

I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE

Original Screen Play

By

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Based on Scientific Information from Articles

By

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The RKO trademark FADES OUT, to reveal a road lined with palm trees, spectrally long and straight like a vista in a Dali painting. Along this road and from a far distance two tiny figures advance toward the camera. Over this scene the TITLE and CREDITS are SUPERIMPOSED. The two figures continue to advance, growing more discernible all the time.

As the credits FADE, the two human figures advancing along the road are more clearly discernible. Although they are not close enough to distinguish their faces, it can be seen that one of them is an enormously tall, cadaverous negro, clothed only by ragged, tight-fitting trousers and that the other is nurse, dressed in crisp white uniform and cap, with a dark cloak over her shoulders.

BETSY

(narrating)

I walked with a zombie.

(laughs a little, self
consciously)

It does seem an odd thing to say.
Had anyone said that to me a year ago, I'm not at all sure I would have known what a Zombie was. I might have had some notion -- that they were strange and frightening, and perhaps a little funny. But I have walked with a Zombie

As she speaks, the two figures advancing on the road come closer.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narrating)

It all began in such an ordinary way --

As she says this the long road and the advancing figures

DISSOLVE

EXT. HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT - OTTAWA - DAY - (STOCK)

The Houses of Parliament seen through falling snow. In the f.g. horse-drawn sleighs are passing.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narrating)

I'd just finished working on a case in Ottawa...a little boy who'd broken both legs. It was one of those cases with traction frames and constant care, nicely complicate with a pair of hysterical parents. When he was all well I had to find another job. That's a nurse's life for you. I went to the Registry.

EXT. CORNER OF A BUILDING - DAY - (SNOW)

At about the level of the second and third floors is one of those half-curved, elliptical signboards which lap around the corners of old-fashioned office buildings. The CAMERA PANS DOWN this sign, from one firm name to another, stopping at the last name listed:

PARRISH AND BURDEN SUGAR CO., LTD.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narrating)

They gave me an address in the business district. I went there.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

An office on the first floor, with a window opening into a courtyard. Through this window snow can be seen falling.

CLOSE SHOT of Mr. Richard Brindsley Wilkens, V.C. He is a small, sharp-featured, precise little man with pincenez glasses, dressed in a dark business suit. One of the coat sleeves is empty. The explanation for the missing arm can be found in his coat lapel: the ribbon of the Victoria Cross. His age indicates that he won it in the last war. He has a tablet in front of him and as he speaks, marks down the answers to his questions.

WILKENS

You're single?

BETSY

Yes.

WILKENS

Where were you trained?

BETSY

At the Memorial Hospital -- here in
Ottawa.

Wilkins writes this down and then returns the pen to its desk holder. He picks up a typewritten page from the blotter, and stares at it.

WILKENS

(fiddling with the paper
unhappily)

This last question's a little
irregular, Miss Connell. I don't
quite know how to put it.

Wilkins straightens himself determinedly and puts down the paper.

WILKENS (cont'd)

Do you believe in witchcraft?

Betsy bursts into laughter and we go to our first sight of her. She is young, bright, alert and looks extremely attractive in her blue nurse's cape and round fur cape.

BETSY

(finally putting the leash
on her laughter)

They didn't teach it at Memorial
Hospital. I had my suspicions,
though, about the Directress of
Training.

WILKENS

(permitting himself a dry
little smile)

Very well. That means that you
have met all Mr. Holland's
requirements. Now, as to salary --
it's quite good -- two hundred
dollars a month.

BETSY

(pleased)

That is good. But I'd like to know
more about the case.

WILKENS

I'm afraid I'm not able to tell you
much. Only that the patient is a young
woman -- the wife of a Mr. Paul
Holland with whom we do
considerable business.

BETSY

That will mean another interview,
won't it?

WILKENS

No, this is quite final. You see, Mr. Holland is a sugar planter. He lives in St. Sebastian Island in the West Indies.

BETSY

The West Indies?

WILKENS

(he's been expecting this)
A year's contract -- a trip with all expenses paid -- that's not so bad, you know.

BETSY

But it's so far away...

WILKENS

That's rather nice, isn't it?

Wilkens glancing at the snow falling outside the windows.

WILKENS (cont'd)

(a little wistfully)
Sit under a palm tree -- go swimming -- take sun baths. Just like a holiday...

BETSY

Palm trees --

FADE OUT

FADE IN

MONTAGE OF SHIPS

A great Canadian luxury liner, a boat like the Empress of Canada, proceeds across the screen from left to right. Another ship, a smaller passenger steamer, going in the same direction, takes her place as she DISSOLVES OFF; then a freighter, and finally a small white-hulled trading schooner comes onto the screen.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narrating)
Boats grow smaller to reach out-of-the-way ports. Judging by the boats that took me to St. Sebastian -- it's far away and hard to get to. First, there was the great liner to Havana -- then a smaller steamer to Port au Prince -- a freighter to Gonave -- and from Gonave, one of the little island

trading schooners that carry sugar
and sisal, sponges and salt all
over the Caribbean.

DISSOLVE

A SAIL -- NIGHT

A gaff-headed sail against a night sky of stars. The boat carrying the sail is evidently in a rolling sea. The sail moves in rhythmic undulance against the sky. We hear the chug-chug of a one-cylinder Diesel.

EXT. SCHOONER -- WHEEL -- NIGHT

Two men stand by the wheel of the schooner, their faces lit by the light from the binnacle. Behind them the wake of the boat creams out, white and phosphorescent. One of the men is obviously the skipper of the boat, dressed in sloppy white ducks, unshaven and with an officer's battered cap on his head. The other is a slim, tall man dressed in flannel slacks and a light tweed coat.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narrating)

The man for whom I'd come to work --
Mr. Holland -- boarded the schooner
at Gonave. He was pointed out to
me, and he must have known who I
was -- yet he never spoke to me.
He seemed quiet and aloof.
Sometimes I wondered how we'd get
on -- but there wasn't really time
for to think about it -- there was
so much to see. I loved the trip.

EXT. SCHOONER -- OPEN GALLEY ON DECK -- NIGHT

Near the mainmast is a large box filled with sand and on this sand a charcoal fire has been laid. A negro, dressed in dungarees, is cooking a large piece of meat. Other negroes lounge on deck, their black faces fire-lit.

They are singing, and their singing is attuned to the rhythm of the chugging motor.

EXT. OCEAN -- NIGHT -- (STOCK)

The wake of the schooner.

EXT. OCEAN -- FLYING FISH -- NIGHT -- (STOCK)

Flying fish, like shooting stars, dart across dark waters.

EXT. STAR-FILLED SKY -- NIGHT -- (STOCK)

The stars seem very close and there is always movement in the

sky, as if it were alive -- falling stars and comets, lively as the flying fish.

EXT. DECK OF SCHOONER -- NIGHT

Betsy is seated on the cabin top just abaft of the foremast. She is looking out toward the sea and her expression is ecstatic. She is completely lost in the beauty that she feels, sees and smells.

BETSY'S VOICE

I smelled the spicy smells coming from the islands -- I looked at those great glowing stars -- and I felt the warm wind on my cheeks and I breathed deep and every bit of me inside myself said, "How beautiful --"

The CAMERA DRAWS BACK to SHOW a tall, masculine figure leaning against the foremast, behind Betsy. This is Paul Holland. As we see him, we hear his voice.

HOLLAND

It is not beautiful.

BETSY

(surprised but smiling)
You read my thoughts, Mr. Holland.

HOLLAND

It's easy enough to read the thoughts of a newcomer. Everything seems beautiful because you don't understand. Those flying fish -- they are not leaping for joy. They're jumping in terror. Bigger fish want to eat them. That luminous water -- it takes its gleam from millions of tiny dead bodies. It's the glitter of putrescence. There's no beauty here -- it's death and decay.

BETSY

You can't really believe that.

A star falls. They both follow its flight with their eyes.

HOLLAND

(pointing to it)
Everything good dies here -- even the stars.

He leaves his position by the mast and walks aft.

The group of negroes at the mainmast. They have stopped singing and they sit about the charcoal brazier. They are

eating, tearing at the meat with cruel, greedy, animal gestures. Holland walks past them on his way aft.

Betsy is puzzled and a little alarmed by Holland's strange utterances and his queer behavior. Over this shot of Betsy looking off at him, we hear her as narrator.

BETSY

(narrating)

It was strange to have him break in on my thoughts that way. There was cruelty and hardness in his voice. Yet -- something about him I liked -- something clean and honest -- but hurt -- badly hurt.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. VILLAGE OF ST. SEBASTIAN -- DAY

St. Sebastian is a drab little West Indian village. The shacks and houses of wood, lath and plaster seem to be falling apart. Over the doorway of one of the buildings -- evidently an administrative office -- hangs an American flag, indicating the government of the island. The hard-packed dirt in the roadway is overgrown with weeds. Everywhere, and moving indolently, are the little, badly nourished negroes, some of them tending stalls and sidewalk vending booths, others walking idly. Betsy, followed by a black sailor with her suitcases, comes down the gangway. Parallel to this gangway is another.

Up the second gangway, in file, black stevedores with bundles of sugar cane and small bales of sisal hemp on their heads, go up to the boat.

On the dock, Betsy makes her way through a group of clamorous children, vendors and beggars. As the black sailor puts her luggage into an umbrella-topped surrey drawn by a gaunt mule, she stops, delighted, before a great basket filled with enormous white flowers. The man seated beside the basket seems to be asleep, his face hidden by the drooping brim of a straw hat. Betsy picks up one of the blooms, smells it and then looks at the vendor.

BETSY

How much is this?

The vendor wakens and lifts his head, revealing a face bloated and scarified by yaws, a hideous nightmare face. Betsy, startled, steps back, letting the flower drop. Paul Holland, passing her, looks at this little tableau of horror and disgust.

HOLLAND

(in passing)
You're beginning to learn.

Betsy looks after him as he walks away into the village.

DISSOLVE

EXT. ROAD TO FORT HOLLAND -- DAY -- (PROCESS)

An umbrella-topped surrey, drawn by a gaunt mule and piloted by an old coachman in dirty white singlet, a top hat with a cockade on his graying hair, is making its way along a dusty road between fields of sugar cane. In the distance, the sea is visible and above it the great billowing white clouds of the Caribbean. Betsy, seated on the back seat of the carriage, is bending forward to listen to the old man.

COACHMAN

Times gone, Fort Holland was a fort...now, no longer. The Holland's are a most old family, miss. They brought the colored people to the island-- the colored folks and Ti-Misery.

BETSY

Ti-Misery? What's that?

COACHMAN

A man, miss -- an old man who lives in the garden at Fort Holland - with arrows stuck in him and a sorrowful, weeping look on his black face.

BETSY

(incredulous)

Alive?

COACHMAN

(laughing, softly)

No, miss. He's just as he was in the beginning -- on the front part of an enormous boat.

BETSY

(understanding and amused)

You mean a figurehead.

COACHMAN

(warming up to his orating)

If you say, miss. And the enormous boat brought the long-ago Fathers and the long-ago Mothers of us all - chained down to the deep side floor.

BETSY

(looking at the endless
fields and the richly
clouded blue sky)
But they came to a beautiful place,
didn't they?

COACHMAN

(smiling and nodding as
one who accepts a
personal compliment)
If you say, miss. If you say.

DISSOLVE

EXT. FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

The jugheaded mule slowly pulls the carriage into the scene. This beast comes to a somnolent stop without the coachman so much as touching the reins. As the man climbs down and starts to take the luggage out of the carriage, Betsy looks through the wrought-iron gate into the garden.

Fort Holland is a one-story house built around the garden, with low covered porches to give shade and breezeway. At the open end of the U is a great gate much like the wrought-iron gates of New Orleans. Through this Betsy can see the garden and its profusion of verdure: azalea, bougainvillea, roses -- much like California planting; no exotic orchids or man eating Venus Jugs -- just ordinary, pretty, semi-tropic flowers and shrubs.

The separate rooms are open to the garden, but have jalousies of thin wood to give privacy when needed. At one corner stands a big, stone tower, obviously a relic of some previous building. The walls of the house have been built right up to and around the tower so that it has become part of the building itself. On the garden side of the tower is the fountain. The most outstanding feature of this spring or fountain, which flows from a crevice in the stones of the tower, is that instead of falling directly into the cistern it falls first onto the shoulders of the enormous teakwood figurehead of St. Sebastian. From the shoulders of the saint it drips down in two runnels over his breast. The wooden breast of the statue is pierced with six long iron arrows. The face is weathered and black. Only a few bits of white paint still cling to the halo above his head. Betsy and the coachman come up to the grillwork of the gate. Betsy looks around the garden, while the old coachman reaches up and pulls a bell rope suspended from the gate. As the bell begins to ring, he pushes the gate open. Betsy walks through.

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

This is a small but lovely room with white plastered walls.

As in the rest of the house, the furniture is not the usual tropical porch furniture, but is neat, serviceable furnishings such as an well-to-do family established for a long time in any given place would acquire. There is a nice four-poster bed with pineapple carving, a dressing table with a little Chippendale chair before it, and a maple rocker so old it has turned a hard, brown color that softly reflects the highlights in the room. On the wall is a little mirror in a carved Spanish frame. There are no pictures or other ornaments. A woven grass rug lies on the floor. Betsy is seated before the dressing table, putting the last touches to her hair. She has changed her clothes and is wearing a simple, linen dress. There is a discreet rap on the jalousied door which separates the room from the garden. Betsy crosses the room and opens the door. A colored man in a butler's white jacket stands there. This is Clement.

