

LADY IN THE LAKE

From: Raymond Chandler
7-5-45

THE LADY IN THE LAKE

FADE IN:

1

INT. CELL BLOCK - BAY CITY JAIL

A row of cells on each side of a wide corridor. Overhead lights are burning, but behind the high barred windows it is daylight. From the cells come various sounds: a man playing a mouth organ, a drunk talking to himself, etc. A steel door opens and closes out of shot. Two jailers move along one side of the cell block and unlock a door.

1st Jailer (into cell)
All right, Wilson -- out.

There is no answer from the cell.

2nd Jailer (a sadistic type; roughly)
Snap into it, sonny-boy! You're up for sentence. A nice cozy little first degree.

A short, white-faced, tough-looking kid, Wilson, comes slowly out of the cell. He is fully dressed except that he has no tie on and no laces in his shoes.

Wilson (in a tough, corner-of-the-mouth voice)
Gimme my necktie!

1st Jailer
You don't need no necktie, boy.

2nd Jailer
The judge ain't fussy.

Wilson
Gimme my shoelaces.

1st Jailer (good-naturedly)
Aw, come on, Wilson.

2nd Jailer (sarcastically)
Shoelaces, he says. When you walk into that gas chamber, you'll walk barefoot.

Wilson lunges at him, brings the heel of his hand up against the under side of the man's nose. There is a brief, fierce struggle. Wilson's hands are twisted behind him. Handcuffs are snapped on his wrists. There is blood on the second jailer's face.

CONTINUED

1 CONTINUED: (2)

They start pushing Wilson along the cells, CAMERA PANNING WITH THEM past the faces of prisoners standing in the cell doors staring with various expressions. From some of them come various ad libs, such as:

Attaboy, Wilson! (or)

The little guys are always tough. (or)

(Addressed to the jailer) On you the blood looks good.

Etc.

CAMERA PANS TO A CELL at the door of which stands a man obviously not of a criminal type, although his collar is torn and there is a bruise on his cheek. He is smoking a cigarette and he watches the men pass with a faint smile of contempt. This is PHILIP MARLOWE. CAMERA HOLDS ON HIS FACE and his eyes follow the procession. The steel door is heard opening.

2 THE CELL BLOCK DOOR - OPEN

As the two jailers and Wilson pass through it. A third jailer is waiting beside it. Beyond is a short, wide passageway ending in the jail elevator, the door of which is open. Inside is a uniformed operator and two armed deputies waiting to receive the prisoner. (Note: They are not allowed to leave the elevator while armed.) In front of the elevator, to one side, there is a small desk with a lamp on it and behind this sits the jailer in charge of the floor. As the two jailers and Wilson move towards the elevator, the third jailer enters the cell block and pulls the door shut behind him.

3 EXT. MARLOWE'S CELL

The third jailer comes into the shot, unlocks the cell door, motions with his head. Marlowe comes out slowly. The cigarette is still in his mouth. The jailer re-locks the door.

Jailer

Kill that butt.

Marlowe takes the cigarette out of his mouth, drops it on the floor and steps on it.

Jailer (angrily indicating the butt)

Pick that up!

Marlowe gives him a level stare and doesn't move.

3

CONTINUED: (2)

Jailer

Tough boy, huh? Okay. Next time we get you in here, we'll teach you some manners. Go on -- get moving!
(They start out of shot)

4

INT. BOOKING ROOM - BAY CITY JAIL

It opens off the main floor corridor. One side of it is a long wooden counter. One end of this is enclosed in a wire grill like an old-fashioned teller's cage. Behind the open part of the counter the Sergeant in charge of the desk is seated. Leaning against the outside of the desk is a big, powerfully built plainclothes dick (LIEUTENANT DEGARMO). He is a tough, old-school type of cop, stony, unsmiling, a bad man to fool with.

Sergeant (to Degarmo)

Have any fun last night, Lieutenant?

Degarmo

Tossed a private dick in the can -- if you call that fun.

Sergeant

Oh yeah. A fella named Marlowe. He's on his way down. What did he pull on you, Lieutenant?

Degarmo

He beat up on a female impersonator.

Sergeant

Is that bad?

Degarmo

That ain't why we cooled him off.

The Sergeant looks off out of shot.

Sergeant

Here he comes now.

Degarmo does not turn. The jailer and Marlowe come into the shot, go up to the desk. The jailer puts a printed slip on the desk. The Sergeant initials it, hands it back. Jailer goes out of shot.

Sergeant (to Marlowe)

Get your stuff from the property clerk.

(He indicates the cage at the end of the desk.
Marlowe is about to turn away)

CONTINUED

4

CONTINUED: (2)

Remember me at all? Degarmo

Fine. Marlowe

Sleep good? Degarmo

Fine. Marlowe

Like our jail? Degarmo

Fine. Marlowe

Don't you know any words but fine? Degarmo

Not right now. Not in here. Marlowe.
(He turns away, goes over to the property clerk's wicket)

Name? Property clerk

Philip Marlowe. Marlowe

The clerk turns, takes several heavy manila envelopes out of a pigeonhole, selects one, puts it down on the counter. He pushes a form forward.

Sign there. Property clerk (indicating line on form)

Marlowe picks up a pencil which is carefully chained to the desk, signs his name as the property clerk pushes the envelope through the grill. Degarmo comes into the shot and picks up the envelope as Marlowe finishes signing. He tears off the end and empties the contents onto the ledge.

Let's see is it all here. Degarmo

He picks up Marlowe's wallet from a collection of personal articles including a wristwatch, keys, knife, silver, fountain pen, two or three letters, a pipe and tobacco pouch, etc. Degarmo opens the wallet, looks inside, fingering some money.

4

CONTINUED: (3)

Degarmo

Eighteen bucks. You ain't exactly dough heavy, are you, shamus?

Marlowe doesn't answer. He is strapping on his wrist-watch, replacing various small articles in his pockets. Degarmo throws the wallet down, picks up the letters. One of them catches his eye. He takes out the folded sheet inside the envelope, opens it up, reads it and laughs. He turns towards the desk Sergeant.

Degarmo

Hey, Sarge. Get an earful of this.

(He reads in a voice that is meant to be mincing)
 "Kingsley Publications, Incorporated, November 12, 1945. My dear Mr. Marlowe. Your story, "He Woke Up Bleeding" is very much in line with material we need for one of our magazines. Would it be convenient for you to call at this office and discuss it with us on November 15 between two and four P.M. Most sincerely yours, A. Fromsett."

Marlowe has now finished putting his stuff back in his pockets. Degarmo re-folds the letter, hands it to him.

Degarmo

Magazine stories, huh? "He Woke Up Bleeding". I think I like that.

Marlowe

Maybe it'll happen to you.

(He picks up the manila envelope, opens it with his fingers and peers inside)

Degarmo

You short something?

Marlowe

A piece of paper. Nothing important.

Degarmo (grinning)

Maybe that's what Captain Weber wants to talk to you about. Let's go sec.

(He turns with a jerk of the head)

5

INT. MAIN HALLWAY

As Degarmo and Marlowe come out of the booking room. There are people moving up and down the hallway, some standing around waiting, jail visitors, civil employees of the City Hall, a couple of uniformed officers, in the background, the elevators. Degarmo and Marlowe walk along to a door lettered "Captain of Detectives". Degarmo opens the door. They start in.

6

INT. CAPTAIN WEBER'S OFFICE

Captain Weber is seated behind his desk with his back to a couple of uncurtained windows. He is a middle-aged, well-dressed man, rather small for a cop, and with none of the conventional mannerisms. He looks up from some papers as Degarmo brings Marlowe in, leans back in his chair and waits silently as they come up to his desk.

Degarmo
This is Marlowe, Chief.

Weber nods. Degarmo makes himself comfortable in a chair at the end of the desk. Marlowe stands.

Degarmo
He slept good and he likes our jail. Everything's fine with him -- except he's short a piece of paper.

Weber
A promissory note for five thousand dollars with the maker's name torn off.
(He finds it on his desk and holds it up)

Marlowe
Correct.

Weber
Who's this Leslie Price the note's made out to?

Marlowe
A card sharp who looks like a girl and dresses like a girl and picks up drunks in bars. Been operating for months in that apartment on Gage Street.

Weber (to Degarmo)
Have we picked up this character yet?

Degarmo
Not yet, Chief. He slipped out a little ahead of us.

Marlowe
The boys probably stopped for lunch.

Weber
Don't be funny. It's wasted on me.

Degarmo
We got there in time to catch you pulling the joint apart.

Marlowe grins at him.

Weber (tapping the note)
Find any more of these?

6

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe
I was only looking for one.

Weber
And you refused to tell us who you're working for.

Marlowe
The name of a client is always confidential. If it wasn't, I wouldn't have a client.

Weber (sharply)
You're talking to the police now.

Marlowe
Sure -- but that's not how I make my living.

Weber throws the note down on the desk. Marlowe quietly reaches for it, picks it up and puts it in his pocket.

Weber
Okay, Marlowe. Let me tell you something. You happened to walk in on a racket we hadn't caught up with. That doesn't mean we wouldn't have caught up with it. I suppose that private license you've got must mean something or they wouldn't give it to you. But it doesn't give you the right to start trouble in my district without letting me in on what you're after.

(Pause)
Isn't that reasonable?

Marlowe (quietly)
It sounds reasonable. But it just doesn't work out that way.

Weber
It's going to have to work out that way in this town. Any time it doesn't, you'll get what you got last night.

Degarmo
Only faster and tougher. Me, I don't like private dicks. Never met one yet that wasn't a crook. Any time -- any place.

Marlowe
I've heard of people that don't like cops. Seems impossible, doesn't it?

Degarmo starts to get up. Weber stops him with a gesture.

Weber
All right, Marlowe. You're on your own. Just don't forget what I said.

DISSOLVE TO:

7

INT. OF AN OLD-FASHIONED GRILLED ELEVATOR IN MOTION - RISING

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE FRONT OF THE CAB including operator's head and shoulders. The elevator stops, the doors open. CAMERA MOVES OUT OF IT into a corridor lined with imitation marble, pebbled glass doors. The steps of a man walking are heard. CAMERA SEES WHAT HE SEES. It reaches a door, turns, moves in close. On the glass panel is painted in black paint "PHILIP MARLOWE, INVESTIGATIONS". The door starts to open.

8

INT. ANTE ROOM - MARLOWE'S OFFICE

As Marlowe comes in dressed exactly as we last saw him. (His collar is still torn, there is still a bruise on his cheek). His hat is pulled down over his eyes and he looks mad. He pushes the door shut, stops. CAMERA PANS QUICKLY to what he sees. A middle-aged, well-dressed man (Mr. Buckle) sitting at the end of a table on which there are a few old magazines. He holds one of them in his hand, has obviously been leafing it through impatiently. He throws it aside, takes out a handsome platinum pocket watch and looks at it.

Buckle (curtly)

I've been waiting an hour and a half. My time is valuable.

Marlowe

Sorry, Mr. Buckle.

He moves past him, unlocks a communicating door, opens it, makes a motion for Buckle to go in ahead of him.

Buckle (rising stiffly)

I had an appointment to meet you here at nine o'clock. What delayed you?

Marlowe

Don't you ever get late to work?

Buckle

I'm the president of my company.

Marlowe

So am I. After you.

(Buck starts past him angrily)

9

INT. MARLOWE'S PRIVATE OFFICE

It is just an office with a minimum of furniture and none of that new. Buckle has just entered.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED: (2)

He stands with his hat in his hands frowning. Marlowe comes in behind him, shuts the door.

Marlowe

Park yourself.

He crosses to the corridor door, stoops down, picks up four or five pieces of mail, carries them around behind his desk glancing at them as he does so, then drops the whole bunch of them in the waste paper basket. He sits down, takes a pipe out of his pocket and starts to fill it. Buckle sits down opposite him, still very indignant.

Buckle

Well? I'm waiting for your report.

Marlowe has finished filling his pipe. He puts a match to it, speaks through the smoke.

Marlowe

Ever been in jail?

Buckle (indignantly)

Certainly not. Is it likely?

Marlowe

I have. All last night. I had canned corned beef hash for breakfast. Ever eat canned corned beef hash? Don't bother to answer. Certainly not. You're the president of your company. Okay, Mr. Buckle. You owe me two hundred and fifty dollars.

Buckle leans forward eagerly, then controls himself and gets the sourpuss expression back on his face. Marlowe takes the note out of his pocket and throws it on the desk. Buckle grabs for it.

Buckle

Who tore my name off? You?

Marlowe

I swallowed it. Just before the cops got me. It didn't taste good either. What business did you say you're in, Mr. Buckle?

Buckle

I manufacture sanitary appliances. Why?

Marlowe

Maybe that explains it.

Buckle

Eh?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED: (3)

He tears the note into small pieces and lets the pieces fall through his fingers into an ashtray. He is smiling.

Buckle (complacently)
Twenty cents on the dollar. Not such a bad idea in the circumstances, was it? Not that I enjoy paying money to crooks.

Marlowe says nothing.

Buckle (expanding a little)
You've done very well. Very well indeed. Now that it's over, I don't mind admitting I was rather nervous about trusting you with all that money.

(He chuckles)
Especially when you didn't show up this morning.

(Marlowe stares at him fixedly)
But after all, you are bonded, aren't you?

Marlowe
About that two hundred and fifty dollars, Mr. Buckle --

Buckle
Yes, yes, of course. A pleasure.

He takes a large wallet out of his pocket, extracts some bills from it and pushes them across the desk. Marlowe picks them up, counts them, snaps them, folds them, tucks them into his pocket. Buckle starts to get up.

Buckle
I may have another commission for you some time.
(He laughs lightly)
Of less embarrassing nature to me, I hope.

Marlowe
Wait a minute.
(He takes a fountain pen out of his pocket, unscrews it, fishes inside, pulls out some tightly rolled bills, spreads them out, throws them across the desk)
Better take that with you.
(Buckle picks the money up wonderingly, looks at it)
I don't like to pay money to crooks either.

Buckle
Well -- really. This is more than I expected. I'm delighted to have made your acquaintance, Mr. Marlowe. Delighted. It's always a pleasure to meet an honest man. Especially an honest man with brains.
(Marlowe just looks at him)
Well, I guess I'll have to be running along now. Have a lot of business to attend to.
(He puts his hand out)

9

CONTINUED: (4)

Marlowe

Did anybody ever tell you you have a face like a fried egg?

Buckle

Wha -- what's that?

(His mouth hangs open like the mouth of a
hooked fish)

How dare you, sir! How dare you speak to me like that!

Marlowe (pretending to be startled)

Shucks. Did I say that out loud?

Buckle gobbles at him a moment, then turns and almost runs out of the office. As the door is heard to close behind him, Marlowe is still staring at it. His face is absolutely expressionless. He doesn't even smile. Very slowly he takes a letter out of his pocket and opens it. It is the letter from Kingsley Publications, Inc. CAMERA MOVES IN ON HIS FACE which is now thoughtful and speculative. Fingers go up and feel the bruise on his cheek and the stubble on his chin.

DISSOLVE TO:

10

CLOSEUP

Of two beautifully manicured feminine hands holding artist's sketch for the cover of a very lurid pulp magazine. The sketch on heavy cardboard shows a beautiful young girl, pressed back against the wall in an attitude of conventional terror, her mouth open to scream, etc. Her dress is partly torn off and on her arm ugly red scratches drip blood. On her, advances a savage-looking individual holding a blood-stained cheese grater. His face is contorted with sadistic glee. Over this, is heard a cool, cultivated attractive girl's voice:

Voice (o.s.)

Not enough gore, Dick. Not nearly enough gore.

CAMERA PULLS BACK SLOWLY to show ADRIENNE FROMSETT seated behind the desk in her private office in Kingsley Publications, Inc. She is a tall, elegant brunette, very pretty with a rather severe expression. A lot of money has been spent on her appearance and none of it has been wasted. She is in her middle twenties, perhaps a little older. Beside her stands the artist, a young man with his sleeves rolled up. They are looking at the sketch together.

Dick

That's because you don't see it in color, Miss Fromsett.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED: (2)

Adrienne

Color or no color, there's not enough blood. Take it away and put more blood in.

(She pushes the drawing into the hands of Dick who shrugs)

Dick

Okay, but don't forget it's got to go through the mails.

Adrienne

Let me worry about that.

Her office door opens and a girl secretary comes in and closes the door behind her.

Secretary

A Mister Marlowe to see you, Miss Fromsett.

Adrienne

All right, Dick, give it a whirl.

He takes the drawing and exits.

Adrienne (to secretary)

And just who is Mister Marlowe -- supposing I cared?

Secretary (a little flustered)

Something about a story. He says you wrote to him to come in between two and four this afternoon.

Adrienne

All right. Show him in.

The secretary exits. Adrienne watches the door close, then quickly picks up a manuscript from her desk, glances at it and pushes it under some other papers. She is calmly lighting a cigarette in a long holder when the door opens and Marlowe comes in. He is freshly shaved, bathed, is wearing a well-pressed suit, and the talcum powder on his face almost covers the bruise.

Adrienne

Sit down, please, Mr. Marlowe. I'll be right with you.

(She gives him a quick look-over, turns to her dictograph box and makes a probably quite unnecessary call which goes like this:)

George? Call Morgan's agent. Tell him four hundred is our absolute top on that twenty thousand worder for Putrid Stories.

(She releases the dictograph key and turns to Marlowe)

Let me see. You sent us some kind of a story, didn't you?

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED: (3)

Marlowe

I must have. Somebody named A. Fromsett wrote me a letter about it.

Adrienne

I'm A. Fromsett. Adrienne Fromsett to be precise.

Marlowe

Married or single?

Adrienne

Miss Adrienne Fromsett. Does that answer your question?

Marlowe

Not necessarily.

Adrienne stares at him coldly for a moment, then her eyes drop. She starts to paw about in her desk.

Adrienne

Let me see -- I thought I had your story --

Marlowe reaches across and moves a couple of papers, picks up his manuscript and hands it to her.

Marlowe

You have.

Adrienne

Yes -- thanks.

(She looks down at the manuscript)

He Woke Up Bleeding, huh? Nice title. By Philip Marlowe. Nice name. Have you done much writing?

Marlowe

That much.

Adrienne

Really? You do very well for a beginner.

Marlowe

It's based on an authentic case.

Adrienne

We get hundreds of those, Mr. Marlowe.

Marlowe

Why don't you print a few?

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CONTINUED: (4)

Adrienne

Do you enjoy being rude -- or is it just part of your act?

(Marlowe grins at her)

Cigarette?

(She holds a box out to him. He takes one,
lights it with the lighter she offers him)

I'll tell you why. It's very simple. The people who know the facts usually can't write -- and the people who can write usually don't have to know the facts. Authenticity has very little to do with it. If the people who read our magazines knew the facts of life, Mr. Marlowe -- they wouldn't be reading our magazines.

Marlowe (unimpressed)

You run this outfit all by yourself?

Adrienne (with dignity)

Mr. Derace Kingsley is president of the company. I'm his principal assistant. Our magazines have a total monthly circulation of over six hundred thousand copies. I have a very responsible position.

Marlowe

What do you do for fun?

Adrienne (coldly)

Fun?

Marlowe

Sorry. I guess you never heard of it.

She gives him a steady glare, then glances down at the manuscript again. She speaks in a cold, business-like voice.

Adrienne

Very well. I'll pay you two hundred dollars for this story, and I'll buy as many more like it as you can bring me.

Marlowe

Would you say there was a living in it?

Adrienne (unbending a little)

I'm afraid not -- if you insist on authenticity.

(Pause)

But you're still in the detective business, aren't you?

Marlowe

Am I?

Adrienne

I thought you were. As a matter of fact -- I was thinking of offering you a commission -- of a rather delicate and confidential nature.

Marlowe

Doing what?

Adrienne

Finding Mr. Kingsley's wife. And without his knowing you're looking for her.

Marlowe

Why shouldn't he know?

Adrienne

Because she's run off with another man, and I'd like to save him from even knowing about it. He's had ten years of misery with her already and that's enough.

Marlowe

Then why bother looking for her?

Adrienne

To save him from scandal. She's capable of anything. She may even end up in the hands of the police. She's a liar and a cheat and a thief. She's been caught taking things from department stores half a dozen times already.

Marlowe

Quite an exacting job you have, isn't it, Miss Fromsett?

Adrienne (sharply)

Meaning what?

Marlowe

What makes all this any of your business?

Adrienne

I'm very fond of Mr. Kingsley. I've known him a long time.

Marlowe

If his wife's a tramp, why didn't he divorce her?

Adrienne

Yes -- why doesn't he? Why hasn't he -- long ago? Well, he will this time. I'll see that he does. That's why I want her found. So she can be served with the papers.

Marlowe

Yes -- a very exacting job you have, Miss Fromsett.

Adrienne

I suppose you think I'm pretty cold-blooded about this, Mr. Marlowe.

10

CONTINUED: (6)

Marlowe (standing up)
 I'd have used a different word.
 (He reaches over and picks up his manuscript)
 You don't really want to buy this, do you, Miss Fromsett?
 You just want to hire a smooth operator to help you play games.

Adrienne
 Say that again -- slow.

Marlowe
 Help you nail down your boss' wife -- so you can make him
 divorce her -- so you can take him over -- and all that goes
 with him.

Adrienne (furiously)
 I don't think I like your manner.

Marlowe
 I'm not selling it. I'm not selling this either -- to you.
 (He folds the manuscript and stuffs it
 in his pocket)
 I'm not selling you anything.
 (He puts his hat on)
 I spent last night in jail because I wouldn't sell out a
 client. He wasn't much of a client. All he did was get
 caught in a crooked poker game. Pretty innocent stuff --
 compared with what you're trying to work.
 (She gets to her feet furiously, makes a motion
 as if to grab something to throw at him)
 Now, now, don't start throwing things. You might sprain
 your hair-do.

Adrienne (with cold restrained fury)
 Nobody in my whole life has ever spoken to me like that.

Marlowe
 Maybe that's what's the matter with you.
 (He starts to move off)
 So long, sweetheart. See you in the beauty parlor. I'll be
 in the third booth having my toenails gilded.

Adrienne (almost yelling)
 Why, you -- !

The sound of a door is heard opening. CAMERA PANS
 QUICKLY to the far side of the office where DERACE
 KINGSLEY has just entered. He stands in the doorway
 looking startled and annoyed. He is a well set up
 man, about fifty, very well dressed with an arrogant
 expression that hides a putty heart.

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10 CONTINUED: (7)

Kingsley

Oh, excuse me. I'm leaving for the day, Adrienne. Is there anything -- ?

11 TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND ADRIENNE

They both look at Kingsley. She puts a sarcastic smile on her face.

Adrienne

Come in, Derry. This is Mr. Philip Marlowe.
 (Kingsley comes into the shot)
 Mr. Marlowe and I have been having a little talk about a story he sent in.
 (turning to Marlowe, introducing)
 Mr. Derace Kingsley, the president of our company.
 (Marlowe nods sourly. Kingsley puts his hand out)

Kingsley (importantly)

Always glad to meet one of our writers, Mr. Marlowe. Everything depends on the man with the typewriter, I always say.

Adrienne

Up to this point, Mr. Marlowe is not one of our writers, Derry. He's just refused two hundred dollars for his story.

Kingsley

Indeed? Which one? Though I'm afraid I don't read many scripts any more. I leave that to Miss Fromsett, Mr. Marlowe. But I'm sure two hundred dollars is a very fair price.

Adrienne

It isn't.
 (Marlowe and Kingsley both stare at her)

Kingsley

It isn't what?

Adrienne

A fair price. The story's worth five hundred. It's a honey. I'd pay it like a shot if I were spending my own money, but --
 (She shrugs)
 I'm trying to be a business woman.

Kingsley (doubtfully)

Well -- if you say it's worth five hundred, darling --
 (Marlowe reacts on the "darling")

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CONTINUED: (2)

Adrienne

Even without Marlowe's name on it.

(She gives him a dirty look)

Kingsley (after a pause)

Then why not pay him his price? I think we can afford it.
We're not exactly bankrupt.

(He turns to Marlowe)

I congratulate you, Mr. Marlowe. A writer who is also a
business man --

Adrienne (sweetly)

And a well-known private detective.

(Kingsley looks startled)

Kingsley

Detective!

Adrienne

That's what makes his stuff so authentic -- so full of life
and vigor and movement -- so full of -- what would you say
it was full of, Mr. Marlowe?

Marlowe

Words.

(Kingsley looks from one to the other. He
is no longer at ease)

Kingsley

I see.

(Pause)

Anything to take up with me before I go?

Adrienne

I don't think so, Derry.

Kingsley

I'll say goodnight then.

(to Marlowe coldly)

Glad to have met you.

He turns on his heel and goes. They watch him out.
The door closes. Then Adrienne rounds on Marlowe.

Adrienne

You didn't open your big yap when the boss was in my office,
did you?

Marlowe (grinning)

When I made three hundred dollars by keeping it shut? How
do you do it?

(He gestures towards the way Kingsley went)

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED: (3)

Adrienne

Personality, Marlowe. Pure personality. And now will you kindly hand me back that very expensive piece of tripe you have in your pocket.

(He takes the manuscript out, throws it on the desk)

I'll probably have to sit up all night re-writing it.

Marlowe

Alone?

Adrienne

And as to that other matter we were discussing before you blew a gasket --

Marlowe

You don't need any help there either -- darling. Not you.

Adrienne (rather provocatively)

No?

(She sits on the corner of the desk and swings a very elegant gam which Marlowe does not overlook.)

Perhaps I'm the best judge of that. And it may not be quite as simple as you seem to think.

Marlowe

I'm not thinking about it.

Adrienne

Sure. You don't do divorce business, do you? You just get in nice clean fights with the cops and spend the night in jail. You're so ethical that you wake up in the middle of the night and slap your own face. I've heard that line before -- and not just from detectives. Would you care to suppose that this case is not quite as obvious as it looks?

Marlowe

Why would I?

Adrienne

For one thing, I still have your five hundred bucks.

(Marlowe starts to get mad again; then quickly)

I didn't mean that. Please! Don't be so tough to get along with. I need help.

Marlowe

Like I need four thumbs.

She gives him an up-from-under look that amuses him and bothers him at the same time.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED: (4)

Adrienne
I wonder if it would help to discuss this over a couple of
ice cubes.

(Marlowe doesn't answer)
Would you care to try?

Marlowe (grudgingly)
Probably be easier than trying to get out of it.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

It is very chic, tall French windows with a view of
the Hollywood hills. The entrance door opens. Marlowe
and Adrienne come in.

Adrienne (closing the door)
I won't be a minute. I just have to fluff out my hair and
put perfume behind my ears. You can be glancing over my
etchings.

She goes out. Marlowe sticks a cigarette in his face
and wanders around the room looking at this and that,
comes to a writing desk against the wall.

13 CLOSE SHOT - WRITING DESK

Marlowe standing beside it. There is a telegram lying
in a very conspicuous position under a paper weight.
He glances back over his shoulder, then coolly picks
the telegram up and reads it. He deadpans, sticks the
telegram in his pocket carelessly, lights his cigarette.
CAMERA PANS HIM over to a window.

14 FULL SHOT - LIVING ROOM

As Adrienne enters with a tray and drinks. She moves
over to a low table in front of a davenport, sets it
down. Marlowe is still standing at the window in the
background. She sits down, starts making a couple of
drinks.

Marlowe
Nice view. If you had a telescope you could see my office
from here.

Adrienne
It's in the Cahuenga Building, isn't it?

14 CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe

Sixth floor.

(He points)

It's the window with the cigar butt on the sill.

Adrienne

Come and sit down. You better save that dialogue for when you talk to Chris Lavery.

(Marlowe crosses to the davenport and sits down)

Marlowe

Who's Chris Lavery?

Adrienne

The handsome brute Crystal Kingsley ran away with a month ago -- or so we thought. Here.

(She hands him a drink)

Marlowe

Thanks.

(He tastes the drink and likes it, then casually)

A month, huh? Did it take him that long to get to El Paso?

(Adrienne has picked up her own glass. She looks at him carefully over it)

Adrienne

Who said anything about El Paso?

Marlowe

Why don't you stop being cute? I like your liquor and I like your nylons -- and what's in them. I could even get to like you. But not if you throw all your curves at once. The diet's too rich.

Adrienne

Here we go again.

Marlowe

Sure. You pull a gag about a story to get me in on a case I don't like and don't want. It's not my kind of case -- and if it was my kind of case, I still wouldn't want it -- on account of I don't like the detective business anyway.

Adrienne (sweetly)

With your writing talent --

Marlowe (ignoring this)

Then when I'm sore and all set to walk out on you --

Adrienne

With a very snappy exit line it was a shame to waste.

CONTINUED

Marlowe

-- in comes Mr. Big looking as executive as all get out with three laundry bills in his hand.

(Adrienne laughs. He does not)

And you make a monkey out of me right in front of him -- partly to show how good you are -- and partly to keep me off balance for the Sunday punch.

Adrienne

Which is -- ?

Marlowe

That all you need a detective for is to keep you from picking your own pocket -- on account of you have a telegram from El Paso on your writing desk -- from Mrs. Crystal Kingsley informing Mr. Kingsley that she is getting a Mexican divorce in order to marry a character named Chris Lavery.

Adrienne

You're pretty good, Marlowe.

(Marlowe takes the telegram out of his pocket and drops it in her lap)

Marlowe

I'm wonderful. Why didn't you tie it to my ear. I'd have found it quicker.

Adrienne

Don't be absurd. How would I know you were coming up here tonight?

Marlowe

Don't sell yourself short, darling. You're good enough to be able to admit it.

Adrienne

I'm not good at all. I'm just a spoiled brat -- and a very confused one at the moment.

Marlowe

Yeah.

(He holds his empty glass out)

My cough is better, but it isn't well yet.

Adrienne (starting to make him another drink)

All detectives drink a lot, don't they?

