STALAG 17

STORYLINE

Set in World War II at a German prisoner of war camp. Written by Donald Bevan and Edmund Trzcinski, actual prisoners of Stalag 17. The play unfolds during the three days before Christmas of 1944. At the opening of the show two prisoners are making an escape, but when the camp guards are waiting for them it is clear someone has tipped them off. The two men are gunned down and their bodies are left out in the compound for all the prisoners to see. The prisoners realize there is traitor amongst them. One prisoner in particular, Sefton, seems to be the prime candidate. Sefton believes in the “dog eat dog” philosophy. He trades with the enemy for a better way of life as a P.O.W. The men become even more suspicious of him when two new prisoners share their story of burning up a German supply train and one of them, Dunbar is taken away by the S.S. The men are convinced it’s Sefton, but he surprises the men by revealing the true spy.

The play takes the life of a P.O.W. light without any deep or tragic psychological probing into the minds of men in war. However, under the circumstances that these characters are held, the play’s light touch of humor is what keeps the men’s spirit up while they wait for the war to end. Because of the play’s Broadway success, it was put on the silver screen in 1952 by famous director Billy Wilder. The picture starred William Holden who won an Oscar for his performance as Sefton. In the sixties Television created a very lighthearted spin off of the film called Hogan’s Heroes.

CAST BREAKDOWN

SEFTON 30’s, wheeler and dealer always looking out for himself
STOSH 25- 30’s, smart ass trouble maker
HARRY 25- 30’s Stosh’s smart ass friend
HOFFY 25-30’s the bunkhouse leader, stern but fair
PRICE 20 –30’s high class do-gooder (The SPY)
REED 20 –30’s, nervous comic, impersonates famous actors.
DUNBAR 20-30’s, high-class preppie officer
CORP. SHULTZ 40-50 friendly but deceiving
DUKE 20-30’s, everybody’s pal
HERB 20s, easy going, street wise
MARKO 20-30’s, quick talking wise guy
S.S. CAPTAIN 25-40 irrational Nazi, fluent German
HORNEY 20’s shell-shocked mute
NAZI GUARD 1 20-30’s takes his job lightly
NAZI GUARD 2 20’s, a bull dog

SIDES
STALAG 17
By Donald Bevan & Ed Trzcinski

Lights fade up on prison compound. The front of two barracks are on opposite sides of the stage. At the back of the stage is a fence. Searchlights scan the compound. Over the sound system are the voices within the S.L. barracks.

HOFFY. Alright guys, this is it, good luck. (The S.L. barracks door slowly opens. Two soldiers come out and quickly move down stage for cover against the lower wall.)

HARRY. I hope they hit the Danube before dawn.

PRICE. They got a good chance. This is the longest night of the year. (The soldiers quickly cross the stage to S.R. barracks and wait against the wall.)

STOSH. I bet they get all the way to Switzerland!

DUKE. I bet they make it to lake Geneva!

SEFTON. I bet two packs of cigarettes that they won’t make it out of the compound.

PRICE. Who asked you Sefton?

STOSH. Wait a minute, Price - I want to back those guys. I’m in for two.

ALL. Yeah me too. (The soldiers cross up stage toward the fence. Suddenly out of nowhere a guard appears in front of them S.R. The soldiers cross to S.L. A second guard appears in front of them. They quickly turn down stage and begin to run. They only make it a few steps before being machine gunned down. The searchlights illuminate their bodies.)

LIGHTS FADE OUT. SET CHANGES TO THE INTERIOR OF THE BARRACKS.

It is early in the morning, just before the cold winter dawn of Dec. 23, 1944. All the men are sleeping in their bunks. A police whistle is heard offstage. A german GUARD enters from the center door of the barracks with stick, striking all bunks, and strides through.

GUARD: Raus! Appell! Aufstehen! geh’ mal! geh’ mal! Roll Call!
Get up! Roll call! ‘Raus! Appell!

STOSH, raises his head sleepy: Ah! Break it off.

GUARD: Appell, ‘Raus, geh’ mal! (He goes out.)

STOSH: Raus! Appell! Aufstehen! Come, roll call! You must get up, you see!

HARRY: Drop dead.

STOSH: And Good Morning to you!

All the men but SEFTON start struggling into their clothes.

PRICE, rises and goes out, calling: Come on, fellas. Let’s go. Come on, Duke—shake it up, Herb. Come on, let’s go.

STOSH, to HARRY, his bunk mate: Come on, animal, let’s go.

HERB, as he goes out: Gee, it’s early.

HOFFY, in a voice of command: Come on, let’s go. That means you too, Sefton. Get out of that sack.

STOSH: Come on, animal! Let’s go.

GUARD, re-enters, hands STOSH a coat: Come, you must get up, you see . . . ‘Raus, ‘Raus!

STOSH: Danke schön . . . To SEFTON; All right, Sefton you bloodsucker, here’s your winnings. (Tosses him two packs of cigarettes.).

HARRY: Heil Hitler! (Harry tosses two more packs to Sefton. Duke and Herb do the same.)

PRICE, coming back to SEFTON: All right, fellows, let’s get out of here. We’ve waited long enough for you, Sefton!

SEFTON: The Jerries are waiting, too!

GUARD, enters and goes to SEFTON: Hast du Zigaretten? (He pulls out an egg.)

SEFTON, trading: Four packs of cigarettes one’ raw egg.

GUARD: Ja, ja. ‘Raus! Appell. Aufstehen.

PRICE, re-enters: Look, Sefton, this is a prison camp, not a country store. Johnson and Manfredi were killed last night trying to escape from here. The Jerries have Johnson and Manfredi’s bodies in the compound . . . There are four hundred men out there who have to stand there and look at those bodies until you get through trading with the Kraut.

SEFTON: What do you want me to do, rush out there to give those Krauts a big fat good morning?

HOFFY, who has rushed back in: Yeah, get out there and give them that big fat good morning before we all get punchy from looking at those corpses. He hurries out, followed by PRICE. After a moment, a large, booming voice, addressing the four thousand prisoners, is heard in the distance over the P. A. system.

PRICE: Parade, Attention! (A light rumble of VOICES is quickly silenced by the command.)

SS. CAPTAIN, a german-accented voice shouts: Guten Morgen, Sergeants! (The MEN reply in groans.)

HOFFY: At ease!

During the speech SHULITZ, the german corporal, enters the barracks. Looks around to make sure no one sees him and goes to the table. He takes a chess piece from inside his cap and replaces it with one on the board. He then ties a knot with lamp cord above the table and exits.

SS. CAPTAIN: I have a message from the Commandant! Two of your comrades were shot last night trying to escape. They were brought into this compound for you to see and realize how stupid it is to try to leave this camp. You are not the guests of the High Command, you are prisoners of war . . . and the guards on the fence have orders to shoot any prisoner found outside the barracks after lights-out. This is done for your good. Das ist alles. Wegtreten! The buzz of the CROWD resumes.

HOFFY: At ease! A-ten-shun! . . . Dismissed!

A rumble is heard as the MEN come closer to the barracks. The MEN enter together; and return to their bunks, subdued by what they have seen outside.


HERB: At least they could have covered them up.

DUKE: I was freezing just thinking of them.
HARRY: lights STOSH a cigarette: I can hardly believe they're dead . . . Just yesterday morning I loaned Johnson my razor.

STOSH: You could even see the marks where they dragged them into the compound.

HARRY: with sarcasm, to SEFTON: 'I thank you for coming out this morning, Master! I hope we didn't disturb you?'

SEFTON: How did I know they were out there.

HARRY: Maybe the Commandant should have sent you a special notice?

STOSH: 'Where do you come off keeping us waiting?'

SEFTON: I told you I didn't know they dragged them into the compound!

HARRY: You didn't know!

STOSH: Yeah, but you didn't hesitate to bet on their lives last night; ya rotten bastard.

HOFFY: All right, men: At ease! Price and I have something to say. I've been telling you guys for some time that there's a German agent in this barracks. Johnson and Manfredi lying out there ought to prove it. Someone in here is tipping everything off to the Jerrys. Just let me refresh your memories—every tunnel we've ever dug has been discovered. We've had four radios in camp . . . the Jerrys confiscated two of them. And now Johnson and Manfredi.

PRICE. moves to Hoffy's side: I took this job of Security man to counteract any German agent that might be planted here. I can't be of any use unless you guys check with me on everything. Not just escapes, but anything you might pick up that will help us plug that leak.

SEFTON: Is that Einstein's theory or did you figure it out yourself?

HOFFY: All right, Sefton. To the others: Price isn't here just to help me run the barracks. Listen to him. He's Security. Check with him before you do anything. We don't want any more suicide escapes. Herb, take their blankets out and cover them up until the Krauts decide to move them. Herb takes blankets from bunks and goes out.

DUKE: YO! Chow's here. He gives the bucket to HARRY.

HARRY: Hey, chow's here. Hey, Chow King . . . Stosh, come on, chow's here. Now, everyone back to your corner. When you hear the bell, come out with ya chow cans and no hitting below the kischkas. He puts the chow can on a stool near the stove.

STOSH: Get the dipper!

HARRY: This is breakfast!

STOSH: Get the dipper.

HARRY: All right.

The MEN start to form into a line. DUKE is first. HARRY returns, hands STOSH the dipper—a tin can tacked to a stick. STOSH speaks to DUKE, who is at the head of the line.

STOSH: Blah! Der Essen 1st der best vergessen! You're always first in line . . . are you gonna drink this mess, or shave?

DUKE: Drink! I tastes it. Shave, goes back to his bunk.

HARRY: receives his tea and peers into it: What is this stuff?

STOSH: It's a mixture of herbs and leaves.

STOSH, Serving HERB: Okay! Don't rush—where do you think you are . . . in the U.S.O.?

SEFTON pulls out his egg, the men immediately notice it. He crosses to the stove moves the soup bucket out of his way and cracks the egg into a metal plate. The sizzling sound causes the men to stare motionless.

STOSH and HARRY move in, their eyes bulging at the sight of the sizzling egg.

STOSH. Where'd that come from?

SEFTON. From a chicken, bug-wit.

HARRY. A chicken?

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

HARRY: It's beautiful! You goin' to eat it all yourself?

SEFTON. Uh-huh. The white and the yellow. (The aroma of the frying egg has brought over DUKE & HERB.)

HARRY. Is it all right if we smell it?

SEFTON. Just don't drool on it.

HARRY. Your not going to eat the eggshells?

SEFTON. Help yourself. (HARRY picks up the shells and hands one to STOSH.)

STOSH. Thanks. You're a real pal! (on second thought.) What're we goin' to do with it?

HARRY. Plant it and grow us a chicken for Christmas.

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

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

SEFTON. (Eating away) Four packs of cigarettes. The price has gone up.

STOSH. That wouldn't be the cigarettes you won from last nights bet?

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

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

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

STOSH. You said it not me.

SEFTON. Listen, Stupe-the first week I was in this joint somebody stole my Red Cross package, my blanket and my left shoe. Well, I wised up since. This ain't no Salvation Army — this is everybody for himself.

