

# THE HAT

(ŞAPKA)

Black Comedy

(A play in two acts)

by

**TUNCER CÜCENOĞLU**

Translated in to English by  
**Gulay Yurdal-Michaels**

Edited by  
**ArmanKantarci**

**Tuncer Cucenoglu**

[cucenoglutuncer@gmail.com](mailto:cucenoglutuncer@gmail.com)  
[tcucenoglu@hotmail.com](mailto:tcucenoglu@hotmail.com)  
<http://www.tuncercucenoglu.com/>

## CAST

THE AMERICAN... Around 35 years old and works as lecturer in a Universty in U.S.A. He has returned to Turkey for his short term military service. His only worry is to complete this service without any mishaps and return to his work. If his military service is extended than he'll lose his job. Since he lives in the States, they call him The American.

COMMANDER	Around 50 years old.
WOMAN	Around 25 years old. She is married to the American.
MOTHER	Around 45 years old. Quite well made up and competent.
DUTY OFFICER	Around 25 years old.
TAILOR WOMAN	Around 50 years old.
1. RECRUIT	Around 30 years old.
2. RECRUIT	Around 30 years old.
3. RECRUIT	Around 35 years old.
4. RECRUIT	Around 35 years old.
FRIEND	Around 35 years old.
MUSICIAN	Around 35 years old.
GUARD	Around 35 years old.
DRIVER	Around 35 years old.
A PRIVATE	Around 35 years old.
ON SERVICE DUTY	

**LOCATION** : ANY COUNTRY

**TIME** : OUR AGE.

## PART 1

*(The barracks where the nominees stay. Bunk beds on both sides. Steel wardrobes. It's dawn. The nominees are sleeping. The first RECRUIT's teeth are chattering from time to time. The 2<sup>nd</sup> RECRUIT farts shortly in the beginning then longer. The 4<sup>th</sup> RECRUIT is the one snores regularly. The 3<sup>rd</sup> RECRUIT must be having a nightmare, since he makes out as if he is protecting himself with his hands from time to time. The only person who is unsettled by all of this is The AMERICAN. He is affected by the smallest sound, and he shows his displeasure by turning his head from right and to the left in his bed.*

*A vague light is filtering into the barracks through the window. The sound of a trumpet is heard from afar. The AMERICAN wakes up in a sudden start. The rest move a little bit but return to their old position again. The AMERICAN hears approaching food-steps, but acts as he is sleeping...*

*The door opens and the DUTY OFFICER comes in)*

DUTY OFFICER *(As he walks he strikes the bunk beds with a stick in his hand in a habitual manner) Get up, get uuup!.. If you were going to sleep, why did you get recruited? Up, up! Get up, get up!*  
*(Everyone moves. Everyone is active)*

DUTY OFFICER *(Going out as he had come in) Get up, get uuup! If you were going to sleep, why did you get recruited? (Exits. Similarly monotonous as he walks outside) Up! Up! Get up, get up!*

AMERICAN Good-morning.

1. RECRUIT Good-morning.

*(Even though he is awake, the 4. RECRUIT tries to sleep a little more)*

2. RECRUIT Good-morning American!

3. RECRUIT Won't you say "Good-morning" to us?

1. RECRUIT I already said it to everyone...

3. RECRUIT I want a special one...

1. RECRUIT I can't put up with this early in the morning...

3. RECRUIT Is that so? Don't discriminate sonny... A good-morning to the American and none to us... Perhaps he might get you accepted into the University... As a doorman... What a calculating mind...

2. RECRUIT Say good-morning to him so shuts up...

1. RECRUIT Good-morning!

3. RECRUIT That won't do... I want a special one.

1. RECRUIT Would I break your heart? Good morning especially to you... OK?

4

3. RECRUIT Did you wear your tongue out? Accepted...

1. RECRUIT *(To the 2. RECRUIT) Would you like a special good morning too?*

2. RECRUIT What kind of men are you? Won't you stop chattering? You cackled like saintly stork till morning yet again... Shut up your gob...

1. RECRUIT Mine has only cackled at least... Look at yourself boy... At least I'm not so smelly, as well as noisy... Quickly, let's open the window a bit... You never know if someone will light up a match, then what'll we do? Booom... *(He opens up the window a bit)* I swear our Government doesn't have an ounce of brains... They go all the way to the Russians to get natural gas... On top of that they pay tons of foreigntax in these days of hardship... Buy in fact why should they? Why not connect the pipe to the butt of the jackass and distribute it to the whole country?  
*(The AMERICAN picks up the shaving materials he has prepared and his towel and goes out)*

2. RECRUIT So now you think you've made a joke, do you?

1. RECRUIT What joke sonny? It's the truth... The things we have suffered because of you in these barracks for nearly a whole month... But at least our suffering will end for two days...

2. RECRUIT Mine is a biological case... However your cackling, and furthermore your gnashing of the teeth are psychological... Supposed to be observed mostly in creatures who have missed their mummies' and daddies' love...

1. RECRUIT There he goes again, lying from his great guts...

2. RECRUIT Sonny, the psychologist from the barracks next to ours told me. It's not a bad idea, if you show yourself to a shrink during leave... You might even find a cure...  
*(The AMERICAN enters trying not to spill the water in his shaving cup)*

1. RECRUIT Is it still full in there?

AMERICAN It's so crowded...

3. RECRUIT When isn't it crowded?

1. RECRUIT I'm so proud of my presence of mind, good thing I did my shaving last night... How does the saying go? Never leave morning's work until next morning...

AMERICAN Guys... I've brought this water for you... I'll shave with my electric shaver...

2. RECRUIT God bless you...

1. RECRUIT Don't you forget the kindness of this American...

AMERICAN Don't mention it. *(He starts shaving with his battery-operated machine)*

3. RECRUIT He's got use to us too... Haven't you American?

AMERICAN It would be better if we could get faster guys...

3. RECRUIT Hey buddy, you aren't telling us if you're use to us by now...

AMERICAN I won't forget these days... I've spent here... With you.

2. RECRUIT Even if his tongue says these things... Don't believe him... Inside, he's crying tears of blood... For he's lived in the Americas till the age of thirty-five and then arrived in these barracks out of love for his country.

AMERICAN C'mon guys...

1. RECRUIT Hey American... You didn't change your posture or politeness... You deserve praise... Honestly, it's impossible not to admire him...  
*(In the meantime, he pulls himself back a little and looks appraisingly at the bed he has made carefully)* Ohho, my dear... Check this out

boys... A bed can be made only this way. *(He takes out a coin from his pocket. He throws the coin, which he places between his thumb and forefinger, up over the bed. The coin springs back on the bed. He feels more delighted)* Yeah, my baby. What a bed. The holy thing looks as if it has been ironed out... Long live the brain, that's thought of it!

2. RECRUIT *(While he's shaving)* I believe you said brain... I haven't misheard you, have I?

1. RECRUIT No, no you've heard it right. *(While he gets dressed)* I did say brain. *(By his hand he points at his head)* This is a brain...

2. RECRUIT That... That... That is a loaf... A loaf and a brain are two different things...

1. RECRUIT You're getting confused again... The thing you've got on top of your body is called a loaf, sonny. Because the thing called intelligence doesn't exist in a loaf...

AMERICAN *(Smiling)* If we're not quicker, I'm afraid they won't let us go on our leave...

1. RECRUIT *(He comes in front of the 2. RECRUIT. He stands at attention)* I'm ready for your comments Commander.

2. RECRUIT *(He shakes about the soapy brush in his hand, as if he were a real commander)* The bed. *(He scrutinizes it)* Well gone... The buttons... Alright... *(He eyes the army boots, shows delight)* Aha, look at the dust on these boots... You won't go on your leave at this rate...

1. RECRUIT If that is the only thing, Commander. *(He looks around searching with his eyes, then without waking up the 4. RECRUIT he cautiously holds his sheet and wipes the dust of the boots with it)* It's done Commander...

2. RECRUIT No... It's not, no... What about the sand in your eyes? You haven't washed your face you rascal...

1. RECRUIT *(He puts eau-de-cologne on a bit of cotton-wool, cleans up his face and hands and stands at attention)* I'm ready for your comment Commander...

2. RECRUIT *(Scrutinizes)* Well done son... That's the way a solder should be... You deserved your leave...

1. RECRUIT May I kiss your hand Commander?

2. RECRUIT May God give strength to your wife son... It's not easy job to struggle with a wild horse like you... Especially after a break of a month...

AMERICAN *(Showing 4. RECRUIT)* He's going to be late.

1. RECRUIT *(Bends down to the 4. RECRUIT's ear)* Get up, get uuup! Get up, get uuup!..

4. RECRUIT Don't you do that!..

1. RECRUIT *(Even more noisily)* Get up, get uuup!.. If you were going to sleep, why did you get recruited? *(The 4. RECRUIT gets up stretching... As is his custom, he takes his shaving gear without really being awake and bumps into left and right as he goes out)*

1. RECRUIT *(Watches those shaving for a while... To the 3. RECRUIT)* That's enough son... There's no end to that scraping...

3. RECRUIT Mine is not just hair but a proper beard baby...

1. RECRUIT So what if it's a beard?

3. RECRUIT Here is the difference... Listen closely... I shave on this side... I go to the other side, and start shaving there... Just when I say it's finished, I see in terror the previous side has grown again...

1. RECRUIT There's an easy way out... You shave both sides with two shavers at the same time, and that'll be the end...

3. RECRUIT My beardless baby... He's supposedly joking with me...

1. RECRUIT Is that so? He thinks he's got beard... Do you think I've never seen one? He thinks he can dupe me...

3. RECRUIT Why don't you touch it? If you slide your hand down your face it won't prickle...

AMERICAN *(As he cleans up his face with toilet lotion)* Guys, we're going to be late...

2. RECRUIT *(He has finished shaving. Giving his shaving cup to the AMERICAN)* Thanks American...

AMERICAN You're welcome...

1. RECRUIT Damn you... You've got cuts all over your face, boy...

3. RECRUIT Don't you have anything else to do? Go on and take a little walk... *(To the AMERICAN)* Thanks American.

AMERICAN You're welcome.

1. RECRUIT You don't have to polite to him American... He doesn't comprehend politeness... *(4. RECRUIT enters, having shaved)*

1. RECRUIT He's shaved, he's really done it...

4. RECRUIT There is no one left son. Hurry up a little more or else, we'll be in hot water.  
*(As he tidies up his bed, he sees the part where the boots have been cleaned with)* Who is the bear, that's stepped on here again?

1. RECRUIT I didn't understand.

4. RECRUIT And you're acting as if you don't know... Is my sheet a cloth to wipe boots with?

1. RECRUIT What the hell is he talking about?

4. RECRUIT Shame on you!

1. RECRUIT Shame is under the bed-covers boy. *(As if he has just seen it)* It really is blackened here... Good Lord. *(He wants to shake the sheet)* How did it get here?

4. RECRUIT Don't spread it sonny, don't! *(Pulls the sheet away)* Leave it, it'll get really worse... What a nitwit you are man...

1. RECRUIT On your dead body man, I haven't done it...

4. RECRUIT Listen to him, just like the first graders.... You're a full-grown man dude... And you have children as tall as yourself...

