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the Grasshopper

COMMANDOS

Tom Swift was kid stuff compared to Sergeants Lederer and McCall and their jumping suits . . . a story which should not be read by retired Army officers with tendencies toward apoplexy

By William Chamberlain

THE day had dawned bright and fair. So far, no portent had appeared in the heavens to warn Jughead Simpson, first sergeant of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battle Group, that disaster lay ahead. There had been a few irritations, of course, but they had been the normal ones, and Jughead had taken them in stride.

At the kitchen, where he'd gone for his pre-reveille cup of coffee, he'd found the second cook in a sulk because one of his kitchen police hadn't showed up; eschewing fanfare, Jughead had entered the culprit's name in his black book, reflecting that a weekend restriction to barracks ought to teach *that* goldbrick that crime didn't pay. The coffee had tasted as if old socks had been steeped in it, but that was the way it usually tasted.

Headquarters Company had turned out for reveille as bright-eyed and bushy-tailed as a bunch of hopheads emerging from an opium den; but the company habitually turned out for reveille that way. Private Opie McCall was late. Private Opie McCall was *always* late. Without rancor, Jughead detailed him to substitute in the kitchen for the missing K.P. Yes, the situation had been normal.

So Jughead was thinking now as he entered the orderly room after inspecting the company area. That, too, had been normal—lousy. Jughead mentioned that fact to Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz, the company clerk.

"The company area," he said conversationally, "looks as if a second-rate reform school had been holdin' its annual picnic there. Tell Sergeant Lederer to take his squad an' police the place over again before I jump right smack down his throat."

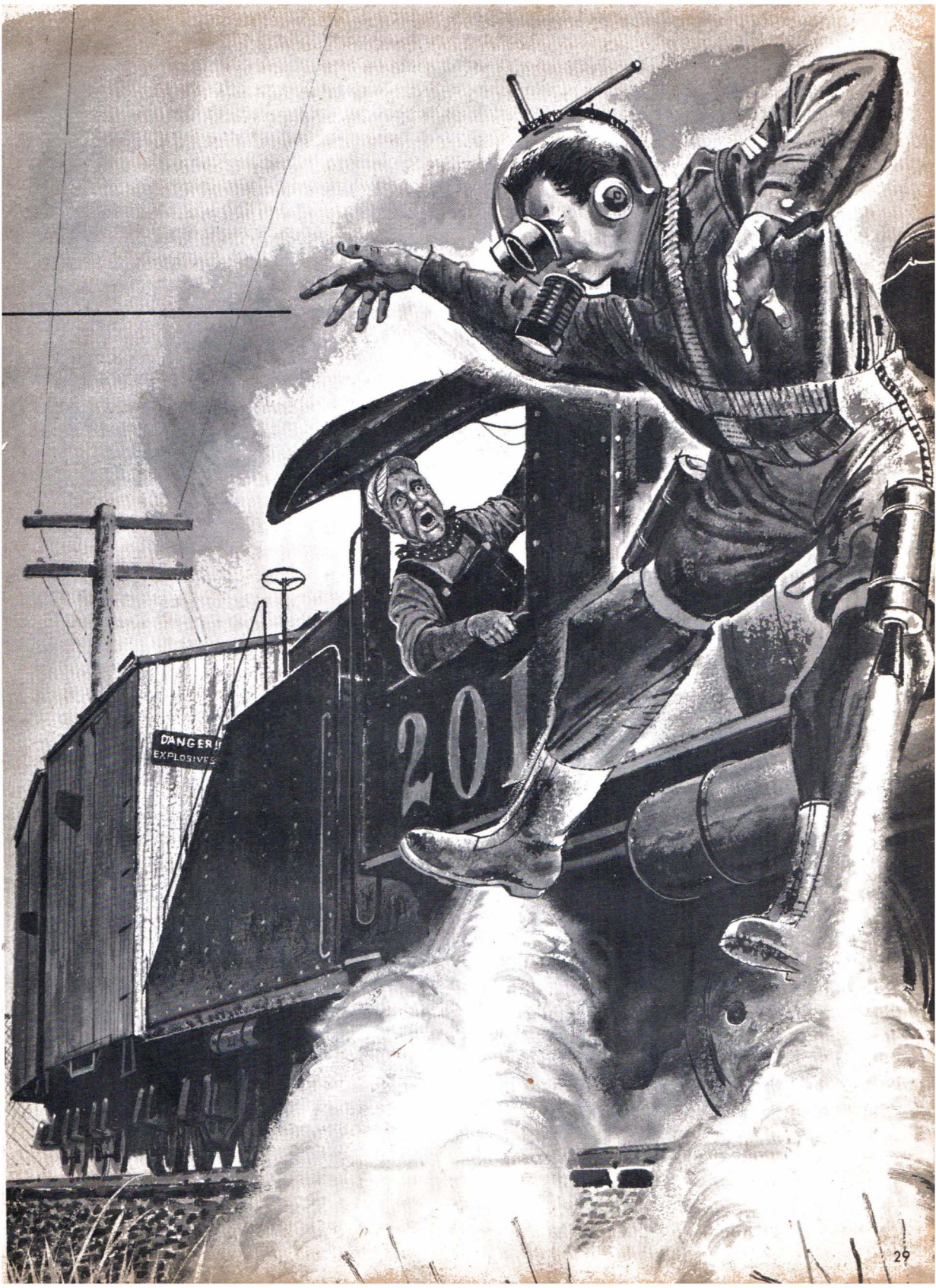
"Right, Sarge," Schwartz said briskly.

