

BEING THE RICARDOS

Written by

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FADE IN:

We meet--individually--three people who are the older versions of three characters we'll meet shortly. They're speaking to an off-camera interviewer in three different locations that have been chosen, dressed and lit for a documentary.

1

INT. SOUNDSTAGE BLEACHERS - DAY

1

JESS is sitting in the bleachers of a television soundstage.

OLDER JESS

It was a scary week, 'cause here's what you gotta understand. You gotta understand a hit television show--today--a big hit television show, what does it get? Ten-million viewers.

We ID the man with a chyron--

Jess Oppenheimer

Executive Producer and Head Writer

OLDER JESS (CONT'D)

Let's go crazy and say fifteen. Fifteen-million viewers 'cause this is a big, giant hit. Here's what you gotta understand. *I Love Lucy?* Sixty-million. Households.

2

INT. NIGHTCLUB - DAY

2

The tables are all set for dinner but the place is empty. BOB is sitting at a table near where a small orchestra would play.

OLDER BOB

Oh yeah. It's been a long time, but I remember that week.

Bob Carroll

Writer

OLDER BOB (CONT'D)

That was a scary week. It was a very scary week.

Continued: 20

DESI (O.S.)
I was playing cards with--

We HEAR his face being *SLAPPED*--

DESI (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ow! Hey! I was playing cards with--

SLAP--

DESI (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ow, Goddammit!

LUCY (O.S.)
Tell me when it starts to hurt.

20A

A FEW MINUTES LATER--

20A

We're on the radio again but from a different angle as the Winchell broadcast continues. Again, we won't see faces--just the occasional slice of someone coming into or out of the frame.

WALTER WINCHELL (FROM THE RADIO)
William L. Markey, Jr.,
Eisenhower's top backer in Buffalo,
is being divorced very quietly. His
wife--

LUCY (O.S.)
The boat?

DESI (O.S.)
We were playing cards on the boat.

LUCY (O.S.)
Since last night?! Since 27 hours
ago?!

DESI (O.S.)
Yes!

LUCY (O.S.)
And you couldn't get to a phone?

DESI (O.S.)
No.

LUCY (O.S.)
Why?

Continued: 20A

DESI (O.S.)

I was passed out a lot of that
time!

20B

A FEW MINUTES LATER--

20B

We're on the radio but from still a different angle and still
no faces. The Winchell broadcast continues--

WALTER WINCHELL (FROM THE RADIO)

The Vice President, in a
magnificent speech this week, told
the American Legion why we--

A copy of a magazine flies across the room and lands on the
radio console. It's *Confidential Magazine*. There's a photo of
Desi with a woman.

"Desi's Wild Night Out" reads the headline.

LUCY (O.S.)

That's tomorrow's *Confidential*.

DESI (O.S.)

Why do you even read that magazine?

LUCY (O.S.)

Why do I even--In this case it's
'cause my husband's on the cover
with another woman so it caught my
eye. The story chronicles a night
on the town with you and--

DESI (O.S.)

That's somebody's niece.

LUCY (O.S.)

What the hell do I care if--

DESI (O.S.)

From Westinghouse. That's the
Westinghouse corporate--you were
there--that's the guy's niece. That
picture was taken last summer.

LUCY (O.S.)

The story's about last Wednesday
night.

DESI (O.S.)

Last Wednesday night I was on the
boat.

Continued: 20A

LUCY (O.S.)
Like last night?

DESI (O.S.)
Yes!

WALTER WINCHELL (FROM THE RADIO)
--with the hall coming to its feet
at the conclusion of his address.

We see LUCY's hand pick up the magazine...

LUCY (O.S.)
(pause)
You're right. This was taken at the
Westinghouse corporate retreat.

DESI (O.S.)
Yes.

LUCY (O.S.)
(beat)
I apologize.

DESI (O.S.)
Say, "Desi, I apologize for
doubting you."

LUCY (O.S.)
No.

DESI (O.S.)
"For I see now that this picture
was taken--not last Wednesday night--
--but six months ago at the
Westinghouse corporate retreat and
I'll never doubt your love for me
again." Say that.

LUCY (O.S.)
No. And you're doing it again.
You're pronouncing it Westin-gouse.

DESI (O.S.)
It is Westin-gouse.

LUCY (O.S.)
Westinghouse.

DESI (O.S.)
Say g-h-o-s-t.

LUCY (O.S.)
Ghost.

Continued: 20A

DESI (O.S.)
 You don't pronounce an "H" after a
 "G". Westin-gouse.

20C

A FEW MINUTES LATER--

20C

We're on the radio from still a different angle. DESI and LUCY are pulling and tugging at each other's clothes on the couch.

WALTER WINCHELL (FROM RADIO)
 When the G-Men captured the
 fugitives in the High Sierras last
 week--

LUCY (O.S.)
 So everything in the magazine was
 made up?

DESI (O.S.)
 I haven't read the magazine, but
 unless the story's about me playing
 cards on the boat--

LUCY (O.S.)
 It's not.

DESI (O.S.)
 --then yes, it's made up. Get it
 through your head--you're the only
 thing I want.

LUCY (O.S.)
 Well then you're an idiot.

DESI (O.S.)
 I'm trying to get this off but I
 think it's been welded.

WALTER WINCHELL (FROM RADIO)
 The House Committee on Un-American
 Activities is holding secret
 sessions in California. The most
 popular of all television stars was
 confronted with her membership in
 the Communist Party. And that, Mr.
 And Mrs. 48, winds up another
 edition until next Sunday night at
 the very same--

LUCY (O.S.)
 Wait.

Continued: 20A

DESI (O.S.)

Wait.

LUCY (O.S.)

Wait.

And now we finally move up to see their faces--LUCILLE BALL and DESI ARNAZ like we've never seen them. LUCY, half-dressed with her red hair down and flying around her face and shoulders, DESI with his shirt ripped open, both of their faces flush and glistening with sweat. Their breathing is still heavy...

LUCY (CONT'D)

(pause)

What did he say?

DESI

He said the most popular of all television stars was--

LUCY

--was confronted with her membership in the Communist Party.

The two of them just stare at the radio...

DESI

(pause)

Yeah.

(pause)

He coulda been talkin' about Imogene Coca.

LUCY

Fuck you, he was not talking about Imogene Coca.

21

OMITTED

21

BLACK**TITLE:****Being the Ricardos**

DISSOLVE TO:

Monday

Continued:

Table Read

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

22

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

22

20-odd people sit at a horseshoe of folding tables. They're the cast and staff of *I Love Lucy* and behind them is the iconic set from the show. The group is largely silent. They smoke their cigarettes, tap their scripts or just wait quietly and nervously. Two seats at the head of the table-- reserved with a card for Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, are conspicuously empty.

A woman finally speaks up. The card in front of her reads "Vivian Vance". We may notice that Vivian is considerably more attractive in real life than she is when she's playing Ethel Mertz.

VIVIAN

This is nonsense.

She lights a cigarette.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It's nonsense and it will get worse before it gets better. Little Rusty Hamer? When he signed his contract-- or the guardian, whoever signs the contract for him--he had to sign a loyalty pledge. Did anyone know that?

Nobody answers...

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Bill?

She's talking to WILLIAM FRAWLEY.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Bill.

FRAWLEY

Is she talking to me?

Two of the elderly witnesses we saw in the opening, BOB and MADELYN, are now in their 20's.

MADELYN

Yes.

FRAWLEY

So she knows I'm here, she can see me?

MADELYN

Yeah.

VIVIAN

Did you know little Rusty had to sign a loyalty pledge?

FRAWLEY

I don't know who the fuck little Rusty is.

VIVIAN

Rusty Hamer from *The Danny Thomas Show*.

FRAWLEY

That's not his name.

VIVIAN

It is his name.

FRAWLEY

The littlest kid on Danny's show?

VIVIAN

Yes.

FRAWLEY

The character's named Rusty, not the actor.

VIVIAN

They're both named Rusty. Rusty Williams is played by Rusty Hamer.

FRAWLEY

And Hamer's a Communist?

VIVIAN

He's 7-years old.

FRAWLEY

And he's interested in politics?

VIVIAN

No imbecile! I'm saying he's 7-years old and they made him sign a loyalty pledge.

Continued: 22

FRAWLEY

Uh-huh.

VIVIAN

This is getting out of hand was my point.

FRAWLEY

Why isn't Danny Thomas's kid named Rusty Thomas?

VIVIAN

Are you drunk?

FRAWLEY

It's 10am, Vivian, so...you know...of course.

MADELYN

Bob and Jess and I were up all weekend working on the script you're about to read and on behalf of all of us I want to say how much we appreciate your respect.

FRAWLEY

Believe me, you do not want me to read this sober.

BOB

I'm starting to get a little tired of your casual insults.

FRAWLEY

Well my insults don't feel like putting on a fuckin' tuxedo for you, kid. Jess, why don't you tell your young writers that I don't work for them.

MADELYN

Jess, why don't you tell your supporting cast that we don't work for him either.

And now we finally hear from the younger version of JESS--

JESS

You all work for me!

(pause)

Look, what you all have to understand is this. Here's what you have to understand. We're all tense.

Continued: 22

There's a long silence in the room before--

MADELYN

(pause)

Seriously, that was it?

JESS

We're all tense, and the cure for that is to just do the show. Normal production week.

FRAWLEY

We're going to need someone to play Lucy and Ricky, those are critical roles.

JESS

The two of them are in Desi's office meeting with the network and the sponsor right now. I'm sure there's an explanation and that this'll be over by show night.

FRAWLEY

One way or the other.

JESS

Yeah. No. I mean--let me be clear-- I said this'll all be over by show night and Bill said, "One way or the other." Gallows humor. I said, "Yeah", but I didn't mean--

MADELYN

The sooner you stop talking--

JESS

Yeah.

23

INT. DESI'S OFFICE - DAY

23

It's an office befitting the president of Desilu and right now it's filled with a half-dozen men plus Lucy and Desi. DESI's sitting at his desk and LUCY's leaning against it.

DESI

I think everyone's acquainted but let's go around. Joe?

JOE

Joe Strickland, CBS.

Continued: 23

HOWARD

Howard Wenke, also CBS.

ROGER

Roger Otter, Philip Morris.

IRWIN

Irwin Gotlieb, attorney for Desilu.

SAM

Sam Stein, attorney for Lucille Ball.

TIP

Tip Tribby, V.P. of Public Relations for Phillip Morris.

DESI

Tip? If Winchell had it cold he'd have used her name, it woulda been at the top of the show and not the bottom and this morning we'd be reading about it on the front page of every paper, am I right?

TIP

Yes.

DESI

They don't have it.

HOWARD

Can you see where CBS might be concerned that there's an "it" to "have", do you see that?

DESI

Couldn't follow you.

HOWARD

Lucy, you need to tell me right here and now what the hell is going on.

DESI

You don't want to talk to my wife like that, amigo.

HOWARD

Or what, Des, you're gonna beat me up?

DESI

She will.

Continued: 23

LUCY

So we're done with the
introductions?

LUCY's quieted the room...

LUCY (CONT'D)

I'm not a Communist, I've never
been a Communist except
technically, yeah I am.

JOE

Jesus Christ, do you get what's
happening and do you know that this
isn't funny?

LUCY

Yes, I do get what's happening and
yes, I know that it isn't funny.

HOWARD

Lucy--

Continued: 23

LUCY

My father died when I was very young and I was raised by my mother and my grandfather, a man named Fred C. Hunt.

DESI

I'd like everyone but Howard to leave the room.

ROGER

Philip Morris pays for this show.

DESI

And they get their money's worth so give us a minute, would you?

LUCY's taken a cigarette out--

ROGER

She's smoking a Chesterfield, could she at least smoke one of the seven brands that Philip-Morris--

DESI

Got it.

Everyone's gone but LUCY, DESI and HOWARD...

LUCY

Fred C. Hunt, my grandfather, was a member of the party. This was in the early 30's and I was in my early 20's. He never used the word "communist" but he cared about workers, the working man. He raised my little brother and me and I wanted to please him so I checked the box. Back then it wasn't considered much worse than being a Republican.

HOWARD

Have you been to a meeting?

LUCY

No.

HOWARD

Never.

LUCY

No.

HOWARD

You were at a cocktail party and later you found out--

LUCY

No.

HOWARD

Have you ever--

LUCY

My entire relationship with communism is twenty years ago I checked a box.

HOWARD

Why is this coming out now?

DESI

The committee investigated her and cleared her. But then last week William Wheeler convened a special session out here--a private session--called her in again and that's why we're sitting here.

HOWARD

(pause)

And nobody's picked it up.

DESI

Nobody's picked up the story, not a single paper. Not a single news network, including your own.

HOWARD

Maybe. Maybe we're outa this. We just don't know yet.

LUCY

When will we?

HOWARD

If you tape a show Friday night it means you still have a show.

Continued: 23

LUCY
(pause)
Okay.

HOWARD
(pause)
Okay.

HOWARD exits...

DESI
You and me, we've been through
worse than this.

LUCY
(beat)
We have?

DESI
No.

LUCY
That's what I thought.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Hey.
(beat)
The whole piece was invented out of
thin air?

DESI
(beat)
Huh?

LUCY
Four pages, fifteen-hundred words--

DESI
Are you being funny right now?

LUCY
That's the second time someone's
asked me that this morning. I'm
Lucille Ball, when I'm being funny
you'll know it. They invented the
whole thing?

DESI
You don't think we got bigger fish
to fry?

Continued: 23

LUCY
They invented--

DESI
(over)
Yes, they invented the whole thing!
I was on the boat playing cards.
They invented the whole thing and
I'm angry at them and I'll do
something about it but right now--

LUCY
Yeah. Got it. Priorities. You're
right.

DESI
Say that again. "Desi, you're
right."

LUCY
No.

DESI takes LUCY in his arms--

DESI
Everything's gonna be fine.
Nothing's gonna happen to you. I
won't allow it. I just won't.

LUCY kisses DESI...then she takes the handkerchief from
Desi's jacket pocket and wipes the lipstick off his lips...

DESI (CONT'D)
You've never done that before.

LUCY
I know. I've seen other people do
it in movies I've been in.

24

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

24

The group is still waiting at the shoehorn of tables.

VIVIAN
*For the love of God, old man, this
isn't hard! Rusty Hamer plays Rusty
Williams on the Danny Thomas show.
He's in second grade and he had to
sign a loyalty oath when he signed
his contract which I think is ugly.
That's it. I don't know why this is
tripping you up. It wasn't
confusing.*

Continued: 24

FRAWLEY

(pause)

There's no such thing as the Danny Thomas show, it's called "Make Room for Daddy", don't tell me comedy, and if Rusty is a communist then I'm going to beat the shit out of a 7-year old, I have no problem with that.

VIVIAN

I'm done.

MADELYN

(to BOB)

That? Right there? Was funnier than anything you've written so far this year.

BOB

That's not--I've written plenty of--

MADELYN

No.

A heavy door opens and LUCY and DESI walk in--

DESI

(calling out)

Good morning!

LUCY sees someone at the table--DONALD GLASS, this week's director--and stops DESI to whisper--

LUCY

(quietly)

Don Glass is directing this week?

DESI knows it's the wrong week for a director Lucy doesn't like...

DESI

(beat)

We'll be fine.

(to the GROUP)

You're wondering what's goin' on.

JESS

No matter what's going on, we all support you a thousand percent.

FRAWLEY

I'd like to find out what's going on before I make that commitment.

Continued: 24

DESI

Here it is. A long time ago Lucy accidentally checked the wrong box on her voter registration. That's the first act of a new episode right there.

BOB

"Lucy Gets Blacklisted".

DESI

That's not a joke, Bob.

BOB

(chastised)

You made the joke, I just put the button--

DESI

(over BOB)

Last week she testified in a closed session. She was cleared. Yeah? She was cleared. I don't know where Winchell got his information but it was wrong. And as you can see, it was not picked up by any newspaper. So let's do our show. Yeah? Let's just do our show. Jess, it's your stage.

JESS

I Love Lucy, Episode two-oh-four. Season 2, Episode 4. "Ethel and Fred Fight". Teleplay by Bob Carroll, Madelyn Pugh and myself.

FRAWLEY

It took three of you to write this one?

JESS

And directing this week, Donald Glass is back with us so let's give him a hand.

Everyone CLAPS...

DONALD

It's good to be back.

JESS

Act I, "Interior, the Ricardo's living room, night."

LUCY
Excuse me. Donald?

