



**GINSBERG'S  
WAR**

# PFALZ ALARM

by **ROBERT J. HOGAN**

*Abe Ginsberg Knew a Bargain When He Saw One. When It Turned Out to Be a Pfalz Alarm He Had to Ask Them "Catch On?"*

**P**ILOTS OF THE 26th pursuit squadron were gathered at morning mess. Lieutenant Weller, just back from a futile two plane dawn attack, was speaking defensively to an overdozen others.

"Didn't have a chance," he said angrily. "Three sausages to knock down and only Benson and me

to do the trick. Must have been fifty E.A.'s in that pack that jumped us when we came in sight of the three balloons, and archie was raving like a bunch of mad dogs. Maybe you guys think we were yellow for turning back, but I'd like to see some of the rest of you birds knock 'em down, eh, Benson?"

Lieutenant Benson, big, heavy fellow, grunted

around a mouthful of ham and eggs and nodded.

"I told Major Lacy there wasn't a chance of getting those bags, unless the whole gang goes over, when I made my report just now. Crazy brass hat idea, sending over just two."

"Ha-ha-ha!" sang out a voice at the end of the table. "Do me a favor, Weller. Don't make me laugh. Fifty E.A.'s. You shouldn't drink so much and you wouldn't see so many."

Charlie Knox, senior flight commander, with his arm in a sling from a recent propeller accident, grinned. Other eyes turned toward the speaker. He was small and slim-shouldered. His eyes twinkled over a Roman nose and from under heavy, black brows. His head was crowned with curly hair of the same hue.

"Says you, Ginsberg!" snapped Weller. "I didn't notice you jumping on your hind legs to volunteer last night."

"Oi," cried Ginsberg, "for once you're telling the truth. Ain't that the trouble." He leaped to his feet. "Look. Now I'm standing, but my head ain't high enough even standing up to let people see am I standing up or sitting down. Last night I was the first one, but could anybody see Ginsberg?"

"Baloney!" snapped Weller.

"Give the guy credit," cut in Knox. "Abe was sitting next to me. He was up first, but—" he laughed—"I guess the major thought he was still sitting down."

ABE GINSBERG sat down. He turned and stared out of the window.

"Pist!" he hissed. "Here comes Major Lacy now. Maybe he'll be asking for volunteers." He grinned at Weller. "Watch this time. See who stands up first to get sausages for breakfast tomorrow—maybe."

Men snapped to attention as the C.O. entered the mess.

"Men," his voice boomed, "we are faced with an emergency. Our forces are massing south of La Tore. If our plans carry, it will be the greatest drive of the war. But as long as those three balloons remain in the sky to guide artillery fire, spy on our movements and hinder our preparations, this drive must be held up. It is imperative that this drive take place as soon as possible before the enemy can mass troops for a counter attack. You all know how Weller and Benson failed this morning through no fault of theirs."

He unfolded a paper.

"Special orders from G.H.Q.," he continued. "At nine this morning every man of the 26th will take the

air for La Tore. Gun belts will be filled with incendiary bullets. The balloons must come down as soon as possible."

A joyous gleam of triumph leaped into Abe Ginsberg's eyes and died again with the major's next words.

"Er," said the major, "I have a correction to make in those orders. I said, 'Every man would go.' There are two exceptions. Knox, of course you stay here with your broken arm. And you, Ginsberg, you don't go over either."

"Huh?" groaned Abe. "You mean I couldn't go balloon hunting?"

The major smiled. "I have a special assignment for you, Ginsberg," he said. "I think you'll like this one much better. You and your friend, Lieutenant Bullock Maddox of the 64th bombardment, pulled a particularly fine piece of work in saving certain photographs a while ago. The French are all hot and bothered about it and want to pin a *Croix de Guerre* on each of your noble chests. The event is to take place at one o'clock today in Paris. Lieutenant Maddox will fly you both from his field. You'll go there at once by side car. You've just about got time to get dolled up."

Abe Ginsberg blinked in astonishment. He took a wobbly step toward the major. "Please, major," he begged, "you wouldn't wake me up too quick if I'm dreaming?"

Charlie Knox was on his feet, holding his coffee cup high.

"Here's to yuh, Abe," he shouted. "I'd like to see you so weighted down with medals you couldn't walk."

"Or talk," cut in Weller.

Major Lacy laughed. "It's no dream, Ginsberg," he said. "But watch out for the kisses of those French generals. Good luck."

