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The Way to the Stars

By Unknown

This was an airfield
Now not a sound here
Empty
Empty hangars
The control tower
Once the very nerve centre of the airfield
and now
derelict
No more happy landings
The crew room
Telephone numbers scribbled on the wal
A pin -up girl
A name Johnny
A sign on the floor
Al that is left of people who lived here
And now sheep are returning to this English
fiel once mentibned in the Domesday Book
It was very different in
- Ok. Thanks, Shorty.
- Goodbye. Good luck.
Pilot Officer Penrose, sir?
- Yes
- Oh, l'm your batman, sir.
- Jones is the name
- Oh, right.
This is your chest of drawers, sir.
Flight Lieutenant Archdale,
he's been keeping a lot of his stuff in here, sir.
lf you speak to him nicely, he won't mind moving
them. He's a nice gentleman, Mr Archdale.
- That his tunic?
- Yes, sir. That's his best.
The one he wears when he goes into Shepley.
He's got a good reason for going into Shepley.
All the fuss he makes about his buttons
in the evening.
He got this DFC, sir, for that low-level do
over Rotterdam. l expect you read about it.
Yes, l did.
- ls there a raid on ?
- No, sir. Well, at least not here.
lt's over at Marston, seven miles away.
Jerry's been giving it to them all the morning.
Yes, l thought l heard

the sirens going in Shepley.

We don't take shelter for the sirens here.

But if you hear whistles being blown,
take my tip and run like a ruddy rabbit.

Jonesy, you silly clot!

You sent me dicing without my lighter.

I'm sorry, sir. I took it away to mend it. Won't take
a minute. I had no idea you were flying, sir.

I've just been up on air test and what happened?

I come into land, sideslip to miss
one of those damned bomb craters,
get caught up in someone else's slipstream
and ruddy nearly pranged the kite.

Bounced for ten minutes.

Lucky the CO didn't see it.

I'm ever so sorry, sir. I'll go and get it now.

- Mr Penrose, sir. He just got in.

- Oh, hello. I heard you were coming.

- My name's Archdale.

- Yes, I know.

I've taken up lots more room than I should.

I'll clear some stuff out.

- Don't bother. There's bags of room.

- They're putting you in my flight, "B" Flight.

- Straight from OTU, aren't you?

- Yes.

- What did they rate you, above average?

- No. Average.

Oh, well, we'll soon change all that.

There's a bit of a do on this afternoon.

It's apt to get a bit chilly at 15,000.

I thought that daylight Blenheims
were doing low-level jobs.

All levels. All jobs. Nothing a Blenheim
won't do, if you treat her right.

- Here you are, sir.

- Ah, thank you, Jonesy.

St Christopher?

Sort of. Yes.

Now, what are we going to do
with all this stuff of mine?

I don't know, sir. Unless I could pinch a chest
of drawers from that Mr Thompson's room.

- The one that bought it yesterday.

- Good idea.

What's that thing mean ?

I got it in a Jerry train in peacetime.

It means...

"Under the washbasin there finds itself a pot "

I looked under the washbasin and there didn't find itself any such thing, so I pinched it.

The sentiment's a bit crude, but it's decorative.

That's Halfpenny Field. Come on, quick!

- Where are the Hurries from?

- Local defence. Attached to us.

- Bad chance, three against 30.

- Oh, I don't know.

- Hello, Tiny.

- Hello, David.

Frankly, I'm scared.

I don't like them as close as this.

This is Penrose, just joined the Squadron.

Tiny Williams, controller, shocking type.

- How do you do?

- How do you do?

I thought I heard something.

Let's get to the shelter.

Right through to the end.

Come on. Don't jam the doorway. Hurry up.

- Where did that one fall?

- By the market square.

- Close?

- Fairly.

I hear as how they hit a shelter

over at Marston this morning

Over 50 dead and lots still buried.

- kick him, somebody.

- I'm only telling you what I heard.

The trouble is you always hear

such ruddy depressing things.

Funny how Jerry always comes over

at our PT time, Sarge.

Don't you worry, my boy.

You won't miss your PT.

More ruddy craters. It makes you sick.

You break your back filling'em in

and Jerry digs up some more.

There's the CO.

This is Pilot Officer Penrose, sir.

He arrived today.

- How do you do?

- How do you do, sir?

Any relation of "Nipper" Penrose,
840 Squadron ?

No, sir.

Grand type, old Nipper,

- How many hours have you done in Blenheims?

- 15, sir.

15? What do they think they're doing
at OTU, these days?

I know there's a bit of a flap on at the moment,
but 15 hours? It's a bit thick, I must say.

- He passed out pretty high in his course, sir.

- Did you? Good show.

Above average?

No, sir. Average.

I can't promise you much time to settle down.

- The Squadron is hard-worked at the moment.

- Yes, sir.

All clear. Come along to the crew room
and meet the blokes.

Well, if Jerry thinks he can put Halfpenny Field
out of action, he's making a big mistake.

As long as we've got 200 clear yards of turf,
we'll get off somehow.

Line shoot.

These fighter types, you know?

Top button undone.

Victory rolls.

Bad show, I think.

That's two of them. Can you see the third?

No, sir.

Mind you, I'm not saying they're not doing
a good job, at the moment.

No Shepley 165

Hello. The Golden Lion ?

Who's that? Fred?

Flight Lieutenant Archdale here.

No. No, don't bother her now.

I just wanted to know if everything was all right.

- Who's that, Fred?

- It's the aerodrome, madam.

Flight Lieutenant Archdale.

Just wanted to know if we were all right.

Hold on, sir. I'm putting you through now.

Hello, David.

No, nothing at all near here.

Well, not really "near". How's the airfield?

Good. Thank you for ringing.

Your snapshots?

Yes, I've had them developed for you.

Good show. I'll be down tonight.

- Oh, David!

- Sir ?

You won't be going on this afternoon's trip.

- Arthur! You'll lead B Flight.

- Right, sir.

I'm sending you up with Penrose

to give him a look round, see how he gets on.

The sooner we get him operational the better.

- Can't Arthur go with him, sir?

- No, David. Sorry.

Now, a re wo a here ?

No sir Just waiting for Mac

Oh, that's all right.

Oh, David, you'd better take a gunner with you.

Who was Thompson's Gunner?

- Clarke, sir.

- Sergeant Clarke!

I'm sending you up to stooge around

with Pilot Officer Penrose.

We don't want you running into

500 plus Messerschmitts.

- You'd better get a route from Ops.

- Right, sir.

Well, chaps, as you know,

the target for this afternoon

Calais. Barge concentrations.

- Bill Thompson was about your size.

- Thanks.

Superstitious?

- Just going to sign the 700. Won't be a minute.

- Righto.

The Home Service has gone, too.

Punctual blighter, Jerry.

Same time yesterday.

Probably having another big shot
at reaching London.

Well, Penrose,
what got you into the flying racket?

Three pints of beer,
I think!

I don't know, really.

I had to do something about it and I felt
I'd sooner do it this way than any other.

- What did you do before that?

- I was a schoolmaster at a secondary school.

- I'm just an amateur.

- There aren't any amateurs and professionals.

Just good pilots and bad pilots.

The good pilots stay alive
and the bad ones don't.

That's not true any more, either.

Thanks.

- Break your blooming heart, wouldn't it?

- Just my luck. Another 15-hour sprog.

Look out. Here he is.

- Afternoon, sir.

- Afternoon.

The port engine's not giving the revs
she should, sir. Careful not to overheat her.
She's a bit overdue for a major, sir, but the
Engineering Officer, he says we can't spare her.
It's a wicked shame to treat aircraft like this, sir.
Mark my words, no good will come of it.

Thanks very much.

The new bloke, sir,

I bet his first takeoff's worse than mine was.

I doubt it.

Well, he missed the control tower

Come on, chaps. Time to get cracking.

Mr Palmer.

A fine sight, isn't it?

- One missing, isn't there?

- Yes.

We don't know which one yet.

- Had a good trip?

- Not bad. Just a stooge around, you know.

- How do you like flying Blenheims?

- Very much.

They take a bit of flying, of course,
but I'd sooner handle them than most types.

