

# "STALAG 17"

Screenplay by

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Based on a play by

Donald Bevan and Edmund Trzcinski

SHOOTING DRAFT

SEQUENCE "A"

FADE IN:

BARBED WIRE AGAINST A WINTRY NIGHT SKY

Beyond it, more barbed wire. Ice has formed on the strands. Now and then searchlight beams crisscross the pattern. As the CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES along the double fence, SUPERIMPOSE -

THE CREDIT TITLES

THE GREAT CAMP - (NIGHT)

A wide expanse of barren ground checkered with clusters of barracks, sectioned off into compounds by double barbed-wire fences, nine feet high. Searchlights sweep over the barracks, the muddy ground with the snow patches, and the pine forest beyond the barbed-wire. The searchlights come from the goon towers – little guard houses elevated on poles – interspersed along the fences.

COOKIE'S VOICE

(with an occasional  
stammer)

I don't know about you, but it always make me sore when I see those war pictures – all about flying leather-necks and submarine patrols and frogmen and guerillas in the Philippines. I don't want to take

anything away from those guys, but what gets me is that there never was a movie about P.O.W.s – about prisoners of war. Now my name is Clarence Harvey Cook, – they call me Cookie. I was shot down over Magdeburg, Germany back in 43. That's why I stammer a little once in a while, especially when I get excited and I always get excited when I talk about Stalag 17. I spent two and a half years in Stalag 17. Stalag is the Kraut word for prison camp and number 17 was somewhere near Krems on the Danube. There were about forty thousand P.O.W.s there, if...

## OUR COMPOUND

In the foreground the big gate. Above it a sign: STALAG 17-D. On both sides of the gate German guards in heavy coats, rifles slung over their shoulders. They stomp about in enormous boots with high cork soles to keep warm. Beyond the gate about eight low barracks form a U about the Appell-ground. They are primitive one-story wooden structures all set up on stilts about two feet high. From one of the buildings – the Administration Building – flies the swastika. In between the barracks are the wash latrines. A road runs through the slushy compound to the compound beyond.

## ONE OF THE GOON TOWERS

A couple of German guards up there, one at the machine gun, the other working the searchlight.

## COOKIE'S VOICE

you bothered to count the Russians and the Poles and the Czechs. In our Compound there were about six hundred and thirty of us – all American airmen, all shot down by the Krauts – radio operators, gunners and engineers – all sergeants. Now you put six hundred and thirty sergeants together and boinnnng! – you've got yourself a

situation! There was more fireworks shooting off around that place! Take for instance the story about the spy we had in our barrack. It was about a week before Christmas in '44 and two of our guys – Manfredi and Johnson to be exact – were just getting set to blow the joint...

## THE HUNDEFUEHRER

A German guard plodding along inside the barbed wire with four mean mastiffs straining at the leash. The light from the goon tower grazes over him.

## ONE OF THE BARRACKS

The light sweeps slowly over the long shack. Catches the sign: BARACKE 4. Catches one of the doors, locked from outside with a heavy wooden bar.

## INSIDE BARRACK

Bunks on both sides. Tripledecked bunks. In the bunks seventy-five American P.O.W.s huddled in blankets. In between the bunks, in the little space left to them, crude tables, an iron stove, makeshift stools. Every inch crowded with whatever they have. Up above and all the way down the barrack hangs their wash. Over all of it, the heavy stench of seventy-five men cooped up. From outside through the broken, patched windows the searchlight sweeps over the bunks. The men are all asleep. Or are they?

## THE FAR END OF THE BARRACK

This is the strategic spot of the story. In the five tiers of bunks live our major characters.

In the upper bunk lies HOFFY. Little fellow. Plenty of authority. The Barrack Chief. His eyes are wide open. He is studying his wristwatch, the phosphorescent numerals shining in the dark.

In the other bunks lie the others, wide awake, tense:

DUKE, big bellyacher.

TRIZ, six-foot-three, ninety-eight pounds.

PRICE, the barrack Security Chief. Quiet, touch of class.

MANFREDI, no cover, fully dressed.

HARRY, bug-eyed, cocky.

BLONDIE, fair-skinned, boyish.

JOHNSON, fully dressed like Manfredi. Scared.

SEFTON, casual. In his mouth a cold cigar butt.

Hoffy again. Still staring at the wristwatch. This is the moment. He lifts the metal dogtags off his chest and jiggles them. This is the signal.

Duke instantly slides out of the bunk, grabs up his blanket and moves toward the window. A searchlight beam sweeps across. Duke goes flush on the ground. The light passes on. Duke gets up again and starts hanging the blanket over the window.

Now the others go into action, silently, efficiently. Except for Manfredi and Johnson they are all in long winter underwear, some in slacks and socks.

As for Sefton, he is lying in his bunk just watching them.

Blondie hangs a blanket over the window. Triz swings one over the clothesline to shield off their end of the barrack.

Hoffy and Price light a couple of handmade lamps: margarine in tin cans with the wick stuck inside.

Manfredi and Johnson are putting on their leather jackets.

Harry tries to awaken STOSH in the bunk above him. The wooden boards around Stosh's bunk are plastered with Betty Grable cheesecake. Harry pokes him. Stosh does not respond. Harry interlocks his fingers, puts them close to Stosh's ears and cracks them in a SHARP SALVO. Stosh opens his eyes, dazed. Harry pats Stosh's cheek.

HARRY  
(in a whisper)  
Get up, Animal! Betty Grable's on  
the phone!

Stosh gives him a dirty look. Gets out of the bunk. He and Harry move to the little iron stove. Triz is already dismantling the pipe above the stove. Harry and Stosh lift the stove and start inching it to one side.

Hoffy moving to a large bucket of water. It is a trick job: a bucket within a bucket. He lifts out the shallow inner part with the water. Hidden underneath are some civilian clothes. He takes them out, crosses to Manfredi and Johnson. (All the dialogue in this scene in whispers, of course.)

HOFFY  
Here's your civilian clothes, boys.

MANFREDI  
Okay, Hoffy.

Duke takes the clothes from Hoffy and starts stuffing them into a small barrack bag.

HOFFY  
Bury your Army outfits before you  
get out of the forest.

MANFREDI  
Okay.

HOFFY  
The compass is the top button on  
your pants, Johnson.

JOHNSON  
Okay.

Sefton, propped up in his bunk, watches the proceedings with a pitying little smile. He eyes wander to Harry and Stosh. By now they have moved the stove some four feet to the side, and start carefully lifting some sawed-off planks out of the floor.

Blondie is standing watch by the blanket-covered window, peeking out.

Price slips a wire hook down into the crack between a bunk and the wall, fishes out a sheaf of papers and walks to Manfredi and Johnson.

PRICE

Anybody asks for your papers, you're French laborers.

He hands them the papers.

PRICE

Your map – your Kraut money – Swiss francs.

MANFREDI

Roger.

PRICE

Now, let's hear it once more, boys.

JOHNSON

We've been over it a hundred times.

HOFFY

Let's hear it again.

MANFREDI

We stick to the forest going west until we hit the Danube –

PRICE

Check.

JOHNSON

Then follow the Danube up to Linz –

PRICE

Check.

JOHNSON

In Linz we hop a barge and go all

the way to Ulm –

From OFF come the WEIRD SOUNDS of an ocarina being played.  
They turn.

It's JOEY in his bunk playing the sweet potato. He's nuts  
all right.

DUKE

Stop it, Joey – go to sleep!

Joey hides the ocarina behind his back, afraid they may take  
it away.

PRICE

(to Johnson)

Go on. You're in Ulm.

JOHNSON

Once in Ulm we lie low until night,  
then take a train to Friedrichshafen.

MANFREDI

Then once in Friedrichshafen we steal  
a rowboat, get some fishing tackle,  
and start drifting across the lake –  
always south – until we hit the  
other side – Switzerland.

Sefton has gotten out of his bunk, and is picking up the  
margarine lamp.

SEFTON

Bingo. Once in Switzerland, just  
give out with a big yodel so we'll  
know you're there. It's a breeze,  
boys.

He lights his cigar butt with the margarine lamp. Manfredi  
and Johnson shoot him a nervous glance.

HOFFY

Stay out of it, Sefton.

SEFTON

Just one question. Did you calculate the risk?

Harry and Stosh have by now removed the loose planks off the floor. A small black hole gapes below them.

HARRY

Ready.

Hoffy, Price, Manfredi and Johnson move toward the trap door, Johnson carrying the barrack bag. Hoffy looks at his watch.

HOFFY

You got ten minutes to get through the tunnel. That'll bring you out just when the Jerries are changing shifts.

(Turns to window)

Blondie?

Blondie gives him the high sign.

HOFFY

(to Manfredi and Johnson)

Okay, boys – peel off.

There are handshakes, goodbyes and good-lucks.

STOSH

When you get going on those broads, think of me!

HARRY

Animal! Animal! Aren't you ashamed of yourself? A couple of guys are trying to escape and you're thinking of broads. Broads?

He does a take.

JOHNSON

(with feeling)

We'll miss you, you cruds.



He turns and climbs down through the trap. Before Manfredi follows him, he turns away, goes down on his knee, crosses himself quickly.

#### UNDERNEATH BARRACK 4 - (NIGHT)

Johnson has already landed on the ground. Manfredi slips down. They look around and start crawling off in the direction of the latrine.

#### INT. BARRACK 4 - (SHOOTING UP THROUGH TRAP)

Stosh is peering after them, his head hanging down through the trap from above. Beyond him in the barrack, Hoffy, Price and Duke bend over Stosh, waiting for developments.

#### UNDERNEATH BARRACK 4 - (NIGHT)

From Stosh's point of view: Manfredi and Johnson have now reached the end of the barrack and are crawling into the compound towards the wash latrine some fifteen feet away. A searchlight sweeps dangerously towards them.

#### INT. BARRACK

Stosh pulls up from the trap, his eyes closed, his fingers in his ears. He doesn't want to see or hear the two out there get shot. The others stand petrified. No shots, no screams. So Stosh bends down into the trap again.

#### EXT. BARRACK 4 - (NIGHT)

Manfredi and Johnson just manage to fling themselves back under the barrack as the searchlight sweeps past. Then, they get on their feet again and dash to the wash latrine – just ahead of another searchlight from the other direction.

#### INT. WASH LATRINE - (NIGHT)

A primitive, roofless structure, with wooden partitions shielding it from the outside. Above, a water tank with pipes running down to spigots over a trough. Under the trough, a wooden lattice to stand on.

Manfredi and Johnson have reached first base. They stand

breathless. Then Manfredi picks up the lattice, leans it against the trough, and lifts a dirt-covered trap leading into the tunnel. Johnson has tied the barrack bag to his own ankle. They HEAR BARKING. Freeze.

## THE HUNDEFUEHRER

Leading the mastiffs past the wash latrine. One of the mastiffs is BARKING. He seems to smell something, but the other dogs pull him along.

## INT. WASH LATRINE - (NIGHT)

Manfredi and Johnson wait until the BARKING fades in the distance. Johnson, the barrack bag tied to his ankle, jumps down into the narrow vertical shaft. Manfredi follows. He pulls the trap shut over his head in such a way that the lattice falls into place on top of it.

## THE TUNNEL

A shaft about three feet square and five feet deep leads into a narrow, crudely shored-up tunnel. Johnson and Manfredi light their Zippo lighters and start worming their way through the tunnel, Johnson leading the way, the barrack bag dragging from his ankle.

## INT. BARRACK

Harry and Stosh moving the stove back into place. Huffy fixing up the trick bucket. Price pacing up and down. Sefton leaning against a bunk, smoking the cigar.

### HOFFY

They ought to be under the barbed wire soon.

### BLONDIE

(still covering the window)

Looks good outside.

### STOSH

I hope they hit the Danube before dawn.

PRICE

They got a good chance. This is the longest night of the year.

TRIZ

I bet you they make it to Friedrichshafen all right.

STOSH

I bet they get all the way to Switzerland!

SEFTON

And I bet they don't even get out of the forest.

They all look at him.

DUKE

Now what kind of a crack is that?

SEFTON

No crack. Two packs of cigarettes say they don't get out of the forest.

HOFFY

That's enough, Sefton. Crawl back into your sack.

HARRY

He'd make book on his own mother getting hit by a truck!

Sefton takes two packs of cigarettes from his pocket and throws them on the table.

SEFTON

Anybody call?

HOFFY

Go on, Sefton – butt out!

DUKE

Wait a minute, Hoffy – I want to

back those kids. I'll cover ten of that.

He starts shaking cigarettes out of his pack onto the table.

TRIZ

I'll take five.

PRICE

Eight.

HOFFY

Put me down for ten, you louse.

DUKE

(throwing two packs  
on the table)

I'll call the whole pot.

SEFTON

Whatever you say.

(calling off)

Hey, Cookie – get me some more cigarettes.

COOKIE, a chipmunk of a kid, scrambles down from his bunk – the one above Sefton's. Drags out a footlocker from under Sefton's bunk. The footlocker is chained to the bunk-post. Cookie opens it, starts taking cigarettes out.

About twelve guys are around Sefton by now, making their bets.

HARRY

Here's two and a half.

SEFTON

No butts.

Cookie comes over with a carton.

COOKIE

(With a stammer)

W-w-will that do or do you want some m-m-m –?

SEFTON  
That'll do.

He rips open the carton.

SEFTON  
Speak up, boys. Any more sports in  
the crowd?

## INSIDE TUNNEL

Johnson and Manfredi crawling on, by the light of their Zippos. Johnson dragging the bag behind him. They are dripping with perspiration. From above comes a little shower of loose earth.

Johnson stops as he comes to the end of the tunnel. There is another shaft leading up. He picks up a rusty can and starts digging at the earth above.

## 20. THE OPEN GROUND ABOVE - (NIGHT)

In the pine forest some thirty feet outside the barbed wire. From the goon towers, the lights sweep over the camp and over the edge of the forest.

The tin can thrusts through the ground as Johnson digs into the open. Then, when the opening is wide enough, he climbs out, his face covered with sweat and dirt. He helps Manfredi out. They lie on the ground for a moment, exhausted. Then Johnson starts untying the bag from his ankle.

MANFREDI  
Let's go.

He rises. There is a SHARP BURST of MACHINE GUN FIRE. Manfredi falls instantly. Johnson, not knowing where the gunfire is coming from, tries to turn and run, the bag dragging behind him.

From a hillock about thirty feet off a MACHINE GUN, manned by three German guards, is blasting away.

A light from one of the goon towers picks up Johnson, running.

The machine gun gets him, ripping his chest. He spins and crumples to the ground. The light swings to Manfredi. Bleeding, he tries to crawl back to the safety of the tunnel. There is another BURST of FIRE –

## INSIDE BARRACK

The men have all run to the window and look out.

All except Sefton and Cookie. They stand at the table where the cigarettes are. And in back of them: Joey, sitting in his bunk, comprehending nothing.

There is another BURST of FIRE. Then all is silent. The men turn back into the room, sickened.

BLONDIE

Filthy Krauts!

DUKE

What slipped up, Hoffy?

HOFFY

Don't ask me. Price was elected Security.

DUKE

(To Price)

Okay, Security – what happened?

PRICE

I wish I knew. We had everything figured out. To the last detail.

STOSH

Maybe the Krauts knew about that tunnel all the time!

HARRY

Shut up, Animal!

STOSH

Maybe they were layin' for 'em out there!

SEFTON  
(casually)  
Yeah. Maybe.

He gives Cookie a sign. Cookie pulls the front of his shirt out of his pants and holds it out against the edge of the table. Sefton sweeps the mass of cigarettes into Cookie's shirt.

DUKE  
Hold it, Sefton. So we heard some shots – so who says they didn't get away?

SEFTON  
Anybody here wanna double their bet?

No answer. He nods to Cookie again. Cookie carries the cigarettes to their bunks. Sefton follows him, kicks open the footlocker. Cookie dumps the loot in.

The men are looking at them. Stosh sees a cigarette on the floor which Cookie has dropped. He picks it up and tosses it into Sefton's footlocker viciously.

FADE OUT:

END OF SEQUENCE "A"

SEQUENCE "B"

FADE IN:

THE CAMP - DAWN

Another miserable day has begun. The barracks loom in the murky light.

From the Administration Building – the one with the swastika – come a dozen German guards, Lugers hanging from their belts. They spread out and cross the muddy compound toward the barracks, BLOWING WHISTLES shrilly. They lift the wooden bars off the doors and go inside.

FELDWEBEL SCHULZ has arrived at Barrack 4. He is an enormous

man, about fifty-five. His cauliflower ears make a good vegetable for his pig-knuckle face. He removes the bar, opens the door, stands there WHISTLING like a madman, enters.

#### COOKIE'S VOICE

Funny thing about those Krauts. They hated the sight of us yet they couldn't wait to look at us again. Every morning – at six on the dot – they'd have the Appell – that's roll call to you. Each barrack had its own alarm clock. Our alarm clock was Johann Sebastian Schulz. I understand the Krauts had a composer way back with the Johann Sebastian in it – but I can tell you one thing: Schulz was no composer. He was a Schweinehund. Oh, Mother – was he ever a lousy Schweinehund!

#### INT. BARRACK

Schulz is marching down the barrack, beating the bunks with his stick.

#### SCHULTZ

Aufstehen, gentlemen! Appell! Raus!  
Hurry up!

Men start sliding out of their bunks. Others roll over in their sacks, groaning.

#### SCHULTZ

You must get up for roll call! Raus, raus, gentlemen! Everybody aufstehen! Raus!

#### MEN

We heard you, Schulz!  
And good morning to you!  
Aw, break it off!  
Why don't you take that whistle and shove it!  
Tell the Kommandant I've got dysentery!



Shut up, Schulz – you're talking to sergeants of the United States Air Force!  
Look at this chilblain. Ain't it a beaut!

SCHULTZ  
Raus! Raus! Aufstehen!

Whacking the bunks, Schulz has reached our end of barrack. Hoffy and Price are getting into their clothes.

HOFFY  
Come on, sack rats – cut the bitchin' and get up!

Duke, Triz and Blondie start climbing out, yawning and scratching themselves.

PRICE  
Say, Schulz – you guys had machine gun practice last night?

SCHULTZ  
(throwing up his hands)  
Ach, terrible! Such foolish boys. Such nice boys. I'd better not talk about it. It makes me sick to my stomach.

DUKE  
You killed them, huh? Both of them?

SCHULTZ  
Such nice boys! It makes me sick to –

DUKE  
Don't wear it out!

Schulz moves to Joey. Joey is sitting in his bunk, TOOTLING on his ocarina. Schulz raps the sweet potato with his stick.

SCHULTZ  
Outside! You, too! Put away the piccolo!

Joey hides the sweet potato, staring at Schulz, frightened.  
Schulz jerks him off the bunk.

SCHULTZ

Los, los. Dummkopf!

HOFFY

(pushing in)

Lay off, Schulz. He's got a sickness.  
He's krank.

SCHULTZ

Sometimes I think he is fooling us  
with that crazy business.

HOFFY

Yeah? How would you like to see the  
guts of nine pals splattered all  
over your plane?

(to Joey)

C'mon Joey – don't be afraid.

He helps him up and starts putting clothes on him.

Schultz has approached bunk with Harry and Stosh. He pokes  
Harry with the stick.

