

HOME BY CHRISTMAS

Bob Hope in Korea, 1950

by

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INSERT - FILM CLIP FROM MASH EPISODE *ABYSSINIA*, *HENRY*:

WE SEE an actual clip from the television show MASH.

We're in the MASH operating room. It's crowded with the cast: ALAN ALDA (HAWKEYE), WAYNE ROGERS (TRAPPER JOHN), MCCLEAN STEVENSON (HENRY BLAKE), LARRY LINVILLE (FRANK BURNS), LORETTA SWIT (MAJ. HOULIHAN) plus nurses at each table.

GARY BURGHOFF enters as RADAR, the only actor not in surgical scrubs. He holds a mask to his face and carries a telegram.

RADAR  
Colonel?

BLAKE  
Yo?

RADAR  
Do you know what I found in this morning's mail?

BLAKE  
Ah, now that's a tough one. Hum a few bars will you, Radar?

RADAR  
You're going home.

BLAKE  
I'm going home?

RADAR  
You got all your points. They're discharging you.

BLAKE  
Discharged?

RADAR  
Tokyo, San Francisco, then home.

BLAKE  
I'm going home? I'm discharged?  
I'm going home!

The cast breaks out into ad-libbed congratulations as Blake is overcome with joy on the news. WE HEAR:

LARRY (O.S.)  
And cut! Print it. We're wrapped,  
everyone. See you tomorrow.

INT. MASH SET (1974)

SUPER: "Los Angeles, 1974." With actors still in surgical masks, WE SEE CAST and CREW wrap for the day. LARRY GELBART, 45, and producer GENE REYNOLDS, 40s, watch video replay of the scene as ALAN ALDA, 30s, comes over and removes his mask. An EXECUTIVE, MIKE, 20s, joins them.

LARRY  
Everyone know Mike from CBS?

ALDA  
What brings you out?

MIKE  
Larry called. About a new scene?

ALDA  
There's a new scene?

LARRY  
Gene. Mike's here.

ALDA  
There's a new scene?

Larry ushers them off to the familiar "swamp" set, where Alda's character lives.

LARRY  
A final scene we shoot tomorrow.

Larry hands a YELLOW LEGAL PAD with dialogue on it to Alda.

ALDA  
(reading aloud)  
Radar enters, telegram in hand, and says, 'I have a message. Lieutenant Colonel Henry Blake's plane was shot down over the Sea of Japan. It spun in. There were no survivors.  
(stunned, to Larry)  
Jesus, Henry dies? *He dies?*

MIKE  
In a comedy? How is that funny?

ALDA  
It's not. It's brilliant.

LARRY

We show extras getting killed every week. I want to make a point. War doesn't always happen to some one else. Don't tell the cast. I want it to hit them hard when we shoot.

MIKE

Oh, it will. Let me rephrase. Do we really need to end the season on a downer?

LARRY

Yes.

ALDA

Yes.

REYNOLDS

Yes.

EXT. CBS RADFORD PARKING LOT

Larry and Mike walk to their cars. Larry's is a '74 Cadillac. Mike's is a Mercedes. Larry has the legal pad in hand.

MIKE

Let me rephrase. Last army show on CBS was *Gomer Pyle*. Nobody died on *Gomer Pyle*.

LARRY

And Gomer was the only marine in America who never heard of Vietnam. The war's on Cronkite every night for dinner.

MIKE

Maybe people want to forget it by prime time. Let me rephrase. *MASH* is *finally* a hit. It's what, four years since CBS canned the Smothers Brothers for this kind of thing.

LARRY

They didn't have our ratings.

MIKE

Lar, it's OK to just be funny.

Mike takes off. In his car, Larry reads his legal pad notes.

EXT. NBC STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD (1950)

INSERT - YELLOW LEGAL PAD

SUPER: "Los Angeles, 1950." WE HEAR a girl LAUGHING. The pad has jokes scribbled on it. It's held in a girl's hands.

EXT. 1950 CADILLAC

Larry, 21, and NAOMI, 19, who reads his jokes on the pad.

NAOMI

Larry, these are hilarious.

At Sunset and Vine, people line up on the sidewalk at a door that says "The Bob Hope Show." At the studio gate, a guard raises the gate. Larry waves to him. Naomi is star struck.

GUARD

Hi Larry.

NAOMI

Oh. My. God. He knows you.

LARRY

He is getting kind of familiar.  
He's fired.

NAOMI

No, Larry, please don't --

LARRY

I kid. Writers don't fire anyone.  
They get fired.

INT. NBC STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

Larry escorts Naomi thru a stage door. On stage is DORIS DAY, 27, rehearsing. Naomi tightens up, squeezing Larry's arm.

NAOMI

Oh my God. Doris Day!

Doris stops singing to look Larry's way. Larry is mortified. JIMMY SAPHIER, 30s, the show's producer-manager, comes over.

JIMMY

Bob is *muy* unhappy with the mono.  
Wants a big kid in the back.

LARRY

(to Naomi)

Bobspeak: meaning, the monologue isn't funny, or so Bob says, and he wants a big closing joke.

JIMMY

And you're still standing here. Let me find this lady a seat. Front row for VIPs. Tonight our guest star is Mr. Burt Lancaster.

(to Larry as she walks on)

Is she legal? You're 21 now.

LARRY

Gimme a break.

Larry heads for the writers room and FREEZES as WE HEAR:

NAOMI (O.S.)

Oh my God - BURT LANCASTER!

Larry sees her gush over BURT LANCASTER, 36, on stage.

LARRY

She's twelve!

ANGLE - BACKSTAGE

Larry hurries past wardrobe, make-up, dressing rooms. He slows at the gold-starred one with "Bob Hope" on it. A loud argument is going on inside, the door half open. CHUCK, 30s, the show's ad agency rep, leans on the desk, smoking. We get GLIMPSES of BOB HOPE, 40s, agitated, pacing.

CHUCK

Joe McCarthy jokes? Nobody cares.

BOB

He's making headlines every day. I went off on HUAC it didn't hurt me.

CHUCK

It's OK to just be funny. Besides, you're both Republicans.

BOB

No, I'm a Republican. He's nuts.

CHUCK

He's also a vindictive asshole. It's an election year.

(MORE)

CHUCK(cont'd)

In a month the Republicans will  
lose the mid-terms, and no one will  
ever hear from that shit kicker  
junior senator again.

BOB

He can't hurt me.

CHUCK

No. But he can chase sponsor money  
away. My agency's seen him do it.  
Same money you pay your cast, crew,  
and writers with.

Bob sees Larry, waves him off, closes the door.

INT. WRITERS ROOM

Sitting at a big table: MORT, 30s, WW II vet, always in a  
baseball cap, junior producer; FRED, 40s, dark, the oldest  
writer, graying hair, BLACK SUIT, sips from a flask, bandage  
on forehead, imagine Robert Mitchum writing gags; CHET, 35,  
proto-beatnik, Tiki shirts, green shades, always scruffy.  
They spot Larry as he enters.

MORT

Where you been?

FRED

Dog bit him on his paper route.  
Bob's changing the mono. McCarthy  
jokes'll never make it.

CHET

I dunno. Bob hates McCarthy. I like  
him. Kicking ass and taking names.

MORT

Kicking ass and making up names.

CHET

Bob should use my baseball stuff.  
World Series ends in four *yesterday*  
so Bob says he wants a *today* topic.  
Worked all night on'm. No sleep.

FRED

Yeah? They put me to sleep.

CHET

(re Fred's bandage)  
That when you fell off the bar  
stool?

Fred makes a loud SNORING noise directed at Chet. The PHONE RINGS. Fred answers, listens, hangs up, smiling at Chet.

FRED  
New topic. Santa Anita race track.

LARRY  
Santa Anita? That's so old.

MORT  
Are you gonna tell Bob?

FRED  
Noooooo.

LARRY  
(thinking)  
Fine - my horse is so old, the bet  
was win, place, or live.  
(the guys groan)  
So old, out of the gate he tripped  
on his hearing aid.

NAOMI (O.S.)  
OH MY GAWD - BOB HOPE!

Indeed, behind Larry, is Bob, amped-up before the show. He's looking back at Naomi. Chuck and Jimmy are there, too.

BOB  
Catch her when she faints, Jimmy.  
They're never ready for me the  
first time.  
(to Larry)  
I heard the Santa Anitas. Keepers.  
Freddy, fall off a bar stool again?

The writers CRACK UP like it's the funniest thing they ever heard, even Fred. Seeing Chuck, Bob closes the door on him.

BOB  
Lar, let's hear'm again.

LARRY  
C'mon, I was kidding. Use those and  
you'll really sound like Bob Hope.

BOB  
What's that supposed to mean?

Bob gives Larry a cold look. The room goes quiet.



LARRY  
I just meant --

BOB  
Think I can't sell those?

FRED  
Nobody said that.

MORT  
Of course you could.

CHET  
World Series. Still front page.

BOB  
A hundred says I can sell'm.

Bob throws money on the table. The writers all ad-lib that they're in and shoot looks at Larry that say "thanks, a lot."

INT. NBC STUDIOS CONTROL ROOM

Larry and the writers watch Bob from the control booth. Bob stands before a live radio audience that laughs LOUDLY.

BOB  
I won't say my horse was old, but  
out of the gate he tripped over his  
hearing aid. In fact, the bet was  
win, place, or live.

After the laugh, the writers pull out money.

BOB  
Thank you! And don't forget, my new  
movie *Fancy Pants*, with Lucille  
Ball, opens Friday in your town.

Bob soaks up applause as they go to commercial. Wardrobe runs out, puts him in a 10-gallon cowboy hat and chaps as he holds up his hand to the writers making the universal "money" sign.

INT. NBC STUDIOS BACKSTAGE

Jimmy and the writers wait. WE HEAR Bob sing "Thanks For The Memory" to applause.

JIMMY  
Stay! Bob's got a big announcement.

Bob comes back stage in Prince Valiant outfit. To writers:

BOB

Ah, they love that Bob Hope sound!

Bob runs out and the applause level goes WAY UP.

JIMMY

That was not the announcement.

CHET

He wants to go double or nothing.

JIMMY

You want to get off probation you might just listen for a change.

CHET

It wasn't my fault. I told you.

JIMMY

Do I know? Was I there? You got a big mouth sometimes, Chet. Some things about Bob Hope you don't say in front of Mrs. Bob Hope. To you I have to explain this.

Bob runs back. Everyone circles around him.

BOB

Ok, big news. Got your passports?

FRED

Shit.

BOB

(pointedly ignoring Fred)

I was on the phone this afternoon with *President Truman*.

Bob pauses for maximum name-dropping effect.

LARRY

Sorry, I didn't catch the name.

BOB

We're going to Korea. Biggest USO show ever. The whole band!

The writers wear frozen smiles, except an excited Larry.

LARRY

Wow! Korea?

FRED  
Army gruel, night and day. "Wow."

CHET  
Army cots with zero women. "Korea."

JIMMY  
Ok, everyone, great show!

Everyone goes, except the writers, who fork over their \$100.

BOB  
Thank you, thank you. Hey, I need  
jokes for a Jerry Lewis dinner.

LARRY  
There's a dinner for Jerry?

BOB  
No. I'm having dinner with Jerry. I  
need some jokes. Chet, Mort?

Chet boldly takes his bills back from Bob.

CHET  
Four good ones. Call you tomorrow.

BOB  
Five.

CHET  
*Four.*

CHUCK  
Bob. The whole band. Twenty guys?

BOB  
When I sold it to Truman I got  
excited.

JIMMY  
You know how the sponsors feel  
about expensive location trips.

Bob whistles "Road to Morocco" as he changes into a sport  
coat, not wanting to hear it.

CHUCK  
They pay the bills around here.

BOB  
Who pays them? I'm number one in  
radio and movies. I pay the bills.  
(MORE)

BOB(cont'd)

(thinks quickly)

*The Paleface* opened big in Tokyo.  
Tell NBC and Paramount to split the  
bill and write it off as promotion.

Jimmy thinks, likes it. Chuck gets it, nods.

JIMMY

(to his assistant)

Get me NBC, I've got some very  
patriotic news for them.

The curtain lifts as the crew cleans up. Bob, Jimmy, and  
Larry see Naomi, Lancaster, and his guys on stage as Naomi  
gives Lancaster her phone number. Bob adds it up.

BOB

Lar, I need a lift. Got plans?

LARRY

Not anymore.

JIMMY

(to his assistant)

A lady needs a cab ride home.

EXT. STUDIO PARKING LOT

There's a beat coupé next to Larry's shiny Cadillac. Bob  
heads for the coupé. Larry heads for the Cadillac.

BOB

That's yours? What am I paying you?

They hop in as Bob goes over numbers in his head. He finds a  
bag of 78 records on the seat and looks them over: Dizzy  
Gillespie, Charlie Parker. Larry puts on a bop station.

BOB

No wife, no kids. Where you live?

LARRY

Beverly Hills. With my folks.

BOB

At home. Bop, burgers, and a  
Cadillac. Not much overhead. Man,  
what I wouldn't give to be 21,  
single, and loaded for a week.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD

Larry and Bob drive up from Sunset to Ciro's (now the Comedy Store). Bob studies the records, listens to the radio.

BOB

Dizzy, Bird ... Who knew you could play jazz backwards? There a sketch in this stuff?

LARRY

Yeah, the names, hipster clothes. They're high all the time.

(stoned voice)

Jazz. What is jazz? Jazz is a cop in a pink uniform writing speeding tickets to parked cars, you dig? What is jazz? Jazz is a barking dog singing love songs to Kate Smith.

Bob cracks up.

BOB

Ever been a top 10 bop hit?

LARRY

Nah.

BOB

Write it when they get one, or it's two hours explaining bop to Chuckie the ad man. 21. You're free. Tomorrow I'm in Palm Springs with the family, but I host a March of Dimes dinner at night, then over 18 holes I argue reshoots with Barney Balaban and his Eskimos.

LARRY

Is that a band?

BOB

Paramount brass. W.C. Fields used to see the suits coming down to the set and say, "Eskimo trouble!"

LARRY

*Big Broadcast of 1937.*

BOB

How did you know that?

LARRY  
I've seen all your movies. Twice.

BOB  
So, a fan of that Bob Hope sound  
after all. If you live at home,  
what do you do when you get a girl?

LARRY  
Hope she has an apartment. I hate  
motels.

BOB  
(re the giant back seat)  
Now I know why you got a Cadillac.  
When I was 21 I was dancing in  
vaudeville and lucky to eat. Always  
on trains. Ever been to Altoona?  
Louisville?

LARRY  
I haven't been anywhere.

BOB  
I was gonna be the next Fred  
Astaire.

LARRY  
A dancer? What happened?

BOB  
World already had a Fred Astaire.  
It needed a Bob Hope.

EXT. CIRO'S NIGHTCLUB

They pull into Ciro's parking lot as Bob waves to fans and  
valets rush over.

VALET  
Miss Maxwell's almost done with the  
first set, Mr. Hope.

BOB  
Thanks, guys. My wallet ...

Bob pats his pockets for tip money. Larry tips them.