- You've flown a lot of types?

- A fair number, you know?

Blenheims are pretty easy. I suppose they'll
make me operational straightaway, won't they?
You can't fly a Blenheim to save your life.
And there's not only your life
to be considered, either.
You'll go on operations
when I think you're fit and not before.
I only thought
that with the shortage of pilots...
If I let you fly on ops in your present state,
I'd only be adding to the shortage.
That landing was ruddy awful.
Don't go, Tiny. I want to speak to you, presently.
If you make another landing like that,
I'll send you back to OTU,
Battle of Britain or no Battle of Britain.
Sorry.
Why didn't you go round again ?
Well, I thought I could get her down all right.
Well, next time, you might remember
that you've got other people flying with you.
Right.

- Hello, Tiny.

- Hello, old boy.

The CO bought it this afternoon.
That's what I wanted to see you about, Tiny.
I suppose they'll make me Acting CO.
I'll send another bloke up with you this
afternoon, to do some circuits and bumps.
And Penrose
I think you'll make a pilot, all right.

- Oh, hello, sir.

- Hello, Sergeant.

Sorry about making such a clot of myself.
What do you mean, sir, that landing?
Ta. I've had worse than that, don't you worry.
Old Bill Thompson,
he used to be my pilot till he bought it.
He used to do some real shakers.
Break every bone in your body.

Poor old Bill.

Yours was nothing.

Thanks.

- Going Shepley way?

- Yes, sir.

- Jump in. What about you, Penrose?

- Thanks very much, sir.

- Hello, Miss Todd.

- Hello, Flight Lieutenant.

- This is Pilot Officer Penrose.

- How do you do?

Don't forget to wipe your feet before you go in the lounge. I've told you before.

Most terribly sorry.

She the manageress?

Bit of a tartar, isn't she?

Oh, her bark's worse than her bite.

Boys, have a drink. I expect you deserve it.

- No, thanks.

- Come on. Don't be shy.

- Palmer's the name.

- Pilot Officer Penrose.

Two large Highland Flings.

Must support the old firm, you know.

Well, been giving those old barges a caning?

That's the stuff. Only, save a few Jerries for the LDV. I'm rather hot with my pike!

I beg your pardon.

The Misses Winterton, major and minor.

- Mr...

- Penrose

- How do you do?

- How do you do?

How do you do?

Would you care for a drink, Miss Winterton ?

What's that you're making?

- An air-force pullover.

- For anyone in particular?

No.

- Just for the Comforts Fund.

- Oh.

It's a bit difficult

making those squiggly bits round the collar.

No, it isn't, really.

You see,
when you get to the end...
Iris, dear, we'd better have our dinner now,
otherwise we shall find
it's all been eaten by the non-residents.
Yes, Auntie.
Oh, Miss Todd!
- You know I never complain...
- Yes. Will you come to my office after dinner?
Iris!
Coming, Auntie.
Now, if they'd drop a bomb on Auntie,
instead of Halfpenny Field...
She need it?
- Oh, hello.
- Hello.
- Can I help you?
- Yes. Here.
You wipe while I wash.
One of the bar boys left this morning. Called up.
- Did you go over this afternoon ?
- No. The Squadron did.
We lost our CO.
Squadron Leader Carter?
I'm terribly sorry.
Yes. It's a bad show.
He was a great friend of yours, wasn't he?
I knew him pretty well.
Is there any hope?
No-one saw him or his crew bail out.
They'll post them as missing, I suppose,
for three months, anyway.
I think if I had to hear
someone was killed,
I'd rather hear it at once,
than hear it first as "missing".
Yes, it is rather an ugly word, isn't it?
know a
kind of poem called Missing.
Do you?
Less said the better.
The bill unpaid. The dead letter.
No roses at the end of Smith my friend
Last words don't matter

for there are none to flatter
Words will not fill the post of Smith the ghost
For Smith, our brother
only son of loving mother,
the ocean lifted, stirred...
...leaving no word.
You wrote that yourself.
I say things I feel, that way, sometimes.
Sort of hobby.
I didn't know.
You're the only one who does
or who ever will.
Miss Todd? Glasses please
Fine bar boy, I am, spouting poetry at you.
The German pilot says to the Girl Guide,
"Which way is to the station ?"
She said, "I don't know.
I'm a parachutist here myself."
- Not bad, eh?
- Not bad.
- Going to bed already?
- Yes. Auntie doesn't like us staying up late.
Well, I suppose there's not very much
to stay up for in a place like Shepley.
- No, there isn't.
- Is there a cinema?
- Oh, yes.
- Well, couldn't we go along...
Iris, dear, I thought I asked you
to get the room warm.
Yes, Auntie.
I sometimes wonder whether these modern girls
ever think of anyone but themselves.
- One for the swing doors?
- No, thanks.
- Drink up!
- Hello, we've had it.
Never mind. Hear about the man in the shelter?
The woman in the shelter... Wait a minute.
- You seen Archdale?
- No, but I shouldn't worry.
He's always last man out.
"Love's Old Sweet Song."
- So, this...

- Good night.

The man... Cheerio.

Get me a final one, will you?

I've got a chill. I have, honest.

Tell'em it's for medicinal purposes.

Mr. Palmer, you do go on.

I kill'em.

- Good night.

- Good night.

- Good night, Miss Todd.

- Good night.

Good night, David.

Toddy.

What is the time? I know we shall be late.

There's plenty of time. Don't fuss.

There.

The skirt's still far too long.

I shall tread on it, I know I shall.

No, you won't

Don't I look a sight!

Yes, you do look a sight.

I'll get your bouquet.

Why, whatever's the matter?

Nothing.

Darling Toddy.

- Good luck.

- Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am glad to say that to me
has fallen the lot to propose
the health of the...

...if I may coin a phrase,
"happy pair".

To the bridegroom, I would say this.

May his matrimonial takeoff
be straight and smooth.

May his climb through the clouds
of married bliss be swift and controlled.

May his navigation be sure, his air speed steady
and may all his engine troubles be little ones.

To the bride, I would merely say this.

That man again. Better get down the shelter.

Come on. Slide along, Corporal. Slide along.

Up a wee bit. That's it.

Thank you so much.

More ruddy craters!

Halfpenny Field.

Halfpenny?

That's a funny kind of a name.

Well, it seems in 1066,

the owner used to pay a "halfpenny" rent for it.

That was our biggest crater.

Over there. By that Boston.

That damn port engine's

still not giving me anything like the right boost.

- Why wasn't it fixed?

- I thought it was. We worked on it all morning.

If you want to break our ruddy necks,

you're going the right way about it.

See it's fixed by 1430 this afternoon, eh?

Yes, sir. Shall I put it "US", then, sir?

I said, "Fix it", didn't I?

Yes, sir.

What's the matter, Dad?

If you ask me, son, I think it's about time

that young chap had a bit of a rest.

Yeah.

This way, sir. This is the officers' mess

and this is the anteroom.

What a honey!

- What a ship!

- That's supposed to be American ?

Yeah gentlemen the B 17

"The Flying Fortress" as we call her is surely

the greatest bombing ship God ever made

Why, it cruises at 650.

Well, let's say 645.

We mustn't exaggerate, must we, gentlemen ?

This bombing ship is the only ship

that will fly in ever-decreasing circles,

until finally it shoots itself down.

Or conversely,

it disappears up its own...

Gosh.

The B17 is a mighty fast machine, son,

but I don't think it's quite as fast as all that.

I mean, yes, sir.

- I mean...

