

THIRD DRAFT

M*A*S*H

THE CONTRACT

JULY 19, 1978

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX TELEVISION

M*A*S*H

"THE CONTRACT"

by

Mac Ness

THIRD DRAFT
July 19, 1978

CAST LIST

HAWKEYE

B.J.

POTTER

CHARLES

RADAR

MARGARET

KLINGER

MULCAHY

BURKE

THATCHER

INTERIORS:

OPERATING ROOM

SWAMP

POST OP

POTTER'S OFFICE

EXTERIORS:

COMPOUND

OPERATING ROOM (POST OP)

SWAMP

DIRT ROAD

FIELD

POTTER is pushing three glasses of Scotch. Potter is seated
his desk and HARKINS and B.J. are seated before him. He Potter

May when, cowboy.

WANTED
Get a ten gallon glass.

WALK BACK AND TALK TO

WALKER

POTTER

To the closest emergency room to clinic
a walk with...

HARKINS
We got someone else?

B.J.
Yeah, some competition.

HARKINS
We'll have to lower our rates.

B.J.
Start making that call...

HARKINS
Suspended alphabetically...A through
Z today.

POTTER
I was expecting of you two before...

HARKINS
(stunned)
Long way to come.

They don't take orders and Potter looks like 11/24.

ACT ONE

1

FADE IN

INT. COLONEL POTTER'S OFFICE - DAY - CLOSE ON DESK

(TITLES SUPERED OVER:)

COLONEL POTTER is pouring three glasses of scotch. Potter is seated behind his desk and HAWKEYE and B.J. are seated before him. As Potter begins on the third glass:

POTTER

Say when, cowboy.

HAWKEYE

Get a ten gallon glass.

CAMERA PULLS BACK AND TILTS TO:

THREE SHOT AT DESK

2

Potter raises his glass and toasts:

POTTER

To the finest surgeons ever to grace
a MASH unit...

HAWKEYE

We got someone else?

B.J.

Uh-oh, more competition.

HAWKEYE

We'll have to lower our rates.

B.J.

Start making tent calls...

HAWKEYE

Beginning alphabetically...A through
K today.

POTTER

I was speaking of you two hotshots...
the duo-denum.

HAWKEYE

(toasting)

Long may it wave.

They down their drinks and Potter licks his lips.

POTTER

(indicating bottle of scotch)
First class...

B.J.

That's why it's measured in ounces.

POTTER

Several notches above the Pierce-Hunnicuttt
Gin and All Purpose Rust Remover.

HAWKEYE

Manufactured daily in our own pool of
cess.

B.J.

Charles's side of the Swamp is clean, so
that would be ex-cess.

POTTER

(reacting badly to B.J.'s joke)
I need another.

Potter fills his glass:

B.J.

Come on, Colonel, it wasn't that bad --
I was just having a little pun.

Hawkeye, also making a face, puts his glass in front of Potter:

HAWKEYE

Give me a double.

B.J.

I thought I just did.

Potter refills Hawkeye's and B.J.'s glasses and the drink during:

POTTER

Speaking of Boston Blue-blood, he should
be back soon...

HAWKEYE

Please, we're not drunk yet.

POTTER

(looks)
It's almost 1700.

B.J.

No wonder we're not drunk yet, we haven't
seen Charles in over 800 hours.

HAWKEYE

How time flies.

POTTER

Look, go easy on him when he gets back.
Afterall he did volunteer.

B.J.

After all you did make a threat.

HAWKEYE

I kinda liked your idea of making him a trench surgeon -- you could wear him in the rain and not get wet.

B.J.

Like your jokes.

POTTER

Now you know Winchester is sensible....

HAWKEYE

(interrupts)
The perfect soldier: G.I. Tract.

POTTER

He listens, every now and then -- although most don't live long enough to see it. He understood that the situation at the 8055th was desperate.

B.J.

The only desperate thing he understands is that he desperately wants out of here.

HAWKEYE

Who doesn't?

B.J.

The North Koreans...they'd rather fight than switch.

HAWKEYE

With a little help from their competitive sponsors: the Russians and the Chinese.

Their glasses are empty, but Potter, feeling generous, refills them again.

HAWKEYE

What was the 55th's problem, Colonel?

