



A Confederacy of Dunces

steven soderbergh



First, we hear his voice.

Booming. Eloquent. And perhaps a little contemptuous.

VOICE

Since the breakdown of the
Medieval system, the gods of
Chaos, Lunacy, and Bad Taste
have gained ascendancy.
Fortuna's Wheel has turned on
humanity, crushing its
collarbone, smashing its skull,
twisting its torso...

Now we see his face: Round. Glistening. Supercilious blue and
yellow eyes encased by curly black hair from above and a
bushy moustache from below. This is IGNATIUS J. REILLY, the
likely result of an Orson Welles/Charles Laughton coupling.
We pivot around his head to reveal a large AUDIENCE in formal
dress. His voice echoes off the cavernous walls...

IGNATIUS

...until humanity can do nothing
but stumble blindly like a
bowery wino, its mind polluted
with bourgeois dreams and
popular music. A firm rule must
be imposed on our nation before
it destroys itself...

On his face again--he leans forward, his voice becoming
husky--as we slowly drift away...

IGNATIUS

Advertising will go down as the
scourge of this century; efforts
once dedicated to the soul are
now dedicated to the sale.
Possession of anything new or
expensive reveals a shocking
lack of geometry and theology.
It can even cast doubts upon
one's soul...

And we now see that Ignatius is seated center stage in an
enormous BATHTUB.

IGNATIUS

Ladies and gentlemen, the day of
the locust is at hand...

WOMAN'S VOICE

(off)

Come on outta there, Ignatius,
or I'm leaving without you!!

Members of the audience exchange confused GLANCES. Ignatius ignores the woman's voice and powers on...

IGNATIUS

...every man, woman, and child
is brainwashed with fantasies of
success and scented shampoos...

Loud POUNDING from offstage. HEADS NOW TURN toward the noise.

IGNATIUS

...we are teetering on the edge
of an abyss...!

WOMAN'S VOICE

(off)

Ignatius!!!

He POUNDS the bath water with his fist, producing a small tidal wave.

ON A DIRTY TILE FLOOR

water SPLASHES down next to the clawed foot of a rusty iron bathtub. Ignatius, yanked from his reverie, is shoe-horned into this tub, which is in turn shoe-horned into a dangerously unkempt and tiny bathroom. Empty bottles of DR. NUT soft drink stand in close but disheveled ranks by the tub. The door knob RATTLES, shaken from the outside by MRS. REILLY, Ignatius' sixtyish shrew of a mother.

IGNATIUS

What is it?!

MRS. REILLY

(off)

You promised!! Now don't do me
like this!! You ain't been out
the house in two months!

IGNATIUS

Outdoor activity is not only
highly overrated, but
potentially dangerous. Have you
forgotten the Scenicruiser
Incident?

MRS. REILLY

Oh, Ignatius, that was years ago...

IGNATIUS

The driver knowingly provoked my regurgitation with his high speed lane-manuevering. No doubt he receives bonus pay for each passenger he hospitalizes. Additionally, if I were to venture forth from this dwelling while Fortuna's wheel is in a downward cycle, I might end up the victim and focus of a vast, impenetrable conspiracy. And, if you require yet another reason for my disinclination, my bath water has just acheived a perfect temperature.

MRS. REILLY

(sweetly)

How about I stop at Holmes and pick us up some nice wine cakes?

Ignatius thinks about this.

IGNATIUS

Well. Now that I think about it, I am in desperate need of a string for my lute.

He rises from the bathtub, taking most of the contents with him.

IN THE HALLWAY

a wave of water slides beneath the door and onto Mrs. Reilly's shoes.

MRS. REILLY

(looking down)

Oh, Ignatius.

EXT. REILLY HOUSE -- DAY

In the dusty little front yard is a mound of earth with a weathered Celtic cross cut from plywood leaning over a faded plaster statue of a collie. Painted on the arm of the cross in white Gothic script is the name REX.

IGNATIUS

replete in voluminous tweed trousers, plaid flannel shirt and long muffler, kneels in front of the grave. His lips move quietly in prayer.

MRS. REILLY

barely visible behind the wheel of a '46 Plymouth, HONKS impatiently. A bizzare little hat is pinned to her heavily hennaed hair.

IGNATIUS

rises slowly, eyes watering. He then pulls on an enormous green HUNTING CAP. Its flaps stick out on either side like verdant wings. He tosses his muffler behind his shoulder and strides toward the car.

A PAIR OF DISAPPROVING EYES

watch Ignatius from behind the SHUTTERS of the house next door.

EXT. CAR -- DAY

The Plymouth tentatively makes its way through late afternoon traffic. The scenery confirms that this is the New Orleans of 1963.

MRS REILLY

Why you keep praying for that dog, Ignatius?

IGNATIUS

That "dog", as you so insensitively put it, was holier in spirit than many of today's clergy. If there is any justice, he holds a position of great importance in the hereafter.

She looks at him in the mirror. His balloon-like head seems to take up the entire back seat. The hat takes up the rest.

MRS. REILLY

Someone gonna think you crazy wearin' that cap alla time.

IGNATIUS

You are in no position to make aesthetic comments regarding hat wear.

IGNATIUS cont.

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.

EXT. WERLEIN'S MUSIC STORE -- DAY

The rear door of the Plymouth opens and Ignatius heaves himself out onto the curb.

MRS. REILLY

Remember, five o'clock!

IGNATIUS

You needn't remind me. I am not a child.

He turns on his heels and sails into Werlein's, revealing a tiny POLICEMAN, ANGELO MANCUSO. He watches Ignatius closely.

INT. D.H. HOLMES -- DAY

The CLERK in the Liquor Department bags a bottle of Gallo muscatel and hands it to Mrs. Reilly with her change.

INT. WERLEIN'S -- DAY

Ignatius drums his meaty fingers on the counter. An aggressively effeminent SALESMAN rings up the purchase of one lute string and some sheet music.

SALESMAN

(noting the sheet
music composer)

Scarlatti. Is he good?

IGNATIUS

"Good"? He was the last of the musicians. His talent was surpassed only by his religious comportment and great leaping ability. Like all true geniuses, he was pilloried and penniless in his lifetime.

SALESMAN

Maybe you could play something of his for me.

IGNATIUS
That is highly unlikely. My
performances would be wasted on
the public.

SALESMAN
So you live alone?

IGNATIUS
Are you continually in the habit
of interrogating your customers?
I assure you I have urgent
business elsewhere.

The Salesman hands Ignatius his bag.

SALESMAN
Come back and see us.

INT. D.H. HOLMES -- DAY

Mrs. Reilly's chafed fingers tap the glass case of the bakery
department. MISS INEZ, the saleslady, looks over.

MISS INEZ
Oh, hey darlin'. How you makin'?

MRS. REILLY
Oh, I got arthiritis in my
elbow.

MISS INEZ
Aw, no! My poor old poppa's got
that. We make him go set himself
in a hot tub fulla berling
water.

MRS. REILLY
My boy's floatin' around our tub
all day long. I can't hardly get
in my own bathroom no more.

MISS INEZ
But I thought you told me he was
married.

MRS. REILLY
He ain't even got him a
prospect. That little girlfriend
he had flew the coop.

EXT. D.H. HOLMES -- DAY

Ignatius stands beneath the clock in front of the store.

The time is five minutes after five. Even in late afternoon pedestrian traffic, Ignatius sticks out like a strange beacon.

PATROLMAN MANCUSO

has seen enough. He moves through the crowd like a tiny torpedo heading for a great wooly tanker.

IGNATIUS

is oblivious; Mancuso isn't even tall enough to enter his field of vision. After a moment of being ignored, Mancuso pokes Ignatius in the arm.

MANCUSO

You got any identification, mister?

Ignatius turns on him, eyes ablaze.

IGNATIUS

What? What did you say?

MANCUSO

Let me see your driver's license.

IGNATIUS

I don't drive. Will you kindly go away? I am waiting for my mother, and she is quite allergic to cretins. I'm afraid you might induce a seizure.

Mancuso plucks at the bag under Ignatius' arm.

MANCUSO

What's hanging out of your bag?

IGNATIUS

What do you think it is? It's a string for my lute.

MANCUSO

You got loot in there?

Ignatius rolls his eyes.

MANCUSO

A what? Are you local?

IGNATIUS

Is it the stated policy of the police department to personally harass me while this city remains the vice capitol of the civilized world? We stand surrounded by gamblers, prostitutes, exhibitionists, anti-Christis, alcoholics, sodomites, drug addicts, fetishists, onanists, pornographers, frauds, jades, litter-bugs and lesbians, all of whom are only too well protected by graft!

Mancuso grabs him by the arm.

MANCUSO

All right, you big nut. You're coming with me.

Ignatius strikes him on the head with his sheet music and lute string.

IGNATIUS

Take that, you toady!

MANCUSO

Hey!!

A CROWD is beginning to form.

MANCUSO

You're resisting arrest!

He tries to again to move Ignatius, with little success.

IGNATIUS

I hope that all of you will bear witness to this outrage!

OLD MAN

A good boy can't even wait for his momma. I'm telling you, the city was never like this. It's the communiss.

Mancuso wheels on the Old Man.

MANCUSO

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

Mrs. Reilly is pushing her way through the crowd, cake boxes in hand.

IGNATIUS

Mother!!

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius! What's going on here?

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?

OLD MAN

She loves her boy.

Ignatius pats his mother on the head.

IGNATIUS

This is clearly a case for the Civil Liberties Union. We must contact Myrna Minkoff, my lost love.

OLD MAN

It's the communiss.

MANCUSO

Shut up!

(to Mrs. Reilly re:

Ignatius)

How old is he?

IGNATIUS

I am thirty.

MANCUSO

(to Ignatius)

You got a job?

IGNATIUS

Senseless ambition is the root cause of our current dilemma--

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

IGNATIUS
 I am at the moment composing a
 lengthy indictment of our
 century. When my brain begins to
 reel from my literary labors, I
 make an occasional cheese dip.

OLD MAN
 The police are all communiss.

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

He moves to grab the Old Man by the arm. As he does, Ignatius quickly grabs his mother and pulls her into the crowd. Mancuso turns just in time to see them disappear.

MANCUSO
 Hey! Come back here!

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Ignatius and Mrs. Reilly round a corner, still moving as quickly as they can. Mrs. Reilly glances behind to see if they're being followed.

IGNATIUS
 Don't look back! You might be
 blinded by a stray bullet!

MRS. REILLY
 How come that policeman was
 after you, boy?

IGNATIUS
 I shall never know. He was
 literally obsessed with
 arresting me.

MRS. REILLY
 Wouldn't that be awful! You'd be
 all over the papers! You musta
 done something. I know you, boy.

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

He begins to slow.

MRS. REILLY
You want that policeman to find
us?

IGNATIUS
Shall I collapse at your feet to
prove my point? I can scarcely
hear you through the pounding in
my ears.

She looks around and notices that they are standing in front
of the NIGHT OF JOY bar.

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

INT. NIGHT OF JOY -- DAY

Ignatius and his mother enter the dusty, dank establishment.
It is the worst kind of low-rent drinking hole and the only
customers are a BLONDE FLOOZY and a rather foppish YOUNG MAN.

IGNATIUS
Oh my god.

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

IGNATIUS
We might have stopped somewhere
else. I suspect the police will
raid this place momentarily
anyway.

MRS. REILLY
Well, let's just have us a quick
drink.

IGNATIUS
Actually, my thirst is
petitioning for appeasement. A
bottle of Dr. Nut would do
nicely.
(calls to bartender)
Garcon?

A heavy-lidded BARTENDER, who looks as though he has
perfected the art of not giving a shit, looks up.

INT. PRECINCT STATION -- DUSK

Mancuso stands in front of a large desk with the Old Man. Behind the desk: a crusty SERGEANT, whose gruff demeanor is matched by his impatience. He looks at the Old Man.

SERGEANT

What's your name?

OLD MAN

Claude Robichaux.

SERGEANT

Mancuso here says you says all policemen are communiss.

BURMA JONES, a black man in his early thirties, blows a plume of cigarette smoke and smiles behind his spaceage sunglasses.

JONES

Cawmniss!! Ooo-wee! If I call a po-lice a cawmniss my ass be in Angola for sure.

SERGEANT

Shut up, Jones!

JONES

(brightly)

Okay.

OLD MAN

I didn't mean anything I said. I just got carried away. This policeman was trying to arress a poor boy waiting for his momma by Holmes.

SERGEANT

(to Mancuso)

What? What were you trying to do?

MANCUSO

He wasn't a boy. He was a big fat man dressed funny. He looked like a big pervert.

SERGEANT

(greedily)

A pervert, huh?

MANCUSO
(with new confidence)
Yeah, a great big prevert.

SERGEANT
How big?

MANCUSO
The biggest I ever saw. The
first thing I spotted was this
green hunting cap he was
wearing.

Another plume of smoke from Jones, who listens intently.

SERGEANT
Well, what happened? How come
he's not standing here before
me?

MANCUSO
He got away. This woman came out
the store and got everything
mixed up, and she and him run
into the Quarter.

SERGEANT
Oh, two Quarter characters.

OLD MAN
No, sir. She was really his
momma. A nice, pretty lady. I
seen them.

SERGEANT
(head in hands)
Jesus Christ! Trying to arrest a
kid with his momma, bringing in
somebody's grampaw.
(beat)
I can see right now there's only
one way you're gonna bring in a
bona fide deviate, Mancuso. And
that's by going undercover.

MANCUSO
(thrilled)
Me? Undercover?

SERGEANT
That's right.

MANCUSO

You won't regret this, sir. I think you'll find my undercover work will make you very happy.

The Sergeant looks up.

SERGEANT

Oh, I know it will.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY -- NIGHT

Three empty BEER BOTTLES rest in front of Mrs. Reilly as she pulls on a fourth. Ignatius approaches, her coat in hand.

MRS. REILLY

I don't want to go yet. We came in here, don't forget, because you were being chased by the police.

IGNATIUS

I think we've given them the slip, we can safely circle back to the car.

MRS. REILLY

Just let me finish this one. 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.

MRS. REILLY

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

IGNATIUS

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

The sight of the wine cakes attracts the attention of the BLONDE FLOOZY (DARLENE). She appears between Ignatius and his mother.

DARLENE

Where you bought these nice wine cakes, lady? They look nice and juicy.

MRS. REILLY
Have one, honey. Over by Holmes,
they good a good selection.
Plenty variety.

Darlene takes a wine cake, under the disapproving eye of Ignatius.

DARLENE
(to Mrs. Reilly)
I bet you cook good, huh?

IGNATIUS
Mother doesn't cook, she burns.

Suddenly, the FOPPISH YOUNG MAN (DORIAN GREENE) appears beside Mrs. Reilly.

DORIAN
(to Mrs. Reilly)
Excuse me, but may I ask where
you got that hat? It's truly
hypnotic.

MRS. REILLY
Oh, Lord, I had this since
Ignatius made his first
communion.

DORIAN
Would you consider selling it?
I'll give you ten dollars.

Ignatius glowers at the two of them.

IGNATIUS
Mother.

MRS. REILLY
(to Dorian)
Oh, I couldn't, really...