DONALD
Yes.

LUCY
Good morning, I'm Lucille Ball.

DONALD
I sure know that, Lucy.

LUCY
I wanted to make sure 'cause you haven't been here in a while. Is it because you've been going through puberty?

DONALD
I look young, yes, but I went through it a long time ago and I haven't been here because I've been directing at Danny Thomas.

FRAWLEY
With the communist kid? Fuck off.

VIVIAN
Jesus Christ.

LUCY
You don't have to fuck off, but you do have to know that Danny does jokes and few people do it better. I do physical comedy.

DONALD
I've seen every episode of the show.

LUCY
So have 60-million other people--
(to JESS)
--are none of them professional television directors?!

DESI
She's kidding.

DONALD
I can tell.

LUCY

I'm hazing you a little, Donald.
It's just my way of saying I have
no confidence in you at all.

Continued: 24

DESI

Alright, we haven't gotten off to a great start this morning I think-- and I have no idea what the fuck you were talkin' about, Bill--

VIVIAN

Ah, Des, I'm beggin' you, don't ask.

DESI

No problem. I just wanted to say that this show is made by Desilu Productions, whose president is speaking to you right now. And for the next 30 minutes I don't want to hear a word that isn't in this script.

(to JESS)

It's your stage.

JESS

Thank you. "Lucy's putting the finishing touches on a fancy dinner table--good china, silver, etc."

MADELYN

The table's set for four but there are only three chairs, I should've put that in the stage direction.

BOB

It's two chairs and a piano bench.

MADELYN

For a total of?

BOB

Three chairs.

We're going to start to go in and out of LUCY'S head as the reading goes on. She's imagining what each beat will be like in its final form the way a chess master can see the board twelve moves ahead. She can also see and hear what the audience is going to laugh at.

JESS

Table's set for four but there are only three chairs. "The door opens and Ricky enters. Lucy doesn't hear him. Ricky puts his coat down quietly and tip-toes in back of--"

QUICK CUT TO:

Continued: 25

25 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE) 25**

LUCY RICARDO is setting the table as RICKY RICARDO enters,
puts his coat down and tip-toes up to LUCY--

CUT BACK TO:

Continued: 26

26

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - SAME TIME

26

LUCY

Why not?

JESS

Sorry?

LUCY

Why doesn't Lucy hear him?

JESS

Well he's about to do the thing where you cover someone's eyes and say "Guess who?"

LUCY

I understand that it's a set-up, I understand why we need Lucy to not hear him, I just don't understand why--in an apartment this size-- Lucy doesn't hear--or for that matter, see--the front door open when she's standing 12-feet from it.

JESS

We'll work on that.

LUCY

Thanks.

JESS

"Ricky puts his coat down quietly, tip-toes in back of her and reaches around and covers her eyes with his hands."

***NOTE: All dialogue for *I LOVE LUCY* will be in italics.**

RICKY

Guess who it is?

LUCY

Bill--Sam--Pat--Ralph?

JESS

"Ricky reacts to this"

QUICK CUT TO:

Continued: 27

27 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE) 27**

RICKY

No!

LUCY

George--Julius--Stephen--

CUT BACK TO:

28 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE - SAME TIME**

28

LUCY

Hang on. Are we supposed to believe that Ricky believes that Lucy really doesn't know it's him? That Ricky believes that Lucy is not only unfamiliar with his voice-- which let's not forget has a Cuban accent--but that he really believes there are at least seven other men who routinely walk into their apartment?

DESI

She has a pretty good point. She has four or five pretty good points.

JESS

We'll write a better joke or Ricky will know that Lucy is joking.

BOB

We can change the names. Pedro, Pablo, Jose.

(beat)

Because they're Spanish names. I mean Latin names. They're Cuban names.

MADELYN

Thanks for clearin' that up, professor.

BOB

I'm just, you know--

JESS

"Ricky takes his hands away and turns her around."

DESI
No! It's me.

LUCY
Oh yes of course. Uh...uh...

JESS
"She snaps her fingers and pretends she can't remember his name."

DESI
Very funny.

JESS
"Ricky kisses her and then notices the table set-up."

QUICK CUT TO:

29 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE) 29**

RICKY
Hey--company for dinner?

LUCY
Uh-huh.

RICKY
Who is it?

30 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE - SAME TIME 30**

JESS
"Lucy elaborately ignores him."

31 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE) 31**

LUCY
How do you like the water glasses?

RICKY
Who's coming to dinner, Lucy?

LUCY
Doesn't the table look beautiful tonight?

Continued: 32

32 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE - SAME TIME**

32

JESS

"She tries to make her way past him on her way to the kitchen but he holds out his hands and blocks the way."

33 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM -NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE)** 33

RICKY

Lucy, who is it?

LUCY

Some people.

RICKY

Whom--whom is coming for dinner here tonight?

LUCY

Whom? You mean besides meem and youm?

RICKY

Never mind that. What are their names?

LUCY

Fred and Ethel Mertz.

RICKY

Wait a minute. What about that big fight Fred and Ethel had? I thought they were mad at each other.

LUCY

They are.

RICKY

I thought they weren't speaking to each other.

LUCY

They aren't.

RICKY

I thought he was staying at the Y.

LUCY

He is.

Continued: 33

RICKY

And she wouldn't let him in the house.

LUCY

She won't.

RICKY

Well if they are and they aren't and he is and she won't--how come?

34

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - SAME TIME

34

LUCY

(guilty)

Well--

DESI

(scolding)

Lucy McGillicuddy Ricardo.

LUCY

Ooooooh. That's nice, but was the rhythm getting old too early?

JESS

We'll work on it.

MADELYN

Because we want to live up to the quality of the writing you were used to at RKO.

There's an awkward silence in the room...

DESI

(pause)

That was gutsy.

MADELYN

(pause)

That was--it was a joke about the writing at RKO and--

DESI

Yeah?

MADELYN

--not--obviously not an insult aimed at Lucy.

ANGIE

Mr. Arnaz?

DESI

My name's Desidorio Alberto Arnaz y de Acha III, but just my mother calls me that. Desi.

ANGIE

I'm Angie, I'm in the chorus and I wanted to say I'm looking forward to working with you.

DESI

I'm looking forward too, Angie.

PATTY

Patty.

DESI

Short for Patricia?

PATTY

Yes.

DESI

Also in the chorus?

PATTY

Dancing chorus.

LUCY steps in...

DESI

And who's this?

LUCY

"Do you remember the first time we met? You were rudely attentive but now you're obnoxiously indifferent."

DESI

(pause)

What?

LUCY

It's a line from our movie, dumb-dumb.

DESI

Do we know each other?

Continued: 43

LUCY

No.

Another chorus girl steps in--

DAISY

Desi--I'm Daisy. People are gonna
get confused.

DESI

I don't see no one confusing you
with anyone, Daisy.

The schmoozing continues as LUCY disappears...

44

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - LATER

44

The stage is empty except for DESI and the PIANIST. DESI's
playing a lullaby on his guitar and singing in Spanish.

LUCY's standing in the giant doorway, framed by the setting
sunlight. She looks beautiful now.

She enjoys the song for a moment before DESI looks up and
immediately stops--stunned by this woman.

LUCY

"Do you remember the first time we
met?"

DESI

If we'd met, I'd remember.

LUCY

"You were rudely attentive but now
you're obnoxiously--

DESI

Wait! That was you?!

LUCY

--indifferent", that was me, yeah.

DESI

This studio has talented make-up
artists.

Continued: 44

LUCY

"I'm Angie, I'm in the chorus, and I just wanted to say that when I drink I take my clothes off." I'm so curious I have to ask--how did you know that Patty was short for Patricia?

DESI

I'm Desidorio Alberto--

LUCY

I don't have that kinda time.

DESI

And you're Lucille Ball.

LUCY

Use a line on me you've never road-tested on anyone else. I dare you.

DESI

Would you like to learn how to rumba?

LUCY

(pause)

Alright nice, and yes I would, but there's absolutely no chance you haven't used that before.

45

INT. CIRO'S - NIGHT

45

A small Latin band is blaring away, the dance floor is packed and DESI's showing LUCY how to rumba, which she's pretty good at.

DESI

(talking over the noise)

I want you to know I'm not trying to be forward. I'm showing you this because it'll come in handy for your rumba number in the movie.

LUCY

I don't have a rumba number in the movie.

DESI

No rumba?

LUCY

No.

Continued: 45

DESI
That's a sign of a poorly written
screenplay.

LUCY
Well we should dance to something
else.

46 **INT. CIRO'S - LATER**

46

The band is playing a slow number and LUCY and DESI are
dancing close.

DESI
Why did you come to Hollywood?

LUCY
I got kicked out of New York.

DESI
Seriously.

LUCY
I mean it. I got kicked out of my
acting school for not being good
enough.

DESI
Get outa here.

LUCY
I won't. I got some modeling work,
I was hired and fired as a Ziegfeld
Girl but hired as a Goldwyn Girl
and that's what took me out here.
Why did you come to Hollywood?

DESI
The Bolsheviks burned my house
down.

LUCY
(pause)
So...a different reason.

DESI
Yeah.

47 **INT. CIRO'S - LATER**

47

The place is almost empty. LUCY and DESI are sitting at a
table.

Continued: 47

LUCY
I'm older than you are.

DESI
How do you know?

LUCY
I asked. Please don't do the same.
But I'm a full-grown woman. I'm not
married. I don't have children. On
my best days I get cast as the
second female lead in forgettable
pictures. I don't mean to insult
you, I know this one's your
Hollywood debut, but *Too Many Girls*
is not...going to be part of the
Oscar conversation.

DESI
You never know.

LUCY
No, plenty of times you do.
Anyway...I'm several years older
than you are.

48

INT. DESI'S HOTEL SUITE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

48

The doors to the terrace are open and we can see the lights
of Hollywood in the distance.

DESI's sitting in a chair in the room with a guitar on his
lap. He's trying unsuccessfully to write a song.

DESI
(singing and playing)
"Lucille...
(beat--singing)
...there's not much that rhymes
with Lucille...
(beat--singing)
Bastille...but who'd write a song
about that?"

LUCY comes out of the bathroom wearing Desi's white dinner
jacket over her bra and underwear. She walks by DESI without
looking at him--

LUCY
I borrowed part of your tuxedo.

--and steps out on the terrace.

Continued: 48

DESI stares as she walks by, then stands up, sending the guitar clanging to the floor.

DESI joins LUCY out on the--

49

INT. DESI'S HOTEL SUITE/TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

49

DESI

It comes with pants, but I'm wearing them.

LUCY

Not for long, pal.

DESI

So...

LUCY

Yes.

DESI

Can I call you Lucy?

LUCY

(beat)

No, I think we should keep this professional, don't you?

(beat)

I was kidding.

DESI

So was I.

LUCY

Oh. That was a nice, dry delivery.

DESI

What's your ambition?

LUCY

My ambition? For tonight? I wasn't making that clear?

DESI

I don't mean ambition. What do I mean?

LUCY

Goals?

DESI

No. Future. Dreams.

Continued: 49

LUCY

What are my future dreams?

DESI

I should've stuck with ambition.

LUCY

Are you interviewing me?

DESI

Yeah.

LUCY

(pause)

Okay. I live in a small house.

DESI

And your ambition is to live in a bigger house.

LUCY

My ambition is to live in a home.

DESI

(pause)

Like for old folks?

LUCY

Not a *home*, not an institution, a home. With a family and dinner time.

DESI

Can I ask an impertinent question?

LUCY

Are you going to ask me why I'm not married?

DESI

No, I was going to ask you why you're not a movie star. Why are you playing the second female lead in *Too Many Girls*?

LUCY

I'm a contract player at RKO. I play the roles I'm told to play. My career's gone as far as it's gonna go, it's hit its cruising altitude. I'm at peace with that. So I'd like to be at peace. I want a home.

DESI

You have a lot more talent than the roles you play have allowed you to exhibit.

LUCY

Now how would you know I have talent?

DESI

Because I have talent. You could be a serious actress, you should be a star by now. But--

LUCY

(beat)
But what?

DESI

There's also something about your physicality. You're--

LUCY

--half naked?

DESI

Sure, but...

LUCY

But?

DESI

There isn't an English word.
(in Spanish)
Dotada cineticamente.

LUCY

What does that mean?

Continued: 51

LUCY

(into phone)

It's me. Hey, you don't love me, I don't love you, you cheat on me every chance you get and I pretend I'm stupid. So I'm moving out. I'll send someone to pick up my clothes. Okay? Love you. But, you know, not really.

She hangs up the phone.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I interrupted you, what were you saying?

52

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

52

The table read is ending--

JESS

And we fade to black. End of show.

There's light applause around the table--

JESS (CONT'D)

Thank you. Notes upstairs.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Back on stage in an hour.

Everyone gets up and exits except DESI and FRAWLEY, who stay sitting at the table...

FRAWLEY

(pause)

It's madness.

DESI

Yeah? I thought you'd be the first one to refuse to work with her.

DESI gets up to leave--

FRAWLEY

You mean that?

DESI

You're not fond of Communists.

FRAWLEY

I'm less fond of the Committee.

Continued: 52

DESI nods and starts to go on his way...

Continued: 52

FRAWLEY (CONT'D)

Des. When the soldiers came. For
your family. How scary was it?

(pause)

You're giving me that look that
says, "I don't get scared a
nothin'."

DESI

(pause)

They killed all the animals. Not
for food, they just killed all the
animals. I still don't know why
they did that.

(beat)

(MORE)

Continued: 52

DESI (CONT'D)

It's six-to-five and pick-em we've already done the last episode of this show. This show, everyone who works here, Desilu, Lucy's whole career--mine too--it may have ended Sunday night and we just don't know it yet. Are you outa your mind, I get plenty scared.

DESI heads off...

FRAWLEY

(more to himself)

Fuckin' madness.

53

INT. LUCY'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

53

LUCY's sitting in silence on the couch, looking at a newspaper. There's a KNOCK at the door--

DESI (O.S.)

Lucy?

LUCY

Yeah.

DESI steps in.

DESI

Madelyn was way outa line and I'll talk to Jess.

LUCY

No, I don't care about that.

DESI

I care about it.

LUCY

You told them I checked the wrong box?

DESI

Who?

LUCY

Before the table read. You told them I checked the wrong box.

DESI

(pause)

It takes fewer words to say that than the truth.

Continued: 53

LUCY

But it makes me sound like a
simpleton who's ill-equipped to
participate in democracy.

Continued: 53

DESI

It was simpler and it's nobody's
goddam business.

LUCY

Well, no, pretty obviously it's
everybody's goddam business.

DESI

You don't have to keep checking the
papers. I've got people who'll let
me know the moment an editor thinks
about it. There's something wrong
with the story, they know it, and
that's why no one's reporting on
Winchell.

LUCY

No. The *Confidential* story. That's
getting picked up.

LUCY puts the newspaper in DESI's hands as she walks out of
the room. DESI looks at the gossip column headline--

"Does Desi Really Love Lucy?"

BLACK**TITLE:****Tuesday****Blocking Rehearsal**54 **INT. WARDROBE ROOM - DAY**

54

VIVIAN's being fitted for a dress. It's more flattering than
what we're used to seeing Ethel in.

VIVIAN

I like this a lot, Tommy.

TOMMY

It's a great color for you.

VIVIAN

I really like this.

TOMMY

And I can cinch the back a little.
I can lower the neckline.

Continued: 54

VIVIAN

Not on CBS you can't, but still,
now we're talkin'. Now we're
cookin' with gas.

TOMMY

Should I bring out some shoes?

VIVIAN

Yes please.

TOMMY disappears. VIVIAN checks herself out in the full-length mirror. LUCY appears in the reflection. She whistles her approval.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Yeah?

LUCY

That's a nice dress.

VIVIAN

I thought so too.

LUCY

Are you borrowing it from wardrobe
for a cocktail party?

VIVIAN

(beat)

A dinner party.

LUCY

Where?

VIVIAN

The apartment of Ricky and Lucy
Ricardo.

LUCY

This is for the show?

VIVIAN

Lucy's invited--

LUCY

Viv--

VIVIAN

I know, but listen. I'm thinking
Lucy's invited her to dinner, she
thinks she's being fixed up with an
eligible guy.

(MORE)

Continued: 54

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

She'd want to look nice, it's something new for the character.

LUCY

But the character's still Ethel Mertz, right?

VIVIAN

(pause)

Yeah.