AMERICAN Guys... Please... Let's hurry a bit more... *(While the 4. RECRUIT gets dressed, the others make their beds)*

1. RECRUIT *(As if he is inspecting the beds)* Well done... Successful... Good for you. *(He springs a coin on the beds)* You really have got the hang of it, I swear... *(To the 4. RECRUIT)* Come on sonny... Hurry up a little bit more...

7

AMERICAN Please hurry a little more...

2. RECRUIT Let's go out together, quickly...

3. RECRUIT Everybody else is sitting down at their tables probably...

*(The 4. RECRUIT looks for the case in which he puts his boots by feeling the ground with his hand... He cannot find it... He looks around; it's not there. Meaningfully he looks at the 1. RECRUIT)*

1. RECRUIT Why do you look at me like that son?  
4. RECRUIT *(He laughs to himself as if to say 'you can't fool me'. He shakes his head)* What a man... C'mon, don't take too long... Bring them out...

1. RECRUIT What are you saying boy?  
4. RECRUIT We're gonna be late!  
2. RECRUIT We are gonna be late!  
AMERICAN Please...

3. RECRUIT This is not the time for joking...  
1. RECRUIT Do you think I've hidden them? Are you serious?  
2. RECRUIT It's getting out of hand!  
3. RECRUIT Leave off joking at the right moment!  
AMERICAN We're really getting late!

1. RECRUIT Do you think I'm that childish? Would I do anything like that?  
2. RECRUIT You wouldn't... But still, bring hem out...  
3. RECRUIT Come on, c'mon, cut it out...  
AMERICAN I beg you...  
1. RECRUIT Enough is enough, I'm going. *(Tries to get out)*  
*(The 4. RECRUIT tries to stop him)*

AMERICAN Come to your senses...  
2. RECRUIT Don't be silly...  
3. RECRUIT This is nonsense...  
4. RECRUIT *(Tearfully)* What kind of joke is this?  
1. RECRUIT *(In a begging posture)* How could you joke about such a thing? Listen, I'm telling you over the dead bodies of my children... I swear to God, I haven't hidden your boots...  
*(All of a sudden ice cold atmosphere, every one is sudden ice cold)*  
4. RECRUIT *(Tearfully)* At night... Before going to bed... I polished them... And put them there...  
AMERICAN Let's not stand around, let's look for them...  
*(Except the 4. RECRUIT everyone goes around looking for the boots under the beds or inside the wardrobes. The AMERICAN also looks inside a window... The boots are not there... The AMERICAN runs to the door and looks in front of it... He looks upset)*

AMERICAN We're very late... What should we tell the duty officer?  
3. RECRUIT What's going to happen when we do American?  
2. RECRUIT The other day someone lost his sword-belt... He told about it. *(Makes an obscene gesture with his hand)* They presented him with one of the best sword-belts from the stock-room...  
4. RECRUIT What's gonna happen now?  
AMERICAN Let's hold it and see... Think calmly... Suppose we find another pair of boots...  
1. RECRUIT That holy thing is not a foot, but a baby's grave Christ's sake... Even if we did find another pair, no one else's boot will fit him...

8

3. RECRUIT Let's be quick...  
4. RECRUIT What am I gonna do now?  
AMERICAN Go as you are...

1. RECRUIT Do you want him to go wearing only flip-flops?  
 AMERICAN Is there any other way?  
 3. RECRUIT To the induction ceremony? You're funny American...  
 AMERICAN Doesn't he have to go to the ceremony?  
 3. RECRUIT Yeeees.  
 AMERICAN Since he hasn't got any boots, he'll have to go like this... If there is anyone who's got another solution. Let him say it please...

2. RECRUIT No, there isn't... But I've got an idea...  
 3. RECRUIT Say it, quickly...  
 1. RECRUIT What is it?  
 2. RECRUIT Let's dye it... Black...  
 3. RECRUIT Don't talk like a puzzle boy... Dye what?  
 2. RECRUIT The flip-flops...  
 3. RECRUIT Gees, hear the solution and get on the line!  
 1. RECRUIT You don't mean it!  
 2. RECRUIT Instead showing all white underneath, wouldn't it be better?  
 AMERICAN Please... It would be totally wrong... If he gets caught... It would be difficult to explain...

3. RECRUIT Yeah, true...  
 1. RECRUIT You'll get him get burned like fire-wood...  
 AMERICAN The best is, still to do like this... Get up and walk please...  
*(The 4. RECRUIT walks with a pitiful way... His uniform and flip-flops display strange contrast...The 4. RECRUIT reads with terror from their faces, that no one is happy)*

AMERICAN You stand on both of his sides please... Keep him in your midst...  
 Walk altogether please...  
*(The 1. and 2. RECRUITS take the 4. RECRUIT in between and walk)*

AMERICAN I'd say it's okay, if you could hide your emotion...  
 4. RECRUIT Would you really?  
 AMERICAN We have to consider the element of luck a little also... Things won't always be negative...  
 4. RECRUIT *(To the 1. RECRUIT)* Would you say OK?  
 3. RECRUIT *(Even if he doesn't believe much that it will work)* You have to keep your faith in God.

4. RECRUIT Should I go?  
 1. RECRUIT There is no way you'll be sitting here.  
 4. RECRUIT What if I get caught?  
 2. RECRUIT You'll just have to call it fate...  
 AMERICAN In my opinion, it's worth trying... Now it's time to be on our way...  
 3. RECRUIT You never know what the new day brings...  
 2. RECRUIT Stay in our midst, don't stay behind...  
 AMERICAN The dining hall will be almost closing...  
 4. RECRUIT Come what may...  
*(The 4. RECRUIT gets up with the air of a sacrificial sheep reconciled to its fate, and leaves the barracks in the midst of the others)*



*(The dining hall)*

*(The 4. RECRUIT goes into the turnstile timidly hiding his flip-flops as much as possible from amongst the others... Each one stretches out his tray and takes the breakfast that is offered to them... They all walk together and sit down at an empty table...)*

*The Duty Officer is walking about...*

*The effect on the whole situation is that of a beehive in the dining hall)*

1. RECRUIT Stretch them underneath the table...
4. RECRUIT Stretch what?
3. RECRUIT Don't use that word...
1. RECRUIT What can you substitute for the word 'flip-flop'?
4. RECRUIT Someone might hear... If they do, I'll be dead...
3. RECRUIT Stop using that word... He is irritated...
- AMERICAN He is not that wrong either... Just act as if you've got the boot on your feet, which you just have polished...
4. RECRUIT I can't control it... It's as if everyone sees the ... Those things...
2. RECRUIT You mean the flip-flops?
4. RECRUIT Please let's end this subject...
- AMERICAN Let's wait as if nothing has happened...
1. RECRUIT *(Meanwhile eating from the food on his tray)* Let's act naturally...
3. RECRUIT To look normal, you seem to be nicking the olives I think...
- AMERICAN Attention! The Duty Officer is looking at us... *(They innocently look in front of them... The 1. RECRUIT keeps on feeding himself in spite of everything, as he keeps an eye on the Duty Officer)*
2. RECRUIT Stop boy.
3. RECRUIT Be a little patient...
4. RECRUIT If I get caught, it's gonna be because of them...
3. RECRUIT I wonder how this man kept his patience for nine months...
2. RECRUIT You have to add ten days to that...
3. RECRUIT Maybe there wasn't... I'm afraid he might even have been a breach birth...
1. RECRUIT Don't be such morons...
- AMERICAN Please, all of us have graduated from Universities... We're all settled in and have jobs... And this just doesn't suit us well...
3. RECRUIT American, we're only joking with each other to end the stress here...
- AMERICAN I understand, but it still doesn't suit us...
3. RECRUIT You're not all that pussy cat either...
- AMERICAN I beg your pardon... What have I done?
3. RECRUIT Don't think that nobody knows what you've done to those who kept you awake all night for what was called a dog patrol, the first night you were here...
- AMERICAN But...
3. RECRUIT No buts, pal... What they've done was, just a simple joke to say the least... And you almost burn them for it...

2. RECRUIT Wait a minute here... Who was gonna burn who? Did he make a complaint?

3. RECRUIT It'd be better if he complained... Don't be surprised if I told you that he pinned paper tails on the men's bottoms and suggest we burned them all together...

3. RECRUIT Are these true American?

AMERICAN It was just to joke... Otherwise we weren't going to burn them really...

3. RECRUIT No kidding... Wow man, unbelievable... See what he's learned in America...

4. RECRUIT *(Almost crying)* The Duty Officer has looked at us...  
*(They fall silent. Complete silence in the dining hall)*

DUTY OFFICER Attentioooooon!  
*(Everyone stands)*

DUTY OFFICER *(He looks at his watch)* Give thanks to our God!

ALTOGETHER We give thanks to God!

DUTY OFFICER We give thanks to our Nation!

ALTOGETHER We give thanks to our Nation!

DUTY OFFICER Have a good appetite!

ALTOGETHER Thank youuuu!  
*(Everyone sits down. Breakfast begins)*

DUTY OFFICER *(He's supposedly walking amongst the tables)*  
So, how do you like your breakfast?

VOICES Thank you, sir...  
Very good, sir...  
Nothing could to it off, sir...  
God above knows it, sir...  
It would be ingratitude, sir...

DUTY OFFICER Well, you have a good appetite!

ALTOGETHER Thank you, sir!

1. RECRUIT Attention... He's coming here... No, no, he's not...

AMERICAN *(To 4. RECRUIT)* Take it easy...

3. RECRUIT Don't change color...

2. RECRUIT Just speak naturally if he asks you something...

1. RECRUIT Act as if you have your boots on...

4. RECRUIT *(As if begging)* Don't remind me... I'm gonna die... Oh God...

3. RECRUIT Be confident... Plus, what would happen if you get caught? At the most, they won't let you go on to leave...  
*(It looks as if they are giving him support)*

1. RECRUIT So what if you can't leave? It's not the end of the world...

2. RECRUIT Besides, what's in having the leave anyway? Should you go all that way, for one night?

3. RECRUIT You'll get on a bus... It's at least six hours drive... That road never ends... You get flat tires...

2. RECRUIT On top of it all, there's the coast of it... It'd been worth it, if you could stay at least two nights... You get off... Arrive home... You're already exhausted... Boom you jump into bed... And sleep like a log...

3. RECRUIT Even if we aren't exhausted, we have to look like that... We can't do any hanky panky... There's a chance of being embarrassed to the

2. RECRUIT In fact believe me, it'd be to your advantage if you don't go on leave...

4. RECRUIT He's coming... He's coming here...  
(*Everyone keeps on eating in dead silence*)

DUTY OFFICER Good-morning boys!

ALTOGETHER Thank you, sir!

DUTY OFFICER So, are you happy?

ALTOGETHER Thank you, sir!

DUTY OFFICER (*To AMERICAN*) How about you, are you happy also?

AMERICAN No reason not to be happy, sir...

DUTY OFFICER You know, perhaps they serve some other things to the soldiers in United States...

AMERICAN (*Seriously*) I don't know what exactly they give to the soldiers there, sir...

DUTY OFFICER Why don't you now?

AMERICAN I haven't been in the military there, sir...  
(*The DUTY OFFICER laughs. All except the AMERICAN therefore feel they have to laugh*)

DUTY OFFICER So, you're content...

AMERICAN Yes sir, I am...

3. RECRUIT (*Spoiled by this*) The American is contented with everything, sir...

DUTY OFFICER Do you mean to say he's retarded?

