

# CHINA

---

# BEACH

"THE CALL"

FIRST DRAFT

October 25, 1990



WARNER BROS.  
TELEVISION

Rev. 11/01/90 (Blue)  
Rev. 11/02/90 (Pink)  
Rev. 11/07/90 (Yellow)  
Rev. 11/09/90 (Green)

CHINA BEACH

"The Call"

Written by

Paris Qualles  
&  
Cathryn Michon

Directed by

Robert Ginty

Executive Consultant  
William Broyles, Jr.

Producers  
Carol Flint  
Lydia Woodward  
Geno Escarrega

Supervising Producer  
Mimi Leder

Co-Executive Producer  
John Wells

Executive Producer  
John Sacret Young

SACRET, INC.  
in association with:

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BETTY RUBIN  
TVC

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CHINA BEACH

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CAST

McMURPHY

DOCTOR RICHARD

DODGER

FRANKIE

LILA

DEL WEST

DARRIN SETH

MEG HECTOR

WAITRESS

CORPSMAN

GI

RASHID SOLAM

EDDIE DAVIS

GUNNER

ILSA VON KLEIN

BOBBY SEALE

JUDGE HOFFMAN

SHULTZ

KUNSTLER

VILLAGER

\*

CHINA BEACH

"The Call"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

ELECTRIC GUN  
Backstage

WHITE TOWER

TRIAGE

CHOPPER

LONGHOUSE

EDDIE'S SOUTH SIDE  
APARTMENT

STORAGE HUT

FEDERAL DISTRICT COURTHOUSE  
Courtroom  
Hallway

APARTMENT BUILDING  
Stairwell

EXTERIORS:

CHICAGO STREET

VILLAGE

STEEP MOUNTAIN TRAIL

MOUNTAIN PLATEAU

NORTHSIDE ALLEY

CHICAGO CATHEDRAL

COMPOUND



CHINA BEACH

"The Call"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

Silence, deathly, bored silence, punctuated by an occasional, uninterested COUGH.

FRANKIE (O.S.)  
You know, it's a very funny  
thing...

And we find ourselves in:

1 INT. ELECTRIC GNU - NIGHT

1

An old vaudeville theatre turned to garish psychedelia. Hippies and yippies and curious accountants smoke and drink just like Brecht wanted them to. He also wanted them to listen. They don't. ON the SCREEN:

"Chicago, October, 1969"

A single spotlight cuts through the smoke and finds a tall black woman onstage who is somehow looking very small, and feeling microscopic. It's FRANKIE, dying and wanting to die.

FRANKIE  
(rapid-fire)  
I mean, I think it's funny... I  
was reading this magazine article  
called "Developing Your Beauty  
Philosophy."

The spotlight cuts toward her like a knife poised to kill. On the wall behind her a banner, "Monday Night Open Mike."

FRANKIE  
And I started thinking about what  
I do to get beautiful. Well, I  
get permanents.

Lips soaked in sweat, quivering, saying nothing. A sudden laugh from the crowd, at nothing she's said, for she's said nothing.

FRANKIE  
Which aren't by the way. Permanent  
I mean, I mean they're very  
temporary, they should call them  
temporaries...

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

The audience wells up into a roar of silence.

FRANKIE

Or maybe not. Anyway.  
 (with the vigor of  
 one who jumps off  
 a building)

So one day I started thinking, I  
 put this stuff on my head to  
 straighten my hair right? But  
 what's to keep it from soaking  
 right through my scalp and  
 straightening out the fissures  
 in my brain.

The audience has become an echo chamber of disdain.

FRANKIE

I mean what if every time I get  
 one of these permanent temporaries  
 I get temporarily stupider. Or  
 maybe it works better on brains  
 than hair and each time I'm getting  
 a permanent I'm actually getting  
 permanently stupider. What then?

A gaping black hole of boredom.

FRANKIE

(as she hits the  
 ground)  
 Well it's certainly something to  
 think about.

She's a wounded gazelle before lions.

FRANKIE

Yeah, it's really something to  
 think about --

2 FRANTIC MAN OFFSTAGE

2

DEL WEST, reed thin, balding, with the thyroid output  
 of ten men, waves his arms frantically. He looks like  
 some scary puppet of a court jester.

3 PIANO PLAYER

3

at a scratched up baby grand stage left gets the message  
 and begins to play a tinkling jazz riff as Del runs  
 onstage.

(CONTINUED)

3

CONTINUED:

3

DEL  
 (his arm around  
 Frankie)  
 It certainly is something to think  
 about... Yeah, Frankie's a very  
 philosophical girl, she asked  
 me once if her hairdo fell in  
 the forest would anybody care?

The audience, in a rare gesture of magnanimity renders  
 light applause... Frankie escapes offstage.

DEL  
 She's a girl that believes, 'I  
 dress, therefore I am.'

The audience laughs in snide, hip appreciation.

DEL  
 You can always count on us here  
 at The Electric Gnu for political  
 comedy on the cutting edge. So  
 let's hear it for Frankie Bunsen...

The audience bubbles over in cruel mirth.

4

BACKSTAGE

4

Frankie watches brokenly as Del, and the audience who  
 wouldn't laugh with her, now laugh at her.

In the shadows a man leans on a light tree. DARRIN SETH,  
 the guru-mentor of the new talent selected for open-mike.  
 A wild-haired man with a goatee, glasses thick as Chunkie  
 bars, and a dead pan that either makes you laugh or run  
 screaming in terror. If you're hiring an enigma he'd  
 be your first pick.