POTTER

Something H.Q. is famous, or infamous, for: screwing up supply orders...they misplaced them or something

HAWKEYE

It'd be a whole lot easier on us if they'd just misplace the bullets.

POTTER

It was just a stroke of luck we had some

POTTER (Cont'd)
this week. They'd have been in big trouble without us.

HAWKEYE
Yeah, but don't you hate someone who borrows and then wants delivery?

B.J.
That's what happens when you advertise.

RADAR ENTERS and crosses to Potter. Radar carries (as always) his clipboard.

HAWKEYE
Radar! Join us in a drink.

RADAR
Ah, no thank you sir.

HAWKEYE
(extending glass)
Then I'll have his.

Again, Potter fills their glasses:

POTTER
(to Radar)
Good thing you don't want any, son...this bottle's shot.

As he finishes, pouring out the last drop, he throws the bottle into the trashcan.

RADAR
That's okay, sir...scotch makes my tongue swell.

B.J.
And Nurse Able said it was already pretty good.

RADAR
(smugly)
She should know.

HAWKEYE
(holding back the laugh)
Then come to the Swamp with us, the still's full. Maybe gin will swell your feet and you'd be taller.

POTTER
I'd think about that...at least it'd help

B.J.
We've even fixed up the guest room. Had Charles's bed fumigated.

RADAR
(defensively)
I wouldn't sit on his bed!
(lower)
I saw him checking the dents in it the other day.

B.J.
Oh, the day he accused Margaret of lying on it.

HAWKEYE
And she layed her fist in his stomach.

POTTER
Well you know what they say: the way to a man's heart...

HAWKEYE
Then come with me to the mess tent...

B.J.
(interrupts)
Terrible opening line.

HAWKEYE
It's fried shrimp today. I'm buying.

B.J.
That's a switch.

POTTER
Guilty conscience.

RADAR
(to Hawkeye)
No thanks...I'm allergic to being sick.

POTTER
Did you just come in to be the target of the Bowery Boys?

RADAR
Oh, no sir.

B.J.
I could never hit a small target anyway.

Radar tries to ignore that.

RADAR

HAWKEYE
(overlapping)
Klinger called to say they're refueling.

RADAR
(shocked)
How did you know that?

HAWKEYE
Why do you think they call me Hawkeye?
B.J. and Potter are also giving him confused looks.

POTTER
What does that mean?

HAWKEYE
(indicates clipboard)
I saw the daily report...you wrote it down, Radar.

B.J.
I thought it was done with mirrors.

POTTER
(indicating no)
Too hard to write on.

HAWKEYE
Call them back, tell them to stop at the deli and picked up a side order of Maxine the waitress.

Hold the kosher pickles.

HAWKEYE
(to B.J.)
I guess you'd call that a short order for...

RADAR
(overlapping)
I'm not that short!

Hawkeye stops, shrugs to B.J. as Radar stalks out of the office.

B.J.
You two should go on the road with that.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

KLINGER, dressed in a W.A.C. uniform, is filling the Jeep's tank from

a can that was strapped to the back of the jeep. He tips it up, emptying every drop. He caps it and throws it in the back seat. Klinger turns, looking across the road O.S.

KLINGER
(calling)
Sir! Sir!

He gets no response so, grumbling, he walks O.S.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

4

Where CHARLES is bending down, his back to Klinger as he approaches. Charles is picking the best of a few dozen scraggly bushes.

KLINGER
I'm finished, sir.

CHARLES
Just a moment. I've found the most mar-
valous outgrowth of tymus vulgaris.

KLINGER
Uh-oh. Is it dangerous?

CHARLES
Hardly. It's a spice...your people should
know about spices.

KLINGER
Only in the women.

CHARLES
This is thyme. Perfect condition, too...
amazing that something like this should
grow in a country as despicable as Korea.

KLINGER
Lots of fertilizer, probably.

CHARLES
Do you know what you can make with this?

KLINGER
A clock?

CHARLES
I should've known better...

KLINGER
Yes sir, but we really need to get going.
Major. My mommie doesn't like me to be
out after dark.

CHARLES
Just a few more.

Charles reaches out for a better bush.

CLOSE ANGLE - THYME BUSH

As Charles reaches for it. A small copper wire stretches across it, glinting in the sun.

