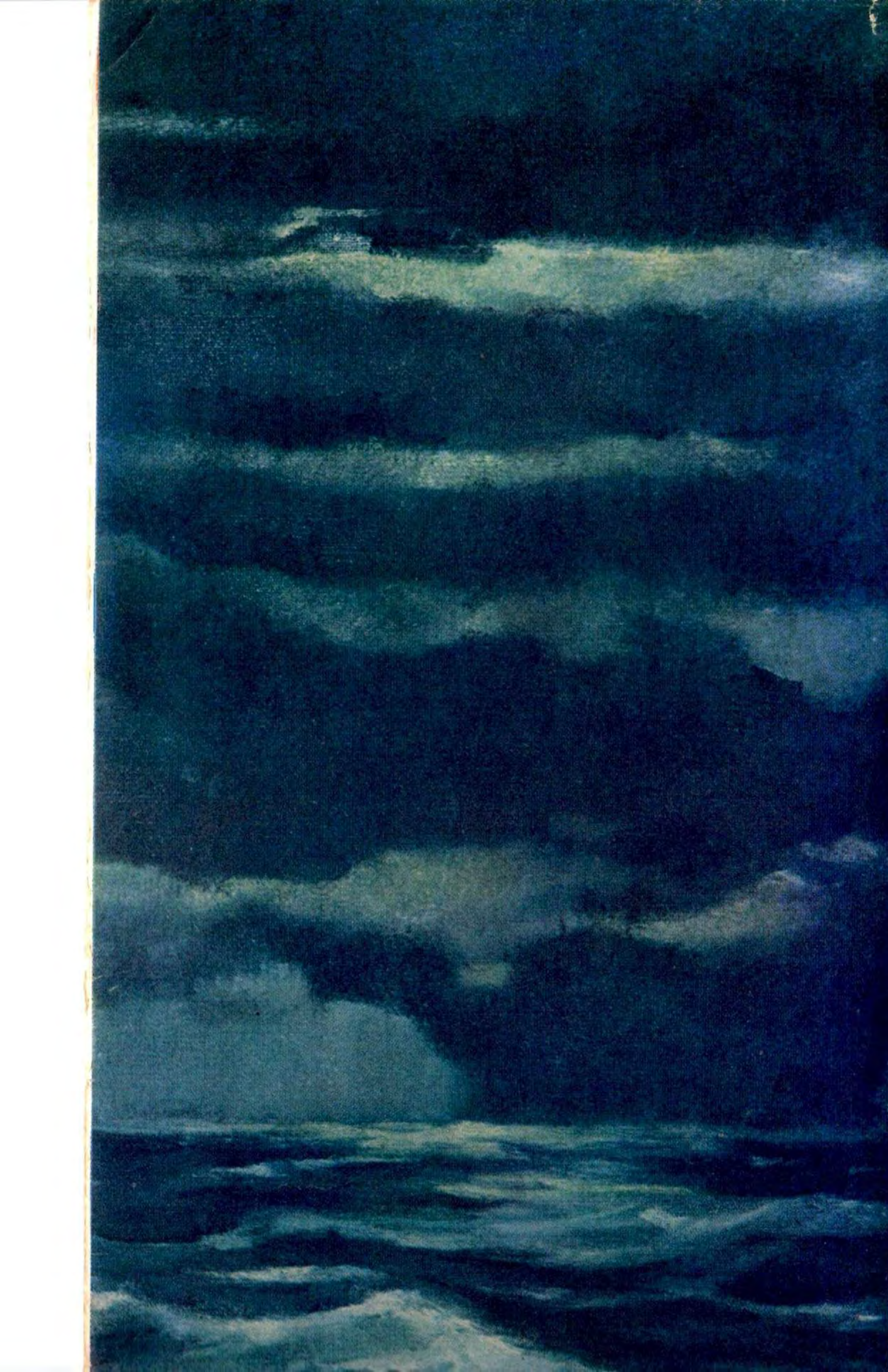




# SUBMARINE WARFARE

**Paul Sample paints the vessels and the life of sailors who live in the closest confinement, and therefore the tightest companionship, of all our fighting men**

