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**C A S T**

Principals

**BERNHARD KAUN**

German composer contracted to Universal Pictures.

**CARL LAEMMLE, JR.**

Head of Universal Pictures (1929-1936).

**MARIANNE MELROSE**

Scriptreader and actress from Sun River, Montana.

**DOCTOR LIME**

Physician assigned to Universal lot.

Supporting

ELIOT BELVEDERE: Theater Manager.

HUGO WILHELM KAUN: Bernhard's father.

UNCLE CARL: Affectionate name for Laemmle's father.

PROFESSOR GÖRLITZ: German surgeon / academic.

NEWSGIRL / X27: An American Mata Hari.

MARIA / DROWNED GIRL: Childhood memory of Bernhard.

CHESTER MONTGOMERY III: MGM executive.

HERR X: Subject of Görlitz's book.

Additional

BROADWAY & HOLLYWOOD TYPES, ACCOUNTANTS, NIGHTCLUB PATRONS,  
SAILORS, SECRETARIES and various other roles to be played /  
doubled by the company.

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### Act 1:

1. THE FIFTH CHILD ..... Bernhard & Hugo
2. IMAGINATION (LET IT RUN WILD) ..... Laemmle & Bernhard
3. THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES ..... Marianne & Cast
4. CREATE A LIFE ..... Lime w/ Newsgirl
5. MONSTERS & MARGINS ..... Laemmle w/ Accountants
6. THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER ..... Bernhard & Marianne
7. GIVE IT MORE TRUMPET ..... Laemmle & Bernhard
8. LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER ..... Görlitz & Lime
9. THIS COULD BE MY CITY ..... Marianne w/ Ms. Carrington
10. POSTCARD FROM UNION PACIFIC ..... Lime (w/ Cast)
11. BLACK MOON ..... Lime (w/ X27 & Cast)
12. THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA ..... Bernhard & Maria

### Act 2:

1. DIAS DORADOS ..... Laemmle (w/ Hedda & Executives)
2. SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY ..... Marianne & Chester (w/ Cast)
3. ROMANTIC SYMPHONY ..... Bernhard (w/ Maria)
4. NOBODY MUST KNOW ..... Görlitz (w/ X27 & Chorus)
5. ABOVE SCHUMANNSTRASSE ..... Lime w/ Herr X
6. LOVE IN THE BLACK FOREST ..... Marianne & Bernhard
7. IT ALWAYS RAINS ON SUNDAY ..... Marianne & Orderly
8. SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART ..... Bernhard, Hugo, Laemmle & Belvedere

**Premise:**

A former Hollywood composer prepares to give a talk at a fortieth anniversary double-screening of *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*, but is distracted by a youthful studio mogul, an old flame, and a now deceased physician.

**Time & Place:**

Scenes alternate between our 1971 Los Angeles present and the 1930s to 1960s past in Hollywood and Hamburg.

**Disclaimer:**

The portrayals herein of Bernhard Kaun, Carl Laemmle, Jr., Carl Laemmle Senior and Hedda Hopper are fictional representations of their real-life selves. All other characters, including those of Marianne Melrose and Doctor Lime, are entirely fictitious. Any similarities to persons previously employed by Universal Studios are purely coincidental.

**Note:**

"Laemmle" should be pronounced LEM-LEE.

**OVERTURE:** *Comprising various themes from the show.*

**Act 1, Scene 1**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Curtain rises on a wood-panelled function room lined with Hollywood portraits. Everyone from Garbo and Barrymore to Brando and Hoffman. There's also a desk, chair, drinks cabinet and small piano. The room's occupant, BERNHARD KAUN, cuts a distinguished figure and holds an invitation as he addresses the audience from downstage.*

**BERNHARD:** If you told me I'd be back in the movie world... Well, I don't even recall the last time I saw one on television. Let alone coming here -- Oh, I might conduct at a festival in Boston or New York on occasion, but I've not been to L.A. since before the war. And how long must it be since—?

*Bernhard checks his watch.*

**BERNHARD:** It's not like Mr. Laemmle to be late—

*The theater manager, ELIOT BELVEDERE, enters. A preppy East Coast type sporting a yellow V-neck and checkered slacks.*

**BELVEDERE:** Hey, we got quite the crowd in tonight. They're showing *Easy Rider* with *Vanishing Point* at the Rialto across the street so I didn't think we'd sell this many tickets—  
(*realizing*)  
Wait, you're not Mr. Laemmle?

**BERNHARD:** We spoke on the telephone.  
(*handing over invitation*)  
My name is Bernhard Kaun. I scored the picture.

**BELVEDERE:** You sound just like Orson Welles.  
(*impersonating*)  
My name is Orson Welles. I wrote and directed this picture.

**BERNHARD:** I can assure you I'm not Orson Welles. I'm—

**Music #1: THE FIFTH CHILD**

*Bernhard's father, HUGO WILHELM KAUN, enters – marching across the stage so that Bernhard also begins to march on the spot and in perfect step with his father. Meanwhile, Belvedere will go back and forth between the photo portraits and Bernhard (all the while doing double-takes) as though he's not convinced Bernhard isn't some Hollywood star after all.*

BERNHARD: I'M THE FIFTH CHILD OF HUGO WILHELM  
Patriarch with great expectation  
Domiciled to a studios realm  
Dry as dust without ostentation  
-- Berlin, Lugano, Violin, Piano  
Clarinet with military inclination  
All at such a tender, tender age  
When our Kaiser ruled and OompaH was all the rage.

I'M THE FIFTH CHILD OF LA CRÈME DE LA CREAM  
Made my way via Germanic connection  
I went wild for your American dream  
Tried as I must without expectation  
-- New York, Assistant, Arranger  
Mills, RCA, Nibelungen orchestration  
All at such an impressionable age  
When the Charleston ruled and Chaplin was all the  
rage.

HUGO: I NEVER LIKED THE MOVIES  
I KNOW IT SOUNDS ABRUPT  
Debauchery's among the factors  
And I despise those method actors.  
I NEVER LIKED THE MOVIES  
I SAID: "HOLLYWOOD'S BANKRUPT  
-- TEACH THEORY IN FREIBERG OR BADEN  
Laemmle's monsters will only corrupt".

BERNHARD: I'M THE FIFTH CHILD OF HUGO WILHELM  
Middle class with romantic affectation  
A miracle of our postwar realm  
East and West, denazification  
-- Berlin, Lugano, Violin, Piano  
Concert tours for generous remuneration  
All in this permissive, long-haired age  
While the Deutsche-Mark rules and hijacks are all  
the rage.

HUGO: (*Counterpoint*) SON, THERE ARE SHADOWS  
YOU CANNOT SEE  
UNTIL THEY CLAIM YOU  
NOT WHAT I SAW  
(CONT'D)

HUGO: (*Counterpoint*)           WHEN I RAISED YOU  
   RAISED YOU TO BE  
   A MAN LIKE ME...  
   I NEVER LIKED THE MOVIES.

*Hugo Wilhelm exits as Belvedere takes down a portrait of Orson Welles, crosses to center stage and holds it up beside Bernhard.*

BELVEDERE:           Yeah, I knew all along you weren't him.

*An ASSISTANT enters. She wears spectacles and a miniskirt.*

ASSISTANT:           Ah, Mr. Belvedere, I've been looking for you all over. I had a message from Mr. Laemmle's secretary. He's not coming -- Suspected food poisoning.

BELVEDERE:           Please tell me you're joking around. You are joking aren't you, Dorian?  
                                   (*turns to Bernhard*)  
                                   Kid likes to spook me. No doubt made a bet with her smart-aleck friends that I'd have a coronary before Hanukkah.

ASSISTANT:           I'm sorry... Seems this Laemmle took an early dinner, but hadn't figured on the poached Honduran salmon. Something about the off season—

BELVEDERE:           Poached Honduran salmon! Jeez, why are we discussing the mating habits of Central American marine life when I got a packed house who all paid five dollars a ticket anticipating old-school charm and sophistication -- Christ, I really am having a coronary.

ASSISTANT:           I've got to go, Mr. Belvedere. I said I'd help Lori out. There's only twenty minutes before intermission.

*The Assistant exits.*

BELVEDERE:           Wait a minute... Wait a minute -- I got the guy who scored the picture.

BERNHARD:           Oh no, Mr. Belvedere. I'm on board with your original plan -- and that was accompanying Mr. Laemmle on stage; you introducing us and me saying "Thank you, Eliot. It's a pleasure to be here tonight..."; but it was

(CONT'D)

BERNHARD: absolutely Mr. Laemmle doing this talk -- You can't expect me to step in at a moment's notice. Besides, they won't know who I am—

BELVEDERE: I wouldn't call it a talk. Just tell them what it was like working with the boogeyman.  
(*off Bernhard's bemusement*)  
What they called Karloff back then.

BERNHARD: That as it may, I never saw him. I was tied to the recording suite. Oh, aside from one time in the canteen -- He was bemoaning the absence of mint sauce.

BELVEDERE: You knew Junior...?

BERNHARD: After a fashion—

BELVEDERE: Terrific! So this is how we'll work things: After the intermission, I'll introduce you by saying "Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm afraid our scheduled speaker, former Head of Universal Pictures, Carl Laemmle Jr., has been taken ill and can't be with us, but I'm delighted that Bernhard Kaun has agreed to say a few words in his place -- Among many other things, Mr. Kaun was an orchestrator, composer and musical director in Hollywood between 1931 and 1942 -- and beside his contributions to over two hundred films, including *King Kong* and *Gone With the Wind*, he composed incidental music for the picture you're about to see -- Please, give a warm welcome to—" *(then)*  
You get the idea.

BERNHARD: Seems you know something about my career, after all -- You must be one of these hotshot film school kids I heard about.

BELVEDERE: You need a full beard to hang with those guys -- Anyhow, like I said, all you gotta do is tell them what it was like working in pictures back then.

BERNHARD: But—

BELVEDERE: Appreciate this, Mr. Kaun, but I should be in the projection room. The old timer's prone to dozing off during the final reel.

(CONT'D)



BELVEDERE:        *(Indicating cabinet)* Feel free to fix yourself something.

*Belvedere exits. Bernhard turns to the audience.*

BERNHARD:        What can I tell them...?

*CARL LAEMMLE JR.'s youthful self enters. Brim full of ginger in a double-breasted suit complete with white carnation.*

LAEMMLE:        *(Taking seat at desk)* Tell them how Uncle Carl made me head of the studio on my twenty-first birthday—

*UNCLE CARL enters. He's similarly attired and full of sparkle.*

UNCLE CARL:     *(To audience)* Sure makes a swell story -- Although he can leave off how I went and lost it later on.

*Uncle Carl removes a document from inside his jacket and sets it on the desk in front of Junior.*

UNCLE CARL:     Sign here. Here... And here.

LAEMMLE:        You know what they'll say, Uncle Carl -- They'll say it's nepotism.

UNCLE CARL:     Of course they will, Junior. Because they don't know anything about running a movie studio. They weren't born into the business -- Neither did they spend the last fifteen years dissecting every last nut and rivet of that business.

LAEMMLE:        Sure means a lot to me -- I won't let you you down, Sir.

UNCLE CARL:     I know you won't, Junior.

*Laemmle signs the document. Turns to Bernhard.*

LAEMMLE:        Boy, that's Uncle Carl alright. Last of the benevolent showmen -- Be sure you tell 'em that.

UNCLE CARL:     You're a good kid, Junior.

LAEMMLE:        It's true, Sir. If it wasn't for you... I mean, you built the backlots and bungalows—

UNCLE CARL:     Planted palm trees—

LAEMMLE:           Swaying in the breeze.

UNCLE CARL:       Universal City was a refuge—

LAEMMLE:           For the guy who got kicked out by his wife—

UNCLE CARL:       For the shopgirl who only a moment ago  
thought about throwing herself off the  
Brooklyn Bridge.

LAEMMLE:           *(Standing)* We gave them our souls!

UNCLE CARL:       And you, Junior, gave them—

*Laemmle crosses to center stage as STAGE HANDS wheel and raise scenery into place. Everything transforms to the Frankenstein studio set and its evocation of a German village in the 1820s.*

**Music #2:           IMAGINATION (LET IT RUN WILD)**

*Laemmle goes full-on expressionist (all wide eyes and hand gestures) as if he were a crazed silent screen actor. At the same time a montage of scenes from THE CABINET OF DOCTOR CALIGARI, THE HANDS OF ORLAC and NOSFERATU (all public domain) is projected onto the stage.*

LAEMMLE:           IMAGINATION  
LET IT RUN WILD  
FIND ITS WAY BY MOONLIGHT'S GLOW  
BEGUILED.  
IMAGINATION  
OUR POOR STEPCHILD  
CINDERELLA FROM THE WORLD  
EXILED  
IMAGINATION.

LAEMMLE &  
UNCLE CARL:       SHE'LL MOVE THROUGH YOUR ROOM AT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU EMBRACE THE DARK  
SO DON'T TURN HER AWAY  
OR SWITCH ON THE LIGHT.  
AND THEY'LL MOVE THROUGH YOUR DREAMS AT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU IGNITE THAT SPARK  
SO DON'T TURN THEM AWAY  
PLAY WHATEVER FEELS RIGHT.

BERNHARD:       I believe your father had his doubts. If I'm  
not mistaken, he said—

DOCTORS AND THEIR DUNGEONS  
THEY'RE TEN-A-PENNY, MAYBE MORE  
(CONT'D)

BERNHARD: CALIGARI, ORLAC, NOSFERATU  
IT'S ALL BEEN DONE BEFORE  
-- WEREWOLVES AT THE WINDOW  
THAT TWO-BIT TICKET'S OH SO CHEAP  
GHOULS, GHOSTS AND GOLEMS  
THE DEAD PREFER TO SLEEP.

LAEMMLE: IMAGINATION  
THESE MOVING REELS  
MAGIC BY THE LANTERN'S GLOW  
BEGUILED.  
IMAGINATION  
ON US IT SMILED  
TO STEAL AWAY OUR HEARTS  
EXILED  
IMAGINATION.

BERNHARD: I still say the picture needed more music.

*The stage hands set going a fog machine.*

STAGE HANDS: SHE'LL MOVE THROUGH YOUR ROOM AT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU EMBRACE THE DARK  
SO DON'T TURN HER AWAY  
OR SWITCH ON THE LIGHT.  
AND THEY'LL MOVE THROUGH YOUR DREAMS AT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU IGNITE THAT SPARK  
SO DON'T TURN THEM AWAY...

LAEMMLE: ... PLAY WHATEVER FEELS RIGHT.

THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE VILLAGERS  
THE BAYING OF THE DOGS  
THE SNAP AND CRACKLE POP  
OF BLAZING LOGS  
-- LOOK, THEY'VE SET THE WINDMILL ON FIRE  
I'M SPENT AND IN A SWEAT  
WHO NEEDS A SOUNDTRACK, BERNHARD  
WHAT PART OF IT DON'T YOU GET?

IMAGINATION  
LET IT RUN WILD  
FIND ITS WAY...

UNCLE CARL (Counterpoint)      DOCTORS AND THEIR DUNGEONS  
& BERNHARD:                      THEY'RE TEN-A-PENNY, MAYBE MORE.

LAEMMLE: ... BY MOONLIGHT'S GLOW  
BEGUILED.  
IMAGINATION  
OUR POOR STEPCHILD  
(CONT'D)

LAEMMLE: CINDERELLA FROM THE WORLD  
EXILED  
IMAGINATION...

UNCLE CARL (Counterpoint) IMAGINATION.  
& BERNHARD:

UNCLE CARL: I'll leave it in your hands, Junior.

*Uncle Carl exits. The German village trappings fade as the stage is once again the backroom of a movie theater.*

LAEMMLE: It's like Uncle Carl said: a swell story.

BERNHARD: I was just thinking about that and, you know, I'm not so sure—

LAEMMLE: What's there not to be sure about?

BERNHARD: Tonight's audience already heard that story twice over -- They're all grown up and sophisticated. I think they'd prefer to hear about the backroom players: the best boys and continuity girls; the lighting operators and set designers; the scriptreaders who filter out all that unreadable junk; or the physicians who ensure everyone on the lot is sound of mind and body.  
(suddenly)  
That's it! Marianne Melrose and Doctor Lime!

LAEMMLE: Marianne Melrose and Doctor Lime? Who...?  
What did those two have to do with any of our pictures?

BERNHARD: They represent what I'm talking about. And they both came onto the lot around the same time as myself -- February 1931.

LAEMMLE: Lemme get this straight: they got a packed house for this fortieth anniversary double screening: Right now they're showing *Dracula* and before they run *Frankenstein* you're gonna tell 'em about some physician and a scriptreader who had zip to do with either of those pictures -- Oh, wait, that Marianne dame did coverage on Fort and Faragoh's script before she made a splash for about five minutes over at Metro; but who the hell remembers her now? Who remembers her now...?

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

## Act 1, Scene 2

Audition Room.  
Somewhere off Broadway. January 1931.

A clipboard-wielding PRODUCER done up in a silk cravat and Princeton blazer stands beside a world-weary DIRECTOR watching MARIANNE MELROSE do her thing. She's wearing a crushed beret. A battered suitcase is at STAGE LEFT.