SCHULTZ

Aufstehen, gentlemen! Please! You do  
not want to stay in bed on such a  
beautiful morning we are having today!

HARRY

Say, Schulz –

SCHULTZ

Jawohl?

HARRY

Sprechen Sie deutsch?

SCHULTZ

Jawohl.

HARRY  
Then droppen Sie dead!

SCHULTZ  
(splitting his sides)  
Ja – ja! Droppen Sie dead! Always  
mit the jokes! Droppen Sie dead!

He pokes Stosh with the stick.

SCHULTZ  
Aufstehen! Appell!

He moves on.

Harry bends over Stosh, shaking him.

HARRY  
Get up, Animal. Come on!

Stosh doesn't budge. Harry again gives him a knuckle-cracking salvo. Stosh opens his eyes automatically.

HARRY  
(sweetly)  
Good morning, Animal! What'll it be  
for breakfast? Scrambled eggs with  
little sausages? Bacon and eggs sunny-  
side up? Griddle cakes? A waffle?

STOSH  
Stop it, Harry!

HARRY  
Coffee? Milk? Or how about a little  
cocoa?

STOSH  
(grabbing him by the  
collar)  
Why do you do this to me every  
morning?

HARRY  
(with sadistic speed)

Hamburger and onions! Strawberry shortcake! Gefillte fish! Banana split! French fried potatoes! Chicken a la king!

The last items are coming out with a gurgling SOUND as Stosh tightens the grip on Harry's neck.

STOSH

I'll kill you, Harry – so help me!

HARRY

Let go, Animal! It's roll call! Hitler wants to see you!

Sefton is standing near his bunk, getting dressed. Cookie is helping him to zip up his luxurious flyer's boots.

SCHULTZ

Good morning, Sefton.

SEFTON

Good morning, Schulz. And how's Mrs. Schulz? And all the little Schulzes?

SCHULTZ

Fine – fine!

He looks at the two bunks which were occupied by Manfredi and Johnson. Takes off his gloves.

SCHULTZ

Let us see. We have now two empty bunks here.

(takes out pencil and notebook, writes)

Nummer einundsiebzig und Nummer dreiundsiebzig in Baracke vier.

PRICE

Suppose you let those mattresses cool off a little – just out of decency?

SCHULTZ

Ja, ja, gewiss! It is only that we are cramped for space with new prisoners every day.

(to the whole barrack)

Gentlemen! Outside! Please! Do you want me to have trouble with the Kommandant again!

He starts herding them out the door.

STOSH

Hey, Schulz – as long as you're going to move somebody in – how about a couple of those Russian broads?

SCHULTZ

Russian women prisoners?

HARRY

Jawohl!

SCHULTZ

Some are not bad at all.

STOSH

Just get us a couple with big Glockenspiels.

SCHULTZ

Ja! Ja! Droppen Sie dead!

Splitting his sides, he pushes them out, and follows.

EXT. COMPOUND - COLD GREY MORNING

Most of the P.O.W.s are out of their barracks by now. A mass of freezing, disheveled men. Some wear Army coats over their underwear, knitted caps pulled down over their ears. Some are huddled in blankets, their feet in wooden clogs. Only a few are fully dressed and shaven. A few are on crutches or bandaged up.

They assemble before their respective barracks, forming a U facing the center of the compound. The barrack chiefs are

assisting the guards in lining them up, fifteen abreast and five deep.

Supervised by Schulz and Hoffy the last ones from Barrack 4 emerge.

HOFFY

All right, men – fall in!

From off comes:

GERMAN OFFICER'S VOICE

Ach-tung! Abzaehlen!

The HUB-BUB dies down.

The guards march down the front line of their barrack groups, counting the lines of five in German.

As Schulz passes him, Blondie spots something in the middle of the compound. He nudges Duke. Duke nudges Price, Price Harry, Harry Stosh, Stosh Cookie. Cookie nudges Sefton who is putting on his wool gloves. The glove drops. They all look off in the same direction.

In the center of the compound, right smack in the mud, lie the corpses of Johnson and Manfredi, covered with a blanket. You know it's them because Johnson's foot is sticking out, with the barrack bag still tied to it.

A stir goes through the men of Barrack 4. They are hit hard. All but Sefton. He looks at the corpses for a moment, then bends down, picks up the glove and starts putting it on.

In front of the Administration Building a German Lieutenant has been supervising a couple of guards as they lay narrow planks over the mud in a line leading to the middle of the compound. He turns now to the P.O.W.s.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

Parade Atten-tion!

The German guards come to rigid attention. The Americans just stand there, sullenly.

The Lieutenant comes to a heil salute. Through the open door of the Administration Building steps the Kommandant, OBERST VON SCHERBACH, followed by another Lieutenant. Von Scherbach is a big erect officer of the Potsdam School. Over his shoulder hangs a furlined officer's coat. His boots shine like polished glass. He glances over the compound, then walks down the planks, followed by the two Lieutenants, marching through the mud on both sides of him. Von Scherbach stops at the end of the plank. In front of him lies a deep puddle. He clicks his heels and raises his hand in a heil salute.

VON SCHERBACH  
Guten Morgen, Sergeants!

A glowering silence from the men. Von Scherbach lowers his hand.

VON SCHERBACH  
Nasty weather we're having, eh? And  
I so much hoped that we could give  
you a white Christmas – just like  
the ones you used to know... Aren't  
those the words that clever little  
man wrote – you know the one who  
stole his name from our capital –  
that something-or-other Berlin?

He waits until his nasty little joke sinks in. Schulz has come up to the Lieutenant, salutes and hands him the slips of paper with the prisoner count.

VON SCHERBACH  
Look at that mud. Come spring – and  
I do hope you'll still be with us  
next spring – we shall plant some  
grass here – and perhaps some  
daffodils –

He turns to the Lieutenant for the tabulations.

VON SCHERBACH  
Ich bitte!

LIEUTENANT  
(checking the papers)

Melde gehorhsamst: 628 Gefangene.  
Zwei Mann fehlen in Baracke vier.

VON SCHERBACH

(to the P.O.W.s)

I understand we are minus two men this morning. I am surprised at you, gentlemen. Here I am trying to be your friend and you do these embarrassing things to me. Don't you know this could get me into hot water with the High Command? They do not like men escaping from Stalag 17 - especially, not enemy airmen from Compound D. We plucked you out of the skies and now we must see to it you do not fly away. Because you would come back and blast our cities again. The High Command would be very angry with me. They would strip me of my rank. They would courtmartial me, after all these years of a perfect record! Now you wouldn't want that to happen to me, would you? Fortunately, those two men –

From the ranks of the men comes the EERIE DISSONANT SOUNDS of Joey's SWEET POTATO.

Joey, in the second row of the Barrack 4 company, is playing on his ocarina, oblivious to what is going on. Stosh turns and quickly grabs the ocarina from Joey's mouth.

Von Scherbach chooses to disregard the little musical interlude.

VON SCHERBACH

As I was saying: fortunately those two men did not get very far. They had the good sense to rejoin us again, so my record would stand unblemished. Nobody has ever escaped from Stalag 17. Not alive, anyway.

He snaps his fingers in the direction of the guard who stands



watch over the corpses.

The guard pulls back the blanket in such a manner that all we can see is the barrack bag tied to Johnson's leg.

The P.O.W.s however see the corpses. There is an ANGRY BUZZ.

Hoffy marches up to Von Scherbach.

HOFFY

(saluting)

Sergeant Hoffman from Barrack 4.

VON SCHERBACH

Yes, Sergeant Hoffman?

HOFFY

As the duly elected Compound Chief,  
I protest the way these bodies are  
left lying in the mud.

VON SCHERBACH

Anything else?

HOFFY

Yes. According to the Geneva  
Convention, dead prisoners are to be  
given a decent burial.

VON SCHERBACH

Of course. I'm aware of the Geneva  
Convention. They will be given the  
burial they deserve. Or perhaps you  
would suggest we haul in twenty-one  
cannons from the Eastern Front and  
give them a twenty-one gun salute?

Hoffy turns on his heel and walks back to his men.

Von Scherbach, without even looking at the corpses, snaps his fingers. The guard throws the blanket back over the bodies.

VON SCHERBACH

For the last time, gentlemen, let me

remind you: any prisoners found outside the barracks after lights out will be shot on sight. Furthermore, the iron stove in Barrack 4, the one camouflaging the trap door, will be removed. And so that the men from this barrack will not suffer from the cold, they will keep warm by filling in the escape tunnel. Is that clear?

The men just stand there, in frustrated anger. Stosh clenches the ocarina in his fist.

VON SCHERBACH

All right, then, gentlemen. We are all friends again. And with Christmas coming on, I have a special treat for you. I'll have you all deloused for the holidays. And I'll have a little tree for every barrack. You will like that.

Stosh, with a quick underhand flip, throws the sweet potato in the direction of Von Scherbach.

It lands smack in the middle of the puddle in front of Von Scherbach and splashes his boots with mud.

VON SCHERBACH

(stiffening)

Who did this?

Absolute silence.

VON SCHERBACH

I will give the funny man exactly five seconds to step forward.

He looks about the compound. Five seconds pass. Nobody moves.

VON SCHERBACH

Then you shall all stand here if it takes all day and all night.

From the ranks of the men of Barrack 4, Stosh steps forward.

VON SCHERBACH

That is better!

But his triumph is short-lived, for almost instantly Harry steps forward alongside Stosh. Then Duke and Blondie and Cookie. Spontaneously, men from all the other barracks follow until all the P.O.W.s have moved forward one step.

VON SCHERBACH

I see! Six hundred funny men! ...There will be no Christmas trees! But there will be delousing.

(to Schulz)

With ice water from the hoses!

He wheels about and marches back up the plank and into the Administration Building. His Lieutenants after him. Two of the guards start picking up the planks again.

SCHULTZ

(shouting, to the  
P.O.W.s)

Dismissed!

The men break ranks, going off in all directions, some back to the barracks, some toward the latrines.

Only Joey stands where he stood, his eyes fastened on the puddle. Slowly he walks toward it. He bends down and fishes out his sweet potato, dripping with mud. It is broken. He wipes the pieces off on his coat and hides them inside his jacket.

INT. WASH LATRINE

Packed with men from Barrack 4, about two dozen of them. Others waiting outside for their turn. At the trough washing: Hoffs, Price, Duke, Stosh, Harry, Cookie and Sefton. No soap. A couple of worn-out towels. Except for Sefton: He's got soap, towel and tooth brush.

STOSH

(imitating von

Scherbach)  
'We will remove the iron stove –  
the one that was camouflaging the  
trap door.'

HARRY  
I'm telling you, Animal, these Nazis  
ain't Kosher.

STOSH  
You can say that again!

HARRY  
I'm telling you, Animal – these  
Nazis ain't Ko –

STOSH  
(grabbing him)  
I said say it again. I didn't say  
repeat it.

Triz reaches for Sefton's soap, but gets a sharp rap on the  
knuckles.

SEFTON  
Private property, bub.

DUKE  
How come the Krauts knew about that  
stove, Security? And the tunnel? How  
come you can't lay down a belch around  
here without them knowing it?

PRICE  
Look – if you don't like the way  
I'm handling this job –

HOFFY  
Kill it, Duke. It's got us all  
spinning.

DUKE  
I just want to know what makes those  
Krauts so smart.

STOSH

Maybe they're doin' it with radar.  
Maybe they got a mike hidden some  
place.

HARRY

Yeah. Right up Joey's ocarina.

DUKE

Or maybe it's not that they're so  
smart. Maybe it's that we're so  
stupid. Maybe there's somebody in  
our barracks that's tipping 'em off!  
One of us!

HOFFY

Come again?

DUKE

You betcha. I said one of us is a  
stoolie. A dirty, stinkin' stoolie!

SEFTON

Is that Einstein's theory? Or did  
you figure it out yourself?

A P.O.W. sticks his head into the doorway.

P.O.W.

(breathless)

New dames in the Russian compound!

Stosh lets go with a SCREAM. He takes off like shot from a  
cannon, Harry after him. Instantly the wash latrine is emptied  
of the men, wet as they are. Nobody is left but Price, Hoffy,  
Duke, Sefton and Cookie.

EXT. COMPOUND

It's a stampede. P.O.W.s are rushing across the compound  
toward the Russian compound.

Stosh, charging like a bull, gets tripped and falls flat on  
his puss right into a mud puddle. Harry zooms past him. Stosh  
picks himself up and runs after him, his winter underwear

dripping with mud.

## THE BARBED WIRE FENCE

dividing the American and Russian compounds. P.O.W.s rush in from all sides, about a hundred of them. They go as far as they are permitted; to a low warning wire, running parallel to the big fence some fifteen feet away. To cross the warning wire is verboten. The German guards up in the goon towers insure that.

There is great excitement among the P.O.W.s. Some give out with cat-calls and wolf-whistles; others just stand there staring.

Beyond the fence a new batch of Russian prisoners has just been brought in. German guards are counting some sixty prisoners, about twenty of them women. They all are in uniforms and wear boots, a bedraggled lot. The women are big buxom dames, not exactly Golden Circle material, but this is war.

The Americans jump up and down trying to attract the women's attention. They throw cigarettes, chewing gum, chocolate. One guy is dancing the Kazatski, two of his pals holding him up.

### P.O.W.S

Yee-ow!

Tovarich! Tovarich!

Oh you sweethearts!

Let's open the third front!

Hey, Minks – Pinsk!

How about some borscht – the two of us!

Stosh and Harry push right up to trip wire. Stosh, plastered with mud, goes completely berserk.

### STOSH

Hey – Russki – Russki! Look at those bublichkis! Over here!

### HARRY

Comrade! Comrade! Otchi Tchorniya –

Otchi Tchorniya!

Stosh puts two fingers in his mouth and tries to whistle. He gets his mouth full of mud. Spits out the mud. Searches madly through his pockets and throws whatever he can find across the fence.

STOSH

Chewing gum – chewing gum!

Some of the Russian women break the ranks to pick up the goodies that come flying over. The German guards push them back. The women smile at the Americans and wave.

STOSH

(at the top of his  
lungs)

Look at me! I'm your baby!

(to Harry)

Get a load of that blonde one! Built  
like a brick Kremlin!

HARRY

Hey – Comrade! Over here! This is  
Harry Shapiro – the Volga Boatman  
of Barrack four!

STOSH

Lay off! The blonde is mine!

The women are being led away by the guards.

STOSH

(screaming)

Hey, Olga – Volga – wait for me!

He takes off blindly toward the women, trips immediately over the warning wire and falls flat on his face in the mud again.

Up in the goon tower the guard swivels the machine gun and yells down.

GUARD

Zurueck oder wir schiessen! Zurueck!

Harry frantically grabs Stosh by the feet and pulls him back, under the wire.

STOSH

Let me go! Let me go!

HARRY

They'll shoot you, Animal!

He lies right on top of him, holding him by the wrists.

STOSH

I don't care! Let me go!

From OFF come the SOUNDS of a dishpan being beaten and shouts of "Chow!" Some of the P.O.W.s start to go back to the barracks.

HARRY

It's chow, Animal! Chow!

STOSH

Who wants to eat? I just wanna get over there!

HARRY

No you don't! You don't want any broads with boots on!

STOSH

I don't care if they wear galoshes!

HARRY

You want Betty Grable!

STOSH

Let me go!

HARRY

(yelling)

Betty Grable!

Stosh's face lights up.



HARRY

Animal! When the war's over, remember I told you I'd fix you up with Betty Grable!

STOSH

Yeah? How you going to fix me up with Betty Grable?

HARRY

How? We go to California. I got a cousin that's working for the Los Angeles Gas Company. That's how we get the address, see? Isn't that clever? I take you up to her house and ring the doorbell and say, 'Congratulations, Miss Grable. We have voted you the girl we'd most like to be behind barbed wire with, and I'm here to present the award'.

STOSH

What's the award?

HARRY

What d'ya think, jerko! You're the award!

STOSH

Me? What if she don't want me?

HARRY

If she don't want you, she don't get anything.

STOSH

(grabbing him)

You're teasing me again!

HARRY

(gagging)

Let go, Animal! It's chow! We'll miss chow!

Stosh relaxes his hold and drops him like a limp rag. They

scramble to their feet and run off towards Barrack 4.

## INT. BARRACK

Chow time. Most of the men sit around eating. Only a few are still in line. They stand before a washtub, from which Triz ladles out a thin brew. Then each man gets a pitiful slice of sawdust bread, cut by Blondie at the table.

1ST G.I.

(in chow line)

What's this stuff anyhow? Manicure water?

2ND G.I.

This is what I like – a hearty meal.

3RD G.I.

They finally found the formula: an Ersatz of an Ersatz.

Hoffy, back in the line with Joey, carrying both chow cans.

HOFFY

What's holding up the parade?

4TH G.I.

Are you supposed to drink this stuff or shave?

DUKE

(next in line)

Drink.

(tastes the stuff)

Shave.

Hoffy gets the two cans filled, gives one to Joey. This is the end of the line.

TRIZ

Anyone else want potato soup?

No answer. He takes out a homemade washboard and a pair of socks, puts them in the tea and starts scrubbing.

Through the door, Stosh and Harry come running.

STOSH  
(out of breath)  
Chow! Where's the chow!

He dashes to his bunk, gets his chow can and is about to dip it into the tub, when he sees what Triz is doing.

STOSH  
Take your socks outa my breakfast!

Triz takes the socks out. Stosh dips in his chow can.

HARRY  
No, Animal.

STOSH  
No?

HARRY  
No. Your eyeball goes. The top of your head. Gotta wind up with athlete's stomach.

Stosh pours back his tea, a miserable man. His eyes fall on the door. An electric shock goes through him. He grabs Harry's arm. They look off:

Sefton has come into the barrack and is crossing toward the iron stove. In his hand is the incredible – more beautiful than all the Kohinoors in the world: an egg.

Harry and Stosh stand there with their eyes bulging. They start forward, drawn by the egg.

Cookie is at the stove, tending a can of boiling water. He sees Sefton and puts a makeshift skillet (the banged-up top of a tin can) with a dab of margarine in it, on the fire. Sefton takes some keys out of his pocket, tosses them to Cookie.

SEFTON  
Set 'er up, Cookie. I'm starved.

Cookie goes towards Sefton's bunk. Sefton cracks the egg into the skillet. Stosh and Harry move in, their eyes bulging at sight of the sizzling beauty.

HARRY  
Easy, Animal! Easy!

STOSH  
Where'd that come from?

SEFTON  
From a chicken, bug-wit.

STOSH  
A chicken?

HARRY  
Don't you remember, Animal? A chicken lays those things.

STOSH  
It's beautiful!  
(to Sefton)  
You goin' to eat it all yourself?

SEFTON  
Uh-huh. The yellow and the white.

He flips the egg over in the skillet. Harry and Stosh cover their eyes and yelp in panic. To their relief they see that the egg has landed safely. The aroma of the frying egg has brought about six P.O.W.s down from their bunks. They crowd around, their mouths watering.

STOSH  
Is it all right if we smell it?

SEFTON  
Just don't drool on it.

HARRY  
You're not going to eat the eggshells?

SEFTON  
Help yourself.

He tosses him the eggshells. Harry gives one half to Stosh.

STOSH

(grateful)

Thanks. You're a real pal!

(on second thought)

What're we goin' to do with it?

