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**PHINEAS
PINKHAM**
howl

FALLEN ARCHIES

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The brass hats decided their auto was running on gas—but they didn't mean gasoline! And though Phineas always claimed his ghost would come back to haunt Major Garrity, what chance had the Boonetownite's spectre in competition with the ghost of last month's English breakfast?

POWERFUL KATINKA had been upsetting the Allied apple wagon for days. Powerful Katinka was the name of a Heinie gun battery which had been set up about a mile from Mont Sec. The Yanks had christened it thus. It was no ordinary Archie battery but one that was more efficient than it had any right to be in the year 1918. The brass hats at Chaumont suspected that the Krupps had uncovered a tow-headed Teuton prodigy who had passed trigonometry at Heidelberg with

an average of one hundred and fifty per cent. When shrapnel could tag a Spad, flying top speed, two out of three bursts, then something had to be the matter. In three weeks time, Powerful Katinka had sent five Allied ships to the cleaners via the scrap iron route. Of course Chaumont could only think up one slogan. Get that blankety-blank gun! They had not thought up how. That was up to the Air Force.

Rufus Garrity was unfortunate enough to have attained the rank of Major. He was even more

unfortunate when the Wing dealt him to that corner of the hectic war zone where Bar-Le-Duc basks in what the French call sunshine. For it was the same place where Lieutenant Pinkham was tossed after he was snagged out of a pilots' pool.

"Well," Phineas observed one night at mess, "the brass hats said they didn't care how we got the gun, haw-w-w-w-w! It is my talents, then, that will not know their own strength."

"I suppose you have got it all written down, you muzzle head," Major Garrity bristled. "Would you mind showing me the recipe?"

"I would like to go over solo tomorrow and look for it," Phineas retorted. "The bombers ain't even been lukewarm yet. They have hit everything but Joan of Arc's birthplace tryin' to strike it. I suppose you have noticed that it has been quiet for the last twenty-four hours? Or have you?"

"Go ahead," Captain Howell said, "I ain't listenin'."

"I bet it means," went on the unabashed flyer from Boonetown, Iowa, "that maybe one of the two-seaters hit close to it by mistake so they're goin' to move it. Maybe they were chased by a Fokker an' dropped what bombs they had left. It's the only way those big-crate bums could tag anythin', haw-w-w-w-w! It is like keeping your eggs in the same basket too long in the same place as maybe somebody might drop an anvil in it by accident. Haw-w-w-w!"

"Why, sure," agreed Bump Gillis blandly. "Now what was it you said?"

"That's teamwork," Phineas howled at the C.O. "They don't pay any attention to me."

"Which proves they are of sound mind," the Major clipped. "Now about this gun—"

"Oh, pardon me," Phineas sniffed, "did I change the subject? Excuse me as it is hardly nothin' I know about hooked rugs." He got up and kicked back his chair. "Do I go up solo tomorrow or don't I? Huh, maybe I ought to write it down what I ask you as—"

"Get out of here!" Garrity yelled. "Sure, go ahead and fly solo—so low the Kraut infantry can hit you with bricks! The law of averages ought to start working my way pretty soon!"

"Oh, I've got nine lives," Phineas informed him. "Haw-w-w-w! Did I ever tell you about how my Ma got scairt by a tabby cat just before I was born? But if I have lost count of the ones I've used up and I go west tomorrow, lookout, Major, as remember what I always promised. I'll come back an' haunt you, haw-w-w-w! Thanks for everythin'. Bon swar, bums!"

"Hey-y, half-wit!" Bump Gillis called to him. "You left a letter."

Howell gestured to the Scot and grinned. "Maybe it's from a dame—that letter. Pull it out an' we'll read it. If it is, we'll send it to Babette an'—"

Having ignored his hutmate's hail, Phineas Pinkham went on his way. Bump grinned and yanked the folded paper from the envelope. A puff of dust came with it. Bump's mouth opened wide and his nostrils quivered like those of a scared mule. He sneezed into his cup of coffee. The contents geysered and sprayed Howell and the Old Man plentifully. Howell likewise sneezed and blew a cigar stump loose from Garrity's lips. Everybody sneezed. Eyes watering, faces the color of ripe tomatoes, the pilots got to their feet and groped their way toward the door. Glad Tidings Goomer, mess attendant, shuffled out of the kitchen door laden with a big pitcher of water. He stopped, his big nose twitching like that of a rabbit on the scent of delectable cabbage. Suddenly a sound like an elephant trumpeting into a megaphone belched from Glad Tidings. The pitcher of water popped out of his hands and went through a window that was not open.

"Are they dumb!" grinned Phineas as he increased his pace. "They should know my handwritin' by this time. Haw-w-w-w-w! Well, I'll just get my bicycle an' pedal toward where my Babette waits for me."

"I'll kill that guy yet," exploded Bump Gillis.

"You ought to get sub sedse id your thick sgull," the Old Man was raving. "Eved if he put dowl rosary beads sub place I would nod touch theb for a thousa'd francs. I—er—ah-h-h-h-h-chew-w-w-w-w! I'll skid hib alive, the hobely ape! Pingab, you—a-h-h-h! Chew-w-w!"

