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# Pride of the Marines

By Albert Maltz

turner entertainment group

**man, voice-over:**

This is philadelphia, 1941.  
Everybody's got a hometown.  
This one's mine.  
My name is schmid.  
Al schmid.  
Maybe you've heard of me,  
maybe not.  
Anyhow, one way or another,  
what i've got to tell you  
starts here in philly.  
I grew up here.  
Used to go to places  
like independence hall.  
That's where  
the liberty bell is,  
and where the declaration  
of independence was signed.  
When i went to school,  
we used to visit the museums  
and famous places  
like constitution hall.  
Our first congress met  
right here at tun tavern,  
where the u. s. Marines  
were founded back in 1775.  
And this is where  
betsy ross lived.  
You heard about her, i guess.  
She made the first  
american flag.  
None of these things meant  
a whole lot to me then.  
When you grow up with something,  
you kind of take it for granted.  
And the reason you're  
seeing these places now  
is just because this  
is where my story begins.  
But it could have  
begun anywhere.  
It could have begun

in your hometown maybe.  
And what happened to me  
might have happened to you.  
Hey, look what i got.  
Say, what's the idea?  
What are the flowers for?  
Somebody kick the bucket?  
No. First bouquet  
i ever bought for a gal in my life,  
and they're for  
your wife.  
Say, what are you doing?  
I got tired  
of buying batteries.  
I'm hooking this up  
to the house circuit.  
What do you know  
about electricity?  
Nothing, but it  
ought to work.  
Might set  
the house afire.  
Short circuit.  
Where's ella mae?  
Cooking.  
On your anniversary?  
It was her idea.

**Girl:**

Hi, loretta.  
Those flowers for me?  
Nope. For your  
hard-working mom, honey.  
Gee willikers.  
If anybody ever  
gave me flowers,  
i'd fall flat  
on my face.  
Mrs. Merchant,  
when a star boarder  
buys a bunch of posies for his landlady,  
you know  
she's a swell gal.  
Happy anniversary.

Al...  
the only couple  
i know that are happy though married.  
One of these days,  
you'll be bringing flowers  
home to a wife  
of your own.  
Then there'll be  
two happy couples.  
I live alone and like it.  
You live alone  
and look it.  
Wait till  
you live double.  
It's more fun.  
Aw, those flowers  
are beautiful, al. Thanks.  
Now you better  
get ready for dinner.  
Come on, al,  
let's go get shaved.  
Ok.  
I should have thought  
of that myself.  
What do you shave for, al?  
Oh, to make me handsome.  
I think you're  
handsome already.  
I think you're beautiful.  
Do you like girls, al?  
I sure do.  
When did you first  
start liking girls?  
Well, when i found out  
they weren't boys.  
Well, if you like girls,  
how do you know you're  
gonna be a bachelor?  
'Cause i ain't gonna  
ever get married. Ever.  
I wish i could shave, too.  
Oh, that's easy.  
Here. Sit right here.  
Slap on the soap.

Feels good.  
It tickles!  
Now lift your head.  
Al, ma says she knows  
lots of legible girls.  
Yeah, i know that already.  
Mom can get almost  
anybody married, pop says.  
That's why she invites  
all those girls here to meet you.  
Ma says someday you're  
gonna get hooked.  
Not me.  
If i do, i won't be  
a bachelor anymore, see?  
I'll tell you a secret  
if you give me a big kiss.  
You know, i am  
gonna get married.  
Honest?  
Mm-hmm.  
When?  
Oh, 5, 6 years from now.  
To me?  
Mm-hmm.  
Oh, you wouldn't  
really marry me.  
Honest to pete, i would.  
Oh, gee!  
I'll always remember  
the first time i shaved,  
you did it.  
I put my car  
in the garage.  
Wouldn't you know it?  
It rained on my anniversary.  
Never in all my born  
days did i ever see a prettier table.  
Candles and everything.  
Oh, those flowers  
are beautiful, al.  
You do know the way  
to a woman's heart.  
You know,

the funniest thing happened today.  
I ran into a girl  
i used to know.  
Pretty as a picture.  
Nice manners, and she's  
a good bowler, too.  
Ruth bowled 500.  
300 is tops.  
What's the extra 200  
for, good behavior?  
Maybe. I don't know  
anything about bowling.  
Ella mae, stop being  
mrs. Cupid, will you?  
Ditch the bow and arrow.  
Girls are great  
for laughs,  
like those silly hats  
they wear.  
Don't bring  
any new girls around here, please.  
Well, anyway, she's  
a wonderful bowler.  
Hey!  
You blew a fuse, jim!

**Jim:**

I fix something,  
then everything  
goes black.

**Loretta:**

the lights are out!

**Jim:**

i know they're out.  
You're sure  
a great electrician.  
Thanks for  
the compliment.

**Ella mae:**

the lights went out!

**Jim:**

i know it?

Did you ring the bell?

Yes, and sparks  
flew out.

We blew a fuse.

Don't the merchants  
live here anymore?

Yeah, i'm al schmid.

I board here.

I suppose your name  
is ruth.

How did you know?

Ella mae was te...

it's silly for you

to be standing out there.

Come on in.

**Jim:**

Where's the stairway?

Hi, ruth.

Gotta find some fuses.

Why don't you

take that thing off before it flies away?

Hat. Hat.

**Ella mae:**

something's burning on the stove,  
and i can't see  
a thing.

**Jim:**

and sit.

Where's ella mae?

The kitchen. Have a sofa.

**Loretta:**

a waste basket, daddy!

**Jim:**

Ella mae and i used to  
work in the same office.

Jim and i, we work

in the same factory.

That must be nice.

Yeah.

**Loretta:**

into the door, daddy!

**Ella mae:**

know what you're doing?

Of course i know

what i'm doing! I'm fixing it!

Ouch!

**Loretta:**

get a shock, daddy?

**Ella mae:**

in the fuse.

I just got a shock taking

a penny out of the fuse!

Don't let anybody

ring the doorbell.

You see how simple it is?

They have a lovely home,

haven't they?

I suppose you'd like one  
yourself someday.

Well, yes, someday i'd  
like a home of my own.

I thought so.

On the installment plan.

Most couples

start out that way.

Hmm. They sure do.

The flowers are nice.

So many of them, it's  
almost like a wedding.

A wedding? Oh, boy,

that's a hot one.

You're way ahead on

your installments, sister.

Hi, ruth.

Well, you two are

good friends already.

Yep. I feel



as if i met her dozens of times.  
Well, isn't that nice?  
Come on upstairs, ruth.  
Stuck a pin  
in the doorbell.  
What gives?  
Ella mae has got to  
stop picking out girls for me to marry.  
I'm fed up. I just  
can't take it anymore.  
She doesn't mean  
to be a nuisance, al.  
It's just kind of  
a disease with her.  
I'm gonna cure her.  
Tonight.  
Bowls 500.  
What's the score?  
You've got 220.  
Ruth's got 40.  
Bowls 500, does she?  
How much longer  
does that poor girl have to take this?  
He's making her feel  
like a monkey.  
Not that he isn't  
enjoying himself.  
Every once in a while  
those pins act like they're nailed down.  
He's using her  
to tell you off.  
That's what you think.  
Jim, what are you doing?  
I'm gonna fix  
this gadget.  
It's out of focus.  
You'll do no such thing.  
Yeah, but...  
you'll be sued. Now,  
put that toolkit away.  
Put that toolkit away.  
Yes, dear.  
You know, i figured out  
what's wrong.

This alley must be warped.  
So is your sense  
of humor.  
Hey, what do you say  
we drop over to webber's  
and schlup up  
a few beers, huh?  
Aw, but ruthie hasn't  
hit her stride yet.  
Aw, come on, al.  
She wants to get  
her game going, don't you, ruthie?  
Yes. I'd enjoy  
another game.  
Well, come on, dear.  
Good night, kids.  
Have a good time.  
Good night.  
Good night, all.

**Ruth:**

Thanks for dinner.  
You be good.  
Well, champ,  
start bowling.  
You know, i think  
there's something wrong with the way i play.  
You don't mean it.  
I'd be terribly grateful  
if you'd show me how you do it.  
Well, i'll tell you,  
it takes a long time  
to learn.  
Not with a wonderful  
bowler like you to teach me.  
Well, uh...  
well, um, you, um,  
bring the ball all the way  
back like this...  
now i see where all  
your power comes from.  
And then you let it go  
like that.  
Oh, i'm so sorry,

but the way you moved  
your legs was so graceful,  
i forgot to watch  
your grip on the ball.  
Oh. Like this.  
And that little step  
you do...  
is that one  
of your secrets for success?  
Oh, well,  
that was a mistake.  
You made a mistake?  
I was a little nervous.  
You, al schmid, nervous?  
Now, look, are you  
gonna try what i just showed you?  
I could never do  
that cute little step.  
Now you're angry.  
I'm not angry!  
Either put the ball down  
or throw it.  
I didn't say on my foot!  
I missed your foot.  
By 1/4 of an inch.  
How would you feel if...  
from the way you've  
been acting tonight,  
i didn't think you knew  
what feelings were.  
See here, this wanting  
to bowl was just a gag?  
Now, don't spoil things  
by acting intelligent.  
Are you trying to make  
a monkey out of me?  
It wasn't hard.  
You're not very bright.  
Is that right?  
Now maybe you know  
how i've been feeling all evening,  
thanks to you.  
Thanks to me?  
Who asked you on this date? Not me.

You cooked it up  
yourself with ella mae  
so you could hook  
yourself a husband.  
You wanted me  
to cooperate.  
Well, i didn't.  
I'm no dummy.  
When i take out  
a dame... look out!  
I don't know what  
you expected from this date, mr. Schmid,  
but i certainly  
didn't expect you.  
Ella mae said there'd  
just be jim and her.  
And as far  
as i'm concerned,  
i've spent a dreary evening  
with an awful drip.  
Good-bye.  
Hi, ruth.  
Ride you home?  
Go away.  
But our little boy  
is sick, ruth.  
He keeps crying  
for you.  
You can't desert him  
like this.  
Stop being a clown  
and go away.  
But he didn't sleep  
all last night.  
He kept crying, "mommy,  
dear! Mommy, dear!"  
It's all right if you  
don't love me anymore,  
but you can't desert  
an innocent boy.  
You ought to be ashamed  
of yourself.  
It's all nonsense.  
I don't even know him.

Young man,  
is this just a pickup?  
Does she look like  
she don't know me?  
Or do i have to go as far  
as to tell you  
she happens to have  
a mole on her...  
excuse me.  
Take my advice,  
young woman.  
You'll go home  
to your child.  
Go on, sister.  
Go home to your kid.  
Probably crying  
its head off.  
It's all right.  
It's got two of them.  
Two heads.  
Imagine that.  
You know, you acted  
just like you didn't like my looks.  
Oh, you're not  
so bad-looking.  
You'd say so, even if  
you didn't think so.  
You'd think so,  
even if i didn't say so.  
Why don't you answer  
the phone sometime?  
I do. Depends on  
who's at the other end.  
You know, i struck up  
quite a friendship with your uncle ralph,  
except he's a little  
too old to date.  
Try harder.  
He won't hook you.  
I'm apologizing, see?  
How about if we  
throw away the rest of the cards  
and start with  
a new deck, huh?

