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Andersonville

By David W. Rintels

A skirmish has taken advance.
Commence firing!
Hold up!
Josie, go tell the captain
there's just a few of them left.
I think we can swing around and
drive them into his arms.
Yeah.
In five minutes,
unless he tells us no.
Ready.
Aim.
Fire.
Load.
- Fire by file. Commence firing.
- Sergeant says there's a few of them.
We can drive them into you,
unless you say not to.
I don't know there's such a few of them.
- Did you see any on your way?
- No, sir.
- Did you see cavalry?
- No.
Old Jimmy McSpadden.
He'll drive them, he'll drive them.
- You tell him to drive around.
- Sir.
As long as there's no cavalry.
Leave it there!
Hey, boys.
- Cousin Josie, are you hurt?
- No. Are you?
- How are you, sergeant?
- I'll live. Just a scratch.
Not such a few of them
as I thought, huh?
Sorry, lads, should have
known there were horses about.
This war has made me deaf and blind.
Is that James?
And Benjamin too.
My respects.
If you'll detail two of your men...
...I know you'll want

to bury your dead.

I thank you, sir.

You'll stay here

and move on in the morning.

- You got rations and blankets?

- Our haversacks are over there, sir.

- Have them brought over.

- Yes, sir. Jeremiah.

You all lie flat on the ground.

Nobody stands.

Nobody moves till morning.

Cousin.

Did you ever think?

No.

I never did.

What do we do?

Pick our time, make a run for it.

Now.

- They're all watching.

- But it's night.

Once you're in their prison camps, they
got you good. You heard the stories?

Here's what.

I'm gonna stand up real slow.

- You can't stand up.

- And I'm gonna say...

...I have to relieve myself.

They'll send a guard with me.

I got a knife in my pocket.

When they hear and they come after me,
you run for it. You run like the devil.

That farm with the smokehouse
we passed this morning...

...looks like Uncle John's?

- Yeah.

I'll meet you there soon.

- Who'll look after the sergeant?

- Don't worry.

Just give my love

to the ladies in Boston.

We will, sergeant.

Ready?

Yeah.

Listen, I gotta...

Billy!

Told you. Nobody stands,
nobody moves around.

Stay, Josie.

Nineteen Massachusetts?

Second Wisconsin.

You were on our left, second day
at Gettysburg.

- I remember. They couldn't move you.

- They tried hard, though.

They were on Cemetery Ridge.

Gave that place its rightful name.

- When'd they get you, boys?

- Yesterday, back there.

You know where they're taking us?

They won't tell us anything.

Well, I know they're not taking us
to Veracruz to fight Santa Anna.

Huh?

Your attention, gentlemen!

- Now, here's the situation.

- How you fairing, Billy?

You're gonna be here a spell, so...

...make yourself at home.

- Last night.

Stretch out on the ground,
but stay in this area.

We have some supplies coming,
but dispatch didn't say when...

...so it may not be until
after dark, even.

Some of your fellows tore up a tract
just north of here.

Until then, just rest easy.

I know some of you
haven't eaten today.

And we're sorry, but we don't have
anything here. For you or for us.

- But, anyway...

- Come stay with me and the sergeant.

- Billy?

- Yes.

I'm gonna need your help with him.

Okay?

Okay.

Till then, just, please be patient.

All right?

You writing Bob's wife?

Yeah.

Right.

Well...

...when you finish with that one,
would you mind writing one for me?

- Sure.

- Afraid I never did learn my letters.

What's it like, being so educated?

I'm just an apprentice.

You just realize how much it is
you don't know.

Well, in that case,

I should be a writing fool.

Go on, write your letter.

I don't mean to be bothering you.

My father's a printer. He taught me.

My mother always read to me
while I was growing up.

My mother will have to go to
the priest to read what we send her.

I don't think she's ever got
a letter in her life.

Everybody up. Let's get a move on.

Get on your feet.

Officers. Over here, please.

This train's not for you.

On your feet now. I said, get up.

Let's go. Let's go,

Massachusetts, stay together.

- Sgt. McSpadden. Cpl. Day.

- Capt. Russell.

- How are you, sergeant? How's the...?

- Never better, sir.

You've always been good soldiers.

Always did what had to be done.

Bob's wife's address is on this. You
may have an easier time getting it sent.

- You take care of the boys, now.

- Yes, sir. Don't you worry, captain.

Just hate having to leave them.

We've been through a lot together.
You're in charge. You do what you can.
Something happens, you're in command.
- I'll do my best, sir.
- I know you will. God bless you, boys.
- Get in the car, now.
- Come on, guys.
I'll mail your letter.
We'll see you in Boston, captain.
You can bet it'll be a sunshiny day.
- Come on. Push them in back. Let's go.
- All right.
- Get going. Come on.
- We'll see you.
No, no, I don't think so.
Come on, now.
Sir.
Let's get a blanket in here.
Left, company. March.
Forward march.
Come on. Pick up your feet.
- Come on, now, hurry it up.
- Whoa. Hold on there, Yankees.
- Caught us a couple of runaways.
- Sweet Jesus.
Come on, now.
Let's go, you Yankees.
Come on, now.
Now, halt.
Teach you to run.
All right. Come on.
Open the gate.
And what do you call this
little piece of heaven?
This? This is Andersonville.
- All right, now. Let's get a move on.
- Come on.
- Move, move.
- Get in there.
Let's go. Move it.
- The hell you waiting on, boy?
- Move it on, you dirty Yanks.
Come on. Move it. Move it.
Get in there.

I'm sick of looking at you.

- Hey, take a look at that.

- Anybody from the 5th New York?

- Where you from?

- Any word about the exchange?

Nice, fresh fish.

Fresh fish. Fresh fish.

Give it to me!

- Give it here.

- Move. Fresh fish. Move.

Hey, hey, fresh fish.

Welcome to Andersonville.

Fine-looking place, don't you think?

For a hog pen, maybe.

- Hey, where'd youse get caught at?

- Cold Harbor.

Well, that's good. Means Grant's going forward, Bobby Lee's going back.

Let me show you around.

Get a good place to stay.

You want to be up by the wall,
away from the swamp.

It don't stink so bad there. There
ain't so many bugs. People neither.

You need to shave. Come on,

I'll show you where you can shave.

- Come on with me.

- Tyce, hold it. Hold it.

Munn, leave them alone.

Stay away from them.

Munn, you leave them alone! Get away!

I know what kind of man you are,
and you just stay away.

Let the fish go.

- We'll roast them another time.

- Don't waste your time with that bunch.

- Come back with your pards.

- And you know who they are, don't you?

We'll take care of you later.

Those are the Raiders. Hyenas is more
like it. And you stay away from them.

They steer the new boys over, whack
you on the head and kill you.

Try to take your stuff from you.

- Very much obliged, friend.

- Thank you.

Friend.

You don't know who I am?

Sarge? Josiah?

Now, old Dick. Now, I
signed up with you, young man.

I fought with all of you at Seven Pines
and the Chickamauga and Antietam.

