

HOOVER

Screenplay by

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INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - 1963

CLOSE ON: The DEATH MASK OF JOHN DILINGER, his GLASSES, his STRAW HAT, his HALF SMOKED CIGAR and his GUN -- IN A CASE.

CLOSE ON: Shaking, old hands clip an article out of a newspaper. Several lines have already been underlined.

"...SEEMING INABILITY TO GAIN CONVICTIONS IN EVEN THE MOST HEINOUS CRIMES..."

"...APPARENTLY FALTERED UNDER THE AWESOME BURDEN, COMPLEXITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIS OFFICE..."

"...I HAVE NOTHING BUT SYMPATHY FOR THE MAN WHO ONCE SERVED HIS COUNTRY SO WELL..."

CLOSE ON: Beads of sweat on a forehead. The phone rings. The sound of someone picking up, then a voice on the other end:

OLD HELEN GANDY (V.O.)  
Sir, the writer is here from the PR  
Department.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)(O.S.)  
Set him up a typewriter in my outer  
office... and show him my photos of  
A. Mitchell Palmer.

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S HOME / LIBRARY - 1919 - NIGHT

A tall, strong, square jawed man in his late 40's, A. MITCHELL PALMER, sits in the downstairs library of his four story townhouse on R street, a posh DC neighborhood in 1919.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
Attorney General Palmer was a  
Quaker. He didn't believe in war.  
But he understood the necessity of  
strength and resolve. Believe--

Palmer watches his WIFE pad quietly up the stairs. He checks a clock against his watch and corrects the minute hand. 11PM.

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S HOME / BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Palmer undresses, but instead of joining his wife in bed, he clicks on a lamp by a chair and settles in with a book.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
--what you will from historians.  
Most write from a present  
perspective, forgetting context.  
Mitchell Palmer was a hero.

Palmer looks to a window, listening to the WHIR OF A MOTORCAR, the HORSE HOOVES ON THE COBBLESTONES. He goes back to reading ignoring the new sounds outside: A CAR PULLS UP, A DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE. THEN A CRASH DOWNSTAIRS AS IF SOMETHING WAS THROWN AGAINST THE DOOR.

A BLINDING FLASH! A MASSIVE EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH THE HOUSE! THE WALLS CRACK, GLASS SHATTERS, FURNITURE GOES FLYING!

Palmer is hurled from his chair, his wife thrown from her bed. Palmer lifts himself off the floor, rushes to his wife and pulls her out of the room.

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S HOME / STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

They race down the twisted, crumbling stairs. Palmer falls through a broken step, pulls himself back up, and wills them to a bedroom door where a GIRL CAN BE HEARD SCREAMING.

The door frame has buckled, but its no match for Palmer's brute strength. He throws his body against the door, revealing his TEEN DAUGHTER crying hysterically, the electric lights flickering on and off. His wife runs to her side.

Everything is suddenly silent. Palmer cautiously navigates what remains of the stairs. Around any corner is a potential assassin. A sudden crash! An assailant? He braces himself and pulls a banister rung off to use as a weapon.

As he turns the corner to the ground floor, he finds utter destruction: A STUFFED ELKS HEAD thrown to the floor, parquet flooring ripped to pieces, piles of rubble, and everywhere: SPOTS OF FRESH BLOOD starting to drip down the walls.

He looks to where his front wall and windows once were. Out on the street a car has blown over. And piercing the silence:

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT (V.O.)

Mr. Palmer?

Palmer rushes beside the mantle for protection, but its bricks crumble to the floor.

Stepping into the cavernous remains of the home is a 30-year-old version of future president FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT with braces on his legs and a crutch. Behind him, lifting her skirt to avoid stepping on the hem is a young ELEANOR.

MITCHELL PALMER

Mr. Roosevelt? Thank Thee. Thank thee Lord it's you.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. / SEWARD SQUARE - THAT NIGHT

A young man, 24, burst out the door of a modest two story home in a simple suit, holding a bike. He's built like a fire plug with wavy black hair, attractive in a bulldogish way.

He hops on his bike and peddles determinedly, stopping at each intersection like a model citizen, then peddling his heart out again. This is young JOHN EDGAR HOOVER.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

Across the country, eight bombs  
exploded that night. All at 11PM.  
Two United States Senators, four  
cabinet members, a Supreme Court  
Justice, John D. Rockerfeller, J.P.  
Morgan. All of them targeted.

As he rides out of frame, REVEAL: only a few blocks away, the dome of the US Capital peaks over the tops of the working class homes. Further in the distance puffs of smoke and flames. The city is in turmoil.

EXT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

Not a single window on the block survived the blast. Tree limbs are down. Cars are on their sides. The block is lit up with flood lights. Detectives and reporters swarm. Police push neighbors back, roping off the neighborhood.

A LONG POV: Mitchell Palmer's giant shoe steps through the wreckage, almost crushing a severed finger lying in the street. He is flanked by young Roosevelt and another up and coming neighbor, young DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

MITCHELL PALMER

This may be the end of days for  
this country, Dwight.

Palmer picks up the finger without putting on a glove, and hands it to an INSPECTOR who puts it in a TRASH TIN.

REVEAL: this is all young Edgar's POV. He is on his bike just behind the police ropes watching the investigators carelessly sweep up evidence: two guns, remains of a suitcase, an English/Italian dictionary.

IN A MANNER THAT WILL BECOME A TRADEMARK OF THE FILM: we see what Edgar sees: a brief imagined STRING OF LIGHT connects the severed finger to A BLOWN OPEN BRIEFCASE. He's making connections. Organizing.

But the strings vanish when the inspectors use buckets to CLEAN UP THE BLOOD instead of collecting it. It's not clumsy, it's customary. This isn't 2009, it's 1919. Still, Edgar is disturbed by the vanishing connections.

Suddenly, a gust of wind shakes the trees and reveals hundreds of PINK HAND-BILLS in the road. Their festive color stands in stark contrast to the destruction. Edgar gathers any that blow past the police line. He reads one. We hear:

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

"There will have to be BLOODSHED:  
there will have to be MURDER: we  
will KILL because it is necessary:  
we will destroy to rid the world of  
your tyrannical institution."

ANGLE ON: Palmer notices Edgar collecting the fliers.

INSPECTOR

Is he a neighbor, sir? Should we  
question him?

MITCHELL PALMER

No. He works in my office.

INSPECTOR

Is he an investigator?

MITCHELL PALMER

He manages the filing system.

And without knowing he's been spotted, Edgar jumps back on his bike and peddles away holding the BRIGHT PINK FLIERS.

AGENT SMITH (V.O.) (PRE-LAP)

You were at Attorney General  
Palmer's home that night?

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / FBI HALLWAY - 1963 - DAY

The camera cruises down the halls of the "MODERN" FBI. The agents are dressed to perfection. Everything is in its place.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

Leave that to the reader's  
imagination. It's important to give  
the protagonist a bit of mystery.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - SAME TIME

A handsome, clean cut young FBI agent, AGENT SMITH, sits behind a 60's typewriter taking notes on a pad of paper.

AGENT SMITH

I could allude to a young man whose description matches yours. The best of both worlds.

REVEAL: standing across the room behind a mahogany desk is a stout old man with a mashed in nose wearing a three piece suit and holding one of those OLD PINK FLIERS from 1919. This is Hoover, almost 40 years later, now J. EDGAR HOOVER. He lets out a laugh that leaves behind a smile. He isn't the brute he's come to be known as. He's surprisingly warm.

OLD HOOVER

Where did you get your law degree?

AGENT SMITH

George Washington. I grew up here. I had a mom to take care of, so I stayed close. I received an English degree there as well.

Hoover walks behind him, reads out of his typewriter.

OLD HOOVER

Then I don't have to tell you that what determines a legacy is often what isn't seen... What's critical at this moment is that we RE-clarify the difference between villain and hero. How do you think that compares with today?

The young man winds the paper out of the typewriter.

AGENT SMITH

I'm not sure, sir. I'd like to hear more. I could come back tomorrow.

OLD HOOVER

Fine. The pages stay here though.

AGENT SMITH

Yes, sir.

Hoover grabs the young agent's hand and shakes it, holding it a bit longer than normal. The agent knows he's being sized up. He goes, taking his typewriter with him.

Left alone, Hoover inspects the hand he just shook with. IT'S PERFECTLY DRY. It WAS a test and Hoover seems pleased. He puts the OLD PINK FLIER back in an ancient file folder.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / FBI HALLWAY - 1919 - DAY

Young Edgar walks down the long hall (same as earlier, but 45 years earlier) with a staccato gait in a crisp white shirt, holding that same (but brand new) file with THE PINK FLIERS.

A GAGGLE OF SECRETARIES, dresses to the floor, are headed right toward him. Most are far older than him.

HEAD SECRETARY

Good morning, John. Mr. Palmer has asked that you attend the emergency meeting today.

YOUNG HOOVER

It's Mr. Hoover, please.

HEAD SECRETARY

Two o'clock. Don't be too early again. It's as rude as being tardy.

She bustles off with the rest, but not before a slim, young secretary, 22, with dark hair, lovely eyes, and a high collar makes eye contact with him. Edgar isn't shy.

YOUNG HOOVER

And who is this lovely addition to the secretarial pool?

HEAD SECRETARY

Helen, introduce yourself.

HELEN GANDY

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Hoover.  
I'm Helen Gandy.

YOUNG HOOVER

Welcome to the Department of Justice, Miss. Gandy... Please let Mr. Palmer know I will attend.

As if he had any choice in the matter. The secretaries brush off, mocking his attempt at grandiosity. Edgar shares one last glance with Helen before she vanishes.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. / PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - EVENING

Packards, Model Ts, bikes and horse drawn coaches rumble by Edgar's trolley, all sharing the cobblestone streets.

IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE D.C. RACE RIOTS: Smoke drifts from a business a block down. The trolley keeps pace with OFFICERS chasing a BLACK MAN. But as they reach an intersection, the

police are greeted with a CROWD OF OTHER BLACK MEN. The police are overwhelmed. Edgar watches like it's a play, refusing to let it dampen his mood.

EXT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - LATER

As Edgar approaches the house, he spots a GRAY-HAIRED, EMACIATED MAN rocking manically on the porch in a wicker chair. Edgar steels himself and climbs the steps.

As soon as the old man spots Edgar, he starts SCREAMING BLOODY MURDER. Edgar ignores it, he won't let this ruin his cheerful mood either. He walks into his house.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - CONTINUOUS

As Edgar walks in, he sees his MOTHER, a stout, outgoing, opinionated woman bent over, tuning the radio, her giant back side to him. It's all he sees. A FLASH--

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - (IN HIS MIND / MEMORY)

Edgar sits at his mother's feet. She pets him like a child.

HOOVER'S MOTHER

Madame Marcia held court this morning. Her premonition... I should buy a dress. She said your father will die soon, and when he does, you will rise to be the most powerful man in the country. Your brother is a good man, EDGAR, but you will restore our family to greatness. EDGAR--

He looks up with childlike fear. Her "Edgar's" cross the cut--

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

In reality, Edgar is sitting by the radio with his Mother.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

--Edgar? Am I boring you?

YOUNG HOOVER

I'm listening. You fired the maid.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

I told her after she was through with her work, she could quit as I was not paying for her impudence. The whole Negro race is in open revolt.



YOUNG HOOVER  
I could open an  
investigation.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
They've gotten too  
comfortable.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Did you hear me? I said I could  
open an investigation.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
Say what you mean.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(beaming)  
Mr. Palmer called me into a meeting  
today. The war against the radicals  
has begun. He insisted that I lead  
a new Anti-Radical division.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
(skeptical)  
And did you leap like a dog?

YOUNG HOOVER  
I told him, "This is perhaps the  
greatest threat our nation has ever  
faced. I can NOT take the job...  
unless I feel certain I can be  
effective."

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
Well done! But you'll take it.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Three thousand a year.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
I'll have to get you all new  
clothes! You can't dress like this  
anymore.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I have forty names of suspected  
radicals already, in only four  
hours. I'll have ten thousand by  
the end of the month. And I have my  
own staff. Trusted agents.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
(critical)  
Are you smoking, Edgar?

YOUNG HOOVER

(ashamed)

It doesn't come naturally.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

Listen to the doctor. With this new burden, your nerves could get the best of you. You don't want to end up like your father. Go try one now. You can put your father in his room.

YOUNG HOOVER

I have to get ready for dinner.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

You're abandoning me tonight?

YOUNG HOOVER

It's with a typist. She's very organized.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

Is it a date?

YOUNG HOOVER

I think so... I'm going to show her my old card catalogue system at the library of Congress.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

(disappointed, critical)

Card catalogues, Edgar?

And with that, the screen door opens and Edgar's emaciated father walks in and down to the basement without saying a word. Both pretend not to see or hear him. She leaps up and heads to the basement door.

EDGAR'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Romance her. Wear a blue tie. You look so handsome in that blue tie!

And she slams the basement door shut, trapping her crazy husband downstairs. She seemed downright jolly about it.

INT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - NIGHT

Edgar (in his blue tie) and Helen are surrounded by THOUSANDS OF BOOKS AND SHELVES, standing in front of a MASSIVE FILING SYSTEM in the dimly lit, breathtaking heart of the Library. It's romantic, clandestine. The only other person there is a NIGHT GUARD well in the distance.

YOUNG HOOVER

I helped develop it. You see, each item is assigned an index card with a completely unique code indicating its topic, title, author, and location. What took days to locate, now takes minutes. Name a topic, or an author. Anything.

HELEN GANDRY

Indiscretion.

YOUNG HOOVER

What era?

HELEN GANDRY

Present day.

YOUNG HOOVER

Time me.

Edgar dives into the catalogue system. Much like the blood and briefcase at the Palmer house bombing, we see this search through Edgar's mind. The same LIT STRINGS appear momentarily sending him to one row of files, then one column, then one specific file. LIT STRINGS appear and evaporate with the splendor of lightening bugs on a southern summer.

He pulls out a single card and flashes it to Helen. She giggles. He leads her in his speedy way to a towering row of book cases. LIT STRINGS ARE EVERYWHERE, all leading to a single book. He pulls it out: CONTEMPORARY COURTSHIP.

HELEN GANDY

(teasing)

How do you know I didn't mean  
POLITICAL indiscretion?

YOUNG HOOVER

If you'd like to start over, we can.

HELEN GANDY

No. This will do.

YOUNG HOOVER

How long did I take?

HELEN GANDRY

One minute, ten seconds.

YOUNG HOOVER

Imagine if every citizen in the  
country was uniquely identifiable

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 with their own card and number.  
 Say, the pattern on their fingers.  
 Imagine how quickly they could be  
 found when they committed a crime.

He re-files the book, clearly missing that she's been  
 flirting. She's a little disappointed.

HELEN GANDRY  
 It's all very impressive, John.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 I'm sorry... Should we go?

HELEN GANDRY  
 It's up to you.

He knows what he needs to do. And with his hands at his side,  
 he leans in for a kiss. It's awkward. Like a school boy.

HELEN GANDRY (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Hoover...

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Did I do something wrong?

HELEN GANDRY  
 No. But I'm not sure where you  
 think this is headed.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Right. Of course.

And with the precision of an army cadet, he gets down on one  
 knee and grabs hold of her hand.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 Miss. Gandy, despite the brief time  
 we've known each other, I feel  
 assured that you would make a fine  
 companion. Your strength, your  
 character, your education--

HELEN GANDRY  
 Are you poking fun at me?

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Of course not.

HELEN GANDRY  
 Please stand up, Mr. Hoover.

YOUNG HOOVER

(he does, humiliated)

I would appreciate it if you didn't share this with the other women in the typing pool.

HELEN GANDRY

Of course not.

YOUNG HOOVER

Would you mind telling me wh-wh-wh-what fl--

(speeds up to kill the stutter)  
flaw you've found in my character?

HELEN GANDRY

No. We just met.

YOUNG HOOVER

(speedy, defensive)

Of course. But I'm a fast and accurate judge of character. We've gone out three times. Many people do, but I don't. It's my most treasured skill. I see people right off for what they are. And please, call me Edgar. It's what my mother uses.

HELEN GANDRY

Edgar, can you keep a secret?

YOUNG HOOVER

You have my word.

HELEN GANDRY

I have no interest in getting married. My work comes first.

YOUNG HOOVER

(bruised)

I see... Then perhaps you'll consider the position of personal secretary for the new radical division. In this moment of need... for our country.

That's a proposal she can accept. He fights back the humiliation, chin up, and makes a bee line out of there.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - 1963

This is Hoover's small private office. A RED BUZZER rings on his desk. He glares at it. It buzzes again.

OLD HOOVER  
Miss Gandy!

And an OLD HELEN GANDY walks in carrying files.

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
The nitwit Kennedy child rang his  
baby buzzer again. Perhaps he needs  
a fresh diaper.

Hoover takes her files and neatly orders them into his  
private cabinet. He locks it back.

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
Would you like me to find out what  
the Attorney General needs?

OLD HOOVER  
I would like you to finish the  
transcript from the Los Angeles  
recording. When you're done, we'll  
answer his buzzer.

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
Okay... Edgar? Agent Smith is back.  
He has questions about the Palmer  
raids. Should I tell him to go?

OLD HOOVER  
(lights up)  
No... Do you like him, Helen?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
I don't have an opinion of him yet.

OLD HOOVER  
I like him. I trust him.

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
I'll set him up in your outer  
office.

OLD HOOVER  
No. Set him up a desk in here.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - 1964

Hoover is bright and cheery again as he spins a tale in his  
rapid pace for the young FBI agent who sits typing away.

OLD HOOVER  
In 1920 we had no federal laws, no  
power, no firearms, and Congress  
(MORE)

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 liked it that way. The criminals  
 ran free. But there was no law  
 against keeping track of radicals.  
 I compiled note cards on over 5000  
 names. And called the one  
 Department that held a small piece  
 of untested power.

AGENT SMITH  
 The Department of Labor. The power  
 to deport, sir.

OLD HOOVER  
 But only to deport people who  
 checked two boxes. They had to be  
 foreign citizens. AND, they had to  
 be working to harm the country.

YOUNG FBI MAN  
 The Labor Department cooperated?

OLD HOOVER  
 Of course not. No one freely shares  
 power in Washington DC, Agent Smith.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR / OFFICE - DAY - 1919

Young Edgar sits behind Palmer who shakes EDGAR'S NOTE CARDS  
 bearing names of suspected radicals. Edgar is in awe as his  
 mentor rants to the heads of the Labor Dept., ABERCROMBIE and  
 CAMINETTI, and their young LABOR DEPARTMENT LAWYER.

MITCHELL PALMER  
 You mean to tell me there is no law  
 under which YOU can issue a warrant  
 for the arrest of an alien when I  
 certify that he is subject to  
 deportation?!

LABOR DEPT LAWYER  
 Without evidence, Mr. Attorney  
 General? No! There exists a Due  
 process of law, sir!

MITCHELL PALMER  
 Due process of law? What about the  
 threat to our country!?

