THEATRE THREE presents *Biloxi Blues* The do NOT have to be memorized.

Monologues

SERGEANT TOOMEY (*To the men)* . . . My name is Toomey, Sergeant Merwin J. Toomey, and I am in charge of C Company during your ten weeks of basic training here in Beautiful Biloxi, Mississippi, after which those of you who have survived the heat, humidity, roaches, spiders, snakes, dry rot, fungus, dysentery, syphilis, gonorrhea and tick fever will be sent to some shit island in the Pacific or some turd pile in Northern Sicily. In either case, returning to your mommas and poppas with your balls intact is highly improbable. There's only one way to come out of a war healthy of body and sane of mind and that way is to be born the favorite daughter of the President of the United States ... I speak from experience, having served fourteen months in the North African campaign where seventy-three percent of my comrades are buried under the sand of an A-rab desert. The colorful ribbons on my chest will testify to the fact that my government is grateful for my contribution having donated a small portion of my brains to this conflict, the other portion being protected by a heavy steel plate in my head. This injury has caused me to become a smart, compassionate, understanding and sympathetic teacher of raw, young men—or the cruelest, craziest, most sadistic goddamn son of a bitch you ever saw . . . and that's something you won't know until ten weeks from now, do I make myself clear, Epstein?

EPSTEIN (*Sits up and looks around*) I was in the latrine alone. I spent four hours cleaning it, on my hands and knees. It looked better than my mother's bathroom at home. Then these two non-coms come in, one was the cook, that three-hundred-pound guy and some other slob, with cigar butts in their mouths and reeking from beer ...They come in to pee only instead of using the urinal, they use one of the Johns, both peeing in the same one, making circles, figure-eights. Then they start to walk out and I say, "Hey, I just cleaned that. Please flush the Johns." And the big one, the cook, says to me, "Up your ass, rookie," or some other really clever remark ...And I block the doorway and I say, “There’s a printed order on the wall signed by Captain Landon stating the regulations that all facilities must be flushed after using" ...And I’m requesting that they follow regulations, since I was left in
charge, and to please flush the facility ... And the big one says to me, "Suppose you flush it, New York Jew Kike," and I said, "My ethnic heritage not withstanding, please flush the facility"...

…They look at each other, this half a ton of brainless beef, and suddenly rush me, turn me upside down, grab my ankles and —and —and they lowered me by my feet with my head in the toilet, in their filth, their poison ...all the way until I couldn't breathe ...then they pulled off my belt and tied my feet on to the ceiling pipes with my head still in their foul waste and tied my hands behind my back with dirty rags, and they left me there, hanging like a pig that was going to be slaughtered…

…I wasn't strong enough to fight back. I couldn't do it alone. No one came to help me...Then the pipe broke and I fell to the ground ...It took me twenty minutes to get myself untied—twenty minutes! — but it will take me the rest of my life to wash off my humiliation. I was degraded. I lost my dignity. If I stay, Gene, if they put a gun in my hands, one night, I swear to God, I'll kill them both ...I'm not a murderer. I don't want to disgrace my family ...But I have to get out of here ...Now do you understand?

WYKOWSKI My brother had this in the Marines. It's S.O.S. (*clarifies*) Shit on a shingle. (*clarifies more)* It's beef. Creamed chipped beef. It doesn't look so bad to me. Hell, I'm hungry. (*He takes a forkful and eats it. They all watch him)* ...It's terrific ...It needs ketchup, that's all. (*He puts ketchup on it*). Why don't you ask them for some matzoh ball soup, Epstein. I hear the army makes great matzoh ball soup. (*He laughs*)

(To EUGENE and EPSTEIN) Listen, you two guys. Don't give the sergeant any more crap. 'Cause when he doesn't like you, he doesn't like the rest of us. Any guy who screws up in this platoon is in deep shit with me, understand? If I have to do any more push-ups on account of you, Epstein, you're going to be underneath me when I'm doing them.