INT. CIRO'S NIGHTCLUB

It's the swankiest nightclub in LA, if not the hippest. Bob and Larry enter and the maître d' cozies up, ushering them to the back of the big room.

INT. MAIN SHOWROOM

On-stage is blonde bombshell Marilyn Maxwell, 29, singing "I Didn't Want to Do It." Bob waves at her and she winks to him. Larry soaks up the pure sex appeal and glamour.

MAÎTRE D'  
(much too loudly)  
Would you like to wait in Miss  
Maxwell's dressing room tonight?

BOB  
With all the music no one could  
hear you out in the parking lot.

EARL WILSON  
Yeah, quiet. I want an exclusive.

Unseen by Bob, columnist EARL WILSON, 43, has sidled up -- short, squat, buzz cut, notebook in hand, wearing big thick Mr. Peepers glasses befitting the author of the gossip column *It Happened Last Night*. Bob reacts as if he just noticed a centipede on his shirt.

EARL WILSON  
What was that about you in *Miss*  
Maxwell's dressing room?

BOB  
Hah! Lar, Earl Wilson. Lar's one of  
my writers, a pistol if you need  
jokes for the column.

EARL WILSON  
Why do they call Marilyn "the other  
Mrs. Bob Hope?" Is that good for a  
guy pushing himself as America's  
favorite family comic?

BOB  
Me? That's Ozzie Nelson. I never  
push my family on the show. The  
censors are all over me.

EARL WILSON

True ...

BOB

No. Your friend Sidney Skolsky says that "other Mrs. Bob Hope" crap.

EARL WILSON

You know I hate Sidney's guts and he hates mine.

Just then, Marilyn finishes to applause. Bob, Earl, Larry, and the Maître d' applaud loudly for a polite second then get back to business.

BOB

Then maybe you'd like a real scoop instead of his bullshit.

EARL WILSON

A *real* scoop. Not Marilyn starring in your next movie. Heard it last night.

(re Larry)

You gonna have your guys sign loyalty oaths like NBC's other shows? Most writers are reds.

BOB

Loyalty oaths? First, nobody on my show works for NBC. They work for me. And I don't need any loyalty oaths. You know I've gone on the air against that HUAC stuff.

EARL WILSON

People want real Americans on their shows. You're from England, right?

BOB

I was born in England. I'm from Cleveland. You think Larry here's a commie? You should see his Cadillac. I'm no red, but people gotta calm down.

Marilyn arrives, smiles at Larry, who kind of melts in her presence. She's appalled to see Wilson eyeing her legs.

MARILYN

Hiya Larry. Looking good.

(appalled)

Earl -- always a surprise.



EARL WILSON

But not surprised to see the same married movie star here four nights in a row?

BOB

Hiya kid. Earl's looking for a big scoop about us.

MARILYN

Earl, Bob and I are --

EARL WILSON

-- just goooood friends. Bob, you mentioned a scoop?

Everybody eyes Bob, it's on him.

BOB

Get your pencil ready. You're breaking this story and getting Marilyn's reaction, too. I just got official word that I'm going to Korea for the biggest show in USO history, and I am herewith asking Miss Maxwell if she will join me on that tour.

EARL WILSON

Pretty good -- Maxie?

MARILYN

Sure. I did USO shows in the last war, I'll go now.

EARL WILSON

Why Korea? MacArthur says the war'll be over in three months.

BOB

Then I better get there fast. Look, I go where the guys go.

EARL WILSON

Why no Doris Day? Bad blood? Huh? She a bitch? She looks like it.

BOB

No! She's shooting a movie. No GI's gonna turn down Marilyn. Perhaps you saw her striptease in *Key to the City* with Clark Gable?

EARL WILSON  
Yeah ... and *Lost in a Harem*. Love  
a live version.

Wilson turns back to his notes as Marilyn refrains from  
hitting him. Everyone waits on his reaction.

EARL WILSON  
Ok, it beats Skolsky's shit. Love  
to keep beating him. Don't lose my  
number, Bobby.

BOB  
I won't.

EARL WILSON  
Good. You two *behave*, or papa'll  
hear about it.

Wilson exits. They all exhale.

BOB  
I did come to tell you the news.  
Sorry it had to be that way.

MARILYN  
I record in the morning ...

BOB  
I'm headed down to Palm Springs.

Just then, two autograph hounds arrive, blowing the moment.

EXT. CIRO'S PARKING LOT

Larry and Bob comes out and the valets scramble to get  
Larry's car. They see Wilson driving out, waving to them.

BOB  
Twenty-one ... you want to trade  
places, lemme know. Let's hit Big  
Boy in Burbank. I'm starved.

INT. GELBART HOME - NIGHT

HARRY GELBART, 40s, sits in his living room easy chair in a  
bathrobe reading a newspaper headlined "Truman and MacArthur  
to Meet at Wake Island; Reds Flee North." Another reads:  
"Nixon Edges Douglas in Senate Poll." Larry enters from the  
front door. Harry speaks in a Yiddish accent.

LARRY  
Waiting up for me?

HARRY  
It's 10:15, Mr. Excitement. You're  
twenty-one now. You can stay out if  
you want.

Larry hands him his pay envelope, flops down on the couch.

LARRY  
Pay day.

HARRY  
Too much.

Harry hands it back. Larry won't take it. Larry picks up the  
paper, reading new car ads. Larry's mom, FRIEDA, 40s, enters,  
and she has the same Old World accent.

HARRY  
Look, Sinatra's home.

FRIEDA  
The show was funny. The horse  
tripping over the hearing aid.

HARRY  
Funny.

LARRY  
That wasn't a real joke.

FRIEDA  
It was as funny as a real joke.

HARRY  
What do you mean not a real joke?

LARRY  
I was making fun of Bob's style.

HARRY  
Don't make trouble. Just be funny.

Harry swats Larry with the newspaper. Larry sees the Korea  
headline.

LARRY  
Oh, yeah, I forgot. Can't make  
Sunday dinner. I'll be in Korea.

FRIEDA  
Korea? Of the Korean War, Korea?

LARRY  
Yeah. We leave Saturday. Gonna be amazing. Probably meet MacArthur.

HARRY  
Certainly sound excited to go to a war. Most people avoid them.

LARRY  
It's my job? Besides, I'll be with Bob. Nobody shoots at him except critics.

FRIEDA  
Communists would.

LARRY  
Not if they want to work in this town.

HARRY  
Korea. We'll get Chinese tomorrow night. You'll get over it. Try Tijuana, like your college friends.

FRIEDA  
Be nice. Say, 'I appreciate the offer, but I prefer not to go to the Korean War at this time.'

LARRY  
Larry Gelbart, courteous objector.

FRIEDA  
Tell him wars aren't funny.

LARRY  
You tell him. Nobody plays a war like Bob.

HARRY  
What are we going to do, write a note that says Larry's excused?

LARRY  
Yeah, I'm too well to attend.

FRIEDA  
So, it's settled. You're not going.

LARRY

Mom, they stop wars for Bob Hope.  
Korea's practically over.

HARRY

And I'm practically a millionaire  
barber.

Harry and Frieda share a look. There's nothing they can do.

EXT. HUGHES AIRCRAFT RUNWAY - DAY

Bob, a bleary-eyed Fred, and Jimmy wait on the field near two army C-54 transports. 40 cast and crew board the planes. Bob hangs out with the Hi-Hatters, an African-American dancing team. Bob shows them a move. The dancers act impressed.

DANCER

Nice, nice. Let me show you what  
you were trying to do.

The three Hi-Hatters then do the move, all better than Bob.

BOB

I'll keep my day job.

Fred spots Marilyn getting out of cab, crossing the tarmac like a catwalk.

BOB

Boys, *Miss* Marilyn Maxwell. You may  
recall her in *Champion* opposite  
Kirk what's-he-got-that-I-haven't  
Douglas?

FRED

Missed it.

MARILYN

You were in the theater when you  
missed it, Freddie.

A purple Mercury pulls up. Chet, in shades, blue suit, and white patent leather shoes gets hot kisses from two German girls ad-libbing "auf Wiedersehen, schotzy" before leaving.

MORT

Two? Two? Why you? How?

CHET

A man off to war? Baby, I might  
never come back ...

BOB  
Don't get my hopes up. Where's Lar?

ANGLE - LARRY'S CADILLAC

parking. Harry sits up front, Frieda in back. Larry waves to the guys as Frieda pushes a bag lunch on him, mortifying him.

FRIEDA  
Take your lunch.

LARRY  
They have food on planes now. In fact, they have planes now.

HARRY  
It's roast beef.

LARRY  
It's a Bob Hope show. We go first class.

FRIEDA  
Take it.

LARRY  
Ma. No.

The Gelbarts get out. The guys watch as Frieda and Harry hug and kiss Larry good-bye. She pushes the lunch again.

MORT  
Hi Mrs. G!

FRED  
Did you sign Larry's report card?

BOB  
Can't go on the field trip unless you sign it.

Larry hugs his mom a last time and does not take the lunch.

HARRY  
Do me a favor, Mr. Wiseguy. Keep your mouth shut and your eyes open. That you should do everywhere.

INT. USO PLANE

Larry sits next to Chet and looks out the window as his parents wave. Chet takes out a roast beef sandwich.

LARRY  
What's with the sandwich?

CHET  
No food 'til Hawaii. It's the army.  
You wanted stewardesses?

As they taxi, Larry looks out the window to see his mom waving. Larry's dad is eating the sandwich.

INSERT MAP ANIMATION

We see a world map with the USO planes flying around a slowly turning globe, touching at Hawaii and Guam, as the USA disappears from sight. The plane heads to Tokyo.

INT. USO PLANE - NIGHT

Bob and Marilyn sit. Jimmy faces them on a fold-down chair.

JIMMY  
NBC has upped their offer for a  
weekly TV show by 10%.

BOB  
No, no, and 10% more no.

JIMMY  
Look at Milton Berle. Never been  
hotter. Lucille Ball?

BOB  
TV's the best thing ever happened  
to them. I'm a movie star. I do TV  
to promote movies. Specials only.

JIMMY  
Berle's numbers speak pretty loud.

BOB  
Everything about Milton is loud.  
No.

(to Marilyn)  
Hey, kid. Wait'll you see Tokyo.

But, Marilyn has drifted off to sleep on him.

ANGLE - THE WRITERS

Chet, Fred, Larry, and Mort all sit in a group. Larry reads *Billboard* and the other three play poker and talk.

CHET

Eisenhower? America will never  
elect a bald President.

MORT

Ike. The guy who beat Hitler?

CHET

Douglas MacArthur beat Tojo. And  
Big Mac don't need a rug. And that  
chin. Puh-res-i-den-tial.

FRED

Had no idea you were so political,  
Chester. Oughta run for Congress.

CHET

How'd you hear the word Congress?  
There a Congress liquor store?

Fred flips him off. Mort sees what Larry's reading.

MORT

Ditch that. Their critic called our  
tv special warmed over vaudeville.

CHET

Seen Sid Caesar? Fun-nee.

FRED

Need a Ph.D. to watch that guy.  
Bob's show is good enough for me.  
Pays my bar tab, anyway.

LARRY

Your bar tab? I want a raise.

CHET

Hey, I don't blame Bob doing what  
he does. He invented it. But times  
change.

LARRY

Invented what? Jokes?



MORT

His kind of a show.

Larry is baffled here -- shrugs. What?

FRED

No characters, plots, situation -- just jokes. A lot of vaudeville guys tried it. Bob figured it out.

LARRY

Figured what out?

CHET

The no-story comedy show. Bob cold opened the monologue - which they did not want him to do.

LARRY

Wait. They didn't want the star of the show to open his own show?

MORT

No. They thought the star should come on after the band, the announcer, the *commercials*. In all of show business, what star is his own opening act? Bob figured radio works best if he goes first. And all topical jokes. That day's news.

FRED

First to hire a room of writers. Doubled the jokes in a show. If Chet'd quit we could triple it.

Now Chet flips Fred off.

CHET

*After* the mono, Bob kids the band. Does bits, has a guest star out for an interview about their new movie or whatever bullshit.

MORT

Then music to close. It builds from Bob solo to that big Bob finish.

LARRY

Everybody does that.

OTHER THREE WRITERS

*Now.*

Fred, drunk, pokes Larry in the chest.

FRED  
You were burping up your lunch back  
then.

LARRY  
You're burping yours up now.

Fred just eyes Larry coolly as Bob sits down with them.

FRED  
You know, I'm glad you're Jewish.  
That way I always got a reason not  
to like you.

BOB  
Jesus. Shut up.

CHET  
That's our Freddie, giving drunk  
Klansmen a bad name.

FRED  
Listen, eightball --

Just then, turbulence causes Fred to slosh his paper cup of  
bourbon and some of it hits Bob's sleeve.

BOB  
Goddammit. Go to sleep.

FRED  
Don't tell me what to do.

It's uncomfortable, silent, just the sound of the plane.  
Fred gets up, goes back a few aisles and drops into a seat,  
pulling his hat over his face. Bob eyes Fred, pissed. Jimmy  
sits down next to Chet.

ANGLE - CHET AND JIMMY

CHET  
Why's Fred get away with that shit  
and I'm always on probation?

JIMMY  
Pull Bob out of a car wreck the  
rules change. Just worry about you.  
(MORE)

JIMMY(cont'd)

You guys make sure you don't go three weeks without jokes on-air and it's hard to get fired. For most people.

ANGLE - BOB, WRITERS, JIMMY

Bob returns to optimist mode and signals to Mort.

BOB

Deal. I wanna win Lar's Caddy back.

EXT. HANEDA AIRFIELD, TOKYO - DAY

SUPER: "Tuesday, October 24th, 1950. Tokyo." Bob's planes land on the airfield runways.

INT. USO PLANE - DAY

Everybody wakes up stiff on seats with rolled up jackets as pillows. They get up to deplane, Bob first.

FRED

Japs'll be a great audience. Only five years since the A-Bomb.

LARRY

Yeah, what's funny after that?

JIMMY

Bob is. *The Paleface* opened huge over here.

EXT. PLANE

Bob stands in the plane's door and a CHEER goes up like it's a Beatles show. Two Japanese men are dressed up as Bob and Jane Russell from *The Paleface*. Bob signs autographs and poses for pictures as crowds of Japanese fans greet him.

CROWD

Boba Hopa! Boba Hopa! Boba Hopa!

CHET

(to Larry)

Probably think he's Red Buttons.

BOB (O.S.)

I heard that!

JIMMY  
Bob heard that!

INT. BUS - DAY

Bob's bus rolls through downtown Tokyo as fans chase after. Suddenly, the bus stops, as the street is clogged with fans. WE HEAR the crowd singing "Buttons and Bows," Bob's hit song from *The Paleface*. He leans out the window to cheers and sings along with them.

MORT  
We fought a war with them? We  
shoulda just sent him.

BOB  
Guys, jokes, jokes.

CHET  
My World Series stuff!

The writers whip out notebooks and feed Bob pages. WE HEAR HUGE LAUGHS. Chet gives Fred an I Told You So Look.

BUS DRIVER  
You know none of these people speak  
English, right?

LARRY  
Then why are they laughing?