- Dick Potter.

- Yes.

- Dick Potter. My God.

- Oh, my God, is that you?

Oh, my God!

- Dick Potter. Dickie!

- There's no food in here.

- Somebody stole my uniform off my back.

- You look fine there, Dick.

- Thank you, Tucker.

- We thought you were killed.

- We thought they got you at Antietam.

- I weren't killed.

They shot me in both my legs,
but I survived.

- I'll be damned!

- You're surprised to see me, huh, Josie?

- When are we going fishing again?

- We're going.

- The best fisherman in New Bedford.

- Yeah, yeah. That's saying a lot.

- God, I can't believe it.

- It's good to see you boys.

Listen, we gotta stay away from these
Raiders. Let's head up over here.

- Why doesn't somebody stop them?

- They run the place, sarge.

What do you mean, they run
the place? What about the Rebs?

- Why don't they stop them?

- Stop them? Hell, they trade with them.

Whiskey, food, rations.

Whatever they need, guards give them.

The 7th Vermont was in here. Took
their coats, shoes, blankets, rations.

- Jesus.
- Cold nights. Didn't have a chance.
- They didn't last a week.
- And they're on our side?
Bounty jumpers. Crawled out of the
sewers in New York for the money.
Most of them thought they'd run
off before they'd see any fighting.
So I ask you again.
Where is my bridle and halter?
What? You don't care?
No rations today unless the goddamn
thief returns what he stole from me.
If you are digging tunnels...
...you will suffer the consequences.
Tunnels are useless!
Even if you are outside, I give any
two men a 12-hour start...
...and then track you with the dogs.
And you will suffer the consequences.
But why bother anyway?
I know absolutely
there are talks going on...
...this moment for exchange.
Any day now, all of you
will be paroled in quick order.
So we understand each other.
No bridle! No halter!
No rations!
You go on about your own business,
now, you know what's good for you.
They're gonna starve us to death
over his bridle!
Wirz is a goddamn liar!
- Give us anything.
- We've been through the mill already.
You boys didn't hear anything about
any prisoner exchange, did you?
- No.
- No?
Damn Wirz tells that to all the new
boys so they don't try and run off.
- Dick.
- Dick?

- Dick, you all right?

- You haven't eaten today?

No, I didn't eat yesterday either.

Somebody stole a bridle,
and Wirz is punishing the whole camp.

Here.

- What is that, salt pork?

- Yeah.

Oh, my God. I ain't seen salt pork
since I been here.

Rebs gave it to us before
they put us on the train.

- I don't want it if the Rebs...

- Dick. Come on.

- Go ahead.

- Eat.

God bless you.

Wow.

- Have this here onion, Dick.

- An onion?

I forgot what an onion tastes like.

Anybody got anything else?

- Yeah.

- Good?

It's a meal fit for a king!

I feel much better, thanks.

God bless you. You boys wanna take
a walk around, see your new home?

- Yeah.

- Think so.

- Sure.

- All right. Help me up.

Caught these boys trying to escape.

- How long they been in that thing?

- Since the day they caught them.

Is there a surgeon around here? The
sergeant took a bullet in the shoulder.

- I can take you down to sick hall.

- I'm fine, Dick.

It won't do you much good.

I'm gonna show you where
we ain't going fishing, Josiah.

They built this place downstream from
their tents, horses, dogs, everything...

...so they do whatever they do in the water, even before it gets down to us. You're seeing a tenth of what we do to it, once it gets down here. They do everything in there. That's why this place has such a stink to it. Don't worry. You won't notice it after a couple months. There's some boys digging a tunnel to get out.

- Dick, they got kids watching us here?
- Yeah, the Rebs are running out of men. They're robbing the cradle and the grave to guard us.
Hey.

Ethan, don't do it.

It's a trick.

You know you can't trust the Reb.

- Hey, Johnny.
- Ethan.
- You got something to eat?
- Yeah, I got something to eat.
- What you got?
- I got two ears of corn.

I'll give you a dollar for them.

A Yankee greenback for both ears.

You come over here.

- Not me. I'm not coming over there.
- Why not?

Because it's the deadline.

You'll shoot me if I do.

- Who says he will?
- You want something or not?
- Ethan, come on.
- Yeah, I want two ears of corn.

Then step across.

Won't last long if you don't.

Don't trust him, he's a Reb.

Don't trust him.

- Is he playing a game with him?
- Do what you want, Yank.

This isn't a game. These kiddies, they scare me worse than the soldiers. They get a 30-day furlough

if they shoot one of us.
You better hurry. Going fast.
All right.
All right.
Here I come.
Hey, wait. Wait!
- He warned him. He warned him.
- I warned him.
You know the rules.
You all know the rules.
I warned him, lieutenant.
What do they do, Dick?
Shoot you for fun in here?
- Charge!
- Forward.
- Spread out.
- One, two, three.
Ready.
Hold the ranks.
About face.
Forward march!
- Captain? Capt. Wirz.
- Yes, sir.
- Good morning.
- Good morning.
I'm Col. Chandler. This is my aide,
Lt. Dahlgren.
The Department of War has detailed us
to inspect all our prison camps.
We'll try not to create a fuss,
so we may be here some time.
Of course. If there is anything
I can do for...
No, no, you just go on
about your duties.
Should I need to speak with you...
...I'll know where to find you.
Good morning.
Good morning to you, sir.
I feel like I gained 5 pounds of hair
and 10 pounds of bugs.
Well, you could use
a little bit more there, Dick.
Tunnel, tunnel, tunnel!

Where?

Over here.

You, come over here!

Yeah, you, get up! Get up, Yank!

Found the Iowa tunnel. Headed this way.

Oh, well, then.

All right, move along, move along.

Come on, now.

- It's just a well. It's just a well!

- 184th Pennsylvania.

Gleason's men.

It's just a well, I tell you.

You gotta believe me.

- Shut up.

- I didn't do anything wrong.

- Hurry it up.

- No!

Dick, are those the fellas you say
are digging the tunnel?

You're my sarge...

...but there's some questions
in here that you just can't ask, sir.
Please go tell the sergeant I'd be
very grateful for a private word with him.
Tell him we mean no harm
and he can trust us. Go on, now.

Yes, sir.

Sgt. Gleason, I don't wanna do
anything against the grain here...

...but I've got some very good men
who'll do anything they can...

...to get out of this place.

So if there's any way we can help you...

...we'd be much obliged.

Call your men.

- Boys.

- Let's go.

- What's your name, sergeant?

- Jimmy McSpadden.

Bring him in.

All right, find a spot.

Benson, watch the door.

Yes, sergeant.

I told Sgt. Gleason we'd help with

the digging and be glad for the chance.

You men, you got any tools?

Got any tools for digging, men?

Knives, forks, spoons, pans, plates.

- Whatever.

- All that works.

- Dig them out, boys.

- That's perfect.

Cups.

What are the chances exactly
of getting outside the walls?

We know a thing or two about tunneling.

