

A Confederacy of Dunces

by

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adapted from the novel by John Kennedy Toole

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. CONSTANTINOPLE STREET, NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

TITLE SEQUENCE: MUSIC

A mean row of houses between Magazine Street and the river in New Orleans in the mid-1960's. A car parks up at the shabbiest house in the street. A sixty-five year old woman, MRS REILLY, climbs out, merrily. She beckons for the others in the car to join her. Another woman of her own age emerges, SANTA BATTAGLIA, followed by an old grandpa, CLAUDE ROBICHAUX and a middle-aged man, ANGELO MANCUSO.

2 INT. THE REILLY HOUSE - EVENING

The party of friends is gathered in a grubby little kitchen. MRS REILLY, a little tipsy, puts down a heavy canvas bag on the table. She looks through to the back of the house and makes an exaggerated "shush" gesture to the others. She goes to the oven. We see her look in.

Her expression changes. She brings out a bottle of Muscatel and an envelope, which has been propped up in front of the bottle. She tears the envelope open and her mouth rounds in a scream. A large bowling ball rolls out of the canvas bag on the table and crashes to the floor.

3 EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER, NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

The same group is gathered here, out by the commercial waterfront and bridge: MANCUSO is now in a police uniform. A police car is parked by, red light spinning. A searchlight plays on the muddy, turbulent water.

A black man in shades is talking to a police sergeant. We see him point to the bridge: his hands do a large "jumping in" gesture, pantomiming the story. He shakes his head sadly, showing where he witnessed the suicide, and how he could have done nothing about it. He points to the fast currents and out towards the gulf sorrowfully.

Suddenly, they all look round: a police FROGMAN in waterproof rubbers has shouted from the shallows. He wades in to the bank clutching something. It is dropped on the ground and we see it. A large green hunting cap with flapped ears. MRS REILLY falls, sobbing, onto the chest of ROBICHAUX.

4 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A sad little funeral. The people we have already seen are present. A little apart stands a sophisticated girl, MYRNA MINKOFF, dressed in black and carmine lipstick.

5 INT. REILLY HOUSE - DAY

MRS REILLY is in the house in the back bedroom with SANTA BATTAGLIA. The paraphernalia of the life of the suicide is being crated up: lots of books, records, a lute, and endless tablets of yellow Big Chief writing paper.

SANTA has found something under the bed. She pulls it out: it is a large manuscript, bound with green string. It is illuminated like a Holy Text and wondrously calligraphed: we see its title which is also ours:

A CONFEDERACY OF DUNCES

6 EXT. LOYOLA UNIVERSITY - DAY

Establishing shot of the school. MRS REILLY (clutching the manuscript), SANTA and ROBICHAUX stand looking up at the tower nervously.

7 INT. DOCTOR TALC'S OFFICE - DAY

NIGEL TALC, a pompous academic in a green needlecord jacket sits chewing candy and reading the manuscript. He shakes his head pityingly and throws it onto his desk.

FADE TO:

8 INT. TALC'S OFFICE - EVENING

A large, merry looking academic taps at the door. There is no answer. He enters, goes to TALC's desk and rummages. He finds the bottle of ink he has come for and fills his pen. He steals a piece of candy and his eye falls on the manuscript. His curiosity aroused by the elaborate calligraphy, he starts to read.

FADE TO:

9 INT. TALC'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Time has passed. Pages from the manuscript litter the floor. The merry-looking PROFESSOR has come to the last two pages. He has clearly been enjoying himself hugely. TALC enters and sees his colleague and the litter of manuscript.

The PROFESSOR stares up, marveling. TALC looks bewildered, smells an opportunity and smiles.

10 EXT. BOURBON STREET, NEW ORLEANS - DAY

MRS REILLY and her friends are standing looking across the street watching a bookstore opposite, "GREENE'S NIGHT OF JOY CURIO TEASHOP". Its window proudly displays a bright yellow hard covered book. A line of CUSTOMERS files in, kept in order by three rather terrifying looking women, LIZ, FRIEDA and BETTY.

The overspill of CUSTOMERS outside is lavishing custom on two bright, newly-painted hot-dog carts, proclaiming, in smart lettering, "DUNCES DOGS: THE WEENIES REILLY MADE FAMOUS". The vendor, CLYDE, is beaming prosperously.

MRS REILLY and MANCUSO have wandered into Canal Street, where MRS REILLY examines a brand new post supporting a balcony beside them. MRS REILLY strokes the new post and looks up at the restored balcony, eyes watering in remembrance.

11 INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

A YOUNG MAN sits on a stool with boxes of the novel. His job is to stick a flash to the corner of each copy of "A Confederacy of Dunces". The flash reads "Winner of the Pulitzer Prize!" He peels and stickers with bored speed. DORIAN GREENE, the proprietor, elegantly dressed in orchidaceous boutonniere and dazzling neckscarf, pats the YOUNG MAN's head and smiles. Above him there is a row of smart editions of Boethius.

FADE TO:

12 EXT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

A crowd of people enters the hotel in tuxedos. PHOTOGRAPHERS flash their cameras, AUTOGRAPH HUNTERS approach a young black man, BURMA JONES and his escort, DARLENE MOUTON. Is BURMA JONES the man we saw down by the river... ?

END OF TITLE SEQUENCE

13 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL, BANQUETING SUITE - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on a gold statuette of Mark Twain holding a pen. OVER, we hear the rich southern tones of the PRESIDENT of the Mark Twain Society.

PRESIDENT (OVER)

Ladies and gentlemen. William Shakespeare, the greatest poet and dramatist the world has ever known, is dead.

We PULL BACK from the statuette to see that it is the centerpiece of a long top table in a packed banquet hall. Below the top table, the room is filled with round, flower-bedecked tables, the diners looking up at the speaker who is on his feet at the center of the top table, beaming and twinkling. He is the merry PROFESSOR we saw reading the manuscript earlier.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the finest composer who ever drew breath ... is dead. Michelangelo, peerless master of sculpture, architecture and paint, is dead. So many great geniuses ... dead. And you know what, ladies and gentlemen? I'm feeling none too well myself.

There is much laughter at this. The PRESIDENT takes the laughter, but quickly his face saddens and he reigns in the amusement by putting up a hand.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Those whom the Gods love, die young. The Gods loved Ignatius J. Reilly. How could they not? Mr. Capote here ...

The PRESIDENT flaps a hand to his left where the puckish figure of a young TRUMAN CAPOTE beams.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

... has told us all that Ignatius J. Reilly will surely taken his place in the pan-thee-on of American immortals, with Faulkner and Melville and Steinbeck and Hawthorne and our very own Mr. Tennessee Williams, sitting up there on the right hand of Mark Twain himself. All on the strength of a book. A miraculous literary find for which the world can only be thankful.

TALC smiles with complacent pride: MYRNA sitting near him, frowns at his smugness.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

(dabbing his brow with a handkerchief)

Now, it was never given for me to meet Ignatius Reilly save on the page. But many of you here knew him well ...

We start to TRACK along the top table and see the important personnel in IGNATIUS' life whom we will get to know later. MRS REILLY and CLAUDE ROBICHAUX, DR TALC, SANTA BATTAGLIA, MR & MRS LEVY, DARLENE, BURMA JONES, GROVER PARLANGE, MR CLYDE, MANCUSO, MYRNA MINKOFF, MISS TRIxie, DORIAN GREENE, MR AND MRS LEVY, GONZALEZ, LIZ, BETTY and FRIEDA.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

... some of you, indeed, might be said to owe your careers to him. For whatever Ignatius touched he transformed. Like a modern Midas he turned all to gold.

We CLOSE IN on MANCUSO, the GOLD of his police medal gleaming brightly. We hear his thoughts.

MANCUSO (OVER)

I knew you were trouble, Ignatius. First moment I saw you, I knew.

FADE INTO:

14 EXT. CANAL STREET - DAY

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

(voice-over)

"There goes trouble," I said to myself. Big trouble. Biggest I ever did see.

NOISE, TRAFFIC, BUSTLE.

Patrolman MANCUSO is walking slowly along Canal, twirling his night-stick with an attempted benevolence belied by the sad and covetous expression in his eyes. He tips his cap to a passing MOTHER pushing a bassinet.

Suddenly his eyes narrow as he looks ahead towards the D. H. Holmes store. A strange sight meets him. A HUGE MAN, moustached, wearing a thick plaid flannel shirt and green hunting cap, its flaps over the ears, stands like a breakwater with the human tide flowing about him. This is IGNATIUS J. REILLY. We look at this figure from the sidewalk up: from the bulging boots and the voluminous tweed trousers up to the ballooning head, with potato chip crumbs in the corners of the mouth.

IGNATIUS is waiting beneath the clock, holding some sheet music and a packet of lute strings. He glares about him in disapproval at everyone: children, mothers, bums, tourists. Occasionally he utters a "pah!"

MANCUSO closes in. He plucks at the bag of sheet music.

MANCUSO

You got any identification, mister?

IGNATIUS

What? Who are you?

MANCUSO

Let me see your driver's license.

IGNATIUS

I don't drive. Will you kindly go away? I am waiting for my mother.

MANCUSO

What's this hanging out of your bag?

IGNATIUS

What do you think it is, you gibbering half-wit? It's a string for my lute.

MANCUSO

Loot? You got loot in there?

IGNATIUS

(bellowing)

This city is famous for its gamblers, prostitutes, exhibitionists, Antichrists, alcoholics, sodomites, drug addicts, fetishists, onanists, pornographers, frauds, jades, litterbugs and lesbians, all protected from the police by graft, corruption and bribery, while I, an innocent bystander...

MANCUSO grabs IGNATIUS by the arm. A lute string whips round and strikes his ear.

MANCUSO

Hey!

IGNATIUS

Yes! Take that.

(to the crowd)

Someone telephone the Mayor. He's a personal friend.

The Crowd is beginning to take IGNATIUS's side. We see an old man, CLAUDE ROBICHAUX, sidle forward.

WOMAN

Shame on you! Let the boy alone.

ROBICHAUX

You should be 'resting the strippers on Bourbon Street. He's a good boy. He's waiting for his momma.

IGNATIUS

(haughtily)

Thank you. You will all be subpoenaed to bear me witness in the massive civil suit that will inevitably ensue this outrage.

MANCUSO

(self-confidence waning)

Now, you come with me.

ROBICHAUX

I seed it all. This good boy was just waiting for his momma. This cop's a communiss, that was he is, a communiss.

MANCUSO turns on ROBICHAUX.

MANCUSO

You calling me a communiss? I'll take you in, too!

MRS REILLY pushes her way through the crowd, laden with shopping and cake-boxes and wearing a preposterous hat.

IGNATIUS

Mother!!

MRS REILLY

Ignatius! What you done now?

(to MANCUSO)

Hey, take your hands off my boy!

MANCUSO

This here's your son?

MRS REILLY snatches the lute string from IGNATIUS.

IGNATIUS
Of course I'm her child. Can't you see her
affection for me?

CLAUDE
She loves her boy, you filthy communiss.

IGNATIUS pats MRS REILLY on her hennaed and preposterously hatted
head. There is a shout from the crowd and BURMA JONES comes forward.

JONES
Hey! Where's my two bits?

MANCUSO
(losing it)
Who the hell are you?

JONES
This mother stole a quarter off me.

MANCUSO
His mother stole money?

JONES
(indicating IGNATIUS)
No, this mother.

MANCUSO sees JONES's collection cup.

MANCUSO
A vagrant. You're coming in too.

He grabs JONES.

JONES
Oo-wee. My mouth.

IGNATIUS
My personal friend, Miss Myrna Minkoff the
celebrated New York civil rights activist, will
hear of this.

CLAUDE
It's the communiss.

MANCUSO
Shut up!
(to MRS REILLY)
How old is he?

IGNATIUS
Mind your own business.

MANCUSO
(to IGNATIUS)
You got a job?

IGNATIUS
Senseless ambition is the root cause of
America's current dilemma...

MRS REILLY
Ignatius hasta help me at home. I got terrible
arthuritis.

IGNATIUS
I dust a little. In addition, I am writing a
lengthy indictment against our century. When
my brain begins to reel from my literary
labors, I fry the occasional beignet.

JONES
(firmly held by MANCUSO)
This guy for real, lady?

MRS REILLY
Ignatius cooks a fine beignet.

JONES
Yeah? I love a good beignet.

ROBICHAUX
The police are all filthy communiss.

MANCUSO
All right, that's it! You're coming down to
precinct, too.

He moves to grab ROBICHAUX. Both arms are full, so to do this he has
to relax his hold on IGNATIUS, who quickly grabs his mother and pulls
her into the crowd. MANCUSO turns just in time to see them disappear
along Canal Street.

MANCUSO
Hey! Come back here!

But they disappear out of sight, and he is loath to lose JONES and
ROBICHAUX. He looks at them both.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
Okay.

15 INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

MANCUSO is whispering to a SERGEANT who stands behind his high
receiving desk. They look across at BURMA JONES and ROBICHAUX, who
sit on the bench opposite, along with the afternoon haul of
shoplifters and bums.

ROBICHAUX plays miserably with his identity cards. JONES puts down
his mouth-organ and looks at the cards.

JONES
Man, they prolly let you go. You is a member
of the American Legion and the Golden Age Club
and ... what's this one?

ROBICHAUX
The Saint Odo of Cluny Holy Name Society.

JONES
What's that, a cat-house?
(ROBICHAUX does not deign to
reply)

Oo-woo. If I call a po-lice a communiss, my
ass be in Angola state pen right now for sure.
Plenty time they pickin up color peoples for
less 'n that, but Saint Odo o' Cluny Holy Name
Society! Hell, they'll give you a ride home.

SERGEANT
(calling from the desk)
Claude Robichaux.

ROBICHAUX approaches.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Patrolman Mancuso here tells me you say all
policemen are communiss.

ROBICHAUX
I didn't mean anything I said. I just got
nervous. This policeman was trying to arrest a
poor boy waiting for his mother by Holmes.

SERGEANT
(turning on MANCUSO)
What?

MANCUSO
He wasn't a boy. He was a big fat man dressed
funny. Resisted an ID check. Looked like a
big pervert.

SERGEANT
(brightening)
A pervert, huh?

MANCUSO
A great big pervert. The biggest I ever saw in
my whole life.

JONES
An' he owes me two bits.

SERGEANT
Shut your mouth up.

JONES
(brightly)
Okay.

SERGEANT
So tell me, Mancuso. Why is this big pervert
not standing here before me?

MANCUSO

He got away. This woman came out the store and she and him run into the Quarter.

SERGEANT

Oh, two Quarter characters.

ROBICHAUX

No, sir. She really was his mother. A nice pretty lady. I seen them downtown before. The policeman frightened her. She's a good lady. I seen her many times. Real pretty. Hair and lips.

ROBICHAUX seems quite excited about how pretty MRS REILLY is. The SERGEANT wrinkles his nose in disgust.

SERGEANT

Jesus Christ, Mancuso. You're the only guy on the force who'd try to arrest somebody away from his mother and then arrest a nutty old grampaw instead. You...

(to ROBICHAUX)

... git.

ROBICHAUX scrambles gratefully away. MANCUSO looks unhappy.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

(curls a beckoning finger at JONES)

And what we got on our friend Mr Burma Jones here, Captain Mancuso? Wearing sunglasses on a cloudy day? Failing to say grace before a meal? What you got for me?

MANCUSO brandishes the collection cup with the air of a lawyer producing Exhibit A.

MANCUSO

Vagrancy, Sergeant.

The SERGEANT empties the cup. Two nickels, a dime and a pin fall out. The SERGEANT draws in his breath deeply.

SERGEANT

Good work, Mancuso. The streets of the Crescent City are safe at last.

MANCUSO

(drooping)

Well...

SERGEANT

Jones, get yourself gainful employment. The Mayor don't like vagrants. It upsets the tourists. Come back in a week and tell me where you're working, else I'll lock you up and get Sherlock Mancuso here to swallow the key. Understand?

JONES

Sergeant, I do understand. But there aint no decent work in this city for colored folks...

The SERGEANT, who is black too, gives him a long look.

SERGEANT

Git.

JONES scoops up his nickels and gits. MANCUSO swallows guiltily.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Let me see, Mancuso. How many people you arrested in the last month?

MANCUSO tries to calculate.

MANCUSO

Including those two?

SERGEANT

You don't start arresting real suspicious characters, you're out of this force, Mancuso. I want real low-life scum in here.

(raising his voice)

I want THIEVES, I want HOOKERS, I want JUNKIES, I want DEGENERATES, I want DEVIANTS, I want INVERTS, I want FRUITS and PIMPS and PEDERASTS. Lots of them.

(the VAGRANTS on the bench look up)

Not grampaws and mothers and sons.

MANCUSO

I still think he was a pervert.

SERGEANT

Like I care what you think. You're going into the French Quarter, Patrolman. And you're going to make some serious arrests, you got that? You shape up or ship out.

MANCUSO nods weakly. He starts to move away.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Wait...

(MANCUSO stops)

... what kinda suspicious characters you gonna arrest in that uniform? I want you under cover. I got just the thing to help you blend in.

16 EXT. IBERVILLE STREET - EVENING

The French Quarter at night in the RAIN. Glistening streets, jazz spilling from the clubs, which are just starting to warm up.

MANCUSO

(voice-over)

That Sergeant had what they call a sense of humor. I was often sick as a child. Maybe I missed out that day in school they covered humor. Or maybe it wasn't humor at all, just the Sergeant's way of punishing me.

We see MANCUSO, dressed in ballet tights and a fluffy yellow sweater walking along Iberville towards Bourbon Street. MANCUSO is neither amused nor happy in the rain.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

(voice-over)

I never liked the Quarter. Just not my kinda place, I guess.

A very elegant, fey young man is walking towards him. This is DORIAN GREENE, wearing a PREPOSTEROUS HAT. MANCUSO brightens and, as DORIAN approaches, he grabs him.

MANCUSO

Right, I want you.

DORIAN slaps him in the face.

DORIAN

So do thousands, blossom, but I do have my standards. Your panty-hose clashes with the Lana Turner angora.

DORIAN stalks off. MANCUSO, outraged, is about to chase him when he hears a commotion over on Bourbon. Female CRIES of "Out, out, out!" Rubbing his cheek, MANCUSO turns to look at the nightclub across the street, whose NEON proclaims in large red letters "Night of Joy".

A door opens. IGNATIUS and MRS REILLY emerge. The door is slammed behind them and we hear the female VOICE from inside.

LANA LEE (O.C.)

And you stay out! This is a respectable joint.

IGNATIUS

(shouting back)

Impertinent doxy!

MANCUSO

(whispers to himself)

I was right! They are perverts.

The REILLYS are crossing the street towards MANCUSO. He pulls himself back into a doorway in the shadows, behind a HOT-DOG VENDOR, who looks at him suspiciously.

MRS REILLY

What a terrible woman.

IGNATIUS

A negation of all human qualities, certainly. Oh my God, we have to go back! You've left your hat behind.

MRS REILLY

I sold it to that nice young man.

IGNATIUS

Sold it? How could you think of selling it without consulting me?

MRS REILLY

But honey, you were making fun of it only this afternoon.

IGNATIUS

Each man mocks the thing he loves. That hat was a link with my childhood. And now it is in the hands of a grotesque epicene deviant. Goodness knows what degenerate uses he will find for it. You are not to be trusted in the world. It is a miracle to me that I could have sprung from such feeble and cretinous loins.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, don't you go talking filthy again.

IGNATIUS

Silence, you appalling woman! How much did he give you for the hat?

MRS REILLY

Fifteen dollars. Got five left.

IGNATIUS grunts and looks into Iberville Street, where MANCUSO is hiding. MANCUSO flattens himself further into the doorway.

IGNATIUS

Well, we might as well stop and eat I suppose. There's a hot-dog vendor there.

MANCUSO looks at the hot-dog cart, in the shape of a battered tin hot-dog on wheels. He presses hard against the wall to conceal himself, holding his breath.

MRS REILLY

Honey, in this cold and this rain, I gotta stand without a hat and eat weenies?

IGNATIUS

It's not my fault that you're hatless. Your henna is running by the way, you look like a burst watermelon. Revolting. I'm ashamed to share the street with you.

MRS REILLY

Let's get to the car and go home. I wouldn't eat nothing outta one of them dirty wagons anyhow. They all operated by a bunch of bums.

The VENDOR, a sad old man called CLYDE, hears this.

CLYDE

Hey! We's human beings, we gotta living to make, lady, same as anyone else.

IGNATIUS

I see what you mean.

(to CLYDE)

I'll thank you to keep your sentimental maunderings to yourself, my man, and not address my dear lady mother in that familiar tone.

They walk away, CLYDE shakes his head and mutters to himself. MANCUSO inches his way from his hiding place and steps forward. CLYDE gives him a withering glance.

CLYDE

Beat it, freak, or I call the cops.

MANCUSO thinks of ticking him off but decides against it. He gingerly tip-toes out of Iberville and looks right and left down Bourbon. IGNATIUS and MRS REILLY are moving up to Canal where their car is parked. MANCUSO follows at a very discreet distance. He peers round the corner of Bourbon and sees them approaching MRS REILLY's beat up old Plymouth and flits, in shadow, towards them.

There is a terrific BANG!

MRS REILLY is finding it difficult to edge out of the parking place and has struck the car ahead. She mounts the curb twice. IGNATIUS howls. MANCUSO can hear them arguing.

IGNATIUS

My stomach! My valve is beginning to close.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, you're making me nervous.

IGNATIUS

You're not turning the wheel correctly. Here, give it to me.

As IGNATIUS wrenches the wheel, the car suddenly leaps forwards out of the parking spot and skids across the wet street into a post supporting a wrought-iron balcony, MANCUSO can hardly believe his eyes. The post flies free and strikes the sidewalk. The whole balcony shifts and shudders.

IGNATIUS

Oh my God! I think I am beginning to bloat.

MRS REILLY

Now look what you done, boy!

MANCUSO begins to steal quietly up to the scene. IGNATIUS has a hold of the wheel and MRS REILLY is squashed up under him.

IGNATIUS

(with a belch)

I? The people who own this wreck of an edifice have probably been waiting for such an opportunity for years.

MANCUSO has reached the side of the car. The balcony above shifts and shudders.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

I expect they spread grease on the road deliberately in the hope that innocent motorists like you will skid into their hovel and lavish them with compensation. Oh my God, I think my valve is permanently sealed... I... hwaargh!

IGNATIUS leans out of the window and vomits all over MANCUSO just as the balcony behind collapses.

17 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

SOUP is being poured by a WAITER into MANCUSO's bowl. MANCUSO looks at it with distaste as he remembers.

PRESIDENT

It fell on Officer Mancuso to resolve this unfortunate accident. The charming residence of Mr and Mrs Hofstaeder was severely damaged.

We see a couple, MR AND MRS HOFSTAEDER, smile blushinglly.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

You might say that the post that Ignatius skidded into was the kingpost that was to underpin the rest of his life. For without this caprice of providence, it is possible that he would never have been propelled out of his quiet world of scholarship and contemplation. And without the policework of Sergeant Mancuso here, well... who knows what might have happened.