KLINGER

Sees the wire and leaps for Charles:

KLINGER

Sir!!!

Klinger makes a flying tackle just as Charles pulls the bush. They roll and a huge explosion blows a wide crater in the ground. Dirt and rocks fly.

Charles and Klinger look up, the noise of the detonation dying down. They brush dirt and rocks off of themselves and Klinger makes a face seeing that his uniform is ripped. They stand.

CHARLES

Wh...what happened?

KLINGER

The North Koreans booby-trapped your vulgaris.

CHARLES

The barbarians.

Charles has a sudden realization as Klinger inspects the rip in his uniform.

CHARLES

Corporal...do you realize what this means?

KLINGER

It means my dress is ruined...and I can't get one from supply like everyone else...I have to have bigger darts.

CHARLES

No, no...that might very well have killed me. You saved my life.

KLINGER

(thinks a moment)

Yeah, I guess I did.
(and)

Of all people! Why couldn't it have been a General, they pay with discharges.

CHARLES

Well I know I'm not a General, I know that there's nothing I can do to adequately repay you...but if there's anything you want, anything you want me to do...I'll do it.

KLINGER
Well Major...Charles...there is one thing
you could do for me.

CHARLES
Anything.

KLINGER
I want your signiture on one, well three
actually, pieces of paper.

Charles gives him a puzzled look, then realizes what Klinger means.

CUT TO:

EXT. 4077TH COMPOUND - DUSK

7

A beat, then:

INT. SWAMP - NIGHT

8

Hawkeye and B.J. are playing chess, the board on a table between
their beds. Hawkeye moves his bishop (Hawkeye is white) in.

HAWKEYE
I've got you now.

B.J.
That's what they all say.

B.J. moves his king.

B.J.

There.

HAWKEYE
That's what you think. Little did you
know that your knight is a double agent.

B.J.
He gets 20 per-cent instead of 10?

HAWKEYE
His real name is Arnold Arthur.

B.J.
I'll bet he works nights at the Round Table
Bar.

HAWKEYE
Exactly. I now reveal his identity...

B.J.
(interrupts)
Thus setting up for some heavy horseplay.

HAWKEYE
And he makes a move for your king.

B.J.
What will the queen say?

Hawkeye moves his knight.

HAWKEYE
My bishop foils your pawns....

B.J.
Where'd he get the aluminum?

HAWKEYE
He's been saving gum wrappers for 10
years. He moves in...

Hawkeye moves his bishop.

B.J.
And...?

HAWKEYE
And it's mate, mate.

Hawkeye leans back triumphantly.

B.J.
Ahhh...I should have suspected Arthur.
He didn't even buy a ticket to the coronation.

HAWKEYE
You know what they say: "the best laid
plans of mice and chessmen..."

Hawkeye picks up a flask of gin and fills his glass during:

B.J.
I've just been rooked.

HAWKEYE
Very pawny. (indicates flask)
How about a glass of Victory Gin.

B.J. holds out his glass:and Hawkeye fills it:

B.J.
Don't mind if I do.

Hawkeye reaches down and produces an olive on a toothpick.

HAWKEYE
Olive?

B.J.
No just the toothpick, it has better flavor.
It's aged in wood.

HAWKEYE

I certainly hope so.
(drops olive into glass)
These must be army olives, they're green.

B.J.

That's from eating army food.

HAWKEYE

(indicates board)
Let's go again. I'll let you win this time.

B.J.

The game is rigged, I saw you mark the pieces.

HAWKEYE

So you can shuffle, then.

B.J.

No, I don't think so. I'm getting a little chess bored.

HAWKEYE

Then what should we do, besides desert.

B.J.

I'm too full for desert. I'll tell you what, I'll read to you.

B.J. starts looking for a book.

HAWKEYE

Oh, goody. What?

B.J.

How about The Damnation of Faust? It's a helluva book. I'll just have a devil of a time finding it.

HAWKEYE

Wow, the way you throw up those puns. It makes me want to.

B.J.

Heave-ho.

Then Charles enters.

HAWKEYE

And speaking of throw up...guess who's home.

CHARLES

No, but I wish I was.

B.J.
That makes three of us.

Charles sits down on his cot.

CHARLES
Oh, this place...

