

## ACT II

SCENE: *The Day Room is empty but for RUCKLY, who stands atop the panel, arms extended with fingers touching, hoop fashion. The shrilling of a referee's whistle, and McMURPHY comes charging out, followed by HARDING, CHESWICK, SCANLON and MARTINI. They wear underwear in simulation of gym shorts, and are dribbling and passing a basketball. CHIEF BROMDEN follows, hovering on the outskirts of the action as though he would like to join in. Two or three baskets are shot through RUCKLY'S "hoop" to the accompaniment of joyful yapping.*

McMURPHY. Snap the ball. Use your elbows, willya? Drive, you puny mothers, drive. *(Blows the whistle, stopping action.)* Ruckly, how many times I gotta tell you, stand still. It ain't right for the basket to be chasin' the ball. *(He blows his whistle and they resume play. MARTINI tosses the ball to an imaginary teammate.)*

MARTINI. Hey, George! *(McMURPHY blows the whistle, retrieves the ball.)*

McMURPHY. Martini. There's only five men on a team. One ... two ... three ... four ... five. So don't go hallucinatin' any more!

*(Action as before; the ball being passed to much yipping and yapping. AIDE WILLIAMS enters, stops short in consternation.)*

WILLIAMS. Hey! You can't play basketball in here.

McMURPHY. Why not? Ah-ah, don't tell me ... against ward policy?

WILLIAMS. You got it, buddy.

McMURPHY. Aw, shucks, just when we got an alumni game

comin' up. (NURSE FLINN has entered and is observing, in shock. McMURPHY goes to her.) Hiya, honey! (Reaching for the crucifix she wears around her throat.) Mind if I take a look at that thing?  
 NURSE FLINN. (Backing away.) Oh, stay back!  
 McMURPHY. I swear I ain't gonna hurt you, I just wanta —  
 RUCKLY. F-f-fuck 'em all!

(The Ward door opens; WARREN enters, followed closely by NURSE RATCHED. All are frozen by her presence as she takes in the scene. WILLIAMS looks, foolishly, from her to the basketball in his hands.)

NURSE RATCHED. (To WILLIAMS:) Good game? (To Warren:) Please take Mr. Ruckly down. (WARREN lifts RUCKLY down and stands him in his accustomed place against the wall. NURSE RATCHED takes the basketball from WILLIAMS. Moving on to McMURPHY; good-naturedly.) We do have our little difficulties, don't we? But they'll be worked out. After all, we have weeks. Months. If necessary, years. (She exits, followed by WARREN and WILLIAMS, as FLINN hurries into the Station. The MEN break into a hubbub, crowding around McMURPHY.)

CHESWICK. You've got her on the ropes!

SCANLON. She's groggy, Mac!

McMURPHY. Yeah ...

HARDING. All you need is the knockout punch!

BILLY. I wouldn't have believed it —!

McMURPHY. Shut up, will ya? Wha'd she mean by that?

CHESWICK. What, Mac?

McMURPHY. That "years" bit. (Silence.) Come on, why does she act like she's holdin' aces?

HARDING. Well ... I guess maybe it's because you're committed.

McMURPHY. Sure I'm committed, but my sentence only got

five months to run, so ... (Looks at the faces. They are uneasy, some showing a kind of guilt.) Come on, gimme the bit.

HARDING. Mac, it's not like a jail sentence. In jail you've got a date ahead when you know you'll be set free. But here ... if you're committed ...

McMURPHY. You mean I'm stuck here till she wants to turn me loose? (HARDING is silent. McMURPHY is badly jolted.) Hey ... then I got as much to lose buggin' that ol' buzzard as you do.

HARDING. More. I'm voluntary.

McMURPHY. You're which?

HARDING. I'm not committed. As a matter of fact, there aren't many on the ward who are.

McMURPHY. Are you shittin' me? (HARDING shakes his head.) Billy — you must be committed? (BILLY shakes his head.) Then why? Why? You're just a young kid. Why ain't you out runnin' around in a convertible, cruisin' for babes? (BILLY looks at the floor.) All you guys, why the hell do you stay? You gripe, you bitch how you can't stand this place, can't stand the Big Nurse, and here all the time you ain't committed! What's the matter with you? Ain't you got any guts?

BILLY. Sure! Sure, that's it, we haven't got the guts! I could g-get out this afternoon if ... (Wildly.) You think I wuh-want to stay here? Sure, I'd like a convertible and a guh-girl friend. But did you ever have people l-l-laughing at you? No, because you're so tough. Well, I'm not tough. Neither is Harding. Neither is Cheswick. Oh — oh, you — you t-talk like we stayed in here because ... oh ... what's the use ...

McMURPHY. (Hard.) Okay, why didn't you tell me?

HARDING. What?

McMURPHY. That she could keep me here till my dyin' day.

HARDING. I guess ... it didn't occur to us.

McMURPHY. That's a lotta crap! Oh, now I get it. Now I see why you guys keep comin' at me like I'm Jesus Q. Christ. It's 'cause

I got everything to lose, and you ... hooee, how d'you like that? You bastards conned me. Conned by a bunch of wackos!

HARDING. Mac, believe me —

McMURPHY. To hell with that. To hell with you. I got plenty of worries of my own without getting hooked on yours. So quit buggin' me. (A yell.) Alla you! Quit buggin' me!

(A stunned silence. He makes a decision, goes to the broom closet, opens it and takes out the toilet brush. NURSE RATCHED, entering with the AIDES, pauses as she see McMURPHY emerge from the closet and start toward the latrine.)

NURSE RATCHED. Mr. McMurphy. (He stops as she comes to him.) What are you planning to do with that?

McMURPHY. Plannin' to use it, ma'am. Plannin' to scrub them urinals so clean we're gonna have to wear dark glasses every time we take a pee. (Goes into the latrine.)

NURSE RATCHED. (Examining the MEN thoughtfully.) Mr. Harding.

HARDING. (Low.) Yes, Miss Ratched?

NURSE RATCHED. Have you gentlemen been reasoning with Mr. McMurphy?

HARDING. Yes, Miss Ratched.

NURSE RATCHED. Just what did you say?

HARDING. We ... explained the Therapeutic Community.

NURSE RATCHED. I see. (She smiles.) That's fine, boys.

(CROSS-FADE as people clear. LIGHTS go to night lighting on the empty Day Room. The Nurses' Station is faintly illuminated from within. Elsewhere there are only the blue nightlights; and moonlight pours through the windows. For a few moments the stage is deserted. Then CHIEF BROMDEN enters from the dormitory. He looks about in a puzzled way as though someone had called

to him. He is drawn to the windows, magnetized by moonlight. Raises his head looking up at the sky ... and in the hush is heard the high laughing gabble of wild geese passing overhead. He raises his arms wide, as though to embrace the whole lost world beyond the windows, then folds them about his body. He is standing like that, head thrown back, eyes closed, when McMURPHY enters.)

