

POODLE SPRINGS

Teleplay

by

Tom Stoppard

From the novel by

Raymond Chandler and Robert Parker

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FRONT TITLE: Los Angeles 1963

HIGH-HEELED SHOES

of an elegance that costs money, and supporting a pair of ankles and calves that money can't buy, are stepping purposefully up an:

INT. STAIRCASE

in what we already know is a low-rent walk-up where the sun never shines.

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

We can see all of the WOMAN as she moves away from us along:

THE HALLWAY

which is end-stopped by an Office Door with a frosted-glass panel, and on the panel, in black painted letters which need retouching, there is the legend:

PHILIP MARLOWE

PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS

The Woman hasn't paused. She goes through this door, which brings her into the:

OUTER OFFICE

which is empty. Facing the door is a second and similar door, closed, and this one simply says PRIVATE. Beyond it is --

MARLOWE

who is sitting behind his desk. He looks good for his age. But time has not stood still for him. This is Philip Marlowe, still tough, hanging on to his looks and his values, but fifteen years down the road from his classic period.

For one thing, he is wearing reading glasses: he has a newspaper, folded to the inside page. He has heard the outer door open. He puts the newspaper on the desk and takes off his glasses.

Marlowe fits a Camel into the corner of his mouth, and fishes in his vest pocket for a kitchen match, which he ignites on his thumb nail and holds to his cigarette, watching the door which says "PRIVATE" from the wrong side.

He can see that here comes a woman who looks high-maintenance even through frosted glass. As she pushes the door open she stops in the doorway and she is a sight: money and good taste and the confidence of both from her demure little hat to those provocative heels. She is thirty years old. She cocks her head at Marlowe and narrows her eyes.

Marlowe likes it. He knows something we don't know.

MARLOWE
Good morning.

LAURA
Marlowe.

MARLOWE
That's my name. What is your
problem, lady?

LAURA
Missing husband.

MARLOWE
Yeah?

LAURA
Yeah. Three days married. Woke
up this morning, he wasn't there.
A fine thing.

Marlowe comes around the desk, cigarette in his mouth, while she opens her purse and takes out a small silver photo frame and places it on Marlowe's desk.

MARLOWE
I'd take the case but I never
sleep with a client.

Laura takes the cigarette out of his mouth and drops it into an ashtray on the desk. She puts her arms around Marlowe's neck. They go into a kiss and don't mind keeping us waiting.

Meanwhile we can take an inventory of the office: a sink in the corner, a hat stand with Marlowe's hat, filing cabinets, window, a safe, a swivel chair, a visitor's chair and a large old desk with nothing much on it except a telephone, the ashtray, with stubs, a glass. And Marlowe's newspaper.

BCU - A MODEST HEADLINE WHICH SAYS "LAURA JACKSON PARKER MARRIES L.A. PRIVATE EYE DOWN MEXICO WAY". And a small portrait photo of Laura.

Much later, we will see a different copy of this newspaper, open to the same page, and we will recognize it from the space ad which covers part of the page, next to the headline. The art work gives us a clear sense of the period (1963), advertising (for example) the latest model of a car.

LAURA
(finally)
Day didn't start right.

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

MARLOWE

Honeymoon's over, sweetheart. I have
to earn a living.

LAURA

What do you charge?

MARLOWE

Hundred dollars a day.

LAURA

I'll take it.

Laura pulls him by the shirt, which tears a little and loses
a button.

MARLOWE

(meaning his shirt)

And expenses.

Laura pulls him down over the desk and kisses him again. Now
we can see the little photo in the frame, which shows Marlowe
and Laura together, she in a bikini top, he bare-chested,
smiling, a blue sky behind them.

Lying on her back, she starts undoing Marlowe's tie.

LAURA

I called my father...

*

MARLOWE

Uh-huh?

LAURA

I said I'm back, Mexico was
beautiful, I met a man, and -- uh --
and I got married. He said he saw
the paper. He wants to meet you.

*

*

*

MARLOWE

Well, that's nice. Reasonable.

LAURA

Dinner up at the house tonight.

MARLOWE

Good. I want to see your old house,
your room, your roller-skates,
everything I missed.

LAURA

You aren't so tough.

His tie is undone. She kisses him. It's a THREE SHOT
counting the phone. The phone rings. Marlowe lifts it.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED: (3)

3

MARLOWE

Philip Marlowe.

PHONE VOICE

Phil, baby, this is Paul Krauss,
private license, I guess you know me?

MARLOWE

I don't know anybody who calls me
Phil baby.

PHONE VOICE

We haven't met but I need some help
on a stake-out. There's a coupla
hundred dollars in it for covering my
ass.

MARLOWE

(for Laura's benefit)

Two hundred dollars?

Marlowe moves himself off Laura and sits up. He fishes a
cigarette out of his pack and puts it in his mouth.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Must be some ass. Where are you?

(to Laura)

Do I hear two-fifty? *

Laura smiles, shakes her head ruefully, and sits up also.

PHONE VOICE

San Pedro. Berth 60. The water
side. You know it?

MARLOWE

(puzzled)

Yeah, and there's no phones there. *

He attempts to strike a match in his one-handed Marlowe
manner. It fails him this time. The match breaks.

PHONE VOICE

I'm calling from my car-- *

LAURA

I can't compete with this --

Opening her purse again she takes out an expensive new
cigarette lighter.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED: (4)

3

PHONE VOICE

-- look for a red Thunderbird at the
edge of the berth --

*

MARLOWE

(genuinely impressed)

You have a phone in your car?

Laura lights Marlowe's cigarette and removes it from his
mouth.

PHONE VOICE

Look, pally, do you want the job or
not?

MARLOWE

(into phone)

Hold on.

She kisses him quickly on the mouth, restores the cigarette,
and puts the cigarette lighter on his desk. It's a present.

LAURA

Call me later.

MARLOWE

I hope the old man likes me.

LAURA

Don't worry, he'll like you. You're
his generation.

It's a joke they can afford, because they're happy with each
other. He watches her as she leaves the office, a man
wondering how he got this lucky. Then he remembers the
jabbering phone.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED: (5)

3

MARLOWE

(to phone)

Okay, you're Paul Krauss, you're a private detective, you need help on a stake-out in San Pedro --

PHONE VOICE

-- for Christ's sake, Marlowe, where did you go? -- This is heavy business and I'm giving you a piece of it --

That's as far as the voice gets. Two gunshots, clearly heard down the telephone line, interrupt the sentence, and as Marlowe listens to the silence for a long beat, the call is disconnected. Marlowe puts the phone down and looks at his watch.

INSERT: MARLOWE'S WRIST-WATCH SAYS 10:17

He picks up the phone. He dials. It's answered.

MARLOWE

Lieutenant Burns, please.

VOICE

Who's calling him?

MARLOWE

Philip Marlowe.

VOICE

Thank you, hold please.

Marlowe picks up the cigarette lighter. He looks at it.

BCU: THE LIGHTER IS ENGRAVED WITH THE WORDS "LOVE THE GIVER-L" IN HANDWRITING.

Marlowe's look softens.

BURNS

(V.O.)

Burns.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED: (6)

3

Marlowe slips Laura's lighter into his pocket. As he starts to talk, Marlowe sits down at his desk, and keeping the phone in his shoulder, tears the story about his marriage out of the newspaper.

MARLOWE

(into phone)

Arnie, I'm playing this by the book.
A private dick called Paul Krauss
just got shot in his car in San
Pedro, Berth six-oh. Either that or
it's somebody's idea of a gag.

BURNS

(V.O.)

Where are you?

MARLOWE

In the office. The car is a red
Thunderbird.

*

BURNS

(V.O.)

How do you know?

MARLOWE

I'm psychic.

Marlowe puts the phone down. He takes out his wallet and puts the newspaper clipping into it, and puts the wallet back into his pocket. He takes a bunch of keys from his pocket, selects one and unlocks a drawer in his desk.

INSERT: WE SEE THAT THE DRAWER CONTAINS HIS GUN, BUT ALSO THREE OR FOUR OLD CIGARETTE LIGHTERS. THEY ARE NOT LOVERS' TROPHIES, JUST OLD LIGHTERS WHICH RAN OUT OF FUEL YEARS AGO.

He takes the gun from the drawer and fits it into the shoulder holster he wears under his coat. He locks the drawer. He takes his hat off the hat stand and glances down through the window.

4 OMITTED

4

5 EXT. SAN PEDRO - DAY

5

A no-longer-new black Chevrolet is winding its way on a deserted pier in San Pedro.

6 THE RED THUNDERBIRD

6

*

is standing quietly at the edge of the berth. It seems empty. The Thunderbird is the kind with a roof on it. Only one of its windows is open, on the driver's side.

7 EXT. THE SAME PLACE - DAY

7

The Chevrolet arrives. Marlowe gets out of the car and walks to the Thunderbird. He looks in. The Thunderbird is not empty. The dead man is in the driver's seat.

And there is the handset of a telephone between the seats.

Marlowe takes a closer look. The dead man looks about forty but dresses younger, in blue jeans and expensive flamboyant shirt, leather jacket, a gold chain around his neck, long blond hair matted with blood.

Lying casually on the passenger seat is a camera with a long focus lens. There is a small notebook also on the seat. Marlowe lifts it by the edges, flips the pages which are mainly blank, and on the last page reads what it says:

INSERT NOTEBOOK PAGE: "LARRY VICTOR 2497 WESTERN AVENUE".

Another car IS ARRIVING O.S.

ARNIE BURNS gets out of the car and joins Marlowe. Burns is fifty-five years old, in a well-worn business suit.

MARLOWE

Single shot through the skull, small-calibre, close enough for a burn mark and hot-loaded by the look of it. Hello, Arnie, I meant to say that first.

Burns has a look.

BURNS

Like he was taken for a ride.

MARLOWE

No, he was talking to me when he got it.

Burns gives him a glance.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

On the car phone, Arnie.

BURNS

Know him?

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED:

7

MARLOWE
(shakes his head)
He said he was on a stake-out, no
details.

Burns takes out the dead man's wallet and looks into it.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
Just wanted an extra hand. Dresses
funny for a private detective,
doesn't he?

BURNS
No, that's you.
(reading from the
wallet)
Paul Krauss. Office on Beverly
Drive. A class act. What time was
this?

MARLOWE
Ten fifteen, give or take.

BURNS
Stick around. By the way, what
happened to your shirt?

MARLOWE
I'm married.

Burns thinks it's a joke. Burns goes back towards his own
car, pausing on the way to touch the radiator of Marlowe's
Chevrolet. The radiator is hot. Marlowe does not mind. It's
business. Burns reaches his car, reaches into it for the
microphone piece of his radio.

8 SAME PLACE - LATER

8

There are now four more vehicles:

An Ordinary Car which brought the Police Doctor and the
Fingerprint Guy.

An Ambulance, into which Two Men are wheeling Krauss' body.

An unmarked Police Car which brought Two Detectives whom we
call Fatso and Slim.

A Patrol Car which brought Two Uniformed Cops.

That's eight new people.

Marlowe is leaning back on his car, watching. Burns is
talking to the Police Doctor. Burns looks puzzled.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED:

8

Maybe we hear him say, "You sure?" -- because later we discover that the Police Doctor puts the "time of death" hours earlier than Marlowe told Burns.

One Uniformed Cop is moving on the traffic if there is any.

The other Uniformed Cop is on the Patrol Car radio, writing down a list. We might hear the words "Pasada Motel" coming through his radio earpiece. *

The Cop has been told to do this by Fatso, who is with him, waiting for the list.

Slim is meanwhile examining the inside of the T-Bird. *

The Fingerprint Guy is just finishing his work on the handset of Krauss' car phone.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

THE UNIFORMED COP finishes his conversation on the radio, tears the page off his pad and gives it to Fatso. Fatso reads it and smiles with unpleasant satisfaction.

Marlowe has gone over to talk to Slim.

MARLOWE

Did you find the other slug?

SLIM

What other? There was one entry wound, one exit wound.

This puzzles Marlowe. He ducks his head into the car and looks up at the roof and around the dash.

MARLOWE

You sure?

Now Fatso arrives with the page from the Cop's notebook.

FATSO

Something troubling you, Marlowe?

MARLOWE

Yeah. There were two shots.

FATSO

Tell me again how you know.

MARLOWE

I was counting.

FATSO

Call a lawyer.

MARLOWE

For what?

FATSO

You can use this phone.

Fatso indicates the phone in the Thunderbird.

*

MARLOWE

What the hell are you talking about?

Fatso reaches into the car, turns on the ignition, and picks up the handset. The length of flex allows Fatso to hold the phone part way towards Marlowe.

FATSO

Here. Call somebody.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED: (3)

8

PHONE VOICE
Number please.

Fatso gives the phone to Slim, who replaces it.

FATSO
There's no dial on these phones.
Every call goes through an operator,
so it's logged. The last call Krauss
made from his car was last night.
You ain't even on the list.

Burns has been watching and listening, professionally
interested but also amused by the way the situation has
turned against Marlowe. Burns takes the "list" from Fatso
and looks at it.

FATSO
(continuing)
I'm looking at you for obstructing
justice, accessory after the fact of
homicide, and being stupider than
three sheep. Are you carrying a gun,
Marlowe?

Fatso reaches inside Marlowe's jacket. Marlowe swipes his
hand away.

MARLOWE
(to Burns)
Arnie, tell this clown who I am.

A mistake. The detectives jump him, turn him, spread him
against the T-Bird. Marlowe's head bangs down on the roof of *
the car.

Marlowe's legs are kicked apart.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
Arnie, I heard the shots!

BURNS
Maybe, but not on the telephone.

SLIM
(handcuffing Marlowe)
Hands behind your back, smartass.

Slim has Marlowe's gun. Fatso has Marlowe's wallet.

SLIM
(continuing)
It's a .38, full cylinder. *

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED: (4)

8

MARLOWE

How long have you known me?!

FATSO

Shuddup, Marlowe -- save it for
downtown.

Slim starts shoving Marlowe towards the unmarked police car.

MARLOWE

Arnie -- this is my first day back
from getting married, give me a
break ---

BURNS

That's the second time I thought I
heard you say married.

MARLOWE

Don't you read the papers?

Fatso has been looking through Marlowe's wallet and found the
newspaper clipping.

FATSO

Yeah. Laura Jackson Parker.
Beautiful-looking girl, she's going
to get awful lonely while you're in
jail, maybe I'll take her out for
some fun --

At which point, Marlowe's foot lands hard in Fatso's crotch.

The newspaper clipping flutters through the air. It has
meant something to Slim, who stoops for it.

Meanwhile Fatso, gasping, has come to his feet and produced
a small leather-covered sap.

FATSO

(continuing)

You saw that, Lieutenant?

BURNS

Saw what?

*

FATSO

Saw what?

*

BURNS

I didn't see anything.

He thinks Fatso had it coming. But by this time, Slim has
changed his attitude. He picks up Marlowe's wallet from the
ground, puts the clipping back into it. He comes over to
Marlowe and releases him from the handcuffs. Burns looks
surprised. So does Marlowe. So does Fatso.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED: (5)

8

SLIM

Mr. Marlowe...You should have said
you were P.J. Parker's son-in-law.
Let's call it even and make a fresh
start. You found a body. Maybe you'd
like to drive your own car down to
the station and tell the captain
about it.

*
*

MARLOWE

(dumbstruck)

Ugh...sure...

Slim hands Marlowe's gun and wallet back to him.

Fatso and Slim get into the unmarked car and depart in it.
The Two Uniformed Cops have naturally watched this scene with
interest. Two officers look at Burns for guidance.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Thanks, Arnie.

BURNS

This man is under arrest, lock him up.

Marlowe, disbelieving and outraged, is embroiled in a repeat
performance. Burns watches.

BURNS

(continuing)

Your story stinks. And now you're
suddenly so important, I wouldn't
want people thinking that Arnie Burns
rolled over for the son-in-law of
P.J. Parker --

(and an afterthought
as Marlowe is
frogmarched to the
Sheriff car)

Oh, yeah -- congratulations.

9 INT. THE CELLS - EVENING

9

Marlowe is behind bars, short of his tie, belt, shoelaces and a shave. From an adjacent cell, a DRUNK WITH NO VOICE is singing "The Times They Are A Changin'". A COP comes into the cell with Marlowe's dinner on a tray.

COP
Bon appetite.

MARLOWE
Where is my change?

Because dinner includes a small bottle of Scotch. The Cop grudgingly hands over the change and Marlowe gives it to the singer.

MARLOWE
(continuing; to the
singer)
You were great, now give it a rest,
OK?

The singer stops, grateful.

10 INT. POLICE STATION CORRIDOR (SUNSET PRECINCT) - MORNING 10

Three people in spearhead formation are striding grimly towards us. Leading the charge is Laura Marlowe, power-dressed for business. Behind her come TWO MEN in good suits, aged in their forties. They carry briefcases.

THE STATION CLOCK tells us it is 8:30.

The three of them arrive at the reception desk, which is manned by a sloppy DESK COP.

LAURA
I'm Laura Parker Marlowe of Parker,
Delane and Jarvis. This is Mr.
Delane. This is Mr. Jarvis. I'm here
to talk to the Chief Deputy about Mr.
Philip Marlowe.

DESK COP
Yeah, he's in deep trouble.

LAURA
That is correct but I'll talk to him
anyway.

The Desk Cop takes that on board.

DESK COP
Sure.