LIEUTENANT PINKHAM turned a deaf ear to the sounds issuing from the drome of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron and pedaled his way toward Bar-Le-Duc. Darkness was coming on fast and was bringing a thin mist along with it. It was just such a night when odors carry and the Pinkham proboscis had been designed so that it could undoubtedly out-smell a beagle hound. Said nose began to sniff when its owner had eaten up a mile of road.

"Phew!" Phineas erupted. "Somethin' has forgot to git buried, it smells like. An' it seems to be comin' from straight ahead—ugh! Maybe it's the Jerries movin' up someplace, haw-w-w-w!" As he pedaled on the obnoxious nocturnal aroma waxed stronger. The pilot from Boonetown screwed up his face and got off his

bicycle. “If I don’t git off,” he ruminated, “the smell’ll knock me off.”

Phineas walked along another half mile until his eagle eye spotted something in the high bushes on the side of the road. He leaned his two-wheeled chariot against a tree and went into the ditch to investigate. There he found a wooden case one side of which had been bashed in. Holding his nose, Phineas gingerly examined the contents, some of which had spilled out. Smoked haddock! It had been exposed to the elements for quite some time and the result did not remind one of attar of roses by any stretch of the imagination.

“Boy!” exclaimed the explorer. “An’ I been blamin’ Bump Gillis for not changin’ his socks often enough every time the wind was just right. I got to apologize to him, haw-w-w-w! It must of fell out of a truck an’ it looks like the Limeys missed their haddie for a lot of breakfasts. Huh, well—it might come in handy, at that. I’ll just cover it with some branches and stuff.”

An hour later Phineas arrived in Bar-Le-Duc and lost no time in reaching the domicile of his light of love, Babette.

“Bong soor,” he said in greeting to the little French ma’amselle. “Has what I have been expectin’ arrived?”

“*Mais oui*,” said Babette, “an’ it ees crazee, Pheenyas. All ze time as it goes along you get eet ze more cookoo in ze head.” Suddenly Babette sniffed suspiciously. “What ees eet ze smell?”

“Haw-w-w-w-w!” guffawed Phineas, examining something that sat on a table. “I was just passin’ by the fishin’ bank,” he explained. “Boy, I want to hear this on the victrola, Babette, don’t you?” He placed a disc on the machine he had been looking over, applied the needle, and switched on. The sounds that emanated from the record were strange indeed.

“Ees eet enough that I hear you wizout zat theeng,” Babette complained. “What ees eet ze awful smell? Pheenyas, *vous ees cafarde*.”

“I never heard that word but I bet it means I’m crazy,” the Yankee Romeo yipped above the din of the record. “Don’t I git insulted enough without you doin’ it? Boy, this is spooky, ain’t it?”

“Bah,” said Babette and she pranced out of the room. “You come an’ smell like ze sweel can an *aussi* mak’ ze awful noise. *Bah!*”

“Well, I guess I know when I ain’t welcome,” concluded Phineas and shut off the record. He wrapped up the two black rubber discs in a sheet of paper, gathered the little square box under his arm, and took his departure. “I bet if I walked out of a glue

factory you would expect me to smell like lilies of the valley. Well, it ain’t any trouble for me to find another dame. Adoo!”

In high dudgeon Phineas headed back to the drome, one hand controlling the handlebars of the bicycle. “That’s dames for ya,” he muttered. “I wish somebody in this *guerre* would git a sense of humor.”

Two miles out of Bar-Le-Duc the smoked haddock began to remind its custodian of its presence. Phineas stopped off, grinning good-naturedly, and removed a couple of slabs of it. Then he continued on toward the drome. A quarter of a mile from where Major Rufus Garrity held forth, Phineas again dismounted. He walked toward the northern boundary of the flying field, climbed a high tree, and secured the square box to a high limb.

“That is that!” he chuckled when he had returned to earth.

Back on his means of locomotion burdened only with two well-seasoned strips of smoked haddock wrapped in paper, the errant pilot pedalled onto the drome. He ditched his bicycle and then took a look at a big car that was standing outside the French farmhouse where Major Garrity suffered his headaches. Sergeant Casey cut across Phineas’ path.

“D’you smell anythin’, Lootenant?” he queried.

“Why—no—the air is sweet like baby breath,” replied Lieutenant Pinkham, sniffing at the ozone. He continued on his way to the big U.S. boiler. “Brass hats,” he commented, “an’ crabbin’ about Powerful Katinka again, I bet. Haw-w-w-w!” He turned back to Casey and yelled, “Where’s the driver of this jilopi?”

“Gittin’ a cup of Java in the groundmen’s barracks,” said Casey, eying his superior suspiciously.

Phineas stopped beside the car and looked into the back of it. Sergeant Casey mumbled something under his breath and went on his way to a hangar. When the Pinkham scion walked into the Frog farmhouse he did not have the haddock. The pair of colonels holding forth in Garrity’s office looked as serious as a five-alarm fire. They were sipping cognac.

“It’s gone,” one was tossing at the Major. “They’ve moved it. Bombs were getting too close to it, I’ll wager. The Krauts figured that sooner or later—”

“There,” Phineas coughed out, “that is just what I said, I leave it to anybody. Boys, it’s good to see a brass hat who agrees with me. I was tellin’ the Major only tonight—”

“Shut your big mouth,” the Old Man yelled. “You fresh—!”

