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*Book-Length Novel*

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From the days of Caesar's legions to the court of Queen Elizabeth  
From a Byzantine slave galley to a Druid altar. Through the long-bloody  
centuries one man had been given a cloak of strange immortality, to fight  
through the wars of a hundred generations and find the girl he had loved  
and lost in the dawn of England's history.

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Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake king-  
doms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof,  
that opened not the house of his prisoners? Thou shalt not be joined  
with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy  
people.

Isaiah XIV, 12-20.

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# HEAVEN ONLY KNOWS

By Joe Archibald

*. . . . Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the house of his prisoners? . . . Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy people. . . .*

—Isaiah xiv, 12-20.

**I**T WAS a Mustang pilot, Lieutenant Isidor Shapiro, of all people, who spotted the big plane high over the Vosges mountains an hour after dawn. Despite the highly significant instructions he had received before leaving the airdrome near Nancy, the lieutenant was uncertain, for the big, four-engined job bore no markings and he did not remember having seen such a silhouette on the big chart back at the station. He had always kept well up on aircraft identification, had learned to recognize a friendly or enemy plane in 1/75 of a second, which was par for the essential course.

*Orders. Lieutenants Korowski and Shapiro will patrol Sector G at an altitude of thirty-five thousand feet and keep a close watch for any mysterious aircraft. . . .* Isidor felt the pitter-patter of little icy feet the length of his spine. *All German four-engined bombers in service have low wings, as opposed to Britain's mid-wing types, and differ from American four-engine—*

But, Lieutenant Shapiro told himself, as he gulped oxygen, the Nazis were finished and not a single unit of the *Luftwaffe* had been in the air for over forty-eight hours. Even now American and British tank columns were rumbling into Berlin to make contact with the spearheads of Joe Stalin's eager armies, and everywhere radio commentators were making wild conjectures regarding the whereabouts of.

The enormity, the incongruousness, of the probability facing Pilot Isidor Shapiro froze his muscles and glued his tongue to the roof of his mouth. Without being fully aware of it, he gave the powerful Mustang engine a hypo of high octane and the plane jumped like a startled wallaby, flinging Shapiro's head back against the rest. An only too familiar thumping sound cut through the roar of thousands of horses, and bullets howled close to the Mustang's