He departed and, a moment later, Jughead heard his voice beneath the open window. "Hey, you seen Sergeant Lederer around?" Schwartz was asking Opie McCall.

Opie, on his way to the kitchen, was brooding about the K.P. tour he'd just inherited; he'd been mulling over a scheme for getting rat poison into Jughead Simpson's noon-day chow when the company clerk's question had interrupted his train of thought. Opie was tow-headed, and his face usually showed an angelic innocence which fronted for a disposition as brash as a two-dollar trumpet. He had a talent for getting into trouble that could be awesome at times.

"Naw, I ain't seen Lederer around," he retorted crossly. "Why should I see him around—you think I'm his keeper?"

Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz looked annoyed. "Because you're in his squad, is why. Sergeant Simpson says the company area looks as if (Continued on page 79)



Grasshopper

Continued from page 28

a reform school had had a picnic there and. . . ."

"Jughead ought to know," Opie interrupted, suddenly cheerful again. "The big ape was probably in and out of every reform school in the country before they got rid of him in the Army."

"Cut that out," Schwartz said angrily. "I got a good notion to tell Sergeant Simpson you called him a big ape!"

"Be my guest," Opie answered, pleased that he'd gotten the company clerk's goat. "He'd probably think it was a compliment—I bet if you sneaked a look at his family tree, you'd find enough baboons hanging by their tails from its branches to start a zoo."

"Okay, I'll report you for that, too, McCall!"

"It won't do you no good—Jughead loves me," Opie said piously. "He's liable to promote me to sergeant any day now."

It was that last statement that really outraged Jughead Simpson as he thrust his head out of the window. "I heard that," he said grimly. "For your information, Jughead loves you so much he's promoting you to the top of the K.P. roster as of now, Mr. McCall!"

He would have said more but his phone was ringing. It was the sergeant major at battle group headquarters on the line. The colonel wished to speak with the company commander, Captain Herkimer, the sergeant major said.

"The cap'n ain't here yet," Jughead answered tartly—he was still smarting over that promotion slander. "What's the colonel want now—you got any idea?"

"Yup," the sergeant major said offhandedly. "He wants two men detailed from Headquarters Company to be grasshopper commandos."

"Okay," Jughead grunted. "I'll tell the cap—grasshopper commandos! What the hell are grasshopper commandos?"

"I wouldn't know, dearie," the sergeant major said sweetly. "You just tell Captain Herkimer to call the Old Man, see?"

Jughead put the phone down. "Grasshopper commandos!" he mumbled and then brightened a little. Whatever they were, he already knew who one of them was going to be. Private Opie McCall! Jughead didn't know just how right—and how wrong—he was.

Major Luther Baggs, of the battle group staff, was the one who had first broached the subject of grasshopper commandos. He'd been in Colonel Adam Spiller's office late the previous afternoon, when the exec had entered with a message in his hand and a long look on his face. The message, he said, was to the effect that General Dooley, commanding the

division, would visit the 2nd Battle Group day after tomorrow. He would bring with him some distinguished guests who swung a lot of weight in Washington.

"The general says he wants us to put on a real good show for these people he's bringing," the exec added glumly.

