

THE LAST DETAIL

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THE LAST DETAIL

(#132085)

FADE IN:

EXT. TRANSIT BARRACKS #1

1           at Norfolk Naval Base. SEAMAN APPRENTICE SWEET           1  
          almost fails to salute a car with an officer sticker  
          on it. He makes the salute and climbs the steps  
          into one of the barracks. His breath is frosty.

INT. TRANSIT BARRACKS MOVING #1

2           down the line of footlockers in the center. Dust           2  
          floats on oppressive shafts of sunlight. Some of the  
          beds are made and some of the mattresses are rolled  
          back. On the ones that are rolled back, the springs  
          sag and mattress stains can be seen.

Two SAILORS can be heard talking quietly about the kind  
of duty they're going to draw, and what is good duty  
and what bad.

                                  SWEET  
          Buddusky? Buddusky? Either  
          you guys seen Buddusky?

One of them points down to the end of the barracks.  
Sweet checks the head - nine of the ten urinals have  
masking tape across them and are marked SECURED. The  
tenth one is ripped away. Sweet moves on.

INT. TV ROOM & CHAIN - BUDDUSKY

3           Beyond a chain with a SECURED sign, BUDDUSKY is           3  
          crumpled up asleep in a tattered chair. His hash-marked  
          arm dangles over the side of the chair hanging onto a  
          nearly empty bottle of Ripple.

                                  SWEET  
          Buddusky.

                                  BUDDUSKY  
          What?

Buddusky opens his eyes. He looks mean.

3 CONTINUED:

3

SWEEK

(more subdued)

MAA sent me. He wants to see  
you right away.

BUDDUSKY

Tell the MAA to fuck himself.

SWEEK

(carefully)

He said right away.

BUDDUSKY

(not moving)

Tell the MAA to go fuck himself.

SWEEK

C'mon, Buddusky. It's your  
ass if you don't...maybe your  
orders came thru..c'mon,  
Buddusky.

Buddusky doesn't budge.

SWEEK

(lamely)

It's your ass...

He leaves.

EXT. TRANSIT BARRACKS

4 Seaman Apprentice Sweek exits, walks down the compound and starts up another set of barracks steps. He passes a cleanup detail whose point men are holding off vehicular traffic with broom sticks to allow the detail safe convoy. 4

INT. OTHER TRANSIT BARRACKS - MOVING AGAIN WITH SWEEK

4A looks identical. Sailors are talking o.s. as he passes. 4A

INT. UTILITY ROOM

4B Sweek finds RICHARD MULHALL, a large black man, in his shorts. Mulhall is carefully pressing his uniform with a steam iron. Two other sailors are doing laundry and talking. 4B

4B CONTINUED:

4B

SWEEK

Mulhall, the Master at Arms  
wants to see you right away.

MULHALL

I ain't goin' on no shit  
detail.

He punctuates with a shot of steam.

SWEEK

C'mon, Mule. It's my ass if  
you don't go.

MULHALL

I ain't goin' on no shit  
detail.

Another hiss from the steam.

SWEEK

It's your ass too. C'mon, Mule.  
Maybe he's got your orders.

Mule uses a damp cloth with the iron to make sure the  
reverse creases down the sides of his arm and pantlegs  
are straight and definite. He works with elaborate care.

MULE

(another hiss of steam)  
Tell the MAA you couldn't  
find me.

SWEEK

He knows where you are.

MULE

Oh yeah? When you're in the  
Navy, shitbird, and you are in  
transit nobody knows where the  
fuck you are. Now go tell the  
MAA to fuck himself. I ain't  
goin' on no shit detail.

Mule gives another couple of shots of steam.

INT. MAA'S OFFICE

5

MAA

You're one lucky son of a  
bitch, Bad Ass.

5

5

CONTINUED:

5

The MAA fingers around for some orders. He finds them.

MAA

You're one lucky son of a bitch.

Buddusky stands there unimpressed.

BUDDUSKY

Where am I going?

MAA

How come you're so lucky,  
Buddusky?

BUDDUSKY

Where am I going, Chief?

Mule arrives. The MAA continues to relish being the center of his little satrapy.

MAA

You're another lucky son of  
a bitch, Mulhall.

MULE

Yeah?

MAA

Buddusky, meet Mulhall, you'll  
be working together.

The two acknowledge each other, then turn back to the MAA.

MAA

You dudes pulled temporary  
duty as chasers.

Buddusky and Mulhall look at each other. Their expressions are guarded.

MULE

Where to?

MAA

(busying himself with  
orders)

Portsmouth Naval Prison.

Mulhall and Buddusky look at each other again. They smile. Then suspicion overtakes Mule.

MULE

Who we taking?

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

MAA

(a joke)  
Seaman, used to be...  
(pulls his orders)  
Meadows, Larence. Drew eight  
years and a D.D.

It's a heavy sentence.

BUDDUSKY

What'd he do, kill the old  
man?

The Chief, as is his habit, rarely gives a direct answer  
to a question.

MAA

C'mon inside.

He motions them from behind the counter they're standing  
at to join him in the inner office. They enter.

MAA

Sweek, get these old boys  
some coffee.

BUDDUSKY

Who'd he kill?

Chief MAA waits while the coffee's being poured. He  
smiles. He's confidential.

MAA

Didn't kill nobody. Robbery.

MULE

What'd he hit?

MAA

Commissary store.

MULE

On base here?

BUDDUSKY

(incredulous)  
Sheeit.

MAA

Yeah. Dumb, ain't it. Working  
a detail there. Assigned him  
myself but don't remember who  
he was.

5

CONTINUED: (3)

5

BUDDUSKY

How much did he lift?

MAA

Forty dollars.

MULE

Forty dollars?

MAA

Forty dollars.

BUDDUSKY

(incredulous)

Sheeit.

MULE

You're shitting me.

MAA

I wouldn't shit you. You're my favorite turd.

MULE

Ha, ha. Eight years and a D.D. for forty bucks? I thought they only pulled that in the Army.

MAA

Well, he tried to lift the polio contribution box, you know.

This doesn't mean much either to Mule or Buddusky. They give the MAA a couple of blank stares.

BUDDUSKY

...yeah?

MAA

Polio boxes are the old man's old lady's personal do-gooder project. She's responsible for the polio contributions on base. You know, every year they give her a plaque. Well, along comes this Meadows and fucks over charity, she takes it very seriously.

MULE

Jesus, eight years.

5 CONTINUED: (4)

BUDDUSKY

And a D.D.

MAA

Well, it's good duty for you guys. Get to go to Washington, New York, Boston. I'd trade places with you.

EXT. NORFOLK COMPOUND - MULE & BUDDUSKY WALKING

6 They leave the office and are walking silently toward the barracks side by side. 6

BUDDUSKY

Listen, we can get this guy to Portsmouth in two days. Less...

He waits for Mule to respond. Mule doesn't.

BUDDUSKY

They're gonna give us a week to do it, know what I mean?

MULE

So what. We get him there in two days, they won't give us no week to get back.

Buddusky stops.

BUDDUSKY

Bullshit. Besides - they got to give us per diem for all that time, regardless - money for you, for me, and for him. Now we run that little shitbird's ass all the way to the brig, save his per diem and ours, split it, and spend it on the way back - know what I mean?

Mule knows he's right. Buddusky knows Mule knows. Buddusky smiles.

MULE

Let's shag ass.

They laugh and start toward the barracks.

INT. BARRACKS BUDDUSKY-INTERCUT

7 He's got masking tape wrapped around his hand. He 7  
pats his dress blues trousers and jumper carefully  
removing the lint.

INT. BARRACKS - MULE

8 Mule sits on his bed in his shorts. He scrubs the 8  
white piping on his jumper with a toothbrush. The  
piping gleams.

BUDDUSKY  
spit polishes his shoes.

MULE  
His shoes gleam nearby. He rolls his neckerchief until  
it's round and well wrought as a rope.

BUDDUSKY  
turns his trousers right side in. He puts them on.

MULE  
Puts on his jumper after turning it right side in.

BUDDUSKY  
places his well rolled neckerchief on.

MULE  
works his white hat until the brim rolls evenly all  
around the top.

BUDDUSKY  
takes his well rolled white hat out of a clear plastic  
bag.

MULE  
places his white hat with great care so it rests just  
above the eyebrow line.

BUDDUSKY  
stands before a mirror, checks his hat. He stands with  
his back slightly arched so there is a suggestion of a  
pouch between his legs, the classic sailor stance.  
He's immaculate.

MULE  
adopts the same stance before the mirror in his hand.

BUDDUSKY  
after a final check, goes out and grabs his AWOL bag,  
goes out whistling.

8 CONTINUED:

8

MULE

grabs his AWOL bag and heads out of the barracks, a happy man.

INT. MAA'S OFFICE LARRY MEADOWS

9 LARRY MEADOWS sits huddled in a dirty peacoat in the 9 corner. He wears handcuffs and his shoes are scuffed. He holds a dingy white hat in his hands. He's eighteen and stares at the floor.

MAA'S VOICE

Okay, Buddusky, you're the honcho.

THE YEOMAN

is busy pulling copies of orders, stuffing them in envelopes, checking travel vouchers.

SWEEK

the young Seaman Apprentice, looks as frightened as Meadows.

MEADOWS

looks up to see his immaculate and imposing escort.

MAA

(continuing)

Here's Meadows' stuff.

(he's gotten it from Yeoman)

And here's your orders, travel chits, and meal tickets.

Billy and Mule put them into their inside peacoat pockets.

MAA

Carryall and driver are outside to take you to the bus. You take the bus to Richmond and the train to Washington. Then up to New York and Boston and you get another bus to Portsmouth. It says on the orders you are to arrive no later than 1800 on 17 December - That don't mean you should play grabass for five days before showing up at Portsmouth. Here's the keys to the cuffs. Each of you gets one key.

9

CONTINUED:

9

They take the keys. So far neither Buddusky nor Mule has looked at the prisoner, Meadows. Now the Chief opens his desk drawer and takes out two .45's with holsters and guard belts. On top of each is a form.

MAA

Both of you sign these chits  
for the pieces.

Sweek reacts more than anyone else to the appearance of the side arms. Buddusky and Mule bend over the desk and sign their names. They bring the guard belts around their middles, adjust the hooks for size, straighten out their coats.

MAA

Here's a clip each. Put it  
in your pocket.

They do. The Chief reaches in another drawer and pulls out two SP armbands. He ties them on their arms.

MAA

There you are, Cochise.  
Everything clear?

Buddusky and Mule nod.

MAA

All right, all right. Let me  
tell you something off the  
record. The old man and his old  
lady have a personal interest  
in this case, so, you know, you  
fuck up and you know what.

The MAA suddenly turns to Meadows and nearly shouts.

MAA

Okay, shitbird, on your feet.

Meadows snaps out of the chair and comes to an awkward and shaky attention.

MAA

These two guys are taking you  
to Portsmouth. This here's Petty  
Officer Buddusky and this here's  
Petty Officer Mulhall.

9

CONTINUED: (2)

9

MEADOWS

(barely getting it out)  
Yes, sir.

MAA

Do you know why they're the  
chasers?

MEADOWS

(doesn't understand)  
Chasers, sir?

MAA

(as though Meadows were  
either deaf or retarded)  
Do you know why these guys are  
taking you to the brig?

MEADOWS

No, sir.

MAA

Cause they're mean bastards when  
they want to be and they always  
want to be, and I give you my  
word they're not about to take  
any shit from a pussy like you.  
If they do they'll get reamed  
out and they know it.

MEADOWS

Yes, sir.

MAA

What?

MEADOWS

Yes, sir!

MAA

(to Buddusky and Mule)  
Okay. He's all yours.

Buddusky and Mule stand on either side of Meadows. Meadows quivers involuntarily. Together they walk out of the office. In a moment they can be seen from the window walking down the sidewalk to the carryall. Snow flurries start to blow.

The MAA tugs at his trousers which are too tight. Sweek, the young messenger, stares silently out the window.

9 CONTINUED: (3)

9

MAA

Sweek, pour me some coffee...

EXT. CARRYALL - MOVING

10 Meadows sits between the two as the carryall approaches 10  
the base gate. The Marine guard waves them through.

EXT. THE STRIP - MOVING

11 A block of sleazy bars and clothing stores and locker 11  
clubs. A sign says "Civvies for Rent." The carryall  
driver slows down here to pick up the action on the  
strip. He lights a cigarette and ignores his passengers  
in the back. He double clutches. The carryall jerks.

BUDDUSKY AND MULE  
react to the brusque ride.

MULE

Easy, driver.

No reaction from the driver. Just the back of his head.  
He double clutches again. The carryall jerks again. Mule  
and Buddusky look at each other.

BUDDUSKY

(whispering to Mule)

He ain't afraid of any chicken  
shit Shore Patrol.

MULE

(agreeing)

No, he ain't.

When they reach the end of the strip the driver jams it in  
high gear and the carryall jerks off again.

EXT. BUS STATION - DOWNTOWN NORFOLK - DAY

12 The carryall turns into the Greyhound terminal. Mule, 12  
Buddusky and Meadows disembark. The driver sits  
ignoring their efforts to pull down their bags and handle  
Meadows. After they get their last bag out, the driver  
still sits unaware of this.

MULE

(to driver)

Sorry, boy, I don't have any  
change.

12 CONTINUED:

12

The driver scowls and slams the carryall door shut. He takes off laying rubber. Mule and Buddusky laugh. Meadows doesn't react at all.

BUDDUSKY

Colder'n a witch's tit.

MULE

Coffee?

BUDDUSKY

Sure.

They go inside the terminal.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL

13 They are noticed immediately by both civilians and 13  
military personnel. Sailors turn around in their seats  
to look, then turn their heads back and doze. Civilians  
stare with more curiosity.

BUDDUSKY

No point in sitting at the  
counter.

MULE

Yeah, might spoil someone's  
lunch. Want me to get the  
coffee?

BUDDUSKY

I'll get it. White or black?

MULE

(after a flicker of  
hesitation)

White.

There's another moment of hesitation.

BUDDUSKY

You?

MEADOWS

(dazed)

Sir?

BUDDUSKY

You want coffee, white or black?

13 CONTINUED:

13

MEADOWS

No, thank you.

Buddusky leaves.

14 ANGLE ON LUGGAGE LOCKERS

14

Mule and Buddusky lean against the lockers sipping coffee from styrofoam cups. The bus to Richmond is announced. Mule sets down his cup.

MULE

Let's make it.

BUDDUSKY

(to Meadows)

Do you need to go to the head?

MEADOWS

No, sir.

BUDDUSKY

Be sure, because from now on whenever you go to the head one of us will be with you.

MEADOWS

I'm not going to kill myself.

Coming from Meadows, who looks incapable of any action. the statement is particularly ludicrous. Buddusky winks at Mule.

BUDDUSKY

(seriously)

No, I don't think so, but you know how it is.

MEADOWS

Yes, sir..but, I don't need to use the head anyway.

They move out toward the bus, Meadows in front.

BUDDUSKY

(quietly, incredulous)

Kill himself..

He looks to Mule for confirmation of this ridiculous notion. Mule doesn't react.

14 CONTINUED:

14

As they pass by a candy counter Meadows eyes a bunch of Baby Ruths and pauses, adjusting his peacoat close to the counter.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS

15 The three move through the bus, Meadows in front. He 15  
doesn't know where to sit.

BUDDUSKY

Back of the bus.

Mule looks back at Buddusky. They sit across the long back seat, Meadows in the middle. Buddusky catches Mule's eye. Then to Meadows:

BUDDUSKY

(sternly)

Meadows.

MEADOWS

(starting)

Yes, sir?

BUDDUSKY

I'm removing your handcuffs, Meadows. Navy feels that in certain kinds of vehicular transport the prisoner shall have the use of both hands to save himself in case of accident.

MEADOWS

Yes, sir.

Buddusky comes up with the key and starts to unlock the handcuffs. Then he stops.

BUDDUSKY

(suspicious)

Meadows?

MEADOWS

Yes, sir.

BUDDUSKY

You won't try any funny shit now, will you, like makin' a break for it or somethin'?

15 CONTINUED:

15

MEADOWS

No, sir.

BUDDUSKY

(still playing it for  
Mule)That's good cause you could get  
us in real trouble, ain't that  
right, Mulhall?

MULE

That's right.

MEADOWS

Don't worry, I won't try  
no funny shit.

BUDDUSKY

Okay.

He removes the cuffs. The bus takes off. Buddusky looks up as does Mule to see passengers staring back at them, some whispering and guarded, some gawking. The two are suddenly embarrassed. They sit back. Meadows just sits and stares at nothing.

16 OUT THE GREYHOUND WINDOW

16

picking up on the bleak terrain from Norfolk to Richmond.

Mule and Buddusky look out opposite windows. Meadows stares straight ahead eating a Baby Ruth, getting chocolate on his hands. Mule looks idly towards Meadows, sees him eating the Baby Ruth.

