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SF PERUSALS

Cry Havoc

by Allan R. Kenward

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH

FOUNDED 1830

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Copy of program of the first performance of CRY HAVOC as produced at the Morosco Theatre, New York.

LEE SHUBERT

PRESENTS

CRY HAVOC

BY

ALLAN R. KENWARD

STAGED BY MR. KENWARD

SETTING BY ALBERT JOHNSON LIGHTING BY MOE HACK

CAST

(As they speak)

DOC.....*Ann Shoemaker*
SMITTY.....*Katherine Emery*
FLO.....*Florence Rice*
PAT.....*Thelma Schnee*
CONNIE.....*Katherine Locke*
STEVE.....*Carol Channing*
SUE.....*Margaret Phillips*
ANDRA.....*Helen Trenholme*
NYDIA.....*Florence MacMichael*
HELEN.....*Julie Stevens*
GRACE.....*Muriel Hutchison*
SADIE.....*Ruth Conley*
NATIVE WOMAN.....*Teresa Teves*

SCENE

A converted gun emplacement adjacent
to Bataan Peninsula, early in 1942.

"First in Spite of Hell"
Motto of the defenders of Bataan.

ACT I

SCENE 1. Afternoon.
SCENE 2. Four days later—11 : 30 P. M.

ACT II

Late afternoon, several days later.

ACT III

SCENE 1. Shortly before dawn, the following morning.
SCENE 2. Several hours later.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The play has been hailed as a female "Journey's End" and tells the story of some nurses on Bataan. The cast is composed entirely of women; we see the characters in a sort of dugout, subjected to gunfire, and we watch the individual characters emerge in a sort of collective reaction to war.

There is the strong-minded doctor, efficient and untroubled. There is her assistant, restrained and poised, and there are the volunteer nurses—a vacuous Southern girl, who might as well be in the Civil War; a swaggering bully; a couple of timid aesthetes who believe the war is a religious war; an ex-burlesque girl; a big, strapping gal from a lumber camp, with an honest confusion regarding herself; and the inevitable spy.

They get on one another's nerves, arrest the wrong person as a spy helping the Japs, and finally confront the real traitor. At the end they find that they are rescued from their buried dugout only to face the firing squad.

DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS

DOC MARSH is an elderly woman of great activity.

SMITTY is a handsome girl in her early thirties. Lean, competent, thorough and cool.

FLO HARRIS is a big girl—the kind we see grinning at us from news-reels as the winner of a corn-husking contest. Slow of speech and action, she is a bit of a philosopher in her own way.

PAT CONLIN, a fiery little pug-nosed girl with a good consignment of freckles, who has a bit of a swagger about everything she does.

GRACE LAMBERT, a well-formed and attractive girl of medium height.

HELEN DOMERET, a lovely statuesque blonde, who carries herself like a model and whose thoughts continually run to men.

NYDIA JOYCE, a cute little literal-minded Southerner.

SUSAN and ANDRA WEST, auburn-haired English girls. Susan, the elder, is the leader, continually protecting and looking out for the more fragile Andra.

CONSTANCE MARKS, a Dresden-doll of a girl, beautifully turned out, delicate and, one might think, too fragile for the work ahead.

STEPHANY FOLDEN (STEVE), a large, raw-boned, muscular gal who carries herself like a man.

SADIE, a substantial middle-aged woman.

ACT ONE

SCENE I

The interior of a bomb-proof shelter near Bataan (originally the concrete foundation for one of Bataan Peninsula's big coast artillery guns now converted into sleeping quarters for its defenders). The furnishings are "catch as catch can." With the exception of a hospital medicine chest and the two decker iron bunks which line the walls, all are products of native craftmanship. The shelter, or "dug-out," is entered from the road above by means of a flight of stairs which are visible when the door rear Center is open. A door down Left leads into a corridor which services a store room, lavatory and small field kitchen. The door up Right leads into another passageway and thence to a small mobile hospital. There is a table Left Center surrounded by several boxes and stools. A desk above Left door is served by a dilapidated chair. A wash basin in the corner up Left has found its way into the shelter from some ship's fittings. The walls are covered with pictures of women cut from magazines and newspapers, mementos of the recent occupancy of a number of officers who have since been moved to Corregidor. Over the door Center is scrawled in charcoal the motto of Bataan, "First In Spite Of Hell." A small acetylene lamp hangs Center and supplies the main source of light. AT CURTAIN: *The door Center opens and an elderly woman of great activity enters. She is* DOC MARSH.

She takes off her helmet and draws her sleeve across a wet forehead and grey hair. She drops the helmet on the desk and beats some of the dust from her work-stained drab uniform as she quickly surveys the room.

DOC. [*Calling off Right.*] Smitty. [*Crosses to door down Left.*] Smitty—you in there?

SMITTY. [*From Right.*] Coming. [*Enters.*] Almost ready for customers inside. [SMITTY *is a handsome girl in her early thirties. Lean, competent, thorough and cool. She looks tired and is.*]

DOC. Anybody helping you?

SMITTY. Lieutenant Holt brought over a couple of native stretcher bearers.

DOC [*Watching for* SMITTY'S *reaction.*] Don't imagine he was much help—

SMITTY. [*Significantly.*] No. Say, what's this burst of activity up here for? We've more work at the hospital than we can handle.

[*They join in checking the bunks and tossing blankets on each.*]

DOC. General MacArthur's moving his whole force up on the Bataan Peninsula. They're setting up a mobile unit here to complement the staff at the hospital.

SMITTY. With what?

