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*Dramatic Publishing*

# M\*A\*S\*H

**MOBILE ARMY SURGICAL HOSPITAL**



**A ONE-ACT COMEDY ADAPTED BY**

**TIM KELLY**

**BASED ON THE BOOK BY**

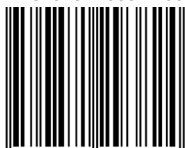
**RICHARD HOOKER**

# M\*A\*S\*H

## MOBILE ARMY SURGICAL HOSPITAL

*Comedy. Adapted by Tim Kelly. From the book by Richard Hooker. Cast: 11m., 11w.* The playwright of the full-length hit has done his own one-act cutting of the comic misadventures of the *Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (M\*A\*S\*H)*. This is a wild, free-flowing comedy that's easy to stage. Joining *M\*A\*S\*H* are two unpredictable madcaps, Hawkeye and Duke. They can't be dealt with casually, however, because they are also two of the best chest surgeons in South Korea. They decide to wage a campaign to get a young Korean to the United States and entered in a good school. The thread of this effort helps tie together the pileup of comic adventures that pyramid right before the eyes of an astonished and hysterical audience! *Production notes are available in the script containing details on costumes, setting, staging and props. Area staging. Approximate running time: 60 minutes. Code: M46.*

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M\*A\*S\*H (1-act)



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# M\*A\*S\*H

**A one-act cutting by  
TIM KELLY,  
the author of the full-length play**

**Based on the book  
by  
RICHARD HOOKER**



**Dramatic Publishing**  
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(M\*A\*S\*H)

ISBN 0-87129-382-X

# M\*A\*S\*H

A one-act comedy  
For 11 men and 11 women,  
(doubling possible; extras if desired)

## CHARACTERS

CAPT. BRIDGET McCARTHY ..... an efficient nurse  
LT. JANICE FURY ..... young, attractive  
SGT. DEVINE ..... slovenly cook, con artist  
LT. LOUISE KIMBLE ..... another nurse  
CAPT. FRANK BURNS ..... a stickler for the rulebook  
CAPT. WALTER "WALT" WALDOWSKI ..... a dentist  
CAPT. JOHN McINTYRE ..... known as "Trapper John"  
CAPT. JOHN BLACK ..... known as "Ugly" because he's  
quite good looking  
CPL. "RADAR" REILLY ..... "hears" things before they  
happen  
CAPT. PIERCE ..... known as "Hawkeye," a brilliant young  
surgeon, but wild  
CAPT. FORREST ..... known as "Duke," a skilled surgeon  
but unconventional  
HO-JON ..... a 15-year-old Korean boy  
COL. HENRY BLAKE ..... the M\*A\*S\*H commandant,  
a no-nonsense personality  
PFC. SUE TODD ..... his WAC secretary  
LT. NANCY PHILLIPS ..... another young nurse  
MAJ. MARGARET HOULIHAN ..... the chief nurse  
CONGRESSWOMAN GOLDFARB ..... a V.I.P.  
MITZI, FRITZI, AGNES ..... the worst dance act in Korea  
MAJ. RUTH HASKELL ..... a psychiatrist  
CAPT. OLIVER WENDELL JONES ..... known as  
"Spearchucker," a neurosurgeon and football star

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### SETTING

It depicts various areas in the compound of a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH); namely—nurses' tent, doctors' tent, and a mess tent.

The nurses' tent is stage R and it consists of two or three cots, footlockers optional. Two cots would probably work better for space requirements.

The doctors' tent ("The Swamp"), stage C, has three or four cots, maybe two of these could be a "bunk bed." One footlocker is essential as a "card table." Other lockers are optional.

The mess tent, stage L, has a counter of some sort, at least one table and bench, and a second table if space permits (optional).

Canvas backing is really all that's necessary to "suggest" the tents.

Downstage, in front of "The Swamp," is designated as "Avenue B." The lane between "The Swamp" and mess tent is "Avenue C," the pathway between the nurses' tent and "The Swamp" is "Avenue A."