Frankie avoids Darrin's gaze and heads in the other  
 direction gathering up her coat and shoulder bag.  
 She is stopped by MEG HECTOR, a blonde, excitable  
 Winnetka Wasp with a permanently surprised look on her  
 face. Frankie is not in the mood for Meg's spunkiness.  
 Frankie keeps walking, Meg walks with her.

MEG  
 Hey, it went good --

FRANKIE  
 (go away)  
 Nobody laughed.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

MEG

(a puppy)

Sometimes that can be good. It's like they're laughing inside but you can't hear it. The permanent thing could be funny, but you made a teeny mistake.

\*  
\*  
\*

Is this girl serious? Unfortunately, yes. What can you say?

MEG

You kept saying permanents straighten your hair instead of saying they make it curly.

Frankie's face says it all, she disappears out the backstage door.

CUT TO:

5

INT. WHITE TOWER - NIGHT

5

Late night. Too bright. White walls, greasy tile, noisy fluorescent lights. Burgers and dripping fries, crankcase coffee, counter in the front, nahgahyde booths in the back. Frankie's nursing some cold fries in the back booth. It's 2:30 A.M.

DARRIN

Quitting?

He slides in across from her.

FRANKIE

Figured I had to make it to the El before somebody started gathering kindling for the Auto de Fey.

DARRIN

You haven't even failed yet.

He's stealing her fries.

FRANKIE

Come on, if I'd have stayed out there another thirty seconds they would have put the tablecloths on their heads and set a cross on fire.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

5

DARRIN

You haven't failed. You havn't even tried. You're a failure at failure. You haven't put yourself out there at all... it's somebody else out there. Who is that? Is she funny? Work from what you know. What's in here. That's what's worth saying.

Meg and Del plop down in the booth.

DEL

(he hopes he is)  
We disturbing anything?

MEG

Hi.

DEL

(signalling)

Hey!

Now Del digs into Frankie's fries. A tired WAITRESS walks up.

DEL

Fries wet and a coffee, lots of cream.

DARRIN

Coffee.

MEG

Glass of water, please.

WAITRESS

Anybody got money?

DEL

Bunsen's buying.

The Waitress isn't moving till she sees some green. Frankie digs out a couple of crumbly bucks. The Waitress splits.

DEL

You really stunk out there. My ma called, she could smell it in Cleveland.

\*  
\*

The front door swings open and the folks at the counter react to what's coming in.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED: (2)

5

DARRIN

Well, well, well -- aren't we the  
happenin' place...

A curly-haired white yippie, with a large group of black men making their way to an empty table. Some of the blacks are dressed in leather, a few in dashikis, all radiate a palpable anger.

DARRIN

(grabbing Frankie)

There's your audience. Here's  
your chance to really fail...

He stands, pulling Frankie behind him, pushing tables out of the way to form a small performing space. Darrin has the unflappable confidence of the truly insane. Frankie may be having a stroke.

DARRIN

We'd like to do a spot improv  
for you, but I need some  
suggestions of occupations. For  
me?

The bored short order cook looks up, cigarette dangling from one corner of his mouth. Nothing.

MEG

(her giddy self)

Brain surgeon!

DARRIN

Obviously, one of my patients --  
and how about for Frankie,  
something glamorous --

DEL

Nurse!

(CONTINUED)

DARRIN

Real creative geniuses... look  
out Mozart -- Now a location,  
something unusual --

One of the Panthers speaks up.

RASHID

(cool, very cool)  
How 'bout a hamburger stand on  
Pluto --

A pause.

DARRIN

(sarcastic, cool)  
Tourists...  
(off the audience's  
nervous laughter)  
Well, okay. A brain surgeon  
and his nurse in a hamburger  
stand on Pluto --

Darrin makes his finger a gun, points at the overhead  
lights. Turns. Then back.

DARRIN

(looking over a  
chart)  
Well, Miss Triscuit, it  
doesn't look good.

Frankie doesn't move. Is terrified. Darrin covers.

DARRIN

Miss Triscuit, we've got to cut  
down on your shock treatments.  
Nurse Triscuit...

Then, suddenly, Frankie's all frantic motion.

FRANKIE

I got two bleeders from dust-off,  
one basket case for the check-out  
counter and a couple of napalms.  
(working on an  
imaginary body)  
Get me I.V.'s and B.P.'s and  
C.P.R.'s, Stat!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7

EXT. STREET IN OLD TOWN CHICAGO - 3:00 AM

7

A frigid October drizzle earlier slicked the deserted streets. Frankie trucks home, collar up against the biting cold.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey! Hey! Wait up.

Frankie turns, it's two of the Panthers. The voice comes from a face the color of bittersweet chocolate, wide-set eyes in a permanent skeptical squint, an elegant flared nose just meant for looking down at others, RASHID SOLAM, a Panther, catlike in biker leather. With him is EDDIE DAVIS, a large, bookish, bespectacled man in a dashiki.

RASHID

I know you.

Frankie is scared, she should be.

RASHID

I think we all visited the same resort once... \*

FRANKIE

I don't --

RASHID

It was real hot.

FRANKIE

(knowing)

I'm sorry, I have to go --

RASHID

We danced the Delta Tango, we kissed in the bush but your Uncle Charlie didn't like it, remember --

FRANKIE

I don't remember.

And she takes off. Eddie chases Frankie to catch up. Rashid follows, trying to stay cool, he doesn't chase people. Even though that's what he's doing.

EDDIE

We just wanted to tell you how we dug you -- \*

There is a gentleness in this man that is hard to ignore.