TOMMY's come back in with the shoes but heads right to where a newspaper's sitting on a table. LUCY's hand casually gets there first.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Hey. Don't.

LUCY looks at the paper and shows it to VIVIAN--

LUCY

"Does Desi Love Lucy Loosely?"
They took time on that.

VIVIAN

Isn't there enough going on with--
I'd be more concerned about--

LUCY

(reading)

"If neighbors hear screams of rage followed by the sound of breaking crockery coming from the Arnaz house this month, they'll know what is happening without having to investigate. The red-haired Missus has just finished reading *Confidential's* report on--"

VIVIAN

In your life have you ever taken this stuff seriously?

LUCY

I take my marriage seriously.

VIVIAN

And Desi said?

LUCY

(in DESI's voice)

"Lucy, I ain't been with no girls since the moment I saw you."

VIVIAN
Then believe him.

LUCY
I do believe him. It's an old picture, we were there together and he was playing cards on the boat Wednesday. You'd be more concerned with what?

VIVIAN
What?

LUCY
You said, "I'd be more concerned with--" and I cut you off. The Winchell broadcast.

VIVIAN
Yeah.

LUCY
I don't get to choose just one, I'm concerned with both.

VIVIAN
Understood. What about the third? What'd they say?

LUCY
We didn't think yesterday was the best day to tell 'em about the third.

VIVIAN
Right.

LUCY
We're doing it now. Jess first, then the network and Philip Morris.

VIVIAN
Could be worse.

LUCY
How?

VIVIAN
You could be playing Ethel.

LUCY
Got it.

Continued: 56

BOB
(to MADELYN)
She's nice.

DESI
(to MADELYN)
You're in enough trouble.

LUCY
You're not in trouble.

Continued: 56

DESI
We need to talk.

BOB
No, don't tell me--

DESI
No, we're still okay. No one's
picked up the story.

JESS
Alright. Looking at Lucy's face I
thought for sure--

LUCY
I'm pregnant.

JESS
(pause)
That's not at all what I was gonna
say.

DESI
That's what we came to talk about.
We were gonna have this
conversation yesterday but other
things--

JESS
Sure.

BOB
Well this is a one-two punch.

LUCY
It's not a punch, I'm having a
baby.

MADELYN
What do we do now?

There's a long silence before LUCY turns to DESI...

LUCY
(pause)
I know it *seems* like no one said
congratulations, but that can not
be, as these are three of our
closest friends and colleagues.

JESS
Of course. Mazel Tov.

And they all begin congratulating Lucy and Desi at once--

Continued: 56

ALL
 Congratulations, Des./That's
 wonderful news./
 Congratulations./etc.

The congratulating quiets down into silence...

JESS
 So---

LUCY
 Yeah. With Lucie I was the size of
 a phone booth. You've got about
 seven weeks before you have to
 start hiding me behind boxes and
 chairs and another seven weeks
 after that before I won't fit in
 the frame.

JESS
 What do you want to do?

LUCY
 Do? Whatever there was to do we've
 done it.

JESS
 Where does that leave us?

DESI
 Without a choice. Lucy Ricardo's
 gonna have a baby on television.

JESS
 (pause)
 Des--

DESI
 How many scripts in the bank?

JESS
 We're five ahead of production.
 We're shooting 4 and writing 9.

DESI
 Four. No harm done. But whatever
 script you're working on now,
 Episode 9, scratch it. Episode 9 is
 now "Lucy Tells Desi She's
 Pregnant" and we work from there.
 (pointing to a story idea
 on the wall)
 What's that one?

Continued: 56

JESS

Which one?

LUCY

"Lucy Goes to Italy".

JESS

We want to send the four of you to Italy.

LUCY

Why?

MADELYN

We think it'd be nice to get off our set.

LUCY

No, why do the Ricardos and Mertzes go to Italy?

JESS

A vacation.

DESI

They don't vacation in Europe, they go to the Grand Canyon, they go to Niagara Falls.

BOB

Work. Ricky's got a gig at a club in Rome.

DESI

And what does Lucy do?

MADELYN

She stomps grapes. Lucy and Ethel go to an Italian Vineyard--

DESI

Why?

MADELYN

We don't know yet--and they stomp grapes.

We start to SLOWLY PUSH-IN on LUCY who's thinking about how that might work and be funny...

DESI (O.S.)

This vineyard is located in the 19th Century?

Continued: 61

LUCY looks over the edge and gives us her squeamish face. The WOMAN indicates with a wave of her arm that LUCY should come in. LUCY cautiously climbs in and gingerly puts her foot on the grapes. Her face reflects that this is a very weird sensation. The Italian WOMAN is stomping vigorously and LUCY looks like she's walking on eggs.

And now we see LUCY'S POV--the bright lights, the cameras and crew and the STUDIO AUDIENCE LAUGHING...

CUT BACK TO:

62 INT. WRITERS' ROOM - DAY

62

BOB

What can happen in the vat of grapes, what can she do?

JESS

It doesn't matter right now, we need to get back to--Des, the network isn't gonna allow it and neither will Phillip Morris.

LUCY'S still thinking about the grapes--

JESS (CONT'D)

Lucy--

LUCY

Just hang on.

63 INT. ITALIAN VINEYARD SET - DAY

(BLACK AND WHITE) 63

But now LUCY'S standing in the vat of grapes by herself, breathing heavy. She's out of ideas. The AUDIENCE IS SILENT.

CUT BACK TO:

64 INT. WRITERS' ROOM - DAY

64

LUCY

She loses her earring.

BOB

Yes.

MADELYN

There it is.

Continued: 64

JESS

What are you talking about?!

LUCY

In the grapes.

65 **INT. ITALIAN VINEYARD SET - DAY** **(BLACK AND WHITE)** 65

LUCY reaches up to check her earring, which is loose, and she tightens it. Then she checks the other ear and feels that her earring's missing. She looks alarmed as she realizes it's down in the grapes.

The AUDIENCE HOWLS--

CUT BACK TO:

66 **INT. WRITERS' ROOM - DAY** 66

DESI

Push it to next year, they're not going to Italy while she's pregnant.

JESS

I'll bet you my next paycheck against your next paycheck that CBS won't even allow us to use the word pregnant.

LUCY

(pointing to another card)
"Lucy Tells the Truth"

BOB

That one's Madelyn's idea. She got it just seconds after I pitched it.

JESS

Folks?

MADELYN

Ricky bets Lucy that she can't go two days without lying and we put her in situations where it's hard not to lie.

In LUCY's head, we

CUT TO:

Continued: 67

67 INT. RICARDO'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE)

67

LUCY

*There! It's started. For the next
48 hours.*

ETHEL

*I can hardly wait to hear you
tomorrow afternoon, Lucy.*

LUCY

Why?

ETHEL

*We're going over to Carolyn's to
play bridge, remember?*

LUCY

*Oh no! Oh no! I can't spend the
afternoon with three women and tell
the truth. I'll call Carolyn and
tell her I'm sick.*

68 INT. WRITERS' ROOM - SAME TIME

68

MADELYN

*After 41 hours she's winning, but
in the final hour--*

BOB

Here it is.

MADELYN

*--Ricky gets a visit from the IRS
and the guy wants to ask about some
questionable things Ricky's
claiming on his deductions. Lucy's
sitting in the living room too and
of course when she's asked by the
IRS agent to corroborate, she can't
tell a lie, so--*

LUCY

That's a funny premise.

JESS

Yes it is.

DESI

But lose the IRS scene.

BOB

It could be a good scene.

Continued: 68

MADELYN

He's correct. Once I write it it could be good.

DESI

Ricky Ricardo loves America. He loves being an American. He's grateful to this country and he'd never cheat on his taxes.

BOB

It's very relatable. Everyone does.

DESI

I don't. Neither does Ricky. Especially when his wife is accused of being un-American. Look for something else and start working on the first pregnancy show.

JESS

Listen to me!

(pause)

They're not going to let us do it.

DESI

Let that be my problem.

JESS

I wish I could, Des, but it's very much my problem. So instead of talking about goddamn grapes--Look, what you got to understand is--

LUCY

Jess? They're free to take us off the air for the rest of the year while continuing to pay our contracts and answering questions about why motherhood is too salacious to put on CBS, but something tells me they're not gonna go that route. Instead, I think Broadcast Standards and Practices will give you a list of insane restrictions, which might even include you winning your bet with Desi, and which I have no doubt the three of you will navigate beautifully.

(to DESI)

You told me to be nice. Good?

Continued: 68

DESI

Yeah.

LUCY exits...

DESI (CONT'D)

I don't care what your first thoughts out of the gate were, but your first words out of the gate were no good.

(to MADELYN)

And what was with you at the table read?

MADELYN

I'm sorry, she was jumping on every stage direction.

DESI

It's her process.

MADELYN

But that process usually happens in private. And following your advice, maybe every once in a while, the first words out of her mouth could be "good script."

DESI

Is this the right week for this shit?

JESS

Hey--

MADELYN

We do seem to be having some success, no?

JESS

(to DESI)

Look, we're all tired from working on *this* week's script.

DESI

Are you sleepy? You need a nap?

JESS

Can I talk to you a second, boss?

DESI

Sure.

They step into--

Continued: 69

69 **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

69

--where JESS closes the office door. They speak quietly.

JESS

I'm the executive producer of this show. You can't manhandle me like that in front of people, you just can't do it. My show. And Madelyn was a hundred percent right.

DESI

Ricky pays his taxes.

JESS

I get it.

DESI

And we're having the baby on the show.

JESS

There's no chance they say yes.

DESI

There's no chance they say yes to you.

DESI heads off and we

CUT TO:

70 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE/I LOVE LUCY SET - DAY**

70

We're in the Ricardo's living room set where the cast and DONALD the director are in the middle of rehearsal. The actors hold their scripts.

DONALD

Back to right before Vivian's entrance. "When do we eat?" Settle, and action.

FRAWLEY

When do we eat? I've been living on peanut butter sandwiches.

DONALD

Bill, that line's gotta take you over to the table.

FRAWLEY

Hm?

DONALD

You need to cross to the table on that.

FRAWLEY

Why?

LUCY

So you can see the table, notice that a fourth place is set and say your next line.

FRAWLEY

Somebody else coming?

LUCY

Well Fred, I took the liberty of asking a young lady to be your dinner companion.

FRAWLEY

A young lady?

LUCY

A cute young chick.

FRAWLEY

Oh boy, bring her on.

LUCY

Hang on, let's go back. After I say "I took the liberty of asking a young lady to be your dinner companion", Ricky should take a sip from a glass of water on the table to keep from laughing. Then when I say, "A cute young chick", Ricky can choke on his water a little.

DESI

I like that.

VIVIAN

I like it too. The very idea that Ethel's a cute young chick should make Desi choke.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(to the DIRECTOR)

That's 15.

DONALD

Okay.

Continued: 70

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
 (calling out)
 That's 15 minutes!

LUCY
 I'll be funny by Friday.

FRAWLEY
 (to VIVIAN)
 And when can we expect you to be
 funny?

VIVIAN says nothing as we

CUT TO:

71 **INT. LUCY'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY**

71

LUCY and DESI walk in and DESI closes the door behind him and LUCY starts in right away with an opening paragraph she's committed to memory--

LUCY
 "Exactly what makes a husband leave
 home is something that has been
 baffling wives since Adam and Eve--
 "

DESI
 Enough.

LUCY
 "For an outstanding example, let's
 take one of the nation's most
 famous husbands--"

DESI
 You've memorized it?

LUCY
 I've memorized worse writing than
 this.

DESI
 Yes, it's a tabloid.

LUCY
 "With a curvy, red-haired tidbit
 like Lucy waiting for him at home,
 would Desi--"

DESI
 Stop it.

Continued: 71

LUCY

"--be foolish enough to prowl
Hollywood like a bachelor wolf and,
if so, why?"

DESI

It's made--

LUCY

Twenty-million readers want to
know.

DESI

Lucy--

LUCY

Twenty-million and one.

DESI

How many times I gotta 'splain
where I was and what I was doing?

LUCY

How many times you gotta 'splain?

DESI

I can't get enough of that joke.

LUCY

They document an entire night.
Someone in your gang's a rat.

DESI

My gang. The night they're talkin'
about I was with Red Skelton and
Xavier Cugat. Which one of 'em you
think squealed?

LUCY

They made it up from nothing.

DESI

I heard on Winchell the other night
that you were a Communist.

LUCY

(pause)

That was true, you idiot!

DESI

Yeah. That was a bad example.

LUCY

And I didn't check the wrong box.

DESI
Okay, I'm sorry about that.

LUCY
I believe you, I was just messin'
around.

DESI
Good.

LUCY
No, that gets you outa the woods
but it puts you into other woods.

DESI
What are the other woods.

LUCY
You don't come home anymore, did
you know that?

DESI
You change subjects faster than--

LUCY
Keep up, it's not hard. I asked did
you know you don't come home
anymore?

DESI
Of course I come home. Sometimes I
go to the boat and play cards. We
drink, it goes late, it's easier to
sleep on the boat.

LUCY
That used to be once a week. Then
twice and now it's four or five
times. I go home after work and you
go to the boat.
(beat)
You once asked me what my ambition
was, you remember? And you liked my
answer.

OLDER MADELYN
She used the word "home" a lot. She
talked about having a home. Lucy
owned three houses, but sometimes,
when she fell into a funk, she'd
say she didn't have a home.
(MORE)

Continued: 77

MUSICIAN

A lot of choices.

DESI

There's only one choice for me and she's got a powerful right hook.

DESI's handed a bottle of champagne--

WOMAN

My friend and I saw the midnight show and the 2AM.

78

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - DAWN

78

LUCY's leaning against her car, waiting with the engine running and the headlights on. After a moment a pair of headlights appear from the opposite direction. DESI pulls up and gets out in his white dinner jacket and untied bow-tie.

DESI

Good morning.

LUCY

I did the calculation. In the course of one week, I see you 1/20th as much as your second trombone player.

DESI

Learn to play the trombone and I'll give you his job.

LUCY

Well...how hard is the trombone?

DESI

Maybe it'd be better if we didn't spend the little time we have arguing about why we don't have more time.

LUCY

Don't make me feel like a bitch because I want to see my husband.

DESI

I could stay home and be kept by my wife. That'd really complete the picture Americans have of Cuban men.

Continued: 78

LUCY
What home are you talking about?

DESI
Or you could quit the film business
and just be my wife, but you ain't
gonna do that, right?

LUCY
No.

DESI
How 'bout you come to the club more
to watch the show?

LUCY
I had a new picture open five days
ago--you really want me to come
down to the club?

DESI
Why not?

LUCY
(pause)
Okay.

79 **INT. CIRO'S - NIGHT**

79

DESI's back on stage performing "Cuban Pete" this time.
LUCY's sitting at a ringside table and DESI can see that
PHOTOGRAPHERS keep coming and kneeling in front of her to get
her picture.

80 **EXT. CIRO'S/BACK ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

80

The fans are waiting. After a moment, DESI comes out the door
with LUCY and all the fans immediately react to LUCY. They
want her autograph and LUCY hands her purse to DESI. DESI
clocks this turn of events as we go to

BLACK**TITLE:****Wednesday****Camera Blocking**

Continued: 81

81 **INT. VIVIAN'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY**

81

VIVIAN, a dancer by training, is stretching on the floor. There's a knock on the door--

VIVIAN
Come on in.

MADELYN enters with a plate of food on a tray.

MADELYN
Good morning.

VIVIAN
Hey Maddy.

MADELYN
Some week, huh? Lucille Ball's a threat to the American way of life? She's a threat to writers, camera operators and Desi, but it really stops there. Have you ever had a week like this?

VIVIAN
No. But we work in Hollywood and something tells me we're all gonna have weeks like this before that committee's done.

MADELYN
(meaning the stretch)
Look what you can still do.

VIVIAN
Still?

MADELYN
I regretted it even before I said it. I can't do that and I'm just impressed.

VIVIAN
What's in your hand?

MADELYN
I brought you some breakfast from the commissary. They told me you didn't have any.

VIVIAN
I did. I had a cup of coffee and half a grapefruit.

MADELYN

Well I have French toast, bacon,
eggs and potatoes.

VIVIAN

Enjoy it.

MADELYN

It's for you.

VIVIAN

That was very sweet but no thank
you.

MADELYN

Is it me or have you lost a little
weight?

VIVIAN

I have.

MADELYN

Well you look great.

VIVIAN

Thank you.

