

ELMER GANTRY

**Screenplay
by
Richard Brooks**

**Based on the Novel
by
Sinclair Lewis**

July 20, 1959

FADE IN:

SINCLAIR LEWIS'S BOOK NIGHT

1

Chapter One, First paragraph of ELMER GANTRY. A heavy red crayon pencil underlines opening two sentences: -

ELMER GANTRY was drunk. He was
eloquently, lovingly drunk.
Gantry's voice heard laughing o.s. uproariously.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SPEAKEASY NIGHT

2

Booths, bar, checkered tablecloths, no floor show, no dancing. Just drinking folks. Music(ballad of the day -- middle 1920's) comes from phonograph of period. Seven men crammed in a booth. Christmas decorations in evidence. An infectious laugh comes from Elmer Gantry.

Gantry is more than six feet tall, broad shoulders, slim hips, big-handed, handsome face, abundant hair. He is a healthy animal -- once an athlete and now trying to keep in good shape. He has the appetites of an animal. He has an animal's quick, unpredictable reactions. He has the graceful gait of a cheetah. His voice is a rich organ, with many levels, shadings and peaks. His clothes are like his voice -- too loud and attract too much attention.

Gantry's laugh, which carries over from the fade-in, is a drunken laugh of merriment. The other six men in the booth with him are also tight. They hang avidly onto each word.

GANTRY

So, anyway, this guy comes home early
an' finds his wife with his best
friend --

(laughing throughout)

--an' the husban' says:- "Harry, how
could yuh do this t' me?" An' the
wife -- she says:- "Why should you

GANTRY (cont'd)
complain? Harry didn't do it to
you!"

2
cont'd

A burst of laughter from jovial drinkers. Gantry already has started for bar and lunch counter. Two Mission Ladies with tambourines enter speakeasy, make rounds. Gantry piles cold cuts and peeled hard-boiled eggs on a plate. Meanwhile:-

GANTRY (to Bartender)
Hey, Mac -- 'nother round o' the same.
(to Topsy Blonde)
What're you drinkin', baby?

BLONDE
Whatever you're buying, kiddo.

SALESMEN IN BOOTH

2-A

Still laughing over Gantry's joke.

AD LOCUST (to Pals)
What I tell you? Is he a card --
or ain't he?

1st PAL
Class. Real class.

2nd PAL
With his gift of gab --

Gantry arrives at booth with plate of food.

3rd PAL (to Gantry)
Hey, Pal, you oughta quit that punk
salesman's job of yours --

1st PAL
Yeh, why'nt you hook up with a live
wire sales outfit like ours?

AD LOCUST
'S no use, boys -- whenever I'm in
town I ask him to go on the road for
my company --
(to Gantry)
Right, Pal?

2-A
cont'd

GENTRY (genially)

Sure, sure. Now --

(starts another joke
to their delight)

There's these two dames in a bar, see?
An' one of 'em says:- "If I don't get
to bed pretty soon -- I'm goin' home
an' go to sleep."

Raucus laughter from all of them. During laughter the two
Mission Ladies arrive at booth. One of them thrusts the
tambourine into the "happy" circle --

MISSION GIRL

Could you please help make it a Merry
Christmas for a poor lonely --

BARTENDER (comes quickly)

Here y'are, lady --

He puts coin in tambourine and hustles them both toward
exit. But their somber appearance already has dampened
the gaiety of the Pals.

1st PAL

They oughta be kept out of a place
like this --

2nd PAL

Yeh. Religion don't belong in any
speakeasy.

GENTRY

Says who????

(hurries after Ladies)

'Scuse me, Sister.

He takes the tambourine from hand of girl, and, in an
effort to keep the party going -- raps tambourine sharply,
addresses the few startled patrons.

GENTRY

Don't tell me you're gonna let these two
angels o' mercy go 'way empty-handed on
Christmas Eve! How 'bout it, neighbors?
This joint is the home of fine bourbon,
slow dice, an' fast women. An' we need
plenty of religion to keep 'em all in
line!!!

(no contributions yet)

2-A
cont'd

GANTRY (cont'd)

Come on, come on, get it up --.
Whatsa matta??? No action????

(suddenly bellows at ceiling)

Hey -- Hey, LORD -- can yuh hear me up
there, Jesus? You didn't think we
were gonna forget YOUR birthday, did
yuh, Boy???

(takes out two \$10 bills --
all he has -- and puts them
into tambourine)

Here Yuh are, Jesus. An' if I had any
more You'd be welcome to it.

(takes a dollar from patron's
change on bar, puts it in
tambourine)

Thank yuh, Brother.

(into face of nervous patron)

You! You think religion is only for
suckers, easy marks, an' mollycoddles???

YOU THINK JESUS CHRIST WAS SOME KINDA
SISSY? No, sir!!!

(as nervous patron looks in
wallet)

The bible says never let your left
hand know what your right hand's doin'.

(takes a bill out of man's
wallet)

AD LOCUST (yells)

You tell 'em, Pal.

GANTRY (confronts

bleary man and woman)

What's your beef, brother?

MAN

Me?

GANTRY

You ashamed o' bein' a Christian???

MAN

Me?

GANTRY

2-A
cont'd

Then let me tell you that Jesus
would never be ashamed to walk
into this speakeasy or any other
joint to spread the gospel.
Jesus had guts! He wasn't afraid
of the whole Roman Army!

During this the man has started to dribble some change
into the tambourine, but Gantry's oratory makes him release
all the change. And now Gantry turns on the bartender
without interruption:-

GANTRY (points at photo
of Red Grange behind bar)
You think Red Grange is hot stuff???
Well, Jesus woulda made the best
All-American quarterback in the his'try
o' football. He was a real fighter,
the best 1'1 scrapper pound-for-pound
you ever saw --

(has rung cash register and
removed a dollar -- and now
Gantry turns to his Pals in
booth)

An' WHY??? LOVE, gentlemen! Jesus
had love in both fists.

1st PAL (drunken protest)
Hey! I don't think you oughta make
fun of religion.

2nd PAL
Yes. I don't go to church -- but I
respect folks who DO go!

3rd PAL
Yeh. My kids go to Sunday School
every Sunday.

1st PAL
You dam' right betcha.

GANTRY
Hell, I ain't makin' fun of the church.
Why, Me'n religion are just like this!
(holds two fingers close)

2-A
cont'd

GANTRY (cont'd)

An' WHY??? Because o' LOVE, gentlemen.
Love is the Mornin' an' the Evenin' Star.
It shines on the cradle o' the babe.

(to all patrons)

Hear Ye Sinners! Love is the inspiration
of poets an' philosophers. Love is the
Voice of Music. I'm talkin' about Divine
Love --

(at Topsy Blonde)

-- not Carnal love!

The Topsy Blonde has begun to cry. She lunges at Gantry.

BLONDE

That was beau'ful sermon, Parson.
(slobbery kiss on Gantry's
mouth)

Beau'ful, beau'ful. Atsa trouble with
this stinkin' world. Nobody loves
nobody!

The bartender leads her away. But during the kiss, the
Mission girl quietly took her tambourine (and money)
from Gantry's hand and left with a frightened whisper:
"Thank you, Brother."

Gantry has by now forgotten the Mission Ladies. The
blonde has awakened his appetites.

GANTRY

Hey, hey -- ain't it time to dig up a
little fe-male companionship?
(takes out black address book)
Call out your orders, men. How d'yuh
like your hot tamales??? Blonde, Brunette --

1st PAL (rises)

Not for me. I always spend Christmas
with the little woman.

As the Pals break up party and head for exit --

2nd PAL

Count me out, too. Christmas in a big
deal with my kids.

Gantry makes a desperate effort to keep them as they
put on overcoats.

GANTRY

Wait a minute, fellas -- I gotta
ketch a rattler in the mornin'
myself, but we still got the whole
night ahead of us --

2-A
cont'd

AD LOCUST

So-long, Pal --. Anytime you wanna
sell for me --

OTHER PALS (leaving)

See yuh next Christmas, Pal --
Swell preacher act you got there --
Praise the Lord, brother --
Don't lose that little back address
book, Pal --

And they are gone. Gantry's fine spirits drain away.
He turns and sits at end of bar. He reaches for the bottle
and a glass on bar. But the Bartender puts his hand on
the bottle and places the check before Gantry. Gantry
automatically reaches into his pocket -- no money left.

GANTRY (smiles softly)

Mac, boy -- I guess you'll hafta chalk
it up for a while --

(removes Bartender's
hand from bottle)

-- an' the rest of this, too.
(pours shot into glass)

BARTENDER (mutters)

Charity!

(walks away with check)

I oughta get myself a tambourine.

GANTRY (sees unhappy

Tipsy Blonde at bar)

Hey, Mac -- the lady's glass is empty.

Tipsy Blonde smiles at Gantry, moves toward him. Gantry's
spirits soar once more. The Bartender rings up "no sale"
on cash register.

GANTRY (raises glass)

Here's to women.

BLONDE
Not without men!

2-A
cont'd

Blonde shrieks with laughter. Gantry smiles, pours for her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GANTRY'S HOTEL ROOM DAY

3

Cheap room and bath. Thru drawn window-shade daylight. A woman's clothes strewn about. The electric lights are still burning. Churchbells heard in distance o.s. Camera shows a whiskey bottle, overturned, empty. Gantry's feet are bare. He lies across foot of bed, trousers on, no shirt.

Thru dissolve the phone has been ringing. It is an irregular ring, coming from hotel switchboard. Gantry awakens. He is bleary-eyed. He thinks the ring comes from alarm clock. He reaches for alarm clock and notices he holds a woman's silk stocking. This makes him look at head of bed. The lush blonde seen in the speakeasy snores there. Her face is lipstick-smeared. During this an insistent knocking on door. Gantry gets up, pulls on a shirt, slips into shoes as he half-stumbles toward door, opens it.

BELLBOY

Phone, Mr. Gantry.

GANTRY (hoarse croak)

What about it?

BELLBOY.

You put in a long distance call to Mrs. Gantry last night --

GANTRY

Oh. Yeh.

(starts for phone)

Thanks.

BELLBOY

Merry Christmas, Mr. Gantry.

GANTRY

Yeh.

BELLBOY (jingles coins
in pocket)
And a Happy New Year!

3
cont'd

Gantry has picked up phone, looks at Bellboy and finally understands the implied tip --

GANTRY
Take care of yuh next time I hit
town. Put out for some coffee, hunh?

Bellboy exits. Gantry takes phone into bathroom. Socks, underwear, washed by Gantry, hang to dry in bathroom. As he speaks on phone, Gantry buttons shirt.

GANTRY
'Lo? Mom? Mery Christmas, Mom.
(voice softens with affection)
Yeh. I just got back from church, too.
(sits on edge of bathtub)
Well, I prayed for you, too, Mom. Hey!
How'd yuh like my Christmas present?
Are yuh positive? That's funny. It
musta got held up in the holiday rush.
(listens)
I know I promised -- but I couldn't get
home -- yeh -- business. I only phoned
to say Merry Christmas. I love yuh, Ma.
Ma -- Ma -- why're yuh cryin'? Yeh --
my absolute promise -- guaranteed an'
delivered I'll be home for Easter. Bye,
Ma -- gotta ketch a train -- take care,
now --

A click on the phone. He sighs sentimentally. And now he begins to move fast. He is late. He grabs up his jacket. He starts out -- sees the girl -- hurries back -- opens her purse -- takes out her lipstick and writes on the cardboard from shirt --

I.O.U. \$10. Merry Xmas.
Elmer

He places the cardboard greeting on the pillow beside the snoring girl. He picks up his own suitcase and his huge salesman's suitcase, exits rapidly, silently.

DISSOLVE TO:

(NOTE: Pages 10 & 11 with scenes 4 thru 6 have been omitted)

INT. RAILROAD STATION DAY

7

People moving toward waiting train with suitcases. A Station Master calls "All Aboard for the Sunset Special to Des Moines, Lincoln, Indianapolis and all points East, etc." Gantry, identifiable suitcase in hand, strides briskly, jauntily toward the train. He picks up an abandoned Police Gazette from a bench.

PORTER (reaches for
Gantry's suitcase)
Porter?

GANTRY
No, thanks.
(lowers voice, taps suitcase)
Government plans -- secret.

And Gantry swiftly moves on. He steps aboard the train -- walks across to the other side -- steps off the train -- out onto tracks -- approaches freight train.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE FREIGHT TRAIN NIGHT

8

It thunders by, whistle wailing in the night.

INT. FREIGHT CAR

9

The whistle overlaps. Half a dozen tramps gathered around flame of canned heat. They whisper, glance back toward end of freight car.

Gantry sleeps. His head is on his suitcase. His feet are bare. His hand has slipped from shoes beside him. (Socks drying atop them) Beside his unshaven face is the florid Police Gazette with girl in Pink Tights on cover.

Tramp in torn shoes creeps up and steals Gantry's shoes. Gantry awakens. The tramp attacks. Gantry fights back. The other tramps gang up on him. It is a lively fight. Gantry manages to throw suitcase out of freight car. A moment later he leaps after it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS DAY

10

Gantry walks along deserted track. He is shoeless. He is bruised. He carries his suitcase. Out of his pocket protrudes the Police Gazette. He passes a billboard. The advertisement is frayed, weather-beaten, half torn.

SISTER SHARON FALCONER

CAN
SAVE
YOU

Revival Meeting Sept. 9-16.

As he passes billboard, he hears singing. He looks across the tracks toward a small church, whose walls are patched with tin. The voices sing I'M ON MY WAY. Gantry crosses tracks and approaches church.

INT. NEGRO CHURCH

11

About 40 Negro men, women and children dressed in their Sunday best. An elderly preacher leads the singing. A massive Negro plays a battered trumpet.

Gantry enters from rear of Church. He stands a moment, listening. His face softens. The hardness in his eyes melts. He smiles. He makes a strange sight, with his bruised and unshaven face, his shoeless feet. He joins in the singing -- at first moderately. 11 cont'd

The Negro Preacher falters in his singing, staring off at Gantry wonderingly. This induces others to turn and look at Gantry.

Gantry's voice now booms out with gusto. He is lost in the singing, oblivious of the covert glances from those around him. He loves the song and he loves singing it.

The congregation -- which has half-stopped singing -- now picks it up and they warmly, spiritedly raise their voices again. The trumpet swings it. Gantry responds with even more enthusiasm. The little church is rocking now.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH FURNACE ROOM NIGHT

12

Gantry hums I'M ON MY WAY. Meanwhile, he industriously shovels coal into an open furnace. The Preacher comes down wooden staircase. He carries a tray of food (pork and black-eyed peas, thick slice of bread, coffee). In the other hand he carries a pair of worn but usable ankle-high shoes.

PREACHER

Better get at this while it's hot,
Mr. Gantry.

GANTRY

Thank you, Brother.

Gantry scoops up another shovel of coal. The Preacher sets down shoes, lifts Gantry's coat from a box to set down the tray of food. Under the coat is the Police Gazette. Gantry sees the Preacher looking at the Police Gazette.

GANTRY (picks up magazine)

Will yuh look at this filthy magazine,
Reverend?

(throws magazine into
furnace and thunders --)

Burn ye naked Jezebels! BURN!

(magazine flares brightly
lighting Gantry and Preacher
with a fiery glow)

GANTRY (cont'd)
Burn like a blindin' flash!

12
 cont'd

Gantry lowers voice dramatically, shapes with his expressive hands an imaginary halo around the startled preacher's head.

GANTRY
 "An' suddenly there shined 'round about him a light from heaven. An' he heard a voice sayin' unto him -- "

PREACHER (swept up in it)
 "Saul, Saul -- "

GANTRY (in the rhythm)
 "-- why persecutest thou me?"

PREACHER (impressed)
Saul of Tarsus!

GANTRY
 The Acts -- Chapter 9. "An' straightway he preached that Christ is the Son of God."
 (clangs shut furnace door)

PREACHER (picks it up)
 "But all who heard him were amazed."
 (amazed himself)

GANTRY (sits down to eat)
 Yeh.

PREACHER
 'Scuse me -- but you sound like a preacher.

GANTRY (mouth full)
 Great black-eye peas, Reverend.

Gantry eats ravenously. The Preacher respects Gantry's avoidance of subject.

PREACHER (goes to stairs)
 If you need a place to sleep --

GANTRY (mouth full)
 Thank yuh kindly, but -- soon's I haul those ashes -- I'll be movin' on.

PREACHER (exits upstairs)
God be with you, friend.

12
cont'd

GANTRY (picks up shoes)
Put in a good word for me, brother.

He starts to put on the first shoe -- looks into shoe -- pulls out a dollar bill. He smiles gently at the empty stairs. He puts on shoes -- humming -- I'M ON MY WAY.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY GENERAL STORE DAY

13

It is summer! Gantry walks along dusty road to store. He wears a straw hat, sporty silk shirt, carries jacket. It is hot. He sweats under burden of his own suitcase and a huge drummer's suitcase containing samples. He also carries a vacuum cleaner. He enters store, passing several loungers whom he appears to know. On drummer's suitcase is stamped CENTRAL STATES APPLIANCES.

INT. STORE OFFICE

14

Owner checks ledger at an old cluttered desk. Calendar tells us it is June 3, 1927. Gantry taps door with his foot and enters.

GANTRY (breezy)
Good mornin', good mornin' --
(owner looks dour)
As the blind man said to the elephant --
"Long time no see."

OWNER
Last March. That's when you sold me
nine o' those vacuum cleaners -- and
that's what I got on the shelf -- nine.

GANTRY
Got a great 'lectric toaster that pops --

OWNER
Nops.

GANTRY
'Lectric egg beater?

OWNER

No sale.

14
cont'd

GANTRY

Well -- no harm done.

(takes out pint)

How 'bout a free snort on the house?

OWNER

That's how you stuck me last time.

Gantry laughs. His attention is attracted to a placard containing a photo of Sister Sharon Falconer and her Tent Revival. He walks toward the placard --

GANTRY

Say -- 'Ja hear the one about the
Missionary, the Chorus Girl, an' the
cannibals?

OWNER

Yep. But tell it agin, anyways.

Gantry peers at the photo of Sister Falconer, the pint bottle in hand.

GANTRY

This Sister Woman any good at preachin'?

OWNER

Don't know.

(takes bottle, pours)

Never go to prayer meetin's -- 'less
business is bad -- or I git sick --
times like that --

(Gantry still eyes placard)

How 'bout them cannibals and the Chorus
Girl?

GANTRY (snaps out of it)

There she is in the wildest jungles
of Borneo --

(swallows drink)

-- without a stitch on except her
dancin' shoes an' a pith helmet --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM DUSK

15

Shooting down thru a hotel room window, we see a small town square, RR Station, etc. A truck containing four trumpet players and a bass drum. Musicians play ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS. On side of truck is a large sign:

REJOICE with SISTER FALCONER
Tent Meeting Tonight
8:30

Over this we hear --

GANTRY'S VOICE
Can I speak to Mrs. Wilson, please?

Gantry enters shot, shuts window to keep out racket. He is unshaven, red-eyed, shirt collar wrinkled. His trousers lie across back of chair. He is in his stocking feet. One of his socks has a hole in heel. It is very hot in the room. An electric fan blows more hot air. On table is a Racing Form. Also a pint bottle with an inch of liquor left. The bed is unmade, rumpled. His two suitcases and vacuum cleaner in evidence.

GANTRY (into phone)
Sally? This is me -- Elmer. How's every l'il thing? But, baaaby -- I only got into town today.
(knock at door -- 50-year old Bellhop enters)
Hold it a second, will yuh, Sal --
(covers mouthpiece --
to Bellhop --)
How'd we do in the 8th Race?

BELLHOP (thumbs down)
Ran out.

GANTRY (into phone)
Sally? How 'bout t'night? Well, what time's your husband come home for supper? Why'nt yuh come over right now?
(listens)
Just for an hour.
(listens)

GANTRY (cont'd)
Half an hour. Sure. Okay. Sure,
I understand. Ketch yuh next time
around, baby.

15
cont'd

Gantry hangs up. He pulls toe of sock forward so as to
conceal torn heel, as he puts on shoe.

GANTRY (meanwhile)
'Ja get the bottle?

BELLHOP (shakes "no")
You know bootleggers -- they got
a cash business.

GANTRY (grins)
Yeh.
(takes out change from pants
pocket -- about 80 cents)
Toss yuh for your two-bit tip.
Double or nothin'.

BELLHOP (shakes "no")
You're too lucky, Mr. Gantry.

GANTRY (flips him coin)
Yeh.

BELLHOP (starts out)
If you need anything, Mr. Gantry --

GANTRY
Thanks, kid --

Bellhop exits. Gantry finishes what's left in the bottle
as he crosses to dresser. Gantry looks in mirror, feels
his unshaven chin, unconsciously places empty pint bottle
on Gideon Bible that lies on dresser. Now the music seeps
into his brain. He goes to window, opens it, looks out.
The Hymn blares out.

EXT. STREET

16

Sister Falconer's truck circles the square in front of hotel. Now a woman sings with the trumpets. This is RACHEL. She stands in truck.

GANTRY AT HOTEL WINDOW

17

He smiles gently at gospel music. An idea forms. He quickly puts on his trousers --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S TENT MEETING NIGHT

18

A thousand people are gathered under the huge canvas. They sing: - SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER. They are led by Sister Rachel, who is the choir leader. Sister Rachel is a plumpish pussy-cat with an excellent soprano voice. She is authoritative and self-confident when singing -- when off-stage she is man-hungry, neurotic, thwarted, thirty.

At head of tent is a pyramidal structure. The lowest platform holds a choir, led by Sister Rachel. The middle platform holds local clergy, important townspeople and newspaper reporters. Among reporters is JIM LEFFERTS. He is what every reporter ought to be -- keen observant, understanding, witty incisive style, untouchable integrity -- what H. L. Mencken would have been had he worked for the Zenith Times Dispatch instead of for the Baltimore Sun. Jim also is quite good at sketching. He draws after the style of Bellows.

The topmost platform is smallest and only large enough for a brilliant white pulpit.

Gantry enters tent. He is still unshaven, red-eyed. He is impressed by the large crowd. He finds a seat, half-way down and several places in from the aisle. He marvels at the circus atmosphere. Gay, happy colors; no stern solemnity here. The platforms swarm with lilies, roses and vines. Four trumpets have been playing gospel song. The audience sings. As Gantry reaches his seat, the song ends.

William L. Morgan, about fifty, conservatively-dressed, literate, quick eyes, polished manners, steps forward.

MORGAN

Ladies and gentlemen -- welcome to
the House of God.

(holds out arms)

Welcome!

18
cont'd

The trumpets play a fanfare introducing BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC. This is the usual introduction for Sister Sharon Falconer. And the people know it. They begin to stand all over the tent. They applaud. They sing. They crane to look for her.

Gantry has been expecting some tricky or showy entrance from the stage.

But here she comes -- down the center aisle -- Sister Sharon. Tonight she wears a simple milkmaid's frock, a milkmaid's bonnet. She carries a bucket of milk. The applause becomes a roar. There is happiness and friendly laughter from the crowd. She hurries down the aisle throwing kisses to the people. There is something of the mystic in her -- a vibrancy, an electric quality that commands instant attention. Her eyes are piercing, ageless. They are set deep under thick, unplucked eyebrows. Her husky voice has range and power, a throaty richness. Her body is ripe, suggesting untapped sex. She is sensual without being vulgar. Her smile is warm, infectious. Her lips are not rouged. Her appeal is direct, emotional. Every person in the audience can own her -- but not have her.

Gantry watches her with rising excitement. This is the woman for him. This is the life for him.

Jim makes a pencil sketch of Sharon.

Sharon is now on the middle platform. She sets down the pail of milk. She holds up her arms and the trumpets finish.

SHARON

Oh, my dear, beautiful people --
when I arrived this morning -- and
I saw your gracious countryside --
I said: - "I won't -- I just won't --
be cooped up with a lot of stodgy old
ministers discussing Hell and Damnation."

(she laughs -- they laugh)

So I sneaked out -- and I've been doing
what most of you have been doing --
FARMING -- milking the cows -- lying
in the heather -- and letting the joy

SHARON (cont'd)
of God's nature flow into my heart.
(Applause. She takes
off bonnet)

And here's the proof there's a happy,
joyful God -- a bountiful God -- a
generous God --

(holds up pail)

-- MILK

(plunges dipper into pail
holds out dipper to
minister on platform)

Here you are, Reverend. The good
Lord's nectar. And pass it along to
those dear newspaper reporters so's
they can wash out the taste of whiskey.

(the crowd eats it up --
so do reporters)

The lights now frame her. The rest of the tent's lights
dim down somewhat. She tosses her head. Her hair tumbles
freely.

SHARON

Tonight I feel gloriously happy.
And I want you to feel happy, too.

Jim sips milk from dipper. He enjoys it.

Gantry listens with wonderment. Sharon has magic for him --
he is the critic -- not the convert -- and he can see the
machinery working -- but he loves it all the more. She is
a real professional.

SHARON

We're going to sing together, laugh
together, rejoice together like carefree
children of a happy God. We're going to
rejoice that inside of us lives the
veritable spirit of the Everlasting and
Redeeming Christ Jesus.

VOICES

Glory to God --
Hallelujah --
You tell 'em, Sister.

Sharon takes an empty milk bucket from several waiting on
stage. She tosses the pail to Morgan --

SHARON

18
cont'd

Bill -- see how many of these dear people can match God's bountiful gift with their own offering. YOU darlings can't make milk -- and GOD won't make money!

She signals Rachel, who starts the music and choir singing STAND UP FOR JESUS. Sharon starts down center ramp. Morgan and ushers(now picking up milk buckets) follow her, using the buckets to make collections. Meanwhile:-

SHARON

No preaching tonight -- no sermonizing -- no sad faces or tears -- just happiness.

(heading up center aisle)

Tomorrow's the last night of our revival here. But when I leave -- you're going to carry on my work. You're, all of you, evangelists -- every blessed one of you. Shake hands with the person on your right. Go on. Ask them if they're saved. Will you shake hands for Jesus? Sing, everybody! Sing His praises.

