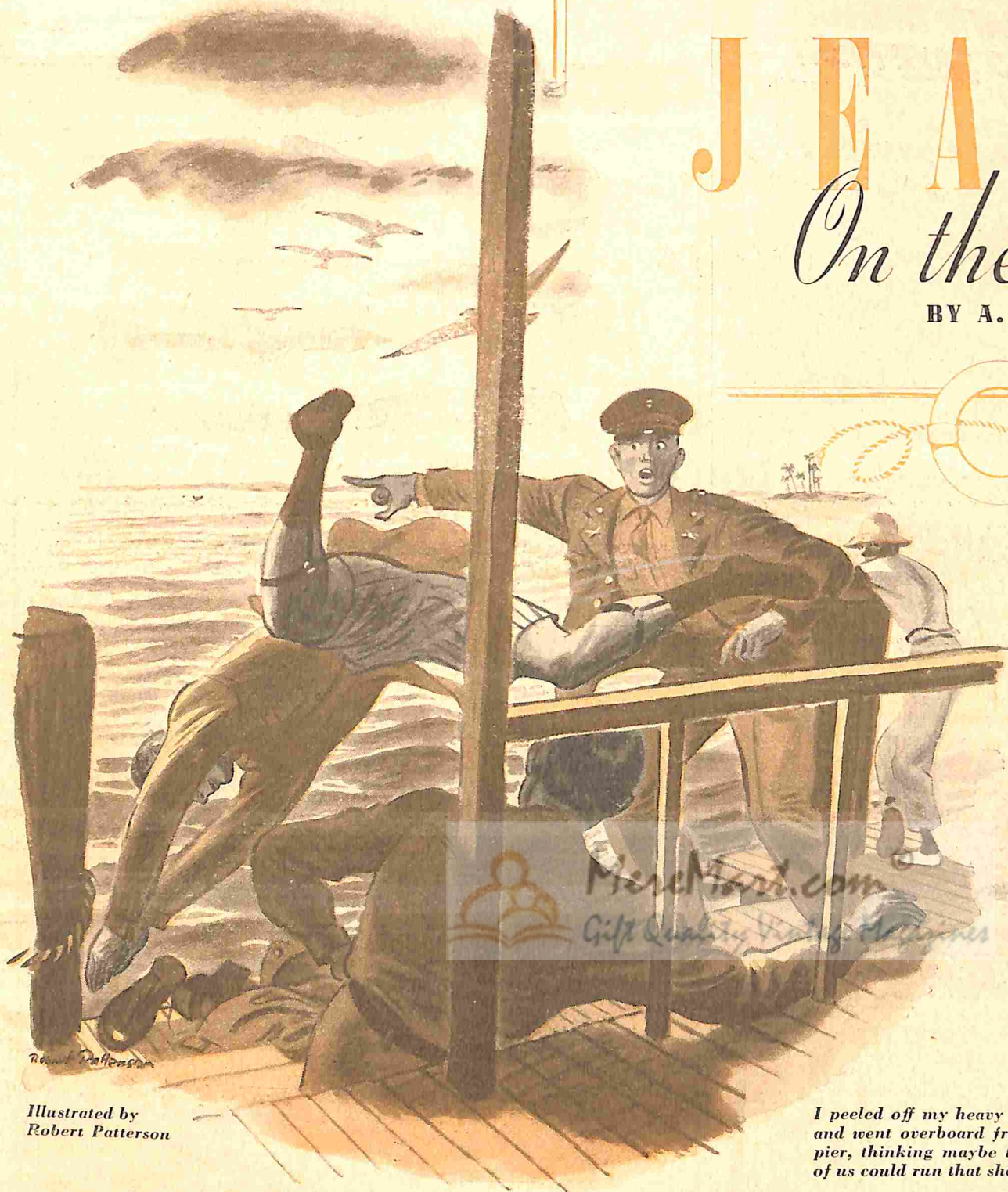


# JEANIE

## On the Beam

BY A. P. COOKE



Illustrated by  
Robert Patterson

**Egbert Wattles vs. Caspar Tweedle,  
may the best man win—and he did**

Hqrs. Co.,  
959 Aero Signal Bn.,  
Drew Field, Florida,  
May 7, 1943.

DEAR BOSS:

Remember when they drafted me and you said, "Egbert, the Herskitt Form-Fit Garter Company is proud of you—our first man to join the colors"? Then you said, "If I can be of service to you while you are personally fighting this war for me, don't hesitate to ask." I hope you have not forgotten that, Mr. Herskitt.

Well, I am now calling on you for that very thing and it is not a military problem either.

