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**PHINEAS
 PINKHAM**
 howl

RICE AND SHINE

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It was a red-letter day for Garrity. The Ninth Pursuit had bagged a Gotha, and Phineas had been shipped off to the hospital. The major lit a cigar and relaxed—but he should have known better. You would, wouldn't you?

MAJOR RUFUS GARRITY, master mind of the warbirds of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron, slumped in a chair in the privacy of his quarters battling a sensation of misgiving that gnawed at his frame from toenails to tonsils. He sucked listlessly at the stem of his gurgling, ancient briar pipe as he reflected on the fact that things had been going too well for him in the vicinity of Bar-le-Duc.

Why, only yesterday, he ruminated with a sudden surge of glee, a mule had kicked Phineas Pinkham

in the slats. A Gotha on the way over to bomb the drome had been kicked dizzy by a blast of Archie fire two nights before. Brass Hats had come in and complimented him on the efficiency of the Ninth. Yes, most certainly those things were unnatural.

The Old Man puffed away contentedly for a time, then screwed up his hard bitten physiognomy. He smacked his lips and sniffed at the ozone. An alien odor assailed his nostrils and brought a touch of nausea to his digestive organs. An acrid curl of smoke from his pipe wreathed his nose, and right then and

there the C.O. got a whiff of skullduggery.

“Cr-r-r-ripes!” he snorted, and reached for a penknife, dug the burning tobacco from his pipe and poked at it viciously. Bits of filament that had never come out of a tobacco shed caught his eye. He reached for his tobacco tin, dumped the contents on the table before him. Stomach barrel-rolling, the major picked out short lengths of coarse hair from the mixture, then let out a leonine roar.

In less than three minutes, an orderly ushered Lieutenant Pinkham into Major Garrity’s quarters.

“Well,” began the freckle-faced pilot, “what now? I’d like to git it over with, as I’m feeling a little peaked this evenin’. It’s somethin’ I ate most likely, as the grub around here has been awful lately.”

“You got kicked by a mule yesterday, didn’t you?” the Old Man. roared. “What were you doin’ around a mule, anyway? I’ll tell you, you throw-back to a baboon! You——”

“I heard once if you pull a mule’s tail,” explained Phineas with a great show of patience, “that its mouth will snap open, but I never believe nothin’ unless I git the proof. I bet Bump Gillis——” He paused, shot a quick glance at the tobacco ashes on the table, then stopped to rub a sore spot on his empennage.

“You’re a liar by all the clocks in Switzerland,” erupted Garrity. “You grabbed that mule to get hairs out of its tail. Look at that tobacco, you spotted mud turtle! Smell the air——”

“I should think somethin’ had died in here,” Phineas said innocently. “Did you look for it? Well, if that’s all—you can’t blame everything on me, major. You can’t prove I pulled hairs out of the mule’s tail unless you catch the mule and ask it. Haw-w-w-w!”

Phineas Pinkham emerged into the company of his fellow pilots wiping the evidence of a defunct orange from his rusty locks.

“I’ll press charges,” the pilot from Boonetown, Iowa, yipped. “It’s gittin’ so I can’t move without gittin’ assaulted.”

“Phineas,” said Captain Howell, “you look even worse than usual. Your mug is the color of a banana, and your eyes look like lemon drops. I would see a leprosy specialist. Ha, ha!”

“It’s no laughing matter,” Phineas retorted. “Of late I have been run down——”

“Ha, ha,” Bump Gillis guffawed. “I saw it! Von Beerbohm flew you right into a picket fence, and you sat down in a pig sty. It’s his liver that was jarred up, and all the bile has gone to his dome. He looks like Confucius, huh?”

“It’s either me or him in this *guerre* now,” the injured one yelped, ignoring the thrusts at his personal appearance. “It is all I will stand. I am irked to the quick. Well, I will go and see a medico.” He took a package of hard candy from his pocket, selected a crystal-like piece and raised it to his mouth. Suddenly he pawed at his face and dropped the package to the table. “Boys, when I can’t eat candy, I am close to the deathbed. Adoo, bums!”

“I hope it’s nothin’ too trivial,” Bump Gillis chortled gleefully, picking up the sweets his hutmate had forsaken. He inserted a chunk into his face and smacked his lips as the taste of peppermint tickled his palate.

Fifteen minutes later, Phineas Pinkham entered the house, to see Bump Gillis swabbing his oral cavity clean with a wet handkerchief. The canny Scot paused to voice his doubts concerning the Pinkham lineage, noted that the Boonetown joker was not enjoying his discomfiture with the usual gusto, and trapped his face.

“Why—er—Carbuncle,” queried Howell, “what ails you?”

“It’s yeller jaundice I got,” responded Phineas dejectedly. “I got to have a change of diet or else it might prove fatal. The medico says I need iron.”

“Just go out an’ taunt a Heinie battery,” suggested Bump Gillis with a grin. “They will give you some shrapnel to chew. Boys, I would like to see you fight von Beerbohm in a wheel chair. Well, who’s going to be the first to sit up with him, huh?”

“It won’t be you, you nickel hugger,” Phineas sniffed. “The stuff that was in that candy will put spots before your eyes before morning. Haw-w-w-w! Oh, well, with you in spasms alongside of me, I could die happy.”