McMURPHY. (Whispering.) Chief, you all right? (No acknowledgment.) Saw you get up and figgered maybe you come out here to scrape off some a that thousand-year gum. (Offering a stick of gum; apologetically.) They took away my canteen privileges so this is all I got.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (Taking it — then he speaks in a hoarse voice.) Thank you.

McMURPHY. That's okay. (Starts off, comes to a startled halt.) Hey —! (Coming back.) Try it again — you're a little rusty.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (Clears his throat; more clearly.) Thank you.

(McMURPHY starts to laugh, trying to keep the sound down. CHIEF BROMDEN goes toward the dormitory, his feelings hurt.)

McMURPHY. (Stopping him.) 'Scuse me, Chief. What I was laughin' at, I just caught wise to what you been doin' all these years. Bidin' your time till you could tell 'em off?

CHIEF BROMDEN. No ... no, I'd be afraid.

McMURPHY. How's that?

CHIEF BROMDEN. I'm not big enough.

McMURPHY. Hoo boy, you are crazy, aren't you. I been on a few reservations in my life, but you are the biggest damn Injun I have ever seen!

CHIEF BROMDEN. My papa was bigger.

McMURPHY. Yeah?

CHIEF BROMDEN. He was a full chief and his name was Tee Ah Millatooa. That means The Pine That Stands Tallest on the Mountain. But my mother got twice his size.

McMURPHY. You must have had a real moose of an old lady!

CHIEF BROMDEN. Oh, she wasn't big *that* way. She wasn't Indian, neither. She was a town woman. Her name was Bromden.

McMURPHY. Yeah, I think I see what you're getting at ... when a town woman marries an Indian that's marryin' beneath her, ain't it? And your papa had to take her name?

CHIEF BROMDEN. She said she wouldn't be married to no man with a name like Tee Ah Millatooa. But is wasn't only her that made him little. Everybody worked on him. The way they're workin' on you.

McMURPHY. They who?

CHIEF BROMDEN. The Combine. It wanted us to go live some place else. It wanted to take away our waterfall. In town they beat up Papa in the alleys and cut off his hair. Oh, the Combine's big ... big. He fought it a long time till my mother made him too little to fight any more. Then he signed the papers.

McMURPHY. What papers, Chief?

CHIEF BROMDEN. The ones that gave everything to the government. The village. The falls ...

McMURPHY. I remember ... but I heard the tribe got paid some huge amount.

CHIEF BROMDEN. That's what the government guy said, here's a whole big pot of money. And Papa said, what can you pay for the way a man lives? What can you pay for his right to be an Indian? He didn't understand. Neither did the tribe. They stood in front of our door, holdin' those checks, askin' what should we do now? And Papa couldn't tell them 'cause he was too little ... and too drunk.

McMURPHY. What happened to him?

CHIEF BROMDEN. He kept drinkin' till he died. They found

him in a alley and threw dirt in his eyes. (*Fiercely.*) The Combine whipped him. It beats *everybody*.

McMURPHY. Now, wait a minute —

CHIEF BROMDEN. Yes, yes, it does! Oh, they don't bust you outright. They work on you, ways you can't even see. They get hold of you and they *install* things!

McMURPHY. Take 'er easy, buddy.

CHIEF BROMDEN. And if you *fight* they lock you up some place and make you stop, and —!

McMURPHY. (*Closing the CHIEF'S mouth with his hand.*) Whoops, cool it. (*Takes him in his arms, gently, soothingly.*)

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*In a moment, ashamed.*) I been talkin' crazy.

McMURPHY. Well ... yeah.

CHIEF BROMDEN. It don't make sense.

McMURPHY. Well, as to *that* —

CHIEF BROMDEN. Sh-h! (*Raises his head, moves toward the windows, listening.*) Hear 'em? (*McMURPHY listens. From the sky the wild, gobbling cry again.*)

McMURPHY. Canada honkers flyin' south. Gonna be an early winter, chief. Look, there they go. Right across the moon!

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*Gazing skyward, chanting softly.*) Wire. brier, limber lock ...

McMURPHY. Huh?

CHIEF BROMDEN. It's a old children's rhyme. My grand-momma taught it to me ...

McMURPHY. Oh, lord, yes, I remember! You play it with your fingers. Hold out your hand, Chief. (*Ticking off fingers, chanting.*) Wire, brier, limber lock —

CHIEF BROMDEN. Three geese in a flock.

McMURPHY. One flew east —

CHIEF BROMDEN. One flew west —

McMURPHY. An' one flew over the cuckoo's nest!

CHIEF BROMDEN. O-U-T spells out —  
McMURPHY. Goose swoops down and plucks you out! (They embrace, laugh happily; then the CHIEF sobers.)

CHIEF BROMDEN. McMURPHY? You gonna crawfish? (McMURPHY doesn't answer.) I mean, you gonna back down? McMURPHY. (Turning away.) Aw, what's the difference.

CHIEF BROMDEN. Are you?

McMURPHY. (His eyes light on the panel. Brightly.) Hey, remember when I tried to lift that thing? I bet you could do it.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (Shrinking back.) I'm too little.

McMURPHY. Whyn't you give it a try?

CHIEF BROMDEN. I'm not big enough!

McMURPHY. How do ya know? That'd be one sure way to find out. (Giving up, cheerfully.) Well, when you're ready, lemme make book on it. Hoo boy, would that be a killin'!

CHIEF BROMDEN. McMURPHY. (McMURPHY pauses.) Make me big again.

McMURPHY. Why, hell, Chief, looks to me like you growed half a foot already!

CHIEF BROMDEN. (Shaking his head.) How can I be big if you ain't? How can anybody? (He exits into the dorm. McMURPHY is motionless a moment, then follows.)

(CROSS-FADE to daylight. NURSE FLINN is in the Station.)

NURSE FLINN. (Picking up microphone.) Council meeting. Patient's Council meeting. (MARTINI rushes from the dormitory in the midst of a frantic hallucination.)

MARTINI. Air to ground, air to ground! ... Enemy sighted at three o'clock. Enemy planes at three o'clock! (He wildly fires his imaginary machine gun into the sky.)

CHESWICK. (Coming out of latrine.) Knock it off, Martini. There's no one there.

MARTINI. (Excitedly.) Don't you see them? Don't you see them?

CHESWICK. There's no one there, I tell you. Now stop it. There's no one there ... (He takes MARTINI in his arms and quiets him.)

MARTINI. (Sadly.) I thought I seen them.

(The OTHERS enter. Their attitude is subdued, brooding. The CHIEF sits in the rocking chair. McMURPHY enters, head down, and seats himself, too. WARREN and WILLIAMS enter with almost military precision, preceding NURSE RATCHED.)