(CONTINUED)



7 CONTINUED:

7

FRANKIE  
(had enough)  
I stunk.

He's gentle, but honest.

EDDIE  
But you were there, man -- We  
dig seeing a sister.  
(and)  
There's a party tomorrow at my  
place --

Frankie is liking this Eddie.

FRANKIE  
You two a package deal?

RASHID  
Listen, I just thought --

A burning look from Eddie.

RASHID  
(an apology)  
You were somebody else.

FRANKIE  
(accepting)  
Yeah, well, we all look alike you  
know...

RASHID  
Yeah. I know.

They walk off together. An uncomfortable silence.  
Frankie drops back a little and out of nowhere she emits  
a wild cry --

FRANKIE  
Incoming!!!

She hurls change from her pockets onto Rashid and Eddie's  
heads as she yowls. They drop flat onto an icy puddle in  
the gutter, head cradled in arms. Seconds pass, Frankie  
kneels down to Rashid.

FRANKIE  
(gotcha)  
Uncle Charlie says hi.

Rashid freezes, then laughs. He has to. Rashid, Frankie  
and Eddie, strangers, sort of, lie on the wet streets,  
laughing their asses off.

DISSOLVE TO:

5

CONTINUED: (4)

5

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
(as Darrin stands  
dumbfounded)  
Move it! I got frag wounds,  
internal bleeding with external  
bleeding, the guy's watch is  
bleeding for crissake --

Frankie grabs one of the Panthers, pulls him to the  
ground, begins CPR. The other guys laugh, but it's out  
there. Serious. She's deadly serious.

\*  
\*  
\*

FRANKIE  
-- What, are you playing statue-  
maker?!

Suddenly, Frankie realizes she's in a burger stand on  
Pluto.

FRANKIE  
Oh. And get me a bacon  
cheeseburger and a Coke.

Frankie stops suddenly, realizing the tornado of energy  
she's just released. The customers stare, what the hell  
was that? Darrin stands in awed silence, this woman is  
terrifying. Finally, he gets back his composure.

DARRIN  
You want ketchup on that?

CUT TO:

6

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

6

Full swing, blood, mud and death. Frankie's improv come  
to sudden life. A pair of CORPSMEN shove a gurney with a  
body toward GRU. ON SCREEN: CHINA BEACH-OCTOBER, 1969

CORPSMAN  
Hey, Captain! Got three more for  
the count.

McMURPHY  
Thanks.

CORPSMAN  
Rhinehart, Steven; Qualles, Paul  
A.; Michon, Charles N.

She pulls out a small notepad and jots them down.

CORPSMAN  
So, where do we stand?

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED:

6

McMURPHY

Your three plus the two in post-op make it...

(counting)

Twenty-five for the month.

CORPSMAN

Dammit!

McMURPHY

Cheer up. There's still four days before the official line comes out. You might hit the pool yet.

CORPSMAN

Yeah, right.

McMurphy sidles up next to DR. DICK.

McMURPHY

Twenty-five.

DR. RICHARD

This fascination with statistics is beginning to border on the macabre.

Blood squirts up from the kid, a gusher. They barely note it.

\*  
\*

McMURPHY

An idle mind is the devil's playground.

DR. RICHARD

(looking)

What's in there, a peace sign?

\*  
\*

McMURPHY

Stars and Stripes says there've only been 37 K.I.A.'s in country so far this month, we've had 25 here alone.

Yep, he pulls out a bloodied peace sign medal. Again, they're non-plussed.

\*  
\*

DR. RICHARD

Guess we're where 'it's at.'

GI enters carrying a slip of paper. Eyes sweep the mess.

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED: (A1)

6

GI  
(calling out)  
McMurphy in here?

DR. RICHARD  
Over here, laboring at her abacus.

GI crosses.

GI  
Which one of you is...

The GI stares down at the mess they're mired in, pales.  
Dr. Dick smiles at his patient.

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED: (2)

6

DR. RICHARD

You're gonna be fine.

(to McMurphy)

Looks like the home team is rallying.

GI

Captain McMurphy? This just came in from M.A.R.S.

They move on, the GI follows.

McMURPHY

What is it?

GI

(reading)

Looks like a request for medical supplies to Dak... Trang. A.S.A.P. There's a list and it's signed...

DR. RICHARD

Dak Trang, um, sounds like a garden spot. Aren't they building a new Hilton up that way?

McMURPHY

What do I look like? Colleen's Supply Depot and Delivery Service? Toss it in the elephant graveyard of Army screw-ups. \*

GI

Evan Winter... Whisler... Winslow?

Stop action. McMurphy, slow turn to GI.

GI

(quickly)

I'm sorry, ma'am, just doing my job.

She takes the note. Reads. Dr. Richard watches.

McMURPHY

Dak Trang.

(yelling to no one in particular)

Anybody know where Dak Trang is?

CUT TO:

8 INT. CHOPPER

8

Skimming treetops. Low ceiling. Courtesy of Master Monsoon. McMurphy sits strapped into bench seat, boxes piled next to her. DOOR GUNNER swings around next to her.

GUNNER

(pointing)

If we had a little more altitude, that'd be Laos over there. What the hell you doing way out here?

McMURPHY

Meeting a friend.

GUNNER

(laughs)

Friend?! Ain't no friends down there, ma'am. Just lions, and tigers, and bears...

McMURPHY

(playing game)

Oh, my! \*

GUNNER

(suddenly serious)

We passed the River Styx about fifty clicks back and Lucifer likes his swamp. \*

McMurphy stares down at the dense canopy below. No answer.

