

CHINA

BEACH

"HEATWAVE"

REVISED FINAL DRAFT

February 10, 1988



WARNER BROS.
TELEVISION

CHINA BEACH

"Heatwave"

Written by

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CHINA BEACH

"Heatwave"

CAST

MCMURPHY

LAURETTE

LILA

BOONIE

DOCTOR RICHARD

NATCH

CHERRY

KC

BECKETT

OLD WOMAN (BA)

DAT THOU

PHOUNG KIET

AMERICAN

MIKE AGNONE

SISTER

COLONEL

*
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*

CHINA BEACH

"Heatwave"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

LILA'S ROOM

MCMURPHY/LAURETTE'S ROOM

RAMSHACKLE BUILDING

JET SET CLUB

Dressing Room

Bar/Stage

CO'S TRAILER

Bathroom

BUNKER

HOSPITAL

Reception Area

GRU

KC'S ROOM

EXTERIORS:

OCEAN

COMPOUND

DANANG

Dogpatch

Ramshackle Building

CO'S TRAILER

JET SET CLUB

ROAD

SACRED HEART ORPHANAGE

BRIDGE

F-4

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CHINA BEACH

"Heatwave"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

A1 KC'S HEAD - INT. KC'S ROOM (Transposed From Sc. 4) A1

Hangs over the side of her bed, upside-down. She's hot and bored, and hating who she's sleeping with.

B1 KC'S POV - THE JEWELRY CASE (UPSIDE-DOWN) (Transposed From Sc. 5) B1

Her wares are there, to buy and sell, dull behind the sweaty glass. There is also a photograph.

C1 CLOSEUP - THE PHOTOGRAPH (Transposed From Sc. 6) C1

shows an Oriental porcelain vase. Elegant and, oh, so cool-looking. The only respite from the heat. It rolls right side up as she does.

D1 OUT OF THE BED - BEHIND KC (Transposed From Sc. 7) D1

A ferrety, snake-oil peddler of a COLONEL with a sated libido oozes upright and begins retrieving his discarded uniform.

COLONEL

That was nice. Real nice.

(an equine snort)

That's the way it is with us, right, KC?

(another snort)

Nice.

He moves to the jewelry case and picks up the hardware that goes with his uniform.

COLONEL

Real nice.

E1 KC'S HEAD (Transposed From Sc. 8) E1

His words and snorts fade as she rolls back over and closes her eyes.

A droplet of sweat rolls down her upside-down forehead and falls to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

E1 CONTINUED: E1

OVER this, WWII's "I'LL BE SEEING YOU" PLAYS: "Cathedral bells were tolling/And our hearts rang on/Was this the thrill of Paris/Or the April dawn...?"

1 EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY 1

The ocean is dead, flat, brass-colored. BOONIE drifts, belly-down, on his surfboard. No wave. No ride. No escape from the heat.

The surfboard eases in, noses the sand. Beached and baked, Boonie's eyes remain closed as he murmurs:

BOONIE
Frag Moondoggie...

The vintage SONG CONTINUES: "Who knows if we shall meet again/But when the morning chimes ring sweet again..."

2 EXT. THE COMPOUND (FROM HELICOPTER - 2ND UNIT) - DAY 2

Heat shimmers over everything, real, tangible.

3 EXT. COMPOUND (A SERIES OF SHOTS) - DAY 3

CHERRY wheels a patient out. The boy uses a metal mess tray as a sun reflector to "catch a few rays." The heat wilts Cherry's homecoming princess look.

A sweating BECKETT stops at the compound bulletin board, untacks an Intelligence Report, futilely uses it as a fan, tacks it back up.

INSERT - CLOSEUP ON INTELLIGENCE REPORT

The report predicts a ⁷sapper attack that night.

At the chopper pad a helicopter lifts off. DR. DICK opens his arms to the breeze caused by the chopper blades, letting the rift dry his sweaty shirt.

AND: I'll be seeing you/In all the old familiar places/That this heart of mine embraces/All day through..."

4 OMITTED (Transposed To A1 Thru E1) 4
thru thru
8 8

9 EXT. CO'S TRAILER - DAY

9

McMURPHY walks away from the hospital, past the CO's trailer. Her t-shirt and fatigue pants are splotted with sweat and blood. She carries a plastic drip-bag full of blood in one hand.

A SPRINKLER waters the cookie-cutter patch of lawn behind the CO's white picket fence, singing a siren's SONG.

McMurphy looks at the prospect of cool water -- and over the fence she steps, ignoring the plethora of KEEP OFF THE GRASS signs and into the spray.

The wet rises up her body sensuously until she is deliciously soaked.

AND: "In the small cafe/The park across the way/
The children's carousel/ The chestnut trees/the wishing well..."

10 EXT. THE COMPOUND - MINUTES LATER

10

Natch catches up with the dripping, squeaking, McMurphy as she heads back to the church/hotel with the drip-bag.

NATCH

The wet look?

MCMURPHY

It helped. For a while.

NATCH

(meaning her)

She's never looked better

That almost gets her. Both can feel it.

NATCH

Come on, McMurphy. It's too hot to work so hard.

MCMURPHY

What?

NATCH

At not liking me. You're working way too hard at it.

MCMURPHY

(sweetly)

It's not so hard. It's a labor of love.

11 INT. LILA'S ROOM - SAME 11

Sitting in a fan-backed rattan chair, Lila confronts the stifling heat with Mrs. Miniver's well-bred decorum. Wearing a crisp white sundress, reminiscent of the 'Forties, hair in a proper chignon, Lila refuses to sweat. A "glow" is all she will allow herself.