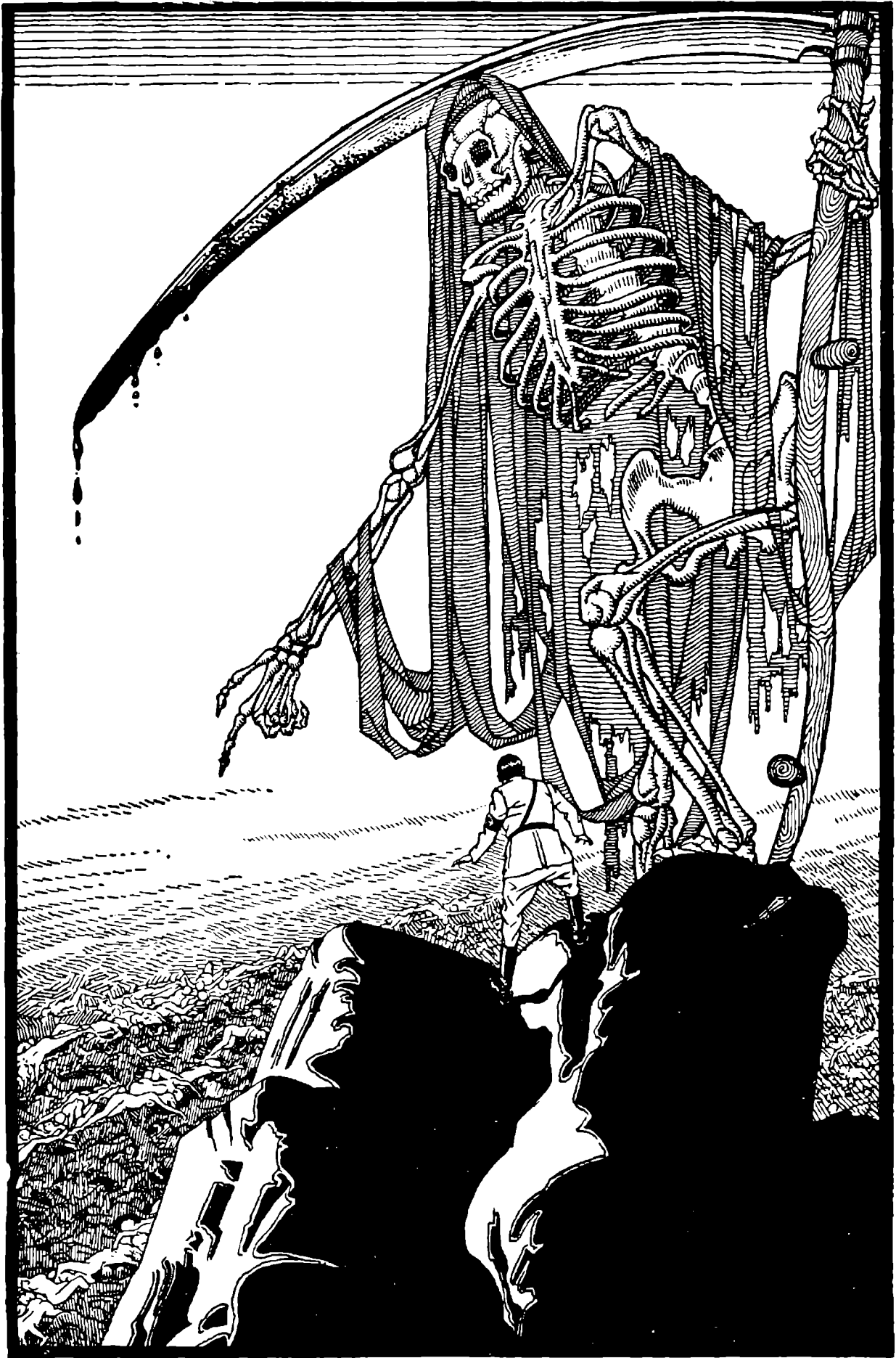
canopy and chewed part of it away, at the same time scattering any doubts that lingered in Lieutenant Shapiro's mind that out of all the millions engaged in the war, he had been chosen to write the final chapter to the grossly misspent lives of certain notorious and undesirable citizens. He pirouetted the Mustang in the sky above the unfriendly heavy and prepared to make history, a subject in which he had been particularly dense back in P.S. 41, Brooklyn.

He had generally been late for school on Blue Monday mornings but now he was getting in a little before eight o'clock and he rang the bell with the first burst from his gun batteries, the ammo chewing into the big crate's wing and making an engine belch fire. He went over and up and around again and smashed the big plane's flight deck and heated up another powerplant. Pieces flew out of the engine and whanged against the Mustang's sides before it cleared.

Lieutenant Shapiro bared his nice white teeth and thought of Warsaw. This did his ancestral heart good. He said, "Two fifteen-cent cigars for Shapiro!" and came roaring back at the cripple from six o'clock, fed it another short, wicked burst, and nearly turned it over on its back, still not daring to be positive of the identity of the occupants of the bucketing steel cocoon although an unusually strong stink was coming out of it. Climbing, he wondered if the people of his beloved borough would some day erect a statue of Isidor Shapiro in Prospect Park.

Any moment now he would sit straight up in his cot back at the field and question the legitimacy of the forebears of a certain pilot named Wee Willie Sparkes who always derived fiendish delight out of holding the flame of a cigarette lighter in close proximity to an exposed bare foot.

He hovered around, waiting for the oc-



cupants of the doomed craft to bail out. If one of them should prove to be big and fat. A voice sounded in his earphones. Korowski's gravelly voice. "You got it, Izzy! It has to be them. They shot at you, didn't they? An' there's no Japs around here!"