MULE

Where'd you get that Baby Ruth?

MEADOWS

(sullen)

I had it with me.

Buddusky has looked over now.

MULE

. (pleasantly)  
Okay, sailor. I wasn't  
accusing you of nothin'.

Meadows looks at neither one of them. He wipes the chocolate from his hands onto his peacoat. They observe this, shrug and turn back to look out their respective windows.

17 CLOSE ON MULE  
staring out his window. He's leaning against the window,  
almost dozing, when he hears a crunching sound. He looks  
over to see Meadows eating corn nuts out of a cellophane  
package. Mule taps Buddusky's shoulder over Meadows'  
head. Both look at him again. This time Meadows sees  
Mule watching him.

MEADOWS

I had 'em with me!

Mule laughs.

MULE

I ain't said a word!

BUDDUSKY

Easy, Meadows. You're making  
Mulehouse hungry.

Meadows doesn't react to this and they all lapse into silence.

EXT. RICHMOND - DAY

18      The Greyhound pulls into its station.

18

INT. TRAIN STATION RICHMOND - DAY

19 Mule, Meadows and Buddusky walk beneath its high baroque ceiling to the boarding gate. The station is not crowded but along the way people look up from their newspapers or stop their conversation to watch them and talk about them. It's making Meadows progressively more nervous.

19

AT A KIOSK  
before they board Mule stops to buy himself some  
candy bars. Meadows eases toward the kiosk and opens  
his coat.

**MULE**

Meadows.

MEADOWS

(jumping)  
Yes, sir?

MULE

Want anything?

19 CONTINUED:

19

MEADOWS

No, sir.

20 AMONG A CROWD

20

waiting before doors E and F, to go down the tunnel to board the train. They look conspicuous. The crowd gives them room, insulating them. Meadows holds the handcuffs close to his middle trying to hide them. He keeps his eyes on the floor. An adult shushes a child and pulls his hand down when the child points toward them. A crowd of chattering schoolchildren led by their teacher pass by. They fall silent.

The doors swing open and they and the crowd walk down the long, gloomy tunnel, turn left at a door marked "TRACK 5", directed by the conductor there.

21 AT A STEEP RAMP

21

They find themselves behind a frail, old COUPLE struggling to push their luggage cart up it.

MULE

Could you use a little help  
with that thing?

OLD WOMAN

Well, it is heavy.

Mule takes the cart and pushes it to the top of the ramp. A bag of groceries with a bunch of carrots jars loose. Meadows catches it, holds it until they reach the top of the ramp.

OLD WOMAN

Thank you kindly.

MAN

Thank you, young man.

They pass them and board the train.

BUDDUSKY

(as they move to him)  
Another good deed by our  
fighting men of the U.S. Navy.

Mule doesn't react and Meadows certainly doesn't.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

22      They take the end seat where Meadows has a seat to      22  
himself and Billy and Mule can sit opposite. Before  
he does sit, Meadows looks at them as though waiting for  
some order.

As before, other passengers give them a wide berth,  
pointedly finding seats away from the three.

BUDDUSKY  
(to Meadows)  
It's okay, sit down.

The train jerks and they pull away. Buddusky and Mule  
remove their guard belts, take off their peacoats and  
readjust the belts to their waists. They put the ammo  
clips in their jumper pockets.

Buddusky notices Meadows looking at them again.

BUDDUSKY  
You wanna take off your coat?

MEADOWS  
No, sir.

MULE  
Ain't you hot?

MEADOWS  
No, sir.

BUDDUSKY  
Meadows, stop calling us sir, we  
ain't no officers.

MEADOWS  
I'm sorry.

Both Buddusky and Mule are uncomfortable with their wretched  
prisoner now. Buddusky leans over and undoes the handcuffs  
again.

BUDDUSKY  
(mechanically)  
Don't try any funny shit.

MEADOWS  
No, sir.

Buddusky sighs, doesn't even bother to correct Meadows.  
He leans back and pulls out a pack of Nickle Italian Cigars.  
Mule pulls out a pack of cigarettes. Mule pulls out a  
pack of cigarettes.

22

CONTINUED:

22

MULE

Wanna butt?

MEADOWS

Thank you.

He takes it and Mule takes one. Buddusky lights them all up. They sit and blow smoke in the air. It's oppressive.

BUDDUSKY

(finally, airily)

Well, Mulehall, heading north, huh?

MULE

Yeahhh, man...headin' north.

BUDDUSKY

Some of my old stompin' grounds.  
...Where you from Mulehall?

MULE

(a little touchy)

Hey, man, it's Mulhall, Mulhall.

(almost distaste)

Mulhall, understand?

BUDDUSKY

Yeah...well, where you from?

MULE

Bogalusa.

' BUDDUSKY

Where's that?

MULE

Above N'Orleans.

Buddusky now is figuring out how to deal with Mule's touchiness.

BUDDUSKY

(finally)

Hot down there, ain't it?

MULE

Yeah. Listen, man. Call me  
Mule, everybody does, call me  
Mule, okay man?

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

BUDDUSKY

Sure.

MULE

(to Meadows)

Mule.

MEADOWS

Yes, sir.

Mule looks out the window.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, they have trouble with  
my name too. Buddusky. They're  
always calling me Bad Ass. Bad  
Ass.

(cheerfully)

I'm the Bad Ass...Bad Ass.

No response from Mule. None from Meadows. A long moment.

BUDDUSKY

Hey, Meadows. Where you from?

MEADOWS

Camden, New Jersey, sir.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah? I was born in Andoshen -  
in the coal fields. That's only  
a few hours from Camden.

MEADOWS

Yeah?

BUDDUSKY

Yeah.

Meadows feels called upon to continue the conversation.

MEADOWS

..not much ocean 'round there,  
huh?

BUDDUSKY

Not much anything, even coal.

MEADOWS

Have you ever been to New England?

BUDDUSKY

Sure.

MEADOWS

New Hampshire?

BUDDUSKY

Yep.

MEADOWS

Is it nice?

BUDDUSKY

Very nice. Lotsa trees, you know trees.

MEADOWS

Have you ever been to..Portsmouth?

BUDDUSKY

(pleasantly)

Yeah, yeah I have.

Now Mule has slowly turned back to the conversation.

MEADOWS

I guess I won't get much chance to see the scenery.

Meadows tries to smile when he says this. This stops the conversation for the moment.

BUDDUSKY

Listen, Meadows, is that true what the Chief said, they slipped you eight years and a dishonorable discharge for forty bucks?

MEADOWS

I didn't get no forty bucks.

BUDDUSKY

You didn't get it?

MEADOWS

Caught me right while I was tryin' to lift it from the box. I didn't get it.

BUDDUSKY

Jesus, eight years and a D.D. for

22

CONTINUED: (4)

22

BUDDUSKY (cont.)  
forty bucks you didn't even get.  
Really stuck it to him, didn't  
they, Mule?

MULE

Yeah.

BUDDUSKY  
They really stuck it to you, kid.

MEADOWS

Yeah. Yes, sir.

BUDDUSKY  
Stuck it in and broke it off.

It's silent for a moment. Then:

BUDDUSKY  
(to himself, almost  
a chant)  
-up your gigi with a wawa brush,  
stick it in and break it off.

MULE

Leave the kid alone.

BUDDUSKY  
I ain't bothering him. Am I  
bothering you, Meadows?

MEADOWS

No, sir.

BUDDUSKY  
I ain't bothering him.

MULE

(pleasantly)  
Well, whatta you expect him to  
say? 'Yeah, you're bothering me?'

Buddusky looks a little annoyed.

BUDDUSKY  
Listen, Meadows, I told you before  
stop calling me sir, you don't  
call me sir you don't call him sir,  
we're no officers. Call me Bad Ass,  
call him Mule, we're no officers.  
Ain't that right, Mule?

22

CONTINUED: (5)

22

MULE

(taking his time)  
That's right.

Buddusky settles back.

BUDDUSKY

(to Mule)  
I'm just trying to be helpful.

Mule smiles at this.

BUDDUSKY

What're you smiling about?

MULE

Nothin'.

BUDDUSKY

No, what're you smiling about?

MULE

Nothin'.

Buddusky looks at Mule for a moment longer, then when he sees he's not going to get any reaction he reaches into his duffel bag and takes out a skin book, something called THE CENTAUR. Just as he's started to settle into the book, Mule leans over.

MULE

How you gonna help him? I  
mean how you gonna help him?  
Know what I mean?

BUDDUSKY

How am I gonna help him?

MULE

Yeah.

Buddusky sets the book down. He looks over to Meadows who has begun to sweat in his peacoat and started to doze. Mule waits for an answer from Buddusky.

BUDDUSKY

(a little aggressive)  
You think I can't help him?

MULE

Now I didn't say that. I just  
asked how you was gonna do it.

BUDDUSKY

(finally)  
Well, I've had some legal  
experience.

MULE

That a fact?

BUDDUSKY

Yeah.

MULE

Well..how you gonna help him?

Buddusky takes the book off his lap entirely. He calls  
out sharply:

BUDDUSKY

Meadows.

Meadows starts. His forehead is shiny.

MULE

You sure you ain't too hot?

MEADOWS

No, sir. I mean no.

BUDDUSKY

Now listen, Meadows. There's a  
few questions I'd like to ask you.  
You don't have to answer if you  
don't want to, understand? Maybe  
I can help you.

MEADOWS

Yes, sir - yes.

MULE

Sheeit.

BUDDUSKY

C'mon.

(to Meadows)

Before this polio thing, you  
have a record?

MEADOWS

No...not with the Navy...  
Got into trouble couple times  
with the cops before I enlisted.

22 CONTINUED: (7)

22

BUDDUSKY

I see...well, was it in the nature of a serious offense? For example were they in the nature of a felony or a disdeamenor?

MEADOWS

Well, it was in the nature of shoplifting. I never was in jail if that's what you mean.

Buddusky nods. Mule squirms uncomfortably. Buddusky ignores Mule's tacit disapproval.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah...well..what about the law officer they assigned you? What did he say?

MEADOWS

(long pause)

Not too much. He didn't seem to want to argue too much. Maybe he was afraid of the old man? You think that coulda been?

MULE

(sarcastic)

Yeah, that coulda been.

BUDDUSKY

Just a minute. You know, you could have had a civilian lawyer if you wanted one.

MEADOWS

Oh yeah? I didn't know that?

BUDDUSKY

Well, you coulda.

MULE

That's great man, great.

BUDDUSKY

Let me handle it just for a minute. Okay?

MULE

Go ahead.

There's a moment of dead silence.

22 CONTINUED: (8)

MEADOWS

They cost money, don't they?

BUDDUSKY

What's that?

MEADOWS

Civilian lawyers.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, they do...But, listen, Meadows.  
The eight years, it ain't necessarily  
eight years.

MEADOWS

It isn't?

BUDDUSKY

No, they usually knock off two at  
the beginning for good behavior.  
So it's only six years.

MEADOWS

Really?

BUDDUSKY

Yep.

MEADOWS

Oh.

BUDDUSKY

Well..that's something...  
ain't it?

Neither Mule nor Meadows answer. Billy after a moment picks  
up his book. Mule looks out the window.

23 OUT OF THE WINDOW - MOVING

23

passing by industrial eyesores: Royal Pipe Supply,  
East Coast Restaurant Supply, Frontier Aluminum, Inc.  
cranes in a junkyard. A flock of birds fly over a  
frozen pond.

INT. TRAIN

24 Buddusky is into his book, Meadows dozes.

24

24

CONTINUED:

24

MULE

(suddenly)

Least we get a long train  
ride. Man. I love trains.

BUDDUSKY

Beats the hell out of sitting  
in Shit City, don't it?

Buddusky has begun to look o.s. He nudges Mule. He points to Meadows. A carrot has begun to work its way out of the sleeve of Meadows' peacoat. Mule stops talking and both men watch as the carrot slips into Meadows' lap. The head of another carrot begins to be jostled into making an appearance. Meadows still dozes. Mule and Buddusky look at each other.

MULE

(quietly)

Man, he didn't bring those  
with him.

BUDDUSKY

No..no he didn't. Meadows.  
Meadows, why don't you take off  
that coat?

Meadows starts. He wakens, looks down to see the carrots dribbling out of his peacoat. He panics. A little cry escapes from him and he jumps up. He starts to run down the aisle of the train. Mule and Billy scramble after him.

BUDDUSKY

Halt! Halt! Goddammit,  
Meadows!

There is panic among the other passengers on the train. The conductor is knocked aside. Meadows bounces off him and falls into a woman's lap who has some needlepoint work she's been doing. She screams. Meadows leaps off her, taking some yarn with him. Someone yells 'escaped prisoner' and a beefy man in a rumpled suit grabs for Meadows. Meadows carries him out between cars.

25

BETWEEN CARS

25

The beefy man strikes Meadows and Meadows falls. Buddusky and Mule are on top of Meadows. They hold him down. Meadows is screaming now. Buddusky tears open his coat.

25

CONTINUED:

25

Out come a bunch of carrots, a gold flecked plastic ashtray with a decal of the Richmond train station, Roloids, gum, a couple of more Baby Ruths, a ten cent calorie guide, a matching ten cent astrological guide for Scorpio, a box of Sherman cigarettes and a throwaway Butane lighter. Billy and Mule hold Meadows down while they pull these things out of his pockets and Meadows begins to cry hysterically. The helpful civilian tries to help pin Meadows down but Mule shoves him away. They begin to gather up the things and heft Meadows to his feet. They handcuff him and start back toward their seats.

### IN THE CAR

26

As Mule pulls Meadows along with Buddusky behind, the passengers are in an uproar. The woman whose lap Meadows had fallen into is complaining loudly to the conductor about the prisoner. 26

MEADOWS

(sobs)

I'm sorry..I was sorry for stealing the money, but I swear..I didn't even want it.

He starts to cry a little harder again.

BUDDUSKY

Hey, Meadows, be a man about it. Don't cry.

MEADOWS

I can't help it, I always steal junk I - I don't need. Quart bottles of hair tonic..model cars I couldn't even build a model car..books..

(he gags)

...and crap.. I had money on the books, ask anybody. It's gone now cause I got forfeiture of all pay and everything but I had money.

He's gotten loud now and Mule and Buddusky are embarrassed. They reach their seats and sit down.

MULE

It's okay, man. It's okay.

Meadows is mortified. He stares at the floor, trying to keep from gagging.

26 CONTINUED:

26

MULE

(quietly)  
Jesus, the guy's crazy.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah. That kid should see  
a psychiatrist.

They look around. The passengers are still in an uproar.  
Meadows has begun to shake. Mule looks at Buddusky like  
he's crazy.

MULE

(controlling himself)  
What about now, man. We got a  
nut on our hands, right now,  
know what I mean?

Buddusky looks around the passenger car.

BUDDUSKY

Maybe we better change trains  
in Washington...walk him around,  
let him cool off a little...

EXT. TRAIN STATION MULE - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

27 Mule waits with Meadows. Buddusky comes walking from the station. 27

BUDDUSKY

Last train doesn't take off til  
ten thirty. We got plenty of  
time for some good chow. Whatta  
you want to eat, Meadows?

MEADOWS

Gee, I don't know.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. STREET - DAY

28 The three walk down the street. Meadows is in front of them, handcuffed. They stop outside of one crowded restaurant. 28

BUDDUSKY

What do you think?

MULE

Looks good.

BUDDUSKY

..little crowded.

The customers have begun to stare at them.

BUDDUSKY

Meadows, what do you think?

MEADOWS

..fine..think they'll melt the  
cheese on the burgers..I like  
the cheese melted..

BUDDUSKY

Yeah..be nice if they had a booth.  
Mule, you see a booth in there?

MULE

No.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah..well, looks a little crowded.

They start to move on. Mule stops.

MULE

Fuck the crowd. I'm hungry.

MEADOWS

Me too.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, well, next place.

MULE

We're gonna miss our train.

They start walking.

MULE

We're gonna miss our train.

BUDDUSKY

I don't give a shit..so we miss  
our fucking train. We got five  
fucking days! C'mon.

Buddusky spots an out of the way alcove. He heads toward it.

EXT. THE ALCOVE

29 Buddusky immediately removes the SP from his peacoat and begins to put the .45 belt on the inside. Mule, a little reluctantly, does the same. Buddusky takes out the keys to the cuffs.

BUDDUSKY

Look, Meadows. Your word worth anything?

MEADOWS

What do you mean?

BUDDUSKY

Just what I said.

Mule waits, a little apprehensive about what's coming next.

MEADOWS

..sure it is, as good as the next guy's.

MULE

The next guy's a prick.

BUDDUSKY

All right then, I got your word you won't try to escape while we're in Washington?

MEADOWS

Where would I go?

Buddusky moves to unlock the cuffs. Mule stops him.

MULE

Forget about the escape shit for a minute. Will you not jump up and run and bang into people and embarrass us like that?

MEADOWS

No, sir.

