

THE DAY THE CLOWN CRIED  
ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

By

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And

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Based on a Story Idea by

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I TOOK A CHILD BY THE HAND...  
TO LEAD HIM ON HIS WAY.  
I TOLD HIM OF THE LOVE OF GOD...  
AND TAUGHT HIM HOW TO PRAY.  
AND AS I SEARCHED FOR BETTER WAYS HIS GUIDE AND HELP TO BE...  
I FOUND, AS WE WALKED HAND IN HAND, THAT HE WAS LEADING ME.  
"THE DAY THE CLOWN CRIED"

COLD OPENING

EXT. PARIS CIRCUS - NIGHT

The normal activity and excitement of showtime around the circus is in evidence where we see the half dark street and alley directly adjacent to the circus tent which (in Paris is an enclosure)... the animals, the midgets, the people and the roustabouts moving with a fixed speed and getting faster as we now know showtime is momentarily due.

We MOVE TOWARD the action, slowly but definitely picking up SOUNDS and actions of the busy people as we go.

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

EXT. CIRCUS - FRONT OF CIRCUS - PEOPLE ENTERING - NIGHT

We see barkers, children, people, pushing... buying tickets, hats, candy... SOUNDS of children laughing, MUSIC playing from o.s. within the tent area... and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF CIRCUS - NIGHT

A continuation of the animals, trainers, clowns INTERCUT with the action of the circus customers jamming the entranceway to get in... (complimented CUTS from backstage to out front... building to the final crescendo... as we see the alley empty and clear out vs. the front area clearing

and also becoming empty.)

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CIRCUS PROPER - NIGHT

The fully dressed orchestra playing the oncoming people to their respective seats as we PAN ALONG the happy faces and excited children... DOWN and BACK within the circus backstage and SLOWLY COME TO A STOP OUTSIDE: "CLOWN ALLEY".

CLOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

The heartbeat of any circus... The long row of unkempt, yet beautifully neat trunks where the clowns make up, with many of the clowns just coming in and setting their clothes and things around their own little areas... midgets running and playing, like the little children they are about to entertain... MUSIC is in the deep background... as we COME TO A STOP at the large trunk with the letters clearly printed ...'GUSTAV - EUROPE'S PREMIER CLOWN."

We PULL BACK and AWAY from the lettering on the trunk and REVEAL the face of a gentle but drawn man, a man whose body and movements indicate he has been at this for a long time. As he sits, the little midgets run close to see what they can do to help; one pulls the chair for him to sit on; another brings a hot cup of coffee; another takes his coat and hangs in on the hattree, adjacent to his trunk... as we PUSH PAST HIM to introduce the other clowns... some half made up, others finishing their make-up... and some just sitting and rapping together, smoking, drinking coffee, waiting for showtime... and in the very distant b.g., almost against the wall of clown alley, we see the trunk and the body of a "CLOWN" in silhouette... we CRAWL TOWARDS the body and the trunk... and COME TO A STOP... HOLDING FULL FRAME. The clown, already made-up and dressed in his tramp outfit, has his head in his hands, leaning down on the trunk table top, a depressed and sad looking hulk of a man... an o.s. voice:

MIDGET

Coffee? It's nice and hot.

The MIDGET slides the cup in front of the clown's face... as he picks up his head and smiles and nods yes... he sips the coffee and we see the clown is HELMUT DORQUE (pronounced Doork).

He is a depressed and very unhappy clown... the frown on his face shows years of knocking around... plus fear that those years are now over. From o.s. we HEAR the SOUND of a small

air horn being blown and carried by one of the midgets. He is yelling through an old megaphone.

MIDGET

15 Minutes to circus... 15 minutes  
to circus.

Upon hearing this, "Clown Alley" really gets busy... all the clowns get up and put their last minute touches together... touching up their make-ups... getting their coats and props together... and as they get themselves up and ready, they exit the clown alley area and start for the arena. The last one to go is Helmut, lingering behind intentionally as we:

CUT TO:

INT. CIRCUS ARENA - CLOSEUP RINGMASTER - NIGHT

RINGMASTER

Ladies and gentlemen, we proudly  
present... "The Clowns"!

INT. CLOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

Helmut hangs back until the very last clown exits Clown Alley, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. CIRCUS PROPER - NIGHT

The MUSIC is really going strong... and the clowns come on like all forty. They explode in the ring... doing all their bits and pieces which ultimately brings them back to the entrance area they just came from and they make the "West Point" arch for the TIMPANI DRUM ROLL and the grand entrance of "Gustav" the Great.

CLOSER SHOT

"Gustav" makes his famous comedy walk into the tent with the longest pair of tails ever seen (at least 75 feet long) and at the end holding them from dragging on the floor is Helmut, the "Tramp Clown".

WIDER SHOT

We see Gustav taking the applause, and it is tremendous. He stops center of the ring, but Helmut keeps walking and doesn't see the post in front of him as he walks around the post, still holding the tails and goes on his butt, pulling Gustav

down as well. The audience screams with laughter, believing this all part of the act, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

All the clowns are sitting around their respective trunks and there is a sense of gloom permeating the air, as Gustav and MR. SCHMIDT pace back and forth behind Helmut, both going at him unmercifully.

MR SCHMIDT

(in the middle of his tirade)

Not to mention how unprofessional that was...

HELMUT

But it was an accident...

GUSTAV

Oh, sure it was... A very well planned and calculated accident!

HELMUT

I swear to you... it was an accident!

Gustav stops and grabs Schmidt's arm, and with a threatening, pointing finger...

GUSTAV

I don't want to hear any more... You will get me another stooge. I don't want this man!!

SCHMIDT

Don't get excited, Gustav, you shall have it.

GUSTAV

You bet I will, or you shall have no show.

Gustav walks away, sits at his trunk, starts taking his make-up off.

SCHMIDT

(moving to Helmut's trunk, leaning over into Helmut's ear)

You will run with the other clowns  
and that's all you will do... is  
that clear?

Helmut, shattered, nods his head yes.

SCHMIDT

(continuing)

And if there is another one of your  
cute tricks... I promise you will do  
your bits for the "Cats" while  
cleaning their cages!

Schmidt walks away... leaving Helmut stunned and shocked.  
Helmut lifts his trunk cover, which opens on a hinge and  
stays upright, as we SLOWLY CRAB AROUND to REVEAL the "One  
Sheets" glued to the inside of the trunk lid... as Helmut  
reaches for a towel to clean his face, we read:

RINGLING BROS. & BARNUM AND BAILEY

PRESENTS

THE WORLD'S GREATEST CLOWN "HELMUT"

SCHMIDT

From Germany

The one sheets are battered and torn and certainly appear to  
be many years old. As we PAN the "Lid" to see them all,  
Helmut's face is reflected in the mirror as we see the tears  
rolling down his face. As we FREEZE FRAME, MUSIC hits for:

MAIN TITLES:

THE DAY THE CLOWN CRIED

FOLLOWING CREDITS:

EXT. DESERTED STREET AND BISTRO - NIGHT

Helmut, dejected and as sad as any man could be, strolls  
down the deserted street, alone.

INT. BISTRO

He comes to a small bistro and walks in... stands at the  
bar.

HELMUT

Clause... give me a double whiskey  
with beer chaser.

CLAUSE

(who knows him)

You won't get "Funny" out of a bottle.

HELMUT

And you won't make a dime sticking  
your nose in other people's business.

Clause pours the whiskey, and places the beer next to it; as  
Helmut gulps the drink down and chases it with the beer from  
the bottle... we:

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

INT. THE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Standing at the window looking out is a beautiful WOMAN,  
simply dressed, no make-up and clean; she has the look of a  
woman who has just bathed and one could almost smell the  
fragrance of bath oil on her body. She is tense and  
concerned.

She sees something and moves toward the door and opens it.  
There is a beat and finally the o.s. SOUNDS of feet scuffling  
get to the door. It is Helmut, fairly crooked at this point.

ADA

Helmut, darling, are you all right?

HELMUT

(nastily)

Do I look like I'm not all right?

ADA

I was so worried about you... Your  
dinner is cold and I couldn't imagine  
what happened to you...

HELMUT

Were you really worried about me or  
your stupid dinner was getting cold?

Ada is hurt by this, but knows something is really chewing  
away at him... and deals with it even more tenderly, which  
only digs in deeper on Helmut.

ADA

Sweetheart, I care about you... I

love you... I worry about you... I  
can't help those feelings...

During the above Helmut is at the small bar in the living  
room pouring another "blast" and gulps it down... he hears  
the words but tries to ignore them.

HELMUT

If there is anything I don't need  
right now... it's your super-  
sentimentality...

He flops down in the armchair and stares straight ahead...  
Again, Ada is hurt by his blasting her, but she's wise enough  
to know this isn't the man she loves... she has to get what's  
eating him out of there.

ADA

Helmut... what's tormenting your  
soul? Please let me help you...  
talk to me... I don't care what it  
is... I love you... I'm your  
friend... you can trust me to  
understand...

HELMUT

I can't trust anybody... I don't  
know how to trust anybody...

ADA

I'm not anybody! I'm your wife!

Helmut, hearing these words, looks up at her and sees the  
beauty in her eyes, and he is affected by this. He stands  
up and takes her in his arms... almost breaking her in two.

HELMUT

I'm sorry, my love... I'm so sorry...  
You're right! You're not anybody.  
You're my wife and I love you, too...  
So very much I just have no one to  
fight back at... I'm lost and alone,  
I can't handle the disgrace of  
failure... the pain of being a has-  
been is more than I can bear...

Ada knows now what's happened.

ADA

Schmidt again? Gustav again? When  
will you learn they fear you and

they know how vulnerable you are now... if they can beat you down then they needn't worry about you coming back to haunt them.

HELMUT

They worry about me? Don't be ridiculous... they just took the last comic bit away from me... because of a silly accident... I'm now down at the bottom, just a stooge assisting a not-so-funny clown.

ADA

But they can't take your talent away... That's your strongest force!

Walking away from her, getting angry again...

HELMUT

What the hell are you talking about? What talent? And if I had any it's being suffocated into nothing... And that's just what I am now... nothing... No one... just empty... a prop to be used and mis-used... how does my great talent stand up to those odds?

ADA

By not quitting... You must fight! Creative survival is even more difficult than human survival... You must fight!!!

Helmut gets quiet and listens, and it makes sense... Ada knows she's got him now.

ADA

(continuing)

Go to Schmidt... Force a confrontation... Don't let Gustav win... make Schmidt see what an injustice they are imposing on you... Please, my love, fight! Make your world better by fighting for it... You can do it... I know you can...

Helmut hears it all and it sounds so good and right.

HELMUT



I will go now and see Schmidt...  
I will tell him I won't take any  
more degradation... I will tell him  
I am a "clown" not a stooge... A  
"clown"... A special person... A  
special clown...

Ada happily gets his hat.

ADA

(placing the hat on  
his head)  
Go, my love... Go and fight for what  
you know is right... I will warm  
your dinner and wait for you to come  
home.

She kisses him, opens the door for him and he goes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE EMPTY CIRCUS - NIGHT

The low key light and the silence of the circus is almost  
ominous and a little frightening for Helmut as he walks across  
the empty arena... with a small light burning from up high.  
All the equipment is tied off. Slight ANIMAL SOUNDS in the  
deep background... and the faintest SOUND of circus music is  
heard. Helmut is now center of the main ring and stops and  
looks around.

HIS POV - THE EMPTY STANDS

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

His face tense, then eases as he looks around.

HIS POV

The stands are full, the lights come up, and the audience is  
standing, applauding thunderously!

MED. CLOSE - HELMUT

In his clown outfit bowing and acknowledging the ovation.

HIS POV - THE AUDIENCE

as they stop applauding and sit down.

WIDE SHOT

Helmut -- the chair and the trombone --

THE TROMBONE PANTOMIME

As the completion of the "Trombone Pantomime" Helmut walks away from the position he was in with the trombone and bows and milks the crowd for reactions and as he bows the second time... WE SHIMMER:

BACK TO:

CLOSE - HELMUT

In bowing position as he looks at the crowd.

HIS POV - THE EMPTY STANDS

CLOSE - HELMUT

His face shows signs of utter despair and dejection... the dream is gone and the memory of what was really hurts deep down. He looks around making sure he hasn't been noticed by anyone and takes that deep sigh and strolls towards the back of the circus tent area on his way to find Schmidt.

WIDE ANGLE

TRUCK WITH HIM, HOLDING the many empty seats in the b.g. as he walks... trying to muster up the courage he's going to have to call... something that has now become totally foreign to him.

HIGH SHOT - THE EMPTY CIRCUS

We see Helmut as the tiny figure he feels like, walking out of the tent area and into the backstage section.

CUT TO:

BACKSTAGE OFFICE AREA - NIGHT

Helmut enters the section of the circus where Schmidt has his "Temp" office quarters. It is a tent-like arrangement with the canvas flap as his door and we see light streaming from the half open canvas flap.

HIS POV - THE TENT OFFICE

Helmut looks and sees a shadow of a body moving around in the tent office area and starts for it.

INT. TENT OFFICE - NIGHT

Schmidt pacing up and down... thinking, as we PULL BACK to see Gustav seated in one of the fold-up chairs with a "I am waiting" look on his face.

SCHMIDT

Naturally, I agree... Doork is a nuisance, but to just let him go seems a little unfair.

GUSTAV

Schmidt! Don't make me put it on a "either him or me basis".

SCHMIDT

All right... all right... I'll give him --

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE OFFICE TENT - HELMUT - NIGHT

listening.

SCHMIDT (V.O.)

-- his two weeks notice tomorrow.  
Will that satisfy you?

GUSTAV (V.O.)

Perfectly!! Let's have a drink...

Helmut drops his head, completely discouraged and saddened by what he knows is a losing battle. As he starts to walk away we can HEAR the tinkling of glasses and the slight laughter of the two men as we watch Helmut slowly scuff his way towards the backstage circus exit, as we:

DISSOLVE (12-ft) HOLDING his walk over his limp body at bar.

INT. THE BAR - NIGHT

Helmut has had more than a few and really looks beaten and shoddy -- he waves for the bartender to bring another.

CLAUSE

(pouring still another  
blast)  
It's your funeral.

HELMUT

(not too clearly)

A funeral is usually in order when someone dies.

Up to now, we have no idea, whatever, as to the time (in history) we are indeed in Germany, but as Helmut downs another blast we SLOWLY CREEP our CAMERA to include more of the bar than we have seen before and it includes pictures, framed, of soldiers, arms interlocked (looking somewhat like summer camp stills), the German flag (1933 vintage / crisscrossed with the Swastika), a large banner marked "Deutschland" Ober Aliss... and finally, the larger than life photograph of "Hitler". Helmut slowly CROSSES CAMERA as he takes another drink and starts spouting again.

HELMUT

The trouble with man today is that he takes everything for granted... he thinks things he's told to think... and accepts it! Just because we know meanings of words we use them and we fool ourselves... people should use the dictionary more... look up words like good... bad... honest... loyal... especially loyal, I know what loyal means, and I have always been that... but does anyone care? No! Of course not... Only when it is expedient... When it isn't ---  
(he slashes his throat with his finger)  
--- ZIPPPP! You're out!

Helmut stops with his BACK TO CAMERA looking straight at "Hitler" and screams:

HELMUT

And that goes for you too... Mine Fuhrer...

He shoves his right arm up and out at the photograph of "Hitler".

HELMUT

... you, too, are a fool. You allow yourself to think you have "loyal" followers... Ha! Wait until they've had it with you... You'll get yours... all the smiling, bowing, heel clicking idiots will shaft you

too. And you will deserve it because if you allow people like Herr Schmidt to get about his business of lying, and cheating, and being disloyal, one day all the Schmidts in Germany will turn on you and you will finish as the dumb little corporal you started as, and never know what hit you...

During the above dialogue, two S.S. men along with two Gestapo men walk into the bar and sit at a table unseen by Helmut, and as they sit, Helmut continues:

HELMUT

He really has to be stupid --

(indicating Hitler)

I could help him by telling him about the people he thinks are good Germans... Ha!

The two S.S. men and the two Gestapo men just happened to stop in the pub, they can't really believe what they are hearing, and the two S.S. men make a move to get up and secure Helmut. The head Gestapo man nods to them to stay seated and wait and listen. Helmut continues his rave and gets more violent as he goes on. Clause, the bartender, would love to tell him the Germans are there, but chooses to go about his business.

Helmut is really getting the effects of the booze now and is bordering on flipping his lid, completely.

(He does the stagger routine trying to get to the table on the other side of the bar furthest away from where the S.S. men and Gestapo men are sitting)... We play this for visual humor, but at the same time showing just how swacked he is!!! Helmut finally reaches the table he has been trying desperately to get to and falls into it, exhausted and emotionally drained. He looks around at the few people who have been watching him, most of which are frightened at what he has said, trying vainly to stay out of it. Helmut catches the eyes of the four men (S.S. and Gestapo) just looking at him.

HELMUT

(angrily)

What are you staring at? Didn't you ever see a man drink before?

The four men just stare at him with no answer.

HELMUT

What's the matter? Haven't you guys got a sense of humor? You must have! Look how you're dressed! Grown men in their little soldier suits... And the black coats and gloves... Like in a movie...

Helmut gets up and walks over to their table... mumbling, and staggering as he goes...

HELMUT

Real cloak and dagger stuff... Didn't you Gestapo guys ever know that everybody can spot you a mile away?

(leaning over and whispering)

Listen, if you really wanted to be unnoticed... You should dress like plain people, then nobody would know you... You might even wear straw hats and shorts...

He hears this and gets hysterical laughing.

HELMUT

Straw hats and shorts!! That's funny! Now that's really funny, isn't it? Straw hats and shorts!

They just stare!

HELMUT

Well, isn't that funny? Think of it... That's funny! Why don't you laugh?

HELMUT'S POV - THE S.S. AND GESTAPO MEN

They are really staring now, hard to believe their ears and eyes.

HELMUT

(gets an idea)

I know why you're not laughing... Because things you hear, you have to think about... I'll show you something that you'll laugh at because all you'll have to do is watch...

DIRECTOR'S MEMO!!! (INSERT CHAPLIN FOOTAGE)

Helmut goes over to the bar, where a little man is standing drinking his beer. Alongside of the beer is a small plate with crackers and brown jam. Helmut takes a comb out of his pocket, dips it in the man's glass of beer, combs his hair down over one eye, takes a finger full of the brown jam and makes a shicklegruber mustache from it... and turns on the four men yelling:

HELMUT

Ve vill conquer the world... Heil me! Heil me! Heil me!

He screams the last "Heil" and collapses on the floor. The four men get up and proceed to pick him up and carry him out of the bar. As they get to the doorway and exit we STAY on... Ada who has just arrived to see them pick him up and carry him away. She is shocked. We STAY on a CLOSEUP OF HER FACE showing the strain, pain and sadness as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LT. REICHER'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE - BERLIN GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We OPEN on the shiny black boots swinging the door open in front of him and as we PULL BACK we see Helmut seated in a slumped position on the hard wood bench as we introduce the wearer of the black boots -- LT. REICHER -- he enters his office as we go with him... (Feather Edge Set)... he walks briskly to the desk where there are briefs and papers stacked high on his desk... he bellows, after looking at the top folder.

REICHER

STEINER !!!!! Get in here!

A frightened and spineless like corporal springs into his office and clicks his heels and screams.

CORPORAL

Heil Hitler!

(shooting that stiff arm out like on a spring!)

Reicher flips his wrist in answer to the heil, showing complete annoyance at having to do it.

REICHER

Do I see what I think I see here?

The corporal leans over the desk, and in order to see puts his hand on the desk to brace himself... Reicher smacks his arm, knocking his face flat on the desk... he stays there with his ass in the air, waiting for instructions. Reicher leans down putting his nose right to the corporal's nose.

REICHER

Never put your hands on my desk...  
is that clear?

Still in the same position, the Corporal extends his arm for a heil Hitler, which is virtually impossible in the position he is in.

CORPORAL

(meekly)  
Yes sir!

REICHER

MOVE IT!!

The Corporal rises and stands stiffer than ever...

REICHER

(picking the folder  
up)  
Now tell me, is this brief correct?  
Is that prisoner, the drunk, the one  
that impersonated the Fuehrer?

CORPORAL

Yes sir! It is!

Reicher paces behind his desk... the Corporal still stiff at attention... waits and watches in mortal fear.

REICHER

(to himself)  
I get all the weirdos... Alright,  
Corporal, send him in!

The corporal clicks his heels, thrilled that he can go.

CORPORAL

Yes sir!!!!

He exits, and returns with Helmut and one more guard. Helmut stands in the doorway, frightened and unsure, Reicher still pacing behind his desk feels Helmut's presence...



REICHER

Alright, come in, sit down!

Helmut walks to the chair in front of Reicher's desk... The spineless corporal moves towards the door... turns... and takes his position on the opposite side of the door that the guard is standing at...

Reicher picks up the folder again, fingers through it. As he looks through the folder, he looks at Helmut and looks and fingers pages and the silence and the anxiety is getting to Helmut as he sweats and waits.

Reicher is toying with him, and each time Reicher looks up the sick, little-boy smile crosses Helmut's face, hoping to endear himself to this Prussian pig!

Reicher finally sits down beside his desk in a chair that resembles a throne. It is high and it looks down on Helmut.

(Props: This chair must be higher and taller than Helmut's chair... for POV shots diminishing Helmut seated there.)

OVER REICHER ON HELMUT

REICHER

(soft spoken)

Are you Helmut Doork?

HELMUT

(nervously)

Doork, yes sir, Helmut Doork! I am he! Yes sir, that is correct, Doork!

REICHER

And are you a clown in the circus?

HELMUT

(ego setting in and forgetting for a moment his trouble and danger)

Not JUST A CLOWN! I am Helmut Doork, Premier Clown! I've clowned for the royal heads of many of our finest countries, why there were times when I had to...

REICHER

(breaking in)

That was years ago... According to these papers you are now just a helper in the circus with little or no importance!!

This stuns Helmut, his facade destroyed... His face drops along with his fear...

HELMUT

(meekly)

Some things are only temporary... Lt. Reicher! Only yesterday, I had calls from one of the great circus owners in all of Europe... he...

REICHER

(breaking in, strong and angry)

You are NOTHING!! You are a HAS BEEN!! You WERE A CLOWN...

REICHER

(continuing)

You are now a prisoner of the State and that's not funny... Can you make something funny out of that, Clown?

Helmut sinks even lower in the over-stuffed chair, despair in his eyes and a weight on his heart... the truth slashing at his very being.

HELMUT

(softly)

No! Lt. Reicher, I can't make anything funny from that thought...