It concerns Jeanie Berthoff who works for you in the outer office. Jeanie is the littlest one out there; the one with the light brown hair. She has blue eyes and is sort of cuddly, but I guess you wouldn't know about that.

The favor I want to ask, Mr. H., is for you to use your influence and get Jeanie back on the beam for me. I will now describe the problem. It is as mixed up as a Hitler nightmare.

You know that I am not the strong, compelling type like Gary Cooper. I guess I am more what the poets call the shrinking violet type and no one could accuse me of being a heroic figure in uniform. I can't help that.

What you probably don't know, unless you looked over the incoming mail personally, is that in the ten months I have been here at this field I have written regularly to Jeanie every week. Most of the time she has answered very promptly in a friendly and affectionate fashion. That is what made me think I was doing O. K. with her.

But I got a very discouraging letter from her a couple of weeks ago in which she said she regrets to inform me that my letters have become so much tripe and until I can learn to be romantic, please not to encumber the postman any more. That, in itself, was enough to rock me back, as they say.

But the worst of all was her postscript. She said, "I hear that Corporal Caspar Tweedle, that dynamic Casanova, is also at Drew Field. Have you seen him or don't you associate with the higher officers?"

*I peeled off my heavy clothes  
and went overboard from the  
pier, thinking maybe the two  
of us could run that shark off.*

You remember Tweedle, Mr. H. He was that salesman for a paper cup concern who used to come into our office smelling of lilacs. The one who looked like Tyrone Power. The one who used to bring Jeanie those trick gadgets from the novelty store. Like that ring which squirted water in your eye when you bent over to look at the phony stone. Remember him?

Well, Jeanie was correct. He is at Drew Field and since his arrival, it hasn't made life any easier for me. Jeepers!

One evening I was pecking at a typewriter in the orderly room, trying to answer Jeanie's letter in the way she wanted—that is, filled with tender and romantic thoughts. I suspected somebody was looking over my shoulder because there was a strong scent of lilacs, even though that is no kind of smell for a soldier to carry around on him, no matter what.

"Oh-ho," he said behind my back. "It begins to look like Old Man Herskitt's male model—Egbert, the Pantie-Bra Kid."

Now, Mr. H., you know I never dreamed about modeling those things for you, but I figured that anyone who knew me that well must have been an acquaintance. I whirled around. Yes, it was that same loathsome Caspar Tweedle and, as Jeanie said, he is now a corporal.

"You," I challenged, pointing an accusing finger, "you are that boresome creature—"

"Tweedle's the name," he interrupted. "Corporal Tweedle. Could that"—and he bent over my shoulder to read some more—"be a letter to the beautiful Jeanie?"

"So what?" I asked in a firm voice.

"Oh, nothing. But from the number of typing mistakes you have made, it must be a code message."

"Listen, you," I broke in. "Lay off me—"

"Ha-ha-ha," he leered. "The Pantie-Bra Kid shows signs of fight." Then he went swinging away, whistling "I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair." Being just a PFC and him being a corporal, I couldn't take a poke at him; that is, not elegantly.

Now, Mr. H., there is this about the army. For every guy who wants to knife you in the back, there are a hundred who are willing to help someone in distress, and that is exactly where I was.

One of these helpers is my sergeant. I understand he has had three wives, but not all at one time, understand. I figured that if a man could get three wives, he must have something on the ball and could advise me from experience. His name is Philemon X. McGarrity. I don't know what the X stands for, but I looked up the name *Philemon* and it means a person who is loving and friendly. So now you can see why he has had three wives.

I told him my troubles and he was very serious like a doctor.

"Egbert," he said, "you are undergoing a lapse of amatory consciousness. Men get that way in the army sometimes, but not often. What you need is a ghost writer."

Well, I had heard about them. They are people who are hired to write things for people who can't write, but it comes out in the name of the people who can't write, just as if they had written it. I thought that might be too expensive.

"No," he assured me. "Go down to B Street and turn left. At the third barracks go in the orderly room and ask for Pal Oblinger, a sergeant. He is a professional pen pal, if you know what I mean."

I found him. He has a good business on the side, because there are numerous soldiers like I who cannot compose romantic

[Continued on Page 12]

THE  
*Household*  
MAGAZINE

JULY 1943  
VOL. 43 NO. 7

JULY  
1943

★ TEN CENTS

THE *Household* MAGAZINE

Arthur Capper Publisher

BUY UNITED STATES  
WAR SAVINGS  
BONDS AND STAMPS



MRS RUSSELL WEBSTER H  
LAFAYETTE MINN  
M347216-H  
4612

COLOR PHOTOGRAPH BY NORA HINE OF FRANK LEWIS, INC.