11 A BRIEFCASE IS SNAPPED OPEN.

11

It belongs to Mr. Delane. Mr. Delane takes out a document.
We are in:

INT. CHIEF DEPUTY'S OFFICE - DAY

The Chief Deputy is behind his desk, looking through a document. Laura is in mid-flow, as we discover. Meanwhile, Mr. Jarvis' briefcase has also been snapped open and another document is handed to the Chief Deputy. The fifth person in the room is Marlowe, seated and staring at Laura, about as wide-eyed as he ever gets.

LAURA

...reserving our position on the
issue of wrongful arrest, denial of
the rights of access to a lawyer,
subjected to various indignities like
a common felon without warrant,
charge or due cause --

The Chief Deputy is reading one of the documents. He picks
up a report sheet which is on his desk and gives that a look.

CHIEF DEPUTY

(interrupting)

Excuse me, Mrs. Marlowe. What I'm
looking at here is your sworn
deposition, and what I'm looking at
here is the medical report of the
time of death.

He indicates the two documents.

CHIEF DEPUTY

(continuing)

OK?

(to Marlowe,
impressed)

Marlowe, that's one hell of an alibi.
You were in bed with your lawyer.

That's news to us, and also to Marlowe -- he glances at Laura
but says nothing for the moment.

The Chief Deputy tosses the documents aside. He shoves
towards Marlowe a box containing Marlowe's gun, wallet, bunch
of keys and one or two other things including the lighter
Laura gave him.

CHIEF DEPUTY

(continuing; getting
up)

On your way, Marlowe.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED:

11

MARLOWE
(to Laura)
Let's go, counsellor.

The visitors get up. Marlowe collects his possessions.

12 INT. POLICE STATION CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

12

Outside the office door. Burns is watching from the reception desk. Delane and Jarvis shake hands with Marlowe and leave. As Marlowe and Laura exit the office, Marlowe notices Burns. He takes Laura over.

MARLOWE
Hello, Arnie. Feeling better?

He means: now that Burns has made his point.

BURNS
(meaning the same
thing)
Much.
(greeting Laura)
Mrs. Marlowe.

*
*

LAURA
(puzzled)
Are you two friends?

BURNS
Hell no.

MARLOWE
Are you kidding?

BURNS
Congratulations. I hear you were
married in Porto Durango.

LAURA
That's right. I met Philip on
vacation.

BURNS
(to Marlowe)
You were on vacation, too?

MARLOWE
No, I had a client. It was a taxi
driver's job but he paid my rate for
driving him home. What's your
interest?

BURNS
Just small-talk, Marlowe.

Burns takes a packet of photographs from his pocket and fans
them out for Marlowe.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED:

12

BURNS
(continuing)
By the way, do you know her?

He gives the photos to Marlowe. They show a woman with short hair like a boy's haircut, walking in the street.

MARLOWE
I've seen her somewhere.

He gives the photos back.

BURNS
They were in the dead man's camera...

MARLOWE
(moving out with
Laura)
If I remember I'll give you a call.

BURNS
If you remember how you got to know
he was dead, give me a call about
that too.

He gives Marlowe a level look. Then he moves out of their
way, and Marlowe and Laura walk out through the street door.

*
*

13 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

13

Laura's Cadillac is parked nearby. She gets behind the wheel, Marlowe gets beside her. The car moves. It takes off in a hurry, travels just far enough to go around the nearest corner and then it brakes savagely to a halt.

14 IN THE CADILLAC

14

Laura turns to Marlowe, transformed. She looks distraught, angry and in love.

LAURA

For all I knew you were dead!

MARLOWE

No...No.

He puts his arm around her.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Let me drive.

Laura shakes her head, wipes her tears with the back of her wrist, and moves the car on again, slower.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Thanks for the show. How was dinner with Daddy?

Laura is still going either way on a seesaw between her anger with him and her relief at having him back.

LAURA

How do you think? I gave you such a build-up, told him you're reliable and honorable and a gentleman --

Marlowe pats her knee gratefully.

*

MARLOWE

(remembering, turning his head back)

Hey, my car...

CONTINUED

14 CONTINUED:

14

LAURA
(ignoring)
-- I mean lying to him about what a
bum I married, and then you stood him
up. Probably the first time in his
life. Then we waited dinner an hour,
then we ate, then I thought you were
dead, then it turned out everything
was fine, you were in jail.

The car pulls up at a red light, waiting to make a left turn.

MARLOWE
Yeah, it all sounds terrible.

They look at each other. The seesaw tips. She starts to
laugh. They fall into each other and kiss.

15 THE TRAFFIC LIGHT

15

goes from red to the green arrow. They don't notice.

MARLOWE
Where are we going?

LAURA
Make love to me.

MARLOWE
I need my car.

LAURA
I'm too rich to make love in a car.

They kiss again. Car horns sound behind them.

16 INT. BEDROOM - LATER

16

You might call it a boudoir. The only thing which doesn't
belong is Marlowe's battered suitcase, unstrapped, well-
travelled. The bedside clock tells us it is 10:00. Marlowe
and Laura are in bed after their exertions. They are cuddled
up but Marlowe is looking idly at an Oral Contraceptive pack
which he has picked up off the side table and is turning
around in his hand.

INSERT - THE ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PACK.

The pack is printed with the days of the week, one day for
each pill, to aid the forgetful. Today is Tuesday. There
are nine empty "bubbles" in the pack, starting with a
"Monday" and ending with today, "Tuesday".

He tosses the Oral Contraceptive pack on the table. It lands
next to a new brand of drug: Valium.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED:

16

MARLOWE

I don't know how to be married. I like this part, but I don't know how the rest of it works. Like those drapes. When you measured for them...

The drapes are fashionably too-long, bunched up on the floor.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

I mean, it's on purpose? Sweetheart, I can't live here. And we can't live at my place, your maid would burst into tears.

*
*

LAURA

Why did you marry me?

MARLOWE

We were in Mexico. I must have eaten some kind of Mexican mushroom. Now I'm waking up in L.A. with the woman of my mushroom dreams, talking about drapes.

That isn't what she wants to hear.

LAURA

I married you because I loved you. I love you.

MARLOWE

(making amends)

I looked at you and I didn't want anyone else to have you. Ever.

They kiss. They lie back content. Friends.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Here's one for you, you went to college. Paul Krauss said he was calling from his car. Then he was shot. The body was in the car all right, and there was a phone. But the phone company says he never made the call.

LAURA

It's not your problem any more.

MARLOWE

Someone tried to set me up. That makes it my problem.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

She is miffed. She leaves the bed and goes into the adjoining bathroom. Marlowe listens to the shower being turned on. Marlowe also gets out of bed, and goes to his suitcase. He opens it, and investigates the contents, with some difficulty finding a clean pair of shorts, socks, a shirt.

The noise of the shower stops and is replaced by a faint electrical buzzing sound. Marlowe goes into the bathroom.

17 INT. THE BATHROOM

17

Laura is brushing her teeth with an electric toothbrush.

LAURA

My father has a proposition for us.

She turns off the toothbrush, puts it down.

MARLOWE

A proposition?

LAURA

We're expected for lunch -- all right?

MARLOWE

Sure. That gives me time to go see
a man I need to see.

*
*
*

Marlowe picks up the toothbrush. He turns it on. It buzzes. He thinks it's ridiculous. HOLD on toothbrush.

*

18 EXT. STREET - WESTERN AVENUE - DAY

18

On a building, we see the number Marlowe saw in Krauss' notebook. Marlowe is just getting out of a taxi at the curb.

19 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

19

Clearly a low-rent place. Marlowe is scanning the board identifying the occupants of the building. He focuses in on "Larry Victor Photography". Other letters on the directory suggest low occupancy. He climbs the stairs.

20 INT. OFFICE BUILDING (UPSTAIRS)

20

"Larry Victor Photography" is painted on a door. Marlowe is ringing the doorbell. No one comes. Marlowe pushes at the door. It is a little loose in the door frame. Marlowe considers the lock. He looks around the deserted hallway, and takes out his wallet, and from the seam of the wallet he slides out a tool like a dental pick. He pushes the pick between the door and the door frame and jiggles it around, managing to ease back the door catch. The door swings open.

21 OUTER OFFICE

21

It is a small room with nothing of interest in it except a number of framed "glamor" photographs on the walls. Marlowe comes in, letting the door snap shut behind him. There is another door opposite. Marlowe tries the handle and finds the door isn't locked.

22 INT. VICTOR OFFICE

22

This one contains a desk and a couple of chairs, a filing cabinet and not a lot else. It is similar to Marlowe's own office. There is even a photo frame on the desk. It shows a pretty girl who looks Mexican. We will meet her: Angel.

Marlowe tries the desk drawers. He finds a number of photographs of no special interest, some boxes of film, and some junk. One of the drawers, however, is locked -- Marlowe hears a key turn in the outer door. There is nowhere to hide so Marlowe sits in the desk chair and puts his feet up.

LARRY VICTOR closes the outer door, enters the office and halts in the doorway. He is in his thirties and nice looking. He dresses sporty in a nice California way, from the white shoes upwards.

MARLOWE

Don't be confused. I am not you.

VICTOR

I can see that. So who are you and how'd you get in here?

MARLOWE

My name's Marlowe. The door was open.

VICTOR

I don't think so. You a cop?

*

MARLOWE

Private.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED:

22

VICTOR
Any idea what breaking and entering
gets you nowadays, Mr. Marlowe?

*

MARLOWE
One to five in Soledad. Let's not
get excited. Sit down, Mr. Victor --
have your chair --

He lets Victor have the chair.

VICTOR
I had cops yesterday.

MARLOWE
Me too. Do you want to compare
alibis?

VICTOR
Not really. I'm sorry if the guy was
a friend of yours.

MARLOWE
I never met him. I only found him.

VICTOR
That's more of a connection than I
have.

*
*
*

MARLOWE
Your name was in his notebook.

*

VICTOR
So they tell me. I never heard of
him.

The phone rings. Victor lets it ring a couple of times.

MARLOWE
Your phone is ringing.

*

Victor picks up the phone. He listens for a moment.

VICTOR
Hold on a moment please.

Victor muffles the phone.

VICTOR
(continuing)
Sorry I can't help.

MARLOWE
Sure. Do you have a card?

Victor opens a drawer, and gives Marlowe a card.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

VICTOR
Call me here or at home, anything I
can do.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED: (3)

22

MARLOWE

Thanks.

Marlowe goes to the door.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

What was your alibi, as a matter of fact?

VICTOR

I was with my wife.

MARLOWE

Me too.

Marlowe goes into the outer office, closing the door.

23 OUTER OFFICE

23

Marlowe opens the outer door but puts back the Yale catch before closing the door loudly behind him.

The inner door to Victor's office opens. Victor checks to see if the outer office is empty. He goes back into his own office, closing the door.

VICTOR

(O.S.)

Listen -- I don't want you to call me. I'm not interested. I'm not paying for it.

Marlowe comes quietly back into the outer office and stands listening.

24 INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUATION

24

VICTOR

No --can't you understand?

(pause)

No, don't talk to her --

*

25 INT. OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUATION

25

VICTOR

(O.S.)

Okay, okay -- just don't talk to her -- Where? Sam's Hof Brau, nine o'clock. Just leave her out of this. I'll be there.

*

*

*

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED:

25

There is the sound of Victor hanging up angrily. Marlowe uses his "dental pick" to release the catch quietly as he lets himself out of the office.

26 EXT. PALISADES - DAY

26

High angle, as wide as you like -- P.J. Parker owns a lot of hill, with a big house in the middle.

27 INT. THE CADILLAC

27

Marlowe and Laura glance at each other as she drives gently through grounds which look like the Botanical Gardens. The car arrives outside the big house.

28 INT. THE HOUSE

28

The entrance hall gives you the idea at once. It's an art gallery, devoted to 20th Century American Art, including a few pieces of sculpture. There is a staircase curling down from high above. Marlowe and Laura enter from outside.

MARLOWE

You grew up here?

LAURA

It's not my fault, Philip.

A smart MIDDLE-AGED FEMALE SECRETARY is supervising A MAN PHOTOGRAPHING one of the pictures. She is also preoccupied with an invitation card which is more like a little booklet, with a purple tassel.

*
*
*

SECRETARY

Miss Parker -- could you check the invitation for the reception?

Laura takes the card and reads from it.

LAURA

"A reception to honor Mr. P. Jackson Parker, Patron of the Arts."

(to Marlowe)

Do you think the purple tassel is too much?

MARLOWE

How much is it?

LAURA

(returning the card)

Perfect. This is my husband, Philip Marlowe.

SECRETARY

(with satisfaction)

Fine-looking man.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED:

28

TOURING THE HOUSE:

*

MARLOWE
Reception?

LAURA
That's the deal.

*

MARLOWE
Deal?

LAURA
Daddy's making the house and the art
collection over to the State of
California.

*

MARLOWE
[That's] nice of him.

*

LAURA
Of course he gets to keep it all till
he's dead.

29 CONTINUATION - SAME PLACE, SAME TIME

29

*

CONTINUED

29 CONTINUED:

29

SEYMOUR CHAMBERLAIN comes out of another office and interrupts. He is a distinguished-looking man in his early sixties. He sounds almost English.

CHAMBERLAIN

Laura! I'm sorry -- you've missed him.

LAURA

Seymour! -- don't tell me he's had to leave now!

CHAMBERLAIN

The call came from Washington. You must be Philip Marlowe. May I offer my congratulations -- and my apologies. There's only one man who could make P.J. Parker give you a raincheck, Mr. Marlowe, and that man is the President of the United States. I'm sorry.

MARLOWE

(shaking hands)

That's okay.

CHAMBERLAIN

Come on in. Mr. Parker has a proposition for you two lovebirds.

30 INT. CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE

30

Impressive. English. It's a few minutes later. Marlowe is standing, looking at a labelled model of a modern resort, Porto Durango in the future. Laura sits informally on the corner of Chamberlain's desk.

Marlowe will be in this room again later [Scene 139]. On that occasion, he will find a significant clue. This clue is visible now but without significance. It's a "Caravan"-- a caravan of camels, in solid silver. It does not have pride of place -- it's just sitting somewhere.

*
*
*
*
*

CHAMBERLAIN

We develop resorts, Mr. Marlowe. Porto Durango is almost up and running. We're always looking for a new situation.

(more)

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED:

30

CHAMBERLAIN (cont'd)
When we think we've found one, we
plant a...

*
*

MARLOWE
(helping)
Spy.

CHAMBERLAIN
Flag. A standard bearer. Someone to
put down roots, live in a nice house,
become part of the community for
upwards of a year, maybe much
longer...and now we think we've found
one, pretty close to home...a great
opportunity for somebody in whom Mr.
Parker can put his trust. Somebody,
perhaps, like his daughter. Well --
Philip -- can I call you Philip?

*

MARLOWE
You can call me Santa Claus if it'll
get you to the point.

*

CHAMBERLAIN
I'll put it like this. Mr. Parker
has a wedding gift for you folks.

MARLOWE
Really?

CHAMBERLAIN
He asked me to say how sorry he is
not to do this in person.

MARLOWE
That's all right. What has he given
us?

LAURA
A house.

MARLOWE
A house? Where is this house?

CHAMBERLAIN
(the good news man)
Right here in California. Poodle
Springs.

31 EXT. PARKER MANSION - DAY - MINUTES LATER

31

ON MARLOWE

MARLOWE
Poodle Springs?

CONTINUED

31 CONTINUED:

31

Marlowe and Laura are climbing back into the car. It's clear from the way she slams the door, she is not pleased.

CONTINUED

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

The scene gets them into the car, and gets the car down the driveway, spraying gravel. The dialogue is Ext. Car and then Int. Car.

LAURA

There was no call to be rude to him.

MARLOWE

Well, that phony English accent...and spare me the President of the United States. He's snake oil out of a bottle.

LAURA

(offended)

Who? Jack?

MARLOWE

No, that Seymour.

(then a take)

Jack? You call the President Jack?

LAURA

That's his name, isn't it?

MARLOWE

And what the hell is there in Poodle Springs?

*
*

LAURA

It's a beautiful little town.

*

MARLOWE

It's in the desert! It's practically in Nevada!

*
*

On the exterior shot, the car takes off down the driveway.

*

32 OMITTED

32

*

32A INT. CAR - DRIVING - SAME TIME

32A

*

LAURA

You won't even look at it?

MARLOWE

No. I'm sorry.

LAURA

No, I'm sorry, I didn't realize I had to live where you want to live.

MARLOWE

I thought you wanted to.

CONTINUED

32A CONTINUED:

32A

LAURA

You never thought about it at all!

*

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED:

32

MARLOWE
That's the same thing, isn't it?
Jesus, I hate being driven!

33 EXT. THE CAR - SAME TIME

33

as it leaves through the gates.

34 EXT. A RED STOP LIGHT (HOLLYWOOD) - DAY

34

Close on a BUM electing to wipe Laura's (clean) windshield.

LAURA
I'm not discussing it. I don't want
to go to Poodle Springs. I wouldn't
go if you begged me.
(to the Bum)
No, thank you!

MARLOWE
(to the Bum)
Shoe-tree, can you lend me a quarter?
I'm down on my luck.

SHOE-TREE
Hey, Phil!

Close on LIGHT GOING GREEN.

Close on Laura and Marlowe as the car moves.

LAURA
I can see the class of work that
comes your way. A ratty office, a
corpse in a car, a night in jail, a
big hello from every bum in the
street -- why would I want to change
a thing? Just because I love you?

35 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

35

This is where Marlowe and Laura were this morning - either
out front, or round the back where cars are parked.
Marlowe's Chevy is there.

The Fleetwood shows up and Laura halts it as a GROUP OF
PEOPLE, led by a uniformed OFFICER, exit the release gate at
the back of the police station. One HOOKER notices and hails
Marlowe:

HOOKER
Hey, Marlowe -- nice work!