"Did you ever learn to salute?" huffed a colonel importantly. "Stand up and—"

"Ha ha," laughed Phineas, "imagine that! I could've sworn I saluted you both. My mem'ry ain't what it used to be. Tomorrow I'm going solo and will spot that Jerry gun for you, sirs. It was only maybe two hundred years ago that the Pinkhams was spottin' blockhouses for Daniel Boone. Every war has had a Pinkham of some kind in it."

"Can't you stop him, Garrity?" blustered a brass hat. "By—!"

"Only with prussic acid," the C.O. retorted. "And then just for over night. Get out of here, Pinkham! Report to me in the morning."

"Awright," Phineas snapped and went out.

"You smell anything?" inquired a colonel, nostrils dilated.

"Seems to me I do," confessed Garrity. He yelled for Glad Tidings Goomer, mess attendant. The sad-faced hash slinger popped out of a door and saluted six times.

"What's that smell?" bellowed Garrity.

"Huh? I dunno. Maybe it's what we et tonight. That stew is gittin' worse, sir, all the time. Or else maybe it's—"

"Clean up that kitchen," stormed the Major.

AN HOUR later the brass hats got into the car and drove away. They made the chauffeur stop at the edge of the field. They got out and sniffed at the air.

"It's getting worse, Henry," declared one, his voice carrying to where Phineas Pinkham was leaning against a hut. "Simply awful, what?"

"You think it might be gas?"

"Haw-w-w-w-w-w!" exploded Phineas Pinkham.

"What was that, Henry?"

The brass hats piled into the bus and it rolled on for about a hundred yards. Then they stopped and climbed out once more. The Old Man and three pilots were watching from the door of the farmhouse.

"That smell gets less the farther away that car goes," Bump Gillis said.

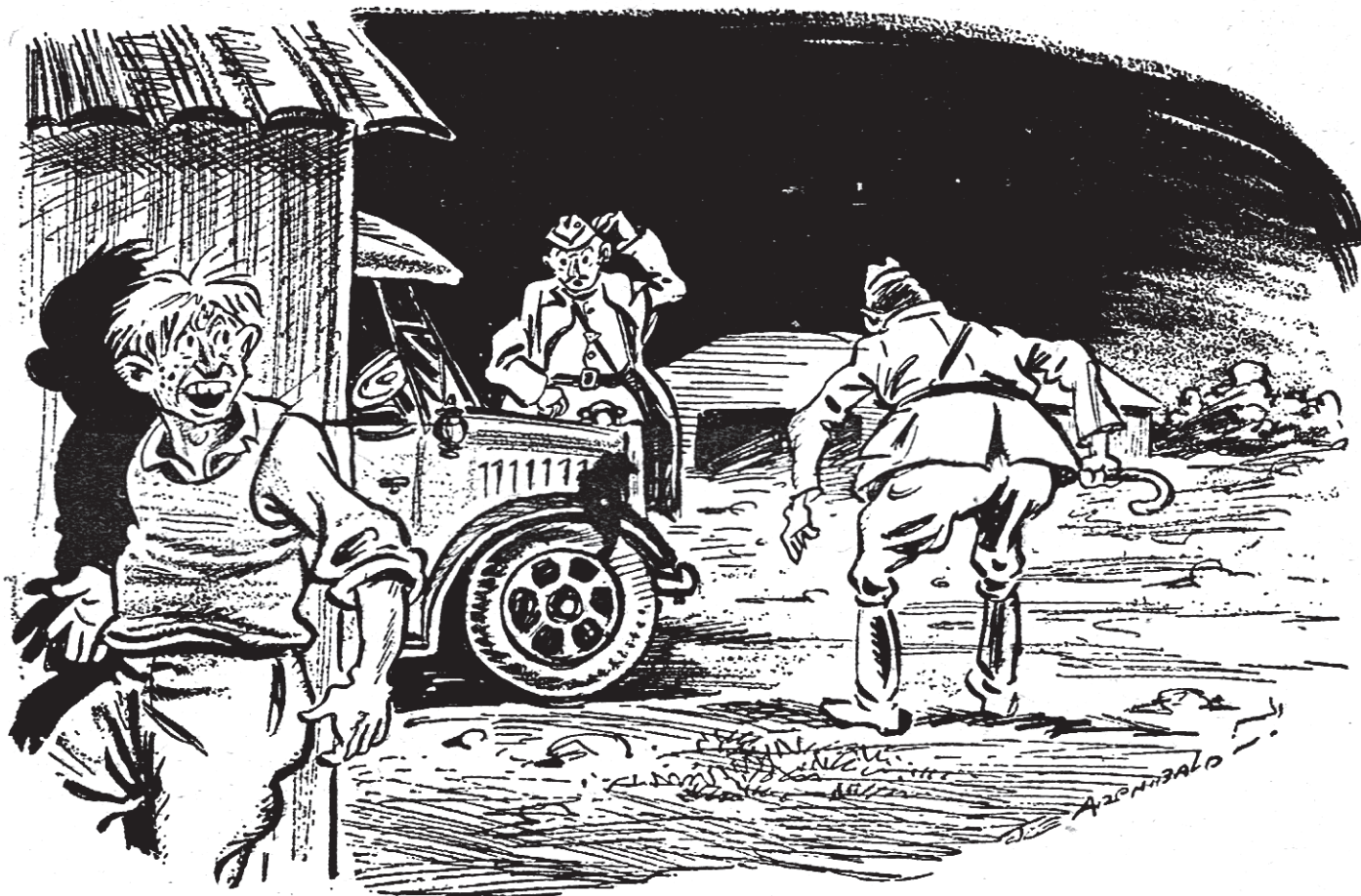
"By cripes, I smell a rat," raged Major Garrity.