MANCUSO nods sadly.

MANCUSO

(to himself)

Policework! Yeah...

18 EXT. ST. CHARLES AVENUE - AFTERNOON

We see a police motor-cycle driving along the avenue. MANCUSO is wearing Bermuda shorts, a T-shirt and a large red beard, hooked over his ears.

MANCUSO

(voice-over)

... don't talk to me about policework.
Paperwork, lawyerwork, bikework, beardwork,
disguisework ...

19 EXT. CONSTANTINOPLE STREET - AFTERNOON

MANCUSO thunders across Magazine Street and into the Reilly block.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

(voice-over)

... motherwork, sonwork, pukework, extrawork,
weirdwork ...

There in the front yard of the Reilly house is the Plymouth, fenders dented and buckled. We know the house from the opening sequence. A mummified banana tree shudders miserably in the light breeze.

MANCUSO dismounts and picks up his saddlebag. The rear window of the Plymouth has, in place of glass, a piece of cardboard bearing the legend "VAN CAMP'S PORK AND BEANS". MANCUSO stops on the path and sees a wooden Celtic cross, which has the word "Rex" carved on it. He stands at the porch and rings the doorbell. There is a faded sticker on the crystal of the door. "A slip of the lip can sink a ship." Below it a WAVE holds her finger to lips that have turned tan. MANCUSO stoops to read the epitaph on the Celtic cross.

Within the house we can hear a television. The song "Big Girls Don't Cry" starts up.

The front door opens and MRS REILLY gives a small scream at the sight of the red beard.

MRS REILLY

Oh, it's you. How you doin, Mr. Mancuso? Come in the house and have a nice cuppa coffee. You cleaned up alright?

20 INT. REILLY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

MANCUSO shrugs and follows her into the kitchen. The volume of "Big Girls Don't Cry" increases. MANCUSO opens his saddlebag and starts to take out some paperwork.

MRS REILLY

What them people say? You told them I'm a poor widow with a child to support?

MANCUSO

(uncomfortably)

Yeah, I told him that. Uh, do you mind if I put my beard on the table? Sergeant told me to wear it for my undercover work today. But it's kinda hot in here... sticking to my face.

MRS REILLY

Sure, go ahead, babe. Have a nice jelly doughnut. Ignatius loves his doughnuts. Went by the German on Magazine Street and got a coupla dozen, still some left.

She offers an oily cake box that looks as if it has been subjected to unusual abuse during someone's attempt to take all of the doughnuts at once. At the bottom of the box MANCUSO finds two withered pieces of doughnut from which, judging by their moist edges, the jelly has been sucked.

MANCUSO

Thank you anyway, Mrs. Reilly, I had a big lunch.

MRS REILLY

You don't mind if I take me a drink, Officer?

She goes to the oven and takes out a bottle of Muscatel, holding it to her cheeks to check it is pleasantly warm.

MRS REILLY (CONT'D)

Sometimes I sure get the blues. Life's hard. I worked hard. I been good.

MANCUSO

You should get you a hobby, Miss Reilly. Me, when I get down I go bowling. You oughta try it. Meet plenty people over by the alley.

MRS REILLY

Ay-yi-yi. I already got arthuritis in my elbow. I'm too old.

MANCUSO

I got a aunt, sixty-five, a grammaw, and she goes bowling all the time. Next time I come by, I'll let you know. I'll bring my aunt. You and me and my Aunt Santa, we'll go by the alley. Okay?

MRS REILLY isn't sure. She sips the drink. She knows MANCUSO is delaying the news.

MRS REILLY

So, what they say, honey?

MANCUSO

(uncomfortable)

Who's that?

MRS REILLY

You know who. Them people as owns the building. Come on out with it.

MANCUSO
(breathing deeply)
The Hofstaeders. I told Mr. Hofstaeder I investigated the accident and you just skidded on the street.

MRS REILLY
I skidded on the street?

MANCUSO
Well, it's better that way. Your son don't have a license, so ...

MRS REILLY
Go on. So what he said then, babe?

MANCUSO
He said he doesn't want to go to court. He wants a settlement now.

MRS REILLY
Settlement. That means money, huh?

MANCUSO fumbles in his shorts pocket and pulls out a piece of paper.

MANCUSO
He even got a contractor to appraise the damage. Here, this is the estimate.

MRS REILLY looks at it. Once. Twice.

MRS REILLY
(hushed)
That say one thousand dollars?

MANCUSO
He's got a lawyer working on it, too. It's all on the up and up.

MRS REILLY
One thousand dollars. Where'm'I gonna find that?

MANCUSO
He'll let you pay in installments. How much that boy of yours earn a week?

MRS REILLY stares at the piece of paper. The song is building to a climax. MRS REILLY closes her eyes and bawls:

MRS REILLY
Ignatius! Ignatius! Turn off that TV and come here. Right now! Ignatius! Ignatius!

MANCUSO wants to be a million miles away. The song finishes. We hear the lumbering sound of IGNATIUS rising and turning off a television. MANCUSO looks in sympathy at MRS REILLY. Her son enters, wearing a monstrous red flannel nightshirt and clutching A LARGE GREEN BOOK. He fixes himself a coffee, leaving the BOOK on the kitchen table.

IGNATIUS

The children on that program should all be gassed. What would our founding fathers think of an America where children are being publicly debauched in the name of Clearasil?

(noticing MANCUSO)

Oh. Good afternoon, officer.

MANCUSO nods warily, fascinated by the nightshirt.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, them people want a thousand dollars for what you did to their building.

IGNATIUS

A thousand dollars? They won't get a cent. We shall have them prosecuted. Contact our attorneys, Mother.

MRS REILLY

Our attorneys? They gotta nestimate from a contractor. Mr. Mancuso here says there's nothing we can do.

IGNATIUS

I might have known this officious haddock-faced fool was at the bottom of it all. Turning this sad, baffled creature against her own child.

MANCUSO

Now, you just show a bit of respect, young feller.

IGNATIUS

Good God, was ever a man so stormed and besieged?

(to MANCUSO)

Stop molesting us. If you had any sense you'd be raiding dens like that Night of Joy in which my beloved parent and I were mistreated and robbed yesterday. My mother was conned out of a valuable hat by a deviant invert and I was the victim of a vicious, depraved, B-Girl. In addition the proprietress is a Nazi.

MANCUSO is struck by this. He makes a note.

MANCUSO

Yeah? Inverts? B-Girls? Night of Joy, you say?

IGNATIUS

Instead of which you intrude upon the study of a contemplative man of letters. My valve may never open again.

MRS REILLY
 (waving the estimate in
 IGNATIUS's face)
 Listen to me, Ignatius. We gotta pay them
 people.

IGNATIUS
 (raiding a cookie tin)
 Well, pay them then if it'll make you feel
 better.

MRS REILLY
 I don't have no thousand dollars! I didn't
 jerk that wheel, boy, you did. You wanna see
 me in jail on account of what you done? You
 gonna get a job, is what.

IGNATIUS
 Poo. The debt could easily be paid with a few
 economies around the house.

MRS REILLY
 I spend all I got on you for food and whatnots.

IGNATIUS
 I have found several empty wine bottles around
 lately, which I certainly did not consume.

MRS REILLY
 Ignatius!

IGNATIUS
 (to MANCUSO)
 I switched on the oven this morning to put in a
 frozen pizza and was almost blinded by a
 broiled bottle of muscatel that was preparing
 to explode.
 (to MRS REILLY)
 I suggest you retrench on some of the moneys
 that you are pouring into the liquor industry.
 That way the debt will be cleared inside a
 month.

MRS REILLY
 Ignatius, I swear...Now you listen. We gonna
 look at the want ads in the paper tomorrow.

IGNATIUS
 I doubt anyone would employ me. You must
 realize the fear and hatred that my
weltanschauung instills in people.

MRS REILLY
 Well then, don't wear it. I'll iron you a nice
 white shirt instead and you can put on one of
 your poor dear poppa's good ties. Folks gonna
 fall over themselves t'employ a young man with
 all your qualifications.

IGNATIUS

Hm. I suppose a newspaper route might be acceptable.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, a big man like you can't pedal around on no bike delivering newspapers.

IGNATIUS

Certainly not. You would drive me about in the car while I tossed the papers from the rear window.

MRS REILLY

(really forceful and angry)

Oh no. I really mean it this time. You are gonna get a job. You hear me?

IGNATIUS

You know perfectly well I cannot go...out there. I have my work to finish, my ...

MRS REILLY

You got work to finish all right. You gonna earn every one of them thousand dollars.

IGNATIUS

But ...

MRS REILLY

Don't but me no buts. Say it now, in front of Mr Mancuso!

IGNATIUS has retreated behind a chair.

IGNATIUS

This is absurd.

MRS REILLY leaps towards him brandishing the bottle, IGNATIUS is scared. He's never seen his mother like this before.

MRS REILLY

Now, boy!

IGNATIUS

Very well! Very well.

MRS REILLY

You mean it? You'll go find a job?

IGNATIUS

I have given my word. The wheel turns downwards.

MRS REILLY stands on tip-toe and kisses IGNATIUS, proudly.

MRS REILLY

That's my lovely boy.

IGNATIUS

I shall start a memoir. "Darryl, the Diary of A Working Boy". Or perhaps "America At Work: The Way It Is, by Wayne". Hm, there are possibilities here. I shall turn your tyranny to good use, placing especial emphasis on the brutal persecution of interfering police officers.

IGNATIUS billows out, grabbing a whole pack of cookies as he goes. MANCUSO watches him in some disbelief. MRS REILLY registers this.

MRS REILLY

(defensively)

He's a genius.

MANCUSO

Yes, ma'am.

MRS REILLY

All his teachers, since first grade, they tell me there's nothing they can teach him.

MANCUSO

Sure. He got a girlfriend?

MRS REILLY

There was a girl. Myrna Minkoff, up at Loyola. But she flew the coop alla way to New York. He don't have no friends now.

MANCUSO

A boy's best friend is his mother.

MRS REILLY

(voice quivering)

See, it aint easy to have a Gifted Child. I aint gifted, his poppa, the Lord rest his soul, he wasn't gifted. But God give us this gifted boy and I had to bring him up careful. All that reading. Maybe it didn't do him no good.

MANCUSO

Reading?

MRS REILLY picks up the LARGE GREEN BOOK that IGNATIUS left on the table.

MRS REILLY

Books like this alla time.

MANCUSO examines the book.

MANCUSO

(reading)

"The Consolations of Philosophy. Boo-thius."

MRS REILLY
I can't never make no head or tail it, but it
can't be decent.

MANCUSO
Mm. You want me to check it out for you?

MRS REILLY
Would you do that?

MANCUSO
(putting the book into his
saddle-bag)
He won't miss it?

MRS REILLY
Aw, he must know it pat by heart. Gifted
chillun got good memories for words.

MANCUSO
Miss Reilly, what exactly is he gifted at?

MRS REILLY
He just... he's just gifted is all. He's gonna
be famous some day. He's a genius. Smart.
All his teachers...
(sobbing)
Oh Lord, a thousand dollars! Why he can't he
be normal? I just want...

MANCUSO is touched.

MANCUSO
Mrs. Reilly, I'll bring my Aunt Santa over one
evening, we'll go bowling. Cheer you up. Get
that elbow moving nice and free. Take your
mind of things.

MRS REILLY
You're a kind man, Officer Mancuso. You're in
a lot a trouble on account of that boy.

MANCUSO puts his beard back on gloomily as he looks at MRS REILLY
tearfully rubbing her elbow.

MANCUSO
(voice-over)
Yeah, a lot of trouble. But it's like Boethius
says, "One moment you're down the next moment
you're up. That's fortune."

21 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

We pull back from a smiling, head-shaking MANCUSO who looks across at
MRS REILLY and winks at her.

PRESIDENT

One thousand dollars, ladies and gentlemen.
 One hundred thousand pennies. Not an easy sum
 to come by. We have here in this fine
 banqueting suite a number of New Orleans finest
 industrialists, financiers and entrepreneurs,
 some of whom ...

We take in a number of prosperous-looking GENTLEMEN, including
 GONZALEZ.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

... Ignatius approached as he set about
 preparing himself for the world of work ...

22 INT. IGNATIUS'S BEDROOM - MORNING

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

...with the same zeal with which he undertook
 all life's tasks.

MUSIC: BASIN STREET BLUES

IGNATIUS is standing in front of a mirror in ballooning yellow
 shorts, socks held up by suspenders, trying to fasten the final few
 buttons of a tight, crisp white shirt. MRS REILLY fusses about him
 picking lint and smoothing hair. IGNATIUS attempts to climb into a
 vast pair of trousers, held open by MRS REILLY in the manner of
 firemen holding open a blanket for roof jumpers. We take the
 opportunity to examine the bedroom.

What a strange room it is. We look along the bookshelf. An eclectic
 and bizarre collection. Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy", Gerard's
 Herbal, Mother Julian's "Confessions", the American Bandstand TV
 annual, the Tractatus of Wittgenstein, the Collected G. K.
 Chesterton, Pope's "Dunciad", "1960 Baseball Heroes", Kowinski's
 "Duodenal Primer" and "Dysfunctions of the Pyloric Valve", "The Earl
 of Louisiana" by A. J. Liebling, a companion to Boethius, a book of
 cake recipes, Tilyard's "The Elizabethan World Picture", "Religion
 and the Decline of Magic", "The Golden Bough", "Man, Myth and
 Medievalism" and so on.

IGNATIUS hops past on one leg attempting to enter the trousers as, on
 the wall, we see a signed photograph of MYRNA MINKOFF standing with
 the New York skyline behind her, inscribed "To Ignatius - One day, I
 know, you will join us. Love, freedom and oneness, Myrna."

We continue past shelving containing a lute and a trumpet. We see a
 photograph of a border collie, REX, and a much younger IGNATIUS, both
 of them squinting against the sun, a cloudless sky of ectochrome blue
 behind. Along the wall we move, past a graduation photograph:
 IGNATIUS, now a little older, his back to camera, mortar-board askew,
 fending off the photographer with a fleshy hand that bears a crumpled
 scroll.

Along to a low table that contains a phonograph Next to it a pile of
 records: mostly Scarlatti. We TILT down the pile of records and
 follow a trail of yellow writing tablets littering the floor: Big
 Chief tablets, all of them covered in furious scrawl. We glimpse a

few titles. "The Curse of the Modern: How America Will Eat Itself", "Some Reflections on the Inanity of Cinema", "How They Babble On in Babylon", "Seven Reasons Why The Public Flogging of Andy Griffith Would Be A Kindness", "A Pulitzer Prize Acceptance Speech by Ignatius J. Reilly", "Ed Sullivan and the Rape of the American Mind", "What Has Posterity Ever Done For You? Notes and Jottings": things of this nature. Interspersed with these literary scrawls are endless crushed cans of Dr. Pepper, empty candy bar wrappers and Oreo packs. A disconcerting number of screwed up tissues litter the floor near the enormous bed...above the bed we see a large poster of Burne-Jones's painting of Fortuna and her wheel.

IGNATIUS, red-faced from exertion, slaps his mother away as she fiddles with a grotesquely short necktie. He shrugs himself into a coat, which when buttoned just manages to disguise the shortness of the tie. He examines the effect in the mirror.

23 EXT. ST. CHARLES AVENUE - MORNING

MRS REILLY and IGNATIUS stand by a trolley stop. IGNATIUS, his tight outfit just about holding together, glares up and down, daring those standing on line to look at him.

As a tramcar rattles towards them, MRS REILLY whips out a comb, lifts the hunting-cap and gives a last loving groom to IGNATIUS's brilliantined locks. She bestows a final kiss and waves IGNATIUS away, while PASSENGERS and BYSTANDERS stare after him open-mouthed.

MUSIC ENDS

24 INT. DIXIE BREWERY - DAY

A small glass office. The DIRECTOR of the brewery, a little bald man in a bow tie is reading a filled-out form. Battalions of brown bottles march by on a long belt behind the glass.

IGNATIUS sits across from him, perspiring freely, his jacket open, the tie revealed in all its brevity and one or two shirt buttons beginning to show the strain.

DIRECTOR

These are very impressive qualifications, Mr. Reilly...you say here under "outside interests" that you pursue harmony. Is that a barber-shop thing, because I happen to belong to...

IGNATIUS

(steamrollering)

As a medievalist I subscribe to the notion of the rota Fortuna, or wheel of fortune, a central concept in the philosophical works of Manlius Boethius the late Roman martyr and poet who laid the foundation for medieval thought. The medieval age, unlike these corrupted times, was one of geometry, balance, harmony and order.

25 INT. TELEPHONE COMPANY OFFICE - DAY

The OFFICE MANAGER, a frail woman in a stiff D. A. haircut plays with a paper clip at her desk. Behind her, through a window, is an immense room full of telephone operators crossing wires at their great flashing consoles. She stares at IGNATIUS's stomach: a few hairs are poking through two open buttons at navel height.

IGNATIUS

But you see in our age Fortuna's wheel has turned on humanity, crushing its collarbone, smashing its skull, twisting its torso, puncturing its pelvis, sorrowing its spirit. What once was dedicated to the soul is now dedicated to the sale. This century is doomed. Cellophane has replaced spirituality; ignorance and supermarkets stand in for learning and love.

26 INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

The LIBRARIAN, a middle-aged woman with blue winged eye-glasses listens to IGNATIUS with fright in her eyes.

IGNATIUS

As I've told you, my world view is basically tragic. Optimism nauseates me. It is perverse. Since man's fall, his proper position in the universe has been one of misery. American culture is putrescent offal wrenched from the fermenting guts of a dying carcass.

The LIBRARIAN looks as if she may either scream or vomit.

27 INT. CHICKEN PROCESSING PLANT - DAY

The SUPERVISOR sits on one edge of a small table. Behind him are rows of women plucking chickens. IGNATIUS is perched on a folding chair, tie loosened and hair sticking up strangely.

IGNATIUS

When Mahatma Ghandi was asked what he thought of Western civilization, do you know what he said?

The SUPERVISOR stares dumbly.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

He said, "I would welcome it." Hah! Employers sense in me a denial of their values. They can see that I am forced to function in a century which I loathe.

28 INT. OFFICE, LEVY PANTS - DAY

GONZALEZ, the office manager, looks up in awe. IGNATIUS is standing on the other side of the desk, sweating wildly, only two buttons fastened on his shirt.

GONZALEZ

I'm sorry, what did you say?

IGNATIUS

I have come in response to your advertisement.

GONZALEZ

(enthusiastically)

Oh, wonderful, wonderful!

A very old woman, MISS TRIXIE, hobbles into the room and bumps into a row of filing cabinets.

GONZALEZ (CONT'D)

Come sit down, please. Miss Trixie will take your coat and hat and put them in the employee's locker. We want you to feel at home at Levy Pants.

IGNATIUS

But I haven't even spoken with you yet.

GONZALEZ

That's all right. I'm sure that we'll see eye to eye. Miss Trixie. Miss Trixie!

MISS TRIXIE

Who?

MISS TRIXIE sits at her desk.

GONZALEZ

Here, I'll take your things.

GONZALEZ reaches for the green cap. IGNATIUS slaps him on the hand.

GONZALEZ (CONT'D)

(disconcerted)

Ah... yes. Miss Trixie has been with us for over fifty years. That will give you some idea of the satisfaction that our workers get from their association with Levy Pants.

MISS TRIXIE

The company says its going to give me a nice boiled ham for Easter. I hope so. Never did get my Thanksgiving turkey.

GONZALEZ

Mrs. Levy, our employer's wife, takes a great interest in Miss Trixie. Mrs. Levy is a brilliant educated woman. She has studied Psychology.

MISS TRIXIE

She won't let me retire. Been waiting years to retire, but she keeps me on. Sure could have used that turkey.

MISS TRIXIE falls asleep.

GONZALEZ

Can you begin work tomorrow? Sixty dollars a week.

IGNATIUS

Grossly inadequate.

GONZALEZ

Miss Trixie only gets forty.

IGNATIUS

I hate to disappoint you, sir, but an oil magnate is currently dangling thousands before me trying to tempt me to be his personal secretary.

GONZALEZ

(pleadingly)

We'll include twenty cents a day for streetcar fare.

MISS TRIXIE begins to snore. IGNATIUS looks out of the window at the Mississippi and back to the slumbering MISS TRIXIE.

IGNATIUS

Hm... it may be that this establishment will fit into my worldview.

PRESIDENT (OFF)

But it is not only the businessmen of America who owe a debt to Ignatius Reilly...

FADE TO:

29 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

A rather bewildered, but cheerful-looking GONZALEZ smiles sheepishly in his tuxedo.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Some owe him more than that, some owe him their entire careers. Ignatius, like all men of talent was quick to observe it in others

We close in, past DARLENE and GROVER PARLANGE, onto the mirrored shades of BURMA JONES, looking a million dollars and smiling at his memories.

BURMA JONES

(to himself)

Oo-wee. That Ignatius sure spotted my talent right away. Yes, sir.

FADE TO:

30 EXT. CANAL STREET - DAY

BURMA JONES, in silvered shades, is playing his harmonica outside Werlein's music store when MRS REILLY's shabby Plymouth car pulls up.

JONES (OVER)

There was a cat who 'preciated talent. No question. Right outside Werlein's music store, that mother and his mother, just like a coupla pilgrims, they step out from a Plymouth and into the new world.

MRS REILLY

I wish you wouldn't wear that ugly cap alla time. It makes folks stare.

IGNATIUS

(heaving himself out)

You are in no position to make esthetic comments regarding head-wear. If you were to venture into a wooded area wearing whatever it is you have on your head, the volume of gunfire from excited rifle owners would probably reverse the Earth's orbit.

BURMA approaches them holding out his cup.

JONES

A quarter mister?

IGNATIUS

What?

JONES

Quarter?

IGNATIUS

The quarter is that way, down Bourbon Street.

JONES

No, man! A quarter. Two bits. A dime, maybe? A nickel?

IGNATIUS

(pondering)

Oh, I see. A quarter, I think. Thank you. Most kind.

He takes a quarter out of JONES's cup and moves forward.

JONES

Hey!

MRS REILLY

Ignatius!

IGNATIUS
(to his mother)
Now. You trot off on your errands, I will buy
my lute string and meet you under the clock at
five.

JONES
Gimme back my quarter!

IGNATIUS disappears into Werlein's Music Store. JONES stands there
and scratches his head.

JONES
Oo-wee.
(voice-over)
Yep. Old Naishus swep me up like a wind sweeps
up a leaf.

31 EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

JONES entering the doors of the police precinct.

JONES (CONT'D)
(voice-over)
Swept me up and carried me along.

32 INT. PRECINCT - DAY

The SERGEANT is giving MANCUSO, dressed in a thick tweed suit, the
green Boethius book under his arm, a piece of his mind. JONES lurks
back, remaining unseen, watching with amusement.

SERGEANT
Mancuso! Whaddaya mean by tipping us off about
that Night of Joy place?

MANCUSO
I had information, Sergeant.

SERGEANT
Yeah? From who?