They hover above a clearing. The door gunners lean out, sweeping the LZ with their M-60's.

GUNNER

(to pilot)

Looks clear!

(to other gunner)

Watch the treeline!

9 CHOPPER POV

9

Mountain tribespeople begin flowing from the jungle to the clearing.

GUNNER

(to McMurphy)

Last chance. We can boot these supplies out from up here. Whatever survives the fall is more than they've ever had before.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

McMURPHY  
 (less than convincing)  
 I'll be alright. Thanks for the  
 ride.

10 EXT. CLEARING

10

McMurphy stands outside the chopper as the Gunner  
 offloads the boxes. He jumps back on.

GUNNER  
 We'll be back in twenty-four  
 hours.  
 (gestures to watch)  
 You gonna be alright?

McMurphy forces a smile as her final link with civiliza-  
 tion hovers up and away. Boots sucking in ankle-deep mud.  
 More Montagnards appear, filling the clearing. Bracelets,  
 suu troans, bare feet. They press closer. Curious.  
 Something wet on her hand. Startled, she jumps. A  
 little boy, muddy hand touching hers. Ashamed... almost.

McMURPHY  
 I'm looking for...

VOICE (O.S.)  
 Hello, McMurphy.

Behind her. DODGER pushing his way through the throng.  
 He stops and stares at her a long beat; she at the man  
 before her. Scruffy beard, Levis tucked in Dingos, a  
 well-worn chambray shirt and a mud-splotched baseball  
 cap. He spots her captain's bars.

DODGER  
 I beg your pardon, Captain  
 McMurphy. I see the Army has  
 learned to do something right.  
 (and)  
 It won't last.  
 (beat)  
 I didn't know if you'd come.

\*  
\*  
\*

McMURPHY  
 You knew I'd come.

She's right. He did.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 EXT. MONTAGNARD VILLAGE

11

Dodger and McMurphy, pied-pipers to the tribal greeters, walk down the center of the village. Thatched mud huts, bamboo longhouses and Army issue tents line the primordial boulevard. A long-rusted tractor stands sentry to hardened bags of cement, scattered bricks and warped sandwiches of rotting lumber.

Chickens and pigs scatter at their feet. A couple of village women, pipes dangling from their mouths, add their curious stares as they winnow rice. Men walk by with old guns slung across their backs. Warriors.

DODGER

The C.I.A. supplies the weapons,  
Rangers train them. They hate  
the Communists and the Catholics  
-- want their own independence.  
Revolutionaries, farmers.

\*

McMURPHY

Margaret Mead should narrate this.

\*

DODGER

You'll get over it.

McMURPHY

(some anger)

What are you doing here?

\*

DODGER

I've got someone I want you to  
meet.

McMURPHY

How long have you been here?!

DODGER

I never left.

\*

McMURPHY

You were home, you were safe.

\*

DODGER

Once you've been here -- there's  
no safe. You know that, you  
taught me that.

\*

\*

\*

He leads her toward a longhouse.

(CONTINUED)



11 CONTINUED:

11

McMURPHY

Why didn't you answer my letters?

\*

DODGER

This is my answer.

\*

An organ. Solo. Haunting. Lilting. Strangely tuned and vibrant in a land of decay. She looks to Dodger. He wears the cheek-splitting grin of a six-year-old boy finding the Christmas stash in November.

DODGER

You'll like her.

12 INT. LONGHOUSE

12

Dimly lit. Rays of muted overcast dapple the long, slender room. Arrayed ward-like in the interior are "hospital beds"; hard, wooden pallets supported by tree trunks, 55-gallon drums, etc.

On the bed lie villagers in various stages of infirmity. Many are children, their wide eyes expressive, taking in their new raven-haired visitor. Others are less fortunate, their lives all but waned. Their thread to life almost visible, and shredding. Many of the beds have various idols and fetishes hung about fending off those spirits responsible for their misery.

McMURPHY

(more statement than  
question)

This is your hospital?

DODGER

For now.

The smile of a teenage boy beckons from a nearby bed. McMurphy crosses to him. His arm, swollen, gangrenous. She checks his arm.

\*

DODGER

His name is Y bang. He cut his  
arm on a piece of rusty shrapnel.  
(beat)

It was only a small cut.

McMURPHY

The infection has spread to his  
chest.

MUSIC. The same haunting organ.

(CONTINUED)

12

CONTINUED:

12

DODGER

(to boy; village  
tongue)

We'll be back.

Dodger takes her hand. They walk down the longhouse to a woven-bamboo partition. The music on the other side. They step around the partition.

ILSA sits playing a battered, foot-powered organ. Silver/straw hair severely drawn back to a bun belies a weathered but youthful face. \*

Oblivious to her visitors, she plays to the audience of a little GIRL seated next to her on an overturned fuel drum.

She suddenly stops playing. Begins gently stroking the little girl. She turns to Dodger and McMurphy. Stares at her, as if flipping McMurphy's hardbound cover and reading her.

McMURPHY

(uneasy)

It's very pretty.

Nothing. Silence.

ILSA

Schumann. 'Erster Verlust.'  
'First Sorrow' or 'First Loss'...  
I can never remember. Evan has  
told me much about you. \*

McMurphy puts out her hand. Approaching.

McMURPHY

Please to...

Ilsa is back at the organ. She pounds the keyboard with a brief, startling intro, and begins to belt out "Blue is the Sky on the Rhine" in bawdy, barroom style.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

Bizarre? Not yet. Her little benchmate joins in in perfect sync and perfect German. They've clearly been this way before.