These gentlemen are from

West Pennsylvania. They're coal miners.

And when we get outside...

That's right. What happens
when we get outside?

They heard Wirz talking about the dogs.

We saw the dogs.

Who is this Wirz anyway?

Well, he's Prussian or Swiss or something.

He joined up with the Rebs.

He wants to be a general.

We shot his arm up pretty good
in some battle.

We got a surprise for him.

We got this...

Tobias.

Sir.

Sergeant, these men can be trusted.

All right, now. Olek, open it up.

- Jesus.

- What do you think of that, huh?

A slave working on the wall
brought us a map.

I mean, hell, we can go creek and river
the whole way.

Swim, float on logs, creeks to Flint River,
Flint to Apalachicola...

...Apalachicola down
to the Gulf of Mexico.

No dog alive can track us
if we never touch land.

- He's right.

- When can we start the digging?
- Soon as you eat in the morning.
- If you eat.

It's hard work. You gotta keep your strength up and your wits about you. Things can get a bit squirrely down there after a time.

How long will it take?

I figure a month, maybe more, maybe less. Now, listen here.

Pennsylvania boys know this, and you Massachusetts men gotta learn it quick.

What goes on in here stays in here.

Good.

Well, all we have is some hardtack, but you're welcome to it.

- Oh, yes, sir.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Dick?

No, I had mine.

Thank you.

I gotta... I got some hard...

Sergeant.

All right, give him some air.

Massachusetts men, outside.

Yeah, Pennsylvania men too. Let's give him some air. Martin, you stay here.

Sorry, I got a little addled.

That's all right, sergeant.

Took a bullet two days ago.

It's gotta come out.

All I got is this hunting knife.

You ever do anything like that before?

I don't see as we have a choice.

I guess not. See if we got some rainwater out there and bring it in.

Yeah, yeah.

Look, I wish I had some whiskey or something.

Me too. Of course, I always wish

I had some whiskey.

- All right.
- All right.

- Have at it.

- Okay.

I've got a new man who needs
some whiskey. I've got a shirt for trade.

Raiders got some whiskey.

Looking for some whiskey to trade.

Got a good shirt.

Looking to trade for some
whiskey. I got a sergeant.

They got whiskey up there.

Raiders got whiskey.

Go up there, you come back without
your shirt, without your whiskey...

...without one of your legs, if you're lucky.

We'll have our day.

When?

We'll have it.

I'm looking for some whiskey.

I got a good shirt to trade for whiskey.

Dickie, nice haircut.

Thank you, sir. I want you to meet Josiah.

- This is Patrick.

- Patrick.

- Drummer boy from New York.

- Nice to meet you.

- They caught him in Culpeper, right?

- Yes, sir.

He's been here since they built this place.

We call him the oldest man in here.

- Give us a hand tonight?

- Sure.

- We're looking for whiskey.

- Got a good shirt. Need some whiskey.

We're looking for whiskey.

Sounds good, boys.

Louder, boys, louder.

A man needs all the music he can get.

Well, I seen

some nice, full haversacks, boys.

Hey, little Munn, any of them fresh fish
look wounded to you?

Not too many.

Oh, that's too bad.

Give me your cup, little rascal.

How the supplies doing, Curtis?
I ain't seen bacon in over a week.
- I'll see to it.
- You do that.
Delaney, I want a strict accounting
of our catch tonight.
You hear that, gentlemen?
We are doing business here,
and don't you forget it.
Gotta balance the books, huh?
That's right. Square the ledger.
Every day, boys, the population's
getting bigger here.
Each new fish brings something extra
to our table.
Stansfield, Sullivan...
...you keep them fires stoked.
We'll have a nice, long night of it.
Oh, you like music. I can tell.
You play anything?
No, I wish I did.
Why don't you sit up here? I'll teach you
a thing or two about the banjo.
- You will?
- Sure.
You stick your finger...
See this notch? Here it is.
Is there any way to get
a letter out of here, Dick?
Yeah. You give the guards \$2.
You got \$2?
- No.
- Well, I got \$ 1 squirreled away...
...and I'd be glad to give it to you.
But they're gonna demand 2.
Josie, I gotta ask you.
You think my father knows
that I'm a prisoner?
If you all thought
that I was killed then...
I mean, I had written them this letter,
but them bastards, they...
They wouldn't send it.
They said \$ 1 wasn't enough.

Just the idea that he thinks that I
might be dead, you know...
Well, just think, when you show up
alive and kicking...
I don't know about the kicking.
Hey, Dick.
Maybe tomorrow
we take them grayback racing.
What?
Graybacks? What's that?
In here, we call lice "graybacks."
We race them and bet on them.
We call Johnny Reb "grayback," right?
Well, in here, we call lice "grayback"
and Johnny Reb "lice."
Oh, that gets better every time I hear it.
The way you kill lice in here is...
...you hold your clothes up
as close as you can to the fire...
...without it catching, and you'll hear
them go... They'll pop right off.
As far as the gnats and the chiggers
and the flies...
...there's nothing you can do about them.
They get you even at the night.
Rain. You boys get a lot of rain here.
Yeah, and when it rains,
you collect it in your clothes...
...and wring it out to drink.
Don't drink from that swamp.
I'm telling you, you'll get sick.
It'll kill you. I've seen it happen.
So, what do you do when it don't rain?
You do without.
You do? How?
Teach yourself.
You can get a swallow or two from one
of these wells every now and then...
...but, Josie, a lot of these boys
are not gonna be able to.
But you're gonna be able
to do it. Hear me?
Look, here. Patrick!
Hi.

This is for your sergeant.
Well, where'd you get this?
Well, wait a minute, the shirt.
Let me get that shirt. I had it,
but the sergeant...
The sergeant will taste this,
he'll think he's gone to heaven.
Will you show me
what else I need to do, Dick?
To stay alive in this place?
We're gonna go fishing again, Josiah,
just as soon as we get out of here.
I think about that more than anything else
since I been in here, casting a good line.
You know, out of all my friends...
...my father, he always liked you
and your cousin the best.
You know what? Me too.
Raiders! Raiders!
Everybody grab something.
Look out, there's more coming in
from over there. You...
- Go look after the sergeant.
- Right.
Take him!
That's him!
Get him!
Get everything they got, boys.
- Get everything!
- Get everything!
- Get all the shirts.
- There's two of them.
Give me that.
Let's go! Let's go! Let's go.
- I got a banjo!
- Good for you, little Munn. Good for you.
Stick with Collins, boys.
You'll live like kings.
- You all right?
- My shoes.
Good fight, men.
Massachusetts men, we all right?
My banjo! My banjo.
- We'll get it. Martin, we'll get it back.

- Where's Josie?

Dick's dead!

Dick Potter. He's dead.

Dickie.

No!

Ninth Michigan.

Nineteenth Detachment Indiana.

Well, now, you been taking Dick
to the dead house?

Who's the Secesh?

Well, now, that is a very
important government colonel...

...the government sent down here
to inspect us.