How about you keeping  
your eyes on the road?  
Would you mind driving  
a little faster?  
It's my birthday tomorrow,  
and i have a dinner date  
to celebrate it tonight.  
You got a date  
to celebrate tonight for tomorrow?  
It don't make sense.  
Does it have to?  
Why are you slowing down?  
It feels like my left  
rear needs some air.  
If you stop, i walk.  
I guess i was wrong  
about my left rear.  
Is that your date  
waiting for you in front of your house?  
Yes, it is.  
Hey, what's the idea?  
What's the matter?  
Didn't you see my car?  
See it? I hit it, didn't i?  
Who are you?  
Al schmid. You want to  
make something of it?  
Don't stay out too late,  
sweetheart.  
I'll be back at 10:30.  
What makes men  
do such crazy things?  
Women!  
Uncle ralph!  
Is that the doorbell?  
Uncle ralph!  
Uncle ralph!

**It's 10:**

Happy birthday tomorrow.  
Can i interest you in  
a whirlwind courtship?  
Say, any loose  
bowling balls around here?

Uh-uh. Don't say it.  
What girl wants to  
stay home on the night before her birthday?  
You don't have to  
worry about me.  
I've got plenty  
of boyfriends.  
Then i'll start at  
the bottom of the list  
and work myself up  
to number one man.  
You start going with me,  
and you're liable to get hooked.  
Stop throwing that hook  
at me, will you?  
After tonight,  
if you still don't want any part of me,  
i'll... i'll leave  
philadelphia.  
I'm going to bed.  
How about celebrating  
your birthday tomorrow  
with me  
and something special,  
like going  
to the fights?  
Save that  
for your birthday.  
Ice hockey?  
Roller skating?  
Oh, i get it.  
You either want  
to exercise or see other people exercise.  
Oh, don't get me  
wrong, ruth.  
I'll do anything  
you say.  
Like going hunting?  
Believe me, ruthie,  
there's nothing like it  
when the weather  
is cool and crisp  
and frost is in the air.  
You're glad to be alive,

and, oh, it feels good  
to smell those autumn leaves burning.  
You can hear  
the coon dogs running.  
Honest, it's great.  
Hi, ruth!  
Coffee perkin'?  
It's on the fire.  
If it gets cold again,  
why, we'll keep warm.  
We've got plenty  
of wood.  
Boy, when i get out in  
the country like this,  
i don't know why i ever  
came back to the city.  
Why did you?  
After my ma died,  
my old man got married again, see,  
so i hit the road.  
Where's the corn?  
Right there.  
I was just a kid,  
but i could take it.  
How old were you when  
you started to work?  
That's kind of young  
to be on your own, isn't it?  
How about you?  
Oh, i like it.  
I like to live  
independent.  
Even if the money  
ain't much.  
At the end of that year  
i saved 8 bucks.  
Right now  
i'm sitting pretty.  
S burner  
at the foundry.  
Making 40 bucks a week,  
trying hard  
to spend it all.  
You want to help me



spend it?  
Easy come, easy go, hmm?  
Easy come nothing.  
It's hard work.  
What's the use of making  
dough if you can't have any fun out of it?  
You might save some  
for a rainy day.  
What rainy day?  
Ain't gonna be any.  
I got it all arranged.  
Every day is gonna be  
sunday in summer.  
No responsibilities,  
no worries,  
no waiting around  
on women.  
Real rugged, aren't you?  
You know what?  
No, what?  
You're the best girl  
i ever took any place.  
You know what i like  
about you?  
I can't imagine.  
I like the way  
you stand up to me.  
I like  
the way you curl up in the car seat.  
I like the way you don't  
jabber all the time and you sit quiet.  
I like the way you laugh  
at my corny jokes.  
I like the way  
you listen.  
I like it when you  
say you're gonna do something, you do it,  
and you don't make up  
a lot of silly excuses.  
Silly excuses about what?  
Oh, about going out.  
I didn't think  
you would.  
Look where we are.

That's the second time you've  
kissed me without warning.  
You want a warning  
next time?  
Like what?  
Oh, something like hello.  
That's a fair enough  
warning.  
Hello.  
You brown-eyed devil.  
Jim, what in heaven's name  
are you doing?  
I'm fixing the radio.  
It just so happens  
that the adjuster case  
and stud for  
the oscillator coil  
are too close to  
the 5-point female plug for the speaker cable.  
What does that mean?  
It means the beginning  
of the end of our radio.  
This thing snores.  
Ah ha ha.  
Ha ha.  
Have a rug  
with the boyfriend.  
This prince valiant,  
oh, he's a real rugged fella.  
Here, have a comic.

**Jim:**

for two weeks in canada now, huntin' bear.  
Let's go. I'm ready.  
Oh, no, not with  
my responsibilities.  
Dinner's almost ready.  
Jim, call loretta.  
5 bucks it works.  
I haven't got 5 bucks.  
Jim and ella mae  
have picked out  
their favorite joint  
for new year's eve.

Want to come with me,  
or should i look up  
in my address book  
and find some good-looking dame?  
Suit yourself.  
You know, uh,  
come to think of it,  
i don't have any other  
boyfriends anymore.  
That's not so good.  
What's wrong with me?  
So you want a new crop  
of boyfriends.  
I didn't say i did.  
All right,  
if that's the way you feel about it.  
Maybe you won't have  
to put up with me so long.  
I kind of feel  
the moss under me.  
Soon as i get  
a neat little pile in the bank,  
i'm gonna  
pull up stakes, go to canada,  
spend the whole year  
huntin' and fishin'.  
Want to come?  
When the time comes,  
ask me and see.  
I always told you  
i was a rolling stone.  
You're not surprised,  
are you?  
No.

**Radio announcer:**

A report has just come in  
that the japanese  
have bombed pearl harbor.  
We have no further  
information at present,  
but more bulletins  
are coming in over the wires.  
Where's

pearl harbor?  
I don't know.  
I was never good  
at geography.  
You want  
to come with me new year's eve?  
I might,  
if you ask me nice.  
Oh.

**Loretta:**

Once upon a time,  
he told me he was gonna marry me  
when we were shaving.  
Fine thing.  
I think we're  
both out of luck, loretta.  
He'll probably end up  
happily married to a shotgun  
and having a romance  
on the side with his fishing tackle.  
Well,  
there's nothing wrong with a shotgun wedding  
if it's  
your own shotgun.  
Jim, where's  
pearl harbor?  
Pearl harbor?  
Oh, it's down the jersey coast,  
near atlantic city  
someplace.  
Can't be,  
the japs are bombing it.  
I know where  
pearl harbor is.  
We had it  
in geography.  
Aw, it's one of those  
men from mars programs.  
The japs just  
got through telling roosevelt they love us.

**Radio announcer:**

We interrupt this program

with news of grave importance  
to every american.

Look.

War broke with  
lightning suddenness in the pacific today.

Doesn't it  
smell good? Shh!

Without warning,  
waves of japanese planes  
attacked hawaii  
this morning.

Bombers blasted  
at pearl harbor,  
at the city  
of honolulu.

The initial attacks caused  
widespread damage and death.

Full reports  
have not yet come in,  
but one thing  
is already certain:

The united states is at war  
with japan.

Stand by.

Dinner's ready.

War...

what do you know?

Are you going  
to war, daddy?

Are you gonna  
be a soldier?

Come on and sit down.

The roast will get cold.

We're at war,  
honey.

The united states  
is at war.

Yes, dear,  
i know,

but the roast  
will get cold.

Now, come on  
and start carving.

Yes, dear.

Are you gonna be  
a soldier, al?  
Ah, i'm going to canada,  
shoot bear.  
Leg of lamb, mmm.  
Boy, oh, boy, that  
smells wonderful, ella mae.  
It's about time  
somebody said that.  
I hope you two are  
going with us new year's eve.  
It's that little  
chop suey place.  
The management likes  
to have us come on new year's.  
Says we add class  
to the joint.  
Jim and me got engaged there...  
oh, i forgot the candles.  
Oh, here you are.  
Why, i'm the best  
little candle lighter in philadelphia.  
You know, i bet it would  
be more fun shootin' japs than bears.  
Hiya, joe.  
Hi, al.  
Hiya, scott. Hi.  
Hey!  
Where you been?  
Downtown,  
joining the marines.  
Ah, baloney,  
they'd never take you.  
Aw, is that so?  
Take a look  
at this.  
United states  
marine corp.  
Say, that's  
pretty good.  
Happy new year!  
Happy new year!  
Happy new year!  
Haa ha.

You know,  
you gotta be real rugged  
to get in  
the marines.  
First to land  
first to fight.  
They turned down  
4 guys in front of me.  
Yeah,  
the marines aren't takin' everybody.  
I walked in,  
they took my pulse,  
eyes, ears, nose,  
throat.  
I coughed.  
Raised my hand.  
Slapped me on the back.  
I'm a u. s. Marine.  
Well, that was fast.  
Took 4 hours.  
How come they  
held up the war  
to let you  
keep our date?  
Oh, i just  
described you to them, sweetheart.  
A picture of the  
macarthur  
when he hears  
al schmid's in the marines.  
War's over.  
Ruth, how do you think  
you're gonna like al in a uniform?  
Don't expect i'll  
see enough of him to tell.  
As soon as i  
get on the train,  
ruthie's gonna get  
herself a new batch of boyfriends.  
Aren't you, ruthie?  
Yup, one for every night  
of the week.  
We kind of made  
a little agreement for tonight.

No getting  
soft-hearted.  
Isn't that right?  
That's right.  
Boy, oh, boy.  
7 more hours before my train leaves.  
Kind of  
gettin' excited.  
Hurray for  
the u. s. Marines!  
On your feet,  
miss hartley.  
Jim?  
Hmm?  
Do you suppose  
he's gonna propose?  
Search me.  
I kind of thought maybe  
he'd do like you did here,  
when you asked me.  
Maybe he isn't  
as smart as i was.  
You know, ruthie,  
i been thinkin'.  
Yes, al?  
The only japs i ever seen  
were at atlantic city,  
where you throw the ball  
and win a kewpie doll,  
and it gets broke  
before you get it home.  
Those japs always  
were snikey.  
Yep, shootin' japs  
oughta be more fun than...  
shootin' bear?  
Yeah.  
You don't figure  
they could shoot you.  
Me? Well, what have  
they got against me?

**Man:**

Happy new year!



Ruthie, i...  
i want a kiss that'll last me for the duration.  
You got one  
like that?  
I'll do  
my darndest.  
Hello.

**Crowd:**

of auld lang syne  
for auld lang syne...  
happy new year,  
darling.  
Happy new year.  
For auld lang syne  
we'll take a cup...

**al:**

The marines'll get every one  
of those islands back.

**Jim:**

one of the marines, huh?

**Al:**

to be there when it happens.

**Ella mae:**

want to take an extra minute  
saying good-bye,  
jim'll keep me warm.

**Al:**

Gotta pack, still, you know.

**Ella mae:**

Call me tomorrow, ruthie.

**Ruthie:**

**Jim:**

I don't know whether  
to ask you to sit down, or what.  
I, uh, i gotta

pack, sweetie.  
You packed that trunk  
10 times already tonight.  
It's not a trunk.  
It's just one of those little...  
i know.  
Kind of exciting  
being a marine  
going off to war,  
isn't it, al?  
Yeah.  
Well, i guess  
if i were a man,  
i'd join  
the marines, too.  
I'm glad  
you're not a man.  
Why?  
Why do you think?  
I'm not thinking  
very much right now.  
Honey, i, uh...  
well, there's  
a lot of things i'd like to say,  
but i don't know  
how to say them,  
so, uh,  
i'll just cut it down to good-bye.  
I'd like to see you off  
at the train.  
I don't want you  
to stay up that late.  
I'm not tired.  
No.  
All right, al, if that's  
the way you want it.  
It's better  
that way.  
You know, i'm...  
i'm not much good  
at letter writing.  
I'll bet you're not.  
Anything i want to say,  
i'd better say now.

