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SF PERUSALS

Samuel French Acting Edition

Biloxi Blues

by Neil Simon

SAMUEL FRENCH

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Roy Selridge ..... BRIAN TARANTINA

Joseph Wykowski ..... .MATT MULHERN

Don Carney ..... ALAN RUCK

Eugene Morris Jerome ..... MATTHEW BRODERICK

Arnold Epstein ..... BARRY MILLER

Sgt. Merwin J. Toomey ..... BILL SADLER

James Hennesey ..... GEOFFREY SHARP

Rowena ..... RANDALL EDWARDS

Daisy Hannigan ..... PENELOPE ANN MILLER

STANDBYS

Standbys never substitute for a listed player unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance.

For Eugene — GEOFFREY SHARP, GREG GERMANN; for Selridge and Wykowski — WOODY HARRELSON; for Carney and Hennesey—JIM FYFE; for Epstein—GREG GERMANN; for Sgt. Toomey—JAMEY SHERIDAN; for Rowena—JOAN GOODFELLOW; for Daisy—JOYCE O'BRIEN.

OPENING NIGHT, MARCH 28, 1985

NEIL SIMON THEATRE

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MESSRS. NEDERLANDER

Emanuel Azenberg
in association with Center Theatre Group/Ahmanson Theatre Los Angeles
presents

Matthew Broderick

in

Neil Simon's



with

Bill Sadler Barry Miller

Randall Edwards Penelope Ann Miller
Matt Mulhern Alan Ruck
Geoffrey Sharp Brian Tarantina

Setting Designed by
David Mitchell

Costumes Designed by
Ann Roth

Lighting Designed by
Tharon Musser

Directed by

Gene Saks

TO MY GRANDSON,
ANDREW LELAND

Biloxi Blues

ACT ONE

The coach of an old railroad train, pressed into service because of the war.

It is 1943.

(All set pieces are representational, stylized and free-flowing. We have a lot of territory to cover here . . .)

Four soldiers, dressed in fatigues, from eighteen to twenty years old, are stretched out across the coach seats, facing each other, their legs reaching out onto the opposite seats. Three of the soldiers are sleeping. They are JOSEPH WYKOWSKI, ROY SELRIDGE and DON CARNEY. The fourth boy is EUGENE MORRIS JEROME. He is awake and sitting up, writing in a school notebook. It is quiet except for the rumbling of the train along the tracks. A fifth boy, ARNOLD EPSTEIN, sleeps in the baggage rack above the others.

It is night and a single light illuminates the group. ROY, in an effort to get more comfortable, turns and his shoeless foot crawls practically into WYKOWSKI's mouth. WYKOWSKI, annoyed, slaps ROY's foot away.

SELRIDGE. (*waking*) Hey! What the hell's with you?

WYKOWSKI. Get your foot out of my mouth, horse-face.

SELRIDGE. Up your keester with a meathook, Kowski.

CARNEY. Knock it off, pissheads.

WYKOWSKI. Go take a flying dump, Carney.

CARNEY. Yeah. In your mother's hairnet, homo! (*They all return to sleeping.*)

EUGENE. (*aloud to audience*) . . . It was my fourth day in the army and so far I hated everyone . . . We were on a filthy train riding from Fort Dix, New Jersey to Biloxi, Mississippi and in three days nobody washed. The aroma was murder. We were supposed to be fighting Germany and Japan but instead we were stinking up America. (*The train rumbles along . . . ROY peers out the window.*)

SELRIDGE. Where the hell are we? (*EUGENE is still engrossed in his writing. ROY kicks him.*) Hey! Shakespeare! Where the hell are we?

EUGENE. West Virginia.

SELRIDGE. No shit? . . . Where's that near?

EUGENE. You don't know where West Virginia is? Didn't you ever take Geography?

SELRIDGE. I was sick that day.

EUGENE. You don't know what part of the country it's in?

SELRIDGE. (*rises, grabs crotch*) Yeah. *This* part. Up yours, Jerome.

EUGENE. (*reads what he has written*) Roy Selridge from Schenectady, New York smelled like a tuna fish sandwich left out in the rain. He thought he had a terrific sense of humor but it was hard to laugh at a guy who had cavities in nineteen out of thirty-two teeth. (*The train rumbles on.*)

WYKOWSKI. (*opens his eyes*) Jesus Christ! Who did that?

EUGENE. What?

WYKOWSKI. Someone let one go! . . . Holy Jeez. (*fans his cap in front of his face*) I need a gas mask . . . (*lights*

a match) You writing all this stuff in your diary? "Major fart in West Virginia."

EUGENE. It's not a diary. It's my memoirs.

WYKOWSKI. Well, you don't have to write it down because *that* one will stay in your book forever . . . Whoo! Jeez! (*He goes back to sleep.*)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Joseph Wykowski from Bridgeport, Connecticut had two interesting characteristics. He had the stomach of a goat and could eat anything. His favorite was Hershey bars with the wrappers still on it . . . The other peculiar trait was that he had a permanent erection. I'm talking about night and day, during marching or sleeping. There's no explaining this phenomena unless he has a unique form of paralysis. (*The train rumbles on in the night.*)

CARNEY. (*His eyes are closed and he suddenly starts to sing a lively song of the period with practically full voice.*)

WYKOWSKI. Wake him up! Wake him up, for crise sakes! (*ROY kicks CARNEY in the chest with his foot. CARNEY jumps.*)

CARNEY. What the hell's wrong with you?

SELRIDGE. It's two-thirty in the God damn morning. You were singing again.

CARNEY. I was not.

SELRIDGE. What do you mean, "You was not"? You practically made a record.

CARNEY. What was I singing?

SELRIDGE. "Chattanooga Choo-Choo."

CARNEY. I don't even know the words to "Chattanooga Choo-Choo."

WYKOWSKI. Maybe not awake. But you know them when you're sleeping.

CARNEY. (*to EUGENE*) Hey, Gene. Was I singing "Chattanooga Choo-Choo"?

EUGENE. Yeah.

CARNEY. . . . Was I good?

EUGENE. Well, for a guy who was sleeping, it wasn't bad.

CARNEY. Damn. I wish I heard it.

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Donald Carney from Montclair, New Jersey was an okay guy until someone made the fatal mistake of telling him he sounded like Perry Como. His voice was flat but his sister wasn't. She had the biggest breasts I ever saw. She came to visit him at Fort Dix wearing a tight red sweater and that's when I first discovered Wykowski's condition. (*The train rumbles on.*)

WYKOWSKI. (*sits up*) God damn it. Someone let go again . . . Was it you, Carney?