MARIANNE:           *(Semi-spoken)*  
I'm down to my last quarter  
so if you think I oughtta  
hop a Westbound to the sticks  
you mistook me for that funny daughter  
who exchanged her brain for bricks.

*She winds up with a hokey flourish and winning smile. The two men are dumbstruck.*

PRODUCER:           Kooky and kinda funny, but—

MARIANNE:           Not what you had in mind, huh?

DIRECTOR:           Kid's honest. I like that.

PRODUCER:           Honesty's alright for Girl Scouts and  
divinity mistresses, but where did it ever  
get anyone on Broadway? Besides, I prefer  
college girls of a certain... How can I put  
it?

DIRECTOR:           A certain elocution.

MARIANNE:           I really am down to my last quarter. All I  
got in that suitcase is an *Olivetti* --  
Figured I'd try writing a novel on my nights  
off. And that's kinda most of 'em.  
*(then)*  
Look, I could use a break -- Okay, I ain't  
got your fancy whatever, but I couldn't have  
been that bad?

PRODUCER:           No, Miss...?  
*(checking list)*  
Miss Melrose. No, you weren't bad. You were  
interminable -- And if this were a show  
about toothache, then I can assure you that  
leading role would be yours.

DIRECTOR:           Hey, you should try Berlin. I hear they go  
nuts for all that—

PRODUCER: Cubism and cabarets.

DIRECTOR: Seven-night Dada plays.

PRODUCER: Only she'll sail home Cargo Class and flat broke.

DIRECTOR: You ever thought about pictures? Hollywood and all that jazz.

MARIANNE: Now you just wanna put three thousand miles between me and this production.

PRODUCER: This gal really does have a sense of humor.

DIRECTOR: With guys like you around, she needs it. Seriously, if this were a comedy I'd bite.

PRODUCER: But you don't do comedy?

DIRECTOR: You won't let me!

MARIANNE: (*Fetching suitcase*) Okay fellas, I get it. Thanks all the same.

DIRECTOR: Hey, wait up. You think we're heartless types who spit girls like you back on the street.

MARIANNE: (*Doing her best Bryn Mawr*) Well, you do, don't you?

PRODUCER: Mmm, I do. What's more, I can spot a phoney accent a mile off.

DIRECTOR: Come on, have a heart. She's got *something* going on. I dunno what it might be, but someone somewhere should know what to do with her.

**UNDERSCORE**: *Theme from THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER (a number we'll hear later on in Act 1).*

DIRECTOR: See... Last night I woke up in a cold sweat thinking about all the dreams we shatter -- I mean, these kids only ever hear about the overnight sensations and rags to crazy riches success stories. They never read about Joan or Jean Nobody boarding that bus back to Ohio with their battered suitcase and empty bottle of peroxide.

**END UNDERSCORE.**

PRODUCER: (Dabs a mock tear) Well, we mustn't let it happen to this Joan or Jean Nobody.

DIRECTOR: Maybe that last quarter is worth a million bucks?

PRODUCER: Look, what we're trying to say—

**Music #3: THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES**

PRODUCER  
& DIRECTOR: WE HEARD THEY MADE A BLIZZARD  
OUT ON THE OTHER COAST  
WITH A '24 SNOW TRACTOR  
AND SOME DING-A-LING EXTRACTOR  
CAUSE THEY ALWAYS GET THE MOST...

PRODUCER: (Handing Marianne her suitcase) Wait, you forgot something!

PRODUCER  
& DIRECTOR: Good luck, kid!

*The two men exit. Marianne waves as a picturehouse lights up with the banner: CARL LAEMMLE PRESENTS DRACULA. Meanwhile, the HEAD USHERETTE enters followed by three MINOR USHERETTES all speaking nineteen to the dozen.*

MINOR USHERETTES: We got a newsreel and talkers on double feature—  
(overlapping)  
This way, Miss Melrose—  
(ushering Marianne to seat)  
I also work at the Rivoli, but if yer go in the afternoon don't sit upstairs!

HEAD USHERETTE: ... STARLIGHT IN THE SKY  
SHOWGIRLS ON THE STAGE  
WARLORDS IN SHANGHAI  
HEADLINES ON A FRONT PAGE.

USHERETTES (ALL): YOU'RE AT THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
THEY'RE GOING OVER BIG THIS YEAR  
WITH ALL THE STARRY-EYED FEMMES  
WE GET A LOT OF THEM HERE  
... THOSE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES.

*A RAINCOAT GUY enters. Sidles up to Marianne.*

MINOR USHERETTES: Hey, bozo. Take a walk!

*Raincoat guy exits.*

MARIANNE: I SEE THEY'RE MAKING PICTURES  
OUT ON THE OTHER COAST  
THEY GOT GERMANIC ART DIRECTORS  
WITH GLYCERINE AND REFLECTORS

USHERETTES (ALL): MAYBE SHE'LL FIND THE MOST...

MARIANNE: TEARDROPS IN MY EYE  
ORCHIDS AT MY DOOR  
VELVET FROM VERSAILLES  
THE WORLD UNLIKE BEFORE

I'M AT THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
THEY'RE GOING OVER BIG THIS YEAR  
SOFTENING MY HEARTBREAK  
BEFORE I MAKE IT OUTTA HERE.

*The movie theater becomes a dreary train carriage. The Head Usherette punches Marianne's ticket.*

HEAD USHERETTE: A THIRD-CLASS COMPARTMENT  
BROUGHT HER OUT WEST  
ACROSS WHEATFIELDS AND PRAIRIE  
WITH FIRE IN HER BREAST...

*The train carriage transforms into a Hollywood readers' office with its towering piles of movie scripts.*

MARIANNE: WORKING THAT SLUSHPILE  
OFF STUDIO THIRTEEN  
SKIMMING FOR MONSTERS  
I DON'T MIND THE ROUTINE.

I'M AT THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
THEY'RE GOING OVER BIG THIS YEAR  
WITH THIS STARRY-EYED FEMME  
YOU GET A LOT OF THEM HERE.

USHERETTES (ALL): SHE'S AT THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
THEY'RE GOING OVER BIG THIS YEAR...

MARIANNE: I'M AT THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
THEY'RE GOING OVER BIG THIS YEAR  
AND THESE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
GOT ME OUTTA HERE...  
THESE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES  
GOT... ME... OUTTA... HERE.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*



**Act 1, Scene 3**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Laemmle sits at the desk. Absorbed in a mountain of paperwork.  
Bernhard tries to get his attention.*

BERNHARD: You see, Mr. Laemmle. Marianne's story—

*DOCTOR LIME enters.*

LIME: He's not listening, Bernhard. Mr. Laemmle's a busy man.

BERNHARD: Lime...? Doctor Lime. Is it really you?

LIME: It's terrific to see you again, Bernhard -- You're in great shape. Concert tours agree with you.

BERNHARD: Hotels, rehearsal rooms... It's not as—  
(*double-taking Lime*)  
Why, I was just telling Mr. Laemmle—

*Laemmle gets up. Crosses the stage.*

LAEMMLE: Don't you see, Bernhard? He came to tell you he doesn't want his life story broadcast to every Jack and Jill. Let him rest in peace.  
(*to Lime*)  
Say, you got any of those antacid capsules? The ones with the candy stripes. This mafia script's playing hell with my digestion.

LIME: Sorry, Mr. Laemmle. I no longer practise.

LAEMMLE: Yeah, I took a shot.

BERNHARD: Rest in peace. What—?

LIME: I'm afraid Mr. Laemmle's right. He always was perceptive.

BERNHARD: You mean—?

*A SECRETARY enters carrying a manila folder. She sashays across the stage and removes an official-looking document.*

SECRETARY: Certificate of Death issued by State of California. Male -- Lime, Otis Claybourn. Date of Death, November 26, 1961. Aged 64. Occupation: Physician. Primary cause of death: Nephritis of liver.

*The Secretary exits.*

LIME: Ten years. Phew... Seems only yesterday the stiffs at Evergreen were lowering my coffin into God's good earth.

BERNHARD: (To Lime) So why are you here—?

LIME: I thought it'd be swell to see old friends. (then)  
And because of that trip I made to Europe -- There were things I couldn't mention at the time, but I think they're about ready to be declassified.

BERNHARD: Declassified? What do you mean?

LIME: (Whispers) I mean federal secrets.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

#### Act 1, Scene 4

*Newsstand outside movie theater.  
Chicago street. Dusk. January 1931.*

*A NEWSGIRL peddles movie magazines, listing guides and a selection of glossy publicity stills. Hung up behind her are a black trenchcoat and fedora. A gaudy placard declares:*

*THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA  
Starring LON CHANEY ~ Man of a Thousand Faces*

NEWSGIRL: Photoplay magazine! Photoplay magazine! Get it here -- This one's sizzling hot. Yes, sirree... See for yourself and getta load of Mary Astor, David Manners, Loretta Young, Douglas Fairbanks, Norma Shearer, Dolores Del Rio and more fireworks than Chinatown on New Year.  
(pause)  
Read all about 'em! Read all about 'em in your latest edition of Photoplay magazine!

*A younger Doctor Lime enters. He seems preoccupied.*

NEWSGIRL: Hey there, Doc! Don't you just think movies are a funny business -- Actors get this dandy idea they'd be better off being somebody else and spend half their lives waiting around to waltz down some staircase. No wonder they keep buying all those fancy houses and fancy cars they can hardly afford to run round the block.

(*then*)

I guess it pays well out there in Hollywoodland, but they're all gonna wind up needing shrinks. Whadda you say, Doc?

**UNDERScore:** *Theme from IMAGINATION (LET IT RUN WILD).*

LIME: (*To audience*) Imagine changing your appearance at will...

**END UNDERScore.**

NEWSGIRL: Oh brother, you ain't listened to a word I said.

LIME: I'm sorry, Martha. It's the Lon Chaney effect -- I also found out they'll be tearing down the Home Insurance building. I'm gonna need a new office.

NEWSGIRL: Sorry to hear that, doc.  
(*indicating newsstand*)  
Although it's a dead cert this new office of yours will be one of those fancy ferroconcrete affairs with, you know, walls and windows, a reinforced roof and drinking water.

LIME: I should be grateful, huh -- What were you saying?

NEWSGIRL: I was running through my ten-dollar pitch for *Photoplay* magazine.

LIME: You know I always buy one regardless—

NEWSGIRL: Sure I do, but I gotta keep in practice. If I don't sell every last copy my boss goes all cranky on me.  
(*impersonating*)  
Beats me how you can't sell the world's best movie magazine outside a goddamn picturehouse?

(CONT'D)

NEWSGIRL: Oh, I didn't mean to blaspheme, but it ain't me -- It's my boss. I said he was cranky.

*Lime gives her a quarter. She hands him the latest edition.*

LIME: Hey, you missed something. Seems monster pictures are gonna be all the rage.  
(reading verbatim)  
"After the success of *Dracula*, Carl Laemmle Junior, Head of Universal Pictures, will terrify audiences all over again with the tale of a man brought back from the dead."

NEWSGIRL: Sounds like a hayride; although from what I hear that Laemmle's a certified crazy. Sure glad he ain't my boss!

LIME: I wonder what it's really like? Out there in Hollywood, I mean?

NEWSGIRL: I'd say it's what you've always wanted—

*A streetlamp comes on... and Lime spins around it as if he were Gene Kelly twenty years before the fact.*

**Music #4:           CREATE A LIFE**

LIME: GLOW STREET LIGHT  
RID THE DARK OF ITS BITE  
BETWEEN THE LINDEN BOUGHS  
OUT OF THIS COBBLED DROWSE  
WHEN YOU CREATE A LIFE  
FAR FROM YOUR OWN  
FALLS EARLY THE DARKNESS  
AND THE TROLLEYS CAN'T CARRY YOU HOME.

NEWSGIRL: GO WHERE YOU MIGHT  
RIDE THROUGH EVERY STOPLIGHT  
AND WEAR THAT FLASHY NECKTIE  
FOR ALL OF THE PASSERS-BY  
TO CREATE A LIFE  
FAR FROM YOUR OWN  
FIND EARLY GREEN PASTURES  
DON'T LET THE DARKNESS FOLLOW YOU HOME.

LIME: CHICAGO...  
FROM A WALK-UP NEAR MIDWAY  
TO SUMMA CUM LAUDE  
I ROSE TO THE HEIGHTS  
DESPITE MY CAST...

*The Newsgirl hands Lime his valise before slipping on the black trenchcoat and fedora.*

NEWSGIRL: (To audience) He's perfect!

*She makes a dramatic exit and the stage transforms...*

*... becoming the entryway to Universal City. Full of California sunshine with EXTRAS and PROP GUYS now crossing the stage.*

LIME:  
 ... I GRIP MY VALISE  
 A MEDICAL DOCTOR  
 THROUGH THIS STUDIO GATE  
 PAST THE CAMELS AND GAFFERS  
 I NEVER IMAGINED  
 HOW THE STARS WOULD ALIGN FOR ME  
 -- CUT SO DEEP, LIKE FATE.

*The extras and prop guys exit. A WORKMAN carrying a paint-can enters and starts painting a wall upstage.*

SO I TOOK FLIGHT  
 SOMEHOW THE TIME FELT RIGHT  
 AND NOW THAT GLOSSY COAT OF PAINT  
 MAKES MR. LAEMMLE FEEL FAINT  
 CAUSE I'M CREATING A LIFE  
 FAR FROM MY OWN  
 RISE EARLY LIKE SUNLIGHT  
 OUTRUN UNCERTAINTY, FIND YOUR NEW HOME.

*The workman turns and makes to exit.*

WORKMAN: Your new office is about ready, Doctor Lime.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

### **Act 1, Scene 5**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
 Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Laemmle stands by the drinks cabinet. Fixes himself something.  
 Bernhard studies the photo portraits.*

LAEMMLE: So you got a couple of nobodies with stars in their eyes.

BERNHARD: Precisely! It's the Hollywood dream. Marianne and Lime epitomize that dream—

*Laemmle puts down his glass. Crosses to center stage.*

LAEMMLE: You wanna tell 'em about the Hollywood dream -- Well, you tell 'em about a man who dared play God. And the studio that put it up on the screen so you couldn't move for lines around the block to see things you'd never set eyes on before.  
 (pause)  
 Your sophisticated crowd are buying those same dreams -- Sure, last week they were throwing rose petals at some mystic touting karma or whatever the hell those guys are selling; but tonight...  
 (pause)  
 Tonight they came to see the golden age of glamor and terror -- the one we created.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 1, Scene 6:**

*Laemmle's Office, Universal Studios.  
 September 1931.*

*Laemmle is sat at a desk with all the executive trappings: a photograph of his father, brass paperweight, fountainpen holder, glass ashtray, desk diary, telephone and the latest edition of Variety. Behind him, the wall is covered by velvet drapes. Three ACCOUNTANTS enter waving an assortment of paperwork.*

ACCOUNTANT 1: Monsters made out of body-parts from the grave reanimated by electrical storms! Carl, you're turning the studio into a crazyhouse.

LAEMMLE: (*Waving Variety*) It's right here in black and white -- and I quote: "Dracula is the wallop of the season. Sold strictly on a supernatural angle, it caught the public's imagination."

ACCOUNTANT 2: That was last week. Our projections say the public wants homespun musicals. They're going gaga over on Broadway for this Astaire fella -- They say he's better than Pavlova--

ACCOUNTANT 3: There's a wonderful script in your readers' office -- *California Melody 1931*--

LAEMMLE: Yeah, I saw the coverage -- Look, I'd be laughed off the lot. And if you think I'm gonna tell Van Sloan he'll be busting out a show tune on his next picture--

*Laemmle stands. Paces the room.*

LAEMMLE: More to the point, why are we even having this conversation? *Dracula* sold fifty-thousand tickets within forty-eight hours of its New York opening -- Yeah, I know, that's New York. They love a guy who stays up all night then sleeps in a box. But you ever think about that Spanish version we shot after hours? Melford got it made for sixty-six thousand and it's doing gangbusters all over Central and Latin America. Hell, we'll do this one in Spanish if we have to.

ACCOUNTANT 1: They'll love it in Guatemala.

LAEMMLE: Sure they will. They're depressed. Hell, I'm depressed. I got clowns telling me to greenlight some ten-cent musical set in an out of town skate-rink.  
(*then*)  
Look, folk just wanna forget their troubles -- Forget the stock market crashed; forget their corn crop got ravaged by a plague of locusts; and forget their boss told 'em there's no use showing up for work tomorrow.

ACCOUNTANT 2: A perfect case for *California Melody 1931*.  
(*waving paperwork at Laemmle*)  
What's more, these projections—

*Laemmle grabs the offending paperwork. Rips it in two!*

LAEMMLE: Projections! Don't you guys think about nothing else?

ACCOUNTANTS: (*In unison*) No!

ACCOUNTANT 3: Besides, this whole supernatural thing's ridiculous. I mean, vampires in tuxedos?

LAEMMLE: Audiences were mesmerized!

ACCOUNTANT 1: They were mesmerized alright. By Lugosi's dopey grin. As for that Mexican *Cónde Dracula* -- Where'd they dig him up from?