Ain't it nice to know they care?

Got it coming from the dead house.

- Good to brace the tunnel with that.

- That's what I figured.

What are we doing here, boys?

Is that your banjo, Martin?

Was.

- Sarge, how's the arm?

- All right. How are you?

- How's the eye?

- Buggered my knee.

Billy, get some rainwater,
clean up the sarge.

- Trade for it if you have to.

- Yes, sir.

He's a good, good lad.

You know how many they got lying
in the dead house from today?

Forty-six.

Sweet Jesus.

That's two by the Raiders, one shot at
the deadline. The rest of them... Starved?

I don't know. They look water-bloated.

They're tying nametags around
the big toes of most of them.

So when they bury them,
there'll be some kind of record.

- You do that for Dickie?

- Yeah.

Good.

He told me again about the water.
We can't drink from the swamp.
It'll kill you.
- We have to tell the men.
- Right.
Tuck! Thomas!
- Boys!
- Wisconsin, Ohio, over here.
How's your sergeant?
He don't look so good.
Took a crack in the eye.
I can still see good enough...
...to see you're no prettier
than you were yesterday, Tyce.
Now, listen. Go ahead, Josie.
Last night, Dick was telling me
about the water here.
You can't drink from the swamp.
It'll kill you.
Tuck.
We need some shelter.
Sew us up something.
They got my kit last night,
my needles, thread, my shears.
Somebody'll have some.
Got some buttons?
Some brass buttons,
trade them to the Rebs.
Okay, Tuck, we'll get you
a needle and thread.
You call that music?
I've heard better noise come
out of dried chicken guts.
Here! Give us something
a man can dance to.
Dance, Collins!
Jig it up!
Anybody got \$2?
I need \$2 to give to a guard
to send a letter to Dick's father.
God bless you.
All right. Now, Thomas.
- We'll get it back.
- Don't do it.

- Thomas.
- That's foolish.
There's 10 of them for every one of...
I need you here!
Get these rations out of the road.
Jesus.
That belongs to him.
And we want it back.
You do, do you?
Who's your best man?
He is.
That's the best you got? He's a baby.
Runt of the litter.
All right, boys, make the ring.
Draw the mark here.
Georgie!
Three cheers for Georgie!
Hip, hip, hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah!
Any of you wants to come in and get
a better look, you step right up.
- The bet is Georgie, under three minutes.
- I'll take some.
Thomas, you look out for this one.
He's a bad one.
He's killed men in here before.
Don't turn your back on him.
He don't fight fair.
All right. All right.
Get up!
This time, we'll get you three of them.
We'll make it a fair fight.
Come on!
Take his jacket off.
There you go, Thomas.
All right!
Hit him!
Come on, Tommy!
Yeah!
You dirty coward, that's enough!
Okay, okay.
That's enough.
- He said, that's enough.
- All right, boys! All right.

We've had our fun for the day.
We want to leave something...
...for tomorrow, now, don't we?
Next time, it'll be me and you, Limber Jim.
Yes. One fine day.
Easy, boys. Watch his head.
- Easy.
- Patrick.
Here's some water, Tom.
Easy.
- Watch his bleeding.
- All right.
- We didn't get it back, did we?
- No, sir.
- I'm sorry, Martin.
- Next time.
There won't be a next time.
There will be no more fighting.
There will be no more worrying
about the Raiders. You're wasting our time.
You're wasting our strength,
and that's the end of it.
You wanna live?
You wanna get out of here?
Then we gotta tunnel.
"Tunnels are useless.
But why bother anyway?
No."
Oh, boy.
Wait a minute, Massachusetts brother.
Wait a minute.
That's enough for you today.
You've been down three times.
The quicker we get it dug,
the quicker we get out.
All right, then. Go ahead.
Where's my shovel?
Hey.
You have any troubles down there,
you just pull on this rope three times.
Martin?
How do you stay
under the ground digging without...
A few minutes and I...

I just get...

It's what I do.

- It doesn't scare you, being down there?

- No.

Was it hard the first time?

My father took me.

All his friends worked the mine.

Yeah, Sgt. Gleason's father
works the mine. Tobias' father.

Everybody worked the mines.

I look forward to it.

- How did you learn to play the banjo?

- My father taught me that too.

- You really think I can learn?

- Yes, sir.

Yes, I do.

I could tell the other night.

I could tell you were...

You're gonna be good.

Real good.

We'll keep watch with you.

Long overdue, I say.

Why just a watch?

Why not wade into them
and start breaking heads?

- That's what we should be talking about!

- Keep your voice down.

You can't just wade into them.

There's too many of them.

We'll get every man here.

Should have done it two months ago.

It's just that everyone thought
we was gonna be exchanged.

Sure we will. Any year now.

Did it when we should've,
my brother would be alive.

- Maybe we ought to take them on, huh?

- Come on, what are we feared of?

We're not a bunch

of little girls, you know.

You can't keep a secret in a place like this.

You try and get together 1000 men

to take them on...

...because that's what it'll take...

...and they'll get you first.
They will.
There's a reason I don't want
to do anything just now.
- Some of us are working on a tunnel.
- Yeah? well, so are we, but...
Well, what do you think?
Well, for now we just keep a watch.
Not go after them.
But any of the Raiders come fore,
the others will help out.
We'll all stand up for each other.
All right?
Nobody say yes if you don't mean it.
You shouldn't have told
about us working on a tunnel.
I know. As soon as I said it, l...
Tunnel traitors turn you in
for half an apple.
They were making all these excuses.
- We gotta tell Gleason.
- Yep.
Tunnel has to be rushed now,
whether we're tired or hungry or sick.
- We don't have a month anymore.
- Sergeant, I'm sorry.
- I know I made a mistake...
- The three of you. Get outside.
Watch whoever heard you.
Any of them is a traitor, goes near a Reb,
you know what the hell to do.
Grundy.
There.
Tobias. I'll tell Gleason.
Sergeant.
It's Grundy.
All right, boys. We've got a tunnel traitor.
Quickly, now. Quickly.
Lieutenant.
Lieutenant.
Hey, lieutenant.
I've got something for you.
- What do you got for me, Yankee?
- I'll meet you by the gate.

- Right now. All right?
- Tell me what you got now.
- I've got informa...
- I've got a letter to be mailed, sir.
I'm told it takes 2 greenbacks.
Can you help me out?
Is it unsealed?
I'm gonna read it, now.
- Yes, sir. It is.
- You're a dead man.
Hey.
- Hey, now!
- What are you looking for, lieutenant?
Lose something, did you?
I'll tell you what he's looking for,
a 30-day furlough, the son of a bitch.
By God, you bring him out here
on the double right now.
Let go of him! Pot-liquor bowl
full of you Yankee sons of bitches!
You're gonna wish that you had crossed
that deadline and got your ass shot.
Goddamn you, you Yankee sons of bitches!
Thank you.
It's a good tunnel.
Good work, boys.
With the little time we had and the tools.
It's not that good,
but it's good for all that we need.
Good job, boys.
All right, the first thing we have to do
is figure out the order we go in.
The first ones out have more
chance before the alarm.
More time to get away
from their damned dogs.
Yeah. So we're gonna draw lots
to fix the order we go in.
No.
Massachusetts men talked it over.
It's your tunnel.
You go first.
He's right.
Well, you helped us dig it.