I know i've been kind of  
monopolizing your time  
the last couple  
of months.  
L... i want you to get  
back into circulation.  
Have fun.  
You don't have to  
worry about me.  
Sure... isn't as if  
anything was said between us.  
That's right.  
Can't tell.  
Things may be different.  
Sure.  
Well, i, uh...  
hello.  
You've been fun,  
sweetheart.  
You've been fun,  
too, al.

**Al:**

**Ruthie:**

to worry about me...  
you don't have to  
worry about me...  
ruth.  
You came anyway.  
Are you sore?  
Sure, i'm sore.  
I could murder you.  
Aw, honey, you were  
gonna just stand here  
and let me go  
without saying anything.  
I don't know,  
i might've called to you at the last minute.

**Man on p. A:**

arriving on track number two.  
Wilmington...  
we only got a minute.

Ruthie, listen, you love me?  
Well, me, too, you.  
I don't want you doing  
what i said; going out with other guys.  
I guess i wouldn't  
have, anyway.  
You've spoiled me  
for anyone else.  
Will you wait  
for me, ruthie?  
You'll have to  
pry me loose.  
I'm the sticking  
kind now.

**Man:**

I want one last look  
at that sweet face you got.  
Don't change the way  
you look, will you?  
That's the way i want  
to see you when i come back.  
Take care  
of yourself,  
and, darling,  
don't be a hero or anything.  
Honey, i'm gonna  
wrap myself up in cellophane.  
I got a reason now.

**Man:**

I see you got  
your trunk packed.  
Yeah.  
Oh, i forgot  
about your present,  
and the train's  
gonna start.  
Here, it's for  
good luck, al.  
Oh. Aw, thanks,  
that's right.  
I got something  
here for you.

Well, mail it.  
The train'll go without you.  
Here, i want you  
to have it.  
It's kind of dinky.  
If you don't like it,  
throw it away.  
Good-bye, honey.  
I even like  
your hat.  
Say good-bye to al?  
Yes, uncle ralph.  
Winter  
lightning.  
We don't often  
see that.  
Kind of special.  
Yes.  
Sort of  
a special day.  
Ruthie, voice-over:  
The day came when al sent me a new forwarding address.  
He didn't know  
where he was going.  
Later, a card came  
saying that private schmid  
had arrived safely  
at his destination.  
Of course, it didn't say  
that that destination was guadalcanal.  
All of us were reading about  
how important it was  
that the marines capture  
henderson field.

**Al, voice-over:**

After we hit the beach,  
taking henderson field  
was pretty easy.  
Hangin' on to it  
was something else.  
Then the japs pulled back  
into the jungle.  
Things got

plenty rugged.  
They taught us what  
infiltration really meant.  
They were good at it.  
Too good.  
We learned a lot  
of lessons.  
Man, we had to.  
Wasn't enough  
of anything.  
Not even any mail.  
So we read our old letters  
over and over again.  
I got one letter  
off to ruth.  
Then things got worse,  
and there wasn't much time for writin'.  
Where's that shambo?  
I don't know.  
Somebody oughta  
take care of that.  
Guess  
somebody did.  
I hear they got 4 of  
our cruisers last night.  
Now all the nip crews  
has got to do  
is sit out there tonight  
and spit at us.  
Anybody tell you  
you're gettin' ripe?  
That's all right,  
i'm gettin' used to it.  
Anyway,  
jap stinks worse.  
Gonna dig this hole  
so deep,  
it'll be just short  
of desertion.  
Got any dope?  
Scuttlebutt's  
the nips are landing up the coast a-ways.  
Jawohl.  
No sleep, no chow, no smokes, no mail,

not enough planes,  
not enough navy, not enough doctors...  
brother, we're hangin'  
on the ropes,  
and the referee's  
up to 8.  
You know something,  
al...  
we've been here  
two weeks, already.  
It's our  
anniversary.  
Remind me later,  
i'll bake a cake.  
Imagine me,  
gettin' married in the morning  
and leaving for  
the embarkation point  
that very noon.  
No honeymoon?  
No nothin'.  
How do you like  
this guy?  
He gets married  
in the morning  
and embarks  
in the afternoon.  
It's like  
buyin' oats for a dead horse.  
Don't let him  
rib you, lenny.  
I wish i'd done  
the same thing.  
Why you guys  
gangin' up?  
Didn't you hear what  
the lieutenant said?  
Thought you were  
takin' your legs  
back to  
the medical?  
I'm ok.  
It's time to relieve  
those guys, ain't it?

Be dark in  
a few minutes.  
Let's make  
a run for it.  
Naw, they'd  
cut you in two.  
Then the two of us  
should go.  
Legs running  
one way, torso the other.  
Ha.  
Diamond  
comin' in.  
Rivers  
coming in.  
Schmid coming in.  
Too many in here,  
get goin'.  
Is that the straight dope  
about them comin' over tonight?  
Shove off,  
knucklehead.  
Ok by me.  
Home and mother.  
He didn't change  
the bolt in this.  
It's still burred.  
Maybe there's  
a spare bolt in the parts box.

**Man:**

water hose, al.  
Water hose, clear.  
No extra bolt.  
Dandy.  
Check the final  
protective line.  
Every time we relieve  
those guys,  
we have to have a traverse  
and search exercise.  
Check the  
ready boxes, al.  
Huh, not on.



What's the lay  
of the base of that stunted tree?  
That's 400 left...  
up 10.  
What do you make  
that brush across the river?  
Which one?  
Right there,  
right in front of that busted coconut pod.  
The base point?  
Yeah, yeah.  
Come on, come on,  
the light's failing.  
Left 920...  
come on,  
come on...  
down 6 mils.  
Why don't those guys  
learn how to make up a range card?  
Hey, lee.  
Here's a belt  
with 1 in 3.  
Stow it.  
How many boxes you got  
belt 1 and 5?  
Here, you guys.  
Hot potatoes.

**Al:**

How do you like that?  
Scared by a crab.  
Ha!  
Sand crab.  
Doesn't this hole  
smell bad enough  
without you cracking  
a crab in it?  
What do you  
expect me to do?  
Pack it in ice  
and ship it home?  
When you two joes quit  
discussing seafood,  
there's a small matter

of a couple million nips across the river,  
more or less.  
Peeyoo.  
This place stinks.  
I'm gonna get some air.  
Better put that back  
before morning.  
It'll be back.  
It'll be back.  
When they come,  
i figure they'll cross the river at the sand bar.  
It's darkest there.  
Don't fire until then.  
Move the machine guns  
up the river,  
the whole battalion's  
dug in.  
Hold your fire till  
diamond's outfit opens up.  
Once the nips  
spot us,  
boom, the mortars  
begin.  
Jawohl.  
You're gonna speak  
your piece tonight, baby.  
Jawohl...  
chop their heads off.  
Al can tell you.  
He saw me fight  
in philly once.  
Maybe they went  
home.  
No, no.  
This is their chance.  
They've been getting  
reinforcements.  
We haven't.  
It'll come  
sooner or later.  
I'll take sooner.  
I'll take later.  
Warm night.  
Jawohl.

I'm thirsty.  
I'm gonna kiss  
my shamrock.  
Just for luck.  
Maybe a ship'll  
come in tomorrow  
with some mail  
on it.  
Why is it that  
everything good  
is always gonna  
happen tomorrow?  
Nah, nothing  
will happen tonight.  
I'm gonna flop.

**Japanese man:**

Tonight you die. Tonight you die.

**Al:**

see them?  
Can you see  
any of them?  
No. But they're there.  
That's their cheerleader  
working up their nerve.  
The shambos are getting  
crooked again tonight.  
Their version of chloe.  
Sounds like they're  
all looking for chloe.  
Chloe, they're all  
looking for you.  
And most of 'em  
are gonna find you.  
It's starting.  
It's starting.  
We're getting  
it now.  
Keep down!

**Al:**

till the last second.  
All they gotta do is

wade across to get us.  
Wish it were quicksand.  
They won't come from  
where they're shooting.  
I think they're crossing!  
There on the sand bars,  
johnny!  
That's them!  
Wait.  
Wait.  
Fire at the wreckage.  
Wait.  
Now! Now! Fire!  
The tree! The tree!  
The best tree left!  
...traverse!  
Get up...  
knock 'em over, boys!  
One big bowling alley!  
In the gutter!  
Kill 'em!  
Good boy.  
You stopped 'em.  
Don't waste your fire there.  
That's pool sector.  
Hit 'em in the...  
hit 'em!  
Come on. Hurry up.  
On the double!  
We're loading  
as fast as we can.  
Ok. Ok.  
There's some  
that crossed over.  
Where?  
On our side!  
Fire, johnny, fire!  
Take over. Take over!  
I'll feed. I'll feed.  
Over the sand bank.  
The sand bank!  
The sand bank!  
Come on, you dirty...  
right now! Attaboy!

I got him.  
I got him!  
They got  
bill waters' gun.  
You'll have to watch  
that side, too.  
I'll watch it.  
I'll watch it.  
How's johnny doing?  
He's dead.  
Right through  
the head.  
Oh, you yellow-bellied,  
dirty, stinking, slimy pigs!  
The best guy in the world.  
Al!  
Watch it! Don't get  
trigger-happy.  
Watch it! Watch it!  
You hit?  
No.  
They got  
the water jacket.  
We're gonna get  
a stoppage.  
Where's that skivvy  
who was yelling?  
Never mind him!  
Find that stinking  
crumb for me!  
Forget him.  
Keep watching.  
They'll be coming...  
lee!  
Push me out  
of your way.  
Where you hit?  
Arm. Shoulder.  
Get me out  
of your way.  
Get back, al.  
Watch 'em.  
I'll give you blood poison,  
you ringtails!

Al, don't let 'em...  
Japanese soldier: You die!  
Tonight, you die!  
Tonight you die.  
Watch him.  
Watch him, al.  
Japanese soldier:  
We come, you die.  
We come...  
eat dirt, tojo!  
Eat dirt!  
I'll shut you up.  
I'll find you.  
Short bursts, al.  
No stoppage.  
We'll hold 'em, lee.  
We'll hold 'em.  
Good ol' gun.  
Don't jam on me,  
sweetheart.  
You suckers.  
You think  
i don't see you.  
That got you rattled,  
didn't it?  
Come on. Come on.  
Just try to get through.  
Come on, suckers!  
Thought you wanted  
to have us in fear.  
I'm still here.  
I'm all staked out.  
Staying here right till  
the end of the world.  
Lee, you hurt bad?  
Stick it out, lee.  
Get light soon.  
We're holding.

**Japanese man:**

Tonight you die.  
Tonight you die.  
Just give me...  
Why can't

i shut you up?  
Why can't i  
shut you up?  
Tonight you die.  
You ain't coming  
so fast now.  
What's the matter?  
You don't like  
what you're getting, do you?  
Come on. There's  
nobody in your way.  
Just a couple  
of marines.  
Come on.  
I'll take you.  
One at a time  
or in bunches.  
Lee!  
Al. Al.  
My face.  
L... i can't see.  
My hands.  
I can't see!

**Lee:**

Don't do it.  
Don't do it, al.  
We'll get help soon.  
Don't shoot yourself.  
Shoot myself?  
Just...  
just tell me  
where they are, lee.  
Tell me where  
they're coming from.  
Show me  
where they are.  
I'll shoot 'em.  
Tell me where  
they are, lee.  
Tell me where  
they're coming from.  
Show me  
where they are.