NURSE RATCHED. Boys, I've given a great deal of thought to what I am about to say. I've talked in over with the Staff and we all came to the same conclusion — that there should be some form of punishment for the unspeakable behavior of yesterday. (A pause. No comment.) Most of you are here because you could not adjust to the outside world. You broke the rules of society. At some time ... in your childhood, perhaps ... you were allowed to get away with that. But when you broke a rule you knew it. You wanted to be punished — needed it — but the punishment did not come. That leniency on the part of your parents may have been the germ of your present illness. I remind you of this, hoping you will understand that it is entirely for your own good that we enforce discipline. (Looking straight at McMURPHY.) Is there any comment? (Silence. McMURPHY rattles the cards in his hands — splat! — then waves an apology.) Then I assume you understand me and agree. You also understand that it is difficult to enforce discipline in these surroundings. After all, what can we do to you? You can't be arrested. You can't be sent to an institution, you're already there. All we can do is take away privileges. And so, after carefully considering the circumstances, we have decided to take away certain privileges which allowed — no, encouraged the rebellion to happen. (Referring to her memorandum.) First, for thirty days there will be no viewing of televi-

sion. (*A groan from SCANLON.*) Second, the privilege of playing cards during recreation hours is hereby rescinded. (*The cards in McMURPHY'S hands go "splat" again. The MEN'S eyes go to him, hopefully.*)

McMURPHY. (*Putting the cards away.*) 'Scuse me.

HARDING. (*Sounding sick.*) Is that all?

NURSE RATCHED. Not quite. There is one more matter ... the behavior of a patient who has been here almost as long as I. Longer, I believe, than any of you. (*Smiling.*) You know, of course, to whom I refer? (*The MEN are puzzled at first, then turn eyes to CHIEF BROMDEN ... so long a fixture, never a subject in these meetings.*) Mr. Bromden long ago was diagnosed as catatonic. And for that reason — because it was assumed we could not communicate — we gave him up. We forgot poor Mr. Bromden. (*Smiles warmly at the CHIEF but there is apprehension gathering in his eyes and his hands grip the sides of his chair.*) That was wrong of us. But Mr. Bromden acted wrongly, too. Please don't misunderstand. We are happy to know that Mr. Bromden can be reached — but disappointed to learn he would conceal it from us, thereby refusing to cooperate in his own cure. And if Mr. Bromden can hear, isn't it logical to assume that he can also speak? I think Mr. Bromden should speak to us, don't you? His first contribution to Group Therapy. And how appropriate if those first words were an apology.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*A whimpered plea.*) Mac ...

NURSE RATCHED. An apology for the behavior that made yesterday's rebellion —

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*In terror.*) McMURPHY ...!

(*NURSE RATCHED snaps her fingers and WARREN comes across toward the trembling, retreating CHIEF BROMDEN. McMURPHY'S foot comes out — operating independently of his will — and WARREN trips over it and crashes to the floor.*)

NURSE RATCHED. (*A warning.*) Mr. McMURPHY —!

WARREN. (*Comes to his feet, catlike.*) Man, you beggin' for it! McMURPHY. (*Rising to block WARREN'S way.*) Let 'im alone. NURSE RATCHED. Mr. McMURPHY, I am warning you.

WARREN. (*Starts toward CHIEF BROMDEN once more and McMURPHY swings, a powerful but clumsy roundhouse right. NURSE RATCHED calmly signals to the Station. NURSE FLINN throws a switch that starts an alarm bell ringing. WARREN ducks lithely and sinks a fist in McMURPHY'S belly that doubles him over. Joyfully, dancing about.)* Come on, you bastard, I been waitin' for this. Come on, stan' up an' — Ugh! (*He is gripped from behind and lifted high off the floor in CHIEF BROMDEN'S hands. WARREN yells in terror.*)

(*BLACKOUT. The ALARM BELL sounds. The alarm bell continues, fading as: a tight pool of light reveals the electroshock table being readied by a TECHNICIAN who hums as he works. [This may be DR. SPIVEY if preferred.] McMURPHY, then BROMDEN, are pushed roughly into the area by the AIDES. Both are in straitjackets. McMURPHY begins to chuckle. CHIEF BROMDEN looks at him uncertainly.*)

McMURPHY. (*Laughing.*) Jesus, that look on Warren's face. That look when you threw the ol' bear hug on 'im. Aw, c'mon, Chief, why don't you laugh right out loud? You got to laugh — 'specially when things ain't funny. (*Laughs again, throws a shoulder block at the CHIEF, stands back and gets him to retaliate.*) That's the ticket! That's the way ya keep yourself in balance. Hey, y'know something? You're gettin' bigger. Look at that foot. The size of a flatcar! You keep growin' that way and pretty soon they'll have ta spring ya. And there'll be Big Chief Bromden, cuttin' down the boulevard, men, women and kids rockin' back on their heels to peer up at 'im! "Well, well, well, what giant's this here, takin' ten feet at a step and duckin' for telephone wires? Comes stompin' through town, stops just long enough for virgins, the rest o' you twitches

don't even bother limin' up!" *(His laugh rolls free, and the CHIEF joins him, this time more easily. NURSE RATCHED enters escorted by the AIDES.)*

NURSE RATCHED. *(Friendly.)* What's so amusing?

McMURPHY. I ain't sure you'd get the point.

NURSE RATCHED. Don't you boys feel sorry for what you did?

McMURPHY. I don't guess so, ma'am. So whatever you're goin' to do, get on with it.

NURSE RATCHED. We had a meeting, Randle. The Staff agreed it might be beneficial if you were to receive shock therapy.

But we won't — provided you are prepared to admit your mistakes.

McMURPHY. You got a paper I can sign?

NURSE RATCHED. A paper?

McMURPHY. Yeah, then you could add some other things. Like how I'm part of a plot to overthrow the government, and how I think life on your ward is the sweetest fuckin' thing this side of Hawaii.

NURSE RATCHED. Randle, we are trying to help you.

McMURPHY. Do I get my pants slit? You gonna shave my head? *(NURSE RATCHED turns from him, nods her head abruptly to the TECHNICIAN, and exits.)* Don't be scared, Chief. I'll go first. If they can't hurt me, they can't hurt you. *(CHIEF BROMDEN whispers as the AIDES grab McMURPHY and strap him to the table. The TECHNICIAN smears a compound on his temples.)* What's that?

TECHNICIAN. Conductant.

McMURPHY. Anointest my head with conductant! Do I get a crown of thorns?

CHIEF BROMDEN. *(Whimpering.)* Papa. Papa.

McMURPHY. Don't holler, Chief. Or if you got to holler, make it "Guts ball."

CHIEF BROMDEN. *(Trembling.)* Guts ball.

McMURPHY. Atta Injun! *(The TECHNICIAN sets the voltage and timer on his machine; clamps a pair of "ice tongs" on McMUR-*

PHY'S head.) Hoo boy, I do get a crown.

