

Affliction: a state of pain, distress or grief, misery; a cause of mental or bodily pain as sickness, calamity, loss, or persecution.

Hi, welcome to the first of hopefully many episodes of affliction. Day to day people face many issues. Some are on a large scale, some are more personal. This podcast will be my attempt to cover just a few of the many afflictions people have faced and the outcomes, in hopes of bringing these issues to light and on a personal level.

I would like to give a warning though. Some people could consider these podcasts sensitive material. Many of the audio clips go into great detail or get up close and personal with those directly involved. So this podcast is not necessarily for those faint of heart or easily anxious.

This episode I was lucky enough to find a reservoir of clips from the World War 2 air raids on archive.org. Many of the clips inspired me, because most of the time what they teach you about war in history class is very detached. They don't show you the people the sounds or the feelings. So I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight those who stayed strong through the air raids and worked hard every day just to stay alive. So here is the first episode of Affliction: The Air Raids.

Please keep in mind, this podcast is a unique compilation of a few of the most sensitive clips found at archive.org. In no way is this intended to imply ownership over the arranged material. This is only intended to shed light on the air raids using the best clips found.

(Hitler's speech)

Translation: Instead, now we have armed to such an extent to which the world has never before seen.

Air raids: strategic bombing during world war 2; a long term continuous attack on the enemy and their railways, harbors, cities, industries, and homes, resulting in over 1.3 million civilian casualties, 60,000 of which came solely from Britain.

This is the Founders' square. The noise that you hear at the moment is the sound of the air raid siren. I'm standing here just on the steps of St. Martins on the field. A search light just burst into action off in the distance, one single beam sweeping the sky above me now. People are walking along quite quietly. Were just at the entrance of an air raid shelter and I must move this cable over just a bit so people can walk in. There's another search light just square behind nelson's statue. Here comes one of those big red buses around the corner. Double deckers they are, just a few lights on the top deck. In this blackness, it looks very much like a ship passing in the night and you can just see the porthole.

My mother and I were in the house alone when the bomb hit the house next door. We had to get out and leave the wreckage as quickly as we could. We went into a surface shelter where we stayed until the end of the raid. Then the next day we started out and we walked until we reached a place called Stanley, where they put it up for the night. Then two days later we got another house until that was bombed last night.

The plane is still very high and it's quite clear that he is not coming in for his bombing run. Earlier this evening – again those were explosions overhead. Earlier this evening we heard a number of bombs go sliding and slithering across the fall several blocks away. Just overhead now the bursts of the other aircraft fire. Still the guns nearby are not working. The third flights now are flying almost directly overhead. Now here there are two bursts nearer in a moment. There they are. That hard, stoney sound.

Now the old lady on our right refused to go down the shelter. She was almost blind and she was old and she said that if she was gonna die she was gonna die in her own home in her own bed. She just simply refused to use the shelter. I distinctly remember being in the shelter, hearing a rush of wind, followed by this noise that was the most deafening frightening noise I ever heard in my life. Followed by a sensation of the whole of your body being compressed in. The air was pushed out. My father had been on the back wall outside of the house, and the whole wall had collapsed on him and that was what saved his life. The shelter itself had crumpled and bend but basically had withstood the blast. And we came out of the shelter and there was no street left it was demolished. The house where the old lady lived that had been completely demolished and there was some flies going on there. My father rushed to the next door family and found them all to be dead. The blast had killed the whole family down there.

It was a surface shelter that I went to, and it's one of the most cheering sights I've seen since the air raids started. I've been around the streets most nights on one job or another, but I've never seen anything come from this shelter but warmth and cheerfulness. All the people come from a nearby block of smiths. There's a family atmosphere and the place looks fine. There are flags on the wall and pictures of film stars. The children have hung paper streamers all around. Along one side, there were chairs and tables, and when I went in all the women were knitting very busily. There was a babble of talk and most of the children were playing cards. Everyone was laughing and joking. If there was any noise from outside, they started singing. Their general mutter seemed to be, take no notice.