Ruth, voice-over:

I didn't hear from al for a long time.  
Philadelphia seemed  
a long ways from the war,  
but we thought of al  
every day.

Man on loudspeaker:

Ruth hartley, telephone.  
Hello?

**Man:**

Oh, yes, uncle ralph.  
There's a letter here  
from the naval hospital in san diego.  
I opened it.  
Yes?  
Yeah, it says  
al is there and ok.  
Oh, thank god,  
uncle ralph. He's safe.  
He can't write  
right away,  
but he wants you  
to write him.  
He sends lots of love.  
He says to address  
reply in care of miss virginia pfeiffer.  
Virginia pfeiffer...  
american red cross...  
naval hospital,  
san diego.

**Al:**

the red cross workers are concerned,  
why, they're ok,  
like the one who brings me a letter.  
As for me,  
i'll take a girl named ruth every time.  
You know, miss pfeiffer,  
once out there,  
ruthie mailed me  
a curl of her hair,  
and when  
i opened the envelope, this curl fell out.



The guys ribbed  
the daylights out of me.  
From then on, i always used  
to take her letters away somewhere to read.  
You never know what was  
gonna pop out of them.  
Now, where was i,  
miss pfeiffer?  
"Well, i'll take a girl  
named ruth every time"  
yeah, well, um,  
i guess that's all.  
Oh, come on, al.  
Give a little bit.  
Think how many letters  
she's written you.  
Think how she wants  
to come to you.  
Well, what do i say?  
Well, you want to tell  
her about your gang?  
Oh, yeah, sure.  
We got a great gang of gyrenes here, ruthie.  
A lot of them  
from the canal.  
Lee diamond,  
who was with me at kebabian.  
Um... where's  
that ashtray, please?  
On the desk,  
by your hand.  
Your right hand, al.  
Oh, thanks.  
Um, "the guadalcanal gophers  
knitting society" we call ourselves.  
More grab...  
excuse me. Heh heh.  
More horsin' around  
than i've seen in a month of sundays.  
Guess everybody's  
sure glad they're alive.  
Well, i guess that's all.  
Um... isn't there  
anything else you wanna tell her, al?

Like what?

About your eyes.

No.

Well, she'll have  
to know sometime.

Look, after i've  
had my operation,  
after i can see again,  
then i'll tell her,  
then it'll be a big laugh  
for both of us, understand?

Al, the doctor doesn't  
promise you'll see after this operation.

Maybe they're...

i know  
those doctors.

They never  
promise anything.

I remember  
the one onboard ship,  
he kept telling me  
i'd lose my leg because of that blood poisoning.

Didn't, did i?

They're both here, and they ain't cork.

**And add this:**

Ruthie, i've been saving the best part for the end.

You've been asking me  
why i haven't been able to write to you myself.

Well, the reason  
is... my hands.

L... i caught some  
grenade fragments in them like a dumb boot,  
but any day now,  
you'll be getting a letter  
written by  
yours truly himself.

Al, this isn't any good!

You're just storing up  
trouble for both of you.

Don't be a killjoy!

Here i am, sitting on top of the world.

Now, put this in.

Pretty soon,

i'll be coming home,  
walking right up to  
the steps of your house.  
And don't you worry  
about my hands, baby,  
because when i  
get them on you,  
well, you'll know  
they're all right.  
Gosh, sweetheart,  
i can hardly wait to see you.  
I, uh...  
oh, say it, al.  
Just make-believe i'm a typewriter.  
Don't be  
embarrassed.  
I...  
I can hardly wait to kiss you for the first time, honey.  
I never told you  
what i feel like when you're in my arms,  
looking up at me  
with your eyes like...  
like... with that kind of  
funny, wonderful light in your eyes,  
like you did  
on the railroad station platform.  
Say it, al.  
Lots of love,  
your brown-eyed devil, al.  
She called me that once.  
It's a kind of joke between us, see?  
Sure.  
Ain't that  
a nice face, though? Ain't it? Take a look.  
Oh, come on, schmid.  
I just looked at it  
a little bit ago.  
Now, don't rib me.  
I only showed it to you once.  
Yeah, it's a nice face.  
A guy could lean  
on a girl like that.  
A marine  
don't lean on anyone.

If there's any leaning  
to be done,  
now the female sex  
is the weaker, isn't it?  
Well, everybody leans  
a little on somebody.  
Nobody stands alone.  
You just wait until tomorrow  
after my operation,  
i'm all fixed up.  
I'll stand alone.  
You just wait. You just watch me!  
I'll ask permission  
to be there.  
Well, you better be.  
I wanna find out if  
you're as good-looking  
as your voice  
sounds like you are.  
Oh, don't spoil me, schmid.  
Keep it tough.  
Hi, al.  
Is that you, lee?  
Yeah, i've been  
waiting outside. I'm next.  
You better be careful  
of this guy.  
He's a little short  
on the brain.  
Yeah?  
He got  
3 machine gun bullets in the shoulder.  
You'd think after  
the first one, he'd have sense enough to duck.  
At least i had sense  
enough not to play catch with a jap grenade.  
Why don't you hang  
a lantern on that thing?  
Uh, did you buy  
that present for my wife for me?  
Yeah, i bought two  
for you to choose from.  
Hiya, tom,  
how's your malaria?

Wonderful.  
It's that tall.  
You'd never know it.  
Ha ha.  
Wither wouldst thou  
love to be shoved, alberto?  
Oh, once around  
the hall, thomas. Ok.  
Here we go  
gathering nuts in may  
nuts in may,  
hay in may  
here we go gathering...

**man:**

please.  
Hold the bandage,  
will you, schmid?  
Guess we're  
ready, now.  
Not too soon  
for me, sir!  
I'm bustin'  
at the seams!  
It's been the  
longest 3 weeks of my whole life!  
Now, look, schmid.  
Don't you expect  
to see the minute the bandage is off.  
I'm darkening  
your room... ok.  
Ok, you told me  
that.  
Just get it off,  
will you?  
Now, i'm not making  
any promises either.  
You see,  
the healing process...  
all right, all right.  
Let's try it,  
please, sir!  
The bandage is off now.  
You can open up.

No!  
Not a darn thing!  
You told me  
it was dark in here.  
How about  
that flashlight, sir?  
You promised!  
I will.  
Take it easy.  
I'm taking it easy, sir.  
Well, you don't expect me  
to see with the blinds down.  
You think i don't know  
my eyes have been injured?  
Why, i even expect  
to be wearing glasses  
the rest of my life.  
"Four-eyes schmid. "  
I don't mind, sir.  
I don't mind  
the glasses. Really, i don't.  
I'm going to snap  
the flashlight on behind my back  
and then bring it around  
towards your face.  
First time  
you see it, holler.  
I'll holler.  
I'll holler so loud  
my girl will hear me in philadelphia.  
Ready?  
Yeah, i'm ready.  
I'm ready!  
Turn it on, sir.  
Even if it's only  
a two-bit flashlight.  
I wanna see stars  
and angels and ruth.  
Give me something  
to holler about, please!  
Come on,  
this is one time  
i wanna get hit right  
smack between the eyes,

come on, doctor.  
Let's see the light.  
Bring it closer.  
See anything?  
Yeah, like  
a locomotive headlight.  
Way off in the fog.  
Bring it closer!  
Closer!  
Closer, please!  
I'm sorry, schmid.  
The light was put on your eyes.  
Close.  
No. I can't be blind...  
not my whole life!

**Doctor:**

Look, schmid...  
please... please...  
you medicine fellows,  
you know.  
You're educated,  
you're smart.  
You got ways  
of fixing guys up.  
I tried my best.  
I fought.  
I'm not asking  
for so much!  
Schmid,  
this examination isn't final.  
I told you yesterday  
it wouldn't be.  
When can we try again, sir?  
Tomorrow? Next week?  
You're still  
suffering the effects of eye concussion, schmid.  
There's still pieces  
of grenade that have to work themselves out.  
You'll probably need  
another operation after a while.  
When?  
We'll have to wait  
6 months, a year.

Even then,  
there's no assurance you'll ever see.  
6 months?  
What are my chances, sir?  
Give it to me straight.  
Miss shelby,  
bring me a card, please.  
I have a card here  
i want you to take with you, schmid.  
We have people  
right here now who will teach you.  
This is for blind people!  
I don't want  
any of this stuff!  
I want to stand on my own!  
I don't want  
any of this stuff!  
Schmid... right now,  
i'm thinking of someone, a doctor friend of mine.  
We went to school  
together.  
He was blind from the time  
he was 10 years old,  
but that didn't  
stop him.  
He's married  
and has two kids.  
He's a fine psychiatrist  
and a happy man.  
Are you listening  
to me, schmid?  
I'm not saying  
it'll be easy for you,  
and these first few months  
are the toughest.  
People get the wrong idea  
about blindness.  
A blind man  
isn't helpless;  
he just has to do some things  
differently from the rest of us.  
Are you listening  
to me, schmid?  
Why don't god



strike me dead?  
We back at the warden?  
A couple more steps.  
I'll take it  
from here. All right.  
Hi, al!  
Hiya, gophers!  
I'm shoving off.  
Good luck.  
Now, listen, tommy,  
let me get the picture straight.  
You mean to tell me  
that she tricked you into going up to her apartment?  
Sure, i was trapped!  
She had a beautiful  
two-room joint overlooking los angeles.  
So i go up there  
with her,  
and she pours me  
a nice, tall drink.  
Then we sit down  
on the sofa.  
What happened then?  
Take it easy,  
i'll tell you.  
Well, we're sitting  
on the sofa, see, and i got my arm around her.  
Everything's  
getting cozy, see?  
Just as i'm about  
to kiss her,  
all the lights  
go out.  
Killed all  
the conversation.  
Well, what'd you do?  
I was in luck.  
I had my flashlight with me.  
Did you light it?  
No, she wouldn't  
let me!  
She told me the noise  
would wake up her father.

**Tommy:**

where you going?

I got my first

3-day liberty, tommy.

I'm going to

los angeles.

You got a date?

No.

You call this number

when you get there.

I don't like

blind dates.

She'll be sober

when you get there. Give her a ring.

What's she like?

Out of the world.

Out of this world, huh?

Well, los angeles

city limits,

how much farther out

can you get?

What's she look like,

an umbrella?

Are you kidding?

She's a beauty!

Big brown eyes

like saucers.

And when she smiles,

she flashes the most beautiful set of teeth you ever saw.

And what a build!

This girl has got a figure out of the world!

When you see

this girl's figure...

now, i've seen a lot

of figures, brother,

and i know

what i'm talking about.

She's got the most...

wait a minute.

I'll get my hat. I'll go with you.

Where's my hat?

Al, this is lee.

I just heard

the bad news about... about the eye test.

Look, al, i got an uncle  
who's a doctor...  
and he's no dope.  
4 years city college,  
harvard med school grad, a real smart guy.  
And sometimes  
he's right,  
and sometimes  
he's wrong.  
Like the time, al,  
that my aunt, his very own wife,  
went to him,  
and he says,  
"minnie, you're  
gonna have a baby. "  
I mean, this is  
his very own wife!  
And she's overjoyed.  
And he's happy.  
And they call us  
on the telephone,  
and they tell us how  
they always wanted to have a baby.  
And we tell them  
we think it's wonderful.  
You shoulda  
been there, al!  
They were going  
to name the baby leroy, after me.  
You know what, al?  
The next morning,  
the very next morning,  
we find out it was  
something she ate.  
So you see, al,  
what do you got to worry about?  
Doctors are human,  
they make mistakes!  
Thanks for coming, lee.  
I'll see you  
in the morning.  
Ok, al.