Her air-conditioning UNIT'S WHEEZY BREATH spills over a bucket of pilfered ice, dropping the temperature by a few degrees, but it GRINDS DOWN. Now GURGLES. STOPS WHEEZING. Silence.

Always in control, Lila rises, moves to the still unit and wallops it a good one. The unit KICKS BACK into action and Lila smiles benignly.

OVER this: "I'll be seeing you in every lovely summer's day/In everything that's bright and gay/I'll always think of you that way..." And "I'LL BE SEEING YOU" WINDS DOWN.

She STARTS the RECORD over; and, as the romantic ballad of a simpler, cooler war begins again, Lila picks up the framed photograph of a WWII flyer.

12 INSERT - CLOSEUP ON PHOTOGRAPH 12

The photograph is inscribed: Lila, I'll be seeing you. Love, Don.

OVER this: "I'll find you in the morning sun/And when the night is new/I'll be looking at the moon/But I'll be seeing you."

13 BACK TO SCENE 13

What the heat couldn't do, the photograph and music can. Lila softens visibly, melting down.

14 INT. McMURPHY'S/LAURETTE'S ROOM - SAME 14

McMurphy enters, eyes the plant on the makeshift sill. "I'LL BE SEEING YOU" FILTERS into the room.

15 McMURPHY'S POV - THE POTTED/HELMET PLANT 15

The plant wants to die.

16 INT. THE ROOM 16

McMurphy tears open the drip-bag and pours the blood into the potting soil.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

MCMURPHY

Don't you die on me.

Her eyes drift beyond the plant.

17 MCMURPHY'S POV: THE COMPOUND 17 *

Natch strolls off. It's pirates, cowboys and Yanks in the RAF-stuff. Like Lila, McMurphy goes a little soft around the edges.

MCMURPHY (O.S.)

(meaning him)

Don't you dare die on me. *

18 EXT. THE COMPOUND - NEAR THE BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER 18

In her red Camaro, KC brakes reluctantly as Cherry runs up. KC is dressed ala Chanel, her suit shantung silk. Her face hides behind oversized sunglasses. *

CHERRY

(out of breath)

Did you talk to him, KC? What did he say?

KC

Who? *

CHERRY

The Colonel. You said you'd talk to him about Rick.

KC

Too much talk scares the Colonel. *

(mocks)

Nice. Real nice.

CHERRY

But... you promised --

KC

I never promise anything... *

(a little softer) *

I'll ask him next time. If there is a next time.

In a rush of on-the-edge excitement, KC beats out a wicked little tattoo on the Camaro's dashboard, then:

(CONTINUED)

KC

If, if everything goes according to plan, I'll be able to kiss everything about the Colonel but the Colonel, adios!

CHERRY

(worried and reproving)

KC, what are you up to now?

KC

(laughs)

No good. But if this deal goes down, KC won't have to do anything or anyone she doesn't want to ever again!

*

*

CHERRY

(trying for KC's sake)

That's great.

KC

That's independence. The only kind that counts. Nice. Real nice.

*

CHERRY

(innocent but not stupid)

Is there any danger?

KC

Not as long as they think I'm fronting for the Big Boys.

(another Ginger Baker tattoo)

But it's my deal. My cash. My ticket out of here.

*

She REVS the Camaro's ENGINE, but Cherry clutches the window sill, saying:

CHERRY

But, what about Rick?

KC

(impatiently)

The people I'm meeting today... they know. Do you copy? Then we'll get something on your brother.

*

(CONTINUED)

23 INT. LILA'S ROOM - SAME 23

Futilely, Lila JACKS UP the VOLUME on her PHONOGRAPH, slams "Loving Don" back in place, and sallies forth to meet the Hun.

24 INT. MCMURPHY/LAURETTE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 24

Lila storms into the room, demanding imperiously:

LILA
What do you call that?

LAURETTE
(sweetly amazed)
It's music, Lila.

LILA
That is not music. That is an iniquitous, insidious, invidious invitation to abandon common sense, culture and clothing and wallow in an atmosphere of rampant carnality, sexuality and lax hygiene!

*

LAURETTE
I could listen to this woman talk for hours.

LILA
(turning down tape)
Then listen to this. Miss Barber, your continued presence at China Beach is largely contingent upon my goodwill --

LAURETTE
I'm dead meat.

LILA
(Machiavelli in hose)
Ah, but the road runs both ways. If you need me, I need you as well.

LAURETTE
(suspicious)
How?

*

LILA
I've planned a special theme night. For the general and his staff. I'd like you to perform.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

CHERRY
(clutching straws)
Promise?

KC
(a little softer
still)
I never promise anything...

And the Camaro is gone.

Cherry stands alone in the swirling dust, watching KC streak for DaNang.

19 EXT. THE BRIDGE

19

A transport TRUCK RATTLES past the Camaro, into the compound and by the bulletin board.

20 INSERT - CLOSEUP ON INTELLIGENCE REPORT

20

Someone has added a comment to the report. The warning now reads: Sapper Attack Tonight: Black Tie Only.

21 BACK TO SCENE

21

The transport TRUCK RUMBLES up in front of the church/hotel. A sticky, ragged Laurette clambers out, ready to collapse. She's a sight.

22 INT. MCMURPHY/LAURETTE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

22

Laurette hits the room, peeling off her sweaty T-shirt and flinging it against the wall.

LAURETTE
I'm singing 'Crying in the Chapel'
and those peckerheads keep yelling,
'Take it off!' Isn't that against
the law or something?

McMurphy looks up from the plant she tends.

LAURETTE
(stares, points)
That looks a whole lot like blood.

MCMURPHY
(simply)
It's out of date.

(CONTINUED)

LAURETTE

Oh. Then I feel much better.

(moving to air
conditioner)

I'm sticky. I stink. I need what
we don't have. A --

(a daunting concept)

-- bath.