DOC. A number of those girls who were evacuated to Cab Cabin have volunteered. Some of them will be quartered here.

SMITTY. [*Bitterly.*] Nurses, or some more of those wet-nosed kids with ten thumbs.

DOC. [*Amused.*] Why, Smitty, I believe you sound bitter.

SMITTY. Why not? By the time they know enough to duck, there'll be about two of them left.

DOC. [*More business-like.*] They've all had some training at the base hospital—

SMITTY. [*Disgusted.*] Some training.

DOC. You'll make up the difference.

SMITTY. Me?

DOC. I'm counting on you to help them fit in.

SMITTY. I sure must be slipping when you pick me for a wet-nurse.

DOC. You need the rest, Smitty. You're the best girl I've got and I'd lose you if you were to keep going at the rate you have—purely selfish on my part.

SMITTY. I'll be damned if you couldn't sell a set of false teeth to Hirohito—and make him wear them.

DOC. Flo Harris will come over to lend a hand, and I'm having the nurses' cook from the base hospital stationed here to handle the meals.

SMITTY. Guess I should be thankful, though, it's the safest shelter in the sector.

DOC. How do you know?

SMITTY. It was the officers' quarters—wasn't it? [*Off stage we can hear someone whistling. The Center door opens and* FLO HARRIS *enters. She is a big girl—the kind we see grinning at us from news-reels as the win-*

ner of a corn-husking contest. Slow of speech and action, she is a bit of a philosopher in her own way. Her uniform, like the DOC'S *and* SMITTY'S *bears the signs of hard wear.*] Greetings, Flo.

FLO. Hi, Smitty—Doc—

DOC. Hello, Flo.

FLO. This our new diggin's?

DOC. Right. I want you to help Smitty break in some volunteers who were just sent down.

FLO. I suppose they're the bunch of lambs Major Williams has lined up in front of the hospital—tellin' them the facts of life.

SMITTY. Or vice-versa.

DOC. He'll keep half of them there for the hospital and send the rest of them over here. [*Starts out Left.*] Let me know when they arrive.

SMITTY. Yep.

DOC. By the way—they haven't sent us any information on these girls—you'd better make up a list—you know, names and experience—

[SMITTY *takes the list and sits at the table to make some notes.* FLO *takes a look around the room.* DOC *exits Left.*]

FLO. I kinda like the idea of sleepin' in the same room with whole bodies for a change.

SMITTY. If you think it's going to be a picnic keeping them whole, you've got another think coming.

FLO. Not me—I gave up thinkin' a long time ago. Wonder if any of these new kids'll bring a radio that'll pick up the States?

SMITTY. You mean—pick up Montana—don't you?

FLO. Somethin' like that. Last letter I got from Mom was December 6th.

SMITTY. As soon as those Japs find out MacArthur's digging in on the peninsula, none of us will have much time for letters or radios.

FLO. I suppose so. Where's your home, Smitty?

SMITTY. [*After a short pause, looks up.*] I never really had one, Flo. [*Looks back at her work quickly.*]

FLO. Don't talk much about yourself—do ya, fella?

SMITTY. [*Unmistakably changing subject.*] Those kids will be here in a minute—I've got to be ready for them.

FLO. I get it. [*Picking up her gear.*] Make any difference where I stow these?

SMITTY. Help yourself.

FLO. This one's nearest the door— Better take an upper—if they're as green as they look, it might be safer. [*Tosses her stuff on the upper Left bunk at the rear.*] Hmmmm, no wild life—this must have belonged to a General. Oh, Smitty—where's the throne?

SMITTY. Second opening down the line—still giving you trouble?

FLO. Woo-woo.

SMITTY. You never got that paregoric I told you to pick up.

FLO. Couldn't operate without it. Though I haven't decided which is worst. [*Leaning back on bed and stretching luxuriously.*] For the first time the war is what I expected it to be.

[*There are sounds of voices off. The Center door opens and the new recruits stream in. They are:* PAT CONLIN, *a fiery little pug-nosed girl with a good consignment of freckles, who has a bit of swagger about everything she does;* GRACE LAMBERT, *a well-formed and attractive girl of medium height;* HELEN DOMERET, *a lovely statuesque blonde, who carries herself like a model and whose thoughts continually run to men;* NYDIA JOYCE, *a cute little literal-minded Southerner;* SUSAN *and* ANDRA WEST, *auburn-haired English girls*—SUSAN, *the elder, is the leader, continually protecting and looking out for the more fragile* ANDRA; CONSTANCE MARKS, *a Dresden-doll of a girl, beautifully turned out, delicate and, one might think, too fragile for the work ahead. Last is* STEPHANY POLDEN (STEVE), *a large, raw-boned, muscular gal who carries herself like a man. They are all decked out in new uniforms, kits and helmets. Each carries her own extra luggage and they all act as though they were embarking on a pleasure cruise.* NYDIA'S *voice babbles along about "Mosquitoes," etc. as they file into the room and come to a stop.* FLO *and* SMITTY *exchange a look without* FLO'S *whistling coming to a stop.*]

SMITTY. [*Curtly.*] So you're the volunteers?

PAT. That's right, sixteen of us, come over here to help win the war. Who are you?

SMITTY. Smitty's the name.

[*Again the pause.*]

PAT. The other eight had to go right on duty, they—

SMITTY. [*Interrupting.*] I know—right now I'm just interested in who's here. Suppose you each call out your names, and the kind of work you feel yourselves best fitted for. [*To* PAT.] Let's start with you.

PAT. [*With resentment.*] Pat Conlin.

SMITTY. [*Ignoring the antagonism.*] What was your work?