- I think I understand what you mean.
- Would you have a beer, sir?
- Thank you.
Gentlemen, Colonel Page.
- How do you do, sir?
- Thank you.
Is it true, sir, I mean, about the rumour?
What rumour?
Well, as you'll all get to hear about it,
sooner or later, yes, it's perfectly true.
That Halfpenny Field is being taken over
by the Yan... by the American Air Corps, sir?
- By the Eight Air Force.
- What sort of aircraft? A20s?
No, B17s.
"The Flying Fortress",
as we call her.
You "ve had it again Prune
Right. Well, tell her I'll be right down.
Oh, hello, Peter. Is that engine all right?
- No. Working on it now.
- Is it going to be US for this afternoon ?
Better not be or I'll murder that ground crew.
What's the gen, sir, still the Middle East?
- How would that appeal to you, Prune?
- What do you think of that, Peter?
Soft, languorous nights,
a canopy of stars, the magic of the Orient.
I'm going to be a sheikhess's plaything.
I've left my lighter at home.
Will you come with me, Peter?
You wouldn't say no to a sheikhess, would you?
Oh, yes, of course, I forgot. You would.
Little Miss Thingumabob at The Lion.
- What do you mean ?
- Nothing at all.
Well, then for Pete's sake, shut up.
I was having an argument with a bloke.
How many trips have you done? He said 41.
43. Why?
That's what I said. Not bad for one tour.
What do you mean, "one tour"?
After this afternoon's trip, you'll have finished
your first tour of ops. Congratulations, Peter.

I'm not being taken off flying, am I?

Yes, for a bit.

Your posting came through this morning.

- Controllers' course.

- Oh, my...

Whose idea was all this?

Now, listen, David,

I came into the RAF to fly,

not to sit on the ground

using a lot of brains I haven't got.

If you applied for me to be taken off flying, you

damn well better apply for me to be put back.

I don't blame you for putting up a moan.

That's why I didn't tell you before.

How could you have done,

if my posting only came through this morning?

So you did apply.

All right. Yes, I did.

- Darling! Where are you?

- Don't make such a noise. You'll wake Peter.

- Hello, Peter.

- Hello, Toddy.

- She's in there.

- Alone?

- She was.

- Good.

- How's our Peter?

- Come and have a look.

- Is it all right?

- Yes. Why?

Well, it looks sort of screwed up.

Well, of course it looks screwed up.

So did you at his age.

Not as screwed up as all that, surely?

- Are you sure it's not in pain ?

- Of course not.

Can I pick it up?

No, David, please don't. You'll ruin my morning

if you wake him - and it's "him", not "it", please.

It'll always be "it" to me,

till it begins to look a little more human.

That's the way to hold a baby.

Our MO showed me.

Darling!

Did naughty Daddy wake him?

Naughty Daddy's got to get the hell out of here.

- I left my lighter in our room. Did you see it?

- No, it wasn't with your things.

Oh. I'll just dash up and have a look.

- Is there something on ?

- Yes.

I know I shouldn't ask, but...

Is it anything important?

Just the usual stooge around.

But, surely, we could have dinner alone somewhere?

Auntie would never agree to it.

Well, I'll ask her tonight.

As a matter of fact,

I'll have something to ask you, too.

Anything very important?

It depends which way you look at it.

I can't find it. It must be at the station, after all.

- You will find it, won't you?

- Oh, yes, I'll find it, all right.

Yes, I think I know where it is.

Give me a ring when you get down.

Have I ever forgotten ?

No. Not yet.

Well, darling.

Ah, there you are, Miss Todd.

I suppose I should say "Mrs Archdale "

but I can never get used to it

There's something I want to see you about.

If you'll go down to my office,

I'll be with you in five minutes.

Now I'm up the stairs,

I think I'd better stay up them, don't you?

They're so bad for my heart, you know.

It's about my bottle of Worcester sauce

- Bye, darling.

- Goodbye.

David!

Yes, darling?

It doesn't matter.

See you tonight.

Now, I noticed this morning at breakfast, when we had fish cakes, remember?

Of course I always like Worcester sauce
with fish cakes
especially when they're the least little bit
tasteless,
I noticed that someone had been tampering
with my bottle.

- Peter!

- OK

- Goodbye, David.

- Bye!

Well...

See you tonight, eh?

- Promise?

- Promise.

Don't talk to any strange men, will you?

Everything all right?

If you have any trouble with it now,
you can knock my head off.

I will. If I'm still here to do it.

- Keep in fairly close going over.

- Right.

- How are you feeling, all right?

- Of course I'm feeling all right.

- I've got Prune standing by, if...

- I'm not a controller yet, you know.

Look, Pete... you're not still
sulking with me, are you?

I'm sorry, David. It was a bit of a shock,
you know, hearing it like that.

know

I suppose

43 trips is quite a lot, isn't it?

A heck of a lot.

Coming down to The Lion tonight?

You bet.

Don't forget, keep in close.

R Roger airborne. 1100.

Bang on the dot.

Hold it.

Come in.

- Oh hello Tiny

- Hello, old man.

I've just heard.

I'm terribly sorry.

Bad show, isn't it?
How did it happen ?
Light flak emplacement
on the roof of the power station.
I suppose there's no
chance that he might...
He went straight in from about 500 feet.
Caught fire at once.
I'm terribly sorry.
He should have evaded after dropping
his bombs. He told us to do it often enough.
I suppose he wanted to mark the bursts.
I suppose so, yeah.
That's how old Campbell went, wasn't it?
Your shoes, sir. Nice and clean now.
Mr Parsons has just told me the news
about Squadron Leader Archdale, sir.
- Yes, bad show, isn't it?
- Terrible, sir. Plain terrible.
I don't know when I've been so upset.
He was my nicest gentleman.
Of course, it's worst of all for you, sir,
you being a particular pal of his. I...
No. I hate mine.
Do you mind if I ask the PMC
if I can move in here?
Yes, if you like.
Peter...
You're going to tell his wife, aren't you?
No.
I think you should. After all, you know her
much better than any of us.
I said, no. I won't do it.
All right. Just as you think.
What's there to tell her?
Your husband crashed into a hill in France
and got burnt?
You'd better get the Adjutant
to write her one of those letters of his.
He knows what to say.
God knows he's had plenty of practice.
He'd got no right to get married...
and have a kid.
We none of us have.

There's someone here to see you, madam.
He's out in the hall.
Did he say what he wanted, Elsie?
I don't know, madam. It's Flying Officer Penrose.
Thank you.
Hello, Peter.
- Mr Palmer wants two whiskies and sodas.
- Very good, madam.
Come into my office, will you?
I know what you've come to tell me, Peter.
You do?
Yes, you see...
he didn't ring up this evening
and I counted one plane missing
when you came back over the town.
Tell me just one thing.
How much hope is there?
No hope at all.
Not very much, I'm afraid.
I thought perhaps there might have been some
question of "missing". It does happen, I know.
Someone bails out, no-one sees them
and then later they're reported as a prisoner...
I'm afraid he was too low to bail out.
His plane crashed into a kind of a hill.
Whatever happened
would have been instantaneous.
You saw it?
Yes, I saw it.
Thank you for coming to tell me, Peter.
I know what it must have meant to you,
but I couldn't have borne it from anyone else.
Thank you.
don't know what to say, I'm afraid.
I've brought a few things down,
which I found up in my room.
Nothing very important.
Just handkerchiefs and socks and things.
I thought I'd better bring them down.
Oh, and there...
There was a piece of paper with his writing on it,
which I thought you might like.
I can't see without my glasses. What is it?
It's a bit of poetry, I think.

Will you read it for me?

- Well, I...

- Please.

"Do not despair for Johnny-head-in-air,
He sleeps as sound as Johnny underground.

Fetch out no shroud for

Johnny-in-the-cloud...

And keep your tears for him in after years.

Better, by far,

for Johnny-the-bright-star...

to keep your head

and see his children fed."

I suppose...

He must have copied it

out of some book or something.

Yes, I suppose he must.

Is there anything else

that you would like me to do?

No, thank you, Peter.

I'll come down tomorrow and see you,

of course. That's if you want me to?

Yes. I want you to.

Well, I'd...

better be getting back to the station.

I volunteered to take somebody's orderly officer.

- You have to work tonight?

- Well, I said I would, you know?

ssee

I forgot. He...

He left his lighter behind.

I found it after we got down.

Probably upset him a bit having to fly without it.

Yes, it would have done.

Thank you, Peter.

- Oh, hello.

- So you kept your promise.

What promise?

o come down and ssee me

Well...

I'm afraid I've got to get back to the station.

Oh. When shall I see you, then?

I don't know.

I'm awfully sorry about tonight.

Good luck!

Goodbye, you lucky people!

Give my love to the Yanks.

And ours to the Arabs, too.