"Where's Pinkham?"

"I'm right here," yelled Phineas as he strode onto the scene. "What you got on me now? Nothin', that's what! I don't know a thing. It ain't no use to ask as—haw-w-w-w-w! Look!"

The brass hats were getting into the car but they had big handkerchiefs tied over their noses.

"Boys, that'll do no good," said Phineas. "I—er—I



mean, how could you stop a smell like that, huh? Why—er—huh—”

“A rat was it you smelled?” Howell tossed at the Major. “That smell has got to be from at least a defunct elephant. Phew-w-w-w!”

“Pinkham,” Garrity roared apoplectically, “you know something about this. You—by cripes, I’ll—if you’ve—”

“That’s right,” wailed Phineas indignantly, “blame me. Always blame me. You saw me come in an’ go out. Did I do anythin’?”

The Old Man swore and went into squadron headquarters. Phineas walked on toward his hut. An hour later he was summoned forth by an orderly. Five minutes after that Major Rufus Garrity was eyeing him like a lion looking at a wart hog.

“So you didn’t know a thing, eh?” he shot out. “They found a ring in that car after they found the fish. The Limeys said they saw you wearing it once. The brass hats stopped at the Bristol outfit and almost tore the car apart before they found the fish. *Well—?*”

“Oh, them blabbers!” erupted *Herr* Pinkham, “that’s beef-eaters for ya. Awright, I did it. But I’ll get even with them pip pip, cheerio bums. You wait! They can’t prove anythin’ by the ring. I can say I lost it someplace and somebody else must’ve picked it up. I hope some of them Limeys put it on and press the sides of it. Haw-w-w-w!”

“Why you—!” The phone buzzed. Major Garrity picked it up. Phineas yawned and leaned against the wall.

“You what?” Garrity cut in. “The ring—you mean—huh? Pinkham? Why—I—what’s that? Don’t you insult this outfit! You put it on and—what? So are you!” He slammed down the receiver.

“That pink-eared fathead,” Garrity hooted, “callin’ us—”

“We’ll get ‘em,” Phineas said. “They can’t—did he get sprayed with red ink from that ring? Haw-w-w-w!”

Phineas emerged from the Operations office a minute later. He was brushing pieces of crockery out of his hair.

“That is assault!” he yelped at the convulsed pilots in the big room. “I will have him up on charges!”

“That was a pretty geranium that was in that pot, too,” gasped Bump Gillis. “Now we have no home touch here. Ha ha ha!” He rolled off his chair.

Phineas hooked a finger into the collar of his tunic and fished out a clod of dirt. Howell’s mouth was open when he threw it. It was quite a shot.

“Eatin’ dirt!” Phineas chided him. “Why you’ll git worms!”

BLAM!

Captain Howell coughed up the dirt and made a flying leap at Lieutenant Pinkham. Phineas stepped aside and pushed the door open. The leader of “A” Flight went through it like a flying squirrel. Phineas went out the back way yelling, “Crash siren!”

Major Garrity barged out of the Operations office. “Ship comin’? Where—light the flares! Don’t stand there, you dumb clucks! Everybody out! Hurry!”

“Haw-w-w-w-w-w!”

Major Garrity stiffened. His whole frame seemed to inflate from jowls to shins. Bump Gillis became alarmed as the Old Man shivered like a ship when it strikes a reef. The head of the Ninth was never any nearer to a stroke.

“That’s enough,” he yowled. “It’s all I stand. I’m gettin’ out of the service. I’ll chew cordite. I’ll chop a hand off. Oh, I’ll think of something!” Swearing, he ran back into his sanctum and slammed the door.

DAWN. Phineas Pinkham, assuming a mien of innocence that would have made a new-born lamb look like a wolf, strutted out of his hut dressed for the airways. He went into the farmhouse where three other Spad pilots were gulping down hot Java.

“Where the hell do you think you’re goin’?” Captain Howell cracked.

“Solo,” retorted Phineas sweetly. “After what you pulled last night? You’re nuts if you think the Old Man—”

“Ask him,” Phineas suggested. “If you want to take a chance of waking him up, haw-w-w-w-w! It is a morning he wants to sleep late. I would rather try to file the hangnails off a Bengal tiger that has an ulcerated tooth. But if you want to blab like the Limeys—”

“Aw, let him go,” another pilot interrupted testily. “Maybe a German Von will kill him for us.”

“If one does,” Phineas flung at the speaker, “remember, I will come back and haunt you. Adoo.” He went out to where the Spads were warming up.