MANCUSO
From the big...from... from an informer.

SERGEANT
Informer? What informer?

MANCUSO
He told me how it was full of B-Girls. And
inverts. And Nazis.

SERGEANT
Yeah, well we didn't find none.
Two weeks you've been undercover and you
haven't brought in one single suspicious
character worth my time. You know what we do
(MORE)

SERGEANT (cont'd)
to incompetent patrolmen who feed us lousy tip-offs?

MANCUSO gulps.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Bus station rest room.

MANCUSO
Hey now, Sarge...

SERGEANT
Bus station rest room! Bring me in some tea-room trade. Act provocative. Cute. The big Come On. I want this precinct heaving with toilet cowboys. You'll find something sexy to wear in your locker.

MANCUSO slopes off. JONES comes forward.

JONES
Howdy, Sarge.

SERGEANT
Whaddayouwant Jones?

JONES
(handing over an official form)
You told me to come and tell you when I got me a gainful employ.

33 INT. LEVY PANTS FACTORY - AFTERNOON

We hear dixieland jazz. To its rhythm huge clanking machinery grinds and judders and rolls.

The place is terrible, the plant pre-war and shockingly maintained. There are perhaps a hundred and fifty working there: sewing, cutting, stitching, pressing, crating, toting. The workforce consists entirely of black men and women. One wall is taken up with a mural:

LEVY PANTS FOR AMERICA: AMERICA PANTS FOR LEVY

Underneath is a fresco of Uncle Sam, trouserless, panting for something to clothe his legs. His hand reaches towards an idealized factory out of which a pair of striped pants emerges, like newsprint from a press.

Deep in this inferno, operating a treadle machine which does something dangerous and ghastly, we see BURMA JONES. A cigarette dangles from his mouth.

JONES
(in voice-over)
Yep, I had me a gainful employ okay.

Suddenly he catches sight of something high up. He can't believe it. He lowers his shades and squints.

JONES

Well, fry my ass in canola oil ...

IGNATIUS is making his way down the rickety iron stairs from the supervisor's level to the shop floor. A few people start to notice him and laugh. JONES stops what he is doing and stares.

With the dignity and solemnity of a bishop IGNATIUS makes his way to the floor, finds the radio producing the music and turns it off. Now everyone can see him. Machinery is switched off. Shouts of "hey... what happened to the music?" and "who the hell...?"

IGNATIUS

(raising his arms)

Fellow workers. Do not be alarmed. I am Ignatius Reilly, newly appointed office executive. I have come amongst you to hear your grievances.

WOMAN

Say what?

JONES

This guy is something else. You gotta listen. Hoo-wee.

IGNATIUS

I have been busy in the short time I have been here. I find in the files that the average wage amongst you is less than \$30 a week. This moves me to rage.

MAN

Where d'you get that hat, man?

IGNATIUS climbs on a box.

IGNATIUS

This sweatshop should be vacuum sealed and sent to the Smithsonian.

MAN #2

Whoa Fats, tell it like it is.

IGNATIUS

This is mechanized slavery. In a hundred years you have graduated from picking cotton to tailoring it.

WORKERS

Thass right, thass right... we graduated.... we're graduates. Mechanized graduates. etc.

IGNATIUS

I have much in common with the Moorish peoples.

MAN

Moorish? What's Moorish peoples?

JONES

Shit man, he means nigger boys like us.

IGNATIUS

I too live outside the mainstream of America. By choice admittedly. But I want you to know that you have a friend. Ignatius Reilly is with you: he has a stratagem.

WOMAN #2

Well, honey, don't breathe over me. I don't wanna catch it.

IGNATIUS

I have met your employer. He is weak, he is pliable. With a little solidarity from you he can be forced to disgorge a living wage.

JONES

And when you gonna disgorge my two bits?

IGNATIUS

I will visit you and move amongst you. Soon the time will be right. We must organize. United we stand, divided...

IGNATIUS crashes through the box. Helping hands lift him up.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

(rising, red-faced)

At a signal from me we shall march. Perhaps an anthem would be pleasing. I shall bend my mind to it.

WOMAN #1

Seems like your mind's already bent, honey.

JONES whips out his harmonica and starts to play the Red Flag. An amplified VOICE shouts off.

GONZALEZ (O.C.)

Reilly? Is that you? What's happening? Why has the plant stopped?

GONZALEZ is speaking from the supervisor's gallery through a PA system. JONES stops playing. IGNATIUS turns to his army.

IGNATIUS

That's enough for now! Back to work!

(calling up)

Inspiring the troops, Mr. Gonzalez. Urging them on to higher productivity and greater diligence.

IGNATIUS leaves: from the staircase he turns again.

IGNATIUS

The hour will soon be upon us... brothers and sisters, the watchword is... *Potemkin!*

JONES plays a skeptical glissando on his harp. The machinery starts up again. As JONES returns to his place, a WORKER approaches him.

WORKER

You know that dude, Burma?

JONES

That's Ignatius.

WORKER

What he say about pumpkins?

JONES

Beats the shit outa me. But I think we gonna have us some fun, here. You know what that mother did to me? I was...

There is a sudden scream. A FEMALE WORKER has caught her hand in an unguarded press. Someone stops the machinery, the workers cluster round: JONES looks and sighs.

JONES

(voice-over)

Working for Levy Pants wasn't no picnic. You know how early you had to rise every morning?

34 EXT. BUS STATION - EARLY MORNING

We PULL DOWN from a large clock telling us it is six in the morning.

JONES

(voice-over)

And the world aint at its most cheerful that time a day.

JONES, lunch-box under his arm, is standing in line as BUS pulls in with a hiss of air brakes. The doors open and JONES shuffles forward.

The DRIVER calls out

DRIVER

Only room for one more.

JONES, next in line, steps forward.

DRIVER

(aggressive)

Not you!

The DRIVER beckons to a WHITE MAN standing behind JONES who steps past him onto the bus. The doors close.

JONES

(voice-over)

Maybe Ignatius was right. A crusade for Moorish peoples was just what the world needed.

Shaking his head, JONES turns towards the rest-room.

35 INT. BUS STATION, REST ROOM - SAME TIME

JONES enters the rest-room and sees the backs of TWO MEN facing the urinals. One is elegantly dressed, the other is in studded leathers, a leather cap on his head, a LARGE GREEN BOOK tucked under his arm.

The elegantly dressed man is DORIAN GREENE, he turns to his leather-clad neighbor, who we see is MANCUSO, complete with thick mustache.

DORIAN

Waving it about is going to make much difference, tulip. Relax. Let go. Try thinking of the Mississippi flowing...flowing to the sea.

DORIAN zips up and moves to wash his hands. He sees JONES who has taken a further stall and is peeing lustily.

DORIAN

(indicating MANCUSO)

Agent provocateur, honey. The police department must think we are simply desperate.

(to MANCUSO)

Good luck, Officer. Don't do anything I wouldn't. But if you do, take photos.

DORIAN leaves with a wink to JONES. MANCUSO wearily zips up and sneezes. JONES finishes up.

JONES

You getting yourself a nasty head cold there, Patrolman.

MANCUSO

(adenoidally)

You just bind your ode bidniss, Joads.

MANCUSO looks at the large GREEN BOOK and moodily kicks open a stall door. JONES dries his hands and leaves.

36 EXT. BUS STATION - SAME TIME

JONES emerges from the rest-room. A young teenager, GEORGE, slicked hair and Cuban heels, hails him secretively. He is clutching a parcel.

GEORGE

Psst!

JONES

I just did, man.

GEORGE

You wanna earn ten bucks?
(points to the john)

(MORE)

GEORGE (cont'd)

Step in there...

JONES

Son, that aint my bag.

GEORGE

Hey! Fuck you, boy.

GEORGE pushes past him and enters the rest-room.

JONES

I better warn you, kid, there's a... what the hell, this gonna be fun.

JONES enters too and watches discreetly from the doorway.

37 INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

GEORGE enters the rest-room. MANCUSO is nowhere to be seen. GEORGE looks around. He sees that one of the tiles above the wash-basins is in fact a service port. He manages to lever it open and is about to dump his packages in it when one of the stalls opens and MANCUSO steps out in all his leather finery.

MANCUSO

(pleasantly through his cold)
What's that you're do-igg there, pal?

GEORGE

Get away from me before I kick your nuts in.

MANCUSO

(taunting)
So, cawd the police.

GEORGE

No. Just get away. I aint making trouble.

MANCUSO

You afred udda police?

GEORGE

Look, pervert, move it. I don't want no trouble with the cops.

MANCUSO

You dote?

GEORGE

No, and neither does a freak like you.

MANCUSO

You udder arrest.

GEORGE

What? Boy, are you out of it.

MANCUSO
 (flashing his badge)
 Patrodeman Madcuso. Uddercover. Cubb alogg
 wid me.

MANCUSO reaches out to grab GEORGE by the arm and cuff him, but GEORGE snatches the Boethius from under MANCUSO's arm and slams it into the side of his head. When MANCUSO straightens up, dazed, he sees GEORGE scrambling out of the door of the rest room with the Boethius and package in his hand.

MANCUSO gives chase. JONES watches him sprint out of the rest-room and follows. GEORGE has disappeared and MANCUSO stands there looking around. COMMUTERS waiting for buses stare at him. JONES walks towards a bus, smiling to himself.

JONES
 I swear this town gettin crazier every day.

38 EXT. LEVY PANTS - MORNING

JONES dismounts from his bus outside the Levy Pants warehouse-factory. We see, in faded late thirties lettering the Levy Pants slogan on the outside wall. On the roof a huge plastic statue of a pair of walking legs. WORKERS are arriving, some by bike, some on foot.

IGNATIUS is standing by the gates, fully clad in usual hat and plaid. He is holding two wooden rods which are wrapped in white cloth, a rolled up banner. He looks secretive and whispers in the ear of each worker as they pass.

JONES approaches.

IGNATIUS
 (dramatic whisper)
 Potemkin! Nine o'clock.

JONES extends his palm. IGNATIUS looks unsure, and slaps it.

JONES
 No man... where's that quarter you owe me?

IGNATIUS
 Never mind about that, we move today! Action!
 Here, you take this and hide it in the shop.

JONES finds himself taking the banner.

JONES
 Shee-yut.

A large woman, LETTY, waddles up.

IGNATIUS
 Potemkin. Nine o'clock.

LETTY

'Kay, hun.

IGNATIUS

You have prepared the anthem, as I instructed?

LETTY

(proudly)

We been practicing.

IGNATIUS

Excellent!

39 INT. LEVY PANTS, WORKSHOP - DAY

We TILT DOWN from a large CLOCK. It is one minute to nine. JONES works his treadle. He looks up at the clock. WORKERS glance uneasily from one to the other, unsure. One of the WOMEN turns off the radio.

The machines hum and clank. Suddenly the silence is shattered by a VOICE over the PA.

IGNATIUS (O.C.)

Potemkin! Potemkin! Potemkin!

One by one the machines are turned off. The WORKERS begin to cluster uncertainly, some excitedly shouting "Pumpkin!" JONES collects the banner from its cache. IGNATIUS appears at the top of the stairs, holding a cine camera to his eye.

IGNATIUS

Friends! I shall be recording this for posterity. More especially for Myrna Minkoff who will be emerald with envy at what we achieve this day.

JONES and a WORKER mouth "Myrna who?" at each other. IGNATIUS struggles to stand on a table. Someone kneels down and IGNATIUS uses him as a step.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

I hope you have all remembered to bring your engines of war.

The WORKERS neither confirm nor deny.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

Your weapons.

Shyly, and with much giggling, the WORKERS produce a variety of fence posts, bicycle chains, broomsticks and so on.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

For the camera, brandish your lances and shake your fists. Jones, unfurl the banner.

JONES gives one rod to a friend and they unroll it. It is a large stained bed-sheet. In mighty block red crayon it reads "FORWARD!" Below that in intricate blue lettering we see the slogan:

CRUSADE FOR MOORISH DIGNITY! GRANT A LIVING WAGE

IGNATIUS films dramatically from many angles.

JONES

Hell, I gotta carry this old sheet?

Some of the WORKERS examine the yellowing stains.

WOMAN

Who been sleeping on that?

IGNATIUS

(excitedly)

This is even more impressive than I imagined. Myrna will choke over her espresso when she sees this.

WOMAN #2

(to JONES)

Don't wave that thing near me, boy.

IGNATIUS

Now. Shortly we will storm the office, while the staff are still subject to the psychic mists of early morning. If Gonzalez refuses to listen to our demands, I shall signal defiance with word "Attack".

WORKER

(holding up a tentative hand)

Hey, Mr. R., pardon me. Somebody tell me you in trouble with a po-lice. Is that right?

IGNATIUS

What? Where did you hear such slander? Some white supremacist or up-state red-neck, I don't doubt. All of you must realize our cause has many enemies.

The WORKERS applaud soundly: "he right!", "that is the case!" and so on. JONES shakes his head. He knows the real story.

IGNATIUS

Now, forward!

The WORKERS march with great solemnity up towards the office floor. LETTY and her choir begin to sing.

CHOIR

SIXTEEN TONS AND WHATTA YOU GET
ANOTHER DAY OLDER AND DEEPER IN DEBT

JONES and his friend lead the way with the banner.

The song is wonderfully stirring and emotional. JONES accompanies on his harp, with his spare hand. He is very good. He and his partner on the banner lead the main group as they storm (well, enter) the office. They crowd the room, singing most affectingly.

GONZALEZ and MISS TRIxie are horrified. IGNATIUS pushes through. MISS TRIxie clasps at him.

MISS TRIxie
What's happening, Gloria? What are all the
factory people doing in here?

GONZALEZ
(in terrified earnest)
Run while you're able, Miss Trixie.

CHOIR
SAINT PETER DON'T YA CALL ME
CAUSE I CAINT GO...

MISS TRIxie
I can't hear you. Is this a minstrel show?

IGNATIUS
(savagely to her)
Go dangle your withered parts over the toilet.

GONZALEZ
Mr. Reilly!

MISS TRIxie shuffles away. With a hurried flap of his paws, IGNATIUS pulls JONES and his partner apart so that the banner can be read. GONZALEZ is mystified. The CHOIR continues to sing.

IGNATIUS
(to GONZALEZ)
Well? Will you meet our demands?

GONZALEZ
(inspecting the banner)
What does this mean?

IGNATIUS
Attack!

WOMAN
You aint givin Mr. Zalez a chance to nay
nuthin.

IGNATIUS
Attack! Attack!

A bicycle chain halfheartedly whizzes over the top of the filing cabinets and knocks some bean-plants over in a corner of the office which is clearly IGNATIUS territory, containing a photo of Rex and some books. IGNATIUS leaps to protect the photograph from the falling bean-plant, in doing so his movie camera falls to the floor, spilling out film.

IGNATIUS
 (stuffing the film back in)
 Now look what you've done! Who told you to
 knock over my bean plants?

MAN
 (sheepishly)
 You say 'Attagg.'

Another MAN is apathetically slashing a sign on the door that reads
 in blue Gothic lettering, "DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND REFERENCE: I.
 J. REILLY CUSTODIAN".

IGNATIUS
 Stop that at once. What do you think you're
 doing?

WORKERS
 (several of them)
 Hey! You say 'Attagg.'

CHOIR
 CAUSE I OWE MY SOUL TO THE COMPANY STO...

IGNATIUS
 And stop that awful song!

The CHOIR stops and looks hurt.

GONZALEZ
 I don't understand what you're doing, Mr.
 Reilly.

IGNATIUS
 Oh shut your little pussymouth, you mongoloid.

LETTY
 We're goin back to the factory. You a bad man.
 I believe a po-lice looking for you.

Several voices agree.

IGNATIUS
 (indicating GONZALEZ)
 Now wait a minute. Someone must attack this
 enemy of the Moorish peoples.

WOMAN
 Will you shut up that Moorish shit?

IGNATIUS
 (pointing into the crowd)
 You... the man with the brick, come over here
 at once and knock him about the head.

MAN WITH BRICK
 I aint hitting nobody with this. You probly
 got a po-lice record a mile long.

IGNATIUS

Well, we can at least make a start by beating up on Miss Trixie.

WOMAN

I think maybe we should make a start by beating up on you, son.

MAN WITH BRICK

Yeah!

They all start to move threateningly towards IGNATIUS, who cowers beside GONZALEZ and MISS TRIXIE. There is a moment of real tension, broken by a stern voice from behind.

LEVY

What the hell is going on here? Let me through.

IGNATIUS

Thank heavens.

MR and MRS LEVY push their way through. The bricks are dropped and there is much sheepish shuffling.

GONZALEZ

(gulping)

Ah, Mr. Levy. Mrs. Levy.
I'm afraid we're having a little trouble here.

MRS LEVY

Where's Miss Trixie? They haven't hurt Miss Trixie!

She plucks her away. LEVY turns and stares at JONES who realizes he has been left holding the banner alone. His friend has slunk to the back of the group.

JONES

Oops.

LEVY

(pointing at the banner)

What's this?

JONES

This old thing? It aint nothing.

LEVY

(turning away)

You're fired. Gonzalez, just what in...

JONES

Hey! What d'I do?

GONZALEZ

I really can't explain, sir.

MISS TRIXIE

Where's my turkey?

LEVY turns and faces the mob.

MR LEVY

Those of you who wish to keep a job here had better be back at work in three minutes.

They turn and start to shuffle out.

IGNATIUS

(sternly: to the mob)

You heard Mr. Levy. Back to work at once. This kind of slackness and insubordination is not to be tolerated.

WORKERS

Why you...

IGNATIUS

Silence!

MR LEVY

Thank you, Mr. Reilly.

JONES stands there, with his banner, staring in disbelief at IGNATIUS's volte face.

MRS LEVY

(an arm round MISS TRIXIE)

You've been traumatized, Miss Trixie. Badly traumatized.

MISS TRIXIE

That mean I can retire?

MRS LEVY

You're coming home with Mr. Levy and me...

LEVY

Hey!

GONZALEZ

(to MR LEVY)

Sir, I think you should know that ...

MISS TRIXIE

Gloria went crazy. She said rude things.

MRS LEVY

Gloria honey? Gloria resigned weeks ago. Now you come along with me, I'm going to look after you.

LEVY

Babe, we are not taking that... this woman home.

MRS LEVY

Don't thwart me, Gus. She needs understanding. She's gonna come and stay with us for a few weeks.

(to MISS TRIxie)

I'll give you a make-over honey. And some nice teeth. You're my project.

MISS TRIxie

You still owe me a turkey.

LEVY

But, precious, I...

(sees JONES: someone he can control)

... hey, I thought I fired you.

JONES

What d'I do? Don't I get no sev'rance?

LEVY

Get out before I call the cops.

IGNATIUS

Yes, you heard Mr. Levy. Hurry along there, Jones.

BURMA throws up his hands: the banner drops.

JONES

Oo-wee.

MR LEVY

Gonzalez, I thought I could trust you to run things here.

GONZALEZ

But Mr. Reilly just went crazy, sir. He tried to get the workers to hit me and Miss Trixie with a brick.

LEVY

What?

MRS LEVY

Is this true?

MRS LEVY turns on IGNATIUS with a snarl.

MISS TRIxie

Just went crazy.

IGNATIUS raises a hand.

IGNATIUS

Silence! I have decided that his establishment is entirely without geometry.

LEVY

What?

IGNATIUS

Your employees shuffle like dazed sheep, drained of either the loyalty to work or the rage to revolt.

LEVY

You're fired.

IGNATIUS

(gathering his things together)
Be quiet, I am speaking. I had thought perhaps that I could initiate changes here, Levy, that would promote your puny, archaic manufactory to the forefront of enlightened industry, dignifying your labor force, beautifying your balance sheet.

MRS LEVY

You dared raise a hand to Miss Trixie?

IGNATIUS

I have decided, however, that commerce is not where my destiny lies. You will have to manage without me from now on, I regret to say.

LEVY

Now hold on ...

IGNATIUS

Your operation is entirely lacking in grace, mystery, harmony or balance. The trousers you produce would embarrass a color-blind Miami pimp, your managerial staff possesses the backbone and initiative of a dead halibut, your own indolence and apathy sir, are a disgrace and an affront to the spirit of commerce and, in addition, your wife smells of sour cranberries. I spurn you as I would spurn a dung-beetle. Good morning.

IGNATIUS leaves with a slam of the door.

MRS LEVY

You handled that well, Gus.

LEVY sees JONES still there.

LEVY

You! Hear this.

He advances slowly on JONES.

MR LEVY (CONT'D)

You...are ...fired. Y'hear? FIRED!

40 EXT. THE FRENCH QUARTER - EARLY EVENING

MR LEVY (OVER)
 FIRED. FIRED. FIRED. FIRED.

JONES is busking in doorways. Playing his mouth-organ. Very little success. We get a flavor of the Quarter, Bourbon Street, Poydras, the line outside Galatoires, the hot-dog vendors.

JONES
 (in voice-over)
 So now Ignatius owed me two bits and one job.

JONES is being watched across the street by DORIAN GREENE, wearing the PREPOSTEROUS GREEN HAT, accompanied this time by three powerful and threatening women, FRIEDA CLUB, BETTY BUMPER and LIZ STEELE.

DORIAN
 Hello again young fellow. You blow magnificently. Doesn't he, boys?

FRIEDA, BETTY and LIZ grunt their agreement. JONES nods cagily.

A BLIND OLD MAN approaches with a white cane.

DORIAN
 I only live down the block. Why don't you come over and do some blowing there? Hm?

The BLIND OLD MAN stops. It is MANCUSO in disguise.

MANCUSO
 Jones, you told the sergeant you had a job.

JONES
 I tendered my resignation.

MANCUSO
 Yeah? Well, you're coming downtown with me.

He makes to arrest JONES. The three GIRLS charge across the street.

LIZ
 Hey! You leave this guy alone. He's doin' okay.

MANCUSO
 Undercover police.

BETTY
 Yeah?

FRIEDA
 So what?

The three of them grab MANCUSO and hurl him against some trash-cans. JONES watches.

MANCUSO

(dazed)

You're all under arrest.

LIZ

Oh, sure.

These girls know no fear and follow no rules. They move in to inflict more damage. We see this from JONES's POV.

DORIAN

That's enough, boys. You know the sight of blood makes me dizzy. .

They turn reluctantly and follow DORIAN away down the street. MANCUSO gets clumsily to his feet.

JONES

Oo-wee, them's tough ladies, Patrolman. I'll be seeing you.

JONES skedaddles. MANCUSO halfheartedly makes to chase him but gives up.

JONES trots along the street towards Bourbon.

SUDDENLY, his eyes narrow as he looks along the street.

JONES

(to himself)

No. Can't be.

We see from his P.O.V. IGNATIUS in the distance, resplendent in pirate costume, pushing what appears to be an enormous hotdog along the street.

JONES

Hey! Naishus! Wait up there!

JONES runs along until he emerges into Bourbon Street. He looks right and left. No sign of IGNATIUS.

JONES finds he is outside the Night of Joy. He notices a sign on the door. "Porter Wanted: Apply Within." He steps back and looks at the place, shrugs and enters.