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED:

35

MARLOWE
(to Laura)
I'll see you tonight.

LAURA
Which jail?

MARLOWE
That was a freak event.
(gently)
Look, Mrs. Marlowe, I'm just a lug.
There are things I can do. I can
shoot, I can keep my word, I can tail
a guy who's walking backwards, I can
open a door into a dark room where
trouble is waiting. So I do them.
I find work that fits what I do. I
get a hundred dollars a day and I
can't be bought or pushed. Not even
by love.

LAURA
Okay.

Marlowe gets out of the car. They're not sure if they're
friends or not.

LAURA
(continuing)
Phil.

She has his attention.

LAURA
(continuing)
The dead man in the car. You never
knew him, so how do you know it was
his voice?

The Cadillac takes off. Marlowe turns to his car.

36 EXT. SAM'S HOF BRAU - NIGHT 36

Sam's Hof Brau has a garish neon sign. We're looking at it from across:

37 EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT 37

The Shot slides to cover the parked Chevrolet.

Marlowe in the driver's seat, looks at his watch and waits. Loud pumping music reaches him from Sam's.

Marlowe lights a cigarette, using the lighter Laura gave him. He looks at the engraving on the lighter, and you could almost say that, in a bad light, the man is, for a moment, almost sentimental.

A pale sand-colored car comes past Marlowe's car and parks a little in front of him. Larry Victor gets out of this car, and crosses the boulevard and walks into Sam's Hof Brau.

Marlowe flicks a cigarette into the street (the way he won't be allowed to in Poodle Springs).

38 INT. SAM'S HOF BRAU - NIGHT 38

A sleazy raunchy place heaving with humanity, alcohol, loud music, yells and whistles. The latter are directed at a COWGIRL STRIPPER who is only background for us. Marlowe, who has just entered, looks around for Larry Victor, and sees him leaving through a door marked "Private".

Marlowe follows him.

39 BACKSTAGE 39

A corridor, a couple of dressing cubicles, side by side.

Victor and a WOMAN IN A BIG PINK WIG are in one cubicle. She is changing between numbers. Marlowe steps into the room (cubicle) next door vacated by the Cowgirl. *

Music from the bar is piped in loud enough to obscure the voices, but Marlowe can hear the woman (LOLA) talking with Victor. Marlowe realizes that a mirror on the opposite wall of the corridor gives him a partial view of Victor and Lola. *

This is what Marlowe hears, against piped music from the bar.

LOLA
(handing Larry an
envelope)
-- the negative's in a safe place. *
So don't think I don't know what I'm *
doing. *

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED:

39

VICTOR
(looking at what is
in the envelope: not
impressed)

Uh huh, yeah, I remember this -- and
I don't care, do what you like. It's
worth nothing to me, totally nothing.
Not to me. Not to you. I'm not going
to say it again.

*
*
*
*

LOLA
We'll see!

*

VICTOR
(he puts the envelope
in his pocket, takes
out some money)
I'll give you a few bucks for old
times sake -- here -- but that's it,
don't call me, okay?

*
*

During Larry's speech, the puppy has come into Marlowe's
cubicle and Marlowe has read the tag.

*
*

BCU - the tag says "RAGS, 6605 WILLOUGHBY, REWARD FOR RETURN"

*

Larry leaves, passing by Marlowe's door without looking in.

*

LOLA (O.S.)
(shouts)
You cheap bastard!

VICTOR
Don't call, huh? Save the nickel.

*
*

LOLA (O.S.)
(new tone)
Where's my sweetie-pie? Where are
you, baby --

Marlowe is about to throw the dog out when he notices it has
an identity tag on its collar. Marlowe reads it.

*

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

Now Marlowe can throw the dog - but, too late. Lola comes looking for Rags. Marlowe gives Rags a cuddle.

MARLOWE

I'm waiting for, uh...

*

LOLA

Yeah, sure. Can I have my dog? I'm on next.

*

*

MARLOWE

Nice dog, cute dog, nice dog.

*

By this time Lola has swept the wig off her head. Her hair is short like a boy's. Marlowe recognizes her as the woman in Paul Krauss's photographs. Marlowe hands over the dog. Lola smiles her thanks.

*

*

*

As Sally enters.

*

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Howdy, long time no see.

*

*

Sally passes by him.

*

40 EXT. SAM'S - NIGHT

40

Marlowe comes out of Sam's. He sees Victor in the street at his car. Victor takes Lola's envelope out of his pocket and tears it into eight pieces and throws them into a drain. He gets into his car and drives away. A TRUCK speeds by, scattering the pieces. Marlowe arrives at the drain. One of the pieces is caught in the grating and Marlowe picks it up.

41 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

41

Victor drives up and stops outside a house. He gets out of his car, carrying a radio-sized package from a store.

He goes into the house.

Marlowe's Chevy drives by. We stay with it till it parks a little way along. Marlowe gets out. He walks back towards Victor's house.

42 EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE - ALLEY - NIGHT

42

Marlowe snoops - looking through windows. He witnesses the following:

A nice young couple - Victor and ANGEL - live here, happily it seems, simple living, simple happiness. In a small Kitchen, Angel has got dinner ready.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED:

42

He opens the back of the radio and connects them -
immediately it plays dance music which Marlowe can faintly
hear. Now she's a happy child.

*

Victor takes her in his arms and kisses her, and dances her
around the kitchen, or into the next room where Marlowe can
see them from the next window. Angel breaks out of the dance
and runs back laughing to the stove where something is
boiling over. Victor meanwhile looks at a table laid for
two. She has put the knives and forks the wrong way round.
Victor corrects them. Marlowe smiles at that. Victor goes
back into the kitchen and fits the back onto the radio, while
she puts food on plates.

Outside where we are, Marlowe has turned away thoughtfully.

43 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

43

6605 Willoughby is a little cottage. The windows are dark.
THE CHEVROLET slides into shot.

*

44 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

44

A flashlight beam moves around the kitchen, settling for a moment on the Spaniel's dinner dish and fake bone. Then a fake mouse, a dish with "Kitty" on it, a cat tray, a saucer of milk.

MARLOWE

holding the flashlight, has entered the house by the kitchen door. He closes the door softly behind him.

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED:

44

Using only the flashlight he moves silently into the stairwell of the little house. The flashlight skips about, and then we all nearly have a heart attack --

A DEAD CAT, a white Persian, is hanging on a long piece of string attached somewhere at the top of the stairs. The cat's white fur is slashed with blood, which still drips. The cat grins in death.

Marlowe is extremely frightened. It takes him a few moments to get control of himself, then he moves past the cat and sees an open door leading to a sitting room. He draws his gun and moves forward. His breathing is scared.

It takes a tremendous mental effort for him to move into the room and snap the light on. He sees at once that the room is empty and it has been systematically searched. Cushions are ripped. The pictures have been taken off the walls. Drawers have been emptied. A thorough job.

Marlowe is just getting his nerve back, when he hears a distinct sudden noise upstairs. The noise is a harsh rattling demonic laugh. Then there is a scratching sound.

45 THE STAIRS

45

are dark and scary. Marlowe looks up the stairs. He is sweating. He forces himself up the stairs, slowly and carefully and silently. His gun is in his hand.

Not only is Marlowe scared, he is not used to being scared.

He reaches the top of the stairs. He hears a small sound in one of the rooms. The door is slightly open. There is no light on inside. But the drapes are open and there is faint yellow light coming in from the street.

He gently pushes open the door. His nerve just holds. Then he sees what made the noise. A PARROT. The parrot does it again. It scratches at the floor of the cage and shakes the bars, and laughs. Marlowe closes his eyes in relief, and steps into the room. He puts his gun away.

And there is someone there.

There is just time to have another heart attack before Marlowe is smashed over the head with the butt of a heavy pistol. Marlowe drops to his knees. The intruder only wants to get away.

Marlowe half-recovers and grabs the intruder round the legs, bringing him down. The gun falls loose. Briefly, Marlowe sees a giant gold chain and a giant medallion, a 3-inch-long cross, hanging from the man's neck. He also wears a leather jacket with a loose wrap-around belt. The man is on his feet before Marlowe is. Marlowe gets smashed in the face, goes down. He can't get up.

*
*
*
*

CONTINUED

45 CONTINUED:

45

The man picks up his gun and runs out. He can be heard taking the stairs. Marlowe finally gets up, but he's come off worst. He heads for the stairs.

*
*

46 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

46

Marlowe staggers out of the house. No one in sight. Then a car takes off from down the street - too far away to make out.

Marlowe, a beaten man, turns the other way. He walks down the street headed for what will be his home, no more than 150 yards away. He even passes his car. He stops to breathe occasionally, consoling his abused body.

47 EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - TWO MINUTES LATER

47

Marlowe is still walking, painfully. He comes to a stop where a truculent old woman, Mrs. Dubrovsky, is washing the steps. It's night, but that's what she does.

He stands on the steps of the Apartment Block.

MRS. D

Hey, watch where you're putting your feet, I just cleaned!

*
*

MARLOWE

Good evening, Mrs. Dubrovsky.

*

MRS. D

Oh, Mr. Marlowe! Haven't seen you around for a while. Where'd you go?

MARLOWE

Mexico.

MRS. D

Mexico? I hear that's not a clean place.

MARLOWE

Mrs. Dubrovsky, you don't have to wash the steps in the middle of the night.

MRS. D

Best time to wash them, Mr. Marlowe, but day is good too. Is that blood?

Marlowe touches his face. But Mrs. D is not looking there, she is furiously scrubbing the step as Marlowe goes into the apartment block.

48 OMITTED

48

49 INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

49

Marlowe lets himself into his old apartment. It's not like Laura's place. We note the slightly crooked dusty slats.

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED:

49

This is where he's lived for years. Everything is a bit shabby. There is no modern art here. There is a chess board with a game in progress. The apartment is just the way Marlowe left it when a client took him to Mexico three weeks ago.

50 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

50

At least there is some whiskey left. Marlowe pours himself a big one. He lifts the phone and dials a number.

MARLOWE

(into phone)

Arnie. About that woman in Krauss's camera. Fact is she lives round the corner. You better get over there...

(pause)

Uh-huh...

While he is talking, Marlowe is looking at - and letting us see - the torn photo he saved from the gutter. He also sees his beat up face in the mirror.

CU - THE TORN PHOTO. It shows only a suggestion of a "dirty photo", like a leg, no face.

51 OMITTED

51

52 INT. MARLOWE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

52

Marlowe dunks his face in the basin and comes up dripping. He has taken his shirt off. His head is cut above the hairline. He washes blood off his face. He feels old.

He looks at himself carefully in the mirror.

He pulls at his spare flesh under his chin and his waistline.

Then he speaks to his reflection.

MARLOWE

So what happened, champ?

Marlowe dunks his face in the basin again.

53 OMITTED
THRU
55

53
THRU
55

56 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

56

Marlowe is dressed again. He's fixing two drinks and listening to Burns.

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED:

56

BURNS

She doesn't know why anybody would be
trying to scare her. Or what they
were looking for.

*
*
*

Marlowe goes to Burns with the drink.

*

MARLOWE

They never know. It's amazing.

*

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED: (2)

56

BURNS

Lola used to work for a photographer,
Larry Victor. I hear you went to
talk to Larry this morning, which you
forgot to mention. Is he a client?

MARLOWE

No.

BURNS

So why are you protecting him?

MARLOWE

Protecting him from what?

Burns angrily puts his glass down, untouched.

BURNS

You're on my turf, Marlowe, and now
you've been cute two days in a row.

Marlowe finishes his drink and fills his glass. His shake
isn't entirely gone (ice rattles in the glass). Unusual for
him. Burns notices. Marlowe, now Burns comes to think of
it, has been rattled from the word go.

*
*

BURNS

(continuing)

Marlowe? What happened to you?

MARLOWE

(Marlowe shakes his
head.)

I don't know. Something. I had an
experience tonight, Arnie. I was
shaking. I could see my hands, they
were shaking. I went up those
stairs, and I remember thinking about
Laura. I was so busy thinking, I
wasn't thinking. Guy came up behind
and hit me.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

BURNS

That happens, Phil.

*

MARLOWE

No, I never had that. This was fear.
I lost what kept it out.

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED: (3)

56

BURNS

What was that?

MARLOWE

Belonging to nobody. I found out
something about this job -- it's a
loner job. It always has been.
Twenty-five years of living out of
your car, eating at counters,
drinking in dives, waiting around to
follow people into their disappointed
lives.

*
*
*

BURNS

You've got a bad case of L.A.

*

MARLOWE

(agrees)

That's what it is. So to hell with
it. I've got a wife I don't deserve
[who] loves me, I've got four good
suits, a Plymouth, a .38 under my arm
and I buy my own drinks. There's
other places.

*
*
*
*
*
*

Burns gives him a look. Is Marlowe serious?

*

BURNS

Like where?

*

Marlowe knows the answer. The Cut supplies it.

*

57 OMITTED

57

58 EXT. POODLE SPRINGS - DAY

58

The main street of the nearest thing to Santa Fe in California -- a rich arty little town with no litter, strict zoning laws and no high buildings.

Marlowe walks out of a vacant 2nd-floor office with a "For Rent" sign in the window. In his hand are a few real estate flyers/advertisements. He pauses to look at the Main Street below without joy, as he lights a cigarette.

Across the street, Marlowe spots Laura threading her way through various barbecues displayed on the street. A SALESMAN is in attendance. She sees him, smiles. He waves.

He goes downstairs.

The immediate surroundings and sights of Poodle Springs conspire to deepen Marlowe's depression -- he notices:

SEVERAL ELDERLY PEOPLE using similar walkers.

A YOUNG MAN carrying a bag of wrapped, new golf clubs.

A BUSINESSMAN at a newsstand unwraps a stick of gum and walks several yards out of his way to put the wrapper into a trash can. Marlowe walks to the same trashcan and disposes of the advertisements. Again he looks at Laura across the street.

Marlowe snaps his cigarette away. It falls at the feet of an elderly female Vigilante. The look she gives Marlowe makes him quail. He picks up the cigarette, disposes of it in a trash bin, raising his hat politely to the Vigilante.

Now in his car (filled with Laura's purchases, plants, etc).

59 OMITTED 59

60 INT. THE HOUSE - DAY 60

Marlowe and Laura moved in a couple of days before. The living room is pretty much in order but there is a box of books which Laura is feeding into a bookshelf. Marlowe is there, looking around the room which is undeniably attractive.

LAURA
You didn't bring anything from your place.

MARLOWE
No.

LAURA
You know, we don't have to keep both apartments.

MARLOWE
I guess not.

On a table there is an envelope addressed to the Marlowes in Poodle Springs. Marlowe picks it up.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
I like the part where it says Mr. and Mrs. Philip Marlowe...

He removes from the envelope a printed invitation with a purple tassel, like the one that we saw at the Parker mansion.

Laura picks up a brand new copy of The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan and puts it into the shelf. We notice it more than she does.

60A OMITTED 60A

60B EXT. GARDEN AND POOL - DAY 60B

Laura is swimming.

Marlowe comes out of the house and watches her for a moment. He takes his newspaper to a chair on the terrace. But he continues to watch her.

Laura gets out of the pool.

Marlowe can't take his eyes off her.

She notices him, smiles at him.

Marlowe moves one hand slightly by way of saying Hi. He glances at the paper where he's circled a small ad.

CONTINUED

60B CONTINUED:

60B

CU - "PHILIP MARLOWE - Private Investigations - No Divorce Work" and a phone number and address.

*

60C INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

60C

Another day. The room looks readied now. Laura looks around with satisfaction. Marlowe is preparing to go out.

*

Marlowe goes out into the hall where he picks up his hat from the table. We notice the local newspaper next to the hat: CARAVAN MINING SEALS LAND DEAL.

*

*

*

LAURA
(nicely from the
doorway)
You don't have to wear a hat here.

*

*

*

MARLOWE
(nicely back)
Don't rush me.

*

*

He uses the wall mirror to get the angle of his hat just right.

*

*

LAURA
Is your head in L.A.?

MARLOWE
No, it wasn't even my case.

LAURA
If you're doing this for me it's
going to go wrong.

He puts his arms round Laura.

*

CONTINUED

60C CONTINUED:

60C

MARLOWE

Listen, that night when I went back
home -- I was beat up and it didn't
seem like home anymore --
 (a beat, he gives her
 a small smile)
-- and I knew I wanted to live where
you want to live.

*
*
*
*
*
*

The Manservant, TINO, comes in from outside as Marlowe
leaves - Tino with a delivery of something. Marlowe says,
"Hi."

60D OUTSIDE SAME TIME

60D

The Fleetwood is there. The Chevy is there. Marlowe gets
in, drives away.

61 OMITTED
THRU
63

61
THRU
63

64 INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE (POODLE SPRINGS) - DAY

64

Marlowe's name is on the door. The office is a room well within his budget. It's on the upper floor of a two-floor building. It is approached by an exterior staircase. There is a desk with a phone on it, a visitor's chair, a filing cabinet, and the only item which isn't second-hand is the photo of Laura in its silver frame.

We find Marlowe, wearing glasses, with his feet on the desk. He is reading a newspaper. So we are looking at a second version of the first shot of Marlowe at the beginning of the film. The only sound is the buzz of a fly, and the fly is beginning to bother him.

Marlowe closes up the newspaper, folds it and watches the fly settle on his desk. He smashes the paper down on the fly but misses. The buzzing continues. Marlowe tosses the paper down.