Phineas had painted a new insignia on his bus, a rabbit jumping out of a silk hat. Sergeant Casey began to argue when the Boonetown trickster climbed into his crate and yipped, “Contact!”

“You can’t go out without them other guys—er—looeyes. You—”

“Look here, are you forgettin’ your place?” Phineas

asked with great dignity. "You want to look out or you will get a severe reprimand, Sergeant. I am soloing today. Git busy, slave!"

"Oh, awright," came from the resigned Casey. "To h—!" He shoved an ackemma toward the Spad's snout. "Spin the prop for the lootenant!" He said something else when the prop was revving fast enough to drown his words. They would not have looked very well in print.

The Spad shot away. Phineas circled the field once when he got aloft, then pointed the prop boss toward the palpitating front. The groundmen watched the ship nose toward the carpet when it had eaten up two or three miles of ozone.

"He's forced down," Casey hollered. "Ha ha, I hope he lands on a cement walk! Well, I didn't see nothin' an' you guys didn't neither, see? We'll wait an hour before we send the meat wagon out. Then it ought to be too late. Come on, police up around here. This dump looks like—"

However, Phineas Pinkham had landed as lightly as the proverbial feather. In a field a quarter of a mile from where he had his store of over-ripe smoked haddock. As he walked to the spot he drew a length of heavy twine from his pocket.

"I'll show them blabbin' Limeys," he growled. "Then I'll go huntin' Powerful Katinka. Haw-w-w-w-w!"

The amazing disciple of Merlin, Houdini, Herman the Great, and all other pioneers in the art of making things seem what they are not, pulled camouflage away from his case of fish and then began a very unpleasant task. He tied a heavy spike on one end of a long piece of twine and shoved said spike through a slab of very polluted haddock. He repeated the process until he had something that looked like an oversized kite string. After he had completed one, Phineas went to work on another. He was dragging both toward the spot where he had left his Spad when four other Spads roared by overhead. "A" Flight was beating him to the lines. He saw Captain Howell swoop low over the spot where the Pinkham Spad squatted and Phineas scootched down in the bushes. He came out when the quartet of Von-poisoners had continued on their way.

Resumption of operations included tying the strings of haddock to his Spad, climbing into the pit, and giving the Hisso the gun. When Phineas was up in the ozone five thousand feet and heading for the Bristol outfit near Bler-court, he spotted a Heinie battle wagon which had somehow escaped Howell's optics. It was a Rumpler flying a thousand feet under his trucks.

"Business before pleasure," the Boonetown flyer yipped and pushed the stick away from him. The Kraut observation ship slipped through a cloudbank, turning as it high-tailed. Phineas stabbed into the soup after the Rumpler, but did not catch up with it until it was well above the lines. Spandau lead spat at him as he hopped to its tail. The Spad guns roared and Phineas let out a joyful whoop as he saw the Vicker spume tear hell out of the Rumpler's tail.

"Boy, I wouldn't change places with them bums," he exulted, piquing in from the port side and lamming the Rumpler in the floating ribs. "I wonder what keeps it up as it is as punch drunk as a Limey heavyweight!"

Phineas chased the ship into Jerry territory before he got in the *coup de grace*. The Rumpler seemed to shake itself like a cat that has just been dragged out of a brook, before it headed for the linoleum. Phineas let the Vons land the best way they could without a tail assembly and an aileron. Then he zoomed for height, looked overside as he climbed, and spotted a familiar landmark. A shellacked Frog hamlet on a hillside.

"Oh mama!" Phineas gulped. "I am too far from home. I've got to git—"

The sun breaking through fleecy clouds at ten thousand suddenly planted its dazzling trademark on something on the panorama below. Phineas looked down as he banked wide. He saw the flash again. It came from a wooded area. Old Sol seemed intent upon pointing something out to Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham, Yankee pilot extraordinary. The thorn in Rufus Garrity's side had no doubt about it. Only metal could glint in such a fashion when bathed with sunshine. Steel! Powerful Katinka? Who could tell?

"Why—I—I'm a—well, what it—huh, why maybe—" Phineas was stuttering as he dropped down. His eagle eyes spotted three or four other wooded patches in the immediate vicinity. If he got them mixed up—

"EUREKA!" he suddenly yipped. He had spotted that flash again. He would have to mark that spot well. As yet he did not know how but— A very obnoxious odor seeped into his oversized bugle.

"Fancy that!" Phineas grinned. "It's right under my nose—the way to do it. Haw-w-w-w-w-w! I would hunt all day for a spaghetti restaurant in Italy. I must be slippin' a little." As he spoke, the incurable jokester gunned down and swept over the copse. He yanked at a piece of twine, tore it loose, and looked back as he back-sticked. The string of haddock floated down to

the tree branches and stuck there. Again he swept over the wooded area, dropped the other string of long-defunct fish, and then headed for a high sky shelf. To his dismay three Kraut Halberstadts were sitting on it.

"I can smell angle worms already," the pride of the Pinkhams groaned. He tried to pull his startled wits together. The Vons dropped down like dice tossed from a box. "It looks like my bright career is nipped in the bud!" the Boonetown pilot quavered, ducking a swath of Spandau lead by the thickness of a rice wafer. "Oh well, you can't keep jumpin' in blast furnaces an' comin' out with frost bites . . . Ugh!"