WYKOWSKI …Okay, you ready for the best part? Here's the best part: (*reading Eugene's notebook*) "Wykowski is pure animal. His basic instincts are all physical and he eats his meals like a horse eating his oats." Hey, Epstein! Can I sue him for defamation of—what is it? (*Reads on*) "He masturbates in bed four or five times a night. He has no shame about it and his capacities are inexhaustible. Sometimes when he has a discharge, he announces it to the room. 'Number five torpedo fired! Loading number six!' " (*To the others*) That's really good reporting. This guy should be on Time magazine or something. You're making me famous. Maybe the movies'll buy this. Great picture for John Wayne.

CARNEY You know what Charlene once said to me? She said the reason she was seeing this other guy in Albany was because she didn't think I was someone she could count on. She said she really liked me more than him but she wasn't sure I'd ever make up my mind. She didn't want to wait for me forever. So while she's waiting, she sees this guy up in Albany.

I'm not going to be in a foxhole with her with some Jap throwing in a grenade. I have to think about this because getting married is more serious. Because if the grenade goes off, it's all over. Two seconds and you're gone. But if you make a mistake in marriage, you've got fifty years of misery. See what I mean? …You going to turn in? I don't know if I am. …Maybe. …G'night.

CARNEY I heard a top-secret rumor today. I'm not supposed to repeat it. I can get in trouble if it gets out. …I hear they're getting ready to invade Europe and Japan on the same day. (*they look at him questioning*) I heard it on the radio. It was one of them small stations. …Surprise attack. You hit them both at dawn. Then they don't have enough time to warn each other.

HENNESEY You guys hear what happened over at Baker Company? Some kid went nuts. Said he was going home, didn't want no part of this army. An officer tried to stop him and the kid belted him one, broke the Captain's nose. They said this guy's sure to get five to ten years in Leavenworth. They don't crap around in the Army, you find that out real fast. …My name is Hennesey. I'm in your platoon. They gave me eight straight days of KP. I left over two spoonfuls of barley soup. Two lousy spoonfuls ... Be careful, you guys.

SELRIDGE (*In response to what he would do with his last week on earth*) Okay . . .Here we go ...I make it with the seven richest women in the world. And I'm so hot, each dame gives me a million bucks. And at the end of a week, I got seven million bucks. Pretty good, heh? …That's why I need ten days. I need a long weekend to spend the money. Give up, suckers, I got you all beat. Break their hearts, Jerome, and tell 'em my score. (*Angrily*) a B? You give me a B? That creep signs a record contract that ain't worth shit and he gets a B? (*He heads for the money*) I want my money back. (*WYKOWSKI gives him a look*) I was kidding. You think I was serious? I was kidding. (*He lies on his bunk)* Who's next?

THEATRE THREE presents *Biloxi Blues* The do NOT have to be memorized.

ROWENA What the hell are you doing for ten minutes? C'mon, kid. I haven't got all day. (*EUGENE appears. He is wearing his khaki shorts, shoes and socks*) Listen. You can keep your shorts on if you want but I have a rule against wearing army shoes in bed. (*Sprays around her with perfume from her atomizer)* You don't mind a little perfume, do you, honey? The boy before you had on a gallon of Aqua Velva. (*She smiles and sprays him playfully*) If you'd like a bottle for your girlfriend, I sell them. Five dollars apiece. I sell hard-to-get items. Silk stockings. Black panties ...You interested?

…You want me to take your shoes off?

…Is this your first time?

…You don't smoke cigarettes either, do you? You look like your face is on fire.

…If you want to look older, why don't you try a mustache?

My name's Rowena …What's yours?

I'm from Gulfport. I still live there with my husband. (*EUGEGE is surprised.)* Yes he knows. That's how we met. He's in the Navy. He was one of my best customers. He still is. …I mean he's my best lover …You gonna do it from there, cowboy? 'Cause I'll have to make some adjustments. If you're gonna hang on the edge like that, we're gonna be on the floor in two minutes. Crowding is what this is all about, Tex. (*She pulls him over. He kneels above he*r) Okay, honey. Do your stuff.

EUGENE, EPSTEIN, WYKOWSKI, SELRIDGE, CARNEY AND HENNESEY

EUGENE. Come on, Arnold. I know you have some great fantasies.

