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**PHINEAS
PINKHAM**
howl

NO MONEY, NO FLYEE!

written and illustrated by **JOE ARCHIBALD**

Experience had taught Major Rufus Garity's boys not to believe a word Phineas "Carbuncle" Pinkham said. And that was why, when he came back with the news that a squadron of Pfalz ships had moved into their sector, they thought it was a Pfalz alarm!

ONCE UPON A TIME, to quote the stock lead of an old-time writer by name of Grimm, there lived a Boche pilot christened Karl Mueller. He was just an ordinary pilot who did not rate a "Von" and is only mentioned because he helps out in this story anent the one and only Lieutenant Phineas "Carbuncle" Pinkham of the U.S. Air Corps.

The aforementioned Mueller sat in a white Albatross ship with a long, untidy wireless aerial dangling. The plane hovered in the sunshine above a great tumbling gob of gray and gloomy ceiling. It should have been an ideal day for Mueller to pick up messages from the Allied lines, as who would

expect any self-respecting enemy ship to be on the prowl in the heart of a great cloud saturated with rain?

But Mueller had forgotten Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham. Of course, if Phineas' Spad had had anything to say, it would have crawled into the hangar this day and huddled in a dry spot, but Phineas did not consult the feelings of a Spad and was riding one in that gloomy ceiling, oblivious to the hazards of such a position in life.

Not certain whether he was flying upside down or otherwise, the Boonetown wonder grinned broadly and gloated as he had never gloated before. Von Holke, one-time bane of the Ninth Pursuit, was well on his way to the barbed-wire barricade to join two or three other Vons who had been too anxious to lay Phineas among the sweet peas. So the war, so far as Phineas was concerned, had become a very successful enterprise.

This last disturbance of his brain cells was the caboose to his train of thoughts, for out of the gray mass his Spad shot into dazzling sunlight, not one hundred yards from Karl Mueller and his Albatross. *Rat-a-tat-tat! R-r-at-a-tat-tat!* Phineas and his Vickers guns went to work in earnest. The hapless Mueller and his observer had been caught flatfooted, and before they could haul out, their ship skidded like a truck on a greased road and went down into the gray ceiling on the slant.

"Cripes!" exclaimed Phineas. "Just like that! I must be gittin' good. I—hell!" Out of the sun a flock of ships were falling. The Boonetown flyer stared at them for a second or two, then slipped a thousand feet back into the rain clouds. Pfalz ships! A new outfit in the sector! That information ought to placate the old turtle, Major Rufus Garrity, and make him overlook the fact that Phineas had once more slipped away from Howell's flight.

Over Bar-le-Duc he began to circle, knowing that his light of love would run out of her domicile and throw kisses up to him. Those bonbons he had sent her by special messenger a couple of days before should have been some treat. The bonbons from that dizzy dame back in Boonetown, Iowa! Well, what she didn't know wouldn't cause her to count many sheep. Sweetmeats were conspicuously scarce in Frogland but nothing was too good for Babette. No, sir!

Phineas cut his motor in the drizzle above the drome of the Ninth and dropped down to a soupy field. As Phineas entered squadron headquarters, he grinned and waved his, big hand.

"Lo, fatheads!"

Howell got up from his seat in a corner and growled. "Run out on us again, huh? Well, you homely mug, there's a pal of yours waiting in there to throw his arms around you and hand you a big kiss!" And the captain hooked a thumb in the direction of Major Garrity's sanctum.

"Yeah?" grinned Phineas, shaking his gangly form like a wet dog. "Well, I got me an Albatross an' right after I saw some things that're goin' to make you mugs wish you had been born just ten years later than you was. Well, here goes nothin'!" he chirped. "I can smell the fat calf cookin' already, like I read in the Bible once, but that's over your heads. See ya in Blois." And Phineas set his teeth and crashed the door of Wings.

MAJOR RUFUS GARRITY had evidently been practicing being mad and making grim faces half an hour before Phineas returned to the fold. He had reached the state of perfection when Pinkham saluted, too respectfully, it seemed, and waited for the fireworks.

"Ah," he growled nastily, "the hero has returned. Well, hurry up with the alibi. I can hardly wait to hear it!"

"I got lost," interrupted Phineas. "It was rainin' and I hate to git wet and I went up to dry off in the sun as I catch pneumonia quick. My Aunt Hattie died of it. And Uncle Pete an'—"

The sounds that emanated from Sir Rufus were never meant to issue from a human throat. They increased in pitch, until the walls of the room trembled and a picture fell from a hook to the floor with a crash. The table quivered like a hula-hula dancer.

"You went up to get dried off, did you?" gurgled the C.O., his face the color of a prune and his mustache sticking straight out like the bristles of a toothbrush. "You were afraid you'd catch cold! Y-you—" His Adam's apple clogged up his throat and he went into a spasm to get it relaxed. "You'll catch hell, that's what, you gargoyle!"

