

"BLACKMAIL UNDER GLASS"

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT - BERLIN (1942) - DAY (9:00 AM)

Period cars rumble past a small park. CLOSE UP of Agent SPENCE, checking his pocket watch, which reads exactly nine o'clock. He sits on a park bench looking serious, his black overcoat partially concealing an expensive checked vest. A half-full stein of beer rests by a book on the bench beside him. Another man approaches slowly, dressed like a LOCAL.

SPENCE

Right on time - an hour late.

LOCAL

(in accented English)

You did not give us much time.

SPENCE

Well now, we're not exactly in a giving mood these days, Luther. (surly)
Just follow the instructions.

Hands him the book, then rudely flicks a finger of beer foam at him.

SPENCE

By the way, your beer tastes like
Harnwasser.

Agent Spence strides purposefully away, while the Local glances at the letter hidden inside, then spits out the beer dripping from his lips.

LOCAL

Shiest!

EXT - PARIS (1942) - DAY (9:00 AM)

TRAFFIC rolls down the Champs D'Elysee. At a sidewalk cafe, an OFFICIAL lounges with his coffee and afternoon paper, while his CHAUFFEUR leans against the side of his car. Nearby, A WAITER adds the last garnishes to the Official's lunch, but as he wheels for the table, an unseen MAN's hand stops him, lifts the serving dish's glass cover and slips a folded page under the plate, then motions for the waiter to serve it.

OFFICIAL

Ah, and what delicacy has Chef André whipped up today?

The Waiter removes the glass cover, and the Official discovers the folded page. We now SEE the man who placed it. This Agent, ABBOTT, is dressed completely in brown, an overcoat draped over his left arm. He interrupts the Official's reading.

ABBOTT

It's a little dish he calls *Chantage Verre de Sous*. You Frenchies always say presentation's everything.

OFFICIAL

(reading)

Ah, *mon ami*, this request, *impossible!* You cannot be serious?

ABBOTT

Dead serious, *m'sieur*. (closer) And I ain't yer *am-eee*.

Abbott walks away, chuckling. The Official hurriedly drains his coffee, clutches the note and rushes to the waiting car. The Chauffeur opens his door, climbs inside and they roar away.

EXT - LONDON (1942) - DAY (9:00 AM) - KING'S GUARD PARADE

Big Ben CHIMES the hour in the distance. Along the street, observers SHOUT enthusiastically, while an older gentleman, FITZGERALD, calmly smokes his pipe, a newspaper rolled under one arm. A Third Agent, ROLAND, dressed in a green trenchcoat, slides in behind him, silently. With expert speed he thrusts an object into Fitzgerald's rolled paper. It could have been a knife, but in a CLOSE SHOT we see it's another note.

ROLAND

(whispered)

New instructions. See that they're followed. (clipped) To the letter!

FITZGERALD

(attention forward)

I don't know if I can. I'll have to get approval.

ROLAND

Not my problem. (closer) Ya got two weeks!

Fitzgerald waits for more conversation, but when none is forthcoming, he turns about slow. Roland has vanished into the crowd! Without a glance at the note, Fitzgerald grips the paper tighter, turns and strides off through the crowd.

EXT - LONDON - DAY - INTERSECTION

From slightly above, we FOLLOW Fitzgerald as he walks to an intersection and turns right. The name 'Downing' is visible on the street sign above. In the distance, he flashes his credentials to one of two guards at a door, then enters.

INT - LONDON - DAY (10 AM) - 10 DOWNING STREET

The room is dominated by an elegant fireplace flanked by filled oak bookcases. The striped vest of a thin man's chest absorb the comments of a well-to-do man and woman, who are KING EDWARD VIII and his consort, THE LADY WALLIS SIMPSON.

EDWARD

I don't see that we *have* a choice, Sir.

THIN MAN

But Your Highness, we cannot risk the exposure. A scandal just now could topple the government. And we know he's catalogued our Services, so we cannot use our normal personnel.

LADY WALLIS

Don't you see, Neville, we can't go on like this? We must get this ogre off our backs, once and for all.

THIN MAN

You don't know the depths of this man's evil, milady. I do, and believe me, he will stop at -

Just then, Fitzgerald enters the room, recognizes the guests and bows before handing the folded paper to the Thin Man. The face adds more lines to the wrinkled face of NEVILLE

CHAMBERLAIN. He nods as appraises the note.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well, it seems our decision has been made for us. He wants the next month's payments delivered within two weeks.

EDWARD

That's insane! We're barely able to meet the monthly payments as it is! If we withdraw the funds any faster, the accountants at the Treasury will surely be suspicious!

CHAMBERLAIN

I know. I believe that is his intention: to have us discovered through our own actions.

He calmly refolds the letter before turning to Lady Wallis.

CHAMBERLAIN

I feel if we are to embark on this dangerous course of action, it may be wise to accept your suggestion, Lady Wallis.

LADY WALLIS

Edward and I agree, he's the man for the job. He helped us retain the crown when we thought foolishly about getting married. He'll help us again.

CHAMBERLAIN

(to Edward)

Your Highness, a letter outlining our current crisis may speed his decision.

(quietly to Lady Wallis)

And a private note from the Lady Wallis could do no harm.

Both turn to their duties of letter writing at a large nearby desk, as Chamberlain motions Fitzgerald closer.

CHAMBERLAIN

Pack your things, Fitzgerald. You're going on a trip - to New Orleans.

FITZGERALD

But Sir, what's in New Or-leens?

BEGIN TITLES

Bouncy JAZZ MUSIC plays throughout the duration of the TITLES.

Behind the TITLES are scattered photos of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, other distinctly Louisiana locales, all in the old-style Kodak format, black-and-white with wavy-edged thick white borders. We linger over them left to right, one at a time. Most are snapshots of an individual in a white linen suit posing beside Babe Ruth, Amelia Earhart, Will Rogers, others.

END TITLES

BLEND IN TO:

INT - FRENCH QUARTER - DAY (12:45 PM) - LAFITTE'S TAVERN

The JAZZ MUSIC played by a quintet on a small platform in the back of a dim, wood-beamed bar. The man in the white linen suit from the Title snapshots, ARTHUR PORT, leans over his drink at the bar, facing away from the band. The lone WAITRESS picks up her drinks on a tray and heads across the room.

The bandmembers are white, except for the young black PIANIST, maybe 15, with thick dark glasses, easily the most talented. They end with with an elegant flourish, to a scattering of meaningful APPLAUSE from the sparse crowd. Noticeably silent are two burly pallookas in conservative grey suits, JAKE and HILDEGARD, sitting by themselves near the jukebox, and two WELL-DRESSED MEN in less somber garb sitting nearer the bar.

PIANIST

Thank - thanks, folks. That was a piece from one of our favorites, called 'Early Romance Rag' by a little-known composer name o' Scott Joplin.

JAKE

Did he say 'Caught Jumpin'?'

HILDEGARD

Nah, you know who he's talkin' about. That old *shine* composer.

The rest of the room stiffens at the use of that word.

JAKE

Ain't they caught him yet?

HILDEGARD

Nah. Pro'bly hidin' from the noose in a henhouse some'eres.

PIANIST

Yeah, well, Mr. Joplin, he done wrote some good songs for hisself. Now, the next tune we's gonna play for y'all -

JAKE

I don't think you're gonna play any-more t'day, *shine*.

A low MURMUR of protest rises up from the small crowd.

PIANIST

(smiling calmly)

Maybe the gen'lemen don' care for our type o' music. How 'bout we switch to an old fav'rit o' yours, Benny Goodman's 'On the Town in the Morning?'

JAKE

I don't think you heard me right, *shine*.

He kicks a chair forward, which hits the front of the stage, spilling the Pianist's drink and splashing his worn boots. We realize now, by his groping hands, the PIANIST is blind.

JAKE

I said, I think yer done playin' for t'day, *shine*.

ARTHUR

(his back to them, at the bar)

Louie, gimme a shot o' kerosene.

LOUIE

Huh? A shot o' what?

ARTHUR

You heard me, kerosene - a double.

LOUIE

Whatever you say, Arthur.

JAKE

Got some nerve playing out here in decent public, boy. Ain't they got a section in town where your kind play?

PIANIST

Jes' tell me what Ah've done t' offend y'all, mistuh.

HILDEGARD

(moving toward the stage)

You were born, that's all. (cracks his knuckles) I got a feeling you won't be tinklin' the ivories for awhile.

Arthur swings around and approaches the Suits, drink in hand.

ARTHUR

Y'know, there's two things I dislike 'bout tourists when they come to town. First off, they act like they own the place. That bothers me some. An' they're always mispronouncin' the name. It's not 'New Anything,' friend. It's 'Nah Lins.'

Arthur plops his drink down deliberately on their table.

ARTHUR

Y'all should learn that 'fore ya get into any more trouble.

JAKE

You know who you're messin' with, pal?

He opens his jacket, which reveals a badge and a holstered gun.

ARTHUR

Ahhh, a couple of J. Edgar Hoover's boys. Y'know what we call you kids up in Baton Rouge? 'Hoover's Headaches.'

The laughter of the lunchtime crowd, who are now clearly on Arthur's side, obviously irritates the two Suits.

HILDEGARD

We could make life very difficult for
you, pal.

ARTHUR

Y' already have. Y' drank up all the
cheap booze.

Hildegard brushes Arthur's arm aside, eyes locked with his. He reaches his big hand down to the shot glass, lifts it to his lips, downs the drink in a single gulp, then slams the glass back down. We switch to a CLOSE shot of the floor, where Hildegard's face immediately lands, choking and coughing from drinking the kerosene. Jake slowly rises.

JAKE

Oh, you're in for some schoolin'
today, chum.

ARTHUR

I don't think so. Been to school
once. Didn't care fo' it.

Jake makes a move, but Arthur drops with one punch. Jake comes up with his gun out, a hand grabbing the table as he rises. Arthur grabs a wine bottle from the Waitress and breaks it over Jake's hand, leaving the hand a wet, bloody mess.

ARTHUR

(to the Pianist)

I think you better come with me, pal.
Ain't gonna be pretty when they come-
to. Put the wine on my tab, Martha.

WAITRESS

Always do, Arthur. (surveys the mess)
Come back soon. Never borin' when
you're 'roun,' hon.

Unnoticed by Arthur, the two well-dressed men watch Arthur as he leaves, then turn to each other and nod, satisfied.

INT/EXT - FRONT DOOR

As Arthur and the Pianist reach the door, three STATE
TROOPERS enter, all business.

TROOPER ONE

Well, how do, Arthur. You involved in this 'un?

ARTHUR

Didn't start it, but I did help finish it. Oh, the bleedin' one's packin'. Maybe you should, uh, lose his permit.

TROOPER TWO

How's the shoulder, Art?

ARTHUR

Only bothers me when I jab. (stretches it and rubs) 'Member t' tell the Kingfish he still owes me big time.

EXT - NEW ORLEANS - DAY (1:00 PM) - FRENCH QUARTER

Arthur leads the Pianist down the sidewalk with a hand on his shoulder, passing two-ups and brick patios.

ARTHUR

What do they call you, son?

RAY

Uh, my name's Ray Robinson, suh.

ARTHUR

Now, none o' that 'sir' crap, I work for a livin.' Friends call me Arthur. Where'd you learn t' play like that?

RAY

Back home in Florida, su - Ah mean, mistuh Arthur. 'Fore Momma passed on.

ARTHUR

Got an ol' upright back at mah place. Needs a little tunin' up, few o' th' keys are missin', but you're welcome to stay an' play.

RAY

Well, Ah could use a place to sleep, 'till Ah get a steady gig lined up.

ARTHUR

Sure thing, Ray, got plenty o' room.

RAY

Say, mistuh Arthur, why'd th' offisuh ask after yer shoulder?

ARTHUR

I...saved the Guv'nuh's life once.

Ray smiles broadly, unable to hide his disbelief.

ARTHUR

I can see y' doubt mah story, Ray. Back in '35, Huey had hissself a spot o' trouble with a doctuh who didn't appreciate having his district jerry-mandered by the State House.

NEW ANGLE - HUEY AND THE CHESS INSTRUCTOR

In a plaza, a CHESS INSTRUCTOR has set up a table and three chairs in front of him. His hand-lettered sign reads, 'Chess Lessons ~~50~~ 25 Cent.' While he narrates, Arthur plays the one open game against him, fast, barely pausing to think.

ARTHUR

Ah happened to be at the Capital on bid'ness. Saw the Kingfisher headin' towards me, an' all of a sudden-like, I realized just how much I disliked him. So I went over to bust the Guv'-nah in the jaw, when the Doc hauled out a revolver an' let one fly. Caught it here (points with a captured rook). Hell, I was in more danger from Huey's bodyguards than from the good Doctor.

Arthur wins in twelve moves. The Instructor reluctantly hands over a quarter, which Arthur knocks twice on the table and tosses back. They continue on through the Quarter, Arthur guiding Ray by gentle touches on his shoulder.

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER, FURTHER ON

The old Market drifts by as they continue on.

ARTHUR

An' ever since, Guv'nuh Long an' Ah have had this unnerstandin'. He unnerstan's Ah saved his life, Ah unnerstan' Ah wish't Ah hadn't. Works jes' fine fer both of us.

RAY

Y'all play chess pretty well.

ARTHUR

You could tell?

RAY

Mebbe we c'n play some time?

ARTHUR

Sure, Ray. I'll even take it easy on ya.

RAY

That's - that's funny. Ah was gonna take it easy on you.

EXT/INT - FRONT OF ARTHUR'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

They wind up in front of an older limestone 3-story, with an entrance to a rear courtyard on the right. Balconies with iron railings line the narrow, quiet street. Arthur guides Ray's hands to the buzzer panel.

ARTHUR

Second buzzer on the right, here. Remember to ring a'fore ya come up.

RAY

In case y'all got a lady present?

ARTHUR

No. 'Case Ah have a gun pointin' at the door.

They ring, step inside and ascend a flight of creaking wooden stairs. At his door, he unlocks it, glances inside, then turns.

ARTHUR

Did I say I had room?

He swings the door wide, displaying a hall opening to a living room, every square inch of which is covered with sleeping BODIES, all tumbled together. Light SNORING drifts up. A large head peeks around the living room wall, belonging to MARION, Arthur's bodyguard, big as a stuntman, with a Western drawl.

MARION

Afternoon, Arthur. Back so soon? What happened? Did Lafitte's run out of gin?

ARTHUR

Har. And also *har*. Marion, this here's Ray. He's gonna be stayin' with us for awhile. Ray, the sarcastic one's Marion.

RAY

Pleasure t' meet ya', Marion.

ARTHUR

Mind yer step there, Ray. How 'bout some lunch?

RAY

Wouldn't mind. Last night's sardines on toast haven't set too well.

ARTHUR

(guiding Ray to kitchen, right)
Really? Then, you're in for a treat. Ah'm gonna whip up a batch o' my famous Annoille eggs and blackened sausage - hope you like it spicy.

INT - ARTHUR'S KITCHEN

Arthur sees a newspaper held by a SLEEPER propped upright against the icebox. While reading, Arthur pries open the icebox door, grabs a mint julep, takes a swig, SEES a cigarette butt bobbing in it and dribbles the drink back into the glass.

ARTHUR (CON'T)

Thirsty, Ray? Got a nice fresh julep?

RAY

No thanks. Ah - Ah believe if'n you won't drink it, Ah'll pass.

ARTHUR

Can't put nuthin' over on you, can Ah?

Arthur empties the drink in the sink, and returns to the icebox. This time, after he grabs a bowl of tan eggs, still captivated by the story, he carefully pulls the newspaper out of the Sleeper's hand. Next to a partially-visible story about a new offensive between Russia and Japan in Manchuko, the headline over Arthur's shoulder reads:

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE (INSERT)

Cash Makes Dash From French Treasury.

SLEEPER

Hey, man, I's readin' that...

The Sleeper slides down the face of the icebox, hitting the floor with a THUD and raising a ripple of annoyance from the other SLEEPERS he apparently lands on. We SEE only the concentration on Arthur's face as he studies the story.

ARTHUR

Sorry there, James.

As Arthur cracks the eggs one-handed and begins cooking, we SEE part of the newspaper itself, held in his other hand:

NEWSPAPER STORY (INSERT)

Reuters - A member of the French cabinet was arraigned today on charges of illegally withdrawing funds from the State Treasury, according to an informed source.

Arthur finishes the last egg as we READ over his shoulder:

NEWSPAPER STORY (INSERT)

A spokesman stated that the Sureté had attempted to trace the destination of the funds, but the trail ended at the transfer offices of the World Bank.

QUICK CUT to an expensive, polished shoe making a SQUEAK on the stairs outside the apartment door.

Back in the kitchen, Arthur ponders the story's last sentence, as we hear Marion call out from the living room:

MARION

Arthur? Someone's on the stairs.

ARTHUR

'Scuse me, Ray, be right back.

Arthur charges down the hall, leaping over bodies.

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT DOOR (FROM THE INSIDE)

Arthur grabs the handle and swings the door wide, revealing a bent-over VISITOR near the keyhole. He straightens up into a tall, muscular man, maybe 6'4 and a couple of hundred tough-as-nails pounds. The Visitor smiles casually at Arthur.

ARTHUR

Why Marion, that ain't no man. That there's a go-rilla. (to Marion) Ain't your parents ever taken you to the zoo?

MARION

(from around a corner)
Naw, they said it'd be a bad influence.

ARTHUR

On whom, I wonder. (to Visitor) What can I do for you, friend?

VISITOR

Afternoon. The Boss would like to have a word with you, Mr. Port. In private.

The Visitor motions politely down the stairs.

ARTHUR

Whose boss, your boss or my boss?
'Cause I ain't got one.

The Visitor reveals a .45 stuck in his waistband.

VISITOR

He made it plain that I should convince you, any way I wanted.

ARTHUR

You didn't say the magic word: please.

We hear a soft CLICK. From around the doorjamb, Marion leans into the doorway, cocked revolver first. The Visitor pulls both hands away from his coat and raises them, still smiling.

ARTHUR

Don't shoot the nice man, Marion. Just take away his toy.

With his gun pointed at the Visitor's waist, Marion takes the .45 and hands it to Arthur. He unloads it and pockets the clip.

ARTHUR

Second time today someone's waved a piece in my face.

VISITOR

I know. We were there.

ARTHUR

And you still wanna hire me?

VISITOR

The Boss is impressed with your methods, Mr. Port. He requires only ten minutes of your time to explain a job you might be interested in. He's willing to slip you a C-note just to listen.

ARTHUR

Well, Herbert, ya should'a said so in the first place. (gestures) Lead on.

Arthur gives him a head start down the stairs, then turns back to the apartment.

ARTHUR

Keep an eye on Ray. Anything he needs, take it outta the house funds.

MARION

Sure thing, Arthur.

ARTHUR

(louder, to the kitchen)
Goin' out for awhile, Ray. Call out if'n ya need anything.

In the Kitchen, Ray's fixing a pretty good meal of fried eggs and sausage.

RAY

Don't worry 'bout me, mistuh Arthur.
See y'all when ya get back.

ARTHUR

(to Marion, quietly)
Don't let 'im burn the place down.