EPSTEIN. I don't sell my fantasies.

WYKOWSKI. Burn his bunk!

EUGENE. Come on, Arnold ... for me.

SELRIDGE. I love this. I'm gonna clean up.

EUGENE.Okay, Carney. You're first. You're dead. Killed in action... What would you do with your last days on earth?

CARNEY. How much time do I have to do it in?

EUGENE. A week.

SELRIDGE. I need ten days.

EUGENE. It's my game. You only get a week... What would you do with it, Donny?

CARNEY. (*thinks*) Okay... I would sing at the Radio City Music Hall. Five shows a day, my own spot. In the audience are four thousand girls and one man. Every girl is gorgeous. Every girl is size 38-24-36... And they all want me... real bad.

HENNESEY. Who's the man?

CARNEY. The President of Decca Records. He wants me too. I have a choice. After the last show, I could have all four thousand girls... or a contract with Decca Records.

HENNESEY. Which one do you take?

SELRIDGE. (*urging him on)* The record contract. I would take the record contract.

CARNEY. Right. I take the record contract.

SELRIDGE. (*laughs*) MORON!! He believed me. He could have humped four thousand girls and now he's got a record contract that ain't worth shit.

CARNEY. Wrong! Because now I'm a big star and stars get all the girls they want anyway.

SELRIDGE. Yeah? How? You're dead. Girls never go out with dead record stars.

CARNEY. Bullshit! I paid five bucks for my fantasy. I can do what I want... What's my score, Gene?

EUGENE. Well, you started off with an A-minus but you finished with a B.

CARNEY. B. Not bad-better than I ever did in school.

EUGENE. Alright. Selridge is next.

SELRIDGE. Okay... Here we go... I make it with the seven richest women in the world. And I'm so hot, each dame gives me a million bucks. And at the end of a week, I got seven million bucks. Pretty good, heh?

EUGENE. If you're dead, what are you going to do with seven million dollars?

SELRIDGE. I told you. That's why I need ten days. I need a long weekend to spend the money. Give up, suck-ers, got you all beat.

EPSTEIN. Moronic. It's beyond moronic. It's submoronic.

SELRIDGE. Break their hearts, Jerome, and tell 'em my score.

EUGENE. It lacks poetry, I give Selridge a B.

SELRIDGE. *(angry*) A B? You give me a B? That creep signs a record contract that ain't worth shit and he gets a B? *(heads for money*) I want my money back.

WYKOWSKI. Touch that money and you're dead.

SELRIDGE. I was kidding. You think I was serious? I was kidding. *(He lies on his bunk.*) Who's next?

EUGENE. Hennesey.

HENNESEY. Me? I'm not ready yet.

EUGENE. It's your turn.

HENNESEY. I'm not good at things like this.

EUGENE. Come on. Just say it.

HENNESEY. I can't think of anything.

SELRIDGE. He can't think of anything. So he's out. Tough shit. Give him an F... Who's next?

HENNESEY. Okay. Okay, I'd spend it with my family.

WYKOWSKI. Is this guy serious?

CARNEY. Damn, I wish we were playing for big dough.

SELRIDGE. What an asshole.

HENNESEY. It's my last week. I can spend it any way I want. I'd like it to be with my family.

CARNEY. (*mimicking)* I'd like it to be with my family.

SELRIDGE. Go ahead, Jerome. What do you give him for that crap!

EUGENE. It's not interesting but at least it's honest...I give him a B-plus.

SELRIDGE. Okay. This game is fixed. I'm calling in the Military Police. I get a B for screwin' seven millionairesses and he gets a B-plus for goin' home to his mother? ...I change my answer. I want to visit sick children in the hospital.

WYKOWSKI. Knock it off, Selridge. You had your turn.

EUGENE. It's yours now, Wykowski.

CARNEY. Don't let us down, Kowski. To some of us you're a hero.

WYKOWSKI. Okay... I always wanted to make it with a world-famous woman that nobody else could have. It didn't make no difference if she was beautiful or not, as long as I was the only one.