"I got me an Albatross," put in Phineas placatingly, at the same time moving back a pace from the reach of a mighty fist, "an'—an' what did I see but a lot of Pfalz ships flyin' around, an' they almost barbecued me. Well, that wasn't such a bad patrol, huh? All them other guys run home when it rained and—"

The Old Man's eyes widened incredulously and a degree of insanity faded from their depths. He backpedalled a trifle and fell into his chair. Suddenly the telephone bell buzzed with insistence. Major Rufus

snatched it from its parking space and barked into the mouthpiece. Phineas turned his eyes toward the ceiling and hummed a tune.

“Shut up!” roared the major. “You bat-eared—no—no, sir, I wasn’t talking to you! I—”

“Haw-w-w-w-w-w!” enthused Phineas uproariously. “That brass hat’ll—”

“An Albatross, you say?” yelped the Old Man. “Is that all? I’ve heard about it already. I don’t want to hear—” And with a robust oath he crashed the instrument to its hook and proceeded to tear at his scalp.

“My confirmation, huh?” inquired Phineas with a grin. “Now maybe you’ll believe—”

“Confirmation?” shrieked the major. “It’s your funeral, you ape! I’ll—I’ll—well—get out of here! I’ll fix up the skids for you later, you fresh snackajapes—er a—janaskapes—er get to hell out or damme, I’ll—”

“I’m goin’, ain’t I?” said Phineas indignantly. And he certainly was. He slammed the door against the C.O.’s last word and crashed full-tilt into a buzzard who had had his ear glued to the keyhole. It was Bump Gillis, and the snooping pilot went to the floor in a nose dive.

“Eavesdroppin’, huh?” snorted the Boonetown representative, delivering a boot to the appropriate section of the pancaked, man’s anatomy. “Y’ought to be ashamed! Haw-w-w!” Phineas kept on his way.

“I’ll kill that bum some day!” yipped Bump Gillis. “I’ll put him out of his misery. I’ll—”

PHINEAS, alias Carbuncle, paused in the doorway and regarded his fellows with hands placed on his hips in a very insulting and significant manner. “I shall see to it myself, girls,” he trickled in a rich soprano voice, “that the dirty old Wing sends you some umbrellas. It’s just too disgusting to have to fly airplanes in a shower! Oh, reservoir!”

Phineas shut the door behind him just as an inkwell broke up against it. What fun! He walked to his hut, there to draw forth a small, well-thumbed paper book entitled: “Be the Life of the Party! One Hundred Tricks to Fool Your Friends.” He was delving deep into this when the door opened to a crack and a wrathful Bump Gillis.

“Don’t talk to me atall, ya dirty baboon!” snapped Bump belligerently. “I don’t even know ya.”

“You don’t give me no appetite, Mushface,” retorted Carbuncle. “I could do without ya like I could a double dose of castor oil.” And, having gotten the last word, he returned to his reading.

Mister Gillis locked up his larynx and went about

improving his personal appearance with a razor and a cake of soap. Apparently the flyer was getting all set for a little trip into Bar-le-Duc. He pulled on his best uniform and then reached for a pair of boots standing at the rear of his cot. He tugged at them diligently and nothing happened. Phineas yawned and sat up.

Bump swore and gave the boot a violent yank. There was a distinct sound of leather parting from leather as the footgear gave way. Bump shot backwards and his head met the wall with a sharp crack. When he had recovered, he held the boot up for inspection.

“Haw-w-w-w-w!” laughed Phineas. “Ya stood them boots where ya spilt that iron cement last night. Wow-w!”

Bump Gillis was born of thrifty Scotch parentage. Part of the sole of a comparatively new boot had been torn away from the welt. On top of that terrible fact it occurred to him that he had not placed the boots there. In fact, he distinctly remembered putting them under the bed. After he had spilled the can of cement, he had gone out. Everything was as plain as a mackerel in a bowl of goldfish. He was still paying for the privilege of sharing a hutment with Phineas Pinkham. Suddenly a fierce grin swept over Bump’s face and he turned to glower at the grinning pokesmith.

“Awright,” he said, “have your joke, halfwit. I had mine a couple of days ago. Them bonbons ya sent to Barley Duck was loaded with soft soap! I unwrapped the package when it got here. I’m a good guy at wrap-pin’ things back up. I worked in a department store once, ya fathead. Now laugh! An’ maybe that dame won’t—”

There followed the most awful exhibition of fisticuffs that had ever taken place on that side of the Atlantic Ocean. For five minutes the hut palpitated, and a groundman walking across the field paused to stare wonderingly. He bent down and felt of the tarmac before, feeling assured that an earthquake was not in progress. Then he grinned as he tumbled to the fact that the hut was the one wherein dwelt Phineas Pinkham.

Finally the door of the hut opened and Bump Gillis staggered out, one hand clamped over his face. Under one eye a hillock of flesh was gradually rising. Back in the hut Phineas sat on his cot, endeavoring to ram back a loose tooth to its former resting place. At last he gave up the job and let despair creep into his heart. Babette had eaten soap! She knew Lieutenant Pinkham’s love for playing pranks. The boomerang had curved and hit him square between the eyes.

THE NINTH PURSUIT was at mess. Phineas, between hasty gulps of food, glowered at Bump Gillis.