PAT. Lady in waitin'.

HELEN. Oh, Pat!

SMITTY. [*As some of the* GIRLS *snicker.*] Look, Conlin —this isn't a cocktail party you've let yourself in for, and these questions are not intended to be straight lines for a bad comic. We've got to know what you're fitted for so as to be able to do a lot of fighting guys the most good.

PAT. So I was a hash slinger—and I mean *was.*

SMITTY. [*Nods, and notes it on her list. Then to the next girl.*] You?

CONNIE. [*Weakly.*] Constance Marks—I only did welfare work at home, but I want to do anything I can to help.

SMITTY. [*Enters name and looks at* STEVE.] You?

STEVE. Stephany Polden.

SMITTY. P-o-l-d-e-n?

STEVE. Yes. Machine operator in a cannery.

SMITTY. [*Nodding and entering the name.*] Next—

SUE. Susan West—traveling student.

SMITTY. Of what?

SUE. Art.

ANDRA. [*As* SMITTY *looks up at her.*] Andra West—music student.

SMITTY. Sisters?

SUE and ANDRA. Yes.

SMITTY. Next.

[*The next is* NYDIA, *who is much too engrossed in her own affairs to realize she is being called. Both* GRACE *and* HELEN *nudge her. She turns.*]

NYDIA. Oh—present.

SMITTY. [*Patiently.*] What's your name?

NYDIA. Joyce, Nydia—

SMITTY. Any experience Joyce—

NYDIA. Oh, you can call me Nydia.

SMITTY. Swell; what can you do?

NYDIA. Back home where I come from, the women are never allowed to do a blessed thing. But I can knit.

[PAT *lets out a short exclamation of disgust, and* SMITTY *throws her a look.*]

SMITTY. Next.

HELEN. Helen Domeret—P.B.X. switchboard operator.

SMITTY. [*To* GRACE.] And you?

GRACE. Grace Lambert—burlesque—God help me.

SMITTY. [*Smiling.*] This is Flo Harris, you'll be working together. [*Ad lib greetings. Then* SMITTY *continues seriously again.*] You'll find the "Johnnie" in there—next to it, is a store room for extra supplies. At the end's our kitchen. The other door leads into a mobile unit for emergency and overflow from the hospital. Now you'd all better find yourselves a bunk. Doctor Marsh wants to meet you. [*Exits Left.*]

STEVE. [*To* CONNIE, *who looks as if she is going to collapse from fatigue.*] Come on, let me take one of those bags.

CONNIE. [*Smiling wanly.*] Thank you.

STEVE. What's the matter, honey? [*Escorting* CONNIE *toward a bunk.*] Feeling sick again?

CONNIE. A little tired, I'm afraid.

STEVE. [*Crossing down Left.*] I'll get you a glass of water.

CONNIE. Thanks. [CONNIE *continues to her bunk.*] The smell in here is awful, isn't it?

PAT. [*Overhearing her.*] What did you expect it to smell like, a floral shop?

[*The* GIRLS *laugh. They are getting themselves settled.* GRACE *has taken the lower down Right bunk;* HELEN *the upper.* CONNIE *has the lower and* STEVE *the upper Right Center bunk.* SUE *has the upper and* ANDRA *the lower of the bunk Left.* PAT *takes the bunk below* FLO *up Left, leaving the single up Right for* NYDIA.]

HELEN. [*Trying to climb into her upper bunk.*] How are you supposed to get up here?

GRACE. Call the porter I suppose.

PAT. [*To* FLO.] Hey—what did this dump used to be?

FLO. A dump.

PAT. Oh, a wise guy.

FLO. It was a dump—for ammunition—before that, a gun emplacement.

PAT. It's still a dump.

HELEN. From what you've told us about that joint you worked in, you should feel right at home.

GRACE. [*To* FLO.] Say, Harris, have you been with the Army long?

FLO. Since they bombed Nichols Field.

SUE. Nurse?

FLO. For lack of a better word.

HELEN. Any good-looking men to spare up here?

FLO. I don't think you'll be disappointed.

HELEN. It'd be a shame to spoil a good record. [HELEN *starts whistling "Parlez-vous"—then sings, using*

"Battling Battalions of Bataan, parlez-vous—
Battling Battalions of Bataan, parlez-vous—
No Mama—no Papa—no Uncle Sam
But with MacArthur why give a damn—
Hinky-dinky parlez-vous—"

PAT. [*As they start to repeat, yells.*] Hey! Hey! [*Crossing up to Right of bunk where* FLO *sits.*] I hear the Japs have gobbled up most of the islands in the Pacific and are saving us for dessert.

HELEN. You're always hearing things.

GRACE. How does the Intelligence Department manage to get along without you?

PAT. I've had offers—turned 'em down to be where the fireworks are set off.

SUE. [*Coming from her bunk.*] I hope you're right about those fireworks, Pat. I rather want to be on hand when we smash those barbarians.

[SMITTY *enters from Left, closely followed by* DOC. PAT *comes to attention and the other* GIRLS *seeing the older woman, start to get up.*]

SMITTY. Attention all of you. Doctor Marsh.

PAT. Fall in.

[ALL *are tumbling to form ranks.*]

DOC. As you were, girls. You can dispense with the formalities up here. Major Williams has given you your orders, I believe.

PAT. Yes, ma'am, to report to you.