ACCOUNTANT 2: You've been shut up in this office too long, Carl. It's given you a warped perspective -- Musicals are the next big thing.  
(*pause*)  
Like we were saying, *California Melody*—

LAEMMLE: Sheesh, why's everyone so nuts about musicals?

ACCOUNTANT 3: At least consider adapting an *American* novel?

ACCOUNTANT 1: *Little Women*, for instance?

LAEMMLE: *Little Women*...? Sure, I see it now: It's night. Jo hears a noise. Goes to the window. There's a lightning storm. Suddenly, she screams! Cause pressed up against the window, illuminated by weird electricity, is the most horrific thing she ever saw: the face of a man built from the lifeless limbs of the dead!  
(pause)  
Now that, fellas, is entertainment!

ACCOUNTANT 2: (*Picking up torn sheet*) You ever look at one of these? Really chew the numbers?

*Laemmle pulls back the LEFT-HAND drape to reveal a wallchart filled with projections. He grabs an accompanying POINTER.*

LAEMMLE: You think I coasted in yesterday? I grew up in the picture business!

**Music #5: MONSTERS & MARGINS**

*Laemmle dances up a storm with the pointer and uses it to hammer home his business acumen.*

LAEMMLE:  
STUDIO BOOKS  
WERE ALL IN THE RED  
WHEN POPS SAID TO ME  
"TAKE THE REINS  
-- BOX-OFFICE BUST  
OUR DRAMA'S TOO SWEET  
THIS SANDAL AND SWORD'S  
NO ZEST FOR DEPRESSION..."  
DREAD'S THE BEST  
SO REPEAT AFTER ME  
WHO'S NEXT  
IN THE MONSTER ROSTER  
FOR A MOVIE RELEASE, WIDESPREAD?  
RKO'S WORKING ON AN OVERSTUFFED MONKEY  
WE'VE GOT SOMETHING HUMAN-LIKE INSTEAD.

ACCOUNTANTS: THESE MONSTERS, MARGINS  
TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
CLEAR THESE COLUMNS OUT OF RED.



LAEMMLE: DESPITE NO DINNER ON TABLES  
 SHOES ON KIDS  
 RENTS FOR THE LANDLORD  
 LIFE ON SKIDS  
 THERE'S ALWAYS A QUARTER SOMEWHERE BE HAD  
 FORGET ALL THE SAD  
 BE FRIGHTENED OUT OF ONE'S WITS.

HAND ME THE PHONE  
 GIVE ME THE COMPOSERS' BACKROOM  
 I NEED A MUSICIAN  
 GOT SOMEONE THERE TO EXHUME  
 SOMEONE NOT CRUSHED UNDER GAMBLING DEBT  
 NOR DIVORCE SETTLEMENT  
 OR A PENCHANT FOR GIRLS IN THE CHORUS LINE  
 FOR MY MASTERPIECE IN DEVELOPMENT  
*FRANKENSTEIN.*

*Laemmle pulls back the RIGHT-HAND drape. It reveals some garish artwork.*

ACCOUNTANTS: THESE MONSTERS, MARGINS  
 TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
 CLEAR THESE COLUMNS OUT OF RED.

*Bernhard's YOUNGER SELF enters.*

LAEMMLE: WELCOME TO MY OFFICE  
 TAKE THAT ARMCHAIR  
 OF TURKISH MOHAIR  
 AND SOME ARROWHEAD WATER  
 -- THIS DAY AND ME CAN'T GET ANY HOTTER.

ACCOUNTANTS: MISTER L...  
BERNHARD: I rushed right here, Mr. Laemmle. What—?

LAEMMLE: STUDIO BOOKS  
 WERE BLOODIED WITH RED  
 WHEN I SAID TO POPS  
 "LET ME TAKE THE REINS  
 -- THEATER SEATS RUST  
 OUR COWBOYS TOO NEAT  
 THOSE BIBLICAL HORDES  
 NO ZEST FOR DEPRESSION..."  
 DREAD'S THE BEST  
 RING *VARIETY*  
 TELL THEM WHO'S NEXT  
 IN THE MONSTER ROSTER  
 THIS GERMAN WITH A STITCHED-ON HEAD  
 KARLOFF'S MORE THAN SOME ELECTRIFIED FLUNKY  
 GIMME MUSIC, GIMME MUSIC BACK FROM THE DEAD.

ACCOUNTANTS: THESE MONSTERS, MARGINS  
TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
CLEAR THESE COLUMNS OUT OF RED.

LAEMMLE: THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT YOU  
THAT PLAYS ON MY NERVES  
JUST WHAT HORROR DESERVES...

DESPITE NO DINNER ON TABLES  
SHOES ON KIDS  
RENTS FOR THE LANDLORD  
LIFE ON SKIDS  
THERE'S ALWAYS A QUARTER SOMEWHERE BE HAD.

ACCOUNTANTS: (*Counterpoint*) YOU'LL WRITE HIM A SCORE  
THAT PLAYS LIKE NO OTHER—

LAEMMLE THESE MONSTERS, MARGINS  
TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
CLEAR THESE COLUMNS OUT OF RED.

ACCOUNTANTS: (*Counterpoint*) ENTER SOME DARKNESS, BOY  
FOLLOW HIM BROTHER.

LAEMMLE: WELCOME TO MY MONSTER PANTHEON!

*The defeated accountants exit. Laemmle calls after them:*

LAEMMLE: Next time I'll do *Anne of Green Gables!*  
(*turning to Bernhard*)  
Jeez, the way they're carrying on you'd  
think I'd nominated Arbuckle for President  
at the League of Decency. And then there's  
this thumping in my chest like jackhammers  
on a double-shift -- Not that I got time for  
a coronary.  
(*then*)  
I've heard great things about you, Mr. Kaun.

BERNHARD: That's kind of you, sir -- Although I've not  
been on the lot so long.

LAEMMLE: You were brought in on a recommendation.

BERNHARD: Mr. Roemheld's been of great help to my  
career.

LAEMMLE: He also said you were at Eastman -- Anyhow,  
I need a favor, Mr. Kaun—

*The telephone RINGS.*

LAEMMLE: Ah, Jeez, I should get that.

*Laemmle picks up. Listens a moment.*

LAEMMLE: (*Into receiver*) More to the point, I'm low on my pills and if they carry me out in a wooden box I don't see anybody else nailing distribution; although you can bet your ass that even six feet under they won't let me alone. Look, I'll get back to you when I've actually got five seconds—

*Laemmle slams down the receiver. Turns to Bernhard.*

LAEMMLE: Lot physician. Can I make it in for a checkup Thursday afternoon? Well, let's see: I'm trying to run a studio so there'll be the usual flimflam with the board in the morning -- I'll also have to remind them I got the distributor on my tail; and that now there's three accountants busting my balls. You saw them, right? Not to mention—

*Marianne enters. She's still wearing that crushed beret, but now it's matched with a business suit. She's also clutching a bradded script with a coverage sheet clipped on top. Bernhard stands. Smiles at her.*

MARIANNE: Oh, I'm sorry Mr. Laemmle. I should have knocked -- I didn't realize... but you said to let you know as soon as I had the *Sarcophagus* coverage—

LAEMMLE: That's okay, Miss Melrose. You can leave it on my desk -- I'll take the short version.

MARIANNE: The script?

LAEMMLE: No, Beethoven's Fifth! Of course, the script.

MARIANNE: The script. Oh, Lordy -- Well, that Egyptian princess back from the tomb premise was promising, but then she transforms herself into a leopard at a tennis party in the Hamptons and... Oh, it's as preposterous as it sounds—

LAEMMLE: Would they go for it in the sticks?

MARIANNE: ... the sticks?

LAEMMLE: Sun River or whatever place you're from? Would the fanettes line up for this cat creature concoction?

BERNHARD: Boy, Sun River... Sure sounds nice.

MARIANNE: Oh, it is—

LAEMMLE: Miss Melrose—?

MARIANNE: Sorry, Mr. Laemmle -- Yes. I mean... No. Actually, I don't know. They might, but then again they might not—

LAEMMLE: Most insightful, Miss Melrose.  
*(sarcastic)*  
 You should work in Publicity.  
*(suddenly, to Bernhard)*  
 Oh, that favor I mentioned -- We're throwing a party for the studio crowd on Saturday and I scheduled our usual quartet. Only their piano player went and got his hand stuck in an elevator. Long story short, I'm in a spot. Every ivory tinkler between here and Tijuana is booked. You think you could sit in...?

BERNHARD: Saturday...?

LAEMMLE: Guests arrive from eight; but the guys pitch up half-hour beforehand -- They play all the jazzy stuff. I'll give you double union rate and as much lobster risotto as you can handle—

BERNHARD: Well, I guess—

LAEMMLE: Terrific. You'll get ahead in this business, Mr. Kaun.

BERNHARD: But where...? I've not been to your—

LAEMMLE: Dias Dorados. It's off Benedict.

MARIANNE: Hey, I once walked by that place! It's real fancy. Well, they all are; but I recognized that pile of Spanish bricks from a highbrow magazine I'd flicked through while killing time at an audition -- I even remember what it said: that Dias Dorados "exuded all the austerity of the missions". How about that?

BERNHARD: You must have a wonderful memory?

MARIANNE: Oh, I'd forget my hat if I didn't pin it to my head.  
(*then*)  
Anyhow, I doubt scriptreaders are invited.

LAEMMLE: On that point, Miss Melrose, you are correct.

BERNHARD: Well, I could sure use a page turner. And what with Miss Melrose knowing the place—

MARIANNE: Someone who turns over sheet music for a pianist...? I can't read music—

BERNHARD: I'll nod my head. With your memory it'll be a cinch.

MARIANNE: Well, knock me down—!  
(*remembers*)  
Oh, wait. Saturday evening? I'll be at Mrs. Carrington's place and won't get through until after five -- I housekeep Saturday afternoons, but it should be alright.

BERNHARD: (*Extending hand*) I'm Bernhard Kaun, by the way. Composer and musical arranger.

MARIANNE: (*Accepting his hand*) Marianne Melrose. Reader and failed Broadway hopeful—

LAEMMLE: Jeez, when did this become a dating agency—  
(*realizing*)  
Hey, what'd you say?

MARIANNE: About being a failure on Broadway?

LAEMMLE: No, about Saturday afternoon?

MARIANNE: Ah, well...  
(*thinking he's annoyed about her other job*)  
My mother worries and I promised I'd only stay in a nice boarding-house...  
(*then*)  
I guess I could find something cheaper, but the landlady—

LAEMMLE: (*To audience*) Who knew I had all day?  
(*back to Marianne*)  
I don't want your landlady's life story -- You mentioned a Mrs. Carrington?

MARIANNE: You're not put out I got another job?

LAEMMLE: You could run a Chinese laundry on Saturday afternoons for all I care. I just wanna know about this doll you work for?

MARIANNE: (*Relieved*) Oh, well, Esther—

LAEMMLE: Esther-Jean Carrington! I knew it! I also know she's bleeding her spouse for alimony — and that he sits on the board at Paramount. (*to audience*) Well, there's a dandy-doodle thing.

MARIANNE: (*Trying not to get roped into anything*) I should get going, Mr. Laemmle. There's some other scripts I—

BERNHARD: You won't forget Saturday evening?

MARIANNE: You got yourself a date, buster!

*Marianne exits. Bernhard longingly looks after her.*

LAEMMLE: Miss Melrose is the sharpest scriptreader I got, but I sure as hell have no idea what goes on inside that pretty head of hers.

*Laemmle returns to his desk. Gets back to work.*

**Music #6: THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER**

BERNHARD: GUESS SHE REMEMBERS  
THINGS ABOUT WINTER  
FROST ON THE HUDSON  
CHAPLIN  
AND CLARA  
ALL KINDS OF JAZZ  
AND HOW SHE PRAYED  
AT NIGHT FOR HER FATHER.

GUESS SHE IMAGINES  
THINGS ABOUT THIS TOWN  
GENTLEMEN CALLERS  
FOX FUR  
AND CANDELABRA  
ALL KINDS OF RAZZMATAZZ  
OR HOW THEY'LL MAKE  
MARLENE AND BARBARA.

(CONT'D)

BERNHARD:           WHAT CAN I GIVE HER  
                           THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER  
                           WITH HER PURPLE PROSE  
                           AND STARRY EYES  
                           LAST YEAR'S CLOTHES  
                           AND LONG GOODBYES  
                           -- OH, THE FUNNY CRUSHED BERET  
                           TAKES MY BREATH AWAY.

*Marianne enters. Dashes back to center stage.*

MARIANNE:           YES, I IMAGINED  
                           THOSE PARTS I MIGHT PLAY  
                           CHEKHOV OR IBSEN  
                           SEAGULLS  
                           AND SISTERS  
                           ALL KINDSA SASS  
                           AND HOW I'D SAY  
                           "WATCH OUT FOR ME, MISTERS!"

BERNHARD:           WHAT CAN I GIVE HER  
                           THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER  
                           WITH HER PURPLE PROSE  
                           AND STARRY EYES  
                           LAST YEAR'S CLOTHES  
                           AND LONG GOODBYES  
                           -- OH, THE FUNNY CRUSHED BERET  
                           TAKES MY BREATH AWAY.

*Marianne exits. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### **Act 1, Scene 7**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
 Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Bernhard and Laemmle resume their 'present day' conversation.*

BERNHARD:           See, you just said Marianne was your best  
                           scriptreader! Without her it would be the  
                           fortieth anniversary of *Sarcophagus*.

LAEMMLE:           I'll give you that Marianne dame, but you're  
                           not telling me the people out front paid  
                           five dollars to hear about some guy writing  
                           seltzer prescriptions.

BERNHARD:           I'd say there's a lot you don't know about  
                           Lime.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 1, Scene 8**

*Physician's Office, Universal City.  
October 1931.*

*High-end functional with desk, screen, swivel-mirror, recliner and diagrams of the male and female anatomies on one wall. Some personal items occupy a shelf. A medical journal is open on the desk beside an appointment list.*

*Lime's younger self stands downstage. Addresses the audience.*

LIME: Back in Chicago I thought I'd seen it all: diseases you'd classify as either hereditary, congenital, infectious, allergic, metabolic, hormonal, circulatory, degenerative, neoplastic, or nutritional -- Throw in emotional disorders and conditions caused by physical or chemical agents and—  
(*then*)  
Turns out I was wrong. You see, out here it's an artistic colony. I get thrown some curve-balls.

*Bernhard's younger self enters.*

BERNHARD: You must help me, doctor. I've forgotten how to compose music!

LIME: I'm sorry, Mr...  
(*checking appointment list*)  
I'm sorry, Mr. Kaun, but problems of creativity aren't my remit—

BERNHARD: But... I've forgotten how to distinguish melody from harmony -- I just let the orchestra off early. I had nothing for them to play.  
(*noticing medical journal*)  
Hypnosis! That's it! I'll try anything.

LIME: (*To audience*) See what I mean—  
(*back to Bernhard*)  
Hypnosis is an experimental technique. I'm surprised you've heard of it?

*Bernhard reaches for the journal.*

BERNHARD: There's this article right here?



LIME: Oh, that -- *Hypnotism: Three Case Studies*. What makes you think I know anything about it? It was written by some high-flown German academic -- a Professor Görlitz.

BERNHARD: Call it a hunch.  
(*throwing journal back on desk*)  
You do know something about it, don't you?

LIME: (*To audience*) And I thought I'd be on easy street.  
(*checks wristwatch*)  
It's unconventional... although I always had this "fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature".

BERNHARD: *Frankenstein*, right?

LIME: Right.  
(*buzzes intercom*)  
Oh, Miss Channing. Would you see I'm not disturbed. Mr. Kaun's appointment will run longer than scheduled.

*Lights dim as Lime takes out a silver pocketwatch on a chain and motions for Bernhard to lay on the recliner. He swings it back and forth so that Bernhard's head moves from side to side as he follows its motion.*

LIME: (*Soft, monotonous*) Consider this pocketwatch -- Once the mark of a gentleman.  
(*then*)  
Your eyelids are heavy as you fall through the depths of time... because this pocketwatch belonged to Nathaniel Hawthorne. Its inscription reads *House of the Seven Gables, Salem -- July 7th, 1851*.  
(*then*)  
On Hawthorne's death it went to an old black servant. Maybe you heard the story?

BERNHARD: (*Under hypnosis*) It came from Italy. No, the maker was Italian -- A white-haired fellow called Saltarelli... but the old servant traded the watch with an itinerant worker from a traveling carnival who wrapped it in a red handkerchief.  
(*then*)  
Why, that's it! Fairground music—

*Laemmle enters wearing a somber morning coat. The stage transforms into MISTER LAEMMLE'S MEDICINAL MENAGERIE — a wheeled contraption with numerous drawers, cabinets and compartments. There's also a HORN which Laemmle now honks! Bernhard sits up.*

LAEMMLE: Why, my good sir, I'd prefer not to use devilish words such as "carnival" and "fairground". They debase the nature of my work — which, as you can see, is giving the good people whatever they want. And that's not something you learn overnight. No, sir. You gotta persuade them your cure—all does it better than whatever the guy across the street is hawking. You gotta—

**Music #7: GIVE IT MORE TRUMPET**

*Laemmle produces a dusty TROMBONE from one of the cabinets and pretends to play a few notes.*

LAEMMLE: INTRODUCE SOME BRASS, BERNHARD  
TO UNDERSCORE THE SCENE, BERNHARD  
NOTES REFLECT THE THREAT  
LURKING OFFSCREEN  
SOME VIOLIN  
ACCENTUATES A SCREAM.