CHIEF BROMDEN. *(Trembling.)* Guts ball. Guts ball.

McMURPHY. *(Singing.)*

"Wire, brier, limberlock.

Three geese inna flock ... *(The TECHNICIAN jams a rubber mouthpiece between his teeth. Through the mouthpiece.)*

One flew Eath, one flew Wetht ..."

TECHNICIAN. Clear! *(The AIDES back off.)*

CHIEF BROMDEN. *(As the TECHNICIAN throws the switch.)*

GUTS BALL-L-L!

*(A blaze of white light. McMURPHY'S body snaps into a rigid arc.*

*SOUND: An electronic scream with voices within it shouting, "Air raid, air raid ... ! The LIGHTS DIM OUT. The sounds fade, cross-blending into.)*

CHILDREN'S VOICES. *(On tape, singsonging.)*

Intra, mintra, cute-ra corn,

Apple seed and apple thorn,

Wire, brier, limber lock,

Three geese in a flock.

One flew east,

One flew west

And one flew over the cuckoo's nest ... ! *(Their laughter rises; then fades.)*

*(LIGHTS TO FULL on the Day Room. HARDING, MARTINI, BILLY,*

*CHESWICK and SCANLON are there, and RUCKLY in his usual position. The MEN are mumbling intensely among themselves. They break off as NURSE RATCHED and DR. SPIVEY enter, moving briskly.)*

NURSE RATCHED. *(Without preamble.)* May I, Doctor? *(The*

DOCTOR waves consent.) Gentlemen, we have just come from the Treasurer's office, and we have here a memorandum of extreme interest. It concerns Patient Randle McMurphy.

SCANLON. (Truculently.) Yeah, where you got 'im? Up in Disturbed?

NURSE RATCHED. No, Mr. Scanlon, he is in the Recovery Room and will be back very shortly. (Silence, and she smiles around the room, holding up the memorandum.) This, gentlemen, is a record of Mr. McMurphy's gains in the short time he has been croupier of his little Monte Carlo here on the ward. How much did you lose, Billy? Mr. Harding? I think you all have some idea of what your personal losses were, but do you know what Mr. McMurphy's winnings come to? According to deposits he has made, over three hundred dollars. (BILLY whistles.) I just thought it would be better if there were no delusions about his motives.

HARDING. (Stirring.) Miss Ratched ... he never made any pretense about his motives.

CHESWICK. That's right!

SCANLON. Said he was out to take us and by God he done it!

CHESWICK. (Who can see the Ward entrance.) Mac!

(McMURPHY and BROMDEN are pushed into the room by the AIDES. Both stand slackbodied as though they'd been wiped out by the EST. Then McMURPHY snaps out of the shamming.)

McMURPHY. Stand back, you peckerheads, here comes the champ! Oi' McMurphy, the ten-thousand-watt psychopath! Howdy, buddies! Howdy, Doc! (With a bow.) Miss Rat-shit. (Takes BROMDEN and makes him stand on the rocking chair; jumps to the panel.) And here, ladeez and gennelmun, right here in front of your eyes, the Wild Man who dotes on high voltage and eats three aides for breakfast each and every morning! (He roars at the CHIEF who weakly echoes the roar. Not satisfied, McMURPHY roars back until the

CHIEF responds with a full-bodied roar.)

NURSE RATCHED. Mr. McMurphy. We are in the middle of a meeting.

McMURPHY. Oh, do continue. (Rubbing his hands, eagerly.) Who we tearin' up today?

NURSE RATCHED. Since you found it so enjoyable, perhaps a few more treatments ... ?

McMURPHY. Oh, please, ma'am. Look at the good a few measly volts have done! (Advancing, "dialing" her breasts.) I bet if we doubled the charge, I could pick up Channel Eight!

NURSE RATCHED. Doctor.

DR. SPIVEY. (Who is chortling.) Miss Ratched?

NURSE RATCHED. I'd like to withdraw that suggestion as to further shock.

McMURPHY. (Reproachfully.) Oh-h!

NURSE RATCHED. Yes ... I think it might be appropriate to consider ... surgical procedure?

McMURPHY. Ma'am?

NURSE RATCHED. An operation. Quite simple, really. We've had an excellent record in aggressive cases.

McMURPHY. Aggressive? Why, ma'am, I'm friendly as a pup. There's no cause to do any cuttin'.

NURSE RATCHED. (Smiling, friendly.) Randle, there's no cutting involved. We simply —

McMURPHY. Besides, it wouldn't do no good to lop 'em off. I got another pair at home. Big as baseballs!

DR. SPIVEY. Haw! (And the MEN laugh, too. DR. SPIVEY rises, to leave.)

NURSE RATCHED. One moment, Doctor. I should like to return to the subject.

DR. SPIVEY. What subject?

NURSE RATCHED. The question of surgical procedure for Patient McMurphy.



DR. SPIVEY. Not warranted except in cases of uncontrollable violence.

NURSE RATCHED. He has exhibited violence.

DR. SPIVEY. Shall we say there was a certain ... provocation? (*With unexpected firmness.*) No, Miss Ratched. Since you have brought up the matter in Group rather than Staff, I shall state my opinion. I do not approve surgical procedure in the absence of recurrent violence.

NURSE RATCHED. (*Tightly.*) And if it should recur?

DR. SPIVEY. Then ... we may reconsider. Mr. McMurphy — I would bear that in mind. (*Exits.*)

NURSE RATCHED. (*Smiling brightly.*) Behave yourself, boys. (*Exits, followed by the AIDES.*)

McMURPHY. (*Shouting after her.*) Do change your mind about those treatments, ma'am, I just adore your little battery charger! (*His face changes when she is gone. To HARDING:*) What was that stuff about "surgical procedure"?

HARDING. I guess she means lobotomy.

McMURPHY. What's that?

HARDING. Well, you might call it kind of ... castration of the brain.

McMURPHY. Okay, okay, what's it do to you?

HARDING. (*Gestures to McMURPHY to follow him, and crosses to stand before RUCKLY.*) They say he used to be a real rough character.

McMURPHY. (*Gazing at RUCKLY ... the slack body, empty eyes. Softly.*) Jee-zuss ...

HARDING. (*Impulsively.*) Mac, we've been talking it over, the boys and I. We think you ought to get out of here.

McMURPHY. (*His eyes still on RUCKLY.*) Get out of here?

CHESWICK. (*Eagerly.*) That's right, we figured out a way. Soon's it gets dark tonight, I set fire to my mattress. Then we make a holler and when the firemen come they're going to leave the door

open, aren't they? Then we rush you out!

McMURPHY. (*Turns to them, grinning.*) Boys, it's as good as a TV show, and I thank you. But if I went I'd miss the party.

CHESWICK. Party?

McMURPHY. You forgotten?

SCANLON. Holy cow!