3. RECRUIT Not at all, sir...

DUTY OFFICER So than?

3. RECRUIT That is... I meant to say that he never objects to anything sir...

DUTY OFFICER Would you?

3. RECRUIT I... I don't, sir... Would anyone?

DUTY OFFICER Are you happy with the food here?

3. RECRUIT We'd be punished by God, sir...

DUTY OFFICER (*He picks up one of the olives*) Perhaps it's a little small...

3. RECRUIT Oooo... Yees... It is...

DUTY OFFICER (*To the 1. RECRUIT*) What would you say?

1. RECRUIT (*He thinks*) I wouldn't say it's too big, sir...

DUTY OFFICER (*To 2. RECRUIT*) In your opinion?

2. RECRUIT It's little...

DUTY OFFICER (*To AMERICAN*) Do you also think it's small?

AMERICAN It's little but, plump sir...

DUTY OFFICER (*To the 4. RECRUIT*) You're not saying a word... Is there something wrong?

4. RECRUIT No... Sir... Nothing...

DUTY OFFICER Then why is this tension? Are you sick or something?

3. RECRUIT Maybe he needs to go to the restroom sir...

DUTY OFFICER If he needs to, then he'll get up and go, and be relieved... Get up and go...

4. RECRUIT No sir... There's nothing wrong with me, sir...

DUTY OFFICER What are you thinking?

4. RECRUIT (*Now he's all confused*) I don't know... Sir...

DUTY OFFICER You mean, you don't have any opinions about the olives?

4. RECRUIT You've said, it was small, sir... I too agree with you...

DUTY OFFICER So this olive is too small, is that so?

4. RECRUIT                    Whatever you say is correct, sir... It's small...  
DUTY OFFICER                And a little hard...  
1. RECRUIT                    *(Because of DUTY OFFICER's partly speaking to him)* I wouldn't say  
it's too soft sir...

DUTY OFFICER                What's your occupation?  
1. RECRUIT                    I'm an accountant, sir...  
DUTY OFFICER                Do you think of getting into politics?  
1. RECRUIT                    I'm happy with my job, sir...  
DUTY OFFICER                You better think about it... You'd make a good politician... Because  
you can show roundabout tendencies in every situation... So that neither  
the skewer nor the meat burns, so to speak... 'I wouldn't say it's too  
big sir... I'm happy with my job sir'... Isn't that right?

1. RECRUIT                    That's right, sir...  
DUTY OFFICER                So then after you finish your military service, you'll leave your job and  
become politician... Isn't that correct everybody?

2. RECRUIT                    That's the best thing to do, sir...  
3. RECRUIT                    That's right, sir...  
*(First the DUTY OFFICER then all the others except the 4.RECRUIT  
laugh)*

DUTY OFFICER                How do you like the butter?  
1. RECRUIT                    This butter?  
DUTY OFFICER                Yes, that butter... Let me see you spread it on your bread...  
*(1. RECRUIT spreads butter on his bread)*

DUTY OFFICER                It looks a little bit greenish...  
1. RECRUIT                    It's not quite white, sir...  
DUTY OFFICER                Well done... You'll be a good politician... This butter is not white at  
all... Look... It's obviously green... Let me handle this food  
business... We have to feed you better quality things... Since it's been  
paid for, why not get better quality? Isn't that right?  
*(He's worried with his own problems)* I didn't understand, sir...  
4. RECRUIT                    Do you have a problem?  
DUTY OFFICER                No, sir...  
4. RECRUIT                    You're not listening to me...  
DUTY OFFICER                Maybe he's missed his children, sir...  
1. RECRUIT                    Well he'll meet them today... How many children do you have?  
DUTY OFFICER                You could say three, sir...  
4. RECRUIT                    What the hell does that mean?  
DUTY OFFICER                My son and daughter kiss your hands, sir...  
4. RECRUIT                    Won't the third one kiss my hand? Is that one lacking manners?  
DUTY OFFICER                The third one is on the way, sir... That one will kiss your hands too...  
4. RECRUIT                    *(The DUTY OFFICER laughs, the others laugh also)*  
DUTY OFFICER                You are really interesting men... Enjoy your meal...  
ALTOGETHER                 Thank you, sir...  
*(The DUTY OFFICER goes towards the other tables)*

4. RECRUIT                    At one point I almost died... I thought he saw the things...  
1. RECRUIT                    Well, I was scared too...  
3. RECRUIT                    Did you think he'd seen the flip-flops?

4. RECRUIT                    I said, don't use that...

AMERICAN Don't use that word... He just gets tense over it...As you see none of the things we worried about happened...We'll get over the oath ceremony too... And you'll meet your children...

4. RECRUIT If God's willing...

3. RECRUIT It would be alright, if it were only over with the oath ceremony...

1. RECRUIT What do you mean?

3. RECRUIT How is he going to solve the boots problem?

1. RECRUIT Getting out is hard enough, finding the boots outside is easier said than done...

2. RECRUIT Like, he dyed them all kinds of colors except the tone of pistachio green...

AMERICAN Actually that's a good question...He'll return after a night out... Will he come back in wearing the flip-flops again?

4. RECRUIT That word again...

AMERICAN I'm sorry... I mean, is he gonna come back with the things on his feet?

1. RECRUIT First of all, let's pick our brains so that the commander doesn't see the fli... the things! Because if the commander sees them, then he'll be burned like oak tree...

4. RECRUIT Oh, God forbid...

1. RECRUIT If wishing would take us anywhere, my grandmother would've become my grandfather...

2. RECRUIT That's not the way that saying goes... It should be, 'If my aunt had a beard, she would've become my uncle'...

1. RECRUIT Okay now, I'll say the original way this saying goes, and I'll be called a rude person...

AMERICAN Then don't say it...

1. RECRUIT Then I should say it... If my aunt had balls, she would've become my uncle...

2. RECRUIT The American didn't know that... Thanks to you he now knows it... Is that right American?  
*(They all laugh except the 4.RECRUIT)*

AMERICAN I had asked from where would you find the boots...

4. RECRUIT There are shops where I live that sell old equipments... They have so many boots there... You can choose and pick out the best one you like... As long as I can get out of here...

2. RECRUIT If God's willing, you will...

1. RECRUIT As long as you don't get excited...

3. RECRUIT Have confidence in yourself...

1. RECRUIT But if you get excited and tangle up in a sheet, then no one can save you...

AMERICAN Don't be scared, we'll get over this...

4. RECRUIT I hope so... 'Cause I really missed my children...

1. RECRUIT *(Slaps the back of the 4.RECRUIT)* You rascal... It's not that you missed, it's your wife... Isn't that right?  
*(Everyone laughs except the 4.RECRUIT. The 4.RECRUIT participates with an obligatory smile. All of them take the 4.RECRUIT amongst them a little as they walk)*

### III

*(The Ceremonial Quarters...*

*There is a cannon or a table wrapped in a flag... Our heroes enter the ceremonial quarters nervously, and take their seats...*

*The DUTY OFFICER is waiting...*

*It's as if the rest of the recruits have taken their seats too...*

*While the waiting continues, the DUTY OFFICER looks on one hand from which direction the COMMANDER will come and on the other hand inspects the general appearances of the recruits... Just as the DUTY OFFICER approaches our heroes, he must have seen the COMMANDER come, so he runs in that direction)*

DUTY OFFICER

Attentioooooooooon! Stand ready!

*(All the heads turn toward the direction from where the COMMANDER will appear)*

COMMANDER

*(Comes in with even steps)* Hello soldiers!

ALTOGETHER

Thank you!

COMMANDER

How are you?

ALTOGETHER

Thank you!

COMMANDER

Thank you too...

*(The COMMANDER goes up on the raised platform prepared for him. He observes everything with the eyes of a hunting bird)*

DUTY OFFICER

For the oath ceremony... At eeeeeeease!... Get ready... March forward...

*(Our heroes walk towards either the cannon or the table...Breaking into single-file, they stand around it... They place their hands on the cannon or the table... The 4.RECRUIT is almost about to drop down in fear and excitement)*

DUTY OFFICER

I swear!

*(As if it's not just our heroes but other unseen recruits too)*

ALTOGETHER

I swear!

DUTY OFFICER

On my honor!

ALTOGETHER

On my honor!

DUTY OFFICER

That I will sacrifice my life!

ALTOGETHER

That I will sacrifice my life!

DUTY OFFICER

With love!

ALTOGETHER

With love!

DUTY OFFICER

When necessary!

ALTOGETHER

When necessary!

DUTY OFFICER

For the sake of duty!

ALTOGETHER

For the sake of duty!

DUTY OFFICER

For my Country and the Republic!

ALTOGETHER

For my Country and the Republic!

DUTY OFFICER

Upholding the glory of our flag!

ALTOGETHER

Upholding the glory of our flag!

DUTY OFFICER

And the honor of the military!

ALTOGETHER

And the honor of the military!

DUTY OFFICER

Dearer than my soul!

ALTOGETHER

Dearer than my soul!

15

DUTY OFFICER

And that I will obey!

ALTOGETHER And that I will obey!  
DUTY OFFICER The laws!  
ALTOGETHER The laws!  
DUTY OFFICER My superiors and the order!  
ALTOGETHER My superiors and the order!  
DUTY OFFICER That I will serve!  
ALTOGETHER That I will serve!  
DUTY OFFICER My Nation and republic!  
ALTOGETHER My Nation and republic!  
DUTY OFFICER With all honesty and sincerity!  
ALTOGETHER With all honesty and sincerity!  
DUTY OFFICER At all the times and everywhere!  
ALTOGETHER At all the times and everywhere!  
DUTY OFFICER On the land, in the sea, and in the air!  
ALTOGETHER On the land, in the sea, and in the air!  
DUTY OFFICER In war and peace!  
ALTOGETHER In war and peace!  
DUTY OFFICER At ease... Ready... Back to your seats, march forward!  
*(Our heroes take their seats. The 4.RECRUIT's fear has escalated. All the heads turned towards the COMMANDER)*  
COMMANDER *(Each of his words are clearly understood and determined, like the bullets of a Mauser's rifle)* Friends... As of this moment... You have become soldiers... Because the preliminary thing to be a soldier... Is to join the oath ceremony... And to do your duty... In a little while, we will leave you free... You will disperse to the four corners of our country, some of you by means of public transportation... And some of you by your private vehicles will reach your homes... To your wives... To your children... The unmarried ones to their mothers... To their fathers... To their brothers and sisters... To uncles... To aunts... Nephews... Grandfathers and grandmother... A day later, which is on Sunday evening, you will be here again and continue your efforts to complete your military duties... So that means that you have discharge for two days and one night... You will make use of this period in the best possible way, together with your loved ones... Without spoiling the honor of the military... You will make use of it with great dignity... What does this mean? I feel the need to explain it... There is a saying in our language... You all know it... But it is useful to repeat it... 'Your hand, your tongue and your waist'... 'Your hand, your tongue and your waist'... The order of these words alone may not mean anything to you... But if I add the words, 'Control', then there will be no doubts... Because then a picture emerges which says, 'Control your hand, your tongue and your waist'... There is nothing that cannot be understood in this sentence... Yet it is still useful to explain... What does 'control your hand ' mean? In other words, does that mean 'While walking, swing your hands carefully and don't hit anything left or right'? There may be some of you who might think of it this way initially... But here and now you have to learn that it really means, 'Do not steal'... So now there is no one left here, who doesn't know the

meaning of this... As for the second word... 'Control your tongue'... What does this mean? No doubt we have to control our tongue even when we are eating... Does not the slightest carelessness cause us to tear even our tongue into bits, besides the food we have been chewing right next to it? This alone would allow us to exhibit an important example that we should be in control of our tongue... Beyond this is the other meaning that, paying attention to what we say on the other hand, contains important and noticeable dangers, especially for you who are fulfilling your military duty... We would have no problems, if everyone just do their duty by controlling their own tongue, and don't talk back and forth about others... Now I will explain about the third and last word... 'Control your waist'... In other words, is this intended to say, 'don't lift up something heavy by yourself, you'd hurt your waist and be crippled for the rest of your life'? Is there anyone among you who would say this? *(He looks at each one of them)*