REICHER

It is no thought... It is fact, Clown, unquestionable fact!! Now down to the issues at hand... Did you willfully and with malice attack the State and impersonate the Fuhrer?

HELMUT

(softly)

I was drunk! It was a mistake! I meant no disrespect... Sir... Honestly, I was drunk and not responsible for my actions and thoughts! And my actions were subconscious!

REICHER

(screaming)

Subconscious?? Meaning it was all motivated by truth that came out under the influence of alcohol!

HELMUT

(still softly)

I am a LOYAL German!

REICHER

And what kind of commendation would you expect for being a loyal German?

HELMUT

I want nothing! But I'm more loyal than most Germans I know...

REICHER

Like who?

Helmut realizes this was the wrong thing to say... he sweats...

HELMUT

Ah, like... re...

REICHER

Names! Names!!! Who?

HELMUT

I don't know...

REICHER

Sir!!!

HELMUT

I don't know, sir...

REICHER

But you said other Germans... What OTHER Germans... Who are they? Why aren't they loyal? Who?

HELMUT

(trying desperately to cop out)

I'm not responsible for what I say now...

REICHER

Why? You're not drinking... you said you weren't responsible last night because you were drunk! Are you drunk now?

HELMUT

No, sir!

REICHER

Then why are you not responsible now?

HELMUT

I don't know!!

REICHER

SIR!!!

HELMUT

I don't know -- sir !!!

REICHER

Why are you not responsible? Why?  
Why? Why? Why?

On each attack of the word "why", Reicher creeps up closer and closer to Helmut, really intimidating him... and the sound of his voice echoes and becomes monotone and ominous...

[THE NEXT TWO PAGES OF THE SCRIPT ARE MISSING AS THEY ARE IN THE ORIGINAL]

The corporal gets Reicher's point and marks his notebook, flips the cover closed, snaps to attention as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT RAILWAY STATION - DAY

Ada walking as briskly as a woman can walk without running and then her walk becomes a panic running, looking, sweating, and the look on her face is evident that she is frightened and close to shock... she gets to a train gate where she sees the S.S. men pushing men through the gate to the train... she knows she is where she has to be... she approaches one of the S.S. men...

ADA

Excuse me, sir, but I wonder if you would help me... you see...

S.S. MAN  
(very briskly)  
No! Go away!

ADA  
You don't understand...

S.S. MAN  
You don't understand... I said go  
away !!

Ada backs away from the gate, and stands to one side watching the prisoners being moved from the back of the huge truck backed up to the railway area... she is looking through the iron bars (we SHOOT the bars holding depth of field snugly so that the prisoners and the bars are in sharp focus)... we make QUICK CUTS between Ada and the prisoners exiting the huge truck... as we see the change of expression on Ada's face we know she sees what she's been looking for... Helmut... he is walking in a slow rhythm following a group of men who look equally as broken and sad as he looks... Ada yells through the bars...

ADA  
HELMUT !

Just as she yells, the voice of an S.S. Man drowns out her scream as he yells...

S.S. MAN  
Move along... you swine... move...  
we haven't got all day... move...  
move... one-two-three-four --

His voice rings loudly in echo in the vast station it's as though he is timing his yells to each scream of hers... we see her mouth moving with the SOUND of the S.S. Man's voice coming from it... she is screaming Helmut... as the S.S. Man screams...

S.S. MAN  
Move it... move it... move... move...  
hurry... faster... faster...

Helmut and the other men push ahead faster and faster... with INTERCUTS of Ada, tears streaming down her face... with CUTS of Helmut walking with his head down, embarrassed and shattered...

MED. - ADA

We MOVE the CAMERA SLOWLY towards her, peering through the bars of the huge gate... and as we MOVE, we HEAR the doors of the train slamming... the whistle... and the slow start of the locomotive moving the train out of the station... by the time we get to the (choker) of Ada... the train is almost out of listening range... She drops her head, wipes her eyes with her handkerchief, as we hear so.:

S.S. MAN

(the same one at the gate who told her to go away)

Now I would be glad to help you, Fraulein... shall we start with a drink? There is a lovely little bar around the corner...

During the above dialogue we see another S.S. Man closing and locking the gate to the train platform... She looks at this "Pig", then down and up as though she were examining a rare, never seen insect... and then right into his face... and softly whispers:

ADA

Go away !!

She turns and slowly walks the long walk down the empty station corridor as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THEIR APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ada is sitting at the kitchen table, the table is empty, the light is low and we see the picture of a lonely heartbroken woman, she has a small bowl of soup in front of her and the spoon in her hand is doing nothing more than swirling the soup around in the bowl... she can't eat, which is evident and as she swirls the spoon around, we MOVE IN SLOWLY and into the bowl of soup (choker)... and HOLD on the spoon in the bowl as we

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

INT. CAMP MESS HALL - INSERT - BOWL OF SLOP - DAY

We see wooden spoon doing exactly what Ada was doing, just swirling the spoon around in what looks like dirty water with a carrot in it, the bowl is chopped and cracked, the spoon is old and almost white from use... the handle still

retains its wooden look... as we PULL BACK we see Helmut is swirling the spoon in the slop... behind him is a Guard just watching his actions... after a beat, the Guard taps Helmut on the shoulder...

GUARD

Tsk! tsk! tsk! shame on you,  
Doork... shame... don't you want to  
grow big and strong like me?

Helmut knows he's in trouble and just waits indifferently for the fireworks to start...

GUARD

We must eat our food! Do we want  
Uncle to feed the little man?

The guard pulls the man next to Helmut out of his seat and practically throws him to the floor to make room for himself to sit down next to Helmut which he does... he half turns his body towards Helmut and turns Helmut around in the same fashion so they are almost facing one another. The Guard takes the wooden spoon and fills it with the soup and proceeds to feed Helmut... he stuffs the spoonful of soup into his mouth... and Helmut takes and swallows... then the Guard takes another spoonful and makes believe he is blowing it (like a mother blows the hot soup not to burn the baby's mouth)... and forces the spoonful into Helmut's mouth.

GUARD

(continuing to feed  
him as he puts the  
spoon in his mouth)  
And now one for Aunt Ada...

As the Guard uses the name Ada, Helmut bites down on the spoon and won't let it go... but if looks could kill... he stares at the Guard with hate...

GUARD

(pulling the spoon)  
Let go, Doork, let go... it's the  
soup that makes us big and strong...  
not the spoon... LET IT GO!

Helmut still holds it clenched in his teeth, and the Guard smacks his face full force. Helmut lets it go... and holds his face, embarrassed and humiliated as any many would be...

GUARD

(continuing)

Now let's try it again...

He fills the spoon and sticks it toward Helmut's mouth, but Helmut clenches his teeth keeping his mouth shut.

GUARD

I said let's try it again...

He shoves the spoon into his lips, as the soup drips all over the front of Helmut's shirt. The Guard uses the spoon to clean the front of his shirt and forces the liquid he took from the shirt front into Helmut's mouth... Some of the men at the table and surrounding tables feel for Helmut, others think it's funny... they laugh quietly.

GUARD

Oh, I know why you're unhappy...  
soup without bread is terrible...

The Guard takes the large loaf of brown bread and rips a huge piece out of the center of the loaf and proceeds to stuff Helmut's mouth with bread, until he looks like his cheeks are eight times their normal size.

GUARD

Isn't that better? Now take some  
soup...

He pushes a spoonful of soup into his mouth which is so full, nothing can get in... consequently the bread spills out, the soup spills out... and he is a mess... (We play this scene for plot value, but it will work comically as well.)

HELMUT

I've had enough, thank you... No  
more, please...

The Guard just stares at him...

HELMUT

Please!

GUARD

I'm surprised at you, Doork, you've  
been here two years now, you should  
have learned we, of the Third Reich,  
never acknowledge the weak, sniveling,  
begging of you swine... that's all  
you're good for... begging...  
pleading... praying... you're a  
disgrace to the human race. That's



why we of the superior race must do away with all of you...

The guard turns to the other men at the table, and goes into one of his mentally unbalanced tirades...

GUARD

And we will! We will! Do away with all of you. You're worthless pigs... with no courage, no guts, why if anyone did to me what I just did to Doork I would kill him!

(turning to Helmut)

Why don't you kill me, Doork? Go on... kill me... kill me... take the knife from the table and kill me...

Helmut looks at the knife on the table, picks it up, holds it in stabbing style, thinks about it... and we know by his look, he would love to...

HELMUT

(with knife in hand)

I would kill you... but I am getting my release any day now... and I won't do anything that would spoil my chances...

Helmut digs the knife into the table top and buries his head in his hands... totally shook from the encounter...

GUARD

Your release?

He begins to laugh, but hysterically.

GUARD

Release? They told me you were funny... but I never realized just how funny you are... RELEASE ????

And the hysterical laughter really echoes throughout the mess hall as the Guard makes his way towards the exit. The men at the table slowly get up and exit the scene, as do the others at the surrounding tables... leaving Helmut just sitting there... we PULL BACK to reveal the empty mess hall, and the lonely sad body of Helmut, as he looks around realizing he's alone, gets up and slowly creeps out of the hall like a puppy with his tail between his legs... as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRISON YARD - FULL SHOT - DAY

There are two rows of prisoners quarters, wooden buildings, weather beaten each row consists of about a dozen barracks each... joined at the ends, farthest from the CAMERA by the administration building, a two story type making a "U" shape of the compound... The entire yard is surrounded by two high wire fences about ten yards apart and fifteen feet high. At intervals of about twenty-five yards, in the area between the fences, are the guard towers, each about eighteen feet above the ground equipped with searchlights, sirens, machine guns, with three Guards on duty. Along outer fence, also about twenty-five yards apart, other powerful lighting equipment mounted on high poles.

It is morning and although the sun shines brightly it doesn't in any way alter the drabness of the compound... nor does it help change the look of the men...

There are about three hundred men milling about, some still chewing what was their breakfast, some pulling brown bread from their shirt fronts and exchanging bread for cigarettes or just making deals, one with another... some sit along the barracks walls trying to get some sun... others walking in circles... some talking, laughing, even playing cards... doing whatever they can to kill time...

PAN the entire camp. At completion of the long PAN introducing the prison camp, we pick up the sixtyish JOHANN KELTNER (formally ANDERLICH), a warm, sensitive looking greying man, thin but with a dignity and a serenity about him... He walks briskly (and we know he'd love to walk slowly and tiredly, but we can see he knows his attitude and conduct will help those that can't help themselves...)

His face tells us he is good, kind and the reason men want to live, he is special and he smiles at all those he passes, greets the men and is generally what man wishes he could be under the same circumstances...

He walks into the building, which we learn is the barracks...

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

The barracks are empty... Keltner enters the huge room and looks around and sees Helmut at the other end of the barracks just walking back and forth like a caged lion... angry, hurt, sad, and generally out of sorts... he can't even hear Keltner approaching him... he finally stops at the back wall of the

barracks and lays his head against the barracks wall...

HELMUT

(not aware Keltner is  
behind him)  
Dear God, please hear me!

KELTNER

He hears you, my son...

Helmut jumps, scared... throwing his back against the wall,  
like a man who fears being attacked at any time...

KELTNER

(sympathetically)  
Here, here, easy, you can't do this  
to yourself...

HELMUT

You frightened me, Johann, I'm  
sorry...

KELTNER

(softly)  
You have nothing to be sorry for...  
Fear isn't something controlled by  
man... fear can not be conferred  
with... there isn't anyway known to  
mankind where man can say to  
himself... "I will not be afraid"...  
Oh, certainly man can try to fight  
it... but faith and believing are  
man's only chance... You must have  
faith... you must!

HELMUT

I have faith... but not always...  
sometimes it eludes me... I can't  
remember to remember it.

KELTNER

But that's natural... you can't expect  
to be perfect in what you try to  
do...

HELMUT

I don't know...

He starts pacing again.

KELTNER

I heard what happened at breakfast  
this morning with ROTHMAN, the  
guard...

Helmut spins around, frightened again...

HELMUT

Will they do something to me? What  
have you heard?

KELTNER

(putting his arm around  
him)

Nothing, absolutely nothing... don't  
worry about it... I just wanted you  
to know that I believe you handled  
yourself admirably...

HELMUT

That was one time I didn't care for  
the laughs I was getting from some  
of the men...

KELTNER

Of course you didn't... but I'm sure  
you know man laughs for two reasons...  
one because something is funny...  
two, because they fear showing fear...  
they laughed because "there but for  
the grace of God go I!"

HELMUT

Do you really think so?

KELTNER

I'm certain of it!

Helmut smiles and takes Johann's hand, tenderly, and warmly:

HELMUT

Thank you, Johann. I always feel so  
much better after you talk to me...

KELTNER

I'm glad, Helmut, I'm very glad...  
you know you can always talk to me,  
about anything...

HELMUT

(remembering)  
Oh! I almost forgot...

Helmut puts Johann around the back of the barrack area near the wall out of sight of anyone coming in...

HELMUT

Before breakfast this morning, I spoke to one of the guards, a very intelligent one, and he seems quite nice and friendly too. Well, he said that the Gestapo has set up a special review board to handle cases just like mine. And he said he would get me a form, a special form. Just been printed up. And I'm to fill it out. Isn't that good?

Keltner looking at him, like a child that believes in the boogie man:

KELTNER

How many times since you've been here, have you filled out forms? Twenty? Thirty times??

HELMUT

(in fast)  
But this is different. It's entirely new.

Helmut takes out a set of papers from his back pocket to show Keltner.

HELMUT

See? These are made up by the Gestapo itself... and the form will go directly to Berlin, to Gestapo headquarters. That's the important thing about this... the Gestapo's in on it. That's a very good sign.

(a beat)  
Isn't it a good sign?

KELTNER

(sympathetically)  
Yes, my son, it is a good sign.

HELMUT

(in fast, excited;  
scanning the papers)  
And I have to be very careful of everything I put down on the form.

The tiniest detail could make the difference. Don't you agree?

Helmut looks up and notices Johann is looking up towards the ceiling of the barracks... watching something... Helmut looks up, too.

THEIR POV - THE BIRDS

Up and under the eaves of the barrack just above their heads, two small birds are perched (apparently they flew in from outside and decided to nest there).

BACK TO HELMUT AND KELTNER - TWO SHOT

KELTNER

Isn't it strange? They are free to go anywhere they want, and they come here to nest.

Helmut doesn't react to Keltner's dialogue, but goes back to his creased and soiled papers that he's read a thousand times before, and reads them again... as he reads... Keltner takes a piece of brown bread from his shirt pocket and crumbles it and throws the crumbs up to the little birds...

HIS POV - THE BIRDS

They scramble to chew the crumbs, and they do...

DOWN SHOT - KELTNER

watching. Johann just watches, smiling at the birds, turns and looks to see if Helmut is watching, too...

HELMUT - CLOSE

Intense at scanning through the papers and totally oblivious to Keltner and the birds...

KELTNER - CLOSE

KELTNER

(softly)

Watch the birds eat, Helmut... it's so cute...

HELMUT

I'm sure I've got everything here...  
The important facts from the moment  
I was arrested, the questions the

Gestapo officer asked me... now  
what was his name again? I can't  
seem to remember what his name was...

KELTNER  
HELMUT...

HELMUT  
What the devil was his name?

KELTNER (LOUDER)  
HELMUT !

HELMUT  
(coming out of it)  
Oh, yes, Johann... I'm sorry... you  
were saying?

KELTNER  
You're not a religious man, are you,  
Helmut?

HELMUT  
(thinking about it)  
Well, I... ah...

KELTNER  
Not sure I am myself anymore.

Helmut quite surprised by this remark.

KELTNER  
Yet... when I see those birds, I  
wonder... were they sent here to  
let us know this place really isn't  
God forsaken?

HELMUT  
He should have sent them elsewhere...  
they could be eaten here!

Helmut goes back to studying his papers, Keltner ponders  
Helmut's remark, looks backup at the birds... his face full  
of compassion, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARRACKS - NIGHT (DUSK)

We now see the Barracks completely (SHOOTING from flat on),  
the wooden bunks are housed in a low wooden building with

eight two tier bunks on each side. A group of men are clustered around Keltner's bunk. Here we meet: ADOLF, a large, once powerful man, in his mid thirties. LUDWIG, once a fairly prosperous businessman before his politics landed him in prison, is older, and his bitterness is written all over his face. FRANZ, is the youngest. He is a sensitive looking twenty five year old, more than likely the "rebel" type of the 1930s.

Helmut is in his upper bunk over Keltner writing on an old piece of paper with a scruffy pencil, which he bites to make a point of, and wets with his tongue like any fat butcher selling liverwurst and marking the price on a brown paper bag... (i.e. Brooklyn, circa 1928).

We TRUCK the CAMERA down the long barrack to include the other men doing their things. A couple of men are getting ready for a card game... several others are comparing clothing, mending and helping one another, a couple play chess. A few are sleeping, but for the most part, most of the men lay in their bunks staring at the ceiling... The floors are spotless... suffice to say they better be... the walls have nothing hanging but a few socks drying... a torn calendar, wrong year, etc.

CLOSE - KELTNER GROUP

Johann sits with his back to CAMERA... at the edge of his bunk, leaving room on his bunk for Adolph, Ludwig, Franz.

He is showing something to them that we cannot see. Keltner's body covers whatever it is that the three men are gawking at, facing CAMERA... and they are indeed gawking with delight and admiration.

LUDWIG

(seriously)

I think we should eat it!

KELTNER

Not on your life...

(catching himself)

Er, that is... I wouldn't...

FRANZ

Put it somewhere so it can brighten up the place.

LUDWIG

(sourly)

It would take a hell of a lot more



than that to brighten up this place.

ADOLF

It'll be better than looking at your long face.

Chuckling, Keltner rises. We BOOM UP with him, and as his head comes up over the top of the bottom bunk... he holds out the object for Helmut to see... It is a potato, a sorry looking spud... that Keltner has put in a small can of water and is beginning to sprout two sick-looking shoots.

KELTNER

(to Helmut)

Do you see the way it's sprouting... I told you it wasn't completely rotten.

HELMUT

(his mind on his thing)

That's nice, Johann. Do you remember when I filled out those last forms? The date might be important.

KELTNER

(almost annoyed)

About four weeks ago, I think.

LOOSER SHOT

As Keltner walks away from Helmut's bunk.

KELTNER

I'll put it up here on the window sill, it'll get the morning sun.

He reaches the window and starts to reach up, to place the potato on the sill... a hand shoots out holding the hand of Keltner...

STOUT PRISONER

Think you can trust your potato so close to me, Reverend?

LUDWIG

The potato he TRUSTS... it's you he doesn't trust!

All the men laugh, including the "stout prisoner" who laughs the loudest... Keltner hands the stout prisoner the potato, who in turn takes same and places it gently on the window

sill just adjacent to his bunk... after placing it on the sill, he gestures ala the trapeze artist after making a super truck, looking for applause... Keltner pats his leg in a gesture of "thank you". He starts back towards his bunk when the front door of the barracks flings open and the Guard enters.

GUARD  
ATTENTION !

The men jump, but quickly, to their feet, and stand at attention at the front of their bunks, ala inspection in the army. They are rigid and waiting to hear what's up. The Guard takes a few steps into the barracks... behind him we see several prisoners carrying bunks waiting to enter the barracks.

GUARD  
All the prisoners from the other side of the camp are being moved over to this side of the camp over to this side of the camp. Barracks "H" will make room for three additional bunks.

He takes a few steps down the aisle...

GUARD  
I want all the bunks moved down toward the far end. Get them as close together as possible. Now! GET MOVING!

LONG SHOT

The men scramble back to their own bunks and immediately begin pulling, shoving, and grumbling comments about being too overcrowded as it is...

THE MEN  
(ad lib)  
Gotta have more room... We need more space... Hey, watch where you're going. This is stupid!

GUARD  
(yelling)  
YOU! You down there at the end... get those bunks right up against the wall.

CLOSE - HELMUT AND KELTNER

As bunks are moved towards the far end of the barracks, Keltner and Helmut prepare to move their bunks, the last ones on their side. Helmut and Adolf, who have already made their move, come up to Keltner to help him with his bunk... Helmut sees that Keltner has help so he decides to back off and hide in his little corner with his pencil and scrap of paper... totally involved with his own pain and his undying fantasy about his ultimate release...

WIDER SHOT - THE ENTIRE BARRACKS

The guard looks down the barracks as the men just about finish the moving job...

GUARD

Hurry it up! Come on, get moving!

The guard turns towards the door and motions for the SIX PRISONERS to enter the barracks... they enter by pairs, each pair carrying a double-tier bunk.

Their personal belongings are piled on the bunks and slung over their shoulders in sacks (barracks bags)... the Guard motions for the two bunks to be placed next to Helmut's and one on the opposite side... next to the Stout Prisoner... NOTE: This arrangement leaves space for one additional bunk right by the door.

The guard motions for the Stout Prisoner and Herman to give the new arrivals a hand with the placement of their bunks.

GUARD

Get them close.

(he looks around the barracks)

You're all going to be nice and cozy in here.

STOUT PRISONER

(in a loud voice)

Yeah, like triplets before they are born to a mother weighing 98 pounds...

HERMAN

That's what I call cozy!

The guard smiles, and all the men laugh...

ANOTHER ANGLE

The guard starts for the door, satisfied with the arrangements... as he gets the door open, Helmut runs over to catch him before he makes his exit...

HELMUT

(anxiously)

Excuse me, sir, the papers... Did they arrive yet?

GUARD

(annoyed)

They'll have to wait!

He exits, closing the door behind him. Helmut, with a look of despair on his face, goes back to his bunk.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT AND KELTNER

HELMUT

You'd think, since he was coming over here anyway, the least he could do was bring the papers with him.

KELTNER

This moving men around has undoubtedly kept him very busy... don't worry, he'll bring them.

HELMUT

I'm sure if I asked him again he'd really become annoyed with me. Would you remind him for me, please?

KELTNER

(kindly)

Of course I will.

Helmut climbs up to his bunk and goes back to his precious paper work.

WIDER ANGLE

As the new prisoners make up their bunks and arrange their belongings, the regulars of Barracks H, among them Adolf, Ludwig, Herman and Franz, begin moving towards them to meet them. Keltner turns to the new white-haired prisoner whose bunk is directly next to his.

KELTNER

I've seen you around the yard, but the others...

WHITE-HAIRED MAN

About thirty of them got here yesterday from the prison outside of Frankfurt.

1ST NEW PRISONER

(who occupies the bunk above the white-haired prisoner)

For the last three months we've been shuttled from one camp to another.

2ND NEW PRISONER

(his bunk is the lower bunk on the direct opposite side)

Now they're shuffling us from one side to another. I think they're trying to lose us.