DOC. Good. As he has perhaps told you, we are to operate a Mobile Hospital under his supervision. Theoretically your orders will come from me, but most of the time, you will receive them from Smitty, here. More often than not, the work that you will be called upon to do is distasteful, and you might think it out of your province, but it must be done—the enemy will attempt to dislodge our position as soon as they can bring up their big guns. Anytime now a hell worse than you ever imagined will break loose. As civilian volunteers you still have the right to go back, but for the sake of all

those up here who need you, I hope this may never happen. [*Studies their faces for a minute.*] Are there any questions?

NYDIA. Yes, sir—er, I mean, yes, ma'am.

DOC. [*Smiling.*] What is it?

NYDIA. I was just wondering, when do we get our sheets?

DOC. Sheets?

NYDIA. Yes, there isn't even one on my bed, and—

DOC. I'm afraid you'll have to do without a number of things you've never had to before, and sheets are one of the least of them.

NYDIA. Yes, ma'am.

DOC. You'll all have about an hour to get settled here. We'll eat at the hospital tonight at six. Any other questions you have, Smitty or Harris will answer for you. [*She picks up her helmet and bag and starts for the Center door, winking broadly at* SMITTY *as she passes her. In the doorway she turns.*] I can't tell you how glad we are to have you up here. Things were beginning to pile up on us— Good luck.

[*She exits and the* GIRLS *start to return to their bunks.*]

SMITTY. Just a minute, all of you. [*They stop and look at her.*] After mess, Conlin and Domeret will go up to Observation with Harris. She'll show you the ropes, two at a time. The rest of you will come to the hospital with me. And I guess now's as good a time as any to give you a little advice. Until you get to know your way 'round, you'll make things easier for yourselves and

everyone else if you stay out of people's way—keep your ears and eyes open and your mouths shut. [*She throws the last at* PAT.] Carry on. [*Turns and exits Right.*]

[GIRLS *return to bunks;* CONNIE *exits Left.*]

PAT. [*With a flip salute.*] Just like that, eh? She didn't waste much time before dishin' out orders.

FLO. Don't get Smitty wrong, she's as square as they come. I've never known her to ask someone to do something she wouldn't do herself.

STEVE. [*Crossing to basin.*] I like her kind. You always know where you stand.

FLO. She grows on you.

PAT. So do warts. I don't think I'm gonna like her.

SUE. Aren't you being rather unfair?

GRACE. Poor Pat's never happy until she's got something to be sore at.

HELEN. [*Who is bouncing on her bunk.*] A night on one of these "third degree" mattresses, and you'll all be sore all over.

FLO. [*Laughing.*] That's what I thought at first, but either you soften them or they harden you, I don't know which.

[ALL *join in the laugh and they settle down to inspecting the place, each girl to her own interest.* NYDIA *is looking for her knitting,* PAT *and* GRACE *are at the table.*]

NYDIA. Well, I like the Doc.

HELEN. She seems regular enough.

GRACE. [*To* FLO.] Yeah, but what does the Doc stand for?

SUE. She is a nurse, isn't she?

FLO. Yep, but she was an important surgeon before she joined the Army.

NYDIA. [*Still searching for her yarn.*] Say, have any of you seen my knitting?

PAT. What are you goin' to do—knit yourself a sheet?

NYDIA. Of course not, silly, it's a sweater for my boy friend—if I can ever find him. We might just as well be in different wars.

HELEN. What is your boy friend, anaemic?

NYDIA. No, he's a bugler with the 43rd. Doesn't it seem funny I haven't been able to find him?

PAT. Not if he knows you as well as we do.

[ALL *laugh at the girl but she continues her search, unconscious of their attention.*]

STEVE. Say, Harris—

FLO. [*Correcting her.*] Flo's the name—

STEVE. Thanks, what is this Observation Smitty mentioned?

PAT. Yeah—what's with the Observation deal—or is it some military secret?

FLO. No, just the Signal Corps Post— The Doc sends us up in shifts to give us a breather. Air raid lookout and field switchboard—

HELEN. [*Suddenly.*] Switchboard!—and I volunteered to get out of a rut.

[CONNIE *screams off Left.* ALL *turn toward the door through which she bursts.* STEVE *catches her.*]

CONNIE. [*In terror.*] Rats—that place is full of rats, we've got to get out of here.

[*The* GIRLS *start to react to* CONNIE'S *terror, but* FLO'S *laugh stops them. They look at her for explanation.*]

FLO. I'm sorry, but things like rats, and sheets won't seem so very important after you get a look at what the boys up in the line and those nurses over in the hospital have to put up with—[*Then, more seriously.*]—and after you've had to write a few letters home for what's left of a man.

[STEVE *takes* CONNIE *to her bunk.*]

PAT. [*After an awkward pause.*] Aw—she ought to be home playin' with her dolls. You don't hear any of the rest of us kickin'.

SUE. We all really do want to do our parts, and we're ever so grateful for your not making us feel horribly green like the others at the Manila hospital, they seemed to forget the time they were green themselves.

FLO. Yeah, I know—I got the works too. I suppose they do get a little tired seein' the surprised looks on each new batch of faces, but most of you will probably find yourselves lookin' on the next batch—if any—in much the same way. [*Suddenly she realizes how serious she is.*] Say—what is this? You've got me goin' like a scratchy record. Suppose I shut up and maybe you'll tell me what's new from the States?

STEVE. Outside of what they did to Manila—all we know is what we hear on the radio, and that ain't much.

FLO. I haven't even seen a radio in days. What do they think over there—what are they doing about all this?

HELEN. You can take it straight from the switchboard —all we're gettin' are rumors.

GRACE. That's right—facts are as rare as our planes in Manila.

FLO. I'll bet they're workin' night and day back home to make up for the mess they've allowed to happen here.

