

you'd yell blue murder. Blaming me—what you doing, going for stupid?"

The manager lost his smile. "Take it easy, Joe. Watch your big mouth."

"Now you're going for hard," Joe said. "Putting on a big show, blaming me."

"Who's being hard?" the manager asked. "I just said he's a vet and—"

"I'm a vet, too," Joe said. "I got the Silver Star and I'm shaming shoes. It isn't up to me—I just gave him the ticket. You don't want to charge him, O.K., fine. What you even asking me about it for? Making all this fuss."

THE several people sitting in the booths, waiting for their shoes, and the repair men at their machines all turned to the rear of the store, watching. The manager said, "I only—"

"Give me my change," the one-legged man said quickly.

"Now, buddy, you don't have to—" said the manager.

"God damn it, give me my change!"

The manager started to say something; then he snapped his mouth shut, grabbed the bill, and gave the one-legged man a full dollar's change. The man left a dime on the counter.

"That isn't necessary," the manager began. "I—"

"Shut up," the one-legged man said. He turned to Joe and held out another dime. Joe took it, saying, "Thanks, buddy."

The man nodded to him and walked out of the store, his crutch making the only sound in the place.

Joe turned back to the shoes and started to rub polish on them. The manager said, to nobody in particular, "I don't know—try to help these vets and you get it. Well, I guess they all got their problems. I had a son in the Army. He came back O.K., but some of them . . . I only wanted to help him, I mean—he'll we ought to help a guy that lost a leg."

Joe said wistfully, "Listen to the dumb bastards—now he's going for home. He'll be going for potatoe the rest of the day."

—LAWRENCE ZEPPEL

LIFE IN HOLLYWOOD DEPARTMENT "BROKEN RADIATOR CAP DIVISION"

[From the Hollywood Camera News]

Robert Mitchum had an accident in his car and the radiator cap is broken. And Bob can't get another car and he can't always get a taxi, so he either hitchhikes to the studio for "Pursued"—or walks the two miles. He's an odd character, is Bob. But fascinating.



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