Lieutenant Shapiro pushed the button of his microphone but could not push a word out of his throat, it being dryer than a Sahara July. He saw Korowski's Mustang bear off to the left and Korowski yelled again, "They're ditchin', Izzy! Look!"

Shapiro counted four small shapes dropping away from the burning heavy. One was big and fat. His parachute did not open quickly. Shivering violently with the significance of it all, Isidor counted three white flowers blooming in the sky. He looked for the fourth but could not find it. He threw the Mustang down as close to the plummeting bomber as he dared and then he saw that one of the chutes had fouled and a tiny figure flopped at the ends of the shrouds like a rag doll for a few charged moments. It suddenly broke loose and tumbled over and over, down through thousands of feet of space. Lieutenant Shapiro felt a little scooped out inside. There was a buzzing in his ears and through it came Korowski's crazily pitched voice.

"Izzy, you did it. You! You'll get a dozen medals. The squadron will be decorated. Say somethin', Izzy—"

**A**DOLF HITLER, née Schickelgruber, found himself on a hillside, lying supine in the softest and greenest grass he had ever seen and the sweetness of it washed the stink of airplane engine coolant out of his nose. He looked up at a sky that was as blue as the eyes of a newborn, pure Aryan babe, and strove mightily to accept the fact that even the Fuehrer could drop down through over thirty thousand feet of space *sans* parachute without as much as splintering a tibia or a clavicle. His mind backtracked faster than had Rommel out of Libya and went back to a hideout in southern Bavaria where a nightmare had begun. With Himmler and Goering he had just managed to escape being hung up by the seat of his pants on an Allied spearhead coming out of Austria. There had been a ride by night that shouldn't have happened to an English setter then the secret drome near the Swiss border the takeoff . . . brief dreams of a hacienda in the foothills of the Andes . . . then the *verdammt* Mustang—and 'aput!

"Gott!" Schickelgruber sighed, and he moved an arm. He moved a leg, and then he seemed to rise up from the soft green grass with very little motive power of his own and he was on his feet and staring out over a countryside that stretched away to dim purple horizons. The rolling fields and hills were splashed with multicolored wildflowers and silvery ribbons that were waterways wound in and out of the topography and that sparkled brilliantly in the soft, warm sun.

Adolf acknowledged the beauty of the land only abstractedly, confining his thoughts primarily to an analysis of its absolute vulnerability to a *Luftwaffe* such as he had enjoyed in 1940 and '41, and was amazed and highly incensed over the fact that his geopoliticians had overlooked such a ripe and defenseless plum in the very shadows of the Vosges.

This lush duchy, or whatever it called itself, had to be near those mountains, for the last fix given Pilot Otto Schmeerhorn by the pseudo-navigator, Heinrich Himmler, had been made right over that range a few seconds before the Mustang had appeared to kick over the whole pot of *Hasenpfeffer*. But where were Heinrich and Hermann and Otto Schmeerhorn? Where was the smoke boiling out of a wrecked plane? Where was everybody? There was not a single house visible to the naked eye. Adolf began to have his doubts regarding his indestructibility. He looked up into the sky again and saw no sun, and when he moved his feet he experienced that unpleasant sensation of not being on too firm a footing, the way he had felt the first time he had climbed a paper-hanger's ladder. In other words, he suspected that not far under his boots, a lot of space began.

"*Nein,*" Adolf whispered. "I am dreaming yet. It is warm and bright yet there is no sun. If the sun does not shine down it must shine up. *Ach, Himmelkreuzdonnervetter!*" He tried not to think. If the sun did shine up— He looked hopefully for signs of life again, saw nothing, yet he was vaguely conscious of strange stirrings all about him, and once he was sure he heard the sound of gay, childish laughter. Maybe he was as crazy as his enemies always claimed, but he was certain of his hunger and wondered what kind of emergency rations were forthcoming in this seemingly unoccupied country.