DORIAN
Fifteen.

MRS. REILLY
Really?

Dorian produces three five dollar bills. Mrs. Reilly un-pins her hat.

IGNATIUS

Mother, I forbid you to sell
that memento of my childhood for
thirty pieces of silver.

She hands the hat to Dorian in exchange for the money.

IGNATIUS

This is sacrilege!

MRS. REILLY

It's my hat! Besides, you were
makin' fun of it in the car!

IGNATIUS

My jesting was merely a defense
mechanism masking my deep
feelings of attachment. You seem
only too happy, in your
inebriated state, to cast said
feelings aside.

Mrs. Reilly begins to cry.

DARLENE

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

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!

Mrs. Reilly lies her head on the bar and begins sobbing loudly.

IGNATIUS
This is ridiculous! Mother, stop that!

DARLENE
Look what you done!

The door of the bar opens, revealing LANA LEE, a statuesque woman nearing middle age. Her fine body is covered with a black leather overcoat glistening with fine mist. She is not happy with what she sees.

LANA LEE
What's going on here? I step out and look what happens.

DARLENE
This guy's been mistreating his momma.

LANA LEE
Mothers? We got mothers in here now? Business already stinks.

IGNATIUS
I beg your pardon.

Lana looks at the empty cake boxes.

LANA LEE
Somebody's been having a picnic in here.
(to Bartender)
Goddammit, Ben, what the hell are you thinking? Why do think I'm looking for a janitor? To clean up crap like this!

IGNATIUS
Excuse me, but my mother is present.

LANA LEE
(screaming)
Would somebody please show these characters the door!

EXT. NIGHT OF JOY BAR -- DUSK

Ignatius and his mother emerge, obviously propelled by unseen hands. Ignatius bellows to the door:

IGNATIUS
You shall hear from our
attorneys!

The door slams closed in response.

MRS. REILLY
That woman was awful.

IGNATIUS
A negation of all human
qualities. My nerves are
shattered. Please, let us return
to our domicile before I erupt
in hives.

As they turn, they bump into GEORGE, a thuggish-looking
TEENAGER sporting flamenco boots with metal taps.

GEORGE
Jesus, watch where you're going!

He brushes past them and enters the bar.

EXT. ST. ANN STREET -- NIGHT

The old Plymouth, with Mrs. Reilly at the wheel, lurches
forward in its parking space and SMASHES the car in front
of it.

IGNATIUS
Oh my god!!

MRS. REILLY
Shut up, Ignatius, you making me
nervous.

With a great gnashing of gears, she tries to put the car in
reverse. From the back seat, Ignatius looks about
disdainfully.

IGNATIUS
That car is a total wreck. Your
driver's license, if you indeed
have one, will surely be
revoked.

She gets the car into reverse and it immediately lurches back
and climbs the hood of a Volkswagen.

The sudden change in angle pitches Ignatius forward -- he COLLIDES with the front seat.

IGNATIUS
Oh my god! My valve!
(grabbing his
stomach)
You've sealed it forever!!

MRS. REILLY
Will you be quiet!! Lay down and
take a nap!!

IGNATIUS
A nap?! I may never close my
eyes again for fear of seeing
this calamity played out
repeatedly in my sleep!

Suddenly the Plymouth LEAPS out of the parking spot.

IGNATIUS
Are you sure you're turning the
wheel the right way?

The car SKIDS across the wet street into a post supporting a wrought-iron balcony. The post FALLS away to one side, and the Plymouth CRUNCHES against the building.

IGNATIUS
What have you done now?

MRS. REILLY
Call a priest!

IGNATIUS
My digestion has been destroyed!

Mrs. Reilly shifts the worn gears and inches backward. As the car moves, the SPLINTERING OF WOOD sounds over their heads.

DOWN THE STREET

Patrolman Mancuso, in BERET, BALLETTIGHTS and KNIT SWEATER, emerges around the corner onto St. Ann and stops when he sees the balcony falling in large sections, THUNDERING ON THE ROOF OF THE CAR. The Plymouth, like a stoned human, stops moving, and a piece of wrought iron decoration SHATTERS the rear window.

MRS. REILLY
Honey, are you okay?

A GAGGING SOUND comes from the car as Mancuso runs up to the rear door.

MRS. REILLY
Say something, Ignatius.

The Patrolman freezes when Ignatius sticks his head out of the rear window and prepares to vomit. As his mouth opens we hear:

THE SCREECHING BRAKES of a train hurtling through a station...

CUT TO:

INT. B.M.T. SUBWAY CAR - MORNING

Views of Brooklyn and Manhattan through greasy windows as the train crosses the bridge in early morning sunlight on the way into the city.

Looking out the window is a maiden from the Bronx, MYRNA MINKOFF, draped in black. She turns from the window and LOOKS FIERCELY AT THE CAMERA. Behind and around her passengers are crowded in, getting on and off when the train stops at a station.

MYRNA
(to the CAMERA)
What is this strange, frightening letter that you have written me, Ignatius? How can I contact the Civil Liberties Union with the little evidence you have given me? I can't imagine why a policeman would try to arrest you. You stay in your room all the time. I might have believed the arrest if you hadn't written about that "automobile accident." If both of your wrists were broken, how could you write me a letter?

Myrna glances out the window and gets up.

MYRNA
(to the CAMERA)
Let us be honest with each other, Ignatius. I do not believe a word of what I read.

MYRNA cont.

But I am frightened - for you.
The fantasy about the arrest has
all the classic paranoid
qualities. You are aware, of
course, that Freud linked
paranoia with homosexual
tendencies.

IGNATIUS

at home in his bathtub, reads Myrna's letter.

IGNATIUS

Filth!

IN THE HALLWAY

Mrs. Reilly's ear is pressed to the door.

MRS. REILLY

What are you mumbling about in
there, boy?

IGNATIUS

(off)

I'm praying.

MRS. REILLY

You're what?

IGNATIUS

(off)

Please leave me alone! You're
shattering my religious ecstasy!

MYRNA

now stands in the threshold of a small, dingy studio
apartment. The sofa bed is open and unmade.

MYRNA

(to the CAMERA)

Great Oedipal bonds are
encircling your brain and
destroying you.

Myrna plays with the zipper of her leather vest.

MYRNA

(to the CAMERA)

Aren't your natural impulses
crying for release?

MYRNA cont.

A beautiful and meaningful
ejaculation would transform
you...Ignatius? You need the
therapy of sex desperately. I'm
afraid -- from what I know about
clinical cases like yours --
that you may end up a
psychosomatic invalid like
Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

IGNATIUS

hurls the letter onto the floor, where it immediately soaks
up the contents of a small puddle...

IGNATIUS

How unspeakably offensive...

MRS. REILLY

(off)

What was that?

IGNATIUS

Will you please stop
eavesdropping and warm up the
television! It's nearly time!

He rises from the tub, and the water follows him onto the
floor and under the door.

IN THE HALLWAY

Mrs. Reilly's shoes are doused once again.

MRS. REILLY

Oh, Ignatius.

EXT. REILLY HOUSE - DAY

Patrolman Mancuso, wearing a t-shirt and Bermuda shorts, with
a long red beard hooked over his ears by means of wires,
pulls up on a large and LOUD chromium and baby blue
motorcycle. He turns and looks at the Plymouth with the deep
crease in its roof and fender parked near the mound in the
yard. Taped across the hole of the rear window is a piece of
cardboard printed with VAN CAMP'S PORK AND BEANS. Mancuso
climbs the worn brick steps. A BOOMING CHANT issues from the
closed shutters:

TV

(off)

Big girls don't cry.
Big girls don't cry.

He presses the BELL.

TV

(off)

Big girls, they don't cry-yi-yi

A WOMAN'S VOICE screams through the shutters of the house next door.

VOICE

(off)

They home. Miss Reilly's proolly in the kitchen. Go around the back. What are you mister? A cop?

MANCUSO

(sternly)

Patrolman Mancuso. Undercover.

VOICE

(off)

Yeah? Which one you want, the boy or the mother?

Mancuso starts down the brick steps.

MANCUSO

The mother.

He turns and walks into the dark alley.

EXT. REILLY BACK YARD - DAY

Mrs. Reilly is hanging a spotted and yellowed sheet on a line that runs through bare fig trees. She stares at the man with the long red beard when he steps out of the shadow of the alley into the sun.

MRS. REILLY

Oh, it's you. How you doing, Mr. Mancuso? What them people said?

INT. REILLY KITCHEN - DAY

Mrs. Reilly pours boiling milk into two cups half full of cold coffee and brings them to the table.

MRS. REILLY

Where I'm gonna get a thousand dollars?

MRS. REILLY cont.

All me and Ignatius got is my
poor husband's Social Security
and a little two-bit pension,
and that don't come to much.

In the parlor, a chorus of falsettos ring out.

IGNATIUS

(off)

Oh my god! de Sade himself would
shudder at these fresh
depravities!

MANCUSO

I'm sorry.

MRS. REILLY

Aw, it's not your fault. Maybe I
can get a mortgage on the house.

Ignatius billows into the kitchen in a monstrous flannel
nightshirt.

IGNATIUS

The children on that program
should all be gassed.

He notices Mancuso.

IGNATIUS

(coldly)

Oh.

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius, honey, the man wants
over a thousand dollars for what
I did to his building.

IGNATIUS

A thousand dollars? He will not
get a cent. We shall have him
prosecuted immediately. Contact
our attorneys, Mother.

MRS. REILLY

Our attorneys? He's got an
estimate from a contractor. Mr.
Mancuso here says they's nothing
I can do.

IGNATIUS

Oh. Well, you shall have to pay
him then.

MRS. REILLY

How?

IGNATIUS

There are means. I wish you wouldn't bother me with this. That TV program always increases my anxiety anyway. Furthermore, I suggest that if this officer here had any sense he would stop molesting us and start investigating dens like that Night of Joy in which we were mistreated and robbed. There are depraved B-girls and pederasts in the Night of Joy. Go investigate that gang and let us alone, you homewrecker.

Ignatius billows out in the direction of the music, his shower shoes FLAPPING LOUDLY against the soles of his huge feet.

MANCUSO

Night of Joy?

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

Burma Jones stands in the gloom, cap in hand. Lana Lee comes out from behind the bar.

JONES

I come about that porter job you got advertize in the paper.

LANA LEE

Yeah? You got any references?

JONES

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

Lana Lee puts her hands in the pockets of her leather overcoat and looks into the sunglasses.

LANA LEE

I've been looking for the right boy for this job for days. The pay is twenty dollars a week.

JONES

Hey! No wonder the right man ain show up.

JONES cont.
What ever happen to the minimal wage?

LANA LEE
You need a job, right? I need a porter. Business stinks. Take it from there! You work six days a week from ten to three.

Jones blows some smoke on Lana Lee.

JONES
Where you keep them motherfuckin' broom?

LANA LEE
One thing we gotta understand is keeping our mouth clean around here.

JONES
Yes, ma'am. Don wanna make a bad impressia in a fine place like the Night of Joy. Whoa!

INT. REILLY KITCHEN - DAY

Mrs. Reilly SNIFFLES and opens the oven door. She pulls out a bottle of muscatel.

MRS. REILLY
You want some nice wine, Mr. Mancuso?

He shakes his head and puts up his hands.

MRS. REILLY
You don't mind?

She takes a long drink from the bottle.

MRS. REILLY
I gotta have my little drink. It relieves the pressure. You know?

MANCUSO
My wife says it's crazy, but I'll tell you what I do. What I do is go bowl.

MRS. REILLY
You like that, huh?

MANCUSO

Bowling's wonderful, Miss Reilly. It takes your mind off things.

MRS. REILLY

Me, I never was much for sports.

MANCUSO

You meet plenty of people over by the alley. Nice people. You could make some friends. Next time I go by the alley, I'll let you know. I'll bring my aunt. You and me and my aunt, we'll go down by the alley. Okay?

Mrs. Reilly smiles faintly and takes another slug from the bottle of muscatel. A single crimson drop snakes toward her chin. Mancuso smiles painfully.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

The front door opens and Darlene flounces in wearing a satin cocktail dress and a flowered hat.

LANA LEE

How come you're so late?

DARLENE

My cockatoo come down with a cold last night, Lana. It was awful. The whole night he was up coughing in my ear.

LANA LEE

Where do you think up excuses like that?

DARLENE

Well, it's true.

Darlene puts her huge hat on the bar and climbs on a stool just as Jones lets out a blue cloud of smoke.

LANA LEE

Show this boy where we keep our brooms and crap. I'm going shopping.

Lana Lee marches to the door and then turns around suddenly.

LANA LEE

(barking)

I don't want nobody fooling with
that cabinet under the bar.

Lana Lee swings through the padded front door.

INT. REILLY HOUSE -- DAY

Mrs. Reilly stands in the hall looking at the DO NOT DISTURB sign printed on a sheet of Big Chief paper and stuck to the door by an old flesh-colored Band-aid.

MRS. REILLY

(screaming)

Ignatius, let me in there, boy.

IGNATIUS

(off)

You know that you are not
allowed in here.

Mrs. Reilly POUNDS on the door.

MRS. REILLY

Open up this door, Ignatius.

IGNATIUS

(off)

Absolutely not. You may have a
knife or a broken wine bottle.

Mrs. Reilly THROWS HERSELF against the unpainted wood.

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius!

INSIDE THE BEDROOM

Ignatius slides open the bolt.

IGNATIUS

Well, don't break down the door.

He opens the door and tip-toes back to bed. His room makes Dresden look like a minor dust-up. Mrs. Reilly steps into the dark room as Ignatius throws himself back among the pillows. He snatches up a Big Chief tablet from the rubble near him and begins doodling on a yellowed page.

MRS. REILLY
(looking down)
Ignatius, what's all this trash
on the floor?

Dozens of Big Chief tablets make a rug of Indian head-dresses
around the bed.

IGNATIUS
That is my world view that you
see. Be careful where you step.

MRS. REILLY
It smells terrible in here.

IGNATIUS
Well, what did you expect? The
human body, when confined,
produces certain odors which we
tend to forget in this age of
deodorants and other
perversions.

MRS. REILLY
If I know it was like this, I'd
been in here long ago.

IGNATIUS
I do not know why you are in
here now.

MRS. REILLY
I came to talk to you, boy. Get
your face out them pillows.

IGNATIUS
Mother, you are standing on my
tablets.

MRS. REILLY
(angrily)
Well, where I'm gonna stand,
Ignatius? You want me to get in
bed with you?

IGNATIUS
(thundering)
Watch out where you're stepping!
My God, never has anyone been so
literally stormed and beseiged!
What is it that has driven you
in here in this state of
complete mania?

MRS. REILLY

I made up my mind. You gonna go out and get you a job.

Ignatius is stunned. He begins to bounce slowly. His blue and yellow eyes bulge.

IGNATIUS

Oh! Oh my valve! It's closing!
Oh!

MRS. REILLY

What are you doing? What valve?
Nobody else got him a valve but you. I ain't got no valve.

IGNATIUS

(screaming)

Everyone has a valve! Mine is simply more developed. I am trying to open a passage which you have succeeded in blocking. It may be permanently closed now for all I know.