41 INT. NIGHT OF JOY - EARLY EVENING

JONES enters and looks around. GEORGE is sitting at the bar talking across to a statuesque woman nearing middle-age, with big hair and a fine body mostly concealed by a shiny leather coat: she is the owner, LANA LEE.

She and GEORGE turn when they see JONES. There are two piles of envelopes in front of them. GEORGE hurriedly covers the envelopes with a beer-towel.

LANA
 (to JONES)
 What do you want?

GEORGE drains a shot-glass. JONES points to the window.

JONES
 Burma Jones. I come about that job.

LANA
 Yeah? You got any references?

JONES
 A po-lice gimme a reference. He tell me I
 better get my ass gainfully employ.

LANA
 Sorry...

JONES
 I ain no criminal. They just start that
 vagran-with-no-visible-means-of-support shit on
 me.

GEORGE
 Don't I know you, boy?

JONES gives him a long stare through his shiny sunglasses.

JONES
 (voice-over)
 Now if there's one thing I hate it's bein
 called "boy", specially by a piece a trash ten
 years younger 'n me.

LANA
 You got any experience as a janitor?

JONES picks up a broom that's leaning against the bar.

JONES
 Wha? Sweepin and moppin and all that nigger
 shit?

LANA
 Watch your mouth. I got a clean business.
 I've been looking for the right man for this
 job for days. The pay is twenty dollars a
 week.

JONES
 Hey! No wonder the right man ain show up.
 What happen to the minimal wage?

GEORGE
 I'd watch it, Lana. He looks like a junkie to
 me. You a junkie, boy?

JONES

You be lookin pretty junky with this broom stickin out your ass. Fine old broom, good and splintery.

LANA

Okay, okay. I don't need a race riot. You want the job or not? Six days a week from ten to three.

JONES

Twenty dollars a week?

LANA

You want the vagrancy laws off your tail. I need a porter. Business stinks. Raided four times last week. Looking for inverts and Nazis. Here, for Chrissakes. So, that's the pay. Take it or leave it.

JONES

Lady, you got yourself a porter.

JONES takes the broom and starts to sweep. LANA and GEORGE look at him suspiciously: they talk in an undertone.

GEORGE

The...orphans were very pleased, Lana. They like the one at the desk with book and the eye-glasses. Thought it was some kinda teacher or something.

LANA

Yeah? You think they want another?

GEORGE

Sure. Many as you can. More of that school-teach shit.

He glances over towards JONES, takes out a hand-tooled wallet and gives her some money. He takes the piles of envelopes and pushes them up his shirt.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Now, I gotta blow. Need to find a place to stash.

JONES is whistling "Working on the Railroad". GEORGE passes him on the way.

JONES

You a messenger for the orphans?

LANA

Let's get on thing straight around here, Jones. You poke your nose into business that doesn't concern you and the police will be told you've been trying to peddle drugs in here, you understand?

GEORGE

Yeah, shut your mouth and sweep.

JONES

Oo-wee.

LANA

My charity work for the orphans is my concern.

A GIRL flounces gracefully in. She wears a satin cocktail dress and flowered hat and her name is DARLENE. She is vague and scatty.

GEORGE slaps her rump and winks as he makes for the door.

GEORGE

It's my darlin Darlene.

DARLENE

Beat it, George.

GEORGE goes with a grin.

LANA

How come you're so late? I told you to be here at five.

DARLENE

My cockatoo come down with a cold this morning, Lana.

(to JONES, friendly)

Hi!

(to LANA)

Poor honey been coughing in my ear all day, his little beak running.

(LANA snorts)

It's true. Had to take him to the vet's for a vitamin shot.

(to JONES)

You the new janitor?

JONES nods and shakes DARLENE's offered hand. LANA is putting the rest of the documents in a small cabinet under the bar. GEORGE's money she stuffs into her cleavage. DARLENE goes to an area by the bar, takes off her hat and checks her make-up. She puts a large BAG on the bar too.

LANA

Yeah, well it's coming out of your wages. You better concentrate your mind girl. You've got to start getting the men-folk to buy real drinks.

DARLENE

Well, if you let me put on a little show, maybe, instead of just...

LANA

Never mind about that. That new Latin girl Rita sold four times more booze than you last week. Wake your ass up. Show Jones here where

(MORE)

LANA (cont'd)

everything is and get this joint smart for the evening.

(to JONES)

Don't forget under the tables. Still crumbs of wine-cake left by that fat loon in the hunting cap.

JONES

Hey! You say fat loon in a hunting cap?

LANA

(leaving)

Sweep.

JONES whistles to himself. DARLENE looks at herself in the mirror and sighs.

DARLENE

Lana hire you today, Mr Jones?

JONES

She ain exactly hire me. She kinda buying me off an auction block, y'know?

DARLENE

At least you gonna get a salary. I only work for commission. I took this job to be in showbusiness, not to end up a B-girl sweet-talking guys into spending 24 bucks on a bottle of champagne.

She starts to dance around the room. JONES goes behind the bar and looks around.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Really, I'm a dancer. But Lana don't wanna know, less I can whip up what she calls a good act.

JONES has found a little cabinet behind the bar. He tries to open it. It's locked. There is A RUBBER stamp on the bar. JONES stamps it on a beer mat and we see: "NIGHT OF JOY: BOURBON STREET." JONES looks back at DARLENE dancing.

JONES

Well, she's passin somethin up, there, Miss Darlene. That is a good act.

DARLENE

Why thank you, Mr. Jones! It is kinda exotic, isn't it? Hey, Lana don't like no one snooping behind the bar.

JONES

I aint snooping. I'm spying.

DARLENE continues to dance while JONES pries open the cabinet. He looks in. In the cabinet he sees a globe, some chalk and a big GREEN BOOK.

JONES

Hey, aint that Officer Mancuso's book?

JONES draws out a packet from the cabinet. It is full of photographs which we do not see.

In the background DARLENE opens her BAG. A pink COCKATOO pokes its head out and coos.

JONES

(voice-over, looking at the photos)

I reckoned they was the luckiest orphans in America. And somehow, it just came into my head that these photographs needed a return address.

JONES takes out one of photographs, turns it over and stamps it with the rubber stamp.

JONES

Someone's gonna see that one day, George, and that's gonna learn you to call me "boy".

He puts it back and relocks the cabinet, laughing to himself. DARLENE is feeding some nuts to the bird, whose name is OSCAR.

DARLENE

That's my baby.

JONES sees the cockatoo.

JONES

Woo-hee. You put that bird in the wash with something red?

DARLENE

He's a rose cockatoo. They're very rare. Watch this. I trained him.

DARLENE takes some bright rings out of her BAG and puts them on her shoulder. The COCKATOO immediately swoops in and grabs them while DARLENE dances slinkily about.

JONES

Hoo!

He takes out his harmonica and starts to play. She dances to it. There is something between them.

DARLENE

That's a mean harp you play there, Burma. Say!
(she stops)

Maybe we could rehearse an act together? You know, afternoons, when she's out. And then present it to her. Something... you know... sophisticated. With Oscar here.

She makes what she thinks is an exotic gesture, plucking at her shoulder strap.

Behind her, through the window, JONES sees IGNATIUS pass, in pirate finery, pushing a huge HOT DOG.

JONES
I'm seein visions.

DARLENE
Why thank you, honey ...

FADE TO:

42 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

DARLENE nuzzles against JONES. A large man, GROVER PARLANGE, whom we will get to know later, pats him on the back. The PRESIDENT is in full flow.

PRESIDENT
The rest, as they say, is showbusiness history.
And they're here tonight. Lays and gen'men...
Mr. Burma Jones and Miss Darlene Mouton!

There is applause from the diners. DARLENE and BURMA JONES stand and take a bow.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
Some of you here this evening, of course, were even lucky enough to know Ignatius J. Reilly early on, when he was yet a bud of potentiality. One of the most brilliant and original minds that the city of New Orleans ever sent to its own Loyola University, Ignatius had the good fortune to be encouraged by an inspired teacher, friend and mentor, Doctor Nigel Talc...

As this is being said, we come to DOCTOR TALC, smoking a pipe, who nods sagaciously and pompously, shifting a slightly guilty glance towards MYRNA MINKOFF who is dressed in startling black, with the most astonishing purple lip-stick and the strangest jewelry depending from her lobes and encircling her white neck. Take a line between Morticia Addams and Sally Bowles.

She shakes out a colored Sobranie Cocktail cigarette and shoots a quizzical and skeptical look at TALC who smiles weakly and puffs on his pipe. We CLOSE IN on MYRNA's face:

MYRNA
(voice-over: ironic)
Yeah, sure. Teacher, friend, mentor. Every student should be lucky enough to have a professor like Doctor Nigel Talc. Warm, witty, modest, well-informed. Oh yeah. And such style ...

The voice of the PRESIDENT, droning on, becomes background noise, as we move closer and closer into MYRNA, the smoke of TALC's pipe beside her thickening and thickening.

FADE INTO:-

43 INT. LECTURE HALL, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY - MORNING

DR TALC is pompously addressing a hall filled with graduate students. We see MYRNA, younger, but still very stylish and outré, sitting in the center of the auditorium: she wears a cloche hat.

DR TALC

Welcome, especially to our freshmen. As some of the old hands from last semester will know, I like to preface these lectures with a few little observations. History. Wasn't it Hegel who said that history repeats itself, first as tragedy and then as farcé?

We see TALC from MYRNA's POV. A couple of rows in front of her, almost obscuring her vision of TALC, is a strange sight. The huge back of a man. He is wearing a lumberjack's jacket and his head is covered with a green hunting cap, its flaps hanging loosely over his ears. On the bench in front of him are piles of yellow Big Chief tablets, on which he is scribbling furiously. It is the student IGNATIUS - he has not yet grown his moustache. He lets out a small explosion of disgust.

IGNATIUS

No, it wasn't. It was Karl Marx.

TALC looks a little disconcerted. MYRNA smiles, intrigued.

TALC

Well, yes... Exactly. But what is history really? No more than the lies of the dominant culture, perhaps. To my students when I was up at Yale, the Civil War was a victory. To you down here, it was a defeat. Angle, perspective, relativity. The only thing to be done with history, Oscar Wilde said, is for it to be rewritten.

IGNATIUS

(correcting him)

The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it.

TALC

(struggling on)

For as Edmund Burke wrote...

(glancing apprehensively at
IGNATIUS)

... and I, er, paraphrase... "what is history but a distillation of rumor?"

IGNATIUS

You can paraphrase all you like, you cretinous buffoon, but Edmund Burke never said anything of the kind. It was Carlyle, Thomas Carlyle who called history a distillation of rumor.

TALC

(worried, but valiantly
recovering)

Ah! Exactly! Yes! Was it Burke, was it Carlyle? That is the point! Exactly. Mm. I am grateful to Mr. Reilly here for making my point for me. For how do we know, really know which one said it? Mm? That's the point, isn't it?

IGNATIUS

We know by actually bothering to read Thomas Carlyle's History of the French Revolution, instead of skimming through children's dictionaries of quotations in a feeble effort to impress the coeds.

TALC

Oh, and Mr. Reilly has read Carlyle's "History of The French Revolution", has he?

IGNATIUS

Naturally.

TALC

All of it?

IGNATIUS

Incredible as it may seem to you, yes. Several times. Have you?

TALC

(hurriedly)

So, this is the point then, history is no more than a shifting kaleidoscope of perspectives...

IGNATIUS rises like an outraged walrus and gathers his books together. MYRNA watches fascinated.

IGNATIUS

Your total ignorance of what you profess to teach merits the death penalty. I doubt whether you would know this, but Saint Cassian of Imola was stabbed to death by his students with their styli. Their pens, to you. His death, a martyr's honorable one, made him a patron saint of teachers.

DR TALC

Now, just one moment, Mister...

IGNATIUS has reached the door. He turns on TALC and points a fleshy finger at him.

IGNATIUS

Pray to him, you deluded fool, you "anyone for tennis?" golf-playing, cocktail-quaffing pseudo-pedant, for you do indeed need a heavenly patron. Although your days are numbered, you will not die as a martyr - for

(MORE)

IGNATIUS (cont'd)
you further no holy cause - but as the pompous,
pig-ignorant fraud you really are.

IGNATIUS bangs the door behind him. TALC smiles weakly.

DR TALC
Well... some people would rather be history
than learn it, it seems...

MYRNA looks at the departing IGNATIUS as he passes the lecture room window.

44 EXT. LOYOLA CAMPUS - AFTERNOON

IGNATIUS is standing at a large soda dispensing machine. Behind him a lecture hall empties. A bottle of Doctor Nut soda rolls out. He picks it up, opens it and waddles across the campus towards the main gate at St. Charles Avenue. A voice behind brings him to an irritated halt.

MYRNA
(running up behind)
Wait up, wait up there!

IGNATIUS turns his baleful glare on MYRNA.

MYRNA (CONT'D)
(holding out a hand)
Myrna Minkoff. You're Reilly, aren't you?

IGNATIUS
Ignatius J. Reilly.

MYRNA
I heard about you.

IGNATIUS
I am not, perhaps, unknown.

MYRNA
That was something, what you said to Doctor Talc. That bastard tried to touch my breasts once.

IGNATIUS
The man must be unbalanced.

While MYRNA wonders if this constitutes an insult to her breasts, IGNATIUS finishes the Dr. Nut, tosses it into a passing trashcan and belches. He prods his stomach.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
Hm... my pyloric valve seems to be in the act of closing. I've not seen you in the history faculty before, Miss Minkoff.

MYRNA

I just changed my major from literature. I think if one is to free one's brothers and sisters from the chains of history then history must be our slave not our master, don't you? You're a graduate, right?

IGNATIUS

That is so.

MYRNA

I heard you've already got Masters in English Literature and Latin and French. And a doctorate in medieval philosophy. And now you're going to add History. Killing yourself by degrees, huh?

IGNATIUS

Neither original nor amusing.

(taking a pack of Oreos from his knapsack)

Anyway, if such a pithecoid oaf as Talc can scrounge and cheat and prevaricate and grease and fondle and lick his way to a history Doctorate I am not sure that I want another one. My student days are over. It is time for the world.

MYRNA

Right! Right! We've got to grab the system by the balls, yeah?

IGNATIUS

Don't be disgusting.

MYRNA

We should form an action committee. We got to sit-in and take over until our demands are met. It's time they found out that the old order is over.

IGNATIUS

The wheel is turning, certainly.

MYRNA

Wheel?

IGNATIUS

Fortuna, blind goddess of destiny is turning her wheel.

MYRNA

What wheel? You mean... revolution?

IGNATIUS

Have you never read Boethius?

(her vacant stare shows she has not)

I am surrounded by fools. Never mind. My education is done. I shall devote myself to my

(MORE)

IGNATIUS (cont'd)
work. A book to lead mankind back to
medievalism, to order, harmony, balance.
Geometry. The whole...

IGNATIUS breaks off as he looks across St. Charles avenue, where we see the entrance to Audubon Park. An attractive sight, green and lush: a gardener sprays weed-killer on the flower beds, families flit by, all lit by a soft afternoon light.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
... what are you doing tonight, Miss Minkoff?

MYRNA
(pausing to size IGNATIUS up)
If we screw, it will only be to seal our bond
as comrades.

IGNATIUS
How dare you be so repulsive? I have no
intention whatsoever of sleeping with you.

MYRNA
Oh... you're homosexual! Hey, that's cool.

IGNATIUS
Stop this filth at once, you degraded creature!
Only a woman who reads and understands Boethius
is worthy of my carnal attention. I hold
myself pure for such a one.

MYRNA
You're really screwed up, aren't you?

They have reached St. Charles Avenue, by a street-car stop. Loyola stands stately behind them, the large lawn at the front green and smooth and beautiful. IGNATIUS prepares to mount an eastbound street-car. He looks at MYRNA and the University buildings behind her.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
(from the footplate)
Meet me here at midnight. Bring a dark lantern
and mask your face in black silk. We strike a
blow for freedom tonight.

MYRNA watches the car rattle away, shaking her head, intrigued and amused. She turns back and sees TALC approaching and holding up and hand to detain her. She can't escape him.

TALC
(hurrying up: watching the
streetcar leave)
Miss Minkoff. I hope you are not associating
with that man? He has pestered and abused more
faculties at this university than mine over the
years. Believe me. One gets to recognize the
type, the embittered eternal student. He will
amount to nothing. He has failure written all
over him.

MYRNA

Yeah? And what you got written all over you,
Doctor Talc? Nobel Prize?

TALC

I wouldn't want to see a bright attractive girl
like you dragged down with him. For all his
grand manner, his mother is white trash who
scrubs floors and waits tables to keep him here
year after year after year.

MYRNA

He's really gotten to you, hasn't he?

TALC

Overbearing, arrogant, loutish, insulting,
paranoid and ridiculous. A nothing.

MYRNA

Hey, don't be too hard on yourself, you look
great in corduroy.

The university clock chimes.

FADE TO:

45 EXT. LOYOLA CAMPUS - NIGHT

The chimes continue. Two dark figures are flitting in the moonlight.
We make out the tremendous bulk of IGNATIUS and the slimmer build of
MYRNA. IGNATIUS is toting something. It seems to be a barrel...
hard to tell exactly what. The dialog is continued in whispers. The
action is difficult to decipher.

MYRNA

Ignatius? Is that you?

IGNATIUS

Take hold of the end of this, Miss Minkoff.

MYRNA

Myrna. What is it?

IGNATIUS

Careful! I should have told you to wear
gloves.

MYRNA

Ignatius, what the fuck... ?

IGNATIUS

Kindly moderate your language. Now, with great
circumspection, I am told it is highly toxic
and can burn your skin on contact, we shall...

MYRNA

Burn my...

(suddenly she stifles a scream)
Oh my God! A WOLF!!

We see the form of an animal suddenly crossing the dark lawn.

IGNATIUS

Lower your voice at once. That is my dog.
Noblest of beasts, he keeps guard over us.
(REX approaches, panting happily)
Good fellow. Ceaseless vigilance, Rex.

MYRNA

Rex? Original.

IGNATIUS

Originality has nothing to do with it. Rex is his name. He is highly intelligent and can bark in Latin. Now... this is the pump. I shall take the nozzle. We should start... let me see... over here.

MYRNA

(excited)

My God, are we going to poison the whole faculty?

Far away we hear a boat's siren on the Mississippi. We pull back until the group of two humans and one frisking dog are very small on the lawn, IGNATIUS's whispered instruction growing fainter.

FADE TO:

46 INT. TALC'S ROOMS - MORNING

DOCTOR TALC wakes up in bed, a freshman coed, KELLY, next to him. He rubs his eyes and, rising, boxer-shorted, walks over to a wash basin and runs the faucet. He takes handfuls of water and drinks. He moves over to the center of the room. There are student essays and papers all over the table. He flips open his desk diary and sees: "Seminar, Tudor Mercantilism, 9.00 am." A desk clock shows us that it is now 8:20.

TALC groans, runs his fingers through his hair, walks over to his book-case and browses the shelves until he finds "English Mercantilism in the 16th Century: a student's guide." He pulls it out and starts to read and take notes, glancing at the sleeping KELLY in his bed.

We have become aware, during this, of a gathering noise outside his window. Laughter and snickers. TALC glances towards the window briefly, with annoyance. KELLY wakes up.

KELLY

(shyly)

Morning, Doctor Talc.

TALC

Ah, good morning, Shelley.

KELLY

Kelly.

TALC
Kelly. Of course.

He goes back to his book, furiously scribbling down notes. KELLY hears the noises outside the window, arises, wrapped in a bed-sheet, walks over to the window and looks out. She stifles a gasp and a giggle.

KELLY
Uh... Doctor Talc?

TALC
Mm?

KELLY
I think... I think maybe you should take a look.

TALC rises wearily and walks over to the window, still holding his book. He arrives at the window, stroking KELLY lightly on the buttocks as he reaches her. He looks out of the window and drops his book, his face tightening.

47 EXT. LOYOLA CAMPUS - MORNING

We look up at TALC's window and see his horrified face. He quickly pushes KELLY out of the view of the students who are gathered about alternately looking up at the window down at the ground.

48 INT. TALC'S ROOM - MORNING

Now we see, from TALC's POV, what it is that has caused the excitement. Below us is a crowd of STUDENTS goggling back and forth between the window and the lawn.

On the lawn, burned into the grass with weed-killer, is this beautifully laid out message in HUGE, yellow, dead-grass letters:-

NIGEL TALC PERVERTS THE YOUNG IN MIND & BODY -- ZORRO

49 EXT. GREYHOUND STATION - AFTERNOON

MYRNA and IGNATIUS sit at on a bench awaiting a bus, IGNATIUS dipping into a bag of beignets. He is wearing a black arm-band. MYRNA has luggage piled up beside her.

MYRNA
You should come with me, Ignatius. This place has stifled you long enough.

IGNATIUS
Don't talk drivel, woman.

MYRNA
You're terrified of real life, that's your problem.

IGNATIUS

Real life? Giggling and shrieking with beat poets in a Greenwich loft paid for by a guilty and obscenely rich father is not real life. It's a masturbatory fantasy profoundly dangerous to your immortal soul.

MYRNA

Oh, you know all about real life Ignatius. Sure. Real life is wallowing on a bed like a whale, reading and eating and farting while your mother works herself into the grave, yeah?

IGNATIUS

How dare you allow my mother's name to pass your vulgar painted lips, you debased trollop!

MYRNA

Woah! Says it all. You ever read Sigmund Freud? Or were you too busy reading Thomas Carlyle and Oscar Wilde?

IGNATIUS

You are a swollen bladder of nauseating pretention. Besides I couldn't possibly leave New Orleans, especially on one of those.

He looks at an arriving Greyhound Scenicruiser with a shudder. It has "New York City" emblazoned on its crest.

MYRNA

You don't know if you've never tried.

IGNATIUS

(gorging himself on beignets)

As a matter of fact I have tried. There was a job going at the Medieval Culture Department at Louisiana State a few years ago. Riding in a car affects me enough, but those Greyhound Scenicruisers. All the way to Baton Rouge. I vomited several times. The driver had to stop the bus somewhere in the swamps to let me walk around for a while. The other passengers were rather angry. They must have had stomachs of iron.

MYRNA gathers her luggage and starts to walk toward the bus.

MYRNA

Ridiculous.

IGNATIUS

(following and eating)

Of course, I couldn't possibly return by such a dangerous contrivance. The taxi back to New Orleans cost me forty dollars, but at least I wasn't violently ill, although I felt myself beginning to gag several times. I made the driver go very slowly, which was unfortunate for him. The state police stopped him twice

(MORE)

IGNATIUS (cont'd)
for being below the minimum highway speed. The
third time they took away his chauffeur's
license. He seemed rather depressed about it.

IGNATIUS hands MYRNA his now empty beignet bag.

IGNATIUS
Here, if you really do intend to travel in this
moving vomitory you might as well have
something to throw into.

A line of PASSENGERS preparing to board the bus finds this talk of
vomit rather disturbing. The doors of the Scenicruiser whoosh open
and the DRIVER starts letting PASSENGERS aboard.