Colonel Spiller received the news with the enthusiasm of a man whose wife has just called to say the kids have smallpox. "Good show!" he snorted. "What the devil does old Dooley think I've got here—a troupe of trained seals? If he wants his confounded guests to see a good show, let him take 'em to the burlesque in town! *That's* a real good show. . . . so I've been told."

The exec looked a little shocked. "Sir," he said, "I think that General Dooley had something in mind other than a . . . er . . . a burlesque show. He suggests that a demonstration of the aerial jeeps we used in Operation Hayride might be impressive."

"You mean those flying saucers that chased me under my own car?" Colonel Spiller asked testily. Then he brightened a little. "Hm'm'm, if they were to chase Dooley and his distinguished guests under a car, *that'd* be a good show all right. Baggs, have we still got those flying gadgets around here?"

Major Baggs stroked his red mustache, and his eyes glittered behind his rimless eyeglasses. "Yes, sir," he said. "I'm quite sure the flying platforms are still over in the Research and Development warehouse. Colonel, how would it be if we had a couple of SOT's fly the platforms for the general. *That* should be a real show."

The Colonel looked as though Major Baggs had suddenly gone into a fan dance in front of the desk. "You," he asked slowly—as though he didn't quite believe his own words, "are suggesting, Baggs, that we have a couple of *drunks* fly those damned doodlebugs?"

"You don't understand, sir," Luther said hastily, digging into his dispatch case. "SOT is a term that the R and D people use—it's short for soldier-of-tomorrow. Personally, I prefer to call them grasshopper commandos. The term is more descriptive."

Colonel Spiller's face began to get red. "Baggs," he said violently, "leaving out the gobbledy-goop, just what in hell are you talking about? Do you know?"

"Certainly, sir," Major Baggs said, looking down his nose. He pulled a sheaf of glossy photographs from his dispatch case and spread them across the colonel's desk. "These are pictures of experimental types of equipment for the individual soldier that Research and Development has been working on. Something radically new, as you can see, sir. The R and D crowd is really quite high on it."

"I'll just bet they are," Adam Spil-

ler said, looking at one of the pictures with distaste. "From the looks of this thing here, they must have been eating opium. What the devil is it?"

He was holding up a picture which vaguely resembled a soldier—at least, he thought, the thing wore boots and carried a rifle. Any human resemblance stopped along about there. The figure's torso was swathed in something that looked like a Don Cossack's jacket with cartridges looped in rows across the front. The face, if it had one, was hidden behind a shapeless, snouted mask out of which peered huge, goggled eyes. Around its waist was a belt, fitted with thigh straps, which held a row of metal canisters; two blast nozzles poked down on either side. There was an over-sized helmet with more goggles on the front and an antenna growing out of the top.

"It's a SOT, sir," Luther said. Then amended hastily, "I mean, that's what the soldier-of-tomorrow will look like."

"Good gad!" the colonel said violently. "Now they're trying to booby-trap our own soldiers!"

"It's not a booby-trap," Major Baggs protested stiffly.

"What's the Hallow'en mask for?" the colonel interrupted sourly. "To hold up banks with?"

"It's a thermal face-piece to protect against atomic blast," Luther said, a little miffed. "The belt you see is a jump belt—those canisters are filled with a solid fuel propellant that discharges through nozzles. Suppose our SOT comes to an obstacle. A barbed wire entanglement or maybe a stream. What does he do?"

"Sits down on his duff and rests, if he's like most of the soldiers I've known," Adam said. "So what?"

The major's enthusiasm was unblunted. "No, sir," he said. "He squeezes a lever, and the belt gives him a sort of jet-assisted take-off. He simply jumps right over whatever is in his way. That's where I got the idea for the name grasshopper commandos, sir. It's rather neat, don't you think?"

"If I could think I wouldn't be in the Army," Adam growled. "And just how do you propose to use these. . . uh. . . SOT's to put on a show for Dooley and his blasted guests?"

Luther's eyes glittered behind his glasses again. "I thought we might get two men from Headquarters Company, sir. Ones who operated the flying platforms during the Hayride maneuvers. Then we'll dress them up in this new equipment. . . . ah. . . . I presume the general will want to review the troops, will he not, sir?"

"I never yet saw one that didn't," Adam grunted.