The hands of no June bride ever trembled with excitement as did the stubby fingers of Abe Ginsberg as he hurried into his cut-rate boots and slightly large whipcord uniform that had been bought at bargain prices. What if it wasn't a perfect fit. Wasn't it good goods bought at half the original price?

Abe stepped to the waiting side car with the importance of a king about to be crowned. But he had no premonition of the crowning that was to come.

THE motorcycle rider jerked the machine into motion with orders to hurry to the 64th field. Rain had drenched the road, but that made little difference to the driver. As he swung in at the field of the 64th

a mud puddle blocked his way. He swerved, tried to dodge it and crashed through it in a sea of muddy water.

As Abe climbed out of the side car, he moaned to big Bull Maddox, waiting beside his warming D.H., “Oi, look, the suit. Mud I got on it. I’m damaged. Ruined.”

Bull laughed and hoisted him over into the back cockpit.

“Hang out in the slip stream of the prop and it’ll dry on the way down,” he advised. “It’ll brush off then.”

Abe Ginsberg did hang out all the way in desperation. Nearly fell out twice, in fact. But he didn’t realize that the Liberty engine in that D.H. was due for overhaul when it returned, for now it was throwing oil.

When they landed at Le Bourget, Bull burst into a roar of laughter as he saw Abe Ginsberg. The oil had smeared over the mud.

“Ruint, the suit,” Abe moaned. “I got to get it cleaned.”

“In the pig’s eye,” Bull laughed. “We got only an hour before the party comes off. That uniform always did hang around you like an old woman’s shawl. We’ll stop on the way through Paris and you can pick up another suit. A new one that fits.” Clouds were gathering as they rode into the great city of sisterly love. As usual in Sunny France, rain was promised. Abe’s eyes flashed down the rows of signs and fastened on one that stood out prominently. He pointed.

#### UNIFORMS AT BARGAIN PRICES

“Wait,” he suggested, “we take a look in here.”

They did. A Roman-nosed, French-mustached merchant came toward them, rubbing his hands. Abe tried on one very cheap suit.

“Take it,” advised Bull. “Fits you like a million.”

“But the goods,” objected Abe. He fingered it. “Don’t feel so good. Maybe for the same price I could take that better suit.”

The merchant shook his head and remained firm.

“We got to get going,” Bull persisted. “That suit looks swell on you. Come on before these Frog generals change their minds.”

Abe looked startled. “They wouldn’t do that, would they?”

“Sure, maybe, if we’re late.”

Hurriedly Abe paid for the suit, left orders to have his old one sent to his field, and the two hastened to the sidewalk just as the first drops of rain were falling.

There was the hectic ride in a sputtering taxi to the parade grounds. When they got out and were given orders as to their position it was raining in earnest.

Officers in slickers shouted at men in other rain coats as they marched in parade formation. The band was made up of horns.

“Don’t we get no drums?” Abe demanded, shivering in the rain. “I like drums. And with medals we ought to get drums.”

“Naw,” Bull said out of the corner of his mouth. “Too wet. Pipe down. Here comes some guys our way.”

Several figures were hurrying toward them through the drenching rain. They stopped before Abe and Bull. One of the men, a small, undersized man whose small stature was accentuated by his cocky importance, faced them. A bushy mustache spouted from his upper lip. His slicker covered all embellishments of rank. He took from under his slicker a paper and began to read hurriedly.

“Whereas, on bla-bla, Lieutenant Abraham Ginsberg performed a deed above and outside the regular call of duty in bla-bla-bla, mumble, mumble, mumble—to bestow honor of *Croix de Guerre*.”

HE FINISHED in a wild burst of speed and shook the water from his hat into Abe Ginsberg’s face. Abe at the same time became aware of a tight, choking feeling about his throat. The collar of his new uniform was gagging him. He tried to stifle the cough, but it came—directly into the French officer’s face, as though by way of retaliation.

The officer hardly noticed as he hurriedly pinned the medal on Abe’s breast. He bent and kissed him quickly on each cheek. Abe wriggled and twitched. The mustache tickled. The officer passed on.

“Whereas,” he read, “on bla-bla, Lieutenant Bullock Maddox bla-bla-bla, mumble, mumble—*Croix de Guerre*.”

He pinned another medal on Bull’s chest. Standing on tiptoe he tried to reach Bull’s cheeks with his lips. Bull stood straight and tall. Then the French officer grasped him by the shoulders and pulled him down. Two resounding smacks sounded.