*(The 4. RECRUIT is trembling in fear)*

COMMANDER

*(As he looks at the 4. RECRUIT)* You're not putting forward such argument, are you? There's no need to be excited soldier... I know you cannot be that naïve. *(Then addresses the rest)* Now listen to me carefully... You all know in the playwright of famous Russian writer Maksim Gorky's "The three sisters", there was a young woman character named Natalia... That name, Natalia has taken its unforgettable place in our youthful years as the symbol of honor and wisdom, and hasn't been erased from our memories for years... Natalia means beauty... Natalia means loyalty... Natalia is the most important source name calling to mind unique words of unequalled qualities... This has gone on for years, and this has played a role of prime importance in our search for these characteristics, which we have counted associated with her, there is Natalia in every girl we meet in our youthful years... However like everything else, Natalia also has been degenerated in recent times... Tens, hundreds of blond and bleary blue-eyed Natalias have invaded our country... But with a considerable small difference in their names. *(Drawing strength from everyone's listening to him in admiration)* Natalias of a thousand years became Natasha! They are everywhere! Natashas are everywhere! In the market places, fairs, hotel lobbies, teahouses by the beaches, on trains and air plains, everywhere! It is possible for you to see virtue less Natashas in the cities, towns and in the most inaccessible corners of villages! Now they are going around everywhere, unconcerned with the possibility of great danger they will cause in five or ten years' time, with their diseases we don't know about... With the help of the developing cosmetics industry, they trap thousands of our citizens into their net who are married with children, and preparing an evil and hard to believe future... I warn you! Stay away from Natashas! Because they are no longer Natalias! Take care your waists...

*(The 4. RECRUIT can no longer control himself and falls down on his back... The DUTY OFFICER rushes to him immediately and picks him up... The 4.RECRUIT signals to DUTY OFFICER that he can stand on*



*his own. The DUTY OFFICER goes away. The 4.RECRUIT stands at attention with great effort)*

COMMANDER *(He has seen the flip-flops on the 4.RECRUIT's feet. He calmly continues his speech as if nothing had happened)* What do you do when the fuse blows at home? You are just about to go to work and you're going through the door, but suddenly everything goes dark... If you leave without fixing the fuse, what awaits you when you get back home in the evening? At the least the refrigerator won't be working, and the food in it will be spoiled, and you'll have nothing to eat when you sit down for dinner... If your wife is at home, she won't be able to iron, use the vacuum cleaner to clean the house, and you won't have a comfortable environment when you come home in the evening... There you see what a little ignorance caused you at home... Yet if you only had found a technician who understands how to fix fuses, none of these would've happened...  
*(From time to time the 4.RECRUIT thinks the COMMANDER hasn't seen the flip-flops)*

COMMANDER *(With the same determination)* Or have you considered what kind of results we would get if we neglect little things in times of war? Why was the Carthaginian Hannibal defeated even if he had the elephants, which were the most powerful weapons of that era? Or why did Hitler commit suicide? What were the small neglects in the Waterloo defeat of Napoleon? How and why can the most powerful nations of the world be defeated by the smallest nations? What sort of future awaits the bridge when the guard whose duty is to defend that bridge, falls onto sleep for a minute? How correct would we be, when we tolerate and forgive those who do not follow the rules, and those neglect so-called 'small matters', which grow into everybody doing the same thing? *(He shows with his hand)* You... Yes, yes you... Come forward... Come closer...  
*(The 4.RECRUIT proceeds sheepishly inch-by-inch. He stops... He's trembling)*

COMMANDER *(Comes closer to the 4.RECRUIT and circles around him)* How dare you? What ignorance? What impudence? Has anyone seen anything like this?  
*(The 4.RECRUIT is absolutely devastated)*

COMMANDER To come to oath ceremony of allegiance without any boots?  
4.RECRUIT *(With great effort)* They're stolen...  
COMMANDER Be quiet! They were stolen huh! Is that your excuse? Is it? Is it?  
*(He can't accept being treated as if he were a fool)* Then were you going say, you fooled the Commander? Huh? Tell me! *(Goes back to his seat. He waits for a while)* One who loses his boots today, will not be able to keep his country tomorrow! *(To the DUTY OFFICER)* This man will not be discharged! *(To the others)* Have a good leave!

ALTOGETHER Thank you!  
*(The COMMANDER leaves the ceremony with forceful steps)*

DUTY OFFICER You stay! *(To the rest)* Disperse!

ALTOGETHER Thank you!  
*(While the 4.RECRUIT waits where he is, the others start to disperse)*

AMERICAN *(Comes near the GUARD. He salutes)* Sir... May I say something?  
DUTY OFFICER Go on...  
AMERICAN Could we say our good-byes to our friend? Maybe he would like to  
send a message to his family with us...  
DUTY OFFICER He'll burn my ass after you! Hurry up!  
*(The DUTY OFFICER moves away a little. The others go next to the  
4.RECRUIT, who has been waiting by himself)*

1.RECRUIT I'm sorry... I joked about you... I wouldn't have wanted this to  
happen...  
2.RECRUIT Our mind is gonna be here...  
3.RECRUIT Just when I started having hope...  
AMERICAN I'm very sorry... Please be strong...  
3.RECRUIT What can you do?  
2.RECRUIT Is there anything you'd like from me?  
4.RECRUIT *(With difficulty)* Buy me a pair of boots... You know my shoe size...  
2.RECRUIT I will...  
4.RECRUIT If you could also stop by my family...  
2.RECRUIT Of course I could...  
4.RECRUIT Give them my love and greetings... Kiss the children... Kiss my  
mother's hand for me... Say hello to relatives...  
3.RECRUIT Dang man, don't squeezed the shit out of it...  
1.RECRUIT It started to look like Brazilian soap operas...  
3.RECRUIT As if he won't ever see them again! My God! Don't over exaggerate it  
sonny...  
4.RECRUIT Tell my wife, I've been like a lion in the military... But don't you dare  
let anyone know that I've had my boots stolen... It's a small town  
anyway... Don't make me a gum in their mouth... You know in my  
hometown, they grab a tambourine and make monkey out of you...  
2.RECRUIT No one will hear anything.. Would you like any money or something?  
Don't be embarrassed, tell me...  
*(The 4.RECRUIT makes a positive sign meaning 'yes')*

DUTY OFFICER *(Shouts from distance)* I guess you are not going on to leave either...  
*(They say good-bye in hurry. The 4.RECRUIT is in tears... Looks  
behind them... Walks to the front of the DUTY OFFICER... Takes ready  
position)*

4.RECRUIT I'm ready, sir...  
DUTY OFFICER *(He's sorry but still)* Let's go...  
*(The DUTY OFFICER in front and the 4.RECRUIT behind him leave,  
stepping in unison)*

#### IV

*(A telephone booth in the bus station. The AMERICAN is calling his  
wife. There's a lot of noise)*

AMERICAN Hello! Helloooo! Yes, it's me honey! I can't hear you... Shout a little!  
Yes! It's better now! No, no I'm still here! They let us just a while ago!  
I'm in the bus terminal! *(Looks at his watch)* The bus will leave in ten

minutes! I'll be there in four hours! Obviously if nothing goes wrong! I'll take a taxi and be home in fifteen or twenty minutes! I'm listening! Yes! Yes! I understand! The road by the apartment is being repaired! I'll get off at the street before then, love! No big deal, it's just a couple hundred yards! You know I'm carrying nothing more than a small bag! I missed you too! Yes, yes! *(Checks his watch)* Yes! Me too honey! Me too! We'll talk in length when I get there! So much has happened! Say hi to your mom! *(He's bothersome... Tones down his voice)* Honey, I'm late already... Let her then... Hello... Thank you... Yes... Yes... Alright! We'll talk when I get there... Okay... See you then! *(The AMERICAN gets out of the phone booth quickly and walks away quickly or even runs)*

V

*(The flat of the AMERICAN's mother-in-law... A rather luxurious furnished living room... Everything is classical... Carmina Burana by Orf is being heard from the music set... The WOMAN looks at her watch once in a while... MOTHER smokes her cigarette appreciatively... She is well-informed and confident woman... She even shows off to her daughter)*

MOTHER *(She is putting on airs... Making an effort even in the way she holds the coffee cup... She talks as if she's dubbing)* He'll come any moment... There's no need to get so excited, dear...

WOMAN But mother, I can't help it...

MOTHER You must control yourself... Men don't like such behavior... You must let him feel you love him, but this bond mustn't give him the impression that it's turned into a weakness... *(The WOMAN gets up lifting the net curtain a little, she looks into the street)*

MOTHER You are a girl who is well educated... You're quite attractive... *(She laughs artificially)* You're better looking than me even... But what good is it, you can't get rid of your childish behavior... You collage grad, you...

WOMAN Mother dear, you've said different things the other day though...

MOTHER What sort of different things?

WOMAN Haven't you told me that men are species to be continuously under scrutiny?

MOTHER It's true... They are... They wouldn't hesitate to go to bed with a coarse woman, who couldn't even be compared to you, whenever they find the smallest chance, without any pity... Your father's running away from home with a sales girl younger than himself and getting lost, is a typical example to this...

WOMAN Don't blame my dad so much, mother...

MOTHER I'm not blaming him, just telling the truth...

WOMAN I know my dad mother... You keep on telling these over and over, even though you know I don't like such advise... Let it go, whatever is done is done...

MOTHER All these I'm telling you is because I don't want you to make mistake...

WOMAN Mother dear, mother dear... You are so use to seeing men an enemy to fight... Tactics... Arrangements... Fights... Touchiness... The welcome you prepared even as he comes into the living room... Ceremonies with stinging remarks...

MOTHER Do you realize you're upsetting me?

WOMAN Yes but what can I do? You're running away from reality... And if the methods you're trying to teach me had been successful at all...

MOTHER Yes, yes... Go on...

WOMAN My father has said 'I'm feeling smothered' when I last saw him... Then he asked me to forgive him... Then I heard that he ran away with that girl...  
*(MOTHER acts as if she's crying without spoiling her posture)*  
*(She embraces MOTHER)* Dear mother... I'm happy... To him I'm acting just the way I am... Because he likes me that way... I thank you... For providing the opportunity for me to meet and marry him... Besides we're going to the States again, after three months when his military service is finished... We'll see each other so much in future... So just let us enjoy the days we're spending with you. *(The phone rings)*

WOMAN *(Running to pick up the receiver)* Hello! Yes... Ahaa! Hello! No he hasn't come yet! But he's about to arrive. *(Looks at her watch)* Should be here anytime... We'll let you know... We have your number... Thank you. *(Puts the receiver down)*

MOTHER Who was it?