"Ya'll choke, Carbuncle," grinned Howell, "if you don't slow up. Not that I care—"

"Go to hell, will ya?" snapped Phineas. "I'm goin' into Barley Duck to fix up—"

"Like hell you are!" barked the major as he fell into his chair. "You stay right here until I make up my mind what I'm going to—" His eyes popped. "Been fighting, eh?" he bellowed. "You and Gillis, eh? Well, damme, both of you stay right here. You—"

"The bum assaulted me," growled Phineas. "He put soap in my dame's bonbons. I am goin' to prefer charges of criminal assault—"

"I meant worse!" put in Gillis loudly. "I—"

"Shut up!" roared the C.O. "If it's fight you buzzards want, you're both going to get it. I got a nice little telephone call from the brass hats about ten minutes ago. There's a squadron of Pfalz ships in this sector—von Bissinger's Pfalz ships!"

"Cripes!" muttered Captain Howell.

"What did I tell you?" said Phineas triumphantly. "I knew it before the brass hats—" His eyes told him that the Old Man was picking up a heavy tin cup, and not by the handle. "Aw-right, awright, don't throw it. I'll shut up."

"There's a big supply depot five miles behind the lines," continued Garrity. "The Boche are getting ready for a push. They're taking no chances on the supplies being blown up. That's why they've got von Bissinger on the job. Three D.H.4s went up in smoke yesterday afternoon trying to get a look at the dump. A butterfly wouldn't get through without getting its tail scorched. But G.H.Q. says two Spads will be able to get through. Now figure that one out, buzzards, and don't all step up at once. Tomorrow night two Spads go out! You have twenty-four hours to argue about who's going to go."

"Well," spoke Phineas largely, "I wonder who'll be goin' with me? When a big dangerous job has to be done, a Pinkham's there. My old man climbed San Joon Hill in Cuba almost by himself. He had to wait for Roosevelt an' the Rough Riders to catch up an'—"

"One more word out of you," howled the major, slamming his fist down on the table, "and you'll be ferrying ships in just seven days!" Finally the Old Man's verbal barrage became exhausted and he evacuated the room.

Phineas was about to step out into the drizzle when he bumped into something solid on the way in. He indulged in a few original dance steps to maintain

his balance and then gasped as he looked into the face of a man wearing the gray flying uniform of the pestiferous Vons. A ripple of surprise swept the big room as two Yankee officers herded the German across the threshold.

"Hello, men," said one, "this is Lieutenant Karl Mueller of the German Air Corps. One of you buzzards shot him down a while ago, he tells me. He was flying an Albatross—"

"Uh huh!" said Phineas, his homely face split by a grin. "That was me. Haw-w-w! How'd you git downstairs without gittin' all mushed up? You had a long ways to go an'—"

The German smiled broadly. "*Ach Himmel!* So? *Der gross* Lieutenant Pingham. Now I feel not so bad, *nein*. Glad I am, *ja!* The Albatross breaks not until I am almost down. I land oopside down in some booshes. *Mein* observer, he iss in hospital not feelink goot."

Phineas took the fellow by the arm, and pointed to the table. "Eat? Grub! Food, *ja?*"

Immediately Mueller's eyes brightened. "*Ja*, Lieutenant, *ja!* *Danke schön!* I eat, *ja?*"

"Sure," grinned Phineas. "Sure, if these hogs ain't guzzled it all up." His brows knitted. "And coneyac, too, Von. Wine! Frog wine." The Yankee joker winked to a mess attendant.

"Well, what about the American officers?" barked Howell to Phineas. "Haven't you got any manners, you ape?"

"Have you just discovered he hasn't any?" bellowed Major Garrity, making an appearance once more. "Sit down, men. And bring the prisoner in to me later. Feed him up good."

"Well," Phineas butted in again, "these looies ain't got lockjaw. They can—"

"Don't mind us, major," grinned one of the infantry officers. "We're on our way to Nancy. Anyway, we don't like lizards in our coffee and cigars that put an eye out. Goodnight."

"Haw-w-w-w!" guffawed Phineas when the door had closed behind them. "They got brains."

KARL MUELLER was wine and dined to his heart's content. The strong, warming liquor set his tongue rambling recklessly and Phineas egged him on.

"*Ja*," declared the prisoner vociferously, "Junkers it iss! They think they run the war, *ja!* Karl Mueller he iss no Junker. Gladt I am *der* Lieutenant Pingham shoodt me oop. I go back after the war to my *Mudder und Fraulein*, *ja*. The marks, they not many in

Berlin. *Ach, und* all the war lords fight now joost like dachshunds over a bone. Two months iss it I fight now *und* no pay, my friends. Also odder Staffels, *und* they get madder *und* madder yet.”

Mueller paused to take another drink and Phineas handed him a real cigar, no fooling. “*Ach*, the aroma of tsigar, Lieutenant Pingham! It worth iss I get shot oop, *ach Himmel!* Where wass I at? *Ja*, poor soldiers of the Kaiser! The *Offiziers* in the Staffels, they do not eat such foodt, *nein*. Alretty yet they get tired of no marks, *und* some I hear say pretty soon mooch longer no pay, they do not fly, *nein*.”

