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## C A S T

### Principals

#### **BERNHARD KAUN**

Milwaukee-born, German composer.

#### **CARL LAEMMLE, JR.**

Head of Universal Pictures between 1929 and 1936.

#### **MARIANNE MELROSE**

Scriptreader and actress from Sun River, Montana.

#### **DOCTOR LIME**

Chicago-born, African-American studio physician.

### Supporting

ELIOT BELVEDERE: Theater Manager.

HUGO WILHELM KAUN: Bernhard's father.

UNCLE CARL: Affectionate name for Laemmle's father.

PROFESSOR GÖRLITZ: German surgeon / theoretician.

NEWSGIRL / X27: An American Mata Hari.

CHESTER MONTGOMERY III: MGM executive.

DROWNED GIRL: Childhood memory of Bernhard.

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. NEW YORK 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
11. BLACK MOON ..... Lime (w/ X27 & Cast)
12. THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA ..... Bernhard w/ Drowned Girl

### Act 2:

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

**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 Pictures 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 silver-haired occupant, BERNHARD KAUN, cuts a distinguished figure with his tweed overcoat and tan leather gloves. He holds a 5x4 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.*

ELIOT: 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.

ELIOT: Hey, 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: I'M THE FIFTH CHILD OF HUGO WILHELM  
 PATRIARCH WITH GREAT EXPECTATION  
 DOMICILED TO A STUDIOUS 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 WILHELM enters.*

BERNHARD: Father...!? But I thought—?

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".

*Hugo exits.*

ELIOT: (*Shouting after him*) Movies are terrific. I  
 spent my life in picturehouses.

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.

ELIOT: Okay, okay. I remember you.

BERNHARD: Any sign of Mr. Laemmle?

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

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

ELIOT: 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—

ELIOT: 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.

*She exits.*

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

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

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.

ELIOT: But you knew Junior.

BERNHARD: After a fashion—

ELIOT: 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.

ELIOT: You need a full beard to hang with those guys. I just annoy librarians -- Anyhow, all you gotta do is say what it was like working in pictures back then.

BERNHARD: But—

ELIOT: Appreciate this, Mr. Kaun, but I should be in the projection room. The old timer's prone to dozing off during the final reel.  
(*indicating drinks 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 for him 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:           That's Uncle Carl all over. The last of the benevolent showmen -- Be sure you tell 'em that.

UNCLE CARL:       And that means a lot to me, Junior.

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

UNCLE CARL:       That's right. I even planted palm trees—

LAEMMLE:           Swaying all soft and nice in the breeze.

UNCLE CARL:       I thought of Universal City as 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: We gave them our souls!

UNCLE CARL: And you, Junior, gave them—

*Laemmle stands. Crosses to center stage as everything around him transforms to the Frankenstein studio set and its evocation of a German village in the 1820s.*

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

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  
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: IF THERE'S ONE THING TO TAKE AWAY FROM MOVIES  
LET IT BE, BERNHARD, THIS SIMPLE DRILL  
WHAT YOU SUFFER FROM IS NOT A LACK OF IT, MAN  
BUT KNOWING WHAT YOU NEED (JUST LISTEN TO ME)  
... TO THRILL.

IMAGINATION  
LET IT RUN WILD

BERNHARD: I still say the picture needed more music.

LAEMMLE: 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 DOCTORS AND THEIR DUNGEONS  
& BERNHARD: THEY'RE TEN-A-PENNY, MAYBE MORE.

LAEMMLE: ... BY MOONLIGHT'S GLOW  
 BEGUILED.  
 IMAGINATION  
 OUR POOR STEPCHILD  
 CINDERELLA FROM THE WORLD  
 EXILED.

LAEMMLE: IMAGINATION...

UNCLE CARL IMAGINATION.  
& BERNHARD:

UNCLE CARL: I'll leave the monsters in your capable  
 hands, Junior.

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

LAEMMLE: You see, it's like Uncle Carl said -- A swell  
 story.

BERNHARD: ... but the folks who showed up tonight  
 already read it in the movie magazines when  
 they were kids. No, they're a sophisticated  
 crowd -- They want to hear about the  
 backroom players: the folks you wouldn't  
 know were there but without whom you  
 wouldn't have a movie -- 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 everything I'm talking about.  
(then)  
Say, they both came onto the lot around the  
same time as myself -- February 1931, if I'm  
not mistaken.