CARNEY. I was singing, wasn't I? I'm not going to do that while I'm singing.

WYKOWSKI. Yeah? Well, maybe you sang to cover it up.

SELRIDGE. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. (*He looks up.*) It's coming from up there. (*They all look up. EPSTEIN has been sleeping on the grilling of the baggage rack with his rear end to the audience. WYKOWSKI whacks his cap hard against EPSTEIN's butt.*)

WYKOWSKI. Hey! Bombardier! Kill Germans, not G.I.s. (*EPSTEIN turns around. He is slight of build.*)

EPSTEIN. I'm sorry. I'm not feeling very well.

SELRIDGE. Yeah? Well, now we're *all* not feeling very well.

EUGENE. Leave him alone. He didn't do it on purpose.

SELRIDGE. (*to EPSTEIN*) You hear, Epstein? He's

your buddy. Aim the next one at him, okay?

EPSTEIN. Does anyone have an Alka-Seltzer tablet?

WYKOWSKI. Plugging it up ain't gonna help, Epstein. (*He and ROY laugh. They all go back to their sleeping positions.*)

EUGENE. (*stops writing, looks at audience*) Arnold Epstein of Queens Boulevard, New York was a sensitive, well read, intelligent young man. His major flaw was that he was incapable of digesting food stronger than hard boiled eggs . . . I didn't think he'd last long in the army because during wartime it's very hard to go home for dinner every night . . . (*The train rumbles on.*) Hey, Arnold! What's the best book you ever read?

EPSTEIN. *War and Peace* . . . The fifth time.

EUGENE. If I wanted to become a writer, who do you recommend I read?

EPSTEIN. The entire third floor of the New York Public Library.

WYKOWSKI. Hey, Epstein? Can you read lips? Read this! (*Bronx cheer; SELRIDGE laughs.*)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) If the Germans only knew what was coming over, they would be looking forward to this invasion . . . I'm Eugene Morris Jerome of Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, New York and you can tell I've never been away from home before. In my duffel bag are twelve pot roast sandwiches my mother gave me . . . There were three things I was determined to do in this war. Become a writer, not get killed and lose my virginity . . . But first I had to get through basic training in the murky swamps of Mississippi . . . (*Silence for a moment, then CARNEY, eyes closed, sings a popular song of the period.*)

(*Lights dim as the train rumbles on. As CARNEY's sing-*

ing slowly fades, we hear the sound of men marching and chanting out the cadence rhythms so familiar in the military.

Lights come up in the barracks as the sound of marching men fades.

EUGENE, WYKOWSKI, EPSTEIN, SELRIDGE and CARNEY amble into the barracks carrying their heavy barracks bags. They are hot, sweaty and tired. They look around at their new "home" for the next few months.)

EUGENE. Boy, it's hot. This is hot! I am really hot! Oh, God, is it hot! (*puts duffel in a lower bunk*)

WYKOWSKI. You can cool off on the top 'cause that's *my* bunk down there. (*He throws EUGENE's duffel on top and throws his own on the lower. EPSTEIN throws his duffel on the top bunk next to EUGENE. He looks at the rolled up mattress and picks off a bedbug. They have all put their duffels on bunks and sit or lie down.*)

CARNEY. I'm so tired I'm just gonna sleep on the springs.

EUGENE. It never got this hot in Brooklyn. This is like Africa hot. *Tarzan* couldn't take this kind of hot.

SELRIDGE. Where's the phone? Call the manager. There's no ice water.

(*SGT. TOOMEY enters with clipboard.*)

TOOMEY. Dee-tail, attenSHUN!! (*The boys slowly get to their feet.*)

SELRIDGE. Hi, Sarge.

TOOMEY. I think it's in your best interests, men, to move your asses when I yell ATTENSHUN!! MOVE IT!!! I want a single line right there! (*They all jump and*

line up in front of their bunks. TOOMEY paces up and down the line, looking them over.) Until the order "At Ease," is given, gentlemen, you are not "At Ease," is that understood? 'Tenshun! (*They snap to attention. He looks at them a moment.*) At Ease! (*They stand "At Ease" . . . TOOMEY looks them over, then consults his clipboard.*) Answer when your name is called. The answer to that question is Ho. Not yes, not here, not right, not sir or any other unacceptable form of reply except the aforementioned Ho, am I understood? Wykowski, Joseph T.

WYKOWSKI. Ho!

TOOMEY. Selridge, Roy W.

ROY. Ho!

TOOMEY. Carney, Donald J.

CARNEY. Ho!

TOOMEY. Jerome, Eugene M.

EUGENE. Ho!

TOOMEY. Epstein, Arnold B.

EPSTEIN. Ho Ho! (*TOOMEY looks at him.*)

TOOMEY. Are there two Arnold Epsteins in this company?

EPSTEIN. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Then just give me one God damn Ho.

EPSTEIN. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Epstein, Arnold B.

EPSTEIN. Ho!

TOOMEY. One more time.

EPSTEIN. Ho!

TOOMEY. Let me hear it again.

EPSTEIN. Ho!

TOOMEY. Am I understood?

EPSTEIN. Ho! (*as if saying "yes"*)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Arnold Epstein was the worst

soldier in World War Two and that included the deserters . . . He just refused to show respect to those he thought were his intellectual inferiors.

TOOMEY. (*to men*) . . . My name is Toomey. Sergeant Merwin J. Toomey and I am in charge of C Company during your ten weeks of basic training here in Beautiful Biloxi, Mississippi, after which those of you who have survived the heat, humidity, roaches, spiders, snakes, dry rot, fungus, dysentery, syphilis, gonorrhea and tick fever, will be sent to some shit island in the Pacific or some turd pile in Northern Sicily. In either case, returning to your mommas and poppas with your balls intact is highly improbable. There's only one way to come out of a war healthy of body and sane of mind and that way is to be born the favorite daughter of the President of the United States . . . I speak from experience having served fourteen months in the North African campaign where seventy-three per cent of my comrades are buried under the sand of an A-rab desert. The colorful ribbons on my chest will testify to the fact that my government is grateful for my contribution having donated a small portion of my brains to this conflict, the other portion being protected by a heavy steel plate in my head. This injury has caused me to become a smart, compassionate, understanding and sympathetic teacher of raw, young men—or the cruelest, craziest, most sadistic God damn son of a bitch you ever saw . . . and that's something you won't know until ten weeks from now, do I make myself clear, Epstein?

ARNOLD. I think so.

