

The White Mud of Minsk



“Push!” cried Bob. “Push harder!” He’d driven his car, a sporty new Hudson Wingback, too close to the berm and gotten it stuck in the notoriously sticky white mud of Minsk. A crowd had gathered to gawk at the vehicle – cars were notoriously rare in that part of the city – and he’d offered 50 kopeks to anyone who could help free it. Many tried, but the concept of “pushing” was as foreign to them as was the French Legion. Then he had a brilliant idea. “Средней Азии!” (Free ride!), he shouted. At once, thirty Minskites grabbed hold of various parts of the Hudson. A minute later, thanks to Dinklaker’s Second Law of Counterintuitive Locomotion (“*Any object when not in motion can be caused to reestablish motion once contact with an unrelated object is made, but only on Wednesdays.*”), the car broke free of its mucky fetters. And more! Once liberated from the mire, it also unshackled itself from Earth’s gravitational field and rose into the sky. All of the hangers-on soon dropped higgledy-piggledy to the ground, save one, who, when he let go of the car, mysteriously floated up to an altitude of 155 feet, where he remains to this day. And what happened to Bob when the Hudson Wingback finally returned to Earth? No surprise, really: that’s another story.