“Dismissed,” shouted an officer. Men raced for cover. Abe found it hard to run somehow in his new uniform. Bull reached the taxi first and dove in. Abe followed. He winced as he sat down. His face was troubled.

“Somethink’s wrong with—the suit,” Abe gasped. “It’s choking me in plenty of places. Maybe we go home now, maybe?” hopefully.

"Huh?" Bull cried. "Home?" he laughed. "Say, listen, kid. I don't get to Paris often, and this is the first medal I ever had stuck on me. We're going to celebrate, see? We'll find a nice little dive where we can get something to drink and dry out."

Abe objected, but Bull won the argument. The wet clothes were very uncomfortable. They'd feel better dry. They found a place and entered. They found seats near a hot stove in one corner of the place. They drank and baked in the heat.

Suddenly Bull Maddox sat up with a start and stared at his little friend. His eyes grew troubled as he glanced from Abe to the bottle on the table. He blinked and stared again.

"Say," he exclaimed, "maybe it's this stuff we're drinking or maybe it's not. But that suit fitted you swell when you got it a couple of hours ago. Now look at it."

Abe had already looked. His face was very long and sober. The sleeves were half way to his elbows. He nodded dubiously.

"Shrinking, the suit," he moaned. "Didn't I tell you I didn't like the goods?" Bull Maddox nearly broke Abe Ginsberg's knee with a slap.

"Well, I'll be a so-and-so," he roared with laughter. "It's shrinking. Ha-ha! A Ginsberg getting stuck with a suit that shrinks in the first rain Ha-ha-ha!"

Desperately, in disgrace, Abe tugged at the sleeves, "*Schlemiel!*" he stormed. "Good-for-nothing. Selling bum goods. I knew it. Oi, is it shrinking? Look. The legs already out of my boots so I'm looking like a kid in short pants." Bull continued to laugh. "Aw, pipe down," he said. "We got medals. What's a suit of clothes? Have another drink."

"But I'm disgraced," moaned Abe. "What would my old man say if—"

They went on drinking. Much drinking. Abe tried to forget, to drown his sorrow and chagrin in his glasses. Bull Maddox rose from the table unsteadily. "Shee Parish and die," he chirped. "Come on."

Abe hung back. "You should do shee Parish sheeing. Me, I'll do shee dying."

Big Bull Maddox picked Abe out of his chair and set him on his wobbly pins. For a moment they stared goofily at each other, clutched for support, then arm in arm they left the place and hailed a taxi.

"Want to go to the hotisht show in Parish," Bull told the driver.

"Take us to Le Bourshee Field," Abe countered.

The taxi driver, being only human, took them the

way that would mean the largest fare—to the great Le Bourget Field.

Bull nearly fell out of the taxi, as it stopped, and blinked about him. Abe piled out after him. They argued over paying the driver, but Bull was the larger and he paid. Abe permitted it.

Bull stared dizzily at the long row of hangars.

"Wonder which one of those shacks is the hotisht place?" he said.

"Thish ain't no show," Abe countered. "We're goin' home."

Somehow, Abe led Bull to their D.H. Bull hesitated unsteadily.

"So we're goin' home?" Bull rasped. "All right. All right. But we'll celebrate at the Frog town near shee field."

The engine started. It was growing dark. Bull got the plane off the ground without killing anyone and headed for home in disgust. Abe slumped in the rear cockpit. As the plane took the air, Abe rose in his cockpit, waved his arms and shouted a thin, "Wheeee!" Then he promptly fell asleep.

The ceasing of the engine's roar and the rumble of the wheels woke him. Somehow, Bull had landed at the field of the 64th. Bull lifted Abe Ginsberg out of the rear cockpit and slung him over his shoulder. Passes were shown at the gate and Bull sloshed on toward the little French town" between the two fields.

"Goin' to shtake you home, but first we'll stop and shtake on more bombs," Bull mumbled. "Got to celebrate."

Bull dropped Abe in a chair in one of the drink emporiums and they continued to drink. Slowly, Bull Maddox's head dropped to the table top and he closed his eyes. Abe staggered from his chair. He had a very peculiar sensation at the pit of his stomach.

In what seemed to Abe a very sly maneuver, he circled the sleeping Bull Maddox, only knocking over two chairs and a bottle on his way to the door.

OUTSIDE it was pitch dark. The rain had ceased to fall. With the true instinct of a homing pigeon, Abe started in circles, and then struck a straight course for his own field.

His head cleared slightly as he walked. One thing he knew. He mustn't be caught by guards at his field, coming in drunk. Only one way to get in, then. Crawl through or under the fence and take his own chances. Major Lacy was death on drunks—too drunk.

