



*a HUMPY & TEX adventure*

# HELL AND HIGHWATER

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*Action was slow over the English Channel and the demon sea plane pilots had a yen for the Front and hot combat. When their gas ran out there was only one river to land on, and that was lined with machine guns. They couldn't land, and they couldn't fly, so—*

IT WAS BACK IN 1776 that the American navy first started going to hell, to hear the men who fought with John Paul Jones tell it. You can ask any sailor to-day, and he'll tell you the outfit is still on a speed run for that uncharted region where every reef is red-hot and the prevailing winds are heavy with brimstone ash.

"Humpy" Campbell, first-class boatswain's mate and aviation pilot, had just brought up this ancient belief about the eventual nautical destination. He and

his observer, "Tex" Malone, were sitting at one of the tables in front of *Monsieur Coyac's* cafe at Ile Tudy. It was in 1918, and Humpy had begun to doubt that the navy was being allowed to do its share toward making the world safe for democracy.

"Look here, Tex," said Humpy, emphasizing his remarks with a shot of cognac that would have done credit to a water tender who wasn't tending water. "Look here—this damn outfit's headed straight for hell, with all four cans lit off. There's a war over here,

four hundred miles away, and we're missin' out on it."

Tex grunted. He's heard talk like this every day for the last month at the Ile Tudy seaplane base; but today Humpy seemed to regard it as a personal affront on the part of Josephus Daniels and the bureau of navigation, that he was being deprived of a fight. Maybe it was the cognac. Maybe it was the letter Humpy had received from Blondie that very morning.

"All we do," Humpy continued, waving a huge and tattooed hand, "is stick around a joint that smells like sardines and goats. We fly up and down from Point Penmarch to the straits of Belle Ile, convoying some lousy troopships or some dirty collier into port. And I ain't seen a submarine for a month."

"Where's your patriotism?" demanded Tex. "Why don't you get out and do your bit? Why ain't you won a medal—like that gyrene?"

Humpy snorted and sat erect, glaring at his observer.

"You shut up," he retorted. "Every time I think of that leatherneck and how he'll rate with Blondie when we get back on Sands Street, I'd like to land on him and get the situation well in hand. I might have got duty up at Queenstown, where the destroyer squadrons really run into subs now and then. But, instead, I sit down here and get corns, while that marine goes out and gets himself all shot up and decorated."

He gripped his cognac glass, and Tex saw the knuckles whiten. Blondie and Sands Street called up fond memories of pre-war days in Brooklyn, when the peroxidized waitress at the hash house near the navy yard had divided her attentions between Humpy and the good-looking marine corporal doing sentry duty at the Sands Street gate.

Blondie's letter of the morning had been full of love, bad spelling, and marines. It told all about Sergeant Riley—he's made another rate—and he'd killed himself a hundred Krauts or so at Belleau Wood and won half a dozen medals. If any leatherneck should drop into the Greasy Spoon and mention "this man's outfit," Humpy knew for certain that Blondie would think he was referring to Sergeant Riley.

"Well," Tex spurred him on, "the war's over there. Why don't you get into it some way? Ain't you got the guts?"

Humpy was on his feet at this, wiping the cognac off his lips and ready to fight.

"You know damn well I got the guts," he roared. "What you tryin' to do, kid me? Listen, you big rubber

sock, if you've got the intestinal fortitude, we'll take this damn crate of ours up to-day on patrol—and head her straight for hell and high water!"

"What ya mean, high water?" asked Tex.

"I mean we'll head straight for the Western Front. There's plenty rivers, ain't there? And they're flooded from the rains. Well, when the gas gives out, or when we get shot down by some Kraut, we'll land on a river."

"You're batty."

"Batty, am I? Now who hasn't got the guts? There's German planes over there, flyin' around in droves. You're scared to shoot it out with them, you and your Lewis gun."

Tex sprang to his feet and banged on the table with such force that *Monsieur Coyac* came running in alarm with another bottle.

"Here's to it," Tex Malone exclaimed, "Hell and high water!"

The two hoisted their glasses. Love, boredom, and cognac can make a man do foolish things.

ETERNAL MISTS swirled about Ile Tudy. Man can stand a certain amount of monotony when the weather is good and he is comfortable. But here there was neither climate nor comfort. There had been nothing doing since that day a month before. Then Humpy and Tex, Ile Tudy's best enlisted men's flying team, had towed a spent torpedo straight into the hull of a submarine that was on the surface, sinking her, and sacrificing the Texan's beloved rope as they zoomed to safety above.