Arthur hurries down stairs to catch up with Tony, waiting at the bottom with the door open. He blocks it with a beefy arm.

TONY

How'd you know my name was Herbert?

ARTHUR

Saw your mugshot on a case up in Gary a few years back. Herbert Garnavillo, alias 'Tony the Slugger.' Lieutenant of Salvatore 'Big Sal' Sarzana. Heard you used a baseball bat on Jimmy the Wolf back in Jersey.

They exit the stairway and take the sidewalk left.

TONY

Jimmy had a real hard head. And please, Mr. Port, call me Tony.

ARTHUR

Sure thing, Herb. Here. (hands him back the .45) You don't need a bullet to drop a man, anyways.

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER - DAY (2 PM) - FIORELLA'S CAFE

Arthur and Tony enter a small courtyard cafe, where the other Well-Dressed Man from the nightclub is already seated, adding cream to his coffee. He is, of course, Tony's boss, BIG SAL SARZANA, mid-50s, nice clothes, and two expensive pinky rings.

BIG SAL

I'm pleased you could accept our little invitation, Mr. Port. Coffee?

ARTHUR

Before dinner? Y'all ain't from around here, are ya?

BIG SAL

Indulge me, Mister Port.

Arthur straddles a chair, while Tony remains standing.

BIG SAL

Caught your performance down at Laf-
fitte's earlier today. Entertaining.

ARTHUR

What's the head of Chicago's most pow-
erful family doing slumming around the
French Quarter?

BIG SAL

I'm looking for some help with a
playboy named Geracey.

ARTHUR

Geracey? Drew Geracey? Isn't he that
millionaire bachelor? Rented some prop-
erty 'round here, so the birdies say.

BIG SAL

The birdies also tell you he kidnapped
my only child? My sweet little Sammy?

While Big Sal talks, he twists his coffee saucer, nervously.
Arthur waves a waiter over, motions that he wants a drink.

ARTHUR

Now what would a guy like Geracey
want with your kid?

BIG SAL

Who knows? He hasn't asked for money
- not yet. Maybe he's doin' it for
kicks, maybe just to piss me off.

TONY

Maybe he's just a sicko.

BIG SAL

For his sake, he'd better not be.

ARTHUR

I suppose the cops are out, eh, Big Sal? So why call on me? Looks like you got all the muscle you need.

BIG SAL

I figured you could pry my kid loose with a little more tact. I don't want my Sammy hurt.

ARTHUR

Well, I don't know what I can do, Big Sal. I've always tried t' steer clear o' you an' your boys.

BIG SAL

I could make it worth your while.

ARTHUR

Speakin' o' that, there was mention of a C-note?

Tony, still standing, peels a single bill off a very large roll of greenbacks. Arthur checks it, pockets it and gets up to go.

BIG SAL

Is there nothing I can say to change your mind?

ARTHUR

Doubt it. Ah don't work so much for the money, as for the thrill of it.

TONY

Can I have the C-note back, then?

ARTHUR

Ahhh - no.

BIG SAL

Did I mention that Geracey's staying at the old Longue Vue estate?

Arthur, half way to the exit, halts, slowly turns around.

ARTHUR

Really? Man, I've always wanted to see the insides of... Y'know, they gotta fountain there that's...

Arthur stops, draws himself up and continues quite formally.

ARTHUR (CON'T)

Mr. Sarzana, I've decided the best interests of your child warrant that I accept your case. Now, here's what I was thinkin'. A few years ago, I pulled this stunt...

EXT/INT - LONGUE VUE HOUSE - NIGHT (2 AM) - GARDEN GATE

A tall stone wall is split by a single elegant gate. One guard, RODNEY, leans over to light his cigarette off that of a second guard, CARTER. Both are dressed formally, though their size is more an indicator of their line of work than their clothing. Rodney walks off to the right, following the stone wall, and is soon lost in the darkness.

Carter leans against the open, wrought-iron gate and listens to the night birds chatter. Soon, he HEARS footsteps crunching up the footpath. He reaches inside his coat for a hidden gun.

CARTER

Rodney? Izzat you?

A figure emerges from the gloom, dressed in a red flannel nightgown, matching nightcap and open sandals. With arms outstretched and snoring loud enough to wake the dead, he bangs into the stone wall. Gerald doesn't know whether to laugh or growl. He shouts over his shoulder, then approaches.

CARTER

Rodney? Rodney! (to sleepwalker) Sorry pal, y' can't sleep here.

Carter spins the sleeper around. In CLOSE UP, Arthur's eyes open.

ARTHUR

Golly mother, is it morning already?

Arthur snaps a right to Carter's jaw, knocking him out. He drags the body inside the gate, as we HEAR Rodney return.

RODNEY

Carter? Everything okay? Thought I heard a noise.

Just as his feet turn the corner, we HEAR a punch connect, then his body hits the ground. Arthur drags the body into the shadows beside Carter, whose jacket has already been removed, and handcuffs their hands behind their backs. He takes their guns, tosses them deep into the bushes, then their shoes, and stuffs their socks in their mouths. Finally, he pulls off Rodney's pants, who begins to mumble angrily into his gag.

ARTHUR

Don't worry, friend, y' ain't mah type.

Arthur transfers some items into his new coat's pockets. The clothes are a poor fit, and the pants legs are a little long.

ARTHUR

Mah taylor wouldn't approve, but I guess it'll do for t'night.

Arthur strolls through the moonlit gardens, admiring the stonework and statues. Through the spray of a fountain, he spots SAMMY tied to a chair, lit in silhouette in a second floor window. He smiles, then walks on.

INT - LONGUE VUE HOUSE - NIGHT (2:15 AM) - BACK KITCHEN

Inside the mansion itself, we SEE four more Guards scattered around a kitchen. JEROME and CLANCY are playing checkers, CHARLIE is reading a paper, while BRANDT is fiddling in the icebox.

CHARLIE

Lay off the pie, Brandt. You're gonna get big as a house.

CLANCY

Leave 'im be, Charlie. He's a big boy.

JEROME

That's just the problem. King me!

BRANDT

Aw, just one more piece, Charlie. I gotta have somethin' ta do around here. This place is quiet as a tomb.

A hand snakes around the doorjamb, holding a small yellow-glass vial. It's heading for the open coffee pot.

CHARLIE

If you want somethin,' try another cup o' coffee. That'll keep you awake and leave yer waistline intact.

The hand freezes, then snakes back out of sight.

BRANDT

Y'know, if I'd wanted your advice, I'd have paid for it.

CHARLIE

C'mere, ya jokester. I wanna place my boot in yer brain!

Charlie fakes a kick at Brandt, who spins around and tries to stab Charlie with his fork. The hand finally gets to the coffee pot during the commotion, pours in a dark liquid, then retreats.

BRANDT

(pretending to fence)

En garde, my dubious friend!

CHARLIE

Don't scuff my shoes or I'll kick yer ass fer sure!

CLANCY

Charlie, stop baiting Brandt! Can't y' see he's got a tapeworm?

CHARLIE

The only worm he's got's in his tiny head!

CLANCY

And you, Charlie, git yer keester outta that icebox! Try the coffee, if ya want somethin' fer yer stomach.

JEROME

(moving a checker unnoticed)
Yeah, I'll take some o' that java.

CHARLIE

Pour me some too, waitress.

BRANDT

I'll waitress you!

Brandt pantomimes clocking Charlie with the pot, then refills their cups. Clancy stares at the board, then sneers at Jerome.

CLANCY

You been cheatin' again, Jerome!

JEROME

No I ain't, Clancy. Honest! Here, I'll take back a move.

Their argument fades, as a set of shoes quietly sneak up the carpeted stairway to the second floor. Arthur chuckles to himself as he slips the glass vial into his coat pocket.

At the top of the stairs, he glances left and right, then heads down the left hallway. He wanders through the magnificently decorated mansion until, in an anteroom, he HEARS two men talking behind a set of doors that flank a marble fireplace. We can SEE the two guards inside, PETER and WARREN, but only a portion of the back of Sammy, tied to a chair.

PETER

Stop squirming, Sammy. You know Mr. Geracey don't like it when ya gets yer clothes all wrinkled.

WARREN

We can't loosen the ropes any more, or we'll be in trouble.

PETER

He'll be back soon. Just sit tight.

WARREN

Sit tight! That's a hoot, Pete. You're a reg'lar Will Rogers.

PETER

If I'm so good, what am I doin' baby-sittin' a brat like this?

Downstairs, Charlie and Brandt are snoring, Jerome's head has scattered the checkers, while Clancy struggles to remain awake.

CLANCY

If I... if I... ever catch you
cheatin' agin'... I'll... I'll...

In the upstairs room, Warren and Peter HEAR Clancy tumble to the floor, taking the rest of the checkers with him.

WARREN

Sounds like Clancy caught Jerome
cheatin' again.

Back with Arthur, he looks about the anteroom for some diversion. He spots the Oriental carpet in front of the fireplace. He removes some newspaper from a box near the fireplace, crumples a page and places it in the middle of the rug, then removes a box of matches from his pocket. He lights the little pile, wafts the ensuing smoke towards the doors and steps back in the shadows. He returns to the fireplace and selects a hefty log, then hides again.

Inside the other room, Peter sniffs the air.

PETER

Warren, you smell smoke?

WARREN

Kee-rist! Geracey'll kill us! Quick!

Warren unlocks the door, races out and stomps on the fire.

WARREN

Who in the hell -

ARTHUR

Me in the hell, that's who!

While Warren tap-dances on the little fire, Arthur clunks him on the back of the head. Arthur whirls around to catch Peter pulling a gun, and Arthur flings the log at him, causing him

to drop it. Arthur lunges through the open door at him, and they roll around on the floor. Arthur finally gains the upper hand, punches Warren three times, and the fight is over.

From astride the fallen guard, Arthur finally notices the prisoner. His eyes travel from pointed shoes up curved, slender legs, across an expensive yellow dress, over the soft silk ropes and onto a radiant woman's face. He smiles at SAMANTHA Sarzana, 28-year-old daughter of Big Sal. She returns his smile, mockingly.

SAM

Bravo. Whaddya do for an encore - burn down the house?

ARTHUR

Lemme introduce mahself, miss. Ah'm -

SAM

I know who you are. You're another one of my father's goons. You sure messed things up here, buddy.

ARTHUR

That's about the poorest excuse for a 'thank you' Ah've ever heard. (begins untying her) What's Geracey doin' leavin' you tied up like this?

SAM

Drew and I are in love. And for the record, that's none o' your business.

ARTHUR

Your father seems to think different.

SAM

All my father cares about is his other 'family.'

ARTHUR

(finishes, stands up)

Ah'm not in the habit of lecturing - what, twenty six? Twenty eight-year-old women, but if you'd stop for a...

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CON'T)

...moment and think, you'd realize your father hired me to make sure you were safe and sound. Ah'm goin' back and telling him you're safe, but Ah can't attest to the 'sound' part.

SAM

(rubbing her wrists)

Please do. Tell him he wasted his money! Again!

ARTHUR

By the way, the name's Arthur. Arthur Port. (slowly looks her up and down) Maybe Ah should have left you tied up.

Arthur saunters out, his eyes still on Sam. Warren and Peter are moaning on the floor, about to come-to.

Arthur calmly descends the stairs, as we HEAR the front door slam. Arthur ducks behind a large pillar, as DREW GERACEY, dressed in evening tux and cape, stalks through the mansion.

DREW

Clancy? Charles? Warren! Where the devil is everybody?

SAM

Up here, Drew!

Sam stands at the window, watches Arthur cross the courtyard, but says nothing. Drew runs up the stairs to her room.

DREW

Darling, are you all right? What are you doing out of your bonds?

SAM

Oh, some meddler came in and spoiled our little game.

DREW

The boulder! Well, I shall send the boys out and -

Drew sniffs the air, walks back out and SEES the scorched carpet.

DREW

Oh my God! Who burned this carpet?

SAM

It was that interloper, dear. Then he insulted me and -

DREW

This carpet's priceless! I can't replace this! My rental calls for all the furnishings to be returned in original condition!

On his knees, he tries scrubbing the burn out with his gloves.

SAM

Aren't you the least bit concerned with my well-being?

DREW

(still scrubbing)

Samantha, darling, this is truly serious. I shall have to call a weaver-friend I know in St. Petersburg.

SAM

Well, I know someone else you can call.

Sam walks over to the fireplace and dumps the entire ash-container onto the rug. She grabs her coat and tosses a sentence as she departs.

SAM

You can look for a housekeeper, too.

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER - DAY (8 AM) - THE COURT OF TWO SISTERS

Arthur strolls in, still wearing the ill-fitting suit, to meet Big Sal and Tony at a fancy restaurant, having breakfast.

BIG SAL

Well, Mr. Port, how'd everything go?

ARTHUR

Just swell, Big Sal. Except you forgot to mention that 'Sammy' is a full-grown woman, not some wide-eyed child.

BIG SAL

I'm sure I told you. Tony, didn't I explain to Mr. Port that Sammy was my full-grown daughter?

TONY

If you say you did, then you must have, Mr Sarzana.

BIG SAL

There you are. (smiles) Y'know, I'm rather pleased with the speed of your results. Now that you're free, maybe I could engage more of your time, sorta, part chaperone, part travel guide?

ARTHUR

Ah see where this is going. No, Ah think Ah've had quite enough of your daughter, thank you very much. Ah'll mail you mah bill.

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT DOOR (FROM THE INSIDE) - DAY

Arthur opens the door and stumbles inside. Ray's PIANO drifts out here, Marion stands beside Fitzgerald in the living room.

ARTHUR

That was the longest night of mah life, Ah swear. And Ah met a dame that makes Matta Hari look like a schoolgirl!

MARION

Arthur, we got company.

ARTHUR

(spots Fitzgerald)

Hey there! Bet y'all never had a tied-up woman tell you she was in love with her captor.

MARION

Arthur, he's not the only -

ARTHUR

Sure, she had a nice shape, but any dame with that kind of love-life oughta -

From the living room, Sam pokes her head around the corner.

SAM

Yes, Mr. Port?

ARTHUR

Uh - oughta... think about a career in teaching. How did you -

SAM

I tracked down dear old dad before you did. He told me where you lived, so I thought I'd thank you properly.

ARTHUR

Too many people here for that.

SAM

He also wanted me to give you this.

She hands Arthur an envelope. He peeks inside to find a nice stack of \$100 bills, 15 or 20 from the looks of it.

SAM

What's my father have to say?

ARTHUR

Ah dunno, but he speaks my language.

FITZGERALD

Sorry to interrupt, but my business is most urgent. (bows) Fitzgerald Gordon, aid to Prime Minister Chamberlain. I've come with some very confidential correspondence. (glances around) Is there somewhere private we could talk?

ARTHUR

Sure, right this way.

He points Fitz to the balcony. Fitz hesitates, then shrugs and goes. Sam wanders through the apartment, looking over Arthur's collections, while trying to overhear their discussion.

ARTHUR

So, what's this all about, Mr. Gordon?

FITZGERALD

Perhaps this may help explain. (opens and reads a letter aloud) "Mr Port, you are our last hope. We are under the thumb of a most disgusting blackmailer, whom I'm sure you are familiar with. His name is Hoover, and he operates your Federal Bureau of Intelligence."

Arthur appraises the balcony-lined street as Fitzgerald talks.

FITZGERALD (CON'T)

"This man has acquired some sensitive material concerning officials from the English, French and German governments, and is threatening to release it if certain payments are not met. In addition, he has recently increased the frequency of payments, to a level we cannot hope to meet." (Fitz meets Arthur's eyes) "You were the only man to come to our aid before. Please, you must help us, or the peace we have built in Europe is in danger of collapse." He signs it, "Your most grateful sovereign, Edward VIII."

ARTHUR

I don't know what to say, Mr. Gordon.

FITZGERALD

Please, just call me Fitzgerald.

ARTHUR

(dry) Right. Blackmail eh? From Hoover, no less? I dunno, Fitzgerald. There'd be a lot of travel involved, my grey suit needs pressing, my overnight bags are in hock -

FITZGERALD

The PM anticipated your reluctance, so he had the Lady Wallis compose this.

Fitzgerald hands Arthur a sealed envelope. Arthur opens it, and HEARS her words as he leans over the railing and reads.

LADY WALLIS (V.O.)

Arthur: When you told my love Edward not to marry me, but to keep me instead as his mistress, I thought you were the cruelest man I had ever met. But now I know you were right. Thank God you were! You helped a damsel in distress once before. Can you not find it in your heart to do so again? The consequences, if you do not, just might destroy us. Forever, Wally.

FITZGERALD

Well, Mr. Port? What do you think?

ARTHUR

I think this apartment's gettin' a little too crowded. I'm goin' out for breakfast - beniets and coffee. Don't bother gettin' up, I'll see m'self out.

Arthur strides quickly through the apartment, Fitz following.

FITZGERALD

But Mr. Port, I must have an answer! Time is of the essence!

SAM

Don't fret, Fitz. I'll change his mind.

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER - DAY

With a small head start, Arthur walks along purposefully, but Sam, walking faster and more energetically, catches up to him. The CAMERA follows them as they head for Jackson Square.

ARTHUR

So, what are you doin' here, Sam? I thought you an' ol' Drew were an item.

SAM

Oh, he didn't seem too interested in me after all.

ARTHUR

Lemme give you a clue, Sam. A man has a woman all tied up, and then leaves? That shows a decided lack of interest.

SAM

I guess you're right. So, planning on taking that job Fitzgerald offered you?

ARTHUR

I dunno. Goin' up against Hoover and his boys is no easy task. Not like knockin' out a handful of Drew's clowns - the Bureau hires some real hard cases.

SAM

I hear England's quite beautiful this time of year.

ARTHUR

That so? Then you go.

SAM

I just might. Say, why don't the English just turn their evidence over to the police - Interpol, or whatever?

ARTHUR

I just read couple' days ago the French are in hot water. Seems they've been secretly takin' money out of the National Treasury to pay the blackmailers. The English and the Germans are prob'ly doin' the same thing. Which means, if they go public with their problems, they'll all get kicked in the pants, maybe face criminal charges. Hoover's got 'em comin' and goin.'

NEW ANGLE - ARTHUR AND SAM IN JACKSON SQUARE

They walk through the busy Square, strolling like other couples.

SAM

But it sounds interesting. How would you solve it, if you did take the job? Pass counterfeit money on to the FBI men, and then turn them in? Or maybe you could blackmail Hoover and turn his whole game inside out?

ARTHUR

Blackmail Hoover? (chuckling) Girl, you have some imagination.

EXT/INT - CAFE DU MONDE - DAY (10:00 AM)

They wind up at Cafe Du Monde, a famous combination outdoor/indoor restaurant, across the street from the Square. They continue talking as they stand in line at the order window.

ARTHUR

Besides, if I know my European mores, an' I think I do, the guys Hoover caught are prob'ly guilty anyway.

SAM

So what? Why should they be penalized for their love lives? That's got nothing to do with how they do their jobs.

ARTHUR

Funny thing about people, Sam. They find out you been sleepin' around, they might not believe ya got yer mind on yer job. Not me, you unnerstand, but other people might.