CLEMENT

Miss Connell -- it's dinner.

BETSY

Thank you, Clement.

He stands aside and lets her step through, goes ahead of her and precedes her down the garden path.

EXT. GARDEN AT FORT HOLLAND -- NIGHT

Betsy and Clement pass the fountain. The figure of St. Sebastian gleams wetly in the rays of the candlelight. On the covered porch in front of the living room, a dinner service has been set out on a long mahogany table. As she comes forward, Betsy sees a handsome young man waiting for her. This is Wesley Rand. The table by which he stands is set for two and lit by candelabra in great glass hurricane lamps. The table is laid with white linen, and the candlelight gleams on silver and cut-glass arranged in the most formal manner. The table itself is a beautiful mahogany structure with elaborate carving, and the four chairs which surround it are massive Victorian pieces. A fifth chair stands by the wall. Rand steps down into the garden and extends his hand to Betsy.

RAND

Miss Connell -- I'm Wesley Rand.
Paul asked me to introduce myself.

They shake hands and he takes her elbow to guide her to the table.

RAND (CONT'D)

(as they walk)

It seems we are having dinner by ourselves, Miss Connell. But I may as well introduce everyone to you, anyway.

(points to the chair at

the head of the table)
There -- in the master's chair,
sits the master -- my half-brother
Paul Holland. But you've already
met him.

BETSY
Yes -- on the boat.

RAND
And that chair --
(indicates the chair drawn
back against the wall)
is the particular property of Mrs.
Rand -- mother to both of us and
much too good for either of us.
Too wise, in fact, to live under
the same roof. She prefers the
village dispensary.

BETSY
(interested and a little
surprised)
Is she a doctor?

RAND
No -- she just runs the place.
She's everything else -- amazing
woman, mother. You'll like her.

BETSY
I like her already.

RAND
And that --
(points to another chair)
is my chair. And this --
(draws back a chair for
Betsy)
is Miss Connell -- who is
beautiful.

BETSY
Thank you. But who sits there?
(indicating a chair at her
left)

RAND
My brother's wife.

There is a little pause. Rand stands for a very brief
moment, looking at the empty chair and then, almost as if
pulling himself together, takes hold of his own chair and
moves it down the table nearer to Betsy.

RAND (cont'd)
(as he moves the chair)

Here, here, this isn't at all cozy --
it makes me seem aloof and I'm
anything but that.

They smile at each other. Betsy looks around the table and
out toward the garden.

FROM BETSY'S VIEWPOINT, as we see the garden. The CAMERA
PANS AROUND to show one aspect of its beauty after another
and finally COMES TO REST ON a lighted window. On the
shutters can be seen the shadow of a man seated at a desk,
obviously working.

BETSY'S VOICE

(over pan)

We had a lovely dinner. Somehow as
we sat there, I couldn't help
thinking of all the stories I had
read in the magazines, stories in
which people had dinner on a
terrace with moonlight flooding a
tropical garden. It seemed a
little unreal. -- Then we had
coffee.

EXT. THE PORCH -- NIGHT

Betsy and Rand are seated in easy chairs with a small coffee
table before them. On it are a coffee urn, a bottle of
brandy, cups and glasses. Behind them is the lighted window
where we have seen the shadow of Paul Holland. From this
angle the shadow can no longer be seen. As if part of a
general conversation that has been going on for some time.

BETSY

-- But, you're an American?

RAND

I went to school in Buffalo. Paul
went to school in England.

BETSY

I wondered about your different
accents. I'm still wondering about
your names -- Rand and Holland.

RAND

(making mockery of his own
explanation)

We're half-brothers. Paul is
mother's first child. When his
father died, she married my father.
Dr. Rand, the missionary. And you
know what they say about
missionaries' children.

Far off somewhere a drum begins to beat, slowly and sullenly.

Betsy turns in the direction of the sound. Rand watches her, grinning.

RAND (CONT'D)
(mocking her interest)
The jungle drums -- mysterious -
eerie.

Betsy turns back to him and smiles.

RAND (cont'd)
That's a work drum at the sugar
mill. St. Sebastian's version of
the factory whistle.

He finishes the little bit of liquor left in his brandy glass and gets up.

RAND (CONT'D)
As a matter of fact, it means the
sugar syrup is ready to be poured
off. You'll have to excuse me.

BETSY
Of course. It's been nice of you
to spend this much time with me.

Rand picks up the brandy bottle.

RAND
(pouring himself a drink)
Don't worry. I wasn't missed. The
only important man here is the
owner.

BETSY
Mr. Holland?

RAND
Yes, the redoubtable Paul. He has
the plantation, and I, as you must
have noticed, have all the charm.

BETSY
I don't know. He spoke to me last
night on the boat. I liked him very
much.

RAND
(pouring another drink)
Ah, yes, our Paul, strong and
silent and very sad -- quite the
Byronic character. Perhaps I ought
to cultivate it.

The drum sounds again.

BETSY
(smiling and pointing off)
Perhaps you ought to get on to the
mill.

RAND
(leisurely sips at his
drink)
It'll wait.

The work drum sounds for the third time. Rand who has finished his drink, reaches for the bottle again. At this moment the jalousies behind them open and Holland comes out. Rand puts down the bottle and straightens up. Holland stands watching him.

RAND (CONT'D)
(to Holland)
I was just going to the mill.
(nods to Betsy)
Good night, Miss Connell.

Betsy nods and smiles to him. Rand starts toward the gate.

HOLLAND
(still watching Rand)
Have the servants made you
comfortable?

BETSY
Yes, thank you.

Clement comes from the house carrying a large, silver tray covered with a napkin. He comes up to Holland and holds the tray before him, lifting the corner of the napkin to present the food under it for inspection.

HOLLAND
(looking at the food)
It seems very nice, Clement. I'll
take it to Mrs. Holland.

He starts to take the tray. Betsy rising, also reaches for it.

BETSY
Can't I take it for you?

HOLLAND
(taking tray)
No, thank you. Tomorrow's time
enough for you to begin work.

He goes off with the tray. Betsy picks up a coffee cup.

LONG SHOT of tower. Holland enters the tower and closes the door behind him.

DISSOLVE

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy, dressed in a trim negligee and slippers, is getting ready for the night. She plumps up the cushion, tests the softness of the mattress and then, yawning, turns out the Aladdin kerosene lamp which lights the room. Level rays of moonlight filter through the rattan blinds into the room. Betsy crosses the room and peers out through the rattan strips into the garden.

EXT. THE GARDEN -- NIGHT

AS BETSY SEES IT. Lights are on in the living room. This light, barred and diffused by the strip-blinds, softly illuminates the garden. The black shadows of trees and shrubbery loom over the paths. Through these shadows a woman, dressed in filmy white, walks stiffly, her arms hanging immobile, close to her slim body. She is blonde and as far as the light will reveal, she seems beautiful. She makes the circuit of the garden, pacing slowly along the paths. Betsy watches her. Then, from the living room, a man's voice calls out to her.

HOLLAND'S VOICE

Jessica.

The woman at once turns toward the living room, mounts the porch and enters through a door held open for her.

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy turns back into the room. She has crossed over to the bed and is removing her negligee when the sound of hesitant notes on the piano attract her attention. In her nightgown she goes back to the window and peers through the cracks between the laths.

INT. A CORNER OF THE LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

From where she stands, Betsy can see the big, square, rosewood piano. A lamp had been lit beside it and the light from this lamp falls on the blonde hair and gleaming shoulders of the woman who had walked in the garden. Her face cannot be seen. Her fingers move strangely over the keyboard, now and again striking a hesitant note, but making no music, only an occasional dissonance.

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy, still watching through the slit in the jalousie, endeavors to get a better view of the living room. She changes her position and looks out again through the blinds.

INT. ANOTHER CORNER OF THE LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

As seen from Betsy's NEW ANGLE. Paul Holland is seated in a low armchair. His eyes are fixed on the woman at the piano. She continues to strike odd notes on the piano.

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy leaves the window, crosses to the bed and lies down. Then, sighing, she makes herself comfortable on the pillow, settling herself for sleep. Outside the nightjars whistle softly, the cicadas twitter and the Hammer tree frogs make drowsy, somnolent little croaks: it is a tropic lullaby of bird, batrachian and insect sound. The faint, groping notes on the piano continue.

DISSOLVE

EXT. THE FIGURE OF ST. SEBASTIAN -- NIGHT -- (MOONLIGHT)

In the moonlight, the pin-cushioned figure of St. Sebastian broods over the dark water in the cistern. Above the constant sound of the water flowing over the saint's shoulders can be heard the sound of a woman crying, mournfully and as if from deep-seated sadness.

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy is asleep. The sound of the woman's weeping is persistent in the room. Finally, it has its effect. The young nurse stirs restlessly, then wakes. She listens, gets up, then listens again.

EXT. THE TOWER DOOR -- NIGHT -- (MOONLIGHT)

INT. BETSY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

It is obvious to her this piteous keening comes from the direction of the tower. It is in this direction she had seen Holland carry the tray of food to her patient. She pulls on her slippers and negligee and leaves the room.

EXT. THE FIGURE OF ST. SEBASTIAN -- NIGHT

Betsy crosses in front of the fountain and goes to the small postern door of heavy, iron-bound oaks which leads into the ruin. The sound of weeping continues. She tries the door. It opens and she goes in, leaving it open behind her.

INT. THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE TOWER -- NIGHT

Betsy comes hesitantly in and looks around her. She can still hear the sound of a woman's crying. It seems to come from above her. A circling flight of shallow stone steps lead upward into the dark. To one side of them, but almost hidden from her in the darkness, is another door leading back into the house. She hesitates a moment and then, slowly, begins to climb the stairs.

INT. TOWER -- SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

Betsy comes up to the level of the second floor. It is in pitch blackness. High above her is a narrow slit through which a single shaft of white moonlight drives sharply into the well-like darkness of the room. Very slowly, almost as if feeling her way on the stone floor with her slippered feet, she crosses the room. Then, one hand groping along the rough, stone wall, she begins to circle the room, searching for some doorway, or an ascending flight of stairs.

Above her in the massive rafters of the tower, bats stir and squeak. One bat, dropping from his perch, sweeps past her with a rushing of air against the taut membranes of his wings, then flies laboriously up and out through the narrow slit high in the wall. Betsy stands stock still, frightened. Then she resumes her groping progress. A rat squeals and slithers across the floor. Again she stops. Then, more as a request for guidance than as a cry for help, she calls out softly.

BETSY

(calling)

Mrs. Holland! Mrs. Holland!

There is no answer. She gropes forward a few more steps, then stops again and again calls, a little louder now.

BETSY (CONT'D)

(calling)

Mrs. Holland?

INT. FIRST FLOOR OF THE TOWER -- NIGHT

A white-robed female figure comes out from under the stairs, walking slowly, her movements drift-like as if walking in deep sleep. She begins slowly to climb the stairs.

INT. TOWER -- SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

Betsy is still groping her way around the circling walls of the tower. The shaft of moonlight strikes down between her and the stairs. Through it she sees the drifting, diaphanous whiteness of the other woman as she comes up from the dark stairwell.

BETSY

Mrs. Holland?

There is no answer. The other woman continues to walk toward her.

BETSY (cont'd)

(embarrassed; trying to explain)

Mrs. Holland -- I didn't mean to

get you up --

The white woman keeps walking toward her with the same entrance tread. Betsy takes a step forward to meet her. The two women come together in such a way that the white-clad woman stops directly in the shaft of moonlight.

CLOSEUP of Jessica. This is the face of the dead; bloodless, cold-lidded, eyes open and unseeing, washed white with the pallor of the moonlight, framed in lank, lifeless tresses of blonde hair.

BETSY (cont'd)
(a frightened questioning
whisper over the closeup)
Mrs. Holland -- ?

Without expression, Jessica moves toward her.

MED. CLOSE SHOT -- Jessica and Betsy. Jessica comes toward Betsy, who takes a step back. They are out of the moonlight now, but the pale face of the woman seems to glow in the darkness. She keeps advancing toward Betsy. Betsy screams -- shrill and piercing.

INT. THE RAFTERS OF THE TOWER -- NIGHT

Betsy's cry echoes back and forth between the stone walls of the tower. The bats hanging from the rafters are roused and begin to fly, squeaking and mewling.

INT. TOWER -- SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

The flight of bats wheels and banks around the figures of the two women. Betsy screams wordlessly and the shrill, piercing sound of her outcry lances back at her from the echoing walls.

CLOSEUP of Betsy. Desperately frightened, her face agonized, she screams again, pressing her loosely clenched fists against the sides of her mouth.

INT. SLIT IN WALL OF TOWER -- NIGHT

Single file, the bats sweep out one by one through the loophole high up in the wall of the tower. Betsy's scream continues to echo.

INT. TOWER -- SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

Jessica still continues to walk toward Betsy. Betsy retreats from her, backs onto the stone stairs leading to the slit in the wall. She orients herself quickly; starts to back up this narrow flight of steps.

INT. TOWER STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Holland running up the steps of the tower. He is pulling a light bathrobe over his pajamas and carrying a flashlight in his hand. Behind him come Clement and a pretty, little negro maid, Alma. Clement has dressed hurriedly. He is barefooted; has on his trousers and a shirt, which is not tucked in at the waistband. Alma, also barefooted, has on a thick, white cotton nightgown, a little bit too big for her. Clement carries a lighted kerosene lamp in his hand.