HENNESEY. Have you got someone in mind?

WYKOWSKI. (*smiles)* Yeah. I got someone in mind.

EUGENE. I think we're heading for an A-plus.

CARNEY. Who's the woman, Kowski?

WYKOWSKI. (*He does a grind and a bump.*) ... The Queen of England! (*They all stare at him, dumbstruck.)*

CARNEY. The Queen of England????

SELRIDGE. That is disgusting. That's like making it with your grandmother.

EUGENE. Be, you wouldn't be the only one. What about the King of England?

WYKOWSKI. Kings and Queens just do it once a year. To make a Prince. But I'd have her every day and every night for a week.

SELRIDGE. You couldn't get near her. They keep her under guard at Rockingham Palace.

WYKOWSKI. Not for me. She would say - (high-pitched voice) "Let that sexy Wykowski in my chamber."

EPSTEIN. Apes and gorillas. I'm living with apes and gorillas.

HENNESEY. What's his score? Give him his score.

CARNEY. (*high-pitched English voice*) Yes. Give the Earl of Meatloaf his score.

EUGENE. This is a tough one. I find it completely un-redeeming in every way. Morally, ethically and sexually ...but it's got style... A-minus!

SELRIDGE. (*furious*) Okay. I want my five bucks back. I'm not getting beat out by a guy who humps the Mother of the British Empire.

HENNESEY. Boy, I'm learning a lot about you guys to-night.

SELRIDGE. And versa visa, jerk-off.

SGT. TOOMEY AND EPSTEIN (*TOOMEY goes nose to nose with EPSTEIN*)

TOOMEY. Private Epstein, are you such a God damn ignorant fool to take the blame for something you were completely innocent of?

EPSTEIN. The army has its logic, I have my own.

TOOMEY. The army's "logic" as you call it, is to instill discipline, obedience and unquestioned faith in superi-ors. What the hell is yours?

EPSTEIN. Since I'm not guilty of a crime, I reserve the privilege to keep my own motives a matter of confiden-tiality.

TOOMEY. That's where you're wrong, soldier. Confessing to a crime you didn't commit is no less an offense to not confessing to one you did commit. That is called obstruction of justice. You may not like our rules, boy, but by God, you're going to clean every toilet and piss-pot until you learn them. Confined to barracks until further notice. The rest of you are on forty-eight hours leave. Fall out! ... Epstein, I would like a word with you in private. *(The others break up and move to their bunks to discuss the event. ARNOLD follows TOOMEY to the latrine. TOOMEY turns, faces EPSTEIN, lowers his voice.*) Listen to me, you flyspeck on a mound of horse shit. You're taking me on, ain't you? Well, you're making a big mistake because I have a nutcracker that crunches the testicles of men who take me on... How the hell do you think you can beat me?

EPSTEIN. I'm not trying to beat you, Sergeant. I'm trying to work with you.

TOOMEY. (*looks at him sideways)* I think you're low on batteries, Epstein. I think some plumber turned off your fountain of knowledge. What the hell do you mean, working with me?

EPSTEIN. I don't think it's necessary to dehumanize a man to get him to perform. You can get better results raising our spirits than lowering our dignity.

TOOMEY. Why in the hell did you put back money you knew you didn't take?

EPSTEIN. Because I knew that *you* did. I saw you take it. I think inventing a crime that didn't exist to enforce your theories of discipline is neanderthal in its conception.

TOOMEY. *(gets closer*) I can arrange it, Epstein, that from now on you get nothing to eat in the mess hall except cotton balls. You ever eat cotton balls, Epstein? You can chew it till 1986, it don't swallow ... Men do not face enemy machine guns because they have been treated with kindness. They face them because they have a bayonet up their ass. I don't want them human. I want them obedient.

EPSTEIN. Egyptian kings made their slaves obedient. Eventually they lost their slaves and their kingdom.

TOOMEY. Yeah, well, I may lose mine but before you go, you're going to build me the biggest God damn pyramid you ever saw... I'm trying to save these boys' lives, you crawling bookworm. Stand in my way and I'll pulverize you into chicken droppings.