ILSA/CHILD

(singing)

Korn blumenblau ist der Himmel am  
herr-li-chen Rhein.

McMurphy watches, Dodger grins. McMurphy stares back to Dodger. What?

CUT TO:

13 INT. EDDIE'S SOUTH SIDE APARTMENT - NIGHT

13

In an abandoned warehouse, over a souvalki restaurant sprawls the apartment/creative workshop/revolutionary headquarters of Eddie, Rashid and five or six others give or take five or six

All manner of improvised furniture, self-proclaimed objects d'art, and massive piles of books and flyers comingle with film editing equipment, a canoe that is used as a bed, and a cache of dusty, but real, guns. Divided into amorphous areas by beads, fringes, tapestries, posters and the like, the apartment feels more like a self-contained village than anything else.

Scattered groups dance, smoke dope, rap intensely, conversations that will change the world. John Coltrane's thoughtful licks scratch out of a bad HI-FI. It's music to get jittery by. In a corner Rashid is preaching-performing to a group of men. Like Coltrane, riffing his anger.

RASHID

No way, it's the black man started  
the sexual revolution -- Chubby  
Checker, he's the cat --

Rashid jumps up on a table and does his imitation of white guys doing "The Twist."

RASHID

Dig, white man's ass been dead  
since old Queen Vicky laid her  
trip on him, Chubby had to teach  
the man how to shake himself and  
get the blood flowin' down there --

The group erupts in laughter over his stiff twistin'.

14

KITCHEN

14

In one corner, triple hot plate, Philco fridge, sink and a bathtub/shower. Frankie and Eddie talk in the glow of the open fridge. Eddie speaks with a revolutionary's passion.

EDDIE

Theory's cool, but theory without practice ain't nothin'. Our breakfast for children program feeds 1800 kids a week --

FRANKIE

(unconverted)

What are the guns for, toys for tots?

EDDIE

That's Rashid. Not my scene. Violence is not the goal.

FRANKIE

But it's part of the plan.

EDDIE

Not my plan, but it's part of the white man's plan.

Frankie looks vastly uncomfortable, as though she were itching from inside her skin.

FRANKIE

It's gonna change through the system. \*

EDDIE

Huey, Bobby, Eldridge, they're doing it, saying what has to be said, you could be a part of it --

FRANKIE

(denying) \*

You can't win stuff like this.

(avoiding) \*

And I don't want to be dead, my mama'll take me to Hampton's Funeral Parlor and bury me in pink taffeta and a nasty updo that'll get me laughed at for all eternity.

(off Eddie's silence)

Eddie, you're nice, but this is just not for me. \*

(CONTINUED)

14

CONTINUED:

14

EDDIE

Too bad. We need someone like you.  
You need something like us.

FRANKIE

(some anger showing)

How do you know? Do you know me?  
(as Eddie says  
nothing)

Listen, I gotta go --

She heads for the door, goes by Rashid, by now pretty  
wasted on wine and rhetoric. He grabs hold.

RASHID

Hey, baby don't go... I got a  
'nouncement -- Hey everybody! I  
gotta 'nouncement!

With a flair for psychedelic psychodrama, Rashid kneels  
at Frankie's feet.

RASHID

Do you see this nubian queen, this  
beautiful daughter of Africa --  
She's a victim of whitey see, the  
man sent her to 'Nam, like he sent  
me and Eddie, but to fight for the  
wrong side. We should have fought  
for the V.C. man, they're the real  
heroes, I love those little Viet  
Cong --

\*  
\*

The room is quiet. A long beat. Frankie stares down at  
Rashid.

FRANKIE

(off silence)

They killed friends of --

RASHID

They didn't kill as many of your  
friends as whitey did...!

Rashid rushes to the cache of weapons and grabs a GUN,  
points it around. FIRES.

RASHID

Why not die right here, we'll  
fight for freedom, just like those  
little yellow cats are -- If those  
little gooks can start a  
revolution what the hell is wrong  
with big black men like us?

(CONTINUED)

14

CONTINUED: (2)

14

EDDIE

Put that down, man! There are people here, you could hurt somebody.

RASHID

What the hell is wrong with us!?  
(to Frankie)  
What the hell is wrong with us, baby?

FRANKIE

You say you want a revolution, but what you really want is a war. Because men love war. It makes you feel real. But it makes you look stupid. Then it makes you look dead.

Frankie turns quietly and goes.

CUT TO:

15

INT. LONGHOUSE

15

Hastily opened supply boxes are scattered among a number of beds. IV tubing, bottles, vials, syringe wrappings are littered about. Ilsa crosses to a girl in her teens, checks her pulse timed with an antique pocket watch. McMurphy comes in, looking.

\*

McMURPHY

(uncomfortably)

Do you know where Dodger is? He's disappeared.

ILSA

(begins singing)

'Nun a de, du mein lieb heimatland,  
lieb heimatland, lieb heimatland...!'

McMurphy stands watching, awkward. She crosses to a nearby patient, an old woman clutching a scruffy rooster. A gurgling wheeze rumbles from her chest.

ILSA

Evan tells me you are an angel of mercy.

McMURPHY

I do my job.

ILSA

Saved his life.

\*

McMURPHY

He said that?

\*

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED:

15

ILSA

For a man who doesn't talk he said  
tons.

\*  
\*

She stuffs a thermometer in McMurphy's hand. The old woman won't open her mouth. McMurphy mimes. Her mouth open, thermometer under tongue. Old woman stares. Smiles. Funny white woman with the shiny twig in her mouth. ROOSTER CLUCKS.

\*

ILSA

Helping those in need?