I'll bring you back a couple of Nautch girls!

I wonder what these Yanks are going to be like.

Goodness only knows, old man.

Present arms!

- Would you mind, sir?

- No. Of course.

Here we go.

Ah, thank you, sir.

- Got it?

- Lovely.

Been looking for you all over the place.

- What's going on ?

- Got to get all your stuff out.

- The Yanks have taken over E block.

- Oh, damn and blast!

Yes, I know. You've got to be quick.

- Excuse me, sir.

- Where are they now?

In the mess, wandering about, chewing the cud,
shooting the bull, calling each other "Buddy".

Buddy.

- Sorry to burst in. They told me number three.

- Oh, that's Ok.

- My name's Penrose.

- Mine's Hollis. Johnny Hollis. Hello.

- Afraid I haven't finished getting my stuff out.

- That's all right. Take your time.

Unter dem?

What's this?

That? Oh, that's just a thing

the bloke I used to share this room with
pinched from a German train in peacetime.

What's it mean ?

It means,

"Under the washbasin there finds itself a pot."

I'll take it down in a minute

I'd kinda like to keep it there.

Hello, my jolly old fellow!

These English sly me. An orderly asked if I like
to be called in the mornings with a cup of tea.

- Excuse me.

- Oh, hello.
That goon's name is Friselli,
the bombardier with me.
- Flying Officer Penrose, Joe.
- Glad to know you.
- This is Wally Becker, navigator.
- How'd you do?
Nice layout you got here.
And what do you know, Joe?
They got a lot of women here, on the station.
Hey, is that true?
Well, there are some WAAFs.
- Well, they're girls, aren't they?
- Yes. I suppose so.
That's all, brother!
Are you moving out all together?
No, I'm staying on for a bit. I'm a controller.
- You're not a flyer, then?
- No, I'm not a flyer.
They had A20s, here, Johnny.
"Bostons", they call'em.
- Not a bad little ship, that A20.
- All right for reconnaissance.
Not looking forward to bringing a Fort in here.
Or to being in it when you do!
We'd just better make darned sure
we don't bring our bombs back.
Heck, we won't. Our bombs are going right
where they're meant to, right on that target.
Zonk! Zonk! Zonk! Every time.
Sure. We're all glad to know that.
Oh, it won't be me. It'll be the bombsight.
There's nothing to bombing
with that little baby to do all the work for you.
I tell you, those Heinis
are in for the shock of their young lives.
Say, have you ever seen a Flying Fortress?
Yes. From a distance.
- Like a trip in one?
- I would. Thanks very much.
Not a real mission, of course. They...
I thought you said you weren't a flyer.
I'm not. I was once, though.
What did you fly?

A20s. Just reconnaissance work, you know.
I'll see you all in the mess.
Well, of all the dirty tricks!
It's that big mouth of yours.
You had it coming to you.
Dashed bad form, old boy.
Come on !
Slide!
Come on in, Jimmy! Come on home.
Bit of a cow shot, old man.
- Tea?
- Tea.
- I say! Can I have some more milk, please?
- Sure thing.
Hey, Spud! Any more hot milk?
Not hot. Cold.
Hot in coffee. Cold in tea.
Anything you say. It's your tea.
- Hello, Tinker.
- Hello, Tinkerbell.
They don't warm the pot, you know.
I've watched them making it.
Oh, well. It's liquid and it's warm. I was afraid
they were going to abolish it altogether.
Oh, but they were going to,
if I myself hadn't protested to the Colonel.
Nobly done, Tinkerbell.
There you are, Bud.
I say, I've found out what that awful brown stuff
is that they put on the table at dinner.
- What is it?
- Peanut butter.
Oh. Made from peanuts, I suppose.
So I imagine.
I've tried it. It's revolting.
Hey!
What's for supper?
- Hash.
- Ooh, that's what I thought.
Flying clothes in the mess.
Yes, well, we must try and rise above it,
Tinkerbell.
You think there may be anything on tomorrow
in the way of ops?

Ah, that, of course, I couldn't say, even if I knew.

All I do know is that they're exceptionally keen
to get cracking keen as mustard

They've only got 12 Forts.

Yes, but then, as a bombardier, I think
that's what they call themselves, said to me,
"12 Forts can make a hell of a mess
of any gosh-darn target."

Apparently, with this new bombsight of theirs,
they can drop a bomb
into a barrel from 30,000 feet.

Zonk!

Well, well.

Last night a very strong force
of RAF Lancasters and Halifaxes
raided Bremen for the fourth night running

- Ah, for Pete's sake!

- What's eating you, Joe boy?

Why do we have to be here all the time,
listening to what the RAF did last night?

We've been here over two months now.

When are we going to get started?

Soon enough, Friselli.

When we do maybe you'll be wishing yourself
back at that radib again Who knows?

- Evening, Penrose.

- Good evening, sir.

First of all, Elsie, a nice large whisky and soda.

Sorry, Mr Palmer,
we've run out of whisky.

- What? Again ?

- I'm afraid so, Mr Palmer.

We had some more Americans in last night.

Will you have beer?

Oh, I suppose so.

What a war!

Tell me, dear, isn't that the RAF boy
who used to be such a friend of yours?

Yes, Auntie.

Hello.

Waitress!

He doesn't seem to come down
as often as he used to, does he, dear?

No, Auntie.

Funny.

Get on with your soup, dear. It'll get cold.

Hey sister!

Bring that check will you?

We've been waiting for 20 minutes for it.

What is it you're wanting?

The check. For crying out loud, the check!

- I'll see Miss Todd about it.

- And who the heck is Miss Todd?

- Pipe down, Joe.

- Johnny, I'm only...

- We'll miss the picture.

- You hadn't oughta shout like that.

Why the heck not?

Devilish bad form, old boy.

Look, is this supposed to be a restaurant or a funeral parlour? That's all I wanna know.

Why talk in whispers when we eat?

It's sort of a custom over here.

What? Like eating's a thing to be ashamed of?

- Yeah.

- Well, I don't get it.

What exactly is it you require?

It's all right, miss. We don't require a thing.

We're just going to sit here till Christmas.

Please. It's just the check.

I mean, the bill, if you don't mind.

Oh, the bill? She understood you wanted to cash a cheque and it's strictly against our rules.

Oh, no, I'm so sorry.

It's just that we are a little bit pressed for time.

Here.

Do you think that this will cover it?

- Did you have coffee?

- Yes.

- Is that what you call it?

- Do you wish to make a complaint?

No. Of course he doesn't. No.

It's very good. Very.

He's just trying to be funny, you know.

Thank you for explaining. I'll bring your change.

Thank you.

Boy, these sourpuss Janes give me a pain.

You two characters go along

and collect the transport. I'll wait for the change.

Ok. I'll settle up with you later.

Watch out for that human rattlesnake.

She'll eat you alive.

I heard you were here. I couldn't telephone.

We've both got to report to Intelligence,

"S2", after dinner.

- Something on ?

- Dawn tomorrow.

Soup any good?

Not bad.

How are you?

Glad to see you.

How you been?

Hello, kid. How's tricks?

Trying to strangle me?

Ok. Go right ahead. See if I care.

That's right.

Pull away, old fella!

Or should I say, "old lady"? Which is it?

"Old fella."

Caught.

- What's his name?

- Peter.

Peter. A nice, well-behaved baby.

That what you think!

- Whose is he?

- Mine.

Yours?

I beg your pardon.

- Why?

- Appropriating him like that.

Most mothers don't like it.

No. They think you're gonna poison them.

Oh, I don't mind. I always feel rather flattered

when someone pays my son a little attention.

Mary doesn't. That's my wife. She hates it

if some stranger gets familiar with our Emmy.

How old is Emmy?

Going on four. We've got a boy, too.

George. He's six. You wouldn't care to see

a snapshot of him, would you?

- Why, yes. I'd love to

- Sure it wouldn't bore you?

- Not at all. Please show me.

- Good. You're in for it.

There.

- What a pretty little boy.

- You'd better not let him hear you say that.

And then, this next one,

that's George and Emmy together.

And that's Mary with them.