EPSTEIN. It should be an interesting contest, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. After I crush your testicles, you can replace them with the cotton balls. (*He glares at EPSTEIN, then exits quickly*.)... Neanderthal in its conception, Jesus Christ!

SGT. TOOMEY, SELRIDGE, WYKOWSKI, CARNEY, EUGENE, AND EPSTEIN

(SGT. TOOMEY enters with clipboard.)

TOOMEY. Dee-tail, attenSHUN!! (*The boys slowly get to their feet*.)

SELRIDGE. Hi, Sarge.

TOOMEY. I think it's in your best interests, men, to move your asses when I yell ATTENSHUN!! MOVE IT!!! I want a single line right there! (*They all jump and line up in front of their bunks. TOOMEY paces up and down the line, looking them over.)* Until the order "At Ease," is given, gentlemen, you are not "At Ease," is that understood? "Tenshun! *(They snap to attention. He looks at them a moment.)* At Ease*! (They stand "At Ease"... TOOMEY looks them over, then consults his clipboard.)* Answer when your name is called. The answer to that question is Ho. Not yes, not here, not right, not sir or any other unacceptable form of reply except the aforementioned Ho, am I understood? Wykowski, Joseph T.

WYKOWSKI. Ho!

TOOMEY. Selridge, Roy W.

ROY. Ho!

TOOMEY. Carney, Donald J.

CARNEY. HO!

TOOMEY. Jerome, Eugene M.

EUGENE. HO!

TOOMEY. Epstein, Arnold B.

EPSTEIN. Ho Ho! (*TOOMEY looks at him.)*

TOOMEY. Are there two Arnold Epsteins in this company?

EPSTEIN. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Then just give me one God damn Ho.

EPSTEIN. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Epstein, Arnold B.

EPSTEIN. HO!

TOOMEY. One more time.

EPSTEIN. HO!

TOOMEY. Let me hear it again.

EPSTEIN. HO!

TOOMEY. Am I understood?

EPSTEIN. Ho! (*as if saying "yes")*

EUGENE. *(to audience)* Arnold Epstein was the worst soldier in World War Two and that included the deserters ... He just refused to show respect to those he thought were his intellectual inferiors.

TOOMEY. (*to men*)... My name is Toomey. Sergeant Merwin J. Toomey and I am in charge of C Company during your ten weeks of basic training here in Beautiful Biloxi, Mississippi, after which those of you who have survived the heat, humidity, roaches, spiders, snakes, dry rot, fungus, dysentery, syphilis, gonorrhea and tick fever, will be sent to some shit island in the Pacific or some turd pile in Northern Sicily. [*Please Note: This is a truncated speech. The monologue contains much more.]* ... and that's something you won't know until ten weeks from now do I make myself clear, Epstein?

EPSTEIN. I think so.

TOOMEY. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, EPSTEIN??

EPSTEIN. Ho!

TOOMEY. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, JEROME?

EUGENE. Ho yes!

TOOMEY. Ho what?

EUGENE. Ho nothing.

TOOMEY. God damn right, boy.

EUGENE. (*to audience)* I hated the lousy movies. I thought I was going to get a nice officer like James Stewart.

TOOMEY. *(looks at EUGENE*) Are you paying attention to me, Jerome?

EUGENE. *(nervously*) Yes ho. I mean Ho, sir. Just plain Ho.

TOOMEY. Where are you from, Jerome?

EUGENE. 1427 Pulaski Avenue.

TOOMEY. In my twelve years in the army, I never met one God damn dogface who came from 1427 Pulaski Avenue. Why is that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Because it's my home. Only one family lives there. I'm sorry. I meant I live in Brighton Beach, Brook-lyn, New York. (TOOMEY notices EPSTEIN shifting from foot to foot.)

TOOMEY. Hey, Fred Astaire! You trying to tell me something?

EPSTEIN. I have to go to the bathroom, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Now how are you going to do that? We don't have bathrooms in the army.

EPSTEIN. They had them in Fort Dix.

TOOMEY. Not bathrooms, they didn't.