BUS DRIVER  
He's Bob Hope. They know when he's  
being funny.

Bob peeks back into the bus, loving it.

BOB  
Christmas bonus this year. Promise!

CHET  
I told you that stuff would kill.  
You gotta listen to me.

INT. INTERNATIONAL HOUSE HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Bob and co. enter. LIEUTENANT PRESCOTT, 20s, an army PR handler, greets them.

PRESCOTT

Sir, I'm Lieutenant Prescott, your escort for your visit. General and Mrs. MacArthur have invited you and your cast to lunch.

BOB

All forty of us?

PRESCOTT

The invitation is for twenty only.

BOB

We'll handle it. Thank you.

JIMMY

Cut the band. That leaves twenty-two.

BOB

Cut two of the writers.

CHET

You're not cutting me. I'm going. I gotta meet MacArthur.

MORT

We'll draw lots.

CHET

You draw. I'm going.

LARRY

We're all drawing lots.

CHET

(pleading)

Bob!

BOB

(pleading)

Chet!

Fred takes out four matchsticks and snaps two in half.

FRED

Long pulls go.

The writers grab. Mort and Larry draw the long matches.

BOB

Sorry, Freddie.

FRED  
Send me a bottle of gin if you feel  
that bad.

CHET  
I'm going.

BOB  
No, fair's fair.

CHET  
Fair? Fair? I can't come to Japan  
and not meet Big Mac.

BOB  
Maybe you should go and I'll stay?

CHET  
Really?

JIMMY  
No!

Everybody heads for their rooms except the writers.

CHET  
Guys, come on, how much for a  
Macarthur ticket? \$50. \$100.

LARRY  
No way.

MORT  
Uh-uh.

FRED  
Forget it.

CHET  
(to Fred)  
You're not even going.

FRED  
I just like turning you down.

EXT. IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

An army bus pulls up, met by a full dress military guard. Bob and his people and Prescott step out. Larry and Mort stare up at the white, imperial walls in front of them.

MORT  
Already lives like he's President.

LARRY  
If Presidents had the money.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE

Inside, GENERAL and MRS MACARTHUR, 70ish, welcome Bob's company with a cadre of military officials.

MRS. MACARTHUR  
Mr. Hope, welcome to our home.

LARRY  
Cozy.

MACARTHUR  
Bob Hope, what a pleasure.

BOB  
Likewise, general.

MacArthur laughs, as if Bob just told a hilarious joke.

LARRY  
Guess MacArthur doesn't speak English, either.

MacArthur watches GIs surround Bob. Mort sees MacArthur eyeing Bob coolly, and tries to break the ice with him.

MORT  
I used to be one of those guys. In a quonset hut in Alaska. I heard a Christmas show Bob did on radio. Like a lifeline home. A year later I was writing jokes for him.

MacArthur just watches. Mrs. MacArthur and Prescott pass by.

MRS. MACARTHUR  
A chair short? We have twenty-one guests and twenty chairs?

PRESCOTT  
Yes, ma'am. I counted three times.

WE HEAR a very familiar LAUGH. Larry and Mort turn to see CHET laughing TOO LOUDLY at something MacArthur said. Bob slowly walks over, staring daggers at Chet, who snaps pictures of himself with MacArthur on a Brownie camera.

CHET

Bob, did you hear that? The General's a comedian, too.

BOB

Is he looking for a writer?

MRS. MACARTHUR

Ladies and Gentlemen, lunch.

As everyone moves to the table, MacArthur sits at the head. Bob, Chet, Larry, Mort sit on one side of him. The officers sit on the other. Chet brazenly slides in next to MacArthur, in Bob's seat. As everyone sits on silk covered formal dining chairs, Mrs. MacArthur sits in a metal folding chair.

CUT TO:

Waiters clear plates, serve coffee. Chet sucks up to MacArthur, who loves it.

CHET

Tell us about your invasion at Inchon. In one move you turned the whole war around.

MACARTHUR

Well Chet, it's not really a war by my standards. Not when the enemy is North Korea's President Kim Buck Tooth -- excuse me, Kim Il Jong.

Chet and the officers laugh, with Chet slapping the table.

MORT

Not a real war?

PRESCOTT

It's more of a policing action.

CHET

It's a real war now. Bob's here.

Now Bob and MacArthur both give Chet a dead stare.

MACARTHUR

The Inchon landing means our boys will be home by Christmas.

MORT

What if the Chinese get involved?



BOB

I heard Mao Zedong says if we  
invade past the 38th parallels --

MACARTHUR

*The 38th Parallel.* The border with  
North Korea. We're not invading.  
We're liberating. I forgot. You  
golf with Ike, my old secretary.

BOB

No, I mean, it's in the papers.

MACARTHUR

Mao has an army of laundry men. He  
fears a confrontation with me --  
the United States. After Inchon,  
his moment passed. In fact, I  
ordered our forces North to his  
borders today to finish the North  
Korean army. Well, you have a  
comedy show to do.

MacArthur gets up, signalling the end of lunch.

CHET

Back to the grind. What a thrill,  
Mr. President - *general*.

MacArthur wags a finger as if to say "naughty, naughty." As  
MacArthur shakes hands with everyone, Bob smacks Chet upside  
the back of the head like he's a five-year-old.

INSERT MAP ANIMATION

SUPER: "Wednesday, October 25th, 1950." WE SEE a graphic of  
Bob's plane leave Tokyo for Seoul, South Korea. WE SEE the  
38th Parallel line, the border with the North. Bob's plane  
stops at Seoul, BELOW the parallel.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Bob, Jimmy, Fred, Mort, Larry, and Chet play cards. They  
look up when they hear the captain's voice.

PILOT (PA)

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are now  
approaching Seoul, recently  
liberated from communist oppression  
and under new management.

The passengers all applaud this.

PILOT (PA)

In Seoul, you will find Coca-Cola,  
*The New York Times*, and Bob Hope.  
Just like downtown Omaha.

CHET

See? You guys coulda showed Mac a  
little respect. 'Writing parking  
tickets.' Guy's our next President.

LARRY

Already thinks he is.

MORT

With that chin, who wouldn't?

CHET

And you and the Chinese invading.

MORT

Mao said don't go into the North.  
Truman said don't go North. Mac  
went North. Fair question.

CHET

Listen to the armchair generals.  
Tell him, Bob. Home by Christmas.

BOB

That's what he said.

CHET

What? You too? He's *MacArthur*.

BOB

Yeah ... sure.

LARRY

But?

BOB

They don't know everything. In  
Africa, in '42, Ike told me himself  
"Rommel's on the run." Two hours  
later, *I'm* in a shelter with Nazi  
bombs falling on me.

CHET

How can you argue with Inchon? That  
battle turned the war around.

LARRY

Inchon: Korean for "what a chin."

CHET

MacArthur knows his business.

MORT

And Ike didn't? They all do.  
They're only human. Bob, tell'm  
about Patton. In Sicily.

LARRY

What happened with Patton?

BOB

Don't remind me.

MORT

Remember when Patton slapped those  
two GIs? When the news broke, he  
wanted Bob to go on the radio and  
defend him. Bob's not a press  
secretary for generals.

BOB

Patton was a great general. Look. I  
just tell jokes. Mac's right. The  
reds are done.

CHET

We're kicking their asses.

PILOT (PA)

Folks, we'll have to put those ice  
cold Cokes on hold. Seoul's main  
runway was bombed an hour ago.  
We'll circle as they clear debris.

Mort shoots Chet an I-Told-You-So look. Bob gets up, and  
heads back to Marilyn.

EXT. SEOUL AIRPORT

The two USO planes have landed and Bob's troupe deplane. As  
they do, Fred turns to Larry and tosses him a newspaper  
reporter's SKINNY, LINED YELLOW NOTE PAD (Mort, Fred, Chet  
already have them). Prescott and his DRIVER, 18, wait for Bob  
with a staff car.

FRED

Ok, junior. When we get to base,  
get the dope: Gossip, slang, what  
they love, hate, all of it.

CHET

Especially officers they hate.

MORT

Bob's rule number one: If GIs think  
it, Bob says it. He's the only guy  
in Korea can say what he wants. And  
does. It's why they love him.

PRESCOTT

Sir, we'll start with a tour of  
territory returned to indigenous  
Koreans from insurgent Koreans.

LARRY

They invaded their own country?  
They look more Korean than we do.

PRESCOTT

Excuse me?

FRED

Bob, can we get to work?

BOB

Lieutenant, my guys need to get on  
base. Like beavers need to chew  
wood, they need to write jokes.  
Marilyn and I will go with you.

(to the writers)

Au revoir, peasants.

(to Larry)

Junior, with us.

INT. PRESCOTT'S CAR

Larry sits up front with the Driver. Bob, Marilyn, and  
Prescott sit in back, as the car drives toward base. Larry  
notices a long line of GIs outside a building, off the  
tarmac. The building is a hospital with a RED CROSS on it.

LARRY

What's the line for?

DRIVER

Shots. Flu, malaria, clap.

Larry writes it down.

DIVER  
You met MacArthur? He say when  
we're going home?

LARRY  
By Christmas.

DIVER  
Right. Then why're we still moving  
North?

PRESCOTT  
(to the Driver)  
You're here to drive. So *drive*.

EXT. ARMY BASE

Mort talks to African-American GIs in a jeep motor pool.

MECHANIC  
We get a Christmas show in October?

MORT  
It airs in the states by Christmas.

MECHANIC  
So it's an army Christmas show.

MORT  
So which of the brass is on your  
case most?

MECHANIC  
You're not going to name me?

MORT  
For Bob only.

MECHANIC  
General Ned Almond. Put us all back  
here. Thinks the Negro is afraid to  
fight. Wants the army segregated  
again. If he had a shoe shine unit,  
that's where he'd put us. Anyway,  
we'll be home in a month, right?

MORT  
That's what I hear.

ANGLE - FRED

As he smokes, talking to a machine gun crew sitting on a jeep with a 50 MM gun on back, loading up. Their eyes follow Fred's cigarette as he waves it around while he talks.

FRED

Where do you guys get a drink  
around here?

MACHINE GUNNER

Rosie's.

This gets smirks from the other guys, knowing looks.

FRED

Ok, what else do you get there?

MACHINE GUNNER

Hand out the Camels, I'll talk.

Fred tosses them the pack, notebook ready.

INT. ROSIE'S

Chet sits at the bar with GIs and Korean girls. ROSIE, 40s, the madame, puts a drink down for Chet. One of Rosie's girls kisses a GI good-bye and he hands her cash. Enter Fred.

FRED

Figures you'd get here first.

CHET

Then you know what they sell.  
Thanks, Rosie. Almond's a hardass?

ROSIE

He shut me down. He should fight  
communist, not me. In June,  
communist say I'm capitalist. This  
week, capitalist say I'm immoral.  
Know what, I always make money.

B-GIRL

I can be communist, but it's extra.

This gets a laugh as she hands Rosie money. Chet takes notes.

SOLDIER

Almond says Rosie's a bad influence  
on American morale.

CHET  
Morale or morals?

ROSIE  
Morals. I'm great for morale.

EXT. TANK LINE

Mort talks to tank crews, who load up. Mort takes notes.

MORT  
Worst thing they make in mess hall?

TANK DRIVER  
The food.  
(Mort waits, wanting more)  
Same as everywhere. Shit on a  
shingle. Wednesday beef.

MORT  
Guys loading up? Going out?

TANK DRIVER  
North along the border, Yalu River.  
Then it's back to Tokyo and a full  
dress victory parade for MacArthur.

MORT  
The fighting bad?

TANK DRIVER  
Fighting? We're mopping up, man.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

WE HEAR JETS overhead. Prescott's car pulls up to an F-80 two-seater fighter jet with a busy flight crew. They get out of the car, impressed by the gleaming jet, a sight new to 1950.

PRESCOTT  
An F-80 Shooting Star, Mr. Hope.  
First American jet used in combat.  
We want you to see how the Pentagon  
spends your tax dollars.

BOB  
It's why I do army shows. To visit  
my money.

PRESCOTT

Very funny, sir. We're hoping you might work an F-80 into your show.

BOB

Is it a funny jet?

As they exit the car, CAPTAIN JOHN KRUPA, 20s, walks over. He's the opposite of Prescott, a burly, tough fighter jock with five o'clock shadow, all Chuck Yeager cool. Bob reaches over to shake hands with Krupa, who eyes Marilyn.

PRESCOTT

Mr. Hope, meet Captain John Krupa. He'll be your pilot in Korea.

BOB

Hi, I'm Bob. This is Marilyn.

KRUPA

I recognize you. Miss Maxwell, I saw you sing once with Jimmy Dorsey. And of course, *Lost in a Harem*.

MARILYN

My Abbott and Costello picture.  
(eyes Bob)  
I played wife number thirty-eight.

KRUPA

I don't remember them in it.

BOB

I know how they feel.

MARILYN

I think I'm gonna like the Air Force.

PRESCOTT

Mr. Hope, the Shooting Star flies up to speeds of 600 miles per hour.

BOB

What's faster, Krupa or the jet?

KRUPA

Come on up and find out.

CUT TO:



INT. F-80 - DAY

Bob is laughing like a kid on a roller coaster as Krupa buzzes the field, Larry, Prescott, and Marilyn.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

Krupa and Bob climb down from the plane, as Bob walks - with wobbly legs - to Larry, Prescott, and Marilyn.

BOB  
You and Krupa here have a lot in common.

LARRY  
Yeah?

BOB  
Prob'ly? Anyway, put him in the show, will ya? I like him.

LARRY  
In the show? How?

BOB  
Gee, I dunno, *write something*? I'm due at a hospital show.

Bob and Marilyn hop in the car, leaving Larry and Krupa.

LARRY  
Larry Gelbart.

KRUPA  
John Krupa.

LARRY  
Krupa. Like the drummer. You funny?

KRUPA  
Maybe. No one says it to my face.

LARRY  
Funny. You look young to be a fighter pilot.

KRUPA  
Out here I'm *old*. You look young to be a comedy writer.

LARRY  
I am. Where you from?

KRUPA  
West Virginia. You?

LARRY  
Beverly Hills. So, jet pilot.  
What's that like?

INT. JET

Larry holds on as best he can as Krupa skims over tree tops.

LARRY'S POV

We see trees, buildings, people as Krupa comes REALLY CLOSE.

INT. JET

Larry white knuckles it, holding tight, shouting through the oxygen mask intercoms.

KRUPA  
So you know Doris Day?

LARRY  
Doris? Yeah. We gonna hit that tree?

KRUPA  
Nah. Dorothy Lamour?

LARRY  
Sure.

KRUPA  
All these actresses. You ever ...

LARRY  
Doesn't happen to writers. It's why we make stuff up. When did you join the Air Force?

KRUPA  
Out of high school. It was that or the coal mine where my dad works.

LARRY  
Going to college? GI Bill?

KRUPA

Me? I'm a lifer. You go to college?

LARRY

Been writing jokes since I was 16.

KRUPA

How'd you get that job?

LARRY

My dad's a barber. Cuts Danny  
Thomas' hair ...