LAEMMLE: Lemme get this straight: they got a packed  
house for this fortieth anniversary double  
screening: Right now they're showing *Dracula*  
and then they'll run *Frankenstein* after  
you've done your talk. And you're gonna tell  
'em about some backroom 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 wears a white suit with  
matching top hat. There's a battered suitcase 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 shall I put it?  
(*pause*)  
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 the leading role would be all 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: (*Makes to leave*) Okay fellas, I get it. Thanks all the same.

DIRECTOR: Hey, wait up. You think we're the heartless kind who spit girls like you back onto 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 I'd shattered -- 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: That's the spirit!

*With perfect synchronicity the two of them lift Marianne from the ground and rush her across the stage as everything around her transforms into the hustle of Times Square.*

DIRECTOR: Look, what's the use in blinding yourself with all this razzle dazzle? Our brains can only handle so much failure.

MARIANNE: What happens to them? I mean, to folks who absorb too much?

PRODUCER: Failure?

MARIANNE: That's it. Failure—

DIRECTOR: They wind up weaving wicker baskets!  
(CONT'D)

DIRECTOR: Take the girls on those billboards, for instance -- Their names all lit up like Christmas trees. Well, for starters, those ain't their real names—

PRODUCER: Neither's yours.

DIRECTOR: (*Shrugs*) Hey, I never said it was.

PRODUCER: Look, what he's trying to say—

**Music #3: NEW YORK MOVIES**

DIRECTOR: I HEAR THEY MADE A BLIZZARD  
OUT ON THE OTHER COAST  
WITH A '24 SNOW TRACTOR  
AND SOME DOOHICKEY EXTRACTOR

PRODUCER: YOU KNOW...  
THEY ALWAYS MAKE THE MOST—

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

DIRECTOR: Now you're catching on. Sometimes that last quarter is worth a million bucks—

PRODUCER: Wait, you forgot something!

*He hands Marianne the suitcase.*

PRODUCER & DIRECTOR: Good luck, kid!

*The two men exit. Marianne waves... As the stage fills with picturehouses and an atmosphere of euphoria and tickets for whatever you please. A neon banner declares: CARL LAEMMLE, JR. PRESENTS DRACULA.*

MARIANNE: I'M AT THE NEW YORK MOVIES  
THEY'RE PLAYING ALL THIS YEAR  
-- YES, THESE NEW YORK MOVIES  
MIGHT GET ME OUTTA HERE.

*Several BROADWAY GIRLS enter. Real theatre-school types. One of them wears a crushed beret.*

BROADWAY JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON BROADWAY  
GIRLS: THEY SAY SHE'S LIKE A GHOST  
 LOST IN RADIO CITY  
 YOU GOTTA FEEL SOME PITY.

*Marianne buys a ticket. Gets caught up with the BROADWAY GIRLS.*

BROADWAY WHEN SHE...  
GIRLS: ALWAYS FINDS THE MOST  
 STARDUST IN HER EYE  
 CONFETTI IN HER HAIR  
 GLITTER IN GOODBYE  
 LOVE AT A COUNTY FAIR.

*On a lark, one of the Broadway girls swipes Marianne's top hat and exchanges it for the crushed beret.*

MARIANNE: I'M AT THE NEW YORK MOVIES  
 THEY'RE PLAYING ALL THIS YEAR  
 -- YES, THESE NEW YORK MOVIES  
 MIGHT GET ME OUTTA HERE.

*Various MOVIEGOERS are suddenly illuminated by the beam of the projector as Marianne's suitcase bumps one of them on the head while she takes her seat. Marianne smiles "Sorry".*

MOVIEGOERS: SHE'S AT THE NEW YORK MOVIES  
 STARDUST IN HER EYE  
 OUT ON THE OTHER COAST  
 CONFETTI IN HER HAIR  
 WITH A '24 SNOW TRACTOR etc.