B.J.
If you'd like we'll hire a decorator.

HAWKEYE
Klinger must've gotten to him.

CHARLES
Indeed he did, and just in the nick of time.

(looking around)
What did I do to deserve this?

HAWKEYE
It must've been terrible.

CHARLES
It's inhuman...being forced to live out a life inside the world's biggest garbage dump.

HAWKEYE
Never settle for second best.

CHARLES
And the mud...

B.J.
What?

CHARLES
Mud. I am sick and tired of mud.

B.J.
We'll talk to the cook.

CHARLES
Every day I have to clean red mud off of my shoes, my clothes, my hair... Have you ever noticed that the minute a war starts, the country turns into one big mud hole? Without the mud this war would be so clean

HAWKEYE
How do you get mud in your hair?

B.J.
Must not take much.

CHARLES
And the unsanitary conditions I'm subjected to...filthy rats...

HAWKEYE
We resent that!

CHARLES
I hate those two holes we call the latrine.

HAWKEYE
Please, Charles keep using that.

B.J.
Would you mind knocking off the self pity until you get back to Boston? You'll need it then.

HAWKEYE
I thought you couldn't break the spirit of a Winchester. What would grandmama think if she heard you?

CHARLES
Yes, you're right. I shouldn't think about it. I understand convicts find it easier if they simply take one day at the time... and since I'm most certainly a convict, I'll try that.

Then:

P.A. VOICE
Attention all personnel. Ambulances arriving in the compound! All doctors and nurses report to surgery immediately!

CHARLES
No. I can't believe it.

They all slowly get up and walk out:

CHARLES
After eight hours with a Levantine transvestite...is there no justice.

HAWKEYE
Well I know we ordered some. Probably some screw up at HQ.

B.J.
Aren't they synonymous?

CHARLES
I won't even be able to get any sleep.

B.J.
Yes, that exciting Korean night life.

HAWKEYE

Let's go save a few.

They're out and headed toward the O.R.

CUT TO:

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

All the tables are filled. There is a general buzz of conversation and instruments. Angle toward Charles and MARGARET.

CHARLES

Suction.

Margaret obeys, the liquid 'suction sound' being heard.

CHARLES

Kelly clamp.

MARGARET

(handing it to him)

Kelly.

CHARLES

All right, move that retractor towards me.

Margaret does.

CHARLES

Thank you much.
(beat)

Four-oh silk on a cutting needle.

Margaret looks at her tray, a beat. Charles is peeved.

CHARLES

Four-oh silk, Margaret. Do you want me to thread the needle myself?

MARGARET

We only have two-oh.

CHARLES

I need four!

HAWKEYE

Oh for crying out loud Charles, use two.

Angle widens to include the others.

CHARLES

I can't, I'm closing a bowel resection.

HAWKEYE

Make your stitches smaller.

CHARLES

How can I be expected to work when I don't have the right supplies.

POTTER

Forget being pretty, just sew fast.

CHARLES

I'm operating twice as fast as I used to. I won't be able to function in a normal operating theatre after this.

BURKE, the anesthetist, looks up.

BURKE

A drop in pressure, Major.

POTTER

Shake a leg, Winchester. I don't want to lose a patient because of an argument.

CHARLES

All right.

(to Margaret)

Two -oh silk...on a cutting needle.

Margaret hands him the suture and he begins to sew.

CHARLES

We would have four-oh if we hadn't given it all to the 8055th.

B.J.

Charles will you shut up before I resect your bowels up to your ears??

POTTER

Knock it off. I mean it, let's keep the arguments out of the O.R.

HAWKEYE

Why, are the customers complaining?

(to patient)

Well, that's enough out of you. Let's close.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

FADE IN

EXT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

B.J. and Hawkeye walk outside, stretching. Behind them, FATHER MULCAHY also exits the O.R.

MULCAHY

Oh, what a session.

B.J.

Tired Father?

MULCAHY

Oh, just a little. The Lord will provide strength, as they say. I can empathize with you two, though...I almost prayed my fingers off.

HAWKEYE

Priest's cramps?

MULCAHY

A hazard of the profession, I'm afraid.

HAWKEYE

Does that affect your insurance rates?

Mulcahy smiles, shaking his head. He walks o.s. B.J. sniffs the air. They begin to walk.