MYRNA
(about to board)
Womb fantasy. You need to break free,
Ignatius. This sleek, smooth, thrusting
machine that so upsets you is in fact a
reminder of the penis you are afraid to use.

IGNATIUS splutters on a mouthful of beignet, sending powdered sugar
and half-digested dough everywhere.

MYRNA (CONT'D)
I'll write you, Ignatius. You're my mission.

IGNATIUS
Minx! Doxy! Good riddance.

MYRNA disappears into the bus, getting strange looks from her fellow
PASSENGERS. From her seat, she looks out of the window at IGNATIUS's
receding form. She smiles to herself in satisfaction and closes her
eyes.

MYRNA
(voice-over)
Yeah, my mission. I really got to him. He
just had to prove me wrong.

MUSIC: TOM LEHRER, "I wanna go back to Dixie".

50 INT. COFFEE-BAR, GREENWICH VILLAGE - DAY

An early sixties Village hangout. Black polo-necks, cappuccino in
glass cups, posters for early Warhol exhibitions and folk concerts,
that kind of scene.

The Tom Lehrer song is being sung at the piano by a satirist-cum-folk
singer: its anti-Southern sentiments are winning great New York
approval.

MYRNA, a few years older now and a decade more sophisticated, is
sitting at a table surrounded by friends and acolytes, including her
special friend, SPIKE. She is reading a letter.

MYRNA

Oh Christ what is the poor mutt up to now?
Listen to this.

(reading out loud)

"Minkoff, Your last communication was offensive and distasteful in the extreme, kindly confine your patronizing armchair psychobabble to the circle of skinny, dandruffed, black polo-necked reefer fiends with whom you no doubt associate."

SPIKE covertly brushes dandruff from the shoulder of his black polo-neck.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

(reading)

It may interest you to know that while you and your friends go on marches trying to provoke police brutality, some of us are...

51 EXT. CANAL STREET - AFTERNOON

IGNATIUS and his mother are running along Canal Street.

MYRNA (OFF)

(reading)

... actually experiencing the full horror of persecution and tyranny.

In the background a baffled MANCUSO is holding onto JONES and ROBICHAUX.

MANCUSO

Hey! Come back here!

We hear ROBICHAUX in the background.

ROBICHAUX

Get your hands off me, you filthy communiss.

MRS REILLY pulls IGNATIUS round the corner into Bourbon Street.

MRS REILLY

How come that policeman was after you, boy?

IGNATIUS

We shall never know. Perhaps he is on a quota.

MRS REILLY

You musta done something. I know you, boy.

IGNATIUS

If anyone was ever minding his business, it was I. Please, we must stop. I think I'm going to have a hemorrhage.

He begins to slow, panting. MRS REILLY stops too.

MRS REILLY
You would too, boy. Just to spite me.

IGNATIUS
What did the doctor say about your arthritic elbow?

MRS REILLY
It's gotta be massaged.

IGNATIUS
I hope you don't want me to do that. You know how I feel about touching people.

MRS REILLY looks around and notices that they are standing in front of The Night of Joy.

MRS REILLY
Come on, we'll go in here.

MRS REILLY and IGNATIUS start to cross the street and are almost run over as a bright red FERRARI roadster sweeps past, splashing them with water. The driver is MR LEVY. IGNATIUS shouts after it.

IGNATIUS
Pampered plutocrat. Your blood will soon be running along the gutters of St. Charles Avenue and draining into the Mississippi.

MRS REILLY
Ignatius, don't disgrace me now, y'hear?

IGNATIUS
My valve!

They cross the street.

52 INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

They enter the bar. It is not full: there is BEN, a bored bartender. DORIAN GREENE, elegant and fey, is at the bar chain-smoking Salems and drinking frozen daiquiris in gulps. At the other end DARLENE perches, trying to look beguiling. A MAN sits at a table scrutinizing a race form.

MRS REILLY
(entering)
Will you shut up 'bout your valve. Aint nobody but you got a valve anyway.

IGNATIUS
Nonsense. Everyone has a valve. Mine is merely more developed.
(wrinkling his nostrils)
My God, this is the very reek of hell.

MRS REILLY
You wanna go back on the street? You want that man to arrest you?

IGNATIUS

They'll be back at the precinct by now, beating up that weird Macarthyite hangover. His theory that all police are communists is at least original.

MRS REILLY

He was a disgusting old man. I don't wanna talk about him. Why don't you try and mingle?

IGNATIUS

I "mingle" with my peers or no one. And since I have no peers, I mingle with no one.

BEN

Whaddayawant?

IGNATIUS

(grandly)

I shall have a chicory coffee with boiled milk.

BEN

Only instant.

IGNATIUS

(turning to go)

Good-bye.

MRS REILLY

(pulling him back)

Get a beer, Ignatius, it won't kill you.

IGNATIUS

I may bloat.

MRS REILLY

(with the assurance of a real drinker)

We'll take two Dixie 45's in chilled glasses.

IGNATIUS

Thank god my mustache filters out some of the stench of this place.

MRS REILLY

Why don't you have one of these nice wine cakes?

IGNATIUS

(taking the box)

Well, perhaps a macaroon or two. I've always found coconut to be good roughage. But then we must depart.

DARLENE closes in on IGNATIUS and takes him down the other end of the bar.

DARLENE

I think what you need is champagne, handsome.

MRS REILLY starts in on her Dixie. She looks inquisitively at DORIAN's daiquiri.

MRS REILLY

What's that you drinking? Looks like a pineapple snowball.

DORIAN

Heart, even if I described it to you, I doubt whether you'd understand what it is.

IGNATIUS

(to DARLENE)

Champagne has a deleterious effect on my valve and intestinal canal.

DARLENE

I'm not just a hostess, you know. I'm an entertainer.

DORIAN

I have to ask you where you found that hat. It is a pain beyond pain, an agony so intense it shocks the mind into instant beauty.

MRS REILLY

This old thing? Lord, I had this since Ignatius made his first communion.

DORIAN

(gazing at the hat)

There's so much going on. A tableau vivant, really. Is it some sort of wild picnic? Or perhaps an Aztec circumcision ritual? Would you consider selling it?

MRS REILLY

You on the level?

DORIAN

Cross my heart and kiss my elbow. When I see something I like, I simply must have it. It's always getting me into trouble. Ten dollars?

DARLENE

(to IGNATIUS)

They got a snake act at Terry's in Basin Street. Snake act! Who cares? I got a rose cockatoo that can undress me. You'd pay money to see that, wouldn't you?

IGNATIUS

(stuffing himself with wine-cakes)

I'd pay far more not to.

IGNATIUS covers his ears with the flaps of his cap to shut out DARLENE's witterings and concentrate on the cakes.

MRS REILLY

Ten dollars?

DARLENE

Miss Lee won't let me try it out. See, Oscar likes shiny things. So if I have a dress held together with brass rings, he plucks them off me. Now that's an act. But I need music to go with it and Miss Lee won't pay no money for a musician. Say can I try one of them wine-cakes?

She leans forward to take one; IGNATIUS snatches the box from her. Wine cakes tumble all over the bar and floor. MRS REILLY looks along the bar.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius! Mind your manners. You help yourself, honey.

(to DORIAN)

Ten dollars, you say? For this?

DORIAN

(inspecting it again)

Closer up, I'm inclined to think it's a nude modern dance interpretation of Washington crossing the Delaware. Fifteen?

MRS REILLY takes off her hat.

MRS REILLY

Fifteen? Sure.

DORIAN takes the hat and hands over three five dollar bills.

DARLENE

(munching a wine cake)

They're real good.

DORIAN

Now. I simply must fly. I only come here to beg the owner to sell me the place, but she's out.

MRS REILLY

You in the nightclub business, sugar?

DORIAN

Heavens no. It's my little dream to open a select little curio teashop on Bourbon and this is just the right spot. Selling choice bibelots and exotic books, while serving tea and playing delicate impossible music. Such a need, don't you feel?

(confidentially)

After all, can't be making any money can they? But the sow of an owner always refuses to sell. Hi-di-ho, I must go. Adieu, mon rêve.

He kisses MRS REILLY's hand and departs.

DORIAN (CONT'D)
(to IGNATIUS)
Farewell, lover beast.

IGNATIUS
I beg your pardon?

DORIAN goes with a flutter. IGNATIUS is picking up wine cakes and putting them back in the box. There are crumbs everywhere.

MRS REILLY
(downing her Dixie)
What a sweet, well-bred young man.

DARLENE
Where you bought these, lady? They're nice and juicy.

MRS REILLY
Over by Holmes, they got a good selection.
Plenty variety.

DARLENE takes another wine cake, under the disapproving eye of IGNATIUS.

DARLENE
(to MRS REILLY)
I bet you cook good, huh?

IGNATIUS
(covering his ears with his flaps)
Mother doesn't cook, she burns.

DARLENE
I like that canned stuff they do. You know?
Spanish rice and spaghetti and tomato gravy.

IGNATIUS
Canned food is a perversion. I suspect that it is ultimately very damaging to the soul.

MRS REILLY
Lord, my elbow's starting up again.

IGNATIUS
Please, I am speaking. Canned food is...

DARLENE
Hey! Don't talk to your momma like that.

MRS REILLY
Oh, he treats me bad sometimes, you just don't know. When I think of all I've done for that boy...

IGNATIUS

Mother, what are you babbling about?

MRS REILLY

You treat me like garbage. I been good.

IGNATIUS

Mother, we've been through this. You are an overt masochist. Kind treatment would confuse and destroy you.

MRS REILLY

(to DARLENE)

I spent all his Granmaw Reilly's insurance money to keep him in college eight years, and since then all he's done is lay around the house watching television.

DARLENE

(to IGNATIUS)

You ought to be ashamed!

IGNATIUS

This is ridiculous!

MRS REILLY

And now he humiliates me in public by getting hisself arrested by a policeman.

IGNATIUS

Mother, stop that!

DARLENE

If I knew you was so crool, mister, I wouldna told you all bout myself.

IGNATIUS

Get up mother, we're leaving.

The door opens and LANA LEE, the owner of the club, enters. She sees the wine cakes all over the place.

LANA

What's going on here?

DARLENE

This boy, he's been mistreating his mother.

LANA

Mothers? We've got mothers in here now? Business already stinks. And food. What I tell you people about rats and roaches? Darlene, clean up this crap.

IGNATIUS

Please. A lady is present.

DARLENE

Cleaning up is the janitor's job.

LANA

Yeah, well we don't got no janitor, do we?
Ben, throw these two out.

MRS REILLY

(draining IGNATIUS's beer)

Don't you worry, we're leaving anyway.

IGNATIUS

We certainly are. Hurry along, mother. This woman looks like a Nazi commandant. She may strike us.

LANA

Wait! Ben, how much these characters owe?

BEN

Eight dollars.

IGNATIUS

What! You will hear from our attorneys.

MRS REILLY holds out two of the bills from DORIAN.

IGNATIUS

Mother, I forbid you to give that Beast of Belsen so much as one cent.

LANA grabs the money.

LANA

(giving change from her cleavage)
Now beat it. Trade from people like you is the kiss of death. I never liked mothers. Not even my own.

The MAN studying the racing form speaks.

MAN

My mother was a whore.

LANA

Mothers are full of shit.

IGNATIUS

How dare you! You will apologize or face the legal consequences.

LANA approaches menacingly, armed with a broom.

LANA

I told you to get out! Now get out. Out, out, out!

IGNATIUS and MRS REILLY are ejected. Across the street we can just glimpse a yellow-sweatered, ballet-tighted MANCUSO ducking behind a hot-dog cart.

53 INT. MOVIE HOUSE, MANHATTAN - NIGHT

A small art-house is filling up for a poetry recital. We see posters for Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti. As the room fills up, a sad little figure with a guitar sings a protest song on stage. MYRNA is sitting next to SPIKE, reading a letter. SPIKE munches a flap-jack and watches the SINGER.

SPIKE

(watching the singer)

Doesn't this guy just send you?

MYRNA doesn't reply. SPIKE sees that she is reading a letter.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

(jealously)

What is it with you and that cat anyhow? He's crazy.

MYRNA

Listen to this, Spike. "How dare you share your lurid sexual perversions with me, you bold harlot? You should whipped along fifth avenue like a common whore."

SPIKE

If I wasn't a pacifist I'd kick his fucking teeth in.

MYRNA

He wrote me some fantasy of throwing up all over a policeman wearing ballet tights. And then he claims this same policeman called on him in a red beard while his mother attacked him with a hot red wine bottle. I told him this was a sign of latent passive homosexuality and submissive masochistic tendencies coupled with a fear of menstruation.

SPIKE

Right on.

MYRNA

I told him he should experience at least four orgasms a day and transform those experiences into free verse.

SPIKE

I do that all the time.

MYRNA

(reading again)

"Leaving these mid-witted erotic fixations aside. How dare you make the assumption that I am, as you put it, 'adrift from the real world of struggle and oppression'? It may interest you to know that there are some who do more than sit in squalid art cinemas eating flapjacks, wearing needle-cord jeans and listening to tone-deaf teenagers with footling grievances."

SPIKE hides the rest of his flapjack. He looks round, almost as if afraid that IGNATIUS is watching him.

SPIKE

This freak really bugs me, you know?

MYRNA

(reading)

"I am about, in your feeble phrase, 'to blow the system open' and will shortly initiate a movement for racial emancipation that will make you and your Sunday afternoon Civil Rights friends quiver with envy.

FADE TO:

54 INT. LEVY PANTS - MORNING

MYRNA (OVER)

Currently, the goddess of fortune has been spinning her wheel downwards. Someone has stolen my beloved volume of Boethius and, what is more, I find myself in urgent need of a thousand dollars. I have therefore offered my services in the capacity of executive vice president in a...

We see IGNATIUS walking towards the outside of the dismal Levy Pants warehouse factory. He mounts the steps slowly, acting a po'boy, and enters his office.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

(still reading OVER)

... massive clothing enterprise near the Poland Street Warehouse. Shortly I commanding a worker's uprising that will make you eat your words. I have already transformed the office here."

During this IGNATIUS has opened the door of the office, where we see MISS TRIXIE dozing and MR GONZALEZ, fingers running through his hair, coping with paper work. IGNATIUS takes out a sign in large, blue Gothic hand-lettering and attaches it to the door of the office.

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND REFERENCE: I. J. REILLY, CUSTODIAN

GONZALEZ and MISS TRIXIE are looking up at the sign. IGNATIUS moves to his desk, decorated with signs, cards, a photograph of REX, bean-plants and other Ignatius-like paraphernalia. A large stack of documents awaits filing.

GONZALEZ

Isn't that nice?

MISS TRIXIE

What does it mean? What is Gloria doing?

Behind them, IGNATIUS takes all the paperwork, looks around, and then ceremoniously dumps it into a large waste basket. He sits down and begins devouring a luncheon meat sandwich.

GONZALEZ

Miss Trixie, that's Mr. Reilly. Gloria left us weeks ago.

MISS TRIXIE

Then what's she doing here eating luncheon meat sandwiches?

MISS TRIXIE shuffles off to the ladies room. GONZALEZ approaches IGNATIUS's desk. His eyes widen.

GONZALEZ

You finished that filing already?

IGNATIUS

Of course.

GONZALEZ

But... but how?

IGNATIUS

My methods are quite revolutionary. I wouldn't expect you to understand them.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

What's this big sign over here for? Somebody's going to get his eye knocked out on that thing.

A sportily dressed middle-aged man, MR LEVY, is standing at the door. Gonzalez hurries forward, scared.

GONZALEZ

Good morning, Mr. Levy. We're so glad to see you.

LEVY

Just came in to see if I had any personal mail.

IGNATIUS

(to GONZALEZ)

Is that Mr. Levy? I've been wanting to meet him.

MR LEVY notices IGNATIUS.

LEVY

Hello there. New worker, Gonzalez?

GONZALEZ

Oh, yes sir. Mr. Levy, this is Mr. Reilly. He's very efficient. A whiz. Filing just seems to disappear when he's around.

LEVY

Oh, yeah, the name on the sign.

IGNATIUS

I've taken an unusual interest in your firm.

LEVY

You don't say. What about the mail, Gonzalez?

GONZALEZ

Right here, sir. I also have some letters for you to sign. I had to write a letter to Abelman's Dry Goods. We always have trouble with them.

GONZALEZ gives MR LEVY his stack of personal mail.

LEVY

What do those crooks want now?

GONZALEZ

Abelman claims that the last lot of trousers we shipped him were only two feet long in the leg. I'm trying to straighten out the matter.

MISS TRIXIE re-enters, shuffling over to her desk.

LEVY

Yeah? Well, stranger things have happened around this place. Look, suppose you sign those letters like always? I have to go.

He pulls the door open.

LEVY

Don't work these kids too hard, Gonzalez. So long, Miss Trixie. My wife asked after you.

MISS TRIXIE is sitting on the floor snoring softly.

GONZALEZ

Miss Trixie, Mr. Levy is talking to you.

MISS TRIXIE

Who?

GONZALEZ

Mr. Levy.

MISS TRIXIE

Can I retire yet?

LEVY

My wife thinks the world of you. Wouldn't hear of you leaving us.

MISS TRIXIE

(indicating IGNATIUS)

Gloria here is doing all the work anyway. I wanna retire.

LEVY looks ill at ease. IGNATIUS steps forward.

IGNATIUS

I hope that you will see some vast changes the next time that you drop in on us. We are going to revitalize your business.

LEVY

(not thrilled)

Okay. Take it easy.

He slams the door.

GONZALEZ

What about the letter to Mr. Abelman sir... ?

(too late: LEVY's off)

Uh... Mr. Reilly, I am going into the factory to speak with the foreman. Please keep an eye on things.

IGNATIUS glances at MISS TRIXIE.

MISS TRIXIE

(to IGNATIUS)

Yes, you keep an eye on things, Gloria... I'm gonna take a nap.

GONZALEZ opens the door to the factory letting in a blast of dixieland jazz. IGNATIUS sails over to the window and sees MR LEVY departing in his bright red FERRARI. IGNATIUS utters a grunt, goes over to GONZALEZ's desk, rolls a sheet of Levy stationery into the office manager's high black typewriter and begins to TYPE. We see:

Mr. I. Abelman, Mongoloid, Esq. , We have received via post your absurd and ungrammatical comments about our trousers...

He continues to type.

55 INT. MYRNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MYRNA is alone in her apartment. A film projector pointing at the wall projects orange exposed film, with a suggestion, from time to time, of what seems to be the gathering of the demonstrators in the Levy Pants factory. The "Moorish Dignity" banner is unfolded on the floor of the apartment, next to the packaging it was sent in.

There is a large oil painting of IGNATIUS in the room, as well as posters for Village "happenings", marches, rallies, demos etc. MYRNA sits on a bean-bag, cross-legged and writes. The distorted sound track of IGNATIUS rallying the Levy Pants workers can just be distinguished.

MYRNA (OVER)

Ignatius, your letter disturbs me. These fantasies are clearly real to you, but you must take my word for it that this deluded fiction about leading the workers to freedom is in fact the screaming of your primal self, yearning to be free. You will never achieve anything in

(MORE)

MYRNA (cont'd)
 that Louisiana backwater and you know it. The
 lie about the movie camera film spilling out is
 a symbol of the truth being exposed to the
 light of day and exposing your fantasy life for
 what it is...

FADE TO:

56 INT. IGNATIUS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

IGNATIUS is reading the letter as MYRNA's voice comes over. Beside him we see the manuscript of his novel.

MYRNA (OVER)
 ... the insulting letter you claim you wrote to
 this so-called Mr. "Abelman" is in fact a
 letter to your potent sexual self, your "able
 man", if you will. As for the bed-sheet that
 you call a banner, it speaks for itself. The
 tell-tale stains and dried deposits upon it...

IGNATIUS puts down the letter in outrage. A telephone is ringing in the background.

IGNATIUS
 (bellowing)
 Doxy! Minx! Impudent trull. I shall show
 her. She'll eat her words. She'll...

IGNATIUS takes up a Big Chief tablet and starts to write. He is disturbed by a shout.

MISS REILLY (OFF)
 Ignatius, come out here!

IGNATIUS sighs and stands.

57 INT. REILLY KITCHEN - NIGHT

MRS REILLY, dressed for bowling, is with MANCUSO and SANTA BATTAGLIA drinking wine. IGNATIUS stands in the doorway.

SANTA
 ... he's a nice man, Irene. You should at
 least meet him.

MRS REILLY
 Aw, I'm too old to look for new men. Why I...
 (noticing her son)
 Ignatius, it's Mr. Levy for you.

IGNATIUS
 Levy? Begging for me to return to work for
 him, no doubt. Well, it's too late.

IGNATIUS picks up the phone. He speaks in a Mexican accent.

IGNATIUS

(into phone)

El Adobe? No, no. Ees El Adobe restaurant.
Best enchiladas in town. Who... ? You don't
take no notice of her. She loco. Bye-bye!

IGNATIUS hangs up.

MRS REILLY

Oh, Ignatius, what you done now? Mr Levy said
something about a letter you typed. What you
done?

IGNATIUS

It would only confuse you more.

(looking at the wine)

An orgy. And I was led to understand that I
would be left in peace this evening.

MRS REILLY (CONT'D)

Honey, this is Officer Mancuso's aunt, Santa
Battaglia. Say hello.

SANTA

Pleased to meet you, precious.

IGNATIUS

(frigidly)

Good evening, madam. I am glad to note that
your nephew has tired of his transvestism.

MANCUSO sneezes.

SANTA

Angelo got a cold. His sergeant make him sit
all day in a cold toilet.

IGNATIUS

(staring at SANTA)

Are you on drugs?

(to MANCUSO)

Since you're here, Officer, I wish to report a
burglary.

MANCUSO

Yeah?

IGNATIUS

Someone has broken in here and stolen a
valuable edition of the works of Boethius.

MANCUSO

(gulping guiltily)

Oh...that right?

IGNATIUS

I happen to know it is the only copy in New
Orleans. Kindly put every available man onto
the job of recovering it. I expect hourly
reports.

(MORE)

IGNATIUS (cont'd)
(to MRS REILLY)
And Mother, what horror do these grotesque
habiliments betoken?

MRS REILLY
(proudly)
Thass my bowling shirt, we goin bowling.

SANTA
You wanna come, Ignatius? S'fun.

IGNATIUS
I would rather have Nikita Kruschev urinate in
my ear.

MRS REILLY
Ignatius, be nice. I'm 'shamed of you enough
as it is. You know what he did? He went a got
hissself sacked from Levy Pants and now he's
working...

IGNATIUS
As it happens, I resigned in triumph. Find
that book, Mancuso and I may well offer a huge
reward.

MANCUSO
Er...right.

IGNATIUS leaves. He stops and turns back, stopping at the kitchen
door and listening.

MRS REILLY
(to SANTA)
I swear that boy is a trial to his mother.
He's working... he's gotta job... I'm ashamed
to say what he's doing. I swear... and you
know what he earned yesterday? Fifty cents.
How's he gonna pay off a thousand dollars at
fifty cents a day?