Marlowe has nothing to do. This is ridiculous, this whole Poodle Springs number.

Then the phone rings and he grabs it like a lifeline.

MARLOWE

Marlowe.

(pause)

A hundred dollars a day and expenses.

(pause)

You lost your purse? I'm sorry, I don't do purses...no, you're right, it should say no divorce and no purses, I'm sorry.

He hangs up. He takes out his pack of Camels, puts a cigarette in his mouth, gets Laura's lighter out of his pocket, and the lighter won't work. It seems to be fresh out of fluid. He has no spare fluid, of course, who does? And now he doesn't even have a match for his cigarette, because he has a lighter. Life is an unequal struggle and he gets up and leaves the office, with the unlit cigarette in his mouth.

64A EXT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE

64A

He is at the top of the exterior staircase. He locks the office door.

Twelve feet below him in the street, a black sedan pulls up. It stops behind Marlowe's Chevy which is parked there, and a thug called LEONARD gets out of the passenger seat, leaving the DRIVER, who is Nameless, behind the wheel.

Leonard meets Marlowe at the bottom of the stairs.

LEONARD

You Marlowe?

CONTINUED

64A CONTINUED:

64A

MARLOWE
Who's asking?

LEONARD
Lippy wants to talk to you. Let's go.

Marlowe brightens up at Leonard's truculent tone.

MARLOWE
Got a light?

LEONARD
I said, let's go.

MARLOWE
I said, got a light?

LEONARD
Sure.

Leonard dips his hand into his pocket and comes up with a gun levelled at Marlowe. Marlowe grins happily.

MARLOWE
You boys from out of town?

LEONARD
(unsmiling)
We ride in the back.

Leonard indicates the sedan.

MARLOWE
Like hell, who's gonna drive me back?
You can ride with me. And put away
the heater, Lippy can't talk to me if
I'm full of lead.

Leonard hesitates and nods. He jerks his head at Nameless, who stays in the Sedan. Marlowe gets into his driving seat and shuts the door.

INSERT: MARLOWE'S HAND REACHES UNDER THE DASH.

Leonard walks around the car. Putting his gun away he opens the passenger door.

LEONARD
(getting in)
Okay, move.

He is still closing his door. Marlowe's hand is holding a .38 automatic which he shoves up Leonard's nose, making it bleed.

CONTINUED

64A CONTINUED: (2)

64A

MARLOWE

You move.

Leonard falls out of the Chevrolet. Marlowe is already out of his car with his gun pointing at Nameless.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Keep your hands on the wheel!

Leonard picks himself up. His nose is bleeding heavily.

MARLOWE

(continuing; to
Leonard)

Now for Christ's sake, do you have a
light or don't you?

Leonard still has his gun in his pocket but he is out of his league. He reaches into another pocket and tosses a book of matches at Marlowe.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Thanks. Now beat it.

Leonard gets into the other car beside Nameless and the car leaves.

Two or three people have paused to observe the incident, but nobody gets excited. Marlowe nods a polite "good morning" to the nearest man, a shopkeeper who has come to the door of his shop, and putting his gun away, he lights his cigarette, meanwhile reading what it says on the matches.

BCU: INSERT - THE MATCHBOOK SAYS "THE AGONY CLUB CASINO", AND ON THE FLIP-SIDE UNDER A PICTURE OF TWO DICE "JUST 5 MINUTES NORTH OF POODLE SPRINGS."

Marlowe's car drives off.

*

65 EXT. DESERT ROAD

65

The Chevrolet passes a sign announcing that we are now in Nevada.

66 EXT. THE AGONY CLUB - DAY

66

It's a Spanish pile of a place out in the desert, and it's for gambling. However, it is not like Las Vegas, not twenty-four hours per day. It is now morning and the place is deserted. Marlowe parks the Chevy. There is no one around. He goes inside.

67 INT. THE AGONY CLUB

67

It's a casino with a bar. Deserted. Leonard appears in the gloom. His nose is swollen and discolored.

CONTINUED

MARLOWE
(cheerfully)
You look different.

A door opens in the back of the room and MANNY LIPSHULTZ appears. He is a big dangerous-looking man.

LEONARD
He showed up, Mr. Lipshultz.

LIPSHULTZ
(acting the injured
party)
What did you do to Leonard? I
just wanted to talk to you, is all.

MARLOWE
You have to ask nicely.

LIPSHULTZ
Okay, I apologize.

He heads for the bar, jerking his head at Leonard to leave the room. Leonard leaves.

LIPSHULTZ
(continuing)
Do you want a drink?

MARLOWE
Scotch. Thank you.

Lipshultz fixes Marlowe a whiskey and a Tab for himself. He needs to lose weight.

LIPSHULTZ
I gotta problem, Marlowe.

MARLOWE
Okay.

LIPSHULTZ
I took a guy's marker for a
hundred G's. Now I can't find the
guy.

From his pocket Lipshultz takes the "marker."

INSERT AS IT IS HANDED OVER FOR MARLOWE TO LOOK AT IT. IT IS
AN IOU FOR \$100,000. THERE IS A SIGNATURE, "CHARLES
NICHOLLS".

MARLOWE
(O.S.)
"Charles Nicholls."

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

LIPSHULTZ

He likes to play here -- it's the closest legal gambling to Poodle Springs.

Marlowe hands back the marker.

MARLOWE

How come you took his marker?

LIPSHULTZ

He always came good before. There's a lot of money in the family. You ever hear of Clayton Blackstone?

MARLOWE

Something.

LIPSHULTZ

The Caravan Mining Corporation.

MARLOWE

No, something else. Way back.

LIPSHULTZ

Caravan Mining is turning Poodle Springs into a company town -- office buildings, the department store, hotels, they even bought the newspaper. Clayton Blackstone is the Caravan Mining Corporation, and Charles Nicholls is his son-in-law. Lives right there in Poodle Springs.

MARLOWE

Who does?

LIPSHULTZ

Charles does, when he's here which he ain't. Daughter is called Miriam and they live in a fancy house on Tamarind Drive where half the rich lays live in this town with their rented husbands.

Marlowe flashes out a Camel, and the match book. He lights the cigarette and blows out the smoke.

MARLOWE

That's where I live.

LIPSHULTZ

Jesus, Marlowe... I didn't mean...

CONTINUED

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

MARLOWE

You have a point. Okay, so there's money in the family. I don't shake people down, all I do is find them.

LIPSHULTZ

That's all I'm asking. I'm out a hundred grand. My backing don't like me to do that, I'm talking about very heavy people, they break legs more often than they break wind, you follow?

MARLOWE

Whereas with you it's the other way around.

LIPSHULTZ

Marlowe, you gotta help me.

MARLOWE

I get a hundred dollars a day and expenses.

LIPSHULTZ

You're a boy scout.

(scribbles on a piece
of paper [inscribed
with the same pair
of dice as on the
matchbook] which he
gives to Marlowe)

That's Miriam's number.

*
*
*
*
*

68 EXT. ROAD - SAME DAY

68

Marlowe is driving home, which means he is skirting the town of Poodle Springs, with a rich suburb on one side of him and desert on the other. He has to slow down for some WORKMEN crossing in front of him. They carry fence posts and drums of fencing wire and tools. They have taken this stuff from a TRUCK parked in the road. The truck says, "Caravan Mining." The Workmen head off into the open land, the desert side.

*

Looking towards the desert side he sees, some little way off, an activity which we call Surveying Activity. It involves a vehicle or two, a few men, a theodolite on a tripod, a big map. He takes note. It doesn't mean much. He will take a closer look later in the story.

Then some houses block his view. One of these houses is his. He turns the Chevy into the driveway.

69 EXT. MARLOWE HOUSE - DAY

69

The Chevy arrives, Marlowe parks next to the Fleetwood in front of the house. Marlowe gets out, cheerful. He has a job. Marlowe enters the house.

★

70 INT. MARLOWE HOUSE - SAME TIME

70

Tino, having heard the car arrive, meets Marlowe in the front hall.

TINO

Mrs. Marlowe is out back, Mr. Marlowe.

MARLOWE

(entering)

Thanks, Tino. How does she look?

TINO

Very lovely, sir.

MARLOWE

That is correct, Tino.

Marlowe walks through the now-settled living room to:

71 EXT. TERRACE AND POOL

71

where Laura sits at a table laid for lunch. There is a phone on the table and she is talking into it.

LAURA

(into phone)

It's something we should talk about -- P.J. Parker means long-term creative involvement in the community...

(while talking she gives him a happy loving welcome with her eyes)

We've showed that in Florida, the Caribbean, and just now in Porto Durango, Mexico -- we'll show you personally on the ground, like a long weekend with your wives... I beg your pardon, Mr. Mayor, without your wives --

(rolls her eyes humorously at Marlowe)

...yes, we know about that, Blackstone is a carpetbagger...

Hearing "Blackstone," Marlowe cocks an eye at her. She doesn't notice.

LAURA

(continuing; into phone)

...whose business is turning a fast buck, period, maybe he got lucky -- more likely he got a tip-off.

(more)

CONTINUED

71 CONTINUED:

71

LAURA (cont'd)

Either way, we're not put off, we'll
do business with Caravan Mining so
long as the good citizens of Poodle
Springs can share our vision.

(pause)

Yes, I could do that -- seven
o'clock? Sure, I love Mexican. Yes,
I know it, I'll be there. Fine.
Good-bye.

She hangs up. She gives Marlowe a wifely kiss.

MARLOWE

I've been hearing about Clayton
Blackstone.

LAURA

Who from?

MARLOWE

Manny Lipshultz. He's a guy who gave
me a job this morning.

LAURA

(pleased)

You have a job? What kind of a job?

MARLOWE

Finding someone. Tell me about
Blackstone.

LAURA

Clayton is very very rich.

CONTINUED

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

MARLOWE
Richer than Daddy?

LAURA
(laughs)
No, not as rich as that.

MARLOWE
But Blackstone's company is buying up
Poodle Springs?

LAURA
You mean Caravan Mining? *

MARLOWE
That's his company, isn't it?

LAURA
Yes.

MARLOWE
So I mean Caravan Mining. You know
about that? *

LAURA
Yes, of course.

MARLOWE
So Blackstone got here first. Now
he's sitting on a fortune. What is
it about Poodle Springs? *

LAURA
It's just business. Why is it so
interesting?

MARLOWE
For one thing, the guy I'm looking
for is married to Blackstone's
daughter.

LAURA
Muffy Blackstone?

MARLOWE
(nods)
Miriam Nicholls. Married to Charles
Nicholls. *

LAURA
I used to know her. They lived near
us in L.A. Her mother drowned in the
pool at their house, seven eight
years ago. It was terrible.

CONTINUED

71 CONTINUED: (3)

71

MARLOWE

Blackstone. The wife in the pool.
That's what I couldn't remember.

Marlowe takes out the piece of paper with Miriam Nicholls's
phone number on it, the two black dice in the corner.

LAURA

She went for a swim in the night and
in the morning she was floating.
Muffy found her. The police accused
Muffy, she was in court -- case
dismissed. Poor Muffy, you can
imagine.

*
*
*

MARLOWE

Yeah.

HOLD ON THE TWO BLACK DICE and Miriam's phone number written
by Lipshultz.

72 EXT. NICHOLLS PATIO - EVENING (SUNSET)

72

A MAID carries a silver tray with glasses and ice-bucket,
which she places on a drinks table -- where Miriam Blackstone
(MUFFY) is handling the vodka bottle. The bottle has a
silver sleeve.

The Maid leaves. Muffy is a pretty girl turned tragic in her
maturity. A little older than Laura. She wears a long-
sleeved cardigan.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED:

72

Marlowe is there. He arrived a few minutes earlier. The handshakes are over.

MUFFY
I'm having a bullshot, Mr. Marlowe,
how about you?

MARLOWE
Thanks. I'll have mine with a twist
without the soup.

Marlowe looks at the bar. His eye is caught by a group of
photographs under glass. During the scene he returns to
these photos.

*
*
*

MUFFY
Vodka with a twist.

She makes Marlowe's drink.

MARLOWE
Laura tells me she knew you.

MUFFY
Of course. I grew up in Los Angeles
too.

MARLOWE
Los Angeles is a big place.

MUFFY
Our families were rich.

MARLOWE
(agrees)
That makes it smaller.
(accepting his drink
from her)
I'm trying to locate your husband.

MUFFY
Really?

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

MARLOWE

I've been employed to find him by a man who claims your husband owes him a hundred thousand dollars.

MUFFY

That's absurd.

MARLOWE

My client says that your husband ran up a debt at his casino and left him holding an IOU for that amount.

MUFFY

Charles does not gamble. Nor does he give people IOU's. He pays for what he buys.

MARLOWE

Sure. But I'd like to hear it from him.

MUFFY

Charles is away working. I don't know where.

MARLOWE

Working?

MUFFY

Charles has his pride and his work, he doesn't allow himself to live off me.

Marlowe gets up, returns to the bar. *

MARLOWE

Mrs. Nicholls, I'd like to shake his hand. When do you think he might be back?

MUFFY

He often goes away for a few days. Like many artists he gets restless, he likes a change.

While she talks, Marlowe looks at the group of photographs. We look at the photographs with him. There are several of Muffy with Charles. (NOTE: In every one, Muffy is wearing long sleeves.)

MUFFY

(continuing; O.S.)

...but he always comes back, because he needs me.

Marlowe stares and stares.

CONTINUED

72 CONTINUED: (3)

72

MARLOWE

This is your husband?

MUFFY

(O.S.)

Yes. You're newly married, Mr.
Marlowe. You should know about love.
Charles is everything to me,
everything I want or ever wanted.

The man in the photographs is Larry Victor.

73 INT. MARLOWE LIVING ROOM - POODLE SPRINGS - NIGHT

73

Marlowe sits with a drink, alone. He is dialing.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello.

MARLOWE

Is Arnie home?

WOMAN'S VOICE

He's working late. Who shall I say?

MARLOWE

It's Marlowe, Mrs. Burns. Will you
tell Arnie I called to tell him it
turns out Larry Victor...

(hesitates)

No, I'm still here... Look, don't
worry, it's not important -- thank
you... yes, sure, good-night Mrs.
Burns.

Marlowe puts a cigarette into his mouth and tries to light it
with an elaborate table lighter which doesn't work. He
lights his cigarette with the book of matches he received
earlier from Leonard. Then he goes to the bedroom to change
his clothes.

A car is heard, and the lights of Laura's Cadillac sweep
across the windows. Marlowe re-enters the living room.
Laura enters.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Hello, sweetheart. What was it like?

LAURA

It was like telling a bunch of
Rotarians how they can get rich by
changing the zoning laws for P.J.
Parker. How was Muffy?

They kiss.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED:

73

MARLOWE
I have to go to L.A.

LAURA
(disappointed)
Back to Los Angeles? When?

MARLOWE
Now. If I can wake up there, I could
be back tomorrow.

LAURA
But why?

MARLOWE
That's where my missing person is.

LAURA
Muffy's husband?

MARLOWE
Yeah. Muffy's husband. Charles
Nicholls.

LAURA
How do you know he's in L.A.?

MARLOWE
Because he's the same person as Larry
Victor, only Muffy doesn't know it.

LAURA
The photographer? You said you
wouldn't go back to that case.

MARLOWE
I'm not going back to it. This is
the Charles Nicholls case.

LAURA
(losing her cool)
But you just said Charles Nicholls
and Larry Victor are the same person.

MARLOWE
I know, ain't it a gas?
But she is not amused. She takes off her wrap. She has
dressed up for her dinner.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
My client says Charles owes him a
hundred grand. I'd like to hear
Larry's side of it. I didn't read him
as a gambler.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED: (2)

73

LAURA

The Mayor told me about your Mr. Lipshultz. Isn't he the kind of work you came here to get away from?

MARLOWE

He owns a club. In my racket Manny Lip is above average.

LAURA

You could try another racket.

MARLOWE

Maybe the resort racket.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Is that supposed to mean something?

MARLOWE

(continuing)

No. I panicked. If we're having a fight, tell me what it's about.

LAURA

We're not having a fight.

MARLOWE

You got the wrong impression, my job is just talking to people. I could have it wrapped up by lunch, I'll call you.

LAURA

Don't say you'll call me if you're not going to do it -- I'll worry.

MARLOWE

One o'clock. Count on it.

He puts his arms around her and she lets him.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

I don't have to go this minute.

She holds him closer and feels his gun against her body. She withdraws, and Marlowe politely removes the gun from the shoulder holster and puts it on the table. Marlowe takes her in his arms again. WE HOLD ON THE GUN. *

74 OMITTED

74

75 OMITTED

75

73

73 CONTINUED: (3)

LAURA
Doh't say you'll call me if you're
not going to do it -- I'll worry.

MARLOWE
One o'clock. Count on it.

He puts his arms around her and she lets him.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
I don't have to go this minute.

She holds him closer and feels his gun against her body. She
withdraws, and Marlowe politely removes the gun from the
shoulder holster and puts it on the table. Marlowe takes her
in his arms again.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
Sorry.

LAURA
Pleased to see me?

74 OMITTED
AND
75

74
AND
75

76 EXT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

76

The empty Chevrolet stands at the curb with heat radiating off the hood, which ticks quietly as the expanded metal parts start to contract.

Marlowe is crossing the street towards Larry Victor's building. He becomes aware of a whining animal sound, near at hand. There is a car parked outside the building. The sound is coming from inside the car. Marlowe is drawn towards the sound and sees that inside the car is Lola Faithful's Spaniel dog, and that the dog has been there a long time and is thirsty. Marlowe tries the door handle and finds the car is locked. The dog is pawing at the window with its tongue hanging out.

