

= Freedom from Fear (painting) =

Freedom from Fear is the last of the well @-@ known Four Freedoms oil paintings produced by the American artist Norman Rockwell . The series was based on the four goals known as the Four Freedoms , which were enunciated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his State of the Union Address on January 6 , 1941 . This work was published in the March 13 , 1943 , issue of The Saturday Evening Post alongside an essay by a prominent thinker of the day , Stephen Vincent Benét . The painting is generally described as depicting American children being tucked into bed by their parents while the Blitz rages across the Atlantic in Great Britain .

= = Background = =

Freedom from Fear is the last of a series of four oil paintings entitled Four Freedoms , painted by Norman Rockwell . The works were inspired by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a State of the Union Address delivered to the 77th United States Congress on January 6 , 1941 ; the speech itself is often called the Four Freedoms . The Four Freedoms theme was eventually incorporated into the Atlantic Charter , and it became part of the charter of the United Nations . The series of paintings was printed in The Saturday Evening Post , accompanied by essays from noted writers , on four consecutive weeks in early 1943 : Freedom of Speech (February 20) , Freedom of Worship (February 27) , Freedom from Want (March 6) and Freedom from Fear (March 13) . Eventually , the series was widely distributed in poster form and became instrumental in the U.S. Government 's Second War Bond Drive .

The Blitz was a period of sustained strategic bombing of the United Kingdom by Germany during the Second World War . Between 7 September 1940 and 21 May 1941 , sixteen British cities were hit by major aerial raids . Beginning on 7 September 1940 , London was bombed by the Luftwaffe for 57 consecutive nights . Overall , more than one million London houses were destroyed or damaged during the Blitz , and more than 40 @,@ 000 civilians were killed , almost half of them in London .

= = Description = =

The painting shows children resting safely in their beds , oblivious to the perils of this world , as their parents look on . Their mother tucks them in while their father holds a newspaper describing the horrors of the ongoing conflict . However , his attention is fully on his children and not on the alarming headlines . According to another view , the children are already asleep , and their parents are checking on them in their shared narrow bed before they themselves turn in for the night . The father appears as the " classic Rockwell onlooker " who serves as a viewer within the painting . Since he is holding his glasses , we assume that he has finished reading the Bennington Banner in his hand . The newspaper 's headline reads " Bombings Ki ... Horror Hit " , referencing the Blitz . In the background is a lit hallway and a stairway leading to the first floor .

According to Rockwell , who did not really care much for the work , the theme " was based on a rather smug idea . Painted during the bombing of London , it was supposed to say , ' Thank God we can put our children to bed with a feeling of security , knowing they will not be killed in the night . ' "

= = Production = =

The models for the work were Jim Martin , Mrs. Edgar Lawrence (Dorothy) , and two children of Rockwell 's carpenter Walt Squires , all neighbors of Rockwell in Arlington , Vermont . At Rockwell 's request , the Bennington Banner produced a dummy edition to use for this work . Freedom from Fear was published in the March 13 , 1943 Issue of The Saturday Evening Post with a matching essay by Stephen Vincent Benét as part of the Four Freedoms series . Coincidentally , the day it was published , poet , novelist , and short @-@ story writer Benét died .

= = History = =

This painting is the only one of the Four Freedoms which had been newly created prior to the commissioning of the series . It had originally been created to depict the Battle of Britain , but went unpublished by The Saturday Evening Post . The United States Department of the Treasury toured Rockwell 's Four Freedoms paintings around the country after their publication in 1943 . The Four Freedoms Tour raised over \$ 130 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 in war bond sales . Rockwell 's Four Freedoms paintings were also reproduced as commemorative covers for postage stamps sold during the War Bond shows .

= = Critical review = =

The scene has been described as overly intimate . Both the arrangement of the furniture and the lighting contribute to this intimacy . Deborah Solomon describes the scene as having " some of the feeling of a French interior , with lovely haut @-@ art touches . Bruce Cole of The Wall Street Journal stated " This reference to the war is so specific that it conveys little about fear or Roosevelt 's plan for universal disarmament . Rockwell just could not get his hands around these airy abstractions . "