Abe skirted the main gate and wobbled dizzily

along the high fence. He made out a guard dimly. He was patrolling the inside of the fence. He crouched and, in crouching, fell flat. He got up, covered with mud, and lurched toward the fence when the guard passed.

Abe was doing very nicely indeed in getting his small body through under the fence when a wire creaked and groaned at the strain. Abe wriggled on in panic.

Sound of running feet came to his dulled ears. A challenging shout rent the blackness, then a beam of light.

“Halt!” That word didn’t mean a thing to Abe at the moment. Horror at being seen in that outfit filled him with fear that was greater than fear of death. He started to run down the field. His feet tracked in a funny way. Couldn’t seem to keep them going right. Still, his desperation drove him on to good time.

He gained a hangar and ducked round it, falling flat. He staggered up again and ducked to the right. It was only luck that the twisted course he chose to take didn’t counteract his drunken staggers. If that had been the case he would have run in a straight line. But he didn’t. Far from it.

Shouts and more shouts sounded from behind him. A rifle cracked out from the vicinity of a flashing electric torch, and a bullet pinged close to Abe’s small head.

“Oi,” he moaned as he ducked around another hangar and ran toward the tarmac. “Oi, *gewalt!*”

Ahead danced something big with wings. It loomed before him like a blessed mountain and Abe dove for it, still having a fight to keep on his feet and control his direction.

The blackness swallowed him up as he lunged and flopped under a wing. The beam of light appeared again from behind and slashed above him. He was still in the shadow of a big wheel. The wheel of a D.H.

HE LAY motionless, gasping for breath and trying to smother his hiccupping. Men shouted and ran about the hangars. It was dark once more about him.

Very unsteadily, Abe rose to his hands and knees and crawled deeper under the belly of the fuselage. His hand groped for support and suddenly rested in the step for the rear cockpit. A swell idea popped into Abe’s dull head. If he could get into that cockpit—somehow. Get in and hide until the search had cooled off.

He did just that, after three futile efforts. Funny, how that D.H. leaped and bounded about, trying

to throw him. He flopped into the rear cockpit and squirmed to make himself somewhat comfortable, not that comfort was paramount with Abe at the moment, but there was something cramping his legs and a mess of stuff he got tangled with, straps in a sort of harness. He didn’t bother, couldn’t think that far, in fact, to figure the whys or wherefores. He only knew that the stuff was in his way.

And being that dulled, he certainly couldn’t know that this very D.H. had been brought to the field of the 26th for a specific purpose, that purpose being to transport an American spy over the German lines and drop said spy over the lines by parachute. Nor could Abe Ginsberg know that a watching pilot from the corner of a hangar had seen him dive under the plane and later crawl into the rear cockpit.

At the moment that the said pilot was walking toward the plane, Abe Ginsberg was fumbling with a strange thing. It had been very strongly impressed upon his mind by the laughs of Bull Maddox that he looked particularly ridiculous in his shrunken, cut-rate uniform. Therefore, when Abe kicked the bulky thing that cramped his feet and found it to be a suit case, he opened it with the drunken curiosity of a monkey. And what should his fingers feel in that suit case but a uniform. A uniform that he couldn’t see in the dark, but the goods of which felt very fine indeed even to his numbed fingers.

He was just finishing the putting on of this uniform when the pilot strode to the plane. Little Abe peered at him dizzily over the edge of the cockpit. Fear clutched at his heart, for he didn’t want to be caught, not now, even with a good uniform. There might be questions asked. Questions that would lead to the whole story of his being cheated in a business deal.

Without a word, the pilot felt about with straps, the straps that had gotten in Abe’s way. If he smelled too much alcoholic atmosphere, he took it as a matter of course, as he said nothing. “I see you found the uniform and put it on,” whispered the pilot.

“Hic—yes,” jumped Abe.

The pilot hesitated for an instant, then he climbed to his seat. An unseen mechanic whirled the prop. The warm motor caught instantly and the plane spun and headed into the wind.

Out into the unknown roared the D.H. Abe slumped in the rear cockpit and hiccupped often, trying to take one long breath. He didn’t know where he was going, didn’t care. He was beginning to have a very queer feeling at the pit of his stomach which the

slip stream of the prop helped slightly, but which the uneven lurching of the D.H. in a stiff breeze that had come up did not help at all. For Abe Ginsberg was becoming a very sick boy indeed.