INT. SECOND FLOOR -- TOWER -- NIGHT

Holland, Clement and Alma come up the stairs. Clement's lantern, held high, illuminates the room, disclosing Jessica still walking and Betsy cowering away from her.

HOLLAND

Jessica!

The woman stops and turns slowly toward him. He speaks hurriedly to Alma.

HOLLAND (CONT'D)

Take Mrs. Holland to her room.

ALMA

(taking Jessica's arm)

Come, Miss Jessica, come with Alma.

BETSY

(attempting to get a grip
on herself. Terribly
ashamed)

I heard someone crying -- a woman --

HOLLAND

A woman crying? No one's been
crying here.

CLEMENT

Mr. Paul -- yes, there was crying
tonight. It was Alma. Her sister
was brought a'birthing.

HOLLAND

(with a slight smile)

Thank you, Clement.

He takes Betsy's elbow and starts toward the stairs.

INT. FIRST FLOOR OF THE TOWER -- NIGHT

Clement precedes Betsy and Holland down the stairs, holding the lantern high to give them light. At the foot of the stairs he steps aside, standing near the door of Jessica's bedroom. Betsy and Holland go outside to the garden. Clement is about to follow them when the door to Jessica's bedroom opens a few inches. Alma puts her head out

cautiously.

ALMA
(whispering)
Clement...

Clement goes over to her.

ALMA (cont'd)
I'm going to stay with Miss Jessica
-- in case the new Miss takes to
roaming again.

CLEMENT
(in a low voice
reprovingly)
Don't you go crying anymore --
that's what frightened Miss Betsy.

ALMA
Well, she didn't soothe me any --
hollering around in the tower!

CLEMENT
Shhh!

EXT. FOUNTAIN -- NIGHT

Holland and Betsy come out of the tower.

BETSY
Why was the maid crying?

HOLLAND
I'm not sure I can make you
understand.
(gestures toward the
fountain statue)
You know what this is?

BETSY
A figure of St. Sebastian.

HOLLAND
Yes. But it was once the
figurehead of a slave ship. That's
where our people came from -- from
the misery and pain of slavery. For
generations they found life a
burden. That's why they still weep
when a child is born -- and make
merry at a burial.

Clement, the lantern still in his hand, passes close behind them. For a moment they turn and look at his black, still face, underlit by the rays of the lantern. It reflects all the sadness of slave people and slave ways. He goes by, the

lantern light fading off in the distance, as he walks down the path.

HOLLAND (CONT'D)

I've told you, Miss Connell, this is a sad place.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. BETSY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The birds in the garden are singing loudly and cheerfully and the sun pours in wide streaks through the jalousies. At the foot of Betsy's bed Alma stands. She has lifted the covers and holds Betsy's big toe between thumb and forefinger. She shakes it gently. Betsy wakes.

ALMA

Good morning, miss.

BETSY

(starting to rouse from bed)

Thank you for waking me.

ALMA

I didn't want to frighten you out of your sleep, Miss. That's why I touched you farthest from your heart.

Betsy starts to get up and Alma protests.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Don't get up, Miss. I brought your breakfast. Just like I do for Miss Jessica.

She turns to reveal right and left-handed coffee pots behind her on a tray. Also on the tray is an enormous, puffed-up brioche.

BETSY

But I'm Miss Jessica's nurse, Alma. You don't have to do that for me.

ALMA

I know, miss. But I like to do it. I like to tend for Miss Jessica and I want to tend for you. You settle right back, now, and I'll mix you your coffee.

BETSY

(pulling the pillow up

behind her to make
herself comfortable)
Thank you, Alma.

Alma takes a cup and places it on the little table near the bed. She takes up the two coffee pots and simultaneously, with a deft movement, pours the hot milk and the hot coffee into the cup. She sweetens it and creams it and passes it to Betsy, questioning Betsy with upraised sugar tongs and cream pitcher before each move.

ALMA
(while she's pouring the
coffee)

Miss Jessica used to say this is the only way for a lady to break her fast -- in bed, with a lacy cushion to bank her head up. If you'd only seen her, Miss Connell. She looked so pretty.

BETSY
She must have been beautiful. What happened to her, Alma?

ALMA
She was very sick and then she went mindless, Miss.

BETSY
(reassuringly)
We'll see if we can't make her well, Alma, you and I.

ALMA
I do my best. Every day I dress her just as beautifully as if she was well. It's just like dressing a great, big doll.

As she talks, Alma picks up the plate with the brioche and places it at the bedside. She puts a knife and fork on the plate. Betsy sets down her coffee cup and picks up the plate.

BETSY
What's this?

ALMA
A puff-up, I call it. But Miss Jessica always says "brioche."

BETSY
Looks like an awful lot of breakfast -- I don't know whether I'll be able to get away with it.

She puts her fork into it and the whole, enormous structure of the pastry falls into tiny bits. Both she and Alma burst into peals of laughter.

DISSOLVE

INT. FORT HOLLAND LIVING ROOM AND OFFICE -- DAY

This room is fairly long with jalousied doors and windows like the other rooms in the house. It is tastefully furnished and there is a large square rosewood piano in one corner of the room. The rather formal elegant furniture shows up nicely against the white-washed plaster walls. At one end is a raised portion with a low railing surrounding it. Here Holland has his office.

There is a trestle table with a straight chair behind it, typewriter on a stand, and a small wooden filing cabinet with an old-fashioned letter-press on top of it. There is a surveyor's map of the plantation on one wall, and on the other a Geodetic Survey chart of the island of St. Sebastian. (For 75c, we can purchase the U.S. Geodetic chart of Anacapa Island, engraved by Whistler, possibly the most beautiful map ever drawn. We can use this for the map of our fictitious island.) Holland is seated at the table with a ledger open before him. He has obviously been working. Betsy sits in a chair drawn up to one corner of the table. She is in her nurse's uniform.

HOLLAND

I made it clear in my letter to the company. This is not a position for a frightened girl.

BETSY

(quietly, but on the defensive)

I am not a frightened girl.

HOLLAND

That's hard to believe, after what happened last night.

BETSY

(before he can continue)

If I were as timid as you seem to think, Mr. Holland, I wouldn't have gone into the tower in the first place.

HOLLAND

And what is so alarming about the tower, Miss Connell?

BETSY

(not so sure of herself)

Nothing -- really. But you must

admit it's an eerie sort of place --
so dark --

HOLLAND
(smiling faintly)
Surely nurses aren't afraid of the
dark?

BETSY
(indignantly)
Of course not!

Holland waits --- looking at her a little quizzically.

BETSY (cont'd)
But frankly, it was something of a
shock to see my patient that way,
for the first time. No one had
told me Mrs. Holland was a mental
case.

HOLLAND
A mental case?

BETSY
I'm sorry...

HOLLAND
(again the impersonal
employer)
Why should you be? My wife is a
mental case. Please keep that in
mind, Miss Connell -- particularly
when some of the foolish people of
this island start talking to you
about Zombies.

Paul rises and walks around the desk. Betsy also stands.

HOLLAND (cont'd)
You will find slave superstition a
contagious thing. Some people let
it get the better of them.
(breaks off and looks at
her intently)
I don't think you will.

BETSY
No.

Holland gets up and crosses to the jalousied door. He holds
it open for Betsy to precede him into the garden.

HOLLAND
Come along. I'll introduce you to
Dr. Maxwell and your patient.

INT. JESSICA'S BEDROOM - DAY

It is a beautiful woman's bedroom, feminine but with no suggestion of the baignic; elegant rather than seductive, and reflecting a playful yet sophisticated taste. The furniture is Biedermeier. There is a large bed, a trim chaise lounge, a little slipper chair and in one corner of the room, that hallmark of great vanity, a triple-screen, full-length mirror, also a Biedermeier style. Before it is a tabouret, the surface of which is literally covered with expensive looking perfume bottles and cosmetic jars. Mrs. Holland had evidently taken the tasks of beauty seriously enough to stand up to them. There is one picture in the room. It is Boecklin's "The Isle of the Dead," framed in a narrow frame of dark wood. Near the open window stands a beautiful gilt parlour harp. (Size 22) Behind it, arranged conveniently for playing, is a small Empire chair. There is no other furniture near this arrangement, and the harp, the empty chair and wind-stirred glass curtains give a dual effect of elegance and loneliness.

The CAMERA is FOCUSED on this harp as the scene opens. The glass curtains blown by the wind, steal across the strings bringing forth tinkling notes.

The CAMERA PANS RIGHT to reveal Betsy and Dr. Maxwell at Mrs. Holland's bedside. Dr. Maxwell is a small, neat man with a charming voice and a pleasant but somewhat professional personality. He is dressed in tropical whites and wears a cummerbund. Alma is removing the breakfast tray and, as she passes Betsy on her way to the door, she makes a little curtsy. Mrs. Holland is lying back against the pillows on her bed in a semi-reclining position.

In the daylight her emaciated, pale face and great, empty eyes are pitiful but no longer frightening.

DR. MAXWELL

I'm afraid it won't be easy for me to explain Mrs. Holland's illness, Miss Connell. We have our own diseases here. But, if you'll sit down --

(indicates a chair)

Betsy seats herself. Dr. Maxwell takes a cigarette case from his pocket. He takes a cigarette, holds it up.

DR. MAXWELL (cont'd)

To put it simply: Mrs. Holland had one of those high fevers often found with our tropical maladies. We might say that portions of the spinal cord and certain lobes of the mind were burned out by this fever. The result is what you see -- a woman bereft of will power, unable to speak or even

to act by herself. She will obey simple commands.

BETSY

Does she suffer?

DR. MAXWELL

I don't know. I prefer to think of her as a sleepwalker who can never be awakened -- feeling nothing, knowing nothing.

Betsy looks to Jessica.

DR. MAXWELL (cont'd)

There's very little we can do except keep her physically comfortable -- light diet -- some exercise --

BETSY

She can never be cured?

DR. MAXWELL

I've never heard of a cure.

BETSY

Is this disease common in the tropics?

DR. MAXWELL

Fortunately, not. This is my first experience with it as a physician. But I have seen half-witted field hands -- whom the other peasants call Zombies. I am sure they suffer from a similar destruction of spinal nerves as the result of high fever.

He crosses the room and clasps shut the black leather bag in which he carries his medicine kit. Betsy rises and walks over to him.

BETSY

Could you give me the details of treatment and diet?

Dr. Maxwell picks up a couple of sheets of typewritten paper which have been lying beside the bed. He hands them to Betsy.

DR. MAXWELL

I prepared these for you last night, Miss Connell.

BETSY

(taking the papers)
Thank you.

He picks up his bag and walks toward the door. Betsy walks with him. At the door, he half turns and says:

DR. MAXWELL
I'll be by in a day or so, Miss
Connell, and see how you are
getting on.

Betsy nods and then turns back into the room. She walks up to the bed and stands looking at Jessica, then down at the list of typewritten instructions. Evidently the list calls for her to carry out some detail of the regime, for she puts it down and starts out of the room in a businesslike fashion.

DISSOLVE

EXT. FOUNTAIN -- DAY

Holland is standing by the fountain as Betsy comes out of the door of the tower and starts to cross the garden. He turns toward her. She stops and smiles.

HOLLAND
You didn't find your patient so
frightening in the daylight, did
you?

BETSY
Mrs. Holland must have been
beautiful ---

HOLLAND
(coldly)
Many people thought her beautiful.

Betsy is about to pass on when he asks abruptly:

HOLLAND (CONT'D)
Tell me, Miss Connell. Do you
consider yourself pretty?

Betsy is a little taken aback by this, but she recovers herself.

BETSY
I suppose so. Yes.

HOLLAND
And charming?

BETSY
I've never given it much thought.

HOLLAND

Don't. It will save you a great deal of trouble and other people a great unhappiness.

Betsy is puzzled and interested. She stands a moment and then starts off.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE VILLAGE OF ST. SEBASTIAN -- DAY

Betsy, out of her customary uniform and dressed in a light colored print dress and a straw picture hat, is walking slowly and a little aimlessly down one of the village streets.

RAND'S VOICE

Betsy!

Betsy turns, as she hears her name, and sees Rand, mounted on a white saddle mule. (The mule is one of those delicate, single footed saddle animals which they breed in Central America and the West Indies, very smart-looking and with good furniture. The saddle should be particularly well-chosen. Most West Indian planters use an English saddle with long stirrups. Sometimes a machete in a leather scabbard hangs from the near side of the saddle.) He maneuvers the mule between a cart and a vendor balancing two baskets on a pole over his shoulders, then brings the animal to a halt beside her.

RAND

Where do you think you're going?

BETSY

It's my day off.

RAND

But what in the world can you do with a day off in St. Sebastian?

BETSY

(a little ruefully)

I was just beginning to wonder. Aren't there shops, restaurants and things?

RAND

Well -- and things -- might be a better description of what you'll find. I'd better come along and show you the town.

Rand swings down off the mule and takes the reins to lead the animal.

BETSY
(very pleased)
But don't you have to work?

RAND
(grinning)
By a curious coincidence, it's my
day off, too.