The Spad pitched and tossed as steel wasps stung it on the rear. Phineas remembered the time when he was in a ferris wheel wreck. The sensation was identical. When he raked in his marbles, he took a hazy look around and saw two Halberstadts so close to his neck that he could feel the heat from the Mercedes power plants. Phineas tripped his guns by force of habit and knocked off a Kraut who had taken a sudden notion to cut across in front of his nose.

"Huh?" gulped Phineas. "Why, it was there an' then—ow-w-w!"

Another blast of lead discouraged the Spad. It gave up trying and headed for Heinie real estate developments. Phineas had been in more than one Spad that had folded up on him. He unloosed his belt quickly. He was free of moorings when the fifteen thousand dollar Allied investment cracked up and tossed him out into the open. The Spad pilot hit a high bank—and Phineas unceremoniously kerplunked into a great big hole. Before he was gathered to the cool bosom of deep, dark, dirty water, the flyer from Boonetown, Iowa, knew he had fallen into an old quarry.

"Gosh, I wonder if it has a bottom?" thought Phineas as he kept on going down. "Boy, I will never drown no more kittens as it is a horrible death."

Abruptly the descending Yank hit bottom, and then he started up. He did not see much sense to that. The quarry banks would be lined with Heinie sharpshooters, he could gamble on that. Then something very queer happened. The top of the Pinkham pate collided with something. It was still dark but the Boonetown wonder knew he was breathing sweet, fresh air. All around him was the sound of excited Teuton jabbering.

"Why," Phineas suddenly mused aloud, "I've jammed my dome up through the rotted part of an old log that's just out of water. They can't see me—they Heinies. Haww-w-ww!"

"Efen *das* Pingham he *ist* not *der* vish, *nein*," Phineas heard a guttural voice say. "*Der* oopstardt he *ist* drowned, *ja!* *Gott sie dank!*"

"You said it," chuckled the cause of the Heinie thanksgivings. "Now if I can hold out until dark—that'll only be nine hours from now—haw-w-w-w-w!" He got his hands up and hooked them onto an out-cropping snag under water. "Well, Pinkhams have always been up to big ordeals. I'll stick to the end."

"How *ist* idt you know idts *das* Pingham?" one of the Krauts wanted information from another. "His body idt don't came oop, *hein*?"

"On *der* Spad *ist* idt *der* rabbit *mit der* high hadt vhat he yoomps oudt uff, *nein*? *Der* magician *ist das* Pingham, *ja!*"

"*Das ist gut*," came the reply. "Ve go *und* spreadt idt *der gut* news by *der* High Kommand. Leave it vunce *der* soldiers by here *zwei* odder *drei* hours, *ja*."

"*Sehr gut, Herr Oberst*," assented another voice.

For hours Phineas Pinkham clung to the log in sodden determination. At times he trod water to get exercise.

"Boy, it *would* be a day that has got fifty-four hours in it," he grumbled. "I'll have fins an' scales when I git out of here, if ever. But a Pinkham knows no odds an'—oh well, I'll do it for the Allies."

When, two weeks seemed to have gone by, the submerged Yank extricated himself from the rotted log and spinned his big ears doing so. He swam close to the side of the quarry and looked up. Everything was as still as a Scotch grog shop when somebody asks who is buying the drinks. Cautiously Phineas climbed up the rocky wall and soon had his chin resting on the edge. He saw the figure of a Kraut dough not twenty feet away. The guard was sitting against a tree evidently thinking of home *und Mutter*.

Phineas grinned and drew himself to firm ground. He crept behind a tree, picked up a rock and tossed it into some bushes. The Heinie guard bolted to his feet and jumped toward the spot from which the alien sound had come. Phineas also jumped. He whanged the Heinie dough over the coal scuttle hat with a rock as big as an emu's torso. To make sure, he hooked a right to the Kraut's jaw as the fellow sank to his wobbly knees.

"If I have not lost strength from my ordeal," the Yank grinned, "I would guess he will be out of circulation for an hour at the very least. Now for some quick work."

Phineas removed the Kraut's long overcoat and

big tin hat and put them onto his own frame. From the pocket of his tunic he pulled out an assortment of thin rubber masks. Selecting one, he pulled it down over his face. Before he reconnoitred toward an olio of night sounds, the magician of Uncle Sam dragged the assaulted Jerry into a clump of bushes. Gun ready, Phineas then walked through a thin strip of forest and came to a barbed-wire fence. On the far side was a Jerry air drome. About twenty yards along the fence was a gate and a Jerry stood guard there. Phineas set his jaws and approached him.

"Handen hoch!"

"Mach schnell," Phineas grunted from far below his tonsils. *"Das Pingham. Oop he cooms, ja! Der Leutnant—ach!"*

The Kraut swung the gate open and Phineas Pinkham went through. Just fifty yards away three Kraut ackemmas were warming up a Fokker that evidently had been under first aid treatment. Phineas gauged the distance, revved up the power plant in his own cranium. Summoning all the German he knew, Phineas told the sentry he would report the great find to the *Herr Oberst*.

"Ja," the sentry grinned and let it go at that.