The people in the tent join in the singing. Rachel sings. Gantry sings. Sharon sings. Morgan does not sing. He smiles, however, on those who do.

JIM LEFFERTS

19

He sketches pencil portrait of Sharon.

GANTRY

20

He watches Sharon, fascinated, drawn by her magnetism. She hurries up the aisle, shaking a hand here, kissing a dear old lady there -- placing a gentle hand on the head of a child held out to her. The crowd continues singing. The ushers collect money in their milk pails.

As she comes abreast of Gantry, he rises and calls --

GANTRY

Sister Falconer!

SHARON

Brother, won't you find happiness
in Jesus?

20
cont'd

GANTRY

It's happiness just to hear your
wondrous message, Sister.

(pushes to get to her)

Can I just have a minute of your
time --

She takes one look at his sporty, loud clothes, his
unshaven face, drink-reddened eyes -- and she is gone
before he can get to the aisle.

Gantry is caught in the midst of a group that is singing,
moving about. He stares after Sharon. Wm. L. Morgan
shoves the milk pail under Gantry's face and rattles the
coins in it.

MORGAN (anticipatory)

Thank you, Brother.

Gantry, eyes still on Sharon, drops a few coins into the
pail. Now he glances at Morgan's conservative appearance.
He realizes his own attire could not have impressed Sharon
favorably. He exits with inner excitement.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PAWN SHOP NIGHT

26

Small cluttered shop. Thru window city activity. (Process)
Gantry is at counter. His drummer's suitcase is open. He
removes items such as electric iron, hair curler, egg
beater, etc. An electric toaster already is plugged in. He
places a toy train on hastily assembled tracks. He plugs in
the train. It runs. The toaster pops out the toast. In
the meantime, Gantry has taken out of his traveling suit-
case -- two loud jackets. He whips off the jacket he is
wearing. Also the pants.

The pawnshop proprietor brings a dummy, wearing a conservative
suit. Gantry likes it. All of this is done in quick
pantomime with an underscoring (or humming) of I'M ON MY WAY.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S TENT DAY

27

She talks earnestly to about 40 men and women. Among them is Rachel, the choir leader and vocalist. Jim Lefferts watches Sharon, making notes, sketching. Sharon is not the High Priestess now. She is a dynamic, hard-working woman. She wears light-grey skirt, straw hat, white shirt waist, linen cuffs and collar, a blue bow. As scene opens, Jim Lefferts helps Sharon on with suit jacket. (On lapel is watch with jeweled cross of pearls as watchfob.)

SHARON (to group as
she paces)

Oh, my dears, I know how hard you've all worked -- but tonight's our last night -- and our last chance. Without you -- without the TEAM -- this revival wouldn't be possible. But our competition is the Devil -- and he's a hustler. He works day AND night. The Devil sees everybody at least once a day. Can we say as much? You, sister --

(points to lovely girl)

CONTINUED

SHARON (cont'd)

27
cont'd

-- you with the beautiful red hair --
my, I wish I had hair like that -- how
many doorbells did you ring these last
two weeks to bring out the sinners?
(the girl's eyes fill)

RACHEL

And we never did get that contribution
from the Paper Mill people.

SHARON

Precisely! The Devil beat me to that
outfit, Sister Rachel. So - let's get
those contributions any way you can --
any where you can. Speakeasies, business
men, street corners, friends, enemies,
everywhere! Remember - there's no dirty
money. And no bloody money -- and money
has no smell! There's only money -- and
how you use it! And we're using it for
God's work.

(she abruptly starts up
aisle. Jim is beside her.

She takes a pair of sun
glasses from her purse)

Poor Brother Lefferts -- I don't suppose
you ever thought of religion as a business.

JIM

Yeeees. But never as BIG business.

She looks at him sharply. Then she smiles radiantly.
In b.g. THE TEAM is breaking up, following her out.

SHARON

Bootlegging and gambling are big business,
aren't they?

JIM

Two of the biggest.

SHARON

College football's big business, isn't it?
(he nods)

And so's our national pastime, Baseball.
Right?

(he nods)

Well, folks get a better show in my tent --
and it's for a better purpose. I scrub

SHARON (cont'd)

27

cont'd

their souls -- make them feel good
inside. If they'll pay a dollar to
see Babe Ruth hit a home run -- why
shouldn't they pay a dollar to see
the Glory of Heaven?

JIM (smiles)

No reason at all, Sister.

She puts on sun glasses and exits into the bright sunlight.
Jim follows her. So does THE TEAM.

EXT. TENT

28

As Sharon emerges from Tent, the people gathered around
tables making requests of counsellors, press forward. Among
those in crowd is Elmer Gantry. He wears a conservative
suit, dark necktie. Gone are his dirty black-and-white
shoes. He is freshly shaved.

VOICES (all at once)

"Sister, this is my daughter, Lucy, and --
"Bless you, Sister Sharon --
"I picked these flowers for you, Sister --
"I had a dream about you last night, Sister --
"If you could spare me an hour --
"My little boy saw the Virgin Mother last
night on the roof after your serv --
"Do you think prayer can help diabetes, Sister --

SHARON

Bless you all -- you're so considerate --
(glances at watch again)
-- but I simply can't -- aren't our
counsellors taking care of you?
(voices denote they want her)
Rachel -- see what you can do --
(Sharon moves thru crowd
toward her car)
-- every one of these lovely people is
important -- every one of them -- please
forgive me, I'm late now -- thank you --
(kisses child held out to her)
Aren't you adorable --

This gives Gantry his opportunity to get to her side.

GANTRY

Sister --

(she starts moving again)

-- I just had to congratulate you
again --

SHARON (doesn't stop,
doesn't look at him)
Thank you.

GANTRY

I'm a preacher myself, so I can tell
how inspired you were last ni --

SHARON

Preacher? What church ???

GANTRY

Well -- uh -- at present I haven't
'zactly got a church -- but --

Sharon stops finally as the chauffeur opens door.
She quickly takes off sun glasses and examines Gantry
from head to foot with diamond-hard eyes.

SHARON

What's the trouble this time?
Booze or women?

GANTRY (flustered)

Why -- Sister Falconer -- me???
(laughs)

SHARON (puts on glasses)

Whichever one it is -- you have
my blessing.
(steps into car)

Jim!

GANTRY (a last effort)

Sister --

JIM (to Gantry)

Nice try -- brother.

Jim enters car. It pulls away. Dust swirls over
Gantry's suit. He looks back to the crowd gathered
around counsellors. His eye stops on Rachel.

RACHEL (to elderly lady)
If you'll give me your name and
address --

28
cont'd

GANTRY (elbows close)
Sister --
(he takes her arm)

RACHEL
One moment, please --
(to woman)
-- to which denomination do you --

GANTRY (leads Rachel away)
I just hadda talk to you --

RACHEL
If you'll just leave your name --

GANTRY (walks off with her)
I heard you sing last night.
(Rachel looks into his eyes)
Course I know flattery don't mean
anything to a talented person like
yourself -- but --
(it means plenty to Rachel)
-- when you sang BEULAH LAND --
it made me realize that music is
the voice of love --
(his voice deepens;
she wilts)
An' what is love? Love is the
Mornin' an' the Evenin' Star. Love
is --
(they keep walking)

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT DAY

29

Gantry and Rachel are at a small table. He smokes an
impressive stogie. A waiter approaches in b.g. Gantry
is heard thru dissolve --

GANTRY
-- land of grrrreat opportunity.
Lookit me -- been with the Central States
Appliance Co less'n a year --
(hands her a calling card)

GANTRY (cont'd)

-- an' I'm their crack salesman.
They even wanna make me a partner.
Ah, it's a great life, great. Gives
daily existence a real meanin' --
why folks in 14 states know me by
my first name --

WAITER

Would you like to start with a cocktail?

GANTRY (outraged)

Cocktail???? My good man, don't you
know that drinkin' is not only sinful,
but against the principles of President
Coolidge?

WAITER

I only mean a shrimp cocktail or --

GANTRY

Jus' bring some of Mother's Apple
Pie an' coffee -- for two.

With the words "for two" he smiles softly on Rachel
and takes her left hand. The waiter departs.

GANTRY

That intelligent-lookin' man who
got in the car with Sister Falconer --
is he top man with her?

RACHEL

Jim Lefferts?

(laughs pleasantly)

Oh, no -- . Sister's manager is
Mr. Morgan.

(makes a serious face)

You know -- very proper and all?

GANTRY

And Mr. Lefferts?

RACHEL

Why he's a famous big city newspaper
reporter -- for the Zenith Times
Dispatch?

(Gantry nods encouragingly)

He's followed us around for a month
now.

GANTRY
Ah, yes -- a fine christian
face --

Gantry has been fingering her wedding ring.

GANTRY (sadly)
I mighta known -- the best ones
are always married.

RACHEL
Well, I'm not, really ---

GANTRY (perks up)
Oh????

RACHEL
Harold and I've been separated
three years now --

GANTRY

Oh! When did you first start servin' God?

29
cont'd

RACHEL

About two years ago. In Cato, Missouri. Sister Sharon's gospel singer got hurt in a riot --

GANTRY

A riot? Not in a Christian town like -- what was the name o' that place?

RACHEL

Cato -- Cato, Missouri.
(He nods. He'll remember)
Some roughnecks started fighting and yelling --

GANTRY (appalled)

Durin' the services?

RACHEL (nods)

And Sister Sharon yelled right back to a farmer on our side -- "Hit him one for the Lord, Brother." I'll never forget it.

GANTRY

Neither will I.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILROAD STATION NIGHT

30

Train puffs at station, ready for departure. About 50 well-wishers to see Sharon and Co. leave.

SHARON

31

She stands on steps of train. She is imperial in white flowing cape. She appears weary.

JIM LEFFERTS

32

He moves quietly among Sharon's followers, listening, observing, alert.

RACHEL

33

She has suitcase on platform. She looks for Gantry.
Morgan comes to her as the train sounds whistle.

MORGAN

Better get aboard, Sister.

She starts for train steps, glancing over shoulder.

GANTRY

34

He stands behind a baggage truck at end of platform. His
traveling suitcase is with him. He looks fixedly at Sharon.

TWO CLERGYMEN

35

They are on edge of crowd, gathered around Sharon. Jim
Lefferts is behind Clergymen.

1st CLERGYMAN (bitterly)

There she goes -- taking enough money
out of this town in two weeks to run
my church for three years.

2nd CLERGYMAN

Brother Jacob -- ENVY is unbecoming
a man of the cloth.

(pushes thru crowd)

Excuse me --

(waving to Sharon as train
pulls away)

God Speed the good work, Sister --

Jim watches the first Clergyman walk somberly away. Jim
heads for train observation car.

SHARON

36

She holds flowers presented by followers. The train slowly
pulls out of station with much steam and noise. Sharon
waves goodbye.

VOICES

Goodbye, Sister --

May the Lord protect you --

Come back soon --

GANTRY

37

He picks up suitcase and moves across platform.

JIM LEFFERTS

38

He steps onto observation platform, sits down, props feet on railing, pulls hat down over his eyes.

GANTRY

39

He swings aboard the last coach.

INT. TRAIN COACH

40

Gantry enters. He sets his suitcase down beside Rachel.

RACHEL (relieved)

Oh, thank heavens. When I didn't see you at the station --

GANTRY

Later, honey.

He leaves her and approaches Conductor in middle of coach. He gives conductor his ticket. As conductor punches ticket, Gantry looks off.

SHARON AND MORGAN

41

She turns up cape collar, closes eyes and faces window. Morgan takes out hand-written notes.

GANTRY AND CONDUCTOR

42

Gantry is giving the conductor a dollar.

GANTRY

See that gentleman? That's Mr. Morgan.

SHARON AND MORGAN

43

She is not asleep, only weary.

MORGAN (from notes)
Our advance man for Lincoln, Nebraska,
got drunk -- disappeared.

43
cont'd

SHARON (eyes closed)
No more business tonight.

MORGAN
This is important, Shara. The Fire
Department in Lincoln says we can't
put up a tent our size. And the
church committee is bickering about --

SHARON
Please, Bill ---

MORGAN
But we'll be there in the morning.

Sharon's eyes snap open and she whispers fiercely --

SHARON
Can't you understand! I'm sick
and tired of dandruffy little
souls. I'm tired of soggy wet
handshakes and hallelujahs. I'm
just -- tired. Let God do a little
work, too.
(weary smile)
Or don't you believe the Good Lord
is on our side?

He smiles at this. She closes her eyes and turns to
window again. The conductor is working toward them,
punching tickets.

EXT. OBSERVATION PLATFORM

44

Gantry steps out onto platform. Jim naps, his feet
propped up, hat down over his eyes. Gantry looks back
into coach and sees conductor getting closer to Morgan.
Gantry taps Jim on the arm.

GANTRY
Mr. Lefferts --
(Jim opens eyes)
My name's Gantry.

JIM (drily)
Congratulations.

44
cont'd

GANTRY
Sorry to wake yuh up, Mr. Lefferts.

JIM
Then why'd you do it?

GANTRY
I reco'nized yuh -- well, I just
hadda compliment yuh on those
articles yuh wrote about evolution
last year. They were not only
sensational an' scarifyin' --
but funny, furious an' fantastic.
(laughs heartily)
'Scuse me, Jim, boy -- I know yuh
got one o' them pewlitzer prizes --
but just between you 'n me -- you
don't really believe in that
evolution junk, do yuh?

JIM (amused)
Devoutly!

GANTRY (friendly)
Then you must believe God is a
Gorilla.

JIM
Now, how'd you arrive at that
conclusion?

GANTRY
It says in the bible that God
created Man in His own Image.

Jim laughs. Gantry laughs and also glances into train
as Jim takes out a cigar.

INT. TRAIN CONDUCTOR

44-A

He whispers to Morgan, who looks back toward Observation
platform.

OBSERVATION PLATFORM

44-B

Gantry is holding a match to Jim's cigar.

GANTRY

You must think Sister Sharon's
important news.

JIM

What's your interest in her?

GANTRY

Can I be frank with yuh, Jim?

JIM

Try!

GANTRY (laughs)

She fascinates me.

JIM

You'll have to get in line. You'll
also have to get rid of a hurdle
first -- name of Bill Morgan.

GANTRY (snaps fingers)

Almost forgot. He's comin' out to
see yuh. Right about now.

(Jim looks at him)

He wantsa give yuh some information --

(winks)

-- inside stuff.

Jim holds Gantry's eyes with a cold glance. Gantry
smiles hopefully. Jim suddenly laughs at the audacity
of the man. Gantry laughs, too.

GANTRY

Thanks, Jim, boy. Thanks a lot.

Gantry enters the train. Jim is amused.

INT. TRAIN

46

Gantry passes Morgan in the aisle. Morgan heads for
Observation platform. Gantry continues to Sharon's seat.
Her head rests against shaded window. Gantry sits beside
her. She opens one eye, sees who it is, closes the eye.

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SHARON (curtly)
I'm sorry. This seat is taken.

46
cont'd

GENTRY
Even the Lord never turned his
back on a sinner.

SHARON
I'm not the Lord. But I am tired.
Now, will you please go away?

CONTINUED

GANTRY

You weren't so tired of life an' all
two years ago in Cato, Missouri.

(she looks at him)

That's when we first met.

SHARON

Met 7777

GANTRY (nods)

On a Friday night, it was. Remember
the riot? Some roughnecks got to
hootin' an' hollerin' an' fightin' --
an' you stayed right up there in the
pulpit an' you yelled: "Hit him one
for the Lord, Brother!"

SHARON (remembers)

But that's exactly what I said.

GANTRY

An' that's exactly what I did!
Busted him one for the Lord!

SHARON (comes to life,
sparkling, excited)

It was a lovely fight.

She bursts into a hearty, musical, ringing laugh. Gantry
joins her with his infectious, booming laugh. Members of the
troupe look at them in amazement -- Sharon laughing with a
stranger? Rachel looks at Gantry and Sharon with longing.

GANTRY

When I saw you in Cato, I thought I
was seein' an angel --
(shakes head)
-- an' you haven't changed a bit.

SHARON (breathless from
laughter)

A very tired angel.

GANTRY (the philosopher)

No wonder. Givin' everybody else
hope, an' courage, an' nobody to lean
on yourself --

SHARON (a twinkle)

I suppose this is a generous offer
to let me lean on you?

GANTRY (laughs)
Me? I wouldn't have the nerve.

46
cont'd

SHARON (in one of her
unpredictable twists)
Yesterday, Mr. Uh ---

GANTRY
Gantry. Elmer Gantry.

SHARON
-- you said you were a preacher!

GANTRY
Well -- practically -- almost --
the semester I was t' be ordained --

SHARON
They kicked you out of college!

GANTRY (bravely)
It was a tragedy, kind of --
(stops)

SHARON (knowing smile)
A girl.

GANTRY (nods, introspective)
A girl named Lulu Bains.

His seriousness makes her stop smiling.

EXT. OBSERVATION PLATFORM

47

Jim sits, feet propped on railing, smoking thin cigar.
Morgan stands. Tracks speed along behind them(process).

JIM
She says you trained her.

MORGAN (modestly)
If a genius needs training at all.

JIM (smiles)
Does she work for you -- or you for her?

MORGAN (tactfully)
We work together.

JIM (makes a note)

Hm.

MORGAN

Would it be -- uh -- unethical to ask
what you'll write about Sister Sharon?

JIM

It would.

MORGAN

Oh -- sorry --

JIM (thoughtfully)

She's brilliant.

MORGAN (pleased)

"Inspired" is a more appropriate word.

JIM

"Inspired" means to be touched by the
hand of God.

MORGAN

Precisely.

JIM (suddenly)

Has she ever been married? Divorced?

MORGAN

A saint does not marry. And she
doesn't believe in divorce.

JIM

You love her?

MORGAN

I worship her.

JIM

I've worshipped a few ladies in
my time, too.

MORGAN

These last six weeks you've observed
our work -- what do you think of it?

JIM (pause)

Most exciting damned woman I ever saw.

SHARON AND GANTPY

48

She is absorbed, entertained by his "story".

GENTRY

-- you wouldn't think a church deacon's daughter would know so much about life. She certain'y showed me plenty.

(sighs)

Anyways -- there's me an' Lulu, the belle of Schoenheim, Kansas, all set t' be married. Now, get the picture -- It's Christmas Eve -- God's pure snow driftin' down -- joy in the air -- I enter the Schoenheim church late at night -- to pray for guidance -- an' what do I find -- right behind the pulpit ????

(throbs with drama)

Lulu Bains, my betrothed, my bride-to-be -- half-naked -- locked in the arms of her lover, a card sharp from Chicago. A couple of years later he was bumped off in a gang war -- God rest his soul.

(eyes moist over his own tragic tale)

That's it, I guess. Lost all interest in preachin'.

(brave smile)

But when I saw you the other night -- it was like a CALL FROM BEYOND.

(she is close to giggling)

Couldn't I see you again? Please???

Won't you have breakfast with me?

What's your hotel room number in Lincoln?

Now the giggle breaks into that lovely laugh again.

SHARON

You're so completely -- so outrageous -- I think I like you.

(a bit sadly)

Guess I've been around sanctimonious folks too long. You're amusing -- and -- you smell like a real man --

(suddenly business-like)

Yes, I'll meet you -- where we put up my tent -- that's where I breakfast. Now -- goodnight. And this time I mean it!

She has already closed her eyes, turned up her cape collar and faced the window.

48
cont'd

Gantry starts up the aisle like a bantam cock. Morgan is coming down the aisle.

GANTRY (gaily)
Evenin', Brother Morgan.
(Morgan is about to pass him)
I wouldn't bother her now -- she's
restin' -- poor child.

Morgan is speechless. Gantry sits down beside Rachel, who quickly makes room for him. Morgan goes to Sharon.

RACHEL (whisper)
You didn't tell Sister about --
this afternoon?

GANTRY (reassuringly)
Baaaby.

He takes her hand consolingly and unconsciously hums I'M
ON MY WAY.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARREN FIELD IN LINCOLN DAY

49

Grey, misty morning. Sharon's trucks disgorge their canvas and poles and wooden benches. Sharon is among the workmen and activity. Jim Lefferts is with her.

SHARON
According to the weather bureau, the
wind will be coming from there --
(points)
-- if the Good Lord doesn't change
His mind.
(to roustabouts)
Put the center poles here -- then the
canvas won't snap and crack all thru
the sermon.

She heads for tables containing large urns of coffee and doughnuts. In b.g. Gantry can be seen hurrying across the field toward her. Sharon sees an official police car speeding, bumping across field toward her.

SHARON (to Jim)
Here they come -- officially!

49
cont'd

The police car grinds to a jarring halt directly across Sharon's path. Police Captain and Fire Chief confront her. The Fire Chief smokes a big cigar.

GANTRY (arrives)
Mornin', Sister.

SHARON (briefly, eyes on
officials)
Good morning.

GANTRY (enthused)
I woke up with a terrific idea, an' --

SHARON (curtly)
Later!
(to Police Captain, pleasantly)
Good morning, Captain.

POLICE CAPTAIN (curtly)
You can't erect that tent here,
M'am -- not in this town.

SHARON
Why not!

FIRE CHIEF
Fire laws.

SHARON (walks off)
Nonsense.

They walk with her.

POLICE CAPTAIN
No, M'am. No nonsense at all.

SHARON
M'am is a contraction for Madam. I
am NOT a madam -- a calibre of woman,
Captain, I'm sure you know well and
do business with.

(he starts to protest)
How many of your madams have been
put out of business by fire laws?

POLICE CAPTAIN (flustered)
Your tent seats more'n a thousand
people. The city ordinance forbids --

49
cont'd

SHARON
By the way, Captain, this is Mr. Lefferts --

POLICE CAPTAIN (nods briefly)
Now, Miss --

SHARON
-- reporter for the Zenith Times Dispatch

POLICE CAPTAIN (impressed)
Zenith!
(grabs Jim's hand)
Welcome. This is Fire Chief Jack --

SHARON (driving)
Isn't it a fact, Mr. Lefferts, that the
whiskey big shots want me closed down?

JIM (caught short)
Uh -- they certainly don't think you
do their trade any good.

SHARON (fiercely)
Know why, Captain ???? Because I'm not
afraid to fight whiskey and repeal -- with
the help of the police or without it!

POLICE CAPTAIN (on defensive)
If you're accusing me of --

SHARON
That's exactly what I'm doing.
(suddenly faces him)
Do you enforce prohibition???

POLICE CAPTAIN
I certainly do!

SHARON (to Jim)
How many speakeasies could you take the
Captain to -- right here in his home town?

JIM (straight man)
Without a membership card? Fifty!

GANTRY
I sell for Central Appliances.

50
cont'd

SHARON
Don't you like your job?

GANTRY
Sure. It's a great life. I'm their crack salesman. Why, only last month they wanted to make me a Junior partner --
(he slows down at the glint in her eye. He suddenly becomes disarmingly honest)

Aw -- it's no use kiddin' you. It's no life at all. Filthy, dreary hotel rooms -- always chasin' after trains -- always tellin' dirty stories to keep the buyers laughin' -- always the pint bottle to prove you're a sport --

(his complete honesty, his self-abasement enlist her sympathy.

This quality in Gantry -- beside his manhood -- impels her to a closer, warmer relationship)

That kinda fella -- he's no success. He's just a tramp wearin' a silk shirt --

(she is close to tears. He snaps out of it)

Well! I could tell the sinners I'm a salesman like that --

(she nods encouragingly)

-- an' I come into one of those miser'ble hotel rooms -- discouraged -- no sales to chalk up -- nothin' to read -- lonely -- dyin' for a drink -- some o' those salesmen drink somethin' terrible --. I reach into the dresser an' what do I find???

(she waits expectantly, as a child hearing a fairy tale)

A GIDEON BIBLE! That's what I find.

SHARON (a whisper)
Yes, yes -- go on --

DISSOLVE TO:

SHARON (to Fire Chief)
Fire laws! Do you see any of my
workmen smoking?

49
cont'd

(she takes cigar from his mouth,
grinds it into earth)
Do you mind? This might start a fire!

FIRE CHIEF (clears throat)
Of course, if there was no smokin'
in your --

SHARON
You're welcome to see for yourself
tonight. A little salvation would do
you both some good.
(exits toward coffee urns)
(Gantry hurries after her)

POLICE CAPTAIN (flustered)
Jesus Christ.

JIM
Or a reasonable facsimile thereof.

SHARON

50

She pours coffee into carton as Gantry enters. In b.g.
the police captain, fire chief and Jim drive off.

GANTRY (admiringly)
I never in all my born days saw anybody
handle cops the way you did!

SHARON (businesslike)
All right, Brother Gantry:- what's this
"terrific idea" you woke up with?

GANTRY
Yes! Well! How'd it be if I addressed
your Revival Meetin' as a SAVED BUSINESS
MAN? I could talk on the good, hard,
practical dollars-and-cents value of
CHRIST IN COMMERCE.

SHARON (yells at workman)
Tom! Slack off on those ropes. They're
too tight.
(to Gantry)
By the way -- what is your business??
Hold-ups?

INT. SHARON'S TENT NIGHT

51

Capacity crowd. Gantry is in the pulpit. He waves a worn Gideon Bible. Jim is among reporters in tier below. Sharon is behind platforms, concealed by canvas drop. She listens.

The scene actually is a continuation of the previous one. Gantry picks up where he left off.

GANTRY

I reached in the dresser an' found --
a Gideon Bible.

(points at audience)

I was so lonely an' miserable I might
as well have been in hell. I WAS IN
HELL!!! I knew all the salesman's
tricks. Why wasn't I successful? Why
wasn't I rich? Becuase I wasn't Right
With God, that's why. I opened this
Bible and read the 18th Psalm.

(opens Bible)

"The Lord is my Rock, an' my Fortress."

(slams Bible shut with a whack)

The LORD is my fortress! Yuh hear
that!!!! THE LORD!