B.J.

Do you smell that?

Hawkeye sniffs too:

HAWKEYE

Yeah, I told you we need to dig a new latrine.

B.J.

That's not the latrine, that's the mess tent.

HAWKEYE

We need to dig another one of those, too.

B.J.

Do you know what the entree for today is?

HAWKEYE

Let's see...from the smell I'd guess rotten eggs and cabbage.

B.J.

Close. Chipped beef on toast.

HAWKEYE

The beef wouldn't chip if they'd quit dropping it.

Potter enters the shot, rubbing his back. Hawkeye and B.J. stop.

POTTER

I should've avoided the rush and reserved another back. I'm going to my tent for about 18 hours of shut eye. If you need me, forget it...I'm mining my tent's threshold.

B.J.

Go ahead, we don't mine.

Potter rolls his eyes and walks o.s.

B.J.

I have an idea.

HAWKEYE

What's that?

B.J.

Let's drink lunch today.

HAWKEYE

That's great, but what about dinner?

B.J.

There's always left-overs.

HAWKEYE

Not with us around.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ANGLE ON HEMOSTAT - INT. SWAMP - DAY

11

The clamp is holding the tubing from the still closed. Hawkeye removes it and lets the gin pour into a flask.

ANGLE WIDENS TO FULL SHOT

12

Charles enters as Hawkeye clamps off the tubing. Hawkeye fills B.J.'s glass, then his own and sits down during:

CHARLES

What're you drinking to?

HAWKEYE

We're going to drink to we're drunk.

CHARLES

No, I meant...never mind.
(beat)

Pierce, Hunnicutt...

HAWKEYE

Present.

CHARLES

About my attitude last night, both here and in the O.R. It was deplorable. There's a reason, of course, but that's really no excuse. I'd like to say, well I want to....

B.J.

Charles, are you apologizing?

CHARLES

Certainly not!

(beat)

I'd just like to say...I'm sorry.

HAWKEYE

And remember, ladies and gentlemen, you heard it here first.

CHARLES

(indicates gin)

Ah, could I have one of those?

HAWKEYE

Swamp Gas? Are you sure. Your tastes are more for Batas Montrechet, 1940.

B.J.

In a canteen.

CHARLES

No, really I would like a drink. Do you have some Vermouth to go with it?

HAWKEYE

The Vermouth is already in it, we make pre-mix...for post-mortem.

Hawkeye finds a glass and blows dust out of it. He fills it:

B.J.

Or post-boredom.

Charles takes the drink, sips it and makes a face. As he sits in a chair, he forces himself to swallow it.

CHARLES

That's the most extraordinary...my, it has the aftertaste of old socks.

B.J.

B.V.D.'s actually. We use them to filter it.

HAWKEYE

Weren't you saying something about a reason?

CHARLES

Oh? Oh, yes. Yes. Something happened to me yesterday, something that's caused me to think...

HAWKEYE

Did you get hit on the head?

Before Charles can reply, there's a knock at the door. It's Klinger, dressed in a real (male) Army uniform.

KLINGER

Can I come in, sirs?

CHARLES

Klinger, of course.

Klinger enters, smiling.

HAWKEYE

Klinger, what're you dressed up for?

KLINGER

A special occasion, a secret between me and the Major.

HAWKEYE

Oh oh. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Elliott Winchester announce the engagement of their son Charles to Max Klinger. Wedding to take place in the mine field next week and the bride will wear off-black.

B.J.

Let's drink to the happy couple.

Klinger, smiling still (even bigger) hands a shief of papers to Charles.

KLINGER

Just put your Charles Emerson Hancock on the bottom line, sir.

Charles looks at them, then begins to sign:

B.J.

He's doing it. Charles is being civil?

KLINGER

The Major is doing me a favor.

CHARLES

And I trust this will settle the matter?

KLINGER

Yes sir, with interest.

B.J.

What's going on?

KLINGER

We're settling up. Yesterday, on our way back from the 55th, I saved the Major's life.

B.J.

Why??

HAWKEYE

You made a Major mistake.

CHARLES

He's not joking, gentlemen. He pushed me clear just before a land mine went off.

HAWKEYE

Really? On the level?

KLINGER

Yep.

B.J.