Since then, the I-33 had been equipped with a machine gun, but the flyers had found no occasion to use it. For a month they had carried the same two bombs, without seeing so much as a periscope.

Now they sauntered up the smelly station street, Humpy a veteran of nearly two cruises, and Tex a D.O.W. man fresh from the Panhandle cattle ranges. It was so foggy that the planes were left in the hangars that morning; even the *Unterseebootes* would have difficulty operating in such pea-soup weather.

"Hello, Sparks," Humpy greeted a sailor, who emerged from the radio shack as they passed. "Anything doin'?"

"Convoy comin' down the coast," the radioman answered. "I'm gonna report to the Old Man, and we'll see whether you birds go up or not. All quiet so far."

"No use goin' up in this weather," Tex said.

"Got cold feet already?" sneered Humpy. "You're yellow."

"You're a liar," Tex answered.

"Hell poppin' over in England," the operator announced, ignoring the threat of hostilities which always seemed imminent between the two bluejackets. "I guess London Bridge is falling down—and a few other things."

"How come?" inquired Humpy.

"Zeppelin. Got a flash a while ago that one of the Kaiser's biggest airships drifted in at about 20,000 feet, this morning, and dropped a couple of eggs. So high the anti-aircraft gunners couldn't see what they was shootin' at. She slipped away in the fog when the fightin' planes started up."

"I'd like to be doin' duty at London when one of them big boloneys come over," asserted Tex.

"I'll see if I can't get you transferred," Humpy replied sarcastically. "You got it soft here and don't know it."

The two were still calling each other hard names half an hour later, when a messenger dashed into their barracks and interrupted their game of acey-deucie.

"Sub off Point Penmarch," he panted. "Skipper wants you."

"You tell the skipper he can take a—well, you tell him we'll be right down," amended Humpy. "Snap out of it, you big boot."

"Does he think we can see a sub in this fog? Does he think we can even pick up a convoy?" demanded Tex.

"You ask him," retorted the messenger. "He's been readin' rocks and shoals to everybody this morning. I'm already restricted to the station for a week for bein' out of uniform."

The two flyers had slipped into their jackets and were adjusting their helmets as they slammed the barracks door and ran down to the captain's office. They could see that the machinist's mates already had the I-33 out of her hangar. Somebody kicked the prop over, and the motor sputtered coldly.

It took about two minutes for the captain to tell them to do something, for Pete's sake and the navy's sake and their own sake. It seemed that there were several sub chasers convoying a freighter down the rocky coast of Finisterre, and none of them could see the others on account of the fog—which made the situation twice as dangerous. Somebody had radioed in a submarine alarm.

"Pick 'em up if you can see them," ordered the captain. "Take them down past Belle Ile. Shove off and carry out your orders."

"Aye, aye, sir," Humpy answered.

They dashed into the foggy street again, and over to the plane, with its motor idling.

"How's the gas? I want her full," Humpy yelled. She was full, somebody assured him. Tex Malone crawled into the after cockpit and inspected his Lewis drums.

Humpy produced an enormous plug of chewing tobacco and diminished it fearfully with one masterful bite—a sure sign he was ready to take the air. He stowed this in his starboard cheek and gave her the gun.

The I-33 slithered out across the calm waters of the bay with gathering speed, her prop sucking in the fog and hurling it behind in wet swirling sheets. Her tail lifted, and the plane, hidden now from the watchers on the shore by a gray curtain, picked herself cleanly out of the water and roared upward. Humpy leaned out and spat into the slip stream, and Tex Malone ducked his cowling and swore.

The plane climbed steeply. Humpy kicked the rudder over, and the headed north. Somewhere up there, shrouded in the mists, was Point Penmarch. And somewhere along that coast of rocky headland and Idle little bays, a freighter was wallowing her way south, groping along in an impenetrable gloom, with fleet little sub chasers circling about in the din of foghorn and siren.

A silence, broken only by the whine of wind in the struts and wires, suddenly struck Tex Malone's ears, and he straightened in alarm, only to see that Humpy had purposely cut the motor.

"We'd never find the damn convoy in this fog, anyway," yelled the pilot. "If you ain't lost your nerve, I'll take you to the war while there is still a war to shove off for."

