

# THE ACK ACK GIRL by Chris Karlsen

## EXCERPT

“I have a couple of favorites. I like Night and Day and Blue Moon. Ava sang a couple of lines from each and added a shoulder and body sway. “They’re good to dance to.”

“Nice moves.”

“Do you dance?”

“When necessary.”

She wondered what that meant, exactly. She heard her mother in her head advising her not to pry. But what if he had a fiancé and she liked to dance and that was the necessity? Sorry Mum, I have to ask. “Pleasant as this evening has been, flirtations and all, just curious but do you have someone special waiting for you somewhere?”

“No. If I had, I wouldn’t have invited you out.”

“I had to ask.”

“Understandable. What about you?”

“No one special is waiting for me either.”

“Good. Back to the songs. Sing Night and Day again.”

She sang the first line and as she did, Chris put his arms around her and danced with her. The warm touch of his hands felt through her uniform. “You’ve nice moves, yourself.” He pulled her closer. “Oh.”

“My mother insisted my sister and I take ballroom dancing when we were in our teens. She said it was uncivilized not to know how to dance.” Without missing a beat, he added, “We’d make a cracking good recruitment poster. Join the RAF or ATS—”

“And share the starry sky?”

“And share the starry sky, I like it.” He gave her one more whirl and stopped. “I’m leaving tomorrow morning.”

Falling off a cliff, she had no better words to describe the sudden sense of loss. They hardly knew each other. He’d warned her he’d be going within days, but none of that made the loss less acute.

“Well, who knows what the future holds. Maybe I’ll get leave down the road and if I go home, we can meet for drinks or something.” She didn’t know what else to say.

“I don’t want to lose this.” He gestured wide a broad stroke of his arm to the sky. “More starry nights, I hoped you’d agree to write me.”

That jolted the life back into her. “Of course. I don’t want to lose this either.”

He kissed her, thoroughly, deeply, and like no other had.