DISSOLVE OUT

DISSOLVE IN

EXT. STREET CORNER - ST. SEBASTIAN -- DAY

A Calypso singer with a guitar slung around his shoulder, lounges against the corner of a building, singing to a small audience of loiterers. He has a derby hat in front of him with one or two coins in it.

EXT. CAFE -- ST. SEBASTIAN -- DAY

Around the corner from the Calypso singer is a cafe. On the roadway in front of it, under a tattered awning, two or three tables have been set out. At one of these sit Betsy and Rand. At another, two white planters in work clothing are having a drink of beer.

Behind them, leaning against the wall, stands the proprietor, a Negro in duck trousers and duck coat, with an apron tied around his middle. Betsy has tea in front of her and Rand, a Planter's Punch. As we see them, she is just laughing at something he has said. He is finishing his drink. Rand sets down his glass and gestures to the proprietor.

RAND
(very jovially to the
proprietor)
Bring me another, Ti-Joseph. I
have to keep the lady entertained.

BETSY
It must be hard work entertaining
me if it requires six ounces of
rum.

RAND
What in the world are you talking
about? Six ounces -- ?

BETSY
Higher mathematics. Two ounces to
a drink -- three drinks, six
ounces.

RAND

How do you know there's two ounces
in a drink?

BETSY

I'm a nurse. I always watch people
when they pour something. I
watched Ti-Joseph and it was
exactly two ounces.

At this moment a new Calypso song starts.

SINGER

(sings)

*There was a family that lived on the isle
Of Saint Sebastian a long, long while
The head of the family was a Holland man
And the younger brother, his name was Rand*

Betsy's attention is caught by the song. Rand evidently
knows the song, because he begins talking at random, trying
to distract her.

RAND

Listen, did I tell you that story
about the little mule at the
plantation -- the little mule and
Clement? Let me tell you. It's
one of the funniest stories --

BETSY

(putting a restraining
hand on his arm)

Wait. I want to listen.

We hear the guitar music without singing, as the Calypso
singer plays a few measures to bridge the first and second
verses. Ti-Joseph comes up to the table with Rand's drink.
Rand makes a motion to him indicating the corner around which
the Calypso singer is standing. Ti-Joseph gets the idea and
goes off instantly.

MED. CLOSE SHOT -- Calypso singer.

CALYPSO SINGER

*The Holland man, he kept in a tower
A wife as pretty as a big white flower
She saw the brother and she stole his heart...*

Ti-Joseph comes in and, while the singer goes on with his
song, whispers in his ear. The Calypso singer stops
immediately. He looks frightened and guilty. Ti-Joseph
turns and goes around the corner to his cafe. The Calypso
singer addresses one of the people in the little group before
him.

CALYPSO SINGER (cont'd)

Ti-Malice trip up my tongue -- What

do you wish trouble on me for --
You saw Mister Rand go in there.
Why don't you tell me?

The colored man he is addressing just dumbly shakes his head.

CALYPSO SINGER (cont'd)
Apologize -- that's what I'll do.
Creep in just like a little fox and
warm myself in his heart.
(placatingly but to
himself)
Good Mister Rand!

The other negro just dumbly shakes his head again. The Calypso singer puts his idea instantly into action, starting off around the corner.

EXT. CAFE -- DAY

Rand has finished the drink which Ti-Joseph had just brought him and is motioning to Ti-Joseph to bring him another, making a gesture with the glass in his hand.

BETSY
(evidently continuing what
she has been saying)
That's carrying free speech a
little too far! I wouldn't have
listened, Wes, if I had realized --

The Calypso singer comes in and stands humbly beside the table.

CALYPSO SINGER
(with a little bow in the
Haitian manner; one hand
in front of the stomach
and the other hand at the
small of his back)
Mr. Rand?

Rand looks up at him.

CALYPSO SINGER (cont'd)
I've come to apologize.

RAND
(curtly)
All right.

CALYPSO SINGER
(with another quaint bow)
Just an old song I picked up
somewhere. Don't know who did make
it up.

RAND
(growing exasperated)
All right. All right.

CALYPSO SINGER
Some of these singers on this
island, they'd tattle-tale on
anybody. Believe me, Mister Rand,
I never would sing that song if I'd
known you were with a lady.

RAND
(jumping up, furious)
Get out of here!

He starts to rise. Betsy restrains him. The Calypso singer runs off a few feet, makes his little polite bow again, and the vanishes. Rand stands practically shaking with rage. Betsy forces him into a chair.

BETSY
Don't let it bother you so, Wes.

RAND
Did you hear what he sang?

Betsy is spared the embarrassment of replying when Ti-Joseph brings the drink that Rand ordered. Rand gulps thirstily at it, then looks at Betsy, half-defiantly, half-mockingly.

RAND (cont'd)
Shocked?

BETSY
(sincerely)
I wish I hadn't heard --

RAND
Why? Everybody else knows it.
Paul saw to that. Sometimes I
think he planned the whole thing
from the beginning -- just to watch
me squirm.

BETSY
(quietly)
That doesn't sound like him.

RAND
That's right -- he's playing the
noble husband for you, isn't he?
That won't last long.

BETSY
I'd like to go now, Rand. Would
you mind taking me home?

RAND

(ignoring her, speaking a
little drunkenly)

One of these days he'll start on
you, the way he did on her.

(imitating)

"You think life's beautiful, don't
you, Jessica? You think you're
beautiful, don't you, Jessica?"

(bitterly)

What he could do to that word
"beautiful." That's Paul's great
weapon -- words. He uses them the
way other men use their fists.

Rand finishes his drink. Betsy watches him, her face deeply
troubled.

DISSOLVE

EXT. THE CAFE - NIGHT

CAMERA IS FOCUSED ON a ragged, barefooted lamplighter. He is
lighting one of the crude kerosene street lamps of St.
Sebastian with a long taper on the end of the stick. When it
finally lights up he lowers the glass chimney with another
stick he carries.

From the beach comes the sound of a guitar and a man singing.
It is very faint, at first, but as it comes closer we can
recognize the voice of the Calypso singer and the melody he
was singing when Rand interrupted him.

The CAMERA PANS OVER to show Rand and Betsy still sitting in
Ti-Joseph's sidewalk cafe. Rand has slumped down in his
chair, thoroughly drunk. Ti-Joseph stands, arms folded,
leaning in the darker shadows of the wall. Betsy looks off
in the direction of the singing, a little anxiously.

CALYPSO SINGER

(faint, but growing
stronger)

*She saw the brother and she stole his heart
And that's how the badness and the trouble start
Ah woe, ah me
Shame and sorrow for the fam-i-ly*

Betsy leans over and touches Rand's arm.

BETSY

Wes. Wesley -- it's time we were
starting home.

Rand makes some meaningless mumble of words.

CALYPSO SINGER

The wife and the brother, they want to go,

But the Holland man, he tell them "no."

As Betsy stares nervously into the shadows beyond the street lamp, she sees the figure of the Calypso singer, moving slowly towards her as he sings.

CALYPSO SINGER (cont'd)

*The wife fall down and the evil came
And it burned her mind in the fever flame.*

Betsy shakes Rand urgently.

BETSY

Please, Wes -- we've got to get
back to Fort Holland.

There is no movement, no sound from Rand. Betsy looks at him, then looks over at Ti-Joseph. There does not seem to be much help to be had in that direction. Really frightened now, she turns back quickly to the approaching Calypso singer. He never takes his eyes off her, as he walks slowly toward the cafe. There is a strange menace in the way he sings.

CALYPSO SINGER

*Her eyes are empty and she cannot talk
And a nurse has come to make her walk.
The brothers are lonely and the nurse is young
And now you must see that my song is sung.*

The Calypso singer is now coming directly to the table. Instinctively, Betsy rises and moves behind the table.

CALYPSO SINGER (cont'd)

(walking very slowly,
singing very slowly)

*Ah, woe, Ah me
Shame --*

He stops abruptly. In the silence footsteps are heard, light brisk footsteps coming down the street toward the cafe. The Calypso singer looks away from Betsy for the first time. As Betsy also turns, in great relief, to see who is coming, the Calypso singer moves quickly and silently out of the scene. A middle-aged white woman, handsome and neatly dressed in a suit with a Norfolk jacket, appears in the entrance of the cafe. She glances briefly in the direction which the Calypso singer has taken and then at Betsy and Rand. She smiles in a friendly way at Betsy.

MRS. RAND

I think you need some help.

BETSY

I'm afraid so.

MRS. RAND

Ti-Joseph?

The older woman looks over at Ti-Joseph.

MRS. RAND (CONT'D)

Ti-Joseph, get Mr. Rand on to his mule, please, and start him for home.

Ti-Joseph comes down and starts to put his hands under Rand's armpits preparatory to helping him to his feet.

TI-JOSEPH

Yes, ma'am.

BETSY

(protesting)

But he's in no condition to ride -- I don't think he can even sit in the saddle.

MRS. RAND

Don't worry about a sugar planter. Give him a mule and he'll ride to his own funeral.

Ti-Joseph gets Rand to his feet and helps him stagger around the corner. From around the corner we can hear Ti-Joseph bellowing.

TI-JOSEPH

Hey, boy! Bring up that mule -- that white mule, boy.

Mrs. Rand turns to Betsy.

MRS. RAND

I really intended going out to the Fort and meeting you long before this, Miss Connell. I'm Mrs. Rand -- Wesley's mother.

BETSY

(dismayed)

Oh, Mrs. Rand --

MRS. RAND

(interrupting)

Come, come, don't tell me how sorry you are that I should meet you this way.

(puts out her hand)

I'm even a little glad that Wesley's difficulty brought us together.

Betsy takes the older woman's hand and they shake hands.

BETSY

Believe me, Mrs. Rand, he doesn't do this often. This is the first time I've seen him --

MRS. RAND

Nonsense, child! I know Wesley's been drinking too much lately. I know a great deal more about what goes on at Fort Holland than you'd think. I know all about you -- that you're a nice girl, competent and kind to Jessica. The Fort needs a girl like you.

(breaking her mood)

But now we've got to get you back there. I'll walk you back and stay over night. It'll be a nice change for me.

She takes Betsy's arm and they start off.

The CAMERA DOLLIES WITH them as they cross the space under Ti Joseph's awning.

BETSY

Thank you, Mrs. Rand. I think you're every bit as nice as Wes says you are.

MRS. RAND

So -- he says I'm nice. He's a nice boy, too, Miss Connell, a very nice boy. But I'm worried about his drinking.

She pauses in her speech, stops for a moment at the very edge of Ti-Joseph's domain and takes Betsy's arm.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

You could do me a great favor.

BETSY

(eagerly)

I'd love to.

MRS. RAND

Use your influence with Paul. Ask him to take that whiskey decanter off the dinner table.

BETSY

(protesting)

I've no influence with Mr. Holland.

MRS. RAND

Try it -- you may have more
influence than you think.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. GARDEN -- FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

Holland is walking down the path from the office toward the gate. He is carrying a piece of sugar cane in his hand and is followed by a negro laborer in working clothes, who has several other pieces of cane in his arms. They are talking as they walk.

HOLLAND

(over his shoulder as they
walk)

No. It isn't a drought, Bayard.
The rains are just a little late,
that's all.

BAYARD

I've seen the drought before, Mr.
Holland. The cane's too dry -- it's
dangerous that way -- it's the
drought.

Betsy comes across the garden with a tray of medicine bottles in her hands and several linen sheets folded over her arm. She meets the two men at the path intersection.

HOLLAND

Good morning, Miss Connell.

BETSY

Good morning.

He waves Bayard on and stops for a moment to speak with Betsy.

HOLLAND

I heard about your little
misadventure yesterday, Miss
Connell.

(with a smile)

On your first "day off," too.

BETSY

Well, I had a good time up to a
point.

HOLLAND

(sincerely)

Wesley can be very entertaining.

BETSY

(encouraged by his tone)
Yes, he can. But I've been
wondering -- you know if you could
leave the whisky decanter off the
table --

HOLLAND
It's always stood there, Miss
Connell. I can remember it in my
grandfather's time and my father's.
I'm afraid it will have to remain.

BETSY
But for Wes -- it must be a
temptation to him.

HOLLAND
I've no sympathy with people who
can't resist temptation.

BETSY
Still, I feel you should remove the
decanter. Wes is not an alcoholic
yet, Mr. Holland. But as a nurse I can
tell you that it won't be long before he is.

HOLLAND
(coldly)
I'm afraid the decanter will have
to stay where it is. I engaged
you, Miss Connell, to take care of
my wife, not my brother.

They look at each other for a moment, then Betsy turns and
walks off without a word. Holland turns to rejoin Bayard at
the gate.

DISSOLVE

EXT. TERRACE -- DINING TABLE -- NIGHT

It is a hot, windy night. The bushes in the garden move
violently with the gusts of wind. Even protected as they are
by the great glass hurricane lamps, the candle flames that
light the table are agitated and stir restlessly. Tonight
there are four people at dinner, Holland, Rand, Betsy, in a
simple print dress, and Jessica, in a lovely evening gown
that leaves her shoulders and arms bare. They have finished
the first portion of their meal and Clement is taking off the
soup plates. Somewhere off in the hills there is the
ululating sounds of a great sea conch being blown.

BETSY
You don't seem very disturbed by
it. I've always thought Voodoo was
something to be scared of: the
drums sounded in the hills and

everybody was frightened.

HOLLAND

I'm afraid it's not very frightening. They have their songs and dances and carry on and finally, as I understand it, one of the gods comes down and speaks through one of the people.