(halts at empty
window space)

That's not an air conditioner.

MCMURPHY

(curling up on bed)

That's a hole.

LAURETTE

(shocked)

We've been robbed.

(and)

What do we do now?

MCMURPHY

(sleepily)

We steal it back.

LAURETTE

Oh. Then I feel much better.

(sits on bed; back
to McMurphy)

They never even heard me. All
that rehearsing and the biggest
hand I got was when I forgot how
short my dress was and bent over...

(with sincerity)

It's a jungle out there, McMurphy.

No one cared. No one listened.

They could have sent a blow-up
plastic party doll...

(then)

McMurphy...?

Laurette looks around. McMurphy has fallen asleep.

LAURETTE

(hurt)

... No one listened...

Laurette rummages through her pile of tapes, jams one home. Martha and the Vandellas' "HEAT WAVE" wipes out Lila's "I'll Be Seeing You." Laurette joins in, regenerating her confidence.

McMurphy drags a pillow over her head.

24 CONTINUED:

24

LAURETTE

Some guys who won't cheer my
underpants! I can see it now!
(rhapsodic)
Belt a little Motown, cool down
with Patsy Cline, then blow the
roof off with a Haight-Ashbury
freakout! Wait 'til you hear my
Janis Joplin!

*
*
*
*
*
*

McMurphy pulls a second pillow over her head.

LILA

How's your Patti, Maxine and
LaVerne?

LAURETTE

Huh?

LILA

The Andrews Sisters.

LAURETTE

You kidding me? You've got me
singing the wrong war! I won't
do it!

LILA

(walks to the door)

Well...

(at Laurette's relief)

There's always Helen Morgan,
Margaret Whiting... stop by my
room. I have a lovely arrangement
of 'The White Cliffs of Dover.'

McMurphy hauls a third pillow onto her head.

25 EXT. DANANG - DAY

25

DaNang is a frontier town, an Asian Abilene, hard, raw
and fun -- at a price. KC maneuvers her Camaro through
the crowded streets.

"CRAZY" plays ON the RADIO.

26 EXT. DOGPATCH - SAME

26

KC turns into DaNang's crib section. Here, the poverty
moves even beyond the limits of Asia. The buildings
are less than hovels -- many not more than boxes made
from American scrap metal.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

KC slows the car down to a crawl, nosing her way through the packed humanity, edging it aside with her front bumper.

*

She pulls up in front of a ramshackle building. The crowd, curious, ugly, hungry, moves in. KC eyes the faces from behind the protection of her sunglasses, straightens her spine. She opens the car door, climbs out, walks through the crowd, straight up to the most hostile pair of eyes.

*
*
*
*

An OLD WOMAN stares at KC, a mute, xenophobic crone.

KC opens her purse, removes some money. She folds the Old Woman's fingers around the bills:

*

KC

I want the car to be here when I
get back, ba. Yes?
(harder)

Yes?

*
*

OLD WOMAN

(hand out)
Tire, too?

KC

(a few more piasters)
The tires, too, ba. And the
windshield wipers. And the radio.
And the cigarette lighter.

27 INT. THE RAMSHACKLE BUILDING - LATER

27

KC sits at a table in a near-empty room. The only light pours through the open door. An Asian man, DAT THOU, stands at the door, watching the street. A second Asian, PHOUNG KIET, and an AMERICAN flank KC.

*

On the table before KC are several 8x10 photographs. She picks up one, compares it to the one already in her hand.

*

28 INSERT - CLOSEUP ON PHOTOGRAPHS

28

Each shows a different angle of a white vase with a blue fernlike spray painted upon it. It is the same vase in the photograph in KC's room.

PHOUNG KIET (O.S.)

As you can see, the vase is a
superb example of procelain work.
The textured glaze --

PHOUNG KIET

-- Is the subtle essentiality of --

KC

(so cool)

What I see are four superb examples of photography. What I want to see is the vase.

AMERICAN

It isn't here. The deal was --

KC

Get it. Is that a problem?

AMERICAN

We told you: Half the money up front; half upon receipt.

KC

We told you: Proof of possession.
(taps photos)

This is not proof. As far as I'm concerned, this is how you spent your summer vacation. Proof is you, vase in hand, standing just about --

(points)

-- there.

PHOUNG KIET

Rick won't like it. It's too dangerous for him here. *

The American cuts his eyes at Kiet. Kiet tries to mask his blunder, but the sudden fear is there. KC hides her response to the name better, says coolly:

KC

Keep Rick happy. Find some place safer.

AMERICAN

(letting Rick slide)

In Danang? Listen to me, little sister --

KC

(rising)

The bottom line here, 'little brother,' is do you want to deal or don't you? *

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

PHOUNG KIET

How do we know we can trust you?

KC

The party I represent contracted
with your -- organization to
purchase one --

(by rote)

-- Porcelain K'ang Hsi vase from
the Manchu Dynasty. Trust doesn't
enter the picture. Pick your
'safe' place. Bring the vase.
I'll bring the money. Save the
snapshots for Rick's mantelpiece.

*

KC takes a moment to observe the response to Rick's name
-- it is clear the slip has created tension among the
black marketeers.

Filing this away, KC leaves.

At the bar Laurette piles her hair up to cool her neck --
and Boonie watches her with curiosity and some wonder.

*

Wired, KC moves in beside Laurette, demanding.

*

KC

Something special, Boonie.

BOONIE

(sets a beer before her)

It's as special as we get around
here. Celebrating?

KC

Walking on air. Tonight KC grabs
the gold ring, kisses this carousel
goodbye.

Laurette's unaware of the sudden tension in the air:

*

LAURETTE

I'd give the life of any firstborn-
type I might produce for one
honest-to-God-sit-down-and-wrinkle-
all-over-bath.