EPSTEIN. Yes, they did, Sergeant. I went in them a lot.

TOOMEY. Well, I'm telling you we don't have any bathrooms on this base. Do you doubt my veracity?

EPSTEIN. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. Then you've got a problem, haven't you, Epstein?

EPSTEIN. Ho ho.

TOOMEY. You bet your ass, ho ho... Do you know why you've got a problem, Epstein?

EPSTEIN. Because I have to go real bad.

TOOMEY. No, son. You've got a problem because you don't know army terminology. The place where a U.S. soldier goes to defecate, relieve himself, open his bowels, shit, fart, dump, crap and unload is called the latrine. La-trine! *(EUGENE smiles.*) Want to tell us what's funny about that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Well... that you said all those words in one sentence.

TOOMEY. That's why these ribbons are pinned on my shirt. Because I'm an experienced army man. Do you understand that, Jerome?

EUGENE. Ha.

TOOMEY. What?

EUGENE. Ho.

TOOMEY. Where are you from, Wykowski?

WYKOWSKI. Bridgeport, Connecticut.

TOOMEY. Do you know where that is, Selridge?

SELRIDGE. It's er ... in Connecticut. Bridgeport, think.

TOOMEY. Is that right, Wykowski?

WYKOWSKI. Ho.

TOOMEY. (*looks directly at ROY)* And what did you do in Bridgeport, soldier?

SELRIDGE. I was never there, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. I wasn't talking to you, Selridge.

SELRIDGE. Oh. You were looking at me.

TOOMEY. I may be looking at you but I am talking to the soldier from Bridgeport. (*looks into ROY's face)* Now what did you do there, Wykowski? (*They all look confused.*)

WYKOWSKI. I drove a truck. A moving van. I was a furniture mover.

TOOMEY. That's just what they need in the South Pa-cific, Wykowski. Someone who knows how to move furniture around in the jungle. (*EPSTEIN half raises hand.*) I believe Private Epstein has a question.

EPSTEIN. May I go to the latrine, Sergeant?

TOOMEY. No. I am addressing the new members of my company, Epstein. (*looks directly into WYKOWSKI's face)* What's your name again, soldier?

WYKOWSKI. Wykowski.

TOOMEY. I am talking to the man next to you.

SELRIDGE. Selridge!

TOOMEY. (*points to CARNEY*) You, boy! You are the one I am directing my question to.

CARNEY. Carney, sir. Donald J... Ho!

TOOMEY. I didn't ask if you were here. I can see that you're here. I asked where you're from, Carney, Donald J.

CARNEY. I don't remember ... Er, Montclair, New Jersey.

TOOMEY. And what was your civilian occupation in Montclair, New Jersey, Private Carney, Donald J.?

CARNEY. I didn't have any.

TOOMEY. No occupation? You were unemployed then, is that right?

CARNEY. No, Sergeant. I worked in a shoe store. In the stock room.

TOOMEY. (*stares at him*) Did I not hear you just say you didn't have an occupation?

CARNEY. Not in Montclair. I lived in Montclair. I worked in Teaneck. You just asked what my occupation was in Montclair.

TOOMEY. I see... Is it your intention, Private Carney, Donald J., to humiliate and ridicule me in front of my company?

CARNEY. No, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. And yet that is precisely what you did. As I stand here in front of my newly arrived company, you took this opportunity, assuming that because of my Southern heritage, I was an uneducated and illiterate cotton picker, you purposefully and deliberately humiliated me. Did you think for one second you would get away with that, Private Carney, Donald J.?...

CARNEY. I wasn't trying to get away with ...

TOOMEY. Well,I can assure you, YOU DID NOT AND WILL NOT! You just got your ass in a sling, boy! Does everyone understand that?

ALL. (*together)* Ho!

TOOMEY. What?

ALL. (*together)* HO!!!

TOOMEY. I am, strictly speaking, Carney, old army. And old army means discipline. Can you do push-ups, Private Carney?

CARNEY. Yes, Sergeant.

TOOMEY. What is the highest total of push-ups you ever achieved in one session, Private Carney?