Mess that evening was a drab affair. Major Garrity’s stomach was still in a state of rebellion, and Bump Gillis’ giblets were beginning to feel the effects of the camphorized sweetmeats. Finally he swore and kicked his chair back.

“Compared to you,” he shot at Phineas Pinkham on the way out, “Lucretia Borgia, the poisoner, was little Bo-Peep. Nobody is safe with you. Ow-w-w!” Bump held his hands to his stomach and reeled out of the door.

“I don’t feel like no rose with dew on it myself,” gulped Phineas. “Ha, well, misery loves company. Of course I must have a leave of absence, major, as there is no drugstore near by. If you will just arrange it this evening——”

The Old Man's mouth was still fouled by the taste of burned mule hair. He felt something snap between the ears and went berserk. He picked up a platter and heaved it at Phineas, but the jaundiced pilot ducked fast. There was a crash as two portly gentlemen oozed into the Frog farmhouse. Both were clad in the correct military attire one would expect to see on Brass Hats who had but a hazy idea of what the trenches looked like.

"Why—er—what's this?" blurted out one. "Fightin', huh? Garrity, this is a disgrace to—what is the meaning of this?"

"Mice," said the C.O. "Ha, ha! We've been overrun with 'em, colonel. Last night I hit one dead center with a cup. You have no idea how your aim improves." "Haw-w-w-w," contributed Phineas. "You're quick on the trigger, major, as—"

"Shut up!" barked Garrity. "Now, if you will join us, gentlemen—"

"Er—er—thanks," the brigadier acknowledged, and eased his torso into a chair. "Heard about *Rittmeister* von Beerbohm today?"

"I didn't have much appetite, anyways," complained Phineas. "But now—"

"Shut up!" bellowed the major. "Raised hell, no doubt?" he tossed at the Brass Hat.

"That's putting it mildly, Garrity," was the response. "Damn funny we haven't a man in this whole Air Corps who can bring him down. That Jerry knocked down two D.H.'s today, and topped it off with a Camel for dessert." G.H.Q. can't understand where all you American aviators have been. Got to do something about this Von."

"He's been up too long," Phineas cut in. "I'm a sick man, but I think I will have to put an end to that bum. I wish he would come along right now, as what I would do to the big knockwurst! I'd—"

H-r-r-r-ro-o-o-om! R-r-r-r-rat-a-tat-tat-br-r-r-rp!

"What in—"

The pilots shoved their chairs back. "That's a Boche crate," yelled Captain Howell. "I know—"

Bullets stabbed through the window of the Frog house. One shot a cigar out of the colonel's teeth. He emitted an "Awk!" and dived under the mess table. Somebody blocked his right of way. The brigadier had beaten him to it.

"It's von Beerbohm," Bump Gillis howled as he dashed in. "An' is he raisin' hell! The fathead—Ow-w-w!" Bump sprawled on the floor as the Albatross

zoomed overhead again. Steel pellets beat out a tattoo on the roof sheltering the pilots and their superiors.

"That is too much!" howled Phineas Pinkham. "I will knock you off for that, you—"

"Well, why don't you get him?" Garrity bellowed from where he was crouching among the ashes in the fireplace. "What was it you were goin' to do? Ha, ha!"

FINALLY von Beerbohm called it a day and headed for home. The Brass Hats crawled out from under the table and wiped their clammy pates.

"Close call, that," breathed the brigadier. "A guy isn't safe anywhere. Was that von Beerbohm? Why don't you chase him? What are you standing there for?"

"Why, there wasn't any room under the table," replied Phineas promptly.

"I'll break you for that crack," the colonel yipped. "Garrity, do you stand for such insub—?"

"You have no idea," the Old Man said. "Quite a to-do, wasn't it, men?"

Sergeant Casey barged into the frog house, skidded to a stop, saluted and then handed a coffee tin to the Old Man.

"The son—er—von Beerbohm dropped it down, sir. Almost washed out an, ack emma," Casey stuttered excitedly. "Maybe there's something in it, as it's damn heavy."

The major pried open the lid of the dented can. He pulled out a flatiron, and attached to the handle found a piece of paper. It was a note addressed to Phineas Pinkham.

"Well, well," Garrity remarked. "And it's not even St. Valentine's Day. Listen." He read the note aloud:

"Mein Herr Leutnant Pinkham:

The age it seems yedt that I don't haff met mit you, und so der call by you I coom to make it. My bullets I hope find you. Not ein trick you get it, not? Ho, ho, so das ist for vhy you don't coom oop vhere ist von Beerbohm, hein? Der ugly mush-face wart hog mit vindmill ears du bist, und if I vould know der Yankee vord worser yedt, I vould say it more. Himmel! Such ein bummer du bist. I hope you should haff twenty years' hives und lumbago by all the joints.

*Yours mit hate,
Von Beerbohm."*

"What, no P.S.?" interjected Bump Gillis, grinning. "That's tellin' you, Carbuncle, ha, ha!"

"Are you going to stand for that?" the colonel tossed out. "Why, nobody could insult me like that."