**Al:**

Ruth!  
No, stop it!  
No, stop it!  
No, stop it!  
No, stop it!  
Stop it! Stop it!  
Stop it! Stop it!  
Stop it!  
Where is he?  
Where are they?  
Find them for me.  
Please find them.  
Please... find them.  
Please find them for me.  
Please...  
find them for me, lee.  
F-f-find them for me.  
Find them... where are...  
Why can't i shut you up!?  
No!  
Ruth! Ruth!  
Ruth! Ruth!  
Ruth! Ruth! Ruth!  
Ruth. Ruth. Ruth...  
where's that bench  
you were talking about?  
Right here.  
I want to get this  
over with quick.  
Got your pencil?  
Yes.  
Dear ruth...  
what harm would it do  
to wait another week?  
What good will it do?  
I made up my mind last night.  
Your mind's made up,  
but what about giving ruth  
a chance to decide  
for herself?  
To decide what?  
How to ruin her life?  
Look, she's worked hard.  
Me, the bigshot.

I was gonna  
buy her things she never had,  
i was gonna see that  
she'd never have to work again.  
What good  
can i do her now? I can't get married.  
I'll never be able  
to earn enough money to keep her.  
But, al...  
i won't have her being  
a seeing-eye dog for me!  
How do you know she'll  
feel that way about it?  
At least tell her the truth!  
Find out what she wants!  
Sure. Tell her the truth  
so she'll pity me.  
Nothing doing.  
I'm leaving pity out of this.  
Aren't you leaving  
love out of it, too?  
You don't seem to care  
what you do to her.  
She isn't going to stop  
loving you, writing to you!  
Send the letters  
back, then!  
Supposing she does have  
a few bad days.  
She's pretty.  
She'll meet another guy.  
She'll fall in love.  
You gonna write  
the letter for me  
or do i have to ask  
lee diamond to do it?  
All right... ok.  
Dear ruth...  
i know this is gonna  
be a kind of surprise to hear,  
but i'm going to give  
it to you straight.  
I'm not  
coming back to philly. Not now, not ever.

And as far as getting  
married is concerned,  
well, it just ain't up  
my alley, that's all.  
I hope you'll be  
very happy,  
and i hope you'll find  
a new boyfriend real soon.  
Yours, al schmid.

Oh, al.  
Schmiddy, don't you get tired  
eating in the supply room?  
Why don't you eat  
in the mess hall with the rest of the guys?  
Why don't you learn  
how to feed yourself?  
It's easy, honest.  
Coming up.  
We put the food on the plate  
according to the clock.  
Like, potatoes at 12 o'clock,

**vegetables at 3:**

meat at 6 o'clock.  
Coming up.  
It's part of our job  
to teach blind guys how to...  
don't call me blind!  
I don't see so good yet,  
that's all.  
Don't you ever  
call me blind again!  
Ok, kid, ok!  
Anyway, why don't...  
mind your business.  
Coming up.  
I don't want any more.  
You want dessert?  
No.  
Al, here you are!  
Al, there's a long-distance  
telephone call for you.  
I'll take you.  
From where?

It's from ruth,  
from philadelphia.  
I ain't here.  
Well, she's probably  
received your letter...  
don't you understand?  
I can't talk to her.  
Tell her  
to leave me alone!  
All right, al.  
Can i steer you  
anyplace, schmiddy?  
No.  
Wanna hit the sack?  
I can sleep anytime.  
See with me,  
it's always night time.  
How about  
the recreation room?  
We can get jack benny  
on the radio.  
Ok.  
Ready?  
You know, that was  
an old girlfriend of mine calling.  
Her name was ruth.  
Yes, operator.

**Operator:**

One moment, please.  
A friend of the party's wants to  
know if she can accept the call.  
A miss virginia pfeiffer  
from the red cross.  
Oh, yes, yes.  
She's been writing.  
Go ahead, san diego.  
Hello?  
Hello?  
Is this ruth?  
Yes, miss pfeiffer.  
I got al's last letter!  
Understand this,  
ruth...

he isn't breaking  
with you  
because he doesn't  
love you.  
Believe me, he does.  
Well, then, why?  
He just had  
a very bad shock.  
What is it?  
Al has completely lost  
the sight of one eye  
and may never regain  
sight in the other.  
That's why  
he's not calling.  
He's afraid  
of becoming a burden.  
Do you understand now?  
Hello, ruth?  
Yes. Yes, i understand.  
There's one thing  
i'd better find out.  
Uh, now, you can  
think this over if you want to.  
It'll  
make a difference in helping al.  
You still love him?  
Do you want him?  
I mean,  
as a husband.  
Oh, yes!  
Yes, i do!  
Remember, he may  
be totally blind  
for the rest  
of his life.  
What does that matter?  
Do you want  
to think it over?  
Think what over?  
I didn't fall in love  
with his eyes nor the color of his hair.  
I fell in love  
with him, with al!



That hasn't changed  
just because something's happened to his eyes.  
You're the kind of girl  
i thought you were.  
Now,  
listen carefully, ruth.  
I know you'll want  
to come out here, but don't come.  
Al seems to go off  
the deep end  
every time  
i mention your name.  
Just keep writing  
to him  
and try not to mind  
if he doesn't answer.  
Just be patient  
and keep loving him.  
We have a pretty big  
job ahead,  
but we can do it.  
My part first,  
and then yours.  
Understand?  
I do understand.  
And i'm so grateful  
to you for everything.  
Remember  
that he loves you  
and that he needs  
you terribly.  
So if you'll  
keep loving him...  
oh, i will. Always.  
Good-bye, then.  
I guess al still  
doesn't know  
what a wonderful  
girl he has.  
Bye.

**Lee:**

how do you like that?  
Hey, guys.

Take a look.  
No more cast,  
isn't it wonderful, huh?  
How do you like it?  
Isn't that marvelous? Marvelous.  
I want you  
to meet my friend.  
Glad to see ya.  
Hey, guys!  
The cast...  
it's off, look.  
Let's barbecue it.  
Ha ha.  
Would you care to say a few words  
to the radio audience?  
Sure.  
Hello, mom?  
It was a great fight.  
Didn't lay  
a glove on me.  
Ha ha.  
You know what  
i'm gonna do with this?  
Don't say it.  
Gonna have it mounted.  
To decorate the homestead  
in flatbush,  
directly  
over the stove.  
How's the arm work?  
Come again?  
How does the arm work?  
Great. Here,  
give me one of them darts, i'll show you.  
Tom, hold this.  
Observe.  
Spitball diamond  
is now on the mound.  
Let me out of here.  
What are you,  
a coward?  
Right down the alley.  
Two fingers.  
Hmm... almost

a bull's-eye.  
A bull's what?  
Well, the wind was  
against me.  
Would you like  
to dance with a girlie  
with a hole  
in her head?  
Hi, al!  
Hi, gofers.  
Hi, al. Tommy.  
Hi, hero.  
Guy made  
that crack gets his neck broken.  
Ok, killer.  
Killer  
i don't mind.  
It ain't pretty,  
but neither am i.  
Whose turn  
is it next?  
I'll take it, red.  
In the evening,  
by the moonlight  
you can hear  
those darkies singing  
in the evening,  
by the moonlight...  
any of you birds  
hear talk about goin' home for christmas?  
Yeah. Wish i could  
believe it.  
Wonder what kind  
of a christmas  
they have  
in california?  
I hear they got no snow,  
but they got variety.  
One year, fog;  
the next year, rain.  
I heard everybody  
who's fit goes home,  
walking cases  
get a furlough.

That's the scuttlebutt.  
Speak up, red.  
Or write it down.  
If i did write it down,  
you couldn't read it.  
You blind bat.  
Ha ha. I've heard  
of bedroom eyes.  
Red here's got  
a bedroom voice.  
Well, i guess  
i'll be stuck here.  
Me, too.  
You're  
a walking case, al.  
Yeah, except i got  
no place to go, see?  
Well, i know  
i'm going home.  
The doc says  
for good.  
I telephoned my wife  
last night  
to give her  
the glad news.  
When i told her  
i was comin' home,  
she got  
all choked up, couldn't talk.  
Just busted out  
cryin'.  
Don't you hate it  
when a dame cries?  
No, with me  
it's different. I'll tell you why.  
When a guy gets  
married, like me and my girl did,  
and goes overseas,  
a lot of things can  
happen by the time you get back.  
The way she cried  
told me a lot of things.  
Told me how much  
she wanted me back.

Sometimes,  
when a dame cries,  
it makes you  
feel good.  
You read in the paper  
about a guy's wife runnin' out on him,  
and right away,  
you think it's gonna happen to you.

**Lee:**

this way.  
Any guy's wife  
that would double-cross him  
while he's  
in the service  
will do it  
in peacetime, sooner or later.  
What's the first thing  
you're gonna do when you get home, bill?  
I think i'll spend  
about 3 solid weeks  
just saying hello  
to my wife.  
What are you gonna do  
after you get tired saying hello?  
I got myself a nice  
little street corner  
all picked out  
for my business.  
You lucky stiff.

**Lee:**

**Virginia:**

Join the gofer sewing circle.  
We're cookin' up a storm.  
Sure it's not  
private gab?  
We got no secrets  
from you.  
Irish has been  
telling us  
about a business  
he's going into,

after he gets  
his discharge.  
Yeah, on a corner.  
Oh, if it's  
on a corner,  
it must be  
a saloon or a bank.  
Which is it,  
irish?  
You're not  
even close.  
Twice in his life  
my old man got his name in the papers.  
The first time,  
in 1917.  
He was the first  
to enlist in milwaukee.  
The second time,  
in 1930.  
He was the  
first vet to sell unemployed apples.  
Any of you guys  
want a piece of my street corner?  
I ain't bright,  
but i'm honest.  
Count me in.  
"Irish and schmid,  
apples and pencils. "  
We oughta do all right.  
Aw, come on.  
Climb out of your foxholes.  
What's the matter,  
you guys think  
nobody's learned  
anything since 1930?  
Think everybody's  
had their eyes shut  
and their brains  
in cold storage?  
I'll tell you guys  
something funny.  
I'm scared.  
I wasn't half as scared  
on the 'canal.

If a man came along...  
anybody...  
and told me  
i'd have a decent job the rest of my life,  
i'd get down on my knees  
and wash his feet.  
Well, i'm  
not scared.  
You talk like a guy  
with dough in the bank.  
You ask me what  
i want out of life.  
Well, i'm not  
an ambitious guy... 30 bucks a week.  
Enough to take  
my girl out on a saturday night,  
a ball game  
on sunday... that's about all i ask.  
Or is that too much?  
You're a cinch.  
Things are  
different now.  
The whole country  
has its eyes open.  
Won't be like  
1930 again.  
That's pretty  
music,  
but i don't  
understand the words.  
What about  
the g. i. Bill of rights?  
I'm going to college  
on that.  
They guarantee  
your old job back, bill.  
They guarantee  
your job, do they?  
I wrote my old boss  
to get my job back.  
What did he write me?  
Quote, i'll tell you  
what he wrote.  
"I'm in a new business,

and your old job just ain't. "  
There's nothing in  
the g. i. Bill of rights to cover that.  
You can't  
get your job back if it doesn't exist.  
That's gotta  
be considered. Considered?  
Now i'll come out  
and say what i'm thinking.  
How about them considering  
the silver plate in my head?  
How long did we get  
to consider  
when they said,  
"hit the beach," at guadalcanal?  
They said, "go,"  
and we went.  
Well, that's ok.  
Well, i want  
some considerin' now.  
I got a wife.  
I want to support her.  
The doc says i can  
never do heavy work again, ever.  
Well, i wanna work.  
My boss says,  
"no job, nothing to come back to. "  
How do i know  
anybody'll ever want me?  
Yeah. Yeah, when i get  
back to el centro,  
i'll probably find  
some mexican's got my job.  
Quiet.  
I'm sorry, juan,  
you're a mexican, but you're different,  
y-you're one of the guys  
in "b" company.  
Nah. I'm not  
different, joe.  
I'm just a mexican,  
like a lot of other  
mexicans who fought.  
You dumb coot.