KRUPA

Danny Thomas walks into a  
barbershop. Sounds like a joke.

EXT. AIRPORT

Larry, on shaky legs, exits the plane with Krupa.

LARRY

Well, you must be happy. This war  
is practically over.

KRUPA

"Practically." It still gets hairy.

LARRY

Gets what?

KRUPA

Hairy. Ugly. Russian MiG jets are  
tough. Chinese come across the  
border for quick hits then go back.

LARRY

Chinese? You saw them?

KRUPA

Just the ones trying to kill me.  
Why?

LARRY

Macarthur says China isn't in it.

KRUPA

Ok. Then they're not.

LARRY

You said you saw them.

KRUPA  
Not if God says I didn't.

LARRY  
Where did you not see them?

KRUPA  
North near the Chinese border. We buzzed low. Under a tree was a 50 millimeter gun. Shot up my wings and fuel tank. My wingman got shot down. Mike. From by you. San Diego.

Krupa turns quiet. Larry stops writing, not expecting that.

INT. MESS HALL

Fred, Mort, and Chet go over jokes at a table. Larry rushes in with new pages that he hands out to them.

FRED  
Late. You find a comic book stand?

LARRY  
I got GREAT stuff from the GIs. I went up in a jet, too.

CHET  
The pilot pin some wings on you?

LARRY  
(re pages)  
And *it's flu shot day*.

FRED  
Flu shots. I'm half asleep already.

CHET  
No wonder people take an instant dislike to you, Freddie.

LARRY  
It saves time.

Chet, Mort, and Fred read the pages.

CHET  
Funny.

MORT  
Yup.

FRED

Eh.

(on their looks)

Ok. It's funny. Pilot bit's good.  
I'll punch it up. Ok, they hate  
Almond, get laid at Rosie's, hate  
Wednesday beef. And it's flu shot  
day. It's officially an army show.

ANGLE - BOB AND THE WRITERS

Bob, in leather bomber jacket, smirks as he reads the jokes.  
He eyes Larry:

BOB

The flu shot bit. You play the GI.

LARRY

Me?

BOB

You see Central Casting out here?  
Don't worry, I'll try not to sound  
too much like Bob Hope for you. Ok,  
Le Mono.

(reads jokes)

Yow, I just had lunch with Almond.

CHET

Better cancel dinner.

Bob smiles, laughing, circles his favorites, then pockets it.

LARRY

You're hiding the mono in Korea?

BOB

The mono is sacred. If only I know  
what it is, no one can change it.

EXT. FIELD ARMY BASE

It's all tents, out in the country somewhere. GIs climb into  
trucks to see Bob's show.

INT. BARRACKS

A WISEASS GI in a MacArthur hat, sunglasses, and corn cob  
pipe imitates MacArthur. A Corporal enters to wrangle them.

WISE ASS GI

When Bob Hope tells a joke you will  
laugh. Slackers who do not laugh  
will see the show again until they  
find it funny. Is that understood?

The guys crack up. Wise Ass sits down, with a *New Yorker*.

CORPORAL

Rides for the show are here. You're  
gonna stay here and read magazines?

WISE ASS GI

Bob Hope's my old man's idea of  
funny.

CORPORAL

He must be *real* old if he don't  
like Marilyn Maxwell.

The guys leave. Then, Wise Ass GI eyes a Bettie Page pin-up  
on the wall. Beat. He hops up and runs out to the trucks.

INT. BACKSTAGE AMPHITHEATER

As Bob's crew sets up, Larry checks the crowd thru the  
curtains. He's in costume, in khakis. Krupa looks NERVOUS.

KRUPA

Full already, huh?

MORT

Not even.

LARRY AND KRUPA'S POV FROM CURTAINS

Troops sit on folding chairs, trying to keep warm in the  
autumn chill. The surrounding hills are bare grass. Then,  
from the hills, troops file in from the battlefield.  
Unshaven, dirty, tired, they plop down, rifles on shoulders.  
Thousands, until every visible spot is covered in GI green.

ANGLE - BACKSTAGE

Bob and the other writers walk up to check the crowd. Larry  
and Krupa join them. Bob sees Krupa is NERVOUS.

KRUPA

Where can I change into my dress  
uniform?

BOB  
Dress uniform? This isn't for the  
brass, it's for the guys. Just be  
you. It's why I wanted you.

Reassured, Krupa and Larry walk off. WE HEAR "THANKS FOR THE  
MEMORY cue up. Wardrobe runs up and takes off Bob's jacket.

WARDROBE  
It's five o'clock, Bob. Showtime.

BOB  
I need that!

MORT  
For the sketch, not the monologue.

Mort walks Bob to the wings as he mumbles his first joke  
again and again, nervous. Wardrobe brings him a golf club:

ANNOUNCER (PA)  
Won't you please welcome, man's  
best friend, Bob Hope!

EXT. AMPHITHEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Bob enters, the total pro, the Bob they want to see. He gets  
a laugh from the outfit alone.

BOB  
Hello, fellow tourists! Isn't it  
Seoul wonderful this time of year?  
(HUGE BOOS)  
That's what you think.  
(swings golf club)  
I'm just playing through.

Bob sees some soldiers, sitting up in trees trying to get a  
look at him.

BOB  
(re soldiers in trees)  
Hiya! Who stuck you up there? You  
must be Republicans.  
(to crowd)  
You guys know what Korea is, it's  
Siberia without the scenic route.  
Seriously, General Almond, thanks  
for putting me up.

Bob waves to GENERAL EDWARD "NED" ALMOND, 58, trim, tough, in  
the front row with his staff. He stands up to mild applause.

BOB

The General really knows how to treat a star. I landed at the airport and told my limo driver -- once he'd put the carrot in front of the mule -- take me to the best place in town. So I'm staying at Rosie's.

(HUGE LAUGH)

Well, I know it's a classy place. As I walked in, I saw General Almond coming out.

ANGLE - BLACK MECHANICS

It's the mechanics Mort interviewed earlier. They can't believe he said it. They stand to see Almond's face.

ANGLE - WRITERS WATCHING BOB FROM BACKSTAGE

the writers count together, timing the joke out with Bob.

WRITERS

Two, three, four ...

ANGLE - BOB AND THE CROWD

As the crowd lets go with a ROAR.

ANGLE - GENERAL ALMOND AND STAFF

The staff cracks up and Almond puts on a tight, fake smile.

ANGLE - BOB

On stage, rolling with the laughs.

BOB

At least I think it was General Almond. It's so hard to tell when a man's crawling on hands and knees.

Bob checks his shoe, like he just stepped in something.

BOB

Wednesday beef again.

As Larry enters from the wings.



LARRY  
Oh, Mr. Hope?

BOB  
Why it's Private Gelbart. They sent you to Korea? Well, I guess if everyone else does their part, we could still win.

Larry shoots a look backstage at the writers, who all smirk.

ANGLE - WRITERS

Fred, Mort, and Chet trying not to laugh.

MORT  
Chet, did you forget to tell Larry we added that line for Bob?

CHET  
Whups.

ANGLE - LARRY AND BOB

As Larry jumps back into the sketch.

LARRY  
As you know Mr. Hope, it's flu shot day here in Seoul.

HUGE BOOS come up from the crowd. Larry takes out a giant syringe from the kit, to LAUGHS FROM THE CROWD.

LARRY  
After he heard the monologue, General Almond sent me over.

BOB  
Wait a minute, I got every shot in the book in Tokyo. Flu, malaria, measles, headaches, and a round trip to Rosie's.

Bob gets LAUGH, and is about to segue, when Larry cuts him off.

LARRY  
Oh no, Bob. This isn't for flu.  
(Bob eyes him, surprised)  
It's to protect the Koreans from you.

This gets a HUGE LAUGH. Bob steps away from the microphone, trying not to crack up.

BOB  
You ad-libbed on me you son of a  
bitch?

Larry aims the needle at Bob's ass. Bob grabs the microphone:

BOB (CONT'D)  
Fellas, while I get out of this,  
take a look at what you've been  
fighting for, and I don't mean  
democracy - Marilyn Maxwell!

THE APPLAUSE and HOOTING and WHISTLING IS DEAFENING as Marilyn enters in a tight fitting dress.

MARILYN  
Bob, look at all these big strong  
men. Don't you wish you were one?

Mock hurt, he leaves. She opens on "Baby, It's Cold Outside."

INT. BACKSTAGE

Hope corners Larry, cracking up.

LARRY  
Bob, Bob, I'll make it up to you.

BOB  
Like how?

LARRY  
That last joke? No charge.

Bob and the writers laugh.

JIMMY  
That's the only way you could.

Larry joins Krupa, who looks nervous.

LARRY  
You're on next. You know the lines.  
There's cue cards just in case.  
(sees Krupa's nerves,  
talks quietly, calmly)  
You're out there with Bob Hope.  
When you're playing ball with Joe  
Dimaggio it's hard to lose.

EXT. AMPHITHEATER STAGE

Bob walks over to the mic, sounds surprisingly earnest.

BOB

And now fellas, a word from our sponsor, Uncle Sam. Yesterday I took a ride in one of the new fighter jets that's helping win this war. That's how fast General Almond wants me gone. But against orders, the pilot brought me back. So before he gets court marshalled, meet Captain John Krupa. Captain?

Krupa lopes on and gets applause and hoots from his friends.

ANGLE - LARRY

Backstage, script rolled up in his hand, tight. He's more nervous for Krupa than Krupa is. Prescott stands next to him.

ANGLE - KRUPA'S SQUADRON IN CROWD

Krupa's co-pilots and crewmen stand up and cheer.

PILOT #1

There he is!

ANGLE - BOB AND KRUPA

Krupa comes out, stares into the crowd, mesmerized for a moment. Bob grabs his hand to shake hands, otherwise Krupa might not have stopped, and he calms down.

BOB

Well, captain, I'll understand if you're nervous being in my show.

KRUPA

I'm a pilot, Bob. I'm used to bombs.

BOB

I hear flying jets is dangerous work.

KRUPA  
Yeah, but since I dropped you off I  
don't draw half as much sniper  
fire.

ANGLE - KRUPA'S SQUADRON IN CROWD

Krupa's co-pilots and crewmen crack up.

KRUPA (PA)  
Up near Pusan my squadron, the  
25th, came in low over some trees.

The guys stand up and take a bow, getting pelted with any  
handy object by the rest of the crowd.

PILOT #2  
Why Chollie, he's relating our  
adventures in Pusan.

PILOT #1  
A pip, I remember it well.

ANGLE - KRUPA AND BOB

As Krupa picks up the story.

KRUPA  
The 25th was looking for a North  
Korean supply line, when a 50  
millimeter gun opened up on me.

BOB (PA)  
Happens to me every year around  
Oscar time.

KRUPA  
It was a North Korean machine gun  
nest.

ANGLE - FRED, LARRY, CHET, MORT

Backstage, the writers follow the show with their scripts.  
Larry reacts as Krupa says "North Korean."

LARRY  
North Korean? They were Chinese.  
And his friend got killed. That's  
what you call punching it up?

FRED

MacArthur says no Chinese in Korea.  
I'm not putting Bob out there to  
fuck with MacArthur. And what's  
funny about a guy getting killed?  
What? They're soldiers. They know  
people die. We're not here to  
remind them of that.

ANGLE - KRUPA'S SQUADRON IN THE CROWD

They're no longer smiling as they listen to Krupa on the PA.

PILOT #2

North Korean?

PILOT #1

That's when Mikey got it.

KRUPA (PA)

My fuel tank was shot. I had one  
run at them, so I circled back and  
took'm out before heading home.

PILOT #1

Didn't even mention Mikey.

PILOT #2

Ah, Krupa's in show biz now.

ANGLE - BOB AND KRUPA

As Krupa wraps it up.

BOB

Well Captain, thanks for being on  
my show. A little different from  
army life, eh?

KRUPA

Yeah, first time I've ever seen our  
own guys point guns at me.

ANGLE - LARRY AND THE WRITERS

Larry says the lines along with Bob and Krupa.

MORT

Funny. And not just pilot funny.

EXT. STAGE

Bob, the full band, all the singers, the cast (including Krupa and Larry) as "White Christmas" starts up.

BOB

Fellas, I don't want to encourage  
the enemy, but this is a song Bing  
Crosby made famous. We loved coming  
to see you. We hear you'll be home  
by Christmas, where we want you  
most.

Bob and Marilyn step out front and the cast joins them.

ANGLE - MARINE PLATOON

It's dark and GIs stare at the show, rapt, singing along. A MARINE CAPTAIN quietly gets the attention of his men.

MARINE CAPTAIN

Show's over. Let's go.

MARINE PRIVATE #1

What?

MARINE CAPTAIN

ROKs at Unsan are under heavy fire.

MARINE PRIVATE

Heavy fire?

MARINE CAPTAIN

Yeah. Big.

There's an ominous pause, as his guys look confused.

MARINE CAPTAIN

Let's go.

They get up, singing "White Christmas" with attitude.

EXT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Backstage overflows with GIs. Bob's musicians jam in a corner. Bob, Marilyn, and Prescott enter. Bob and Marilyn drink from their own bottle with paper cups, tipsy. Bob is looking for someone in the crowd.

At the bar, Fred drinks with Larry (still in his Private Gelbart get-up) and Chet, surrounded by Krupa, his squadron, and many GIs. Fred is lost in his own world, bored.

SOLDIER  
Lucille Ball?

LARRY  
Sure.

SOLDIER #1  
Jane Russell.

CHET  
Oh yes ...

SOLDIER #1  
Did you ever --

LARRY  
No! Doesn't happen to writers.

CHET  
Speak for yourself.

LARRY  
What?

All eyes turn to Chet, especially a surprised Larry.

CHET  
Well, I'm not ruling anything out,  
is all I'm saying.

SOLDIER #2  
What about Bob? He gets around!

Chet spots Bob nearby.

CHET  
I'm already on probation.

PILOT  
What was that treetop story? You  
coulda mentioned Mike.

KRUPA  
I did when I told them about it.

PILOT #2  
And they were Chinese.

LARRY  
For folks back home, it woulda  
ruined the bit.

PILOT #2  
Sorry our friend getting shot  
fucked up your "bit."

Bob and Marilyn walk up, tipsy.

MARILYN  
Six trucks of GIs couldn't make it  
to the show. Guess who heard about  
it?

BOB  
Oh, Freddie? Road trip! There's  
some boys need some laughs.

Fred turns from the bar and falls flat on his face, stone  
drunk. GIs rush to pick him up. Bob looks at Larry.

BOB  
Lar, you're up. Tony!

A guitarist, TONY, 20s, playing, gets the nod from Bob.

EXT. KOREAN ROAD - NIGHT

A jeep and a full troop truck full of armed men bookend  
Hope's car. The drivers use moonlight - no headlights.

INT. CAR

The car hits giant potholes. Bob and Marilyn sit in back,  
sipping from their paper cups, like high school kids on prom  
night. They kiss, sloppily. Larry makes the mistake of  
looking in the back seat. Bob sees Larry's judgmental look:

BOB  
Yes, Lawrence?

Larry turns away. He and Prescott's Driver sit up front,  
MINDING THEIR OWN BUSINESS. Then there's giggling again.