HERMAN

Do you think they're bringing in war prisoners?

LUDWIG

I don't know why they're sending them here... we're overcrowded as it is.

KELTNER

No, no... it's got to be something else... Otherwise they would have left the bunks.

ADOLF

It could be possible that he is fixing up the barracks for some of his lady friends.

KELTNER

That many women?

HERMAN

(standing at attention)

Reverend, we Germans are SUPERMEN!

All the men break out in laughter at Herman's comment and his actions... but the laughter is cut short as they HEAR the door open again, and they all look in that direction.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING OVER the men onto the door, entering is the same guard that was just there... this time he enters with two more prisoners carrying their bunks. One of them is JOSEF GALT, a burly bully like man, who knows all the tricks of survival, and ERNST UHLMANN, a think little man with a face like a weasel... they follow the Guard into the barracks proper.

GUARD

ATTENTION !

The men quickly snap to attention. The guard indicates for Galt and Uhlmann to put the bunk in the space right by the door.

GALT

We might as well be outside.

UHLMANN

If I get pneumonia, I'll hold the government responsible!

GUARD

With a little luck, you'll both get pneumonia!

The guard turns and moves towards the door, stops, and turns to see all is well, and exits the door, closing it behind him.

Galt sits on the lower bunk as Uhlmann sprints up to the upper bunk and looks towards the original men, who are just standing around watching the two new "fish"... then men sense trouble and slowly and quietly return to their own bunks... some of the other men just stare at the two new prisoners...

UHLMANN

(sitting on his bunk)

It's sure quiet in here...

WIDER ANGLE

Uhlmann in his surveying the barracks spots the potato plant on the window sill... next to the Stout Prisoner's bunk... he jumps from his bunk and runs over towards the plant... he takes it from the window sill and yells over to Galt...

UHLMANN

Hey, Galt! Come over and look at

this!

GALT

(coming over to Uhlmann)  
What is it?

UHLMANN

Ain't it cute?

GALT

It's a God damn posie!

He and Uhlmann burst into laughter...

UHLMANN

Looks kinda sick, doesn't it?

GALT

(examining it)  
It's one of them potato things...  
and it sure as hell is sick!

UHLMANN

Maybe we should put it out of its  
misery.

GALT

No, we don't want to do that... we  
might break someone's heart.

He looks around at the other prisoners.

GALT

Whose little plant is this?

The stout prisoner gets up from his bunk and starts to move forward and challenge Galt... but Keltner jumps from his bunk and gets to Galt first.

KELTNER

(with deep conviction)  
The plant is MINE!

GALT

Is it now? Tell me precious... do  
you knit, too?

KELTNER

If necessary, I can... and I do !

This brings a ripple of laughter from the others...

particularly the new prisoners who are delighted at seeing someone stand up to Galt for a change... Galt with a sneer on his face steps out into the aisle to face Keltner square on!

GALT

(to Uhlmann)

What do you think of that, Uhlmann...  
he knits!

UHLMANN

Now, if he could just cook...

Galt and Uhlmann laugh, but they are the only ones that do...

GALT

(coming out of the  
laugh)

Can you cook, sweetheart?

Keltner knows damn well he can't fight the brute, yet he realizes that if he steps down, life not only for him, but for the others in the barracks will be intolerable under Galt's bully rule. (During the following dialogue, Adolf, Franz, Ludwig, Herman and the Stout Prisoner... easy up a little closer to Keltner and Galt.)

KELTNER

If necessary, I can cook, yes! Now,  
if you don't mind, I'll take that  
plant!

He holds out his hand... Galt, wearing a deceptive smile, eyes the older man...

GALT

Alright, old man, you really want  
it?

He raises his arm over his head with the plant in that hand.

GALT

Go get it!!

CLOSE - KELTNER

He looks past Galt at Helmut who is sitting up on his bunk...

CLOSER - KELTNER

He looks at Helmut. His eyes try to encourage Helmut to do



something, say something, do anything to show that he is on Keltner's side.

CLOSE - HELMUT

He sits up on his bunk, and wants nothing to do with the bully and his pranks... so he goes back to studying his papers and looks up again to catch Keltner's look of disappointment, and as Keltner turns away from Helmut... Helmut realizes he should do something to show Keltner he, indeed, cares... he jumps down from his bunk and grabs Galt by the arm and turns him around... they are now face to face...

HELMUT

Why don't you pick on someone your own size...

GALT

(shocked, but pleased that he finally got a rise out of someone)  
What?

HELMUT

(firmly)  
You heard me! Give him his plant back, and leave him alone... He didn't bother you ... and if you have to show your muscle, there's plenty of other guys to pick on!

GALT

You're my size!

... and with this, Galt smacks Helmut a shot across the mouth that sends him spilling into the corner, half knocked unconscious... he lays there with blood flowing from his mouth...

Keltner leaves Galt and runs to the corner to see if Helmut is okay. Galt follows him... Keltner is leaning down checking Helmut... as Galt bends down next to the two of them... still holding the plant.

GALT

He's alright... that'll teach him to keep his nose out of my business... here's your plant!

Galt makes like he's handing the plant to Keltner, who reaches for it, and as he does Galt slowly stands up making Keltner

reach and reach and reach... and as Keltner gets closer and closer, Galt stands to his fullest height... making it literally impossible for Keltner to get it... Franz, Ludwig, Adolf, Herman and the Stout Prisoner (more than likely provoked by Helmut's stand, now circle Galt)...

GALT

(still holding the  
plant up high)  
Go on, little man, reach for it!

Keltner, torn between seeing that Helmut is alright, and getting his plant back, tries to get it, and still looks to see that Helmut isn't hurt too bad...

HERMAN

(in a low menacing  
voice)  
Give it to him!

Galt looks at him with a menacing stare...

ADOLF

You heard him... give it to him!

FRANZ

You've had your fun... give it to  
him... NOW!

STOUT PRISONER

(closing in on Galt)  
RIGHT NOW!!

Galt realizes this is no time for a showdown... and with a childlike smile... grits his teeth...

GALT

Sure, here's your stupid flower or  
whatever you call it...

Keltner takes it from him.

KELTNER

Thank you...

Keltner leans down and picks Helmut up and walks him to his bunk, helps him onto it, and puts the plant on his own bunk...

ANOTHER ANGLE

The four men: Ludwig, Adolf, Franz and Herman stay with

Galt, as does the Stout Prisoner... They are clustered around Galt.

GALT

What's the matter with you guys?  
Can't you take a joke?

ADOLF

What joke?

GALT

Hell, all I was doing was trying to  
have a little fun.

LUDWIG

Have it with someone else!

GALT

What's so special about him?

ADOLF

That's the Reverend. Even when they  
came and dragged him from his  
church... he kept right on preaching  
against them until they knocked him  
unconscious.

Galt is silent for a beat.

GALT

Well, how the hell was I supposed to  
know?

HERMAN

NOW you know!

Galt shoves his way through the five men and walks beaten,  
for the moment, to his own bunk... as the men disperse and  
walk back to their respective bunks...

CLOSE - GALT AND UHLMANN

Galt walks over and sits at the edge of his bunk, while  
Uhlmann swings his legs back and forth from his perched  
position on the top of his bunk... Galt gives him a stare...

GALT

You and your posies...

UHLMANN

That was close...

GALT

Where were you when I need you?

UHLMANN

I make love, not war!

(goes giggly over  
what he just said)

Hey, that's pretty good... I made  
that up... Make love, not war! I  
bet that would make a good slogan  
someday...

GALT

Aw, shut up!

And he smacks his legs up and onto the bunk.

TWO SHOT - KELTNER AND HELMUT

Keltner with a wet towel in his hand cleaning the blood-  
dripping mouth of Helmut...

KELTNER

That was really very nice of you,  
Helmut...

HELMUT

Yeah, nice and STUPID!

Helmut grabs the towel and throws it to the floor and turns  
on his side away from Keltner. Keltner bends down, gets the  
towel, sits on the edge of his bunk... looks up, wonders and  
ponders Helmut as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARRACKS H - NIGHT

The door to Barracks H slowly opens and Helmut peeks through  
the opening to see that all is clear... he slips out and  
walks along the dark, dreary alleyway towards the Guard's  
shack... he moves like a prisoner trying to miss the  
spotlights in a jail break...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Helmut gets to the Guards hut... he looks into the window,  
and sees the Guard he wants... sitting at his desk eating  
off a tray that has a meal fit for a king on it... including  
the "doilies"... wine, and a steak that would satisfy six

men in Barracks H... Helmut looks around to be sure no one notices him and slowly slips up to the front door of the shack and knocks on the door...

INT. GUARD'S SHACK - NIGHT

GUARD

(annoyed at being  
bothered)  
Come in!

The meek and frightened Helmut enters the shack and walks over to the Guard's desk, and his eyes go immediately to the tray of food. While the Guard just stares at him... somewhat shocked at his presence in the shack.

GUARD

(breaking the silence)  
What the hell are you doing here?  
Who gave you permission to leave  
your quarters?

Helmut tries to talk as the guard gets louder and louder.

GUARD

Are you some kind of privileged  
character?

Helmut nods no...

GUARD

Then what are you doing out of the  
barracks?

The frustration of not being able to answer, and the frustrations of being hungry... and the child-like treatment Helmut is getting from this Pig becomes emotionally too much... as he screams...

HELMUT

(turning red)  
If you'll shut your stupid mouth  
maybe I can answer one of your  
questions!

The Guard looks at Helmut in disbelief... but at the same time a little delighted at this chance to show his German superiority... as he slowly gets up from behind the desk and crosses to Helmut, with a sneer that would frighten Rommel...

GUARD

(nose to nose with  
Helmut)  
I have a STUPID MOUTH?

Helmut backs away towards the door, and the Guard moves closer and closer to him... backing him up against the door.

HELMUT  
(meekly)  
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to raise my  
voice...

He bows his head in fear, as well as concern for what he might have done to his chances of release.

GUARD  
The volume of your voice isn't the  
issue... it's what comes out of  
your mouth that disturbs me... maybe  
you need a little lesson in respect  
and courtesy...

And he smacks Helmut across the face with his black glove...

GUARD  
... and maybe I've been a little too  
soft with you...

He smacks him again, harder... the glove now feels like a sword to Helmut... and his hands hang limp down by his sides.

GUARD  
You see, Doork, I knew why you came  
in here... I knew why you left your  
barracks without permission... It's  
just that I hadn't heard you mention  
your release papers for so long I  
had hoped I could hear you begging  
once more...

HELMUT  
(in a whisper)  
I'm sorry...

GUARD  
(mimicking him)  
I'm sorry, I'm sorry... You're a  
sorry specimen of a human being...  
that's what you are...

And he smacks him this time with all the force he can

muster...

GUARD

Now, I will help you to your quarters,  
Herr Doork, here you will stay, and  
pray for release papers that may, or  
may not, ever come...

This wakes Helmut's soul and he becomes erect and stonefaced at the words the guards just said... this look infuriates the guard even more... he grabs Helmut by the scruff of the neck... like grabbing a wet cat to be thrown out of the house... and he opens the door and pulls Helmut by the back of the office... out the door, down the three steps and onto the ground... and pulls him like a sack of potatoes to the barracks doorway...

EXT. BARRACKS H - DOORWAY - NIGHT

Helmut is just about beaten at this point as the guard opens the door of the barracks and pulls Helmut into the doorway, and his body stops on the threshold.

INT. BARRACKS H - NIGHT

SHOOTING OVER the men onto the doorway... in the deep b.g. the sad body and figure of the man lays in the doorway, as the Guard kicks him in the ribs, unmercifully...

GUARD

Now, get inside where you belong and  
don't ever let me catch you doing  
anything without permission again.

Helmut slowly gets up... in pain and practically crawls to his bunk... having to pass all the men, almost as though he were ashamed .. he gets to his bunk, and tries vainly to get up to the top where he lives... Keltner helps him... and as he settles in his place...

CLOSE - THE GUARD

GUARD

(yelling across the  
barracks)  
Reverend! If you don't watch that  
idiot, we may have to get him a  
keeper!

The guard storms out the door... slamming it shut.

CLOSE - KELTNER AND HELMUT

Keltner leaning over the side of Helmut's bunk whispering... as the other men go back to their respective chores and whatever they were doing when the guard stormed in...

KELTNER

Helmut, Helmut, how could you think of doing such a thing? I begged you not to irritate him... and that I would ask him about your papers... that wasn't smart, Helmut... not smart at all... as a matter of fact...

HELMUT

(gritting his teeth)  
Leave me alone! ... and mind your own business... Just leave me be...

Keltner knows this is nothing more than Helmut's dismay and pain in his heart talking... The kindly man drops down to his own bunk... just shaking his head... as if to say, how can I help him? as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARRACKS H - DAY

The same Guard is motioning for the men to hurry and get outside... he is standing at the doorway to the barracks and the men are moving out into the ice cold morning as briskly as they can... the Guard moves inside after the last man has made his exit...

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

SHOOTING OVER the Guard as he looks around, we see Keltner coming out of the toilet area, rushing because he's late... he throws his towel on his bunk, and as he does... he sees what stops him in his tracks...

KELTNER'S POV

It is Helmut still sound asleep in his bunk...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Keltner moves towards Helmut to wake him...

GUARD



(in a sotto voice)  
Reverend, let him sleep... you move  
out, I'll take care of this...

Keltner reluctantly starts to move out towards the front door, as the Guard passes him on his way to Helmut's bunk... Keltner goes out the door... the Guard sneaks over towards the bunk where Helmut is asleep and very sneakily slips the cover off Helmut's body... then proceeds to open the window above his head and the window alongside... and across the way and opens the back door... which is adjacent to the toilet area... and walks out of the barracks leaving the front door wide open...

EXT. BARRACKS H - DAY

All the men are lined up for inspection, they are all looking straight ahead as the Guard walks down the line.

All except Keltner who can't help but look in the direction of the barracks where he knows Helmut is still sleeping. He throws a glance at the guard as if to say... why? Why are you doing this? Why did he leave Helmut sleeping, usually the one thing that would send the guard up a wall... why is he allowing this to happen?

GUARD

(as he finishes his  
walk)  
You are a sick looking group of  
things... I can't even call you  
human... because you're not... you're  
all lice... DISMISSED!

The men break up and go about their business, they move in all directions, but Keltner starts for the doorway to the barracks and is detoured by the guard who knew he would, as he stands in the way of Keltner who has to turn away and go about his business... the Guard peeks into the barracks.

INT. BARRACKS - GUARD'S POV - DAY

Helmut still sleeping...

EXT. BARRACKS - CLOSE - GUARD - DAY

He is delighted... he grabs the door and slams it shut with a bang that would wake the dead... then opens it again and walks off...

INT. BARRACKS - CLOSE - HELMUT - DAY

He jumps from out of his hard sleep... foggy and unsure about where he is, what time it is and he looks around and sees the barracks are empty... and he panics... but he is also shivering... the barracks feel like the inside of a meat truck refrigerated somewhat below zero...

Helmut grabs his pants from the front of his bunk, pulls the cover over him and tries to get the pants on under the cover... It is cold! (Photographically, we can show "cold"... Props: vapor/smoke.)

He gets his pants on and jumps down onto the cold floor and dances from the ice-like floor, he bends down looking for his socks and shoes... he wears just a tee-shirt...

Having trouble finding both shoes, he grabs the blanket again and covers himself with it, while searching for the other shoe...

He finds the other shoe and proceeds to put them on... takes a beat and sees he has no socks on... reaches under the bank and pulls out the pair of socks... which stand straight up (from the cold ... he holds them in the air, and drops one at a time and they sound like "pans" hitting the floor... he takes one and blows warm air from his mouth into the socks, one at a time, which warms them... (Props: the socks need discussion!)

He then proceeds to put his shoes on and puts one on, and then the other... now wearing both shoes he starts to tie the laces... he pulls them straight away to tie and they stand straight up! (Props: this is done with leather laces, pure leather... it works without any unnecessary rigging!)

INSERT - THE STANDING STRAIGHT LACES

BACK TO SCENE

He finally gets them tied and starts, still sleepily, into the toilet area... (We can go for a great sound joke here.) He steps into the latrine, closes the door and we HEAR the SOUND of crushed ice being poured into the bowl... he flushes and we HEAR what might sound like an ice crusher... he steps out of the latrine and walks over to the basin and turns the water on.

INSERT

The water spigots... they both read "COLD".

BACK TO SCENE

And as he takes some water on his hands to his face... it is "cold" and his face just freezes from the pain of the cold... he looks around and sees the little metal ashtray, that looks like a small bowl or a tin from a used shaving cream lather soap... he fills it with water.. and to show his ingenuity, he takes a lighter from his pocket, places the tin on the edge of the sink and lights the fire under the tin (which couldn't possibly hold more than a handful of water) and proceeds to heat same...

Once he is satisfied that it is at least warmer than the spigot supplied, he grabs for the tin which is so hot from the burning, he screams in another type pain... the pain of "HOT" hurting... he decides to flick his fingers in the tin bowl and splash some of the water on his face (which is by now, just drips of water)... brushes his teeth with his finger and soap... straightens his hair and exits the toilet to his bunk to get his shirt... another "ICE COLD" item... he feels how cold it is, and doesn't have the courage for another climate blast... he rolls up his shirt and places it under his armpit to warm it... as it hits under his arm... the cold just about wipes him out... he decides to sit on it... and he does.

CLOSE - THE GUARD - AT THE DOOR

He's been peeking all the while... He figures he's had his laugh, and it's the first time we see he can laugh... he steps into the barracks area, and yells:

GUARD

Doork! Move it out, and on the double!!

Helmut jumps with fright, unravels his shirt, runs towards the open door putting on his shirt as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARRACKS H - NIGHT

Most of the men are clustered around their bunks, and in the dull light we see some of them in the aisles, talking, playing cards... while most of the others are whistling, clapping, and laughing as Uhlmann does his silly little clog dance... it is apparent the ugly episode between Galt and Uhlmann has been forgotten for the moment.

The lights are hung from cords down off the ceiling and for

a complex this size it could use ten... there are but two.

Uhlmann is having the time of his ignorant life... the more the men applaud, the more he "clog dances".

MED. CLOSE SHOT - LUDWIG AND ADOLF

They are both seated on their top bunk, Adolf enjoying the poor dance Uhlmann is giving as Ludwig looks down the aisle towards Helmut's bunk.

LUDWIG

(nudging Adolf)

It looks like Helmut found some new ears to listen to his Super Star fantasies...

Adolf takes a look, shrugs his shoulder, as if to say I couldn't care less... and goes on watching the action of Uhlmann and the other men...

LUDWIG

(to himself, but for Adolf to hear as well; a la Shakespeare, mimicking Helmut)

Ringling Brothers would have done anything for me to appear with them but I had to do what was best for me!

CLOSE - HELMUT AND THE FOUR NEW PRISONERS

The four new men are surrounding Helmut on the top of his bunk listening to his bragging.

HELMUT

So I told Mr. Ringling if he wanted "Helmut" he'd have to bring his circus to Germany... I am a German, I told him, and my responsibility is to my own people who are my biggest fans.

1ST PRISONER (NEW ONE)

Did you really say that?

HELMUT

(proudly)

Of course I did... they offered me anything... anything I wanted to go

with them.

2ND NEW PRISONER

Hey! I saw the circus in Berlin about four years ago... Didn't you make your entrance in a long tail coat with a pair of tails on the jacket about fifty feet long? Sure! And a funny Little clown at the very end carrying the tails like a woman's train?

Helmut studies the prisoners glare and decides he couldn't even remember the clown he saw was Gustav the Great, why not? No one would ever know... and he nods with a kind of studied humility... yes.

2ND NEW PRISONER

You were great!

Helmut eats it up.

2ND NEW PRISONER

You should have seen him... You'd never know it was him... with the long tails and white tie... red nose... long hair... and a battered top hat... with the hair hanging way down to his shoulders... and, ah, let me see... oh, yeah... your mouth went from ear to ear.

HELMUT

(softly)

Right!

3RD NEW PRISONER

How do "clowns" ever come up with such ideas for faces and make-up?

HELMUT

It doesn't happen overnight... it takes years and years... You try many faces, then finally you hit the one that's just right for you.

4TH NEW PRISONER

My kids will never believe this, I can't wait to... tell...

His voice trails off as he realizes the hopelessness of what

he was about to say. This puts a damper on the discussion and the men start to break up and get down off the bunk. Helmut, seeing his captive audience leaving... panics.

HELMUT

(emotionally)

Wait, let me tell you some other things... I mean things that are really exciting and... please! Please... let me just have a few more...

1ST NEW PRISONER

(ignoring Helmut completely)

What's going on with those guys?

He's looking off down the aisle where Uhlmann has his audience... The four prisoners move out into the aisle to get a better look, leaving Helmut perched on his bunk with a pleading and broken look of despair...

HELMUT

(a last attempt)

Did you know "clowns" literally bequeath their faces to their sons, or sometimes to...

He realizes it's futile as the four new prisoners move towards Uhlmann and the others down the aisle...

3RD PRISONER

Come on, let's see what's such fun...

He moves and the others move along with him. Helmut thinks about joining them, and starts to move off his bunk but his body won't respond... he just hangs there limply... his head lowered, a sad man.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING OVER the men placing Helmut in the very deep b.g. as we see the four new prisoners walk over to watch the action...

MED. CLOSE - UHLMANN, GALT, KELTNER, AND OTHERS

Uhlmann is just finishing his dance with a spin, when he finally gets dizzy and topples over on one of the bunks. All the men applaud wildly. Uhlmann laying half down and half up on the lower bunk he landed on, breathing heavily...

yells over to Galt...

UHLMANN

Hey, Galt, it's your turn, how about doin' one of your belly dances for us?

All the men agree and start yelling for Galt to do it... Galt moves out into the center of the aisle in the clearing made by the men, and holds up his hands for silence... they quiet down and Galt looks around until he spots Keltner.

GALT

Reverend?

The men become very still, they look from Galt to Keltner and back to Galt, their eyes reflecting suspicion of him, wondering what he's up to now. Galt is fully aware of this.

GALT

Well, Reverend, what do you think? Would a little belly-dancing be too much for the boys?

Keltner studies Galt for a beat, then accepts his offer of a truce.

KELTNER

(moving over towards Galt)

A little fun is what we need... so... if you'll all hold the noise down, I'll join in.

A hushed cheer goes up from the men as Keltner stands besides Galt. Galt holds his hands over his head and nods for Keltner to do the same thing. The Reverend does, and now Galt begins undulating his hips. Keltner studies the move for a beat and then does the same thing but with comical awkwardness. Franz starts playing a slow sensuous rhythm on his harmonica. The men clap and whistle softly.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

He is sitting upright on top of his bunk, watching what Galt has Keltner doing, a look of disgust passes his face as he turns away from what he'd been watching and gets busy with his papers and figuring again.

MED. SHOT - GALT, KELTNER

They are just finishing their dance. The men applaud wildly but softly... Keltner, puffing, moves over to the side and sits on one of the bunks to catch his breath. Galt takes a few bows, and the men react with applause and whistling that's beginning to take on "noise" proportions... Keltner motions for the men to hold it down... and they do.

4TH NEW PRISONER

Say, why don't we get the clown to do something?

GALT

A clown? Who's a clown??

HERMAN

You've heard of "Helmut Doork".  
That's him down there!

LUDWIG

Don't waste your time. You'll never get the Great Doork to do anything.

WIDER SHOT

as he starts walking towards Helmut's bunk...

1ST NEW PRISONER

Oh, I'm sure he will!

The others follow right behind. There is a look on Keltner's face like he would like to stop them, but between his puffing and his certainty that Helmut will be alright, he stays where he is.

CLOSE - ADOLF

as he walks with the others.

ADOLF

You're wasting your time. He doesn't perform for the likes of us... he'll turn you down.

LUDWIG

He's right, we've been asking him for three years... I have a feeling he only does his little routines for the crowned heads of Europe.

ADOLF

And, of course, the BIG heads of



Berlin.

There is general laughter... as the group arrives at Helmut's bunk.

CLOSE - HELMUT

He sees something's going to happen, he puts his papers away and sits upright... waiting... his eyes catch Galt's eyes peering at him.

Galt tells it all with his eyes... This one isn't "sacred" to the men... he might just be the pigeon Galt's been hoping for... the one every bully looks for, for his own brand of fun.

1ST PRISONER

How about it, Doork?

HELMUT

(swinging his legs  
around ready to jump  
down)  
I'd like to, but I can't... really...  
I can't.

GALT

(strongly)  
Can't? Did I hear you say you can't?

HELMUT

(it stops him in his  
tracks; he stays up  
on the bunk)  
I'd like to do something... but...  
(pointing to the 2nd  
New Prisoner)  
He can tell you... He's seen me  
work... I need props... make-up...  
I work with a lot of different  
things...

2ND NEW PRISONER

That's right... I did... and he does!

HELMUT

(in fast)  
Sure, tell them... I can't just do  
anything... I need lights, props,  
my costume.

Galt doesn't like no for an answer...

GALT

(gritting his teeth)

Now, me and these... gentlemen...  
we don't expect you to do your "act",  
just a little something that'll give  
us a laugh, that's all.

Keltner moves in from o.s. and stands at the back of the  
group watching and listening.

LUDWIG

(to all the men)

Aw, forget it... and that's probably  
his problem... he's forgotten how!

GALT

(trying to suck him  
in)

Wait a minute, you guys... show people  
have to be in a mood...

(to Franz)

Play a little music, like in a  
circus...

Franz starts playing his harmonica... slowly...

GALT

There! Ain't that nice? Don't it  
put you in a mood?

HELMUT

(getting fed up)

I TOLD YOU! I need things to do my  
act.

2ND NEW PRISONER

Hey, Doork, what about that drunk  
routine... that was funny...

Helmut looks at him puzzled... he can't think or remember  
anything at this point... certainly not anything relating to  
any of the previous lies he's told...

GALT

(pacifying his head  
off)

Yeah, that drunk thing... that does  
sound funny...

HELMUT

I still need many things... props  
and...

2ND NEW PRISONER

(puzzled)

I don't remember you using anything  
in that drunk routine.

GALT

(starting to fume)

Hey... are you trying to fool us?

With this Keltner moves in and up to Galt.

KELTNER

Leave him alone!

GALT

Stay out of this, Reverend. We're  
not doing anything... We just want  
him to join in the fun.

UHLMANN

(to the men)

Right! If a Reverend can give us a  
laugh, why not a clown?

All the men ad lib their agreement with what Uhlmann just  
said; it appears that they are all on Galt's side, and Keltner  
knows it.

KELTNER

(to Helmut, softly)

It doesn't have to be anything  
special... a little dance, maybe?

HELMUT

(taking it all out on  
Keltner)

Like that disgusting exhibition you  
did? Oh, no... not me!

4TH NEW PRISONER

Go on, Doork, so I can tell my kids.

HELMUT

Can't you get it through your heads,  
I need...

GALT

(firmly)

WE need you to give us a laugh.

Galt grabs Helmut's jacket and pulls him off the bunk, nose to nose to him...

GALT

So... TRY!

Galt has Helmut by the neck portion of the jacket, practically choking him to death... his vice-like hands are closing in on his throat and Helmut's trying vainly just to breathe...

One of the prisoners starts pounding his feet and making a march-like noise yelling from the other end... "So try!"... "So try!"... "So try!"... the other prisoners in the barracks pick up the chant and the stomping... Keltner doesn't even hear the racket they've started because of his concern for Helmut being choked to death... He tries to loosen Galt's hands from Helmut's throat.

KELTNER

That's enough, leave him alone!

GALT

Stay out of it, Reverend!

Galt spins Helmut around so that his back is facing the aisle and he walks him into the center area... the other men feeling this violence happening, and watching. Helmut being choked, triggers all of their venom and their hate and they really come on strong... stomping, yelling...

THE MEN

(ad lib)

Choke him harder... see if that's funny! Make him dance! Hey, Doork!... be funny now! He don't look so funny to me! He sure as hell looks funny to me! Hey, Galt, pull his string and make the dummy funny!

And they stomp and they stomp and they stomp... "So try!"... "So try!"... They get louder and louder... Helmut is kicking his legs, which are off the ground, and Galt won't let go.

CLOSE - HELMUT

His face is turning color... he hasn't a lot of air left in his lungs... and Keltner is practically hanging onto Galt trying to get his hands loose... and Galt could carry another

three men without batting an eye. Galt puts him down slowly, in the middle of the aisle, so that just his feet touch the ground, but he keeps his hands around his throat.

GALT

Your public is calling, clown...  
now, clown!

WIDER SHOT

SHOOTING OVER Galt, Keltner and Helmut, we see the door of the barracks slam open and bang against the wall making more noise than anything all the men made together, and they all freeze...

MED. CLOSE - THE GUARD

He stands in the doorway, legs spread apart, hands on his waist... and he is wearing a raincoat, the barracks has become totally silent... all that is heard is the rain pecking away on the roof. Galt has let go of Helmut who just lays on the floor with Galt and Keltner on both sides of him...

GUARD

(walking slowly into  
the barracks)  
What is going on here?  
(to Helmut)  
On your feet!

Helmut gets up, dizzily, just about getting oxygen back into his system...

GALT

(like a little boy)  
He was showing us some of his funny  
clown falls...

The Guard surveys the faces of the others as they stare back.

GUARD

Because of all the noise coming from  
in here -- I have been called up  
front to explain... I don't like to  
be called up front... I don't like  
to have to explain...

(menacingly)  
And, you might not like it, either.  
(a beat)  
Back to your bunks, all of you...  
Turn out the lights, and keep it

QUIET !

As the guard turns to the door to go, Helmut takes a step forward about to stop the guard, Keltner grabs his arm and turns him the other way... the Guard exits closing the door, quietly behind him... The men start to disperse... Galt gives Helmut a "I'll get you for this" look and returns to his own bunk with Uhlmann almost up his ass following... Keltner leads Helmut back to their bunk.

HELMUT

(whispering)

I was just going to ask him about the forms... my release...

KELTNER

(shaking his head)

That was not the time, believe me!

Keltner sits Helmut down next to him on his lower bunk, as Helmut rubs his throat, and tries swallowing a few times...

KELTNER

Hurt much?

HELMUT

(beaten)

No, I'm alright... thank you.

They both sit in silence... Helmut breaks the silence...

HELMUT

Johann, why do they pick on me?  
I've never done anything to them.

KELTNER

You've never done anything for them!

Helmut dislikes Keltner's remark and gets up from the lower bunk and starts up to his. He gets to the top bunk and starts to get onto it, stops and whispers to Keltner.

HELMUT

You think I should have performed?

KELTNER

The men would have appreciated it.

Helmut rolls into his bunk, the lights go out and he lies on his back staring at the ceiling. Keltner sits on the side of his bunk and takes his shoes off... periodically the rays

from the searchlights revolving outside cross the windows to momentarily flood the barracks with light. After a few seconds, Helmut leans over to whisper to Keltner.

HELMUT

Johann!

KELTNER

(he stands up, eye level with Helmut)  
What is it?

HELMUT

They don't believe me, do they? I mean about being a clown?

KELTNER

Oh, I'd say you've convinced most. However --  
(a long beat)  
There is one you haven't convinced...

Helmut stares at Keltner, knowing full well what's coming... yet doesn't have the courage to take the chance that it might be another thought... so he waits...

KELTNER

(gently)  
You, Helmut... you!

CLOSE - HELMUT

The truth of Keltner's charge hits Helmut with an overpowering force. He looks at Keltner for a beat... his eyes filled with pain, then slowly turns away from him, leaving him standing there as we PAN with Helmut and HOLD on...

CLOSE - THE WINDOW

The rain is pouring down.

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT - YARD - DAY

It is the next morning, a chilly, damp day following a night of rain.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

Attention! Attention! All prisoners will assemble immediately in the

yard. All prisoners will assemble immediately in the yard. Attention! Attention!

The loudspeakers repeat the command. Across the muddy, puddle splotched yard, a barbed wire barricade about six feet high has been erected, dividing the camp in two. A number of guards patrol the fence on both sides.

EXT. BARRACKS H - WINDOW - DAY

Uhlmann is looking out into the yard. He motions to someone to "take a look at this".

INT. BARRACKS H - DAY

Galt has just arrived at the window where Uhlmann is standing.

UHLMANN

They've put up barbed wire!

MED. SHOT - FAVORING HELMUT, KELTNER

They look at each other in wonder as they start into the aisle. The men in the barracks are frantically trying to organize themselves.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

The prisoners are pouring out of the barracks doorway. Galt and Uhlmann are already standing outside as Helmut, Keltner, Herman, Adolf, Franz, Ludwig, Stout Prisoner, New Prisoners, join them. All look o.s. momentarily speechless at what they see.

GALT

What the hell... ?

FULL SHOT - YARD - PRISONERS' POV

Beyond the fence we see men, women and children standing in groups near the barracks on that side of the camp. The SOUND of children crying can be heard.

VARIOUS SHOTS - MEN

As they quickly scurry to line up in front of their own hut.

STOUT PRISONER

Youngsters! They've got youngsters over there.



YOUNG PRISONER

Women!

ADOLF

Another fence!

MED. SHOT - PRISONERS - FAVORING KELTNER

Helmut stands next to him.

HELMUT

What does it mean? What do they  
need a fence for?

KELTNER

(shaking his head)  
Misery loves company. Looks like  
they're going to deny us even that.

The Guard is shoving the late-comers into place.

GUARD

All right. All right, move. Hurry  
it up. Move.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING ACROSS the prisoners in f.g. toward the new fence.  
Guards move among the men, herding them into lines. On the  
other side of the fence, we can see the new arrivals lining  
up, being prodded into place by Guards.

LONG SHOT - PRISON YARD - DAY

On both sides of the fence, the prison inmates have assembled  
in the wet, forbidden yard. On one side are the regular  
prisoners, who watch the guards warily as they straighten  
their lines. On the other side are the new prisoners --  
about two hundred frightened Jews of all ages, including  
thirty or forty children and a number of very old men and  
women. They stand in absolute silence as the loudspeakers  
blare again, except for the crying children.

LOUDSPEAKER

Attention! The Commandant issues  
the following special order: the  
north side of the camp is now  
temporary quarters for non-Aryan  
prisoners. Fraternizing between  
Aryan and non-Aryan prisoners is

strictly prohibited. Any violation of this order will be severely punished. Heil Hitler... Repeating...

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING THROUGH the booted, outspread legs of a soldier guard in f.g. toward the line of prisoners behind him. One woman holds a child of about three who cries inconsolably.

LOUDSPEAKER

The Commandant issues the following special order:

As the announcement is read, the guard's legs turn around, and he walks away from the CAMERA toward the woman. He stands before her menacingly, and she clutches the child closer to her in a futile attempt to hush its crying.

LOUDSPEAKER

The north side of the camp is now temporary quarters for non-Aryan prisoners. Fraternizing between Aryan and non-Aryan prisoners is...

MED. SHOT - PRISONERS

SHOOTING along line of prisoners from barracks H to show their various reactions as the announcement continues -- disdain, surprise, sympathy and relief. The guard stands with his back to the line at the end farthest from the CAMERA. Galt is near the CAMERA.

GALT

(under his breath)  
Jews!

Prisoners nearest to Galt eye him questioningly.

LOUDSPEAKER

... strictly prohibited. Any violation of this order will be severely punished. Heil Hitler.

The loudspeakers go dead. The prisoners stand silently studying the new arrivals across the yard. The new prisoners self-consciously file back into their huts on the other side of the fence. As the prisoners begin to break rank --

GUARD

Prisoners from barracks H remain in

line. Barracks H will remain in  
line.

The prisoners turn and look in direction of the Guard as they straighten their lines. The guard paces slowly along the line inspecting it silently. On the fringes of the scene, we can see prisoners from other barracks gathering to see what their fellow convicts are in for.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - GUARD

Finally he stops and contemplates his shabby charges with disgust.

GUARD

I said last night I didn't think I would enjoy being called up to account for the noise coming from barracks H. I can tell you this morning I didn't enjoy it.

He walks down the line, looking at each man.

GUARD

I don't know what caused the trouble last night, but I'm not blaming you entirely.

(fatherly)

I failed you. I should have seen that you all have much too much energy for the confined life you lead here.

(he smiles benevolently)

GUARD

We're going to correct that. I've been told that energy comes from food.

MED. SHOT - PRISONERS

Their faces reflect that they know what is coming.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING PAST the line of prisoners in f.g. to the Guard, who has paused to let his words sink in.

GUARD

So... to help you... all rations are canceled for the next... forty-eight hours.

A hushed ripple of ad lib grumbling and growling rolls along the line of prisoners.

GUARD

And, if that doesn't quiet you down,  
I'll think of some other ideas you'll  
like even less. I'm going to make  
this barracks the quietest in the  
camp.

(roaring)

Is that clear?

The prisoners are silent but their faces register their resentment.

GUARD

Now, don't blame me.

(with sly meaning)

I didn't start the trouble last night.

The truth of what he has said is reflected in the faces of the men.

GUARD

Fall out.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING HELMUT, KELTNER

As they stand with the other prisoners, watching the guard move off. Keltner looks worried, the others are angry, Helmut seems undecided as his eyes follow the guard.

HERMAN

Bastard!

STOUT PRISONER

I can't go without food. I'll starve.

Suddenly Helmut makes up his mind and starts off after the Guard. Keltner, sensing the mood of the men, puts a restraining hand on his arm, whispers to him hoarsely.

KELTNER

Helmut, don't.

But Helmut shakes him off and hurries away.

The other prisoners notice where he is headed and exchange looks. Keltner shakes his head. Galt's eyes narrow as he watches Helmut run off after the guard.

GALT

(loudly)

He's the one we can thank for the diet.

MED. SHOT - GUARD - MOVING

The CAMERA MOVES BACKWARD as the Guard strides toward it, his face sour. Behind him we can see Helmut running to catch up to him. When he is close enough...

HELMUT

Sir? Corporal...

The guard stops and turns so abruptly that Helmut almost runs into him.

GUARD

What?

HELMUT

(obsequiously)

Doork. Helmut Doork. Remember? The papers... You said... Remember the special forms for the Gestapo to review my case.

GUARD

No papers.

He stalks off. Helmut starts to say something more but thinks better of it. Crushed, he starts back towards his barracks, head down. He walks sadly for several steps, then looks up and stops, his expression changing to one of uneasiness.

MED. SHOT - PRISONERS - HELMUT'S POV

A dozen of Helmut's barracks-mates, including Galt, Uhlmann, Adolf, Ludwig, Herman, the Stout Prisoner, several of the New Prisoners, are drifting across the yard towards him, and the looks on many faces bode no good for Helmut.

FULL SHOT - HELMUT, PRISONERS

The men converge and form a half circle around him.

As the men close in on him, he moves back until we can see the barbed wire fence behind him. Helmut senses their disposition and remains warily silent. Keltner and Franz stand slightly behind the pack.

GALT

What'd you say now, Mr. Doork,  
Almighty!

(to men)

Last night he wouldn't give us a  
laugh. Today they won't give us  
food.

LUDWIG

(venomously)

What were you doing? Making a deal  
with your guard pal to slip you some  
food?

HELMUT

(indignantly)

No! I was asking him about the forms  
he'd promised to get me.

(admonishing)

Because of last night... I'm not  
getting them.

Keltner, seeing how disappointed Helmut is, moves up through  
the group.

KELTNER

(encouragingly)

When this blows over, Helmut, we'll...

LUDWIG

(interrupting)

Don't feel sorry for him. He's got  
no one to blame but himself. The  
whole thing was his doing.

ADOLF

He's been telling us how great he  
is; how funny. Why? Why couldn't  
he have done a trick or two for us?

UHLMANN

The Reverend did a turn. What's so  
special about him?

The men voice agreement... Helmut should have performed.  
Helmut starts to go around one end of the semi-circle but  
the men bar his way.

KELTNER

Don't start anything here. We're in

enough trouble.

The other prisoners in the b.g., those who have remained in the yard to see what was going to happen to the men of barracks H, sense trouble, the kind they want no part of, and begin scurrying back to their own barracks.

UHLMANN

We're not starting anything, we're finishing something.

GALT

We've decided Doork here is going to keep us laughing so hard we won't be able to hear our stomachs growling.

STOUT PRISONER

Better hurry it up, clown. 'Cause my stomach's growling already. Can you hear it?

HERMAN

Hear it! The whole place hears it.

The men take a few steps toward Helmut as they call for him to perform.

MEN

Yeah, Doork, do a trick. How about that night in Munich when they wouldn't stop laughing. How about it, Doork? Come on, just a little trick. Give us one laugh. That's all we're asking for. Come on, Helmut, do something.

Helmut, hoping to stall the inevitable, still hoping to preserve for a while longer his beautiful myth of being a great clown, holds up his hands for the men to be quiet. Franz interpreting the gesture as giving in to the demands of the men...

FRANZ

(excitedly)

He's going to do it! He's going to do it!

The men quiet down and move back a few steps to give Helmut room.

HELMUT

(grandly)  
Nothing pleases an artist more than to perform. I'm going to do a real show for you. All I ask is that you give me a little time... time to get things together... things I can use as props... I'll even try to make a costume, and...

ADOLF

You don't need a costume. We've got imagination.

(TO MEN)

Right?

Murmurs of agreement.

HERMAN

Do the drunk pretzel like the kid suggested last night.

GALT

(commanding)

And do it now, clown. No more stalling.

Helmut, still trying to hold on to his dream of greatness, draws himself up proudly and begins to move forward.

HELMUT

Let me through.

ADOLF

Aren't we good enough for you?

LUDWIG

He'd do his tricks fast enough if his guard pal asked him. Wouldn't you, Doork?

As the mention of the word "guard" the mood of the men turns ugly.

MED. SHOT - PRISONERS - HELMUT'S POV

Their faces show their determination that Helmut will perform or... else.

KELTNER

Do something, Karl. For God's sake,



do something.

GALT

And be sure it's funny.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, GALT

Helmut is frightened. He strains to look beyond the men for help. He opens his mouth to scream for the Guard, but Galt puts his hand over Helmut's mouth.

GALT

(his face pressed  
close to Helmut's)  
You make us scream... scream with  
laughter... or I'll tear you to  
shreds on the wire.

Galt presses Helmut right up to the barbed wire fence so he can feel the barbs in his back.

FULL SHOT - HELMUT, MEN

Galt takes his hand away from Helmut's mouth. Helmut doesn't utter a sound. He knows that Galt and the men mean business and he now must do something. He nods his head.

HELMUT

All right... all right.

The men move back to give him room. Frantically, he tries to think of something to do... he knows it must be great... or else his myth will explode. He walks around in a little circle, trying, trying to think of something. Finally he faces them. He bows his legs and pretends he's a bow-legged man trying to walk a high wire, but he's so frightened the result is pathetic, not funny.

PAN SHOT - PRISONERS

The camera works across their faces, which are expressionless.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

Seeing that he is getting no reaction from his "audience", Helmut tries something else.

He pulls his shirt over his head and walks around like a headless man. He pretends to trip over some unseen object, peers through the front of his shirt at it, and stamps on the object. Again he tries to walk over it, and again he

slips.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, MEN

as Helmut starts to repeat the same routine, many of the men are openly contemptuous. Galt wears a smirk. Keltner, unable to watch Helmut's degradation, moves away. Others express their disappointment, their disdain.

MEN

If he's Germany's greatest clown,  
God help the Fatherland. Doork, the  
Great! You got paid for that? To  
go without food is bad enough, but  
to have to watch that!

2ND NEW PRISONER

(accusingly)  
You're not the clown I saw. You  
lied. You're big all right. A big  
liar.

4TH NEW PRISONER

(contemptuously)  
And I was going to tell my kids!

UHLMANN

He's no clown. Not even a bad one.

HELMUT

I am. I am a clown!

They move away from him.

HELMUT

(continuing)  
Give me a chance. I just got started.

But the men continue to walk away. Helmut tries to do a hand stand, but his hands slip in the mud, and he lands ignominiously on all fours. When he looks up, only Adolf, Galt and Uhlmann remain.

ADOLF

(sadly)  
That's what we've been eating our  
hearts out to see!  
(a beat)  
You stink. You really stink.

HELMUT

I... I slipped. I can do it.

Seeing the disbelief on their faces, Helmut becomes almost hysterical. He is still on his knees.

HELMUT

I am a clown. I am. I am.

He pounds on the ground in frustration. Galt spits contemptuously, and the three start to leave. Galt turns back, looks down at Helmut. Very deliberately, he comes forward to stand at a mud puddle.

GALT

Doork the Great.

With that he kicks a shower of mud directly into Helmut's face.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

The mud splatters over his face. He cries out. His hands go to his eyes instinctively. He kneels there, rocking back and forth in misery. Then from o.s., we HEAR a tiny, tentative laugh -- the tiniest laugh ever heard. Helmut looks up quickly. He isn't sure that he heard it.

Then it comes again, a little stronger. He looks around quickly to see who has come back to taunt him, to ridicule him.