CARNEY. I'm not too strong in the arms. About ten... maybe fifteen.

TOOMEY. Congratulations, Carney. You are about to break your old record. I want one hundred push-ups from you, Carney, and I want them now. AM I UNDER-STOOD?

CARNEY. One hundred? Oh, I couldn't possibly do one hu-

TOOMEY. HIT THE FLOOR, SOLDIER!!!

CARNEY. I could do, say, twenty a day for five days-

TOOMEY. Count off, God dammit and move your ass!

CARNEY. (*starts doing push-ups)* One...two... three ...four... five...

TOOMEY. (*looks into EPSTEIN's eyes)* Nobody eats, drinks, sleeps or goes to the latrine until I hear one hun-dred.

CARNEY. Six ... seven ... Oh, God ... nine ...ten ...

TOOMEY. Eight. You forgot eight, didn't you, boy?

CARNEY. I did it. I just didn't say it.

TOOMEY. Well, say them all, Donny boy. Let's start again from one. Let's hear it.

CARNEY. One... two... three ... *(CARNEY continues this throughout the scene with great difficulty.)*

CARNEY, WYKOWSKI, SELRIDGE, EPSTEIN AND EUGENE

CARNEY. *(His eyes are closed and he suddenly starts to sing a lively song of the period with practically full voice.)*

WYKOWSKI. Wake him up! Wake him up, for Christ's sake! *(ROY kicks CARNEY in the chest with his foot, CARNEY jumps.*)

CARNEY. What the hell's wrong with you?

SELRIDGE. It's two-thirty in the God damn morning. You were singing again.

CARNEY. I was not.

SELRIDGE. What do you mean, "You was not"? You practically made a record.

CARNEY. What was I singing?

SELRIDGE. "Chattanooga Choo-Choo."

CARNEY. I don't even know the words to "Chatta-nooga Choo-Choo."

WYKOWSKI. Maybe not awake. But you know them when you're sleeping.

CARNEY. (*to EUGENE*) Hey, Gene. Was I singing "Chattanooga Choo-Choo"?

EUGENE. Yeah.

CARNEY. ... Was I good?

EUGENE. Well, for a guy who was sleeping, it wasn't bad.

CARNEY. Damn. I wish I heard it.

EUGENE. (*to audience*) Donald Carney from Mont-clair, New Jersey was an okay guy until someone made the fatal mistake of telling him he sounded like Perry Como. His voice was flat but his sister wasn't. She had the biggest breasts I ever saw. She came to visit him at Fort Dix wearing a tight red sweater and that's when I first discovered Wykowski's condition. *(The train rumbles on.)*

WYKOWSKI. *(sits up)* God damn it. Someone let go again... Was it you, Carney?

CARNEY. I was singing, wasn't I? I'm not going to do that while I'm singing.

WYKOWSKI. Yeah? Well, maybe you sang to cover it up.

SELRIDGE. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. (*He looks up.*) It's coming from up there. (*They all look up. EPSTEIN has been sleeping on the grilling of the baggage rack with his rear end to the audience. WYKOWSKI whacks his cap hard against EPSTEIN's butt.)*

WYKOWSKI. Hey! Bombardier! Kill Germans, not G.I.s. (*EPSTEIN turns around. He is slight of build.)*

EPSTEIN. I'm sorry. I'm not feeling very well.

SELRIDGE. Yeah? Well, now we're all not feeling very well.

EUGENE. Leave him alone. He didn't do it on purpose.

SELRIDGE. *(to EPSTEIN*) You hear, Epstein? He's your buddy. Aim the next one at him, okay?

EPSTEIN. Does anyone have an Alka-Seltzer tablet?

WYKOWSKI. Plugging it up ain't gonna help, Epstein. (*He and ROY laugh. They all go back to their sleeping positions.)*

EUGENE. (*stops writing, looks at audience)* Arnold Epstein of Queens Boulevard, New York was a sensitive, well read, intelligent young man. His major flaw was that he was incapable of digesting food stronger than hard boiled eggs... I didn't think he'd last long in the army because during wartime it's very hard to go home for dinner every night... (*The train rumbles on.*) Hey, Arnold! What's the best book you ever read?