MADELYN

I'll see you on stage.

VIVIAN

Madelyn?

MADELYN

Yeah.

VIVIAN

Who told you I didn't have any
breakfast?

MADELYN

I'm sorry?

VIVIAN

You said, "They told me you didn't
have any."

MADELYN

(beat--shakes her head)
I don't know. I think-- It was
Tino. The tall waiter.

Continued: 81

VIVIAN
 (pause)
 Okay.

MADELYN leaves. VIVIAN sits a moment before--

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
 (pause--to herself)
 Jesus Christ.

CUT TO:

82

INT. DESI'S OFFICE - DAY

82

JOE, HOWARD, ROGER, TIP--the CBS and Philip Morris executives we met earlier, are seated where they were before with DESI leaning against the edge of his desk and LUCY sitting in his chair.

JOE
 Day 3 and still no pick-up on the Winchell story. Fellas, I think we might be outta this.

ROGER
 Might be.

TIP
 Might be. Howard?

HOWARD
 There's another shoe and none of us are getting outa this alive.

JOE
 Howard--

HOWARD
 They're uncovering something new, they're chasing the original testimony, something, but there's another shoe.

LUCY
 There's nothing to uncover, there are no more shoes.

DESI
 Lucy's pregnant.

LUCY
 Well that.

Continued: 82

There's a long silence...

JOE
(pause)
What?

DESI
Lucy's pregnant.

JOE
(pause--then to LUCY)
With a baby?

LUCY
(pause)
Mm-hm.

ROGER
How, uh...I'm not sure what words
to use...how much pregnant are you?

LUCY
(pause)
Why did you think you didn't know
what words to use?

HOWARD
He means how far...as a percentage
of nine months--where are we on the
timeline of--

LUCY
Someone should point a goddam
camera at *this*.

DESI
She's twelve weeks pregnant.

JOE
(trying to do the math)
So that means...

LUCY
Twelve weeks ago I fucked my
husband.

JOE/HOWARD/ROGER/TIP
(simultaneously)
No, no, no, etc./That's not what we
were asking, etc./We don't need to
talk about the details of, etc.

DESI
She'll start showing in about six
weeks and a month after that there
won't be any hiding it.

ROGER
This isn't a problem.

DESI
It's not.

ROGER
This has happened before, I won't
say names, but it's been dealt
with.

LUCY
(to DESI)
Is he talking about having me
killed?

ROGER
No. You carry a basket of laundry,
stand behind chairs, sit with a
pillow on your lap--

DESI
And those are great ideas--
especially having Lucy carry a
basket of laundry in every scene--

ROGER
Or stand behind chairs.

DESI
Where in the Ricardo's living room
are the giant chairs you're talking
about?

JOE
Lucy and Ricky redecorate. The
writers can get some fun out of it.
And maybe they also get some large
figus trees.

LUCY
They would have to be California
Redwoods and I'd have to stand
behind them anytime I wasn't doing
the wash.

HOWARD
Well what do you propose?

DESI
That the Ricardos have a baby.

HOWARD

(beat)

What do you mean?

LUCY

(to DESI)

I told you it was gonna be like this.

DESI

Lucy Ricardo will be pregnant on the show. An 8-episode arc starting with Lucy telling Ricky the happy news and ending with the birth of the baby.

ROGER

Noooo, no, no, no.

HOWARD

We can't have a pregnant woman on television.

DESI

Why not?

HOWARD

Because it's television. We come into people's homes.

JOE

Pregnant women often vomit.

LUCY

I know I could any second.

ROGER

May I say something?

LUCY

Frankly, I can't wait.

ROGER

If Lucy Ricardo's pregnant, the audience's mind immediately goes to how did she get that way. Lucy and Ricky sleep in separate beds.

DESI

We'll be pushing the beds together too.

ROGER

Oh noooo, no, no.

Continued: 82

HOWARD

I'm sorry, Des, we've gotta put our foot down on this one. You can't do it. End of discussion.

DESI pushes the intercom button on his desk--

DESI

(into intercom)

Miss Rosen, would you come in please with a pad and pen.

(to the others)

My secretary.

MISS ROSEN steps in with a pad and pen--

HOWARD

What are you doing?

DESI

(to MISS ROSEN)

To Mr. Alfred Lyons, Chairman of the Board of Philip Morris.

HOWARD

We don't want to bring Mr. Lyons into this.

DESI

"Mr. Lyons, I guess it all comes down to you. You are the man who is paying the money for this show and I will do whatever you decide."

HOWARD

Mr. Lyons doesn't get involved at this level.

DESI

"There's only one thing I want to make certain that you understand."

HOWARD

Desi--

DESI

"We've given you the number one show on television and up until now the creative decisions have been in our hands. They are now telling us that Lucy and Ricky can't have a baby on the show."

Continued: 82

HOWARD

That's not exactly what we said.

DESI

"All I ask from you, if you agree with them, is that you inform them that we will not accept them telling us what not to do unless, beginning with our next episode, they also tell us what to do.

(beat)

Sincerely, etc. Thank you and send it by telegram please.

MISS ROSEN

Yes sir.

MISS ROSEN exits.

LUCY

And that wasn't even why I married him.

LUCY gets up and before she walks out the door with DESI, she pulls him to her and gives him a passionate kiss for the benefit of the executives.

LUCY (CONT'D)

That was.

LUCY exits and DESI gives a small "What can I say?" shrug to the execs before heading out the door and we

CUT TO:

83

INT. "I LOVE LUCY" SET/RICARDO'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

83

FRAWLEY and VIVIAN ("FRED" and "ETHEL") are locked in a coat. Each has one arm in a sleeve and Lucy's tied the coat closed with a scarf. We're in the middle of camera rehearsal.

ETHEL

Lucy, let me out of here!

FRAWLEY

Untie this coat!

LUCY

I'm not letting you out until you kiss and make up.

ETHEL

*I'll never make up with him after
the things he said.*

FRAWLEY

*How about the things you said to
me? You said my mother looked like
a weasel.*

LUCY

*Apologize, Ethel. Tell him you're
sorry.*

ETHEL

*Alright. I'm sorry your mother
looks like a weasel.*

LUCY

Now Ethel.

ETHEL

*Well I can't help it. He should
have more consideration. After all,
I gave him the best years of my
life.*

FRAWLEY

These were the best?

DESI

*Alright, now you're even.
(to "ETHEL")
What are your conditions for making
up?*

LUCY

*We should really go back to the
dinner table.*

DONALD

What was that?

LUCY

*We should go back to the dinner
table.*

DONALD

*I think given the time we should
move on. It was good.*

LUCY

Yeah, except no it wasn't.

DONALD

What.

LUCY

Good. It wasn't good.

DESI

Let's go back.

FRAWLEY

What's happening?

VIVIAN

She wants to go back.

FRAWLEY

To where?

VIVIAN

The dinner scene.

FRAWLEY

What?

VIVIAN

(shouting)

The dinner scene, ya drunken yontz!

FRAWLEY

Have we hired someone to play Ethel yet?

DESI

Alright, let's go.

DONALD

Go forward or go back to the dinner scene?

LUCY

Back.

DONALD

Page 15. This is still Scene A. From, "You're right, he's not going to do me out of dinner." Cameras re-set. Props re-set.

As the cameras re-set and some crew members re-set props over to a beautifully laid-out dinner table--

Continued: 83

VIVIAN

Someone's going to need to tell us
what was wrong with the scene in
the first place.

FRAWLEY

You were in it.

Continued: 83

DESI
(knock it off)
Bill.

LUCY
Something fundamental was wrong and
I'll figure out what.

DONALD
I can figure out what, let's all do
our individual jobs.

LUCY speaks to DESI quietly and confidentially for a
moment...

LUCY
(whispering)
I hit him in the face till he's
bleeding, does our insurance cover
that?

DESI
(whispering)
Yeah, I got the platinum plan.

LUCY
(whispering)
Good job.

DONALD
Ready, ready.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Quiet please, rehearsal's up.

DONALD
From "You're right, he's not going
to do me out of dinner." Settle
and...Action.

VIVIAN
*You're right. He's not going to do
me out of dinner.*

LUCY
Good.

LUCY puts a roast down on the table, then takes a small piano
bench and puts it on the downstage side of the table. The
table now has four place settings but three chairs--one on
each end and one in the middle with its back to the audience.

LUCY sits at one end and motions "RICKY" to quickly sit at
the other end.

Continued: 83

LUCY (CONT'D)
Well sit down everyone.

"FRED" and "ETHEL" both come over and start to take the one chair.

Continued: 83

LUCY (CONT'D)

*Oh, we don't have anymore chairs.
You don't mind sharing that one do
you?*

They both sit down gingerly on the piano bench. They indulge in a little jockeying for position. "RICKY" cuts a slice of roast beef--

LUCY (CONT'D)

The roast beef should be pre-cut.

DONALD

It will be dear.

DESI

*How is that, Ethel? Not too much
fat, is there, Ethel?*

"ETHEL" looks at "FRED'S" behind--

ETHEL

There sure is.

LUCY

He means the meat.

ETHEL

Oh no, the meat is fine.

"RICKY" gives "FRED" a serving and "FRED" and "ETHEL" start to eat while "RICKY" serves LUCY's plate and his own.

"ETHEL" and "FRED" are having trouble eating in such close quarters and that's where the comedy is supposed to come from. They jab each other with their elbows and vie for more room on the chair until they both fall off.

DONALD

Perfect.

LUCY

Yeah?

DONALD

Moving on.

LUCY

Staying put.

DONALD

Why?

Continued: 83

LUCY

We need to work out the moves at the table.

VIVIAN

Bill and I can work out the moves.

LUCY

Viv, it's not that I'm not confident that you can--

DONALD

This is camera blocking. We can work out the stage business during tomorrow's run-throughs.

LUCY

I'd strongly prefer we do it now.

DONALD

I have to exercise my directorial authority.

LUCY

(beat)

You have to do what?!

DESI

Let's take a break.

DONALD

It's not time for a break.

DESI

Good then, that's 10 minutes.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(calling out)

10 minutes, we come back to Scene A.

DONALD

No we don't.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Maybe we don't, it's hard to say

People start to scatter...DESI speaks privately to LUCY.

DESI

Tell me what's happening?

LUCY

Hm?

Continued: 83

DESI

What's happening right now?

LUCY

You know what occurs to me? At the top, it should be clear that I'm setting a nice table, right? There should be flowers in a vase.

QUICK CUT TO:

Continued: 88

88

INT. DRESSING ROOM CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

88

LUCY walks down the corridor toward her dressing room and walks past Vivian's open dressing room door. She stops, thinks, turns around and sticks her head in the door.

Continued: 88

LUCY

Viv.

VIVIAN looks up from her dressing table.

LUCY (CONT'D)

It's not you or Bill. The dinner scene. It's Donald Glass.

VIVIAN

Well...it'll be funny.

LUCY

I'm sure of that.

VIVIAN

Can't get better till it gets bad.

LUCY

Cross Step One off the list.

VIVIAN

(laughing a little)
Yeah.

LUCY

Okay.

VIVIAN

You hangin' in there?

LUCY

Look, we've made 37 episodes. You do 37 of anything and one of 'em's gonna be your 37th best. Ours was directed by Donald Glass.

VIVIAN

Honey...the committee...they're not gonna base their findings on how this week's show--

LUCY

Fuck the committee. I said that. I'm talkin' about the show. And unless you count his wardrobe, Don Glass doesn't understand the moving parts of physical comedy.

(beat)

That's all. My point is, you're not the problem.

LUCY starts to leave--

VIVIAN

Luce?

LUCY turns back.

LUCY

Yeah.

VIVIAN

Madelyn brought me breakfast this morning. French toast, bacon and potatoes. She said someone noticed I hadn't had breakfast. She said it looked like I'd lost some weight.

LUCY

She's right, you look great.

VIVIAN

Madelyn's a staff writer. She doesn't bring people their breakfast.

LUCY

(pause)

I'm not sure what you're asking. It sounds like she was just--

VIVIAN

How would she know I hadn't had breakfast?

LUCY

(beat)

I really don't know.

VIVIAN

It was you, right?

LUCY

Yes. You have to give me credit. When I lie, I give up on it pretty quick.

VIVIAN

It's admirable.

LUCY

Thanks.

VIVIAN

You told her to bring me breakfast and remark on my weight loss.

Continued: 88

79A.

LUCY
Let me explain why.

VIVIAN
Why?

Continued: 88

LUCY

Because I think you should get off
this looney diet you're on.

VIVIAN

It's working.

LUCY

It's not good for you.

VIVIAN

I feel great.

LUCY

It's not good for Ethel.

VIVIAN

It's not.

LUCY

We're best friends, Viv, I don't
want to fight. I just sent over
some breakfast.

VIVIAN

You didn't *just* send it over, you
sent it over with Madelyn and a
message. And now a *new* message,
which is that I look too good.

LUCY

We just want you at the weight you
were when we cast you.

VIVIAN

Otherwise it'll be bad for Ethel?

LUCY

Yes.

VIVIAN

Or bad for you?

LUCY

Alright--

VIVIAN

No one's gonna stop loving Lucy
when you're pregnant. GI's don't
have your picture in their
barracks.

LUCY

Thanks for that, Viv.

Continued: 88

VIVIAN

I'm saying take it easy, that's all. Everyone here stands shoulder to shoulder with you and no one feels funny 'cause we're scared to death and you're not helping by jumping up and down on everyone who works here and doing it in front of-

-

Continued: 88

LUCY

Goddamit, Viv, most American women look like you, not me, and they want to see themselves on television!

There's a tense silence before FRAWLEY opens his dressing room door--

FRAWLEY

What the hell are the two of you screaming about?!

LUCY

Nothing.

VIVIAN

Nothing.

FRAWLEY

I'm in my room taking my mid-morning nap.

VIVIAN

Don't you usually do that while we're rehearsing?

FRAWLEY

I'd love to see more of that Moss Hart wit on the show.

VIVIAN

(to LUCY)

Don't worry about it. The weight always comes back. I can't keep it off anymore.

LUCY

(beat)

This conversation went poorly.

VIVIAN

I thought it was great. I definitely feel like performing for tens of millions of people now.

LUCY

Alright, so...okay.

LUCY steps out into--

Continued: 88A

88A **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

88A

LUCY starts to head down the hall--

FRAWLEY

Lucille.

LUCY

Yeah.

FRAWLEY

Come with me for a drink.

LUCY

It's 10am.

FRAWLEY

I'm sure it's 10:15 somewhere.

LUCY

We have to be back on stage.

FRAWLEY

I wonder if they'll wait for you.

LUCY

Bill--

A young P.A., Scott, is walking by--

FRAWLEY

Kid. Tell the stage Mrs. Arnaz is taking some personal time and she'll be back when she's back.

SCOTT

Copy that.

LUCY

(to Scott)

Probably 15 minutes.

SCOTT

Yes ma'am.

LUCY

And you should remind props that I'll need garden shears for the opening scene.

SCOTT

Copy.

Continued: 88A

FRAWLEY

Let's go.

Continued: 88A

LUCY

(still to Scott)

We have to establish right away
that I'm setting a fancy table.

FRAWLEY

You don't need to explain it to
him.

LUCY

(still to Scott)

We'll have flowers in a vase and
I'll cut one of the flowers--

FRAWLEY

He doesn't care.

LUCY

--it'll be too short. So I'll cut
the other flowers and then they'll
be too short and so on.

SCOTT

Got it.

LUCY

So I need garden shears.

SCOTT

Copy.

LUCY

Regular scissors aren't strong
enough to cut through the stems.

FRAWLEY

He's thinking a lot about killing
you now.

LUCY

Fine.

FRAWLEY

(to Scott)

Go.

SCOTT

Yep.

SCOTT takes off.

LUCY

Where are we drinking?

Continued: 88A

FRAWLEY
Across the street.

Continued: 89

89 **EXT. ALLEY/STREET - DAY**

89

LUCY and FRAWLEY walk through the alley and across the street.

FRAWLEY

It's raining. Is your hair gonna be alright?

LUCY

I'm fine. Since I started doing this show, rain bounces off my hair.

FRAWLEY

That's helpful.

LUCY

I honestly had no idea this place was here.

FRAWLEY

They like to keep a low profile.

LUCY

It's hard to imagine why.

FRAWLEY

After you.

LUCY

What kind of people go to a bar on a Wednesday morning?

FRAWLEY

It's an eclectic group.