HARRY

Plant it, Animal, and grow us a chicken for Christmas.

Cookie, at Sefton's bunk, has taken from one of the footlockers three cans, a china cup with a broken handle, a fork, a spoon, and a salt-and-pepper shaker. He slams the locker shut with his foot and sets everything up on the other footlocker. Hoffy, Duke and Price, seated at the table eating chow, eye him with disgust.

From the stove comes Sefton carrying the skillet and the can of boiling water. The other P.O.W.s, including Harry and Stosh, follow him, hypnotized by the egg. Sefton walks to his bunk, sits down on a little stool, puts salt and pepper on the egg. Cookie meanwhile has opened the cans. From one of them he measures out a spoonful of instant coffee into the cup and pours the boiling water over it. Sefton takes two lumps of sugar out of the other can and some Zwieback from the third can. The guys around him sniff the royal breakfast. The situation is tense.

HOFFY

If I were you, Sefton, I'd eat that egg some place else. Like for instance under the barrack.

SEFTON

(sipping the coffee,  
to Cookie)

A little weak today.

Cookie puts another half a spoonful of instant coffee into the cup.

DUKE

Come on, Trader Horn! Let's hear it:  
what'd you give the Krauts for that  
egg?

SEFTON

(eating away)

Forty-five cigarettes. The price has  
gone up.

STOSH

That wouldn't be the cigarettes you  
took us for last night?

SEFTON

What was I going to do with them? I  
only smoke cigars.

DUKE

Nice guy! The Krauts shoot Manfredi  
and Johnson last night and today  
he's out trading with them.

SEFTON

Look, this may be my last hot  
breakfast on account of they're going  
to take away that stove. So will you  
let me eat it in peace?

STOSH

Ain't that too bad! Tomorrow he'll  
have to suck a raw egg!

HARRY

He don't have to worry. He'll trade  
the Krauts for a six-burner gas range.  
Maybe a deep freeze too.

SEFTON

What's your beef, boys? So I'm  
trading. Everybody here is trading.  
Only maybe I trade a little sharper.  
So that makes me a collaborator.

DUKE

A lot sharper, Sefton! I'd like to

have some of that loot you got in those footlockers!

SEFTON

You would, would you? Listen, Stupe – the first week I was in this joint somebody stole my Red Cross package, my blanket and my left shoe. Well, I wised up since. This ain't no Salvation Army – this is everybody for himself. Dog eat dog.

DUKE

You stink, Sefton!

He goes after him.

HOFFY

Come off it! Both of you!

A couple of P.O.W.s hold Duke back.

SEFTON

Now you've done it. You've given me nervous indigestion.

(he gets up)

Anything else bothering you, boys?

PRICE

Just one little thing. How come you were so sure Manfredi and Johnson wouldn't get out of the forest?

SEFTON

I wasn't so sure. I just liked the odds.

He picks up the skillet with the half-eaten egg.

SEFTON

And what's that crack supposed to mean?

PRICE

They're lying dead in the mud out

there and I'm trying to find out how come.

SEFTON

I'll tell you how come.

(pointing at Hoffy)

The Barrack Chief gave them the green light. And you, our Security Officer, said it'd be safe. That's how come.

He crosses to Joey who has been sitting on the edge of the bunk looking on blankly and puts the skillet with the egg on his lap. Turns back to the others.

SEFTON

What're you guys trying to prove anyway? Cutting trap doors! Digging tunnels! You know what the chances are to get out of here? And let's say you do get all the way to Switzerland! Or say to the States? So what? They ship you to the Pacific and slap you in another plane. And you get shot down again and you wind up in a Japanese prison camp. That's if you're lucky! Well, I'm no escape artist! You can be the heroes, the boys with the fruit salad on your chest. Me – I'm staying put. And I'm going to make myself as comfortable as I can. And if it takes a little trading with the enemy to get me some food or a better mattress or a woman – that's okay by Sefton!

He strikes a match on the sleeve of Duke's leather jacket and lights himself a cigar.

DUKE

Why you crud! This war's going to be over some day – then what do you think we'll do to Kraut-kissers like you?

He lunges forward and there is a fracas, the others trying



to hold them back.

From off comes:

MARKO'S VOICE  
At ease! At ease!

MARKO, the Inter-barrack Communications officer, has entered from the compound, followed by a one-legged P.O.W., THE CRUTCH. Marko gets up on a stool a piece of paper in his hand.

MARKO  
(yelling)  
AT EASE!

HOFFY  
Break it off, boys! At ease for the news!

The ruckus subsides.

MARKO  
Today's Camp News!  
(reading)  
Father Murray announces that due to local regulations the Christmas midnight Mass will be held at seven in the morning!

STOSH  
You can tell Father Murray to –

MARKO  
At ease! He also says, quote: All you sack rats better show up for the services and no bull from anybody. Unquote. At ease! Monday afternoon a sailboat race will be held at the cesspool. See Oscar Rudolph of Barrack 7 if you want to enter a yacht. Next: Jack Cushingam and Larry Blake will play Frank deNotta and Mike Cohen for the pinochle championship of the camp.

HARRY

That's a fix.

MARKO

At ease! Tuesday afternoon at two o'clock all men from Texas will meet behind the north latrine.

Boos and cheers.

MARKO

At ease! Next: A warning from Kommandant von Scherbach. Anybody found throwing rocks at low-flying German aircraft will be thrown in the boob. At ease! At ease!

(then in a lower voice)

Are the doors covered?

He looks around to make sure.

MARKO

(to The Crutch)

Okay, Steve. Give 'em the radio.

The Crutch, leaning against the edge of the table, pulls up the empty pant leg. Attached there is a small radio, a makeshift set with tubes showing. Also a pair of earphones. Blondie starts getting it out.

MARKO

(to Hoffy)

You can keep it for two days.

HOFFY

Two days? We're supposed to have it for a week!

MARKO

You're lucky to get it at all. The boys are afraid the Jerries'll find it here. This barrack is jinxed.

PRICE

Don't worry. We'll take care of it.

HOFFY

(to Stosh and Harry)

Take some men and get the antenna going. Let's see if we can catch the BBC.

In the background, Harry gets a volley ball from under the bunk, Stosh picks up a roll of chicken wire from a corner of the barrack, and the two lead six other P.O.W.s out into the compound.

MARKO

What about those guys last night?  
What gives in this barrack anyway?

DUKE

Just a little sickness. Somebody around here's got the German measles.

SEFTON

He oughta know. He went to Johns Hopkins. He used to be a bedpan.

MARKO

What's the gag?

SEFTON

(imitating him)

At ease! At ease!

Marko shrugs and turns to Hoffy.

MARKO

Be sure to put down the news. Looks like the Germans have started a counter-offensive and the other barracks want to know.

Marko and The Crutch go off.

EXT. BARRACK

The men are setting up the chicken wire, attaching one end

to the barrack, and the other to a tall post: it becomes a volley ball net, and in turn, an antenna. Stosh is slipping a wire through the window into the barrack. They divide into two teams, Stosh and Harry on opposite sides, and start playing volley ball. In the background, Marko and The Crutch are seen walking away.

## INT. BARRACK

Triz has connected the antenna wire to the radio on the table. Blondie is sitting there with the earphones on, working the dials, Price sitting next to him with pencil and paper. The others stand around waiting.

PRICE

Getting anything?

BLONDIE

Getting too much. I'm tryin' to unscramble.

SEFTON

If you can't get the BBC, how about getting Guy Lombardo?

HOFFY

Are we boring you?

BLONDIE

Hold it... Quiet...

He repeats what he hears over the earphones while Price writes it down.

BLONDIE

...has driven across Luxemburg...  
The second German wedge is reported  
fourteen miles west of Malmedy where  
tank columns cut the road to  
Bastogne... the Allied Air Force is  
grounded by poor visibility...

The boys don't like what they hear.

## EXT. BARRACK

The volley ball game is in fine progress, the ball popping back and forth across the antenna. A German guard approaches, puzzled over the sports activity on this lousy winter day. He is a singularly grim fellow. He starts circling them. Harry and Stosh, to appear nonchalant, break into the SCHNITZELBANK SONG. The guard moves dangerously close to the window. Quickly Harry flips the ball over the net at him. The guard slaps it back across the net. Again Harry pops it at him ... and slowly the guard finds himself sucked into the game.

HARRY

Wunderbar! Isn't he wunderbar!

STOSH

He's the grrrrreatest!

The guard permits himself a smile as he goes on playing.

INT. BARRACK

The boys around the radio.

BLONDIE

(Repeating what he  
hears)

...five Panzer divisions and nine  
infantry divisions of von Rundstedt's  
army have poured into the wide  
breach... meanwhile two of Patton's  
tank units have been diverted toward  
Bastogne and are trying to –

It's jammed again. Blondie fiddles with the dials.

HOFFY

Come on!

BLONDIE

Static!

DUKE

Static is right! The radio's static,  
Patton's static, we're static!

SEFTON

Maybe it's going to be a longer war  
than you figured – eh, Duke?

Triz, who has been standing watch at the door, now sees:

EXT. COMPOUND

Marching toward Barrack 4 are four German soldiers headed by Schulz.

INT. BARRACK

Triz reaches up and snaps a string. All the wash in the barrack jumps up and down. That's the signal.

Immediately the boys jump into action. Triz and Blondie disconnect the wires. Hoffs takes the radio off the table and they all start dispersing.

EXT. BARRACK

Schulz and the four German soldiers are about to enter the barrack. Schulz pauses as he sees the guard playing volley ball enthusiastically. Schulz taps him on his back. The guard wheels around, freezes, clicks his heels. Schulz gives him a disapproving look. Then he leads the four soldiers into the barrack. Harry, Stosh and the other P.O.W.s follow, worried.

Schulz and the soldiers enter the barrack, followed by Harry, Stosh and the other players.

The guys have just assumed innocent positions. A little too innocent maybe.

SCHULTZ

Did I interrupt something, gentlemen?

STOSH

Yeah. We were just passing out guns.

SCHULTZ

(laughing)

Always joking. Always making

wisecrackers!

HARRY

Wisecrackers? Where did he pick up his English? In a pretzel factory?

SCHULTZ

You always think I am a square. I have been to America.

(he shows them his cauliflower ears)

I wrestled in Milwaukee and St. Louis and Cincinnati. And I will go back! The way the war is going I will be there before you!

HARRY

You should live so long.

Schulz has taken a wallet out of his pocket, shows a photograph to them.

SCHULTZ

This is me in Cincinnati.

STOSH

Who's the other wrestler? The one with the mustache?

SCHULTZ

That is my wife.

STOSH

(taking the photograph)

Look at all that meat. Isn't she the bitter end!

SCHULTZ

(snatching it from him)

Give it back. You must not arouse yourselves.

HARRY

Hey, Schulz! I got a deal for you.

Suppose you help us escape. We'll go home and have everything ready for you in Madison Square Garden. For the world championship! Schulz, the Beast of Bavaria versus Halitosis Jones!

SCHULTZ

Droppen Sie dead!  
(to the German soldiers)  
Raus mit dem Ofen. Los! Los!

The soldiers move toward the stove. As the scene proceeds they dismantle the stove and ultimately carry it out.

SCHULTZ

(to the P.O.W.s)  
All right, gentlemen! We will now all go outside for a little gymnastic and take some shovels and undig the tunnel which you digged.

STOSH

Why don't we just plug up that tunnel – with the Kommandant on one end and you on the other.

SCHULTZ

It is not me. It is the orders. I am your friend. I am your best friend here.

DUKE

Cut out the guff, Schulz. We're on to you. You know everything that's happening in this barrack. Who's tipping you off?

SCHULTZ

Tipping me off? I do not understand.

HOFFY

You're wasting your time, Duke.  
(to the others)  
Outside, everybody! Let's get it



over with.

PRICE

Wait a second, Hoffy. Schulz says he's our best friend. Maybe he can give us a little hint.

DUKE

Come on, Schulz! Spill it! How did you get the information? About Manfredi and Johnson? About the stove and the tunnel? Who's giving it to you? Which one of us is it?

SCHULTZ

Which one of you is what?

PRICE

Which one of us is the informer?

SCHULTZ

You are trying to say that an American would inform on other Americans?

DUKE

That's the general idea.

(looking at Sefton)

Only it's not so general as far as I'm concerned.

SCHULTZ

You are talking crazy!

SEFTON

(taking the cigar out  
of his mouth)

No use, Schulz. You might as well come clean. Why don't you just tell 'em it's me. Because I'm really the illegitimate son of Hitler. And after the Germans win the war you'll make me the Gauleiter of Zinzinnati.

SCHULTZ

You Americans! You are the craziest

people! That's why I like you! I wish I could invite you all to my house for a nice German Christmas!

HARRY

(to Stosh)

Why don't we accept, Animal? The worst that can happen is we wind up a couple of lamp shades.

SCHULTZ

(jovially)

Raus! Raus! All of you!

By this time most of them have put on their warm clothes, caps and gloves and are filing out.

Schulz starts to follow them, but stops short as he sees:

The electric light bulb hanging by a wire from the ceiling. Just the bulb. No shade. The wire is tied up into a slip knot.

Schulz reacts to what he has seen. he watches the last of the P.O.W.s leave, and the Germans carry the stove out of the barrack. He closes the door. His entire attitude has changed. He is serious and efficient. He walks over to the chess set on the table. Out of his pocket he takes a chess piece – a black queen – and exchanges it with the black queen from the set. He puts it in his pocket. Steps over to the light bulb, pulls the slip knot free and exits.

The light bulb hangs straight now, swaying gently in the empty barrack.

EXT. COMPOUND

The men from Barrack 4 are lined up between the latrine and the barbed wire, starting to dig up the tunnel. They are supervised by German guards. In the background, Schulz is crossing from the barrack towards the Administration Building. As the men dig, they look off at:

COOKIE'S VOICE

He was the Beast of Bavaria all right,

as we pieced it together later. And there was a stoolie in our barrack, just as Duke said. They had a very simple communications system – Schulz and the stoolie...

An open German half-truck driving toward the big gate, carrying two crude wooden coffins.

#### COOKIE'S VOICE

That's how the Krauts knew about the tunnel, from the day we started digging. Those poor suckers Manfredi and Johnson! They got out of Stalag 17 sure enough, only not quite the way they wanted to go.

The men have stopped digging. As the CAMERA goes down the row they take off their caps. Joey does not comprehend. Blondie, standing next to him, takes the cap off for him. The CAMERA PULLS PAST Cookie who has taken his cap off, and now STOPS on Sefton. He has seen the coffins. He has seen the others take off their caps. He takes the cigar out of his mouth, snuffs it out, puts it into his pocket, and slowly pulls off his cap.

#### COOKIE'S VOICE

As for the stoolie, I just wish he had German measles because when you get the measles you break out all over in red spots, and we could have pegged him easy. As it was it could have been anybody in our outfit – Duke or Hoffy or Price or Goofy Joey or Harry or the Animal or maybe Sefton. Sergeant J.J. Sefton. I guess it's about time I told you a few more things about that Sefton guy. If I was anything of a writer I'd send it in to the Reader's Digest for one of those 'Most Unforgettable Characters You've Ever Met'...

DISSOLVE:

## END OF SEQUENCE "B"

## SEQUENCE "C"

### EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

A circle about 15 feet in diameter is drawn on the barren ground with white lime. Around it, some forty G.I.s. In the center, Cookie, holding a cardboard box. To one side, standing on a wooden crate, Sefton. In front of him, a makeshift bookie's desk, a heap of loose cigarettes on top. G.I.s are crowding around, making wagers in cigarettes. Hanging off one side of the desk, the odds board: NO. HORSE ODDS 1. Whirlaway 3:1 2. Seabiscuit 5:1 3. Equipoise 1:1 4. Twenty Grand 4:1 5. Schnickelfritz 10:1

### COOKIE'S VOICE

...he was a B.T.O., Sefton was. A Big Time Operator. Always hustling, always scrounging. Take for instance the horse races. Every Saturday and Sunday he would put on horse races. He was the sole owner and operator of the Stalag 17 Turf Club. He was the Presiding Steward, the Chief Handicapper, the Starter, the Judge, the Breeder and his own bookie. He was the whole works, except that I was the stable boy for ten smokes a day.

### SEFTON

Step up, boys! The horses are at the post!

### G.I.S

Five on Equipoise!  
Give me Equipoise – ten on the nose!  
Two on Twenty Grand!  
Schnickelfritz for me. Five smackers!  
Equipoise – one solid pack!

### LAST G.I.

(an unkempt bum)  
Five on Seabiscuit! Pay you when the

Red Cross parcels come in.

SEFTON

No credit.

UNKEMPT BUM

Have a heart, Sefton!

SEFTON

Sorry. It's against the rules of the  
Racing Commission.

(calling out)

Already? Any more bets? Shake 'em  
up, Cookie!

Cookie shakes the cardboard box, puts it face down on the  
ground in the center of the circle.

SEFTON

Let 'er go! They're off and running  
at Stalag 17!

Cookie has lifted the box. There are five mice of various  
colors with numbers 1 to 5 attached to their backs. The mice  
start spreading hesitantly in all directions.

The P.O.W.s YELL and SCREAM, rooting for their horses to  
reach the circle line first.

Among the P.O.W.s Stosh and Harry. Stosh, with a bundle of  
mutuel tickets in his hand, screaming his head off.

STOSH

Equipoise! Oh, you beauty! This way!  
This way!

Equipoise, No. 3, pulls in front and is only a few feet from  
the edge of the circle.

HARRY

Equipoise! Equipoise! What did I  
tell you, Animal?

STOSH

Come on, baby! Daddy's going to buy

you a hunk of cheese!

Equipoise, now only a foot from the finish line, suddenly stops and goes into a dizzy spin. The other mice gain rapidly.

STOSH AND HARRY

Straighten out, you dog! This way!  
That's no horse – that's a dervish!  
Please! This way! Come to Daddy!

In a turmoil of SCREAMING G.I.s, Schnickelfritz passes Equipoise, still spinning like a top, and crosses the line.

SEFTON

The winner is No. 5: Schnickelfritz!

Stosh grabs Harry.

STOSH

Schnickelfritz! I told you  
Schnickelfritz! Why'd you make me  
bet on Equipoise!

HARRY

I clocked him this morning. He was  
running like a doll.

STOSH

(choking him)  
You clocked him! Why don't I clock  
you?

SEFTON

(calling out)  
The next race will be a claiming  
race for four months old and upward  
which have not won since November  
17th.

While Sefton pays off the winners, Cookie puts up a new odds board. New bettors start lining up on the other side. Among them, Harry and Stosh.

COOKIE'S VOICE

It's a good thing nobody ever asked

for a saliva test. Because I wouldn't have put it past Sefton to stiff a horse once in a while – especially when the betting was heavy.

DISSOLVE:

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

Near Sefton's bunk, the distillery is set up: a Rube Goldberg contraption of old tin cans and a maze of piping, a margarine lamp burning under the boiler. The whole thing SPUTTERS and HISSES.

Behind a makeshift wooden shelf – the bar – stands Cookie, pouring drinks for some eight customers, among them Harry and Stosh, crooked. In Stosh's hand is the big Betty Grable cheese-cake photo from his bunk.