McMurphy removes thermometer, wipes it off and gently pushes it between the woman's dry, cracked lips. It's in. Maybe not under the tongue, but it's in.

McMURPHY

Doing what I can.

Woman blows. Thermometer sails out. McMurphy in a futile grab for fragile projectile. It hits floor. CRACK. TINKLE. History.

ILSA

'Es geht lezt fort zum fernen  
strand, lieb heimatland, lieb  
heimatland, lieb heimatland.'

Now Ilsa hands McMurphy a stethoscope out to check the old woman's chest.

ILSA

Doing for the many or for the few?

Rooster in the way. Tries to gently dislodge the bird. CLUCKS. Another gentle nudge. Nothing. Old woman stares. Another shove, less gentle. Woman clutches, ROOSTER CLUCKS and McMurphy gets pecked.

McMURPHY

It seems like many, it may be only  
a few.

The old woman grins and hands McMurphy the bird. She places it at the woman's feet. McMurphy listens to chest.

\*

ILSA

Her name is Me Deng. What do you  
think?

McMURPHY

She's running a pretty high fever.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: (2)

15

McMURPHY (CONT'D)

Dehydrated with a lot of fluid in  
the lungs. Probably pneumonia.  
Bacterial. I can try penicillin,  
but at her age...

Ilsa crosses to another patient.

ILSA

(the answer)

Give her back the chicken. The  
village chief gave it to her to  
take with her into the next life.

\*

McMurphy hands the old woman the animal. Cradled again.  
She smiles, McMurphy smiles and squeezes her hand. Moves  
on. Young man, late teens, comatose. McMurphy checks  
his eyes.

McMURPHY

Flashlight?

Ilsa tosses, McMurphy catches. Not a flashlight.

ILSA

Zippo. Hold it close.

Ilsa rumages in supply box, pulls out an IV bottle with  
tubing and syringe attached. McMurphy flicks lighter,  
checks pupillary action.

McMURPHY

Fully dilated.

(checks body)

No marks. Did he walk in?

ILSA

Slowly. Then spasms. What do  
you think? Poison? Meningitis?

McMURPHY

Definitely not meningitis. At  
this stage there'd be swelling of  
the...

(eyes Ilsa)

You're testing me. Why?

ILSA

Evan said you were a good nurse.

Ilsa smiles. Goading.

(CONTINUED)



15

CONTINUED: (2A)

15

ILSA

He also said you have 'energisch'  
... spunk. Doesn't necessarily  
mean you have commitment.

\*

McMURPHY

Why the test? I have a job.

(CONTINUED)

15 . CONTINUED: (3)

15

ILSA

Evan had a job, too. Now he has a better one.

Ilsa holds up a sphygmometer.

ILSA

What is this?

McMurphy stares at her. Ilsa stares back, smiling. Disarmed, McMurphy crosses to Ilsa and takes the sphygmometer.

McMURPHY

It's a sphygmometer.

ILSA

Blood pressure? Last time I saw one of these, it took two people to carry it. Show me how it works.

(off McMurphy's look)

No test. I really don't know.

McMurphy slowly wraps the cuff around Ilsa's arm. Not sure of the game. If it's a game.

McMURPHY

It's pretty simple. After you get it level with the heart, you...

ILSA

You see yourself as part of the solution when you are part of the problem.

(and)

Malnutrition, gunshot wounds, carpet bombing, defolients, napalm.

McMURPHY

I just work here.

ILSA

You are your country.

(bull's-eye)

Did Evan tell you about our new hospital?

(and)

Operating room. Outpatient clinic.

(swings cuff)

We'll fill it with all your American gadgets.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: (4)

15

McMURPHY

Who's building this hospital?

ILSA

All of us. Evan... the people...  
and now, you, Fraulein McMurphy. \*

Bullshit. Then again, maybe not. The spark is lit.  
Maybe not.

CUT TO:

16

INT. STORAGE HUT

16

Dodger, rivulets of sweat pouring from his body, hoists  
sacks of rice in the corner of the hut. The door opens.  
McMurphy enters. He continues to stack.

DODGER

Rice. There's never enough. \*

McMURPHY

A tropical 'Coals-to-Newcastle.' \*

DODGER

In the lowlands, maybe. Not up  
here. The soil and thin air makes  
it a struggle. We're growing a  
special strain developed in the  
Phillipines. Doubled the yield in  
just three months. \*

McMURPHY

You're a farmer? \*

DODGER

I work for the government. \*

McMURPHY

Ours? \*

DODGER

Good as any. \*

McMURPHY

You've changed. \*

DODGER

There's work to be done and we're  
doing it. \*

McMURPHY

She's quite a woman. \*

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED:

16

McMURPHY

Why am I here?

He stops stacking, looks at her. Says nothing.

McMURPHY

You always tell me everything.

DODGER

What have you got left, weeks,  
days, hours? What then?

McMURPHY

(she's with him)  
I've changed.

DODGER

Sure you have. You're a...  
(mock insult)  
... stubborn, ornery, self-  
righteous... fighter. Stay and  
fight with us.

McMURPHY

For what?

DODGER

Did she tell you about the hospital?

McMURPHY

Yes.

Dodger's eyes light up.

DODGER

I was hoping she would. Come on!

He takes her hand and whisks her out the door.

CUT TO:

17

EXT. STEEP MOUNTAIN TRAIL

17

Steep. A slog. McMurphy barely keeps pace with Dodger,  
who fairly bounds with excitement.

DODGER

Two hundred beds! She tell you  
about the O.R.? Twelve tables!