He was leaning half out of the cockpit later when the pilot turned, cut the motor, nosed the D.H. up into a partial stall and grunted: "Jump!"

"Hic—Huh?" bleated Abe, feeling very bad now.

"Jump!" snapped the pilot. "Now." And as Abe made not the slightest sign of doing as directed, the pilot reached over the cowling, seized Abe by the seat of the pants and toppled the suddenly struggling inebriate over the side.

"Oi!" gasped Abe. He felt himself going—going. Something gave a little tug around him, then he was falling faster.

"Oi!" he groaned. A crack like that of a small cannon sounded above him. He felt himself jerked upright and then he seemed to be swinging gently, all in pitch darkness.

THE end came minutes later. That sudden snap of the parachute harness when the chute had opened had done something to aid Abe. His sick feeling had fled with certain interior decorations. His boots struck something soft and oozy, accompanied by sweet odors of the barn yard. Then he seemed to be dragged on and on through the soft, mucky stuff he had landed in.

Struggling, fighting, he at last kicked free of the harness and staggered to his feet.

"Oi, hic, ish thish way ish treated a Crux de Gerry? Oi."

His sickness was gone, but he was still very dizzy and unsteady on his spindle-like legs. He staggered across an open field and fell over a stone wall. He got up and went on. His feet struck the hard surface of a road and he lurched down that.

A dark form approached from ahead and drew nearer. A big form that half filled the road.

"*Wie gehts,*" saluted the dark figure. It swayed slightly.

"Huh?" blinked Abe. He didn't realize he was in Germany. He didn't even know he was in a German uniform. "Hic. *Wie gehts,* yourself. *Macht Deutsches sprechen, eh?* Sure I can do that, too, even."

The big fellow laughed. He swayed toward Abe and in German he said: "You're pretty drunk. Better let me take you home. What outfit are you with? I can walk straighter than you."

Abe wasn't arguing. Come to think of it, he did

want to get back to the field. The German of the other clicked in his brain.

"*Sechs unt zwanzig,*" he answered. "Twenty-sixth."

"*Ach,*" from the other. "*Sechs unt zwanzig Jagdstaffel. Gut.*" He continued in German. "I go that way myself. I will help you to your field. "He glanced closer at Abe in the darkness. "*Ach, bitta, Herr Leutnant,* I did not see you were an officer."

Abe laughed and locked his arm in the big elbow of the other for support. Arm and arm the two made their way down the road. No telling distance to Abe in his condition. He only knew that some regular guy, a bit tight himself, was helping him back to the field.

They paused at a gate at the challenge of a guard.

"Pst!" said the big German. "I have here a very drunk *leutnant*. He looks as though he had been sleeping in a dung pile. He says he belongs to the twenty-sixth jagdstaffel—here."

The guard seemed to hesitate.

"Perhaps if you let the *leutnant* in without notifying the commanding officer, who will be very angry with him, the *leutnant* could get you an easier assignment," persisted the big German. Good fellow, that guy. There seemed a tie of alcoholic friendship between him and the little fellow he thought one of his superior officers.

The guard brightened and nodded. But during this conversation, Abe Ginsberg had snorted something under his breath in disgust.

"Humph," he mumbled between hiccoughs.

"Funny. Everybody talking *deutsches sprechen* around here. Crashy guysh."

He swayed away In the darkness, inside the field and wandered down behind a row of hangars unmolested. Abe yawned at a hundred yards from the gate.

He felt about the ground outside a hangar and found a roll of canvas. He yawned again, hiccoughed twice and lay down. The world became very peaceful about him. No one heard his snoring, for he was not awakened until the blast of a warming Mercedes beyond the hangar.

TO SAY that Abe Ginsberg's head cleared abruptly when he sat up would be putting it mildly. It was still gray, but the rising sun was making it easy to see about him. His eyes popped out of his head as he sat up with a groan.

Between two hangars, he could see ships being rolled out on the line. Pfalz planes with here and

there a Fokker. Mechanics in the garb of Germans were working on the ships. German officers sauntered about, shouting orders.

“Holy gefilter fishes,” Abe breathed. “Can this be possible? So this is Germany. Me, a Yank pilot in—” Suddenly his eyes took in his uniform. It was covered with what covers barn yards, but beneath was the unmistakable German uniform of an *ober-leutnant*.

Slowly, a grin spread over the face of Abe Ginsberg. He licked his lips with a thick tongue and made a wry face. He jerked into an erect, military bearing.