Marlowe

But not as much as you hope. Okay, go ahead and explain what this is really all about -- just in case I could figure out some way to believe you.

(She takes the telegram, glances at it, and throws it to one side)

Marlowe (following her movement
with his eyes)
We'll come to that later. How, when and where did she skip
out?

Adrienne
From a place in the mountains up beyond Arrowhead. It's
called Little Fawn Lake. Three or four cabins and this
little private lake that Derry owns. Crystal was due back
in town the day she left. She never showed up.

Marlowe
Who else was up there?

Adrienne
The caretaker and his wife. They live there all year round.

Marlowe
She doesn't sound like the solitary type. What was she doing
up there alone?

Adrienne
I can guess -- but I haven't been up to count the bottles.

Marlowe
Then what?

Adrienne
Nothing -- until the telegram came -- except that a hotel in
San Bernardino called the office and said Mrs. Kingsley's car
was in their garage and where should they send the storage
bill? That doesn't have to mean anything.

Marlowe
What does Kingsley think about all this?

Adrienne
He pretends everything's lovely.

(Pause)
I don't believe him. You saw his face when I told him you
were a detective.

Marlowe
Let me get something straight. Are you trying to hire me to
find Mrs. Kingsley -- or to find out why Kingsley isn't
finding her?

Adrienne (calmly)
Derry knows as well as I do that the telegram doesn't make
sense.

Marlowe
It gives him everything he wants.

Adrienne

That's what's wrong with it. A Mexican divorce -- with no property settlement? Not Crystal Kingsley. If she divorced him at all, she'd do it right here in California. And it would cost him plenty. And that's only the half of it. Not even Crystal would be fool enough to marry Chris Lavery. You don't have to marry the Chris Laverys of this world. You just pay their bills, lend them all the money they need and forget to ask for it back.

(Her voice is bitter. Marlowe looks at her intently for a moment)

Marlowe

You mean that's what you'd do.

Adrienne (angrily)

I wouldn't use Chris Lavery to line a bureau drawer. That cheap dime store Casanova!

(She breaks off, makes herself laugh)

Maybe Crystal would -- but she wouldn't marry him -- and didn't.

(She leans back and takes a drink)

The very day I wrote you to come in about your story, I met Chris Lavery in front of a bank. He said he hadn't seen her in two months.

Marlowe

He didn't have to be telling the truth.

Adrienne

Why wouldn't he? He'd brag about it.

Marlowe

Not if she walked out on him.

Adrienne

He'd brag anyway -- and say he'd walked out on her.

Marlowe

You seem to know this bird pretty well.

Adrienne

I'm not exactly an innocent where men are concerned.

(She shrugs)

Anyway, he's back home and she isn't. And her car is still in that garage. And nobody does anything or says anything or writes anything or asks any questions. There just isn't any mystery, is there? All I need a detective for is to keep me from picking my own pocket. Sure. I'm a dope. I've been in this magazine business so long I don't know the facts of life any more.

(She picks up her glass and empties it angrily)

Sorry to have wasted your time, Mr. Marlowe. Please don't let me spoil your evening by talking any more nonsense.

(Marlowe laughs)

14

CONTINUED: (6)

Adrienne (cont'd)

You'd better go on home and play with your fingerprint collection.

She starts to get up. Marlowe reaches for her wrist, pulls her down close to him. She tries to pull away but he holds her hand. He looks down at her long red fingernails.

Marlowe

How do you keep them so long without breaking them?

Adrienne

By not scratching anybody -- and don't think it isn't tough.

He tilts her head back with his free hand.

Marlowe

What would happen if I --

Adrienne

If you kissed me? I'd swoon with delight.

Marlowe (calmly)

Look, this isn't all on account of you want to stick a knife into Mr. Lavery, is it?

(She jerks away from him)

Adrienne (between her teeth)

You would have to say that, wouldn't you?

Marlowe (quietly)

If I'm on this case, I'm working at it -- not playing with it. Where does Lavery live when he's home?

Adrienne

He lives in Bay City.

Marlowe

Bay City. That makes it perfect.

Adrienne

I'm so glad. His address is 676 Altair Street on the edge of the canyon.

Marlowe

And you hope he throws me into it.

He laughs, and after a moment, unwillingly, she laughs too.

DISSOLVE TO:

15

EXT. SWIMMING POOL - BAY CITY BEACH CLUB - (DAY)

CAMERA (HIGH BOOM SHOT) IS SHOOTING DOWN past the high board in foreground. Bright sunlight, the water in the pool sparkling. All around the pool are tables at which bathers sit smoking, sipping drinks, etc. Behind the tables are dressing rooms, bar, a stucco wall topped with tile. Beyond that, the open beach and the ocean. A girl runs out on the board, jumps, makes a beautiful swan dive into the water below. There is a murmur of admiration. A very fat young man, weighing about two hundred and fifty pounds, with an enormous backside, lumbers out to the end of the board, stands. There is an immediate shriek of protest from the bathing girls down below. Shriill ad libs such as:

Danny, you cut that out!
Don't! Please don't!

Some of the people near the edge of the pool start to get up. The fat young man hurls himself into the air, lands in the water flat on his rear end. An enormous splash arises amid shrieks and exclamations.

16

CLOSE SHOT - THE WATER

As Danny's head emerges. He treads water with a broad grin on his face, strikes out for the side.

17

CLOSE SHOT - ONE OF THE LADDERS

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE WATER. Danny comes up the ladder still grinning, stands looking around as if expecting to be admired. CAMERA PULLS BACK to show two pretty girls at a nearby table and a tall, powerfully-built, good-looking but surly individual, CHRIS LAVERY. All three are looking at Danny. The girls are wiping water off their faces, laughing. Lavery is angry.

Danny (grinning vacantly)
Gee, did I splash somebody?
(He thinks this is very funny)

Lavery (savagely)
You'll pull that trick once too often, you overgrown moron.

1st Girl (quickly)
Chris, please.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED: (2)

2nd Girl (drawling)
He's only a kid.

Danny
Gee, I was only having fun.

Lavery
Your idea of fun is why some people wear false teeth.

Danny steps back with an expression of mock terror, teeters wildly on the edge of the pool and collapses into the water again. Lavery is still glaring savagely in his direction. A waiter comes among the tables, reaches Lavery.

Waiter
There's a man here asking for you, Mr. Lavery. A Mr. Marlowe.

Lavery
Marlowe? Never heard of him. What's he want?

Waiter
He didn't say.
(Pointing)
Over there.
(Lavery looks off)

18 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Waiting beside the pool entrance looking at nothing in particular.

19 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - LAVERY

At the table looking at him.

Lavery (very surly)
And I never saw him before.

2nd Girl (still drawling)
This certainly isn't your day to be amiable, sweetheart.

Lavery
What?

2nd Girl
That is, if you ever have one.

Waiter
What shall I tell him, Mr. Lavery?

19

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavery (standing up)

I'll tell him myself.
(He starts out of shot)

20

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Waiting. Lavery comes into the shot and up to him.

Lavery

Yes? What is it?

Marlowe looks him over casually.

Marlowe

Mr. Chris Lavery?

Lavery

Correct.

Marlowe takes a card out of his pocket and hands it to him. Lavery takes the card and reads it frowning. He holds the card out to Marlowe.

Lavery

Sorry. I don't seem to be needing any private detectives today.

Marlowe

I'm not looking for a job. I've already got one. You seem to be part of it.

Lavery

Yeah? What part of what?
(Marlowe doesn't answer)

What's the gag? Who are you working for?
(Marlowe doesn't answer; Lavery speaks angrily)

Who sent you over here?

Marlowe

A cleaning woman at your house. I guess that's who she was. Would you like me to go back there and wait? This isn't a very good place --

Lavery

You'll probably wait a long time.

Marlowe

I'm paid for my time.

Lavery

And since I haven't the slightest idea --

CONTINUED

Marlowe
I'll be waiting in front of your house. Sorry to have bothered you. I had to come down from L.A. I don't want to waste the trip.

Lavery
You've already wasted it.

Marlowe
Yeah? How can you be sure -- when you don't know what I want to see you about?

He nods, turns, starts out of shot. Lavery looks after him frowning, then looks down at the card he's holding, bites his lip. He glances back towards the table with the two girls.

21 CLOSE SHOT - THE TABLE

2nd Girl
What do you see in this hunk of beef?

1st Girl
Chris? I think he's wonderful.

2nd Girl
You getting anywhere with him?

1st Girl (indignantly)
I'm not trying to get anywhere with him. I think he's fun.

2nd Girl
I heard different.
(Pause)
But maybe we're not talking about the same guy.

22 MEDIUM SHOT - LAVERY

Looking back towards the table. He starts off in another direction, walking quickly.

DISSOLVE TO:

23 EXT. ENTRANCE BAY CITY MEDICAL BLDG. (ESTABLISHING SHOT)

Traffic on sidewalk. People coming in and out of lobby, etc.

24

EXT. CORRIDOR AND OFFICE DOOR

On the door is lettered ALBERT S. ALMORE, M.D. Below that, INTERNAL MEDICINE. Chris Lavery comes into the shot, starts to open the door.

WIPE TO:

25

INT. DR. ALMORE'S OFFICE

He is seated behind his desk. His nurse stands beside him. It is a luxurious office, high up; with wide open windows. Dr. Almore is about forty years old, rather cadaverous looking, with a guarded professional expression. The nurse is a little flashy-looking.

Nurse

Mrs. Pettigrew is next, Doctor. But Mr. Lavery would like to speak to you on a personal matter. He says it won't take but a moment.

Almore raises his head very slowly to look at her. Her expression is completely blank -- too blank.

Almore

Lavery?

Nurse (glancing at a slip of paper in her hand)

Mr. Chris Lavery.

She puts the slip of paper in front of Almore. He looks down at it, leans back, picks up a paper knife and tries the point on his thumb.

Almore (without looking up)

What personal matter?

Nurse

He didn't say, doctor.

Almore lifts his head and gives her another studying look.

Almore

Send him in.

Nurse

Yes, doctor.

She turns, goes out of shot. Almore watches her go with an expression almost of hate. A door opens out of shot.

CONTINUED

25

CONTINUED: (2)

Nurse's voice (off scene)
Will you come in, please?

Almore is still watching the door. It closes. Lavery comes into the shot, sits down across from Almore.

Almore
I thought I told you never in any circumstances to come to this office.

Lavery looks at him coolly, puts a cigarette in his mouth, lights it.

Lavery
Not even if I'm sick?

Almore
If you were sick -- you would be much safer in choosing another doctor.

Pause. Lavery looks vaguely uneasy.

Almore
You could have waited until I got home. It's not a very long walk from your house to mine. Across the street.

Lavery
There's a man waiting outside my house for me. It's going to take a little money to handle him. More than I've got at the moment.

Almore
What man?
(He still has the paper knife in his hand.
He tries it on his thumb again)

Lavery
It's not sharp enough. A hypodermic needle is much sharper.

Almore lays the paper knife down, folds his hands on the desk.

Almore
I'll remember that -- when the time comes -- as I have no doubt it will.

Lavery
Don't be funny, Almore.

Almore
You haven't answered my question. What man?

CONTINUED

Lavery

Just a private detective.

(Almore's face tightens)

Nobody you know. The other one -- Talley -- is still doing that stretch for drunk driving. But you know how it is --

Almore (cutting in)

I know exactly how it is. What does this one want?

Lavery

Nothing that five hundred bucks won't handle.

Almore (sarcastically)

Quite sure of that?

Lavery

I know the type. He looks more expensive than Talley -- but they can all be had.

(Almore looks at him silently)

After all, the late Mrs. Almore's parents don't have any dough to speak of. If they had --

(He stops, shrugs)

Almore (quietly)

Yes? If they had?

Lavery

You wouldn't be practicing medicine in Bay City, would you? Or anywhere else.

Almore takes a wallet out of his pocket, extracts some bills, folds them and pushes them across the desk. Lavery takes the money, counts it.

Lavery (sharply)

This adds up to two hundred. I said five hundred.

Almore (calmly)

There's a rule about dealing with blackmailers. Always give them something -- but always much less than they ask for.

Lavery

Next time I'll ask for a grand.

Almore

There's another rule. When a blackmailer gets too expensive, you don't pay him at all. You get rid of him.

Lavery

I'd like to see you try it.

25

CONTINUED: (4)

Almore

You won't have that pleasure. You won't even be aware of it, my friend. Now get out of my office. I have patients waiting.

(Lavery stands up)

And next time think of a better gag.

Lavery

It doesn't happen to be a gag.

(He puts his hand in his pocket and takes out a card)

Here's his card.

(He drops the card in front of Almore who looks at it)

Almore (drily)

Am I supposed to be convinced by a business card?

Lavery (starting to go)

That's your pigeon. You can run over and see the guy for yourself if you don't believe me.

He goes. Almore picks up the card, stares at it stonily. An expression of doubt forms itself on his face. He reaches for his telephone, lifts the instrument, holds it a moment still pondering, then slowly begins to dial.

DISSOLVE TO:

26

LONG SHOT - EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF LAVERY'S HOUSE

It is a Spanish type bungalow, built downhill (i.e. with a lower floor below the street level). To one side there is a single garage with the door open, a small yard in front, vacant lots on both sides. A dark coupe stands in front of the house. Diagonally across the street is a much larger and more imposing house standing on a terrace with a stucco wall around the yard.

27

MEDIUM SHOT - EXT. LAVERY'S HOUSE

The door opens and a rather shabbily-dressed woman comes out, shuts the door. She has to bang it to get the catch to click in place. She starts down the path.

28

INT. MARLOWE'S COUPE - PARKED AT CURB

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE HOUSE. Marlowe is leaning in the corner smoking with his hat over his eyes. The steps of the woman are heard. He looks out, glances at his wristwatch, yawns. He looks towards the house again as the steps approach. The woman's head and shoulders appear in the car window.

Woman

Had a pretty long wait, didn't you, mister?

(Marlowe nods)

Didn't find him down to the Beach Club, huh?

Marlowe (non-committally)

He'll be back.

Woman

I won't. Not till I get paid what I'm owed, anyways.

Marlowe

Hard to collect from, huh?

Woman

Bet you got a unpaid bill in your pocket too.

Marlowe

I usually have.

Woman (grimly)

I bet there ain't a thing in that house that's paid for. Except maybe the liquor and the perfume.

Marlowe

Perfume? What kind does he use?

Woman (leering)

I ain't saying he uses any.

The sound of an approaching car is heard. She turns her head quickly.

Woman

That looks like him now.

29

EXT. STREET

A smart convertible with the top down drives up and swings around into the driveway. It stops. Lavery starts to get out. The woman comes into the shot approaching him. Lavery turns to her.

CONTINUED

29

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavery (smoothly)

Oh hello, Mrs. Matthews. Let me see -- I owe you a little money, don't I?

Woman (her voice is now oily)

Fourteen dollars, Mr. Lavery -- if it's convenient.

Lavery

Sure.

(He pulls some bills out of his pocket,
strips one off)

Here's twenty. You can owe me the change until next week.

30

INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

Marlowe is watching this with an ironic grin. He slides along the seat and starts to get out.

31

MEDIUM SHOT - EXT. LAVERY'S HOUSE

Lavery moves along from the garage to the front door, puts a key in the lock and starts to open the door. Marlowe comes into the shot. Lavery turns.

Lavery (sarcastically)

Sorry to have kept you waiting.

(He looks back towards the sidewalk where
the woman's steps have now receded. He
looks at Marlowe again)

Ready to tell me what you want -- or do I still have to guess?

Marlowe

I'm working for Derace Kingsley.

Lavery (surprised or pretending
surprise)

Kingsley? I didn't know he'd got down to hiring private dicks.

Marlowe

That would be pretty far down, would it?

Lavery

Right.

Marlowe

You and I ought to get along.

(He makes a move towards the door)

How about going inside -- or do you like to do your fighting in the front yard?

31 CONTINUED: (2)

Lavery laughs shortly, pushes the door open.

Lavery
Okay, I'll give you three minutes.

Marlowe
I'll do my best -- but it may take three and a half.

He goes past Lavery into the house.

32 INT. LAVERY'S LIVING ROOM

It goes almost to the back ending in an arch beyond which there are windows and the top few feet of a staircase railing. Lavery is closing the front door. Marlowe stands looking around. The room has a good deal of elegance. There are a couple of davenports facing each other in front of a fireplace. Lavery moves past Marlowe and puts his shoulders against the mantel, lights a cigarette with an air of tolerant amusement.

Marlowe
Nice place. How many rooms?

Lavery (sarcastically)
What you see. Kitchen over there.

(He points)
Two bedrooms and bath downstairs. It's not for sale.

Marlowe
Any guests?

Lavery (sharply)
Just what does that mean?

Marlowe
Your cleaning woman said something about perfume. I don't suppose you use it -- or do you?

Lavery
You want to go out of here on your feet or on the back of your neck?

Marlowe (indifferently)
Either way. I've tried both. Why don't you tell us where she is? That way we won't be bothering you.

Lavery
It would take more than a private dick to bother me.

CONTINUED

32

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe sits down in an easy chair, pats the arms, crosses his legs and looks comfortable.

Marlowe

No it wouldn't. A private dick can bother anybody. He's used to snubs -- he's paid for his time -- and he would just as soon use it to bother you as any other way.

Lavery (between his teeth)

You're talking about Crystal Kingsley, of course. I haven't seen her in two months -- and I've already said so.

Marlowe

You've probably said a lot of things you didn't mean. So have we all. Better take a look at this.

(He takes the El Paso telegram out of his pocket and holds it out)

Lavery

What's that?

Marlowe

There's a very easy way to find out.

Lavery comes over, takes the paper out of Marlowe's hand, unfolds it, stares down at it.

33

INSERT - THE TELEGRAM

EL PASO, JUNE 7, 1945, 12:19P DERACE KINGSLEY
965 CARSON DRIVE, BEVERLY HILLS AM CROSSING TO
GET MEXICAN DIVORCE STOP WILL MARRY CHRIS LAVERY
STOP GOOD LUCK AND GOODBYE CRYSTAL

Lavery's voice (over insert)

Who cooked this up?

34

MEDIUM SHOT - LAVERY

Holding the telegram. Marlowe watching him.

Marlowe

Some girl with a teletype machine. She was probably working for the Telegraph Company.

Lavery (sharply)

I've never been in El Paso in my life.

(He looks down at the telegram again)

And this doesn't prove I was. Just because that screwball --

CONTINUED

Marlowe

I know. She was just being cute. She probably got bored sitting in a hotel room -- all alone with a Gideon Bible.

(He stands up, jerks the telegram neatly out of Lavery's hand, puts it back in his pocket)

You're the only guy that can put any sense into it, Lavery. If you won't, you won't. But personally I don't see why you won't. She's been gone a month -- this wire's the only word Kingsley has had from her -- and if it doesn't mean anything --

Lavery

Not so far as I'm concerned, it doesn't.

Marlowe

Then there's nothing to do but to give the case to the Missing Persons Bureau. They've got the facilities to check on it. El Paso isn't New York. They'll find out where she stayed, how long she stayed, who she was seen with and what point she left for. That's all routine to cops. They spend their lives at it.

Lavery

But Kingsley will never go to the cops.

Marlowe

Because his wife got drunk and played around? Because she had a few nasty habits -- like getting careless at the stocking and handkerchief counter? I've heard of that. Sure he wouldn't want it to get in the papers, but he might have to face it. He might have to go to the cops. To protect himself -- in case anything had happened to her.

Lavery (quickly)

What sort of thing?

Marlowe

I don't know. That's why I'm asking for information. And don't ever think that with this telegram in front of them, they won't put you through the meat-grinder.

(Lavery begins to look a little worried)

You got any little secrets you wouldn't like to come out?

(Lavery doesn't answer)

What line of business are you in?

Lavery

At the moment, not any.

Marlowe

Ever been in any line of business?

Lavery (between his teeth)
You're asking for it, aren't you?

Marlowe (indifferently)
You're one of the flat wallet boys, aren't you, pal? Nice clothes and beach clubs -- good furniture -- but you owed your cleaning woman fourteen bucks. Who did you touch on the way home -- so you could hand her a twenty and tell her to keep the change?

Lavery takes a couple of quick steps towards him.

Lavery (with controlled fury)
Okay -- out! And make it fast!

Marlowe doesn't move. The two men stand almost toe to toe.

Marlowe
The cops'll get all that too -- and they'll wonder. Crystal Kingsley has money. Once in a while boys like you have to make it the hard way.

(Lavery doubles a fist)
Don't tangle with me -- yet. I fight dirty. Why don't you loosen up a bit and save yourself a lot of trouble? You know a lot about this dame.

Lavery
Enough not to want any part of her -- even if she waved a fortune at me. And if my opinion's worth anything to you, that's why she sent the wire. To get me in the kind of jam you'd like to get me in. It's not going to work.

(Pause)
Sorry, but this is the end of the line.
(He moves to the front door, yanks it violently open)
Take the air and don't come back!

Marlowe shrugs, moves over to the door.

Marlowe
Okay. But you're not clean, Lavery. There's something behind your eyes. I've looked at too many not to know. I may have to come back.

Lavery
Better bring somebody to drive you home in case you land on your tailbone and knock your brains out.

Marlowe looks at him expressionlessly.

34

CONTINUED: (4)

Marlowe

Who was it said, the cheaper the punk, the gaudier the patter?

(He turns and starts out)

35

CLOSE SHOT - FRONT DOOR - EXT. LAVERY'S HOUSE

As Marlowe comes out. The door slams almost hard enough to hit him. He glances back at it with a sour expression, starts down the walk.

36

EXT. STREET

SHOOTING PAST MARLOWE'S CAR towards the vacant lot next to Lavery's house. A Cadillac coupe is parked there. There's a man sitting behind the wheel with his hat pulled over his eyes.

37

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE'S CAR

As Marlowe comes up to it. He opens the door, then glances back along the street towards the parked coupe, then starts to get into his own car.

38

INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

He slides over under the wheel, starts the motor, glances in the rear view mirror, then turns his head to look back as his car starts to move.

39

LONG SHOT - EXT. STREET

From behind the parked Cadillac. Marlowe's car IN MOTION in background. It nears the corner, starts to turn.

40

INT. CADILLAC COUPE

SHOOTING PAST THE DRIVER. As Marlowe's car turns out of sight, the driver of the coupe starts his car, sets it in motion towards Lavery's house.

41 INT. LAVERY'S LIVING ROOM

Lavery is standing at the window looking out.

42 WHAT HE SEES

The Cadillac comes to a stop, the door opens and the driver, now seen to be Dr. Almore, starts to get out.

43 INT. LAVERY'S LIVING ROOM

Lavery moves back from the window to the middle of the room. He looks towards the back of the house, reacts sharply, makes a warning motion to somebody out of shot. There is the sound of quick steps on the stairs. Lavery reaches down for a cigarette and a lighter, makes a business of lighting it with false nonchalance. He stands looking at the flame of the lighter. Steps are heard outside the house. The doorbell rings. The hand holding the lighter shakes. He blows it out impatiently, puts it down and starts for the door.

44 CLOSE SHOT - THE DOOR

As Lavery reaches it. He hesitates a moment, then opens it. Dr. Almore is standing outside. The two men look at each other a moment in silence, then Dr. Almore moves past Lavery into the room. Lavery closes the door and turns.

Lavery
Getting a little reckless, aren't you?

Almore (calmly)
I'm a doctor. A doctor can go anywhere.

Lavery moves past him to the mantelpiece and takes up his attitude.

Almore (sharply)
What did he want?

Lavery smiles, doesn't answer.

Almore (tensely)
Don't try to stall me. What did he ask you?

CONTINUED

44

CONTINUED (2)

Lavery

Just questions.

Almore

So it's your turn to be funny.

(He puts his hand in his right jacket pocket)
I wonder if you're wise to be funny.

Lavery

Don't get excited. He was just looking for a woman I used to know.

Almore

What woman?

Lavery

I've known a lot of women.

Almore

I'm sure you have. But I'm only interested in one.

Lavery

And she's dead. So he wouldn't be looking for her, would he?

Almore

In that case, you can give me back my two hundred dollars.

Lavery

I don't have it any more.

(Almore starts towards him)

Take it easy. You always have to pay these guys off -- no matter what they're doing. It's the only way to keep them off your neck. Besides -- I never give anything back. You know me better than that, Almore.

Almore slowly takes a small automatic out of his pocket. Lavery reacts, becomes very still.

Almore

Never?

(Lavery doesn't answer. He is staring at the gun)

Let me see your wallet.

Slowly Lavery takes his wallet out of his pocket, holds it out. Almore takes it with his left hand, sits down, lays the gun on the table and opens the wallet up. He takes out some money, looks it over.

CONTINUED

44

CONTINUED (3)

Almore

A little over one hundred and eighty dollars here. Didn't give him very much, did you?

(Lavery doesn't answer. Almore looks up at him)

Perhaps you didn't give him anything at all. Maybe there wasn't any private detective -- just somebody collecting a small bill.

Lavery (thickly)

I gave you --

Almore (cutting in contemptuously)

His card. You could get a hundred of those cards without spending a nickel.

(He stands up leaving the wallet and the money on the table, picks his gun up)

All right, Lavery. This time you can keep the change -- but this is the last time. Remember that -- or my friend here --

(He raises the gun)

-- may have to talk to you.

There is a faint sound like a board creaking.

Almore

What's that?

45

SHOOTING PAST THE HEAD OF THE STAIRCASE

Towards the living room. A woman's head and shoulders are seen vaguely in the shadow as she stands listening.

Lavery's Voice (in background over

scene)

What's what?

Almore's Voice

I thought I heard a board creak.

46

INT. LIVING ROOM - CLOSE SHOT - LAVERY

Staring at Almore woodenly.

Lavery

Oh that. I hear it all the time. I guess it's the sea air.

47 CLOSE SHOT - ALMORE

Staring at Lavery.

48 TWO SHOT - ALMORE AND LAVERY

Almore stands listening a moment, then puts the gun back in his pocket.

Almore
Remember what I said.

Lavery (thickly)
I won't bother you again.

Almore
I wish I could believe it. But there's never really a last time for a blackmailer -- as long as he's alive -- is there?

Lavery doesn't answer. Almore nods quietly, turns and goes. The front door is heard to open and shut. A moment later, the sound of a car starting up and driving away is heard. Lavery listens. He looks towards the back of the house, turns to snub out his cigarette in a bronze ashtray.

DISSOLVE TO:

49 ANOTHER MAN'S HAND

Snubbing out another cigarette in a black glass ashtray on a desk.

Marlowe's Voice (off scene)
I got a great idea for a story.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to show Marlowe across the desk from Adrienne. She has her glasses on and is looking very executive.

Marlowe
About a guy that went to a lot of trouble to establish an alibi he didn't need. The point of the story is why he did it.

Adrienne (suspicious but interested)
All right -- why did he do it?

CONTINUED

Marlowe

I've got to work on that part a little more. If you want to give me a couple of hundred bucks just for the idea --

Adrienne

Stop playing the fool. Did you see Chris Lavery?

Marlowe

Yeah. In swimming trunks and with his pants on. I didn't like him either way.

Adrienne

How did he like you?

Marlowe

He could hardly keep his hands off me. The only thing that stopped him was he left his brass knuckles in his other suit.

Adrienne (impatiently)

Well -- what did he have to say?

Marlowe

Nothing.

Adrienne

Nothing? He must have. That telegram --

Marlowe

It didn't do a thing for him. He thinks it's a gag. He's never been in El Paso. He hasn't seen Blondie in two months. And if I bother him any more, he won't let me use his perfume.

Adrienne

He seems to have sold you a bill of goods.

Marlowe

It's also possible he was telling the exact truth. The telegram could be a gag -- just to get him in trouble -- because she's sore at him. That is, if women do get sore at Chris Lavery.

Adrienne (with feeling)

You bet they do.

Marlowe gives her a thoughtful look, but says nothing.

Adrienne (rather quickly)

Then you'll have to go up to Little Fawn Lake and start from there, won't you?

Marlowe

What would I find there?

Adrienne

You can probably find somebody that saw Crystal leave.

Marlowe

How would that help -- unless Lavery was with her -- so we could prove him a liar?

Adrienne

Would you be surprised?

Marlowe

No. But why hasn't Kingsley found that out?

Adrienne

He hasn't tried. He hasn't even been up there.

Marlowe

Just not interested, huh? You know, if I had any sense, I'd take this so-called mystery to the Missing Persons Bureau right now.

Adrienne (sharply)

You can't!

He moves around the desk and leans against it beside her. He leans forward and pulls her glasses off quickly.

Adrienne (annoyed)

Don't do that.

Marlowe

You don't need them. You just think they make you look like a career woman.

Adrienne

I am a career woman.

Marlowe

You didn't wear them up in your apartment when you were giving me the works.

Adrienne

Well -- I have to do so much reading --

Marlowe

Uh-huh. But you're not reading now.

(Pause)

Why can't I take it to the Missing Persons Bureau?

Adrienne
He'd never stand for it.

Marlowe
Kingsley? Why -- scandal?

Adrienne
Of course. I told you that.

Marlowe laughs shortly.

Marlowe
I don't see how a little scandal could hurt this business.

Adrienne
You can't betray a confidence.

Marlowe
That's all right up to a point -- provided the client
is on the level.

He moves away from her around the desk. She stares
at his back frowningly. He strolls over to the wall
and looks at one of the framed magazine covers.

Marlowe
This dame with the bread knife through her kidney -- did
she have to be wearing yellow garters?

Adrienne
She didn't have to be wearing any garters.

Marlowe
Shame on you! This is Kingsley Publications. They all wear
garters -- and they all show them. And they're all dead.
(He turns away from the wall)
What was the name of that caretaker up at Little Fawn Lake?

Adrienne (suddenly business-like)
Bill Chess. And I have a letter to him for you, so he'll
show you the cabin.

(She lifts an envelope off the desk and
holds it out)
I knew you'd want to go up there next.

Marlowe (taking the envelope)
Thanks. And what are your plans for me after that?