MULE

And not steal nothin'?

MEADOWS

No.

Mule slaps his hand by way of shaking on it.

MULE

Let's eat.

EXT. STREET

30      The three emerge from the alcove, walking, two impeccable      30  
sailors and a sloppy one, but they no longer appear as  
prisoner and guards.

Billy and Mule hitch up their pants, turn up their peacoat  
collars, and drop their hats over their foreheads by  
way of reacting to the cold. Meadows gives a shabby  
imitation of their movements. Buddusky laughs when he  
sees this. He adjusts Meadows' collar. Mule picks up,  
leans over and gives the right tilt to Meadows' hat.  
They saunter off.

INT. HAMBURGER JOINT

31      They sit at the counter. The hamburgers are brought      31  
along with shakes and fries. Buddusky looks at Meadows'  
cheeseburger suspiciously.

BUDDUSKY

Cheese melted enough?

MEADOWS

Sure.

Buddusky looks at it closely.

BUDDUSKY

Ain't melted at all. Send it  
back.

MEADOWS

No, it's okay, really.

BUDDUSKY

Send the goddam thing back.  
You're paying for it, aren't  
you?

MEADOWS

It's all right, really.

BUDDUSKY

Have it the way you want it.  
Waiter?

MEADOWS

No please -

WAITER

Yes, sir?

31 CONTINUED:

31

BUDDUSKY

Melt the cheese on this for the  
Chief here, will you?

WAITER

Certainly.

The waiter takes it away.

BUDDUSKY

See, kid, it's just as easy to  
have it the way you want it.

32 CLOSE ON MEADOWS  
biting into his cheeseburger.

32

BUDDUSKY

See what I mean?

Meadows nods. Buddusky looks over to Mule, pleased with  
himself.

EXT. STREET THE THREE

33 lifting their collars again and putting on their gloves.33

MULE

(moving)

Better catch that train.

BUDDUSKY

We still got time for a beer.

MULE

Now wait a minute, man -

MEADOWS

I ain't old enough.

BUDDUSKY

(whirling on him)

You ain't old enough for what?

MEADOWS

(intimidated)

For a beer.

33 CONTINUED:

33

BUDDUSKY  
Everyone's old enough for a beer,  
ain't that right, Mule?

MULE  
(tentatively)  
Yeah..

Buddusky grabs Mule by the elbow.

BUDDUSKY  
(pointing up the street)  
I know that place, it's nice  
and quiet, eight years and a  
D.D. let's buy the kid a beer.

Buddusky allows no argument. They head off to the bar.

INT. BAR & BARTENDER

34 alone. They are the only customers. They go to the bar, 34  
sit on their stools.

BUDDUSKY  
(as he's moving)  
Hi there, Ed. I'll have  
thirty cents worth of beer  
in a glass and the same for  
my shipmates here.

BARTENDER  
Ed don't work here no more and  
lemme see your I.D.'s.

BUDDUSKY  
How come?

The bartender tilts his head at Meadows.

BARTENDER  
Cause this kid ain't twenty-one.

BUDDUSKY  
Look, pal, the Chief here just  
got back from nine months off the  
coast of Nam, lobbing shells on the  
V.C. so why can't he have a beer  
at least?

34

CONTINUED:

34

The bartender shrugs, and works at a water spot with his towel.

BARTENDER

Look yourself, pal. Law says I  
hafta serve him  
(meaning Mule)  
and says I can't serve him and I  
respect the law.

MULE

(smoothly)  
Mr. Citizen Bartender, tell you  
what you better do. You take  
your beers and ram 'em up your  
ass sideways.

Meadows gasps. Buddusky smiles. The bartender's hand  
drops below the bar.

BUDDUSKY

Whoa there, sunshine. We're on  
our way, so you can take your hand  
off the horsecock you're holding  
under the bar.

The bartender doesn't move. He smiles tightly.

BARTENDER

How do you know I don't have  
somethin' with a little more  
bark to it?

Mule backs away from the bar. Meadows is frozen.

BUDDUSKY

Ho, ho, ho, this redneck's talking  
about firearms.

(he leans over the bar)

But I happen to know there ain't  
nothing under that bar but wood  
cause I happened to be in here  
one night when a certain sailor had  
it laid up longside the head.  
Whatta you think of that, redneck?

The bartender puts his hands slowly back on the bar.

BARTENDER

That boss'd lose his license if I  
serve the kid and that's the truth.

BUDDUSKY

I'm gonna kick your ass around  
the block for drill.

BARTENDER

Try it and I'll call the Shore  
Patrol.

BUDDUSKY

(yelling)

I am the Shore Patrol, motherfucker!

He whips open his peacoat, tears out his forty-five and  
slams it hard on top of the bar.

BUDDUSKY

I am the motherfucking Shore  
Patrol, you motherfucker!

Buddusky's veins are standing out on his forehead. He's  
in an instant rage. Mule and Meadows are nearly as  
shocked as the bartender.

BARTENDER

Look, fella, I'm just a family man  
is all. I'm just trying to make a  
living for my kids.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, yeah, I was wondering when  
you'd get to that. Give this kid  
a beer.

BARTENDER

Have a heart, I'm doing my job.

BUDDUSKY

We're all doing our job, give this  
kid a beer.

BARTENDER

It is my job.

MEADOWS

(tugging at Buddusky's  
coatsleeve)

Listen...I don't want a beer anyway.

BUDDUSKY

You're gonna have a fucking beer!

34 CONTINUED: (3)

34

MULE

C'mon, man.

MEADOWS

Please, I don't feel like one now.

Mule has Buddusky by the elbow now. He picks up Buddusky's .45 and starts easing him toward the door.

MULE

(carefully)

C'mon, man, let's go, let's go,  
c'mon.

(as they reach the door,  
to the bartender)

Do you have piles?

(before he can answer)

Oh, that's right. Of course  
you don't. Your wife told me  
you were a perfect asshole.

With that, Mule whisks Buddusky out the door. Meadows follows.

EXT. STREET

35 The three of them are moving up the street quickly. Mule and Billy are in front. They round a corner. Suddenly they stop. Their prisoner comes chugging along after.

35

MULE

- Man, you are a bad ass, you know  
that? I thought you was gonna  
blow his head off.

Buddusky laughs.

BUDDUSKY

I'm a bad ass.

MEADOWS

Yeah.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah what?

MEADOWS

(intimidated)

You're a .. bad ass.

35

CONTINUED:

35

BUDDUSKY

A what?

MEADOWS

(louder)

A bad ass!

BUDDUSKY

A what?

MEADOWS &amp; MULE

A BAD ASS!

BUDDUSKY

(throws an arm around  
Meadows' shoulder)And you ain't leaving D.C. til  
you've had a belly full of beer.

Meadows looks worried.

EXT. ALLEY BUDDUSKY, MEADOWS & MULE - NIGHT

36

They're sitting on wooden crates, leaning up against  
a dumpster. The dusk is freezing. Sleet's on the  
ground along with three six-packs and a pile of empty  
cans, some manfully bent. Buddusky pops open three  
more cans.

36

MEADOWS

I'm not sure I can finish  
another. It's too damn cold.

BUDDUSKY

Beer's supposed to be cold.

MEADOWS

(shivering)

No. It's too cold outside.

This has been occurring to Mule as well.

BUDDUSKY

Then you don't have to worry  
about the beer getting warm.

Buddusky takes a long swallow and sighs appreciatively.

BUDDUSKY

Nothin' like it.

36

CONTINUED:

36

MULE

Yeah..except maybe we could  
smuggle it on the train..you  
know, finish it up there.

MEADOWS

Yeah.

BUDDUSKY

(looking at his watch)  
Our train just left.

MULE

(angry)  
Well, that's nice, that's  
fucking nice..

BUDDUSKY

Listen we got time up the gump  
stump, we're on per diem, let's  
just check the hell into a hotel  
and catch the early train tomorrow  
morning. Sunday. Okay?

MEADOWS

...is it in the regulations?

MULE

(rising, shivering)  
You know, kid, you coulda been  
an Admiral...let's get our asses  
into a hotel room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

37 Buddusky, head wet, is out of the shower, sits sipping 37  
a beer in a towel and toasting his feet under a hissing  
radiator. Meadows is on the bed in T-shirt and shorts,  
drinking a beer. Mule is sloshing around in the shower  
and drinking a beer. There are some corn chips on the  
table, several cellophane bags broken open.

BUDDUSKY

(shouting to Mule)  
Is this the life or what?

MULE

(still in the shower,  
poking his head into the room)  
Beats freezin' your ass in the alley.

37 CONTINUED:

37

BUDDUSKY

It beats bein' back at Shit  
City too.

Mule turns off the shower.

MEADOWS

( chiming in)

I bet it even beats being at  
Portsmouth too.

Buddusky shakes up a can of beer.

BUDDUSKY

Kid, you got a great knack for  
killing a conversation.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

38      Amidst mounds of beer cans and potato chip bags and      38  
cigarette smoke they watch TV. More precisely Mule and  
Meadows watch IT TAKES A THIEF with Robert Wagner.  
Buddusky tries to attract their attention.

BUDDUSKY

All right, now assume that you  
are a clock and your hands are  
the hands of a clock. A is like  
twenty to six. B is quarter to  
six, C is ten to, D, is -

MULE

C'mon, man, we're watching the movie.

BUDDUSKY

(interrupting himself)  
Meadows wants to learn to be a  
signalman.

MULE

He can't.

BUDDUSKY

He said he does.

MULE

Later.

38 CONTINUED:

38

BUDDUSKY  
Meadows? You wanna be a  
signalman?

MULE  
After the movie.

39 CLOSE BUDDUSKY  
It's later. He picks at something on his arm.

39

MEADOWS  
Hey, teach me the hand signals.  
C'mon I thought you were gonna  
teach me the hand signals.

BUDDUSKY  
(sudden indignation)  
I don't give a shit.

Mule laughs.

MULE  
I gotch your hand signals -  
dangling.

BUDDUSKY  
Yeah, hand it over and I'll slap  
it on the radiator and fry it.

Mule gets Buddusky to laugh again.

40 CLOSE BUDDUSKY & MEADOWS  
They stand side by side in their shorts. Mule sits  
and watches. All are very drunk now.

40

BUDDUSKY  
Now let's run through what we got.  
I don't expect you to get 'em  
perfect. It takes a high degree  
of manual dexterity. All right - go.

Meadows runs through a series of hand signals perfectly.

BUDDUSKY  
(a little annoyed)  
Christ, that was good. Damn good.  
You probably have a flair for  
this kind of thing. Some guys  
are like that. I am.

40 CONTINUED:

40

MEADOWS  
(swaying, imitating Mule)  
I gotch your flair..  
(he can't get out dangling)

Mule keels over, lying on the floor choking with laughter.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

41 Mule and Meadows lie on the floor. Buddusky comes 41  
in carrying a bag. He takes off his peacoat, revealing  
that he didn't bother to put on his jumper. He splits  
open the bag which has several more six-packs of beer  
in it.

42 ALL THREE ON THE FLOOR 42  
Mule and Buddusky are lying down, totally smashed.  
Meadows is between them.

MEADOWS  
Hey you guys. Mind if I say  
something?

No response.

MEADOWS  
That guy at the bar..why'd you  
get so mad at him.

MULE  
What guy?

BUDDUSKY  
What bar?

MEADOWS  
You know, c'mon you guys. He was  
only doing his job. I don't blame  
him not giving me a beer.

BUDDUSKY  
Yeah, well I do.

MEADOWS  
But how can you get so mad at  
a guy for just doing his job?  
It's not fair.

MULE  
Not fair?  
(he laughs)

42

CONTINUED:

42

BUDDUSKY

Don't you never get mad at  
nobody?

MEADOWS

Sure. Sure I do.

MULE

What do you get mad at?

Both Mule and Buddusky are looking at him now.

MEADOWS

...not at somebody who's doin'  
their job.

BUDDUSKY

What then?

Meadows is on the spot.

MEADOWS

(reaching for something)  
Injustice.

BUDDUSKY

Bullshit. I don't think you  
never get mad at nothin'.  
You're just a pussy.

MEADOWS

I do too get mad.

MULE

Ever get mad at the old man for  
what he done to you?

MEADOWS

Well..he was just..

BUDDUSKY

Doin' his job? Hey, man, they're  
taking eight years of your life.

MEADOWS

Six years, you said six.

BUDDUSKY

Oh what the fuck's the difference?  
You don't care to begin with.

42 CONTINUED: (2)

MULE

C'mon, bad ass, that don't help him.

BUDDUSKY

Fuck help! Fuck injustice! Fuck what's fair! Don't you ever just want to whomp and stomp and bite off an ear just for..just DO it, get it outta your system? You ever been in a fight?

MEADOWS

Well..

BUDDUSKY

C'mon, you ever been in a fight?

MEADOWS

(sort of changing the subject)

I do remember something I got mad at. Something when I was in the brig a Marine did.

BUDDUSKY

What? Grunts beat you up?

MEADOWS

Yeah, but that didn't get me mad.

BUDDUSKY

Well, godamnit, what got you mad?

MEADOWS

This Marine guard he ask me if I believe in Jesus Christ and I said Yes and he said that from now on he was Jesus Christ and that I shouldn't forget it. Can you imagine that? That's awful.

BUDDUSKY

What'd you do about it? Ja hit him?

MEADOWS

Boy he better hope the Chaplain don't catch him at that.

MULE

How many Navy Chaplains do you know up close?

BUDDUSKY

Fuck Chaplains. What'd you do about it, ja coldcock him?

MEADOWS

You know, going to services on Sunday.

MULE

Well, most of 'em are Texas Baptists who like to stand on the bridge with the old man and wear aviator sunglasses.

BUDDUSKY

You know what your trouble is, kid?

MEADOWS

Yeah, wear sunglasses?..

BUDDUSKY

Your trouble is, listen, listen to me - you never get pissed off?

MULE

You told a Chaplain what the grunts did to you he'd probably say it was good training for a shitbird seaman. They ain't what they appear to be.

MEADOWS

Oh, no. I'm sure they screen 'em very carefully before they..I mean it takes a lot of dedication to be a Chaplain in the Navy.

MULE

It don't take diddly!

BUDDUSKY

See what I mean, you didn't do nothin', you never get pissed at nothin' and you ain't probably even alive.

He grabs Meadows.

BUDDUSKY

Take a poke at me.

MEADOWS

What for?

BUDDUSKY

Punch me out you little prick.

MEADOWS

Well..why should I?

MULE

Now he ain't gonna punch you, you know better'n that.

BUDDUSKY

I'm gonna get him to.

MEADOWS

But..but..I like you, Bad Ass.

BUDDUSKY

I'm takin' you to jail, motherfucker, hit me.

MEADOWS

But that ain't your fault, you're just --

Buddusky screams and runs around the room.

BUDDUSKY

Mule, Mule, c'mon, let's go find some grunts then -

(to Meadows)

You got pissed off at the grunts, didn't ya?

MEADOWS

Yeah..

BUDDUSKY

Let's go choose off some grunts and get this kid in a fight. I ain't been in a good fight in a coon's age.

This stops Mule.

MULE

A what?

BUDDUSKY

A coon's age.

MULE

That's what I thought you said.

Mule rises unsteadily. Buddusky is already swaying on his feet.

42 CONTINUED: (5)

42

BUDDUSKY

Hey, that's just an expression.

MULE

Way a person talks is the way a person thinks.

BUDDUSKY

Bullshit.

MULE

(to Meadows)

You think it's just an expression?

Meadows says nothing.

BUDDUSKY

C'mon answer somebody back for once.

MEADOWS

Yeah...

Mule looks at the two of them.

MULE

Yeah what?

MEADOWS

It's an expression.

MULE

(turning away)

All right you guys.

MEADOWS

No, wait a minute.

MULE

I don't wanna hear nothin' more from you.

BUDDUSKY

Listen to him. Listen to the kid - you wanna be fair, don't you?

Mule says nothing.

42 CONTINUED: (6)

42

MEADOWS

--for instance, why I said expression was that there's lots of expressions you use and don't think about. Like when I was a kid I used to eat a nut called a.. nigger's toe.

Buddusky giggles.

MEADOWS

It's not funny, I'm not trying to be funny. I mean we all just would go to the store and ask for nigger's toes. We didn't think about it..I mean don't get me wrong, I wouldn't go into a store today and say 'gimme a bag of nigger's toes.' So..I don't eat 'em at all anymore - cause I don't know what else to call 'em.

BUDDUSKY

What do you call those nuts anyway, Mule?

Mule sulks, pops some Fritos into his mouth and takes a swig of beer. He slams down his beer.

MULE

Shit fire! I don't know. We used to call 'em nigger toes too!

All three laugh. Buddusky picks up three fresh cans. He pops the tops

43 MULE AND BUDDUSKY LIE ON THE FLOOR

43

The bathroom door is ajar and Meadows can be partially seen taking a leak. The sound of the stream goes on, and on, and on. Mule and Buddusky are listening, and slowly the wonder grows on both of them as the sound goes on and on. They look at each other. Buddusky starts to laugh again.