COOKIE'S VOICE

Another one of his enterprises was the distillery. Believe it or not, he ran a bar right in our barrack, selling Schnapps at two cigarettes a shot. The boys called it the Flamethrower, but it wasn't really that bad. We brewed it out of old potato peels and once in a while a couple of strings off the Red Cross parcels, to give it a little flavor.

STOSH

(in a crying jag)

It's not fair, Harry. I'm telling you, it's not fair! She's been married for over a year! My Betty! She had a baby! Didn't you hear it on the radio!

HARRY

C'mon, Animal! Pull yourself together!

(off)

Hey, Cookie! Belt us again!

He pushes their little condensed milk cans, serving as jiggers, across the bar, counts out four cigarettes.

STOSH

Look at her! Isn't she beautiful!  
Married an orchestra leader!

HARRY

So what? There's other women!

STOSH

Not for me! Betty! Betty!

HARRY

Cut it out. Animal! I'll fix you up  
with a couple of those Russian women!

STOSH

(sarcastically)  
You'll fix me up!

HARRY

Sure, Animal! I'll get you over there!

STOSH

How? Pinky Miller from Barrack 8  
tried to get over there and they  
shot him in the leg!

HARRY

It takes a gimmick, Animal, and I  
figured us a little gimmick.

STOSH

You did?

HARRY

(tapping his forehead)  
Sharp. Sometimes I'm so sharp it's  
frightening.

Cookie slides over the two tin jiggers. Harry picks them up,  
hands one to Stosh.

HARRY

(toasting)  
To the Brick Kremlin!



STOSH  
(his eyes on the  
cheesecake photo)  
She'll never forgive me!

HARRY  
Bombs away!

They both drink it down in one gulp, Harry holding his nose. It's terrible stuff and hits them hard. Stosh goes into a violent fit of coughing, pulling his barrack cap down over his eyes.

HARRY  
(to Cookie)  
What are you serving today? Nitric  
acid?

COOKIE  
I only work here. Talk to the  
Management.

He points to Sefton, who is taking inventory of the cigarettes in his footlocker: cartons, packages, loose ones. He is tabulating the amounts on a piece of paper.

HARRY  
All right, Management. What are you  
trying to do? Embalm us while we're  
alive?

SEFTON  
Exactly what did you expect for two  
cigarettes? Eight year old Bottled-  
In-Bond? All the house guarantees is  
that you don't go blind.  
(to Cookie)  
Don't ever serve 'em again.

STOSH  
Blind! Harry! Harry!

He staggers around, not realizing his cap is pulled down over his eyes.

STOSH

Harry – I'm blind!

HARRY

(pushing up his cap)

Blind? How stupid can you get, Animal?

I drank the stuff myself.

Suddenly he seems not to see too well himself. He gropes around in panic.

HARRY

Animal! Animal! Where are you, Animal?

DISSOLVE:

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

A big telescope, about seven feet long, is set up on a tripod at the window pointing toward the Russian Compound. The telescope is made of various-sized cans soldered together. It's run by Cookie, behind a table, piled with cigarettes and chocolate bars. Bent down peering through the telescope, panning it slowly, is a P.O.W. Across the barrack stretches a long line of impatient customers, all the way to the open door and out of it. Cookie taps the peeker to indicate his time is up. The next in line pays his cigarette and peeks

COOKIE'S VOICE

The killer-diller, of course – the real bonanza – was when Sefton put up the Observatory. He scrounged himself some high-powered Kraut lenses and a magnifying mirror and got Ronnie Bigelow from Barrack 2 to put the whole shebang together for a pound of coffee. On a clear day you could have seen the Swiss Alps, only who wanted to see the Swiss Alps? It was about a mile away, that Russian delousing shack, but we were right on top of it. It cost you a cigarette or a half bar of chocolate a peek. You couldn't catch much through that

steam, but believe you me, after two  
years in that camp just the idea  
what was behind that steam sure  
spruced up your voltage.

## RUSSIAN DELOUSING SHACK - (THROUGH THE TELESCOPE)

About a dozen Russian women, wrapped only in blankets, waiting  
in line. The telescope pans across a couple of windows. They  
are completely steamed-up by the disinfecting vapors.

### INT. BARRACK

The P.O.W. is glued to the telescope. Cookie taps him on the  
shoulder.

#### COOKIE

Let's go! Thirty seconds to a  
customer.

Without moving his eye from the telescope, the P.O.W. fishes  
another cigarette from his pocket and gives it to Cookie.

Sefton stands at the open barrack door, a cold cigar in his  
mouth. He surveys the landoffice business, both inside and  
out, for beyond him a line of about forty more P.O.W.s  
stretches into the compound.

#### P.O.W.

(from rear of line)

Hey, Sefton – what's snarling up  
the traffic? By the time we get to  
look they'll be old hags!

#### SEFTON

Simmer down, boys. There'll be a  
second show when they put the next  
batch through.

Hoffy, Price and Duke come in from the compound. Hoffy cases  
the situation and pulls Sefton to the side.

#### HOFFY

What's the big idea, Sefton? Take  
that telescope out of here.

SEFTON

Says who?

HOFFY

Says me.

SEFTON

You take it out. Only you're going to have a riot on your hands.

HOFFY

Every time the men get Red Cross packages you have to think up an angle to rob them.

PRICE

When the Krauts find that gadget they'll throw us all in the boob.

SEFTON

They know about that gadget. I'd worry more about the radio.

DUKE

I suppose they also know about your distillery and the horseraces?

SEFTON

That's right.

DUKE

Just what makes you and them Krauts so buddy-buddy?

SEFTON

Ask Security.

(to Price)

You tell him, Price. You've got me shadowed every minute of the day. Or haven't you found out yet?

PRICE

Not yet.

HOFFY

Answer the question. How do you rate  
all those privileges?

SEFTON

I grease the Kraut guards. With ten  
percent of the take.

DUKE

And maybe a little something else?

SEFTON

A little something what?

He strikes a match on Duke's dogtag and lights his cigar.

DUKE

(lunging at him)

Maybe a little information!

Hoffy and Price hold back Duke.

HOFFY

Break it off!

DUKE

How much more do we have to take  
from him?

HOFFY

There'll be no vigilante stuff. Not  
while I'm Barrack Chief.

From the window come excited shouts.

G.I. VOICES

Hey, look at them!

It's Harry and the Animal!

Look what they're doing!

Everybody in the barrack is dashing toward the window giving  
out on the Russian Compound. Hoffy, Price, Duke, and Sefton  
follow after.

The window is packed by G.I.s staring out. More crowding in.

G.I.S

Those crazy jerks!  
They won't get away with it!  
The Krauts will shoot them!

EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

This is Harry's little gimmick: He and Stosh are painting a white line down the middle of the road leading towards the Russian Compound. Stosh carries the bucket and Harry, moving backwards, wields the brush. They are very close now to the barbed wire fence dividing the compounds. A bespectacled German guard is standing in front of his sentinel house.

They crouch as low as they can as they paint themselves through the gate past the guard and up the road toward the Russian delousing shack. The guard gives them a glance. It looks okay to him. He starts stamping about at the open gate.

INT. BARRACK

G.I.s at the window, watching in great excitement.

G.I.S

They're past the fifty yard line!  
Quarterback sneak!  
Look at them go!

SIX G.I.S

(in chorus)

We want a touchdown! We want a  
touchdown! We want a touchdown!

HOFFY

Those idiots! They'll paint themselves  
into their graves!

EXT. RUSSIAN COMPOUND

Harry and Stosh are doing dandy as they paint up the highway. Harry gets his bearings: the delousing shack is some twenty-five feet off the road. He paints a very elegant turn off the highway.

## THE GATE BETWEEN THE COMPOUNDS

The German guard is stamping up and down. Suddenly he does a double take as he sees:

### EXT. RUSSIAN COMPOUND

The white line leading down the middle of the highway veers off idiotically over the terrain towards the shack.

### THE GERMAN GUARD

He stands there perplexed, then takes off after them.

### EXT. DELOUSING SHACK

Harry and Stosh have now painted up to the window of the shack. Without even stopping, they paint right up the wall and around the window. As they paint, they peer in through the thick steam (through which we cannot distinguish anything). Now, they paint down the building on the other side of the window and toward the doorway. Into their pathway come the boots of the German guard. They paint right over the boots. Then they see the butt of the guard's rifle. They look at each other. They are in trouble. They stop painting and straighten up slowly.

### GERMAN GUARD

Was ist denn hier los? Sie sind  
verhaftet!

Harry gives the guard's eye-glasses a couple of quick strokes of paint. Dropping paint and brush, Stosh and he run like mad back toward the gate.

The guard stands there struggling with his glasses.

The Russian women, huddled in blankets, giggle their heads off.

FADE OUT:

END OF SEQUENCE "C"

SEQUENCE "D"

FADE IN:

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

About twenty P.O.W.s lazing about. The sack rats in their bunks. Triz and Price playing chess, Joey looking on blankly. Sefton, a towel around his neck, is sitting in a chair being shaved by Cookie. Stosh, in his bunk, is carving a new ocarina for Joey out of wood. CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY to:

The electric light bulb, hanging straight and innocent on its wire.

COOKIE'S VOICE

Now let me see, what came next? Oh, yes. Next came those new prisoners. 'Twas two days before Christmas when all through the camp, not a creature was stirring, not even that lamp.

MARKO'S VOICE

At ease! At ease!

Marko, carrying a handful of letters and a book, has entered, followed by The Crutch.

MARKO

Mail call!

The whole barrack springs to life, everyone moving towards Marko with whistles, screams and hoorays. Joey, who keeps staring at the chess board. Sefton and Cookie go on with the shave.

MARKO

At ease! At ease! First, the Kommandant is sending every barrack a little Christmas present. A copy of Mein Kampf. In the words of Oberst von Scherbach: 'Now that a German victory is in sight, all American prisoners are to be indoctrinated with the teachings of der Fuehrer. Unquote. In my own words:



(he lets go with a  
belch)  
Unquote.

He tosses the book into the air. Duke catches it.

DUKE  
That's the wrong direction.

He flings it at Sefton. It sails past Sefton's head.

Cookie ducks. Sefton doesn't even bat an eyelash.

SEFTON  
You must have been some tail gunner!  
(to Cookie)  
Go ahead, Cookie.

STOSH  
Come on, let's get that mail. Anything  
for Stanislaus Kuzawa?

MARKO  
At ease! At ease!

As Marko calls out the names he hands out the letters. Some of the men open them immediately. Others go to their bunks to read.

MARKO  
Martin. Shapiro. Price. Trzcinski.  
McKay. Shapiro. Shapiro. Manfredi.

There is an awkward pause, then Marko puts Manfredi's letter in his pocket.

MARKO  
Shapiro. Musgrove. McKay. Peterson.  
Cook.

Cookie comes up for his letter. So do Duke and Blondie. (Their names are Musgrove and Peterson.)

MARKO  
Pirelli. Coleman. Agnew. Shapiro.

STOSH  
(in a little voice)  
Nothing for Kuzawa?

MARKO  
Shapiro. Shapiro.

STOSH  
(to Harry)  
Just what makes you so popular?

HARRY  
(fanning the letters)  
Frightening, isn't it? Fifty million  
guys floating around back home and  
all those dames want is Sugar-lips  
Shapiro.

MARKO  
McKay, Agnew. Here, Stosh.

He holds out a letter.

STOSH  
(revitalized)  
Yeah?

MARKO  
Give this to Joey, will you?

STOSH  
Oh.

Marko has now distributed all the letters.

MARKO  
At ease! At ease! Here's a little  
something from Father Murray. One to  
each barrack.

He has knelt down in front of The Crutch and pulls out from  
the empty pant's leg a little Christmas tree.

MARKO

And he says he wants you cruds to cut out all swearing during Yuletide.

G.I.

How'd he get those trees?

MARKO

I don't know. Prayed, I guess. They grew out of his mattress.

Marko sticks the tree into one of the margarine cans.

G.I.

What'll we use for decorations?

MARKO

For that you got to pray yourself.

He goes, followed by The Crutch.

Stosh sits next to Joey at the table, reading his letter to him.

STOSH

'...and we do hope that you will finish that last year of law school when you come back home...'

(looks up at Joey)

Law school?! You don't want to be a stinking lawyer with a stinking brief case in a stinking office, do you, Joey?

Joey just sits there. Stosh goes on reading.

STOSH

'...And do keep writing, son. Your letters are very dear to us. With all our love, Dad.' Here, Joey, take it.

Joey doesn't move.

STOSH

It's from your Dad, Joey.

He shoves the letter into Joey's pocket.

STOSH

The next time we write to your folks, Joey, you know what you're going to say? You're going to say you don't want to be a lawyer any more. You want to be a musician – like play the flute, maybe – eh, Joey?

There is a fleeting smile on Joey's face.

Triz, in his bunk, a crumpled letter in his hand, is mumbling to himself.

TRIZ

I believe it! I believe it!

G.I.

You believe what?

TRIZ

My wife.

(Reading)

'Darling, you won't believe it, but I found the most adorable baby on our doorstep and I have decided to keep it for our own. Now, you won't believe it, but it's got exactly my eyes and nose...' Why does she always say I won't believe it? I believe it!

Blondie is reading his letter, several G.I.s around him, among them Duke.

BLONDIE

This is from my mother.

(he reads)

'I saw a wonderful article on German prison camps in one of the magazines. They showed pictures of the tennis courts and they also say that in the winter they freeze them over so you

boys can ice skate...'

DUKE

Anything about us grouse hunting in the Vienna woods?

BLONDIE

(continues to read)

'...In a way I'm glad you're not in America right now – with everything rationed here, like gas and meat.'

DUKE

Heart-rendering, ain't it? Why don't we send them some food parcels?

Harry is busy with all his mail. He has opened six of his letters and is now working on the last. Stosh comes into the SHOT and peeks over his shoulder.

STOSH

What do those broads say?

HARRY

What do they always say?

STOSH

That's what I wanna hear.

HARRY

(hiding the letters)

It's not good for you, Animal.

Stosh grabs one of the letters from him.

STOSH

Hey! This is with a typewriter! It's from a finance company!

HARRY

So it is from the finance company. So it's better than no letter at all. So they want the third payment on the Plymouth.

(showing him five

more letters)  
So they want the fourth, the fifth,  
the sixth and the seventh. So they  
want the Plymouth.

STOSH  
Sugar-lips Shapiro! Frightening,  
ain't it?

HARRY  
(holding up the last  
letter)  
This is a good one!  
(mounts a stool)  
Shut up, everybody! Listen to this!  
(he reads)  
'The President of the United States  
to Harry Shapiro. Greeting: Having  
submitted yourself to a local board,  
you are hereby notified to report...'  
What do you know! So now I'm a draft  
evader!

EXT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

Hoffy is walking across the muddy compound towards the  
barrack, leading a couple of new prisoners: LIEUTENANT DUNBAR  
and SERGEANT BAGRADIAN. They are exhausted but, by contrast  
to the old P.O.W.s, remarkably clean. They are followed by a  
P.O.W., carrying two barrack bags.

HOFFY  
(opening door to  
barrack)  
This is it, gentlemen. Don't bother  
to scrape your shoes.

He leads them into the barrack.

INT. BARRACK

Hoffy leads in Dunbar, Bagradian and the P.O.W. with the  
barrack bags. He snaps the line, the wash jiggles through  
the barrack. Everybody turns.

HOFFY

Okay, gang! Meet our new guests.  
This is Lieutenant Dunbar and this  
is Sergeant Bagradian.

DUNBAR AND BAGRADIAN

Hi.

STOSH

Lieutenant?!

The whole barracks comes to its feet and salutes him with  
mock reverence. Harry dashes up and polishes with his sleeve  
the Lieutenant's bar.

DUNBAR

Knock it off, boys. The pleasure's  
all mine.

HOFFY

The Lieutenant will be with us for a  
week or so until the Krauts can ship  
him to the officers' camp in Silesia.  
Looks like all the railroad lines  
out of Frankfurt are fouled up because  
somebody blew up an ammunition train.

BAGRADIAN

Somebody, my eye.  
(indicating Dunbar)  
The Lieutenant did it – right in  
the station – with fifty German  
guards around.

HARRY

(climbing off the  
stool)

Well! Glad to have you with the  
organization!

STOSH

You're just in time for the Christmas  
Pageant.

BAGRADIAN

Looks more like the lost company of  
Tobacco Road.

P.O.W. WITH BARRACK BAGS

(indicating Bagradian)

He's an actor. You should see him do  
imitations. He can imitate anybody.

HARRY

If he can imitate a girl, he's made.

P.O.W.

Hey – do Lionel Barrymore.

STOSH

Do Grable.

HOFFY

Stop it, boys. They were shot down  
two days ago and they've been on  
their feet ever since.

(to Stosh and Harry)

Fix them some tea, will you?

(to Dunbar and  
Bagradian)

Price will show you your bunks.

Price leads them towards the bunks which were formerly  
occupied by Manfredi and Johnson, the P.O.W. with the barrack  
bags following them.

PRICE

We had a couple of unexpected  
vacancies. Which one will it be –  
the upper or lower, Lieutenant Dunbar?

DUNBAR

Doesn't matter.

Cookie is just finished shaving Sefton. Sefton turns in his  
chair.

SEFTON

Lieutenant Dunbar? It wouldn't be  
James Schuyler Dunbar? From Boston?



DUNBAR

Yes, it would. Do we know each other?

STOSH

(indicating Sefton)

He's from Boston, too. But you wouldn't know him, not unless you had your house robbed.

Sefton gets up, wiping the soap off his ears with the towel.

SEFTON

Maybe he would. We applied for Officers' Training together, remember? They turned me down, but I'm glad to see you made it. Of course, it couldn't be that all that dough behind you had something to do with it!

(to the others)

His mother's got twenty million dollars.

DUNBAR

Twenty-five.

SEFTON

They've got a summer house in Nantucket, with an upstairs polo field.

(to Price)

You better put a canopy over his bunk.

HOFFY

Lay off, Sefton.

SEFTON

(to Dunbar)

With your mother's pull, how come you're not a chicken colonel by now?

HOFFY

Lay off, I said – if you don't want your head handed to you.

HARRY  
(from the table)  
Tea is being served on the verandah!

Harry sets two chow cans on the table.

HARRY  
(to Stosh)  
Where are the napkins, Animal?

Stosh tears off two sheets of toilet paper from a roll, separates them and puts them next to the chow cans. By now, Dunbar and Bagradian come over to the table.

BAGRADIAN  
(to Dunbar, a la Ronald  
Colman)  
Do be seated, Bonita. What a perfectly charming table arrangement. They must have copied it from House Beautiful.

Stosh starts pouring hot water from the pot.

HARRY  
Animal! How many times have I told you, you got to pour from the left!

Stosh reverses his direction. Harry has taken a faded tea bag out of his watch pocket. He dunks it three times into each chow can. Then, looking at the tea bag as if it were a watch:

HARRY  
Dinner will be served at seven sharp.  
Black tie.

He puts the tea bag back into his watch pocket.

HOFFY  
Where'd they get you, Lieutenant?  
Over Frankfurt?

DUNBAR

On the Schweinfurt run.

HOFFY

How many ships did you lose?

DUNBAR

Half the group.

PRICE

Flying out of England?

DUNBAR

Yes. Paddington, 92nd Bomber Group.

BLONDIE

(wide-eyed)

Hey, Lieutenant. How did you blow up that train with fifty guards around?