Well, Charles...I think we're both sorry for the way we treated you.

HAWKEYE

Yeah, that's a good enough reason for your acting the way you did.

CHARLES

I tried to maintain my composure. I'm now paying the Corporal back.

HAWKEYE

Gee, Klinger. That must be worth at least 50 cents. What's he giving you, a nose job?

KLINGER

Are you kidding? How would I siphon?

B.J.

I once saved a dog's life. It licked my hand.

HAWKEYE

Do you blame it? It didn't know where your face had been.

CHARLES

Someday, Pierce...with extensive shock therapy, you might become semi-sane.

B.J.

I doubt it.

Charles has finished signing the papers. He hands them to Klinger.

CHARLES

Here you are.

KLINGER

Thank you sir, you won't regret it.

CHARLES

I take it that this makes us even?

KLINGER

With interest.

HAWKEYE

(to Klinger)

What do you mean, even? You got three stacks of paper and all you did was save Charles life. What is it?

KLINGER

My ticket home.

B.J.

How's that?

KLINGER

He signed my psycho discharge papers.

Charles turns away from them...and their looks.

B.J.

He can't send you home, that takes three signatures.

HAWKEYE

Who made three?

KLINGER

You two did.

HAWKEYE

What??

KLINGER

You remember that poker game a few months ago? The big one, Major Freedman came to it.

HAWKEYE

The one where I tried to bet my fillings?

KLINGER

Right.

B.J.

I remember. You won big that night.

KLINGER

And, in the last hand, what did you two bet?

HAWKEYE
(realizes)

Oh.

KLINGER
Don't you remember how Major Freedman balked? Saying how if he wanted a section 8 he could sign his own? But you bet your signitures. Remember?

HAWKEYE
What's the matter? Didn't you want fillings?

B.J.
You could've made a necklace.

KLINGER
I won't need it, now.

Klinger moves to the door.

KLINGER
I have packing to do. I want to be ready to spring it on the Colonel when he wakes up. I'm off.

CHARLES
How right you are.

Klinger starts out, but:

KLINGER
Oh please, sirs, don't tell anyone. I'd rather do that.

CHARLES
I'd prefer to forget the whole incident.

KLINGER
Hold that thought.

Klinger exits as Charles makes a pot of tea:

CHARLES
He doesn't realize that what he said makes absolutely no sense...

B.J.
Charles, are you out of what's left of your mind?

CHARLES
What do you mean?

HAWKEYE
He doesn't realize what this could mean. A section 8, Charles!

CHARLES

What could I do?

HAWKEYE

How about suicide?

CHARLES

Cretin.

Charles concentrates on making his tea as B.J. and Hawkeye have a low conference.

B.J.

Isn't Potter going to be surprised.

HAWKEYE

Klinger going home on a section 8...

B.J.

Why don't we send Charles home in 8 sections?

CUT TO:

13

INT. POST OP - DAY

13

On one bed, his shoulder bandaged, is a young man: THATCHER. He's reading a pulp detective novel called: Quincey Penn -- in Danger! Klinger walks up:

KLINGER

Hey, Ronny Thatcher? Port Lake Erie?

THATCHER

That's right.

KLINGER

(extending hand)

Max Klinger. Father Mulcahy told me...I'm from Toledo too.

But they can't shake, because of Thatcher's hurt shoulder. They laugh and Klinger extends the other hand and Thatcher puts down the novel. They shake.

THATCHER

Hey, great. Nice to meet you.

Klinger sits on the empty bed beside him.

KLINGER

I should've known right off. You've got that Toledo look. Were you born there?

THATCHER

All my life.

KLINGER

Me too.

THATCHER

First time I've been away. Two months now, and look what happens to me. I survived 18 years in the Toledo streets, but...

KLINGER

I know what you mean.

THATCHER

How long have you been here?

KLINGER

Forever.

THATCHER

I know what you mean.

KLINGER

But I'm going back.

THATCHER

That's great...

KLINGER

I just got my discharge papers...I can't wait.

CUT TO:

INT. SWAMP - DAY

14

Charles, standing by the still, pours gin into his teacup, mixing it with the tea. As he walks to his cot and drinks:

CHARLES

Afterall, I did have to pay him back.

HAWKEYE

Wouldn't he have settled for your firstborn?