*

BOONIE

(for KC's benefit)

I'd join you.

*

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

LAURETTE
 (oh, so Laurette)
 I'd let you.

BOONIE
 One hitch. There's only one tub
 in the whole camp.

LAURETTE
 And...?

BOONIE
 And it's inside the C.O.'s trailer.
 Strictly off-limits.

KC
 (for Boonie's
 benefit)
 I can get you inside.

31 INT. THE CO'S BATHROOM - LATER 31

KC flips on a light, indicates the pristine, oversized,
 rectangular, white bathtub.

KC
 Your tax dollars at work. Enjoy.
 The general's sitting out this
 latest offensive on Maui.

31A A SERIES OF SHOTS 31A

Laurette stoppers the tub, turns on the water.
 She empties ice cube trays into the filling tub.

31B INTERCUT KC'S ROOM 31B

KC lays out neat little packets of money on her bed.
 An open briefcase is at the foot of the bed. Waiting.

32 INT. THE CO'S BATHROOM 32

Laurette splashes a little Old Spice into the water for
 effect, sniffing rapturously. She starts to recap the
 bottle, shrugs, and pours the rest of the aftershave into
 the tub.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

She peels her clothes with a stripper's abandon. Her shorts sail into the hall. Her blouse hangs on top of the door. She hums a little bump and grind for all this.

Another search of the medicine cabinet produces a woman's tortoise shell hair clip.

LAURETTE

Mrs. General's we'll presume.

She sweeps her hair up, secures it, turns to the tub, slowly, seductively, like a lover.

One foot lifts, then arcs, ballerina-like, to fall toward the water. Her pointed toes reach the water line and penetrate it.

OVER this: Tchaikovsky's "DEATH OF THE SWAN QUEEN" from Swan Lake.

Her eyes close in ecstasy. She sighs. Heaven.

32A INTERCUT: KC'S ROOM

32A

Money laid out, ready, KC's eyes close in anticipatory ecstasy. She sighs. Heaven.

The ALERT SOUNDS, ending KC's bliss.

MORTARS START to HIT. Money starts to bounce. KC dives to retrieve her scattered cash.

The FLOOR QUIVERS, the money flies, KC jumps. The LIGHTS BLOW.

33 INT. THE CO'S BATHROOM

33

Eyes now open, Laurette chooses to ignore the alert. She lifts her second foot, begins to ease it into the water.

Standing, stork-like, the LIGHTS BLOW.

34 EXT. COMPOUND - A MOMENT LATER

34

wrapped in the CO's "Reclining Buddah" towel, Laurette sprints across the compound for the safety of a bunker.

LANDING MORTARS SCORE all around her and she yelps with each EXPLOSION.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SOMEONE is CRYING in the darkness.

FADE IN:

35 INT. THE BUNKER - NIGHT

35

It's black inside the bunker. The CRYING continues. A candle lights. The flickering light plays over the the faces in the bunker: Lila and Cherry.

Now in comes KC, her cool chanced but intact, briefcase at her side, a copy of the Wall Street Journal in her hand.

KC

This better not last long.

Cherry cowers toward her with each EXPLOSION -- an Iowa innocent in white pajamas and pink curlers.

And KC, feeling silly, half not wanting to, nevertheless, puts her arm around her.

Lila faces the attack in a filmy peignoir ensemble, complete with maribou edging, fluffy mules and green face mask. She cradles an open vanity case, her bunker kit, on her lap, doling out stubs of candle from it.

LILA

Here. Take this. No, no, pass it on. Steady, don't tip it. You'll burn yourself with the --

There is a sudden flash of light at the entrance.

Laurette and the towel crouch there, silhouetted by the glare from an EXPLOSION.

LAURETTE

Oh God, I'm going to die... naked
... in a hole in the ground...
(moves in, considers
Cherry and Lila)
... With Sandra Dee and Eva Gabor!
It isn't fair.

Another MORTAR HITS. Laurette yelps.

LILA

Steady on, Laurette. No one is going to die here tonight.

LAURETTE

How can you be so sure?

(CONTINUED)

Lila packs a little earth around her candle to hold it upright, then checks to see if her facial mask is lifting.

LILA
(rummaging through
the vanity case)
There is no one's name written on
the walls.
(takes a package)
Have a Lorna Doone?

Lila may be a little much, but she is also spellbinding.
Cherry accepts a Lorna Doone.

CHERRY
No one's name? What does that
mean?

LILA
It's what we used to say in London.
During the Blitz.
(for Cherry)
The Battle of Britain.

CHERRY
I read about that in history.

LILA
(drawing Cherry out of
her fear)
Each time after the Luftwaffe's
bombers had passed over... the fire
wardens would check the shelters
for casualties. Calling out,
'Anyone's name written on the
wall?'

CHERRY
Really?

Again, Lila delves into her vanity case, producing a
silver hip flask.

LILA
Brandy? Lorna Doones and brandy
go best with bombings.

More EXPLOSIONS, nearer. Laurette wraps the towel more
tightly around herself.

LAURETTE
(points at Lila)
Could someone shut her up!

(CONTINUED)

LILA

They say truth is the first casualty of war, but I'd put my money on good manners.

KC

(checks wrist watch)

Let's not mention money. Tonight's fireworks display could be costing me a fortune.

LILA

Is that all you can think about? Your bank account?

CHERRY

(earnestly)

It isn't the money, Lila. It's about independence.

KC

(drily honest)

It's about money, too.

Before Cherry can say anything, the flap over the entrance buckles.

The women freeze, eyes fixed upon the tarpaulin.

