

# The Soothsayer



General Wilbur “Shorty” Dinklaker was renowned for his wartime foresight. Time after time, he predicted a military conflict’s outcome with uncanny accuracy. In battle, he always knew what the enemy was poised to do, so he could take appropriate steps to neutralize the attack. His adversaries couldn’t figure out where this aptitude came from, because in person he didn’t display *any* military intelligence at all. Only a handful of Army brass knew that Dinklaker’s prognosticating success was due entirely to his friend, Phil. Phil was a soothsayer. And Phil’s allegiance to the general was due to Annette, Dinklaker’s comely aide-de-camp. It was a cozy arrangement: Annette motivated Phil (neither would elaborate for this story), who provided spot-on predictions to Wilbur, who reported them to his commander in chief in exchange for nylons from the base commissary, which he gave to Annette. But the arrangement fell apart one chilly day in early December when Phil came out of his prophetic trance prematurely and caught Wilbur and Annette making goo-goo eyes at each other. He sensed correctly that some hanky-panky had been going on for some time, too. *The heck with national security!*, he was heard to mutter as he stormed off in a huff, never to return. The next day, December 7, 1941 – well, you probably already know what happened.