Adrienne
I haven't any. I thought maybe by that time you could
start thinking for yourself.

Marlowe
That might be dangerous.
(He comes around the desk beside her again)

49

CONTINUED (5)

Marlowe (cont'd)

But you do want me to go up to Little Fawn Lake?

Adrienne

It seems indicated, doesn't it? I've had some experience with these things.

Marlowe

Will it make you very very happy if I went up to Little Fawn Lake?

Adrienne (between her teeth)

Yes, it would.

Marlowe

And if I made you very very happy, what would you do for me?
(He reaches down, takes hold of her wrists and pulls her up)

Adrienne

If you let go of my wrists, I'll show you.

Marlowe

Would you autograph a yellow garter for me?

She tries to jerk loose but he holds her. The sound of a door is heard opening.

Kingsley's Voice (over scene)

Oh, excuse me. I --

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include him standing in the doorway. Marlowe lets go of Adrienne's wrists.

Kingsley

Discussing another story, I see.

(He turns to Adrienne coldly)

Is there anything you want to take up with me? I'm just leaving for the day.

Marlowe

What -- again? Why the heck don't you stick around and do some work once in a while?

Kingsley (to Marlowe stiffly)

Would that be any of your business, Mr. --

(He hesitates)

Marlowe

Marlowe. Philip Marlowe. I'm the guy that's looking for your wife.

CONTINUED

Kingsley (to Adrienne coldly)
So that's what's going on between you two. That's why you want to pay this man five hundred dollars for that amateurish story.

Marlowe
Wait a minute.
(He walks over to Kingsley)
Didn't you like my story?

Kingsley
I did not. I hadn't read it yesterday, but I have since.

Marlowe
Maybe you don't want to buy it.

Kingsley
If Miss Fromsett hain't already agreed --

Marlowe
That's all right. You don't have to buy it. Maybe you don't want me to find your wife either.

Kingsley
I certainly do not.

Marlowe
Uh-huh. I'm getting interested.

Kingsley
Interested?

Marlowe
That's what I said. Interested. Miss Fromsett wants me to find your wife -- you don't want me to find her.

Kingsley (to Adrienne)
Adrienne, you had no right whatever to make any such arrangement.

Adrienne (coolly)
I made it anyway.

Kingsley walks up to her.

Kingsley
Then you will cancel the arrangement immediately. Immediately, do you understand?

Adrienne
And if I don't?

Kingsley (formally)
In view of the fact that you are my employee, I don't think you have any alternative.

Adrienne
I've already given him a letter to Bill Chess.

Kingsley (to Marlowe)
I'll have to ask for that letter back. Miss Fromsett has entirely misunderstood my intentions. I'm sure you don't.

Marlowe
No. This sort of thing happens all the time.

Kingsley (sharply)
What sort of thing?

Marlowe
Disappearing wives -- that their husbands don't want found.

Kingsley (slowly)
I see.

(Pause)
How much will it cost to have you keep your mouth shut, Mr. Marlowe?

Adrienne
Derry, please!

Marlowe (to Adrienne grimly)
You know, you're pretty dumb. You worked your head off trying to get me to take this case. Why didn't you use your ace in the hole? All you had to do was for this guy to come in and call me a blackmailer.

(to Kingsley)
How much will it cost to keep my mouth shut? I don't know. I never had that much money. I guess I'll have to go home, sharpen up a couple of pencils and figure it out. See you later.

(He starts out)

Kingsley (urgently)
Mr. Marlowe!

Marlowe turns.

Marlowe
Oh sure. I forgot.
(He takes the letter out of his pocket and sails it onto the desk)

Kingsley
Perhaps I was a little hasty.

49

CONTINUED (8)

Marlowe

I wouldn't call it hasty. Not when she's been gone a whole month.

He goes out. Kingsley turns to Adrienne.

Kingsley

I'm sorry, dear. I'm afraid I lost my temper.

Adrienne (soothingly)

You're just worried and upset. Think nothing of it.

Kingsley

Do you think that man can be trusted?

Adrienne (dreamily)

Well -- unfortunately I'm afraid he can.

(She reaches for her glasses and puts them on carefully)

Although there was a moment there -- when he asked me for a garter --

Kingsley (scandalized)

A garter?

Adrienne

A yellow one -- autographed.

Kingsley (indignantly)

I never heard of such a thing.

Adrienne (smoothly)

Maybe you ought to go to night school.

DISSOLVE TO:

50

EXT. LITTLE FAWN LAKE - (DAY) - LONG SHOT

SHOOTING FROM HIGH GROUND in the direction of the dam at the far end. At the near end of the lake, there is a small pier and bandstand partly dismantled. On the rough narrow road beside it stands a work truck loaded with lumber which has been torn down from the bandstand. The driver is behind the wheel. Two workmen are finishing loading scrap lumber onto the truck. Beyond the bandstand on the left hand side of the lake, there are two shuttered cabins standing among rocks above the lake. Some distance beyond them, a large red-wood cabin close to the dam.

CONTINUED

50

CONTINUED (2)

On the opposite shore of the lake from this redwood cabin is a small cabin built of pine logs with the bark still on them. There are granite rocks all around the lake and the ground rises to a ridge except beyond the dam. There are many giant yellow pines, etc. Distantly is heard the thudding of an axe. One of the workmen swings the gate up and fastens it.

Workman

All right. Take it away.

51

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - THE TRUCK

Painted on the side of it is ECLIPSE FILMS, INC. The driver starts the truck. It moves off around the lake, CAMERA FOLLOWING. (During the following scenes the noise of hammering and wood tearing will be heard with greater or less distinctness according to distance.) About fifty feet from the small rough cabin the truck swings away from the lake over a rise. It reaches a gate across the roadway. It stops. The driver gets down, opens the gate, and gets back into the truck. As he drives through, Marlowe's car comes around a big rock. Truck and car squeeze past each other slowly. The truck goes on. CAMERA PANS BACK with Marlowe's car as it passes the gate, starts down towards the lake. The truck noise diminishes in the background. The sound of the axe increases. Marlowe's car stops near the rough cabin. He kills the motor and gets out, stands a moment looking around, then starts in the direction of the chopping noise.

52

CLOSE SHOT

A big pile of cut pine logs. Beside this, a chopping block at which a man, BILL CHESS, is chopping firewood. He wears sneakers, faded overall pants. The upper part of his body is bare, hard and brown. He's good-looking in a rough sort of way. He swings the axe hard on a block. The axe sticks. He wrenches it loose, throws it down, gets a wedge and a sledge hammer. He taps the wedge into the block, swings the sledge powerfully and splits the log. The noise of this covers Marlowe's approach. Chess throws the wedge and the sledge down on the ground and picks up the axe again.

CONTINUED

Marlowe

You Bill Chess?

Chess turns mildly startled.

Chess

Howdy. Kind of snuck up on me, didn't you? Yeah, I'm Bill Chess.

Marlowe

My name's Marlowe. Mr. Kingsley sent me up from L.A. to look at his cabin.

Chess (surprised)

Look at his cabin? Jeepers, he ain't selling, is he?

Marlowe

Might be. Everything's for sale in California. That's a nice lot of wood you got there.

Chess (glancing at the wood pile)

This? I guess you ain't hard to please. This is just about the worst lot of wood I cut up in two years. It's full of knots, it's green, and even when it's dried out, it ain't going to have any sap in it.

Marlowe grins, sits down on a stump, picks up a sliver of wood and bites on it.

Marlowe

Tastes all right so far. Pretty lonely up here most of the time, isn't it?

Chess (looking at him steadily)

Some folks like it lonely.

Marlowe

Uh-huh. I'm single myself.

Chess

I ain't said I was single.

Marlowe

I'm not trying to pry into your private affairs, Mr. Chess.

Chess

That ain't what I meant either.

(He turns his head)

That's Kingsley's place over there.

He looks off. Marlowe follows his glance.

53

THE KINGSLEY CABIN

As seen from across the lake. It stands on high ground with a field stone porch. It is built of oiled redwood. The venetian blinds are closed. It looks empty, deserted.

54

MARLOWE AND CHESS

Chess

I got the keys right in my pocket.

(Pause)

Seems like he'd have let me know.

Marlowe

He wrote you a letter. I forgot it. Maybe you'd like to call him up.

Chess

I'd have to go to the village. Ain't hardly worth it. Shortest way is across the dam. Or would you rather go around the lake?

Marlowe

Either way.

(He stands up)

What about those other cabins? I'm a writer. I need peace and quiet.

Chess

A writer, huh? Nobody been up this year. I don't figure they'd bother you if they was. This is a mighty quiet place.

Marlowe

Uh-huh. I met a movie truck coming through the gate. What are they doing?

Chess

They won't be here but a couple of days. They just got to tear down a little bandstand they built at the far end of the lake last summer. 'Bout time they got around to it too. If peace and quiet is what you want, here's where they make it.

They start out of shot.

55

SHOOTING DOWN TOWARDS THE DAM

From Chess's cabin. It is a very small dam with a narrow top just barely room enough to walk on.

CONTINUED

55

CONTINUED (2)

There is a rope hand grill set in stanchions. Chess and Marlowe start across.

56

CLOSER SHOT

Chess and Marlowe walking on the dam. The water is very high and flowing over the dam in spots.

Chess

I got to run some of this off. Lake's higher this year than I ever saw it.

Marlowe

Any fish in it?

Chess

A few old trout. Too smart to bite. The Kingsleys friends of yours?

Marlowe

I know him. I never met his wife.

Chess

She was up here a while back. Kingsley ain't been up in a year.

Marlowe

How long since Chris Lavery was up here?

Chess stops, turns. His face is suddenly grim and hard.

Chess

What was that?

Marlowe

I said how long since Chris Lavery was up here?

Chess

I thought that was what you said. You picked a bad spot to get funny in, mister.

(He points down to the outer face of the dam)

It's all of thirty feet down to those rocks. A guy could fall off here awful easy.

Marlowe (surprised)

That was too fast for me. I never laid a glove on it.

CONTINUED

56

CONTINUED (2)

Chess

Yeah? What's your interest in Chris Lavery?

Marlowe

I happen to know him. He's a friend of Mrs. Kingsley, isn't he? Comes up here once in a while to see her.

Chess

Does he?

Marlowe

Not if you say he doesn't.

Chess

I ain't said nothing about him.

He turns abruptly and starts on again. Marlowe looks thoughtfully at his back.

57

EXT. KINGSLEY CABIN

As they reach the steps and start up.

Chess

Sorry I got mad, mister. I'm way off the beam lately. My wife moved out on me a while back.

Marlowe (staring at him)

That's tough.

Chess

I'll say it's tough. And for no good reason --
 (They have reached the top of the
 steps. Chess puts the key in the
 door, unlocks it and pushes it open)
 -- except I come over here and had a few drinks once in
 a while.

58

INT. LIVING ROOM - KINGSLEY'S CABIN

As they enter. It is dark except for light around the closed venetian blinds and the open door.

Chess

I better open up the blinds. You can't see anything.

He crosses to the windows and starts to open the venetian blinds. Marlowe stands looking around.

CONTINUED

58 CONTINUED: (2)

It is a handsome room, lined with knotty pine and furnished with Indian rugs, mountain furniture, etc. Marlowe leans down, picks something off the table beside an easy chair. He glances towards Chess who is still opening the blinds, then down at what he holds.

59 INSERT - A MATCH FOLDER

Lettered, "Bay City Beach Club".

60 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Looking at it with a thoughtful expression. He slips the match folder in his pocket.

61 FULL SHOT - INCLUDING CHESS

Who has turned away from the window.

Chess

How much is he asking -- or ain't that my business?

Marlowe

He hasn't said yet.

Chess

It's a swell cabin -- but it could burn down for all I care. A thing like that oughtn't to happen to a guy. Out here's the kitchen.

They go towards it.

62 INT. KITCHEN

As the two men come in.

Chess (indicating stove)

Pilgrim combination gas and wood range. They come high.

(He looks around)

I cleared out the bottles after Mrs. Kingsley went down.

Marlowe

Bottles?

CONTINUED

62

CONTINUED (2)

Chess

That's right. You said you didn't know her. Talking out of turn again, ain't I?

Marlowe

Maybe you feel like talking.

Chess

That -- or busting somebody's head. She didn't even say she was going. Just packed up and left. I was over on the north shore of the big lake. I come home late and she's gone and the Ford's gone. And there's this on the bureau.

He takes a folded paper out of his pants pocket, holds it out. Marlowe opens it, reads it to himself, then aloud musingly.

Marlowe (reading)

'I'd rather be dead than live with you any longer. Muriel.'

(He looks up)

Muriel, huh? I thought you were talking about Mrs. Kingsley.

(He hands back the paper)

Chess

Why the heck would I care what Mrs. Kingsley did?

Marlowe

She was up here, too, wasn't she?

Chess

I guess we just ain't talking about the same thing, mister.

Marlowe (thoughtfully)

I wonder.

He turns, goes out of shot. Chess stands looking after him, half puzzled, half pugnacious.

63

INT. BEDROOM

As Marlowe enters. He crosses and opens the blinds. The twin beds are made up. Marlowe glances towards the door, crosses to a clothes closet, slides the door open. It is full of woman's sports clothes. He slides the door shut and bends down to pull open the shoe drawer beneath it. Chess appears in the doorway and starts watching him suspiciously.

CONTINUED

Chess

So what for do you have to look at the lady's clothes?

Marlowe pushes the drawer shut, straightens up and turns. Without answering Chess, he crosses to the dressing table, stands looking down at the toilet articles on it. He picks up a perfume bottle, takes out the glass stopper and sniffs.

Marlowe

How long was she up here -- Mrs. Kingsley, I mean?

Chess (suspiciously)

Close on a month.

Marlowe

She have many visitors?

Chess (aggressively)

I thought you was looking at this cabin with the idea of maybe buying it.

Marlowe (mildly)

I don't remember saying that.

(He takes the match folder out of his pocket and holds it out in his hand)

She had one visitor anyway. I happen to know he belongs to this beach club. Would it be all right if I mentioned his name?

Chess (between his teeth)

Go ahead.

Marlowe

Chris Lavery.

Chess

Yeah. He was up here. Three or four days before -- well, before.

Marlowe

Before Mrs. Kingsley left, huh?

Chess

I guess so.

Marlowe puts the match folder back in his pocket, sits down on one of the beds and pushes his hat back on his head.

Marlowe

You see her leave? I'm still talking about Mrs. Kingsley.

Chess

You ask a lot of questions, don't you, mister?

Marlowe

I've got a reason.

Chess

No, come to think of it, I didn't. Does that mean something?

Marlowe

Probably not.

Chess

Would it be too much trouble for you to tell me what you're talking about?

Marlowe

She ran out on her husband -- same like your wife. She never went home at all.

Chess (staring)

You mean Kingsley don't know where she is?

Marlowe

She sent a wire from El Paso a couple of weeks ago -- saying she was going to marry this Lavery person.

(Pause)

That ought to make you feel better.

Chess

Yeah. Maybe I had the wrong idea at that.

Marlowe stands up.

Marlowe

It would make me feel better, too -- if I believed it.

Chess

What's stopping you?

Marlowe

Mr. Lavery is right where he lives -- in Bay City. I saw him yesterday. Let's get out of here.

He starts out. A man's voice is heard yelling distantly.

Marlowe

What's that?

63 CONTINUED (4)

Chess (listening)
One of them guys down at the end of the lake probably.

The yell is heard again.

Marlowe
He seems to be yelling your name.

Chess
That right?

He and Marlowe start out quickly.

WIPE TO:

64 EXT. CABIN

Chess and Marlowe come down the steps. The sound of the work truck is heard approaching along the rough road that skirts the lake. Marlowe and Chess look towards it.

65 WHAT THEY SEE

The movie truck bumping rapidly along the rough road past the two closed-up cabins. The driver is leaning out and waving an arm at them.

66 CLOSE SHOT - CHESS AND MARLOWE

Watching the approach of the truck.

Marlowe
He looks like a bee stung him.

Chess
He ain't got any business over here.
(He starts towards the truck)

67 CLOSER SHOT - THE TRUCK

As it bears down on the two men. It grinds to a stop. The driver jumps out leaving his motor running. His face has a shocked excited expression. He almost runs up to Bill Chess.

CONTINUED

67

CONTINUED (2)

Driver (to Chess)
The foreman wants you. Right away quick.

Chess
What's the matter?

Driver
Better come down and see. There's something in the lake.

Chess (slowly - reacting to the
driver's tone and expression)
What kind of a something?

Driver
A dead woman.

68

TWO SHOT - CHESS AND MARLOWE

Reacting. Marlowe, startled and grim. Chess stands stunned for a moment, then suddenly starts running.

DISSOLVE TO:

69

EXT. STREET - PUMA POINT

SHOOTING TOWARDS PUMA LAKE. In the background, the lake is seen. There is a short pier at the foot of the street. Boats moored, etc. Sounds of outboard motors and speed boats can be heard from the lake. In the foreground to the right, a galvanized iron building which is the fire station. To the left, a hardware store with a wooden sidewalk in front of it. Beyond that, standing alone, a small pineboard shack. Traffic on the street and people walking, some in sports clothes (the summer visitors), and some wearing what they happen to have (the natives). Marlowe's car swings around the corner past the hardware store, slows in front of the pineboard shack.

70

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE'S CAR

As it comes to a stop. Marlowe leans out looking towards the shack, then starts to get out.

71

EXT. THE SHACK

It is a one-room affair with a glass window and a glass front door. On the door are lettered, one over the other, "CHIEF OF POLICE - FIRE CHIEF - TOWN CONSTABLE - SHERIFF'S OFFICE - CHAMBER OF COMMERCE." To the window is pasted a big printed sign reading: "KEEP JIM PATTON CONSTABLE. HE IS TOO OLD TO GO TO WORK." Marlowe stops to stare at this sign and the lettering on the door. He almost grins, then opens the door and starts in.

72

INT. SHACK

There is a wooden counter, pot-bellied iron stove in the corner and rolltop desk at which a man, PATTON, is sitting sharpening a pencil with a horn-handled hunting knife which is about ten times as big as the pencil. He is a solid-looking man, well past middle age, wearing a faded Stetson hat on the back of his head, khaki shirt and pants. There is a star with a bent point on the left breast of his shirt. He is a very calm-looking man. Marlowe closes the door, crosses to the counter and leans on it.

Marlowe

You Jim Patton?

Patton (without looking up)

Yep.

Marlowe

You're the law around here, aren't you?

Patton (still not looking up)

That's right, son. What law we got to have around here, I'm it.

(Pause)

Come election anyways. There's a couple good boys running against me this time and I might get whipped.

Marlowe

Nobody's going to whip you. You're going to get a lot of publicity.

Patton finishes sharpening the pencil, lays it down, wipes the blade of the knife on his pants, folds it and puts it in his pocket.

CONTINUED

Patton (indifferently)

That so?

He swings around in his chair, hooks a tall spittoon a little closer and unloads in it. That done, he tilts back in his chair, crosses his hands on his stomach and finally looks Marlowe over.

Patton

You guessing -- or selling something?

Marlowe

Neither. Your jurisdiction reaches over to Little Fawn Lake, doesn't it?

Patton

A word that long ought to reach almost anywheres.

(Pause)

Something bothering over to Kingsley's place?

Marlowe

There's a drowned woman in the lake.

Patton unclasps his hands, scratches his ear, gets slowly to his feet, uses the spittoon again, strolls over to the counter.

Patton

Anybody I know?

Marlowe

Bill Chess's wife.

Patton

Thought she went away.

Marlowe

If she did, she came back. You don't think I'm kidding, do you?

Patton (calmly)

No. Who're you?

Marlowe

My name's Marlowe. I came up to look at Kingsley's property. There's some workmen over there tearing down a little pier and bandstand --

Patton

I know all about that.

Marlowe

The body was stuck under the staging. From the look of it, it didn't happen yesterday.

Patton

Where's Bill at?

Marlowe

He's over there.

Patton

He'll need a drink.

(He goes over to his desk, pulls the drawer out, brings out a pint bottle and holds it to the light)

This baby's near full. This ought to hold him. Took it off a motorcycle fellah a week before last. Figured he'd be safer driving down the hill without it. Came from El Centro he said. I forget his name.

Marlowe

For Pete's sake, sheriff!

Patton puts the bottle on his hip.

Patton

Take it easy, son. That your car outside?

Marlowe

Yes.

Patton

I'll just run down the street and pick up Doc Hollis. Then you can follow me out. That suit you?

Marlowe

Don't do anything in a hurry, will you?

Patton lifts up the flap of the counter and comes through.

Patton

She's dead, ain't she? Ain't no cause to hurry that I can see. Wouldn't know how to do it if there was.

He starts out, Marlowe following.

DISSOLVE TO:

73

CLOSE UP

Of an old worn Frontier Colt protruding from a pocket holster. CAMERA PULLS BACK to show the gun is in Patton's right hip pocket. Then Patton's broad back appears and we see that he is kneeling on one knee in front of something that is partly covered by an old blanket. It lies on the dismantled pier. In the background, is the lake. The blanket is partly pulled down, but Patton's body hides what is exposed except a mop of long wet hair. Patton replaces the blanket, stands up and turns. In his hand he holds a necklace of heavy costume jewelry. He stares down at it frowningly.

Patton

Now I got it, I ain't sure what I want it for.

(He looks off)

This something you give her, Bill?

74

CLOSE SHOT - CHESS

He is sitting on the ground with his back against a rock, his head bowed between his hands. A whiskey bottle stands between his feet. He looks up vaguely, then nods. He speaks in a dead, expressionless voice.

Chess

That's right. Bought it for her in Berdoo last winter.

Patton's Voice (off scene)

Only married about a year, wasn't you, Bill?

Chess

Year and three months.

75

TWO SHOT - CHESS AND PATTON

Patton

Where at is her folks?

Chess

Never talked about them.

Patton

Kind of close-mouthed, wasn't she?

(He wraps the necklace in a big cotton

handkerchief, puts it in his pocket, turns away)

Which one of you boys found her?

76

FULL SHOT - THE PIER

And what is left of the bandstand. Patton is standing near the blanket-covered body. The three workmen in a group off to one side. Near Patton is DOC HOLLIS, a scrawny, sick-looking man in a Panama hat. Marlowe is leaning against the pier railing watching.

Workman

All three of us, I guess. We shook loose a piece of the old staging that's down under the water. Used to be a boat landing, they tell me -- before the dam was raised.

Patton moves to the edge of the pier and looks down into the water.

77

CLOSER SHOT - PATTON AND THE WORKMEN

Patton

Must be all of six feet under water now.

Workman

Yeah, it is. Anyway, a big piece of it came loose. We saw something move down there. Thought maybe it was a fish -- at first. Then all of a sudden, up she came. We hooked her in with a pole and started hollering.

Patton

Sounds reasonable. You boys plan to work any more today?

Workman

We've knocked off till Monday. We're just waiting on you, sheriff.

Patton

Don't need to wait any longer then. Kind of keep your mouths shut about this for a while.

Workman

Okay, sheriff.

(To the others)

Let's go, boys.

They start off reluctantly.

78

CLOSE SHOT - CHESS

Listening. He reaches suddenly for the whiskey bottle, takes a drink and shudders.

THREE SHOT - PATTON, HOLLIS AND MARLOWE

Patton is looking at Chess. He gets a plug out of his pants, cuts a piece off with his hunting knife and stuffs it into his jaw, wipes the blade of the knife off on his pants, puts it away. The sound of the truck is heard starting, then the sound of it going away. Patton's eyes follow it for a moment, then he turns to Hollis.

Patton

What you say, Doc?

Hollis (snappishly)

About what?

Patton

Cause and time of death.

Hollis

Don't be a darn fool, Jim Patton.

Patton (calmly)

Can't tell nothing, huh? Water's pretty cold up here.

Hollis

Not that cold.

Patton

Looks drowned all right. But you can't always tell. There's been cases where a victim would be knifed or poisoned or something -- and they would soak him in the water to make things look different.

Hollis

You get many like that up here?

Patton (unmoved by the sarcasm)

Only real murder I ever had up here was old Dad Meacham. Had a shack in Sheedy Canyon. Panned a little gold in summer over near Belltop. Come a heavy snow one winter, part of his roof caved in. We was over there trying to prop her up a bit and by gum, there was old Dad in bed with most of a kindling axe in the back of his head. Somebody must have figured he had a little bag of gold hid away.

(He pauses and sighs)

We never did find out who done it.

Hollis

That certainly surprises me.

CONTINUED

79

CONTINUED (2)

Patton (musingly)

Course, we found three ounces of gold nuggets in Guy Pope's cabin. Never was anything bigger than sand on Guy's claim. Dad had nuggets over a pennyweight on his.

(He sighs again)

Didn't do us no good though. Guy was dead of pneumonia two weeks before we found Dad.

(Pause)

Well, that's the way it goes.

(He looks towards Chess)

Fellah always forgets something, don't he? No matter how careful he is.

80

CLOSE SHOT - CHESS

He comes suddenly to his feet, starts towards Patton. His face is tight and hard. CAMERA PANS HIM across. As he reaches Patton, he thrusts his arms out in front of him.

Chess

That's the way you feel about it, put the cuffs on and get it over with.

Patton

Don't help none to talk like that. What I'm trying to figure is how she got down under that old staging. Current's towards the dam -- what little current there is.

Chess (violently)

She done it herself, you fat jughead! Muriel could swim like a fish. She just swum down under the pier and drowned herself.

(He stops, his face twisted with emotion.

After a moment he controls himself)

How was I to know that was what the note meant?

Patton (mildly surprised)

Nobody ain't told me nothing about no note.

Chess takes a note out of his pocket and hands it to Patton. Patton unfolds it, reads it, looks at Chess, then down at the note again.

Patton

Don't seem to have any date.

(Pause)

Looks middlin' old, too.

CONTINUED

Chess

I had it in my pocket ever since. And it don't have to have a date for me to know what day it was.

Patton (still looking at the note)

Don't sound like a suicide note to me either somehow.

Doc Hollis goes off into a sudden fit of coughing. He grabs a handkerchief out of his pocket and crams it against his mouth. Patton looks at him suspiciously. The coughing stops. Hollis examines his handkerchief with passionate attention.

Marlowe (to Patton)

Ever try to drag a body under six feet of water, sheriff?

Patton (turning on him)

No, can't say I ever did. Any reason it couldn't be done with a rope?

Marlowe

If a rope was used, the marks would show on the body, wouldn't they? And if you're going to give yourself away like that, why bother to cover up at all?

Patton (mildly)

I ain't accused anybody of murdering anybody -- so far.

Hollis (sharply)

How much more of this foolishness have I got to listen to? This woman's been dead for several weeks. Only a careful autopsy can determine what she died of. I'm not interested in standing around watching you try to think, Jim Patton.

Patton

County don't pay me to go off half-cocked, Doc.

Hollis

Well, it doesn't pay me at all. I want to go home.

He gets another fit of coughing. Then he turns and walks off, still coughing.

Patton (absently)

If it had been him, I could understand it.

(He turns to Chess)

Better get some clothes on, Bill. We got to take a ride.

80

CONTINUED (3)

Chess (almost screaming at him)
 Sure, ride me down to the jailhouse and lock me up!
 That's all a dumb-headed hick like you could think of.
 She was my wife and I murdered her and hid her body in
 the lake, didn't I? Then I stuck around waiting for
 her to be found, didn't I? I wanted to be handy so you
 wouldn't have to bother looking for me. What's the
 use of talking to people like you?

Patton (trying to get a word in)
 Now, wait a minute --

Chess (still yelling)
 Go on, prove it on me -- hang me! What do I care?
 What did I do -- to make her kill herself -- and leave
 a note like that? What did I do, that's what I want
 to know. Because I didn't do anything at all. It
 don't make any sense.

(His voice breaks. He begins to sob)
 It -- just doesn't -- make any sense.
 (He covers his face with his hands,
 sobbing)

DISSOLVE TO:

81

EXT. SMALL RUSTIC CABIN IN PUMA POINT

There is a small enamel sign with an arrow and
 inside it the word "Telephone." In front of the
 cabin there is a railed grass plot divided by a
 narrow walk. A tame doe deer with a leather collar
 is trying to reach over the railing to nibble on
 the grass. It stops, pricks up its ears as Marlowe's
 car drives into the shot and stops. Marlowe gets
 out. The deer comes towards him.

Marlowe
 Hi, Bambi.

He scratches the doe's ear. The doe leans against
 him. He tries to push her out of the way. She
 doesn't push. He steps around her over the fence,
 starts towards the door of the telephone office.

82

INT. TELEPHONE OFFICE

A small bare office lined in knotty pine with a
 single desk and a telephone booth in the corner
 opposite.

CONTINUED

82

CONTINUED (2)

A fluffy blonde in slacks is working on an account book at the desk. She looks up as Marlowe enters. He crosses to the desk.

Marlowe (taking out his wallet)
Can I have a couple of dollars in change? I've got to call L.A. Be about a dollar, won't it?

The girl looks him over and smiles. She has a soft, lazy voice.

Girl
Depends how long you talk.

Marlowe
I might talk quite a while.

Girl
The manager's gone for the week-end. You can use his office if you like --
(She indicates the open door)
-- and pay me after.

Marlowe
Sure you want to take the chance?

Girl
Uh-huh. Nice up here, isn't it? Quiet. I always think the mountains are so peaceful, don't you, Mr. --

Marlowe
Murphy.

Girl
I'm Birdie Keppel. You don't look as if your name would be Murphy. Sure, I'll take a chance. I like to take chances.

Marlowe
What did you do before you worked for the telephone company?

Birdie
Oh, it's a long sad story, honey.

Marlowe
I'll bet it is. In there, you said.

He turns away, starts towards the inner door.

83

INT. SMALL PRIVATE OFFICE

As Marlowe enters. He closes the door, sits at the manager's desk and picks up the telephone.

84 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

On phone. He dials 110, waits.