He began walking and felt a buoyancy that was alarming, and he knew somehow that if he flapped his arms like a bird he

would surely fly. He came to two big trees the leaves of which appeared to have been washed by a rain of liquid gold. Great, luscious-looking yellow apples grew thick upon them and bent the branches down. Adolf naturally chose the biggest apple within reach and curled his fingers around it and tried to jerk it loose, but there was no strength in his arms. He tried both hands with the same results and flew into a fit of rage and dropped to his hands and knees and chewed at the grass like a famished bull calf.

"Blimie," said a voice. "It is 'im, Orville. Carst yer eye on the ruddy cove. I wouldn't give you a blinkin' tanner for 'im."

"You can say that again, Herbert."

"An' right orf, Orville, he tries to grab the bloomin' appil, forgettin' wot 'appened to Adam."

Adolf spat out a mouthful of Celestial alfalfa and quickly raised his head. "*Gott sei dank*," he muttered when he saw the two men moving down the hillside. One was tall and lanky and he had an unruly mop of hair the color of cinnamon. He wore the uniform of the *Amerikanischer* army and his bony, freckled face was split with a wondering grin. Adolf knew that the short one with the big, predatory nose and the chin that sloped off a bit too soon was a *verdamm't* Britisher. "*Guten morgen*," he greeted.

"Phlur-r-r-r-t!" Herbert said. "So you are the gormless 'un that's been muckin' about, yus? The bloody beast of Burke's Garten! Got yer comeuppance, didn't yer?"

"If I am the prisoner of war," Adolf Schickelgruber said haughtily, "I expect to be treated with the respect that was laid down by the Geneva Conference, *ja!* Where *ist* Heinrich and Hermann? *Was ist los?*"

"Me an' Herbert haven't seen the mugs," Orville Wiggin, once very much of a mortal back in Putney, Vermont, said. "All we know is, we was sent down here to pick you up, Furrier. We are kind of non-coms like we was in the army only we do not git pushed around and do not have to salute nobody up here. If that ain't paradise, Schickelgruber, you tell me—"

"*Hein?* Paradise—?" Adolf's lower jaw dropped down and shook like an oriole's nest in a stiff breeze. "*Himmel?*"

"If that is Kraut for Heaven," Orville said. "Yes."

"*Ach, das ist gut, hein?*" Adolf laughed gleefully. "So—I was gulded by a Divine Power like I told everybody. To make the

world strong by destroying the weak was my destiny, *ja?* *Mein Kampf! Lebensraum!* Utilitarian massacre. *Ach*, perhaps I am here to eliminate the undesirables here. But where are the fortifications? I, *der Führer*, will build the war machine—"

"'Ark at 'im, Orville," Herbert Snorkle, late of the King's London Rifles, sniffed. "Incurable, wot?"

"Take me to your *Gefechstand* at once!" Adolph Hitler said, highly indignant, and drawing himself up to his full height, which brought the top of his head approximately two inches below Orville Wiggin's right shoulder. "*Schweinhunds*, you are talking to *der Führer!*"

"Swine, is it?" Herbert snapped, and gave Adolf a buffet with a flat hand the size of a dried hake that rattled his teeth. "Always wanted t' 'and you wot's wot. He called you a pig too, Orville. Heil the bloke!"

Orville connected neatly and got Adolf on the rebound and the now defunct Fuehrer spun around twice, did several waltz steps and shagged on through before his eyes were in focus once more.

"*Ach du lieber*," Adolf puled. "You hit *der Führer* and nothing happened. I don't understand—"

"Have patience," Orville grinned. "You will soon enough. The supervisor, that is our immediate superior officer up here, was sayin' only yesterday why he arranged for you to git up here. He didn't think Beezlebub had a tough enough punishment for the likes of you downstairs. Not even with them innovations he put in for which he can't take much credit, seein' as how he stole the idea from the Nazi roasting ovens in that town of Maidanek, Poland. You should sue the bum, Adolf."