DUNBAR

Just lucky, I guess.

BAGRADIAN

Don't let him kid you. Cagney couldn't have pulled a sweeter job.

(a la Cagney)

All right, boys. We were waiting in the depot in Frankfurt, see? And there was an ammunition train coming through, the longest ammunition train you ever saw, see? So Dunbar gets himself in the men's room, see? Fixes himself a time bomb, busts open the window and just as the train moves out, lays the thing in there, see? So then, he comes out like nothing's happened and three minutes later you can hear it – boom! Broke every window in Frankfurt. It was gorgeous!

HOFFY

I wouldn't talk about things like that.

BAGRADIAN

(himself again)  
They never caught on.

HOFFY  
They may. That's why I would keep my  
mouth shut.

DUNBAR  
We're all Americans here!

PRICE  
The Krauts have a way of getting  
information.

DUKE  
Especially in this barrack.

DUNBAR  
How?

PRICE  
That's what we'd like to know.

Sefton is just putting on his leather jacket. He has been listening to what has been going on. Cookie hands him out of the footlocker a bottle of Rhine wine and a carton of cigarettes. Sefton tucks them inside his leather jacket. Cookie now hands him a pair of silk stockings.

COOKIE  
(in a low voice)  
There's only one pair left.

SEFTON  
(putting the stockings  
in his pocket)  
We'll get some more.

He puts his cap on and walks toward the door. As he passes the others:

DUNBAR  
Where does a guy take a hot shower  
around here?

STOSH

Hot showers? Dig him!

PRICE

Sorry. No hot showers. You wash in the latrine.

DUNBAR

Latrine?

SEFTON

(stopping in his tracks)

What did you expect, glamor boy? The Officers' Club with a steam room and a massage maybe?

DUNBAR

(going after him)

Just a minute. You made a couple of cracks before and I let them slide. But I don't intend to take any more. If you resent my having money, start a revolution, but get off my back.

SEFTON

Look, Lieutenant. All your dough won't help you here. Because here you're on your own. And no mother to throw you a lifebelt. Now let's see how good you can swim.

He has picked a little twig off the Christmas tree. He puts it in his buttonhole.

SEFTON

Sorry, boys, but my taxi's waiting.

He goes out.

BAGRADIAN

What's wrong with him?

HOFFY

Plenty.

## STOSH

Number one on the rat parade!

Hoffy nods to Duke. Duke leaves the barrack, after Sefton.

EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

On the muddy compound there is a tag football game going on with some forty G.I.s watching.

Sefton is walking along. Behind him, Duke has come out of the barrack and is following him. Sefton becomes aware of it. Nonchalantly, he walks into a wash latrine.

INT. WASH LATRINE

Sefton comes in. There is another P.O.W. there, a colored guy, just finishing washing his hands. Sefton quickly climbs up a couple of rungs of the ladder leading to the water tank and stops there. The colored P.O.W. doesn't notice it.

EXT. WASH LATRINE

Duke stands some distance away, watching the only pair of legs visible under the raised partition. The legs move now down the length of the latrine and out the other end. The colored P.O.W. emerges and walks off with his back toward Duke. Duke follows him.

INT. WASH LATRINE

Sefton jumps off the ladder and exits the way he came in.

## COOKIE'S VOICE

It was a funny thing about Sefton and me. I guess I knew him as well as anybody else in the camp because I had worked for him for two years. But there were lots of things I didn't know about him. Take for instance, where he would disappear to once in a while. Of course, I had a hunch, but it seemed so crazy I couldn't quite believe it – Just as I would never have believed that Sefton was

the guy that would give away  
Lieutenant Dunbar for blowing up  
that ammunition train.

## EXT. COMPOUND

Duke is still following the wrong guy. Now the P.O.W. stops to talk to a pal. Duke realizes his mistake. He dashes back into the wash latrine and comes out again. He stands there frustrated. With the football players rushing about, passes being thrown and G.I.s milling around, he has lost Sefton.

DISSOLVE:

## INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

START on the electric light – the cord is again tied up into a noose.

CAMERA PANS to Harry. He is made up a la Hitler; his hair is combed across his forehead and a charcoal mustache on his lip. He is now making up Joey as Hitler, with two fingers blackened in charcoal. Joey just sits in his bunk, dumbly.

At the table, Huffy is playing gin with Dunbar. Price kibitzing.

HOFFY

(to Harry)

Cut the horseplay, Harry. What's the matter with you guys?

PRICE

And don't blame me if you all wind up in the cooler.

DUNBAR

How's two?

He lays down his hand.

Stosh, at the door, holds it slightly ajar and peeks out into the compound. He too is made up as Hitler.

STOSH

Get ready! Here he comes!

He SLAMS the door, snaps wash line.

EXT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

A German truck draws up, loaded with blankets. Schulz, sitting next to the driver, gets out and starts into the barrack. Two German guards stay behind.

INT. BARRACK

Schulz enters, closes the door behind him. From OFF comes Bagradian's voice: A double-talk German gibberish in the characteristic guttural sounds of der Fuehrer.

Schulz stops, mystified.

Bagradian stands on a stool giving a lecture to some thirty P.O.W.s, all of them with their backs towards Schulz. Bagradian's face cannot be seen as he holds the Mein Kampf book in front of it. Schulz listens for a little while to Bagradian's ranting and raving. Then he stamps his foot.

SCHULTZ

Gentlemen! Gentlemen! Attention!

Bagradian lowers the book. He too is made up as Hitler. He raises his arm in the Nazi salute.

BAGRADIAN

Heil, Hitler!

SCHULTZ

(responding  
automatically)

Heil, Hitler!

He catches himself, lowers the arm.

SCHULTZ

(jovially)

Droppen Sie dead.

BAGRADIAN



(a la Hitler)  
Quiet! We are indoctrinating!  
(to the others)  
Is you all indoctrinated?

P.O.W.S  
(in unison)  
Jawohl.

BAGRADIAN  
Is you all good Nazis?

P.O.W.S  
Jawohl.

BAGRADIAN  
Is you all little Adolfs?

P.O.W.S  
Jawohl!

BAGRADIAN  
Then we shall all zalute Feldwebel  
von und zu Schulz! About face!

The P.O.W.s wheel around and face Schulz. They are all made up as Hitler.

P.O.W.S  
Sieg heil! Sieg heil! Sieg Heil!

After each 'Sieg heil' they raise their arms in salute.

SCHULTZ  
Ach! One Fuehrer is enough! Now  
please, gentlemen! Take off the  
mustaches immediately. Or do you  
want me arrested by the Gestapo?

P.O.W.S  
Jawohl!

SCHULTZ  
You would be very sorry to get a new  
Feldwebel. Somebody without a sense

of humor.

HOFFY

Okay, boys. Wipe off the mustaches.  
Now what is it, Schulz?

The men start wiping off the mustaches and straightening their hair.

SCHULTZ

Gentlemen, tomorrow morning the Geneva Man is coming to inspect the camp whether we are living up to the International Convention. I am sure he will find we are treating you very well. You must not run around in your underwear. And take off the wash. The Kommandant wants all the barracks to be spic and also span.

STOSH

We'll put pink ribbons on the bedbugs.

SCHULTZ

The Kommandant also sends you clean blankets. He wants every man to have a new, clean blanket.

HOFFY

We know! We got them last year. Five minutes after the Geneva Man was gone, the blankets were gone.

SCHULTZ

One more thing, gentlemen. The Kommandant told me to pick up the radio.

HOFFY

What radio?

SCHULTZ

The one you are hiding in the barrack, don't you know? The one your friend without the leg is smuggling all

over the compound.

PRICE

Schulz, you're off your nut!

SCHULTZ

Give me the radio.

PRICE

We have no radio.

SCHULTZ

All right, gentlemen, I will find it myself. Now let's see.

He starts wandering around the barrack, drawing closer and closer to the trick bucket.

SCHULTZ

Am I cold? Am I getting warmer? Hot, maybe? Very hot?

He has reached the bucket. With his boot he kicks it over on the floor. The water spills on Cookie's shoes. The radio and the earphones lie on the floor.

SCHULTZ

(picking up radio)

What is this? This is water?

HARRY

It's a mouse trap.

SCHULTZ

(holding up earphones)

And this?

STOSH

My grandmother's ear-muffs.

SCHULTZ

(to Dunbar)

Look at them, Lieutenant. Everybody is a clown! How do you expect to win the war with an army of clowns?

DUNBAR

We sort of hope you'll laugh  
yourselves to death.

Schulz gives out with a big phony laugh. As he laughs his  
eyes fall on:

The light bulb and the cord tied up in a noose.

Schulz stops laughing.

SCHULTZ

Now, outside everybody, for the  
blankets! Everybody out!

He herds them out. Joey is in his bunk, still wearing the  
Hitler mustache.

SCHULTZ

Outside! You, too!

He pushes Joey out. Alone in the barrack again, Schulz quickly  
walks to the table, exchanges the black queens and straightens  
out the light cord.

EXT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

The men, standing in line are being issued new blankets by  
the two German guards.

HARRY

That Schulz pig. I'll get him yet.

STOSH

You hold him. I'll slug him.

HOFFY

It's not Schulz. It's that stoolie.  
Whoever he is, he's sure batting a  
thousand.

PRICE

The guy I want to talk to is Sefton.  
Where's Sefton?

(turns to Cookie, who  
is coming up in the  
line)

You haven't seen Sefton, have you?

COOKIE

(frightened)

No, I haven't.

GERMAN GUARD

(hurrying them along)

Der Naechste!

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

The P.O.W.s are coming back with the blankets. Schulz is standing at the door with radio and earphones.

SCHULTZ

(calling out to the  
guards)

Henkel! Krause!

(to Hoffy)

I'm very sorry about the mouse trap,  
but the war news are very depressing  
anyway.

The two German guards have entered. Schulz points at the rolled-up volley ball net under one of the bunks.

SCHULTZ

I might as well also confiscate the  
antenna.

The guards carry out the wire-roll.

SCHULTZ

American know-how!

Simultaneously, he snaps the wash line. Shaking with laughter, he exits. As he goes out, Cookie squeezes himself into the barrack, carrying his blanket. He starts edging towards his bunk, but Hoffy grabs him.

HOFFY

All right, Cookie, let's hear it:  
where is Sefton?

COOKIE  
I don't know. I told you.

PRICE  
He wouldn't be at the Kommandant's,  
would he?

COOKIE  
I don't know.

HOFFY  
What did they trade him for the radio?

COOKIE  
I don't know.

During this, they have backed him up towards his bunk.

HARRY  
Why don't we just look in those  
footlockers?

STOSH  
Come on, you little stooge. Hand  
over them keys.

COOKIE  
I haven't got any keys.

STOSH  
Okay. Then I'll get me a key.

He grabs off a piece of iron holding up a corner of the  
distillery. Meanwhile, Harry has pulled out Sefton's  
footlockers. Stosh shoves the iron bar into one of the locks.  
Stops. Looks up at Hoffy.

STOSH  
Okay, Hoffy?

HOFFY  
Okay.

Stosh starts ripping off the lock.

Cookie has shrunk back into the corner of his bunk.

The first footlocker is cracked open. It is brimful of cigarettes, chocolate bars, coffee, tea and sugar. Stosh now pries open the second footlocker. He throws back the top: there is a dazzling assortment of cameras, binoculars, wristwatches, beer steins, bottles of Rhine wine and a cuckoo clock.

STOSH

Of all the hoarding cruds!

BAGRADIAN

Looks like Macey's basement, don't it?

DUNBAR

That kid's richer than my mother.

Harry has picked up the cuckoo clock. It opens, the birdie emerges and cuckoos.

HARRY

Shut up!

He slaps the door shut on it. Stosh pulls from under the binoculars a pair of silk stockings. He holds them up.

STOSH

For cryin' out loud! What would he be doing with these?

DUKE'S VOICE

Suppose you ask me.

They turn. In the door stands Duke, breathless. He had just come in from the Compound.

DUKE

Go on, ask me! Because I got the goods on Mister Sefton. Because this time he didn't shake me.

He moves toward the telescope at the window.

DUKE

Take a look for yourself. It'll curdle  
your guts.

He swings the telescope around so it faces the Russian  
Compound.

STOSH

The Russian women!

They all dash towards the window and the telescope. Hoffy  
pushes through and looks himself, focusing the telescope.

DUKE

Try the end barrack. Where the goodies  
are.

Hoffy looks.

HARRY

(impatiently)

Come on, Hoffy! We all want to see!

Hoffy straightens up. Stosh pushes Harry away and looks  
through the telescope.

HOFFY

(to Duke)

How did he get over there?

DUKE

Easy! Walked right through the gate,  
past the guard. Like he was some  
Kraut Field Marshal.

Stosh, looking through the telescope, has let go with a long  
whistle.

STOSH

This is murder!

RUSSIAN BARRACK - (DAY)



The telescope is focused on the window, revealing:

A party is in progress. Sefton is the only man among some eight Russian women. He lies on a bunk, reclining like a Sultan. The Russian women around him vie for his favor. One plays the balalaika. Another is dancing the Kazatski on the table.

INT. BARRACK

The men struggle to get at the telescope. Harry jerks Stosh away. Meanwhile, Blondie moves in.

HARRY  
(pulling Blondie off)  
Go play with your marbles!

Harry looks.

STOSH  
The stinkin' miser! Keeping all that  
to himself!

TRIZ  
Would I like to lay my hands on him!

HARRY  
(from the telescope)  
Who wants to lay their hands on him?

Blondie, Bagradian and a couple others have dashed to the footlocker, grabbed themselves some binoculars, and dash back to the window to look.

DUKE  
(to Hoffy and Price)  
So I'm a vigilante, huh? So what are  
the Barrack Officers going to do  
now?

PRICE  
Don't worry Duke. We'll handle it  
from here on in.

DUKE

You better handle it fast. Before a few more of us get knocked off.

Hoffy, boiling mad, grabs the telescope from the guys and flings it across the room.

The telescope smashes against Sefton's bunk. It almost hits Cookie. He cringes back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COMPOUND - (DUSK)

Sefton is coming back from the Russian compound. There are about a dozen P.O.W.s about. He pauses at the gate until a couple of P.O.W.s have moved on. Then he walks through the gate, giving the German guard a little high sign. Whistling a Russian tune, Sefton crosses toward Barrack 4.

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DUSK)

The electric lights are burning. Sefton enters, whistling. Duke slips behind him, slams the door shut, and stands there blocking the exit.

Sefton stops whistling. He surveys the situation. About twenty-five P.O.W.s stand around silently, looking at him. Hoffy, Price, Harry and Stosh in the foreground.

SEFTON

(casually)

Hi.

No answer.

SEFTON

Too late for chow?

No answer.

SEFTON

What's the matter, boys? Is my slip showing?

HOFFY

I'll say it is. You spilled a little borscht on it.

SEFTON

Borscht?

STOSH

Have a nice time over there?

SEFTON

Oh! Somebody was peeking!

He nonchalantly starts peeling off his coat.

SEFTON

Yeah! Had a dreamy time! Those dames, they really know how to throw a party. I've handled some pretty interesting material in my day, but between you and me, there's just nothing like the hot breath of the Cossacks. There's a couple of blonde snipers over there, real man-killers...

He breaks off as his eyes fall on his footlockers. He sees that they have been broken open.

SEFTON

What's this?

They just look at him. He turns to Cookie, who is curled up in his bunk, petrified.

SEFTON

What happened, Cookie? Who did it?

HOFFY

We did it.

SEFTON

There better not be anything missing. This is private property.

PRICE

So was the radio private property.  
So was Manfredi and Johnson.

SEFTON

What about the radio?

DUKE

(moving in on Sefton)

Yeah, what about it?

(to Hoffy and Price)

Cut the horsing around. We know he's  
the stoolie and we know what the pay-  
off is. Let's get on with it.

SEFTON

Let's get on with what? What is this  
anyway? A Kangaroo Court? Why don't  
you get a rope and do it right?

DUKE

You make my mouth water.

SEFTON

You're all wire happy, boys. You've  
been in this camp too long. You put  
two and two together and it comes  
out four. Only it ain't four.

HOFFY

What's it add up to you, Sefton?

SEFTON

It adds up that you got yourselves  
the wrong guy. Because I'm telling  
you. The Krauts wouldn't plant two  
stoolies in one barrack. And whatever  
you do to me you're going to have to  
do all over again when you find the  
right guy.

BLONDIE

(from the window)

Watch it!

He snaps the wash.

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT BY NOW)

Planks have been laid from the Administration Building to Barrack 4. Two German guards are just putting down the last plank right against the barrack. Von Scherbach strides down the planks. He is accompanied by his aide and two German soldiers. They, of course, are marching through the mud. The aide hurries ahead to open the door to the barrack.

INT. BARRACK 4 - (NIGHT)

Von Scherbach enters, followed by his aide. All the P.O.W.s look on tensely.

VON SCHERBACH

Good evening, Sergeants.

(looking around)

A bit dank in here, isn't it?...

Where is the Baracken-Fuehrer?

HOFFY

(stepping up)

Yes, sir.

VON SCHERBACH

You have a Lieutenant here...

He holds out his hand. His aide hands him a slip of paper.

VON SCHERBACH

(reading)

...a Lieutenant James Dunbar?

HOFFY

Yes, sir.

DUNBAR

I am Lieutenant Dunbar.

VON SCHERBACH

What is your number?

DUNBAR

(reading off his dog-

tags)  
105-353.

VON SCHERBACH

(checking with paper)

That is correct.

(he salutes)

Lieutenant Dunbar, I came to apologize for the accommodations. Ordinarily, of course, we never put officers up with enlisted men.

DUNBAR

I'll live.

VON SCHERBACH

Quite a transportation jam we are having outside of Frankfurt! They are very angry in Berlin. They will be even angrier on the East Front, waiting for that ammunition train. Don't you think so, Lieutenant?

DUNBAR

I don't know what you're talking about, Colonel.

VON SCHERBACH

Of course you don't. Now, Lieutenant, how would you like to join me in my quarters? I have a nice fire going.

DUNBAR

I'm okay here. Why bother?

VON SCHERBACH

No bother. I'm very grateful for a little company. You see, I suffer from insomnia.

DUNBAR

Ever try forty sleeping pills?

VON SCHERBACH

(to his aide, sharply)

Abfuehren!

The aide takes Dunbar by the arm.

HOFFY

(to the aide)

Wait a minute. We have some rights here.

(to von Scherbach)

Why is this man being taken out?

VON SCHERBACH

(looking around the room)

Curtains would do wonders for this barrack.

(on second thought)

You will not get them.

He snaps his fingers. The aide marches Dunbar out. Von Scherbach follows, slamming the door after him.

For a moment, there is a stunned silence. Then:

BAGRADIAN

How did he ever find out about that ammunition train?

HOFFY

You must have shot off your mouth all the way from Frankfurt to here.

BAGRADIAN

We did not.

PRICE

Maybe just a hint or so. Think hard.

BAGRADIAN

I don't have to think. We didn't tell anything to anybody. Not a word. Not until we hit this barrack.

The men stand struck.

Then all eyes go to Sefton. He is closing his footlockers.  
He senses their look. Straightens up.

SEFTON

What are you looking at me for?

No answer. He shoves the footlockers under his bunk. From  
OFF come whistles and shouts: 'Lights Out!'