BOB  
Hey, this is how we did it in Italy  
in '43. Me, a honey, a guitar, and  
a gag man. Wait'll these GIs see  
us. They're sitting in mud  
freezing their asses off.



LARRY

Like us?

Larry looks over his shoulder as Bob strokes her hair.

BOB

Try it on thirty a week, smart ass.  
They're out here stuck in mud at  
three in the morning because they  
got drafted. Remember that.

Larry turns, keeps his eyes out the window. WE HEAR Bob and Marilyn giggling to themselves again.

EXT. MUDDY ROAD - NIGHT

A convoy of trucks is trapped in mud. Headlights illuminate the scene as a truck tows a stuck vehicle from mud. It's the trucks from the WISE ASS GI's outfit. The guys pushing are tired, cold, dirty. The truck pulled from the mud is backed up, rear gate down. Bob's cars arrive and Prescott's GIs jump out to help. Bob sees the flatbed truck with the lights shining on it, thinking. A SERGEANT, 20s, steps up.

PRESCOTT

Unpack that coffee. Get these guys  
some coffee and food.

SERGEANT

Is that really him?

BOB

It's me, pal. I deliver.  
(re the flatbed truck)  
Leave that. It's my stage.

SFX: WE HEAR "Thanks for the Memory" on acoustic guitar.

CUT TO:

The GIs sit in a circle around Bob's truck. A curtain has been hung over the back as his impromptu stage. Tony the Guitarist sits on the edge of it, warming them up.

INT. TRUCK

Behind a BLANKET, hung as a curtain, Marilyn awaits her cue. Larry reads off his notes:

LARRY  
Know why I'm out here at three AM?

CUT TO:

ANGLE - BOB IN FRONT OF THE BLANKET

finishing Larry's joke on the back of the truck, golf club in hand.

BOB  
... after General Almond heard my monologue he gave me a top secret assignment: prisoner exchange.

This gets a LAUGH. Now Marilyn sticks her head out.

MARILYN  
Well, hello Bob!

BOB  
Marilyn! I haven't seen you in three weeks.

MARILYN  
But Bob, you said not to come out until you got your first laugh.

Marilyn steps outside in her dress, getting wolf whistles.

BOB  
Well, how about a song? Those always work.

The Guitarist goes into "My Funny Valentine," which Marilyn sings to the GIs, but emphasizes lines for Bob, who mugs along with her.

MARILYN  
*Sweet comic Valentine  
You make me smile with my heart  
Your looks are laughable,  
unphotographable  
Yet you're my favorite work of art.*

ANGLE - TWO MARINES

It's the MARINE CAPTAIN and MARINE PRIVATE who left Bob's show during "White Christmas." They're more into hot coffee and food than him. They wear wet, torn uniforms, faces scraped raw from brush and gravel.

ANGLE - BOB

As he sees the two marines showing up late.

BOB

What happened to you guys? The  
local girls must be rough.

MARINE PRIVATE

Ho, ho, ho. They weren't local.

BOB

Hey, the key word is girl, right?

ANGLE - CAPTAIN AND PRIVATE

tell their story to a circle of GIs, Bob, Marilyn, and Larry.

MARINE PRIVATE

We went as back-up at Unsan. By the  
time we got there, every ROK we saw  
was dead. Wiped out.

PRESCOTT

North Koreans. Circling back.

MARINE CAPTAIN

No, Chinese. Lots. Screaming,  
blowing trumpets all night.

LARRY

Did you see any Chinese?

MARINE CAPTAIN

Hard to miss all those red stars  
flying in your face. I know how  
they fight. I was in Manchuria five  
years ago.

PRESCOTT

You saw them? MacArthur plans to  
piss in the Yalu river next week.

MARINE PRIVATE

Mao's saving Dugout Doug the trip.

PRESCOTT

What did you call him, private?

## MARINE CAPTAIN

Dugout Doug, *lieutenant*. Just like  
the Philippines. Never leaves HQ.  
Been out here one day to hand out  
medals and take pictures.

The Captain unslings a gun from his shoulder. He hands it to  
Bob. There's a low whistle from Prescott's Driver.

## MARINE PRIVATE

Chinese zip gun. Merry Christmas,  
Bob Hope.

## MARINE CAPTAIN

Sorry there's not a red bow on it.  
But it's not Christmas anyway. It's  
Halloween.

## INT. SEOUL MESS HALL - DAY

Bob's cast and crew sit and finish breakfast and coffee.  
Their bags are with them. They look exhausted, hung over,  
and feeling the morning chill.

Then Chet rushes by, in a South Korean local's shirt, Bermuda  
shorts, sunglasses, and a Kansas City Monarchs baseball cap.  
He pops breakfast rolls in his pockets and grabs coffee. As  
the officers eye Chet, Bob just shrugs.

## BOB

Best not to ask where Chester's  
concerned, general. Where are the  
first marines today? I always do a  
show for them. I'm not on in  
Pyongyang til tonight.

## PRESCOTT

First Marines? They just took  
Wonsan. It's the second Inchon.

## KRUPA

We can fly up there in an hour and  
make Pyongyang in good time.

## INSERT MAP ANIMATION

SUPER: "October 26th, 1950." Bob's plane is shown flying to  
the Eastern side of the Korean peninsula, *crossing the 38th  
Parallel* into North Korea and the port of Wonsan.

INT. PLANE

Larry and writers doggedly work out jokes, doing weak Bob impressions. Fred and Chet are hung over.

FRED

These fighter jets are wild. I  
thought one flew by, but it was ...  
ah forget it, I got nothing.

CHET

Hey, how about these fighter jets?  
I haven't been on anything that  
fast since Gloria DeHaven!

Everybody starts to laugh, then stops. Bob sits down with them. He picks up Larry's notebook. Chet's busted.

BOB

Come again, Chester?

CHET

I was just, I mean -- it was --

BOB

Don't bother. How's the mono?

Bob reads over Larry's notebook, starts whistling.

FRED

Robert, you only whistle when  
you're unhappy.  
(Fred reads Larry's jokes)  
Chinese army jokes? What gives?

LARRY

We met some marines last night who  
fought the Chinese.

FRED

They say.

LARRY

They gave Bob a Chinese zip gun.

FRED

China supplies the North. So what?

CHET

MacArthur told us. No Chinese. Big  
Mac has spoken.

MORT  
Bob doesn't take orders.

CHET  
From MacArthur?

MORT  
From any one.

FRED  
A zip gun's not a Chinaman. Same  
thing with Krupa. Stick to funny.

BOB  
Wait. Krupa? What happened?

Fred realizes he made a mistake. Reluctantly:

FRED  
Krupa's story about getting shot  
at? He says it was the Chinese.  
Also, his wingman was killed. I  
changed it to North Koreans and  
left the other guy out.

For the first time, Bob truly looks angry.

BOB  
Goddammit. Don't ever do that to me  
again. They know when it's bullshit  
up there. I don't bullshit them.

Bob tosses the notebook to confused Larry.

BOB  
And you. Just say *communists*. Reds.  
Got it? Maybe they did fight some  
Chinese. There's Russians here,  
too. Does it change anything? The  
whole world says Korea's done by  
Christmas. We're winning. Maybe  
MacArthur, the CIA, the United  
States military, and the President  
of the United States know what  
they're talking about. Maybe they  
don't. Me? I hope they do. I don't  
make the news. I make fun of it.

Marilyn bustles by and Bob, alert to the possibilities, jumps  
up to join her.

BOB  
Let me know when it's soup.

ANGLE - BOB AND MARILYN

As he follows her up the aisle.

BOB  
Honey, what?

MARILYN  
I want some time with you.

BOB  
This isn't exactly Paris.

MARILYN  
I didn't expect it to be. It's nice  
not running around and hiding, but  
we never have any time.

BOB  
These trips --

MARILYN  
It's still *work* for you, and that  
always comes first.

BOB  
I never led you on.

MARILYN  
And I didn't lead you on. You're  
kidding yourself if you think I  
want to be the woman who broke up  
Bob Hope's marriage.

BOB  
What?

MARILYN  
I don't want you to leave anyone. I  
just don't want to be left behind  
when you're with me.

Bob pulls her close.

CHET (O.S.)  
Hey, look. The 1st Marines!

Everyone looks down at the coastline and the Sea of Japan.

POV - THRU PLANE WINDOWS

At Wonsan Harbor, combat loaded battleships with thousands of sailors and marines wait at sea. Plumes of black smoke rise from a cruiser. Then an EXPLOSION, as it hits more mines.

MORT (O.S.)  
That did some damage.

ANGLE - THE WRITERS

trying to get a glimpse of the action below. Bob and Marilyn work their way down the aisle, to the rest of the company.

LARRY  
Why are they on the ships?

PRESCOTT  
They've got mine sweepers. They  
haven't landed yet.

As they watch, more explosions go up as mines are detonated.

EXT. WONSAN AIRFIELD - DAY

The C-54s carrying Hope's troupe land at the airport and taxi around toward the airfield's small terminal and hangar. The doors pop open on the planes and the ladders drop as everyone gets out and stands on the tarmac - it's deserted.

At the opposite end of the field is the terminal. A plume of black smoke comes up from behind it. The village as seen in the distance, is on fire.

The late October wind is chilly and sharp as everyone buttons up their jackets and heads for the hangar.

CHET  
We beat the marines. Hilarious.  
There's a joke in that.

MORT  
Yeah, on us. 'Cause if the marines  
aren't holding Wonsan, who is?

PRESCOTT  
I was told they'd taken it. It's a  
hot zone.



MARILYN

Oh God.

The troupe has made it far enough now where they can see clearly what's on the tarmac near the hangar.

On the side of the landing strip are dead bodies, a shot to death Korean family. They haven't been buried yet: Men, women, children.

Beyond the bodies are all their belongings: dumped out suitcases, broken toys, a bird in a bird cage that's still alive, and a dog leashed to a suitcase, barking at the plane.

A wedding dresses, half stuck out of a suitcase, flaps like a flag in the chilly wind.

There's stunned silence as they get a look at the bodies.

CHET

Jeez.

FRED

How old is that kid? Six?

Fred looks cold-angry. Mort has tears in his eyes. Larry is speechless, struggling to say ANYTHING.

KRUPA

Typical for the North Korean army. Murderers. Better get in the terminal for cover. There's gonna be snipers and stragglers.

JIMMY

Almond is gonna hear about this.

BOB

Yeah, have NBC file a complaint. If we ever make a phone call again.

Bob was overheard. He sees how worried people are.

BOB

Kidding! Kidding!

(calm, in charge)

Everyone, we've got a show to do.

Let's get to the hangar. Warm up.

Bob starts walking and they follow him. Except Larry, who watches Krupa. Krupa pulls his pistol and takes the safety off. The flight crew pull pistols, head for the terminal.

The terminal has big windows in front so passengers can see planes landing and taking off. WE SEE desks, a waiting area, a luggage pick-up.

KRUPA

Prescott, let's go.

Larry watches as Prescott, who hadn't thought of it, now joins Krupa's flight crew, gun drawn.

EXT. WONSAN AIRFIELD TERMINAL

Krupa takes one side of the front door and his men the other. WE HEAR a DOOR INSIDE the terminal SLAM SHUT. Krupa steps forward, gesturing that he'll go in first.

INT. WONSAN TERMINAL

Prescott kicks in the door. Krupa goes in like a cop, but there's no one inside. WE HEAR A NOISE from the back of the room, like someone making an effort to move something heavy.

ANGLE - LARRY'S POV

Through the big windows, Larry can see what happens next. On Krupa's signal, the men cover Krupa like cops about to enter a house with a gunman inside.

INT. WONSAN TERMINAL

The main luggage area is deserted and has clearly been ransacked. WE HEAR MOVEMENT from the back again. The terminal main waiting room consists of long benches, a chalk board with Korean characters and arrival/departure times on it, and one dead civilian airport worker behind the counter.

Krupa and his men slowly enter. One of Krupa's men, quite nervous, steps too close to the window, and Krupa quickly moves to pull him back.

As Krupa does so, his leg hits a METAL FOLDING CHAIR that bangs on the floor and ECHOES LOUDLY in the big empty space. They freeze. The noise is behind the ticketing desk.

EXT. WONSAN AIRFIELD

Larry looks toward the terminal. WE SEE Krupa and the others spread out around the ticketing counter. Then, past the terminal, Larry SEES DUST coming up on the road.

In the hangar, Chet notices Larry still out there.

CHET  
Larry, get over here!

LARRY  
There's somebody coming!

ANGLE - MORT, CHET, AND BOB

They see the dust coming up the road now.

MORT  
Trucks. From the west. Not the  
marines, the harbor's east.

BOB  
Who is it?

MORT  
I can't see.

ANGLE - LARRY

He looks in the terminal. Krupa's men are all in position.

ANGLE - LARRY'S POV

Krupa leads the men to the back room, first again. Krupa holds up THREE fingers, counting off: 1-2-3.

INT. WONSAN TERMINAL

Krupa throws himself against the wall, ready to shoot anyone or anything behind the counter.

Krupa edges down one wall, gun up. The others walk alongside the counter, guns out.

Krupa sets up to go through the door first. His two guys get ready to kick it open when Krupa notices the cabinets below the counter. There's a shoelace caught in one of the doors.

Krupa signals the men to FREEZE, points to the locker. One more step and his guys would be in front of it. Krupa signals a three count again: 1-2-3.

The men yank open the door. Krupa shouts in Korean:

KRUPA  
Don't move! Halt!

Inside, a skinny Korean boy, scared to death, pops up above the counter in a fedora and suit way too big for him. WE HEAR BOOM! A bullet smashes the wall inches over the kid's head.

The pilot holds Prescott's gun arm in the air, by the wrist. The gun smokes. The pilot stopped him just in time.

KID  
Don't shoot! No communist! I like  
Harry Truman! I'm not Chinese!

EXT. WONSAN AIRFIELD

Larry exhales at what he's watching inside the terminal. WE HEAR the RUMBLE of HEAVY ARMORED VEHICLES.

INT. WONSAN TERMINAL

Krupa and the guys relax, when they HEAR the RUMBLE.

KRUPA  
Shit.

They look out the window to see the column of trucks.

INT. WONSAN AIRFIELD

Krupa and his men exit the terminal to see the big trucks.

KRUPA  
About time. It's the army. X Corps.

ANGLE - AMERICAN CONVOY

X Corps' army trucks roll into the airport. Krupa waves the all clear to the hangar.

EXT. PLANE

Bob's shaky troupe exits the hangar, chattery and nervous. The soldiers are all looking at Bob. General Almond, sharp-jawed, all high energy aggression, gets out, in a clean pressed, decorated uniform.

ALMOND

Bob! Where's the 1st Marines?

PRESCOTT

Over there, sir.

Indeed, rolling in from the East are three jeeps of 1st Marines. The first to get there are the officers, and LT. GENERAL LEWIS PULLER, 50s. He does not look happy. The marine generals dress like soldiers, compared to Almond in his clean pressed uniform.

ALMOND

Ha! Bob Hope beats the marines to the beaches. Great headline!