Phineas cast a triumphant glance at Howell. Karl Mueller drained his coffee cup and continued. “*Ach, und* I fight *mit* sooch nice *Kameraden, ach!* Your *Freund* I am, *ja*. I say look oudt for von Bissinger’s Pfalz ships. *Ach*, they are flyers—*und—und—*” The German flyer’s head fell forward and he brought it up only with an effort. “They are favorites of the Kaiser, *ja*. Soon they get plendy marks—*coom* oop. Odder flyers wait longer *und—*” His head dropped again. The gruelling crack-up of the afternoon, the quantity of food he had gorged, the strong cognac, all had ganged together to tie ten-pound weights to his eyelids. Howell ordered two, of the flyers to take the German to a hutment and put him to bed.

“Well,” said Phineas complacently, “I giss I haven’t started somethin’ in this *guerre*, huh? Maybe we didn’t find out something! With me around, they can fire all the Intelligence Corps an’ save money. The Heinies are gittin’ their pay docked, huh! Well, maybe they won’t keep on being tough and forget a lot of that, *Gott und Vaterland* stuff.”

“You hate yourself, don’t you?” rasped Gillis. “Marks or no marks, von Bissinger and his crowd are not going to fly over waving white doilies. You and your fathead! Go ’way some place and have a paralytic stroke.”

“My pal!” commented Phineas with a grin and sauntered out.

The next night Lieutenant Wilson and a new man drew the ammunition dump assignment that was a tough break on the insurance companies. Just before dusk they took off and flew toward the Jerry backyard where supplies were being unloaded. The new man was destined never to reach a ripe old-age; in fact, Wilson himself only got away from a dozen Heinies by a miracle and missed the field by four miles.

CROSS off twenty-four hours. In Wings Major Garrity, as happy as a lion with the shingles, ground

his teeth and swore. Not only had his men failed to blow up the supply depot, but he also had on his hands the problem of Phineas Pinkham and his hutmate. If only he could commit them to Blois for the duration of the war, then give them ninety years apiece in Leavenworth, it would be just half enough to satisfy his spleen. The door opened and Howell entered.

“The Spads are waiting, sir, and Reade and I are—”

The Old Man’s mouth snapped open. A vindictive light shone under each bushy eyebrow. “You’re not going over, you or Reade!” was the major’s pronouncement. “Get Pinkham and Gillis and send ’em to me. By cripes. I’ll show them! I’ll give ’em enough fight to last as long as they live, the halfwits! Bring them here.”

Just fifteen minutes later Lieutenants Pinkham and Gillis sat in their Spads, bidding farewell to their comrades. Underneath them were some bombs intended for the Jerry supply dump.

“Well,” declared Phineas as he cut his motor a bit, “I giss now you’re doin’ something. I’ll be back pretty soon, but this baboon with me—well, ya’d better kiss him good-bye, because if the krauts don’t git him, I’ll bump him off on the way home. Adoo!”

“Happy landings!” called the Old Man, and, strangely enough, his voice was a trifle thick.

“Engine feathers!” snapped Phineas. “If I git shot, I’ll haunt ya for the rest of your life.” He jammed in the throttle and tore away. Bump Gillis squinted one good eye through the glass in front of it and followed suit. In a few moments both ships were swallowed up in the dusk.

Over German acreage Phineas and Blimp dropped low and skimmed toward the spot where the supply dump was supposed to be located. The moon was stingy in dispensing light, but there was enough to permit the two buzzards to discern landmarks. They could not go on indefinitely without some opposition—it was not in the cards stacked at Jerry divisional headquarters.

Three Fokkers came tearing up at them from a drome on the carpet in the immediate vicinity. Phineas dived at one and sprayed a Von with lead poison before he could get started. The others kept on coming. The Pinkham heir looked toward his pal for a split second and saw that he was climbing for the stars like a fool. Up there two stabs of fire cut the darkness. More Jerries! Huh! And Mueller had said that the Boche were lying down!

Boonetown’s hero slammed some shots into a Fokker which was trying to get above his ears and then

back-sticked. The Spad climbed and climbed. Machine guns were clattering upstairs. Down below, the ground coughed up a great gob of fire. Another. Bump was unloading his bombs. Good sense! But Phineas? He was out tonight to stretch his luck to the limit. If a Heinie bullet smacked the beak of a bomb—well, it would be tough on the Pinkhams!

Unloaded, Bump Gillis felt secure and unbeatable. He caught a Fokker pilot on the blind spot and kicked him out of the war. Tracers licked at Phineas as he split-arc'd and sliced at a Tripe broadside. In the nick of time he lifted his trucks and the Spad bounced high into the air. The undercarriage swiped the tail of a kraut, did a lot of tricks and was pulled out of its spasm by the unperturbed Phineas in time to see Bump wobbling downward.

One Fokker was left in the scrap and it was in Bump's wake, Spandaus hot. However, the Boche had made a big mistake. The performance of Phineas' ship had deceived him into believing that the *Amerikaner* had been knocked haywire. Before he could blink, that ship was right on his neck where the hair was short, and Vickers hardware was beating out his swan song.