Laurette's fingers pleat the edge of the towel. *

Lila and KC, the old hands of this, exchange a questioning glance: Friend or VC?

A BARRAGE of FIRE, then stillness. The tarpaulin lifts. A head pokes in.

MCMURPHY

Avon calling.

The women relax as McMurphy, dressed in flak jacket, helmet and shortie nightie, scoots into the bunker.

MCMURPHY

It's personal now. A vendetta. Even Charlie doesn't want me to get any sleep. *

LAURETTE

What kept you?

(CONTINUED)

MCMURPHY

Didn't have a thing to wear.
(then)
Love your outfit though.

*

LAURETTE

(touches towel)
What? This ol' thing?
(then)
You really ought to try and get
some rest, McMurphy.
(holds candle close)
The skin around your eyes is
beginning to look like waxed
paper.

*

MCMURPHY

You're a peach, Laurette.

McMurphy takes off her flak jacket and rolls it into a
pillow. Taking off her helmet, she lies back.

*

*

LILA

The third casualty of war. A
decent complexion.

*

Once again a SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS intrude on the attempts
at keeping the mood "all in a day."

Laurette sings shakily into the stillness that follows:

*

LAURETTE

'Mama said there'd be days like
this, there'd be days like this
my mama said...'

MCMURPHY

(helping out)
'Mama said! Mama said --'

LAURETTE

' -- There'd be days like this --'

KC and Cherry join in, grinning through their fear:

ALL BUT LILA

'There'd be days like this, my --'

The impromptu sing-along is cut short by a LONG, PIERC-
ING WHISTLE, then ANOTHER EXPLOSION. In its wake, there
is silence.

The silence stretches to the breaking point. And now:

*

(CONTINUED)

KC

It isn't my complexion I worry
about.

LILA

(sarcastic)

I'm sure.

KC

With all the drinking, and no fresh
vegetables -- I have fought the
same six pounds since I got here.

LAURETTE

(around a Lorna Doone)

Well, you sure won the war. I
couldn't bribe my rear end into
that dress you're wearing.

CHERRY

I come from a family where the
women go all to hip after
thirty-two.

(puts back a cookie)

It's pretty scary.

MCMURPHY

(eyes closed)

Be brave. And turn on the air
conditioner.

LAURETTE

(to KC)

So, how do you do it, then?
Staple your lips?

KC

I never forget the religious side
to fashion.

LAURETTE

Huh?

MCMURPHY

KC's right. Never, I mean, never
underestimate the power of prayer.

LAURETTE

Prayer...?

KC/MCMURPHY

Dear God, let it fit!

Their laughter fades as the WAR reasserts itself.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (5)

35

The five women draw back into themselves, listening.
Fear -- a living thing -- shares the bunker with them.

Lila, KC and McMurphy meet each other's eyes. They have
been down this road before.

Cherry settles in more closely to KC.

KC neither rejects or welcomes the younger girl's
presence.

Laurette confronts her fear with a loud, verbal assault.
She dives in, loud enough to be heard through the HITS:

LAURETTE

Okeh, okeh. So we've hit most of
the big ones: bad skin, midriff
bulge --

(to KC)

The power of prayer --

(to Lila)

Ancient history... and all that's
cool. But I want to know when
we'll --

(sing-song)

'Get right down to the real nitty-
gritty?'

CHERRY

What's that?

MCMURPHY

You had to ask?

LAURETTE

Men! Capital S-E-X, men!

CHERRY

(suddenly shy)

Oh. That.

KC

My feelings exactly.

Lila turns to McMurphy, taps at her mask, starts to take
it off, and cutting off the subject.

LILA

I think I'm beginning to crack.

(CONTINUED)

*

*
*
*

LAURETTE

Not a chance.

(then)

So? Who wants to be first?

(forbidding silence)

Okeh, since you all insist, I'll go first. All right...

(like a postulate)

I believe there are no bad men. Only men who have not yet asked me out. Like Boonie.

(oblivious to KC's look)

I believe he could be a very good man. I believe I should help him reach that goal.

MCMURPHY

I believe someone should take her towel away from her.

LAURETTE

McMurphy?

MCMURPHY

(deliberately obtuse)

What?

LAURETTE

Come on! What do you think makes a good man?

MCMURPHY

(no hedging)

Me.

(at their laughter)

Go ahead, laugh. It's true. And you all know it. Men are... whatever we make them.

CHERRY

I'm really lost.

MCMURPHY

You like the set of his shoulders? He's sensitive. Great thighs? He's responsible. Good in bed? The guy's... what? Intelligent?

KC

On his way up.

Laurette snickers and Lila inserts primly:

(CONTINUED)

LILA

Giving.

*

MCMURPHY

He dumps you and you suddenly
realize you've been dating a Nazi!

LAURETTE

(game)

A hunchbacked Nazi!

KC

A hunchbacked Nazi with a poor
credit rating.

MCMURPHY

I rest my case.

CHERRY

(dubious)

It sounds a little like
Frankenstein's monster.

LILA

It sounds a lot like Frankenstein's
monster.

CHERRY

What about love?

MCMURPHY

It's in there. You make it fit.
Like KC's dress.

LAURETTE

He doesn't belch in public.
You're sure it's love.

MCMURPHY

He sticks around for a while.
You're sure it's love.

KC

He doesn't hit you. Much.
You're sure it's love.

*

CHERRY

Not to me.

KC

You're a kid. You'll learn.

(CONTINUED)

CHERRY

(stung)

Oh, that's so easy!

*

KC

I didn't say it was easy.

LAURETTE

(into the quiet)

How long has it been?

*

*

KC

(worried about
her big deal)

Why? You got big plans?

LAURETTE

(Bert Parks)

And now, The winner by a landslide,
1967's Miss Congeniality -- China
Beach...