"Well, right after the review, the SOT's could come in on their flying platforms," Luther explained. "They'd land by the railroad spur on the other side of Viceroy Creek, behind the reviewing stand, sir. Then, with their jump belts, they could leap across the

creek and charge up the slope to capture the general and his party. It should make a spectacular show, colonel."

Adam Spiller, looking at the picture, had to admit that having a SOT come jumping up like a kangaroo to poke a gun in one's face, wouldn't be exactly humdrum. And the general had said he wanted a good show . . . seeing the look on his face might be worth the price of admission, at that, he concluded.

"I've got a feeling I'm going to regret this, Baggs," he said. "But you can go ahead if you can get hold of the same men who flew those fool platforms before—I don't want any recruit SOT's careening around on the things. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," Luther said, beaming. "Uh, it'd help, colonel, if you'd personally call Captain Herkimer and tell him that we want two of the men who flew the platforms during Operation Hayride."

"You know their names?" the colonel asked.

Major Baggs frowned and patted his mustache. "Um . . . let me think, sir. It's been some time ago. One was named McCall—he was a sergeant, I think. The other's name was Ledbetter . . . no, that's not quite it . . . Lederer, sir! They're our men!"

Colonel Spiller jotted the names down. "This had better work, Baggs," he said grimly. "If it doesn't, you can start heading for the boondocks. I'll be right with you."

"It'll work like a charm, sir," Luther said.

Luther Baggs didn't know he'd just inadvertently promoted Opie McCall. Had he known, the major might have started for the boondocks without waiting for the day after tomorrow to arrive.

Captain Augustus Herkimer, commanding Headquarters Company, was a red-faced blustering man; in the battle group he had the name of being a number one apple-polisher. Right now, he was gnawing on a cigar while he spoke with Colonel Spiller on the telephone. Jughead Simpson stood by the desk, a pad in his hand.

"Yaas, colonel," Captain Herkimer was saying in a treacly voice, "certainly we can furnish two men to operate flying platforms. We're the . . . heh-heh . . . 'Can Do Company', sir. I'll detail two . . . eh? Oh, I see . . . you have two particular men in mind. . . ."

Jughead started a little at the mention of flying platforms—he had hoped that he'd seen the last of those gadgets. The captain's voice was dripping more sweetness into the phone.

" . . . Sergeant McCall and a man named Lederer . . . I've got it, sir. I'll personally see that Lederer and Sergeant McCall report to Major Baggs at the R and D warehouse this afternoon. Goodby, sir."

He put the phone down and swung around to the open-mouthed Jughead Simpson. "Sergeant," he said snap-

pily, "I just told the colonel that I'll have Sergeant McCall re—" His voice stopped suddenly, as he spewed his frayed cigar halfway across the room and came up out of his chair as though he'd been goosed from behind. "Sergeant McCall!" he yelled as he found his voice again. "Who in the double-sundered hell made that eight-ball a sergeant!"

Jughead's shock was even greater than the captain's. "Maybe the cap'n misunderstood the colonel, sir," he mumbled, grasping at a straw. "Maybe the connection was bad. . . ."

"The connection wasn't bad and I didn't misunderstand," Captain Herkimer groaned, sitting down heavily. "The colonel distinctly said 'Sergeant McCall'—I even repeated it after him."

"Sir," Jughead said desperately, "maybe the cap'n could call the colonel back and just say he made a mistake—McCall ain't no sergeant. Or ever likely to be."

The captain's face took on a purple tinge—he should have remembered that Augustus Herkimer didn't make "mistakes", Jughead thought glumly. Not any mistakes he owned up to, anyway.

"And have him think I don't know the names of my own *noncoms*?" Herkimer said through his teeth. "Are you crazy, sergeant? I'm not going to make myself out a liar for the sake of a few miserable stripes. Get out an order promoting McCall to acting sergeant—I'll bust the cuckoo back to private when he's finished his commando grasshoppering."

A black cloud completely obscured Jughead's day now. He said, "Yes, sir," dolefully, and went out with the laggard steps of a man heading for the gas chamber. With Opie McCall a sergeant, he was thinking, the Army didn't stand a chance. The Russians could take the country without firing a shot.

Opie stopped the jeep behind the R & D warehouse a little before one o'clock. He flicked an imaginary bit of dust from the new sergeant's chevrons on his sleeve, and looked at Sergeant Lederer out of the corners of his eyes.