WOMAN (yells)

Praise the Lord!

VOICES

The Lord!

Hallelujah!

Oh, yes, the Lord is my Rock.

During this, Gantry comes out of pulpit. He does not walk down. He leaps onto the tier below. Faces in crowd are eager, ready to hear the miracle they know is coming, wanting it, believing it.

GANTRY

The next mornin' I walked into a
General store. "What're you sellin'
today, Elmer? Some gold-plated vacuum
cleaners?" "No, sir," I said. "You
can get better vacuum cleaners at
Sears-Roebuck, an' get 'em cheaper.
But you can't beat our electric irons
at any price." An' he sat down an'
gave me the biggest order of the year.

GANTRY (cont'd)
 (he stops in aisle, raises arms,
 looks at heaven)
 Can yuh hear me, Lord? Thank yuh, Lord,
 thank yuh. I didn't make that sale.
You did, Lord!

51
 cont'd

SHARON

52

She is as thrilled and excited as anyone in the crowd. Her first reaction of surprise has given way to complete absorption. Gantry has changed her from a bystander into a participant.

GANTRY

53

He now picks faces among crowd and makes them a personal target, attacking, cajoling, appealing -- all on a highly personal level. He has never stopped for a moment.

GANTRY

An' when I told my business pals I was
 comin' to Jesus, they laughed. But
Sister Falconer didn't laugh! She said:-
 "Go ahead, Brother, give 'em hell!" An'
 before I'm thru, I'm gonna give yuh all
 the hell in the bible. The Lord put it
there. An' if yuh don't like it, fix
 it up with the Lord!

Morgan closes his eyes in embarrassment. He cringes.

GANTRY

Listen t'me, sinners! You can't pray
 to Kingdom Come, an' then play bridge
 or poker. You can't say your psalms,
 an' look at God thru the bottom of a
 beer mug. You can't go to church on
 Sunday and cheat at business on Monday.

(to God atop tent pole)

We're comin' back to yuh, God! We're
comin' back to the old-time religion!

(to crowd)

An' what is religion? Religion is
love! An' LOVE IS THE MORNIN' AN' THE
 EVENIN' STAR!

RACHEL IN CHORAL SECTION

54

She's startled to hear the words that won her heart.

GANTRY

Love is the eternal, the glorious
music-maker.

SHARON

55

Tears come to her eyes as she listens.

GANTRY

Yes, love! Not the carnal -- but the
Divine love --. An' where's this
grrrreat love come from? It comes
direct from God.

WOMAN IN CROWD (screams)

Oh, dearest God!

OTHER VOICES

Oh, love the Lord.
Direct from God.
Kiss that Lord.
Hallelujah!

JIM LEFFERTS

56

He has stopped drawing sketch. He is astounded and held
by this new personality. Something new is being born here.

GANTRY

I admit I'm not smart like some of
those smart-aleck perfessors, an' wise-
guy writers, an' agitators! I don't
know the first thing about Theosophy,
philosophy, psychology, ideology -- or
any other ology! But I know this! WITH
CHRIST, YOU'RE SAVED -- AN' WITHOUT HIM,
YOU'RE LOST! An' how do I know there's
a merciful God??? Because I've seen
the Devil plenty of times.

A roar of laughter and applause. This is language they
understand. This is imagery they can visualize. During
this moment of appreciation, Gantry races down the aisle
toward the platform. He leaps onto the lower platform and

slides across the stage in a beautiful hook slide. He is on his feet at once. Rachel has uttered one small shriek.

56
cont'd

GANTRY (stops applause)

Any punk ball player can slide like that. But how many folks've got the guts to play ball on GOD'S team? An' listen to this! The Captain of THIS team is JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. Come on now -- everybody -- man an' boy -- woman an' child -- who'll be the first one to shake hands for Jesus?
(a brief moment's hesitancy
in the audience)

Is there any decent Christian who'd refuse to hold out his hand to the Lord???
(several women start coming)

Thank yuh, Mother. You, too, Sister. How 'bout it?? Are yuh gonna make me BEG an' BEG -- when I'm offerin' yuh my JESUS????? Did the Savior die in vain???? DID HE SUFFER ON THE CROSS FOR NOTHIN' ?????

PIMPLY YOUTH IN CROWD

Oh, God! I can't stand it.

The trembling youth rushes for the platform, mumbling "Oh, God! Oh, God!"

The crowd is stunned. Gantry is positive he's being attacked. He leaps off the platform and whips off his jacket.

GANTRY (roars)

All right, you sinner! I'll fight you for God any day in the week an' twice on Sundays!

The Pimply Youth drops to his knees before Gantry. He weeps pitifully.

PIMPLY YOUTH

Help me, Brother Gantry. Save me!
I sin every day --

Gantry can hardly believe it. He is making his first conversion.

SHARON

57

Her eyes are filled with excitement and happiness. She is show-woman enough to take advantage of the crowd's momentary inertia. She quickly runs to the lower tier. She signals Rachel, who is immobilized. Sharon starts the musicians to playing STAND UP FOR JESUS. Sharon, tears in her eyes, begins to sing. Rachel takes it up. Now the crowd begins to sing.

MORGAN

58

He is shocked, disbelieving, unable to fathom the success of Gantry's approach.

JIM LEFFERTS

59

He is deeply interested in Gantry now. He rapidly sketches Gantry in a pose, arm outthrust, one foot on the pulpit, the other foot on a chair.

CROWD

60

With the singing, it has come to life. Now they flow in a stream toward the platform. Some of the crowd is weeping, ecstatic, happy, excited, thrilled, moved to come forward to shake-hands-for-Jesus without reasoning why.

There is a great yearning in these faces, a great need for love and protection -- a need for a cure-all, a medicine, a hope to carry them thru their loneliness and ill-health, their fear of daily life, their inability to depend on themselves -- their deep need to feel they can belong -- someone powerful enough to direct fate -- GOD -- or God's representative -- GANTRY -- can help them.

They keep coming -- singing the militant song. Gantry finds himself overcome -- weeping -- at his own success.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S TENT NIGHT

- 61

It is empty and dark now -- except for one light that illuminates the pulpit. A workman sweeps among the benches. Gantry enters from behind the platforms.

JIM LEFFERTS

62

He sits at back of tent. He smokes a cigar. He has almost completed a sketch of Gantry, started during Gantry's sermon. He stops sketching now to watch Gantry.

GANTRY AND WORKMAN

63

Gantry is drawn toward the pulpit as to a magnet. As he mounts platforms, he speaks to the workman, his voice hollow in the tent's emptiness.

GANTRY

This light supposed to keep burnin'?

WORKMAN (sweeps up)

Yep.

GANTRY

All night?

WORKMAN

Sometimes folks come just to touch where Sister Sharon stands --.

(Gantry slowly walks up
ramp toward Platform)

Heard you talk t'night

GANTRY

Well?

WORKMAN

Well what?

GANTRY

Did yuh like it?

WORKMAN

Mister -- I been converted five times. By Billy Sunday, Reverend Biederwolf, Gypsy Smith and twice by Sister Falconer. I get terrible drunk -- an' then I get good and saved. Both do me a powerful lot of good -- gettin' drunk -- and gettin' saved.

The workman exits toward the rear. Gantry has reached the pulpit. He stands transfixed a moment in the pencil of light. He carresses the pulpit. He can still hear the cheers.

Sharon has come from her dressing room during this.
She has stopped to watch Gantry from the darkness.
Her cape is draped casually over her shoulders.

63
cont'd

SHARON

Are you praying? Or planning to
take it over?

Gantry sees her below. He bounds down to her, leaving
his Gideon Bible on the pulpit.

GANTRY

Sharon!

(he is at her side)

Oh, Sharon -- was it all right?
Did I do all right for yuh?

SHARON

Yes. You were fine, really fine. I
cried like everybody else.
(they start up aisle)

GANTRY

No, really -- please tell me the truth.

SHARON

450 converts out of 1200 people.
That's a truth of some kind.
(a contradictory twinkle)
Morgan thought you were vulgar.

GANTRY (stops her)

Do you? Think I'm vulgar?

Sharon looks deep into his eyes. The pulpit glows behind
them. She hesitates, then --

SHARON

Yes.

GANTRY

But you like me.

SHARON (pause)

Yes.

GANTRY

Very much?

SHARON

Not very much.

63

cont'd

Her denial notwithstanding, Gantry feels instinctively that she is attracted to him. He takes her by the arms. She doesn't move. Her eyes have never wavered from his. He inclines his head toward her. She watches him unswervingly.

GANTRY

Oh, Shara -- baby.

He kisses her on the mouth. His eyes close. Her eyes remain open. She appears to be resisting an urgency within her. She remains rigid -- but she remains! Her cape falls. She looks at the fallen cape.

He feels he has made a drastic mistake. He bends, picks up the cape, comes around behind her, places the cape gently around her shoulders. She has not moved. Her eyes are veiled, her body rigid.

SHARON (without turning)

Do you want to join me?

GANTRY (relieved)

Sure, sure. Anything yuh want. Yuh got me plumb hypnotized.

SHARON (starts toward exit)

No. You're hungry, that's all. But I can hypnotize -- because God chose me to do His work.

GANTRY (spirits soaring)

Sure! Me, too!

SHARON (stops, faces him)

No! I chose you. The big difference between you and me -- is that I believe! I REALLY BELIEVE! Be here at nine in the morning. We'll discuss salary, schedule, organizational work --

GANTRY

Sure. I got some swell ideas for promotin' --

SHARON

By the way -- you still smoke, don't you?

GANTRY

Well, I --

SHARON

I can smell it. Will you stop it?
At once and altogether? The drinking,
too. Will you???

GANTRY

Sure. If that's what you --

SHARON

It is! Goodnight!

She is out of the tent and hurrying toward her limousine.
Gantry is limp. He shakes his head. He glances back
toward the pulpit.

From his bench to one side, Jim Lafferts rises. He has
witnessed all of it.

JIM

Evening, Brother Gantry.

GANTRY

Say -- all the time Sharon an' me --
Sister Falconer -- were --

JIM

Yep. Sitting right there.

GANTRY (laughs)

You're not gonna write about it?

JIM (gathers papers, etc.)

Boy kisses girl? Hell, that's not news.
You're slipping, Brother.

(Gantry looks at him)

When you first hooked me on the train,
I thought you were a friendly, likeable,
self-respecting, first-class bum! Now
look at you --. Where'd you get your style?

GANTRY (mounts platform)

Just let her rip, I guess.

JIM

I've heard many a powerful bible-
walloper --- but you not only put the
fear of God into them -- you scared

JIM (cont'd)

63
cont'd

the hell out of them. And the way
you strung certain words together --
America -- home -- mother -- heaven --
hell -- sin -- love -- hate -- fight --
surrender --

By this time Gantry is on the platform. He reaches up and takes the Gideon Bible he left on the pulpit. As Jim asks his question, Gantry turns and faces the reporter in the black empty tent. Behind Gantry glows the pin-spotted pulpit.

GANTRY (softly)

'S a funny thing --
(eyes bright, turned inward)
I get up here -- an' see 'em out
there -- an' first thing I know, I'm
a-howlin' -- an' they're a-moanin'.
It's like a mighty spirit's movin'
inside me. Words an' ideas come
pourin' out like riled-up strangers.
I feel so powerful and full of love
that I'm 'bout ready to explode. I
do explode. An' then I just about
love everybody!

JIM

Especially the girls.

Gantry snaps out of it. He laughs, comes off platform.

GANTRY

Yeh. This is where I b'long, all
right. Right here! In religion.
Even if it is a tent!

JIM

Every circus needs a clown, Brother
Gantry. And who knows? You might
turn out to be the funniest clown of
them all -- and the most successful.

Gantry glares at him a moment, trying to decide what
avenue to take with Jim. Then Gantry bursts into a
friendly roar of laughter --

GANTRY

Clown????

(he shakes Jim's hand vigorously)

GANTRY (cont'd)
 You're terrific, Jim, boy --
 terrific!

63
 cont'd

He puts his arm around Jim's shoulder and they exit together. Jim is forced to smile in spite of himself.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FIRE STATION DAY

64

Fire Chief (who earlier tried to prevent Sharon from erecting tent) places a fire hat on her head. Photographers take pictures --

FIRE CHIEF (thru dissolve)
 -- great pleasure to make Sister
 Falconer an honorary member of the
 Fire Department.

Fire Chief starts applause. Firemen, spectators applaud. Morgan watches quietly. Jim Lefferts makes a sketch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TENT NIGHT

65

Gantry on second platform. He holds a chimpanzee by the hand.

GANTRY
 The smart-alecky college professors
 are tryin' to prove this ape is your
 great, great grandfather. Well --
 this monkey might be Darwin's uncle --
 but he ain't yours or mine! Right,
 Grandpop?

Chimp claps his hands and turns somersault. Jim Lefferts sketches Gantry as a chimp. Audience laughs, applauds.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BANK DAY

66

Street packed with people. Traffic stopped. Sharon stands on a ladder placed at Bank entrance. Morgan grimly stands behind her.

SHARON (over loud speaker)
 Would Jesus play poker? Would Paul
 play the stock market? What do you
 think will get you into God's Own
 glorious Heaven? This Ace of Spades?
 (holds it up -- flips it away)
 -- your bank book?
 (holds it up -- flips it away)
 -- or this pledge to be a good Christian?

66
 cont'd

The crowd applauds. Auto horns sound. Jim Lefferts
 watches from crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TENT NIGHT

67

Gantry is on the platform. A new banner has been
 suspended overhead: --

GOD IS LOVE

The audience is tense, worked up by Gantry. During his
 exhortation murmurs and moans are heard. The faces in the
 crowd perspire, not only with heat, but with complete
 involvement. Jim Lefferts is in press section. Gantry is
 the fiery Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse.

GANTRY

You're all doomed to perdition --!
 You're all goin' to the stinkin',
 scaldin', painful, everlastin'
 tortures of the fiery hell created
 by God for sinners. Unless -- unless
 you repent with Sister Falconer.

Suddenly -- after "repent with Sister Falconer" -- a
 gaunt farmer leaps to his feet with a shout.

FARMER

68

His face sweating, arms flopping, he leaps out of his seat
 and into the aisle. He drops to his hands and knees. He
 starts BARKING like a dog.

People stand up everywhere to watch. Several ushers start
 toward barking farmer. Everyone is startled except Gantry.
 He takes it in stride.

GANTRY (shouts)

Let that man alone!

(runs down ramp)

Go ahead, Brother -- you go right
ahead an' bark.

(points to tent pole top)

There he is! The devil!

(reaches farmer)

Atta boy. Bark that damned devil
right outta this tent.68
cont'd

Gantry starts clapping his hands rhythmically. The crowd takes up the clapping. Many of them shout encouragement. Hysteria mounts.

MORGAN

69

He is out of his seat among clergymen. He is dismayed. Jim Lefferts pushes thru startled crowd on platform. He tells a photographer to get a picture of the farmer.

GANTRY AND FARMER

70

The farmer barks pitifully. Gantry and crowd clap rhythmically. Excitement increases. Rachel has caught Gantry's hand-motion and starts choir and music.

Morgan watches Lefferts, whose attitude is cryptic, alert.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TENT NIGHT

71

The earth is soaked; large puddles of rain water. Distant rumble of thunder heard. Crowd has gone home. Quiet. A watchman sits near tent opening.

Sharon's limousine speeds up. Gantry drives. He quickly gets out of car -- carefully leaps from plank to box to avoid getting his shined shoes soiled or trouser cuffs muddled. He exchanges greetings with watchman, enters tent.

INT. TENT

72

Gantry quickly hurries down the center aisle toward platforms and dressing rooms. The pulpit is spotlighted, as

usual. Gantry hums happily under his breath:- I'M
ON MY WAY. At far end of tent, from Sharon's
dressing room, comes a light. We hear Morgan's
voice. Tonight it is sarcastic, acrimonious.

72
cont'd

MORGAN'S VOICE

I'll tell you why it can't go on.
Because it's preposterous, that's why.

INT. SHARON'S DRESSING ROOM

73

Sharon wears a bathrobe, slip, stockings, shoes. She
hums happily as she hangs a dress on a screen. She is
busy, preparing clothes for street wear. Morgan puts
collection money in briefcase, makes an entry in a ledger.

MORGAN

Preposterous and obvious to everyone.
And even dangerous! Especially before
Jim Lefferts -- and make no mistake
about it -- our newspaper friend is
about as friendly as a rattlesnake.

SHARON

Then you think it's wrong!

MORGAN

Not wrong. Ridiculous! One minute
you're preaching a happy perfumed
heaven -- and the next minute Gantry's
damning everyone to a scalding, stinking
hell.

SHARON

I'd say we make a pretty good team.

MORGAN (sarcastic)

Like two cops working over a criminal.
Gantry scares him with the electric
chair -- and you save him if he confesses.

SHARON

Does the method really matter? The point
is -- our sinner does confess -- and he
is saved.

Morgan comes to her at dressing table.

MORGAN

You can't separate the method from
the man! Who is Elmer Gantry? What do
you really know about him? His background?
His reputation? What's he want? Money?
My job? You? What???

SHARON (softly)

Bill --

MORGAN (takes slip of paper
with notes from pocket)

In 1917 Mr. Gantry was expelled from a
theological seminary in Kansas -- for
seducing a Miss --

(looks at notes)

-- a Miss Lulu Bains -- the deacon's
daughter -- in the church where he had
the same day delivered a Christmas sermon.

(she is silent)

There's more. Want to hear it?

Gantry enters exuberantly. He holds up a telegram.

GENTRY (fanfare)

Ta-daaaaaa! Ladies an' gentlemen, yuh
see before you a magic carpet, a heavenly
summons, a ticket to the BIG TIME!

(reads telegram)

"Congratulations! Would you consider
meeting with church committees and myself
about bringing your revival to our fair
city of Zenith, capital of America's
great midwest. Kindly telegraph reply
immediately." Signed:- George F. Babbitt,
secretary Zenith Chamber of Commerce,
chairman of Church Board, etcetera, etcetera.

Gantry hands telegram to Sharon. She doesn't look at it.

SHARON (a whisper)

Zenith!

(she looks quickly at Morgan --
a secret between them)

GENTRY

Why not?

MORGAN

We're not ready for Zenith.

GANTRY

Mr. Babbitt an' the Church Committee
think we are. An' I know we are!
Next stop -- Zenith. Then Chicago,
New York, London -- an' straight to the
top on the Sharon Falconer Express!!!

MORGAN

In a tent??? They'll laugh at us.

GANTRY

Not at Shara, they won't.

MORGAN

Pitchman's talk. What do you know about
the background of our work? The nature
of revivalism is rural! It grew out of
frontier life! Big City people are more
cynical --

GANTRY

An' they're more lonely, too. An' more
sinful --

(to her)

-- an' more unhappy -- an' Shara --
they need you more.

Morgan sees that Sharon's eyes are already moist.

MORGAN (indicates telegram)

I'm against this!

Sharon has been brushing her hair, hairpinning it back.
She listens to them both non-committally.

GANTRY (genially)

Bill, boy -- you're a sourpuss.

(thrusts telegram before Morgan)

This is a passport to the Promised
Land.

MORGAN

Gantry -- I am not your boy! I don't
know how you deluded her -- but to me
-- everything about you is offensive.
You're a crude, vulgar, show-off -- and
your vocabulary belongs in an outhouse!

GENTRY (softly)

You're right, Bill. Crude -- vulgar --
show-off --. I've been a lot of things
I'm ashamed of. Let's put it this way.
You're a five dollar text book -- an'
I'm a two cent tabloid newspaper.
You're too good for the people -- but
I AM THE PEOPLE! Sure, I'm common --
just like most people .

SHARON

The common people put Christianity on
the map in the first place.

MORGAN

What are you saying, Shara? That you
want to go to Zenith? Now?

SHARON (a whisper)

I wonder what God wants?

Morgan knows she is rationalizing. He also knows she is
more deeply involved with Gantry than she realizes.

MORGAN (won't hurt her)

All right. All right, Shara --
(goes back to briefcase)
With God's help -- maybe you are
ready for Zenith.

SHARON

Thank you, Bill.
(runs behind screen)
Be with you in a minute.

Morgan takes briefcase, hat and umbrella, exits into tent
area. Gantry, no trace of animosity in him, delightedly
accompanies Morgan.

INT. TENT

74

Gantry and Morgan emerge. They walk up aisle.

GENTRY

I think it'd be more proper if the okay
to Mr. Babbitt came from you, Bill.
(hands Morgan telegram)

GANTRY (cont'd)

Tell Babbitt we're ready to talk
business ~~as~~ but they gotta get the
lard out, an' act fast --

(tosses a barb of his own)
-- only don't say it so crude an'
vulgar as that.

MORGAN (enjoying it)

I'll use some of my nice sweet-
smelling "five-buck" words, hm?
(keeps on walking)

Gantry has stopped. He is delighted. He calls out.

GANTRY

I knew we could work together, Bill.

MORGAN

I hope this won't allow you to
consider yourself the boss!

GANTRY

Bill -- as always -- the Boss is
God -- I'm only his messenger boy.

MORGAN (drily)

I'm sure God will be relieved.

Morgan exits up aisle.

CONTINUED:

INT. SHARON'S DRESSING ROOM

75

She hurriedly comes from behind screen. She wears dress. She grabs up her cape, jeweled watch, bible and exits toward tent.

INT. TENT

76

Sharon comes from dressing room.

SHARON

Bill -- ?

(she stops)

GANTRY

77

He waits -- alone. His glance of direct maleness unsettles her.

GANTRY

He's answering the telegram.

Sharon avoids his eyes, passes him, starts up aisle.

SHARON

What if Bill's right? What if we're not ready for Zenith?

(he walks beside her silently)

We don't have to prove ourselves here. But in Zenith --! All those important ministers with their college degrees and fancy interpretations of the bible -- I can just see them dissecting everything I say or think or wear --

They have reached the exit. She stops talking as she faces heavy rain puddles between them and the limousine. She starts forward, hesitates. Gantry sweeps her up in his arms. She stiffens with alarm. He carries her to the limousine, bravely splashing thru the muddy water. Watchman opens door.

GANTRY (to Watchman)

Can't let Sister catch cold, can we?

Gantry slides Sharon past the wheel and gets in. He starts the motor. She is a bit flustered.

SHARON
What was I sayin?

77
cont'd

GENTRY
That you'll murder 'em in Zenith.

SHARON (smiles)
You mean -- save them.

GENTRY (starts car)
Yeh. That's what I mean!

Limousine pulls away, splashing mud.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S HOTEL SUITE DUSK

78

Room filled with flowers. Table set with tea and cookies. Sharon in a business suit. Gentry and Morgan in conservative clothes. A church committee of ten ministers from Zenith, two from Lincoln and George F. Babbitt, Zenith's leading business man and citizen.

They have been engaged in open discussion for some time. Thru the dissolve we hear a welter of voices:--

REV. BROWN (50, worried)
Who's going to put up the money?

REV. PHILLIPS (local)
Right here in Lincoln we had no
problem raising --

BABBITT
If you'll only leave the money matters
to me --

REV. HACKER (45, athletic)
Mr. Babbitt --

REV. GARRISON (35, lean,
hard intellect)
Why is a cash guarantee necessary at all?

MORGAN
Without a guarantee, gentlemen -- a
revival is impossible.

BABBITT

Keerect!

REV. HACKER

But if they get a guarantee --

BABBITT (overlaps)

Order!

REV. HACKER (overlaps)

-- what guarantee do we get?

BABBITT

Order, PLEASE!

Babbitt strikes spoon against glass for order. The chatter that has risen simmers down.

BABBITT

Thank you.

Sharon has been listening quietly, pouring tea, refilling cups, passing cookies. She now pours for Rev. Planck. Gantry turns on lights.

REV. PLANCK

Mr. Babbitt, as chairman of this committee -- I can say I want this revival -- but we simply cannot make a cash guarantee.

REV. ULRICH

I agree. After all, 30 thousand dollars --

BABBITT

Will be raised!

REV. PLANCK

How, Mr. Babbitt?

BABBITT

By decent, respectable people who wanta see the old time religion come back to the --

REV. ULRICH

I agree!

BABBITT
Will you let me please finish?

REV. ULRICH
Of course, George.

BABBITT
Thank you, Charley. Okay, now.
Everybody knows I contribute more to
charity and poverty and things than
anybody.

(to Rev. Hacker)
Didn't my Real Estate Company give
you that corner lot -- rent free --
for a church baseball team?

(to Pengilly)
And who got coal for your church in
those tough war years of '17 and
'18 -- and I'm not even a Methodist!
All right then! I always say:-
"Business is business." It's the
American Way. Now, you boys just --

REV. GARRISON
Mr. Babbitt -- why do you want a
revival in Zenith?

BABBITT
I know what you're getting at, Phil.
You're not fooling me for a second --

MORGAN
Gentlemen -- we're all aware of the
church's financial problems, but --

REV. GARRISON
Are we aware, sir!

REV. BROWN
My church hasn't been painted in
eight years, --

BABBITT
Whose fault is --

REV. POTTS
What about the gymnasium, I --

BABBITT
-- that? The church is supposed to --

REV. PENGILLY

In my part of town -- milk for
children is the problem.

GENTRY

Your problem is EMPTY CHURCHES --
that's your problem.

BABBITT (quick glance
of approval)

That's a fact!

MORGAN

Let's face it, gentlemen -- the
unpleasant fact is that attendance
is falling off everywhere.

GENTRY

You know Sister Sharon can fill your
churches -- an' that's why you're here
in the first place.

BABBITT

Keerect! I always say:- "If you're
sick -- call a doctor."

REV. ULRICH

I agree.

MORGAN

Look at the record, Gentlemen --
(looks at typed pages)
Sister Sharon's been in Lincoln
-- going on the fifth week. 275
new church members in one church
alone --

REV. PHILLIPS

My church.

MORGAN (refers to notes)

More than 2800 Decisions for Christ --
actual converts -- who signed pledges --
not our statistics, gentlemen --
(holds up clipping)
-- but printed in your own Zenith
newspaper -- written up by Jim Lefferts,
a Pulitzer Prize winner.