MRS. REILLY

It don't change the fact that you got to get a job to pay that man off!

IGNATIUS

Knowing that you are congenitally incapable of arriving at a decision of this importance, I imagine that that mongolid law officer put this idea in your head.

MRS. REILLY

Mr. Mancuso says the man might take the money in installments.

IGNATIUS

(gasping)

Ah! Don't you realize that he is trying to destroy your home? Through the centuries it has been the Mancusos of the world who have started wars and spread diseases.

IGNATIUS cont.

He has become your Svengali! In my private apocalypse he will be impaled upon his nightstick! Ah!

MRS. REILLY

We gotta pay that man, Ignatius!

IGNATIUS

(breathing heavily)

It is INCONCEIVABLE that I should get a job!

MRS. REILLY

You wanna see me in jail? Wouldn't you be ashamed with your poor momma behind bars?

IGNATIUS

(gasping for air)

Will you stop talking about imprisonment? Martyrdom is meaningless in our age. Aggh! Aggh!

He rolls over onto his hands and knees and crawls to the end of the bed, bleary eyes glaring at his mother.

IGNATIUS

Instead of demanding that I give up my life's work may I suggest certain economies around the house.

MRS. REILLY

I spend everything I get from social security on you for food.

IGNATIUS

(growling)

I made the mistake of heating the oven the other day before inspecting it properly. When I opened it to put in my frozen pizza, I was almost blinded by a bottle of broiled wine that was preparing to explode. I suggest that you divert some of the monies that you are pouring into the liquor industry and leave me to the task of inventing a new world order!

MRS. REILLY
(clenched teeth)
Tomorrow we looking at the want
ads in the paper. I'm gonna iron
you a nice white shirt and you
gonna put on one of your poppa's
nice ties and go find you a job.

INT. PRECINCT STATION - DAY

Patrolman Mancuso stands before the sergeant and clears his
throat.

MANCUSO
I got a lead on a place where
they got B-girls.

SERGEANT
You got a lead? Who gave you the
lead?

MANCUSO
A lady I know. It's called Night
of Joy.

SERGEANT
How come this lady knows about
the place? Who took her to this
place?

MANCUSO
She was there alone.

SERGEANT
(screaming)
She's probably a B-girl herself!
Get outta here, Mancuso, and
bring me in a suspicious
character. I'm gonna give you
ten days to find one or you're
off the force.

Mancuso hurries away as a DETECTIVE approaches and drops a
paper on the sergeant's desk.

SERGEANT
(to the detective)
Send a couple men over to that
Night of Joy some night. Someone
there might've been just dumb
enough to talk to Mancuso. But
don't tell him. I don't want
that goon taking any credit.

SERGEANT cont.

He stays in costume until he
brings me in a character.

EXT. REILLY HOUSE - MORNING

GOTHIC MUSIC. The front door opens and Ignatius steps out into the early morning sunlight. He is squeezed into a coat and a tight white shirt vertically divided by a wide flowered tie. His thick black hair is plastered to his skull in the style of the 1920s. His moustache, too, gleams brightly as he advances to the worn brick steps. Mrs. Reilly runs after him with a greasy lunch bag and numerous classified sections of various newspapers. Ignatius glowers at his mother as he snaps up the papers and the bag. He shuffles down the steps and stops at the mound with the plaster statue of Rex the Collie and the Celtic cross. The shutters of the house next door SNAP OPEN and the two bottle-green eyes peer out. Ignatius bows his head and prays.

IGNATIUS

(softly)

Oh, Fortuna, blind, heedless
goddess, I am strapped to your
wheel. Do not crush me beneath
your spokes. Raise me on high,
divinity.

INT. JAX BREWERY - DAY

Ignatius is seated opposite the PERSONNEL DIRECTOR in a small glass office. Battalions of brown bottles march by on a long belt beyond the glass. The director, a little bald man in a bow-tie, seems about to speak.

IGNATIUS

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.

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.

IGNATIUS

You see the gyre has widened;
the Great Chain of Being has
snapped like so many paper clips
strung together by some drooling
idiot; death, destruction, and
anarchy have led to the perverse
excesses of progress, ambition
and self-improvement.

INT. SUPER MARKET STOCK ROOM - DAY

The PRODUCE MANAGER, a lad of nineteen, with orange hair and freckles, leans back in his office chair under a Playmate-of-the-Month calendar. Ignatius is squeezed into a wooden school desk filling out an application.

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.

The produce manager nods and shoots a rubber band.

INT. CHICKEN PROCESSING PLANT - DAY

The SUPERVISOR sits on one edge of a small table. Behind her are rows of women plucking chickens. Ignatius is perched on a folding chair.

IGNATIUS

Employers sense in me a denial
of their values. They fear me.
I suspect that they can see that
I am forced to function in a
century which I loathe.

INT. OFFICE LEVY PANTS - DAY

GONZALEZ; the office manager, looks up in awe. Ignatius is standing on the other side of the desk, cap in hand.

GONZALEZ

I'm sorry, what did you say?

IGNATIUS

I have come in response to your
advertisement.

GONZALEZ
(enthusiastically)
Oh, wonderful. Which one! We're
running two in the paper, one
for a woman and one for a man.

IGNATIUS
(hollering)
Which one do you think I'm
answering?

GONZALEZ
(in great confusion)
Oh, I'm very sorry. I wasn't
thinking. I mean, the sex
doesn't matter. You could handle
either job. I mean, I'm not
concerned with sex.

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

GONZALEZ
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
Yes. Well. Miss Trixie has been
with us for over fifty years.

GONZALEZ cont.
That will give you some idea of
the satisfaction that our
workers get from their
association with Levy Pants.

Miss Trixie begins to SNORE.

GONZALEZ
Can you begin work today?

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

Lana Lee is snapping rubber bands around piles of bills.
Jones is sweeping the floor with a push broom. The padded
door BANGS open and GEORGE clicks into the bar, loudly
scraping the metal taps on his flamenco boots across the
floor.

GEORGE
(to Lana Lee)
You got a new jig, huh? What
happened to the last one? He die
or something?

LANA LEE
(blandly)
Honey...

George opens a flashy hand-tooled wallet and gives Lana a
number of bills.

LANA LEE
(whispering)
Everything went okay, George?
The orphans like the pretty
pictures?

GEORGE
They like the one of you on the
desk with the glasses on. They
thought you were some kinda
teacher or something.

LANA LEE
You think they want more like
that?

GEORGE
Yeah. Why not? Maybe one with a
black board and a book. You
know. Doing something with a
piece of chalk.

George and Lana exchange lecherous smiles.

LANA LEE
I get the picture. I got a
blackboard in the back.

GEORGE
(to Jones)
Hey, you a junkie? You look like
a junkie to me.

JONES
(slowly)
You be lookin' pretty junky with
a Night of Joy broom stickin'
out your ass.

LANA LEE
Okay, okay, I don't want a race
riot in here. I got an
investment to protect.

Lana UNLOCKS a cabinet under the bar and gives George a
package wrapped in brown paper.

LANA LEE
Come on, George. The orphans are
waiting. Now go on. Beat it.

George takes the package, winks at Lana, and BANGS out the
door.

JONES
That suppose to be a messenger
for the orphans? I like to see
the orphans he operatin for. I
bet the United Fun don know
about them orphans.

LANA LEE
What the hell are you talking
about? There's nothing wrong
with a little charity.

Jones produces a small nimbus of smoke.

JONES
Uh-huh.

LANA LEE
You just be happy you got a job.

JONES
Ever' night I'm fallin' on my
knee.

INT. LEVY PANTS OFFICE - DAY

Ignatius is tacking a wide cardboard SIGN to a post near his files. The sign, in bold blue Gothic lettering, reads:

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

Gonzalez and Miss Trixie are looking up at the sign. Ignatius moves to his desk, where a large stack of DOCUMENTS await filing.

GONZALEZ
Isn't that nice.

MISS TRIXIE
What does it mean? Gomez, who is
this person?

GONZALEZ
Miss Trixie, you know Mr.
Reilly. He's been working with
us for a week now.

MISS TRIXIE
I don't know any Reilly, ask
Gloria.

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, Gloria is no longer
with us. She was out last file
clerk.

MISS TRIXIE
You can say that again.

Miss Trixie SHUFFLES off to the ladies room. Mr. Gonzalez approaches Ignatius' 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

(off)

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's face hardens into a mask of horror.

GONZALEZ

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

MR. LEVY

I just came in to see if I had any personal mail. I'm driving back to the coast right away.

IGNATIUS

(to Gonzalez)

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

Mr. Levy notices Ignatius.

MR. 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.

MR. LEVY

Oh, yeah, the name on the sign.

IGNATIUS

I've taken an unusual interest in your firm.

MR. 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.

Mr. Gonzalez gives Mr. Levy his stack of personal mail.

MR. 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.

MR. LEVY

Yeah? Well, stranger things have happened around this place. Better check with that foreman in the factory. What's his name? Look, suppose you sign those letters like always. I have to go.

He pulls the door open.

MR. LEVY

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

Miss Trixie is sitting on the floor SNORING SOFTLY.

GONZALEZ

(screaming)

Miss Trixie, Mr. Levy is talking to you.

MISS TRIXIE

Who?

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, as it were, your business.

MR. LEVY

(not thrilled)

Okay. Take it easy.

He SLAMS the door.

GONZALEZ

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

Ignatius glances at Miss Trixie who is SNORING LOUDLY. Mr. Gonzalez opens the door to the factory letting in a BLAST OF DIXIELAND JAZZ. Ignatius sails over to Gonzalez's desk, rolls a sheet of Levy stationary into the office manager's high black typewriter and begins to TYPE. We see:

Mr. I Abelman, MONGOLOID, Esq.:
Dear Sir, We have received via
post your absurd comments...

INT. LEVY LODGE - DAY

MRS. LEVY, aquamarine-lidded eyes and high plasticized curls of platinum hair, is being kneaded mercilessly by a rather ornate, mechanized exercise board.

Mr. Levy enters. Perry Como sings on the TV set in front of them.

MRS. LEVY

How's Miss Trixie? I hope she's still relating and functioning pretty well.

MR. LEVY

She's still alive.

MRS. LEVY

That woman's a real prospect for psychic rejuvenation. I want us to bring her out here someday soon. I'd like to really get to work on her.

MR. LEVY

Bring that old bag out here? Are you nuts? I've already let you keep her at the office. When I went there this morning she fell asleep on the floor. You should see this other character Gonzalez hired. I don't know where the hell from. I'm afraid to guess what those clowns do in that office all day long. It's a wonder nothing's happened already.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

Darlene is pouring water into the half-filled liquor bottles behind the bar when Lana Lee swings through the front door. She props it open, letting the morning sun pour onto the greasy floor.

LANA LEE

This place is turning into a goddam precinct. Did you see what was going on here last night?

DARLENE

Morning Lana Lee.

LANA LEE

A lotta empty space and a few cops throwing signals at each other. Half the time I gotta watch you, brain, to see you don't try to sell them a drink.

DARLENE

Well, Lana, how I'm supposed to know who's a cop. Everybody looks the same to me.

She blows her nose.

LANA LEE

You tell a cop by his eyes, Darlene. They're very self-assured.

Lana Lee gets a cup of coffee, sits at the bar and opens the newspaper.

DARLENE

I ain't making no money I'm so afraid the guy on the next stool is the police. You know what we need in here to make money?

LANA LEE

(angrily)

What?

Jones enters through the front door and stands in the shaft of sunlight.

DARLENE

What we need in here is a animal.

LANA LEE

A what? Jesus Christ.

JONES

(getting his broom)

I ain cleanin up after no animal.

DARLENE

Just look there in the paper, Lana, almost every other club on the street's got them an animal.

Lana turns to the entertainment pages and studies the nightclub ads.

LANA LEE

Look at this. They got a snake at Terry's, got some doves at the 104, a baby tiger, a chimp...

DARLENE

And that's where the people are going. You gotta keep up with things in this business.

LANA LEE

Thanks a lot. Since it's your idea, you got any suggestions?

JONES

I suggest we vote unanimous agains changing over to a zoo.

LANA LEE

Keep on the floor.

DARLENE

We could use my cockatoo. I been practicing a smash dance with it. The bird's very smart. You oughta hear that thing talk.

JONES

Watch out. Your orphan frien just pullin in. It's humanitaria time.

George CLICKS through the door in his flamenco boots.

LANA LEE

(quickly)

Sorry, George, nothing for the orphans today.

JONES

(blowing blue smoke)

Them orphans better star applyin to the United Fun.

DARLENE

I wouldn't give him nothing, Lana. He's operating some kinda shakedown racket, if you ask me.

LANA LEE

(to George)

Come here.

She leads him out the door.

EXT. NIGHT OF JOY -- DAY

Lana Lee and George stand in the bright sun.

GEORGE

Whatsa matter?

LANA LEE

I can't talk in front of those two jerks. Look, this new porter's not like the old one. This smartass has been asking me about this orphan crap since he first saw you. I don't trust him. I got cop trouble already.

GEORGE

Then get yourself a new jig. There's plenty around.

LANA LEE

I couldn't get a blind Eskimo for the salary I'm paying him. He thinks if he tries to quit, I can get him arrested for vagrancy. The whole things a deal, George.

GEORGE

But what about me?

LANA LEE

This Jones goes out to lunch from twelve to twelve-thirty. So you come around about twelve-fifteen.

GEORGE

What am I supposed to do with them packages all afternoon? I can't hustle them pictures till after three when the schools let out. I don't want to be carrying that stuff somewhere.

LANA LEE

I don't care. Go sit in the park. Just be sure they're safe. I'll see you later. I've got a globe and the chalk, see if you can find me a great big serious-looking book.

They leave the alley, heading in opposite directions.

MAN

(yelling)

Come back here! Somebody stop them!

George turns to see THREE VERY TOUGH-LOOKING WOMEN sprint by, chased with diminishing effort by a middle-aged MAN in a VENDOR'S OUTFIT. The man, MR. CLYDE, stops to catch his breath next to George.

MR. CLYDE

They...they robbed me.

GEORGE

You got robbed by a bunch a women?

MR. CLYDE

They weren't like women, they
were...different.

GEORGE

Yeah, right.

George heads off, boots clicking.

INT. PRECINCT STATION - DAY

A nervous Patrolman Mancuso stands before the sergeant.

SERGEANT

I don't know what whore gave you
the tip on the Night of Joy, but
our boys have been in there
almost every night and they
haven't turned up anything.

MANCUSO

Well, I thought...

SERGEANT

Shut up. You gave us a phony
lead. You know what we do to
people give us a phony lead?

MANCUSO

No.

SERGEANT

We put them in the rest room at
the bus station. You stay in the
booths there eight hours a day
until you bring somebody in.

MANCUSO

Okay.

SERGEANT

Don't say "okay." Say "yes,
sir." Now get outta here.

EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

The door opens and Mancuso steps out DRESSED AS A FARMER. He
shades his eyes from the glare and then hurries down the
stone steps.

CUT TO:

MYRNA MINKOFF

in close-up, addressing the CAMERA.

MYRNA

I must tell you about a bold and
vital new development.