He's got more foxhole time  
than you've got  
in the marine corps.  
Can i put in  
my two cents?  
You guys are all jumpy.  
Nobody can blame you.  
You're shut off here,  
and sometimes it must seem  
as if nobody cares.  
Who does?  
Well, people care,  
all the people.  
Civilians aren't  
strange animals.  
They're your own fathers  
and mothers and wives,  
your sweethearts,  
your friends,  
and believe me,  
if they can help it,  
you're not going  
to be let down.  
Aw, that's  
a dame's...  
i mean, a female's  
point of view.  
So the g. i. Bill  
sends some guys back to school.  
Gets some  
other guys jobs.  
Gets a guy started  
on a farm.  
So maybe we'll even have  
prosperity for two years after the war  
while we catch up  
on things...  
like making diaper pins  
and autos,  
things the poor civilians  
did without.  
But what happens  
after two years? Answer me that.  
A bonus march.

No, sir.  
You guys think because you did  
the front-line fighting  
you can take a free ride  
on the country  
for the rest  
of your lives... no, sir.  
Look, there's no free candy  
for anybody in this world.  
I know what i fought for...  
i fought for me.  
For the right  
to live in the u. s. a.  
And when i get back  
into civilian life,  
if i don't like  
the way things are going,  
ok, it's my country.  
I'll stand on my own two legs,  
and i'll holler.  
And if there's  
enough of us hollering, we'll go places, check?  
Check.  
Listen to these  
two characters  
checking each other off  
like a couple of bookkeepers.  
So what? We agree.  
Only you ain't got  
the books to check, that's what.  
You ain't gonna  
write the piece.  
You ain't gonna  
run the country.  
You're just a couple  
of ex-heroes sittin' around in a hospital.  
I'm going to be  
a lawyer.  
Who says, in 10 years  
from now, i won't be a congressman?  
I'm going into politics  
with both feet.  
And if i have anything  
to say about it,

my kid isn't gonna  
land on any beachhead.  
And if any old windbag  
tries to sell me the idea of shipping oil to japan  
or doing business  
with any new hitler, he'd better start ducking.  
Ok, junior.  
I'll check that.  
And i'll put  
a little handwritin' on the wall for you, too.  
We don't want no apples.  
And whoever's running  
the country better read it too...  
no apples,  
no bonus marches.  
I'll paste  
that in your hat, congressman.  
Ok.  
Like they say in those  
old revival meetings,  
"hallelujah and amen. "  
Ok, al, ok.  
And i'll wrap it  
up for you.  
One happy afternoon,  
when god was feeling good,  
he sat down,  
and he thought  
of a rich,  
beautiful country.  
And he named it  
the u. s. a.  
All of it, al...  
the hills,  
the rivers, the lands, the whole works.  
Don't tell me  
we can't make it work in peace  
like we do in war.  
Don't tell me  
we can't pull together.  
Don't you see it, guys?  
Can't you see it?  
You askin' me?  
Yeah.

I'm askin' you  
like everybody else.  
I don't see none  
of those things you said god made.  
I don't see a thing.  
I didn't mean it  
that way.  
No, you didn't.  
But a lot of things  
take time in this life.  
When a man has to climb  
a mountain all alone,  
sometimes  
he loses the way...  
and it's up to  
his friends to help.  
What's on your mind?  
You.  
I thought it was  
something important.  
You're important.  
Sit here.  
I want to say  
something important, too...  
straight and tough.  
Shoot.  
Suppose the worst  
happens to you, al,  
and you don't get  
your sight back.  
I'm not kidding you,  
you're gonna  
be cut off from certain things.  
No hunting,  
no driving your own car,  
no watching  
ice hockey.  
But even  
without sight,  
a man can  
swim and dance and go fishing.  
He can't hunt,  
but he can walk in the woods  
when the leaves

are falling.  
With only  
a little training,  
he can learn  
to play poker,  
checkers, chess,  
dominoes.  
He can learn to read  
by the touch system,  
type his own  
letters, listen to music...  
he can play any old  
instrument he wants.  
Don't you see, al...  
once you get  
over your fear of being helpless,  
the whole world is  
wide open for you.  
With a tin cup?  
If you're afraid  
you can't hold down a job anymore,  
that's just  
crazy, al.  
You can go back  
to a job that's just as good  
as the one you left.  
Yeah?  
Why, right here  
in california,  
there are over  
400 blind workers in the aircraft factories.  
I tell you, it's  
all very interesting, virginia,  
but it sort of  
doesn't apply to me.  
A couple of months  
from now, i'll be able to see all right.  
Sure, al.  
I hope so, too.  
I just thought  
you might like  
to know some of these things.  
Yeah. Sure.  
Ok, al.

Yeah.

Hey, tommy, tell 'em  
about the first time you went huntin'.

Oh, the time i want  
to take my girl huntin'...

so i go out, and i buy  
the whole thing...

the hat, you know,  
with the tail in the back,  
and the leather coat  
with the things across here,  
with the shells...

you know, and the gun.

Now i gotta get  
a dog, see?

I buy the best dog  
in illinois,  
the best huntin' dog  
you could buy.

75 bucks.

One dog. \$75.

So i went huntin'  
with her, see?

We get out there.

Soon as he sees  
a rabbit or a bird,  
stops dead,

he goes like this.

Doesn't catch nothing.

Just like this...

see?

I beat him over the head  
with the gun a coupla times.

I broke him  
of that habit.

Ha ha ha.

Ha ha.

Hi, virginia.

Hello, boys.

Al, it's time  
for you to see the captain.

I want you  
to see a picture of my girl.  
Beautiful?

She sure is.  
But who's the guy  
with his arm around her?  
That's my friend  
from the draft board.  
Beautiful girl.  
Great friend.  
Captain burroughs says  
to come in.  
Thank you.  
Door, schmid...  
to your right.  
Good morning,  
miss pfeiffer.  
Good morning,  
captain burroughs.  
Good morning,  
schmid. Good morning, sir.  
Hi, al.  
Sounds like lee.  
That's it.  
Schmid, i got  
great news for you.  
You're getting  
a navy cross.  
Congratulations.  
That's  
wonderful, al.  
Navy cross...  
never in all  
my born days did i think...  
the navy cross?  
Stand at ease.  
Corporal diamond's  
getting one, too,  
although the ceremonies  
won't be held at the same place.  
That sounds  
great, lee.  
Yeah, gave me  
a wallop.  
Your hometown's  
quite proud of you, schmid.  
I guess you know

that the papers have been printing  
a lot of stories  
about you.  
So the navy's decided  
that you'll get your award  
at the philadelphia  
navy yard.  
Corporal diamond's  
going on furlough, too.  
He'll be on the train  
with you  
and effect your transfer  
to the naval hospital.  
You leave tomorrow.  
You'll be home  
in time for christmas.  
Couldn't ask for  
a better christmas present than that, could you?  
I gotta go back there?  
It's your hometown.  
Why not?  
Well, it's not  
my home anymore.  
We've found,  
from past experience  
that men convalesce quicker  
in a hospital near their home.  
But it isn't  
my home, sir.  
According to  
your record, it was when you entered service.  
Yes, sir. But, uh,  
I-i'm gonna move.  
I got a brother  
in chicago,  
and when i don't  
have to go to no hospital no more...  
let's stop shadowboxing.  
You don't want to return  
to philadelphia  
because you've  
got friends there.  
You're afraid  
to have them pity you.



That's it, isn't it?  
No. N-no, sir.  
That isn't it...  
just because a guy happens  
to have a little  
eye trouble.  
Why, in a couple  
more months,  
after i've had  
another operation,  
i'll be able to see  
all right, sir.  
Well, then,  
why don't you go home?  
You've got a girl there.  
No, sir.  
She and i are all washed up.  
I got nobody  
in philly for me. Nobody.  
You need to find out  
from the people  
who knew you before you were injured  
that you mean  
just as much to them now.  
Until you learn that,  
you won't make any progress.  
I'm making  
progress, sir.  
I'm trading a couple  
of eyes in for a ribbon on my chest.  
Now i'm going home  
so people can stare at me.  
That's  
fine progress!  
You're under orders,  
schmid.  
You're going back.  
Good-bye.  
Good luck.  
Thank you, sir.  
Good-bye, diamond.  
I'll be seeing you.  
So long. So long, schmiddy.  
Here we are,

schmiddy.  
You gonna miss me,  
ginnie?  
I don't know how  
we'll run the place without you.  
By the way, i put  
a couple of letters in your bag  
you don't  
know about.  
Thought maybe  
you might want lee to read 'em to you.  
Aw, you're  
a great fixer, aren't you?  
I don't wanna read 'em.  
I'm sorry, i just  
wanted to help...  
listen, I-i've  
been carrying a beef inside me,  
but it hasn't been  
against you.  
You're great.  
I'm glad  
you think so, al.  
Listen, will you  
do me a favor  
and send ruthie a wire  
and ask her to...  
ask her to meet me  
at the station, will you?  
Sure, i will.  
It's not for the reason  
you think.  
I just want to get  
things straightened out once and for all.  
As long as i can't see,  
i don't want to marry anyone.  
Ok, al?  
Keep your powder  
dry, virginia,  
and thanks  
for everything.  
Good-bye, lee.  
Good luck.  
You know...

some of these days, i'm gonna come back here  
and find out what  
you really look like.  
I'll be an awful  
disappointment.  
No, you won't.  
You're swell.  
Don't stop  
fighting now... don't.  
So long, ginnie.  
Bye.  
So long, schmiddy,  
you lucky stiff.  
Say hello  
to philadelphia.  
So long,  
fellow. Have a swell trip.  
Dear heavenly father,  
he's got to come home  
where he belongs.  
He's got to know  
he's wanted.

**Lee:**

the biggest production we ever had,  
and...  
don't you gentlemen want to get some sleep?  
How about it, al?  
I'm not sleepy.  
Well, call me  
when you want me.  
Thanks anyway.  
So, like i was  
saying...  
everything was going  
along all right  
until our  
high school teacher hands me the girdle,  
and she says,  
"put this on. "  
I took one look  
at that belly choker and i hit the roof.  
I says,  
"look, miss tuttle,

"i am willin'  
to be the dame in this play,  
"i am willing to wear  
the blonde wig.  
"I'm willing  
to wear the dress with the phony fronts.  
But a girdle  
stops me cold. "  
Nobody was gonna  
get me to crawl into that booby trap.  
So she gives me  
a pep talk  
about how  
if i don't wear the girdle,  
i'll have nothing  
to hold up my stockings.  
You know how  
them girdles are.  
They got  
long tentacles  
hanging down  
all around them.  
And by this time  
i'm burnin', i'm really steamed up.  
And i says,  
"look, miss tuttle, i won't do it. "  
She says,  
"you will. "  
And i says,  
"i won't!"  
So i put on  
the girdle.  
Well, it was  
about this big...  
junior miss size.  
I wrestled  
with that thing for a solid hour.  
I was on a chair.  
I was on a table.  
I was on a floor.  
You've gotta get leverage.  
I pulled it,  
i yanked it, i jerked it,  
then, by some

supernatural miracle, i got it on.