CUT TO:

18

EXT. MOUNTAIN PLATEAU

18

HUFFING, PUFFING. FOOTSTEPS up the trail.

DODGER (O.S.)

Babies dying from rubeolla.  
Pregnant women with rabies.  
Plague, typhoid, scarlet fever,  
hell half the kids here die from  
malnutrition and diarrhea.

They appear on the summit.

19

THEIR POV

19

The hospital. A barren mountain plateau. A tropical  
Badwater. A checkerboard of stakes with yellow ribbons  
flapping in a stiff breeze seemingly marching off to  
infinity. Small piles of rocks and smaller piles of sand  
randomly pimple the scrub earth.

20

McMURPHY

20

incredulously turning to Dodger. He's lost in the Dak  
Trang fantasy. He walks out and points to a distant  
frame structure of rotting two-by-fours; a pair of  
skeletal walls reclaimed by the jungle.

DODGER

The I.C.U. will be over there. The  
burn ward, there. Five stories.  
And when it's done the Red Cross  
will send the staff, supplies,  
equipment.

MUSIC. Wind-whipped strands of 'Nun leb' wohl, du Kleine  
Galle' make its way to the summit. Ilsa Von Klein,  
pumping the fantasy. The madness.

DODGER

We can do it. You and me. Here!  
Right here!

Her face. His eyes. Their history and simpatico.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

21 INT. FEDERAL DISTRICT COURTHOUSE - DAWN

21

Eddie, Frankie, and Rashid walking down the hall. Ahead of them a line of scruffy youth is camped outside a courtroom. A lot of the blacks wear shirts that say "Free Bobby", the whites have shirts and signs that say "Free the Chicago Eight". Frankie stops, turns to go, Rashid grabs her hand.

FRANKIE

You guys tricked me, we were going to breakfast --

RASHID

You wouldn't have come --

EDDIE

Frankie, it's important --

FRANKIE

You think everything's important --

EDDIE

They're denying Bobby Seale his constitutional rights.

RASHID

Don't you care?

FRANKIE

(ticked)

I care. I've been working my butt off. Don't tell me I don't care.

EDDIE

Through the system. But the machine is broken.

RASHID

Take a look.

22 INT. JULIUS J. HOFFMAN'S COURTROOM - DAY

22

The galleries are filled and there are armed Federal Marshals positioned around the courtroom. Tension fills the room like static electricity, the slightest move and the air crackles with it. Eddie, Frankie and Rashid cram in near the back.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

They denied his motion to represent himself. They're saying he'll make mistakes, make the whole thing a mistrial --

RASHID

Bunch of lawyer jive, 'cause nigger's too stupid to get what's going down --

The eight defendants and all the lawyers enter the room. BOBBY SEALE, a smallish black man with a beard, raises his hand in the Panther's fist salute. From the gallery a few people call out to Bobby. Bobby comes over.

BOBBY

We got the right of self-defense if the pigs attack us, but today let's be cool, whatever happens. I'm gonna defend my constitutional rights, so whatever happens, just be cool --

Bobby's speech is met with replies of "Right on, Bobby", "We're cool" and the like. JUDGE JULIUS J. HOFFMAN, enters, the court is called to order. MR. SHULTZ, lawyer for the prosecution addresses the court. \*

SHULTZ

If the Court please, before you entered, Bobby Seale addressed the gallery and said that if he's attacked they know what to do --

BOBBY

(exploding)

You're a liar, you're a rotten fascist pig liar, I told them to defend themselves, we all got that right and if you attack me I will defend myself --

(CONTINUED)

SHULTZ  
 (shouting over  
 Bobby's speech)  
 He was talking to these people  
 about an attack by them --

The gallery begins shouting, Defense attorney WILLIAM  
 KUNSTLER attempts to calm Bobby. Hoffman shouts over it  
 all. \*

HOFFMAN  
 Let the record show Defendant  
 Seale is shouting --

KUNSTLER  
 Your Honor, the record should  
 indicate that Mr. Shultz shouted -- \*

HOFFMAN  
 If what he said was true I can't  
 blame him for raising his voice. \*

BOBBY  
 I have a right to defend myself --

HOFFMAN  
 I will not hear you now --

Bobby jumps up and crosses to the judge, pointing to  
 portraits of the founding fathers that hang behind him.

BOBBY  
 George Washington, Benjamin  
 Franklin, they was slave owners,  
 you are acting in the same way,  
 denying me my constitutional  
 rights -- \*

HOFFMAN  
 Now I'm being called a racist, a  
 fascist --

BOBBY  
 They were slave owners, look at  
 history --

HOFFMAN  
 (near aneurysm)  
 As though I had anything to do  
 with that -- I'm asking you one  
 last time to be silent --

(CONTINUED)



22

CONTINUED: (3)

22

BOBBY

What can happen to me more than  
happened to George Washington's  
slaves --

HOFFMAN

(banging his gavel)  
Marshals, please!

Marshals grab Bobby, shove him into his chair. Frankie  
is in shocked disbelief.

Bobby Seale is manacled at his wrists and ankles to the  
chair with clanking chains. Wrapped around his mouth is  
a thick, white cloth, his eyes and temples bulge with the  
strain of getting breath. Bobby yells muffled obscenities  
at Hoffman, as he gags and twists like an incubus.

The courtroom erupts. There is shouting as the gallery  
rushes the courtroom, and is shoved back by the Marshals.

KUNSTLER

This is no longer a court of law  
you have, this is a medieval  
torture chamber --

\*  
\*

Rashid stands up and raises his fist.