LONG SHOT - PRISON YARD - HELMUT'S POV

The yard is empty except for a few prisoners from other barracks way off on the other side.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

He is puzzled. Then again he hears the laugh o.s. He turns slowly to look behind him.

MED. SHOT - BOY - HELMUT'S POV

On the other side of the fence stands a wide-eyed boy of about eight, who is watching Helmut timidly. The ragged youngster laughs again, hesitantly, as if unsure what Helmut is doing is supposed to be funny, but finding it so nevertheless.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

He looks uncertainly at the youngster. Is the child ridiculing him, too? He leans over the mud puddle and looks at his reflection. He likes what he sees. The mud on his face looks almost like a primitive clown mask. Very deliberately Helmut scoops up more mud and puts a blob of it on the end of his nose. He waits for the child's reaction.

CLOSE SHOT - BOY

His eyes are laughing, but his little lips are pressed tight together. He has been taught not to make sounds... not even sounds of laughter. But finally what he is looking at becomes too much for him and the laughter spills out between his lips as they form a smile. He laughs delightedly now, satisfied that Helmut is being purposely amusing.

TWO SHOT - HELMUT, BOY

Helmut gets to his feet, bows slightly and stiffly to the child, and then attempts another hand stand. This time he holds himself up for a moment and then deliberately allows himself to fall on his back in the mud.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

As he lands, he quickly glances off towards his barracks, but from the look of disappointment on his face, we know that none of his barracks mates are watching. When he hears more laughter from o.s., he quickly rolls on his side to look.

MED. SHOT - CHILDREN - HELMUT'S POV

Two more youngsters have joined the first, and all are laughing excitedly. The first child jumps up and down, clapping his hands.

WIDER ANGLE - FROM THE FENCE - FAVORING HELMUT

Helmut gets up and bows, more deeply this time, a tribute to the children's vindication for his claim that he is a clown. He turns toward the direction of his barracks.

HELMUT

(screaming at top of  
voice)

Come back, damn you, come back. The children... they're laughing. They're laughing. I am a clown. I am a clown.

He turns back to the children and again bows. He quickly leans down, looks at his reflection in the puddle, and scoops up a handful of mud which he plasters on his nose to make a bulbous, artificial proboscis. He turns back to the children and in pantomime, pretends to see a fly buzzing about and tries to swat it. The imaginary fly buzzes closer. The CAMERA MOVES UP to --

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

As the "fly" lands on his nose. He looks cross-eyed at the mud blob, then swats at it. The blob falls off.

MED. SHOT - CHILDREN

There are now nine or ten youngsters at the fence, all squealing with delight.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

He bows again, and as his head comes up he looks o.s. toward his barracks, still hoping that someone will be watching his "great" success. When he turns back to the children, we see that he continues to smile -- while tears course down his cheeks through the mud still caked on them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MESS HALL - DAY

The last barracks on the open end of the camp on the political prisoners' side. Outside the building is a low counter arrangement with two prisoners behind it serving mush and black bread to a long line of men, all of whom carry bowls and spoons.

This time in mid-July, three weeks after the incident at the fence. The day is bright and hot. Our ANGLE FAVORS Helmut as he nears the prisoner who is serving up the mush.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

As he moves up to be served and holds out his bowl. The prisoner - messman spoons a blob of mush into it. Then he looks around quickly and, before Helmut can pull back his bowl, slops another half spoonful into it with a wink at Helmut, who gives him a grateful smile in return. Helmut moves on to the bread server, who gives him a big grin as he slips two pieces of bread into the bowl on top of the mush. Helmut hurries away, the CAMERA FOLLOWING him.

He walks strangely, as if having trouble controlling his own feet. Helmut ducks around the corner of the barracks nearest the mess hall, then peers cautiously back into the main yard. Satisfied that he hasn't been noticed, he quickly puts one piece of bread into his pocket and takes out his spoon.

Holding the second piece of bread beneath the bowl, he wolfs down a few mouthfuls of the mush. Then he smooths out the remainder with the spoon to make the mush appear untouched.

He places the one slice of bread back on top of it, and studies the end result. Nodding approval, he licks his spoon clean and puts it back in his pocket. He goes back around the corner of the barracks into the main yard and heads for the next building.

CLOSE SHOT - BARE FEET

This pair of massive feet are the property of the Big Prisoner, a massive hulk of a man.

OLD PRISONER'S VOICE

Don't know how you can go without shoes. Soles of my feet are too sensitive.

The CAMERA PANS UPWARD to the Big Prisoner and an Old Prisoner, sitting against the side of their hut. The Old Prisoner, a frail man, with shirt off, is finishing his mush.

BIG PRISONER

It's my stomach that's sensitive.

OLD PRISONER

(looking o.s., smiles)  
Here comes your second helping.

As Helmut's feet walk into FRAME and stop next to the Big Prisoner, we see the reason for his peculiar walk. He is wearing a pair of enormous shoes, many sizes too large for him and cut open along the soles from the toes to the insteps so that they flap as he moves along.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Helmut joins them and holds out his bowl of bread and mush to the Big Prisoner.

HELMUT

Here.

Still grinning, the Big Prisoner puts his empty bowl on the ground beside him and takes Helmut's bowl. Holding the bread

aside, he digs into the mush. Helmut watches him eat, his own hunger written all over his face. After a few bites, this makes the Big Prisoner a little self-conscious.

BIG PRISONER

How're the shoes?

HELMUT

Perfect.

The Big Prisoner nods and goes back to eating, satisfied that he has made a fair bargain and shouldn't be embarrassed about taking Helmut's food.

HELMUT

Don't forget the bowl.

The Big Prisoner, his mouth full of mush, only nods. Helmut, tearing his eyes from the food, moves off. The Big Prisoner watches him go. Suddenly, he looks down at the departing Helmut's feet, and his face darkens.

BIG PRISONER

(irked)

Hey, Doork!

Helmut stops and turns as the Big Prisoner shoves himself away from the hut and goes to him, staring down at the shoes.

BIG PRISONER

My shoes!

The Big Prisoner reaches out with the large toe of one bare foot and lifts up the flapping toe of one of Helmut's shoes. He lets it drop again.

BIG PRISONER

I said you could use 'em, not ruin 'em.

HELMUT

I had to fix them this way... for the act, you know. Wait till you see how funny it is.

BIG PRISONER

Yeah. But will I feel like laughing when it gets cold!

HELMUT

Don't worry.

BIG PRISONER

Worry! I'm the one who'll get frost bitten toes, not you.

HELMUT

When I return them, they'll be like new. I promise.

The Old Prisoner has finished his mush and puts his bowl down on the ground and moves forward to join Helmut and the Big Prisoner.

BIG PRISONER

For what you've done to my shoes I should get more food.

OLD PRISONER

He's got to have something to eat.

The Big Prisoner looks at him questioningly.

OLD PRISONER

(continuing)

If he gives you his other meal... he'll starve to death. Then you won't get anything.

This reasoning makes sense to the Big Prisoner.

BIG PRISONER

(to Helmut)

Remember... you fix them before you bring 'em back.

HELMUT

Promise.

Helmut shakes his head "yes", turns and quickly hustles off in the direction of his own barracks, the CAMERA MOVING with him. After a few steps.

BIG PRISONER'S VOICE

Doork!

MED. SHOT - BIG PRISONER - HELMUT'S POV

The Big Prisoner looks at Helmut, then at the piece of bread Helmut had given him. His manner is self-conscious. He tosses the piece of bread to Helmut.



MED. SHOT - HELMUT, BIG PRISONER, OLD PRISONER

Helmut catches the bread, his smile expressing his thanks. The Old Prisoner puts his arm around the Big Prisoner's shoulder, while the Big Prisoner tries not to show that he is pleased with himself for his "generous" act.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

Taking bites of the bread, Helmut, rather jauntily, lopes off toward his own barracks. As he moves among the other prisoners, the CAMERA MOVING with him, we see many of them point or nod toward Helmut and smile good-naturedly. Helmut is completely unaware of them, so lost is he in his own thoughts.

EXT. BARRACKS H - MED. SHOT - KELTNER, FRANZ, HERMAN - DAY

They sit in the shade beside their barracks. Herman is using his empty bowl as a fan. Keltner is just finishing his food. Franz is examining his jacket, his empty bowl beside him on the ground.

FRANZ (IRRITATED)

I mean it this time.

KELTNER

Don't tell us. Tell him.

Franz holds up the tattered jacket to show that a button is missing.

FRANZ

What am I supposed to do? Use pins?

HERMAN

Who has a pin?

Keltner chuckles.

FRANZ

You can laugh. He isn't always after you for something.

KELTNER

No?

He fishes in a pocket and pulls out a large piece of chalk, holds it up.

FRANZ

What's that?

KELTNER  
Chalk.

FRANZ  
What for?

KELTNER (SHRUGS)  
Says he can mash it into a powder  
and put it on his face.

Herman stops fanning long enough to ask...

HERMAN  
Where'd you get it?

KELTNER  
From a guard.

Astonished, Herman and Franz look at him questioningly.

KELTNER  
(lowers his voice)  
A very bad Nazi. Still has a heart.

Herman and Franz smile. Then Franz holds up his tattered coat.

FRANZ  
I wish he'd have a heart and use  
someone else's coat. Or better yet --  
his own.

KELTNER  
(looking o.s. and  
nodding)  
Ask him.

WIDER ANGLE - FAVORING HELMUT

As he comes flapping up, still munching on the piece of bread given to him by the Big Prisoner. Keltner holds out the chalk to him.

KELTNER  
Finally got it.

Helmut takes it and examines it in a very professional manner. Herman and Franz exchange looks. Keltner waits for Helmut to speak.

KELTNER

(a little annoyed)  
Isn't that what you wanted?

HELMUT

(holding up the chalk)  
This will do more for the act than  
anything. Wait'll you see!

KELTNER

(a sigh of relief)  
For a moment there you had me worried.

FRANZ

(indicating bread  
Helmut's nibbling on)  
I see you got smart.

HELMUT

His conscience bothered him.

KELTNER

I thought he would kill you when he  
saw what you had done to his shoes.

HELMUT

(sheepishly)  
So did I.

The men laugh.

FRANZ

I don't know what I'm laughing at...  
look at what he's doing to my coat.  
(holds it up)  
Look at it! Yesterday a button off.

And you've got it ripped here under the arm. Besides all  
that falling down isn't doing it any good.

HELMUT

(firmly)  
I've got to have it. It is the only  
one I can get on and still is tight  
enough to look funny.

FRANZ

At the rate you are tearing it up,  
it's going to look a lot funnier.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING PAST Helmut and group and in f.g. toward the main yard, where we see Galt and Uhlmann approaching. During the ensuing dialogue, Galt spots Helmut, nudges Uhlmann and together they come toward him.

KELTNER

Give in, Franz. You know he's going to talk you out of it again.

HELMUT

I'll be careful. I swear. Besides, I've got to have it. I explained before... a clown can't change his costume. It's his trademark.

FRANZ

I know... I know... but...

Galt and Uhlmann join the group, looking to start trouble.

GALT

(interrupting)

Why should he give it to a Jew clown?  
Right, kid?

FRANZ

That's got nothing to do with it.

GALT

What's the matter with you bastards anyway? All he ever did for us was cause trouble, but for them...

(nodding toward the  
other side)

... he can't do enough.

(a beat)

I say he's one of them.

KELTNER

(coolly)

If he were, he'd be over there

Through this Helmut remains silent -- his eyes focused on the coat.

GALT

That's where he belongs.

Franz and Keltner get to their feet. Herman remains seated.

FRANZ

What're you so hot about? It's no skin off your...

UHLMANN

(cutting in)

We've got a good reason for not liking them.

GALT

If it wasn't for them... we wouldn't be in here.

This surprises the men. Herman gets to his feet.

HERMAN

What'd you mean?

UHLMANN

A bunch of them got picked up with papers we'd sold them. And what'd they do? Turn us in, they did. The ungrateful...

KELTNER

So that was it! Counterfeit papers. I can imagine the prices.

GALT

Supply and demand, Reverend. Supply and demand.

Deliberately, Franz hands his coat to Helmut.

FRANZ

Take it, Doork -- anytime you want it.

Helmut accepts the coat... nodding his head in the gracious manner of a ruler accepting homage from a faithful subject. He turns smartly and slowly struts away with as much dignity as he can muster in his big shoes which flap with every step he takes. The others stand and stare at Galt and Uhlmann.

UHLMANN

What's so terrible about what we did? Lot of them got out of the country with our papers. They were damn good counterfeits.

Keltner, without a word, turns and goes off after Helmut.

GALT

(calling to Keltner,  
very proudly)  
And what's more, we never charged  
for children. Never.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, KELTNER

As Keltner catches up with Helmut. The CAMERA MOVES BACK as they walk along the side of the barracks toward the door.

KELTNER

I've been meaning to ask you. Heard  
anymore about the request for a review  
of your case?

Helmut doesn't hear him as he's deep in his own thoughts.

HELMUT

Did you hear the laughs I got  
yesterday?

Keltner nods.

HELMUT

Not just from the children... but  
the adults, too.

You know where a lot of clowns make a big mistake? They  
play just for the children.

They forget... it's the parents, the adults that buy the  
tickets.

KELTNER

Never thought of that.

Helmut stops, faces Keltner, a sly smile on his face.

HELMUT

They said I couldn't come up with  
anything new.

Keltner looks puzzled.

HELMUT

At the circus. Schmidt and the rest.  
Wait'll they see my act now. It's  
funny. Really funny.

(a beat)  
Isn't it?

KELTNER  
The children certainly enjoy it.

Helmut begins to move along again with Keltner following.

HELMUT  
What I needed was time. Time to concentrate on new material. A man's got to have time alone.

KELTNER  
(glancing around)  
You call this being alone?

Helmut takes a few more steps then stops short.

HELMUT  
Do you think... maybe... they'd let me go to other camps and entertain?

Keltner is about to say something... but shrugs his shoulders. He knows there's not much point in trying to make Helmut look at things the way they really are. Helmut starts to walk again.

HELMUT  
I'd have to get to the Commandant. Would need his permission.

They arrive at the steps to the barracks. Helmut swings Franz's coat over his shoulder as he starts up the steps.

HELMUT  
If you have time later, I'd like you to see something I've been working on. I hunch down and do a tiny soldier parading. Think they'll like it?

KELTNER  
(pointedly)  
Who? The adults?

HELMUT  
(matter of fact)  
The children, of course.

KELTNER

I thought the smart clown only played  
to the adults.

Helmut, caught in a contradiction of his own "theory" of clowning, gives Keltner an annoyed look, then goes into the barracks letting the door slam behind him.

CLOSE SHOT - KELTNER

As he stands at the bottom of the steps -- he shakes his head and smiles as he marvels at the change taking place in the pompous Helmut as the little gentle clown within him struggles to emerge.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRISON YARD - PAN SHOT - CHILDREN - DAY

The CAMERA is PANNING across the faces of about forty children behind the fence as they watch Helmut o.s. Some of them are laughing; some clapping; some squealing with glee, and a few just watching quietly, but with laughter in their eyes. Behind them, near the barracks on the non-Aryan side, a number of adults also are looking on, but they hang back, fearful that getting too close to the fence might provoke the always anticipated wrath of the guards.

EXT. PRISON YARD - FULL SHOT - DAY

We see now that Helmut on his side of the fence is performing for the children on the other side of the menacing barbed wire fence. Behind him, also at a safe distance because they still aren't certain of the official reaction to all of this, a number of his fellow political prisoners are watching his antics. But, in spite of his talk about the importance of playing to the adults -- it is the children that Helmut plays to -- and it is for their laughter that he listens. The CAMERA MOVES IN to --

MED. FULL SHOT - HELMUT

And we see that he has used the chalk to whiten his face. With charcoal he has blackened his eyebrows, formed a wide black mouth and drawn lines down over his eyelids to his cheekbones, giving him the appearance of a clown at once sad and happy. At the moment he is coatless, but Franz's coat lies nearby on the ground. For the stunt he is doing now Helmut carries the remains of an old broom and a piece of cardboard. He is trying to sweep a small heap of dirt he has gathered onto the cardboard, but each time he tries, the dirt goes over the cardboard and he must sweep it into a



pile again. After a few attempts he feigns exasperation and ponders the problem. Inspiration comes. He sweeps the dirt into a pile again, bends over and very carefully sweeps it into the front of one of his shoes, holding up the split top to let it in. This accomplished, he is very proud of himself, but when he tries to take a step, some of the dirt comes out. Frustrated, he ponders again, and again has an inspiration. He removes the shoe and puts it under his arm. But as he walks away with it, all the dirt slides out through the open toe. The children roar with delight.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE GIRL

She is a flaxen-haired youngster of about five who holds a weathered rag doll as she jumps up and down for sheer joy at Helmut's performance.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE BOY

He is a completely delighted boy of perhaps seven. Each time Helmut does something he particularly enjoys he hugs himself and spins around.

CLOSE SHOT - BROTHER AND SISTER

The girl is no more than four; the boy about eight. He clings to her hand as they watch Helmut, unsmiling, perhaps not understanding. The boy looks at his sister, and a tiny smile tugs at her mouth. The boy smiles back. The girl giggles. The boy laughs outright. They have re-discovered happiness.

They look back at Helmut, both laughing.

CLOSE SHOT - SISTERS

The older girl is ten or eleven; her sister five or six, tugs at her arm, and the older girl bends down to her. The younger girl whispers to her, pointing to Helmut, and the older girl picks her up. The little one puts her arms tightly around her sister's neck. Both laugh merrily.

MED. FULL SHOT - HELMUT

He is putting on Franz's too-small jacket. He tries to button it, but it won't go around him. He sucks in his belly, but then his pants begin to slip, and he grabs at them with an embarrassed look at the laughing children.

Deciding that the only way to button the coat is to hunch his shoulders, he tries that, but now his shoulders must remain hunched. He manages to pick up the broom and puts it

over his shoulder, playing soldier. But when he tries to snap to attention, the coat pops open again, bringing another roar of laughter from Helmut's audience.

Now he marches a few steps toward the CAMERA, stops, snappily puts the rifle down at rest position and salutes -- knocking himself flat. Another roar of laughter. As it swells, we --

PAN SHOT - JEWISH PRISONERS

The laughter o.s. continues to swell as the CAMERA PANS across the faces of the adult Jewish prisoners huddled near their huts. They smile, fearfully at first, then break into timorous laughter.

ARYAN PRISONERS - PAN SHOT

As the laughter swells even more, the CAMERA MOVES over the faces of the political prisoners on Helmut's side of the camp. They, too, are laughing -- some tolerantly; some at Helmut rather than with him, but they are laughing.

As the laughter continues to SWELL, the CAMERA PANS over to yard-guard. He is trying very hard not to laugh. The result is a self-conscious giggle.

As the laughter grows even louder, the CAMERA PANS as though wafted on the waves of laughter, up to a guardtower, and we see two rifle-armed soldiers in the tower watching the performance below them. They gesture in Helmut's direction and laugh.

The CAMERA continues to PAN over to the administration building and UP to an open window on the second floor.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMANDANT'S OFFICE - FULL SHOT - DAY

LT. SCHARFF, handsome, mid-30's, stands with his back to CAMERA at an open window in a small, but luxuriously furnished office. The window through which he is looking opens onto the prison yard. An AIDE pokes his head in the doorway.

AIDE

(in a loud whisper)

He's coming back down the hall.

Scharff nods, quickly closes the window, gives a look around the room, and follows the Aide out.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMANDANT'S OUTER OFFICE - FULL SHOT

As Scharff comes through the door from the adjoining room. The Aide is standing in front of a small desk. Scharff takes his position beside the door into the outer office. They wait. After a beat, the room's other door opens and in comes COL. HEINRICH BESTLER, a slightly built, pinch-faced SS officer in his 50's. Scharff and Aide spring to attention and give him the salute.

SCHARFF AND AIDE

Heil Hitler.

BESTLER

Heil Hitler.

(striding into his  
inner office as he  
passes Scharff)

BESTLER

(continuing)

Come in.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMANDANT'S OFFICE - FULL SHOT

Bestler goes directly to the desk and sits down. Scharff stands at attention just inside the door.

BESTLER

Oh, stand at ease. And, close the door.

Scharff closes the door and moves over to stand near the desk.

BESTLER

I don't have to tell you why your Commandant was relieved of his command here. This prison is a disgrace. Disgrace! The latitude allowed by him will not be tolerated by me. Understand?

Scharff nods his head. Bestler gets up from the desk and walks around it.

BESTLER

That includes the staff. I'm going to turn this place into a model prison, a credit to the Reich. Understand?

Scharff again nods his head.

BESTLER  
Speak up.

SCHARFF  
Yes, Colonel.

Bestler returns to his desk, sits, and opens a folder. He glances up to study Scharff.

BESTLER  
This isn't the first prison the SS has had to take over from the military. Military men are too soft to deal with those...  
(he nods toward the window)  
Scharff starts to speak but quickly changes his mind.

SCHARFF  
Yes, sir.

BESTLER  
You were about to say something?

SCHARFF  
Oh... I... was just going to say that I didn't hold with the soft treatment of the prisoners.

BESTLER  
Good!  
(taking papers from folder)  
Our first order of business is to prepare...

He is interrupted by the SOUND of laughter o.s. He turns slightly and looks curiously at the window, then turns back to read from the papers in the folder.

BESTLER  
Our first order of business is to prepare all non-Aryan prisoners for

shipment in two weeks.

SCHARFF

Where are they being sent, Colonel?

BESTLER

Work camps.

Again the SOUND of laughter from o.s. and Bestler looks quickly at the window, irritated. Scharff, uncertain of his superior's reaction, tries to cover up.

SCHARFF

(speaking a little  
louder)

But we have about 40 children, some only babies, with more scheduled to arrive tomorrow or the next day. They're not going to be much use in a work camp.

BESTLER

(his attention diverted  
back to Scharff)

I'm aware of that. This order covers only the adult prisoners over fifteen. We won't have to wet nurse the children for long. Other plans are being made for...

Again he is interrupted by the laughter o.s.

BESTLER

What is that?

Before Scharff can answer, Bestler goes to the window and opens it.

PRISON YARD - LONG SHOT

SHOOTING PAST Bestler through the window, we can see Helmut performing for the children. Bestler watches for a moment.

BESTLER

What is that supposed to be?

BESTLER, SCHARFF - MED. SHOT

Scharff goes to the window and looks over Bestler's shoulder.

SCHARFF

That! Well, you see, sir, one of the prisoners used to be a circus clown. Sometimes he gives a little... well... a sort of show -- for the children.

BESTLER

(turning away from window)

A show! Is this a prison camp or a traveling circus!