It was like sitting

in a tight foxhole.

Why do women insist

on wearin' them things?

Believe me, al,

if i was a dame,

i'd settle

for the spread.

You don't have

to entertain me, lee.

Where are we?

Still crossing

ohio, i guess.

What time is it?

**Uh, 5 to 3:**

Wanna go to bed? I'll call a porter.

Aw, i feel kinda jumpy.

You don't have to sit up with me, lee.

Oh, i'm not sleepy.

How about

some dominoes?

**Ruth:**

the sticking kind, al.

**Al:**

that sweet face of yours,

**ruth:**

Suppose the japs shoot you?

Me? What have

they got against me?

I'm the best little ducker

in the world.

**Ruth:**

sticking kind, al.

I wanna see

that sweet face when i come back.

Why'd you

join up, al?

I wanna see...

why'd you join?  
I wanna see.  
Why'd you join?  
I wanna see!  
I wanna see!  
What's the sense  
of seeing ruth just to break up with her?  
It was a crazy idea  
i had.  
Won't do her any good,  
won't do me any good.  
We're finished.  
There's no point in having  
a wake over the corpse.  
I don't want her  
to come to the station.  
I don't want  
to see her at all.  
You send  
a telegram for me. Tell her not to come.  
That's not fair,  
schmidy.  
She's probably  
planned a christmas celebration.  
You're going  
to see her.  
Lee, don't make me  
fight you.  
You and me, we don't  
have to be polite with each other.  
What have i got  
to celebrate?  
What does "welcome home"  
mean to a blind man?  
Maybe more  
than to anyone else  
if he doesn't hide it  
from himself.  
Cut the guff.  
You're not talking me  
into anything.  
Al, i want to tell  
you something.  
You gonna

write that wire?  
I'll write  
the wire,  
but first i want  
to get something off my chest,  
from me to you  
without etiquette, too.  
Al, back there  
on the 'canal,  
i thought something  
about you i never told you before.  
It was after  
you got the grenade in your face.  
Towards morning,  
it was,  
when we thought  
the japs were coming in on us.  
You remember  
what you did?  
You pulled your. 45,  
and i thought you meant  
to kill yourself.  
But you kept  
yelling out,  
"tell me when  
they come in, lee, i can't see 'em,  
but tell me  
where they are, and i'll shoot 'em. "  
Well, i was  
scared to death  
and layin' on  
the ground waitin' for a jap bayonet.  
But i kept  
thinking something.  
I thought,  
"that boy schmiddy  
has more guts  
than any man alive. "  
I was wrong, al.  
I think  
you were hopped up by excitement,  
like you'd taken  
a shot or something.  
I don't think

you got any guts, al.  
I think you're  
kind of yellow.  
You haven't got  
guts to see ruth.  
Shut up, shut up!  
You haven't got guts  
to pay off on a bet!  
You didn't enlist  
in the marine corps  
because you had any  
sense in your head.  
You didn't care about  
this was the u. s. a. And you lived in it.  
You didn't know  
what the war was about, and you didn't care.  
You're a hopped-up kid  
lookin' for excitement...  
that's a lie,  
and you're a stinkin' liar.  
You're saying  
those things  
'cause you know  
i can't crack you in your lyin' face.  
Ok...  
then ask yourself a question.  
Would you do it  
over again?  
If you knew you was  
gonna be blind,  
would you do it  
over again?  
Or would you ask  
for shore duty, maybe?  
Al, look.  
In a war,  
somebody gets it, and you're it.  
Don't you think  
i'd crawl  
on my hands and  
knees to a doctor  
if he could take an  
eye out of my head  
and put it



into yours?  
But he can't, al,  
he can't.  
Believe me,  
you ain't been a sucker.  
There ain't a guy  
who's been killed or disabled  
in this war  
who's been a sucker.  
I know it's  
a stinkin' war, but it has to be won.  
And you're  
one of the guys  
who lost some chips  
in the winning.  
Everybody's  
got problems.  
I know you're  
in a tough spot,  
but it ain't  
peaches and cream for everybody else.  
What problems  
have you got? You're in one piece, ain't you?  
Your wife don't have  
to turn over in her insides when she sees you.  
When you go for a job,  
there ain't nobody gonna say,  
"we got no use  
for ex-heroes like you. "  
That's what  
you think.  
Sure, there'll be  
guys who won't hire you,  
even when  
they know you can handle a job.  
But there's guys  
that won't hire me  
because  
my name is diamond instead of jones,  
'cause  
i celebrate passover instead of easter.  
Do you see  
what i mean?  
You and me,

we need the same kind of a world.  
We need a country  
to live in  
where nobody  
gets booted around for any reason.  
Aw, i'm all mixed up...  
mixed up and scared.  
Draggin' at the heels  
and yellow.  
Oh, no, no,  
I... i wasn't telling the truth before.  
You're not yellow.  
Aw, you're  
a swell guy.  
You're a pure sort  
of a guy if i ever saw one, but...  
don't leave  
all your guts back on the 'canal.  
You need 'em  
now, too.  
That girl  
loves you, al.  
You two  
can make out.  
She's the real goods.  
Ok, lee.  
But now  
we send that wire.  
Didn't what i said  
mean anything to you?  
Yeah.  
It means  
send that wire.  
It's good we're late.  
Ruth got that wire, then.  
Yeah.  
It's too bad we can't  
get those navy crosses together.  
We won 'em together;  
we oughta collect 'em together.  
Say, al...  
you hold any hard  
feelings about what i said last night?  
Nah, forget it.

Say, you don't have  
to come to the hospital with me.  
Your wife's sittin'  
in new york, bitin' her fingernails.  
We're late enough  
already.  
It's all right.  
The trains run pretty often.  
Well, maybe  
there's a navy car waitin' for me.  
Or you can just  
stick me in a cab.  
Well, i'd like  
to get you settled.  
Come in.  
Your bags are  
in the vestibule, gentlemen.  
Mr. Schmid, i heard  
that march of time broadcast  
about what you done  
on guadalcanal,  
and i saw  
your picture in life magazine.  
And i want to say  
i feel honored you rode in my car.  
Thanks.  
And i read you were  
there with him, sir.  
Thanks for letting  
us stay up so late last night.  
No. Like i said,  
it's been an honor.  
I want to navigate  
this on my own.  
Your bags are  
right there, gentlemen.  
Boy. It sure smells  
like philly, all right.  
You know, not so long ago,  
i left from the same place.  
Ain't it grand  
to be home?  
Say, you don't  
see ruth around here, do you?

No.  
That's fine.  
Now that's  
off my mind.  
Uh, do you wanna  
wait here a second?  
There's a conductor  
over there i want to ask about trains.  
I wanna gauge my time.  
Sure, go ahead.  
Stick here  
with the bags a minute, will you?  
I'll be all right.

**Porter:**

I recognize you  
from al's snapshot.  
You're ruth.  
Yes.  
I'm lee diamond.  
Didn't you get the telegram?  
Yes, but i decided  
to come anyway.  
Lee, you've  
got to help me.  
I have to get him  
back among his friends, where he lived.  
He's got to know  
that we...  
he's pretty set  
on not going.  
Where are you  
taking him now?  
Navy hospital.  
Well, he's got to come  
home first, even if it's just for an hour.  
It'd mean so much  
right now.  
If he won't go  
with you, he won't.  
You'll just have  
to try.  
I've got  
al's car with me.

Couldn't you lie to him  
and tell him it's a navy car, maybe?  
I don't know. It...  
i want one chance, lee,  
won't you give it to me?  
It's his whole life  
i'm fighting for.  
Yeah. I know.  
And yours.  
Al, here's luck.  
Number one,  
there's a navy car waitin' for you;  
number two,  
i can get a train to new york  
in 15 minutes.  
Do you mind  
if i take you up on that proposition?  
Sure, lee.  
Go right ahead. Thanks.  
Your bag's  
on your right.  
Here's the navy car.  
There's  
a good-looking wave ready to take you.  
A wave?  
Say, that's class.  
Don't step out of line.  
She's a loo-ie. Ha ha.  
I guess i won't  
see you for a long time, huh, lee?  
Well, maybe  
after my furlough,  
i can drop off  
and see you on my way back to san diego.  
Hey, that would be  
great, if you could.  
You'll probably see  
a lot more action before this is over.  
Looks that way,  
my arm's coming along good now.  
It'll be funny,  
sittin' around,  
thinking of you landing  
on a beachhead again.

When i hit the beach,  
i'll mark the first nip  
for you, al.  
Yeah. Get 'em  
in the eyes.  
Right in the eyes!  
Gosh...  
that kind of popped  
out of me  
without me  
even thinking of it.  
Ha ha.  
Take care  
of yourself, al.  
Likewise.  
I'm gonna miss you, you old ball of fire.  
Yeah. Likewise.  
Say, uh, what were  
them old hebrew words you told me?  
Sholem alechem?  
Yeah. Well, uh...  
sholem alechem,  
kid.  
That goes double  
for you, al.  
Well, i'm off  
to the beachhead.  
Ok, lieutenant.  
I'll write you, al.  
Thanks.  
So long, lee.  
So long, al.  
I know  
where we are now...  
passin'  
independence hall.  
I used to remember  
hearing the bell strike the hour.  
Somehow, whenever  
it struck 12 noon, i got hungry.  
Out on guadalcanal,  
i remembered that bell whenever i was hungry.  
Good day for huntin'.  
Cold and crisp.

Had my huntin' coat  
and boots on... be all right.  
Ever go huntin'?  
Mm-hmm.  
Couldn't hit the broadside  
of a barn right now.  
Got eye trouble.  
That's why i'm here...  
get 'em fixed up.  
Are we  
at the hospital?  
Mm-hmm.  
Steps.  
I used to count steps  
when i was a kid.  
Now i'm back  
at it again.  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.  
Any more?  
Uh-huh.  
7, 8, 9...  
ruth...  
you're home now.  
Please forgive me  
for doing it. I had to.  
Why? It's no good.  
Now, be  
reasonable, al, it's christmas eve.  
I didn't have  
the heart  
to tell ella mae  
about your wire.  
She has dinner  
all ready for you, in your honor, and...  
loretta has  
a present for you.  
It won't work.  
I'm not going in.  
You can tell 'em  
anything you want.  
You're still  
the same stubborn...  
look, if you and i  
are finished, ok.

But why can't you stay  
to a christmas party with your friends?

**Loretta:**

Oh, al.

Hiya, kid.

I read all about you  
in the newspapers.

You killed 200 japs,  
didn't you, al?

So they tell me.

Come on inside.

I'll take your bag.

I'll show you  
the way.

You got hurt  
in the eyes, didn't you?

Yes, i did.

Sometimes

i need some help.

Ma? Al's home.

What's it like  
when you can't see good?

Is it like  
being in a dark room?

You got it.

Al! Oh, it's so good  
to see you.

I don't see  
why i can't be sentimental, too,  
especially  
under mistletoe.

Hi, ella mae.

How's jim?

Oh, he's fine.

He'll be home from work  
any minute now.

Give me your coat.

Now, you just  
make yourself right at home again.