“And have you heard that there is quite a little bonus for the man who knocks that Heinie down? Five hundred dollars in good American money. You could do quite a bit with five hundred, couldn’t you, lieutenant? Say, there’s something the matter with this pilot, Garrity. His face—”

“It’s jaundice,” Phineas explained. “I—er—”

“It is?” howled Garrity. “Why, I thought you were kidding me again. Pinkham, you get ready to leave immediately. You go over to Hospital 6 for treatment and then to Paris for a week. That’ll fix you up.”

“Boys, I git bilious just lookin’ at him,” exclaimed Bump Gillis. “Phineas, just pick up that flatiron the Von dropped, as you’ll look like a Chink running a laundry.”

“I’ll git ready,” said the Pinkham scion. “I’m yellowed up now, but I’ll get back into the pink and smack that sausage addict right into the Kaiser’s lap. Well, bums, er—haw-w-w-w, I don’t mean you,” he addressed the Brass Hats. “I must hurry to get the five-fifteen.”

Once in his hut, however, Phineas’ enthusiasm for the capital city of France dropped down faster than a cannon ball pushed over the edge of a well. Playing second fiddle was something that the flyer from Iowa relished like salt herring smothered with ice cream. There was little doubt that von Beerbohm was the top and had been for weeks.

“Paree, huh?” he growled to himself, and got to his feet. He looked into a mirror and studied his yellowed physiognomy. Then he dug his hands into his trouser pockets viciously. As he withdrew the hand from his port-side pocket, several grains of rice fell to the floor.

“Haw-w-w-w!” he chortled, remembering. “That was some weddin’ last week in Barley Duck. It’s a wonder that a dame would marry that stuffed cabbage. Well—rice—huh! Rice—an’ my map lookin’ like I was born near the Great Wall of China. That’s funny. Haw-w-w!” He sat down again and called upon his brain cells to stop swinging lead and carry on. The Pinkham gray matter stirred and began to churn.

“Paree, huh?” Phineas repeated at length. “I should say not! A Pinkham don’t let clouds grow up under his undercarriage. When he is pushed so far, he stops and then springs at a throat or two. Well, I guess I’ll see what is what. I wonder if they are still working on that airdrome over close to Commercy.”

Ready for a week’s recess from the war, Phineas refused to put the Ninth Pursuit out in any way. “My bicycle’ll take me to the station,” he said. “I wouldn’t

think of usin’ U.S. equipment when I am not on active duty.”

“Now I know he is sick,” declared Major Garrity with emphasis. “I think it’s close to fatal.” He watched Lieutenant Pinkham tie his luggage on the rack he had built on the bike and then pedal away.

The Frog train that crawled out of Bar-le-Duc that afternoon contained not the faintest trace of Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron. The miracle man, if he intended going to Paris, certainly was taking a wide detour, for at the moment he was heading for a spot between Commercy and Lerouville.

And as Phineas neared his objective, Major Garrity’s Spads, led by Howell, blazed the air trails over his head on their way to take a poke at the Vons. In the Jerry back area, Bump Gillis dropped something overside. It was a message for von Beerbohm. The gist of it was that *Herr Leutnant* Pinkham would be back from leave in a week, and would knock off the dirty Dutchman’s ears.

At dusk, Phineas Pinkham got off his bike, rubbed his empennage and massaged the cramps out of his legs. A quarter of a mile away, he caught signs of feverish activity. Here, he knew, a gang of Chinese coolies were clearing land for an airdrome. The labor battalion knocked off for the day just as Phineas advanced to a clump of bushes where he crouched down and mulled over the situation. He located a long, rambling structure that evidently housed most of the sons of Confucius.

“I bet it’s a coolie paradise,” the Yank observed with a knowing grin. “But there ain’t no perils that’ll stand in my path. Huh! I bet they’ll like some cigars.”

NIGHT moved in. Phineas Pinkham, bag in hand, crept toward the barracks. Sounds emanated from within. Phineas had heard such a disturbance only once before, and that was in a monkey house at a zoo. Across the field he spotted a house which apparently quartered several Yankee officers who were directing operations. There was a plane at one edge of the drome, and Phineas licked his lips.

After one more cautious look about, he slipped in through a door and closed it behind him. The barracks reeked with an assortment of odors that would have made a glue factory smell like lilac perfume. Dozens of coolies packed the place, their slant eyes fixed upon Phineas Pinkham without expression.

“This inconsequential atom of the universe says

‘bon swar;’” he expanded in greeting. “Complenez?”

“No spleakee Lingsh,” a coolie responded in sing-song, sucking at the stem of a disreputable clay pipe. A dozen others shook their heads.

A squabble broke loose among one group over a pack of greasy cards. Phineas picked himself a place to sit and rummaged in his bag. Soon he called to one coolie in very severe tones.

“Charlie,” he snapped, “dome here velly click, slavvy?”

He handed the yellow man a pair of scissors and pointed to his head. The coolie looked at his fellows, scratched his own pate. A chattering medley ensued. Finally the Oriental shrugged, and began to clip the Pinkham locks. In very few minutes, Phineas’ head had been transformed into a phrenologist’s delight. There was little doubt that skull experts would have offered Phineas any price for his head in the event of his demise. The coolies watched with fascination as the Boonetown jokester drew up the skin at the corner of each eye close to the temple and affixed it with newskin. The chattering that followed would have drowned out a chorus of a thousand chipmunks.