Edgar looks to an old man in the corner, CAMINETTI. A FREEZE  
 FRAME OF: EDGAR'S POV OF CAMINETTI'S UNFLATTERING SCOWL:

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
 But one of their heads, A Mr.  
 Caminetti... well, he WAS wary of  
 (MORE)

OLD HOOVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 our Justice Department, but he  
 hated one person more--

EXT. A PACKED HALL - 1919 - DAY

A fiery, stout woman (hair up, glasses on her nose) stands on stage shaking her fist at a crowd of 3000 red-banner waving, slogan chanting Russians, Jews, Fins, Poles, Italians...

EMMA GOLDMAN  
 I am a revolutionist by nature and  
 temperament and as such I claim the  
 right to rebel and resist invasion  
 by all means, force included,  
 consequently, a destructionist!

From a balcony, Edgar listens, jotting down notes.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
 --Emma Goldman, hero of the radical  
 movement. She was set to be  
 released from prison in two weeks.  
 If I could hand CAMINETTI, Emma  
 Goldman, he'd deport her without a  
 thought. We'd have our precedent...

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - 1963

AGENT SMITH  
 But she was a citizen, sir.

Hoover has gone silent. He's focused on his frosted glass and steel back door. He watches the SILHOUETTE OF AN OLD MAN walk past and pause. He waits, breathless. The figure limps away. The sound of a door beyond his opens and closes.

YOUNG FBI MAN  
 Would you like to stop, sir?

OLD HOOVER  
 No... It's hard for you to imagine  
 today, but there was a time when  
 the average American feared for  
 their safety and survival. In--

EXT. CHICAGO SKYLINE - 1919 - NIGHT

The only thing lighting the city of Chicago is a half moon and burning buildings.

OLD HOOVER  
 --Chicago a coal strike, started by  
 communists labor, shut off all the  
 power. Riots followed. And on--



EXT. CENTRALIA MAIN STREET / IWW HALL - ARMISTICE DAY - 1919

A PARADE OF VETERANS march down a street lined with citizens and boy scouts. SHOTS RING OUT from a rooftop. Onlookers scream and scatter. Bodies lie bleeding in the street.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
 --Armistice Day in Centralia,  
 Illinois, veterans, fresh back from  
 War were murdered by radicals. The  
 red revolution was on our soil.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY / PRISON - NIGHT

Young Edgar, in a long coat, waits outside watching the faces of the men who exit. He approaches one, posing as a fan.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Excuse, me sir?  
 (the man ignores him)  
 Is Mrs. Goldman really in there?

MAN AT JAIL  
 Who's asking?

YOUNG HOOVER  
 I'm a fan. I've read your writing  
 as well. Do you work with her?

MAN AT JAIL  
 If you're truly interested in the  
 Party, then you shouldn't be  
 stalking members on the streets  
 like a sycophant. Come to a rally.  
 Organize.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Yes, sir. But for now, may I have  
 your autograph?

Hoover holds out a newspaper with a story by the man,  
 "Bolshevik America." The man autographs the article.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / BUREAU FILE ROOM - 1919

Edgar is with his new inner circle, THREE HANDSOME AGENTS and Helen Gandy. WORKMEN are installing rows of filing cabinets

YOUNG HOOVER  
 We can't take them down one by one  
 or they'll go underground and we'll  
 find a bomb in every Senator's  
 (MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
mailbox. It must be a simultaneous  
raid. Hitting all of them at once.

An older agent with a BIG MUSTACHE has questions.

MUSTACHED AGENT  
And who are "they?"

YOUNG HOOVER  
That's what you have to find out.  
We need a card on every radical  
person in the country. Who they  
are, where they live, what they  
say, what group they belong to.

MUSTACHED AGENT  
Who have already committed crimes?

YOUNG HOOVER  
I care less if they've already  
committed a crime, and more if they  
plan to.

FBI AGENT 2  
How many are on our team?

YOUNG HOOVER  
Only you four.

HELEN GANDY  
I'll have locks installed.

YOUNG HOOVER  
No locks. That would draw  
attention. Nothing will be  
alphabetically ordered. The cards  
will be broken down into subjects  
and categories. The system will be  
simple enough if it's been  
explained. If not, finding  
information will prove impossible.  
Trust no one. Not even fellow  
agents. Half of our colleagues are  
on both sides of the payroll.

MUSTACHED AGENT  
And the crimes we are investigating  
aren't crimes... they are ideas?

YOUNG HOOVER  
If their idea is to come to this  
country and plot the overthrow of our  
government, then that IS a crime.

MUSTACHED AGENT

Mrs. Goldman is not an alien. She married a U.S. Citizen.

Edgar opens the article he had autographed outside Prison.

YOUNG HOOVER

The man she married hasn't visited her once in prison, but the man she's lived with since her wedding day... visits her nightly.

MUSTACHED AGENT

Smells like a Mitchell Palmer publicity stunt to me. Tell me, John, what happens when we raid this list of yours, and we find NOTHING? No guns, no bombs, just innocent people deported--

YOUNG HOOVER

(taking it personally)

From every corner of this nation, the American people have urged the Attorney General to do something about the violence and return the United States to peace and glory. I am happy to send your objections to Palmer himself, but in the meantime, you will expose Miss Goldman's sham marriage... and change that suit of yours.

FBI AGENT 1

Pardon me, John?

YOUNG HOOVER

(re: his unfashionable suit)

Your suit. Have some respect for yourself, and more importantly show some respect to this Bureau.

Edgar leaves the room in a huff. The other agents turn away from the challenging mustached Agent. He's played his hand.

EXT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT LOBBY - DAY

Edgar walks toward a group of press. Writers, Cameras, all waiting for him. They eye him curiously, who is this kid?

YOUNG HOOVER

Today... um upon her release, Miss Goldman was immediately served

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
deportation papers... According to  
our information, she is one of the  
most dangerous anarchists in this  
county.

REPORTER  
Yeah? Who are you, mister?

YOUNG HOOVER  
John. John E. Hoover.

It's not a home run, but they scribble down his name.

INT. ELLIS ISLAND / COURTROOM - DAY

An INSPECTOR oversees a formal examination. Edgar hands him a checklist of accusations and sits directly in front of a tired looking Emma Goldman at a table filled with government lawyers. He examines her ill fitting "fraud of a dress." She catches him doing it and is distracted.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
Miss Goldman, do you live with the  
man you claim to be married to?

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I decline to answer.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
Are you aware the man who married  
you had no authority to do so?

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I decline to answer.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
Miss Goldman, are you an anarchist?

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I decline to answer

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
(growing frustrated)  
Do you deny that you are an  
anarchist?

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I decline to answer.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
Do you believe in the overthrow by  
force or violence of the Government  
of the United States?

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I refuse to answer.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
Do you advocate the assassination  
of public officials?!

EMMA GOLDMAN  
I refuse to answer.

INSPECTOR SCHELL  
(composes himself, then)  
This ALIEN has refused to answer  
any questions pertaining to the  
charges contained in the warrant,  
notwithstanding the fact that every  
opportunity was afforded her... I  
recommend deportation.

EDGAR'S POV: of old Caminette's face (earlier). Again, THE  
FRAME FREEZES: THIS TIME ON HIS EQUALLY UNFLATTERING GRIN.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
And just like that, we had our  
precedent.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / BUREAU FILE ROOMS - 1919

The File room has grown exponentially. The cabinets are  
spilling over. Edgar is pulling out cards. There are LIGHT  
STRING CONNECTIONS everywhere. Helen Gandy interrupts:

HELEN GANDY  
Edgar? Should I arrange our travel  
to Paterson for Valentines Day?

There's trepidation in his pause. Is this a romantic gesture?

YOUNG HOOVER  
Yes... Of course, Miss Gandy.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY RAIDS / MONTAGE - 1920 - NIGHT

SET TO: BOBBY BENTON'S 1963 hit "ROSES ARE RED (MY LOVE)", a  
title card reads: VALENTINES DAY, 1920.

An Army of 500 Police, 35 troopers and bomb squad detectives  
barge out of a station and fan out across Manhattan.

EXT. THE RUSSIAN PEOPLES HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTER - THAT NIGHT

FBI MEN in white shirts, ties, and winter coats and POLICEMAN  
with copper badges and batons burst into a building. They are

greeted with jeers, taunts and bottles from the Russians and anarchists inside.

The batons come out. Heads are split. Students are pushed down stairs, bookcases are overturned, there's blood and broken bones everywhere -- IT'S VIOLENT AND BLOODY.

INT. TRAIN BETWEEN D.C. AND PATERSON N.J. - THAT NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A puff of smoke as Edgar lights up a cigarette to try and calm his nerves. Helen Gandy is sits next to him.

YOUNG HOOVER

They found a counterfeiting press,  
five pistols, two automatics. And  
in Trenton, they found gunpowder,  
copper, brass wire, batteries--

HELEN GANDY

A bomb factory.

YOUNG HOOVER

120 arrests in Detroit, 41 in  
Philadelphia, 17 here, so far.

REVEAL: On his lap are 33 more warrants "for subversive radical activity." Can't leave the work at the office?

EXT. NARROW CITY STREET / NEW JERSEY - LATE THAT NIGHT

Black sedans drive slowly down the snow covered street. Their lights shut off and they coast to a stop. Edgar and Helen's feet step out quietly. But this is no date -- a dozen other officers get out with them.

A SECRET SERVICE OFFICER preps his ten men.

SECRET SERVICE OFFICER

These men are armed, violent, and  
prepared to kill to avoid capture--

Privately, Edgar hands out firearms to SIX OF HIS MEN.

FBI AGENT

Are we allowed to use these, sir?

YOUNG HOOVER

These are gifts from me to you.  
There is no law preventing us from  
using our own weapons.

Edgar can't naturally handle a firearm. He tucks it away, concealing it from a journalist and Miss Gandy who stand at a remove.

INT. PRINTING PRESS / NEW JERSEY - MOMENTS LATER

Bureau Agents, Secret Service, and local cops burst through the front door, guns drawn. It's a classic raid.

CHORUS OF OFFICERS  
Hands in the air. -- On the ground.

THE RADICALS inside dive for cover, reach for weapons or run up stairs, but they are quickly tackled, beaten, and pursued.

One YOUNG RADICAL escapes up the stairs. Two agents chase him. Edgar, the last in the door, slowly starts up the stairs after them. HE CAN HEAR A SCUFFLE. It sounds violent. He slows his step, and draws his gun.

He reaches the door, ready to fire the first shot of his life, but finds it's not a scuffle at all. The young radical is being beaten within an inch of his life by the officers.

Edgar watches. He's never seen such violence first hand. Is it revolting? Titillating? Both?

YOUNG HOOVER  
That's enough.

The room goes silent, making the screaming downstairs seem all the louder. Edgar ignores it. He's focused on: A PRINTING PRESS in the corner -- AND A STACK OF PINK PAPER -- identical to the color found the night of the Palmer house bombing. A STRING LIGHT FLASHES OUT THE WINDOW AND CONNECTS TO --

EXT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S HOME - FLASHBACK

--all of the PINK PAPER at Palmer's house months ago.

Edgar has completed the circle -- Guns, bombs, and the solution to the Palmer raid mystery. The raids are a success.

EXT. ELLIS ISLAND HOLDING CELLS - MIDNIGHT

Snow covers the ground. Edgar is dressed warmly, walking with a congressman, dignitaries and reporters.

Hundreds of prisoners are being marched through the snow, single file to a gangplank and onto a tugboat. Edgar watches a tired, filthy Emma Goldman struggle up the gangplank to the tugboat and disappear.

The camera reveals a massive, rotting 5000 ton ship, THE BUFORD. This won't be a pleasant journey for the prisoners. Above them all looms the mighty Statue of Liberty.

AGENT SMITH (V.O.)

But everyone in the Bureau involved  
in those arrests lost their jobs,  
correct? Even Palmer himself?

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

Most did. And there is the lesson.  
The bombs stopped. Peace came. And  
the American people forgot there  
was ever a threat. --

EXT. ATTORNEY GENERAL PALMER'S OFFICE - 1921

From afar, Edgar watches assistants carry boxes out of his  
boss's office as Palmer takes a moment to assess his loss.

OLD HOOVER

-- So when political adversaries  
attacked Palmer in his run for the  
White House, when they attacked the  
Bureau, the country let it happen.

Palmer feels eyes on him, and looks up to Edgar.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

YOUNG FBI MAN

But why Palmer and not you? If you  
orchestrated the raids...

OLD HOOVER

(defensive, a sore spot)  
I was only twenty four years old. I  
was following orders, Agent Smith.

YOUNG FBI MAN

(regretting the question)  
I understand, sir.

OLD HOOVER

But If we hadn't of done it, you may  
very well have been born into a  
communist State instead of the  
country you love today, am I right?

YOUNG FBI MAN

Of course, sir.

A door opens across the hall. Hoover looks up and sees the  
earlier silhouette again limping toward his glass back door.

OLD MAN'S VOICE

Edgar?



OLD HOOVER  
 (quietly to Agent Smith)  
 Ignore him.

OLD MAN'S VOICE  
 Edgar!

OLD HOOVER  
 Mr. Toulson! I will be out in a  
 moment. I am in a meeting.

OLD MAN'S VOICE  
 Don't forget your appointment with  
 the Attorney General, Edgar.

OLD HOOVER  
 The file is not complete yet, Mr.  
 Toulson. Go away!

The casual familiarity of the exchange in front of Agent Smith bothers Hoover.

Smith is packing up. Hoover extends his hand for a shake, apparently wanting to dispense with the earlier tension.

AGENT SMITH  
 Thank you, sir. I apologize. I will  
 finish this chapter tonight.

OLD HOOVER  
 Very good, Agent Smith.

The Agent goes. Hoover checks the hand he just shook with. The young agent's palm was sweaty. He seems heartbroken. He had truly liked Agent Smith--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Hoover is in his outer office with a new agent, AGENT JONES, 22. He's from Indiana. He's by the books.

OLD HOOVER  
 Say I wanted to include the story of  
 how I became director. Do they tell  
 that story in the Academy?

AGENT JONES  
 Yes sir... You were called into the  
 new Attorney General's office--

OLD HOOVER  
 Harlan Fiske Stone.

AGENT JONES

Yes sir, Attorney General Stone. He called you into his office and told you to sit down, sir.

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE - 1924 - DAY

Young Edgar is let into HARLAN FISKE STONE's office. Stone is 60, an imposing figure at 6'6" and 260 lbs.

HARLAN FISKE STONE

Sit down.

Edgar does. Stone examines him intently over his desk. Edgar calms his nerves by manically talking business.

YOUNG HOOVER

Sir, there are almost a dozen vacancies in Chicago. With the robbery rate rising it would actually profit the bureau to fill these vacancies and start making recoveries. I have cabinets filled with files on suspects, and with a Congressional hearing--

HARLAN FISKE STONE

Lower the treble, son. You didn't call this meeting. I did.

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes, sir.

HARLAN FISKE STONE

Everyone you've worked with here is gone. And there's a reason for that. This Bureau is of exceedingly bad odor. Would you agree?

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes, sir.

HARLAN FISKE STONE

And no offense, but you seem to have no social life, no wife, no girlfriend, and as far as I can tell, no pals... at all.

YOUNG HOOVER

That's accurate, sir.

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 And you're shamelessly distracted  
 by this hodgepodge fingerprinting  
 affair.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 It wouldn't be a hodgepodge if we  
 could centralize the prints here.

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 It's a speculative science at best.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Yes, sir.

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 And why do they call you "Speed?"

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Who calls me that?

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 They all do... Behind your back  
 evidently.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 (unaware, covering)  
 Well... S- S- Sir, I earned a  
 reputation for delivering groceries  
 when I was ten years old. I was the  
 fastest in the neighborhood. It was  
 a nickname.

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 Are you sure it's not for the way  
 you talk?

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Perhaps, sir.

A long beat of silence. Edgar is ready and willing to be  
 fired -- if only to stop the humiliation. Instead:

HARLAN FISKE STONE  
 Young man, I want you to be acting  
 director of the Bureau of  
 Investigation.

Edgar absorbs the unexpected good news, covers his shock, and  
 looks back across the desk at Stone's imposing forehead.

YOUNG HOOVER

I'll take the job, Mr. Stone... But only on certain conditions.

Stone gives a quizzical look. How dare he name conditions?

HARLAN FISKE STONE

What are they?

YOUNG HOOVER

(as if prepared)

The Bureau must be divorced from politics, and not be a catch-all for political hacks. Recruits must be college educated. Appointments must be based on merit. Promotions will be made only on proven ability... And the bureau will be responsible only to you sir, the Attorney General.

HARLAN FISKE STONE

(a beat, then)

I wouldn't give you the job under any other conditions...

(cutting Edgar off)

That's all. Good day.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / FBI OFFICE - 1930

All of the agents in the FBI are lined up in two long, never ending rows, facing each other. Edgar walks down the long aisle between them, shaking each Agent's hand.

YOUNG HOOVER

I am determined to summarily dismiss from this Bureau any employee whom I find indulging in the use of intoxicants. I--

He gets to a chubby agent, shakes his hand. Sweat. He turns to Helen beside him. She takes note. He continues, indicating each man with a bald spot, each man not neatly dressed.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

--believe that when a man becomes a part of this Bureau, he must so conduct himself, both officially and unofficially, as to eliminate the slightest possibility of criticism as to his conduct...

He stops at a handsome linebacker of an agent with dark hair, RAYMOND CAFFREY, 29.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
And your name, Sir?

RAYMOND CAFFREY  
Agent Caffrey, Sir.

YOUNG HOOVER  
What is your assignment?

RAYMOND CAFFREY  
Special Agent to Kansas City,  
aiding in the search for escaped  
murdered Frank Nash, Sir.

YOUNG HOOVER  
It's dangerous work. But when you  
return, you will be rewarded for  
you service to our country.

Edgar shakes his hand. This is the kind of Agent he wants in his Bureau (and his dinner table). Next to him though is the MUSTACHED AGENT who challenged Edgar during the Palmer raids.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
You still fancy facial hair, Agent  
Stokes?

MUSTACHED AGENT  
The ladies appreciate it.

YOUNG HOOVER  
And the ladies' opinions' are more  
important than the Bureau's?

MUSTACHED AGENT  
No... sir.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Mr. Stokes, perhaps you are better  
suited for the Police force than  
the Bureau of Investigations.

MUSTACHED AGENT  
I've been here seven years, Edgar.  
As long as you.

YOUNG HOOVER  
No. You were with the old bureau  
seven years. That bureau is gone.

INT. BASEMENT BED - (HOOVER'S MIND?)

Edgar stands above his emaciated father, examining him with scientific curiosity. The man's eyes open wide, lock on his son and he lets out a TERRIFYING SCREAM. Edgar bears it. Silence. His father dies, his jaw still ajar, mid scream.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME / HOOVER'S BEDROOM - DAY

A WORKMAN is installing a personal telephone line into Edgar's childhood (and current) bedroom. Dressed all in black, Edgar supervises from the doorway.

WORKMAN

Why the phone in your son's room  
and not in the master bedroom?

YOUNG HOOVER

I'm paying you to put in a line,  
not ask questions.

And Edgar pulls out a pack of LUCKY STRIKES.

EXT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME / FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar and his NEICE, 12 (also in black), are smoking.

YOUNG NEICE

I thought Lucky Strikes were only  
for girls.

YOUNG HOOVER

You thought wrong. Hold it in your  
lungs or it'll do you no good.