They reach the front of the line> Arthur orders. They move to a table under a tent-like canopy, bordering on the sidewalk.

SAM

But surely you could figure out some way to help them? You got into Drew's mansion like some kind of magician.

ARTHUR

Sam, you have an overinflated view of mah capabilities.

JAKE

I'd say way overinflated.

Before their order comes, three Suits appear, Jake (his right hand bandaged), NATHAN and SAUNDERS, and surround their table.

ARTHUR

Well now, if isn't Lefty! How's the intimidation bid'ness these days?

JAKE

Howdy, Port. Long time no see.

ARTHUR

Sam, may Ah introduce three of Hoover's finest? The one with the bandaged hand appears to be carryin' a grudge.

NATHAN

I'd say he's carryin' a grudge. Forty-two stitches!

ARTHUR

Well, maybe you'll walk a little more lightly aroun' here.

JAKE

The only thing I'll be walking on, is your grave.

Sam realizes trouble is brewing, and glances around for help.

ARTHUR

Here we go again. I try to be nice to y'all the first time 'round, and this is the thanks I get? Sometimes it just don't pay to be neighborly.

SAUNDERS

Miss, you don't want no part of this fellow. He's nothing but trouble.

SAM

Oh, I dunno. I kinda like trouble.

Their coffee and beniets arrives. The Waiter hurriedly leaves.

ARTHUR

Gentlemen, our breakfast is here. Say yer piece an' move on.

JAKE

You've been working against the Bureau's best interests, Port. You don't wanna do that.

Jake makes his point by leaning his good left hand on Arthur's plate of beniets, and squishing down hard.

ARTHUR

Now that tears it! Don't you realize how hard it is to make a good beniet?

Sam, with the coffee pot, pours it onto Jake's left hand.

ARTHUR

First ya gotta get the cookin' oil nice an' hot.

Jake screams, pulls his scalded hand away. Arthur grabs a container of cream and throws it in Nathan's eyes.

ARTHUR

Then you gotta make the batter just right, not too thick, not too watery.

Arthur pulls Nathan's jacket over him, slams him on the head with a serving tray, while Sam sticks out her foot and trips Saunders. He tries to get up, Arthur socks him twice, emphasizing with his words.

ARTHUR

Then ya gotta drop 'em in the pot without splashin' the oil. (to Sam)
You're pretty good in the kitchen.

SAM

You should see me in the bedroom.

ARTHUR

I have seen you in the bedroom. Yo, Antoine? Sorry about the mess, m' friend. C'n we get a bag to go?

Arthur hands him a hundred, then bends down to the moaning Jake.

JAKE

Better... not take that job the Limey's offering. It'll go bad for you.

ARTHUR

Is that what this is all about? Well, you tell that ol' spider I'm gonna truss him up with his own web. You tell Hoover that fer me!

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Arthur and Sam breeze in, as Sam flashes Fitz a smile.

ARTHUR

Fitzgerald old boy, your problems are solved. Arthur Port is on the case. Here, have a beniet.

FITZGERALD

Thank you, Mr. Port. Have you a message for His Highness and Lady Wallis?

ARTHUR

Tell the King reinforcements are on the way. And tell Lady Wallis...the cruelest man is comin' to her rescue.

FITZGERALD

Very good. I'll head back immediately.

ARTHUR

You do that. Me and Miss Sarzana have some travel plans to take care of.

Arthur pulls out a handful of maps. Nearby are the B&W photos from the credits. Sam studies them while Arthur checks the maps.

ARTHUR

Now, if you wanted to get to England surreptitiously, how would you go?

SAM

Tramp steamer, New York to Liverpool?

ARTHUR

Nah, that'd take too long. Have to fly, but they'll be watching the normal air service, sooo... We'll take a DC-3 over to Cuba, lose the Suits in Havana, hop another plane to the Antilles, then on to Madrid, shoot on up to Portsmouth and hire a rental car from there.

SAM

Gee, Arthur, I don't know. That's an awful lot of miles on low-cost transportation.

ARTHUR

Look at it this way, doll. You'll be travelin' with me.

SAM

Yes, but look at it this way - I'll be traveling with you.

EXT - ESTABLISHING SHOTS

With upbeat JAZZ MUSIC playing under the scenes, we follow a quick MONTAGE of travel shots:

- A) Arthur and Sam sitting at an airplane window, overlooking the Gulf, making plans and taking notes;
- B) Pouring over large maps, in line for a flight to Madrid;
- C) Getting sandwiches made near the tarmac, until Sam hears their flight called and drags Arthur towards the plane;
- D) Again in a plane, eating their wrapped sandwiches, at night;
- E) Still at night, driving out of Portsmouth, Sam sleeping in the passenger side, as Arthur pulls a blanket from the back seat and drapes her with it.

INT - 10 DOWNING STREET - DAY (10:00 AM)

Fitzgerald greets Arthur and Sam as they enter. They walk down a corridor, turn right into a large meeting room. Arthur pauses before entering. He SEES a large antique book on a stone shelf.

ARTHUR

Fitz, what's the story behind this bible? Is it a Gutenberg?

FITZGERALD

No, I'm afraid it's merely a clever forgery, struck around the year 1820. But still and all, a rather fine piece of work, don't you think?

Fitzgerald indicates the room, and Arthur and Sam enter. Inside, the French Official and the German Local from earlier are consulting with a tall, thin man who appears to be Chamberlain. The King and Lady Wallis sit together at the side, in overstuffed chairs.

CHAMBERLAIN

And here is our rescuer now. Gentlemen and Lady, may I introduce Mr. Arthur Port and his friend, Miss Samantha Sarzana.

ARTHUR

Yer Highness, you've lost weight.

LADY WALLIS

Child, you and I should have a talk.

The Lady Wallis leads Sam aside, where they converse quietly.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well, Mr. Port, suppose you prove to us that you're the man for the job, eh? If you don't mind.

Arthur shoots Fitz a look of mild annoyance, and sits.

ARTHUR

So I have to prove myself, do I? (looks Chamberlain over) Well, how's this for starters. You're a fraud and an imposter, and I'd rather deal with the real thing, if you don't mind.

EDWARD

Mr. Port, are you sure you know what you're doing?

ARTHUR

Yeah, Ah should have my head examined. But this poor excuse for a toothpick ain't the real Prime Minister. I'd bet my last wisdom tooth on it. (leaning forward) Too ugly.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sir, you go too far!

ARTHUR

You're right there, pal. Ah've come too far to be delayed by the likes of you. Where'd they dig you up? West End? Revival of Othello? Bet you do a real sweet Ophelia.

CHAMBERLAIN

Really sir, if you do not stop this insulting -

ARTHUR

Tell me, when you kiss the boys, do you pucker? Or do they?

The PM throws a punch at Arthur, but his blow lands like a weak slap. Arthur smiles, stands, and surveys the room.

ARTHUR

All right, enough of this charade. If y'all don't produce the real Prime Minister in about two seconds, I'm gonna start singin' Gershwin. Real loud and way off key!

THE REAL CHAMBERLAIN

That's enough for tonight, Mac Donald.

The real Chamberlain enters through another door, while the previous one bows, shoots an angry glance at Arthur and storms out. Arthur blows a kiss at his retreating form.

CHAMBERLAIN

My congratulations on seeing through our little test so quickly.

EDWARD

May I ask, what tipped you off?

ARTHUR

Honestly? It was more a hunch than anything else. But you might inform him that the real Neville Chamberlain is an Oxford grad. Wearin' an Eaton tie tack just ain't cricket.

GERMAN LOCAL

Bravo, Herr Port, but if I may, our Governments would also like to be assured of your abilities. And so: (unfolds page and reads) 'There are three men applying for a job, and all three men are wearing hats - '

ARTHUR

And the third man is blind, you want to know how the blind man knows what color hat he has on? Heard it. Next?

FRENCH OFFICIAL

(also reading)

'A man sits in his cabin, writing a letter - '

ARTHUR

An electrical storm blows up, and you want to know how he dies, right? The cabin's an airplane cabin, he's writing a letter 'cause he's a skywriter. And if you've got one about a murdered man in a locked room with a puddle of water, the icicle melted, okay?

Fitzgerald folds up his page and slips it into his pocket.

EDWARD

Perhaps I can ask Mr. Port a single question that will prove his value to us once and for all? Look around you, Mr. Port. Take a good look. What, in your opinion, is the most precious article in this entire room?

Arthur's eyes play across everything in the hushed room: the six occupants, their jewelry, the books, the furniture, the TICKING clock on the mantelpiece. He's ready to give up when Sam catches his eye and motions to the oversized reproduction of the Knights of the Garter emblem hanging above the fireplace. The engraved inscription reads: 'Hony Soyt Qui Mal y Pence.' He turns confidently to face the King.

ARTHUR

I believe the answer you are looking for, Your Highness, is 'honor.' For once you've lost your honor, it can never be regained at any price.

EDWARD

So you understand. (to the others) He is our man.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well then, if that's settled, may we get down to the matter at hand? As we've indicated, Mr. Hoover has acquired some rather embarrassing photographs and audio tapes of several of our officials, and of the French and German governments as well. Some of the photographs are on the table before you.

Arthur crosses to the photos. They show men in the arms of women, all in the same surroundings: a large wooden bed in an elegantly wood-paneled room. Sam smiles suggestively at one of the more unusual positions. Arthur stays serious.

CHAMBERLAIN

You may think that the blackmail plot is our worst problem, but it's not. It has come to our attention that we have, somewhere in our midst, a traitor, a person who is passing information on to Hoover. Twice we tried to catch the FBI men who took these photos, and both times they were alerted before we could apprehend them.

ARTHUR

These are all the same location?

CHAMBERLAIN

(nods) An FBI-owned resort in Alsace-Lorraine, outside of the town of Freiburg. We had no idea the Bureau ran it.

GERMAN LOCAL

The resort got the nickname of *die Lieben Nisten*, the 'Love Nest,' from some of its more satisfied patrons.

ARTHUR

I c'n see why.

FRENCH OFFICIAL

But we haven't gotten very far in our investigations, since Hoover knows every one of our agents by sight.

ARTHUR

Sure, we could snoop around. Haven't been to the Rhine valley in years.
(to Sam) Feel like a spot of travel?

SAM

I must, or I wouldn't be here.

CHAMBERLAIN

(moving to desk) You'll need some expense money. (writing a check) Would five thousand get you started okay?

ARTHUR

Five - thousand - dollars?

CHAMBERLAIN

Certainly not! Pounds sterling. Just to get you started, of course.

ARTHUR

Well, sure. Just to get us started.

EDWARD

(rising, shakes Arthur's hand)
I think you'll find, Mr. Port, that the risks involved will more than equal your pay.

EXT - DIE LIEBEN NISTEN - NIGHT (11:00 PM)

Arthur and Sam drive up in a hired car to the Estate. Thick woods cover the rolling hills. A German GUARD stops the vehicle before the heavy iron gate. The fronts of snug villas, separated by a dozen yards or so, are visible beyond the gate.

GUARD

Sorry, *mien herr*, but you have a reservation, yes?

ARTHUR

No, my good man, I don't. But I do have a prior engagement, if you catch my drift?

GUARD

I am sorry, *mien herr*, but this is an exclusive resort, catering to a very limited clientele.

ARTHUR

Well, maybe you could find us a cabin not already reserved?

Arthur hands him their papers, folded in with a wad of bills, as Sam leans out and calls, in a heavy Long Island accent:

SAM

Sweetie, what's takin' so lo-ong? You said you'd have me under the covers in no time fla-at!

Arthur and the Guard exchange looks, and the Guard accepts the money with a grin. They walk to the guard shack, where the Guard hands Arthur a pen and indicates a sign-in register.

GUARD

You will sign in, please? Your name and your title?

ARTHUR

Right you are, Willy, I'll just put my John Q. right here...

SAM

Sweetie, can you help me?

Sam struggles with a strap of her dress. The Guard drools.

ARTHUR

See if you can help her out, old boy,
while I finish this.

GUARD

Certainly!

The Guard rushes to the car while Arthur thumbs through the register. On one page is the signature 'Lord Omdurman' in bold ink. Arthur rips out the page and heads back to the taxi.

SAM

Oooh, that tickles!

ARTHUR

Come now, dear, we have a long night
ahead of us! Thank you, my good man.

GUARD

(somewhat flustered)

Not at all, *mien herr*. Enjoy your stay!

The CAMERA focuses on his flushed face as the car drives in.

INT/EXT - VILLA FIVE

Arthur carries in two bags as Sam checks out the Villa. The room is dark until she hits the light switch, which softly illuminates the room and sets romantic MUSIC to playing.

SAM

(normal voice)

The 'Love Nest,' eh? Aptly named.

Arthur closes the door behind them, and crosses to Sam.

SAM

What do you think we should -

Arthur sweeps her into his arms, kisses her passionately.

ARTHUR

Don't talk, until I can get the volume up.

SAM

Hope that isn't a problem - getting it up, I mean.

Arthur wags a finger at her semi-seriously in response. He soon finds the VOLUME and cranks it way up, then returns.

ARTHUR

Maybe we should pretend to...you know?

SAM

Why pretend?

They begin fervently undressing. Arthur accidentally knocks over a pitcher of roses near the bed. The water seeps under a nearby wall beside the bed. He crosses to Sam and whispers:

ARTHUR

Sammy, I need you to stall. Pretend you're onstage.

SAM

Onstage?

ARTHUR

You're gonna have t' distract whoever's watchin' us. Just for a few minutes.

SAM

The things I do for men!

Sam begins to dance suggestively, while slowly removing her clothes. She starts slow, then really gets into it. Arthur disappears around the corner of what must be the 'false' wall.

INT - THE HIDDEN ROOM - SECONDS LATER

From within the hidden room, we SEE Sam dancing on the other side of a window, from behind which two Agents, FRANKLIN and Spence, are filming.

FRANKLIN

Where'd the guy go off to?

SPENCE

Who cares? Just keep the camera on her!

NEW ANGLE - ARTHUR'S SEARCH

Arthur fishes around the moulding, locates a secret button, then leans up and switches off the room lights.

SPENCE

Dammit! Can you still pick her up?

FRANKLIN

I got it under control.

Arthur clicks the button, and a small door pops open. Arthur squeezes in and joins the Agents in staring at Sam's dancing.

ARTHUR

That dame sure can move, can't she?

FRANKLIN

I'll say! Lookit the way she - hey!

In the bedroom, Sam is lost in her sinuous dance, while a few BUMPS sound above the music. Then, Franklin crashes through the fake mirror onto the bed. Sam jumps out of the way, and Arthur and Spence tumble through the narrow door into the kitchen, wrestling. Spence lands on top of Arthur and pulls back his hand to throw a punch, but Sam slaps Spence in the face with the roses. Spence goes sprawling, Arthur jumps on top of him and quickly handcuffs his hands behind his back.

ARTHUR

Thanks for the timely rescue, Sam.

SAM

No problem. (indicating roses)
Besides, I prefer yellow.

Arthur rifles Spence's pockets, while Sam takes another set of handcuffs into the bedroom, cuffs the knocked-out Franklin and gags him with a pillowcase. Arthur pulls Spence's wallet out of his coat, and we SEE in an INSERT his Driver's License and his Special Agent's Badge, both with his name, Peter Spence, clearly spelled out.

ARTHUR

Awright, Mr. Spence, tell me why we're so photogenic.

AGENT

So my name's Spence and I work for the Bureau. So what? You ain't gettin' anythin' else outta me.

Suddenly, in the other room, we HEAR the gagged Franklin's muffled MOANS, as if he's being tortured.

FRANKLIN (OFF-SCREEN)

No! No! Stop! Stop it!

ARTHUR

Hear that? She's comin' in here next, and she won't be happy if I have to tell her you ain't cooperatin.'

SPENCE

That - that don't bother me none.

Franklin's SCREAMS turn to SOBS. We can just make out his words:

FRANKLIN (OFF-SCREEN)

No more, no more, please!

ARTHUR

I know you're with the Bureau, an' I also know the blackmail game you been runnin' on the three Governments.

Spence appears worried from Franklin's weakening MOANS.

SPENCE

So we took some pics of a bunch o' rich playboys? So what?

ARTHUR

So to you, it's okay that their people have to foot the bill for their governments' indiscretions?

SPENCE

I'm just doin' what I'm told.

ARTHUR

Who do you get your orders from? Who gets the evidence when it's collected?

SPENCE

Everything comes straight from the Director's Special Assistant. Our info goes back to him, through private diplomatic pouches, via the Embassy in Stuttgart.

ARTHUR

Why here? Why this place?

SPENCE

The Director heard this place was hot a few years ago. So, we secretly bought it, remodeled a little during the past years, and boom! A Hideaway Motel.

Sam strolls in, waving a long feather in one hand, smiling.

SAM

Got all the poop you need? Or should I work him over, too?

ARTHUR

Naw, he's spilled everything he knows.

SPENCE

(nodding at the feather)

You mean, that's what you were using on Franklin?

ARTHUR

I tried t' warn you, she can be dangerous at times.

SAM

I should have used it on you.

ARTHUR

Don't make threats you're not prepared to keep.

SAM

(menacing the feather)

I just have one question, Mr. Spence: Why's Hoover doing all this? What's he got to gain, except more enemies?

SPENCE

Who knows? Maybe he don't like the way the Germans and Brits have been all buddy-buddy since they locked away that nutcase Adolf back in '33. Maybe he wants an advantage in trade negotiations. Or, hell, maybe he's just paranoid.

SAM

What's Hoover got to be paranoid about?

INT - WASHINGTON - HOOVER'S OFFICES - DAY (7:45 AM)

Hoover's special ASSISTANT, a tall, 40-ish thin man, enters the outer of two offices, and SEES Hoover through the open door, in the washroom of his Inner Office. Both offices are dark, paneled in heavy wood, and the shades are drawn.

ASSISTANT

Good morning, Sir. You're in early.

In close up we SEE Hoover, seemingly washing makeup off his face. He makes no response to his Assistant's comment.

ASSISTANT

We received two Diplomatic pouches this morning. One's from the lodge in Germany. (he opens it) That's odd.

HOOVER

What's odd? (finishes washing)

The Assistant removes a large feather from the pouch.

ASSISTANT

That's all that was in it.

HOOVER

That idiot Spence! Never mind. Who's the other one from?

ASSISTANT

It's marked 'Code Name Pooh.'

HOOVER

Our man in London! Read it, please.

ASSISTANT

It says, 'Our cousin has hired a specialist to intervene in the current situation. Possibly a relative of yours.'

HOOVER

Let 'em hire any fool they want! They just better have the money in our hands by next Friday, or they'll all be looking for a good retirement villa. Get rid of this guy! I mean now! I want nothing left of him but his shadow!

EXT - LONDON - BURRAY STREET - DAY (12 NOON)

Arthur and Sam step off a double-decker bus marked 'Airport - Downtown.' They walk down the sidewalk, unaware another man has stepped off the bus and is following them - Agent Roland.

SAM

So, what's our next move?

ARTHUR

I have an old buddy who lives near Oxford, used to be in the Bureau years ago. Think I'll look him up.

SAM

So we're heading for Oxford?