WOMAN His childhood friend...

MOTHER Oh that primitive fellow...

WOMAN Mother! His education maybe cut off prematurely... But he's got a lot of market stores...  
*(The doorbell rings... The WOMAN runs excitedly... MOTHER thinking that her son-in-law has arrived tidies up herself... She keeps her cup in her hand)*

WOMAN *(Her voice is heard)* Ooooooh! Just a minute... Mother is there any garbage?

MOTHER Would you give the garbage bag by the kitchen door, if it's not too much trouble?  
*(The WOMAN enters)*

WOMAN He should have come by now...

MOTHER This traffic, oh this traffic... When he comes, I'll sit with you a little longer... Then I'll leave you two alone...

WOMAN Mother, I thought you were going to leave after dinner? Why do you keep on changing your mind like this?

MOTHER I thought this would be the best way... Besides he'll be arriving all tired... He'll take his bath in comfort... He'll lie down... I wouldn't give him the impression that I'm an extra person around... He'll stay one night anyway... You'll have a lot to talk about...

WOMAN Well, as you wish mother...

MOTHER And don't tell him that the primitive man called when he arrives... Once they start talking, he'll take away half of the night from you...

WOMAN But he loves him a lot... He becomes happy as a child...

MOTHER Oooh, these men! They love their friends so much that they can't even see their wives... It's just a reminder from me...

WOMAN *(A little harshly)* Thank you, mother...  
*(The doorbell rings... The WOMAN wants to run and open the door)*

MOTHER *(Stops her daughter)* Perhaps it'll be better if I open the door. *(She exits. Her voice)* Ohh! Hello! Welcome! *(She comes near the living room door)* Look who is here dear? *(The AMERICAN enters... He's not aware that his hat is not on his head... He walks very seriously to the middle of the living room... Stops and salutes)*

WOMAN Oh my dear. *(She wants to embrace him)*  
*(The AMERICAN realizes in terror that he doesn't have his hat on his head... His face changes suddenly... He checks with his hands... He stops in his tracks without knowing what to do)*

COMMANDER *(Appearing. Nobody will see him through out the play, except the AMERICAN)* The one who loses his boots today, will not be able to keep his country tomorrow...  
*(The AMERICAN makes a sign with his hand to the COMMANDER that he doesn't have his hat)*

COMMANDER *(Corrects himself)* The one who loses his hat today will not be able to keep his country tomorrow!

*(As the AMERICAN runs out under the surprised look of the WOMAN and the MOTHER, the most passionate part of Carmina Burana crescendos)*

**PART TWO**  
**VI**

MOTHER *(The same place. The COMMANDER is sitting in the place of honor without moving. The two women are flustered... But the MOTHER is trying to hide it as usual)*

WOMAN Oh dear God! I don't know what to make of it... What happened?  
Where did he go? Mother please help me!

MOTHER What can I do? We'll have to wait... Maybe he forgot something in the cab... Yes, yes... He definitely forgot something in the cab...

WOMAN His small bag is here too...

MOTHER Maybe his wallet...

WOMAN But he was holding his head by his two hands... Do you think he had a headache?

MOTHER I didn't see him do such thing... He just saluted... Then left running...  
*(The WOMAN is looking out of the window worriedly)*

WOMAN He behavior was strange... Or did it seem to me that way?

MOTHER When I opened the door, he was smiling at me with happiness... He gave me a sign to be quiet... He came in quietly to make it a surprise...  
*(Silence... The doorbell rings... The WOMAN runs to open it)*

WOMAN *(Her voice)* What happened dear? What is it with you?  
*(The AMERICAN enters in with quiet and hopeless look, followed by the WOMAN)*

MOTHER Hope you're alright? What happened?

AMERICAN I lost my hat...

MOTHER You left it in the cab, didn't you?

AMERICAN Yes... In all probability...

MOTHER So you lost a hat, no big deal...

WOMAN You're alive... So what?

MOTHER It's not worth to worry... It's only a hat...

COMMANDER The one loses his hat today, cannot keep his country tomorrow... Naturally women don't know what it means to lose your hat... Tell them! Give them some information!

AMERICAN As you command, sir!  
*(The two women look at each other with worry)*

WOMAN *(Softly to MOTHER)* He said, 'As you command, sir'!

MOTHER It's not possible for both of us to mishear it...

AMERICAN *(Exhausted)* Look here... This morning one of my friends from the barracks lost his things...

COMMANDER You don't call boots things!

AMERICAN Forgive me... He lost his boots... He went to the oath ceremony with his things...

COMMANDER Nothing's wrong with calling the flip-flops, things... Go on!

AMERICAN Thank you...

MOTHER What did he have on his feet at the oath ceremony?

AMERICAN Flip-flops... You know the rubber flip-flops... And the commander caught him... He cancelled his leave... He shouldn't have done it...

MOTHER Should he have gone barefoot? That's cruel...

COMMANDER Explain that, this was a matter of discipline!

AMERICAN But that's the regulations... If you are a soldier, you have to dress according to the regulations...

COMMANDER Good for you!

AMERICAN The one loses his boots today, cannot keep his country tomorrow...

COMMANDER *(Shakes the AMERICAN's hand)* Bravo! Now tell him about your case!

AMERICAN I forgot my hat in the taxi... That is, I lost it... When I go back tomorrow, it should be on my head... Otherwise they will cancel my leave... Naturally they will... If you think cancellation of my leave will result only in my coming home here, you're mistaken... My military service will expand... They may even keep me in longer... Then I can't go back to the States in time and lose my job... Is that understood?

MOTHER Why should you lose your job?

AMERICAN My contract requires me to start my job on time...

MOTHER They'll show sympathy... This is not your fault...

AMERICAN The University I work at is a serious establishment... Perhaps you forgot the struggle I had until I got in...

MOTHER *(Looks worried)* Your being unemployed doesn't concern you only...

COMMANDER You have made them understand the importance of the matter... See how they have started to think negatively... Tell them about the solution...

AMERICAN This matter can be resolved only in one way... And that is getting the hat back...

MOTHER That depends on finding the cab driver. *(To her daughter)* Honey this involves you too... Why don't you use your brains a little too... *(They think)*

COMMANDER She has raised her daughter without any defense against the harsh realities of life... And now she expects her to assist in the solution...

WOMAN Wait a minute... From where did you take the cab?

AMERICAN At the bus terminal... *(Smiles)* By getting a receipt from the Bus Terminal Taxi Management... *(He gets up, runs to the phone and dials a number from a piece of paper he gets out of his pocket)* Hello! I got on a taxi from your office just a while ago... I've forgotten my hat in the taxi... Would you? Yes... Dark-shinned... With mustache... He was a short man... *(The DRIVER appears... As if he is driving)*

AMERICAN We chatted all the way... Me? I'm doing my military service... He was a cheerful person... He was a typical man of our people... He had done his military service in the same place where I'm doing mine... He left me on the street just bellow ours, due to road repairs... Yes... I'm listening. *(Smiles)*. *(He gives a phone number)* Our home phone... Please... I'm waiting... *(He puts the receiver down)* Good news! Because the drivers work in that firm regularly, they act pretty picky in these matters... They will investigate now, and let us know...

MOTHER You've worried both yourself and us for no reason...

WOMAN For a moment, I thought you were gonna go back to dishwashing again...

MOTHER Shame on you...

AMERICAN Come here my darling. *(Kisses her)*

WOMAN My dear God, I was so worried... Bu you were talking lot of nonsense really...

AMERICAN How is that?

WOMAN It was as if you were talking with an invisible person... You said things like, 'As you command, sir'...

MOTHER Honestly, I even thought of calling a psychiatrist I know...

AMERICAN C'mon let it go...I didn't even know what I was saying, because of fear... That's all... It seemed as if the Commander had appeared beside me...

COMMANDER I didn't appear. *(Gets angry)* I'm next to you. See, I'm here... My recommendation to you is that, don't roll up your trousers before you see the river! It's a little too early for your showing of joy! I advise you not to relax before you put that hat on!  
*(The AMERICAN starts to feel worried again)*

AMERICAN I say this matter is still not solved... I can only relax after I put my hat on...

COMMANDER Well-said...  
*(The phone rings... The AMERICAN runs joyously and lifts up the receiver)*

AMERICAN Hello... It's me... Oh is that you? I arrived just little while ago... Come on up here... I have to hang up, because I'm waiting for a call... Come on op here. *(He puts the receiver back)* It's my childhood friend...  
*(The MOTHER makes a sign to her daughter as if to say 'You're done')*  
*(The phone rings again... The AMERICAN lifts the receiver up immediately)*

AMERICAN Hello... Yes. *(Smiles)* Have you found it? I'm listening. *(His face gradually changes to have hopeless look)* Yes... Yes... But still... Yes... Yes. *(He puts the receiver down)*

MOTHER What happened?

WOMAN Come on say it...

AMERICAN The driver has gone on leave... The phone in his home doesn't answer... But if and when he becomes aware of the hat, he would definitely call them. *(To the DRIVER who has been waiting on his feet)* Please become aware of it and call them... Please...

DRIVER You've forgotten it on the back seat brother... Plus it's fallen on the floor... I'll do my best to become aware of it... Because I know what that means brother... But unfortunately I'm out of town...

COMMANDER It's obvious from his face that he's done his military service... It's not for nothing that this country embezzles cannons, tanks, machine guns and rockets worth billions to its children...Hadn't I told you not to roll up your trousers before seeing the river?

AMERICAN But the man is out of town... Oh my God!  
*(The doorbell rings... The WOMAN opens the door... The FRIEND enters)*

FRIEND *(Embraces the AMERICAN and kisses... He senses there's something strange)* What's wrong? Did something bad happen?

MOTHER He's lost his hat... And the possibility of finding it is hopeless now...

WOMAN And he has to go back tomorrow night...



FRIEND *(His joy is gone)* Oh no!

MOTHER *(With the approach of one who holds on to a snake when he/she falls into sea)* Only you would understand from such matters... You're our hope. *(Her demeanor changes)* Please help! Please!

FRIEND Help? How? *(He thinks)* If I didn't help you, to whom else would I? But how? *(He thinks)* I've got it, I've got it! *(He pulls out a pocket phone book from his pocket... He has found the number he was looking for)* May I phone?

MOTHER Please do...

WOMAN You shouldn't even ask...

AMERICAN Please...

FRIEND *(Dials the number and waits)* Hello!

ANSWERING MACHINE *(An amusing voice)* Are you sure you're calling me? Tell me, tell me!

FRIEND Sure I am, you moron! *(To the others)* Pardon me...

ANSWERING MACHINE Good for you! I'm not at home right now! If you can leave your message after the beep, I'll beep you as soon as I can... Bye for now... You dummy!

FRIEND *(Sounds of drums... Almost a short concert... It ends)* You brat! There's an important matter here... Call me as soon as possible... Leave message in my pager... Do whatever you can but find me... If you don't call... You know ... That kid will be! *(Puts the receiver down)*

WOMAN What does "that kid will be" mean?

FRIEND I'm sorry... But that bastard won't understand otherwise...

MOTHER *(Softly to her daughter)* You don't believe me when I call him primitive... I don't understand what your husband finds in this low life...