"Yus," Herbert Snorkle agreed. "I guess that is where you could find 'Ermann an' 'Einrich about now, Furor, gettin' their ruddy carcasses toasted a bit of any afternoon."

"*Hein?* And you say there is a worse punishment?" Adolf asked in a nasty scoffing manner. "It is impossible, *ja*. Even I know *Himmel* would not commit the atrocities. And I am already dead, is so?"

"Coo," Herbert said and sadly shook his head. "These bloomin' Narsties think only of the agony of the meat and bones, wot, Orville? Now—"

"Sh-h-h-h, Herbert," the Vermonter admonished. "Let'm find out fer himself. Up with you, Schickelgruber. We have a nice li'l walk ahead of us. Hup—one-two-three — Hup—three-four—an' don't let your

seat drag or we'll lift it the hard way, won't we, Herbert?"

Off they went with Herbert Snorkle playing a not so reasonable facsimile of *God Save the King* on a mouth organ. *Ach*, something was *schmutzig!* The terrible dubiety and perplexity of the moment crowded into all the painful disorder that had been inside Adolf's head ever since the influx of frantic telegrams from Stalingrad. Adolf beat his fists against his aching pate and suddenly called upon Wotan to assert himself and smite these enemies down. He screamed for *Die Valküre* to come down with the horses and not to spare the brutes. He wanted out, but *schnell!*

"Phlur-r-r-rt!" Herbert interrupted liquidly. "Bung off with the blinkin' rat cellar speech or I'll 'and you a packet that this 'eathen yer callin' for will feel in his backside."

"They told us he was nuts," Orville observed.

**S**HAKEN out of his incipient delirium by the threat of a cocked fist the size of a Vermont ham, Adolf Schickelgruber walked like a somnambulist along a path that finally led to a bosky dell filled with bird song and delicious spicy odors, and here he beheld paradisiacal readjustments that were beyond his powers of absorbence. A grinning fox and a happy English hound running along side by side; a lamb and a wolf cuddled together in a nest of soft leaves and sleeping peacefully. There were rabbits playing a sort of game with a lion; and ferrets and rats cavorted about in happy fraternity. All these and many more, every known species of fauna, apparently immune from destruction, one from the other.

"Ach, but the lion has to have meat, *hehn?* The ferret has to haff der blood?" Adolf forced out. "I am dreaming yet."

"This is 'Eaven like we tol' yer, smutty lip," Herbert said impatiently. "Carn't you git it through yer thick skull, Furor? An' when did yer ever 'ear of a spirit eatin'? We look like we got bodies t' feed but, in other words, we bloomin' well 'aven't, wot, Orville?"

"Jackpot," Orville grinned.

Adolf was still befuddled and more alarmed than ever. "But no cities, no railroads or highways. No houses. You say nobody eats, *ja?* Where *ist* the manna from *Himmel?*"

"All mullarkey," Orville sniffed. "Mortal properganda. If you are hungry it is 'cause

you are not etherealized yet, Schickelgruber. Why should we have beds when we got such deep soft grass t' sleep in, huh? Who wants to leave Heaven when it is so hard to git to, and where is a better place to go? It is silly. The Master has control of the weather an' can turn it on an' off as He pleases. Any more questions, Hitler? What fun, Herbert!"

"Yus, it is a blinkin' paradise, right enough," the cockney agreed. "Orf with you now, 'Itler. Me an' Orville cannot waste time on you. We 'ave a date with two angels in 'alf an hour."

Adolf Schickelgruber, his stomach growling like his old dogs of war, walked and walked and walked, his brain atilt and wondering as to the modus operandi of his arrival in *Himmel* and why he had been rendered only partially incorporeal. The path soon resolved into flights of steps that was spiral and nearly perpendicular and he climbed until his head swam and felt as light as a gobbet of meringue, and he was sure no Focke-Wulf or Messerschmitt had ever attained such an altitude.