CHARLES

It's not only my fault.

B.J.

Oh, no.

CHARLES

Afterall, you two signed.

HAWKEYE

We were forced to...

B.J.

It was either our signatures or losing the game.

CHARLES

But you lost anyway.

HAWKEYE

Nobody's perfect.

CHARLES

You certainly aren't.

CUT TO:

INT. POST OP - DAY

15

KLINGER

Ah, to be part of the population again. Watching the ships dock...sitting in The Trianon and listening...

THATCHER

(interrupts)
They tore it down.

KLINGER

What??

THATCHER

They tore The Trianon down. Last year. It's a bank now.

KLINGER

That's not fair! I can't spend my Saturday nights in a vault. Gee...
(beat)

Well, I guess there's always Al's Pool Hall.

THATCHER

Nope.

KLINGER

They tore it down too??

THATCHER

It tore itself down. Gas leak, took out the whole block.

KLINGER

Even the deli?

THATCHER

Especially the deli. Fortunately it was at night, so no one was hurt...unless you count the looters.

We slowly ZOOM IN ON KLINGER. As his expression changes. It's not the city he knew. He doesn't even look at Thatcher who, from now and in following shots is O.S.

KLINGER

Looters? That was a class neighborhood. Maybe a fight now and then, but...

THATCHER
(interrupts)

Not anymore. Most of the merchants moved out last year, it got pretty rough... The old 'It'll cost you less to pay protection money than it will to replace your front windows.'

(beat)

The pool hall, the deli, the dime store, Molly's Candy and Bakery, the Hotel Redmont, the Tavern... All gone... Nothing but pawn shops, dollar a week rooms, and business girls wearing out the sidewalk.

KLINGER

That's not it... That's not my city, my neighborhood... That's not what I want to go back to.

CUT TO:

INT. SWAMP - NIGHT

16

Charles, holding his teacup, stumbles back over to the still. He's getting pretty drunk. Charles picks up the beaker of gin and pours it into his cup: Hawkeye looks:

HAWKEYE

There's no tea in there.

CHARLES

I thought I'd just have the sugar.

B.J.

You'll get a cavity in your liver.

Charles goes back to his cot and during the following, as he drinks, his speech gets worse:

CHARLES

(indicating cup)
This stuff grows on you.

HAWKEYE

Like vintage fungus.

CHARLES

I mean, I've only had the best... Champagne and wine... But not at the same time, of course.

(beat; sits down)

Do you know, Hawkeye, B.J....

B.J.

(interrupts)

Not too well, but we're hoping to meet them New Year's Eve.

Charles laughs

CHARLES

My father is an attorney, you know... Makes a lot of money, but we've always lived with my grandmama on Beacon hill.

B.J.

You father couldn't bring home the Beacon.

CHARLES

That's right. My grandmama is very strict. Boarding school for me... Did you know that she wouldn't let me speak to anyone who's last name had less than three syllables?

HAWKEYE

That's terrible.

CHARLES

My doctor's name was Downs... I couldn't even tell him what was wrong with me.

HAWKEYE

And you've been this way since childhood?

CHARLES

Once I had the mumps, and she made the butler's son stay near me so he'd get them and I wouldn't be lonely. He didn't get the mumps, but I caught his cold.

(chuckles)

I was miserable. I thought if I sneezed, I'd make myself sterile.

KLINGER ENTERS. He doesn't look happy. Charles laughs:

CHARLES

Ah, the camp Riff raft.

KLINGER

Is he drunk?

HAWKEYE

We won't be sure until the autopsy.

Charles stands, nearly falls back on the cot, then rights himself. He staggers over and picks up the flask of gin. During:

CHARLES

And the corpse will sue for malpractice.

B.J.

You going to have more to drink?

CHARLES

I can't have less.

Charles takes the flask to his cot, sits, and fills his cup:

HAWKEYE
Are you finished packing?

KLINGER
No. No. I'm not going.

HAWKEYE
What??

CHARLES
Now wait a minute... We had a deal!

KLINGER
Don't worry Major, you paid me back. You gave me something better than a discharge.

CHARLES
A Winchester never skimps.

Charles puts his cup down, gets a strange look:

CHARLES
Oh, my...

Charles falls back on the cot. Passed out.