"Well, shall us sergeants go report, Sergeant First Class Lederer, sir?" he asked with elaborate casualness. "By the way, to whom do we report to? I forgot to ask."

"We report to Major Baggs," Lederer said grimly. He was a slender, tanned man who worried over things. "You chased him under a car with a flying saucer once, in case you don't remember."

Opie had started to climb out of the jeep; now he scrambled back as consternation spread across his face. "Not him!" he said. "I just remembered, sarge—I got a K.P. tour to finish up. I went right off in the middle of the dinner dishes."

"Get out of that jeep," Lederer snarled. "I don't know how I got

mixed up in this—whatever it is—but the chances are you're at the bottom of it. So, start marching!"

This was the same R & D warehouse where they'd learned to operate the flying platforms some weeks earlier, Sergeant Lederer noted without comfort, as they rounded the corner. The same Master Sergeant MacGillicuddy was waiting for them. Major Luther Baggs was not in sight and Opie breathed a sigh of relief.

"Well, well, well," Sergeant MacGillicuddy said. "If it ain't the Flyboys Lederer an' McCall! Welcome back, aces."

"Never mind the clowning," Lederer said morosely. "Where's Major Baggs? We're supposed to report to him."

"He'll be along," MacGillicuddy said in a cheerful tone. "While you're waitin', you can try on your soldier suits."

He led the way into the warehouse. Dim and dusty light came through grimed windows as Opie rounded the partition of a small alcove. He yipped suddenly and jumped back. Two outlandish-looking shapes, as menacing as men from Mars, lurked there in the gloom.

"We been invaded!" Opie yelled. "Run for your life, sarge! Those things have got guns!"

"Come back here, hero," MacGillicuddy said tolerantly. "Them are dummies wearin' your soldier suits."

"You mean we wear that stuff?" Opie asked, returning warily.

"Why not?" MacGillicuddy asked in a reasonable tone. "The suits won't mind—one dummy's the same as another to them."

Opie glowered. Presently, however, he began to get into the masquerade spirit of the thing. He and Lederer had donned the impregnated uniforms, the molded boots, the armored vests and breech clouts. Sergeant MacGillicuddy adjusted the thermal face-piece on Sergeant Lederer while Opie stood back and admired.

"You look like a pop-eyed elephant, sarge," he said.

Lederer made strangled and profane sounds behind the mask. MacGillicuddy came out of the alcove now with a harness in his hands. It had web straps and canisters and two nozzles.

"Okay," MacGillicuddy said, leaning at Opie, "let's cinch you up in your grasshopper gear, boy."

Opie eyed the strange rig cautiously. "What's that thing for, sarge?" he asked in a suspicious voice.

"You'll find out, laddie," MacGillicuddy grunted as he pulled the straps across Opie's thighs and buckled the belt around Opie's waist. "This is your jump-belt. All you got to do is squeeze that there little gadget an' off you go, happy like a bird."

The little gadget that MacGillicuddy referred to was a hand grip with a lever attached which dangled at the end of a cord in the vicinity of Opie's knees. Opie bent to grab the thing.

"You mean I just squeeze like

th . . ."

That was as far as he got—the rest was lost in a nasty hiss as twin jets blasted out of the nozzles. Since Opie was bent over, the jets hit the wall behind him; he crossed the warehouse in two giant and involuntary strides and rammed his head into the far wall. The shock sat him down abruptly. For a moment he blinked dazedly—then jumped to his feet, a wild look on his face.

"I been booby-trapped!" he yelled. "Get me out of this thing! If this you got to do to be a sergeant, I'd rather . . ."

In his excitement, he squeezed the lever again. This time he went through the warehouse's wide doorway like a goosed kangaroo. Major Luther Baggs was getting out of his car a dozen yards away as Opie hit the ground and bounced like a rubber ball. He tried to clear the car with his next jump but misjudged his distance and he and the major collided violently—and went down together in the dirt. The two looked at each other. The recognition was mutual—and unpleasant.

"So, it's *you*," Luther said bitterly, blowing through his mustache. "It's not enough you try to assassinate me once—now you try it all over again. So help me, I'm going to . . ."

Opie didn't wait to hear. He took off from a sitting start, the jump-belt assisting. His first leap cleared the car that he'd failed to negotiate earlier; his second took him around the corner of the warehouse. Lederer prudently had slipped out the back way. Opie's final jump landed him squarely on top of his fellow sergeant.