REV. GARRISON
Does the record show how long your
"converts" remain church members?

BABBITT (exasperated)
There he goes again! I always say:-
"When in doubt -- take action." Let's
vote.

REV. ULRICH
Second the motion.

BABBITT
All in favor --

REV. ULRICH
AYE !!!

REV. GARRISON
Just a moment, please --

BABBITT
Out of order. There's a motion on
the floor --.

SHARON
May I say something, please?

BABBITT
You have our undivided attention,
Sister.

SHARON (sad smile)
Wouldn't it be a happier world if
money was not the third arm of
religion --. Poor Reverend Brown
can't paint his church --
(to Rev. Potts)
-- you can't have your gymnasium --
(to Pengilly)
-- no child should be without milk --
(suddenly terse)
-- and my expenses are high enough
to run a factory. I practically DO
run a factory.

BABBITT
You people never think of OUR problems,
do you?

SHARON

78
cont'd

Who do you think pays my staff --
the musicians -- the workers who put
up the tent -- truck transportation --
railroad fares -- food bills --
advertising and printing bills --
electric bills -- insurance bills --
hotel bills! The church committees
always expect a generous contribution
from me -- and they always get it!
And when I leave your town five weeks
later -- you get the benefits -- you
have the flock -- and I have to start
over again.

(softly, sadly)

No, gentlemen -- you don't want a
revival. And I'm afraid you don't
want me, either.

She quickly exits into her bedroom.

BABBITT (to ministers)

Now see what you've done!

GENTRY

79

He looks at Morgan during the awkward silence. Morgan
is concerned about Sharon. He starts toward bedroom.

GENTRY

Bill -- I think these gentlemen would
sure like to have a l'il privacy 'long
'bout now -- to sorta kick it aroun' --
(Morgan enters bedroom)

REV. PLANCK

Thank you, Mr. Gantry.

BABBITT

Uh -- Mr. Gantry --
(comes close)
-- got any cigars around here?

GENTRY

Never touch 'em, Mr. Babbitt, but --

BABBITT

George.

GANTRY (the charm)
-- I'll gladly send for some --
George, boy.

BABBITT
Thanks, Elm --
(winks)
-- now don't you worry none.

Gantry enters bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

80

Sharon turns from window as Gantry closes door.

SHARON (depressed)
You were right, Bill. They don't
want us.

MORGAN
They'll want us, all right. The
point is -- if they invite us --
should we accept?

GANTRY (softly)
I was just thinkin', Shara -- when
we get to Zenith -- we'll use
sawdust in the tent. That way there
won't be so much racket when you talk.
Another thing --

INT. LIVING ROOM SUITE

81

Heated voices in close dispute. No one listens to
anyone else.

REV. PLANCK
I'm not afraid to admit it -- our
churches are half-empty --

REV. HACKER
The ball parks are full --

REV. BROWN
So are the race tracks!

REV. ULRICH
And the speakeasies! --- So I'm told.

BABBITT
Let's not go blaming them!

REV. GARRISON
Them? Who? The bootleggers?

BABBITT
The PEOPLE, that's who.

REV. POTTS
The people seem to be losing faith --

REV. PENGILLY
In us, perhaps -- not in God!

REV. HACKER
Well -- if Sister Sharon can fill
our churches, I'm for the Revival.

BABBITT
Let's vote!

REV. ULRICH
Let's vote!

REV. GARRISON
Vote to do what? Marry the church
to a three-ring circus -- to barkers
who say they're messengers of God --
who reduce frightened farmers to
howling dogs? All very entertaining,
I'm sure, but hardly --

REV. PLANCK (uneasily)
Whether we like it or not, Phil --
we are in competition with the
entertainment business.

REV. GARRISON
I'm not!

BABBITT
Then you oughta be!
(to Rev. Brown)
What about your bingo games?
(to Rev. Hacker)
What about your baseball and square
dances, hah? Ain't that entertainment?
Whatsa difference, hah? It's our job

BABBITT (cont'd)
to make a success outta Christianity --
keep the churches full --

81
cont'd

REV. PENGILLY
What has religion to do with filling
churches?

(quietly)

Once there were only 13 Christians in
the entire world! Was Christianity a
failure? Did God go out of business?

BABBITT
Keerect! Christianity is a going
concern -- a successful international
enterprise --. Now, if you boys don't
get the young people into church -- if
you don't keep the train on the tracks"
-- your church boards will find some-
body else who will.

(silence)

Is that clear, Reverend Garrison?

REV. GARRISON (rises, gets hat)
Speaking for myself -- not my congregation
or its church board -- religion is NOT a
business! And Revivalism is not religion!
And my vote is NO!
(starts out)
Good night, gentlemen.

They watch him go in awkward silence. There is a glint
of admiration in Pengilly's eyes. Fear in others.
Defiance in Babbitt.

REV. PLANCK
Phil --
(but Garrison exits)

BABBITT
Harvard! Look around you, boys.
Young folks crying they're the Lost
Generation. Godless anarchists on
every street corner, and him walking
out on a crisis. Do you realize
that almost every President of the
United States was a Mason and a
Protestant??? Every session of
Congress opens with a word read from
the St. James version of the bible.

BABBITT (cont'd)

But right now -- in this enlightened age -- a Catholic is running for President! Do you want the Pope in the White House? I tell you boys -- our Christian nation is in grave danger.

81
cont'd

REV. PENGILLY (takes
off eyeglasses --)

Mr. Babbitt --! Don't say another word. Don't say anything at all.

Babbitt subsides. Ministers converge on Rev. Pengilly.

REV. PLANCK

Please, John -- if Revivalism can do the job --

REV. PENGILLY

Zenith had a revival 40 years ago. It saved everybody in sight for miles --. -- and today -- we still have the same problem --

REV. PLANCK

Please, John --

Rev. Pengilly looks at their strained faces. He wipes his spectacles. He is very sad.

INT. BEDROOM

82

Sharon stares moodily out of window. Morgan sits, looks at floor between legs. Gantry paces. Knock at door. It means much. Gantry opens door.

BABBITT (beaming)

Welcome to Zenith, Sister.

GENTRY (shakes hands)

Congratulations, George, boy.
A wise decision.

Gantry and Morgan exit into living room. Sharon closes door, remains in bedroom. She closes her eyes in prayer.

INT. LIVING ROOM

83

Gantry shakes hands with other ministers. Morgan gets typed sheets. General hubub.

MORGAN

Of course -- in the interests of full support -- all your churches will be closed every Sunday while the Revival is --

REV. PENGILLY (rises)

Not my church.

(gets hat)

Those doors haven't been closed in the 45 years I've been pastor.

(starts out)

My church will always be open to any -- even one -- even none.

Babbitt hurries after him.

INT. HALLWAY

84

Rev. Pengilly emerges. Babbitt stops him.

BABBITT

Brother Pengilly -- this kind of thing takes special know-how. Now, why don't you just be regular and play ball --

REV. PENGILLY

Mr. Babbitt, sir --

(a gentle smile)

-- why don't you believe in God?

(he walks away)

Babbitt watches him go.

MORGAN (inside room)

This statement inviting Sister Sharon to Zenith must be signed by all Protestant clergymen --

REV. PLANCK

All?

MORGAN

Now, on the matter of pledge cards --.
We have found from experience --

84
cont'd

INT. CORRIDOR

85

Rev. Pengilly turns corridor. Jim Lefferts waits there, leaning against wall, jotting down some notes. Jim joins Rev. Pengilly.

JIM

Evening, Reverend.

(Pengilly nods)

Brother Garrison left in a hurry.

(Pengilly nods)

Has it been decided to throw the
Christians of Zenith to the lions?

REV. PENGILLY

Don't be so happy, Jim. Lions eat
infidels, too.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET ZENITH DAY

86

A parade, led by Boy Rangers Drum-and-Bugle Corps. Sharon sits with Morgan in back of open touring car. She waves at crowds on sidewalk. There are tumbling clowns, and a Veterans' contingent, led by George F. Babbitt in his World War I uniform. Beside him strides Gantry. The parade passes under a banner strung across the street:-

WELCOME TO ZENITH
SISTER SHARON

There are other banners:-

HELLO, SISTER SHARON
Goodbye, Mr. Devil

HURRY UP, SISTER
OUR SOULS ARE ON FIRE

Confetti drifts down from buildings. Joyous citizens throw colorful streamers.

GANTRY AND BABBITT

87

They parade side by side acknowledging plaudits of crowd. Though they speak to each other, they do not look at one another. Each waves to crowd, smiles --

BABBITT

Great folks, ain't they?

GANTRY

Great. Can I make a suggestion, George, boy?

BABBITT

Shoot, pal.

GANTRY

For openin' night -- how 'bout invitin' factory workers, farmers, mill hands --

BABBITT

Sorta rootin' sections -- see who's got the most Christian spirit --

GANTRY

That's right, George.

BABBITT

Already done, pal. Way ahead of you.

GANTRY

I knew yuh would be, George.

SHARON AND MORGAN

88

He is quite impressed by the turnout. She is ecstatic. Her car passes by a building from which confetti rains down. On the building is a sign:-

ZENITH TIMES DISPATCH

Jim Lefferts watches parade at window. Several other reporters and a sob-sister watch also.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GOLF CLUB PRIVATE LUNCH ROOM DAY

89

About 30 men at one table. Insignia of various organizations displayed. Among reporters are Jim Lefferts and Sob Sister. Morgan sits on one side of Babbitt -- Sharon on the other side. Babbitt stands.

BABBITT

-- so here she is -- without further ado -- the White Hope of America -- Sister Sharon Falconer!

Babbitt applauds. Mild applause. Sharon rises.

SHARON

Thank you, Mr. Babbitt. We all know why the Lord's been good to your Real Estate Co.

(unpins lapel watch)

I promised not to take more than 30 seconds of your valuable time. As Mr. Babbitt says:- "Time costs money." So -- here goes.

(rapidly)

Ten years ago, you Elks, Masons, Rotarians, Lions, Kiwanis fought against Kaiser Bill. But there's a far more dangerous enemy right here in Zenith. The DEVIL! -- and he's got a mortgage on every soul in town. I know you all say your prayers and you bathe every day and you obey at least nine of the commandments -- some of the time --

(self-conscious laughter
from the men)

-- but that only makes you red, fresh meat for Mr. Devil. We need a mass revival of faith -- you just cannot be a part-time Christian and be in a State of Grace. So -- will you open your dear, warm hearts and sign these pledges --?

(holds them up)

Will you lend me your muscles, brains and money?

(looks at watch)

28 seconds. For God's sake -- do it now! 30 seconds!

She sits down. Much applause, banging on cups, glasses. Jim Lefferts smiles. Sob Sister tearfully enthusiastic.

89
cont'd

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S OFFICE HEADQUARTERS NIGHT

90

Typewriters, mimeographing machines, tabulators busy. Secretaries answering phones. Posters of Sharon and Gantry on the wall. Slogans and bible quotations. A beehive of activity takes place simultaneously. It is revealed thru the eyes of Jim Lefferts, who enters from the outside. Flash-powder pictures are being taken.

SECRETARIES (on phones)

Good evening. God is Love. Sister Sharon's Sanctuary. May I help you?

That's right, sir. The first tent meeting is tomorrow night.

No, Sister Brown -- there is no admission charge --

COUNSELLOR (with bible,
into phone)

For sickness Sister Sharon would suggest reading the 103rd Psalm --

ANOTHER COUNSELLOR

If you are discouraged try Deuteronomy, Chapter 33, Verse 27 --

To one side Morgan answers reporters. On other side of outer office, Sharon answers Sob Sister and other reporters. As Jim approaches --

TABLOID REPORTER (to Morgan)

Kind of like a factory, isn't it.

MORGAN (a smile)

Except we're manufacturing faith.

2nd REPORTER

Would you say you were selling religion?

MORGAN

Do you know of a better product
to sell than God?

90
cont'd

Jim approaches Sharon and reporters. She appears weary,
nervous.

REPORTER (to Sharon)

How many souls do you expect to
save in Zenith?

(her mind is elsewhere)

Sister???

SHARON

I'm sorry. What was the question,
please?

SOB SISTER

In what branch of the church were
you baptized?

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hold it, Sister.

Flash picture taken. Sharon is startled.

JIM (leans in)

Sister Sharon -- I'm afraid you've
got a problem with the fire
department again. I've got the
Chief on the phone.

As she looks at him blankly, Jim has her by the arm
and is leading her into the inner office.

SHARON (to other reporters)

Excuse me, please.

INNER OFFICE

91

Jim enters with Sharon, closes door. She starts for
phone, sees it is on hook, turns askance.

JIM

You looked as if you'd had about
enough who-what-when-where.

SHARON (relieved)
Oh --. Thank you.

She quickly opens her purse and fumbles for an aspirin tablet. Jim pours a glass of water for her. Meanwhile --

JIM
Tired?

SHARON
These last two days --
(holds up aspirin --
smiles)
The Aspirin Age.
(swallows aspirin)

JIM
Nervous about opening tomorrow
night?

SHARON
I don't know.

JIM
What about Gantry?

SHARON (smiles)
He's got all the nerve in the
world -- but no nerves.
(smile fades)
Want the truth? I'm scared to
death of you city people.

JIM

Don't be. The women will worship
you -- and the men will love you.
(he starts to go)

91
cont'd

SHARON

And you?

JIM

I'll be there, too.
(exiting)
'Night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S TENT DAY

92

About fifty volunteer workers are seated near lower platform. Rachel and her choral group are to one side. Workmen push wheelbarrows of sawdust down aisle, spreading sawdust. Gantry paces before them like a general before an attack.

GANTRY

When Sister Falconer says:- "Won't you
shake hands for Jesus?" -- the chorus
starts singin'. You got that Sister
Rachel?

(she nods)

All right. Now the minute folks start
comin' down the aisle -- you ushers go
into action. You'll wear this kinda
badge --

(holds up badge)

Get 'em movin' -- keep 'em movin'!!!
Get these pledge cards in their hands.
Don't forget the pencils. You
counsellors -- you'll wear these lapel
pennants --

(holds them up)

German-speakin' hold up your hands --

(they do)

Swedish-speakin' --

(they hold up hands)

Now, don't forget to ask 'em if they're
regular church members -- also WHAT
church -- an' it don't matter what church.
Some folks might wanna cry -- well, let 'em!

(looks at watch)

T'night's the big night -- are we ready
t'make a touchdown for Jesus Christ???

Yes! ALL

GANTRY
Any questions?

RACHEL
Brother Gantry --?

GANTRY (ignores her)
Okay, then -- 7:30 we hit that line!

He snaps watch shut, pockets it, starts up aisle toward exit.
Rachel hurries after him, falls in beside him. MOVE with them.

RACHEL (meekly)
Elmer --?

GANTRY (keeps walking)
Later, honey.

RACHEL
I wrote my husband --

GANTRY (glance over
his shoulder, whispers)
Not now.

RACHEL
Are you angry? Did I do something?
For the last week you haven't even --
touched me.

Gantry takes her by the elbow, whispers as they walk --

GANTRY
Baby, I like to have fun almost as much as
you do --. But all this -- all this --
ALL THE TIME -- ! It just ain't
Christian behavior, honey.
(workman approaches with sawdust.
Gantry becomes formal)
Sister -- you might find your answer
in meditation and solitary prayer.

With which he stalks out into the bright sunlight. Rachel
feels guilty for even having imposed on such a Christian
gentleman.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TENT NIGHT

93

Crowd still filters in. Within tent we hear gospel singing. Several religious organizations picket the tent. They carry sign identifying themselves: - Seventh Day Adventist, Christian Scientist, Unitarian, etc. These groups are orderly. They sing a gospel song in competition with those inside the tent. Several policemen stand by indecisively.

A gaunt man stands on a box, waves American Flag, rants at those entering tent.

GAUNT MAN

I tell you the end of the world is coming! It's coming this September 15th. It says so in the bible. They can't save you from the holocaust in this canvas babylon. Just as sure as God drowned the world -- just as sure as God plagued the earth with locusts and pestilence --

INT. TENT

94

Almost capacity crowd. Some people are gathered in groups with identifying standards and banners of welcome. (somewhat like a political convention)

- 1) ZENITH CAN CO. EMPLOYEES
We love you, Sister
- 2) MIDWEST WOOLEN WEAR INC.
God Bless you, Sister
- 3) APEX SAUSAGE & BOLOGNA CO.
Hallelujah, Sister
- 4) BABBITT REAL ESTATE CO.
God, Country and Home

Ushers guide new arrivals to proper sections by asking, "Woollen Wear? Apex Bologna? etc." These groups sing lustily.

A dissident group of college students, wearing fraternity jackets, also have placards: -

- 1) CLASS OF '27
SAYS REVIVALS
ARE SOPHOMORIC

EXT. TENT NIGHT

93

Crowd still enters tent. From inside we hear gospel singing. There is confusion outside tent entrance. Two groups picket. One group:

FREE THINKERS
OF THE WORLD
PROTEST !

They sing a gospel song in competition with singing inside. Second picket group:

- 1) THE WET PARADE
- 2) REPEAL PROHIBITION!
- 3) EVEN JESUS DRANK WINE!

A gaunt man stands on a box, waves American Flag, rants at those entering tent.

GAUNT MAN
I tell you the end of the world is coming! It's coming this September 15th. It says so in the bible. They can't save you from the holocaust in this canvas babylon. Just as sure as God drowned the world -- just as sure as God plagued the earth with locusts and pestilence --

SECOND SPEAKER (simultaneously)
Revivals are against organized labor. We want meat on the table -- not pie in the sky! We want a minimum wage -- not maximum malarkey. We want a voice to speak for a veterans' bonus -- not a "voice of doom" !

Several policemen stand around indecisively.

INT. TENT

94

Almost capacity crowd. Some people are gathered in groups with identifying standards and banners of welcome. (somewhat like a political convention)

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- 1) CLASS OF '27
SAYS REVIVALS
ARE SOPHMORIC

CONTINUED

2) IN WHAT PART
OF THE BODY
IS THE
SOUL?

94
 cont'd

3) WHAT PRICE SALVATION?

The college boys stand en masse. They sing the Star Spangled Banner in direct competition with the gospel singing. This causes confusion among others who don't know if they should stand or not. Some get up, are pulled down by friends, etc.

Others in crowd are dubious, shy, curious. Among spectators (not sitting together) are Reverends McGarry and Pengilly.

On second platform are several clergymen seen earlier:- Reverends Planck, Ulrich, Hacker, Potts and Brown. Leading citizens, Mayor, Babbitt, etc. in same section. Jim Lefferts among the press.

Gantry is on platform (downstage) singing the gospel song. His quick eyes gauge the temper of the crowd.

Immediately as the gospel song ends, there is a commotion at rear of tent. A college student and a Babbitt Real Estate Co. Employee are fighting. People call "shame, shame". Ushers and friends separate the fighting men.

Babbitt is out of his chair at once. He grabs Police Captain Holt and hustles him to one side, off platform. Jim Lefferts watches this byplay.

Gantry signals Rachel to start Sharon's theme, BATTLE HYMN. She does so.

BABBITT AND CAPT. HOLT

95

Gantry approaches in b.g.

BABBITT

Arrest them! All of them!

CAPT. HOLT

I don't know who started the fuss inside -- and the ones outside ain't breaking any laws.

BABBITT

First arrest them -- then we'll
find out who did what.

95
cont'd

GANTRY (calmly)

I wouldn't do that, George.

BABBITT

You want a riot? I always say:-

GANTRY

An' you're right! But -- yuh gotta
give folks stretchin'-room for their
feelin's. Now, you sit down, George,
boy, an' get close to God.

Gantry heads for Sharon's dressing room.

INT. SHARON'S DRESSING ROOM

96

Flowers from well-wishers. Sharon sits before mirrored
dressing table. Her eyes are closed. She is pale,
lifeless. Her bible lies open before her. Gantry enters.
Morgan has been pacing silently, turns on him.

MORGAN (paces)

I knew this would happen! You
certainly promoted us into Zenith --
and you certainly filled our tent --
but with WHAT? You and your "people".
Those aren't people. They're a mob!
They're one big dangerous animal. And
I'm not letting Shara go out there to
be mobbed or humiliated.

GANTRY

What's your plan? To run? Back to
the sticks? Either we win 'em over
t'night -- or there's no place to run!
(To her)

You've got to face 'em, Shara.

MORGAN

And do what? Blow them kisses? Tell
that mob to be nice little boys and
girls? Zenith is your idea -- and those
are your people -- you face them.

GANTRY (goes to her)

They want Shara --

(He lifts her to her feet.

Though he speaks softly, there
is strength and confidence in
his tone)Those Big City people got a coat of
hard varnish -- but underneath they're
just as sick an' scared as anybody
else. People everywhere are all the
same IN ONE THING. They're all afraid
to die. An' they hope you can save
'em. An' you can!

96

cont'd

She has not taken her eyes from his. It is as though she
has projected herself into an hypnotic state. She starts
for the tent -- stops -- returns to her dresser and picks
up her bible.

GANTRY

Shara --

But she does not hear him. Gantry holds aside the canvas
curtain -- she walks out to face the impatient, buzzing,
divided crowd.

INT. TENT

97

Sharon walks toward the center ramp. Gantry signals Rachel
to stop the BATTLE HYMN music. The music finishes off
raggedly.The jabbering crowd sees her. The singing groups stop
unevenly, tapering off. The college students, who clap in
derision -- stop clapping.As she comes to the ramp -- the crowd quiets down. She
seems alone -- small --. Now there is a great awesome
silence.

JIM LEFFERTS

98

He watches intently.

REVEREND PENGILLY

99

He is sympathetically absorbed.

Sc. 100 OUT

SHARON

101

She looks opaquely at the crowd. She seems to be waiting -- listening for some voice no other person can hear.

PACES IN CROWD

102

They are disturbed -- uneasy. Even outside the tent there is quiet, as the Picketers look thru tent opening -- and the Gaunt Man stops orating.

BABBITT

103

He perspires freely. He glances at the police. They are ready.

All these quick shots take place as the crowd simmers down to silence.

SHARON

104

Still she waits.

GANTRY AND MORGAN

105

They have come out of dressing room to watch. Gantry is under great strain.

GANTRY (whispers)

If anything happens to her --

The two men look at each other. Each man realizes how deeply the other feels. This is their first bond of sympathy.

SHARON

106

She speaks. Her voice is clear -- simple -- measured.

SHARON (she starts up aisle)
Some of you are troubled -- skeptical
of my motives. You want to know my
credentials. Who am I? Who sent me?
Some of you have come to sit in
judgment of me. But who among you is
wise enough to be a Judge in the House
of God? For even though you speak
with the tongue of an angel -- and
have not charity -- you are as sounding
brass. If I have sinned -- then God
will punish me. If I am lost in the
wilderness -- then God will show me
the way back. Will you pray with me
for guidance? Will you?

A few people among loyal groups, mostly aged persons,
kneel in the sawdust.

SHARON
God doesn't mind if you get a little
dirt on your knees.

More people kneel -- still among loyal groups. A crippled
man with crutches (at aisle) reaches out to Sharon. She
helps him kneel.

CRIPPLED MAN
I believe in you, Sister -- I
believe --

The choral group, under Rachel's direction, suddenly begins
to sing something appropriately solemn. Sharon turns
quickly, hurries toward platforms.

SHARON
No -- no singing -- no music --
(singing dies out)
-- just simple prayer.
(she mounts ramp -- appeals
to clergymen)
Will you pray with me?

Reverends Planck, Ulrich, etc. kneel. Babbitt does
likewise -- after the others act. Rachel and the choral
group and musicians kneel.

PRESS SECTION

107

Several reporters, led by Sob Sister kneel. Jim Lefferts remains seated.

AUDIENCE IN TENT

108

Comprehensive shot as loyal sections kneel.

REV. PENGILLY

109

He gets to his knees. So does Rev. McGarry.

GANTRY AND MORGAN

110

Gantry starts to say that Sharon has won the crowd. He sees Morgan on his knees. Gantry, too, kneels.

SHARON

111

She faces the audience on the second platform. She kneels. She closes her eyes.

SHARON

Dear God --

She stops. Something arrests her. She turns and looks behind her. Everyone on the platform is kneeling with the exception of Jim Lefferts.

SHARON

Are you too proud to kneel, Mr. Lefferts? You may not believe in God -- but God believes in you!

JIM LEFFERTS

112

He recognizes the power of her mystic appeal. He looks to the crowd.

CROWD

113

Loyal groups grimly await his move. Dissident faces also wait -- still not kneeling.

SHARON 114

She waits.

GENTRY AND MORGAN 115

They watch from side of platforms.

JIM LEFFERTS 116

A slight smile on his lips -- he kneels.

SHARON 117

She turns back to the audience, not in triumph, but in humility.

SHARON (closes eyes)

Dear God -- I am set upon by
enemies and I know not why.

(to crowd)

The Lord has said: -- "he that
believeth on me -- believeth not
on me -- but on him that sent me."

Crowd begins to mouth words with her. First a few voices
and then more. Now even the students, the last to kneel,
drop to their knees. They, too, mouth the prayer.
(Gospel of St. John 12:47)

SHARON

"And if any man hear my words and
believe not -- I judge him not. For
I came not to judge the world -- but
to save the world."

EXT. TENT 118

Now even the picketers and the soap-box orator get to
their knees to join the mass prayer.

INT. TENT 119

This is what the crowd wants to hear. There is a poetic
strength and beauty in the words -- a glowing faith in

Sharon as she kneels on the platform. Now the entire audience is saying the prayer with her -- all except Jim Lefferts. 119 cont'd

SHARON

"Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Shall I say -- Father, save me? But it is for this cause that I came unto this hour."

(she opens eyes -- pauses -- crowd waits --)

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves for it is written:-- If thine enemy hunger, feed him;"

(crowd joins in again)

"If he thirst, give him drink;"

(many persons weeping as they say prayer)

"Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

There is a calmness and peace and oneness in the crowd now.