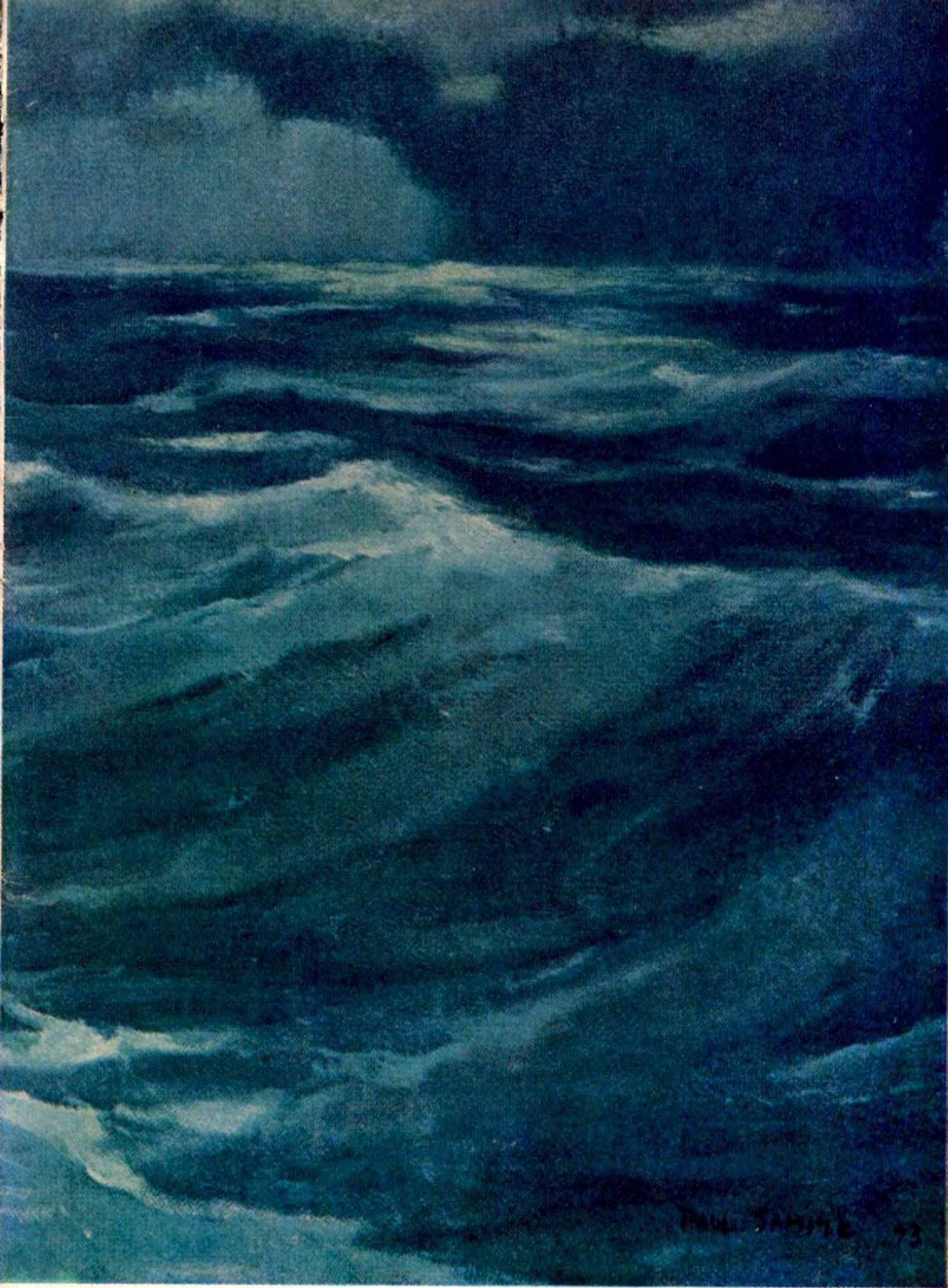
**T**here is barely room in a submarine for human flesh and spirit. That is why the man who fights underwater is affected, probably more than any other fighter, by men—by the ones with whom he is so closely imprisoned in hazard.

This man is not a pale, silent, dehydrated person, as he is so often pictured. He is like any seagoing man: healthy, cocky, profane. He has plenty of time to shave, but he is a man, he grows a beard. He is better fed than most fighting men. He is in his early 20's. If he is a really good submariner, he is an extrovert, a noisy, cheerful guy. The only thing that makes him different from other Navy men is the compactness of the community of 60-odd men in which he lives.

No matter where he is aboard his ship, no matter what he is doing, he can almost always reach out and touch another man. If he sits playing cribbage in the forward torpedo room, he needs only to turn his head to have his face warmed by the breath of a sleeping friend, and if the sleeper seems to be in bed with a torpedo, that is just part of a submariner's intimacy. After meals his dining room becomes his clubroom, and he sits at table elbow-to-elbow with others reading westerns or shooting the breeze or listening to the dismal tinkling of a samisen on a Japanese radio program.

And yet he does not hate his confinement. On the contrary, he prefers it. That other, upper world of the conning tower is something he explores only in line of duty. It is a foreign, lonely place. If he has a night watch above, he wears dark glasses to adjust his eyes before he goes up, and his world turns artificial and queer. The dripping steel





the deck is awash and is no place for men to walk. When the submarine dives, motion stops and the closed-in men feel secure from attack. Out on a Pacific patrol, Sample was quickly infected by this feeling. He wrote in his journal: "It was pitch black and very windy and rough and very lonely up there."