It isn't a good picture of Mary. I took it myself,
the last leave before I came overseas.

She's kind of squinting at the sun.

She hasn't seen it yet

or she'd stop me showing it around.

I think she's beautiful.

- Thank you for letting me see them.

- Thank you for letting me let you see them.

Do you hear from them often ?

Oh, Mary writes most days. They come in
batches, though, that's the trouble.

Nothing for weeks and you get kinda worried
and then suddenly you're snowed under.

- The children must miss you very much.

- Oh, no, I shouldn't think so.

It doesn't mean much at that age, does it?

No.

Where's his father? Overseas?

He was killed three months ago.

I'm so...

- Is...?

- Yes.

Thank you.

Have you been over here very long?

Hey, Johnny, what the...

- Ok. I'm coming.

- I beg your pardon.

Would you mind not shouting like that in
the hotel? It's apt to disturb the other guests.

Yes, miss. Certainly, miss. I'm very sorry, miss.

Well, see you sometime again, I hope.

I mean, you'll be around?

- Oh, yes. I'll be around.

- Good.

- Goodbye.

- Goodbye.

What was she balling you out for?

Not washing behind your ears?

Excuse me!

Are you going out tonight?

Just to see a picture.

Have a couple of drinks, maybe.

- Like to come along?

- No, thanks. No. It's not that.

It's just that...

Well, if you don't mind me saying so, it might be a good idea if you had an early night tonight.

Come on, boy. No picture for us.

Back to the station... and bed.

- Johnny, look...

- I said, "bed".

Scram.

- Ok. Good night.

- Good night.

Thanks.

That's Ok.

If I don't see you before, all the best.

You bet.

- Good night.

- Good night.

- Hello.

- Hello.

I haven't seen you for...

well, ages, it seems.

I know. We've been pretty busy up at the station.

I haven't had much of a chance to get down here.

- Well, what's your news?

- Nothing much.

Auntie's made another application for my deferment.

She says she's trained me now in her illnesses and if I leave her to join up, it'd be fatal.

I see. It would. Absolutely.

But I can stay on at the cottage hospital as a part-time nurse.

- That's something, isn't it?

- Yes.

- What's your news?

- Oh, nothing much.

Just the usual sort
of stooging, boring...
- Oh, hello, Tiny.
- Hello.
Well... we ought to get cracking.
Good evening.
No, you wait here and I'll go and get the car.
Is there any chance of seeing you soon ?
Afraid not, you know.
We've got a basinful of stuff to get through.
Yes. I see.
It's perfectly all right.
I just wondered...
Look, I...
I know what you're thinking.
You're not right, you know.
Aren't I?
I wish that I could explain it.
You don't have to explain anything, Peter.
There's nothing to explain.
I'm terribly sorry.
It's perfectly all right.
Goodbye, Peter.
How long do you think this blasted war
is going on for?
Oh, years and years and years, I should think.
Spring 1950's my personal bet.
Do you think any of us have the right
to get ourselves tangled up until it's over?
What do you mean, financially or emotionally?
Wives, children, things like that.
Why ask me, old man ?
Personally, I've never had the old urge.
Why don't you write to Auntie Thingumajig
in the Daily Whatsit?
I'm serious, you know.
I know you are.
And I know you're thinking about David.
But I'm telling you the truth. It's not a subject
that I'm qualified to give an opinion on.
But you could tell me
how you'd feel if you were...
well, if you were in
the same sort of spot as I'm in.

I could, but it wouldn't do any good.
You see, I'm on the ground and, any time now,
you may be on ops again.
Anything I said couldn't have
any possible bearing on the matter.
Good luck, Colonel.
Thanks. We'll need it.
Well, guys, I guess this is it.
Quite some moment, isn't it?
Yeah but not for making a noise like a speech
I didn't even have a pep talk for the fellas.
They don't need it.
You're all the lousiest crew any poor pilot
was ever stuck with and I love you.
So, come on. Get up them stairs.
- Come on. Let's go, Joe.
I'm right behind you.
- Fred. Another pint, please.
- Very good, sir.
- Ah, good. Here's the food.
- Here it is.
- Right, sir.
- Ta.
- Well, here's to Forts.
- Here's to Lancs. Cheerio, Nob.
Some people get all the luck.
- Where are you now?
- Over at Tetworth Gunnery School, sir.
Can you imagine Nobby instructing?
- I'll bet he puts the wind up the pupils.
- The pupils put the wind up me, they're so good.
- Have you applied for Lancs?
- Hundreds of times.
Have another crack at it. I'll pull a few strings
and try and get you with me again.
Now, that sounds a bit of all right.
I've just heard a great story. This'll kill you.
There was an Englishman,
an Irishman and a Scotsman travelling in a train.
Please, could we have three beers?
- Yes, sir.
- Light ales.
- and when the man...
- Excuse me, will you?

came to collect the tickets, the Englishman turned to the Scotsman and said...

- What are you chaps drinking?

- Hello. Thanks. We've just ordered.

- Come on. Have another.

- Well, Ok. Thanks.

I guess we've got the right to get plastered tonight.

You have. From all accounts, that was a grand job you did today.

We walked away from it.

That's the best that can be said for it.

Here. Sit down. Sit down. Sit down.

What are you having? The beer's good.

- This is beer, isn't it?

- Well, it's a little ladylike.

Ok. We'll have what you got there.

Four pints of dark, Thomas.

Chalk it up on the old slate.

I'm going to have my cigarette now, dear.

Oh. I must have left my lighter upstairs.

Run and get it for me, will you, dear?

Allow me.

Oh.

Thank you.

The pleasure is all mine.

What charming manners.

- Hello, fellas.

- Baby, there's your beaker.

Thanks a lot. Say, listen, Flight Lieutenant,

I guess I owe you a bit of an apology.

If I gave you or anybody else the idea

that bombing targets was going to be easy,

I'll eat my words right here and now,

but I defy any other bombardier

to have done any better under those conditions.

Funny thing,

that group ahead of us hit that target smacko.

You know, "zonk, zonk, zonk"?

- How wide were your berths?

- How wide would you like?

- We may have killed a couple of enemy cows.

- Enemy-occupied cows.

Aw, lay off, fellas. I'll do better next time.

We live and learn.
I sure hope we learn. We only just lived.
Focke-Wulfes?
Yeah. They're good. Like you said they were.
Like some of us didn't believe.
Here it is.
Ooh, biggies!
Thanking you.
Well, good luck.
- Thanks.
- Here's to you.
I'm celebrating myself tonight.
I've been posted, Lancasters.
- Flying again ?
- You bet.
- Swell.
- You mean, "good show old boy".
Congratulations.
The ticket collector said,
"This man's expired."
So, the Irishman said,
"But his ticket hasn't."
Not bad, eh?
Come to think of it. I know a better one than that.
Goebbels...
Captain ? Captain ?
- Goebbels said to Hitler...
- Excuse me, would you?
This'll make you laugh, this one.
It's a good one.
Goebbels said to Hitler...
Goebbels said to Gring...
No. Wait a minute.
Gring said to Goebbels...
No. That's not right. Wait a minute.
It's very funny, this one.
- Care for a drink?
- We're already swimming in it.
- Wait a minute, Johnny. This is our night out.
- Joe says, yes.
That was a terrific show
you boys put up this morning.
Yes, I'm sure I'm right. It is...
Yes. That's right.

It's Gring said to Goebbels...

- Hello, Nobby. Is he still at it?

- Yes.

- Nobby Clarke, the worst air gunner in the RAF.

- How do you do?

- How are you?

- Sit down, Nobby.

You blokes put up a pretty good show
this afternoon.

My story. I can't remember the middle bit,
but the end was,

"Because the higher you go, the Fhrer."

Not bad, eh?

Ooh, by the way, I hear you chaps did a good
job of work this afternoon. Congratulations.

Don't drink that walop

Fred! Large Highland Flings all round

Perhaps you'd all like to hear this story

It's a good 'un

Gobbing said to...

Well, would you believe you?

Have a beer, Miss Winterton.

Disgraceful.

What do they think this place is, a speakeasy?

Mr Palmer. Mr Palmer!

Oh, yes, Miss Winterton?