McMURPHY. You wouldn't want me to miss Billy cashin' in his virginity?

HARDING. But, Mac —

McMURPHY. Don't worry, boys, tonight them windows will be open. So I can sashay right on out. We make it a goin'-away party, huh? (*Sees WARREN entering.*) Whoops, cool it.

WARREN. Supper time, gentlemen, move yo' feet. (*He goes to pull the "nails" from RUCKLY'S hands and the ACUTES follow him out.*)

McMURPHY. (*Catching BILLY'S attention.*) Pst. (*BILLY comes to him. Confidentially.*) You take your vitamins, Billy? 'Cause I'm warnin' you, that Candy girl ...!

BILLY. Aw, Mac ...

McMURPHY. Now, don't go bashful on me, I'm bettin' you burn that woman down!

BILLY. That's right ... that's what I'm gonna do ... (*Squirming pleasurably.*) I'm goin' to ... b-burn her down!

McMURPHY. Hey, you got any bread?

BILLY. How much?

McMURPHY. "Bout fifty bucks?

BILLY. Fifty —! (*Resentfully.*) What for?

McMURPHY. Candy's layin' out for liquor. And there's old Turkle to take care of, and ... why the hell you lookin' down your nose like that?

BILLY. Something Miss R-Ratched said.

McMURPHY. What'd she say?

BILLY. How you were always coming out ahead. Always winning things. (*Turns from McMURPHY and exits.*)

McMURPHY. Winning. *(His eyes close, his body sags and his hands come up to where the electrodes were ... his face abruptly haggard and defenseless.)* Hoo boy. *Winning. (He exits, feet dragging.)*

*(LIGHTS DIM to Night Lighting. AIDE TURKLE enters the deserted room from the outer corridor. After making sure that he's alone he sits, lights up a marijuana joint and takes a deep drag. CHESWICK comes creeping out of the dorm.)*

CHESWICK. Ssssssssst!

TURKLE. *(Startled, turns his flashlight on CHESWICK'S face.)* Lord he'p me, I thought you as a snake!

CHESWICK. *(An excited whisper.)* She showed up yet?

TURKLE. She who?

CHESWICK. Candy!

TURKLE. *(Blandly.)* I don't know nothin' 'bout no candy.

CHESWICK. *(Dismayed.)* Mac said he made a deal with you.

TURKLE. I ain't got the slightest inclination what you talkin' 'bout.

CHESWICK. Don't go away! *(Disappears back into the dormitory.)*

TURKLE. *(Exhaling smoke.)* I ain't goin' nowhere.

*(McMURPHY emerges with CHESWICK at his shoulder.)*

McMURPHY. Turkey, ol' boy! What's the beef?

TURKLE. Ain't no beef.

McMURPHY. So?

TURKLE. Ain't no money changed hands, neither.

McMURPHY. *(Digs in his pocket for a wad of bills.)* There y'are. Begged, borrowed and stole.

TURKLE. *(Taking it, mournfully.)* You know they fin' out 'bout this they fire my ass.

McMURPHY. She's bringin' liquor, Turkey.

TURKLE. *(Brightening.)* Yeah?

McMURPHY. Bottle of Scotch and one of vodka. Which d'you want?

TURKLE. *(Deliberating.)* Sorta like 'em both.

McMURPHY. Hey, what're we supposed to drink?

TURKLE. *(Morally.)* You ain't supposed to drink at all.

McMURPHY. *(To CHESWICK, who is at the window.)* Any sign?

CHESWICK. Nary sign.

McMURPHY. *(Slaps his forehead.)* Hoo boy, am I stupid! How they gonna find the right window in the dark? *(To TURKLE.)* Turn on the lights.

TURKLE. Hey, now, tha's dangerous. Miz Ratched, she see the ward lit up —

McMURPHY. Come on, Turkey, she's asleep,

TURKLE. *(Grumbling as he finds the key.)* That ol' shiitpoke never sleep.

*(The LIGHTS GO ON and HARDING and the OTHER ACUTES come piling out of the dormitory.)*

MARTINI. *(Racing in.)* Hey, where's the party?

McMURPHY. *(Indicating the latrine.)* In there.

MARTINI. *(Joyously.)* Oh, boy! *(He races into the latrine.)*

McMURPHY. *(To TURKLE.)* Gimme the window key.

TURKLE. I ain't s'pose to let these keys off n —

McMURPHY. Gimme.

TURKLE. *(Muttering as he moves it from the ring.)* Tha' better be good liquor.

McMURPHY. *(Tossing the key to HARDING.)* Open the window, huh?

HARDING. *(At the window.)* Ssssssss! She walks in beauty!

McMURPHY. Well, let 'er in! Let this mad stud at her!

BILLY. (As HARDING unlocks the screen.) Look, McM-M-Murphy, wait —

McMURPHY. Don't you mama-murphy me, Billy Boy, it's too late to back out now.

(Candy is climbing through the widow, helped by HARDING and SCANLON, impeded by the bottles she carries in each hand. She's quite tipsy.)

CANDY. (Charging at McMURPHY.) You damned McMURPHY! (See flings her arms around him to kiss him, and TURKLE adroitly snatches the bottle of Scotch.) Hey, what the hell —!

McMURPHY. That's okay, baby. (Inspecting the half-empty bottle of vodka.) What happened to this one?

CANDY. (Giggling, patting her stomach.) We got the rest of it right here.

McMURPHY. We?

CANDY. Oh, lordy, I forgot, Sandra's out there!

SANDRA. (Is struggling through the window with HARDING'S help, showing a lot of leg.) Hiya, Mac.

McMURPHY. Sandy, baby! (Kisses her. SANDRA is a big, earthy wench. Like CANDY, she is drunk.) What'd you do with your husband?

SANDRA. (As HARDING closes the screen and pockets the key.) That creep!

CANDY. (Giggling.) She up and left him. Ain't that a hoot?

SANDRA. Lissen, you can take just so many funsies like ants in your panties and frogs down your bra. Cheesus, what a creep!

CANDY. (With warmth.) Hello, Billy!

BILLY. (Bashfully.) Hello, C-C-C-C —

CANDY. Never mind. (She kisses him, then pulls him to a chair and sits on his lap.)

SANDRA. (Suddenly.) Ouch!

McMURPHY. Ya okay, baby?

SANDRA. (Darkly, eyeing SCANLON.) Somebody pinched my ass.

McMURPHY. I gotta find somethin' for us to drink! Cheswick, get me somethin' to mix it in. (Takes the keys and opens the Nurses' Station. MARTINI and SCANLON follow. SANDRA goes circling, looking over the MEN.)

SANDRA. Whoeee, Candy girl, is this for real? I mean, are we in an asylum? (To HARDING:) Tell the truth, are you really nuts?

HARDING. Absolutely, madam. We are psychoceramics, the cracked pots of humanity. Would you like me to decipher a Rorschach?

