

17/8/54.

This is the first test of a new kind of ejector seat --- the method of catapulting a crew out of a five-hundred-mile-an-hour plane in case of emergency. He comes out underneath because it's a bomber. From fighters, the way out is upwards. The whole job is automatic; owing to the danger of black-outs at great heights and speeds, a timing device releases the seat and opens the parachute.

All works according to plan; and now all the parachutist has to do is wait till he drops another ^{few} miles to terra firma.

But if, as in this case, it turns out to be not terra firma but aqua pura --- there's a lifjacket that inflates to keep him afloat.