"Go ahead, before you turn yellow," shouted Tex.

Humpy cut his switch in again, and the motor roared. He kicked a man-sized foot against the rudder and pointed the nose of the I-33 east. She was bound for hell—if Sherman was right and the gasoline held out.

THEY flew blind for nearly an hour, the altimeter showing two thousand meters, before rifts in the fog below confirmed the fact that they were over land. Little by little the mists grew thinner under them, while the plane roared along at top speed. They saw more and more of the green squares of fields, as France unrolled beneath.

Neither, perhaps, realized the full extent of the risk

they were taking. Away off to the east, the Western Front cut across France, an interminable ditch of mud and blood. They couldn't miss it. There were rivers, the maps showed that France was full of rivers. Humpy could remember offhand the names of some of the most important—the Aisne, the Somme, the Meuse and the Marne. It ought to be easy to pick out a landing place! Neither flyer, however, knew that rivers in France may loom large on the map and yet be as incapable of floating a plane as they would a battleship.

Another half hour logged past. Their motor was droning its faithful song, with neither a miss or a false note. Then down off the sea came a howling wind that drove the fog before it, tearing it to wisps and scattering the wisps across France. A cold raw gale it was, and it set the I-33 bucking like one of Tex Malone's broncos. Humpy swung the plane's nose around and rode along in the teeth of the wind while he climbed to find a calmer stratum of air.

Tex leaned out to survey the terrain below and watch the last of the fog, as it rolled down toward St. Nazaire, where the convoy was headed. There'd be devil to pay if it was clear where the convoy was now—and if the sub showed up.

He glanced up idly to see what the ceiling looked like now that the fog was dispersed, and he probably would have fallen over the side in excitement, had it not been for his safety belt.

A thousand meters above them and a couple of miles away, a great whale-like shape was driving along, tail-on in the gale.

"Zeppelin!" Tex yelled with all his might. But the word seemed to freeze in his throat. "Zep!" he repeated at the top of his lungs, and the wind plucked the word from his lips and flung it far into space. Humpy showed no sign of having heard. Tex jerked the Lewis gun around and pressed the trigger. It needed warming, anyway. A few stray shots chattered forth, and Humpy turned in alarm.

"Look!" shouted the observer, pointing.

Humpy looked and almost swallowed his tobacco. The I-33 shrieked upward, nearly heeling over in the wind, two men tense in her cockpits, watching the graceful giant above. Tex Malone fingered the Lewis gun anxiously.

They shot under the belly of the Zeppelin, a thousand feet below, and Tex Malone, face upturned, saw a machine gun at the bow of the big ship spitting straight down at them. There was another in action at

the stern, and when he lowered his head again, a piece of the cowling ripped away under a chance hit, and a flying splinter struck his cheek.

Humpy sat back on the stick and shot the I-33 into the dizziest climb the Texan had ever taken. The crate shrieked, groaned, and strained like a freighter in a heavy sea, but her motor roared cleanly under a full gun, and she obeyed. When the pilot eased off and leveled, they were astern of the big ship.

They bore down on her now, riding the gale for a tail wind and traveling fast. Machine guns appeared on the Zep—one at the stern, one amidships, one on top of the envelope. Tex jerked his own gun around in an arc as they slithered past, pouring a dotted line of lead into the air cruiser. Another muzzle spouted death at them from the bow; a shred of fabric was torn loose on the upper right wing, and it twisted and shrieked in the wind.

Humpy was headed skyward again, and this time he climbed until Tex wondered if the pilot had been hit and had slumped back with a death hold on the stick. When he finally set the crate on a level again, they were far above the dirigible and could see the flash of guns above the envelope.

Humpy cut the motor and spat his chew of tobacco down at a barley field, ten thousand feet below.

"Bomb!" he yelled. "She's got more guns than a battleship."

"Okay," shouted Tex.

The motor roared again. It pulled the ship's nose down, down, in a dive that threatened to rip the fabric from the wings and jar loose every bolt in the crate. Straight for the whaleback the plane shot—straight for the black-snouted guns that popped defiance. Then, scarcely three hundred feet above, Humpy flattened her out.

Tex couldn't miss this target, larger than the largest of submarines. The bomb was set free. Tex watched it plummet down, his gaze held by a horrible fascination as Humpy zoomed up and away in a sprinkle of machine-gun bullets.