SUE. I'm sure they're all beastly jealous of us being here on the spot. Everyone is simply dying to get their hand in, you know.

HELEN. Yep, they're not havin' much trouble sellin' this war.

ANDRA. That's ridiculous. No one has to sell a war of aggression. I hardly think there is anyone that would sit back and see everything they hold sacred defiled before their very eyes.

PAT. In a pig's ear. I'll bet most of them are afraid they'll have to climb off their plush izzies and shake up their well ordered lives.

HELEN. [*To* FLO, *with a laugh.*] You wanted to know what's goin' on—there you are—both sides of it.

[STEVE *and the* OTHERS *join in on the laugh.* SUE *watches* ANDRA, *who is growing more serious by the minute.*]

ANDRA. Perhaps I'm dense, but I can't see two sides, nor can I see anything frightfully amusing about this war.

[EVERYONE *is stopped short.*]

SUE. [*Fills in the awkward pause.*] What Andra is trying to say is that we are both firm believers that this is a "Holy War" and that any country which turns its back on God can't survive.

PAT. Amen.

[ANDRA *turns on* PAT, *but before she can speak,* NYDIA *jumps up.*]

NYDIA. Why of course—

PAT. [*To* ALL.] See, even Nydia agrees.

NYDIA. I just remembered where I put my knitting.

[ALL *laugh except* ANDRA *and* SUE. *It is not a nasty laugh, but more one of relief.* SUE *sees the trouble is over and starts for the Right door.*]

SUE. I'm rather anxious to have a look around before it turns dark—[*To* FLO.]—think Smitty will object?

FLO. No, but you can go out that way, and ask her—she's inside with some stretcher cases.

SUE. [*Stopping beside* ANDRA.] Like to get some air, Andra?

ANDRA. I'd rather not, if you don't mind.

SUE. Any of the rest of you?

AD LIB. "Are you kiddin' "—"Not me"—"No thanks," etc.

SUE. [*Stops beside* ANDRA.] Sure you don't mind?

ANDRA. Of course not, Susan.

[SUE *starts again for the door up Right.*]

FLO. Hey—[SUE *stops.*]—don't forget your top-hat.

SUE. [*Returns to her bunk and grabs her helmet.*] Righto. [*As she exits Right.*] See you at the hospital. Cheerio.

NYDIA. Ta ta.

HELEN. You and your sister are the walkin'est people I've ever seen.

PAT. [*To* FLO.] Every stop on the way they held us up for a constitutional.

HELEN. I can't imagine working up any more of an appetite. I could eat a horse now.

GRACE. I could put away a couple of hooves myself.

PAT. Better save the gags till after dinner—they probably feed you horse meat up here.

GRACE. I don't care as long as it's stopped buckin'.

[CONNIE *crosses behind table on her way to basin. She carries a towel and cake of scented soap she has taken from her bag.*]

FLO. Don't get too hungry. We can't break for chow till Smitty gets through in there.

PAT. [*Sniffing air and turning to look at* CONNIE.] Phew. What is that? [CONNIE *turns.*] That smell you're usin' should drive out the rats.

STEVE. Leave the kid alone, Pat, she's not botherin' anybody.

PAT. This is a hell of a place to bring perfume.

STEVE. Kinda bad place to bring gripes, isn't it?

PAT. [*Quickly.*] Wait till you get rid of that cold and you'll know what I'm talkin' about.

[*The Center door opens and* SADIE *enters laden with kitchen equipment. She stumbles and some of her pans spill over, making quite a noise.* FLO *rises to greet her.*]

FLO. Sadie— [*Turns to* OTHERS.] Gang, I want you to meet Sadie—the greatest cook in the Army. She can make an inner sole taste like filet-mignon.

AD LIBS. "Hello, Sadie"—"here let me help you"—"when do we eat"—"boy, are we glad to see you."

SADIE. [*After getting her stuff reorganized.*] You'll have to eat at the hospital tonight. Tomorrow I can get things set up here.

[*She exits Left,* FLO *helping her.* NYDIA *and the* OTHERS *seem to have pepped up at the thought of food.*]

NYDIA. Gee—this is going to be fun, isn't it?

HELEN. I'll reserve my opinion till I get a good look at the men.

GRACE. You would.

NYDIA. I wonder where the canteen is?

GRACE. I hardly think they'll have one over here.

NYDIA. Don't be silly—where else do you think they have their dances and shows Saturday night. In every war picture I ever saw there was a canteen.

PAT. Maybe the General didn't see those pictures.

[*There is the distant sound of a SIREN and approaching PLANES.*]

HELEN. What's that?

STEVE. Sounds like an air raid warning.

GRACE. I'll bet it is.

NYDIA. Let's all go out and see. [FLO *enters Left as* NYDIA *starts for the Center door. There is a large EXPLOSION nearby. The lamp shakes.* FLO *watches it sway.*] Maybe we better not.

STEVE. [*To* FLO.] Is it an air raid?

[FLO *nods.*]

PAT. How close is it?

FLO. Too damned close—[SMITTY *enters and crosses to Center door.*]—but you won't have to worry till that lamp starts doin' a Highland Fling.

[ALL *hold a long look at the swaying lamp.*]

SMITTY. Funny time for a raid.

FLO. Yeah.

SMITTY. Probably a flight returning from Clark Field with a few kisses left over.

[*There is another EXPLOSION. All eyes are on the lamp. It only jiggles.*]

FLO. I hope that English girl knows enough to duck.

ANDRA. [*Startled.*] Is there any danger of something happening to her?