Jim Lefferts is cryptically non-committal. Morgan is misty-eyed with relief. Gantry has admiration and respect for Sharon -- also; a vision of "things to come".

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TENT NIGHT

120

Pandemonium. Music, singing. The police make a path thru the crowd, which tries to reach Sharon. She and Gantry come out of tent and go to her waiting car. The chauffeur opens door. People congratulate her, try to touch her, praise her, ask her advice. They are finally in the limousine and away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR NIGHT

121

Packed with enthusiastic people waiting for Sharon to arrive, hoping to get a glimpse of her, wanting to congratulate her, thank her, etc. Several bellboys push thru crowd with bouquets of flowers. They enter Sharon's suite(door open), which is populated with clergymen, Babbitt, Morgan, reporters and photographers.

(Jim Lefferts not present). The only topic is Sharon Falconer. "She's an angel, she's gifted, she's a saint". To Babbitt she now means SUCCESS. To the clergymen she means vindication. To the people she is a prophetess and deliverer.

121
cont'd

A sudden stir -- pushing, craning, excitement. Photographers' flashbulbs down the corridor go off. Sharon and Gantry are coming. Captain Holt and several officers make a path for them. Rachel tries to catch Gantry's eye -- not a chance.

Sharon appears exhausted, drained, empty. Gantry is flushed, confident, surging with animal appetites. They enter Sharon's suite. Reverends Planck, Ulrich, etc. shake her hand, shower praise on her. The photographers keep taking pictures. The clergymen want to pose with her -- Babbitt won't leave her side. A weak, fixed smile is on Sharon's strained face. The hubub is deafening, but Babbitt is heard above all others. As Gantry guides Sharon to her bedroom.

BABBITT (to Sharon)

I knew you were 100 % first time I say you -- real quality --

(Sharon is in bedroom; Gantry closes door, looks for Morgan.

Babbitt continues to others)

Didn't I tell you? Didn't I spot her genius first?

(to reporters)

She's the greatest thing since Joan of Arc. I always say -- and you can quote me, boys -- "Nothing succeeds like success."

Morgan is on phone accepting congratulations for Sharon. Gantry gets to him, covers mouthpiece.

GANTRY (whispers)

Get 'em all outta here -- quick.

He leaves Morgan, who hangs up as quickly as possible.

REV. PLANCK (to Gantry)

It's a great victory over doubt and dissension --

PHOTOGRAPHER

Can we have a picture of you and Sister?

GANTRY

Not me, gentlemen -- an' Sister Sharon's just gone thru a tryin' ordeal --

121
cont'd

Morgan is ushering people out of suite.

BABBITT (grabs Gantry)

I was just saying:- "If it doesn't get you here --
(taps his heart)

GANTRY

Right, George, boy.
(whispers)
Give the child a break -- she's practically out on her feet --

BABBITT

Oh, sure, sure --
(to Clergymen)
Give the little lady a break, boys.
(herds them toward door)
Time to say goodnight -- we're all very 'preciative -- we thank you all --

CORRIDOR

122

People moving along, leaving. Rachel strains to catch Gantry's eye. Gantry is shaking hands with clergymen, etc., Babbitt is really good at sweeping them out.

RACHEL (calls out)

Brother Gantry --

GANTRY (to reporter)

There's a lady who deserves your attention, fellas -- Sister Rachel, the Maestro of Music --

And Gantry has dodged back into the suite.

INT. LIVING ROOM

123

It is almost empty now.

MORGAN (at door)

Good night -- good night -- thank
you -- good night --

123
cont'd

GANTRY

Thanks, Bill -- you're a trojan --
(shakes Morgan's hand)
good night --

Morgan instinctively says good night and finds himself
gently pushed into the corridor with the others. Gantry
quickly locks the door.

Suddenly he is bouncy, humming his little tune. He
starts for Sharon's bedroom. He preens a moment before
the mirror. He plucks a rose from the bouquet. He
opens bedroom door a few inches with happy anticipation --

GANTRY

Shara?

(no reply)

Are yuh decent?

(no reply)

Gantry enters the bedroom. Sharon lies face down on the
bed. She is clothed exactly as we last saw her. She is
sound asleep. Her face is still wet with tears. She has
fallen into a deep sleep of exhaustion. Gantry comes to
her, looks down at her helplessness. He removes her
slippers quietly. He draws the coverlet over her form.
He smiles in regret, turns off light and exits.

INT. CORRIDOR

123-A

Gantry emerges from Sharon's room. The corridor is empty
now. He still holds the rose he plucked. He walks past
a door, stops, looks around, comes back, taps on the door.

In a moment it is opened by a tearful Rachel. He hands
her the rose, steps inside. She sniffles, hope lights her
eyes.

GANTRY

Baby -- you've been avoidin' me --
(as he embraces her, he snaps
off the lights, closes door)

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CITY ROOM TIMES DISPATCH NIGHT

124

Desk lamp snaps on! A night editor, a couple of reporters and a janitor sweeping up.

Jim Lefferts has snapped on the light at his desk. A woman secretary sits at his typewriter. Jim pulls notes and papers from his pocket. He dictates as she types. Camera gets reactions of others.

CONTINUED

JIM

124

Slug this:- Lead all -- article one.
(pacing)

cont'd

Revivalism came to Zenith last night. After six years of backwoods success, Sister Sharon Falconer faced a fractious overflowing Metropolitan crowd. Many came to jeer -- and stayed to cheer. Sister Sharon tamed the Philistines with a simple prayer. The Big City Hicks swallowed the chocolate-coated pill with howling hosannas. Paragraph. But if simple prayer was the main attraction of revivalism -- Sister's tent soon would be as empty as the churches she claims she can fill. Paragraph. What is a revival? Is it a church? Is it religion? Or is it a circus side-show, complete with freaks, magic and rabble-rousing? Why does a revival attract thousands? To see a miracle? To be saved from a lifetime of sin in five minutes? To be entertained, cured, cuddled in quick, painless salvation? Paragraph. Zenith is the center of the Bible Belt. This is an Age that wants noise and whoopee! We are fertile land for corn, beans, squash, rumble-seat sex and Revivalism. Hallelujah, brother!

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

125

Jim continues his attack, during which we see a rapid series of shots in keeping with the wit and humor of the style. Jim's voice is heard over these vignettes.

- 1) Foreman in press room pulls paper from carrier. It contains Jim's sketches of Sharon and Gantry. The Caption reads:- SAINTS -- or -- SCOUNDRELS ???
- 2) Rev. Ulrich hurries into Rev. Planck's church library. Ulrich carries a Times-Dispatch. He is frightened. Planck is on the telephone reading from paper to someone --

- 3) -- that someone is Rev. Brown. Brown is half-shaved. As he listens in growing horror to what Planck is reading, his razor shakes in his hand, his eyes close in despair.
- 4) Rev. McGarry (he walked out on committee inviting Revival to Zenith) reads Jim's article and smiles in appreciation.
- 5) Rev. Pengilly is in a fish market. The fish-man slaps a big slimy fish onto the front page of the Dispatch.

125
cont'd

During the shots seen above, we hear Jim: --

JIM

The law says a doctor, lawyer, dentist must pass a State test. Churches demand University degrees from their preachers. But what qualifies someone to be a Revivalist? Nothing! Nothing at all! Anyone can set up shop as a Revivalist -- be he fool, ignoramous, charlatan, insane or innocent and inspired. All you need is showmanship, some familiar bible quotations, and, most of all, a tireless voice. There is not one law in any State in the Union protecting the public from the hysterical onslaught of revivalists. But the law does permit them to invest in tax-free property, get lower railroad fares, buy most things at wholesale prices -- and collect money without accounting for how it is used! What do you get for your money? Can you get into heaven by contributing one buck or fifty? Can you get life eternal by "shaking hands for Jesus" with Elmer Gantry? Are you really converted when you sign a pledge card? How many of these assembly-line converts go back to church? And for how long? One Sunday? Two?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM HOUSE DAY

126

Five attractive girls lounge around. They curl their hair, cream their faces, etc. One of the girls, lush, attractive,

examines her hose for runs. A BLONDE reads from the Times Dispatch. PETE, a hawk-faced man is on the phone.

126
cont'd

BLONDE (reads)

"I've watched this UNholy Trinity --
Falconer, Gantry, Morgan -- "save"
Nebraska! Has sin in that State been
washed away? Is there less envy, lust
or adultery?

GIRL

Gee, I hope not.

PETE (hangs up)

Break it up, girls -- a party of Johns
want action --

GIRL WITH HOSE

(quiet, disdainful)

Keep reading, honey.

PETE

The guys said they'd be right over --

GIRL WITH HOSE

Drop dead.

(Pete shrugs helplessly)

BLONDE (reads again)

"To Sister Sharon -- God is a wise, old
benevolent Father, who is superintendent
of a perfumed hotel called Heaven. To
Elmer Gantry -- God is an All-American
football player, with a long white beard,
who carries lightning in one hand and a
bag of tricks in the other. And Gantry
has the high pressure style and personality
to sell this God even to Big City Slickers.
He can make innocent people feel guilty --
and bad people feel good! Gantry has a
voice made for promises!

BRUNETTE

He's dreamy. I saw him in the parade ---
with Georgie!

BLONDE

I'm going down to that tent tonight and
get myself good and saved.

RED HEAD

Can he save anybody?

126
cont'd

GIRL WITH HOSE

Can he?!!! Anywhere -- anytime! In the tent, standing up, laying down or any other way. And he's got plenty of ways.

BRUNETTE

Lulu -- was you saved by him, Lulu, honey?

LULU (girl with hose)

Sister, I was saved by him way back in Schoenheim, Kansas.

(mimics Gantry)

"Love is the Mornin' an' the Evenin' Star. An' WHAT IS LOVE? Not the carnal -- but the Divine love?"

(without rancor)

He gave me special instructions back of the pulpit Christmas Eve. He got to howling "repent, repent" -- and I got to moaning "save me, save me". And the first thing I knew, he rammed the fear of God into me so hard and fast. I never heard my old man's footsteps. Next thing I knew, I was out in the cold, hard snow in my bare little soul.

BRUNETTE

Oh, Brother Gantry -- save me, too!

The girls have a fine time. Lulu doesn't hear their laughter. She thinks of something long ago. She looks at sketches in newspaper -- of Gantry and Sharon.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S HEADQUARTERS DAY

126-A

Only a few visitors today. Most of office staff reading Jim Lefferts' story. Phones keep ringing -- being answered.

PHONE GIRLS

126-A
cont'd

"Sorry, Mr. Gantry is not in --"
"Sister Sharon will return later --"
"Mr. Gantry most certainly was born
in the United States --"
"Yes, sir -- Mr. Morgan will issue
a statement later."
"Sorry, Mr. Gantry is not in --"

During this conglomeration of sound, Mr. Babbitt enters,
pushes his way past several persons. He is in a rage,
newspaper under his arm.

BABBITT

I wanna see Sister Sharon!

SECRETARY

I'm sorry, Mr. Babbitt, she's not in.

BABBITT

Where's Gantry -- or Morgan -- or
anybody --

INT. SHARON'S HEADQUARTERS INNER OFFICE DUSK 127

Late afternoon shadows streak office. Gantry has Times
Dispatch on desk. He is on the phone. He is strangely
subdued.

GANTRY (into phone)

Don't do it, Shara --. Don't
get mixed up in an alley fight.

(door bursts open and

Babbitt enters in a rush)

Shara???? Shara????

(she has hung up. Gantry hangs
up, turns to Babbitt with what
is meant as a hearty attitude)

Hello, George, boy --

BABBITT

You shut up!

(whacks his newspaper)

I'm crucified to pieces!

(reads from paper)

"Why did George F. Babbitt underwrite
a guarantee of \$30,000 to bring a
revival to Zenith? Is Sister Sharon

BABBITT (cont'd)
preaching the word of Jesus -- or the
gospel of Babbitt's Real Estate
business?"

127
cont'd

(throws paper on desk)
For Chrissakes -- I'm a 32nd Degree
Mason -- I'm in business -- I don't
want any trouble!

GANTRY
Georgie, Georgie -- you're not takin'
that thing seriously???

BABBITT
I sure as hell don't think it's a joke!
My phone won't stop ringing. Everybody's
either mad at me -- or laughing at me.
Even my own family's turned against me.
As of right now -- I'm cancelling out on
my support -- financial and every other way.
(starts out)

GANTRY
But, George -- you've got to fight back.

BABBITT (stops in horror)
Fight the PRESS???? Mister -- you know
anybody ever licked the newspapers?
(opens door)
Besides -- I'm for a free press -- free
enterprise -- and whatever-the-hell
the other freedoms are!
(he slams out of office)

Gantry hesitates a moment in the heavy silence. He quietly
locks door, goes to desk, opens a drawer, takes out a
bible -- tosses it aside -- reaches farther into the desk
drawer -- takes out a pint bottle, uncorks it, takes a
long, long drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. REV. PLANCK'S LIBRARY DUSK

127-A

Two wire baskets of telegrams stand on desk. Morgan,
newspaper in hand, faces Rev. Planck. Morgan is in a
cold rage.

MORGAN

But you invited us here! If you
withdraw your support, you're
endorsing this vicious, bigoted
newspaper smear!

REV. PLANCK

These telegrams of protest --

MORGAN

There's always a lunatic fringe, who --

REV. PLANCK

These, Mr. Morgan, were sent by my
parishoners --

(other telegrams)

-- these are complaints from the
church board -- even my national
superior phoned me long distance --
I'm sorry, Mr. Morgan.

MORGAN

But if you turn against us now --

REV. PLANCK

What I do doesn't matter. Public
opinion's turned against you. That
does matter.

INT. SHARON'S HOTEL SUITE NIGHT

127-B

She is alone. She has newspaper.

SHARON (into phone)

I want to speak to the publisher.

(knocking at door)

Tell him it's Sister Sharon

Falconer. I'll wait!

(she opens door. To Rachel
as she enters)

Did you find Mr. Gantry?

RACHEL

Nobody's seen him at the office
since this morning.

SHARON

His hotel room?

RACHEL
Hasn't been there all day.

127-B
cont'd

SHARON (into phone)
Yes? Mr. Eddington? I want to
see you. No, sir! At once! Your
office is fine. Will you please have
Mr. Lefferts there? Thank you.
(hangs up. Starts into bedroom)

RACHEL
Maybe something happened to Mr. Gantry.

SHARON
Forget Mr. Gantry. When Mr. Morgan
comes to the tent, tell him to keep
things going til I get there.
(gets clothes from closet)

RACHEL
Isn't there anything I can do
to help?

SHARON (gently)
Sing loud and clear -- and pray
hard and long.

Sharon kisses Rachel on the cheek. Rachel exits as
Sharon dresses.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BABBITT REAL ESTATE CO. NIGHT

128

Gantry pounds on door. Taxi pulls away from curb.
Office (seen thru window) is empty. One shaded light
burns.

CONTINUED:

INT. OFFICE

129

Door opens to inner office. Babbitt emerges in shirt sleeves. Thru door(seen briefly)are five men in a smoke-filled room. They are seated around a poker table, chips, cards, drinks. Wall clock reads 9:12.

BABBITT (opens door)

I'm busy.

GANTRY (enters briskly)

Sit down, George, boy.

(Babbitt stands defiantly; Gantry
reads from little black book)

736 Lombard Street. Two-story building.

Owner:- George F. Babbitt. Tenant:-
speakeasy.

(Babbitt sits down)

1121 Maple Street. Owner:- Babbitt.

Tenant:- Prostitu --

BABBITT

On my property! I'll have them
evicted at --

GANTRY

You were victimized, George, boy.

(Babbitt sweats)

Same's me.

BABBITT

Yeh.

GANTRY (gets Babbitt's
jacket from coat tree)

Now, say goodnight to the boys in the
back room.

BABBITT (easy laugh)

Oh, that! We're only playing for
chips -- sociable.

GANTRY

'Course.

(holds coat for Babbitt)

BABBITT (shaky laugh)

You taking me for a ride or something?

GANTRY
You're taking me -- to the Publisher
of the Times Dispatch.

129
cont'd

BABBITT (indicates
little black book)
You got something on him, too?

GANTRY (glances at clock)
We're late, George, boy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PUBLISHER'S OFFICE NIGHT

130

Mr. Eddington, publisher of Times Dispatch, is 60, sparse
of frame and words. Clock on his desk reads -- 9:25. Jim
Lefferts slouches in a chair. Sharon, on her feet, is
between Publisher's desk and Jim's chair. She is heated,
almost inarticulate, because of her anger.

PUBLISHER
Are you suggesting censorship, Miss?

SHARON
Only fair play, Mr. Eddington.
(indicates newspaper)
This is the worst kind of muck-raking.

JIM
Is it truth?

SHARON
No!

JIM (softly)
Then you ought to sue us for libel.

Publisher's secretary enters, puts typed note before him.
Eddington glances at it, nods to her. She exits.

SHARON (meanwhile)
Oh, you're too clever for that. It's
what you imply!
(looks thru Jim's story)
The veiled slurs --
(blinded by rage)
-- oh, where is it -- the sly hints
that I've misused collection money.

JIM
I never said that.

130
cont'd

SHARON
Did I ever preach anything except
God's word? Well -- did I????

JIM
Are you ordained?

SHARON (startled)
What?

Secretary shows in Gantry and Babbitt. Gantry listens
silently, keenly observant. Babbitt is cowed at once.

JIM (uninterrupted)
Ordained! Do you hold a degree from
any recognized Theological Seminary?
Does Gantry?

SHARON
No, but --

JIM
Are you sanctioned to preach by any
church?

SHARON
No, Mr. Lefferts. And neither was
Peter or Paul or any of the Apostles.

JIM
But they said they lived with the Son
of God -- were taught directly by Him --
were sanctified by Him. What gives you
the right to speak for God?

SHARON
I couldn't possibly be doing God's work
without His approval.

JIM
How did you get His approval?
(she is silent)
Did God speak to you personally?
(silence)
Did He write you a letter? Did you have
a visitation from God? A burning bush,
perhaps?
(she is close to breaking)

JIM (cont'd)

130
cont'd

Where in the New Testament does it say that God ever spoke to anyone except His Son?

(silence)

But it does say in First Corinthians:-
"Let your women keep silence in the churches -- it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

Sharon is unable to speak. Her eyes fill. Babbitt wishes he were someplace else.

GANTRY (pleasantly)

Well, Jim, boy -- I'm glad you're a student of the bible.

BABBITT (nervously)

How're you, Mr. Eddington?

(publisher nods)

How's the wife and family?

PUBLISHER (ignores Babbitt)

What is it, Mr. Gantry? Are you responsible for some of these crackpot calls I've been getting? You want Mr. Lefferts fired, too?

GANTRY

Fired???? Why, you oughta give Jim a bonus for boostin' your circulation.

JIM

I thought you came "to bury Caesar -- not to praise him".

GANTRY

SHAKESPEARE! Ah, yes! An' a moment ago you used the bible to whip Sister Sharon --

JIM

Merely quoted it -- as a source of information.

GANTRY

As a man of integrity, you wouldn't use information unless it was fact, would you?
(Jim is suddenly alerted)

GANTRY (cont'd)

Do you believe the bible is fact?

(Jim waits)

Come on, Jim, boy --. Was the Universe created in six days? -- did God make the sun stand still just to help Joshua lick the Amalekites? Facts, Jim, boy?

130
cont'd

JIM

No.

GANTRY

Do you believe Moses parted the Red Sea?

JIM

No.

GANTRY

--that God wrote the ten commandments with a finger of lightnin'?

JIM

No.

GANTRY

--that the blind were cured an' the dead raised, an' five thousand people were fed with five little fishes an' two loaves of bread?

JIM

No.

GANTRY

Do you believe ANY of the miracles in the Holy Testament?

Jim sees the trap, hesitates. Babbitt can't control himself.

BABBITT

Well -- do you?

JIM

No more than I believe that black cats or spilled salt or broken mirrors are bad luck -- or that God can be jealous or vengeful or bloodthirsty -- or that Jehovah sanctions bigamy and slavery and stupidity.

Now Gantry's voice is soft in contrast to Jim's.

130
cont'd

GANTRY

In other words -- you don't believe in the bible!

BABBITT

Did you hear that, Mr. Eddington?

JIM

The bible is a book of beautiful poetry and wisdom and --

GANTRY

But if it's not fact -- why would you use it as information???? -- except to maliciously destroy her character!

BABBITT

I heard you do it -- and you'll burn in Hell for it!

GANTRY

No, Mr. Babbitt -- that doesn't scare Jim. If you don't believe the bible -- you don't believe there's a real Hell. Right, Jim, boy? An' it follows -- if there's no Hell -- there can't be a Heaven.

JIM

As you imagine Heaven and Hell -- it doesn't exist.

GANTRY

Then you don't believe Christ can give us life everlasting.

JIM

I'd love to believe it.

GANTRY

But you don't!

JIM

No.

GANTRY

Then you don't accept Jesus Christ
as Divine!

(Jim waits)

130
cont'd

BABBITT

Answer the question!

JIM

Jesus was a great, virtuous Teacher.
His faith and courage changed the
Western world --

GANTRY (cuts in)

DO YOU ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS
DIVINE ???

Jim hesitates. He looks at the publisher, at Sharon --

JIM (quietly)

Let me say -- I have doubts.

BABBITT

That's blasphemy!

JIM

No, Mr. Babbitt. To doubt is not
blasphemy. When you say blasphemy --
you mean "don't dare disagree -- don't
think -- don't doubt." But Tolstoy,
Darwin, Jefferson, Lincoln had the
same doubts, too.

BABBITT

Then they'll burn in Hell, too!

GANTRY (to Publisher)

You have every right to publish this --!

(indicates paper)

but --

BABBITT

Nobody's blaming you, Mr. Eddington.

GANTRY

-- BUT -- as part of America's free
press, you certainly won't deny us
equal rights.

PUBLISHER

Your reply will be published --
prominently.

130

cont'd

GANTRY

Mr. Eddington -- I'm no writer. Now,
Jim, here, is brilliant, witty. He
uses words like a stiletto. He learned
his trade from Ingersoll and Mencken
and Sinclair Lewis and a lot of other
atheists!

BABBITT

Atheists!

GANTRY (swiftly to Publisher)

You own a radio station, Mr. Eddington --

PUBLISHER (nods)

Set the time. Half an hour. Tonight --
tomorrow -- name it.

GANTRY

Tomorrow -- an' every day for two
weeks! Half an hour a.m. -- half an
hour p.m.

PUBLISHER (rises)

Just to answer this article ????

GANTRY

I don't intend to answer anything! You
don't debate the existence of God! He's
spread the poison of atheism --
disbelief -- doubt- Give me a chance
to spread the gospel -- to raise the
banner of Christianity -- to restore
the faith he stole!

(Publisher sits down)

Now, sir -- as Mr. Babbitt says:- "Time
costs money" -- especially radio time --
so your leadin' citizen, George F.
Babbitt, has kindly consented to pay
for every minute of radio time we use.
Right, George?

No one is more astonished than Babbitt.

BABBITT (tries to smile)

Right.

GANTRY (bends over Sharon)
The folks at the tent are waitin'
for yuh, Sister.

130
cont'd

Sharon rises briskly. There is a twinkle in her eye. She is buoyant. She starts out. Babbitt remains stunned.

SHARON
Goodnight, Mr. Eddington.
(nod to Jim)
Mr. Lefferts.

JIM (to Gantry)
Congratulations!
(to a worthy opponent)

GANTRY (graciously)
I bear you no malice, Jim.
(opens door)
Mr. Babbitt!

BABBITT (startled)
Blasphemy!
(recovers)
Goodnight, Mr. Eddington.
(to Jim, as he exits)
You ought to be ashamed of yourself.
(exits)

Jim laughs softly to himself. Publisher shakes head, sits back with a sigh.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY NIGHT

131

Sharon's car speeds by. He drives. She sits beside him.

INT. CAR

132

She smiles. She begins to laugh softly. Then the laugh becomes full-throated, hearty. He glances at her. She laughs so hard that tears come to her eyes. He pulls over to the soft shoulder of the road, shuts off the motor -- leaves the headlights on.

SHARON (still laughing)

132

Oh, it was glorious -- outrageously,
blissfully glorious. You really are
an alley-fighter. You hit Brother
Jim on both sides of the belt --

cont'd

She begins to kiss him -- not on the mouth -- but with
quick, exuberant, happy kisses -- speaking all the while.

SHARON (mimics him)

"You murdered him, baby." You knocked
him flat with a celestial bolt --
8, 9, 10 and out. You didn't fight
fair -- but "you seen your duty and
you done it!" Oh, darling --

And now Gantry can no longer withstand her innocent kisses.
He clasps her fiercely, kissing her on the mouth, a kiss
devoid of innocence, an embrace that presses her down on
the seat, engulfs her.

For a moment she submits and then frantically, breathlessly
struggles, fights free.

SHARON

Stop it!

GANTRY (tingling)

Shara, baby --

SHARON

What are you -- crazy?

(He's stunned -- confused)

I was so happy you delivered me --

GANTRY

Sure, fine -- but, Shara, honey --
there's a time for everything -- an'
right now --

He moves to embrace her again. She quickly opens her
door and steps out of car.

SHARON

Can't you understand???? God sent
you as His instrument -- not as my
lover!

She walks away from car. He is out and after her in an
instant. The car's headlights provide illumination.

GANTRY

No! I don't understand! You have
got me crazy -- talkin' to myself.
You're two diff'rent people at the
same time. One minute you're a hot,
screamin' banshee -- an' the next
minute cold potatoes -- yes an' no --
when an' if. I don't understand yuh
at all -- but I worship yuh!

SHARON

Then stop treating me like one of
your tramps.

GANTRY (stops her)

There's no such thing as a tramp.
There's only honest women -- an'
dishonest women!

SHARON

And all you want to do is make an
honest woman of me.

(walks back to car)

Men!

GANTRY (after her)

Don't knock 'em -- if you haven't
tried 'em.