His eyes roving like a ferret's, the amazing Spad pusher from the Yankee side walked close to the idling Jerry ship. He turned suddenly and leaped, gun butt flailing. Two ackemmas bit the dust. The other got Phineas' toe in the bread basket just as the Yank leaped to the Fokker pit. Loud yelps split the air. The sentry took aim and fired. A bullet pinged off Phineas' borrowed tin hat as he goosed the Mercedes engine. Jamming in the throttle, he felt the D-7 leap away and tear across the field.

"Pingham—Himmel!"

"Donnervetter!"

A siren shrieked. Von pilots came tumbling out of a Jerry mess shack. Machine guns almost cut the Fokker undercarriage away before Phineas could get buoyancy under the wings. He had never experienced a more satisfied feeling in his life than when the Fokker lifted clear of Heinie dirt.

"Adoo bums," he yelped as ackemmas worked feverishly to get other battle wagons out of a hangar. *"I'll send you a postcard from where I make my first stop. It is maybe six lives I have got left yet, haw-w-w-w-w!"*

JUST as Garrity's pilots were trekking into mess that night on the drome of the Ninth the word came

through. A Jerry had dropped a big rock just behind the Allied lines and almost had wrecked a Yankee fourgon. The driver had gotten out of the bus to pick up the missile. Wrapped around it was a big square of fabric and on it the rabbit-out-of-the-hat insignia of Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham. A note had been enclosed. A brass hat of an infantry outfit called the Old Man. Garrity read the letter to his pilots—

"Herr Leutnant Phineas Pinkham shot down behind lines near Pagny. Thrown out of Spad into water-filled quarry and drowned. Our deepest sympathy.

—Herr Oberst Von Scrahm."

"Well," stuttered Bump Gillis, "it looks like a sure thing this time. That rabbit an' hat—well huh, Major, that old pipe of yours is hell on a guy's eyes. Ugh, I ain't hungry. Well—"

Captain Howell took a prolonged puff at his cigarette. It seemed to have a sour taste. He tossed it away.

Garrity choked as he said, "Well, let's drink to him, guys. After all Pinkham was a pretty good mutt. Here's to him, yeah. Don't look at me like that, you clucks! You've called him worse things than I have. Uh—huh—let's not fight. Now that Lieutenant Pinkham's—"

An hour later the Old Man and his pilots were grouped in front of the farmhouse looking up at the sky.

"Nope," sighed Bump, "it's no use. He—"

"H A W-W-W-W-W-W-W!"

Garrity's pipe popped out from between his teeth. Bump Gillis fell over backwards from an old nail keg. The too familiar guffaw had come from some distance away and it had nothing to do with imagination. Then—

"Well, I come back. I said I'd haunt ya, you ol' turtle. Haw-w-w-w-w! Yeah, they got me, them Vons did. I been taking lessons on the harp. It's swell where I am. There's sirloins at every mess and brass hats have to wait on the Looeys. I am next to one now who is cleanin' cuspidors. Haw-w-w-w-w-w! Well, until the next time, adoo bums! I will be back for more hauntin'."

An eerie silence grabbed the world by the throat.

Major Rufus Garrity swore, mopped a pasty face and sent a small army of men toward the spot from which the sound had come. But the stunned men returned shaking their heads.

"It is not possible," the Major insisted. "Even Pinkham could not—Goomer! Get me a bottle—two bottles!"

"What do you think, Bump?" Howell asked Gillis.

"I—dunno—that ape wasn't human. He's drowned, ain't he? He'd get out of any place nobody else could. Oh, I believe it. He left St. Peter's drome A.W.O.L. He could do it. Have you got anythin' for me to drink? Look at me shake."

At ten o'clock that night Phineas Pinkham got out of a Fokker a mile from a Handley Page outfit some sixty miles from Bar-Le-Duc. He had long since discarded all his disguise with the exception of his mask. As he set the Kraut ship down in the midst of a crowd of wondering Britishers, he said, "Boys, it was nice of the Jerries to load me up with so much gas."

"I say," a British C.O. exclaimed as he got out of the pit. "Blasted queer, no end, I say. Who are you, my fellow?"

"I ain't yours," Phineas grinned. "I am Lieutenant John Smith of the Intelligence Corps. I have found the Kraut Archie, Powerful Katinka. I want some bombers warmed up. Hurry an' don't gape at me. There is no time to lose as the wind is just right tonight and in this mist that's comin' up, the smell—well you get them bombs loaded, Major? Git me to a phone as I want to talk to the Haigs."

"You—er—sure—er—this is beastly irregular, y'know?" the brass hat blustered. "Why—er—"

"I could have got Yanks to do it," Phineas snapped, "but it is bloaters an' herrrn' an' haddock the Limeys can smell a mile as that is all they live on, ain't it? I must call up the red tabs, if you don't—"

"The fellow might be balmy, but if he has found that gun—why—we have to go over anyway at midnight, y'know," the Major shot at a subordinate.

"Righto!" came the answer and the man spun on his heel.

"I will ride in the bomber," announced Phineas. "In the front pit as my nose is a pretty good one, too. Haw-w-w-w-w! Ha ha! I am glad you Limeys decided to bring three of them big crates down this far as they will blow up things as good here as close to the Channel. Well—when you are ready, let me know."