- Disgraceful, isn't it?

- Yes, isn't it?

Well, don't you think

you'd better do something about it?

Right.

Boys, boys!

No, now, listen.

Break it up, break it up. Break it up.

- I'll tell you why, Miss Winterton objects.

- Oh?

I think she feels like a little chamber music.

So, what about giving her

one of the old ones, eh? Shall we?

- Yes.

- Let's go.

- There you are, Miss Todd.

- Yes, Miss Winterton?

Now, you know I never complain...

Go on up, dear.

You know I never complain,
but this time, really, I mean to say.

- The singing.

- Singing!

Yes, I'm terribly sorry,
but it is nearly closing time.

Closing time? They should all have been
thrown into the street an hour ago.

I agree,

but I don't think I'm quite strong enough to do it.

I assure you, Miss Winterton,

I don't approve of it.

- Toddy, my angel!

- Peter! Peter, really.

Good night, Miss Winterton.

- I'll be up in a minute. Toddy.

- Peter, what is it now?

These two gentlemen, very good friends of mine
both, Americans though they may be,
desire to cash a cheque.

Oh, all right. You'll find blank cheque forms
on the desk in my office.

Oh, thanks so much.

- Hey, Johnny.

- Yeah?

- Did you see that? He actually kissed her.

- Come on, lug.

- I just want one word with you.

- Well?

Afraid I won't see you after tonight,
not for a bit anyway.

Peter, I'm sorry. At least... I'm glad for you.

It's what you wanted, isn't it?

More than anything else, yes.

Iris will be terribly upset. Have you told her?

No, Toddy.

I was wondering whether you'd tell her for me,
after I've gone, you know.

Just say it happened very suddenly and...

just say goodbye to her for me, would you?

Peter, I know it's none of my business, but...

what exactly is wrong between you two?

It's nothing, Toddy, really. Nothing.

It's just that...

Look, I can't possibly explain it.

Let me just say goodbye to you, eh?

That's for you.

And that's for her.

And that's for her again.

Cheque forms, cheque forms, cheque forms -
there aren't any cheque forms.

"For Johnny". Hey, what's this?

Johnny, look.

- The old girl's written you a poem.

- Oh, put it away, Joe, it may be private.

Private! I'll say it's private.

She's put her flaming heart on paper.

For Johnny.

"Do not despair for Johnny-head-in -air,

He sleeps as sound as Johnny underground."

- What the heck does that mean? Any idea?

- Put it away.

"Fetch out no shroud for Johnny..."

Just looking for cheque forms, ma'am.

If you want to cash a cheque

to pay for your last round of drinks,

please don't bother,

have them on the house.

That's darn kind of you,

but we couldn't possibly...

Please, I insist. If you're very quick,

you've just time to order another.

Gee, that's swell of you, ma'am.

I could hug you for that.

Waiter.

- Any more news from home?

- No, not since I last saw you.

Have you been reading this?

Well... we were looking

for the blank cheque forms, you see,

and Johnny happens to be my name, too,

and Joe...

- And I'm sorry.

- That's all right.

Your name's Johnny, is it?

Yes, it is. Johnny Hollis.

What did you think of this?

I don't know that I quite understood it.

I'm not much of an expert on poetry, I guess.

Nor me.

Oh? We thought you'd written it.

No, my husband wrote it.

Now, why on earth should I tell you that?

You're the only person, beside myself,
who knows.

- Now, why should I tell you?

- I don't know.

Perhaps it's just the names.

Yes... perhaps it is.

But... it makes me feel kind of
privileged.

I'm glad.

- You're not superstitious, are you?

- No, not me.

If it happens, it happens,
no matter how many ladders you walk under.

My husband used this lighter
as a sort of St Christopher.

He was miserable if he flew without it.

He flew without it the day he was killed.

If he knew he didn't have it,
he was probably worried.

And if you're worried when you're flying...

well, things can happen.

If I give it to you, you won't feel that way about it,
will you?

No, I don't use lucky charms.

I'd sure like to have it though.

- It doesn't work very well as a lighter, I'm afraid.

- I can probably fix it.

Anyway,

it's a good thing to have.

Thanks an awful lot.

- Oh, and Johnny...

- Yes?

No, I'm not going to tell you my Christian name
because...

Well, just because.

But people, some people anyway,
call me Toddy.

Yes, Toddy?

If you ever feel you want
to get away from the camp,
and you don't want to face the crowd in there,
come in here and talk to me.
I'd like to hear some more about your family.
Say, you don't know
what you're letting yourself in for.
When I get going about my family,
I don't stop for a long time.
Oh, good.
Oh, Lord, look at the time. If I don't get
these boys out of here, I'll have the police in.
Mr Palmer,
I'm ashamed of you.
I'm terribly sorry.
Gentlemen, I call for three cheers
for our popular hostess Miss Todd, our Toddy.
- Speech! Come on, speech.
- Speech, come on !
Thank you, gentlemen,
and welcome to our American allies.
And will you please get the hell out of here?
- Good night.
- Good night, Toddy.
- Good night, pheasant.
- Good night, Captain.
And about those drinks, thanks a lot.
Good night. Good night, Peter.
And thanks - really thanks.
- Good night.
- Good night, Toddy.
All out. End of the line.
Visual target, couldn't miss.
Where were the Focke Wulf?
That's one target we won't have to hit again.
You'd think they'd defend a target like Frankfurt.
It's different from the last time
we went to Frankfurt, remember?
- Gosh, don't I just.
- Hello, Irene.
Thanks. First time they used those rockets
on us. Never been more scared in my life.
You were scared? Did you hear a noise
like a machine gun coming from the copilot?

- It was my teeth rattling.

- Johnny

Sir

- Oh, Bill, mail in ?

- Yes, sir.

- Anything for me?

- I checked, but there's nothing for you.

Ok. Thanks.

No dice, eh?

No dice.

I expected something today, too.

Haven't heard for quite a while as it happens.

- Nothing wrong, I hope.

- No, sir. Thank you, sir.

Anyway, I wouldn't worry too much about it
cos in a week or so's time,
you'll have the opportunity
to find out how Emmy is for yourself.

- You mean... I'm going home?

- Yeah, that's right.

Oh, boy.

How come ?

Seems they need more instructors back home
with combat experience.

I've been asked to recommend a combat pilot
capable of taking charge of a special instructors'
course, majority goes with it.

So I thought I'd send the best man I'd got.

Gosh, I don't know what to say.

I'm going to hate losing you,
especially now when things are hotting up.

Yeah, I know.

In a way, I'll hate going, too.

But... home.

Play ball!

Hey, look, get Tiny running at the pitcher.

Of course,

you don't run towards the bowler in this game.

- No, you don't.

- Stupid of me.

- He ought to stick to cricket.

- Yeah. Say, Joe.

What are you doing this evening?

- Just taking Iris to the station dance.

- Ah.

I suppose she'll turn out to be in love
with some Englishman, like all the rest.

Listen, I gotta tell you...

Hey, bring the bat back!

Come on, bring the bat back.

- Listen, Joe.

- What?

I've got to call on the vicar.

I'll come into town with you.

- On the vicar?

- Yeah.

- Why?

- It's the children's party they're giving tomorrow.

For some weird reason,

they've put it all off on me.

Well, do you wonder

after that performance last time?

- Uncle Johnny.

- Yeah, that's me.

How about that story

about the flying hippopotamus?

- How do you dream things like that up?

- All right. kids like that sorta...

- Joe.

- What?

- I gotta tell you.

- Tell me what?

- Don't tell the others, now.

- I'm not going to. What?

They're sending me home.

- Johnny, no.

- Yeah.

- Safe.

- What do you mean "safe"? I've ruined myself.

Peter, who was it who

sprouted wings?

A pottamus.

The pottamus sprouted wings, that's quite right.

He looked down, you see, and suddenly

there he'd gone and sprouted'em.

Yep.

Pottamus don't have wings.

Great big ones, too. Wingspan 200ft.

Where'd the pottamus fly to?

Well, it was a nice bright day,
so he flew towards the sun.

- That's very naughty.

- I know, that's what I told him. Naughty.

You're an evil influence.