Arthur glances at a store window, slows, then pulls Sam close in an embrace. Roland dodges to his right to buy a paper. Arthur looks around but can't spot him, so they continue.

ARTHUR

Oxford? No, Scotland Yard, actually. I cabled last night before we boarded the plane. By now, the boys will have pulled my friend in for interrogation.

SAM

Won't he be angry?

ARTHUR

Naw, me an' John go way back. He'll be overjoyed to see me.

INT - SCOTLAND YARD - DAY (2:00 PM)

JOHN DRAKE, handcuffed, screams at the walls of the interrogation room. Two SERGEANTS in plain clothes lounge nearby.

DRAKE

Ya can't treat me this way, ya swine!
Ya drag me in here - without a warrant,
mind! - lock me up in these fargin'
cuffs, and fer wot? Just so ya c'n keep
me here coolin' me heels, fer five
bleedin' hours! Well, I won't stand fer
it, I tell ya! I wanna see my solici-
tor and I mean right now! I know me
rights! I know when an innocent man -

Just then, Arthur and Sam stroll in, accompanied by a CAPTAIN, who motions the two Sergeants out.

CAPTAIN

Out, both of you. Lets have the keys.

DRAKE

Oh no, not him again! Ya canna' leave
me wi' this wretched bloke! I've told
ya everything! I ain't done nuthin'!

ARTHUR

Thanks, Captain. I'll tell the PM you
been real helpful.

CAPTAIN

Yes, well, just see that there are no
visible bruises.

The Captain hands the keys to Arthur, shakes his head and leaves, right behind the two Sergeants.

DRAKE

Don't leave me wi' him, I'm beggin'
ya! He did me right sorry last time,
he did! Plea-ease Captain! Ple-ease!

His sobbing pleas melt into laughing chuckles and his accent drops as soon as the door is shut. He goes to shake hands with Arthur but the cuffs stop him. Arthur obligingly removes them.

DRAKE

Arthur C. Port, as I live and breath!
Good to see you. Who's the frail?

ARTHUR

Her name's Samantha, and she ain't no
frail, believe me. Sam, meet John Drake,
once an FBI agent, but now all better.

DRAKE

Good lord, Arthur, you make it sound
like I had a disease! Glad to meet
you, miss. What's it been, eight years?

ARTHUR

More like nine. (to Sam) We sorta
worked together, in Berlin.

DRAKE

Germany in '33 was a lot different
than it is now. You could hardly walk
down the Freidrichstrasse without
bumping into a Brownshirt hassling
some poor Jewish shopkeeper.

As Drake relaxes in his chair, Arthur straddles a desk corner.

ARTHUR

We need your help, John. Your former
employer is blackmailing the English
government. We need something to use on
ol' J. Edgar, to put him off his feed.

DRAKE

Gee, I don't know, Arthur. I've been
away for so long, I don't have anything
fresh. All the dirt I had has been
turned over a dozen times since.

SAM

Do you want to see the old days
return, Mr. Drake?

DRAKE

Hell no, miss. Whaddya think I am,
some kind of Nazi?

SAM

Then you have to help us.

Drake straightens up, turning serious.

DRAKE

Look, the best I can do is a name: Phil Anderson. Used to work out of the Chicago office, 'till he got dumped back in '39 for making a crude joke about one of Hoover's parties.

SAM

His parties?

DRAKE

Yeah, something to do with fancy ball gowns. I never got the joke myself. Anyway, Anderson got booted out on his tail. Full severance, but no explanation. Last I heard, he was running some kind of security company on the North Side, hard by Wrigley. If anyone has anything on Hoover, he's the one.

ARTHUR

By the by, does the name 'Omdurman' mean anything to you?

DRAKE

Omdurman, eh? Sounds like a general, or maybe a battle. My British history isn't what it used to be.

ARTHUR

Lotta me ain't what it used t' be.

DRAKE

Try the Imperial War Museum. They could track it down for you.

ARTHUR

Thanks, old friend. Lookin' pretty good, for a washed up ex-field agent.

DRAKE

You too, you sorry excuse for a private detective. (to Sam) Take care of this one, miss. He's worth it.

Arthur puts the cuffs back on gently, then makes a winding motion with his fingers and knocks on the door. Drake returns to his loud, agitated accent as Arthur and Sam wave goodbye.

DRAKE

Ya push me around like that, wi' me hands tied? Ya bastard! Take off these fargin' cuffs an' try that agin'! I'll wipe the gutters wi' ya! Just wait'll I get out, I'll come after ya, ya sadist! Yeah, keep an eye out for me!

EXT - THE STREET OUTSIDE POLICE HQ - DAY

Arthur and Sam exit onto the street, as John's YELLS fade.

SAM

So, what does the 'C' stand for?

ARTHUR

The 'C' in what?

SAM

Your middle name. Drake called you Arthur C. Port.

ARTHUR

(feigning puzzlement)

I don't know! I'll have to ask him next time we have him over for tea!

SAM

You're impossible!

ARTHUR

Wait a minute. Quick! Step in here.

INT- THE BUTTERED SCOAN TEA SHOP - DAY (3:00 PM)

Arthur and Sam duck into a small tea-and-scones shop, while Roland, strolls past, then stops in the vestibule of a store

two doors down. Arthur peers through the crowded window.

ARTHUR

Thought Ah felt something. See that guy there, the one in the green trench-coat? Been followin' us ever since we landed this morning. We're gonna have to lose him, and Ah think Ah know just how. Quick, pop in here.

INT - THE RUTTING STAG - DAY (3:15 PM)

They enter a local bar, loud and raucous near the end of the day. A darts tourney is in full swing near the back, while dozens of LOCALS drink at tables and the bar. Arthur spots TWO LARGE FELLOWS shooting darts, and leads Sam there.

ARTHUR

'Ello, sports. Say, 'ow about a little wager, eh?

He SHOUTS in the larger man's ear. Arthur flashes some bills, the man nods and they move off to the men's room.

Roland pops his head in and looks around. It takes awhile before he spots Arthur, his back to him, shooting darts with two big men. He smiles grimly, and moves slowly toward them.

WAITRESS

Want anythin', ducky?

ROLAND

Get away from me, and stay away!

The Waitress goes away in a huff, but an arm by the dart players reaches out and grabs her.

Roland temporarily loses sight of Arthur. He tries to force his way to the bar, but he calms down when he sees Arthur's heavy build and recognizable clothes back at the dart line. Roland draws a wicked switchblade from under his sleeve.

Arthur continues to play, facing the board. Roland nears the dart game, his knife clutched under his forearm, and waits for Arthur to turn about. When he does, Roland's jaw drops - it's somebody else, dressed to look like Arthur.

Roland is about to stab him anyway, when the Waitress appears and spills a tray of drinks all over him. He drops his knife.

ROLAND

You idiot! Look what you've done!

WAITRESS

You bumped into me!

VERY BIG PATRON

Those were our drinks, mistuh!

INT/EXT - OUTSIDE AT THE RUTTING STAG

Arthur and Sam meet up at the back door, as a FIGHT erupts inside. They go outside as THUNDER rumbles in the distance.

ARTHUR

Always seems to be a fight when I go into a bar. Taxi!

They hail a black cab, get in, and it drives away.

INT - THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM - DAY (4:00 PM)

With softer jazz MUSIC in the background, Arthur and Sam pull out thick volume after volume, and proceed to pour over books, maps and files, until Sam finds what they're looking for. She drags a thick red book to him as the MUSIC fades down.

SAM

Here it is, Arthur! 'Omdurman, Battle of. Fought by Her Majesty's British and Egyptian Army against the Dervishes under Abdullah. September 2nd, 1898.' So on and so on.

ARTHUR

Hmmm... 'The turning point of the battle was when the 21st Lancers counter-charged and broke the Dervish line. The charge was led by twenty-four-year-old ...' Well, that just about clinches it. (closes book) C'mon, Sammy. We gotta go close down a mole.

INT/EXT - THE ALBERT HALL - DAY (5:00 PM)

Arthur and Sam enter a massive brick building through a side entrance. They look out across a sea of faces, all straining to hear the speaker. Over loudspeakers, we HEAR a recognizable voice. The crowd VOICES their support throughout his speech.

CHURCHILL

You know that I am a loyal subject of the Crown, yet a tireless critic of the current Government's wasteful spending. And who does it affect the most? You, good men and women, you who work hard for every copper and pound. But it does our country no good, when our taxes go for the support of useless pageantry, unnecessary bureaucracy, and idle Royalty!

We now SEE CHURCHILL in Close Up, as he takes a moment to let the crowd's approval swell.

CHURCHILL

Our circumstances would be less troubling, if a certain Monarch paid more attention to His own people, than He did to His cousin's subjects across the sea. To His own people, who need His attention so very much at home.

Again the crowd ROARS its agreement. Arthur and Sam maneuver through the crush of people, angling to get backstage.

CHURCHILL

We not only have the right to change this Government, not only the power to change this Government, but we have the obligation to change this Government!

The room breaks out into SHOUTS & CHEERS. Churchill heads past his bodyguards at curtain's edge, for an exit onto the sidewalk - but is halted by a man's arm, blocking the doorway.

ARTHUR

Mr. Churchill? May we have a word together, without the hired help?

CHURCHILL

What is this in regards to, sir?

ARTHUR

Let's just say I'm a history buff,
and I wanna talk over old times -
like that charge you led at the
Battle of Omdurman?

INT - RED LION PUB - DAY

Arthur sits with Churchill at a small window booth, while Sam
flirts with the bodyguards, who block the front door.

ARTHUR

You used a pseudonym when you visited
the *Lieben Nisten*, didn't you? Named
yourself after a battle you fought in,
all of fifty years ago. Why?

CHURCHILL

A minor indiscretion of youth. (takes
a sip) Yes, it was silly of me to use
that name in the Villa's log book. I
was young and stupid, and thought I
was in love.

ARTHUR

Why are you doin' Hoover's dirty work
for him?

A WAITRESS bring over two beers, reddish-brown and foaming.

CHURCHILL

You do not know what you are meddling
in, my boy. Do you think I enjoy feed-
ing information to that - that ogre?
I do what is best for this country. If
I know what information is being passed
to our enemies, then I can determine
best how England should proceed.

ARTHUR

D'you expect there'll ever be an end
to Hoover's greed, for money, for more
information, for more power?

CHURCHILL

I hope that by then, someone will have dropped a very large rock upon him.

ARTHUR

Well, that someone is me. All I ask is one week of silence from you, 'till next Friday. By then, either your troubles will be over, or you c'n tell Hoover any damn thing you want. One week - do we have a deal?

CHURCHILL

Right now, I'd make a deal with Comrade Joe himself, if it meant getting out from Hoover's odorous thumb. And to prove my support, I will pass along this tidbit of information: Hoover has already been warned about your involvement in this case. By me, I'm afraid. By now, he'll have agents watching every commercial flight returning to the States, no doubt to have you arrested on trumped-up charges.

ARTHUR

That puts quite a cramp in our travel arrangements.

CHURCHILL

Not necessarily. How good a pilot are you, my boy?

ARTHUR

Well, I've got some hours in single-engine fighters, but I've never flown a multi-engine job before.

Churchill pulls out a pen and paper and begins writing.

CHURCHILL

And you won't have to. At Hempstead Airfield near Glasgow, there is a special trainer version of the Spitfire Mark III. It is outfitted...

(MORE)

CHURCHILL (CON'T)

...with two seats, one each for the trainer and the instructor. Even better, it incorporates new external fuel tanks, with a flying radius of twelve hundred miles. (finishes note) Show them this note, and you will have no trouble. With a full tank, you should be able to make Reykjavik. From there, Greenland, and after that, the welcoming arms of Canada.

ARTHUR

(standing)

Thank you sir. I'm in your debt.

CHURCHILL

If you can succeed in squashing this spider, we shall be in your debt.

INT - HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - NIGHT (6:00 PM)

Hoover's Assistant enters with a dispatch. He looks worried.

ASSISTANT

An urgent dispatch, sir. From 'Pooh.'

HOOVER

Well? What's he say?

ASSISTANT

'Sorry to report, but I cannot watch the 'ship' you're interested in. The surf's getting rough and hampers my visibility. But, since the vessel in question has already set sail, my value in the matter seems negligible.' He ends it, 'See you in the Big Forest, Piglet. From Pooh.'

HOOVER

Dammit all! I've told him not to use that name in official correspondence - wait a minute! What was that he said about setting sail?

ASSISTANT

Sounds like the man is returning home.

HOOVER

Just in case, get a cable off to Admiral Fletcher on the Hornet. Tell him to turn back any lone planes taking off from British airbases in the next thirty-six hours. If they won't identify themselves - shoot 'em down!

ASSISTANT

(troubled)

Yes, sir.

INT/EXT - HEMPSTEAD FIELD OPERATIONS ROOM - NIGHT (11:00 PM)

A sleepy TOWER OPERATOR is disturbed by a KNOCK at the door. He opens it, to an RAF OFFICER escorting Arthur and Sam inside.

OFFICER

Sorry to disturb you, Rory, but these two have special orders for an emergency launch. Top Priority.

OPERATOR

In the middle of the night! This is most irregular. No, no, I'm sorry, but you'll have to wait until morning when I can get confirmation from -

Arthur motions at the Officer, who shrugs and shows the Operator the note he's holding. The Operator changes his tone.

OPERATOR

I'm quite sorry, sir! I didn't realize he sent you up here. Is there anything you need for your flight?

ARTHUR

Sam'iches, and a pot of hot coffee, black. And could you make sure the external fuel tanks are topped off?

OFFICER

I'll look to the fuel straight away.

OPERATOR

Well then, I'll... take care of the sandwiches and coffee.

While filling his own thermos, the Operator makes small talk.

OPERATOR

Would it be out of bounds for me to ask your final destination?

ARTHUR

I'm afraid it would.

OPERATOR

Wouldn't you be happier with a plane with greater range, like the Mosquito?

ARTHUR

Not fast enough for our needs.

OPERATOR

And that would be?

ARTHUR

We're eloping. Portugal. Dawn service.

OPERATOR

Well, if you could manage to bring it back in one piece. Please?

Sam accepts the thermos, and they exit out into the moonlit runway area. In the distance, we SEE the Spitfire under dim spotlights, being readied for takeoff.

SAM

Eloping. Cute. So, are you riding shotgun or am I?

ARTHUR

I probably have just a few more hours in the air than you.

SAM

Maybe, but I'll bet I'm better with a stick than you are.

ARTHUR

(chuckles) Next you'll be making some crack about cockpits. Sure you're not just hangin' 'round to spy on me?

SAM

Reasonably sure.

Just as they slip into the plane and prepare to take off, a YOUNG OFFICER runs from the Control Tower, waving frantically.

YOUNG OFFICER

Wait! Wait! Don't leave yet! (lifts up a sack) Your sandwiches!

Arthur's hand leans out, takes the bag, pulls it in, then returns with a bill and presses it into the Young Officer's palm.

INT/EXT - OVER THE NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT (2 AM)

Arthur and Sam fly northwestward in the moon light, enjoying the closeness of the cockpit, as Sam runs her hands over Arthur's broad shoulders. Suddenly, the radio crackles to life. The CAMERA'S view shifts back and forth from the Spitfire's cockpit to those of the two planes following them.

BLACKJACK ONE

Unidentified British fighter: you are entering American-controlled airspace. Identify yourself immediately.

ARTHUR

Y' didn't eat them sam'iches yet?

SAM

Nope, haven't touched them.

ARTHUR

Good. Hold on!

Arthur boosts the throttle and throws the Spitfire into a wingover dive, heading straight for the deck.

BLACKJACK ONE

He's running! Stay with him!

The Spitfire noses down, gaining distance over its pursuers, two P-39 Aircobras. All three planes plummet in the moonlit night, heading right for the approaching waves.

SAM

You're getting a little low, aren't you?

ARTHUR

Some day when we're old and gray, I want to look back on our time together and know, deep in my heart, that you were never bored.

SAM

I'll never accuse you of that. But I'd have less gray hair in that future, if you pulled up sometime soon!

ARTHUR

Just a little lower...

The Spitfire appears headed for a watery grave, when at the last minute, the flaps jut out and throw the plane into a tight curve, arcing mere feet above the water. As it levels out, one wave crests high enough to spray the windscreen.

ARTHUR

That'll clear the bugs off, at least.

SAM

Arthur! You're too low! Pull up!

ARTHUR

We're in the middle of the Atlantic. We got no place t' hide. I can't dog-fight with 'em - even if I could, I wouldn't shoot down one of our own boys. This may be our only choice.

SAM

You're planning on drowning us, just so they can't hang us for treason? Great plan. Um, let me off at the next corner and I'll hail a cab. Oh - oh!

Another wave rears up and catches a wingtip, throwing the

plane out of balance. Arthur fights to keep it airborne, and for a brief moment, the engine COUGHS and SPUTTERS. But it catches again, and resumes its former satisfying engine GROWL.

SAM

Arthur, we can't keep running from them. We're going to have to do what they ask, or they'll open fire.

ARTHUR

That's exactly what I want.

SAM

You want them to shoot? You got a touch of altitude sickness?

ARTHUR

Just turn around and watch.

Sam smiles grimly at Arthur, as she turns in her cramped seat to stare out a corner of the cockpit at their pursuers.

BLACKJACK THREE

Captain, we can't stay with them. Their plane's too fast!

BLACKJACK ONE

I know! Unidentified British plane, this is your last warning. Turn back, or you will be considered hostile!

BLACKJACK THREE

No response, Captain.

BLACKJACK ONE

I know, I know! Dammit, what's that man's problem? Has he got a death wish or something? Blackjack Three, get in behind him and fire a burst over his wing. Just a warning!

BLACKJACK THREE

Roger that, Cap.

The Aircobra slips in behind the Spitfire, now at some distance. He fires a short burst, and the tracers arc past.

SAM

Arthurrrrrrr!

ARTHUR

Keep watching!

The 'Cobras continue at the same altitude as the Spitfire, occasionally touching the waves. Suddenly, a wave hits the belly of one 'Cobra, the engine sputters, COUGHS and stalls.

BLACKJACK THREE

Captain! I'm losin' her!

BLACKJACK ONE

Kenny! Ride her out! Lift the nose!!

As the 'Cobra noses down, the pilot pulls her up into a stall and slams hard into the water, but upright. In CLOSE UP, we SEE the young pilot throw back the canopy and climb out onto the rocking wing, jumping into the ocean with his life vest inflated, as the other two planes roar away.

BLACKJACK THREE

Get that bastard, Captain.

Sam's eyes widen as she watches the ditching.

SAM

You did it! One of them's ditched!
How did you know that would work?

ARTHUR

I read about the new Air-cobras in Scientific American a few months ago. They got an air scoop under the belly. I just figured if we could get them low enough, maybe a healthy dose o' seawater would calm 'em down.

Tracers once again arc across their view, as the second 'Cobra slides in behind them.

ARTHUR

Seems like one of 'em just don't know when to quit. Gonna have t' try some-thin' different with him.

Arthur checks his fuel gauges, as more tracers fly past his windscreen. In INSERT, we SEE the gauges are listed 'Internal Left, Internal Right, External Left and External Right.' The External Left is empty, while the other still has a third.