“It is written that even a leopard can change its spots,” Phineas grinned, beginning to remove his uniform. “This lowliest of creatures knows that you can’t go into a alligator’s abattoir dressed up like a leg of mutton.”

“No spleak Lingsh!”

By dint of much gesturing, sign language and haggling, Phineas acquired an assortment of apparel badly in need of insecticide and soap. Decked out in this raiment, the Pinkham heir would have been stamped as a product dragged off a Chinese junk in the Hoang-Ho River by his own mother, could she have seen her offspring at the moment.

“Boys!” he enthused as he looked himself over with a pocket mirror. “I could even pass in a Lime house. Well, adloo, bums. I glo to tlakee plomenade ablout lairdlome.”

That night things began to happen on both back porches of the palpitating Front. The *Rittmeister* von Beerbohm had received the message dropped by the facetious Bump Gillis. One *Herr Oberst* read great possibilities in it and summoned a certain Teuton to his workshop. Four Heinie Brass Hats attended the powwow and hatched a very dirty plot.

“*Das ist gut,*” chuckled one of them. “*Herr Schmutz ist der gross actor.* Vunce he dresses oop like Pinkham so efen he fools me. He vill take idt *der*

Yangkee Shpadt *und fly ofer mit, ja. Und* he vill insultd Allied *Offiziers und t’row rocks mit by der* windows by Bar-le-Duc. I bedt you Pingham vill dast nodt giff *der* proof he vas by Paris, as he giffs trouble eferywhere, *hein?* He vill get idt *der* court martial.”

“*Ach,*” von Beerbohm tossed out. “By *der* air *mit* I vill gedt him. Tventdy t’ousandt marks you rob me of. *Donnervetter!* Sooch a stupidness. I giff *der* protest by *der* High Command. *Ein* letter goes by Potsdam. *Der* robbery it giffs!”

“You shouldt make *der* mouth shut!” barked the *Herr Oberst*. “Iss idt *Rittmeister* von Beerbohm runs *der* var? Go oudt, as you make idt *der* red by *der* face!”

And as this little tete-a-tete was going on in the Dutch district, a Spad was taking off from the drome near Commercy. Allied officers jumped from their beds at three in the morning and ran out into the chilly air. They found two non-coms propped up against a tree snoozing blissfully. A cigar stub hung between the index and middle fingers of each. One of the officers, smelling a rat, removed one of the stogies and sniffed at it.

“It’s some kind of hop,” he yipped. “It’s a Jerry spy, posing as a Chink. Spread the alarm. Call up—”

“That’s what we get for drinking all that cognac,” groaned another. “I thought I heard somebody warming up that crate, but I guessed it was a bat flyer going over. I was boiled, all right. Now we’ll get it!”

The job of questioning the coolies was a futile one. The uniform that Phineas had taken off had been crammed under a bunk out of sight. And the coolies had had a hard day and were bogged down by stark weariness. After all, it wasn’t their war, anyway.

Meanwhile, through the chill ozone of early dawn, Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham was pushing a Spad. Although his liver was out of whack, his spirits were exuberant.

“Oh-h-h-h-h-h-h! He flies through the a-a-a-air with the gr-r-r-r-reatest of ease! This dar-r-r-r-rin’ yo-o-oung man—Oh, boys! Wait until I meet von Beerbum. Face to face. Haw-w-w-w! They will twit a Pinkham, will they? Oh-h-h-h! He f-1-l-lies through the a-a-air—” He reached into his pocket and brought forth a few grains of rice which he began to chew.

“This humble crumb on earth’s surface knows that if you’re a pelican you can’t feed on cocosnuts,” the errant pilot chortled. “A China boy without rice is like a Indian without jerked venison. Flew Man Hooey has spoke.”

An hour before the slumbering Vons were to be

rudely ousted from their blankets on the Kaiser's dromes, the Yankee miracle worker mused down to Jerry soil and picked out a strategic landing site. Before the Spad had stopped rolling, Phineas leaped clear of the pit, lost his footing, and rolled over and over into a clump of bushes. The Spad kept on going, plunged down a declivity and came to grief in an old stone quarry.

Phineas got up, felt gingerly of his superstructure, and found it to be as sound as possible under the circumstances. He then ankleed over to the edge of the quarry and eased himself down its rocky sides to examine the wreck. For half an hour he labored to cover it with branches, both dry and green. At last he climbed out of the gravel pit and headed toward a more populated section of Hunland.

One could not trek very far in that neighborhood without meeting up with a Heinie outfit. Phineas bumped into one at the edge of a wooded stretch, and drew in his stomach as a saw-toothed bayonet jumped out to welcome him.

"*Handen hoch! Himmel! Der* yellow man ist. Hans, joomp up vunce! Look vhat I haff get idt. Aoh, don't make idt *der* moof!"

"Would a bee sting if it was sat on by a mule?" countered the captive. "Flew Man Hooey has spoke!"

"He speaks *der* English," gulped another Kraut. "Call idt *der Ober Leutnant*."

"Son of a Mandarin am I," expanded Phineas. "The Allied dogs they make me a slave like Uncle Tom. The spirits of my honorable ancestors show me the way of escape. They call on me to avenge the unspeaking insult to the Bing dynasty!"