SANTA and MANCUSO exchange glances.

SANTA
Irene. It's time you started thinking about
yourself. My friend's just dyin to meet you.
Respectable feller, got some money too.

MRS REILLY
Aw, c'mon. I'm too old...

MANCUSO
I don't know who this guy is, Irene...

SANTA
Claude... he's real stuck on you, sugar.

MANCUSO

... Claude, right. But if my Aunt Battaglia thinks he's right for you, I'm sure he's right for you.

MRS REILLY

How come he knows me, 'f I don't know him?

SANTA

He's seen you downtown, hun. He thinks you a mighty handsome woman.

MRS REILLY

How old is he?

SANTA

He's smart and respectable.

MRS REILLY

How old?

SANTA

Well, I won't lie. He's got granchillun. Mind, so would you have if Ignatius was... you know... normal.

IGNATIUS, listening, can barely restrain a "pah!"

MRS REILLY

S'pose he saw Ignatius? He'd run a mile.

IGNATIUS puffs as he straightens himself. The voices of the others fade away as they leave the house.

SANTA

We'll have ourselves a little cocktail party here one afternoon when Ignatius is out working.

MANCUSO

That book, Miss Reilly ...

Back in his room, while the others depart, IGNATIUS frowns as he writes to MYRNA.

IGNATIUS

Madam Minkoff, It may interest you to know that since resigning from Levy Pants I have secured a new position. Under the influence of her deranged Sicilian friends my mother has taken to dressing up like an Alabama teenager and bowling on certain evenings with a mad old woman with a toilet fixation and her nephew, a notorious cross-dresser affiliated in some corrupt way with the police department.

58 EXT. THE QUARTER - DAY

IGNATIUS walks the streets looking in shop windows and swigging Dr. Nut. He passes a few windows. One says "Specialty Dancers Required". IGNATIUS thinks for a moment. An aggressive face appears at the window. Another shop advertises for "Alert boy required for grocery deliveries. Own bike". We see IGNATIUS picturing himself as a grocery boy. Over this, we have been hearing the rest of his letter.

IGNATIUS (OVER)

That thousand dollar debt continues to hang over me like the sword of Damocles and it was born in on me that I would be beaten senseless with a baked wine-bottle if I dared stay at home, so I decided to seek employment in the French Quarter.

59 EXT. POYDRAS STREET - DAY

IGNATIUS waddles slowly and wearily along this Quarter street. Suddenly he stops outside a narrow garage and looks up sniffing. The sign above the garage door reads:

PARADISE VENDORS INCORPORATED

Ignatius enters the garage.

60 INT. PARADISE VENDORS - DAY

Inside we see a battered collection of hot-dog carts, all constructed in the shape of frankfurters. In the corner MR CLYDE is boiling hot dogs in a huge pot.

IGNATIUS

Pardon me sir. Do you retail here?

CLYDE

What do you want?

IGNATIUS

I would like to try one of your hot dogs.

CLYDE

Sure.

IGNATIUS

They smell rather tasty. May I select my own?

CLYDE

Here, take this fork. Try to keep your hands out of the water. It's like acid. Look what it's done to the fork.

IGNATIUS prongs a dog, slaps it in a bun and gulps it down.

IGNATIUS

My, these are rather strong. What's in them?

CLYDE

Rubber, cereal, tripe. Who knows? I wouldn't touch one of them myself.

IGNATIUS

They're curiously appealing. Is that Scarlatti?

MR CLYDE has been whistling. He looks around nervously.

CLYDE

Where?

IGNATIUS

That tune.

CLYDE

I thought I was whistling "Turkey In The Straw".

IGNATIUS

Well don't. If you must whistle, whistle only Scarlatti. He was the last of the musicians. I do believe that I shall have another of these savories.

IGNATIUS eats three more in rapid succession. CLYDE looks on amazed.

CLYDE

I wish there was more like you, son.

IGNATIUS

Unlikely. Hm! I cannot recently remember having been so totally satisfied.

CLYDE

Okay. Four weenies. That'll be one dollar.

IGNATIUS

Ah! I am afraid that they will all have to be on the house. Or on the garage or whatever it is. Like St. Francis I am above money.

CLYDE

(furious)

I'll call the police.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God!

CLYDE

One dollar.

CLYDE deftly places the two rotting tongs of his fork at IGNATIUS' throat.

IGNATIUS

You're puncturing my imported muffler!

CLYDE

Shut your fat lip and pay me. I'm not gonna be robbed again. That's all that happens to you in the hot dog trade. Holdups, muggings. Nobody respects a hot dog vendor.

IGNATIUS

That is patently untrue, sir. No one respects hot dog vendors more than I. They perform one of our society's few worthwhile services. I would happily pay you twenty dollars a dog if only I had the money.

CLYDE relaxes his hold: a thought has struck him.

CLYDE

Okay, buddy, now listen to me. You got no money? This is how we play it.

61 EXT. PIRATE'S ALLEY - DAY

We see a hot-dog cart trundle along the street. Its sign reads.

TWELVE INCHES OF PARADISE

We widen to reveal IGNATIUS pushing the tin weenie fantastically attired in a pirate's uniform: scarf, ear-ring, sash, cutlass and boots.

IGNATIUS

Hot dogs! Hot dogs from Paradise!

CITIZENS and TOURISTS cross the road to avoid IGNATIUS, who opens the lid of the wagon and helps himself to a double-dog with plenty of chilli-sauce. He pulls a Big Chief pad out of the bun compartment, licks a pencil and jots as he pushes the cart with his stomach.

IGNATIUS (OVER)

"And so it is that I have now negotiated a position in a reputable catering business, here, in the gourmet capital of the South, with free uniform thrown in. It is an opportunity to study at first hand the types that frequent the French Quarter...

We have seen DORIAN GREENE in the background approaching with amazement.

DORIAN

It's the ghost of Lafitte, the pirate. No, it's Oliver Hardy. Or is it Susan Hayward? "
(quoting)

"The Tartar woman is for me, and my blood says, take her!"

IGNATIUS

Get away from me, you fop.

DORIAN watches IGNATIUS swallow a twelve inch dog.

DORIAN

(admiringly)

My. You should been at our wild little gathering last night. You would have gone down so well.

IGNATIUS

Where is my mother's hat?

DORIAN

Oh, that. I'm afraid it was destroyed. Everyone dearly loved it.

IGNATIUS

I won't ask you just how it was desecrated.

DORIAN

I wouldn't remember anyway. Little *moi* spent the evening being filled with milk punches.

IGNATIUS

Buy a hot-dog?

DORIAN

I care about what I eat, darling. My body is a temple. So remember, if you enter it, be sure and take your shoes off first.

IGNATIUS

Don't be revolting.

DORIAN

But, heart, why the sensational drag? Tell Mama. Tell Mama all.

IGNATIUS

This ensemble was my employer's idea. It is meant to draw attention to our product.

DORIAN

(lighting a Salem)

That ear-ring. It's so Rita Moreno.

IGNATIUS

If you want a costume like this, then buy one.

DORIAN

It would be a riot at a party.

IGNATIUS

I suspect that the parties you attend must be true visions of the apocalypse. In a few years, you and your friends will probably take over the country.

DORIAN

Oh, we're planning to. We have connections in the highest places. You'd be surprised.

IGNATIUS

No, I wouldn't. Now, why don't you run along? Look, there's a sailor drifting along Chartres Street. He looks rather lonely.

DORIAN glances down to the Chartres Street end of the alley and sees the SAILOR.

DORIAN

Oh, him. That's only Timmy.

IGNATIUS

Timmy? Do you know him?

DORIAN

Of course. He's one of my dearest friends. He's not a sailor at all.

IGNATIUS

What? Do you mean that he is impersonating a member of the armed forces of this country?

DORIAN

That's not all he impersonates.

IGNATIUS

This is extremely serious. Every soldier and sailor that we see could simply be some mad decadent in disguise. The United States is probably totally defenseless!

DORIAN and TIMMY wave at each other and the sailor drifts out of sight.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)

I wonder how many of our military are simply people like your friend.

DORIAN

Who knows?

IGNATIUS

Of course, this could be a world-wide deception. The next war could turn out to be one massive orgy...

(thinking)

... good grief. Actually, this might be quite beneficial to the world. It could mean an end to war forever. Instead of killing and maiming their enemies, the soldiers of the world will simply fall into bed with them. This could be the key to lasting peace. Perhaps you are the hope for the future.

DORIAN

We would certainly help to end the population explosion.

IGNATIUS

Have you people considered forming a political party and running a candidate?

DORIAN

Politics? Oh, Maid of Orleans, how dreary.

IGNATIUS

Minkoff will spit with jealous rage. This is very important. We may be able to save the world! We must organize immediately.

DORIAN

I can't tell you how much you're depressing me.

IGNATIUS

There must be a large meeting to kick off the campaign.

DORIAN

Wouldn't that be something like a party?

IGNATIUS

Yes, in a way.

DORIAN

Well darling, you should have said so! We'll have it at my place. Friday night. My card.

IGNATIUS

(taking the card)

Dorian Greene. Very well, Mr. Greene, I shall come on Friday night and make a speech. Begin organizing at every level. You must raise every man you can.

DORIAN

(eyebrows raised)

Heart...

MYRNA (OFF)

(reading)

"So you will be eager to learn that I have found the key to the future..."

62 EXT. CARNEGIE HALL, NEW YORK - PM

MYRNA are lining up for a Judy Garland concert at Radio City: there is a long line and they are camped sitting in a doorway, wearing mittens and stamping from the cold. MYRNA cheers them up by reading from a letter.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

(reading out loud)

"... it resides, not in the hands of absurd, posturing fools like you and your hashish-maddened comrades in your frothy coffee be-bop bars, but in the swelling tide of queens, pansies, fruits, flits, dykes and assorted faggotry...

Members of the crowd who fall into this category, overhearing, are either amused, intrigued or offended.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

...whose numbers, according to a providential Nature, are growing daily. Within a week I will have organized a political crusade that will show up your own bijou activism for the amateur sham it really is and you will be begging me on bended knees to join the new homosexual army that will shortly rule the world."

A cheer from some of those listening. SPIKE sulks.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

In the meantime, I continue my work in the catering trade. No doubt your tortured erotomaniac mind will be eager to find something symbolic in my involvement with twelve inch weenies in a bun. If you dare to suggest such a thing in your next communication with me, however, I shall come over to Manhattan and spear you with my boiling fork.

MYRNA and her friends laugh. We see the marquee above them announcing JUDY GARLAND IN CONCERT, and at the same time we hear, over:

JUDY GARLAND

CLANG CLANG CLANG WENT THE TROLLEY

63 EXT. ST. CHARLES AVENUE - DAY

IGNATIUS is pushing his cart against the traffic toward the Quarter. He is reading a letter and does not seem to notice that his cart is traveling in a straight and unswerving line.

MYRNA (OVER)

Ignatius, I am worried for your psychosexual health. It was you who pointed out the phallic significance of the frankfurters, not I. We have known, have we not, for some time, that your latent sodomite tendencies have been preying on your mind. This scheme of forming a political party comprised only of homosexuals is one proof of this.

A streetcar is approaching. The MOTORMAN sees the weenie wagon on the track ahead and rings the trolley-bell.

GARLAND
DING DING DING WENT THE BELL

IGNATIUS continues to peruse the letter and push the cart.

MYRNA (OVER)
Your insistence that you could only contemplate
a woman who shares your worldview and love of
Boethius is another. Such a woman cannot exist
in the modern world and you know this.

GARLAND
ZING ZING ZING WENT MY HEARTSTRINGS
FROM THE MOMENT I SAW HIM I FELL

IGNATIUS stops, puzzled, and looks down. The bicycle tire of the
cart is stuck in the groove of a tram-line. He stoops to pull it
out.

GARLAND
CHUG CHUG CHUG WENT THE MOTOR
BUMP BUMP BUMP WENT THE BRAKE

The MOTORMAN applies the brake.

MYRNA (OVER)
It distresses me that my work here in New York
prevents me from coming down and sorting you
out. In the meantime eat nothing but pulses,
drink nothing but water and do nothing but
meditate.

At last IGNATIUS sees the streetcar bearing down on him.

IGNATIUS
Oh, my God!

JUDY
THUMP THUMP THUMP WENT MY HEART-STRINGS
WHEN HE SMILED YOU COULD FEEL THE CAR SHAKE

GEORGE appears on the sidewalk and takes the situation in. Wildly
IGNATIUS tugs at the cart, wrenching it from the ruts. The cart
totters and falls to the ground, sending buns and steaming dogs
everywhere. IGNATIUS collapses in a heap.

IGNATIUS
Help! My valve has slammed shut!

The cart is still in the path of the oncoming streetcar. GEORGE runs
over and begins lifting it.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
Oh my God. A pubescent gangster!

GEORGE
I'm just tryna help you out.

IGNATIUS makes a vague effort to assist. The streetcar gets nearer and nearer.

IGNATIUS
Where did you come from?

GEORGE
Look, you want me to help you save this pile of junk or not?

GEORGE heaves the wagon upright and pushes it out of the way, just as the streetcar rattles by. The MOTORMAN leans out as he passes by to get a better look at IGNATIUS, sprawled on the cobble-stones.

MOTORMAN
You fat slob. Whaddaya tryin to do?

IGNATIUS
(to GEORGE)
I hope you realize that our association is only the result of an emergency.

GEORGE
(raising IGNATIUS)
Come on. Up.

IGNATIUS
(staring at the backs of his hands)
My hands are breaking out in small white bumps. Hot dog?

GEORGE
No, thanks.

IGNATIUS
Then pardon me while I have one. My system is petitioning for appeasement.

GEORGE
Now I helped you out, prof. Maybe you can do the same for me.

IGNATIUS
(eating)
Perhaps.

GEORGE indicates the brown paper packages under his arm.

GEORGE
You see these? These are school supplies. Now, this is my problem. I gotta pick them up from the distributor at lunchtime, but I can't deliver them until after school's closed. So I gotta carry them around for almost two hours. You understand?

IGNATIUS

(belching)

Please stand further off. The odor of your hair-tonic is doing desperate things to my pyloric valve.

GEORGE

What I'm looking for is a place to put these things in the afternoon. Now I could meet you someplace about one and put them in your bun compartment and come get them out sometime before three.

IGNATIUS

How bogus. Do you seriously expect me to believe you? Delivering school supplies after the schools are closed?

GEORGE

I'll pay you a coupla bucks every day.

IGNATIUS

You will? Well, you will have to pay me a week's rent in advance. I don't deal in small sums.

GEORGE opens his hand-tooled wallet and gives IGNATIUS ten dollars.

GEORGE

Here's ten for the week.

IGNATIUS happily pockets the cash and snatches one of the packages from GEORGE's arms.

IGNATIUS

I must see what it is that I'm storing. You're probably selling goof balls to infants.

GEORGE

Hey! I can't deliver the stuff if it's opened.

IGNATIUS

Too bad for you.

IGNATIUS tears off the brown wrapping and reveals a stack of large postcards.

GEORGE

Gimme that, you nut.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God!

We see the postcard. A NUDE WOMAN is sitting on the edge of a desk next to a globe of the world. She holds a piece of chalk in a way which suggests onanism. Her face is hidden by a large green book: "The Consolation of Philosophy".

IGNATIUS

My Boethius! Do I believe what I am seeing?
What brilliance. What taste. At last.

IGNATIUS turns the photograph over to reveal the address of the Night of Joy, as stamped upon it by BURMA JONES.

GEORGE

Give that back.

IGNATIUS

This one is mine.

IGNATIUS pockets the photograph. He hands the package back to GEORGE.

GEORGE

Okay, you can keep that one. I gotta blaze.

GEORGE opens the bun compartment, drops his packages inside and runs off.

IGNATIUS

Wait! Where in the world did you get these?
Who is this brilliant woman? Who is she?

GEORGE

(calling back)
Mind your own beeswax.

IGNATIUS takes the card from his pocket. He looks at the address.

IGNATIUS

Bourbon Street. The Night of Joy.

He starts to scribble on a Yellow Chief tablet: we move away from him until he is a small figure on the tramlines.

IGNATIUS (OVER)

So Myrna Minkoff, the woman who loves Boethius does not exist in the modern world. Ha! The great wheel turns. On Friday night I will have raised an army to rescue her.

64 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS - NIGHT

MYRNA is looking down at a letter in her hands.

IGNATIUS (OVER)

My next letter will have you trembling with jealousy and admiration. In one swift move I will have founded a new political crusade and rescued a saint from her captors.

PRESIDENT (OVER)

Which was the last letter Miss Minkoff every received from Ignatius J. Reilly.

MYRNA finds a hand placed on her shoulders.

TALC
(whispering)
There's nothing you could have done for him,
Myrna. We all did what we could.

MYRNA
(hissing)
Take your hands off me you goddammed creep.

TALC
Now, now, little lady ...

The PRESIDENT mops his brow.

PRESIDENT
Yes, Ignatius Reilly was lucky indeed to have a
friend like Miss Minkoff in whom he could
confide.

There is a sudden agonized yelp. TALC's hands fly to his lap and he
moves his chair away from MYRNA.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
But, ladies and gentlemen, we all know, I
think, that a boy's best friend, now as ever,
is his mother. In Irene Reilly, Ignatius had a
mother of such grace, and strength and faith as
any child might pray for. How many budding
artists can have been blessed with a mother who
drove them on with such love and understanding?

We move in on MRS REILLY. Tears start to roll down her cheeks and
she whispers:

MRS REILLY
Ignatius! Oh Ignatius ...

FADE TO:

65 EXT. REILLY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

IGNATIUS, younger and without his mustache, is patting down dirt with
a spade on a little mound outside the front of the house. He is
wearing a black arm-band. MRS REILLY, in her green hat, stands there
too.

IGNATIUS has tears streaming down his face. He plants a Celtic cross
over the mound.

MRS REILLY
He didn't feel nothing, honey.

IGNATIUS
Each man kills the thing he loves. The coward
does it with a kiss, the brave man with a
sword.

MRS REILLY
It want your fault. Not really.

IGNATIUS takes off his hunting cap. For the first time we see him bare-headed.

IGNATIUS
Rex. Bravest and truest of creatures. Pure in heart, in thought, in word and deed. Too noble for this vulgar world. We shall not see your like again.

MRS REILLY
When you're a professor married to that nice Miss Minkoff honey, you can buy another dog. Easy. A whole kennel full.

IGNATIUS
I have left Loyola.

MRS REILLY
(staring)
You done what?

IGNATIUS
They did not understand me. I forgave them, readily. But of course what they could not forgive is that I understood them.

MRS REILLY
But what are you going to do?

IGNATIUS
Myrna has asked me to accompany her to New York.

MRS REILLY
New York? New York City?

IGNATIUS
I'll be out of your hair at least.

IGNATIUS stoops to nail a wooden plaque into the down-beam of the Celtic cross.

MRS REILLY
B-but I don't want you outta my hair, sweetie. You're all I got. Twenty years we been here together. You with your books and your degrees and me looking after.

IGNATIUS
No doubt the Minkoff hussy would call that unhealthy. The passing of Rex may well mark a crisis in Fortuna's cycle.

IGNATIUS straightens himself and looks down at his handiwork. There is writing on the plaque we can't quite make out.

MRS REILLY

Honey, what'm I gonna do without my boy?

IGNATIUS puts an arm round her.

IGNATIUS

Don't distress yourself, mother. I am staying here. New York would not understand me either.

MRS REILLY

No, treasure. I guess it wouldn't at that. You and me, Ignatius. I understand you, don't I? You're my boy. There's just you and me against the world...

IGNATIUS pushes his mother away.

IGNATIUS

How many times do I have to tell you not to talk like in clichés, woman? Find your own words please, don't borrow them from Peyton Place.

MRS REILLY

Sorry, honey.

IGNATIUS

Now. I have to catch a trolley to the bus-station to see off the minx.

He bows to Rex's grave and replaces his hat with dignity. MRS REILLY leans down to read the plaque.

REX: Holiest of Dogs. Taken from this false world after accidentally swallowing weedkiller, Loyola, October 9th, 1962. Requiescat In Pacem.

The "cat" of "requiescat" has been crossed out and, as an afterthought, the word "dog" has been written above it.

66 INT. THE REILLY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

SANTA BATTAGLIA, MANCUSO and MRS REILLY are gathered in the parlor, a tray of cocktails, jelly daiquiris and so on, on the coffee table.

SANTA is looking out the window, awaiting someone.

MRS REILLY

I aint known a single day's peace or a single night's sleep since that dog died, Santa. Maybe Ignatius was right about that wheel a fortune of his.

MANCUSO

(starting at the memory)

Uh... Miss Reilly, that reminds me... that book. I...

MANCUSO gulps guiltily and gives a pleading look to SANTA.

MRS REILLY

Oh yeah, maybe you'd better hand it back to me. Ignatius keeps 'plaining about it being stolen.

SANTA

Angelo is trying to say he lost it.

MRS REILLY

Heaven sakes...

MANCUSO

This young guy beat me over the head with it... I'll catch up with him one day.

SANTA

Sure you will, Angelo.

ANGELO

(gloomily)

I gotta make one arrest soon, anyhow, or I'll be selling hotdogs too.

MRS REILLY

Don't remind me of my shame...all that education adding up to nothing but weenies.

SANTA

(still at the window)

I wonder how come Claude aint showed up yet.

MRS REILLY

To tell you the truth, Santa, I don't think I want to meet this old man. S'pose Ignatius comes back from work early?

SANTA

Aw, relax, Irene. You said he's doing an afternoon shift today. You making me nervous. You'll like him, won't she Angelo?

MANCUSO

I never met the guy.

MRS REILLY

Too old to be making new friends.

MANCUSO erupts into a fit of sneezing and coughing.

SANTA

Lord Angelo. Stop that coughing. Go to the bathroom and gargle.

MANCUSO nodding and coughing, leaves the room.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Now listen to me, Irene. You had arthritis very bad. The bowling's helping you out.

(MORE)

SANTA (cont'd)

Right? You was stuck home with that crazy boy every night until Santa come along. Right? You gotta debt of a thousand dollars? Listen to Santa, precious. This old man looks like he got him a little money. He dresses neat. He knows you from somewhere. He likes you.

(with a speaking look)

The two of you is going off to Galatoires this evening. Have some fine food, some fine wine. You be nice to him. Claude can pay off your debt like that!

MRS REILLY

(understanding)

Yeah?

The doorbell goes.

MRS REILLY

(panicking)

I don't know Santa ...tell him I hadda go...

SANTA shakes her head and goes to the door. MR ROBICHAUX steps into the parlor carrying a large bunch of flowers.

ROBICHAUX

I'm sorry I'm a little late.

MRS REILLY sits frozen on the sofa staring into her drink. We hear gargling from the bathroom.

SANTA

Irene! What are you doing, girl? Say "hello" to Mr. Robichaux.

MRS REILLY

(to her drink)

Glad to meet you.

ROBICHAUX

(to SANTA)

Maybe Miss Reilly don't remember, but we met before.