HARRY. You stink, Sefton!

SEFTON. Anything else bothering you, guys? Cause if not, I'd like to finish my meal in peace.

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

SEFTON. I wasn't so sure. I just liked the odds. (Beat.) And what's
that crack supposed to mean!
PRICE. They’re lying dead in the mud out there and I’m trying to find out how come.

SEFTON. I’ll tell you how come. (Pointing at Hoffy) The Barrack Chief gave them the green light, And you, our Security Officer, said it’d be safe, That’s how come. (Beat.) What’re you guys trying to prove anyway? Cutting trap doors! Digging tunnels! You know what the chances are to get out of here? And let’s say you do get all the way to Switzerland! Or say to the States? So what? They ship you to the Pacific and slap you in another plane. And you get shot down again and you wind up in a Japanese prison camp. That’s if you’re lucky! Well, I’m no escape artist! You can be the heroes, the boys with the fruit salad on your chest, Me— I’m staying put, And I’m going to make myself as comfortable as I can, And if it takes a little trading with the enemy to get me some food or a better mattress— that’s okay by Sefton!

MARKO, enters from the center door with a lump under his jacket, HE looks around, then speaks in a loud nasal voice. HI! fellows. The MEN greet him, all imitating his voice. All right, at ease! At ease! Hoffy, you guys keep one of the radios until tonight.
HERB: Oh, boy!

HOFFY, rising: Aren’t we supposed to have it for a week?
MARKO: We can’t take any chances . . . we’re going to keep shifting the two radios around so the Jerries won’t get them.

HOFFY, turns to HARRY: Here, Harry, take care of it. HARRY takes the radio and puts it on a stool near his bunk.

MARKO: And copy the news down so at least I can read it.
STOSH: We’ll memorize it.

The MEN begin to gather round the radio while HARRY is tuning it in.

DUKE: See if you can get a torch singer, Harry.
HARRY: I’ll see if I can pick up some news first.

MARKO: Wait until I read off my news. There are general objections.

STOSH: Let’s hear the radio.

MARKO, mounting a stool near the table: AT EASE!

STOSH: At ease! At ease for the news!

MARKO: At ease! The MEN become quiet. Local camp news. HE reads from his sheet of paper. “Father Murray announces that due to the local regulations, the traditional Christmas midnight Mass will be held 10 in the morning.”

STOSH: Who gets up that early?

MARKO: At ease! He also says, quote . . . He would like to see as many men in chapel for services as he sees during air raids. Pop Martin and Henry Smith will play Frank DeNotta and Mike Cohen for the Pinochle Championship of the camp.

HARRY: That’s a fix!

MARKO: At ease! The camp library has sent out a plea for the return of all books immediately. Due to the shortage of reading material in camp, Camp Librarian Weaver says quote . . . Stop screwed your buddies.
STOSH: Nice talk for a librarian!

MARKO, continuing: Monday afternoon a sailboat race will be held at the Cesspool. See George Dungan of Barracks Nineteen if you wish to enter a boat . . . and none of those boats with the rubber-band motors . . . Tuesday afternoon at two o’clock all men from Texas will meet behind the North latrine. The MEN boo.

STOSH: That’s too good for those crap artists.

MARKO: At ease! You’ll get the war news from Harry.

STOSH: I thought that was the war news.

MARKO: I’ll be back tonight for the radio. Okay, at ease! (MARKO goes out.)

SEFTON: There’s your escape artists straining themselves to hear some dame sing a lullaby!
HARRY: Get lost!

HOFFY, seated back of table: If the radio annoys you, you don’t have to listen.

SEFTON: It don’t annoy me. It’s just that as far as I’m concerned that radio’s worth exactly four bars of chocolate on a trade.

HARRY (repeating in a loud whisper what he picks up on the radio): Hold it . . . quiet! The Eighth Air Force sent an armada of over 850 planes to targets in western Germany.

The MEN are tense as they hover over HARRY.

PRICE. Hey, write that down!

HOFFY: I got it.

HARRY: Over six hundred B-17s and B-24s participated Heavy bombers from bases in Italy bombed cities in northern Austria. Winston Churchill in an address before the House of Commons said that the turning point in the war has been reached.

There is great excitement and the MEN jump up and shout. A voice offstage calls “Timber!”

HERB, (shouts in a warning voice): Hey, fellows—TIMBER!

HARRY quickly hides the radio in his bunk. HERB, DUKE, and PRICE return to their bunks, where they sit quietly.

STOSH: Who is it?

DUKE: Shultz!

STOSH, (comes to the center of the room, speaks loud as though he didn’t know Shultz was coming): Hey, Harry, come here, it’s Shultz. The german corporal SHULTZ enters. SHULTZ bustles with efficient Teutonic good humor and cheerfulness, which almost conceal his innate cruelty and arrogance. So this guy says to me that Shultz is always snooping around and playing Pratt Boy for the Commandant just to keep from going to combat. But I told him that I know Shultz wasn’t doing it just to keep from going to combat.

SHULTZ, (slaps STOSH on the back, and laughs): You’re such a joker.

STOSH: Shultz!

SHULTZ: How is everybody today? What’s the matter, you seem restless?

STOSH: Yeah, Shultz, we were passing out guns when you came in.

HARRY, (going up to SHULTZ): Hey, Shultz!

SHULTZ. (Jovially): Ja!
SHULTZ: You will drop dead.

STOSH: Hey, Shultz, Harry tells me you lived in New York before the war.

SHULTZ: Harry tells you I lived in New York . . . every time you see me, you tell me Harry tells you I lived in New York. You know I lived in New York . . . I had a luggage store in Radio City. A real first class shop. You know I sold two suitcases to Clark Gable once . . . I'm like Harry . . . I'm a New Yorker.

SHULTZ: Ja, Broadway?

SHULTZ: (almost fondly): Ja, Broadway.

HARRY: Times Square?

SHULTZ: Ja, Times Square, Central Park, Yorkville—I know all those places. Don't worry. I'll be there before you.

HARRY: Hey, why don't you help us escape? We'll go home and have your luggage store open and waiting for you.

SHULTZ: You Americans! I couldn't understand you. You complain . . . for you the war is over. You don't work. You don't have duty .

STOSH: (imitating SHULTZ' accent) We don't eat.

SHULTZ: You got it good!

HARRY: You should live so long! (The MEN all laugh.)

SHULTZ: Drop dead. (Reaching in his jacket) Would you like to see a picture of my shop? (HE pulls out some pictures and hands them to HARRY.) That's me in front. (HARRY takes pictures.)

HARRY: (going up to SHULTZ confidentially) Hey Shultz, why don't you help us escape? We'll go home and have your luggage store open and waiting for you.

SHULTZ: You Americans! I couldn't understand you. You complain . . . for you the war is over. You don't work. You don't have duty .

STOSH: Pick me up a clean old man.

DUKE and HERB go out. SHULTZ, leaves, laughing and calling out Timber! Timber!

STOSH: Hey, Shultz, Harry tells me you lived in New York before the war. Don't worry. I'll be there before you.

SHULTZ: Hey, why don't you help us escape? We'll go home and have your luggage store open and waiting for you.

HARRY: What's on your mind, Shultz?

SHULTZ: Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: That's a great little hobby.

SHULTZ: Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: (as he leaves) I don't think so. Besides you seem to handle the job just fine.

SEFTON: Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: (as he leaves) I don't think so. Besides you seem to handle the job just fine.

SEFTON: Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: (as he leaves) I don't think so. Besides you seem to handle the job just fine.

SEFTON: (looking back) Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: (as he leaves) I don't think so. Besides you seem to handle the job just fine.

SEFTON: (looking back) Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?

PRICE: (as he leaves) I don't think so. Besides you seem to handle the job just fine.

SEFTON: (looking back) Hey, maybe Price is the Kraut spy. He's so glib. You really get any fun out of doing that?
HOFFY: You don’t seem to go for anybody and they sure as hell don’t go for you.

SEFTON: ‘Why? Because I trade with the Krauts for food? If Harry or Pigmeat get social with Shultz, they’re the barracks clowns, but me, because I get a little grub, I’m a collaborator . . . right?

HOFFY: No, not exactly, just—(HE is silent for a moment, then:) You’re not a very likable guy.

SEFTON: Don’t give me that likable routine.

HOFFY: Look, Sefton, this isn’t dog-eat-dog. All of us have some rights here. You weren’t brought up in a cave.

SEFTON: I wasn’t brought up, period! They just put a stick in my hand and told me to defend myself.

HOFFY: So you had a tough life.

SEFTON: Look, I’m not crying. I know what the score is. I’m the criminal type. The fall guy . . . when something goes wrong . . . I’m the guy they look for.

HOFFY: From where I’m sitting, you’ve been going out of your way to get elected.

SEFTON: Well, don’t worry about me—I can take care of myself.

HOFFY: Maybe you can take care of yourself, but as long as I’m barracks chief, we’ll do what’s best for most of us.

HERB. (Comes in breathlessly:) Hey, Hoffy, they’ll be here in a minute. (Crosses to stool right:) Hey, Stosh, wait until you hear this new guy talk. He’s an actor. Does he talk funny?

STOSH: Yeah, he don’t talk good like us, huh?

HERB: And there’s another guy. He’s from Boston. He’s got a fancy name, Schuyler Dunbar. . . . it sounds like two last names. But this actor—he talks so funny. (Laughs.) You can hardly understand him.

SEFTON: What did you say that other guy’s name was?

HERB: Schuyler Dunbar!

SEFTON: James Schuyler Dunbar?

HERB. That’s right, he’s from Boston, just like you are, do you know him?

SEFTON, (grins:) Yeah, I know him . . . His mother had a gang of lawyers to get him out of the draft. Then, when he couldn’t make it, he enlisted. Headlines . . . “James Schuyler Dunbar, Millionaire Sportsman Enlists as a Private.”

HOFFY: Don’t you think for what he was back home, you should give him more credit for being here?

SEFTON: Go on, his mother’s in Washington now, arranging for a Congressional Medal.

HERB: Geez, is he really rich?

SEFTON: Between him and Price, the joint’s really gonna get social.

HERB: He looks like anyone else.

SEFTON: Anyone else would be called a draft dodger, but he was called a millionaire sportsman volunteering.

STOSH, (to HARRY, gesturing toward SEFTON) ‘This crumb kills me. (to SEFTON) What the hell are you going to do give this guy a hard time?

SEFTON: Yeah . . . I’m psychopathic.

HOFFY: What did he ever do to you?

SEFTON: I just don’t like the guy.

STOSH: Why?

SEFTON: What the hell are you, a social worker? He’s rich, that’s enough.

The door flies open. DUKE bursts in.

DUKE. Come in, fellows. Here’s a list of the new guys. Wait till you see how clean they are.

SEFTON. Yeah, we’re getting a better grade of prisoner. (DUNBAR, REED enter C. They are cold, and have no jackets. They are blowing on their hands and shivering.)

STOSH. Welcome to Stalag 17. You’re just in time for the Christmas Pageant. (Men greet new prisoners warmly.)

REED. (Looking around.) What is this, a Shubert house?