As she speaks, the background plays out the events in her
dialogue.

MYRNA

Last week I was at a party being
given for this very real boy
that had just returned from
Isreal. He is unbeleivable, I
mean that.

Behind her, the man she speaks of chats her up at a well-
attended bohemian get-together. He is scraggly and guitar-
laden.

MYRNA

For hours and hours he sang
these folk songs he had picked
up over there; really
significant songs that proved my
theory that music should
basically be an instrument of
social protest and expression.

IGNATIUS

in his bathtub, reads the letter.

IGNATIUS

Ho hum.

MYRNA

continues. Behind her, the guests have gone, and she and the
man are alone, talking.

MYRNA

Later we started talking--on
many levels--and I let him know
what was on my mind in
general...

Myrna jumps on the man and starts KISSING him.

IGNATIUS

snorts derisively.

IGNATIUS

Oh my god!

A KNOCK on the bathroom door.

MRS. REILLY

(off)

Ignatius, you in there?

MYRNA

stops talking and taps her foot, waiting for Mrs. Reilly to finish.

IGNATIUS

(off)

Yes! Please join your bowling Sicilians and leave me in peace!

IGNATIUS

returns his attention to the letter.

MYRNA

begins again.

MYRNA

So anyway, he said, "I can't believe someone with your voice and personality isn't appearing before the people."

IGNATIUS

(off)

Hah!

She ignores him.

MYRNA

The next day I got a telephone call from him: Would I lecture his social action group in Brooklyn Heights?

IGNATIUS

(off)

Obviously Soupy Sales had other engagements.

MYRNA

I don't imagine your
sociological ideas have
progressed beyond your mattress,
but if--

IGNATIUS

bursts into the room behind Myrna, bellowing.

IGNATIUS

ENOUGH, you obscene liberal
doxy!! You should be speared
upon the member of a
particularly large stallion. How
dare you place before my eyes
such an offensive communication!

Myrna's eyes widen.

IGNATIUS

in his bathtub, leers gleefully. He writes furiously on a Big
Chief tablet.

IN MYRNA'S APARTMENT

he continues to circle her menacingly, shoving the folk-
singing man and other cowering bohemian types out of his way.

IGNATIUS

I thought of you and some of
your radical social ideas as I
surveyed the substandard
conditions in the factory where
I am now preparing to organize
the workers. Yes, I have
infiltrated the system! I have
reached the inner chambers. I am
at the very seat, as it were, of
Levy Pants. After my near-death
experience in the automobile
accident you refused to believe
ever occurred, I had a true
epiphany. I realized that for
too long I have confined myself
in Miltonic isolation and
meditation. Just today I began
my selfless descent into the
bustling heart of Levy Pants,
where no aspect of its operation
escaped my scrutiny...

INT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

Close on a hand-painted BYZANTINE CROSS. In gold leaf on the arms are printed the words: GOD AND COMMERCE.

Pull back to reveal Ignatius, his scarf wrapped around his head, standing at the frosted glass door leading to the factory.

Gonzalez and Miss Trixie wave good-bye faintly from across the room and Ignatius opens the door. Miss Trixie falls to her knees in front of the cross.

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Ignatius steps out onto the landing. He stands at the top of a long flight of metal steps high above the barn-like room of the factory. Spread below him are the bolts of fabric, cutting tables, massive sewing machines, and furnaces that provide the steam for the pressing. In the grooves and traces between the tools and equipment, move the makers of Levy Pants.

IGNATIUS

(over)

The original sweatshop has been preserved for posterity at Levy Pants. It is a scene combining the worst of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*.

Ignatius slowly descends. The frail metal staircase sways with his gargantuan tread. He reaches the bottom of the stairs and pauses. Several of the factory workers shamble about with scraps of cloth. DIXIELAND JAZZ issues forth from various loudspeakers on the factory walls.

IGNATIUS

(over)

If only the Smithsonian Institute, that grab-bag of the nation's refuse, could somehow vacuum-seal and transport the Levy factory to the nation's capital, visitors to that questionable museum would defecate in their garish tourist outfits.

Ignatius lurches forward and comes upon a woman pressing some BABY CLOTHES.

He turns away and watches another woman making a colorful but rakish EVENING GOWN by joining together sections of fuschsia satin on one of the large sewing machines. She whips the material back and forth under the massive electric needle.

IGNATIUS

(over)

I attempted to ascertain just what went into the making of a pair of Levy Pants...pants.

Ignatius sails on among the cutting tables and sewing machines. Several women working at the dye vats are doing LAUNDRY and hanging it out on pulley lines that swag and criss-cross above a neighborhood of pressing machines. One man in his seventies takes a break from his work building a CHINA-CABINET and swigs from a bottle of Jack Daniels.

IGNATIUS

(screaming to the old man)

Is there no one no one in this factory working on a PAIR OF LEVY PANTS!?

The old man shakes his head, points to his ear and then to one of the loudspeakers BLASTING JAZZ. He waves to Ignatius and then points out the turntable on a shelf near an idle pressing machine.

IGNATIUS

(over)

Continual exposure to the "music" had developed within them a Pavlovian response to noise, a response they actually believed was pleasure.

Ignatius sails over to the turntable and yanks the record out from under the needle arm. A LOUD SCREECH. THE MUSIC STOPS. The workers GASP. Ignatius holds the record aloft.

IGNATIUS

(over)

Needless to say, they were quite overwhelmed by the singularity and magnetism of my being.

A LOUD AND DEFIANT ROAR OF PROTEST RISES UP FROM THE COLLECTIVE WORKERS who abandon their individual projects and begin advancing on Ignatius. He smiles broadly and staggers as he sees them approach. He waves amiably with the record and then puts it back on the turntable. DIXIELAND POURS IN TORRENTS from the speakers on the walls.

Ignatius smiles ever more broadly, clicks his fingers and begins waving his arms. The workers stop in their tracks and watch in awe as Ignatius swings his massive bulk from side to side. A few workers BEGIN TO CLAP in cadence. A PARTICULARLY HOT LICK ON A TENOR SAX sets everyone to dancing. Ignatius twists his bulk and pounds his fists in the air above his head.

IGNATIUS

Go! Go! Do it, baby, do it! Hear me talkin' to ya. Wow!

Two women join Ignatius in a breathtaking *pas de trois*. The crowd ROARS and CLAPS along. Through a series of stunning collective moves the Levy workers manage to create steps out of boxes and assist Ignatius and his two partners onto a large cutting table. They proceed to gyrate so furiously that the table COLLAPSES beneath them and Ignatius sprawls helplessly as the workers gather around him with concern. He wiggles a bit, then holds out a huge hand.

IGNATIUS

Fellow workers of Levy Pants I am uninjured!

All CHEER and APPLAUD.

IGNATIUS

Furthermore, since pride is a Deadly Sin which I feel I generally eschew, absolutely nothing has been hurt!

Several of the men help Ignatius to his feet.

IGNATIUS

Tell me, brothers and sisters in pants, what is your weekly wage?

The workers look at each other in some vexation, then...

VARIOUS WORKERS

Shit, man, \$27.50. Thirty dollars a week. Fuck. I'm only getting twenty-six-fifty. Shit. Let's put it this way, man, under thirty dollars a week.

IGNATIUS

In my considered opinion, a person deserves more than thirty dollars a week for simply staying in a place like this factory for five days a week. I'll tell you, friends, if I was a factory worker at Levy Pants I would long before this have stormed the office and demanded a decent wage!

The gathered throng of Levy Workers CHEERS.

MYRNA

swallows with awe as Ignatius circles.

IGNATIUS

So while your cure-all for everything from racial oppression to fallen arches is sex, I seek out the truth by wading in the trenches, as it were. I am stepping boldly into our society, not in the boring, passive manner of the Myrna Minkoff school of social action, but with great style and zest!

IGNATIUS

back in his tub, finishes with a flurry:

IGNATIUS

But take heart, perhaps someday you will be apprehended for simply being your obnoxious self. Incarceration will finally make your life meaningful and end your frustration.

He pounds his fist into the water with glee.

MYRNA

looks down at her black shoes as bath water washes over them.

CUT TO:

INT. MATTIE'S RAMBLE INN - DAY

Jones is perched on a wooden stool at the bar of this combination saloon and grocery. Behind the bar is the elderly *cafe au lait*-tinted MR. WATSON, owner of the Inn. Another CUSTOMER is hunched over an empty glass at the end of the bar.

MR. WATSON
(to Jones)
You want another beer?

JONES
You tryina sell me another beer,
a poor color boy bustin his ass
for twenty dollar a week? Shit!
I'm workin in modern slavery. If
I quit, I get report for bein
vagran. If I stay, I'm gainfully
employ on a salary ain even
startin to be minimal wage.

Mr. Watson leans over the bar and hands Jones a beer.

MR. WATSON
(confidentially)
I tell you what you can do.

The customer at the end of the bar looks up and bends towards them.

MR. WATSON
You try you a little sabotage.
That's the only way you fight
that kinda trap.

CUSTOMER
We really plannin big sabotage.
We havin a big demonstration
where I work.

JONES
Yeah? Where?

CUSTOMER
At Levy Pant. We got this big
old white man comin in the
factory tellin us he like to
drop a atom bum on top the
company.

JONES

It sound like you peoples having more than sabotage, it sound like you havin a war.

CUSTOMER

He gonna lead us in a big demonstration he say make all the other demonstration look like a ladies' social.

JONES

Yeah, and it sound like he gonna lead you peoples right into the unemployment line.

INT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

Ignatius bursts through the door, his scarf-shawl flying horizontally. A cheap movie camera is slung over his shoulder and under his arm is a rolled up bed sheet.

IGNATIUS

(brusquely)

Good morning, sir!

GONZALEZ

Well, you certainly are early today, Mr. Reilly.

IGNATIUS

What do you mean? I always arrive at this time.

GONZALEZ

(meekly)

Oh, of course.

IGNATIUS

Do you believe that I am here early for some purpose?

GONZALEZ

No. I...

IGNATIUS

Speak up, sir. Why are you so strangely suspicious? Your eyes are literally flickering with paranoia.

GONZALEZ

Excuse me?

IGNATIUS

You heard what I said.

Ignatius lumbers through the door to the factory. Gonzalez tries to compose himself but becomes disturbed when WILD CHEERING AND APPLAUSE explodes behind the factory door. He tries nervously to light a cigarette.

INT. LEVY PANTS FACTORY -- DAY

Ignatius stands on a cutting table, pointing his movie camera at the assembled throng.

IGNATIUS

Will all of you wave your sticks
and stones again?

They do so.

IGNATIUS

Brandish those weapons fiercely!
That's right. You can even jump
up and down, if you like.

The workers laughingly comply. Satisfied, Ignatius puts down the camera.

IGNATIUS

Our first approach will be a
peaceful and rational one. If
Gonzalez fails to respond to the
emotion of this spectacle, I
shall call "Attack!" Then you
may begin your onslaught.
Onward!!

The crowd begins moving toward the stairway.

IGNATIUS

Wait! Someone help me down!

A handful of workers help Ignatius to the floor. The workers begin to sing:

FACTORY WORKERS

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

Ignatius films the crowd as he moves toward the front of the line.

IGNATIUS
Myrna will choke on her espresso
when she sees this!

FACTORY WORKERS
(singing with passion)
SAINT PETER DON'T YA CALL ME
'CAUSE I CAIN'T GO...!

INT. LEVY PANTS OFFICE - DAY

The entire labor force of Levy Pants is now crowded into the office behind Ignatius. Two of the more statuesque women are holding a stained bed sheet gingerly between their fingers as if it were a leper's shroud. Painted on the sheet are these words:

FORWARD
CRUSADE
FOR MOORISH
DIGNITY
raise our wage
NOW!

Ignatius scans the crowd with his little movie camera. GONZALEZ and Miss Trixie are both standing on top of his desk with their hands in the air.

FACTORY WORKERS
(singing)
'CAUSE I OWE MY SOUL
TO THE COMPANY STO...

MISS TRIXIE
(to Ignatius)
What's happening, Gloria? Is
this a minstrel show?

P.O.V. OF HAND-HELD CAMERA: The workers' fists punch in cadence above their heads as Ignatius' CAMERA SCANS THEIR FACES.

FACTORY WORKERS
Raise our wages! Raise our
wages! Raise our wages!

HAND-HELD CAMERA PANS FROM THE CROWD OVER TO THE OFFICE DOOR JUST AS IT OPENS AND MR. LEVY ENTERS FOLLOWED BY HIS WIFE IN A LONG FUR COAT. Ignatius drops his little camera. All eyes are turned on the Levys. Slowly and in unison fists are lowered, lips pucker, and eyes pop.

MR. LEVY
Who's responsible for this,
Gonzalez?

Ignatius steps forward and picks up the fallen bed sheet.

IGNATIUS
I am, sir, and...

MR. LEVY
You're fired.

Mr. Levy looks around.

MR. LEVY
Anyone else want to get fired?

The workers look at each other. The answer is no. They begin turning around and heading back toward the factory.

IGNATIUS
Wait! Come back! This man is a
symbol of all that oppresses
you! He must be made to grovel
and quiver!

Mrs. Levy marches over to the desk and lifts Miss Trixie down.

MRS. LEVY
Come Miss Trixie, dear, you're
going home with me.

MISS TRIXIE
Am I retired?

MRS. LEVY
No, darling, you're promoted.

Ignatius watches with tears in his eyes as Mrs. Levy carries Miss Trixie to the door. He is bumped by an escaping worker, and his movie camera FALLS to the floor. Its contents spill out, fatally exposed to light...

INT. REILLY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mrs. Reilly is stuffing old bowling shoes and a towel into a torn and dusty bowling bag. On the kitchen table are numerous Big Chief tablets as well as a very large green book: the collected writings of Boethius. There is a TAP On the back door. It opens and SANTA BATTAGLIA leans a kinky gray head into the kitchen.

SANTA

Yoo hoo, Irene, honey, time to scoot over to the Alley.

MRS. REILLY

I'm comin' right along, Santa'; where's your nephew?

SANTA

They got him stuck in the toilet at the bus station. Have you ever? He sounds like he's got pneumonia already.

MRS. REILLY

Aw, poor Angelo.

SANTA

Dedicated? And never complains. He says it ain't so bad, he just wishes he had him a good book to read.

Mrs. Reilly turns the big green book over and then hands it to Santa.

MRS. REILLY

Give him this one. It's Ignatius's favorite. He just re-read the whole thing since he lost his job at Levy Pants.

Santa takes the book.

SANTA

Aw, that's sweet. I know Angelo'll be glad to get this.

IN THE BATHROOM

Ignatius is soaking in the bathtub and BLOWING BUBBLES in his bottle of Dr. Nut with a straw. His eyes are dim and sad.

MRS. REILLY

(off)

I'm leaving the classified right here for you, Ignatius, although if you can't hold a little job in an office--

IGNATIUS

I was hated and resented. My
excellence confused them.

MRS. REILLY

I know you, boy. You musta
pulled some real boo-boos at
that Levy Pants.

IGNATIUS

Ultimately it was Myrna
Minkoff's fault. You know how
she makes trouble.