BOB

The marines are welcome at all my landings.

Everyone finds this funny except the marines. Puller is contained fury.

PULLER

We been on boats three weeks clearing two-thousand mines. Mines Tokyo and X Corps never mentioned.

Almond waves an aide over and a photographer.

MARILYN

Two thousand?

PULLER

Nine men killed clearing them. Mines I seriously doubt the North Koreans laid on their own -- it had to have been Russian or Chinese advisors.

ALMOND

(cuts him off, re Bob)  
Let's not go over excuses.

PULLER

Excuses? Yours or mine?

ALMOND

(to Bob and Marilyn)  
Wonsan's complicated. It's not as simple as Inchon.

PULLER

While we waited three weeks the North Koreans escaped above the border.

ALMOND

Yah, running scared. It's why we're going so far north. To finish them off.

PULLER

Or they're baiting us north to thin out our lines.

ALMOND

They don't think that far ahead.

PULLER

They thought out those mines pretty well.

Puller stops, speechless, as two GIs in white waiter jackets come up to the general, like they walked out of Sardi's.

WAITER

How many for lunch, general?

ALMOND

Bob, Marilyn, Puller, join me. We have roast beef today.

BOB

I can't. I'm visiting the Missouri out there. Wounded men.

PULLER

I'm still seasick.

Puller walks off, cursing under his breath. Krupa steps up to the X Corps command with the kid.

ALMOND

What's this, captain?

KRUPA

Found him inside. There's a family of non-coms on the tarmac.

(in Korean)

Your family?

KID

My teacher's family.

ALMOND  
Get him talking.

X CORPS SERGEANT  
(menacing)  
Yes, sir. He will.

The Sergeant tosses the kid a Hershey bar, who devours it.

KRUPA  
Says the Chinese are coming.

ALMOND  
Chinese? You mean North Koreans.  
Maybe Russians.

KRUPA  
He said Chinese, sir.

ALMOND  
For God's sake, I hardly take him  
to be a credible source of military  
intelligence. You're probably just  
impressed by his suit.

Almond's aides and staff crack up at Almond's joke. Krupa  
takes it, because he has to take it. The sergeant takes the  
kid and the brass walk off with Bob as he signs autographs.

Larry, Fred, Mort, and Chet meet up with Krupa.

LARRY  
What happened in there?

KRUPA  
Local kid hiding. Figured we were  
the Chinese, Russians, who knows.

LARRY  
North Koreans, Russian mines,  
Chinese, the UN, and us.

KRUPA  
Nuts.

Jimmy Saphier arrives with four GIs.

JIMMY  
While Bob and Marilyn are on the  
Missouri, you each get a guide. Get  
to work.

The writers disappear into the mass of arriving X Corps GIs.

ANGLE - LARRY

Larry wanders among GIs with his guide. Larry starts asking the usual questions, which don't make sense now:

LARRY  
So, where do you guys go for a  
drink around here?

X CORPS SERGEANT  
You been here longer than me. It's  
that kind of a war.

WE HEAR a HONKING horn as a jeep pulls up to Larry.

DRIVER  
You Bob's writer, Leon Goldman?

LARRY  
Sure.

DRIVER  
Hop in. Bob Hope wants you *now*.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

In a jeep, Bob and Marilyn sit in back and Larry up front. They roll past refugees on the side of the road who shout at the jeep, hoping for food, water, any help.

Up ahead, GIs divert refugees off the road onto a large rocky field. The jeep follows goes onto the field. Larry tries to write as the jeep bounces off rocks. They shout to talk.

DRIVER  
What are you writing?

LARRY  
Jokes.

DRIVER  
Is this funny?

LARRY  
I don't know. It's all I got. Where  
are these people going?

DRIVER  
(shrugs)  
Don't think they care long as  
they're not getting shot to shit.



LARRY

Why are we driving on rocks? I  
can't write.

DRIVER

Russians mined the road. We'd get  
our asses blown off. Unless you  
think that's funny.

Larry puts the notebook away to watch the countryside and  
refugees. They carry everything they own on their backs.

The jeep finally gets back on a real road as they enter  
Wonsan harbor, a landing base with thousands of marines from  
ships now arriving. The jeep takes them down to the dock.

A helicopter waits for them, the kind seen every week in the  
opening credits of MASH. Under the big, spinning propeller,  
the pilot indicates there is only room for Bob and Marilyn in  
the helicopter. Larry has to wait. They get inside and it  
takes off, heading out to sea to the battleship USS Missouri.

ANGLE - LARRY

Larry is waved onto a PT boat and taken out to sea with some  
GIs. Theirs is the only boat heading out. All the others head  
to shore, full of men younger than Larry.

LARRY

Those guys graduate high school  
yet?

PT BOAT CAPTAIN

How old are you?

LARRY

Twenty-one.

PT BOAT CAPTAIN

Out here that's retirement age.

ANGLE - USS MISSOURI

WE SEE Bob's helicopter land on the big ship.

ANGLE - LARRY ON THE PT BOAT

Larry's PT arrives at the Missouri. An ENSIGN, 20s greets  
him. Some of the deck is a triage area for wounded GIs.

WE SEE a HUGE explosion far out in the harbor. Smoke billows from a distant mine sweeper.

ENSIGN

Welcome aboard! You are now on the USS Missouri, the very same ship on which General MacArthur personally accepted the complete surrender of the empire of Japan, ending hostilities in the Pacific.

Larry heads for the deck where the wounded arrive. It's a scene familiar to M\*A\*S\*H fans. 1950s medi-copters land, carrying hurt sailors on sideboards from smoldering ships in the distance. Doctors rush in, crouching low, examining them. Larry is transfixed as doctors make life or death calls. Some men are taken downstairs. Others get last rites. A young CORPSMEN runs out to the medical teams.

CORPSMEN

Incoming!

A doctor bumps into Larry as he runs alongside a stretcher carrying a wounded woman. Two doctors run past, shouting:

DOCTOR

What the hell happened?

DOCTOR #2

More mines.

Doctor #2 points to a ship further out. Black smoke billows from it as another medi-copter hovers above.

CORPSMAN

(to Larry)

Who are you?

LARRY

The writer!

CORPSMAN

What?

LARRY

I write jokes!

CORPSMAN

You're in the way!

A SAILOR grabs Larry's sleeve and pulls him toward a doorway.

INT. SICK BAY

The Sailor escorts Larry down the steps to the sick bay.  
Larry overhears two wounded marines, bandages on their heads.

SAILOR  
Wait here, please. I'll see if you  
can come in yet.

The Sailor ducks into the sick bay, leaving Larry.

MARINE PRIVATE #1  
Don't know what happened. I just  
woke up here. FUBAR.

The marines see Larry's confused look.

MARINE PRIVATE #2  
FUBAR. Fucked up beyond all reason.

The Sailor waves Larry inside.

LARRY'S POV

The sick bay is a long rectangular room lined with beds for  
wounded men, followed by a second ward after that.

Bob and Marilyn stand at the door for the second ward. Larry  
heads for them as they confer with a Navy doctor, then enter  
the next ward. Larry hurries to catch up.

INT. SICK BAY

Larry follows Bob and Marilyn into the next sick bay, a room  
similar to the one they are leaving.

BOB  
Ok, you boys know the drill about  
getting a Bob Hope autograph.

MARILYN  
Yeah, sorry fellas, it's orders,  
you have to take one.

Larry watches from the door, standing back while Bob works.  
Bob and Marilyn stop at the first bed, a 19-year-old marine  
whose arms are completely in casts.

BOB

Hey, kid. How you throw dice with those on?

(gets a smile)

Where you from?

WOUNDED MAN

San Francisco.

BOB

Yeah? I used to play the Golden Gate Theater on Market Street. They still have the sandwich shop on Polk - Zalley's?

WOUNDED MAN

You know Zalley's? Sign my cast?

MARILYN

Sure.

WOUNDED MAN

What are you doing after the war, Miss Maxwell?

MARILYN

Waiting for the good looking guys to come home.

(re Bob)

This is all we got.

BOB

I feel a song coming on.

LARRY'S POV

Larry looks down the line of kids. The wounds are horrible: one marine has blackened skin, burns all over his chest. Others are bandaged around their hands, in spots over their chests and torso covering bullet wounds, and some are simply unconscious.

ANGLE - BOB AND MARILYN

They move on to a marine in the next bed, wrapped up to the chest in a blanket, lots of drip and plasma tubes. Bob looks down, and the boy has no legs, which catches Bob by surprise. Bob chokes up a little, as does Marilyn. Larry has come up closet to Bob.

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Hey, ski nose. Sign my cast?

BOB  
Ski nose? A wise guy. Who came  
through here first, Bing Crosby?

WOUNDED MAN #2  
If he's selling Chinese mines, he  
did.

BOB  
Chinese mines ...  
(sees Larry)  
Hey, where you from?

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Kentucky. Going back to racing when  
I get back. I'm a jockey.

Bob chokes up, looking where the kid's legs used to be. The soldiers watch as Bob's eyes tear up slightly and Marilyn taps him on the shoulder, a signal that she'll take over.

MARILYN  
Want to hear a song?

WOUNDED MAN #2  
"We'll Meet Again."

Marilyn sits down and sings "We'll Meet Again" to him at his bedside. It softly fills the ward, as his eyes close and he listens, clearly drifting off, unconscious.

Bob heads quickly down to the end of the hall to hide his tears and disappears into a small room.

Larry follows him, past Marilyn, her song continuing.

Larry finds Bob in what hospitals call a "crying room," where you basically let out all the emotion that builds up in wards like these, but out of sight of the patients.

Larry sees Bob in the room, tears in his eyes, allowing himself to lose it. Bob spots Larry in the doorway.

BOB  
What? Can't I get one goddamn  
minute to myself?

Larry backs off, giving Bob some privacy, as Bob loses it. The doctor comes up to the door.

DOCTOR  
Excuse me, is Mr. Hope in there?

LARRY  
Yes, please give him a minute.

DOCTOR  
Who are you?

LARRY  
One of Bob's writers.

DOCTOR  
Excuse me, kid.

The doctor walks past Larry, ignoring him.

DOCTOR  
Mr. Hope, that marine back there  
missing his -- from Kentucky. He's  
awake. I don't know how long I'll  
have him ...

BOB  
Awake?

DOCTOR  
At all.

Bob pulls himself together, wiping tears from his eyes. He steels himself, and from the time it takes him to get up and walk from one end of the crying room to the other, he's once again - Bob Hope, comedian.

INT. SICK BAY

Bob enters, as Marilyn ends the song.

BOB  
Ok, fellas, whose got the dice?  
You know what the Navy is -- the  
original floating craps game.

The guys laugh but no one gets up, not that they can.

BOB  
Ok, I'll make house calls.

Bob goes to the kid from Kentucky, and Larry is within ear shot of their conversation.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Hey kid, you fell asleep during my first set.

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Never happened to you before?

BOB  
I see the marines are now trained in sarcasm. Kentucky, huh? Where?

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Louisville.

BOB  
Ah, the Royale. I played it in vaudeville. On Benson and ...

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Third. It's a movie house now. I saw *Road to Morocco* there with my dad.

BOB  
Jockey, huh? You know, last week at Santa Anita, I ran a horse.

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Yeah?

BOB  
I won't say he was old, but out of the gate he tripped over his hearing aid.

The kid cracks up. Larry watches as Bob times it perfectly, silently saying the follow-up as Bob says it:

BOB  
The bet was win, place, or live.

WOUNDED MAN #2  
Mr. Hope, would you mind signing my cast before you go?

Bob looks down: he already did sign it. The kid fades again.

The kid slips away, and the doctor rushes in with a nurse. The kid isn't just falling asleep. Bob backs up. Marilyn watches stoically, holding it in -- she's been here before, too.

There's a silence as the Nurse and the Doctor try to save the boy. They can't. Bob backs away to the crying room, gestures for Larry and Marilyn to follow.

INT. CRYING ROOM

Bob and Marilyn sit down on folding chairs, exhausted. Larry watches them get a second wind.

BOB  
Quit staring at me.

LARRY  
Bob, if you need a minute ...

BOB  
I already had one. Do you?  
(to Marilyn)  
They told me they took Wonsan. How could they not know that? How? And those bodies on the field ... they weren't dead but a few hours. We walked right into it.

LARRY  
(checks his notebook)  
GIs call it "FUBAR." It means --

MARILYN  
We know what it means.

Just then, WE HEAR a loud voice in the sick ward.

PRESCOTT  
Excuse me, Mr. Hope?

Prescott barges into the crying room.

PRESCOTT  
General Almond asked that I brief you - and Miss Maxwell, of course.

BOB  
Brief us? He sending us on a mission?

PRESCOTT  
Ha! Yes, sir. He wants you to have a positive perspective of the Wonsan landing, as confusing as it must have looked to civilians.



BOB

Sure, go ahead, Lieutenant.

PRESCOTT

(like a press conference)

The 1st marines have landed safely and are now moving on to clean up North Korean stragglers on the run. General Almond wants you to know everything is back to normal and communist forces are expected to surrender within days.

MARILYN

That's great.

PRESCOTT

General Almond moved the marines out in hot pursuit, double-time.

BOB

Wait, the 1st Marines are why I came out here. Now they're gone?

PRESCOTT

Yes, well, in all the confus -- uh, the landing, the North Koreans are farther north than first thought.

(re the wounded)

But of course, there's some of the mighty 1st here on-board.

BOB

I understand. Glad it's going our way.

MARILYN

Yes, thank God.

Prescott exits. Larry looks at Bob: Well?

LARRY

(re his notebook)

You don't believe that guy?

Bob eyes Larry, pointedly not answering him. The sick bay Doctor sticks his head in the door.

DOCTOR

Mr. Hope, the second ward is open.

The Doctor exits. Bob hops up to his feet, so does Marilyn. Bob tosses Larry back his notebook.

BOB  
Doesn't matter what I think. No  
marines. No show.

Bob and Marilyn exit. Larry sits, angry.

BOB (O.S.)  
Ok, you boys know the drill about  
getting a Bob Hope autograph.

MARILYN (O.S.)  
Yeah, sorry fellas, it's orders.  
You gotta take one.

Larry pockets his notebook and follows Bob and Marilyn.

EXT. PLANE - DAY

Bob's plane is warming up on the runway. Bob stands on the  
doorway, waving to a crowd of marines.

BOB  
Next landing fellas, I'll bring the  
beer!

Bob lingers a second, waving to them. He goes inside, but  
the marines stay out there, waiting for another glimpse of  
Bob. It starts to rain.

INT. PLANE

Larry, Fred, Chet, and Mort sit together. Bob walks up as  
the writers look out the window.

MORT  
First marines. Headed North.

WRITERS POV

WE SEE the 1st Marine column, rolling away, heading out of  
the airport area, off into the North.

ANGLE - BOB AND THE WRITERS

As Bob drops down into a seat among them.

BOB  
Jokes?

They hand Bob their notebooks.

BOB'S POV

WE SEE the jokes fly by as he flips thru the pages. Names pop out to us: MacArthur; Mao; Truman; Kim Il Jong; China; Red Army; Stalin. WE HEAR Bob whistling "Fancy Pants."