HERB. (In a loud aside.) That’s the one!

HOFFY. I’m Herman Hoffman, the Barracks Chief. Harry get them some tea. (Harry goes off.) Price, these are the new guys. This is Eddie Price, the Security Officer.

PRICE. Hi! (They greet each other.)

HOFFY. Price show ‘em where to sleep.

PRICE. You’ll sleep in the top bunk. Duke, show him where his is, will you.

DUKE. (Takes DUNBAR’S gear and dumps it onto bunk.) Yeah.

STOSH. Harry, bring over a cup of tea.

REED. Do they expect you to sleep on these slabs?

HARRY. They’re all right if you don’t sleep sideways. (goes to table, starts to pour tea.) Are you an actor for real?

DUNBAR. You ought to see him do imitations. He can imitate almost anyone.

STOSH. If he can imitate a girl—he’s made!

HARRY. He ain’t kidding!

HERB. Do John Wayne. (REED, imitating the famous tones,) The culmination of my search for true esthetic contentment! The lost company of Tobacco Road.

HARRY. Huh? What did he say?

STOSH. (Sternly.) Animal serve the tea. How many times have I told you, you always gotta serve from the left?

HARRY. (Elegantly shifts can to his hand,) What’s the latest news?

DUKE. Yeah! What’s the scoop?

DUNBAR. (Sitting at table,) We’ve got five armies pounding at Germany. The war can’t last six months.

HARRY. (Great display of excitement,) Pack your bags, men, we’re going home!

STOSH. Relax.

HARRY. Only six more months!

HERB. (From his bunk,) That’s what they said a year ago.

STOSH. (Seated at table,) Okay, then stay here! What the hell are...
you . . . a realist? (Rises, gets himself some tea from stove.)

HARRY. (To DUNBAR) What about some more news?

DUNBAR. Patton's storming across country like a bat out of hell.

STOSH. We know that. What we want to know is, did Betty Grable get married?

REED. She married Harry James, the bandleader.

HARRY. There's nothing to the guy, skin and bones.

DUKE. Who won the world series?

STOSH. Never mind that. How about the women—are they still built the same?

REED. The ones I've seen are. And they're wearing shorter skirts.

STOSH. If they're any shorter than they were when I was home, it must be absolutely heavenly.

DUNBAR. It hasn't changed too much at home. I think the civilians know there's a war on.

STOSH. I could have told them that two years ago.

REED. Say, how is this place for showers?

DUKE. Showers?

DUNBAR. What about food?

HARRY. This isn't the place for showers or food.

REED. I'm not going to like it here. I can see that!

DUNBAR. I guess you get used to it. Don't you?

STOSH. Sure! I've been here a year and a half and when I'm hungry—I'm hungry.

HARRY. It isn't too bad. Your stomach shrinks.

STOSH. I wish it would disappear.

DUNBAR. How do you get washed up?

STOSH. You get a shower once every three months. It's called de lousing. They spray you with powder and keep your uniforms in a machine overnight.

DUNBAR. You mean you only wash once every three months?

PRICE. No, you wash every day if you like, but the showers come once in three months.

HARRY. You can keep them.

DUKE. Of course, you can take a sponge bath with the ice water we get.

STOSH. The water's so hard the dirt don't come off, anyway.

DUNBAR. That's pretty tough. At least if a guy could stay clean.

SEFTON. (Who has come to table and is standing in the background.) What did ya expect, Glamour Boy? The Racket Club?

DUNBAR. (Smiles.) No . . . I don't know what I expected.

HARRY. (Pointing with thumb to SEFTON.) He's from Boston, too, but you wouldn't know him unless you had your house robbed.

DUNBAR. (Rising.) You from Boston? What part?

SEFTON. What happened to your mother's lawyers?

DUNBAR. You tell me! You were around long enough to read about it.

PRICE. Why don't you be a good boy, Sefton?

SEFTON. Why don't you mind your own business?

STOSH. (To DUNBAR.) Don't mind him! He ain't very good on first impressions. . . . But later, you grow to hate him!

DUKE. (Breaking in to avoid embarrassment.) How did you get brought in?

REED. Ha! What a trip! We rode steerage. Came up here by boxcar all the way from Frankfurt.

DUNBAR. That first night in the Frankfurt station they had an air raid. The Jerries locked us in the boxcars and when the R. A. F. started to bomb, the cars were shaking like Jello.

REED. Some of the guys nearly went mad trying to beat the doors down with their bare hands.

DUNBAR. I was never so scared in my whole life. It was worse than being shot down. At least when you were shot down you could bail out. You weren't trapped like rats.

HARRY. You get the same feeling when there's an air raid in camp.

DUNBAR. These Germans are damned inhuman.

REED. But we got even with them, eh, Jimmy? Jimmy burned up a whole freight train in Nurnberg.

(Astonished comments from others.) Boy, you should have seen it burn! We were out of the station when it really caught on, but, boy! I'll bet you could see the blaze for miles. It was gorgeous and the Jerries didn't even catch on. (HOFFY enters.)

STOSH. It's a good thing they didn't, or they'd have hung the whole bunch of ya. (To HOFFY.) Geez, get this, Hoffy. These guys burn up a whole freight train, and they act as though nothing happened.

HOFFY. It's best not to talk about things like that.

REED. Why not?

HOFFY. The Jerries have a way of getting that information.

DUNBAR. How?

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

PRICE. If they did, you'd wind up in the boob!

STOSH. And, brother, ya don't last long there. That's solitary confinement. It's just the other end of camp. They just leave the bodies around to be picked up every morning.

SEFTON. Not James Schuyler Dunbar! His mother would arrange with the German Government to have his Grade A milk flown to him every morning.

DUNBAR. You made a remark before and I let it slide by, because I'm new here . . . but look, Junior! I don't intend to take any more. If you resent my having money, start a revolution, but get off my back. (gets up, turns away, dismissing SEFTON.)

SEFTON. Why you friggin' pansy! . . . (HOFFY knocks over stool, and makes leap for SEFTON. HARRY jumps in front of SEFTON; HOFFY and REED grab DUNBAR; STOSH grabs SEFTON from rear.)

HOFFY. Break it up. What's the matter with you guys?

SEFTON. (Breaking loose from Stosh.) keep . . . your . . . filthy hands off me.
HOFFY. For Christ’s sakes, Sefton, you’ve been here long enough not to start trouble.

SEFTON. (glares at HOFFY.) Tell him to keep his paws off me.

(goes back to his bunk.)

HOFFY. Go on outside and cool off. What’s the matter with you, are you out of your mind? The guy was just shot down. . . . He just walked in here! You’re sick . . . you’ve got a sickness.

SEFTON. (grabbing his coat from bunk.) Yeah, I’m sick. (Gestures sharply toward DUNBAR.) I’ve got a lever for him.

DUNBAR. Give it a week, and if you’re still looking for a fight, I’ll give it to you.

SEFTON. You aren’t going to last a week! You’ll know you’re not in a rest camp when I’m through with you! (He hangs out the door.)

FADE OUT

ACT I, SCENE 2

Later that night. The men are lazing around. REED in his bunk, HARRY and STOSH seated at table; HOFFY and DUNBAR seated on stools.

HARRY. Hey, do Jimmy Stewart.

REED. “To be or not to be, that is the question . . .“ (Continues to recite ‘Hamlet’ as men call for different characters.) “Whether ’tis nobler to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing, end them. To die, to sleep, and by a sleep to say we end the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to. To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there’s the rub,” sweetheart! (Shout offstage.) “TIMBER!” . . . “TIMBER!”

STOSH. Who is it?

DUKE. Shultz!

STOSH. Harry, it’s Shultz, let’s give him a double Hitler. (HARRY and STOSH quickly comb their hair in the Hitler manner and with small pieces of tape, fashion Hitler-type mustaches. Raise arms in Hitler gesture.)

SHULTZ. (Enters with German newspapers under arm.) I have your papers. Read all about the war and be happy you are out of it.

HARRY and STOSH. Heil Hitler!

HARRY. Horney your alive! I thought you was for sure dead.

SEFTON. He doesn’t look to far from it.

HARRY. Lay off ’em Sefton.

DUNBAR. What’s the matter with that big guy?

HOFFY. Herb help him to his bunk. (HERB takes Horney’s arm and slowly crosses to his bunk.)

DUNBAR. He wasn’t always like that, was he?

PRICE. No, He’s been in solitary confinement for 45 days!

REED. What did he do?

PRICE. He struck an Officer.

HARRY. What did they do to him? Horney use to be a real slugger. (Harry crosses over to his bunk. He pulls off a pin up girl from the wall that surrounds his bed.) Hey Horney, how about those Teledo Twins! Huh! With their love out to here. (Harry motions large breasts. Horney does not respond.) That’s OK Horney, you take it easy.

STOSH. He’s been in that rat-infested dungeon for nearly two months.

HOFFY. The rats must have driven him out of his mind.

DUNBAR. Why the hell do you stay here? Why don’t you escape?

HOFFY. Those famous first words!

STOSH. We like it here.

REED. I’ll tell you one thing. I don’t intend to spend my nights fighting it out with bed-bugs. I’m getting out as soon as I get a chance.

DUNBAR. It must be tough, I’m sure, but a guy has to take a chance.
If you try enough you're bound to make it.

HARRY. A couple of guys from this barracks had that idea just last night.

STOSH. Then we had roll call this morning and their bodies were just lying there.

DUNBAR. What about digging a tunnel?

STOSH. The Jerries always find the tunnels just about when they're completed. Of course, if you don't mind getting your tail shot off, you can make a run for the fence.

PRICE. That's the most dangerous, but I got out a couple of times that way.

DUNBAR. Then you have been out?

PRICE. Getting out is only part of it. It's getting to Switzerland that's tough. The closest I ever got was about eight miles from the Swiss border.

DUNBAR. What happened?

PRICE. The Jerries had a phoney border rigged up. I thought I was in Switzerland. I went to a farmhouse to tell the people I was an American airman, and they just turned me over to the authorities.

REED. Gee, if that ever happened to me, I would have gone out of my mind.

PRICE. I could have reached out and touched Switzerland.

REED. (Seated in his bunk.) I would have made a run for it. Let them kill me, but I would have made a run for it.

DUNBAR. What a hell of a way to be caught! Hasn't anyone made it?

PRICE. Not from this camp.

HOFFY. And nobody will as long as that agent is operating.

DUNBAR. Couldn't you make a mass break . . . - ?

PRICE. Where could four hundred men go once they got out? There aren't too many guys making escapes . . . it's too risky. And those that do go usually plan for weeks. They bribe the guards for a compass or some clothes.

SEFTON. (Laughs) But make sure you're bribing the guards; because there's a very fine point between trading and bribing.

STOSH. Who the hell asked you?

SEFTON. Nobody. I'm just keeping the Junior League informed. After all, we're both from Boston . . . I'd hate to see him get into trouble.

MARKO. (Enters with mail.) Mail Call . . . Mail Call! At ease! (Starts calling out names on the letters.) Shapiro, Shapiro, Shapiro, Martin, Shapiro, Gordon.