The lights go out. The barrack is in semi-darkness.

SEFTON

I suppose some jerk's going to say I  
did it.

He crawls into his bunk. He lies there, his eyes wide open.  
The air is charged.

After a long moment, the men move in on him, led by Duke and  
Stosh. Sefton sits up to meet them. A couple of guys grab  
him from behind, hold him down.

SEFTON

Why don't you try it one at a time?

The first blows are falling.

Joey lies in his bunk, his head propped against the bedpost,  
his face still in idiotic Hitler make-up. He does not  
comprehend the SOUNDS from Sefton's bunk, the beating and  
muffled cries. In the foreground, the electric bulb, hanging  
straight, sways gently.

FADE OUT:

END OF SEQUENCE "D"

SEQUENCE "E"

FADE IN:

EXT. COMPOUND

Wintry day. Cold sun shining. Through the big gate two  
vehicles are driving into the compound: a 1939 Buick sedan



and a tarpaulin-covered truck. The vehicles are muddy, battered, and carry the insignia of the Red Cross. They stop in front of the Administration Building. P.O.W.s converge from all sides. Out of the Buick steps the Geneva Man: a friendly type, about fifty-five, dressed in civilian clothes and carrying a brief case. He tips his Homburg to the P.O.W.s, but they are more interested in the truck. While a couple of German lieutenants exchange credentials with the Geneva Man, the Red Cross drivers roll back the tarpaulin of the truck, and the P.O.W.s (including all the men from Barrack 4, except Sefton) crowd around the goodies.

#### COOKIE'S VOICE

Now, there's a lot of folks around these days that don't believe in Santa Claus. I always did and I always will. For a while there, I thought the German Luftwaffe had shot him down, reindeer, sleigh and all. But, no sir! Come the day before Christmas, he showed up with some presents for us, the Geneva Man did. He had started out with seven truckloads. He was lucky to get one of them through – with all the bombing and booby traps and pilfering. Still, they were presents and made you feel good: coffee, a little sugar and some candy and toothbrushes and about a thousand rolls of that sanitary paper. Brother, they sure kept sending us reams of that stuff. I'll bet you if they had dropped all that paper on Berlin the first day, the war would have been over right then and there.

#### INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

It is quite changed now. The wash is gone. Everything is put away. The barrack is apparently empty, except for a German guard and Schulz, who gives the place a last once-over. The German guard is sweeping dust under the bunks.

#### SCHULTZ

Schnell! Schnell! Bevor der Mann vom

Roten Kreuz inspizieren kommt!

At one of the bunks he sees a miserable plant, potted in a smelly old shoe. He picks it up and gives it to the guard.

SCHULTZ

Nehmen Sie das hinaus!

The guard takes the shoe out. Schulz, about to leave himself, sees a pair of socks hanging from the line above. He rips them down and tucks them disgustedly under a blanket. From OFF comes:

SEFTON'S VOICE

Hey, Schulz!

Schulz turns.

At the other end of the barrack, Sefton is lying in his bunk. He has propped himself up on his elbow. His face is battered. One eye is swollen, one ear gashed. His body is aching.

SCHULTZ

(crossing)

What is this? You must get out of the bunk. The Geneva Man is coming to inspect the barrack!

He sees Sefton's condition.

SCHULTZ

Du lieber Gott! How do you look? You had a fight?

SEFTON

(holding out a pair  
of silk stockings)

How would you like to give Frau Schulz a pair of silk stockings for Christmas?

SCHULTZ

You should go and see the doctor.  
Maybe I can –  
(breaking off)

Silk stockings?

SEFTON

Here. Take them.

He presses the stockings upon Schulz.

SCHULTZ

Wunderbar! Maybe they are too wunderbar for my wife. But there is a piano teacher in the village –

SEFTON

And how about three hundred cigarettes for yourself?

He has dragged himself out of his bunk and is taking cartons of cigarettes out of the footlocker.

SCHULTZ

Three hundred cigarettes! What is it you want from me?

SEFTON

Who's the guy, Schulz?

SCHULTZ

What guy?

SEFTON

The one you work with. Who is he? How do you do it?

SCHULTZ

I do not want those cigarettes.

SEFTON

Yes, you do!

He pulls himself up with an armful of cartons.

SEFTON

I'll make it five hundred!

SCHULTZ

No! No!

Sefton grabs him.

SEFTON

You'd better talk, Schulz, because I'm going to find out with you or without you. Because I won't let go for a second. Because they'll have to kill me to stop me. So talk!

SCHULTZ

Talk what? I do not know anything!

SEFTON

How many do you want? A thousand?

He bends over the footlocker, fighting his pain, comes up with more cartons. He thrusts them upon Schulz.

SEFTON

Take it! Take it!

There is a SOUND of P.O.W.s entering. Schulz looks off.

The P.O.W.s are coming back from the compound with the Christmas presents. Hoffy, Price, Duke, Harry and Stosh stand in the door, looking at Sefton and Schulz.

Schulz quickly drops the cartons on Sefton's bunk. Stands embarrassed for a moment, then retrieves his poise.

SCHULTZ

Gentlemen! When the Geneva Man comes through the barrack, I don't want any funny business. No mustaches. We will all behave ourselves.

He goes toward the other end of the barrack, which is by now filled with all the other P.O.W.s. Schulz stops.

SCHULTZ

And gentlemen! You will not complain to the Geneva Man. Because I have orders from the Kommandant to report

everyone who complains.

The men move toward Sefton.

STOSH

Look at him! Dunbar's being crucified  
and he's trading again!

DUKE

Didn't you get enough last night?  
You itching for more?

HARRY

Some guys never learn!

HOFFY

I called a meeting of the barrack  
chiefs this morning, Sefton. I thought  
maybe I could get you transferred  
into another barrack. It turns out  
nobody likes you any more than we  
do.

SEFTON

So you're stuck with me, eh?

STOSH

Maybe those Russian dames would take  
him.

HARRY

Not with that kisser – not any more!

Cookie has come through the door with some ice in a towel.

COOKIE

(to Sefton)

Here... put some ice on it.

Duke grabs the ice-bag from him.

DUKE

Beat it, stooge!

(to Hoffy and Price)

Go on – tell the crumb where he

stands.

PRICE

All right, Sefton. You got away lucky last night. One more move, no matter how small, and you'll wake up with your throat slit!

HOFFY

You heard that, Sefton?

SEFTON

Sure I heard it. I still got one good ear.

From OFF comes Schulz' WHISTLE. They look.

Schulz stands at the far door, blowing his whistle.

SCHULTZ

Achtung! Achtung! Everybody at attention for the Geneva Man!

The men all come to attention before their bunks. The German lieutenant enters, ushering in the Geneva Man. Schulz stiffens and clicks his heels.

GENEVA MAN

As you were, gentlemen. Please.

He takes off his hat, looks around, and as the scene progresses, moves through the barrack.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

Here we have a typical barrack. It houses seventy-five men. Every one of them has his own bunk, naturally.

GENEVA MAN

Naturally. It would be rather awkward to have three men in one bunk.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

As for the blankets, you will notice they are very warm. Fifty percent

wool.

GENEVA MAN

They also smell of moth balls.

(to a P.O.W. at that  
particular bunk)

When were they issued? This morning?

The P.O.W. looks noncommittally.

GENEVA MAN

(to the Lieutenant)

What do you do for heat in this  
barrack? No stove?

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

The men here used it for a trap door,  
so we had to remove it temporarily.

GENEVA MAN

How long is temporarily? I trust not  
until July.

Through the other door a couple of P.O.W.s have brought in  
the chow-tub, steaming with some brew. They put it on the  
table in the middle of the barrack.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

Here you see a typical meal the  
prisoners are getting. What are we  
having today, Schulz?

SCHULTZ

Bean soup with ham hocks. Would you  
like to taste it?

(fishing with the  
ladle)

Where's the ham hock? There should  
be a ham hock.

STOSH

When he finds it, we'll send it to  
Geneva.

The Geneva Man continues down the barrack.

GENEVA MAN

Are there any complaints? Please speak up.

He looks around. A pause.

GENEVA MAN

Don't be afraid to talk. That's what the Geneva Convention is for: to protect the rights of prisoners of war. Whether they are Americans or Germans.

Nobody answers.

GENEVA MAN

(to Harry)

What have you got to say?

HARRY

I like it here.

(then with a shrug)

Aeh!

GENEVA MAN

(to Price)

What about you?

PRICE

It's all right. Considering.

The Geneva Man walks on. Stops at Sefton's bunk. Sees his battered face.

GENEVA MAN

What happened to you? Were you beaten?

Why don't you answer?

(to the German  
Lieutenant)

What did you do to this man?

SEFTON

They didn't do nothing.



GENEVA MAN

Who beat you?

SEFTON

Nobody beat me. We were playing pinochle. It's a rough game.

HOFFY

(stepping up)

Pardon me, sir. Since you want us to speak up, there was a man removed from this barrack last night. A Lieutenant Dunbar. We sure would appreciate your looking into it. That's if they haven't shot him yet.

GENEVA MAN

(to the German  
Lieutenant)

Why was the man arrested?

GERMAN LIEUTENANT

Sabotage. He blew up a train.

HOFFY

They'd have to prove that first, wouldn't they? Isn't that what the Geneva Convention says? You can't just take a man out and shoot him!

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VON SCHERBACH'S OFFICE - (DAY)

The office is in the Administration Building. It is primitive, sparsely furnished. A desk with a couple of phones on it. Iron stove. A black leather sofa. Maps.

In the room are von Scherbach, Dunbar and the Colonel's ORDERLY. The Colonel's boots, shining gloriously, stand near the desk. He is pacing up and down in his stocking feet talking to Dunbar. In his hand is the black queen from the chess game. He tosses it into the air once in a while and catches it. Dunbar stands close to a wall. He is completely exhausted, fighting sleep.

START the SCENE on the chess piece in von Scherbach's hand and PAN with it as von Scherbach walks to reveal the room.

VON SCHERBACH

You have no idea how boring my life here is. If it weren't for an occasional air raid or some foolish prisoners trying to escape, I wouldn't know what to do. I want to thank you for keeping me company. I don't drink, I don't smoke, I don't read. I hate music. That only leaves good conversation. It will be a shame to lose you.

DUNBAR

(fighting sleep)

I didn't do it – I didn't do it.

VON SCHERBACH

Of course you did! Twenty-six carloads of munitions gone off like a trick cigar! The S.S. is running around in circles. The Gestapo is arresting the wrong people. And von Scherbach has caught the fish. Most amusing, isn't it?

Dunbar falls back against the wall, yawning.

VON SCHERBACH

(straightening him up)

You are being rude again.

DUNBAR

I want to sleep. Give me five minutes on that couch.

VON SCHERBACH

(looking at his wristwatch)

Nine-thirty. General von Pfeffinger should be at his desk by now. Shall we call Berlin and tell him the good

news?

DUNBAR

(wearily)

I didn't do it. I didn't do it.

Von Scherbach has gone to the desk, picks up the phone and cranks it.

VON SCHERBACH

(into phone)

Hauptkommando Berlin. General von Pfeffinger. Dringend.

He hangs up, sits on the edge of the desk holding up his stocking feet. During his subsequent spiel, the orderly steps up and pulls von Scherbach's boots on.

VON SCHERBACH

I hope you appreciate this moment, Lieutenant. You see, I am a cavalry man. All the von Scherbachs were cavalry men. Well, you know what happened to the cavalry. The young ones they put into panzer divisions. The older ones they put in the quartermaster's corps. Or they made them recruiting officers or wardens. Like me. Wet nurses to putrid prisoners. In Berlin they have forgotten that Colonel von Scherbach even exists. They will remember now!

The boots are on. The telephone RINGS. He jumps to his feet, picks up the receiver, automatically clicks his heels.

VON SCHERBACH

(into phone)

Berlin? Hier Oberst von Scherbach.  
General von Pfeffinger?

(clicks his heels)

Oberst von Scherbach. Stalag 17.  
Melde gehorhsamst haben als  
Gefangenen den Mann, der Munitionszug  
in Frankfurt in die Luft gesprengt

hat. Jawohl, Herr General –  
(clicks the heels)  
– Name Lieutenant Dunbar. Sabotage.  
Jawohl, Herr General.

He clicks his heels again, hangs up. Sits again on the desk and the orderly automatically starts to pull off his boots.

VON SCHERBACH

There will be two S.S. men here tomorrow to take you to Berlin. You will be interrogated by the General Staff. When you come to the part about your arrest, I'm sure you won't forget to give me the proper credit.

DUNBAR

(sinking back)  
I want to sleep... I haven't slept for three days.

VON SCHERBACH

(pulling him up)  
You will remember the name? Von Scherbach? VON SCHER-BACH!

There's a KNOCK on the door.

VON SCHERBACH

Herein!

Schulz opens the door, clicks his heels, salutes.

SCHULTZ

Der Mann vom Roten Kreuz moechte den Herrn Oberst sprechen!

VON SCHERBACH

Ich bitte!

Schulz ushers in the Geneva Man, steps out himself.

VON SCHERBACH

Well, Herr Inspector! How did you find the camp? Crowded but gemuetlich,

shall we say?

GENEVA MAN

I want to talk about Lieutenant Dunbar. Is this Lieutenant Dunbar?

VON SCHERBACH

It is.

GENEVA MAN

What exactly is he charged with?

VON SCHERBACH

Whatever it is, it's out of your jurisdiction. This man is not a prisoner of war. Not any more. He is a saboteur.

GENEVA MAN

He is a prisoner of war until you can prove sabotage.

DUNBAR

I didn't do it. I was in the Frankfurt station and the train was three miles away when it blew up.

VON SCHERBACH

Oh, come now! You threw a time bomb.

DUNBAR

How could I have had a time bomb? They searched me when they took me prisoner.

GENEVA MAN

And the way you search your prisoners, it does sound rather unlikely.

VON SCHERBACH

All I know is he did it. I am satisfied.

GENEVA MAN

I am not. According to the Geneva

Convention –

DUNBAR

Is there anything about letting a  
guy sleep in the Geneva Convention?

He has shuffled over to the sofa, and plunks himself down –  
instantly asleep.

VON SCHERBACH

(to the Geneva Man)

You were saying –?

GENEVA MAN

Simply this. After the hostilities  
are ended, there will be such a thing  
as a War Crimes Commission. If this  
man should be convicted without proper  
proof, you will be held responsible,  
Colonel von Scherbach.

VON SCHERBACH

Interesting.

GENEVA MAN

Isn't it?

The Geneva Man looks straight into von Scherbach's eyes. Von  
Scherbach doesn't like the look. He picks up the black queen  
and tosses it again.

VON SCHERBACH

Very well. If you insist on details.  
I have ways of finding out about  
that blasted time bomb. Good day,  
sir.

(indicating stocking  
feet)

You will forgive me for receiving  
you like this?

GENEVA MAN

Perfectly all right. I do not like  
boots.

As the Geneva Man exits –

VON SCHERBACH  
Schulz!

Schulz enters.

VON SCHERBACH  
Wie ist es moeglich dass dieser  
Amerikaner eine Bombe bei sich hatte?  
Er wurde doch bei der Gefangennahme  
untersucht.

SCHULTZ  
Jawohl, Herr Kommandant.

VON SCHERBACH  
Finden Sie es heraus – und zwar  
sofort!

SCHULTZ  
Zu Befehl, Herr Kommandant.

Von Scherbach tosses him the black queen.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARRACK 4 - (DAY)

START ON black queen now with the other chess pieces on the table. PAN UP to disclose the barrack and the electric light, its cord now looped.

Sefton is lying in his bunk, dressed. Cookie above him in his bunk. At the center table, Harry, Stosh, Blondie and Bagradian are decorating the Christmas tree with their dogtags and hand-made candles. Joey sits there watching them. Blondie takes off Joey's dogtags and puts them on the tree. One of the P.O.W.s is WHISTLING Silent Night.

Sitting on a stool is Triz. He is knitting a little baby's garment. He pauses as a thought disturbs him, then:

TRIZ  
I believe it. I believe it.

He goes on with the knitting.

Through the door come Duke and Price, followed by two P.O.W.s from another barrack. One P.O.W. is carrying an old-fashioned phonograph, the other some records.

DUKE

(indicating center  
table)

Put it down, boys.

HARRY

Hey, – music!

PRICE

We made a deal with Barrack One.

BAGRADIAN

(to Price)

Any news on Dunbar?

PRICE

He's still in the Kommandant's office.  
That's all I know.

The P.O.W.s from Barrack One have deposited the phonograph and the records on the table.

DUKE

Over here.

They follow him to Sefton's bunk.

DUKE

(to Cookie)

Let's have that distillery. Come on.

Cookie looks down at Sefton for permission.

DUKE

What are you looking at him for?  
(to Sefton)  
Any objections, Sefton?



SEFTON

Take it.

The P.O.W.s climb on Sefton's bunk and start taking down the distillery, which is piled up in Cookie's bunk.

DUKE

(to Sefton)

Next we're going to auction off your department store – and your stable.

SEFTON

Why not?

At the table, Price finishes cranking the machine. Harry puts on a record and Price starts it playing. The tune is: When Johnny Comes Marching Home. The guys start crowding around.

Meanwhile, Stosh has been watching the P.O.W.s from Barrack One take down the distillery. As they start out, he grabs up an empty glass jar, follows them surreptitiously and, in moving, siphons off a stream of booze into the glass jar. One of the P.O.W.s catches him.

P.O.W.

(slapping his hand)

Hey! That goes with it!

They pull the hose out of the glass jar and leave. Stosh, however, has gotten himself a pint of Schnapps.

At the table Harry and a few others start singing with the record. Everybody has gathered around except Sefton and Cookie. Price moves over to his bunk, (PAN with him). As he takes off his jacket his eyes fall on –

The loop in the electric cord.

Price. His eyes narrow for a split second. Then he takes his cap off, cases the situation. The P.O.W.s are at the phonograph. Sefton lies in his bunk, his eyes toward the wall. Cookie climbs down to join the others. Nonchalantly, Price crosses toward the lamp. He stands at the table with his back towards the barrack. Picks up the black queen, pulls

the top off, palms a small piece of paper, puts the top back and places the chess piece back on the chess board. He is about to read, but – Some of the P.O.W.s come marching down the barrack toward Price in a take-off of a homecoming parade, led by Harry and Stosh.

Price stands there, the note in his fist. After they have passed, he opens his hand, reads the palmed note, puts it in his pocket. He looks after the others who are now marching down at the other end of the barrack. Casually, he pulls the slip noose out of the light cord, and walks toward the center table.

Sefton, lying in his bunk, sees the shadow of the bulb and the light cord on the wall, swinging gently back and forth. It doesn't make too much of an impression on him. However, he definitely notices it and looks around for the cause. He dismisses it and lies back in his bunk.

The Johnny Comes Marching Home number is over and Bagradian now goes into an impersonation of Lionel Barrymore, as the mayor of a small town, welcoming home the returning warriors – and Jimmy Stewart answering for the soldiers. (To be worked out later). During this, Price has joined them.

P.O.W.S

Do Bogart.

Do Cary Grant.

PRICE

Do Cagney.

STOSH

Naw! Do Grable!

BAGRADIAN

Okay.

He goes into a short impersonation of Clark Gable.

STOSH

Grable, not Gable!