*Now he produces a VIOLIN with a missing string and plays it with an imaginary bow.*

LAEMMLE: INTRODUCE SOME BRASS, BERNHARD  
TO UNDERSCORE THE SCENE, BERNHARD  
IT'S THE LINGUA FRANCA OF THE HORROR STORY  
SOME MONSTER THEME  
A UNIVERSAL DREAM  
YOURS TO BRING, YOURS TO SING.

SO GIVE IT MORE TRUMPET  
YOU'RE THE ONE IN THE LEAD  
IF YOU WANNA BUMP IT  
THE TENSION UP HIGH WE NEED.

*Bernhard gets up from the recliner.*

BERNHARD: I GUESS AT HEART  
I'M THE INCURABLE ROMANTIC  
BECAUSE THESE GHOULS  
ARE MAKING ME FRANTIC  
THEY WANT MELODIES FOR FRANKENSTEIN  
AND DRACULA'S DAUGHTER  
(CONT'D)

BERNHARD: WHILE THE DOCTOR WRITES  
I'M "MOSTLY WATER"...  
SO MAYBE SOME DROPS WILL FIND MARIANNE  
SWIMMING IN THE THOUGHT THAT THERE MIGHT BE  
PARTS THAT SHE COULD BLEND  
INTO MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND.

*Marianne enters wearing a glittery dress. She sashays center stage and pulls Bernhard towards her. They dance seductively...*

*... Until with a graceful swirl, Marianne exits.*

LAEMMLE: INTRODUCE SOME BRASS, BERNHARD  
TO UNDERScore THE SCENE, BERNHARD  
FIND THAT TINGLE IN EVERY SPINE  
TREMBLING CHORDS IN DISJOINTED TIME  
MAKE THEM REACH FOR ANOTHER HAND AND PUMP IT  
THIS AIN'T TEA AND CRUMPET.

*Finally, Laemmle produces a Halloween-like SKELETON and does a kind of dance with it.*

LAEMMLE: SO GIVE IT MORE TRUMPET  
HIGH NOTES THAT CUT 'TIL THEY BLEED,  
BERNHARD  
GRAB 'EM BY THE HORNS YOU NEED.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, BERNHARD  
THOSE NURSERY RHYMES PLAYED, BERNHARD  
ALWAYS SOMEONE FALLING  
BLIND, CONTRARY TO LIFE  
I WAS SO AFRAID.

*Laemmle exits. The carnival trappings fade. Bernhard lays back down on the recliner.*

LIME: You don't need those gimmicks, Mr. Kaun.

BERNHARD: But I was afraid, too...

LIME: Of what?

BERNHARD: Lake Constance... the Untersee.

LIME: What happened?

BERNHARD: Our family vacation. At the height of summer.

UNDERScore: *Theme from THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA (a number we'll hear at the close of Act 1).*

BERNHARD: Her name was Maria. She was nine years old.  
The same age as myself.  
(*then*)  
I remember her arguing with her mother.

*MARIA enters. Her hair saturated; her muslin dress wet through.*

MARIA: I didn't want to go inside and sit in some  
stuffy practice room with a stuffy piano  
master smoking his foul pipe the whole time  
-- Not on such a beautiful day.

BERNHARD: That's right!  
(*Getting up off the recliner*)  
Those were your exact words.

MARIA: I ran off and stood by the edge of the lake.  
The water fascinated me.

BERNHARD: As if you were daring it to steal you away.

MARIA: I liked how my reflection shimmered on the  
surface.

BERNHARD: I was mesmerized. I lost all sense of time.

MARIA: Just us beside the water. And then...

BERNHARD: I can't remember...

MARIA: Neither can I.

*Maria exits.*

BERNHARD: Only that her reflection had vanished.

*Hugo Wilhelm enters. Reads aloud from a newspaper.*

HUGO: "A nine year old girl from Immenstadt, Maria  
Wetzlar, has gone missing on Lake Constance.  
No witnesses have come forward, but it's  
believed she drowned around midday  
yesterday. Miss Wetzlar was on vacation with  
her parents. She was a piano prodigy with  
numerous recitals to her name -- The search  
continues."  
(*shaking his head*)  
Childhood overflows with sadness.

*Hugo Wilhelm exits. Bernhard lays back down on the recliner.*

**END UNDERSCORE.**

BERNHARD: I was the last person to see her alive. I feel responsible -- I should have alerted an adult. They might have saved her... Over and over I picture one of them doing so.

*Bernhard slumps back on the recliner. He's asleep.*

LIME: When I clap my hands you will awake and remember nothing.

*Lime claps his hands: Bernhard raises himself from the recliner. Lights come up again.*

LIME: You're in Universal City, Los Angeles. It's 1931.

BERNHARD: What am I doing here?  
(*standing*)  
There's music to compose!

*Bernhard exits. PROFESSOR GÖRLITZ enters. He's wearing circular, steel-rimmed spectacles and holds a book under his arm.*

GÖRLITZ: Most impressive. I'm flattered by your adherence to my method.  
(*indicating article*)  
Nevertheless, hypnosis is not my primary area of research -- It's a means to an end.

LIME: You came a way to tell me that?

GÖRLITZ: You interest me.

LIME: Now it's my turn to be flattered. But I'm just a regular physician who moved out West. I run into a movie star or two, but—

*Görlitz clicks his fingers. Lime is immediately hypnotized...*

*... and walks over to his desk where he slides open a drawer. He removes a small object.*

LIME: (*Under hypnosis*) I came here because it is an artistic colony -- A place where someone with my inclinations might be accepted.

*Lime holds up a snap-shut case. Flicks it open. And removing a tiny brush, he paints his eyelids. They assume a green, metallic glow.*

LIME: An inclination for feminine things.

GÖRLITZ: It's why I brought you this—

*Görlitz holds up the book. Lime pockets the case and crosses to center stage.*

GÖRLITZ: I had it translated into English.  
 (to audience)  
 Well, I've got to make a few cents! And  
 it'll shift more copies over here.  
 (back to Lime)  
 You will read it as a matter of urgency.

*Görlitz hands Lime the book.*

LIME: (Reading aloud) *The Strange Case of Herr X:  
 The Man Who Became a Woman...* by Professor  
 Manfred D. Görlitz.

*NOTE: If staging allows, Görlitz and Lime will stand either side of a double-sided mirror so the audience see them as follows:*

G \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ L

**Music #8: LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER**

LIME: LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER  
 LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER...

GÖRLITZ: A MAP OF A BOY'S LIFE  
 THOSE MOUNTAINS HIGH AND STERN  
 DOWN FROM THEM YOU'D NEVER YEARN

LIME: LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER...

GÖRLITZ: A MAP OF A GIRL'S LIFE  
 FINE LINES THOSE ROADS THAT LEAD TO HOME  
 NOT FAR FROM IT YOU'D EVER ROAM

LIME: LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER...

GÖRLITZ: IMAGINING A PATH WHERE THERE'S NONE  
 WON'T GET YOU THROUGH  
 LIKE STANDING AT A MIRROR  
 EXPECTING WHAT YOU SEE THERE  
 THROUGH YOUR BREATH CLOUDING THE GLASS  
 IS REALLY YOU.

LIME: A MAP OF A BOY'S LIFE  
 YOU FOLD IT UP, DON'T LET IT SHOW  
 YOU IMPROVISE OUR WAY TO GO  
 (CONT'D)

LIME: LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER  
LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER.

GÖRLITZ: My nighttime surgery is on the Hamburg waterfront -- I'll expect you.

*Görlitz clicks his fingers and exits. The intercom buzzes.*

FEMALE VOICE: (*Over intercom*) I'm sorry to disturb you, Doctor, but there's been an accident over at Soundstage Eleven—

LIME: (*Dashing over to intercom*) Thank you, Miss Channing. I'll be there as soon as I can.

*Lime grabs his medical bag and exits. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 1, Scene 9

*Laemmle Mansion (Dias Dorados).  
September 1931.*

*Spanish revival affair before the guests arrive. Bernhard's sat at the piano in a white sequined jacket. Marianne stands beside him flicking through their sheet music.*

MARIANNE: Some kinda place they got here.

BERNHARD: Thank God my father's on another continent -- It would finish him if he saw me playing Hollywood Hills entertainer.

MARIANNE: How come you let Junior talk you into this?

BERNHARD: I fell for his flattery and then bam! Next thing, I'm a paid-up member of Ernesto's All-Stars and done up like that lobster risotto over there -- Next week, it'll be a high school dance.

MARIANNE: (*Indicating sheet music*) Maybe you should be in Egypt exhuming cursed mummies cause these sure look like hieroglyphics to me.

BERNHARD: You've been force-fed too many terrible movie scripts.  
(*then*)  
As far as I know this music is not cursed; but I guess we should do a final run through for good measure.

*Bernhard plays a few bars on the piano.*

**UNDERSCORE:** *Theme from SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART (a number we'll not hear until the end of the show).*

MARIANNE: Hey, that's a cheerful kinda tune.

*Bernhard stops playing.*

BERNHARD: Ooh, that slipped out by mistake. It's a little something I'm working on.

MARIANNE: Maybe you'll play some more for me one of these days?

BERNHARD: I'd love to.  
(*then*)  
You know, I'm glad I came after all.

*They sense the beginnings of a romantic moment...*

BERNHARD: Maybe we could—?

**END UNDERSCORE.**

*ERNESTO, the All Stars bandleader, enters.*

ERNESTO: Two minutes, Senor K.

BERNHARD: Okay, thanks Ernesto.

*Ernesto exits.*

BERNHARD: Where was I...?

MARIANNE: (*Expectant*) You were—

BERNHARD: Oh, that's right...  
(*pause*)  
All you need to do is keep one eye on the music and the other on my head -- And when I nod...  
(*starts playing piano*)  
Like this...  
(*nodding*)  
Just turn the page.  
(*then*)  
Oh, and it must be from the top corner.

*Somewhat flustered, Marianne eventually manages to get a handle on this page-turning as all the while Bernhard keeps playing.*



BERNHARD: Page turning is quite an art. You must stay alert.  
*(then)*  
 In four bars...  
*(still playing)*  
 And...  
*(with an exaggerated nod)*  
 Now!

*Marianne turns the page! Meanwhile, Bernhard continues playing as ERNESTO & HIS ALL-STARS enter and join the groove their temporary pianist has going. Laemmle and ASSORTED GUESTS (the Hollywood crowd and their decorative wives) also enter. They're soon pouring Champagne and crowding around a card game. Here and there highbrow types admire a stone fountain as well as the BATHING BEAUTIES draped all over it.*

*Meanwhile, Marianne has gone from doing her best to keep up to becoming too efficient a page-turner and is now turning pages at a rate of knots (like she were in a silent film). This forces Bernhard to play faster and it's all the band can do to keep up with him as they reach the end of the number quicker than they expected! Marianne turns and smiles at the audience.*

ERNESTO: *(Somewhat flustered)* Ladies and Gentlemen, there will now be a short intermission.

*Ernesto & His All-Stars exit. Bernhard and Marianne cross the stage to Laemmle's table. He's with CHESTER MONTGOMERY III (all pomade and after-dinner smiles) and ESTHER-JEAN CARRINGTON (flaunting a cigarette holder and wearing a dramatic chiffon number with matching turban as if she's come straight from the set of some biblical epic).*

LAEMMLE: I can tell within one second whether or not a girl's got star quality—  
*(then)*  
 Ah, Mr. Kaun. You're doing fine up there.  
*(to Esther and Chester)*  
 Bernhard Kaun -- He stepped in at short notice, but I've also got him doing incidental music for the picture I was just telling you about.  
*(to Bernhard)*  
 Esther-Jean Carrington.

*Esther extends her gloved hand.*

BERNHARD: My pleasure—

LAEMMLE: And from Oklahoma City, Chester Montgomery the Third.

- BERNHARD: Pleased to meet you, Sir.
- CHESTER: Call me Chester. Your boss here, does! And any friend of Junior is a friend of mine.  
(*then*)  
Say, what's it like being a genius?
- BERNHARD: Well, I'm not—
- CHESTER: Aw, modesty got nobody nowhere! I mean, how do you musicians even get to think?
- BERNHARD: It's all in the preparation -- On stage we enter into an unspoken agreement with our audience. One founded upon illusion; and yet a few moments later the house lights come back on and—
- LAEMMLE: Christ, what is this? A Pulitzer lecture -- Way I see it, the music department should run like General Motors.
- ESTHER: Who's the pretty page-turner?
- MARIANNE: Why, it's me, Mrs. Carrington -- Marianne Melrose. And you'll be real happy to know I didn't break anything this afternoon—
- ESTHER: My... I hardly recognized you.
- CHESTER: (*To Esther*) Perhaps you can introduce me—
- ESTHER: Oh dear, Carl. It won't do to leave Chester out in the cold.
- LAEMMLE: (*Reluctantly*) Miss Marianne Melrose. One of my scriptreaders.
- Chester Montgomery kisses Marianne's hand.*
- CHESTER: So you're the girl keeping the moths out of Esther's wardrobe.
- MARIANNE: (*Whispering to Bernhard*) I just realized -- Esther and Chester! They'd make quite the double-act.
- Laemmler motions for Bernhard and Marianne to join them.*
- CHESTER: What were we talking about? Right, Junior was saying how he knows within one second whether a girl has star quality or not.

LAEMMLE: Not failed me yet. Line up a hundred femmes and I'll sail down that line and pick out the next Dietrich. Although most often they all wash out.

CHESTER: Now that's a bet I'd take. For all you know she's here tonight under your own roof.

LAEMMLE: Save your money, Chester. Throw it at some Mexican pyramid scheme -- I already checked.

CHESTER: One day I'll prove you wrong, Carl.

ESTHER: Men deciding the fate of women. Now there's something new under the sun -- What do you say, Miss Melrose?

MARIANNE: Well, I'm...

ESTHER: Speak freely. You're off the clock -- Besides, if Junior gives you any trouble I'll tell Uncle C. to stop his pocket money.

BERNHARD: She's too modest to say so, Ms. Carrington. But the next Dietrich is indeed under Mr. Laemmle's roof this evening -- Why, we're in the presence of a girl who wowed Broadway night after night!

LAEMMLE: (*Off general consternation*) Mr. Kaun must've bumped his head on stage just now -- Someone call an ambulance—

CHESTER: (*To Marianne*) You were on Broadway?

MARIANNE: Well, if you wanna count my old *Funny Sister* routine then be my guest.

CHESTER: (*Triumphant*) What did I say, Carl? Right under your nose. In that prison you call a Readers' Office.  
(*then*)  
How about it, Miss Melrose? How about you help me prove Junior wrong -- It's intermission and... Well, I just know you'll be terrific.

MARIANNE: Aw, that ship sailed, Mister.

CHESTER: Let me be the judge of that.  
 (to Bernhard)  
 Maestro. The keys await!  
 (ushering Marianne to center stage)  
 Follow me, Miss Melrose.

*Bernhard resumes his seat at the piano.*

MARIANNE: (Dawning on her) You mean...?

CHESTER: I do mean—

*Laemmle shakes his head in disbelief as Chester rejoins him and Bernhard plays a couple of bars to quiet the crowd.*

**Music #9: THIS COULD BE MY CITY**

*The Bathing Beauties do a routine that mimics the actions Marianne and Esther describe: putting up umbrella on rainy sidewalk, dusting ornaments etc.*

MARIANNE: I CAME FROM MONTANA  
 A TOWN CALLED SUN RIVER  
 I CAME FOR THE LIFE HERE  
 AND MAYBE SOME SILVER  
 ALL THE PEOPLE MIGHT BRING ME  
 -- WHEN I CROSSED THE SIDEWALK  
 RAINY IN WINTER  
 AND STOPPED BY THE FOYER  
 TO STUDY THEIR PORTRAITS  
 THAT GLISTENED WITH NITRATES:  
 GARBO, COOPER, LILLIAN AND LOUISE  
 AND MAYBE MAYBE SOMEDAY, MARIANNE.

THIS COULD BE MY CITY  
 THIS COULD BE MY LUCKY DAY  
 BECAUSE I—

I DUST THE ART DECO  
 AT A VILLA ON FAIRFAX  
 I IMAGINE MY LIFE HERE  
 BESIDES POLISH AND WAX  
 WHILE THE LADY'S AT PARAMOUNT  
 -- I MOVE THRU THE SUNLIGHT  
 FROM THE GREAT WINDOW  
 AND STOP BY A BUREAU  
 TO GAZE AT HER PORTRAIT  
 THAT GLISTENS WITH NITRATE...  
 LIKE HARLOW, THEDA, LILLIAN AND LOUISE  
 AND MAYBE TODAY, MARIANNE.