STOSH. That's my boy!

MARKO. At ease!—Gordon, Horney.

DUKE. I'll take his.

MARKO. Shapiro, Shapiro, Shapiro.

HARRY. What? No packages?

MARKO. That's it. I'll come back tomorrow to pick-up your outing letters. (MARKO leaves.)
birthday and the family loved it. I've written poems about mom's famous cherry pie, the old bridge at Mill creek and the changing of winter to spring. But, I've spent most of the time trying to write one for you. Well, finally it came to me. I call the poem "A Photograph of You." I hope you enjoy it? (Duke hesitates to read it.)

HARRY. Go on, read the poem.

DUKE. "When the evening shadows gather; after all my work is thru... I can't keep my eyes from straying; to the photograph of you. For one day our country called; and you so bravely answered "here".... Oh! I'm proud of you, my soldier; yet I brush away a tear. Thus my heart is ever with you; while I wait the long days thru... and the dearest of all my treasures; is that photograph of you. When the years have told their story; and the world is once more free... I'll be waiting for you—darling; there will still be you and me. Then we'll build our dreams together; hand in hand the long years thru... but forever in my heart I'll hold; that photograph of you." (The men stare at HORNEY who is seating on his bunk staring off. they remain silent until the door opens and MARKO enters.)

MARKO. Hi, fellows!

PRICE. What do want, Marko?

MARKO. I've come to get the radio.

STOSH. We didn't even get a chance to use it.

MARKO. That's your hard luck. Harry... let's have it.

STOSH. Go on, Harry, give him that lousy radio.

MARKO. Everyone else wants a radio, too, you know. I'll bring it to Barracks Twenty—maybe you can go over there and listen.

STOSH. I don't get along with those guys so well—who gets it next?

MARKO. We don't plan far ahead, we have to be careful.

HARRY. (Searching frantically) All right. Who's the wise guy? Who took the radio? Have you got it, Sefton?

SEFTON. What would I do with it?

HARRY. A broken head is all he'll understand.

SEFTON. He's been having too much fun today... he needs a lesson.

STOSH. What are we waiting for? You want him to get us all killed?

ALL. Yeah?

HARRY. He's been having too much fun today... he needs a lesson.

STOSH. Why don't you try making me understand, one at a time?

SEFTON. Why don't you get a rope and do it right?

STOSH. Knock it off, Stosh.

HOFFY. Kill it, Sefton!

SEFTON. You creeps have been giving me a lesson all day why don't you get off the pot?

HOFFY. Knock it off, Stosh.

STOSH. What are we waiting for? You want him to get us all killed?

ALL. Yeah?

HOFFY. What the hell is this, a gang war?

SEFTON. Why don't you get a rope and do it right?

HARRY. It isn't only the radio... he's been making trouble all day.

STOSH. I took all I'm going to take... he's the only leak in this barracks. (grumbling sounds of agreement.)

HOFFY. While I'm running this barracks, I'll do the accusing. If anyone don't like it, get a new Barracks Chief.

STOSH. (To SEFTON.) You're on borrowed time, you crud... you'd better not screw up. (Voice offstage calls "Timber! ")

PRICE. Timber, fellahs!

DUKE. Timber! Two of them, Hoffy.

(Enter GUARDS and S. S.CAPTAIN.)

S.S.CAPTAIN. (Sharp tones.) Good evening, Sergeants. A bit dank
in here, isn’t it…. Where is the Baracken-Fuehrer?

HOFFY. I’m the Barracks Leader.

S.S.CAPTAIN. Have you a Sergeant-Major Dunbar here?

HOFFY. Yes sir.

DUNBAR. I am Sergeant-Major Dunbar.

S.S.CAPTAIN. What is your number?

DUNBAR. (Reading off his tags) 105-353

S.S.CAPTAIN. (Checking his papers) That is correct. Sergeant-Major, I understand you come from a higher class of living. I apologize for the accommodations.

DUNBAR. I’ll live.

S.S.CAPTAIN. Quite a transportation jam we are having outside of Nurnberg! They are very angry in Berlin. They will be even angrier on the East Front, waiting for that ammunition train. Don’t you think so, Sergeant-Major?

DUNBAR. I don’t know what you’re talking about.

S.S.CAPTAIN. Of course you don’t. Now, Sergeant-Major, how would you like to join me in my quarters? I have a nice fire going.

DUNBER. I’m okay here. Why bother?

S.S. CAPTAIN. No bother. I’m very grateful for a little company.

DUNBAR. Would you like to join me in my quarters? I have a nice fire going.

S.S.CAPTAIN. Of course you don’t. Now, Sergeant-Major, how would you like to join me in my quarters? I have a nice fire going.

DUNBER. I’m okay here. Why bother?

S.S. CAPTAIN. No bother. I’m very grateful for a little company.

DUNBAR. Ever try forty sleeping pills?

S.S. CAPTAIN. (to the GUARDS, sharply) Abtuehren! (The Guards take DUNBAR by his arms)

HOFFY. (stops guard) Wait a minute! We have some rights. What the hell is this about?

S.S. CAPTAIN. Curtains would do wonders for this barrack. (on second thought) You will not get them. (They exit)

HERB. What the hell is this?

DUKE. Who knows?

REED. Why did they take him away, Hoffy?

HOFFY. Why do you think they took him? You probably told everyone from here to Frankfurt how you burned up a train.

REED. We didn’t tell anyone that story. Yesterday was the first time we mentioned it.

HOFFY. What about the rest of the guys in the boxcar?

REED. No one saw it . . . no one. You’re the only guys who knew about it. (Men are stunned. After a moment HOFFY snatches his jacket, rushes off after S.S.CAPTAIN. Long silent period.)

SEFTON. (Moves nervously.) Why are you looking at me? (Men move away from SEFTON and go to their bunks until he is left alone by stove.) I’ll bet his mother’s lawyers made arrangements to send him to an officer’s camp. (Men remain silent. A police whistle sounds outside. There is a call of “Lights Out!” off. “Lights going out.” Barracks is quiet. A searchlight from upstage, off, glams through the room twice as it covers the camp. Then the room becomes dark, only light being the faint glow from the windows.) I suppose someone’s going to say I did it! (Barracks remains silent. SEFTON climbs into his bunk.) I never squealed on nobody! Never! (Barracks still remains silent. After a long moment, a small group of men move to SEFTON’s bunk. A stifled scream breaks silence. Dull sounds and grunts and heavy shifting of feet are heard as men give SEFTON a beating as he lies in his bunk. They break up as suddenly as they had started. The barracks is deathly quiet and only SEFTON’s pained moans and quiet sobs are heard as men return to bunks and curtain falls.)

LIGHTS FADE OUT

ACT I SCENE 3

Afternoon, the next day. The stage is empty. Outside there is noise of an excited crowd of men, followed shortly after by the enthusiastic blasts of an automobile horn.

COMMANDANT’S voice: “Achtung! Achtung! All prisoners must stand back from the automobile. Do not crowd around, you must all go to your barracks. Your barracks leaders will all have the opportunity to speak to the Red Cross representative later.” Noise of shouting continues, followed by another blast of automobile horn.

Door opens and REED enters, wearing his underwear and with a blanket wrapped around him. Sits on HARRY’S bunk, putting his head in his hands. HERB comes running in, likewise wearing his underwear and with a blanket around him. He runs to his bunk, excitedly looking for something.

HERB. (As he throws his mattress around, continuing his search.) Hey, do you know where there’s a paper and pencil? I want to give the Geneva Man my name and address so he’ll write my mother.

(Serves paper and pencil in bunk and starts to go out but stops in front of REED.) Oh, don’t worry about your buddy, Hoffy’s up with the Commandant. He’ll take care of it. Do you want to come out and see the Geneva Man’s automobile? -It’s a 1939 Buick . . . . (Door opens and SEFTON enters. He has on him the marks of his beating and wears his regular clothes. Both parties stare at each other for a second, then HERB and REED exit. SEFTON remains in position until they close the door, then walks to his bunk, taking off his jacket. 1st and 2nd GERMAN GUARDS enter with SHULTZ., distributing blankets and underwear on each bunk. SEFTON climbs into his bunk. 1ST GERMAN GUARD is working downstage R., 2ND GERMAN GUARD is working downstage L. 2ND GERMAN GUARD finishes and leaves C. 1ST GERMAN GUARD finishes and starts out SHULTZ follows.)

SEFTON. Hey, SHULTZ!

SHULTZ. Whaddya want? Tea or a little bread? (Shultz sees Sefton’s condition) Du lieber Gott! How do you look this way? You had a fight?

SEFTON. Have some cigarettes.

SHULTZ. One hundred cigarettes! What is it you want from me?

SEFTON. The who you, Shultz?

SHULTZ What guy?

SEFTON. The one you work with. The German agent in this barracks?

SHULTZ. I do not want those cigarettes.

SEFTON. Yes you do! (Pulls out another carton) I’ll make it two hundred!

SHULTZ. No—No!

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

SHULTZ. Talk what? I do not know anything!
SEFTON. How many do you want? Five hundred? (Sefton grabs more cartons and forces them on Shultz.) Take it! Take it!

STOSH. (Enters followed by the other men.) The son-of-a-bitch was too weak to go to delousing but he wasn't too weak to trade with the Kraut!

SHULTZ. (Quickly drops the cartons and crosses for the door. Turns back at doorway.) Gentlemen! You will not complain to the Geneva Man. Because I have orders from the Commandant to report everyone who complains. (He exits.)

STOSH. To hell with the Geneva Man. This crumb was trading with Shultz. We go up and get that delousing powder sprayed all over us and he stays back here like a king.

PRICE. Come on, Stosh. Forget it.

STOSH. We've been forgetting about it for too long. (To SEFTON.) Didn't you get enough last night? You itching for more?

HARRY. Aw, don't argue with him, Stosh.

STOSH. You slimy creep... why don't you say something? Maybe you want me to jam cigarettes down your throat!

PRICE. Cut it out, Stosh.

STOSH. Let me give him a lesson... he's screaming for it!

HARRY. What are you letting him get your goat for?

HERB. At least we're clean and he's dirty.

STOSH. We're still not clean while he's in the barracks! I can't even stand to look at him any more. The crummy Kraut-lover.

HARRY. Hey... blankets! Stosh, did you see this?

HERB. Hey, clean underwear!

DUKE. Maybe the war's over?

HARRY. They must be going to shoot us. (HARRY hands STOSH his clean underwear, then holds his own in front of him: it is too big.) Stosh, mine are too big. You want to trade.

HERB. You know, I'm ashamed to walk around here in my under- wear. Especially if that spy's in here. I wish Hoffy'd come back. He's been up at the Commandant's office all night.

DUKE. You'll look better this way.

HARRY. Maybe the war's over?

STOSH. Are you letting him get your goat for?

HERB. At least we're clean and he's dirty.

STOSH. We're still not clean while he's in the barracks! I can't even stand to look at him any more. The crummy Kraut-lover.

HARRY. Hey... blankets! Stosh, did you see this?

HERB. Hey, clean underwear!

DUKE. Maybe the war's over?