*The movie theater becomes a dreary train carriage. An INSPECTOR enters and punches Marianne's ticket.*

TICKET INSPECTOR: A THIRD-CLASS COMPARTMENT  
 BROUGHT HER OUT WEST  
 ACROSS WHEATFIELDS AND PRAIRIES  
 WITH FIRE IN HER BREAST

*The carriage transforms into an equally dreary readers' office comprised of Marianne and THREE GIRLS (not unlike the Broadway Girls). A towering pile of scripts beside each of them. Laemmle paces the room and chomps on a cigar.*

*Suddenly, one of the girls raises her hand; the script she was reading held aloft. Laemmle motions for her to stand and she crosses the stage to hand him the script. Laemmle skims it before spitting out his cigar into the script and tossing the whole package in a nearby wastepaper basket. Another girl raises her hand...*



LAEMMLE:                   WORKING THAT SLUSH PILE  
                                  OFF STUDIO SEVEN  
                                  SKIMMING FOR MONSTERS  
                                  IN MY HOLLYWOOD HEAVEN

*Several PARTYGOERS enter. Marianne hesitates, but soon throws her unread scripts into the air.*

PARTYGOERS:           YET SOON SHE'LL MAKE  
                                  INFLUENTIAL FRIENDS ON SUNSET  
                                  TALKING ABOUT SOME MOVIE THING  
                                  AND ALL KINDSA DING-A-LING

MARIANNE:            YOU KNOW...  
                                  I'LL ALWAYS FIND THE MOST  
                                  TEARDROPS IN MY EYE  
                                  ORCHIDS AT MY DOOR  
                                  VELVET FROM VERSAILLES  
                                  THE WORLD UNLIKE BEFORE.

                                  I'M AT THE NEW YORK MOVIES  
                                  THEY'RE PLAYING ALL THIS YEAR  
                                  AND THESE NEW YORK MOVIES  
                                  MIGHT GET ME OUTTA HERE.

CAST:                    SHE'S AT THE NEW YORK MOVIES  
                                  THEY'RE PLAYING ALL THIS YEAR

MARIANNE:            YES, THESE NEW YORK MOVIES  
                                  MIGHT GET 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 that really you?

LIME: It's terrific to see you again, Bernhard -- You're in great shape. Concert tours agree with you. You could double for Von Karajan in *Life* magazine.

BERNHARD: Hotels, stuffy rehearsal rooms -- Damned unhealthy, to tell the truth.  
(*double-taking Lime*)  
This is a coincidence! I was just telling Mr. Laemmle how the folks out there—

*Laemmle gets up. Crosses the stage.*

LAEMMLE: Can'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. But 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, April 26, 1961. Aged 64. Occupation: Physician. Primary cause of death: Nephritis of liver.

*The Secretary exits.*

LIME: Has it really been ten years? Seems only yesterday the folks at Evergreen were lowering my coffin into God's good earth.  
(*then*)  
Same day NASA launched their first manned spacecraft into the heavens.

BERNHARD: (*To Lime*) So why—?

LIME: I wanted 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: What kind of things?

LIME: *(Whispers)* Federal secrets.

BERNHARD: You see, Mr. Laemmle!  
*(to audience)*  
 I'll start by saying how when I came out to  
 L.A. it was snowing for the first time since  
 records began -- And that maybe Lime brought  
 it with him all the way from Chicago.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

#### **Act 1, Scene 4**

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

*A NEWSGIRL peddles movie magazines and theater listing guides.  
 There's also a selection of glossy 10x8 publicity stills. While  
 hung up behind her are a black trenchcoat and fedora. Somewhere  
 a child practices scales on a decrepit piano. A gaudy placard  
 declares:*

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

NEWSGIRL: Photoplay! Photoplay! Get your copy right  
 here -- It's a real terrific edition. Yes,  
 sirree... You got 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 right here!

*A younger Doctor Lime enters.*

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

(CONT'D)

NEWSGIRL: 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?

*(pause)*

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)*  
 "Following the success of *Dracula*, Carl Laemmle Junior, Head of Universal Pictures, will thrill and 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 been looking for—

*A streetlight comes on.*

**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 slips 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.*

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.

HEAR MY FRIEND  
NOTES THAT FLY FROM THE PAGE  
UP TO THE SILVER SCREEN  
HE TOLD ME OF HIS DREAM  
HOW HE'D CREATE A LIFE...

GLOW STREET LIGHT  
RID THE DARK OF ITS BITE  
AND SHOW ME ONE MORE NIGHT.