ARTHUR

Okay, lets see if the Good Lord's in our corner t'night.

Arthur pulls a lever under the External Left fuel tank, and under the left wing, the spheroidal tank drops away, splashing across the water behind the Spitfire. The 'Cobra races on, oblivious, until the tank bounces across a wind-whipped wave and flashes past his wing at three hundred miles an hour. The pilot winces, then tightens the grip on the joystick.

SAM

He's still with us!

ARTHUR

Nuthin' to it, but t' do it.

Resolved, Arthur pulls the other lever, and in a near-repeat, the tank falls away with a spray of fuel and goes bouncing across the waves. Blackjack One is ready for it this time, and he dodges it easily, as the cartwheeling tank sprays its last fuel over the left wing of the plane.

ARTHUR

Ya got anythin' in your purse ya wanna toss, now's the time.

Blackjack One smiles grimly. His thumb lowers to the trigger.

BLACKJACK ONE

This one's for Kenny.

He squeezes the trigger, and the openings in his left wing spout flame as the bullets roar out. But a wisp of flame lingers after the firing stops, then grows to a larger section. The pilot notices, and stares at the Spitfire ahead of him.

BLACKJACK ONE

Oh man, I don't wanna do this.

The 'Cobra dips lower, as the pilot tries to rake the burn-

ing wing with ocean spray. First one wave then another wash over the wing. He prays as he crashes through each wave.

BLACKJACK ONE

God is great...God is good...God is -
Awww, Goddammit!

The last comment comes out harsh, as the 'Cobra's engine begins to SPUTTER and cough. Just like Blackjack Three, it shudders, jerks twice and noses right into an oncoming wave. The pilot sits calmly in the cockpit, smiling ironically at his situation as the 'Cobra rocks in the waves.

The Spitfire circles above and drops a flare to mark the spot. Arthur closes the cockpit and stow the flare gun.

ARTHUR

Stewardess? How 'bout them samwiches?

SAM

Take a guess what kind of sandwiches we have? (pause) Watercress.

ARTHUR

Ewwwww...

The Spitfire turns northwest as it flies off.

INT - HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - MORNING (10 AM)

The Assistant walks in with another decoded message.

ASSISTANT

Sir, we just received a message from the Detroit-Windsor border. A Canadian consular car just entered the States. Two of its passengers match the ID of the detective and his female companion.

HOOVER

Do we have a name for his lady friend?

ASSISTANT

Actually, one of our boys in the Organized Crime section recognized her photo. She's the daughter of Big Sal Sarzana.

HOOVER

Then they're headin' for Chicago.
Alert the Chicago office. Increase the
surveillance on his house, and put a
round-the-clock tail on both of them
when they're spotted. And keep tabs on
any ex-agents we have living in the
area. If I know this detective, he'll
be snooping around them like a hound
dog after an old bone.

The Assistant takes furious notes while Hoover strides about.

HOOVER

And while he's out of town, get the boys
in New Orleans to lean on his friends,
anyone that knows him. I want to know
what this man's planning, and I want
the report on my desk in 48 hours.

EXT/INT - SARZANA'S GOLD COAST MANSION - DAY (11:30 AM)

Sam leads Arthur as they pass a half-dozen burly guards up the
wide stone stairs of her father's Lake Shore Drive mansion.
She opens the door without knocking and glides in. Arthur
follows a bit more warily. Big Sal and Tony are just inside.

SAM

Daddy!

Sam rushes to embrace her father in the entrance hall and
kisses his cheek, while Arthur nods respectfully to Tony.

ARTHUR

Howdy...Tony.

TONY

Good to see you, too, Mister Port.

Big Sal leads them into a quieter room, with Tony following.

BIG SAL

So, my little girl's been over to
England and spent a night in a romantic
German hideaway, eh? In my day, we
had the honeymoon after the wedding.

ARTHUR

Pardon me, Big Sal, but -

SAM

Arthur, don't even start. Daddy, it's not what you think. I'm working with Arthur on a very important case.

BIG SAL

That's a shame. So, whaddya need?

SAM

I didn't think I needed an excuse to visit my own father! (pause) Oh, all right. We could use a little help. We need to find a man named Anderson, who runs a security firm on the North Side.

BIG SAL

Anderson, Anderson... (glances at Tony) Wouldn't be a guy named Phil Anderson? Used to work with the Feds?

ARTHUR

That's the guy.

TONY

(consulting his notebook)

Phil Anderson. Runs a nickel-and-dime bodyguard rental and spouse shadowing biz out of a storefront on Clark Street. 2833 North. (smiles) Want his number?

ARTHUR

Wouldn't hurt.

Arthur leans over and copies the number into his own notebook. Sal smiles, as if he knows exactly what will happen next.

BIG SAL

You wanna call him, right? First, do me a small favor. (points) Pick up that phone there and call Gregory 2277. Tell Luigi when he answers, that you wanna make reservations for four people, two o'clock t'day.

ARTHUR

Whatever you say. (dials) H'lo, Luigi?
I'd like to make reservations for two
o'clock. Four people, one o' them bein'
Big Sal. Thanks, *paisan*.. (hangs up)

BIG SAL

(points to another phone) Now, go to
that phone over there, and call Mr.
Anderson. See, the first one's bugged.
They don't think I know, but I know.
Second one's clean as a whistle.

ARTHUR

H'lo, Phil, Phil Anderson? A mutual
friend of ours asked me t' look you
up...John Drake...Yeah, he's eatin' a
lotta fish an' chips these days. Say,
is there someplace we c'n do a face-
t'-face?... I'm on the North Side...
Sure, we're not too far from there...

Arthur scribbles into his notebook.

ARTHUR

Got it, middle-right section at 2:00 pm.
Thanks. I'll make it worth yer while.

Arthur hangs up, and gives Sal and Sam a knowing smile.

ARTHUR

We got a meeting for two pm. Nice
public place. He says it'll be safer
that way. Says it's got a nice view.

INT/EXT - UNMARKED VAN ON THE STREET

Behind the house, THOMPSON and ELLIOTT sit in the front seat,
while STEVENS, alone in the back, talks into a radio handset.

STEVENS

This is Stevens over at Sarzana's. Send
a couple'a cars down to Luigi's Pasta
on La Salle. There'll be four people to
tail: Sarzana and Big Tony, and the
detective and his gal Friday.

While the Suits in the front seat watch Sarzana's house, we Arthur and Sam sneak out an entrance in the alley.

EXT/INT - WRIGLEY FIELD - DAY (2:00 PM)

Arthur (with a bag of peanuts) and Sam (carrying a pennant) stroll through the CHEERING crowd, heading for the third row in the Right Field bleachers.

ARTHUR

Dr. Livingston, I presume?

ANDERSON

Stanley! Hey, you missed a hell of a first inning!

Arthur and Sam take a seat on the bench next to Anderson.

ANDERSON

So how can I be of service to a pal o' John Drake's?

ARTHUR

I hear you worked for a big fellow who's bothering some friends of mine.

ANDERSON

Never! I never worked for that idiot! (calmer) I worked for an ideal. I felt that the real criminals at large in this country needed to be stopped, and the Bureau seemed the best place to work from. And it was, for awhile.

The Crowd CHEERS the on-field action, in contrast to Anderson.

ANDERSON

But then he changed the game. Sure, he was in on a few captures, but when he began to use Bureau for his own private witch hunts, I couldn't go along. You know, he actually sent a bunch of agents to ask southern sheriffs if he should run for President. Know what their response was? They didn't even want him as Director of the FBI!

SAM

You were forced out. Can we ask why?

As the crowd ROARS, the ANNOUNCER'S voice crackles:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Now batting, number 23, Ted... Williams!

ANDERSON

God, I'm glad the Cubs bought up the contract for Williams. What a steal! A sawbuck says he parks it in right field.

ARTHUR

(cracking peanuts) You're on.

While Ted Williams bats, Anderson continues with his story.

ANDERSON

Yeah, they forced me out, but I was ready to go. I was tired of hassling innocent people who's only crime was speaking their mind. One day, it got back to the Director that I'd told a joke about his little all-guy get-togethers. Guess he didn't see the humor. They offered me full pension, and I took it. Never looked back. (looks intently at Arthur) What've your clients done wrong?

ARTHUR

Whaddy mean, clients?

ANDERSON

I can spot a fellow detective a mile away. Dipping into the company till?

ARTHUR

Nope. Sleeping with people other than their spouses.

ANDERSON

Yeah, I get a lot of those. Hell, you could put half the world in jail for...

(MORE)

ANDERSON (CON'T.)

...that. So, you wanna get back at the Director? (writes a note on his ticket stub) Check out this building on Saturday night - that's tomorrow. It's in the Georgetown area. If he's still using it, the guest list should be real interesting. And bring plenty of film.

The crowd EXPLODES as Ted rockets a line drive into the bleachers just to their right. Arthur smiles at Anderson, drops a fiver into his peanut bag and tosses the bag to Anderson. Anderson looks inside and spies a wad of hundreds stuffed in the bottom, along with the nuts and empty shells.

ARTHUR

We'll give the Director your regards.

ANDERSON

Tell him green's not his color.
(pause) He'll understand.

Arthur and Sam look puzzled, then blend into the CHEERING crowd. They pass another Agent, WILSON, in a porkpie hat, clapping half-interested, absorbed with watching Anderson.

INT - SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY (3:15 PM)

Sam unlocks her apartment door, and Arthur follows. She crosses the room and kneels at the foot of a large closet.

ARTHUR

C'mon, Sam! We gotta catch a train in forty-five minutes if we wanna make Washington by tomorrow night.

SAM

Calm down. I'm getting some things that might be helpful on our stakeout. Stakeout! I can't believe I'm using that word.

ARTHUR

(rifling hanging clothes)
Whaddya need, anyway? You got enough clothes already to outfit most of Gary.
(waves a frilly number) Ni-iiice.

Sam comes up with an expensive camera and a long telephoto lens. She takes a few snaps of Arthur mugging with her outfits.

ARTHUR

Hey, pack a couple extra bags with stuff you wouldn't mind losing. Just in case.

Sam pulls out two bags from a closet shelf and piles clothes into it. Arthur stops her from putting in the frilly one.

ARTHUR

No, no. You may need this some day.

EXT/INT - UNION STATION - DAY (4:45 PM)

With up-tempo JAZZ music in the background, Arthur and Sam hop out of a cab, loaded with bags. Sam tips the DRIVER as a PORTER helps Arthur with the bags, and they run for the station. QUICK CUTS show them at the ticket counter, where Arthur slips the porter a couple of bills and whispers instructions while Sam buys the tickets. Then they run for the tracks and toss three bags onto a train labeled "California - Los Angeles." The Porter (still with three bags) moves off, while lurking in the shadows, two Agents, LANDERS and HARRIS, observe their departure.

LANDERS

Harris, stay here an' keep an eye on 'em. I'm gonna go report in.

HARRIS

You got it, Landers.

Unseen by Harris, Arthur and Sam sneak off the other side of the train and meet up with the Porter, who points to another train, labeled "East Coast - Washington." Sam stares wistfully at the other train, as it RUMBLES and slowly pulls away.

SAM

There go some of my favorite blouses.

ARTHUR

What're you complainin' about? I had three perfectly good Hawaiian shirts stowed in one o' those cases.

The jazz MUSIC swells and carries over into the next scene.

INT/EXT - CAB RIDE THROUGH WASHINGTON - NIGHT (9:30 PM)

As the MUSIC fades, Arthur and Sam ride in the back of TONY's Yellow cab, rolling through suburban Washington.

SAM

So you're certain you know this place?

TONY

Oh, I take big shots there all the time.

ARTHUR

Whaddy mean, big shots?

TONY

Oh, admirals, generals, coupl'a senators ever' once in a while. 'Course, they don't arrive in uniform, ya' unnerstand. But I seen 'em aroun,' I know who they is.

ARTHUR

Tony, d'ya think you could slip us in close without bein' noticed? We'd like it to be a suh-prise.

Arthur waves the now-ubiquitous hundred at Tony.

TONY

I gotcha, mistuh. They's an alley off t' the right. From there, y' might be able to stand on the cab roof and sneak a peek through the windows.

ARTHUR

Tony, ya just earned yourself a bonus.

Arthur slides another hundred forward as Tony drives away.

EXT/INT - SOUTH SIDE OF THE BROWNSTONE (CONTINUATION)

The cab rolls to a stop in an alley adjacent to the building. Arthur steps out and clambers up on the trunk, with Sam's camera and long lens in hand. He leans against the roof as we SEE through the lens. Through a window, a party is in full swing. Arthur whispers to Sam while snapping pictures.

ARTHUR

Jesus, Joseph and Mary! These are th'
ugliest women Ah've ever seen.

Only women are visible, all wearing floor-length gowns, all
decidedly un-feminine. Some hold cups, others plates. All appear
to be in a jovial mood. Sam leans out the passenger side window.

SAM

Are you sure your standards aren't
just a tad too high?

ARTHUR

Seriously ugly. They make Godzilla
look like Greta Garbo. Wait a minute,
our host is making the rounds.

The larger woman seen at the front door now blocks the window,
her back to it. She shakes hands all around, talking with some,
joking with others. Arthur tries to get a shot of her face.

ARTHUR

C'mon, honey, show us your face. Let
us a get a look at the host-ess with
the most-est.

The heavy woman finally turns around - and while he shoots
away, Arthur stares wild-eyed. It's not a her - it's Hoover!

ARTHUR

Holy Hannah! Tony, time t' roll!

Arthur jumps down and scrambles inside, as the cab takes off
down the alley. Hoover glances out the window, thinking he
heard something. He laughs at something inside, then draws
the curtains. In the cab, Arthur hands Sam the camera.

SAM

What did you see?

ARTHUR

Honey, we got the best evidence we
could ever get. We can now proclaim
to one and all that J. Edgar Hoover
has without a doubt, the worst taste
in dresses in the entire Free World.

SAM

You mean, the hostess was Hoover?

ARTHUR

Talk about the hostess with the most-est - geez! (to Sal) Okay, Tony, take us back to the train station.

TONY

Y' mean, you all ain't gonna stay in town, even for one night? Mistuh, that ain't no way t' treat yo' woman. I would 'spectfully recommend y'all take in some o' the sights, find a nice ro-mantic restaurant an' then high-tail it to a quiet 'lil hotel. (laughs)
After that, yer on yer own.

SAM

That does sound like fun. What say you, Mr. Port? We haven't sat still for all of two hours since we met.

ARTHUR

Ah have t' agree, it sounds great. All right, shoot. The city of Nah Lins can do without us for one mo' night.

INT/EXT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (11:30 PM)

The image of the Georgetown cab DISSOLVES into a darker sedan with three Agents, cruising slowly to a halt down the street from Arthur's apartment. SAUNDERS and WILLIAMS in the front, NATHAN in the back, wait patiently until they see Marion exit from Arthur's front door. Nathan picks up the car radio.

NATHAN

H'lo, Jake? This is Nathan. The big one just left...Got ya...We'll be here.

Nathan hangs up. Without a word, they exit the car and walk to the building. Saunders breaks and goes around to the back.

INT - ENTRANCE TO ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUATION

Nathan and Williams climb the creaky wooden stairs, pause at

the door, look at each other, as Nathan slowly turns the handle, then pauses. Suddenly he flings the door open wide, which hits a SLEEPER on the floor.

SLEEPER

Hey man! Watch where yer swingin' that thing! You's a membre snager fadda...

The Sleeper kicks the door back, but Nathan catches it, looks at Williams, then forces the door open with his entire body behind it. The Sleeper YOWLS in pain and surprise, and the room erupts in NOISE and CONFUSION.

In another room, Ray wakes to the sound of the Agents forcing everyone out of the apartment, more YELLING and CONFUSION. Ray slips out of bed, feels his way around the door jamb and moves through the darkened kitchen. He feels his way hurriedly to the back door, but as he reaches for the handle, Saunders' hand grabs him, giving Ray a start.

SAUNDERS

Where d'ya think yer goin,' *shine*?

RAY

Oh man, not again!

Saunders swings him around forcefully and throws him back into the hallway, where Ray tumbles to the floor. The rest of the apartment is now empty, and Nathan walks up.

SAUNDERS

This the one yer lookin' for, Nathan?

NATHAN

Sure is. Jake'll be so pleased to see you again, *shine*. C'mon, get up!

Nathan leans down and roughly hauls Ray to his feet, then tosses him into Williams by the front door, who throws him into a heavy chair.

RAY

Look, gen'lmen, if you're wantin' a punchin' bag, mebbe you'd be happier with someone who c'n punch back. Me, Ah'm a pacifist.

NATHAN

Just speak when yer spoken to, *shine!*

Nathan punches Ray in the gut, causing Ray to double over in pain. From the front door, a voice calls:

JAKE

No more o' that! I want info outta him, not blood. Leastways, not yet.

Ray's blind eyes crack open as Jake, now with two bandaged hands, leans down into his face.

RAY

Wha...what did the blind man say to the...to the ugly man? 'Stop it! You're makin' mah fingers hurt!'

JAKE

Whaddya know, Nathan? We got us a comedian. Maybe he can tell us a joke about where Port is right now?

RAY

Sorry, Ah don't...don't do other people's material.

JAKE

Too bad. Nathan? Persuade the man.

Nathan steps forward, cracks his knuckles, then begins punching poor Ray again and again. The scene FADES TO BLACK.

EXT - A PHONE BOOTH OUTSIDE ATLANTA - DAY (4:30 PM)

Arthur drives up in a flashy Caddy convertible, Sam in sunglasses beside him, and stops at a pay phone beside a diner. He gets out and goes to the phone, looking around as he dials.

ARTHUR

H'lo there, Blue Jay, this is the Red-wing Blackbird. Got the birdseed, are on our way back t' the nest.. What?.. When?..Dammit, where were you?..Yeah, Ah know...Naw, Ah don't blame you. It's just those damn Suits! How is he?

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - DAY (CONTINUATION)

The CAMERA cuts to Marion, who talks on the hall phone while looking into the bedroom at Ray, who lies on top of the sheets, heavily bandaged, MOANING softly, COUGHING occasionally.

MARION

The guy's tougher than a lot of men I seen twice his size. He'll be okay in a coupl'a weeks, but he won't be playin' piano any time soon...Yeah, I'm set now. (fingering a revolver in his belt) Yeah, I'll tell him. (hangs up) Arthur says he wants to hear some Bach outta you the minute he comes through that door.

Ray LAUGHS weakly, then COUGHS again before settling down.

EXT - THE PHONE BOOTH OUTSIDE ATLANTA - DAY (CONTINUATION)

Back with Arthur, hanging up and leaving the pay phone.

SAM

So how is everyone getting along without us?

ARTHUR

Oh, just ducky. Ray has three busted ribs an' a concussion, an' Marion's gonna shoot the next s.o.b. that even touches the front door.

Arthur gets in and takes off in a shower of gravel.

SAM

Oh my God! What happened?

ARTHUR

Seems they got a visit from the goon squad while we were up in Georgetown. Waited 'till Marion went out, then booted everyone out, 'cept Ray. Worked him over, then left him lyin' in the middle o' the living room floor. Marion doesn't think he talked, tho.