"Now, you'll be surprised, Furrier, when you see the court," Orville said. "We're just plain folks up here who didn't git a chance to change clothes when they got the call. The judge who has your case was on his way to a trout stream when he was took an' so don't let his ol' khaki pants, windbreaker an' old slouch hat with the fishin' flies stuck in it fool you, Adolf. Down below he was a big judge, so works at his trade up here."

"Yus," Herbert Snorkle said. "You'll also see a big bracket sittin' next to the judge. 'E'll be wearin' an ol' barth-robe, which was all 'e 'ad on when the blitz bomb got 'im. Then there is a Greek in tails an' top 'at, an' a Roosian wearin' a bear-skin coat—but don't think the jury is packed, mind yer."

"I know my rights," Adolf squeaked. "I'll get a lawyer."

"Nope," Orville said. "Couldn't get one to take *your* case, Furrier, not even a little shyster who used t' be on the Capone payroll. Well, here we are."

Adolf Schickelgruber found himself on the flat summit of the Celestial mesa, staring at the welcoming committee, a dozen men seated on a semicircular stone bench. A more unmilitary and less dignified group he had never hoped to see, and once more he felt only contempt for soft and decadent democracies. *Ach*, there was nothing much to worry about.

The fat man in the wind-breaker said, "Bring the prisoner to the bar, Wiggin."

Orville gave Hitler a poke. "Hop to it, Junior," he said, then cleared his throat and began announcing in his rich Vermont twang. "If it please the court, we have brought you Adolf Hitler, born Schickelgruber, once a paper-hanger an' a lous—bad one, Your Honor. An artist, he says with a straight face, but better known as Chancellor of the Third Reich. He is charged with murder, rape, arson, coercion, robbery, sacrilege, extortion—"

"Enough, Corporal," the judge said, shoving his old felt hat further back on his bald head. "We are well acquainted with the rascal's misdeeds. Scraggy-looking character, isn't he? I've thrown the book at pickpockets who were more respectable-looking. Well, let's get it over with, gentlemen. I have a game of chess to finish with Leo Tolstoi. Court is now in session. You are the defendant, Adolf Schickelgruber?"

"*Jawohl*," Hitler mumbled, having his grave doubts now. He silently cursed all German pundits from Barbarossa to von Hindenberg for feeding this claptrap

anent the superiority of German arms and German *Kultur* to the rank and file for centuries. The *dumkopfs!*

The judge, Milo Spinnaker, formerly of Hohokus, N. J., asked sternly, "How many people do you think you have killed, directly and indirectly, since you took over Germany, Schickelgruber?"

"*Hein?* I do not know. I kept—no—records."

"Careless of you, to say the least," Judge Spinnaker chided. "We believe it to be close to twelve million, Hitler!"

"So why ask me?" Adolf replied insolently. "Let me go down below and the quicker *ist* better. At least the devil feeds his own."

"Oh, so you are hungry, Schickelgruber?" the judge said, and exchanged amused glances with the members of his court. The Greek in the top hat laughed outright. "But it won't get any better or any worse, Hitler. Nothing changes here. But regarding your penance. It'll be one you'll never forget. You, who called yourself *Führer*, you shall count all you have killed for we have all of them here. You shall remain up here until your total checks

with The Master's. We trust you are good at figures, Schickelgruber?"

"Coo," enthused Herbert Snorkle.

"This is goin' to be good," said Orville Wiggin.

"*Nein, nein!* Always was I poor in arithmetic, *meine Herren*. You all know I did not get much of *der* school and was a poor paper-hanger. You make *das lustspiel, hein?*"

"He thinks we are comedians," Judge Spinnaker chuckled. "Well, I'm a monkey's uncle!" He got up and walked up to Adolf, picked the erstwhile Fuehrer up by the scruff of the neck and nearly lifted him out of his boots. He carried him to the edge of the eminence and set him down. "Look, Schickelgruber, they are all down there in that great bowl. Men and women and children of all nationalities, even millions of Germans. The souls of the millions you liquidated, Hitler! You will count them all. Corporal Wiggin, the tablets of paper and the crayons for the guilty one."