Marlowe (into phone)
This is Puma Point 76. I want Hillside 3580 in Los Angeles.

(Pause)
Yes, anybody there.

85 INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

She is stretched out on the davenport in lounging pajamas. There is a pile of typed scripts on the floor beside her and several more scattered around on the davenport. She has her glasses on and is reading a script as the telephone rings beside her on a table. She reaches for it without taking her eyes off the script.

Adrienne (into phone)
Hello. Yes, this is Hillside 3580... Ch.
(Pause. She sits up suddenly alert, throws the script to one side)

Hello... Yes, I seem to remember you vaguely, Mr. Marlowe... Of course I'm busy. I'm always busy. Just a minute.

(She puts the telephone down and takes an atomizer off the table, sprays a little perfume behind her ears, replaces the atomizer, picks up the phone)

All right. What did you find out?

(Pause)
Yes, of course I'm alone... What do you mean how do I mean of course I'm alone?

(Pause)
Oh. Well, I am alone. What does it matter?

86 INT. SMALL PRIVATE OFFICE

Marlowe (on phone)
It doesn't matter to me. But I know what I'm going to say. How well did you know Muriel Chess?

87 INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

Adrienne (on phone)
I've never seen her. I knew Bill got himself hooked about a year and a half ago -- to some doll he picked up in a beer joint in Riverside.

CONTINUED

87

CONTINUED (2)

Adrienne (cont'd)

(Pause while she listens. Suddenly she reacts sharply, swings her feet to the floor and stands up)

Good grief! Do they think Bill -- ?

88

INT. SMALL PRIVATE OFFICE

Marlowe (on phone)

They're not telling me what they think. Jim Patton -- that's the constable up here -- he's taking Chess down the hill for questioning. The note could be a suicide note all right -- and then again it could be somebody going away sore.

(Pause while he listens)

I didn't say it had anything to do with Crystal Kingsley except that she was up here about that time -- and she was buying Bill drinks -- and I don't suppose Muriel dunked herself just to get her name in the paper.

(Pause. He listens again)

Just why would I do that?

89

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

Adrienne (on phone, urgently)

Because you have to. It's the first thing the police always do. Even that hillbilly constable up there --

(Pause)

No, I'm not talking about what they do in Kingsley Publications. I'm talking about what any detective with a grain of sense would do. I'm quite sure if I left my husband and didn't intend to come back, there'd be some indications of it around the house.

90

INT. SMALL PRIVATE OFFICE

Marlowe (on phone)

Uh-huh. But I've got a sort of broken down hunch this might be a good time to break the rule and leave it lay.

(Pause)

You know what I mean all right -- and if you don't, Kingsley does.

(Pause)

Okay, sister. You're ordering the dinner. I hope you like what you get to eat.

91

INT. ADRIENNE'S APARTMENT

Adrienne (on phone, angrily)
 You talk just like a mail order detective, Marlowe. Crystal was buying Bill a few drinks -- so Muriel was insanely jealous -- so there was a fight -- so there was a murder -- so there was --

(There is a click. She jerks the phone away from her ear. There is the sound of an open line. She rattles the connection angrily)

Operator!

Operator!

(Disgustedly, she replaces the telephone)

DISSOLVE TO:

92

INT. SMALL PRIVATE OFFICE

Marlowe has just hung up. He is grinning. He opens the door, starts out.

93

INT. TELEPHONE OFFICE

Marlowe enters and crosses to the desk.

Birdie
 That'll be a dollar eighty cents plus twenty-seven cents tax -- Mr. Murphy.

Marlowe
 You got that awful quick.

Birdie (lightly)
 Yes, didn't I?
 (Pause)
 That was terrible about Muriel Chess, wasn't it?
 (Marlowe just stares at her)
 About her being drowned, I mean.

Marlowe (sharply)
 Who told you?

Birdie
 Aw, be yourself, honey. Why would I work in a telephone office if I didn't know most everything that went on?
 (Marlowe takes money out of his pocket, puts down a couple of dollars and some small change)
 Did she really drown herself?

CONTINUED

Birdie (cont'd)

(Marlowe nods)

I could tell you something else about her -- if you were real nice to me.

Marlowe

How nice?

Birdie

I was going out with a fellow from Victorville tonight. I could change my mind.

Marlowe

Just my luck. I've got to go out with a fellow from Los Angeles tonight.

He makes a motion to move.

Birdie

Honey, I'll tell you anyway. You've just got that something --

(She gets serious)

I don't think that girl's name is Muriel -- any more than yours is Murphy.

Marlowe (grinning)

No?

(He sits on the corner of the desk, gets out a couple of cigarettes, puts one in his mouth, one in hers, lights them both)

My name's Philip Marlowe. I'm a writer. What nice soft hair you have.

Birdie

Yes, haven't I? You're not a writer, honey. You're some kind of a dick, aren't you? The nice kind. And you're looking for Mildred Haviland, too.

Marlowe

Am I?

Birdie

Sure you are. Just like that tough copper that was up here with her photograph.

Marlowe

Photograph.

Birdie

Oh, it wasn't much like the way she is now.

Marlowe

I'll bet it wasn't.

Birdie (shocked)
I didn't mean that, honey. I mean the way she was -- well, you know what I mean.

Marlowe
Sure. Changed a lot, had she?

Birdie
Enough. But not enough to fool me. I'm good at faces.

Marlowe
I'll bet you are. You did a sweet job on yours.

Birdie
You really think so, honey?

Marlowe
What did you tell this copper?

Birdie
Nothing. I just looked kind of blank. I didn't like him. And even if I had -- I don't guess I'd have told him. Everybody's done something they're sorry for.

Marlowe
What had she done to be sorry for?

Birdie
He wouldn't tell me.

Marlowe
The skunk. I'd tell you, Birdie -- if I knew. But I just never heard of anybody named Mildred Haviland -- or Muriel Chess either -- until today.

Birdie
Honest?

Marlowe
Uh-huh.
(He gets down off the desk)
This guy tell you his name -- or show you his badge?

Birdie
Why --
(She stops to think)
No, he didn't. But I just knew he was a copper. He was so big and tough and mean.
(Marlowe grins)
I -- I guess you think I talk too much, don't you?

93

CONTINUED (4)

Marlowe

Just about right. I wonder if he found what he was looking for.

Birdie (contemptuously)

Course he didn't. Don't you think I'd know?

Marlowe (slowly)

I'm not sure.

(He starts to go)

This might be the one time you didn't get to listen in.

DISSOLVE TO:

94

EXT. PRIVATE ROAD - (NIGHT)

Near Little Fawn Lake. Bright moonlight. The gate across the road is closed. Beyond it there is the distant shine of the lake water through the trees. The noise of a car is heard. Headlight beams swing into the shot, stop on the gate which is now seen to be padlocked. The lights swing to one side and go off. The car motor stops. A door is heard opening and closing. Marlowe comes into the shot, reaches the gate, listens a moment, starts to climb over it.

95

LONG SHOT

SHOOTING DOWN THE SLOPE towards the Chess cabin in darkness. The lake and dam are visible beyond it, and the Kingsley cabin in the background is also completely dark. Marlowe enters the shot walking silently on the pine needles.

96

CLOSE SHOT - THE CHESS CABIN

As Marlowe reaches the front door. He tries it quietly. It is locked. CAMERA PANS HIM to the side of the cabin. He moves along the wall, turns the corner out of sight. There is a faint sound of a door being tried. Marlowe reappears, stops before one of the windows, tries the screen. He goes on, stops before another window.

97

CLOSE UP

The side of the cabin. Marlowe is standing looking up at a small unscrapped window. He reaches up, tries it, tries to push it in. No soap. He looks around, listens. The night is perfectly silent. Marlowe moves away from the cabin, stoops, drags a heavy block of wood over to the cabin wall, up-ends it, steadies it and carefully climbs up on it. He pauses to listen again. Then he gets out a knife and works the blade in between the frame and edge of the window. There is a small clicking sound. He replaces the knife in his pocket, pushes the window in. He puts both hands on the sill and heaves up, starts to wiggle through the small opening.

98

INT. CHESS CABIN

In darkness. The shadowy outlines of furniture can be seen, the light color of the lamp shade, etc. Marlowe is through the window and is turning his body to drop to the floor. He drops, turns and suddenly the beam of a flashlight hits him square in the face.

Patton's Voice (off scene)

I'd rest right there, son. You must be tuckered out.

CAMERA PULLS BACK AND PANS along the flashlight beam to show Patton sitting in the chair beside the lamp. He lowers the flash, reaches over, clicks on the lamp and kills the flash. The shabby living room of the cabin is now seen, with the open door of the kitchen and a corner of the wood cook stove.

Patton

What's on your mind, son -- besides breaking and entering?

Marlowe

I had an idea -- but I guess I can learn to forget it.

He turns a straight chair around and straddles it looking around the room.

Patton

I've been a mite curious about you, son -- since Bill told me you was some kind of dick. You didn't bother to tell me yourself.

Marlowe

I'd have got around to it. Sorry it bothered you.

CONTINUED

Patton

It didn't bother me none. I don't bother at all easy. Mind telling me what you aimed to look for in here?

Marlowe

Is that something you have to get told?

Patton gets up, crosses to the cabin door, unlocks it and opens it. He spits out into the darkness and turns back.

Patton

Ain't no sense chewing tobacco these days. Things ain't fixed up for a man.

(Pause. He sits down and makes himself comfortable again)

Well, maybe I do, maybe I don't. I already pawed around considerable myself. Just got back up the hill about an hour ago.

Marlowe

How did you find things?

Patton

What things would that be?

Marlowe (grinning)

You're not dumb, sheriff. You just like some people to think you are. If Muriel committed suicide, everything belonging to her would be right here in the cabin, wouldn't it? But Bill Chess has been living here for a month and it's a small place. Wouldn't he wonder why she didn't take her stuff?

Patton

Reckon he would -- if she committed suicide.

Marlowe

And if he murdered her, he'd still have to do something about her stuff -- for exactly the same reason. There was a Ford car, too, wasn't there?

Patton (woodenly)

Who're you working for, son?

Marlowe

Kingsley.

Patton

What doing?

CONTINUED

Marlowe

I'd rather not say.

Patton

Guess you don't have to. I guess you fellahs do a lot of divorce business. Kind of smelly work to my notion.

Marlowe

Know any kind of detective work that isn't?

Patton doesn't answer for a moment, then he nods slowly.

Patton

I guess you and me could get along. Ever hear of Coon Lake?

Marlowe shakes his head. Patton jerks a thumb over his shoulder.

Patton

Back about a mile. There's a little narrow wood road that turns up the mountain. Careful driver can just squeeze past the trees. Comes out by Coon Lake. There's a bunch of hand-hewn log cabins up there that's been falling down ever since I can remember. Bill Chess's Ford is up there hid in the brush. Two suitcases in it packed tight. Packed kind of sloppy, too -- for a girl as neat as Muriel was.

Marlowe

Makes it look bad for Bill, doesn't it?

Patton nods.

Patton

No stranger would think to hide a car up there. Probably wouldn't even know there was such a place. And that ain't all either.

(He gets a small twist of tissue paper out of his pocket, opens it up and holds it out on the flat of his hand)

Take a look at that.

(Marlowe comes over to look at it)

What do you figure that is?

Marlowe

A gold chain. Might be an anklet.

98

CONTINUED (4)

Patton

And cut off her ankle with wire cutters.

Marlowe

Why would Bill do that?

His hand goes out and takes the anklet with the piece of tissue paper. He turns towards the lamp.

99

CLOSE UP - MARLOWE

Standing beside the lamp. Patton is behind him. Marlowe lays the paper down on the table, picks the chain up with both hands. His body hides what he is doing from Patton.

100

EXTREME CLOSE UP

Of the anklet in Marlowe's fingers. He brings the cut edges together. It is obvious that they do not fit.

Marlowe's Voice (over the close up)

Why would he cut it off her ankle -- and leave that necklace on her neck?

101

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND PATTON

Marlowe has now turned to look at Patton. He is holding the anklet and tissue paper in his left hand.

Marlowe

What's this white powder? Flour?

(He moistens his fingertip, touches the powder, tastes it)

Confectioner's sugar. Pretty clever of you to find it, sheriff.

Patton

Heck, I knocked the box over and spilled some of the sugar. Without that, I guess I never would've found it.

Marlowe hands the anklet back to him. Patton twists the paper up and replaces it in his pocket. He stands up.

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED (2)

Patton
You staying up here or going back to town, Mr. Marlowe?

Marlowe
Back to town.

Patton
Then if you'll kind of shut that window you busted in, I'll put the lamp out and lock up.

102 WIDER ANGLE

As Marlowe crosses to the window, pushes it shut and fumbles with the catch, glancing back over his shoulder at Patton who has his hand out to turn the key switch of the lamp. Marlowe moves past him to the door. Patton switches off the light, starts after him.

103 EXT. CABIN

As Marlowe comes out past the screen door. He holds it open while Patton locks the house door. They move a couple of steps away from the cabin.

Marlowe
You really think Bill killed her?

Patton
If I do, I ain't going to let any itty-bitty chain stop me.

(Pause)
I don't figure he meant to kill her. Bill's kind of hot-tempered when he gets going.

(Pause. He looks around and sniffs at the night air, then looks at Marlowe)
Don't agree with me, do you?

Marlowe
No.

Patton
Well, good night to you. Guess I'll walk down to the end of the lake. Figure out the next mistake I'm going to make.

(He starts off, takes three or four steps and looks back)
Don't worry none about busting open that window, Mr. Marlowe. That is, unless you get the notion of doing it all over again.

He goes on. Marlowe turns away and starts back towards his car.

104

INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

It is dark except for moonlight filtering through the tall pines. Marlowe is slumped in the corner of the car with his hat on his nose. For a moment there is silence, then suddenly the sound of a car is heard starting some distance away. Marlowe sits up straight and looks out through the windshield.

105

WHAT HE SEES

Through the branches of an ironwood tree behind which he has hidden his car. The reflected light of headlights can be seen rounding a curve below on the road. The noise of the car is heard increasing. The headlights tilt up and almost, but not quite, shine into Marlowe's car, then they swing off, as the car passes. The sound of the car diminishes.

106

EXT. MARLOWE'S CAR

Still dark. The car is hidden in deep brush behind the ironwood tree. The door opens and Marlowe steps out, listens a moment, then starts down the narrow wood road up which he drove his car to hide it.

WIPE TO:

107

EXT. CHESS'S CABIN

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE SMALL WINDOW. The block of wood is still leaning against the side of the house. Quiet steps are heard approaching. Marlowe comes into the shot, stops a moment to look back and listen, then starts towards the block of wood.

108

INT. CHESS'S CABIN

As the window swings open. Marlowe's head and shoulders and then his body almost fill the opening. He climbs through the window in darkness, drops to the floor. A moment's silence. Then a small pocket flash comes on and starts to prowl the room. It touches the closed front door, the chair in which Patton sat, the lamp, a fireplace, a small writing table in the corner, the entrance to the kitchen, then back along the wall under the small window to the front door again.

109

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

From behind as he moves over to the door, reaches it, snaps off the flash, pulls the door open. He stands a moment against the screen looking out. He closes the door again, snaps the flash on. CAMERA PANS HIM back across the room and into the kitchen. The flash beam explores the kitchen. The cook stove, wood box, table, dish closet, the sink with a varnished wooden drainboard and some open shelves above it on each side of a window. The flash beam moves in on a small heap of spilled white powder, holds a moment, then moves up to the shelf.

110

CLOSE SHOT - THE SHELF

In the light of his flash which moves along it past a box of salt, a box of baking soda, some cereals, stops on a square box marked, "Confectioner's Sugar." A hand comes into the shot, takes the box.

111

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Standing beside the drainboard. He is seen in reflected light from his flash. He sets the box on the drainboard, pulls a drawer open, takes out a big spoon. He sets the flashlight down on the drainboard pointing at the box. He opens up the top of the box and probes in it with the spoon. He puts the spoon down, moves out of the shot leaving the flash. A rustle of paper is heard. He comes into the shot again, spreads a piece of newspaper on the drainboard, up-ends the box and dumps the contents on the newspaper. He stirs around in it with the spoon. There is a light click of metal touching metal. He picks the flash up and shines it on something that is in the sugar. It is a small metal object. He picks it up, holds it on the palm of his hand and shines the light on it.

Adrienne
Outside the gate. I didn't see yours.

Marlowe
It's hidden. This is police property now.

Adrienne
So I'd better not touch any smooth surfaces?

Marlowe
What made you come up here in such a hurry?

Adrienne (sharply)
What made you hang up on me?

Marlowe
Somebody was listening in.
(Pause)
Surely you didn't suppose I got tired of the sound of your voice.

Adrienne
Here we go again.
(She gets serious)
Just once, let's not fight. Do you mind? Things are serious enough --

Marlowe
Serious enough so I don't want any part of them.
(Pause)
And don't ask me what I mean. You're not sitting at that fancy desk editing all those crime magazines for nothing but a fat salary and the pleasure of hearing Mr. Derace Kingsley announce he's leaving for the day.

Adrienne (calmly)
You're the hardest detective to keep working I've ever had to deal with. What are you afraid of now?

Marlowe
Of what I might find out. You look pretty good in slacks.

Adrienne
I look pretty good in anything. Now that's out of the way -- I suppose you've searched the place?

Marlowe
I didn't get a chance. We weren't the only people that had the idea. Her clothes and car are gone. So she didn't commit suicide -- unless it was part of her idea to have Bill accused of murdering her.

116

CONTINUED: (3)

Adrienne

That's not impossible -- to a jealous woman, is it?

Marlowe

I don't know. I've never been a jealous woman. Have you?

Adrienne

Let's not get personal, Marlowe.

Marlowe moves a little closer to her.

Marlowe

Why? I couldn't think of a better place.

She moves away from him, but not far.

Adrienne

What was found?

Marlowe

The Ford with a suitcase full of clothes in it -- hidden up at Coon Lake.

Adrienne

Only one suitcase?

Marlowe

Sure. Muriel Chess wasn't a rich man's darling.

Adrienne

Do you always have to be a heel?

Marlowe

Only when I'm working.

Adrienne

Well -- that's certainly the only time I'm likely to meet you.

She turns and goes towards the kitchen door. He looks after her grinning.

117

INT. KITCHEN

As Adrienne enters. The light is behind her. She reaches up, turns on a hanging bulb, stands looking around. She sees the spilled sugar on the drainboard. Marlowe comes in behind her, stands in the doorway.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED: (2)

Adrienne (indicating the sugar)
Does that mean anything?

Marlowe
It means somebody hid a gold anklet in the sugar.

Adrienne
Why would anybody do that?

Marlowe
Probably on account of this.

He takes the little gold heart out and holds
it out to her. She takes it.

118 CLOSEUP - ADRIENNE

Looking down at the gold heart.

119 INSERT - THE HEART

See Scene 112.

Marlowe's voice (over insert)
Who's Mildred Haviland?

120 TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND ADRIENNE

She looks up at him.

Adrienne (slowly)
Mildred Haviland. Seems to me I've heard that name somewhere.
(She looks down at the heart again)
To Mildred from Chris.
(She looks up again)
Who told you her last name?

Marlowe
A friendly little blonde in the telephone office. This guy
Lavery gets around, doesn't he?

He takes the heart back from her and puts
it in his pocket again.

CONTINUED

120

CONTINUED: (2)

Adrienne

The Chris on that doesn't have to be Chris Lavery. There must be hundreds of men named Chris.

Marlowe (sarcastically)

Yeah, sure. Probably dozens of them come up to Little Fawn Lake and give people anklets.

Adrienne

You don't have to be nasty. How did this telephone girl know about it?

Marlowe

She didn't know about the anklet. She knew somebody who looked and acted like a cop was up here asking for Mildred Haviland a while ago -- and he had a photo with him -- which looked a little like Muriel Chess.

Adrienne

Evidently a lady with a past.

Marlowe

It caught up with her.

Adrienne

You really think that's what happened?

Marlowe

Could be -- and could be not. One way to find out might be to bump Lavery again -- only I don't think I want to find out.

(Pause. She stares at him expressionlessly)

Do you?

Adrienne (coldly)

Yes. When I start something, I usually finish it.

Marlowe (steadily)

Like I told you over the phone -- this might be a good time to break the rule.

Adrienne

I don't happen to agree with you.

(She turns and starts out by another door)

121

INT. BEDROOM - CHESS CABIN

As Adrienne enters. She switches on the ceiling light. It's a small plain room lined with knotty pine. There are twin beds, a dresser, etc. She crosses to the dresser, pulls a drawer open.

CONTINUED

121 CONTINUED: (2)

Adrienne (as if to herself)
Cold cream, nail polish, powder, manicure set.
(She closes the drawer slowly, opens
another)

122 CLOSE SHOT - ADRIENNE

Leaning over the open drawer. SHOOTING DOWN. There are mixed up garments in it, some men's shirts, socks, handkerchiefs, woman's aprons, etc. Adrienne's hand goes down, turns various articles over, stops. Slowly she draws something out.

123 MEDIUM SHOT

Adrienne turns with a piece of female lingerie in her hand. Marlowe has come into the room and is watching her.

Adrienne (feeling the material
with her fingers)
A slip. And it's real silk.
(She holds it up, touches the edge)
Lace. No woman would leave this behind if she were going
away.
(She drops the slip back into the drawer,
pushes it shut and faces Marlowe)
What does Jim Patton think?

Marlowe
He's not saying -- but I could give a guess. That Bill and Muriel had a fight -- and she made up her mind to leave him -- and wrote that note -- and that was as far as she got.

Adrienne
And what do you think -- if you're telling?

Marlowe
That if Bill killed her, he would have found a better place to hide her. He lives up here -- he knows the country. There must be a thousand places better than a lake right in front of his cabin.

124 CLOSEUP - ADRIENNE

Staring at him. She is a little unsure now -- almost frightened.

CONTINUED

124 CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe's voice (over closeup)
 She didn't kill herself -- and Bill didn't kill her. But
 somebody else did -- somebody who was in a hurry -- because
 there was no telling when Bill might get back and catch
 him at it.

Adrienne (under her breath)
 Him?

125 TWO SHOT - ADRIENNE AND MARLOWE

Marlowe
 Or her. That's why I don't want any part of it.

Adrienne
 You're crazy.

Marlowe
 Am I? How would you look to Kingsley if the guy you hired
 to find his wife pinned a murder on her?

Adrienne (slowly)
 Suppose I don't care -- any more.

Marlowe
 Sure you care.

He turns his head suddenly. Distantly the
 sound of slow careful steps is heard. Marlowe
 reaches up, snaps the light switch, starts back
 to the kitchen.

126 INT. KITCHEN

Marlowe reaches the hanging bulb and turns that off.
 He starts towards the living room.

127 INT. LIVING ROOM

Marlowe comes in quickly through the dark kitchen,
 reaches the table lamp and turns that off too. He
 stands silent, listening. The sound of the slow
 careful steps is heard again nearer. They stop,
 then come on, then stop again. Marlowe reaches for
 his flash, moves silently towards the door. Very
 slowly he pulls it open. The steps are heard near
 the cabin now. He reaches the flash out until the
 lens is against the screen door, then clicks it on.

CONTINUED

127

CONTINUED: (2)

There is a sudden flurry and thud of hoofs and a pounding sound that diminishes rapidly in the distance. Adrienne comes up behind Marlowe.

Adrienne (laughing)

You big idiot! Call yourself a detective and you can't tell a deer's footsteps from a man's?

Marlowe switches off the flash and turns. They are almost touching. They stand a moment silently, then go into a clinch. A long kiss.

Adrienne (as she comes out
of the kiss)

Probably bad policy to kiss a detective, isn't it?

Marlowe

All depends what you've got on your conscience. It might be good policy.

As he kisses her again --

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

128

EXTREME CLOSEUP

The side of a door and a doorbell with a card above it which reads: "Mr. Christopher Lavery". A man's thumb is pressing the doorbell. It is heard to ring inside the house. The thumb stays on the button for a long time, then releases it. CAMERA PANS SLOWLY to the left to follow the hand down to the door knob. The door is not quite shut. The hand pushes the knob. The door sticks, finally moves slowly open. Marlowe, up to this point visible only as to hand and arm, moves on through the door, stops inside the house.

129

INT. LAVERY'S LIVING ROOM

Marlowe standing inside the open door. The room is dim. The venetian blinds are closed. (The following scene is played entirely in this dim light). Marlowe reaches back to push the door closed. CAMERA PANS AROUND as he moves on into the room, stops by a low table.

CONTINUED

129

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERA MOVES IN on the table showing a half-empty bottle of whiskey, a couple of used glasses, a bucket partly full of water from melted ice cubes, an ash-tray with burnt matches, cigarette stubs. Marlowe's hand goes down, picks up one of the stubs which is seen to be stained with lipstick. He drops it, turns away. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIS MOVEMENTS over to the mantel, moves in on an electric clock. The room is so silent that the faint whirring of the clock can be heard. He turns away. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM across to a desk. He opens the desk, looks through it, pausing to listen. At one point, the electric ice box goes on with a sudden jar and startles him. Marlowe turns away from the desk, starts towards the arch at the back of the room. Suddenly he stops frozen. At this moment, the ice box also stops. There is dead silence. Marlowe stares fixedly.

130

WHAT HE SEES - MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

Through the archway, showing the head of the stairs. A woman stands at the top of the stairs looking at him silently. There is a gun in her hand. She is a slender woman of uncertain age with untidy dark hair, a silly-looking hat and a shabby coat over a house dress. On her hands she wears cotton gloves. She holds the gun, a small automatic, not directly pointed at Marlowe. There is bewilderment rather than menace in her expression. After a moment, she starts forward.

131

MEDIUM SHOT

Marlowe stands silently watching the woman approaching. His face is deadpan. She comes within five or six feet of him before she speaks. She has a hoarse, unsteady voice.

Woman

All I wanted was my rent. The place seems well taken care of. Nothing broken. He promised me a check. I didn't get it.

132 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Registering this. He is obviously much more concerned with the gun than with what the woman is saying.

Marlowe (playing up)
That so? How far behind is he?

133 CLOSE SHOT - WOMAN

Woman
Three months. Two hundred and forty dollars. I told him I needed it. He promised me over the telephone this morning.

134 TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND WOMAN

Marlowe (watching her closely)
Over the telephone, huh? This morning.

Woman
I mean he promised to give it to me this morning.

She lifts the gun until it is pointing at him. This movement has no apparent connection with her expression or what she says.

Marlowe
Uh-huh. And you're --

Woman
I'm Mrs. Fallbrook. This is my house. Who did you think I was?

Marlowe moves a little to one side, but the gun seems to follow him all of its own accord.

Marlowe
I thought you might be the owner. You talking about the rent and all.

Mrs. Fallbrook
And who are you, if I may ask?

Marlowe
Finance company. About the car.

Mrs. Fallbrook looks startled.

CONTINUED

134

CONTINUED: (2)

Mrs. Fallbrook
 You mean Mr. Lavery is behind in his car payments?
 (Marlowe nods)
 I don't like that. I don't like that at all.

Marlowe (drily)
 That's what the finance company said.

He makes another sideways movement and his right hand comes up slowly. His eyes go towards the gun. He braces himself.

Mrs. Fallbrook (glancing down at the gun she's holding)
 You know, it's funny about this gun. I found it on the stairs. Nasty oily things, aren't they?
 (She holds the gun out on her gloved hand)
 You'd better take it. Men always understand guns.

135

CLOSEUP - MARLOWE

SHOOTING PAST THE EXTENDED HAND holding the gun. His face shows an immense but controlled relief. His hand comes out stiffly, takes the gun off her hand. During the following speech, over scene, Marlowe examines the gun. He breaks out the magazine, finds it empty. He cocks the gun to eject the shell in the chamber, but no shell is ejected. He holds the cocking piece back and turns the gun against the light so that he can look into the empty breach. When he is satisfied that the gun is empty, he holds the muzzle to his nose and sniffs. His face tightens.

Mrs. Fallbrook's voice (over the above action)
 But of course it's much easier for you -- about Mr. Lavery's car, I mean. You can just take it away if you have to. But taking a house with furniture in it isn't so easy. There's apt to be bitterness and things get damaged -- sometimes on purpose. The rug on this floor cost over two hundred dollars second-hand. It's only a juke rug, but it has lovely coloring, don't you think?

Marlowe finally takes his eyes off the gun and looks towards the voice.

Marlowe (absently)
 Huh?

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND MRS. FALLBROOK

Mrs. Fallbrook now looks at the gun.

Mrs. Fallbrook
It isn't loaded, is it? I certainly hope not. I wonder why Mr. Lavery left it on the stairs.

Marlowe
Probably had a hole in his pocket.
(Then very slowly)
No. It's not loaded -- now.
(He drops the gun into his pocket)
It's been fired since it was last cleaned.

Mrs. Fallbrook
Oh, has it?
(She sniffs the glove on the hand which held the gun)
I'm afraid I got oil on my glove.
(She does a startled double-take)
Fired? You mean lately -- in here?

Marlowe
I wouldn't know that. You go through the house?

Mrs. Fallbrook (taking offense)
I have a right to, I hope. It's my house.

Marlowe
Uh-huh. Sure he's not here somewhere.

Mrs. Fallbrook
Mr. Lavery? Of course he isn't. How could he be? I called out from the top of the stairs when he didn't answer my ring. I went down to the lower hall. I even peeped into the bedroom.

Marlowe
Naughty. Did you look under the beds and in the clothes closet?

Mrs. Fallbrook (getting haughty)
Well, really! What finance company did you say --

Marlowe (curtly)
I didn't say. Quite sure you found this gun on the stairs? Sure you didn't knock somebody off with it -- on account of he owed you three months rent?

Mrs. Fallbrook (angrily)
How dare you be so insulting! How dare you --
(Her voice breaks in a sob)
Oh, I should never have come in. It was horrid of me. Mr. Lavery will be furious.