"By *der Herr Oberst* of *Staffel 8* ve take him," decided the *Ober Leutnant*. "*Ach, Gott*, maybe iss it *der* Chinese army ve gedt to coom *mit der* Kaiser, *nein*?"

"Look," said Phineas baring his arm to view. "On my arm is the mark of the Bing dynasty. Dogs of Allies, they make of me the cootie—er—coolie. I will get word to honorable father, honorable brothers, honorable uncles. The Hooeys will rise up!"

AN HOUR later, on the drome of *Staffel 8*, Phineas Pinkham, alias Flew Man Hooey, was fabricating a tale that would have put Baron Munchausen to route. Six Heinie Brass Hats became agog and put their heads together, the combined weights of which would have tipped a hay scale at three hundred pounds.

"So iss idt," gurgled one. "If idt giffs *der* Chinamen of royal bloodt, *der* yellow race vill rise to *der* cause of *der* Vaterland. By Siberia they vill coom through Russia

yedt. Into India also, *und* Englanders vill haff to take their soldiers off *der* Frondt in *der* vest, *nein*?"

"*Der* Kaiser shouldt hear," said another.

And Phineas, dressed now in a heterogeneous array of Boche scenery, sat in the mess shack with the flying Vons and conversed at length with his arch enemy, the *Rittmeister* Von Beerbohm.

"I vill show to you *der* ship vhat I ride to bring down *der verdammt* Pingham," von Beerbohm was enthusing. "*Der Tag ist* near, as ve haff moof *der* drome oop fife miles. In two or t'ree days more ships coom *und* ve smash idt all *der* Yankees in *der* sky *mit* vunce."

Phineas took a snifter of *Schnapps*, then folded his hands in his lap.

"This molecule of no account humbly states that the sun does not rise up just to hear a rooster crow," he intoned. "It is writ that—"

"Eh?"

"I make humble apology," Phineas hastened to say. "This despised mud turtle forgets he is in big muskrat lodge. Flew Man Hooey claws—er—crawls at your honorable feet. Haw! Uh—er—"

"*Der* riddle he talks *mit*," commented the *Rittmeister* in a confounded tone.

"*Ach!*"

"This lowest of scum," continued our hero, "humbly asks to see what makes big heaven scrapers roar like dragons and fly to most honorable celestial sun."

"Ho, ho," von Beerbohm enthused. "Idt iss *der* komical talk he makes, *hein*?"

"Slo slorry," murmured Phineas. "The lowly ant clearing its humble throat should not be heard above the snort of a hippo."

"*Himmel!*" von Beerbohm growled. "If idt vas not *der* yellow man I listen to, I would think I get idt *der* insult, *ja*. Veil, *hoch der* oopstart Pingham! I shouldt vish he vas by us tind I would choke him *mit* my bare hands. *Hoch!*"

Later, Flew Man Hooey found himself quartered in a cubicle all by himself. It was in a Frog barn, the hay mows having been partitioned off into sections. In solitude, Phineas sat down to cogitate and chuckle. Overhead, a Mercedes engine roared. He looked out of a window and saw the Albatross pique down. He saw something else. A Kraut truck rolled up, and groundmen swarmed aboard. Several large iron-hooped barrels were rolled off the truck. The head of one was knocked loose and two Krauts came up, each carrying large tin buckets with long snouts attached.



"Now that's interesting," observed the watcher. "This humble bum can add up two and two, and if von Beerbohm is nice to me he will let me water up a Albatross all by myself. Haw-w-w-w! I wonder how Major Garrity is this day."

After dark that night in Bar-le-Duc, a buck-toothed, freckled-faced, lop-eared individual, clad in the uniform of the Yankee Flying Corps, entered a *buvette* and nonchalantly dropped a live frog into a French officer's wine glass. On his way to the bar, he flipped an evil-smelling bomb into a corner and five minutes later was hustling to another grog shop.

"Haw-w-w-w-w," he guffawed, after dropping an unsealed envelope full of voracious red ants into the inside pocket of a colonel's trench coat. "Haw-w-w-w!"

Babette chanced to meet the aviator as she tripped along Bar-le-Duc's busiest street, and hooked an arm through his. The flyer immediately pushed Babette in the face and proceeded on his way.

"Allez!" he grinned. "You have ze funny face."

"Peeg!" the scorned damsel yelled. "*Chien—vache!* I get ze square *avec* Pheenyas. I secure ze shotgun an'——"

M.P.'s were hard on the pilot's tail when he climbed into the Spad two miles from town and gunned upstairs. Garrity got the news an hour later.

"He didn't go to no hospital, huh?" he bellowed. "Well, he'll be in one when I get through with him. The batty, flap-eared—didn't go to Paree. Where did he get that Spad? I'll fix that crackpot this time. I'm through with him. I'll bust the hell out of him. I'll——" He grabbed a phone, buzzed every Allied drome within a radius of a hundred miles.

"Arrest him the minute he sets that crate down," was the stock order to every Headquarters shack. "He's got to come down sooner or later. Put him in irons if you can find them. Spread the alarm. Maybe he's violent, too, as he had yellow jaundice when he left. Maybe it went to his head. Better use a gun if he gets tough!"