SANTA's eyes open widely.

MRS REILLY

I remember.

ROBICHAUX

It wasn't your fault, Miss Reilly. It's them police. They all a bunch of communiss.

SANTA

Policemen got them a hard line of work. Sometimes they make a mistake.

ROBICHAUX
I'll never forget that Patrolman Mancuso.

SANTA
Mancuso? You say Mancuso?

Coughing explodes in the bathroom.

MRS REILLY
(desperately)
Let's go out for a walk. What do you say?

MANCUSO appears in the doorway.

ROBICHAUX
Christ Awwmighty! That's him! If you wasn't a
dirty cop, I'd punch you right in the nose!

MRS REILLY
Santa, honey, you feel like a nice walk?

SANTA
Listen Claude. Angelo got that cold on account
of he made some mistakes lately. They got him
stuck in a toilet. Next thing they gonna kick
him off the force.

MANCUSO coughs sadly.

ROBICHAUX
Maybe I was a little excited.

MANCUSO
I shouldn't of took you in. I got nervous.

MRS REILLY
(to ROBICHAUX)
It was all my fault. Mr. Robichaux, you don't
know Ignatius. He makes trouble every place he
goes.

SANTA
(eagerly)
Somebody oughta punch that Ignatius in the
nose.

MANCUSO
Somebody oughta punch him in the mouth.

SANTA
Somebody oughta beat up on that Ignatius. See?
We's agreed on something! Now come on.
Everybody make friends.

ROBICHAUX grins at IRENE.

ROBICHAUX
Miss Reilly. Ma'am. May I say that you are
looking as handsome as any lady in Louisiana?
I...

There is a bang on the door and IGNATIUS enters, in his pirate's uniform. MRS REILLY rises nervously. IGNATIUS surveys the scene.

IGNATIUS

Highballs. Cream cheese and pepper jelly.
Lipstick. I'm amazed your clothes are still
on.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, what you doing home this time of day?

IGNATIUS

(going to the ice-box)
I am addressing a political meeting tonight.

MRS REILLY

What lies are you telling now, boy?

SANTA rolls her eyes at MRS REILLY behind IGNATIUS who is grabbing food out of the fridge, as if to say "humor him".

MRS REILLY (CONT'D)

(a soothing tone)
Sure, honey. A political meeting. That's
nice.

SANTA

We need someone strong since Huey Long passed
away.

IGNATIUS

Don't be absurd.
(noticing ROBICHAUX)
What's that deluded Macarthyite doing in my
house?

MRS REILLY

Now, Ignatius...

ROBICHAUX

Afternoon, son.

IGNATIUS

Son? Son?

The TELEPHONE rings.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius, that'll be Mr. Levy for you. He's
been calling all day. And don't you go
pretending he's got a wrong number, he knows
different.

IGNATIUS answers the 'phone. He speaks in an English Mayfair accent.

IGNATIUS

Hellay? Who? No, no. As a matter of fact Mr
Reilly was called out of town on rather crucial
business. Who did?

(MORE)

IGNATIUS (cont'd)

Yes, well, don't pay any attention to her, she is far from stable and even farther from sober. I? The butler, sir, naturally. Actually Mr. Reilly is in the state mental hospital at Mandeville...yes...since being so viciously dismissed by you his ego has become badly bruised. You may yet receive his psychiatrist's bills, they are rather staggering...mm?...Yes, very dangerous. Visiting hours are between the hours of two and five pm. Take him some cookies. Happy to have been of service.

IGNATIUS hangs up.

MRS REILLY

Oh, Ignatius, what you done now?

IGNATIUS

It would only confuse you more.

(looking at them)

So. This is how you spend the money I earn trudging the streets.

MRS REILLY

Money? What money?

IGNATIUS

I am going to my room to bathe my temples in eau de cologne and prepare my speech.

(to MANCUSO)

You have done nothing to recover my valuable book, I notice.

MANCUSO

Well now, son...

IGNATIUS

Never mind. I have my own methods and expect to make a citizens arrest this evening. I may even be engaged to be married before the evening is out. Tonight, I feel, will be a night of joy...

IGNATIUS leaves for his room, shutting the door behind him.

MRS REILLY

Married? He say married?

ROBICHAUX

He been out in the sun, Miss Reilly? What he dress like that for?

MRS REILLY starts to cry. ROBICHAUX goes to comfort her.

MRS REILLY

I'm so ashamed.

ROBICHAUX

Hush, Mrs. Reilly. Don't you worry none.

MANCUSO

(thinking hard)

Night of Joy, did he say?

MRS REILLY

You heard that stuff he gave Mr. Levy about staying up at Mandeville hospital? Maybe he knows. Maybe the poor boy knows he aint right in the head.

SANTA

Could be that's the best thing for him, sugar. A little rest up at Charity. They take care of him there.

MANCUSO

Something in that, Miss Reilly ...

ROBICHAUX

Might be the kindest thing.

SANTA

See? You oughta think about it, precious. For his sake, much as yours.

They are all in agreement: MRS REILLY looks from one to the other.

MRS REILLY

Oh my poor boy. My poor unhappy boy!

MRS REILLY dissolves into floods.

FADE TO:

67 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS HOTEL - NIGHT

CLAUDE has an arm round MRS REILLY, who weeps copiously.

The PRESIDENT takes a sip of milk punch.

PRESIDENT

A mother is a wonderful thing, ladies and gentlemen. Another great American invention. Ignatius own father, as many of you know, departed this life before ever his son was born, yet a number of good citizens of this community might be said to have been as fathers to Ignatius. Doctor Talc, we've seen, filled that rôle with honor and grace.

MYRNA utters a contemptuous noise at this and whispers the word "hog-shit" loud enough for many to hear. TALC grins feebly.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

His first employer, Mr. Augustus Levy can also be thanked for the selfless, fatherly interest he showed in the young genius.

MR LEVY, uncomfortable in a stiff collar, grins sheepishly. MRS LEVY manages a tight smile too. We move in on LEVY's face.

MR LEVY
(to himself)
Young genius, yeah. On account of him we got to have Miss Trixie move in.

FADE TO:

68 EXT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

A bright red Ferrari Dino sweeps into a parking place outside Levy Pants. MISS TRIXIE, and the LEVY's are wedged inside

MR LEVY
(voice over)
Took me two weeks to persuade Mrs. Levy to send her back to work.

69 INT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

GONZALEZ looks up from her desk to see MISS TRIXIE enter. She is made up and looks like Marlene Dietrich in her final years. GONZALEZ gives a start.

GONZALEZ
Miss Trixie!

MISS TRIXIE
(snarling)
This is Levy Pants!

MR and MRS LEVY appear behind her.

MRS LEVY
You're back again where you're wanted and needed, darling.

MISS TRIXIE
I thought I was retired. You people have tricked me!

MRS LEVY
But you're a new woman now. New teeth, new hair, new look. You've years left in you.

MISS TRIXIE
(savagely)
Bitch.

LEVY
Now are you happy? If she had a knife on her, I'd be taking you to the hospital.

MRS LEVY
Listen to the fire in her voice. So vigorous. It's unbelievable. Wait till the Women's Psychology Group reads my paper on her.

GONZALEZ
(heartbroken)
She's back?

MRS LEVY
Can you believe your eyes?

GONZALEZ
She certainly looks tan.

MISS TRIXIE
I am a very attractive woman.

LEVY
All right. You've had your fun. Let's go.
I'm getting depressed.

GONZALEZ
Just a moment, sir. I have some mail for you.
A certified letter from Abelman's.

LEVY
What's he say?

GONZALEZ
Well, it's marked personal so I haven't...

LEVY
C'mon. Read it to me.

GONZALEZ opens the letter, clears his throat and reads.

GONZALEZ
"Dear Gus Levy, We have passed on your
insulting letter to our lawyer, who is
investigating a libel suit for \$500,000. This
may do little to compensate for our hurt
feelings. We will see you in court like
gentlemen. No more threats, please. Signed,
I. Abelman, Abelman's Dry Goods."

MR LEVY stares.

LEVY
Insulting letter? What...

GONZALEZ takes a thermostat from the envelope. LEVY snatches it.

LEVY
"Mr. I. Abelman, Mongoloid, Esq. , We have
received via post your absurd and ungrammatical
comments about our trousers, revealing, as they
do, your total lack of contact with reality and
your blighted worldview. It is not the
trousers we sent you that are undersized, but
your brain and doubtless your shriveled
manhood. If you molest us further with any
more of these illiterate, ill-tempered, ill-
spelled whinings you will feel the sting of our
(MORE)

LEVY (cont'd)
lash across your pitiful shoulders... yours in
contempt.' Gus Levy." Who wrote this? Who
wrote this?

GONZALEZ
I don't know sir. I never saw it before.

LEVY
Gonzalez, what was the name of that kook you
had working in here, the big fat schmo with the
green cap that I fired?

MRS LEVY
That you never managed to fire, you mean.

MISS TRIXIE
Gloria. That was Gloria.

GONZALEZ
Reilly. Ignatius J. Reilly.

70 INT. LEVY'S LODGE - DAY

MRS LEVY is on her exercise board watching a large color TV. MR LEVY
is dialling.

MRS LEVY
Gus, Perry Como has gone orange again.

LEVY
Hello? ...Hello? What? Well, who are you?
Butler? Well, now just exactly what... where?
Mandeville, but... oh jeez. Well, do you think
we'd be allowed to visit? Right... right.
What's that? Sure, we'll bring some chocolate
chip. Thank you.

MRS LEVY
What is it, Gus? A problem?

LEVY
I just found our Mr. Reilly.

71 EXT. NEW ORLEANS - DAY

The bright red Ferrari bombs through the outskirts of the town.
Inside, MRS LEVY is eating from a bag of cookies.

MR levy
(voice-over)
But the doctors up at Mandeville had never
heard of him.

MRS LEVY
And you really believed he would be there?

LEVY

Well, the butler was insistent.

MRS LEVY

You are sad, Gus. This car is sad. Your life is sad. You've run your father's business into the ground and now you are about to lose everything. Sad.

LEVY

Honey. Shut your face. Hm?

They are passing a courthouse, outside which there is something of a commotion. LANA LEE and GEORGE appear on the steps hand-cuffed, and are ushered into a police-van. Cameras flash. MANCUSO, in his uniform, stands proudly in front of other PHOTOGRAPHERS. The SERGEANT has his arm on his shoulder. LIZ, BETTY and FRIEDA pose in muscular fashion. The LEVY's watch as they pass.

MRS LEVY

You're gonna find yourself in that courtroom before long.

LEVY

On a charge of murdering my wife.

MRS LEVY

You were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, Gus Levy and it rusted.

LEVY

Will you shut your goddammed mouth?

An exterior view of St. Charles' Avenue as the car zooms along and pulls into Constantinople. It is stuck behind a lumbering old Plymouth.

MRS LEVY

(scornfully)

A man who lives here is gonna have a butler. Please.

We see the old Plymouth stop outside the Reilly house. The LEVY's slow down opposite.

MRS REILLY is getting out of the driver's seat, she slams the door and walks around to the open rear window where IGNATIUS is sitting. His head is in a bandage, blood seeping from the ear region.

LEVY

Hey, that's him.

MRS REILLY

I'll get married if I want to, boy. You can't stop me. Not now. To think I would have to live to see my son stand up to give evidence in a courtroom filled with strippers and pornographers.

IGNATIUS

I was doing my public duty. You should be proud.

MRS REILLY

Proud! You told me last night you were going to a political meeting, not a cat-house. When Claude and I came out of Galatoires, I just couldn't believe my eyes...

IGNATIUS

You're not to see that man any more. He is a dangerous radical.

MRS REILLY

Claude can be kind to a person, and that's more than you can do with all your ideas and all your graduating smart. I want to be treated nice by somebody before I die. You need a rest, baby, you know you do. Up at charity... after last night ...

MR and MRS LEVY watch in disbelief from the safety of their car.

IGNATIUS

Mandeville! Where they suck out your brain through a straw.

IGNATIUS scrambles out of the back seat and slams the door.

MRS REILLY

Ignatius that aint so. You 'member old Mr. Becnel used to live down the block? They took him in because he was running down the street naked.

IGNATIUS

Of course he was running down the street naked! His skin could not bear any more of the dacron and nylon clothing that was clogging his pores. I have always considered Mr. Becnel as one of the martyrs of our age.

MRS LEVY

Meshugah.

MRS REILLY

They take care of you. You could write stuff in your little copybooks like always.

IGNATIUS

(roaring)

They would try to turn me into the kind of moron who liked television and new cars and frozen food and hair sprays and lanolin and cellophane and plastic and ice-machines and air-conditioning.

LEVY

Mr. Reilly, this man wants to sue us for half a million dollars.

IGNATIUS

Hm. Have you thought of speaking to Miss Trixie, the Mother of Commerce?

LEVY

Miss Trixie couldn't write a goddam grocery list.

IGNATIUS

Interrogate her. Her senility is a guise. She hates Levy Pants for not retiring her and showering her with turkeys. She was filled with hostility. And if Abelman can't see that making shorts rather than long pants is the key to a prosperous future in this hideous new leisure-obsessed America then he doesn't deserve to live. Good afternoon.

LEVY

Hey!

But IGNATIUS has entered the house, banging the door behind him.

LEVY (CONT'D)

(softly: an idea dawning)

Hey!

He turns back to the car and looks at his wife.

72 INT. TRIXIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is filled with a huge mountain of litter. MRS LEVY wrinkles her nose. MR LEVY shows MISS TRIXIE the thermostat.

LEVY

Miss Trixie. Did you write this to Abelman?

MISS TRIXIE

Blow it out your ass.

LEVY

Mr. Reilly says you did.

MISS TRIXIE

Well, then, I guess I did. Now that you mention it, I guess I did write it at that. You people deserve it, too. I hope you lose everything you own.

MRS LEVY leans over MISS TRIXIE's shoulder and snatches away her wig.

MRS LEVY

Give me back that wig, you ungrateful bitch. And I'll take back your new teeth too.

LEVY
(producing a document)
We'll retire you if you'll sign a statement
that you wrote that letter.

MISS TRIXIE
Retire? Gimme that.

As she does so, MR LEVY thinks.

LEVY
You know, that freak Reilly gave me an idea.
From now on we make Bermuda shorts only. I
want a whole new line of wash and wear swatches
from the mills. Levy Pants becomes Levy
Shorts.

MRS LEVY
Levy Shorts. That's rich. You'll go broke in
a year.

MR LEVY looks into the distance.

LEVY (OVER)
Levy Shorts for Home or Sports.

FADE TO:

73 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS - NIGHT

MRS LEVY's jewelry glitters, MR LEVY smiles to himself.

LEVY (CONT'D)
(to himself, happily)
Levy Shorts -- it takes all sorts.

PRESIDENT
Ladies and gentlemen, all of you gathered here
knew and loved Ignatius J. Reilly ...

Rich DINERS concur. MYRNA MINKOFF snaps her purse shut with a
vicious clang as she lights another cigarette.

MINKOFF
Sons of bitches...

The PRESIDENT chooses to ignore this. His face contorts dramatically
into a rictus of magisterial grief.

PRESIDENT
If I may quote Thomas Hardy...

74 EXT. ST. PETER STREET - NIGHT

PRESIDENT (OVER)
... it is one of life's little ironies that the
begetter of so much fortune for others should
himself be cut down by a capricious fate.

IGNATIUS stands, in his pirate finery, ear-ring glittering, outside the gate of a splendid 18th century three-story, yellow stucco French-style house. He has his hot-dog cart with him and two large weenies are disappearing down his throat.

He presses a bell. He takes some pieces of paper from his silky inner recesses. Scraps of Big Chief. The photograph of LANA tumbles to the floor. He picks it up and looks at it eagerly. He rings the bell again and reads from the Big Chief jottings.

IGNATIUS

(practicing)

"Sodomites of the world unite... not a division of panzers but a division of pansies... fruits of war... Queen's Own Rifles..."

As he is mumbling this to himself the gate opens. DORIAN appears, resplendent in a golden velvet suit.

DORIAN

Darling, you're simply late. The rally is getting gorgeously out of hand. Come with mother.

IGNATIUS

(indicating his cart)

Can I park this in your passage?

DORIAN

(eyebrows raised)

Angel...

IGNATIUS parks it and follows DORIAN along the carriageway, coldly eyeing the furiously camp pastel fittings. The sounds of revelry come from within the house.

IGNATIUS

This repellingly flamboyant whimsy belongs to you?

DORIAN

Mm. Soon be time for a make-over. Pastel is horrifyingly yesterday. At the moment I'm excited about angry Mediterranean yellows and passionate ultramarines. Not to mention ultra-passionate marines, but that's another story... stop it, Dorian, stop it.

He slaps himself playfully.

IGNATIUS

And where does the money come from to support this grotesque way of life?

DORIAN

Oh, my dear family out there in the wheat. They send me large checks every month so long as I stay out of Nebraska. Such a penance.

IGNATIUS

You don't work?

DORIAN

Well, honeysuckle, one day I mean to open a select little teashop in the Vieux Carré. Life's dream. When I find the right location. Offering rare and exciting books and collectibles to the discerning few.

IGNATIUS

Hm ... New Orleans needs a good bookshop. Do you know, you can't get a copy of Boethius anywhere?

DORIAN

(putting his hand to his heart)
You amaze and horrify me.

75 INT. DORIAN'S APARTMENT, PARLOR - SAME TIME

DORIAN opens the door to his apartment and we are assailed by the sound of JUDY GARLAND over the rainbow.

IGNATIUS stands staring at the sight. There are dozens of MEN, some elegant, some rough, some in drag.

DORIAN

(à la Gloria Swanson)
This floor used to be wood, but I had it changed. Valentino said there's nothing like tile for the tango.

IGNATIUS notes TIMMY, the sailor-suited boy he saw in the street earlier, hanging in chains on the wall, clad only in a G-string. A party of choice YOUNG MEN is by the record-player, one of them miming to JUDY.

FIRST YOUNG MAN

Divine!

SECOND YOUNG MAN

Fantastic!

At the center of one group is a COWBOY, at the center of another is an OLDER MAN IN BLACK LEATHER, teaching judo holds to admiring STUDENTS.

DORIAN

(to IGNATIUS)
I only invited the better element.

DORIAN is passing TIMMY and slaps him hard.

TIMMY

Again. I deserve it. Again. Again.

DORIAN
 (slapping him once more)
 You're such a slut, Timmy.

TIMMY
 I'm worse than a slut.
 (to IGNATIUS)
 Tighten my fetters, beastmaster, please.

IGNATIUS
 Certainly not.

TIMMY
 Oh, that's mean. That's so mean! Thank you.

TIMMY writhes happily as DORIAN and IGNATIUS pass into the center of the room.

IGNATIUS
 I can see that it's not going to be easy to capture the Baptist vote.

The OLDER MAN IN BLACK LEATHER expertly throws a giggling STUDENT. DORIAN watches approvingly.

DORIAN
 Senator Mouton has a black belt.
 (beat)
 Studded with mother of pearl.

IGNATIUS
 This is like the last days of the Roman Empire.

DORIAN offers up a plate of delicate canapés.

DORIAN
 Why thank you, daffodil. Can I press you to something warm and salty?

IGNATIUS
 No. I trust you have briefed your friends as to the nature of the political task before us?

DORIAN
 Oh, talk, talk, talk. Let's go into the kitchen. I want you to meet the ladies' auxiliary.

DORIAN opens the door into his kitchen, IGNATIUS follows.

IGNATIUS
 An auxiliary? Excellent.

76 INT. DORIAN'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - SAME TIME

LIZ, FRIEDA and BETTY are sitting at the table, swilling beer from cans.

DORIAN
Boys... meet a new face.

FRIEDA burps, crushes her beer can and tosses it against the wall, it bounces and falls into a potted plant.

LIZ
Three points.

FRIEDA
Put it there, Fats.

She grabs IGNATIUS's paw and works it over.

IGNATIUS
Oh, my God.

DORIAN
That's Frieda, and Betty and Liz.

IGNATIUS slips his hands into his pockets to avoid further handshakes.

IGNATIUS
How do you do. Ignatius J. Reilly. I'm sure you'll be of invaluable help to our cause.

FRIEDA
Well, grab yourself a beer. I wish we had it in bottles. Betty here could open you one with her teeth. She's got teeth like an iron claw.

BETTY makes an obscene gesture at FRIEDA.

FRIEDA (CONT'D)
(bellowing suddenly)
And one of these days she's going to get them knocked down her fucking throat!

LIZ opens a beer can and a SPRAY OF FOAM shoots out onto IGNATIUS's distended stomach.

IGNATIUS
I think I shall return to the other room.

LIZ
Yeah, beat it bigass, you're using up all the air in here.

IGNATIUS turns to leave. LIZ hurls a beer can at him. IGNATIUS, ducking, leaves precipitately. BETTY and FRIEDA start to wrestle, grabbing each other by their cropped hair.

DORIAN
Gentlemen! Please!

DORIAN follows IGNATIUS out in the parlor.

77 INT. DORIAN'S APARTMENT, PARLOR - SAME TIME

IGNATIUS gives DORIAN a baleful look.

IGNATIUS
I can't imagine how you decided to besmirch the
movement by inviting those rowdies.

DORIAN
Oh, hush your mouth. They're fun girls when
they're in the mood.

IGNATIUS surveys the party. LENA HORNE, forecasting Stormy Weather,
has replaced JUDY.

IGNATIUS
You must bring these people to order. There is
crucial business at hand.

DORIAN
I hope you're going to be amusing.

IGNATIUS
I plan to lead a march to rescue this noble
female from corruption.

He shows DORIAN the photograph. DORIAN looks at it with wide eyes
and reads the stamped address on the other side.

DORIAN
Night of Joy? How very fascinating.

DORIAN is thinking furiously and delightedly. A PLAN has come into
his head.

The COWBOY is now slinking around the floor in his boots and Stetson
lip-synching to LENA. The BOYS around the phonograph watch
swooningly.

FIRST BOY
Clever.

SECOND BOY
Crisp.

THIRD BOY
Terribly cosmo.

FIRST BOY
How I wish Lena Horne was my mother.

IGNATIUS has taken out some scraps of Big Chief.

IGNATIUS
(shouting to DORIAN)
Stop all of this. I am beginning to smother
from the stench of glandular emissions and
cologne. My valve may close.

DORIAN

Don't be so drab, lovelet. They're enjoying themselves.

IGNATIUS

Turn off that offensive music and quiet down these sodomites.

DORIAN

I thought you were going to be fun. If you're just going to be tacky and dreary, then you'd better leave.

IGNATIUS

I shall not leave. No one can deter me. Peace! Peace! Peace!

DORIAN

Oh, dear. You are serious about this, aren't you?

IGNATIUS breaks away from DORIAN and rushes across the room, pushing through the elegant GUESTS. He unplugs the phonograph to squeals of anger.

GUESTS

Beast... Madman... Is this what Dorian promised?... Bring back Lena...The outfit, grotesque... And that earring. How unbelievably gross...So monstrously huge... and woundingly plain.