The aerial bombing caused the evacuation of many of London's children. When it was suggested that the princesses be evacuated, Princess Elizabeth's mother firmly rejected, saying the children won't go without me. I won't leave without the king. And the king will never leave. Youngest Princess Elizabeth speaks in broadcast to comfort the citizens and support them in as much as a child can.

I can truthfully say to you all that we children at home are full of cheerfulness and courage. We are trying to do all we can to help our gallant sailors, soldiers, and airmen. And when peace comes, remember, it will be for us, the children of today, to make the world of tomorrow a better and happier place.

June 6th, 1944. The invasion of German occupied Normandy France, the largest amphibious invasion in history. Nazi Germany military forces have reached its peak. 5,202 tanks, 5,041 Luftwaffe aircraft, and several other forces potentially await the allied troops.

Their planes are going overhead. They were plenty low. They just made the statement that no German planes have been seen, and I think that was the first one we've seen so far. It came very low, just cleared our stack, and as he passed he let go a stream of tracer that did no harm. And just as that happened, there was a burst of fire off the coast, just off about 5 miles. They're firing now just behind us, and many aircrafts burst in the sky. And bombs bursting on the shore, and along in the convoys of the German planes, that are beginning their first attack on the night of June 6th now that darkness has come upon us. The reverberations of bombs, every once in a while you hear a burst of fire. And the bigger caliber of one of the large ships firing up. Another bomb hit, another one. And the tracer line keeps arcing up into the darkness. (murmured, frantic speech)

BEF, or British expeditionary force. The name given to the British army in Western Europe during the Second World War.

On the station, I walked the men walk into the large waiting trains. It was astounding to walk along carriage after carriage of soldiers and to find in each one of them silence. For most of the men were fast asleep where they sat. All the way along the line, the people of England stood at the back crossings and in the gardens to wave to them. And so the men of the BEF came home

Winston Churchill, the prime minister of the united kingdom during World War 2.

We ask no favors of the enemy. We seek from them no compassion. On the contrary, if tonight the people of London were asked to cast their votes, as to whether conventions should be entered to stop the bombing of all cities, an overwhelming majority would cry out no. we will meet out to the Germans the measure, and more than the measure they have meted out to us.

The people of London, with once voice would say to Hitler, you have committed every crime under the sun. Where you have been the least resisted, there you have been the most brutal. It was you who began the indiscriminate bombings. We remember Warsaw, in the very few days, the first few days of the war. We remember Rotterdam; we have been newly reminded of you habits by the hideous massacre in Bell-gore. We know too well the bestial assault you are making upon the Russian people to whom our hearts go out in their valiant struggle. We will have no truce or folly with you, or the grisly gang who work your wicked will. You do your worst, and we will do our best.

Yesterday morning, at 2:41 a.m., at General Eisenhower's headquarters, General Goebbels, the represented of the German high command, the designated head of the German state, signed the act of unconditional surrender of all German land sea and air forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Force, and simultaneously to the Soviet high command. (singing)

I wanted very much to see this city, which has suffered by the malice of our assailants. I can see that it has had many of fine building shattered and gutted. But I can also see that it does not have the hearts of its people cast down. The resolution of the British people is uncounterable. Neither sudden or long shocks, nor long cold charring proving strange and large can or will alter our course. No country made more strenuous efforts to avoid being drawn into this war. We kept on doing our best. We kept on improving. We profited by our mistakes and our experiences. We turned misfortune to good account. We were told we would run short of this or that, until the only thing we rand short of was funds. We did our duty. With quite a little forethought, a little care in decision, and with rather greater measure of slow persistency, we had never need to faced this thing in our life time or in that of our children.

I have never given you any assurances of a speedy, or easy, or cheap victory. On the contrary as you know, I have never promised anything but the hardest conditions, great disappointments, and many mistakes, but I'm sure that in the end, all will be well for us in our island home. All will be better for the world, and there will be that crown of honor for those who have endured and never failed. And history will accord, for having set an example for the whole human race.

Thanks for listening to the first episode of affliction. This podcast was produced by me, Katie Piedra. For more podcasts like this, visit whje.com.