They walk into--

90 **INT. DIVE BAR - CONTINUOUS**

90

The place is empty except for maybe three people scattered around. LUCY and FRAWLEY head to the bar where they're met by a BARTENDER.

FRAWLEY

What are you having?

LUCY

I'll take a tetanus shot.

FRAWLEY

Jim Beam. Two times.

Continued: 90

LUCY

I thought you and Desi had a deal.
You don't drink at work.

FRAWLEY

Desi and I have a deal that I won't
be drunk at work. Have you ever
seen me drunk at work?

LUCY

Would I know?

FRAWLEY

No.
(raising his glass)
Here's to your new baby.

LUCY

Alright then.

They drink.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Are they being polite or do they
not recognize us?

FRAWLEY

They don't own television sets.

LUCY

Why didn't I think of that?

FRAWLEY

Honey, I read seven newspapers
every day.

LUCY

Seven?

FRAWLEY

Yeah.

LUCY

When do you have time to do that?

FRAWLEY

It's 30 minutes between races at
Santa Anita, it takes me a minute
and a half to pick a horse.

LUCY

Aren't you at work?

Continued: 90

FRAWLEY

Yeah we have bookies now and telephones.

LUCY

Know all about that. Did a Damon Runyon picture.

FRAWLEY

In none of those seven newspapers have I read anything about Lucille Ball being a Communist. I don't hear anyone talking about it.

LUCY

Since when do you talk to anyone?

FRAWLEY

I got news for you, the less you talk, the more things you hear and I haven't heard anything. So...problems at home?

LUCY

Problems at home?

FRAWLEY

Yeah.

LUCY

No, I'd like very much to have problems at home but my problem's not home that much. A few times a week.

FRAWLEY

He was playing cards on the boat Wednesday night.

LUCY

I know. The picture's six months old and I was there when it was taken. I'm saying why wasn't he home? Where I and our daughter were?

FRAWLEY

Your husband, Ricky--

LUCY

Desi.

Continued: 90

FRAWLEY

Desi--is in love with America like
no man I've ever known since George
M. Cohan, who loved America so much
he wrote the same song five times.
Okay? Desi loves America as much as
that guy. But that doesn't mean
he's not Cuban.

LUCY

I know that.

FRAWLEY

The world he's from has a very narrow definition of manhood.

LUCY

I know that too.

FRAWLEY

The man is the man.

LUCY

Mm.

FRAWLEY

And you know what? Not for nothin', but the women are happy.

LUCY

You've asked them?

FRAWLEY

They look happy.

LUCY

I see.

FRAWLEY

But that's neither here nor there.

LUCY

It really isn't.

FRAWLEY

He's mesmerized by you, Lucille. And he misses you when you're in two different places, he does, I'm a witness.

LUCY

He doesn't have to, we live in the same house.

FRAWLEY

He does have to, that's what I'm saying. He has to spend time away from you so that he can feel like he's not--

LUCY

--second banana. I navigate male egos for a living, bud.

Continued: 90

FRAWLEY

Then why are you running the set?

(beat)

Why are you running rehearsals?
You're doing it right in front of
him.

LUCY

I can't prioritize the director's
feelings over the health of the
show.

FRAWLEY

No, not--I couldn't care any less
about Donald's feelings if I tried
hard. He's a hack but we'll
overcome that because, frankly,
we're not doing Uncle Vanya.

LUCY

Got it.

(beat)

But the business at the dinner
table has to be precise.

FRAWLEY

Really? I was only in vaudeville 40
years so I wouldn't know about
these things of which you speak.

LUCY

I know you know! So why do you care
if--

FRAWLEY

(over)

You did it in front of Desi...is my
point.

LUCY

(pause)

Lemme tell you something about
Desi. He runs this show. Every
creative decision goes through him.
Every business decision--the
network, Philip Morris--and if that
wasn't enough, he's camera ready on
Monday. It takes me five days to
get a laugh and he's killing at the
table read and that man, believe
me, is nobody's second banana.

FRAWLEY

How many people know that?

Continued: 90

LUCY

Know what?

FRAWLEY

That Desi runs the show. How many people know that?

LUCY

(pause)

There's me. And I just told you.

FRAWLEY

You get the picture?

91 **EXT. HOTEL POOL - DAY**

91

OLDER MADELYN

There was a minute there when Lucy was gonna be a serious actress in serious movies. She was gonna compete for roles with Crawford and Hayworth. It might've been Lucy in *All About Eve* and you know what-- she'd have blown the doors off the place. It was almost like that. For a minute there.

92 **OMITTED**

92

93 **EXT. LUCY AND DESI'S BACKYARD/POOL - DAY**

93

DESI's sitting by the pool reading a book, and, after a moment, the back door flies open and LUCY runs out with her shoes in one hand and a bottle of champagne in the other. She's disheveled desperately gasping for breath.

DESI

Lucy?

LUCY tries to say something but doesn't have the air yet.

DESI (CONT'D)

What happened?

LUCY

(barely audible--breathing heavy)

Flat tire. 'Bout a quarter mile back.

DESI
You abandoned the car there?

LUCY
Sprinted the last five-hundred
yards.

DESI
What's going on? Also you ran with
a bottle of champagne in your hand?

LUCY
Bringing it...more festive. I got
it. I got the part.

DESI
Which part?

LUCY
I got the part, Des. *The Big
Street*.

DESI
(pause)
You said it was going to Rita
Hayworth.

LUCY
Scheduling problems. Then they went
to Judy Holliday. Scheduling
problems. I've got the female lead
in *The Big Street*.

DESI
That's tremendous.
(beat)
That's tremendous.

LUCY
(pause)
I'm opposite Henry Fonda.

DESI
When does it start photography?

LUCY
Two weeks. Still can't catch my
breath.
(pause)
It's Damon Runyon.

Continued: 93

DESI

I know, I read the script and I'm very--I'm very happy, I was just looking forward to you coming out on tour.

LUCY

Rita Hayworth had scheduling problems.

Continued: 93

DESI

So did you.

LUCY takes a moment...then tosses her shoes aside--

LUCY

You don't think I want to be in the same city at the same time as my husband? What do I talk about every-

-

DESI

I know, I know that.

LUCY

Every decision I make is based on being near you. Every single decision.

DESI

Well, yeah. But obviously not every single decision.

LUCY

You know how many years I've spent sticking my head in the frame, saying something bitchy and going away? Crappy little roles in pictures I wouldn't pay a nickel to see if the theater had the only available air conditioning. If *The Big Street* is a hit I'll be getting the roles that go to Rita and Judy and Betty.

DESI

Which Judy?

LUCY

Holiday. Who's the baseball player you talk about? The one that sat down and let Lou Gehrig--

DESI

Wally Pipp.

LUCY

--start that streak? Gehrig was his understudy.

DESI

Backup.

Continued: 93

LUCY

And the guy took a rest one day and Gehrig came in and didn't come out for forty years?

DESI

Fourteen years and it was Wally Pipp.

LUCY

Okay, well, imagine if Wally Pipp had scheduling problems and Lou Gehrig, instead of grabbing his glove, toured with his husband's Latin orchestra. It would've changed the course of baseball.

DESI

And the course of Latin music.

LUCY

Rita Hayworth is Wally Pipp. I'm Lou Gehrig. *The Big Street* is the Yankees.

DESI

I understood the metaphor so long ago.

LUCY

You don't have to tour. You could stay in town.

DESI

And do what?

LUCY

Sell out Ciro's every night.

DESI

We're not a house band. I'd like to sell out New York, Chicago and Miami too.

LUCY

I know. Eight weeks. I'll come to wherever you are on the weekends. So it'll be important that you not fall in love with someone else Mondays thru Fridays.

Continued: 93

DESI

Agreed. And it'll be helpful if you don't sleep with Henry Fonda or Joseph Cotton.

LUCY

How did Joseph Cotton get into the conversation?

Continued: 93

DESI
I've heard rumors.

LUCY
You really want to compare rumors?

DESI
No.

LUCY
Yeah.

DESI
Hey, look at me.

LUCY
I already am.

DESI
They're rumors. I have never, and
will never, have an interest in
being with anyone but you.

LUCY
Should we open the champagne, take
our clothes off and go skinny
dipping in the pool?

DESI
That bottle of champagne is
basically a grenade now but all
your other ideas were good.
(beat)
Lucy, Jesus. You're gonna be a
movie star.

LUCY
You comfortable with that?

DESI takes LUCY by the shoulders...

DESI
Am I comfortable with that?

And the champagne bottle, which is laying on its side,
EXPLODES, with the cork shattering a wine glass.

LUCY and DESI stare at it...

LUCY
That bottle has comic timing.

Continued: 94

94

INT. CHARLES KOERNER'S OFFICE - DAY

94

LUCY sits on a couch in the waiting area. She takes in the framed posters of classy hit movies and smiles a little to herself. The SECRETARY notices.

Continued: 94

LUCY

I've been at the studio for almost ten years and I've never been in the president's office.

SECRETARY

Mr. Koerner isn't the president, he's the head of production.

LUCY

Second in command. Still. Higher than I've ever gotten.

The SECRETARY's phone buzzes and she picks it up--

SECRETARY

Yes sir.

(to LUCY)

You can go on in.

LUCY gets up, straightens herself out and walks into

95

INT. CHARLES KOERNER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

95

KOERNER

Lucille. Charles Koerner.

LUCY

Lucille Ball.

KOERNER

Do you like Lucille or Lucy?

LUCY

Lucy's fine. I mean either's fine. Lucy.

KOERNER

Alright.

LUCY

And do I call you Charlie?

KOERNER

Anyone as brilliant as you were in *The Big Street* can call me Betsy and I wouldn't care.

LUCY

Thank you.

KOERNER

Sit. Please. Right there.

Continued: 95

LUCY

Thank you.

They sit.

KOERNER

That was a whole new side of you we've never seen. Where has that been?

LUCY

It's been buried under bad movies.

KOERNER

I've heard you make some form of that joke before.

LUCY

Keep putting me in pictures like *Big Street* and you won't hear it again.

KOERNER

We're dropping your contract, Lucy.

LUCY laughs...

KOERNER (CONT'D)

No, it's not a joke. RKO's dropping your contract.

LUCY

(pause)

I don't understand.

KOERNER

We don't have anything for you.

LUCY

(pause)

I don't--This is happening fast. *The Big Street* was a hit.

KOERNER

It was a critical hit.

LUCY

I get there wasn't a stampede to the box office, but you didn't lose money, did you?

KOERNER

No.

Continued: 95

LUCY

Do you understand the conditions under which this picture was finished?

KOERNER

It has nothing to do with--

LUCY

Damon Runyon left town before principal photography, our director joined the army during post-production and our editor died. He just flat-out died.

KOERNER

There were a number of obstacles.

LUCY

That's accurate. Did you read the reviews?

KOERNER

They were very impressive.

LUCY

They were more than impressive.

KOERNER

Lucy--

LUCY

I blew Henry Fonda off the screen.

KOERNER

This has nothing--

LUCY

Henry Fonda, who is very much under contract here at RKO.

KOERNER

As a matter of fact you blew him off the screen 'cause it was his last picture he owed at RKO and your director couldn't get him to give a damn.

LUCY

Making my job that much harder.

KOERNER

This has nothing to do with your performance in *The Big Street*.

Continued: 95

LUCY

But it should have everything to do with my performance in *The Big Street*. I showed what I can do and that's just the beginning of what I can do. That's just the beginning of it. I can do comedy too. Are you sure this isn't a joke?

KOERNER

It's a tough business.

LUCY

I know that! I've been in it since I was fourteen!

KOERNER

But you're 35 now.

LUCY

(pause)

And that's the problem?

KOERNER

No, the problem is that you're really 39, aren't you?

LUCY

(pause)

Mm-hm. 39-year olds don't go to your movies? They don't like seeing stories about themselves?

KOERNER

You came through for us when Judy Holliday and Rita Hayworth were on other pictures and we didn't want to lose Fonda. This studio has a handshake understanding with Metro and Warner and they'll loan us Holliday or Hayworth so we just don't have enough for you that would warrant keeping you under contract.

LUCY

Judy Holliday does one thing very well but it's just one thing.

KOERNER

I know how you're feeling right now, I've had to have this conversation a hundred times.

Continued: 95

LUCY
I'm surprised, 'cause you're
terrible at it.

KOERNER
Can I make a suggestion?

LUCY
Be younger?

KOERNER
Radio.

LUCY
(pause)
The hell did you just say to me?

KOERNER
You've got the voice for it. I've
noticed there's a lot you can do
with your voice. You should think
about radio.

LUCY
You should go fuck yourself, Betsy.

LUCY gets up to leave and we

CUT TO:

96

EXT. LUCY AND DESI'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

96

LUCY's sitting by the pool, reading a script by a hanging
lantern and smoking a cigarette. She has a glass of wine and
there's an almost-empty bottle sitting next to her.

After a moment, DESI appears at the door...

DESI
Lucy?

LUCY
Yep?

DESI
What are you doing?

LUCY
I'm reading scripts.

DESI
It's three o'clock in the morning.

Continued: 96

LUCY
I know. I'm drunk too.

DESI walks over to her...

LUCY (CONT'D)
I know why you like drinking. I
didn't get it until about two hours
ago.

DESI
You read any good movies?

LUCY
These are radio pilots.

DESI
Oh yeah?

LUCY
Yeah.

DESI
(pause)
You know there's nothing wrong with
radio. I do it all the time.

LUCY
You're a bandleader.

DESI takes that in, nods, gets up and heads back to the
house. He turns and calls back--

DESI
You know *Bataan* was a hit too.

LUCY
I didn't hear you.

DESI
Bataan was a hit. And I was good.
The reviews were Valentines. I
didn't bang a drum. It would've led
to better parts except I had to go--
what do you call it--fight World
War II. Now those crappy little
parts in pictures you wouldn't pay
a nickel to see if it was the only
available air conditioning in the
--

LUCY
Des--

Continued: 96

DESI
I can't get 'em.

DESI heads into the house. We stay on LUCY a moment before we

BLACKOUT

TITLE:

Continued: 96

Thursday**Run Throughs**97 **INT. RICRADO'S LIVING ROOM SET - DAY**

97

We're in the middle of a dress rehearsal. JESS, MADELYN, BOB and others are sitting in the bleachers.

"RICKY" is helping "LUCY" through the front door. "LUCY" is wrapped in bandages.

DESI

*Honey--are you sure you're alright?
Are the bandages really fake?*

LUCY

*Oh I'm fine. Thank goodness the
Mertz's had their awnings up.*

DESI

The whole thing was my fault.

LUCY

*No, it was my fault. Weren't we
silly?*

DESI

Yeah. We'll never fight again.

They kiss. "FRED" comes in the door looking very sad.

FRAWLEY

You okay, Lucy?

LUCY

Oh, I'm fine.

FRAWLEY

Are you sure?

LUCY

*Yeah. Don't look so sad. I'm really
alright.*

FRAWLEY

*I wasn't sad about that. I just saw
Ethel and she's so mad about what
we did, she's gone home to her
mother!*

LUCY

Oh no!

Continued: 97

DONALD

And we cut. Good. Is that lunch?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(calling out)

That's one hour for lunch.

DONALD

We'll do notes on stage after and go again.

Everyone starts to leave--

LUCY

(stopping everyone)

One quick thing?

Everyone stops...

DONALD

(beat)

The table scene's getting good.

LUCY

Yeah, it's not, but I wanted to circle back and express again my serious concern about Ricky's entrance at the top. I brought it up at the table read Monday and there haven't been new pages.

JESS

Because it's gonna work.

LUCY

Hear me out.

JESS

Okay.

LUCY

Right now Lucy's trimming the flowers on the table when the front door opens and Ricky comes in.

JESS

We're gonna have to cut the flowers. I don't mean "cut the flowers", I mean cut the flowers.

Continued: 97

LUCY

(pause)

I couldn't understand the
difference between those two line
readings.

JESS

We're running long. We have to cut
the bit with the flowers.

Continued: 97

DESI

How long?

JESS

About a minute.

LUCY

Alright, we'll get back to the flowers. The door opens, Ricky comes in and Lucy doesn't see or hear him, which is unusual because the front door is--you know--right there, and in previous episodes we've established that Lucy's eyes and ears are connected to her brain.

JESS

We buy the conceit.

LUCY

I'm sorry?

JESS

We buy it. Lucy's so focused on making the table nice she doesn't even notice Ricky coming in the door.