ANGLE - BOB

flipping thru the pages.

BOB

Do these come with a loyalty oath?

(reads from Larry's book)

They only sell plain candy bars at the PX because GIs think General Almond is nuts enough.

(reads, eyeing Mort)

If you see a fat guy in a red suit don't shoot, it ain't Mao, it's still Santa.

(to Mort)

Et tu, Morton?

Bob crumples the page and tosses it at Mort. Bob turns his attention to Chet, who looks sullen.

CHET

You know me, I love Big Mac, but ... the natives are restless.

BOB

Freddie?

FRED

You don't need to do that shit. We're here to get laughs. It's a fucking Christmas show for fuck's Sake. Fuck this fucking bullshit.

BOB

Nicely put.

MORT

C'mon, the guys know something's up.

CHET

So Bob should nail MacArthur in front of his own troops?

(MORE)

CHET(cont'd)

(to Bob)

We don't make the news. We make fun of it, right?

JIMMY

I dunno. Radioman told me back home the AP is reporting Bob beat the marines to Wonsan. We made news.

MORT

So it's no secret. What's the difference?

CHET

The difference is this is a war and these guys are in the middle of it. Whose side are you on?

MORT

Same side I fought for five years ago. Go to hell.

CHET

So one battle goes screwy. We're *winning*. Why bring the guys down?

LARRY

They are down. They --

FRED

(like shushing a kid)

Larry, please?

(to Bob)

Just do the Marilyn in a Christmas stocking jokes. Just be funny.

LARRY

(re his notebook)

What happened to if the guys think it Bob says it? If we don't care what the guys think, Fred's right.

BOB

Who says I don't care what they think?

Bob leans forward, challenging Larry. Larry doesn't back down. He shrugs, like, "whatever."

LARRY

Just do the Christmas jokes.

Bob stares coolly back at Larry. Chet, Fred, and Mort all ad-lib arguing their points to Bob, as Jimmy tries to quiet them. Larry says nothing, just waiting for Bob's decision. Bob gives up on all of them. Annoyed, he gathers up the notebook pages, avoiding Larry's look. The guys only get quiet when they see Bob get up and leave.

ANGLE - BOB

Bob heads up to the front of the plane. There's a seat next to Marilyn. Their eyes meet. Then she sees the jokes in his hands and she looks away, chilly.

Bob turns, spots a seat at the back of the plane, passing Prescott. He gives Bob a big smile and a thumbs up.

PRESCOTT

Pyongyang an hour away, Mr. Hope.

BOB

Yep.

Bob finally finds a spot way in the back of the plane. He sits at the window. Then Bob sees something on the tarmac that stops him, makes him smile.

BOB'S POV - THE 1ST MARINES

It's a downpour now as rain drenches the young marines still out on the tarmac, soaked, chilly. They've spotted him in the window. They wave and take pictures.

BOB SEES a jeep pulls up to the marines and a SERGEANT lays into the kids, really chewing them out. They run in the rain for their trucks, to roll out. Their truck joins the convoys, becoming part of the bigger roll out, and disappears North.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Bob watches them as the rain spatters the window. They roll for take-off. Bob rests his head against the window, and falls asleep.

INSERT MAP ANIMATION

SUPER: "Thursday, October 26th, 1950. Pyongyang." Bob's planes fly back West, from Wonsan to Pyonyang, all in the North, above the 38th parallel.

INT. PLANE

Bob has fallen asleep, the jokes still in his hands, pretty much untouched. Jimmy taps Bob, waking him up.

EXT. PLANE - DAY

Bob's planes sit on the runway as his troupe deplanes and gets into two busses.

A jeep waits for Bob and Marilyn with GENERAL JOHNNIE WALKER, 61, greeting them. Walker is a short, bulldog. He wears sunglasses, a silver helmet, a pearl-handled revolver. A flashing red siren with three big stars is affixed to his jeep.

The writers come-up just behind Bob with Prescott who instantly salutes Walker, who barely notices him.

PRESCOTT

Mr. Hope, Miss Maxwell, allow me to introduce General Johnnie Walker, Eighth Army.

BOB

(loud, for the writers)  
Marilyn, allow me to introduce you to *General Johnnie Walker*.

On hearing the name, all four writers jot down this instant keeper.

WALKER

*Loved Lost in a Harem.*

MARILYN

Thank you, general.

Bob jumps in the back seat of the jeep and Walker gallantly helps Marilyn up the step, then hops into his seat.

WALKER

Ok! Roll!

INT. WALKER'S JEEP

Walker's driver shoots thru the city at about sixty miles and hour, showing no fear, while Bob and Marilyn just try not to fall out onto the street.

From time to time, Walker actually gets up to wave to soldiers on the street, as if he were leading a parade. The "streets" are dirt roads and the buildings are charred black rubble.

WALKER

Commies kept it nice, eh? I don't think they're getting their deposit back. This is downtown Pyongyang. Let me know if you want to do some window shopping, Miss Maxwell! Yah, I'm kidding, of course. We're headed out to Pyongyang University where you can set up for your show. Take it easy on me up there, Bob. I don't want to have to shoot you. HAH! I'm kidding, of course.

BOB

Was there much fighting to take the city?

WALKER (CONT'D)

Hah! We hauled butt thinking there'd be a fight but only got into some friendly fire. Nobody got hurt, but by the time we sorted it out, the South Koreans got into the city first. Can you believe that? Hey, but you beat the marines to Wonsan. It's that kind of a war.

BOB

General, what's going on? What happened at Wonsan? Or Unsan? Are the Chinese in it?

WALKER

Yah, yah, you heard about the dust-up at Unsan last night?

(Bob and Marilyn nod)

Ok, unofficially, some Chinese are here. Is it a problem? It's the country next door. Lots of Mexicans in Texas, right? They a problem?

(Bob and Marilyn shrug

like, "guess not")

Right. So if Tokyo says home by Christmas, we're home by Christmas. Yah, well, you got jokes to tell, I got a war to run. Wonderful meeting you both. See you tonight.

Walker's jeep tears off gunning 60 m.p.h., siren blaring as the trucks with Bob's cast and crew arrive. Bob can see across the quad, a growing group of his GI fans. Prescott heads over to Bob and Marilyn. Bob yawns.

MARILYN  
You need some rest.

Bob shrugs, re the GI fans: "what can I do?"

PRESCOTT  
Mr. Saphier says he'll get your show set up on the football field. We have several hospital visits planned.

BOB  
Sure. I'm ready to go. Marilyn?

MARILYN  
Fifteen minutes. Gotta girly up.

BOB  
(to the writers)  
Road trip! Lar --  
(icily)  
-- no. Mort, lets hit it.

Mort gets into the staff car with Marilyn and Bob. The car leaves a cloud of dust behind them. Chet looks to Larry.

CHET  
That's not good. You don't want to be on probation, man. Bob's always looking at you. You never think your job's safe. Fred's always needling you.

LARRY  
That's what it's like now.

EXT. PYONGYANG STREETS - DAY

Krupa and Larry walk down the street, taking in the rubble. Larry shivers, only wearing an LA-friendly sport coat.

LARRY  
How is it the Chinese attack and the worst thing we can do is tell our guys who's shooting at them.  
(MORE)



LARRY(cont'd)

Back home they think there's a  
commie under everybody's bed and  
out here they can't find one.

They find themselves outside the Russian embassy where three  
GIs hang out in the courtyard. They have a bonfire going  
(using busted up furniture) and liberated bottles of vodka.  
Krupa and Larry come up to the fire to warm their hands. In  
a bureau the soldiers use for wood are a pile of clothes.

7TH CAVALRY GI

Nice jacket, sport. You a reporter  
for the Palm Beach news?

LARRY

For Bob Hope.

7TH CAVALRY GI

Yeah? You need a jacket? Trust me,  
it's getting cold. No one's got  
winter gear. Who thought we'd be  
this far North in October?

One of the GIs points to a looted Russian commissar's long  
coat and big fur hat.

LARRY

Sure, thanks.

7TH CAVALRY GI

Good. Cause we need some backstage  
passes.

The GIs wait on Larry, who nods.

LARRY

Deal --

KRUPA

-- and a bottle. Comrade.

The GIs throw Krupa a bottle and a grateful Larry his Russian  
long coat and fur hat.

ANGLE - ARMY STAFF CAR

Prescott sits up front with a driver. Bob, Marilyn, and Mort  
sit in back. Bob waves to GIs who recognize him. Where there  
isn't rubble, buildings have Communist murals on them. At an  
intersection, they see one of Joseph Stalin and Kim Il Jong  
surrounded by angelic children who look up at them as gods.  
Passing GIs flick cigarette butts and smash bottles on it.

The car passes a girls school. The courtyard houses North Korean POWs. Rows of them sit Indian-style, hands on heads. Republic of Korea soldiers guard them, not American GIs. Three NK officers hang by the neck, swinging in the wind, as examples to the rest.

Bob's car heads through a levelled area completely charred black - fields and hills recently wiped out by fire. Remains of bodies, barely recognizable, litter the hills and fields.

ANGLE - BOB, MARILYN, AND MORT

Bob leans forward to Prescott.

BOB (CONT'D)  
What the hell happened?

PRESCOTT  
Napalm. A chemical fire we drop  
that incinerates enemy territory.

Bob, Marilyn, and Mort take in the black fields, which stretch to the horizon.

ANGLE - PRESCOTT'S CAR

The car drives into downtown Pyonyang near a still standing three story building. Bob sleeps, faced pressed against the car door. When the car jerks to a stop, he wakes up.

PRESCOTT  
Mr. Hope, I'll go in and let them  
know you're here. Be right back.

Prescott gets out of the car and heads into the building. Bob, Marilyn, and Mort sit back, beat. Nobody talks, they're all exhausted, half asleep.

Mort nudges Bob. Mort nods to a street corner where a group of GIs have spotted Bob and Marilyn. The crowd is gradually growing, as they try to get a glimpse of him. Beat, Bob pulls himself up and leans out the window.

BOB  
Hey, I'm playing through to the  
18th hole. Pyongyang's the worst  
sand trap I ever hit!

ANGLE - BOB, MORT, AND THE CROWD OF GIS

In the chill air, Bob signs autographs, posing for pictures, hanging out. Mort listens, takes notes, takes photos.

GI

Man, we were racing to get here first. Night before we did the 5th and 7th Cavalries were blowing the shit out each other. "Friendly fire." By the time we got here the Russians were long gone.

MORT

Wiped out, huh?

GI #2

*Bugged* out. North. They'll be back.

GI

Bullshit. They high-tailed it. Took our POWs, too. They know we'll come North for'm.

(to Bob)

The shit they did here. We found a well full of dead bodies. Ditches full of people.

GI #2

Least there's food. We were down to a slice of spam and a can of grapefruit juice per day cause our supply lines are stretched so thin. Gets down to thirty degrees at night. We were three to a blanket.

(re something behind Bob)

I want those in a blanket.

WE HEAR wolf whistles. Marilyn has emerged from the car in a tight sweater.

GI #1

Oh, man.

BOB

I'm glad that was for Marilyn.

The guys are whistling and ogling her.

GI #2

What size cup do you wear?

MARILYN  
Bigger than yours, honey.

The GI's friends laugh him down as he has no comeback.  
Prescott comes out of the building.

PRESCOTT  
They're ready for you inside.

BOB  
Fellas, I'm going inside. We'll  
come back. Hang out if you can.

Bob heads inside with Prescott, but GI #3 tags along.

GI #1  
(ogling Marilyn)  
I didn't even get that sweater's  
autograph.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Prescott and Marilyn head through a lounge area, empty except  
for a couch and a desk with no chair. GI #3 walks with Hope,  
talking his ear off. Mort follows Bob.

GI #3  
I'm a cameraman in the Field  
Photographic Unit. I want to work  
in pictures when I get home.

BOB  
Sure. Toluca Lake 3-409. My home  
office. You call me when you're  
out. Toluca Lake 3-409. What's your  
name? I don't forget names.

GI #3  
Thanks! Mine's Ralph Kramer.

Mort writes it down as Bob and Marilyn head inside.

MORT  
Call after noon. Bob drinks.

BOB (O.S.)  
I heard that!

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Bob, Marilyn, Prescott, and a furious Mort climb the stairs.

MORT

Can you believe that? Our own guys  
shooting each other for Ping Pong,  
Korea.

PRESCOTT

Happens in every war. Generals have  
their reasons, sir.

MORT

Yeah. I been in a war. Not a  
"police action." First general into  
town gets the headlines at home.  
That's why guys get ground into  
dust.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Bob, Marilyn, and Mort follow Prescott into an office  
building converted into a hospital. At the top of the stairs,  
doctors and nurses wait for them.

DOCTOR

This ward is all men flown down  
from the Chinese invasion at Unsan.

BOB

Invasion?

DOCTOR

Yes. We've got three floors just  
like this.

The doctor opens the door. It's an entire floor of severely  
wounded American and South Korean soldiers. The lines of beds  
stretch across the entire building, with few aisles. They're  
all in bad shape. Bob takes a step forward, taking in all  
these hurt men.

BOB

(quietly)

Jesus Christ.

One by one, GIs start to notice Bob as the room gets quiet.  
Bob bucks up, becomes Bob Hope, Comedian.

BOB

Ten shun! Ok, whose got the dice?

## EXT. PYONGYANG FOOTBALL FIELD

The stage is finished and Les Brown's band sets up their music and tuning up. The front rows have folding chairs, but for the most part, the soldiers gathering out front sit on the ground, many trying to keep warm in the increasingly chilly air.

From the stage, Fred spots Larry and Krupa and the three 7th Cav GIs who gave Larry the coat.

FRED

Hey, Bob's back! Get up here!

## EXT. BACKSTAGE

The writers gather around a table with Bob, punching up a sketch. Larry enters, looped, in his commissar's outfit.

MORT

You switch sides?

CHET

Larry's so impressionable.

LARRY

How come at home there's supposed to be a commie under every bed and out here we can't find ONE?

Bob and Larry share a look as Larry flops down in a seat. Jimmy comes up to talk to Bob, whispering in his ear.

CHET

Drinking before a show. You after Fred's job?

FRED

Moving on. Page ten. We need a big kid for Bob's entrance as the sheriff.

BOB

You guys can handle it. Marilyn and I have to rehearse some new lyrics.

CHET

The army objected to "How Much Is That Doggy in the Window?"

LARRY

Turned out the dog is a Pekingese  
spy. Sssh, top secret.

BOB

That's a good one for the Larry  
Gelbart show. But you write for me.  
So work on that Bob Hope sound.

CHET

Like Bob's entrance? I need a  
laugh.

LARRY

Bob comes in as the sheriff and  
says, "What you call being a coward  
I call making a living!"

CHET

Ka-ching. That works.

Bob and Larry lock eyes. Both know Larry meant it. Mort and  
Fred see it, too. Chet's oblivious to the looks as he jots  
it down. Bob doesn't give in to Larry.

BOB

Yeah, it does.

Bob nods to Chet, who writes it down. Bob exits with Jimmy,  
who shoots a look back at Larry like "what's your problem?"