HARRY

Do Jimmy Durante!

PRICE

Do Cagney. Like you did yesterday.

BAGRADIAN

(a la Cagney)

There was that ammunition train in the depot at Frankfurt, see? So Dunbar gets himself in the men's room and fixes a time bomb, see? Then he waits until the train starts moving out, see? And one of the cars got the door open with some straw on the floor, see? So he throws it, see, and three minutes later – voom! See?

PRICE

Throws what? How could he have a time bomb?

BAGRADIAN

Just pulled the old match gag, see!

PRICE

What's the match gag?

BAGRADIAN

Take some matches, see?

(takes a book of matches from his pocket)

And a cigarette, see?

(takes a burning cigarette from Triz' mouth)

Tuck the cigarette in like this, see?

(tucks the cigarette inside cover of match-book with the lit end sticking out)

Now the cigarette keeps burning like a fuse, see?

DUKE  
Say, that's a dandy!

PRICE  
(as it sinks in)  
Yeah. Pretty clever.

STOSH  
Do Grable.

HARRY  
Hey, here's Esther Williams.

He bends his head over and taps his ear, as if to shake out water. No laugh.

HARRY  
Nothing, eh?

P.O.W.  
Do Cary Grant.

Bagradian goes into a take-off on Cary Grant. Price leans his head against a bunk-post, completely relaxed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARRACK 4 - (EVENING)

The lights are on. In the foreground, our bulb, with a loop in the cord again. A Christmas party is in progress. On the center table, the pitiful little tree is lit. All the P.O.W.s in the barrack are huddled around the table, most of them sitting on the bunks. They are singing Adeste Fideles. It is bitter cold. Outside the wind is howling. They are wrapped in blankets and most of them wear gloves.

As for Sefton, he is lying in his bunk, a pariah. Duke comes over from the group, pulls Sefton's foot-locker out and starts taking out the bottles of Rhine wine.

DUKE  
Where's the corkscrew?

He finds it, puts it in his pocket.

SEFTON

Have a cigar.

DUKE

Thanks.

He takes a cigar, puts it in his mouth and goes off with the wine. As Sefton looks after him, his eyes are caught by the light cord and the noose in it. He stares at it.

The P.O.W.s around the tree are SINGING, Price prominently in the foreground. Duke has come with the wine and starts opening it. Stosh nudges Joey who sits next to him and points to a lone little package under the tree.

STOSH

Hey, Joey – there's a present for you.

Joey doesn't move. Stosh picks it up.

STOSH

Want me to open it for you?

He opens it. It's the crude ocarina he carved out of wood. Joey's eyes flicker. He takes the ocarina and starts playing weird SOUNDS on it. The boys look at him, delighted.

STOSH

There, Joey – ain't that better than being a lawyer?

HARRY

(nudging Stosh)

Animal! Got a little something for you!

He produces from behind his back a package, wrapped with ersatz ribbon.

STOSH

Got a little something for you, too!

He takes out a package from inside his blanket.

HARRY

I'll open mine now.

STOSH

I'll open mine, too.

They start opening their presents. It becomes apparent that each has given the other a roll of sanitary paper.

HARRY AND STOSH

(throwing their arms  
around each other)

You're a doll! Just what I wanted!  
How did you know!

From the compound, a SIREN is heard. And shouts, Lights Out!  
The singing stops.

PRICE

Air raid warning.

BLONDIE

Not Christmas Eve!

HOFFY

(wearily)

Come on, everybody. Let's get out.  
Let's hit those slit trenches.

TRIZ

(getting up)

I'm not really built for war.

They blow out the candles. Simultaneously, the lights are turned off. The men start rushing out. Outside, through the door, men from other barracks can be seen hurrying by.

Sefton sits up in his bunk, looking at the electric cord.  
The bulb is dark now.

SCHULZ' VOICE

Out, out everybody!

Sefton looks off.

Schulz has come through the door and is herding them out.

SCHULTZ

You must get out. For your own good,  
you must get out.

HOFFY

Come on, everybody!  
(pushing Joey)  
Let's go!

Schulz has come up to Sefton.

SCHULTZ

What's the matter with you? You want  
to be killed?

SEFTON

Not particularly.

He picks up his leather jacket and moves toward the door  
where the other P.O.W.s are crowding out.

PRICE

(to Stosh and Harry  
who are lingering  
behind)

Must you always be the last?

STOSH

Oh, yeah? You jump in those trenches  
first and everybody jumps on top of  
you!

HARRY

How do you think I got my hernia?

Price pushes them out. Dawdles at the door, closes it from  
inside. He is alone with Schulz in the dark barrack.

Schulz has gone over to the chess board, has picked up the  
black queen, opened it. There is no message. Price comes up  
to him.

SCHULTZ  
Nun? Was ist? Haben Sie's  
herausgefunden?

PRICE  
Ich weiss alles.

SCHULTZ  
Wie hat er's gemacht?

PRICE  
Ganz einfach... Streichhoelzer...  
und eine Zigarette...

He takes a book of matches and puts a lighted cigarette in  
it.

PRICE  
Passen Sie auf!

The "time bomb" goes off, lighting up their faces.

SCHULTZ  
Ach so!... ACH SO!

There is a broad grin on his face. Then he and Price move  
out of the barrack, quickly. As they go out the door –

SCHULTZ  
(calling off, with  
phony efficiency)  
Air raid! Air raid! Everybody in the  
trenches!

Now the barrack is empty. Except for one thing: from behind  
one of the rear bunks, Sefton steps out. He puts a cigar in  
his mouth, lights it. There is a gleam in his eye.

SEFTON  
Ach so-o-o-o!

FADE OUT:

END OF SEQUENCE "E"



## SEQUENCE "F"

FADE IN:

INT. BARRACKS 4 - (DAY)

The phonograph, on the center table, is playing: I Love You. About a dozen P.O.W.s are dancing with each other, among them, Triz, leading Harry, Blondie, leading a bearded P.O.W. The whole thing is very elegant, with new guys cutting in, politely. One of the P.O.W.s sings into a mike, consisting of a stick stuck into a knothole in the table with a tin can on top.

### COOKIE'S VOICE

So it got to be Christmas Day in Stalag 17. As it turned out, it was more like the Fourth of July – with all the fireworks that were to go off all at once and bust the camp wide open. It sure started off innocently enough, with a party going on in every barracks...

Sefton, propped up in his bunk, is watching the proceedings. In back of him, against the window, sits Cookie. Sefton's eyes never leave –

Price, who is near the phonograph with Pirelli and another P.O.W. They are supplying a makeshift jazz accompaniment, playing on a washboard, drumming on the table and strumming a bass fiddle string attached to a bucket.

Sefton. There is a look of cynical amusement on his face as he takes this in.

A P.O.W. tags Triz to cut in. Harry holds out his arms. He is ready. But the P.O.W. dances off with Triz, leaving Harry flat. Harry looks over to Stosh.

Stosh lies in his bunk, drinking what's left of the booze he swiped from the distillery. He is staring at the pin-ups of Grable pasted on the ceiling of his bunk.

### HARRY

Come on, Animal – let's trip the  
light fantastic!

STOSH  
Let me alone.

HARRY  
You're crying, Animal.

STOSH  
It's that song, Harry!

HARRY  
(seeing the pin-up)  
You don't want to cry over a dame  
that doesn't even know you're alive!  
Snap out of it!

STOSH  
There's a time in every man's life  
when he wants to be alone! So go  
away!

He takes another swig and lets down the big pin-up so it  
hangs a few inches in front of his eyes.

Harry turns away from Stosh, picks up a pilot cap, turns it  
inside out so the yellow fur shows on top, puts it on. He  
gets some straw out of a hole in a mattress and tucks it  
under the cap like curls.

HARRY  
All right, boys, who wants the Queen  
of the May?

A P.O.W. drops his partner and dances Harry off.

Sefton, in his bunk, watching Price all the time.

SEFTON  
Any cigars left, Cookie?

No answer from Cookie.

SEFTON

Come on, Cookie. Get me a cigar.

Cookie doesn't move.

SEFTON

What's the matter? You on their team now? You think I'm the guy?

COOKIE

I don't know anymore.

Sefton goes to the raided footlocker for a last tattered cigar.

SEFTON

I understand how you feel, Cookie. It's sort of rough – one American squealing on other Americans. Then again, Cookie – maybe that stoolie's not an American at all. Maybe he's a German the Krauts planted in this barracks. They do this type of thing. Just put an agent in with us – a trained specialist. Lots of loose information floating around a prison camp. Not just whether somebody wants to escape, but what outfits we were with and where we were stationed, and how our radar operates. Could be, couldn't it?

COOKIE

In this barracks?

SEFTON

Why not? Just one of the boys. Sharing our bunks. Eating our chow. Right in amongst the ones that beat me up. Except that he beat hardest.

COOKIE

Who is it?

SEFTON

That's not the point, Cookie. The

point is what do you do with him?  
You tip your mitt and the Jerries  
pull him out of here and plant him  
someplace else, like Stalag Sixteen  
or Fifteen. Or you kill him off and  
the Krauts turn around and kill off  
the whole barracks. Every one of us.  
So what do you do?

COOKIE

Who is it?

Sefton doesn't answer.

COOKIE

If you don't want to tell me, why  
don't you tell Hoffy? Or Security?

SEFTON

Yeah. Security.

He just sits there, smoking and looking in the direction of –

Price at the middle table. Bagradian steps up to Price, who  
is busy beating out the rhythm. The P.O.W. is no longer  
singing.

BAGRADIAN

Where's Hoffy? Why don't we get any  
news about Dunbar?

PRICE

Don't worry. He'll be all right.

BAGRADIAN

I had to be the ham! I had to shoot  
off my mouth!

PRICE

Forget it. He'll be back here. They've  
got no proof.

Harry seats himself on the table, tossing his curls.

HARRY

(to the rhythm boys)  
Sweet and soft, boys. Beguile me.

Stosh in his bunk. He drains the booze from the jar, looks out at the room through tear blurred eyes. He sees:

Harry sitting on the table, listening to the music. He is in the identical pose Betty Grable has struck in the big pin-up photo.

Stosh's eyes go back to the big pin-up photo. He looks back at:

Harry. By now it is not Harry who is sitting there. It is Betty Grable, or rather the pin-up photo superimposed in the same size as Harry.

Stosh blinks his eyes. He stares some more. Delirious happiness dawns on his face. He climbs out of his bunk and walks toward Harry, in a trance.

STOSH  
(to himself)  
Betty!... Betty!

He has reached the table, bows politely to Harry.

STOSH  
May I have this dance, Miss?

HARRY  
Why, sure!

He climbs off the table. Stosh puts his arm around very elegantly and dances him off.

STOSH  
Who would've ever thought I'd be holding you in my arms?

A peculiar expression comes over Harry's face.

STOSH  
Pinch me, will you? Pinch me so I'll know I'm not dreaming.

Harry reaches up and pinches him heartily on the cheek.

STOSH

Thank you, darling!

Again, a reaction from Harry as they dance on. Stosh sings a few bars of I Love You with the record. His cheek is very close to Harry. He is lost in blissful romance.

STOSH

Did anybody ever tell you you have  
the most beautiful legs in the world?

Harry does a big take.

STOSH

But it's not just those legs. It's  
that nose of yours I'm crazy about.  
That cute little button of a nose!

HARRY

(the situation begins  
to seep through)  
Hey, Animal! Animal!

STOSH

(sweeping on madly)  
I've been crazy about you for years.  
I've seen every picture you've ever  
made six times. I'd just sit there  
and never even open that popcorn  
bag.

HARRY

(breaking from him)  
Animal! Animal! Wake up!

He starts slapping his face.

STOSH

Betty! Betty!

HARRY

(taking off his wig)

This is me, Animal! It's Harry  
Shapiro!

Stosh stares at him. The truth dawns on him. He starts bawling  
like a child.

Hoffy hurries in from the compound. He is followed by Duke,  
Marko and The Crutch.

HOFFY  
Cut that music! Cut it! Listen!

All turn.

HOFFY  
The S.S. Men are here to pick up  
Dunbar. They're taking him to Berlin.  
Looks like he's finished.

DUKE  
Only he ain't quite finished yet.  
Blondie – get that smudge pot. Tie  
it to Steve's leg.

Blondie gets the can of smoke-powder and, as the scene  
progresses, fastens it in The Crutch's empty pants' leg.

PRICE  
What are you going to do?

HOFFY  
I want everybody out of here. We'll  
need a lot of commotion on the  
compound.

MARKO  
I'll get the men from the other  
barracks.

PRICE  
(to Hoffy)  
You don't think you can snatch Dunbar?  
Not from the S.S.?

HOFFY

We're sure going to make a stab at it. You, Price and Stosh and Harry and Blondie – be at the north latrine. You'll all get your posts. Now everybody start drifting out with Marko.

MARKO

Easy, boys, easy. Disperse out there nicely and always remember just because the Krauts are dumb that doesn't make them stupid.

The men start filing out through both doors quietly.

HOFFY

(to Blondie)

Ready?

BLONDIE

Roger.

HOFFY

(to Price, Stosh,  
Harry and Duke)

Okay. Move on.

The Crutch, Blondie, Harry and Stosh leave.

PRICE

I don't know what your scheme is, but it sounds crazy.

HOFFY

Maybe it's crazy, but it's better than having Dunbar dead.

PRICE

Just as you say, Hoffy. But wouldn't it be smarter if I went out and kept Schulz tied up?

HOFFY

Good.



SEFTON

(moving in)

I wouldn't worry about Schulz. I'd worry about Sefton. Remember me? I'm the stoolie.

DUKE

You ain't going to squeal this one, brother.

SEFTON

No? Aren't you a little afraid to turn the stoolie loose on that compound? For a tip-off like this, you know what the Krauts would pay?

HOFFY

You'll stay in this barracks and not a peep out of you.

SEFTON

Okay, then. Put a guard on me. I want you to put a guard on me. Because if anything goes wrong out there, this time you won't have a patsy. Right?

HOFFY

Right.

SEFTON

So who stays with me? Maybe Joey? No – not Joey. Wouldn't you feel safer with Security on the job?

HOFFY

Okay, Price. You stay.

PRICE

What about Schulz?

HOFFY

We'll take care of Schulz.

(to the others)

Come on.

They all follow Hoffy out, leaving Price and Sefton.

They stand for a while looking at each other. From OFF come some WEIRD NOTES on the ocarina.

Joey sits in his bunk, playing on his new sweet potato.

SEFTON

That's the boy, Joey. Play us a little something. What do you want to hear, Price? Home On The Range? Or maybe a little Wagner?

No answer from Price.

SEFTON

Or how about a game of pinochle? No, you're not a pinochle man. You're a chess player.

(moves to chess board)

I haven't played since I was a kid.

Let's see –

(maneuvers the white pieces)

– a pawn moves this way, doesn't it? And a bishop this way? And the queen – every which way, doesn't it?

PRICE

Suppose you just sit down and keep your mouth shut.

SEFTON

(moving about)

I went to school with a guy named Price. But that was in Boston. You're from Cleveland, aren't you.

PRICE

Yes, I'm from Cleveland.

SEFTON

I thought that's what you said. You're

from Cleveland. And you were with the Thirty-sixth Bomb Group?

PRICE

Thirty-fifth.

SEFTON

Three hundred and sixty-fifth Bomb Squadron? Out of Chelveston?

PRICE

Are you questioning me?

SEFTON

Just getting acquainted. Trying to make one friend in this barracks.

PRICE

Don't bother, Sefton. I don't like you. I never did and I never will.

SEFTON

A lot of people say that and the first thing you know is they get married and live happily ever after.

(goes to window)

I wonder what they're trying to pull out there?

EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

Several hundred P.O.W.s are casually strolling about the compound. The CAMERA MOVES TOWARDS the Administration Building PAST an S.S. car parked on the roadway, with the motor running. An S.S. driver stands at the car door. Harry and Stosh stand by the car, inspecting it. CAMERA MOVES ON PAST the flagpole, against which leans Duke, and ON TO the porch of the Administration Building: there stands Hoffy, reading the bulletin board. Only he isn't reading it. From one corner of his eye he is peeking through the window into the Kommandant's office. Suddenly he reacts to a movement inside. Without turning, he gives the signal: he throws one end of his muffler around his neck.

Duke, at the flagpole, gets it and throws his muffler around

his neck, thusly relaying the signal.

At the car, Harry follows suit.

Marko, leaning against the north latrine, catches the signal and, still facing the compound, RAPS with his knuckles on the wooden boards.

INT. NORTH LATRINE - (DAY)

The Crutch is sitting on the wash trough. On hearing the RAPS, Bagradian pulls up The Crutch's loose pants' leg. Blondie strikes a match and lights the fuse on the smudge pot. Bagradian pulls down the pants' leg. They help The Crutch off the wash trough and he hobbles out.

EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

The Crutch is slowly hobbling toward the car, a thin wisp of smoke curling up from his pants' leg.

Out of the Administration Building emerge two S.S. Men, leading Dunbar between them. Hoffy, standing at the bulletin board, WHISTLES a few bars of the Air Force song. Dunbar turns, sees Hoffy whistling. Hoffy doesn't look at him, but Dunbar senses that something is in the wind. He walks on between the S.S. Men. As he is being led toward the car, still some thirty feet away, P.O.W.s crowd in to watch him.

The Crutch, hobbling on from the direction of the latrine, is some twenty feet from the car.

Duke straightens up from the flagpole casually, and starts sauntering toward the car.

The latrine. Blondie and Bagradian have moved out of the latrine and stand there with Marko, watching the car.

Harry and Stosh at the car. Stosh tightening the belt of his coat, Harry pulling the barracks cap tight on his head.

The driver of the car opens the door. The S.S. Men and Dunbar are some eight feet away now.

The Crutch, hobbling past the car, releases a string and the

smudge pot drops as he moves on. He barely makes it. Almost instantly, there is a belch of fire and smoke starts pouring out of the smoke bomb.

The wind billows the smoke across the car, rapidly enveloping the S.S. Men and Dunbar. There are German SHOUTS from within the smoke cloud.

Duke, Harry, Stosh, Blondie, Bagradian, Marko and Hoffs move into the smoke from all sides. All now is lost in smoke. Just silhouettes of men rushing about. SHOUTS, German commands, SOUNDS of scuffling. From OFF a siren starts to sound. German guards come running from all corners of the compound into the cloud.

In the goon towers, the guards wheel around their machine guns, but don't dare to shoot into the smoke.

From the Administration Building storms von Scherbach, followed by the two Lieutenants, Schulz and other guards. They dash into the smoke cloud, which starts lifting.

#### THE COMPOUND - THROUGH THE WINDOW OF BARRACKS 4

The smoke cloud starts to clear. At the car, the two S.S. Men and the driver stand with guns in their hands. Dunbar is gone. The other P.O.W.s stand around innocently. Von Scherbach is screaming his head off, but his words are not heard. CAMERA PULLS BACK INTO Barracks 4, revealing Sefton and Price at the window. Sefton turns from the window, a little smile on his face.

SEFTON

Ach so!

PRICE

What did you say?

SEFTON

Amazing, what you can do with five thousand ping-pong balls, isn't it?

Price is pacing. Joey starts tooting again.