Friday came. Sergeants Lederer and McCall were in arrest in quarters, forbidden to leave the barrack area until, late in the afternoon, they left for the R & D warehouse under guard of Jughead Simpson. At the warehouse, Major Baggs was waiting for them—and he spoke briefly and to the point. There was no comfort in his words.

"If I had any choice in the matter," he said bitterly, "the two of you would be under lock and key right now. You're a menace running around loose—I should have remembered, Heaven help me."

Four-thirty came. Just about now the review would be starting on the parade ground a mile away. A phone call from Major Baggs presently would launch the grasshopper commandos on their mission. Sergeant Lederer, rigged up in his SOT suit, sat morosely in the jeep while Opie, similarly attired, leaned against a fender and idly pitched pebbles at the warehouse. A little farther along, Sergeant MacGillicuddy still fussed over the flying platforms while he talked with Jughead Simpson. The latter's voice was unnecessarily loud.

"They could be on their way to the coop at Leavenworth by this time tomorrow," he was saying happily.

"That'd be nice," MacGillicuddy

agreed.

"Shootin' would be better, of course."

"Listen to the big moose—he's loving it," Opie said darkly under his breath. He bunged a rock at a wasp's nest hanging beneath the warehouse eaves—and missed it by a yard. "One of these days I'm going to fix that character's crotch for him but good!"

"Leave that bee's nest alone," Lederer said crossly. "Ain't we got enough trouble but you want more?" "Aw, I'm not going to hit it," Opie said. "Listen to those two clowns over there—they're funny like a broken leg."

He whanged another rock at the wasp's nest—and this time his aim was bad. The stone hit the nest in the center; the nest fell to the gravel and rolled to a stop between the two flying platforms, spewing out a horde of angry insects as it went. For a moment Opie froze, his mouth dropping open—and his next reaction was purely reflex. He landed behind the jeep's wheel and jabbed at the starter, as a formation of wasps headed viciously in his direction.

"I'm getting out of here," he said tersely.

Gravel spewed as he headed across the flat field, the jeep careening like a ship in a heavy sea. Sergeant Lederer, hanging on grimly, looked back. A dark cloud hovered over the flying platforms. In the middle of it, Jughead Simpson and Sergeant MacGillicuddy seemed to be doing some sort of a savage dance as they capered, flinging their arms about their heads. Then they streaked for the warehouse and the door slammed behind them.

Opie stopped the jeep a quarter mile out in the field—and sat, arms folded across the wheel, while he brooded in the last of the afternoon. The enormity of what had just happened was dawning on him now; it had already dawned on Sergeant Lederer.

"If we weren't dead ducks *before*, we are now," he said, his voice muffled by the thermal face-piece. "What Jughead is going to do when he gets his hands on us, shouldn't happen to a . . ."

"What about what'll happen when that major gets his hands on us for not showing up in his flying saucers?" Opie asked sadly. "Maybe I and you had better just head for Mexico, sarge."

Opie's cheerfulness was returning. "Maybe it ain't too bad, sarge," he said. "Why don't we hide the jeep in the bushes beside the railroad track. Then, if we jump out all of a sudden in our SOT suits, probably nobody'll notice we don't have the flying saucers."

"We can try it," Lederer said. "It won't work."

The last of the troops had left the parade ground as Colonel Spiller led the general and his distinguished guests to a point where they could

look down on Viceroy Creek. The stream, shallow but twenty feet wide, reflected the gold of the setting sun. The scene was marred a little, however, by a yard engine, pushing two box cars plastered with red stickers, which nosed out of a clutter of warehouses, a quarter mile away, to creep along the spur on the stream's far bank.

"What's that thing doing there?" Adam Spiller growled under his breath to Major Baggs. "Trying to spoil my show?"

"The ordinance people had some explosives to move to Magazine B, sir," Luther said unhappily—he had even worse news for the colonel. "I told them to wait until the demonstration was over but I guess they thought that the review ended it and . . ."

The colonel wasn't paying any attention. "And where in hell are those commandos of yours, Baggs?" he demanded.

"Sir, nobody answers the phone at the R and D ware . . ."

Luther stopped abruptly, his mouth falling open. The yard engine was opposite now, gathering speed on the gentle grade, but something was wrong. The engineer suddenly scrambled out of the near side of the cab and hit the ground running, yelling crazily as he went. The train was going on without him. Faster, now.