Bouncing up the street in a bonnet holding a mass of shopping bags (and not in black at all) is Edgar's mother.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME / KITCHEN - THAT NIGHT

Edgar's mother spins around in a new dress.

HOOVER'S MOTHER

I had two made. Same cut, different  
pattern. And two suits for you.  
They'll be delivered on Friday.

Edgar sits down at the dinner table. At his place is a sapphire ring. He examines it. She cozies up.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

It's platinum. Six diamonds and a star sapphire. I've told everyone in the neighborhood. They all know.

YOUNG HOOVER

What about the funeral for father?

EDGAR'S MOTHER

(serves up some pot roast)  
There's no time for that now.

YOUNG HOOVER

I shouldn't mother. I've been gaining weight.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

It's solid weight. There's nothing wrong with solid weight on a man. I'm so incredibly proud of you, Edgar

She pulls out a clipped newspaper article. It's small, barely a mention, but it announces his new job.

EDGAR'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I'm starting an album for you. I'm going to put everything in it. This is just the beginning.

He slips the sapphire ring on his finger -- where it will remain the rest of his life.

INT. MAYFLOWER HOTEL / LOUNGE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Edgar holds court at his corner table with SPECIAL AGENT CHARLES APPEL and another handsome agent. The wait staff pays them special attention, but Edgar doesn't notice. He has his eye on a GROUP OF YOUNG MEN celebrating at the bar.

Edgar is focused on a tall, slender, SHARPLY DRESSED MAN. Trouble is, another man in the group, LAWRENCE RICHEY, knows Edgar, and waves. Edgar returns the gesture, but feels caught. His discomfort doubles when Richey heads toward him -- THE SHARPLY DRESSED MAN JUST BEHIND (CLYDE TOULSON, 28).

LAWRENCE RICHEY

Mr. Hoover! Good to see you. I'd like to introduce you to Mr. Clyde Toulson. He graduated from George Washington University Tonight. With a law degree.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Congratulations, Mr. Toulson.

YOUNG TOULSON  
 (the quiet type)  
 Thank you. I believe you're one of  
 our most distinguished Alumni.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 I did... yes... I do... have a  
 degree from the school. Yes.  
 (an awkward beat; covering)  
 I was just admiring your suit, Mr.  
 Toulson. You could take a lesson  
 from him, Lawrence.

YOUNG TOULSON  
 It's a custom cut. From Garfinkel's  
 Department store, sir.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Do you have a card, Mr. Toulson?

YOUNG TOULSON  
 I do. Of course.

Clyde hands his card to Edgar. Edgar looks it over, hands  
 Clyde his own card, and just as quickly goes back to his meal  
 -- as if he never paid Clyde any special attention.

YOUNG TOULSON (CONT'D)  
 Thank you, sir.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Helen and Edgar are going through applications. One pile for  
 interviews, one for rejects. The reject pile is stacked high.

HELEN GANDY  
 (redacting an application)  
 Well educated. Highly recommended.  
 Willing to guarantee five years  
 service... Has a family in New  
 York... And a new baby.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 No interview.

HELEN GANDY  
 The family in New York or the baby?



YOUNG HOOVER

Five years is not enough. We want men willing to dedicate their lives. How many is that so far?

HELEN GANDY

320 denied, and 21 interviews.

YOUNG HOOVER

Did you receive an application from a Mr. Toulson?

HELEN GANDY

(finds the report, wary)  
 Yes... His report states he, "has confidence, poise, his diction is excellent." But, "Although physically fitted for it, might be displeased with rugged work." His only interest in the Bureau is to gain experience that would benefit a private law practice. And he has no interest in being here for any period of time, which would, "Render employment speculative."

She waits for him to say "No interview," but he doesn't.

HELEN GANDY (CONT'D)

He did receive a letter of recommendation from the executive assistant of the Secretary of War.

YOUNG HOOVER

That's fantastic, Miss Gandy.

HELEN GANDY

He, well... mentions here that Mr. Toulson, "Showed no particular interest in women."

It's 1930's code for gay. She offers a bright side.

HELEN GANDY (CONT'D)

Then again, some of our best agents excel because they have... no family incumbrance.

YOUNG HOOVER

You're right. Bring him in for an interview.

Helen adds him to the yes stack. Edgar tries to change the subject.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
The problem, Miss Gandy, is that these men don't look up to me.

HELEN GANDY  
Of course they do.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I don't mean figuratively. I mean. They don't look UP to me.

He doesn't want to be any clearer than that. It's too sensitive a subject -- he's shorter than most.

HELEN GANDY  
Well... if you could conduct the entire interview from behind your desk instead of walking about the office, I could correct that.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(considers it, then:)  
Miss Gandy, say I had private information on someone in a position of power. Harmful information... Now Destroying information goes against my nature, but I don't trust it in the general files either. Could I trust it with you? If we created a confidential file?

HELEN GANDY  
Of course, Edgar.

And with that, he slides his first "Private and Confidential" file across his desk to her. IT'S MARKED "ELEANOR ROOSEVELT." She sets it carefully in her lap.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY - 1964

OLD Miss Gandy sits outside the A.G.'s office with A STACK OF SIMILAR FILES IN HER LAP. She patronizes ROBERT KENNEDY'S SECRETARY with a smile.

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT KENNEDY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Kennedy stands by a window, pensive. A FILE sits casually on the corner of his desk. Hoover is relaxed in a chair, focused on a FIREPLACE in the office. He breaks the silence:

OLD HOOVER

Was the fireplace always here or did you have it put in?

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

It was put in... What were you doing with wire-taps in that house?

OLD HOOVER

You asked that I pursue this "Organized Crime" element, Mr. Kennedy, and that's what I did. With diligence... Do you use the fireplace?

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Rarely... Who else has heard the recording?

OLD HOOVER

I've filed this matter "Personal and Confidential" I'm the only one with access to it.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Mr. Hoover, I asked you to pursue a real threat. Instead you have publicly denied the existence of Organized Crime, and now this gross display of intimidation.

OLD HOOVER

Sir, I was only following orders. We bugged the basement of a home in Los Angeles that is a known gathering place for lawbreakers. How was I to know that a criminal's girlfriend and an east German communist would be down there having sex with your brother, the President of the United States. Do not shoot the messenger, sir. I am here to protect you both.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

What do you want from me?

OLD HOOVER

If this information was discovered by the public it would create wide spread distrust in your brother's leadership ability, and before all else, I hold the well being of our Country paramount.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

So how may I HELP you, Mr. Hoover?

OLD HOOVER

If I am to pursue the elements you consider a threat, I humbly request that you allow me the same power and access to follow the groups I see as IMMEDIATE threats.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

It's not 1920 anymore.

OLD HOOVER

Do you know who Stanley Levinson is?

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

A lawyer.

OLD HOOVER

A white communist lawyer who is organizing at the highest levels. Including the SCLC. His group is growing, their aim is entirely self serving, and their leadership is openly critical of this Department. Have you read the clippings I sent?

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

I can't say I have.

Hoover pulls out the critical newspaper clippings (the ones that made him sweat in the opening scene).

OLD HOOVER

They claim we are, "Unable to get convictions in even the most heinous crimes," and that we have, "Faltered under the pressure, complexities and responsibilities of our office." In PRINT in the New York Times.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

You can't bear a little criticism?

OLD HOOVER

It depends on what their aim is...  
They are gaining considerable  
power, their priorities are  
singularly focused on their own  
issues, and they are trying to  
incite revolt.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Frankly, they sounds more critical  
of your office than mine... There's  
a new face to communism, Edgar, and  
this isn't it. Communism is a  
foreign threat now. Not domestic.

OLD HOOVER

Mr. Kennedy. Before you were even  
born, I heard that very same  
argument from a Mr. Mitchell  
Palmer. And do you know what it  
took to change his mind? A bomb. If  
he had sat in his smoking chair  
five more minutes that night in  
1919, we would have been lucky to  
have found an intact index finger.  
I do not want to see that happen to  
you, or your brother.

(attempting a conciliatory tone)

There's no reason we can't both get  
what we want. We can wage a war on  
two fronts, sir.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

You can go now. And please leave  
the transcripts with me.

OLD HOOVER

Yes sir. Feel free to share them  
with your brother. I have a copy of  
my own, in safe keeping.

And with that threat, Hoover walks toward the door, stops at  
the fireplace, inspects it, and goes, a smile creeping into  
the corners of his mouth. The rhythm of his shoes on the  
flooring cross the cut, matching the rhythm of--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1924

--Young Edgar doing push ups in his office with the window  
open to let in air and dry his brow. FOOTSTEPS!

Edgar takes a handkerchief from his pocket and dabs his brow,  
but he's not sweating.

MISS GANDY

Your four o'clock is here, sir.

He hurries to close the window, but the curtain gets stuck, the window jams, and the handkerchief falls from his pocket. He heads for his desk. His office door opens. Miss Gandy lets in the next applicant, it's dapper Clyde Toulson (earlier).

YOUNG HOOVER

Have a seat, Mr. Toulson.

Edgar rounds his desk and STEPS UP ONTO A NEW SMALL PLATFORM TO MAKE HIM TALLER. Clyde smiles, trying to relieve Edgar's embarrassment. He steps toward the desk and extends a hand.

YOUNG TOULSON

Mr. Hoover, thank you for this opportunity.

A SIDE SHOT reveals Edgar standing on his riser, still not quite as tall as Clyde. They shake hands.

YOUNG HOOVER

Please. Take a seat.

YOUNG TOULSON

Thank you, sir.

YOUNG HOOVER

There are several problems with your application, Mr. Toulson, not the least of which is you do not show the required dedication to the bureau, nor the dedication t--

As Edgar rattles, he watches Clyde's eyes. Clyde sees the curtain stuck in the window. He sees the handkerchief on the floor, and the spot of sweat forming on Edgar's brow.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

--t--t--to... th--

(speeds up to stop stuttering)  
the protection of the American people and the American way. This is NO platform to a fatter paycheck in private practice.

We see what Edgar sees: LIGHT STRINGS connect the evidence Clyde is looking at. It seems to Edgar that Clyde can see the strings as well. It's frightening, invasive, titillating --

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

Is there something the matter, Mr. Toulson?

YOUNG TOULSON

Is exercise a requirement for all Agent's, Mr. Hoover?

YOUNG HOOVER

(busted?)

All agents must be in excellent physical condition. We must out match and out wit the public enemy at every turn.

YOUNG TOULSON

What kind of routine do you do?

YOUNG HOOVER

(making it up)

Sit ups... push ups... squatting...

YOUNG TOULSON

How about chin ups?

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes. Of course.

YOUNG TOULSON

I see. Would you like me to fix the curtain, Mr. Hoover? Or perhaps open the window? I always enjoy the air after exercise. Don't you, sir?

YOUNG HOOVER

If it would please you.

And Clyde carefully and expertly removes the curtain from the window, bends over, plucks up the handkerchief off the floor, and returns it to Edgar's desk.

YOUNG TOULSON

Where I may fall short in terms of resume, I apparently far exceed the rest in terms of honesty. I did not lie to get this interview. Like the rest, I WOULD like to start a private practice eventually, but I could be persuaded otherwise if the right opportunity arose.

EXT. GARFINKEL'S DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Edgar steps out of a limousine and walks into the department store. Clyde gets out behind him and follows him in.

INT. GARFINKEL'S DEPARTMENT STORE / MONTAGE - DAY

Edgar is measured for a suit -- Clyde supervises fabric choices -- Clyde pulls out ties and shoes -- Edgar tries on a 3-PIECE-SUIT. It's the first time we've seen him this put together. He looks like the "Hoover" the world now knows.

INT. GARFINKEL'S DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

Edgar is with a clerk, his items laid out on a counter. Clyde is at a remove. Something's wrong. Things get uncomfortable when the department store CREDIT DIRECTOR appears.

CREDIT DIRECTOR

Are you Mr. John Hoover?

YOUNG HOOVER

I am. Is there a problem?

CREDIT DIRECTOR

It seems there's a Mr. John Hoover whose credit has gone bad with us. That would appear to be you.

YOUNG HOOVER

(quiet, humiliated)

That's not me. On my word. My parents call me Edgar, my niece calls me J.E. And I sign John E, not John.

CREDIT DIRECTOR

Sir, may I suggest you choose ONE name, and re-apply.

He presents a new application. Edgar looks at the blank NAME SPACE. He puts a pen to the page, and writes. "J. -- EDGAR -- HOOVER." The camera focuses in on the soon to be famous name.

INT. HELEN GANDY'S OFFICE - DAY

Edgar walks in wearing his new 3-piece-suit with a pocket square -- the more dapper look he'll carry the rest of his life. Helen Gandy greets him with a grim face.

YOUNG HOOVER

You don't like it?



HELEN GANDY

Mr. Hoover. There's been a massacre  
in Kansas City.

YOUNG HOOVER

One of ours?

HELEN GANDY

Yes.

YOUNG HOOVER

(his worst fear)  
Special Agent Caffrey?

EXT. KANSAS CITY TRAIN STATION (FLASHBACK) - DAY

GUN FIRE AND SMOKE. Cars screech to a halt. Passengers run  
for their lives. Police officers scramble for cover.

A VOICE

Let 'em have it!

A MAN WITH A MACHINE GUN beside a Plymouth starts firing on  
two officers. Another gangster behind a second car opens  
fire. The two cops immediately fall to the ground, dead.

A MAN catches a bullet in his arm. He drops to the ground and  
scrambles to the side of a Chevy, TOWARD AGENT CAFFREY (The  
dark haired linebacker of an agent Edgar complimented  
earlier).

Caffrey scrambles to the driver's side of his Chevrolet to  
provide safe haven for the wounded man, but he's cut short as  
A BULLET BLASTS THROUGH HIS HEAD.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

By 1930, The communist threat had  
been beaten back, but--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - 1930 - DAY

A MOVIE CREW has lit Edgar's office. Clyde is by a window  
dressed as an FBI Agent. It's sexy on him.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

--the depression had hit, and their  
was a new threat. The bank robber,  
the car thief and the kidnapper.  
But like communism, America didn't  
react with scorn, they gave the  
American gangster their admiration.

Edgar is in his new suit behind his desk. Two flags flank it, making the perfect stage. A makeup woman powders his nose.

DIRECTOR

Whenever you're ready, sir.

YOUNG HOOVER

Our nation is under attack from within. The problem of organized gang warfare and the defiance by desperate armed criminals of the forces of society and civilization can no longer be ignored.--

INT. MOVIE THEATER / CHICAGO - 1930 - NIGHT

An Audience watches the newsreel featuring Edgar.

YOUNG HOOVER

--Pretty Boy Floyd is now Public Enemy Number one. Look around you. He could be anywhere. With your help, the American gangster's days are numbered.

The Audience is none too pleased with Edgar's announcement: Boos, popcorn at the screen. The projectionist cuts it short.

A trailer fades in. It's PUBLIC ENEMY starring JAMES CAGNEY as the dashing gangster. THE AUDIENCE ERUPTS WITH APPLAUSE!!

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Old Hoover is again talking to Agent Jones -- who is more focused on the WORKMEN DEMOLISHING HOOVER'S BACK WALL.

OLD HOOVER

But that summer, a single crime opened the door to set things right. Do you know what that was, Mr. Jones?

AGENT JONES

(distracted)

I'm sorry, sir, what was that?

OLD HOOVER

Who is the most famous man of the 20th Century... thus far?

AGENT JONES

Joe McCarthy, sir?

Hoover clearly disapproves. This guy is toast.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Old Hoover has a new, VERY SWEATY AGENT, at the typewriter.

SWEATY BALDING AGENT

The most famous? Is that you, sir?

Hoover is focused on the bald spot forming on the crown of the Agent's head. That and the sweat are deal breakers.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Hoover is with yet another Agent, AGENT GARRISON. This one is very young and handsome with a North Carolina accent.

AGENT GARRISON

Well I suppose his notoriety depends on the field he is in.

OLD HOOVER

His field... was in the clouds.

AGENT GARRISON

Then Charles Lindbergh, sir.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME / HOOVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT -1932

The private phone (earlier) rings. It's 11PM. Edgar is in his childhood bed, asleep. He stirs and answers the phone.

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes?... Send officers from Trenton.  
I will be on the first train.

His mother comes in. He hangs up. He looks truly disturbed.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

What is it?

YOUNG HOOVER

The Lindbergh's baby has been kidnapped.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

(deeply shocked)  
You have to find him, Edgar. He has to be brought home alive.

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes, mother.

EXT. THE LINBERG'S HOME / NEW JERSEY - DAYBREAK

Edgar and Clyde arrive at the Lindbergh home, a big white house in the middle of a field. All around are POLICE CARS and GIANT LAMPS that must have burnt all night.

Like the Palmer crime scene, Edgar looks for clues, little LIGHT STRINGS making connections. AN OFFICER talks AT Clyde:

NJ OFFICER

This morning alone we've heard from the Pennsylvania railroad, Will Rogers, President Hoover, Governor Roosevelt, the Customs Department, the U.S. Mail and the Boy Scouts--

EDGAR WATCHES THE NJ POLICE trudge around an area under an opened upstairs window. He shouts out.

YOUNG HOOVER

All of you. Get off of that dirt. You are trampling evidence.

Colonel Shwartzkoff (clearly the one in charge) approaches:

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF

There's nothing there. No defined footprints. It seems he was wearing fabric on his shoes.

YOUNG HOOVER

And you don't think the size of the print may have held some value?  
(re: the upstairs window)  
And how did he get up there? Are there marks on the window and wall you're erasing as well?

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF

There was a ladder. We found it a hundred yards away in three pieces. We moved it inside.

YOUNG HOOVER

You moved it?

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF

Yes. For safe keeping.

YOUNG HOOVER

Congratulations. You've completely contaminated the crime scene. Now  
(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
if you please, get your boots off  
of this property, Mr. Shwartzkoff.

OFFICER SHWARTKOFF  
What right do you have to be here,  
Mr....

YOUNG TOULSON  
J. Edgar Hoover. Director of the  
FBI. We have been sent by President  
Hoover himself to make sure this  
crime is resolved successfully.

YOUNG HOOVER  
The President has authorized access  
to all documents and evidence--

OFFICER SHWARTKOFF  
Mr. Hoover, you are free to  
observe, but New Jersey is not the  
President's domain.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Where is Mr. Lindbergh? I'd like to  
hear his opinion on the matter.

INT. THE LINDBERGH HOME / GARAGE - LATER

Surrounded by workmen installing a bank of phone lines, Edgar  
hovers over THE LADDER: it's home-made, each of it's three  
pieces measure 80.5 inches. We see Edgar's LIT STRINGS as he  
makes connections -- the sections must have fit neatly into  
each other to form a 20 foot ladder that would collapse to 6.

A side-rail on the center section has split along the grain.

YOUNG HOOVER  
He fell five feet.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
Who did?

Reveal CHARLES LINDBERGH, dressed well, but bearing the signs  
of no sleep. He seems interested in what Edgar has to say.

YOUNG HOOVER  
The kidnapper... with the child in  
his arms, sir.

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF  
That's speculation, Mr. Hoover.

YOUNG HOOVER

Mr. Lindbergh, sir, if it had split on the way up, it would have collapsed. It was a miscalculation. Built to bear the weight of a man going up, but not the weight of a man and a child coming down.

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF

We have other theories.