MRS. REILLY

Myrna? Don't give me that
foolishness, that girl's in New
York. Tomorrow morning you get
on that trolley and when you
come home again, you better have
you a job.

IGNATIUS

Fortuna has decided on another
downward spin...

MRS. REILLY

What?

CUT TO:

JOB INTERVIEW MONTAGE OVER A MELANCHOLY STRAIN FROM
SCARLATTI:

INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - BOX FACTORY - DAY

Ignatius is seated opposite the PERSONNEL MANAGER.

IGNATIUS

I should tell you that I am only
seeking employment at this time
because I would be beaten
senseless with a baked wine
bottle if I dared stay at home.

INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - SHIPPING COMPANY - DAY

Ignatius seated opposite the PERSONNEL MANAGER.

IGNATIUS

Opening the door of my home is
like intruding into the den of a
lioness with a maroon mane.

INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - CANDY COMPANY - DAY

IGNATIUS

My mother is becoming increasingly abusive and vicious. Indifferent to the fact that my struggle to improve the lives of the oppressed resulted in calamity and heartache.

INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - MUSHROOM FARM - DAY

IGNATIUS

Furthermore she has taken to dressing up like a courtesan and bowling on certain evenings with a lascivious bawd and her nephew, a notorious cross-dresser affiliated in some corrupt way with the police department.

EXT. POYDRAS STREET - DAY

THE SAD SCARLATTI TUNE CONTINUES as Ignatius waddles slowly and wearily along. Suddenly he stops and looks up spreading his great nostrils. He finds himself halted before the narrow half-open garage doors of a converted automobile repair shop. Ignatius sniffs vigorously. The protruding hairs in his nostrils twitch as they analyze wafting fumes. The sign above the garage door reads:

PARADISE VENDORS INCORPORATED

Ignatius checks his watch and enters the garage.

INT. PARADISE VENDORS -- DAY

In the gloom Ignatius discovers a fleet of large tin hot dogs mounted on bicycle tires. Several of the mobile hot dogs are badly dented and one crumpled frankfurter lays on its side, its one wheel horizontally above it.

In a dark corner MR. CLYDE is boiling hot dogs in a large institutional pot that dwarfs the gas range upon which it rests.

IGNATIUS

Pardon me sir. Do you retail here?

MR. CLYDE

What do you want?

IGNATIUS

I would like to buy one of your hot dogs. They smell rather tasty. I was wondering if I could have just one.

MR. CLYDE

Sure.

IGNATIUS

May I select my own?

MR. CLYDE

Here, take this fork.

Ignatius takes the corroded instrument and selects a dog.

MR. CLYDE

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

Ignatius drops his dog in a handy bun and takes a big bite.

IGNATIUS

My, these are rather strong. What are the ingredients in these?

MR. CLYDE

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

IGNATIUS

They're curiously appealing. I do believe that I shall have another of these savories.

Ignatius spears and eats three more hot dogs.

IGNATIUS

I cannot recently remember having been so totally satisfied.

MR. CLYDE

Four weenies. That'll be one dollar.

IGNATIUS

I am afraid that they will all have to be on the house.

IGNATIUS cont.

Or on the garage or whatever it is. My bowling-fanatic mother has given me only carfare today.

MR. CLYDE

I'll call the police.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God!

MR. CLYDE

Pay me! Pay me or I'll get the law.

The old man picks up the long fork and deftly places its two rotting tongs at Ignatius' throat.

IGNATIUS

You're puncturing my imported muffler!

MR. CLYDE

(sputtering)

I'm not gonna be robbed again. That's all that happens to you in the hot dog trade. Hot dog vendors and gas station attendants always get it. 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.

MR. CLYDE

Okay, buddy, now listen to me. You can't pay up. I've got an idea.

EXT. CARONDOLET STREET - DAY

CLOSE ON HAND PAINTED SIGN TAPED TO THE SIDE OF A WEENIE WAGON:

TWELVE INCHES OF PARADISE

PULL BACK TO REVEAL IGNATIUS pushing the tin weenie in a white smock.

IGNATIUS
Hot dogs! Hot dogs from
Paradise!

Ignatius turns a corner into an alley and parks. He opens the various lids in the wagon, prepares a hot dog for himself, and ravenously eats it.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Patrolman Mancuso is seated in the end stall attempting to read the big green book of Boethius's writings. He turns one thin page and then watches delicate boots as they click moving back and forth from the lavatory to the towel dispenser. Mancuso opens the door a crack and sees GEORGE leaning against the lavatory drawing on the back of his hands with a ball-point pen. Mancuso opens the door of the stall and approaches George, coughing deeply.

MANCUSO
(pleasantly)
What's that you're writing on
your had, pal?

George looks up and sees Mancuso in his monocle and beard.

GEORGE
Get away from me before I kick
your nuts in.

MANCUSO
(taunting)
Cawd the police.

GEORGE
No. Just get away. I ain't
making trouble.

MANCUSO
You afred udda police?

GEORGE
Look, kookie, move it. I don't
want to trouble with the cops.

MANCUSO
You dote?

GEORGE
No, and neither does a screwball
like you.

MANCUSO
You udder arrest.

GEORGE
What? Boy, you are out of it.

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

Mancuso reaches out to grab George by the arm and handcuff him, but George SNATCHES the big green BOOK from under Mancuso's arm and SLAMS it into the side of his head. When Mancuso straightens up he sees George SCRAPING RAPIDLY out of the door of the rest room with the big green book in his hand.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

George runs into a corridor of lockers, quickly opens one and takes out an armload of brown paper packages. Without closing the locker door, he runs out onto Canal Street.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - DAY

Jones is sweeping out the booths in a cloud of cigarette smoke and dust. Lana Lee is seated at a small table in front of the small stage. On the stage is a stand that looks like a hatrack with large rings instead of hooks attached to the top and three rings on chains hanging from the top at different heights.

DARLENE
(off)
Okay, Lana, we're ready.

LANA LEE
(to Jones)
Put the record on.

JONES
Sorry. Recor plain star at
thirty a week.

LANA LEE
(hollering)
Put down that broom and get on
that phonograph before I call up
the precinct.

JONES

Get the phonograph yourself
before I call up the precinct
and ax them po-lice mothers make
a search for your orphan frien
who disappear.

LANA LEE

I'd like to see a jailbait
vagrant like you trying to get
the cops to believe you,
especially when I tell them you
been dipping into my cash
register.

JONES

The only thing I been dipping in
around here is a mop bucket
fulla dirty water.

LANA LEE

It's my word against yours.
Which one you think they'll
believe?

Jones is silent behind his silver shades.

LANA LEE

Now get on that phonograph.

Jones throws his broom into a booth and slips behind the bar. When he bends down to turn on the turntable he sees the door has been left open to the little cabinet. He places the needle on the record and a full orchestra intro floods the room. Jones kneels down and, for the first time, TAKES OFF HIS SUNGLASSES.

DARLENE

(off)

Okay, everybody, here we come.

Darlene bumps her way onto the little stage with the cockatoo on her arm. Jones pops up behind the bar, his shades restored.

Darlene, in a low-cut orange satin evening dress, makes several clumsily lascivious motions over toward the stand while the cockatoo sways unsteadily on her arm. Holding onto the top of the stand with one hand, she makes a grotesque pass at the pole with her pelvis and SIGHS.

DARLENE

Oh.

Lana stares in disbelief. Jones pops down behind the bar. Inside the little cabinet, neatly stacked, are ten PACKAGES wrapped in plain paper. Piled in the corner is a globe, a box of chalk, and the large green book: THE WRITINGS OF BOETHIUS. THE MUSIC CHANGES TEMPO.

DARLENE

Oooo. Oooo. Go birdie, go.

Darlene places the cockatoo on the lowest ring, and with beak and claw it begins to climb up to the next highest ring. Darlene bumps and grinds around the pole in an orgiastic frenzy. Lana Lee is frozen in her seat.

DARLENE

Oh. Oh. Bird, oh.

Jones snatches a pencil from the cash register and ducks behind the bar. He writes the address of the Night of Joy as minutely as he can on the side of each package.

DARLENE

Oh.

She bumps down to the edge of the little stage to show the audience the lingerie that shows through the opening.

LANA LEE

Stop it! Stop the music!

JONES

Whoa!

He SNAPS the cabinet shut, and TURNS OFF the phonograph.

DARLENE

(offended)

Hey, what's the matter?

Jones comes out from behind the bar.

LANA LEE

It stinks is what's the matter. You look like a whore in that orange dress. And what's all these sounds you're making like a slut?

DARLENE

But Lana...

Lana sticks a cigarette between her coral lips and lights it.

LANA LEE

We gotta re-think the whole act.
I know this business.
Stripping's an insult to a
woman. Anybody can insult a
tramp. The kinda creeps come in
here wanna see a sweet, clean
virgin get insulted and
stripped. You gotta use your
head for Chrissake, Darlene. You
gotta be pure. I want you to be
like a nice, refined girl who's
surprised when the bird starts
grabbing at your clothes.

DARELENE

Who says I'm not refined.

LANA LEE

Okay. You're refined. Then be
refined on my stage. That's what
gives a turn drama, goddamit.

JONES

Ooo-wee. Night of Joy be winnin
a Academy Awar with this ack.
The bird get one, too.

LANA LEE

Get back on my floor.

JONES

Right, away, Scarla O'Horrer.

LANA LEE

(screaming)
Wait a minute!

"TARA'S THEME" pours forth. Lana SNAPS HER FINGER and the
MUSIC STOPS.

LANA LEE

That's it.

DARLENE

(bewildered)
That's what?

INT. PRECINCT OFFICE - DAY

Patrolman Mancuso leans against the sergeant's desk and
WHEEZES.

MANCUSO

I'b getting pneumodia. My at
says if I stay iddat badroom,
I'b gudda die.

SERGEANT

Your aunt? A grown man like
you's gotta listen to his aunt?
Jesus. Stand up straight.

The sergeant studies the miserable figure before him shaking
with the aftereffects of a dangerous cough.

SERGEANT

Okay. Don't go back to the bus
station. Get out on the streets
again and get some sunshine.
But listen here. You've got two
more days. If you don't bring in
nobody by then, you're off the
force. You understand me,
Mancuso?

Mancuso nods and SNIFFLES.

CUT TO:

MYRNA MINKOFF

staring at us. She is in her apartment, where a cicrle of
friends are gathered, holding hands. Incense burns...

MYRNA

Your letters are sick, Ignatius,
and I am worried. First you
claim you've become an activist
labor organizer and now you
produce a pack of lies about
being connected with the "food
merchandising industry."

IGNATIUS

is soaking in the tub sucking on a Dr. Nut and reading her
soiled letter. Large BUBBLES emerge from the bathwater
beneath his legs.

MYRNA

fans her nose.

MYRNA

Let's face it, Ignatius. Since I last saw you, you have done nothing but lie around rotting in your room. You must do something, Ignatius; a very bad crack-up is on the way. Get out of that womb-house for at least an hour a day. Realize that life is surging all around you. The valve closes because it thinks it is living in a dead organism. Open your heart, Ignatius, and you will open your valve.

IGNATIUS

rolls his eyes.

By now, everything in the bathroom is floating in several feet of water; Ignatius bobs as though in a small dinghy.

MYRNA

(off)

If you are having any sex fantasies, describe them in your next letter.

REX, Ignatius' dog, floats by on a BATH MAT. Ignatius looks at him with great longing.

MYRNA

(off)

I may be able to interpret their meaning for you and help you through this psychosexual crisis you are having. The members of my group therapy group are all following your case with interest.

IN MYRNA'S APARTMENT

all the hand-holding guests turn and WAVE.

MYRNA

If I were not so busy, I would take off on a long overdue inspection tour and come to see you personally.

IGNATIUS

back in reality, sitting in the tub, firmly situated on the floor. His eyes are weary.

MYRNA

(off)

Hold on until we meet again.

INT. BATTAGLIA PARLOR - NIGHT

On top of the old console radio are two fifths of Early Times and numerous bottles of Seven-Up. Patrolman Mancuso and Mrs. Reilly are seated on the sofa. Santa is standing in the doorway with a highball in a jelly glass. Mancuso COUGHS DEEPLY.

SANTA

Angelo is just afraid he'll spoil the party. He lost the book you gave him from Ignatius.

MRS. REILLY

That won't spoil the party. Just don't ever tell Ignatius.

Mancuso COUGHS.

SANTA

Lord Angelo. Stop that coughing. Go lay down in the back and rest up till the old man comes.

Mancuso erupts into a SPASM OF COUGHING and leaves the room.

SANTA

I wonder how come that old man ain't showed up yet.

MRS. REILLY

To tell you the truth, Santa, I don't think I want to meet this old man.

SANTA

Well, it's too late now.

MRS. REILLY

Yeah, but what me and this old man gonna do?

SANTA

Aw, relax, Irene. You making me nervous. Now listen to me. You had arthritus very bad. The bowling's helping you out. Right? You was stuck home with that crazy boy every night until Santa come along. Right? Now listen to Santa, precious. You don't wanna end up all alone with that Ignatius on your hands. This old man looks like he got him a little money. He dresses neat. He knows you from somewhere. He likes you.

Santa looks Mrs. Reilly in the eye.

SANTA

This old man can pay off your debt.

MRS. REILLY

(suddenly understanding)

Yeah?

Someone KNOCKS LIGHTLY at the shutters on the front door.

SANTA

(eagerly)

Oh, I bet that's him.

MRS. REILLY

Tell him I hadda go, honey.

Santa opens the door and pushes the shutters outward.

SANTA

Hey, Mr. Robichaux. We been waiting for you. My friend Miss Reilly here's been wondering where you was. Come on in out the cold.

Mr. Robichaux steps into the parlor.

MR. ROBICHAUX

Yeah, Miss Battaglia, I'm sorry I'm a little late. I had to take my little grandchirren around the neighborhood. They raffling some rosaries for the sisters.

SANTA

Oh, I know. Lady friend of mine
won the outboard motor the
sisters was raffling last year.

Mrs. Reilly sits frozen on the sofa staring into her drink.

SANTA

Irene! What are you doing, girl?
Say "hello" to Mr. Robichaux.

MRS. REILLY

(to her drink)
Glad to meet you.

MR. ROBICHAUX

(to Santa)
Maybe Miss Reilly don't
remember, but we met before.
(to Mrs. Reilly)
It was downtown by Holmes. That
policeman tried to take in your
boy.

Santa's eyes open widely.

MRS. REILLY

Oh, yeah.

MR. ROBICHAUX

It wasn't your fault though,
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.

MR. ROBICHAUX

I'll never forget that Patrolman
Mancuso.

SANTA

Mancuso? I got plenty relatives
with that very same name. As a
matter of fact, one of them's on
the force.

COUGHING EXPLODES in the kitchen.

MRS. REILLY

I think I hear Ignatius calling
me. I better go.

Patrolman Mancuso appears in the doorway.

SANTA

As a matter of fact, here he is.

MR. ROBICHAUX

Christ Awmight! That's him!

MRS REILLY

(rising)

Well--

MR. ROBICHAUX

If you wasn't a dirty cop, I'd
punch you right in the nose!