Looking worried, and not just about the dog, Marlowe enters the building.

77 INT. LARRY VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

77

Marlowe tries the outer door. It's unlocked. He enters the outer office. The inner door is closed. He opens it.

78 INNER OFFICE

78

Lola Faithful is sitting in Larry Victor's chair and she is dead. There is a small bullet hole in her forehead.

CONTINUED

78 CONTINUED:

78

Marlowe closes the door behind him and walks closer. He sees that the desk drawer, which had been locked, now has a key in it. There are a number of photographs inside. They range from the erotic to the pornographic. Marlowe gives them a quick look, and he sees that one of the photos features Lola in her undressed salad days.

Marlowe takes Victor's business card from his wallet. We see in Close Up what it is. Marlowe checks the number and dials. *

MARLOWE *

(into phone) *

The cops are going to be all over *

your house in about ten minutes. *

Tell me a bar near your office. *

(pause) *

I'll see you there in an hour. *

Marlowe hangs up. He starts to re-dial. *

79 LATER - ARNIE BURNS

79

is looking world-weary and skeptical. He has the end of a baby cigar in his mouth, and he is looking at Marlowe who looks back at Burns innocently and shrugs. *

The office is fairly full of cops, etc. A Medical Examiner is dealing with the corpse.

A Detective (Burns' guy) shows a damaged bullet he holds in tweezers.

DETECTIVE

One shot. .25 caliber.

BURNS

Come on.

Marlowe follows Burns through the door.

80 INT. THE HALLWAY

80

The dog is there, lapping water from a bowl provided.

BURNS

I thought we had a deal.

MARLOWE

Missing person job out of Poodle Springs.

BURNS

Who's missing?

MARLOWE

Charles Nicholls.

CONTINUED

80 CONTINUED:

80

BURNS

Who's he?

MARLOWE

Among other things, he's married to the daughter of Clayton Blackstone, maybe you heard of him.

BURNS

Yeah, I've heard of him. I've got a file this thick on him. Is he your client?

*
*
*

MARLOWE

No.

*
*

BURNS

Who, then?

*
*

MARLOWE

That's confidential, Arnie, you know that.

*
*
*

CONTINUED

80 CONTINUED: (2)

80

BURNS

This is murder, Marlowe. Two murders.

MARLOWE

Do you have a suspect?

BURNS

I did, but she got shot.

MARLOWE

I was wondering about that list of
phone numbers which Krauss called
from his car.

BURNS

(shrugs)

His office, his doctor, and the
Pasada in Silverlake.

MARLOWE

The Pasada?

BURNS

It's a cat house pretending to be a
motel. What the hell are you doing
here? What does Blackstone's son-
in-law have to do with Larry Victor?

*
*
*

Decision time for Marlowe.

MARLOWE

Let me find him, Arnie. If he's your
guy I'll give him to you gift-wrapped.

BURNS

(after a beat, nods)

Stay in touch.

Burns goes back into the office.

81 OMITTED

81

82 INT. BAR ROOM - DAY

82

MARLOWE

There was a dead woman sitting in
your chair. Lola Faithful. Cops'll
like you for it enough to put you in
the tank while they see what's what.
Otherwise you can tell me what's
going on. Maybe I can do better for
you.

It's an ordinary bar. Marlowe and Victor sit face to face in
a booth. Marlowe is drinking whiskey, Victor has a beer with
the can on the table.

VICTOR

Oh my God.

Marlowe lights the two cigarettes.

*

MARLOWE

There's no rush. Only, if you don't
start talking in a minute I'll give
you to the cops.

VICTOR

Why didn't you?

MARLOWE

I don't know.

Marlowe is thinking of the "happy couple", Larry and Angel,
as he described them to Laura.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

So tell me about Lola.

VICTOR

I haven't seen her for years.

MARLOWE

You met her at Sam's Hof Brau a few
weeks back.

VICTOR

Sam's Hof Brau?

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED:

82

MARLOWE

She showed you a photograph.

VICTOR

A photograph?

MARLOWE

Try not to say everything I say.
Then I followed you home, your
girlfriend had dinner waiting and you
gave her a radio and danced.

VICTOR

That's my wife. Angel.

MARLOWE

Uh-huh. And is Miriam Nicholls your
wife?

VICTOR

Miriam Nichol- ?

MARLOWE

I told you not to do that.

VICTOR

Who is Miriam Nicholls?

MARLOWE

She's Charles Nicholls's wife.
Charles Nicholls is you.

Pause.

VICTOR

Oh God.

MARLOWE

Do I call you Larry or Charles?

VICTOR

What a mess.

MARLOWE

Murder does that. You have
everything tidy and then there's a
murder and things unravel. Who came
first, Angel or Miriam?

VICTOR

Miriam. I met Angel a couple of
years ago.

MARLOWE

Do they know?

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED: (2)

82

VICTOR

About each other? Nobody knows. It would kill Angel. She was an illegal from Mexico. The immigration people caught up with her.

(proudly)

So I married her.

*
*
*
*
*

MARLOWE

You're some sport. How much do you lose at the tables?

*

VICTOR

What are you talking about?

MARLOWE

I was hired to find you by a guy who holds your marker for \$100,000.

VICTOR

Who told you that? I don't gamble.

Marlowe takes this in.

MARLOWE

Okay.

VICTOR

Did you tell the cops about me and Lola at Sam's Bar?

MARLOWE

Not yet. I don't think you kill people. And you seemed to have enough trouble already. She was blackmailing you.

From his pocket Marlowe produces the torn photograph which he picked up outside Sam's.

VICTOR

How did you get that?

*

MARLOWE

I pick things up. Are you still taking dirty pictures?

VICTOR

(easily)

Not any more. There was a time when dirty pictures was a good living. Now they're on the newsstand next to "True Romance".

*

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED: (3)

82

VICTOR

(continuing)

Back then those pictures paid the rent for me and a lot of the girls when times were hard. And now and again they paid off big when a girl got her break, studios would give you a thousand dollars for the negative.

*

MARLOWE

A little extortion?

VICTOR

There's another way to look at it. Every picture has a price. People pay for different reasons.

*

*

MARLOWE

That's true.

VICTOR

In the old days Lola was the house model. Like my assistant.

MARLOWE

With keys to the office.

VICTOR

(shrugs)

I guess so. We lost touch when I gave up the porno business years ago.

MARLOWE

Until one day recently when she found out that Larry Victor had turned into Charles Nicholls with a rich wife and she thought you'd pay some money to keep her quiet about your early work.

Victor laughs and looks at Marlowe with amazement.

VICTOR

Mr. Marlowe, where have you been?
Who gives a shit about that nowadays?

*

CONTINUED

82 CONTINUED: (4)

82

MARLOWE
(with the torn
fragment)
So what's this?

*

VICTOR
A picture of my wife.

MARLOWE
Muffy?

VICTOR
That's how we met. She wasn't doing
it for the money, dirty pictures was
her kick. Don't underestimate Muffy.
Doctor Kinsey would have to write
another book.

MARLOWE
Lola stole the picture from your
office and tried to sell it back to
you.

VICTOR
(nods)
I told her I didn't want it. But she
wouldn't let up.

MARLOWE
She called you when I was sitting
across the desk.

VICTOR
Yes. So I went to Sam's Hof Brau and
gave her a little money -- just to
get her out of my hair. She kept the
negative, but what could she do?

MARLOWE
Somebody thinks plenty. Are you
driving that yellow coupe?

VICTOR
(nods)
It's parked up the street.

MARLOWE
Leave it there.

83 INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - DAY

83

Marlowe lets himself and Victor into the apartment.

CONTINUED

83 CONTINUED:

83

MARLOWE

The cops'll be watching your house.
I mean Larry's house. They don't
know you're Charles because I didn't
tell them. So sit tight, I'll be
back later and I'll drive you home...

VICTOR

To Poodle Springs?

Marlowe opens the Yellow Pages looking for something.

MARLOWE

That's where I live.

VICTOR

Marlowe. Jesus Christ. You're the
son-in-law!

Marlowe finds what he's looking for:

BCU "PASADA MOTEL" AND THE ADDRESS

VICTOR

(continuing)

Is that why you're doing this?

That gives Marlowe a moment's pause. He tears the page from
the Yellow Pages and puts it in his pocket.

He goes out closing the door. Victor looks around, quite
interested by seeing how Marlowe lives. He notices the
chessboard, which has a game in progress. Larry considers
the board. He moves a piece.

*
*
*
*

84 INT. LINCOLN - THE GIANT GOLD CROSS

84

fills the screen. We pull back a little to see:

THE TOUGH WITH THE LEATHER JACKET

who is sitting behind the wheel of a parked black Lincoln,
and we pull back a little more till we are looking over his
shoulder through the windscreen at:

85 EXT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

85

Marlowe walks out of the building towards his car.

86 INT. THE LINCOLN

86

There is a second man (EDDIE GARCIA) in the passenger seat.

Both men get out of the Lincoln.

87 OMITTED

87 *

87A EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

87A *

Garcia and Leather Jacket (J.D.) approach Marlowe. *

Garcia is a slim man wearing a black suit, black shirt, narrow black tie. His black hair is brushed straight back. He moves like a dancer and looks like a killer.

GARCIA

My name's Garcia. This is J.D.

MARLOWE

He's bigger in daylight.

GARCIA

We represent Mr. Clayton Blackstone, who would like to speak with you.

MARLOWE

I'm in the phone book.

J.D.

(producing a gun)

You want me to shoot some corner off him, Eddie?

GARCIA

You gotta piece under your left arm, I'll have to take it.

Garcia takes Marlowe's gun from the shoulder holster.

GARCIA

(continuing)

Okay, Sailor. You ride with us.

MARLOWE

To hell with that, who's gonna drive me back?

But Garcia is no Leonard.

GARCIA

If you're coming back, we'll talk about it.

Marlowe has to smile at that too. Garcia opens the rear door of the Lincoln for him and follows him into the car. J.D. gets behind the wheel. The Lincoln moves.

87A CONTINUED:

87A

gets behind the wheel. The Lincoln moves.

88 THE LINCOLN 88 *

The car is heading back north and east through a rich area of town that soon becomes multi-rich. *

89 OMITTED 89 *

90 EXT. THE BLACKSTONE HOUSE - DAY 90

It is big and rich. The Lincoln pulls up and two MEN, in suits, open the doors of the car.

91 INT. THE HOUSE - DAY 91

Garcia shows Marlowe into a room.

GARCIA

Wait in here.

Marlowe takes a seat in a room which is fifteen feet high and lined with leather-bound books. There is a fireplace in which you could roast an ox. There are leather chairs and a bar.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED:

91

MARLOWE

Maybe I'll read for a while. Do you have "The Shoes of the Fisherman?"

GARCIA

They ain't real.

Marlowe looks absently at his watch. Then he gives a jump. He has remembered his phone call.

MARLOWE

Jesus! I have to use the phone.

Garcia looks at him with contempt.

MARLOWE

(continuing; urgently)

I mean it. I have to call my wife. She'll be worried about me.

GARCIA

Shut up.

And proving his point about the books, Garcia opens a fake door lined with book spines, and speaks briefly into the next room. Then he stands back, holding the door open and CLAYTON BLACKSTONE enters. He is older than Marlowe, with iron-grey hair and a cold closed-in face. He is wearing a business suit. Garcia closes the door.

GARCIA

(continuing)

This is Marlowe, Mr. Blackstone. He thinks he's tough and he thinks he's funny.

BLACKSTONE

I don't think he's either.

GARCIA

It's the guy J.D. says was inside that house on Willoughby.

BLACKSTONE

(to Marlowe)

Why?

MARLOWE

A woman named Lola popped up in a case I was working on. She lived there.

BLACKSTONE

And?

MARLOWE

I thought I'd look over her house.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED: (2)

91

BLACKSTONE

And?

MARLOWE

And what's your interest?

BLACKSTONE

Perhaps I should have Eddie teach you
some manners.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED: (3)

91

MARLOWE

Perhaps you should stop trying to scare me to death, and share a little information. Maybe we can help each other.

BLACKSTONE

You know that Lola Faithful is dead?

MARLOWE

I found the body.

BLACKSTONE

You?

MARLOWE

Yeah, and that made me sort of wonder who shot her.

BLACKSTONE

The police like the photographer.

MARLOWE

The police like the obvious. I don't think he's the type.

BLACKSTONE

So you know him too?

MARLOWE

I know a lot of people. I know your daughter.

BLACKSTONE

What has that got to do with anything?

MARLOWE

She's married to the photographer.

Pause.

BLACKSTONE

Mr. Marlowe, would you care for some refreshment?

*
*

92 A FEW MINUTES LATER

92

Eddie Garcia is butling...expensive Scotch into two cut glass tumblers. Marlowe and Blackstone are sitting at a table. Garcia takes his position by the door.

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED:

92

MARLOWE

I was hired to find your son-in-law Charles Nicholls. It turned out I already knew him, only he was calling himself Larry Victor.

BLACKSTONE

Who hired you?

MARLOWE

You did, Mr. Blackstone. You didn't pick me but you own the Agony Club out in Poodle Springs. Manny Lipshultz gave me a story about an IOU, and I bought it.

BLACKSTONE

Charles had started spending more time away from home. My daughter was distressed. I want my daughter to be happy.

MARLOWE

Yeah, I can see. How much are you paying Charles to be married to her?

BLACKSTONE

I give him an allowance, certainly. He's not what you'd call successful.

MARLOWE

He probably makes twice what I make.

BLACKSTONE

That's what I mean.

MARLOWE

I'm also thinking you hired Paul Krauss who'd been following Lola Faithful around before he became even less successful than I am. *

BLACKSTONE

Why would I have someone following Lola Faithful?

MARLOWE

You sure had someone search her house and give her cat one hell of a fright. *

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED: (2)

92

BLACKSTONE

You take chances.

MARLOWE

You think so? Try this. Lola was trying to raise money on a pornographic photo of your daughter, but what I'm thinking is that isn't enough to explain why you'd go to all this trouble to talk to me. What did Lola have on you, Mr. Blackstone?

*
*

Garcia moves towards Marlowe to do him damage, glancing at Blackstone for a green light -- but Blackstone waves him back.

BLACKSTONE

I know who you are. I know who you married. But don't count on that to protect you when it comes to the shove. My daughter was a sick woman for a while after her mother died. A nervous breakdown. Her behavior became extreme... for a while. Maybe you should stick to your own case -- did you find my son-in-law?

MARLOWE

(shrugs)

It's my first day. How do you feel about Charles Nicholls, now that he's Larry?

BLACKSTONE

My daughter loves him. As long as she does, he is one of nature's noblemen to me. I will support him. I will intercede with those who bear him ill.

MARLOWE

He'll be glad to hear that. He's at my place. I'm going to drive him home.

BLACKSTONE

You're an interesting man, Mr. Marlowe. But don't count on my interest. I can eliminate you by nodding my head. Take him home, Eddie. You can give him back his gun.

Blackstone goes to a desk and writes a number down on a small white card which he gives to Marlowe.

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED: (3)

92

BLACKSTONE

(continuing)

By the way, I didn't hire Paul Krauss. I'd like to know who did, it's information I'd pay for. You can reach Eddie on this number.

MARLOWE

(remembering)

Oh yeah, can I use your phone?

BLACKSTONE

(cagily)

A local call?

MARLOWE

Poodle Springs.

Blackstone nods at Garcia and goes back into the other room.

GARCIA

You're a piece of work, Marlowe.
I'll give you that.

93 OMITTED

93

94 EXT. PASADA MOTEL - DAY

94

Marlowe's Chevrolet shows up outside. Marlowe gets out. He has been looking at the Yellow Page, so he is now putting it back into his pocket as he walks into the motel.

*
*
*

95 INT. PASADA MOTEL

95

A squalid reception area. Behind the reception desk stands a BEEFY MANAGER.

MANAGER

You want a room?

MARLOWE

No. I'm a friend of Paul Krauss --
I guess maybe you saw the paper.

MANAGER

Yeah. Sorry to hear about it.

MARLOWE

I guess you knew him pretty well.

MANAGER

You're doing a lot of guessing, pal.
What do you want?

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED:

95

Marlowe takes out some money.

*

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED:

95

MARLOWE

He had a girl, didn't he? I heard
she was kind of special. I'd like to
pay my respects.

The Manager looks at the money.

MANAGER

Respect. You call this respect?

Marlowe adds to the money. The Manager picks it up.

MANAGER

(continuing)

You want to screw your friend's girl?

MARLOWE

You got any objection?

MANAGER

(shrugs)

What are friends for? He was here a
lot -- but he only wanted...

The Manager seems to be trying to remember.

MARLOWE

(impatient)

Who?

MANAGER

I don't know -- Loretta, Yvonne,
Gina... I forgot...

MARLOWE

You forgot which girl?!

MANAGER

I forgot which name -- she has a
different name for every regular.

The Manager picks up the phone.

MANAGER

(continuing; to
Marlowe)

Room 16, anyway.

Marlowe heads off.

MANAGER

(continuing; into
phone)

Gentleman to see you.

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED: (2)

95

Marlowe walks into the courtyard, towards the stairs.

96 A DOOR

96

with "16" on it. Marlowe knocks.

WOMAN'S VOICE

It's open.

97 INT. MOTEL ROOM

97

Marlowe comes in. The woman -- Angel, as it will turn out -- is not visible, she's in the bathroom with the door ajar.

ANGEL (O.S.)

Make yourself at home, mister.

MARLOWE

Thanks.

ANGEL (O.S.)

Got to make myself beautiful for you.

MARLOWE

Sure.