EPSTEIN. War and Peace... The fifth time.

EUGENE. If I wanted to become a writer, who do you recommend I read?

EPSTEIN. The entire third floor of the New York Public Library.

WYKOWSKI. Hey, Epstein? Can you read lips? Read this! (*Bronx cheer; SELRIDGE laughs.)*

ROWENA

(*ROWENA's room. EUGENE hidden behind screen, ROWENA sitting at her vanity, smoking, trying to be patient*.)

ROWENA. *(calls out)* How you doing, honey?

EUGENE. (*behind screen*) Okay.

ROWENA. You having any trouble in there?

EUGENE. No. No trouble.

ROWENA. What the hell you doing for ten minutes? C'mon, kid. I haven't got all day. (*EUGENE appears. He is wearing his khaki shorts, shoes and socks. A cigarette dangles from his lips. ROWENA looks at him.*) Listen. You can keep your shorts on if you want but I have a rule against wearing army shoes in bed.

EUGENE. *(looks down)* Oh. I'm sorry. I just forgot to take them off. (*He sits on the bed and very slowly starts to unlace them. To audience.*) I started to sweat like crazy. I prayed my Aqua Velva was working. (*ROWENA sprays around her with perfume from atomizer.*)

ROWENA. You don't mind a little perfume, do you, honey? The boy before you had on a gallon of Aqua Velva.

EUGENE. *(looks at audience then at her*) No, I don't mind. You can spray some on me. (*She smiles and sprays him playfully*.) Gee, it smells good.

ROWENA. If you'd like a bottle for your girlfriend, I sell them. Five dollars a piece.

EUGENE. You sell perfume too?

ROWENA. I sell hard to get items. Silk stockings. Black panties... You interested?

EUGEnE. (*earnestly*)... Do you carry men's clothing?

ROWENA. (*laughs*) That's cute. You're cute, honey...You want me to take your shoes off?

EUGENE. I can do it. Honest. I can do it. (*He gets his first shoe off.)*

ROWENA. Is this your first time?

EUGENE. My first time? (*He laughs*.) Are you kid-ding? That's funny... Noo...It's It's my second time..The first time they were closed.

ROWENA. You don't smoke cigarettes either, do you?

(She takes cigarette out of EUGENE's mouth.)

EUGENE. How'd you know?

ROWENA. You looked like your face was on fire... If you want to look older, why don't you try a mustache?

EUGENE. I did but it wouldn't grow in on the left side ... What's your name?

ROWENA. Rowena... What's yours?

EUGENE. My name? (*to audience*) I suddenly panicked. Supposing this girl kept a diary.

ROWENA. Well?

EUGENE. (*quickly*) Jack... Er... Jack Mulgroovey.

ROWENA. Yeah? I knew a Tom Mulgreevy once.

EUGENE. No. Mine is Mulgroovey. Oo not ee.

ROWENA. Where you from, Jack?

EUGENE. *(slight accen*t) Texarkana.

ROWENA. Is that right?

EUGENE. Yes, ma'am.

ROWENA. Is that Texas or Arkansas?

EUGENE. Arkansas, I think.

ROWENA. You think?

EUGENE. I left there when I was two. Then we moved to Georgia.

ROWENA. Really? You a cracker?

EUGENE. What's a cracker?

ROWENA. Someone from Georgia.

EUGENE. Oh, yeah. I'm a cracker. The whole family's crackers... Were you born in Biloxi?

ROWENA. No. Gulfport. I still live there with my husband.

EUGENE. Your husband?? ... You're married?? ...My God! If he finds me here he'll kill me.

ROWENA. No he won't.

EUGENE. Does he know that you're a — you're a-

ROWENA. Sure he does. That's how we met. He's in the Navy. He was one of my best customers. He still is.

EUGENE. You mean you charge your own husband??

ROWENA. I mean he's my best lover... You gonna do it from there, cowboy? 'Cause I'll have to make some adjustments.

EUGENE. I'm ready. (*to ROWENA)* Here I come.