136

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe

What you shouldn't have done was let me find out the gun was empty. Up to then you were holding everything in the deck.

She stares at him a moment horrified, turns and starts to run towards the front door. Marlowe makes a move to go after her, then stops, shakes his head. The front door opens and slams shut. Quick steps are heard on the walk outside. Marlowe bites his lip, turns away and starts for the stairs.

137

INT. LOWER HALLWAY

As Marlowe reaches the foot of the stairs. CAMERA PANS HIM to an open door leading into a bedroom. He glances in, then moves along the hallway to a closed door. As he approaches, he, and we, become aware of the sound of gently running water. Marlowe knocks on the closed door. No answer.

Marlowe (calling out)

Lavery! You in there?

No answer. He tries the doorknob. The door is locked. He frowns, then moves back, CAMERA PANNING WITH HIM, to the bedroom door and he starts in.

138

INT. BEDROOM

There is a tumbled bed, clothes scattered about. He crosses to the bureau, looks at various articles scattered on it, reaches suddenly for a handkerchief. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on Marlowe examining the handkerchief. It is obviously a woman's handkerchief. There are initials embroidered in a corner. He sniffs the handkerchief with a wry expression, then spreads it out. The initials are seen to be A.F. He stands a moment staring at it tight-faced, then takes a handkerchief out of his own pocket, wads the initialed handkerchief inside it and puts it away. He moves across to a closet door, opens it, looks inside, closes the door, glances around the room once more, starts for the door.

139

INT. HALLWAY

As Marlowe reaches the closed door again. The sound of running water continues. He bangs on the door again. No answer. He steps back, crashes his shoulder and side against the door. It holds. He swears, tries it again. There is the sound of tearing wood as the door gives. He pushes the door open. The sound of the running water is louder. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM into the bathroom. A pair of man's pajamas are tossed on a clothes hamper, a pair of slippers on the floor beside it, a hand towel on the wash basin, a safety razor and brush full of soap.

140

REVERSE SHOT

Marlowe standing inside the bathroom door staring down. He sniffs a couple of times. His eyes go to the floor exploring it. He moves in on the camera and starts to stoop down.

141

REVERSE SHOT - LOW CAMERA

SHOOTING ALONG THE FLOOR. A light catches several small bright objects, one lying against a slipper, one near the baseboard, one almost under the window. Marlowe's hand and arm come into the shot and pick them up, one by one, CAMERA MOVING TOWARDS THE END WALL. CAMERA PANS SLOWLY up the wall to the window. There is a starred hole in it. CAMERA PANS OVER to the tiling. There is a broken tile in the wall. Marlowe's hand comes into the shot and touches it. CAMERA PULLS BACK as he turns looking at what is in his hand.

142

INSERT

Three empty shell cases of a twenty-five caliber automatic pistol lying in Marlowe's hand.

143

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Reacting. He puts the shell cases down on the side of the wash basin, turns towards the stall shower from which the sound of running water comes.

144

CLOSEUP

An oilskin shower curtain drawn across the stall shower. Marlowe reaches it, draws it to one side enough to glance in. He freezes, then very slowly, he reaches in and turns off the water. He draws the curtain wider and stares down.

145

REVERSE SHOT - CLOSEUP - MARLOWE'S FACE

Staring down into the shower. It is very grim. His hand comes into the shot, reaches up and draws the curtain across until the closed curtain and his hand are all we see. Then the hand is withdrawn.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

146

INT. DERACE KINGSLEY'S OFFICE - LONG SHOT

SHOOTING TOWARDS AN ENORMOUS WINDOW which overlooks the city. The office is much larger than Adrienne's and in a different style of decoration. Kingsley is sitting behind his desk, turned away from it looking out of the window. A door opens in foreground, a secretary enters, marches the length of the room.

147

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

Secretary

Mr. Floyd Greer to see you, Mr. Kingsley.

Kingsley (shortly, without turning)

In what connection?

Secretary

He -- he wouldn't say, Mr. Kingsley.

Kingsley (sharply)

It's your business to make him say.

Secretary

Yes sir.

(She hesitates a moment)

He isn't in uniform, but I think he's a police officer.

CONTINUED

147

CONTINUED: (2)

Kingsley swings around, sharp and stares at her coldly.

Kingsley (irritably)
Why didn't you say so? Show him in.

The secretary goes. CAMERA PANS HER TO THE DOOR which she opens. She stands in the open door.

Secretary
Come in, please, Mr. Greer.

A thin, cadaverous-looking man in a sloppy business suit enters. The secretary exits, closes the door. The man approaches Kingsley's desk with a flat-footed walk. He is a tired old workhorse of a cop.

Greer (politely, almost hesitantly)
I'm Floyd Greer of the Central Detective Bureau, Mr. Kingsley. Sorry to bother you.

Kingsley
Well, what is it?

Greer
We got a call from the San Bernardino police about what happened up at your place in the mountains.

(He looks at a chair, then hesitantly sits down in it. Kingsley makes no answer)

Maybe you didn't hear about it yet.

(Pause)

Though I guess you kind of must have at that.

Kingsley
Perhaps it would save time if you'd tell me what you're talking about, Mr. Greer.

Greer (patiently)
Woman found drowned in that little lake. Wife of your caretaker.

Kingsley (acting startled)
Good Heavens! You mean Muriel Chess? I had no idea --

Greer
I thought this guy Marlowe was working for you. He was up there when they found her.

(Kingsley just stares at him)

That's okay. You don't have to tell me your private business -- so far. This is just a routine check-up. Guess you know this man Chess pretty well, don't you, Mr. Kingsley?

CONTINUED

147

CONTINUED: (3)

Kingsley

Very well.

Greer

They figure he done it.

Kingsley

Nonsense! Bill Chess wouldn't hurt a fly.

Greer (unimpressed)

Uh-huh. How long since you been up there, Mr. Kingsley?

Kingsley (thinking)

Let me see -- early last October I think.

Greer

Uh-huh. How about Mrs. Kingsley?

Kingsley (smoothly)

She was up there more recently.

Greer

Uh-huh. I called your home. They tell me she's away.

Kingsley

That's correct.

Greer

Been away quite a while, they tell me.

Kingsley (leaning forward)

Just what are you driving at?

Greer (mildly)

Not driving at anything, Mr. Kingsley. Like I told you, this is just routine. We got to contact the parties. Take this guy Marlowe, for instance. He's got a private license. We'd kind of like to know what he was doing up there.

Kingsley

Why don't you ask him?

Greer

Uh-huh. We could do that. That is, if it's all right with you.

(Kingsley doesn't answer)

I think maybe you've got me wrong. I don't work for any newspaper. You want to divorce your wife, that's your business.

CONTINUED

147

CONTINUED: (4)

Kingsley (coldly and deliberately)
I'm very busy today, Mr. Greer. As you say, that is my business. I have no information for you about Bill Chess or his wife. Is there anything else?

Greer gets up slowly.

Greer
No. I guess not. Like I told you, this is just routine.

Kingsley (nastily)
You must get very tired of it.

Greer (staring at him empty)
A guy has to eat. Much obliged for your time, Mr. Kingsley.

He turns away. Kingsley's eyes follow him to the door which is heard opening and closing.

148

INT. ANTEROOM - KINGSLEY'S OFFICE

Kingsley's secretary is seated behind her desk as Greer enters. He looks her over.

Greer
You look cute in that blue dress.

She gives him a freezing glance. He sighs, crosses towards the door.

149

INT. MAIN RECEPTION ROOM - KINGSLEY PUBLICATIONS

A corner of a large modernistic waiting room, lounging chairs, smoking stands, etc. Several people are waiting, a couple of them look dopey enough to be writers. There is a receptionist at a small switchboard. Marlowe is leaning on the counter beside it. There is a ribbon-tied candy box under his hand.

Receptionist (to Marlowe)
What name shall I say?

Marlowe is about to answer when an inner door opens and Greer comes out. Marlowe sizes him up with a glance, turns his back, busies himself lighting a cigarette.

CONTINUED

149

CONTINUED: (2)

Greer passes behind him. Marlowe turns his head, follows Greer with his eyes to the outer door which is heard opening and closing. As the door closes, Marlowe turns back to the receptionist.

Marlowe

Marlowe.

The receptionist plugs in.

Receptionist (into phone)

Mr. Marlowe to see you, Miss Fromsett.

(Pause)

Thank you, Miss Fromsett.

(She releases a plug, turns to Marlowe)

Miss Fromsett will see you now.

Marlowe picks up his box of candy and starts out of shot.

150

INT. KINGSLEY'S OFFICE

He is walking up and down frowning. He stops before a communicating door (opposite the one by which his secretary and Greer entered), puts his hand out to open it, drops his hand, turns away, takes a couple of steps, suddenly turns back, opens the door and starts in. CAMERA FOLLOWS HIM through into Adrienne's office. Adrienne is standing in front of a mirror doing something to her hair. As Kingsley enters, another door across the room opens and Marlowe comes in carrying his candy box.

151

INT. ADRIENNE'S OFFICE

As Kingsley stops dead staring at Marlowe with hostility. Adrienne turns, looks from one man to the other. Marlowe is unperturbed. Adrienne's eyes go to the candy box.

Kingsley (to Adrienne sharply)

Adrienne, I want to speak to you in my office a minute.

Adrienne (surprised at his tone)

Yes, of course, Derry --

(She turns to Marlowe)

Will you excuse me?

CONTINUED

151

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe sits down and puts the candy box on her desk.

Marlowe

No.

(He turns to Kingsley)

You better park yourself, Mr. Kingsley. You're due for a joint. I've got to talk to both of you.

(Kingsley doesn't move, just stares at him. Adrienne sits down slowly behind her desk)

You just had a cop calling on you.

152

CLOSE SHOT - ADRIENNE

Reacting.

153

MEDIUM SHOT

Kingsley

Thanks to your incompetence -- and your indiscretion in telling Jim Patton you were seeking divorce evidence against my wife.

Adrienne (to Kingsley)

What would you expect him to tell them -- that she's been missing for a month and you haven't moved a finger to find her?

Kingsley turns on her angrily.

Kingsley

I think that's my business.

Marlowe

Calm down. I didn't tell Jim Patton anything. I just let him keep the guess he already had. He probably knows a lot more about your wife than you think.

Kingsley (glaring)

Indeed?

(He starts to turn away)

If you'll excuse me -- I'm sure you would like to present your little box of candy in private. Too bad Miss Fromsett never eats candy.

Marlowe

Fine. I didn't bring any. Does your wife own a gun?

CONTINUED

153

CONTINUED: (2)

Kingsley and Adrienne both look startled.

Kingsley

A gun?

Marlowe gets up, crosses to the communicating door and closes it.

Marlowe

That's right. A gun.

Kingsley

I -- I don't know.

(He controls himself. His voice gets sharp again.)

Why?

Marlowe (sarcastically)

You don't know. That's a little odd.

(He turns to Adrienne)

How about you?

She doesn't answer. After a moment, she reaches across the deck for the candy box. As she picks it up, she reacts to its weight. She looks into Marlowe's eyes, then quickly jerks the ribbon off the box and lifts the cover. She separates a piece of newspaper and looks down.

154

CLOSE SHOT - INTO THE BOX

A small automatic lying on a piece of newspaper.

155

CLOSE SHOT - ADRIENNE

As she looks up at Marlowe again.

Adrienne

You told me you'd find a gun sooner or later, didn't you?

156

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Marlowe

When you start finding bodies -- sooner or later you always find a gun.

157 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

As Kingsley comes to the desk and looks down at the gun. His hand goes out to it, then stops.

Marlowe
You can handle it. It's empty -- now.

Adrienne (under her breath)
Now?

Kingsley's hand goes slowly to the gun. He picks it up, holds it on his hand staring down at it.

Marlowe
Lavery's dead. This gun killed him.

158 CLOSEUP - ADRIENNE

Reacting.

159 CLOSEUP - KINGSLEY

Reacting.

160 CLOSEUP - MARLOWE

Watching them react.

Marlowe
He was in his bathroom -- with the door locked. One of those locks where you push a button in the middle of the knob.

161 MEDIUM SHOT

Adrienne
Then he killed himself. That doesn't sound --

Marlowe (drily)
Not unless he missed with the first three shots. Only two went into him -- but there were five empties on the floor.

Kingsley drops the gun into the box with a grimace of disgust.

CONTINUED

Kingsley (harshly)

You can't really think my wife did anything like that.

Marlowe

Thinking's got nothing to do with it. Here's a gun that can be identified and traced. It's got a serial number on it. Off hand, I'd say a woman did the job --

(He glances briefly at Adrienne who returns his look deadpan. Then he turns back to Kingsley)

-- but it doesn't have to be so. It might just have been made to look like a woman's job. You might have shot him.

Kingsley

Don't be an idiot. I don't go around shooting people.

(Pause, then deliberately)

Besides, I have no motive -- nothing I'd regard as a motive.

Marlowe

The cops aren't so finicky. They'd like the motive fine.

(He grins scurly)

Personally, I don't think you'd even swat a fly. You'd buzz for your secretary. So I'm still asking you if your wife owns a gun.

Kingsley stares at him tight-lipped and says nothing.

Marlowe (losing patience)

Come on, say something, can't you? This isn't just another cute little murder yarn in one of your magazines. I've found a dead man -- and I haven't told the police -- and I've got the gun that killed the dead man -- so what do you think I'm going to do about it -- bury it in the back yard?

Adrienne

Stop yelling. You make me nervous.

Marlowe (rounding on her)

A little thing like a murder wouldn't make you nervous, would it?

(He turns to Kingsley again)

Any number of people might have seen me go into that house. One person did -- the owner. She called to collect some back rent.

(Kingsley and Adrienne react)

I'm not worrying much about her. She's not the type to talk to the police if she can help it.

CONTINUED

161

CONTINUED: (3)

Kingsley (between his teeth)

So what do you propose to do?

Marlowe (reaching for the gun)

Put this back right where I found it. Then call the law and wait for them to come. What else can I do?

Kingsley (quietly)

Would a thousand dollars make you change your mind?

Marlowe

So she does have a gun.

Kingsley

Yes.

Marlowe

Does this look like it?

(He holds the gun out)

Kingsley

Yes.

Marlowe

How about the serial number?

(He looks down and starts to read it)

It's 22B453 --

Kingsley (cutting in on him)

I don't know the serial number.

Marlowe (drily)

I was hoping you wouldn't.

(He drops the gun into his pocket)

Where did she get the heater?

Kingsley

I don't know that. She hasn't had it long.

Adrienne

Then she couldn't have bought it new. That gun's at least ten years old. I know something about guns. It probably can't be traced.

Marlowe (looking at her)

You think it can't be traced -- or you know it can't be traced?

Adrienne (coolly)

My experience --

Marlowe

You better stick to your magazine murders, Miss Fromsett. The real ones turn out a little different.

CONTINUED

161

CONTINUED: (4)

Adrienne looks mad enough to haul off and smack him. He ignores it, and turns away from her.

Kingsley (slowly)

That thousand dollar offer still stands, Marlowe.

Marlowe

Don't think I'm too proud to take it. I'm just too smart to get stuck with it.

Kingsley

Then the situation just has to be accepted.
(He starts to turn away)

Marlowe

One thing you might bear in mind. The Bay City cops are going to come up here and talk to you. That'll be the first you've heard of all this. Remember that.

Kingsley

To protect you?

Marlowe grins wryly and doesn't answer. Kingsley goes out.

162

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND ADRIENNE

She sits down slowly and reaches for a cigarette.

Adrienne

You can be rude to more people quicker than anybody I ever met.

Marlowe

I thought you were in love with me.

Adrienne

You?

(She smiles contemptuously over her cigarette)

Marlowe

A few kisses don't mean much in your life, I guess.

Adrienne

Let's not be Victorian, dear.

Marlowe

Right. What kind of perfume do you use?

CONTINUED

162

CONTINUED: (2)

He reaches the balled-up handkerchief out of his pocket, opens it out on the desk and lifts out the small feminine handkerchief. She is watching him.

Adrienne

Why?

Marlowe reaches across the desk and drops the small handkerchief in front of her. She finishes lighting her cigarette, drops the match, picks it up and sniffs.

Adrienne

Is this perfume? It smells more like fly spray.

She opens the handkerchief up. The initials appear. She stares down at it.

163

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Watching her.

164

CLOSEUP - ADRIENNE

Her expression is a little strained. Her eyes come up slowly to meet his.

Adrienne

I don't have to ask the obvious question, do I?

165

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND ADRIENNE

Marlowe

I found it on the dresser in Lavery's bedroom.

Adrienne

And I left it there, of course.

(Marlowe doesn't answer)

Perhaps you think I killed him?

Marlowe doesn't answer.

Adrienne (pushing the handkerchief away from her with a finger)

What do you want me to say?

CONTINUED

165

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe gets up.

Marlowe

Nothing. I just thought you'd like to have your handkerchief back. Nobody knows about it but me --

Adrienne

-- and whoever killed him.

Marlowe

Yeah.

Adrienne

We printed a story once in one of our mags called "Double Bluff". It was about a killer -- a woman -- who planted clues that pointed to herself. Rather too obvious to be believed. At least that was the idea.

Marlowe

But she didn't get away with it?

Adrienne

She almost did. But the dick in the story was a little too smart.

Marlowe

He wouldn't have to be very smart. A lot of people have been hanged because they wouldn't do their murder and leave it lay.

Adrienne

Think I'll be one of them?

Marlowe

You might try a little better perfume next time.

Adrienne

Perhaps I thought of that too.

Marlowe

Okay. I get it. You're a very cool little number, aren't you -- to yourself. Me, I've looked into your eyes -- close up -- you could be caught standing over the guy with a smoking pistol in your hand and I still wouldn't go for it.

Adrienne

That's very sweet of you.

Marlowe

Isn't it? But you can always fool a sentimentalist like me. All you've got to do is make him cry.

CONTINUED

Adrienne
Are you crying, Marlowe?

Marlowe
Not right now. I'm just going about my business and stacking up the corpses.

(He glances around the office)
You ought to be sitting pretty here when they catch Crystal Kingsley.

Adrienne gets up, comes around the desk towards him.

Adrienne
Last night -- up at the lake --

Marlowe
Yeah -- you kind of forgot to be executive for a minute, didn't you? Don't let it bother you.

Adrienne (sharply)
Don't talk like that. Not ever.

Marlowe
I always talk like that. It keeps me single.
(He gestures towards Kingsley's office)
He'll get over it after a while. It's a little embarrassing to have your wife hanged, but you live it down. And you'll be here to console him. You'll have your nice big office -- and your smart clothes -- and a neat little row of buzzers to push --

Adrienne
Is that what I want?

Marlowe
Sure it is. If it wasn't, you wouldn't have worked so hard to get it.

He gets up, reaches for his hat. Adrienne beats him to it, pulls the hat away from him.

Adrienne
Don't be in such a hurry. And don't be too sure Crystal Kingsley -- or any other woman -- killed Chris Lavery. You ought to take a week off sometime and get your mind double-tracked.

(Marlowe just looks at her)
You're over-simplifying the whole thing. Crystal bought Bill Chess a few drinks -- therefore she had a fight with his wife -- therefore she murdered him. Crystal Kingsley sent a telegram from El Paso saying she was going to marry Chris Lavery and you found Chris back home in Bay City -- therefore he ran out on her --

Adrienne (cont'd)

-- therefore she got sore and murdered him too. That's how it looks to you, isn't it?

Marlowe

Something like that.

Adrienne

But all you've really got on her is that you don't know where she is.

Marlowe

That's right.

(He pats his pocket)

And when I find her -- or when the police do -- I'll give you six, two and even this turns out to be her gun.

Adrienne

I'll take it.

Marlowe

Fine. Now if you're finished with my hat --

She again moves it out of his reach, then glances at it.

Adrienne

The ribbon's torn.

Marlowe (crossly)

A dog bit it.

Adrienne

What were you trying to do -- steal his dinner?

(She looks up and makes a gesture around the office)

Maybe you think I don't know anything about murders and murderers.

Marlowe

Oh sure -- as an amateur.

Adrienne

Well, a good amateur can always lick a third-rate professional.

Marlowe

Thanks.

Adrienne

We deal with all the murders there are in here -- and our murders have to make sense -- even if they are made up. They have to have motives that people can understand. You can't just grab them out of the air. You may as well learn that yourself if you want to be a writer.

Marlowe

Okay, I will. Right now I'm a little busy.

Adrienne (slowly)

Too busy to find out who Mildred Haviland is?

(Marlowe doesn't answer)

You do remember, don't you, Mr. Marlowe? That little gold heart you found up in Bill Chess' cabin. Or perhaps you don't think it had anything to do with all this.

Marlowe (cautiously)

Why would I?

Adrienne

You think these two murders -- if they are murders -- are tied together because Crystal Kingsley is connected with Little Prawn Lake and also with Chris Lavery. I think they're tied together too -- but it doesn't have to be Crystal Kingsley that ties them together. It could be Mildred Haviland -- whoever she was -- and whatever she was.

Marlowe

She was Muriel Chess.

Adrienne

But what was she before she was Muriel Chess? That's what I'd like to know.

She gets up, comes around the desk and hands him his hat. He takes it and slams it on his head.

Adrienne

After all, I'm the girl that's paying you, Marlowe.

Marlowe (between his teeth)

You're not paying me to make a fool of myself.

Adrienne

I don't have to. You do that for free.

He gives her a sudden grin, turns and exits. She stares after him, then turns to the desk, looks down at the little handkerchief. CAMERA MOVES IN ON HER FACE as she picks it up by one corner, holds it at arm's length and drops it into the waste basket with an expression of disgust.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAVERY'S LIVING ROOM

The last time we saw it, it was dimly lit and silent. Now the blinds have been pulled up and there are five men in it. Two uniformed police officers are standing in the background. Captain Weber is facing Marlowe and holds the little gun by a finger hooked through the trigger guard. A little to one side, Degarmo is on the phone.

Weber (to Marlowe disgustedly)
A lot of good it's going to do us to print this now.
(He holds the gun up in front of
Marlowe's nose)

Don't you know enough not to handle a weapon found at the scene of a crime?

Marlowe
I didn't know there'd been a crime. This Mrs. Fallbrook, who said she was the owner, found it lying on the stairs. She gave it to me.

Weber
That must have given you an idea.

Marlowe
I get a lot of ideas -- but I don't run to the police with all of them.

Weber (savagely)
I bet you don't. The last time I saw you, I told you not to start trouble in my district without letting me in on what you were after.

Degarmo hangs up the phone and comes over beside Weber.

Degarmo (to Weber)
Ed Garland's on his way. He's deputy coroner this week.

Weber nods without taking his eyes off Marlowe.

Marlowe
I wasn't starting any trouble. I was just calling on a friend.

Weber
Don't give me any of the flip talk, I don't like it.

Degarmo takes a match out of his pocket and chews on it.

Degarmo
Look, Chief. The fellow downstairs is called Lavery. He's dead. I knew him a little. He was a chaser.

CONTINUED

166

CONTINUED: (2)

Weber is still looking at Marlowe.

Weber

What of it?

Degarmo

The whole set-up indicates a dame. You know what these private-eyes work at. Divorce stuff. Suppose we let him tie into it instead of just trying to scare him dumb.

Weber (to Degarmo)

If I'm scaring him, I don't see any signs of it.

(To Marlowe)

All right. Who are you working for? And don't give me any of that stuff about protecting a client. We've got a murder to deal with here.

Marlowe (reluctantly)

A man named Derace Kingsley. He runs a string of magazines in L.A. Kingsley Publications, Incorporated.

(Degarmo takes an envelope out of his pocket and makes notes. Marlowe gives him a casual glance and goes on)

Kingsley's wife ran out on him about a month ago -- from a place he has up in the mountains called Little Fawn Lake.

167

CLOSEUP - DEGARMO

Making notes. His pencil has stopped. His face tightens. Very slowly, he raises his eyes to look at Marlowe, then lowers them again and begins to write.

168

CLOSEUP - MARLOWE

Noting this.

169

CLOSEUP - WEBER

Paying no attention to anything but Marlowe.

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

Lavery was supposed to be the guy Kingsley's wife ran out with.

CONTINUED

169 CONTINUED: (2)

Weber

Wait a minute.
(He turns his head)

170 FULL SHOT

As Weber turns. The two uniformed officers are in the background.

Weber

You boys can get back to your car and call the dispatcher.

They salute and start out. Weber turns back to Marlowe.

171 THREE SHOT - MARLOWE, WEBER AND DEGARMO

Weber (to Marlowe)

All right. Go on.

The front door is heard opening and closing. It sticks and has to be banged as usual.

Marlowe

I had information Lavery was home, so I came down to talk to him about it. Yesterday.

Weber

Yesterday?

Marlowe

Uh-huh. He said there was nothing to it. So I went up to Little Fawn Lake. Something funny happened up there.

(Marlowe glances towards Degarmo who has again stiffened at the mention of Little Fawn Lake)

They found a drowned woman in the lake.

172 CLOSEUP - DEGARMO

Reacting sharply, then controlling the reaction.

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

But it turned out to be the caretaker's wife. Party named Muriel Chess. She committed suicide -- maybe.

173

THREE SHOT - WEBER, MARLOWE AND DEGARMO

Marlowe is covertly watching Degarmo.

Weber

I don't want any part of that. Let's confine ourselves to what went on here.

Marlowe

Nothing went on here. I've only been here twice. The first time I talked to Lavery and didn't get anywhere. The second time I didn't talk to Lavery and didn't get anywhere. He was dead.

Weber

So you went through the joint, handled the gun, covered up everything you could, and finally got around to calling us.

Marlowe

Sure. Only I forgot to hide the body. Careless of me, wasn't it?

Weber takes a threatening step towards Marlowe. At that moment, a car pulls up and stops outside the house. A door opens and shuts. Steps come quickly down the walk. The front doorbell rings. Degarmo moves over to open it, CAMERA PANNING WITH HIM. A tall man in a dark business suit and a black tie enters.

Degarmo

Hello, Ed. The customer's downstairs.

Weber comes into the shot.

Weber

I'll go down with you, Garland.

(to Degarmo)

You stay here.

Degarmo gives him a surly look and moves back towards Marlowe.

Weber (to Garland as they walk,
CAMERA PANNING)

It's going to be a little tough to find out when he was killed. He's in the shower and some bright mind thought of leaving the cold water turned on.

CAMERA PANS Weber and Garland along the room until it picks up Marlowe and Degarmo standing near the mantel. Marlowe has his hand in his pocket. He brings it out slowly, looks at something in his hand.

174

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE AND DEGARMO

Marlowe

You looked kind of interested when I mentioned Little Fawn Lake. Ever been up there?

Degarmo

We ask the questions, peeper.

Marlowe

And when I mentioned a woman being found drowned in the lake -- you looked still more interested.

Degarmo (between his teeth)

You heard what I said.

Marlowe

Ever hear of anybody named Mildred Haviland?

Degarmo looks at him savagely, doesn't answer. Marlowe holds out his hand with the little gold heart in it. Very slowly, Degarmo takes the heart and stares down at it.

175

CLOSE SHOT - DEGARMO

Looking down at the heart.

176

INSERT OF THE HEART (If necessary)

Showing the inscription as before.

177

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND DEGARMO

Degarmo's eyes come up slowly. There is hatred in them.

Marlowe

There was a fellow up there a few weeks ago looking for this drowned woman under the name of Mildred Haviland. He acted like a cop I was told -- a tough cop with bad manners -- like you.

Degarmo lashes him across the face with his open hand.

Degarmo (in a murderous voice)

Say that again.

CONTINUED

177

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe has not reacted to the blow except that it jerked his head.

Marlowe

If it was true, this dame has a shady past -- and you know something about it.

Degarmo hits him again.

Degarmo (in the same voice)

Try again.

Marlowe

Uh-uh. Third time lucky. You might miss.

178

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

He puts his hand up to his cheek. It already shows a swelling. He rubs it gently. His eyes have cold fury in them.

Degarmo's voice (over scene)

Next time it won't be the flat of my hand I'll use on you.

179

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

He drops his hand, looks down at the fingers. They are tightly clenched. He can hardly control himself.

180

CLOSE SHOT - DEGARMO

Degarmo

Poke your nose into my business and you'll wake up in an alley with the cats looking at you.

181

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

As he locks up into Degarmo's eyes.

Marlowe

I'll remember.

(Pause)

Both ways.

DISSOLVE TO:

182

INT. ANTEROOM - CAPTAIN WEBER'S OFFICE

There is a closed door lettered "CAPTAIN WEBER - PRIVATE". A police photographer is behind a desk typing. Marlowe is sitting in a wooden chair and beside him a plainclothes dick. There is a dark bruise on Marlowe's cheek. He looks at his wrist-watch, stands up.

Dick (gruffly)

Sit down, you.

Marlowe moves towards the entrance door.

Marlowe (casually)

I got to go down the hall.

Dick

I said, sit down!

Marlowe (giving him a hard look)

Don't they raise anything but mugs in this town?

(He jerks the door open)

I'll be right back, copper. Relax.

The dick starts after him, then hesitates. The stenographer looks up from the typewriter.

Stenographer

What's the matter -- you leave your blackjack home this morning?

The dick stands uncertainly.

183

INT. MAIN HALLWAY - CITY HALL

As in Scene 5. Marlowe has just come out. He starts down the hall, then looks across at a certain door, starts towards it.

184

EXT. THE DOOR

It is marked "PRESS ROOM". Marlowe reaches it, looks back, opens it, goes in quickly.

185

INT. PRESS ROOM

It is a dirty bare room with a number of telephones on a wooden table, a little of newspapers on the floor.

185

CONTINUED: (2)

Under one of the windows, two reporters are playing cards. A third reporter is kibitzing.

1st Reporter (playing a card
in front of him)
Twenty-one.

2nd Reporter (playing a card
in front of him)
Twenty-eight.

The door opens off scene. The kibitzer looks towards it. The card players do not. Marlowe comes into the shot, comes up to the table.