FRIEND He'll call me as soon as he gets my message... With a special pleasure... "Cause he comes toward dawn just to wake me up, and even if I haven't left a message he calls just to disturb me... He's a son of a gun, but a trustable friend...

MOTHER *(As if she's disgusted)* What does he do? Since he works at night...

FRIEND He's a musician...

COMMANDER In all probability, he is a drummer...

AMERICAN A drummer?

FRIEND Yes, he works in a nightclub...

COMMANDER *(Suspiciously)* What does a military hat has got to do with a man like this?

AMERICAN Where's he gonna get me the hat?

FRIEND He was a noncommissioned Officer who played in the military band... He was dismissed from the military...

COMMANDER I'm not surprised at all!

FRIEND Since then, he's been collecting whatever military outfit there is, and keeps them in his home... It's like a kind of hobby... For sure there's a hat there... Relax... your problem is salved...

COMMANDER Why are you waiting for him to call you? Don't leave the matter till

tomorrow morning... Make him call you from the club he's working at...

AMERICAN Don't you know where is he working at? I'd appreciate if you could call him now...

FRIEND That I hadn't thought of... You're great man I swear...

COMMANDER I thought of it!

FRIEND *(He dials the numbers)* Hello... Is it the Green Parrot? Is the drummer there? Yes... Yes... When did you fire him? The whole band? Alright then, do you know where they are working at now? In the hell pit? Gees, where's this club at? Why are you shouting? Up to yours too! Up your mother you... Fuck off you son of a bitch...  
*(The FRIEND hangs up angrily)*

FRIEND They fired the whole band...

COMMANDER The drummer must be the reason... It's definitely the drummer's fault!

FRIEND He use to go after a woman there... Places like that can't accept such behavior... Good thing they haven't shot him... From his privates...

COMMANDER Do you realize the people who you depend on? I don't trust this fellow... Send him off to every one of the clubs to search and find the drummer...

AMERICAN I have a favor to ask you... Please go round all the clubs and find the drummer...

FRIEND Tonight?

AMERICAN Yes tonight please... Then otherwise it'll be too late... Call me up when you find him... I'll jump into a taxi and get there... Afterwards when it's over, we'll go to his house and have a look...

MOTHER Let him inform you but don't go to that strange place where he works... You can meet at his house in the morning...

FRIEND I on the other hand came here to have fun and talk about the good old days...

AMERICAN We'll still have a talk again tomorrow... I beg you... Please...

MOTHER *(Softly to her daughter)* Primitive, primitive... And tomorrow nothing good will come out of your husband either...

FRIEND Then there's no problem... Let me call my home and tell them. *(He dials the number)* Hello... Hey blind bat, how are you? I'm at my friend's... I won't be coming home tonight... I swear I'm with him... We'll talk about the old days... Don't fuss anymore! I'll give the phone to him so you can talk. *(To AMERICAN)* Let her hear your voice so she'll believe me...

AMERICAN *(He is obligated to take the receiver)* Good evening... Yes... If you could give permission to your husband tonight... We'll be together a little bit... Please... Please... I thank you very much... You're very kind... Good night. *(Hangs up)* Your wife is very kind... Why do you worry her? Now you broke my heart... She says, you only drop by home once or twice a week...

FRIEND *(His excuse is all ready)* Try going home tonight... What happens if I go? Then your problem won't be solved... It's all because of these necessities... But never mind these... I'll sacrifice myself for you, for my friends! Okay so long now! As soon as I find him, I'll call you.

(Tries to sound as if well-mannered) Sorry we gave you a headache...  
 See you soon...  
 MOTHER (Artificially) We have given you so much trouble...  
 WOMAN We thank you...  
 FRIEND Don't mention it...  
 (The AMERICAN goes out to send the FRIEND off... Laughter outside)  
 MOTHER You see... I'm protecting you from dangers... It's clear that no good  
 will come out of our son-in-law for you tomorrow either... I'll ask for  
 permission so that he can rest a little bit...  
 AMERICAN (Enters. Seeing that MOTHER gets up) Where to mother?  
 MOTHER I'll stay with my sister tonight... And you can have a good rest... When  
 you get a good news call me, alright?  
 AMERICAN Don't worry...  
 MOTHER (Knowingly) There's a saying, 'show me your friends, and I'll tell you  
 who you are'... A person like you have friend like him is mind  
 bubbling...  
 AMERICAN Mother dear, we spent our childhood together... This is a way of being  
 raised... We have to except everyone the way they are... And see, how  
 useful he is for us now?  
 MOTHER... That's true but still stay distant to him...  
 AMERICAN Yes mother, yes. (Still he doesn't show that he's angry) This is our  
 third meeting in fifteen years...  
 MOTHER Well, I'm just telling you... (To her daughter) Come dear, let me give  
 you a kiss... Okay, good night now... Sweet dreams...  
 WOMAN Bye mom...  
 AMERICAN Bye... We'll call you...  
 (The MOTHER has gone... They come back)  
 WOMAN (She embraces her husband) I've missed you so much...  
 AMERICAN Me too. (Embraces her back with passion)  
 WOMAN Take those things off... Put on your pajamas... Lie down here... I'll  
 prepare something for you to eat...  
 AMERICAN Okay...  
 (They separate with difficulty... The AMERICAN wears the pajamas  
 the WOMAN has brought)  
 WOMAN Would you like to take a shower?  
 AMERICAN Not now honey... I'd like to have a cigarette. (Takes one from the  
 package the WOMAN has brought... Lights it up and sits down) God  
 what a busy day it has been...  
 WOMAN I'll make a coffee if you like...  
 AMERICAN That's not a bad idea darling... But I think it would be better if you  
 bring me a drink... If it's not too much trouble for you...  
 WOMAN I've missed you so much...  
 AMERICAN Yeah, me too...  
 (The WOMAN exits... The COMMANDER's face grimaces... As if he's  
 not too happy with the way things have turned out)  
 WOMAN (Comes in with a bowl of nuts... She takes out a bottle from the  
 sideboard and pours it, leaving the glass beside her husband... Raising  
 her glass) To your health, my love...  
 AMERICAN To yours too, my darling...

*(The WOMAN goes into the bedroom... COMMANDER is watching the goings-on upsettingly... The DRIVER who had been waiting disappears with a meaningful laugh... The WOMAN comes back in after she has put on her nightgown and sprayed herself with perfume in a seductive manner... She turns on the dim light preventing the bright light... Provides romantic music to be heard from the music set... They finish their drinks quickly without talking)*

WOMAN Come on now... Let's go to our bedroom...

AMERICAN You go on... I'll come over when I finish my cigarette...

WOMAN *(She sways as she goes off)* Don't be late...

AMERICAN I won't...

*(The AMERICAN gazes at his wife's back with desire... He takes a few quick puffs from his cigarette and puts it down... He stands up)*

COMMANDER What's up? Where are you going? How can you do this thoughtlessness? How can you get in bed with your wife, while an important business of the hat awaits a solution? Sit down there! What if you get the call? What if you can't get to the phone fast enough? And you're supposedly be a scientist...Or are you not? *(Definitely)* There's no way you're leaving by this telephone! Is that understood?

AMERICAN It's understood, sir!

COMMANDER Tell her you won't be coming! Let her take care of herself and try to go to sleep...

WOMAN *(Her voice)* Come on... You're late... You're betraying me for a cigarette...

COMMANDER If you can't tell her, then wait for her to come... She'll be coming here anyway...

*(The WOMAN does come worried about what has happened)*

WOMAN But you've finished your cigarette, my love... Why aren't you coming?

AMERICAN You go to bed honey

WOMAN What does that mean?

AMERICAN I'd like to sit up a little bit more...

WOMAN Why?

AMERICAN The phone might ring...

WOMAN But there's a parallel phone. You could answer it from the bedroom...

COMMANDER *(Seeing that AMERICAN makes a sign as if to ask what he should be doing)* There may not be proper atmosphere for discussion there... You cannot go in there without solving this problem...

AMERICAN Yes, sir...

WOMAN What do you mean, 'sir'? What are you talking about? You are making me worry... C'mon get up. *(She tries to make him get up by grabbing his hand)* Come on...

AMERICAN Don't insist, darling...

COMMANDER Tell her in a decisive way!

AMERICAN You go in and sleep! The Commander is saying that too...

WOMAN *(As if crazed)* Where is that Commander? You are imagining things...

AMERICAN I'm not imagining or anything... Do whatever I tell you! Go in and sleep!

COMMANDER Well done!

*(The WOMAN goes inside somewhat fearfully.. Her going into the bedroom and even locking up the door can be heard)*

AMERICAN  
COMMANDER

What will happen now?

You'll wait...

*(They sit face to face for a while... The AMERICAN almost dozes off... The COMMANDER wakes him up by poking him... The COMMANDER reminds him of the hat by making a sign just with his hand... The AMERICAN tries to sleep again several more times... But the result doesn't change... The COMMANDER wakes him up each time by poking him, reminding him of the hat by his hands... It is towards dawn and it is slowly getting brighter... The cassette in the music set is over anyway... The shrill sound of the telephone rips the silence... The AMERICAN jumps out of his seat disoriented and confused... He almost attacks the receiver)*

AMERICAN

Hello! Yes... Swear on it! What should I do? I'm writing. *(Takes down an address)* When should I come there?

*(The WOMAN has also come in... She listens to her husband in confusion)*

AMERICAN

Right away! Right now! Thanks! *(He hangs up)* The hat is gonna be found... Thank goodness... Give me something to put on. *(While he hurries to put the civilian clothes on the WOMAN has brought, the COMMANDER also signals him to hurry)*

AMERICAN

Why don't you... Inform your mother... And I'll return... As soon as I get the hat... Darling... Forgive me...

COMMANDER

*(Is angry)* Don't be so soft, get going!

*(The AMERICAN goes out as he tries to put on one of his shoes and button up his shirt, with the COMMANDER accompanying him)*

## VII

*(The Musician's home... A small living room stacked up with furniture disorganized... The FRIEND has somehow found an empty armchair and is partly dozing off in it... The doorbell rings and the FRIEND gets up somewhat confused, gathers himself up and opens the door... The AMERICAN stands amongst the furniture for a while... The COMMANDER is beside him)*

FRIEND

You're late man! Why don't you come in!

AMERICAN

This is?

FRIEND

The musician's home... Come in here!

AMERICAN

*(While hopping in between the junky furniture)* I thought I had come into a warehouse by mistake...

FRIEND

Have a seat here...

AMERICAN

*(Finding a seat with difficulty, sits down)* Where is he?

FRIEND

*(He doesn't want to tell him that the Musician is having an intercourse with a woman inside)* He'll be here soon... He's inside...

AMERICAN

*(Lowering his voice)* Does he live here?

FRIEND

He's a bachelor... He comes here in the morning and goes out at noon... He's lots of fun in fact...