Lieutenant Gillis also made a mistake. He forgot to throw the switch when his Spad pancaked right in the middle of a road. Petrol merged with sparks and there was a flare of fire. With his heart almost riding his tongue, Phineas made a lucky landing in the same road and jumped out of his ship faster than he had ever done before. He legged it to the burning Spad more quickly than the best one-hundred-yard-dash record and found Bump clear of his belt and swearing like a mule skinner.

"You frogface!" barked Bump, blowing a scorched hand. "Ya landed with those bombs. I always knew you was nuts, but—"

"Did I want to leave you to git burnt up and then I'd be shot for murder if I ever git back, fathead?" retorted Phineas. "They'd swear I—anyways, shut up and let's git goin' before the whole German army an' air force start comin' at us. We ain't in no U.S. possession!"

THEY were about to make for the one good Spad. when out of the bushes beside the road stepped a big man wearing a coal hod hat. Bump pulled his gun but the straggler held up his hands, exclaiming, "*Kamerad!*"

"*Kamerad*, me eye! I'm goin' to shoot the squarehead."
"No, let me shoot him," urged Phineas and reached

into his pocket. He pulled out a little black gun and aimed it at the shaking German's head.

"*Kamerad!*" whispered the German again. "I could have shoodt you both—" Phineas pulled the trigger. A stream of water hit the man right in the face.

"Haw-w-w-w!" chuckled the irrepressible Yank. The German wiped at his face, mumbling to himself.

"Tricks, iss it?" he said. "Tricks! *Ach*, I bedt you I know—*Gott im Himmel!* I bedt, you—" He peered into Phineas' face. "It iss! It iss! *Der* Lieutenant Pingham. Phineas Pingham of Boonetown!"

"Cripes!" ejaculated the person in question. "Rudolph Schnitzel! Shake, ya old squarehead! I ain't seen you since we drank all the beer at that Odd Fellers' clambake out in—"

"*Ach*, it iss goodt to see you—"

"Say, what is this?" demanded Bump. "He's a Heinie an' I'm goin' to crack him one. I—"

"I am Cherman, *ja!*" interrupted Rudolph defensively. "But I don't wish to fight for the Kaiser no more. While I am here once to see my *Grossmudder*, they grab me *und* poot me in the army. The war it breaks oudt *und* here am I. I want to fighdt for the Yankgees, *ja*. Alretty yet my father's delicatessen will be ruint, if they know his Rudolph is a Cherman soldier, *ja! Und—*"

"Sure," agreed Phineas, "but let's git out here. This is a hell of a place—"

"*Nein*," grinned Rudolph, "*nein*." He slapped at his bulging pockets. "More marks have I than ever I see. You *und* me *und* your *Freund* we go to a cafe I know two miles away *und* get *Schnapps* yet. A long time iss it since I had—"

"He's nuts!" growled Bump. "Cripes! He thinks we can go to a German beer garden an' walk right in like—"

"*Schnapps?*" yipped Phineas. "Rudolph, you ain't changed a bit. You're dumb. Look, we got American uniforms on, doomcops! Anyway, I can get you better *Schnapps* in France. How come you got that big dent in your coalhod?"

Rudolph Schnitzel told them. He related a story that electrified Phineas' versatile brain and set it to clicking like a well-oiled Hisso motor. Rudolph had been driving a car which was bringing up two German officers to von Bissinger's squadron. They were paymasters, loaded down with marks. All of a sudden some *Dumkopf* up in the sky had dropped bombs, and one had hit the road just ahead of the automobile, so that Rudolph had driven it into a ditch. The officers

had been thrown out and Rudolph had escaped.

“Haw, that was me! I dropped them eggs!” announced Bump proudly as the three scooped down in the lee of some bushes. “Well—”

“Have I got an idea!” exclaimed Phineas *sotto voce*. “Bump, Mueller wasn’t kiddin’ us, I bet. That’s back pay Schnitzel has in his pockets, Bump. It’s not goin’ to von Beestinger, see? But you and me and Rudolph are going to call on them in person. Rudolph, you are goin’ to be Hair Obust or somethin’. Bump’s goin’ to drive the machine if we can git it into the road, and I bet we make things quiet around this neck of the woods until we git the supply dump. Listen, the Jerries ain’t gettin’ along so good, are they, Rudolph?”

“*Nein*,” groaned the German-American, “they have not much yet to eat. Pay it iss slow to come. *Ach*, the Kaiser he iss not fooling them mooch longer, Phineas, *und*—”

“That’s all I want to know. Now, look here, fatheads,” we got to push that Spad out of sight under the trees over there, so no squareheads can see it from the air. Come on. And then lead us to where the car got spilled, Rudolph.”

“How come I drive?” protested Bump. “I’m an officer or nothin’. I ain’t—”

“I ask you, you damn fool,” groaned Phineas, “is this the time to argue? I’ll bop you one, you—”

“Come on!” snapped Bump indignantly. “It don’t make no difference. We’ll rate wooden kimonos before midnight, anyway!”

IN A very short time Phineas stood looking down at two motionless hulks, and the strangest thing about them was that there was no sign of their having been used badly by chunks of flying iron.