I think perhaps we'd better put the candy away
in a safe place,
otherwise we shall have them all eaten
before tomorrow afternoon.

Yes.

You know, Iris, I've been thinking.

Why don't you leave the old sourpuss
to stew in her own juice?

Oh, I couldn't do that.

After all, I do owe her a lot
in a way.

Oh, look, you don't owe her a thing
and you know it.

Looks to me as if things are the other way round.

She's just a selfish old gorgon
who thinks of nothing but her stomach.

Don't let's talk about her. Do you mind?

Ok, let's talk about you.

I wonder if you'd mind if I asked you
a question, kind of personal.

- A truth game?

- Yeah, that's right.

I've been wondering
if there was any particular...

Well, if there was any
one guy you...

- You know what I mean, don't you?

- I do.

And the answer is no.

- No-one at all?

- No-one at all.

Not even an Englishman ?

Not even an Englishman.

That's all better.

- Hello, gang.

- Hello, Johnny.

Say, what's the flare path lit up for?

Oh, some RAF pathfinder types diverted here.

- Oh. Hello, Alan. Are you happy in the service?

- You bet, sir.

Can I pancake please? Over

No. 2.

Hello, Fanfare N Nuts. This is Blueprint.

You are No.2 to land.

Circle field at 2,000 and stand by.

Over.

Hey is there an ol soak down there
caled Tiny Williams?

This is Peter Penrose Over

N Nuts. Blueprint control.

Remember your RT procedure.

Yes, you old basket, this is Tiny Williams!

How are you?

- Here, let me at him.

- Yes, sure.

Hello, Peter.

Peter, this is Johnny Hollis, remember?

Hiya Johnny

Make mine a large Scotch and soda Over
Wilco.

One Scotch and soda.

- Thanking you.

- Thoughtful of you, Johnny.

Give me that, that's not for you.

Try some of this punch.

- Have you got a thirsty partner?

- No, Toddy's not here yet.

I didn't bring anyone.

Figured I'd do better on my own.

- Good hunting.

- Hey, check that.

- I got it.

- I've had my eye on her all evening.

Luck, pal.

Battery acid!

Excuse me, do you know Keith Hardy?

I've been looking for him.

Keith Hardy? Oh, he's left.

Left?

Yes, can I get you a drink?

Thank you, that's kind of you.

Hello.

Hiya, Keith, old boy,
the very guy I've been looking for.

Obviously.

One Scotch and soda large for you, sir.

- Thanks.

- Good to see you, Peter.

How are you? Do you remember Nobby?

- Sure. How are you?

- Fine, thanks, sir.

- Take this.

- No, thanks, I don't touch it.

- No, too young.

- Ah, I see.

Well, you finally made Lancasters.

Yes, sir. Even the whole ruddy Air Council
couldn't keep us apart.

- Swell. What's it like being a pathfinder, Pete?

- Not so bad. No future in it though.

- What's going on in there?

- Station dance.

- Ah, could we take a squint?

- Sure, take it away. The joint's yours.

- Come on, Nob.

- Right.

Not bad.

Hey, there's that little girl
that used to live down The Lion.

- What's the matter, Iris?

- I think I want to go home.

Do you mind?

Iris, did I do anything wrong?

No, I just don't feel very well,
that's all.

Come on, come on, break it up. A fine thing.

- I thought you were my friend.

- Ok, Johnny.

- When did you get here?

- Just now.

I couldn't see you,

so I picked the handsomest man in the room.

Well, I'm pretty too. Get out of it! From now on
you're dancing every dance with me, see?

Excuse me.

- Wasn't it fun ?

- I haven't enjoyed myself so much for years.

Ah.

Are you going to do your Uncle Johnny stuff again this year?

Ah, sure.

- Oh.

- What's the matter?

Say, is there any way of breaking into the schoolroom?

- Well, we might. Why?

- It's something I forgot to fix for tomorrow.

One of my conjuring tricks.

Old Black Magic, they call me.

Oh, come on, then.

- If we get arrested, it's your fault.

- Ok.

I wish we could have a little more light on the scene. I think it's gonna show.

I'm afraid you'll have to risk it, Johnny.

It'll take hours to black out all the windows.

Yeah, you're right.

Ok, we'll risk it.

- Thank you, Miss Todd.

- Not at all.

Say... the village looks quite different in the moonlight.

The old Lion looks positively romantic, doesn't it?

There's a very bad blackout in No.3 bathroom.

You ain't got no soul.

- I've seen moonlight before.

- I know.

I hate goodbyes,

so I've been putting off telling you...

but I'm going home.

Oh, Johnny, how marvellous for you.

I'm so glad.

- You can imagine what I felt when I heard.

- Yes, indeed.

- How wonderful for Mary to have you back.

- Yes.

I guess she'll be pleased, all right.

After the war,

maybe you could come out to the States.

Oh... well, we'll try.
I don't suppose it'll be very easy.
Then we'll come over here and visit with you.
Golly, it'd be swell to come over here
to your Golden Lion just as ordinary tourists.
Sit around there all day - talking, drinking.
Not to have to fly.
Don't you like flying, Johnny?
Oh, sure I do.
But in my own time and not the government's.
Well... just in case.
Here's wishing you all the best.
- All the best, Johnny.
- You deserve it.
Give my love to Mary.
I will.
Thank you. And thank you for a lovely evening.
Oh, no, thank you.
- I shall see you again, shan't I?
- Oh, sure. kids' party.
Of course.
And I'll be down to say goodbye,
too if I can.
- Then this is just good night.
- That's right.
It's just good night...Toddy.
Good night, Johnny. Thank you.
What for?
Lots of things.
- How are you, Johnny boy?
- I don't know yet.
Well, get a good hope, Minnie -
here we go again.
Good morning, Johnny. All set?
Well, getting set, sir.
Guess I'm just a bit out of uniform
at the moment.
Say, sir...
...about that question of going home.
What about it?
Well, I was just wondering
if you couldn't see your way clear
to putting some other guy's name in.
Sure I could, easily, but what's the idea?

I don't know as I'd be all that much good
as an instructor.

Sure you would, Johnny.

What's the real reason ?

I don't know as there is a real reason, sir.

But the crew's only got ten more missions.

We're kind of accustomed to being together.

And last night I got talking

with some of the RAF fellas in the mess...

and it occurred to me that if a guy

didn't get here until the middle of things...

maybe he kind of oughta stick around

until the end.

Oh, it'll take much too long

to explain to you now.

Look, sir, I'll come in and see you

after the mission?

Yeah, sure.

You can see me any time, you know that.

- You don't have to, but come anyway.

- Thanks.

- Hey, Johnny, I'll give you a hand with that.

- Oh, thanking you.

And me thinking at last we had the opportunity

to get ourselves a good pilot.

Yeah. You'll have to put up

with them bad landings just a little bit longer.

Bad landings? What about them takeoffs?

Since when did I ever do a bad takeoff?

Well, you usually manage to miss

the control tower, I'll give you that.

I suppose you think I'm a fool?

Sure I do.

Only... well, we got kinda used

to your flying now, Johnny,

and... I guess a good landing

would kinda throw us off.

- What are you throwing for?

- Double deuce.

- Double deuce! Here, let me try, will you?

- Ok.

Here. Let's see if our luck's in.

Double deuce - the target for today.

Smacko! Right on the...

Smacko, right on the target all right.

I oughta autograph this miss.

Johnny.

His mark. Let's go.

What a charming boy that American is.

Charming.

- I must say, you're a very lucky girl.

- Yes.

He's asked us both to dinner tonight, hasn't he?

- Did he say what time he was coming?

- I don't think he'll be coming at all.

- Oh, why ever not?

- I told him a lie and he found out.

You know, Iris, I don't want to be unkind, but

I despair sometimes of being able to help you.

I took a lot of trouble

to become friends with that boy.

And just by using the ordinary little ways

of politeness and charm, if you wish,

I get him to like me very much indeed.

So much that he called you a selfish old gorgon

who thinks only of her stomach.

Said it I had any sense

I'd leave you to stew in your own juice

And what's more,

I agreed with every word he said.

- Iris, how dare you?