(he looks out window again)

Am I correct in assuming that those children are on the non-Aryan side of the camp?

SCHARFF

(almost in whisper)

Yes, sir.

BESTLER

(leaving window)

And the... buffoon? A German?

SCHARFF

Yes, Colonel.

Bestler sits on the side of the desk and looks at Scharff, who tries very hard not to show how uncomfortable he is.

BESTLER

Am I to believe you aren't aware of the general order absolutely forbidding fraternization?

SCHARFF

(not worried)

I know about it, sir.

BESTLER

Close the window.

Scharff carefully closes the window. Bestler walks around desk to stand leaning against the wall.

BESTLER

Just what do you think fraternization means, Lieutenant Scharff ?

SCHARFF

Communication. Social contact.  
Giving aid, talking...  
(shrugs helplessly)

BESTLER  
How long has this been going on?

SCHARFF  
Just the last two or three weeks.

BESTLER  
And the Commandant approved?

SCHARFF  
Well, sir, children are very hard to handle.

BESTLER  
This clown! Who is he?

SCHARFF  
(trying hard to remember)  
It's... I know. It's Doork, the Great.

BESTLER  
Not his clown name, you idiot. His number. His identification.

SCHARFF  
If I have the Colonel's permission to leave, I will check it at once.

BESTLER  
Later. Right now I want these performances halted. Understand?

SCHARFF  
Yes, sir.

Bestler begins shuffling papers from the folder. Scharff, uncertain whether he has been dismissed or not, hesitates. Bestler glances up.

BESTLER  
(shouting)  
Immediately!

SCHARFF  
Yes, sir !

He salutes and bolts from the room, almost crashing into the door in his flight.

CUT TO:

PRISON YARD - FULL SHOT - DAY

Shooting past the children in f.g. to Helmut through the fence, as he bows to the applauding youngsters. Behind him we can see a number of soldier-guards coming through the cordon of watching prisoners, and waving them to disperse. They do so reluctantly, as the guard from Helmut's barrack moves forward to Helmut, who is just about to start another routine.

GUARD

(shouting)

That's all. Show's over. Everybody clear out.

Helmut stops, startled.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, GUARD

ANGLED to include children across the fence.

HELMUT

What's wrong?

GUARD

(to Helmut)

Get back to the barrack.

(to children)

You heard me. Show's over.

The children don't move, but stand staring at Helmut as if waiting for him to tell them what to do. This frustrates the guard, who isn't accustomed to being questioned.

GUARD

Go on. Get away.

Still the children refuse to budge. Angry, the guard goes close to the fence, waving his arms at them.

GUARD

Move, damn it, before I come over there and...

The youngsters scuttle back a few feet fearfully, but there



they stop, their eyes still on Helmut. The guard turns to Helmut.

GUARD

Get them moving before somebody gets hurt.

Helmut goes up to the fence and speaks to the children softly.

HELMUT

That's all the show for today. Go back inside.

The children back away with long faces. Finally convinced that Helmut is through, they turn and wander back toward their barracks, but with many a backward look at him. Helmut continues to encourage them, as the guard looks on.

HELMUT

That's right now, go along. I'll see you tomorrow. Goodbye. Goodbye. Until tomorrow.

Many of the children wave to him. The guard takes Helmut by the arm, turns him toward the barrack and hustles him off.

MED. TWO SHOT - HELMUT, GUARD

The CAMERA MOVES BACK as they come toward it, the guard firmly propelling Helmut along.

GUARD

Get inside and take that stuff off your face.

HELMUT

I don't understand. What's the matter?

GUARD

Orders. No more shows.

HELMUT

You mean... not ever?

GUARD

That's right.

HELMUT

But we weren't doing any harm.

GUARD

The Commandant thinks you are.

HELMUT

The Commandant?

GUARD

The new Commandant. He minds.

HELMUT

Just because I make them laugh a little...

GUARD

You know the rule... no mixing with Jews.

HELMUT

I wasn't mixing! I was only...

The guard stops him and turns him so that they are face to face. The CAMERA MOVES UP TO --

TIGHT TWO SHOT - HELMUT, GUARD

GUARD

(quietly, threatening)

Look, it's not my order. It's the Commandant's.

(more kindly)

Now do what I tell you and save yourself a lot of grief.

He pushes Helmut toward his barrack and then turns and walks off, the CAMERA PULLING BACK to --

WIDER ANGLE

Helmut watches the guard go, then, dejectedly, shuffles toward his barrack. As he nears it, Keltner, Franz, Adolf, Herman, Ludwig, and the other regulars intercept him.

MED. SHOT - GROUP

They crowd around Helmut, anxious to know what's happened.

FRANZ

What happened?

HELMUT

(still bewildered)

He says I've got to stop -- with the children.

KELTNER

(nodding)

I've been expecting it.

LUDWIG

Because they're Jews?

KELTNER

Because of the laughing.

HELMUT

Why should that bother them?

KELTNER

When you rule by fear, laughter is the most frightening sound in the world.

Silently the men walk up the steps and into the barrack, the CAMERA PANNING with them until we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRISON YARD - FULL SHOT - DAY

It is a warm, sunny afternoon and most of the prisoners on both sides of the fence, are out warming their weary bones. On the Aryan side, a number of prisoners, including Ludwig and Herman, are having a makeshift soccer game using a bound bundle of rags for a ball. They play with fierce rigor for such emaciated men, yelling at each other and kicking up clouds of dust as they try to work off their frustrations. On the non-Aryan side of the fence, the children, now about 50 in number, are grouped near the wire barricades staring across it, their faces dour. It appears they are watching the game.

MED. LONG SHOT - CHILDREN

Shooting past the soccer players in f.g. toward the fence. Through the men we can see the children, but the play moves away from them. They continue to stare straight ahead, obviously watching something else. Suddenly many of them press close to the fence straining to see.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRACK "H" - CHILDREN'S POV

Helmut can be seen standing in the doorway. After a beat, he quickly retreats back into the barrack.

CUT TO:

INT. BARRACK "H" - DAY

The CAMERA MOVES BACKWARD down the aisle between the bunks as Helmut walks dejectedly down the aisle, nervously fingering his white ascot. The barrack is empty except for Keltner, who is arranging the sprouts of his potato plant over a little trellis of sticks. Helmut turns and walks back up the aisle to stand in front of Keltner.

HELMUT

I can't go out there. I can't take another day of them staring at me.

KELTNER

They'll get over it. Disappointment is no stranger to those children.

HELMUT

They look at me as though it was all my fault. Haven't they been told why I can't...

KELTNER

I'm sure they have.

HELMUT

Then why do they stare?

KELTNER

(holding up the plant)  
It's amazing how a thing like this can feed off itself. Think how lucky we would be if we could do that.

Helmut glances disinterestedly at the plant as he reaches up to his bunk and brings down the coat belonging to Franz. He holds coat up for Keltner to see.

HELMUT

I sewed a button on. Look all right?

KELTNER

(inspecting coat)  
Fine.

Helmut gently pats the coat, then folds it and puts it back on his bunk.

HELMUT

I did make them laugh. Didn't I?

Keltner nods.

HELMUT

(angrily)

I wish they'd get them out of here.  
Prison is no place for little  
children.

KELTNER

We've been all over that before.  
You've got to stop thinking about  
them.

HELMUT

(trying to convince  
himself)

You're right! I've got to think of  
myself.

Keltner puts the plant under his bunk and gets up.

KELTNER

It's too hot in here. I'm going to  
get some air.

HELMUT

Johann... do you think there's any  
possible way I could talk to the  
Commandant. Maybe I could make him  
understand...

The sentence trails off as Helmut realizes how useless his suggestion is.

KELTNER

There's nothing you can do... but  
forget.

HELMUT

How can I! They were my own very  
special audience. And now they stare  
at me as if I had betrayed them.

KELTNER

They're children, Helmut. You can't

expect them to understand the madness of adults.

HELMUT

(sudden thought)  
If I could talk to them. To the children themselves -- that would help, wouldn't it?

Keltner doesn't answer but he watches Helmut with new interest.

HELMUT

If I explain it to them -- then they'll know I am not mad at them.

KELTNER

(very deliberately)  
You go near that fence once again... and you're taking your life in your own hands. You know that as well as I do.

HELMUT

(pleading)  
I would just need a minute. A minute to talk to them.

Helmut goes to the door and looks out.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT - CHILDREN AT THE FENCE - HELMUT'S POV

The children are still pressed against the fence, still trying to get a glimpse of Helmut

CUT TO:

MED. SHOT - BARRACK "H"

Helmut stands just inside the doorway... looking out.

HELMUT

I wish to God I didn't care. I wish to God I could forget them.

Helmut walks back to Keltner.

HELMUT

But I can't.

Helmut looks at Keltner, his eyes pleading for help.

KELTNER

I'm going to ask you a question,  
Helmut, and I want you to think  
carefully before you answer.

Helmut nods.

KELTNER

The reason you can't get them out of  
your mind -- is it because you need  
them -- for you audience?

Helmut drops his eyes as he attempts to find the right answer.

KELTNER

I want the truth.

HELMUT

(after a moment)

I know I can't perform for them  
anymore. I know that.

(a beat)

I really don't know what the reason  
is. I think it's got something to  
do with... well, I don't want those  
little ones to think I've turned  
against them, too. That's why I've  
got to do something. Something.

Keltner studies Helmut for a moment.

KELTNER

You'll be taking a chance. A great  
chance.

Helmut nods that he know this.

KELTNER

(very definite)

All right! Come on then.

HELMUT

Where are you going?

KELTNER

You want to talk to the children?  
Well, I think I can help you.

HELMUT

There's no reason for you to get involved in this.

KELTNER

Reason? When war is waged against children! That is reason enough for the whole damn world to get involved. And it will, believe me, it will.

Keltner puts his arm around Helmut's shoulder. Helmut grins, a broad grin of thanks.

KELTNER

So, come on, Doork the Great, let's start getting involved.

They both walk quickly to the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. HELMUT'S BARRACK - DAY

As Keltner and Helmut come out. In the b.g. we can see the soccer game still going on, the players shouting excitedly at each other. Keltner surveys the scene for a moment.

KELTNER

Wait here.

He moves down the line of barracks toward the mess hall.

EXT. PRISON YARD - FULL SHOT - DAY

As Keltner moves among the men lounging around the barracks, talking and watching the soccer game. Trying to appear as nonchalant as possible, he whispers something to a group of prisoners. They glance back at Helmut and then nod. Keltner moves on to another group, taking care to avoid the two yard guards, one of which is the guard in charge of Barrack "H". Again Keltner murmurs something to the other prisoners, and again they look at Helmut and nod assent. Keltner goes on to another group. As he does, the men in the first group casually disperse and start across the yard toward the fence, moving around the soccer players. One of them goes up to Ludwig, who is playing in the match, and whispers something to him. Ludwig nods, and the other prisoners move away. Ludwig runs off chasing the "ball".

MED. SHOT - LUDWIG



as he storms into a clutch of players, including Galt, all kicking at the "ball".

LUDWIG

(low to Galt)

Kessler is going to talk to the children. Cover him.

GALT

(mean)

Who says so?

LUDWIG

(evenly)

The Reverend says cover him... so we cover him.

The players around Galt give him a meaningful look and he gets their message.

GALT

All right! I was just asking.

FULL SHOT

As Keltner's plot takes shape, we see a dozen or so prisoners wander, apparently aimlessly, across the yard and form a spectator's section for the soccer game with their backs to the fence, thus providing a shield between the children and the guards. The game picks up tempo, but the play somehow stays in the center of the yard, strengthening the shield.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

As he watches the plan in action. Keltner rejoins him.

KELTNER

You know what to do?

Helmut nods.

KELTNER

Stay behind the men and keep an eye out for the guards on the other side.

HELMUT

Right.

KELTNER

Make it quick. You won't have much time.

Helmut nods again and starts away, but Keltner stops him

KELTNER

And Helmut, keep the children quiet.  
We don't want trouble.

Helmut nods and moves off across the yard. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him as he circles around the soccer players, trying to look as if he is just wandering over to join the other spectators. As he nears the other side, the children spot him and react, pressing closer to the fence and pointing to him.

MED. LONG SHOT - HELMUT

Shooting past the children in f.g. toward Helmut as he nears the line of prisoners, who continue to ad lib shouts of derision and encouragement to the soccer players. The children begin ad libbing cries of greeting to Helmut. He puts his fingers to his lips to silence them and takes his place in the line with his back to them.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

as he stands pretending to watch the soccer game with the others.

HELMUT

(shouting)

Kick it, Ludwig. Kick it!

The prisoner next to him gives him a sidelong glance and nods almost imperceptibly. Quickly, Helmut ducks behind the line.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

Behind the line as he scurries, bending over, to the fence. The children flock to him. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him to the fence.

CHILDREN

Doork, Doork, Doork is back. It's  
Doork. It's Doork.

Helmut tries to silence their squeals of delight. Holding a finger to his lips:

HELMUT

Shhh. Shhhh. The guards...

The children quiet down and press closer to the fence. Helmut drops to his knees, looking around.

CHILDREN

Do a trick, Doork. Please, Doork,  
please, please.

HELMUT

No, no. I can't. The guards won't  
let me. Not now. Maybe some other  
day.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE GIRL

This is the same flaxen-haired little five-year-old with a  
doll we saw before. She regards Helmut solemnly.

LITTLE GIRL

They're bad.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

Smiling wryly at the simplicity of this appraisal, Helmut  
reaches through the fence and pats the head of the girl's  
doll.

Eager to touch Helmut, another child take his hand, others  
grab at his arm. Still other youngsters, following this  
lead, try to reach through the fence to touch him. Obviously  
enjoying this adulation, Helmut takes as many of the little  
hands as he can, squeezing them affectionately. Only one  
group of eight children hangs back. They do not seem to  
understand what this is all about. Their little faces are  
fearful, yet they are fascinated by Helmut. Suddenly one  
little boy gives a yelp of pain and backs away from the wire,  
clutching his forearm.

HELMUT

What is it? What happened?

LITTLE GIRL

He hurt himself.

Wide-eyed with fright, the little boy takes his hand away  
from his arm to reveal a nasty looking scratch from one of  
the barbs on the fence. Seeing his own injury, the youngster  
bursts into tears.

HELMUT

Shhh. Shhh. Don't cry. It's going  
to be all right.

(to the other children)  
Be careful when you're near this  
fence.

He consoles the little boy, who continues to cry and holds up his wounded arm for Helmut to see. Helmut looks around frantically, as if hoping to find help somewhere. Then he quickly removes his ascot -- his precious trademark, the symbol of his self-accorded status -- and hands it through the fence.

HELMUT

Here, wrap this around it. I'll  
make it all better.

The little boy goes on crying, but some of the other children take the cravat and fashion it into a crude bandage around the youngster's arm. It fails to silence the boy's crying, however.

HELMUT

(worried)  
Hush now. Stop crying. Please.  
Look... Look at this.

He begins shuffling around on his knees, imitating a duck in an effort to appease the crying child. As he goes, Helmut quacks softly. The boy stops crying, but his face remains unhappy. The other children laugh in spite of Helmut's efforts to keep them quiet, all but the group of eight youngsters who only stare at Helmut in awe. Seeing that he is making progress with the crying child, Helmut next pulls his coat up over his head and, still on his knees, moves around like a headless man, groping ahead with his hands.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE BOY

His frown gradually dissolves and, in spite of his sniffing, he smiles, timorously at first, then broadly. Finally, he laughs.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

Helmut shrugs his jacket back into place and smiles at the boy.

HELMUT

There, that's better. No more crying  
now.

For the first time he notices the other group of frowning

children. Among the other smiling and laughing youngsters, they seem to stand out. When Helmut fastens a quizzical look on them, they back away a little, fearfully.

HELMUT

What's the matter with them?

LITTLE GIRL

They're new. We can't understand them. All they do is cry.

OLDER BOY

They're all the way from Czechoslovakia.

The eight just start at him wordlessly, their fear naked in their eyes.

HELMUT

(to the silent ones)

There's nothing to be afraid of. Everything is all right.

When there is no reaction from the children, who obviously don't understand him, Helmut looks over his shoulder, wondering if he has time.

MED. LONG SHOT - PRISONERS - HELMUT'S POV

The prisoners are still rooting for the soccer players, but as Helmut looks, Adolf, in the middle of the cheering section, turns and sees him.

ADOLF

(a hushed call)

Hurry up.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

Helmut nods to Adolf and then turns back to the youngsters, afraid but still unable to tear himself away.

HELMUT

Here. Look. I'll show you... No noise now.

In pantomime, he pretends to pull a hair from his head and threads it through an imaginary needle. Finally accomplishing this, he pretends to be sewing a button on his jacket, holding the thumb of his left hand under the button while he sews with his right. When he has finished, he pantomimes that he

has sews his thumb to the jacket. He pretends to be embarrassed and tries to hide his hand in his trouser pocket, but in order to put his hand in his pocket the jacket goes too. The children giggle, then roar with laughter at his frantic efforts to detach his thumb from his jacket.

The silent children press closer to watch Helmut's antics. Some look at each other and smile, then grin. Suddenly the entire group is laughing. Helmut holds up his hands for silence, but the grin on his face says he loves it.

HELMUT

No, no, be quiet. Be quiet. Shhh.  
Shhhh.

The children go on laughing as if this is just part of the game.

MED. LONG SHOT - TOWER GUARDS

The SOUND of the children's laughter floats up to two guards in a tower on the non-Aryan side of camp. One of them, who has been watching the soccer game below, nudges his partner and points down to Helmut.

LONG SHOT - PRISON YARD - GUARDS' POV

Between the children at the fence and the line of soccer spectators we can see only the top of Helmut's head bobbing up and down. But that is enough.

MED. LONG SHOT - TOWER GUARDS

After a long look, one of the guards picks up a telephone and starts to make a call.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

Helmut seems to have thrown caution away under the stimulus of the children's laughter. He is on his feet trying a hand spring. He lands flat on his back, but rolls over on his side and grins broadly at his audience, which laughs appreciatively. This is the old Doork. Their Doork. Again Helmut tries the hand spring and again he flops.

FULL SHOT - PRISON YARD

A HIGH ANGLE with Helmut and the children in f.g. and beyond them the Aryan side of the yard. The soccer game is still in progress, with the spectators on both sides of the action whooping it up. Then in b.g. we see two soldiers, two SS

officers, and the guard in charge of barracks "H", come bursting through the spectators near the huts and into the game itself. The players slowly subside as they realize what is happening. They watch the guard cross the yard. The cheering trails off, and the yard becomes strangely quiet, the prisoners' warning to Helmut.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

Oblivious to all this in his joy at performing for the children again, Helmut is just pretending to slip on something underfoot. His arms flay the air as he tries to regain his balance, but he falls. Through this, however, the children seem to be watching something behind Helmut, and when he lands on the ground, they do not laugh.

Again their faces are frightened as they look o.s. Helmut looks at them, puzzled. Then, realizing that something is wrong, he turns and looks up from the ground.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOOTING PAST Helmut in f.g. toward the guard, SS men, and soldiers, who have come through the line of spectators and stand glowering at him. The prisoners have moved back, warily watching for the next move.

GUARD

You wouldn't listen, would you?

Almost wearily, he goes to the fence. This isn't something he likes, but his authority is at stake here, and he has no choice. As the CAMERA PANS him to the fence we see that some non-Aryan adults have drifted over to see what the disturbance is.

GUARD

(to the children)

Go on. Get back.

The children don't move. Their eyes are on Helmut. The guard shouts over to the adults standing behind the children.

GUARD

You back there, get them out of here.

The adults begin to gather up the children.

HELMUT

They had nothing to do with it. It was all my doing.

The guard turns and comes up to face Helmut. He studies him for a moment, then hits him a vicious backhand slap across the face. Taken by surprise, Helmut staggers backward and falls. A murmur runs through the prisoners. The children still near the fence, cry out with alarm. Seeing their terror, Helmut is determined to make it look like just another act. With a painful effort he gets to his feet, smiles at the children, turns and salutes the guard, knocking himself down again. A couple of children giggle. The FIRST SS OFFICER quickly steps forward to stand behind the guard.

He holds a swagger stick in his right hand, which he repeatedly whacks into the palm of his left hand. He looks down at Helmut.

FIRST SS OFFICER

Get up.

Helmut struggles to his feet. He glances over at the children. They are all watching him. He takes a deep breath, winks at the little ones, then salaams before the SS Officer and the guard. Some of the children giggle. This infuriates the SS officer. He raises the swagger stick and brings it down hard on Helmut's head knocking him to his knees. The children scream with terror. The SS Officer raises the stick to hit Helmut again, but Keltner, in an almost instinctive reaction, catches hold of his arm.

KELTNER

The children! Not in front of the children!

TWO SHOT - FIRST SS OFFICER - KELTNER

The SS Officer turns and brings the stick down on Keltner. He hits him over and over, each blow more vicious.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT - FRIGHTENED CHILDREN IN B.G.

Helmut turns away from the beating, pulls his jacket up over his head and starts to walk around like a headless man stumbling and falling over his own feet. The children, many still screaming, turn their eyes away from the SS Officer to watch Helmut's antics.

FULL SHOT - FRANZ, GALT, UHLMANN, LUDWIG, ADOLF, HERMAN AND OTHER PRISONERS

The horror-stricken men stand frozen as the SS Officer continues to hit Keltner until he drops to the ground.



Suddenly Franz breaks away from the men and charges at the First SS Officer.

MED. SHOT - SS OFFICER - FRANZ

Franz runs INTO CAMERA and attempts to stop the First SS Officer. The Second SS Officer whips his pistol out, aims carefully and FIRES a shot into Franz's head.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE PRISONERS

Uhlmann stands speechless and dumbfounded. Galt cowers. Beads of perspiration pour from his brow. Adolf weeps bitter tears as Herman places his arm around his shoulder to comfort him, and himself as well. Ludwig, dead to any emotion, simply turns and walks away into the crowd.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

Helmut is now, more than ever, the clown, as he goes into a frenzied version of the "Clap Dance". The complete incongruity of his behavior leaves the spectators stunned.

WIDER ANGLE - SHOWING THE CHILDREN IN B.G.

The children are no longer screaming, instead they are watching Helmut as though they are hypnotized.