"Roger," Orville grinned.

Adolf looked out over the immense bowl thousands and thousands of feet below and his knees turned to aspic and his teeth rattled like a million castanets. Millions upon millions of little figures milled about down there like as many ants busily engaged in repairing a violated hill.

"Start when you're ready, Schickelgruber," the judge said.

"If they won't stay still, how can I count them?" Hitler screeched, and he hopped up and down like a piece of popcorn on a hot stove-lid. "Tell them to form *der* lines and march past!"

"Oh, brother," Orville sighed.

"You'll take them as you found them originally," the judge snapped. "Going about their work and their play, minding their own business. Start counting, Hitler. The quicker you start the quicker you'll go to hell. We'll return in a few days to check your count."

"*Ja—jawohl—Your Honor.*"

THE court adjourned and left the eminence, and Herbert Snorkle said before retiring, "I 'opes you git mud in your bloomin' eye, 'Itler. Orville, this is worth forgettin' t' duck at Dunkirk. Coo."

Left alone, Adolf began to count. He counted for seventeen Celestial days and nights, until his head was merely an aching pulpy lump atop his sagging shoulders. He cursed every Nazi general and soldier who had ever borne arms for the Reich for having killed so many, especially those

who had liquidated children, for the little spirits kept running about like startled rabbits, hiding behind trees, in the thickets and under their mothers' skirts. Their laughter tormented him and kept mixing him up in his count and made him go back and start over and over again. Once he contemplated flight but found he could not move the seat of his pants off the hard flat rock as much as an inch. And his meridian kept growling and it was icy cold on the high mesa although everything below was bathed in soft liquid sunshine. Finally, satisfied with his count, he waited for the return of the disciplinarians.

A flood of warmth suddenly enveloped the eminence and a voice said, "What's the good word, Adolf?" and Hitler turned and saw Judge Milo Spinnaker standing there, flanked by Orville Wiggin and Herbert Snorkle. The judge was smoking a cigar that burned eternally and his old angling hat was cocked over his right eye.

"Yus, Furor," Snorkle asked. "You think you got a 'undred per cent, wot?"

"Silence, Snorkle!" the judge said. "Schickelgruber, what was your result?"

Adolph said eagerly, "Ten million, nine hundred and eighty-one thousand, seven hundred and two."

The judge looked in his little book. He shook his head. "Wrong, Schickelgruber. You didn't even get close. Start counting over again."

"*Nein!*" Adolph screamed. "It *ist* barbarous! Even to a Pole I wouldn't—" He threw himself down and tried to chew a rug that was not there.

"Snap out of it!" Judge Spinnaker ordered. "Or I'll have the temperature lowered, Fuehrer. Get back to your counting and no more of this damned nonsense!"

"*Jawohl, Ach du lieber,*" Adolf choked out and got up and gathered up his accounting equipment and hopped to his hard seat on the edge of the eminence.

"You know wot, 'Itler?" Herbert Snorkle called out. "I bet you fergot t' count us blokes."

"*Ach—ist so. Danke schoen.* This time I get the right answer. *Ein-zwei-drei—*"

"Coo," Herbert said rapturously. "This is 'Eaven, Orville. I wish we could send word t' our bureaved relatives 'ow 'appy we are 'ere."

When the judge and Orville and Herbert went down the steps, Adolf began his count again. He counted for twenty-one days and nights this time to make sure, until his head was filled with gremlins wearing hob-nailed boots, all swinging



heavy mauls or working pneumatic drills. He wore out three hundred crayons and the papers, filled with columns of figures, were stacked three feet high at his feet. His throat was raw from screaming at the little spirits, who seemed more restless than ever, and at the moment, if his soul were only his own, he would have given it along with the Reichstag to a Warsaw pawnbroker for one slice of a bratwurst sausage.