SAM

Is that good or bad?

ARTHUR

Ah think it means they'll be comin'
back agin' soon. We better just be
there when they do.

The Caddy speeds up, trailing a cloud of dust and gravel.

INT - HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY (4:30 PM)

The Assistant enters with a report, looking worried.

ASSISTANT

Mr. Director, I have the report you
wanted. (reading) 'The interrogation
of suspect Ray Robinson yielded no
useful information. Do you want us to
attempt further contact?'

HOOVER

Further contact? No I don't want fur-
ther contact - I want answers! Wire
them Priority One! Tell them to try
again. Dammit, do I have to do every-
thing myself?!

INT - FBI OFFICE, NEW ORLEANS - DAY (4:30 PM)

A cable shoots out of the Teletype machine, and is picked up
by Nathan, who has a little trouble with his two bad hands.

JAKE

Oh, great! Now he wants us to lean on
more people!

NATHAN

Who's he want us to lean on now?

JAKE

Anybody! Everybody!

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Ominous JAZZ MUSIC plays during a quick MONTAGE. In each of

the scenes, the music accentuates the heavy-handed tactics:

- A) A STREET MUSICIAN is hassled, and his small DOG tries to bite one of the two AGENTS pushing his owner around;
- B) Now early morning, two more AGENTS interrupt a large male FORTUNE TELLER, who tries to ignore them, then tries vainly to signal he doesn't know anything;
- C) A WAITRESS, about to enter a restaurant, is swung around by a man's arm, and angrily tells the Agents where to go.

EXT - FRENCH QUARTER - DAY (3:30 PM) - ST. LOUIS STREET

As the ominous jazz MUSIC fades, the same black sedan from in front of Arthur's apartment, slowly cruise the street near a staggering DRUNK. Nathan leans out the driver's window:

NATHAN

Hey there, pal. Ever heard of a guy named Port?

DRUNK

No, but Ah heard uva drink called Port. Wanna buy me one?

NATHAN

If you help us out, pal, we'll buy you a whole damn barrel.

DRUNK

Yeah, Ah heered o' th' guy b'fore. Some kina dee-TECTIVE, ain't he?

NATHAN

Sure is! Climb aboard.

The rear passenger door opens, and the Drunk staggers in.

JAKE

So, you know where this guy is now?

DRUNK

Sure do! He's up in that, whatchama-callit, that Alaksan wilderness place.

JAKE

What are you sayin', rummy? He ain't nowhere near there.

DRUNK

He shore as shootin' is? Where d'ya think Ah got this?

The Drunk holds up his bottle of 'Prospector Gold' whiskey, and proceeds to spill much of the bottle over both of them.

SAUNDERS

You idiot! Look what you've done!

DRUNK

It's that fool's fault fer drivin' that way! Now y' owe me two bottles!

NATHAN

We ain't giving you a dime.

DRUNK

Welchin' on a deal? I knew y' damn agints couldn't be trusted!

In the back, Jake looks down to see a gun pointed at his gut.

DRUNK

Pull over t' the curb right here.

JAKE

That's a swell idea. Nathan, pull over.

NATHAN

Sure, Jake, whatever.

The sedan rolls to a stop, as Sam and Marion emerge from a nearby doorway. Marion also has a gun, partially visible. In the back of the car, the Drunk removes his wig and shaggy beard, to reveal:

ARTHUR

Ah've had such a nice time with y'all, Ah think we should celebrate. Here, boys, have a swig.

JAKE

Do what he says. We'll get him later.

Arthur passes the whiskey around to Nathan and Saunders in the front. They try to get by with just little sips.

ARTHUR

Gentlemen, y'all c'n do better'n that.

Saunders shrugs, drains half the bottle, then passes it to Nathan who finishes it off. Both grimace as they swallow.

ARTHUR

Mmmm, tasty. Just like mah momma used t' make. Now git out.

Arthur waves the two out the front, and they stagger to the sidewalk. Sam gets behind the wheel, while Marion slides in beside Jake, sitting on his right hand. Jake YOWLS in pain.

MARION

Pardon me! Is that your bad hand?

ARTHUR

No, no, this is his bad hand.

Jake YOWLS again, as the sedan drives up the street.

EXT - BAYOU COUNTRY, BESIDE A DOCK - DAY (4:30 PM)

The sedan pulls up to a dock where an old swamp boat is tied up. The rickety sign reads 'Tattooed Cajun Bayou Tours.' Marion manhandles Jake out of the back, but stays with the car. Arthur pushes Jake ahead of him, while Sam follows.

JAKE

Listen to me! If you don't release me right away, you'll be charged under Federal kidnapping laws. And if any harm comes to me, you'll...you'll be in even bigger trouble!

ARTHUR

Well, now ya done it, Jake! Ah'm so scared my socks are drippin'!...

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CON'T.)

...(serious) Who ya gonna report this to? J. Edgar? He just wants to ferget y'all ever worked for him. An' Ah doubt y'all are goin' runnin' to ol' Huey. He'd as soon throw you in th' state pen as say hello.

Arthur swings Jake around, so he can talk to him face-to-face.

ARTHUR

Y' run off all mah house guests, beat an innocent blind kid unconscious, then go terrorizin' th' entahr French quarter. In one week, y' all have done more harm to mah reputation than Ah've done in five years o' drunken revelry!
(twisting the cuffs) I think you got a bucket full of 'pologizin' t' do.

He spins Jake around to face the dock, where the gangplank is raised on a long wooden tour boat. Two men are lounging in chairs onboard, TOULEE and BOZE, who look to be brothers. Both are large, tattooed, scarred cajun backwoodsmen, sporting jeans and worn shirts. They feign fishing, but really appear to be hard at work at sleeping.

ARTHUR

Ahoy, the boat! Permission t' come aboard?

TOULEE

Sorry cap'n, but we's out in da bayou fishin' right now.

BOZE

Ah'm 'fraid we won't be back fer hours.

ARTHUR

We got payin' customers here! And when Ah say payin,' Ah mean cash.

As Arthur approaches the dock's edge, he pulls out his shrinking wad of hundreds. Toulee looks over lazily, but shakes his head 'no' to Boze.

BOZE

Naw, we's close ont' a perfect string.
Three cups o' bait, three lockers o'
catfish. Hate t' spoil our luck now.

Determined, Arthur is about to pull out the last bills he has, when he remembers who he has handcuffed beside him.

ARTHUR

What am Ah thinkin'? Hold still, you.

He gets Jake's wallet, removes his cash and adds it to his own.

ARTHUR

This enough to drop the gang plank?

TOULEE

Hoo yay, more than! Climb aboard.

They walk across the fast-lowered plank, and the scene FADES.

EXT - BAYOU COUNTRY - SWAMP BOAT - DAY (5:00 PM)

The boat glides smoothly down a bayou. Toulee and Arthur are on the bridge, Boze in the back, near Sam. Jake is unseen.

ARTHUR

So, when was the last time ya saw
Marie Antoinette?

TOULEE

Oh, Ah'd have t' say coupl'a weeks
past Easter. She was fussin' wit' one
o' th' smaller gators, a twelve-foot-
er. They got inta a tussle, an' we
cleared out.

SAM

(to Boze)

Marie Antoinette? Why did you name a
gator after her?

BOZE

'Cause whenever she's aroun', heads
always roll. She's all of aroun'
twenty feet or so, give or take.

ARTHUR

Think we can scare her up? Or that really scarred old one, what's his name, the Duke?

TOULEE

Oh, yeah, Ah'm shore we could rouse one of 'em. We got the right bait.

Boze works intently with his hands and occasionally touches his lips with something white, though it's unclear what he's doing. From nearby, Jake's frightened MOANS are heard.

BOZE

Gotta say, this is the part Ah hate.

SAM

You mean, torturing a man who ordered a blind kid beaten?

BOZE

Nah, don't mind torturin' bullies. Ah just hate dressin' 'im fer the gator.

We finally SEE what Boze has been working on. He is licking and sticking marshmallows to Jake's exposed skin. Jake is suspended from a yard arm, pants legs rolled part way up. Boze crowns the big toe with one last marshmallow.

BOZE

Okay, Toulee, he's ready as he'll ever be. Let's git t' fishin' a'fore the marshmallows start t' fall off.

TOULEE

All rahtee, brother Boze, swing 'im out.

Boze swings the arm out over the water and works a winch to lower Jake to the water's surface. As soon as his feet touch the water, two gators SPLASH in from a nearby bank.

ARTHUR

Now then, Mistuh Jake, Ah'm gonna ask some questions. Anythin' less than complete sincerity, an' you'll be a wallflower at the next Bureau dance.

SAM

Arthur! You're not going to let them eat him, are you?

ARTHUR

Not if he's honest. 'Course, he prob'ly don't have much experience at that.

Arthur tosses the rest of the marshmallows into the water. The two gators cruise up and destroy the bag in a spray of foam.

JAKE

Y-yes, yes! Whatever you want! Just ask your questions!

ARTHUR

Whaddya know about Hoover's parties?

JAKE

He - he invites a lot of big wigs, Defense Department people, Washington types. Always men. Nothing much happens. They like to - to dress up a little.

ARTHUR

Ah didn't see a 'little' one among 'em. You're aware of the blackmail plot he's involved with?

JAKE

Whi - which one?

A big gator swims close, jumps up and tries to bite, but Arthur swings the arm away quick, and the gator swims past.

JAKE

Which one?! (really scared) He's got a lot of 'em going! There's the ex-wife of the New York senator, th - the one with the chief of the L.A. police department, and a bunch overseas.

ARTHUR

An embarrassment of riches. Ah'm specifically interested in a chalet in the Alsace-Lorraine region.

JAKE

Oh, that one. They netted a lotta Euro-
pean royalty, an' a couple of ministers,
too. Hoover's got plans to break the
Continental stranglehold on trade.

ARTHUR

That's what I figgered. (pause) I'll
bet you're real sorry y' got such
hatred for black people. Bet you're
gonna have a lot more tolerance for
all races in th' future.

JAKE

Oh yes, yes, I'm an asshole - was, I
mean! I really was!

ARTHUR

And the first thing you're gonna do
when you get back?

JAKE

I'll ask for a transfer! Right away!

SAM

Have you boys had your fun? Can you
let him down now?

ARTHUR

One more question: what was the joke
that got that Chicago agent fired?

JAKE

Um, oh, uhh, 'How can you tell when
Hoover is working undercover? (pause)
He's got a bulge under his dress.'

In four quick CUTS, looks unimpressed, as do the brothers and
Sam. Only the gators seem to be smiling, one cruising closer.

JAKE

Don't blame me! It's not my joke!

ARTHUR

That's 'bout the only thing that
saves you from bein' dinner.

With his hand on Jake's belt, Arthur nonchalantly swings him onboard, just as the big gator makes one last leap and misses.

ARTHUR

I think we've gotten as much as we're gonna get from this 'un. Toulee, take us back t' the dock.

BOZE

Ah don't mind saying, Ah'm kinda disappointed. They don't usually break until the first one takes a nibble.

SAM

Are you going to let this wretched man go now?

ARTHUR

In a manner of speaking.

EXT - DRIVING BACK TO NEW ORLEANS - DAY (7:00 PM)

Arthur drives, a hand on the wheel and one holding his chin, braced on the driver's door. Sam stares out the other side, once or twice at him. Some time passes before she speaks.

SAM

Don't you feel bad, leaving him like that? It would have been more humane just to shoot him and get it over with.

ARTHUR

You may find this hard to believe, but Ah've never shot another human bein' in mah life. An' it's not just 'cause Ah'm a bad shot, neither. See, when Ah was growin' up, Ah found it easy t' knock others down with a punch or two. That's no measure of a man's worth, or a dame's, for that matter. So Ah learned t' outsmart 'em.

A QUICK INTERCUT shows us Jake, tied up and sitting outdoors on a table, in a clearing surrounded by trees. He looks terrified, staring wide-eyed towards his feet. Then we CUT back to Arthur and Sam.

ARTHUR

Shootin' a man with a gun? Takes no skill a'tall. But get a squirrel t' pull the trigger - that's an indication of real talent, that is.

INTERCUT back to Jake, who's now hogtied, with a piece of twine tied to his open zipper, the other end tied to a pistol's trigger, and more twine tied from there to a walnut lying on the table. A SQUIRREL hops up on the table, eyes the walnut, eyes Jake, scampers closer and grabs the nut, twitches his nose, then turns to go.

JAKE

Noooooo!

We HEAR a loud gunshot as we INTERCUT back to:

INT - HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - NIGHT (10:00 PM)

A door SLAMS, synchronous with the GUNSHOT. The Assistant is handed a page, and in INSERT we see part of a typewritten note, with a handwritten addendum on the bottom:

NOTE (INSERT)

FROM: New Orleans Office.

TO: Director.

RE: Current Investigation of Port et al;
Immediate authorization is requested
for medical attention for Agent Paul
Jake, currently in Metairie Hospital.

HANDWRITTEN ADDENDUM (INSERT)

We're gonna need \$3,000 for special
reconstructive surgery.

Just then, Hoover enters. The Assistant hides the note.

HOOVER

What've you got?

ASSISTANT

Oh, nothing, sir.

Hoover motions for him to follow. The Assistant sighs, grabs a pad and follows him into his inner office.

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (10:00 PM)

Arthur and Sam look into the bedroom where Ray lies. A DOCTOR attends him, his bag open nearby.

SAM

Don't let those bastards give you the wrong impression o' most folk, Ray. They had no idea what they were doin'.

RAY

Ah'm kinda lucky bein' blind, really. Ah don't treat people as any one color. Ah treat 'em all as individuals.

ARTHUR

Funny. That's how we treated that Agent that beat you up - as a one-of-a-kind.

Arthur and Sam step back from the doorway, as the Doctor comes out. Marion closes the door behind him.

ARTHUR

Whatever he needs, Doc, he gets.

DOCTOR

He'll be fine. Just make sure he gets plenty of rest. That means, no more beatings.

MARION

Right.

Marion slides a chair next to the doorway, props it against the wall and sits deliberately, holding a revolver in his lap.

EXT - THE BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI - NIGHT (11:00 PM)

With somber, almost funereal JAZZ MUSIC playing behind the scene, Arthur and Sam walk along the riverfront, not far from Du Monde's. Arthur shakes some dried black beans in his right hand. They walk slowly.

SAM

You look troubled. Are you worried about Ray?

ARTHUR

No, If the Doc says Ray'll be okay,
then Ray'll be okay. (pause) Ah'm
just not happy with how Ah acted.

Sam lifts a hand to Arthur's forehead in mock seriousness.

SAM

No signs of a fever. Am I hearing you
correctly? This sudden introspection
seems rather out of character.

ARTHUR

Yeah, Ah weaken ever' so often. Here.

Arthur hands two of his four dried beans to Sam.

ARTHUR

These are special voodoo good luck
beans, straight from Madam Laveau's.
You're s'posed t' toss 'em into a
movin' body o' water. One per person.
Make a wish for yourself an' throw
yours in. The other one's for Ray.

SAM

You really believe in this?

ARTHUR

Ah'm a confirmed Christian, but a
little help never hurts.

Sam smiles as she shakes her head. She makes a wish with her
eyes closed, then throws it, and does the same with the other
bean. They float for a moment as the current takes them.

SAM

You have two. One's for you. Who's
your other one for?

ARTHUR

It's for that idiot Jake who got in
our way. Ah hate doin' that, bein' the
tough guy. That's their tactics,
leavin' a fellow lyin' in the gutter,
gaspin' for breath. That's not me.

SAM

It seems like it's you for now.

ARTHUR

An' that's not the worst of mah worries. Ah...Ah don't think Ah c'n use those photos we've got of Hoover.

SAM

What?! After all the work we went through, all the risks we took? You know it'll shut Hoover down completely. Well, have you got a better plan?

ARTHUR

Sure don't. Wish Ah did.

He tosses his first bean and the current carries it away.

SAM

Then why on Earth would you give up the only real advantage we possess?

ARTHUR

Ah just wouldn't be able to look mahself in the mirror afterwards. How'd we be any different than them, if we stoop to using their methods? How much irreparable harm will be done to the other men's lives in those photos? Their only crime was bein' in the wrong place at the wrong time.

SAM

Then, what are you going to do?

ARTHUR

Ah hope Churchill can suggest something. Figure we'll stop over at his estate afore we hit London. Either way, we'll have t' tell Chamberlain that our plans are all for naught. They've got four days before their money's due. 'Spouse they'll have t' pay Hoover off.

Arthur tosses the last bean way out into the river.

INT - CHURCHILL'S ESTATE - DAY (9:00 AM)

The somber MUSIC fades, as Arthur and Sam discard rain-soaked coats. They are ushered through the large, baronial entrance by the head butler, FELTIE, who directs them to an adjacent library. Churchill rests in an overstuffed chair, reading memos by a roaring fire. He rises as they enter.

SAM

Thank you for seeing us on such short notice, Mr. Churchill.

CHURCHILL

Glad to be of service. Your cable suggested some interesting developments?

ARTHUR

Ah don't know how interestin' they'll be. Sam an' Ah took some very incriminatin' photos of J. Edgar, but Ah'm havin' second thoughts about usin' 'em.

CHURCHILL

That is interesting. How good are they?

SAM

Good enough to plant a new fanny in the Director's chair. Problem is, Ah don't feel right incriminatin' all the others in the photos. Or usin' his personal life t' bring Hoover down.

CHURCHILL

I see. Conscience acting up?

Arthur leans on the stone mantelpiece and stares at the fire.

ARTHUR

Yeah, Ah 'spect so. Don't wanna become like them, an' Ah'm worried Ah might if Ah use their methods.

CHURCHILL

Just because others may be temporarily inconvenienced, doesn't mean that your goals or your methods are wrong.

ARTHUR

So to you, ruined lives are 'temporarily inconvenienced'?

CHURCHILL

We must look at the 'big picture' here, and not worry about the consequences of the actors presently onstage. Remember how many people have already been hurt by Hoover's schemes, and how many more if he were allowed to continue.

SAM

Arthur was hoping you might have an alternative, instead of the photos.

ARTHUR

Ah figure you've built up quite an operation in the years since you took over as First Air Lord. Perhaps you have some other means of interfering with J. Edgar's plans..?

CHURCHILL

Do you think if I had such a tool at my disposal, that I would not have used it already? Mr. Port, you are the first man I've come across with the ingenuity and the desire to tackle Hoover's gang head-on. I had hopes you would be successful. I had such hopes...

Churchill pauses as Feltie enters with a humidor. He accepts a cigar and lights it. Arthur takes one but pockets it.

CHURCHILL

I am sorry, but my position is quite precarious. Any further assistance, and I would be supplying Hoover with just enough reason to force me from office. Then who would England pin her hopes on? That fool Chamberlain? Pardon me for saying so, but he's as incompetent a man as the Prime Minister's office has ever harbored.

SAM

Are there any weaknesses in Hoover's personality that we may have overlooked, some flaw we might exploit?

CHURCHILL

Other than an erroneous faith in his own infallibility, there's not much. He considers himself a super-patriot, the only true defender of his country's destiny. (draws on his cigar) In that respect, he's much like myself. Other than his desire for more power and certain private idiosyncrasies that you've already discovered, there's not much else in his profile to go on.