YOUNG HOOVER

(annoyed, but careful in front of Lindbergh)

And the ransom note? May I see the note please, Mr. Shwartzkoff?

Shwartzcoff pulls it out and hesitantly offers it up.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

You've been touching it with your bare hands as well?

OFFICER SHWARTKOFF

We checked. There were none of the "finger imprints" you fancy so valuable, Mr. Hoover.

YOUNG HOOVER

None YOU could find perhaps. Would you please put it down?

A moment of eye contact between Edgar and Lindbergh, then as Edgar reads it, we see all the clues: the distinct spacing, spelling and grammar GLOWING IN HOOVER'S TRADEMARK MANNER.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

"Have 50,00\$ redy. we will inform you were to deliver the Mony. We warn you for making anyding public or for notify the police. Indication for all letters are SINGnature" S-I-N-G SING-nature "And 3 holes."

And the camera zeros in on the THREE HOLED SYMBOL the kidnapper made in the bottom corner of the letter.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

I want this letter. And the ladder.

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF

(leans in close)

There is no Federal jurisdiction

(MORE)

COLONEL SHWARTKOFF (CONT'D)  
 here. I've shown you what you asked  
 for. It's time for you to go.

Edgar looks to Lindbergh who is examining the letter now. He  
 seems exhausted, helpless, unsure of who to trust.

EXT. LINDBERGH'S HOME / HOOVER'S CAR - LATER

Edgar and Clyde get back in their car.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 I'm afraid for his boy.

YOUNG TOULSON  
 He trusts the local police more  
 than us.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 No. He thinks we're ALL fools.  
 He'll go around them too. He'll  
 bargain with the kidnapers.

INT. U.S. CONGRESS - DAY

Edgar sits with Clyde before a Senate Committee. He's a  
 brilliant speaker, never looking down, never pausing.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 President Hoover called me the  
 morning the child was taken and  
 asked that I do whatever was in my  
 power to help solve this crime. But  
 do you know what ALL OF THE POWER  
 OF THE FBI means without federal  
 laws? Without arms? Without the  
 power to make arrests? It means  
 nothing. If we are one nation under  
 God then we should have a force  
 that can aid every state in this  
 nation and stop the wave of crime  
 that is pulling us into chaos. Mr.  
 Chairman, I urge passage of the  
 Lindbergh Law, making kidnapping a  
 FEDERAL offense. To immediately  
 deliver every finger print in the  
 country to my office so that we may  
 have a central file. To arm our  
 agents so that we have a fighting  
 chance against their sub-machine  
 guns. I urge you to do this in the  
 name of little Lindy. Because if he  
 can be taken, then what child is  
 safe? And if we cannot aid in his  
 safe return, then what use are we?

It's a smashing success of a speech.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Edgar watches from a window as trucks in the courtyard unload massive files. Something weighs on him.

HELEN GANDY  
What is it, Edgar?

YOUNG HOOVER  
The rest of the Fingerprints from  
Leavenworth and Chicago.

She waits. He turns. That's not what she meant.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
Our new President has scheduled a  
meeting... There's talk of re-  
organizing the FBI.

HELEN GANDY  
I've heard similar whispers.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Do you remember the file we built  
on his wife, Miss Gandy? Would you  
make a copy for me?

He looks out the window and steps out onto the balcony.

EXT. HOOVER'S BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Edgar puts on a big smile. Down below on Pennsylvania Avenue is Roosevelt's inaugural parade. Edgar WAVES DOWN to Roosevelt as his car passes, then heads back inside

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - (APPARENTLY CONTINUOUS) - 1964

As if a continuous (but 32 years later) Hoover comes in off the balcony. He is greeted by his young writer. Two workers at the far end are now building the FACADE OF A NEW FIREPLACE. It looks identical to Kennedy's.

OLD HOOVER  
Lindbergh hired criminals to look  
for his son. He even got an offer  
from Al Capone to help pay the  
ransom. And he employed an eccentric  
by the name of John Condon who'd  
placed a newspaper ad to act as a go-  
between between with the kidnapers.



AGENT GARRISON  
Was Condon a criminal too?

INT. THE LINDBERGH HOME / NURSERY - NIGHT - 1932

A white haired JOHN CONDON is escorted in and up to Lindy's crib. It hasn't been disturbed since the kidnapping night. Pins still hold the covers down. The window is still ajar.

Mr. Lindbergh walks into the room.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
Mr. Condon? You say the kidnapers  
responded to your ads?

CONDON  
(hands over two letters)  
Twice now. I will reply in the  
newspaper if you'll allow it... Did  
he leave the note in the crib?

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
No. On the window sill.

Condon looks at the pins securing the blankets in the crib.

CONDON  
These pins are unique.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
My wife uses them to hold the  
covers in place. Our son had a cold  
when he was taken.

CONDON  
Can I take them with me?

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
(not sure of this man)  
Why are you doing this?

CONDON  
So a mother may have her child  
again and that you may know that  
the American people are grateful  
for the honor bestowed upon them by  
your pluck and daring.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
How do we know these letters of  
yours are from the kidnapper?

CONDON

The symbol matches the original  
letter's symbol... doesn't it?

(silence)

What is it Mr. Lindbergh?

CHARLES LINDBERGH

In a moment of thoughtlessness, I  
showed the symbol to some other men  
who had offered to help. I'm not  
sure they were trustworthy. I'm not  
sure anyone is trustworthy anymore,  
Mr. Condon. You should know that I  
have decided to have your letters  
analyzed to see if they are truly  
from the same author.

INT. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S PRIVATE LIBRARY - DAY

Edgar storms into a law book jammed room with a studious  
looking man, MR. ALBERT S. OSBORNE, and several agents.

YOUNG HOOVER

Clear all of these tables.

YOUNG AGENT

Where do we put the books, sir?

YOUNG HOOVER

Out of my sight... Mr. Osborne,  
what do you need from us?

ALBERT S. OSBORNE

Bright lights. A microscope.  
Measuring instruments. Magnifying  
glasses... a projector.

YOUNG HOOVER

You have the full resources of the  
Bureau. Don't be shy, a child's  
life depends on this.

ALBERT S. OSBORNE

Okay. Paper samples... from every  
regional manufacturer.

YOUNG HOOVER

Mr. Toulson, you will get Mr.  
Osborne whatever he needs to  
conclude without a doubt that these  
letters come from the same author.

And with that, Edgar puts the three Lindbergh notes on the now book cleared table. Lindbergh has handed them over.

EXT. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S PRIVATE LIBRARY - LATER

Clyde stands with an impatient Edgar, outside the makeshift lab. A SIGN indicates this is the Attorney General's library.

YOUNG TOULSON

Should we tell the Attorney General?

YOUNG HOOVER

So he can say "no" for the third time? Just post a sign.

YOUNG TOULSON

To say what... "Keep out?"

YOUNG HOOVER

No. "FBI Crime Laboratory." Have it carved in wood and nailed in. If he wants it gone, he can pull it out himself. It's time we have at least one thing the bad guys don't.

YOUNG TOULSON

Decorating skills?

YOUNG HOOVER

Science, Clyde.

Albert Osborne walks out of his lab. Edgar perks up.

ALBERT S. OSBORNE

The ink is different, but the handwriting is a match. Whoever Mr. Condon is corresponding with IS the person who wrote the original note.

YOUNG HOOVER

OR... Condon wrote all the notes himself.

YOUNG TOULSON

Lindbergh is planning to deliver the ransom money through Condon. It may have already happened.

YOUNG HOOVER

Call the Internal Revenue Service. Get them to Lindbergh's home. I insist those bills be marked.

Edgar starts down the hall. Albert stops him with:

ALBERT S. OSBORNE

Is that all, Mr. Hoover? I have a  
2:30PM class to teach.

YOUNG HOOVER

No you don't. Consider your pay  
doubled. You work for your country  
now, Mr. Osborne.

EXT. GRAVEYARD GATES / JEROME AVENUE - NIGHT

Condon waits at the FRONT GATE rereading his instructions.

A MAN approaches, but walks right by. Condon checks his  
watch: 9:15 PM. He considers, then starts to leave. As he  
does, he sees a WHITE HANDKERCHIEF being waved from inside  
the cemetery through the bars of the gate.

Condon approaches. The man is in an overcoat with a fedora  
covering his eyes, the handkerchief now over his nose and  
mouth. Each time Condon nears, he darts behind a gravestone,  
pulling Condon deeper and deeper into the graveyard. Finally  
the man shouts out in a German accent:

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

Have you gotted the money?

CONDON

I can't bring the money until I've  
seen the baby.

Both men hear FOOTSTEPS. The man jumps a fence and runs.

CONDON (CONT'D)

I promise you there are no police.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

(shouts back as he runs)

It's too dangerous.

The footsteps turn out to be those of a NIGHT GUARD. Condon  
waits for him to pass, then pursues the man deep into the  
park. Out of breath, and ready to collapse, Condon slows his  
pace. So does the man with the handkerchief.

CONDON

No one will hurt you.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

If they catch me they will.

CONDON

They only want the child.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

They'll give me thirty years if I'm caught. They could burn me.

CONDON

No.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

I didn't do it. I am only the messenger.

He slowly approaches Condon. Condon braces himself.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD (CONT'D)

What if the baby is dead? Would I burn if the baby is dead?

CONDON

Why would we be meeting if the baby was dead?

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

He's not. He's treated well. Better than the diet in the newspaper ad his mother put down. But would I burn if I did not kill it?

CONDON

No... And you've seen the child?

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

You gotted my letter with the SINGnature. It is the same like the letter with the SINGnature which was left in the baby's crib.

CONDON

In the crib?

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

Yes.

Condon was told differently. He pulls the pins from the baby's crib from his pocket.

CONDON

Do you recognize these?

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD

Those are from the baby's crib.

CONDON  
So you were there. Yourself.

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD  
(feeling busted, he flees)  
Place another ad in the paper when  
you have the money.

And with that, the man vanishes.

INT. LINDBERGH'S HOME / GARAGE - NIGHT

Condon and Lindbergh are with an officious little IRS man,  
ELMER IREY. Edgar, Clyde and AGENT SISK, watch him record the  
numbers off each gold marked bill onto a ledger.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
I thought gold notes were going out  
of circulation, Mr. IreY.

ELMER IREY  
That's our hope. It will make these  
bills more identifiable.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
I have no need to pursue the money,  
Mr. Hoover. I only want my son.

YOUNG HOOVER  
This isn't just for your Lindy,  
sir. I've already assigned a 26 man  
team, lead by Special Agent Sisk  
here to pursue the case. If we let  
these people go free, no child will  
be safe.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
If they find out you're involved, I  
may never see my son again.

YOUNG HOOVER  
We won't pursue a single lead until  
your child is in his mother's arms.  
You have my word.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Sitting in the audience, Edgar watches a newsreel fire up.  
It's a plea for the safe return of "Little Lindy" featuring  
the happy, curly headed toddler at his parent's estate.

Edgar looks to his left, to his mother, a tear on her cheek.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Edgar's mother walks in, sits on the edge of Hoover's bed, and wakes him. Only half awake, he seems very boyish.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

I had a nightmare, Edgar. That you were covered in blood. That you had split your skull open, and were left to die under a tree. You were found by two farmers passing on the highway. What trouble are you in, Edgar? Tell me.

EXT. NORTHERN TIP OF ST. RAYMOND'S CEMETARY - NIGHT

Condon walks alone. The night is dark, and there is only the occasional passerby. He's been waiting for a while. Finally:

MAN IN THE GRAVEYARD (V.O.)

Ay, Doctor.

REVEAL: This is Lindbergh's POV from a Ford down the block. He hears the voice. He watches Condon talk to the man from afar, and then disappear with him.

EXT. A CITY STREET NEAR RAYMOND CEMETARY - LATER

Condon runs out of the cemetery, and up to the driver's side door. Lindbergh doesn't see his child.

CONDON

I talked him out of 20,000 dollars.

CHARLES LINDBERGH

I'd prefer him happy than save the money, Mr. Condon. I don't want to upset him.

CONDON

I'm sorry, sir.

Lindbergh again sees the man with the handkerchief. This time far in the distance. Lindbergh hands Condon the BOX OF MONEY.

LINDBERGH'S POV: Condon returns to the man, hands him the box with his left hand and accepts an envelope with his right.

The man kneels down and inspects the money. Stands, shakes Condon's hand, blows his nose, drops the handkerchief and disappears. Condon makes it back to the car.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
The baby? Where is the baby?

CONDON  
(hands over the envelope)  
I promised to wait six hours before  
opening it.

CHARLES LINDBERGH  
Get in.

Condon gets in. They drive away in silence. Charles resists opening the envelope, but he can't. He tears it open.

CHARLES LINDBERGH (CONT'D)  
You gave your word. I did not.  
(reads the note)  
"The boy is on Boad Nelly. It is a  
small boad 28 feet long. Two person  
are on the boad. The are innosent.  
You will find the Boad between  
Horseneck Beach and Gay Head near  
Elizabeth Island."

EXT. THE SKIES ABOVE MARTHA'S VINYARD - MONTAGE - DAY

Lindbergh flies his plane low, looking at every boat -- by the shore -- along the docks -- out to sea.

AGENT GARRISON (V.O.)  
What was in the boat?

OLD HOOVER  
There was no boat. Lindbergh--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - 1964

Hoover is with his writer.

OLD HOOVER  
--didn't trust us. He wanted to do  
it his way. Who could blame him?  
Nobody respected us then.

And at that moment, simultaneously, both the front and back doors of this outer office open. From one end, Helen, from the other, an bent over old man who was once handsome, this is OLD CLYDE TOULSON. Hoover only sees Helen.

HELEN GANDY  
Mr. Hoover, we've been calling--



OLD TOULSON

Edgar...

Hoover turns toward the voice. He reads Toulson's face.

OLD HOOVER

Agent Garrison. It's time to go.

Garrison goes, but not before noting the familiarity between Toulson and Hoover. Once alone with Toulson and Helen:

HELEN GANDY

The Attorney General has authorized your wire taps.

OLD HOOVER

Very good, Miss Gandy.

OLD TOULSON

(not so pleased)

Are you sure you want this? Once you do it... it's done.

OLD HOOVER

And when I prove myself correct, we will have saved this country another radical revolution. History will remember that.

OLD TOULSON

And if you're wrong, history will judge it an illegal move over a petty grudge.

OLD HOOVER

(furious)

Is our reputation petty to you, Mr. Toulson? Order the wires.

OLD TOULSON

Can we discuss it over dinner?

OLD HOOVER

After you order the wires.

He sees the tension in Hoover's face, the doubt. Helen goes.

INT. HELEN GANDY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

HELEN GANDY

(habitual, into her phone)

The Director is on his way.

EXT. WILLARD HOTEL - SAME TIME / INTERCUT

An Agent sneaks in the service door of a hotel.

EXT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER / INTERCUT

Hoover and Toulson walk the hall to the elevator, side by side. Agents clear the halls.

INT. WILLARD HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER / INTERCUT

The Agent picks the lock on a hotel room door.

INT. D.O.J / ELEVATORS - MOMENTS LATER / INTERCUT

Reaching the elevators, Agents step out before their floors.

Hoover and Toulson step into an open, waiting lift. Their nightly departure is clearly choreographed.

INT. WILLARD HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER / INTERCUT

The Agent plants a microphone under a hotel room mattress.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / ELEVATORS - MOMENTS LATER

Hoover and Toulson ride down in silence together.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / BASEMENT HALL - CONTINUOUS (ISH)

An agent speaks into a microphone in a closet off the hall.

PARKING LOT AGENT  
J.E.H. approaching.

And the pair step out of the elevator and into the hall -- but it's not Toulson and Hoover anymore, IT'S YOUNG, HANDSOME CLYDE AND EDGAR -- WITH A FILE IN HAND.

They sail toward the door. As they near it, an Agent opens it for them, not making eye contact.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / GARAGE - CONTINUOUS - 1933

Perfectly timed, Edgar and Clyde walk out as an armored car pulls up, agents open the doors, and they load in.

INT. THE ARMORED CAR / D.O.J. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The BLACK DRIVER calls back.

DRIVER  
Harvey's Restaurant, sir?

YOUNG HOOVER  
(we hear his nerves)  
No. To the White House.

The car pulls out of the garage and into the atrium. Giant gates open letting them out onto Pennsylvania Ave.

EXT. ROOSEVELT'S OFFICE - DAY

Edgar sits outside Roosevelt's office holding the file on his lap, waiting patiently, watching the clock -- 5:30PM.

SECRETARY  
The President is ready for you, Mr.  
Hoover.

And Edgar walks in, ready to fight for his job.

INT. HARVEY'S RESTAURANT - THAT EVENING

An old world, elegant restaurant. The staff is immaculate. Edgar and Clyde are escorted to their corner booth without a word, complete familiarity. A few heads turn as they take their seats. It's a corner table, a stage of sorts.

INT. HARVEY'S RESTAURANT - LATER

Edgar and Clyde have settled in to their booth.

YOUNG HOOVER  
It's the same dance each time. They  
make me wait. They imagine I'm  
sweating, that they're showing me  
who's boss. And I play along.

YOUNG TOULSON  
Did you play him the tape?

YOUNG HOOVER  
No. The transcript. But he didn't  
want to read it. That was unique.  
He wanted me to tell him about it.

YOUNG TOULSON  
How you came across it?

YOUNG HOOVER  
No. I explained up front we had  
never expected to find Mrs.  
Roosevelt in the bedroom of a known  
communist agitator. Much less  
having what sounded like... an  
intimate moment.

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

(anxious laugh)

And that I needed his guidance in how to proceed. I wanted him to know he had an ally.

YOUNG TOULSON

Before he had a chance to ask you to resign.

YOUNG HOOVER

Exactly, but when I was done, he simply pushed the file aside. He seemed unconcerned with it... Clyde, The President of the United States is afraid.

YOUNG TOULSON

Afraid of you?

YOUNG HOOVER

Of a potential invasion from abroad.  
(to the passing Host)  
Sir, can we have a bottle of Dom?

HOST

Of course, Mr. Hoover.

Clyde gives Edgar a look. This is unusual.

YOUNG TOULSON

You're drinking now?

YOUNG HOOVER

We're celebrating... I feel I can trust you with anything, Clyde--

YOUNG TOULSON

I'd like to think so.

YOUNG HOOVER

(a big secret)

The President signed a secret order granting me increased power of surveillance. Secret surveillance of Communists and Radicals. Without warrant.

YOUNG TOULSON

Is that legal?

YOUNG HOOVER

Sometimes we have to break the rules if we are going to keep our country safe...

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
(off Clyde's concern)  
But to make sure I hadn't heard  
wrong, I clarified it with  
Secretary of state Hull. He said,  
"Go ahead and investigate the  
cocksuckers."

YOUNG TOULSON  
Vulgar.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Agreed.  
(searching Clyde's eyes)  
I want to ask you something.

YOUNG TOULSON  
Feel free.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I need someone who understands  
what's at stake, who I can trust.  
An Associate Director of the FBI...  
I know you've only been with us 12  
months...

YOUNG TOULSON  
...almost 18.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(strangely intimate)  
You're missing my point. Clyde, I  
want you to be my number two man.

YOUNG TOULSON  
I'm not one for the spotlight.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I need you, Clyde.