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And yet he does not hate his confinement. On the contrary, he prefers it. That other, upper world of the conning tower is something he explores only in line of duty. It is a foreign, lonely place. If he has a night watch above, he wears dark glasses to adjust his eyes before he goes up, and his world turns artificial and queer. The dripping steel up there is unfriendly and so are the stars, and he ducks to avoid the chill sea spray. He would rather be below, shut in with his kind.

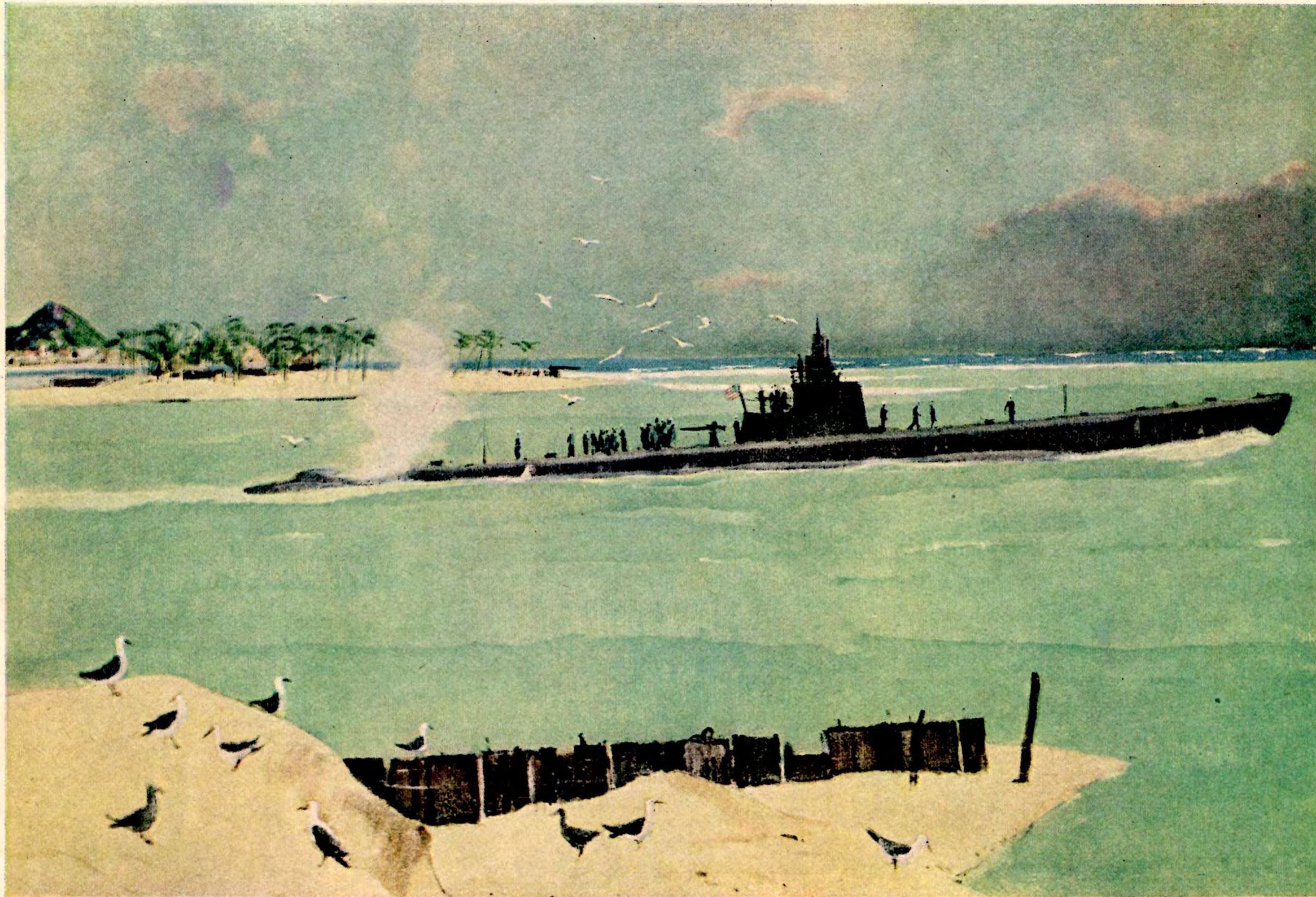
He and his fellows are interdependent. Every man on a submarine has a job when the ship dives: even the cook must "secure" the galley sink. Under vague battle lights men stand about absolutely immobile, speaking their parts—reading gauges and meters and repeating the readings, giving and repeating orders—in muffled voices, like whispers echoing in a deep well. And the engineering officer stands with a sober face, for he has computed the weight of everything that came onto the ship, every orange and all the fuel and each man, and he has made his calculations as to exactly how much water must be let into the ballast tanks so that when the ship goes down she will weigh exactly the same as the water she displaces, and will trim. Each man reports readiness at his station, and each knows that if he goes wrong he will throw away his own life and those of his friends. As the last red light on the panel known as the Christmas Tree flickers over to green, the diving officer reports: "Pressure in the boat; green board, sir." The captain speaks. The gentle whine of electric motors replaces the roar of diesels. There is a thunder of water roaring into the ballast tanks, and of air venting obscenely on deck. The ship settles. She trims all right. The captain kids the engineer; "Just luck, you bum." But the engineer's face shows that he knows he has done a good job, and enlisted men nearby are glad for him and even feel that they have helped a little.