BUDDUSKY

(laughing all the way through this until he's crying)

Once down in Long Beach a friend of mine was looking for me and I was right above him on top of his

43

CONTINUED:

43

BUDDUSKY (cont.)

car. I pissed on his head. You know, just being crazy.

MULE

Yeah..well don't get crazy with me.

Meadows emerges. He's a little livelier at this point than his guards who don't move off the floor.

MEADOWS

Hey you guys..here we are in Washington, D.C. In a hotel room.

MULE

We could go back to the alley.

MEADOWS

No, no..there's no tellin' when I'll be in Washington again. I think I should see a statue of something.

Neither Mule nor Buddusky move.

MEADOWS

Wouldn't you like to see a monument?

43

CONTINUED:

43

Mule groans. Buddusky mumbles something and staggers to his feet. He makes it over to the desk in the room, mumbling all along as he fumbles through it. There are a string of epithets, some part of which can be heard as he searches the desk. He's found what he's looking for. Holding onto it, he starts to hop back into his trousers.

MULE

Where you goin'?

BUDDUSKY

Show Meadows the sights. C'mon, men, drop your cocks and grab your socks. We'll show Meadows the Pentagon or some shit. I got a brochure.

Meadows dutifully begins to dress. Mule doesn't move.

MULE

Hey listen, man...

BUDDUSKY

..yeah..

MULE

- I'll cover you from here.

BUDDUSKY

C'mon.

MULE

I ain't goin' nowhere.

Buddusky sighs.

BUDDUSKY

Suit yourself. C'mon, Meadows.

Mule looks up at the two staggering to finish getting dressed. Buddusky ricocheting off the cot on the way to get his gloves. He looks at the SP armband crumpled up with a Fritos bag. Then back at Buddusky.

43 CONTINUED:

43

MULE

Okay, I'm comin' with you.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - NIGHT

44 The three sailors weave along the street. They stop  
under a streetlight examing the brochure and its map  
carefully.

44

BUDDUSKY

(indignant)

I'm tellin' you, Mule, the motherfucker's  
supposed to be right here.

MULE

Yeah, well maybe they moved it.

BUDDUSKY

Don't be an asshole, they're not  
gonna move the Washington Monument.

MULE

Yeah..well so far according to this  
brochure map they moved the Lincoln  
Memorial, the Pentagon, and the White  
House..don't see why they shouldn't  
move the Washington Monument...

BUDDUSKY

(shaking his head, studying  
it fiercely)

...this map is all fucked up.

They stagger along a few more steps, Meadows, clearly under  
the weather now, is having a hard time keeping up.

MEADOWS

We're not gonna find anything, let's -

BUDDUSKY

(pulling him along)

C'mon kid.

44 CONTINUED:

44

They approach the bottom of a long impressive flight of stairs. Mule and Buddusky bend over the map. Meadows holds onto a railing, in serious trouble.

MEADOWS

C'mon you guys...let's go home.

MULE

What's this?

BUDDUSKY

(studying it)

..it's the fucking Jefferson Memorial.

MULE

(studying it)

...this ain't the fucking Jefferson Memorial.

BUDDUSKY

..then what the fuck is it?

MULE

..it's the fucking Supreme Court.

And it is.

BUDDUSKY

Oh. Hey, kid. It's the Supreme Court. C'mon.

MEADOWS

It's okay, I can see it from here.

BUDDUSKY

C'mon, kid, some very important people have walked up these steps.

With considerable difficulty they navigate the steps.

MEADOWS

(walking)

Hey..could I..appeal my case...  
to the Supreme Court?...

44 CONTINUED:

44

MULE

(walking)

Negative..Supreme Court's for  
civilians only.

MEADOWS

(walking)

..in eight years..I'll be a civilian..  
then..I'll appeal to the Supreme Court.

They're nearing the top and breathing kind of hard.

MULE

Do that..maybe they'll shorten your  
sentence.

Meadows barfs.

MULE

You can't do that here!

He moves to grab him. Meadows barfs again. Mule jumps back.

MULE

..well, I guess you can..

INT. D.C. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

45 All three are now in their skivvies and they turn to 45  
face the beds - one large soft bed and one small cot,  
which doesn't look comfortable. Mule sits on it. The  
springs squeak.

MULE

I'll take the cot.

BUDDUSKY

(pulling him off the cot)

You're taller, I'll take the cot.

MEADOWS

(sitting on it)

I'll take it.

45

CONTINUED:

45

MULE

(pulling Meadows off)

No, it's better for me. You two take the bed.

BUDDUSKY

I'm the honcho and I'm taking the cot. You and Meadows take the bed.

MEADOWS

Maybe..since I'm youngest I should have the cot.

BUDDUSKY

Who the hell asked you what you think?

MULE

Aw, shit, I ain't sleeping with no white boy. I'm gonna take the cot.

Buddusky blocks his path to the cot.

BUDDUSKY

Try it and I'll give you a shot in the chops.

It looks like they're about to come to blows. Neither one moves.

BUDDUSKY

Son-of-a-bitch, give me that pillow.

Buddusky grabs a pillow from the bed, rips off a blanket, wraps himself up in it, and lies on the floor.

BUDDUSKY

You and your fucking segregationist remarks.

He punches the pillow twice. Mule looks at him a minute, then takes the other pillow, tears off another blanket, and settles down in another corner of the floor. Meadows starts to do the same thing, reluctantly. He keeps staring at the bed.

45 CONTINUED:

45

MEADOWS

Wait a minute you guys. We could  
sleep across it.

Mule and Buddusky raise their heads from their respective  
corners of the floor.

SHOT OF THE BED

with the three of them lying on it. The cot is much lower  
than the bed and only their heels are supported by the cot.

MULE

I can't take this shit. Gimme the  
cot..please, man.

BUDDUSKY

Wait a minute..wait a minute.

Buddusky rises, spots the dresser drawers. He pulls two  
of them out and places them under the cot, raising its  
level nearly even with the bed, though it's still uneven.

BUDDUSKY

Great now, ain't it?

MULE

(giving up)  
Yeah..

MEADOWS

Great, bad ass.

Buddusky hits the light. The room is dark. There is a  
crash when Buddusky hits the bed. Mule swears. A groan  
or two. Then silence.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

46 All three are still in bed. The drawers have slipped 46  
to one side of the cot and Mule is dangling badly. Meadows  
is the first to get up. He goes to the tap and starts  
drinking water. He belches, keeps drinking.

46

CONTINUED:

46

Mule gets up and holds his back, clearly almost crippled by the bed. His legs practically give way underneath him. He walks to the dresser mirror. He massages his scalp.

Buddusky rolls over, reaches for a cigar. Of the three, he appears the least hung over. He lights it and goes into a spasm of coughing.

EXT. TRAIN TERMINAL - DAY

47 All three have coffee in large containers, and are 47  
drinking them as they wait. Mule and Buddusky once again  
have strapped on their guns and armbands, but they do not  
use the handcuffs.

Mule is shaking his head.

BUDDUSKY

Look..all we do is get off the train  
at Philly and take the bus to Camden.  
What's wrong with that? It's just  
a few hours.

Mule stares suspiciously at Buddusky. Then he looks to  
Meadows. Back to Buddusky.

MULE

He didn't ask to see his mother.

BUDDUSKY

He wouldn't ask to use the head if  
he had amebic dysentary. I'm telling  
you he wants to see his mother...

MULE

How do we know she'll be home?

BUDDUSKY

It's Sunday.

MULE

Sunday! What does that mean?

BUDDUSKY

C'mon.

47 CONTINUED:

47

Mule is obviously worried.

MULE

You wanna see your mother?

MEADOWS

I don't want you guys to get in trouble or nothing, you been really good to me.

MULE

(disgusted)

Let's go see your mother.

INT. TRAIN MOVING - DAY

48 Mule and Meadows are dozing. Buddusky has been jiggling 48 around, staying seated but rifling through his pockets. He obviously can't find something. He nudges Mule.

BUDDUSKY

(whispering)

Hey, Mule.

Mule looks around, blinks.

MULE

What is it, man?

BUDDUSKY

Don't say nothin' but Meadows kiped my key.

MULE

What key?

BUDDUSKY

You know, to the handcuffs.

Meadows sits across from Mule and Buddusky, dozing.

MULE

He didn't take no key.

BUDDUSKY

How do you know?

48

CONTINUED:

48

MULE

(groggy)

Probably you lost it last night..  
you was jumpin' around.

BUDDUSKY

I'm tellin' you he stole it.  
He's a kleptomaniac.

MULE

Why would he steal the key, we  
aren't putting the cuffs on him anyway.

BUDDUSKY

(indignant)

You dumb bastard, he can't help himself.  
He don't want to steal but he's got to,  
he's got to get it out of his system -  
it's like jerking off. He's got to do it.

Mule thinks about this for a minute.

MULE

Well, if he's got the key then you  
wake him up and get it back.

Mule turns back on his side and continues to doze.  
Buddusky is annoyed. He nudges Meadows, waking him.

BUDDUSKY

Meadows.

MEADOWS

What?

BUDDUSKY

..goin' home to see your mother, huh?

Meadows is a little mystified.

MEADOWS

Yeah, if you say so.

BUDDUSKY

You happy about it?

48 CONTINUED:

48

MEADOWS

Sure.

BUDDUSKY

Meadows, you didn't take any shit from that hotel..like another ashtray or nothin'. I mean cause it could get us in trouble.

MEADOWS

No, I didn't.

BUDDUSKY

I mean..I just asked 'cause, you know, you can't help yourself.

MEADOWS

Yeah, but I don't get the urge in a hotel room.

BUDDUSKY

You don't?

MEADOWS

No..gee this is..see I get a kind of urge. And I usually get it in a dime store or a candy counter or some place like that. Not in a hotel room.

Buddusky nods, uncertain.

MEADOWS

Bad Ass..I'll try to behave myself. I really will. I appreciate what you guys are doing for me.

BUDDUSKY

(embarrassed now)

Yeah, forget it.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA STREET - DAY

49        The bus with CAMDEN on it rolls up. The three start        49  
out. Meadows tugs at Buddusky's arm.

MEADOWS

Hey, Bad Ass, want a candy bar?

Meadows flicks his eyes toward the candy counter. Buddusky smiles. He winks at Meadows, grabs him around the scruff of the neck and shakes him with mock roughness.

BUDDUSKY

Get your ass on the bus, sailor.

INT. BUS - MOVING - DAY

50        Meadows eagerly looking out the window. He's nearing        50  
home ground.

MEADOWS

..that's Calvin Collidge Junior High.  
I went there.

MULE

Oh yeah?

BUDDUSKY

Where's your old man, Meadows?

MEADOWS

Seattle. Seattle, Washington.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, I know where it is. What's  
he doin' there?

MEADOWS

I think he works in a hardware store.  
He's married. I mean not to my mother  
but to somebody else. I think I even  
have a half-sister. That's Camden High  
where I graduated from..gee, I wonder  
if Miss Marabito's still there?

EXT. CAMDEN STREET - DAY

51        These last lines might well be said O.S. as the bus        51  
              moves through the town.

MEADOWS (cont.)

She made me want to be a veterernarian.

EXT. CAMDEN STREET - DAY

52        The trio start walking along the street. Mule        52  
              suddenly stops and drops his AWOL bag. He rubs his calves.

BUDDUSKY

What's wrong?

MULE

Nothin', just wait a minute, okay?

Mule sits on the curb beside his AWOL bag. He's perspiring heavily. Both Meadows and Buddusky are surprised.

MEADOWS

(whispering to Buddusky)

What's wrong with him?

MULE

(hearing it)

Nothin', nothin's wrong with me,  
 understand?

He continues to rub his legs. He finally rises shakily.  
 It's made Meadows nervous, as if he's done something wrong.

EXT. MEADOWS HOUSE - DAY

53        All three are on the porch. A large yellow blind        53  
              is pulled down, covering the living room window. Buddusky  
              keeps ringing the bell, Mule tries to peer behind the  
              blind at the edge of the window. Meadows watches them,  
              but betrays no particular anxiety.

BUDDUSKY

You wanna check next door or something?  
 Your mamma friends with any neighbors?

53 CONTINUED:

53

MEADOWS

Mrs. Esposito.

MULE

Maybe she's over there.

MEADOWS

(indicating garage)

Her car's gone.

BUDDUSKY

Well - whatta you want to do?  
Wanna wait awhile? We could wait  
awhile.

MEADOWS

(shrugs)

I'll check with Mrs. Esposito.

Meadows wanders off across the lawn and out of SHOT.  
Mule sits on the steps.

BUDDUSKY

Your legs really bother you,  
don't they?

MULE

(hesitates, then)

Sometimes..see I was on this paint  
detail and some joker jiggled the scaffold -  
I fell and tore a bunch of shit in my knees,  
and every once in a while it makes my  
whole leg ache.

Buddusky thinks about this. Then:

BUDDUSKY

You take vitamins?

Mule laughs.

BUDDUSKY (cont.)

You oughta take vitamins, seriously.  
Go to the dispensary.

53 CONTINUED:

53

MULE

(cutting him off)

I don't want the Navy messin' with this anymore, understand? I'm six years away from my twenty and I'm not about to give them a chance to bounce me out on a medical they say wasn't service connected and make me lose my pension. I seen that happen too many times.

Mule suddenly shoots to his feet.

BUDDUSKY

What's wrong?

MULE

(panicked)

We let that kid go off by himself.

BUDDUSKY

I know it.

MULE

Man, what's got into you? He could get away.

BUDDUSKY

Take it easy, Mule. He ain't goin' nowhere.

Mule starts moving quickly up the street.

MULE

What makes you so sure?

BUDDUSKY

You know him..

EXT. STREET - MULE AND BUDDUSKY MOVING

54 Buddusky hurrying to keep up with the longer-legged  
Mule.

54

54

CONTINUED:

54

MULE

(looking around)

So where is he? Where is he?

Buddusky can't see him either. Then they take a couple of more steps and clear a bush. Meadows can be seen on the front porch of a neighbor's two doors away, talking quietly to a fortyish Woman.

BUDDUSKY

There. Jesus, Mule don't get your balls in an uproar. Meadows ain't goin' nowhere without us.

Mule is visibly relieved when he sees Meadows.

BUDDUSKY

See, lemme tell you about a kid like Meadows. He's the kinda guy that goes to the brig and he's probably secretly glad. Too much can happen to him on the outside, and it's all bad. This way he knows the worst has happened and he's probably glad, know what I mean?

Mule looks slowly back from Meadows to Buddusky. Buddusky smiles.

BUDDUSKY

Glad.

MULE

Well, if you ain't right, you better be quick - cause I ain't.

Throughout this exchange, snatches of Meadows' conversation with Mrs. Esposito can be heard. "She went to Trenton.. Ralphie Plotto's mother has diabetes..didn't you tell her you were coming? ..message..how's the Navy..fine." Meadows comes ambling back.

54 CONTINUED:

54

MEADOWS

She went for the day.

MULE

(to Buddusky, a reproach)  
Sunday.EXT. FRONT PORCH MEADOWS' HOUSE - BUDDUSKY, MULE, MEADOWS55 They pick up their bags. Meadows stares at the lowered 55  
blind on the adjacent living room window.

BUDDUSKY

..you wanna go in and wait for  
a while?

MEADOWS

What for?

BUDDUSKY

..maybe she'll come back early.

MEADOWS

No thanks.

BUDDUSKY

- you can at least sit in your own  
house - maybe we can get in.Buddusky opens the screen door and tries the door. It  
opens. Only as it does, he realizes that Meadows has his  
hand on his arm, trying to stop him.From the open door all three can see the living room behind  
the blinds and a glimpse of the kitchen beyond: it's all  
a mess, wine bottles, cigarette butts floating in cheap  
dago red, stubbed out in plastic dishes with dried egg yoke,  
scattered underwear, etc. It's sloppy and alcoholic.

MEADOWS

(after a long moment)

Aw, hell - I don't know what I would've  
said to her anyway...

EXT. TRAIN - PHILADELPHIA STATION - DAY

56      Train moving out of station towards New York.      56

INT. TRAIN DINING CAR - MOVING - DAY

57      The three of them sit at a table. Buddusky is sipping      57  
coffee, Mule an orange juice. Meadows just sits.

BUDDUSKY

(to Mule)

You know what Meadows oughta do?  
He oughta get his old lady to write  
her congressman.

(to Meadows)

Hey Meadows. You know what you oughta..

MULE

Not now, man.

BUDDUSKY

Whatta you mean not now?

MULE

Listen, his old lady can write  
letters to her congressman till she  
owns the fucking post office. It  
don't mean diddly shit. Look, either  
we let him go or he lives with it,  
and we're not about to let him go,  
understand? So he lives with it.

The waiter comes with three plates of eggs. He sets  
them down. Meadows stares at his eggs and begins to cry  
softly.