SANTA

Aw, take it easy, Claude. Angelo
here didn't mean no harm.

MR. ROBICHAUX

(to Santa, wildly)

How come you brought me here?
What is this?

MRS. REILLY

Santa, honey, you wanna call me
a nice taxi?

SANTA

Aw, shut up, Irene. Now listen,
Claude, Angelo says he's sorry
he took you in.

MR. ROBICHAUX

It's too late to feel sorry. I
was disgraced in front my
granchirren.

SANTA

Angelo got that cold on account
of he took you in, Claude. They
had him stuck in a toilet. Next
thing they gonna kick him off
the force.

Patrolman Mancuso COUGHS SADLY.

MR. ROBICHAUX

Maybe I got a little excited.

MANCUSO

I shouldn't of toog you id. I
got nerbous.

MRS. REILLY

(to Mr. 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.

MRS. REILLY

Somebody oughta punch him in the
mouth.

SANTA

Somebody oughta beat up on that
Ignatius. Now come on. Everybody
make friends.

INT. LEVY LODGE - DAY

Mrs. Levy props Miss Trixie on the yellow nylon couch. Mr.
Levy is painting a paint-by-numbers undersea-scape.

MR. LEVY

Let her alone. Look she's trying
to sleep.

MRS. LEVY

Let her alone? Do you realize,
Gus, that this is the tragedy of
this ppor woman's life. She's
always been alone. She needs
someone. She needs love.

MR. LEVY

Ugh.

MRS. LEVY

(sweetly)

Miss Trixie. Wake up.

Miss Trixie opens her eyes and WHEEZES. She is wearing
stupendous FALSE TEETH.

MISS TRIXIE

Am I retired?

MRS. LEVY
No, darling.

MISS TRIXIE
I am very tired.

MRS. LEVY
It's all in your mind. You have
this age psychosis. You're still
a very attractive woman.

MR. LEVY
Can't you take her outside? It's
a nice day.

MRS. LEVY
She likes the couch. Let her
have some enjoyment.

MISS TRIXIE
(snarling)
Silence!

MR. LEVY
You'd better take those teeth
out of her mouth before she
bites off her tongue. And let
her alone. All she wants is to
retire. It's like torturing a
dumb animal.

MISS TRIXIE
Who took my eyeshade? Where am
I?

EXT. PARK -- DAY

George sits on a bench, smoking a cigarette and killing time. The THREE TOUGH-LOOKING WOMEN approach and pass, and George, remembering their robbery of Clyde the vendor, gives them a long stare. The women -- LIZ, FRIEDA, and BETTY -- stop and look at him.

LIZ
What the hell are you looking
at?

GEORGE
Nothing.

They walk toward him. He stands up and swallows hard.

BETTY
Really.

BETTY cont.

It looked like you were staring
at us.

GEORGE

I...I thought I'd seen you
before.

FRIEDA

In your dreams, maybe.

LIZ

Yeah. Did you see this?

She hauls off and slugs him. His packages fall to the ground.

EXT. PIRATE'S ALLEY - DAY

The alley is filled with well-dressed ladies in large hats. A variety of artwork dangles from the iron pickets of the fence behind the Cathedral and a sign reads: LADIES' ART GUILD EXHIBIT AND SALE. Ignatius, in scarf and earring, points the prow of his wagon into the throng. Taped to the side of the great tin weenie is the hand-lettered sign: TWELVE INCHES OF PARADISE. A WOMAN reads the sign and SCREAMS. Several other women gather around her.

IGNATIUS

Hot dogs, ladies? Savories from
the hygienic Paradise kitchens?

Ignatius BELCHES VIOLENTLY. The ladies pretend to study the sky and Ignatius glances at the numerous paintings hanging near him on the fence.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God! How dare you present
such abortions to the public.
You ladies need to be taught how
to handle a brush. For starters,
I suggest you get together and
paint someone's house.

SECOND LADY

Please leave.

IGNATIUS

Gladly!

Ignatius grabs the handle of his cart and waddles off down the Alley. Ignatius parks the wagon, squats uncomfortably on the side steps of the Cathedral, and removes his boots. He is inspecting the great slabs of his feet.

A VOICE

(off)

Oh, dear. What am I seeing? I come out to see this dreadful, tacky art exhibit, and what do I find as Exhibit Number One?

DORIAN GREENE approaches.

DORIAN

It's the ghost of Lafitte, the pirate. No. It's Fatty Arbuckle. Or is it Marie Dressler? Tell me soon or I'll die.

IGNATIUS

Get away from me, you fop. Where is my mother's hat?

DORIAN

(sighing)

Oh, that. I'm afraid it was destroyed at a really wild gathering. Everyone dearly loved it.

IGNATIUS

I'm sure they did. I won't ask you just how it was desecrated.

DORIAN

I wouldn't remember anyway. Too many martinis that night for little moi.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God.

DORIAN

What are you doing in that bizarre outfit? You look like the Queen of the Gypsies. What are you supposed to be? I really want to know.

IGNATIUS

The traditional uniform did not claim enough focus. This ensemble was my employer's idea. It is meant to draw attention to our product.

IGNATIUS cont.

Not easy in the Quarter with so many other grotesque distractions.

DORIAN

(lighting a Salem)

How is that dear mother of yours?

IGNATIUS

I don't want to hear her sainted name cross your decadent lips. I am laboring here to pay her debts.

DORIAN

I hope she doesn't know that you're flouncing around the streets like some sort of Hungarian Joan of Arc. That earring. It's so Magyar.

IGNATIUS

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

DORIAN

It would bring the house down 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

(with a bright smile)

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 and partake in some dubious recreation that appeals to you. 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, oldest 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. My God! We may be all trapped in some horrible conspiracy. I knew that something like this was going to happen. The United States is probably totally defenseless!

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

IGNATIUS

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

DORIAN

Who knows?

IGNATIUS

(sotto voce)

Of course, this could be a world-wide deception. The next war could turn out to be one massive orgy. Good grief. Actually, this might be quite beneficial to the world. It could mean an end to war forever. This could be the key to lasting peace. Perhaps you are the hope for the future.

Ignatius dramatically POUNDS one paw into the other.

IGNATIUS

There certainly doesn't seem to be anything else very promising on the horizon.

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

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 organizational meeting to kick off the campaign.

DORIAN

Wouldn't that be something like a party?

IGNATIUS

Yes, in a way.

DORIAN

Then it might be sort of fun. You can't imagine how drab, drab the parties have been lately.

IGNATIUS

There is no time to be lost. The apocalypse is near at hand.

DORIAN

We'll have it at my place. This Friday. Here's my card.

IGNATIUS
(very serious)
Begin organizing at every level.

INT. BATTAGLIA PARLOR - DAY

Santa Battaglia is reading the newspaper seated on the sofa between Mrs. Reilly and Mr. Robichaux.

SANTA
Listen, you two. Why don't we go see that cute little Debra Reynolds.

MR. ROBICHAUX
That would be nice.

MRS. REILLY
I think Ignatius told me this movie ain't no good.

SANTA
Irene! You all the time thinking of that boy, and with all the trouble he's giving you. You better wake up, babe. If you had any sense you woulda had that boy locked away at Charity Hospital a long time ago. They'd turn a hose on him. They'd stick a letrit socket in that boy. They'd show that Ignatius. They'd make him behave himself.

MRS. REILLY
(with interest)
Yeah? How much that cost?

SANTA
It's all for free, Irene.

MR. ROBICHAUX
You gotta think about yourself, Irene. That son of yours is gonna put you in your grave.

MRS. REILLY
(pensively)
Let's go see that precious Debra Reynolds.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY -- DAY

George sits at the bar, nursing a bloody nose.

LANA LEE
You were robbed by a bunch of
women?

GEORGE
They weren't like women, they
were...different.

LANA LEE
Yeah, right.

INT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

GONZALEZ turns around in his swivel chair just as the main door to the office opens and Miss Trixie steps in. Her eyes are weak pools edged with blue shadow. Her lips are extended in an orange line that almost reaches her nostrils. A few gray wisps of hair escape from beneath the Doris Day wig.

MISS TRIXIE
(snarling)
This is Levy Pants!

Mrs. Levy steps into the door-frame 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!

Mr. Levy passes Miss Trixie on his way into the office with a shopping bag of her things. Mrs. Levy brings Miss Trixie into the office and closes the door.

MR. LEVY
Now are you happy? If she had a
knife on her, I'd be taking you
to the hospital right now.

MRS. LEVY
Listen to the fire in her voice.
So vigorous. It's unbelievable.

GONZALEZ
(heartbroken)
She's back?

MR. LEVY

Can you believe your eyes?

GONZALEZ

She certainly looks tan.

MISS TRIXIE

I am a very attractive woman.

MR. LEVY

All right. You've had your fun.
Let's go. I'm getting depressed.

GONZALEZ

Just a moment. I have some mail
for you. And this is a certified
letter from Abelman.

Mr. Gonzalez hands Mr. Levy an envelope. He opens it and reads.

GONZALEZ

It's addressed to you and not
the company, and it's marked
personal, so I thought you'd
better open it.

INT. ABELMAN OFFICE - DAY

ISADORE ABELMAN is pacing around his desk, dictating a letter. His SECRETARY scribbles furiously.

ABELMAN

Dear Gus Levy,
We are shocked and grievously
injured to receive the attached
letter. We have been a faithful
outlet for your merchandise for
thirty years. Maybe you remember
the wreath we sent when your
father died for which we spared
no expense. This will be very
short. After many nights without
sleep, we have given the
original letter to our lawyer,
who is investigating a libel
suit for \$500,000. This may do
little to compensate for our
hurt feelings. Get a lawyer. We
will see you in court like
gentlemen. No more threats,
please. Signed,
I. Abelman, Abelman's Dry Goods.

INT. LEVY PANTS - DAY

Mr. Levy is now seated in a swivel chair. He flips the page and scans the Thermofaxed copy of Ignatius's letter.

MR. LEVY

(reading)

"Mr. I. Abelman, Mongoloid, Esq.... your total lack of contact with reality...your blighted worldview... you may feel the sting of our lash across your pitiful shoulders... yours in anger...Gus Levy!!" Who wrote this? What do you know about this, Gonzalez?

GONZALEZ

I don't know a thing. It's the first time I've seen that letter.

MR. LEVY

Gonzalez, what was the name of that big kook you had working in here, the big fat one with the green cap?

GONZALEZ

Reilly. Ignatius J. Reilly.

EXT. ST. CHARLES STREET - DAY

Ignatius is pushing his cart against the traffic toward the Quarter. He is lost in thought and does not seem to notice that one of the bicycle tires is traveling into the groove of a streetcar track. A streetcar approaches in the distance.

IGNATIUS

(talking to CAMERA)

Does M. Minkoff want sex in politics? I shall give her sex in politics and plenty of it! Almost everyone else has had an opportunity to run the world. I cannot see why these people should not be given their chance.

IGNATIUS

sits by a curb, eating one of his hot dogs.

IGNATIUS

(still to us)

Our first step will be to elect one of their number to some very high office -- the presidency. If Fortuna spins her wheel kindly...then they will infiltrate the military. As soldiers, they will be so continually busy giving cocktail parties that they will never have time for battle.

IGNATIUS

riding home on the streetcar, still addressing the camera.

IGNATIUS

From time to time the Chief of Staff, the President, and so on, dressed in sequins and feathers, will entertain the leaders of all the other countries at balls and parties.

Other passengers exchange glances.

IGNATIUS

Degeneracy, rather than signaling the downfall of a society as it once did, will now signal peace for a troubled world...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mrs. Reilly, dressed in her nightgown, is on the phone.

MRS. REILLY

I keep thinking about what you said. Maybe it ain't such a bad idea after all, babe. You know what I mean?

IN SANTA BATTAGLIA'S KITCHEN

Santa is stirring gumbo in a huge pot on the stove.

SANTA

Of course it ain't. Them people at Charity can let Ignatius take him a little rest.

SANTA cont.
 Claude ain't gonna want no
 Ignatius around, sweetheart.

MRS. REILLY
 (off)
 He likes me, huh?

SANTA
 Likes you? He called up this
 morning to ax me if I thought
 you was ever gonna remarry.

IN THE REILLY HOUSE

Ignatius sails in the front door.

MRS. REILLY
 (on phone, quiet)
 He's sure considerate.

IGNATIUS
 What in the world are you
 whispering about?

SANTA
 (off)
 Christ. It sound like that
 Ignatius come in.

IGNATIUS
 Good grief. Are you speaking to
 that Battaglia strumpet?

SANTA
 (off)
 You better ring up the Charity,
 honey.

Santa guffaws in a husky voice and hangs up.

IGNATIUS
 What in the world do you and
 that old bawd babble about?

MRS. REILLY
 Shut up!

IGNATIUS
 Thank you. I see that things
 about here are as cheerful as
 ever.



MRS. REILLY
 (screaming)
 How much money you brought in
 today? A quarter?

The telephone RINGS.

MRS. REILLY
 That must be that Mr. Levy. He
 already rang up here twice
 today.

IGNATIUS
 Mr. Levy? What does that monster
 want?

MRS. REILLY
 He wouldn't tell me. Go on,
 crazy. Answer that. Pick up that
 phone.

Ignatius picks up the phone.

IGNATIUS
 (heavy Mayfair accent)
 Yus?

MR. LEVY
 (off)
 Mr. Reilly?

IGNATIUS
 Mr. Reilly is not here.

MR. LEVY
 (off)
 This is Gus Levy.

IGNATIUS
 Mr. Reilly is at the state
 mental hospital at Mandeville.
 He has been since being so
 viciously dismissed by your
 concern. You may yet receive his
 psychiatrists' bills. They are
 rather staggering.

MR. LEVY
 (off)
 He cracked up?

IGNATIUS
 Violently and totally.

MR. LEVY

(off)

Can he have visitors at
Mandeville?

IGNATIUS

Of course. Drive out to see him.
Bring him some oreos.

Ignatius SLAMS the telephone down, presses a quarter into his
mother's palm, waddles into his room, and SLAMS THE DOOR.

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius, where you going to?

IGNATIUS

(off)

Please, Mother, I'm rather
rushed.

Sounds of dressing behind the door. A large piece of METAL is
heard falling to the floor. Mrs. Reilly looks at the quarter.

MRS. REILLY

(screaming at the door)

You might as well stay at home
all day long for all the money
you bringing in. How I'm gonna
meet the note I gotta pay that
man?

IGNATIUS

(off)

I wish that you would let me
alone. I am addressing a
political meeting tonight, and I
must organize my thoughts.

MRS. REILLY

A political meeting? Ignatius!
Ain't that wonderful.

The door opens. Mrs. Reilly GASPS. Ignatius is in full pirate
finery. She swallows and looks at him.

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius, don't you think maybe
you'd be happy if you went and
took you a little rest at
Charity? You could just rest,
honey.

IGNATIUS

I thought you might react like that. That's why I have kept all of this paraphernalia stashed at Paradise Vendors. This rather impressive saber I purchased only this afternoon.

MRS. REILLY

You can't go out like that.

IGNATIUS

Please. Not another hysterical scene.