SMITTY. No, she's at the hospital by this time.

FLO. Probably.

SMITTY. There go our guns—

[*A new sound is heard, that of ack-ack GUNS.*]

FLO. I was beginning to think those boys at the Observation Battery forgot to wake up.

PAT. They all sound alike to me.

FLO. It won't be long before you'd rather hear that sound than Tommie Dorsey.

CONNIE. [*Tensely.*] What if they drop one here? We'd never get out, would we?

SMITTY. You couldn't be safer in your own bed.

[*The shock of EXPLOSIONS continue, growing more distant.*]

ANDRA. How long does it keep up?

SMITTY. Until they're out of bombs or out of commission.

CONNIE. [*Growing panicky after another SHOCK.*] We've got to get out of here!

SMITTY. [*Seeing this and studying the faces of* ALL.] It's only natural to expect several cases of nerves until you know what this is all about, but we've learned that it doesn't pay to sympathize with crack-ups.

PAT. What makes you think anybody's gonna crack up?

SMITTY. I don't think you'll prove any different from the rest of us.

PAT. You've got a lot to learn.

SMITTY. So I see.

PAT. Just don't take us for a bunch of Patsies.

SMITTY. You might as well take that chip off your shoulder, Conlin. You won't find anyone around here with enough time to knock it off.

[*The SHOCKS have subsided. The PHONE jingles.* SMITTY *goes to it. Again the sound of the SIREN.*]

FLO. Well, the shootin's over, kids.

SMITTY. [*Into phone.*] 63rd Auxiliary, Smith speaking—

STEVE. [*Looking at lamp.*] They come and go fast, don't they?

[*WARN CURTAIN*]

FLO. Sometimes.

SMITTY. Yes, Doc, I understand. See you there. [*Hangs up and turns to* GIRLS.] Well, girls, your baptism's arrived sooner than you bargained for. All that activity you just heard was over at Fort Stotsenberg. We've got to go over there and clean up.

STEVE. Clean up? Are there many hurt?

SMITTY. I'm afraid so.

PAT. Well, come on—what are we waiting for?

[*They* ALL *grab for their tin hats and kits, and pile out Center and up the stairs in a hurry, jabbering as they go.*]

GRACE. [*To* SMITTY.] Will the other girls be there?

SMITTY. No.

HELEN. And they gave us the horse laugh because they got first duty.

AD LIBS. [*As they exit.*] "How about our supper?"
"The hell with supper we can eat any time."
"Don't worry about your sister, kid."
"We'll see her there."
"She can take good care of herself."
"And the other kids thought they'd see action before us—"

FLO. [*Who with* SMITTY, *is preparing more deliberately.*] What a shock they've got coming, and the worst of it is there'll be nothing to replace what they'll lose tonight.

SMITTY. Maybe they're different.

FLO. Who you kiddin'?

SMITTY. [*Has taken a small bottle from her pocket and shaken out a pill which she washes down with a cup of water. Now she turns and starts for the Center door.*] Ready?

FLO. [*As she turns, she shrugs, and tosses her rabbit's foot in the air catching it as it falls.*] Are we ever?

[*They start up the stairs,* FLO *whistling, as the Curtain falls.*]

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE II

It is eleven-thirty P.M., *four days after the preceding scene.* DOC MARSH *sits at the table working over a pile of reports. At the table beside her,* NYDIA *has dozed off at her knitting. Her hands are on her lap holding a half finished row.* SADIE *is seated on one of the bunks rolling bandages.* ANDRA, *on her bunk, tosses restlessly.* HELEN *on hers sleeps heavily. The rest of the girls are out on duty. There is the sound of distant GUNS.*
AT RISE: DOC *notices a mosquito about to light on* NYDIA'S *face and brushes it off. She smiles a motherly smile at the girl and returns to her work.* GRACE *enters from Right and crosses to the* DOC.

DOC. Yes, Lambert.

GRACE. Everything's ready for that transfusion, Doc Marsh.

DOC. Very good. I'll be right in. [GRACE *exits Right.* DOC *turns to* NYDIA.] Joyce—Joyce, it's after eleven-thirty— [NYDIA *comes out of it and continues her knitting between yawns.*] You and Domeret had better get ready to relieve the Observation detail. [*Exits Right.*]

NYDIA. [*Rising as* DOC *starts out.*] Yes, Doctor. [*Crosses to* HELEN'S *bunk and shakes her.*] Wake up, Helen, we're on duty. [HELEN *grunts and rolls over.*

NYDIA *crosses to her own bunk and puts knitting under pillow.*] Helen.

ANDRA. Please be quiet.

NYDIA. [*Apologetically as she returns to* HELEN.] Oh, I'm sorry. [*More quietly.*] Come on, Helen, you don't want to disappoint the boys.

HELEN. [*Sleepily.*] How about the one I just left?

ANDRA. Will you two shut up?

HELEN. [*Paying no attention.*] Why is it you always wake up from a dream just when it's getting interesting? [*She swings to the floor, yawns and starts to pull on her shoes.*]

[SADIE *puts the bandages on the cabinet and rises.* NYDIA *is getting on her kit.*]

SADIE. [*Going off Left.*] I'll get you both some tea—

HELEN. And a couple of slices of bread—*buttered!* I find it comes up easier that way.

NYDIA. I wonder why I don't get sick like you and Connie?

HELEN. Simple enough— It's all mental.

NYDIA. [*With a blank look.*] Oh, I see.

HELEN. Besides, when you run across a bad one, you pass out before your stomach has a chance.

ANDRA. Shut up.