*

*

*

*

*

KC slashes Laurette with her eyes. Definitely more here
than a few mortar rounds and close quarters.

LAURETTE

(back-pedaling)

So... maybe not... so, anybody
read any good books lately? Any
bad books?

(then)

Okeh, okeh, I've got it! I've
got it! We'll play 'Firsties'!

KC's response is a rustle of the Journal's turning pages.

McMurphy shakes her head slowly.

CHERRY

'Firsties'?

LAURETTE

You know, first dance, first car,
first paycheck. Everyone tells
her story.

CHERRY

I never owned a car.

LAURETTE

Right..

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAURETTE (CONT'D)

(then)

Okeh, okeh, here's the deal.

(builds for suspense)

The subject is: The first time
you -- had -- sex!

Reactions run true. KC remains behind the Journal.

Cherry blushes, turns away.

McMurphy's eyes drift. It's all too damn depressing.

MCMURPHY

Laurette.

LAURETTE

(matches her tone)

Colleen.

LILA

I'm not taking part in this tawdry
bit of show and tell.

LAURETTE

McMurphy...?

MCMURPHY

Not on your --

KC

(still behind
the paper)

I lost it at the movies. In a
Chevy Impala. White. With a
turquoise interior. A car that's
parked on the right side of the
tracks. I didn't. To put it
mildly... The Junior Mints
were stale...

(peers around the
Journal)

And so was the sex.

(behind the paper)

Great, A.T. and T. is down by six.
What else can go wrong tonight?

Suddenly McMurphy begins to speak:

(CONTINUED)

*

MCMURPHY

Until I was twenty, I'd never even dated anyone who wasn't the best friend of a brother. And a Catholic. Five dates. Five boys whose mothers wanted them to be priests.

*

LAURETTE

(she's not joking)

Sounds like hell.

MCMURPHY

I didn't care about any of them, you know. Except Johnny. I believed Johnny Kabonic was my reward for owing all the rules.

*

KC

Nice girl finishes first, huh?

*

MCMURPHY

Until my brother, Brian, found I wasn't such a 'nice' girl. He and Johnny were best friends all through school, catechism, confirmation, everything. But he almost beat him to death.

*

KC

One battlefield to the next. No wonder you became a nurse, McMurphy.

*

*

MCMURPHY

When the fight was over, Brian sat on the running board of his pickup and cried. Said I'd ruined everything. He wouldn't even look at me.

*

*

Laurette jumps in after awhile to deflect McMurphy's pain:

*

*

LAURETTE

I was in this band, Pontiac and the Wyandots. Strictly nowhere, Jones, but the drummer had forearms to die for.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAURETTE (CONT'D)

(remembering)

Drummer forearms, this dark, deep tan, and a white shirt with the sleeves rolled just to there --

(draws a line just below the elbow)

Anyway, I decided to give myself to this guy --

CHERRY

(appalled)

Because of his forearms?

LAURETTE

I know. It denotes a certain shallowness on my part. But I learned my lesson. Forearms to die for do not necessarily come paired with a backbone.

MCMURPHY

(grins)

Dumped you, huh?

LAURETTE

In Pocatello, Idaho. At the state fair. For the reigning Spud Queen. I haven't touched a potato since.

Everyone is laughing. Even the Journal jiggles suspiciously.

Caught up in the camaraderie of the moment, Lila begins to talk -- surprising herself most of all.

LILA

Not Donald. Just Don. That was his name. He was always very, very definite about that. Just Don. He was with the R.A.F. He'd joined up even before Pearl Harbor. I was a --

(smiles for Cherry)

-- Donut Dolly. We'd both rushed the war, so afraid it would end before we got our fair share... There was this little cafe. Red checked tablecloths. Candles in wine bottles. Some silly girl from Soho trying to sing like Hildegard.

*

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

LAURETTE

Or the Andrews Sisters?

LILA

(soft laugh)

Don loved it all. He used to slip that girl twenty dollar bills to sing 'I'll Be Seeing You' over and over.

(eyes focus on a distance)

His Spitfire flamed-out somewhere over the Low Countries.

*
*

McMurphy and Laurette exchange a look. This is something they hadn't expected. Lila: flesh and blood and heart.

CHERRY

My boyfriend and I, we have a special song, too. Do you know 'Icicles, Popsicles'?

LAURETTE

Forget the top forty. Let's hear hear more about this boyfriend.

*

CHERRY

I... well, actually...

KC

(paper down, protective)

She never owned a car, remember?

KC and Laurette take each other's measure.

Cherry jumps in, hoping to divert a confrontation:

CHERRY

(unconsciously doing Laurette)

Okay, okay, I've got it! I've got it! Everyone has to wish for what they want most in the world.

LAURETTE

That's a snap. The undying love of a good man. Or a standing ovation. Or both.

*

CHERRY

(looks to KC)

I wish I could get word about my brother. From people who really 'know.'

(CONTINUED)

KC

I wish I could get out of this
hole before the deal of a lifetime
goes sour and --

(drily at the looks)

I'd like an end to world hunger
and peace in our times.

*

MCMURPHY

Peace? Yeah. Just a cool patch
of it.

Before Lila can speak, there is a CRASH against the
entry tarp.

*

A sudden flash of light.

The women tense, expecting the worst.

The crash becomes Boonie stumbling into the bunker, the
compound lights are now on behind him.

BOONIE

Somebody here order a pizza?

*

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

36 OMITTED 36
 & &
 37 37

38 EXT. THE CHURCH/HOTEL THE NEXT DAY 38

There's a pothole from a mortar blast, some upheaved debris -- and nearby KC examines her Camaro.

One red panel has been damaged in the attack. Cherry hovers, a persistent gadfly with a "mission."