(CHESWICK rolls in a stand with an enema bag with tube attached.)

CHESWICK. Cocktail shaker!

McMURPHY. (On microphone.) Medication! (Comes out of Station with jugs and bottles of medicine.)

HARDING. (Reading the label on a bottle of colored liquid.) Artificial coloring, citric acid. Sixty percent inert materials.

McMURPHY. (Pointing out a line.) Twenty-two percent alcohol. (Is pouring liquids into the bag.)

HARDING. (Reading the next label.) Ten percent codeine. Warning: May Be Habit Forming.

McMURPHY. (Seizing it.) Nothin' like a good bad habit.

HARDING. (Next bottle.) Tincture of nux vomica.

McMURPHY. (Emptying it in.) That'll give it body.

CHESWICK. (Returning from the Station.) Here's some cups.

McMURPHY. (Shakes up the cocktail with professional dexterity. Tastes it. Clicks his teeth together loudly.) If we cut it a leetle bit ... (Pours the remaining vodka into the "shaker" and squeezes it.)

SANDRA. (Giggling) Jeez, what a blast. Is this really happen-  
ing?

HARDING. No ma'am. The whole thing is collaboration between Franz Kafka and Mark Twain.

McMURPHY. (*Pouring.*) Bar's open.

HARDING. (*Tasting.*) Interesting ...

CANDY. (*Taking a sip.*) Tastes like cough medicine.

SANDRA. (*Getting to her feet.*) 'Scuse me, I gotta tinkle. (*She goes, weaving.*)

HARDING. You know this stuff gives one the feeling of — of —

McMURPHY. (*Griming.*) No more rabbits?

HARDING. Old friend, you have taught me that mental illness can have the aspect of power. Perhaps the more insane a man is, the more powerful he can become.

SCANLON. Sure — Hitler!

(*There is a scream and SANDRA comes running from the dormitory with RUCKLY in pursuit.*)

RUCKLY. F-f-fuck 'em all!

SANDRA. This damn place is dangerous!

CHESWICK. (*Leads her to the latrine.*) Wrong way, lady.

(*MARTINI is in the Station, fiddling with the tape machine. Now it comes on: MUSIC.*)

CANDY. C'mon, Billy! (*Pulls him to his feet and they dance, cheek to cheek. The MEN fall back for them as they hold each other closely, moving slowly.*)

McMURPHY. (*Dangling TURKLE'S keys.*) How about the Seclusion Room?

CHESWICK. (*Happy.*) Sure, the place is one big mattress!

HARDING. One moment! Shall we send them off without benefit of ceremony. Come, children — here, before me. (*Mounis a chair as BILLY and CANDY link hands before him and the GROUP forms*

*up in rough semblance of a wedding.*) Mac, would you bring Ruckly? We need a centerpiece. (*McMURPHY brings RUCKLY, arranges him in a crucifixion pose.*) Dearly beloved. We are gathered in the sight of Freud to celebrate the end of innocence and to cheer on its demise. Who stands sponsor for the benedict?

McMURPHY. (*Moving to BILLY'S side.*) R. P. McMurphy.

HARDING. And for the bride?

SANDRA. (*Coming to CANDY'S side.*) Me!

HARDING. Very well, then. Do you, Candy Starr, take this man to love and cherish for such brief time as rules and regulations may allow?

CANDY. I do.

HARDING. Do you, Billy Bibbit, take this woman to have and hold until the night shift changes and our revels end?

BILLY. I duh-duh-duh — I duh —

McMURPHY. He does.

HARDING. Most merciful God, we ask that You accept these two into your kingdom with Your well-known compassion. And keep the door ajar for all the rest of us ... for this may be our final fling and we are doomed, henceforth, to the terrible burden of sanity. As comes the dawn we shall most assuredly be lined up against the wall and fired upon with bullets of Paxil! Prozak! Thorazine! Go, my children — sin while ye may, for tomorrow we shall be tranquilized.

(*CANDY and BILLY kiss. They exit to singing of the Wedding march, under an arch formed by CHESWICK and SCANLON'S arms.*)

McMURPHY. (*Putting down RUCKLY'S arms.*) Mr. Ruckly, you did a fine job. (*SANDRA sits on the floor, sniffing.*) Sandra, baby!

SANDRA. Well, it was so damn beautiful. (*McMURPHY hugs her.*)

HARDING. (*With a sigh.*) Mac, we're sure going to miss you.

McMURPHY. So why don't you all come along?

HARDING. Oh, I'll be going soon. But I've got to do it my own way. Sign the papers. Call my wife and say, "Pick me up at a certain time." You understand?

McMURPHY. Sure, but ... what is it with you guys?

HARDING. You mean what drove us here in the first place? Oh, I don't know ... a lot of theories ... but I do know what drives people like you — strong people — crazy.

McMURPHY. Okay, what?

HARDING. People like us.

McMURPHY. (*Uncertainly.*) Bull.

HARDING. Oh, yes, my friend.

McMURPHY. Hey, what's happening to the party? Drink up, you mother-lovin' loonies, this is Big Mac tendin' bar, and when he pours let no man — ! (*CHIEF BROMDEN, having taken several belts from the bottle, lets out a wild whoop, startling EVERYONE.*) Chief, was that you?

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*Equally startled.*) I guess so.

McMURPHY. What ya doin', declarin' war?

CHIEF BROMDEN. My tribe never made war on nobody.

TURKLE. That was a sorry damn tribe. (*TURKLE flinches as CHIEF BROMDEN looms over him.*)

CHIEF BROMDEN. Maybe that was our mistake. We should of! (*He whoops again, pleased with the sound, then goes into a shuffling war dance, accompanying himself with chanted Indian gutturals. The OTHERS fall delightedly into the line and it becomes a snake-dance, weaving its noisy way around the room.*)

(*NURSE RATCHED enters from the corridor and stands frozen in incredulity. She is there some moments before anyone becomes aware.*)

McMURPHY. Hiya, kid. We got room for one more.

(*NURSE RATCHED flees. HARDING drops out of the dance.*)

HARDING. (*Yelling.*) Stop! Quiet! Shut up, everybody. (*With delayed horror.*) Was that ... did I see ... ?

McMURPHY. (*Aggrieved.*) I assed her to stay.

HARDING. Oh, God, she went to get help. (*Hurrying to the window.*) Mac, you've got to get out of here.

McMURPHY. (*Cheerfully tipsy.*) Okay, soon's I say g-bye to my buddies.

HARDING. (*Swinging open the grille.*) In a hurry.

TURKLE. I don't know 'bout him — but I am goin' to drag ass! (*Climbs onto the sill, tumbles out of sight.*)

HARDING. Sandy!

SANDY. You coming, Mac?

McMURPHY. (*Shaking hands with the MEN.*) Best damned buddies I every had!