RAND

For some reason, they always seem to pick a night like this. This wind even sets me on edge.

He reaches out with his hand and then looks around the table. It is obvious something is missing. Both Betsy and Holland notice his half-gesture. Betsy glances at Holland. He smiles and nods.

RAND (CONT'D)

Clement.

Clement, busy at the sideboard, looks around toward him.

RAND (cont'd)

You've forgotten the decanter.

HOLLAND

I think from now on, Wes, we'll try serving dinner without it.

RAND

Oh, I see. The lord of the manor has decided to abolish one of the tribal customs.

Holland makes no answer. The conches blow wildly in the hills and a flurry of wind sweeps the garden.

RAND (cont'd)

An economy move, I suppose. Or, perhaps, Paul, you decided on a finer moral standard for our happy little household, now that Miss Connell is with us.

Holland still keeps his silence, although the muscles in his jaw twitch.

RAND (cont'd)

What are you trying to do, impress her?

HOLLAND

Let's drop it now, Wes. We can talk about it later if you want.

Rand glowers at him and makes no immediate answer. A great gust of wind blows across the garden. The candle flames level out in one direction and then the other.

RAND

But I want to talk now. Why have you decided to take the whiskey off the table? What's behind it? What nice, sadistic little plot is brewing this time, Paul?

HOLLAND

(with a glance at Betsy)
Let's not discuss it, Wes.

The conches sound again in the hills, wildly and yet monotonously.

RAND

(with great sarcasm)
Let's not quarrel before the ladies. Let's be reserved and gentlemanly.
(jumping to his feet)
You were so gentlemanly when you drove Jessica insane -- so polite when you made her into that!

He subsides in his chair, shaken, entirely out of control. He doesn't look at Holland, nor at Betsy but at Jessica. They sit there for a moment in complete silence. Then Holland, obviously holding in his temper, rises and says:

HOLLAND

Miss Connell, I think it would be best if I had Clement bring the rest of your dinner to your room.

He turns and goes into the living room. Betsy also starts to rise. Rand still stares at Jessica.

DISSOLVE

INT. BETSY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The room is in darkness. Betsy stands leaning against one of the jalousies, looking out through the slit between two panels. Over the scene comes the sad, masculine sorrow of the Liebestod. It is being played well and forcefully on the piano in the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

From her window Betsy can see Holland playing the piano.

INT. BETSY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Betsy stands watching him. Then suddenly, as if compelled, she leaves the window, opens the jalousied door and goes quickly out into the garden.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Holland is still playing. The sound of the door opening is heard. It startles him and he turns toward the sound. He sees Betsy and rises to face her as she steps into the room.

BETSY

I heard you playing.

HOLLAND

(trying to hide behind
brittleness)

I often do.

BETSY

(disregarding his remark)

I know what you went through tonight. I kept thinking of what you said: that all good things died here, violently.

HOLLAND

Why did you come in here?

BETSY

I don't know. I wanted to help you. And now that I'm here, I don't know how.

Holland comes close to her and looks down into her eyes.

HOLLAND

(with unexpected
sincerity)

You have helped me. I want you to know I'm sorry I brought you here. When I thought of a nurse, I thought of someone hard and impersonal.

BETSY

(looking past him into the
garden)

I love Fort Holland.

HOLLAND

What you saw tonight -- two brothers at each other's throat and a woman driven mad by her own husband? Do you love that?

BETSY

You didn't drive her mad.

HOLLAND

Didn't I? I don't know. That's the simple truth of it. I don't know.

Betsy shakes her head and moves closer to him. Her face, upturned to his, is filled with pity.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

Before Jessica was taken ill, there was a scene. An ugly scene. I told her I wouldn't let her go, that I'd hold her by force if necessary.

Betsy puts her hand on his arm, in an instinctive gesture of sympathy and comfort. Holland looks down at her hand and then, searchingly, into her face.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

You wouldn't understand that kind of love. You never knew Jessica as she was. Beautiful, restless, willful -- living in a world with room for nothing but her own image and her own desires.

Betsy gently draws her hand away. She watches his face, lost in remembering.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

She promised so much -- warmth and sweetness...she promised --

In the hills the conches blow wildly, echoing and answering each other from every direction. For a brief moment, the noise is so loud Holland could not speak if he wanted to and then, when he can, and does, his voice has changed entirely. It is cold. It cuts between him and Betsy like a sword.

HOLLAND (CONT'D)

I think it may be best for all of us not to discuss this again. Thank you -- I know you meant to be kind.

DISSOLVE

EXT. FOUNTAIN -- NIGHT

Betsy stands looking into the dark cistern. The wind still blows and the conches are sounding from the hills. But the noise of the water flowing over the shoulders of St. Sebastian can be heard above these other sounds. The iron arrows in his breast glisten.

BETSY

(narrating)

I don't know how their own love is revealed to other women -- maybe in their sweethearts' arms -- I don't know. To me it came that night after Paul Holland almost thrust me from the room, and certainly thrust me from his life. I said to myself, "I love him." And even as I said it, I knew he still loved his wife. Then because I loved him, I felt I had to restore her to him -- to make her what she had been before -- to make him happy.

As the narrator's voice ceases, the CAMERA HOLDS ON that small, silent figure before the fountain.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. MRS. HOLLAND'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Jessica is seated before the triptych mirror, facing it blankly. At the other end of the room stand Betsy and Dr. Maxwell. Paul, his back to the window, faces them.

HOLLAND

All that you say comes down to the same thing. You are asking me to pass a sentence of life or death on my own wife.

DR. MAXWELL

Insulin shock treatment is an extreme measure, Mr. Holland. But -- as Miss Connell pointed out when she suggested it -- this is an extreme case.

HOLLAND

(to Betsy)

You admit that it is terribly dangerous. Why do you advise it?

BETSY

I've worked with it. I've seen cures. It is at least a hope.

DR. MAXWELL

It's the very danger itself that makes the cure possible, Mr. Holland. The insulin produces a state of coma, a stupor. The

patient is revived from the coma by a violent overwhelming nerve shock. That nerve shock can kill -- but it can also restore the damaged mind.

HOLLAND

I don't know -- I don't know--

DR. MAXWELL

(sympathetically)

It is a hard decision to make -- but yours is only a technical responsibility...

HOLLAND

Technical responsibility, real responsibility -- what difference does it make?

(turns back to face them)

Jessica lives -- or she dies. That's what we're talking about!

Betsy turns and looks across the room to where Jessica sits motionless before the mirror.

BETSY

You are wrong, Mr. Holland.

She turns back to face him.

BETSY (cont'd)

It is not a question of life or death. Your wife is not living. She is in a world that is empty of joy or meaning. We have a chance to give her life back to her.

Holland stares at her. He turns to the window and stands for a moment with his back to the room.

DISSOLVE

OMITTED

INT. ARCHED DOORWAY OF MRS. HOLLAND'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Through the doorway we see the enormous shadows of Betsy and Dr. Maxwell on the wall as they work over their patient. We hear the murmur of their voices although we cannot hear what they are saying. In the doorway itself, leaning against the wall looking toward the room expectantly, anxiously, is Holland, half hidden in the shadows of the arch. The shadows on the wall straighten up. We see Betsy in shadow drawing her hand wearily across her forehead. Still in shadow, she turns toward the door, her shadow grows enormous as she comes toward the source of light.

As Betsy comes under the arch, Holland moves to meet her. She turns to him.

HOLLAND
(tensely)
Well?

BETSY
She is alive, Mr. Holland -- that's all.

There is a little pause. Then Betsy looks at Holland, her eyes glistening with tears. Betsy turns away slightly, closing her eyes for a moment to steady herself. Holland puts his hands on her shoulders and turns her back to face him.

HOLLAND
(gently)
Don't take it to heart, Betsy.

BETSY
I imagined this so differently...

Holland takes his hand from her shoulders.

HOLLAND
I've been waiting here for hours, trying to imagine Jessica well again -- wondering what I'd feel. I could see Jessica as she used to be, I could hear her say in that sweet mocking voice, "Paul, darling..." The whole thing beginning all over again...

BETSY
(dully)
And instead, I came -- bringing you nothing.

HOLLAND
(slowly looking down at her)
Instead -- you come, with sympathy, Betsy, and a generous heart. Don't forget that. Don't call it nothing.

Betsy turns wearily and returns to the sick room. Holland is about to follow her when he hears a low chuckle and turns to see who it is.

INT. THE PASSAGE TO THE TOWER DOOR AS SEEN FROM JESSICA'S ROOM -- DAY

A few feet from Holland, leaning against the wall, is Rand.

He has evidently been there some time. He is not drunk, but it is obvious he has been drinking. Holland walks down the short corridor toward him.

RAND

Very sad, very sweet. The noble husband and the noble nurse comforting each other -- because the patient still lives. I've been imagining too, Paul. You didn't think of that, did you? I saw Jessica coming across the garden, I heard her voice.

THERE ARE TWO PAGES MISSING AT THIS POINT WHERE PAUL AND WESLEY END THEIR CONVERSATION. THE SCRIPT PICKS UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NEXT SCENE JUST AFTER ALMA'S SISTER HAS VISITED WITH HER BABY.

BETSY

I suppose not.

ALMA

Things so bad, nobody can help -- not even Doctor Maxwell.

BETSY

Doctors and nurses can only do so much, Alma. They can't cure everything.

ALMA

Doctors that are people can't cure everything.

BETSY

(with a puzzled look)

What do you mean -- "doctors that are people"?

ALMA

(slowly, almost sing-song)

There are other doctors...Yes, other doctors...Better doctors...

BETSY

Where?

ALMA

At the Hounfort.

BETSY

(shaking off the idea)

That's nonsense, Alma.

ALMA

They even cure nonsense, Miss

Betsy. Mama Rose was mindless. I was at the Houmfort when the Houngan brought her mind back.

BETSY

You mean Mama Rose was like Mrs. Holland?

ALMA

No. She was mindless but not like Miss Jessica. But the Houngan cured her.

BETSY

Are you trying to tell me that the Houngan -- the voodoo priest -- could cure Mrs. Holland?

ALMA

Yes, Miss Betsy. I mean that. The Houngan will speak to the rada drums and the drums will speak to Shango and Damballa.

The CAMERA MOVES IN to a CLOSE TWO SHOT of both women's faces, Betsy looking thoughtfully at Alma and Alma returning the gaze with equal intensity.

ALMA (CONT'D)

(softly)

Better doctors --

DISSOLVE

INT. THE DISPENSARY - DAY

This is a small, plainly furnished room with a plain table, a few bentwood chairs and a medicine cabinet and a few washbasins and water pitchers on a shelf. Mrs. Rand is kneeling down at the side of the little, black pickaninny, rubbing ointment on a sore on his chest. Betsy, in street clothes, watches her. Mrs. Rand finishes her work on the little boy's chest and begins to put his little shirt back on him. An obeah bag tied around his neck on a string gets in her way as she tries to button the shirt. She holds it up so that the little boy can see it.

MRS. RAND

Ti-Peter, how do you ever expect to get to Heaven with one foot in the voodoo Houmfort and the other in the Baptist church?

The little black boy looks at her with rolling eyes but does not answer. She gives him a playful pat on the behind, starting him on his way to the door.

MRS. RAND (CONT'D)
(to Betsy, cheerfully)
Some of this native nonsense. The
Houngan has his prescription and
Dr. Maxwell and I have ours.

BETSY
You've never said anything about
voodoo before, Mrs. Rand.

MRS. RAND
Haven't I? I suppose I take it for
granted. It's just part of everyday
life here.

BETSY
You don't believe in it?

MRS. RAND
A missionary's widow? It isn't
very likely, is it?

BETSY
I don't mean believe, like
believing in a religion. I mean,
do you believe it has power? Do
you think it could heal a sick
person?

MRS. RAND
(looking hard at Betsy for
a moment)
Frankly, my dear, I didn't expect
anything like this from a nice
level-headed girl. What are you
driving at?

BETSY
I heard the servants talking about
someone called Mama Rose. They said
she had been "mindless"...

MRS. RAND
Her son drowned. She brooded until
her mind was affected. All the
Houngan did was coax her out of it
with a little practical psychology.

**PAGES ARE MISSING AT THIS POINT AS BETSY AND
JESSICA LEAVE FORT HOLLAND AND TRAVEL ACROSS THE SUGAR CANE
FIELDS TO THE HOUMFORT**

EXT. THE HOUMFORT - NIGHT

LONG SHOT. The camera is behind Betsy and Jessica as they go
toward the Houmfort through the sugar cane. We see this
voodoo temple as they go toward it. It is a rickety

structure of poles and laths, roofed over with a thin thatch of sugar cane and straw. It forms a sort of rude pergola. In the center of this structure is a small, cubicle hut, made of rough boards but neatly whitewashed. From the rafters of the main structure hang crude chandeliers of tin which give light to the ceremonies.