ARTHUR

Ah understand. Well, thank you for taking the risk in seeing us. (stands)

CHURCHILL

What are you plans, then?

ARTHUR

We're off to Downing Street. Looks like we'll have t' tell Chamberlain an' the King t' pony up th' dough.

CHURCHILL

Remember this: Hoover has been working from his web for so long, he now can only think like a spider. To him, everything is suspect, everyone an intruder, a fly to be trussed up and hung as a trophy. You must remember this is how he thinks, if you truly want to catch him. (rises) Good luck.

Churchill shakes their hands, watches Feltie lead them out, and snubs his still-fresh cigar out in the nearby tray.

EXT - CHURCHILL'S ESTATE - DAY (9:15 AM)

The heavy front door closes, Arthur and Sam walk towards their car, hiking their collars up against the raw weather.

SAM

Not much help there. Seems like he's more worried about his own future in office than his country's.

ARTHUR

Well, his heart's in the right place, even if he can't commit himself wholeheartedly to our cause.

SAM

One thing does bother me. Did you notice what he said at the end there, about Hoover being a spider, trussing up people as if they were flies? I've heard that comment before, I know it.

Arthur stops dead in his tracks. A waiting driver holds the door open to their cab, standing a few feet away in the rain.

SAM

I remember! (snapping her fingers) At Cafe Du Monde, in the French Quarter. You said it, to one of the agents!

ARTHUR

Well, it's probably just that Churchill an' I see Hoover the same way: as a dangerous, crafty ol' spider.

SAM

I sure hope that's all it is.

They climb in, and the DRIVER shakes an armful of rain out of his coat. He circles the cab, gets in and drives them away.

INT - #10 DOWNING STREET - DAY (11:00 AM)

Arthur and Sam are shown by Fitzgerald into the same meeting room as before, but this time, only the King, Lady Wallis and Chamberlain are present. Arthur looks very disconsolate.

CHAMBERLAIN

I must say, with only a few days to spare, I am a little surprised you chose to come here in person.

ARTHUR

You won't be, once you hear what Ah have to say.

Arthur takes a seat, while Sam hangs by the door and begins leafing through the fake Gutenberg Bible on its stone stand.

ARTHUR

Ah've never had t' tell a client this before, but Ah've failed. And it's not 'cause we haven't got th' evidence on Hoover. Got some pretty good evidence.

EDWARD

What's preventing you from using it?

ARTHUR

Mah conscience. Ah'm not happy with how low Ah've sunk. My gut feeling is, you're gonna have t' pay the man off.

CHAMBERLAIN

You can't mean that! It would ruin this administration!

LADY WALLIS

But you say you have the material to get back at him. Why won't you use it?

ARTHUR

Ah won't use a man's personal life against him. Ah just won't!

EDWARD

But he's doing the very same thing to us. What's the difference?

ARTHUR

The difference is, Ah know better.

Arthur, still sitting, looks away. He notices Sam, paging through the phony Gutenberg.

LADY WALLIS

Well then, if your mind is made up, I suppose that's that.

CHAMBERLAIN

No, it's not! We've contracted with you to solve our problem, and we've already advanced you a goodly amount.

ARTHUR

Which Ah'll repay, as best Ah can.

CHAMBERLAIN

We don't want the money back! We want Hoover stopped!

EDWARD

Now, Neville, he's done his best -

CHAMBERLAIN

Has he? Has he? You heard him say he's got the evidence we need to fight Hoover, but he refuses to use it.

They argue, while Arthur watches Sam with growing interest.

EDWARD

Do we have enough time to call in someone else?

CHAMBERLAIN

Of course not! We'll barely have enough time to collect the funds for the next payoff!

LADY WALLIS

Is there any way we can get more time? An extension, perhaps?

CHAMBERLAIN

Lady Wallis, these are blackmailers we're dealing with here, not bankers!

As their argument continues, Arthur observes Sam as she leafs through the Gutenberg. He remembers something Churchill said:

CHURCHILL (V.O.)

He considers himself a super-patriot, the only true defender of his country's destiny.

Arthur watches the pages slip through Sam's fingers. She spots him, and smiles. Suddenly, Arthur's head snaps up. A reciprocating smile spreads over his face. He jumps up, rejuvenated.

ARTHUR

Sorry to've put you through that spell o' anxiety, folks. Just pretend that was mah little test for y' all.

EDWARD

You mean, you do have a plan to stop Hoover?

ARTHUR

Your Highness, Ah have a plan that's so ingenious, Hoover himself will want to shake mah hand after Ah've sprung it on him. But Ah'm gonna need a lotta help.

CHAMBERLAIN

Just tell us what you need.

Sam walks over to stand beside him, curious.

LADY WALLIS

Can you explain what you're planning?

ARTHUR

Ah'll explain as we go, all right? First, Neville, you'll have t' get on th' horn to that French official. (scribbles) He'll have t' get us permission t' remove a book from th' Louvre, and if all goes well, it won't be comin' back. (hands him the note)

SAM

(quietly) You're making this up as you go along?

ARTHUR

(aside to Sam) You could tell? (to Edward) Your Highness, Ah understand you're quite close t' th' rulin' family of Germany?

EDWARD

(wry smile) Quite close.

ARTHUR

Swell. (writing again) Have someone from their Ministry o' Culture track this down. Old writing ink, from around th' late Seventeenth or early Eighteenth Century. Th' exact color doesn't matter - blue, black, purple, all th' same. It's goin' t' a spot in th' French Quarter, an' Ah'll need it no later than t'morrow afternoon. Neville, same thing with that book.

LADY WALLIS

Is there anything I can do?

ARTHUR

Matter of fact, there is, Lady Wallis. Ah'd like you t' visit Sotheby's. (scribbles again) Tell them Ah'll need this set up in New York for Friday afternoon, with a preview open t' th' public Friday morning. And they'll need t' publicize it with as much hoopla as time allows.

LADY WALLIS

(reading) But, will there be enough time to organize everything?

ARTHUR

There better be. Let's see...Right now, it's Tuesday morning. If th' French and Germans come through, they'll have th' stuff Ah need in Naw Lins by Wednesday afternoon. We'll whip up our little magic, then we'll bring everything up t' Sotheby's in New York by Thursday evening. Barely enough time, but Ah think we can do it. (to Chamberlain) An' Ah'm gonna need a bit more spending cash. Five thousand'll cover it. (pause) Dollars, not pounds.

CHAMBERLAIN

Certainly. (crosses to desk, writes a check) But please, what is your plan?

ARTHUR

Y'all are gonna think Ah'm crazy, but this plan should trap ol' J. Edgar perfectly. What I propose is this: we take an old book from the Louvre, together with th' ink from...

Arthur's words trail off as the scene FADES OUT.

EXT - #10 DOWNING STREET - DAY (11:30 AM)

Arthur and Sam follow Fitzgerald outside to a waiting car.

ARTHUR

Fitzgerald, c'n you get us to a phone that you're positive isn't tapped?

FITZGERALD

Surely, Arthur.

As Sam tries to get in, Arthur stops her at the door.

ARTHUR

Where d' ya think you're goin'?

SAM

I thought I was going with -

Arthur grabs her up and kisses her, hard and meaningfully.

ARTHUR

Thanks, Sam, for everything. Don't ever leave my side.

They smile at each other, then enter the car and drive off.

INT - CHURCHILL'S ESTATE - DAY (SEQUENCE)

Feltie brings Churchill a phone, receiver first.

CHURCHILL

Yes, Mr. Port. What can I do for you?

The scene switches to a London phone box. Arthur and Sam are squeezed inside, while Fitzgerald waits by the car.

ARTHUR

I need you t' pass along th' following note to J. Edgar. 'It's come to my attention that Sotheby's is going to auction off..."

CHURCHILL

Ah? Yes? (listening) Oh, I say, that is choice. (laughing) Oh, good one. When do you want this sent? ...Right, Thursday morning it is. And, Mr. Port?

In the phone box, Sam snuggles up to Arthur.

ARTHUR

Yes sir?

The CAMERA switches one last time, back to Churchill.

CHURCHILL

Well done.

He hands the phone back to Feltie, and chuckles a bit more.

INT - THE LOUVRE - A SMALL OFFICE - DAY (11:45 AM)

The CAMERA travels past an open door with the legend 'Directeur du Littéraire Antiquités' painted in gold. Inside, the CURATOR sits at his crowded oak desk, when his phone rings.

CURATOR

Oui, this is the Director... *Certainment*, we have old books from the period ...*Oui*, late 18th century, but they are quite rare. I would have to have an extreme reason to let you see them ...You wish to borrow one? But that is out of the question! I cannot allow... Whom did you say? But I will have to have some confirmation of his ...Oh, he is? In person? In one hour?

The Curator straightens up, and the casual attitude vanishes.

CURATOR

Mon dieu! Then I have no choice but to allow your request...*Pardon?* You wish what? 'Printing on one side only, not on both?' Well, any request with the authority of the *Ministre d'Art* will be completely honored, *m'suirre*.

The Curator hangs up the phone, shakes his head and rises.

CURATOR

Les Americains! Insanity in a country that powerful is a dangerous thing!

He exits the room muttering while he checks the stacks.

INT - THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE - DAY (11:45 AM)

The CAMERA snakes its way past crowded shelves, turns left and enters a room with 'Warenlager aus Geschicht-schreiber Sammlung' over the door. In the midst of a stone-walled room, the ADMINISTRATOR of the Repository picks up the phone.

ADMINISTRATOR

Yah, this is the Administrator of Collections...Yah, we have many pots of old inks. And we have the formulas, too, so we can recreate any of the old...Yah, we have that kind of ink. How much? (pause) Sent where? Wait, let me get this down...Yah, yah, Poydras Street...It may take some time... Well, I'm sorry, *mein herr*, but I cannot...Who?

The Administrator hears the name, and sags back in his chair.

ADMINISTRATOR

Yah, yah. If the Grand Duke wants it, it shall be so...By tomorrow afternoon?! But I will have to charter a special - hallo?

The line gone dead, he drops the phone back on the cradle.

ADMINISTRATOR

Ah, Americans. Always so impatient.

He groans as he gets up, then walks out to the stacked shelves, holding his glasses to his face as he begins his search.

INT - ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - DAY (8:15 AM)

The place looks surprisingly spacious without all the sleepers on the floors. Arthur and Sam enter with bags in hand, and drop them in the hallway. Arthur heads toward the kitchen.

ARTHUR

Ahhh, it's great t' be home again.
Marion? Your sugar daddy's home!

SAM

I'm going to go look in on Ray.

Sam scoots around the corner to find the guest bedroom empty.

SAM

Arthur? Ray's not in here. Where -

ARTHUR

Don't worry, he's doin' jes' fine.

Sam joins Arthur on a back stairs overlooking the courtyard. Down below, Ray and Marion study a chess board. Most of the black pieces rest on Ray's side. Marion struggles to think of a good move out of a bad situation.

SAM

Looks like Ray is holding his own.

As Marion places his piece, he calls out his move.

MARION

Knight to...to King's Bishop five.

RAY

Uh, well then, Ah - Ah b'lieve, Ah'll have t' ansuh with, Queen takes Pawn, check. (pause) If it makes y'all feel bettuh, Ah'd have made the same move.

MARION

Makes me feel a whole lot better.

Arthur and Sam wave at the somber Marion, then return inside.

SAM

How long before we have to board another plane?

ARTHUR

Ah figger, th' book an' ink oughta arrive this afternoon, and mah friend will have his magic done by t'morrow mornin'. Maybe aroun' noon t'morrow?

SAM

Wow! A whole 24-hours without having to leave the ground! (collapses on couch) I may just sleep it all away.

ARTHUR

You c'n sleep if you want, but Ah gotta go meet someone.

SAM

(groaning) Oh, who?

ARTHUR

Just Louisiana's most emanant painters.

SAM

Let me guess. House painter? Or does he do balcony railings?

ARTHUR

Har. And did Ah mention *har*? Actually, his paintings hang in some of the most prestigious art galleries in the nation. Has a fine steady hand, and a good eye for detail. And as it so happens, he owes me one whopper of a favor.

Arthur looks down at Sam's weary, prone body.

ARTHUR

Coming?

SAM

(tired) How could I refuse?

ARTHUR

Sam, Ah promise you, this time next week, you'll be relaxin' on a shady porch, a mint julep in one hand an' a plate o' fine catfish in th' other.

Sam drags herself upright and leans into Arthur's embrace.

SAM

You didn't tell me you could cook!

ARTHUR

That's prob'ly 'cause Ah can't. But Marion, now, that's another story entirely. (leaning) Hold on. Gotta get a book for our artist-friend.

Holding onto Sam, Arthur leans way to the left. His fingers grab onto a leather-bound spine entitled 'Up the River: The Travels of the First Lewis and Clark Expedition.' He pulls the book out and they return to their upright position.

SAM

If we're going to go meet a painter, why are you bringing a history book?

ARTHUR

Have you ever asked someone to forge somethin', without givin' them a little background material t' work from?

SAM

Forge? Did - did you say forge? You mean to say this famous painter is a forger? Shouldn't he be in jail?

ARTHUR

Why d'ya think he owes me a huge favor?

SAM

(sarcastically) Do you know how much it bothers me when you answer my questions with another question?

ARTHUR

Ya think Ah do it on purpose?

With a mock growl, Sam begins to tickle Arthur, and they run out the door, laughing. Their LAUGHTER fades after the door closes, as we hear them bound down the wooden stairs.

INT - PAUL KACOE'S STUDIO - DAY (10:00 AM)

The front bell rings as the door opens. PAUL Kacoe, a well-respected local painter, steps away from an oversized canvas of a half-finished riverboat on the Big Muddy. He turns to SEE Sam enter his brick-walled studio, followed by Arthur.

PAUL

Ah, mon ami! It is good to see you again, Arthur! Such a long time you have been away!

ARTHUR

Nice to see you too, Paul. Sam, may I introduce Paul Kacoe, world-renowned painter and local *artiste*? Paul, this beautiful gal here is Samantha Sarzana.

SAM

It's a pleasure to meet you, Paul.

PAUL

The pleasure is all mine, *mademoiselle*. So, Arthur, please tell me you brought this gorgeous creature in so that I may paint her portrait, yes?

ARTHUR

Ah, no. Maybe later. Right now, Ah have a more urgent comission for you.

PAUL

My friend, I am so sorry, but as you can see, I am in the middle of a great work, for which Madam La Hairre of St. Anne Street is paying quite well.

Sam walks up to the large painting and looks it over. Arthur joins her, as Paul follows, beaming.

SAM

This is rather nice.

PAUL

'Rather nice'? Young lady, when this painting is finished, it will be donated to one of the greatest museums in North America, there to be on display for decades to come!

ARTHUR

Ma commission might just hang in an even more impressive spot - and it'll only take you twenty-four hours.

PAUL

What kind of masterpiece could I do, in such a short period of time?

Arthur displays the book, and flourishes it during his speech.

ARTHUR

First, a little background. You're familiar with the Lewis and Clark Expedition? Sam, how's your history?

The actual Lewis and Clark Expedition is shown in INSERTS during the following conversation, with the descriptions coming as VOICE OVERS:

SAM (V.O.)

Let's see. At President Jefferson's urging, Lewis and Clark put together a team of forty-odd adventurers, and built a large keelboat. They travelled up the Missouri, then made their way across the Rockies, and wintered on the Oregon coast before returning, something like two years later.

PAUL (V.O.)

During the years 1804 to 1806, yes? How close am I?

ARTHUR (V.O.)

Close enough to win a prize. Now, while they wintered in Oregon, they hoped to connect up with a passin' French trade ship, many of which

plied the coast. Lewis wanted t' pass along a copy o' his Journal, t' make sure that some record o' their expedition made it safely back t' civilization, just in case anythin' happened.

SAM (V.O.)

I remember now! They didn't sight a single ship. And when they returned to the Missouri, they lost all their writings, even those of the crew, when the keelboat got swamped in heavy spring flooding.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

Yeah, they lost their only copy o' th' main Journal, th' Journal Clark had spent two years puttin' together. And despite their bravery and heroics, the mission was always seen as somethin' of a failure 'cause o' th' loss o' that one irreplaceable Journal.

The INSERTS end with the Journal floating away downstream.

SAM

It really was a shame.

PAUL

I see it now. You want me to paint a great mural, depicting the tragic loss of the Journal to the Waters Primeval? An epic battle between the Forces of Nature and the Will of Man, yes?

ARTHUR

Ah, no. Somethin' much less strenuous. I want you t' make me a copy o' Clarke's original Journal.

PAUL

Oh? Oh no, Arthur! You want me to return to my old ways, the ways of the forger? This I will not do! I have taken a vow never to do this thing again!

SAM

Whom did you make this vow to? If he or she knew how important this was, maybe they'd let you off the hook?

PAUL

I do not think so, mademoiselle. You see, I made this vow to Arthur himself!

ARTHUR

Paul, that was a long time ago.

PAUL

Did you not tell me to point my life in a new direction? Was it not you who told me, 'Forging will gain you nothing but a prison cell'?

ARTHUR

You're right, Ah said those things. Maybe I shouldn't have come. C'mon, Sam, I know a few more people in the 'Quarter who could probably do this job for me, maybe even do it better.

Arthur heads for the door, pulling a reluctant Sam with him.

PAUL

Who? Who do you know, could do a better forge than Paul Kacoe? Why, I could write to you from your own mother, you would cry tears over it, it would be so good. Come back, come back, I will do this thing for you.

ARTHUR

Nah, yer heart's into it.

PAUL

My heart? My heart is right here!
(thumping his chest) I am right here!
Now tell me exactly what you want!

Facing the door, Arthur smiles wide, then hides it before he turns back to Paul. Sam hides her own private smile and follows. Arthur displays his book as he returns.

ARTHUR

All right, here's what we need. We got a book comin' from the Louvre, with printin' on only one side o' th' page. I though you could scribble on the back sides -

SAM

As if they copied the Journal into one of their personal books?

ARTHUR

Exactly!

PAUL

Ahhhh, I see. They spent some time making a second Journal, a copy of the first. You do not need everything in it, do you?

ARTHUR

Naw, thirty or forty pages should suffice. Th' important thing is t' end up with a note that they're doin' it in a hurry, while a passin' French ship captain waits for it t' be finished. In our fictitious story, a French ship does stop, they make him a copy of th' Journal, then he sails away with it. Here.

Arthur opens up the book he brought.

ARTHUR

Here's some old maps from th' Second Expedition, some drawings o' animals they discovered, a few Indian sketches, and some quotes by Clark when they got back to civilization.

PAUL

Ahhh, this is, this is good, very good. Oh, and they have letters he wrote to Jefferson, pleading for another chance. Oh, your Journal is as good as finished right now!

SAM

Okay, so we're making a phony Journal? So how do we get Hoover to bite on this?

ARTHUR

That's th' beauty o' my plan. You know that phone call Ah made t' Churchill? He's gonna let it slip that th' French are so hard up for blackmail money, they're gonna auction off the newly-discovered Journal at Sotheby's Friday. With th' historical value as an American relic, Hoover will be dyin' to get it. Mah guess is, he'll send some o' his boys t' steal it before the auction itself.