TOOMEY. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, EPSTEIN??

ARNOLD. *Ho!*

TOOMEY. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, JEROME?

EUGENE. Ho yes!

TOOMEY. Ho *what*?

EUGENE. Ho nothing.

TOOMEY. God damn right, boy.

EUGENE. (*to audience*) I hated the lousy movies. I thought I was going to get a nice officer like James Stewart.

TOOMEY. (*looks at EUGENE*) Are you paying attention to me, Jerome?

EUGENE. (*nervously*) Yes ho. I mean Ho, sir. Just plain Ho.

TOOMEY. Where are you from, Jerome?

EUGENE. 1427 Pulaski Avenue.

TOOMEY. In my twelve years in the army, I never met one God damn dogface who came from 1427 Pulaski Avenue. Why is that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Because it's my home. Only one family lives there. I'm sorry. I meant I live in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, New York. (*TOOMEY notices EPSTEIN shifting from foot to foot.*)

TOOMEY. Hey, Fred Astaire! You trying to tell me something?

ARNOLD. I have to go to the bathroom, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Now how are you going to do that? We don't have bathrooms in the army.

ARNOLD. They had them in Fort Dix.

TOOMEY. Not bathrooms, they didn't.

ARNOLD. Yes, they did, Sergeant. I went in them a lot.

TOOMEY. Well, I'm telling you we don't have any bathrooms on this base. Do you doubt my veracity?

ARNOLD. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Then you've got a problem, haven't you, Epstein?

ARNOLD. Ho ho.

TOOMEY. You bet your ass, ho ho . . . Do you know why you've got a problem, Epstein?

ARNOLD. Because I have to go real bad.

TOOMEY. No, son. You've got a problem because you don't know army terminology. The place where a U.S. soldier goes to defecate, relieve himself, open his bowels, shit, fart, dump, crap and unload is called the latrine. La-trine! (*EUGENE smiles.*) Want to tell us what's funny about that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Well . . . that you said all those words in one sentence.

TOOMEY. That's why these ribbons are pinned on my shirt. Because I'm an experienced army man. Do you understand that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Ha.

TOOMEY. What?

EUGENE. Ho.

TOOMEY. Where are you from, Wykowski?

WYKOWSKI. Bridgeport, Connecticut.

TOOMEY. Do you know where that is, Selridge?

SELRIDGE. It's er . . . in Connecticut. Bridgeport, I think.

TOOMEY. Is that right, Wykowski?

WYKOWSKI. Ho.

TOOMEY. (*looks directly at ROY*) And what did you do in Bridgeport, soldier?

SELRIDGE. I was never there, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. I wasn't talking to you, Selridge.

SELRIDGE. Oh. You were looking at me.

TOOMEY. I may be looking at you but I am talking to the soldier from Bridgeport. (*looks into ROY's face*) Now what did you do there, Wykowski? (*They all look confused.*)

WYKOWSKI. I drove a truck. A moving van. I was a

furniture mover.

TOOMEY. That's just what they need in the South Pacific, Wykowski. Someone who knows how to move furniture around in the jungle. (*EPSTEIN half raises hand.*) I believe Private Epstein has a question.

ARNOLD. May I go to the latrine, Sergeant?

TOOMEY. No. I am addressing the new members of my company, Epstein. (*looks directly into WYKOWSKI's face*) What's your name again, soldier?

WYKOWSKI. Wykowski.

TOOMEY. I am talking to the man next to you.

SELRIDGE. Selridge!

TOOMEY. (*points to CARNEY*) *You*, boy! You are the one I am directing my question to.

CARNEY. Carney, sir. Donald J . . . Ho!

TOOMEY. I didn't ask if you were here. I can *see* that you're here. I asked where you're from, Carney, Donald J.

CARNEY. I don't remember . . . Er, Montclair, New Jersey.

TOOMEY. And what was your civilian occupation in Montclair, New Jersey, Private Carney, Donald J.?

CARNEY. I didn't have any.

TOOMEY. No occupation? You were unemployed then, is that right?

CARNEY. No, Sergeant. I worked in a shoe store. In the stock room.

TOOMEY. (*stares at him*) Did I not hear you just say you didn't have an occupation?

CARNEY. Not in Montclair. I *lived* in Montclair. I worked in Teaneck. You just asked what my occupation was in Montclair.

TOOMEY. I see . . . Is it your intention, Private Carney, Donald J., to humiliate and ridicule me in front of my company?

CARNEY. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. And yet that is precisely what you did. As I stand here in front of my newly arrived company, you took this opportunity, assuming that because of my Southern heritage, I was an uneducated and illiterate cotton picker, you purposefully and deliberately humiliated me. Did you think for one second you would get away with that, Private Carney, Donald J.? . . .

CARNEY. I wasn't trying to get away with . . .

TOOMEY. Well, I can assure you, YOU DID NOT AND WILL NOT! You just got your ass in a sling, boy! *Does everyone understand that?*

ALL. (*together*) Ho!

TOOMEY. What?

ALL. (*together*) *HO!!!*

TOOMEY. I am, strictly speaking, Carney, old army. And old army means discipline. Can you do push-ups, Private Carney?

CARNEY. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. What is the highest total of push-ups you ever achieved in one session, Private Carney?

CARNEY. I'm not too strong in the arms. About ten . . . maybe fifteen.

TOOMEY. Congratulations, Carney. You are about to break your old record. I want one hundred push-ups from you, Carney, and I want them *now*. AM I UNDERSTOOD?

CARNEY. One hundred? Oh, I couldn't possibly do one hu—

TOOMEY. HIT THE FLOOR, SOLDIER!!!

CARNEY. I could do, say, twenty a day for five days—

TOOMEY. Count off, God dammit and move your ass!

CARNEY. (*starts doing push-ups*) One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . .

TOOMEY. (*looks into EPSTEIN's eyes*) Nobody eats,

drinks, sleeps or goes to the latrine until I hear one hundred.

CARNEY. Six . . . seven . . . Oh, God . . . nine . . . ten . . .

TOOMEY. Eight. You forgot eight, didn't you, boy?

CARNEY. I did it. I just didn't say it.

TOOMEY. Well, say them all, Donny boy. Let's start again from one. Let's hear it.

CARNEY. One . . . two . . . three . . . (*CARNEY continues this throughout the scene with great difficulty.*)

TOOMEY. (*shouts*) *Private Jerome!* Do you think this is cruel, unfair and unjust punishment being inflicted on Private Carney?

