Story

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Story

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Abstract

"Say man! What’s dee haps man?” Dat ol’ forst-sergeant’s on mah tail again...
“SAY man! What’s dee haps man?”

Dat ol’ first-sergeant’s on mah tail again. Dat man’s all dee time on mah tail. Ah think he’s layin’ fo’ me.”

“What he do now, man?”

‘Dat mudda, he say, ‘Jackson, you bring dat mop an’ clean up dis heah hall.’ Ah say, ‘No, man. Ah ain’t gonna clean up no hall,’ an, he say, ‘Boy, you bettah start some scrubbin’.”

“An’ what you say den, man?”

“Ah tell him Ah go awol first. Dat mudda ain’t gonna make me scrub no floor. He say, ‘All you do all week, Jackson, is lay in you’ ‘bunk an’ sleep.’ Ah say, ‘No, man. Ah sure don’t stay in da sack all dee time. When dat chow whistle blow Ah’s da first in dee line.’

“You gonna scrub dat floor, man?”

“No, I ain’t gonna scrub no floor! What you think Ah am? If dat mudda want me he bettah come in town an’ hunt fo’ me, man.”

“You goin’ awol, man?”

“Hell, yes. Ah’m goin’ in an’ shack-up fo’ da weekend. Ah ain’t scrubbin’, no floor an’ dat’s a fact.”

“If dat mudda find out you gone he gonna put you in dee stockade, man.”

“Ah been in da stockade before. Ah like it in da stockade, man. Ain’t nuthin’ ta do all day ’cept sit around in dee sun. Man, dat ol’ stockade ain’t so bad. Ah been in seven, eight times already. Dey gotta place all saved fo’ me.”

“Don’t dey make you work none in da stockade, man?”

“Sometimes dem muddas make you go out an’ pick up paper but Ah always just go out an’ lay in dee sun. Pretty soon da guard get mad an’ say Ah bettah get to work or else. Ah say ‘Or else what, man?’ an’ he know he can’t do nuthin’ to me so Ah goes back to sleep.”

“Is dat all you gotta do in dee stockade, man?”

“Dat’s all, man. If Ah’m lyin’, Ah’m flyin’.”

“Say, you gonna want someone to go on into town with you, man?”

—Gary A. Braga, T. Jl., Sr.