HELEN. Sounds like they've started up again?

NYDIA. Over an hour ago.

HELEN. Four days and four nights—seems like a year, doesn't it?

NYDIA. I wonder why they're picking on us?

HELEN. They know that General MacArthur can't bring up much in the way of reinforcements while they keep that up.

NYDIA. Can't he?

HELEN. Haven't seen any heavy equipment coming up, have you? [*Starts toward* SADIE *who has entered and is putting tea and sandwiches on table.*] And God knows we need it.

ANDRA. [*Rising up in her bunk.*] Do you two have to make so much noise?

HELEN. You're doing all right yourself.

[SADIE *exits Right.*]

NYDIA. Leave her alone, Helen. I don't think she feels very well.

HELEN. There's nothing wrong with her. [*Looks at* ANDRA *who is pathetically begging silence with a look.*] Why don't you stop dramatizing yourself?

ANDRA. You shut up.

NYDIA. Don't pick on her, Helen. She hasn't slept since Sue disappeared.

HELEN. It makes me sick the way everyone babys her. You'd think she's the only person around here who'd lost something in this war.

ANDRA. [*Rising.*] You nasty beast—you shut up or I'll—

HELEN. Cry for Mama—sure, we know. Isn't there enough grief out here without you loading everybody with your petty troubles?

ANDRA. [*Tense but not hysterical.*] It may be petty to you but I can't stand it—to be around those stinking bodies out there and force myself to help gather up those torn pieces of flesh, and all the while I keep thinking of—of—

NYDIA. Don't, Andra—we understand. [*Looks at* HELEN *and mouths "please."*]

HELEN. I'm sorry, kid—

[DOC *enters Right.*]

ANDRA. [*She doesn't see* DOC.] If only we knew where she is—even if she were—gone, it wouldn't be so bad —but just to disappear— [*She covers her eyes and drops into a chair.*]

DOC. [*Crossing to her.*] I couldn't help overhearing what you just said, West— [ANDRA *looks up.*] No, don't explain—I understand better than you'll ever know. I don't have to think back very far to remember seeing those same planes bombing a town in China. I was helpless to do a thing but watch that death pouring out of the sky. I found myself flat on the ground, pounding it with my fist and bawling like a baby—we can't help that, but we can rise above it. Come on now, on your feet.

ANDRA. [*Rises, unsteadily.*] I'm afraid, I can't stand much more—they keep bringing in more bodies, and not a trace of her—

DOC. [*Evenly.*] There never has been anything pretty about war, West. Men have always destroyed and

women have always come along behind and tried to put back the pieces. You know how badly they need you out there now.

ANDRA. [*Breaking to bunk and burying her head in her arms.*] What has all that to do with my sister?

DOC. [*Coldly.*] Perhaps I've been wrong about you. I thought you'd turn out to be one of our best. [*Turns away.*] You don't have to go out with this shift—turn in and try to get some sleep— [*To* OTHERS.] You two had better get started.

NYDIA. Yes, Doctor. [*Exits Center.*]

[DOC *turns from* ANDRA *and sits at table as though she has washed her hands of the girl.* ANDRA *slowly turns and glares at* DOC. HELEN *waits at the table for a last sip.* ANDRA *suddenly straightens and with a look of hatred at the* DOC *moves quickly to her bunk and slips her feet into her shoes. She grabs her kit and helmet and turns toward the door without another look at the* DOC.]

ANDRA. Come on, Helen.

HELEN. [*Without emotion.*] Better reinforce yourself, kid.

ANDRA. I don't want any. Come on. [ANDRA *exits Center.*]

[HELEN *stuffs a sandwich in her pocket and follows her out. As the door closes,* DOC *looks up with a sigh of relief. She smiles to herself and returns to her work. Again the Center door opens and* SMITTY *enters.*]

SMITTY. Greetings, Doc.

DOC. Hello, Smitty, anything new?

SMITTY. Same old story, those babies over there seem to know what we're going to do before we make up our minds.

DOC. They have certainly slowed our communications down to a walk.

SMITTY. It don't add up, Doc. Here they've been raisin' merry hell behind us for five days now, then after a few hours' silence they start hittin' bull's-eyes.

DOC. Lose anybody?

SMITTY. [*Taking a cup of water.*] Stretcher crew.

DOC. [*Worried.*] Not Steve Polden and—

SMITTY. No—a couple of the kids from the village. Never knew what hit 'em.

DOC. [*Relieved, but affected by the loss.*] That's too bad. We needed them. Smitty—

SMITTY. Yes? [*Starts out Right.*]

DOC. Just a minute. I was told something today in the strictest confidence, but I feel if anyone should know —it's you.

SMITTY. Yes?

DOC. Sit down. [SMITTY *sits Center chair.*] Intelligence Headquarters has every reason to believe that someone in the Ambulance Corps is working with a native Fifth Columnist passing on information to the Japs.

SMITTY. One of the girls?

DOC. One of our girls.

SMITTY. I don't believe it.

DOC. We must find her, Smitty. The lives of too many people depend on it.

SMITTY. Do you believe it?

DOC. I'm afraid I do—but it's reassuring to know that after all you've been through—you don't. Found any trace of Sue?

SMITTY. [*Shakes her head.*] Not yet.

DOC. She must have been buried in a fox hole—she couldn't have disappeared.

SMITTY. They're still diggin'.

DOC. Better keep Andra away in case they dig her up.

SMITTY. Yeah, I know.

DOC. Bring in any work for us?

SMITTY. An amputation and a couple of fractures.

DOC. [*Starting out Right.*] Coming?