EUGENE. Oh, gee, I don't know. It's my first day—

TOOMEY. I want the God Almighty truth from you. Is this punishment unfair and unjust, Private Jerome?

EUGENE. (*to audience*) If only I had a heart murmur, I wouldn't be in this trouble.

TOOMEY. Your answer, boy.

EUGENE. Well, I think it was a misunderstanding . . . I think er—(*feels his head*) I think I have swamp fever, sir.

TOOMEY. Yes or no, Jerome. Am I being unfair to the young man who is breaking his ass on the floor?

EUGENE. In my opinion? . . . Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. I see . . . Apparently, Jerome, you don't understand the benefits of discipline. It is discipline that will win this war for us. Therefore, until you learn it, soldier, I will just have to keep teaching it to you . . . *Selridge*! One hundred push-ups. *Hit* the floor!

SELRIDGE. Me??? . . . I didn't say nothin'.

TOOMEY. When we do battle, we are sometimes called upon to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others.

SELRIDGE. Yeah, but we didn't do battle yet.

TOOMEY. ON YOUR FACE, SOLDIER!!

SELRIDGE. (*on floor*) One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . (*They continue.*)

TOOMEY. (*to EUGENE*) What I have done to Private Selridge may seem even more unfair and unjust than what I did to Private Carney. Is that your opinion, Private Jerome?

EUGENE. (*takes a deep breath*) . . . No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Hold it, boys. (*To others; they stop.*) You all heard that. Private Jerome approves of my method of discipline. He thinks what I am doing is fair, moral and just. Therefore, with his approval and endorsement, Private Wykowski will join us for one hundred push-ups. Hit the deck, Wykowski! I can see how grateful you are. You can thank your buddy, Private Jerome.

WYKOWSKI. (*glares at EUGENE*) I will. Later. (*starts push-ups*)

TOOMEY. Back to work, boys.

WYKOWSKI. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . .

EUGENE. (*to WYKOWSKI*) I'm sorry. (*CARNEY is struggling.*)

CARNEY. I—I don't think I can do any more, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. I realize that, son, and I sympathize with you. If only there were some way I could help you.

EUGENE. I could finish it for him, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. That's damn decent of you, Jerome, but I think Private Carney doesn't expect other men to shoulder his responsibility.

CARNEY. I would be willing to make an exception, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. What I think you need, Carney, is inspiration. Therefore, I am asking volunteers to join Privates Carney, Selridge and Wykowski on the barracks floor. All volunteers take one step forward and shout, "Ho!" Sound off!

EUGENE. (*takes one step forward*) Ho! (*ARNOLD remains silent and doesn't move.*)

TOOMEY. We have one volunteer . . . and one inconclusive. (*He crosses to ARNOLD, moves in face to face.*) Does your silence mean you are not volunteering, Private Epstein?

ARNOLD. I have a slight deformity of the spine which escaped the medical exam—

TOOMEY. ON YOUR FACE, EPSTEIN!!! (*ARNOLD drops to floor.*) Ready . . . Ho!

ARNOLD. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . (*All four men are doing push-ups. CARNEY and EPSTEIN struggle the most. TOOMEY paces back and forth, nodding happily.*)

TOOMEY. Now we're moving ahead in our quest for discipline . . . As the sweat pours off your brows and your puny muscles strain to lift your flabby, chubby, jellied bodies, think of Private Jerome of Brighton Beach, New York, who is *not* down there beside you. *Not* sharing your pain, *not* sharing your struggle . . . Fate always chooses someone to get a free ride. The kind of man who always gets away with all kinds of shit. In this company it seems to be Private Eugene M. Jerome. Eventually we get to hate those men. Hate them, loathe them and despise them. How does Private Jerome learn to deal with this cold wall of anger and hostility? By learning to endure it alone. That, gentlemen, is the supreme lesson in discipline. You're slowing down, boys. The sooner you finish, the sooner you'll get to our fine Southern cooking . . . Up down . . . Up down . . . Carry on instructions, Jerome. Up down . . . up down . . . (*TOOMEY leaves.*)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) It was then I decided I had to get out of the army . . . I thought of shooting off a part of my body I might not need in later life but I couldn't find any . . . But the worst was still to come . . .

(*Lights out on EUGENE.*
Lights up on section of mess hall. WYKOWSKI, SELRIDGE, CARNEY and EPSTEIN are sitting at a wooden table, staring frozen faced at the aluminum tray filled with "supper" in front of them. Nobody moves. The forks in their hands are raised motionless above the tray.)

CARNEY. What do you think it is?

WYKOWSKI. My brother had this in the marines. It's S.O.S.

CARNEY. What's S.O.S.?

WYKOWSKI. Shit on a shingle.

CARNEY. (*looks at it*) Yeah, that's what it looks like alright.

SELRIDGE. What do you mean? They take a shingle and they put—shit on it?

WYKOWSKI. It's beef. Creamed chipped beef.

ARNOLD. Why would you chip something after it's been creamed?

WYKOWSKI. It doesn't look so bad to me. Hell, I'm hungry. (*He takes a forkful and eats it. They all watch him.*) . . . It's terrific . . . It needs ketchup, that's all. (*He puts ketchup on it.*)

SELRIDGE. They oughta drop this stuff over Germany. The whole country would come out with their hands up. (*EUGENE appears, carrying his tray. His mouth is agape, his face aghast as he looks at what's on his tray.*)

EUGENE. I saw this in the Bronx Zoo. The gorillas were throwing it at each other.

ARNOLD. If you can't eat this, you can get something else. It's government regulations. Enlisted men must be served palatable food.

WYKOWSKI. Why don't you ask them for some matzoh

ball soup, Epstein. I hear the army makes great matzoh ball soup. (*He and SELRIDGE laugh. EUGENE looks emphatically at ARNOLD.*)

ARNOLD. It's my right to speak up. (*He looks around.*) I'm going to speak to the sergeant.

CARNEY. Sit down, would you, please?

EUGENE. Don't start in with him, Arnold. He's crazy. This was probably his recipe.

WYKOWSKI. (*to EUGENE and ARNOLD*) Listen, you two guys. Don't give the sergeant any more crap. 'Cause when he doesn't like you, he doesn't like the rest of us. Any guy who screws up in this platoon is in deep shit with me, understand?

ARNOLD. Who made you Lieutenant Colonel?

WYKOWSKI. *I* did. I promoted myself. If I have to do any more push-ups account of you, Epstein, you're going to be underneath me when I'm doing them.

SELRIDGE. Well, now we know who the fruits are. (*He laughs.*)

ARNOLD. I'm not even supposed to be in the army with my stomach. No one's going to make me eat this if I don't want to.