This feeling of having helped is perhaps the key to the submariner's pride in his job, and to his insistence that there (*continued on next page*)



**"SKIPPER ON THE BRIDGE"** is a portrait of Commander Roy Benson. He not only controls the ship during attacks, but he is the ship's doctor and father and heart. Little things he does—chinning himself on the conning tower in the afternoons, puffing quietly on a cigar on the bridge, kidding his men about their girls or their haircuts—set the tone and maintain the morale of the whole ship.

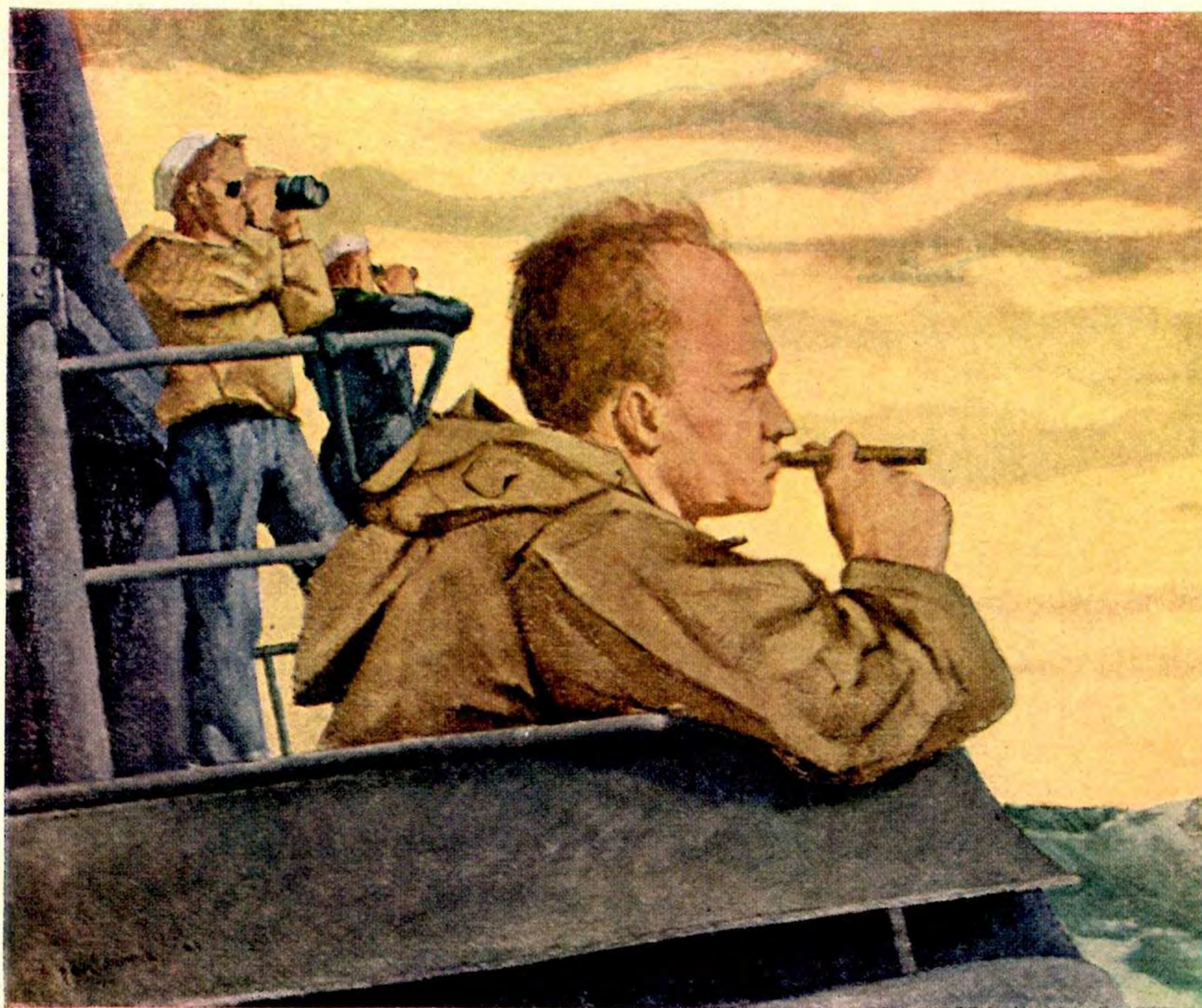
property. The redhead who laughs so much infects every man on the ship with his cheer.