HARRY. They must be going to shoot us. (HARRY hands STOSH his clean underwear, then holds his own in front of him: it is too big.) Stosh, mine are too big. You want to trade. (They exchange. STOSH holds up long underwear.)

STOSH. Am I supposed to live in this cocoon? (To REED, in effort to cheer him up.) Don't worry about your buddy. He'll be all right. And if he isn't we'll give Sefton a work-out again.

DUKE. (Trying new underwear.) How does it look?

HERB. (Turning round.) Look, mine are all sewed up.

DUKE. You'll look better this way.

HERB. You know, I'm ashamed to walk around here in my under- wear. Especially if that spy's in here. I wish Hoffy'd come back. He's been up at the Commandant's office all night.

HARRY. (Looking at STOSH'S head.) I wish I knew pornography so I could read heads.

DUKE. You mean phrenology!

HARRY. Phrenology?

DUKE. Yeah, pornography is obscene pictures.

STOSH. That's what he means. Pornography!

PRICE. Phrenology's an interesting subject... they can tell character by studying the bumps on the head.

HARRY. (Sits with STOSH, who is on stool) You mean if I take my hat off they can tell how smart I am?

PRICE. More or less. Bumps supposedly indicate the sensual and moral disposition.

STOSH. Isn't that a sensual head? The Mongreloid type.

HARRY. Just by looking at my head you can tell all that?

PRICE. That's the theory.

HERB. There's a lady around my neighborhood has big bumps on her head. Her husband always beats her up.

STOSH. Those bumps don't count.

HARRY. (Feeling STOSH'S head again.) No bumps. What does that mean, Price?

PRICE. I don't know.

HARRY. You know, Stosh, a little clubbing around the ears wouldn't hurt your I. Q.

MARKO. (Enters carrying phonograph.) All right, everybody out for delousing. (Men voice strong objections.) I was only kidding. You guys have the phonograph for today.

STOSH. Big deal.

HERB. I'll take it.

MARKO. Be careful with those two records. That's all we have.

DUKE. All right!

MARKO. Boy, everything is happening today... isn't it something? The whole camp's a madhouse. Did you see the Geneva Man's car? A big 1939 Buick.

HARRY. Who do you think was blowing the horn?!

MARKO. You can't believe how the Jerries are opening up for this guy. I heard we're going to get extra food. There's supposed to be four boxcars just full with Christmas parcels -

HARRY. Christmas parcels... you mean with turkey?

HERB. And cranberries too.

MARKO. Sure, everything. (Starts out, then stops.) I almost forgot. I got a couple of local news items. (Mounts stool, announces.) At ease! The Pinochle championship of the camp was won by Pop Martin and Henry Smith this afternoon.

HARRY. I told you it was a fix!

MARKO. At ease! Bill Dillmuth is forming a dramatic society, so will all those who go in for that stuff report to the chapel tomorrow.

HERB. That's for you, Reed.

MARKO. Will whoever stole the Commandant's dog, please return it to the Camp Office before we all get a reaming. He means it.

STOSH. You tell him I ate that knockwurst yesterday.

PRICE. Marko-what did you find out about Dunbar?

MARKO. Who?

PRICE. The new guy they took out of here.

MARKO. Oh, yeah! They're charging him with sabotage. (Men mutter “Sabotage,” show concern.) Sure, didn't you guys know he burned up a train? He's just lucky the Geneva Man is here or they would have thrown him right in the boob. They got him up at the Commandant's office.

STOSH. What the hell does the Geneva Man have to do with it?

MARKO. The Jerries are so busy with him they probably won't
get around to Dunbar until after he leaves. Gee, the Commandant treats that Geneva Man like he was Queen for a day. Isn't it crazy the way they jump for that guy?

PRICE. It's not crazy. The Commandant doesn't want to get loused up with the War Crimes Commission.

MARKO. He's really nosing around and asking all kinds of questions. If you get a chance you can go talk to him and tell 'em anything you want. He's listening to all complaints.

STOSH. Hey, let's go complain and after he leaves... the goons will set us up real nice in solitary.

MARKO. I have to go up to the Commandant's office again. I'll check back later with info about Dunbar. (Exits)

REED. Boy, I bet right now Dunbar is getting pretty nervous about his situtation.

PRICE. At least they haven't sent him to the boob. Don't worry. Maybe he'll be all right.

HARRY. The Commandant didn't yank him out just to have company.

STOSH. (Directing this to SEFTON.) We know why they yanked him out.

SEFTON. Yeah, but you don't know why they're stalling until after the Geneva Man leaves.

STOSH. We don't have to know. If Dunbar gets railroaded we'll hang your hide to the wall.

SEFTON. (Coming out of his bunk.) Maybe you better start worrying about your own hide, because you can beat me up ten times a day but that agent is still operating. I guess you slobs are satisfied. You've got a fall guy. But there are two of us in this barracks that know that I'm not the rat... that's me and the guy who really did squeal.

STOSH. We'll still keep an eye on you.

SEFTON. Yeah - you do that little thing. And I'm keeping an eye on the rest of you guys. You all heard Dunbar spill. (Crosses to STOSH.) Guys like you, Pigmeat... you're always nosing around with Shultz - and Harry - he's always out there trading.

PRICE. Harry trades for escape equipment.

SEFTON. Yeah, I know that (Crosses to above table.) -- that goes under the heading of bribing. What about you and Hoffy? You two are a couple of organizers from away back and Duke and Herb, all of you.

PRICE. Drop it, Sefton.

SEFTON. What for? I took a beating for Dunbar. I don't know who did it, but I know why I got it.

STOSH. And don't forget why.

SEFTON. I won't. Somebody's taking a beating for me.

PRICE. There ain't going to be any more beatings.

STOSH. You better move that skunk to another barracks.

SEFTON. You better move me to another camp. Because as long as I'm anywhere near this place I'm going to get the guy who left me holding the stick. (Long pause. There is a whistle for roll call outside.)

PRICE. Okay... roll call. Let's go. Come on... let's get it over with. (Enter 1ST GUARD.)

1ST GUARD. 'Raus!... Appell! Roll call!

HARRY. Don't you guys know who's winning this war?

STOSH. What's all this roll call business... they don't think we're going to escape now that we have all this terrific stuff?

HERB. But we don't have clothes.

PRICE. Come on... let's get out there.

SHULTZ. (Enters.) Roll call, everyone out... come, you must get out.

STOSH. Hey, Shultz, how come I didn't get a Christmas card from you?

SHULTZ. I mailed them late this year.

HARRY. Hey, Shultz, we heard Hitler put Santa Claus in a concentration camp... is that true?

(Men all clear the barracks. SHULTZ removes chess piece from his jacket and goes to the table. He swaps it with the empty one. Makes a loop with the light cord and leaves)

PRICE. (As voices are heard outside.) Parade, attention!

SS. CAPTAIN. (Off.) guten Abend, Sergeants.

PRICE. At ease!

SS. CAPTAIN. (Off.) I have a message from the Commandant. (Men grumble.)

PRICE. At ease!

SS. CAPTAIN. Because of Christmas there will be no morning roll call. (Men cheer.) It will be later. Also—tomorrow night... you will have lights for one extra hour... the Commandant has ordered me to wish you a Merry Christmas.

PRICE. Attention! Dismissed!

HARRY. (Offstage.) To hell with the extra hours. Just give us back our clothes.

STOSH. (Returning to barracks followed by the other men, impersonating SS. CAPTAIN. In german) Guten Abend, instead of using pointed bullets for Christmas we will use flat ones.

HARRY. I think they're anti-Semitic. How come they didn't use flat ones on Yom Kippur? Hey, Duke, play something fast. Let's get some life in the barracks.

STOSH. Two records, and he's making requests! (The music starts from phonograph on table.) We'll dedicate this tune to the Geneva Man. Animal! Remove the chastity belt and we'll trip the light fantastic.

HARRY. YO! That's my boy! (They step into the dance area)

STOSH. (Dances with a faraway soulful look.) Let's go. Let's get with it.

HARRY. You led the last time.

STOSH. Stop acting like a broken-down virgin, dance! (They start to dance.)

HARRY. (At first big dip.) Don't dance so close. How do I know you're not the spy?

STOSH. (Hurt.) I wish you hadn't of said that... I was just be-
ginning to feel passionate!

REED. Are they kidding?

HERB. No - it's fun. You want to dance?

REED. I haven't been a prisoner long enough to get away with it.

STOSH. You know, this reminds me of the time I was stationed in California. I picked up a girl in the Palladium. One of those big, juicy blondes. The kind that was raised on the farm and developed in the city. She wasn't wearing a slip and every time she'd spin - - ('Whistles.) Wow, what a build! (Shouts.) I hate this life! (The men drag REED into the dance. As the men are caught up in the dancing.

PRICE goes to the table. Looks over the scene carefully, SEFTON is reading the paper. PRICE pulls the loop out of the light cord. He exchanges the chess pieces, takes out the note, reads it, crumples it, puts it in stove, crosses to the guys and places his hand onSTOSH'S shoulder. Lights fade out)

END ACT ONE

ACTII, SCENE 1

That evening, STOSH, HARRY, HERB and DUKE are playing cards. PRICE and REED are watching. SEFTON is seated at his bunk.

DUKE. Who delt this hand?

STOSH: Always picking on the dealer.

DUKE. Only when your dealing.

HARRY. Hey, Talent, do John Wanye again.

REED, OK, pilgrim, I'm burstin' out of this can. I got it all fig-

ured. The Red Cross is sending me my Winchester 30, 30.

HARRY. Next time we have roll call you be the Commandant, order the guards to let us all go free.

STOSH. Hey, Reed, how about doing Hedy Lamarr for me tonight?

SEFTON. (Puts his large tin cup on stove to heat.) I'm heating some tea . . . anyone else want to use the stove before I do? (No answer.) If anyone else wants to use the stove, I'll wait.

HARRY. What's wrong with him?

STOSH. He's making poison gas so he can get all of us with one shot.

HARRY. I don't want to die until I collect all my back pay. You know if the war would only last five years . . . I'd be a rich man.

STOSH. Boy! Did you ever find a home?

REED. I just hope I'm not here long enough to collect a month's back pay.

PRICE. I don't blame you... after what almost happened.

REED. You don't think they could pull anything, do you?

PRICE. No... they don't have any witnesses, do they?

REED. They couldn't have.

PRICE. You're covered. I'm pretty familiar with the way the Krauts operate . . . as Security man I made it my business to learn. Now if there happens to be anything you might have a doubt about . . . check it with me.

HARRY. If there is an agent in here? What's in it for him? The guy might just as well be a prisoner.

PRICE. For him this is a job. It's easier for a man to live under these conditions as long as he has a purpose. To him this is a duty.

HARRY. The guy's so close to home and he can't have a furlough!

SEFTON. Why not?

HARRY. You crazy?

SEFTON. No. He could pull a phoney escape. All the guards are in on it. We wouldn't know if he's in solitary or home on furlough. Why, if the creep pulled a legitimate break, he couldn't make it to the latrine.