(*JAMES HENNESEY, a soldier their own age, on KP, crosses to refill their sugar jars.*)

HENNESEY. You guys hear what happened over at Baker Company? Some kid went nuts. Said he was going home, didn't want no part of this army. An officer tried to stop him and the kid belted him one, broke the Captain's nose. They said this guy's sure to get five to ten years in Leavenworth. They don't crap around in the army, you find that out real fast.

CARNEY. I hope they ship us out to the Pacific. At least we'd get Chinese food.

HENNESEY. My name is Hennesey. I'm in your platoon. They gave me eight straight days of KP.

WYKOWSKI. How come?

HENNESEY. I left over two spoonfuls of barley soup. Two lousy spoonfuls . . . Be careful, you guys. (*He turns and moves away quickly as SGT. TOOMEY crosses to table.*)

TOOMEY. How my boys doing? (*All except EPSTEIN smile and greet him warmly.*) How's the chow?

WYKOWSKI. (*overly cheerful*) First rate, Sarge.

SELRIDGE. They don't give you enough.

EUGENE. Surprisingly interesting food, Sarge.

TOOMEY. Not hungry, Epstein?

ARNOLD. I find enough nourishment in bread and water, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Well, you're all going to need plenty of nourishment with ten back breaking weeks ahead of us, starting tonight.

CARNEY. Tonight?

TOOMEY. Worked out a little surprise for you. Something to work off tonight's dinner. We're going on a midnight hike, men.

EUGENE. Midnight?

TOOMEY. Not too far, this being your first night in camp. Just a short fifteen mile walk around the marshes and swamps. How does that sound to you, Jerome? You think that's a reasonable request of me to make?

EUGENE. We've sort of elected Wykowski our leader. I think he should answer that. (*WYKOWSKI glares at EUGENE.*)

TOOMEY. Is that right, Wykowski?

WYKOWSKI. I don't question orders, Sergeant. I just follow them.

TOOMEY. That's a good answer, Wykowski. It's a chicken-shit one, but a good answer . . . How about you, Epstein? You up to a fifteen mile walk around the swamp?

ARNOLD. . . . No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. No??? Epstein's not up to it, men . . . Why is that, Epstein?

ARNOLD. We've been on a train for five days and five nights. We haven't had one good night's sleep since we left Fort Dix.

TOOMEY. I see . . . Okay. Fair enough, Epstein . . . You're excused from the hike. I appreciate a man who speaks up.

ARNOLD. Thank you, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. You get a good night's sleep just as soon as you've washed, scrubbed and shined every john, urinal and basin in the latrine. If it doesn't sparkle when we get back, then Wykowski and Selridge are going to do two hundred push-ups. That'll put you in good with the boys, Epstein . . . Anyone else care to stay home for the evening? . . . Okay then, let's get moving. Full field packs in front of barracks at twenty-four hundred hours, ready to march. LET'S GET CRACKING! (*They all jump up, except EPSTEIN.*) *HOLD ON ONE GOD DAMN MINUTE!!!* (*They all stop.*) Nobody—but NOBODY—leaves here with good U.S. Army chow untouched, uneaten and unfinished. You can sit there poking at it with your fork till it sprouts weeds, but by God, you will sit there until that tray is empty . . . Line up in front of me, trays extended for inspection. (*They quickly line up in front of TOOMEY in single file. WYKOWSKI is first. TOOMEY*

looks into his tray.) Okay, Wykowski, move! (*SELRIDGE is next.*) Right, Selridge, move. (*He follows WYKOWSKI out. CARNEY is next. His food is untouched.*) Something wrong with your dinner, Carney?

CARNEY. Yes, Sarge. It's the first food I was ever afraid of.

TOOMEY. You'll like it about a month from now 'cause that's how long you'll be sitting there. Back to your seat! (*CARNEY glumly goes back and sits at the table. EUGENE steps in front of TOOMEY, tray extended.*) Don't approve of our *cuisine*, Jerome?

EUGENE. It's not that, Sarge. It's a religious objection. This is the week that my people fast for two days.

TOOMEY. This is March, Jerome. Rosh-Ahonah and Yom Kippur are in September. I have an all-religion calendar in my barracks room. Don't you try that shit on me again!

EUGENE. It's a different holiday. It's called El Malaguena.

TOOMEY. El Malaguena??

EUGENE. It's for Spanish Jews.

TOOMEY. Carney!

CARNEY. Yes, Sarge?

TOOMEY. Put half your tray on to Jerome's.

CARNEY. (*smiles*) Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. (*to EUGENE*) Eat in good health, Jerome, and Happy El Malaguena to you. (*EUGENE sits as CARNEY eagerly scrapes half his tray into EUGENE's. EUGENE, looking miserable, sits. ARNOLD steps in front of TOOMEY.*) Okay, Epstein, what's your story? And don't tell me today is La Coocharacha.

ARNOLD. I have a legitimate excuse, Sergeant. I have a digestive disorder, diagnosed as a nervous stomach.

TOOMEY. Is that right? And how come you passed the army medical examination?

ARNOLD. It only gets nervous while I'm eating food. I wasn't eating food during the examination. I brought a chicken salad sandwich along to show them what happens when it enters the digestive tract . . .

TOOMEY. Are you a psycho, Epstein? You sound like a psycho to me. That's a psycho story.

ARNOLD. (*reaches into breast pocket*) I have a letter from my internist who's on the staff of Mount Sinai Hospital on Fifth Avenue—(*TOOMEY grabs letter from ARNOLD, quickly reads it.*)

TOOMEY. Did you show this to the army medical examining officer?

ARNOLD. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. What did he say?

ARNOLD. He said don't eat chicken salad sandwiches and then he accepted me.

TOOMEY. Then this letter ain't worth the paper it's written on. (*He tears it up, shreds it over ARNOLD's food.*) I expect to see everything on that tray gone, Epstein, including that letter. The corporal at the door will be watching you. Good appetite, men. (*turns briskly, starts out*) . . . "El Malaguena" . . . (*ARNOLD sits and the three men sit in stony silence.*)

EUGENE. I've got an idea.

CARNEY. Yeah?

EUGENE. We dump it under the table. We'll be gone by the time they find it.

CARNEY. Great idea. But we have to time it right. When no one's looking.

EUGENE. I'll tell you when.

CARNEY. Remember. Timing's everything.

EUGENE. (*looks around*) . . . Okay. *Now*!