And you, you tunneling fool, Billy.
You get to Pennsylvania,
I got a job for you.
- Got a job for you.
- I'm never going underground again.
- No?
- I just want to get back to New Bedford...
...and breathe some good salt air.
- You'll get that.
Fair is fair. You first.
All right, all right. Agreed.
Now...
...the second thing is, we need
one strong man to be last.
To make sure everybody
gets through in case the support gives way.
He's gotta be there...
...to drag everybody out
in case there's a cave-in.
I'll do that.
It's gotta be a mining man.
He's gotta see that cave-in coming.
I'll stay with him.
- All right.
- John?
What do we do with him?
Leave him tied up there for a week.
It will do him good.
Kill him!
Hold it, lads! Hold it!
He's not going anywhere.
I'm keeping my eye on him
because I'm staying here.
I don't wanna slow you down.
Wait a minute. All we have to do
is get to the river, right?
- What is that? A mile?
- I can't tell from the map.
We'll leave him tied.
Someone will find him in the morning.
- You're coming with us.
- Josie, I don't...
How soon do we go?
I figure there's only a couple

of feet left to dig. An hour or so, maybe.
We should go first chance.
Those bastard Raiders
may come after us anytime.
Yeah, or sell us to the Rebs
for a crust of bread!
We have to kill him, John.
We can't leave him to turn traitor
on someone else's tunnel.
- He's right.
- Should have killed him in the first place!
- No!
- Wait a minute.
- Wait.
- Just do it.
Do it!
Gleason.
But, sergeant...
So now all the boys will know
he's a tunnel traitor.
Now nobody can take this map.
If you're caught,
it would lead them to the rest.
So you gotta study it now
so you can find your way.
I've already done my studying.
Give that man your old boots.
Got anything to trade?
Now, do like I say.
There's just one last thing.
We're not all gonna make it...
...but whoever does is honor bound...
...to get to Grant or Sherman
and tell them what it's like in here.
Tell him how many of his men have died
and that he has got to exchange for us.
That...
We'll leave in two hours, and with
God's luck, we'll all meet at the river.
- Yes, sir.
- Sergeant.
Good luck.
You stay close. Follow me.
Okay.

All right?
Hey, Yank, stop!
- Yankees escaping!
- Yankees escaping. The east wall!
Go! Go get them!
Martin!
Yankees escaping! Get them dogs!
Open the gate!
They're at the east wall!
Saddle up them horses
on the double-quick now!
Martin! Run! Run!
They're about to the woods!
Come on! Move it! Move it!
Come on, you men! Come on, now!
Soldiers, ride hard, now!
Ride hard, now!
Go! Get up there, now! Come on!
Thomas!
You hold there, now! Take this one back.
Put him in the stockade.
There's more game out there,
now, so let's go!
Come on, get up.
That tree. Tree.
Come on.
Come on.
Look. Look.
That's enough!
One, two. One, two...
No! No! No! No! No! Stop!
Halt!
Halt!
These musicians,
they must be much, much better.
And this, what you call marching, you
will drill them until it's dark or after dark...
...if necessary.
They must be perfect tomorrow!
- Absolutely, sir. They will be.
- Oh, colonel.
I hope you don't have to leave before
we can welcome Gen. Winder back.
- Tomorrow morning.

- Oh, too bad...
...because they will improve very much...
- If you spent one hour a day...
...improving the stockade rather than
planning these ridiculous little ceremonies...
Colonel, excuse me.
I'm in charge of the guard force...
You're responsible for
operation of this prison.
- Oh. Well, in part, but, colonel...
- May I ask you a personal question, captain?
- Something I need for my report.
- Oh, yes. Of course.
I heard when you came here from
Switzerland you had medical training.
- Absolutely true. I am fully qualified...
- To what? Allow this disgrace to civilization?
Colonel, please. Don't speak like this
in front of my men.
They'll hear soon enough.
I'm filing my report.
There are things I must say to you,
but not in front of the men. We must talk.
Please. Colonel?
Please.
Thank you.
Will you, please?
Forward march!
Will you please leave us alone?
You must know, colonel,
Gen. Winder is in charge here.
- Totally. Of food, medicine, supplies...
- I will report to the government...
...what I think the general's responsibilities
are. If you would like to discuss...
...your own responsibilities for the deaths
of more than 100 men in your care a day...
- I only meant that...
- You, captain. You.
In one week, you could've finished a dam
across the stream. Made floodgates...
...to flush out the waste. Built
another camp to relieve crowding.
But you see, we have no tools.

I ask for sources...

You have some tools, captain.

I took inventory.

You can parole prisoners to gather food from nearby plantations.

- I did, colonel, earlier, but they ran.
- Under guard!
- And let the prisoners build shelters.
- We have no canvas!
- Wood!
- I wanted them to have wood...

...but Gen. Winder ordered all the trees...

- I have told you...

...I will not discuss the general with you!

Now, if you have anything else to say on your own behalf...

I most respectfully... Please...

...you must tell them there is no one, absolutely no one in this war...

...who has to deal with the circumstances I have to deal with.

You have seen. You know that.

But please tell them I do not complain.

I am a soldier, colonel.

I know my duty and I fulfill it faithfully.

Look at this arm of mine.

Shattered in the Battle of Seven Pines...

Yes. You are a soldier, captain.

So when you personally ordered the stocks to be built and the ball and chain...

- Only for escaped prisoners...
- You knew you were violating...

...the Articles of War. As you knew you were when you had food withheld from prisoners...

...as punishment.

Now, was there anything else you wanted to say?

It's true, colonel. Of course it is.

It's all true.

I know it will not surprise you that I agree with everything that you say.

But I try, colonel. I try very hard.

Look at those young boys in the

Fife and Drum Corps out there.
I paroled them so they wouldn't
have to stay in that wretched stockade.
I ordered the hospital moved out,
outside of the wall.
Where the air is cleaner.
I ordered the stockade made bigger,
but you know the problem.
They just send us, all the time,
more and more prisoners...
...on Gen. Winder's orders, 33,000 now.
When we were built for only 8000...
...so of course I agree with you.
With the proper help, we can do much more.
Can you help us there, colonel?
The problem is, I need people.
You know, perhaps...
...if I was major instead of only captain...
...then I would have more staff assigned
to me and we could start to solve...
...those problems together.
They listen to you in Richmond, colonel.
So I think if you put
that recommendation...
...in your...
In your report...
...it would be most definitely helpful.
Colonel.
Couple of these here are dead.
Looks like legs gave out.
They strangled.
Think Capt. Wirz knows that?
- I don't know if he does.
- Well, go tell him.
Yes, sir.
Dear God Almighty!
Yes.
This one's alive too, I think.
These here ones are dead.
Lieutenant, mind helping me
get these ones back inside?
Help us with the gate, sir?
Eugene, get them to the dead house.
- Let's go.