BUDDUSKY

Now see what you made him do?

MULE

What I made him do? Where you goin'?

Meadows has gotten up from the table.

57 CONTINUED:

57

MEADOWS

(crying quietly)

The head, okay?

He goes.

BUDDUSKY

(furious)

Well, if that don't make you wanna  
shit in your flat hat. I hope you're  
satisfied.

Mule is equally angry. He rises.

MULE

You're the one insisted we take  
him to his fucking mother, understand?  
I hate this detail. I hate this fucking  
chickenshit detail.

He goes after Meadows.

INT. TRAIN BATHROOM - MOVING - DAY

58 His head is dripping with water. He holds the tap  
open and runs water over one hand, then the other.

58

MULE'S VOICE

Meadows..Meadows..? You all right?  
Open up, hear?

Meadows stares at himself in the mirror.

ANGLE ON MULE

59 He has begun to bang on the door. Suddenly it opens. 59  
Meadows stands there with a couple of paper towels, slowly  
drying himself off. Mule watches while Meadows continues  
to dry himself. Mule turns and heads swiftly back to the  
dining room.

INT. TRAIN DINING ROOM - MOVING - DAY

- 60 Buddusky sits eating his eggs, hunched over them. 60  
Mule gestures violently for Buddusky. Buddusky rises slowly,  
bile in his eye. He moves towards Mule.
- 61 Mule walks out between cars where Buddusky joins him. 61  
The noise is considerable but from here Mule has a view  
of the john and Meadows in it.

MULE

(above the rattling cars)

I consider myself in jeopardy with you  
man, understand? In jeopardy. This is  
no farewell party, understand? And he  
ain't retirin', understand? He is a  
prisoner and we are taking him to the  
jailhouse and you have a tendency to  
forget that. You are a menace, man.  
You ain't no simple shit bad ass, you  
are a dangerous mother-fucking menace.  
From now on MAA can piss up a rope you  
ain't no honcho, I wanna hear no more  
horseshit psychology jive. No turning  
that kid's head this way to prove what  
a big man you are... you're a fucking  
lifer like me and I don't want you to  
fuck me up. Navy's the best fucking  
thing ever happened to me understand?

INT. TRAIN - MOVING - DAY

- 62 Mule and Buddusky have their peacoats off SP bands 62  
and .45s showing. They sit opposite Meadows. Nobody  
talks. The atmosphere is chilly.

MULE

(to Buddusky quietly)

When we hit New York, we check in,  
we check out. We don't get on no  
red bus and go sightseein'. Now I  
want you to agree to that...Buddusky.

BUDDUSKY

I hear you.

62 CONTINUED:

62

MULE

Well do you agree?

BUDDUSKY

I was trying to show the kid a good time.

MULE

He can't have a good time. It ain't in him.

BUDDUSKY

He had a good time in Washington. Meadows -

MULE

(doesn't want him to ask Meadows)

All right, he had a good time in Washington. Think that'll make it easier on him to do his eight years? It won't. It'll make it harder.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUILDING - DAY

63      Some recognizable part of the skyline visible through the windows. They approach some lockers where Meadows, Buddusky and Mule store their AWOL bags. Buddusky and Mule have their peacoats on, temporarily concealing their arm bands and pieces. 63

MULE

Train leaves for Boston in two hours.  
We don't leave this building till then.

Turning from the lockers they all sit down on a row of chairs, waiting with other military personnel. Everyone looks a little greasy, the way they do from an overnight flight. Buddusky smokes and sulks. Mule stares fixedly, expressing nothing. Meadows is between them.

MEADOWS

You guys pissed at me..Bad Ass?

63 CONTINUED:

63

Buddusky says nothing.

MULE

Nobody's pissed at you Meadows.

Buddusky gets to his feet.

MULE

Where you goin'?

BUDDUSKY

The head, okay?

MULE

We'll all go. Meadows, c'mon.

Buddusky swears under his breath. The three head across the floor to the men's room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

64 Large, white tiled, with a muddy film on the floor and 64 vending machines lining the walls. Four marines are inside. Two stand at the urinals. Two are in the stalls. The three sailors enter. The marines have been talking but they fall silent now. One of the marines finishes with the urinal. He washes his hands and combs his hair. A Lance Corporal flushes the toilet and emerges. He washes his hands and combs his hair.

Buddusky goes up to the urinal. He fumbles with his trousers, having a little trouble.

ANGLE ON THE MARINES

one of them noticing Buddusky fumbling around.

MARINE

(quietly)

Sailor looks like he lost somethin'.

The Lance Corporal next to him smiles.

Buddusky, of course, hears it. The marines continue making a few barely audible remarks, suggesting that whatever Buddusky lost must be so small it's hard to find and maybe the other two sailors ought to help him look for it.

Buddusky is now relieving himself but the telltale veins are beginning to bulge on his forehead. Mule is sensitive to the problem. Buddusky smiles.

BUDDUSKY

Now if I was a marine... I wouldn't  
have to mess with thirteen buttons...  
I'd just take off my hat...

The fourth marine comes out of the stall. He's heard the remark. He passes close by Buddusky's back and bumps him into the urinal. Buddusky turns and the marine jumps back, shocked.

MARINE

You son of a bitch.

He goes for Buddusky. Buddusky knocks him back into the stall. The marine's hat falls in the toilet. Buddusky rushes in and pushes on the plunger. The toilet flushes. The other marines close in on Mule and Meadows.

A quick melee follows. Buddusky is a wild man. He uses white soap from a broken dispenser by the sink to blind one marine, bangs others into the vending machines, breaking a mirror, butts and kicks and tries to hold up his pants. Mule backs him up manfully and at a key point Meadows pulls one marine off Buddusky, misses with a punch, and gets a bloody nose.

It ends with Buddusky hurling the large metal trash cans at the marines in a final barrage of total, if extremely temporary, victory. Others attracted by the noise enter the men's room and Buddusky, still holding up his pants, along with Mule and Meadows in hot pursuit, streak out of the men's room.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUILDING FLOOR - DAY

65 All three run.

65

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUILDING - DAY

66 Buddusky streaks to the outside followed by Meadows and Mule. He steps directly in front of a timely taxi-cab. The cab screeches to a halt. Buddusky opens the door, shoves Meadows in. It's only now we see that Buddusky has been laughing happily. 66

BUDDUSKY

(to driver)

Washington Square, my good man,  
and fuck the expense.

He and Mule pile in besides Meadows. The cab takes off.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE - DAY

67 They pour out of the cab. Buddusky promptly cups his hands over his mouth and imitates the shrill whistle of the bosun's pipe - one long low whistle to one so high it's lost, then back to the low one and several quick short trills. 67

Some of the people in the square pause and give him and his companions a look. Buddusky is delighted with himself. Mule laughs and hates himself for it, shaking his head, laughing...

MULE

He's gonna do it.

MEADOWS

What?

MULE

Get us picked up by the Shore Patrol.

As they walk through the square, Buddusky now holds his hand against his nose to approximate the sound of a ship's 1-MC intercom.

67

CONTINUED:

67

BUDDUSKY

Now hear this, hear this - all hands  
desiring to do so, lay down to the  
do-so locker and do so.

A long haired couple on a bench smile pleasantly and give them the V-sign. Mule gives it back. He sees Meadows doing the same. Buddusky has turned and walks backward signaling the couple in semaphore directing attention to the long haired female.

MEADOWS

(walking)

What're you doin'?

BUDDUSKY

(including Mule in it)

Sending her a message.

MEADOWS

What kind of message?

BUDDUSKY

(again including Mule)

Tit for tat you scarf my dog  
I'll eat your cat, Listen right over  
there are the greatest Italian sausage  
sandwiches in the world. C'mon, I'm  
buyin'.

Before Meadows can get over his confusion about the message, Buddusky has him hustled toward the sandwich stand.

MEADOWS

You been here before, Bad Ass?

Buddusky gives him a look, "Are-you-kidding-I've been-  
everywhere-and-done-everything."

BUDDUSKY

(handing him a hankchief)

Wipe your nose, kid. You fought like  
a champ..din't he Mule?

67 CONTINUED:

67

Mule smiles despite himself.

BUDDUSKY (cont.)

It was great, wasn't it? Go on, admit it, admit it, admit it.

MULE

(their backs to us)

I got your greatness...

EXT. ITALIAN SAUSAGE STAND - DAY

68 All three stand in the chilly weather chomping down 68  
on fat Italian rolls. The grill behind them hisses.  
Peppers and onions spill out of the sides of their mouths  
as they eat.

BUDDUSKY

Now I ask you..where can you find  
a sanwich like this..for half-a-buck?

MEADOWS

I never ate anything so good..  
I ain't shittin' you.

Mule has finished his.

MULE

(still chewing)

I'm gonna hafta have another  
one of these.

EXT. - VILLAGE STREET - DAY

69 The three of them are walking away from the sandwich 69  
stand. Buddusky burps. Mule comes up with a louder  
belch. Buddusky sucks in air and tries to outdo him.  
He succeeds. They walk down the street.

MULE

We got to figure out what to do now.

69 CONTINUED:

69

BUDDUSKY

And we will. We will. Only we'll  
do it over some Heineken's.

MEADOWS

What's Heinekins?

BUDDUSKY

Greatest beer you'll ever have in  
your life. President Kennedy used  
to drink it.

Mule turns away thoroughly disgusted. Buddusky reaches  
over and puts his hand on Mule's arm.

BUDDUSKY

Hey, Mule. We gotta go back there,  
our AWOL bags are in the lockers.  
Only we can't go back there right  
away - not after what happened.

MULE

Well,.when do you think we can go?

BUDDUSKY

Couple hours...

MEADOWS

How'd you know that about President  
Kennedy?

Buddusky just smiles. Mule shakes his head.

INT. BAR #1 - NEW YORK - DAY

70 Buddusky is playing darts with a couple of civilians 70  
and kibitzing with the bartender as well. He's drinking  
hard liquor now and is very drunk. Mule and Meadows  
are nearby.. Both have been drinking as well. With Mule  
and Meadows we hear snatches of Buddusky's conversation  
with the bartender and other dart players..."sailors are  
crazy...who the hell said they're crazy...never saw one  
who wasn't...guess you're gonna tell us about one you saw  
that was, ain't you?" Money is changing hands during the  
game. And Buddusky appears to be losing.

MULE

(quiet desperation)  
Meadows.

MEADOWS

Yeah...

MULE

You gotta help me get Buddusky  
outta here..

(agonized)

He's bettin' with our travel money...

Buddusky throws a stray dart. A cry goes up.

BUDDUSKY

Damn!...all right, double or nothin'...

CLOSE-BUDDUSKY AND BARTENDER

Buddusky holds the darts in his hand between rounds and  
talks with the bartender. He's covered with perspiration.  
He leans over the bar listening intently.

BARTENDER

My word of honor. Listen I stood  
here one night and watched a sailor  
twenty-two years old, count off four  
thousand dollars cash onto the bar  
and give it all to her. Saw it with  
my own eyes. For what? Can you explain  
what makes a sailor pay four g's cash  
that he got for leave time and shipping  
over for a hole this wide and that deep?  
Crazy...no other explanation.

BUDDUSKY

Well. You gotta understand the nature  
of a sailor. He ain't like other people.

BARTENDER

(to other customers)

No he ain't.

BUDDUSKY

Listen, pally, that sailor is gonna be able to talk about that the rest of his life - wherever he goes in the world, whoever his shipmates are - he's gonna have a story to tell. Now what've you ever done that's worth telling? Know what I mean?

(to player)

All right, double or nothin', how 'bout it.. eighty-seven bucks here says I can take you one outta one, winner take all.

OTHER PLAYER

You're on, sailor.

Mule rises a little shakily. Buddusky comes over.

BUDDUSKY

Don't worry, man. I got him right where I want him... I'm hustling him, know what I mean?

MULE

(furious)

Yeah and maybe he's hustling you.

Buddusky smiles.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah maybe. But no use arguing. I gotta win or we don't get outta New York.

He goes back.

MULE

Fourteen years.. fourteen mother-fucking years...

EXT. VILLAGE STREET - NIGHT

71        On the street again with Buddusky, staggering and        71  
counting up the money. All three are laughing. Buddusky  
is counting. He drops a bill, stoops to pick it up and  
slips. He remains seated, counting.

BUDDUSKY

Sixty-three bucks..clear. That's  
twenty-one apiece.

MEADOWS

What do you mean apiece?

BUDDUSKY

(rising)

Hell, we're partners, ain't we?

MEADOWS

Well, yeah, Bad Ass.

BUDDUSKY

Then take your fucking twenty-one  
bucks and don't give me such a fucking  
hard time.

He gives a pile to Mule and one to Meadows. Mule notices  
Meadows reaction. He takes his own cut.

MULE

Thanks, man.

Buddusky turns and signals the bar - a few quick flashes  
of his hand down with precision despite his drunkenness.

MEADOWS

Bravo Yankee Brave Yankee.

Meadows imitates the gestures perfectly.

BUDDUSKY

You should put in for signalman,  
you know that kid?

There is an uncomfortable moment of silence. Then before  
anyone else hears it:

71 CONTINUED:

71

MEADOWS

What's that?

There is a murmuring sound, something that sounds almost like singing and it appears to be coming from the street itself.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, I hear it too.

They move on a few steps and it grows louder. They locate the sound coming from a building that corners on a narrow alley. They keep still and listen to the sound - both drunk and yet a little wary.

MULE

What the hell is an Indiana dog?

BUDDUSKY

A dog from Indiana...I guess.

MULE

Listen to 'em. They're saying  
Indiana dog over and over.

As they listen it does sound like that. They walk up to the side of the building and read a sign: NICHIREN SHOSHU OF AMERICA. Use Side Entrance. They look down the alley to the side entrance.

BUDDUSKY

(a little hesitant)

That's the damndest thing I ever heard.

MEADOWS

(suddenly)

Let's go take a look.

He walks down the alley to the entrance. He looks in, looks back to Buddusky and Mule. He shrugs.

MEADOWS

What the hell, eight years and a D.D.

He goes on in. Buddusky and Mule follow very quickly.

INT. VESTIBULE - NIGHT

72        Buddusky and Mule behind Meadows who leads. Buddusky 72  
is pleased with Meadows' initiative and nudges Mule. Mule  
is not pleased. The chanting is louder now and they come  
across neat rows of shoes. This stops them all.

MULE

Well, now what do you wanna do?

MEADOWS

Take off our shoes.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, must be one of those Jap  
deals, where you take off your shoes.

Both Meadows and Buddusky begin taking off their shoes.

MULE

That sign wasn't an invitation.

BUDDUSKY

All they can do is kick us out.

Buddusky and Meadows place their shoes in the rows and walk  
through a kitchen toward the sound. Mule kicks off his  
shoes and follows. They stop at a curtained doorway to  
watch.

INT. LIVING ROOM - P.O.V. THROUGH CURTAIN

73        Where fifteen people are on their knees in stocking 73  
feet and chanting to a scroll enshrined in a black altar.  
Two candles burn on the altar and between them the smoke  
of incense rises from a ceramic holder.

As they chant, the worshippers vigorously rub strings of  
beads between their palms. Behind the chanters against  
the wall sit three other people who watch but don't chant.

The chanting now sounds like "And on again and on again and  
on again..."

73 CONTINUED:

73

MEADOWS

(quietly)

What're they saying?

BUDDUSKY

(stopping him)

Hold it down..I think we're in  
fucking church.

Just as he says this a young man jumps up from the chanters.

YOUNG MAN

Good evening!

OTHERS

Good evening!

YOUNG MAN

Young Men's Division! I've been  
on a Shakubuku!

The men jump up and start swinging their right arms violently. They all sing "I've been on a Shakubuku, all the live long day! I've been on a Shakubuku just to start me on my way! (To the tune of "I've been Working on the Railroad".) As the song progresses, they clap their hands faster and faster so that neither the singing nor the swinging of the hands can keep up with the pace of the clapping. Meadows is fascinated.

CLOSE SHOT - OTHER YOUNG MAN AMONG THE CHANTERS

74 He's addressing the three other people sitting against 74  
the wall.

OTHER YOUNG MAN

Good evening!

OTHERS

Good evening!

OTHER YOUNG MAN

My name is Bob and you're probably  
wondering what we're doing here,  
chanting and singing crazy songs.

(laughter, applause from  
other chanters)

OTHER YOUNG MAN

This is a meeting of Nichiren Shoshu of  
America. The best way to explain what it's  
all about is to hear from people who have  
been chanting and to hear what has happened  
to them because of it. Who's first?

Hands shoot up. Bob chooses another young man. He rises.

YOUNG MAN

Good evening!

EVERYONE

Good evening!

The three sailors chuckle a little.

YOUNG MAN

...It's almost too much for words.  
I don't know how to tell you what  
Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo and the Gohonzon  
have done for me...

MEADOWS

What's a Gohonzon?