(*In unison they lower their trays under the table. They are about to dump it when the voice of the CORPORAL calls out.*)

VOICE. (*sharp*) GET THOSE TRAYS BACK ON THE TABLE. (*They bring trays quickly back up.*)

CARNEY. . . . Work on your timing.

ARNOLD. Give it to me.

CARNEY. What?

ARNOLD. I'm not going to eat mine. No point in all of us suffering. Scrape it onto my tray.

EUGENE. You mean it?

ARNOLD. This is lunacy. I'm an intelligent human being. I refuse to capitulate to the lunatics. One day when this war is over, there will be investigations . . . (*to BOYS*) Go on. Give it to me. (*They scrape food onto ARNOLD's tray.*)

CARNEY. I like you, Epstein, but you're weird as hell . . . But I'll tell you one thing. I'm sitting next to you every meal we get. (*He leaves.*)

EUGENE. I could have used you when my mother made lima beans. (*He leaves.*)

ARNOLD. . . . I won't eat slop . . . I won't eat slop . . . I WON'T EAT SLOP! I WON'T EAT SLOP!

EUGENE. (*appears in field equipment*) . . . Arnold didn't eat the slop. They gave him K.P. for five straight days including cleaning the latrines. But that was better than the midnight march through the murky swamps of Mississippi. (*We hear the sound of eerie birds and strange animals. EUGENE looks up.*) The only time I heard strange sounds like that was at Ebbets Field when the Dodgers played . . . Toomey made Wykowski carry me

the whole fifteen miles just so Wykowski would hate me more . . . But maybe Toomey was right. If nobody obeys orders, I'll bet we wouldn't have more than twelve or thirteen soldiers fighting the war . . . We'd have headlines like, "Corporal Stanley Leiberman invades Sicily" . . .

(*Lights off on EUGENE. Lights up on barracks. ARNOLD enters from latrine, EUGENE goes to his locker.*)

EUGENE. (*continued*) Hey, Arnold, it was incredible. You missed it. We were in the swamps up to our necks. There were water snakes and big lizards that crawled up your pants and swooping swamp birds that swooped down and went right for your eyeballs . . . What's wrong, Arnold? . . . Arnold? . . .

ARNOLD. Leave me alone!

EUGENE. What is it? Are you sick?

ARNOLD. Get away from me. You're like all the rest of them. I hate every God damn one of you.

EUGENE. Hey, Arnold, I'm your friend. I'm your buddy. You can talk to me.

ARNOLD. (*sits up, looks around*) . . . I'm getting out. I'm leaving in the morning. I'm going to Mexico or Central America till after the war . . . I will not be treated like dirt, like a maggot. I'm not going to help defend a country that won't even defend its own citizens . . . Bastards!

EUGENE. Because you pulled latrine duty? We all have to pull latrine duty. You have to adjust . . . It's all a game, Arnold. Only it's their ball and their rules. And they know the game better than we do because they've been playing it since Valley Forge.

ARNOLD. . . . I was in the latrine alone. I spent four hours cleaning it, on my hands and knees. It looked bet-

ter than my mother's bathroom at home. Then these two non-coms come in, one was the cook, that three hundred pound guy and some other slob, with cigar butts in their mouths and reeking from beer . . . They come in to pee only instead of using the urinal, they use one of the johns, both peeing in the same one, making circles, figure-eights. Then they start to walk out and I say, "Hey, I just cleaned that. Please flush the johns." And the big one, the cook, says to me, "Up your ass, rookie," or some other really clever remark . . . And I block the doorway and I say, "There's a printed order on the wall signed by Captain Landon stating the regulations that all facilities must be flushed after using" . . . And I'm requesting that they follow regulations, since I was left in charge, and to please flush the facility . . . And the big one says to me, "Suppose you flush it, New York Jew Kike," and I said my ethnic heritage notwithstanding, please flush the facility . . . They look at each other, this half a ton of brainless beef and suddenly rush me, turn me upside down, grab my ankles and—and—and they lowered me by my feet with my head in the toilet, in their filth, their poison . . . all the way until I couldn't breathe . . . then they pulled off my belt and tied my feet on to the ceiling pipes with my head still in their foul waste and tied my hands behind my back with dirty rags, and they left me there, hanging like a pig that was going to be slaughtered . . . I wasn't strong enough to fight back. I couldn't do it alone. No one came to help me . . . Then the pipe broke and I fell to the ground . . . It took me twenty minutes to get myself untied . . . Twenty minutes! . . . But it will take me the rest of my life to wash off my humiliation. I was degraded. I lost my dignity. If I stay, Gene, if they put a gun in my hands, one night, I swear to God, I'll kill them both . . . I'm not a murderer.

I don't want to disgrace my family . . . But I have to get out of here . . . Now do you understand?

EUGENE. But you can't go AWOL. They'll catch you. They have agents all over the world . . . You'll get back at them one day. Don't you believe in justice?

ARNOLD. . . . You're so damn naive, Eugene.

(*WYKOWSKI and SELRIDGE come out of the latrine in their underwear, carrying towels, toothbrushes and toothpaste.*)

WYKOWSKI. (*scratching*) I got a hundred and twelve God damn mosquite bites.

SELRIDGE. (*shivers*) I pulled twelve leeches off me. I pulled one off near my crotch, it wasn't a leech. Maybe I pulled something else off. (*He gets into bed, still shivering. CARNEY and HENNESEY come out in their underwear, towels.*)

CARNEY. I heard a top secret rumor today. I'm not supposed to repeat it.

WYKOWSKI. What is it?

CARNEY. I can get in trouble if it gets out.

WYKOWSKI. No one's gonna talk. What is it?

CARNEY. I hear they're getting ready to invade Europe and Japan on the same day.

HENNESEY. Where'd you hear that?

CARNEY. On the radio. It was one of them small stations.

EUGENE. Why on the same day?

CARNEY. Surprise attack. You hit them both at dawn. Then they don't have enough time to warn each other.

EUGENE. Hey, Carney. When it's dawn in Europe, it's a day later in Japan. They don't have dawn at the same time. Japan could read about it in their newspapers.

HENNESEY. Besides, we're not ready. We don't have enough trained men to invade both places on the same day.

ARNOLD. You know what *Time* magazine estimates the casualty rate of a full scale invasion would be? Sixty-eight per cent. Sixty-eight per cent of us would be killed or wounded.

WYKOWSKI. No shit? . . . So out of this group, how many is that?

ARNOLD. Of the six of us here, about four point three of us would get it.

CARNEY. What part of your body is point three?