HARDING. (*As SANDRA climbs through the window.*) Don't hang around ... !

McMURPHY. (*To BROMDEN.*) You gonna be all right? 'Cause if you ain't I'll hear about it, and I'll come bustin' back into this place ... !

HARDING. (*Crossing to him.*) Come on, Mac.

McMURPHY. Okay, all right.

(*WARREN and WILLIAMS, not quite fully dressed, come in fast. NURSE RATCHED is close behind.*)

NURSE RATCHED. (*Snapping it.*) Stand still, everyone. Just remain right where you are. (*Switches on full lights. The MEN blink confusedly.*) Warren. Room check. (*WARREN races off.*) Williams — get this place in order. (*Strolling about, easily.*) So, we've had a party. Thrown, no doubt, by Mr. McMURPHY? (*To McMURPHY.*) I wonder ... was there some sort of profit in it?

McMURPHY. (*Scornfully.*) Oh, very smart. Tryin' to bug me till I blow. Well, shove it, lady, 'cause I'm hip ...

(WARREN pushes BILLY and CANDY onstage. They are disheveled and confused, covering their eyes against the light. McMURPHY stops dead at the window.)

NURSE RATCHED. Where were they?

WARREN. (*Grimacing.*) Seclusion Room. On the floor.

NURSE RATCHED. William — Bibbit. Oh, Billy, I'm so ashamed!

BILLY. (*Considers.*) I'm not.

McMURPHY. Thassit, Billy —!

(*The OTHERS erupt into cheers.*)

NURSE RATCHED. You be silent! Oh, Billy ... a woman like this.

BILLY. Like what?

NURSE RATCHED. A cheap — low — painted —

BILLY. She is not! She's good, and sweet, and —!

ALL. Attaboy, Billy!

NURSE RATCHED. (*Dragging CANDY forward.*) Look at her.

CANDY. (*Fleeing to McMURPHY.*) Mac —!

BILLY. (*Simultaneously.*) You leave her alone!

NURSE RATCHED. Billy, have you thought how your poor mother is going to take this? She's always been so proud of your decency. You know what this is going to do to her. You know, don't you?

BILLY. No. No. You don't nuh-need —

NURSE RATCHED. Don't need to tell her? How could I not?

BILLY. (*Beginning to crumble.*) Duh-duh-don't tell her, Miss Ratched. Duh-duh —

NURSE RATCHED. Billy, dear, I have to. I have to tell her that you were found on the floor of the Seclusion Room ... with this ... prostitute. That you and she —

BILLY. No! I d-d-didn't! I mean, she m-made me do it! NURSE RATCHED. I can't believe she pulled you in there forcibly.

BILLY. (*Wildly.*) It was the others. They m-made fun of me. Thuh-they —

NURSE RATCHED. Who, Billy?

BILLY. Thuh-thuh — they teased me. They c-c-called me names.

NURSE RATCHED. Who, Billy?

BILLY. (*Clutching her knees; sobbing.*) McMuh-Murphy. It was McMURPHY.

McMURPHY. (*In dismay.*) Billy ...

NURSE RATCHED. All right, Billy. No one will hurt you. I want you to go to Dr. Spivey's office. Wait for him there, you'll be needing attention.

BILLY. Miss Ratched, you're not going to tell my mother?

NURSE RATCHED. It's all right, Billy, it's going to be all right.

BILLY. (*Catching McMURPHY'S eye.*) McMURPHY ...! (*Breaks and runs out of the ward. WARREN follows.*)

NURSE RATCHED. (*To CANDY; hard.*) And you, miss, if you're not out of here within ten seconds I will have you jailed as a common prostitute.

CANDY. You coming, Mac? (*She flees through the window.*)

NURSE RATCHED. (*To McMURPHY.*) Aren't you? There's no reason to stay, you've already plundered these poor, sick people of everything they had. So run, Mr. McMURPHY. Get out while the getting's good. Save your own skin, Mr. McMURPHY, there's no more profit to be made out of these helpless, mentally ill —

WARREN. (*Off, yelling frantically.*) Nurse Ratched! Oh, my God, Nurse Ratched ...! (*NURSE RATCHED hurries out, followed by WILLIAMS.*)

HARDING. (*After a silence.*) Nobody's blaming you, Mac.

SCANLON. (*Unconvincingly.*) That's right. Nobody's blamin' you. *(McMURPHY looks at them one by one, and their eyes won't meet his. He sits, slowly, waiting for what is to come. NURSE RATCHED enters, the AIDES following. She crosses directly to McMURPHY.)*

NURSE RATCHED. He cut his throat. *(McMURPHY does not look up.)* He went into the Doctor's desk and he found an instrument and he cut his throat. That poor boy has killed himself. He is in there now, in the Doctor's chair, with his throat cut. *(McMURPHY doesn't move or answer.)* I hope you're satisfied. Playing with human lives. Gambling with human lives as though you were God. Are you God, Mr. McMurphy? Somehow I don't think you are God.

*(McMURPHY sighs deeply and heaves himself to his feet.)*

HARDING. *(Blocking him.)* No, Mac, it's what she wants.

McMURPHY. *Don'tcha think I know it!*

NURSE RATCHED. *(Signaling the AIDES not to interfere; smiling as McMURPHY walks toward her.)* Come on, Mr. McMurphy. Mr. Big ... Strong ... Masculine ...

*(He reaches out and rips her uniform open down the front. Her knee comes up viciously, and McMURPHY barely eludes it. NURSE RATCHED screams, the scream cut off as his hands lock about her throat. The cry is caught up and continued in CHIEF BROMDEN'S throat as he spins away. A single light stabs down at him as all other lights BLACK OUT. There is a hissing sound, then the thudding of the Black Machine with electronic counterpoint.)*

CHIEF BROMDEN. Papa, they got to me again. They got the

wires on me and they're givin' orders. Go right. Go left. Do this. Do that. Sign the papers twenty times and don't step on the grass. Where can I run? How can I get away? Papa, there's no place to hide no more. No place to hide!

*(LIGHTS COME UP on the Day Room. It is post-supper. CHIEF BROMDEN is hunched in catatonic stance. HARDING is at the card table dealing blackjack to CHESWICK, SCANLON and MARTINI.)*

HARDING. *(Imitating McMURPHY'S style.)* Hey-a, hey-a, come on, suckers, the game is twenty-one, you hit or you sit. What do you do, Scanlon?

SCANLON. I wasn't payin' any mind.

HARDING. Well, pay some mind.

SCANLON. *(Getting up restlessly.)* Gosh, if we only knew. Where they got him. What they're doin'. Damn near a whole week now.

CHESWICK. Hey, you know what a guy down at the dining room told me? He says McMurphy knocked out two aides and took their keys away and escaped!

SCANLON. *(Hopefully.)* That sounds like Mac.

HARDING. What ward was your informant from?

CHESWICK. Disturbed.