IGNATIUS

(raising his arms)

Silence! I am here tonight my friends, to show you how you may save the world and bring peace. I am here tonight to realize my dream: the creation of a NEW WORLD ORDER! Sodomites of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains.

TIMMY

(from the wall)

But I like my chains!

GUESTS

He's truly mad... Dorian, what a bad joke... Where in the world did he come from?... Not even vaguely attractive... Filthy... Depressing...

IGNATIUS

(oblivious)

The challenge is placed before you. Will you turn your singular talents to saving the world, or will you simply turn your backs on your fellow man?

COWBOY

Yes please!

GUESTS

Such poor taste... Someone turn on that record again... Where is my coat?... Let's go to a smart bar... Look, I've spilled crème de menthe on my most priceless jacket... Those eyes, they're frightening... let's go to a smart bar....

IGNATIUS

Silence, you perverts! Listen to me! Your pansy division will blitzkrieg the world. Columns of marching queens... battalions of buggery... the fruits of war. Our first task is to storm a citadel of barbarism where a beautiful woman is being held captive...

DORIAN has had enough.

DORIAN

Right, that's it! Now Mother's pissed. You're just not couth.

(screaming)

Girls!!!!

The kitchen door opens and LIZ, BETTY and FRIEDA appear.

DORIAN

This love child of Noah Beery and Margaret Dumont is pissing on my parade. I think he deserves a visit from the Smack Fairy.

The girls haul up their slacks and approach IGNATIUS.

DORIAN

And then come back to mother, girls. I've got a plan.

78 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DORIAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FRIEDA, LIZ, and BETTY carry IGNATIUS through the carriageway. He flails.

IGNATIUS

How dare you! My valve has slammed shut.

The girls dump him on the sidewalk.

FRIEDA

Okay, buster. Beat it.

They turn back into the house.

IGNATIUS

(bellowing)

Your movement is doomed. You know nothing about politics and voter persuasion. You will not carry a single ward, a single parish. You won't even carry the Quarter.

THE HOT-DOG CART comes sailing through the air and lands next to IGNATIUS, dented. Frankfurters and buns spill into the air followed by photographs of LANA.

BETTY (O.C.)

Get going, lardass, or your balls are history.

IGNATIUS, sprawled on the ground looks up at the night-sky, the fight gone out of him, suddenly looking very alone and vulnerable. A photograph of LANA is in the gutter beside him. He looks at it mournfully, all his accustomed energy spent.

IGNATIUS

Oh Fortuna, Fortuna...why do you hate me so much?

79 EXT. BOURBON STREET - NIGHT

We look over the shoulder of a mysterious MAN in a silk suit and homburg (MANCUSO in elegant disguise) as IGNATIUS, battered, bruised and panting from exertion, stops his cart outside the Night of Joy.

He lumbers up to a poster in a glass case at the door of the Night of Joy. The MAN IN THE SILK SUIT moves back into the shadows.

POSTER

ROBERTA E. LEE presents Harlett O'Hara The Virginny Belle (and pet!)

GEORGE appears out of the club carrying a package.

GEORGE

Hey, you! I been looking for you. I got more supplies to stash.

He goes up to the weenie-wagon and dumps in another package. The STRANGER in the silk suit watches from the shadows.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'll pick these up three o'clock tomorrow afternoon, yeah?

He scoots into the club. BURMA JONES steps past him into the street wearing tails and a stovepipe hat.

JONES

Whoa! Come in, see Miss Harla O'Horror dancin with her pet bird. Guarantee one hunner percent real plantation dancin. Cotton growin right on the stage right in front of your eyeball! Free entry to all our patrons.

IGNATIUS approaches JONES.

JONES (CONT'D)

Whoa, if it aint Mr. Ignatius. It'll cost you two bits to come in.

IGNATIUS

Please. Is a beautiful woman given to reading works of medieval philosophy by any chance being held captive in here?

JONES

Yeah! Sure! Plenty chicks like that in here. You get your ass inside and meet some of them.

JONES ushers IGNATIUS in.

80 INT. NIGHT OF JOY - NIGHT

IGNATIUS lumbers through the gloom and seats himself at a small table directly beneath the stage. The STRANGER in the silk suit comes in behind him.

At the table next to IGNATIUS is a TALL MAN who looks sorrowfully around him. This is GROVER PARLANGE. GEORGE stands at the back looking supercilious.

A phonograph is thumping through "FOOLS RUSH IN". IGNATIUS looks over at the bar but BEN, the bartender, pretends not to see him. RITA, a fortyish Latin woman, pries herself loose from the bar, comes over to IGNATIUS and smiles, revealing several gold teeth.

RITA

You wanna drink, chico?

IGNATIUS

Thank you, yes. A Dr. Nut, if you please.

RITA

I see what we have.

She returns to the bar. IGNATIUS watches return with two bottles of champagne and two glasses.

RITA

We no have Dr. Nut. Mira, you are owe twenty-four dollar for these champagne.

IGNATIUS

Don't be absurd, bring me a coke.

RITA

No coke. No nawtheen. Only champagne.

(sitting down)

Come on, honey. Open the champagne. I very thirsty.

She slides the check over to IGNATIUS and takes his hand.

IGNATIUS
Don't you dare touch me!

RITA
Ave Maria! Que pato! Mira, you are pay now,
maricon.

LANA LEE, vividly dressed in gold lamé is whispering to DARLENE in the wings.

LANA LEE
This better be worth it, Darlene. Give it some
sass, you hear? I paid out good money for
this.

DARLENE
Don't you worry, Lana. Burma an' I done a lot
of rehearsing. It's gonna be real classy.

LANA LEE
Screw classy, girl. Just make sure that bird
strips you down to your tits and ass.

A fanfare blares from the phonograph. At his table IGNATIUS looks around the room.

IGNATIUS
I can't see her. Perhaps she is being kept
prisoner, with nothing but Boethius for
company.

There is a scratching of vinyl and a FANFARE is played. LANA LEE appears on the stage.

IGNATIUS
Oh, my God! Could that be her?

IGNATIUS looks at he photograph. There is a small mole on the NUDE WOMAN's thigh in the photograph. His eyes narrow on the real LANA's thigh where he sees the same mole.

LANA LEE
Welcome, ladies and genitals.

RITA
You are pay me now.

IGNATIUS
Who is keeping this woman prisoner here?

RITA
Prisoner? She own the joint.

IGNATIUS
But she reads Boethius. Oh my God it is her.
The Nazi commandant. But...

LANA LEE

And now that pure virginny Belle, Miss Harlett
O'Hara.

Some feeble APPLAUSE. The curtain opens revealing a garish Southern Belle set. DARLENE sweeps on-stage in a ball gown trailing yards of nylon net, it is held together with lots of little gold rings. On her arm is OSCAR, the huge rose-colored COCKATOO. Behind her is BURMA JONES, who starts to play 'Swanee River' on his harp in a melancholy fashion.

RITA

(hissing)

Mira, you are pay me now or else, cabron.

DARLENE

I'm tired of protecting my honor from unscrupulous gentlemen, Leroy. I'm tired, tired... all those southern balls. I don't like balls.

JONES

But you sure likes a cockatoo, Miss Harlett.

There is some ribald applause at this pun ("cock or two"). At the table next to IGNATIUS, GROVER PARLANGE giggles.

BURMA starts to play a raunchier number.

DARLENE

Undress me, bird.

IGNATIUS's eyes round with amazement as he sees that OSCAR is perched on a large green book.

IGNATIUS

There! There! What is my Boethius doing in this pit of despair?

GROVER PARLANGE shushes him. OSCAR excretes on the book and turns its head to see IGNATIUS.

We INTERCUT between the black bead of its eye and the gold ring glittering on IGNATIUS's right earlobe.

DARLENE

(repeating)

Undress me, bird.

The bird hops from DARLENE's arm and squawking, dashes for IGNATIUS' head.

We INTERCUT from IGNATIUS and OSCAR's POVs as OSCAR flies towards IGNATIUS, like a pterodactyl falling on its prey. A scary moment.

DARLENE

Hey!

OSCAR sinks its claws into IGNATIUS's smock and pecks at his ear-ring with its beak.

IGNATIUS

Good heavens!

IGNATIUS leaps to his feet and tries to beat the bird off. The champagne bottles and glasses smash on the floor as he springs up and begins to stagger to the door.

DARLENE

Come back here with my cockatoo!

LANA LEE runs onto the stage. IGNATIUS is floundering about, making noises like a moose as he beats away the mass of rose feathers welded to his ear and shoulder. DARLENE grabs the Boethius book, descends from the stage and starts to bang IGNATIUS on the head with it.

LANA LEE

How in the hell did this character get in here?
Jones? Throw him out.

DARLENE

(banging)

Let - go - my - bird!

IGNATIUS

Get this beast off me!

OSCAR succeeds in pulling the earring loose. .With a trill of triumph and a squirt of droppings it flies from IGNATIUS's shoulder. IGNATIUS knocks over several more tables as he lurches to the door, howling in pain, blood pouring from his ear.

RITA

(waving the check)

Hey! You are owe forty-eight dollar to me. You are pay right now.

IGNATIUS stumbles past JONES and bounces out the door.

81 EXT. FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

DORIAN and the THREE GIRLS process up the farther end of Bourbon Street.

DORIAN

If I understood him aright, we should find him at the Night of Joy. And if I know my little Ignatius this could work to our advantage.

LIZ

(muttering)

I still say we should have beaten him up good and proper.

DORIAN
Curb your sweet maternal instincts, heart. He
can do us some good.

82 EXT. OUTSIDE GALATOIRES - NIGHT

MRS REILLY and CLAUDE ROBICHAUX are exiting from the restaurant.

MRS REILLY
I never thought I could spend an evening like
that, Mr. Robichaux.

ROBICHAUX
Miss Reilly, Irene. I would like to devote the
rest of my life lavishing such little pleasures
upon you. Truly I would.

MRS REILLY
Mr Robichaux!!

ROBICHAUX
What do you say?

MRS REILLY
Oh, Claude! But what about Ignatius ...

ROBICHAUX
Irene, it'd be nice for you to spend just one
evening without having to think about ...

SUDDENLY ...

Gasping and clutching his earlobe, IGNATIUS lurches out onto the
street from the Night of Joy and into the path of an oncoming
Greyhound Scenicruiser.

PEOPLE on the sidewalk scream. JONES bursts through the door onto
the sidewalk. Brakes hiss and screech competing in volume with a
distressed howl from MRS REILLY.

IGNATIUS looks up and, blinded by the headlights a few feet from his
eyes, he swoons.

JONES leaps into the street and plucks IGNATIUS from the bus which
roars past, saving him in the nick of time. IGNATIUS falls back onto
the sidewalk.

LANA LEE comes out and studies the mound of humanity lying in the
street. GEORGE emerges too and looks around. He sees the parked
weenie wagon and surreptitiously takes out his supplies.

LANA LEE
Is he dead?

JONES blows smoke over the inert figure.

JONES
Hey, wake up, man.

DORIAN and the THREE GIRLS arrive.

DORIAN
There! I told you he'd be here.

MANCUSO steps out of the shadows in his silk suit and homburg.

MANCUSO
Let me take a look at him.

He bends over and listens to IGNATIUS' heart. MRS REILLY rushes forward wailing.

MRS REILLY
Ignatius! Ignatius!

MANCUSO
He's okay. He just passed out.

MRS REILLY
(startled)
Why, Angelo!

MANCUSO holds a conspiratorial finger to his lips.

MANCUSO
Everybody back. Give him air.

GEORGE
(tucking the package into his
shirt)
Give his fat ass a kick.

DARLENE steps through the crowd, the Boethius under one arm, OSCAR on her shoulder, the earring proudly caught in its beak. MRS REILLY buries her head in the shoulder of ROBICHAUX. CROWDS of on-lookers, tourists and bums are beginning to congregate.

ROBICHAUX
They'll look after him at Mandeville, Irene.

DARLENE
What a opening night. What we gonna do, Lana?

LANA LEE
Let me get my hands on Jones.

JONES
Whoa! Hey! That cat force his way in.

LANA LEE
Shut your smart mouth. I think I'm gonna have to call up all my pals at the precinct. You're fired. Darlene, too. I know I shouldna let you get on my stage. Get that goddam bird off my sidewalk.

(MORE)

LANA LEE (cont'd)

(to the CROWD)

Hey, folks, come on in and enjoy a good drink made by our expert mixologists to your exact specification.

RITA

Mira, Lee. Who is pay for champagne?

LANA LEE

You're fired too, you dumb bitch.

RITA

Hey! That not fair.

GROVER PARLANGE steps up to BURMA JONES and DARLENE.

PARLANGE

Ma'am? I have to say that was one of the funniest performances I've ever seen in my life.

DARLENE

Funny? Why, you ...

MANCUSO stops LANA LEE just before she turns to go in.

MANCUSO

I'd like to use your telephone. Maybe I'd better call an ambulance.

LANA looks MANCUSO over carefully and smiles.

LANA LEE

(whispering)

Sure baby, come in. Hey, you don't wanna waste your evening messing with that character laying in the street. He's some kinda bum. You look like you could use some action.

She steps close to MANCUSO, reaches into her gold lamé overalls and surreptitiously flashes the Boethian photograph cupped in her hand.

LANA LEE

Take a look at this, baby. How'd you like to spend an evening with that? I'm all yours.

CLOSE on the PHOTO: the LEGS, the BOOK, the GLOBE, the CHALK. MANCUSO clears his throat.

MANCUSO

Patrolman Mancuso, undercover agent. You're under arrest ...

(pointing at GEORGE)

and you are under arrest...

MANCUSO leans forward to grab him. But GEORGE gets out a knife and faces off MANCUSO.

GEORGE
(back away)
Oh yeah?

In the background behind him IGNATIUS starts to come round, prodding his valve.

IGNATIUS
It will never open again.

GEORGE
You just back off, pig.

MANCUSO stares in confusion. GEORGE moves slowly backwards as IGNATIUS rises.

GEORGE trips backwards over IGNATIUS, sending him sprawling, and is himself smartly grabbed by the THREE GIRLS who hold him in a grip of iron. There is a burst of applause from the CROWD.

MANCUSO
Thank you, ladies.
(to GEORGE)
You're under arrest for attempted kidnapping, the distribution of pornography to minors and the theft of a valuable book, property of Mr. I. J. Reilly.
(To LANA)
And you are under arrest for soliciting for immoral purposes, the possession of pornography and managing a house of ill-repute.

RITA
(laughing)
Yeah. I give evidence. Now who's dumb bitch?

MRS REILLY
Ignatius ...

MRS REILLY approaches IGNATIUS, but before she can come any closer, the THREE GIRLS have given him a friendly kick.

BETTY
Hey, you did all right lardass.

LIZ
Yeah. Good work, fats.

DORIAN
Sugarheart, how can I ever thank you enough?

DORIAN plants a huge kiss on IGNATIUS's fevered brow. MRS REILLY shrieks in horror.

DARLENE gives a whoop of delighted and leans forward to embrace PARLANGE. As she does so she drops the Boethius book. IGNATIUS' eyes flutter open as the Boethius falls by his head, encrusted with cockatoo droppings.

IGNATIUS
(faintly)
Spin, Fortuna, spin.

His eyes flutter and close again.

83 INT. REILLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

IGNATIUS wakes up in his room. He puts his hand to his head and feels gently. His ear is bleeding. He stands up and wobbles.

He makes his way out of the door and along the corridor towards the kitchen, but stops at the door hearing noises.

84 INT. REILLY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

MRS REILLY, ROBICHAUX, SANTA and MANCUSO are gathered around the table, dressed for bowling.

MRS REILLY
No, I'm saying we're all very happy for you, Angelo, but it don't change nothing.

MANCUSO
If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be back in uniform. Sergeant says I might even be in line for promotion.

SANTA
But if it weren't for him you wouldn't never have been humiliated like you have these past months. Getting into debt and all.

ROBICHAUX
Never you mind about that debt. I'll look after that. But I meant what I said, Irene. We can't marry less that boy is safely out of the way.

SANTA
You deserve a rest from him, hun. He's crazy. What's he gonna do next?

MRS REILLY
Well, I signed the papers and all. They're coming round for him in the morning.

ROBICHAUX
(patting her hand)
It's the best. They'll give him a little operation. Take all that junk out his head. Calm him down.

MRS REILLY
They still allow him to write in his little notebooks, they said.
(breaking down)
(MORE)

MRS REILLY (cont'd)

He was such a lovely little boy. So bright.
He loved his momma. What I do wrong?

SANTA

Nothing, honey. Nothing. Let's go. We'll
bowl the blues out of you, okay? The ambulance
come tomorrow and he'll be out of your hair.
You want him out of your hair, don't you?

MRS REILLY

Yeah, I guess I want him out of my hair.

SANTA

So let's bowl, baby!

CLOSE UP on IGNATIUS' face. He is absolutely defeated. He turns to his room.

85 INT. REILLY HOUSE, IGNATIUS' ROOM - NIGHT

The finished manuscript of the novel is on the bed. IGNATIUS is writing a note. We see his hand moving over the paper:

"I tried to bring harmony to those around me.
I failed and now I go to join the geometry of
the stars. Look for me sometimes in the night
sky."

A large tear falls on the paper and smudges the ink. IGNATIUS takes the note and goes into the kitchen.

86 INT. REILLY HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

HARMONICA MUSIC: SAINT JAMES INFIRMARY

IGNATIUS closes the oven door and looks up at the wall above it. We see, from his P.O.V. a framed quotation in his best calligraphy:-

When a true genius appears in the world, you
may know him by this sign, that the dunces are
all in confederacy against him.

Jonathan Swift

87 EXT. THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

THE HARMONICA MUSIC CONTINUES

The bridge over the Mississippi. IGNATIUS stands swaying on the edge looking down at the swirling waters below. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

The MUSIC stops suddenly, as if the harp were wiped across the mouth of the player.

IGNATIUS opens his eyes again.

PRESIDENT (OVER)

The City of New Orleans was rid of a vile nuisance.

88 INT. ROYAL ORLEANS - NIGHT

The PRESIDENT looks around beaming.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Following Patrolman Mancuso's evidence The Night of Joy lost its licence and a pornographic ring corrupting the pure youth of the town was successfully rounded up and convicted. Let's show our appreciation for Patrolman, now Sergeant, Angelo Mancuso!

A CYMBAL is struck: a SPOTLIGHT hits MANCUSO who stands smiling amid applause.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

How lucky for the city that Mr. Dorian Greene should take over the site and cause to rise up like a phoenix from the ashes of those defamed premises New Orleans' premier rendezvous -- Greene's Night of Joy Curio Teashop, the most charming and -- er -- original store in the state.

More applause. CYMBAL and SPOTLIGHT on DORIAN who smirks happily.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

With us this evening too is Mr Grover Parlange, owner of the Pelican Music Hall and manager of their most successful act, Darlene and Burma Jones!

PARLANGE takes his bow in the SPOTLIGHT

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

And let's hear it for Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Levy -- Gus here, Louisiana Businessman of the Year and President of Levy Shorts Incorporated!

The LEVYs rise to their applause.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Newly appointed chairman of the judges of the Pulitzer Prize literary committee, Professor Nigel Talc!

TALC rises, pipe in teeth.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

And of course the current Head Seraph of the St. Odo of Cluny Holy Name Society, Mr. Claude Robichaux and Mrs Robichaux!

CLAUDE and MRS REILLY take a bow. The PRESIDENT, with an extravagant gesture, reigns in the merriment, his face crumpling with dramatic sorrow.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

But how sad that there is one who cannot be with us here this evening. The world was too small for Ignatius J. Reilly ladies and gentlemen. In helping others he found no means of helping himself. You all did what you could ...

There is a violent interruption as MYRNA MINKOFF gets to her feet.

MYRNA

Bullshit!

The DINERS gasp.

MYRNA (CONT'D)

You bunch of lousy hypocrites, how dare you! You just couldn't find room for him, could you?

PRESIDENT

Now just a moment...

MYRNA

All of you with your disgusting greedy little lives, you killed him. You owe him everything and you killed him. One man who couldn't fit into your filthy little world of work and money and families and what you call decency. I tell you this, that man was a giant and you are all cockroaches. Shit-eating dung-beetles. You killed a great heart. We all did. I did too... I failed him... I...

Sobbing, she runs from the room. BURMA JONES stands and goes after her. MRS REILLY falls weeping into CLAUDE's arms.

PRESIDENT

(trying to be light)

Well now, it seems the little lady is upset. I think maybe...

89 EXT. ROYAL ORLEANS - NIGHT

MYRNA leans against a wall outside the hotel. She looks up at the night sky and weeps. JONES approaches.

JONES

Oo-wee! You told them, lady. Yessir!

MYRNA

Fuck off.

JONES

Hey!

MYRNA

You're as bad as any of them. Look what he did for you.

JONES

Yep. I done fine. I making lots of good money thanks to that dude. And you publishing his letters, that's gonna make some money too, I guess. We all done good.

MYRNA

Do you think I'm going to keep it? I wouldn't touch a penny.

JONES

Come on, girl. I'll give you a ride home. Where you live?

JONES clicks his fingers and a limousine starts up outside the hotel and purrs towards him.

MYRNA

(scornfully)

New York City.

JONES

Ooo-wee, that's a long ride. Okay.

MYRNA stares at him.

MYRNA

You can't get rid of your guilt by wasting your corrupt money on me.

JONES

Guess not.

The limousine draws up and JONES opens the passenger door.

MYRNA

Trying to get rid of me, is that it? Don't want to spoil the party.

JONES

Miss, I aint trying to get rid of you. I trying to get rid of this pain-in-the-ass motherfucker.

A VOICE comes from the interior of the limousine.

IGNATIUS

These drafts are extremely bad for my system. Kindly close the door at once before my valve seals.

MYRNA lets out a scream.

JONES

Darlene aint gonna marry me till he's out from under our feet.

IGNATIUS

I have decided New York would be more suited to my worldview.

The rear window moves smoothly down to reveal IGNATIUS inside, a can of DR. Peppers to his mouth.

MYRNA

You fat sonofabitch!

She gets in the car and starts alternately to punch and kiss IGNATIUS.

IGNATIUS

I expect my own room in your apartment. South facing and furnished with an adequate writing desk. Kindly remove your painted harlot's lips from my moustache.

MYRNA

You bastard! You selfish, egotistical bastard. This is typical of your narcissistic self-absorption. Of all the phallocentric, egotistical, anally infantile...

IGNATIUS taps the glass separating him from the DRIVER.

IGNATIUS

(to the DRIVER)

Greenwich Village and kindly keep your speed to below forty miles an hour.

The car moves off, IGNATIUS and MYRNA still arguing. JONES looks after it. Suddenly the car squeals to a halt. The passenger window comes down and a fat paw beckons at JONES.

Puzzled and frowning, he approaches. The fat paw flips a quarter towards him. It shines in the air as it spins. The car moves on. JONES catches the quarter.

Behind him emerge LEVY, MRS LEVY, MRS REILLY, MANCUSO and all the other dinner guests. DARLENE runs towards JONES and together they watch the limousine disappearing.

THE END