Loretta, you come on  
in the kitchen  
and help me get  
the drinks ready.



Al and ruth,  
you go on in there and sit down.  
Sofa still  
in the same place?  
Yes, everything's  
just the same.  
Smoke?  
No, thanks.  
I don't smoke, al, remember?  
Yeah. I remember.  
Do you have a match?  
Got one.  
Things pretty much  
the same, huh?  
Yes. Everybody's working  
a little harder, of course.  
Things are  
rationed, too.  
Yeah. I heard  
all about it.  
As long as i'm  
staying for dinner,  
you might  
as well know  
how they feed chow  
at the hospital.  
I mean, with people  
with eye trouble.  
They use  
the clock method.

**Potatoes at 12:**

on the plate,

**vegetables at 3:**

**Meat at 6:**

You see?  
Virginia wrote me, al.  
Oh. Great little  
fixer, that girl.  
She's wonderful.  
Yes. She's ok.  
You're looking fine, al.

How about you?  
You change  
your hairdo or anything?  
No, I... i look  
the same, i guess.  
You still wear those  
silly-lookin' hats?  
I guess you'd think so.  
We're awfully  
proud of you, al.  
Aw.  
Cocktails, al,  
we're being very festive in your honor.  
Cocktails? That's  
class, all right.  
Have some nuts?  
Sure. Thanks.  
Oh. Daddy,  
al's here!  
Where?  
Right there.  
Al, you old  
no-good marine.  
How are you?  
Boy...  
gee, it's good  
to see you again.  
Isn't it great  
to have him back?  
Am i glad  
you could make it for christmas with us.  
Me, too.  
Al? Here's  
your gun, al.  
Thought you might  
like to see how clean i kept it.

**Ella mae:**

down, dear, he doesn't want it right now.  
Here's  
your drink, al. Oh, thanks.  
Now, you go on upstairs  
and get cleaned up.  
I won't have

my dinner spoiled.  
No, dear.  
There,  
you see that, al? I'm still henpecked.  
Ha ha.  
Sounds it.  
I'm having a cocktail  
too, al... ginger ale and grape juice.  
Same old stuff,  
huh?  
You betcha.  
There's some new  
boys up the block.  
Kinda rough,  
but i found a smooth one.  
Ha ha.  
I bet you did.  
We have a super tree  
this year, al.  
Almost touches  
the ceiling. Swell.  
You want me to tell  
you what's on it? Never mind.  
There's a great  
big star on top, and underneath...  
never mind, loretta,  
i don't wanna hear about it!  
Oh, honey.  
Excuse me.  
Of course  
i want to hear about your christmas tree.  
I'm just tired  
from the train, that's all.  
It's a nice tree.  
Lots of colored  
lights.  
Sure, honey, sure.  
Forgive me.  
In a minute,  
you can tell me all about it, huh?  
All right.  
I forgive you.  
Thanks.  
How was

your trip, al?  
Ok. Every state  
sounded alike.  
Your old room's  
all ready.  
It's got new wallpaper.  
I did it myself.  
It's a little lumpy,  
but it's clean.  
Sorry, jim,  
i've got other plans.  
I'm going to chicago,  
to live with my brother.  
Oh, i, uh...  
didn't know that.  
Well, i'll see you  
in a minute, folks.  
I gotta help ella mae  
in the kitchen.  
But, al...  
yeah?  
I thought you were  
going to stay here and marry ruth.  
Loretta and i have  
talked everything over, al.  
She's quite  
grown up now. I'll say i am.  
Too big  
to give me a kiss?  
Big girls  
kiss, too.  
Mm, you've been  
practicing. Uh-huh.  
On stevie,  
the smooth boy i told you about.  
Ha ha. It felt  
smooth, too.  
Al? You're  
not different, are you?  
Of course he's not.  
Ma says all  
soldiers come back different.  
She said you'd  
be different, too.

I'm a little different,  
i suppose.  
No, you're not.  
Can't see loretta's  
christmas tree, can i?  
I can't see you.  
Doesn't that make me  
different?  
No, i don't  
mean your eyes. I mean you.  
You're not different.  
No?  
No...  
i think you're  
just the same.  
I can tell.  
Thanks.

**Jim:**

come and get it.  
Dining room still in the same place?  
Sure.  
Am i sittin'  
where i always used to?  
Yes, right next  
to ella mae.  
Watch me make this  
on my own.  
There. You see?  
There have been 20 babies  
born on this block  
since you left, al.  
Guess that always  
happens in wartime.  
Train whistle  
still go at night? Sure.  
Bet you didn't remember  
to light the candles, did you?  
Oh, dear, no.  
Here you are.  
Remember me, ella mae?  
The best little  
candle-lighter in philadelphia.

**Ella mae:**

There.

**Jim:**

a blind fellow working at our factory now.

Loretta, stop  
reaching for things.

Haven't you got  
a tongue?

Sure, mom.

But my arm's longer.

It's time for you  
to take your present to stevie now.

Go upstairs  
and get our coats.

This blind fellow  
i was telling you about  
went to a school.

You know, it's  
a funny thing, al, but...

he can feel those  
small rises better than i can see 'em.

It's god's truth.

How does he get  
to the plant? By bus.

Somebody  
takes him, huh?

Oh, no, he goes  
by himself.

Al, i went to see  
mr. Davidson last week,  
and he said  
that if you'd go to the same school  
for a couple  
of months,  
you could have  
your old job back anytime you wanted.

He did, eh?

Yes.

Well, it just doesn't  
fit in with my plans.

**Loretta:**

the christmas tree lights.

I'm all  
ready, mom.  
We promised to  
drop in on these neighbors of ours.  
Their youngster has  
a crush on loretta, and he's sick.  
We won't  
be gone long.  
I'll give you  
my present tonight if you stay, al.  
Ok.  
There's some beer  
in the icebox. Help yourself.  
Thanks.  
We'll be right back.  
Now, don't you dare  
touch those dishes.

**Ruth:**

You're gonna  
love my present.  
It's just what  
you've always wanted.  
Swell, loretta.  
Shall we go into  
the living room, al?  
Sure. I don't need  
any help.  
I can find my way  
around this house blindfolded.  
Peace on the earth,  
goodwill to men  
turn the radio off,  
will you, ruth?  
It's some kids  
outside.  
The world  
in solemn stillness lay  
to hear  
the angels sing  
for lo, the days  
are hastening on  
by prophets  
seen of old...

I want you to take me  
to the hospital. Now.  
But you said you...  
i said i'd stay  
because i didn't want any arguments.  
Now i want to go.  
Loretta will be  
awfully upset.  
Am i going to have  
my life run by loretta?  
I wouldn't have  
been stuck here in the first place  
if it hadn't been  
for that kid.  
Now, don't blame her.  
I brought you here.  
Then get me out.  
Al, i want  
one fair chance to talk to you,  
and you've got  
to give it to me.  
Ok, you can  
talk your head off.  
There's nothing  
you can say  
i ain't  
said to myself a thousand times.  
What's the use?  
You don't know  
what i want to say.  
You don't even  
think of me.  
Always trying to run  
the whole world by yourself.  
Don't pull  
any tears on me.  
That's why i didn't  
want to see you in the first place.  
I'm not pulling  
any tears on you.  
You didn't want to see me  
because you love me.  
Yet you're ready to let  
some fool idea in your head



wreck both of us.  
Ruth, i'm helpless.  
I'd be a drag on you all your life.  
Why don't you let  
me decide that?  
Because i'm  
nobody's lap dog, that's why.  
You think i want  
to live out my life  
knowing every day  
of the year  
you married me  
out of pity?  
I got too much pride  
for that. I'd rather live alone.  
Pride...  
you haven't got any pride!  
You just  
tell yourself that.  
You haven't got  
enough pride to face the truth.  
Virginia told you  
about the jobs.  
You could get  
hundreds of them.  
But you didn't want  
to learn one.  
You want to be lonely.  
You want to feel  
sorry for yourself! You wanna be helpless!  
You haven't got  
the pride to accept being blind like a man.  
Get me  
out of here! I won't.  
Get in that car  
and drive me. I won't.  
You're going to stay here  
and listen to me. I won't drive you.  
That's fine.  
That's great. That ties it up.  
I could beat  
your ears off for saying that.  
But you missed  
one card... i may be blind,

but i know where  
the phone is in this house.  
I'm calling a cab!  
Al!  
I don't need any help.  
Please leave me alone.  
Oh, al,  
don't be hurt.  
I've gotta go  
get that cab.  
If you go out  
of this room now,  
you'll leave me  
to stumble all through my life  
the way  
you just did.  
I don't pity you, al.  
I love you.  
Suppose there never  
was a war, darling.  
What if we were  
married and one day i got hit by a car  
and was left  
a cripple...  
would you  
walk out on me?  
No, you wouldn't.  
Darling, my heart's  
been falling over things all year  
because you've  
been gone.  
I need you, al.  
Sure you'll  
need me, too.  
What's wrong  
with that?  
Why shouldn't  
two people need each other?  
I know these  
last months  
have been awful  
for you, sweetheart.  
And it's only  
because you're fine and decent

that you're  
afraid of being a burden to me.  
But you won't be,  
not you, al.  
You can work.  
We can have  
a family.  
Sure, we'll have  
a problem,  
but everyone  
has problems.  
All married  
couples do.  
People can't let  
each other down because of that.  
I don't know  
what i'll do if you leave me now.  
I need you too much.  
Ruthie, don't.  
I don't want  
to make you cry.  
It's just that i was  
an ordinary guy before,  
and i wasn't  
worth you then.  
And now, i'm less  
than an ordinary guy.  
I can't see.  
Less than ordinary.  
You?  
Oh, sweetheart,  
don't you realize  
that every single  
man who's fought  
is no longer  
ordinary?  
Don't you realize  
that millions and millions of people  
were looking  
to Guadalcanal every day  
when you were  
fighting there?  
They were,  
millions of them.

Every civilized  
person in the world, i guess.  
It wasn't  
any ordinary guy  
who kept the japs  
back that night.  
It was one of  
the most extraordinary fellows in the world.  
You... al schmid.  
South pacific force  
of the united states pacific fleet,  
headquarters  
of the commander.  
In the name of the president  
of the united states,  
the commander,  
south pacific area and south pacific force,  
takes pleasure in presenting  
the navy cross to  
private albert a. Schmid.  
350951,  
united states  
marine corps reserve,  
for service as set forth  
in the following citation.  
"For extraordinary heroism  
in the line of his profession as machine-gunner  
"in the action against  
a strong japanese landing force  
"in the solomon islands  
on august 21, 1942.  
"Schmid's machine-gun squad  
was attacked by the enemy.  
"Lacking the protection  
of riflemen,  
"it was necessary  
for the squad  
"to tear down  
their frontal protection,  
"in order to meet  
the oncoming enemy.  
"Under the greatest  
difficulties,  
"the enemy attack was met

and repulsed.

"In the action,  
schmid was seriously wounded.

"His courage,  
intrepidity, and fortitude  
contributed largely  
to the defeat of the enemy. "

W.f. Halsey.

Admiral, u. s. Navy.

I congratulate you,  
schmid.

I'm mighty proud, sir.

That was  
wonderful, al.

Let's get that cab  
with the red top on.

How do you know  
it's red?

Its kind of fuzzy,  
but it's red, ain't it?

Yes, darling,  
it is red.

Now, look, honey,  
don't get your hopes up.

That doesn't mean  
i'm gonna see good again.

Whichever way it is,  
we'll do it together.

**Man:**

Home.

America, america...

turner entertainment group