(CONT'D)

MARIANNE: THIS COULD BE MY CITY  
THIS COULD BE MY LUCKY DAY  
BECAUSE I—

*Esther stands. Crosses to center stage.*

ESTHER: SHE READS OUT MY FAN MAIL  
FROM A HOUSEWIFE IN GLENDALE  
DECLINES AN INVITATION  
FOR THAT FOREST LAWN RESERVATION  
WHILE I LIGHT A CIGARETTE  
AND SAY "IT'S ALL KISMET"  
BUT WHEN I GLANCE IN MY MIRROR  
AT THIS GIRL FROM SUN RIVER  
THAT'S WHEN IT HITS ME—

MARIANNE: THIS WILL BE MY CITY  
THIS WILL BE MY LUCKY DAY  
BECAUSE I'LL MAKE MY OWN WAY  
IN MY CITY.  
THIS WILL BE MY CITY  
THIS WILL BE MY LUCKY DAY  
BECAUSE I'LL MAKE MY OWN WAY  
IN MY CITY.

BERNHARD: THIS WILL BE YOUR CITY.

MARIANNE: (*Spoken*) This will be my city.  
... OUR CITY.

*Chester jumps to his feet and leads the applause. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 1, Scene 10

*Readers' Office, Universal Studios.  
A few days later.*

*Two READERS engulfed by unread scripts and cigarette smoke.*

READER #1: (*Throwing up hands in dismay*) You believe this junk? I gotta guy in an underwater city with some kinda half-man, half-reptile thing going on.

READER #2: (*Striking through entire page*) Try this French aristocrat. Thinks he's a werewolf every third Friday—

*Bernhard enters.*

BERNHARD: Excuse me...?  
(*off lack of response*)  
Excuse me, but I'm looking for—

READER #1: Hey pal, we're on a deadline here. And our boss don't take kindly to coverage hitting his desk the wrong side of that deadline.

BERNHARD: I'm sorry. I wondered if—

READER #2: You looking for someone, mister?

BERNHARD: Miss Melrose -- I understand she works here?

READER #1: You're barking up the wrong tree, pal. Try down the hall.

READER #2: (*To Reader #1*) Shoot, he means Marianne. You know, cute girl from the sticks. Wears one of those berets that looks like it just got flattened by a trolley-car.

BERNHARD: That's her! Kinda funny, kinda crushed -- The beret, you understand. Not Miss Melrose.

READER #1: Oh, her...

READER #2: And don't get me wrong. I'm not saying she ain't in fashion -- Only last week I—

READER #1: I think we established who he's looking for.

READER #2: I'm just trying to be pleasant.

READER #1: Which is more than you'll say for Junior if if this coverage don't hit his desk tonight!

BERNHARD: You've seen her, then?

READER #2: Not for several days. She's—

**UNDERSCORE**: *Theme from THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER.*

READER #1: Word is she's seeing some big shot from Metro -- Guy with numbers after his name.

READER #2: Look, all I know is she took a few days off. She got a screen test or something.

**END UNDERSCORE.**

*Bernhard exits. Lights dim before coming up on...*

## Act 1, Scene 11

Broadcasting Studio.  
Time passing.

An ANNOUNCER sits at a microphone. Reads from a script.

ANNOUNCER: Hollywood on the March! Brought to you exclusively by *Finlayson Milk Powder*.  
(dramatic pause)  
Head of Universal Studios, Carl Laemmle Junior, said his next monster picture will be *The Invisible Man* starring French actor, Claude Rains.

*Laemmle enters.*

LAEMMLE: You heard that right -- Universal don't only make crowd-pleasing pictures; Universal don't only make thrilling pictures; Universal also make classy pictures.  
(pulling out ticket)  
So grab your ticket now for *The Invisible Man* -- In case they all...  
(making ticket disappear)  
... vanish before your very eyes!

*Laemmle exits.*

ANNOUNCER: Hollywood on the March!  
(dramatic pause)  
At his inaugural address in Washington, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself".  
(dramatic pause)  
Hollywood on the March!  
(dramatic pause)  
Metro Goldwyn Mayer higher executive, Chester Montgomery the Third, announced the signing of unknown Marianne Melrose to a six-picture deal.

*Chester and Marianne enter. They walk arm-in-arm across the stage; waving at admirers as they go.*

ANNOUNCER: Montgomery said Miss Melrose, from Sun River, Montana, is sure to become one of the glittering stars of the sound era. Montgomery also announced his engagement to Miss Melrose.

*Chester and Marianne exit.*

ANNOUNCER:

Hollywood on the March! Brought to you exclusively by *Finlayson Milk Powder*.

*(dramatic pause)*

Fans of Miss Shirley Temple are getting not one, but two new pictures featuring the adorable starlet. *Baby Take A Bow* will be in theaters at the end of June; while *Now and Forever* – in which Miss Temple appears alongside Gary Cooper and Carole Lombard – will be on general release for the 1934 fall season.

*(dramatic pause)*

In foreign news, Professor Manfred Görlitz of Hamburg, Germany claimed a major scientific breakthrough with the publication of his book, *The Strange Case of Herr X: The Man Who Became a Woman*. Görlitz believes that by science alone he can transform a man into a woman and vice-versa.

*(dramatic pause)*

It seems Victor Frankenstein is alive and well after all, folks.

*(dramatic pause)*

You've been listening to...

*(dramatic pause)*

Hollywood on the March!

*(dramatic pause)*

Join us same time next week for the nations's favorite entertainment digest brought to you exclusively by *Finlayson Milk Powder* and...

*(dramatic pause)*

... Hollywood on the March!

*(dramatic pause)*

Goodnight one and all. God bless America.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 1, Scene 12**

*Lime's Office, Universal City.  
April 1934.*

*Lime is sat reading Görlitz's book.*

FEMALE VOICE: *(Over intercom)* I'm sorry to disturb you, Doctor, but you're wanted over at Soundstage Seven. They just said "Bring bandages!"

LIME: *(Into intercom)* Thank you, Miss Channing. I'll be there as soon as I can.



*Lime grabs his medical bag and exits. X27 (formerly our Chicago Newsgirl) enters wearing the trench coat and fedora. She sneaks over to Lime's desk. Finds Gørlitz's book. Opens it.*

X27: (To audience) We got word this Professor Gørlitz is also the Nazi Uranium contact in East Africa.  
(pause)  
I figure Doctor Lime can do some work for Uncle Sam.

*X27 removes a silver ticket from her coat. Makes to place it inside the book. Lime's secretary, MISS CHANNING, enters.*

MISS CHANNING: My word! Who are you...? How did you get in here?

X27: (In a spot): I'm... I'm from the Association for... The Association for Under-Appreciated Hollywood Physicians.

MISS CHANNING: But what are you doing at Doctor Lime's desk?

X27: Let me explain.  
(holding up ticket)  
I've brought him this ticket and... Well, that's why I'm here.

MISS CHANNING: A ticket?

X27: Not just any old ticket! This is recognition for Doctor Lime's service these past three years. It entitles him to return travel on the Streamliner! That's the brand new art deco train. And there's more -- It also gives him first class passage on *The Bremen*; a super-duper transatlantic ocean liner.

MISS CHANNING: Has Mr. Laemmle been informed? It all sounds most improper.

X27: Oh, Mr. Laemmle was most agreeable. He said nobody deserves a vacation more than Doctor Lime -- Do you know he's written more prescriptions for Junior than all the other studio quacks rolled into one!

MISS CHANNING: So why go sneaking around?

X27: Well... we're a charitable organization and we just like to do a good deed and go right on our way -- We knew, for instance, that Doctor Lime had wanted to visit Europe for a while now.

*X27 slots the ticket inside Gorlitz's book. Snaps it shut.*

X27: Remember, Miss Channing, not a word. We'd like this to be a surprise for Doctor Lime.

*X27 exits. Miss Channing shakes her head.*

MISS CHANNING: How ever did she know my name?

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 1, Scene 13

*First Class Carriage. Art deco Streamliner.  
A fortnight later.*

*Lime rides coast to coast in his new travel suit. Several WELL-TO-DO PASSENGERS are also in the carriage. Lime removes a postcard from the rail schedule on the tabletop and a biro from his jacket.*

**Music #10: POSTCARD FROM UNION PACIFIC**

LIME: MY DEAREST, DEAREST BERNHARD  
I'M SORRY THAT I MISSED YOU  
BUT THERE WERE A MILLION THINGS  
I SIMPLY HAD TO DO  
-- FOR ONE, I BOUGHT THIS CHECKERED SUIT  
ON SALE AT CARSON PIRIE SCOTT  
CAUSE THE FOLKS HERE ON THIS TRAIN  
WELL, I GUESS THEY KNOW WHAT'S WHAT.

PASSENGERS: We most certainly do!

LIME: OH, AND PLEASE TELL MR. LAEMMLE  
THAT HE SHOULD GET SOME REST  
AND NOT TO MIND MISS CHANNING  
YOU KNOW, SHE REALLY DOES HER BEST  
-- THERE'S LUMINAL AT MY OFFICE  
IN A COPPER TRINKET STORE  
BY THAT BOX OF SHERBET CANDY  
ON THE SHELF BESIDE MY DOOR.

(CONT'D)

LIME: IT'S TRUE I GOT THIS TICKET  
AND SOMETHING I MUST FIND  
UNVEILED BY MANFRED GÖRLITZ  
AND HIS PHANTASMAGORIC MIND  
-- HE REALLY KNOWS HIS STUFF  
AND IS SUPREMEYLY QUALIFIED  
BECAUSE MY DEAREST BERNHARD  
I'M TORMENTED DR. JEKYL CONCEALING MR. HYDE.

*A TICKET INSPECTOR enters.*

INSPECTOR: OH, WE'VE ROLLED INTO A STATION  
THERE'LL BE A FIFTEEN-MINUTE WAIT  
IT'S RIGHT HERE IN THIS SCHEDULE  
THE GOLDEN ZEPHYR'S NEVER LATE!

LIME: I GUESS I'LL SMOKE A CIGARETTE  
STRETCH MY LEGS A BIT  
HEY, THEY GOT A WOODEN MAILBOX

PASSENGERS: DESIGNED BY GIDEON COLBY, A WELL KNOWN JESUIT.

*Lime signs the postcard, stands and exits. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 1, Scene 14

*Der Schwarzer Mond Nightclub. Hamburg.  
Several days later.*

*A sleazy waterfront dive typical of Northern Europe. Sailors and whalers assume studied poses amid the fog of opium and absinthe.*

*X27 enters holding a package. Görlitz enters in the uniform of a gestapo officer.*

*They circle each other in a kind of ballet centered on the package; one that culminates with X27 discreetly leaving it on a table. She exits.*

*Görlitz rushes to the table. Opens the package. It's a book.*

GÖRLITZ: *The Strange Case...?* If this is her idea of  
a joke—  
(noticing)  
Ah-ha! A slip pocket.

*Görlitz removes a map. Unfolds it...*

GÖRLITZ: Mount Kilimanjaro... Subterranean Tunnels!  
Wait until the Führer—

*Suddenly, a SMOKE BOMB explodes!*

*X27 enters and, half-disguised by smoke, she reaches out and grabs the map from Görlitz. She stuffs it inside her trench-coat and immediately exits.*

GÖRLITZ:           Achtung! Thief!

*All hell breaks loose in the shape of a choreographed fight / dance between the sailors and whalers (whereby a sock on the jaw leads to a graceful backflip etc.)*

*Lime enters. He wears an African robe and glamorous wig complete with white gardenia. Everyone freezes.*

**Music #11:           BLACK MOON**

LIME:           DIAMONDS, RIFLES AND URANIUM  
IT'S THE GERMAN RENAISSANCE  
-- ABBYSINIA, FRANCE, SUDETENLAND  
FORGERY PAR EXCELLENCE  
TRAITORS, SLAVES AND REFUGEES  
THE PROFESSOR'S WORK YOU'VE READ  
SCALPEL, SUTURE AND HEMOSTAT  
WILL RAISE YOU FROM THE DEAD.

ASHES, CHALK AND ROSARY  
EYES BECOME DIVINE  
MOSQUITO, TIN AND CRUCIFIX  
YOUR BLOOD WILL FLOW LIKE WINE  
-- TYPHUS, RIVER AND MEDICINE  
THERE ARE SOULS THIS NIGHT WILL KEEP  
PASSPORT, JASMINE AND IVORY  
YOU WILL SLEEP THE ANCIENT SLEEP.

*X27 enters.*

X27:           MINERAL RIGHTS IN TROPIC ZONES  
PRINCIPALITIES MADE OF PRECIOUS STONES  
AND ONCE IN A WHILE A NOSTALGIC TUNE  
BRINGS THEM ALL...

CAST:           ALGERIAN SAILORS  
WHITE RUSSIAN WHALERS  
BUTTONED-UP TAILORS  
CRIPPLED BLACKMAILERS

X27:           ... BRINGS THEM ALL  
TO THE SCHWARZER MOON.

LIME: PAPER, DUST AND DEITY  
 YOUR LANGUAGE WILL BE MUTE  
 SOLDIER, SYMBOL AND SACRIFICE  
 YOU WILL EAT THE STRANGEST FRUIT  
 -- WHISTLES, CYMBALS AND CASTANETS  
 WILL SPIRIT YOU AWAY  
 SCORPION, SNAKE AND CENTIPEDE  
 DEFINE THIS CABARET.

X27: MINERAL RIGHTS IN TROPIC ZONES  
 PRINCIPALITIES MADE OF PRECIOUS STONES  
 AND ONCE IN A WHILE A NOSTALGIC TUNE  
 BRINGS THEM ALL...

CAST: ALGERIAN SAILORS  
 WHITE RUSSIAN WHALERS  
 BUTTONED-UP TAILORS  
 CRIPPLED BLACKMAILERS

X27: ... BRINGS THEM ALL  
 TO THE SCHWARZER MOON.

*Lime exits to a barrage of applause, wolf whistles and catcalls.  
 X27 returns the map to Görlitz.*

GORLITZ: Danke Schön.

X27: This could be the start of a mutually  
 advantageous friendship.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 1, Scene 15

*Backroom of movie theater.  
 Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Bernhard and Laemmle resume their earlier conversation.*

BERNHARD: I said there was a lot you didn't know about  
 Lime. And you can see how Marianne's life  
 changed overnight -- I never got a second  
 date, for a start.

*Marianne's OLDER SELF enters.*

MARIANNE: You went up to Lake... Lake somewhere or  
 other—?

BERNHARD: Arrowhead—

LAEMMLE: His fancy weekend place. Guy made more than I did!

BERNHARD: Straightened out my writer's block.

MARIANNE: Ah, the artist alone and all that?

BERNHARD: Not quite. You see, I wasn't—

MARIANNE: Ah-ha! And to think all these years I felt guilty about going with Chester—

BERNHARD: Oh, not in that way. It was the little girl who drowned when I was a child.

MARIANNE: A little girl back from the dead? Sounds like a script I once read.

BERNHARD: I know it's—

LAEMMLE: Far-fetched?

BERNHARD: She really did. See for yourself...

**UNDERSCORE:** *Theme from ROMANTIC SYMPHONY (a number we'll not hear until Act 2).*

*The stage transforms into a bygone music room. A standard lamp illuminates a cabinet of stuffed birds, faded sheet music and a rusted metronome on the piano.*

LAEMMLE: *(Bumping into piano and setting off metronome)*  
A guy could go doolally up here.

BERNHARD: This room is filled with her presence—

MARIANNE: It is a bit spooky. I'll give you that.  
*(then)*  
Hey, what this...?

*Marianne picks up an old newspaper clipping. Reads aloud:*

MARIANNE: "A nine year old girl from Immenstadt, Maria Wetzlar—

**UNDERSCORE FADES TO:**

**Music #12: THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA**

BERNHARD: THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA  
SHE WAS TAPPING AT MY WINDOWPANE  
SAID WE ARE NOW ONE PLUS ONE  
AND THAT I NEED NOT EXPLAIN.

THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA  
WE HEARD THE TICKING OF MY METRONOME  
BESIDE THESE BIRDS OF AUDUBON  
IN THIS HOUSE FAR AWAY FROM HOME.

COYOTES PROWL THE NEARBY HILLS  
ANXIOUS TO BE FED  
MY PIANO PLAYS AGAINST THEIR THIRST FOR BLOOD  
IN COUNTERPOINT I WED.

*Maria enters during instrumental interlude. Upon seeing her, Laemmle faints (silent-movie style!) over an armchair. Marianne tries to revive him...*

BERNHARD: THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA  
SHE SAID "WRITE THAT ROMANTIC SYMPHONY"

MARIA: FROM ALL THE THINGS YOU LOOK UPON  
IN THIS PLACE WHERE YOU CAME TO BE.

BERNHARD: YOU MOVED THROUGH MY ROOM THAT NIGHT

MARIA: WHEN YOU EMBRACED THE DARK

BERNHARD: YOU MOVED THROUGH MY DREAMS THAT NIGHT

MARIA: WHEN YOU IGNITED A SPARK

BERNHARD: YOU MOVED THROUGH MY ROOM THAT NIGHT.

MARIA: I MOVED THROUGH YOUR ROOM THAT NIGHT.

*Maria exits. The room fills with moonlight and the baying of coyotes from offstage. Laemmle comes round.*

LAEMMLE: There's something ominous on the breeze.

BERNHARD: Oh, it's just your imagination, Mr. Laemmle.