*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 them about the Hollywood dream  
-- Well, you tell them about a man who dared play God. And the studio that put it up on the screen just so ordinary folks could see it and tell their friends -- So that you couldn't move for lines around the block to see a whole bunch of things you'd never set eyes on before.  
(pause)  
I'm telling you, your sophisticated crowd out there are buying the same dreams. Sure,  
(CONT'D)

LAEMMLE: last week they were throwing rose petals at some mystic touting karma or whatever the hell those guys are selling; but tonight they've come for our golden age illusions of glamor and terror -- Hell, those photographs up there are testament to that.  
 (pause)  
 Oh, and we made it look effortless into the bargain. You couldn't let them see how damn hard we worked or how much we cared.

*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 and telephone. Behind him, the wall is covered by velvet drapes. Three ACCOUNTANTS enter waving an assortment of paperwork.*

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

LAEMMLE: Instant box-office gold, gentlemen!

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: Carl, 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—  
 (to audience)  
 Jeez, why's everyone so nuts about musicals?  
 (back to Accountants)  
 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  
 (CONT'D)

LAEMMLE: 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 anything else?

ACCOUNTANTS: (In unison) No!

*Laemmle stands. Contorts himself like Max Schreck in Nosferatu.*

LAEMMLE: Not shadows on a dark night or that mysterious stranger who hides from daylight?

ACCOUNTANT 3: Like 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: Musicals, musicals! Sheesh...



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

ACCOUNTANT 1: *Little Women*, for instance?

LAEMMLE: *Little Women*...? Sure, I can 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: (Pointing to torn-up sheet) You ever look at those? I mean, really chew the numbers?

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

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

*Laemmle dances up a storm with the pointer—*

**Music #5: MONSTERS & MARGINS**

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 artwork with the tagline: FRANKENSTEIN ~ THE MAN WHO MADE A MONSTER.*

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: 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: 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 the board  
at the League of Decency. And did I tell you  
there's this thumping in my chest like  
jackhammers on a double-shift -- Not that I  
got time for a coronary.  
(*then*)  
I need a favor, Mr. Kaun—

*The telephone RINGS.*

LAEMMLE: 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 any of these other  
clowns turning a profit; 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 said you're from? Would they line up for this Egyptian 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, Saturday. Anyhow, 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 Gershwin, Cole Porter. 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 is it? 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 that ring-a-ding stood out cause I recognized it from some highbrow glossy -- I had a lot of time to kill at auditions. I even remember what it said: that Dias Dorados had "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. But I can't read music?

BERNHARD: I'll just 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...  
(*thinking he's annoyed about her other job*)  
Well, I promised my mother I'd find a nice boarding-house and... 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 looks on longingly.*

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.

**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.

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. Rushes 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 we'd be here for a  
 screening of *Sarcophagus*.

LAEMMLE: I'll give you that Marianne dame, but you're  
 not telling me those folks 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 alongside several hardbound  
 anthropological volumes. A medical journal is open on the desk.*

*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 --  
 (CONT'D)



LIME: Throw in emotional disorders and conditions caused by physical or chemical agents and...  
 (pause)  
 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... it's a catastrophe. I can't 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)  
 It's an experimental technique. I'm surprised you've heard of it?

*Bernhard reaches for the journal.*

BERNHARD: What about 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 out here.  
 (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 motions for Bernhard to lay on the recliner.*

*Lime takes out a silver pocketwatch on a chain. 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 surely 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. And this  
 new owner 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...*

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: INTRODUCE SOME BRASS, BERNHARD  
 TO UNDERSCORE THE SCENE, BERNHARD  
 (CONT'D)

LAEMMLE:           NOTES REFLECT THE THREAT  
LURKING OFFSCREEN  
SOME VIOLIN  
ACCENTUATES A SCREAM.

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*  
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.

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  
(CONT'D)

LAEMMLE:                   ALWAYS SOMEONE FALLING  
BLIND, CONTRARY TO LIFE  
I WAS SO AFRAID.

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

BERNHARD:            I was afraid, too...

LIME:                    Of what?

BERNHARD:            Lake Constance... the Untersee.

LIME:                    What happened?

BERNHARD:            Our midsummer vacation.

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

BERNHARD:            She was around nine years old. The same age as myself.

*(then)*

My word, it was hot... It was the last time I saw Maria -- I'd hear her mother call her now and again so I knew her name.

*(pause)*

She was arguing with her mother because she 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... Those were her exact words.

*(pause)*

And then I saw her at the edge of the lake. As if she were daring it to steal her away. I remember her white dress reflected on the blue water.