LUCY

Okay, I'll run with that. Ricky walks up to her quietly, puts his hands over her eyes and says--

She points to DESI--

DESI

"Guess who it is."

LUCY

And Lucy says, "Bill?, Sam?, Pat?, Ralph?"

JESS

She's teasing him.

LUCY

Yes. She's teasing him. That's clear. But then Ricky responds--

She points to DESI--

Continued: 97

DESI

"No!"

LUCY

No! And there's a stage direction for Ricky that says, "Burning". No! He's upset. Lucy continues the teasing--George, Julius, Stephen, Ivan?

BOB

We changed that to "Pedro? Julio? Juan? Guillermo?"

MADELYN

(imitating BOB)

"Because those are Spanish names. I mean Mexican. Cuban. Latin. They're Brazilian names! Turkish!"

BOB

You good?

MADELYN

Yeah.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

We're moving into a meal penalty.

LUCY

Lucy guesses some names.

JESS

Teasingly.

LUCY

And the script indicates that Ricky then takes his hands away from Lucy's eyes, turns her around and says--

She points to DESI--

DESI

"No! It's me!"

LUCY

So my question again, Jess, is does Ricky honestly, truly believe that there might be eight different men who routinely walk into their apartment--all of whom sound exactly like Desi Arnaz?

Continued: 97

JESS

You think we're saying Ricky's stupid?

LUCY

I think we're saying the audience is. And that's something for which they won't soon forgive you.

JESS

Do you charge for these lessons?

LUCY

A ton.

JESS

For the sake of the joke, the audience will take the leap with us.

LUCY

They will, but they'll need a busload of orthopedists when they land.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Jess--

JESS

Let's talk about it after lunch.

LUCY

I have an idea.

JESS

I've got a crew here. We're about to run into a penalty.

LUCY

Lucy's working on the flowers.

JESS

We're cutting the flowers for time. I don't mean literally cutting the flowers--

LUCY

I can not go through that again. Ricky opens the door, comes in, shuts the door the way we've seen him do in thirty-seven episodes. Lucy doesn't acknowledge him.

Continued: 97

JESS

So far you're describing the script.

LUCY

Right. But instead of playing the hands-over-the-eyes guessing game, Ricky just stands there.

(MORE)

Continued: 97

LUCY (CONT'D)

He can't understand why Lucy didn't notice him come home anymore than we can. He stands there for a full beat, and then another, and then merrily and in a slightly exaggerated manner says--as we've seen him say a hundred times--

She points to DESI--

DESI

"Lucy, I'm home!"

Everyone LAUGHS, and once the laughter dies down...

LUCY

For Ricky is funny.

JESS

Luce? Let's talk about it after lunch.

(to the A.D.)

Scott.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(calling out)

That's lunch. One hour. Back on stage for notes.

People begin to head off their separate ways. FRAWLEY catches LUCY's eye and shrugs his shoulders as if to say, "What did we just talk about yesterday?"

LUCY

(calling out)

Hang on!

Everyone stops...

LUCY (CONT'D)

Des. Did that work for you?

DESI

Works perfect.

LUCY

(to JESS)

We'll talk about it after lunch.

People start leaving again. As LUCY walks past FRAWLEY she quietly says--

LUCY (CONT'D)

It needed to be fixed.

Continued: 98

98

INT. WRITERS' ROOM - DAY

98

JESS, MADELYN, BOB and MARY PAT are sitting around the table.

BOB

I think we can get more out of
"hypocrite".

MADELYN

Yeah.

JESS

Like what?

BOB

Like Lucy says, "Well it's nice to
know I'm married to a hypocrite"
and Desi gets his back up and says--

MADELYN

"Hypocrite!" then turns to Fred and
says, "What's a hypocrite?"

BOB

Fred tells him-- "It's a person who
says one thing but does another"
and Desi says, "Thank you" and
turns back to Lucy and says--

MADELYN

"Oh yeah?!"

JESS

Good.

BOB

Yeah, that's exactly what I was
going to pitch.

MADELYN

But I pitched it faster.

BOB

By interrupting me.

MADELYN

How do you think I got to be a
woman in a comedy room?

There's a KNOCK on the door and LUCY sticks her head in--

Continued: 98

LUCY

Hey.

(to JESS)

Is now a good time?

Continued: 98

JESS
 Madelyn had a good idea. We shoot
 it both ways and see which one gets
 the bigger laugh.

BOB
 That was my idea.

LUCY
 It's a bad idea.

MADELYN
 (to BOB)
 It's just not your day.

LUCY
 (to JESS)
 Can I have a minute in your office?

JESS
 Sure.

JESS gets up and walks out into--

99 **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

99

JESS
 What's wrong with shooting it both
 ways?

LUCY
 Well you'll be on the floor during
 the show, right?

JESS
 I'll be where I always am.

They step across the hall into--

100 **INT. JESS'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

100

LUCY
 In full view of the audience.

JESS
 I suppose.

LUCY
 Since we're doing it both ways, how
 about we do it once with your pants
 on and once with your pants off?

Continued: 100

JESS
It's not the same.

LUCY
It is, and I don't want to do the version with my pants off in front of two-hundred people. But I need to talk to you about something else.

LUCY closes the door.

JESS
You're not gonna tell me you're pregnant again, are you?

LUCY
No. I'm still pregnant from before, but no. Jess, you know how much I value you.

JESS
I think I do.

LUCY
You know you do.

JESS
Okay.

LUCY
And you also know what it is Desi does around here.

JESS
Sure.

LUCY
I mean every business decision goes through Desi. In fact most business decisions are made by Desi.

JESS
You married a very bright man.

LUCY
I did. He also makes a lot of creative decisions.

JESS
(pause)
I'm not sure I'd say a lot.

Continued: 100

LUCY

Well...I would. I'd say a lot. He devised the camera system we use. He's the reason the east coast isn't seeing the show on a foggy kinescope.

JESS

Yeah.

LUCY

And even though we use three cameras, the studio audience can see every scene, that's him too. And the cast, the four of us, we can see the audience.

JESS

I give him a lot of credit for that.

LUCY

He's the one who thought up Lucy being pregnant on the show.

JESS

That's never gonna happen 'cause no matter what CBS says, Philip Morris is never gonna let it happen, but, like I said, I give him credit.

LUCY

That's the thing though. You don't.

JESS

What do you mean?

LUCY

He doesn't get credit as an executive producer, which, let's face it, is what he is. You get sole credit.

JESS

I didn't win my credit in a raffle, I earn it. I'm the show runner, not to mention being the creator of the show.

LUCY

I don't see how we could do the show without you.

Continued: 100

JESS
You absolutely could not.

Continued: 100

LUCY

I don't see how we could do it
without Desi either.

JESS

Because he plays Ricky which he
does get a screen credit for.

LUCY

Jess--

JESS

Is this something our agents should
be talking about?

LUCY

No.

JESS

Because I'm not at all comfortable
with this conversation.

LUCY

I'm about to make you less
comfortable. I need you to help me
save my marriage.

(pause)

I need you to help me save my
marriage.

101 INT. WRITERS' ROOM - DAY

101

MADELYN and BOB are waiting along with MARY PAT...

BOB

(pause)

What do you think they're talking
about in there?

MADELYN

I think they're talking about you.
I think they want to pay you less
because you're not as funny as I
am.

JESS and LUCY step out of JESS's office--

JESS

Mary Pat, would you ask Desi if I
can come see him?

MARY PAT

Sure.

Continued: 101

LUCY starts to head off and JESS slams his office door behind him a little too hard. LUCY clocks that and then calls into the writers room--

LUCY

Madelyn?

LUCY motions for MADELYN to step outside.

MADELYN

Yeah.

MADELYN steps into--

102

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

102

--and she and LUCY take a few steps away for privacy. They speak quietly.

MADELYN

Was everything alright in there?

LUCY

Yeah. So listen, it has to be coherent. If it's anything goes then nothing's funny

MADELYN

Anything Goes was a hit.

LUCY

Not Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*, I mean--

MADELYN

I know. Why are you telling me?

LUCY

The opening, Ricky's entrance with his hands over my eyes, that was Jess, right?

MADELYN takes a moment before--

MADELYN

Outside of that room we make it a point not to talk about who wrote what.

LUCY

It wasn't Jess?

Continued: 102

MADELYN

(beat)

Again--

LUCY

You know I'm right about the logic.
Why aren't you backing me up
instead of endorsing some plan to
shoot it both ways.

MADELYN

Listen, why don't we get together
for a drink or a swim this weekend
and we can put it on the agenda.

LUCY

The show's tomorrow and I'm fine
talking about it now.

MADELYN

By all means, let's unnecessarily
add more to what you're worried
about this week.

LUCY

I'm not worried--

MADELYN

Shhh.

LUCY

(quieter)

I'm not worried. I'm saying that I
count on you to be the firewall--to
be--to make sure--just--logic,
okay?

MADELYN

I won't say who wrote what, but I
can tell you that I'm the lady in
there trying to make Lucy smarter.

LUCY

(beat)

'Scuse me?

MADELYN

I'm the one trying, every week, to
make--

LUCY

Lucy's dumb?

Continued: 102

MADELYN

(beat)

I didn't say that.

Continued: 102

LUCY

But you're trying--struggling, it sounds like--to make Lucy smarter.

MADELYN

I created this character with you.

LUCY

And she needs to be smarter.

MADELYN

She sometimes, for the sake of comedy, is infantilized.

LUCY says nothing...

MADELYN (CONT'D)

This is a crazy week, time and place to be having this conversation. This is important to--

LUCY

How is she infant--

MADELYN

She literally says "Waaah".

LUCY

'Cause when she does, 60-million people laugh--just like for Lou Costello and Stan Laurel--and you get paid.

MADELYN

When those two grown men play slow-witted five-year olds, I cringe.

LUCY

Then I question your comedy IQ.

MADELYN

No you don't, you think I'm the funniest writer in the room and that's why you're talking to me and not Jess.

LUCY

Many people regard Lucy as clever. She always has a plan to overcome an obstacle.

MADELYN

Yeah, but oftentimes that obstacle is her husband's permission.

Continued: 102

LUCY

You really think this week, right now, is the best time to talk about this?

MADELYN

No! I specifically said that 30-seconds ago.

(pause)

Look, it's just a female perspective from another generation.

LUCY

Another generation? You're on a roll.

MADELYN

Bette Davis, Bacall, Hepburn--

LUCY

Funny women.

MADELYN

--Judy Holliday--

LUCY

Judy Holliday? Go to hell.

MADELYN

They are funny women and they're smart and tough and they outsmart the men. Why do you and Gracie Allen feel like you have to--

LUCY

Okay, stop. Stop stop stop. Maddie, I love you. You're like, I guess, a great-granddaughter to me from another generation. And it's my fervent wish for you that one day you're half as funny as Gracie Allen. In the meantime, please remember that Lucy and Ricky and Fred and Ethel, if they live past tomorrow, have to live in a reality that accepts the physical laws of the universe. Ricky knows that Lucy doesn't think there are possibly eight other men in the apartment.

MADELYN

Understood.

Continued: 102

JESS comes out of his office and calls into the writers room--

Continued: 102

JESS

Let's go.

MADELYN

(to LUCY)

But I don't make that decision.

JESS

Mary Pat, cut the flowers. And to be clear, by "cut the flowers"--

BOB

She knows exactly what you mean.

MARY PAT nods that she does.

As JESS and BOB walk past MADELYN--

JESS

(to MADELYN)

Let's go.

LUCY's left standing there...

LUCY

(under her breath)

Judy Holliday. This isn't happening.

103

INT. DESI'S OFFICE ROOM - DAY

103

DESI's pacing a little with a script in his hands, going through his lines. He tosses the script on the couch and lights a cigarette. Then paces a little bit.

There's a knock on the door--

DESI

Come on in.

MISS ROSEN opens the door--

MISS ROSEN

Mr. Oppenheimer is here to see you with Mr. Carroll and Miss Pugh.

DESI

Nothing from Mr. Lyons yet?

MISS ROSEN

No.

Continued: 103

DESI
Anyone at Philip Morris?

MISS ROSEN
No.

DESI
You think they know something we
don't know yet?

MISS ROSEN
I think if they did, our offices
would be empty by now.

DESI
Okay.

DESI calls out--

DESI (CONT'D)
Camina conmigo al escenario!

--as he heads out into--

103A **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

103A

DESI
Walk me to the stage. We're an hour
behind.

JESS
Madelyn's got a new joke for the
second act.

MADELYN
I just this minute told Lucy that
we don't talk about who wrote what.

BOB
And Madelyn came up with the joke
only seconds after I did.

MADELYN
Isn't it possible that two comedy
writers working on the same script
came up with the same joke at the
same time?

BOB
It's possible.

MADELYN
Thank you.

Continued: 103A

BOB

It's just not what happened.

DESI

Do I need to be here for any of
this?

JESS hands DESI a piece of paper. DESI looks it over...

DESI (CONT'D)

"Hypocrite?! What's a hypocrite?"

They turn onto--

103B **INT. NEW CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

103B

MADELYN

That's to Fred.

DESI reads the rest of the new joke...

DESI

Got it. Good. Was that what you
wanted me for?

JESS

The hypocrite joke is for Episode
9, that's the script we're working
on. If Lucy's going to be pregnant--
Lucy Ricardo--we have to introduce
it in 9 according to your
timetable.

DESI

Yeah.

JESS

So I just wanted to confirm with
you that there's no chance we're
doing that.

DESI

We are doing that.

They walk through a door and onto--

103C **INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS**

103C

--where a piece of the set is being worked on by a couple of
of stagehands, lights are being re-focused and a camera is
being built.

Continued: 103C

JESS

You know Phillip Morris won't let us and even if they did--

DESI

What.

JESS

We don't want to see this girl pregnant. We don't want to know that she's pregnant. We don't want to know *how* she got pregnant.

DESI

Do we have viewers who don't know how women get pregnant?

JESS

Yes, they're called children.

DESI

Do any of these children have younger brothers or sisters?

JESS

You know what else a lot of our viewers are? Christian.

DESI

I'm way ahead of you. I'm gonna have a priest, a minister and a rabbi review every script.

MADELYN

I'm gonna be re-written by a priest, a minister and a rabbi?

BOB

There's a joke in there somewhere.

MADELYN

Good, because after being re-written by a priest, a minister and a rabbi there aren't gonna be many left in the script.

DESI

Good one.

JESS

Des--

Continued: 103C

DESI
Enough. I sent a telegram Tuesday
to Alfred Lyons.

JESS
You did.

DESI
I've put the decision in his hands.

JESS
Okay. Okay good. Okay.

DESI
You're that sure he's gonna say no.

JESS
I am.

DESI
That it?

JESS
Yeah.

But everyone stands there awkwardly for a moment...

JESS (CONT'D)
Oh, Bob, tell Desi that thing you
were saying before.

BOB's now on the spot. He doesn't want to do this.

BOB
(pause)
Me?

JESS
Yeah.

BOB
Really?

DESI
Guys?

JESS
It was interesting. Bob was saying
that you're really the title
character of the show. Because
you're the "I" in *I Love Lucy*.

Continued: 103C

DESI
(pause)
Hm.

JESS
So strictly speaking, you have top
billing.

DESI
(pause)
I'm the "I" in *I Love Lucy*.

JESS
Yeah.

DESI
I never thought of it that way.

JESS
You like that?

DESI
I *like* that.

JESS
Alright.

DESI
Jess?

JESS
Yeah.

DESI
(confidentially)
Patronize me again and I'll stick
my hand down your throat and pull
your fuckin' lungs out.

JESS
(pause)
Look--

MISS ROSEN, Desi's secretary, comes in with a telegram.

MISS ROSEN
Excuse me.

JESS
What is it?

MISS ROSEN
It's a telegram for Mr. Arnaz. It's
from Mr. Lyons and Philip Morris.

Continued: 103C

DESI

Thank you.

DESI opens the telegram, reads it and hands it to JESS. DESI walks away as he calls out--

DESI (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Let's go, please, we're an hour behind!

MADELYN

What does it say?

JESS

"To all Philip Morris and CBS employees: Don't fuck with the Cuban."

104 **EXT./EST. LUCY AND DESI'S HOUSE - NIGHT** 104

The house is mostly dark with only a few lights on.

105 **INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT** 105

LUCY has a basket of laundry in front of her. She's separating whites and colors while working on her lines.

LUCY

(as "LUCY")

"Well he didn't come home and he hasn't called...