**"DEPARTURE."** Ashore, the crew of a submarine sticks close together, like a club, and the men resent outsiders. When sailing time comes, they report quietly aboard, with little excitement or fear. As the submarine leaves the base, the men are mustered smartly on deck, but by the time the ship has

reached the harbor mouth, they are dispersed at ease, watching the beach slip away, comparing notes on the times they had at the Royal Hawaiian, already making some vows and plans for their next leave. There is surprisingly little ceremony about their departure; only the gulls are out to see them off.





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is no other duty in the Navy he would like as much. Every man on a submarine feels that he is part of an attack. When the general alarm sounds through the ship, it only takes a few seconds for the news to go from man to man like an electric charge jumping gaps: "Tanker, big one...big tanker...tanker..." All through the ship men brace themselves and from time to time their eyes meet. They hear the captain's voice: "Fire one!" There is a long wait. Then the shock of distant explosions. All cheer, and an enlisted man loses his head and rushes up to the captain and pumps his hand and shouts; "You hit the bastard, you hit him!" But elation modulates quickly into alertness. The ship dives deep. When depth charges walk toward the submarine, the men punctuate the thuds with whispers: "Whew... oh-oh... that was close... we're okay now..." And at that moment the crew is especially compact in spirit, for there is no intimacy quite like the knowledge that the ship you share with your friends may at any moment serve also as your common coffin.

In moments of relaxation, personalities are not only integrated; they become common property. The redhead who laughs so much infects every man on the ship with his cheer.





The men who hear the engineering officer describe over and over that last enchanted evening in San Francisco all feel as if they personally danced with his girl. Pin-ups peeping out from between the wheels and gauges are not personal property: they are public loves.

And all through the closeness of feeling runs a strong, essential thread: the leadership of the captain. Aboard a submarine, more than on any other naval vessel, the skipper is the ship. He can afford to be informal, to let his men wear sweaters and skivvies, to call them by their first names, even to tolerate joshing of his own foibles, because he knows that his men will be self-disciplined, since each is so important to the survival of the ship. He can be considerate; perhaps he will call the torpedoman who loves sketching to the periscope to see Mt. Fuji. If one of his men falls very sick at sea, you may find him in his room — which is cluttered with cigar boxes and clothes, snapshots of his girl and pictures taken through the periscope—with a book open, looking up the words he dreads: “. . . we therefore commit this body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and the life of the world to come . . .”



**"SUBMARINERS"** Fireman Second Class John Gavin, a French-American (*standing*), and Seaman Second Class Charles Schaub, a German-American, take the air together on the conning tower of a U. S. submarine. Submariners are not pale, silent introverts, as they are often described; they are like these men and like any American sailors, husky, hearty, hard-working and yet easygoing.





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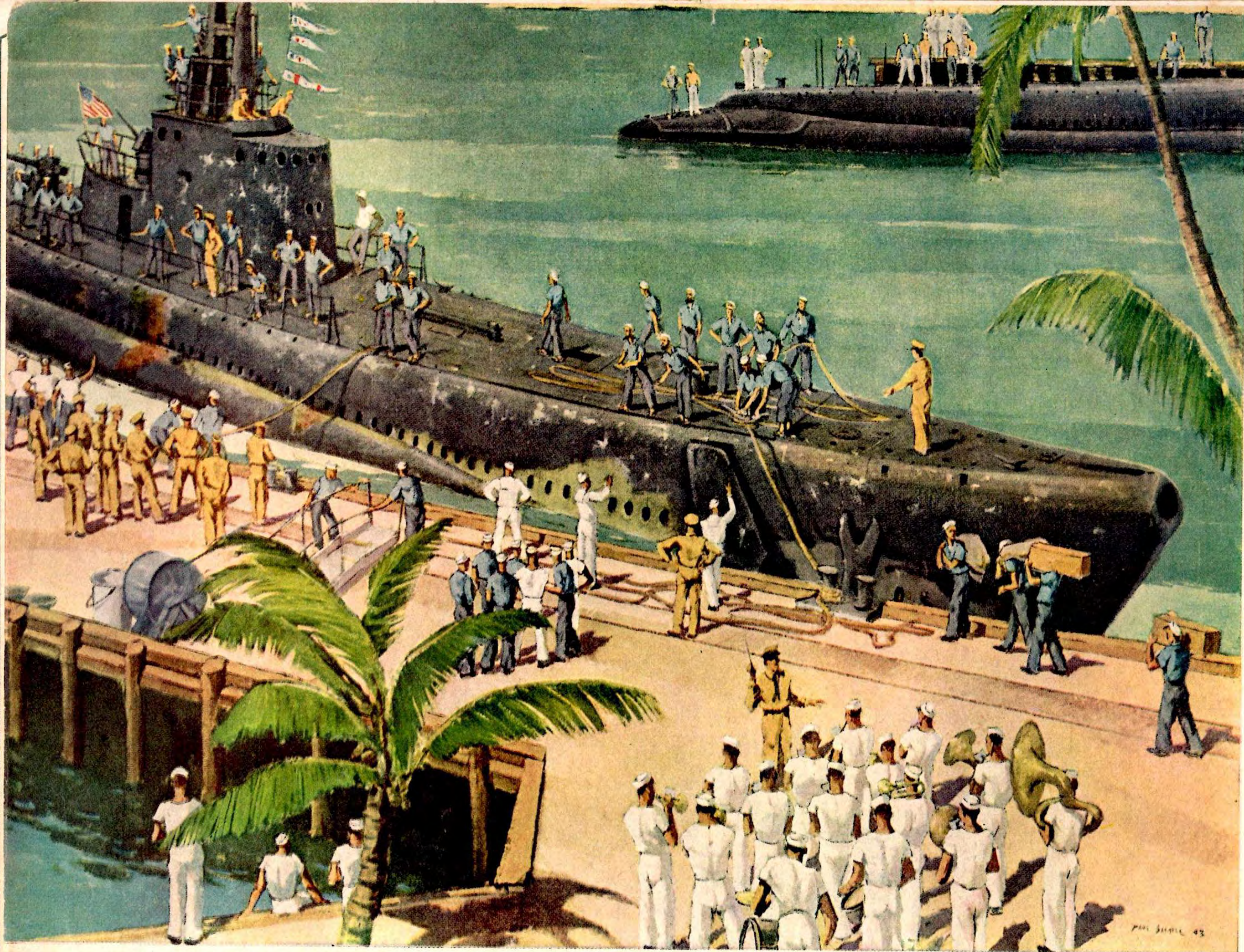
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“OFF WATCH” shows crew’s quarters in the forward torpedo room. It also shows the confinement of submarine life. In this tiny space there are 19 men. Some are sleeping, some play cards on a checkerboard, some lounge and shoot the breeze. The interior decoration of their home consists of tor-

