

Jim is not a jumpy type, but he found himself pretty white and shaky, and when they had taxied to a stop on the home ground his legs were strangely weak as he climbed down to the hard coral. We were waiting for him, and our one thought was to hustle him away before he was seen. He wanted to talk, but Mac growled: "Shut up, you mug! We've got to get you out of here!" We hadn't got far from the bomber when Mac almost winded us both with a jab in the ribs. A peep was drawn up at the edge of the field, with a provost officer sitting in it. Thanks to a previous incident he knew us well, and was watching us as we came along. We changed our direction casually, and as soon as we reached a road we hailed a passing truck, and beat it smartly back to camp.

It had been a narrow squeak, but it looked as though we had come out of it all right. There was no holding Jim back now, and as soon as we were in the tent he held forth about it all. As he finished his tale we heard a peep pull up at the Headquarters tent, and when Mac went and glanced out we saw his back stiffen. "It's that provost, and he's talking to Bill!" he exclaimed. Bill was our platoon commander, and a great chap. Soon Bill looked in the tent and said, "Are you there, Jim? Here a minute!"

Jim got up slowly, then stepped out to the flap with a reckless air. "All right, sir, I know what it's about," he said. "Yes, I've been up on a raid this morning. Always wanted to since they opened the strip." The provost was there with Bill, and there was a bit of a silence, while they both looked rather taken back. The provost glanced at Bill, then said to Jim, "Hm, you know that's a court-martial offence? We don't want you shot down on a sightseeing flight when you may be useful to the Army some day" (a dirty crack, that). "Actually what I came down about is a missing peep. It was taken from the runway shortly after I saw you up there, so I wondered whether you had seen it pass you. It had "chaplain" labelled right across the windshield. Know anything about it?" We didn't, and he said "okay!" and left, but only after giving Bill a long and meaning look.

"Come along with me, Jim!" said Bill ominously. Jim followed sheepishly, and when he came back a quarter of an hour later he still looked much the same way, except that his face was red as well by that time. When he liked, Bill could give a good dressing down. "No, it won't be a court-martial this time," Jim grumbled to our questions, "But I won't be going on any more plane trips." Then he added thoughtfully, "But I wasn't going to, in any case, the way they scared me this morning!"