- I'll get another wagon.
Those who are not shot...
...are caught by the dogs without fail.
And put in the stocks or ball and chain.
But still, if you escape the dogs...
...go hundreds of miles to your own army?
Not possible!
Everybody's saying you got real close.
Closer than anyone ever did.
Saw the river.
You think Sgt. Gleason got away?
I mean, really away?
Maybe. Maybe.
Good chance.
I don't want it.
I don't want it. No!
You gotta eat, Billy.
Gotta eat.
I don't want to.
I don't want to live.
Not here.
As soon as I can stand,
I'm gonna walk across the deadline.
Tunnels are useless!
Gonna die anyway.
Come on, Billy boy! Come on!
You gonna leave the rest of us
alone here, Billy?
Yeah.
I am.
Goddamn it, Billy. We're gonna
make it through this together...
...or we're not. Together!
Don't make it easy for them.
Now, eat.
- Eat!
- Okay. Okay.
- Hey, hey, hey! Fresh fish.
- Sergeant. Move them out.
Hey.
Fresh fish.
Welcome to Andersonville.
Fine-looking place, don't you think?
For a hog pen, maybe.

- You some of Grant's men from Virginia?
- Yes, sir.
- Yeah? Is that where youse get caught at?
- Yeah.

Good, good. Let me show youse around,
get you a decent place to stay.

You wanna be away from the swamp.

Come on. You hungry?

Get you something to eat. Come on up here.

You'll like it up here.

How long's it been since you ate?

We'll get you fixed up, me and my pards.

Just follow me.

Clean the fish, boys. Come on.

- Whose move?

- It's your turn.

- My move?

- Yes.

All right. Son of a gun.

- I don't know. Awfully sharp.

- How is the game?

- Going pretty good.

- He's cheating me.

All right.

- One, two, three.

- No, no, no.

- Yeah, yeah.

- He did it again. Cheeky little bugger.

Beats me every time. Olek, tell me.

When you were coming

out of the tunnel with Gleason...

Patrick, you finish the game later.

Go ahead, Patrick.

I want to speak to the doctor.

- Yes, sir.

- Finish in a minute.

He's a good boy. Little cheater.

Now, when you were

coming out of the tunnel...

...could you see Gleason?

Did you see what happened to him?

The dogs. Dogs got him.

I got up a tree. He wouldn't stop.

He kept running for the river,

swinging a stick at those dogs...
...but, Jimmy, you can't outrun dogs.
I heard it.
Knew they got somebody.
- Glad I didn't see it.
- I didn't either.
Didn't want to.
I'm not telling them. No point in it.
He was like a father to them.
- He was a fighter.
- I just say I didn't really see.
When I get out of here...
...I'm never going south of New Bedford.
Ever.
Those who are not shot
are caught by the dogs without fail...
...and put in the stocks
or a ball-chain.
But still, if you escape the dogs
to walk hundreds of miles...
...to your own army... Not possible!
Tunnels are useless!
Even if you are outside,
I give any two men a 12-hour start...
...and then track you with the dogs.
And you will suffer the consequences.
But why bother anyway?
I know absolutely there are talks
going on this moment for exchange.
You're a damn liar, Wirz.
- Any day now, all of you will be...
- If John Gleason gets to Uncle Billy...
...or old Ulys, then we'll get exchanged.
You bet on it.
So I suppose we understand each other.
Move. Hey.
Hey, fresh fish. Welcome to Andersonville.
Fine-looking place, don't you think?
For a hog pen, maybe.
- Where'd youse get caught at? Virginia?
- Yes, sir.
That's good. Means Grant's going forward,
Bobby Lee's going back.
Just the way we like it.

Let me show you around,
get you a good place to stay.
You wanna be up near the wall, away from
the swamp. Don't stink so bad there.
Ain't so many bugs neither.
Come on. You hungry?
I'll get you something to eat.
What happened to you?
Well, we'll take care of that. Come on.
- You'll like these people up here.
- Look at these vultures.
- my pards are up on high ground.
They'll fix you up.
Just waiting to rob and murder the new boys.
Look at them!
- Thieving, stinking cowards!
- We'll get you fixed up. Me and my pards.
Jim. Jim.
Jim, there's a thousand of them.
They have clubs and knives.
We have nothing.
Who's with me? Who? Who?
Who's with me? Who?! Who?!
Who?!
Who's with me?
I'm with you, Jim!
We're with you! We're with you!
- Who?!
- You want them? Then let's get them!
- Who?!
- I'm with you. By God, I'm with you.
What are you standing there for?
- We're with you.
- Form up! Form up!
Form up, boys! Form up!
Who?
Who?!
Form up!
Who?!
Come on! Come on! Come on! Let's go!
I waited for this day.
Come on. Come on!
- You slime-swilling pig.
- Come on!

Hey! Hey! Wait till everyone's here
before anybody gets anything.

- Let me see that.

- Look, my shirt!

Martin's banjo.

Hey, we found your banjo, Martin.

- I say we hang them.

- Yeah!

- I say we hang them all!

- Yeah!

- String them up! Murdering devils!

- I'm doing it with my own two hands!

Now, just hold your horses, Jim.

We're not murderers.

- Murder? To hang them?

- What they did was murder!

We're not hangmen.

Anybody who wants to help,
you come ahead.

But if nobody has the sand for it,
I'll do it myself.

And I'm going to start...

...with you.

- Now, wait a minute, Jim.

- What about them? Do we hang them too?

- It's not murder!

- It's justice!

- That's right.

I think the first thing we have to do,
before anything else...

...is give them a trial.

- A what?

A fair trial.

Show them the fairness
they showed my brother!

- They killed over 200 men in here!

- We must give them a trial.

A fair trial with a jury and witnesses
and a judge.

- What?

- Why?

Are we so much better?

If we do to them what they did to us?

- I think he's right!

- No!

All right, all right. A trial. That's gonna take time. What are we supposed to do...
...with them in the meantime? If we keep them here with us, someone'll kill them.

- Yeah, they will.

- All right.

- We'll ask Wirz.

- Wirz!

We'll ask Wirz to keep them under guard outside the walls...
...and deliver them back to us for trial when ready.

Bring them all in.

How would this trial be conducted?

According to the rule of law, captain.

Both sides would have lawyers to speak for them.

The Raiders would be allowed to speak for themselves...

...question the witnesses, provide...

- You would have a jury?

Yes, sir. New men who come in after today...

...so they wouldn't be prejudiced against the defendants.

I've never in my life heard of anything like this.

These men, these Raiders, they are as bad as they say?

Animals, captain.

Cutthroats and murderers.

Even as Yankees go, these are the worst of the worst.

If I allow this, it will make your task easier...

...keeping order in the stockade?

Might just do that, sir.

They're real troublemakers.