FULL SHOT - HELMUT, GUARD, SS MEN, OTHER GUARDS

The guard, fully aware that the sadist SS men may take action against Helmut, quickly motions for two of the other guards to take Helmut away. The First SS Officer, still panting with exhaustion, shows his approval of the action taken by the guard. The two guards seize Helmut by the arms and begin dragging him off toward the administration building. The prisoners move away before the guards holding Helmut, forming a sort of line of march for them. As they drag Helmut along, he waves back at the children, makes a funny face and moves his feet in something approaching a dance step.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CELL - NO LIGHT

SHOOTING FROM THE BACK of the cell toward the door. The cell is about eight feet long and four feet wide with a steel door at the far end. The cell is bare. We HEAR men approaching, and a guard opens the door letting in a shaft of bright light. Two guards hoist the unconscious Helmut into the cell and drop him onto the floor.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

He lies in a heap on the floor, his face swollen from a severe beating.

MED. SHOT - CELL

The guards walk out, slamming the door shut leaving the cell pitch dark.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - WINDOW WITH WINDOW SHADE

Window shade quickly rolls up letting in a stream of blinding sunlight.

INT. COLONEL BESTLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Lt. Scharff is by the window, having just rolled up the window shade. Colonel Bestler is on the phone and obviously exasperated by what he is hearing.

MED. SHOT - BESTLER, SCHARFF

BESTLER

(on phone)

Yes.

(pause)

Yes. Yes, I understand perfectly. However, I don't see how we can be held responsible.

(pause)

Our orders were very clear. We were to have the freight car ready to be picked up at midnight.

(pause)

Of course, I'm aware the operation must be kept secret.

(pause)

I just don't have the staff to send down there now and... Yes, I'll wait.

He puts hand over mouthpiece to talk to Scharff.

BESTLER

The freight car wasn't picked up.

SCHARFF

It's still down there on the siding!

BESTLER

Some stupid mix up. If they think...

The SOUND of the voice coming over the phone causes him to literally snap to attention.

BESTLER

Yes, General.

(pause)

Yes, I'm as distressed about the situation as you are.

(long pause during which he nods his head)

Yes. Personally! Immediately!

Yes, General. You can leave it in my hands.

(pause)

Heil Hitler!

He puts down the instrument and turns at once to Scharff.

BESTLER

Who did you leave in charge down there?

SCHARFF

Sergeant Hoffman. Very reliable.

BESTLER

Apparently not reliable enough. The cargo seems to be raising quite a fuss.

SCHARFF

(explanatory)

Fifty children, sir! In a boxcar!

BESTLER

I know. I know. But the siding isn't far from town. The General doesn't want unauthorized persons getting curious. Understand?

SCHARFF

I'll get some men down there right away.

BESTLER

Men! You'll get yourself down there.

And take at least a dozen guards with you. Don't let anyone get close to that boxcar... under any circumstances. No one !

SCHARFF

Yes, sir.

Scharff turns to leave the office, but after a few steps he stops and turns back toward Bestler, a look of concern on his face.

SCHARFF

Sir?

Bestler looks up.

SCHARFF

I wondered, sir, if you might have any suggestions as... well... how do we quiet children?

BESTLER

Use any method you can, but shut them up. That's an order.

Scharff is disappointed at not getting some help from Bestler. Suddenly his face brightens.

SCHARFF

Sir, the clown!

Bestler looks at him quizzically.

SCHARFF

The one who amused the children

BESTLER

Out of the question. The man's being disciplined for that very thing. We can't change our position now.

SCHARFF

No one need know.

BESTLER

He'd know.

Scharff thinks this over. Suddenly his face brightens.

SCHARFF

Sir, if I could guarantee he'd never say anything.

Bestler looks interested.

SCHARFF

You see, sir, he's been trying to get a review of his case. Claims he's here by mistake. I could tell him you would recommend the review.

BESTLER

A man who wants something. Good. Very good strategy, Lieutenant. (he turns to face Scharff)

However, when you bring him back here, return him to solitary and keep him there.

(a beat)

I've seen the best of men, after several years in solitary, unable to remember even their own names.

SCHARFF

Then I have your permission to take the clown.

BESTLER

Permission granted.

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG SHOT - OPEN ROAD - DAY

A small open truck with 12 soldiers in the back, followed by a staff car, move along the road.

INT. STAFF CAR - MOVING - DAY

DRIVER is in the front seat, Helmut and Scharff in the back.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT - SCHARFF

Helmut has been cleaned up, but still shows the effects of the beating and his stay in solitary. Holding a small mirror, he is applying his makeup. He occasionally closes or tries to shade his eyes from the light. They ride on in silence. Scharff stares straight ahead.

HELMUT

Wish you could've gotten the big shoes. The children laugh so when they see them flopping up and down.

Scharff makes no reply. Helmut starts to put on his big black mouth.

HELMUT

(a touch of the old arrogance)

The Commandant, himself, asked for me!

(a beat)

You say he's personally requesting a review of my case! Why, that means I'm practically on my way back to Berlin.

(studies mouth in mirror)

Should be red. Mouth looks better in red.

(a beat)

Know the first thing I'm going to do when I get to Berlin? Buy an overcoat with a fur collar. Had such a coat. Very elegant. Very elegant.

(finishing the up-turned corners of mouth)

It's a good idea... moving the children.

Scharff reacts to this. He looks sharply at Helmut.

HELMUT

Prison's no place for children. I said all along that it was some kind of mistake.

SCHARFF

(uncomfortable)

Finish your makeup. We're almost there.

HELMUT

Know what Johann Keltner said?

SCHARFF

Who?

HELMUT

Keltner. From my barracks. The minister. He said... Let me think. He said... men who wage war on children. That's it. Men who wage war on children... commit such a crime...

(a beat as he thinks)  
... such a heinous crime. That's it. Men who wage war on children commit such a heinous crime that even the devil damns their souls.

Scharff looks as though he'd just been slapped across the face. He quickly turns toward the window. Helmut inspects his reflection in the mirror as he draws black vertical lines down over each eye -- giving him a very lost, sad, dejected look.

EXT, RAILROAD SIDING - LONG SHOT - DAY

as the truck and staff car leave the highway and jolt down a short roadway to a railroad siding where a boxcar sits on the tracks. Uniformed GUARDS stand watch on both sides of the car, which has the door nearest the CAMERA, partially open. The truck and staff car pull up to the nearest boxcar. The soldiers jump from the rear of the truck, one of them carrying a large burlap sack.

MED. SHOT

as Scharff gets out of the car, from the boxcar comes the SOUND of children crying.

SCHARFF

(to Helmut in car)  
Wait here.

Scharff strides purposefully over to Sergeant Hoffman, the guard beside the open door. Hoffman salutes Scharff.

SCHARFF

Any word about the train yet?

HOFFMAN

No, sir. The last we heard -- it won't get here until evening.

SCHARFF

Anyone been around?

HOFFMAN

No, sir.

SCHARFF

With all that wailing, it's a wonder.  
Couldn't you keep them quiet?

HOFFMAN

I didn't know what to do, Lieutenant.  
I was afraid to close both doors.

SCHARFF

(to other soldiers)  
Keep a tight guard on the whole area.  
No one gets near here. Understand?  
(to Hoffman)  
You post them.

HOFFMAN

(saluting)  
Yes, sir.

Hoffman moves over to soldiers and begins giving them their orders.

SCHARFF

(to soldier holding  
the sack)  
Leave that here.

The soldier puts down the sack, and hurries off after the others with Hoffman leading the way. Scharff turns toward the staff car.

SCHARFF

(calling to Helmut)  
Over here, Clown.

Helmut quickly gets out of the car and moves over to Scharff. He looks toward the partially open door.

HELMUT

They're crying.

SCHARFF

(indicating the sack)  
Take that in to them.

Helmut picks up the sack and peers into it.

HELMUT

What is it?



SCHARFF

Bread. They won't wait so loud with their mouths full.

HELMUT

(shocked)

How... how long have they been here?

SCHARFF

You just get in there and keep them quiet. You can do that, can't you?

Helmut nods. Scharff puts his hand on Helmut's shoulder. Helmut stiffens under his touch.

SCHARFF

Do a good job and I'll personally ask that you get a favorable decision on your case. Understand?

HELMUT

Yes, sir.

Helmut moves over to the half open door of the boxcar, the CAMERA MOVING with him. Just before he looks inside, he puts a wide grin on his face. But when he does peer into the car, his eyes cease to smile.

INT. BOXCAR - HELMUT'S POV - DAY

In one end of the car the children are huddled together in one frightened, wailing mass. They do not even notice Helmut at first, so great is their sorrow. The little ones cling to the larger youngsters, who, in turn, cling together. The small ones weep hysterically, as children do when they have been crying for a very long time. The CAMERA PULLS BACK so that Helmut is in f.g. He slides the boxcar door open fully, throwing more light on the children. This brings renewed walls of anguish from the youngsters, who cluster together more fiercely. But one little boy sneaks a look at the door, expecting to see more guards. When he sees Helmut, his tear-filled eyes widen. He can scarcely believe what he sees, much less verbalize it. He tugs frantically at an OLDER GIRL he has been clutching. She looks first at him, then at Helmut. She, too, can hardly believe it.

OLDER GIRL

(tentatively)

Doork?

(shrill with

recognition)  
It's Doork. It is! It is!

The children begin untangling quickly. Faces appear between legs, around skirts and over shoulders. For a moment they can only stare at Helmut, speechless with wonder.

HELMUT  
(gently)  
So this is where you've been hiding?

That breaks the silence, and the children begin squealing ad-libbed expressions of greeting and relief. They repeat his name time and again: "Doork, Doork, Doork." As one... the youngsters surge toward him. The little boy who first saw him reaches him first. He drops to his knees and puts his arms around Helmut's neck, hugging him furiously. Helmut returns the embrace.

BOY  
I want to go home. Take me home.

HELMUT  
Now, now, there's nothing to cry about. We're going to have fun.  
(disengaging himself  
and picking up the  
sack)  
Here. I brought you something.  
(he tosses it into  
the car)  
The children pounce on the sack and tug at it, unsure what it is except that it's a gift from Helmut.

HELMUT  
Wait now. Don't open it yet. Wait'll I get in. You help me.

He backs up a few steps, the CAMERA PULLING BACK with him. Then he runs toward the car and, with strength he really doesn't have, jumps up so that he gets his arms on the floor of the boxcar. He heaves himself forward partially into it, and the children grab his clothes to help him inside. A couple of the older boys seize the seat of his pants and finally pull him in.

INT. RAILROAD CAR - DAY

FAVORING Helmut as he rolls over and jumps up, wagging his head from side to side in the manner of a Jack-in-the-box.

The children watch him big-eyed. A few giggle.

HELMUT

Look, I'm a Jack-in-the-box.

He gestures around to indicate that he is, indeed, in a box.

HELMUT

We're all Jacks-in-the-box -- the same box.

The children laugh, and some begin imitating Helmut's head movements. Others do the same, and still others, including the Czech youngsters, until all are wagging their heads at each other and loving it. Then, out of sheer adoration, the youngest of the children close in on Helmut and hug him around his legs. Slowly he stops wagging his head and stretches out his arms to embrace as many of them as he can -- almost as if trying to protect them. Suddenly the gaiety dissolves, and the children go solemnly silent. Helmut reacts.

HELMUT

Well... who's hungry.

Almost in unison, the children shout "I am", again forgetting their unhappiness.

HELMUT

All right, I want everybody to sit down. When I count three, everybody sit. Ready? One, two...

On the count of two, many of the youngsters sit down. Helmut feigns surprise.

HELMUT

Oh, you're too fast. Three!

This brings a burst of giggles, and the remaining children, sit down... the Czechs following the example of the others. Helmut opens the burlap sack and begins handing out pieces of black bread. The children grab at the chunks and gnaw it voraciously. When all of the youngsters have been given the bread, Helmut takes a piece and bites into it with great relish. After a few chews on the bread:

HELMUT

Now... what'll we do?

There is a long moment of silence, then the little blonde girl with the rag doll speaks up timidly.

LITTLE GIRL

I want to see my Mommy.

Helmut is brought up short. For a beat he searches his brain frantically for an answer. Then he goes to the child and kneels beside her.

HELMUT

You would? All right.

LITTLE GIRL

You know where she is?

HELMUT

She's right here with you.

LITTLE GIRL

I don't see her.

HELMUT

That's because you don't know how to look. I'll show you. Close your eyes.

(to the other children)

All of you... close your eyes.

The little girl closes her eyes and one by one the other youngsters do also. The Czech children look at each other, then at the other children, then they too close their eyes.

HELMUT

Everybody's eyes shut? Now, think about your mommys and Daddys... There, don't you see them? Can't you see their faces?

The children, marvelling at this feat, ad lib expressions of assent.

HELMUT

So you see! They're right here with you. All you have to do is look in your hearts.

LITTLE GIRL

(putting her hand  
over her heart)

Does Mommy see me, Doork?

HELMUT

(deeply touched)  
Yes, she does. She has you safe in  
her heart, too.

The silence in the car tells Helmut that sadness has returned  
to the children. He brightens quickly and rises.

HELMUT

I've got an idea. You all know my  
name, but I don't know yours. So  
let's find out everybody's name,  
shall we?

He points to a boy of about ten in the group.

HELMUT

You... come here and I'll show you  
what we'll do.

The boy, honored at being singled out, rises and comes to  
Helmut, who takes a stubby pencil from his pocket.

HELMUT

What's your name?

BOY

(timidly)  
Willie.

HELMUT

Willie. That's a good name. How do  
you spell it?

BOY

W-I-L-L-I-E.

HELMUT

Fine. I'll just write that on top  
of your head.

Using the eraser end of the pencil, Helmut carefully traces  
the letters on top of the boy's head. The youngster peers  
upward, wondering.

HELMUT

There. See, this way we'll all be  
able to tell everybody else's name  
just by looking at his head.

CLOSE SHOT - BOY

still looking up, but now doubtful.

BOY

Did you really?

MED. SHOT - THE GROUP

HELMUT

Of course I did. Here...

He pulls an older boy to his feet, winks at him and points to the first boy's head.

HELMUT

(to the older boy)

Tell him what it says.

OLDER BOY

(giggling)

It says Willie.

BOY

(impressed)

Really? Truly?

He puts his hand to his head.

HELMUT

Be careful. Don't smear it.

(he glances around)

Let's see now... Yes. You shall be next.

He points to a Czech girl of about six. He motions for her to come over to him. She shyly bows her head. Her friends push her forward. Helmut holds out his hand to her, she grabs it.

HELMUT

What is your name?

She looks at him, then at the other Czech children. They all giggle.

HELMUT

(squatting down beside her)

Forgive me. I don't speak your language.

He gently plants a kiss on her cheek and she puts an arm

around his neck.

HELMUT

(to others)

See! We understand each other.

Now...

(he points to Willie)

Willie.

(he points to himself)

Doork.

(points again to Willie)

Willie.

(pointing to himself)

Doork.

The child's eyes light up and she whispers into Helmut's ear.

HELMUT

A beautiful name! Now you tell all the children.

CZECH GIRL

(almost a whisper)

Inga.

HELMUT

It's such a pretty name... say it again.

CZECH GIRL

(more sure of herself)

Inga!

She quickly bows her head for Helmut to outline her name on the top of it.

HELMUT

(with a flourish of his pencil)

I-N-G-A. There it is.

The little girl gives a quick curtsy and hurries back to her group. Helmut glances around at the children.

HELMUT

Let's see now. Who wants to be next.

The little girl with the doll presses forward.

HELMUT

You?

Shaking her head she holds up the doll.

HELMUT

Her?

LITTLE GIRL

So the little children will know her name.

HELMUT

Of course. That way she can't get lost, can she? What's her name?

LITTLE GIRL

Frederika.

HELMUT

(mock dismay)  
Frederika?

He studies the top of doll's tiny head. Then he holds up his hand and measures off a distance of about three inches in the air with thumb and forefinger.

HELMUT

Frederika!

Next he puts the doll's head between his thumb and forefinger, illustrating that the head is too small for the name.

HELMUT

Couldn't we just make it Freda?

LITTLE GIRL

(solemnly)  
Oh, no! Frederika.

Helmut shrugs, closes one eye and begins writing in tiny letters on the doll's head. The children laugh delightedly.

EXT. RAILROAD SIDING - FULL SHOT - DAY

Sergeant Hoffmann is walking his post beside the open door of the boxcar. Inside we can see Helmut and the children and HEAR their laughter.

The CAMERA PANS over to the staff car, where Scharff sits in the front seat smoking a cigarette and waiting.



DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILROAD SIDING - FULL SHOT - AFTERNOON

It is perhaps two hours later. Sergeant Hoffman is now leaning wearily against the boxcar near the door. The CAMERA PANS over to the staff car, where Scharff is dozing in the back seat.

MED. SHOT - SERGEANT HOFFMAN

From within the boxcar we can HEAR Helmut SINGING softly to the children. Sergeant Hoffman is listening. Finally he takes something from his pocket, goes to the door of the boxcar and sticks his head inside.

INT BOXCAR

The children are scattered about, either sleeping or near sleep, many of them cuddled close to Helmut, who sits near the door with his back against the side of the car, crooning.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(whispering)

Clown. Clown, can you play one of these?

He holds out a harmonica. Helmut leans over to get it, being careful not to disturb the children.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

I got it to send home to my boy...  
but if it'll help...

TWO SHOT - HELMUT, HOFFMAN

HELMUT

It will. It will.  
(he takes it)

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

You won't say anything to the  
Lieutenant.

HELMUT

I promise.

He leans back and looks at the harmonica, then he has a sudden thought as Hoffman's head disappears. He leans back toward the door.

HELMUT

Guard... guard.

Hoffman reappears at door.

HELMUT

It's going to be dark soon. The little ones may be afraid. Do you think... well... could you get some kind of a light for in here?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(angry)

Want to get me in trouble?

Helmut nods that he understands Hoffman's situation.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(trying to justify himself)

I would if I could.

HELMUT

I know. I know you would.

Again Hoffman's face disappears. Helmut leans back and begins experimenting with the harmonica. Actually he can play it only slightly, but he manages to get some sort of soft tune out of it. The CAMERA PULLS BACK SLOWLY to include the children, most of who are resting peacefully, secure in Helmut's presence. But suddenly a little dark haired, dark-eyed girl of about six, sits upright and cries out, frightened by a bad dream. Helmut reacts. The child looks around the boxcar as if she can't remember how she got there and begins crying inconsolably. Some of the other children stir. Helmut quickly but carefully disengages himself from the tots around him and picks his way over to the girl. He kneels beside her, and the CAMERA MOVES UP to --

TIGHT TWO SHOT - HELMUT, DARK-EYED GIRL

The child continues crying, but more softly, he wide wet eyes on Helmut.

HELMUT

(gently)

What's the matter?

(she only stares at him)

It's all right -- just a bad dream.

He tries to put a comforting arm around her, but she shrinks away continuing to sob softly. Realizing that words won't help, he turns to the harmonica for communication, serenading her with a soft but sprightly tune of his own improvisation. It is hardly a masterpiece, but it has the desired effect. The girl stops sobbing, and when Helmut finishes the tune he makes a real funny face and she timorously puts a hand up to touch his make-up, but pulls it back quickly. With an affectionate smile, Helmut takes her hand and runs it over his face, pretending that her touch tickles him. As he laughs, the child begins to smile faintly. He shows her the traces of chalk make-up on her fingers, and she giggles. His conquest is all but complete. He picks the youngster up, and holding her like a dancing partner, pretends to dance with her to a little tune he hums. She loves this and laughs outright. When Helmut finally puts her down, he kisses her on the cheek and turns his cheek in an unspoken request for a return kiss. The girl shyly and quickly gives Helmut's cheek a peck. Grinning, Helmut pats the spot where she kissed him to show his appreciation for her wonderful gift.

WIDER ANGLE

The older girl we saw earlier calls to him in a hushed voice.

OLDER GIRL

Doork.

Helmut moves over and squats down beside her and the CAMERA MOVES IN to --

CLOSE TWO SHOT - HELMUT, OLDER GIRL

OLDER GIRL

Where are they sending us?

HELMUT

(shaking his head)

Don't know.

OLDER GIRL

Do you have children?

Helmut looks around at the children. He smiles sadly.

HELMUT

I do now.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STAFF CAR - NEAR DUSK

Scharff, dozing in the back seat, is awakened by the SOUND of an approaching train o.s. He listens, glances at his watch, shakes his head and gets out of the car.

EXT. RAILROAD SIDING - NEAR DUSK

As Scharff strides to the boxcar, where Sergeant Hoffman has also hear the locomotive. He salutes as Scharff comes up, the CAMERA FOLLOWING him.

SCHARFF

It finally got here.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

Yes, sir.

SCHARFF

Help them get the car coupled on.

We want to move it out of here as fast as possible. Be sure the doors are locked. And, get the clown off.

Hoffman salutes, and Scharff moves off toward the approaching locomotive and freight cars being backed up to the boxcar.

FULL SHOT - FREIGHT TRAIN - (STOCK)

It is backing down the siding toward the boxcar.

MED. SHOT - SERGEANT HOFFMAN

With a cautious look around, he reaches under the waiting boxcar and brings out a box-type, battery operated lantern. He goes to the boxcar door and peers inside.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(calling)

All right, clown, time to get off.

Helmut appears at the door and looks down.

HELMUT

What is it?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

Train is here. They are hooking it up now.

(he hoists the lantern inside)

Here. Tell them not to light it up

until the doors are closed.

Helmut gives him a look of deep gratitude.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(curtly)

And get off right now.

Just then the boxcar is jolted as the locomotive makes contact and Hoffman runs off toward the front of the car.

INT. BOXCAR - EVENING

The jolt has awakened several of the children, who gather around Helmut in the dimness of the car, frightened and bewildered.

CHILDREN

We're moving. What's happening?  
What was the noise? Doork, where  
are we going?

HELMUT

(forced gaiety)

It's nothing. You're going for a  
train ride. What do you think of  
that? A real train ride.

CHILDREN

(pressing close --  
sensing his anxiety)

Is it far? Are you coming, too? I  
don't want a train ride.

HELMUT

Oh, it'll be fun. I would like to  
come, but I don't think I can.

CHILDREN

(pleading)

Please come, Doork. Please. Please.  
Please.

HELMUT

I can't. They want me to stay here.

There are cries from the children, whose pleading eyes make Helmut terribly uncomfortable. He backs toward the door.

HELMUT

But... I'll come to see you. Soon

as I can. And, I want you all to promise me to be very good. No crying.

The children stare at him silently, their eyes unconsciously accusing. With him goes all their security. Helmut knows it, but he has no choice. When he reaches the door...

HELMUT

If you want me... remember, just close your eyes.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE GIRL WITH THE DARK EYES

Wordlessly, she shuts her eyes -- tight.

PAN SHOT - CHILDREN

Following the dark-eyed girl's example, the smaller children one by one, close their eyes.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

Near tears with emotion, he wavers. Then with great control..