“Ain’t you ashamed, Rudolph? These krauts—”

“*Ja*,” answered Private Schnitzel with a shrug, “I bash them maybe a couple of times with a cloob *und* run away. I want to fight with the Yankgees *und*—”

“Yeah, I know. Hurry up and help me git these fancy uniforms off the krauts. I hear somethin’ upstairs that sounds like a harp but ain’t. Bump, you take Rudolph’s overcoat and tin hat and will we have a party? You’re our chauffeur and don’t git mad if we act tough and bat you one over the dome every once in a while. Is this a spot? Fancy meeting up with you, Rudolph, hey?”

“Oh, yeah?” cracked Bump. “Well, you can go jump in a canal some place. I’m takin’ the Spad and—”
Overhead there was an ominous hum. It increased

in volume and Bump paled as he hurried to obey the instructions of the inimitable Phineas.

“Hide the marks in that old stump over there,” whispered Phineas hoarsely to Rudolph as he struggled into a pair of German officer’s boots. “When you git through, we’ll take these Heinies and throw them over the fence into the bushes.”

Rudolph hid the marks. Bump Gillis put on Rudolph’s coat and coalscuttle helmet, and the latter took out a first-aid kit and wrapped up Phineas’ head with gauze. After much grunting, swearing and a lot of honest sweat, the strange trio got the car out of the ditch—and with very little time to spare, for upstairs three Fokkers skimmed right over their heads.

“Ya look like a swell Hair Obust, Rudolph,” declared Phineas through the gauze, as the car rumbled down the rough road with one flat tire. Private Schnitzel grinned broadly and puffed out his chest.

“*Ach*, for a long time I want to be an *Offizier*,” he said. “Now I am, *und* it feels goot. You look yoost like the other feller, Phineas, *ja!*”

“If this works, ya crazy loons,” flung back Bump Gillis, “I’ll be king of Borneo in the morning.”

“Still, *Dumkopf!*” barked Rudolph. “Perfect!” commented Phineas with a grin.

“Nuts!” growled Bump and drove the accelerator to the floorboards. “Drivin’ right to von Bissinger’s drome! I got a good mind to wreck this damn thing an’ git back to that Spad. Cripes!”

“*Ach*, all the marks we have, Phineas,” exclaimed Rudolph. “How mooch *Schnapps* we buy in France for all them marks, Phineas?”

“Maybe two bottles,” replied the Yank. “I hear that that kraut dough is gittin’ lower than that Chink money with the holes in it. But I know a Frog in Barley Duck that is half blind. We might buy his buvette. Hey, Bump, hit the road once in a while, will ya?”

German sentries halted the car briefly as it rumbled onto the drome where Pfalzes roosted in their big, forbidding-looking coops. *Herr Oberst* Schnitzel growled some German in his most angry voice, and they were soon rolling up to a thatched-roofed house—Staffel headquarters.

HIS EXCELLENCE, *Herr Oberst* von Brahm, leader of Staffel-Nine, His Majesty’s Imperial Air Force, lifted his brows away up on his forehead when the two German officers were ushered in. The face of one was almost hidden by a gore-stained bandage. On the way the astute Phineas had cut his finger a bit with a little

penknife. He overlooked no bets.

"Well," snapped von Brahm impatiently, "I see *Herr Oberst Wohlberg* did not come this time, *nein?*" He spoke, of course, in German.

"*Nein*, Your Excellency," answered Rudolph, keeping his chest high up near his chin. "The poor Wohlberg, *ach!* He iss dead. The *verdammmt Amerikaner* airmen bombed us, *Herr Oberst*. We—"

"*Und* the marks, *Herr Oberst?*" bellowed von Brahm.

"*Ja!*" answered Rudolph Schnitzel sorrowfully. "No place could we find them. The other car with Wohlberg; it was blown up *und* only by a miracle did the *Hauptmann und* I escape. We—"

"*Was ist?*" exclaimed von Brahm angrily. "Yet another excuse, *ja?* Once again the excuse! You think my brave gentlemen will fight for nothing while the war profiteers in Berlin swill wine and glut on suckling pigs? *Schweinhund!* You think—"

"You are right, Your Excellency," snapped a voice from the doorway. The palpitating Phineas turned stiffly and stared at a Boche officer who had entered, a tall, broad-shouldered flyer squinting through a monocle. His face was almost square with a jaw on which a mule would have broken its hoof. Under his slightly hooked nose a mustache crouched, either end well waxed and sticking out like a needle. "My men do not go up until we get what is due us. Always we get promises. My men risk their lives for nothing? *Nein!* *Nein*, I say! Bah!"

Von Brahm bristled. "Can I pay you out of my pocket, *Herr Baron?*" he growled. "Yet I do not blame you. Already I have had enough." He glowered at Schnitzel. "The Baron Harolde von Bissinger! Your name, *Herr—*"

Phineas shifted from one foot to the other and tried to stop his heart from kicking through his ribs. Standing like a Teuton ramrod was punishment in any language. And his hair was gradually rising under his cap until he felt that the headgear would be shoved off.

"Von Stahl," supplied Schnitzel, "from—"

"Enough," rasped the irate Staffel commander, and snatched at the field telephone angrily. "I will tell them something in—" He tore it from its place with such force that the wire snapped.