"There," Major Garrity yowled as he sat back in his chair. "We'll get that fathead. He'll be in Blois before the next sunset. I'll see he gets a wheelbarrow with anvils tied to it. This is the time he broke the camel's back!"

And all the next day, von Beerbohm carried on with

might and main and added a Salmson observation crate to his string. Phineas stood humbly on the drome as the Albatross rolled in late in the afternoon. The *Rittmeister* got out and strode up to the son of Confucius.

“There you are, most humble person,” he grinned. “*Das ist der* fiery dragon that knocked off *der* pair of Yanks. That makes thirty-eight victories, *und* in three months I will make all the *Frauleins* forget *der* Baron Richthofen. *Der* gross Pingham I wait for. Four more days *und*——”

“This unworthy mote quails before the dragon’s jockey,” Phineas quavered. “It would make my honorable ancestors happy if the great one would honor Flew Man Hooey by showing him what makes the red dragon go. It is written that this unimportant son of heaven will teach his yellow brethren to fly like the crow.”

“Ho, ho!” burst forth von Beerbohm’s guttural laugh. “Come vunce, *und* I show you, *ja*.”

THE *Rittmeister* explained as best he could the workings of an Albatross. He showed the pseudo-Oriental from the Allied side of the fence how gas was fed into its innards. Flew Man Hooey was allowed to climb up on the snout and feast his oblique orbs on the prop and the water-cooling unit. The *Rittmeister* felt no qualms as he watched the honored and humble guest unscrew the radiator cap and peer into the steaming maw. There was a baffled expression on the face of the son of heaven as he climbed down.

“Honorable dragon still hot,” he intoned. “Most estimable bird still velly angry.”

“I will make him howl vunce more before I got to bedt,” von Beerbohm gloated. “*Der* dragon idt likes *der* Yangkee blood, *hein*? *Ach*, budt *das* ist better it shouldt get *das* Pingham *mit* claws. I bedt you *mein* life you would hate it to be *das* feller, *hein*?”

The Oriental head moved from side to side. “This humble person would not rest quiet in dragon’s stomach,” he replied, and trotted away in Chinese fashion.

“*Himmel!*” von Beerbohm said to another von pilot. “Always he giffs *der* humble sound *und* is vorth noddings. How could vun feller hate himself so mooch like anyt’ing, *hein*?”

Phineas did not get very far before there came a very familiar sound in the ether over his head. He looked up, saw concentric circles on the bottom of a Spad wing. No undue riot occurred on the Kraut

drome. Unmolested, the Spad came in, swept down and rolled up close to von Beerbohm’s crate. And out of the Spad stepped a man who popped the Pinkham eyes and nearly ruined their slant. Stepping toward von Beerbohm was the counterpart of the Boonetown wonder himself. Freckles spotted the Kraut’s face. Big protruding incisors were bared as the Heinie grinned.

“Veil, I did it,” he exclaimed. “If *das* Pingham efer shows oop by Bar-le-Duc again vunce more, he vill be arrested by all the Allies. I efen insulted *der Fraulein* who must know him, *ja*. Ho, ho! I put ants in ze big Ofhzier’s pocket, *und* I shmell out *der Biergarten und*—so funny iss idt you vill eggscoose me if I don’t shtop *der* laughing *mit* stitches. Ho, ho! Vunce you shouldt joost see *der Fraulein*’s face when I poosh her *mit*.”

“Oh, you big bum!” yelled Phineas involuntarily. “I’ll smack you dizzy. You’ll do that to my dame, huh? You will—uh—er—huh! Aw-w-w, cripes! Well——”

Von Beerbohm stiffened. Eyes as big as goldfish bowls, he stared at Phineas for several breathless seconds. Suddenly his brain snapped.

“*Gott im Himmel! Das* Pin——!”

Toward the Spad that had just come in and was still idling, Phineas was racing. Two ack emmas tried to block his path. There was nothing humble about the Boonetown jokester as he went to work on the Heinie wrench and plier experts. Leaping clear of their prostrate forms, he jumped to the Spad and jammed in the throttle.

