew her close but didn't say a word. This time she yielded, allowing him to stroke her hair.

"I don't know why all this has to happen. I just don't know what I'd do if something happened to either of you," Grace said amid sobs.

"I know," Philip said. "None of us understand why it has to happen. But it has." They sat lost in thought for a few moments. Finally, Philip said as cheerfully as possible, "Still, we don't need to talk about it anymore tonight. We're all safe and together for the moment. We should be grateful for that." And with that they sat quietly holding each other in the face of the oncoming storm.

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After Grace had gone to bed and Philip and Claire were settling down to sleep, Claire said, "I'll cable Karrie tomorrow to see if it's all right."

"We could offer to extend their house a bit . . ."

"That would take a phone conversation. I'm sure she'd be embarrassed at the offer."

"Well, I'll have to insist on providing for the children's financial needs," Philip protested. "Otherwise, we can't let them go."

"Calm down, dear. I'll work this out with my sister. In the meantime, you need to get some sleep so you'll be rested for your summons tomorrow. Do you have any idea what they want?"

"I honestly don't. I'm sure it's not a cabinet post, since I don't have the experience. Besides, they frown on elevating ministers from the Lords instead of the Commons."

"But it's the prime minister himself who wants to see you?"

“Mr. Appeasement himself.” Philip paused a moment in frustration then continued. “I’m not sure I’d want to serve in his government. Under his leadership, England has become weak and unreliable.”

Claire rolled onto her right elbow and looked directly into Philip’s eyes. “The idea is that you should be calming down right now so you can fall asleep—not getting your dander up over Mr. Chamberlain. I’m sorry I brought the subject up.”

Philip laughed. “Fine . . . I’ll let him rest in peace tonight and find out what he’s got in store for me tomorrow.” They kissed and Claire rolled back to her side, tucking her knees up against the back of Philip’s legs. They lay quietly for a few moments.

“He’s not all bad, you know?” Claire piped in.

“Chamberlain? I think he is.”

“No, Dominic. He has a vulnerable side. Sometimes I think all his bravado is a mask of his fear. Coming to England was very hard on him.”

“I know,” Philip said quietly. “I’ve tortured myself a thousand times wondering if I did this to him. Whenever he challenges me, I see a look in his eyes that is at once both defiant and yearning—as if he secretly wished that we could connect. But there have been so few times that it’s happened.” Philip found himself biting his lip again.

Claire was quiet for a moment—quiet in the way that Philip couldn’t decide if she wanted to tell him something unpleasant and was trying to figure out how to phrase it or quiet because he had surprised her with his comment, and she was thinking about it. Finally she replied. “I don’t know the answer, Philip. He’s a hard boy to understand. It seems like he goes out of his way to irritate people, particularly you and Michael, as if he relishes the conflict. But other times, when

no one else is around, he can be very tender when he talks to me. If people could see that side of him, I think he'd get along better . . .”

Philip decided not to respond when her voice trailed off.

Claire yawned. “I guess that’s another thing that will have to wait for tomorrow. Suddenly I can’t keep my eyes open.”

Philip snuggled close again. And with that Claire settled deeply into the pillow. It wasn’t so easy for Philip, who lay very quietly, thinking about the events of his life over the past twenty years. It almost seemed like a dream now—his injuries in the war, moving to Salt Lake City against his father’s will, and starting a family when he thought he was past the age of marriage. Now he was about to be asked to assume some kind of role in the prosecution of a war that he felt could have been avoided had England, France, and America shown any kind of resolve in standing up to Hitler, the Austrian Corporal who had seduced the German people.