KC
 (a little hurt
 showing through)
 Can you tell me the reason for
 that? Talk about mindless waste...

CHERRY
 (eagerly)
 Those people you talked to
 yesterday -- in DaNang. Did
 they --

KC
 -- Rick? Maybe.
 (a cocky grin)
 Let me handle it, all right.
 (the grin
 disappears)
 If I can still make contact.

CHERRY
 Let me go with you this time.

KC
 Miss Spanky Pants Meets the Black
 Market. You'd blow the whole
 deal. If there still is a deal.
 (touches crumpled
 fender tenderly)
 Somebody just tell me, tell me why.

39 INT. THE HOSPITAL - DAY 39

McMurphy and Doctor Dick have worked their way through the night's wounded. Now there is a light at the end of the tunnel as McMurphy moves to the last gurney.

(CONTINUED)

MCMURPHY

Third degree over seventy-five.

DOCTOR RICHARD

Over-easy or sunnyside-up?

MCMURPHY/DOCTOR RICHARD

Oh --

(as Doctor Dick joins
her)

Shut up...

DOCTOR RICHARD

(mock serious)

Have I grown predictable? Is the
magic gone from this relationship?

(then all business)

Did he get morphine?

MCMURPHY

Done.

DOCTOR RICHARD

Then get some sleep.

MCMURPHY

Rack. Full rack. On rack. Sun
rack. Rack of Ages.

(then)

It's too hot to sleep.

A corpsman, MIKE AGNONE, enters, pushing another gurney.

MCMURPHY

What now?

MIKE AGNONE

Couple hookers found him in an
alley in Dogpatch. Take it or
leave it.

McMurphy's hand moves reflexively to stroke the cap of
blonde hair worn longer than regulation.

Doctor Richard reaches out, turns the pale, handsome face
to one side. The off-side is blued and bloodied. A
neat hole in the temple.

DOCTOR RICHARD

He's been lone-wolfing it for a
while. Not your typical combat
wound.

(CONTINUED)

39

CONTINUED: (2)

39

MIKE AGNONE

Look at his wrists. He was tied
good an' tight.

MCMURPHY

(looking again)

An execution? Is that what you're
saying?

MIKE AGNONE

He knew too much. He talked too
much. Who knows? Who wants to?

DOCTOR RICHARD

I.D.?

MIKE AGNONE

(shakes head)

Zip. Guys who go native don't
wear dog tags.

DOCTOR RICHARD

Why do we ask?

(off the wall)

You know the guy?

McMurphy smooths the blonde hair again, turns the ruined
side back to the gurney. Touches the yellow hair one
more time. Again. Recalls another face.

MCMURPHY

He looks like an Iowa farm kid.

40

EXT. THE BRIDGE - LATER THAT DAY

40

The "wounded" Camaro limps gallantly over the bridge.

A watchful Cherry, mounts a rattle-trap bicycle, and
follows. She pedals for all she's worth -- but even in
its damaged condition, the Camaro draws away and
disappears.

41

INT. THE JET SET CLUB - LATER

41

Lila cleans up wreckage, and begins a restacking of
unbroken glasses. A grunt pushing a wheel barrel of
gathered debris goes by -- and the lovely glass pyramid
collapses.

LILA

(woeful)

... My 'Forties Night'...

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

Boonie turns from his work on a backdrop painting a garish view of the White Cliffs of Dover that would make Van Gogh dizzy.

BOONIE

So...?

LILA

(reavering)

I think... it could use a bluebird.

(beat)

Or two.

BOONIE

Everyone's a critic.

42 ANGLE ON STAGE

42

Laurette takes the stage. Smiles for Boonie. Eyes the backdrop.

BOONIE

You don't like it.

LAURETTE

Like it? I love it!

(and)

What is it?

43 ANGLE ON BAR

43

Lila sits on a stool, nails tap-tapping.

LILA

Laurette, dear, I'm waiting.

44 ANGLE ON STAGE

44

LAURETTE

Okay... Okay... I'm ready. I'm set. I'm go.

(sings)

'Soldier boy, oh, my little soldier boy, I'll be true to you...'

Laurette's version of the Shirelles' hit is lower, grittier, "Forties" blue. Hildegard would have loved it. "Loving Don," too.

Boonie's forgotten paintbrush says it's good.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

Lila's face is a delight. She loves it. She's worried because she loves it.

LAURETTE
 (winds down, gutsy
 and blue)
 'Soldier boy, oh, my little soldier
 boy... I'll... be... true... to...
 you...'

LILA
 (into the appreciative
 silence)
 That's it?

LAURETTE
 (a Cherry-like
 vulnerability)
 You didn't like it? I thought
 for sure you'd like it. And
 now you don't like it.

LILA
 (honest)
 I like it.
 (more honest)
 That worries me.

LAURETTE
 (big smile)
 Then you'll love this.

Laurette moves into a lovely a capella rendition of "I'll Be Seeing You."

45 LILA'S FACE

45

First there is surprise. Then brief delight for the gesture.

But, as the song progresses, the delight slips, becomes something else.

Pain? Anger?

46 ANGLE ON STAGE

46

Laurette turns to smile at Lila. Stops singing.