AMERICAN Where are the hats?  
 FRIEND Only he would know...  
 AMERICAN *(Searches with his eyes)* Where would he have put the hats? To be honest there doesn't seem to be any space for them here...  
 FRIEND Don't worry... He probably found a place for them... It's not only hats, but he's got boots, ceremonial swords, underwear and military uniforms, so many things that you wouldn't even want...  
 AMERICAN All here!  
 FRIEND Yes! Plus, he can cook in the kitchen and invite his friends round...  
 AMERICAN Hasn't he at all learned how to be neat in the military?  
 FRIEND If he had, would they have dismissed him?  
 AMERICAN If this was the reason for his dismissal, then you can't say they were wrong...  
 COMMANDER Good for you!  
 FRIEND This is nothing compared to what other things he's done... In order to keep him under control, they put him up to a job in the dining hall in his last days there... And what do you expect him to do there? He sat down to play poker with the other workers there... They were so deep into their game... Before they knew it, it was time for the lunch... The service trays were all dirty... So he served the soup, main dish and desert all heaped up to the soldiers with the plates that were kept for special occasions only... And in the mean time he was shouting to them, 'You queers, this food is all gonna mix up in your stomachs anyway! I'll take it away from anyone who objects'...  
 AMERICAN No kidding!  
 FRIEND *(Sound from inside the room can be heard)*  
 AMERICAN What are these sounds?  
 FRIEND Don't worry about it...  
 AMERICAN He's never got married?  
 FRIEND He was married... But his wife-poof!  
 AMERICAN What do you mean 'poof'?  
 FRIEND It means 'poof'! In other words she ran away...  
 AMERICAN Why did she run away?  
 FRIEND He's a womanizer... But you should ask him, he has an interesting story...  
*(Sound of a woman yelling)*  
 AMERICAN I thought you he was a bachelor...  
 FRIEND He is a bachelor...  
 AMERICAN But from inside a voice... wasn't that a woman's voice?  
 FRIEND Yes... Just when we were about to go out, he brought a B-girl *(call-girl)* to the car...  
 AMERICAN Is that the woman inside?  
 FRIEND *(Natural)* Yeeees!  
 AMERICAN While we wait here, and he's there... Wow that's too much...  
 FRIEND You were so late... And I was about to doze off, so he must have been bored and said to himself, 'I'll take drink' and have gone in there... He's gone since then...  
 AMERICAN What if there isn't?  
 FRIEND If there isn't what?

AMERICAN                   The hat?  
FRIEND                       Don't worry yourself, he'd create one...  
AMERICAN                   I hope so...  
                                      *(Silence... A little later the door of the room opens with difficulty and the MUSICIAN appears in his bathrobe)*  
FRIEND                       Where the hell have you been?  
MUSICIAN                    What kind a question is that? I was waiting by the stove so the milk wouldn't boil over... Hello buddy!  
AMERICAN                   Hello!  
MUSICIAN                    It's the hat, right?  
AMERICAN                   Yes... We've disturbed you so early in the morning...  
MUSICIAN                    Never mind the disturbance man... Daily life goes on...  
AMERICAN                   If I could see it without much delay... And I wouldn't want you to, oohm...  
MUSICIAN                    You'd seeee... Don't rush... Let me welcome you properly... Drink a cup of our coffee... Even though it's a little massy here today but you'll excuse me...  
AMERICAN                   Oh, sure...  
MUSICIAN                    Man don't be so polite... It is a mass here, just a bit... Since my lady whizzed out of here, these furniture haven't got a woman's touch, really... He must have told you about my lady's whizzing out of here...  
AMERICAN                   Not in so many details... He just said 'poof' ...  
MUSICIAN                    So you've kept your friend waiting here with nothing to do... Why didn't you tell him how she 'whizzed' out of here?  
FRIEND                       Because nobody could tell as sweetly as you ... C'mon, tell us...  
MUSICIAN                    You've heard it many times... Go in and have drink... C'mon, don't be shy... I said, c'mon man, go on...  
FRIEND                       *(To AMERICAN)* Get comfortable...  
AMERICAN                   The hat?  
MUSICIAN                    I'll take care of that... Watch the milk so it won't boil over... *(Upon seeing the FRIEND go inside)* He's a good friend, if I may say so... He did whatever he could to find me last night... No one can top him off, when it comes to sacrificing himself for a friend...  
COMMANDER                As we had time to listen to the story of this man's wife running away...  
AMERICAN                   You were gonna tell me how your wife 'whizzed'...  
MUSICIAN                    Oh, yeah! *(With pleasure)* I don't know, do you ever chase women? You know buddy a flower doesn't make the spring come... You have to have a lot of flowers to have the real taste... Even finding a lot of flowers isn't enough sometimes... You need a place... After this age it's too hard to do it in the forest, under the trees or in the back seat of a car... On top of it, the possibility of getting caught at any moment is too high... If you were to rent a flat for this business, where will find it? The rents are expensive and the income is low... You can't ask friends, if they had one they could've used it\* *(\*This last sentence is originally, 'if a man had an ointment for baldness, he would use it on his head)* In any case, I come home towards morning... My wife would be sleeping in the inner room when I come... I said to myself, "Man, use your head... You've got a lovely flat-your own"... I mean this place... One day I brought someone here... I checked, my lady was

sound asleep... I locked the door from outside quietly, then I finished the job and sent the woman packing... This went on for five years without any incidents... The last time I was doing the same again; I came home, locked her door again... Just when we had started the works, whom should I see but my wife right next to us! Of course my lady poofed immediately!

AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN

I thought you had locked the door on her... Where did she come from? I committed the most important imprudence, without knowing it... I hadn't looked into the room, thinking that she'd be in there anyway... But she was in the restroom...

AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN

I'll be happy if for the last time you could tell me, how you left the military...  
*(Pleased enormously)* In those days I was in charge of the dining hall... We got the news that Chief of Staff would come for as inspection... Our Commander had a tray of special baklava made... He was planning to serve it to him in order to be favorable in his eyes... Brother it was such baklava; you couldn't resist it for the love of God... On top of it all, they had left it in my care... Saying that on or two wouldn't hurt, I could rearrange them on the tray over again, I started to gobble it down... Next thing I knew, only three pieces of baklava were in that huge tray... Then I swallowed them down too, saying they shouldn't be left over...

AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN  
COMMANDER

You left the military after that I guess...  
What do you mean 'left' brother, they kicked me out!  
Grave irresponsibility... That's why there can be no tolerance in the military!

AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN

Can we get to the hat?  
Let's see...  
*(The MUSICIAN gets up and lifts up and empties a sack onto the floor... At least fifteen or twenty hats fall out... He lines them up across)*

MUSICIAN  
AMERICAN

Choose any one you like and take it...  
*(Picks up the one resembles his hat the most)* There, it looked just like this one. *(The AMERICAN puts it on his head)*

COMMANDER  
AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN

This hasn't faded!  
It's too new!  
I don't collect used equipment... What's everybody else's dirty, greasy goods got to do here in my home? If you'd want old hat, you should go to the Flea Market...

AMERICAN  
MUSICIAN  
AMERICAN

*(Joyously)* No, no... It'll do... I thank you very much...  
When will you bring it back?  
In the shortest time possible...  
*(The FRIEND enters and looks happy when he sees the hat on his head)*

FRIEND  
MUSICIAN  
FRIEND

Ohoo, it looks good on you...  
I guess you did the milk early...  
It boiled over and even put out the fire... She's sleeping, sonny...



MUSICIAN That's your luck... They nicked the hubcap from my car again last night... There's one exactly the same on a car on the side street... If you'll be my watchman, you could have my blessings...

COMMANDER I cannot stand this man anymore! You better come quickly or I'm gonna do something! *(Exits)*  
*(The AMERICAN signals to the FRIEND that they should go quickly)*

FRIEND It's almost noon... I'll come back and solve your problem in a couple of nights... With your permission, we'll go now...

MUSICIAN If you say so! *(Slowly)* My hat is in your care okay! I want it back just the way it is! Agreed?

FRIEND Okay buddy...

AMERICAN Thanks very, very much...

MUSICIAN I wouldn't give it to anyone, but I liked you... Whenever you might need swords etcetera, come to me, I'll find them... You'll take care of it like the apple of your eye, right?

AMERICAN Right... I promise, I will bring it back in the same condition... So long!

FRIEND See you...

MUSICIAN Bye!  
*(They jump over the furniture and leave)*

## VIII

*(MOTHER's home... The MOTHER and WOMAN are waiting. The doorbell rings... The WOMAN runs to open it)*

WOMAN Did you find it?

AMERICAN *(His voice)* We've found it!  
*(The AMERICAN in front, and the FRIEND behind him and the COMMANDER as the last one, enter)*

COMMANDER First of all put on your outfit, then your hat... Let's see if it fits...  
*(The AMERICAN hurriedly changes his clothes and puts on his hat... The clothes are all faded from the sun, while the hat is bright green... Looking out of place)*

COMMANDER Is this acceptable?

AMERICAN Does it match?

MOTHER It's too obvious...

AMERICAN If we could wear it down a little... It'll be alright if we could find a way to make it yellowish somehow...

FRIEND Noooo! I can't take that responsibility... He'd raise hell and my good relations of so many years with him would go sour... I can't dare to...

MOTHER How can we make it yellowish anyway? I we put it in bleach, it's going to have lighter color but what if its shield damaged?

FRIEND Oh no!

MOTHER We wouldn't anyway... It might come out with a wavy coloring...

AMERICAN I'm gonna report back to duty at night... No one will notice it...

COMMANDER *(Upset)* Do you think the Duty Officer sleeps? Let's say you avoided him... Then what will you do in the morning? It won't work!

AMERICAN *(Starts worrying again)* No, no, it won't work... Besides they don't ever pardon those who try deception... They'll destroy me...

COMMANDER AMERICAN Well said! The time is getting short take your precaution!  
 The best thing is to go to the Flea Market without losing any time...  
*(The AMERICAN hurriedly changes his cloths... The FRIEND and COMMANDER run after him)*

WOMAN MOTHER What if they can't find it?  
*(Hopeless)* They can't... It's impossible, because today is Sunday...  
 But thank God I've spoken with the tailor...

WOMAN MOTHER What tailor, mother?  
*(Speaking as she dials the numbers on the phone)* We'll have it made  
 dear... Is there any other way out? Hello! I'd like to speak with the  
 tailor woman... Yes, yes... About the hat... It didn't fit... The color  
 doesn't match... You have our address, don't you? Okay then... Please  
 hurry a little... Yes we do, we do have a sewing machine... Thank you  
 very much...  
*(She puts down the receiver)*  
*(A car horn is heard from outside... It's coming from a distance, but it  
 can be heard progressively more often and it is quite an annoying  
 sound... Along with the car horn, angry voices can be heard... As the  
 MOTHER and WOMAN open the window and look out, the sound of  
 the horn suddenly stops... But the yelling can be heard more clearly  
 now)*  
 You rude jerk!  
 Can't we even have peace in our own home?  
 Stop it!  
 You boor!  
 Lout!  
 MOTHER It's none of our business! *(Goes back inside)*  
 WOMAN *(Closes the window)* What kind of material is the tailor going to use?  
 MOTHER Let's wait for her to come... We'll see...  
*(It gets dark)*  
 DRIVER *(With a crowbar in one hand and the AMERICAN's hat in the other, his  
 hands and face are in blood... To the spectators)* There's no humanity  
 left my friend... The man forgot his hat in the taxi... I blow the horn so  
 that he hears and comes down to get it... Then five or the of bastards  
 attacked me, just because I was blowing the horn... Man you wait and  
 see if I don't make you pay for this! See if I don't bring all the other  
 drivers here! *(As he walks away)* No humanity left, none...