SHARON

The Encyclopedia Sexualis.

GANTRY

Never read it!

SHARON

You wrote it!

(faces him)

You've just got to have every woman --.
Old, young, stupid -- even poor, starved
Rachel with her wet calf eyes --

GANTRY

May God [^]strike me dead this second if I --

SHARON

Be careful -- or He'll strike you stone
dead for being an ungrateful liar. Can't
you ever tell the truth?

GANTRY

You wouldn't know the truth if it
 bit yuh! It's you I want! Only you!
 I want you every which way. I want
 you so much I'm in pain half the time.
 I'd like to tear those holy wings
 off an' make a real woman outta yuh.
I'd show yuh what heaven's really
like! No silvery clouds -- or harp
 music -- or golden stairways -- but
ecstasy comin' an' goin'!

132
cont'd

SHARON (shaky laugh)

What makes you think I want you? Do
 you really believe I'm competing for
 your glorious body?

GANTRY

Damn right, yuh are! Every woman
 competes with every other woman --
 for every man!

SHARON

Ha!

GANTRY

Truth, Shara! You want it! You want
 it as much as I do. You want it with
me! When yuh gonna make up your mind
 to take it????

She looks fixedly into his bold eyes. She turns and
 swiftly slides across the seat and behind the driver's
 wheel. As she does so --

SHARON

Get in the car.
 (starts motor)
 Do as I say.
 (he gets in)

EXT. CAR

133

She throws it in gear with a grinding noise. The car is
 sent hurtling forward.

INT. CAR

134

Her face is set, tight.

SHARON (tersely)
You want to know why? All right.
You've got a rival. And that's
where we're going -- to meet your
competition!

EXT. CAR

135

It speeds recklessly into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH NIGHT

136

Sharon's car speeds along highway adjoining beach. Its
twin headlights stab the lonely blackness. The car
turns onto a pier that extends over the surf. Behind
pier are roller coasters, etc. closed down for the night.

PIER

137

An aged Caretaker comes out of silhouetted building.
Sharon, at wheel, stops car, is out at once.

CARETAKER (peering)
Sister Sharon?

SHARON
Turn it on, please!

As Gantry comes out of car, Sharon is already running
down the ramp that leads to the sand. Gantry follows
her, a little awed by her electric intensity.

BEACH

138

Sharon reaches the sand, kicks off her slippers for
freer movement.

GANTRY
Shara -- for God's sake --

SHARON (stops, turns)

138
cont'd

Shhhh!

She looks rapturously at the pier. All at once, a bright light comes on. Gantry turns to look. A huge cross -- created of electric bulbs -- begins to revolve slowly above the building.

SHARON (low, hoarse,
self-hypnotic)

There! That's what I've been working for -- my own tabernacle.

(almost unaware of him)

No more tents. No more running around like a circus. No more haggling with committees. A permanent home -- with a clinic for sick bodies -- a free soup kitchen -- a place of worship for everybody -- of every faith!

During this she walks toward the pier as to the arms of a lover. She looks up at the revolving cross in ecstasy.

SHARON

That's my first love. What've you got to match that?

Gantry gives her the respect he knows she wants.

GANTRY

Nothin'. Nothin' at all. I'm a hick from Kansas an' you're real class.

SHARON (short laugh)

The only class I've got is the name Falconer. And that's why I picked it. I'm Katie Jones from Shantytown in Pennsylvania.

(tone hardens)

That's right -- Shantytown! But does that make me a liar? I AM Sharon Falconer now! I've MADE her. I've put Sister Sharon together piece by piece -- til I've got the right to be her! I AM HER!

(looks at cross)

I started building that tabernacle two years ago. And when this Revival is ended I'll have enough money to own it!

(her eyes bore into his)

SHARON (cont'd)
You think it was blind luck that
brought us to Zenith?

138
cont'd

GENTRY (softly)
'Course not --

SHARON
It was God's will!!!

GENTRY (quietly)
'Course.

She takes his face in her expressive hands.

SHARON
Now, do you understand why you and
I couldn't --

GENTRY (slides his arms
around her back)
'Course.

SHARON (brushes his cheek
with her lips)
Nothing's going to take it away from me.

GENTRY
'Course.

SHARON (touches his lips
lightly with hers)
And nobody must spoil it --

GENTRY
'Course.

SHARON (a whisper)
I've never --

GENTRY
'Course not.

He brings her closer to him with a gentle movement, gentling her. The "talk" is out of her system. Now she can respond. She kisses him gently on the mouth and then fiercely, hungrily. She moans incoherently as they sink to the sand among the shadowy, powerful pilings of the pier.

EXT. PIER

139

From inside Tabernacle comes the aged Caretaker. He peers over railing into darkness --

CARETAKER

Sister Sharon --? Okay to turn it off now?

(silence except for surf)

Sister Sharon -- ?

(he re-enters building)

GANTRY AND SHARON

140

They lie partially hidden by the glistening pilings. The surf crashes o.s.

The huge cross stops revolving. The lights snap off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RADIO STATION DAY

141

Control room in f.g. Thru glass panel can be seen small broadcasting studio. Twelve men and women sit with their backs to control room. In b.g. Gantry (his back to us) faces a cube-shaped microphone of the period. Gantry's voice comes over the speaker in the control room.

GANTRY'S VOICE

Jim Lefferts is an honorable man.
But so was Brutus. An' we all know
that Brutus was an anarchistic,
alcoholic assassin!!!

EXT. STREET

142

Gantry's voice continues to blast from a radio loud speaker(horn) located on the newsstand. A crowd grows in size. Jim Lefferts and Sob Sister also listen, on edge of crowd.

GANTRY'S VOICE (uninterrupted)

Jim Lucifer Lefferts calls you decent
people of Zenith suckers, slickers an'
saps! He attacks the way you worship --

GANTRY'S VOICE (cont'd)
 but I don't notice him attackin' booze
 or prostitution!
 (applause on radio)

142
 cont'd

During the applause, Jim turns to enter the Times Dispatch building. Sob Sister is beside him.

SOB SISTER
 What is your opinion of booze?

JIM
 I drink it.

INT. SHARON'S HOTEL BEDROOM

143

Open on another radio of the time. It is being carried by Morgan. Gantry's voice continues without interruption. Morgan brings the radio to Sharon, who listens raptly as she starts to get out of bed. Morgan is just as intent as Sharon.

GANTRY'S VOICE
 Lucifer Jim says he wants to protect
 the people -- he says he wants to
 "save" you! But HOW? By stabbin'
 Jesus with his dirty lies? By
assassinatin' God?
 (Sharon reaches for her
 slippers. As she picks
 up a slipper -- sand trickles
 out. She smiles. Meanwhile --)
 If Brother Jim wants to save you,
 why doesn't he fight the tidal wave
 of vice, sin an' corruption ?????

INT. RADIO STATION

144

Gantry stands before the microphone in his "fighting" pose. Behind him are the Citizens' Committee, including George Babbitt, etc. Gantry continues without a break. Control room now, in b.g.

GANTRY
 I have right here in my hand --
 (takes postcards out)
 -- an' thank heaven you can't see 'em --
 lewd, obscene, dirty, French Postcards!

BABBITT

145

He is out of his chair and takes the postcards. Other members of committee gather to look. Babbitt drools as he whispers "shocking, shocking". Meanwhile:-

GANTRY'S VOICE

An' last night -- last night on the corner of Main Street --

INT. LIVING ROOM HOUSE

146

Red Head, Blonde, Brunette and Lulu Bains listen to still another radio of the period.

GANTRY'S VOICE

-- I was accosted by no less than three painted women --

Lulu bursts into laughter.

BRUNETTE

The tramps!

GANTRY'S VOICE

Your streets are made unsafe by shameless, diseased jezebels, by rapacious pickpockets, an' insidious opium smokers.
(radio applause)

LULU

AND Elmer Gantry.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOXING ARENA NIGHT

147

Radio applause dissolves into applause by five thousand persons.

Gantry stands in the center of boxing ring. The boxers wait in their respective corners. Gantry -- a radio man following him, holding a microphone near him -- roars at the crowd. Gantry holds a Times Dispatch newspaper. Around the boxing ring are policemen -- Gantry now has a police escort. Jim Lefferts sits in press section at ringside.

GANTRY

147
cont'd

This newspaper says everybody's against me. It says the Methodists, Episcopalians an' Baptists are against me. Even the ossified, petrified, mildewed, horizontal, perpendicular Presbyterians are against me. But this paper LIES! Some of the preachers might be against me. Unitarianism an' Spiritualism hate me. An' what hates me most of all is Harvard-ism, Yale-ism an' Princeton-ism. But YOU'RE some of God's best people -- an' you don't hate me, do you?

The crowd of plug-uglies, blood-thirsty boxing fans, peanut vendors, gamblers, touts -- all roar their approval of Gantry. Among crowd we see Lulu and Pete.

VOICES (amid uproar)

Atta boy, slugger.
Smack 'em down, preacher.
Hit 'em in the breadbasket.
Kill 'em!
Murder 'em!

GANTRY (looks heavenward)

Can Yuh hear me, Jesus? I'd like for Yuh to save this friend of mine, Jim Lefferts, who's been writin' all these dirty black lies about me. You'd better put on some rubber gloves, Jesus -- an' use a strong disenfectant -- but if Yuh can save sinner-Jim I'd like for Yuh to do it.

The crowd laughs. Jim Lefferts, at ringside, laughs. Flashbulbs go off. Meanwhile, during hubub --

REPORTER (to Jim)

What the hell's he think he's doing?

JIM (laughs)

Exactly what he set out to do -- making the people laugh AT me and WITH him!

Gantry is having the ring bell tolled rapidly to quiet the crowd. It simmers down.

GANTRY

Now will yuh all stand up while
we toll ten bells for the knockout
of vice, sin an' corruption????

147
cont'd

The entire audience stands. As each bell is heard we see broken-nosed gangsters with tears -- sentimental broads -- Gantry head bowed in ring -- Jim Lefferts shaking head to himself -- etc. Final shot of Lulu. She smiles, but her eyes are cold, hard.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S TENT DRESSING ROOM NIGHT

148

She is dressed to go on. From tent, o.s., we hear Sharon's theme -- BATTLE HYMN. She sits at her dressing table. She has a crystal radio set before her. She wears earphones. She listens to Gantry's voice. (to us an unintelligible gibberish) She is absorbed, excited.

Morgan enters carrying a large bouquet of flowers.

MORGAN

Shara -- they've played your
introduction twice --
(sets flowers before her.
she opens the card)
Every seat is filled -- it's the
biggest crowd we've ever had --

She reads the card: "Love is the Morning and the Evening Star".

MORGAN (as he exits)

Shara -- please --

She rises, places Gantry's card in her bosom, takes off her ear phones. As she puts the ear phones down -- Camera MOVES down onto them and we hear --

GANTRY'S VOICE

-- sin, sin, SIN!

DISSOLVE TO:-

EXT. STREET NIGHT

149

Traffic stopped. Crowd fills street -- torches, arc lights, etc. Gantry is on a platform erected across the street from Times Dispatch Building. Radio and loud speaker microphones before him. Rachel is to one side near trumpet players. Babbitt among committee behind Gantry. Police escort. (Captain Holt)

GANTRY (waves bible)

Booze! Booze sent a bullet thru
Lincoln an' McKinley! Booze is the
weapon of racketeers! Booze is the
way white slavers rob 60 thousand
American girls of their virtue every
year --

INT. TIMES DISPATCH CITY ROOM

Reporters listen to loud speaker at window. Jim Lefferts listens to Gantry on the radio -- two stenographers take down speech in shorthand. Intercut with Gantry, who can be seen thru window on the square below.

GANTRY

The bootleggers, an' white slavers, an'
newspapers are tryin' to scare Sister
an' me outta town. But as long as I've
got a foot, I'll kick booze. As long
as I have a fist, I'll punch it. As
long as I have a tooth, I'll bite it.
An' when I'm old an' grey, an' bootless,
an' toothless -- I'll gum it til I go
to heaven, an' booze goes to hell!
(a mighty roar from crowd)

During applause, Jim puts on his coat.

JIM

That's a helluva speech.

CITY EDITOR

I'd sure like to print it.

JIM (starts out)

Sure print it.
(exits)

EXT. STREET PLATFORM

151

Gantry quiets crowd by holding up arms --

GANTRY

It's 8 days since I gave you the addresses of 11 blind tigers, two cocaine peddlers, an' 16 brothels. What's been done about it. Nothin'! We're sick an' tired of just scoldin' sin -- we're gonna ABOLISH IT! We'll show 'em how to clean up this town t'night! RIGHT NOW!

The trumpets play ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS. A roar from crowd. Gantry leaps off the platform. He is detained by men who want to shake hands and by women who want to kiss him. He suddenly finds himself clutched by Rachel.

RACHEL (eyes brimming)

Be careful.

GANTRY (happily)

Courage, Sister -- courage!

And he is off, speeding toward head of parade formed by singing, excited torch-waving crowd, bored police, amused reporters and photographers. Jim Lefferts falls in beside Gantry. MOVE with them.

GANTRY

Well, Jim, boy -- glad to have you on the side of the angels.

JIM (drily)

Aren't you afraid some of these "desperate" bootleggers carry guns?

GANTRY (taps bible)

No bullet can pierce the Holy Book.

JIM

They might not aim at the book.

Gantry smiles -- takes his place at the head of parade.

GANTRY (holds aloft bible)

Onwaaaaard!

Camera bulbs flash. The Crusade picks up tempo.
The mob rounds a corner, comes to a stop before a
Speakeasy door.

151
cont'd

GANTRY

Smash down the door!

CAPTAIN HOLT

What for? Just knock. They'll
open up.

But Gantry seizes axe from fellow-crusader. He smashes
at door. Camera flashes go off.

INT. SPEAKEASY

152

Door splinters, crashes in. Gantry, followers pour in.
Customers almost faint from fright. Proprietor, timid
little man, runs forward.

PROPRIETOR

Please -- please -- no trouble -- no
bombs -- please, no shooting --. Okay,
I buy my beer from your mob. Okay?
Don't break the furniture, please!

But the zeal of Gantry is not to be stayed. He and mob
smash glasses, bottles, glassware -- photographs taken.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

153

Five girls(not including Lulu Bains), listen to phonograph,
dance with each other. Maid, with towels over arm, drifts
thru. Sound of tramping feet on stairs.

RED HEAD

The fleet must be in.

Door bursts off hinges. Gantry and Crusaders enter.
Pete dashes for back door and escapes.

BLONDE

Hey! What's your hurry?

GANTRY (holds bible high)

SCARLET WOMAN|||

BLONDE

That's a dirty lie.

(to Captain Holt)

You know we pay protection every week regular.

153
cont'd

BRUNETTE

Wait til Georgie hears about this!

GANTRY

Take 'em away, men!

As the girls are hustled out by police, an excited Crusader drags a kicking girl out of a back room. It is Lulu Bains.

CRUSADER

You shoulda seen what this one was doin'!

Behind Lulu comes a shamefaced man.

LULU

Take your filthy hands offa me.

GANTRY (roars)

HARLOT !!!!!

Then Gantry sees who she is. There is a moment when they face each other.

GANTRY

154

He mouths Lulu's name inaudibly.

LULU

155

She recognizes Gantry at the same moment. She starts to laugh. She is dragged off and down the stairs by some rough-handed men. We hear Lulu laughing and the other girls singing ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS.

GANTRY

Captain --!

(Holt, reporters pause)

May I suggest that you release those poor unfortunate creatures?

CAPTAIN HOLT (stunned)
What??? But you --

155
 cont'd

GANTRY (cuts in)
 After all -- throwin' a prostitute in jail
 will not remove her sin -- and it most
 certainly won't get rid of prostitution.
 (flash pictures taken)
 Please, please -- no pictures -- no
 publicity --
 (puts arm around Holt, leads
 him toward stairway)
 Captain -- I wanna compliment you --

STAIRWAY

156

Gantry and Holt descend stairs.

GANTRY (continues)
 -- an' your men on a fine, patriotic job --
 (voice lowers into a fierce,
 harsh tone)
 See those girls leave town -- an' quick!

Before Holt can recover from this one -- Gantry and Holt
 are out on the pavement. A crowd has gathered to watch
 the raid -- they see Gantry and a cheer goes up. He
 raises his arms and smiles -- more flash pictures --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S HEADQUARTERS DAY

157

Every evidence of success. Highly-intensified activity.
 Girls on phone "Good morning, God is Love, etc."
 Counsellors on phones. Typewriters and mimeographing
 busy. Mailmen carry in sacks of mail. Letters contain
 money. Beyond the railing, flowing over into corridor,
 is a crowd of men, women, a few children, waiting to see
 Gantry or Sharon. Morgan escorts four affluent women
 around the office. The women jabber --

WOMEN

I hope those dreadful girls get what
 they deserve.

Can't we form a brigade to stamp out
 something?

WOMEN (cont'd)

157
cont'd

That Mr. Gantry -- why he's
absolutely incredible!

MORGAN (sweetly)

Not meaning to differ, Mrs. Blake --
but the fantastic thing about
Mr. Gantry is -- that he's absolutely
credible!

Messenger carries in several bouquets of flowers. He
takes them to inner office.

INNER OFFICE

158

Gantry paces, busy. Messenger brings in flowers. A dozen
bouquets already there. Opened telegrams on desk. Gantry
devours the pictures on page one of tabloid and Times
Dispatch -- pictures show him smashing glasses in Speakeasy --
holding up bible before arrested "hussies". Tabloid Streamer --

REVIVALIST ROUTS SIN!

SECRETARY (looks in)

She's her, Mr. Gantry --

He quickly rises and exits.

CORRIDOR

159

Sharon, police making path for her, moves thru crowd. She
wears something gay and feminine. The crowd wants her
blessing, wishes to congratulate her, touch her, obtain
favors, give favors. "My husband suffers terrible from
arthur-itis" -- "My little girl is sick" -- etc. Gantry
gets to her side. He escorts her now.

GANTRY (to crowd's requests)

Bless you, Brother -- later. Thank
you, Sister -- not now --.

TALL HANDSOME MAN

Sister Sharon -- can I have a moment
of your time --

GANTRY (sharply)

What's it this time, Brother ???
Booze or women?

This starts Sharon laughing.

159
cont'd

INNER OFFICE

160

Gantry and Sharon enter, close door. Scarcely looking at her, inflated with his own success, he heads directly for the desk. Sharon is radiant today.

GANTRY (indicates flowers)
Mayor -- congressman -- governor --
(picks up telegrams)
Take your pick:- Madison Square Garden --
vaudeville -- a tour of England, Australia,
Japan --

She stops him by placing palm against his lips. Her eyes are soft, romantic, feminine. Her tone is eager.

SHARON
For right now -- how about Katie Jones
sneaking away with her prehistoric hick
from Kansas? A real fun picnic -- no
telegrams or newspapers or sermons --
the only business of the day will be
us --just the two of us --

GANTRY
We can't.

SHARON
I've got the escape all planned. The
getaway car's out front -- motor
running -- bathing suits and sandwiches
stashed away -- we'll disappear before
they know we're gone --

GANTRY
In a coupla minutes you're gonna cinch a
contribution from that Ladies Committee --
(puts sketch of Tabernacle
on desk)
-- eleven o'clock we dedicate your Waters-
of-the-Jordan Tabernacle, Mayor, brass
band, the works --. Lunch at Rosen's
Department Store where you say grace for
200 Washing Machine Salesmen. At two
o'clock --

SHARON
I'll be exhausted, irritable and
hateful.

160
cont'd

GENTRY
Shara, baby -- we'll celebrate late
t'night --

SHARON
Tonight's a thousand years away.
(sees his stricken expression)
Very well --
(removes gloves, sighs)
-- get your smug little ladies in
here with their fat little hands and
their fat little souls --

GENTRY
Don't forget their fat little checkbooks.
(opens door to outer office)
Ladies -- dear ladies --

SECRETARY (calls)
Phone, Mr. Gantry --

OUTER OFFICE

161

As Morgan leads the ladies into inner office, Gantry
strides toward phone. Office staff shake his hand, etc.

GENTRY (to secretary)
I'll take it here.
(picks up phone)
'Lo? This is Mr. Gantry. Who?

LULU BAINS

162

She is at a wall phone in hallway of a cheap apartment
house. She wears a sleazy wrapper. She holds the Tabloid
paper with the "heroic" pictures of Gantry.

LULU
I just called to say thanks for
getting me out of that jam last
night.

Gantry listens on phone, sweat breaking on his face. He
glances toward inner office. Thru open door, he can see

Ladies Committee and Sharon. He is acutely aware of the eyes on him in the office. He borrows a pencil from the secretary. 162 cont'd

GANTRY (into phone)
What's the address?

He writes it down. He hangs up, a dark, foreboding shadow in his eyes.

LULU AT PHONE 163

She hangs up, starts to her room. In the threshold of her room stands Pete, who has been listening.

INT. LULU'S ROOM 164

She enters, goes to dresser. Meanwhile:-

LULU
Get hold of Benny.

PETE (nervously)
Wait a minute --. After all, this
Gantry bum is a preacher --

LULU
Get hold of Benny!

A slight shiver from Pete as he exits. Lulu brushes her hair with vigorous strokes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPRING STREET NIGHT 165

A taxi arrives. Gantry pays cabbie. He looks suspiciously up and down street. Taxi drives off. Gantry crosses the street.

INT. LULU'S APARTMENT 166

She wears a sheer kimona over slip and stockings, high heels. Pete is jittery; he sweats. Benny, a middle-aged weasel, holds a camera. On bed is suitcase and strewn clothes to give impression of packing.

BENNY (to Lulu)
What're these pictures for?
Divorce? Blackmail?

166
cont'd

PETE (nervously)
Will you come onnnn!!!!

BENNY (calmly)
Now, chick, remember -- position is
everything.

LULU (teasing)
Hooo.

BENNY
I mean -- without flashbulbs or
floodlights -- you gotta freeze this
guy for a few seconds. A time
exposure takes time. So keep him
still! And QUIET!

LULU
But that's so dull.

BENNY
And keep the radio playing --
(touches camera time
exposure button --
it whirrs)
-- or he'll hear this.

PETE (starts for window)
Okay -- okay -- let's go.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY

167

Gantry bounds up the stairs. A woman descends. Gantry
quickly blows his nose in handkerchief to hide face.

INT. LULU'S ROOM

168

Lulu accompanies Benny toward window. Pete is just
climbing out.

BENNY
Now, this preacher fella -- think
you can get him into bed?

LULU (laughs)
Are you kidding?

168
cont'd

Knocking on door. Benny steps out of window.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

169

Benny joins Pete. They climb up the fire escape a short distance. Thru window we see Lulu take off her kimona --

LULU (calls to door)
Yesssss?

INT. ROOM

170

Another knock at door. Lulu takes one quick look in mirror, unlocks and opens door. Gantry steps inside room, removes handkerchief from face. His voice is affable, pleasant -- but his actions are quick, springlike. As he quickly glances into the bathroom, the closet, peers out of window --

GANTRY (scarcely looks at her)
You look great, kid.

LULU
Likewise.

GANTRY
Sorry about last night. If I had
any idea I'd run into you --

LULU
Oh -- that's okay.

Satisfied they are alone, Gantry locks door, his smile gone.

GANTRY
All right! What the hell's the idea!!!

LULU (puts kimona loosely
over her shoulders)
Elmer, honey --

GANTRY
You really think I'm gonna sit still
for a shake-down????

LULU (innocent waif)
Baby -- how could I put the squeeze
on you? Who's going to take the word
of a five-buck whore against Elmer
Gantry? I only wanted to see you for --

GANTRY

For what!!!

LULU

Gee, honey --. Look --
(indicates half-packed suitcase)
I'm almost packed -- the cops gave me
notice -- I've got a ticket on the
midnight bus. I got no beef against
you -- I just wanted to see you once
more -- kick around some old memories --
maybe have a few laughs --

(sees his disbelief)

Ah, who'm I kidding?

(begins pacing, apparently
under emotional stress)

When you first hit town, I figured you
could go to hell any way you wanted --
without my help. But last night, when
you came busting in like Christ Almighty
wearing a tin star -- I got mad, boiling
mad. All I could think of was me -- how
you took me and ditched me -- not even
one "goodbye, I'm sorry" -- nothing!!!
Me -- that's all I could think of --
little Miss Lulu, the dumb pushover.
And when the cops said "get out of town
in 24 hours" -- all I wanted was to hurt
you -- spit in your eye, blackmail,
shake-down, anything and everything to
hurt you --

(stops, breathless -- the anger
seeps away)

But when you walked in just now -- gee,
honey -- I almost went to pieces. It
was like the first time between us, all
over again -- all goose pimples and weak
inside and --

(averts her face)

You better beat it.

(gets handkerchief at dresser)

I'm sorry I phoned. I won't make any trouble --
not even if I could. Please go now.

(she blows her nose)

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

171

Pete and Benny have camera ready at window.

PETE (astonished whisper)
What's she doin'?
(Benny doesn't know)

INT. ROOM

172

Gantry has been conned by his own type of con. He feels sorry for her. He comes to her at dresser. Lulu's eyes glitter -- not with tears.

GANTRY
I did run out on yuh back in Kansas.
I didn't want to -- but -- we were
both trapped, and --

LULU
It's nobody's fault -- except maybe
my old man's --

GANTRY
Do you ever hear from him?

LULU (moves to bed)
Once. Last Christmas. The letter said:-
"Daughter, read First Kings 21:23." I
looked it up. It said -- "And the dogs
in the street shall eat Jezebel --" or
something like that.
(soft laugh)
My old man and his bible. Tell me --
how is it some people can find only
hate in the bible -- instead of love?

During this last, Lulu has been putting clothes into her
suitcase on the bed.

GANTRY (comes to her)
Where will yuh be goin' to?

LULU
Does it matter?

GANTRY
Could yuh use some cash -- to kinda
tide yuh over?

LULU

172
cont'd

No.