HELMUT

(huskily)  
Goodbye.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT

He turns and sits down on the floor of the car with his feet hanging outside. He is just about to jump down when he is stopped by a LOUD WAIL of anguish from one of the children behind him. He turns and looks back at them.

MED. SHOT - CHILDREN - HELMUT'S POV

A BOY of about six, one of the Czech youngsters, is crying with the dejection of a lad who has just lost everything. The other little Czechs and the older girl who first recognized Helmut at the boxcar door are trying unsuccessfully to console him. Between cooing and patting the boy's shoulder, the girl throws accusing looks at Helmut.

WIDER ANGLE - TO INCLUDE HELMUT

Uncertain what to do, Helmut glances around outside. Satisfied that the train isn't going to move at once, he gets up and goes to the children.

HELMUT

What's this now? Crying? After all  
the fun we've had?

The boy only looks at Helmut and goes right on crying. Helmut  
looks helplessly at the older girl.

GIRL

It's his birthday. He thought there  
would be presents.

HELMUT

(to girl)  
He's a Czech. Do you speak...

GIRL

(annoyed)  
Of course not!

Helmut is angry with the girl because he really wants to get  
off the train and yet can't because of the accusing look in  
her eyes.

HELMUT

(pointedly)  
Then how do you know it's his...  
birthday?

GIRL

(with typical child  
logic)  
He told me.

HELMUT

He speaks German?

GIRL

No.

HELMUT

But he told you it's his birthday?

The girl nods firmly as do the other children. The boy  
watches it all, wide-eyed. Helmut figures to put an end to  
this.

HELMUT

What date is this?

GIRL

(after thinking it

over)  
Why, it's his birthday!

This is too much for Helmut to fathom. He turns his head away, trying to think.

GIRL  
Don't you believe him?

Helmut turns back to them, looking first at the girl, then at the boy, his little upturned tear-stained face full of wonder. Helmut softens, recalling perhaps his own birthday disappointment.

HELMUT  
Of course, I do.  
(pats boy's head)  
Tell him I wish him a happy birthday.

GIRL  
He knows that. But... but what're you going to do about a present?

Helmut fans his clothes, finds the harmonica and produces it with a flourish.

HELMUT  
Aha, the very thing. He can be the clown while I'm gone.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING THE CZECH BOY

As Helmut bows and holds out the harmonica to him.

HELMUT  
Happy birthday.

The boy looks solemnly at Helmut and the harmonica. He doesn't quite seem to understand what this is all about, but the harmonica is enticing. He looks up at his countrymen for encouragement. They smile at him, and he takes the harmonica, examines it, then blows into it experimentally. When he hears the SOUND that comes out, he brightens. Then the little girl with the rag doll comes forward and offers it to the boy. He looks at her strangely, one of the older German boys scoffs.

GERMAN BOY  
He's a boy! Dolls are for girls.

The little girl is hurt, and looks to Helmut for support.



HELMUT

When you give something you love...  
it doesn't matter if it's the right  
thing.

He takes the doll and puts one of it's hands in the boy's hand, the other in the little girl's. They stand looking at each other and sharing the doll. Helmut looks towards the door apprehensively, but there seems to be no action outside -- and there are the eyes of the children on him.

HELMUT

Maybe we have time for a birthday  
game. A quick one. Let me take a  
look.

INT. BOXCAR - FULL SHOT

Helmut goes back to the door. He glances around outside. There still seems to be time. He returns to the children.

HELMUT

Everybody line up behind me now, and  
I'll show you how a train goes.  
Wait -- the harmonica.

Helmut looks around for the new owner of the harmonica. He goes over to him.

HELMUT

May I borrow it back... for just a  
minute or two?

The boy studies him dubiously with that "Indian-giver" look in his eyes.

HELMUT

For just a minute -- then I'll give  
it right back to you.  
(trying a sort of  
sign language)  
Just for the game.

Finally the boy hands over the harmonica and manages a smile because he sees all the other children smiling at him.

HELMUT

Good. Now everybody... line up  
behind me.

The children scramble into line behind him. Helmut looks back at them.

HELMUT

Grab hold of the one in front of you... 'cause we're going to be a fast express train.

The children, laughing and giggling, grab hold of one another.

HELMUT

(calling out)

All aboard. All aboard.

He puts the harmonica to his lips and begins huffing and puffing on it, imitating a train. He begins to shuffle his feet and move slowly down the side of the car... the children holding on for dear life and following him... their eyes shining with expectation as Helmut begins to quicken his pace.

CUT TO:

INT. BOXCAR - NEARLY DARK

Dim shafts of light from the two small square vent openings near the top on each side, gives the boxcar an eerie look. Helmut stops abruptly as he hears the slamming of the door. The children pile up behind him.

HELMUT

WAIT!

He moves quickly to the door and tugs at it. Finding it locked, he pounds on it.

HELMUT

Open the door! Let me out... LET ME OUT!

But the train NOISES drown his voice. Then the boxcar suddenly lurches and starts to move forward. Helmut's pounding weakens and stops. He turns from the door, his face reflecting his fright. The children, not quite understanding what has happened, gather around him, and pull on him. He manages to control his fear, and looking at the children, he manages a big smile.

HELMUT

Guess I'm going with you after all.

He switches on the lantern and holds it high so its rays cover all the children.

CHILD

Let's play some more, Doork?

Helmut glances down at the tot, started by the suggestion. Then he nods in a stunned sort of way. He puts the harmonica to his mouth and begins puffing on it.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAILROAD SIDING - EVENING

Scharff and Sergeant Hoffman stand watching the boxcar move away.

MED. TWO SHOT - SCHARFF, HOFFMAN

SCHARFF

I'm glad that's over. Call in the sentries.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

Yes, sir.

He starts to move away.

SCHARFF

Kessler in the car?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

Kessler?

SCHARFF

The clown?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(looking around)

I... I guess he is, sir.

SCHARFF

You GUESS!

Scharff races to the car with Sergeant Hoffman right behind him. The CAMERA FOLLOWS them.

Scharff peers inside and finds the car empty. With an angry glance at Hoffman, he hurries to the truck and looks in the cab. It too is empty.

SCHARFF

(moving back toward  
Hoffman)  
I told you to get him off the train.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

I told him, sir. HE was standing  
right by the door. I'm sure he got  
off.

SCHARFF

Did you see him?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

Why, I...

SCHARFF

DID you?

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

You told me to see that the car was  
coupled on. When I came back...  
Why wouldn't he get off?

SCHARFF

Idiot!  
(shouting)  
Guards. GUARDS!

The other soldiers come running from o.s.

SCHARFF

The clown prisoner is missing. He  
may have escaped. Search the area.  
If he got off the train he must be  
around here someplace.

The soldiers rush o.s. into the deepening darkness.

CLOSE TWO SHOT - SCHARFF, HOFFMAN

SCHARFF

You know what happens if he gets  
away.

SERGEANT HOFFMAN

(hopefully)  
He can't get very far.

Scharff looks o.s. after the disappearing train.

SCHARFF

If he's on that train -- he's going  
farther than you know ---

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT - TRAIN - EVENING (STOCK)

The rear of the boxcar is just disappearing from sight in  
the darkness.

CLOSEUP - SCHARFF

SCHARFF

... or he knows.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOXCAR - MOVING - DAY

It is the next morning. Light is coming from the vents and  
the lantern which hangs from a peg in the middle of the right  
side of the car. Helmut is asleep on the floor with the  
children huddled around him. He lies on his side with one  
arm thrown protectively over the little Czech girl, Inga,  
and Willie. Behind him, the Czech birthday boy and the girl  
with the doll are cuddled close to him. Other youngsters  
have their heads on his legs and feet, and all are as close  
to him as they can get.

He is, in fact, a sort of human bed. From the train NOISES  
o.s. we can tell that the freight train is slowing down.  
Then, with a jolt, it stops, and o.s. we HEAR a truck engine  
approaching. Helmut stirs and sits up, trying to get his  
bearings. This arouses some of the children and they too  
sit up and look around.

CHILDREN

What is it? Are we there, Doork?  
Where are we? Why are we stopping?

HELMUT

I don't know.

He untangles himself, rises and stretches his numbed arms  
and legs. He starts toward the door, but it slides open  
suddenly and a BURLY GUARD vaults inside. Behind him we  
see a truck similar to a moving van being backed up to the  
boxcar. Helmut blinks uncertainly at the light pouring  
through the door.

BURLY GUARD

Everybody up. No noise.

The children are too startled to move. The guard notices Helmut and reacts.

BURLY GUARD

Who the hell are you?

HELMUT

Where are we?

BURLY GUARD

How the devil did you get in here?

HELMUT

I... I'm from the other prison. Got locked in -- by accident.

BURLY GUARD

Ah, for...

(shouting out the door)

Sergeant!

CUT TO:

EXT BOXCAR - DAY

We see now that the train has stopped at an isolated siding. The truck has backed up almost to the door of the boxcar. A SERGEANT climbs down from the cab of the van and hurries to the boxcar door, the CAMERA PANNING him there.

SERGEANT

What's the matter?

BURLY GUARD

Look at this. He's from the other camp. Got in here with the shipment.

SERGEANT

How did that happen?

HELMUT

I... I was taking care of the children back there and... accidentally got locked in.

SERGEANT

Of all the... What's your name?

HELMUT

(realizing he's in  
big trouble)  
Doork. Helmut Doork.

The Sergeant fumes for a moment, then...

SERGEANT

(to the guard)  
Put him in the truck with the others.  
And, let's get going.

CUT TO:

INT. BOXCAR - DAY

ANGLE to the door as the Sergeant disappears. Reaching out, the Burlly Guard lowers the tailgate of the truck so that it forms a bridge to the boxcar.

BURLY GUARD

(to the children)  
All right, in the truck, quick now!

The children, most of whom are on their feet now, hesitate, looking to Helmut for guidance. The guard seizes one youngster and shoves him toward the door. Instead, however, the child flies to Helmut and grabs him around the legs.

BURLY GUARD

I said move!

HELMUT

(quickly)  
Wait. Let me.  
(to the children)  
Everybody up. Come on. Up, up, up.

He moves around, helping the still seated children to their feet. When they're all up...

SERGEANT

(to Helmut)  
Not you.

HELMUT

Don't you want me to stay with them?  
They'll be frightened without me.

BURLY GUARD

Not for long, they won't.

SERGEANT

(to guard)

That's enough. Get them inside and keep them quiet.

Burly guard starts to prod the children but they don't move, their eyes are fixed on Helmut.

BURLY GUARD

(threateningly)

MOVE!

HELMUT

Do as he says. And, don't worry, I'll be with you soon. I promise.

Reluctantly, the children march off. They look back frequently at Helmut who waves to them.

SERGEANT

(to Helmut)

Come along, now.

They walk over to a two-story building. Helmut looks back in the direction of the children, then looks about the camp.

HELMUT

This is just another prison.

SERGEANT

What'd you expect?

HELMUT

I thought the children were going to a better place.

The Sergeant, with an incredulous look on his face, stares at Helmut.

INT. CELL - DAY

The cell is a small, bare cubicle containing only a cot and an open toilet. In the wall, fronting on the prison yard, there is a small barred window. Helmut stops pacing and moves over to it, and looks out. The CAMERA SWINGS so that it is SHOOTING PAST Helmut's head through the window. At the far end of the yard we can see the windowless stone buildings. As Helmut stares out at them, we HEAR approaching footsteps. Helmut stiffens, turns toward the door as the



SOUND of the footsteps grows louder and louder.

The CAMERA SWINGS toward the door as it opens to reveal CAPTAIN CURT RUNKEL, a slender, impeccably groomed and thoroughly Nazified officer of the elite S.S. He is the embodiment of all Hitlerian ideals. Runkel strides into the cell.

RUNKEL

(over shoulder to  
guard at door)  
Close the door, and wait out there.

Guard closes the door. Runkel studies Helmut coldly. Without taking his eyes off Helmut, he pulls out a cigarette case, takes out cigarette, lights it and slowly inhales.

RUNKEL

You're a remarkable man. Very  
remarkable.

Helmut stirs uneasily.

RUNKEL

Have you any idea where you are?

Helmut shakes his head.

RUNKEL

Auschwitz. This is Auschwitz.  
(a beat)  
Mean anything to you?  
(before Helmut can  
answer)  
You may have observed we're enlarging  
our facilities.

He moves over to the window and looks out, puffing slowly on his cigarette.

RUNKEL

Still a great deal of work to be  
done.  
(proudly)  
It's going to be our most efficient,  
most modern prison.  
(he turns and smiles)  
And, I might add, most unique.  
(walks back towards  
Helmut, studying him  
carefully)

RUNKEL

Yes, you are a remarkable man. I  
always wonder about remarkable men.

(then evenly)

Why did you come here?

HELMUT

I explained. I got locked in the  
boxcar and...

RUNKEL

(cuts in - still bland)

Ah, yes. An accident. Unavoidable  
I suppose.

HELMUT

I was taking care -- I mean, the  
Commandant requested me to take care  
of the children.

RUNKEL

(a slight note of  
mockery)

The Commandant!

Runkel tosses his cigarette on the floor and very deliberately  
grinds it out with his boot.

RUNKEL

I've spoken to YOUR Commandant. He  
has you listed as an escaped prisoner.

HELMUT

Escaped! But...

RUNKEL

(finishing it for him)

... it was an accident.

(his face close to

Helmut's)

Are you one of them, clown?

HELMUT

(terrorized at the

thought of death)

No... no! I'm not one of them. I'm  
not !

Runkel smiles, moves away from Helmut.

RUNKEL

You misunderstand completely. The Judas goat is never killed. He isn't worth killing.

(moves to cell door)

I'm just asking you to lead them.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING HELMUT

His eyes plead, "No. I can't do it. No."

RUNKEL

Not... even to save your own life?

For a brief moment, Helmut struggles to find the courage to stand up to Runkel -- but he has no courage and he sinks slowly to his knees, his head bowed.

CLOSE SHOT - RUNKEL

RUNKEL

(victorious)

I'm glad to see you're not a self-appointed martyr.

TWO SHOT - HELMUT, RUNKEL

Runkel towers above Helmut who sits back on his haunches, leaning against the wall.

RUNKEL

Just think! Now you're really one of us.

The truth of Runkel's remark hits Helmut like a devastating blow. He turns his face to the wall in shame. Runkel walks to the door, raps on it, the guard outside swings it open.

HELMUT

(attempting to get to his feet)

Sir... Sir... could I... could I have a little time with them before ... before...

His voice trails off. Runkel looks at Helmut while he thinks it over. He moves back to the middle of the cell.

RUNKEL

Yes. Yes, of course.

(he looks at his watch)

I can give you about half an hour.  
(a little smile lights  
his face)  
You see, we're not heartless men  
here.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHILDRENS' HUT - DAY

ANGLE to the door as Helmut and the Sergeant approach from  
o.s. Helmut has freshened his make-up.

SERGEANT

Remember what I told you.

HELMUT

There won't be any trouble.

Helmut goes to the door and starts to open it. The CAMERA  
MOVES UP to --

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

With a great effort, he composes himself and throws open the  
door.

CUT TO:

INT. CHILDRENS' HUT - DAY

ANGLE to the door, where Helmut stands wearing an enormous  
grin. The children are about the barren room in little  
groups. When they see Helmut, they leap up and run to him,  
clinging to him as he closes the door behind him and moves  
into the room.

CHILDREN

Doork, Doork, you came back. You  
came back. We thought you'd left  
us. Don't leave us, Doork.

The children continue to ad lib expressions of mingled fear  
and delight at his return. Helmut goes among them, patting  
their heads comfortingly.

HELMUT

There. There. It's all right. It's  
all right. Everything is going to  
be all right.

When the youngsters are calmed, Helmut holds up his hands for silence.

HELMUT

Now I want everyone to put on a big smile and sit down, because we're going to have more fun than we've ever had.

Slowly, still unconvinced that they have nothing to fear, the children sit on the floor.

HELMUT

Good. We'll start by seeing that we all have our names on our heads.

The children begin to lower their heads so Helmut can check to see if their names are still there.

HELMUT

(as he moves among them)

Yes, yes. There's Fritz, Maria, Sadie, Inga, Josef, Nathan, Helga, Willie...

The little girl with the rag doll holds up the doll for Helmut to see.

HELMUT

Ah, yes, Frederika! Good. I see all of your names.

This is almost too much for Helmut, but he manages to control himself by turning away for a beat. Then he turns back to the children, his big smile back in place.

HELMUT

Now... on with the show. Just watch this.

CUT TO:

PAN SHOT - CHILDREN

Their little faces are troubled, worried.

DISSOLVE TO:

PAN SHOT - CHILDREN

It is a half hour later, and now the children are laughing at something Helmut is doing o.s. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to --

MED. SHOT - THE GROUP

Helmut is walking an imaginary tightrope. Every few steps he almost loses his balance, but with comical gyrations he manages to complete the walk. He bows deeply to the children -- and falls flat on his face. The youngsters laugh, applaud and squeal delightedly.

TWO SHOT - HELMUT, WILLIE

Helmut is lying on the floor near the boy. He looks up at the tot and grins.

WILLIE

Doork! Doork... you're great !

Helmut grabs Willie and holds him close while he fights back his tears. Willie plants a big kiss on his cheek. Helmut scrambles to his feet, the CAMERA PULLING BACK to --

WIDER ANGLE

SHOOTING PAST Helmut to the door as it opens, revealing the Sergeant, his face expressionless. Helmut reacts.

SERGEANT

(to Helmut)  
It's time.

HELMUT

Just a few more minutes?

The sergeant shakes his head.

HELMUT

I'll bring them.

The children are watching him, puzzled.

CHILDREN

What's the matter, Doork? Where are we going? You come with us this time. Where're they taking us.

HELMUT

(trying to think what to say)  
They... they want us to move to

another building... where we'll have more room... to play.

(a beat)

Tell you what. Let's make it a big circus parade. Everybody get in a line behind...

He picks up Willie and stands him near the door.

HELMUT

(continuing)

... behind Willie here.

The children scramble up and begin forming a line behind the very proud Willie. Helmut looks around for the boy with the harmonica.

HELMUT

Now, where's our band? The harmonica?

He sees the boy and goes to him. Helmut pantomimes playing the harmonica and points to himself. The boy smiles widely, fishes the harmonica out of his pocket and holds it up.

HELMUT

There we are? Everybody ready?

Here we go.

Helmut takes his place at the head of the line, like the Pied Piper, leads the youngsters out the door, playing a crude sort of circus parade music. The little children giggle excitedly as they troupe out. The older ones seem less certain, but as long as Helmut is with them, they feel secure.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

As the procession of youngsters emerges from the barracks with Helmut dancing along at its head. The Sergeant and the other two Guards stand watching in disbelief as the line turns and moves along toward the first of the windowless buildings.

MED. SHOT - SERGEANT, GUARDS

They look at each other incredulously. What they are seeing surpasses their imagination.

FULL SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

SHOOTING from a HIGH ANGLE as the procession moves toward the CAMERA. Helmut looks back at his charges from time to time, smiling and waving and always puffing away on the harmonica. The children smile back, some timidly and some a bit fearfully, but all smile.

PAN SHOT - PARADE

CAMERA PANS in on the children as they march behind Helmut. We see some of them strutting, their little arms swinging freely. Some of the little ones have to skip to keep up with the others. They are all smiling.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

With each step, Helmut looks about, his eyes searching heaven, praying for the miracle that will save the children... the sudden blast of thunder, the striking down of the guards.

CLOSE SHOT - SERGEANT, GUARDS

As they follow the parade warily, almost as if expecting a trick. They wear scowls worn into their faces by long use.

MED. SHOT - BUILDING - HELMUT'S POV

Its steel door gapes open. Through the open doorway we can see a bare room in which what appears to be shower heads jutting from the wall. A single ceiling light gives the room a stark appearance. The CAMERA PULLS BACK and UP as the procession comes up toward the building.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

Despair fills his eyes as he realizes that there is to be no miracle. He looks ahead into the room, his courage fails him and he stops so abruptly that the children behind him run into his legs. He turns and looks at them, then back to the door.

WIDER ANGLE

Almost reluctantly, Helmut stands aside. He tries to smile, but the result is almost grotesque. He tries to speak, but no words come. The Sergeant and the guard drift up toward him, scowling. Gently, Helmut tousles the hair of little Willie and steers him through the door into the room. The other children follow him hesitantly. Helmut puts the harmonica to his lips and begins playing again.

ANOTHER ANGLE - TAKING IN SERGEANT AND GUARDS



FIRST GUARD

Their clothes! They've got to undress.

The sergeant starts to move toward the line of children, the Sergeant grabs his arm and stops him.

SERGEANT

Leave them alone.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, CHILDREN

SHOOTING over Helmut's shoulder down at the children as they file past him. Each one hesitates a beat before him and looks up at him.

Their faces are wondering, but trusting. They smile tentatively. Only the little girl with the doll hangs back, waiting for something rather than fearful of entering. When all of the other children have gone in, she goes up to Helmut and wordlessly holds out her hand in a silent request to enter with him. In her eyes is the absolute certainty that he will.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT - LITTLE GIRL'S POV

He looks down at her hand for a long beat.

MED. SHOT - HELMUT, LITTLE GIRL

The little girl waits for Helmut, but he doesn't take her hand. Shyly, she begins to withdraw it. Suddenly, Helmut reaches out and grabs her hand, clutching it desperately as he needs her innocence to control the panic that is tearing at him. Holding on to her to steady himself, they walk together into the room, the CAMERA PANNING with them.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMBER - DAY

ANGLE to the door as Helmut and little girl enter. Suddenly, the door slams shut behind them. Helmut whirls to it instinctively, as if to shove it open or cry out for help, but he does neither.

CLOSE SHOT - HELMUT

His face is pressed against the steel door. He fights the panic within him. Then, he quickly wipes his eyes and turns

back towards the children. Slowly he takes three chunks of stale bread from his coat pocket and begins juggling them, at the same time wagging his head from side to side, slowly at first, then more gaily. From deep inside him comes a tiny, tiny laugh. The CAMERA PULLS BACK SLOWLY to reveal the children in the f.g. Suddenly, Helmut tosses the pieces of bread high, high into the air and stretches out his arms to encompass all the children. As they gather around him, they take up his soft laugh, timidly at first, then more assuredly until the chamber resounds with gentle laughter.

CUT TO:

IF ANOTHER MAN'S CHILD IS THREATENED AND YOU MOVE NOT TO PROTECT IT, THE CHILDREN OF ALL MEN ARE IN JEOPARDY AND YOU STAND AS GUILTY AS THOSE WHO THREATEN.

JOHN F. O'BRIEN

FADE OUT

THE END