SAM

So you're asking Paul to create a work that the public will never see?

ARTHUR

Hey, who's side are you on?

SAM

I'm just asking.

PAUL

Yes, she is just asking!

ARTHUR

Actually, Ah figure Hoover will want to make a big splash over this whole thing, so he'll most likely donate it t' some big collection. The Guggenheim perhaps, or maybe th' Smithsonian. Th' guy's got an ego almost as big as mahn.

PAUL

So this journal, it could be on display in the Smithsonian, when all is done? Ho, ho, ho! (Paul hugs Arthur) For you, I will make the ultimate forgery, one so perfect, it will...

(MORE)

PAUL (CON'T.)

...never be discovered. But, eh, what do I use for the ink? Anything that I whip up will be discovered to have come from this century.

ARTHUR

Already thought o' that, Paul. Some time this afternoon, there'll be a shipment o' hundred-year-old ink arrivin' from the Germans. Don't know what the color will be.

PAUL

The color, it does not matter.

ARTHUR

That's what Ah said. And the book -

Just then, the door bell rings again as a delivery man enters and looks around.

ARTHUR

Ah b'lieve the book is here now.

Arthur accepts the book, slips the man a bill and closes the door. He unwraps it and looks at the title.

ARTHUR

Oh, *fantastique!* *Le Directeur* did a *tres bonne* job!

He hands it to Sam, who laughs once and gives it to Paul.

PAUL

Ah, 'The Man in the Iron Mask!' Perfection! Now, you two will leave me while I get busy reading and practicing.

ARTHUR

If it's all the same, Ah'd like t' stay right here 'til it's finished.

PAUL

C'est bonne, but please, *mon ami*, no interruptions, *oui?*

ARTHUR

Wee-wee. (to Sam) C'mon, Sam, let's wait over here.

He guides her to a back room, with a fainting couch and draped silks. Sam takes the couch while Arthur sits on the floor. Soft blues MUSIC plays, while the CAMERA flips between:

- A) Paul practicing Clark's handwriting, with the reference book open beside him;
- B) Arthur and Sam, in the other room, talking between themselves;
- C) Darker now, Arthur bringing a Po' Boy to Paul, trying to sneak a peak over his shoulder and Paul shooing him away;
- D) Night now, with Sam asleep, Arthur restless.

INT - PAUL KACOE'S STUDIO - DAY (6:00 AM)

Arthur's head is in Sam's lap. Both are sound asleep. Paul sticks his head in.

PAUL

Arthur? Sam? It's Christmas morning!

Sam stirs first, and gently wakes Arthur up.

SAM

Arthur? Arthur? It's ready.

ARTHUR

Mmm? Huh? Oh!

They stumble to their feet and return to the studio. Paul stands proudly beside his drawing table, the new Journal open on it. Arthur and Sam close the distance with caution.

SAM

It looks great!

PAUL

I believe it is the masterpiece you were looking for, *oui*?

ARTHUR

No, not quite, I'm afraid.

Arthur turns to the very end of Paul's Journal. He carefully grasps the last page, then rips it out forcefully.

ARTHUR

There. Now that's a work of art.

He holds up the Journal and smiles. Sam and Paul trade puzzled looks.

INT - CHURCHILL'S ESTATE - DAY (11 AM) - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

Churchill hands a note to a SERVANT, and speaks in hushed tones.

CHURCHILL

I'd like you to send this to our contact overseas. Mark it Priority One. Let no one see this. make no copies. And destroy this when you're done.

Churchill turns to leave, and the Servant gets to work typing in the message on a period encrypting machine.

INT - HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY (12:00 NOON)

The Assistant rushes in with a message in his hand.

ASSISTANT

Sir! Sir! We just decoded a Priority One dispatch from Pooh! (clears his throat) 'It's come to my attention that Sotheby's in New York is going to auction off a rare piece of Americana on Friday the Twelfth: an authentic Journal from the Louis and Clark expedition. The French expect to make enough from the auction to pay off their entire blackmail bill.'

HOOVER

Now we've got them! All right, here's what we'll do. Send a wire to the New York office. Have them get Murphy and Sullivan up to -

ASSISTANT

But Sir, shouldn't we verify the Journal's authenticity?

HOOVER

Not enough time. When did Pooh say they were going to auction it off? Friday? Hell, that's tomorrow! Besides, Sotheby's will have already gone over it with a fine tooth comb.

INT - SOTHEBY'S, NEW YORK - DAY (10:00 AM) - VIEWING ROOM

Amid crowded tables filled with every kind of antique and collectible, two suited men, MURPHY and SULLIVAN, wander by. They brush past an ELDERLY MAN and WOMAN who are being shown the Journal by GERALD, an employee. Two GUARDS stand nearby.

GERALD

Yes, madam, there was a Journal written by Clark upon his return to Missouri in 1806, but it was written only from his memory of the trip. You see, the full Journal was lost overboard as the Expedition made its way home. Shame, really. Now this book here, on first glance appears to be merely an old French manuscript of the same period, but when you open it up... (thumbs through the pages of the Journal)...you'll notice someone has written in ink across the blank reverse pages. This is, in fact, a partial copy of Clark's original Journal, presumedly given to a passing French trading ship while the Expedition wintered on the Oregon coast. The drawings, the descriptions are all clearly in Clark's handwriting. We're only missing the last single page.

ELDERLY WOMAN

But why didn't Lewis or Clark say that a copy had been given to the French in the first place?

GERALD

Yes, that is a bit of a puzzle. There is of course the missing last page, which might have given an indication under what terms the French were to deliver the copied Journal. Perhaps the Expedition had second thoughts about whatever agreement they'd made with the French? And when it didn't show up, well, so much the better.

ELDERLY MAN

And this Journal was discovered...?

GERALD

Ah, yes. Recently recovered from a shipwreck on the Canadian coast. The ship seems to have run aground, and the Journal was discovered wrapped in heavy rags in a heavy wooden box. Buried in the sand for, oh, a century and a half. Seems in damn fine shape for all that, I must say. Hadn't heard anything about the retrieval myself, but it's being placed for auction by a well-respected Foreign Agency. Beyond repute, I'd say.

The two Suits have heard enough, and continue their stroll, with a knowing look at each other's eyes. The Elderly Man watches them depart, then changes his voice as he speaks.

ELDERLY MAN

Nice job, Gerald. I think our fish have taken th' hook.

GERALD

I say, did I do all right?

ELDERLY WOMAN

All right? I might ask Dad for a loan so I can buy it myself!

INT - SOTHEBY'S, NEW YORK - DAY (NOON) - AUCTION ROOM

A large crowd is on hand to witness the sale, including a

number of reporters. The tension builds as the AUCTIONEER finishes with the last item before the Journal.

AUCTIONEER

At five thousand? Five thousand is our final bid? All through, fair warning? (gavel) Sold to Number 478, the gentleman in the blue hat! (pause) Now we come to the highlight of the season: an original Journal from the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804. Ladies and gentlemen, I don't have to tell you how rare it is that we here at Sotheby's have the opportunity to auction off such a valuable and important piece of Americana as this.

To his left, a circular display booth pivots to reveal the stand on which the Journal should rest. Something is wrong, however, and an AIDE races to the Auctioneer's side, to get his attention. Gasps rise from the crowd.

AUCTIONEER

The condition is perfect, the quality is impeccable, and the Journal itself is (listens) ...missing?!

The Auctioneer's astonishment is complete. Beside the empty stand lays a knocked-out armed GUARD. The Elderly Man and Woman sitting near the back don't look surprised at all. It's now clear from their voices that it's Arthur and Sam.

SAM

Well, they took the bait. What do we do now?

ARTHUR

Time ta' reel us in a big ole fish.

INT - SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM - DAY (4:00 PM)

The Journal lies on a glass-covered display pedestal, with Hoover standing close behind it, flanked by four armed SECURITY MEN and the CURATOR of the Smithsonian. PHOTOGRAPHERS' flashbulbs POP continuously, as a horde of REPORTERS vie to be recognized.

REPORTERS (ALL AT ONCE)

Mr. Hoover? Mr. Director? Sir!

HOOVER

Yes? (indicating one)

FIRST REPORTER

Mr. Hoover, you say you 'rescued'
this artifact. Why? And from whom?

HOOVER

Let me just say, I believe this Journal,
the only surviving document from
Lewis and Clark's first expedition,
belongs here, beside the Constitution
and the Declaration of Independence.
And I would have sacrificed everything
to make certain it got here. As to
'from whom,' well (chuckle), let's
just say, the Crepe Suzette won't be
so tasty tomorrow on the Seine.

Strained laughter escapes from a few of the Reporters.

SECOND REPORTER

How exactly did you come by this
Journal?

HOOVER

Two of our bravest agents, Charles
Murphy and William Sullivan - step
forward, boys.

The two men step forward at the side. Of course, they're the
two who brushed past Arthur and Sam at Sotheby's.

HOOVER

These two fine men risked their lives
to bring this document here today.
They infiltrated a secure facility
and removed the Journal, then care-
fully brought it here.

THIRD REPORTER

That secure facility you refer to.
You mean Sotheby's Auction House?

More Reporters chuckle openly at this, than at Hoover's joke.

HOOVER

Don't let that fool you. They were merely the tip of a great conspiracy against our country. Our enemies won't sleep well tonight, knowing we've recovered this document. Yes?

FOURTH REPORTER

These enemies you speak of, Sir. You mean foreign powers? Won't they be anxious to get this document back?

HOOVER

Let 'em try!

He closes the glass top of the display pedestal, locks it and hands the key to the Curator. While more flash-bulbs POP, Hoover holds the pose and beams for the Photographers. The Security Men step forward, brandishing their weapons.

INT - HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY (6:00 PM)

Hoover strides through his office, hurrying past his Assistant, paying no attention to his attempts to warn him.

ASSISTANT

Sir! Sir! I must speak -

HOOVER

Didya hear me on the radio? I should run for President. I'd be a shoo-in!

He strides through without waiting for his Assistant's comment, who looks like he really wanted to say something.

INT - DAY - HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE (4:45 PM)

The shades are drawn and it's quite dark. Hoover crosses to his desk, pulls out a big cigar, sits down and lights up. Suddenly, he leans forward, as he realizes he's not alone.

ARTHUR

Nice speech, J. Edgar. May I say, your talents are wasted behind that desk.

HOOVER

Well, Mr. Port! And Miss Sarzana! How nice of you to visit. If you're here on behalf of your European friends, forget it. The Journal's in the Smithsonian under armed guard. There's no way you or anyone else is ever gonna remove it.

SAM

Actually, we wanted to thank you for getting the Journal there, safe and sound. That's exactly where we want it.

HOOVER

Don't try to put anything over on me. I know the French were gonna sell it at auction to pay off my -

Hoover stops abruptly, aware he might have said too much.

ARTHUR

T' pay off your what, J. Edgar? Your blackmail demands?

HOOVER

You can't prove a thing, Port! The Frogs won't talk. They know the consequences if they do. Same with the Limeys and the Krauts. Say what you came to say and be done with it!

SAM

We didn't come to say anything. We wanted to give you something.

ARTHUR

You forgot a piece of th' Journal when you handed it over t' th' Smithsonian.

He slides a photo across Hoover's desk. An INSET shows a photo of the missing last page, ripped out, with handwriting.

HOOVER

So there's a missing page? Big deal.

ARTHUR

This is th' last page o' th' Journal. Says th' Expedition knew they were on French territory, and that in return for a French officer bringing their Journal t' safety aboard his ship, they'd reaffirm France's authority over the remaining French territory.

HOOVER

French territory? What French territory?

SAM

Oregon. Washington. The part of the Louisiana Purchase we didn't pay for.

ARTHUR

If you don't lay off your little blackmail scheme, copies o' this page will mysteriously find their way t' all th' newspapers of America and Europe. Diplomatic action will surely follow. Y' think th' French'll be able t' pay off your demands once they own Portland an' Seattle?

HOOVER

You're not serious! It'd destroy this country!

ARTHUR

Ah'm willin' t' take that risk. Got a feelin' you'll back down 'afore you allow your beloved country t' suffer.

HOOVER

(crumpling photo) I'll squash you like a bug, Port!

ARTHUR

My friends call me Arthur.

HOOVER

They'll never find your body! When they talk about you years from now, it'll be nothing but lies!

With a CRASH, a wooden wheelchair bursts thru the door. It's a nearly-paralyzed FDR, wheeled by his wife, ELEANOR. Arthur and Sam stand as they enter.

ELEANOR

I'm afraid not, Mr. Hoover. Franklin, my husband, your President, is ordering you to cease bothering Mr. Port.

Roosevelt mumbles something, and Eleanor leans down to listen.

ELEANOR

My husband says he will guarantee the French receive all the disputed territory if you don't back down.

ARTHUR

How - how'd you know we'd be here?

ELEANOR

A call from one of Mr. Sarzana's attorneys alerted us.

SAM

Dad always likes to have important people in his debt.

FDR mumbles a string of words, quite energetically.

ELEANOR

My husband says, if he still had his legs under him, he'd walk over there and kick you right in the jaws. (pause for more forceful mumbling) My mistake - in a somewhat more private area.

HOOVER

Everything I've done, I've done in the best interests of this country.

FDR gathers his energy to respond, but Arthur steps forward.

ARTHUR

May Ah, sir? J. Edgar, you've been in office so long, you only know what's...

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CON'T)

...right for you and your twisted web of goons and hired muscle. You've forgotten we have a process in this country where officials are voted in and out of office. You never got voted in, you were appointed. Big mistake. Like that green number you wore last Saturday. Big mistake. (smiles) Stick to basic blue.

Hoover drops back into his chair, embarrassed, flabbergasted.

ELEANOR

You look a little pale, Mr. Director. My husband thinks it'd be a good idea if you had some help in running the Bureau. Perhaps a three-person Oversight Board would be the answer? And, so that it's not a strain on your resources, the President will select them himself - from outside the Bureau.

HOOVER

(mustering his will)

I won't stand for this outrage! I -

ELEANOR

You will sit there and you will take it! Or you can resign. Those are your only options. (pause) Well, I believe that concludes our business here. Good day to you, Mr. Hoover.

FDR mumbles WORDS that sound a lot like 'farging asshole.'

ELEANOR

The President says 'good day,' too.

Eleanor wheels FDR out, followed by Sam. Arthur pulls out an envelope and drops it on the speechless Hoover's desk.

ARTHUR

Sotheby's says they want 250 thou for the Journal you stole. Maybe you can take it outta the entertainment funds?

Arthur follows Sam to the door. They smile back at Hoover.

EXT - FBI HEADQUARTERS - DAY (6:30 PM)

Eleanor wheels FDR out the main doors. They pause at the top of the ramp outside Hoover's offices.

ELEANOR

Franklin likes you. He says you should consider running for office.

ARTHUR

No sir. I wouldn't know how to deal with the likes o' him.

ELEANOR

On the contrary, you know exactly how to deal with the likes of him.

SAM

Are you sure you can understand him?

ELEANOR

To be honest, I can't always understand his words. But he makes his meanings quite clear.

FDR reaches up with feeble hands, gropes for Arthur and Sam's hands, squeezes them hard and smiles. Eleanor turns the wheelchair, heads down a wooden ramp to a waiting pair of cars. Arthur and Sam WATCH as the SECRET SERVICE MEN load FDR into the first car.

ARTHUR

Now, there goes a real American.

SAM

Don't you mean two?

ARTHUR

You're right. Hon? Let's go home.

EXT - BATON ROUGE PLANTATION - DAY (SUNRISE) - FRONT PORCH

Arthur and Sam are sitting on brown wicker furniture, relaxing near their empty breakfast dishes. Through the open

front door, we HEAR Ray playing on an in-tune piano, and the occasional CLINK of Marion washing dishes.

ARTHUR

Well, we made out like bandits. Their generosity astounds even a perpet'al mooch like me. Hey, y' wanna take a turn 'roun' th' countryside?

SAM

That sounds great, but you drive this time. I want to watch the scenery.

They get up and walk down the covered wooden porch. Ray's PIANO continues throughout the following scenes.

ARTHUR

Ray, where you playin' t'night?

RAY

Down to Maxwell's Toulouse club.

SAM

We'll be back in plenty of time to catch your show.

ARTHUR

See ya there, Marion.

Arthur and Sam stroll hand in hand out past the main house, out to where the garden begins. They head towards a field.

ARTHUR

Ah 'spose Ah'm pleased with our little dance with the spider. Too bad we didn't nail the spider himself.

SAM

What are you saying? Of course we did. I mean, Hoover will still head the FBI, but he'll never be able to -

ARTHUR

Ah'm not talkin' 'bout Hoover.

They take a path to the left, towards a large outbuilding.

ARTHUR (CON'T.)

Sure, we put an end to J. Edgar's shenanigans, but there's still one man at large, who was behind so much of this. He used me - he used both of us - an' made it look all along like Hoover was the real mastermind.

SAM

You mean Hoover wasn't some power-hungry, dangerous megalomaniac?

ARTHUR

He was all that an' more. But the sly one, the real power behin' this whole series of events, he got clean away.

In a NEW ANGLE, the CAMERA leads them down the path.

ARTHUR (CON'T.)

Remember when we interrogated agent Spence? He said Hoover had heard the Love Nest was hot a few years ago, so they bought it and remodeled it in the off-season. Remember that?

SAM

They had it for a couple of years. So?

ARTHUR

Then how come when Churchill spilled the beans to me at the Red Lion pub, he said using that pseudonym was a 'minor indiscretion of youth'? That he was 'young and stupid.' Not old and reminiscin', but 'young and stupid'?

SAM

You never told me that part. Churchill didn't want me in that pub, and I accepted. I stayed outside and flirted with his furry guards. If I'd heard that comment, I'd have probably called him on the carpet.

The view DISSOLVES to show Churchill mostly obscured by the

overstuffed chair he's sitting in. Feltie the butler arrives with a cordial. Churchill's hand flicks a cigar ash as he reads a report with Arthur's and Sam's movements recorded all over it (INSET). He drops it into the fireplace.

ARTHUR (CON'T.)

It was his idea to use the Spitfire, and he suggested using Gerald as our contact at Sotheby's.

SAM

Yes! I remember Churchill saying, 'Don't worry, he's done this kind of thing for me before,' when you were on the phone. Oh, I should've known he was playing us for fools!

They approach the building, a large metal barn that looks like a hanger. Inside are three planes: a Messerschmitt, a Dassault, and the experimental Spitfire, being prepped for flight.

ARTHUR

Well, we weren't too foolish. Got a nice stable of planes outta all this, plus enough cash to take a nice trip or two. Say, how'd ya like t' get hitched?

SAM

You mean married? No, no, I couldn't. I'm afraid it would change us.

ARTHUR

C'mon. Ah'll let you ride in front?

SAM

Let me? Whose name is on the registration?

ARTHUR

Yes, but who has th' keys?

SAM

You - but not for long!

As Sam begins tickling him, they bound laughing down the runway towards the hanger, as the CREDITS roll. FADE OUT.