Mrs. Reilly begins BEATING Ignatius on the arm.

MRS. REILLY

Get back in that room, boy. Get back in there, Ignatius. I ain't fooling this time, boy. You can't disgrace me like that.

Mrs. Reilly SLAPS Ignatius flatly in the face.

MRS. REILLY

You ain't leaving this house, crazy.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God, are you going mad?

Mrs. Reilly keeps raining BLOWS as Ignatius waddles down the hall, pushes open the long shutters, and runs into the yard.

MRS. REILLY

(screaming)

Come back in this house.

IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Reilly exits onto the porch. Ignatius draws his scimitar from his belt and runs into the middle of the street.

MRS. REILLY

You ain't going nowhere, Ignatius.

IGNATIUS

I dare you to come out in that shredded nightgown and get me!

Ignatius sticks out his massive pink tongue.

MRS. REILLY
Get back in here, Ignatius!

A VOICE CALLS from behind the front shutters next door.

VOICE
(off)
Hey, knock it off, you two!

MRS. REILLY
Take a look at Ignatius, Miss
Annie. Ain't that awful?

MISS ANNIE
(off)
I'm gonna ring up the cops in
about one minute.

A taxi is cruising down the block. Ignatius flags it down just as his mother runs down to the curb in her shredded nightgown. Ignatius SLAMS the taxi door in her face.

MRS. REILLY
Ignatius!

EXT. ST. PETER STREET - NIGHT

DIM YET FRENETIC SINGING AND LAUGHING comes from an eighteenth-century three-story stucco building painted a bright canary yellow with gas jets in reproduction brass lanterns on either side of the carriageway. Ignatius stands before the black enamel gate. His blue and yellow eyes denounce the resplendent facade. He looks at the three brass doorbells and at the little white cards above each.

Billy Truhard
Raoul Frayle

3A

Frieda Club
Betty Bumper
Liz Steele

2A

Dorian Greene

1A

He jabs his finger into Dorian's bell and a DOOR OPENS somewhere down the carriageway.

Dorian Greene appears in the distance walking somewhat unsteadily toward the gate.

DORIAN
Oh, dear. Where in the world
have you been?

DORIAN cont.
I'm afraid that the kickoff
rally is fast getting out of
hand.

Dorian fumbles with the lock and opens the gate.

DORIAN
Everyone is simply letting his
hair down.

Dorian does a rapid and uncoordinated pantomime of letting
his hair down.

IGNATIUS
Oh, my God! Stop that appalling
obscenity.

DORIAN
Well, come along, Gypsy Queen,
let's get inside.

Ignatius follows Dorian down the carriageway. Pastel lamps
are concealed behind the palms along the walls.

IGNATIUS
This building is repellingly
flamboyant. Who is responsible
for this abortion?

DORIAN
I, of course, Magyar Maiden. I
own it.

IGNATIUS
I should have known. May I ask
where the money comes from to
support this decadent whimsy of
yours?

DORIAN
From my dear family out there in
the wheat. They send me large
checks every month. I simply
guarantee them that I'll stay
out of Nebraska. I left them
there under something of a
cloud, you see.

Dorian opens the glossy black door and they step inside.

IN DORIAN GREENE'S APARTMENT

Judy Garland is blasting "The Trolley Song" above the din. Before Ignatius is a seething mass of people. Cigarettes and cocktail glasses held like batons fly in the air directing the SYMPHONY OF CHATTER, SHRIEKING, SINGING, and LAUGHING. A small band of YOUNG MEN, the only stationary ones in the room, stands before the phonograph.

FIRST YOUNG MAN

Divine!

SECOND YOUNG MAN

Fantastic!

THIRD YOUNG MAN

So human!

Herringbones and madras and lamb's wool and cashmere flash past in a blur as hands and arms rend the air in a variety of graceful gestures. Fingernails, cuff links, pinky rings, teeth, eyes - all glitter. At the center of one group is a COWBOY, at the center of another is a LAD IN BLACK LEATHER, teaching judo holds to epicene students.

DORIAN

(to Ignatius)

I only invited the better people.

IGNATIUS

Good gracious. I can see that we're going to have a great deal of trouble capturing the Calvinist vote.

TIMMY, the sailor turns from the judo lesson and grins.

TIMMY

(to Ignatius)

How fun.

DORIAN

(to Ignatius)

Come. You must see the decoration that I've made.

He leads Ignatius over to the mantelpiece and shows him a bud vase containing one red, one white, and one blue rose.

DORIAN

Isn't that wild? It's better than all of that tacky crepe paper.

Ignatius TAPS the vase with his cutlass.

IGNATIUS

Dyed flowers are unnatural and
perverse. I can see that I am
going to have my hands full with
you people.

DORIAN

(moaning)

Oh, talk, talk, talk. Let's go
into the kitchen. I want you to
meet the ladies' auxiliary.

Ignatius follows Dorian through the crowd.

IGNATIUS

(greedily)

Is that true? An auxiliary?
Well, I must compliment you upon
your foresightedness.

IN THE GREENE KITCHEN

THREE WOMEN are seated at a table drinking from beer cans
when Dorian and Ignatius push through the large swinging
door. They regard Ignatius squarely. One woman, FRIEDA,
CRUSHES a beer can in her hand and tosses it into a potted
plant next to the sink.

DORIAN

Girls...

The three women RAISE A RAUCOUS BRONX CHEER.

DORIAN

This is Ignatius Reilly, a new
face.

FRIEDA

Put it there, Fats.

She grabs Ignatius's paw and works it over.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God.

DORIAN

That's Frieda, and they're Betty
and Liz.

Ignatius slips his hands into his pockets.

IGNATIUS

How do you do. I'm sure you'll
be of invaluable help to our
cause.

BETTY and LIZ nudge each other.

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

(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' trousers. They all laugh.

IGNATIUS

I think I shall return to the
other room.

BETTY

Hey, don't go away empty-handed.
Liz, tell him what's he's won.

Liz reaches over to the counter and grabs one of the MANILA
ENVELOPES belonging to George.

LIZ

Here you go, Fats. This might
sail your boat.

DORIAN

Or perhaps his "dinghy".

They laugh again as Ignatius opens the envelope and stares at
the large postcard inside.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God!

CLOSE on postcard: A NUDE WOMAN is seated on the edge of a
desk next to a globe of the world. The gesture of one hand
hand suggests onanism with a piece of chalk. In the other
hand is a LARGE GREEN BOOK which hides the woman's face.

The title of the book is: THE WRITINGS OF BOETHIUS.

IGNATIUS

Do I believe what I am seeing?
What brilliance. What taste.
Good grief.

He looks up, his eyes on fire. We've never seen him so completely transfixed.

IGNATIUS

Where in the world did you get
these? Who is this brilliant
woman.

BETTY

We found 'em.

Ignatius scans the outside of the envelope and sees the tiny street address scrawled in the corner.

IGNATIUS

(to Dorian)

I must leave immediately.

DORIAN

But...but...

Ignatius leaves the kitchen, followed by Dorian.

IN THE PARLOR

Ignatius ploughs his way through the crowd.

DORIAN

You're leaving right now?

IGNATIUS

(shouting to Dorian)

A brilliant, misused woman
requires my immediate attention.
My dream for peace and a New
World Order must be postponed.
Besides which, I am beginning to
believe your movement is doomed.
You know nothing about politics
and voter persuasion, and from a
standpoint of self-preservation,
I am beginning to smother from
the stench of glandular
emissions and overpowering
cologne. My valve may close.

DORIAN

But we haven't voted on the best costume!

EXT. NIGHT OF JOY

Ignatius stands in front, looking down at the scrap of brown paper and then up at the facade of the Night of Joy.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God! This poor, gifted woman is in the hands of fiends.

He lumbers up to a poster in a glass case. It reads:

ROBERTA E. LEE
presents
Harlett O'Hara
The Virgin-ny Belle
(and pet!)

Jones steps out of the Night of Joy wearing tails and a stovepipe hat that rests at an angle above his dark glasses.

JONES

Whoa! Come in, see Miss Harla O'Horror dancin with her pet. Guarantee one hunner percent real plantation dancin.

Crowds of people rush by, ignoring Jones.

JONES

Hey! Guarantee plantation atmosphere, got cotton growin right on the stage right in front of your eyeball, got a civil right worker getting his ass beat up between show. Ooo-wee!

Ignatius approaches Jones.

JONES

Hey, man, I remember you. You look like a walkin' sabotage.

IGNATIUS

Please. Do you by any chance have a woman in that den who is given to reading?

JONES

Yeah! Sure! We got one real fine lookin' gal in here always got her nose in a book.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God. Is there any way that I can meet this paragon?

JONES

She be startin in a few minutes.

IGNATIUS

Good grief. Don't tell me that she is this Harlett O'Hara.

JONES

She Harla O'Horror all right.

IGNATIUS

Boethius plus a pet. What a discovery!

JONES

You better get you ass in there and get you a ringside seat.

Jones propels Ignatius rapidly through the padded door. A man wearing a silk suit and a homburg steps out of the shadows: Patrolman Mancuso.

INT. NIGHT OF JOY - NIGHT

Ignatius lumbers through the gloom and seats himself at a small table directly beneath the stage. A three-piece band is thumping through "Fools Rush In". Ignatius looks over at the bar but the BARTENDER pretends not to see him. RITA, a fortyish Latin woman, pries herself loose from the bar before the bartender can stop her. She comes over to Ignatius and smiles revealing several gold teeth.

RITA

You wanna drink, chico?

Ignatius reels from her breath, rips the scarf from his cap and covers his nostrils.

IGNATIUS

Thank you, yes. A Dr. Nut, if you please.

RITA

I see what we have.

She CLOPS back to the bar. Ignatius watches her speak to the bartender in pantomime. They make a variety of gestures, mostly directed at Ignatius. She returns with two bottles of champagne and two glasses. SHE SLAMS THE TRAY on the table.

RITA

We no have Dr. Nut. Mira you are owe twenty-four dollar for these champagne.

Ignatius directs a few swipes of his cutlass at Rita.

IGNATIUS

This is an outrage! Bring me a coke.

RITA

No coke. No nawtheen. Only champagne.

She sits at the table.

RITA

Come on, honey. Open the champagne. I am 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.

The band emits a DEBILITATED FANFARE and Lana Lee appears on the stage in gold lame overalls.

IGNATIUS

Oh, my God!

LANA LEE

Welcome, ladies and genitals.

RITA

Your are pay me now.

IGNATIUS

(hissing)

Shut up, you slut.

The band STUMBLES into a four-count version of "Sophisticated Lady".

LANA LEE
 And now that pure virgin-ny
 Belle, Miss Harlett O'Hara.

An OLD MAN at one of the tables CLAPS FEEBLY. The curtain opens revealing the stand decorated with rings. Darlene sweeps onstage in a ball gown trailing yards of nylon net. On her head is a monstrous picture hat. On her arm is the monstrous bird. Another CUSTOMER CLAPS.

RITA
 Mira, you are pay me now or
 else, cabron.

DARLENE
 (carefully to the bird)
 There sure was plenty balls at
 that ball, but I still got my
 honor.

IGNATIUS
 Oh, my God! Is this cretin
 Harlett O'Hara!?

The cockatoo turns its head and sees Ignatius.

CLOSE on the BLACK BEAD OF ITS EYE.

CLOSE on the GLITTERY GOLD HOOP hanging from IGNATIUS'S RIGHT EARLOBE.

The bird FLAPS from Darlene's arm, circles Ignatius once, and then lands on his SHOULDER, SQUAWKING HYSTERICALLY.

DARLENE
 Hey! It's that crazyman!
 The bird sinks its claws into Ignatius's smock and snags his earring with its beak.

IGNATIUS
 Good heavens!

Ignatius leaps to his feet and beats at the bird with his paws. The champagne bottles and glasses SHATTER on the floor as he springs and begins to stagger to the door.

DARLENE
 Come back here with my cockatoo!

Lana Lee runs onto the stage SCREAMING. Ignatius is BEATING at the mass of rose feathers welded to his ear and shoulder.

LANA LEE

How in the hell did this
character get in here? Where's
Jones? Somebody get me that
Jones.

IGNATIUS

How dare you fiends inflict a
rabid bird upon your
unsuspecting customers? You may
expect to be sued in the
morning.

CLOSE on the EARRING firmly in the COCKATOO'S BEAK.

The bird pulls the earring loose and FLIES from Ignatius'
shoulder. Ignatius KNOCKS OVER several more tables as he
lurches to the door.

RITA

(waving the check)

Come! You are owe twenty-four
dollar to me. You are pay right
now.

Ignatius stumbles past Jones and bounces out the padded door.

EXT. NIGHT OF JOY - NIGHT

GASPING and clutching his valve, Ignatius continues forward
onto the street 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.

IGNATIUS

looks up and is blinded by the headlights a few feet from his
eyes. The HEADLIGHTS SWIM and FADE. Ignatius swoons.

JONES

leaps into the street and pulls at the white smock. Ignatius
falls backward and the bus RUMBLES past a few inches from his
desert boots.

Lana Lee studies the mound of white lying in the street.

LANA LEE

Is he dead?

Jones blows smoke over the inert figure.

JONES
Hey, wake up, man.

PATROLMAN 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's heart.

MANCUSO
He's okay. He just passed out.
Everybody back. Give him air.

The bus has stopped a few yards down the street blocking traffic and the street is filled with people. Darlene steps through the crowd with the rose cockatoo on her shoulder. The earring dangles from its beak like a golden worm.

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.

Lana Lee turns to the crowd.

LANA LEE
Well, folks, now that you're all
here, how's about coming into
the Night of Joy? We got a class
show.

RITA
Mira, Lee. Who is pay for
champagne?

LANA LEE
You're fired too, stupid.

Patrolman 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. Look, 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
fun.

Lana Lee steps close to Mancuso, reaches into her gold lame
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 the evening
with that?

Close on the PHOTO: The LEGS, the BOOK, the GLOBE, the CHALK.
Mancuso clears his throat.

MANCUSO
(to Lana Lee)
I'm Patrolman Mancuso.
Undercover agent. You're under
arrest for soliciting and for
possession of pornography.

Ignatius's eyes flutter open. Frieda, Betty, and Liz stomp
into the crowd surrounding Ignatius, inciting several
fistfights.

IGNATIUS
(faintly)
Spin, Fortuna, spin.

His eyes flutter and close again.

DISSOLVE TO:

A SPINNING NEWSPAPER.

It slows and comes to a halt. The headline:

WILD INCIDENT ON
BOURBON STREET

FLASH BULBS POP. BLACK AND WHITE NEWSPAPER PHOTO: Jones grins broadly at what looks like a dead cow lying in the street.

MRS. REILLY

(off)

It's all there. Read it, boy. I shoulda known something like this was gonna happen with your dirty pictures and running off dressed up like a Mardis Gras.

FLASH BULBS POP. FULL BACK FROM FRONT PAGE TO REVEAL NEWSPAPER HELD UP BY PATROLMAN MANCUSO AS HE POSES FOR A PHOTO TAKEN BY THE SERGEANT.

MANCUSO

Thank you very much, Sergeant.