MARTINI. Somebody told me they'd caught him and sent him back to the Work Farm.

HARDING. Who?

MARTINI. *(Looking around.)* Somebody ...!

HARDING. *(Wearily.)* And a loony down in Occupational Therapy told me that McMurphy had sprouted wings and was last seen soaring in circles overhead, defecating on the hospital.

MARTINI. *(Open-mouthed.)* Honest? *(HARDING throws up his hands in disgust.)*

(WARREN enters, harbinger for NURSE RATCHED, who is close behind. NURSE RATCHED wears a cervical collar. Her manner has changed; wrier, and her eyes are nervous. WILLIAMS appears in the doorway, waiting.)

NURSE RATCHED. (Her voice husky.) Isn't it past your bedtime?

CHESWICK. (Advancing.) Miss Ratched — (NURSE RATCHED takes a step backward.) — what we want to know —

HARDING. Is McMurphy coming back? I think we have a right ...

NURSE RATCHED. I agree, Mr. Harding. He will be back. (There is hostile skepticism.) Don't you believe me?

HARDING. (Deliberately.) Lady, we think you are full of bull.

NURSE RATCHED. (A pause; calmly.) I assure you, McMurphy will be back. Now I think it's time you were in bed? (She faces them steadily; and the MEN file silently into the dormitory. Only CHIEF BROMDEN, unnoticed and unmoving, remains. To WARREN:) Bring him in. (WARREN and WILLIAMS wheel in a gurney bed upon which McMURPHY lies covered by a blanket. He is immobile but for minor twitching. There are great purplish bruises about his eyes, and a thin line of spittle runs from his mouth. Following NURSE RATCHED'S signals, the AIDES position the bed.) That's fine, boys. (The AIDES exit silently on their rubber shoes. NURSE RATCHED feels McMURPHY'S pulse, straightens the blanket. Softly, looking down at him:) That's just fine. (She exits.)

(CHIEF BROMDEN emerges from the shadows and studies the figure. From the dormitory CHESWICK enters, then SCANLON and MARTINI. CHESWICK, at the foot of the gurney, lifts the chart that hangs there and holds it to the light.)

SCANLON. What's it say?

CHESWICK. McMurphy, Randle Patrick. Post operative. Pre-

frontal lobotomy.

SCANLON. So they done it.

CHESWICK. That ain't McMurphy.

SCANLON. (Surprised.) No?

CHESWICK. Some dummy they rigged up.

SCANLON. Think so?

CHESWICK. Factory made.

MARTINI. I bet he's right.

SCANLON. (Dubiously.) They done a pretty fair job, though. See? Even the busted nose.

CHESWICK. They can do noses.

MARTINI. Look, its eyes is open!

CHESWICK. All smoked up.

SCANLON. Nobody inside.

CHESWICK. How stupid does that ol' bitch think we are?

MARTINI. (Wisfully, as the MEN turn away.) Gee, I wish McMurphy would come back.

CHESWICK. (Brightly.) Hey, remember the time he pinched Miss Ratched on the ass and said he was just trying to stay in touch?

SCANLON. An' them things he'd write in the Log Book. "Madam, d'you wear a B cup or a C cup or any ol' cup at all?"

CHESWICK. D'you remember the time that little nurse —

SCANLON. The one that wears a cross!

CHESWICK. — she dropped a pill down the front of her uniform and McMurphy tries to help her get it out, and she hollers —

SCANLON. (Falsetto.) "Don't touch me, I'm a Catholic!" (Whooping with laughter, they exit into the dormitory.)

(CHIEF BROMDEN moves at last, approaching the gurney. He gazes down at McMURPHY a long time. Then he slides the pillow from under McMURPHY'S head and presses it down on his face. McMURPHY'S body jerks and thrashes, fighting with indomitable vitality. BROMDEN is crying now. The tears roll



down his cheeks, but he keeps the pressure on the pillow until the body subsides ... at last gives up resistance. Now it is quiet, unative. HARDING, in pajamas and robe, enters from the dormitory. He has been awakened and is angry.)

HARDING. *What in hell is going on? They come in cackling like a pack of geese ... how is a man ever going to get any sleep if ... (He becomes aware of what is happening.)* Chief. *(Horrified.)* Chief! *(He flings himself on BROMDEN.)* Chief, let go. Let go. *(Pulls with all his strength. CHIEF BROMDEN stumbles back. HARDING flings aside the pillow. Feels for pulse in McMURPHY'S neck. In soft horror.)* Oh, Christ Jesus ... *(The CHIEF begins to sob, his body shaking. HARDING turns from him and races to the window.)* I've still got the key! *(He unlocks the grille, swings it open.)* All right, Chief, get going. *(No response.)* Chief, do you hear me? *(BROMDEN doesn't respond. With increasing desperation.)* If you're gone they can't prove anything. Anybody can die, post-operative. Happens all the time. *(Still no response.)* We won't tell. But the Big Nurse ... she'll look at you. She'll ask questions. And you'll talk.

CHIEF BROMDEN. *(It penetrates.)* What should I do?

HARDING. Beat it!

CHIEF BROMDEN. Out there?

HARDING. Flag a ride on the highway. Head north, Canada.

We'll say he was alive after you busted out.

CHIEF BROMDEN. I'm afraid.

HARDING. *(Despairing.)* Chief ...!

CHIEF BROMDEN. I can't do it, I'm not big enough

HARDING. You're as big as you're going to get.

CHIEF BROMDEN. No. No. McMurphy said ... he says ... *(His eyes go to the panel at the foot of the station and he moves towards it.)*

HARDING. *(A wail.)* Chief, what are you doing?

CHIEF BROMDEN. McMurphy said ... *(He knocks HARDING*

aside. *Heaves on the panel. Nothing. He takes a deep breath, tries again. There comes a cracking sound, a ripping and screeching as the panel breaks loose. High-voltage cables snap: there are brilliant blue-white bursts of light and the snarling sound of short-circuits. The nightlights and the lights in the Station go out. The harsh Emergency lights come on. In the distance an alarm bell sets up a clamor.)*

HARDING. Oh, Christ, they'll come down with an army!

CHIEF BROMDEN. I done it. *(Exulting.)* I done it, Harding!

HARDING. Okay, Chief, go. *(He grips the CHIEF'S hand.)* You're going to make it out there.

CHIEF BROMDEN. Yeah ... *(He smiles at the world outside.)* I been away a long time. *(He slides lightly through the window, and is gone. HARDING closes the grille, drops the key outside. He comes down. Picks up the pillow and restores it to cushion McMURPHY'S head. He straightens the disarranged sheet and blanket. Satisfied, he throws a little salute to McMURPHY'S body, and exits into the dormitory.)*

*(The LIGHTS DIM. Last of all the single shaft on McMURPHY'S body DIMS OUT, and the bell stops its clamor as ...*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

THE END