(Please see pages 28 to 31, Life Magazine, December 13, 1937. All the details mentioned above are graphically illustrated,

Near the little hut in the center of the Houmfort, stands an altar covered with a lace tablecloth and littered with a childish jumble of plates, candles, little colored stones and bottles. Before this altar stands the Houngan, the high priest of the voodoo ceremonies, a small, stoop-shouldered man in a worn, white coat and trousers with ragged cuffs. Several mild-looking negroes in white trousers and shirts sit in kitchen chairs on one side of the altar with rada drums between their knees. Grouped around this altar in a loose semicircle are the worshippers, a group of mild-mannered, poorly-but-neatly-dressed negroes. They seem to have made an effort to dress in their best and their best is very poor indeed. As Betsy approaches, she can see familiar faces. As she comes up they turn and look at her. They are not hostile nor greatly surprised; just mildly curious. Leading Jessica by the hand, Betsy takes her place at one end of the semicircle around the altar. Her arrival has in no way interrupted the ceremonies. The Houngan continues to chant before the altar, the rada drums beat and the crowd sings the chorus of the Shango song at the proper intervals. It is all very decorous and decidedly religious in tone. No sooner has Betsy taken her place with the others than the Shango ritual approaches its climax. The Sabreur, a colored man dressed in white shirt and trousers, with a neat dark tie knotted under his collar, comes in, bearing a sabre in his right hand, holding it in stately, almost processional manner. He advances to the altar, strikes it three times and at this signal two colored women dressed in white beguine dresses with square cut necks, an essential part of this religious costume, come forward. One holds a white leghorn chicken and the other carries a white rooster. They come together to the altar and for a moment, the figures of the Houngan, the Sabreur and the two Mam-Lois hide the actual blood sacrifice from us. Only the fact that the drumming and the singing reach a climactic pitch reveal that some Important portion of the ceremony has taken place. Instantly the drumming and the singing stops. A young colored girl jumps up from her seat among the worshippers and begins shivering and quaking, crying out wordlessly. There is a cry from the people.

THE PEOPLE

Put the god in her! Put the god in
her!

The Houngan prances forward, followed by the Sabreur. The Houngan holds a little saucer in his hand with some dark liquid at the bottom of it. He dips four fingers into this

liquid while the girl quivers and writhes before him in religious ecstasy. He marks her forehead with four strange marks, one with each finger. The Sabreur, crying out the name of Shango, four times, points his sabre to the four directions of the compass. There is an immediate transformation in the girl. Her frenzy ceases. She seems to be filled with a jubilant calm and dances into the cleared space before the altar. Her words are no longer meaningless. They have taken shape and form and, when she speaks, she speaks with great resonance as if her voice came from somewhere other than her own throat. She is possessed by the god, Shango.

One by one, people from among the group of devotees dance into the circle, go up to her and beg for favors. One woman leads a little boy up to her. We hear her words as she calls out to the possessed girl:

WOMAN

Make him rich, Shango! Make him
rich!

The girl lays her fingers on the boy's eyes, and then takes his shoulders and turns him around three times, Evidently this is absolute guarantee of an enormous income tax to be paid at St. Sebastian. The woman and her son retire happily, pleased and grinning. Finally, exhausted, the girl possessed of the god, Shango, sinks to her knees and then falls fainting to the floor. Two colored men come in, carry her away. A great cry rises from the voodoo worshippers.

WORSHIPPERS

Damballa! Damballa! Damballa!
Damballa!

The drums find a new rhythm. The Houngan retires to one corner of the altar; the Sabreur to the other. Two young girls, their beguine dresses slashed and torn, dance in from either side. This is a wild and an impassioned dance, a dance to Damballa. There is no singing, only an occasional call from the crowd, "Come to us, Damballa!" The dancers reach the climax of their dance and strike a plastic pose before the altar, each kneeling on one knee, their arms held to their breasts, their foreheads butted together. Although not a muscle moves, one can almost feel the tension of these two bodies. One of the rada drummers comes up and crouches down holding a small drum almost under the chins of the two girls.

The other drummers stop playing and he begins to beat a quick staccato rhythm that grows faster and faster. In this playing, as in the pose of the girls, there is tremendous tension. By now all cries have ceased. Everyone is silent, waiting. Then suddenly, from behind the closed and curiously painted door of the inner Houmfort, a voice speaks. A voice that is light, pleasant and authoritative.

VOICE

(muffled by the door)

Where are my people? Let them
bring me the rice cakes -- let them
dance and be happy --

There is a great ecstatic shout from the voodoo worshippers.

VOODOO WORSHIPPERS

(shouting)

Damballa! Damballa!

The Sabreur dances forward, sword in his left hand and a little plate with rice cakes, in his right. He kneels down and places the plate near the door jamb. A line forms at the door. Betsy leading Jessica by the hand takes her place with the rest. She is third in the line of suppliants. She can see the whole procedure. The suppliant places his forehead against the forehead of the god painted on the door, and speaks. The first suppliant is a weary-looking field hand who shuffles to the door and speaks in such a low tone that his words cannot be heard. The second suppliant is an old woman, thin and work-worn. She speaks sincerely and humbly and Betsy, directly behind her, hears her words.

OLD WOMAN

Damballa -- my son don't take care
of me.

VOICE OF DAMBALLA

Tell him his own little son will
grow big. He, himself, will grow
old. The son learns from the
father. One day your son may stand
here to complain that his boy does
not take care of him.

The old woman turns away, comforted -- hopeful. Betsy looks at her. She can see tears in the old woman's eyes. With Jessica's hand in hers, Betsy takes her place at the door. She puts her forehead against the crudely painted forehead of the god. She talks to the door.

BETSY

Damballa! This woman is sick.

The door swings open slowly. The feeble light of the outer Houmfort does not penetrate the darkness of the inner temple. A hand reaches out from the darkness and takes Betsy's hand and draws her in. The Houngan follows Betsy into the temple. The door shuts behind him. Jessica remains outside, standing before the door.

INT. INNER HOUMFORT - NIGHT

A match flares and a hand brings it forward to light an oil lamp which flares brightly, revealing a little room of

whitewashed boards, bare except for a table on which stands a small iron tripod from which an iron pot is suspended. Although there is no fire under the pot, the steam rises from this receptacle and water boils and bubbles in it. It is the Houngan who has lit the lamp and, on the other side of the table is Mrs. Rand. Her face is serious and unsmiling.

BETSY

(starting forward around
the table)

Mrs. Rand.

MRS. RAND

Wait. Don't draw any conclusions.
Let me explain.

BETSY

But, Mrs. Rand --

MRS. RAND

I knew you'd come. And I knew I'd
have to come up here and talk to
you. I couldn't let you go back
without any word. I came to tell
you again -- Jessica cannot be
cured.

BETSY

But how did you get here? What
are you doing here?

MRS. RAND

I asked you to let me explain. It's a
long story. And not an easy one --

EXT. THE HOUMFORT - NIGHT

Jessica stands patiently where Betsy had left her. The Sabreur and two Mam-Lois stand near her looking at her and talking. We cannot hear what they say. The drumming and the song of joy for the coming of Damballa continue over the scene. Suddenly, as if he had arrived at some decision, the Sabreur, holding his sword stiffly in front of him, starts toward Jessica with little mincing steps.

INT. INNER HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

Mrs. Rand, as if continuing with something she has been talking about for a long time --

MRS. RAND

-- and when my husband died I felt
helpless. They disobeyed me --
things went from bad to worse. All
my husband's dreams of good health,
good sanitation, good morals for
these sweet and gentle people

seemed to die with him.

(pauses)

Then, almost accidentally, I discovered the secret of how to deal with them. There was a girl with a baby -- again and again I begged her to boil the drinking water. She never would. Then I told her the god, Shango, would be pleased and kill the evil spirits in the water if she boiled it. She boiled the water from then on.

BETSY

But you didn't have to come up here.

MRS. RAND

Perhaps not. But I did come here and I found it was so simple to let the gods speak through me. Once started, it seemed such an easy way to do good. I should have known there was no easy way to do good, Betsy.

PAGE MISSING WHERE THE SABREUR CUTS JESSICA'S ARM AND SHE DOES NOT BLEED. THE WORSHIPPERS REALIZE SHE IS A "ZOMBIE".

MRS. RAND (CONT'D)

Betsy! Get her away -- back to the Fort! Do as I say -- they won't hurt you.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHOOTING TOWARD the inner Houmfort. Betsy runs out from the doorway, takes hold of Jessica's arm and starts running with her. There is a movement in the crowd as if they were about to follow her. From the doorway of the inner Houmfort, the Houngan calls out:

HOUNGAN

Trouble. Bad trouble. Let her go.

The crowd subsides.

DISSOLVE

EXT. THE BANYAN TREE -- NIGHT

Betsy and Jessica pass quickly under the dead goat, on their way home.

EXT. GARDEN AT FORT HOLLAND -- NIGHT

Betsy comes out of the tower door, closing it behind her very quietly and cautiously. She starts across the garden toward her room. From the shadows, Holland steps out barring her

way.

HOLLAND

Where have you been, Miss Connell?

There is a pause. Holland stands looking at her, taking in her bedraggled appearance.

BETSY

(wearily)

I wanted to help you.

HOLLAND

Help me? How?

BETSY

I took Mrs. Holland to the Houmfort. I thought they might cure her.

HOLLAND

You have deliberately endangered Mrs. Holland's life. There's no telling what you may have started with this insanity. Why did you do it?

BETSY

(in a low tone)

I told you.

HOLLAND

Because you wanted to give my wife back to me? Why should that mean anything to you?

BETSY

(not looking at him)

You know why. You saw it the other night at the piano. You turned away from me.

HOLLAND

(putting his hand on her shoulder, looking into her face very closely)

What I saw the other night, I didn't dare believe, Betsy --

Betsy tries to turn away from him. He grips her shoulders tightly.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

I thought I was looking at a woman who loved me and had compassion for me. Yet you made that trip to the Houmfort to bring Jessica back to

me --

BETSY

Yes.

Holland pulls her close to him, looks down into her eyes.

HOLLAND

You think I love Jessica and want her back. It is like you to think that -- clean, decent thinking.

BETSY

(simply)

She was beautiful.

HOLLAND

I hated her.

Betsy looks up at him, astounded by his words.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

Her selfishness made her empty and dead. She was a possession, a beautiful possession to own and hold -- but I never had a moment's peace or happiness with her.

They stand there, close together, looking at each other. Suddenly Holland puts her arms around her.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

Betsy --

She lifts her face, with a smile of complete love and trust. Holland studies her face longingly, but does not kiss her.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

I should never have brought you here.

BETSY

There's no happiness for me anywhere else --

Holland shakes his head slowly, hopelessly.

BETSY (cont'd)

(pleading)

Paul, I don't want you to be alone, unhappy --

Holland lets his arms drop from about her shoulders.

HOLLAND

(coldly)

I may prefer it that way.

They stand looking at each other. The garden is still with the dead, heavy stillness of their hopelessness. Then, from the direction of the Houmfort, there is the sound of a single conch blowing, loudly and insistent, a thinner, higher call than we have heard before.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

Mrs. Rand, in a simple afternoon dress, is seated on the sofa. Before her is a coffee table with a silver tea service. She is engaged in pouring tea. Betsy is beside her helping her. Rand, in working clothes, is in an armchair near the sofa with a highball in his hand. Also seated, and facing Mrs. Rand and Betsy, is Dr. Maxwell and Commissioner Jeffries. The latter is a dignified man of early middle-age. He is dressed in a light business suit. At the window, at the rear of the room, stands Holland, talking with a Priest. As the scene opens, Mrs. Rand fills a teacup and holds it up toward Holland. He comes toward her to pick up the cup, the Priest walking with him. As they walk, Holland speaks:

HOLLAND

But I assure you, Father Walters, Miss Connell had no idea of the consequences when she went there.

DR. MAXWELL

Paul, we're not trying to blame Miss Connell. It isn't a question of blame. It's a question of what we are to do with Jessica. The commissioner is very concerned.

JEFFRIES

It has become a serious problem. There's so much gossip, rumor and agitation about the whole thing.

HOLLAND

I know. We've felt it at the mill. The men could hardly keep their minds on their work.

RAND

Well, Jeffries, why come to us about it? Why don't you go up to the Houmfort and put a stop to the drumming and dancing -- that's what causes all the trouble.

JEFFRIES

(shaking his head)

No. You're quite wrong. Right here's the seat of the trouble. Mrs. Holland has become an object of speculation and religious

interest to these people. It's revived all their old superstitions -- Zombies -- and that sort of nonsense.

MRS. RAND

I wouldn't worry too much, Commissioner. It'll pass. We've had this sort of thing before.

DR. MAXWELL

This is something else. They're curious. Curiosity and religious fervor make a strange and explosive mixture.

MRS. RAND

I'm quite sure nothing will happen, Doctor.

JEFFRIES

If I were as sure as you, Mrs. Rand, we wouldn't be here. I'll tell you quite bluntly: for the peace of the island and possibly for her own safety, we've come to ask you to send Mrs. Holland away to St. Thomas.

RAND

To the asylum?

JEFFRIES

I believe there's a kinder name for it, Wesley. At St. Thomas, it's called the Institute for Mental Therapy.

RAND

(getting up)

It doesn't matter what you call it. I can tell you right now Jessica isn't going!

Dr. Maxwell looks first at him, then at Holland, then back to Rand.

DR. MAXWELL

Fortunately, Wesley, this isn't a matter for your decision.

RAND

You mean to say Paul can send her away -- that he can hand her over to strangers -- who'll shut her up -- maybe mistreat her? He hasn't that right!

MRS. RAND
(trying to calm him)
Wesley!

DR. MAXWELL
I am afraid, Wesley, he has that
right. And I will have to urge him
to use it.

RAND
I tell you he hasn't and he
wouldn't dare use it if he had.