*(pause)*

Suddenly, that reflection was gone!

*(then)*

Later, my mother read aloud from the newspaper that a little girl had drowned on Lake Constance; but I didn't understand how it could have happened? I never saw anything. The water had remained completely calm.

**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 again I picture one of them doing so.  
*(suddenly agitated)*  
 The mist is sweeping in...  
*(pause)*  
 ... the impossible softness of rain on Lake Constance.

*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. The year is 1931.

BERNHARD: What am I doing here? I should be on my way.  
*(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 -- Rather, 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: As I suspected.  
(*then*)  
I brought you something.

*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 bean somewhere! And  
it'll shift more copies here in the U.S.  
(*back to Lime*)  
You must read it as a matter of urgency.

*Görlitz hands Lime the book.*

LIME: (*Reading aloud*) *The Hermaphrodite Complex:  
The Man Who Became a Woman...* by Professor  
Manfred D. Görlitz.

*Görlitz pushes the swivel-mirror to center stage. Lime looks up from the book. Sees his own reflection.*

GÖRLITZ: You should find it enlightening.

**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  
(CONT'D)

GÖRLITZ:                   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  
  
 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.*

MISS CHANNING: (*Over intercom*) I'm sorry to disturb you,  
 Doctor, but you're needed 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), Los Angeles.  
 September 1931.*

*Spanish revival affair brimful with the Hollywood crowd and  
 their decorative wives. A JAZZY QUARTET are midway through a  
 number. Their honorary member, Bernhard, plays piano.*

**UNDERScore:**        Theme from LOVE IN THE BLACK FOREST (a number  
 we'll not hear until Act 2).

*Marianne acts as Bernhard's page turner and doing her best to  
 keep up she starts turning the pages too fast (like she were in  
 a silent film). This forces Bernhard to play faster and he  
 reaches the end of the number several bars before the rest of  
 the band! Marianne smiles at the audience. Obviously pleased  
 with herself.*

**END UNDERScore.**

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

*The bandleader and his regular musicians exit. Bernhard and Marianne cross the stage as lights come up on 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. No doubt you've seen her pictures.

*Esther Carrington extends her gloved hand.*

BERNHARD: My pleasure—

LAEMMLE: And Chester Montgomery.  
*(then)*  
 The Third, I should add.

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.

*Laemmle motions for Bernhard and Marianne to join them.*

CHESTER: What were we talking about? Right, Junior, here, 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 girls 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.

MARIANNE: Oh, I know people like Mr. Laemmle make all sorts of decisions before breakfast, but—

LAEMMLE: Now that's the first sensible thing I heard her say.

MARIANNE: ... but when I was trying to make good on Broadway, it often felt—

CHESTER: 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. Your piano awaits!  
(*to Marianne*)  
This way, Miss Melrose.

*Chester ushers Marianne to center stage. 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**

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

(CONT'D)

MARIANNE: 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.

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.

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

**Act 1, Scene 10**

*Readers's Office, Universal Studios.  
Some days later.*

*Two READERS engulfed by unread scripts and cigarette smoke: the guy throws up his hands in dismay; the woman strikes through an entire page in red biro.*

GUY: You believe this junk? I gotta guy in an underwater city with some kinda half-man, half-reptile thing going on.

WOMAN: You should 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—

GUY: 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, but I wondered if—

WOMAN: You looking for someone, mister?

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

GUY: You're barking up the wrong tree, pal. Nobody here by that name. Try down the hall.

WOMAN: *(To Guy)* 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.

GUY: Oh, that Marianne...

WOMAN: And don't get *me* wrong. I'm not saying she ain't in fashion -- Only last week I asked where she got—

GUY: I think we established who he's looking for.

WOMAN: I'm just trying to be pleasant.

GUY: Which is more than you'll be able to say for Junior if this coverage don't make his desk tonight!

BERNHARD: So you've seen her?

WOMAN: Not for two or three days. She's—

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

GUY: Word is she's seeing a big shot from Metro -- Some guy with numbers after his name.

*Bernhard is crestfallen.*

WOMAN: Look, all I know is she took a few days off. I think 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.*

*A radio show ANNOUNCER sits at a microphone Reads from a script.*

ANNOUNCER: Hollywood on the March!  
(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.  
(pause)  
So grab your ticket now for *The Invisible Man* -- In case they all...  
(with a flourish)  
... 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, will undoubtedly be one of the glittering stars of the sound era. Montgomery also announced his own engagement to the same Miss Melrose.