## IX

*(The shop-window of a store in the flea Market... There's a replica of  
 the AMERICAN's hat in the specially lit display... Furthermore, it is  
 faded and worn out a little... The GUARD is sitting further down... Our  
 heroes the FRIEND in front, AMERICAN behind him with the  
 COMMANDER at the vary back come in almost running through the  
 spectators)*  
 AMERICAN *(Stands in front of the window display with great happiness)* Here, it's  
 this one!  
 FRIEND Are you sure?

COMMANDER That will do!  
 AMERICAN I'm almost thinking that the driver has sold it to this shop... This, this is it... Dear God, thanks to you!  
 COMMANDER But the shop is closed... Find its owner without delay...  
 FRIEND *(To GUARD)* Hey hommie... Hello... Where's the owner of this shop?  
 GUARD Not here!  
 FRIEND Where is he?  
 GUARD Today is Sunday... Nobody opens up their shop... They have right to rest too, don't they?  
 COMMANDER Give him a little money...  
*(The AMERICAN hands out ten dollars to the GUARD)*  
 GUARD *(Smiling immediately, he gets up and comes next to them)* You shouldn't have brother...  
 AMERICAN You'll find the shop-owner for us. *(He gives the money)*  
 GUARD *(Taking the money, he goes into the phone booth there... He dials the numbers he pulled out of his pocket... Waits... Dials again... Comes back with a sad face)* He's not in sir... I just remembered, He's gone to the spa... He'll only be here tomorrow morning...  
 FRIEND Do you have the key?  
 GUARD Why should I? We just do our guard duty here! Why do we need it?  
 AMERICAN That hat...  
 GUARD It's easy... You can have it tomorrow at nine am... I won't let him sell it to anyone else until you come...  
 FRIEND We have to have it today...  
 AMERICAN We have to get it in an hour...  
 GUARD It's not possible brother... If it had been, fine...  
 AMERICAN Look here, I'll give you anything you want... Here's a hundred dollars... Do whatever you can, but get me that hat...  
 FRIEND We beg you man, please...  
 GUARD *(His eye's on the dollar, but sad and helpless)* I've got six kids at home, kissing your hands... But it's impossible... Otherwise why wouldn't I give it to you?  
 FRIEND *(He pulls the GUARD aside)* Look here, I've got a proposition for you... Don't think about the money for the broken class, but break it! Give us the hat... And a hundred bucks is from me too...  
 GUARD Brother, I'll get this money only once... What will happen afterwards? Do you know what I went through to get this job? Who's gonna get bread for those kids when I'm out of job? No... It can't be done brother... I won't blink an eye, and guard it... Come tomorrow and it's yours...  
 FRIEND Is this your last word?  
 GUARD God is unchanging, and my word is unchanging... It can't be done brother...  
 COMMANDER *(Annoyed)* Furthermore, you are encouraging upright people to criminal acts... Get going!  
*(The AMERICAN walks on hopelessly... The others follow)*  
 AMERICAN *(Turns back to the GUARD who has been watching them as they go)* My very last proposition... I'll give you a thousand dollars... I'll give you all that I have...

GUARD

*(He is decisive now)* I said no mister... No way... I've guarded this place with my honor till today... I can't permit my name to be a thief from now on...

*(The COMMANDER holds the AMERICAN by the arm sternly... They walk on)*

X

*(The MOTHER's house... the TAILOR WOMAN is taking measurements... She has laid out the AMERICAN's outfit on the floor... The hat is on the side... MOTHER and WOMAN wait with great excitement... The doorbell rings... The WOMAN opens it... The AMERICAN in front followed by the others enter... MOTHER signals to them to be quiet)*

TAILOR WOMAN

This can be done...

MOTHER

She'll sew an exact replica...

TAILOR WOMAN

Hold on for a moment, there are things I have to ask for...

MOTHER

Hurry up ask...

TAILOR WOMAN

When do you need this hat?

AMERICAN

*(Hopeful again... Looks at his watch)* It should be on my head in forty-five minutes...

TAILOR WOMAN

It will... But the only thing I'd like from you is that, you won't be hanging around me like hunting birds... You'll sit down and wait without making any noise...

AMERICAN

We'll wait... If you like, we can all go to the next room...

TAILOR WOMAN

Well not that much... You can sit down here... But make much noise... Every artist has a system of working... Mine is like this... You won't ask about anything... You won't occupy me with anything...

AMERICAN

We won't...

MOTHER

You just relax...

WOMAN

As long as it's ready in time...

FRIEND

*(Encouragingly)* Auntie knows this business...

AMERICAN

I hope to God nothing goes wrong...

TAILOR WOMAN

Be quiet now!

*(Everyone falls salient... They sit on the armchairs... They start watching the TAILOR WOMAN)*

TAILOR WOMAN

The machine does it, but the hands take the pride... The sewing machine please!

*(The MOTHER and WOMAN bring the machine on rollers)*

TAILOR WOMAN

The chair please!

*(The FRIEND, wanting to be of use, grabs a chair and puts it in front of the sewing machine and goes back to his place immediately)*

TAILOR WOMAN

*(Sits down on the chair and starts fiddling with the machine... Gets it going with her feet)* Lubricant!

*(The MOTHER comes quickly and searches for it)*

TAILOR WOMAN

This machine hasn't been used for a long time... The way I remember, the lubricant is kept there somewhere...

(The MOTHER has remembered, so she goes inside in a hurry and a moment later comes back cranky and lubricant on her hand and gives it to the TAILOR WOMAN)

TAILOR WOMAN (She lubricates the necessary parts and runs the machine) Good!  
(Everyone except the COMMANDER is jubilant)

TAILOR WOMAN The green tread! Light green! The reel, cotton reel!

MOTHER (Fearful) Everything is there!

TAILOR WOMAN None of these will do... I need a light green tread... (She's enjoying the situation) If there's none, then this just can't be done! Because it will show up... I haven't let anyone laugh at me up until now... And I won't from now on either...  
(MOTHER runs inside again in a hurry and comes back with a box full of cotton reels... She hands it to her)

TAILOR WOMAN (Looks for one and finds it) Here it is...  
(Everyone except the COMMANDER is jubilant)

TAILOR WOMAN This part is done... Now I need the material. (She lifts up one piece of the outfit) Here, materials just like this one...

MOTHER There's none...

WOMAN Mother please look inside...

MOTHER (She is not playacting but using her real voice now) There isn't any my dear... There really isn't any, I swear...

TAILOR WOMAN Are you sure there isn't any inside?  
(MOTHER runs inside and comes out hopelessly... She does not say anything)

TAILOR WOMAN Okay, I understand... It's up to me now... Yet this is what an artist thrives on... An artist creates out of nothing... An artist doesn't run away in the face of adversity... This hat is necessary for you, isn't it?  
(With trembling voice) Yes... Please... In approximately thirty-five minutes, I have to leave home and get into a taxi to go to the bus terminal... Otherwise? (Can't say it)

AMERICAN

TAILOR WOMAN You will get into a taxi!  
(The TAILOR WOMAN comes near the outfit and marks the back of the shirt with a piece of soap... picks up the scissors)

TAILOR WOMAN With God's name! (She gets ready to cut)

COMMANDER Stop her! Stooooop!

AMERICAN As you command, sir! Stop!

COMMANDER What is this woman trying to do?

AMERICAN What are you trying to do? Would you please explain it?

TAILOR WOMAN I'll make the hat with the material from the unseen parts of this shirt...

COMMANDER What's gonna happen to the parts that's been cut?

AMERICAN Then what's gonna happen to the parts that's been cut?

TAILOR WOMAN (Showing the material that is greener next to her) I will patch it with these... It won't be seen anyhow... This part will be tucked inside the trousers...

COMMANDER What happens if you have to bend down?

AMERICAN I will need to bend down... Then what's gonna happen?

TAILOR WOMAN You won't bend down... There's no other way...

COMMANDER If you don't bend down, your military service won't be over...

AMERICAN To end my military service, I will need to bend down! And these patches will be seen!

COMMANDER Do you know what does it mean to damage military equipment? We must induct all women into the army... We must...

AMERICAN And my military service will never end... Leave those scissors alone... I said leave them!  
(The TAILOR WOMAN leaves the scissors in fear... She runs out of the house in terror of the AMERICAN's decisiveness... The AMERICAN puts his clothes and boots on and the hat, which the MUSICIAN gave him, on his head)

AMERICAN I can't bear this stress anymore...  
(To his FRIEND) Would you drop me off at the bus terminal?

FRIEND That's why I'm here... Shell we go?

AMERICAN (Shakes hands with MOTHER... Embraces his wife) Take good care of your selves...

WOMAN What if they punish you? What if you lose your job?  
(The AMERICAN suddenly runs inside and comes back with a hammer... He runs out, followed by the others)

## XI

*(It is the front of the window display of the shot in the Flea Market... The GUARD is still sitting in one corner... The hat is under a bright light... It's in it's place brilliantly in the window display... The AMERICAN is seen with the hammer in his hand at the very back of the spectators... He is running towards the window display... Just behind him almost catching up to him is the FRIEND... Further behind him are the WOMAN and the MOTHER running and crying out at the same time... COMMANDER is running in seriousness... The GUARD hears the commotion and sees the AMERICAN... He senses the intention when he sees the hammer in his hand... He grabs his gun)*

GUARD Stop! Or I'll shoot! Stop it, stop it!  
(The AMERICAN lifts up the hammer to hit the glass... Now everything is like a film in slow-motion... The FRIEND grabs the GUARD's hand with great difficulty, which is about to fire, lowers the hand that's holding the gun, down a little bit... The gun fires... The hammer in the AMERICAN's hand falls down... The AMERICAN falls down as he holds his leg...All the action returns to normal)

FRIEND What do you think you're doing?

GUARD (Trying to free his hand) I won't let anybody steal anything from here...  
(The FRIEND takes the gun away from the guard's hand... Everyone except the COMMANDER gather around the AMERICAN)

FRIEND (Gets up, to the GUARD) Thank God, it has only scraped his leg... Suppose it had hit his heart? Who would've looked after his children?

GUARD Well what if he robbed the shop - who would have looked after my children?

FRIEND Stop chattering and go get some bandage or something...  
(As the GUARD goes away hesitantly)

## XII

*(It is the front of the barracks... The guard on duty is sitting in front of the door... The DRIVER's back is to the spectators and he is crouching on the ground... The AMERICAN is limping through the spectators towards the barracks... It is as if his feet don't go...The DRIVER who hears the foot steps gets up and looks at the on comers... Part of the DRIVER's face is in bandage... It's obvious he has been beaten... The COMMANDER appears just in front of the AMERICAN)*

DRIVER

*(He has recognized the AMERICAN) Hey brother!*

AMERICAN

*(Looks at the DRIVER with empty eyes) .....*

DRIVER

*Haven't you recognized me? (Extends the hat he was holding in his back) This is yours... You've forgot it in the taxi... I searched for your home a lot... Good thing, you've told me where you do your military service...*

AMERICAN

*(Smiles happily... Takes the hat and puts it on his head) How can I thank you enough? What can I do for you? You drove four hours...*

DRIVER

*Did the humanity die brother? Don't hang out here, go in... Otherwise you'll be late! So long now!*

*(The AMERICAN confused a little, but definitely collecting himself together, as he enters in the barracks...)*

**THE END**

September 18 1995, Istanbul