YOUNG TOULSON  
(considers, then)  
Under one condition.  
(Edgar smiles)  
Good day or bad, if we agree or  
disagree, we never miss a lunch or  
dinner together.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I'd have it no other way.

The Host arrives with champagne, a reporter trailing him.

HOST

Mr. Hoover, Mr. Walters from the Times is here to see you.

The champagne pops. Edgar is as happy as he'll ever be.

INT. A TRUCK / HOPWELL - MT. ROSE HIGHWAY, NJ - DAY

Two men drive along a small, muddy, isolated section of the road just near the summit, WILLIAM, 46, turns to the DRIVER:

WILLIAM

Pull over.

DRIVER

Only a half mile to Mt. Rose.

WILLIAM

Can't wait.

EXT. HOPWELL - MT. ROSE HIGHWAY / ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

William wanders into the woods, ducks under a branch, unbuttons his coveralls, and looks down. What he sees is hard to believe -- sticking up through the dirt is what appears to be a skull and a foot. The dirt all around is kicked up.

WILLIAM

Orville!

INT. A TRUCK / HOPWELL - MT. ROSE HIGHWAY, NJ - SAME TIME

Orville perks up, gets out of the truck and wanders down. The camera cranes up and over the trees, revealing not four miles away, THE WHITE WALLS OF THE LINDBERGH'S HOME.

EXT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Edgar is at his mother's bedside. She lies motionless in bed sipping medicine / sherry. Edgar is devastated.

YOUNG HOOVER

The body was blackened, the left leg missing from the knee down. A visible fracture on the skull. He'd suffered a violent blow to the head... I told them months ago, he must have fallen on the way down, with the baby in his arms.

She turns her head, clearly in pain. Clearly quite ill.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 We are the sinners, we tolerated  
 lawlessness in the land until it  
 grew to diabolical proportions...  
 The baby's blood is on all of our  
 hands. On your hands, Edgar.

Edgar is horrified at the idea, but believes it deeply.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / FBI OFFICE - 1932

AS BEFORE: Edgar walks down the hall toward the press. This time, when they see him and Clyde coming, they leap to attention, snap photos, and throw out questions.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 A short time ago, I spoke with the  
 President. He ordered me to employ  
 the full force of the FBI in solving  
 this case. The day of the criminal  
 in America is over. There will be  
 justice before the year is out. That  
 is a promise from the FBI.

A CHORUS OF REPORTERS  
 Mr. Hoover! -- Mr. Hoover!

Edgar loves the new attention. Clyde focuses in on a single reporter who seems less than impressed.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / FBI OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Clyde has pulled the disinterested reporter aside for a private chat with Edgar.

REPORTER  
 How many more pieces can I run on  
 Lindbergh's employees and  
 relatives? I need something fresh.

YOUNG TOULSON  
 And if the director gives you a  
 piece of information, exclusively,  
 how does the country benefit?

REPORTER  
 The country?  
 (reading Clyde)  
 A story on the FBI?  
 (reading Edgar)  
 On its young director?

YOUNG HOOVER  
What angle?

REPORTER  
(considers, then:)  
With the inescapable demise of the  
American Outlaw, the new American  
hero is the FBI.

YOUNG HOOVER  
A story or a cover story?

REPORTER  
I can't promise a cover. But I have  
a pal in the radio business if  
you're willing to share true life  
stories. Maybe even a comic book.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(tamps down his joy)  
I would only want the truth to be  
told. Nothing colorful. Just who we  
are. Who I am. What we do.

Toulson smiles at the reporter. They all know what Edgar  
really wants -- fame -- for himself and his FBI.

INT. "G-MEN" COMIC BOOK / ANIMATION MONTAGE - DAY

A CARTOON HOOVER is the star of the classic G-MEN comic. It  
leaps to life through animation. Hoover totes a machine gun.

FAKE HOOVER VOICE  
Give up Mr. X or it's all over.

CRIMINAL CARTOON VOICE  
Says who?

FAKE HOOVER VOICE  
The FBI.

Then a flurry of machine gun fire makes the jump to:

JUMP TO: COMIC BOOK HOOVER and a GAGGLE OF OTHER FBI AGENTS  
raid a farm. As they bust down the door, a comic book labels  
the man in the door MACHINE GUN KELLY, with the bubble:

MACHINE GUN KELLY (V.O.)  
Don't shoot, G-men!



INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT - 1933

Close on Edgar's mother pasting another clipping in her now thick scrap book: "MACHINE GUN KELLY -- CAPTURED ALIVE."

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
Six weeks after the kidnapping,  
Congress passed the Lindbergh law  
making kidnapping a federal offense.  
The right to make arrests followed,  
then the right to bear arms.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Edgar slips a revolver into a holster under his vest. The handle has a mother-of-pearl grip.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
I began collecting the finest  
scientific minds in the country.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE / A.G.'S LIBRARY - DAY

The three pieces of the LINDBERGH LADDER are carefully brought into the temporary lab in the A.G.'s old library.

Edgar has his eye on the strangely dressed, introverted man who seems to be organizing things, ARTHUR KOEHLER.

YOUNG TOULSON  
He claims to be the world expert on  
wood analysis.

YOUNG HOOVER  
It's easy to be the expert if  
you're the only one in the world  
with any interest.

YOUNG TOULSON  
He claims he can tell as much from  
a wood cut as a doctor can from an  
autopsy. He has some... social  
difficulties--

YOUNG HOOVER  
Is he mentally ill?

YOUNG TOULSON  
Only as mad as you are... sir.

The Attorney General storms across the hall toward Edgar.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

This was supposed to be a  
"temporary inconvenience", Mr.  
Hoover. If you want your Sherlock  
Holmes playtime, I suggest--

YOUNG HOOVER

Where do you suggest I go?

ATTORNEY GENERAL

I suggest you take your case to  
congress and put my books back.

YOUNG HOOVER

(turning red)

Would you like me to tell the  
country we cannot solve the  
Lindbergh case because we can't  
afford a proper laboratory and the  
Attorney General won't even let us  
use his library?

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fine. Now Get your science fair  
project out of here!

INT. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ROOM - DAY

Edgar sits before a packed hearing. Clyde sits beside him.

YOUNG HOOVER

We must outsmart and outwit the  
foreign AND domestic criminal. THEY  
have chemists building bombs. We  
need chemists tracing their efforts.  
We must have the most advanced force  
in the world if we are to have the  
safest nation on earth.

SENATOR

But Mr. Hoover, yours is already  
one of the most well funded  
departments in Washington.

YOUNG HOOVER

That is true sir, but our car and  
bank robbery recoveries totaled 6.5  
million last year, and our budget  
was only 2 million. Unlike other  
departments in Washington, we run a  
profit... And you cannot possibly  
quantify the value of our successes

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
with Pretty Boy Floyd, Baby Face  
Nelson, Machine Gun Kelly.

SENATOR MCKELLER takes the mic. He's not half as friendly.

SENATOR MCKELLER  
Mr. Hoover, is it true that you  
directly or indirectly spend the  
Bureau's money on advertising?

YOUNG HOOVER  
We are not permitted in any way to  
engage in advertising, sir.

SENATOR MCKELLER  
But you take part, for instance, in  
the making of radio shows and comic  
books... I've seen several of these  
"G-men" programs, and your picture  
seems to be shown in conjunction  
with them quite frequently.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(very uncomfortable)  
We declined emphatically to lend  
any form of endorsement and had  
nothing to do with their  
production, furnished no advice,  
technical advice or other advice.

Clyde leans back and tries not to look shocked -- this was a  
blatant lie. For the first time, Edgar starts to sweat.

SENATOR MCKELLER  
The very advertisement said the  
broadcasts were, "True reflection,  
as contained in the OFFICIAL  
RECORDS... Based on actual cases  
from the files of Federal Bureau of  
Investigation, Saturday nights at 8  
o'clock."

(Edgar is speechless)  
Mr. Hoover, what are your exact  
qualifications for your leadership  
position with this Bureau?

YOUNG HOOVER  
(his job now at risk)  
19 years with the Department of  
Justice. 12 as Director.

SENATOR MCKELLER  
And in that time, have you EVER  
made an arrest, yourself?

YOUNG HOOVER

I have made investigations. I administer many cases at once, Sir.

SENATOR MCKELLER

That's not what I asked. The comics show you with a machine gun, making arrests. Is that just fiction?

YOUNG HOOVER

I am responsible for thousands of arrests, sir.

SENATOR MCKELLER

So you admit it's PURE fiction. In fact it wasn't you who hunted and captured John Dilinger at all. It was Agent Purvis, is that correct?

YOUNG HOOVER

I have been in charge of all of these cases... but no sir, I have not personally made an arrest.

Edgar's blood is boiling, humiliated.

EXT. THE CAPITOL - LATER

Edgar marches out, rambling at Clyde at a frantic pace.

YOUNG HOOVER

We spend our lives working for justice, and the thanks we get is a political attack. Would they rather crimes go unsolved? Why is he fighting me? Start a file on Senator McKeller immediately. I want three agents on him at all times. Go through his trash. Photograph him at every dinner.

Edgar arrives at his armored car and gets in. Clyde follows.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

Get out. You can walk back.

YOUNG TOULSON

We have lunch. We don't miss lunches. No matter what. Remember?

YOUNG HOOVER

You pulled away from me in there.

YOUNG TOULSON

I'm sorry, Edgar, but it was a lie. An easily provable one. If he had pursued it, there's no telling how much worse it could have been.

YOUNG HOOVER

(a beat, then)

Find out where Agent Purvis is. He is to be demoted immediately, or better yet, fired.

YOUNG TOULSON

Firing the man who killed Dilinger would be a PR disaster.

YOUNG HOOVER

Then he'll spend the rest of his career behind a desk. And tell him if he wants to keep that job, he'd best keep out of the papers.

Edgar shuts the door leaving Clyde on the sidewalk. The car drives off. The "lunch promise" is already broken, but it's not the punishment Clyde took it as -- Edgar is breaking down. He sets in on a panic attack.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Edgar sits next to his mother's bed, soothing his woes with a bottle of Johnny Walker. She looks very sick.

YOUNG HOOVER

I don't know who to trust anymore, mother. Let me take you to a doctor. I can't go on without you. Please, mother. We could go now.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

(barely a whisper)

Faith, Edgar. Faith... Don't wilt like a little flower. Be strong.

INT. SMALL AIRPLANE TO NEW ORLEANS - DAY

The hum of the engines in mid air, Edgar, Clyde, and 12 AGENTS have chartered a plane. Edgar is manic.

YOUNG HOOVER

The arrest is mine to make, understood? You will strictly follow Agent Toulson's orders.

(kissing up)

(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

Agent Toulson is the finest agent in the Bureau today. His worth is second to none. In all of your careers, you can only dream of becoming half the agent he is now. Listen to his every word.

The Agents nod out of duty. Toulson is uncomfortable.

EXT. GOOD LOOKING APARTMENT HOUSE / NEW ORLEANS STREET - DAY

The place is surrounded. Agents are poised on rooftops, stairways, and in cars all watching the apartment's door.

WE FOCUS ON: Edgar behind a car across the street, his gun at his side. Clyde is a few cars up with his own.

Out comes a WELL DRESSED WOMAN. She steps down to the curb, lights a cigarette and looks around. The officers make themselves invisible, their fingers on their car keys and guns, ready for a signal.

Edgar peaks up over his car as two men walk out of the building behind her, FRED HUNTER and ALVIN KARPIS. Edgar eyes Karpis and toys with his trigger. As the trio starts toward a car, the street fills with TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIANS.

The woman gets in the car first. The AGENTS wait for Edgar to make a move, but he's focused on a MAN ON AN OLD WHITE HORSE sauntering into the lane beside the through traffic. Clip-clop, clip-clop, slowly clip-clopping past. Fred is now in the driver seat, and Karpis is about to get in.

Finally, the horse moves past Edgar's line of vision. REVEAL: All three are in the car. Edgar throws a signal and all at once, the AGENTS descend with sawed off shotguns: Off roofs, down stairwells, their cars rushing in to block the street.

Edgar rushes across the street from his hiding place, his heart pounding, Clyde a step behind. Karpis shuts his door. An Agent busts the driver's window with his shotgun, and points it at the driver's head.

Edgar arrives, flings open the back door, and aims his gun at Karpis's head. On the seat beside him is A RIFLE.

YOUNG HOOVER

Put the handcuffs on him.

AN AGENT pulls off his necktie, and ties Karpis's hands.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

Mr. Karpis. You are under arrest.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO / MONTAGE - DAY

A fast cut bust by "G-men" with guns of gangster William Mahan in bed in the middle of the night. Edgar is there to make the arrest.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING / FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Edgar leads Clyde and a team of Agents into an apartment building. He hands a Thompson machine gun to Clyde.

YOUNG HOOVER

Blow it down.

Clyde hesitates, then pulls the trigger turning the door into swiss cheese. Bullets start flying back at them from behind the door. Edgar and the Agents duck for cover. Edgar's Agents tear gas into the room.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING / JANITOR'S CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER

Someone is firing from inside a closet. Agents stand on either side waiting for it to subside. When it does, they rip the door open revealing HARRY BURNETTE. He fires once more, but he's out of bullets. Edgar steps into frame.

YOUNG HOOVER

Mr. Burnette, you are under arrest.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Edgar with a gaggle of reporters. They're eating it up:

YOUNG HOOVER

Karpis said he'd never be taken alive, but we took him without firing a shot. He shook all over -- his voice, his hands and his knees.

REPORTER

And you arrested Harry Campbell in Toledo and Burnett in Manhattan as well, Mr. Hoover?

YOUNG HOOVER

(false modesty)

And William Mahan in California, but it was a WE job, not an I job.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Clyde walks in holding a cereal box. Edgar takes it and digs through it like a kid looking for the toy -- but without any of the joy. Edgar pulls out a toy badge. It says "PURVIS."

REVEAL: the front of the box has an image of Agent Melvin Purvis with: "THE FBI AGENT WHO CAUGHT DILINGER!"

YOUNG HOOVER

Write the cereal maker. Let them know they must print any further boxes to read: "FORMER-AGENT" of the FBI.

(with a grin)

Sit. I have something to show you.

He pulls a letter from his desk, stifles a giggle, and reads:

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

"Only eight more days, funny how even the dearest face will fade away in time. Most clearly I remember your eyes with a kind of teasing smile in them, and the feeling of that soft spot just north-east of the corner of your mouth against my lips."

Edgar almost collapses with laughter.

YOUNG TOULSON

What is it?

YOUNG HOOVER

It's from Lorena Hickock, the White House reporter with the bad breath... to Mrs. Roosevelt!

YOUNG TOULSON

What are you going to do with it?

YOUNG HOOVER

Nothing. I accused her of having an affair with a man, but Old Horse Face is having an affair with Bat Breath! A woman! I was wrong!

Helen Gandy sticks her head in. Edgar clears the tears from his eyes. He can't stop laughing.



HELEN GANDY

Mr. Hoover, they'd like to see you  
in the laboratory.

YOUNG HOOVER

I'll be right there, Miss Gandy.

(she goes)

Clyde, the races begin in Del Mar  
next week. I was thinking of taking  
a quick vacation. I thought perhaps  
you'd like to join me.

YOUNG TOULSON

(smiles, considers)

I've never been to a horse race.

YOUNG HOOVER

It's wonderful. And between you and  
me, when I lose my bets, the track  
covers the losses.

YOUNG TOULSON

And when you win?

YOUNG HOOVER

They pay!

YOUNG TOULSON

So where's the thrill?

YOUNG HOOVER

In the sun that comes down in the  
stands. The hotel rooms. The  
service. The dinners. The company.  
Come with me.

YOUNG TOULSON

I would love to.

YOUNG HOOVER

I'll have Miss Gandy make all the  
arrangements. It will be perfect!

YOUNG TOULSON

Edgar... I'm afraid I can't now.  
But perhaps in a few months... if I  
start saving.

YOUNG HOOVER

No. It's covered. Completely.

YOUNG TOULSON

I really couldn't do that.

YOUNG HOOVER

You've done so much for me. For the Bureau. Consider it a thank you.

(Clyde isn't convinced)

I'll get a suite with adjoining rooms instead of separate rooms. That will be savings enough.

YOUNG TOULSON

It's a deal.

(smiles warmly)

You should go. They're waiting for you in the crime lab... Mr. Hoover.

INT. THE NEW FBI CRIME LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Clearly Edgar got what he wanted: The basement of the FBI has been turned into a massive new crime lab. Rows and rows of files hold FINGER PRINTS. Rows and rows of SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS and LAB TECHNICIANS fill the halls.

Edgar walks the long hall, finally arriving at an EXAMINATION TABLE. Wood specialist, Koehler (earlier), has disassembled the Lindbergh ladder, each rail and rung numbered. As he explains his findings, we see Edgar's LIGHT STRINGS connecting the evidence. These two are peas in a pod.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

There are several kinds of wood here. Pine. Birch. Fir. And if you look closely, you will see that each has its own internal markings, rings and knots, and its own external markings, as in here, from the machinery that milled the raw timber. And these, that mark the tools used to build the ladder.

YOUNG HOOVER

(re: a long piece of wood)

This one is very different.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

Yes. Number 16. It was a rail. And look at these four nail holes. They were NOT used in the construction of the ladder.

YOUNG HOOVER

It was used for something else before the ladder was built.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

Yes. And it's low grade sapwood with NO signs of weathering, so it was inside, not out. And the pine shows no signs of previous use. That tells us this ladder was built for THIS job. Nothing else.

YOUNG HOOVER

How does this help us identify the kidnapper?

ARTHUR KOEHLER

I need more money, sir.

YOUNG HOOVER

For?

ARTHUR KOEHLER

Postage. I need to write to every mill on the East coast to see if their blades match these marks.

Edgar considers. Is this guy for real, or really nuts? He looks at the wood again, and ALL THE CONNECTIONS LIGHT UP.

YOUNG HOOVER

I want a report on each mill. And a map to track all leads. By the time I'm in New York, I want something to report, Mr. Koehler.

INT. "G-MEN" MOVIE PREMIERE - NIGHT

Up on the screen is the movie "G-Men." Lighting quick James "Brick" Davis (JAMES CAGNEY) jumps through a window.

JAMES CAGNEY (IN THE FILM)

Hold your fire!

The machine guns go silent. He grabs the gun from the suspect's hand and hip tosses him over a table to the floor.

Cagney now plays the "G-MAN" as the hero instead of "PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE." The G-man has officially replaced the criminal as protagonist. The audience eats it up. REVEAL: Edgar next to Clyde watching with pride.

EXT. "G-MEN" THEATER / RED CARPET - NIGHT

On the RED CARPET afterward with Clyde and his mom, Edgar is THE STAR. The press goes mad when A LITTLE GIRL WITH CURLS marches up and Edgar bends down to her.

SHIRLEY TEMPLE

Mr. Hoover. I was wondering if you would join MY police force.

YOUNG HOOVER

Why yes. If you agree to be an honorary G-woman, Miss Temple... and give me one little kiss.

SHIRLEY TEMPLE

I don't know if your wife would approve, Mr. Hoover.

The press laughs. So does Edgar. He shoots back:

YOUNG HOOVER

But Miss Temple, you see, I still live with my mother.

The press eats it up. It's everything Edgar ever dreamed of for himself and his Bureau.