HAWKEYE
I hate someone who can't hold their terpine.

B.J.
At least we won't have to embalm him.

They look at Klinger a moment. He looks down.

HAWKEYE
What's the angle?

Klinger pulls up a chair and sits between them.

KLINGER
Well... I guess I really never thought about it before, but...
(beat)

I really don't have anything to go home to. Everything I know is gone. Laverne and I are divorced... All my friends either moved away or were drafted and...

(trails off; beat)
I guess what I'm really trying to say is: this is my family now. Maybe we've got some bad times, what with the war... But what family doesn't have bad times?

B.J.
What about your real family? Your parents?

KLINGER
If I go home in a dress, they'll disown me.

KLINGER (Cont'd)

I never gave it too much thought before, but if I get out on a psycho, it'll ruin my life. I won't be able to get a job, I'll have to spend most of my time with psychiatrists.

HAWKEYE

You're right. That's not much of a life.

KLINGER

I was always trying so hard to get out, I never thought about what it would be like after I'm out.

(beat)

I'm staying.

B.J.

Are you sure?

Klinger holds up his discharge papers.

KLINGER

I'm this sure.

Klinger tears them up.

KLINGER

I found out that trying to get this was a lot more fun than finally having it.

Klinger stands.

KLINGER
Don't tell anybody. Please?

HAWKEYE

Sure.

KLINGER

Do you think the Major will tell?

Charles is dead to the world.

HAWKEYE

He probably won't even remember who he is tomorrow.

B.J.

Hopefully, neither will we.

KLINGER

Thanks.

HAWKEYE

What about your trusoe?

KLINGER

I'm keeping it.

B.J.

Why? You don't have anything to gain by it anymore.

HAWKEYE

You could be normal... Almost.

KLINGER

Oh, no. If I have to start acting sane around here, I will go crazy. Besides, it was so much fun getting the first one, I'll try for another. Maybe two's my lucky number.

(beat)

Goodnight.

Klinger EXITS.

HAWKEYE

I don't believe it. The only problems we used to have were from the wounded. Many times, we were the wounded, but...

(beat)

This place has become so complicated.

B.J.

War is hectic.

Charles rools over as Hawkeye pours himself a drink.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

17

Hawkeye and B.J. walk out and stop. They're drinking in the bright, cool morning.

HAWKEYE

Another pretty day. Two in a row, I don't know if I can take it.

B.J.

(sniffs)

Even breakfast smells good.

HAWKEYE

Don't believe that. The Army packages good food smells in an aerosol spray. I've been using a can as deodorant.

B.J.

So that's why you smell like asparagus.

Potter, bright eyed and et cetera, walks by, whistling.

POTTER

Morning boys.

(stops)

I-Cor says it'll be a slow day, wounded-wise. A little peace at the four-oh-double crapout.

Charles, with a long moan, comes out of the Swamp, holding his head.

B.J.

Ah, the creature from the Swamp.

CHARLES

Please, not so loud... My head feels like an abscessed tooth.

HAWKEYE

Headache, Charles?

CHARLES

No thanks, I already have one.

POTTER

What happened to you, Major?

B.J.

He didn't pull through the autopsy.

POTTER

You look like the bottom of the latrine.

HAWKEYE

No thanks, he already has one.

CHARLES

I'm going to take a shower.

Charles walks o.s.

POTTER
You'd better hurry to the Officer's Mess.

B.J.
You want us to punish them?

POTTER
A real treat today: fresh tomatoes.

HAWKEYE
Anyone we know?

KLINGER (o.s.)
Morning sirs!

Potter turns and ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE KLINGER. Klinger is wearing a tarlatan ballet skirt and a big smile. Potter gives a start.

POTTER
Klinger... A tu-tu?

HAWKEYE
I think it's too-little.

B.J.
Getting ready for a night at the operate?

KLINGER
Do you like it?

POTTER
It's not going to work.
(walking o.s.)
You might as well give up, Swan Leek.

Klinger, with an even bigger smile, follows Potter o.s. after Potter's last line. He gives a loud, happy:

KLINGER
Not until I get out!

ANGLE TIGHTENS ON HAWKEYE AND B.J. they turn to each other, smiling.

FREEZE FRAME

FADE OUT

THE END