(faces him, comes close)

Just -- kiss me goodbye --

(puts her hands on his
shoulders -- her kimono
slips off, falls to floor)

Just once --

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

173

Benny readies camera.

INT. ROOM

174

Gantry does not kiss her. Her eyes are closed. Her lips are parted -- waiting. She opens her eyes, leans toward him, deliberately places her lips to his. He is stirred by pity and her sensuality. He holds her close, responding to her kiss.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

175

Benny takes picture.

INT. ROOM

176

Gantry and Lulu still kissing. Suddenly she breaks from his embrace.

CLOSE SHOT LULU

177

She is deeply moved. For the first time, she does not want to hurt him. She glances quickly, almost frantically at the window. She reaches up over center of bed and pulls cord -- turning off the light! The only source of light -- not enough to take pictures -- comes from the bathroom.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

178

Benny and Pete exchange glances.

INT. ROOM

179

In the semi-darkness, she sits on the bed. Her voice is soft -- childlike -- simple and unveiled -- truthful.

LULU

Stay a while, hunh?

(he is silent)

Talk to me.

(he is silent)

Don't go yet -- please, don't go.

GANTRY (hesitant)

Lu --

LULU (takes his hand)

Tell me anything -- tell me a good,
strong lie I can believe -- but hold
me -- just hold me like you used to --.

(he makes no move)

Please?

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

180

The light comes on. Gantry's hand is on the light-cord.
Benny takes a picture. Radio music covers sound of
camera and, of course, voices inside.

INT. ROOM

181

Gantry lowers hand from cord.

GANTRY (gently)

It's no use, Lu --.

LULU

Why???

GANTRY

Because -- I don't know --

LULU (rejected, furious)

Because of what??? Because of HER --
the bible broad???

He looks at her a brief moment, helpless -- knowing it's
hopeless. He turns to exit. Lulu, all softness gone now,
looks swiftly to window, hurries after Gantry, intercepts
him.

LULU
I'm sorry. No hard feelings?
(he shakes his head)
I think I can use that cash, after all.

181
cont'd

GANTRY
'Course.

He takes out money, hands it to her. She holds money between them, shifts position so as to give Benny a better camera angle.

GANTRY
Maybe I could send you some now'n
then -- til you get a job -- or maybe
meet some nice, respectable man --

LULU (laughs)
I meet nice, respectable men every night.
(she places money in
her stocking)
The Bank of America --
(she laughs -- models leg)

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

182

Benny takes a picture.

BENNY (proudly)
Class -- she's got real class!!

INT. ROOM

183

Gantry opens door.

GANTRY.
Take care of yourself, hunh?

LULU
Likewise, hon.

He exits. She closes, locks door. She turns and her eyes are brittle, gleaming. Pete and Benny come in from fire escape.

PETE
Some preacher --. I'm glad I'm a pimp.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S OFFICE HEADQUARTERS DAY 184

Office staff busy, phones, etc. A secretary stands at door to inner office with Morgan. She points off. Morgan looks.

PETE 185

He watches as secretaries open letters and money pours out. Money does something to Pete's thyroid. Under his arm he carries a large manila envelope 8x11.

MORGAN (enters to Pete)
What can I do for you, brother?

PETE
I want to see the Sister Woman.

MORGAN
Is it personal or business?

PETE
You might say -- personal business.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S HOTEL SUITE DAY 186

Gantry crosses toward her bedroom. He wears white linen trousers, blue and white blazer, captain's cap. He carries a large picnic basket, fishing rods, etc. He hums happily as he knocks at bedroom door and enters. Sharon is asleep. He opens drapes, lets in sunlight. She awakens.

GANTRY (meanwhile)
Wake up, Miss Jones! You see before your eyes the Captain of the S.S. Happiness, Fishing boat Extraordinary! All aboard for a glorious, excitin', carefree pleasure cruise -- fish, fun, frolic, romance an' privacy guaranteed.

SHARON (runs, embraces him)
Even to a Captain, you make a lovely Captain.

At this moment they are more united as man and woman than ever before. During their embrace, an insistent knocking has been heard at outer door. Sharon runs into living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

187

Sharon crosses, opens door, peers out. It is Morgan. She quickly pulls him in. He carries the envelope brought by Pete. Gantry comes from bedroom with basket, etc. Sharon is impish, happy, bubbling over.

SHARON (as she pulls him in)

Bill -- not one word -- not even one --
about legal documents, tents, money or
lost souls.

(acting the "moll")

We're goin' on a picnic, see? And if
you squeal, we'll put the finger on
you and rub you out --

Gantry smiles, sets down basket, etc. He senses something
uneasy about Morgan.

MORGAN (plays game)

Think I'd rat on a coupla pals?

SHARON (laughs, appeals)

It'll be all right, won't it --
just for one day?

MORGAN

In that outfit the fish'll jump into
the boat -- just to look at you.

She blushes at her night dress -- starts for bedroom --
stops -- runs back, impulsively kisses Morgan and runs
for the bedroom, closes door.

GANTRY (comes to Morgan)

You got that look, Bill. What is it?

Morgan silently hands Gantry the envelope. Gantry looks
at Morgan -- opens envelope, draws out photographs. We
see they are pictures of himself and Lulu -- putting
money in her stocking -- kissing Lulu, etc.

While Gantry looks at photos, Morgan speaks to him in a
low, fierce whisper --

MORGAN

I know all about your insatiable lust,
vanity and ambition. But I never knew
about your incredible stupidity!

(Gantry looks at him)

MORGAN (cont'd)

187

Oh, I know you were framed.

cont'd

(takes photos)

These are obvious enough. Elmer the Great, Elmer the Grifter, the con man -- conned by the oldest badger game --

GANTRY (cuts in)

I don't want Shara to see those!

MORGAN

She'll have to.

GANTRY

What do you want me to do, Bill? Quit?
-- go see the girl? -- anything you say!
But I don't want her to see those!

MORGAN

Not a chance. We're in this together --

SHARON'S VOICE

Darling --

(bedroom door opens)

-- do you think we should've invited
Bill --

(enters living room)

-- to come -- on the picnic --

Her words die out as she sees Gantry's hands on Morgan. Gantry sees her, releases Morgan. She walks forward slowly -- not understanding -- tying cord of her robe.

She looks from one to the other. Neither says anything. Morgan looks to Gantry -- looks at Sharon's innocent face -- and turns away. He cannot show her the pictures.

Gantry takes the photos from Morgan's hand -- gives them to Sharon. She sees their faces -- then glances at the pictures.

SHARON

188

She looks at the photos -- the blood drains from her flushed cheeks.

MORGAN

189

He is sick.

GANTRY

190

He makes no protest -- no argument. There is something ironic to him in the fact that he is "caught" for something he did NOT do.

SHARON (quietly)

I suppose they're for sale?

(Morgan nods)

How much?

MORGAN

Twenty-five thousand dollars.

SHARON

Twenty-fi ----.

MORGAN

At two o'clock today. Cash.

In small bills. And --

(he stops -- looks at Gantry.

Gantry waits)

-- and she wants Shara -- nobody
else -- to bring her the money.

Gantry understands now. He turns away.

SHARON

Why?

(Morgan looks at Gantry.

She asks Gantry --)

Why?

(Gantry is silent)

MORGAN

Her name's Lulu Bains.

SHARON (to Gantry)

The deacon's daughter?

GANTRY (quietly)

Yes.

SHARON (to Morgan)

Get the money.

Wait. GANTRY

190
cont'd

SHARON
Get it!

MORGAN (nods)
One more thing. She wants you to
bring the money to 721 Spring Street.

CLOSE SHOT GANTRY 191

At mention of the address, he turns sharply, looks at
Morgan, is about to say something. Falls silent.

SHARON AND MORGAN 192

She looks at him askance. Morgan doesn't know how to
say it. He hurts for her.

MORGAN (finally)
That's where she -- worked --
before it was raided.

She nods slowly without knowing it. She knows the meaning
of the designated meeting place -- the effort to humiliate
her.

SHARON (a mere whisper)
All right.

Morgan quickly exits. Sharon looks at the photos a moment.

SHARON
You must have hurt her very much.

She puts down pictures, glances at picnic basket and
fishing equipment. She goes into bedroom to dress.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET DAY 193

Hot day. Urchins watering themselves at fire hydrant.
Passersby. Sharon's car, driven by herself, stops before
old house with several steps leading up. She gets out,
wearing business suit, dark sun-glasses. She carries a
briefcase. She looks up at the house number.

EXT. HOUSE

194

The number is 721. Faint sound of a player piano is heard. It plays a sensuous jazz blues of the period.

Sharon enters, closing door behind her.

INT. STAIRWAY

195

Sharon mounts the stairs. The player piano music grows louder. Scribbling on walls. General feeling of dis-repair. A slight shiver from Sharon and she continues up stairs. She stops before a doorway -- whose door was smashed off its hinges by Gantry's axe. She enters.

INT. LIVING ROOM HOUSE

196

Sharon enters. The player piano continues with its sensuous music. Sharon looks around the room. No one is there. But there are empty beer bottles, whiskey glass stains on the table, a single high-heeled shoe, overturned, lying on the floor. As Sharon passes by a deep chair, a scrawny alley cat leaps out with a piercing wail, jumps across a small table and knocks over an empty bottle. It crashes. Sharon is frightened.

LULU'S VOICE (calls)

Make yourself right at home, honey.

Sharon exhales with relief. She does not sit down. She stands, almost afraid to touch anything. She looks at player-piano. She looks at walls.

WALLS

197

The photographs of silent movie stars have not yet been removed:-- Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Rudolph Valentino, Mary Pickford, Theda Bara, Wm. S. Hart, Pearl White, etc.

In the midst of this gallery, there still is the plaster Madonna and Child, with candle-encased-in-red glass. On another wall is a bleeding heart.

LULU BAINS

198

She sits in a tiny room down corridor from living room. A large double bed occupies most of the room, wash basin,

white cracked pitcher, cheap dresser with mirror. 198
Here there are more photographs of movie stars. cont'd

Lulu, in contrast to Sharon, wears a fetching dress of bright color. She sits before mirror and buffs her fingernails.

LULU (calls casually)
Be right there.

But in contradiction, she continues buffing fingernails.

SHARON IN LIVING ROOM 199

She slowly approaches the Madonna and Child. She removes her sunglasses.

LULU IN BEDROOM 200

She rises, applies lipstick with a sensuous puckering of her full lips.

SHARON IN LIVING ROOM 201

With the blues music continuing, Sharon lights the taper at the candle-in-the-glass. She lights candle.

LULU IN BEDROOM 202

She is finished with lipstick. She hoists her stockings and checks if the seams are straight. A quick dab of perfume on her thighs and behind the ears. She quietly, exits bedroom. She takes envelope with negatives.

HALLWAY 203

Lulu comes forward slowly. A beaded curtain hangs between hallway and living room. The breeze from open door sways the beaded curtain. The beads make a slight tinkling sound. The player-piano music covers all other sounds. Lulu stops before entering to Sharon. She looks.

SHARON

204

She is kneeling before the Madonna and Child. Sharon's eyes are closed. Her face is peaceful. The briefcase is beside her. She mouths a prayer silently.

LULU

205

The glint of anticipation at the meeting, goes out of her eyes. She watches Sharon with silent contempt.

SHARON

206

She continues praying before the religious figurine. The music plays in contrast.

LULU

207

The piano roll comes to an end. The music stops. She comes to a decision. She turns, does NOT enter living room. Instead she goes into kitchen.

STAIRWAY

208

Lulu comes from kitchen. In b.g. is door to living room. Sharon can be seen kneeling. Lulu hurries down the stairs toward the street. Her footsteps clatter down. She slams door, exits.

SHARON

209

She remains before the Madonna, praying. Her face is composed. The piano roll, having come to an end, slaps on and on.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TIMES DISPATCH SQUARE DUSK

210

A newspaper truck speeds up to newsstand. Man drops a bundle of tabloid newspapers.

MAN ON TRUCK

Extra, Jack --

News truck speeds away. News vendor cuts cord on bundle of papers. During this he shouts, "Extra, Extra --" People slowly gather.

INT. TIMES DISPATCH CITY ROOM

211

Publisher comes from his office quickly. He carries the tabloid, ZENITH TELEGRAM. Behind him comes the City Editor. Publisher stops before Jim's desk. Jim sits, feet propped up, clipping his fingernails. Publisher thrusts tabloid in front of Jim. Page one is covered with photos of Lulu and Gantry. The streamer reads:
P r e a c h e r P r E y s

PUBLISHER

Did you see this?

JIM

Yep.

PUBLISHER (to City Editor)

Correct me if I'm wrong, but --

(to Jim)

I understand she brought these pictures to you first!

JIM

Yep.

PUBLISHER

You turned her down???

JIM

Yep.

PUBLISHER (waves off

City Editor --)

Why?

JIM (puts on jacket)

These stupid pictures prove only one thing:- that Elmer Gantry is human as anybody else.

PUBLISHER

It's the obligation of a free press to --

JIM (cuts in)
You're right, Mr. Eddington. A
free press can print anything -- even
lies! And this pornography is just
that -- a blackmailing lie!
(Jim exits)

211
cont'd

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BABBITT'S REAL ESTATE OFFICE DUSK

212

Babbitt sits alone. It is virtually dark. He holds
Tabloid paper with Gantry expose before him. He listens
to the radio.

RADIO VOICE

Instead of Mr. Gantry's scheduled
address, the Babbitt Real Estate Co.
will present an organ recital by --

Babbitt snaps off the radio. He sips a drink. He is
terribly depressed.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHARON'S TENT NIGHT

213

Only one person approaches tent. It is Lulu Bains.
Singing from inside tent. A somber song or lament.

INT. TENT

214

Only about 50 persons. Most of these are angry, sullen.
A dozen loyal supporters present a meek, disunited front.
The press section is empty. Several reporters, including
Jim Lefferts, are to one side -- NOT on platform. Two
photographers with them.

Only a handful have shown up among choral section. Rachel
is steadfast. The other chairs gape empty. Three trumpets
and one bass drum provide music.

Babbitt is missing.

Sharon stands at front of lower platform. Her eyes are
closed. She appears to be praying. Behind her, to one side
is Gantry. He is silent, watching the sullen unpredictable
gathering. Morgan is to the other side of her.

Up the center aisle comes Reverend Pengilly. He passes the reporters.

214
cont'd

REPORTER (to Jim)
First time I've seen him up there.

JIM
First time they've been in trouble up there.

SHARON

215

The singing ends among choir. Sharon takes a big breath and opens eyes. She sees Reverend Pengilly coming up the ramp toward her. She addresses group, but especially includes Pengilly

~~SHARON~~
Thank you for coming here tonight.
(Pengilly sits alone among
chairs reserved for clergy)
You have every right to an explanation.
I'll try to give it to you --

MAN (shouts)
Tell us about SIN, Sister!

He throws a rotten egg. It misses her and smashes against the pulpit overhead.

In a moment, Gantry has swept her aside. Rev. Pengilly is almost as quick. Morgan hurries to her also. As Pengilly leads Sharon back, Gantry steps forward and holds up his arms to quiet the crowd. An egg splatters him! A photographer's flashbulb goes off.

SHARON

216

She makes a move toward Gantry. Pengilly places her cape around her shoulders and holds her back.

MEN IN AUDIENCE

217

The hoodlums reach into paper bags and baskets at their feet. They heave fruit, vegetables at Gantry.

GANTRY

218

Fruit, eggs, etc. hit him. Morgan comes to him, tries to make Gantry quit platform. Gantry shakes his head. Morgan is hit by missiles. He turns in fury toward crowd.

GANTRY'

No -- |

Morgan hurries back toward Sharon.

CHOIR

219

It has been running for cover. Rachel backs off, stunned.

REPORTERS

220

Only Jim does not run. The others get out of range. Photographers take a few more pictures and then they run, too. Jim watches with growing anger.

SHARON, MORGAN, PENGILLY

221

They lead her toward rear exit, behind platforms. Morgan takes her away. Pengilly returns to tent.

AUDIENCE

222

Most of them flee to avoid involvement. The loyal few panic toward exit -- opposite end from platforms. They pass by Lulu, who huddles on a bench. She is sick with shame and horror -- and pity.

LONG SHOT

THRU TENT ENTRANCE

223

The few loyal supporters run out. Inside tent, a riotous handful continue to pelt Gantry with eggs, etc. He accepts the degradation with the stoicism of a man who welcomes punishment.

JIM LEFFERTS

- 224

He stops one egg-thrower. Another rioter tangles with him. Jim, too, is spattered with eggs as he engages in a short fist-fight.

One of the rioters has picked up a trumpet abandoned by a musician. He blows a jazzed-up version of ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS. Another rioter wildly beats the bass drum. Another rioter slashes at the canvas tent walls with a knife.

224
cont'd

GANTRY

225

He sees Lulu at far end of tent.

LULU

226

She sees that Gantry has noticed her. She rises and moves toward exit.

GANTRY

227

He walks unhurriedly down the ramp and up the center aisle, toward Lulu. The rioters dance around him, hurling insults and garbage, tooting wildly on trumpet, pounding savagely on drum.

EXT. TENT

228

Lulu runs off into the darkness. She stumbles, falls, gets up, keeps running. The wild sounds from within tent pursue her, mock her.

Gantry emerges from Tent. He sees Lulu running. He walks quickly after her, unhurried, but determined.

INT. TENT

229

Jim Lefferts sits on a bench. He is alone except for the rioters. He watches their antics with contempt.

Rev. Pengilly comes toward Jim, passes him, walks up the center aisle toward exit. Jim falls in beside him, more as a protective measure. The rioters continue their vandalism in b.g.

They continue walking out together -- side by side -- the truly religious man and the iconoclast --.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S OFFICE HEADQUARTERS NIGHT

230

Sharon and Morgan turn corridor, find glass door to office smashed. Office is in ruins. Papers scattered. Files overturned. A smear of black ink stains the wall. The smear is one scrawled word:-

REPENT

Phones have been ringing insistently thru the dissolve. Sharon stands amid ruins dry-eyed, dumb with shock. Morgan picks up receiver of one phone. A woman's voice rants on unintelligibly. Morgan switches on overhead light, as he listens on phone.

Jim Lefferts appears in corridor, stops in doorway to office.

A stone thrown from street, crashes thru window. Sharon walks slowly toward shattered window. She sits in a chair, facing window. There is no anger in her face.

Jim quickly turns off the light. Morgan hangs up on the ranting woman. The office is in darkness except for the light from corridor and the blinking sign outside. Morgan goes around office removing receivers from ringing phones.

Jim moves toward Sharon. She seems pitifully small and alone. Now the office is silent. Sharon rocks slowly in her chair. No tears.

SHARON (whispers to herself)

Oh, my God -- why hast Thou
forsaken me?

JIM (lifts her gently

to her feet)

We'll take you home.

As Jim and Morgan take her out --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LULU'S APARTMENT NIGHT

231

One shaded lamp is on. Pete paces feverishly. Lulu enters, door unlocked. Radio plays ballad of day.

PETE (comes to her)
Why'd you do it?

231
cont'd

She ignores him, starts for bathroom. This silence infuriates him. He slaps her fiercely. The force of the slap spins her.

PETE
Did she show with the money?

LULU (whispers)
Yes.

PETE
Why'nt you go thru with it?
(silence. He grabs her
forcefully)
Why???

LULU (quietly)
You wouldn't understand.

PETE
What'd the paper pay for the pictures?

LULU (looks away)
Nothing. I didn't sell them.

He slaps her. She staggers back. He slaps her several more times. She stumbles against the lamp. The lamp overturns, remains on.

Pete lifts her, pins her against the wall. Their shadows are large and clear. He holds her and slaps her and slaps her. Tiny moans come from Lulu, nothing more.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY

232

Gantry mounts the stairs. The slaps are heard coming from Lulu's room. Gantry is a frightening sight. The muck of eggs, etc. has dried on him.

INT. LULU'S ROOM

233

Gantry enters. Another slap is heard o.s. Gantry quickly crosses room toward them. He stops Pete before he can slap her again.

GANTRY (quietly)

233

Don't you know that hurts.

cont'd

And Gantry slaps Pete a might whack. His broad hand sounds like a wooden paddle on Pete's face. Pete falls to the floor.

Gantry tenderly lifts Lulu and places her in an armchair.

Pete is up and rushing at Gantry. He swings a punch. Gantry catches his arm. He swings Pete by the arm across the room. Pete strikes the bed post, twirls, and falls. Gantry is upon him. He doesn't bother with Pete's face. He pounds several hammer-like blows into Pete's middle, mashing him inside. Gantry half-carries Pete into the hallway and dumps him down the stairs.

A man appears at one of the doors, sees Gantry, quickly shuts door.

Gantry enters Lulu's room. He locks the door. Lulu is sitting in the chair, where he placed her. She looks at him, cheek beginning to swell. No tears in her eyes. Gantry quickly wets a towel in bathroom. He comes to her. He kneels before her and gently wipes away the blood at her mouth. He brushes back her hair.

He takes her trembling hand in his own. He looks at her with a kindly smile. There is no accusation in his eyes. No anger with her. Lulu is under great stress. His kindness and consideration -- his gentleness -- suddenly break her down. Deep from within her comes one sob -- suppressed for years. It brings the tears.

GANTRY

I'm sorry -- for everything.

He goes to the door. He opens it, stands on threshold. He touches the key, indicating to close it when he goes. She nods. He exits. She locks the door. She weeps.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TENT DAWN

234

First streaks of light pour thru knife-slashes in canvas "roof". Long strips of canvas hang down, where vandals finished their work. Benches overturned, revival circulars strewn about, banners torn, remains of eggs, vegetables, etc. A huge banner -- GOD IS LOVE -- is slashed by a knife.

The pulpit is overturned.

234
cont'd

Jim enters the quiet tent. He moves slowly down the aisle. A folded newspaper is in his jacket pocket. He sits down quickly to one side as he sees --

GANTRY

235

He comes from the dressing room. He has changed his messy clothes. He carries his old traveling salesman suitcase. He sees the overturned pulpit. He sets down suitcase, bounds up onto platform and sets right the pulpit. He touches it with fond remembrance. He looks out at the chaotic emptiness.

GANTRY (calls out)

Brothers an' Sisters --

(pauses -- gently)

-- goodbye.

JIM (warmly)

Amen!

(Gantry waves pleasantly,
comes off platform)

You look like a man who could use
a drink.

Jim comes toward Gantry, takes pint bottle from other jacket pocket, hands it to Gantry, sits on bench. Gantry looks long at the amber liquid, smiles; there is a warmth in him, no malice.

GANTRY

Well -- happy days.

(drinks)

JIM

I'll drink to that.

(he does)

GANTRY (looks around)

Will yuh look at this place -- ???

(shakes head, grins)

What were they so mad about, anyhow?

JIM

The Mob don't like their gods to be human.

(Gantry nods)

They hurt you?

GANTRY (takes pint)
It only hurts for a second, Jim, boy.

235
cont'd

JIM
What'll you do now?

GANTRY (grins)
Way I got it figured -- you're up,
then you're down. You sin -- then
you're saved. Yuh do the best yuh
can an' leave the rest to the Lord.

JIM
You really do believe in the Lord,
don't you?

GANTRY
Damn right.
(drinks again -- so does Jim)
Does a man good to get down on his
knees now 'n then. That's why folks
come to a place like this. When
they're sick, or scared, or got too
much money, or not enough, or before
a war, or right after! Prayin's the
cheapest, first-rate medicine there
is. That's why Shara was so good
for 'em.

JIM
She's a lot of woman.

GANTRY
Yep.

JIM
You ought to marry her.

GANTRY
Don't tell me you believe in holy
matrimony ?

JIM (smiles)
I can recommend it -- never having
tried it.

GANTRY (softly)
It's too late, Jim, boy.

JIM

Maybe not.

235

cont'd

Jim takes newspaper from pocket, opens it, places it on knee of Gantry. Three-column headline:-

EVANGELIST INNOCENT

Underneath is a boxed section featuring a photo (head shot) of Lulu Bains. Caption:-

"I FRAMED ELMER GANTRY"

Gantry is not exultant. He does not even feel victorious.

JIM

She was waiting for me at the paper -- with that story.

(Gantry says nothing, takes a long, long drink from pint)
How'd you get her to do it?

GANTRY (rises)

I didn't.

JIM

The Lord sure moves in mysterious ways.

GANTRY

He sure does.

Gantry walks off with suitcase and newspaper. Jim lights cigar -- finishes last swig in bottle.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TABERNACLE ON PIER NIGHT

236

The huge cross, blazing with electric bulbs, revolves above tabernacle. Electric lights outline structural design of building.

Streams of people flow into the tabernacle. The Boy Rangers bugle-and-drum corps play a lively gospel song. (ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS'S NAME)

Babbitt proudly marches into Tabernacle.

RADIO TRUCK

237

Atop the truck is an announcer. He describes the event.

NEWSREEL PLATFORM

238

Two newsreel cameramen at work.

CROWD

239

It moves slowly into pier. It sings the gospel song. Cameramen take flash pictures.

INT. TABERNACLE

240

Banners, banners everywhere. Banners hanging from wooden rafters; banners on the walls. They move restlessly in the breeze that comes thru open doors. Huge posters read:-

In the blood of the Messiah
Is Redemption from sorrow.

Across the tabernacle, undulating in the breeze, is a huge banner on which is printed:-

JESUS SAID: "I am the way,
the truth and the life."
John 14:16

The large white cross is secured against black stage drapes. The altar is simple and tasteful. Flowers, abundant flowers.

The Tabernacle is almost filled. They keep pouring in. An air of excitement in the crowd, which is dotted with crippled, infirm, people in wheelchairs, etc.

Aisle captains and ushers wear identifying badges. Advisers wear lapel pennants; counsellors carry pledge cards and pencils.

No press section on stage. To one side a long table for reporters. Jim Lefferts is present. On stage radio technicians test microphone. Rachel leads the choir.

EXT. PIER BACKSTAGE

241

This is to rear of pier. It is roped off. Entrances to dressing rooms and stage from this area.