MORT

You trying to get fired?

FRED

If I can help in any way ...

LARRY

There's worse things than being  
fired.

MORT

In show business?

EXT. BACKSTAGE

Hope rushes to find Marilyn with Jimmy in tow. They pass the  
7th CAV GIs we met at the Russian Embassy, now backstage,  
eyeing Marilyn and scarfing craft service food with their  
vodka.

Four soldiers hand out brand new parkas to a shivering cast and crew. Jimmy pulls one on as he talks to Bob, who hasn't changed his icy look.

JIMMY  
Larry's a kid, he lost his temper.

BOB  
He's a writer. He'll get over it.

Prescott waits for Bob backstage. Bob stays icy.

PRESCOTT  
Mr. Hope? Could I take a look at the script before the show.

JIMMY  
The script?

PRESCOTT  
Yes. I'd like to report back to General Almond the tone of the show.

BOB  
Sure. Jimmy, give him the run through, will ya?

JIMMY  
Right away.

Jimmy hands the Prescott his own copy. A GI shyly comes up. For the SHY GI, Bob warms up.

SHY GI  
Uh Mr. Hope? My brother and me are from Akron, he's a huge fan --

BOB  
Ohio boys? I'm from Cleveland.

PRESCOTT  
(looks up)  
I thought you were born in England.

BOB  
(icy)  
Yeah. But I'm *from* Cleveland.  
(to the Shy GI)  
I came over when I was three. It was that or marry the girl.  
(as the Shy GI laughs)  
Jimmy, an 8x10 for ...?



Jimmy has one ready and hands it to Bob with a pen.

SHY GI  
Willie.

BOB  
(as Bob signs)  
Willie boy.

PRESCOTT  
No, he said "Willie."

Everyone looks at Prescott for a second as if to say "we know." The Shy GI leaves as Prescott scans the script.

BOB  
Lemme know if you have any good  
jokes.

Prescott sits down in the background to read the through the scripts. WE HEAR the band warm up with "Buttons and Bows." Bob eyes Prescott, whistling along with the band.

ANGLE - BOB

stepping away from Prescott. Bob peaks thru the curtains.

ANGLE - BOB'S POV

Hospital staff seat wounded men in the front rows, in wheel chairs, on stretchers, and those that are mobile in folding chairs. It obviously pains many to move. As the sun goes down, it's C-O-L-D.

Out back, soldiers pour into the football stadium.

ANGLE - BOB

Bob pauses, moved by the sight of all them. Prescott comes up to him. Bob is oblivious, in his own space for the moment.

BOB  
Wow, look at'm come.

PRESCOTT  
Mr. Hope, there's no monologue.  
This script starts on the second  
sketch.

Bob pats his pocket, wishing Prescott would go away.

BOB  
Mono's here. Fort Knox.

PRESCOTT  
May I see it?

BOB  
No, you kidding? Milton Berle could  
be right around the corner.

PRESCOTT  
Sir, I seriously doubt Milton Berle  
would come all the way to Korea  
steal a joke.

BOB  
Oh, you don't know Miltie.

PRESCOTT  
Mr. Hope. I'm not kidding.

BOB  
Me, neither. No.

PRESCOTT  
Sir, we know the questions your  
writers are asking. You act like  
men gossiping in war is news. We  
all know what they're saying. I can  
not allow you to undermine the war  
effort.

BOB  
Me undermine it? *Me?*  
(re the audience)  
You think I'd do that to these  
guys?

PRESCOTT  
Criticizing General MacArthur at a  
moment like this is un-American.

BOB  
Get outta here. I don't need  
patriotism lectures from you.

PRESCOTT  
I can call my superior officers.

BOB  
And I can call theirs. What time is  
it in DC, Jimmy?  
(before Jimmy answers)  
(MORE)

BOB(cont'd)

Five AM. Harry's always happy to hear from me, but not that early.

PRESCOTT

Harry ... ?

BOB

Truman.

Prescott backs down, walking off in a huff.

JIMMY

Would you really call Truman?

BOB

(shaking his head)

Not if I want to get back into the USA I wouldn't.

Bob shakes his head and walks off. He gets to his dressing room where a Gomer Pile-like GI awaits him, standing guard.

GOMER

Sir, I've been asked to assist you in anything you might need.

BOB

That gun loaded?

GOMER

Yes, sir.

Bob takes the notebook jokes out of his jacket.

BOB

Anyone tries to get in here, shoot'm

GOMER

Yes, sir.

Bob, closes the door, sits down on a metal folding chair. He lays out the notebook pages, rereading them. Calmly, Bob takes out a black marker and starts crossing out jokes.

EXT. PYONGYANG UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL FIELD

Larry, Krupa, Mort, and Chet walk out from the stage door. They see thousands of troops waiting. Larry now wears an army parka, like the other guys.

The Les Brown orchestra strikes up Bob's jaunty theme music from "Fancy Pants."

LARRY  
Get ready for that big Bob Hope  
sound.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Bob is freezing while Jimmy tries to get a US parka on him.

JIMMY  
You'll get pneumonia.

BOB  
Will you quit? I'll go out in my  
suit even if I freeze my ass off.  
(re parka)  
That thing's warm but it's not ...  
funny.

Just then, Bob's eye catches something in the room the  
writers were using: Larry's discarded Russian fur hat and  
long coat. WE HEAR:

PA SYSTEM  
Ladies and gentlemen, greetings  
from liberated Pyongyang!

EXT. PYONGYANG UNIVERSITY FIELD

The soldiers give themselves an extended CHEER.

PA SYSTEM  
And now, please welcome the mayor  
of Pyonyang, Party Chairman, Bob  
Hope!

Bob walks out in the Russian fur hat, long coat, and his nine  
iron. The soldiers are up on their feet, with something we  
haven't seen on many faces in Pyongyang - excitement, fun.

BOB'S POV

Of the wounded in the front row, applauding as best they can,  
actually looking happy.

ANGLE - PRESCOTT

A skeptical look on his face, as he watches the show, arms  
crossed, with GENERAL WALKER and other officers.

WALKER  
Prescott. What's he gonna say?

PRESCOTT  
I don't know, sir.

WALKER  
Yah. I see General MacArthur's  
intel is as good as ever.

ANGLE - LARRY AND KRUPA

Along with Chet, Fred, and Mort. Larry looks just as  
skeptical as the Prescott.

LARRY  
My horse is so old ...

ANGLE - BOB

who soaks up the applause, alpha-celeb that he is, with a  
comical look of "for me?" on his face. And then, at the  
perfect moment ...

BOB  
You fellas look surprised ...  
didn't you hear you're getting a  
change of enemy?

There's a pause, a Did He Really Say That Pause, and we hear  
a "ooooooooohhhhhh" rising from the troops, since they knew  
exactly what it meant.

ANGLE - WRITERS AND KRUPA

The writers look confused as Krupa laughs. Larry smiles.

FRED  
Who wrote that?

LARRY  
He did.

ANGLE - PRESCOTT

Not looking happy.

ANGLE - BOB

Shooting a look to his guys before he really gets going.

BOB

(to the marines)

Things really move around here. I took a cab over from the Pyonyang Hotel. I paid the driver in US dollars, he spoke Russian, and I got my change back in Chinese yuan. At the Pyonyang the towels say "His, Hers, and Whose Sorry Now?"

(waits out the laugh)

Seriously, I love it here with General Johnnie Walker in charge. He fits right in. Last week Johnnie Walker Black, this week Johnnie Walker Red. Sorry about that last one. In Pyongyang, the bombs just keep coming. But isn't North Korea lovely this time of year?

The GIs BOO loud and LONG. Bob looks surprised again:

BOB (CONT'D)

No, you know what North Korea is. It's Siberia with Chinese take-out.

There's a pause as the troops can't believe he said it, then a big laugh.

ANGLE - LARRY

Fred, Chet, Larry, and Mort, all laughing, as a HUGE LAUGH erupts from the troops. Mort marvels at it:

MORT

He's taking MacArthur apart and didn't even say his name.

ANGLE - BOB

Soaking up the greatness.

BOB

You know, we're so close to the front I sent my laundry out and it came back with fortune cookie in it.

Bob looks at Larry, Chet, Fred, and Mort all watching the show. He makes the sign he made to them when he won the \$100 from each of them. He's made his point.

BOB (CONT'D)

I told my driver to take me where the action is around here. He took me to General Walker's tent.

As Bob slips into the jokes we've already heard, WE CUT TO:

EXT. PYONGYANG AIRFIELD

Bob's planes are ready to go on the runway. The musicians and tech crew board the planes behind them.

Bob and Marilyn sign autographs. Troops on the tarmac noticeably shiver, as they're still in their summer uniforms. Bob's cast and crew all wear winter parkas and snow hats - Bob still wears his Russian outfit.

ANGLE - LARRY

With Krupa and his flight crew. Larry is making a list as they shout to him:

CREWMAN #1

Some magazines.

CREWMAN #2

With women in them.

CREWMAN #3

The kind --

LARRY

I know the kind.

KRUPA

Food.

CREWMAN #1

Candy bars.

CREWMAN #2  
Pepper salami.

CREWMAN #1  
Beer!

LARRY  
Got it, got it.

KRUPA  
I had a great time flying you guys  
around.

LARRY  
I'll get this stuff into the mail  
for you as soon as I get back.

ANGLE - BOB

The propellers on their C-54s crank up. Bob stays for every last autograph and snapshot. One guy keeps coming back for another and another, just excited to be near Bob Hope.

BOB  
(to autograph hound)  
Did you forget your Aunt Mary?

Bob signs it as the guy gets out of the way for another soldier. Larry comes up to Bob.

LARRY  
You changed your mind.

BOB  
No, I just did it my way.  
(re the troops)  
Anyway, I doubt anyone'll be  
thinking about us tomorrow morning.

The autograph hound is back and Bob starts signing.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Does Aunt Mary have a sister?

AUTOGRAPH HOUND  
A son, Joe.

BOB  
Fellas, what else can I do for you?



PRIVATE

Get us some parkas like yours!  
It's freezing out here.

SERGEANT

Yeah, we're still in summer  
uniforms. Tell Big Mac!

BOB

I'll do better.

Bob takes his parka off and throws it to the soldier.  
Following his example, Bob's cast and crew take their parkas  
and hats off and toss them to the shivering GIs, filling the  
air them.

ANGLE - THE WRITERS

In their parkas as Jimmy nudges them to throw their parkas.  
Finally they do, glaring at Bob. Bob and the writers wave  
good-bye to the GIs on the tarmac. Bob stops to sign the  
autograph hound's parka, before jumping on the stairway to  
the plane.

The writers greet Bob, smiling with clenched, chattering  
teeth. Bob alone seems unaffected by the cold.

MORT

Very generous, Bob. The guys need  
those parkas. They're freezing.

BOB

Ah, it was nothing.

FRED

Now we're freezing.

LARRY

You know where we're going next,  
don't you?

Bob looks confused, just now coming off his high.

CHEET

Alaska.

BOB

Fellas, fellas, what are you  
worried about? You think the army  
can't find a another parka for a  
big star like me?

With that, Bob skips up the stairs, the writers knowing exactly what he meant and follow him inside, with a little less spring in their step.

INT. PLANE

Marilyn sits at her window seat in the front row, waving to GIs. Larry sits next to her. Larry spots Bob coming down the aisle and starts to get up. Marilyn sees Bob, too. She grabs Larry's hand for him to stay. At the same time, Bob puts a hand on Larry's shoulder for him to sit. Larry gets it, and sits back, as Bob heads to the back of the plane. Bob looks back at Marilyn for a second, then gives up. He turns to face Chet and Fred.

BOB

Ok, who's got the cards?

ANGLE - MORT

the last to enter the plane. He watches the troops in the distance, marching off in columns, headed North. He waves to the last on the tarmac, who definitely want to go home with them. Mort finds it hard to hold back a tear. Finally, he enters the plane, and the door closes behind him, taxiing down the runway, building towards it's take-off. GIs remain on the field, until Bob's planes are completely out of sight.

INT. NBC STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD (1950)

Larry walks down the halls of Bob's NBC offices with a big box full of beer, salami, and '50s mens magazines. Larry walks past Bob's secretaries.

SECRETARY

(eyeing a copy of KNAVE)

Another big Friday night, Larry?

LARRY

Hilarious, ladies. This happens to be going to Captain Krupa. Have you heard where he's stationed yet?

SECRETARY

Not yet. Bob needs you in editing.

Larry takes his box and heads down to editing. As he walks down the hall, WE HEAR Larry's Captain Krupa sketch playing, and the big laughs it got in Seoul.

Larry finds Bob and Jimmy with the tech guys. Standing over them is Chuck, the sponsor censor/rep. They look grim.

CHUCK

Cut it. Just cut it, and pick it up after with the Western sketch.

LARRY

What? You're cutting my stuff? Play it back, it got laughs.

BOB

We know it did Larry.

LARRY

Why are we cutting funny? We never cut funny.

JIMMY

Larry --

LARRY

What am I supposed to tell Krupa? His family knows he'll be on the show.

(re care package)

Who do you think this is for?

BOB

Larry. John Krupa's dead.

LARRY

What?

BOB

I know he was a friend. But he's dead. He was shot down over North Korea. The fighting's gotten bad.

LARRY

I know.

Larry sits down, the care package in his lap.

BOB

There's no way we can play the sketch. His family --

LARRY

Yeah. Wouldn't be right.

BOB

It's a war, Lar. It's what happens. People get hurt.

As the news sinks in on the 21-year-old Larry, the room goes SILENT, AS WE

FADE TO BLACK:

SUPER: "The day Bob Hope left Korea, 180,000 Chinese troops were already in Korea and attacked United Nations forces. The Korean War did not end by Christmas 1950, but on July 27th, 1953, with the armistice that exists today. American forces suffered 36,516 dead, 92,134 wounded, and 8,176 missing in action."

FADE IN:

INT. CBS RADFORD MASH SET (1974)

The cast and crew are ready in the operating room. Gary Burghoff waits for them, looking impatient again. The 45-year-old Larry stands next to the camera.

From Larry's jacket pocket he takes out the final script page, folded long, in half, and hands it to Burghoff. WE SEE Burghoff's face as he absorbs what he's about to say.

LARRY  
Ok everyone, places.  
(waits for Burghoff)  
And, rolling.

CUT TO:

FOOTAGE FROM MASH EPISODE, *ABYSSINIA*, HENRY:

INT. SURGERY/OR SET

The cast is in surgical garb, masks on, operating on wounded soldiers.

RADAR O'REILLY enters the OR. He does not wear a mask.

TRAPPER JOHN  
Radar, put a mask on.

HAWKEYE PIERCE  
If that's my discharge, give it to  
me straight, I can take it.

Radar is devastated, crying, can barely deliver the news.

RADAR

I have a message.

(everyone listens)

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Blake's  
plane ... was shot down ... over  
the Sea of Japan. It spun in.  
There were no survivors.

Radar leaves. The OR is silent, the cast in tears. Then, WE  
HEAR a metal forceps hit the floor, bringing everyone back to  
their job, saving lives.

FADE TO BLACK.