47 ANGLE ON EMPTY BAR STOOL

47

- 48 ANGLE ON STAGE 48
 Laurette looks at Boonie.
- LAURETTE
 I thought she'd love it.
- 49 OMITTED 49 *
- 50 EXT. THE SACRED HEART ORPHANGE - DAY - LATER 50 *
- The Camaro pulls onto the orphanage grounds. KC turns off the ignition. Hands on the steering wheel, beating out a slight tattoo, she eyes the orphanage. It bears the obvious marks of Catholicism -- a crucifix above the lintel, a polychromatic Pieta in a fern-draped niche. It also carries the marks of war in shell-blasted trees, pock-marked earth. *
- 51 KC'S POV - THE CHILDREN 51
- Slowly, they appear, like forest creatures, moving to circle the convertible. *
- 52 ANGLE ON KC AS THE CIRCLE TIGHTENS 52
- KC is not moved to tears. *
- KC
 Dandy... Don't touch the chrome.
- 53 EXT. THE ORPHANGE - ARCHWAY 53 *
- KC counts out a few bills into an Ursaline SISTER's hand. She is not happy with the way things are going.
- SISTER
 We are so very grateful for your contribution, Miss --
- KC
 Just KC.
- SISTER
 Of course. Many of our patrons desire anonymity.
- KC
 No kidding.

(CONTINUED)

53

CONTINUED:

53

SISTER

When Mr. Phoung told us of your wish to help the children, it was as though the Lord had directly interceded upon our behalf.

(a sweet smile)

Again.

KC

His eye on the sparrow, right?

SISTER

We were expecting you last --

KC

I got pinned inside a bunker.

SISTER

Of course. Unfortunately, Mr. Phoung and his associates are no longer here.

KC

(dream castles
crumbling)

Yeah, but... how...?

SISTER

He asked me to tell you that he would be in touch. Maybe.

(and)

He never promises anything.

KC's face.

54

OMITTED

54

&

&

55

55

55A

EXT. THE BEACH - DUSK

55A

A dejected, exhausted Cherry pushes her bike through the sand.

55B

EXT. THE BEACH

55B

She struggles the kickstand down and starts to leave the bike -- it sinks and fills over.

Cherry is near tears or kicking puppies.

(CONTINUED)

55B CONTINUED:

55B

MCMURPHY
(calls) *

There you are.

CHERRY
(snaps) *

So what? *

MCMURPHY
(backing off)

Whoa... skip it.

CHERRY

I'm sorry. *

(a sudden knowledge)

Is something wrong?

MCMURPHY

I don't... there was this G.S.W... *

(at her blank
expression)

... What have you learned about
your brother? *

CHERRY

Rick...?

MCMURPHY
(wanting out)

Do you know anything more than
when you first got here? *

CHERRY

I keep running into walls. I
heard he was missing in action,
probably... *

(she can't say it) *

KC says he could be in DaNang,
but -- *

MCMURPHY

KC? What does she have to do
with any of this?

CHERRY

She said she had friends who -- *

MCMURPHY

Friends? In DaNang?

CHERRY
(not stupid)

'People in the know,' she said. *

People who would have ways of
finding --

(CONTINUED)

55B CONTINUED: (2)

55B

MCMURPHY

Listen... a kid was brought into
the hospital this morning --

CHERRY

(excited)

Rick? Is it Rick? Can I see him?
Oh, Colleen, it's like my wish --

MCMURPHY

(getting through it)

He's been shot in the head. When
I first saw him I thought of you.
His hair was like... yours.

*

Cherry clutches McMurphy's arm, dragging her.

*

CHERRY

I want to see him. Hurry,
please. I need to see if it's
Rick!

*

MCMURPHY

Whoever he is, the kid is dead.
Do you hear me? Okay? Dead.
No wish come --

*

*

CHERRY

D-D-Dead?

MCMURPHY

Someone put a bullet through his
brain. Some 'friend' in DaNang
probably.

*

(breakable)

His hair was just like...

Cherry moves away like a sleepwalker.

MCMURPHY

What are you doing?

CHERRY

I'm going to the hospital. I
still have to see if it's...
Rick.

MCMURPHY

He's not in the hospital.

*

56 INT. GRU - LATER

56

Cherry stands by the door, pale and blue in her Red Cross uniform, caught in the rhythmic striping of the fan blades.

BECKETT

(to McMurphy)

I don't like this. Don't. Do not.

MCMURPHY

He could be her brother, Beckett.

BECKETT

Oh man... the guy just wants to be dead.

McMurphy moves to a rack of body bags. She touches a zipper. The noise is loud in the quiet.

Cherry swallows noisily, looks away quickly.

57 CLOSEUP ON BECKETT'S HAND

57

His dark hand closes over McMurphy's.

BECKETT (O.S.)

You're intrudin', Mick Em.

58 ANGLE ON GRU - THE TWO OF THEM

58

A look, and Beckett removes her hand deliberately. He zips the bag fully closed again.

BECKETT

Not him.

(to Cherry)

You sure?

CHERRY

I'm sure.

BECKETT

It ain't what you think, you know. It's hard. The flesh all goes to bones. Your dreams all go to bone.

CHERRY

I can't not know. I can't. I have to see.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 58

BECKETT

I know.

Beckett moves to a section of racks:

59 THE BODY BAG - THE DEAD MAN'S UNZIPPING PROFILE 59

Cherry's face comes INTO FOCUS BEYOND it. The resemblance is there -- even with the flesh all gone to bone. The hair. The cheekbones. The full lower lip.

60 ANGLE ON BECKETT 60

The resemblance hits him the way it did McMurphy. It's scary. One of the "boys" belongs to someone else now.

61 ANGLE ON CHERRY 61

Her eyes fill. Glitter.

MCMURPHY

(appearing next to
her)

Is it...?

CHERRY

... No.

62 ANGLE ON BECKETT 62

The sound of a ZIPPER CLOSING.

BECKETT

(many things)

Always a pleasure, Mick Em.

63 EXT. THE COMPOUND - LATER - NIGHT 63 *

Cherry and McMurphy walk across it. *

CHERRY

Do you know what's so awful?

MCMURPHY

I don't know anything.

(CONTINUED)