pedoes, valves, ducts and gauges. There can be no race distinctions in such a compact community, and the Negro mess attendant bunks with his white companions and plays cards with them. Life in submarine quarters is informal: men go shirtless and are either barefoot or wear special-issue sandals.





**"PATROL'S END"** shows submarine returning from patrol. A band plays things like *Beer Barrel Polka*, officers wait to go aboard for reports, sacks of mail and boxes of fresh vegetables and fruit are carried on, and the men speak calm greetings to their friends ashore. Only men on the dock wave.

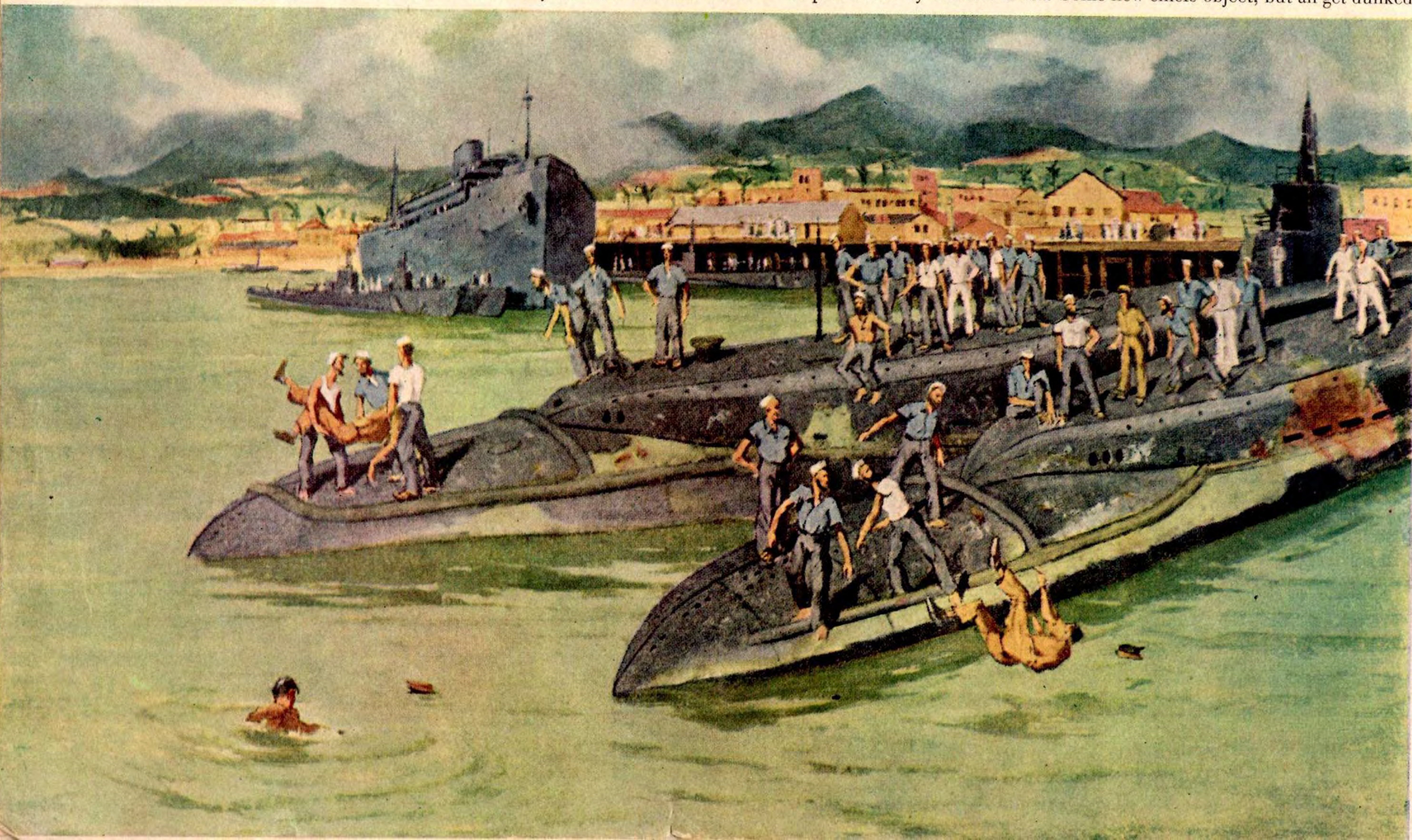
**"CHIEFS OVERSIDE."** Men who have been promoted while on patrol to rating of chief petty officer are tossed overboard by crew mates after submarine has tied up and first bustle of arrival at home base is over. Men get word of promotion by wireless at sea. Some new chiefs object, but all get dunked.