### STAGING

Keep it moving. There must be no dead spots. Although the script is divided into "scenes" to indicate passages of time, one scene should "fade" into the next almost like a movie. Director may wish to move personnel about the compound for "atmosphere." It makes for a nice touch, but don't allow it to distract from dialogue situations.

## COSTUMES

Army fatigues covers it except for special requirements—Hawaiian shirts for Hawkeye and Duke, the Bonwit dancing outfits and combat boots, surgical gowns and masks for the Monster scene. Blake might wear an army uniform. Straightjacket for Burns, kimono for Mitzi, football pads and helmet for Trapper.

## SOUND EFFECTS

Siren, helicopters. Artillery fire and pistol shot are optional.

## GENERAL PROPERTIES

Mess tent: Counter, coffee pot or urn (practical), cups or mugs, table(s) with bench.

“The Swamp:” Cots, footlocker(s), playing cards, magazine, tablecloth, candelabra, bottle of wine, wine glasses.

Nurses’ tent: Cots.

Offstage, for general use: Bottles of plasma, blankets, flashlights, operating smocks, surgical gowns and masks.

## PERSONAL PROPERTIES

BRIDGET: Comb, brush, etc.

HAWKEYE: Golf clubs, orders, stool, rifle, sun helmet, stuffed toy tiger or lion.

DUKE: Duffel bags, orders, lantern, whistle.

TODD: Clipboard with papers, letter.

DEVINE: Flashlight, contract.

RADAR: Flashlight, binoculars.

HO-JON: Fresh linen, sack containing dead cat.

NANCY: Handkerchief.

BLAKE: Report, document.



**NURSE:** Large mirror.

**WALT:** Frankenstein monster mask.

**VARIOUS MASH PERSONNEL:** Flashlights.

**NURSES:** Pom-poms.

# M\*A\*S\*H

## SCENE ONE

**SETTING:** *The MASH compound. (For detailed description and stage chart, see Production Notes.)*

**AT RISE OF CURTAIN:** *The area is alive with simultaneous activity. In the nurses' tent, CAPT. BRIDGET McCARTHY is arranging her hair. LT. JANICE FURY is exercising. In the mess tent, SGT. DEVINE is at the counter pouring coffee. LT. LOUISE KIMBLE and CAPT. FRANK BURNS are seated at a table. The main focus is on "The Swamp." A footlocker has been pulled out and it serves as a card table. Three doctors are grouped around it playing poker. They are: CAPT. WALTER "WALT" WALDOWSKI, CAPT. "TRAPPER JOHN" McINTYRE and CAPT. "UGLY" JOHN BLACK. CPL. "RADAR" REILLY is down on his hands and knees, his ear pressed to the floor of the tent.*

**WALT.** Anything yet?

**RADAR.** Sir, how can I hear anything if you keep asking me if I hear anything? Wait, wait! Something's coming in now.

**UGLY.** What?

**RADAR.** Quiet.

**TRAPPER & WALT** (to **UGLY**). Quiet!

*(In the mess tent, SGT. DEVINE brings two cups of coffee to the table.)*

DEVINE *(setting down cups)*. Here we go. Nice n' hot.

BURNS. You're wearing dirty fatigues again, Sergeant Devine.

DEVINE. Yes, sir. Sorry, sir. I was wondering, Captain Burns, if you'd care to purchase the hot dog concession at Yankee Stadium? It belongs to my cousin, but he'd let it go cheap.

LOUISE. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Sergeant. Always working an angle.

DEVINE. It's not easy to make an honest dollar in this place.

LOUISE. An "honest" dollar and you would be perfect strangers.

DEVINE. Yes, ma'am. *(He returns to the counter)*.

*(In the nurses' tent, JANICE has quit exercising.)*

JANICE. You'd think working in a mobile Army unit would keep you in trim.