“Maybe I’m pulling a Rip Van Winkler,” he said to himself. “So now I’m a German. Maybe last night I met a magician, who can tell?”

He shrugged and walked rapidly and boldly out on the tarmac. His eyes burned, but he could see fairly well. One ship, well down the line, was running at full speed, warming. It was a Pfalz. It would be warm and ready to go when he reached it.

He turned toward the nearest hangar and entered with an important swagger. He walked through, and on the way he lifted a pair of goggles and a helmet from a nail on the wall as though they belonged to him.

With those in his hand, he walked swiftly to the warming Pfalz. The mechanic in the cockpit had cut the throttle, leaving the engine to idle. He was climbing out. Abe came up to him and snapped at him in German.

“Heraus. I am in a hurry. I go at once. Is everything ready?” The mechanic whirled and snapped a salute.

“*Jawohl, Herr Oberleutnant.*” Never once did Abe falter. He was in the cockpit. His hand hit the gun of the Pfalz and the ship spun and wobbled over the chokes. As it roared down the field he had a little trouble getting used to the handling of a strange ship, but he managed to get the ship into the air.

He hurled toward the Front of his own lines. He climbed steadily. Up over a cloud he saw a mass of Fokkers soaring to dive on any Yank ships that might try coming over. Below and to the east lay three giant balloons high in the sky.

Abe grinned. “So the gang didn’t knock ‘em down yet.” He looked up at the horde of Fokkers and Pfalz high above, awaiting to pounce down.

“And maybe I don’t blame them.” He climbed higher until he came near to the German ships. He wanted to thumb his nose, but instead he grinned and waved. Pilots nearest waved back. “Vait till I get back to the field and laugh at Weller and Benson and the

rest of the gang,” he chuckled. He made a big circle, veering far away from the pack above, until it looked as though he were going to pass the balloons and travel farther east.

AN INSTANT’S movement of the controls and he was plunging on the first balloon. That one was going down flaming and the next was flaming, before the German Archie realized what was going on. They burst forth angrily around that last balloon.

A piece of shrapnel from an Archie slithered through Abe’s right wing with a whistling sound. He kicked desperately in a zigzag movement and pressed the triggers. Spandau guns ahead of him fluffed out and slashed into the belly of the monster.

*Blam! Blam! Blam!* Archie was going crazy. Abe’s instrument board vanished and oil sprayed into his face. Something struck his guns and they stopped their chatter.

He sat spellbound, aghast for an instant. Spandau slugs had entered that balloon. He was sure of that. Had seen the tracers.

*Boom!* With a grunt that sent Abe’s Pfalz hurling end over end in the air, the big bag went up in smoke and flame. He heard the distant whine of Fokkers and Pfalz coming down to trap him.

Then he did thumb his nose at them, for he had a good lead. The motor was dry of oil and knocking when he got to the field of the 26th pursuit squadron. He taxied to the dead line with a grin on his face. He left his helmet and goggles covering most of his head and face. When guards stuck guns in his ribs and announced that he was a prisoner, he went willingly to Major Lacy’s office with them.

Major Lacy seemed very busy. They waited outside. Abe’s grin broadened as he heard Lacy’s words through the part open doorway.

“It’s an outrage,” he was saying. “News of this spy going over leaked out somehow. Yesterday morning the whole squadron went over after those balloons and they hardly got in sight of them before every Jerry on the Front jumped them and drove them back. They didn’t have a chance. Then last night it was decided as a last resort to send a spy over and see if he could learn if the Germans suspected this drive. You know what happened, Knox. Someone else took that spy’s place. We found out when the real spy came to the field later. I’d like to lay my hands on the man who went over in that spy’s place and spoiled the whole plan.”

That was when Abe Ginsberg piped, “Here I

am, Major,” from the outer office. Abe was still held between the two guards as the major threw open the door, but he forgot that his helmet and goggles partly covered his face and head. Lacy glared at him.

“Sure,” grinned Abe. “I come back from celebrating the medals and feeling sick so I sneaked in under the fence and I’m hiding in the back of a D.H. and along comes a pilot and he pushed me out over Germany. I get a Pfalz this morning and knock down the three balloons when they aren’t looking and—”

Major Lacy strode toward him.

“Say,” he thundered, “who the devil are you?”

“Huh?” Abe blinked. “Oh, I’m forgetting.” He tore off helmet and goggles.

“Ginsberg!” Lacy and Knox cried in the same breath.

“Certainly, Ginsberg,” Abe grinned. “Pfalz alarm. Catch on?”