She speaks again, coming into Marlowe's view by the end of her speech.

ANGEL

So, mister, tell me about what kind of fun we're going to have, okay?

Now Marlowe sees that it's Angel. He's completely shocked.

ANGEL

(continuing)

What's the matter?

MARLOWE

Is your name... Angel?

ANGEL

(surprised, because
it's her real name)

How did you know?

MARLOWE

I'm a friend of Larry's.

ANGEL

He has a lot of friends.

MARLOWE

Yeah.

Angel turns the dial of a kitchen timer.

CONTINUED

97 CONTINUED:

97

ANGEL

It's twenty-five dollars and I don't
kiss.

*
*
*

MARLOWE

I want to talk to you, Angel.

ANGEL

It's still twenty-five dollars.

*

MARLOWE

I want you to talk to me.

ANGEL

Sure, tell me what you like.

Angel lifts her dress to take it off.

*

MARLOWE

You don't have to do that. I want to
talk about Paul Krauss.

*

ANGEL

Who are you?

MARLOWE

I'm a private detective.

ANGEL

I don't know anything.

She walks past Marlowe and opens the door.

ANGEL

(continuing; shouting)

Ivan!

*
*
*

Marlowe goes into the bathroom

*

98 INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

98

*

Marlowe takes a quick look around and discovers heroin paraphernalia. He turns away to exit the motel room.

*

*

99 INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

99

*

He is in a state of high tension and emotion. Angel is still shouting in the doorway. He turns her roughly and talks into her face.

*

*

*

MARLOWE

Did you know Larry has another wife?

ANGEL

(laughs)

You mean that Poodle bitch? She's two thousand dollars a month to Larry and me.

MARLOWE

His face tight with anger, turns sharply away. In the doorway, he passes the Manager, who is rolling up his sleeves.

100 OMITTED

100

*

101 INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - DAY

101

It's the same face, Marlowe's, which practically busts through his own front door and into his own apartment.

The living room is empty, Marlowe bangs his way into the bedroom and then back out again, and is heading for the kitchen when:

Arnie Burns appears, casually walking in from the kitchen, and then stands looking at Marlowe like a man who is owed an explanation. Burns takes a piece of paper from his pocket.

BURNS

Somebody left you a note.
"Marlowe - thanks anyway."

He folds the paper and puts it back into his pocket. Marlowe nods and moves to pour himself a drink.

BURNS

(continuing)

Where were you today?

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED:

101

MARLOWE
Why? Is somebody dead?
(indicating the chess
set)
You moved a piece.

BURNS
Not me.

Marlowe pours a drink for Burns.

MARLOWE
The note was left by Larry Victor.

BURNS
Tell me something I didn't know.

MARLOWE
Okay. Larry Victor and Charles
Nicholls, son-in-law of Clayton
Blackstone, are the same guy.

Burns accepts the drink from Marlowe thoughtfully.

BURNS
You've known this for a while?

MARLOWE
I've known it since before Lola
Faithful was murdered.

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED: (2)

101

BURNS

(enraged)

And who are you? Who the hell are
you to hold out on me, you gumshoe -
who are you?

*
*
*
*

MARLOWE

(interrupts)

Okay.

(beat)

Okay. I didn't think he did it.

*
*
*
*

BURNS

This is cop business. You better
start talking.

*
*

MARLOWE

Lola Faithful had a dirty picture of
Miriam Blackstone. Larry took it
back in the days when they were still
airbrushing pubic hair in barbershop
slicks. Lola tried to blackmail him
with it. He didn't care. Then Lola
tried Miriam's father. Blackstone
had the house tossed over looking for
the negative. He still wants it.
Dead or alive, Lola's got him nervous.

BURNS

Blackstone has people killed, take my
word.

MARLOWE

I don't need it, I've got his.

BURNS

You covered some ground today.

MARLOWE

He sent his help to fetch me. He
wanted to impress me. But he didn't
have Lola killed, not with an itsy
twenty-five.

*

BURNS

Paul Krauss was killed with a twenty-
five. Do you know anything that
connects Krauss and Lola, apart from
the pictures in his camera?

MARLOWE

Did you talk to Angel?

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED: (3)

101

BURNS

Larry's wife? Not personally.
Sweet, simple Mexican girl, I'm told.

MARLOWE

She does twenty-five dollar tricks at the Pasada Motel. Krauss was her special customer. And now, if you'll excuse me, I'm through with the Larry Victor case. I've got my own case which is the Charles Nicholls missing-husband case, which I blew, and I'm going home to Poodle Springs, okay?

BURNS

Did I miss something?

MARLOWE

No, I missed it, I got suckered, Arnie: Poodle Springs is where I belong.

102 EXT. DESERT - SUNDOWN

102

The sky and the desert. And the Chevrolet roaring home.

102A INT. CHEVY - DRIVING - SAME TIME

102A

And Marlowe driving hard, looking grim.

103 LATER - NIGHT

103

The Chevrolet still going.

104 INT. MARLOWE HOUSE - NIGHT

104

Laura, in a nightdress, has fallen asleep over a book, waiting up for Marlowe. Marlowe is there, just arrived, watching her. He gently takes the book away -- it's "The Group" by Mary McCarthy, a new book. He kisses her on the hair. She doesn't wake. He looks around and takes a wrap from the back of the couch and spreads it gently over Laura.

105 A DESERT MOON

105

hangs in an incredible sky. Marlowe sits on the terrace, still wrapped up in his own thoughts, still wearing the clothes he arrived in.

106 OMITTED

106

107 EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

107

Then Laura appears from the house. She looks like a ghost in a white negligee.

LAURA

Philip.

MARLOWE

Hello, sweetheart.

LAURA

Darling, what are you doing?

She comes to him, shivering. Marlowe takes off his coat and puts it around her.

MARLOWE

It's cold here at night, colder than the city.

He needs her. She's glad. She embraces him.

LAURA

You seem different.

MARLOWE

I am.

LAURA

Did everything go all right? Did you find Muffy's husband?

She sits next to him. He puts his arm around her shoulders. The moon hangs above them. *

MARLOWE

Yeah, I found him.

(pause)

You remember that happy couple I told you about?

(more)

CONTINUED

107 CONTINUED:

107

MARLOWE (cont'd)
Dancing to the radio...? The guy I
risked my license for? Turns out he
was a bigamist, a pimp and a liar.
She was a hooker and a junkie.
Otherwise they didn't fool me one
bit. I don't know what anything is
any more.

A phone on the terrace starts ringing.

LAURA
Muffy's been calling you. She's
drunk.

Laura walks into the house. Marlowe answers the phone.

MARLOWE
(into phone)
Yeah.

108 OMITTED

108

INTERCUT WITH:

109 WHEREVER MUFFY IS CALLING FROM

109

MUFFY
(on the phone)
Mr. Marlowe -- I'm sorry --

MARLOWE
It's all right, Mrs. Nicholls.

During this he puts a cigarette into his mouth and tries to
light it with the table lighter but that lighter still
doesn't work.

MUFFY
(over phone, sobbing,
drunk)
Did you find my husband?

Marlowe throws the table lighter into an armchair.

MARLOWE
I don't know where he is.

MUFFY
There's something I didn't tell you.
Charles had -- he's got a girl in Los
Angeles.

CONTINUED

109 CONTINUED:

109

MARLOWE

How do you know that, Mrs. Nicholls?

MUFFY

He wouldn't tell me who she was.
Please find him and tell him it
doesn't matter about the girl, I just
want him home. There's nothing I
wouldn't do for him, you see.

MARLOWE

I'm beginning to. You hired a
private detective called Paul Krauss
to follow him.

MUFFY

I couldn't stand not to know! I love
him!

MARLOWE

Yes, I understand. Love. I'm sorry.

But Muffy has hung up on him.

Laura has returned to the terrace with two drinks. She hands
one to Marlowe.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

I guess I'll go and see my client,
and tell him I quit.

LAURA

(disappointed)

It's late.

MARLOWE

High noon at the Agony Club. I'm
owed a hundred dollars and expenses.

LAURA

I'll give you two.

MARLOWE

I'll be an hour. I'll come back and
do everything you want.

LAURA

I want to believe you.

MARLOWE

I'll belong to you. I'm back.

They kiss.

CONTINUED

109 CONTINUED: (2)

109

MARLOWE
(continuing)
An hour. I promise.

He leaves.

110 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

110

Marlowe's Chevy is speeding along the road towards the Agony Club. As it approaches the sign announcing "Nevada", Marlowe sees through the windscreen that a big black sedan is halted at an odd angle to the road, with its lights on.

As he roars past the sign, he brakes and brings the Chevy to a halt. He looks over his shoulder at the black sedan. He turns the Chevy around and drives back slowly towards the car. He stops the Chevy near the sedan and goes over to have a look. The sedan looks empty at first, but then Marlowe sees Manny Lipshultz lying sprawled on the front bench. He is looking back at Marlowe with dead open eyes. The exit wound made by the bullet which killed him is not neat and the face is a mass of dried blood.

Marlowe steps back. He hears a strange quiet creaking sound from the desert on one side of the road. He looks out there. He is spooked. In the moonlight he can see something which puzzles him. Could it be a sheep?

Marlowe draws his gun from under his arm and walks towards the apparition. The white thing is moving slightly. Again, the faint creak.

When he gets there, Marlowe sees that the object is a garment, a lightweight blouson jacket, hanging on a stake driven into the ground. Then he sees a line of posts in the ground, joined by fence wire. The breeze moves the jacket and makes the wire creak. Marlowe examines the jacket. On its back is "National Survey." On the stake is a metal label. Marlowe uses his matches to read what it says --
"Federal Property -- Do Not Remove." *

Car headlights are approaching from Poodle Springs. They light up Marlowe. He puts the jacket back on the stake. He goes back to the road. The car arriving is a Police Car. History is about to repeat itself. Marlowe prepares himself.

111 OMITTED

111

112 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

112

Laura, poker-faced, is power-walking into a long lens, rather like when she walked into the "police station" back in L.A.

Now we see it is a Jail Corridor and a UNIFORMED CAPTAIN is having to walk fast to keep up with her.

CAPTAIN

Mrs. Marlowe, I'm really sorry.

LAURA

Harvey, I'm real sorry too, but if you try to hold him you can kiss good-bye to policing this town when it's built.

CONTINUED

112 CONTINUED:

112

Marlowe is in the end cell, alone, as we see when, at a nod from the Captain, a COP opens the cell door.

LAURA
(continuing)
Thank you.

MARLOWE
(seeing her, smiles
wryly)
Hello, sweetheart. Another freak
event.

113 OMITTED

113

114 INT. MARLOWE HOUSE - DAY

114

It's the next morning.

The front of this scene is about Marlowe reversing the moment (in his apartment) when he decided to trade Los Angeles for Poodle Springs. He's going back, and the change is symbolized by changing clothes.

So (for instance) we pick up on the discarded clothes which Marlowe was wearing in jail. Tino is carrying the crumpled colorful clothes to a laundry bin. He can hear Laura's voice from behind closed doors -- an adversarial tone, echoing her tone in Scene 34.

LAURA (O.S.)

I'm not discussing it. I don't want you to not go.

114A INT. DRESSING AREA - SAME TIME

114A

LAURA

(no pause)

I wouldn't beg you, not if you begged me.

MARLOWE

That didn't make sense.

They are in their private quarters -- it just needs a full-length mirror, an open suitcase (packed), some clothes hanging up. Marlowe is finishing getting dressed -- he looks everything a well-dressed private eye should be.

LAURA

No, you're the only one who makes sense.

MARLOWE

You see, in my business when your client is murdered, it looks bad to just walk away. That's why I have to go to L.A.

LAURA

Maybe you should live there.

MARLOWE

I know. I'm sorry.

LAURA

I'm sorry too.

He closes the suitcase and heads toward the door. They are both guarded, not sure where they stand with each other or with the future.

CONTINUED

114A CONTINUED:

114A

MARLOWE

The last time I was a suspect, you told the cops I was in bed with you. I always meant to ask you about that. I wasn't in bed, I was in my office, I didn't need a phony alibi.

LAURA

It wasn't phony. The medical report said Krauss had been dead at least four hours. I wasn't going to argue about it.

MARLOWE

Yeah. And the other thing you said was, how did I know it was his voice on the phone?

He puts on his hat and adjusts the angle in the mirror.

*

MARLOWE

(continuing)

We could have been Mr. and Mrs. Thin Man.

*

115 EXT. PASADA MOTEL - DAY 115

Marlowe's Chevy arrives. Marlowe gets out and walks fast, an unstoppable man -- heading for Angel's Room; but first:

116 INT. PASADA RECEPTION - DAY 116

The Manager is at his post. He sees Marlowe coming like a train. Marlowe doesn't mean to stop but he states his business:

MARLOWE

Angel.

MANAGER

(a wit)

Sweetheart.

He puts his big hand on Marlowe's chest, Marlowe bats the hand aside, the Manager gets heavy, Marlowe gets heavier; this is all in two or three seconds, and then it's a two-punch fight, bang, bang and the Manager is down and temporarily out. Marlowe has barely paused.

116A EXT. MOTEL AREA - SAME TIME 116A

Angel is not in her room -- she's at the Coke machine and sees the action at Reception -- or enough of it to make her make a run to her room, with Marlowe coming after her.

This could involve stairs if the Motel is a double-decker.

Angel goes into Room 16 and almost gets the door shut but Marlowe is there to kick it open. He follows her in.

117 OMITTED 117

118 INT. ANGEL'S ROOM - SAME TIME 118

ANGEL

Mr. Larry's friend.

MARLOWE

You remember.

CONTINUED

118 CONTINUED:

118

ANGEL

I don't know where he is.

MARLOWE

That's okay. I'm here for you, Angel. Does any of this seem familiar? -- "I'm a private detective. I'm working for Mrs. Miriam Nicholls of Poodle Springs. She wants to know what her husband does in L.A. I found out he calls himself Larry Victor and has another wife." Remember somebody saying that to you? His name was Paul Krauss.

ANGEL

What do you want?

MARLOWE

What did Paul Krauss want? He called you here.

Now the Manager comes through the door and grabs Marlowe in a bear hug from behind and wrestles him out of the room and onto the second floor landing.

118A OUTSIDE ANGEL'S ROOM - SAME TIME

118A

The two men move down the landing, pushing and shoving as Marlowe tries to free himself from the Manager's grasp, occasionally kicking against motel room doors as they pass. Some doors will open as hookers look out to observe the disturbance. Marlowe finally pushes off the railing and snaps the Manager's back against the brick wall of the building, freeing himself. He grabs the Manager and loads him upside-down in a laundry hamper, wheels the hamper to the end of the corridor where he releases it to roll downstairs. Marlowe returns to Angel's room and tries to open Angel's door. She's locked it. A bullet smashes through the door near his head. Marlowe ducks low and kicks the door off its hinges.

118B INT. ANGEL'S ROOM - SAME TIME

118B

Marlowe's kick and his entrance are so violent that he has grabbed her gun-wrist, slammed it against the wall, knocking the gun out of her hand, before she can get in a second shot, and knocked her heels-over-head. Marlowe puts Angel's gun in his pocket.

A beat.

MARLOWE

Now we can talk.

*

CONTINUED

118B CONTINUED:

118B

ANGEL
You are a crazy man.

*

She is shaking.

He stands up to leave.

ANGEL
(continuing)
I need the bathroom, okay, Mister?

MARLOWE
Sure. After me.

There is a bathroom with a toilet opening out from the bedroom. Marlowe goes in, leaving the door open. He looks around rapidly. He has guessed rightly why Angel wanted the bathroom. Without much difficulty, he finds a loaded hypodermic syringe. Angel attacks him for it. Marlowe knocks her back on the bed.

ANGEL
(with her eyes on the syringe)
I need my medicine.

MARLOWE
What did Krauss want? Money?

ANGEL
He was a john, that's all. I did things he liked.

*
*

BCU - Marlowe squeezes the syringe, letting some of the dope squirt out.

ANGEL
(continuing)
I don't know anything! Please!

*

Marlowe squeezes a little more.

ANGEL
(continuing)
No -- please -- I'll tell you.

MARLOWE
What did Krauss want?

ANGEL
It was like you said. He found out Larry had another wife.

CONTINUED

118B CONTINUED: (2)

118B

MARLOWE

Yeah, and she was worth two grand a month to you and Larry. How much did Krauss want, to keep quiet about you.

ANGEL

Half. Half of everything, that pinche rubio.

MARLOWE

(agrees)

Yeah. He was greedy - and "half of everything" buys a lot of dope. So you made a date with Krauss. Away from the Pasada Motel.

*
*

CONTINUED

118B CONTINUED: (2)

118B

DISSOLVE TO:

119 FLASHBACK - EXT. SAN PEDRO - (SILENT) - DAWN

119

A small car (Angel's car) waiting at the place where we first saw the red Thunderbird on the pier. Angel is in the car. *

MARLOWE
(V.O.)
Somewhere quiet.

ANGEL'S HANDS

holding the gun on her lap, nervously.

MARLOWE
(continuing; V.O.)
You kept a little gun for protection,
but I don't think you'd ever used it.
I think you fired a trial shot just
to see if you knew how.

Sitting in her car, she fires a shot through the open window toward the water. It makes her jump.

DISSOLVE TO:

120 THE THUNDERBIRD

120

arrives, with Krauss driving, and he parks where we first saw the red T-Bird. *

CONTINUED

120 CONTINUED:

120

MARLOWE
(V.O.)
Krauss showed up.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGEL

approaches the Thunderbird.

Krauss smiles at her in greeting. And then the shock on his face.