Marlowe
You guys cover the police beat?

1st Reporter (laying his hand
down face up)
Thirty-five.
(He glances up at Marlowe)
We all do. Why?

Marlowe
Ever hear of anybody called Mildred Haviland?

All three men look at him quickly, then look away. The kibitzer makes a business of lighting a cigarette. The other two become intent on the cards.

1st Reporter (without looking
up)
Nope. Why?

Marlowe turns to the second reporter.

Marlowe
How about you?

2nd Reporter
Sorry.

Marlowe (to the kibitzer)
You?

Kibitzer (shaking his head)
Doesn't do a thing for me.

There is a moment of silence. None of them look at Marlowe.

CONTINUED

185 CONTINUED: (3)

1st Reporter (casually)
Who're you?

Marlowe
My name's Philip Marlowe. I'm a private dick from L.A.

1st Reporter
That so?
(to second reporter)
Go ahead and deal.

2nd Reporter (gathering up the
cards)
Yeah, sure.

He gathers up the cards and starts to shuffle
them.

Marlowe (quietly)
I think you boys are lying.

1st Reporter (looking up at him)
Smart guy, huh?

Marlowe
You forgot to score the hand.

All three look at him. A door opens off scene.
They turn.

186 REVERSE SHOT

Across the card table towards the door. A thin,
delicate, boyish-looking kid has just come in.
He looks about seventeen, but is actually much
older. He is sloppily dressed and is munching
a hamburger sandwich wrapped in a paper napkin.
He strolls across the room to the card table.
(His name is Dolly)

Dolly (in a high pitched voice)
Hi, fellows. Anything break?

2nd Reporter (absently)
Hi, Dolly.

1st Reporter
Nothing breaks around here.

CONTINUED)

186

CONTINUED: (2)

Dolly (casually)
 I heard different. A little murder over on Altair Street.
 (The three reporters all stare at
 him)
 It ain't official yet. They got to clean it up a little.

Marlowe
 A man named Chris Lavery.

They all stare at him.

Marlowe (casually)
 A friend of this Mildred Haviland that I was asking you
 about -- that you never heard of.

Dolly munches his hamburger, speaks with his
 mouth full.

Dolly
 Sure we did. The Almore case.

1st Reporter
 Shut up. This guy's a private dick from L.A.

Dolly (pleased)
 Yeah?
 (He puts his hand out)
 My name's Dolly Madison.

Marlowe (shaking hands with
 him)
 Philip Marlowe. What's the Almore case?

Dolly
 A doc whose wife suicided a year and a half back -- maybe.
 This Mildred Haviland was his office nurse.
 (He looks at the other reporters)
 They never did find her, did they, fellows?
 (They don't answer him. He shrugs,
 then to Marlowe)
 Seems like this is the one we don't talk about -- the one
 they hid on the top shelf -- all wrapped up in brown paper.

1st Reporter
 Better button your lip, kid.

2nd Reporter
 Or you'll wake up in an alley --

Kibitzer
 -- with the cats looking at you.

CONTINUED

186 CONTINUED: (3)

Marlowe (slowly)
The Almore case, huh? Much obliged.

He nods, turns away, starts out of shot. The reporters look after him curiously.

187 INT. MAIN HALLWAY

As Marlowe comes out of the press room, starts across towards Captain Weber's office.

188 INT. ANTEROOM - CAPTAIN WEBER'S OFFICE

The dick is standing holding the door open looking out. Marlowe comes in past him.

Dick (gruffly)
Boy, you had me worried. I thought you'd taken a powder. Captain Weber wants to see you right away.

They cross to the door marked "PRIVATE". The dick opens it.

189 INT. CAPTAIN WEBER'S OFFICE

As Marlowe enters. The dick stays outside closing the door. Captain Weber is seated at his desk. In a chair near him, sits a well-dressed, white-haired woman.

Weber (to Marlowe)
Sit down.

Marlowe sits down across the desk. Weber stares at him coldly, then turns to the woman.

Weber
This is the man.

The woman looks at Marlowe steadily, then turns to Weber.

Woman
I'm sorry. I've never seen this man in my life.

CONTINUED

Weber

And you weren't over at that house you own on Altair Street this morning?

Woman

Certainly not. I was home all day until the officers asked me to come down here with them.

Weber

Thank you, Mrs. Fallbrook.

(He turns to Marlowe)

Would you say this was the party that gave you the gun?

(Marlowe shakes his head staring at

Mrs. Fallbrook)

Got anything to say?

Marlowe

Not unless Mrs. Fallbrook has a daughter-in-law who might have been over there.

Mrs. Fallbrook

I have no daughter-in-law.

Weber (standing up)

Thank you, Mrs. Fallbrook. I guess that's all.

She stands up. Weber conducts her to the door and opens it for her. She exits. Weber comes back to his desk, sits down and stares at Marlowe grimly.

Weber

Want to change your story a little?

Marlowe

No. There was a woman in the house and she said she was Mrs. Fallbrook.

Weber

What'd she look like?

Marlowe

Five two, a hundred and eighteen, about twenty-eight years old, maybe younger, brown hair, blue eyes, and she didn't act as if she'd just murdered anybody.

Weber (drily)

She hadn't -- today. In spite of the appearance, Lavery was killed last night.

CONTINUED

189

CONTINUED: (3)

Weber (cont'd)

That's definite -- and that's the only reason I'm not holding you.

(He stares at the bruise on Marlowe's cheek)

What happened to your face?

Marlowe

I must have walked into a door. Does the name Mildred Haviland mean anything to you, captain?

Weber

I don't think so. Why?

Marlowe

How about the Almore case?

Weber nods.

Weber

I've heard of it. It was before my time. I've only been here a year. I'd have to ask Degarmo.

Marlowe

And you could ask him about that gold heart I gave him. It seems to connect Chris Lavery with Mildred Haviland -- and Mildred Haviland -- who was Dr. Almore's office nurse -- seems to have been the real name of the woman who drowned in Kingsley's lake. Maybe you ought to have Degarmo or somebody look into it a little.

(Weber stares at him silently,
Marlowe stands up)

Can I go now?

Weber nods without answering. Marlowe starts out. Weber watches him leave. As the door closes, he reaches over and presses a key on his dictograph.

DISSOLVE TO:

190

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MARLOWE ON PHONE

Marlowe

... the one they wrapped up in brown paper and hid on the top shelf... I'll pick you up a block south of the City Hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

191 INT. MARLOWE'S CAR - IN MOTION

Dolly Madison sitting beside him.

Dolly

Sure, it looked like suicide by monoxide -- but why did that office nurse scream for the exit so quick -- and why did the dick Mrs. Almore's parents hired land up in the drunk tank so quick -- and why did the desk Sergeant that gave us the dope get thrown for a loss -- and why was there no inquest -- ?

DISSOLVE TO:

192 INT. CORNER OF BAY CITY LEADER OFFICE

Showing Marlowe bending over a bound volume of old issues of the newspaper. His hat is on the back of his head and his empty pipe is upside down in his mouth. His finger traces a column, then traces a line sideways as THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON THE PAGE, THEN IN ON A LINE OF TYPE: "Wife of Dr. Albert S. Almore of this city and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Grayson of 640 S. Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles -- "

DISSOLVE TO:

193 CLOSE SHOT - (NIGHT) - GLASS PANEL DOOR

Lettered "506 ALBERT S. ALMORE, M.D." It is dark behind the glass. A hand comes into the shot, tries the doorknob, drops. CAMERA PANS ALONG THE WALL to the sound of walking steps to another door lettered, "508 ALBERT S. ALMORE, M.D. ENTRANCE 506." The glass panel is dark. CAMERA PANS AGAIN TO A THIRD DOOR lettered, "510, ALBERT S. ALMORE, M.D. ENTRANCE 506." Behind this panel there is light. A hand comes into the shot, tries the knob, then knocks on the glass.

DISSOLVE TO:

194 CLOSE SHOT - DR. ALMORE

Standing beside a sterilizing cabinet in his shirt sleeves.

CONTINUED

194

CONTINUED (2)

Inside the cabinet a whole row of dismounted hypodermic needles are cooking. His face is coldly angry.

Almore

I have no intention of discussing my wife's death or anything connected with it. The fact that Mrs. Almore's parents had some curious ideas on the subject --

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

How about Lavery? He have any curious ideas on the subject -- anything that could get him full of lead for instance?

Almore's face convulses with rage. He moves IN TOWARDS CAMERA, leans down. A drawer is heard opening. Marlowe laughs off scene.

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

Don't bother to drag a gat, Doc. I know a scared man when I see him.

Almore freezes staring. We hear the sound of steps, then a door opening and closing off scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

195

STREET SIGN

OXFORD STREET - 600 Block. Car noise over scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

196

FACADE OF STONE AND BRICK APARTMENT HOUSE

With number 640 over the entrance. CAMERA MOVES IN to the sound of steps walking.

DISSOLVE TO:

197

ELEVATOR DOOR

Opening on hallway in apartment house. CAMERA MOVES OUT, turns, moves along hall to sound of steps on carpet, reaches door, PANS TO FACE DOOR, moves in on bell and card above bell.

CONTINUED

197

CONTINUED: (2)

The card reads: "Mr. Eugene Grayson." A finger comes into the shot and pushes the bell.

DISSOLVE TO:

198

CLOSE SHOT

A tall, thin, elderly man standing near a window with a newspaper in his hand. (GRAYSON). His glasses are pushed up on his forehead.

Grayson

Of course he killed her -- but there's nothing to do about it now -- and if there was, I have no money to pay you --

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

I don't want money, Mr. Grayson. I want information. The name and address of this detective you hired -- and what it was he found out that made Degarmo frame him for drunk driving --

Grayson (sadly)

He never told us. Perhaps he didn't know anything really. But I have his address -- or rather his wife's address. We -- we send Mrs. Talley a little money when we can. I don't know where Talley is. Perhaps he's afraid to go back --

DISSOLVE TO:

199

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE'S HAT

In Adrienne's hands. She is stitching the torn ribbon, her scarlet nails gleaming under the lamp. CAMERA PULLS BACK to show her seated near the davenport on which Marlowe is stretched out with a lumpy wet towel on his cheek. There is the distant sound of radio music.

Marlowe (in a grumbling voice)

That Almore angle is nothing but a red herring. All it did for me was get my face slapped.

(Adrienne looks up at him with a bright smile)

Maybe you wanted me to get my face slapped.

CONTINUED

Adrienne

I wouldn't mind.

Marlowe

I could have had a lot more fun out of it.

He puts his hand up to the towel and holding it in position, sits up and puts his feet on the floor. He lowers the towel and unfolds it. There are some ice cubes in it.

Marlowe

How about using a couple of these in a glass?

Adrienne

Why is it a red herring?

Marlowe

Almore's a needle pusher. He runs around nights with a case of loaded hypodermics -- keeping well-heeled drunks from having pink elephants for breakfast. It's a nice racket and it uses up a lot of dope. Almore'd be the last guy in the world to put his wife out with a shot in the arm.

Adrienne finishes stitching the ribbon, looks the hat over and lays it under the lamp, then looks across at Marlowe.

Adrienne

Maybe that explains the monoxide. If he did it with dope, he'd be writing his name on it. I suppose they tested her blood for monoxide.

Marlowe

I'd have to ask Degarmo. He was in charge of Homicide then -- temporarily. And you know what asking him would get me.

(Pause)

About these ice cubes -- do you want them on the floor?

Adrienne gets up, takes the towel from him and goes out of shot. He looks after her, rubs his cheek and gets up, wanders around, lights a cigarette, picks up his hat and studies it critically.

Marlowe

Whoever taught you to sew didn't have his mind on his work.

There is a tinkle of ice cubes off scene.

Adrienne
Can I help being attractive?

She comes back into the shot with a couple of drinks, hands one to Marlowe, sits down again.

Adrienne
Let me see if I've got this straight. The Almore frail was at a party and got higher than a flagpole sitter. They had to page the Doc to come quiet her with his needle. He took her home but couldn't stay -- having urgent calls to make, so he got his office nurse -- this Mildred Haviland -- to sit with her. Do you suppose he and Mildred -- ?

(She stops and sips her drink)
Or have I a nasty mind?

Marlowe
I hope so. You knew Lavery. Didn't you know he was the one who found the lady in the garage with her head under the exhaust pipe?

Adrienne
Sorry. In spite of our close friendship, he forgot to tell me.

(Marlowe grins sourly)
Who called the cops?

Marlowe
Doc Almore -- when Lavery got him to come home. He had to be paged through the Physician's Exchange.

Adrienne
And where was Mildred Haviland all this time?

Marlowe
She went home as soon as Mrs. Almore was asleep from the shot in the arm. Doesn't sound very probable, does it?

(Adrienne shakes her head)
But that's what the Graysons were told.

Adrienne
What made them hire a detective?

Marlowe
Suspicion mostly. And a dislike of Almore. There'd been quarrels, threats of divorce, and so on.

Adrienne
People like Almore are too vulnerable to play games like murder.

Marlowe

If being vulnerable kept people from murder, there wouldn't be any murder.

Adrienne

But a doctor -- with an established practice -- and anyhow, you walk right over the two key points.

Marlowe (sarcastically)

I knew you'd pick up after me.

Adrienne

Why did the Haviland woman disappear -- and what did the detective -- Talley is the name, isn't it -- find out that was so dangerous he had to be put out of the way?

Marlowe

Can't answer either of those. He never told.

Adrienne (slowly)

He never told the Graysons -- but perhaps he told his wife. Men usually do. And you have her address.

Marlowe

Yeah -- but I've only got one head.
(He rubs it)

Adrienne

And you're not using that. Look.
(She holds out a slim finger and taps it with another)

The Haviland girl ran away because she was scared. Therefore, she had some dangerous knowledge too. The chances are it was Almore she was scared of because the cops couldn't have hurt her without hurting Almore as well.

Marlowe

How do you know she was scared?

Adrienne

Look where she went -- and what she did. She picks up a hillbilly like Bill Chess in a beer parlor, marries him, hides out in a lonely part of the mountains. Would that be your idea of a good time? A year and a half goes by and nobody finds her. Then all of a sudden, a guy is up there showing her photo and asking questions. Why? How did he know where to go?

Marlowe (cunningly)

Lavery.

199

CONTINUED (5)

Adrienne looks at him scornfully.

Adrienne

For Pete's sake, I thought you were a detective. If Lavery put the finger on her, nobody would have to ask where she was living.

Marlowe (pretending surprise)

I missed that one, didn't I?

(Adrienne looks at him suspiciously)

There's only one thing I can think of that could put her in that neighborhood without nailing her down. A blackmailing letter to Almore signed with her original name -- which Almore handed to his pal, Degarmo --

Adrienne

Why would he do that?

Marlowe

Because if Degarmo was in charge of the original investigation -- and messed it up or covered it up -- then he had to keep it covered up. So Degarmo went up to the mountains to find her and slap her mouth shut. Only he didn't find her.

Adrienne gets excited.

Adrienne

How do we know he didn't find her? And how do we know he didn't do a little more than slap her mouth shut?

(She stops, shakes her head)

No, I'm being silly now. He wouldn't know how to hide the car and suitcase at Coon Lake --

Marlowe

-- and his timing wouldn't be that good --

Adrienne

-- and if he was vicious enough and crooked enough to knock off a witness, he wouldn't do it by drowning her in that lake.

Marlowe

And it's just possible he couldn't imitate the lady's handwriting well enough to fool her husband.

Adrienne

But you think Crystal Kingsley could.

(Marlowe shrugs)

No. That's silly too. Bill's wife wrote that note herself. And she was going away. Maybe Almore did send her money -- enough to keep her quiet for a while -- and then --

199

CONTINUUM (3)

Marlowe

It's no use, honey. Nothing you can think up about the Almore business explains what happened to Bill Chess's wife. This is part of a different picture. You're the girl who talks about murders being logical. Okay. The only logical connecting link between these two murders is Crystal Kingsley. So if you don't mind --

He stands up, reaches for his hat which she jerks away from him.

Adrienne (soothingly)

You may be right, darling -- but just the same, if I were a detective, I think I'd like to talk to Mrs. Talley. I'd like to know what her husband had on his mind just before he got tossed into the icebox, wouldn't you? There might be a story in it for you.

Marlowe

Suppose it proved Crystal never killed anybody.

Adrienne

If you cast your memory back a couple of slaps in the face -- I'm the girl who made a bet it wasn't Crystal's gun you found in that house.

(She stands up, puts his hat on his head and strokes his bruised cheek)

Even if it doesn't lead to anything, you can always use the experience.

Marlowe

Talley's wife lives in Bay City.

Adrienne

So what?

Marlowe (turning away)

Nothing. I thought maybe you'd like me better with my own teeth.

He goes out. She looks after him and her face is sobered by a sudden moment of doubt. She almost calls out, but bites her lip instead as the door closes off scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

200

EXT. STREET - (NIGHT)

In run-down residential section.

200

CONTINUED (2)

A big frame house in foreground. Behind it, a little to one side, a smaller frame house. Marlowe's car drives into the shot, stops. Lights go out, etc. The car door is heard opening.

201

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

As he gets out of his car, looks along the street.

202

WHAT HE SEES

The wide dusty street, lighted windows in scattered houses, a few jalopies parked. Across the way is a Cadillac coupe parked the wrong way. It is the same car as in Scene 36.

203

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Glancing across at it. He watches for a moment, then turns and starts towards the rear bungalow.

204

REVERSE SHOT - MEDIUM CLOSE

The Cadillac across the street. The sound of Marlowe's steps receding. A large heavy hand comes over the sill of the Cadillac, flicks ash from a cigarette. The hand is withdrawn.

205

EXT. THE SMALL BUNGALOW

As Marlowe reaches it and starts up on the wooden porch. There is an open door behind a wire screen. The room beyond is dimly lit.

206

CLOSE SHOT - SCREEN DOOR

As Marlowe reaches it. His hand goes to a bell. He pushes it. It doesn't ring. He knocks. There is the sound of movement inside. A sluggish woman's voice answers from inside the room.

Voice

206

CONTINUED (2)

Marlowe
Mrs. Talley?

Voice
What do you want?

Marlowe
Mr. Talley in?

Voice
Who wants him?

Marlowe
Marlowe's the name.

There is a sour laugh from inside.

Voice
All right. How much is this one?

Marlowe
I'm not collecting anything, Mrs. Talley. I just --

Voice
Then go on away and leave me alone. Mr. Talley isn't here. He hasn't been here. He won't be here.

Marlowe pulls at the screen door, finds it hooked. He puts his face against the wire mesh to see better inside.

207

WHAT HE SEES

A shabby living room with some worn overstuffed furniture, a couple of frayed lamps, one with a very small bulb lit in it. Against the far wall, a woman is lying on a couch staring at the ceiling. She turns her head slowly to look at the door. Her face is in shadow.

Marlowe's voice (off scene)
I've just come from the Graysons. How about letting me in? Don't you want something back -- for what they did to your husband?

Woman
No. I've already had all the trouble I can handle. Go on away, copper. I'm sick.

208

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE'S FACE

through the screen door.

208

CONTINUED (2)

Marlowe

I'm no copper. The Greysens wouldn't talk to a copper. Call them up and ask them about me.

Woman's voice (over scene)

Never heard of them. I'm tired, mister. I'm sick. I'm broke. All I want --

Marlowe

Would a little money help?

209

REVERSE SHOT - THE WOMAN

Staring at him, a blur of face and tangled hair. She gropes a handkerchief to her eyes, then suddenly she laughs.

Woman

Money! I must have heard of it somewhere.

(She laughs again hysterically)

It must have been George talking. He had a little money coming -- once.

Marlowe's voice (over scene)

If he plays his cards right, he can still have it.

Woman

If that's what it takes, you can scratch his name off right now.

(She turns her face to the wall)

210

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Behind the screen door.

Marlowe

All I want is a little information, Mrs. Talley. It's worth fifty bucks to me. I want to know what your husband found out about Mrs. Almore's death.

211

CLOSE SHOT - WOMAN

Lying with her BACK TO CAMERA on the couch. She rolls over suddenly and sits up.

Woman (almost screaming)

Get out! Get out I said! I'll call that big copper on you. He'll take care of you. What do you think he'd do to me if I talked to you? He was here and told me. And how. He told me plenty.

(Her voice catches in a sob. She re-

211 CONTINUED (2)

Woman (cont'd)

It's no use, mister. Think I want what George got?
 (Her voice catches in her throat. She swallows, then very softly)

George. Where are you, George? Why don't you come back?
 I -- I need you so bad. I --
 (She breaks off into a fit of crying)

212 EXT. SCREEN DOOR

As Marlowe stares through it silently. The sound of the woman sobbing inside. Marlowe steps back, stands uncertainly a moment, then turns, starts down off the porch. His steps recede towards the street. The sobbing inside the house goes on.

213 EXT. STREET - MARLOWE'S CAR

In foreground. He reaches it, yanks the door open savagely, slams into the car. Starter, motor, sound, lights go on. The car is yanked INTO MOTION. It moves off swiftly down the block. Then the sound of another starter is heard. CAMERA PANS QUICKLY over to pick up the Cadillac coupe across the street as it moves away from the curb and starts off without lights.

214 INT. MARLOWE'S CAR - IN MOTION - (TRANSPARENCY)

Marlowe's face in foreground. It is grim and tight. The sound of the motor indicates he's driving fast. The background is the edge of a residential section with only a few scattered houses. Suddenly Marlowe looks up into his rear view mirror.

215 CLOSE SHOT - REAR VIEW MIRROR

In it can be seen the headlights of another car overtaking him from behind.

216 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Registering this. He swings around to look through the rear window of his car.

217 WHAT HE SEES

Through the rear window a pair of bright headlights and over the sound of his car, the sound of another car coming fast. Suddenly a spotlight is switched on. It strikes square into the window.

218 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

as he jerks away from the spotlight beam, looks forward again through his windshield. The movement of his shoulders and body indicates he is pushing the accelerator down hard.

219 REVERSE SHOT - THROUGH WINDSHIELD - (TRANSPARENCY)

The background now shows no street lights, no houses, just open fields. Marlowe's head and shoulders in silhouette. The sound of the overtaking car is loud. Its lights begin to crawl along the side of Marlowe's car.

220 REVERSE SHOT

Marlowe driving. His body is tense. The lights of the overtaking car pour into Marlowe's car.

221 EXT. ROAD - MEDIUM LONG SHOT

Towards Marlowe's car and following car. The overtaking car with spotlight coming up alongside of Marlowe's car, not yet level.

222 INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

SHOOTING DIAGONALLY back from R.F. Past Marlowe can be seen the front half of the overtaking car. Marlowe turns his head quickly to size up the situation, then suddenly brakes. There is the screech of his tires. He is thrown forward against the wheel, then back. The overtaking car sweeps past out of shot.

223 EXT. ROAD - MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

Marlowe's car as he wrenches it around on screeching tires. The other car has now passed him, is also grinding to a stop. Marlowe's car just clears the rear end of the other car. Marlowe's car, in reverse direction, starts back. The overtaking car jerks back in reverse. As it heaves around, for an instant two men are seen in it. Then all its lights shine INTO CAMERA. It starts off after Marlowe again.

224 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - BOTH CARS

Going away, CAMERA FOLLOWING at same speed. The overtaking car is again pulling up level with Marlowe's car.

225 INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

SHOOTING FORWARD AND LEFT, as the overtaking car edges into the shot.

226 INT. OVERTAKING CAR

SHOOTING PAST HEAD AND SHOULDERS of the two men. Marlowe's car visible through the windshield and side window. Suddenly the driver wrenches the wheel violently to the right. There is a grinding crash and screaming of tires as the Cadillac side-swipes Marlowe's car.

227 INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

SHOOTING BACK. At the moment of collision, Marlowe is thrown violently forward against the corner of the windshield.

228 INT. THE CADILLAC

The driver wrenches the steering wheel in the opposite direction and breaks clear of Marlowe's car which veers off to the right out of control.

229

EXT. ROAD - MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

The Cadillac is screaming to a stop. Marlowe's car shoots off the road to the right and crashes against a pole. The Cadillac backs a little, then swings over along the side of Marlowe's wrecked car. Both the doors start to open.

230

CLOSE SHOT - THE CADILLAC

L.F. door opens as Degarmo gets out. He starts BACK TOWARDS CAMERA around the car, pauses, takes a gun out. His big thumb slowly pulls back the hammer. A click is heard. He starts around the back of the Cadillac, CAMERA PANNING, to pick up Dr. Almore who has got out of the other side.

Degarmo (curtly to Almore)

You stay out of this.

He passes him, CAMERA STILL PANNING, starts towards Marlowe's car.

231

CLOSE SHOT - THE SIDE OF MARLOWE'S CAR

SHOOTING FORWARD. Everything is silent now except for Degarmo's steps as he comes around the car into the shot. He reaches F.R. door of Marlowe's car, stops, then yanks the door open.

Degarmo

Come on out of there! Playing dead won't get you anything, baby.

232

SHOOTING INTO MARLOWE'S CAR

As Degarmo leans into it with his gun raised. Marlowe is seen slumped in the corner between the wheel and the door. He doesn't move.

233

REVERSE SHOT

Past Marlowe's head and shoulders. Degarmo looking in on him. The gun in foreground. Degarmo's heavy paw comes into the shot, yanks Marlowe's head over.

CONTINUED

233 CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe is out cold. Degarmo lets go. Marlowe's head rolls limply against the seat.

234 EXT. MARLOWE'S CAR

as Degarmo backs out. Almore comes up beside him. Degarmo turns to him.

Degarmo
Cold meat. Better take a look at him, Doc.

Almore (sharply)
Did you have to smash my fender up?

Degarmo
What's a fender between friends?
(He glances down at the gun, shrugs)
Too bad I can't use this to finish the job.

He puts the gun away. Almore gives him a nasty look, pushes past him to lean into the car.

Almore (from inside car)
Stunned. His pulse is quite strong.
(He backs out of the car again)

Degarmo
That's too bad.

Almore takes a leather case out of his pocket and opens it. Light shines on glass and metal.

Almore
But that can be remedied easily enough.

He starts to take a hypodermic needle out of the case.

Degarmo (harshly)
Put the needle away. You may need it for yourself one of these days.

Almore
Or for you.

Degarmo
Why you --

He breaks off. The two men stare at each other hostilely.

CONTINUED

234

CONTINUED: (2)

Degarmo (vaguely uneasy)
I bet you would at that.

Almore snaps the case shut and puts it back in his pocket.

Almore
You've made a mess of this -- just as you have of everything else.
(He turns away)

Degarmo (under his breath)
Maybe I'm picking on the wrong guy at that.

He stands looking after Almore for a moment, then takes a flat bottle off his hip, unscrews the cap and sniffs at it. He leans into the car again.

235

REVERSE SHOT

Marlowe in foreground. Degarmo in the car door. Degarmo takes hold of Marlowe's head and tilts it back, forces his mouth open. He pushes the neck of the bottle against Marlowe's teeth and pours. Liquor gurgles.

236

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE'S FACE

As the liquor pours off his mouth down his chin. Degarmo withdraws the bottle, jerks Marlowe's head. Marlowe's eyes open fuzzily and focus on Degarmo's face. Slow recognition comes into them. The bottle goes to Marlowe's mouth again. He reaches for it, drinks. Then the hand holding the bottle lunges out.

237

TWO SHOT - MARLOWE AND DEGARMO

SHOOTING DOWN OVER CAR SEAT. As Marlowe tries to hit Degarmo. Degarmo brushes the blow aside, the bottle falls to the car floor. Degarmo grins.

Degarmo
Attababy. Always come out fighting. So long, sonny.

His big fist cracks against Marlowe's jaw.
Marlowe's head jerks back.

CONTINUED

237

CONTINUED: (2)

Degarmo

And this one's for the police fund.

He hits him again a smashing blow to the chin. Marlowe's head jerks with the blow, but he's already unconscious. He slumps into the corner of the car. Degarmo stares down at him a moment, then pulls back out of shot. The car door closes. Degarmo's steps are heard going away.

238

EXT. CADILLAC

As Almore stands looking at the bent right front fender. He bends and tries to straighten it out with his hands. Degarmo's heavy steps are heard. He comes into the shot.

Degarmo

Pile in. I got to get to a phone. I know a guy who'll fix that fender and keep his trap shut.

Degarmo starts to get into the car as Almore turns.

Almore

You'll try this trick once too often.

Degarmo turns his head, looks at him.

Degarmo

You better hope this ain't the time, sweetheart.

DISSOLVE TO:

239

EXT. SERVICE STATION

Outside phone booth. The station is closed up and dark. A car is heard approaching rapidly. Its lights swing in on the phone booth. The car stops. A door opens. Rapid heavy steps. Degarmo comes into the shot, enters the phone booth, drops a nickel and starts to dial.

DISSOLVE TO:

240

STRETCH OF EMPTY ROAD

A distant wail of a police siren growing louder and approaching headlights coming rapidly TOWARD CAMERA.

DISSOLVE TO:

241

EXT. ROAD

Beside Marlowe's wrecked car. As the police car comes up beside it and stops. Two uniformed cops pile out, yank open the door of Marlowe's car. One of them pushes his head and shoulders in.

Cop's voice (inside car)
Stiff as a clam -- and a bottle of hooch on the floor.

242

INT. MARLOWE'S CAR

The cop leaning in shaking Marlowe who is still out.

Cop
Come on, toots. You got a date with the desk sergeant.

Marlowe slowly opens his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

243

CLOSE SHOT

Of cover side of open magazine in a pair of gnarled hands. The cover shows the same picture as in Scene 49. (The dame with the bread knife through her kidney) with additional cover makeup and heavy black title: "DEATH WEARS YELLOW GARTERS". CAMERA PULLS BACK as the sound of an opening door is heard off and the shuffle of feet. The magazine is seen to be in the hands of the desk sergeant, and the scene is the interior of the booking room of the Bay City jail. The sergeant folds his magazine and shoves it under the counter out of sight. Two cops come into the shot pushing Marlowe. He is unsteady and battered. His hat ribbon is torn again. They shove him up to the desk. The sergeant looks him over, then leans forward and sniffs.