A man whispered into the Limey officer's ear.

"Right you are," the C.O. agreed. "How do we know he is not a German spy? Landed in a Fokker—lock him up!"

"Aw what's the use?" Phineas yipped and ripped off his mask. "Haw-w-w-w-w-w!" he guffawed loudly

then. "I am Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham—just escaped from—"

"Strike me pink! Pinkham! We heard—why—on the jump, you fellows! Load up the blarsted bombs. This spotted blighter is liable to have spotted that gun—damme yes!"

"Don't you dare call up my outfit," Phineas threatened him. "Not until the morning as it is a whim I have got."

"Righto! Fancy that!"

AT MIDNIGHT three Handley Pages began to circle over Pagny. Phineas Pinkham sniffed at the ozone, then crawled down into the bowels of the bomber and hurried to the control pit.

"I got it tagged," he snapped. "The smell is stronger over that clump of woods that is shaped like a kidney. The Limey gunner says it is so, too, as he worked in Yarmouth a long time and knows smoked haddock and herrin' when he smells 'em. Haw-w-w-w-w-! Unload the eggs when you git over that stretch. Boys! What fishin'!"

The churn of bomber props brought the short hairs up on Heinie necks down in the woods. The first egg splatted not fifty yards away and made Powerful Katinka tremble.

"I told you alzo yedt," a Heinie brass hat trumpeted to another. "*Der shmell—somet'ing idt ist rotten. Das Pingham, he flies ofer today mid I bedt you mein life—*"

Blam! Cra-a-a-a-ash! B-o-o-o-o-ong! Powerful Katinka keeled over. Cement flew in chunks. Krauts burrowed into the dirt like ground moles.

"*Ach—Himmel—Gott!*" yelled the boss of the big gun as he tried to wriggle into a fox hole. "*Idt ist kaput—ja! Himmel!*"

The Handley Pages did a great job of it. Two hours latter the word of the downfall of the Archie swept along the front. Garrity of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron was dragged from his bed to hear the astounding news.

"Huh? The Limeys got it?" he gulped. "That bombing outfit. How could they spot it? They only established themselves here a week ago. Something is fishy, by cr-r-r-r-r—" The Old Man did not realize how very right he was. He did feel a tingling of the spinal column and paused to wonder why. In the next second that spooky voice seeped out of the mists and in through the window.



“HAW-W-W-W-W! Here I am once more. Can you hear me, bums? It is yours truly, Phineas Pingham, again haunting you! I will show you a Pingham never forgets, dead or alive. Haw-w-w-w-w! I met old Nap today—y’know Napoleon. He is still tryin’ to git up an army and is melting down harps to make bullets. But Mark Anthony is the guy I like best here. He has got such swell dames. I wish I could tell you about all the other bums I met but—”

The voice broke off just as a big automobile rumbled onto the drome. Three British red tabs got out and walked into the farmhouse.

“Why, Major, are you sick? Huh, why—?”

“Just leave me alone—please,” groaned the Old Man. “You can send for a wagon, though. Be sure it’s padded as—”

“Uh—er—you hear anything, sir, when you come in?” Bump Gillis interrupted to ask the Britishers. “A voice like a laughin’ jackass’s or—er—”

The red tab shook his head and passed a hand over his face.

“Let me get up and pack my things,” yipped Rufus Garrity.

The door had opened. “Haw-w-w-w-w! It’s me. Boys, did I fool ya?”

The red tabs had to concentrate on the Old Man. They grabbed at every one of his extremities and yelled for spirits of ammonia.

“Aw, it was only two phonograph records I had made,” explained Phineas with a broad grin as he sat down and reached for a bottle. “Boys, they was worth the *argent* I paid. I put the box in a tree and made an amplifier out of bark to put behind it. Sounds carry

so at night! I didn’t think I’d ever get to use it, though, after I fell into the quarry. Boys, did you ever smell smoked haddock that has been weather-beaten for a month? Haw-w-w-w-w!”

“Lemme go,” erupted Garrity. “I demand to be released!”

“It was them fish I strung together and was takin’ ‘em out to drop on the Bristols when I got my attention distracted. I chased a Rumpler an’ spotted Powerful Katinka. I got away from the Krauts and headed for the Handley Pages an’ went over with them. Let’s see, did I leave out anythin’? Oh yes, I stopped twice to play the phonograph.

“Why,” yelped the Major, “then y-you—? It wasn’t the Limeys who did it? The Ninth Pursuit Squadron got Powerful Katinka? Why—er—why didn’t you say so, Pinkham? Let me up, fellows, I want to shake his hand. We will be decorated for this. Let me go.”

Major Garrity was freed. He shoved out his hand. Phineas gripped it.

“You are always right, sir,” Phineas said. “You will get decorated.” He squeezed hard. Ink spurted out and splattered the Old Man’s tunic.

“Why—you—!”

“It was a little rubber sack with a hole in it,” Phineas said as he ran out of the place. “Haw-w-w-w-w!”

A red tab jumped out of Major Rufus Garrity’s torrid path to the door. He bumped against Captain Howell.

“Queer fellow, eh what?” he spluttered.

“Haw-w-w-w-w!” Howell ripped out and reached for a bottle.