*Chester and Marianne exit.*

ANNOUNCER: Hollywood on the March!  
*(dramatic pause)*  
 In foreign news, Professor Manfred Görlitz of Hamburg, Germany claimed a major scientific breakthrough with the publication of his book, *The Hermaphrodite Complex*. 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)*  
 Hollywood on the March!  
*(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)*  
 You've been listening to...  
 (CONT'D)

ANNOUNCER: Hollywood on the March!  
*(dramatic pause)*  
 Join us same time next week for our nations's  
 best entertainment digest brought to you  
 exclusively by *Finlayson Milk Powder* and...  
*(dramatic pause)*  
 ... Hollywood on the March!  
*(dramatic pause)*  
 God bless America. Goodnight one and all.

*Lights dim before coming up on...*

**Act 1, Scene 12**

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

*Lime is sat reading Görlitz's book.*

MISS CHANNING: *(Over intercom)* I'm sorry to disturb you,  
 Doctor, but you're needed over at Soundstage  
 Seven—

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 the  
 Newsgirl) enters wearing the trench coat and fedora. She sneaks  
 over to Lime's desk. Finds Gorlitz's book. Opens it.*

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

*X27 removes a silver ticket from her trenchcoat. Goes to place  
 it inside the book. Suddenly, 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! No, 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 that ain't all -- It  
also gives him first class passage on *The  
Bremen*. One of the top transatlantic ocean  
liners.

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

X27: Oh, Mr. Laemmle was agreeable. He said  
nobody deserves a vacation more than Doctor  
Lime -- Did you know he's written out 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 wished 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.  
Ten days later.*

*Lime rides coast to coast in his new travel suit. A WELL-TO-DO PASSENGER sits opposite. 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.

PASSENGER: We 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.

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 SUPREMELY QUALIFIED  
BECAUSE MY DEAREST BERNHARD  
I'M TORMENTED DR. JEKYLL CONCEALING MR. HYDE.

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  
-- I GUESS I'LL SMOKE A CIGARETTE  
STRETCH MY LEGS A BIT  
HEY, THEY GOT A WOODEN MAILBOX  
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 Hermaphrodite...? If this is her idea of  
a joke—  
(noticing something)  
Ah-ha! A slip pocket.*

*Görlitz discovers a map. Unfolds it...*

GÖRLITZ:           *Subterranean Tunnels of Mount Kilimanjaro!  
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 in the place freezes.*

**Music #11:           BLACK MOON**

LIME:               DIAMONDS, RIFLES AND URANIUM  
IT'S THE GERMAN RENAISSANCE  
TRAITORS, SLAVES AND REFUGEES  
FORGERY PAR EXCELLENCE  
-- ABBYSINIA, FRANCE, SUDETENLAND  
THE PROFESSOR'S WORK YOU'VE READ  
(CONT'D)

LIME: 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: AND ONCE IN A WHILE  
A NOSTALGIC TUNE  
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 told you there was a lot you didn't know about Lime. And you can see how things took off for Marianne. Her life changed overnight -- I never got a second date, for starters.

*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 came 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 (the 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.*

**END UNDERSCORE.**

LAEMMLE: 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 much.  
(then)  
So what happened?

BERNHARD: It was a moonlit night. And...

MARIANNE: You really saw her, didn't you?

LAEMMLE: Like I said, a guy could go doolally—

**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.

THE LAST TIME I SAW MARIA  
SHE SPOKE OF SUMMER ON THE UNTERSEE  
THE NIGHT BLEW COLD THEN SHE WAS GONE  
I GUESS THEY CALL IT C'EST LA VIE.

*The DROWNED GIRL enters. Her dress saturated.*

DROWNED GIRL: I MOVED THROUGH YOUR ROOM THAT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU EMBRACED THE DARK  
I MOVED THROUGH YOUR DREAMS THAT NIGHT  
WHEN YOU IGNITED A SPARK  
I MOVED THROUGH YOUR ROOM THAT NIGHT.

*The Drowned Girl exits. The room fills with moonlight and the baying of coyotes.*

LAEMMLE: There's something ominous on the breeze.

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

**CURTAIN.**

**ENTR'ACTE:** Theme from CREATE A LIFE