Sergeant
A fine specimen of American manhood. What's the charge, men?

Cop
Drunk in auto. Crashed his car into a phone pole out by the brick yard on thirty-fourth. Out cold when we found him and this in his lap.

He puts a bottle on the desk. The sergeant picks it up, shakes it and studies the label.

CONTINUED

243

CONTINUED: (2)

Sergeant

They could give a bottle of this stuff away with a dime cigar and still make money.

(He puts the bottle down, looks Marlowe over some more)

Resisting a little arrest, maybe? Something to give the situation a little color. Is that it, boys?

Cop

No. He didn't bother us at all, sarge. Looks like somebody slugged him.

He points to Marlowe's jaw. The sergeant studies it leaning over.

Sergeant

Sure one of you boys didn't do that?

Cop

We didn't have to. We never laid a glove on him.

Sergeant (to Marlowe)

What's your story, son?

Marlowe (thickly)

I was side-swiped by two men in a Cadillac coupe. Lost control and crashed. They must have planted the liquor on me when I was out.

Sergeant

Indeed? And why would they do that?

(Marlowe doesn't answer)

No doubt you got the license number of this Cadillac coupe.

Marlowe

No.

Sergeant

Any idea who was in it at all?

Marlowe

Yeah -- but I'm saving it for Captain Weber.

Sergeant (interested)

Oh -- for Captain Weber.

(He scratches his chin)

Of course we'd be glad to break up his evening and get him down here right away.

(His tone changes; harshly)

Throw him in the bucket, boys. We'll charge him later on. Drunk in auto doesn't quite satisfy me for this bird.

CONTINUED

243

CONTINUED: (3)

One of the desk sergeants looks at Marlowe.

Cop
Come on, bud. Let's go.

Marlowe shakes him off, pushes his face at the desk sergeant.

Marlowe
You'll charge me right now. On that blotter.
(He points to it)

Sergeant
Oh, I will, will I? Well, let me tell you --

Marlowe (shouting at him)
You'll charge me with murder.

The sergeant looks startled for a moment, then slowly relaxes and grins.

Sergeant (sarcastically)
Ah, murder. First or second degree -- or haven't you made your mind up?

Marlowe
First degree. Go on -- write it. Philip Marlowe, 418 Bristol Apartments. 1762 N. Kenmore Avenue, Los Angeles.

The sergeant doesn't move.

Marlowe (yelling at him)
Go on, write it I tell you! On the night of November 23rd, 1944, I murdered a woman named Mrs. Florence Almore --

The desk sergeant's face changes expression abruptly from sardonic amusement to sudden sharp attention.

249

REVERSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Shouting at the desk sergeant.

Marlowe
-- residing at 677 Altair Street in Bay City. I murdered her by injecting four and a half grains of morphine sulphate intravenously while she lay unconscious on the garage floor --

CONTINUED

249

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERA HAS MOUNTED IN CLOSE ON MARLOWE'S FACE which blurs, then clears. It is still the same face, but the expression is more composed.

Marlowe

She was found dead at 1:30 A.M. on the morning of November 24th. By Chris Lavery. He lived across the street from the Almore then. There was no inquest. The blood test for monoxide was made by a laboratory man in private practice. He had offices in the same building as Dr. Almore. He has since left Bay City.

CAMERA PULLS BACK AND PANS OVER to show Captain Weber standing beside his desk across from Marlowe with his hat and coat on. He is staring at Marlowe deadpan.

Marlowe

The only other person connected with the case was an office nurse named Mildred Haviland. She disappeared before she could be questioned. She's dead. Lavery's dead. Well?

Weber (slowly)

I suppose you think we're a bunch of crooks down here.

Marlowe

The sweetest apple could have a worm in it. The first time I mentioned Mildred Haviland's name down here, I got my face slapped. Funny, but that made me curious. Then I tied her into the Almore case, only I found out that the Almore case doesn't get talked about in Bay City. That made me still more curious. So I found somebody who wasn't scared to talk -- and I got to Mrs. Almore's parents. And from them to the wife of a man named Talley who tried to investigate the Almore case when it happened. He landed on the road gang. I was at her house tonight. I was followed away from there and side-swiped and knocked out and had liquor poured on me. Maybe something like that happened to Talley.

(He stops. Weber says nothing)

If you cared enough to look for a Cadillac coupe, dark blue or brown or black with a smashed right front fender -- but I don't suppose you'd be that interested, would you, Captain?

Weber (between his teeth)

I might be. I might already have looked for it. I might even have found it.

CONTINUED

249

CONTINUED: (3)

He sits down at his desk, pulls a drawer open, reaches in it, puts on the desk the little gold heart Marlowe found in the Chess cabin. He reaches in the desk drawer again and beside the heart he lays a blue and gold police badge.

Weber

I might even know who was in that car.

Marlowe

What are you going to do about it?

Weber (indicating the badge)

I've already done it. Lieutenant Degarmo isn't working for me any more. I've suspended him for a board of inquiry. Anything else?

Marlowe

What about Almore -- and what about Crystal Kingsley?

Weber

We haven't found Crystal Kingsley. As to Almore, I'm going to re-open the case.

He stands up, crosses to a water cooler, pours himself a cup of water, drinks it, crushes the cup in his hand and slams it to the floor. He goes back to his desk and stands glowering.

Weber

You're a bull-headed fool, Marlowe. You've practically forced on me the nastiest job a police official can have -- exposing his own organization.

Marlowe

Too bad it had to be forced on you.

Weber

We'll skip that. There've been three deaths already. If Mrs. Almore was murdered -- three murders. And if they're in any way connected, there may be other deaths.

Marlowe

They're connected all right -- through Mildred Haviland. And you know it.

Weber (harshly)

If they are, I'll find out -- and without your help. That's all. You can go.

Marlowe

What did Talley find out?

CONTINUED

249

CONTINUED: (*)

Weber
I said you could go.

Marlowe
But you didn't say I had to. Talley --

Weber comes around the desk fast at him.

Weber
Get out of here -- quick! Or I'll start working on you myself.

Marlowe fingers his jaw, takes his hat off, looks at the torn band, puts it back on the back of his head.

Marlowe (quietly)
Sorry, Captain. I was beginning to think you were on the level.

He starts to turn away. Weber grabs his arm, yanks him around, doubles his fist. Marlowe stares at him coldly. Weber controls himself, drops the fist, lets Marlowe's arm go, turns back to his desk, and presses down a key on his dictograph.

Weber (into dictograph)
I've got a man in my office I want driven home. He lives in L.A. Come up and get him. I want him driven right to his door --

(He looks up at Marlowe)
-- and then I want him heaved through it.

He releases the dictograph key viciously.

DISSOLVE TO:

250

INT. CORRIDOR - MARLOWE'S APARTMENT HOUSE - (NIGHT)

Sound of elevator doors closing off. Marlowe comes into the shot walking wearily, hands in pockets, head down. CAMERA PANS HIM along the hall. The sound of a telephone bell muffled by walls is heard. Marlowe reaches a door, unlocks it, starts in. Increasing sound of the telephone shows it comes from his own apartment.

251

INT. LIVING ROOM - MARLOWE'S APARTMENT

He stands in shadow against the hall light, then closes the door, switches on light in room. The telephone sound continues. He crosses to a chair, sinks down on it and puts his head against the back ignoring the telephone. After a moment, it stops. He reaches up to take his hat off, suddenly yanks the ribbon viciously and tears it where it was switched, throws the hat away from him on to a chair. He fingers his cheek and jaw and head, looks at his wristwatch. He is a very tired guy. The telephone starts ringing again. With a glance of hate, he reaches for it.

Marlowe (into phone, in a very surly voice)
Hello... Yes, naturally it's me. Who'd you expect it to be -- Carrie Jacobs Bond?... Do I sound as if I feel good? No, I don't feel good, and as long as I know you, I don't ever expect to feel good... What -- what's that?

252

CLOSEUP - MARLOWE

Reacting sharply as to a startling piece of news.

Marlowe (into phone)
Now listen, you can't sell me that. There are a few things --

(Pause; then weakly)
Oh, all right.

He hangs up slowly looking a little dazed. After a moment, he starts to get up.

DISSOLVE TO:

253

INT. BATHROOM - CLOSE SHOT

Marlowe's naked torso. He is toweling his head with as much care as possible. He grunts with pain a couple of times, throws the towel aside, stoops partly out of shot. His movements indicate he is pulling his pants on. He puts on a pajama coat, moves away FROM CAMERA to stand in front of mirror looking at himself and fingering his chin. The buzzer sounds distantly. He ignores it.

CONTINUED

253 CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe (speaking to mirror)
The name's familiar, but I can't seem to remember the face.

The buzzer sounds again. He reaches for a bathrobe, starts to put it on.

254 INT. LIVING ROOM

Empty. Door buzzer sounding persistently. Marlowe comes across to door and pulls it open.

255 CLOSE SHOT - OPEN DOOR

Adrienne and Kingsley standing outside. Kingsley looks troubled and uncertain. He is wearing a vivid black and white scarf inside his overcoat.

Kingsley
We've been trying to get hold of you all evening.

Marlowe motions them in. CAMERA PULLS BACK, PANS THEM into the living room as Marlowe closes the door.

Marlowe
Why didn't you call the Bay City police department?
They always know where I am.

Kingsley (swallowing)
My wife --

Marlowe
Uh-huh. Too bad she couldn't have called you up yesterday.
Where is she?

Kingsley
It seems difficult to believe, but -- but she's in Bay City.

Marlowe winces, then looks at Adrienne who is strolling around the room unconcernedly examining it. She finds Marlowe's hat, picks it up, pouts, sits on the arm of a chair holding it.

Marlowe (to Adrienne)
Next time you better use rivets.
(He turns to Kingsley)
What's difficult to believe about it? She was probably hanging around waiting for a chance to bury him.

CONTINUED

Adrienne

That's not funny.

Marlowe

Getting me and my car smashed up for nothing isn't funny either. Getting arrested isn't funny. But I have one bright spot of news for you. The desk sergeant down at Bay City is a constant reader of Kingsley Publications.

Adrienne

Oh, for goodness sake!

Marlowe

I also made the acquaintance of a new brand of whiskey -- the kind you have to start running before you drink it.

Kingsley

Mr. Marlowe, please.

(Marlowe turns and looks at him)

The last time we met I offered you a thousand dollars.

Marlowe

What a waste of money. A nickel phone call would have done just as well. All you've got to hand Marlowe is an address where he can get his head smacked.

Kingsley

Won't you understand? I've heard from my wife. She's in great trouble.

Marlowe

Don't tell me she shot the Mayor.

Kingsley (sharply)

She hasn't shot anybody. Of course, she's behaved like a fool. She's compromised herself -- the police are looking for her. She called me up at a quarter to seven this evening. She's desperate. She needs money. Whatever my personal feelings are, I -- I have to help her.

Marlowe

Who's stopping you?

Kingsley

She refuses to see me.

Marlowe (savagely)

Let her get a little more desperate then.

Kingsley

It isn't that she objects to seeing me personally. She's afraid I might be followed. I don't know how to handle these things.

255. CONTINUED: (3)

Marlowe
Do I look as if I did?

Adrienne (quietly)
Crystal hasn't killed anybody. I told you that long ago, remember? I'm the girl that --

Marlowe
You're the girl that's too many things.
(He walks over to her, yanks his hat out of her hands, tears half the brim off and hands it back)
Try it that way.
(He turns back to Kingsley)
What's her story?

Kingsley
She didn't tell me.

Marlowe
Look, Kingsley, your wife has been missing for a month. A couple of people have been murdered, and she's very closely connected with both of them. She's hid out in a place where one of the murders was committed. The police are looking for her. She telephoned you. You didn't just say hello and we have fish for dinner tonight, did you?

Kingsley
I'm giving you the opportunity to ask these questions.

Marlowe
I don't want it. I didn't want this case in the beginning, and if you remember, you didn't want me to have it.

Kingsley
I've changed my mind.

Marlowe
I've changed mine too. Besides, there isn't any case. You know where she is and you know that sooner or later she's going to talk to the cops. Why try to stall it off? And why send me? Why not send your lawyer -- if you're afraid to stick your own neck out for just once.

Kingsley takes a long envelope out of his pocket.

Kingsley (slowly)
There are five hundred dollars in this envelope. All the cash I could raise tonight. I'll pay you anything you ask to take it to her.

CONTINUED

255

CONTINUED: (4)

Marlowe (curtly)

No sale.

Kingsley

Very well. Come on, Adrienne.

She gets up, and as she walks past Marlowe, she puts the battered hat on top of his head.

Adrienne (coolly)

I told him you'd rat when the going really got tough.

Marlowe

You should talk about ratting. Nobody's bashed you in the jaw or thrown you down the basement stairs or smashed your car up or locked you up in a cell.

Adrienne

Oh stop being sorry for yourself. You didn't have to be a private detective, you know.

(She yanks the battered hat off his head and throws it in the corner)

But now that you've gone this far, I should think you'd like to know the answers.

Marlowe (to Kingsley)

How much are you offering?

Kingsley (briskly)

I'll pay you a thousand dollars to deliver this envelope -- and five thousand if you prove her innocence.

Marlowe (as if in spite of himself)

Where do I go?

Kingsley

To a cocktail bar called the Peacock Room. It's on the main boulevard near Fourteenth Street.

(He reaches up and pulls the black and white scarf off his neck and holds it out)

You're to wear this. She knows it.

(Marlowe takes the scarf and holds it at arm's length)

You're not to speak to her if you see her -- but follow her out of the bar after an interval. She will go in there every half hour.

Marlowe

Dressed how?

Kingsley

She didn't say.

CONTINUED

Adrienne (indicating the scarf)
With you wearing that --

Marlowe
Too bad you didn't bring a red, white and blue wheel-
barrow. Then she could have really picked me out. If
it's foggy down there, she won't be able to see this for
more than a block.

He hangs the scarf around his neck, takes the
long envelope from Kingsley and looks inside it.

Marlowe
I need a car.

Adrienne (holding out keys)
Here. You can take mine. It's a Plymouth convertible
down in front. I followed Derry over. He can take me
home. Good luck.

She takes Kingsley's arm, starts him towards
the door. Marlowe just looks at her. She
opens the door, gives Kingsley a little push.

Adrienne
Wait for me outside, Derry. There's something I want
to say to Mr. Marlowe.
(He goes out. She almost closes
the door, then turns)
What did you find out about Almore?

Marlowe
He could have killed Lavery all right.
(He shrugs)
I don't see how he could have killed Muriel Chess too.

Adrienne (coming toward him)
Are you mad at me?
(He doesn't answer)
I called you a rat, didn't I? That was just psychology.

Marlowe
And as subtle as a hunk of concrete.

Adrienne
I'm in love with you, you battered lug.

Marlowe
Phooey! All you really like is getting people beaten
to a pulp.

Adrienne
Sure?

255 CONTINUED: (6)

He grabs her and kisses her. She holds him.

DISSOLVE TO:

256 EXT. STREET

In front of the Peacock Room and adjoining Gift Shoppe. The Peacock Room is the usual cocktail lounge with a neon sign. There is dim light in the display window of the Gift Shoppe. A woman stands looking in at it. She wears slacks and a loose coat. A plymouth convertible with the top up drives along the club past the Peacock Room and parks.

257 EXT. PLYMOUTH

As the door opens and Marlowe gets out. He is hatless, is wearing a noisy sports jacket and the black and white scarf is conspicuous around his neck. CAMERA PANS HIM back to the front of the Peacock Room. As he reaches the entrance, he glances towards the gift shop. The woman who is standing there pays no attention to him. He starts in to the Peacock Room.

258 CLOSE SHOT - THE WOMAN

Standing in front of the display window. As Marlowe enters the Peacock Room, she turns her head quickly. In the street light, her face is tired, pretty, hard. Dark hair is loose around her head. She starts towards the Peacock Room, walking slowly.

259 INT. PEACOCK ROOM

An illuminated clock on the wall behind the bar shows the time to be 1:35. The place is crowded and noisy. The bar is solidly packed with people as Marlowe comes up and stands behind them. He looks along the line of booths towards the back. The door opens behind him and the woman comes in. She gives him a casual glance, moves past him towards the back of the lounge as if looking for someone.

CONTINUED

259 CONTINUED: (2)

A drunk in one of the booths makes a half-hearted pass at her. She turns her back, starts toward the front again. She gives Marlowe a brief glance and a tiny nod, then goes on out. He apparently pays no attention. He lights a cigarette, blows the match out with a full breath, looks around the lounge again, then turns and starts out.

260 EXT. GIFT SHOPPE - CLOSE SHOT

The woman standing in front of the window staring at a shelf of small glass animals. Her face is vaguely reflected in the glass. Steps are heard. Marlowe comes into the shot, stands beside her. Both their faces are reflected.

Woman (without turning her head)
Give me the money.

Marlowe
Money?

Woman
Don't play dumb. You're wearing the scarf, aren't you?

Marlowe
Oh this.
(He pulls the scarf off his neck, looks at it, crumples it into his pocket)
Where can we talk?

Woman
There's nothing to talk about. Just hand it over and leave me alone.

Marlowe
It's not that simple. Where's your hideout?

The woman turns and faces him. Her face is strained.

Woman
What makes it your business?

Marlowe
An envelope I have in my pocket with five hundred dollars in it.

Woman
A lousy half grand. That would be him.

CONTINUED

260

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe

Probably all he could scrape up with the banks closed.
Want it -- or just want to crab about it?

Woman

Okay.

She puts her hand out. Marlowe shakes his head.

Woman (eyeing his bruises)

You look as if you'd had enough trouble.

Marlowe

I can still handle some of yours.

She smiles provocatively.

Woman

Really?

Marlowe

That's a nice job of hair dyeing.

(Pause)

Of course I never saw it blonde.

Woman (still provocatively)

Have any hopes?

Marlowe

You talk my language, baby. Let's go.

She gives him a long cool stare, then shrugs.

Woman

All right. But stay half a block behind me. It's across the boulevard, down Eighteenth. Apartment 743.

Marlowe

Sure you haven't been spotted?

Woman

As sure as I know how to be.

She turns away and moves off. He turns and looks after her. As the sound of her steps dissolve into the late traffic noise, he starts in the same direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

261 EXT. SHADED STREET

Apartment house front in background. The woman's back is moving towards it. She reaches the entrance, glances back, turns in. Marlowe comes into the shot following.

DISSOLVE TO:

262 INT. APARTMENT HOUSE LOBBY

It is small and quite deserted. The sound of the elevator is heard rising in the shaft, then the street door opening, then closing. Marlowe presses the call button. Sound of the elevator starting down.

DISSOLVE TO:

263 CORRIDOR OF APARTMENT HOUSE

Marlowe walking along it, CAMERA FOLLOWING. He passes a door numbered 742, then a long space of wall, reaches a door numbered 743. He knocks lightly. The door moves inward at once. He starts in.

264 INT. LIVING ROOM

Of a wall-bed single apartment. SHOOTING TOWARD THE OPENED DOOR and the woman's back as she stands holding it. Marlowe is coming in past her. She has her right hand in the pocket of her coat. She pushes the door shut and leans against it. Marlowe moves on into the room, CAMERA PANNING WITH HIM to show the layout. There are two windows, one open with a net curtain blowing gently. A davenport against the solid wall. Next to it, a narrow curtained archway, a couple of easy chairs, etc.

Marlowe (looking around)
 Don't tell me you've been living here for a month.
 (She doesn't answer)
 What was the idea of that wire from El Paso?
 (She doesn't answer)

265

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

As he stands looking at a cheap framed print on the wall. He speaks as if to the picture.

Marlowe

How did you find out the cops were looking for you? They haven't told anybody.

Woman's voice (off)

My husband told me.

Marlowe turns finally and looks at her.

Marlowe

Uh-uh. Because if you didn't know Lavery was dead, there was nothing to be cagey about.

266

CLOSE SHOT - THE WOMAN

She smiles contemptuously, then starts across the room. Her right hand is still in her pocket.
CAMERA PANS WITH HER.

Woman

Still playing the detective, aren't you, Mr. Marlowe?

267

TWO SHOT

As she approaches within a few feet of him and stops.

Woman

I'm afraid you'll never get to see my hair blond. Too bad, isn't it?

Marlowe

I can stand it.

Woman

Sit down. There.
(She indicates the davenport)

Marlowe

Sure.

He sits down. There is a stiff grin on his face.

Woman

I suppose you wonder how I know your name.

CONTINUED

267

CONTINUED: (2)

Marlowe
Nice to have a pair of them, isn't it?

Woman (puzzled)
A pair of them?

Marlowe
A pair of little guns. Little guns that fit in purses -- or pockets -- and kill just the same as big guns. Why don't you take it out?

Slowly she draws her hand from her pocket, holds a small automatic. She points it at him.

Woman
Yes, it is convenient, isn't it? Now if you'll just hand over that money --

Marlowe
You did that Mrs. Fallbrook character very well. If I hadn't fallen for it --

Woman (calmly)
I still had this.
(She glances down at the gun)

Marlowe
But what I can't figure is why you went back.

Woman
Did I go back?

Marlowe
Yeah. The cops know he was killed the night before.

Woman
I went back to look for money. It was that simple. Or are you wondering why I didn't write a check somewhere?

Marlowe
Maybe I'm wondering why you didn't have more money with you when you started out -- for El Paso.

Woman
Maybe I didn't know I was going to El Paso.

Marlowe
A little careless about money, aren't you -- for a girl who's so careful about murder.

(Her eyes flicker dangerously.
He laughs)

Put the gun away, baby. You're all through killing people. That is, if you really have killed anybody.

CONTINUED

267

CONTINUED: (3)

Woman

Oh -- you have some doubts about it, have you?

Marlowe (slowly)

Yeah -- but your little gun is breaking them down.

A look of uncertainty shows on her face.

Marlowe (quickly)

There's somebody else that could have killed Lavery -- or didn't you know?

Woman (as if startled by the idea)

I -- I --

(Suddenly her mouth tightens with decision)

Give me that money -- and get out of here quick!

Marlowe (grinning)

You don't really think I've got the dough in my pocket, do you? Ah, come on, honey, think of my trading position.

Woman (tensely)

Where is it then? In your ear?

Marlowe (slowly shaking his head)

In my apartment.

Woman (furiously)

You're a liar! He promised --

Marlowe stands up and raises his hands.

Marlowe

Take a look for yourself.

She comes towards him slowly, stops, her teeth bite her lip.

Marlowe

Don't be afraid. I don't carry a gun -- when I call on ladies.

She puts the gun against his body.

Woman (menacingly)

If you haven't got that dough --

Her left hand goes slowly inside his jacket into his breast pocket.

Marlowe

I have it all right -- only not here.

CONTINUED

267

CONTINUED: (4)

Woman (looking him in the eyes)
You'd better have it right here, brother!

Her hand comes out empty, moves to his other pocket. His eyes flicker down at the gun. He turns his body a little as though to make his jacket fall open.

Woman

Stand still!

Marlowe

What for -- a little .45 with the safety catch on?

Involuntarily, her eyes go to the gun. She takes a half step back. Marlowe suddenly kicks her feet from under her, puts his left arm around her body, pulls her towards him and grabs her right wrist. He pushes the gun away.

Marlowe (pulling her up close)

Never kill a man when he's looking at you, angel. His eyes give you bad dreams.

(his voice softens)

You didn't really mean to do it, did you?

Woman (suddenly sobbing)

I'm frightened. I'm so frightened.

268

CLOSE SHOT

From the sink. Showing Marlowe's hand over the woman's hand holding up the gun. He slowly twists it out of her hand.

269

CLOSE SHOT

Over Marlowe's shoulder into the woman's face. Her eyes are wide and desperate.

Woman

Get me out of here! Please! Take me with you. Anywhere.

Marlowe (trying to disengage

himself)

I'll bet that went big with Lavery.

CONTINUED

269 CONTINUED: (2)

She winds her arms around his neck and pulls his head down. There is a faint sound as of curtain rings.

270 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Trying to pull away and reacting to the sound. His head starts to turn. The woman hangs on to him with all her weight. His hands come up to push her away.

271 CLOSE SHOT

Of the woman's face as he succeeds in pushing her away. Suddenly she bursts out laughing. Into the laugh comes the sound of a heavy blow.

Woman
Hit him again. He's tough.

There is the sound of a second blow.

272 MED. SHOT

Of the woman as she steps back to avoid Marlowe's falling body. Her head goes down as he collapses on the floor at her feet. There is the sound of movement out of shot which she follows with her eyes. Her glance comes up from the floor to something above her. Suddenly the expression of triumph in her eyes changes to fear. Her mouth opens in the beginning of a scream.

DISSOLVE TO:

273 AN OPEN WINDOW - NIGHT

With net curtains blowing. Outside is the sound of a siren approaching. (NOTE: During the following the siren continues to grow in volume until it dies down outside). Close at hand there is the sound of heavy breathing and heavy uncertain steps. A man's figure comes into the shot BACK TO CAMERA, leans into the open window. The heavy breathing continues. The man is coatless and his shirt is torn. It is Marlowe. He pushes himself away from the window with his left hand and turns. Something is indistinctly seen in his right hand. He looks around vaguely, rubs his hand across his forehead, then starts out of shot.

274

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE ARCHWAY at the end of the davenport. The curtain is now pulled to one side. An open door shows in background. Marlowe is moving towards it. Suddenly he stops, looks down, slowly lifts his right hand and looks down at it.

275

CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Staring down at a small automatic in his hand. His face is puzzled. He lowers the gun slowly, looks to his left and freezes. CAMERA LINGS QUICKLY to what he sees. The wall bed is pulled down. Over the side of the bed trails a limp bare arm, fingers touching the floor. Marlowe's coat is tossed in a heap on the floor beside it. Further along are crumpled female garments, shoes, etc. CAMERA MOVES UP THE BARE ARM. The back of the woman's head comes into the SHOT, then Marlowe's head and shoulders lean over. As the sound of the apartment house elevator is heard distantly, he straightens up, raises the gun again and sniffs at the muzzle. He reacts, then quickly picks up his coat, turns, goes quickly out of shot towards the archway.

276

INT. BATHROOM

As Marlowe comes into it carrying his coat. He puts the gun down on a clothes hamper and his coat on top of it. He turns water in the basin, sloshes it over his face and head. There is knocking at the apartment door; heavy determined knocking. He straightens up, listens, grabs a towel, dries his face and head. He takes the gun and the coat off the hamper, twists the towel he's holding around the gun and leans down to put it into the bottom of the hamper. He closes it, slips his coat on. The knocking continues, heavy and commanding. A rough voice calls out:

Voice

Open up. It's the law.

Marlowe steps up on the edge of the tub, pushes the bathroom window open and leans out.

277

WHAT HE SEES

A rough brick wall enclosing a light well in the back of the apartment house.

278 CLOSE SHOT
 Marlowe's head and shoulders as he leans out and looks down.

279 SHOOTING DOWN
 Seven stories to the cement yard.

280 INT. BATHROOM
 As Marlowe pulls back in and turns. The knocking on the door has stopped. He listens. There is the sound like the murmur of voices. He starts to climb out through the window.

281 EXT. APARTMENT HOUSE HALLWAY
 SHOOTING TOWARDS DOOR OF APARTMENT NUMBER 743. A uniformed officer is standing outside it waiting. The apartment house manager and another uniformed cop come into the SHOT walking quickly towards him. CAMERA FOLLOWS.

Manager
 What's the matter?

1st Cop
 What we're here to find out.

Manager
 Who called you?

1st Cop
 I couldn't say, mister. We got it from the dispatcher.

They reach the door. The manager fits a pass key in and unlocks the door. He starts to open it. The second cop blocks him off.

2nd Cop
 Thanks. We'll take it from here.

They go in and close the door in the manager's face.

282 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

As they turn from the closed door and look towards what is on the bed. They move over. The second cop bends down.

2nd Cop (whistling between
his teeth)
That kind of a killing, huh? Oh boy, will you look at those scratches.

1st Cop
I'm looking at them -- and a couple of bullet holes too.

283 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Clinging to the outside wall of the apartment house. His fingers are clawing a precarious hole on the rough bricks. He is sidling along the narrow ledge towards a closed window similar to the one he came out of. He steadies himself and cautiously starts to lean towards it.

284 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

2nd Cop (straightening up)
Better call Homicide. I'll look through the joint. Probably a waste of time. My guess is the killer put the call in.

1st Cop
How come?

2nd Cop
This kind of work -- the guy that does it wants to be admired.
He starts towards the bathroom as the other cop crosses to a wall telephone and takes off the receiver.

285 HALLWAY AND BATHROOM DOOR

As the second cop reaches it. The door is closed. He reaches out, tries it cautiously, pulls his gun out of the holster. Suddenly he throws the door open. We see an empty bathroom. The window over the tub is closed. No sign of anything wrong. The cop stands a moment, then puts his gun back in his holster and turns.

286

INT. WENT DOOR BATHROOM - (IN DARKNESS)

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE OPEN WINDOW. A hand enters the SHOT and slowly pushes the window shut. Heavy breathing is heard and steps, then a door closing.

287

INT. OF THE BEDROOM - (IN DARKNESS)

A door is being slowly opened and Marlowe appears in the doorway. As he looks, CAMERA PANS ACROSS THE ROOM to show double beds made up, closed and curtained windows. Marlowe comes slowly on into the room, stops, listens. There is the sound of a clock ticking. He crosses the room and starts through another door.