*Crash!* That must have been a terrible sound to the men aboard the dirigible—to the men who knew it meant death. The bomb had struck the envelope and torn into its vitals, poured out of a ragged hole. Then the big bag wilted. Flames bathed its sides, spreading in the wind. The Zeppelin dived slowly to earth and destruction.

Humpy cut the motor again.

"That ain't war. That's too damn easy," he shouted.

“Well, go on to the war, you damn goldbrick,” Tex answered. “What’s wrong, losin’ your nerve?”

The pilot thumbed his nose vulgarly and gave her the gun.

LEAVING the ruins of what had been one of Germany’s latest and finest Zeppelins behind them—a victim of its own greed in daring to attempt to bomb both London and Paris on one trip—the I-33 roared east. Far below her, France spread itself like a relief map of fields and villages and wooded terrain. The scarcity of the silver ribbons that were rivers worried Tex Malone; but he would not admit being concerned over their ultimate fate; so long as that tobacco-chewing pilot sat in front and drove the plane relentlessly on toward the war.

The few rivers that did present their glitter under the light of the afternoon sun looked too small to land on, but Tex remembered that they were flying very high—so high that no one on the ground would be able to spot their pontoons or even be sure of the marking on the wings, unless he used glasses. Humpy intended to keep this naval invasion of the Western Front a secret until the expedition had accomplished something. Of course, it wasn’t every day that an Allied plane shot down a Zeppelin. They would have that to soften the skipper’s wrath—that and the explanation that they were lost in the fog.

“At least we won’t get more’n four years sweeping navy-yard streets,” muttered Tex, thinking about the results of their escapade, now that the effect of the cognac was beginning to wear off. Then he refused to worry about it any longer. There was no observing to do—nothing but sightseeing. He slumped far down in the cockpit and quickly fell asleep.

Two hours, with the I-33 sitting down on the tail wind for every mile that was in it. Then, far over on the southern horizon, Humpy sighted Paris. All his life he’d wanted to see this town; but now the flying sailor kicked the rudder over to port and put a few more miles between the I-33 and that distant haze of smoke and buildings. There was no use in going over and being spotted; some Frog plane would be coming up to see what in hell a seaplane was doing so far from water.

That was the Seine down below them; they could have landed there and made one big liberty in Paris. Humpy filed the idea away for future use, and pressed resolutely on. Roads that cut the green fields below began to be choked with trucks and troops. They flew over what appeared to be a French airdrome and

were surely seen and examined through glasses. The Frenchmen probably shrugged and remarked that those mad Yankees were beyond one’s comprehension.

The minutes clicked past. Humpy suddenly yelled something that was rendered unintelligible by the noise, but Tex looked toward where the pilot pointed, far ahead of them.

The war at last!

Tiny black cracks and little pockmarks stretched everywhere. Heaps of stone marked the ruins of shell-torn buildings. Twisted shattered trees stood out starkly, here and there. The flyers saw no sign of life just now—only the grotesque shadows lengthening in the setting sun. A heavily wooded section that had somehow escaped the withering breath of war lay beneath them.

Then, as if by magic, a long line of white puffs of smoke spread across the dun and green earth. Tex suddenly realized that they were behind the lines. This was the back of the artillery firing over the Front—which was somewhere up there in that area where the woods were heavier.

Tex was sitting bolt upright now, all desire for sleep gone. If they met any Kraut planes it might be soon. Or he might get a chance to drop that other bomb on a Boche ammunition dump, if Humpy would only keep going into the German lines. There was no place below where they could land, anyway.

A greenish-gray cloud was hanging heavily in a little valley over to the left. Probably gas. Poor devils, these birds in the trenches, Tex thought. He was glad he’d joined the navy. Look, now, those fellows down below might be dying by the hundreds, while he and Humpy were sailing serenely above, with nothing more to worry about than finding a river big enough to—

A smoking tracer bullet screamed past his ear and ripped through the fuselage. The Texan whirled in his seat and looked up.

They had come out from behind a fleecy puff of clouds, without the slightest warning, those two Fokkers. Tex would always remember the cold thrill of seeing them and noting the crosses marked on their wings. Now they flashed down in a swoop toward the cumbersome American plane, black snouted guns flashing red.

Humpy took in the situation in a glance, while the tracers sizzled by. The Fokkers were on his tail and had the upper position. He banked off sharply to the right and then dived steeply. A shot hit the instrument

board; glass flew into his face. Above them the faster ships shot past, veering swiftly a few yards beyond. Then they turn and made ready to swoop hawklike upon their prey.

