

wardens barked orders and pointed instructions at the hordes, but few people paid any attention they were too fearful of the fire and fury that was roaring over the english channel towards them terror had already turned pretty young faces into ugly balls of fear, and the eyes of thousands were turned constantly upwards, pulled wide and white by dread

eleven-year-old samuel hunt watched all of this from beside the mouth of bethnal green tube station he had long since grown used to the sirens and fright that gripped his city most evenings for him, the piercing howl was oddly reassuring – a sign that life and london were still functioning what he feared much more was the silence that came afterwards that was where the grim reaper's work could usually be found

"better head down the steps, sammy," a familiar voice urged him the heavy-set butcher's wife herded her two toddlers past him "adolf's bombs can't reach you down on the tube"

sam smiled a thank-you "i'll be down in a minute, mrs griffiths – just as soon as lily gets here"

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