STOSH. You've been having a lot of furloughs, Sefton.

SEFTON. The only difference is that I don't go home on furlough. I just hang around the Commandant's cottage. Looking for a way to burn the damn thing down . . . with him in it.

STOSH. How come it's still standing?

SEFTON. (Crosses to stove.) He's never home when I get there. Tea, anybody? (They all ignore him.)

MARKO. (Enters ) Mail Pick up . . . Any out going mail- get to me now! (HERB and HARRY get their mail and hand it to Marko.)

REED. Have you heard anything else on Dunbar?

MARKO. When I drop off the mail I'll check with Hoffy and let you know.

REED. Thanks.

MARKO. At ease! (Exits.)

PRICE. I'll bet you've got a lot to write home about, Reed? Just that train ride alone.

REED. That's one thing I never want to write about

STOSH. I don't blame you.

PRICE. It must have been pretty exciting.

HARRY. No kidding. The whole freight train burning... could you really see it?

REED. Sure- we were a mile away and you could still see it.

STOSH. That was a clever idea... who thought of it?

REED. Dunbar.

HARRY. It sure is a shame about Dunbar. Especially considering that the war's almost over

PRICE. What the hell ever made you guys burn up that train?

REED. It just happened. We were sitting in the Nurnberg station and this other train was passing us . . . all the doors were open plenty of straw on the floor and what else do you need?

PRICE. Just a fire bomb, I guess.

STOSH. Where the hell did you ever get that fire bomb?

HARRY. Did you have it with you when you were shot down?

REED. No . . . there was nothing to it. . . . Dunbar figured that if you put a lighted cigarette into a book of matches . . . the matches would light up when the cigarette burned down.

STOSH. How come I never thought of that?
HARRY. No bumps!

REED. At the time we thought we were doing a big thing.

PRICE. (Sitting in his bunk.) It’s best to leave stuff like that up to the bombers. It seems dropping tons of bombs from a plane is considered cricket but a hand-thrown fire bomb is sabotage.

STOSH: That’s because using matches and a cigarette for a fire bomb is considered Yankee ingenuity. And, these Facists pigs can’t stand creative freedom.

HARRY. Yeah, imagination is a great weapon.

STOSH. It’s a good thing Hedy Lamarr can’t read my mind.

(Price casually crosses to the light and ties a loop in it. Sefton watches with curiosity.)

HARRY. No kidding!

REED. God, I’m getting hungry! When I used to go around the casting offices on Broadway they told me to get hungry . . . it was supposed to make a better actor out of me . . . at this rate, I should be a star. (going to bunk.) I wonder if Lawrence Olivia was ever in a prison camp?

STOSH. Who’d he play with? Notre Dame?

MARKO. (Enters.) Hey guys here’s the latest on Dunbar. They’ve set the trial for tomorrow morning. But get this, apparently Dunbar was nowhere near the train when it burned. So far they can’t prove a thing.

STOSH. How come they took him out of the barracks without even knowing nothing?

MARKO. (Cocky) Well, this ain’t a democracy.

HARRY: At ease!

REED. So their going to have a trial anyways?

MARKO: Yeah, but I wouldn’t worry about it-- they don’t have any witnesses. Plus, the Commandant has gotta prove to the Geneva man how Dunbar could have had a fire-bomb with him on prisoner train.

STOSH. (As the realization spreads over his face.) That’s great!

MARKO. I’ll keep ya posted. (Exits.)

SEFTON. If there’s an agent in this barracks, he sure heard a mouthful!

REED. (Sits in lower bunk.) I had to open my mouth again. (Men are stunned by knowledge of damage already done.)

STOSH. Who was it that said they’d need a witness?

SEFTON. So they don’t need a witness . . . it’s too late for talk. Some guy in here has that information.

PRICE. I’ll take care of this, Sefton. All right, nobody is going to leave this barracks alone. . . . If anyone is going out, take somebody else with you. And there’ll be no talking with the Jerrys. There won’t be anything leaking out of this barracks . . . not until after the trial, when it won’t do them any good.

SHULTZ. (Enters c. with the GUARDS.) TIMBER! TIMBER! (As he leaves with the two GUARDS.)

HARRY. Come on, Reed, forget about it.

REED. I just didn’t think

HARRY. Hell, nobody in this barracks done anything for a year and a half.

REED. Hey, Stosh, do you really think we’ll prevent anything from getting out of here?

STOSH. Sure we will . . . what the hell is everyone moaning about? This is Christmas Eve . . . let’s all try and make the most of it. In fact, I think this calls for homemade moonshine. Say, where did we put those rations? (An air raid siren starts up.)

PRICE. Hey, that’s an air raid . . . let’s get out . . . come on. (A general scurrying.) Everyone out . . . come on . . . let’s hit those trenches.

HARRY. These damned things are becoming a pain. (Barracks light goes off.)

SHULTZ. (Enters.) Everyone out . . . come, you must get out . . . air raid . . . for your own good, you must get out. (SHULTZ carries pencil-type flashlight, which be plays across men who are moving toward door.)

PRICE. Come on, Stosh, no straggling.

STOSH. I’m not going to be the first one into the trenches everyone in camp jumps in on top of you.

PRICE. Come on . . . everyone out. (Keeps up chatter until barracks is cleared. (SHULTZ pulls the loop out of the cord and picks up the cess piece. PRICE crosses to SHULTZ. SHULTZ opens the chess piece, its empty. PRICE pulls the one out of his pocket and reveals that it’s empty as well.)

SHULTZ. Nun? Was ist? Haben Sie’s herausgefunden?

PRICE. Ich weiss alles.

SHULTZ. Wie hat er’s gemacht?

PRICE. Ganz einfach... Streichholzer... und eine Zigarette... (Lights cigarette then places it in match package.) Passen Sie auf! (It suddenly flares up.)

SHULTZ. ACH! SO-o-o-o — (Then in loud voice.) Air raid! Air raid! Everyone out. Air raid! (SHULTZ and PRICE exit)

(A figure appears, SEFTON, from behind a bunk where he has remained unseen by PRICE and SHULTZ. Lights match, repeats SHULTZ’S words.)

SEFTON. ACH! So-o-o-o-o!

ACT II SCENE 2

Later that night. A scrawny branch of a pine is propped up as a Christmas tree. A barrel stands on top of a stool. HORNEY is seated on a stool beside wine barrel. He blows weird sounds on a piccolo. PRICe is in his bunk, reading a german paper. REED and HARRY are at table carving tree decorations out of soap. Other men are in their bunks.

STOSH. (Singing in bunk.) “I’m dreaming of a White Christmas. Just like the one..."

HARRY. Shut up!
STOSH. “‘Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house there was nothing to eat, not even a mouse.” (HORNEY begins playing loud on piccolo—STOSH, to HORNEY.) Hey, Gabriel! Will you take that thing out to the latrine?

HARRY. Ah, leave him alone. At least he’s doing more than just staring. Come on, give us a hand. (Stosh gets out of his bunk.)

STOSH. Hey, will ya get a load of this! Why, no self-respecting dog would stop at that tree.

HARRY. I read some place once that soap is made from animals. Is that right, Reed?

REED. Yes . . . animal extracts.

HARRY. What a waste of meat!

REED. Gentlemen, do you realize this piece of soap used to be a horse? If we can devise some method of getting it back on the hoof . . . we’ll all have something to eat.

STOSH. (DUKE enters. STOSH, irritably.) Well, What about those parcels? I’m starving!

DUKE. There are four boxcars down there but we couldn’t find out what’s in them. (Crosses, sits in bunk.) My God, almost every Kraut in camp is drunk. It’s going to be a hell of a Christmas.

REED. The service in this place is terrible! How’s it coming?

STOSH. ‘(goes to barrel, leaning over it and cocking his ear.) Listen to it . . . boy! This will tear your guts out!

REED. (Crosses, looks in barrel.) Is it ready?

STOSH. Ready or not, it goes tonight.

REED. I’ve heard of making wine from raisins. But raisins and prunes, never!

STOSH. That’s what gives it the body.

PRICE. Don’t you guys know those prunes and raisins are part of a scientifically planned diet? They can be used for escape rations.

REED. He’s right, Stosh.

STOSH. All right, now I’m a menace to the camp!

PRICE. What’s the use! (Crosses to the door.) I’m going over to barracks twenty and find out what their getting on the radio—anyone want to come?

HARRY. Naw we’re enjoying the spirit of the season. (HARRY holds up a carving that looks like a round lump. PRICE exits)

STOSH. What the hell is that?

HARRY. It’s baby Jesus!

STOSH. Oooh, your going to hell.

REED. (REED is investigating moonshine barrel.) Will it be strong enough?

STOSH. Are you kidding? Smell it! Even Horney is getting sluggish from the fumes. (grins.) The only good thing about going hungry, is that we know the agent they got planted here is starving, too.

HARRY. Everyone is gonna get turkey but the spy.

REED. (In his John Wayne voice.) All right, you pilgrims, up against the wall. I’m taking over the horse meat this Christmas, comprende!

STOSH. Oh, crap, Horney, why don’t you go catch some rats? (As Horney’s piccolo gets the best of him. To REED.) Who gave him that piccolo—Shultz?

REED. Let him alone. He’s happy.

STOSH. (At table.) Nobody else is. Where does he get the strength?

HARRY. Maybe the agent gives him extra rations. That’s sabotage.

REED. Who the hell ever thought I’d be wishing for horse meat! Just a week ago we were in England. They posted the Christmas menu up in the briefing room . . . turkey and all the trimmings. (SEFTON enters, carrying bread and tea.) And I remember Dunbar saying, ‘Woner if we’ll have a mission scheduled for Christmas?’

SEFTON. Then what did you say? (Pauses. No answer.) Don’t let me interrupt your Christmas carols, Shakespeare. (Crosses to his bunk.)

STOSH. Hey, Trader Horn, there’s a Christmas card here for you from Hitler.

SEFTON. That’s funny. I was just talking to him down at the gate he didn’t say anything. (Takes soap carving from HARRY.) Now, isn’t that touching—a peanut! (HARRY snatches it back, turns to STOSH.) Isn’t it nice that we’re all together for Christmas!

STOSH. I’m so hungry I could eat a whole horse. Even the head.

SEFTON. What’s it going to do . . . back in?

HERB. (enters, under his arm is a hockey stick with three rolls of toilet paper.) Merry Christmas! Men - . . - look what Santa brought! (Men gather round table.)

HARRY. What-a you got there?

STOSH. What the hell kept you so long?

REED. Where are the Christmas parcels? (Men repeat question.)

HERB. There aren’t any!

STOSH. There aren’t any! (grumbles and moans.)

DUKE. Stop kidding. Is that all that came in?

HERB. That’s all. Four cars of toilet paper and hockey equipment.

HARRY. Whose mother is it that was in charge of Red Cross athletic equipment?

STOSH. No food? We’re starving and they send us toilet paper! What the hell good is the paper!

HERB. Some guy at the depot said there was enough paper to stretch clear back to America. We can use this to decorate the tree. (Crosses to tree.)

REED. I’ll bet the officers’ camp got turkey.