I've seen you before, haven't I?

I was one of the men caught escaping.

You had me in the stocks for a week.

And you won't make

that mistake again, will you?

- As a lawbreaker, you agree with this?

- Yes, I do, captain.
I will get you the law books.
Keep the proceedings in writing.
You will send the findings and the sentences
to me, and if everything is in order...
...the sentence will be ordered for execution.
Keep the ringleaders under lock and key
until they ask for them.
Sir.
Well?
Have your trial.
Quiet down! Let's have order!
- Quiet down! Quiet!
- Quiet!
- Who's speaking first?
- I am, Your Honor.
Sgt. Horace Trimble,
9th Indiana Volunteers...
...appearing for the prosecution.
And may I present to this court
the Honorable Jared Hopkins, Esquire.
I want order!
102nd New York Volunteers
appearing for the defense.
- All right!
- Order!
It is my job to prove to these men...
...who arrived here but yesterday...
...that the men here on trial
behaved like savages...
Damn right!
...barbarians and worse in this camp...
...while the rest of you are soldiers
in the Federal Army...
...who conducted and
will conduct yourselves accordingly.
I trust there'll be no more such outbursts.
Mr. Hopkins, I beg your pardon.
Please say what you have to say, sir.
What could you have to say?
I do not envy you men at all.
Yesterday, you arrived in hell.
I do not speak lightly.
Andersonville is not just

a place without food to eat...
...or water to drink...
...or a place to come in out of the rain from.
- Save your crap!
It is not just a place where guards...
...murder us for their sport.
Hang them! Kill them all!
It is a place without civilization.
It is a place without law!
Stop this farce now!
Order!
- Let's have some order here!
- And you will hear how men...
...good Union men...
Traitor!
Traitors!
Were driven mad!
- Now, I will not be silenced!
- You're gonna hang!
These men were driven
by these circumstances...
...not of their own making...
Not of their own making to commit,
understandably...
Liar! No! No!
...acts of desperation they never would
otherwise have committed!
We stood it!
This is hogwash! Hang the bastards!
I will be heard!
Order! Order! Order!
I will be heard!
That is the second reason
I do not envy you men.
You are being asked to sit in judgment...
...on soldiers in your own Federal Army.
These men are victims as well...
...and their conduct
must be understood...
...as being caused by the Rebels!
- The Rebels... The Rebels are the ones...
- I want justice!
...ought to be on trial before you...
- I followed the law!

...not the men of your own army.
Call your witnesses.
We charge these men here
with being thieves...
...who stole from their fellows...
- I'm no traitor!
...food, clothing,
possessions of every kind...
And more!
...always brutally and without mercy...
...frequently under cover of night.
You will have all the witnesses
to that you want.
Is there anyone here
who can say they did more...
Yeah!
...who saw one of these...?
I exempt the six ringleaders.
Who saw one of these commit
or order another to commit murder?
- Stealing food's just as bad as killing them!
- If so, and he will swear to it...
...let him now come forward.
Is there anyone here who saw one
of these six commit murder...
Yeah!
...or order another to commit murder
of another federal soldier...
Yeah!
...to steal his goods
or for any other reason?
If so, and he will swear to it...
...let him come forward now.
I'll swear.
I swear!
I swear!
- I swear!
- I'll swear!
I'll swear, by God!
I swear!
Yeah, I'll swear!
- I'll swear!
- I'll swear. Collins will hang.
I swear.

Cpl. Day, take the stand.
Do you swear to tell the truth,
the whole truth...
...and nothing but the truth,
so help you God?
I do.
You can sit.
Cpl. Day...
...tell the jury what you've seen
with your own eyes, corporal.
Yes, sir.
I...
Before I do, sir, may I ask
Sgt. Hopkins a question?
Certainly.
Sgt. Hopkins...
...did I understand you to say
that no law applies in here?
You did indeed, corporal.
And that is the very point.
There is no law here.
There is starvation...
...roasting heat, freezing cold.
There is disease, acts of barbarism...
...and cruelty on all sides.
But what law?
Rebel law!
We do not obey Rebel law!
The fact is...
...there is no law here...
...for my clients to have broken!
You shyster!
There is law!
Therefore, they cannot be guilty!
You're wrong!
You're wrong! You're wrong!
Order! Order!
And I thank you, sir.
You are wise beyond your years.
Josie, what are you doing?
But that cannot be, sir.
- We live by laws here.
- The law of survival.
We do not stop belonging

to the Federal Army because we're here.
That's right!
We have our sergeants.
We maintain order and discipline
as best we can!
We stand in line to get
what little food they give us.
We don't steal or betray each other
to the Rebels.
I am saying that men can be excused...
...if they do extreme things,
necessary things...
...in order to stay alive
in a place like this!
What they did, they knew to be wrong,
every man knows to be wrong.
They are against every man's law and
understanding. None of us did those things!
They did them to live, corporal! To live!
All men want to live, sergeant!
But there are some things
men won't do just to live!
What things?
That's what we must hear here.
What has been done here?
- Murder was done here.
- Murder!
Tell them about Dick Potter.
Dick Potter...
Dick Potter and his father were the best
fishermen in New Bedford, Massachusetts.
He joined up the first summer of the war
because he wanted to...
...because he thought he ought to.
He was a good soldier...
...and was shot in both legs
and captured...
...at Antietam and brought here.
Do you swear to tell the truth,
the whole truth...
...and nothing but the truth,
so help you God?
I do.
You can sit.

What's your rank, soldier?

Private.

All right, private, tell us what you saw.

I've seen each of these six men.

They've murdered.

They've robbed.

- Tell them what happened, corporal.

- Sergeant...

...it was the first day

the 184th...

Do you swear to tell the truth,

the whole truth...

...and nothing but the truth,

so help you God?

Yes, sir. I do.

You can sit.

You tell us what you saw, young man.

Sir, I saw that man, Collins...

That's the one that killed

my brother Richard.

And that little sailor down there cost me

my leg the first week I was in here.

And the fellow in the green has killed

a lot of men in here.

They're all murderers.

Every one of them. Every one of them!

We've heard enough!

Those are guilty of thievery...

...and low, cowardly assault

on their fellows.

Give them the ball and chain

or make them run the gauntlet.

Every man who wishes gets a shot

at them with his fists...

...sticks, anything you can find.

Yeah!

These six...

...hang them.

Prisoners...

...I return these men to you

as good as I got them.

You have tried them yourselves

and found them guilty.

I have had nothing to do with it.