BRIDGET. I don't worry about it. I let it spread.

JANICE. Sometimes when I'm at the operating table and those cases keep coming on day and night, I get the feeling I'm going to faint.

LOUISE. I wouldn't advise it. If a nurse faints in surgery they either use her for a blood donor, or take bets on how long she'll stay under. MASH is no place for a lady, Lieutenant Fury. Come on, we've got the next shift. *(BRIDGET and JANICE leave their tent, going UR.)*

(In "The Swamp," RADAR is convinced he's on to something.)

RADAR. Yup. That's what it sounds like to me. Helicopters.

(CAPTS. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PIERCE, "HAWKEYE," and AUGUSTUS BEDFORD FORREST, "DUKE," have entered "Avenue C" from UL. HAWKEYE carries golf clubs. DUKE has the duffel bags. Both wear vivid Hawaiian shirts, cross to "The Swamp." Dialogue plays through their entrance.)

TRAPPER. Must have been that assault on Moonflower Hill.

WALT. Takes care of our poker game for the next 72 hours. (HAWKEYE and DUKE are standing at the L entrance to "The Swamp.")

HAWKEYE. This the tent they call "The Swamp"? (All look up to see the new arrivals. RADAR goes back to his peculiar listening. During the following, LOUISE will leave mess tent. Later, SGT. DEVINE will also leave.)

WALT. In lovely, romantic South Korea. Yup.

UGLY. Who might you gents be? (The two new arrivals move into the tent.)

HAWKEYE. I'm Captain Benjamin Franklin Pierce. My friends call me "Hawkeye." (Turns to his buddy.) This is Captain Augustus Bedford Forrest, alias "Duke."

DUKE. Hi'ya.

TRAPPER. *Hawkeye?* Your old man used to sell lobsters?

HAWKEYE. Still does. Nothing under a pound and a half.

TRAPPER. Crabapple Cove, Maine?

HAWKEYE. You got it.

TRAPPER (*flinging off his fatigue hat*). Hawkeye, don't you remember me? Pride of Dartmouth College? McIntyre. John McIntyre. "Trapper John" McIntyre.

HAWKEYE. Trapper John! I'll be a speckled seagull!  
(*TRAPPER JOHN and HAWKEYE embrace like long-lost brothers, dance around like lunatic grizzly bears.*)

TRAPPER. I knew there couldn't be *two* Hawkeyes in this cockeyed world!

UGLY (*shaking hands with DUKE*). I'm John Black. Everyone calls me "Ugly." They call me Ugly because I'm good-looking. This is Walt Waldowski. If you want to know where the *real* action is, it's in his tent.

WALT (*shaking hands*). The Painless Polish Poker Parlor and Dental Clinic. On Wednesdays and Fridays I run bingo games. Helps relieve tensions.

RADAR. Quiet!

WALT, TRAPPER & UGLY. *Quiet!* (*Only now do the newcomers notice RADAR with his ear to the floor. They exchange a bewildered look.*)

RADAR (*getting up*). Helicopters! No doubt about it. Gonna be a busy night. (*He exits toward R, into "Avenue A" and off.*)

TRAPPER. That was Radar Reilly.

UGLY. He can anticipate what you're gonna say before you say it. He's got super-sensitive ears.

TRAPPER. We knew two new guys were coming last week.

UGLY. Radar monitored the call from General Hammond.  
(*HAWKEYE and DUKE are impressed.*)

HAWKEYE. Sounds like a good man to know. Where do we bunk?

TRAPPER. In here with me. (*Sour.*) And Burns. (*UGLY moves to R entrance of "The Swamp."* *HAWKEYE and DUKE toss their duffels on cots and UGLY yells into "Avenue A."*) Ho-Jon!

HAWKEYE (*sitting on cot*). Who's Burns?

WALT. *Captain* Frank Burns. Regular Army. He'll never let you forget it.

TRAPPER. Goes watery in the eyes when they play reveille.