HERB. No, there was definitely no discrimination. The officers got polo sticks and Kleenex.

STOSH. (Opens roll of paper—examines, unravels some—rises.) I think I’ll pre-flight this stuff. Hey, Shapiro, if anyone should want me, I’ll be out on the poop-deck. (goes to door. HOFFY enters, followed by DUNBAR.) Yo, Holty, what kept you so long?

HOFFY. Timber! We have company.

STOSH. Dunbar! Welcome home.

HARRY. (To REED.) I here’s your buddy . . . I told you he was all right.
REED. Jimmy, you sure had us worried.

HOFFY. Dunbar's here to pick up his stuff. (1ST GUARD enters.)

HARRY. What happened?

HOFFY. The trial is over. They found him guilty.

STOSH. Wasn't the Geneva Man there?

HOFFY. He was there. The Krauts had their proof.

DUNBAR. They showed up with my fire-bomb.

1ST GUARD. Los, Mann, mach schnell! [Hurry up, man!]

REED. Come on Jimmy. (Takes DUNBAR to DUKE'S bunk.)

HARRY. What happened?

HOFFY. Five minutes—cigaretten. (GUARD takes cigarette.)

HOFFY. (Slumps in chair.) They're sending him to a concentration camp.

STOSH. You've got to go through this because of a cruddy informer.

DUNBAR. Yeah, because of an informer. I spent all last night thinking about what I'd do to him if I caught him.

SEFTON. What would you do?

STOSH. Mind your business, Sefton!

SEFTON. That is my business. Twenty-four hours a day. (To DUNBAR.) What would you like? Does the guy live if he's caught? Does he go free? What do you say?

DUNBAR. I didn't really make up my mind, Sefton.

SEFTON. You'd better give it some thought. You'll be leaving here soon and I want to know how you feel about it.

DUNBAR. Then I'll have to leave it up to you.

HOFFY. Take it easy Sefton. Duke, fix him some tea.

DUKE. (goes to stove.) Yeah. (Fixes tea.)

REED. Is there anything we can do, Hoffy? Any way, we can get the Jerries to let him stay . . . any way at all?

HOFFY. No, there isn't time. There's nothing we can do.

DUNBAR. How in the hell did they ever find out about that fire-bomb? Nobody knew about it.

SEFTON. That means we cross Duke off the list . . . that leaves only five of us . . . who could be the rat? . . . That is, if we include me?

STOSH. You're the only one on my list.

HOFFY. Never mind that! Let's fix the Kraut a special Christmas drink that'll get him out of the way. What'll it be?

REED. How about lighter fluid?

STOSH. That's no good unless you set a match to him.

HERB. I got a bottle of Cascara pills my mother sent me — I'll get 'em. (This idea brings enthusiastic approval.)

REED. (Looking at bottle label.) "For ordinary cases of constipation, one pill is effective. Two pills in extreme cases."

HARRY. This is an extreme case.

REED. "For infants, consult a physician."

HARRY. My uncle's a doctor.

STOSH. We're authorized, go ahead!

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REED. "For infants, consult a physician."

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STOSH. We're authorized, go ahead!

REED. In cases of over-dose . . . stay close to home.

HARRY. Hey, Hoffy, I'll get a cup. (gets cup from cupboard on wall)

STOSH. (Handing REED hockey stick from floor below table.) We'll use this stick to crush 'em.

REED. Round about the cauldron go: In the poison'd entrails throw.
(Carefully shakes two pills from bottle into cup.)

STOSI. Come on, this is Christmas, don't be so stingy.

REED. (Pours more into cup.) We'll make it a baker's dozen.

HARRY. Put the rest in. Kill the bottle. He's a friend of mine.

REED. (Holds bottle up to HARRY in gesture of toast.) To a man's best friend. (Empties bottle into cup.)

HARRY. We better get something to dissolve them.

SEFTON. (Hands REED his cup.) Here!

REED. (Mixing drink, giggles and exaggerates as he recites from Shakespeare.) “Fillet of a fenny snake, In the cauldron boil and bake: Eye of newt and toe of frog, Wool of bat and tongue of dog. (Witches cackle.) In the cauldron boil and bubble.” (Screches like a bag. Fakes taking a sip, puts cup down as if not to his satisfaction. Adds a few ingredients from imaginary test-tubes, then fakes another sip.) Begging your pardon, sir, could you direct me to the nearest . . . ?

HARRY. Straight ahead, gov-nah, cawn't miss it! (REED puts down cup and clutches his throat, gasping.)

STOSI. (With English accent.) Time, gentlemen, time! Drink up, pubs closing. Awin't you Americans got no homes! (All move to barrel and join GUARD.)

HARRY. Out the gate in Forty-eight. (They Serve GUARD cup with pills in it. All gather to drink.)

HERB. (To STOSI) Will it do him any harm?

STOSI. It won't do him any good.

HOFFY. (To GUARD.) More wine for Christmas.

STOSI. (Toasting.) Here's to a stormy Christmas. (They lift their cups.)

HARRY. L'echayim!

STOSI. Ya! Christmas!

GUARD. Ja! Christmas! (GUARD laughs—all take sip with GUARD.) guter Wein! [Good wine.]

ALL. Yeah! (GUARD takes another sip—all laugh and josh.)

STOSI. The joke's on you.

REED. Hey, it ain't workin'!

STOSI. He's got a cast-iron stomach.

REED. Wait a minute! Has this squarehead got the right drink? (All the men are startled, they take quick sips to make sure.)

STOSI. Why don't you jump up and down?

GUARD. 'Wie? [What?]

STOSI. Jump up and down. (Men jump up and down and GUARD joins in.)

HARRY. Get out of the way, he looks ripe. (GUARD looks astonished, then makes a bolt toward door, and out.)

HOFFY. All right, boys, break it up! Duke . . . take off. Good luck, Dunbar! (DUKE and DUNBAR make dash toward door and out.) The rest of you guys get over at the table. Act like nothing happened.

STOSI. TIMBER, fellows, he's coming back! (In a conversational tone to REED.) What was your job during the war?

REED. Hero!

1ST GUARD. (Staggers in slowly, looks around dully.) ‘Wo ist er? Wo habt—ihr—ihn versteckt? Alarm! [Where is he? Where has— he hidden?] (GUARD looks at men. He moves about nervous-ly, starts to shout in german. Starts to look around bunks, shouting as he goes. He is becoming frightened as he realizes his prisoner is missing. Looks at STOSI, screams at HOFFY, then runs out still shouting. Outside, the blast of his whistle repeats frantically.)

HOFFY. Men, this may cause trouble but at this time I don't think the Jerries are going to bother too much over one man. We were responsible for Dunbar being taken and this is our chance to make up for it. (PRICE enters.)

PRICE. What's up, Hoffy?

HOFFY. The Jerries had the goods against Dunbar and they were shipping him out tonight.

PRICE. Did they have that information?

HOFFY. Yeah . . . he came back to the barracks to pick up his gear so we slipped his guard a doped-up drink and sneaked Dunbar out of the barracks.

PRICE. Where'd you sneak him?

HOFFY. We've got him hidden.

PRICE. That's going to cause trouble, Hoffy.

HOFFY. The Jerries are too drunk to worry about one man.

PRICE. He's an S.S. prisoner. They're tough, Hoffy. They'll turn the camp upside down to find him.

HOFFY. Hell! Not for one man!

PRICE. You're damn right they will.

HOFFY. It's already done.

PRICE. I hope we get away with it.

HOFFY. We will! (general ad lib.)

PRICE. All right, all right. As long as we have Dunbar hidden we may as well make the best of it. Will he need anything?

HOFFY. No, not now.

PRICE. I'll go over and explain things to him. Let him know what the score is. Where've you got him?

HOFFY. (Places his arm on PRICE'S shoulder as though becoming confident, starts to take him aside.) I didn't have much time. The Jerry was in the barracks.

SEFTON. (Cuts in, sarcastically.) Yeah, whisper it in his ear. Go on, check with Security - . . next we check with Washington, D.C.

HOFFY. What's eating you?

SEFTON. Nothing . . . not a thing. Ya hide a guy in camp then ya have to make a production out of it.

PRICE. (Tugs on HOFFY'S arm.) The hell with him, Hoffy.

HOFFY. (To PRICE.) No, wait a minute. (To SEFTON.) What do you want me to do?

SEFTON. Keep your mouth shut. This is supposed to be a big fat secret. Don't tell anybody . . . who are you and Price kidding with all this arranging?
HOFFY. (Quietly.) Sefton . . . that's the way we do things.

PRICE. (Sarcastically.) Look, Sefton, we like to make arrangements. (To HOFFY, dismissing SEFTON.) Come on, Hoffy.

SEFTON. You two guys have everything so well organized . . . you better take a look out that window, there's a few Krauts coming maybe you can make arrangements with them. (DUKE returns, crosses to bunk. Men become alert. HOFFY goes to the door.)

SHULTZ. Over here, Sergeant Hoffman. Get the Barracks Commander!

HOFFY. They're heading this way.

PRICE. (goes to door.) What did I tell you?

HOFFY. It's to be expected. It doesn't mean anything . . . Shultz is coming this way. (Turns and shouts.) Get ready for some TIMBER!

DUKE. Timber, timber!

PRICE. (Nervously.) Hoffy, this is bad.

HOFFY. Wait until we find out what they're going to do. (Door slams open. SHULTZ enters.)

SHULTZ. (With no pretense of friendliness this time.) Achtung! [Attention!] (Men come to their feet.) This time you have gone too far. (S. S. OFFICER enters, goes to CS. with 1st and 2nd GUARDS.)

S. S. OFFICER. (Speaks in german. Shouts to GUARD 1) Komm her! 1st hier die Barracke wo du ihn hindibrach. test?

1ST GUARD. (Standing at rigid attention—crosses to CAPTAIN.) Jawohl, Herr Kauptmann!

S. S. OFFICER. You ought to be shot! If I'd been in charge of this camp, you would have been! (He is screaming.) Du bist nicht würdig die Uniform eines deutschen Soldaten zu tragen! Melde dich nachher, bei der Wache. Du bist verhaftet! Abtreten! (GUARD 1 exits.) Where is he?

PRICE. Who?

SHULTZ. The Captain is giving you a chance to give this man up. (Men are silent.) This is no time for foolish heroics. If he is not turned over to us, there will be reprisals.

S. S. OFFICER. Where is he?

SHULTZ. Sie verweigern eine Antwort.

S. S. OFFICER. (He becomes very angry, screams orders to Guard 2.) Haltet eure Gewehre fertig, habt keine Angst sie zu benutzen! Hold your weapon ready, do not hesitate to use it. (Guard 2 cocks rifle.) Get the Barracks Commander!

SHULTZ. Over here, Sergeant Hoffman.

S.S. OFFICER. (Shouting.) Kommt, becilt Euch! I give you a chance to tell me where he is.

HOFFY. I don't know.

S.S. OFFICER. Ich bin's überzugt.... I am convinced you do know.

HOFFY. I don't know.