SMITTY. I'll be right with you. [DOC *exits Right and* SMITTY *wearily rubs her forehead as she crosses to the basin, takes out another pill and washes it down with a cup of water as* CONNIE *enters Right. She is drawn, but does not show the physical signs of the work she's been doing like the rest of the girls. She has managed to keep her uniform neat and her hair brushed. At the moment she is dirty, but she crosses to her bunk and starts to brush off and get her perfumed soap from her bag as* SMITTY *speaks.*] I suppose you've left Polden out there to finish up your work as usual.

CONNIE. It's almost done, and I was afraid I was going to be ill.

SMITTY. How long do you think she'll be able to stay in one piece, doing double duty this way?

CONNIE. Steve doesn't mind, she understands.

SMITTY. What good did you expect to be out here with this constant whimpering and weak stomach of yours?

CONNIE. It's the smell—ether, blood and sweat and that horrible Dakin's solution—I'm all right at Observation.

SMITTY. Who wouldn't be? Sittin' on your can all day pushin' plugs into a switchboard. But every one of the girls needs that breather more than you. You're going to do more of your share around here or give me a better reason than a sensitive nose.

[SMITTY *turns on her heel and starts out Right. As she reaches the door, we can hear the voices of some of the other* GIRLS *approaching.* CONNIE *nervously takes her soap out and crosses to the basin as* GRACE, PAT *and* FLO *enter from Right.* FLO *crosses to her bunk whistling.*]

GRACE. [*Entering.*] Those guys must talk us over like we were a bunch of sheep.

PAT. Nuts. They don't care that much.

GRACE. Well, how else do you think he'd know I have a birth mark on my—

PAT. [*Interrupting.*] Can it. He probably was making a stab in the dark.

FLO. Maybe he caught your act in that burlesque show.

GRACE. It wasn't that *kind* of an act. The way those guys paw you, you'd think they were studying Braille.

[STEVE *enters from Right.*]

FLO. You ought to get on the end of a stretcher. The only boys that come our way aren't interested in birth marks, are they, Steve?

[STEVE *has crossed to* CONNIE *at the basin and ignores* FLO'S *question.*]

STEVE. Feelin' better, honey?

[*She puts her arm around* CONNIE. CONNIE *pulls away self-consciously. The* OTHERS *exchange looks.*]

CONNIE. Yes, thanks.

[CONNIE *is frantically scrubbing her hands.* STEVE *pats* CONNIE *lovingly on the shoulder and moves down to her bunk. The other* GIRL *winks knowingly.*]

GRACE. [*Picking up the conversation.*] Those guys in the fox holes are the worst. They really play rough. We ought to have guns to protect ourselves.

FLO. Nydia's got the right technique.

GRACE. What's that?

FLO. She pretends she doesn't know what they want.

PAT. She's not pretending.

[*They laugh.*]

STEVE. Say, Flo, I think you got in wrong with Helen today.

FLO. Yeah?

STEVE. [*To* GRACE.] One of the boys told Helen she was the loveliest thing he'd ever seen and then Flo marks his chart "Delirious."

FLO. There's only one guy that gets in my hair.

GRACE. Don't tell me, lemme guess—Lieutenant Holt?

FLO. [*Nodding.*] He's a persistent cuss.

GRACE. Somebody's goin' to cool him off one of these days.

STEVE. Smitty's kinda sold on him, isn't she?

PAT. She's not sold on anybody, that piece of ice.

GRACE. Stick around and see the ice melt some time when Lieutenant Holt shows up.

STEVE. I hate to see her waste time on that fellow.

FLO. He's made a pass at every skirt in this outfit.

GRACE. At and under.

[CONNIE *has returned to her bunk after fixing herself carefully before the mirror. She is now getting out her perfume.* GRACE *takes her place at the basin.*]

PAT. I like the guy—at least he puts his cards on the table.

FLO. And how. But it's a pretty worn deck.

GRACE. Poor Pat's been tryin' to get him to walk her and he doesn't even know she's at bat.

PAT. Sour grapes—tchk—tchk. [*She catches sight of* CONNIE *spraying perfume on herself.*] Put on your masks, kiddies, Lady Squeamish is layin' down another gas attack.

CONNIE. [*To* PAT, *sincerely.*] Does this really bother you?

PAT. [*Somewhat disconcerted.*] I can't say I'm nuts about it.

CONNIE. I'm awfully sorry, but it's the only thing that takes that awful smell away. I know that you all put up with a lot from me and I do appreciate it, but please don't begrudge me these little things. They're all I have to remind me of what I've given up.

PAT. Stop, you're killing me. After all, none of us have to stay, you know, so why all the self-pity? There's no reason why you can't act like the rest of us.

STEVE. There are countries where she'd have to act like the rest of them, aren't there, Pat? Yeah and these are the kinda ideas I figured we were all out here fightin' against so we could express ourselves as individuals.

PAT. Aw, you guys are always gettin' serious. Can't a fella have a little fun here without everybody lookin' down his throat to see what made the noise?

GRACE. [*Coming to* PAT'S *assistance.*] You know the only reason we ride Connie is because we're all fed up seeing you do her work every day.

STEVE. [*Quietly.*] I'd do the same for you, Grace—

FLO. Sure, we know it, Steve. We just don't think it's fair, but after all, it's none of our business, so let's stow it; what say?

[PAT *shrugs as* SADIE *enters from Right and crosses toward Left door.*]

GRACE. [*Leaving the basin.*] Hey, Sadie, got anything out there for a bunch of hungry soldiers?

SADIE. In a few minutes now.

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