("choking up")

...not that it makes any difference to me."

(as "ETHEL")

"Oh I can see that it doesn't make any difference to you. Why don't you call Ricky and tell him you're sorry."

(as "LUCY")

"What?! You think I'd allow my pride--"

LUCY checks her script--

LUCY (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Do you think I'd swallow--

(as "LUCY")

"What?! Do you think I'd swallow my pride like that?"

Continued: 105

DESI appears in the doorway, holding their sleeping TWO YEAR-OLD GIRL on his shoulders.

DESI
(quietly)
Never.

LUCY
Oh, what are you doing up?

DESI
I woke up and you weren't there. So I went to the nursery to see if everything was okay. She'd kicked her blanket off so I fixed it. That woke her up.

LUCY
Yeah.

DESI
But as you can see, I got her back to sleep and we went searching for mama. You know we pay a housekeeper to do the laundry.

LUCY
I like doing laundry and I never get a chance. Don't you love the smell?

DESI
I do. They should make a cologne that smells like soap.

LUCY
They do. It's soap.

DESI
I'm gonna put her back in her little apartment now. You should come to bed.

LUCY
I will.
(beat)
This was a nice date.

DESI smiles and nods...

DESI
Come back to bed soon.

DESI exits.

Continued: 105

LUCY resumes sorting the laundry and running lines...

LUCY

"Do you think I'd call him and go crawling back?"

(again)

"What?! Do you think I'd swallow my pride?! Do you think I'd call him and go crawling--"

LUCY notices something in the laundry basket...

LUCY (CONT'D)

(mindlessly, as "LUCY")

"What? Do you think I'd swallow my pride like that?"

She's looking at a handkerchief that was in the laundry basket. We can't see what's caught her attention but something's bothering her.

106 **EXT. LUCY AND DESI'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

106

It's raining. LUCY walks out the back door, down past the pool and leans against the gate, looking back at her house. She stares.

107 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT**

107

A cigarette is lit and from the light of the flame we see LUCY sitting in the Ricardo's living room.

After a moment, the heavy elephant door opens and headlights from a car stream into the soundstage. We can see from the headlights that it's still raining. The headlights are turned off and we hear a car door open and then close.

FRAWLEY

(calling)

Lucy?!

LUCY

Over here.

FRAWLEY

(to the SECURITY GUARD)

Thanks, Bobby.

SECURITY GUARD (BOBBY)

Everything alright in there?

Continued: 107

FRAWLEY
We're fine, thanks.

The SECURITY GUARD takes off as FRAWLEY makes his way to the set.

FRAWLEY (CONT'D)
What the hell?

LUCY
Thanks for coming down.

FRAWLEY
It's two in the morning.

LUCY
Sorry about that.

FRAWLEY
Kid, what's goin' on?

LUCY
I'm gonna re-stage the dinner scene.

FRAWLEY
Let's go to my dressing room and call Desi.

LUCY
No, Desi's home with the baby, we can do this.

FRAWLEY
Does he know you're here?

LUCY
He's sleeping.

FRAWLEY
Let me take you home.

Another pair of headlights pull up to the open elephant door.

FRAWLEY (CONT'D)
Is that him?

LUCY
That's Viv.

FRAWLEY
You called her too?

Continued: 107

LUCY

I'm re-staging the dinner scene.
This isn't for beginners, you know,
this isn't school.

FRAWLEY

I don't hire the directors.

LUCY

I know, I'm just sayin'.

VIVIAN

What's happening here?

LUCY

Thanks for coming, Viv.

VIVIAN

Is everything alright?

FRAWLEY

The three of us are on an empty
soundstage at two in the morning,
she's drunk, I'm not, so, yeah,
everything's good, why do you ask?

VIVIAN

Your call just said to come to the
stage, that it was an emergency. So
I thought--

LUCY

We need to re-block the dinner
scene, it's not gonna take long.

VIVIAN

What?

FRAWLEY

You heard her right.

LUCY

It won't take long, we're just
gonna make an adjustment.

LUCY pulls the drop cloth off the dining table.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Two people who are fighting have to
share a seat at a dinner table.

LUCY grabs the downstage piano bench--

Continued: 107

LUCY (CONT'D)

First thing, why don't we take this
and move it upstage so the camera
can see you.

VIVIAN

Are we really doing this?

FRAWLEY

As a matter of fact, putting the
chair upstage makes sense.

LUCY

Sit please.

VIVIAN

Which one of us?

LUCY

Both of you. In the chair.

VIVIAN and FRAWLEY each take half the piano bench.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Now it can't just be a mish-mash of
pushing, it can't just be a scrum,
each move has to be articulate. So
Ethel elbows Fred.

(beat)

Elbow him.

QUICK CUT TO:

108 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE)** 108

"ETHEL" elbows "FRED" as the AUDIENCE LAUGHS.

CUT BACK TO:

109 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE/I LOVE LUCY SET - SAME TIME** 109

LUCY

Fred elbows Ethel a little harder.

QUICK CUT TO:

110 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE)** 110

"FRED" elbows "ETHEL" back.

Continued: 110

VIVIAN

Ow.

CUT BACK TO:

111 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE/I LOVE LUCY SET - SAME TIME** 111

LUCY

Ethel elbows Fred harder--

She does--

FRAWLEY

Hey--

LUCY

Then Fred--

He does--

LUCY (CONT'D)

Now hit each other at the same time
and fall off the piano bench.

QUICK CUT TO:

112 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK AND WHITE)** 112"FRED" AND "ETHEL" elbow each other and fall to the floor as
the AUDIENCE HOWLS WITH LAUGHTER.

CUT BACK TO:

113 **INT. SOUNDSTAGE/I LOVE LUCY SET - SAME TIME** 113

LUCY

And that's that. Let's run it a
couple of times at speed.

VIVIAN

Did something happen?

LUCY

I'm sorry?

VIVIAN

At home. Did something just happen?

LUCY

No. I was--no. I was doing some
laundry and--no.

(MORE)

Continued: 113

LUCY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I just wanted to fix this beat. I couldn't sleep. It's like when you're not sure if you left the oven unlocked. Door unlocked. Nothing, I wanted to fix this beat. Let's do it again.

FRAWLEY and VIVIAN stand there quietly...

LUCY (CONT'D)

(pause)

You know I did this show so Desi and I could be together? I had no idea it was gonna be a hit. I just thought...well, the construction department's gonna build us a little apartment and that's where we'll live most of the time. You know? And it worked out. This is where--

LUCY draws the set in the air with her finger...

LUCY (CONT'D)

It's like a story you'd read a little girl. A witch puts a curse on a woman. She'll be adored by the man she loves, but only as long as she stays on this patch of ground.

(beat)

It's still a lot more than most people get. Let's run it at speed.

FRAWLEY

I'm gonna drive you home.

LUCY

I'm the biggest asset in the portfolio of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The biggest asset in the portfolio of Philip Morris Tobacco, Westinghouse...I get paid a fortune to do exactly what I love doing, I work side by side with my husband who's genuinely impressed by me, and all I have to do to keep it is kill every week for thirty-six weeks in a row. And then do it again the next year. Kill. So let's do it again.

Continued: 117

ANNOUNCER

Yes, it's the gay family series,
starring Lucille Ball, with Richard
Denning, transcribed and brought to
you by the Jell-O family of
desserts.

SINGERS

J-E-L-L-Ooooh! The big red letters
stand for the Jell-O family. Oh,
the big red letters stand for the
Jell-o family. That's Jell-O!

WOMAN

Yum, yum, yum.

SINGERS

Jell-O puddings!

MAN

Yum, yum, yum.

ANNOUNCER

And now, Lucille Ball with Richard
Denning as Liz and George Cooper--
two people who live together and
like it. As we look in on the
Coopers, it's a beautiful spring
day and Liz is just going to the
kitchen to talk to Katy, the maid.

LUCY

(as "LIZ")

Oh Katy?

KATY

Yes, Mrs. Cooper?

LUCY

(as "LIZ")

Katy, I've got some good news for
you.

KATY

Uh-oh.

LUCY

(as "LIZ")

"Uh-oh". What do you mean, "Uh-oh."
I say I've got good news and you
say, "Uh-oh"?

THE AUDIENCE LAUGHS--

Continued: 117

KATY

Everytime you say you've got good news it's usually good for you and bad for me.

LUCY

(as "LIZ")

Oooooh well...maybe that's a little true.

ANOTHER LAUGH, and we

CUT TO:

118

INT. LUCY'S RADIO DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

118

LUCY'S changing into street clothes. There's a knock on the door.

LUCY

Come on in.

JESS sticks his head in the door--

LUCY (CONT'D)

That was a good show.

JESS

I thought so too.

LUCY

Pass it on to Maddie and Bob, would you? Great job this week.

JESS

I've got two gentlemen out here who'd like to see you and you're gonna want to hear what they have to say.

LUCY

(beat)

Did it need to sound ominous, can't they just come in?

JESS walks in with two executives--LEVY and HART.

LEVY

Lucille Ball.

LUCY

Yes sir.

Continued: 118

LEVY

David Levy, head of comedy
development, CBS.

HART

David Hart, head of current
programming, CBS.

LUCY

Uhh, well, David...and David, I've
been working here at CBS for a year
and I've never heard of either of
you.

LEVY

CBS Television.

LUCY

(beat)
CBS does television?

The two executives look at each other...

HART

Yeah. Edward R. Murrow--

LUCY

I'm kidding.

HART

Understood.

LEVY

That was funny.

LUCY

Thank you.

JESS

These men have an interesting idea.

LUCY

Would you like to sit?

HART

Thank you.

LEVY

Lucy, we've been here to the show a
few times now, and we noticed--
well, David noticed--

HART

You noticed too.

Continued: 118

LEVY

We both noticed. We noticed that when you do the show, you use gestures and expressions.

LUCY

(pause)

You mean the acting?

LEVY

Yeah.

LUCY

My face, my body and my voice, that's all I get to work with.

HART

It's just unusual because it's radio.

LUCY

I watched Jack Benny. He plays it for the studio audience and it works pretty well for him.

LEVY

It does, and it works pretty well for you too. Very well. And we think it's a shame that no one gets to see it.

LUCY

Invent a way to see what's on the radio.

HART

We did, it's television.

LUCY

Are you here to sell me one?

JESS

Lucy--they want to put *My Favorite Husband* on TV.

119

INT. CBS COMMISSARY - DAY

119

LUCY's having lunch with LEVY, HART and JESS, along with HOWARD and ROGER, the two executives we met earlier.

*

LUCY

I'm very interested.

Continued: 119

ROGER
That's great.

LEVY
Is it too early to raise a glass? *

HOWARD
To *My Favorite Husband*.

LUCY
Yes! Except I don't want to do *My Favorite Husband*. *

HOWARD
(pause)
I'm confused. *

JESS
Yeah, me too.

LUCY
Don't panic. It's simple. I'm interested in your idea of doing *My Favorite Husband* on television, I just want it to be a different show.

JESS
What show do you want it to be?

LUCY
One where Desi plays my husband.

120 INT. CBS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

120

LUCY, JESS and the executives from lunch have now been joined by more executives, including MACY, an even bigger wig than the big-wigs she's been meeting with. They're all sitting around a very long table with LUCY at one end and MACY on the other.

MACY
I understand there's a casting issue.

LUCY
(pause)
Was that to me?

MACY
Yes.

Continued: 120

LUCY

I wasn't sure, you're quite a ways away.

HART

Our casting department has come up with a list of very exciting names we think you'll like. Could you pass this down to Lucy.

LEVY

These are all very funny men.

HART

I think we have mimeos for everyone.

The casting list starts getting handed out--

LEVY

It's one of the best lists I've seen in a while.

LUCY

Number 12 died last week.

HART

That's my fault.

LUCY

There's no issue.

HOWARD

What was that?

LUCY

(louder)

I was answering Mr. Macy. There's no casting issue. I am ready and eager to do a half-hour domestic comedy for CBS if the role of my husband--let's call him Shmezy--is played by Desi.

HOWARD

Can I remark on this?

*
*

ROGER

Please.

HOWARD

On *My Favorite Husband*, your husband is the 5th Vice President of a bank.

*

Continued: 120

LUCY

Yes.

HOWARD

Can I ask you, in all candor, do you see Desi as the 5th Vice President of a bank?

*

LUCY

I can't see him being the 5th Vice President of anything. I can see him owning the bank.

ROGER

You see the problem?

LUCY

I see what you think is the problem.

MACY

Lucy.

LUCY

Yes.

MACY

I don't ordinarily come to meetings like this. I don't pay attention to casting issues. This meeting is several floors below my general interest. I'm here to deliver a hard truth. We can't have an all-American girl married to a man who isn't American.

LUCY

He is American. He was a sergeant in the U.S. Army and he served in the war.

MACY

You know exactly what I mean, Lucy, he's Spanish.

LUCY

Still no. He's never been to Spain in his life. He *speaks* Spanish. He was born in Cuba. His father was the Mayor of Santiago, Cuba's second largest city.

MACY

You know exactly--

Continued: 120

LUCY

--what you mean, yes I do. Look, I'm not here trying to get a job for my nephew. Desi Arnaz is a phenomenally talented man. Not just a world-class musician but a very good actor who would be a movie star if there was such a thing as a Cuban movie star. Moreover we work very well together. I go out and meet him when he's touring and he brings me up for some sketches and it works. Jess?

JESS

It works.

LUCY

Any cultural differences will make for good comedy, am I right Jess?

JESS

You're not wrong.

LUCY

Now I don't want to have another meeting like this because I don't know how many more people will fit around a table. My position's not going to change. You want me on television and there's only one television show I'm willing to do, so what's it gonna be?

There's silence around the table for a moment, and then--

The *I LOVE LUCY* THEME MUSIC crashes in.

TITLE:

Friday

Show Night

121

INT. I LOVE LUCY SET - NIGHT

121

A live orchestra is playing the theme music. The bleachers are filled with an excited audience and there's pre-show activity from the crew.

Continued: 121

We see eight empty seats in the back row with reserved signs being taped on them.

122

INT. LUCY'S DRESSING ROOM - SAME TIME

122

LUCY, who's hair and make-up are now done up as "Lucy", is finishing putting her costume on with the help of a dresser. P.A. SCOTT pops his head in--

SCOTT

We think it's about 15 minutes.

LUCY

We think?

SCOTT

We're holding for something, I'm not sure what.

LUCY

Okay, thanks.

P.A. SCOTT pops back out.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Holding?

JESS taps on the open door.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Yeah, come in.

(to the DRESSER)

Can I have a second?

DRESSER

Sure.

The DRESSER exits.

JESS

I think I know why you want to see me.

LUCY

Do you?

JESS

Hear me out.

LUCY

I asked you a favor, Jess. I asked you to give him an E.P. credit.

(MORE)

Continued: 122

LUCY (CONT'D)

Instead, you tried to convince him
he was the title character or some--

JESS

Listen--

LUCY

--bullshit. What the hell was that?

JESS

I'm sorry if he was insulted. I
mean, I know he's insulted so I'm
sorry.

LUCY

He wasn't insulted, he was laughing
about it. But yeah, he's insulted.
No, he's offended, I'm insulted. I
asked you to do a small favor--

JESS

Yeah.

LUCY

--and it's not like you don't owe
me a couple.

JESS takes a deep breath before--

JESS

It wasn't a small favor and I don't
know what you think I owe you.

LUCY

Really?

JESS

It wasn't a small favor, you asked
me to save your marriage.

LUCY

No, I--

JESS

And it's not the first time you've
asked me to do that, is it?

LUCY

I asked you to give him an E.P.
credit, that's all.

JESS

No problem. Can my wife play Lucy
once in a while?

Continued: 122

LUCY

If your wife played Lucy once in a while, I'd think it would be appropriate that she be so credited. And what do you mean it's not the first time I asked you to save--

JESS

"Jess, Jessie, we'll have Desi play my husband. It'll save my marriage."

LUCY

Was that supposed to be me?

JESS

Yes.

LUCY

Don't do voices.

JESS

You're insulted? *Desi's* offended? You asked me to give away my job title like it was a parking spot.

LUCY

You're right, I'm sorry.

JESS

Jesus Christ, Lucy, sometimes I think, wait, what?

LUCY

You're right. And I'm sorry. I was dead wrong.

JESS

(pause)
I wasn't expecting that.

LUCY

I know.

JESS

Have you ever said that to me before?

LUCY

I doubt it. But I've thought it if that means anything.