Tex had the Lewis gun going; he ripped lead into the floor boards of one ship when it went over them. The Boche dropped out of line and slipped away, whether in search of other prey or because he was hit, the sailor did not know.

Another steep bank, this time to the left. The Fokker tore down on them like mad, tracers spouting from twin Maxims. Humpy zoomed up after the Boche had passed, desperately trying for top position, but the faster German bus had shot skyward, too. Now he circled and headed for them, guns spewing a deadly hail.

"We went out to find the war, and we found plenty of it," Tex Malone told himself through gritted teeth, as he slued the Lewis muzzle around to follow their pursuer. This unequal struggle couldn't last much longer.

The I-33 wobbled perilously as a bullet tore through a strut. Lead sprinkled all about the slow seaplane; Humpy jerked at the stick, as a wire into a spin.

Tex Malone, clinging onto his Lewis gun, swayed and grabbed his left shoulder as a shot bit into cringing flesh. He cursed through clenched teeth with the pain, but kept the hot barrel hurling lead back at the pursuing craft.

They plunged, down in a sickening dive, twisting slowly. The motor's roar suddenly became a high-pitched scream; where the whirling prop had cut the fading sunlight before, there was nothing. A bullet had shattered the propeller. Humpy cut the ignition in time to prevent the I-33 from bursting into flames; pistons jammed through cylinder heads. The Fokker swooped past, its engine roaring steadily in the silence of their own, the noise punctuated by the chatter of the Lewis gun. The seaplane shot toward the earth, a helpless thing. Humpy Campbell swore and gave thanks in the same breath that they had plenty of altitude to make their chance of landing a fighting one.

The Fokker swept past above, but its pilot was a true sportsman. Now that his adversary was falling, he cut his guns and waved a black-gloved hand. Tex saw the Maltese-crossed plane vanish behind a cloud bank in the manner in which it had appeared; then he became sick with the pain in his shoulder and the dizzy drop toward earth.

"I see water—if I can make it," the observer heard Humpy yell, and his voice sounded faint and far away, almost drowned in the scream of the wind through struts and wires and torn bullet-riddled wings.

Tex, his head spinning with weakness and nausea, looked over the side to where the earth twisted and turned crazily as it rushed up to meet them. The setting sun glinted on a stretch of silver. They were down to two thousand feet, fifteen hundred, a thousand—and then Humpy gained control and set the ship in an uncertain wabbling glide. The stream shot up toward them, its silver changed to the dirty yellow of flood waters. It was narrow in places and wide enough for landings where the channel formed basins. Toward one of these calm wide places, the sailor at the stick headed the wreck of the I-33.

SHE flattened out, and the pontoons struck with a splash. The left wing dipped into the rain-swollen stream, nearly capsizing the plane. Then she righted and glided crazily toward the eastern bank, slipping downstream a little as the current made itself felt.

They came to a slow halt in the twilight, and Humpy jerked the goggles off his eyes. Suddenly he noticed a crowd of gray-green men working like mad not fifty yards away; heard their exclamation of surprise as the plane swept toward them, twisting sidewise in the grip of the current.

"Jerries, by God!" Humpy gasped.

Tex roused himself from that terrible nausea. He saw the Germans staring at the seaplane from a half-completed pontoon bridge that was meant to span the Marne, so that the artillery on the eastern shore could be hurried across for the drive that night.

There were guttural yells. An officer sprang into action and whipped out his Luger. The first shot ripped into the twilight stillness with a noise that sounded like a five-inch navy gun. Humpy Campbell sighed and slumped down in his cockpit, his head sinking limply on his chest.

"Will you surrender?" the engineer officer demanded, in perfect English.

Tex Malone saw him as through a haze, a dim fog that was gradually becoming tinged with red. The Luger was still leveled at him; the I-33 was drifting a little closer toward the half-finished pontoon bridge; the crowds of soldiers were massed on the structure, tools in hand. And in the forward cockpit was his buddy, shot by this German—perhaps dead.

"Hell, no!" Tex shouted.

This war they had found took on a very personal aspect for him as the red haze engulfed not only the officer who had shot Humpy, but every man on the bridge. He swung the Lewis gun toward them, ducked as a shot from the Luger whizzed past his ear, and jerked the trigger.