**CURTAIN.**

**ENTR'ACTE:**

Theme from CREATE A LIFE



**Act 2, Scene 1**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Curtain rises on Bernhard and Laemmle.*

BERNHARD: If you wanted to talk about what you wanted to talk about then maybe you should've shown up tonight!

LAEMMLE: Yeah, I'd have told them that working with you was like keeping Mozart on the lot -- While I was knocking back thirty cups of coffee and getting a second opinion from the janitor so I could put out pictures for the lucky souls who somehow had time to enjoy themselves, you were up at that fancy weekend place sipping lemon tea and notating a few pages in 3/4 time.

*The theater manager, Eliot Belvedere, enters.*

BELVEDERE: Hey, you'll never believe who I ran into in the lobby -- Peter Fonda! So after telling him *Easy Rider's* in my all-time top ten I said: "Shouldn't you be across the street what with the screening and all...?" And he said, cool as anything: "Don't worry, man, I already saw that picture".  
(pause)  
Wait, I'll use that before I bring you on -- Oh, that's why I'm here. Ten minutes, Mr. Kaun.

*Belvedere exits.*

BERNHARD: (Too late) About that talk—

*Bernhard tries to catch him up and also exits.*

LAEMMLE: I gave 'em invisible men, Egyptian mummies, wolfmen. You name it!  
(then)  
He thinks my life wasn't tragic enough -- I lost the studio, for Chrissake! And once Uncle Carl...  
(emotional)  
Yeah, I disposed of the house.

*Notorious Hollywood gossip columnist, HEDDA HOPPER, enters. She's jotting in a notebook.*

HEDDA: So you could spend the next thirty years  
feeling sorry for yourself.

LAEMMLE: It's funny, cause the trades all say—

**Music #13: DIAS DORADOS**

HEDDA HOPPER: YOU'RE FADING AWAY  
ON THAT SOUTH AMERICAN CRUISE  
COUNTERSIGNING CHECKS FOR  
MISTER HOWARD HUGHES.

LAEMMLE: As for those sycophants up on Wilshire—

*A ghoulish chorus shrouded by cloaks enter and remain in shadow  
at STAGE LEFT. They are in fact the accountants we met earlier.*

ACCOUNTANTS: COME BACK TO THE PICTUREHOUSE  
DO ANY PROJECT YOU CHOOSE  
HOW ABOUT THE FEMALE IMPERSONATOR?  
-- YOU WERE NEVER A PROCRASTINATOR.

LAEMMLE: BECAUSE THEY TELL ME I BECAME  
ANOTHER CHARLIE FOSTER KANE  
WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A SLED  
OR ANYTHING PRECIOUS IN ITS STEAD  
I'D WISH TO RECLAIM  
AH, BUT THEN AGAIN  
I WAS ELIGIBLE AND NEVER  
SHORT OF A COMPANION  
WHEN SITUATED OFF BENEDICT CANYON  
AND SOMETIMES DROVE JUST SO  
WE COULD GAZE OUT AT THE PACIFIC  
-- OH, YOU WANT ME TO BE MORE SPECIFIC—

*The stage transforms to the Laemmler mansion with its now  
overgrown gardens, abandoned tennis courts, old card table and  
dried-up fountains. However, it's not deserted and is now a  
HIPPIY COMMUNE overflowing with flared corduroy, patchouli and  
marijuana; tie-dye, bandanas and second-hand Grateful Dead LPs.  
Laemmler picks up a wooden tennis racquet, spins around the  
cracked fountain and turns an old playing card. The hippies pay  
him no mind.*

LAEMMLE: WE HAD MAHJONG  
AND CANASTA

LAEMMLE                   FOURS FOR BRIDGE  
& HIPPIES:               WITH THE CUNARDS  
OR LADY ASTOR

LAEMMLE: SPARKLING REPARTEE  
 BENEATH THE AVOCADO TREE  
 FRENCH CHAMPAGNE AND ALL THOSE NOUVEAU  
 CONFECTIONS  
 BATHING BEAUTIES "AT HOME"  
 WITH THEIR TENNIS-WHITE COMPLEXIONS  
 LIKE ALABASTER.

SOCIALITES, SCULPTORS  
 BANKERS AND BROKERS, TEXAN CIGAR SMOKERS  
 CONNOISSEURS OF FOUNTAINS  
 OR ITALIANATE GARDENS  
 -- OLD ENGLISH COLONIALS  
 WHOSE ATERIES HAD HARDENED  
 PATRONS OF PAINTERS  
 AND THOSE GLORIOUSLY AFFECTED  
 AFICIONADOS

LAEMMLE  
& HIPPIES: ALL CAME TO THE HOUSE  
 WE CALLED  
 ... DIAS DORADOS.

ACCOUNTANTS: NOW THE GOSSIPS WRITE IN THEIR OWN ACIDIC WAY

HEDDA HOPPER: THAT YOU HAD NOTHING LEFT TO SAY  
 AND WEAR THE PAST UPON YOUR SLEEVE  
 BESIDE THIS DUCKPOND EACH FALL  
 WALK BENEATH ARCHWAYS TO RECALL...

LAEMMLE: ... EVERY GILDED HOUR AND DOCUMENT I SIGNED  
 THAT PENNY ARCADE WHERE MY SHOES WERE SHINED  
 MOTHER'S MANTILLA WITH IMITATION PEARLS  
 AND ALL THE CHINATOWN GIRLS  
 WHO BROUGHT ME SWEET & SOUR  
 TO REJUVENATE  
 MY STAGNATING MIND  
 AT OUR LONELY PIGEON TOWER.

*Hedda and the accountants exit. Laemmler opens the door to a  
 dusty room with its armchair, faded calendar and portrait of  
 Uncle Carl.*

LAEMMLE: NOBODY UNDERSTANDS  
 THIS TIME UPON MY HANDS  
 LET ALONE  
 INSURMOUNTABLE LOSS  
 AS THESE YEARS UNFOLD  
 LIKE A ROSEBUD  
 WITHOUT THE GLITTER AND THE GOLD  
 ... OF DIAS DORADOS.

*Laemmler closes the door on the spooky room. Bernhard enters.*

BERNHARD: Seems Hollywood's full of tragic stories --  
In Marianne's case it all started after that  
party.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 2, Scene 2**

*Upscale Hollywood lounge.  
October 1931.*

*Out-of-hours COUPLES are sat at tables drinking English or  
Russian tea. A pianist UNDERSCORES the glimmer of marble and  
borrowed jewelry with THE GIRL FROM SUN RIVER theme. A WAITER  
and WAITRESS are stood at STAGE RIGHT.*

WAITRESS: Chester's brought fox-fur girl again. What  
happened to that broad from out East?

WAITER: That was last week. Now he's head over heels  
for this Marianne Melrose.

WAITRESS: Marie Rose? I ain't never heard of her.

WAITER: That's cause it's MEL-rose. Mari-ANNE  
Melrose. And he's sure seeing a lot of her  
-- They say she's gonna be in pictures.

WAITRESS: Nobody tells me nothing.

WAITER: Quit complaining. I just told you didn't I—

**END UNDERSCORE:**

*Lights come up on Marianne and Chester sat at one of the tables.*

CHESTER: If you ask me, Junior should be certified.  
He's got the next Harlow whack-bang in the  
middle of his lot, yet keeps her shuttered  
away like Rapunzel -- Instead of spinning  
gold, he's got her reading about the undead  
and dime-a-dollar mad professors.

MARIANNE: It's not so bad—

CHESTER: Look, Frank and Janie in Wichita Falls might  
catch the traveling show when it comes  
around in August, but they've forgotten all  
about it by Halloween cause that's all it  
was -- A carnival ride, a passing fancy.

*He removes a cigarette from his silver case. Leans forward.*

CHESTER: Ah, but romance. Now that won't ever go out of style. Wouldn't you agree?

MARIANNE: You misjudged some things, Mr. Montgomery—

CHESTER: Don't go all formal on me. Call me Chester.

MARIANNE: Okay Chester, you misjudged me.

CHESTER: It's quite straightforward. When you sang at Junior's party it was like...  
*(waves unlit cigarette)*  
 ... It was like the color of electricity -- I wanted to go into production there and then and put it in the most razzle-dazzle box this side of Christmas.  
*(pause)*  
 Ah, but then I said to myself... "Chester, you can't treat a living breathing girl as if she were a commodity. Sure, she's one helluva hot ticket, but this Miss Melrose has got something going on you can't commodify -- Natural, God-given talent".  
*(pause)*  
 And if we happen to click in other ways then that wouldn't be so bad.

MARIANNE: You wonder why I'm suspicious? Take a look around the room, Mr. Montgomery.

CHESTER: Oh dear, there you go again—

MARIANNE: Aright, Chester. Take a look around the room.

CHESTER: If you insist.

*Lights come up on those other couples.*

PRODUCER #1: *(To GIRL #1)* I'll make you a star!

PRODUCER #2: *(To GIRL #2)* This time next year—

PRODUCER #3: *(To GIRL #3)* You're somethin' special—

*Lights dim on these other couples.*

CHESTER: Where's the fire? It's just some girls cutting a good deal when they see one.

(CONT'D)

CHESTER: Wait, you think guys like me don't mean that stuff? Well, you're wrong -- Okay, things don't always turn out, but right here and now we imagine they will. That's Hollywood.

MARIANNE: So you weren't just... I mean, you—

CHESTER: I wouldn't have bought you lunch otherwise.

MARIANNE: You really think I can make it—?

*Chester stands, takes Marianne's hand and leads her downstage.*

**Music #14: SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY**

CHESTER: A YEAR FROM NOW  
THEY'LL REPEAT YOUR NAME  
AND KNOW THE TOWN  
FROM WHERE YOU CAME  
THEY'LL WAIT IN LINE  
BY SODA STREAMS  
ON THE AVENUE  
WHEN STARS ALIGN  
FOR THIS INGÉNUÉ  
WHO'LL ALWAYS BE...  
MARIANNE  
DA DA DI DA

*Lights come up on the three producers and their girlfriends; as well as the waiter and waitress.*

CAST: OH, MARIANNE  
DA DA DI DA  
DA DA DI DA  
OH, MARIANNE...

*The stage transforms to a beauty parlor. Several STYLISTS enter. They brush Marianne's hair and paint her nails while she flicks through a copy of Paris Match.*

MARIANNE: SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY  
I'M WHIRLING IN A TRANCE  
TAKING EVERY CHANCE  
MIXING BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE  
AND YES SIRREE I'LL FIND THAT  
MAP TO THE TREASURE.  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY  
MY ASPIRATIONS HAVE SHIFTED  
I EVEN GOT MY EYEBROWS LIFTED  
CAUSE I'M PHOTOGRAPHED AT EVERY PREMIERE  
(CONT'D)

MARIANNE: ACQUAINTING MYSELF WITH GIDE AND BAUDELAIRE.  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY I AIN'T  
PLAYING ALL THE DUMBEST SCENES  
STICKING BY THOSE STALE ROUTINES  
LAUGHING OFF THE "MIGHT HAVE BEENS"  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY.

CAST: OH, MARIANNE  
DA DA DI DA  
DA DA DI DA  
OH, MARIANNE...

*Marianne now reading a copy of the Wall Street Journal.*

MARIANNE: SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY  
I'M BATTING FOR ROMANCE  
LEARNING HIGH FINANCE  
EYEING THAT COAL-STOCK MEASURE...

*Several LADIES OF LEISURE enter. Marianne tosses the Journal aside and wraps herself in a mink stole.*

... OR SIPPING JASMINE TEA  
WITH LADIES OF LEISURE.  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY  
MY STAR IS ONLY RISING  
BUT THAT'S NOT SURPRISING  
CAUSE I'M GLISTENING LIKE YOUR DADDY'S PISTOL  
ACQUAINTING MYSELF WITH MING AND CRYSTAL.  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY I AIN'T  
CHASING DOWN THE ICE CREAM MAN  
SNEAKING HOME WITH MARZIPAN  
JAZZING BY THE GOOD-HUMOR VAN  
SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY.

CAST: OH, MARIANNE  
DA DA DI DA  
DA DA DI DA  
OH, MARIANNE...

*Chester waves a movie script around while Marianne slips on a pair of shades and a bleached Marilyn wig.*

CAST: OH, MARIANNE  
DA DA DI DA  
DA DA DI DA  
OH, MARIANNE...

CHESTER: SINCE I CAME YOUR WAY  
YOU GOT A CHAUFFEUR AND A LIMOUSINE  
THE SCRIPT THEY'RE GONNA GIVE TO JIMMY DEAN  
(CONT'D)

CHESTER: -- YOU TOOK THE MAISONETTE IN MALIBU  
WITH ITS PICTURE-POSTCARD VIEW,  
MADE-TO-MEASURE MAID, JACARANDA TREE  
AND A MARMOSET FROM THE CHINA SEA  
SINCE I CAME YOUR WAY.

CAST: OH, MARIANNE...

MARIANNE: SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 2, Scene 3

*Loft Apartment, Manhattan.  
Early 1940s.*

*Bernhard is sat at the piano and alternates between making pencil annotations to a handwritten score and trying out a crashing chord crescendo in the Romantic style. After two or three go-rounds...*

BERNHARD: Yes! It's alive with her memory.  
(*turning to audience*)  
I no longer have that weekend place, but...  
(*indicating piano*)  
This is all I need.  
(*standing*)  
I'm free of the studios! Free to compose my  
*Romantic Symphony.*

*Laemmle enters. He's wearing black-tie.*

LAEMMLE: In other words, you'll be a penniless artist  
before Christmas -- And, for the record, I  
don't hear any difference between the syrup  
you just played and the stuff those 9-5 guys  
at the lot toss in the wastepaper basket.

BERNHARD: With all due respect, you're not a musician.

LAEMMLE: I know a tune when I hear one and—

*Bernhard's father, Hugo Wilhelm, enters.*

HUGO: It's because he wouldn't practice! Always  
the dilettante -- Instead of his scales,  
he'd be engrossed in those two-Pfennig  
fantasy magazines. And he even had the nerve  
to try and hide the fact from me by stuffing  
them down his long trousers!



*Bernhard tries to protest, but Hugo's not done.*

HUGO: Music is a technical discipline to be mastered by strict adherence to method and repetition of that method.

*(suddenly)*

And where on earth's your metronome? I suppose Mr. Hollywood Big Shot's too good for the simple classroom trappings.

BERNHARD: You're wrong, father. Music is worthless if it cannot communicate our innermost soul and private sorrows.

*(pause)*

And those are two things in danger of being obliterated by that lunatic from Linz. Even if, God forbid, his Reich does last a thousand years, it won't contain a single piece of music worth recalling.

HUGO: Innermost soul? Private sorrows? See if Doctor Freud can clear his schedule because you need multiple appointments.

BERNHARD: Doctor Freud! Doctor Freud! Don't you see? My music is the embodiment of childhood trauma.

HUGO: I suppose you blame me for this trauma; in spite of your privileged upbringing.

BERNHARD: I don't blame you at all, father. I'm...

**UNDERSCORE:** *Theme from THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA.*

BERNHARD: ... I'm referring to Maria. The little girl who drowned at Lake Constance.

HUGO: Mmm, I admit that was unfortunate, but—

BERNHARD: It's straight out of nineteenth century Romanticism: beauty at the moment of death—

**END UNDERSCORE.**

LAEMMLE: Yeah, that'll be right in the audience's wheelhouse.

*(then)*

Look, I once read an article in *Reader's Digest* about some Portugese King embalming his dead wife and keeping her body for Lord

(CONT'D)

LAEMMLE: knows how many years in the 1400s -- Ain't that something? Well, maybe if I had any interest in fifteenth-century Portugal. Now, if our guy doing the embalming was a regular Joe from Cleveland then maybe you got me -- What I'm saying is the most highfalutin stuff in the world is sawdust if an audience won't buy a ticket.

(pause)

And if you ask me, Bernhard's music is like Portugal in the 1400s.

(to Bernhard)

Nothing personal, you understand.

(checking wristwatch)

You'll excuse me gentlemen -- I'm due at a War Bonds fundraiser in fifteen minutes and I mustn't keep my date waiting.

*Laemmler exits.*

HUGO: Your old boss made some sense -- If only you'd listened and taught theory in Freiburg or Baden.

BERNHARD: (*Laughing*) Oh father, you'll never change—

**Music #15: ROMANTIC SYMPHONY**

*Hugo produces (and extends) a telescopic POINTER — which he then brandishes like a schoolmaster. Bernhard sits at the piano.*

BERNHARD: PAPA SAID IT'S TIME TO PLAY  
COME ALONG BERNHARD, PRACTICE DAY  
HIT THE KEYS 'TIL THEY'RE BURNING  
THERE'S PAIN IN YOUR LEARNING.

OBSERVE MY HANDS SO GHOSTLY WHITE  
SEE THE NOTES TAKE WONDROUS FLIGHT  
ALL OF MUSIC RESIDES IN THEM  
LET ME SHOW YOU ANOTHER STRATEGEM.

*Hugo eases off a little with the pointer.*

BERNHARD: OUTSIDE OUR LAKE BECKONS  
UNTERSEE ON A HOT DAY  
WALK THE SHORE, DAISIES TO SHARE  
STRANGERS MEET  
SOMEONE CALLED TO ME...