The Sergeant tosses the flashbulb into a trash can and clamps his hand on Mancuso's shoulder.

SERGEANT

Single-handed you break up the city's most active high school pornography racket. Mancuso, of all people, brings in a woman even our best plainclothesmen couldn't fool. Mancuso, I find out, has been working on this case on the q.t. Mancuso can identify one of her agents.

Patrolman Mancuso's face is flushed.

SERGEANT

You staged a one-man raid, Angelo. I wouldn't be surprised if you was to get a promotion. And just a couple of days ago I was thinking you was a horse's ass.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

George is pasting an article in his Junior Achievement scrapbook while his MOTHER is VACUUMING on the other side of the living room.

She watches her son hopefully, sighs, and turns OFF the vacuum. The DOORBELL RINGS and she goes to answer it. George runs his finger over the WILD INCIDENT ON BOURBON STREET headline. CLOSE ON GEORGE AS HE STRAINS TO HEAR.

GEORGE'S MOTHER (off)
The police? You must have the
wrong apartment.

George swallows.

INT. PRECINCT CELL - DAY

Lana Lee is gripping the bars with white knuckles.

LANA LEE
(screaming)
Get me out this goddam hole! I
can't take another minute with
these three creeps.

Frieda, Betty and Liz come up behind Lana Lee. Frieda drops her chin on Lana Lee's shoulder and holds up a copy of the front page.

FRIEDA
You take a nice picture.

INT. GREENE BEDROOM - DAY

Dorian is reading the newspaper in bed. Timmy is curled up on a dog bed nearby wearing a choke collar.

DORIAN
(to Timmy)
That great big old Gypsy Queen's
sweet mother must have been
heartbroken over this dreadful
publicity.

INT. DARLENE'S KITCHEN - DAY

The cockatoo FLAPS and SQUAWKS on the kitchen table. Darlene gives the bird the gold earring and continues cutting her picture out of the front page of the newspaper. The TELEPHONE RINGS. Darlene studies her photo as she goes to answer the phone.

DARLENE
Hello?

MAN'S VOICE

(off)

Listen, you got some great publicity. Now I run a club in the five hundred block of Bourbon, and I'd like to have you and your little birdie take a look at it.

Darlene radiates.

INT. MATTIE'S RAMBLE INN - DAY

Jones spreads the newspaper on the bar and blows smoke over the front page. Mr. Watson brings him a beer.

JONES

You sure gimme a good idea with all this sabotage crap. Now I sabotage myself right back to bein a vagran. That fat freak a guarantee one hunner persen nucular bum. Shit. Drop him on somebody, everybody gettin caught in the fallout, gettin their ass blowed up.

INT. LEVY'S LODGE - DAY

Mrs. Levy is on her exercise board. Mr. Levy settles onto the yellow nylon couch and unfolds his paper. Mrs. Levy reaches down to select an OREO COOKIE from the box on the floor. Mr. Levy looks at the pictures and the article on the front page and WHISTLES THROUGH HIS TEETH.

MR. LEVY

Oh, boy.

MRS. LEVY

What is it, Gus? A problem?

MR. LEVY

I just found our Mr. Reilly.

EXT. REILLY HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Reilly pulls the old Plymouth into the front yard, gets out of the driver's seat, SLAMS the DOOR and walks around to the open rear window where Ignatius is sitting. His head is in a bandage.

MRS. REILLY

I'll get married if I want to, boy. You can't stop me. Not now.

MISS ANNIE
 (off, thru shutters)
 I told you! They're at it again.

MRS. REILLY
 What you need is a rest,
 Ignatius. A long rest.

IGNATIUS
 That man is a dangerous radical.

MRS. REILLY
 Claude can be kind to a person,
 and that's more than you can do
 with all your politics and all
 your graduating smart. I want to
 be treated nice by somebody
 before I die.

Mrs. Reilly turns from the car and marches up the front steps. Ignatius scrambles out of the back seat and SLAMS THE DOOR.

VOICE
 (off)
 Pardon me. May I speak with you
 Mr. Reilly?

Ignatius turns and sees Mr. Levy holding a thermofax of a letter out in front of him.

MR. LEVY
 Mr. Reilly, did you write this?

IGNATIUS
 Mr. Gonzalez was extremely
 dictatorial. He would never
 permit me near a typewriter.

MR. LEVY
 I know. But he says he didn't
 write this.

IGNATIUS
 An obvious untruth.

MR. LEVY
 Mr. Reilly, this man wants to
 sue us for \$500 thousand.

IGNATIUS
 Have you thought of speaking to
 the Trixie woman?

MR. LEVY

Miss Trixie is so old. I wouldn't think she could write a grocery list.

IGNATIUS

Interrogate the Trixie jade. Her senility is a guise. She hates Levy Pants for not retiring her. She was filled with hostility.

EXT. ROAD -- DAY

Mr. and Mrs. Levy are jammed into a tiny Italian sportscar.

MRS. LEVY

This car is sad, Gus. A transparent attempt at recapturing youth.

MR. LEVY

You didn't have to come.

MRS. LEVY

I won't stand by while you browbeat Miss Trixie.

MR. LEVY

Browbeat?

MRS. LEVY

I've decided. I'm starting a Foundation.

MR. LEVY

A what?

MRS. LEVY

The Leon Levy Foundation, in honor of your father. The awards will commemorate the memory of that great man.

MR. LEVY

So you'll hand out prizes to old men of unequalled meanness? Then we'll really have libel suits-- from the recipients.

MRS. LEVY

There's resentment in your voice, Gus. I can hear it. For your sake: That doctor in the Medical Arts Building. Before it's too late.

INT. TRIXIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is filled with a huge mountain of litter. Mr. Levy holds the Ableman letter under Miss Trixie's nose. She is not wearing her wig.

MR. LEVY

Did you write this to Abelman?
Mr. Reilly says you did.

MISS TRIXIE

Well, then, I guess I did. Now that you mention it. I guess I did write that. You people deserve it, too. I hope you lose everything you own.

Mrs. Levy leans over Miss Trixie's shoulder.

MRS. LEVY

Give me back those teeth.

MR. LEVY

We'll retire you if you'll sign a statement that you wrote that letter.

MISS TRIXIE

Retire? Thank goodness. Of course I'll sign.

MR. LEVY

You know, Trixie's oddball letter gives me an idea. From now on we make Bermuda shorts only.

MR. LEVY cont.

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

I couldn't run Levy Pants.
That's true. I think I can run
Levy Shorts.

MRS. LEVY

You should give thanks for Miss
Trixie. She's saving you \$500
thousand dollars.

MR. LEVY

I'll tell you what we'll do!
We'll have the Levy Foundation
present an award in her honor!

MRS. LEVY

The "Trixie" award for quick
thinking.

MR. LEVY

Here. This is quick thinking.

He picks up the newspaper and points to the photo of Jones.

MR. LEVY

(reading)

"PORTER PULLS DERANGED MAN FROM
PATH OF SPEEDING BUS."

CLOSE ON JONES IN TOP HAT AND SHADES.

MR. LEVY

He gets the first award.

INT. BATTAGLIA KITCHEN - DAY

Santa is opening oysters and talking on the phone. THUNDER
RUMBLES.

SANTA

Do it now, honey. Hang up and
call them people at the Charity
right now.

IN THE REILLY KITCHEN

Mrs. Reilly has pulled the phone into the kitchen and closed
the door.

MRS. REILLY

No, listen. I don't wanna be
here when they come.

MRS. REILLY cont.
I mean, Ignatius is big. He
might make trouble.

SANTA

(off)
Irene, this is the best decision
you ever made. I tell you what.
I'll call up the Charity right
now. You come over here. I'll
get Claude to come over, too.
You'll be sending out wedding
invitations in about a week.

IN IGNATIUS'S BEDROOM

Ignatius stares at a photo of Rex on the wall next to his
bed.

MRS. REILLY

(off)
Ignatius.

Ignatius rolls over.

IGNATIUS

What do you want?

MRS. REILLY

(off)
I'm going out, Ignatius.

IN THE HALLWAY

Mrs. Reilly, dressed in hat and coat, is pressed up against
the bedroom door.

MRS. REILLY

I wanted to say goodbye.

Ignatius does not answer.

MRS. REILLY

Ignatius, open up.

The door opens slowly. Ignatius sticks his fat gray face into
the hall.

MRS. REILLY

(tears in her eyes)
Now kiss me, honey. I'm sorry it
all had to end like this.

She embraces Ignatius and kisses him on the moustache.

MRS. REILLY
Don't ever be mad at me, honey.

She releases him and runs to the front door.

MRS. REILLY
(turning)
I'm sorry I ran into that
building, Ignatius. I love you.

She opens the front shutters and SLAMS them behind her.

IGNATIUS
Come back. Come back, please.
Mother!

MISS ANNIE
(off)
Aw, shut up.

THUNDER ROLLS AND CRACKS. Ignatius's yellow and blue eyes
flash.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

LIGHTNING FLASHES behind the closed shutters. Ignatius begins
a slipshod frenzy of dressing. His red flannel nightshirt
sails up and hangs on the chandelier. He jams his toes into
his desert boots and leaps into his tweed trousers. RAIN
EXPLODES ON THE ROOF. Shirt, cap, overcoat.

IGNATIUS
Escape! Escape! I must escape!

He runs into the hall, careening against the narrow walls on
his way to the front door.

THREE LOUD KNOCKS CRACK AGAINST THE SHUTTERS. Ignatius
freezes.

IGNATIUS
(whispering)
It's the brutes from the Charity
hospital.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(off)
Ignatius, are you in that dump?

WOMAN'S VOICE

(off)

Listen, I can tell there's somebody in there. I heard you stomping around.

IGNATIUS

(trembling)

Yes, yes, I'm here.

Ignatius tears at the shutters and pushes them open. MYRNA stands drenched on the porch. Her black hair is braided into a pigtail that twists under one ear and falls on her breast. A guitar is slung over her shoulders.

IGNATIUS

Thank Fortuna you've come.

MYRNA

Jesus. You look terrible. Like you're having a nervous breakdown or something. Why the bandage? Ignatius, what's the matter? Look how much weight you've gained.

IGNATIUS

I've gone through hell.

He pulls Myrna into the hall by the sleeve of her coat.

IGNATIUS

Why did you step out of my life, you minx? Your new hairdo is fascinating and cosmopolitan.

He snatches her pigtail and presses it to his moustache.

IGNATIUS

The scent of soot and carbon in your hair excites me with suggestions of glamorous Gotham. We must leave immediately. I must go flower in Manhattan.

Myrna grabs the soggy pigtail and throws it over her shoulder.

MYRNA

Don't put me on. Look, Ignatius, I'm beat. I've been on the road since nine o'clock yesterday morning.

A SIREN SOUNDS IN THE DISTANCE.

Ignatius grabs Myrna and presses her to the wall.

IGNATIUS

(in a panic)

We must leave. My mother may return momentarily. If I see her again, I'll regress. We must dash.

Myrna follows Ignatius into the bedroom. He stuffs his Big Chief tablets into a laundry bag. Myrna looks on and drips.

IGNATIUS

Perhaps my mother has done me a great favor by planning to re-marry.

MYRNA

Re-marry? Who'd marry her?

IGNATIUS

Those Oedipal bonds were beginning to overwhelm me.

MYRNA

Ignatius, I can't beleive I'm hearing this.

IGNATIUS

It's unbelievable, isn't it? To think that I fought your wisdom for years.

MYRNA

You're going into a whole new and vital phase. Your inactivity is over. I can tell. I can hear it.

IGNATIUS

The great wheel turns.

SIRENS WAIL FAR OFF.

EXT. REILLY HOUSE - NIGHT

The RAIN HAS STOPPED. The brown banana tree drips. Myrna and Ignatius are visible sihouettes behind the shutters of the little house as they pack.

PERRY COMO
(on soundtrack)
THEN YOUR LOVE WILL HOLD YOU ROUND, ROUND,
ROUND AND YOUR HEARTS A SONG WITH A BRAND NEW
SOUND...

Myrna and Ignatius emerge onto the porch laden with bags and boxes. Myrna stops.

MYRNA
Ignatius. This is a very
meaningful moment. I feel as if
I'm saving someone.

IGNATIUS
You are, you are. Now we must
flee!

They struggle down to Myrna's Renault.

PERRY COMO
(on soundtrack)
AND YOUR HEAD GOES SPINNING ROUND, ROUND, ROUND...

MISS ANNIE
(off)
Hey, where are you two beatniks
going?

MYRNA
Does that old bitch still live
here?

They are packing the car. Ignatius stuffs himself into the back seat.

IGNATIUS
Shut up and get us out of here!

PERRY COMO
(singing)
CAUSE YOU FOUND WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DREAMING OF.

SIRENS CLOSER.

MYRNA STARTS THE CAR. The luminous moon slips out from behind retreating thunder clouds.

PERRY COMO
 (singing)
 IN THE NIGHT YOU SEE THE OVAL
 MOON
 GOING ROUND AND ROUND IN TUNE...

IN THE RENAULT

IGNATIUS
 We must hurry! Why aren't we
 moving?

Myrna glares at Ignatius in the rear view mirror.

MYRNA
 Are you going to bug me like
 this? I mean, I'd like to know.

IGNATIUS
 (gasping)
 Oh, my valve!

Myrna pulls the car out onto Constantinople Street.

PERRY COMO
 (singing)
 AND THE BALL OF SUN IN THE DAY
 MAKES A GIRL AND BOY WANT TO SAY

IGNATIUS
 Watch out for that ambulance. We
 don't want to begin our
 pilgrimage with an accident.

The little Renault heads up the street just as the AMBULANCE passes with "Charity Hospital" printed on its door.

Ignatius stares gratefully at the back of Myrna's head, at the pigtail that swings innocently at his knee. He takes the pigtail in one of his paws and presses it warmly to his wet moustache.

THE AMBULANCE

pulls up in front of the Reilly house. Two LARGE ORDERLIES exit and approach the front porch. They knock several times, with no result. They exchange glances, shrug, and head back to their vehicle. As they ambulance pulls away, the camera drifts over to MISS ANNIE'S house. For the first time, she OPENS HER SHUTTERS.

She talks TO THE CAMERA as the CREDIT ROLL:

MISS ANNIE

Lemme tell you something. I gotta be fair. That Ignatius was okay until that big dog of his died. He had this big dog useta bark right under my window. That's when my nerves first started to go. Then the dog dies. Well, I think, now maybe I'll get me some peach and quiet. But no, Ignatius is got the dog laid in his momma's front parlor with some flowers stuck in its paw. That's when him and his momma first started all that fighting. To tell you the truth, I think that's when she started drinking. So Ignatius goes over to the priest and ax him to come say something over the dog. Ignatius was planning some kinda funeral. You know? The priest says no, of course, and I think that's when Ignatius left the Church. So big Ignatius puts on his own funeral. A big fat high school boy oughta know better. He had about two dozen little kids standing around in that yard watching him. And Ignatius had on a big cape like Superman and they was candles burning all over. The whole time his momma was screaming out the front door to throw the dog in the garbage can and get in the house. Well, that's when things started going bad around here.

She closes the shutters.

THE END