Continued: 122

JESS

It does.

LUCY

It's just been a compound fracture
of a week.

JESS

You want to hear something stupid?
I think I've been mad at you this
week because you're not Jewish. If
it had been me, I'd have been fired
two minutes after the words came
out of Winchell's mouth.

(beat)

I told you it was stupid.

LUCY takes that in...and then decides to make a joke...

LUCY

And you didn't disappoint.

JESS smiles--

JESS

Good show tonight.

LUCY

Good show.

(then)

Hey, why are we holding?

JESS

I'm not sure.

LUCY

We're holding, someone must know
why.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Come in.

P.A. SCOTT sticks his head in--

SCOTT

Desi's asking to see you in his
office.

LUCY

You mean his dressing room?

Continued: 122

SCOTT

No, he's in his office with some
CBS executives and some men from
Philip-Morris.

SCOTT exits...

JESS

Why's he in his office at show
time?

LUCY

(pause)
Because the evening editions just
came out.

LUCY looks at JESS...They both know this can only mean
trouble.

JESS

(pause)
Listen to me. Memorize this. "It's
none of your fuckin' business."
(beat)
There. Let that be the best thing I
ever wrote.

LUCY smiles...nods...then says--

LUCY

(pause)
Nah. It's still "vitameatavegamin."

LUCY heads out and JESS follows her.

123

INT. DESI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

123

DESI stands behind his desk and the men are all silent. LUCY
and JESS come in.

DESI

The evening edition.

DESI shows LUCY the front page of the *Los Angeles Herald-
Express*. There's a four-inch headline in red ink: LUCILLE
BALL A RED.

LUCY let's it sink in and then has an involuntary sharp
intake of breath. DESI takes her hand--

DESI (CONT'D)

It's alright.

Continued: 123

LUCY

It's in four-inch type.

DESI

I'm gonna fix this.

LUCY

That's Hindenburg type.

DESI

I've already made the calls.

LUCY

And they used red ink.

DESI

Yeah.

Continued: 123

LUCY

I didn't even know newspapers had red ink.

DESI

I guess they do.

LUCY

I was cleared.

DESI

Somehow the city editor, a woman named Agnes Underwood, has a photostatic copy of the affidavit showing you registered in 1936 as a voter intending to affiliate with the Communist Party.

LUCY

But I was cleared. After the testimony they stamped "canceled" on the card, I saw the card.

DESI

Other papers are showing the canceled card and they're running a caption that says, "Note the cancellation at left", but the *Herald-Express* took the word "canceled" out of the document altogether.

LUCY

Other papers?

DESI

Yes, but I've made calls and we're taking care of this.

(calling)

Miss Rosen!

LUCY

Calls to who?

DESI

Every reporter within 20 minutes of this soundstage. That's why we're holding.

LUCY

You're saying the reporters are coming here?

MISS ROSEN steps in and waits for instructions.

Continued: 123

DESI

We'll seat them in the back of the bleachers.

LUCY

You think we're still filming a show?

(to the EXECUTIVES)

Why are none of you talking?

ROGER

It's Desi's idea.

DESI

I'm gonna warm up the audience the way I always do, except instead of *Cuban Pete* and the joke about the turtle, I'm going to tell them what happened. I'm going to explain that you checked the wrong box, I'm going to show them the cancelled document, and then I'm going to bring you out so the press sees them give you a round of applause.

LUCY

Fellas, could we have the room for just a moment?

Everyone steps out but LUCY and DESI. They're silent for a moment before...

LUCY (CONT'D)

You're not telling these people I checked the wrong box.

DESI

This is a critical moment.

LUCY

If I'm gonna die--

DESI

You're not.

LUCY

I'd rather die standing up.

DESI

I don't have any idea what that--

LUCY

I'm not an idiot, I didn't check the wrong--

Continued: 123

DESI

You saw the headline.

LUCY

You can see that headline from
outer space.

DESI

Then please--

LUCY

Grandpa Fred raised me from age
eleven. He cared about the little
guy, he cared about workers'
rights. It was a tribute to him and
to say I checked the wrong--

DESI

Grandpa Fred, Grandpa Fred, *Grandpa
Fred was wrong, Lucy!* 'Cause he
didn't tell you the part where they
throw your father in prison for the
crime of being the mayor of a city.
I was chased to this country!
Believe me, you checked the wrong
box.

LUCY takes a long moment...

LUCY

And what if they don't applaud?

DESI

They will. And the press will write
that they did.

LUCY

You're going to tell them that I
was accused of--sixteen years ago--

DESI

They're going to read it in the
morning anyway. We have a sample
population of two-hundred people on
our stage.

(calling out)

Miss Rosen!

LUCY

If they boo me--

Continued: 123

DESI

If they boo you we're done here
tonight.

MISS ROSEN comes back in--

DESI's gotten a small black address book out of his desk and opened to a page. He shows it to his secretary and points to a name--

DESI (CONT'D)

Call this man. Tell them it's for
me, they'll find him, he's
expecting my call. Tell me when you
have him.

MISS ROSEN takes the phone book and walks out.

124

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND THE SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

124

LUCY is leaning against a wall in a private spot, smoking a cigarette. We can see the lit "Desilu" sign in the distance. She takes a deep breath to settle herself.

After a moment, a heavy steel door opens. VIVIAN looks in one direction and then the other and sees LUCY. She steps out--

VIVIAN

Someone said they spotted you going
out here.

LUCY

This was our pre-show spot, you and
me. All last season, you remember?

VIVIAN

Yeah. We should do that again, I
liked that tradition.

LUCY nods...

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I was just told. Jesus, Lulu. Four-
inch type?

LUCY

Red ink.

VIVIAN

How did they get it wrong?

Continued: 124

LUCY
Well...I mean...they didn't.

VIVIAN
Grandpa Fred?

LUCY nods...

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
You're the most beloved woman in
America. You're not gonna get
blacklisted.

LUCY
Aww, Viv. You know how many brands
Philip Morris owns? All it takes is
someone calling for a boycott of
Marlboros.

VIVIAN
(pause)
I shouldn't have piled on this
week. It just--

VIVIAN shakes her head and waves it off...

LUCY
What?

VIVIAN
None of that matters right now.

LUCY
It may be the last time we're out
here. Say it.

VIVIAN
Lucy Ricardo's married to a man six
years younger than she is and
Ethel's married to her grandfather.
And it's understood, as the
underlying premise for a running
joke, that I'm not pretty enough
for him. It got to me and at the
world's worst time.

LUCY nods her head, she understands...

LUCY
(pause)
That was a knockout dress.

The heavy steel door opens and FRAWLEY steps out with
MADELYN...

Continued: 124

FRAWLEY

Oh. You two wanna be alone?

VIVIAN/LUCY

Yes./No.

MADELYN hurries over to LUCY and speaks to her privately.

MADELYN

(quietly)

You're my hero.

LUCY

(pause)

I care about what works, Maddie. I care about what's funny. I don't see myself caring about a woman's perspective from a new generation. I care about you.

After a moment...

FRAWLEY

I'd love for someone to bring me breakfast.

MADELYN

That's not what we were talking about.

LUCY

Doesn't a P.A. bring you breakfast every day?

FRAWLEY

Yes.

LUCY

Okay.

FRAWLEY

Never French toast.

LUCY

We'll look into that.

FRAWLEY

I came out to try to distract you with nonsense but I assume these two beat me to it.

LUCY

Viv doesn't like the jokes about Ethel being unappealing.

Continued: 124

FRAWLEY

Yeah, there's no one within the sound of her voice who doesn't know that.

VIVIAN

I said what I felt.

FRAWLEY

You've been saying what you felt since the first day of work, it's not like you've finally given voice to your feelings. You know what, sweet ladies? Something dies inside a man--it just dies--the first time he hears a girl call him old. So on the subject of Jess, Bob and Madelyn writing "Ethel" jokes, I'm indifferent.

LUCY

The two of you...

(beat)

...are good actors. It's a privilege doing this show with you.

There's a long silence before...

FRAWLEY

Now you're scaring the shit outa me.

VIVIAN

(over)

I was just gonna say.

LUCY

Desi's gonna tell the audience. He's invited press. He's betting the audience will accept the truth, give their approval and the press will write about it.

(beat)

I'd take the other side of that bet.

The steel door opens and P.A. SCOTT sticks his head out--

SCOTT

Excuse me. Sorry. Mr. Arnaz is ready to do the warm-up. They told me you wanted to know.

Continued: 124

LUCY
Thank you.

Continued: 124

VIVIAN

(pause)

Alright, I'll see you out there.
Good show.

FRAWLEY

Good show.

MADELYN

Good show.

VIVIAN and MADELYN go inside. LUCY starts to head in but FRAWLEY puts a hand out to stop her...

FRAWLEY

(pause)

The dinner scene is inarguably
better.

LUCY smiles...then heads inside.

125

INT. SOUNDSTAGE/I LOVE LUCY SET - NIGHT

125

The orchestra's finishing a number as we see an USHER seating a few members of the press in the last row where other members of the press are sitting.

DESI watches the press being seated from backstage.

The audience APPLAUDS at the end of the number...

ANNOUNCER

Now ladies and gentlemen, give a warm welcome to one of the stars of *I Love Lucy*. You know him as Ricky Ricardo--here's Desi Arnaz!

A healthy round of applause greets DESI as he walks onto the set carrying a folded newspaper.

DESI

Thank you, thank you very much.

(pause)

Usually, right now, I'd be doing the final audience warm-up. I'd tell you an old joke about a turtle. I'd point out our groundbreaking camera system that allows the studio audience to watch the show unobstructed and I'd introduce you to the rest of the cast.

Continued: 125

We see LUCY watching from an off-stage vantage point. At various times we'll see FRAWLEY or VIVIAN, JESS, MADELYN, BOB, MARY PAT, the network guys or A P.A. watching from various places around the stage.

DESI (CONT'D)

I'm not doing that tonight and here's why. Last week, my wife, Lucille Ball, was asked to testify in front of a closed session of the House Un-American Activities Committee.

There's a murmur in the audience...

DESI (CONT'D)

Yeah, the congressmen who investigate Communism. After hours of testimony, the committee concluded, unambiguously, that Lucy was and is in no way involved with the Communist Party. So everything's swell, right? No. Because this is the evening edition headline in the *Herald-Express*.

DESI opens the paper and shows them the headline. The AUDIENCE GASPS...

DESI (CONT'D)

So I made some phone calls. I called the editor of the *Herald-Express*. I called the chairman of the committee. I called all the members of the committee. And I made one more call to someone and I believe he's still on the line.

DESI is handed a phone by MISS ROSEN. He'll speak into the phone and then hold the receiver up to the microphone so the audience can hear.

DESI (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Are you still with me, sir?

MAN (V.O.)

Yes.

Continued: 125

DESI

(into the phone)

I'm now standing in front of a
studio audience in Hollywood,
California, and we're joined by a
number of members of the press.

Continued: 125

MAN (V.O.)
That's fine.

DESI
(into the phone)
We want to know, sir, does the FBI have any case against Lucy? Does the FBI have any evidence of wrongdoing? Does the FBI have any reason to believe that Lucille Ball is a Communist?

MAN (V.O.)
No. Absolutely nothing. She is one-hundred percent clear.

DESI
(into phone)
Thank you, sir. One more question. Would you tell us your name please?

MAN (V.O.)
This is J. Edgar Hoover.

An impressed reaction from the AUDIENCE...

DESI
Thank you, sir, enjoy your evening.
(he hangs up)
Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome my wife and the star of *I Love Lucy*, Lucille Ball.

The audience breaks into THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE and CHEERING. Backstage, LUCY breathes a sigh of relief, takes a moment, and walks onto the set.

The audience gives her a STANDING OVATION.

DESI looks up to the last row where he sees the reporters feverishly writing all this down. He catches the eye of one reporter who's taking it all in but not writing it down and he pantomimes, "Write it the hell down."

Backstage, people are shaking hands.

LUCY gives a final wave to the audience and walks off.

DESI shouts over the SUSTAINED APPLAUSE

DESI (CONT'D)
(shouting)
So enjoy the show.

Continued: 125

The orchestra crashes into a new number as DESI heads offstage a moment later and takes us--

126

INT. BEHIND THE SET - CONTINUOUS

126

--where he takes LUCY in his arms. They have to speak up to be heard over the orchestra--

DESI
It's all over.

LUCY
Thank you.

DESI
It's over now.

LUCY
Thank you.

DESI
They love you.

LUCY
I love you.

DESI
No one's gonna mess with you. Ever.

LUCY
I thought they were gonna boo.

DESI
You wanna do a show?

LUCY
(louder)
Have you been cheating on me?

DESI
(pause)
What?

LUCY
Have you been cheating on me?

DESI
Is this a bit?

LUCY
No.

Continued: 126

DESI

(pause)

No, I haven't been.

LUCY

When you stay out all night you're on the boat playing cards?

DESI

Yes.

LUCY

You haven't been with anyone else?

DESI

What's going on with you?

LUCY

Don't gaslight me.

DESI

Where did this come from? They just cheered for you.

LUCY

They got it right, didn't they?

DESI

Lucy--

LUCY

They only got the picture wrong. Did they get it right? Did they get it exactly right?

DESI

Jesus Christ, I just proved that the *Herald-Express* got it wrong, you think *Confidential Magazine*--we're about to do a show.

LUCY

Just tell me.

DESI

Tell me why you think--other than this garbage--tell me why you think I've--

LUCY takes out a white handkerchief that has a lipstick smudge on it.

DESI takes a long moment...

Continued: 126

DESI (CONT'D)

(pause)

That's your lipstick. Remember? At the beginning of the week you kissed me, then took my handkerchief and wiped the lipstick off and put it back in my pocket. And you said you'd never done that before.

LUCY

I hadn't.

DESI

Then what the hell are we talking about?

LUCY takes out another handkerchief that also has a lipstick smudge...

LUCY

This is my lipstick.

There's a long silence while DESI makes up his mind...

DESI

(pause)

They were just call girls. They're hookers. It doesn't mean anything.

LUCY nods...

DESI (CONT'D)

Look--

LUCY

Let's do the show. Yeah? We'll just forget this for a half-hour. Yeah?

(beat)

Let's do the show.

LUCY turns to a stagehand with a walkie-talkie--

LUCY (CONT'D)

Jim, let's go. It's not gonna get better than this.

We see and/or hear the show revving up--"Quiet Please!" "Picture's Up!" "Roll Sound!" "Camera's Rolling!" "Sound speed!" The three camera's slate.

DONALD

And...action.

Continued: 127

127 **EXT. HOTEL POOL - DAY**

127

 OLDER MADELYN

It ended up being a good show that night. We did both versions of the opening but it was the original version that made it on the air. The one with the names. You must've gotten a hold of the B-negative 'cause your original question--

127A **INT. SOUNDSTAGE BLEACHERS - DAY**

127A

 OLDER JESS

For the record, I won my bet with Desi. CBS wouldn't let us use the word "pregnant". But more people watched the birth of Little Ricky than had ever watched a television program before. Your original question--

Continued: 142

142 **EXT. HOTEL POOL - DAY** 142

 OLDER MADELYN
 (remembering)
 It was Desi's line. It was the new
 bit Lucy put in but that version
 never made it into the show.
 (trying to remember)
 What was his line?

143 **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET - NIGHT** 143

DESI enters. He stands there, unnoticed by Lucy...then--

 DESI
 Lucy, I'm home!

And LUCY hears that, smiles and revels in it for a quick moment and laughs a little...there's an awkward silence.

 LUCY
 Sorry about that, I got lost for a
 second.

143A **EXT. HOTEL POOL - DAY** 143A

 OLDER MADELYN
 We never went back to do another
 take of the alternate opening. Lucy
 just wanted to move on.

143B **INT. I LOVE LUCY SET/LIVING ROOM** 143B

As the show re-starts, with the audience loving every moment, we start to slowly PULL BACK and PULL UP.

The show continues semi-MOS as we pull back further and higher, so that what we're looking at is obviously a set. A small set. Three flats and no ceiling. Stagehands are smoking and talking to each other backstage with LUCY commanding her small, fictional world.

We're up above the light grid now--

144 **OMITTED** 144

Continued: 143B

DISSOLVE TO:

145

TITLE:

145

The morning after Lucy and Desi shot their final show together, Lucy filed for divorce.

Continued: 145

The show plays for a moment longer before we

SNAP TO BLACK