*Maria enters. She drifts quietly across the stage.*

MARIA: COME AWAY... COME AWAY.

BERNHARD: I'VE ALWAYS FOLLOWED IN YOUR SHOES  
STERN CONVERSATIONS, FAMILY MUSE  
BUT IT ESCAPED NOW THROUGH THE HORN  
MONEY QUICKLY TURNED TO SCORN...  
MY SYMPHONY WILL BE A TRIBUTE TO THE GERMAN  
BLOOD WE SHARE  
THIS MONUMENTAL ACT OF CREATION  
SON TO FATHER  
A BEHOLDEN PRAYER.

*Hugo goes back to almost rapping the keys with the pointer.*

BERNHARD: COME ALONG BERNHARD, THERE'S WORK TO DO  
THE SUMMER MONTHS WON'T WAIT FOR YOU  
I KNOW THE BAROMETER'S AT NINETY-SIX  
BUT IT'S EITHER THIS OR MATHEMATICS.

*Again, Hugo eases off with the pointer.*

BERNHARD: OUTSIDE OUR LAKE BECKONS

MARIA: COME AWAY... COME AWAY.

*Maria exits. Lights dim and come up on...*

#### **Act 2, Scene 4**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Bernhard and Laemmle have lapsed into silence. X27 and HERR X enter from opposite sides of the stage.*

LAEMMLE: Who the hell are these clowns? Wait, I know  
the dame in the fedora -- What'd she say her  
name was...?

X27: I didn't. My identity remains classified; but  
you can call me X27 -- And this is Herr X.

HERR X: I wish to spare my family further  
embarrassment. They live in a suburb outside  
of Munich, you see.

LAEMMLE: What's with the cover stories? It's  
*Frankenstein*. Not a Hitchcock retrospective.

BERNHARD: They're friends of Doctor Lime.

- LAEMMLE: Jeez, I'd forgotten about him -- Like your audience will.
- HERR X: On the contrary, Sir. I owe Mr. Lime -- as well as X27, here -- a great deal. I could not have come to America otherwise.
- X27: All in a day's work for freedom, democracy and Uncle Sam.
- LAEMMLE: Bernhard, can you show these two the exit. I've no idea what they're talking about.
- HERR X: We wished only to commend Herr Kaun for telling Doctor Lime's story.
- BERNHARD: Why, thank you. That's most kind.  
(to Laemmle)  
If you recall, Lime traveled to Europe for personal reasons and got mixed up in some Nazi uranium plot with a German academic -- Professor...?
- X27: Professor Görlitz—
- HERR X: Ahhh!! Don't mention that fiend—
- Sudden BLACKOUT before lights come up on...*

### Act 2, Scene 5

*Library on upper floor of townhouse.  
Somewhere in Germany. Circa 1879.*

*Professor Görlitz stands downstage. Behind him a desk, chair and rows of wooden shelves lined with dusty volumes.*

- GÖRLITZ: (To audience) From my earliest childhood I sensed my own superiority. My father was in the Prussian regiment and put me down for the military academy even before my birth.  
(pause)  
I'd have gone, too, if not for the summer of my eighth year. My mother and I were waiting for my father to come home on leave...

*Görlitz exits. A young MASTER GÖRLITZ enters. He wears short trousers, but already carries himself like an adult. He selects a book from one of the shelves.*

MASTER G: Mornings I study under a private tutor; but in the afternoon if my mother and I are not calling on friends or else receiving visitors, I'm free to do as I please.

*Doctor Lime enters.*

LIME: Funny to think an eight year old boy altered the destinies of both Herr X and myself one summer afternoon last century.

MASTER G: On the contrary. It's a logical sequence.  
(*to audience*)  
I was trained to exercise dispassion.

*The young Görlitz takes a seat at the desk. He opens the book.*

MASTER G: See for yourself, doctor. See how life begins. From the tiniest cells, fantastic creatures emerge.

*He turns the open book toward Lime.*

LIME: Insect anatomies. Perfectly preserved in cross-section.

MASTER G: And perfectly catalogued, I might add.  
(*pause*)  
I discovered countless examples and filled notebook after notebook; making pencil drawings to illustrate my text. From there, it became the work of a lifetime.

LIME: Although your father came home early—

MASTER G: Any displeasure at my being in his library was forgotten when he saw the academic rigor of my undertaking.

LIME: Your future was determined.

MASTER G: I would go to the finest school in Leipzig—

LIME: University in Hannover—

MASTER G: Postgraduate studies in Leiden—

LIME: Your own practice.

MASTER G: I could not complain.

LIME: You enjoyed all the material comforts—

MASTER G: Weekends in the country—

LIME: A box at the opera—

MASTER G: Summers on Lake Geneva—

LIME: Friends in the upper chamber—

MASTER G: And yet—

LIME: For reasons unfathomable even to you—

MASTER G: I was not satisfied—

LIME: You recalled the insects you'd catalogued.

MASTER G: Indeed.

LIME: And wished to solve the ultimate mystery.

**UNDERSCORE:** *Theme from CREATE A LIFE.*

MASTER G: ... that someone born to one gender could become a member of the other—

LIME: Herr X was your prototype—

MASTER G: I wished to know how God felt at the moment of creation!

**END UNDERSCORE.**

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 2, Scene 6**

*Surgery overlooking Port of Hamburg.  
Night. May 1934.*

*Shelves lined with glass receptacles. Medical instruments here and there. From offstage we hear the melancholy boom of a foghorn. Professor Görlitz emerges from behind a screen, removes his surgical gloves and throws them aside.*

GÖRLITZ: For the first time I've failed.

*X27 enters.*

X27: Is not your procedure still one of an experimental nature?

GÖRLITZ: I could console myself with such a thought.  
Yet I'd be wrong.  
*(picks up his own book and waves around  
before throwing it aside)*  
Herr X was no fluke!

X27: What if Doctor Lime goes before the medical  
board?

GÖRLITZ: I think it unlikely. His shame will be too  
great. Besides, the word of an American over  
that of the great Professor Görlitz...?

X27: The board are obliged to investigate any  
accusations of impropriety. And there's your  
reputation to consider.

GÖRLITZ: My reputation, you say...?

X27: He may even go to his Consulate. There's  
really no knowing whom he might tell—

*X27 pushes aside the screen to reveal Lime on an operating table  
three-quarter covered by a white sheet. Görlitz is horrified.*

**Music #16: NOBODY MUST KNOW**

GÖRLITZ: NOBODY MUST KNOW  
OF MY NEED TO DEVIATE  
NOBODY MUST KNOW  
OF THESE PERSONS I CREATE  
NOBODY MUST LEARN  
OF THIS UNFORTUNATE NIGHT  
NOBODY MUST KNOW  
THE AMERICAN DIDN'T TURN OUT RIGHT.  
NOBODY MUST KNOW  
I MADE THE WRONG INCISION  
NOBODY MUST KNOW  
CATERACTS CLOUD MY VISION  
NOBODY MUST HEAR  
OF MY UNLICENSED TRADE  
NOBODY MUST FIND  
THIS BLOODSTAINED SILVER BLADE.

*The accountants enter and form a ghoulish chorus at STAGE RIGHT.*

ACCOUNTANTS: NOBODY, NOBODY, NOBODY...

*Görlitz & X27 do a cat & mouse dance around the operating table;  
now and then spinning it around on its wheels.*

GÖRLITZ: NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 OF OUR MÉNAGE A TROIS  
 NOBODY MUST CONFISCATE  
 THE CONTENTS OF THIS JAR  
 NOBODY MUST UNCOVER  
 EACH SORDID DETAIL  
 NOTHING MUST LEAVE ME  
 OPEN TO BLACKMAIL.  
 NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 OF THE SPECIMENS I COLLECT  
 NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 OF THESE SOULS I INFECT  
 NOTHING MUST RUIN  
 MY ACADEMIC REPUTATION  
 NOBODY MUST INFER  
 THIS STICKY SITUATION.

X27: THE ETHER'S FADING FAST, MEIN HERR  
 BETTER THINK LIKE A MAGICIAN  
 FORGET THE USUAL ARRANGEMENT  
 OR THERE'LL BE AN INQUISITION  
 -- I WOULD NOT DISPLEASE THE UNITED STATES  
 THEY'LL TABLE MORE THAN ACCUSATIONS  
 VIA PARAGRAPHS AND CLAUSES  
 AT THAT SPINELESS LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

*An agitated Görlitz starts opening cupboards and drawers. He's looking for something and alights on what looks like a diary.*

GÖRLITZ: NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 OF THOSE HOUSEFLIES AND DOGS  
 NOBODY MUST COPY  
 MY ANNOTATED CATALOGUES  
 NOBODY MUST DISCOVER  
 THIS INDEX OF ERROR  
 NOBODY MUST LEARN  
 OF MY FREUDIAN TERROR.  
 NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 HERR X WAS OPEN TO SUGGESTION  
 NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 MY THEORY GIVES ME INDIGESTION  
 NOBODY SHOULD RECOMMEND  
 I MEET THE FIRING SQUAD  
 AND NOBODY MUST KNOW  
 I'LL BE PUNISHED BY GOD.

*X27 dramatically reveals several cadavers perfectly preserved behind glass.*

ACCOUNTANTS: NOBODY, NOBODY, NOBODY...

*Lime begins to stir...*



X27: He's coming round! The game's up, Görlitz—

*Görlitz makes a grab for the ether, but only succeeds in knocking a glass bottle to the floor where it shatters. Lime wakes immediately and sits bolt upright!*

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

## Act 2, Scene 7

*Nighttime waterfront, Hamburg.*

*A spotlight sweeps the harbor with its neon, boat shadows and BLIND ACCORDIONIST. Three SHOWGIRLS crowd round a Scandanavian SEA CAPTAIN.*

SHOWGIRL #1: Tell us a story, Mister Sea Captain.

SEA CAPTAIN: What kind of story?

SHOWGIRL #2: Aw, you know the ones we like—

SHOWGIRL #3: Yeah, tell us of assignations in Oslo.

SHOWGIRL #1: And Copenhagen.

SHOWGIRL #2: Tell us of tenement rooms—

SHOWGIRL #3: And switchblades—

SHOWGIRL #1: Of nineteenth century novels—

SHOWGIRL #2: Of priceless antiques—

SHOWGIRL #3: In luxurious townhouses—

SHOWGIRL #1: Glowing with gas—

SHOWGIRL #2: Wax and electricity.

SHOWGIRL #3: Tell us of crooked card games—

SHOWGIRL #1: Spied upon from second-storey windows.

SHOWGIRL #2: Tell us of fallen Eurasian women—

SHOWGIRL #3: Silhouetted—

SHOWGIRL #1: Behind Chinese silkscreens.

SHOWGIRL #2: Tell us of empty theaters—

SHOWGIRL #3: Abandoned mezzanines.

SHOWGIRL #1: Tell us of the Winter Palace—

SHOWGIRL #2: And Anastasia.

SHOWGIRL #3: Tell us of cobblestones—

SHOWGIRL #1: And backstreets—

SHOWGIRL #2: Quiet with rain.

SHOWGIRL #3: Hey, last time he said he'd bring us presents—

SHOWGIRL #1: Souvenirs!

SHOWGIRL #2: I'd like a Japanese fan.

SHOWGIRL #3: And I'd like—

SEA CAPTAIN: Okay, okay. I'll tell you those stories and a few more besides -- And there are souvenirs... but first I need a drink!

*They exit full of easy laughter. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 2, Scene 8

*Tenement on Hamburg waterfront.  
Several days later.*

*Lime is sat by the window. A large wooden crucifix hangs down over the cassock he's wearing. A small wooden box and metallic syringe are on the table.*

LIME: I underwent a physiological change -- A transformation that triggered some deeper compulsion within me.  
(*then*)  
Dawn is coming on. I must book my return passage, yet...

**Music #17: ABOVE SCHUMANNSTRASSE**

LIME: I CRY TEARS AGAIN  
WATCHING ALL THE PEOPLE HERE  
CROWDS, MOVING FASTER  
FROM MY WINDOWSILL  
(CONT'D)

LIME:            ABOVE SCHUMANNSTRASSE.  
 I CRY TEARS AGAIN  
 FOR WHAT LOVE BECAME  
 IN THAT SURGERY WITHOUT A NAME  
 HE WORKED HIS SORCERY  
 AND MADE OF ME  
 THIS NIGHTTIME CREATURE  
 I GUESS HE READ HIS NIETZSCHE.

*He removes the crucifix and unbuttons the black cassock.*

I DRY TEARS AGAIN  
 WISHING I'D NOT INTERFERED  
 AND CRY ALOUD WITH FEVER  
 WHEN I OVERHEAR  
 YOUNG GUYS FROM GENEVA.  
 I DRY TEARS AGAIN  
 FOR THOSE TALES I TOLD  
 ASSIGNATIONS BOUGHT WITH GOLD  
 OR FORGERY  
 THAT MADE OF ME  
 THIS BELGIAN PREACHER  
 AND GOLD COAST SCHOOLTEACHER.

*Herr X enters carrying a Gladstone bag. He places it on the table and removes several medicine bottles.*

HERR X:            As for me... I wished to avoid being called  
 up. War in Europe seems inevitable.

AND I LIKED THE NAME "JOANNA"  
 I HEARD IT ON BAVARIA RADIO  
 SIGNED PAPERS I COULD NOT UNDERSTAND  
 TO REALIGN MY BIOGRAPHY  
 WHILE IN MUNICH FLAMES WERE FANNED  
 BY OUR FATHERLAND'S GEOGRAPHY  
 AND MATTERS MORE THAN SEX  
 SO I WELCOMED THIS HERMAPHRODITE  
 AND DRANK TO THE GOOD PROFESSOR'S COMPLEX.

LIME:            I CRY TEARS AGAIN  
 WAITING FOR THE DAWN TO CLEAR  
 ABSINTHE AND CALAMINE  
 FROM A FRIEND UPSTAIRS  
 OUR LIVES CLANDESTINE.  
 I CRY TEARS AGAIN...

LIME &  
HERR X:            ... FOR WHAT WE BECAME  
 IN THAT SURGERY WITHOUT A NAME  
 WHERE HE WORKED HIS SORCERY  
 AND MADE OF US THESE  
 (CONT'D)

LIME & NIGHTTIME CREATURES...  
HERR X:

HERR X: I GUESS HE READ HIS NIETZSCHE

LIME: I GUESS HE READ HIS NIETZSCHE.

*Professor Görlitz enters. He also has a medicine bottle that he puts on the table. Lights dim before coming up on...*

### Act 2, Scene 9

*Backroom of movie theater.  
 Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Bernhard and Laemmle resume their earlier conversation.*

LAEMMLE: Okay, so some lot physician took an oddball vacation.

BERNHARD: Don't you see the irony? It's the *Frankenstein* story repeating itself—

LAEMMLE: Guy hardly walked around with a bolt through his neck.

*Lime enters.*

LIME: Mr. Laemmle's half right. Yes, I got home in one piece and resumed my life—

LAEMMLE: I'd say I'm wholly right.

BERNHARD: Wait a second. I sense a caveat.

LIME: (*Nodding*) The next thirty years were not without their complications.

BERNHARD: Surely you reported that Görlitz fellow?

LIME: I thought about it, but realized he never acted from malice.

*Herr X enters.*

HERR X: Görlitz was a fiend! A charlatan!

LIME: We had this conversation and agreed not to let this one disagreement get in the way of our friendship.

HERR X: You're most correct, Herr Lime.

*Görlitz enters. Herr X screams and rapidly exits.*

GÖRLITZ: You'd think Herr X would be grateful --  
Anyhow, you all saw me bring Doctor Lime an  
analgesic to get him through his return  
voyage.  
(*then*)  
The real tragedy was my being ahead of my  
time -- If only genius could choose an era  
in which to flourish.

*Görlitz exits.*

LIME: I guess we were both born twenty-five years  
too soon.  
(*then*)  
Funnily enough, the last picture I ever saw—

BERNHARD: Before you...?

LIME: That's right. I went to a matinee of some  
*Psycho* rip-off -- The one with the fright-  
break gimmick—

LAEMMLE: *Homicidal*. 1961 William Castle production.  
Boy, that's a crazy picture!

LIME: Anyhow, that picture was how I found out  
gender surgery was now available in Denmark.  
(*then*)  
I'd been too busy writing to notice much of  
anything.

BERNHARD: Writing?

*X27 enters with a proof of Lime's book.*

X27: (*Reading front cover*) *The Strange Case of  
Doctor X: The Man who Failed to Become a  
Woman* by Otis Claybourn Lime -- Nothing  
redacted and on sale soon. Get your copy of  
Doctor Lime's book right here!  
(*then*)  
Oh wait, wrong persona... I gotta go!

*X27 exits.*

LIME: It's finally getting published, ten years  
after my death, as per a clause in my will.  
(CONT'D)

LIME: Well, I guess that about wraps up my story. You should get back to Miss Melrose -- Swell seeing you both.

*Lime exits as lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 2, Scene 10**

*Montgomery household.  
Malibu. Circa 1955.*

*Marianne sits at the breakfast table buttering toast. She looks a little older. Chester enters. Oddly enough, he looks the same.*

CHESTER: What did I tell you -- You're on fire, Mrs. Montgomery!

