

Episode 7

MAN OVERBOARD!

SELECTION OF ANCHORAGE at Yokasuka harbor rather than Yokahama or Tokyo was for both practical and recreational reasons. Yokasuka had a huge complex shipyard and drydock facility as well as a beautiful Japanese Navy officers' club. The massive air strikes on Japan carefully avoided bombing these facilities.

~~My duties as Flag Secretary and Admiral's Aid were not~~ strenuous, and I was coasting along nicely until one day the Admiral decided to throw a big party for all the top Navy brass in the harbor which was now filled with naval warships of various types. He had been ashore to visit the Japanese Navy officers' club and decided this would be the ideal place for the bash.

I was called to his quarters and he outlined what he wanted as to hors d'oeuvres, main course and desert and told me to go ashore and make arrangements with the commissary to schedule the date and to prepare the food. The Admiral would provide the liquor from his private stock.

So off I went with my Titles and my Powers to negotiate with the Commissary Officer. He was most obliging, took me through the officers' club and showed me the dining quarters where the party would be held. The building was a beautiful one-story wooden structure with the interior tastefully furnished with traditional carved furniture and decorated with beautiful art objects and paintings. The tiled wash room had the traditional squat toilets in porcelain.

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In early evening of the day of the party, the Admiral and Captain took off for shore in the Captain's Gig, now serving as the Admiral's Barge. I was in charge of the six steward's mates under a Chief Steward's Mate--all black or Filipino--who would be serving the food and drinks. We loaded the liquor aboard a small boat and took off for shore.

The tables had been set and the food was already prepared in the kitchen and ready to be served. Drinks all around first. Everything was going as smooth as clockwork. After several rounds, the food was served, followed by afterdinner drinks.

Then, time to head back to the ship.

Suddenly I realized I had a problem. A big problem. My steward's mates had been nipping all this time and I hadn't noticed it. They were all gloriously drunk. Our transportation had disappeared. The men were wandering about. Finally we all straggled down to the dock and found that our small boat had gone back already. We were stranded ashore.

Tied up at another dock was a huge submarine tender and we all headed for it.

As we started down the long dock ^{toward} ~~and headed for~~ the ship I saw one steward's mate pull out a bottle he had under his jacket and take a big swig. . . . Then I made a big mistake. I grabbed the bottle and threw it over the dock into the water. As the bottle arched in the air, the steward's mate jumped and arched after it, splashing into the water. It was Fall and the water was cold. We fished him out and he stood there shivering, his teeth chattering.

We headed down the dock to the submarine tender. I attempted to get the man aboard to dry off but was refused. I pleaded. It did no good. I tried to get the Officer-of-the Deck to send a blinker message to our ship and he said he couldn't find it in the dark. My Titles and my Powers weren't worth a damn in this case. I received only one concession--a Navy blanket to wrap around the shivering man.

We stood around until daylight, when a small boat came in to pick us up. Back aboard I checked the steward's mates into their quarters, then sacked out.

Later that afternoon the Captain called me to his quarters. Here it comes, I thought. A reprimand and a big black mark on my record.

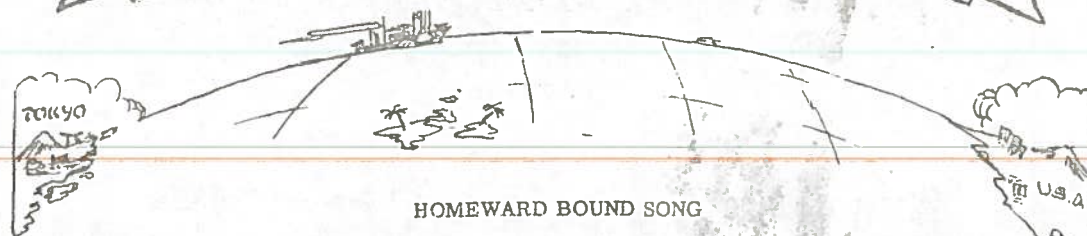
The Captain looked me in the eyes and said, "That was a fine party you organized, Mr. Phillips. The food and the service was excellent and everyone had a fine time. There's just one bit of advice for the future. Next time you should supervise the liquor so no one gets to it until after the party is over and you are back on the small boat."

End of lesson.

(Final episode.)

Appendix A: Homeward Bound Song. Printed on the back of the Thanksgiving Menu, 1945. Lyrics by J.K. Phillips.

HOMeward BOUND



HOMeward BOUND SONG

The battles are over, the Nips are undone;
We entered the Bay without firing a gun,
With a song in our hearts--for we knew we had won
We men of the Cumberland Sound
Brave men of the Cumberland Sound

They tell us the 'A' bomb decided the war;
But the facts have been often distorted before--
Oh it's rumors like this we have learned to ignore
We men of the Cumberland Sound
Stout men of the Cumberland Sound

For we know every move that the Cucumber made
Was followed with fear by the Nipponese braid--
His Imperial Highness himself was afraid
Of the men of the Cumberland Sound
Fierce men of the Cumberland Sound

We fought every battle that counted at all;
We gave the Jap bustards a mighty hard fall--
If it's hand-to-hand tussles, just give us a call
Us men of the Cumberland Sound
Tough men of the Cumberland Sound

So it's proof you demand--see this saber and gun?
These weapons were torn from the mighty Shogun
In tough barter-battles--and always we won
We men of the Cumberland Sound
Sharp men of the Cumberland Sound

Of all the engagements the one that stands out
Is the battle of Mogmog, a terrible bout
Which lasted for months, with the end oft in doubt
For the men of the Cumberland Sound
Bloody men of the Cumberland Sound

But now that it's over we all can be glad
For the blessings of life and the future ahead;
Ours the fate to be neither heroic nor dead
We men of the Cumberland Sound
Plain men of the Cumberland Sound

Oh hoist in the boats, pipe the skipper aboard;
The homeward bound pennant is there at the yard,
And we're ready for sailing in every regard
We men of the Cumberland Sound
Good men of the Cumberland Sound

-Lyrics by J.K. Phillips-