UGLY. Does surgery by the military manual. All spit and polish. (*Yells again.*) Ho-Jon!

(*HO-JON comes running into the compound from UR and into "Avenue A."*)

HO-JON. Here I am, sir, Captain.

UGLY. Two new butcher boys.

HO-JON. Yes, sir, Captain. (*HO-JON enters tent. Duke is unpacking his duffel.*)

TRAPPER. Ho-Jon is the best houseboy in the camp.

HO-JON (*slight Oriental bow*). I am very honored, gentleman, sirs. (*HAWKEYE and DUKE return the bow.*)

DUKE. Same here.

HO-JON (*referring to DUKE's unpacking*). Oh, no, sir. My job. (*He crosses to the cot, takes the duffel from DUKE, begins to unpack it. During Ho-Jon's introduction, BURNS leaves mess tent.*)

WALT (*the cards*). You guys in? (*DUKE, HAWKEYE, WALT, UGLY and TRAPPER JOHN group around the footlocker. BURNS enters "The Swamp."*)

BURNS. *Captain* Waldowski, why don't you play cards in your own quarters? This area is a Mobile Ambulance

Surgical Hospital, not a card parlor. That footlocker happens to be mine! It's also my tent and I wasn't consulted. War is a *serious* business.

TRAPPER. Come off it, Burns.

BURNS. *Captain Burns, if you please.*

TRAPPER. Meet Captain Forrest.

DUKE. Hi.

TRAPPER. Captain Pierce. (*BURNS extends a hand. HAWKEYE prefers to belch. HO-JON laughs out loud.*)

BURNS (*turning on him*). What are you laughing at? (*HO-JON, embarrassed, lowers his head.*) What are you doing in here anyway? (*To others.*) Can't trust any of them. They're all thieves. (*HO-JON is shaken by the insult and terribly hurt. He runs out and off UR.*)

WALT. That's not true and you know it. Don't take out your frustrations on Ho-Jon.

BURNS. He'll get over his hurt. We have more important things to worry about.

(*COL. BLAKE has entered from DL and crosses to the L entrance of "The Swamp." PFC. SUE TODD is with him, holding a clipboard with papers.*)

BLAKE (*entering the tent*). Don't anybody yell attention on my account. Pierce and Forrest. Where are they? (*HAWKEYE and DUKE raise their hands like students in a classroom.*)

HAWKEYE & DUKE. Here, Teach.

BLAKE. Wise guys, huh. That's all I need. Let me see your orders. (*They fish out their orders and pass them to BLAKE. He hands them to TODD.*) File this garbage under garbage.

TODD. Yes, sir.

BLAKE. You guys look like weirdos to me. Maybe it's General Hammond's way of getting even for all the static I've been giving him, but if you work out I'll hold still for a lot. If you don't, I'll nail your tails to the tent flap.

BURNS. Colonel, sir. About the card playing that goes on 24 hours a day. (*BLAKE turns and leaves tent, trailed by TODD.*)

BLAKE. Private Todd, file the captain's complaint under "J."

TODD. "J," sir?

BLAKE. "J" for junk. (*BLAKE and TODD exit UL.*)

BURNS. My protest was in the best interest of the unit's efficiency. You can't play cards all night and be alert in the morning.

TRAPPER. Simmer down, Burns. You're all nerves.

WALT. 'Sides, there aren't going to be any card games for quite a spell.

UGLY. Radar heard helicopters.

BURNS. If there's going to be a run of casualties we'll be notified in advance through official channels. The Army way. We won't hear a siren for days. (*Siren wails through the compound. Everyone jumps to his feet.*)

HAWKEYE. Mighty short days, Captain Burns.

*(The Compound throbs with activity. NURSES and MILITARY PERSONNEL hurry into the "avenues," prepared for the worst. Some carry plasma, blankets, etc. The "Swampmen" dash out R and L. The siren continues to wail as lights fade to blackness.)*