The I-33 floated down toward the pontoon bridge slowly and peacefully, but the gun in her after cockpit chattered death. Men fell from the bridge, spattering into the flood-swollen waters of the Marne. Others tried to flee, and dropped on the structure before they reached the shore. The officer let his Luger slip slowly from his grasp, buckled at his knees, and toppled headfirst into the stream.

Tex stilled the gun. It was all over for the present. There were other Germans on the eastern bank; now they came forward hesitantly, the remainder of the engineer company. They had stopped bringing out pontoons, and were now advancing. There were a few rifle shots, but the I-33 had grated into the end of the unfinished bridge and anchored there, her left wing caught against a portion of the structure. She offered little target for the men ashore.

"Humpy!" yelled Tex, "Humpy, speak up! Where'd they hit you?"

A low moan came in answer. Humpy was not dead, and Tex swore fervently. It was up to him to get to his wounded shipmate—to get him out of the plane and minister to his hurts. But he had no chances now, the Germans were coming again.

"Take that you so and so!" gritted Tex. He set the spare drum on the Lewis gun and began spraying the length of the bridge with deadly lead. The advancing men fell back, leaving several on the level of the structure.

Tex was controlling the bridge as well as any Horatio—until the artillery cut loose, or somebody dropped a bomb or came near enough to toss a hand grenade into the wreck of the I-33. A few shots sprinkled about them in the water, making the peculiar thud that is produced only by a bullet. One or two ripped through the already riddled fuselage of the I-33.

*Rat-tat-tat!* A machine gun was opening up somewhere down the line. It seemed like a signal for all hell to tear loose. Overhead in the gathering dark, a shell screamed, falling somewhere in the wood to the east with a deafening roar. More followed closely. The air became full of shrieking metallic demons, and the earth trembled with the impact of them.

An Allied barrage was falling. That meant an

attack, according to the notions Tex had about war. He crawled painfully out of his cockpit and pulled himself over to where Humpy sagged limp in his seat. There was blood on the other sailor's face, and Tex jerked the helmet off in alarm, to find that it was only a glancing wound. He trailed the helmet down into the water, then used it to wipe away the stain. Humpy began to show signs of reviving under the influence of the cold water.

"Come on, mate, snap out of it," Tex urged. "We got to make it to the shore here."

"Listen!" Humpy said suddenly. "They're comin'."

"Who?"

"The Americans."

Tex strained his ears. At first he heard only the hideous noises overhead, the din of a hundred boiler factories in the air; then the yelling of men in the wood on the west bank came to him.

"To hell with this damn mud!" somebody said.

"Yep," Tex agreed. "Americans."

He slid back to his cockpit and jerked the muzzle of the Lewis gun around again. He began pouring lead into the woods to the east, just on general principles.

A sweating, swearing sergeant broke out of the trees on the western shore, urging his men forward profanely. He saw the wrecked plane, its American insignia barely discernible in the dusk, and halted abruptly.

"Well, for the love of Pete!" the sergeant exclaimed. Then he turned to the men following him through the mud. "Come on, you birds. I'm damned if the navy ain't got here ahead of us!"

Humpy struggled to his feet. There was something familiar about that voice. "Hey, Riley!" he shouted. "Riley!"

"What the hell? Humpy Campbell!" the sergeant ejaculated. "Holdin' the bridge, too."

Tex had the gun going spasmodically; he drowned out part of the conversation. Now he cut the shooting and turned to see the marines, splashing across the few yards of water that separated the western shore and the end of the bridge.

"Listen, leatherneck," Humpy shouted, as the marine came alongside, "what the navy's done to-day is plenty. Blondie told me about you winnin' all them medals. All we needed was a shot at the war, and we got it to-day. Wait'll we get back on Sands Street, and we'll see who rates the highest."

Riley laughed. "Pipe down, sailor," he said. "I got to shove off and run them Krauts out of that forest over

there. There's more medals out here—not for Blondie, but for my wife over in the Bronx. I guess Blondie didn't tell you I got married to a girl friend of hers the week before we sailed. So long!"

Humpy slipped back in his seat weakly and watched the marines pass by, as they clambered on the bridge and moved up for the attack.

"Come on, Tex," he said finally. "Let's move back toward the rear and get these wounds dressed. War is sure hell—when you consider that everything we did to-day was absolutely useless."