Gantry, dressed, shaved, stands at railing, looking out over the black waves, gleaming softly with the reflected lights of the electric bulbs. Singing of crowd heard o.s. Morgan comes from Sharon's dressing room to join Gantry.

MORGAN

She wants you to have the top spot tonight. I'll introduce Shara -- then, she'll put you on.

(Gantry is silent)

You all right?

(Gantry nods)

Make it good -- we're on a state-wide hookup.

(Morgan exits)

EXT. PIER

242

The crowds keep coming.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (from truck)

Any moment now -- over this radio network -- you will hear the voice of Sister Sharon Falconer -- but not that, I'm afraid, of Elmer Gantry. For Mr. Gantry has completely vanished since three nights ago -- when their famed Revival Tent was defiled and Elmer Gantry was humiliated. But now -- only 72 hours later -- we are about to witness what promises to be Sister Sharon's most glorious night -- and for Mr. Gantry -- VINDICATION !!! The big question has been asked by leading newspapers -- "Will the people want Sister Sharon and Elmer Gantry back again?" Here's their answer! Since early morning thousands of people have been coming to the opening of the Tabernacle -- they've come by buses, trains, trolleys, on foot in autos -- a tremendous pilgrimage -- an unforgettable manifestation of faith.

This radio copy has been used from the start. It is used to cover some of the following shots:-

BUSES

243

People disembark from a long line of them. On buses
are banners such as:-

CONTINUED

WELCOME BACK SISTER SHARON

and

WE GLORY IN GANTRY

FACES IN CROWD

244

Men, women and children. They flow along pier toward
Tabernacle. They carry children, they help the crippled.
They sign the gospel song. They eat hot dogs and popcorn
and peanuts. They are happy in their seriousness.

INT. SHARON'S TABERNACLE DRESSING ROOM

244-A

Morgan and Jim Lefferts face a distraught Sharon.
She paces feverishly before them. The singing of
crowd in Tabernacle fliters thru.

SHARON

You never liked him -- or understood
him! You don't want to find him !!!

JIM (sympathetically)

I've checked the police, hospitals,
railroad and bus depots -- everywhere --

SHARON (cuts in)

Where is he??? Where???

(this last is said almost to
herself and not directed
at either Morgan or Jim)

JIM

Every wire service in the country's
asking the same question. He's page
one news. If anything'd happened to
him -- you'd know it.

Sharon, in one of her unpredictable switches, suddenly
becomes calm, even mystical.

SHARON

Yes -- yes. I would know it!

(picks up her cape)

He'll be here! I'm sure of it!!!

(calmly to Morgan)

We'll wait for him.

MORGAN

We can't wait! Some of those people've
been out there since early morning.

244-A
cont'd

SHARON (simply)

I won't go on without him.

She starts for door leading to rear of pier.

JIM (quietly)

Maybe he won't be coming back --
(she stops, looks at him)
-- just a feeling.

SHARON

We'll wait for him.
(she exits to pier)

Jim opens door leading to stage of auditorium.

MORGAN

Thanks for your help.

Jim nods, exits to auditorium. Morgan opens door to
rear of pier.

SHARON ON PIER

244-B

She stands at railing, facing ocean. Her eyes are closed,
her face composed. She could be praying.

MORGAN

244-C

He emerges from dressing room, starts for Sharon. He
stops, peers into darkness at one side of pier.

GANTRY

244-D

He approaches, suitcase in hand.

MORGAN

Elmer!

SHARON

244-E

She turns, sees Gantry. She runs to him, her face ecstatic. As he removes his hat, she embraces him fiercely, holding him, not kissing him.

SHARON (a whisper)
Oh, darling, darling.
(she is thankful for
his appearance)

Morgan comes to them. He is delighted and relieved. He does not wish to intrude on this moment, but he knows he must begin the revival meeting.

MORGAN (hurriedly)
You all right?
(Gantry nods, over her shoulder)
I'll introduce Shara. Then, she'll
put you on. She wants you to have the
key spot tonight.
(He starts for dressing room)

GENTRY
Bill ---

MORGAN (calls back)
Make it good. We're on a state-wide
hookup!

INT. TABERNACLE

244-F

The crowd is festive beneath the restless banners. They are just finished the song they have been singing.

Jim Lefferts is at table among reporters. In the background Morgan is seen quickly approaching Rachel, who is situated with choir and orchestra,

SOB SISTER (enters to
reporters from outside)
Gantry's back!!!
(Jim turns in disbelief)
Somebody just saw him.
(She starts away)
Where's a phone around here?

Jim's eyes light with ironic laughter.

JIM (to other reporters)
Quite a guy, Mr. Gantry.
(laughs softly)
First the mysterious religioso
three-day disappearance -- now the
"divine" resurrection!!!

244-F
cont'd

As he laughs, Jim mutters something akin to "son-of-a-"
But it is drowned out by Rachel and the choir starting to
sing Sharon's theme, BATTLE HYMN. The crowd joins in.

EXT. PIER GANTRY AND SHARON

245

Her eyes are moist with happiness. She looks at his
troubled eyes.

SHARON
Three endless days without a word. Why?
(He is silent, wondering how
frankly he may speak)
Do you realize how much I need you?
(He is silent)
Are you angry? With me???
(He shakes "no")
Don't blame them out there. Everything
happens for a reason.
(looks out to sea)
Everything has a purpose. God sent
you to me in the first place. And He
brought you back to me because He wants
us to go on with His work.

He comes to her side, starts hesitantly --

GANTRY
Shara --

SHARON (waits, then --)
Yes?

GANTRY
What would happen if we chucked the whole
works -- beat it across the state line --
an' got good an' married? Have a buncha
kids -- take 'em to a ball game, like most
folks -- go dancin' --yuh know we never
even danced together -- once? Let's do
it! Tonight! Right now!

SHARON (looks to
Tabernacle)
But all those people --

245
cont'd

GANTRY
If they wanna pray -- let 'em go to
church. We could sneak away --

SHARON (sharply)
THIS is their church!
(she suddenly points)
Look!

245
cont'd

SHOOTING STAR

246

It crosses the black sky.

SHARON AND GANTRY

247

She still points to the shooting star. From inside
Tabernacle comes mass singing of her introduction theme:-
BATTLE HYMN.

SHARON
A shooting star! It's a sign -- an
omen for the glory that begins tonight.
Morgan appears at backstage entrance.

MORGAN
Ready, Shara --

SHARON (to Gantry)
Wish me luck.

He reaches for her arms, perhaps to bring her back to
reality. But she starts for the stage, transfixed,
deaf, except to her own inner voices.

GANTRY (calls)
I wish you --
(she is gone)
-- love.

She enters Tabernacle with Morgan.

INT. TABERNACLE

248

Morgan appears from side of stage. He approaches stage
center. The choir finishes singing BATTLE HYMN.

MORGAN
If you believe in the faith of
your own Sister Sharon --
(shouts of yes)

MORGAN (cont'd)

248

-- if you believe in the innocence
of Elmer Gantry --

cont'd

(more shouts of yes)

-- if you believe in GOD ALMIGHTY --
(more cries)

-- reassure them all with a
Hallelujah!!!!!!

A thunderous hallelujah bursts from the crowd.

SHARON

249

She enters stage on this thunderous approval. Her cape is off. She is an "angel in white". Her piercing eyes, ecstatic face brings the crowd to its feet. They cheer, they weep. The crippled are helped up. Children are raised to see better.

JIM LEFFERTS

250

In press section, he watches with mounting fever in himself. He does not write a single word.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

251

He tries to describe the scene over the pandemonium.

BABBITT

252

He is pleased. This is vindication for him, too.

GANTRY

253

He hears the ovation and is happy for Sharon. He leaves the railing at back of pier and moves around to the side, where he can see her thru one of the side doors to Tabernacle.

SHARON

254

Her eyes fill with gratitude. She holds up her arms to quiet the crowd.

SHARON

254
cont'd

At this very moment -- the power
of the Holy Ghost has descended
on this Tabernacle. He is here --
(looks toward ceiling)
-- here -- right now!

An awesome silence among crowd, who fall under the spell
of her intensity, her fanatic belief.

GANTRY

255

He walks along side of pier, past open door, by the
overflow crowd, which bulges from every doorway.

TWO MEN AT RAILING

256

One of them smokes a cigar(near one of the many NO
SMOKING signs posted around Tabernacle). His companion
sees a uniformed fireman approaching. He nudges the
cigar-smoker and whispers. The cigar-smoker flips the
stogie-stub away.

CLOSE SHOT CIGAR

257

It lands in the roped-off section(where people are not
permitted to go). It falls on a pile of oily rags.

SHARON (uninterrupted)

Just now -- across the sea -- to
the end of the world -- I saw an
omen -- for all of us -- a fiery
line written by the Hand of God --
a glorious shooting star!

(faces in crowd nod,
exhort her -- they have
seen the sign, too)

Thus God has told us of His Coming.
WILL we be ready when the great
moment comes?

JIM LEFFERTS

- 258

He is rapt.

SHARON

Have we lost God? Have we lost
contact with the supernatural?
HAVE WE LOST FAITH?

258
cont'd

CLOSE SHOT CIGAR

259

The oily rag, under cigar, glows in an ever-widening circle.

SHARON

Without faith -- we are morally sick.

CLOSE SHOT GANTRY

260

He stands among a few people on Pier, looking at Sharon
thru open door.

SHARON

God is food for the soul. Take
away God and your soul will starve!

SHARON

261

Though her eyes are open, she does not see the crowd --.
The tremendous force she exerts over the audience is
not thru shouting -- but from some searing belief
approaching controlled hysteria.

SHARON

Faith is the strongest force in the
world. Faith can raise the dead.
Faith can heal. Faith is the only
stairway to life everlasting!

MALE VOICE (suddenly shouts)

HELP me, Sister.

A stir in the crowd. Sharon focusses.

MAN IN CROWD

262

A thin, intense, young man has leaped to his feet with his
shout and is on his way to the stage, stiff-legged, eyes
bulging.

YOUNG MAN

262
cont'dHelp me!

Ushers move toward him quickly.

VOICES

Shhhh!

Stop him!

What's he want???

A Young Woman, seated beside the Young Man, hurries
after him, joins him.

YOUNG WOMAN

He can't hear, Sister! He's deaf!!!

An usher has the Young Man by the arm.

SHARON (to usher)

Let him alone, please.

YOUNG MAN (in ecstasis)

Heal me!

(weeping)

Heal me, Sister!Morgan afraid lest such experiments fail and backfire,
intervenes --

MORGAN (to Young Woman)

You should take him to a doctor.

SHARON

GOD is the greatest healer of all!

VOICES (mounting hysteria)

Praise God.

Let God heal.

Make way for God.

Let the Lord be merciful.

SHARON (to woman)

Was he born deaf?

YOUNG WOMAN (shakes "no")

A storm woke him up one night. He
screamed he couldn't hear the thunder.
He could FEEL it -- but he couldn't
HEAR it!

Young Man watching woman's lips, nods agreement.

262
cont'd

SHARON

You're his wife?

YOUNG WOMAN (close to tears)

Yes sister. I'm sorry to trouble
you --

(she is weeping now -- unable
to continue)

Sharon kneels on stage before Young Man. This brings
their respective heights to the same level.

SHARON

Do you believe in the Father, the
Son and the Holy Ghost?

(Young Man looks to his wife,
who nods. He nods)

Do you believe Jesus healed by the
laying on of hands? That He passed
on this gift to His Disciples?

GENTRY

263

He starts forward as though to stop Sharon -- but
withdraws. It is too late.

SHARON (meanwhile)

Pray with me everyone --. I need
your faith.

This is said over the following quick cuts --

JIM LEFFERTS

264

He leans forward to watch, completely absorbed.

BABBITT

265

He, too, is mesmerized -- ready to believe.

CROWD

266

The strained faces. The excitement, deep-rooted hope
and belief. This is the final meaning of religion for
many of them -- the living proof.

SHARON

267

Her eyes are closed. She faces heaven.

SHARON

Oh, Lord -- Oh, God, be merciful.

Sharon opens her eyes. She stares hypnotically into the Young Man's eyes. She places her palms over his ears.

SHARON (sharply)

Heal! HEAL!

With each "heal" -- she presses on his ears.

CROWD

268

They hold their breaths. The tension mounts. Even Jim finds himself hoping for a miracle, though later he might not believe it.

SHARON

Oh, God, help us in our weakness.
Punish us for our sins -- but reward
us for our faith!

(sharp commanding tone)

HEAL!!! HEAL!!!!

Again the pressing action with her palms.

GANTRY

269

He hopes fervently with her.

SHARON

Let Thy spirit fill this Tabernacle.
Let Thy Holiness bless this house
created for Thy Glory -- and Thine
alone!

CIGAR AND OILY RAGS

270

Rags are burning now. The flames lick at the wooden wall of Tabernacle.

SHARON AND YOUNG MAN

271

Her voice grows in intensity.

SHARON

HEAL !!!!!

(to crowd)

Pray for God to HEAL -- HEAL!

An ecstatic expression comes to the Young Man's eyes.
He pulls her hands from his ears.

YOUNG MAN (whispers)

Oh, God -- I think, I --

SHARON

Can you hear me?

YOUNG MAN

Yes -- oh, YES!

Sharon turns him around to face audience, so that he
cannot see her lips.

SHARON

Repeat after me --

YOUNG MAN

Repeat after me--

SHARON

Blessed is the Lord.

YOUNG MAN

Blessed is the Lord.

FACES IN CROWD

272

Some pray. Others weep.

SHARON

Thank Thee, Oh, Lord for Thy mercy --

YOUNG MAN

Thank Thee, Oh, Lord --

(he sinks to his knees, still
facing audience -- he shouts
thru his tears --)

I CAN HEAR !!!!!

Oh, God ---!

WOMAN IN CROWD (screams)

272
cont'd

Praise God!

CRIPPLED MAN

VOICES

Hallelujah!

A woman in crowd with a high soprano voice sings the one word:- HALLELUJAH. It is a beautiful piercing tone.

RACHEL

273

Shaken by the event, she begins to sing the Hallelujah from THE MESSIAH.

Other choral members take it up. The music joins in.

CROWD

274

It joins in the singing. Babbitt is moist-eyed. He sings!

GENTRY

275

He is relieved.

JIM LEFFERTS

276

He shakes his head in wonderment.

CLOSE SHOT CIGAR

277

Flames from oily rag lick at wooden structure on outside of Tabernacle. The wind blows one of the flimsy banners dangerously close to flames.

CROWD

278

Several in wheelchairs are being propelled toward the stage. They sing en masse HALLELUJAH.

VOICES

Heal me, Sister.
Help us, blessed Sister.

278
cont'd

A man on crutches hobbles forward.

A blind man, white cane over arm, arms outstretched, stalks toward the stage lustily singing HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH.

Babbitt helps another man carry an ailing woman toward Sharon.

The singing swells into a frenzied roar.

A woman faints with joy.

GANTRY

279

He sees one of the billowy banners catch fire. He moves toward it.

SHARON

280

She stands on stage, bible clasped to breast, eyes closed, praying inaudibly.

FEMALE VOICE (screams)

FIRE !!!!!

GANTRY

281

He beats out the flames of banner with his unprotected hands. But it is too late. Another banner has caught fire.

CLOSE SHOTS

282

Shots grow shorter, quicker, building to match the frenzy with which the fire leaps from banner to banner.

BANNER

283

It is consumed in one slash of fire.

WOMAN

284

She screams.

SHARON

285

She is stunned.

GANTRY

286

He grabs at burning banner. He yanks it down.

JIM LEFFERTS

287

He pulls down burning banner and beats at it. Other reporters do likewise. Babbitt is momentarily immobilized.

BANNERS ON CEILING

288

Whipped by the wind, the fire spreads. The thin, painted material burns like gun powder.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

289

He has an opportunity here to describe an on-the-spot dramatic event. But his horror at what he sees permits him to say only a whispered:-

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Oh, my God --

CROWD

290

People try to run. They are jammed. A blazing banner falls on them.

They PANIC!!!

SHARON

Wait! PLEASE!

But her words are lost in the shouting.

TABERNACLE

LONG SHOT

291

_____ Panic! People _____, trying to run, unable to
_____ yelling, clawing _____ personal safety.

_____ races from banner _____ banner, wall to wall,
_____ pouring down, add _____ confusion.

_____ 'S FACE

292

_____ mouth opens to scream _____ No voice.

293

_____ acally clammers _____ backs of women and children.
_____ is transformed _____ proportions. He
_____ the frightened _____ and helps the woman.

294

_____ holds up her tiny _____ to keep her from harm. She
_____ down. She and _____ disappear under feet of mob.

_____ EFFERTS

295

_____ es to help the woman _____ and child. He is knocked
_____ conscious.

_____ CRUTCHES

296

_____ es are knocked out _____ under him.

_____ MAN

297

_____ carried along in _____ of people.

_____ IN WHEELCHAIR

298

_____ leaves it in an effort _____ escape. Hopeless.

GANTRY

299

He strikes one of the men who brutally, heedlessly tries to make his escape. Then he fights his way toward Sharon.

Gantry sees Jim Lefferts. He lifts Jim to his feet, sets him aside as he comes to consciousness. Then Gantry continues toward Sharon.

SHARON

300

The choir has long since run. Behind Sharon, the black drapes on the stage are blazing. The white cross burns. The pulpit smoulders. Sharon walks down among crowd.

SHARON

You're in the house of God! You MUST have FAITH! Those who believe in God will be saved. Trust in the Lord --

Sharon clutches at the arm of a panicked man. He knocks her down.

Whatever faith the crowd had a few minutes ago has been replaced by the stronger instinct of self-preservation.

MORGAN

301

He is swept thru one of the side doors onto the pier, over the railing and into the surf. Rachel is beside him.

NEWSREEL CAMERAMEN

302

They take pictures for a few moments and then run as the burning banners fall around them.

The radio announcer retreats, now describing the chaos.

GANTRY

303

By superhuman effort, his fists and sheer brute strength, he reaches Sharon. His clothes are torn. His face is scratched. Gantry and Sharon are in the midst of a milling screaming mob.

Gantry gets Sharon to her feet.

GANTRY

303
cont'd

It's no use!

She pulls away from him.

Immediately beside Gantry, a woman's dress has caught fire. Gantry rips the dress off the woman. In that instant he is separated from Sharon. A stampede of terrorized people sweeps Gantry along with them toward a side door and the pier.

SHARON

304

She appeals mutely to the crowd. She holds aloft the bible as though it will somehow quench the flames, or inspire the mob with courage.

SHARON

Why won't you trust in God?

She confronts a panic stricken man with her bible. The man punches her in the face, knocks her down.

GANTRY

305

He is swept outside the Tabernacle to the pier. He struggles to get back to Sharon.

SHARON

306

She gets to her feet. Blood is at the corner of her mouth. She looks heavenward. The ceiling is ablaze. She holds up the bible. One of the remaining banners:-

GOD IS LOVE

-- falls as it burns. Sharon's white satin gown catches fire. She does nothing to save herself. She gazes upward beatifically.

INT. TABERNACLE LONG SHOT

307

Most of the crowd is safely outside. Sharon is almost alone in the blazing cauldron.

She is a column of fire. She stands looking heavenward. Smoke billows around her, obscuring the vision.

307
cont'd

GANTRY

308

He shouts her name in one last agonizing plea, and then is plunged over the railing with the crowd -- into the surf.

EXT. PIER AND TABERNACLE LONG SHOT

309

The building blazes. The sea around it hisses with burning timbers.

People leap from the pier into the water.

Fire engines are heard arriving with clanging bells.

The huge revolving cross atop the building stops turning. Its lights go out. It is as though life itself has come to an end.

The crowd watches the spectacle. It is awed when the electric cross goes out. Their faces are lighted by the fire.

GANTRY

310

He struggles thru the water, helping a man here, a woman or child there. Babbitt also helps in the rescue work.

INT. TABERNACLE

311

The roof caves in where Sharon was last seen.

FIRE ENGINES

312

They arrive in a clamor. Their work is hampered by the crowd.

POLICE CARS

313

They arrive with screaming sirens.

CROWD

314

Gathered around one of the hot dog stands, they watch and listen to a description of the fire on the radio.

EXT. WATER UNDER PIER

315

The sea appears blood-red from the fire's reflection. People thrash about, yelling, sobbing, calling out names of loved ones lost in the darkness.

GANTRY

316

He is under the pier among the pilings, which are covered by a mossy slime. Men, women and children cling to the slippery pilings. Gantry helps two children toward the beach.

JIM LEFFERTS

317

He is waist-deep in the surf. He assists several aged persons to the sand. Babbitt carries out a child.

EXT. TABERNACLE LONG SHOT

318

It is a skeleton now, a stark cage within which still boils the flames. Miraculously, the huge cross still stands, though its electric bulbs have burst from the heat.

Firemen's hoses play water on the fire. Police are commandeering the crowds now.

Clouds of smoke obscure most of the building.

AMBULANCES

319

They begin to arrive at the pier and beach.

NEW SPECTATORS

320

They pour toward the pier and beach, brought by the radio report, reddened sky, firebells, police sirens.

BEACH

321

Scores of people drag themselves thru the surf toward the sand, where internes and doctors wait to help them.

GANTRY

322

He stops a moment in his labors to look at the burning Tabernacle. Jim Lefferts and Babbitt continue working.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PIER LONG SHOT DAWN

323

The sky is dull, leaden. Silhouetted against the first light of day are the grim, charred remains of the smouldering Tabernacle. Most of the roof is gone.

The blackened cross still stands. Two walls remain upright.

Firemen poke among the ruins. They clear away sagging timbers.

BEACH

324

Hundreds of people are gathered. Some of them are smeared, smudged, shivering in their wet clothes. They search among supine figures for loved ones. Internes and doctors aid them.

EXT. PIER

325

Here are gathered hundreds more. These are the ones who escaped unhurt. Behind them are people drawn by the fire.

There is a great hush except for the sounds made by firemen and workers clearing debris, searching for bodies.

MORGAN

326

He stands on pier, sipping coffee. A blanket is around his wet shoulders. He looks at ruins and shivers. A fireman carries out several articles. One of them is Gantry's traveling-salesman suitcase. He sets it down beside Morgan. Rachel looks at suitcase, turns away to hide tears.

INT. CHARRED RUINS OF TABERNACLE

327

Jim Lefferts carefully picks his way toward Gantry, who sits hunched on an overturned bench. Jim's sea-soaked shoes squish as he walks. He carries a scorched, worn bible.

GANTRY

328

His right hand is bandaged for burns. Part of his suit is burned. He is still soaked. Soot and ashes are on his jacket. He is expressionless, eyes deadened.

Jim enters to Gantry. He hands Gantry the bible.

JIM (softly)

It's hers. It's all we could find.

A fireman knocks loose a partially-burned timber. It crashes. A cloud of soot and ashes spirals up. Gantry rises with the bible. He starts out. Jim goes with him.

EXT. PIER

329

A stir among crowd as they see Gantry emerge with Jim. They press forward slowly.

NEWSREEL CAMERAMEN

330

They quickly adjust camera toward Gantry.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

331

He signals associate and pushes forward with microphone on a long cord.

GANTRY AND JIM

332

They move thru the silent, red-eyed, sick-at-heart crowd. Gantry looks into none of their faces. He is immersed in his own thoughts of Sharon. The crowd makes a path. The people watch him mutely.

A small boy is trying to tie a handkerchief around his blistered hand. Gantry stops on seeing the child. He quickly ties the handkerchief. Jim moves on.

WOMAN
Speak to us, Brother Gantry.

332
cont'd

He looks into their pleading eyes, eyes seeking solace.

JIM LEFFERTS

334

He watches, wonders whether Gantry will start preaching again, hoping he does not.

Morgan moves forward to Jim's side, hoping fervently that Gantry will speak.

GANTRY

335

He looks at Sharon's bible, ignores radio microphone.

ANOTHER WOMAN
Please ask Sister Sharon to forgive us.

GANTRY (gently)
Ain't nothin' to forgive. That fire was mighty hot -- hotter'n the fires of damnation.

MAN (haltingly)
I -- I ran -- I was afraid --. Tell Sister not to hate me.

GANTRY (looks heavenward)
Can yuh hear me up there, Sister?
Do you hate these folks?
(he listens -- looks at crowd)
She don't hate yuh. She loves yuh!

VOICES
Thank you, Brother.
Praise the Lord's love.
(other murmurs)

GANTRY (continuing)
An' WHAT IS LOVE? Love is the Mornin'
an' the Evenin' Star. Not the carnal
but the Divine love. Love is the voice
of music. Sing! Sing out your love!
(he starts the singing)
I'm on my way --- to Canaan Land --

RACHEL

336

Unashamedly weeping, she picks it up. She sings right along with him, walks among others, urging them to sing.

CROWD

337

It begins to sing. People on the pier sing. Crowd on beach sings also. The singing makes the crowd feel better. And that makes Gantry feel better, too. He walks toward Jim and Morgan. Crowd keeps singing.

MORGAN (to Gantry)

That was inspired.

GANTRY (reaches for suitcase)

Jim, boy -- d'you think it was inspired?

JIM

I think it was real friendly.

MORGAN

We've got to carry on her work --

GANTRY

Bill --

MORGAN

We'll get a new tent -- bigger --

GANTRY

Bill --

(Morgan stops)

"When I was a child, I spake as a child -- I understood as a child -- but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

(with a twinkle)

Paul's Epistle, First Corinthians 13:11.

(starts away with suitcase
and Sharon's bible)

So-long, Bill --

JIM (calls after him)

See you around, brother.

GANTRY (friendly)

See you in hell, brother.

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Gantry walks on. Rachel sings. It is her farewell
to him.

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cont'd

GANTRY

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He walks away from the pier and the singing crowd. His
pace increases. He hums the song along with the crowd.
"I'm on my way -- to Canaan Land --"

Far off a train whistle sounds. Gantry listens, smiles,
increases pace --- singing continues in b.g.

FADE OUT

THE END