"*Ach Himmel!*" he roared, dropping the instrument. Phineas stifled a chuckle. Von Brahm completed ten laps around the table and then shook a fat finger in front of Schnitzel's nose. "You go back von Stahl. Tell them von Bissinger and his Pfalzes they stay in the hangars until we get our pay, understand? My

men cannot risk their lives on nothing to eat and soldier's pay? Tell it to von Webling. Tell it to the High Command. Tell it to the Kaiser, yet! *Ach!* The profiteers they are big and fat! Look at my brave gentlemen out there when you go out, von Stahl! Iss it a wonder they have unrest in the Fatherland? *Ach*, away, von Stahl! I am not fit company tonight, *Donnerwetter!*"

Phineas looked at von Bissinger and grinned. under his bandages. Rudolph Schnitzel, alias von Stahl, about-faced with perfection and left Staffel headquarters. Both men walked with determined, albeit nervous tread to their bespattered Jerry staff car. In the driver's seat slumped Bump Gillis, his face burrowed into the collar of his coat. Phineas nudged Rudolph, who grinned and whanged Bump over his iron hat with the butt of a Luger.

"Asleep, are you, *Schwein?*" he barked. "*Raus mit—*"

"Ya dirty—" Phineas' heart froze. "Dumkopf!" followed up Rudolph in a booming voice. And he tapped Bump again. Lieutenant Gillis wanted to fight, but it occurred to him that he was in a spot. Black revenge in his heart, he stepped on the gas and drove the Heinie car out of the drome. They passed a group of Jerry pilots, who stiffened and saluted. Phineas tried hard not to laugh.

ONCE in the clear, he nudged Rudolph. "Cripes, ya sure were a panic! Ya sure—look!" He pointed. "That big place over there—those trucks. The supply dump or I'm the Clown Prince! We'll drop some bombs on it an' then go home. There won't be no Pfalz ships warmin' up even. Are we foolin' 'em?"

"Yeah?" yelped Bump Gillis. "When I'm back among friends, I'll tell you what I think. And you, Schnitzel, I'll sock you for those bops on the dome."

"Still, *Schwein!*" rasped Rudolph and leaned forward to put another dent in Bump's iron derby. Bump swore with helpless rage but clamped his jaws tight when he caught a glimpse of a patrol of Jerry troops at the side of the road just ahead. He whizzed by them at top speed, but the car seemed to crawl.

"Am I enjoying this?" exulted Phineas. "Let me hit the bum the next time, huh, Rudolph? I'll teach him to put soap in my dame's bonbons! Stealin' my stuff, huh, fathead? Well, ya know how that actor Monk Flanagan tried it. Ya'll never learn, Bump."

The car came to a stop near the place where the Spad had been cached. High overhead props hummed, but they were too far up to see what was going on downstairs.

Phineas ordered Bump and Schnitzel to get the Spad out into, the road, and revved up while he went to the stump to retrieve the hidden marks. He took a thin bunch of them and tore them down the middle, one half of which he rammed into his pocket. The other half he tied up with a piece of gauze and rummaged in the Boche overcoat he was wearing for something to write on. He found a letter to the man he was supposed to be and set about scribbling on the envelope. He put the message inside the torn legal tender and transferred the works to a boot-top. This done, Phineas picked up the rest of the Heinie payroll and, cramming his pockets, went over to where Schnitzel and Bump were warming up the Spad.

"Well, git out of the pit, Bump," he yipped. "I got calls to make. See ya maybe in St. Peter's Y.M.C.A." He handed Rudolph a small bunch of marks. "Take Bump over an' hit him some *Schnapps* on the way home. Hurry up an' git into that car. Them Fokkers are rolling downstairs, ya *Dumkopfs*."

"Why, ya dirty bum!" howled Lieutenant Gillis. "Ya mean I've got to drive through the lines with the kraut? Like hell!" The Mercedes roar was nearer. Bump Gillis, swearing that he would get hunk, even though it be in the next world, jumped out of the pit and ran toward the car.

"An' git him some bonbons, Rudolph," shouted Phineas as he jammed in the throttle. As the Spad waddled down the bumpy road, the flyer from Boonetown thought he caught the scent of freshly cut flowers. His spine shivered like a bowl of jello in a cyclone as he back-sticked and climbed to a thousand feet. A Fokker whistled down beside him and looked him over. Phineas waved toward von Bissinger's drome. The Boche waved back and lifted his nose to boom up toward the star-studded, blue-black canopy where another Tripe hovered, its pilot also puzzled. Both Boche had seen the car down on the carpet. They diagnosed the situation as Phineas had hoped they would. A captured Spad. Von Bissinger had sent a pilot out to bring it in.

OVER the great squatting canvas hangars of the Pfalz squadron roared Phineas. He reached down to his boot, plucked out the bunch of torn marks and flipped them overside. Then he ruddered around and headed for the supply dump not more than half a mile away. It came sweeping along under his trucks, a great rectangular blotch. It was time. Phineas reached down.