SELRIDGE. Hey, Wykowski. We know what part of *your* body is point three. (*He giggles.*)

EUGENE. Listen, if you knew you were one of the guys who wasn't coming back, if you knew it right now, what would you do with the last few days of your life? It could be anything you want . . . I give everyone five seconds to think about it.

CARNEY. I thought about it. I'm not dying. You think I'm gonna kill myself to entertain *you*?

EUGENE. Why not? It's like a fantasy. I'm giving you the opportunity to do anything in the world you ever dreamed of . . . Come on.

SELRIDGE. I think it's a good idea. Let's play for money.

HENNESEY. For *money*?

SELRIDGE. Yeah. Five bucks a man. The guy with the best fantasy collects the pot.

HENNESEY. That's morbid.

WYKOWSKI. Okay, I'm in. We need a judge.

EUGENE. I'll be the judge.

WYKOWSKI. Why you?

EUGENE. Because I thought of the game. Ante up, everyone. Come on, Hennesey. (*They all put up money*

except EPSTEIN.) Come on, Arnold. I *know* you have some great fantasies.

EPSTEIN. I don't sell my fantasies.

WYKOWSKI. Burn his bunk!

EUGENE. Come on, Arnold . . . for me.

SELRIDGE. I love this. I'm gonna clean up.

EUGENE. (*jubilant*) Okay, Carney. You're first. You're dead. Killed in action . . . What would you do with your last days on earth?

CARNEY. How much time do I have to do it in?

EUGENE. A week.

SELRIDGE. I need ten days.

EUGENE. It's my game. You only get a week . . . What would you do with it, Donny?

CARNEY. (*thinks*) Okay . . . I would sing at the Radio City Music Hall. Five shows a day, my own spot. In the audience are four thousand girls and one man. Every girl is gorgeous. Every girl is size 38-24-36 . . . And they all want me . . . real bad.

HENNESEY. Who's the man?

CARNEY. The President of Decca Records. He wants me too. I have a choice. After the last show, I could have all four thousand girls . . . or a contract with Decca Records.

HENNESEY. Which one do you take?

SELRIDGE. (*urging him on*) The record contract. I would take the record contract.

CARNEY. Right. I take the record contract.

SELRIDGE. (*laughs*) MORON!! He believed me. He could have humped four thousand girls and now he's got a record contract that ain't worth shit.

CARNEY. Wrong! Because now I'm a big star and stars get all the girls they want anyway.

SELRIDGE. Yeah? How? You're dead. Girls never go

out with dead record stars.

CARNEY. Bullshit! I paid five bucks for my fantasy. I can do what I want . . . What's my score, Gene?

EUGENE. Well, you started off with an A-minus but you finished with a B.

CARNEY. B. Not bad—better than I ever did in school.

EUGENE. Alright. Selridge is next.

SELRIDGE. Okay . . . Here we go . . . I make it with the seven richest women in the world. And I'm so hot, each dame gives me a million bucks. And at the end of a week, I got seven million bucks. Pretty good, heh?

EUGENE. If you're dead, what are you going to do with seven million dollars?

SELRIDGE. I told you. That's why I need ten days. I need a long weekend to spend the money. Give up, suckers, I got you all beat.

ARNOLD. Moronic. It's beyond moronic. It's submoronic.

SELRIDGE. Break their hearts, Jerome, and tell 'em my score.

EUGENE. It lacks poetry. I give Selridge a B.

SELRIDGE. (*angry*) A *B*? You give me a B? That creep signs a record contract that ain't worth shit and he gets a B? (*heads for money*) I want my money back.

WYKOWSKI. Touch that money and you're dead.

SELRIDGE. I was kidding. You think I was serious? I was kidding. (*He lies on his bunk.*) Who's next?

EUGENE. Hennesey.

HENNESEY. Me? I'm not ready yet.

EUGENE. It's your turn.

HENNESEY. I'm not good at things like this.

EUGENE. Come on. Just say it.

HENNESEY. I can't think of anything.

SELRIDGE. He can't think of anything. So he's out. Tough shit. Give him an F . . . Who's next?

HENNESEY. Okay. Okay . . . I'd spend it with my family.

WYKOWSKI. Is this guy serious?

CARNEY. Damn, I wish we were playing for big dough.

SELRIDGE. What an asshole.

HENNESEY. It's my last week. I can spend it any way I want. I'd like it to be with my family.

CARNEY. (*mimicking*) I'd like it to be with my family.

SELRIDGE. Go ahead, Jerome. What do you give him for *that* crap?

EUGENE. It's not interesting but at least it's honest . . . I give him a B-plus.

SELRIDGE. Okay. This game is fixed. I'm calling in the Military Police. I get a B for screwin' seven millionairesses and *he* gets a B-plus for goin' home to his mother? . . . I change my answer. I want to visit sick children in the hospital.

WYKOWSKI. Knock it off, Selridge. You had your turn.

EUGENE. It's yours now, Wykowski.

CARNEY. Don't let us down, Kowski. To some of us you're a hero.

WYKOWSKI. Okay . . . I always wanted to make it with a world-famous woman that nobody else could have. It didn't make no difference if she was beautiful or not, as long as I was the only one.

HENNESEY. Have you got someone in mind?

WYKOWSKI. (*smiles*) Yeah. I got someone in mind.

EUGENE. I think we're heading for an A-plus.

CARNEY. Who's the woman, Kowski?

WYKOWSKI. (*He does a grind and a bump.*) . . . The Queen of England! (*They all stare at him, dumbstruck.*)

CARNEY. The Queen of England????

SELRIDGE. That is disgusting. That's like making it with your grandmother.

EUGENE. Besides, you wouldn't be the only one. What about the *King* of England?

WYKOWSKI. Kings and Queens just do it once a year. To make a Prince. But I'd have her every day and every night for a week.

SELRIDGE. You couldn't get near her. They keep her under guard at Rockingham Palace.

WYKOWSKI. Not for me. She would say—(*high-pitched voice*) "Let that sexy Wykowski in my chamber."

ARNOLD. Apes and gorillas. I'm living with apes and gorillas.

HENNESEY. What's his score? Give him his score.

CARNEY. (*high-pitched English voice*) Yes. Give the Earl of Meatloaf his score.

EUGENE. This is a tough one. I find it completely unredeeming in every way. Morally, ethically and sexually . . . but it's got style . . . *A*-minus!

SELRIDGE. (*furious*) Okay. I want my five bucks back. I'm not getting beat out by a guy who humps the Mother of the British Empire.

HENNESEY. Boy, I'm learning a lot about you guys tonight.