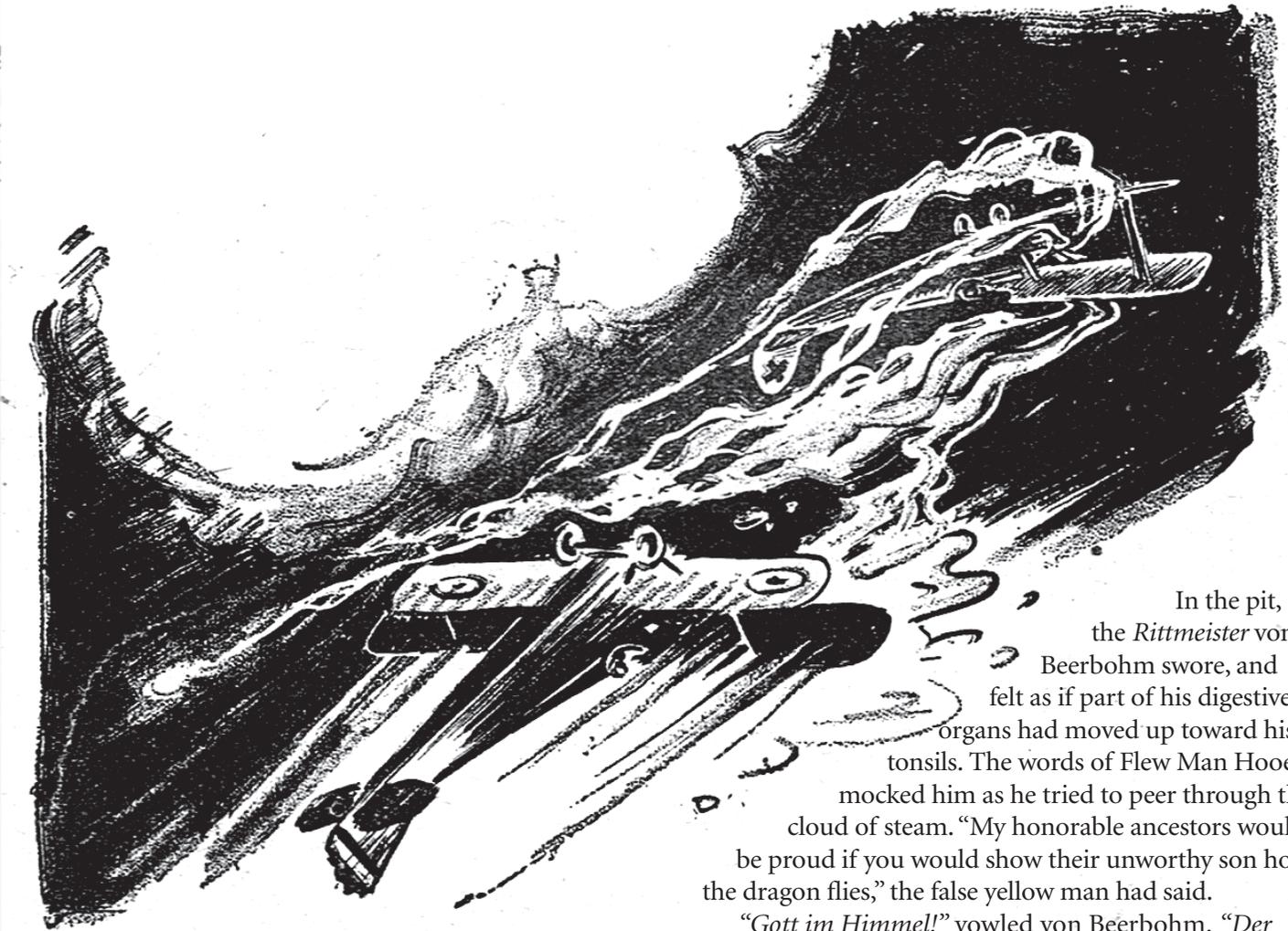
“Eferybody!” yelled von Beerbohm as he raced to his red dragon. “Shoodt vunce! All to vunce! *Das ist* Pingham—*Donnervetter!*”

“Haw-w-w-w-w!” guffawed Phineas as he tore across the field. “This unworthy thing that crawls under a log wishes to bat you down, you big sausage destroyer. Oh, boys!”

Machine-gun bullets sprayed the Spad as it lifted clear of terra firma. A slug whizzed close to the Pinkham cranium.

“If my hair wasn’t clipped, that tracer would’ve parted it. Haw-w-w-w-w!” he hollered. Then he looked down. Von Beerbohm was on his way up. No other Jerry ship had moved from its chocks.

“Oh, it’s all hog or nothin’, huh?” observed the escaping Yank gleefully. “Well, git hot, von Beerbum, as that’s when the fun starts. Even my honorable ancestors will laugh until the tombs rock when I dust you off, haw-w-w-w-w! I’ll lead you toward the lines if I may, as that is most humble idea I have got! Haw-w-w-



w-w, what fun! I must pull back on the chopstick and climb!”

Before the Boonetown magician had eaten up much sky space toward the Front, however, the *Rittmeister* von Beerbohm began to demonstrate his skill with a battle wagon. Spandau lead munched at the Spad’s wings, and kicked the rudder post askew so that Phineas could fly in only one direction—straight ahead. A tracer singed the short hairs on the top of the Pinkham pate. Both Spad markings on the top wings looked like almost-used-up punch boards in a cigar store.

“I wish you would get hot,” groaned the Yank, “as them bullets can’t miss forever. I wish some Spads would come along. It’s always the way. A Pinkham always is alone when pushed into a corner and—why—er—it seems something is wrong, as where is the slug mush?”

The Boonetown pilot twisted in the pit just as he zoomed over the lines. A cloud of steam almost obscured the pursuing Albatross. The Mercedes part of the sky duet had acquired a very sour note.

In the pit, the *Rittmeister* von Beerbohm swore, and felt as if part of his digestive organs had moved up toward his tonsils. The words of Flew Man Hooey mocked him as he tried to peer through the cloud of steam. “My honorable ancestors would be proud if you would show their unworthy son how the dragon flies,” the false yellow man had said.