Do with them as you like...
...and may God have mercy
on you and on them.
Company, about face!
Forward march!
My God, you don't mean
to really hang us up there?
That's about the size of it.
No! I just want to live! I just want to live!
This is nothing.
Keep your peckers up, boys.
We'll have no weakness here.
What? Did you think
you were gonna live forever?
No, don't do it!
Devils! Devils!
I'm gonna go up! I wanna hang them!
Let me hang...
This is nothing, boys.
Doesn't matter a damn.
Doesn't matter at all.
Let's get this done right, Jim.
Don't you worry about that.
Hang them! Hang them! Hang them!
Hang them! Hang them! Hang them!
Hang them! Hang them! Hang them!
Hang them! Hang them! Hang them!
Okay, boys, on three.
One!
Two!
Three!
Fresh fish, lots of them.
Uncle Billy's army must be close.
Could be rescued soon.
No, Rebs gotta keep ferrying new boys in,
keep the population up.
Martin, drink some of this.
It's rainwater. It's good for you.
Scurvy. Gums all rotten.
Can't even eat the mush anymore.
I miss Thomas. Don't you?
Sergeant and I were just talking
about him this morning.
You know him before the army?

He didn't live but 10 miles from me, but...
You know, the sergeant was saying, for...
For a man so strong...
...he never once saw him use
his strength in anger.
Except to get my banjo back.
Old Sweet.
You know, he lived on a farm
with his brothers and sisters.
He had a big family.
I have six children.
Six?
Had eight. Two died.
All right, let's see. She'll...
She starts us out with...
With some nice, plump chickens...
...from our own stock.
We breed them ourselves,
Rhode Island Reds.
- It's the tenderest meat you ever ate.
- Yeah?
She fries them, and we'll have them
with mashed potatoes and gravy.
- Mashed potatoes?
- Yeah!
I like my mashed potatoes with butter.
Yeah.
You know, we make butter
in our springhouse.
You never had butter like we churn.
Sounds good. You bring the butter.
All right.
We could put it on the biscuits.
My mother, she makes
the best biscuits in the world.
Okay, you just open them up,
just lift the top right off.
Oh, my! You got any honey?
Yeah, of course we got honey.
All right, we'll have some honey, then.
What'll we have next?
Pie.
Apple?
Apple.

Or cherry.

Apple and cherry.

Save me the leftovers. Good God, men,
you wanna drive us to the lunatic asylum?
Stuff a sock in it. Hey, friend!

What's the news, lads? Where were you,
and who were you with?

- We was with Uncle Billy Sherman.

- Grant in Virginia, all over Virginia.

Making it warm for old Johnny Reb?

Warm? Warm? Let Atlanta burn
to the ground. That warm enough for you?

We're headed to Savannah,
and we'll give them the same.

Yeah.

So this is Andersonville, huh?

Yeah, this is it.

Is it as bad as they say?

No, worse.

You boys want to stay with us?

- All right with you?

- Don't see why not.

Come on over here, lads. Come with us.

You boys hear anything
about the exchange?

There won't be any exchange,
and that's a fact.

You seem pretty sure.

I was at Sherman's headquarters
the day Grant issued the policy.

- What policy?

- Haven't heard about that.

We've been out of touch for a while.

What policy is that exactly?

Any Reb soldiers he lets go,
they just bust their paroles...

...and back on the line fighting us
the next week.

He's not gonna do it.

Says his only job's to win the war.

Rebs are saying they won't give back
our colored soldiers.

Grant says they're a part of us,
and without them, no deal.

The niggers?
We're supposed to die here for niggers?
- Good for Ulysses S. Grant.
- Does he know what it's like in here?
He does for a fact.
Somebody got out and told him.
- Got out?
- Who got out?
I don't remember his name exactly.
Any of you remember?
You know what he looked like?
Sort of tall, thin.
The hair had some yellow in it.
He's older than me.
Could his name have been Gleason?
That's it! John Gleason.
We're gonna die in here, Josie.
Just because there's no exchange...
You heard how the army's doing.
First Atlanta, Savannah.
Maybe we'll... We'll be rescued.
Savannah's toward the sea,
and we're inland.
The army's headed the other way.
Would you write a letter
to my wife and children?
- Martin.
- She'd probably want that.
Oh, you put a toe tag on me, now.
You go to the dead house
without a toe tag...
...and they'll never know
where you're buried.
Martin? Martin, did you hear?
Did you hear? Josie, did you hear?
John made it. He made it, Martin.
He got to Sherman. He said he would.
Damn if he didn't do it! Oh, Gleason.
Goddamn if he didn't!
Well, then, hand me the banjo there.
I'll play some dancing music.
- Play something happy, Martin.
- Josie.
You Yankees!

Yankees, you listen up now!
Colonel's got something
real important to tell y'all!
So you sergeants, you bring them
down here on the double-quick now.
Come on. Come on, get up.
Come on. Come on, Billy.
Get up there.
Let's go.
The colonel...
...comes with an important message
for all of you.
Col. O'Neil.
You men, you prisoners...
...I want to talk to you about
your situation here.
It must be clear to you by now
that your government...
...has cruelly abandoned you.
As you know, they have turned down...
...all of our efforts to exchange you.
They know of your suffering...
...which though terrible, is no worse than
the suffering of our men in Northern prisons.
And they know, as we all do...
...that you have had to endure far more...
...than should be expected of you.
And now that your government
has no further use of you...
...you are being thrown aside
to starve and die.
That being so...
...and with the Southern Confederacy
certain to succeed...
...and achieve its independence
in just a few more months...
...I make you all this offer.
If you will join our army
and serve it faithfully to the end...
...you will receive all the rewards...
...that the rest of our soldiers do.
You'll be taken out of this place
at once, today...
...this very minute.

You'll be clothed and fed.
You'll receive a nice cash bounty.
And at the conclusion of the war...
...you will have your very own farm.
That is our offer, men.
What is your answer?
Colonel, sir.
Sgt. James Dudley McSpadden,
19th Massachusetts Volunteers, sir!
I have the honor to speak
for my detachment, sir!
First Detachment, form ranks!
Attention detachment!
About face!
Forward march!
Right, two. Right, two.
Three cheers for Sgt. McSpadden!
Hip, hip!
Hurrah!
- Hip, hip!
- Hurrah!
- Hip, hip!
- Hurrah!
March! Right, two.
Second Detachment, form ranks!
Fifty-fourth Massachusetts, form ranks!
Seventh Detachment, form...
- Form ranks!
- Forward!
Forward march! Right, two. Right, two.
Attention, detachment! Forward face!
March!
Hey, hey, hey! Get away from him,
you lousy rag picker.
- that the winged seraphs of heaven...
...coveted thee.
Easy, son.
Got the fever.
So gather around.
Rise up, you Yankees!
Y'all are weak, naked demons
for sitting too long!
Move on up, now!
Move on up!

Everybody, please gather around.

I have some good news for you!

It will make you very happy.

Go on, now, and listen

to what the captain has to say!

- Gather around.

- Move on up, now!

- Move on up.

- Gather around.

You are being exchanged, starting today.

Every one of you, starting right now,
this morning.

You see, all this time, I was right.

I was right, and you didn't believe me.

Go tell the rest! Everyone is exchanged!

The train leaves in two hours.

The gate is open!

The gate is open!

We're exchanged.

- Martin?

- Patrick.

Patrick, come on. Come on.

We can leave.

Billy.

Come on. Come on, lad, get up.