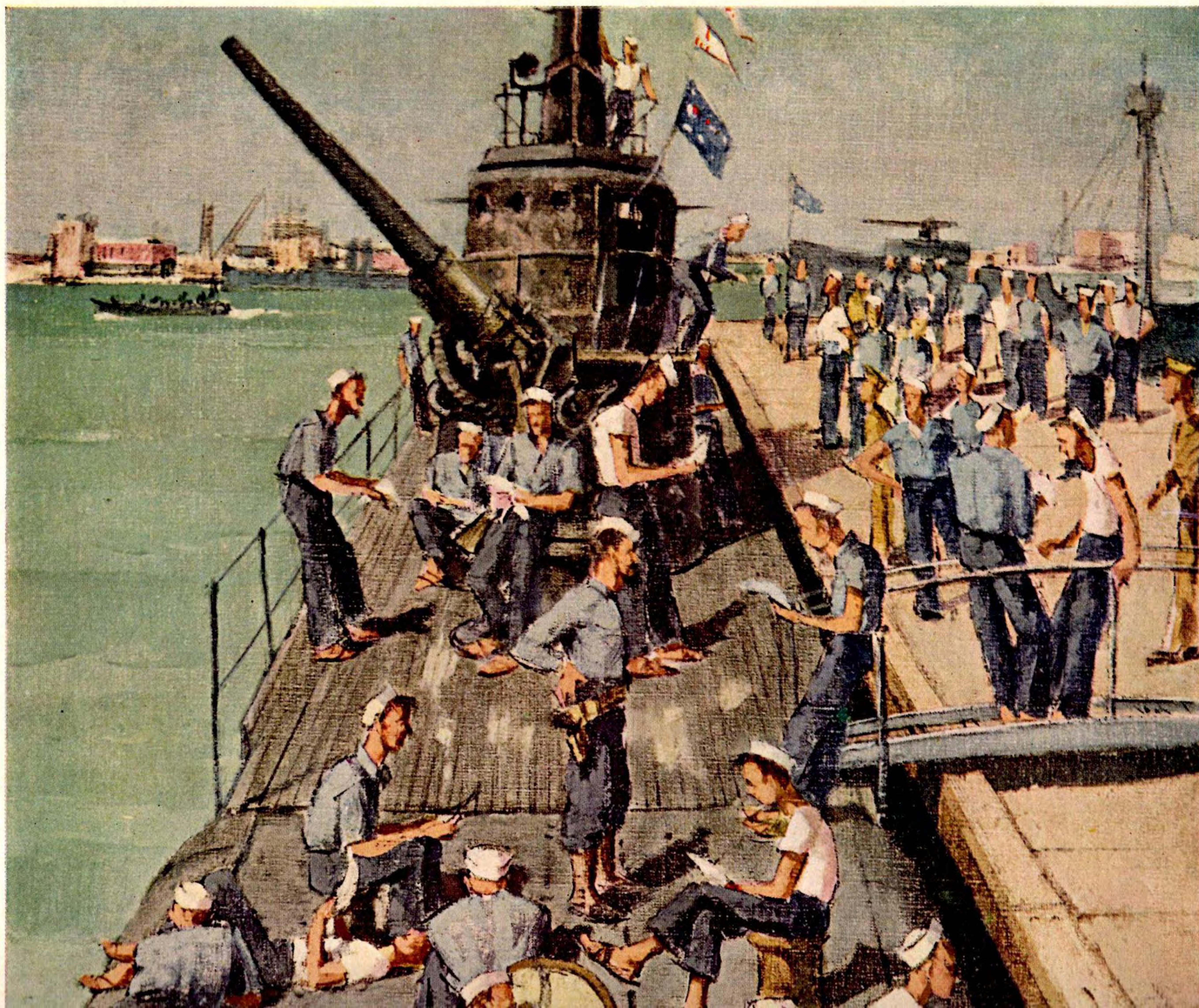


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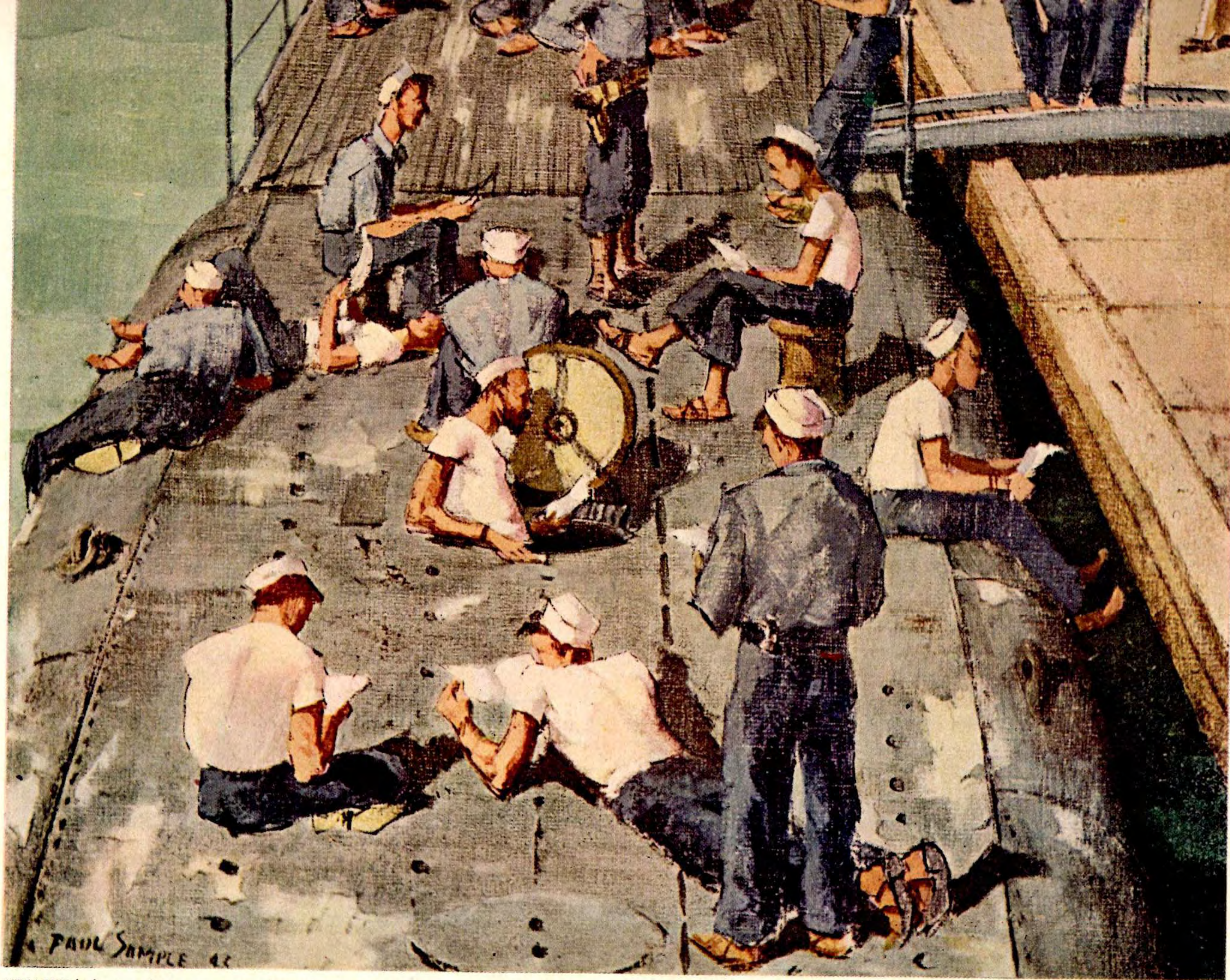
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"MAIL" is just as important to submariners as it is to the men in foxholes. First thing that goes aboard a homing submarine, immediately behind the squadron officers, is all the mail which has accumulated while the crew was at sea. Ship mail catches up with surface vessels at sea, but Navy has

no postmen who are willing to deliver mail to the mouth of Tokyo Bay. Here men are seen reading their letters all over their submarine, on the deck, with legs over the side, leaning against gangway, sitting in open hatches. As they read their mail pennants fly at the conning tower in celebration of successes.