JEFFRIES
Why?

RAND
Because he drove Jessica insane --
deliberately -- coldly!

They all look at Holland. There is a long and awkward pause. Holland makes no move to deny by word or gesture his brother's accusation. Finally, however, he breaks the pause by bringing the teacup to his lips.

JEFFRIES
That could be a serious accusation,
Rand, if it weren't a foolish one.

RAND
Foolish? Tell them how foolish it
is, Paul -- tell them!

HOLLAND
(very calmly but with a
little uncertainty)
My guilt in this matter, if any,
Wesley, is not the subject of this
discussion.

RAND
But it is, Paul! Because that's
why you won't dare send Jessica
away!

Holland empties his teacup. Carrying the teacup and saucer very carefully, he walks across to the table in front of Betsy, and sets it down. Betsy looks at him. It is on her look, questioning and puzzled, that we

DISSOLVE

INT. INNER HOUMFORT -- DAY

Although it is broad daylight, the Inner Houmfort is lit with a rush light which burns weakly. The ceremonial pot of boiling water has been removed from the table and, in its

place, squatting cross-legged like a tailor, sits the Sabreur. With one hand he holds upright a small, cheaply-made bisque doll, with flaxen hair. It is dressed in a little white slip. From under the table rim, two dark feminine hands come up to put a white robe on the doll. The moment this garment has been draped on the little doll, a rada drum begins to beat softly in a corner of the room.

THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK to reveal that one of the girls who danced in the voodoo ceremony is kneeling before the table. It is her hands which have dressed the doll. There are about five people in the room, including the three drummers. The Sabreur makes magical passes over the doll.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. GATES OF FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

Betsy and Holland are standing in the gateway. The CAMERA is POINTED TOWARD the garden. On the porch in the b.g. we can see Mrs. Rand.

BETSY

I still can't believe it Paul -- that you wouldn't say a word in your own defense.

HOLLAND

I have no defense. So far as I know -- it is true.

BETSY

You can't believe that. You don't know what viciousness it would take to drive a person mad. You're not vicious or cruel, Paul.

HOLLAND

How do you know I'm not? I was cruel to Jessica. When I got to know her -- when I found out how empty and ungenerous she was, there was something about her -- something smooth and false -- that made we want to hurt her.

BETSY

I can understand that. Everyone feels that way about someone.

HOLLAND

No. It's not just how I felt toward Jessica. I've been cruel to even you.

Betsy, smiling, shakes her head.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

The first night I saw you -- you were looking at the sea. You were enchanted -- and I had to break that enchantment. Do you understand, Betsy -- I had to break it!

Betsy is shaken by this, but she tries to put it aside.

BETSY

You wanted to warn me...

HOLLAND

(disregarding her words)

The night you came to me in this room -- to comfort me, to help me -- I turned you away.

BETSY

Don't, Paul -- don't doubt yourself -- don't make me doubt you.

HOLLAND

I remember words I said to Jessica -- words mixed like to poison -- to hurt her, to madden her.

BETSY

(desperately)

That's past -- that's over and done with...

HOLLAND

I want you to be safe, Betsy. I want to know you're away from this place -- home again, where nothing can harm you -- nothing and no one.

BETSY

You want that?

HOLLAND

Yes.

They stand looking at each other in silence.

DISSOLVE

EXT. THE PORCH -- DAY

Mrs. Rand is seated in an easy chair, obviously enjoying an interlude of leisure. Clement comes from the house, bringing her a bulky newspaper, still in its mail wrapper.

CLEMENT

Would you like to see the paper,
Mrs. Rand?

(proudly)

This is our newest one.

MRS. RAND

Thank you , Clement!

She takes it and starts slitting the wrapper eagerly.

EXT. THE GARDEN AT FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

Betsy and Holland start across the garden to the porch.

EXT. THE PORCH -- DAY

Mrs. Rand sees them and waves a section of the paper in
welcome.

MRS. RAND

You're just in time. Will you join
me in the Sunday paper?

Betsy and Holland sink into porch chairs, looking grateful
for the shade. Betsy takes off her hat and tosses it onto
the coffee table.

HOLLAND

Considering that the paper is three
months old and this isn't Sunday --
no thank you.

BETSY

(smiling)

I guess I'll wait until I'm home,
Mrs. Rand.

Mrs. Rand looks at a page of rotogravure section.

MRS. RAND

(casually)

That's a long wait...

HOLLAND

I'm afraid not. Betsy's leaving
us, Mother.

Mrs. Rand puts down the paper and looks at them, startled.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

She's decided to go on the next
boat.

MRS. RAND

Why, Betsy -- we can't lose you.
You mean too much to us here.

BETSY

That's sweet of you, Mrs. Rand.

HOLLAND

Betsy feels there is nothing she
can do for Jessica...

PAGE MISSING

EXT. GARDEN AT FORT HOLLAND -- DAY

Rand and Dr. Maxwell come through the gate and walk up the
garden path. As they do so, Mrs. Rand comes down the porch
steps. Betsy and Holland follow her.

MRS. RAND

Dr. Maxwell -- it's nice to see
you.

RAND

(grimly)

Dr. Maxwell has very unpleasant
news for us.

HOLLAND

(nervously)

An accident at the mill?

DR. MAXWELL

No -- it's about Mrs. Holland. A
result of our discussion the other
day, I'm afraid.

HOLLAND

What about her?

DR. MAXWELL

In view of all the circumstances,
the commissioner has decided on a
legal investigation.

HOLLAND

Investigation of what?

DR. MAXWELL

Of the nature of Mrs. Holland's
illness. And, of course, the
events which led up to it.

HOLLAND

In other words, I'm on trial.

DR. MAXWELL

I did everything I could to
forestall this, Paul. I don't
think there's any question of your

innocence in the matter. But there's been too much talk. The thing's out of hand.

HOLLAND

Maybe it's better this way, Mother. I'm glad you're going home, Betsy -- you'll be out of the mess.

RAND

But she isn't. She's been subpoenaed.

Holland turns to the Doctor, his face stricken.

DR. MAXWELL

Miss Connell's testimony will be very important.

BETSY

(quietly)

I would have stayed anyway, Dr. Maxwell.

RAND

We're all in it. There won't be a shred of pride or decency left for any of use.

(violently)

Say something, Paul! You've always been good with words. Put some together, now, and tell us that you're not responsible -- that every damnable bit of it doesn't rest squarely on your shoulders!

MRS. RAND

You're wrong, Wesley. The guilt is mine -- all of it.

RAND

(bitterly)

Are you going to lie for him, Mother?

MRS. RAND

Betsy, tell them about the Houmfort. Tell them what you saw there.

BETSY

(protestingly)

Mrs. Rand...

MRS. RAND

You must, Betsy. They'll have to believe you.

BETSY

(reluctantly)

Mrs. Rand was at the Houmfort that night. But there's nothing wrong with that. She's gone there for years -- trying to take care of those people, to help them.

RAND

What do you mean?

HOLLAND

I don't understand...

DR. MAXWELL

I think I do.

(smiling)

I've often talked a little voodoo to get medicine down a patient's throat.

MRS. RAND

It's more than that, Doctor. I've entered into their ceremonies - pretended to be possessed by their gods...

They stare at her, dumbfounded.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

But what I did to Jessica was worse than that. It was when she going away with Wesley. There was that horrible scene.

She turns to Rand.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

You thought she loved you, didn't you? She didn't. She didn't love anyone except herself -- her reflection in the mirror, the look she could bring into a man's eyes.

RAND

That isn't true. You never understood her.

MRS. RAND

(disregarding his protest)

That night, I went to the Houmfort. I kept seeing Jessica's face -- smiling -- smiling because two men hated each other -- because she was beautiful enough to take my family in her hands and break it apart.

The drums seemed to be beating in my head. The chanting -- the lights -- everything blurred together. And then I heard a voice, speaking in a sudden silence. My voice. I was possessed. I said that the woman at Fort Holland was evil and that the Houngan must make her a Zombie.

Dr. Maxwell has been studying Mrs. Rand with a curious, intent expression.

DR. MAXWELL

And what happened then, Mrs. Rand?

MRS. RAND

(unsteadily)

I hated myself. I kept saying to myself over and over again that these people had no power; they had no strange drugs; that there is no such thing as a Zombie.

DR. MAXWELL

Ah -- that's where reason took hold.

MRS. RAND

Yes, I said it, and I made myself believe it. But when I got here, Jessica was already raging with fever.

DR. MAXWELL

Two things had happened, Mrs. Rand. One was that your daughter-in-law had been taken ill with a fever. The other thing -- completely disconnected -- was that you had wished her ill, because she had hurt your sons.

MRS. RAND

(protesting)

But I had no thought of harming her. It wasn't I...

DR. MAXWELL

You were possessed. That is true -- possessed by your subconscious mind. You were in the Houmfort, surrounded by their symbols. To them, nothing worse can happen to a person than to be made into a Zombie. Your subconscious mind

used their own words for evil.

HOLLAND

Dr. Maxwell is right, Mother.

DR. MAXWELL

(gently and kindly)

Emotion tricks all of us, Mrs. Rand. And you are a woman with a very strong conscience. That conscience has been tormenting you. The rest is coincidence. There is no such thing as a Zombie. The dead do not come back to life. Death is final.

From the hills comes the sound of a single conch, loud and thin.

The CAMERA PANS from the group around Mrs. Rand to the tower door. Jessica walks out of it and comes slowly past the fountain.

EXT. HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

The CAMERA IS FOCUSED ON a little five-and-ten-cent store doll about three inches high. It is dressed in a crude imitation of Jessica's loose, belted, white gown. A thread is tied around it and this thread leads off, taut.

The CAMERA PANS ALONG the thread to show us that the other end of the thread, some twenty feet long, is held by a negro, crouched near the altar. Halfway between this man and the doll, the Sabreur, his sword stuck in the mound before him, straddles the thread, his hands clasped around the thread but not touching it. Carre-Four stands watching.

The conch is blowing its strange, magnetic call and the negroes are chanting as they watch the Sabreur and the doll. The Sabreur makes motions as if he were pulling on the thread but still does not touch it. He makes these motions over and over again. The doll moves slowly. Then suddenly stops. The Sabreur's most frantic efforts fail to move it.

OMITTED

EXT. THE GARDEN -- NIGHT

ANOTHER ANGLE -- Jessica comes slowly past the fountain.

RAND'S VOICE

Jessica!

She does not seem to hear but continues walking toward the gate. We hear the sound of running feet. Holland and Betsy run up to Jessica. Holland takes her arm, but she continues to walk forward. He tries to hold her. It is apparent he

cannot do so without the use of considerable force.

BETSY

Jessica! Jessica!

She pays no attention but continues to move forward toward the gate. Betsy, realizing that is something outside of her previous experiences with the woman, has the presence of mind to run forward and slam shut the great wrought-iron gate. Jessica walks up against the gate and stands there, unable to move any further. They stand and look at her perplexed.

EXT. HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

The doll has stopped moving. The Sabreur is exerting all his force. We can see the sweat soaking his white shirt. The others are chanting, louder now, swaying in rhythm with his pulling movements. The conch is being blown with a more insistent and compelling note. Still, the doll-figure refuses to move. The Sabreur stops. The conches are suddenly silenced.

EXT. GARDEN GATE -- NIGHT

In this sudden silence, Holland and Jessica look at each other across the motionless figure of Jessica.

HOLLAND

The Houmfort -- they're trying to get her back there.

Betsy and Holland look at each other. Then Betsy takes Jessica's arm.

BETSY

Come with me, Jessica.

Obedient again, Jessica allows Betsy to turn her around and lead her back to the open tower door. As Betsy and Jessica go into the bedroom, the door closes behind them.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE HOUMFORT -- EARLY EVENING

CLOSE SHOT of an enormous black hand. The fingers of this hand are spread out limply. On this hand stands the little five-and-ten-cent store doll which represents Jessica. From beneath this hand, another smaller black hand comes in and closes the great fingers around the doll.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to show the exterior of the Houmfort. The light is fading. The posts of the Houmfort and the figures of several voodoo worshippers are outlined in silhouette against the darkening sky. A single rada drum is

being beaten in light, quick rhythm. Someone sets fire to a heaped-up bonfire of dry leaves. The flames blazing up illuminate the scene more clearly, so that we can see a small group of voodoo adepts squatting on their heels in a ring around the bonfire. Near the bonfire stand Carre-Four and the Sabreur, with the drummer crouched behind them. The Sabreur takes the doll from Carre-Four's hand and holds it a foot or so away from him. The great black hand reaches for it. Again the Sabreur takes the doll away and dances off with mincing steps to a distance of a few yards. Carre-Four lumbers after him, his hand extended. Again, the Sabreur lets him take the doll.

CLOSE SHOT of Carre-Four's hand with the doll upon it. From underneath, the smaller hand of the Sabreur comes in and closes the great black fingers over the little white doll.

DISSOLVE

INT. MRS. HOLLAND'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The room is in darkness. In the faint light from the barred windows, we see Betsy sleeping on the chaise lounge. A shadow moves across her face. Through the window, we see the great, cadaverous figure of Carre-Four. His hand closes around the bars, his face presses against them. Then he lets go of the bars and slips out of sight. His figure reappears at the next window. Again, he tries the bars and peers into the room. Again, he vanishes in the darkness. We hear a faint sound from the tower. Betsy wakens. Her eyes go quickly to the bed, where the outline of Jessica's figure reassures her. There is another muffled, dragging sound from the tower. Betsy sits up, listens intently. She gets up and goes toward the door leading into the tower. At the foot of Jessica's bed, she stops to grab up Jessica's white negligee, throwing it around her she continues to the door and opens it slowly and cautiously.