Kerwham! The Spad vibrated as the explosion

rocked the terrain below. Another bomb went down. Another! Each was timed seconds after its predecessor. *Kerwham! Blam!* Three kisses for the Kaiser, mused Phineas. The supply-dump was in a hell of a mess!

And then he pointed his nose toward tome with two Fokkers slamming down at him from either flank. A tracer cut along just in front of the bridge of his nose. Steel-jacketed bullets slammed into his dash and a lot of instruments fell into his lap.

"Well, if I don't make it," yowled Phineas, "I'll rate a statue in front of the post-office back home. The Jerries are goin' to be without grub and clothes and stuff for a long time, yip-p-pee!" Searchlights stabbed at Phineas. Machine-gun fire opened up from the trenches. An anti-aircraft battery blazed away. It would not be long now.

He hurled his ship out of the path of bursting scrap-iron and saw a Fokker in front of him. *R-r-r-r-rat-a-tat!* One burst and the Boche caved in. A family of splinters bit into his chin as the other Fokker set about picking him clean from behind. Phineas said a prayer and front-sticked. As he swooped low over where most of the war was going on, machine guns were unlimbered in the trenches again, snouts pointed at his blind spot. He turned his head around quickly. The Fokker was reeling as if it had absorbed too much of Rudolph's coveted *Schnapps*.

"Cripes!" yipped the Yankee pilot. "The Heinies hit their own guy! Haw-w-w-w-w!—er—glub-glub!" A stream of oil spurted back into his face. The Hisso coughed and gave up the ghost. Phineas swore and sent the Spad down in a long, breath-taking glide. The ship bounced over a lot of tangled barbed wire and came to grief in a trench. Phineas wondered who had hit him over the head with a mallet before he passed out. It was that damned Bump Gillis, he'd bet—

Base hospital. Phineas Pinkham opened one eye slowly. He groaned. There seemed to be an anvil inside his head and a lot of blacksmiths were slugging it with hammers.

"Where am I?" he murmured to something hazy hovering near the bed.

"In base hospital 5. You're all right," replied, a voice from a long distance away. "We thought you'd busted your skull, but found that the bone in your head is about two inches thick."

"Oh, yeah?" And Phineas lifted himself on one elbow, "Well—"

"Where's Lieutenant Pinkham?" The voice was very familiar. Phineas sat up in bed. "H-huh," he muttered,

“that’s Rump, I bet. Oh, hello, mush-face: So ya got back okay. Where’s Rud—”

“Goin’ up to a detention camp, the bum,” snapped Bump, “Ya know what he did? He stopped into a Heinie barroom and went right in and brought out six bottles of some stuff. We hadn’t more’n got started when a lot of krauts began to holler and shoot at us. We got shot at by every Heinie’ outfit in France before we rolled into where the Yanks was. We had three flat tires an’ a gill of gas in the tank. Well, I got even with the bum. I hit him over the head with a tire pump before introduced him all around. He won’t wear a hat for a year!”

TWO weeks later, back on the drome of the Ninth Pursuit, Phineas Pinkham and his hutmate, due for citations—at least, they had been promised them—sat next to each other at mess.

“Did we fool them krauts, huh?” Phineas was reiterating. “They thought the Kaiser’s secretary of the treasury was holdin’ out on ’em! Haw-w-w-w-w!” He looked Over at the still dumbfounded Major Garrity. “What did the hospital guys do with those marks? Me an’ Schnitzel are goin’ to have a binge in Berlin with ’em when the *guerre’s* over. We’re goin’ to have a lot of *Schnapps*. I bet the brass hats have stole ’em! Well, if they have, I’ll write to the Secretary of War. They’re our marks. Findin’s keepin’s an’—”

“They’re locked up in my trunk,” elucidated Sir Rufus. “And you don’t get them until I see fit to hand them over. I’m not risking your going around France to sell them to dumb doughs, see?”

“Awright, awright,” said Phineas. “I just asked, didn’t I?”

And speaking of marks! In Staffel headquarters a fuming von Brahm and a sputtering Baron von Bissinger were staring down at a bunch of paper that a Boche kiwi had found at last on the outskirts of the drome. Beside it lay the mud-stained letter with the damnable message scrawled upon it. The faces of both august leaders were the color of an eggplant. They trembled and swore robust Teuton oaths.

For glaring apparent now was the fact that Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham, bane, of the German air hosts, had visited them on that memorable night of the blowing up of the precious supply dump. He had stood within’ arm’s reach of them behind the man who had reported that the marks had been blown up!

And here was a little bunch of the banknotes torn in half, also a letter written to a certain *Hauptmann* of the German army, with Lieutenant Pinkham’s handwriting defacing the envelope. Von Bissinger’s fists flailed the air and he jumped up and down with rage, losing his monocle and most of his sanity. Von Brahm, contemplating suicide by arsenic, stared at the writing again, which ran to wit:

“*Dear von Beestinger:* Enjoyed my visit. Here’s half the dough you and your fatheads are worth. If you want the other half, come and get them. I’m buying bowkoo *Schnapps* with the rest when I get oonder der linden trees. Yours until the Kaiser gets the seven years itch six times running.

LIEUTENANT PHINEAS PINKHAM,
42 Locust Street,
Boonetown, Iowa.”