BUDDUSKY

Shh...I'll tell you later.

NOW A YOUNG GIRL STANDS

YOUNG GIRL

Good evening!

EVERYONE

Good evening!

74 CONTINUED:

74

## YOUNG GIRL

A year ago. I was like everybody else. Half dead. I was antisocial, apathetic. I was in a heavy drug scene. I was promiscuous. A year ago I'd never dream of standing up and talking like this in front of people.

75 ANOTHER GIRL

75

## ANOTHER GIRL

..then I started chanting and everything changed. I wanted to do things.

76 A THIRD GIRL

76

## THIRD GIRL

I wanted a flute real bad and my cousin knew this guy and was going to get one for me. I really chanted for it. I just chanted and chanted. Well the guy didn't have the flute anymore and my cousin got a clarinet for me instead. I love that clarinet! I never wanted a flute in the first place!

Applause.

77 A YOUNG MAN, Rather effeminate and slender.

77

## YOUNG MAN

I came to New York from California. I was at the end of my rope. I weighed over two hundred pounds, I was sleeping twelve hours a day, I was a royal mess. The first person I met in New York was a girl who brought me to a meeting like this. I thought they were all out of their minds!  
(laughter)  
Later, I went to the girl's apartment - used her Gohonzon.

77 CONTINUED:

77

MEADOWS

C'mon, what's a Gohonzon?

BUDDUSKY

I'll tell you later, dammit!

YOUNG MAN (cont.)

Boy, was I skeptical! I was going to put the Gohonzon to a real test. There was a poster of Peter Fonda on her wall, you know, the one where he's on this fantastic chopper, and I said, "OK, if the Gohonzon is so marvelous, I want to meet Peter Fonda." She said, "Chant for it and see what happens." So I chanted for twenty minutes just to test it. I walked out of her apartment, down the street, and at the corner of eighth Avenue and 57th I was hit by a cab. Who was the passenger? You guessed it - Peter Fonda! It blew my mind. I couldn't believe it! Not only that but I had my leg fractured and got a settlement for \$1500 from the cab company. That was a year ago and I've been chanting ever since.

EXT. ALLEY ENTRANCE - NEW YORK - NIGHT

78 The three sailors are moving toward the street. At the moment Buddusky and Mule are oblivious to Meadows and walk ahead of him. 78

BUDDUSKY

Bunch of candy asses.

MULE

(laughing)

Ever hear such happy horseshit?

BUDDUSKY

(a sage observation)

That last guy was a big fruit.

MEADOWS

Yeah but you guys... you guys..  
(genuinely impressed)  
..he sure was a happy fruit.

They look at Meadows as he catches up to them.

MEADOWS

(chanting)  
Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo  
Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo

BUDDUSKY

Wait a minute. If you're gonna  
chant we got to decide what for.

MEADOWS

How 'bout I get sprung from Portsmouth?

Buddusky isn't sure he likes this. They start walking.

BUDDUSKY

...yeah...

MULE

(quickly)  
Let's see if it works first,  
you know, then you can chant for  
somethin' ... big.

MEADOWS

Okay.

BUDDUSKY

What about we all get laid?

MULE

Too big. What about..  
(tapping Meadows)  
- he gets laid.

MEADOWS

Should you chant for something like that?..

78 CONTINUED:

78

BUDDUSKY

Why the fuck not?

MEADOWS

It's a religion.

MULE

Kid you're too good to believe.

BUDDUSKY

Aw, chant for all three of us.

MEADOWS

Yeah, all three of us.

Mule stops. His legs are obviously bothering him.

MULE

Well, if he's got to chant, let's  
do it somewhere else.INT. SUBWAY - MOVING - NIGHT

79 One-third filled with unpromising types. Meadows is 79  
chanting under his breath. Buddusky notices and nudges  
Mule.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

80 It is freezing cold. Meadows is still chanting to 80  
himself. They pass a magazine rack of skin books.  
They stop, go back. They pick one up. It's wrapped  
up in translucent tissue paper. The proprietor scowls  
at them. Buddusky slits the tissue paper.

PROPRIETOR

(scowling)

You're paying for that sailor.

Buddusky looks up at him and says nothing. He opens the magazine. All three crane their heads towards the center. There's a picture of a man and woman engaged in cunnilingus briefly glimpsed. Meadows eyes pop.

MEADOWS

Gee...

BUDDUSKY

Yodeling in the canyon.  
(he yodels)  
Ever done that before?

MEADOWS

...not exactly..

BUDDUSKY

(almost wistful)  
Nothin' like it, right, Mule?

MULE

Nothin'.

Meadows isn't sure whether they're putting him on or not. Meadows looks back at the magazine.

MEADOWS

Are they really doing that when  
they take that picture?

BUDDUSKY

There's more things in this world  
than you can dream of..used to be  
a whore in Wilmington with a glass  
eye, she'd take it out and wink you off!

MEADOWS

(appalled)  
..really?...

Mule laughs and so does Buddusky.

80 CONTINUED:

80

PROPRIETOR

All right, pay up sailor.

BUDDUSKY

One more word outta you and I'll  
kick your magazine rack in.

He slams the magazine back on the rack and they take off.

INT. ENGRAVERS STAND - NIGHTCLOSE ON BRACELET

81 Engraved on it is: L. Meadows. 81

Wider angle to include engraver and all three.

ENGRAVER

There's still room for your rank  
if you want me to put it.

MEADOWS

...No... I don't think so.

Buddusky pulls him aside.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, it's time you made your rate.

MEADOWS

C'mon, they busted me to E-1,  
you know that.

BUDDUSKY

Right now we're a navy of three.  
Pick a rate, any rate. I'm the  
honcho and I can promote you anyway  
I feel like it. What'll it be?

Meadows looks tentatively at Mule, then:

MEADOWS

Chief signalman!

BUDDUSKY

Okay, partner, L. Meadows, SMC.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

82        They're walking along. Meadows keeps checking his        82  
              wrist out with its new silver bracelet.

MULE

Very sexy. Chicks love to see  
 you wearing doo-dads like that.

MEADOWS

Hey! I outrank you dudes now.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

83        Meadows can be heard barking orders at them, trying        83  
              to imitate an old SMC. Mule and Buddusky snap to.  
              They pass three girls. One of the detail yodels.  
              The three girls skitter like geese.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - ANOTHER ANGLE - NIGHT

84        Meadows is back to chanting. They pass Rockefeller        84  
              Center. Meadows stops. They watch the skaters for  
              a moment.

MEADOWS

Someday, I'm gonna give that a try.

MULE

Why someday?

MEADOWS ON THE ICE

85        without Buddusky or Mule. He keeps slipping and        85  
              picking himself up. He's clearly determined to stay  
              on his feet.

Mule and Buddusky at edge of rink watching, enjoying it.  
 Mule suddenly turns to Buddusky.

MULE

You done it again.

85

CONTINUED:

85

BUDDUSKY

What?

MULE

Let him outta our hands.

Buddusky thinks about that.

BUDDUSKY

I didn't do that, you did.

Mule realizes he's right. He looks back down at Meadows who waves to them.

Meadows is moving a little better now and he's chanting under his breath Nam-myoho-range-kyo.

MULE

(amused)

Sure is having a good time.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah and you said it wasn't in him.

MULE

Well I guess it is.

Meadows skating is moving faster and faster chanting as he moves faster and faster.

Angle on Buddusky and Mule - the smile fades from Mule's lips.

MULE

Lookit him go.

Buddusky looks for a moment as Meadows continues to pick up the pace.

MULE

(he can't get over it)

Lookit him go.

Angle on Meadows MOVING faster and faster, chanting and chanting.

85 CONTINUED:

85

Meadows joins Buddusky and Mule and begins to remove his skates.

MEADOWS

(still out of breath)

Listen it really works, I chanted  
to stay on my feet and I did.

He puts on his shoes and rises.

MEADOWS (cont.)

Well where do we go now?

MULE

We crash.

BUDDUSKY

Let's have a cappachino and sober  
up first.

MEADOWS

What's a cappachino?

INT. CAFE COFFEE SHOP - NEW YORK - NIGHT

86 The three sit at a table. Meadows watches with 86  
fascination as the machine tops the cappachinos with  
whipped cream. The waiter brings them. Buddusky  
and Mule are beginning to fade. Meadows sips his  
cappachino. It burns his lips. He sips it again,  
starts chanting to himself, and looks around the room  
at the chess game, at vehement conversations, at long  
haired boys and girls. Mule and Buddusky suddenly half  
rise out of their chairs. He looks up and a girl DONNA  
is standing over him smiling.

DONNA

(thrilled)

You're chanting. I'm with the  
Nichiren Shoshu. I'm Donna.

Meadows looks up dumbfounded.

86

CONTINUED:

86

DONNA

What are you chanting for?

BUDDUSKY

:(teasing)

Yeah, what're you chanting for?

Meadows blushes.

The girl smiles.

DONNA

A girl? Are you chanting for a girl?  
That's okay, you can chant for anything...  
what's your name?

MEADOWS

Meadows.

MULE

Your first name.

MEADOWS

Larry.

DONNA

Larry you can chant for anything,  
and it works. Hey, if throwing  
avocados against the wall worked,  
I'd throw avocados, wouldn't you?

Meadows turns to Buddusky.

MEADOWS

What's..

BUDDUSKY

(cuts him off)

A fruit - not that kind of fruit,  
a real one.

86 CONTINUED:

86

DONNA

C'mere, Larry - I'd like you to  
meet some people, would you like to?

Meadows gets up and follows her. Buddusky and Mule look  
at each other then over to Meadows who appears to be  
holding his end of a conversation with the other table.  
After a moment he comes back:

MEADOWS

All right, you guys drop your socks  
and grab your cocks, we're going to  
a party.

INT. DONNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

87      Arethra Franklin is being played. Donna and Meadows      87  
are off to one side getting to know one another. Donna's  
three friends, an aging boy with shoulder length hair  
called Henry and two girls continue talking to each other.

Mule and Buddusky sit side by side at the end of the sofa,  
nearly inert, ignored by all, except by the sole concession  
to sociability: after it sweeps the room they are silently  
offered a joint.

MULE

(not moving)

Might as well be a fuckin' bus stop.

BUDDUSKY

Relax.

MULE

(irritated)

I am relaxed.

BUDDUSKY

Listen, Mule we got it made.  
We get rid of that silly lookin'  
dude, we have the three chicks  
between us.

87 CONTINUED:

87

MULE

We will, huh?

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, why not?

MULE

Because those three chicks'll  
fuck each other before they'll  
come near us is why not.

Buddusky looks a little hurt. He looks over toward  
Meadows.

BUDDUSKY

Well, kids' doin' all right, ain't he?  
(calling across)  
Go ahead try it.

Buddusky mimes inhaling on a joint. It can be seen  
Meadows is being offered one and he's looked to Buddusky  
and Mule.

Buddusky turns to Mule who is giving him a nasty look.

BUDDUSKY

(indicating Meadows smoking)  
It's just grass.

MULE

(sarcastic)  
Plain grass?

BUDDUSKY

Yeah.

MULE

Oh. Okay. Say that at the court  
martial.

ANGLE ON MEADOWS AND DONNA

88        She changes records on the hi-fi. She's got a wall        88  
           of records. Meadows is handing her some albums.  
           Meadows is stoned but he doesn't know it yet. He holds  
           onto the albums and she has to take them from him.

MEADOWS

You sure have a lotta records.

DONNA

I get most of 'em for free.  
 I work in the business.

MEADOWS

What business?

BUDDUSKY

is standing in the kitchen, drinking wine, pinning  
 the one girl's exit from him with one hash-marked arm.  
 He is drinking heavily.

BUDDUSKY

- there ain't nothing better in the  
world than being on the sea - even  
 in the navy ..on the bridge..talking  
 to..ships..

His eyes close. She starts to duck under his arm. His  
 eyes open. She stays put.

BUDDUSKY

..across miles and miles of  
 liquid real estate..

MULE & THE OTHER GIRL

who seems progressively annoyed by Henry's periodic  
 interruptions.

88 CONTINUED:

88

HENRY

And you approve of Nixon?

MULE

- yeah.

HENRY

What about his Southern strategy,  
Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Agnew,  
you approve of it all?

MULE

(doesn't want to argue)  
He's the big honcho.

Henry's off to pour himself another drink.

GIRL

Well, how'd you feel about going  
to Vietnam?

MULE

- the man says go, we got to do  
what the man says. We livin' in  
this man's world.

The girl shakes her head.

GIRL

(softly)  
Oh, baby.

ANGLE ON BUDDUSKY

89      weaving his way into the living room. He searches      89  
out a corkscrew and vigorously begins to screw the top  
of its head off, making mincemeat of the cork, swearing  
at it.

MEADOWS

Hey, Bad Ass, I smoked grass.

89

CONTINUED:

89

BUDDUSKY

(confidentially)

Listen kid, I'm handing this girl  
such a line of shit it's unbelievable.

MEADOWS

Gee..

BUDDUSKY

She loves it, she loves it.

MEADOWS

I missed out on a lot when you think  
of it.

Buddusky finally pulls out the cork. He hands it to Meadows.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, stick with me partner.

#### MULE AND GIRL

Henry is back with his drink.

GIRL

Well, tell me this - how come  
you don't see more black officers?

MULE

-cause you got to have a recommendation  
from a white man usually..white man's  
not about to recommend no black man to  
be over no white man, even if he qualifies..

GIRL

..then how can you stay in?..

HENRY

- nothing, nothing that Nixon does  
disturbs you, is that right, just  
answer is that right?

89 CONTINUED:

89

GIRL

Henry, stop that.  
(to Mule, quietly)  
..how can you stay in?

MULE

(a long moment, then:)  
..it's okay.

WITH MEADOWS AND DONNA

90 smoking together. She nods toward Mule and Buddusky. 90

DONNA

You like them a lot, don't you?

MEADOWS

Best friends I ever had.

DONNA

You guys on leave?

MEADOWS

Liberty you mean.

DONNA

Liberty.

MEADOWS

No.

This strikes him as funny.

DONNA

What're you doing then?

MEADOWS

They're taking me to jail.

90 CONTINUED:

90

BUDDUSKY  
with the girl, still boring her.

BUDDUSKY  
What you're talking about now,  
you're talking about deep water.

GIRL  
I didn't say a word -

BUDDUSKY  
I tell you when you're on deep  
water and doing a man's job on  
the bridge or when it's rough  
weather and you lash yourself  
to the rack and get rocked to  
sleep like a baby and you wake up  
and it's calm and for miles and  
miles the water's like fucking  
glass and there's porpoises off  
the bow, well then you're talking  
about deep water and there's  
nothin' like it.

The girl's eyes have finally closed. Buddusky sees she's  
bored.

BUDDUSKY  
(pleasantly)  
- not even pussy.

The girl doesn't react.

MULE, HENRY AND GIRL

HENRY  
I'm not putting down the whole  
fucking government, Annette, I  
just want him to tell me one  
thing, there's got to be one thing  
you don't like about Nixon.

MEADOWS & DONNA

91 She's no longer laughing. She's appalled.

91

DONNA  
Eight years.

Meadows is still smoking and giggling.

91 CONTINUED:

91

MEADOWS

I get two off -

DONNA

(cutting him off)  
Why don't you get away?

MEADOWS

Get away?

DONNA

Right now, to Canada. I have  
a friend, George Lucido. He's  
into Nicheren Shoshu, he lives  
in Toronto. I can give you his  
number - he'll take care of you,  
really.

MEADOWS

Oh no, I couldn't.

DONNA

Why not?

MEADOWS

It would be their ass.

DONNA

And what do you owe them?

MEADOWS

They're my best friends.

DONNA

- for how long?

MEADOWS

What difference does that make?

DONNA

Have they been your best friends  
for eight years? Look at them,  
they don't care about you, they  
probably won't even think about  
you after they take you to jail.

MEADOWS

Listen, they worry about me -

91 CONTINUED: (2)

91

DONNA

They don't worry about anything,  
they want somebody else to do  
that for them - that's why they're  
in the Navy...eight years.

She takes his hand. She appears to have decided something.  
She rises.

MEADOWS

Where we going?

She leads him upstairs towards an upper loft. Buddusky  
spots this.

BUDDUSKY

Mule. MULE!

Buddusky points towards Meadows moving up to the loft and  
yodels. Meadows is momentarily paralyzed by the sound.  
Donna tugs him on.

DONNA'S LOFT

92 The bed is prominent. Donna finishes writing something 92  
on a pad at the nightstand. Meadows has begun to sweat.  
She tugs him onto the bed, sits beside him, puts an  
arm around him.

DONNA

Now you're telling me the truth?  
...there's nothing else you did?

Meadows shakes his head.

DONNA

Here's George's number in  
Toronto - take it. Go on take it.

Meadows hesitates. She stuffs it into his pocket. He  
lets her, fascinated with her. She looks directly at  
him for a long moment.