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar gets in back with Clyde. His mother gets in the front.

YOUNG TOULSON

Are we going to the club?

YOUNG HOOVER

(a finger to his lips)  
After we drop mother at the hotel.

Clyde smiles. As the car pulls away, Edgar moves his hand on top of Clyde's like it's the most natural thing in the world.

INT. THE STORK CLUB / NYC - NIGHT

Edgar and Clyde are escorted in by the CLUB OWNER.

STORK CLUB OWNER

I have you at a table with Anita Colby. Lela Rogers and her daughter, Ginger, have asked if they can join.

YOUNG HOOVER

As long as it's near the front.

And he leads them through the ogling crowd in this, the most exclusive night club in the city. It's immaculate. The live music and decor make the Great Depression feel like fiction.

INT. THE STORK CLUB / EDGAR'S TABLE UP FRONT - LATER

Edgar holds court with a handful of actresses and singers, amongst them: Lela Rogers and her daughter. He goes on at a mile a minute, the women reacting with giggles and awe.

YOUNG HOOVER

The bullet entered the back of his head and exited through the front near his cheek. The thing people don't realize is that there is very little blood. The heat of the bullet seals the wound as it enters. So the scene is far more peaceful than you depict in your moving pictures.

REVEAL: Clyde is at a remove, literally pushed away by the women to listen from afar and deal with the WAITERS.

LELA ROGERS

And little Lindy? Did you see the child with your own eyes?

YOUNG HOOVER

Those aren't details I can share with a group of refined women. I couldn't stand to make a single one of you shed a tear. But I assure you, we're on the case.

MODEL -- ANITA COLBY

I saw the Lindberghs in Paris. I hardly recognized them.

YOUNG HOOVER

Only justice can bring reason back to their lives... but I might share one confidential clue with you. If you will swear secrecy.

He holds out his pinky. They giggle, hold out theirs and make a four way pinky pact. More laughter. Lela doesn't let go of his pinky. She's falling for him. He gets quiet:

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

The first gold notes from the ransom money have surfaced. And can you guess where?

MODEL -- ANITA COLBY

Tell us... Please, Mr. Hoover.

YOUNG HOOVER

In the Bronx. On three occasions.  
And each of the shop owners who  
turned them in claim they received  
them from a man with a pointed  
chin... and a German accent.

Anita gasps and cozies up to Edgar. Lela clocks it. She wants  
him to herself. Clyde watches it all play out from afar.

ANITA COLBY

(flirting)

Take my word for it, Mr. Hoover,  
all the admiration in the world  
can't fill the spot where love  
goes... or keep your bed warm.

Clyde tunes in. Edgar tries not to notice.

YOUNG HOOVER

I serve my country, Miss Colby. A  
nation's admiration is more than  
enough for me.

ANITA COLBY

But it likely makes for a cold bed.

The band strikes up "RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET." Lela sees it  
as an opportunity to pull "her Edgar" away.

LELA ROGERS

Mr. Hoover. Would it be out of the  
question to bother you for a dance?

YOUNG HOOVER

(suddenly panicked)

How do you mean?

LELA ROGERS

Well... simply a dance. You do  
dance, don't you?

YOUNG HOOVER

(turning red)

It's a skill I haven't mastered,  
and the night is getting long.

LELA ROGERS

Then no time like the present. This  
is my favorite song.

YOUNG HOOVER

(turning purple)

Mr. Toulson, I think it's t-t-time for us to go. We have a good deal of work t-t-tomorrow. I'm afraid I just don't have t--t--time to dance. My sincere apology. N-- Now Mr. Toulson. This minute.

And Edgar finally wiggles his way out of the table, clearly running away from the women. Clyde follows.

Lela and Ginger can't contain their laughter. Edgar catches a glimpse of it on his way out. He's humiliated.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL / MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

On his mother's bed is a now giant album of Edgar's press clippings with a new shot of Edgar from the premiere's press book. Edgar is crying and stuttering at her beside.

YOUNG HOOVER

I--I--I d--d--d--don't like to d-d--  
d--d--dance, a-a--

EDGAR'S MOTHER

Edgar, go look in the mirror and talk the way the doctor taught you to. Be my little Speedie.

He stands up, looks in the mirror, straightens his posture, and starts talking in his fast, "speedie" way, the way the world knows him -- it's his stutter cure.

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes, mother, I can spit my words out with precision, diction and clarity. I don't like to dance. I don't like to dance with anyone, but mostly I don't like to dance with women, mother. It's about time you knew. I find it humiliating and I refuse to be publicly humiliated.

EDGAR'S MOTHER

Edgar. Stop.  
(he does)  
Do you remember Barton Pincus?

YOUNG HOOVER

(speedy in the mirror)  
His father was the watchmaker. He  
(MORE)

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
was 10 years younger than me, and  
you called him "Birdie" or "Daffy."

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
Do you remember what happened to  
"Daffy" after the school custodian  
discovered him in the hoop skirt  
and the flower bonnet?

YOUNG HOOVER  
He was made to stand outside our  
school wearing the skirt and bonnet  
as punishment.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
And did you ever wonder why we  
called him Daffy?

YOUNG HOOVER  
For his odd behavior.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
It was short for daffodil, Edgar.  
And do you remember what happened  
to little Daffodile Pincus?

YOUNG HOOVER  
Yes... He shot himself six weeks  
after he stood outside school in  
that skirt.

EDGAR'S MOTHER  
That's right. And I thank God every  
day that my own sons don't suffer  
from his condition. Edgar. I'd  
rather have a dead son than a  
daffodil for a son.

She closes Edgar's album and wills herself out of bed.

EDGAR'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Now I'll to teach you how to dance.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Yes mother.

Edgar cannot even face her. He can only look at her through  
the mirror. It's a heartbreaking moment.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Lights, cameras, Edgar is filming a new televised speech.



YOUNG HOOVER

It is imperative that we preserve  
and protect the morals of the  
American family. If the home is  
imperiled, if the home is  
destroyed, everything in our  
civilization crashes to its doom.

Clyde watches from afar, surprised / concerned by Edgar's  
newfound passion for "traditional morality."

EXT. NATIONAL LUMBER AND MILLWORK COMPANY - DAY

Arthur Koehler (wood expert) walks through the front gates of  
the Millwork Company -- in the Bronx.

INT. NATIONAL LUMBER AND MILLWORK COMPANY / MILL - LATER

Arthur compares samples of National Lumber's wood to the cuts  
on his evidence wood -- it's an exact match.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

When did you get this shipment?

MAN AT THE COUNTER

A long while back. November? 1931.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

Are you sure of that?

MAN AT THE COUNTER

It was either November or December.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

Three months before the kidnapping.

The camera drifts outside and down the block to -- THE  
DISTINCTIVE CEMETARY GATES WHERE THE RANSOM WAS DELIVERED.

INT. FBI OFFICES - THAT DAY

Edgar, Clyde, Arthur and an army of other WELL DRESSED AGENTS  
gather around a giant map of the northeast.

AGENT ONE

If the lumber yard is a cash  
business, then there aren't any  
receipts or names.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

It tells us where he was shopping  
before anyone was looking for him.

YOUNG HOOVER

Read me the addresses where the  
ransom bills have turned up.

AGENT TWO

456 west 3rd.  
(Edgar puts a pin in)  
476 west 3rd.  
(another pin goes in)

The sound goes out, but pins continue to go in. We focus on Edgar watching -- making connections. The pins fan out from a single block, all centering around the lumber yard.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)

We knew who we were looking for.  
Someone who'd done business in this  
neighborhood for years. Someone who  
was still there.

INT. FIRST FEDERAL RESERVE BANK / LIBERTY AND NASSAU - DAY

The model G-Man, AGENT SISK questions a BANK MANAGER.

BANK MANAGER

Yes, sir, I received, 2,980 dollars  
worth of these gold certificates.  
The customer signed his name J.J.  
Faulkner. Here is his address.

INT. BRONX APARTMENT - DAY

Agent Sisk flanked by Federal Agents burst into an apartment in the Bronx, guns drawn. It's completely empty.

EXT. A BRONX NEWSPAPER STAND - DAY

NEWSPAPER BOY

He was average height, blue eyes--

EXT. A BRONX BAKERY - DAY

BAKER'S WIFE

High cheek bones and a pointy chin.

EXT. A BRONX CASHIER - NIGHT

THEATER CASHIER

Yes sir, pointed chin, and an  
accent, an accent like--

EXT. A BRONX NEWSPAPER STAND - DAY

NEWSPAPER BOY  
Like a German accent maybe.

EXT. A BRONX BAKERY - DAY

THE BAKER  
A German. With big cheek bones.

INT. CORN EXCHANGE BANK / THE BRONX - SEPT 18, 1934 - DAY

A TELLER holds a \$10 gold certificate:

SCARED TELLER  
Am I going to get him in some kind  
of trouble?

AGENT SISK  
Not if he didn't do anything wrong.  
We're the FBI, son. The good guys.

SCARED TELLER  
(considers, then)  
It was deposited by Walter Lyle. He  
manages the gas station. Up on  
Lexington and 127th.

INT. GAS STATION / LEXINGTON AND 127TH / THE BRONX - DAY

Agent Sisk is with WALTER LYLE, he's nervous, sweating as he  
handles the gold note from the bank.

WALTER LYLE  
Yes. I remember him. He bought 89  
cents worth of gas.

FBI AGENT  
And paid with this bill?

WALTER LYLE  
Yes, sir. But I don't know him.  
I've never seen him since.

FBI AGENT  
He was memorable enough that you'd  
remember it if he came in again?

WALTER LYLE  
Yes. He was German, I think. I  
mean, with an accent. Pointed chin--

FBI AGENT  
 (withering; same old story)  
 --and high cheek bones, right?

WALTER LYLE  
 Yes. And I guess I looked at the  
 bill funny because he assured me he  
 had 100 more just like it. At home.

AGENT SISK  
 (perks up)  
 You had a conversation with him?

WALTER LYLE  
 No. That was it.  
 (Sisk withers again)  
 But I wrote down his license plate  
 number. That's the writing right  
 here along the edge of the bill.

And he holds up the bill to show Agent Sisk -- BINGO!

INT. THE FBI HALLWAY - DAY

Edgar walks the halls with purpose. Energized.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Miss Gandy, get Mr. Toulson.

Helen emerges from her office and follows. Toulson does the  
 same. They're a trio by the time they burst through--

INT. FBI OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

--the investigating office doors. Agent Sisk is there,  
 waiting at the pin covered map. He needs no prompting.

AGENT SISK  
 The New York Motor Vehicles  
 Bureau's describes it as a dark  
 blue 1930 Dodge sedan. The owner is  
 a carpenter who was born in  
 Germany, and lives at 1279 East  
 222nd Street... in the Bronx.

Sisk pushes a pin into the address. The map lights up in  
 Edgar's head. It all fits. The lumber yard, the cemetery, and  
 the spots the bills were spent.

AGENT SISK (CONT'D)  
 His name is Richard Bruno  
 Hauptmann.

EXT. ROADSIDE - SEPTEMBER 19TH 1934 - DAY

A black sedan carrying EDGAR and TWO OFFICERS is parked. They watch through binoculars as -- A man leaves his house, walks around to his locked garage and disappears.

The man re-emerges in his car -- a 1930 BLUE DODGE SEDAN.

They tail him as he drives up Tremont Avenue. Traffic picks up. THEY LOSE SIGHT OF HIM FOR A MOMENT. When he comes back into view, they see ANOTHER POLICEMAN HAS PULLED HIM OVER.

YOUNG HOOVER

Pull over!

The driver does. Edgar leaps out, runs to the car, and pushes the other officer out of the way.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

FBI. Put your hands up.

Edgar jams his gun in the car. The man inside puts his hands up, and in a truly innocent way, with a German accent asks:

MAN IN CAR

Is there a problem?

YOUNG HOOVER

Get out of the car.

He does. The officers put him face first against the car.

Edgar pulls the man's ID and a \$20 bill out of his wallet. The bill has a gold marker on it. Edgar quickly checks its serial number using his MASTER LIST. It's a match.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

Mr. Bruno Hauptmann, you are under arrest for the kidnapping and murder of Charles Lindbergh Junior.

And he's cuffed.

EXT. NEW JERSEY JAIL - DAY

FLASH! FLASH! The Press snaps photos of Hauptmann being escorted in. Edgar is front and center. Colonel Schwartzkopf (Lindbergh's home earlier) is pushed off to the side. The FREEZE FRAME of this still crosses the cut to:

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Old Hoover is examining the same still as Agent Garrison's keys strike the paper, the pages are stacking up. A new cover page reads, "UNTITLED FBI STORY."

OLD HOOVER  
We need a title, Agent Garrison.

Garrison just keeps typing. The phone rings. Hoover picks up.

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
We're working, Miss Gandy.

OLD HELEN GANDY (V.O.)  
The tape came in.

OLD HOOVER  
(perks up)  
Put it in my private office.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Hoover loops up a reel to reel audio tape. He treats it like a blown egg. Precious, fragile.

He hits PLAY. At first the sounds are hard to make out. A DOOR CLOSING, FABRIC MOVING, CHIT CHAT, DRINKING. The words are hard to distinguish, but it sounds like A FEW BLACK MEN AND TWO BLACK WOMAN. Hoover leans in, titillated.

INT. WILLARD HOTEL (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

WE FOCUS ON: the microphone under the bed. We see feet and shadows, but mostly it's just sounds.

*(As Hoover hits fast forward, the film zooms forward and the shadows move faster, returning to normal when he hits play)*

FAST FORWARD: talking. FAST FORWARD: Kissing. FAST FORWARD / STOP / PLAY: It's audio roulette. He hits the jackpot: the sound of THE BLACK MEN HAVING SEX WITH THE TWO BLACK WOMEN.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hoover is listening, his forehead is misty, he may even be masturbating, it's tough to tell. The phone rings. He ignores it. It rings again. He ignores it, trying to keep his focus.

It won't stop ringing. He flies into a rage, and picks up the phone -- without hitting stop on the tape player.

OLD HOOVER  
I told you I'm not to be disturbed.

INT. HELEN GANDY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Old Helen can hear the sex recording through the phone.

HELEN GANDY  
Mr. Hoover. It's urgent. I have  
Agent Shakin on from Dallas.--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

GORDON SHANKLIN (V.O.)  
My apologies Mr. Hoover, I told  
Miss Gandy to put me right through.

OLD HOOVER  
What is it, Agent, Shakin?

GORDON SHANKLIN (V.O.)  
Sir, the President has been shot.  
(Edgar is stunned)  
He was just declared dead, sir.

OLD HOOVER  
Who knows about this?

GORDON SHANKLIN (V.O.)  
No one, sir. I thought you should  
know before the press reports it.

OLD HOOVER  
Thank you, Agent Shakin.

He hangs up. Even steely Hoover has to process the magnitude of this moment. He walks into his outer office, considering his next move. He focuses in on his NOW COMPLETED REPLICA OF ROBERT KENNEDY'S FIREPLACE. He picks up his phone and dials.

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
Get me Robert Kennedy... I don't  
care where in McLean he is. Put me  
through immediately.

INT. HOME IN MCLEAN, VIRGINIA - MOMENTS LATER / INTERCUT

Robert Kennedy walks up to his phone, relaxed, unaware.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY  
Mr. Hoover?

OLD HOOVER  
Mr. Kennedy, The President has been  
shot.

Hoover hangs up. He eyes the red buzzer on his desk. He unscrews the bulb and the light goes out.

EXT. PIMLICO RACETRACK / BALTIMORE - DAY

The flags are all at half staff for Kennedy. Hoover doesn't seem to notice. He's got his eye on the 6th race of the day. Toulson is by his side. Both are using binoculars, both stand as the horses round the end headed toward the home stretch--

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DEL MAR RACETRACK / CALIFORNIA - DAY - 1935

The horses round the corner 30 years earlier in Del Mar. REVEAL: Edgar and Clyde, dressed to the nines, watching a similar race. They've clearly made it to their vacation.

Their horse wins! It's pure joy. These two are being treated like royalty, surrounded by DESI ARNAZ, BING CROSBY, JIMMY DURANTE, LUCILLE BALL, and A FEW MOBSTER TYPES.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE / BATHROOM - NIGHT

Clyde changes into a robe and checks his hair. It takes very little for him to be handsome. He's far more interested in his race stubs, his treasures. He places them carefully in a zippered pouch of his dop kit.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE / BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Edgar is in his own bathroom changing into a silk robe. He checks his hair, finds a grey and plucks it out. He slicks the rest back. He brushes his teeth with precision and spits. He walks out of his bathroom, through his bedroom, and into the central living room just as--

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE / LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

--Clyde enters from his own suite. Without words, Clyde pours two cocktails. Edgar finds a radio station.

Edgar turns and watches Clyde from behind, finishing their drinks. It all feels very romantic.

YOUNG TOULSON  
Did you see his shoes?



YOUNG HOOVER

Desi Arnaz? The leather ones with the horrible buckles across the top? No didn't notice them one bit.

YOUNG TOULSON

You'd think with all of their money they'd have better fashion sense, or pay someone to have it for them.

YOUNG HOOVER

And his fau-ginger wife, when she walked in, I was afraid a hunter might pull a rifle on that hat.

Edgar imitates how it must have bounced each time she took a step. Clyde is charmed. He sits. Edgar does the same. Clyde puts his hand on Edgar's. Edgar continues laughing for a bit -  
- without taking his hand away.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

I care so very much for you, Clyde.

YOUNG TOULSON

(gets up the nerve, then)  
I love you, Edgar.

Edgar won't look at Clyde -- who is looking right at him.

YOUNG TOULSON (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

YOUNG HOOVER

Yes.

Out of nerves or preparation, in the slightest of gestures, Clyde wets his lip.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)

C-Can I ask you s-something?

YOUNG TOULSON

Anything.

Edgar removes his hand to reach for a drink he doesn't need.

YOUNG HOOVER

What do you think of Dorothy Lamour? The actress.

YOUNG TOULSON

With Rudy Vallee at the Stork Club?

YOUNG HOOVER  
That's the one.

YOUNG TOULSON  
She's a bit too camp for me.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Well, I'm thinking... of t-t-taking  
her up on a proposal.

YOUNG TOULSON  
For dinner?

YOUNG HOOVER  
No. We've already had dinners.

YOUNG TOULSON  
When?

YOUNG HOOVER  
On the weekends. When I've gone up  
to New York.

YOUNG TOULSON  
(that feels like cheating)  
I see.

YOUNG HOOVER  
What I'm asking is... I think it  
may be time for a Mrs. Hoover.  
(Clyde can't even speak)  
You don't like her?

YOUNG TOULSON  
Don't make a fool of me.

YOUNG HOOVER  
I'm not.

YOUNG TOULSON  
(the big, scary question)  
Have you become... physical?

YOUNG HOOVER  
Yes. We have.  
(Toulson quietly fumes)  
You'd rather me be half a person,  
Clyde? Remain incomplete?

Toulson throws his drink against a wall. Edgar shrieks.

YOUNG TOULSON  
Am I an incompletion?

YOUNG HOOVER  
Pick that glass up.

YOUNG TOULSON  
No. I won't. I have no reason to.  
Fire me. Now. Go on.

YOUNG HOOVER  
You are making a fool of yourself.