His fingers and toes and even the tip of his nose were frost-bitten and the taunting laughter from far below had taken up permanent residence in his tortured ears.

Then Schickelgruber suddenly felt a rise in temperature and heard the music of Herbert Snorkle's mouth-organ, and he jumped to his feet, hugging his precious papers to his bosom. Soon the judge and Orville and Herbert appeared on the rim of the mesa and Judge Spinnaker said without preamble:

"Well, Hitler, what is the result you have this time?"

"Eleven million, seventy-six thousand *und* three," Adolf said confidently.

Once more the judge peered into his little book, then snapped it shut. He looked at Orville and Herbert, and shook his head sadly. "Wrong again, as I was sure you would be, Fuehrer. Too bad, you've got to count them over again. We have brought fresh supplies."

Adolf Schickelgruber went into a rare tantrum and ran around in a tight circle like a high school horse and beat his fists against his head. "*Nein!* Send to hell! Always inside my head is numbers. Hundreds, thousands, millions yet. *Ein-zwei-drei-ein, zwei, drei-donnervetter!*"

"'Ark at the blighter," Herbert said. "Cheer up, 'tler. Rome wa'n't took in a day, wot? Let's be orf, Orville. Ain't it Paradise, though? The girlies are never 'ungry up 'ere."

Alone, Adolf Schickelgruber began the long count once more, striving desperately to correctly tabulate the millions he had sent to this corner of Paradise. "Four thousand, nine hundred *und* one—*nein*, I counted the fifty Czechs twice—four thousand, eight hundred *und* fifty-one—"

Then, hours upon hours later—"Eleven thousand, six hundred *und* sixty-two—*dumkopfs! Schweinhunds!* Stand still yet! Stop running about like crazy, *ach!*" But when he reached thirty-seven thousand, the little figures down in the great bowl began converging into one great swirling

mass, and the ones he had counted could not be isolated from the ones he had not and so he lost his head and forgot momentarily his miserable status in the scheme of things. He cursed them one and all, threatened them with the fury of the Luftwaffe, the Wehrmacht, the Elite Guards, the Gestapo and the rocket bombs, and then a vicious gust of icy wind tore his tally sheets loose from his fingers and swept them far out of reach and shocked him back to the sickening realization that he had to go back and start from scratch again.

"*Ein-zwei, drei—*" Adolf stopped counting and clamped his hands to his poor addled cranium when the horrible significance of his penance began to penetrate the compote of noises roaring and whistling therein. He would never leave this lofty perch, for a man, even if he had a dozen pair of eyes to see with, as many brains to figure with, and although he happened to be the greatest mathematician in the Universe, could never correctly count the millions of souls swirling about in that hallowed corner of *Himmel*. Yet he knew he had to keep on counting for his only chance of deliverance depended on the remote possibility that some day he would bring in a total that would check with The Master's.

Days later, Adolf was counting. "One million, nine hundred *und* forty-six thousand *und* one—one million, nine hundred *und* forty-six thousand *und* two—"

ON THE American airdrome near Nancy, Mustang pilots strove to placate Lieutenant Isidor Shapiro. "Of course they didn't find what was left of Hitler, Izzy," Wee Willie Sparkes argued. "Don't forget he dropped over thirty-thousand feet and straight down like an anvil. I'll bet the crows are salvagin' scraps of the Fuehrer outside Liverpool an' in the foothills of the Pyrenees."

"I guess so," Lieutenant Shapiro griped. "But he got off easier than the other Natzies. What he got was too good for him an' that's what bothers me. He don't have t' stand trial. See what I mean?"

Pilot Pete Korowski nodded. "Sure, but forgit it, Izzy." He spat against the little stove in the center of the hut to hear it sizzle. "I wonder how many people did get killed because of the stinker? I guess Heaven only knows."

"Yeah," Lieutenant Shapiro said, thinking of the welcome he would get when he got back to Brooklyn.