288

INT. LIVING ROOM - (IN DARKNESS)

Marlowe enters slowly, stops and listens. The ticking of the clock is louder. Some light comes through the curtained windows, then a lamp goes on. Marlowe is seen standing beside it looking around the room. This is a much better apartment. There are easy chairs, books, a table with a decanter of whiskey on it. The ticking comes from a grandfather's clock in the corner. Marlowe crosses to the liquor, draws a finger across the surface of the table, then looks at the finger. He wipes it off on his pants. He up-ends a glass, pours some whiskey into it, drinks it down. He stands listening. He pours himself another drink, lifts it to his mouth. The clock whirrs and begins to chime. Marlowe almost drops the glass. It chimes the half hour. He takes a long breath, downs the second drink, drops into a chair, takes a cigarette out of a box on the table beside it, lights it, leans back and closes his eyes for a moment inhaling the tobacco. He is a very tired character. The sound of feet passing the door jerks him upright. There is a confused mumble of voices. He relaxes, reaches for the cover of the cigarette box and stares down at it.

289

CLOSE SHOT

of the cigarette box cover in Marlowe's hand. It is black wood or plastic with the name HARRY G. TALBOT inlaid in silver.

290

MED. CLOSE SHOT OF MARLOWE

as he replaces the cover, stands up, starts back towards the bedroom.

291

INT. BEDROOM

as Marlowe enters. He switches on a lamp, then goes to a closet and opens it. He paws through some men's clothes, comes out with a lightweight overcoat. He slips it on. It is a little off-size but near enough. He finds a felt hat up on a shelf. He tries that. It is a little too small. He puts it on the back of his head, crosses to a mirror and tries the effect mussing out his hair under the hat. It gives him a dissipated appearance. He switches off the lamp, starts out.

292

INT. LIVING ROOM

As Marlowe comes up to the liquor and pours another drink. He rubs a little whiskey over his face, pulls his coat crooked, sticks another cigarette in his face and starts towards the door. He leans against it listening. Then bracing his shoulders, he turns the knob and pulls the door open.

293

EXT. APARTMENT HOUSE HALLWAY

SHOOTING TOWARDS APARTMENT 743, as Marlowe comes out of the door of 741. Two uniformed cops in sight; one at the open door of 743, one closer. A light from a flash-bulb comes through the open door of 743. In the act of closing the door, Marlowe looks towards it. The nearest cop turns. He is small, very neat with a sharp nose (SHORTY).

Shorty

Just a minute, mister.

Marlowe stops, looks back. Shorty comes towards him, his thumbs hooked in his belt. Marlowe hiccups.

Marlowe (in a thick voice)

Wassa matter, off'cer?

Shorty

Didn't you hear nothing?

Marlowe

Heard knocking.

(he grins)

Trouble?

Shorty leans towards him and sniffs.

Shorty

You going someplace?

293

CONTINUED (2)

Marlowe (confidentially putting a
finger against Shorty's chest)
Now look, pal. I got my hat on, didn't I? I got my coat on.
I come out of the apartment, didn't I? What does it look
like I'm doing?

Shorty

You're drunk.

Marlowe (with sudden dignity)
And what makes that your business?

Shorty

Dame bumped off next door. Kind of gives us a hard
hold. What's your name?

Marlowe

Talbot. Harry G. Talbot. Goo' night, officer.

Shorty

You stay right there a minute, bud.

(He turns and calls down the hall to the other
cop who is watching)

Tell the lieutenant the guy next door is on deck. He wants out.

The cop nods and goes through the open door.

294

INT. APARTMENT 743

SHOOTING TOWARDS THE BED as the cop comes into the SHOT.
A ~~photographer~~ is putting away his stuff. Plainclothes
men standing around. A big man is bending over the bed
on which the body is lying. The cop goes to his side.

Cop

The party next door is out there, Lieutenant. Want to talk
to him?

The man grunts, ~~straightens~~ up and turns. It is Degarmo.

295

EXT. HALLWAY

Marlowe and Shorty stand waiting. Marlowe is looking
along the hall. Shorty is looking at Marlowe. The sound
of steps is heard. Marlowe looks towards the sound and
reacts.

296

CLOSE SHOT - DEGARMO

walking. His dull heavy face is impassive under

296

CONTINUED (2)

He looks casually towards Marlowe. A brief flash of triumph crosses his face. **CAMERA PULLS BACK** to include Marlowe and Shorty and the door of Talbot's apartment standing slightly open.

Shorty (officially)
This is the guy in the next apartment, Lieutenant. Name of Talbot. I figured maybe you'd like to ask him --

Degarmo (cutting in on him)
Sure. (He glances towards the partly opened door)
Let's go inside.

297

INT. TALBOT APARTMENT

Marlowe enters shepherded by Shorty. Degarmo last. He closes the door and ranges the apartment with his eyes, rubbing a thick thumbnail across his chin. He spots the liquor cabinet, goes over to it, sniffs the used glass, pours some whiskey into another. He carries it back to stand in front of Marlowe sipping the whiskey and looking across the glass at him.

Degarmo
Nice to see you again.

Shorty looks puzzled. Marlowe does not react.

Degarmo (to Shorty)
Put a gun on him.

Shorty (startled)
What?
(Suddenly he catches on, jerks a gun out of his holster licking his lips)
Well, for crying out loud! How'd you know, Lieutenant?

Degarmo
Frisk him.

Shorty moves behind Marlowe and pats him in various places.

Shorty
He's clean.

Degarmo
Clean. Well, that's nice. That's smooth. That's the way we like it.
(His voice hardens)

CONTINUED

Degarmo (cont'd)

What are you going to do, baby -- go down and get a paper -- to find out if she was dead?

Marlowe deepans, doesn't answer. Shorty's eyes glisten.

Shorty

He's one of them sex killers you read about.

Degarmo (to Marlowe)

Hello, sex killer.

Shorty (suddenly sniffing at

the air)

Hey, this place has been closed up for days. You can smell the dust in here.

Degarmo

Go look around. See how he got in.

Shorty scoots out of the shot. Degarmo watches him go, then turns back to Marlowe.

Marlowe

Got the badge back awful quick, didn't you?

Degarmo

Never lost it officially. Weber didn't have time to post it. Nobody knows but him and me and you -- and what you know don't count.

Marlowe

Crack this one quick -- and you'll be sitting pretty, won't you?

Degarmo

You catch on. Any suggestions?

Marlowe

Sure. Make it simple. I killed her. She needed killing. How would you like that?

Degarmo

I'd love it -- but I couldn't sell it.

Marlowe

No? Let me try again.

He reaches into an inner pocket and pulls out the black and white scarf, lets it fall in a streamer.

CONTINUED

297

CONTINUED (3)

Degarmo looks off quickly and grabs the scarf out of his hand.

Marlowe

Kingsley was wearing this tonight. I can prove it. He sent me down here to give his wife money for a getaway, but I wanted her story first. We came up here and she pulled a gun on me. I grabbed it out of her hand -- and somebody cracked me on the back of the head.

Degarmo (thoughtfully)

You sure are a guy that gets pushed around.

Marlowe

When I came out of it, you know what I found -- and that --
(Indicating the scarf)
-- and cops banging on the door.

There is a noise off and Shorty comes back into the SHOT excitedly.

Shorty

Look, Lieutenant. He got across the light well from the other apartment. The bathroom window is kicked in. A guy could just make it.

Degarmo (nodding)

Smart work, kid. He called up and reported the killing -- without giving any name -- that's how it was turned in -- and went out the bathroom window.

Shorty (puzzled)

Why would he do that? I mean wait?

Degarmo

He's eccentric. The girl could have laid there for a week. All he had to do was walk out. Yeah -- he's eccentric all right.

(He reaches out and grabs Marlowe's arm)

Let's go downtown and talk about it.

(He starts him for the door, Shorty following.)

Degarmo looks back at Shorty)

You stay here. Don't let anybody touch anything. If the folks that live here come home, that goes for them too.

Shorty looks vaguely uneasy.

Shorty

Sure, Lieutenant -- only --

Degarmo

Only what?

CONTINUED

297

CONTINUED (4)

Shorty

Hadn't you oughta wait until Captain Weber gets here?

Degarmo lets go of Marlowe's arm, walks over to Shorty and pushes his chin up.

Degarmo

You want to keep on wearing those buttons, sonny, you better move one up -- about to here.

He puts his hand across Shorty's mouth. Shorty steps back, deadpans and says nothing. Degarmo starts for the door again. They go out.

298

INT. CORRIDOR

As they go out. Degarmo closes the door on Shorty, looks back towards apartment 743.

Degarmo

We got to get out of here fast -- before Weber crashes the party.

(They start down the hall walking quickly)

You got a car?

Marlowe

Over on the boulevard.

DISSOLVE TO:

299

EXT. SIDEWALK

Beside Adrienne's parked convertible. The Peacock Room close up and dark now, is in the background. The street is deserted. Degarmo and Marlowe enter walking. Marlowe stops beside the convertible, opens the door, then glances towards the Peacock Room.

Marlowe

That's the joint. She was to drop in every so often and give me the high sign when I showed.

Degarmo

How was she going to know you?

Marlowe (drily)

She'd seen me before.

CONTINUED

299

CONTINUED (2)

Degarmo (puzzled)

Yeah?

Marlowe

Sure. In Lavery's house. The wrong Mrs. Fallbrook.

Degarmo (slowly)

But you didn't know that until you saw her.

Marlowe

Sure I did. Who else could she be?

He turns and starts to get into the car, Degarmo after him.

DISSOLVE TO:

300

EXT. BIG HOUSE IN BEVERLY HILLS - LONG SHOT

SHOOTING FROM THE STREET past the parked convertible. The porch light is on. The front door is open. A woman in a bathrobe stands in it. Degarmo faces her. Degarmo nods, turns, starts down off the porch. The door is closed. The porch light goes off.

301

INT. CONVERTIBLE

Marlowe at the wheel. The right hand door hangs open. Degarmo comes up and gets in beside him.

Degarmo

The housekeeper says Kingsley wasn't home since seven o'clock.

Marlowe starts the car.

302

INT. CONVERTIBLE - (IN MOTION)

The background of a residential street.

Marlowe

You didn't look under the beds, did you?

Degarmo

Leave me be a cop, baby. The housekeeper wasn't hiding anything. Why would she?

(Marlowe shrugs)

CONTINUED

302

CONTINUED (2)

DeGarmo (cont'd)

Kingsley's smart enough to see you as for a fall guy -- but if he was tough enough to sit the chair out, he'd want us to find him home. What too fast for you?

Marlowe

Maybe I'm overtrained. Where do we go now?

DeGarmo

We talk to this Fremont babe. And from what you say, she's worth talking to.

Marlowe gives him a quick glance, then stares ahead deadpan.

DISSOLVE TO:

303

INT. ADRIENNE'S BEDROOM - (SEMI-DARKNESS)

She is in bed asleep, her hair tumbled over the pillow, her face smooth and relaxed. The door chimes ring. She stirs vaguely. They ring again. Her eyes open. She sits up in bed, then throws back the covers, pulls a housecoat around her and starts out.

304

INT. ADRIENNE'S LIVING ROOM - (IN DARKNESS)

As the chimes sound again. A light goes on, Adrienne crosses to the door, stands close to it.

Adrienne (calling out)

What is it?

The bell chimes again. With frown of annoyance, Adrienne opens the door. DeGarmo pushes in past her without a word. Marlowe follows. Adrienne steps back looking indignant. DeGarmo moves on into the room, takes a match out of his pocket, chews on it as he turns to face her.

Adrienne (to Marlowe with suppressed fury)

Nice to see you again, Mr. Marlowe. But if you have to bring guests here at three o'clock in the morning, you might at least give me a chance to put my war paint on.

CONTINUED

304

CONTINUED (2)

Degarmo (bluntly)
You're Adrienne Fromsett?

Adrienne
Yes. Some people call me Miss Fromsett. And my guests have been known to remove their hats.

Degarmo
Funny. Where's Kingsley, sister?

Adrienne (walking up to him)
Well, well. Am I being a silly artless little girl. A copper -- and with all the well-worn mannerisms.

Marlowe
Just like in your magazines.

Adrienne (acidly)
I knew there was something wrong with them. It's been worrying me lately.
(She eyes Degarmo but continues speaking to Marlowe)
Does the dreamboat have a name -- or just a face you'd love to drop in a cement mixer?

Degarmo
Listen, you --

Adrienne (whirling on Marlowe)
Are you going to stand there like a drug store Indian and let this loud-mouthed flatfoot -- ?

Marlowe
Calm down.
(Pause)
She's been murdered.

Adrienne reacts appalled.

Adrienne (huskily)
Crystal -- murdered?

Marlowe (to Degarmo)
Show her the scarf.

Degarmo takes it out of his pocket and holds it out. Adrienne stares at it. Her eyes to Marlowe, then back to the scarf.

Marlowe (watching her)
Somebody was hidden out in her apartment. I got knocked on the head. That oughtn't to surprise you.

CONTINUED

Marlowe (cont'd)

When I came to, the police were at the door -- and she was dead on the bed.

(Adrienne stares at him speechless. Marlowe takes the scarf out of Degarmo's hand and moves close to her)

This was found in the room. You know who was wearing it tonight.

She looks at the scarf again, then looks Marlowe in the eye.

Adrienne (very slowly)

What am I supposed to say?

Marlowe

This is Lieutenant Degarmo of the Bay City police. He wants to know where Kingsley is.

Degarmo

He ain't home if that's any help to you.

Adrienne (still watching Marlowe)

He drove me home -- because I had lent Mr. Marlowe my car -- but he didn't come up.

Degarmo

I'll just look through the joint and make sure.

Adrienne pulls her eyes away from Marlowe and looks at Degarmo.

Adrienne

You're a Bay City police officer, Lieutenant.

Degarmo

That's right. So what?

Adrienne

If you want to do any looking through this apartment -- you'll call the Los Angeles police before you do it.

Degarmo

Aw, skip the attitudes, lady. We don't have the time to build up a scene. If I say I'm looking through, I'm looking through, see?

Adrienne (to Marlowe)

Is that what you want?

Degarmo

It don't cut any ice what he wants. It's what I want.

He turns away and starts out. Adrienne watches him out of the SHOT.

304

CONTINUED (4)

Adrienne (turning to Marlowe)
Why didn't you tell him you were wearing the scarf?

Marlowe
Was I?

Adrienne
Wait a minute. I don't get this. Just what are you trying to do?

Marlowe
You'll see.

Adrienne (angrily)
You know Derry wouldn't do anything like that. It's unthinkable.

Marlowe
Would I do it?

Adrienne
No -- of course not.

Marlowe
Then Kingsley's in -- however it looks to you. Because nobody else knew I was going down there. And it was Kingsley who spoke to her on the phone. He said she wouldn't tell him where she was living, but that's just something he said. We don't have to believe it.

Adrienne
How was she killed?

Marlowe
Shot -- and roughed around pretty thoroughly as well.

Adrienne
Then you can count Derry out right now.

Marlowe
No. You think you know he wouldn't have done it, sure. But what about this logic you're always talking about? Only the killer could have called the cops down there -- and his only reason would be to have me killed before I got out. Kingsley had the motive -- and he arranged the set-up. There's nobody else in the picture.

Adrienne
I still won't believe it. You got yourself in a jam -- and to get out of it you're willing to do this. I wouldn't have believed that either.

Degarmo comes back into the SHOT.

CONTINUED

304

CONTINUED (5)

Degarmo (to Marlowe)
 Nice place -- and this time I did look under the bed.
 (He turns to Adrienne)
 Well, ready to give us the dope?

Adrienne
 I don't know where Mr. Kingsley is.

Marlowe
 You're lying.

Adrienne
 Am I?

Marlowe (very quietly)
 Then that makes me have to guess. Where did all this start?

Adrienne (between her teeth)
 You are a rat after all.

Degarmo
 Wait a minute. What goes on here? I thought I was the heavy.

Marlowe (staring grimly at Adrienne
 but speaking to Degarmo)
 It's a long way from here, Degarmo, and I think we better
 take Miss Fromsett with us.

Degarmo
 A long way where?

Marlowe
 To Little Fawn Lake.

Degarmo
 What makes you think he's there?

Marlowe
 There's a good way to find out.
 (to Adrienne)
 Where's the phone?

Adrienne (backing away from him)
 You're horrible. Both of you.

Marlowe (harshly)
 Real murders are not so pretty, are they, Miss Fromsett?

DISSOLVE TO:

305 LONG SHOT - MOUNTAIN ROAD - (DAY)

Shadows of the trees indicate it is early morning. In the background the hills above Little Fawn Lake is visible. Patton is in a dusty car with a couple of people sitting along the tender. The noise of another car is heard approaching. Patton's head and shoulders lean out of the dusty car. He starts to get out.

306 REVERSE SHOT

Of the approaching convertible as it comes up level with Patton. It stops. Degarmo gets out, then Adrienne, then Marlowe. Patton moves towards them. He looks at Degarmo without friendliness, gives Marlowe a short nod, looks at Adrienne with a smile.

Patton
Morning. You folks made fast time. I was going fishing when you called up.

Marlowe
This is Lieutenant Degarmo of the Bay City police.

Patton
I guess we've met. Only he didn't bother to tell me his name.

Degarmo
In police business sometimes you don't, Patton.

Patton
That so? I guess you know best. Course I'm in police business myself -- in a ignorant sort of way.

(He turns to Adrienne)
Ain't seen you in a coon's age, Miss Fromsett. You're looking good.

Degarmo
Let's cut out the social stuff, huh? Where is he?

Patton
Kingsley? Most likely asleep. His car's out front of the cabin. I ain't heard a sound.

Degarmo
Let's go get him.

He takes a gun out from under his arm and slips the chamber open, examines it.

CONTINUED

Patton
There ain't going to be no shooting here, Lieutenant.

Degarmo
All depends. I come up here to collect a killer.

Patton
You heard me. Better give me that gun, mister. This is my territory. I run things up here.

Degarmo flicks the chamber in place, puts the gun back under his arm.

Degarmo (contemptuously)
Ain't you the funny little fat man?

He turns on his heel and starts away.

Patton
You stay right where you are, mister.

Degarmo stops, turns at the sudden ring of authority in Patton's voice.

Degarmo
Okay, Patton. It's your party. Lead on.

Patton (looking at Adrienne)
It ain't no lady's party.

Marlowe
Oh, Miss Fromsett's an expert on murder.

Adrienne (wearily)
Oh shut up.
(To Patton)
Mr. Kingsley is my boss, Mr. Patton. And I don't believe a word of what these men think.

Patton
We'll see.
(To Marlowe)
You don't look like you been making a lot of friends lately. You're all bruised up.

Marlowe
I was in a car crash.

Degarmo (impatiently)
What is this anyway? A class reunion?

306

CONTINUED (3)

Patton

Ain't no hurry. I'm a fella likes to know what he's doin' and where he's goin'. Take this woman who found drowned in the lake a couple of days back. Bill Chess's wife. Was her you were looking for, wasn't it -- that time you were so careful not to mention who you were?

Degarmo

What of it?

Patton

Kind of a coincidence, you coming up again looking for Kingsley.

Marlowe

Coincidence isn't quite the word.

Patton (looking at him)

Huh? Well, what is the word?

Degarmo

Oh, for Pete's sake! I don't have the time for your brains to work.

Patton

Kingsley can't get away. This here's the only road out.

Degarmo

If he knows he's cornered --

Patton

If he killed somebody and come up here, he darn well has to know he's cornered.

Degarmo (patting his gun)

That's why I'm wearing this.

Patton (to Degarmo)

Listen to me, son. Mr. Kingsley's a friend of mine. He gets to talk all he wants. Understand? None of your shoot first and ask afterwards stuff goes for my district. Got that straight?

Degarmo (slowly)

Sure. I want him to talk. Only I want to be alive to listen -- in case he has a gun.

Patton

You don't need to worry about that none. I may think kind of slow --

(His hand flicks and a huge Frontier Colt appears in it as if by magic)

-- but I ain't exactly muscle bound.

306

CONTINUED (4)

Degarmo sugars at him and at the gun. Patton spins it on the trigger guard and slaps it back into the holster.

Degarmo

Nice work. You and me could go places, Patton.

Patton (quietly)

Let's do that.

He and Degarmo start out. Marlowe doesn't move. Neither does Adrienne.

Adrienne

I hope you're satisfied. Between them, they ought to be able to handle one middle-aged business man, don't you think?

(Marlowe doesn't answer)

I hope you're proud of yourself -- when you have time to think about it.

Marlowe

I've done my thinking. That's why I'm here.

Adrienne (bitterly)

I suppose you suspected Derry all along.

Marlowe

I'd be a fool not to. Everything he did -- and everything he didn't do -- pointed right straight at him.

Adrienne

Everything but one. I know him too well.

Marlowe

Maybe you don't know me well enough.

Adrienne

As well as I ever want to -- and more.

She turns and walks quickly away. He looks after her frowning, then his eyes go to the fishing rods tied to the side of Patton's car. He takes a pocket knife out, opens the blade and reaches for the line on one of the fishing rods. He releases the catch on the reel and starts to pull the line loose.

DISSOLVE TO:

307

INT. LIVING ROOM - KINGSLEY CABIN

It is sunlight outside, but the blinds are closed. Two lamps are burning. Kingsley is slumped in a chair asleep, dully dressed. There is a half empty bottle of whiskey beside him and an overturned glass. Steps are heard coming up on the porch. Kingsley doesn't move at first, then as the steps near the door, his eyes open and focus. He looks dully towards the door as it opens and Patton and Degarmo come in. They stand looking at him.

Patton

Morning, Mr. Kingsley. I didn't know you'd come up.

Kingsley (thickly)

What do you want?

Patton

Maybe we better have a little light in here.

He crosses to the blinds and opens them. Kingsley stares dully.

Patton (turning from the windows)

This here's Lieutenant Degarmo, Mr. Kingsley. He belongs to the Bay City police.

Kingsley stares at Degarmo dully.

Kingsley

I suppose they've arrested her.

Degarmo laughs shortly. Patton rumples his rousy hair, sits down, holds his Stetson in his lap.

Patton

Well, it ain't quite that simple, Mr. Kingsley. You're talking about your wife, ain't you?

Kingsley

Who else?

Adrienne's steps are heard on the steps. She comes in, crosses quickly to Kingsley.

Adrienne

Derry, why didn't you tell me you were coming up here?

Kingsley (dully)

I didn't know myself. I just started out driving -- and found myself here.

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CONTINUED (2)

Degarmo (unpleasantly)
And had plenty to think about since, haven't you, pal?

Kingsley
I suppose so.
(He looks up at Adrienne)
They've caught her -- but I suppose you know all about it.

Adrienne (gently)
No, Derry. They haven't exactly caught her.

Patton
You better let us handle this, Miss Fromsett. More in our line.

Adrienne ignores him.

Adrienne (to Kingsley urgently)
That black and white scarf you had last night -- the one you gave Marlowe to wear -- remember?

Degarmo
Here. Cut that out. What are you trying to pull off?

Adrienne (ignoring Degarmo also)
You do remember, Derry?

Kingsley
Why -- you saw me yourself. Of course I did. That was how she was to know him.

More steps are heard outside and Marlowe comes in.
Adrienne turns to face Degarmo.

Adrienne
Mr. Marlowe never told you that, did he, Lieutenant?

Degarmo (sarcastically)
Come to think of it, I don't believe he did.

Marlowe (quietly to Adrienne)
Why didn't you tell him?

Adrienne
I -- I don't know.

Marlowe
Because you knew I had my reasons. You knew I wasn't that much of a heel -- or didn't you?

Adrienne
Yes. I guess I did know you had your reasons.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED (3)

Kingsley comes slowly to his feet.

Kingsley

What happened? What's my scarf got to do with it?

Degarmo

As if you didn't know.

Kingsley

As if I didn't know what?

Adrienne

You don't know, do you, Derry? She's dead. She's been murdered.

Kingsley (confused)

Murdered? Who? Who's been murdered?

(He looks around. Nobody answers. After a pause, he answers himself)

Crystal?

Degarmo

And are you surprised.

Kingsley (gravely)

No. As a matter of fact -- I'm not surprised.

(He looks at Marlowe)

I think Mr. Marlowe knows why.

Marlowe (nodding)

What was the idea of kidding me about the phone call?

Kingsley

Believe it or not -- I wasn't sure. I ought to have been. I know. But it's been a long time -- and anyway, I wanted to know and that was the only way I could have made you go down there.

Degarmo

Let's cut out the roommate act, huh?

(To Marlowe)

So you tried to kid me about that scarf, pal.

Marlowe

You could call it that.

Degarmo

Too bad for you, Shamus. I ought to have tumbled a lot quicker -- to how you guessed where Kingsley was. You didn't guess at all. You knew.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED (4)

Marlowe

Sure I knew.

Degarmo

How much is he paying you to lay a smoke screen for him? Boy, you take some chances for your dough. Ever figure we could pin that killing on you if we felt like it?

Marlowe

What killing?

Degarmo (savagely)

What killing do you suppose we've been talking about all this time?

Marlowe

That's what I want to know. Who was killed last night in that apartment?

(Degarmo starts to speak, but gets nothing out)
You saw her, didn't you, Degarmo? You saw her dead -- and you know her very well alive. You were up here looking for her -- with a photograph. What reason would Kingsley have to murder anybody named Mildred Haviland?

Degarmo's face goes tight and grim. He doesn't answer.

Marlowe (turning to Kingsley)

It was your wife died in the lake, Kingsley. Not Bill Chess's wife. You know it by now.

(Kingsley nods)

The Haviland woman killed her -- to get her money -- and to get her identity. She wrote that note. She hid the car with the clothes in it. Why not? She had another car. Your wife's car. And she knew when the men were going to tear down that pier -- and the body would probably come up -- but nobody would know who it was by then -- except for the clothes.

(He turns to Patton)

That's all Bill or you or anybody else really had to go on, Patton. The clothes on that drowned woman. She didn't have what you could call a face.

(He turns back to Degarmo)

She ran off from Bay City after a murder, didn't she, Degarmo?

(Degarmo nods silently)

My hunch is she committed that murder. That's why she ran out. Why she hid up here -- as long as she could stand it -- and until you found her. Then she had to run out again -- with more hard luck. She ran into Lavery this time -- and of course Lavery knew her -- and he knew how to blackmail her. That was his hard luck -- because she knew the answer to that when the time came.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED (5)

Degarmo (between his teeth)
Could be -- now that you put it that way.

Marlowe (quietly)
Could be? You know it was that way. So why didn't you say so last night? There's only one reason, Degarmo. The killer called the police -- and he was first on the scene to catch the fall guy. The killer was you. Nobody else had any motive to conceal her identity.

Degarmo
Finished?

Marlowe
Almost.

Degarmo
You're finished now.

He jerks his gun out.

Patton (sharply)
Put that gun away! I told you once --

Degarmo (to Patton)
Keep your fat face out of this -- if you want to keep on having a face.

Patton doesn't move.

Patton
I've been a shooter before you stopped sucking a milk bottle, mister. This here's my country and my home. Nobody pulls a gun here but me -- and when I pull one, I use it.

Degarmo
Watch me use this.

Marlowe
And then what? Where do you go from here?

Degarmo (grimly)
A long long way, buddy.

Marlowe
Better start -- while the sheriff's busy looking for a place to spit.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED (6)

Degarmo
Get your hands up -- all of you!

Nobody moves but Marlowe. He puts his hands in the air clenched. Degarmo laughs.

Degarmo
Looks like you're the only one that's scared, shamus.

Marlowe
I'm easy to scare. I don't have any friends. I've had some of your medicine.

Degarmo (thickly)
Okay. I killed her. She needed killing bad. I covered up for her once. She made a crook and a bully and a no-good cop out of me. Well, the score is even. I'm laughing. Anybody want to laugh with me?

(Nobody moves or speaks. Degarmo starts to back away)
I'm getting out of here. Anybody want to stop me?

Patton stands up slowly. The gun jumps at him.

Patton
It ain't no use, Degarmo. Drop the gun. You're finished.

Degarmo
How about you? You've got a nice fat belly. Easy to hit.

Patton (dully, without inflection)
See can you hit it then.

308 CLOSE SHOT - DEGARMO

Baring his teeth. His finger starts to tighten on the trigger.

309 CLOSE SHOT - PATTON

Standing wooden-faced. His hat drops to the floor showing his hand holding the Frontier Colt at his side.

310 CLOSE SHOT - MARLOWE

Standing with his hands held raised and clenched. Suddenly his body twists. Something falls from his right hand. The fishing line with two lead sinkers tied to it.

311 CLOSE SHOT - DEGARMO

As the weighted line coils around his wrist. It jerks taut just as he fires. The bullet goes wild. There's another shot. Degarmo staggers.

312 CLOSE SHOT - PATTON

The gun at his side hasn't moved, but a little smoke wisps from it.

313 FULL SHOT

Marlowe holds the line on Degarmo's wrist taut, pulls on it and moves in on it. Degarmo staggering, breathing hard. Patton walks slowly across the floor and knocks the gun out of his hand.

Patton

Hope I didn't hurt you bad, son. I ain't shot a man in a awful long time. I'm plumb out of practice.

Degarmo's eyes go back in his head and he crashes to the floor. Patton leans down over him, disentangles the fish line with the two lead sinkers, stares at them, then looks up at Marlowe.

Patton

Where you learn that one?

Marlowe

Argentine lasso. I forget what they call it. I made it up -- out of the materials at hand -- your fishing tackle.

Patton straightens up again, looks down at Degarmo's sprawled body.

Marlowe

I didn't want you to kill him. He's a copper and his own people ought to get him.

CONTINUED

313

CONTINUED (2)

Fatten

Shucks, I ain't killed him. Just a shoulder shot.

(He looks down at Lagarno)

He's big and he's fast and he's tough. I guess he just kinda outgrew himself and collapsed of his own weight -- like a house of cards.

DISSOLVE TO:

TAG SCENE

Between Marlowe and Adrienne. Loose ends, explanation, clinch. FADE OUT

Should probably end with some kind of gag about Marlowe's old battered hat. They are driving along in the convertible down the mountain, the top is down. She slams it on his head, kisses him. CAMERA MOVES IN ON THE HAT until we can see that sure enough she mended it with rivets.

THE END