DONNA

Now, Larry, there's something else.

MEADOWS

What?

Donna's eyes are closed.

92 CONTINUED:

92

MEADOWS

What?

DONNA

I'm going to chant, I'm going to  
chant for you like I've never  
chanted for anything in my life.

MEADOWS

...chant?...

DONNA

Yes..to get away!

She turns toward the wall. And there, attached to the  
wall by the bed is her Gohanzon. She begins to chant.

DONNA

Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo, etc.

Meadows just stares at her. He turns away and sits in  
the bed, deeply disappointed, ignoring her chantings.

MEADOWS

(he turns to her)

They're my friends..it would be  
their ass.

She doesn't hear him. She's chanting.

MULE, HENRY AND GIRL

93

MULE

93

..well, now there is one thing  
about Nixon..

HENRY

Oh my God! This is it! This is  
it! Yes, yes!

MULE

(very stoned)  
..I just don't like the way he  
sits in a chair.

Henry stares blankly for a long moment. Then:

HENRY

You don't like the way he sits  
in a chair, this is beautiful,  
this is great.

93 CONTINUED:

93

MULE

I don't like the way the man  
sits in a chair when he's in  
those man-to-man meetings,  
understand?...he's like this,  
on the side of the chair, leaning,  
like he's in a hurry to get away,  
only he don't want to let on.

Mule imitates Nixon down to the frozen smile. His  
imitation is accurate.

HENRY

Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.

MULE

I mean a man who can't just sit  
in a chair, it does make you  
wonder...don't it?

DONNA'S LOFT

94 Meadows has risen and watches Donna's face now as it's 94  
rapt with chanting. He stares and stares and slowly  
his lips begin to form the words.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

95      The three of them watch as a sleepy bell boy wheels      95  
in a cot. Buddusky peels off a bil and hands it to  
him. He leaves. The three of them stand there swaying.

MEADOWS

...which of us gets the cot?

MULE

Please, please let's not  
start that shit again.

The lights are out. All three are in bed, Mule and  
Buddusky in the large one, Meadows in the cot. Meadows  
alone has his eyes open.

MEADOWS

Bad Ass?..Bad Ass?..

There's a groan from the direction of the large bed.

BUDDUSKY'S VOICE

What the fuck is it?

MEADOWS

If you're Catholic do you  
think it's sacrilegious  
to chant?

Another groan from the bed and some soft swearing.

BUDDUSKY'S VOICE

Look, did it get you laid?

MEADOWS

...no..

BUDDUSKY'S VOICE

...then whatta you want to  
chant for?..

No answer.

MULE

Chant your ass off..only way you  
get pussy in this world is to pay  
for it.. one way or another..

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL ROOM - DAY

96      It is morning. Meadows wakes up. He looks up to see Mule

96 CONTINUED:

96

and Buddusky strapping on their arm bands and .45's.

MULE

C'mon, kid. Time to go.

EXT. TRAIN - MOVING - DAY

97 The line from Boston to New York. Focus on the wheels and their rhythmic sound.

97

INT. TRAIN DINING CAR - MOVING - DAY

98 Meadows has almost involuntarily picked up the sound of the wheels and begun to chant to it.

98

Mule sits drinking orange juice. Buddusky is studying the orders.

BUDDUSKY

What time we get to Boston?

MULE

(checking his watch)

Two hours...what time we got to be in Portsmouth?

BUDDUSKY

Before eighteen hundred... tomorrow.

Mule and Buddusky look at each other. They look at Meadows. Meadows is lost.

MULE

(softly)

Twenty-six hours.

Buddusky doesn't answer.

MULE

Whatta you think?

Buddusky smiles slowly

BUDDUSKY

I think we oughta get the kid laid.

The waiter comes with their food. He sets down a plate of eggs in front of Meadows and starts to go.

98

CONTINUED:

98

MEADOWS

Waiter?

WAITER

Yes, sir?

MEADOWS

I asked for my eggs over easy.

WAITER

Those eggs are over easy.

MEADOWS

They're not.

He hands them to the waiter who scowls and takes them.  
Mule and Buddusky react.

INT. BOSTON TRAIN STATION - DAY

99      They stand there with their AWOL bags. Meadows looks 99  
worried.

MEADOWS

Do you think we have enough  
money for all three of us?

BUDDUSKY

You ain't never been laid  
before. We have.

MEADOWS

I bet you been laid a lot.

BUDDUSKY

More times'n you could count.

MEADOWS

How many more times you figure  
you can do it... at your age?

Buddusky looks at him. Meadows laughs, as does Mule.  
He starts to chase Meadows who drops his AWOL bag, runs  
laughing. Buddusky chases him across the station.  
Mule is laughing until he sees civilians staring. He  
runs after them. Trying to catch up.

MULE

Cut the shit, there are civilians  
around here watching.

Buddusky stops, realizes he's got his SP band and .45 on.

99 CONTINUED:

99

BUDDUSKY  
(mock serious)  
Cut the shit, Meadows.

MULE  
At least wait till we check into  
a hotel and get rid of these  
pieces.

EXT. CAPTAIN JOE'S TATTOO PARLOR - BOSTON - DAY

100 The three of them stare at a window filled with  
samples of tattoo artwork. Inside sits CAPTAIN JOE -  
a rather large woman - staring out at them.

100

MULE  
(to Buddusky)  
Wanna tattoo?

BUDDUSKY  
Does a nun want the clap?

MULE  
Maybe we should get the first  
class chevrons tattooed on our  
arms... I got a feeling they  
ain't going to be on our sleeves  
for long.

BUDDUSKY  
What's that supposed to mean?

Mule doesn't answer. They join Meadows who is staring  
at various designs on display. DUTY FIRST under a flag,  
an anchor with Underway Again, a banner across a heart  
with the word DECEIVED. Buddusky points to a black  
panther.

BUDDUSKY  
Just right for a militant  
mother like you.

MULE  
Yeah, it'd almost show up too,  
wouldn't it. Here's the one  
for you.

Mule points to Donald Duck in a sailor cap smoking a  
corn cob pipe. Below the inscription it says, "So What".

100 CONTINUED:

100

BUDDUSKY

(to Meadows)

How about you? Maybe they got  
some kind of Buddhist tattoo.

MEADOWS

(absently)

No thanks.

MULE

C'mon.

Buddusky and Mule start moving. Meadows lingers and  
just stares at Underway Again.

EXT. BOSTON STREET #1 - DAY

101 All three are walking. Meadows is subdued now.

101

BUDDUSKY

Listen, there's only one kind  
to have. A radio man on the  
Rockbridge had his dick tattooed:  
every time he'd skin it back for  
short arm inspection, it'd say  
"Hi, Doc!"

Meadows moves a little ahead of them and windowshops.

MULE

You figure on taking him to  
a cathouse, don't you.

BUDDUSKY

So?

Mule doesn't answer. It's obvious he is unhappy with  
Buddusky's plan

BUDDUSKY

C'mon, the kid's eighteen and  
never had it. Next chance he  
gets he'll be twenty-six.

They continue to walk. Mule thinks about it.

MULE

(giving in)

Yeah. By that time he might  
not want it anymore. Hey, kid!

102      They walk with Meadows in the middle. He looks  
worried again.

102

                 MEADOWS  
                 ...you mean like right now, huh?  
                 just go ahead and do it.

                 BUDDUSKY  
                 Not this exact minute, but  
                 later on this evening.

They continue to walk. In thoughtful silence.

                 MEADOWS  
                 I think I would...sure. Get  
                 the old ashes hauled.

                 MULE & BUDDUSKY  
                 Ashes hauled?

EXT. BOSTON MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

103      Buddusky buys the tickets.

                 MEADOWS  
                 What about the time?

                 BUDDUSKY  
                 We got the time. We wanna get  
                 there early enough so they're not  
                 too used, but we don't wanna get  
                 there while they're still half  
                 asleep.

They enter the theatre.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

104      Meadows between them. He glances from one to the other.104  
            They are preoccupied with the film.

                 MEADOWS  
                 (to Mule)  
                 We don't even know where the  
                 place is.

                 MULE  
                 We'll find it.

                 MEADOWS  
                 How much will it cost?

104 CONTINUED:

104

MULE

Don't sweat it.

MEADOWS

(to Buddusky)

..well, what do I say to her?

BUDDUSKY

(annoyed)

Whatever you feel like.

MEADOWS

Do they assign you one or do  
you hafta make up your own  
mind?..Bad Ass?

BUDDUSKY

You make up your own mind. The  
U.S. Navy ain't running whorehouses  
yet, now will you shut the fuck up  
I wanna see what this dude's gonna  
do.EXT. BOSTON STREET #2 - NIGHT

105 It has grown dark now. Meadows and Mule stand 105  
shivering while Buddusky, a few feet away, is talking  
to another sailor. Meadows tries to overhear, but can't.  
Buddusky comes back: no luck.

MEADOWS

....we're never gonna get  
there.

BUDDUSKY

Is this the original Bad-Ass  
or is this some candy ass,  
just answer that?

MEADOWS

It's the original Bad Ass.

BUDDUSKY

We're gonna get there.

EXT. BOSTON STREET #3 - NIGHT

106 Mule and Buddusky watch the cabs go by. At this point 106  
they're beginning to look a little worried.

106 CONTINUED:

106

MEADOWS

(freezing)

What're we doing?

Mule ignores him. Another cab pulls up to the stoplight.  
He nudges Buddusky. Buddusky shakes his head.

The cab goes on. They wait and shiver. Finally two cabs  
pull up.

BUDDUSKY

The one with the suede jacket.  
He's the one.

The cab starts to take off. Mule whistles him down.

INT. CAB - MOVING - NIGHT

107 Past the CAB DRIVER to the three in back.

107

BUDDUSKY

Well, partner, how're they  
treating you?

CAB DRIVER

Fine. Where to?

BUDDUSKY

Just down the street here...  
well, hell. Tell you what we  
want - you look honest, can we  
trust you?

Buddusky pauses but the cab driver doesn't answer.

BUDDUSKY

See, we're in transit, the three  
of us and we could sure use the  
services of a decent cathouse...

Driver says nothing.

BUDDUSKY

One that don't hate G.I.'s..

Driver says nothing. Meadows squirms.

BUDDUSKY

Sizeable tip in it for you..

Driver says nothing.

107 CONTINUED:

107

BUDDUSKY

C'mon, mister, I wouldn't press  
it if it wasn't important.

CAB DRIVER

Save your tip - I get it from  
the other end.

He turns a corner.

CAB DRIVER (cont.)

I been in transit a few times  
too. I'm an old minesweep sailor  
myself.

EXT. WHORE HOUSE - NIGHT

108 The cab pulls into the driveway between clumps of  
trees that nearly hide a white house. He drives over  
a service station bell and the single "ding" can be  
heard.

108

After a moment an older WOMAN looks out the window. She  
then opens the front door.

OLDER WOMAN

(to driver)

Hi, Lou, how's the boy?

LOU

Right as rain, Millie. Got a  
few live ones for you.

MILLIE

C'mon in, boys, Navy's always  
welcome here. Welcome aboard.

INT. WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT

109 They follow Millie into a room that's too brightly  
lit. There are seven girls in short-shorts and halters  
who sit in chairs that line the walls.

109

BUDDUSKY

As the blind man said when he  
passed the fish market, 'hello girls.'

MULE

Shhh.

109 CONTINUED:

109

There is now a moment of silence. The "ding" of the departing cab can be heard. After a moment:

BUDDUSKY

Well, Millie, tell you how it is.  
Got a friend here we wanna do a  
favor for. He's going away on  
a trip.

MILLIE

It's just him then?

MULE

Just him.

MILLIE

(a little suggestive)  
What kind of party do you want?

The look to Meadows, who says nothing.

BUDDUSKY

Well, it's his party. You call  
it sailor.

MILLIE

Okay, sailor, take your pick.

BUDDUSKY

Pick a winner, kid..go ahead.

Meadows goes down the line of girls and back again. The girls are not exactly demonstrative. He finally stands before the youngest one. She says nothing, rises, and starts out. Meadows doesn't follow at first. Buddusky intercepts her and presses a bill into her hand.

BUDDUSKY

Make it a good one, baby, it has  
to last a long time.

The girl steals a glance at the bill.

GIRL

(flatly)  
Sure, honey, anything you say.

She gives Buddusky a quick pinch on his ass.

BUDDUSKY

You got a winner, kid.

109 CONTINUED: (2)

109

Meadows follows her out. Buddusky and Mule sit down.

BUDDUSKY

Damned if I wouldn't a picked  
the same one. She's a cute little  
thing. Whatta you think?

MULE

Don't matter to me. They're all  
the wrong color.

BUDDUSKY

Oh come off it. I've had 'em  
in all colors. Don't make any  
difference.

MULE

Maybe to you it don't,  
(he folds his arms across  
his chest)  
- but I got pride.

BUDDUSKY

You giving me a line of shit?

Mule laughs.

MULE

Yeah!

He hits Buddusky on the arm.

INT. BEDROOM - MEADOWS AND GIRL - NIGHT

110 She shuts the door and immediately begins to unbutton  
Meadows' pants. She's expert and the flap falls open  
immediately. Meadows doesn't move. 102

GIRL

Let me check you out, honey.

The light isn't too good.

GIRL

C'mon over here by the sink.

Meadows waddles over because his pants are beginning to drop.  
The girl has turned on the tap and vigorously begun to  
soap up a washcloth. Meadows almost trips over his own

110 CONTINUED:

110

pants. She helps him out of them. Meadows is frozen.  
The girl turns back to finish soaping up the washcloth.  
Then she looks back:

GIRL

Well, you're not gonna have  
a bit of trouble.

INT. WHOREHOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

111 Buddusky and Mule - they have just settled in to talk. 111  
Their mood is one of leisurely reminiscence.

MULE

Oh, I was about eleven or twelve.  
Girl was eighteen.

BUDDUSKY

I was fourteen. In the icehouse.  
I ever tell you about the icehouse?

MULE

No, but it must have been a  
frosty first time.

Mule follows Buddusky's suddenly surprised look to the  
girl who has re-emerged and comes to the edge of the room.  
She beckons to them:

GIRL

Could you c'mere a sec?

They don't know what to make of it. They rise and follow her.

INT. WHOREHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

112 The four of them. Meadows looks disconsolate. He sits 112  
on the bed - his jumper still on, a towel around his  
middle.

GIRL

Look, those are the rules,  
doesn't matter if it's ten  
hours or ten seconds.

BUDDUSKY

Okay, honey, we'll stake him  
to another shot.

MEADOWS

Gee, I'm sorry.

112 CONTINUED:

112

BUDDUSKY

Wanna give it another try?

After a moment, Meadows nods.

BUDDUSKY

Okay, honey.

Mule goes over and pats Meadows on the shoulder.

MULE

Don't worry, kid, plenty  
more where that came from.INT. WHOREHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT113 They enter living room trying to hold their laughter  
down. Buddusky sits.

113

MULE

(standing)

I don't know what you're  
bothering to sit down for.

Buddusky laughs.

BUDDUSKY

He's a pretty good old kid,  
ain't he?

MULE

...yeah he is.

The two look for a moment at each other and don't wish  
to pursue the conversation.

BUDDUSKY

(to other girls)

Hello, ladies.

ONE GIRL

Let's go to a room, sailor.

BUDDUSKY

I can't.

OTHER GIRL

Why not?

BUDDUSKY

I'm saving myself for my wife.

113 CONTINUED:

113

ONE GIRL

Ha, ha. Very funny.

Mule and Buddusky are both seated now...

BUDDUSKY

Well he passed the five minute mark.

MULE

And then some.. you ever been married.

BUDDUSKY

Not so's you'd notice...yeah, once.. little girl out in Torrance, you know where that is?

MULE

(meaning 'no')

Uh-uhh.

BUDDUSKY

On the way to San Pedro, you know Terminal Island..Dottie Brown, she had great tits and used to wear angora sweaters..but..she wanted me to go to trade school and be a TV repair man, you know, run around town in all that smog and shit fixing TV's in one of the V.W. busses..

(long pause)

I just couldn't do that.. how 'bout you, you ever been married?

Mule shakes his head.

MULE

I still support my mama.. I'm the only kid of hers that would... she can't brag enough about me. Tells everybody all the places I go and how many men are under me and all that shit.. yeah, man, I don't know what I woulda done without the Navy.

BUDDUSKY

I guess we're just a coupla lifers.

Mule looks off in the direction of Meadows' bedroom.

113 CONTINUED: (2)

113

MULE

..yeah..

INT. WHOREHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

114 Meadows and the girl are both naked and Meadows is still on top of her. The act is over. Meadows awkwardly tries to kiss her. She turns her head away matter of factly.

114

THE GIRL

No, honey, we don't do that.

MEADOWS

You're not mad?

THE GIRL

(starting to rise)

No, I'm not mad.

MEADOWS

Well where are you going?

THE GIRL

That's it, there ain't no  
more..unless you wanna go again..  
do you?