PRICE

(to Joey)  
Stop that, will you!  
(to Sefton)  
Those idiots! So they sprang Dunbar!  
So what good is it? He's still in  
the compound, isn't he? How long can  
he last? Where can they hide him?

SEFTON  
Where. Up Joey's ocarina. Didn't you  
know?

Price looks at him.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. COMPOUND - (DAY)

All the P.O.W.s are formed into a line that serpentine toward a desk set up on the porch of the Administration Building. Light machine guns have been set up around them, the guards watching carefully. Behind the desk sit the two German Lieutenants, and in back of them stands Schulz. Every P.O.W., as he passes, is screened by the Lieutenants, then dogtags and faces being checked against an index of cards and photographs on the desk.

COOKIE'S VOICE  
Yeah? Where did we hide him? Nobody  
knew that except Hoffy – not one of  
us – and he wouldn't talk. It sure  
drove the Krauts crazy looking for  
Dunbar. They herded us all out into  
the compound and put some extra  
machine guns on us and gave us the  
old picture check. You know, checking  
our dogtags and our pans...

Pirelli, Blondie, Hoffy and Duke file by. The next in line is Price, followed by Sefton. As Price is being checked, his eyes meet Schulz's. Schulz looks at him inquisitively. The only answer on Price's face for a split second is: "I don't know". But he's got to watch himself as he is followed by Sefton.

A barracks: Guards with dogs are searching under it.

Another barracks: German guards throw tear gas bombs into it and close the doors.

The compound. All the P.O.W.s are now lined up in long lines facing the Administration Building. Von Scherbach, standing on the porch flanked by the S.S. Men, his Lieutenants and Schulz, lets go with a tirade. THE CAMERA SWOOPS BACK from his face over the lined-up P.O.W.s all the way to the south latrine and UP AND OVER the water tank. As it now PANS INTO the water tank, we see Dunbar. He is hiding in the water tank, up to his knees in icy water. He is weak and drawn and he has to hold on not to collapse.

#### COOKIE'S VOICE

...against their index file. They searched under the barracks. They searched the roofs. They even searched the bathroom in the Kommandant's office, but no Dunbar. Then they tried to smoke him out, throwing tear gas bombs into every barracks, just in case he was hiding up in the rafters. Then they made us stand for six hours out there until finally von Scherbach came out and gave us his ultimatum: if Dunbar didn't come out by next morning he'd raze the whole lous; compound, stick by stick and if we'd sleep in the mud for the rest of our lives, that was okay by him. I thought he'd bust his gut the way he was screaming. He just couldn't figure how a guy could disappear from the compound and still be there, but Dunbar was there all right. He sure was there.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT)

From the goon towers lights are sweeping over the compound, the dark barracks and the barbed wire fences.

## COOKIE'S VOICE

He was there for half the night, his feet right in the icy water. That's tough to take, especially when you got three heated pools at home. It took a lot of guts, the kind you'd expect from a sergeant – but a lieutenant –!

## WATER TANK - ABOVE THE LATRINE - (NIGHT)

Dunbar, exhausted, is clinging desperately to the ladder inside the tank, his feet in the icy water. Over the tank sweeps the light from a goon tower.

## EXT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

The Hundefuehrer is leading his dogs past the dark barracks. Not a sound from within.

## INT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

Blankets are hanging over the windows. On the center table burns a margarine lamp. All the men from Barracks 4 are gathered around the table. All except Joey and Sefton. In the center of the table is one of the P.O.W.s' cap. The men, one by one, are dropping their dogtags into it.

## HOFFY

(putting in his own dogtag)

Let's have it understood men – this is going to be a rough deal. But we have no choice. One of us must take Dunbar out of the camp tonight. Right away. We'll draw one dogtag and the guy who goes with it does the job. It's going to be rough because the Krauts have put on extra guards and they are expecting a move like this. So if anyone wants to withdraw, he better speak up now.

He looks around. Nobody moves.



HOFFY

Then we're all in on it?

DUKE

Everybody but Joey, and you know who.

They shoot a look towards Sefton. Sefton stands leaning against his bunk. He looks right back at them.

Back at the table.

HOFFY

Okay.

(with irony)

Who's the lucky one?

He shakes the dogtags in the cap. Everyone crowds around, tensely.

HARRY

Let me do it, Hoffy.

STOSH

You want to go?

HARRY

No. I want to draw.

HOFFY

All right.

(holding out cap)

Draw.

Harry closes his eyes, puts his hand deep into the cap and picks out a tag. But before anybody can look at it, Price closes his fist over it.

PRICE

Suppose we call this my tag. I'll take him out.

The men turn toward Price.

HOFFY

No volunteers, Price. I said we're all in on it.

PRICE

You have elected me Security. The way things have been going in this Barracks, I guess I've done a poor job and I want to make up for it. Is that asking too much?

Sefton, standing against the bunk, takes it in with a grim smile.

HOFFY

We've all done a poor job of it.

PRICE

I still say this is my tag. Any objections, Hoffy?

HOFFY

Any objections, men?

PIRELLI

Not from me.

TRIZ

He can have it.

HARRY

(to Stosh)

Who are we to argue with a hero?

DUKE

How about me latching on, Price?

HOFFY

There's a crowd, especially if you've got to cut your way through barbed wire.

(hands Price wire cutters)

Here's the wire cutters.

(to Blondie)

Are the civilian clothes ready?

BLONDIE  
(stuffing clothes  
into duffel bag)  
Coming up.

HOFFY  
(to Harry and Stosh)  
Get going on the trap door.

They move to the old trap door and start unscrewing it. Price goes to his bunk, Hoffy with him. Price starts putting on his jacket.

PRICE  
What do you say, Hoffy. We'll hit  
the air raid trenches and cut out in  
back of Barracks nine.

HOFFY  
You'd better cut out in back of the  
south latrine.

PRICE  
Why the south latrine?

HOFFY  
Because that's where he is. In the  
water tank.

Price takes it smoothly.

PRICE  
Good spot. With any luck we'll make  
Krems by morning, or maybe even catch  
a barge to Linz.

Sefton, who has been watching closely, tosses two packs of cigarettes on the table.

SEFTON  
Two packs of cigarettes say Dunbar  
never gets out of the compound.

HOFFY  
You starting that again?

SEFTON  
Anybody cover?

They all look at him.

STOSH  
(from the trap door)  
Somebody step on that crumb!

DUKE  
We warned you, Sefton!

SEFTON  
Sure you warned me. You were going  
to slit the throat of that stoolie.

He throws an open jack-knife onto the table. The blade sticks.  
The knife quivers.

SEFTON  
Here's the knife to do it with. Only  
make sure you got the right throat.

DUKE  
We're looking at it.

HOFFY  
(to Harry and Stosh)  
Hurry up on that trap.  
(to Sefton)  
What are you trying to do, Sefton?  
Gum up the works?

SEFTON  
That's right. Or would you rather  
see Dunbar lying out there in the  
mud tomorrow morning like Manfredi  
and Johnson?

HOFFY  
Look, Sefton, I had my hands full so  
they wouldn't tear you apart –

SEFTON

I called it the last time, didn't I?

PRICE

Are we going to stand around here  
and listen to him until the Germans  
find out where Dunbar is?

SEFTON

The Germans know where Dunbar is.

HOFFY

How do they know?

SEFTON

You told them, Hoffy.

HOFFY

Who did?

SEFTON

You did!

HOFFY

You off your rocker?

SEFTON

Uh-huh. Fell right on my head.

(confronting Price)

Sprechen sie deutsch?

PRICE

No. I don't sprechen sie deutsch.

SEFTON

Maybe just one word? Kaput? Because  
you're kaput, Price.

PRICE

Will you get this guy out of my hair  
so I can go?

SEFTON

Go where? To the Kommandant's office

and tell him where Dunbar is?

PRICE

(starting for him)

I'll kill you for that!

SEFTON

Shut up!

(slaps his face)

Security Officer, eh? Screening everybody, only who screened you? Great American hero. From Cleveland, Ohio! Enlisted right after Pearl Harbor! When was Pearl Harbor, Price? Or, don't you know?

PRICE

December seventh, forty-one.

SEFTON

What time?

PRICE

Six o'clock. I was having dinner.

SEFTON

Six o'clock in Berlin. They were having lunch in Cleveland.

(to the others)

Am I boring you, boys?

HOFFY

Go on.

SEFTON

He's a Nazi, Price is. For all I know, his name is Preismaier or Preissinger. Sure, he lived in Cleveland, but when the war broke out he came back to the Fatherland like a good little Bundist. He spoke our lingo so they put him through spy school, gave him phony dogtags –

PRICE

He's lying! He's just trying to get himself off the hook!

HARRY  
(jabbing him)  
Shut up, he said.

STOSH  
You heard him.

SEFTON  
Okay, Herr Preismaier, let's have the mail box.

PRICE  
The what?

SEFTON  
The one you took out of the corner of your bunk and put in this pocket.

He snatches a black queen out of Price's coat pocket.

SEFTON  
Now let me show you how they did it. They did it by mail. That's right. Little love notes between our Security Officer and von Scherbach with Schulz the mail man.  
(ties up a loop in the light cord)  
Here's the flag.  
(opening a black queen)  
And here's the mail box.  
(grins at Price, who is sweating)  
Cute, isn't it? They delivered the mail or picked it up when we were out of the barracks, like for Appell. When there was a special delivery, they'd pull a phony air raid to get us out of here, like for instance, last night.  
(to Price again)  
There wasn't a plane in the sky –

or was there, Price?

Price dives for the open trap door. He is caught by Duke. He breaks away and flings himself at the window, tearing down the blanket.

PRICE  
(screaming)  
Hilfe!

He never gets the whole word out. Stosh and Harry jump him, Stosh clamping his hand over his mouth. They throw him to the floor and all duck as the light from the goon tower swoops through the barracks.

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT)

The Hundefuehrer, leading the dogs past Barracks Nine. The dogs sense something, and bark. The Hundefuehrer looks around. The dogs calm down and the Hundefuehrer goes on.

INT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

Everybody is petrified. The barking dies down. Blondie and Triz hang the blanket again.

HOFFY  
(indicating Price)  
Gag him.

Two P.O.W.s move in and take over.

Duke moves up to Sefton.

DUKE  
Brother, were we all wet about you!

SEFTON  
(putting a cigar butt  
into his mouth)  
Forget it.

He strikes a match on Duke's stubbled cheek and lights the cigar. It doesn't hurt Duke a bit. He just stands there with a broad grin.



HOFFY

(indicating Price)

What are we going to do with him?

SEFTON

Don't you know? Because I got my own ideas.

(to Blondie)

Let's have that civilian stuff.

Blondie gives him the barracks bag. Sefton opens it, takes out a Tyrolean hat, puts it on. It is too small.

SEFTON

I'll look pretty stupid in this,  
yodelling my way over those Alps.  
Now let's have the wire cutters.

Pirelli takes them out of Price's belt and gives them to him.

HOFFY

You taking Dunbar?

SEFTON

You betcha. There ought to be some reward money from Mama. Say ten thousand bucks worth.

He starts putting on his jacket and his cap, the eyes of every P.O.W. in the barracks on him.

SEFTON

I told you boys I'm no escape artist,  
but for the first time, I like the odds. Because now I got me a decoy.

HOFFY

What's the decoy?

SEFTON

Price. When I go I want you to give me five minutes. Exactly five minutes to get Dunbar out of that water tank.

Then you throw Price out into the compound, nice and loud. He'll draw every light from every goon tower. It's our only chance to cut through. What do you say, Barracks' Chief?

HOFFY

Shoot!

Price squirms.

DUKE

What's the matter, Price? You said you were going to save Dunbar, didn't you? So now, you're getting your chance.

Sefton has picked up the barracks bag and the wire cutters and moves toward the trap door.

SEFTON

So long, Cookie. The department store is all yours. What's left of it.

COOKIE

So long, Sefton.

STOSH

You're not disposing of those Russian broads?

SEFTON

Tell you what to do. First, get yourself a hundred cigarettes for the Kraut guards. Then get yourself another face.

Harry laughs.

SEFTON

You could use a new one yourself.

HOFFY

Let's synchronize the watches. Eleven forty-two, sharp.

SEFTON  
(adjusting his)  
Check.

He climbs down into the open trap. All the men crowd around to say goodbye.

SEFTON  
One more word. If I ever run into  
any of you bums on a street corner,  
just let's pretend we never met  
before. Understand?

He takes the cigar butt out of his mouth, puts it into Duke's half-open mouth – and goes. There is a moment of silence.

HOFFY  
This barracks will never be the same.

UNDERNEATH BARRACK 4 - (NIGHT)

Sefton is crawling cautiously in the direction of the latrine. Behind him, the trap door is being fitted into the floor again.

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT)

Sefton has crawled to the edge of the barracks, waits for a light to swoop by. Then he dashes into the latrine just in time to evade another searchlight from a goon tower.

INT. LATRINE - (NIGHT)

Sefton recovers his breath, listens for a second, then climbs up on the wash trough. He raps on the bottom of the water tank.

INT. WATER TANK - (NIGHT)

Dunbar, utterly exhausted, is clinging to the ladder, his legs submerged in the icy water. He hears the signal. There is a flicker in his eyes. He hears another signal. With his last strength, he climbs the ladder, waits for a light to swoop by, then works himself over the top.

INT. LATRINE - (NIGHT)

Sefton has climbed on a beam above the wash trough. Dunbar's legs come down, dripping wet. Sefton gets hold of them, then as Dunbar lets go above, he takes his full weight and lowers him to the wash trough. Dunbar lies there, gasping.

SEFTON

Shut off the moaning, or we'll have the dogs on us. Shut it off, Lieutenant. This is orders!

DUNBAR

My legs are frozen.

SEFTON

(rubbing his legs down)

You'd better get that blue blood circulating, because we're busting out of this stink-hole in exactly –  
(looks at watch)  
– one minute and twenty seconds.

DUNBAR

(looking up)

Sefton!

SEFTON

What did you expect, a St. Bernard dog?

DUNBAR

Not you.

SEFTON

What some brandy?

DUNBAR

Yeah.

SEFTON

Who doesn't! Suppose we wait until we hit the Waldorf Astoria.

DUNBAR

It's on me.

SEFTON

You won't get off that cheap.

DUNBAR

What are the chances busting out of here?

SEFTON

(looking at his watch)

We'll know in forty seconds.

(then with a grin)

Only in a democracy can a poor guy get his keister shot off with a rich guy.

INT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

Hoffy stands looking at his watch. Blondie is crossing with the breadknife in his hand towards the door. Stosh and Duke hold the gagged Price down on the bunk. Harry has strung together some five old cans.

HARRY

(to the bearded P.O.W.)

Hold his leg.

The P.O.W. sits on Price's leg. Harry starts tying the tin cans to his ankle.

HARRY

(to Price)

Just in case your Kameraden are hard of hearing.

HOFFY

Fifteen seconds. Get him up.

Stosh and Duke pull Price up off the bunk and move him to the door. He struggles and squirms.

STOSH

Stop shaking, Price. There'll be no  
pardon from no governor.

DUKE

(to Price)

Funny, ain't it? In your own Vaterland –  
by your own Soldaten!

(to Stosh)

The kid's got no sense of humor.

HOFFY

What's the matter with you, Security?  
You were always so calm. Especially  
when you let Manfredi and Johnson go  
out there.

(to Blondie)

Open the hatch.

Blondie has inserted the breadknife in the crack of the door.  
He now whips up the knife with a sharp movement.

EXT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

The bar across the door swivels up. The door is flung open  
from inside. Duke and Stosh hold Price. Hoffy tears the gag  
off his mouth.

HOFFY

Let 'er go!

Duke and Stosh have lifted Price with all their might, and  
give him a terrific heave. As Price comes flying out into  
the compound, the tin cans clattering, the door is slammed  
shut.

A light from a goon tower swings sharply to Price and holds  
him in its beam. A burst of machine gun fire splatters around  
him. He scrambles to his feet, screaming.

PRICE

Schiesst nicht! Schiesst nicht! Ich  
bin ein Deutscher!

His words are drowned out by more machine gun fire. He tries  
to run back towards his barracks, but is cut off by another

beam and more machine gun fire from another goon tower. He runs madly into the dark compound, the tin cans clattering behind him – lights from all the goon towers searching for him.

INT. LATRINE - (NIGHT)

Sefton and Dunbar stand at the door of the latrine, searchlights swinging in arcs toward the compound. Sefton holds the wire-cutters in his hand. There is the clatter of the tin cans and machine gun fire, and Price's desperate screams, "Nicht schiessen! Nicht schiessen!".

SEFTON

Now!

They duck out.

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT)

Sefton and Dunbar dash across the short stretch to the barbed wire. They fall on their faces at the wire and Sefton starts cutting.

Price. A machine gun bullet has struck him in the shoulder. He desperately tries to evade the relentless light beams. He manages to tear off the tin cans, runs on towards the Administration Building. A couple of more bullets hit him. He falls face down into the mud. All the lights converge on him and the machine guns sputter away.

BARBED WIRE - (NIGHT)

Sefton is just cutting through the outer fence. In back of him, Dunbar patches the cut wire of the inner fence. Beyond them, all the lights play on the body of Price. The machine guns are no longer shooting, but there are whistles and a siren. The barking dogs tear into Price's body.

Sefton and Dunbar crawl through the outer wire and pause to patch it up hastily.

SEFTON

Let's blow, Chauncey.

DUNBAR

Let's!

They get to their feet and scramble off into the forest.

EXT. COMPOUND - (NIGHT)

Von Scherbach comes striding out of the Administration Building followed by a Lieutenant, the two S.S. Men and Schulz. He wades cockily through the mud with his beautiful boots towards the body on the ground. The Hundefueher calls off his dogs. The other guards step back. With his boot, von Scherbach flips the body over. The lights from the goon towers play on the muddy face of Price. They all stand there stunned.

INT. BARRACKS 4 - (NIGHT)

The lamps are being put out; the blankets being pulled down by the P.O.W.s.

HOFFY

All right, men. Everybody back in their bunks like nothing happened.

They climb into their bunks. All is still.

DUKE

(puffing Sefton's  
cigar)

What do you know? The crud did it.

HARRY

I'd like to know what made him do it.

STOSH

Maybe he just wanted to steal our wire cutters. Ever think of that?

Cookie, in his bunk, a broad smile on his face, starts whistling softly: When Johnny Comes Marching Home. Beyond him lie all the P.O.W.s in the barracks, their hearts beating, their eyes wide open.

EXT. FOREST - (NIGHT)



Sefton and Dunbar climb swiftly up a hill through the trees. Dunbar's arm is over Sefton's shoulder as they march. OVER THIS, Cookie's whistling of Johnny Comes Marching Home – gradually augmented by drums and then an orchestra. Sefton and Dunbar march on, in time to the music.

SUPERIMPOSED BEYOND THEM appear the other P.O.W.s from Stalag 17, their spirits marching with them through the forest. Way in front, Stosh in his underwear, waving a makeshift flag. Then comes Harry. Then Cookie. Then Triz and Blondie. Then Joey, playing his ocarina in tune with the march, a smile on his face. And Marko and The Crutch. Then Hoffs and Duke, and all the others we have grown to know. All waving their pathetic flags: towels, blankets and torn shirts. All marching to freedom and home, marching with Sefton and Dunbar. As the MUSIC SWELLS to a crescendo –

FADE OUT:

THE END