BCU: ANGEL'S GUN FIRES ONCE FROM CLOSE RANGE.

MARLOWE
(V.O.)
You killed him -- with one shot.

DISSOLVE TO:

121 ANGEL'S CAR

121

driving away.

MARLOWE
(V.O.)
-- and you went to tell Larry...

*

DISSOLVE TO:

BCU - A CHEAP CLOCK WHICH SAYS 10:17.

DISSOLVE TO:

122 INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

122

The clock is on Larry's desk. We recognize the clock.

Larry Victor with Angel's gun in his hands, emptying the magazine to count the bullets. Angel is not there.

MARLOWE
(V.O.)
...with a gun which had two slugs
fired.

Larry puts the magazine back into the automatic and picks up the phone.

MARLOWE
(continuing; V.O.)
Larry tried to give you a beautiful
alibi.
(more)

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED:

122

MARLOWE (cont'd)

He thought of somebody Krauss might call from his car, like somebody in the same business, like me. In a funny voice. He didn't know that every call goes through an operator in the Bell Building.

Victor is now talking into the phone, speaking agitatedly (the way we heard "Krauss" speaking to Marlowe) and as he does so he fires two shots into a small pile of pillows, with the gun close to the mouthpiece. Then he hangs up the phone.

BCU - NEXT TO THE PHONE IS THE NEWSPAPER WHICH WE SAW IN THE FIRST SCENE OF THE FILM, OPEN TO THE PAGE WITH THE BIG SPACE AD AND THE LITTLE STORY ABOUT MARLOWE'S MARRIAGE.

(END OF FLASHBACK)

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

118C INT. ANGEL'S ROOM - DAY

118C

ANGEL

Larry did it.

*

MARLOWE

No. Larry covered for you.

*

ANGEL

No...

*

MARLOWE

Because picking up the pieces when things break is what Larry does. Because women who break things are his habit.

*

*

*

*

ANGEL

You got to believe me, Mister - Larry did it all.

*

*

MARLOWE

Larry wasn't there. Otherwise he would have known Krauss was killed with a single shot.

*

*

*

*

Marlowe throws the syringe near her. She crawls for it. He starts out, then:

*

*

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Why did he pick me anyway?

*

*

*

CONTINUED

118C CONTINUED:

118C

ANGEL

You were in the newspaper.

*

Marlowe has to laugh. Though it's more like a grunt.

*

CUT TO:

122A EXT. ANGEL'S ROOM - SAME TIME

122A

In the Motel Area, a dozen CUSTOMERS, the ones who needed longer to dress, are spilling out of the Girls' Rooms and hurrying to their cars.

They're a mixed bunch, the ones who want to be gone before the cops arrive. Marlowe takes no notice but he's walking through a Fellini film -- there's a man still wearing his dog's collar and chain, perhaps another in full Glamour Make-up, or another in a Fireman's outfit, another expensively tailored but he couldn't find his shoes and socks.

*

The Hooker that greeted Marlowe from the paddy wagon behind the police station is there.

*

HOOGER

Hey, Marlowe -- how 'bout one for the road?

*

*

*

All this is in one sweep-through.

122C EXT. PASADA MOTEL - DAY

122C

Marlowe walks to his car, gets in, drives away.

123 INT. ARNIE BURNS' OFFICE - DAY

123

A PARROT in a cage occupies a corner of the desk. Marlowe has just arrived. Burns is behind his desk.

MARLOWE

She's in Room 16 -- you can pick her up before the smack wears off.

CONTINUED

123 CONTINUED:

123

Marlowe puts Angel's gun on the desk. *

BURNS
What is this?

MARLOWE
I took it from Angel. That's what
made it so hard.

The photos of Lola, from Krauss' camera, are on Burns' desk.
Marlowe fans them out. *

MARLOWE
(continuing)
Paul Krauss and Lola, both killed
close-up with a .25. It had to be
the same gun. But it wasn't the same
gun. I can tell you how she did it
if you're interested. *

BURNS
Yeah, well, I might have been, if it
was still my case.

Marlowe gives him an enquiring look.

MARLOWE
It's gone "upstairs"?

BURNS
(embarrassed)
Yeah. The case is solved and it's
being handled upstairs. Matter of
fact, Larry Victor phoned in this
morning with a confession to all
three murders -- Krauss, Lola and
Manny Lipshultz... just before he
drove his car off Pacific Coast
Highway into the ocean.

Marlowe laughs.

MARLOWE
You found the car?
(Burns nods)
How about a body?

BURNS
(deadpan)
Not yet.

MARLOWE
(giving Burns an
"out")
Well, it's possible Larry was in the
car.

CONTINUED

123 CONTINUED: (2)

123

BURNS

(declining it)

Yeah, and it's possible Cassius Clay
will take Sonny Liston.

MARLOWE

Is that Lola's parrot?

BURNS

That's right.

MARLOWE

Do you think he'll talk?

Marlowe's glance has gone to the parrot cage, and at this
moment we see from his face that he has spotted something.
Then we see what that is: a small key is hanging, "hidden in
plain sight" inside the cage among the "toys" (mirror, bell)
put there for the parrot's amusement.

*
*
*
*
*

During Burns' next speech, Marlowe turns back to the desk and
takes a second look at one of the pictures of Lola. He sees
that in the background is a building he can identify by its
sign (it's either a Hotel or a Post Office).

*
*
*
*

CONTINUED

123 CONTINUED: (3)

123

BURNS

Nobody wants him. We don't have a
parrot pound. Not yet. I've got
something for you.

Burns turns away to find "the something" in a filing cabinet.
This enables Marlowe to remove the key from the cage --
snapping the thread it hangs by. The parrot objects, Burns
hears it but turns back too late to see what Marlowe did.

*
*
*
*

BURNS

(continuing)

Stop annoying my parrot. Here --

*
*
*

Burns throws a thick file on the desk in front of Marlowe.
The file has a label: "BLACKSTONE".

Marlowe raises his eyebrows at Burns.

CONTINUED

123 CONTINUED: (4)

123

Marlowe, troubled, carefully opens the file on his desk. It's fat with documents. And newspaper clippings. One particular clipping catches his eye. The headline says: --

BCU - "CINDY BLACKSTONE DROWNING REMAINS MYSTERY"

The story is accompanied by a portrait photo of the dead woman and another photo of Miriam Blackstone, a mousy young woman in a plain dress. She raised her arms as though to ward off all the photographers, and both her wrists are bandaged.

124 INT. HOTEL - DAY (OR POST OFFICE)

124

This is a once-good now shabby hotel. Marlowe opens a Deposit Box, using the Parrot Key. He takes out a manila envelope.

Marlowe moves aside and opens the envelope. It contains a photograph, the complete Muffy photo of which Marlowe had the fragment; and also a roll of negatives. He turns to the Hotel (or Post Office) Clerk.

MARLOWE

Do you have an envelope? And a stamp?

The Clerk produces these items. Marlowe puts money on the counter. Marlowe puts the negatives in the new envelope. He writes on the envelope: "PHILIP MARLOWE" - and continues writing the address.

125 A PHONE BOOTH - A MINUTE LATER - DAY

125

Marlowe is dialling, holding the card which Blackstone gave him.

126 OMITTED

126

127 EXT. HOTEL - DAY

127

Marlowe comes out of the hotel. There is a mailbox. Marlowe posts the envelope to himself.

He crosses the street towards a little park. As he does so - looking every inch Chandler's Private Eye - a bus goes by behind him. On the bus is a display advert for a movie new this year: "FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE" - with debonair James Bond holding his Walther PPK 7.65.

Marlowe enters the Park and approaches an empty bench. In the b.g. are various FOLKSINGERS, BACKPACKERS, and one BUM sleeping on the grass.

127A LATER

127A

CONTINUED

127 CONTINUED:

127

Marlowe enters the Park and approaches an empty bench. In
the b.g. are various FOLKSINGERS, BACKPACKERS, and one BUM
sleeping on the grass.

*

127A LATER

127A

CONTINUED

127A CONTINUED:

127A

Marlowe waits on the bench. The black Lincoln arrives behind him. Garcia gets out. He approaches Marlowe. Behind Garcia, J.D. gets out of the Lincoln and remains in position to cover his boss.

J.D. is bored. An OLD MAN throws some bread towards some grateful birds on the ground. J.D. notices. He picks up a stone and tests his aim at a bird. He misses.

*
*
*

Garcia goes to Marlowe and sits next to him.

*

GARCIA

So what have you got, Sailor?

Marlowe gives the manila envelope to Garcia. Garcia slides the photo out part way, has one quick glance and slides it back. He gives the envelope back to Marlowe who puts it back into his pocket.

GARCIA

(continuing)

Mr. Blackstone was here, you'd be dead.

MARLOWE

How long have you been with Blackstone?

GARCIA

Thirty-one years.

MARLOWE

Family. Miss Whiplash of 1955 must have kept you pretty busy.

GARCIA

Yeah, since she was little it was always something. Booze, creeps, dope. I spent a lot of time straightening out her life. Took her to Switzerland once to see doctors. They had a word for it.

MARLOWE

Fruitcake?

GARCIA

Lotta words. Nothing worked.

MARLOWE

Till she met Charles.

GARCIA

Yeah. Love. That's the word. The guy's a creep, okay.

(more)

CONTINUED

127A CONTINUED: (2)

127A

GARCIA (cont'd)

But Muffy don't know it or if she does, she doesn't care. And Mr. Blackstone don't care either. He's got her undercover out in the Springs, off the streets, safe.

MARLOWE

Too late to help her mother. What happened that night she drowned in the pool?

GARCIA

What do you want, Sailor?

MARLOWE

See your boss.

GARCIA

You found Nicholls. I was you, I'd move on.

MARLOWE

Charles Nicholls moved on himself. He phoned the cops with a confession to every murder he could think of and they found his car in the ocean this morning.

GARCIA

(pause)

Sorry to hear that. Muffy's going to be all broken up.

(OR)

Gonna ruin Muffy's day.

*
*
*
*

MARLOWE

On the other hand, he could be in Mexico growing a beard.

GARCIA

Same thing.

MARLOWE

Yeah.

GARCIA

(stands up)

Don't you have a home to go to?

Marlowe's expression reminds us that maybe he doesn't.

128 OMITTED

128

129 INT. MARLOWE APARTMENT - EVENING

129

Marlowe lets himself into the apartment. Takes off his hat and coat. He throws them aside anywhere. The bachelor life. It's no fun either. He pours himself a drink. Drinks it. From his pocket he takes an envelope, from which he removes the newspaper clipping he found in Burns's file, showing the photos of Muffy and of her mother. He lays it on the desk and after a moment, he turns it face down. Then, also from his pocket, he lays down the manila envelope he got at the hotel.

Ever since Laura's lighter ran out of fuel in this movie, Marlowe has been using matches. Now for perhaps the third time, he takes out Laura's lighter and it fails him. But this time he opens the desk drawer, finds fluid, and starts to fill the lighter. His glance pauses over the engraved message, "LOVE THE GIVER - L".

*
*
*
*
*
*

Driving rain is hitting the window. He decides he has to make a phone call. It's a certainty that he is calling Laura well before the call is answered.

*

The door buzzer sounds.

Marlowe puts down the phone and goes to answer the door. It's Muffy.

*

MARLOWE
Mrs. Nicholls.

He lets her in. She is obviously a little crazed. She has on a raincoat and hat.

MUFFY
Laura told me where I'd find you.

CONTINUED

129 CONTINUED:

129

MARLOWE

It's a long way to come.

She opens her purse and puts a stack of hundred dollar bills on Marlowe's desk.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

What is that?

MUFFY

Five thousand dollars. I'd like to hire you to find my husband.

MARLOWE

I don't want your money, Mrs. Nicholls. I don't want the job.

MUFFY

You know something about Charles you're not telling me. I'd like a drink. Vodka if you have it.

Muffy takes off her hat and raincoat and sits down near Marlowe's desk. While she is occupied with that, Marlowe starts to place something over the clipping to hide it, then he makes a different decision: he turns it face-up. Then he goes to fix her drink.

MUFFY

(continuing)

There's a woman washing your front steps.

MARLOWE

(looks at his watch)

Yes, that's right.

MUFFY

But it's raining.

KITCHEN

MARLOWE

(fixing her drink)

What can I tell you? There's clean and there's clean.

CONTINUED

129 CONTINUED: (2)

129

Marlowe, getting ice now, is waiting for Muffy to notice the clipping.

MUFFY (O.S.)

But...

She breaks off. Now Marlowe figures, rightly, that she has noticed the clipping. He goes back into the room with the drink. Muffy is holding the clipping.

MUFFY

What is this?

MARLOWE

It's a photograph of you taken eight years ago outside the Coroner's Office. Here's your drink.

He holds it out to her. She reaches to take it. Marlowe moves Muffy's sleeve back a little to show her badly scarred wrist.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

I noticed you always wear long sleeves. I wondered about it when I saw this photograph.

He puts her drink down next to her and goes to sit in his own chair.

MUFFY

Why have you got it?

MARLOWE

I was comparing it with this one.

From the manila envelope he slides the photo of Muffy. Muffy * gasps.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Yup, that's you. Lola Faithful had it. It was only a sample. She thought your husband would pay money for the negatives. That's why Charles was meeting Lola when Paul Krauss saw them together.

MUFFY

That's not true!

MARLOWE

That's why Krauss followed her. To find out who she was. He took some pictures but they were still in his camera.

(more)

129 CONTINUED: (4)

129

MARLOWE (cont'd)
Because when he told you her name,
you didn't need pictures. You knew
who she was, from the old days.

MUFFY
She tried to steal Charles.

MARLOWE
No, it was just business. Paul
Krauss made a mistake. You shot the
wrong woman.

MUFFY
Lies! It's all lies!

MARLOWE
The cops don't agree with me either.
They've got a confession. From
Charles. That's the bright side Mrs.
Nicholls. He loved you in his way.

Muffy grabs her coat and hat and runs out of the apartment.
Marlowe lets her go. He knows what he's doing. He goes into:

KITCHEN

where there is a wall-phone, an intercom. He lifts it,
checking his wristwatch and speaks into it.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
Mrs. Dubrovsky, how are you?... Yeah,
well, could you do me a little favor?
There'll be a car coming for me in
probably an hour, a black
Lincoln...Yes, that's right...Could
you call up when it's
outside?...That's very kind.

Marlowe hangs up the phone. He goes into the:

130 BEDROOM

130

Marlowe turns on TV. He lies on bed. In a few moments,
President Kennedy footage is on TV, and Marlowe is
asleep.

*
*
*

131 EXT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

131

It's still raining. It's raining on the black Lincoln which
is parked with its engine running. J.D. is behind the wheel.
Garcia is next to him. Garcia is looking at the cars in the
street. He sees what he's looking for: Marlowe's car.

CONTINUED

131 CONTINUED:

131

He nods to himself, glances at J.D., turns up his coat collar.

CONTINUED

131 CONTINUED:

131

GARCIA

Okay.

Garcia gets out of the car. He runs towards Marlowe's street door. *

132 LOBBY

132

From the opposite end of the lobby-hallway, Mrs. Dubrovsky peers out from her apartment door. She watches as Garcia enters the exterior door into the entrance area which is separated from the lobby by an interior door. Mrs. Dubrovsky quickly closes her door. *

132A INT. LOBBY - ENTRANCE AREA

132A

Garcia scans a building directory for Marlowe's apartment number. He heads for the elevator. Behind him, Mrs. Dubrovsky reappears at her door. Garcia moves to press the call button but is too late -- he watches it rise, stands impatient. *

Behind Garcia, Marlowe appears from the stairwell, wearing his raincoat, his car keys in hand. *

MARLOWE

Hi Eddie. Muffy didn't waste much time.

Garcia adjusts, no problem.

GARCIA

You drive with us.

MARLOWE

To hell with that, how am I going to get back?

GARCIA

(pause; nods,
assenting)

Okay, Marlowe. Let's go.

He goes to open the street door for Marlowe. When he opens the door, it's after the cut, so it's another door.

133 INT. BLACKSTONE HOUSE - NIGHT

133

Garcia opens the door for Marlowe. It opens into:

134 THE STUDY

134

This is the room we were in before. Blackstone is there, standing by the wood fire. Muffy sits demurely in a club chair.

Garcia says nothing. He stands by the door.

CONTINUED

134 CONTINUED:

134

MARLOWE

Hello, Mrs. Nicholls.

BLACKSTONE

My daughter tells me you made a serious accusation against her.

MUFFY

It's lies!

BLACKSTONE

Muffy, leave this to me.

(to Marlowe)

She also tells me you've come into possession of a photograph...

MARLOWE

Uh huh. It's one of a set. I have the negatives.

BLACKSTONE

I don't get you, Marlowe. What do you want?

MARLOWE

It's an itch I have to scratch. I'd as soon not be here, but the cops won't do their own work.

BLACKSTONE

Marlowe, my daughter is ill, her mother's death drove Muffy over the edge.

MARLOWE

She cut her wrists that night.

BLACKSTONE

Yes. She was the perfect daughter, a quiet shy girl.

MARLOWE

Yes I read that. It's what you told the newspapers.

*

BLACKSTONE

That night turned her into someone else.

MARLOWE

Into this?

He takes the photo of Muffy from his pocket and lays it down where Blackstone can see it.

CONTINUED

134 CONTINUED: (2)

134

MARLOWE
(continuing)
I don't think so. The photo is dated. Her wrists are smooth as milk. That's why it had such leverage over you. It was taken before this one.

Marlowe lays the clipping down, showing mousy Muffy with her bandaged wrists.