And Clyde clears two more glasses on the bar onto the floor.  
There is glass everywhere. Edgar is speechless.

YOUNG HOOVER (CONT'D)  
Clyde, and you have no shoes on.  
Stop this!

Clyde gets up in Edgar's face. It looks like he might fight  
him physically.

YOUNG TOULSON  
You will never tell me what to do  
again. You just lost that right. I  
see through you. You're a scared,  
heartless, horrible, little man.

Edgar throws a punch. It lands. Toulson throws one of his  
own. It's a brutal fight. Years of pent up attraction.

They crash to the floor. Clyde pins Edgar. He considers  
pounding his face in. Instead, he kisses Edgar full on the  
lips. They hold for a moment. Edgar hardly resists. Finally,  
Clyde pulls away.

YOUNG HOOVER  
(not meaning it)  
Don't ever do that again.

YOUNG TOULSON  
I won't.

Clyde checks himself for cuts and starts out of the room.  
He's almost to his bedroom when Edgar stops him.

YOUNG HOOVER  
Don't leave me, Clyde... Please. We  
have a second day of races.  
(hard words to form)  
I'm begging you.

YOUNG TOULSON  
(a long beat, then)  
If you ever mention a lady friend  
(MORE)

YOUNG TOULSON (CONT'D)  
 again, that will be the last day  
 you share my company.

Clyde goes. Edgar touches his lips, recalling Clyde's against his. A sensation he may never feel again. He calms his shaking, gets up, and starts collecting glass off the floor.

The sound of a GUNSHOT -- crosses the cut to:

EXT. PIMLICO RACETRACK / BALTIMORE - DAY - 1964

Picking up where the race left off before the flashback - flags still at half staff:

--as the horses round the corner to the finish, Old Toulson feels a numbness in his right shoulder. He blinks his eyes, he's seeing flashes. He shifts as if tripping, as if the ground just moved, and he sits. Hoover rushes to his side. So do others around them.

OLD HOOVER  
 What is it, Clyde?  
 (Clyde can't answer)  
 Get a doctor!

INT. DC HOSPITAL EXAM ROOM - DAY

Flanked by TWO AGENTS and Miss Gandy, Hoover looks quite ill.

DOCTOR  
 He should be able to recover most of his function, but a stroke like this will limit the hours he can work. The information he can process. For a while at least... Are you okay, Mr. Hoover?

OLD HOOVER  
 I played in the yard with my dog on Saturday. Perhaps it's dehydration.

DOCTOR  
 That could do it. But it may be wise to reduce your work hours as well. At your age it's important to take leave.

OLD HOOVER  
 Can I have some privacy please?

The other Agents go. Hoover steams.

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)

If you ever denigrate me in front of my staff again, I will have you railroaded out of your profession.

DOCTOR

(truly afraid)  
I apologize, sir.

OLD HOOVER

What do you have for energy?

DOCTOR

We have diet medications that tend to give a boost.

OLD HOOVER

So I could lose a few pounds and have more energy?

DOCTOR

You don't need to worry about your weight sir, it's solid weight.

It's ass kissing, but Hoover appreciates it.

OLD HOOVER

We'll schedule a daily visit.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME / BREAKFAST TABLE - DAY

Hoover and Toulson sit across from each other. Hoover taps a hard boiled egg with a spoon and expertly peels it.

Toulson struggles to grip his spoon. His entire right side is immobilized. His face droops. Hoover lets him struggle.

OLD HOOVER

They're giving him the Nobel Prize.  
(Toulson nods.)  
The degenerates and radicals are being lifted up internationally.  
It's like 1920 all over again.

OLD TOULSON

Don't...

OLD HOOVER

When he finds out we have this tape, that we know the truth about his character, he will decline the award.

OLD TOULSON  
Johnson... Wait.

He ignores Toulson's plea, focusing instead on Toulson's egg struggle. He gets up, leans in close and peels it for him.

OLD HOOVER  
I can't understand you, Clyde. You  
have to work harder to enunciate.  
(Toulson looks concerned)  
We have no legal recourse. Law  
enforcement hasn't kept pace with  
the improved tactics of today's  
criminals.

OLD TOULSON  
What's the... idea.

OLD HOOVER  
We have friends in the press. We  
plant stories with them to insure  
the activities of suspected radical  
leaders see the light of day.

OLD TOULSON  
They'll trace it.

OLD HOOVER  
Only if they're true. It's Counter  
intelligence, Clyde. The more  
untrue the story, the more dramatic  
the impact. I'm going to deliver  
the hotel recording the day before  
the Nobel Prize with a personal  
letter. If he still accepts it.  
I'll deliver the tape to the press.

OLD TOULSON  
The tape may... not be legal.

OLD HOOVER  
That's why the letter won't be from  
me. It will be a fictitious letter  
from one of his own.

OLD TOULSON  
There would be... no room for  
error. I'm not certain we could...  
insure that.

Hoover doesn't like the prudent advice or his "special friend's" flagrant display of mortality.

OLD HOOVER  
I can't understand you, Clyde.

Hoover hits his own yolk. It's hard. He tosses it down to his dog who's been waiting expectantly.

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
I need you back at the office  
tomorrow. It's no time to relent.

OLD TOULSON  
I can't.

It's not the answer Hoover wanted.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

The doctor fills a syringe with amphetamines, leans in to Hoover's arm, and slides the needle gently in.

CLOSE ON: Old Hoover's eyes dilate. He's juiced.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Edgar is sitting at the typewriter himself now. Writing. We hear the words. It's manic, emotional, a drug induced tirade.

OLD HOOVER (V.O.)  
Look into your heart. You know you  
are a complete fraud and a great  
liability to all of us Negroes.  
(This is a fraudulent letter)  
White people in this country have  
enough frauds of their own but I am  
sure they don't have one at this  
time that is anywhere near your  
equal. I repeat...  
(return key, return key)  
I repeat... you are a colossal  
fraud and an evil, vicious one at  
that. You could not believe in  
God... Clearly you don't believe in  
any personal moral principles.  
(is this all self-reflection?)  
You have turned out to be not a  
leader, but a dissolute, abnormal  
moral imbecile.  
(he reflects, then)  
There is only one thing left for  
you to do. You know what it is...  
There is but one way out for you.  
You better take it before your  
(MORE)

OLD HOOVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 filthy, abnormal fraudulent self is  
 bared to the nation.

The letter is a bloody, inky tirade. He seals it in an envelope. It says as much about Hoover's own state as it does about the mysterious recipient.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Hoover is with a new writer, AGENT JONES. He almost looks black -- mixed race perhaps. Hoover is trying to process it.

AGENT JONES  
 Miss Gandy told me you stopped with  
 Bruno Hauptman's arrest. Should we  
 start there?

OLD HOOVER  
 Yes... Check for his address in  
 earlier drafts...

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMANS HOME - DAY - 1934

Hauptmann is handcuffed, standing in the middle of the room. His wife walks in. Edgar's focus shifts from a pricey STROMBERG-CARLSON RADIO to her expensive shoes. Officers keep her from embracing her husband. She starts to cry. Hauptmann tries to comfort her -- in German:

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 Es ist nichts. Es ist Über meine  
 Glücksspiel.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 What did he say?

OFFICER ONE  
 That this is about his gambling.

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 May I sit?

He knows he's been caught in a lie. He sits by the window.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Where's the rest of his money?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 I don't know what you mean. Or who  
 HE is.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 You don't know who Charles  
 Lindbergh is?



BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 Except maybe from the papers, no.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 This isn't the kind of money a  
 carpenter makes, Mr. Hauptmann.

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 I made Wall Street investments.

Agents in the adjoining room start ripping open Hauptman's mattress, but Hauptmann pays it no attention. He simply gazes out the window. Edgar takes note. He walks to the window, peers out, and sees the small, crude, garage fifty feet away.

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMAN'S GARAGE - LATER

Agents tear up the floorboards in the garage. They find fresh dirt, grab a shovel, and dig into it and quickly find a jar buried in a hole, but it is only filled with water.

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMANS HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar stands in front of Hauptmann holding the empty jar.

YOUNG HOOVER  
 Where is the ransom money, Bruno?  
 Did you spend it all on your old  
 lady's shoe collection?

His wife Anna's shoes are in a pile in the middle of the floor. She's having a nervous breakdown.

Agents start carting out stacks of Hauptman's papers, filled with his handwriting.

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 Where are you taking my things?

YOUNG HOOVER  
 To the FBI, Mr. Hauptmann. Does  
 that worry you?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
 You hunt the wrong man because I  
 have accent, because you don't  
 trust immigrant. You are a bigot.

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMANS HOME - NIGHT - 1935

AGENTS cuff Hauptman to a chair. A NYPD OFFICER has a hammer. The lights go out. We hear punches, blows and screams.

INT. FBI LABRATORY - DAY

The mass of Hauptman's papers and journals have arrived. Albert Osborne (the handwriting expert from earlier) is there to receive them.

INT. A NEO-COLONIAL BUILDING / LIMBO - DAY

Albert Osborne is isolated on a riser with 11x14 photostat blow ups of letters and words from Hauptman's writings.

ALBERT S. OSBORNE

In both the ransom note and Mr. Hauptmann's personal writings, he wrote, "haus" for house, "anyding" for anything, "gut" for good, and "boad" for boat, And notice the inverted capital "N"s and "y"s that look like "j"s

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

With the mixed race agent.

AGENT JONES

But couldn't those sorts of Germanic formations come from any number of immigrants? Aren't those common translation mistakes?

OLD HOOVER

You're right, Agent Jones. Alone it wouldn't have been enough. So when my agents arrived to replace the local police, we searched again.

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMAN'S GARAGE - DAY - 1934

FBI AGENTS are literally dismantling the garage. EDGAR IS STANDING WATCH. The NYC Police simply observe. Edgar is focused on a piece of wood he finds odd. It's above the work-bench -- a board nailed across two joists.

YOUNG HOOVER

What purpose would a piece of wood like this serve?

REVEAL: wood expert Koehler is now there too.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

It doesn't appear structural.

JUMP TO: AGENTS carefully pull the board off the joists, waiting to see if anything gives structurally. It doesn't. Behind it they find TWO NEWSPAPER PACKETS. Edgar opens one carefully. Inside are ONE HUNDRED TEN-DOLLAR GOLD NOTES.

YOUNG HOOVER

Remove all the joists.

JUMP TO: ANOTHER AGENT finds a hidden shelf. In it is a ONE GALLON SHELLAC CAN. He pulls out the rags stuffed on top. Inside is \$11,930 worth of ransom money.

AT THE SAME TIME: Arthur Koehler finds Hauptman's tool chest. He opens it. It's neat and organized. All of the tools are in place, except: the STANDARD 3/4 INCH CHISEL. He pulls Hauptman's saw from the chest and examines it.

INT. A NEO-COLONIAL BUILDING / LIMBO - DAY

The same space the handwriting expert appeared in earlier -- now Arthur Koehler is explaining his own findings.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

You see, no two saws make the same markings. This saw from Bruno Hauptmann's tool chest makes markings identical to those found on the ladder used in the crime. I searched 1900--

(holds up a piece of wood)

--factories across the country to see which blade made the other cuts on the ladder. I narrowed it down to one. Centralia lumber yard. Four blocks from Mr. Hauptman's home.

CLOSE ON: Edgar listens from a bench, seemingly alone, giddy with this man's scientific exactitude.

INT. BRUNO HAUPTMAN'S ATTIC - NIGHT

Edgar is with Agent Sisk and Arthur Koehler as they approach an attic corner and see -- an eight foot board is missing.

Koehler unwraps a long bag labeled -- "Rail 16." It's the original rail he pointed out to Edgar in the lab so long ago.

ARTHUR KOEHLER (V.O.)

Rail 16. It didn't match the rest. And those extra holes. Why were they there?

He lays the wood next to the empty spot in the floor. It's a perfect match. The four extra holes match perfectly with the nail holes in the floor joists.

INT. A NEO-COLONIAL BUILDING - DAY

Arthur is still in the white space.

ARTHUR KOEHLER

The science is conclusive. Mr.  
Hauptmann built the ladder.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

The young, mixed race FBI Agent stops typing.

AGENT JONES

But did he do it alone?

OLD HOOVER

(displeased with the question)  
He never confessed, but what  
sociopath ever does. The evidence  
was clear. He was indicted for  
murder in the first degree while  
perpetrating a burglary. In New  
Jersey, that is punishable by death.

EXT. COURT HOUSE / COURT AND MAIN STREET / FLEMING, NJ - DAY

The two story, neo-colonial building stands strong with four columns out front. Snow has turned the streets white.

Hundreds of telegraph and teletype wires run out an upper window onto an overwhelmed utility pole. From there, the wires fan out, carrying their messages to the entire world.

The streets are filled with CARS, REPORTERS, and EAGER CITIZENS. A MAN sells miniature replicas of the kidnapper's ladder on green ribbon necklaces. ANOTHER MAN hocks packets of curly blonde hair (that looks a lot like his own) for five bucks a pop claiming it's "Baby Lindy's."

In a makeshift radio studio in the back of a truck, an announcer reports:

RADIO ANNOUNCER

January 2nd, 1935, a cold winter morning in Fleming New Jersey, and what has now undoubtedly been penned "The Trial of the Century" has begun. H.L. Mencken has called it, "the biggest story since the

(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)  
 resurrection." And from the looks of  
 things, it may be bigger.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

REVEAL: this is the space the EXPERT AGENTS have been  
 TESTIFYING from. As in the earlier sequences, Edgar is there,  
 listening intently from his bench, dressed to the nines. BUT  
 NOW WE REVEAL: he's not alone. The courtroom is packed with  
 REPORTERS and ONLOOKERS. From their dress and entourage, it's  
 clear many are rich and/or famous.

The prosecutor, WILENTZ, calls his next witness:

WILENTZ

Your honor, I would like to call to  
 the stand Mr. Charles Lindbergh.

In a gray suit and shirt with a tie, Charles Lindbergh walks  
 slowly and confidently up to the stand and takes the seat  
 next to THE JUDGE. The room is hushed.

Lindbergh looks through the crowd, to the defense stand,  
 stopping on Anna Hauptmann. He remains calm, unreadable.

WILENTZ (CONT'D)

Picking up where you left off. You  
 said you heard a voice, in the  
 cemetery that night.

CHARLES LINDBERGH

Yes. Very clearly. A voice coming  
 from the cemetery, to the best of  
 my belief, calling Dr. Condon. In a  
 foreign accent, "Hey, Doctor."

WILENTZ

And since that time, have you heard  
 the same voice?

CHARLES LINDBERGH

Yes, I have.

WILENTZ

And whose voice was it, Colonel,  
 that you heard in the vicinity of  
 St. Raymond's Cemetery that night,  
 saying, "Hey Doctor?"

And for the first time, Lindbergh turns his gaze from Wilentz--  
 -- to Bruno Hauptmann. Emotionless, Strong:

CHARLES LINDBERGH

That was Hauptman's voice.

Hauptmann locks eyes with Lindbergh. They hold their gazes for a moment. The air goes out of the room. Lindbergh looks back to Wilentz and A GASP RUNS THROUGH THE ROOM.

INT. COURT ROOM - LATER

COURT CLERK

Mr. Bruno Hauptmann, take the stand.

We see A REPORTER who's snuck a tiny film camera in under his coat. He furtively aims it at the witness stand.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Agent Jones watches Hoover pull the shades. The room goes dark. Hoover fires up a film projector... It's B&W footage of Hauptmann from the trial itself.

Hauptmann is on the stand being questioned. He's combative, arrogant, and easily bothered:

WILENTZ

You have had an opportunity in this court today to tell the whole truth. Have you told the truth?

BRUNO HAUPTMANN

I told the truth already.

WILENTZ

And the statements you made to District Attorney Foley, did you tell him the whole truth?

BRUNO HAUPTMANN

To a certain extent

WILENTZ

And to a certain extent you didn't tell him the truth, is that it?

Silence from Hauptmann.

A SPLICE IN THE OLD FILM:

WILENTZ (CONT'D)

This board that came from your closet, S-204, has these numbers here. It is a little blurred now, isn't it?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
Looks like it.

WILENTZ  
It looks like 2974, and the numbers  
down here, 3-7154, is that right?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
Yes.

WILENTZ  
And between those numbers are some  
words, it looks like "Decatur" and  
"Sedgwick", you see that? You know  
what that means don't you, that  
address on there?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
Not exactly.

WILENTZ  
It is Dr. Condon's address and  
telephone number. The man who paid  
the ransom. Written in your writing  
on a board in your closet.

A SPLICE IN THE OLD FILM:

WILENTZ (CONT'D)  
And when you saw this piece of wood  
you said, "That's my lumber." Isn't  
that so - in the Bronx.

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
I said, "Yes," without thinking.

WILENTZ  
You don't usually do things without  
thinking. You have a very good  
mind, haven't you?

BRUNO HAUPTMAN  
I don't think so, not so good.

WILENTZ  
Oh, you really DO think so, don't  
you?

Wilentz has just called him a liar and manipulator.  
Hauptman's silence speaks volumes. The projector winds out.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Hoover takes A FIST FULL OF PILLS. AND GETS MORE SHOTS --

WE SEE -- ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE OF: Martin Luther King's march on Washington and his famous, "I Have a Dream," speech -- as if it's going on right outside -- it likely is.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

The curtains are still drawn. The room is still dark. Hoover is high on amphetamines again. Agent Jones is packing up.

OLD HOOVER

A man's legacy is determined by where the story ends. Lets consider that tonight and make a decision tomorrow.

AGENT JONES

Is this about a man's legacy or about an institution's reputation?

OLD HOOVER

The two are connected Agent Jones. One invented the other. And vice-versa

AGENT JONES

Yes, sir.

Agent Jones goes.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hoover sits watching the nightly news with Toulson. Toulson is doing better. Walking around.

OLD TOULSON

There's a new restaurant in the hotel in Miami. We could go. I could make the arrangements.

OLD HOOVER

Would you please sit down.

OLD TOULSON

I'm feeling better. If you'd like, I could return home.

OLD HOOVER

Stay and watch with me.

(Toulson sits)

(MORE)



OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 He received my letter with the  
 audio tape last night.  
 (Toulson is quiet)  
 Say it Clyde.

OLD TOULSON  
 It's so risky. Over a few negative  
 news articles, Edgar?

OLD HOOVER  
 He's deliberately allowed himself  
 to be surrounded by Communists.  
 With the power he's gathered he's  
 now the greatest domestic threat--

Edgar turns up the volume. He focuses in on: a chiron.  
 "SWEDEN - NOBEL PEACE PRIZE"

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 He'll decline the award. He knows  
 what we have could ruin him. There  
 is no question. He's done, Clyde.

Hoover stops breathing. He can't hear the reporter. He's now  
 focused on the grainy B&W image of MARTIN LUTHER KING being  
 handed the Nobel Peace Prize. And then his words:

MARTIN LUTHER KING  
 (on TV)  
 I accept the Nobel Prize for Peace  
 at a moment when 22 million Negroes  
 of the United States of America are  
 engaged in a creative battle to end  
 the long night of racial injustice.  
 (a jump cut)  
 --all the people of the world will  
 have to discover a way to live  
 together in peace... man must evolve  
 a method which rejects revenge,  
 aggression and retaliation.  
 (a jump cut)  
 I believe that unarmed truth and  
 unconditional love will have the  
 final word in reality. This is why  
 right temporarily defeated is  
 stronger than evil triumphant. I  
 believe that what self-centered men  
 have torn down, men other-centered  
 can build up.