MARIANNE: I burnt the toast, but this crinoline dress is fully flame resistant.

CHESTER: You kill me hun -- No, I'm talking about the European tour. We made bank. I just got off the phone with Silverstein.

MARIANNE: You're putting me on. Everyone knows I was Hollywood's Nearly Girl.

CHESTER: Ah, you were always a knockout -- Besides, comebacks are all the rage. Look at Ingrid Bergman and Jennifer Jones. They're doing those Italian pictures the critics go nuts about.

MARIANNE: Yeah, but only the critics see them.

CHESTER: Forget about it... When you return from Europe your stock'll be sky high.

MARIANNE: Maybe you should float me on Wall Street.

CHESTER: Seriously hun, the itinerary's fixed—

**UNDERSCORE**: *Theme from SINCE YOU CAME MY WAY.*

CHESTER: We fly to London, then it's Paris, Amsterdam and Copenhagen before we wind up with a week in Berlin -- Oh, and get this: We got a television spot in Germany. They've been showing your old pictures and they're going over like Marilyn Monroe in a monastery.

(CONT'D)

CHESTER: In three months you'll have Broadway eating outta your hand.

**END UNDERSCORE.**

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 2, Scene 11**

*German TV studio.  
One month later.*

*The producer, HERR LAEMMHOFF, dressed for comic operetta (and bearing more than a passing resemblance to Laemmle), furiously smokes a clay pipe. Noxious fumes fill a stage-set that's a pasteboard evocation of forests, lakes, mountains and castles. Bernhard enters. He's also in full alpine costume.*

BERNHARD: Herr Laemmhoff, this is ridiculous!  
(pause)  
I thought returning to Germany would mean I got to do serious music.

LAEMMHOFF: Don't forget we got that Hollywood star, Marianne Montgomery, coming on tonight's show. She'll appreciate the trouble you took -- Besides, we don't wanna look cheap.

*Somewhere, a Cuckoo clock does its thing: "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"*

LAEMMHOFF: We sure went all in this week—

*Bernhard's not listening.*

LAEMMHOFF: Hey, maestro... What's eating you?

BERNHARD: Marianne Montgomery... Why do I know that name?

LAEMMHOFF: Cause they've been showing her pictures on television for the past month.

BERNHARD: I don't own a television.  
(then)  
Wait... It can't be—!

*Sudden BLACKOUT with dry ice before lights come up on...*

## Act 2, Scene 12

*Several hours later.*

TECHNICIAN: (Offstage) Fünf, veir, drei, zwei, eins—

*Marianne enters looking like Alice in Bavarialand. She comes on to canned appluase.*

MARIANNE: (To audience) Where's the crossroads? I was told there'd be a carriage waiting to take me to the Black Forest Academy of Stage and Screen.

*Laemhoff enters smoking his clay pipe.*

LAEMMHOFF: The Black Forest Academy! You mustn't go to that evil place—

MARIANNE: But I traveled all the way from America -- And besides, they're expecting me tonight. (then)  
I'm trying to launch this comeback but my agent said how acting's changed since I was last in pictures -- So I said, if you're expecting some kinda female Marlon Brando then go take a hike; but he was like:  
"Forget The Method -- There's this terrific school in the Black Forest"—

LAEMMHOFF: Did your agent also mention how nobody ever ever leaves that "terrific school" -- especially Yankee girls hoping to launch misguided comebacks. (loudly whispering)  
They're all witches!

MARIANNE: You gotta be kidding.

LAEMMHOFF: Remember what happened to Jonathan Harker -- You must have seen *Dracula*?

MARIANNE: Sure. Eight thousand times -- I worked for the guy who produced the picture and he never shut up about how much money it took. (then)  
Actually, you kinda remind me of him.

LAEMMHOFF: Let that picture be a warning to you -- Harker himself became a vampire—

*Bernhard enters.*



BERNHARD: Don't listen to that line of alpine junk.  
Jonathan Harker was a fictional character.

LAEMMHOFF: You may scoff, Bernhard, but the terrors of  
this region are congregated in that place.

MARIANNE: *(To Bernhard)* He means the Black Forest  
Academy of Stage and Screen.

BERNHARD: You should definitely go. I just saw one of  
your old pictures.  
*(then)*  
Seriously, the building might be a little  
spooky—

LAEMMHOFF: The architect based it on an old gingerbread  
house. And it's full of cuckoo clocks!

*Again, the Cuckoo clock does its thing: "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"*

BERNHARD: We're surrounded by fairytales: Hansel and  
Gretel, elves and shoemakers, crazy Bavarian  
kings—

**Music #18: LOVE IN THE BLACK FOREST**

*They'll do a Bavarian routine with a side of comic operetta.*

MARIANNE: YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN MONSTERS  
DESPITE THE SUPERSTITION  
WOODEN DOLLS AND PUPPETS  
OR THAT FAIRYTALE MAGICIAN  
-- DO YOU...?

LAEMMHOFF: YET SOMETIMES YOU SHOULD LISTEN.

BERNHARD: HIGH UP ON THE MOUNTAIN  
IT'S STARTING TO SNOW  
BUT I WON'T STOP AND SAY  
THAT ICE ON YOUR CHEEK'S  
A WHITE BOUQUET  
AS MY LEDERHOSEN GIVE WAY.

BERNHARD  
& MARIANNE: LET'S LÄNDLER PAST THE CASTLE  
IGNORING ALL THE DOORWAYS  
TRADE *FRANKENSTEIN* FOR *LA BOHÈME*  
-- SUMMER SOMETIMES STUMBLES  
AND BRINGS US HEAT IN MORE WAYS  
LOVE TO OUR BLACK FOREST CAME.



BELVEDERE: Hey, I know you. You're...  
 (then)  
 Don't tell me.  
 (pause)  
 Tom Conway!  
 (realizing he isn't)  
 No, elocution needs work.  
 (then)  
 Wait, lemme have another crack.  
 (then)  
 Sydney Greenstreet!  
 (wrong again)  
 Mmm, need to gain a few pounds.  
 (then)  
 I got it! Peter Lorre!

CHESTER: (Laughing) I never acted in my life --  
 Production's my racket. Well, it was.  
 (then)  
 And no, I'm not Daryl Zanuck -- I'm Chester  
 Montgomery the Third out of Oklahoma City.

BELVEDERE: Shoot. How'd I miss that?  
 (then)  
 Boy, I feel stupid.

CHESTER: If I apologized for every faux-pas I wouldn't  
 have time for much else besides -- Take my  
 sudden demise: Marianne's comeback was in  
 full swing -- Oscar Hammerstein of all  
 people had some hotshot fresh outta college  
 write a revue showcasing the best numbers  
 from all her old pictures. Would've been  
 terrific, but with me outta the picture the  
 backer developed a sudden *liquidity* problem  
 and—

BELVEDERE: Marianne Montgomery, née Melrose?

CHESTER: That's right. You remember.

BELVEDERE: *The Queen of Peru* is in my all-time top ten!

CHESTER: Oh yeah, that one had everything

BELVEDERE: So whatever happened to her?

CHESTER: Well, now. That's a sad story. She got a  
 a liking for Valium and ended up in one—

*Marianne enters wrapped in a dressing-gown.*

MARIANNE: In one of those "places". I believe that's the current euphemism.

CHESTER: Now, hun, don't get sore.

MARIANNE: I'm not sore, Chester -- I'm not at all ashamed of my circumstance.

BELVEDERE: Marianne Melrose! I mean Mrs. Montgomery. I was only just saying...  
(*then*)  
Now, there's a thought, I know UCLA have the the original nitrate for *The Queen of Peru*. If I ran that picture one evening, would you introduce it for me?

MARIANNE: Why, I'd love to!

CHESTER: I don't think Marianne's in the kind of shape to be among people—

MARIANNE: Who should I be among, Chester? Amoeba...? Aquatic pond life?

CHESTER: Now, hun—

BELVEDERE: (*Diplomatic*) Look, I've gotta be elsewhere, but it was fabulous meeting you, Mrs. Montgomery -- I'll be in touch about that screening.  
(*to Chester*)  
Oh, tell Mr. Kaun I'll be right back.

CHESTER: Mr. Kaun?

BELVEDERE: Bernhard Kaun. The guy who's nervous as hell about doing that talk in...  
(*checks wristwatch*)  
Jeez, three minutes.

*Belvedere exits. Marianne waits until he's gone.*

MARIANNE: I got it all wrong? What the hell was I thinking? I could've been Mrs. Kaun; the wife of a concert pianist—

CHESTER: Conductor.

MARIANNE: Ughh...?

CHESTER: He's a conductor these days.

MARIANNE: What's the difference! Guy stays at swanky hotels in big cities all across the world. Mixes with nice people.  
*(imagining the life)*  
 Oh, I agree. The Mahler was simply divine.  
*(then)*  
 Ah, Mrs Rothschild, you must join us for cocktails tomorrow evening. I won't take no for an answer.

CHESTER: Look, hun, I know we didn't go to fancy concerts or nothing, but we had some good times. We had some laughs—

MARIANNE: *(Laughing)* We sure did, Ches. It was hysterical.

CHESTER: *(trying to calm her down)* You skipped your tablet again, didn't you—?

MARIANNE: I can't keep up -- One minute I'm taking too many; the next, not enough. I've no idea whether I'm here or there; whether it's today or tomorrow; this year or last year?

CHESTER: Well, that's why—

*The stage transforms to Marianne's room at the institute with its television, desk and chair. A battered suitcase (the one from her audition back in 1931) sits in the corner. An ORDERLY enters ringing a bell.*

ORDERLY: Visiting time's over, Mr. Montgomery. No doubt we'll see you again, Tuesday.

CHESTER: Okey-doke. You're the boss around here.  
*(to Marianne)*  
 You keep well now, hun. And I'll—

MARIANNE: Yeah, see you Tuesday.

*Chester makes an awkward semi-affectionate gesture and exits. The Orderly puts down her bell and starts making the bed...*

**Music #19: IT ALWAYS RAINS ON SUNDAY**

MARIANNE: THEY SAY I HAD ANOTHER NERVOUS BREAKDOWN  
 THAT I'D BEEN THROUGH QUITE A STICKY PATCH  
 OH PLEASE EXCUSE THIS DRESSING-GOWN  
 SISTER KEEPS MY DOOR OFF THE LATCH.  
 (CONT'D)

*One by one, Marianne picks up a newspaper and TV listings guide from the desk.*

MARIANNE: I READ ABOUT THE COUP IN PARAGUAY  
ENJOY 'MOVIE OF THE WEEK' OR A MATINÉE  
I'LL WRITE TO FRIENDS THEN WAIT FOR THEIR REPLY  
AND IT ALWAYS RAINS ABOUT THIS TIME ON SUNDAY.

THEY SAY I SHOULD RETURN TO HOLLYWOOD  
DO GRAND GUIGNOL OR BE PEARL ON *MASQUERADE*  
OH, I KNOW THAT SHOW'S REALLY NOT SO GOOD  
BUT MISTER Z SAID THERE'S MONEY TO BE MADE.

*One by one, she picks up a real estate brochure and Esperanto dictionary.*

MARIANNE: I'D GET IN ON THE CRAZE FOR ESPERANTO  
MAYBE BUY A PLACE OUT IN MONTERREY  
CAUSE THEY GOT THEIR SET DOWN IN SACRAMENTO  
AND IT WON'T EVER RAIN ABOUT THIS TIME ON SUNDAY.

*The Orderly finishes up the bed and comes downstage.*

ORDERLY: BUT I HEAR THEY'RE ALL SMOKING CANNABIS

MARIANNE: AND YOU KNOW THERE'S SO MANY THINGS I'D MISS

ORDERLY: LIKE THAT CALENDAR OF SAILBOATS AT KEY WEST

MARIANNE: THE CHAPEL WITH ITS FADED FRANCISCAN CREST

ORDERLY: THE GARDENER WITH HIS *BALKAN SOBRANIE* TIN

MARIANNE: THOSE HANDS OF BRIDGE I NEVER NEVER WIN

ORDERLY: THE DAY ROOM WITH ITS TANK OF TROPIC FISH

MARIANNE: AND THE FOUNTAIN WHERE I ALWAYS MAKE A WISH

ORDERLY: THE FOUNTAIN WHERE YOU ALWAYS MAKE A WISH.

MARIANNE: Hey, I still got my old *Olivetti*—

*Marianne opens up the suitcase. Numerous handwritten journals spill onto the floor. She takes out a metal typewriter and places it on her desk. Luckily, there's a sheet of faded paper in the carriage.*

MARIANNE: I'll write my memoirs!  
(CONT'D)

MARIANNE: IT'S TRUE THE PAST IS LIKE A FOREIGN LAND  
GLISTENING WITH PLASTIC STARS AND RUST  
OH, SHOULD I USE THIS AMPERSAND?  
PLEASE SAY "YES" OR I'LL SPONTANEOUSLY COMBUST.  
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE SCANDAL, TWIST AND SUBPLOT  
NOT FORGETTING CHESTER, VALIUM AND BROADWAY  
AND I REALLY WON'T MIND — NO, NOT ONE SINGLE JOT  
THAT IT ALWAYS RAINS ABOUT THIS TIME ON SUNDAY.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 2, Scene 14**

*Backroom of movie theater.  
Somewhere in Los Angeles. November 1971.*

*Bernhard checks his watch. Suddenly, Laemmle's present-day self dashes onto the stage.*

LAEMMLE: I make it I still got two minutes.

BERNHARD: Mr. Laemmle...! I thought—

LAEMMLE: Yeah, it was dicey for a while there -- You want my advice, keep away from "off-season" seafood.

BERNHARD: I can't believe it. I just spent the last—

LAEMMLE: Bernhard, I was lying on my couch and it suddenly hit me—

BERNHARD: That you didn't have food poisoning?

LAEMMLE: Yeah.  
(*then*)  
I mean, no I didn't have food poisoning, but what I realized was this: I never let an audience down back then and I ain't gonna start now.

*Belvedere enters.*

BELVEDERE: Mr. Laemmle! You're here!  
(*to Bernhard*)  
You're off the hook, Mr. Kaun. We're going with Plan A.  
(*back to Laemmle*)  
Boy, you had me running around like crazy.  
(CONT'D)

BELVEDERE: It's terrific you made it, Mr. Laemmle, Sir  
-- A real honor. And I'm telling you,  
*Frankenstein's* in my all-time top ten...

*Belvedere and Laemmle make inaudible chit-chat as they wander upstage.*

BERNHARD: (to audience) I guess the movie world always  
was unpredictable. My father was right.

*Hugo Wilhelm enters.*

HUGO: I'm not sure I was.

BERNHARD: But...? You were adamant: "Teach theory in  
Freiburg or Baden" -- You never liked the  
movies.

HUGO: True. But from this vantage point they don't  
seem so bad.

BERNHARD: You changed your mind! How come?

HUGO: Because...

**Music #20:           SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART**

HUGO:               SOMEWHERE THERE'S A FALLING STAR  
CATCH IT IF YOU MIGHT

BERNHARD:       SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART  
WITH EVERY NOTE YOU WRITE.

*Belvedere and Laemmle return to center stage.*

BELVEDERE:       SOMETIMES YOUR HOPES  
DON'T MEET WITH WHAT GOES  
SOMETIMES THE SONG YOU SING  
NOBODY KNOWS

LAEMMLE:         BUT SOMEWHERE, SOMEONE'S LISTENING  
TO THAT CHEERFUL KINDA TUNE  
SO NEVER FORGET  
IT'S YOURS TO COMPOSE.

HUGO:             SOMEWHERE THERE'S A FALLING STAR  
CATCH IT IF YOU MIGHT

BERNHARD:       SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART  
WITH EVERY NOTE YOU WRITE.



BELVEDERE:           SOMETIMES A LOVE  
LEAVES YOU TOO SOON  
THE SKIES WERE DARK  
YOU ALWAYS KNEW

LAEMMLE:            BUT SOMEDAY THEY'LL SUDDENLY SING  
YOUR CHEERFUL KINDA TUNE  
THEY NEVER FORGOT  
THEIR WHOLE LIFETIME THROUGH.

HUGO                    THE STROKE OF BRUSH  
THE POINT OF PEN  
A RISING VOICE  
THE JOY WITHIN TO PRETEND  
PRACTICE TILL THE STAGE IS SET  
AND YOUR HEART GIVES IN.

*Hugo exits.*

BERNHARD:            SOMEWHERE THERE'S A FALLING STAR  
CATCH IT IF YOU MIGHT  
SOMEWHERE IN YOUR ART...

LAEMMLE:            (*Counterpoint*)  
NOTES THAT FLY FROM THE PAGE  
UP TO THE SILVER SCREEN  
I TOLD YOU OF MY DREAM...

BERNHARD:            WE FOUND OUR PLACE OUT THERE  
AND CREATED A LIFE...  
... SOMEWHERE IN OUR ART.

BELVEDERE:           (*Checking watch*) Uh-oh, there goes the  
intermission.  
(*then*)  
This way, gentlemen. We got a picture to  
introduce!

*The three of them exit.*

**CURTAIN.**