INT. THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE TOWER -- NIGHT

Betsy steps into the lower tower room. The thick blackness of the place is faintly lit by the open door into Jessica's windowed bedroom. She stands at the foot of the circling stone stairs, straining to see into the darkness above. Overhead, there is a sudden commotion of wings and shrilling - something has disturbed the bats. Very slowly and hesitantly, Betsy moves up a few steps.

The CAMERA PANS UP from Betsy, around the circling walls of the stairs, to where the sharp blade of light from the slit window of the tower strikes across the wall. A big black hand slides down the shaft of light. The CAMERA PANS BACK to Betsy. She can see nothing, but she hears the dry, whispering sound of the hand moving along the wall. She backs down the few steps and across to the tower door leading to the garden.

EXT. THE GARDEN AT FORT HOLLAND -- NIGHT

Betsy slips out of the tower door. She stands irresolutely by the fountain, watching and listening. She can see nothing in the black patch of the open tower door. She walks slowly into the garden. There is a faint sound behind her. Fearfully, Betsy looks back across her shoulder. She sees a shadow slip into the deeper shadows of the fountain, merge with them. Quickly she moves behind a tall shrub, looks again toward the tower. She sees nothing.

A CLOSE SHOT of the fountain shows the surface of the water in the cistern broken by a spreading ring of ripples. Taut with fear, Betsy leaves the shadow of the tall shrub and slips over to a bush nearer the living room porch. As if in answer to this move, a whispering rustle comes from the screen of bamboo against the tower-wing of the house. She stares toward the bamboo. She sees nothing.

A CLOSE SHOT of the bamboo shows the leaves trembling slightly. Betsy looks across the empty, defenseless space between herself and the porch steps. Steeling herself, she moves into it, walking with the slowness of nightmare fear, looking from side to side with the slightest possible move of her head. At the foot of the steps, she turns to look back at the bamboo. A distorted shadow slithers out from under the stalks. Her panic released, Betsy runs up the steps, down the shadowy porch to the door of Holland's bedroom.

BETSY

(in a very low, choked
cry)

Paul...Paul...

She flings herself against the door, turns the handle, and runs into the room, closes the door behind her. Into the space before the porch steps moves the great gaunt figure of Carre-Four. This is our first full sight of him in the scene. He is bare to the waist, wearing only a pair of dark, ragged trousers. He starts up the steps.

EXT. PORCH -- NIGHT

Betsy comes out of the door to Holland's bedroom, followed by Holland who has put on a robe. In a CLOSE SHOT, we see the shock that springs into their two faces as they see Carre-Four facing them across the length of the porch, moving toward them, a single slow step at a time. As Carre-Four sees Betsy's white-clad figure, his hands come up slowly from his sides.

HOLLAND

You! What are you doing here?

Carre-Four continues his slow, implacable move forward. His lifted hands start reaching outward.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

Get out of here.

Carre-Four comes on relentlessly, his great arms outstretched toward Betsy, the enormous hands curving to seize her. Fear comes into Holland's face. With a quick gesture, he presses Betsy back and steps in front of her.

HOLLAND (cont'd)

(a little uncertainly)

Get out of here --

Carre-Four is almost upon them. His shoulders press forward as he reaches out.

MRS. RAND

(quiet, with great
authority)

Carre-Four!

The single word freezes Carre-Four into immobility. Astounded, Betsy and Holland turn to see Mrs. Rand at the far end of the porch -- her face and hair pale above a dark, coat like robe.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

Carre-Four. Go back.

Slowly, the giant figure obeys. Carre-Four turns to face her. His hands relax, his arms fall to his sides again. In his blind fashion, Carre-Four moves back across the porch, turns and goes down the steps to the garden. Holland, who has been watching this transfixed, starts after him.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

Paul!

Holland pauses at the head of the stairs and turns to her.

MRS. RAND (cont'd)

Let him go. Don't touch him, don't
try to stop him!

Betsy has come down the porch behind Holland and she and Mrs. Rand stand together. All three of them look into the garden.

Carre-Four slips through the gates and is immediately lost to sight in the darkness of the road beyond.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. BETSY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

As Betsy steps into her room, she sees Rand standing by one of the windows. In his face and his posture are complete

dejection, utter misery.

RAND

Betsy, can I talk to you a minute?

BETSY

(with quiet sympathy)

Of course, Wes.

She waits, inquiringly. Rand takes a few steps into the room and turns to stare through the door, across the garden to Jessica's room.

RAND

Does she suffer? Does she know what she is?

BETSY

I don't know.

(trying to ease the truth)

I once asked Dr. Maxwell the same question. He said he thought she was like a sleepwalker who would never waken.

RAND

She hated sleep. She used to say it was a thief -- stealing away her life, an hour at a time...

BETSY

(trying to speak lightly)

Not to a nurse. Sleep is a cure.

Betsy crosses to the dressing table and takes a small cotton stoppered bottle from a drawer. She pulls out the cotton and shakes two little pills into her hand.

BETSY (cont'd)

(going to Rand)

In fact, I'm prescribing sleep for you right now.

She puts them into his hand.

BETSY (cont'd)

Be a good patient. Take these and go to bed.

RAND

(suddenly)

She's dead. The dead ought to be buried.

BETSY

(gently)

But she's not dead, Wes.

RAND

(violently)

You know what she is! That's death
-- no mind, no senses -- no love,
no hate, no feeling -- nothing!

BETSY

Please, Wes, do as I ask. You must
rest, you must sleep.

Rand turns his hand and lets the tablets fall to the floor.

RAND

(dully)

She should have rest.

(looking up at Betsy)

She shouldn't have to walk and
walk, in that black emptiness.

(with realization)

You could set her free.

You could give her rest. You could
give her rest.

Betsy, alarmed and troubled, puts her hand on his arm.

BETSY

Don't think of it, Wes. I couldn't
do that.

Rand turns and takes hold of her arm pleadingly, urgently.

RAND

You could do it. You have drugs --
it would be so quick -- a single
injection. If you won't do it for
her sake, do it for Paul.

Betsy shakes her head.

BETSY

No, Wes.

RAND

Jessica was never any good for
Paul. You will be, you are. And
Mother -- seeing Jessica day after
day -- never able to escape, never
able to forget. Please, Betsy --
it's only merciful.

He looks into her eyes and sees the finality of her refusal
there. His hand drops from her arm and he turns away.

BETSY

(with great pity)

Her heart beats, Wes. She

breathes. That's life -- I once
took an oath to guard life.

Rand straightens up and takes a deep breath.

RAND

I know. I shouldn't have asked it.

He starts slowly to the open door.

DISSOLVE

EXT. HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

The Houngan and the Sabreur are working over the doll again.
It begins to move.

EXT. GARDEN -- NIGHT

SHOOTING TOWARD the gates from behind Rand where he still
sits at the table. Jessica, dressed in a white nightgown,
comes slowly out of the tower and moves toward the gates.
Rand watches her. The gate stops her progress.

EXT. THE HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

The doll has stopped despite the frenzied efforts of the
Sabreur and the wild chanting of the voodoo adepts. Nothing
can make it move again. There is a whispered consultation
between the Sabreur and the Houngan. The Houngan lifts his
hand and the drums begin to beat a light rapid rhythm.

The Sabreur dances toward the doll, making a menacing move
with his saber. When he reaches the little image, he puts
the point of his saber in the ground and draws from his
bodkin, a long needle. With one swift movement, he stabs
this through the doll's back.

EXT. GARDEN -- NIGHT

As seen from Rand's ANGLE. He rises slowly, drains the
liquor in his glass, walks forward to where Jessica stands at
the gate. He looks at her for a long moment and then, as if
a resolve had formed in his mind, goes to the statue of St.
Sebastian, takes hold of one of the iron arrows. He tugs at
it, but it refuses to come free. He puts his foot up on the
wooden breast of the statue and gives a hard pull. The long,
iron arrow comes out in his hand. With this in his hand, he
walks to where Jessica stands. He pulls back the latch bar
and throws the gates wide open. Jessica moves out into the
darkness. Rand follows her.

EXT. ROAD IN FRONT OF FORT HOLLAND -- NIGHT

SHOOTING TOWARD the gates. Jessica, followed by Rand, walks
into the darkness.

INT. HOUMFORT -- NIGHT

The kettle of water, without a fire, is still boiling. The CAMERA MOVES AROUND the room to show that it is empty. Then MOVES UP ON a small shelf before which a candle is burning. On this shelf, a few inches above the candle flame, stands the cheap little doll dressed like Jessica, with the needle in its back. Suddenly, the doll falls forward on its face.

EXT. SEASHORE -- DAY FOR NIGHT

Rand carrying Jessica's dead body in his arm, comes down to the sand.

The surf. Rand reverently places the body in the lapping water of the surf. The backward drag of an outgoing wave draws it silently away from him. He watches it go.

A returning wave, tall and forward curving, upthrusts the body of Jessica so that we see it in the semi-transparency of the wave.

MED. CLOSE SHOT of Rand. The body comes floating to his feet.

Rand carries the body a little further into the surf so that the waves when they come in flow past his knees. Again, the outsurge takes the body away.

A returning wave brings Jessica's body back again. (There is a famous painting by Boecklin, called "And the Sea Gave Up its Dead" which should somewhat influence the composition of this scene.)

MED. CLOSE SHOT -- Rand. He walks forward to secure the returning body. This time, he picks it up in his arms and starts wading forward.

Rand is walking forward with the body in his arms. The sea is up to his hips. The outgoing surge tugs at him. He struggles to regain his footing, misses and is drawn out to sea.

EXT. SEA -- NIGHT -- (PROCESS)

The stars seem to have fallen to the surface of the sea. We see lights here and there, only a few feet from the water, flaring and sparkling.

EXT. SEA -- FLOUNDER FISHERMAN -- NIGHT -- (PROCESS)

MED. LONG SHOT. This is a closer shot of the scene and identifies the lights. There are torches held in the hands of black fisherman, up to their knees in water, spearing flounders by torch light.

EXT. SEA -- NIGHT -- (PROCESS)

CLOSEUP -- flounder fisherman. He is moving slowly through the shallow water his spear raised. Suddenly, he makes a darting strike with his spear. With a cry of triumph, he holds aloft a struggling flounder. He disengages it from the spear and puts it into the sack slung from his belt.

MED. CLOSE SHOT -- another fisherman. He, too, is moving stealthily forward, spear poised, torch held low. Something on the surface of the water near-by attracts his attention and he lifts up his torch, the periphery of the light widening as he holds it aloft. The widening light reveals the dead body of Jessica afloat on the surface of the water, pallid and dreamlike, her wet, white garments clinging like cerements. The fisherman looks for a moment at the body and then calls off to one of the other fishermen.

LONG SHOT -- flounder fishermen, their lights all converging on a central light.

EXT. BEACH -- NIGHT

MED. CLOSE SHOT. A group of flounder fishermen come out onto the land. They are carrying the bodies of Jessica and Rand. They start in the direction of Fort Holland.

EXT. GATES AT FORT HOLLAND -- NIGHT

The fishermen come in bearing their tragic burdens. Rand's body is carried on the shoulders of four fishermen. Behind walks Carre-Four and in his gigantic arms is the body of Jessica; her wet hair and garments dripping from the great arms of the still-living Zombie. The upheld torches and spears of the fishermen give a weird, processional feeling to the group.

EXT. DINING TERRACE -- NIGHT

Holland, Betsy and Mrs. Rand stand watching the fishermen bringing in the bodies of the dead. Across the garden from the fountain stands the little group of house servants also watching. The procession passes the fountain of St. Sebastian and the CAMERA GOES IN to show the glistening sad face of the saint.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. STREET CORNER -- OTTOWA -- DAY

The CAMERA, as in the first portion of the script, PANS DOWN the sign, pausing for a moment at the firm name of the Parrish & Burden Sugar Company. Then it CONTINUES ITS DOWNWARD MOVEMENT to disclose a portion of the street itself, In the falling snow Betsy is standing with her back to the camera, looking up at the sign.

BETSY'S VOICE

(narration)

It was a sad time at Fort Holland. Mother Rand was completely broken by the tragedy. But she's a woman of courage. She's begun to build up her life again at St. Sebastian -- It's a good life and a full one. As for Paul and me -- it wasn't a simple problem for either of us.

A CLOSER SHOT of Betsy as she stands waiting. She is dressed in a fur-collared coat and has a little round fur cap on her head. She looks very attractive and very happy. The door of the office opens and Paul Holland comes out, muffling up his overcoat. Betsy takes a half step to meet him. He takes her arm with a well-used and familiar gesture.

PAUL

Sorry to keep you waiting, darling! I thought I'd never get away. Invoices and stock lists piling up all day long. The balmy tropics were never like this.

BETSY

(giving his arm a little squeeze as they start walking toward the camera)

I wouldn't have minded waiting. I never mind waiting for you -- only we're dining with the Wilkins. I don't want it said all over Ottawa that the Hollands are always late.

They pass the camera which HOLDS for a moment on the sign and the falling snow, then we

FADE OUT

THE END