It's now clear that the man Hoover's been after this whole  
 time is King. It's also clear Hoover's lost this round. He  
 shuts off the TV. Shamed.

EXT. COURT HOUSE / FLEMING, NJ - MORNING - 1935

A bell tolls atop the old courthouse. A crowd outside chants:

CROWD

Kill Hauptmann! Kill Hauptmann!

INT. COURT ROOM - SAME TIME

Their chants can be heard as Hauptmann is ushered in wearing manacles by a STATE TROOPER and FIVE POLICEMEN. He sits. Edgar watches the Jurors enter. None look at Mr. Hauptmann.

JUDGE

Would the jury and the defendant rise.

(they do)

Mr. Foreman, what say you? Do you find the defendant guilty or not guilty?

JURY FOREMAN

We the jury find the defendant, Richard Bruno Hauptmann guilty of murder in the first degree.

MESSENGER BOYS head for the doors. Guards block them. Edgar holds his breath.

WILENTZ

Your honor, I move for immediate sentencing.

Edgar watches Hauptmann intently. The Judge does the same.

JUDGE TRENCHARD

According to the law of this state, I rule that Mr. Bruno Hauptmann suffer death at the time and place, and in the manner provided by law.

Edgar watches Hauptmann go white as a ghost. Hauptmann's wife watches the floor, refusing to look at her husband. Her tears fall to the ground.

EXT. COURT HOUSE / FLEMING, NJ - MOMENTS LATER

A YOUNG BOY leans out the 2nd story window of the courthouse.

YOUNG BOY

It's death for Bruno Hauptmann!

And THE CROW ROARS. It's a lynching mob.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Edgar sits on the corner of his mom's bed cutting out his own PRESS CLIPPINGS announcing the trial's conclusion. He pastes one in an album. ANGLE ON: his mother. She's so ill she can't sit up in bed. He now must clip the articles himself.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY - 1964

Hoover is with Agent Jones again.

OLD HOOVER

The trial of the century. The criminal shamed. The FBI cemented as the public hero... It's our ending.

AGENT JONES

But did he act alone? Is he the one who actually took the child from the crib? How can you be sure?

OLD HOOVER

The mountain of evidence we discovered, uncovered, clarified and confirmed. You can't dispute it.

AGENT JONES

Clarence Darrow did.

OLD HOOVER

Of course. That's what he does.

AGENT JONES

And Mrs. Roosevelt issued a public statement questioning his guilt.

OLD HOOVER

Mr. Jones. She has plenty to hide herself when it comes to un-American activities.

AGENT JONES

If you're comfortable with it as an ending, I'll do my best with it.

If Hoover was feeling better he would fire him, but he's feeling very weak. The phone rings. He picks it up.

OLD HELEN GANDY

Ben Bradlee of Newsweek is waiting in the meeting room, sir.

OLD HOOVER  
The doctor first, Miss Gandy.

OLD HELEN GANDY  
He's in Baltimore, Mr. Hoover.

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Hoover is in his office with BEN BRADLEE of NEWSWEEK.

Hoover hits stop on the recording of King and the woman in the hotel room. He's fighting exhaustion, trying to be warm.

OLD HOOVER  
If you want it, it's yours  
exclusively.

BEN BRADLEE  
I heard you took it to the Post  
already. Nobody's interested, am I  
right?

OLD HOOVER  
The public would be. And they  
deserve to know the truth.

BEN BRADLEE  
The public might be curious. But  
with all due respect, I'm not sure  
it's of serious interest.

OLD HOOVER  
The SCLC has direct ties to  
communism, Mr. Bradlee. We are  
seeing a pervasive contempt for law  
and order. The crime rate is  
soaring, there is widespread, open  
defiance of authority, and mark my  
words, if this goes unchecked, it  
will once again plunge our Nation  
into the abyss of anarchy.

BEN BRADLEE  
I've found no connection between  
Mr. King and the Communist party.

OLD HOOVER  
Even great men can be corrupted.  
Communism is not a political party.  
It is a disease anyone can catch if  
not careful. And it spreads and it  
corrupts the soul, turning the

(MORE)

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
gentlest of men into villainous  
tyrants.

BEN BRADLEE  
He preaches peace.

OLD HOOVER  
It always starts peacefully. It's a  
ruse. Mr. Bradlee, when the country  
is taken by surprise, you won't be  
able to live with yourself knowing  
you could have prevented the  
bombings and violence.

BEN BRADLEE  
I appreciate you bringing this to  
me, Edgar. I'll consider it.

OLD HOOVER  
(pleased)  
I can tell you are interested, Ben.

BEN BRADLEE  
Yes, I am. But I'll be candid,  
Edgar. I'm more interested in what  
this says about you and your FBI.

OLD HOOVER  
If you're going to be candid, Ben.  
Be candid.

BEN BRADLEE  
You know the funny thing about  
notoriety? Especially the kind that  
needs adoration, fame for fame's  
sake? If unchecked, it inevitably  
leads to villainy... infamy.

OLD HOOVER  
Exactly. And I've worked too hard  
to watch the bad guys capture the  
spotlight again.

BEN BRADLEE  
With all due respect, sir, I  
suggest you look into what this  
squabble with Mr. King is really  
about before you destroy the  
reputation of the thing we both  
know you love the most.

A beat between them. Hoover is stung. Stunned.

INT. TRENTON STATE PRISON / ELECTRIC CHAIR - MORNING - 1936

It's 8:44 on April 3, 1936. The execution room is brightly lit. Hauptmann is ushered in and strapped into the chair.

EXECUTION SUPERVISOR

Mr. Bruno Hauptmann. Do you have any final words?

Hauptmann remains silent. They slip a mask over his head. A lever is flipped, his body jerks, and smoke rises from his head. A beat, then the electricity is shut off.

A Doctor approaches the body and checks the pulse.

DOCTOR

Mr. Bruno Hauptmann is dead as of 8:47, Friday April 3rd, 1936.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

A terrified Edgar sits next to his mother watching her breathing grow shallow, his brother and family around her.

His mother takes her last breath. A doctor closes her eyes. Edgar cannot process the moment. He's in shock.

INT. HOOVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

Edgar is in shock, lost in the only home he's ever known. He gathers the many albums filled with clippings, opens the oldest one, then stops heartbroken. He goes to her jewelry case -- GRABS UP HER PEARLS, AND HOLDS THEM TO HIS CHEST.

JUMP TO: Edgar slips his mother's old dress over his head. He's gained some weight and it almost fits. He pulls on his mother's pearls and fixes them just the way she would.

Inspecting himself in the mirror, Edgar has his first and only complete emotional breakdown of the film. This was the closest thing to love he'd known.

INT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE / LATE 60'S MONTAGE - DAY

WE'RE IN HOOVER'S MIND: Quick cuts of NEWS EVENTS are intercut with Hoover getting more amphetamine shots. Each time his pupils dilate, we see: King being shot, gunfire from a clock tower, war in Vietnam, injured returning Soldiers...

AN EVEN OLDER HOOVER gets up from his chair. He seems drugged out of his mind. He walks to the window. Outside there is a parade. He steps out onto the balcony, the sun in his eyes.

He looks down just in time to see the presidential motorcade. It's the inauguration of Richard Nixon.

He looks out to the mall in the distance. He can see an ocean of anti-war protestors. This isn't the country he's known -- HE'S A STRANGER IN HIS OWN LAND.

EXT. NIXON'S OFFICE - DAY

Hoover sits outside Nixon's office. IT'S THE EXACT SAME SHOT, AS WHEN HE DID THE SAME AFTER ROOSEVELT'S INAUGURATION -- JUST 40 YEARS LATER He even holds a file on his lap. This game should be old hat by now -- so why is he sweating?

SECRETARY

The President is ready for you, Mr. Hoover.

And Hoover walks in, just like he did forty years earlier.

INT. FBI HALLWAYS - DAY

Helen walks the now ultra (70's) modern hallways of the FBI. This place has certainly grown and matured -- even from the 60's version we first saw at the film's opening. The FBI appears to be a well oiled technological wonder.

EXT. HOOVER'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

Helen walks through the outer office to Hoover's inner office door. She knocks. Nothing. She knocks again. Nothing. She listens. She can hear stilted breathing. She considers for a beat, then does what she never has, she opens the door.

Her boss looks up to her from his desk. He's been Sobbing.

OLD HELEN GANDRY

I'm so sorry, Mr. Hoover, you weren't answering your phone... You had a photo session with a retiring Agent. He's leaving now.

And she starts out of the room.

OLD HOOVER

Where's Clyde?

OLD HELEN GANDRY

It's a "bad day" for him, sir.

OLD HOOVER

Can you schedule a dinner for him and I... our old corner booth?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
I'm afraid he's too tired today...  
Perhaps you could dine at his  
house. I think he'd like that.

OLD HOOVER  
Helen?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
(surprised at the familiarity)  
Yes?

OLD HOOVER  
Do I kill everything I love?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
(carefully)  
He's not gone yet, Edgar.

OLD HOOVER  
(absorbs it, then)  
And everything we've built?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
(by rote)  
No. The Bureau is stronger than  
just you and me now. Your child is  
sure, and keeps this country safe.

OLD HOOVER  
Helen, if anything happens to me, I  
need you to do something.

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
Of course.

OLD HOOVER  
Nixon will come for it all. They'll  
crucify me and my Bureau. I'm  
afraid of what will happen if I'm  
not here to protect it.

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
Your private files, sir?  
(he nods)  
Then no one will never find them.

OLD HOOVER  
No matter what pressure is put on?

OLD HELEN GANDRY  
Yes, Edgar. I promise you.



INT. FBI HALLWAYS - NIGHT

THE SAME SHOT WE SAW YEARS BEFORE: Old Hoover leaves work, walking the long hallway toward the elevators, Agents stepping out of his way. An old, emaciated Toulson is far behind, dragging his right leg, struggling to keep up. Hoover refuses to acknowledge his dearest partner's impairment.

INT. TOULSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hoover sits in the unfamiliar dining room with his nearly blind friend, eating OMAHA STEAK and baked potatoes.

OLD TOULSON

Did he ask for your resignation?

OLD HOOVER

He asked what I had in the files on him.

OLD TOULSON

What did you say?

OLD HOOVER

"What file, sir?" But he knows. He asked me to expand our wiretaps to cover news reporters.

OLD TOULSON

We can't do that. Especially now.

OLD HOOVER

That's the problem, Clyde. If I won't do his "Black Bag" jobs, he'll create his own private force.

OLD TOULSON

That's illegal.

OLD HOOVER

He didn't say it. I could see it in his eyes. He won't be controlled. He'll do anything to hold onto power... He's a menace.

OLD TOULSON

(the irony hurts)  
Right. I see.

OLD HOOVER

I NEVER played his game. If to some it seemed like rule bending, then perhaps they need to look into

(MORE)

OLD HOOVER (CONT'D)  
 their souls and consider what it is  
 they did that made them feel  
 blackmailed and intimidated.

OLD TOULSON  
 I wasn't thinking that.

OLD HOOVER  
 Then what?

OLD TOULSON  
 I was thinking it might be time for  
 us to retire. I don't know how much  
 longer I have.

OLD HOOVER  
 Shut up, Clyde.

OLD TOULSON  
 You built a great thing, Edgar. If you  
 stop now, you'd be celebrated. That's  
 what you want, isn't it? Our country's  
 adoration? There's a chance you could  
 have it.

OLD HOOVER  
 And why wouldn't I have it?! I  
 saved this country from Bolshevik  
 invasion, rid us of radicals,  
 captured Machine Gun Kelley, killed  
 Dilinger, arrested Karpis,  
 convicted Bruno Hauptmann, and now  
 when I try with my last breath to  
 save this country again, I am  
 rewarded with a forced retirement?  
 No. I will not go down to this man.  
 And your suggestion that I do makes  
 me question your very loyalty.

OLD TOULSON  
 MY loyalty, Edgar?!

Hoover knows he's gone too far. He puts his hand to his chest  
 like he has indigestion. Avoiding Toulson's glare.

OLD TOULSON (CONT'D)  
 (serving up the hard truth)  
 I read your manuscript, Edgar.  
 (Hoover looks up.)  
 You didn't arrest Karpis. You know  
 as well as I do there was no white  
 horse in the street, no gun--

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - DAY - 1935

A REPLAY OF THE EARLIER KARPIS ARREST -- This time Edgar doesn't lead the charge. Karpis simply walks out of the building, and is surrounded by armed FBI Agents. Only when it's safe does Edgar emerges from the shadows.

OLD TOULSON  
--in the back seat. And YOU didn't  
kill Dilinger. Agent Purvis did--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER OFFICE - 1971

CLOSE ON: Dilinger's death mask, pipe and glasses on display.

OLD TOULSON (V.O.)  
--but you kept the glory for  
yourself. And Machine Gun Kelly  
never said, "Don't Shoot G-men."  
You made it up for the comics.

INT. TOULSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

OLD TOULSON  
And when we went to the scene of the  
"greatest crime of the century," Mr.  
Lindbergh didn't come out and--

EXT. CHARLES LINDBERGH'S HOME - DAY - 193

UNLIKE THE EARLIER VERSION -- Edgar gets in his car, his eye on Lindbergh in his upper window, refusing to even make eye contact with Edgar and Clyde on the driveway below.

OLD TOULSON (V.O.)  
--shake your hand and express his  
faith in the FBI. He called you a  
"fussy little man" and refused to  
even meet you.

EXT. ROADSIDE - SEPTEMBER 19TH 1934 - DAY

A REPLAY OF HAUPTMANN'S ARREST: This time it's not Edgar making the bust, it's Agent Sisk

OLD TOULSON (V.O.)  
You didn't arrest Hauptmann. Agent  
Sisk did. You weren't even at the  
scene. Just the photo-op.

INT. TOULSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

In atypical fashion, Hoover is silent. He knows it's true.

OLD TOULSON

Most of what you wrote was exaggeration. The rest lies, and I don't know if you even realize it anymore.

(Hoover looks ill)

Edgar? You can lie to everyone else. The whole world. For your own sake, for the sake of the Bureau. But you CANNOT lie to me.

Hoover is sweating. Toulson hands him a handkerchief.

OLD HOOVER

I should never have given you a job. You know that, Clyde? You weren't qualified.

(Toulson readies for an attack)

Do you remember what you did in your interview?

OLD TOULSON

I don't.

OLD HOOVER

You fixed my window... And you found my handkerchief on the floor. And you handed it to me... Do you know why I was sweating?

OLD TOULSON

Because you were exercising.

And Hoover dabs his forehead with Toulson's handkerchief. Toulson doesn't interrupt, he refolds the handkerchief.

OLD HOOVER

No. That was also a lie... I was sweating because I knew that I needed you... I've never needed anyone else in my entire life. Not like that. And I started to perspire.

OLD TOULSON

(a long beat, then)

I know...

Hoover puts a hand on his chest, likely feigning indigestion - perhaps wanting a way out of this affectionate moment.

OLD TOULSON (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

OLD HOOVER

Yes. Indigestion... Would you like to have dinner tomorrow night? At our old place?

OLD TOULSON

(he knows he can't)  
Perhaps if I feel better.

OLD HOOVER

Then you must. We have a good many things to discuss. I can't depend on anyone at the Bureau now.

And in his boldest show of affection in the film, Hoover kisses Toulson's forehead, holding his lips there for some time. Toulson grabs his arm.

OLD TOULSON

Thank you, Edgar.

And Hoover goes, trying to remain "J. Edgar Hoover" despite the feelings rising up inside him.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME - THAT NIGHT

Hoover walks into his home. Something seems off, but he can't figure it out.

He plays with HIS DOGS. They lead him to a portrait of his Mom. It seems she is making eye contact with him. He considers taking her down, but instead, straightens her. Now all is right.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - MORNING

Richard Nixon is with his Chief of staff H.R. HALDEMAN. He's just gotten a piece of juicy news. He's stunned.

RICHARD NIXON

Jesus Christ! That old cocksucker!

H.R. HALDEMAN

I'll get a speech prepared. We should go on Television.

RICHARD NIXON

Not yet. First seal off his office. Change the locks. Do whatever you have to. I want those fucking files.

INT. HELEN GANDY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Helen shows up to work as usual. Cool as Ice. Her phone rings. She takes the call in stride, and makes a simple note in her ledger -- "CALL: HOOVER HOUSEKEEPER. ANNIE." She walks back to her office door, and closes it.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME - MORNING

Old Toulson struggles up the stairs behind A MAID. When they reach Hoover's bedroom door, she stops. She's not going in.

Toulson takes a beat, considers the door. He's never been in the room. He pushes it open. REVEAL: it's filled with Ming vases, porcelain Foo dogs, Buddhas, ivory elephants, AND A MULTITUDE OF NUDE MALE STATUES displayed on mahogany tables draped in lace. This is Hoover's hidden world. Any light that might try and get in is blocked by Chinese screens.

And there, lying on the floor in his silk pajama bottoms is the body of J. Edgar Hoover. Toulson kneels next to the body, and lovingly closes his eyes. Hoover has passed.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME / BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Toulson finds a stack of files sitting on the bedside table. On top is the manuscript of his unfinished book. He picks it up. Under it is the King's sex tape transcript, and a folder labeled "Eleanor Roosevelt." He opens it and pulls out a photostat of a letter. As he reads it, we hear a replay of Young Edgar reading it years ago.

YOUNG HOOVER (V.O.)

"Funny how even the dearest face  
will fade away in time. Most  
clearly I remember your eyes, with  
a kind of teasing smile in them,  
and the feeling of that soft spot  
just northeast of the corner of  
your mouth against my lips."

It's the lesbian love letter to Eleanor that Edgar once rolled with laughter at. It seems he liked to keep it close and read it often.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - INTERCUT

Broadcast of the President

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)

It can truly be said of him that he  
was a legend in his own time.--

INT. HOOVER'S OUTER AND INNER OFFICES - SAME TIME

NIXON'S MEN barge into Hoover's old office, seal it off, and search for his secret files. They stand guard at the door, not letting anyone in or out.

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)

--His magnificent contribution to making this a great and good nation will be remembered by the American people long after the petty carpings and vicious criticisms of his detractors are forgotten.

INT. HELEN GANDY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

It's too late. Helen already has her boss's private filing cabinets safely in her office. And as the President's men search Hoover's office and change his locks, she quietly dips the last of his files into the shredder.

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)

The FBI he literally created and built is today universally regarded as the finest law-enforcement agency in the world.

INT. HOOVER'S ADULTHOOD HOME / BEDROOM - DAY

Toulson lays down in Hoover's untouched bed, holding the old Eleanor Roosevelt letter close to his chest.

RICHARD NIXON

The FBI is the eternal monument honoring this great American.

FADE OUT.

TITLE CARDS ON BLACK:

The contents of Hoover's "private and personal" files will never be known. Only a few clues from misfiled items have ever surfaced.

Clyde Toulson inherited Hoover's estate, moved into his house, and accepted the U.S. flag draped over his coffin.

Clyde Toulson's grave is a few yards from Hoover's in the Congressional Cemetery.