S.S. OFFICER. (Screams.) Du weiss cs nicht?!!? (Hits his crop, against bunk.) Vielleicht können wir dir die gedanken erfrischen. So brauchst du behandelt werden! You're all criminals! I should have you beaten, perhaps then you can remember. (In German) If I don't find him, I will kill this man in the morning. Maybe then they will talk. (He exits)

SHULTZ. You Americans, I don't understand you. It is foolish for all of you to suffer for one man.

HARRY. You've been doing it for eleven years.

SHULTZ. This has become a very important matter. This man is an S. S. prisoner and the Commandant is responsible for him. If Sergeant Dunbar is not found, the Commandant will have to suffer the consequences, and I am sure you will suffer even more. The S. S. will take over the camp and they will not play games.

HOFFY. Is that all, Shultz?

SHULTZ. (As he leaves.) I warned you. You will be the ones to suffer.

PRICE: I knew this was going to cause a lot of trouble.

HOFFY. We had to risk it. As you can see, Dunbar wouldn't have had a chance.

PRICE. We don't know that for sure. They might have just wanted to move him to a different camp.

SEFTON. Yeah, the concentration kind.

MARKO. (Entering.) HOFFY!

HOFFY. (Impatiently.) What do you want?

MARKO. We just got word at the Camp Office that the Jerries are going to seal up every building in camp and gas them.

HOFFY. When?

MARKO. In the morning. Everyone will be checked going out. You better get prepared.

HOFFY. That settles it. Now we really have to do something.

MARKO. What happened?

STOSH. The Jerries. Go on, go on.

MARKO. (Exits.) At ease!

PRICE. Where is Dunbar? (Pause.) I mean is he safe from the gas?

HOFFY. (Pause.) No. And its pretty clear that the Jerries mean business. They're going to kill Dunbar if they get him.

PRICE. Where can we hide him now?

SEFTON. There's no place you can hide him. You have to get him out of camp.

HOFFY. That's right! Let's have it understood men -this is going to be a rough deal. But we have no choice. One of us must take Dunbar out of the camp tonight. Right away. We'll draw one dogtag and the guy who goes with it does the job. It's going to be rough because the Krauts are now going to expect a move like this. So if anyone wants to withdraw, he better speak up now. (Nobody moves.) Then we're all in on it!

STOSH. Everybody but Horney, and you know who. (They shoot a look towards SEFTON. He looks right back at them.)

HOFFY. Okay. (With irony) Who's the lucky one? He shakes the dogtags in the cap. Everyone crowds around, tensely.

HARRY. Let me do it, Hoffy.

STOSH. You want to go?

HARRY. No, I want to draw.
HOFFY. All right. (Holding out cap) Draw. Harry closes his eyes, puts his hand deep into the cap and picks out a tag.

But before anybody can look at it, Price closes his fist over it.

PRICE. Suppose we call this my tag. I'll take him out.

HOFFY. No volunteers, Price. I said we're all in on it.

PRICE. You have elected me Security. The way things have been going in this Barracks, I guess I've done a poor job and I want to make up for it. Is that asking too much?

HOFFY. We've all done a poor job of it

PRICE. I still say this is my tag. Any objections, Hoffy?

HOFFY. Any objections, men?

DUKE. Not from me.

HERB. He can have it.

STOSH. (To Harry) Who are we to argue with a hero?

HOFFY. Where's the wire cutters?

DUKE. I'll get them.

HOFFY. Are the civilian clothes ready?

HARRY. (Stuffing clothes into duffel bag) Coming up.

HOFFY. (He turns to DUKE) Duke, go out and get Dunbar!

DUKE. Should I bring him right in?

HOFFY. Yeah, we'll have to risk it! (goes out.)

PRICE goes to his bunk, HOFFY with him. PRICE starts putting on his jacket.

PRICE. What do you say, Hoffy. We'll hit the air raid trenches and cut out in back of the south latrine.

HOFFY. You'd better cut out in back of Barracks nine.

PRICE. Alright. Say where did you hide Dunbar, anyways?

HOFFY. In the latrine.

PRICE. Good spot. With any luck we'll make Krems by morning, or maybe even catch a barge to Linz.

(SEFTON, who has been watching closely, tosses two packs of cigarettes on the table.)

SEFTON. Two packs of cigarettes say Dunbar never gets out of the compound.

HOFFY. You starting that again?

SEFTON. Anybody cover? (They all look at him.)

HARRY. Somebody take out that crumb!

STOSH. We warned you, Sefton.

SEFTON. Sure you warned me. And if you want to slit the throat of that German spy... (He throws an open jack-knife onto the table. The blade sticks. The knife quivers.) Here's the knife to do it with. Only make sure you got the right throat.

STOSH. We're looking at it.

HOFFY. (To Sefton) What are you up to, Sefton?

SEFTON. Figure it out. Or would you rather see Dunbar lying out there in the mud tomorrow morning like Manfredi and Johnson?

HOFFY. Look, Sefton, I had my hands full so they wouldn't tear you apart.

SEFTON. I called it the last time, didn't I?

PRICE. Are we going to stand around here and listen to him until the Germans find out where Dunbar is?

SEFTON. The Germans know where Dunbar is.

HOFFY. How do they know?

SEFTON. (Stares at PRICE) You told them, Hoffy.

HOFFY. Who did?

SEFTON. You did!

HOFFY. You off your rocker?

SEFTON. Uh-huh. Fell right on my head. (Confronting PRICE.) Sprechen de deutsch?

PRICE. No, I don't sprechen de deutsch.

SEFTON. Maybe just one word? Kaput? Because you're kaput, Price.

PRICE. Will you get this guy out of my hair so I can go?

SEFTON. Go where? To the Commandant's office and tell him where Dunbar is? Isn't that why you volunteered to take Dunbar out?

PRICE. (Starting for him) I'll kill you for that!

SEFTON. Shut up! (Slaps his face) Security Officer, eh? Screening everybody, only who screened you? Great American hero from Cleveland, Ohio! Don't bet on it. He's a Nazi. For all I know, his name is Preismaier or Preissinger. Sure, he lived in Cleveland, but when the war broke out he came back to the Fatherland like a good little Bundist. He spoke our lingo so they put him through spy school, gave him phony dogtags —

PRICE. He's lying! He's just trying to get himself off the hook! (PRICE tries to walk away, but STOSH and HARRY block his path.)

STOSH. I don't think so.

SEFTON. Okay, Herr Preismaier, let's have the mall box.

PRICE. The what?

SEFTON. The one you put in this pocket. (He snatches a black queen out of PRICE'S coat pocket.) Now let me show you how they did it. They did it by mail. That's right. Little love notes between our Security Officer and von Scherbach with Schulz the mall man. (Ties up a Loop in the light cord) Here's the flag, (Opening a black queen) And here's the mailbox. (Grins at PRICE, who is sweating) Cute, isn't it? They delivered the mail or picked it up when we were out of the barracks, like for Appell. When there was a special delivery, they'd pull a phony air raid to get us out of here, like for instance, to night. (To PRICE again) There wasn't a plane in the sky— or was there, Price? (PRICE tries for the door, but HORNEY reaches down from his bunk and raps his arm around PRICE'S throat, holding him.)

PRICE. (Screaming) Hilfe! (STOSH takes PRICE and spins him over to HARRY, who places knife to PRICE'S throat.)

HARRY. One sound out of you and I'll slit your throat.

HOFFY. Somebody gag him before he brings the guards.
HARRY. (Sits PRICE on chair) Throw me some rope! (Binds and gags him.)

STOSH. (To PRICE) Why, you crummy son-of-a-bitch. Don’t trade with the Jerrys, don’t use prunes to make wine, check everything with Security! I should have figured you out long ago.

SEFTON. Yeah, but you didn’t.

STOSH. (To SEFTON) Brother, we are all wet about you.

SEFTON. Forget it.

HARRY. (To HOFFY.) So what do we do now?

HOFFY. Let me think. We have Dunbar to worry about.

SEFTON. You’re going to wear out your brain with all that thinking. I’m taking Dunbar out.

HOFFY. Your taking Dunbar out?

SEFTON. You’re going to wear out your brain with all that thinking. I’m taking Dunbar out.

HOFFY. Take it easy, Dunbar.

STOSH. How do you like that! A genius and nobody asked him!

DUKE. Nobody ever asked me.

STOSH. Why didn’t you say something before?

SEFTON. How come you thought of it?

DUKE. It wasn’t hard. The Jerry latrine always has two traps... one practical and the other is like a spare. I don’t know why, but that’s the way they build them. The secondary duct is accessible without great difficulty. (grins.) I studied sewerage and disposal in college.

STOSH. Why didn’t you say something before?

DUKE. Nobody ever asked me.

STOSH. How do you like that! A genius and nobody asked him!

DUNBAR. (Comes back) Ready.

HOFFY. Dunbar, your going once the lights are out. Don’t worry about it. Sefton volunteered to take you out.

DUNBAR. You don’t have to do it for me. I’m willing to try myself.

SEFTON. Who’s doing it for you? Just don’t forget to tell your mother where to send the reward money.

DUNBAR. I can go it alone, Hoffy. Just tell me what to do.

HOFFY. Take it easy, Dunbar.

SEFTON. Ah, you wouldn’t make it to the latrine!
HOFFY. What the hell are you talking about? You can't use Price for a decoy! That's murder —

HARRY. (gets up.) Better get ready, five minutes is coming up.

HOFFY. (STOSH makes a grab for PRICE. HOFFY grabs STOSH’S arm.) Goddamn it! Hold it!

STOSH. (Frees his arm, grabs and holds HOFFY.) We got no time to argue.

HARRY. Sefton and Dunbar are waiting out there. (Pushes PRICE toward the door.)

HOFFY. Let's not act like animals!

REED. How many other guys have died or been sent off to a concentration camp because they trusted him. (HOFFY looks at PRICE.) he's not a fellow soldier... he's a German spy!

HOFFY. Even I trusted you. (Pause) Throw the bastard out! (PRICE begins struggling.)

STOSH. How much longer have we got?

HARRY. One minute. (They all remain silent and wait.)

LIGHTS FADE DOWN. SET CHANGES TO EXTERIOR OF COMPOUND.

SEFTON and DUNBAR crawl out from under the S.R. Barracks. They stand against the side, waiting. Suddenly the door flies open on the S.L. barracks. PRICE is thrown out. The door quickly shuts.) Let me in! Stosh! Hoffy! Let me in! (Search lights hit PRICE. PRICE now starts to shout in German.) Kameraden! Kameraden' Schiesst nicht! Schiesst nicht! [Comrades! Comrades! Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot! (PRICE’S is shouting at the tower. He is suddenly cut off by a sharp burst of machine gun fire. He runs upstage towards the fence. Machine guns fire again and PRICE reacts to each hit. As he falls his coat gets caught on the barbed wire of the fence. A whistle is heard offstage. PRICE’s body hangs on the fence silhouetted by the search lights.)

SEFTON. (To DUNBAR) You ready?

DUNBAR. Yeah!

SEFTON. (Gestures for DUNBAR to lead.) After you princess. (They exit)

CURTAIN