“*Gott im Himmel!*” yowled von Beerbohm. “*Der Dunkopf* I am yedt. Efen if *der* cow coomes by *der* drome, I should cut it open vunce *und* see maybe *der* Pingham giffs inside. *Donner und Blitzen!* I shouldt turn aroundt vunce. *Himmel!*”

The Albatross responded to his touch with the sprightliness of a mud scow caught in the flats. Steam billowed back until the *Rittmeister’s* face was the color of a pomegranate. And then as he finally got the sluggish crate to bank, the Pinkham Spad poured lead through the fuselage not four inches back of the Von’s own empennage. The tortured power plant, sounding like a concrete mixer fouled with bits of stove parts, strove valiantly to climb a couple of feet. To Phineas, his enemy looked like a big white cloud trying to make up its mind where to go.

“Haw-w-w-w-w!” he yipped. “No more tricks, huh? It is like you tell a rabbit it can’t have no more bunnies. Well, there have been better Vons than you who thought I was all washed up. Haw-w-w-w! It’s just where I wanted to git you, as we are over my school yard. Will you go down, or will I knock you down, you—”

The Rittmeister von Beerbohm had nothing to say about it. The Mercedes engine had become very weary of making rice pudding. Yankee doughs on the ground marveled as they watched the steam cloud head for the ground.

"It's the rum the Limeys give us," decided one. "I'm not seein' right. It— why, inside is a Boche ship! Mike, will you pinch me, as maybe I am in a nightmare and they will shoot me if I am caught asleep on post. Look!"

PHINEAS saw the flying turkish bath hit the ground two miles behind the bank of the Meuse and bounce along the countryside like a cavorting spring lamb, before it stayed put against a group of trees. Roaring with glee, Phineas set his crippled Spad down almost as hard, but nothing could wash out the Boonetown wizard in such an hour of triumph. The *Rittmeister* was crawling on his hands and knees into the clear when Phineas trotted up. Von Beerbohm's face was the color of a hound's tongue, and steam dribbled from his scratched proboscis.

"*Himmel!*" he groaned. "*Vas ist?* What you have did to *mein* Albatross, you deffil! *Ach*, better I should joined the submarines."

"I just put rice in the radiator," explained Phineas. "I hope you will forgive this unworthy atom of Confucius for forgetting the raisins. Haw-w-w-w! We will not be hungry until mess time, as the Mercedes should have every cylinder filled with pudding."

"Rice?" groaned the dejected Von. "*Ach, Himmel!*"

"Of course," Phineas said. "I was a Chinaman, wasn't I? Would you expect me to carry betel nuts? Well, this has been a day. Do you know my yeller jaundice is better already, von Beer-bum?"

"*Himmel!*" breathed the *Rittmeister*, pawing at his brow. "Take me avay vunce. Any blace where idt iss you ain'dt, *ja!*"

"I won't dare to see Babette until my locks grow back," Phineas was muttering to himself as he sat down to rest. "It was my crown of glory. But a Pinkham knows no sacrifice when it comes to the Allied cause. Flew Man Hooey has spoke."

It was a strange cargo that a Staff car unloaded in front of the stone house on the drome of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron. Von Beerbohm's face was still parboiled when he stumbled in through the door and groped his way to a chair. Behind him, dressed in varied garb, one eye aslant and one normal, head as devoid of hair as a billiard ball, trailed Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham.

"What is it?" yipped Bump Gillis. "Who—why, it looks—"

"Haw-w-w-w-w-w!" came a familiar raucous eruption.

"It is," gasped Major Rufus Garrity, staggering back. He hit something and lost his balance. It was von Beerbohm's lap.

"This unworthy son comes back to the hut of his papa," chortled the prodigal. "Flew Man Hooey, that most ordinary thing of low life, is ready to take up where he left off. Hello, bums! Did I rice to the occasion? Haw-w-w!"

"Where did you get that make-up, you fathead?" Garrity hollered. "Where did you get that Spad? How—"

"I borrowed a crate over at Commercy," Phineas said quickly. "I busted it up over in a Dutch real estate development. I picked up this one—Well, it's a long story. Say, am I hungry! Where is some mess, as—"

"There's some rice pudding left, that's all," said Bump Gillis. "If that is what you want, well—Look at the Von! He's turned green!"

"Rice iss idt," the humbled Boche ace groaned. "*Ach*, giff idt by me *der* paregoric, *ja*. Ugh!"

"There, you hurt his feelin's," grinned Phineas. "Well, if you honorable brothers will let this most ordinary gnat of nature sit down, I will try and fight my unstrung nerves. I wish you would have the Brass Hats pay me the reward dough in tens, as that will make a big roll to carry. I got to have something to win Babette back. Oh, an' that's another thing! That was not me in the Barley Duck last night. The Von here will confess, or else I will stuff him full of rice pudding."

"Aw-w-w, Lord!" moaned Garrity.

"I vill tell all, *ja*," von Beerbohm yipped eagerly. "I vill gonfess anyt'ing, *ja*. Only don't I should efen hear *der* vord 'rice' vunce again yedt."

"Do you know a good hair tonic?" Phineas asked of the befuddled C.O. "I feel naked. Haw-w-w-w! Oh, well—" He swore and scratched at his ribs. His clawing fingers moved to his neck, operated there for a while, then moved back to his diaphragm.

"Giss I won't see you bums 'til morning," he said at last. "I go to spend the night in soak in the brook. You can't hobnob with coolies and come out covered with rose petals. Haw-w-w-w-w! Adoo, bums!"