"Good God!" Adam Spiller said in a shocked voice. "That damned ammo train's running away with nobody at the wheel! It'll blow this whole confounded place to Kingdom Come!"

Opie had parked the jeep, and he and Sergeant Lederer crouched in the edge of a clump of brush as the yard engine came toward them. The engineer, a fat and red-faced man, leaned in the cab window at peace with the world; while waiting for the review to be over, he'd had a couple of small nips, and they soothed him now.

"Let's give him a show," Opie said on the spur of the moment. "The poor guy probably leads a dull life."

He squeezed the lever of his jump belt, and came up out of the bushes like a projectile—and landed beside the track while the engineer stared with his eyes popping. "Boo!" Opie said. "You're dead!" The engineer hadn't been expecting men from Mars. It unsettled him. He'd seen all he wanted to see and he left.

"Brother, you've done it now!" Lederer groaned as he came up beside Opie and stared after the retreating train. "The red stickers mean those are ammo cars—they could blow up the whole post running loose that way down the grade!"

"We got to catch 'em," Opie mumbled. "Come on!"

He squeezed hard on the lever of his jump belt and his first leap took him thirty feet down the track. Then he got the rhythm of the thing and took off after the fleeing train like a big jack rabbit going over tall sagebrush. He landed on top of the tender, Sergeant Lederer coming along close

behind. Together they piled down into the cab and began to pull levers—and after what seemed like a long, long time the engine finally wheezed to a halt.

Lederer slumped against the side of the cab, pulling his mask aside and mopping his sweating face with his sleeve. He looked back. People were running toward him, Major Baggs in the lead.

"We're dead now," Lederer said hollowly.

"You could be right," Opie agreed sadly.

Saturday came. Opie was back in the kitchen, finishing up the dinner dishes. Jughead Simpson had yanked his chevrons off last evening, sputtering maledictions out of a face that had been pretty badly swollen. Captain Herkimer had arrived to announce in a few hundred choice words that Lederer and McCall were again in arrest. The colonel, himself, was considering their cases.

Now, Lederer leaned gloomily against the wall while he watched Opie scrub at a pot. "Most likely they'll charge us with stealing that train, in addition to everything else," Lederer said.

Opie was trying to think of an answer to that when the door of the mess hall slammed and voices drifted back to the kitchen. One of the voices belonged to Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz.

"Talk about falling in a sewer and coming out like a rose," it said aggrievedly. "That McCall does it every time!"

"Like such as what?" a second voice asked.

"Like I'm in the orderly room waiting to type up the court-martial charges on him and Lederer," Schwartz said angrily. "Then colonel calls up Captain Herkimer—I listen in just in case there is something I ought to know to go into the charges."

"Was there?"

"No," Schwartz snapped in a peevish tone. "What the colonel said was that McCall was to keep his sergeant's stripes and he and Lederer were to get week-end passes all next month."

"Boy, week-end passes for a month!" the other voice said enviously. "How come, Schwartz?"

"It was for nothing but stopping that damn train," Schwartz answered vindictively.

Back in the kitchen, Sergeant Lederer looked at Opie McCall. Opie looked back. Then, with grave ceremony, he untied the towel he was using as an apron and heaved it into a corner.

"Well, what do you know?" he marveled. "It kind of looks as if us SOT's done all right, Sergeant First Class Lederer, sir. What say I and you go find us a beer?"

"That I'm for," Lederer agreed, a little dazed.

Opie offered his arm. "Shall us sergeants be off, sarge?" he asked. "Us SOT's got to stick together." •

Blue Notes

*Some assorted background facts
on who wrote what, and why, in
this issue of Bluebook*

Obituaries," says Brigadier General Edwin William Chamberlain, "are easier to write than autobiographies, so I'll just stick to facts."

The author of "The Grasshopper Commandos," which appears on pages 28-29 (as well as "Last Man On Luzon," in our previous issue), then goes on to say he's from Idaho, was a student at the University of Idaho, was graduated from West Point, and served all over the Pacific before being retired for physical reasons right



after WW II. He started writing in the early 30's, has drawn checks from most of the top magazines in the business, and he concludes by saying that "I write mainly about the people I know best—soldiers. . . . I hold the hundreds I've known in deepest respect."