

VESUVIUS IN FERNO

Nature, not man, provides the most terrifying spectacle of destruction witnessed in Europe for the last seventy years. Vomited from the molten bowels of the earth the white hot rocks and lava roared and rolled ~~into~~ their accustomed way down Vesuvius. Inescapable calamity threatened all men whose business, whether of peace or war, held them along that path.

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(next) Up from the death-mountain coiled the thick, oily smoke, ~~swarming~~ hiding the light of day, hanging, with seeming reluctance to be blown away, ~~over~~ over the still erupting crater.

(next) This was the stage at which men feared catastrophe on the scale of Pompeii. The lava-flow increased. Armies looked on, conscious that puny indeed were the destructive efforts of mankind, measured against terror of erupting Vesuvius.

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(GV lava over wall) In the volcano's path lay the little township of San Sebastiano, whose six thousand people knew by this time that the wall of fire would overwhelm at least part of their town. Yet without panic they queued up for emergency food rations, calmly sought information as to ~~what~~ transport would be provided. For the evacuation was now under way. The allied armies and the RAF lent a hand. The war, at such a time, seemed irrelevant. Five thousand men, women and children were quickly got away to safety before the lava-wall burned its ^{path} ~~way~~ through the outer ^{part} ~~part~~ of the town.

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(25 GVP town) San Sebastiano was crumbling before the oncoming ~~mountain~~ tide of lava when news cameramen rushed to the scene and secured pictures of destruction, the like of which have not been shown before.

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To scenes of bombing we have grown accustomed. This slow, inexorable advance of ~~the~~ wrathful nature spellbound all that beheld it.

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~~The air shimmered with heat.~~

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Even Outside the range of lava the pavements were as/laid if over inferno. ~~From places of safety,~~ soldiers watched a spectacle awesome beyond anything they had seen before - an advancing wall of lava more than a quarter-mile wide.

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(43 aftr hand up) It was a terrifying reminder of nature's awful power. *By now 7 flow o lava \ ceased.* ~~At last the lava ceased to flow. Merged in water at the clouds of steam.~~ For the time being Vesuvius was content.