SELRIDGE. And versa visa, jerk-off.

WYKOWSKI. So I'm winning, right?

EUGENE. It's not over yet. There's two more to go.

SELRIDGE. Epstein's next. I want to hear what *his* last week on earth would be like. Probably wants to take an English exam at City College.

EUGENE. It's your turn, Arnold.

ARNOLD. There's no point to this game.

EUGENE. Yes, there is.

ARNOLD. What's the point?

EUGENE. I like it . . . Come on. It's your last week on earth. You're going to get killed overseas. What's your secret desire? (*They all look at EPSTEIN. . . . He thinks carefully.*)

ARNOLD. . . . I don't want to say. If I say it, it might not come true.

CARNEY. He doesn't have one. All he does is complain.

WYKOWSKI. And pass gas. That's his secret desire. He wants to bend over and blow up the world. (*SELRIDGE loves that one.*)

EUGENE. Wait a minute. Give him a chance. He has one . . . What is it, Arnold? What's the last thing you want to do on this earth? (*All attention is on EPSTEIN.*)

ARNOLD. . . . I would like to make Sergeant Merwin J. Toomey do two hundred push-ups in front of this platoon. (*There is stunned silence.*)

WYKOWSKI. That's good . . . I hate to admit it, but it's good.

SELRIDGE. It's okay. Five hundred would have been better.

EUGENE. I think it's terrific. I give Epstein an A-plus.

CARNEY. A-plus? You're crazy. Now you can't beat him.

EUGENE. I can still tie him.

WYKOWSKI. If it's a tie, all bets are off. Nobody wins.

EUGENE. Fair enough. Somebody else has to judge me. Pick a judge, Wykowski.

WYKOWSKI. (*smiles*) Sure, I pick Selridge.

SELRIDGE. I love it. No matter what crap he says, he gets an A-plus. Your money is safe, boys.

HENNESEY. Go on, Gene . . . Let's hear yours.

EUGENE. Okay. (*He takes a deep breath. They listen intently.*) . . . I'm going to get mine wiping out a whole

battalion of Japanese marines. They'll put up a statue of me at Brighton Beach. Maybe name a junior high school after me, or a swimming pool. (*He poses.*)

SELRIDGE. All they'd give you is a locker room. The Eugene M. Jerome Locker Room.

HENNESEY. Let him finish. Go on, Gene.

EUGENE. Well . . . if it's my last week on earth . . . I would like to fall in love.

CARNEY. With who?

EUGENE. The perfect girl.

WYKOWSKI. There is no perfect girl.

EUGENE. If I fell in love with her, she'd be perfect.

WYKOWSKI. I told you. Jewish guys are all homos.

CARNEY. Incredible! . . . Okay, the game is over. Tell him what he got, Roy, and we'll all take our money back. (*They look at SELRIDGE.*)

WYKOWSKI. Go on. Tell him his score.

SELRIDGE. I give him a C-minus.

WYKOWSKI. What??

SELRIDGE. I'm sorry. I'm not gonna let him beat me with that pissy story. I came up with something "hot," I'm not gonna give him an A-plus for "Love in Bloom."

WYKOWSKI. Jesus, you are a moron. Go look in the latrine and see where you dropped your brains.

SELRIDGE. I couldn't help it. I couldn't.

EUGENE. You win, Arnold. It's your money. (*ARNOLD starts for money.*)

WYKOWSKI. It never fails. It's always the Jews who end up with the money. Ain't that right, Roy?

SELRIDGE. Don't ask me. I never met a Jew before the army.

WYKOWSKI. They're easy to spot. (*to ARNOLD*) There's one . . . (*to EUGENE*) . . . And there's another one. (*to all*) They're the ones who slide the bacon under

their toast so no one sees them eat it. Ain't that right, Jerome?

ARNOLD. (*calmly*) I'm tired of taking that Jew crap from you, Wykowski. I know you can probably beat the hell out of me, but I'm not going to take it from you anymore, understand?

WYKOWSKI. Sure you will. You'll take any shit from me . . . Come on. Come on. Let's see how tough you are. I'll knock the Alka-Seltzer right out of your asshole.

HENNESEY. Cut it out, Kowski. What difference does it make what religion he is?

WYKOWSKI. I didn't start it. Epstein's the one who thinks he's too good to take orders, isn't he? Well, I'm not doing a hundred push-ups for any God damn goof-up anymore. If he doesn't shape up, I'll bust his face whether he's got a Jew nose or not. (*They both go for each other, restrained by the others.*)

CARNEY. (*seeing TOOMEY off*) Ten-HUT!

(*Suddenly SERGEANT TOOMEY appears in his pants and an undershirt. All snap to attention.*)

TOOMEY. What the hell is going on here?

HENNESEY. Nothing, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. What do you mean nothing? I heard threats, challenges and an invitation to bust the nose of members of minority races. Now are you still telling me that nothing was going on here?

HENNESEY. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. I think you'd better sleep on that answer, boy. And to make sure you get a good night's sleep, you get yourself good and tired with one hundred push-ups. On the floor, dogface, and let me hear you count. (*HENNESEY gets on the ground and immediately starts to do*

push-ups.) If I hear any more racial slurs from this platoon, some dumb bastard is going to be shoveling cow shit with a teaspoon for a month. Especially if I hear it from a Polack! LIGHTS OUT!

(*The lights suddenly go out leaving only a tiny spot on EUGENE.*)

EUGENE. (*to audience*) . . . I never liked Wykowski much and I didn't like him any better after tonight . . . But the one I hated most was myself because I didn't stand up for Epstein, a fellow Jew.

Maybe I was afraid of Wykowski or maybe it was because Epstein sort of sometimes asked for it, but since the guys didn't pick on me that much, I figured I'd just stay sort of neutral . . . like Switzerland . . .

Then I wrote in my memoirs what every guy's last desire would be if he was killed in the war.

I never intended to show it to anyone, but still I felt a little ashamed of betraying their secret and private thoughts . . . Possibly the only one who felt worse than I did was Hennesey on the floor.

HENNESEY. (*doing push-ups*) . . . 41 . . . 42 . . . 43 . . . 44 . . . 45.

(*Weeks later.*
A section of the latrine. SELRIDGE and CARNEY are finishing shaving. HENNESEY is brushing his hair. They are all in underwear, some with trousers on.)

SELRIDGE. Forty-eight hour pass, hot damn! If I make it with one woman every four hours, that means I could have . . . er . . . I could have . . . (*He thinks.*)—a lot of women!

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