- I said I wouldn't leave, I owed you something.

I should say you do owe me something.

No, I did owe you something. I don't any longer.

Whatever I owed you,

I don't think it was as much as you said it was.

And it's been paid back a hundred times over.

I'm going to leave you and I'm going to get a job.

I'm never coming back as long as I live.

Goodbye.

Well, really.

What exactly is a gorgon ?

Do you know, Miss W?

I'll thank you to keep your impertinence

for your bar cronies, Mr P.

Miss Todd, Iris has gone off her head.

- She says she's going to leave me.

- Good.

- What did you say?
- I said good.
- That settles it. I shall leave myself.
- Good.
- Have you gone off your head, too?
- It may interest you to know, Miss Winterton, you've only been tolerated in this hotel for so long because of Iris.
As I seemed to be her only friend in the world, I thought if I threw you out -
which, heaven knows, you've richly deserved time and again in the last six years -
Iris would be in a worse position than she is now.
Or rather was, until she had the sense to walk out and leave you flat.
- How...
- I will make out your bill at once, Miss Winterton. And I may say nothing I have done for years will give me greater satisfaction.
Morning, Miss Winterton, how's everything?
Oh, go to the devil.
- Peter !
- Hello, Toddy.
Come into my office, quickly.
- What's the matter with the old trout?
- How long have you got here?
I don't know what good fairy brought you here, but it's providential.
You've got half a minute to make a big decision. Iris is leaving.
Now, do you or don't you want to marry her?
Toddy, you see, it's all very difficult,
- Let me do the talking. Do you mind?
- I've thought about it a lot...
I've known for a long time what's been the trouble between you two.
The thing that's been holding you back has been the thought of David and me, isn't that right?
I shouldn't have told you this in a hundred years. That's about it, yes.
Peter, believe me, you're wrong, dead wrong.
- Are you sure, Toddy?
- I wouldn't lie to you about a thing like this.

I promise you, if I could go back five years
and choose again whether or not to meet David,
whether or not to fall in love,
to marry him and bear his child,
I'd choose again to have things happen
exactly the way they did before, no other way.

- I can't understand...

- There isn't anything to understand.

I can't explain it, but any other woman
in the world would tell you the same.

Look, there she is now. Go on.

Iris... look, could you...

Have you got a minute to...

- Peter! You haven't let her go?

- Toddy, I couldn't stop her.

Go after her. Tell her she's to stay as my guest
until she gets a job, tell her the gorgon's gone,

- and tell her...

- What?

Well, tell her you love her
and then see what happens.

To the station and please hurry.

Please, I've got something I must say to you.

- Well?

- Well... you see...

Look, a squadron leader's pay is 29 bob a day.

- Is it really?

- Yes.

And then with allowances and a bit of fiddling,
you can get it up to 31s/3d.

- Really?

- Oh, yes, yes.

Then if you slip in a marriage allowance,
of course, that's different.

That's about 49s/9d a day.

That's what I was trying to suggest.

I mean, to ask you if...

- What are you trying to ask me?

- Well...

Look, it hasn't altogether been my fault.

I've been confused and muddled about things,
but my feelings haven't changed a bit
in the last four years, not an atom.

- And I wondered if you could...

- What, Peter?

Well, if you could take on 49s/9d a day.

- Tiny... Oh, good afternoon, sir.

- Afternoon.

- Come outside a minute, will you?

- Yes. Excuse me.

Well, congratulate me.

- Why?

- Don't I look any different?

- No.

- I'm engaged to be married.

- Who to?

- I'll give you one guess.

- And about time too.

- Tiny, I want you to be best man.

I'd have murdered you if you hadn't.

This calls for a party.

You bet. Got any money?

We'll get Johnny and some station chaps.

- And some of those of those types from 720.

- Are they back from the Med?

Didn't you know? They're at Marston now.

Old Prune's the flight commander.

Prune? Good Lord. Old Hitler's really had it now.

Well, here they are.

I make it three missing.

Stearns's in.

Only B for Baker missing.

B for Baker sighted, sir.

Coming towards the field now.

He's flying on three engines.

Sir, B Baker reports one engine cut,
rudder half shot away.

Elevator damaged

and one 500lb bomb stuck in bomb bay.

Bomb bay door won't close. Any advice?

Hello, Johnny.

Suggest you make a heading of 1-6-5.

1-6-5...

and bail out over airfield.

Bail out.

Seven.

Eight Nine

- One to come

- Sir ?

Pilot reports crew bailed out. No accidents.
The controls were not set to required course.

- Right.

- Exterior speaker.

Hello, Johnny. Blueprint calling. Over.

Climb to 3,000ft and bail out. Over.

And have a 500lb bomb going off in Shepley?

Not on your life lm coming in Out

- Hello, Johnny? Hello, Johnny?

- Go ahead Blueueprint

Climb to 3,000ft and bail out. That's an order.

Helo Blueueprint

There"s something wrong with my receiver

l didn "t get that

Third time luucky

Here l come Out

Do you mind coming to the platform with me?

Children, ladies and gentlemen...

Children!

Now, at this stage of the proceedings, l had
hoped to introduce to you Captain John Hollis.

Uncle Johnny!

Exactly. But, unfortunately, it appears that
he is prevented from coming here this afternoon.

That is so, isn't it?

Yes, that's right.

We want Uncle Johnny!

Yes, yes, l know, children. But you
must remember that he's probably on duty
and that there are more important things
in the world than entertaining you.

However, l've been asked to introduce to you
Lieutenant Joseph...

- Frisell.

- Frisell, who will speak to you in his stead.
Lieutenant Friselli.

l'm afraid l can't tell you any stories, kids,
because l just don't know any.

At least, l can remember the Three Bears, but
l guess you've all heard that one already?

l just wanna say that on behalf of everyone
at Halfpenny Field,

it gives us all an awful big kick to see you

having such a good time here this afternoon.

And I only wish Johnny Hollis
could have gotten along to see it,
cos I know it would have given him
a big kick, too.

But like the vicar told you,
he couldn't quite make it.

I guess you'd better start
playing those games of yours.

Are you friends with Uncle Johnny?

That's right.

What happened when the hippopotamus
flew into the sun ?

I don't know, kid, he didn't tell me.

Peter, you run away and play.

I heard what happened. I'm terribly sorry.

Thanks.

I didn't tell the vicar because I...

Well, I didn't want to spoil all this.

I knew Johnny pretty well.

Yes, I know.

I know there's nothing I can say can make things
any better for you, but I can only tell you this:
as long as this town lasts,
he'll be remembered here.

I'd like you to read this.

Not now, later.

It might help.

Time, please, gentlemen. Time, please.

- Time, please, gentlemen. Time, please.

- Sorry, Toddy, dear.

- Hiya, beautiful.

- Oh, you Americans.

And you RAF.

There's nothing to choose between you.

Good night, Toddy.

Beware of him, he's a bad type.

- You're all bad types. Good night.

- Good night.

- Good night.

- Good night, Colonel, come again.

Why not come to Chicago?

Say, you can fly over in a few hours.

- What about all these gangsters?

- Aw, heck.
- Chicago's one of the most peacefulest...
- Good night, Nobby.
- Good night, Toddy.
- Good night, Wally.

The next one's going to be like.

Rockets 1,000 tons, mark my words.

- Good night.
- Good night.

Goodbye, darling.

- Won't be long now.
- Take care of yourself.

Surely.

- Good night.
- Good night.

There you are.

- Take care of her for me, Toddy.
- Yes, of course.

Don't talk to any strange men.

- Good night.
- Good night, Peter.

I just wanted to give this back to you.

- Did you read it?
- Yeah.

Is it yours?

It belongs to me.

How's that last part go again ?

"Better by far...

for Johnny-the-bright-star,

To keep your head and see his children fed."

Yeah, that's it.

It might have been written for him, mightn't it?

I think it was.

- Well, thanks a lot. Good night.
- Good night, Joe.

Thanks.

Sounds like a busy night again.

Going back to the station ?

Fetch out no shroud

for Johnny-in -the-cloud

And keep your tears for him in after years

Better by far for Johnny-the-bright-star

To keep your head and see his children fed.