MEADOWS

Well how was..

THE GIRL

How was what..you're a cherry,  
aren't you?  
(the friendliest she's been)  
I mean you were a cherry.

Meadows nods.

THE GIRL

Well, you got off to a shaky start,  
but after that, you took to it  
like a duck to water.

She pats him on the shoulder and starts to rise.

MEADOWS

Just one thing..I don't know if I  
have enough money to go again,  
but I'll pay you what I have just  
to..just to look at you.

114 CONTINUED:

114

THE GIRL

(suspicious)

Just to what?

MEADOWS

Look at you.

The girl settles back down and eyes Meadows.

THE GIRL

I bet you haven't seen many  
girls with their clothes off,  
have you, honey?

Meadows shakes his head. He stares at her in genuine  
wonder.

THE GIRL

..let me tell you I've got a  
good bod..not great, but pretty  
good..

MEADOWS

..it's beautiful.

She lights a cigarette, and lets him run his hand along  
the curving line of her hip. She smiles at him almost  
absently. Meadows is lost in her body.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

115 Buddusky is shaving and Meadows is talking to him.  
Mule is putting his gear in his bag. Buddusky has  
a slight smile on his face.

115

BUDDUSKY

What'd she say again?

MEADOWS

Let me check you out, honey. I  
swear to God! Like I'm in a gas  
station and she's checking the  
oil. And then -

MULE

Then we know what happened.

MEADOWS

Yeah but after..after..

Meadows pauses.

115 CONTINUED:

115

MEADOWS

..maybe it was an act for her, I mean I know she was a whore, but I think she liked me.

BUDDUSKY

They got feelings like anyone else. She probably did..

MEADOWS

Well for me it was real, and that's what counts, huh?

Buddusky shakes off his razor.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, welcome to the wonderful world of pussy. Sinks yours, kid.

INT. COFFEE SHOP THE THREE

116 Mule and Buddusky are now wearing armbands and sidearms. 116 They're having coffee now and the silence is oppressive. The three are restless and at the same time not looking at each other. Mule reads the paper and shakes his head. Buddusky catches the action.

MULE

(indicating paper)  
Remember that destroyer, the Hummel, got rammed a couple months ago by that Canadian carrier?

BUDDUSKY

(quietly)  
Yeah, shitpot full of the crew got deep-sixed. Thirty some.

MULE

(quietly)  
Thirty-eight. Yeah, they court-martialed the Captain - negligent, dereliction of duty..sentenced him to a reprimand.

BUDDUSKY

(quietly)  
Poor dude - ain't gonna be easy getting a decent table at the Officers' Club.

116 CONTINUED:

116

MULE  
(quietly)  
Not for a few weeks.

EXT. BOSTON STREET

117 The three stand for a moment. There's snow on the ground, but the sky is clear and sunny. They breathe deep.

117

BUDDUSKY  
You don't hafta get there 'til  
1800.. But to Portsmouth only  
takes about an hour and a half.

MULE  
We could go see a movie or two.

BUDDUSKY  
Get a coupla six-packs maybe.

MULE  
Shit fire, if you wanna we could  
even go back to the cathouse.

MEADOWS  
(finally)  
No, I did everything one time,  
so that makes that one time stick  
out, know what I mean?

BUDDUSKY  
(nods)  
Yeah.

They walk on a bit.

BUDDUSKY  
Sure is a nice day.

MULE  
It is.

MEADOWS  
Yeah it is. If it was summer  
we could maybe have a picnic.

They move on a few more steps.

117 CONTINUED:

117

BUDDUSKY

Hell, there's nothin' saying  
we can't.

MULE

Can't what?

BUDDUSKY

Have a picnic!

EXT. HYDE PARK - DAY - LONG

118 It's sparsely dotted with evergreens and blanketed with 118  
snow. The three struggle up a slippery incline, carrying  
hotdogs, onions, mustard, pretzels and beer in brown  
paper bags that are splitting because of the pressure of  
their AWOL bags on top.

CLOSER ANGLE

It is apparent that all three are freezing cold. Mule  
stops and massages his legs. His bag splits open and  
groceries spill into the snow. He swears.

MULE

Fuckin' bag split..my fuckin'  
gonads are frozen.

Nobody answers. Meadows bends down to help him with the  
groceries and his bag splits open too. Buddusky looks on  
for a moment. Then:

BUDDUSKY

There's a fireplace thing up there  
on the level. We can build a  
fire and warm up.

The two continue picking groceries out of the snow.

119 FIREPLACE LEVEL

119

They are gathering up a few sticks of firewood and  
trying to break them over their knees. The wood is green  
and they have a hard time breaking them.

BUDDUSKY

Fuckin' wood's too green.

They try jumping on the sticks to break them.

120

CLOSE FIREPLACE

120

with a pile of wood that's smoking, not really

120 CONTINUED:

120

catching fire because it's too fresh.

BUDDUSKY

Fuckin' wood's too fuckin' green.

Mule's hotdog drops off his stick and into the sputtering flames. He goes to pick it up and burns his hand.

121 BUDDUSKY

121

sits on a couple of evergreen branches and pops the tops on a couple of beer cans. He hands them to Meadows and Mule. Mule holds his burnt hotdog and rummages around in the grocery bag.

BUDDUSKY

What're you lookin' for?

MULE

Buns.

BUDDUSKY

- I forgot 'em.

MULE

(vaguely hostile)  
You forgot the buns?

BUDDUSKY

(hostile himself)  
Yeah.

MULE

How can you eat a hotdog without a bun?

Nobody answers.

MULE

You can't eat a hotdog without a bun..hotdog's not hotdog without a bun.

BUDDUSKY

Then don't eat the fucking hotdog.

Meadows has spread mustard on his and relish, which spills off into the snow. He takes a bite.

MEADOWS

It ain't bad.

122 CLOSE BUDDUSKY 122  
looking over the snowfield, sipping on a beer. Meadows  
is below toying with a stick in the snow. He tries to  
snap it. It doesn't break.

Mule comes up from the fire to Buddusky.

123 ANGLE ON MULE AND BUDDUSKY 123  
with Meadows below. Buddusky doesn't look around.

BUDDUSKY  
Kinda like being at sea here..  
I was on a weathership off Greenland  
once..right in the middle of winter.

MULE  
How was it?

BUDDUSKY  
I like sea duty..kid's come a  
long way in the last few days,  
ain't he?

MULE  
Yeah.

BUDDUSKY  
He don't stand a chance at Portsmouth,  
you know that, don't you? Goddam  
grunts beatin' the shit out of him  
for eight years..kid don't stand  
a chance.

MULE  
I don't wanna hear about it.

BUDDUSKY  
Maggot this..maggot that..Marines  
are real assholes, you know that?  
It takes a certain kind of sadistic  
temperament to be a Marine, you  
know that?

124 MEADOWS 124  
has picked up another stick. He begins to chant softly,  
holding the stick and looking at it. When the chant builds  
up he tries again to break the stick over his knee. It  
breaks. He looks up to Buddusky and Mule

125 MULE &amp; BUDDUSKY

125

MULE

(not moving)  
Let's get this over with.

BUDDUSKY

(not moving)  
Yeah.

Buddusky rises and goes over to get another hotdog. He starts to put one on the stick when he spots another one, burnt, lying in the snow.

BUDDUSKY

Hey, Mule.

MULE

What?

BUDDUSKY

You dropped somethin'. Maybe  
you better stuff it back in your  
pants before it freezes.

He tosses it over his head to Mule. Mule picks it up,  
packs some snow around it.

MULE

Well now, this couldn't be mine..  
it ain't a bit bigger than that  
little pink weenie of yours.

He throws it at Buddusky hitting him flush in the back.

BUDDUSKY

(picking it up)

Meadows!

He hits Meadows with it. All three spreading out, packing  
snowballs and firing them at each other.

Mule and Buddusky and Meadows begin to laugh and take cover  
to scoop up some quick ammunition.

Suddenly Mule and Buddusky realize they are fighting alone.  
They head for where Meadows took cover and he's not there.

They look off, past a clump of evergreens and see that  
Meadows is running.

BUDDUSKY

Meadows..Meadows..Meadows!

125 CONTINUED:

125

Meadows stops abruptly. He turns and signals Buddusky.

MULE

What does he think he's doin'?

BUDDUSKY

Bravo Yankee, Bravo Yankee..  
son-of-a-bitch, he's running away!

MEADOWS RUNNING

chanting now as he struggles through knee high snow,  
"Nam Myoho, Renge-Kyo, Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo."

WITH BUDDUSKY & MULE RUNNING

MULE

(frantic)

Get him, get him, get the  
motherfucker.

Buddusky puffing and running begins to pull ahead of Mule

BUDDUSKY

Meadows! Meadows!

MEADOWS

runs and chants

WITH BUDDUSKY

as he runs he draws the .45. The key from the handcuffs  
that Buddusky thought Meadows might have stolen falls into  
the snow. Mule spots it. As Buddusky runs he has the  
ammo clip in one hand and rams it into the .45

BUDDUSKY

Meadows, halt!..halt you  
son-of-a-bitch, halt.

Buddusky loses a shoe. He keeps running, furious.

BUDDUSKY

(barely audible)

I lost my shoe, I lost my shoe,  
I lost my fucking goddam shoe..

It appears as if Meadows is out front and going to get away.  
Buddusky starts to take aim.

MULE

Buddusky! No!

125 CONTINUED: (2)

125

Buddusky looks to Mule, then back to Meadows, who suddenly disappears from view.

126 WITH MEADOWS

126

tumbling down into a hidden gulley. He pulls himself to his feet. He still tries to chant, gets momentarily confused about what direction he was running in. He starts up the same slope he had fallen down and runs into Buddusky who hurls himself onto Meadows.

They fall in a heap on the side of the slope.

MEADOWS

(screaming)

Let me go! Let me go! I want  
to go! .. I want to go, I want to  
get out of here!..please, God,  
let me go!

Buddusky hears only the hysterical screaming and has a hard time trying to hold Meadows down. Meadows slips his grip and actually starts down the slope again screaming.

Buddusky leaps on him and cracks him across the head with the .45. Blood appears on Meadows' head and in the snow.

BUDDUSKY

You son-of-a-bitch, shut up!  
Shut up! Shut up!

Buddusky starts beating Meadows, who continues to scream. Mule is finally there and tries to pull Buddusky off.

MULE

You got him! You got him!  
You got him!

BUDDUSKY

I lost my shoe, I lost my shoe,  
I lost my fucking shoe!

EXT. PORTSMOUTH STREET - DAY

127

The bus pulls up outside Portsmouth prison. Buddusky and Mule pull their unwilling prisoner off the bus. Meadows is a mess. Blood is dried on his scalp and still streaks his bruised face. The handcuffs are on him. The two pull him toward the prison entrance. He tries to resist.

127

128 MOVING SHOT ACROSS THE PRISON COMPOUND  
The three follow an immaculate Marine Corporal who  
doesn't look behind him.

128

Meadows still tries to resist and is chanting loudly  
now. Buddusky and Mule have to hold him up.

BUDDUSKY

Will you shut up, will you please  
shut up?

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - DAY

129 They move down a hall toward the OOD's office. Meadows 129  
is out of control and still chanting. As they reach the  
entrance a Marine sergeant looks up from his desk.

SERGEANT

You can't report with him in there  
like that. Baker, Mooney. Prisoner  
from Norfolk, on the double.

Two hefty guards move down the hall toward them.

SERGEANT

Jesus Christ, what did you do  
to him?

Meadows stops chanting. The two guards arrive and start  
to pull him away from Mule and Buddusky.

As the three part - there is one moment of silent exchange  
between them. They look at each other and for this moment  
Meadows seems calm - all three seem like they want to say  
something reassuring to one another. Then Meadows is  
hustled away.

INT. OOD'S OFFICE - DAY

130 The corporal stands behind the OOD, a young Marine 130  
officer, who is seated at a desk. Buddusky and Mule  
stand at attention in front of the desk.

BUDDUSKY

(strained)

First Class Petty Officers Buddusky  
and Mulhall sir, reporting as ordered  
with Seaman Meadows, a prisoner.

130 CONTINUED:

130

OOD

(acidly)

Yes I saw the prisoner.

OOD looks back at the orders, then up again at the two sailors. The OOD takes his time. He is, even for a marine, immaculate - he should be the most immaculate military figure in the film. His short hair fairly bristles when he rises. He deliberately completes a circle around the two sailors.

OOD

Stand at ease.

The two stand at ease - a posture between attention and at ease. The OOD continues to look them up and down.

OOD

You are a couple of piss poor chasers Buddusky, are you aware of that? Piss poor. Mulhall are you aware of that fact?

MULHALL

What fact?

OOD

What fact sir.

MULHALL

What fact sir?

OOD

(right in his ear)

That you are piss fucking poor.  
- answer me sailor.

MULHALL

No sir - I was not aware of that fact.

OOD

Well you are now, aren't you?  
Aren't you Buddusky?

Buddusky's face has grown redder and redder. Mule has cast anxious glances in his direction, clearly fearing another outburst of violence from Buddusky.

130 CONTINUED:

130

BUDDUSKY

.. I'm aware that you say so..sir.

The OOD nods, aware that Buddusky is trying to avoid capitulating completely. The OOD stands there a moment trying to size Buddusky up, possibly gauging by just how much he wants to humiliate him. Buddusky has begun to tremble. The marine notices it.

OOD

I see you're a signalman, Buddusky..  
I realize that shore patrol duty is not your permanent mos but where do you get the idea that strapping on an armband and a sidearm entitles you to abuse the prisoner? Where? Do they teach you that in the Navy? Or was that your idea of a good time.

Buddusky is shaking more now. The OOD is inches from his face.

BUDDUSKY

I guess..

OOD

(aching for him to do something)  
You guess what sailor? What?

BUDDUSKY

..nothing..

OOD

..nothing?..

BUDDUSKY

..nothing..sir...

OOD

(quickly, to Mule)  
Did the prisoner offer any resistance?

MULE

No sir.

130 CONTINUED:

130

OOD  
(back to Buddusky)  
Did he try to escape?

BUDDUSKY  
- not exactly.

OOD  
That's a little vague Buddusky,  
either he did or he didn't.  
Which is it?

Buddusky glances uneasily at Mule.

OOD  
You don't have to look at him  
for the answer Buddusky, or maybe  
you do.

BUDDUSKY  
He didn't.

OOD  
He didn't what?

BUDDUSKY  
He didn't try to escape.

OOD  
He didn't try to escape sir.

BUDDUSKY  
He didn't try to escape sir.

The OOD goes back to the orders. He looks at them.

OOD  
You haven't left yet.

MULE  
Sir?

OOD  
Your orders weren't endorsed when  
you left, so according to this you're  
still in Norfolk.

130 CONTINUED:

130

MULE

Well we're standing here.

OOD

Yes, but you haven't left yet.

BUDDUSKY

That's not our fault our orders weren't endorsed..sir...

OOD

Yes, but you haven't left..

MULE

Look, both of us have a lot of time in Captain..

OOD

What's that supposed to mean...

MULE

Too much time to be hard-assed because some dude in Norfolk forgot to endorse our order .. sir.

OOD

You're asking for trouble, sailor.

MULE

I'm asking to see the XO.

OOD

Deep trouble.

BUDDUSKY

No, we ain't about to say anything more until we can see the XO.

OOD

What makes you think the XO can be bothered?

(he endorses orders)

Now get the hell out of here.

BUDDUSKY

You're supposed to pull a few copies.

130 CONTINUED:

130

Furious, the OOD pulls his copies.

OOD

I hope I see you two again.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH NAVAL PRISON

131 Buddusky and Mule move quickly out the side entrance, 131  
Buddusky red-faced.

BUDDUSKY

Goddam grunts, they think they  
can get away with anything..

MULE

..yeah..

BUDDUSKY

Telling me my job, I know my job.  
I know my job better than any goddam  
body in the goddam Navy, goddam grunts..

MULE

..yeah..

BUDDUSKY

..well, we told that son of a bitch,  
didn't we? Reaming our ass all over  
the joint and he don't even know enough  
to pull copies - bunch a candy asses.

Buddusky sounds a little out of breath. He pauses at  
the corner. For the first time he looks directly at  
Mule, breathing heavily.

MULE

(quietly)

- I hate this chickenshit mother-  
fucking chickenshit goddam detail.

The two stare at each other for a long moment. Then they  
look away, each inadvertantly gazing down opposite ends  
of the street. Until the very last exchange they don't  
look at each other.

131 CONTINUED:

131

BUDDUSKY

So where you goin'?

MULE

Norfolk. .

BUDDUSKY

I mean now.

MULE

Don't know - stop off in  
Baltimore maybe. You?

BUDDUSKY

Go back to New York.

There's a sticky pause. They look at each other.

MULE

Well, see you in Norfolk.

BUDDUSKY

Yeah, maybe our orders came thru.

They walk away from each other.

THE END