MARLOWE
(continuing)
If the jury had known what Muffy liked to do on Saturday nights, she'd never have walked. *

BLACKSTONE
(pause)
You don't take good advice, Marlowe. You should have stayed in Poodle Springs. *

MARLOWE
I couldn't settle. *

BLACKSTONE
You think you're safe here because of your father-in-law? *

MARLOWE
Oh, yeah. The friend of Presidents. I've got an itch about that too. What is the scam with these resorts?

BLACKSTONE
(murderously)
Eddie...

He is interrupted by Muffy - addressing nobody in particular.

MUFFY
She was mean to me!

MARLOWE
What did your mother do to you, Muffy?

BLACKSTONE
That's enough!

CONTINUED

MUFFY

Mommy tried to take Charles away from me. She tried to spoil it.

MARLOWE

They've all been trying to spoil it haven't they, Muffy?

MUFFY

Yes.

MARLOWE

Manny Lipshultz.

MUFFY

Yes. He told lies about Charles. He said Charles gambled and didn't pay. Now Charles will know how much I love him.

MARLOWE

And Lola Faithful.

MUFFY

Yes.

Blackstone goes to Muffy.

BLACKSTONE

There is nothing, Muffy, that is so broken I cannot fix it.

MUFFY

Charles loves me! He'll tell you! Why can't you find him?

BLACKSTONE

He's dead, Muffy. His car went off the road into the ocean. He's not coming back.

Muffy gives a cry. Blackstone tries to put his arms around her, but she fights him off and steps back. Blackstone turns to Marlowe.

BLACKSTONE

(continuing)

Where do you stand?

MARLOWE

She killed two people, that's without counting her mother. I can't lindy off into the sunset on that.

BLACKSTONE

And I can't let her go down for it.

MUFFY

(cries out)

You killed my darling. All of you
did it!

Her hands suddenly come up, gripped around her .25 Automatic. She shoots Blackstone once through the forehead and whirls around to put a second shot into Marlowe, but Garcia has reacted in time to put a bullet into Muffy's head before she can pull the trigger again.

TABLEAU: Two men, two corpses.

MARLOWE

Thanks, Eddie.

GARCIA

I didn't see it coming.

MARLOWE

She had the jump.

GARCIA

(shaken)

Half a second. I was half a
second late.

MARLOWE

Yes and no.

Marlowe goes to check the bodies.

The door bursts open and J.D. comes in with his gun in his hand. He's heard the shots. He takes in the scene.

GARCIA

(to J.D.)

Take it easy. There ain't nothing
to do here.

MARLOWE

(about the bodies;
nods)

It's all done.

J.D.

(about Marlowe)

What about him?

MARLOWE

J.D....

Marlowe hits him and knocks him cold.

134 CONTINUED: (7)

134

MARLOWE
(continuing)
That's for Lola's cat.

Garcia has taken no notice. He stands in grief over 31 years of looking after the Blackstones.

GARCIA
She wasn't a bad kid, you know, till she was seven or eight. I taught her to shoot. There was good times. Blackstone looked after me better'n I looked after him.

MARLOWE
What do you do now?

GARCIA
I got no grief with you, Marlowe. You and me, we do what we do. I clean up for my guy, you clean up for yours.

MARLOWE
Mine?

GARCIA
Parker. You're family aren't you?

It's not an accusation, just a fact. Marlowe's face has to deal with it.

135 EXT. BACK ROAD L.A. NIGHT

135

Marlowe's car makes its way through the confusion and darkness of the night. It is raining.

136 OMITTED

136

*

136A INT. MARLOWE'S CAR - NIGHT

136A

*

Marlowe's car makes its way through the Parker Mansion gate, up towards the house. The driveway slowly becomes more congested, first a few POLICEMEN are seen walking across the driveway. Closer to the house are more cars, people moving about in a manner we perceive as chaos.

*
*
*
*
*

What goes on? In Marlowe's headlights a POLICEMAN signals for him to stop his car. Another POLICEMAN approaches Marlowe's car window.

*
*
*

MARLOWE
Is somebody dead?

*

CONTINUED

136A CONTINUED:

136A

The Policeman ignores him, thinks its a joke.

*

POLICEMAN

Just leave your car here.

*

Marlowe looks around at the madness in the driveway. Only a small cross-section of the house is visible. From Marlowe's confused gaze we cut to:

*

*

*

137 OMITTED

137

*

138 INT. PARKER HOUSE - SAME TIME

138

We have been here before. Marlowe pauses to take in what's happening -- GUESTS in tuxedos and expensive dresses, a WAITER or TWO are standing by with trays of welcoming glasses of champagne, and large colorful banners that rise up around the foyer. Some of the guests are admiring Parker's art collection and it seems everyone is holding an invitation with a memorable Purple Tassel. Marlowe realizes, as we do, that tonight is the night of the Reception.

Off to one side are the open doors to a Ballroom where the main business is going on. Close by is the coat-check set-up in the large main lobby of the house.

COAT CHECK PERSON
(to Marlowe)
Check your hat, sir?

MARLOWE
(declining)
Thanks, but I don't know that I'm staying.

SEYMOUR CHAMBERLAIN, in tuxedo, comes out of a room, closing the door behind him. Chamberlain spots Marlowe.

CHAMBERLAIN
Philip!...Go right in.
(indicating the ballroom)
Laura will be so pleased. I am trying to coax P.J. to come out of hiding -- you know what he's like.

Marlowe's reaction shows that he doesn't. Chamberlain gladhands Marlowe and has his eye caught by new arrivals, to whom he refers.

CHAMBERLAIN
(continuing)
Oh-oh. I have to meet and greet...

Chamberlain diverts and is half-seen meeting and greeting a couple -- could he be saying, "Ron! Nancy!" Marlowe is already on the move (but not towards the ballroom), perfunctorily appreciating art on his way to the door Chamberlain came out of. Marlowe goes in:

NOTE: Marlowe thinks that Chamberlain was trying to coax Parker out of this room, but in fact Chamberlain was only coaxing Parker on the phone.

139 INT. CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

139

is empty of people, but interesting to him. It is an office with large-scale maps pinned to the walls. On examination, some are seen to be plans of Poodle Springs, actual and potential. Others are maps of the country showing the state line between California and Nevada.

*

The silver "camel caravan" catches his eye. He looks at it more closely. On the base is an engraved plaque which says--

CU - "CARAVAN MINING" and "To P.J. Parker from his friend Clayton Blackstone."

He puts the caravan down.

CONTINUED

139 CONTINUED:

139

Marlowe notices a blinking light on the telephone on the desk. Next to the light it says "POOL."

140 EXT. POOL - NIGHT

140

From the top of the stone stairs, Marlowe sees P. J. PARKER swimming. He is a big man, about sixty years old. He swims well. Marlowe is standing above the pool, watching.

*
*
*

MARLOWE

Mr. Parker...?

Parker swims on.

*

MARLOWE

(continuing)

I'm Philip Marlowe.

PARKER

(swimming)

Laura's husband?

*

Parker keeps swimming. Marlowe comes down the steps.

*

MARLOWE

Aren't you supposed to be hosting a reception?

PARKER

Supposed is right.

(he stands up in the water)

*
*

Who the hell are they to look at my art collection? I never invited them. That's why I went swimming. When you have to do something you hate to do, water calms you down -- sets you up, you know?

*
*
*
*

MARLOWE

That so? Maybe I'll join you. Or should we talk in the pool house?

*
*

141 INT. POOL HOUSE

141 *

Parker, in a robe, takes an opened bottle of white wine from the fridge; pours two glasses. *

PARKER
Burgandy - okay? *

MARLOWE
Thanks. *

Parker gives Marlowe a glass. *

PARKER
It's a good year... *

Marlowe sips. *

PARKER
(continuing)
Don't you think? *

MARLOWE
Yeah, but it's not over yet. *

PARKER
(amiably tough; he
likes Marlowe)
You sorry son of a bitch. I gave you
a house. *

MARLOWE
You gave Laura a house. In Poodle
Springs. *

PARKER
What is it with you and Poodle
Springs? It's no different from a
dozen nice little towns out in the
desert. *

MARLOWE
Except it's the one closest to
Nevada. So you're moving it across
the state line where gambling isn't
against the law. *

PARKER
Moving Poodle Springs? *

MARLOWE
By moving the border. *

PARKER
Good, Philip. *

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED:

141

MARLOWE

Poodle Springs, Nevada? Is it legal?

PARKER

It's still confidential, but it'll be as legal as the President's seal can make it. You see, Philip, all the parties have to get something they want.

MARLOWE

What does the President want?

PARKER

California. Last time he lost California by a whisker. Poodle Springs voted solid Republican. Next time they'll vote in Nevada. And Nevada will get the revenues from the casinos.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED:

141

MARLOWE

What does California get?

PARKER

(gesturing at the
house)

The P.Jackson Parker Museum of Modern
American Art. *

MARLOWE

So now Poodle Springs is a goldmine
and Caravan Mining owns it. You
bring in your investors and they make
your partner Blackstone millions.
What would the D.A. say about that?

PARKER

Why don't you go in the house and ask
him? By the way, Clayton is not my
partner. *

MARLOWE

Not on paper maybe, but he's your
partner. *

PARKER

We're... associates. *

MARLOWE

Like Barnum and Bailey. *

PARKER

He's an old friend. I'm happy to see
him do well.

MARLOWE

He's not doing too well at the
moment. I left him an hour ago with
a bullet in his head. Muffy killed
him. Then Eddie Garcia shot Muffy
just as she was about to put the next
bullet in me.

PARKER

(pause)

I see. Does anybody else know this?

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED: (2)

141

MARLOWE

Not yet. Can I use your phone?

PARKER

Why don't you sleep on it?

MARLOWE

There's more. Three unsolved murders, a little blackmail, a little sex, and a woman drowned in a pool eight years ago. This one will run and run, and all of it leads back to your associate and old friend Clayton Blackstone.

PARKER

Philip, you have a beautiful wife who loves you. Life is beckoning. What happened tonight at the Blackstones is a personal tragedy. Don't make it yours and Laura's.

MARLOWE

And yours, you forgot to say.

PARKER

You don't get it, do you, Philip? Jack's father and I go back a long way.

MARLOWE

Jack?

PARKER

Tomorrow I fly out early to meet the President one more time...

MARLOWE

Oh, yeah... Jack.

PARKER

...and we can go public.

MARLOWE

Not after he gets to read this story at breakfast.

PARKER

He won't get to read it, not tomorrow. Are you with me, Philip?

MARLOWE

No. Also, you're crazy. The truth is going to come out, you can't stop it.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED: (3)

141

PARKER

Let it come out. Let the police and
the newspapers do what they do -- at
their own speed. They won't come up
with anything that will stick, and by
then I'll have got this show on the
road. I'm asking you as a father,
Philip.

*

*

*

He looks towards the House. Laura, in an open doorway by the
reception room, looks down the lawn towards Parker. Marlowe
rises to see her.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED: (5)

141

PARKER

(continuing)

Oh, I'm in real trouble now -- she's
found me. I better go put some
clothes on and meet the people.

Parker heads off to the House. Laura gestures to him.
Marlowe watches Parker putting up his hands in mock surrender
and kissing her. Parker speaks to Laura. Laura turns her
face towards Marlowe, then turns to Parker to listen.

142 INT. POOLHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

142

Marlowe notices the phone in the poolhouse. He is still
considering using it. He looks back to the house where Laura
now stands alone. She is distracted by some people inside.
Then she starts down towards him.

*
*

142A EXT. RECEPTION AREA - PATIO - CONTINUOUS

142A

Marlowe hurries up the lawn to join Laura in the shelter of
the patio.

LAURA

Philip...?

MARLOWE

Hello, sweetheart.

*

LAURA

I hoped you'd come. It was nice of
you to remember.

MARLOWE

I've missed you.

LAURA

I want you to miss me. I want you
desperate for me.

MARLOWE

What did your father tell you?

LAURA

He just said he thought you were
right for me. He said you were a
smart man.

MARLOWE

Did he mention I was at the
Blackstones?

LAURA

No. Must we talk about Blackstone?

CONTINUED

142A CONTINUED:

142A

MARLOWE

Yeah. Did you know your father owned
Blackstone?

LAURA

Why does that have to bother us?

CONTINUED

142A CONTINUED: (2)

142A

MARLOWE

So you knew.

LAURA

It's just business, legal stuff.

MARLOWE

It's just business, but it stinks,
and you and I shouldn't be tarnished
by it.

LAURA

Tarnished? Tarnished? What kind of
word is that?

MARLOWE

It's just a word.

LAURA

No, it isn't. It means you think
you're shiny bright, like a knight in
armor. Darling, you're sweet and
brave and I love you, but sometimes
you don't seem to live in the world
the rest of us live in. There is no
such thing as a clean dollar.
Someone somewhere got screwed before
it got to you. You won't take my
money, but you'd take money from
Manny Lipshultz? And come home where
the pool is kept at eighty degrees
and the vodka at forty? You explain
it.

*

MARLOWE

Maybe when I'm not so tired. I have
to leave now. Maybe I'm not smart in
the way your father was hoping.

He moves out into the rain.

*

CONTINUED

142A CONTINUED: (3)

142A

LAURA
But will I see you, Philip?

MARLOWE
That's up to you. You know where
I'll be. Goodnight, Mrs. Marlowe.

Laura watches him go. She can sense the nature of the decision she will have to make and why. When she lifts her eyes she sees Parker watching her from an upstairs window.

143 EXT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

143

Marlowe arrives back home.

143A INT. LOBBY - SAME TIME

143A

Mrs. Dubrovsky has heard him. She pops her head out of her door, as Marlowe presses the button for the elevator.

MRS. D
So who's dead?

Marlowe gapes at her.

MRS. D
(continuing; explains)
I thought you went to a funeral.
Looked like one of those funeral cars
to me.

MARLOWE
Oh, the black Lincoln... No, it
wasn't a funeral, Mrs. Dubrovsky.
(as the elevator
arrives)
Good night, try to get some sleep.

144 INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

144

The TV set is on with the sound turned down to almost zero.

ON THE TV SCREEN

The scene, live, outside the Blackstone house: floodlights, police cars...interrupted by cuts to portraits of Blackstone and Muffy.

Marlowe is asleep on the couch, looking the way we saw him -- in need of renovation. Near him is the news clipping portrait of Laura, fallen from his hand.

145 LATER - EARLY MORNING

145

The scene consists of two elements:

1. The TV screen with the sound up.

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED:

145

2. Marlowe renovating himself -- shower, shave, clean clothing, the Private Eye ready for business again.

Both elements happen in cuts between time lapses.

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED:

145

The TV information includes: pictures of Blackstone, Muffy, Lola, Krauss, Lipshultz and Larry/Charles...and Marlowe...and Laura and Parker.

The Voice Over on the TV includes:

VOICE OVER

"...slain by daughter Miriam, say police, who tied the murder weapon to the killing of dancer Lola Faithful two days earlier, and of casino operator Emmanuel Lipshultz, who was found yesterday shot dead near the Nevada border outside Poodle Springs..."

*

VOICE OVER

(continuing)

"Still missing: Miriam's husband Charles Nicholls, also known as Larry Victor, a glamour photographer...and Blackstone's bodyguard Eduardo Garcia..."

*

VOICE OVER

(continuing)

"Los Angeles Private Detective Philip Marlowe whose call brought the L.A.P.D. to the murder scene, recently married the daughter of P.J. Parker, Blackstone's longtime business rival, some say associate, in the Californian development boom..."

VOICE OVER

(continuing)

"...only just beginning to emerge in what looks like quite a tangle of real estate fortunes, murders, blackmail and local politics. The killing of Paul Krauss last month connects with Blackstone, too. He was apparently working for Miriam when he was shot dead in his car in San Pedro..."

*

*

Finally, the Marlowe who puts down his coffee cup and turns off the TV and walks out of the door, is all rested and spruced up.

146 INT. STAIRCASE AND HALLWAY - MARLOWE OFFICE

146

This is where we came in, with Laura's high heels on the stairs...and Laura walking down the hall towards "PHILIP MARLOWE PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS"...and:

147 INT. MARLOWE OFFICE - DAY

147

*

Marlowe is behind his desk, unwrapping a Florist's delivery. It's a baby cactus. With a card. He looks at the card, reads it. Then he hears the door, looks up. He tosses the card aside - on to a folded newspaper. We can read the card. It says "Marlowe - maybe see you around for a tequila".

*
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*
*
*

Near the card is the newspaper headline: "MILLIONAIRE AND DAUGHTER DEAD IN DOUBLE SHOOTING" and pictures of Blackstone and Muffy.

*
*
*

Laura is in the doorway.

*

MARLOWE

Good morning.

LAURA

(dry, affectionate)

Marlowe.

Beat. She looks wonderful, upbeat, but Marlowe is not sure which way this is going to go. Laura walks in, closing the door. She sits in the visitor's chair. She indicates the newspaper.

LAURA

(continuing)

Poor Muffy.

Then the phone rings.

MARLOWE

Excuse me.

(into phone)

Philip Marlowe...oh-huh...I'm sorry,
I don't do divorce...That's all right.

He puts the phone down and then leaves it off the hook.

MARLOWE

(continuing)

Do you want a divorce?

LAURA

No. I want a job.

Laura comes round the desk and kisses him long and hard on the mouth.

MARLOWE

You're hired. I love you. I should
have said that first. Did you tell
Daddy?

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED:

147

LAURA
I don't have to tell him.

CONTINUED

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147

INUED:

LAURA
I don't have to tell him.

CONTINUED

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HOLD on the *
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We are *
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148 *