RASHID

You pigs can gag the revolutionary  
but you can't gag a revolution!

Rashid is attacked by Marshals even as Bobby is being  
held down. A Marshal kicks Rashid as Rashid resists  
arrest and is hauled away. Frankie runs out and Eddie  
runs after.

\*  
\*

23

HALLWAY

23

Frankie sees them hauling Rashid away. She starts to run  
after, then stops, turns and runs the other way. Eddie  
sees this and stops her.

EDDIE

Where are you going --

She runs, Eddie runs after, he catches her. She's  
crying, angry.

(CONTINUED)

ILSA

(German)

'And the ships came full of  
sailors with guns, to burn the  
town right down...'

McMurphy sets the water on the floor. The old woman with pneumonia starts coughing, hacking. McMurphy feels her forehead.

McMURPHY

Fever's worse.

McMurphy looks around for something to give her. The supplies are exhausted. She scrounges. Finds a discarded bottle with a corner of penicillin remaining.

McMURPHY

A clean syringe?

A look.

McMURPHY

Anything.

Ilsa opens a cigar box and unwraps an old, metal syringe and a small soapstone. She begins sharpening it with the stone.

ILSA

I've had this syringe twenty-  
five years.

Hands it to McMurphy.

ILSA

Don't bother sterilizing. It  
won't matter.

McMurphy draws the penicillin. Gives the woman the injection. The rain begins to fall harder.

ILSA

She gets the injection, but it's  
our pain that's relieved.

(goes back to  
singing)

'And she watched...'

McMURPHY

Why do you sing?

(CONTINUED)

ILSA

When you have nothing left.  
Soothe. I sing.

McMURPHY

(looks at Ilsa)

I guess you've given a lot of  
injections... for a lot of pain?

ILSA

(momentarily lost,  
vulnerable)

Death is my business and business  
is always good.

McMurphy gives her back the syringe. Ilsa lovingly  
rewraps it and places it in the box.

McMURPHY

How long have you been a nurse?

ILSA

Since Poland, in 1941. With the  
Schutzstaffel. A captain like  
you. It was all very exciting.

ILSA

Twenty-eight years. A lot of  
injections.

McMURPHY

You could go home.

ILSA

I'm a nurse. I do what I can.

SOUND of CHOPPER landing.

ILSA

(the chopper)

You've got good friends.

McMurphy picks up a rucksack. Swings it over her  
shoulder. A weak cry from across the room. The old  
woman beckons to McMurphy. McMurphy crosses to her and  
watches as the dying woman struggles to remove a black  
bracelet and slip it on McMurphy's wrist.

GUNNER (O.S)

Captain! Captain!

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (3)

28

McMurphy crosses to exit. The CHOPPER IDLING.  
The Gunner, flak jacket and helmet. Yelling!

GUNNER

Captain!

(sees her, runs)

Come on. Come on!

McMURPHY

I've got to say goodbye to a --

GUNNER

(almost dragging her)

Now! Move it! Half of Gockland  
is moving up the valley! Armed  
for bear! If we run now the  
pilot might just wait!

She doesn't want to leave, the Pilot's motioning  
frantically. The Gunner pulls her towards the chopper.  
Villagers are rushing out of the village.

McMURPHY

Dodger! Dodger!

Where the hell is he? The Gunner's got her to the bay  
door. Leaps on. McMurphy breaks away, runs back to  
Ilsa, to get her to come.

McMURPHY

Come on. \*

ILSA

(calmly)

I stay here. I have no enemies. \*

McMURPHY

Where is Dodger?

GUNNER

Captain!

McMURPHY

Dodger!

The Gunner pulls McMurphy onto the chopper. No sign of  
him. The chopper is airborne in a hurry. Ilsa visible  
stepping from the longhouse door. Villagers running  
everywhere. No Dodger. McMurphy's face. The village  
several hundred feet below, GUNFIRE. Ilsa watching, a  
statue. VC moving in! The trees outside the village.  
Door GUNNERS BLASTING. McMurphy trying to see him.

(CONTINUED)

McMURPHY

Dodger...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

29 EXT. CATHEDRAL (CHICAGO) DAY

29

An overflow crowd for the Panther's memorial service spills out onto the steps. There are protesters, TV reporters, newspapermen. Frankie wanders, a lost soul. Over it all, BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD'S "For What It's Worth" plays... in Frankie's head. Real SOUNDS FADE IN and OUT. The chants of protesters. The tinny eulogy over speakers:

MINISTER (V.O.)

The time for investigations is over, it's time for us to speak out... the rights of all are at stake. If America wants to murder us at home, murder us in a useless war, we will not take it, we will not take it, we will take action --

Frankie wanders, crying, dazed, for how long it's hard to say, for it's like a dream.

Out of the church doors comes a coffin, draped in a flag. The conservative family. Rashid is one of the pallbearers. Rashid pulls the flag off and runs down the steps. He addresses all gathered.

RASHID

Eddie Davis was a Vietnam vet. He fought for freedom. He earned the right to get shot in bed and have this flag draped on his coffin.

Rashid pulls out a flask, pours gasoline on the flag, strikes a match, tosses it. The flag burns and melts and twists. Photographers snap pictures, police put Rashid in cuffs. Frankie sees him, he sees Frankie. Frankie follows as he's hauled away in to a waiting patrol car.

FRANKIE

Rashid! Rashid!

But she can't get close. The patrol car pulls away. She's tossed and shoved by the crowd. She screams at the departing car. \*

FRANKIE

(broken, grieving)  
What the hell do you want from me?! \*

CUT TO:

