

THE BIG SLEEP

screenplay by
William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett, and Jules Furthman

from the novel by
Raymond Chandler

Directed and Produced by Howard Hawks

CAST OF CHARACTERS

PHILIP MARLOWE "Doghouse Reilly" -- private detective, working for the D.A. husky, confident, well-dressed but not flashy. 38 years old -- unmarried.

GENERAL STERNWOOD. Old -- obviously dying; only in his fierce eyes seems to be life. A widower; a millionaire with two daughters: Carmen and Vivian.

CARMEN STERNWOOD About 20; sullen; always biting her thumb.

VIVIAN STERNWOOD Mrs. Rutledge -- spoiled, exacting, smart, ruthless, with a habit for getting married. She is beautiful, giving the impression of strong will and strong emotions -- the dangerous unpredictable type.

NORRIS Sternwood butler -- thin, silver-haired, gentle -- an intelligent face. He writes the checks in the Sternwood menage.

OWEN TAYLOR. Sternwood chauffeur -- handsome; boyish-looking -- in love with Carmen; at one time wanted to marry her, but was prevented by Vivian and re-hired as their chauffeur. He doesn't like the game Geiger is playing with Carmen.

SHAWN REGAN. Ex-brigade commander of the Irish-Republican Army -- at one time rum-runner from Mexico. A big guy -- tall and heavy -- an ex-bootlegger. Friend of the General.

ARTHUR GWYNNE GEIGER In his early 40's. Medium height, fattish, soft all over --

a Charlie Chan moustache; his left eye is glass.
Operator of a smut bookstore; blackmail racket on the side.

AGNES. Hard-looking, expensive blonde, working in Geiger's bookstore -- with a phony veneer.

JOE BRODY. Middle-aged, important-looking incongruously furtive and nervous in manner. His face well-fed, haggard and lined.

PROPRIETRESS IN
SECOND BOOKSTORE Small, dark, shrewd-faced woman.

CAROL LUNDGREN Dark, handsome kid -- Geiger's shadow.

BERNIE OHLS. A D.A.'s man -- dapper, slightly flashy man -- his clothes are expensive -- but always a little wrong. He's pleasant and affable to all -- respects courage -- loves no man.

EDDIE MARS Operator of the Mars Cypress Club at Las Olindas.
Handsome, hard, horsy-looking man, wears beautiful, expensive, restrained clothes. He owns the house Geiger lives in.

MONA MARS Eddie's blonde wife who supposedly ran away with Shawn Regan. She's tall, blonde, strikingly beautiful -- a woman who knows her way around, yet shows a certain dignity and finesse.

EDDIE MARS' THUGS. One a bodyguard . . . young, good-looking, pale-faced boy; the other -- older, slim, deadpan.

WILDE District Attorney -- wears evening clothes.

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CAPTAIN CRONJAGER. Of the city police homicide detail.
In plain clothes. He is a cold, hatchet-faced man.

CAPTAIN GREGORY. A slow, burly man who looks stupid but who isn't.
Also in plain clothes.

ABBA Secretary in Gregory's office; a middle-aged woman.

LARRY COBB A big, blonde expensive-looking man; Vivian's escort to the Casino. Drunk in the car.

HARRY JONES. Small, hardly 5 feet -- in cheap snappy "underworld" suit. In his wizened, ugly face there is honesty, reliability, courage and dependability.
He comes to Marlowe with a "straight" proposition.

CANINO Mona Mars' watchdog. He does the dirty jobs for Eddie Mars.

ART HUCK Operator of the Huck garage and paint shop -- the "Mars hide-out". A gaunt, hard face.

GIRL TAXI-CAB DRIVER Smart, competent girl.

LIBRARIAN. Typical -- in Hollywood library.

BARMAN AT MARS CASINO
WAITERS " " "
CROUPIER " "
MAN AT GAMBLING TABLE -- beside Vivian
CROWD IN CASINO
THUG
MOTORCYCLE COPS
MEDICAL EXAMINER
UNIFORMED DEPUTY
GUARD AT PIER
4 STRETCHER BEARERS
2 PLAINCLOTHESMEN
ETC.

FADE IN

1. ESTABLISHING SCENE EXT. STERNWOOD PLACE

It is a millionaire's house, big, sprawling, California style, with clipped lawns and gardens, on a hill above the now abandoned oil field which was the family's wealth. A small coupe drives up to the door and stops, and Philip Marlowe gets out. We just have time to establish him as he approaches the door --- a husky, self-confident man, well-dressed but not flashy.

2. INSERT: BRASS DOORPLATE KNOCKER WITH A BELL BENEATH lettered

STERNWOOD

3. CLOSE SHOT EXT. FRONT DOOR MARLOWE

as Norris opens the door. NORRIS is thin, silver-haired with a gentle intelligent face.

NORRIS:

(holding the door)

Good morning, sir.

MARLOWE:

I'm Philip Marlowe. General Sternwood sent for me.

NORRIS:

(opens door, steps aside)

Yes, Mr. Marlowe. Will you come in?

MARLOWE:

(entering)

Thanks.

4. INT. FORMAL HALL SAME OPULENT BIG-SCALE STYLE MARLOWE --

as Norris shuts the door, takes Marlowe's hat.

NORRIS:

Will you sit here? I'll tell the General you have come.

MARLOWE:

Okay.

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2. Norris exits. Marlowe looks about, interested and curious, sees something, moves toward it.

5. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he stands before a portrait, examining it with curious interest. It is a portrait of General Sternwood, in regimentals, beneath crossed battle-torn cavalry pennons and a sabre. He is still staring at the portrait when at a SOUND OFF, he turns and sees CARMEN STERNWOOD approaching. She is about 20, in slacks, something sullen and hot about her. She stops about 10 feet from him and stares at him, biting the thumb of her left hand.

MARLOWE:

Good morning.

CARMEN:

(after a moment)

You're not very tall are you?

MARLOWE:

I tried to be.

CARMEN:

Not bad looking, though -- you probably know it.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

He goes to a chair and sits down. When he looks up, he sees Carmen approaching, still staring at him.

CARMEN:

(approaching)

What's your name?

MARLOWE:

Reilly -- Doghouse Reilly.

CARMEN:

(beside the chair now)

That's a funny name. Are you a prize fighter?

MARLOWE:

No. I'm a shamus.

CARMEN:

A what?

MARLOWE:

A private detective.

CARMEN:

You're cute.

As she speaks, she sits suddenly on the arm of his chair. As she does so, Marlowe rises, shifts the chair in doing so, so that to her surprise, Carmen finds herself sitting in the chair itself. She stares up, surprised and then angrily, is about to speak again when they both see the butler. He has just entered noiselessly, stands beside the chair. On Norris' face there is now a curious expression of grief, sadness. Carmen glances up at him, rises quickly as if he had reprimanded her with words, and exits. Marlowe looks after her, thoughtful, a little grim.

NORRIS:

The General will see you now.

MARLOWE:

(looking after Carmen)

Who was that?

BUTLER:

Miss Carmen Sternwood, sir.

MARLOWE:

You ought to wean her. She looks old enough.

BUTLER:

Yes, sir. This way, if you please.

They exit through French doors.

6. EXT. REAR LAWN SAME WEALTHY SCALE

Garage at one side, beyond it a tremendous greenhouse. The butler is leading Marlowe along the path toward the greenhouse. A chauffeur is washing a car before the garage. We establish him in passing -- a handsome, boyish-looking man, OWEN TAYLOR. Marlowe follows the butler on to the greenhouse, looking at the tremendous

size of it as the butler opens the door and stands aside for Marlowe to enter.

7. INT. GREENHOUSE CHOKED WITH ORCHID PLANTS

Marlowe, following the butler between the crowding tendrils and branches. The place is oven-hot, damp with sweat, green with gloom. Marlowe is already reacting to it, is already mopping his face with his handkerchief.

MARLOWE:

(mopping neck, following butler)

Couldn't we have gone around this?

BUTLER:

(over shoulder; walking on)

The General sits in here, sir.

8. MED. CLOSE SHOT GENERAL STERNWOOD

in a wheelchair in center of the greenhouse, in a cleared space about which the plants crowd and hover. The GENERAL is the man we saw in the portrait, though older, and obviously dying, so that only his fierce eyes seem to have any life. Even in the terrific heat his body is wrapped in a traveling rug and a heavy bathrobe, his gnarled hands lying like dead gnarled twigs on the rug, his fierce eyes following as Norris leads Marlowe in.

NORRIS:

(stopping)

This is Mr. Marlowe, General.

The General does not speak, only the fierce eyes stare at Marlowe as the butler pushes a wicker chair up behind Marlowe's legs.

STERNWOOD:

Brandy, Norris.

(to Marlowe)

How do you like your brandy, sir?

MARLOWE:

(sitting down)

Just with brandy.

Norris takes Marlowe's hat, exits.

STERNWOOD:

I used to like mine with champagne.
The champagne cold as Valley Forge
and about three ponies of brandy
under it. You may take your coat
off, sir.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

He rises, removes his coat, takes out his handkerchief,
hangs his coat on chair.

STERNWOOD:

(watching him)

It's too hot in here for any man
who still has blood in his veins.

Marlowe sits again, mops his face and neck.

STERNWOOD:

(still watching him)

You may smoke too. I can still
enjoy the smell of it, anyway.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

He produces a cigarette, lights it, blows smoke, Sternwood's
nostrils moving as he sniffs the smoke. Norris enters,
pushing a teawagon bearing decanter, siphon, initialled
ice-bucket.

STERNWOOD:

That man is already dead who must
indulge his own vices by proxy.

The butler wheels the wagon up, starts to prepare a
drink.

STERNWOOD:

(watching pettishly)

Come, man. Pour a decent one.

NORRIS:

(adding brandy)

Yes, General.

MARLOWE:

(watching)

But not too decent, Norris. I don't want to exchange places with it.

Norris adds soda, hands glass to Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

(taking glass)

Thanks.

He sits back. Norris covers the ice-bucket with a napkin, exits. SOUND of DOOR CLOSING as Norris leaves the greenhouse. Marlowe raises the glass, sips. Sternwood watches him, licks his lips with longing pleasure and enjoyment. Marlowe lowers the glass.

STERNWOOD:

Tell me about yourself, Mr. Marlowe.
I suppose I have the right to ask.

MARLOWE:

There's not much to tell. I'm thirty-eight years old, went to college once. I can still speak English when there's any demand for it in my business. I worked for the District Attorney's office once. It was Bernie Ohls, his chief investigator, who sent me word you wanted to see me. I'm not married.

STERNWOOD:

You didn't like working for Mr. Wilde?

MARLOWE:

I was fired for insubordination --
I seem to rate pretty high on that.

STERNWOOD:

I always did, myself. Sir --
(he slides one hand under
the rug on his knees)
What do you know about my family, Mr. Marlowe?

MARLOWE:

(mopping)

You're a widower, a millionaire, two

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

young daughters. One unmarried, the
other married once but it didn't take.
Both now living with and both --
(he breaks off; the General's
fierce eyes watch him)

STERNWOOD:

Go on.

MARLOWE:

Am I to swap you gossip for hospitality?

STERNWOOD:

(sternly)

You are to swap me your confidence for
my own.

MARLOWE:

(shrugs)

All right. Both pretty, and both
pretty -- wild. What did you want to
see me about?

STERNWOOD:

I'm being blackmailed again.

MARLOWE:

(mopping)

Again?

STERNWOOD:

(draws his hand out from
under the rug, holding a brown
envelope)

About a year ago I paid a man named
Joe Brody five thousand dollars to let
my younger daughter alone.

MARLOWE:

Ah.

STERNWOOD:

What does that mean?

MARLOWE:

It means 'ah.' It never went through
the D.A.'s office, or I'd have known

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
it. Who handled that for you?

STERNWOOD:
Shawn Regan did.

MARLOWE:
(alternating between the
drink, the cigarette and the
now sodden handkerchief with
which he mops his face and neck)
There must be some reason why Regan's
not handling this one too. Am I to
know it?

STERNWOOD:
Shawn has left me.

MARLOWE:
I thought I hadn't seen him around
lately.

STERNWOOD:
Yes, he left about a month ago, without
a word. That was what hurt. I had no
claim on him, since I was only his
employer. But I hoped we were more than
that and that he would have said goodbye
to me. You knew him too?

MARLOWE:
Yes. From the old days, when he
was running rum from Mexico and I
was on the other side, and now and then
we swapped shots between drinks -- or
drinks between shots, if you like
that better.

STERNWOOD:
My respects to you. Few men ever
exchange more than one shot with
Shawn Regan. He commanded a brigade
in the Irish Republican Army, you
know.

MARLOWE:
(mopping)
No, I didn't. But I knew he was

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

a good man at whatever he did.
Nobody was pleased better than me
when I heard you had taken him on
as your -- whatever he was here.

STERNWOOD:

As my friend, my son almost. Many's
the hour he would sit here with me,
sweating like a pig, drinking the
brandy I could no longer drink, telling
me stories of the Irish revolution --
But enough of this.

(he holds out the
envelope)

Here. And help yourself to the brandy.

Marlowe takes the envelope, sits again, wipes his hands
on his wet handkerchief, removes from the envelope a
card and three clips of stiff paper.

9. INSERT: CARD

-- in Marlowe's hand.

Mr. Arthur Gwynn Geiger
Rare Books and De Luxe Editions

Marlowe's hand turns the card over. On the back, in
hand-printing.

"Dear Sir:

In spite of the legal uncollectibility
of the enclosed, which frankly are gambling
debts, I assume you might wish them
honored.

Respectfully,
A. G. Geiger."

DISSOLVE TO:

10. INSERT: THREE PROMISSORY NOTES

filled out in ink, dated: September 3
September 8
September 11

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"On demand I promise to pay to Arthur Gwynne Geiger on order the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) without interest. Value Received. Carmen Sternwood."

11. STERNWOOD AND MARLOWE (AS BEFORE)

Sternwood watching from wheelchair as Marlowe mixes himself a drink at the wagon, then turns toward chair.

STERNWOOD:
(watching Marlowe)
Well?

MARLOWE:
(Standing)
Who's Arthur Gwynne Geiger?

STERNWOOD:
I haven't the faintest idea.

MARLOWE:
Have you asked your daughter?

STERNWOOD:
I don't intend to. If I did she would suck her thumb and look coy.

MARLOWE:
Yeah. I met her in the hall. She did that at me. Then she tried to sit in my lap.

Sternwood stares at him. After a moment Marlowe raises the glass, drinks, lowers it.

STERNWOOD:
(harshly)
Well?

MARLOWE:
(stares at him a moment)
Am I being polite, or can I say what I want.

STERNWOOD:
Say it.

MARLOWE:

Do the two girls run around together?

STERNWOOD:

I think not. They are alike only in their one corrupt blood. Vivian is spoiled, exacting, smart, ruthless. Carmen is still the child who likes to pull the wings off flies. I assume they have always had all the usual vices; whatever new ones of their own invention --
(again he makes the repressed convulsive movement, glares at Marlowe)

Well?

MARLOWE:

Pay him.

STERNWOOD:

Why?

MARLOWE:

It's cheaper. A little money against a lot of annoyance. The money you won't miss, and if your heart hasn't broken long before this time, whatever's behind these --

(indicates the notes on the chair)

-- can't do it now.

STERNWOOD:

Not my heart. No Sternwood ever had one. But there is my pride, which I at least, and I believe my older daughter still, both have.

MARLOWE:

Sure. A man named A. G. Geiger's just betting himself three thousand bucks on that pride. Who was this Joe Brody you paid the five thousand to?

STERNWOOD:

I don't recall. Norris would know. My butler. I think he called himself

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STERNWOOD: (Cont.)

a gambler.

(hopefully)

This may be an authentic gambling debt,
after all.

Marlowe looks at Sternwood for a moment. Then he half
turns, sets the glass on the wagon and takes the napkin
from around the ice bucket and mops himself with it.
Sternwood watches him.

MARLOWE:

Do you think it is?

STERNWOOD:

(after a second)

No.

Marlowe mops himself again with the napkin, puts it back
on the wagon, takes up his glass, drinks.

MARLOWE:

I guess you want me to take this
Geiger off your back: that right?

STERNWOOD:

Yes.

MARLOWE:

Do you want to know anything, or do
you just want to be rid of him?

STERNWOOD:

Didn't you just tell me I no longer
have any heart to be broken?

MARLOWE:

It may cost you a little -- besides
my own twenty-five a day and expenses.

Sternwood says nothing, merely makes a faint, impatient
movement of his head or shoulders. Marlowe drains the
glass, sets it back on the wagon.

MARLOWE:

When do I start?

STERNWOOD:

At once. And now if you will excuse me -- But another brandy before you go?

MARLOWE:

(takes up papers from chair, then his coat)

No thanks.

STERNWOOD:

(presses bell plugged into chair arm)

Then good morning. And good luck.

He lies back in the chair, closes his eyes. Marlowe watches him a moment, then, his coat over his arm and still mopping his neck, he turns and exits.

12. EXT. GREENHOUSE MARLOWE

emerges, still carrying his coat, dripping wet, mopping with his sodden handkerchief, breathing the cool air, starts away. Before he reaches the house, Norris meets him, pauses two feet away, silver-haired, respectful, grave.

NORRIS:

Mrs. Rutledge, the older daughter would like to see you before you leave, sir. And about the money: the General has instructed me to give you a check for whatever you require.

MARLOWE:

Instructed you how?

NORRIS:

(blinks, stares, then smiles)

Ah, I see, sir. I forgot you are a detective. By the way he rang the bell.

MARLOWE:

You write his checks.

NORRIS:

I have that privilege.

MARLOWE:

(starts on)

That ought to save you from a pauper's grave. I won't need any money now, thanks -- How did Mrs. Rutledge know I was here?

NORRIS:

She saw you through the window. I was obliged to tell her who you were.

MARLOWE:

I don't like that.

NORRIS:

Are you attempting to tell me my duties, sir?

MARLOWE:

No. Just having fun trying to guess what they are.

NORRIS:

This way, sir.

13. INT. VIVIAN'S SITTING ROOM

The room is large, over-elaborate, feminine. VIVIAN reclines on a chaise-lounge, showing her legs to good advantage. She is beautiful, giving an impression of strong will and strong emotions, the dangerous unpredictable type. She sips a drink, insolently at ease, watching Marlowe as he enters. Marlowe is still rumpled and sweating. He adopts her be-damned-to-you attitude, looks her over, and sits down unbidden, wiping his face and neck with his handkerchief.

VIVIAN:

So you're a private detective. I didn't know they existed except in books, or else they were little greedy men snooping around hotels. My, you're a mess, aren't you?

MARLOWE:

Yeah -- I'm not the orchid-bearing type.

VIVIAN:

This business of Dad's -- think you can handle it for him?

MARLOWE:

(sardonically)

It doesn't look too tough.

VIVIAN:

Really. I would have thought a case like that took a little effort.

MARLOWE:

Not too much.

VIVIAN:

Well! What will your first step be?

MARLOWE:

The usual one.

VIVIAN:

I didn't know there was a usual one.

MARLOWE:

Oh, yes. It comes complete with diagrams on Page forty-seven of "How to be a Detective in Ten Easy Lessons", correspondence school textbook.

VIVIAN:

You must have read another one on how to be a comedian. I'm quite serious, Mr. Marlowe. My father is not well, and I want this case handled with the least possible worry to him.

MARLOWE:

That's the way I'm going to handle it.

VIVIAN:

I see. No professional secrets.

Marlowe doesn't answer. He's still admiring her legs. Vivian sets her glass down, looking him over coolly, as though he were something in a bottle.

VIVIAN:

How do you like Dad?

MARLOWE:

I liked him.

VIVIAN:

He liked Shawn. I suppose you know who Shawn is?

MARLOWE:

Yeah, I know.

VIVIAN:

You don't have to play poker with me. Dad wants to find him, doesn't he?

MARLOWE:

Do you?

VIVIAN:

Of course I do! It wasn't right for him to go off like that. Broke Dad's heart, although he won't say much about it. Or did he?

MARLOWE:

He mentioned it.

VIVIAN:

I don't see what there is to be cagey about. And I don't like your manners.

MARLOWE:

I'm not crazy about yours. I didn't ask to see you. And I don't mind your ritzing me, or drinking your lunch out of a bottle. I don't mind your showing me your legs. They're very swell legs and it's a pleasure to make their acquaintance. I don't mind if you don't like my manners. They're pretty bad. I grieve over them during the long winter evenings. But don't waste your time trying to cross-examine me.

Vivian is really angry now. She swings her legs to the floor, and her anger is something sparkling and terrific.

VIVIAN:

People don't talk like that to me.

Marlowe laughs at her softly. His eyes are warm and mocking. Vivian relaxes slowly, looking at him, and something besides fury comes into her own face.

VIVIAN:

Do you always think you can handle people like trained seals?

MARLOWE:

Just what is it you're afraid of?

They watch each other, and Vivian's face closes against him like a door.

VIVIAN:

Dad didn't want to see you about Shawn at all.

MARLOWE:

Didn't he?

VIVIAN:

Get out.

(as Marlowe rises and
turns from her)

Please . . . you could find Shawn if
Dad wanted you to.

MARLOWE:

(still dead pan)

When did he go?

VIVIAN:

A month back. He just drove away
one afternoon without saying a word.
They found his car in some private garage.

MARLOWE:

They?

VIVIAN:

(her manner suddenly
different, as though she
has won her bout with him)

Dad didn't tell you then.

MARLOWE:

He told me about Regan, yes. That's not what he wanted to see me about. Is that what you've been trying to get me to say?

VIVIAN:

I'm sure I don't care what you say.

MARLOWE:

(giving her a look she
could chin herself on)

You might change your mind about that some day. So long, Mrs. Rutledge.

Vivian watches him as he goes out, with smoldering, puzzled eyes.

14. INT. MAIN HALL

Marlowe comes down the hall, heading for the door. Norris appears with Marlowe's hat and hands it to him.

MARLOWE:

You made a mistake. Mrs. Rutledge didn't want to see me.

NORRIS:

I'm sorry, sir. I make many mistakes.

He opens the door. Marlowe pauses to look at the view.

15. LONG SHOT MARLOWE'S ANGLE

Beyond the lawns and hedges of the Sternwood estate the ground falls away to barren fields with several old wooden derricks, some of them still wearily pumping oil. The derricks are at a considerable distance from the house, but a man with binoculars could see any activity around them clearly enough. The sky is clouded; THUNDER SOUNDS distantly.

16. AT THE STERNWOOD DOOR

MARLOWE:

How long those wells been pumping?

NORRIS:

About thirty years. The General likes to take his field glasses sometimes and sit by the window and watch the walking-beams. They're like life, he says -- an endless seesaw, forever up and down and getting nowhere.

MARLOWE:

They get oil. Black stuff, with a smell to it . . . worth dollars.

He goes out, gets into his car and drives away. The SOUND of THUNDER follows him.

DISSOLVE TO:

17. INSERT: A BRONZE PLAQUE

"HOLLYWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY"

DISSOLVE TO:

18. INT. LIBRARY

The typical reading room, with the usual characters hunched over books at the tables. Marlowe stands by the librarian's desk. A boy comes from the door to the stacks and hands the librarian a book. She looks at it.

LIBRARIAN:

Famous First Editions.

(looking at Marlowe--
it is obvious that
she feels he's not
the type to be
reading about first
editions)

This was the one you wanted?

MARLOWE:

(blandly, as he
takes the book)

I collect blondes, too -- in
bottles.

He walks over to a table and sits down, leaving the woman staring after him.

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19. EXT. GEIGER'S STORE ESTABLISHING SHOT

Sign on window: "RARE EDITIONS". etc.

Marlowe walks up and pauses to assure himself that it's the right place. The store front is narrow. Discreet gold lettering on the plate glass repeats the legend on Geiger's card:

A. G. GEIGER

Rare Books and De Luxe Editions

The windows are blanked off with Chinese screens, fronted by large Oriental urns. Marlowe puts on a pair of horn-rimmed sun glasses, adjusts his hat to a less rakish angle, and enters.

20. INT. GEIGER'S STORE

The room is small, dim, expensively underfurnished with leather chairs, smoking stands, and a small psuedo-Oriental desk. A few sets of tooled leather binds on narrow tables, others in glass cases.

AGNES, a hard-looking, expensive blonde in a tight black dress, rises from behind the desk as Marlowe approaches and moves to greet him. Her manner is professionally distant, her accent betrays her phony veneer.

AGNES:

Can I be of any assistance?

MARLOWE:

Would you happen to have a Ben Hur 1860?

AGNES:

(hanging on hard to her composure, seeing that she's going to have trouble with Marlowe)

A first edition?

MARLOWE:

No. Third -- the one with the erratum on page one-sixteen.

AGNES:

I'm afraid not -- at the moment.

MARLOWE:

How about a Chevalier Audubon --
the full set of course?

AGNES:

(with a frozen smile)

Uh -- not at the moment.

MARLOWE:

(politely)

You do sell books?

AGNES:

(dropping the act,
pointing to the
display books)

What do those look like --
grapefruit?

MARLOWE:

They look like books from here,
anyway. Maybe I'd better talk
to Mr. Geiger.

AGNES:

He's not in at the moment.

Marlowe glances up as a man enters the store; a middle-aged, important-looking person who has an incongruously furtive and nervous manner. He looks quickly at Marlowe, then at Agnes, who gives him an almost imperceptible warning nod. Marlowe remains blandly unaware of the byplay, all his attention apparently on the cigarette he's lighting.

The man walks quickly to the rear of the store. Agnes pushes a button on the desk. A door in the back wall opens on a buzzer lock. The man darts through it like a rabbit.

AGNES:

(to Marlowe)

I said Mr. Geiger is not in.

MARLOWE:

I heard you. I'll wait for him.

AGNES:

He won't be back until very late.

At this point the furtive man comes out of the rear part of the store and leaves hurriedly, looking at neither Agnes nor Marlowe. His face is lined and haggard. Marlowe is interested.

MARLOWE:

(watching the man out)

He must have got hold of the wrong title.

(to Agnes)

Well, guess I'd better blow. I'm already late now for my lecture on Argentine cera-micks.

(mispronouncing
the word)

AGNES:

(icily, correcting
him)

The word is cerAMics. And they ain't Argentine: they're Egyptian.

MARLOWE:

You did sell a book once, didn't you? Well, even the Argentine's a little too far for me today. Guess I'll just stick to the public library -- or I might try that book store across the street.

AGNES:

(freezing)

Do so.

Agnes stares viciously at his back until he is out. Then she goes to the door at the rear, knocks and goes through.

21. MOVING SHOT MARLOWE

He walks across the boulevard, turns into a small bookstore, the second-hand variety, cluttered and dingy. Several nondescript people browse among the tables. At the rear a small, dark, shrewd-faced woman sits reading at a desk --- apparently she is the proprietor. Marlowe approaches her, and she looks up blank-faced from her book.

MARLOWE:

Would you do me a very small favor?

PROPRIETRESS:

I don't know. What is it?

MARLOWE:

You know Geiger's store across the street?

PROPRIETRESS:

I think I may have passed it.

MARLOWE:

You know Geiger by sight?

PROPRIETRESS:

I should think it would be easy enough to go to his store and ask to see him.

MARLOWE:

I don't want to see him that close, just yet.

(as he gets no response)

Know anything about rare books?

PROPRIETRESS:

You could try me.

MARLOWE:

Would you have a Ben Hur, 1860, Third Edition, with the duplicated line on page one-sixteen?

The woman pulls a fat volume in front of her, starts to open it.

MARLOWE:

(continued)

. . . or a Chevalier Audubon 1840 . . . ?

The woman stops, closes the book.

PROPRIETRESS:

Nobody would. There isn't one.

MARLOWE:

Right..

(as the woman
gives him a
puzzled stare)

The girl in Geiger's store didn't
know that.

PROPRIETRESS:

I see. You begin to interest me --
vaguely.

MARLOWE:

I'm a private dick on a case.
Perhaps I ask too much.

(leaning forward
to hold a match
for her cigarette)

It didn't seem much to me somehow.

PROPRIETRESS:

(after a pause)

In his early forties, medium
height, fattish, soft all over,
a Charlie Chan moustache. Well
dressed, goes without a hat,
affects a knowledge of antiques
and hasn't any. Oh yes, his left
eye is glass.

MARLOWE:

You'd make a good cop.

PROPRIETRESS:

(returning to
her reading)

Only if he wore smoked glasses.

MARLOWE:

(laughing softly
pulling a flat
pint from his
hip pocket)

I shouldn't think you'd have to work
too hard to start anything smoking.

He shakes the bottle up and down, invitingly. She
looks up at him, searchingly, then smiles slowly.

PROPRIETRESS:

It's going to rain, soon.

MARLOWE:

I'd rather get wet in here.

She pulls open a drawer and stands two small glasses on the desk. Marlowe smiles, and starts pouring. Through the window behind him the front of Geiger's store can be seen.

DISSOLVE TO:

22. INT. BOOKSHOP

NIGHT (RAIN)

It is raining hard outside. The proprietress is a little tight, quite relaxed, and slightly philosophical, leaning against Marlowe, who sits on a stack of Britannicas beside her, watching the window. The proprietress picks up the bottle, which is now empty, shakes it forlornly, and sets it down again.

PROPRIETRESS:

A couple of hours, an empty bottle, and so long, pal. That's life.

MARLOWE:

But it was a nice two hours.

PROPRIETRESS:

(sighing)

Uh-huh.

(looking toward
the window)

There's Geiger's car driving up.

MARLOWE:

(over above action)
Who's the other guy?

PROPRIETRESS:

Damon -- or Pythias. I don't know.
Geiger's shadow, anyway. Name's
Carol Lundgren.

Marlowe has risen, is now in a hurry to follow Geiger.

MARLOWE:

So long, pal.

PROPRIETRESS:

If you ever want to buy a book . . .

MARLOWE:

A Ben Hur eighteen-sixty . . .

PROPRIETRESS:

(sighing)

With duplications. . . . So long.

DISSOLVE TO:

23. INSERT: A STREET SIGN ON A LAMP POST (RAIN) NIGHT
wet with rain:

LAVERNE TERRACE

DISSOLVE TO:

24. LONG SHOT (RAIN) NIGHT
ESTABLISHING A SECTION OF LAVERNE TERRACE

A narrow street with a high bank on one side and a scattering of cabinlike houses built down the slope on the other side, so that their roofs are not much above street level. They are masked by hedges and shrubs. Sodden trees line the dark road. The headlights of a car appear. Geiger's coupe drives up and stops in front of the garage of a small house almost completely hidden by a square box hedge. Geiger gets out, opens an umbrella, and vanishes behind the hedge. Almost immediately Marlowe's car appears, continuing slowly past Geiger's house. It turns, stops under a tree. The lights go out.

DISSOLVE TO:

25. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR (RAIN) NIGHT

Marlowe yawns, gets a bottle out of the dash compartment, shakes it reflectively.

MARLOWE:

Another hour, another bottle --
another dame?

He uncaps the bottle, salutes an unseen person wryly, drinks, then lights a cigarette and settles down to wait.

DISSOLVE TO:

26. EXT. LAVERNE TERRACE RAIN NIGHT

A dark convertible stops in front of Geiger's house. The lights go out. A small slim woman in a vagabond hat and raincoat gets out. She pauses, looking around -- we see her face dimly. It is CARMEN STERNWOOD. She vanishes behind the hedge. The DOORBELL RINGS faintly, the door opens and closes.

27. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe looks offscene after Carmen, with an unpleasant grin.

MARLOWE:

Yeah -- another dame.

His expression indicates that things may pick up shortly. He looks at his watch -- the CAMERA MOVES IN to feature the watch -- the hands standing at 6:35.

DISSOLVE TO:

28. INSERT: THE WATCH ON MARLOWE'S WRIST

The hands now indicate: 7:20.

29. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR RAIN NIGHT

SHOOTING obliquely across Marlowe's shoulder, showing the street and particularly Geiger's house through the rain-streaked windscreen. Suddenly a hard white flash of light shoots out of Geiger's house like a flash of lightning. Close on its heels comes a woman's thin half-pleasurable scream. Marlowe is out of the car and on his way.

30. EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe rounds the hedge on the run. There is a wooden footbridge bridging the gap between the bank and the front door. He covers this in two jumps and stops at the front door. The knocker is in the shape of a lion's head, and ring in its mouth. Marlowe puts his hand on it, and as he does, three SHOTS SOUND from inside. Marlowe freezes. From inside we HEAR a sighing groan and

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the thud of a falling body, then footsteps going away. Marlowe looks over the railing of the bridge, but there's no way around to the back. He stands still, listening. Light shows from the house, behind draperies. From offscene at some distance, we HEAR someone running down steps.

31. EXT. REAR STEPS EXTREME CLOSE RAIN NIGHT

On a man's feet, running with hysterical speed down the wet treads. We follow them across muddy ground, apparently a dirt road surface, to a car.

32. LONG SHOT ALLEY BELOW GEIGER'S HOUSE RAIN NIGHT

As a car starts and roars away with clashing gears. Almost before it is out of sight a second car pulls out from under shrouding trees and follows it.

33. EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE AT FRONT DOOR RAIN NIGHT

The SOUND of the two cars is still audible, fading into distance. Marlowe listens to it. When everything is quiet again he tries the front door, finds it locked. French windows flank the door just out of reach beyond the railing of the bridge. Marlowe swings out over the railing, kicks in the right-hand window, and pulls himself over the sill.

34. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

As Marlowe comes in through the window. The room is wide, low-beamed ceiling, brown plaster walls with strips of Chinese embroidery and Oriental prints on them. Low bookshelves, a desk, thick rug floor cushions, low divans -- an exotic messy atmosphere. On a low dais at one end of the room is a carved teakwood chair, a massive thing in which Carmen Sternwood sits, rigidly erect, in the pose of an Egyptian goddess. She wears a man's large silk dressing gown -- it doesn't pretend to fit her and gives the impression of having been thrown hurriedly around her by someone other than herself. Carmen's eyes have a queer fixed stare. She pays no attention to Marlowe. She looks as if, in her mind, she is doing something very important and doing it well. She seems pleased about it, her lips curved to a smile. She laughs from time to time -- softly, secretly.

Opposite her, Geiger lies on the floor in front of a thing like a totem pole. The eye of the totem is a camera lens; it focuses on the chair where Carmen sits. A blackened flash bulb is clipped to the totem beside it. Geiger is dressed in semi-oriental fashion. His embroidered coat is soaked with blood. He is obviously dead.

Marlowe takes all this in, sniffs the air. It is heavy with something unpleasant. He crosses to a small lacquer table bearing a flagon of dark liquid and two glasses. Marlowe sniffs the flagon, makes a grimace of disgust. Carmen's clothes are wadded up on the divan. Marlowe picks up her coat and shoes and goes to her.

MARLOWE:

Hello. Remember me.

She doesn't seem to see him. The soft, secret laughter is his only answer. He goes closer, and deliberately slaps her face. This gets a reaction -- he slaps her again, without emotion, but hard. Carmen comes to, slightly, giving him a sly, mad smile.

MARLOWE:

You're higher than a kite. Come on, let's be nice. Let's get dressed, Carmen.

He puts her shoes on.

CARMEN:

(giggling)
You tickle.

MARLOWE:

Yeah, you tickle me, too.

Marlowe pulls her to her feet and puts her coat on, trying not to dislodge the dressing gown. She falls against him, very happy about it all, apparently about to pass out. Marlowe is not happy.

MARLOWE:

Let's take a walk.

CARMEN:

(thickly, half
conscious)
You're cute.

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MARLOWE:

Sure, sure. So's your boyfriend.
Want to look at him?

He walks the staggering girl over to Geiger's body.
It is hard work -- and Carmen is not impressed.

CARMEN:

(as before)

He's cute.

MARLOWE:

Cute. Yeah. Let's walk.

He walks her back and forth across the room a couple of times -- LOW CAMERA FEATURING the dead man as their legs pass in front of him. Then she passes out in his arms, still convinced that everything is cute. He spreads her out on the divan, unconsciously wiping his hands on his coat as though he has touched something dirty. Then he returns to the totem and Geiger's body. He examines the concealed camera. The plateholder is gone. He rolls Geiger's body over enough to see under it. No plateholder. He frowns thoughtfully at the girl . . . then goes into the rear of the house.

35. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE REAR ROOMS NIGHT

Marlowe passes quickly through the bath and kitchen, pausing to try the locked kitchen door and to examine a window which had been jimmied open. The scars show plainly on the wood, the rain blowing in unheeded. Marlowe then goes to the bedroom, which is in keeping with the living room. He glances briefly through the closet, with a man's clothes in it, then picks up a keyholder from the dressing table, where it has been placed along with other contents of Geiger's pockets -- money, handkerchief, etc.

36. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Marlowe returns and unlocks the desk. In one drawer he finds a locked steel box, which he opens with Geiger's keys. He takes from it a leather book.

37. INSERT: THE BOOK IN MARLOWE'S HANDS

He leafs through the pages slowly, showing an index

and writing in code, in the same slanted printing as on the cards General Sternwood gave him.

38. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Marlowe places the book in his pocket, wipes his fingerprints carefully from the box, replaces it and locks the desk. He pockets the keys, turns off the lamps and the gas logs in the fireplace, makes a wadded bundle of Carmen's clothes, jams her hat on her head and picks her up, holding her clothes awkwardly in one hand. On the way out he pushes down the light switch by the door, and kicks the door shut behind him.

39. EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE RAIN NIGHT

as Marlowe carries the sleeping girl out to her car.

DISSOLVE TO:

40. EXT. STERNWOOD HOUSE RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe has just rung the doorbell. In the drive behind him stands Carmen's Packard. The door opens.

Norris appears in it, recognizes Marlowe, looks swiftly past him and recognizes the car also. Then he looks at Marlowe again -- the same quiet, grave face with its expression of grief and sadness which the sight of the car brought into it. His voice though is quiet and calm.

NORRIS:

Good evening, sir.

MARLOWE:

(rapidly)

Mrs. Rutledge in?

NORRIS:

No, sir.

MARLOWE:

The General?

NORRIS:

He's asleep.

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MARLOWE:

Good. Where's Mrs. Rutledge's maid?

NORRIS:

Mathilda? She's here.

MARLOWE:

Better get her down here. This job needs a woman's touch. Take a look inside the car.

But Norris does not move, only his eyes go again to the waiting car and return, his face still grave, only the grief a little sharper behind it.

NORRIS:

(quickly)

She's all right?

MARLOWE:

Sure. She's okay. Just get that maid. Mathilda can do all right for her.

NORRIS:

We all try to do our best for her. I'll call Mathilda at once.

MARLOWE:

(turning)

Then I'll leave it with you. Goodnight.

NORRIS:

May I call you a cab, sir?

MARLOWE:

(pauses)

No. In fact, I'm not here. You haven't even seen me tonight -- see?

NORRIS:

Yes, sir.

Marlowe turns on, fast, walking down the drive in the rain.

DISSOLVE TO:

41. INT. GEIGER'S DARK HOUSE RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe, a shadowy figure, enters, closes door behind him, crosses the room to a lamp, turns the switch. Marlowe is quite wet, indicating that he has walked back from Sternwood's. He stands with his hand still on the light switch, looks about the room, crosses to another lamp, puts it on, is about to turn away when he stops dead, reacts as he looks at the totem pole and at the floor beneath it where Geiger's body had lain. The body is gone. Marlowe crosses the room, wasting no time, determined. He passes through door to bedroom, snaps light on beyond it, after a moment the light beyond the door snaps off and Marlowe re-enters living room. He has not found the body. He stands for a moment, thinking, then he goes and kneels so that he can squint along the surface of the thick rug. He sees in the nap the marks where Geiger's heels were dragged along it, across the room toward the front door. He rises at last, thoughtful, slowly takes out a cigarette and lights it, drops match into ashtray, stops, takes up the dead match and puts it into his pocket. Then he takes out his handkerchief, goes and wipes off the bedroom doorknob, goes to the first lamp, turns it out and wipes it off, leaving room in darkness and himself a shadow which can be barely seen in the act of wiping off that button. Then he crosses the room.

42. EXT. DOOR TO HOUSE NIGHT

Marlowe as he closes and locks it, wipes off knob, pockets keys, turns.

43. INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Marlowe, sitting at a table, the code book which he found at Geiger's open before him, a highball at his hand as he tries to work out the code. He cannot solve it. His hand reaches for the highball glass.

DISSOLVE TO:

44. INT. MARLOWE'S BEDROOM MORNING

Marlowe, in bed, wakes reluctantly as LOUD KNOCKING on the apartment door penetrates his slumber. He

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crawls out of bed, obviously the worse for a hangover, pulls on a dressing gown as he staggers sleepily toward the next room.

MARLOWE:

(as the KNOCKING
CONTINUES)

All right, all right. Keep your
pants on . . .

45. INT. MARLOWE'S LIVING ROOM AT FRONT DOOR

as Marlowe opens it to admit BERNIE OHLS, a dapper, slightly flashy man, whose clothes are expensive and always a little wrong. His face is dapper and deceiving since it is actually the face of a man who has been in close places in the course of his duty, has killed several lawbreakers, at times when he was outnumbered and they thought he was covered and helpless until too late. He is pleasant and affable to all, respects courage, loves no man.

MARLOWE:

Well Bernie. Don't you ever go
to bed?

OHLS:

(entering --
surveying Marlowe)

Boy, what a beautiful hangover!
Tut, tut -- man your age, out on
the town all night . . .

MARLOWE:

I got it right here.

OHLS:

(sitting)
That's even worse.

MARLOWE:

All right -- what is it?

OHLS:

Does it have to be something?

MARLOWE:

Look, Bernie, when somebody

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
from the Homicide Squad comes
over to help . . .

OHLS:
You're working for the Sternwoods,
aren't you?

MARLOWE:
(warily)
Yeah.

OHLS:
Done anything for 'em yet?

MARLOWE:
How could I do anything
yesterday in all that rain?

OHLS:
(laughing)
Okay -- They seem to be a family
that things happen to. A big
Buick belonging to one of them
is washing around in the surf off
Lido fish pier. Oh yea, I almost forgot.
There's a guy in it.

MARLOWE:
(flatly, after a
pause)
Regan?

OHLS:
Who? Oh, you mean that Irish
ex-legger old Sternwood hired
to do his drinking for him.
What would he be doing down
there?

He watches Marlowe's face narrowly -- it tells him
nothing.

MARLOWE:
What would anybody be doing down
there?

OHLS:
That's what I'm going to Lido to

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OHLS: (Cont.)
find out. Want to come?

MARLOWE:
Thanks, Bernie. Yeah, be with
you in ten minutes.

He starts out, already pulling off his dressing gown.
Ohls looks after him, frowning.

DISSOLVE TO:

46. INT. CAR OHLS AND MARLOWE MORNING

Ohls is driving. It is an official car, now and then
Ohls sounds the siren.

OHLS:
It ain't Regan. I checked up.
Regan's a big guy, tall as you
and a shade heavier. This is a
young kid.
(he SOUNDS SIREN --
the car is going fast)
What made you think it was Regan?

MARLOWE:
Who is it? Don't they know yet?

OHLS:
Now, now. Behave. What made
Regan skip out? Or ain't you inter-
ested in that either?

MARLOWE:
Why should I be?

OHLS:
That wasn't what old Sternwood
wanted you for, then?

MARLOWE:
Can't a guy quit a job anymore
without notifying the District
Attorney?

OHLS:
When an ex-bootlegger gets himself
hired into a job where all he's

OHLS: (Cont.)
got to do is sit in a greenhouse
and drink a millionaire's brandy,
when he throws that job up --

MARLOWE:
I'm not looking for Regan.

OHLS:
Okay, keep buttoned, kid.

MARLOWE:
General Sternwood told you to send
me out to see him. But he never
told me I was to report --

OHLS:
I said, keep it buttoned, didn't I?
(SOUNDS SIREN)
After all, you got to eat too --
even if I don't know why.

MARLOWE:
Sometimes I don't know either.

Ohls SOUNDS the SIREN AGAIN. The car speeds on.

47. EXT. ENTRANCE TO LIDO FISH PIER MORNING

A faded stucco arch, the sea beyond it, the pier stretching
away as Ohls' car stops before the entrance and Ohls
and Marlowe get out. Beside the arch are parked a
police car and several police motorcycles. The long
pier, railed with white two-by-fours, runs out over
the water. There are several private cars parked along
the road, a crowd of people is gathered at the far end of
the pier as a motorcycle officer, stationed beneath
the arch, is holding back another crowd as Ohls and
Marlowe come up. Ohls shows the officer his badge.

OHLS:
(to guard)
Medical examiner come yet?

GUARD:
(checks pass,
waves them on)
Beat you by 15 minutes. He's
examining the guy now probably.

OHLS:

(pockets his pass)

Oh, he is, huh? Didn't you guys
ever hear of the D.A.'s office?

GUARD:

Keep your shirt on. There's a
deputy in charge.

Ohls, followed by Marlowe, passes onto the pier.

48. SEAWARD END OF PIER

A shattered gap in the railing at the end of the pier shows where the car crashed through. Another crowd of people held back by other policemen, gather along the broken railing in b.g. Beyond them, moored to the end of the pier, lies a flat barge with wheelhouse and derrick. As Ohls and Marlowe approach, the police herd the crowd back and four men come up from the barge, carrying a sheet-covered stretcher and carry it on across the SHOT -- the crowd gaping after it. As the bearers are about to pass, Ohls stops them.

OHLS:

Wait a minute.

The bearers stop. Ohls turns the sheet back, looks at the dead man's face.

OHLS:

(over his shoulder
to Marlowe)

Want a look?

Marlowe looks at the face for a moment. Ohls drops the sheet back.

OHLS:

(to bearers)

All right. Beat it.

The bearers go on. Ohls and Marlowe approach the barge, the crowd gawking about them, after the stretcher, the policemen shoving among them.

A POLICEMAN:

(to crowd)

That's all now. Go on.

49. DECK OF BARGE MOORED TO THE END OF THE PIER

On it sits the car which has been lifted from the water. It is the same black sedan which Marlowe saw the chauffeur washing yesterday in Sternwood's garage -- bent and stained with water. In front of the car are gathered Ohls, Marlowe, a uniformed deputy, two plainclothesmen and the Medical Examiner who has just finished repacking his small black bag.

OHLS:

(to deputy)

What's the story?

DEPUTY:

You can see most of it from here. Went through the rail yonder. Must have hit it pretty hard. The rain stopped down here about nine P.M. The broken ends of the rails are dry inside. That would put it about nine-thirty last night.

OHLS:

Drunk, huh?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN:

Then he must have been that guy you hear about that always drives better drunk. He plowed an awful straight furrow down that pier, right to the end of it. Then he hit the railing -- right square head-on -- hard and clean -- or he wouldn't have gone through it.

OHLS:

All right. Suicide then.

DEPUTY:

The hand-throttle was set half-way down. Something had hit him a pretty hard lick across the left temple.

OHLS:

(to Medical Examiner)

All right, Doc. Let's have it.

MEDICAL EXAMINER:

His neck was broken.

OHLS:

What made the bruise? Steering-wheel?

MEDICAL EXAMINER:

It was made by something covered.
The wound had already bled under the
skin while he was still alive.

MARLOWE:

A blackjack?

They all turn and glance at Marlowe.

OHLS:

(after a moment)
I'd forgotten about you. Let's go
back to town.

50. EXT. PIER MARLOWE AND OHLS

They are walking back toward their car. A few people
still hang around, staring at the barge.

OHLS:

So you recognized him.

MARLOWE:

Yeah. Sternwood's chauffeur. I saw
him washing that same car yesterday.

OHLS:

So that was what old Sternwood wanted
with you.

MARLOWE:

Look, I don't even know his name --

OHLS:

I do. His name's Owen Taylor. About a
year or so back he run Sternwood's
daughter, the hotcha one, off to Yuma.
The older sister run after them and
brought the girl back and had Taylor
thrown into the icebox. Then the
next day she comes down and begs the
kid off -- said the kid meant to
marry the sister, only the sister can't
see it. So they let the kid go, and

OHLS: (Cont.)

darned if the Sternwoods don't have him come back to work, same as if nothing had happened.

MARLOWE:

And now somebody'll have to go see them about this.

OHLS:

Yep. That's me, probably.

MARLOWE:

Leave the old man out of it, if you can. He's got enough troubles already besides being sick.

OHLS:

Regan, huh?

MARLOWE:

I don't know anything about Regan. I told you that.

OHLS:

Then what are you doing in this?

MARLOWE:

I'm not looking for Regan. I can tell you that much.

OHLS:

(drily)

Yeah. I heard you the first time.

DISSOLVE TO:

51. INT. GEIGER'S STORE

Marlowe enters, wearing the dark glasses as before, and as before, Agnes rises from behind the desk. She is not happy to see Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

(cheerily)

Hello -- I'm back again. Mr. Geiger in?

AGNES:

I'm afraid not. No.

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Marlowe glances around to make sure they're alone, then removes the glasses and moves close to Agnes.

MARLOWE:

It was just a stall about those first editions. I got something to sell. Something Geiger's wanted for a long time.

AGNES:

Oh -- I see. Well -- you might come back tomorrow. I think. . . .

MARLOWE:

Drop the veil, sister. I'm in the business too.

Agnes stares at him, scared stiff, not knowing how to get rid of him.

MARLOWE:

-(impatiently)

I haven't got forever. Is he sick? I could go up to the house.

AGNES:

(frantically)

No, that wouldn't do any good -- he's out of town. Couldn't you -- tomorrow -- ?

Marlowe glances up sharply as Carol Lundgren, the dark handsome boy in the leather jacket, opens the door in the rear wall. Behind him, through the open door, we see the back room, littered with the papers and boxes of hurried packing, and a gaunt, hard-looking man with a certain animal attractiveness in the midst of it, cramming folios and stacks of large-sized envelopes into the packing boxes. Carol is obviously strained and under tension, looking as though he has not slept.

CAROL:

(desperately)

Agnes, you've got to --

He becomes aware of Marlowe, shuts up abruptly, and slams the door. From the partition his voice rises, sharp but unintelligible, answered by a heavier, man's voice -- no words come through, but the implica-

tion is clearly that Carol shall shut up and get out. A door slams violently, then there is silence. Marlowe, ignoring this byplay, and the stricken look on Agnes' face, puts on his glasses and touches his hat.

MARLOWE:

Tomorrow, then. Early.

AGNES:

Yes, early.

Before Marlowe has quite left the shop she darts back through the rear door.

52. EXT. GEIGER'S STORE MOVING SHOT MARLOWE

As he walks rapidly along the Boulevard to a taxi standing at the curb. A smart, competent-appearing girl sits reading a pulp magazine behind the wheel.

53. INT. CAB

Marlowe sticks his head in, does a take, and relaxes.

MARLOWE:

(disgustedly)

I would have to pick a girl at this point.

CABBY:

(giving him a cold stare)

Anything you want, bud, I can give you.

MARLOWE:

(grinning)

And with both fists, too, I'll bet. Tail job?

CABBY:

Cop?

MARLOWE:

Private.

CABBY:

(laying aside the magazine)

Hop in.

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Marlowe looks down at the magazine.

54. INSERT THE MAGAZINE ON THE SEAT

It is a copy of TWO-GUN DETECTIVE TALES, with a lurid cover of gunmen and a gory corpse.

55. INT. CAB THE SHOT AS BEFORE MARLOWE AND CABBY

MARLOWE:

(grinning)

Okay, kid. Take it.

He gets in quickly.

CABBY:

(slapping down the flag)

I got it.

56. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET CAB IN F.G.

A light panel pickup job comes out of an alley and turns down the street. The gaunt, hard-looking man is driving. Marlowe leans forward and gives the cabby the high sign. The cab pulls out to follow.

DISSOLVE TO:

57. INSERT STREET SIGN

RANDALL PLACE

DISSOLVE TO:

58. LONG SHOT ESTABLISHING

A section of Randall Place, featuring an apartment building with a basement garage. An awning stretches out over the sidewalk -- lettering along the awning's side reads, RANDALL ARMS. The panel truck drives past the entrance and turns into the basement garage. Some distance behind it we see the cab pull into the curb. Marlowe gets out and walks toward the RANDALL ARMS.

59. INT. RANDALL ARMS THE ENTRY

The door stands open onto a small foyer, without desk or switchboard. A panel of gilt mailboxes is let into one wall of the entrance. Marlowe, after a glance

inside, examines the names under the mail drops. One in particular catches his eye.

60. INSERT THE CARD ON THE MAILBOX

The name JOE BRODY is typewritten on the card.

61. INT. RANDALL ARMS THE ENTRY AS BEFORE

Marlowe taps the card, then gives the foyer one more meaning look, turns.

62. EXT. RANDALL PLACE AT THE CAB

As Marlowe returns to it. He speaks to the girl, who nods and drives away with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

63. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET

as the cab pulls into the curb in front of a nondescript office building. Marlowe gets out and leans in to pay the driver.

64. INT. CAB

MARLOWE:

(handing her a bill)

Nice going, kid. Buy yourself an orchid.

CABBY:

Thanks. You can take my number in case you have any more jobs you want done right.

(indicating the serial number on her driver's cap)

I mean this number.

MARLOWE:

What number did you think I thought you meant?

The Cabby flustered clashes the gears savagely, shoots the cab away. Marlowe tips his hat to her and enters the building as she drives away.

65. INT. BUILDING HALLWAY AT MARLOWE'S OFFICE DOOR

Marlowe opens the door, which has Philip Marlowe in
glit letters on the upper glass.

66. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE THE-WAITING ROOM

A small room, cheaply furnished, with a closed door in
one wall. Vivian sits waiting for him, beautifully
but simply dressed, quite at ease. She seems in a
better humor this morning, smiling at the surprised
Marlowe.

VIVIAN:

Well, you do exist, after all.
I'd begun to think I dreamed you
out of a bottle of bad gin.

VIVIAN: (Cont.)

(with underlying hint
of seriousness)

I've been trying to get you on the
phone all morning.

MARLOWE:

You can insult me just as well face
to face. I don't bite -- much.

VIVIAN:

(apologetically)

I was rather rude.

MARLOWE:

(smiling)

An apology from a Sternwood?

(unlocking the

connecting door,

holding it for her)

Come into my boudoir.

67. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE

Like the waiting room, it's shabby and not large. The
usual desk, chairs, and filing cabinets.

VIVIAN:

(sitting)

You don't put on much of a front.

MARLOWE:

You can't make much money at this trade, if you're honest. If you have a front, you're making money -- or expect to.

VIVIAN:

Oh -- are you honest?

MARLOWE:

Painfully.

VIVIAN:

(taking out a
cigarette)

How did you get into this slimy business, then?

MARLOWE:

(giving her a look as he
lights it for her)

Because people like you pay good money to have the slime cleaned up.

She looks away from him, angry but not able to say anything. Marlowe sits down behind the desk.

MARLOWE:

What did you want to see me about?
Taylor?

VIVIAN:

(softly)

Poor Owen. So you know about that.

MARLOWE:

A D.A.'s man took me down to Lido. Turned out he knew more about it than I did. He knew Owen Taylor wanted to marry your sister -- once.

VIVIAN:

(quietly)

Perhaps it wouldn't have been a bad idea. He was in love with her. We don't find much of that in our circle. . . .

(changing her tone)

But I didn't come to see you about

VIVIAN: (Cont.)

Owen. Do you feel yet that you can
tell me what my father wants you to do?

MARLOWE:

Not without his permission.

VIVIAN:

Was it about Carmen?

MARLOWE:

I can't even say that.

Vivian watches him for a moment, then gives in. She
takes a thick white envelope from her bag and tosses
it on the desk.

VIVIAN:

You'd better look at this anyway.

Marlowe examines the envelope.

VIVIAN:

A messenger brought it this morning.

MARLOWE:

Eight-thirty-five it says --
for you or your father.

He opens the envelope, takes out a medium-sized
photograph. We do not see the subject of the picture,
but Marlowe's reaction is significant. He whistles
softly.

MARLOWE:

So that's what Carmen looks like!
(to Vivian)
How much do they want for this?

VIVIAN:

Five thousand -- for the negative and
the rest of the prints. The deal has
to be closed tonight, or they give
the picture to some scandal sheet.

MARLOWE:

The demand came how?

VIVIAN:

A woman telephoned me, shortly after this thing was delivered.

MARLOWE:

There's nothing in the scandal sheet angle. Juries convict on that racket without leaving the box. What else is there?

VIVIAN:

Does there have to be something else?

Marlowe nods -- his face is uncompromising.

VIVIAN:

(giving in again)

The woman said there was a police jam connected with it, and I'd better lay it on the line fast or I'd be talking to my little sister through a wire screen.

MARLOWE:

(deadpan, nodding)

What kind of a jam?

VIVIAN:

I don't know.

MARLOWE:

Where's Carmen now?

VIVIAN:

She's at home -- still in bed, I think. She was sick last night.

MARLOWE:

She go out at all?

VIVIAN:

The servants say she didn't. I was up at Las Olindas across the State line playing roulette at Eddie Mars' Cypress Club. I lost my shirt.

(taking another cigarette --
laughing wryly)

MARLOWE:

(getting up to
hold the match
for her)

So you like roulette. You would.

VIVIAN:

Yes, the Sternwoods all like
losing games. The Sternwoods can
afford to. The Sternwoods have
money.

(bitterly)

All it's bought them is a raincheck.

MARLOWE:

What was Owen doing with your car
last night?

VIVIAN:

Nobody knows. He took it without
permission. Do you think. . . . ?

MARLOWE:

He knew about this photo?

(shrugging)

I don't rule him out. . . . Can you
get five thousand in cash right
away?

VIVIAN:

I can borrow it -- probably
from Eddie Mars.

(sardonically)

There's a bond between us, you
see. Shawn Regan ran away with
Eddie's blonde wife.

MARLOWE:

(turning away --
leaving a pause)

You may need the money in a
hurry.

VIVIAN:

How about telling the police?

MARLOWE:

You know better than that. The
police might turn up something

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
they couldn't sit on -- and then
where would the Sternwoods be?
(after a pause)
How was it left?

VIVIAN:
The woman said she'd call me back
with instructions at five.

MARLOWE:
Okay -- call me here as soon as
you've heard from her.

VIVIAN:
Can you do anything?

MARLOWE:
I think so. But I can't tell you
how -- or why.

VIVIAN:
I like you. You believe in miracles.

MARLOWE:
(laughing)
I believe in people believing
they're smarter than they are --
if that's a miracle. Have a drink?

He reaches down into the desk drawer.

VIVIAN:
I'll have two drinks.

Marlowe grins at her. He comes up with a bottle and two glasses, fills them, and takes one to her. They salute, start to drink and find that their eyes have met over the glass rims and refuse to come apart. Vivian breaks it, not because she is shy or coy, but because suddenly there is a sadness in her face. Her gaze drops briefly, then returns to Marlowe, clear, steady, and sad.

VIVIAN:
You're a lot like Shawn Regan.

Marlowe looks at her, almost with tenderness and understanding.

MARLOWE:

You want to tell me now or later?

VIVIAN:

What?

MARLOWE:

What you're so anxious to find out.

VIVIAN:

It couldn't be -- you.

MARLOWE:

Let's do one thing at a time.

VIVIAN:

(rising)

I think we've done enough for
one day. . . .

MARLOWE:

(gently)

Want that other drink?

VIVIAN:

(going toward door)

No. . . .

Marlowe sets his glass down on the desk and picks up
the envelope.

MARLOWE:

You forgot this . . .

She turns by the door as he approaches, holding out her
hand for the envelope. Marlowe gives it to her, but
doesn't let go of it.

They are not thinking about the envelope. Slowly he
bends to her -- she leans back against the wall, her
lips parted, her eyes soft, misted with tears.
Marlowe's mouth covers hers. Presently they break --
Vivian puts her hand on Marlowe's cheek.

VIVIAN:

(softly)

Your face is like Shawn's too --

VIVIAN: (Cont.)
clean and thin, with hard bones
under it. . . .

She turns, neither slowly nor fast, away from him, opens
the door, and goes out.

DISSOLVE TO:

68. EXT. LAVERNE TERRACE AT MARLOWE'S CAR DAY

Parked unobtrusively under some trees a reasonable distance
from Geiger's house. Marlowe sits patiently, waiting,
his hat pushed to the back of his head, his collar
loosened, smoking quietly. Presently, in b.g. in front
of Geiger's house, Carmen Sternwood appears furtively
around the far end of the hedge, and goes quickly in
through the gap leading to the front door. Marlowe
reacts, then gets out, to follow her.

69. MED. CLOSE SHOT CARMEN

standing in an attitude of terror, her back pressed
against the wall beside the front door to Geiger's
house, staring at Marlowe as he enters. She raises
one hand and clenches her teeth on her thumb, staring
at him. The terror fades a little as she recognizes
him. She wears coat, hat, veil, etc.

MARLOWE:
Remember me now, don't you? Dog-
house Reilly, the man that didn't
grow very tall. Remember?

CARMEN:
(making an effort
to seem natural)
Is this your doghouse?

MARLOWE:
Sure. Let's go inside, huh?

CARMEN:
(shrinking, cringing)
Inside?

MARLOWE:
You wanted to get in, didn't you?

He pushes her away, unlocks the door, pushes it inward.

MARLOWE:

In with you.

He shoves Carmen in ahead of him, follows.

70. INT. GEIGER'S LIVING ROOM CARMEN AND MARLOWE

Carmen standing, looking about the room, as Marlowe shuts the door and stands looking at Carmen. She feels him watching her, smiles at him. He doesn't answer it. The smile fades. Marlowe takes out pack of cigarettes, offers it. She shakes her head dumbly, staring at him. He lights a cigarette.

MARLOWE:

How much do you remember about last night?

CARMEN:

Remember what? I was sick last night. I was home.

MARLOWE:

Sure you were. I mean, before you went home. In that chair yonder -- on that orange shawl while they were taking pictures. Quit stalling.

(staring at him, she starts to put her thumb in her mouth again)

And stop biting your thumb too.

CARMEN:

You -- were the one?

MARLOWE:

Me. How much do you remember?

CARMEN:

Are you the police?

MARLOWE:

No. I'm a friend of your father's.

(a moment)

Who killed him?

CARMEN:
(faintly)
Who else . . . knows?

MARLOWE:
About Geiger? Not the police, or
they'd be camping here.
(a moment)
Maybe Joe Brody.

CARMEN:
Joe Brody? Who's he?

MARLOWE:
Sure. Not Steve Brody: Joe
Brody. Did Joe kill him?

CARMEN:
Kill who?

MARLOWE:
Look sister. I don't know how much
trouble you are accustomed to, but
I hope you've had plenty of practice
dodging it.

CARMEN:
(nods her head)
Yes. Joe did it.

MARLOWE:
Why?
(she watches him out
of the corners of her
eyes, biting her thumb;
he draws on cigarette,
expels)
Seen much of him lately?

CARMEN:
No! I hate him!

MARLOWE:
So you're all ready to tell the
cops he did it, huh?
(quickly, as she
stares at him)
That is, if we can just get rid

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
of that photograph Geiger made
last night.

CARMEN:
Photograph? What photograph?

MARLOWE:
(drags at cigarette,
expels smoke)
Just like last night. What a scream
we are. Sternwood and Reilly, two
stooges in search of a comedian.

CARMEN:
Your name isn't Reilly. It's Marlowe.
Vivian told me.

MARLOWE:
So you are beginning to remember.
And you came back to look for the
photograph, but you couldn't get
into the house.
(she stares at him)
The photo's gone. I looked for it
last night. Brody took it with him.

CARMEN:
I've got to go home now.

MARLOWE:
Sure. But I wouldn't tell the police
about Brody yet. Don't even tell a
soul you were ever here -- either last
night, or today. Not even Vivian.
Leave it to Doghouse Reilly. Where's
your car?

CARMEN:
On the back street, where nobody
would see it.

She turns to go out as he turns to follow.

MARLOWE:
You're not going to tell anybody
we were here, are you?

CARMEN:

(gives him a swooning look)

It depends. I never tell on people who are nice to me.

She gives him a languishing, swooning, inviting look, so that her attitude is a caricature of what her more brilliant and vivid sister's might be. Marlowe grasps her arm almost savagely, turns her toward the door.

MARLOWE:

Come on. Get out of here --

He stops; they both react as FEET SOUND beyond the door, approaching, they pause dead as the BELL RINGS. While they stand staring at each other, Carmen drooling almost with terror, the BELL RINGS AGAIN, ceases, then SOUND of KEY at the lock and a moment later the door opens and EDDIE MARS enters quickly and then stops dead, staring at them. He is a handsome, hard, horsy-looking man in beautiful, restrained, expensive clothes, who stands staring at them with complete composure for a moment. Then he looks at Carmen, shuts the door, takes his hat off.

MARS:

Excuse the casual entrance. The bell didn't answer. Is Mr. Geiger around?

MARLOWE:

No. We don't know just where he is. We found the door open and stepped in.

MARS:

I see. Friends of his?

MARLOWE:

Just business. We dropped in for a book.

Mars stares hard at Marlowe, who stares just as hard back.

MARLOWE:

But we missed him.

(takes Carmen's arm,
pushes her toward
door to pass Mars)

So we'll trot along.

As Marlowe is about to shoulder Mars aside to pass, Mars himself steps aside until Carmen has passed him; then he moves in between Marlowe and the door.

MARS:

The girl can go. But I'd like to talk to you a little.

Marlowe stares at him, then makes a slight motion toward the gun inside his coat.

MARS:

Don't try it. I've got two boys outside in the car.

He turns, opens the door, Carmen scuttles through it. Mars shuts the door behind her, looks about the room.

MARS:

(puts hat back on)
There's something wrong around here. I intend to find out what it is. If you want to pick lead out of yourself, go ahead.

MARLOWE:

A tough guy.

Mars makes no answer. He walks on into the room, looking around. Marlowe watches him.

MARLOWE:

I suppose it's all right if I smoke.

Mars does not answer. He looks about, sees the totem pole, is astonished, approaches it, stops suddenly as he moves the small rug over the bloodstain with his foot, then kneels swiftly out of sight for an instant beyond the desk. When he rises, he is facing Marlowe and his hand is just emerging from inside his coat, holding a Luger pistol.

MARS:

Blood. On the floor, there, under the rug. Quite a lot of blood.

MARLOWE:

(in interested tone)
Is that so?

Mars slides into the chair behind the desk, still watching Marlowe, hooks the telephone toward him with the pistol-barrel, then shifts the pistol to his left hand and puts his right hand on the phone but without raising it.

MARS:

I think we'll have some law.

Marlowe approaches while Mars watches him, and looks down at the stain, pretends to have seen it for the first time.

MARLOWE:

That's old blood. Dried.

MARS:

Just the same, we'll have some law.

MARLOWE:

Why not?

MARS:

Just who are you anyway?

MARLOWE:

Marlowe's the name. I'm a private detective.

MARS:

Who's the girl.

MARLOWE:

A client. Geiger was trying to throw a loop on her. We came to talk it over. He wasn't here.

MARS:

Convenient -- the door being open, when you didn't have a key.

MARLOWE:

Wasn't it? By the way, how'd you happen to have one?

MARS:

Is that any of your business?

MARLOWE:

I could make it my business.

MARS:

(smiles tightly)

And I could make your business mine.

MARLOWE:

You wouldn't like it. The pay's too small.

MARS:

I won this house. Geiger is my tenant. Now what do you think of it?

MARLOWE:

You know some nice people.

MARS:

I take them as they come.

(he glances down

at the pistol,

shrugs, puts it

back inside coat)

Got any ideas, detective?

MARLOWE:

One or two. Somebody gunned Geiger. Somebody got gunned by Geiger, who ran away. Or Geiger was running a cult and made blood sacrifices in front of that barber pole there. Or he had meat for dinner and does his butchering in the front parlor.

(Mars scowls at him)

All right. I'll give up, then. Call your friends downtown.

MARS:

I don't get it. I still don't get your game here.

MARLOWE:

Don't you, Mr. Mars?

Mars stares at Marlowe, who meets his stare steadily. Mars' face is now hard.

MARS:

You seem to be telling me Geiger was in a racket of some sort. What racket?

MARLOWE:

I don't know. I'm not his land-lord. And I'll tell you something else you missed. Somebody cleaned out whatever was in that back room in his bookshop today.

Mars stares at Marlowe a long moment. Marlowe takes out a cigarette deliberately, is starting to light it.

MARS:

You talk too much.

While Marlowe stands, the cigarette in his mouth, the match-box arrested in his hands, Mars suddenly whips out the pistol again, holds it on Marlowe, and whistles shrilly. SOUND of car door SLAMMING OFF, then RUNNING FEET.

MARS:

Open the door.

MARLOWE:

Open it yourself. I've already got a client.

Mars rises, still holding the pistol on Marlowe, crosses toward the door as the SOUND OF FEET reaches the door and the knob is rattled from outside. Mars reaches the door, opens it. Two men plunge into the room, already reaching inside their coats. One is a young hoodlum, good-looking, pale-faced boy, the other is older, slim, deadpan.

MARS:

(jerks his head
at Marlowe)

Look him over. . . .

The slim man flicks out a short pistol, covers Marlowe. The boy approaches, searches Marlowe, who turns, helping the boy search him with the burlesqued air of a bored beauty modelling a gown in a shop.

BOY:

Okay. No iron.

MARS:

Find who he is.

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The boy draws Marlowe's wallet from his breast pocket, flips it open, studies the contents.

BOY:

A shamus.

He strikes. Marlowe, moving faster, catches his wrist, wrenches it suddenly and sharply, so that in the next instant the wallet is in Marlowe's hand. The boy reacts angrily, but Mars stops it.

MARS:

(sharply)

That'll do. Beat it.

The boy stops sullenly, glaring at Marlowe.

MARS:

(coldly vicious)

I said, outside.

The two guards withdraw, exit.

MARS:

All right. Talk.

Marlowe deliberately finishes lighting the cigarette, inhales.

MARLOWE:

Not to you. I told you I've already got a client.

MARS:

Who was it cleaned out the back of Geiger's store?

MARLOWE:

Quite a shower yesterday. Did it rain up there at Las Olindas?

MARS:

(slaps the pistol
angrily down on
the desk)

I might even make it worth your while to talk to me.

MARLOWE:

That's the spirit. Leave the gun
out of it. I can always hear money.
How much of it are you clinking at me?

MARS:

(slams the desk
again with the
flat pistol)

I ask you a question, and you ask
me another. My guess is, you need
some help yourself. So cough up.

MARLOWE:

Not me. It's Geiger's kinfolks that
need help -- provided a man like
Geiger had anybody who loved him and
will care who bumped him off. So
I'd better give what I know to the
Law. Which puts it in the public
domain and don't leave me anything
to sell. So I guess I'll drift.

Marlowe makes a move to lift the gun, but does not.

MARLOWE:

(easily)

By the way, how's Mrs. Mars these days?

Mars' hand jerks at the gun, almost lifts it, pauses.
He glares at Marlowe.

MARS:

(almost whispers:
raging inside)

Beat it. Get out of here.

Marlowe moves easily and unhurriedly toward the door.

71. EXT. STREET BEFORE GEIGER'S HOUSE

as Marlowe gets into his car. A short distance behind
it Mars' car is parked, the two guards in it. Marlowe
drives away. He expects a shot perhaps. As he drives
away he burlesques it: holds his hand out the window as
if he were testing the air for rain. He drives on.

DISSOLVE TO:

72. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE MARLOWE EVENING

sitting at his desk, the phone pulled up in front of him. He smokes nervously -- he seems to have been waiting some time -- and glances at his wristwatch. The PHONE RINGS. He grabs it.

MARLOWE:

Yeah . . . What's the news? . . . Nothing!

-- you mean they haven't called you?

(smiling sardonically)

Mrs. Rutledge. . . . You are not a very good liar. I thought you were going to trust me . . .

(jerking the phone
away from his ear
with exaggerated
haste)

Why, Mrs. Rutledge!

The PHONE CLICKS LOUDLY as the other end is slammed down on the hook. Marlowe replaces his instrument slowly. He is not clowning now. He speaks softly to the telephone as though to Vivian herself, half in admiration, half in anger.

MARLOWE:

You crazy darn fool. . . .

He picks up his hat and goes out.

73. EXT. RANDALL PLACE NIGHT

on Marlowe, parked a few doors from the Randall Arms, obviously waiting for something.

74. EXT. RANDALL PLACE AT THE RANDALL ARMS NIGHT

as Vivian drives up, parks, and enters the apartment.

75. EXT. RANDALL PLACE NIGHT

Marlowe gets out of his car and walks toward the Randall Arms.

76. INT. UPPER HALLWAY AT STAIRHEAD NIGHT

as Marlowe climbs the last steps. He walks down the hall to 405 and presses the bell. In one of the other apartments a radio plays softly. Presently the door of 405 opens noiselessly, just wide enough to show the man who stands behind it -- JOE BRODY, whom we have seen before, in the back room of Geiger's store and later driving the panel truck. He looks steadily at Marlowe and does not speak. His right hand holds the door. A cigarette smolders in the corner of his mouth.

MARLOWE:

Geiger?

BRODY:

(after a pause, deadpan)

You said what?

MARLOWE:

Geiger. Arthur Gwynne Geiger. The guy with the blackmail racket.

Brody's right hand drops slowly out of sight -- we get the impression he's reaching for a gun.

BRODY:

Don't know anybody by that name.

Marlowe gives him a hard smile. Brody doesn't like the smile.

MARLOWE:

You're Joe Brody?

BRODY:

So what?

MARLOWE:

So you're Joe Brody -- and you don't know anybody named Geiger. That's very funny.

BRODY:

Yeah? You got a funny sense of humor, maybe. Take it away and play it somewhere else.

Marlowe leans against the door and gives him a dreamy smile.

MARLOWE:

You got Geiger's stuff, Joe. I
got his sucker list. We ought to
talk things over.

BRODY:

(glancing sideways
into the room, then
back to Marlowe)
There's plenty of time to talk.
Make it tomorrow, bud.

He starts to close the door. Marlowe bares his teeth
and shoves the door in against Brody, viciously.

MARLOWE:

(pleasantly)
We'll make it now.

77. INT. BRODY'S APARTMENT

NIGHT

A pleasant room, nicely furnished. French windows open
onto a balcony; near the windows a closed door, and near
the entrance another door with a heavy curtain drawn
across it. Marlowe closes the entrance door behind him,
not taking his eyes from Brody. Brody stands still,
his hand frozen underneath his coat, his eyes wolfish.
Presently he breaks, letting his hand drop.

BRODY:

(shrugging --
turning away)
Why not, if you think you got
something.

Marlowe smiles, glancing at the curtained doorway. A
woman's shoes show below the edge.

MARLOWE:

You alone, Joe?

BRODY:

(meaningfully)
Yeah.

Marlowe lifts the curtain, high enough to show a very
spiffy leg -- Vivian's, in fact. He admires it.

MARLOWE:

I could be alone with that almost any time.

He drops the curtain again, goes to the davenport, and sits down, tossing his hat beside him. Brody picks up a box of cigars from a nearby table, walks to an easy chair opposite Marlowe, and sits.

BRODY:

Well, I'm listening.

He drops his cigarette stub into a tray and puts a cigar between his lips.

BRODY:

Cigar?

He tosses one to Marlowe through the air. As Marlowe reaches out to catch it Brody takes a Police Special out of the cigar box and covers Marlowe, who relaxes slowly, like a steel spring.

BRODY:

Okay, stand up. Slow.

MARLOWE:

(not moving, smiling
sardonically)

My, my -- such a lot of guns around town, and so few brains. You're the second guy I've met today who seems to think a gat in the hand means the world by the tail.

(derisively)

Put it down, Joe.

(as Joe doesn't
move, only looks
nastier)

The other guy's name is Eddie Mars.
Ever hear of him?

BRODY:

No.

MARLOWE:

If he ever gets wise to where you

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
were last night in the rain -- you'll
hear of him.

BRODY:
(deadpan, but
lowering the gun)
What would I be to Eddie Mars?

MARLOWE:
Not even a memory.

BRODY:
Don't get me wrong. I'm not a tough
guy -- just careful.

MARLOWE:
You're not careful enough. That play
with Geiger's stuff was terrible. I
saw it, you know. I don't think
Geiger's boy friend liked it.

BRODY:
Carol Lundgren? That punk.

MARLOWE:
Yeah. Punk burns, sometimes.
(raises his
voice to the
curtain door)
You might as well come out, Vivian.
Brody decided not to shoot me just yet.
(as the curtain
parts slightly to
show Vivian, undecided)
Oh, yeah, and bring the blonde with you.

Vivian comes out, followed by Agnes. Vivian looks
strained, angry, indomitable. Agnes looks merely vicious.

MARLOWE:
(to Agnes)
Hello, sugar.

AGNES:
(sourly)
Hello -- trouble!

Agnes flounces down on the arm of an overstuffed chair. Brody watches, his eyes hard and narrow, expressionless. Vivian stands looking down at Marlowe. She is definitely not glad to see him.

MARLOWE:

So you don't really believe in miracles -- or me.

VIVIAN:

I've learned not to believe in anything. I don't need you, Marlowe. I don't know how you got here, but I don't want you. Will you get out?

MARLOWE:

But darling, the man with the gun won't let me. Look -- he's all bothered and curious, wondering about stuff.

BRODY:

(menacingly)

Yeah -- you bet I'm wondering.

(looking sharply from
Vivian to Marlowe,
then to Agnes)

Agnes -- put some more light on so I can see to shoot if I have to.

(to Vivian, as
Agnes switches
on a floor lamp)

You -- sit down, and keep quiet.

VIVIAN:

Joe, I swear I didn't have anything to do . . .

MARLOWE:

(attempting to
draw her down
beside him)

Don't argue with the man. Here . . .

(taking Vivian's handbag,
hefting it to assure
himself the wad of bills
is still inside, and grinning
with satisfaction, placing

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
bag on couch)
Sit on this, baby Go ahead. You
won't need it.

VIVIAN:
Marlowe, you're ruining everything.

MARLOWE:
(finally losing
patience, yanking
her down bodily)
Sit down!

Vivian struggles with him angrily. Marlowe puts his arm
around her and smiles mockingly at Brody, who raises his
gun slightly, with unpleasant significance.

BRODY:
Okay, fella. Give out.

MARLOWE:
(shaking his head)
Uh-uh, Joe -- you're doing the giving.

BRODY:
(leaning forward,
menacingly)
Listen. . . .

MARLOWE:
Sure, sure -- You're the hard boy
with the gun. Okay -- go ahead,
blow holes in me. That won't take
the cops off your neck.

BRODY:
What cops?

MARLOWE:
The cops that are going to find out
where all that lead in Geiger came from.

He rises, pacing with nervous catlike energy as he talks,
his sheer ease and conviction holding Brody motionless.

MARLOWE:
(continuing)
You shot Geiger, last night in the

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

rain. The trouble is he wasn't alone when you whiffed him. Either you didn't notice that -- and I think you did -- or you got scared and ran. But you had nerve enough to take the plate out of his camera, and you had nerve enough to come back later and hide his corpse, so you could clean out his store before the law knew it had a murder to investigate.

BRODY:

(dangerously quiet)
It's kind of lucky for you I didn't kill Geiger.

MARLOWE:

You can hold your breath for it, just the same.

BRODY:

You think you got me framed.

MARLOWE:

Don't go simple on me, Joe. I told you there was a witness.

BRODY:

(suddenly seeing
the light)
Carmen! That little. . . . She would -- just that!

Vivian reacts to this - Marlowe puts his hand strongly on her shoulder, holding her quiet!

MARLOWE:

(laughing)
I thought you had that picture of her.

For a moment nobody moves. There is a feeling of predatory animals; caged and waiting. Vivian looks slowly up into Marlowe's face. Then Brody puts his gun down on an end table by his chair.

BRODY:

Let's all calm down here. Let's all just sit quiet a minute and think.

BRODY: (Cont.)

(to Marlowe)

Who are you? And what do you get out of this?

MARLOWE:

I'm just a guy paid to do other people's laundry. And all I get out of it is those pictures of Carmen.

BRODY:

What pictures?

MARLOWE:

(as to a child)

Oh, Joe!

He sits down beside Vivian again, talks to her as though Brody were not present.

MARLOWE:

How do you like that? He drops the whole thing in my lap, and then he says "What pictures"?

(to Agnes)

Poor Aggie. I hate to think of you standing outside the gas chamber watching him while he chokes.

AGNES:

(to Brody)

Joe. . . .

BRODY:

Shut up.

(to Marlowe)

How did you get to me?

MARLOWE:

I never saw so many streets leading to one place in my life. Everywhere I turn I fall over Joe Brody -- and I been doing a lot of turning.

BRODY:

So Carmen says I gunned him.

MARLOWE:

With the photos in hand, I might be able to convince her she was wrong.

BRODY:

(after a pause,
scowling)

I'm not saying I have or haven't got the photos. I'm only saying I'm broke. Agnes and I are down to nickels, and we got to move on for a while till this Geiger thing cools off.

MARLOWE:

No dough from my client.

BRODY:

(to Vivian -- with
cold fury)

So you did go to somebody after all.
(rising)

All right! I don't need your five grand. I can take you off my back, Marlowe, and I can get the cops taken off. I got a connection, see? I got a handle on something big enough to turn this town upside down --

MARLOWE:

Why haven't you pulled it?

BRODY:

I'm going to. And what I get out of it will make your five grand look like a roll of nickels.

AGNES:

Joe -- you're not gonna do it. You can't go up against Eddie Mars, he'll --

BRODY:

(furiously)

Shut up! You have to let that big mouth run off in front of -- ?

He is interrupted by the sudden RINGING of the DOORBELL. They hold it, all of them apprehensive of who may be on the other side of the door, while the RINGING STOPS and

becomes an insistent rapping. Brody jerks open a desk drawer and draws out a bone-handled automatic, which he hands out to Agnes. She takes it, shaking nervously. Brody indicates Marlowe.

BRODY:

(to Agnes)

If he gets funny, use your own judgment -- and the dame, too.

Agnes sits on the arm of the davenport beside Marlowe, the gun out of sight against him. Marlowe, observing her shaking hand, is not happy. Brody puts his own gun in his pocket, leaving his hand on it, and opens the door. Carmen Sternwood pushes him back in the room, using a tiny revolver which she pushes against his hips. Carmen kicks the door shut behind her; Agnes leaps up, standing out of Marlowe's reach, her gun wavering between him and Carmen. She remains oblivious of the other people in the room. Vivian reacts to her entrance, but says nothing. Marlowe sits still, automatically stroking the sleepy cat.

CARMEN:

(to Brody, with
quiet viciousness)

I want my pictures, Joe.

Brody is scared, playing it very easy, backing up as she follows him.

BRODY:

Take it easy, Carmen.

MARLOWE:

(sharply, eyeing Agnes)

Carmen. . . .

AGNES:

(to Carmen)

Get away from him, you.

Vivian rises sharply, also getting out of Marlowe's reach; she whips a small automatic out of her coat pocket.

VIVIAN:

(to Agnes, trying
to watch her and

VIVIAN: (Cont.)

Brody at the same
time)

Let her alone.

(to Brody, moving
toward him)

Joe, if you dare to hurt her. . . .

MARLOWE:

This is cute. Hasn't anybody else
got a gun? -- We can play ring
around the roses.

CARMEN:

(ignoring them
all -- to Brody)

You shot Arthur Geiger. I saw you.
I want my pictures.

MARLOWE:

For Pete's sake, all of you -- relax!

No one hears him. The three women continue to behave like nervous cats -- the lead may start flying at anybody, any minute. Brody still has his hand in his pocket; he may blast Carmen -- and Marlowe, gunless, sits in the middle of the possible crossfire. Vivian is closer to him than Agnes, having moved beyond the hampering arm of the couch. Marlowe moves abruptly. Grabbing the couch cushion which Vivian has just vacated, he slings it at Agnes, knocking her off balance and down.

Almost as a continuation of the same movement Marlowe makes a dive for Vivian's legs. She falls on top of him, they struggle for the gun, and Vivian bites Marlowe's wrist. He whacks her across the side of the head with his free hand, wrenches the gun free and stands up. Carmen's attention has been distracted slightly by this dust-up, and Brody strikes at her gun hand. The gun goes off, making a small sharp crack, shattering a pane of glass in the French windows, then skitters out of Carmen's hand and across the floor. Agnes lets go a frightened bleat and collects herself, about to fire at Carmen. Marlowe makes a quick rush, kicks the gun out of her hand, and puts his foot on Carmen's gun just as Carmen gets there, her hands and knees, reaching. She puts her hand on Marlowe's foot, and then looks up at him, sidewise, and giggles. He bends over and pats her on the back.

MARLOWE:

Get up, angel. You look like a Pekinese.

She draws back and rises as Marlowe scoops up her gun with his left hand and drops it in his pocket. The gun he has taken from Vivian still dominates the room.

MARLOWE:

Everybody -- stand still.

They do, and he walks over and picks up Agnes' gun, sticking that on in his hip pocket. Brody is wiping the nervous sweat off his face -- Agnes and Vivian still crouch half stunned on the floor. Marlowe laughs.

MARLOWE:

My, don't we have fun! You can get up now, kiddies.

(walking over
to Brody)

All right, Joe. Give.

Brody goes sullenly to the desk, opens a secret compartment, and pulls out a fat envelope, hands it to Marlowe. Marlowe glances at the contents.

MARLOWE:

Sure this is all of it?

BRODY:

Yeah. Now will you dust, so I can air out the room?

Marlowe turns as the Sternwood girls approach him. Carmen gives him a languishing smile and holds out her hand for the envelope.

CARMEN:

Can I have them now?

MARLOWE:

I'll take care of them for you.

He hands the envelope to Vivian, who thanks him with her eyes.

MARLOWE:
(to Carmen and Vivian)
You'd better go on home now.

Carmen continues to look at him, sidelong, biting her thumb.

CARMEN:
You'll take care of Carmen, won't you?

MARLOWE:
Check.

CARMEN:
Could I have my gun back?

MARLOWE:
Later.

CARMEN:
You're awfully cute.

MARLOWE:
Yeah.
(stopping Vivian
as she passes him,
heading toward the
door)
Countess -- you forgot something.

He picks up her bag off the davenport and hands it to her -- the scene is almost a repetition of the one in Marlowe's office, with Marlowe still holding the handbag.

MARLOWE:
Did I hurt your head much?

VIVIAN:
(softly)
You -- and every other man I ever met.

She goes out. Carmen follows her, but at the door she turns impulsively, flings her arms around Marlowe's neck and kisses him.

CARMEN:
I like you.

She runs off down the hall. Marlowe looks at her, puzzled by her unusual attitude. He closes the door and turns again to Brody and Agnes. Agnes, considerably scratched up, gives him a snakely glare as she pats her wounds with a handkerchief.

BRODY:

I got enough of you, chum.

MARLOWE:

Yeah, but there's still some unfinished business. What's this handle you got on Eddie Mars that's big enough to turn the town upside down?

BRODY:

Listen -- you got your pictures -- you got nothing more on me. Get outa here.

MARLOWE:

Sure, I can go. You can go, too. Up to Quentin, to the big chair in the little room with the window. They stand outside, Joe, with stop-watches. They clock you in seconds, but from where you sit the centuries stink of cyanide, and they wrap around your throat, and a lot of people say it's easier than hanging -- I don't know.

BRODY:

What are you trying to do?

MARLOWE:

Keep your neck out of a noose -- in return for some information. Got an alibi for last night?

BRODY:

I was right here with Agnes.

MARLOWE:

(picking up his hat)

Okay, Joe. You can only die once, even for a couple of murders.

Brody stares at him as he turns to leave. Agnes is scared -- she puts her hand on Brody's shoulder.

BRODY:

Wait a minute. What do you mean -- a couple of murders?

MARLOWE:

But then, you don't have to worry, do you? You got a connection.

BRODY:

Sit down.

MARLOWE:

(laughs, sits down
on table edge)

Where were you about seven-thirty last night?

BRODY:

(sullenly)

Watching Geiger's place, to see if he has any friends too big for me to kick out of the way when I take over his business. It's raining hard, I'm shut up in my car, and I don't see anything except another car parked in the alley below Geiger's. I look at it -- it's a Buick, registered to Mrs. Rutledge. That's all. Nothing happened, and I got tired waiting and went home.

MARLOWE:

Know where that Buick is now?

BRODY:

How would I?

MARLOWE:

In the Sheriff's garage. It was fished out of twelve feet of water off Lido pier this morning. There was a dead man in it, Owen Taylor, the Sternwood's chauffeur -- the guy you got the pictures from. He'd been sapped and the

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

car pointed out the pier and the
hand throttle pulled down.

Brody gives Marlowe a stricken look. Agnes tightens her
grip on him.

AGNES:

Joe, you didn't. . . .

BRODY:

Shut up.

(to Marlowe)

You can't hang that one on me.

MARLOWE:

I can make a good try -- unless
you talk and talk straight.

BRODY:

All right, all right! Yeah, I
heard the shots. I see this guy
come slamming down the back steps
with something in his hand. He
shoots off in the Buick, and I
follow him, and out of the high-
way he skids off the road and has
to stop, so I stop too, and play
cop. His nerve is bad, and I sap
him down -- and I figure the film
might be worth something, so I take
it. That's the last I see of him.

MARLOWE:

Uh-huh -- so Taylor gave Geiger the
works, and all for the love of little
Carmen. Agh! The sap! . . . How'd you
know it was Geiger he shot?

BRODY:

Seemed like a good guess. When I
saw what was on the film I was sure,
and when Geiger didn't show at the
store this morning, Agnes and I fig-
ured it was a good time to do our-
selves some business.

MARLOWE:

Yeah, you figured, all right. You

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

businessed yourself right into a hot box.

BRODY:

Yeah -- yeah, I guess I did.

MARLOWE:

I got connections too, you know, with the D.A.'s office. If I know about Eddie Mars I might be able to cool you down some.

AGNES:

(as Brody hesitates)

Go on, Joe -- tell him!

BRODY:

Okay. It's kind of a funny story. It ain't about Eddie Mars, really -- it's about his wife. I. . . .

The DOORBELL starts to RING. Brody stands up, with Agnes beside him. Marlowe stays put.

BRODY:

So she's back again.

MARLOWE:

If she is, she doesn't have her gun. Don't you have any other friends?

BRODY

(crossing to the table, picking up the Colt)

Just about one.

(going angrily to the door)

I got enough of this.

He opens the door about a foot, with his left hand, holding the Colt ready by his thigh. It is impossible to see who stands in the hall. Almost instantly two shots sound, close together. Brody doubles up, falls forward against the door, slamming it shut. Agnes reacts, but does not scream. Marlowe leaps up, hauls Brody away from the door -- Brody is quite dead. Marlowe runs out.

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78. INT. HALLWAY THE RANDALL ARMS NIGHT

as Marlowe runs toward the stairs. A frightened woman peers out of a doorway, pointing to the stairs. The SOUND of RUNNING FEET comes from the treads below. Marlowe races to the stairway and down.

79. INT. FOYER THE RANDALL ARMS NIGHT

The front door is closing itself quietly as Marlowe races down the last flight of steps. He goes through the door, catching it before it closes.

80. EXT. RANDALL PLACE THE RANDALL ARMS NIGHT

as Marlowe comes out, pauses to get his bearings.

81. EXT. RANDALL PLACE LUNDGREN NIGHT

He runs between two parked cars diagonally across the street, whirls to fire.

82. EXT. RANDALL ARMS MARLOWE NIGHT

As two shots sound -- we see the impact of the bullets on the wall beside Marlowe, too close for comfort.

83. EXT. RANDALL PLACE LONG SHOT LUNDGREN NIGHT
(MARLOWE'S ANGLE)

as Lundgren vanishes behind parked cars, in the dense tree shadows, running hard.

84. EXT. RANDALL PLACE NIGHT

as Marlowe gets in his car and heads down the street, following Lundgren.

DISSOLVE TO:

85. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET NIGHT

a quiet residential street, with trees growing heavy along the parkway. Marlowe's car pulls in to park. Marlowe gets out into the street, crouching low, and pulls Carmen's little gun from his pocket. He walks back the way he has come, crouching for shelter behind the line of parked cars. Aside from him the street is deserted.

86. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET LONG SHOT MARLOWE'S ANGLE
NIGHT

as Carol Lundgren walks unconcernedly along, approaching Marlowe. He seems to feel that he's in the clear, even whistles softly as he walks.

87. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET MARLOWE NIGHT

As Lundgren draws abreast of him, Marlowe steps from between the parked cars, holding the gun at his side. An unlighted cigarette droops from his lips.

MARLOWE:

Got a match, bud?

Lundgren stands still, taken by surprise, not sure what to do. His hand rises instinctively to his leather jacket, but not inside. A siren wails off, going toward the Randall Arms -- Lundgren turns his head instinctively toward the sound, and Marlowe steps in against him, the little gun jammed into Lundgren's midriff.

MARLOWE:

Me, or the cops?

LUNDGREN:

Get away from me.

MARLOWE:

This is a small gun, kid. I can give it to you through the belly, and in three months you'll be well enough to walk the last mile up at Quentin.

Lundgren holds it, glaring at Marlowe, then relaxes.

LUNDGREN:

What do you want?

MARLOWE:

(turning -- indicating car)
Get into my car, kid.
(as Lundgren obeys -- slowly)
Under the wheel. You drive.

88. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR NIGHT

As Lundgren slides under the wheel, from the curb side, and Marlowe gets in beside him, keeping him covered.

MARLOWE:

Let's go to Laverne Terrace --
Geiger's house.

(pleasantly -- as

Lundgren starts the car)

And by the way, Carol -- if you shot
Brody for friendship's sake, you shot
the wrong guy.

Lundgren gives him a hard, nasty look and laughs.

MARLOWE:

(softly)

Not all friendship, was it? Yeah,
money talks, all right. It talks,
and it's breath smells of blood. . . .

(laughing to himself)

I told Brody that sometimes punk burns. . . .

89. EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE AT FRONT DOOR NIGHT

Marlowe and Lundgren stand on the footbridge. Marlowe still carries the toy gun. He pulls the keys out of his pocket with his left hand and gives them to Lundgren.

MARLOWE:

You open it.

Lundgren starts to take the keys, then slams Marlowe a quick, hard punch on the jaw. Marlowe rocks back, but doesn't fall -- he smiles and throws the gun down at Lundgren's feet.

MARLOWE

Maybe you need this.

Lundgren goes for the gun. As he bends down Marlowe steps in fast, bringing his knee up into Lundgren's face. The force of the blow straightens Lundgren up, and Marlowe uncorks a terrific left. Lundgren falls heavily. Marlowe, unperturbed, unlocks the door, puts the gun back in his pocket, and starts to drag Lundgren inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

90. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM MARLOWE AND LUNDGREN

Lundgren is stretched out on the couch, his hands bound behind him, under his back. A single lamp shines down into his face. He has bled somewhat from the nose. Marlowe sits on the couch, twisted sideways, so that Lundgren's head is strained back over his knee. Marlowe helps the straining by having his left hand wound in Lundgren's hair. His manner is gentle, almost friendly.

MARLOWE:

(softly)

You're going to cop a plea, brother -- don't ever think you're not. And when you talk, you're going to say just what I want you to say, and nothing else. You hear me, sweetheart?

Lundgren makes no reply, staring stonily into the light.

MARLOWE:

(almost caressingly)

It's your face, Carol. You can do what you want with it.

He jerks Lundgren's head back harder and raises his free hand, bringing it down.

DISSOLVE TO:

91. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Marlowe stands at the telephone, speaking into the instrument. His face is beaded with sweat, his collar open. He smokes jerkily -- we get the impression he hasn't enjoyed slapping Lundgren around. In b.g. Lundgren lies on the couch, both hands over his face.

MARLOWE:

(into phone)

Hello, Bernie? -- Yeah, Marlowe. How you fixed for red points, Bernie . . . ? Well, come on up to 7244 Laverne Terrace -- I got some cold meat set out . . . might interest you.

DISSOLVE TO:

92. INT. GEIGER'S BEDROOM MARLOWE AND OHLS NIGHT

They stand by the bed, looking down. Geiger is laid out on the bed. Two strips of Chinese embroidery cover the wounds on his breast, in the shape of a cross, his hands folded over them. The only light in the room comes from two black candles burning on either side of the bed.

OHLS:

Nice gesture of friendship. Lundgren?

MARLOWE:

Yeah.

Ohls bends over, lifts up the Chinese embroidery, studies Geiger's chest, then straightens up.

OHLS:

So that's where the three slugs went out of Owen Taylor's gun. Well, I can understand that.

(making a gesture
of distaste)

Let's get out of here.

93. INT. GEIGER'S SITTING ROOM CAROL

sprawled sideways on the couch, leaning his head against the wall, showing signs of his recent battle with Marlowe. Marlowe sits in b.g., easily, smoking. Ohls stands over Carol. Ohls is annoyed with Marlowe, shows it in succeeding scenes.

OHLS:

(to Carol)

Do you admit shooting Brody?

CAROL:

(not moving -- not
opening his eyes)

Take a jump, Jack.

MARLOWE:

(through smoke)

He doesn't have to admit it. I've got the gun.

OHLS:

(he rouses himself)

I've called Wilde. Come on. We'll deliver this punk to him.

He leans down, grasps Carol's arm.

OHLS:

Get up.

(Carol flings his hand off --
rises sullenly -- Ohls
moves in beside him)

Come on, Marlowe. The D.A. will
want to see the man that solves
singlehanded what we make busts on.
And on the way to him, you and I
will talk a little too.

Marlowe rises, follows as Ohls takes Carol out, snapping
off the lights as he passes them and all exit.

94. INSERT: (ESTABLISHING SHOT) DOOR

lettered:

"DISTRICT ATTORNEY"

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

95. INT. SUMPTUOUS DISTRICT ATTORNEY OFFICE

indicating a city of some size, wealth, etc. The D.A.
sits behind his desk. He wears a dinner jacket, has been
called hastily from a party obviously. At corner of the
desk sits Captain Cronjager of the city police homicide
detail, in plain clothes. He is a cold, hatchet-faced
man obviously displeased with the way things have happened.
Ohls enters, followed by Marlowe.

OHLS:

(to Wilde)

Evening, Chief. Evening, Cronjager.

(he pulls up a
chair to sit down)

Meet Sherlock Holmes, gentlemen.

(to Marlowe)

Grab yourself a chair -- unless you'd
rather be on your feet while Cronjager
gives you a going-over.

WILDE:

Sit down, Marlowe. We'll try to
handle Captain Cronjager. But I
think you'll admit you were going a
little fast, won't you?

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

He sits down, takes out a cigarette, holds it unlighted in his hand. Ohls and Cronjager stare at him.

OHLS:

Fast is right. But just wait and watch him go when his foot finally does slip.

(to Cronjager)

Maybe you'd better tell Sherlock Holmes here what else you got on the Randall Place killing.

CRONJAGER:

A blonde. Down on the street, trying to start a car that didn't belong to her. Hers was right next to it, the same model. She acted rattled, so the boys brought her in and she spilled. Claims she didn't see the killer.

OHLS:

(still riding Marlowe)

He's in the back office now -- handcuffed. Here's the gun.

He takes Carol's gun from his pocket, drops it on the desk. Cronjager looks at the gun, but without touching it. After a moment Wilde chuckles, enjoying Cronjager's discomfiture and Ohls' annoyance. . .

OHLS:

But that's just one of them.

(he stares at Marlowe while
he addresses Cronjager)

You heard about a car being lifted out of the surf at Lido pier this morning with a dead guy in it?

MARLOWE:

(mildly)

Do you have to be coy about it?

OHLS:

(staring at Marlowe --

OHLS: (Cont.)
addressing Cronjager
with malicious sarcasm)
Sure. The guy they found drowned in
the car shot another guy last night
in your territory; a guy named Geiger
who ran a racket in the back room of
a bookstore on the boulevard. The
punk I got in the back office worked
for Geiger.

(to Marlowe)
You're on the air. Let's have it.

MARLOWE:
That's all. When I finally located
the lad that moved the packing case
out of Geiger's back room, Geiger's
blonde secretary was with him. It was
Brody. While I was trying to persuade
Brody to tell what became of the packing
case, the doorbell rang again and
Brody opened the door and somebody
shot him twice. You know the rest of it.
(he lights his cigarette)

OHLS:
Except what was in the packing case -- yes.

MARLOWE:
(smoking)
Brody didn't tell me.

OHLS:
(staring at Marlowe)
You see, Cronjager? Even as smart as
he is, he's got to guess sometimes, too.

MARLOWE:
My guess is the same as yours. Black-
mailing stuff. Geiger's customers must
have been wearing a path across that
rug, coming in to knock on that locked
door and pay their monthly installments.

OHLS:
(staring at Marlowe)
That's right, Cronjager. Maybe Sherlock's
even going to show us his evidence for
guessing that.

MARLOWE:

Do you folks still guess when you have evidence?

WILDE:

(sharply)

That's enough of this.

(to Marlowe)

So Taylor killed Geiger because he was in love with the Sternwood girl. And Brody followed Taylor, sapped him and took the photograph and pushed Taylor into the ocean. And the punk killed Brody because the punk thought he should have inherited Geiger's business and Brody was throwing him out.

MARLOWE:

That's how I figure it.

WILDE:

(extends his hand)

Let's see your evidence.

OHLS:

Give, pal. Hiding murders. Spending a whole day foxing around so that this punk of Geiger's can have plenty of time to commit another one.

Marlowe takes from his coat and puts on the desk before Wilde the three notes and Geiger's card to General Sternwood, and the notebook with its code list of names. Wilde looks at them, lights a cigar. Ohls and Cronjager rise and look at the articles over Wilde's shoulders. Marlowe smokes quietly.

WILDE:

(after a time)

These notes. If General Sternwood paid them, it would be because he was afraid of something else. Do you know what he was afraid of?

MARLOWE:

No.

Wilde stares at Marlowe.

WILDE:

(after a moment)

Have you told your story complete?

MARLOWE:

I left out some personal matters.

(they stare at each other)

I intend to keep on leaving them out.

WILDE:

Why?

MARLOWE:

I've still got a client. You recommended me to him through Bernie. My first duty is to him.

Wilde, Ohls and Cronjager all stare at Marlowe. He smokes quietly. Wilde, staring at Marlowe, makes a slight signal with his hand.

OHLS:

(to D.A.)

Okay. But you're wasting time.

If you'd let me handle Sherlock. . . .

WILDE:

That'll do, Bernie.

OHLS:

(to Cronjager)

I want to surrender a prisoner to you. Come on.

(he goes toward door --

Cronjager following. As

Ohls opens the door

he pauses and looks back

at Marlowe. To Marlowe)

I like you. Better and better. Some day I'm going to like you so well I won't be able to bear having you out of my sight.

He and Cronjager exit, close the door. Wilde puffs his cigar, staring at Marlowe. Marlowe smokes quietly.

WILDE:

(after a time)

Do you know why I'm not tearing your ear off?

MARLOWE:

I expected to lose both of them.

WILDE:

(smoking -- watching him steadily -- after a time)

What are you getting for all this?

MARLOWE:

Twenty-five a day and expenses.

WILDE:

And for that money you're willing to get yourself in dutch with the law enforcement of this county, maybe lose your license.

MARLOWE:

(quietly)

I've still got a client.

WILDE:

Is he still just a client?

(Marlowe doesn't answer -- smoking)

Listen to me, son. My father was a close friend of old General Sternwood. I like him as well as you do. I've done all my office permits -- maybe a good deal more -- to save him from grief. But in the long run, nothing can save him except dying.

MARLOWE:

Yeah -- the big sleep. That'll cure his grief.

WILDE:

It cures all the grief. . . . You really don't know yet what General Sternwood wants with you?

MARLOWE:

Yes. To settle this business with Geiger.

WILDE:

He's afraid that ex-bootlegger, Regan, that he took up about a year ago, is mixed up in this somewhere. What he really wants is for you to find out that Regan isn't.

MARLOWE:

Regan's no blackmailer. I knew him.

Wilde shrugs slightly.

WILDE:

Maybe you'd better find him and prove it.

MARLOWE:

Maybe I had.

Marlowe rises. He indicates the objects on the desk.

MARLOWE:

Can I have these?

Wilde looks again at the objects, then he takes up the notebook containing the code names and addresses, opens the desk drawer, drops the book in and shuts it, pushes the other things across the desk toward Marlowe.

WILDE:

Take them.

DISSOLVE TO:

96. EXT. HOBART ARMS APARTMENT MARLOWE NIGHT

as he unlocks the entrance, enters.

97. INT. LOBBY MARLOWE

as he enters, is shutting the door when a man, the only occupant, sitting with a newspaper in a lobby chair, lowers the paper. It is the young hoodlum who was with Mars at Geiger's house this morning. He rises, flicks

his cigarette stub into a potted palm and thrusts the tip of his right hand into the V of his coat-opening.

BODYGUARD:

(jevially)

Well, well, if it ain't Hawkshaw himself. The boss wants to talk to you.

MARLOWE:

What about?

BODYGUARD:

What do you care, Hawkshaw? Just keep your nose clean. Let the boss do all the thinking and ask the questions.

MARLOWE:

(drops hand into side pocket)

I'm too tired to talk. Too tired to think too. But if you think I'm too tired to refuse to take orders from Eddie Mars -- try getting your gat out before I shoot that good ear off.

(bodyguard stares at him -- undecided)

BODYGUARD:

A comedian, huh?

MARLOWE:

Yeah. I'm going to die laughing in just about a minute.

BODYGUARD:

(baffled)

You ain't got no gun.. Have you forgot about this morning?

MARLOWE:

That was this morning. I'm not always barefooted.

The bodyguard stares at Marlowe a while longer. Then he waves his left hand airily.

BODYGUARD:

Okay, hot shot! You win. But don't
let it go to your head, see?

(moves toward the door)

You'll hear from us.

MARLOWE:

Too late will be too soon.

The bodyguard crosses to the street door, exits. Then Marlowe follows to the door, sees it is locked, turns, his lip twisted in contempt, and crosses toward elevator.

98. INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT MARLOWE

as he enters, snaps on light, tosses his hat onto the bed, takes Carmen Sternwood's little pistol from his pocket, tosses it onto table beneath the lamp, crosses to bookcase on which a bottle of whiskey sits, takes up the bottle and goes on to the kitchen, exits.

OVER SOUND OF REFRIGERATOR DOOR, CLINK OF GLASS, etc.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

99. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

at table beneath the lamp, half-emptied highball beside him, as he finishes cleaning Carmen's pistol. He closes the pistol, and holding it in his left hand, he gathers up the remaining tiny shells he had removed from it, examines them, shrugs sardonically, tosses them into desk drawer, closes drawer and is folding a greased rag about the pistol when the telephone rings. He puts the pistol on the desk and turns.

100. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE AT TELEPHONE

He holds the receiver lowered somewhat, so that Mars' harsh voice comes clearly from it.

MARS' VOICE:

So you're tough tonight.

MARLOWE:

Sleepy, too. What can I do for you,
Mister Mars?

MARS' VOICE:

Cops over there -- you know where.
Did you keep me out of it?

MARLOWE:

What do you think?

MARS' VOICE:

Listen, soldier. I'm nice to be nice to.

MARLOWE:

You listen. Maybe you'll hear my
teeth chattering.

MARS' VOICE:

(laughs shortly)

Did you -- or did you?

MARLOWE:

I did. I don't know why, but I did.

MARS' VOICE:

Thanks, soldier. Who gunned him?

MARLOWE:

Somebody you never heard of. Let it
go at that.

MARS' VOICE:

If that's on the level, someday I may
be able to do you a favor.

MARLOWE:

You can now. Hang up and let me go
to bed.

MARS' VOICE:

(laughs again)

You're looking for Shawn Regan,
aren't you?

MARLOWE:

Everybody I meet seems to think I am.
But I'm not.

MARS' VOICE:

If you were, I could give you an idea.
Drive up to the club and see me. Any
time.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

MARS' VOICE:

Be seeing you then.

The other receiver clicks. Marlowe puts his receiver down slowly, sits a moment, thoughtful. He seems to be waiting for something. He takes out a cigarette, has just struck the match when the phone rings. Without moving he blows out the match and wedges the paper stem into the telephone bell, muffling it, so that it now merely buzzes, steadily as whoever it is continues to ring. Then he strikes another match, lights the cigarette, rises and begins to unknot his tie as he walks out of SHOT. The muffled telephone buzzes, the light snaps off, leaving the room in darkness. The muffled phone continues to buzz as whoever it is keeps on ringing.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN

101. ESTABLISHING SHOT DOOR

lettered:

Bureau of Missing Persons

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

102. INT. OFFICE MARLOWE

DAY

Marlowe seated, facing across the desk Captain Gregory, a slow, burly man who looks dull and stupid but is not. Gregory in plain clothes looks at Marlowe's credentials, looks up.

GREGORY:

Private, eh? What can I do for you?

MARLOWE:

I'm working for General Guy Sternwood.
The D.A. knows him.

GREGORY:

I know who he is too. Did the D.A.
send you here?

MARLOWE:

Isn't your information available to anybody, unless it's a homicide matter?

GREGORY:

Did the D.A. send you here?

MARLOWE:

No.

GREGORY:

Did he know you were coming?

MARLOWE:

(after a moment -- takes out cigarettes)

Mind if I smoke?

GREGORY:

Go ahead.

MARLOWE:

(lights up)

Thanks.

GREGORY:

What do you want?

MARLOWE:

I want to know what became of a man named Shawn Regan, who used to work for General Sternwood.

GREGORY:

I don't know where he is. He scrambled -- pulled down the curtain, and that's that.

MARLOWE:

Will you give me what you have got on him?

Gregory rings a bell on desk-edge. The door opens, a middle-aged woman secretary enters.

GREGORY:

Get me the file on Shawn Regan, Abba.

The woman exits. Marlowe smokes. Gregory takes up a

charred pipe, digs tobacco dottle deliberately from it, is about to fill it when the woman enters, lays an official file on the desk, exits. Gregory puts down the pipe, puts on glasses, opens the file.

GREGORY:

He blew on the sixteenth of September. No one reported it. We got into it by finding the car. It was the chauffeur's day off, so nobody at Sternwood's saw Regan take his car out of the garage. We found the car four days later in a garage belonging to a ritzy bungalow court on Sunset. The garage man reported it to the stolen car detail; said it didn't belong there. We couldn't find who it belonged to.

MARLOWE:

And of course Eddie Mars' wife couldn't tell you, because she had disappeared too.

GREGORY:

(stares at Marlowe a moment)
If you knew so much already, why did you come to me?

MARLOWE:

Sorry. Go ahead.

GREGORY:

So you have been talking to some Sternwood about Regan.

MARLOWE:

Why not? You just said nobody has accused anybody of any crime yet.

GREGORY:

Yes, Mrs. Mars was gone too, disappeared within two days of the day Regan's car was left in the garage.

MARLOWE:

What are the angles?

GREGORY:

Mrs. Mars lived in the apartment the

GREGORY: (Cont.)

garage belonged to. Regan was known to carry a roll, fifteen grand, in his clothes all the time --

MARLOWE:

Yes. I had heard that.

GREGORY:

It don't seem to have been any secret to anybody that Regan was sweet on Mars' wife.

MARLOWE:

So it looks like they went off together.

GREGORY:

Regan had fifteen grand in cash with him. Mrs. Mars had some rocks, and a car of her own -- making two cars available. Everything disappeared but one of the cars.

MARLOWE:

What did she look like? Have you got a photograph?

GREGORY:

No. . . . A blonde. She won't be now though.

MARLOWE:

What was she before she married Mars?

GREGORY:

A torcher.

MARLOWE:

Maybe she isn't anything now. Maybe neither of them are.

GREGORY:

You're thinking of Eddie Mars. You're wrong. Mars is a business man, and a good one. Jealousy's a luxury -- murdering for it, at least -- that a man like Eddie Mars knows he can't afford.

MARLOWE:

So, as far as you're concerned, Mars is out.

GREGORY:

Mars is out. And, until something more turns up, we are too.

MARLOWE:

(rising)

And so am I, it looks like. There's no law on my book either against a man with fifteen grand going away with the woman he loves.

(turning)

Thanks.

GREGORY:

(closing the file).

Not at all.

(Marlowe moving toward the door)

Give my best to the D.A.

MARLOWE:

(half halts --

being slyly kidded)

I will.

He exits.

103. EXT. STREET MARLOWE

gets into his car, drives away. As he does so, a coupe starts up behind him, following him.

104. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR MOVING MARLOWE

is aware that the other car is following him, is sardonic, is careful to let the other car keep in sight of him.

105. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE ANTEROOM MARLOWE

entering, finds Norris waiting for him.

MARLOWE:

(closing door)

Good morning, Norris.

NORRIS:

(rises)

Good morning, Mr. Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

How's the General this morning?

NORRIS:

Not so well, sir. I -- ah --

MARLOWE:

Yeah? What's on your mind?

NORRIS:

(in sort of a rush)

I read the papers to him this morning. From -- ah -- certain items we assume that your investigation is now complete.

MARLOWE:

Yes, as regards Geiger. I didn't shoot him, though.

NORRIS:

Quite so, sir.

MARLOWE:

I guess you've called for the debris.

NORRIS:

The debris, sir?

MARLOWE:

(crossing to other door)

This way.

Norris follows him.

106. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE MARLOWE

at desk takes out papers, evens them, puts them into envelope.

MARLOWE:

There you are. Three notes, and the card.

NORRIS:

(steadily)

Thank you, sir. Mrs. Rutledge tried several times to telephone you last night --

MARLOWE:

I know. I was busy getting tight.

NORRIS:

(puts hand inside coat)

Quite so, sir.

(he draws out check,
hands it to Marlowe)

The General instructed me to hand you this. Will it be satisfactory?

MARLOWE:

(takes check, glances
at it, folds it)

Five hundred. Quite.

NORRIS:

(curiously insistent)

And we may now consider the entire incident closed?

MARLOWE:

(gets the overtone but
covers completely, easily)

Sure. Tight as a vault with a busted time lock.

NORRIS:

Thank you, sir. We all appreciate it. When the General is feeling better, he will thank you himself.

MARLOWE:

Fine. I'll come out and drink some more of your brandy. Maybe with champagne.

NORRIS:

(departing)

I'll see that some is properly iced, sir.

He exits, closes the door. Marlowe's air changes now.
He opens the check slowly, looks at it, speculatively.

MARLOWE:

(musing: aloud)

Completely closed . . . completely closed.

He rouses, puts the check into his wallet, goes to
phone, dials, speaks into phone.

MARLOWE:

Hello. . . . Let me speak to Eddie. . . .

Sure, Eddie . . . Phil Marlowe.

(holding phone between head
and shoulder, he takes out
cigarette, is about to light
it, speaks into phone, still
holding cigarette and burning
match in both hands)

Hello, Eddie. I want to see you.

I'll drive up tonight. . . . Check.

DISSOLVE TO:

107. ESTABLISHING SHOT INSERT SIGNBOARD

Stateline, Nevada

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

108. INT. LAS OLINDAS CLUB ENTRANCE NIGHT MARLOWE

checking his hat and coat at counter. The slim,
pasty-faced bodyguard who had been with Mars and the
other guard at Geiger's house enters, approaches.

MARLOWE:

Hello. How's the pistol-packing
business up here?

BODYGUARD:

(blandly)

Better. We don't have so many
amateurs around.

MARLOWE:

Not amateurs -- just suckers, huh?

BODYGUARD:

(turning)

This way.

Marlowe follows him.

109. INT. MARS' PRIVATE OFFICE MARS AND MARLOWE

The office is suave, restrained, well-furnished, shows money. A wall safe in one wall, radio, liquor cabinet, comfortable chairs, etc. Mars wears a well-cut, expensive dinner suit. He shakes hands with Marlowe as the bodyguard withdraws, shuts the door.

MARS:

(shaking hands)

Took you a long time to get here, didn't it?

MARLOWE:

I wouldn't be here now if you hadn't hinted you had something for me.

MARS:

(turns to liquor cabinet,

opens it, starts to fix drinks)

What did you change your mind about?

About what you are after, or just about admitting it?

Marlowe, lighting a cigarette, doesn't answer. Mars prepares the highballs, approaches, hands one to Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

(taking drink)

Thanks.

Mars leans against the desk, elegant, holding his drink.

MARS:

A friend of yours is outside playing the wheels. I hear she's doing well. Mrs. Rutledge --

(Marlowe says nothing, drinks)

I liked the way you handled that yesterday. You made me sore at first. But I see now you knew what

MARS: (Cont.)

you were doing. You and I ought to get along.

(Marlowe says nothing, drinks, smokes. Mars watches him)

But I like to pay my checks as I go along. How much do I owe you?

MARLOWE:

For what?

MARS:

Still cagey, huh?

MARLOWE:

All right. How much have you got that I can use?

MARS:

(waves hand, easy)

Oh, that, I heard you had all the information already.

MARLOWE:

I don't know. You didn't bump Regan off, did you?

MARS:

No. Do you think I did?

MARLOWE:

I came up here to ask you.

MARS:

(stares at Marlowe)

You're kidding.

MARLOWE:

Yes, I'm kidding. I used to know Regan. You haven't got the men for that work. And while I think of it, don't send me any more gun punks. I might get nervous and shoot one of them.

Mars stares at Marlowe, lifts glass and drinks, staring at Marlowe across the glass, lowers the glass.

MARS:

You talk a good game, but I still think we can get along. Are you looking for Regan, or not?

MARLOWE:

Geiger was trying to blackmail General Sternwood. I finally figured out that at least half the General's trouble was being afraid Regan might be behind it.

MARS:

I see. Well, Sternwood can turn over now and go back to sleep. It was Geiger's own racket. I like to know who rents anything from me, so I did some inquiring today myself. So if it was just Geiger you were after, whoever gunned him washed you and Sternwood both up.

MARLOWE:

(sets glass down, rises)
I guess that's what the General thinks too since he paid me off today.

(Mars takes up Marlowe's empty glass)
No thanks. No more.

MARS:

Another won't hurt you.

MARLOWE:

No thanks.

MARS:

(sets glass down)
I'm sorry about that. I wish Sternwood would hire you on a straight salary to keep these girls of his home at least a few nights a week.
(he drains his glass, sets it down, wipes his mouth)
They're plain trouble. The older one's a pain in the neck around here. If she loses, she plunges, and I end

MARS: (Cont.)

up with a fist full of paper not even worth the ink on it. If she wins, she takes my money home with her.

MARLOWE:

Don't you get it back the next night?

MARS:

She's spent it by then.

MARLOWE:

And is back on the cuff, huh?
Mind if I look the joint over?

MARS:

Go ahead.
(indicates small door)
That comes out behind the tables.

MARLOWE:

Thanks. I'll go in with the other suckers.

MARS:

As you please. We're friends, aren't we?

MARLOWE:

Sure.

They shake hands.

MARS:

Maybe I can do you a real favor some day.

MARLOWE:

Maybe! There's just one thing puzzling me, Eddie. You don't seem in much of a rush to find your wife. From what I hear she's not the kind of a wife a guy wants to lose. Could it be you know where she is -- with Regan?

MARS:

(deadly quiet)

Look, soldier. . . . What's between

MARS: (Cont.)

me and my wife is between us.

MARLOWE:

Okay. Sorry.

(he goes to door, turns)

You don't have anybody watching me,
tailing me around in a gray Plymouth
coupe, do you?

MARS:

(sharply, surprised,
actually innocent of it)

No. A gray Plymouth? When?

MARLOWE:

Then it don't matter. If it's not
you, it's just an enemy. I can
take care of him.

He exits. Mars stares after him.

110. INT. CASINO MARLOWE

leans against small, swank bar, looking into the gambling
room, which is big, spacious, various small lay-outs
along the wall. At the end of the big room are three
roulette wheels. The two outside ones are deserted;
even the croupiers have been drawn into the crowd
which is packed densely about the middle one. In the
center of the crowd VIVIAN'S HEAD can be seen as she
plays her winning streak. Marlowe is watching her. On
the fringe of the crowd the waiters stand also, watching.
All this is a build-up to show a phenomenal run which
Vivian is making. The barman leans on the bar behind
Marlowe.

BARMAN:

She's sure picking them tonight.
She comes here a lot, and from the way
it's been running for her, she's due
to pick them. But it's been a long
time since this place seen anything
like that.

Two men emerge from the crowd about the wheel and
approach the bar, excitedly. The barman moves to
them, waits.

FIRST MAN:

(to Barman)

Scotch and soda.

(the barman starts
the drinks. The

speaker mops his face)

Boy, I never saw such a run. Eight
wins and two stand-offs in a row on
that red. Betting a grand at a
crack too.

BARMAN:

(serves the two drinks)

A grand at a crack, huh? I saw an
old horse-face in Havana once --

Marlowe moves away as the two men take up their drinks.

111. GROUP AT WHEEL MARLOWE

as he reaches the crowd. The play has stopped. The
croupiers of all three wheels are now facing Vivian
across the table. A mass of bills, chips, etc.,
before Vivian.

CROUPIER:

If you will just be patient a moment,
Madame. The table cannot cover your
bet. Mr. Mars will be here in a
moment.

VIVIAN:

(looks about, cool,
insolent, though her
face shows excitement)

What kind of a cheap outfit is this?
Get busy and spin the wheel. I want
one more play and I'm playing table
stakes. You take it away fast enough,
I notice. But when it comes to dishing
it out, you begin to whine.

CROUPIER:

The table cannot cover your bet, Madame.
(indicates her pile)
You have over sixteen thousand
dollars there.

VIVIAN:

It's your money. Don't you want it back?

A MAN:

(beside her, much more
excited than she is)

Look, lady --

VIVIAN:

(turns on him,
vicious, cutting)

Do you want another sixteen
thousand of it?

The man falls back, discomfited. A door opens in the wall behind the table. The crowd falls silent, turns, as Mars comes out the door, smiling, indifferent, immaculate, hands in his jacket pockets as he strolls to the table.

MARS:

Something the matter, Mrs. Rutledge?
(she is about to speak
when he continues,
easily, courteous)

If you're not playing any more, you
must let me send someone home with you.

VIVIAN:

One more play, Eddie. All of it on
the red. I like red. It's the
color of blood.

Mars stares at her a second, smiles faintly, takes from his inner breast pocket a large pinseal wallet with gold corners, very elegant, and tosses it carelessly to the croupier without opening it.

MARS:

Cover her bet in even thousands.
(to the gaping crowd)

If no one objects to this turn of
the wheel being for the lady alone.

The crowd remains breathless. Vivian leans down and shoves the whole mass of her winnings savagely onto the RED diamond of the layout, stands back. The croupier leans without haste and rapidly and skillfully

counts the money, stacks it, places all but a few scattered chips and bills, rakes these into a neat pile and pushes it off the layout with his rake, leaving the bet on the RED. Then he opens Mars' wallet with the same detached deliberate swiftness, draws out two flat packets of thousand-dollar bills. He breaks the tape around one, counts off six bills, adds them to the unbroken packet, puts the four other bills back into Mars' wallet and lays the wallet aside as carelessly as if it were a packet of paper matches. Mars does not touch the wallet. He stands as before, elegant, detached, courteous. The croupier spins the wheel with one hand, snaps the ball into it with the other, draws back and folds his arms.

112. CLOSE SHOT VIVIAN'S FACE

as she watches the spinning wheel.

113. CLOSE SHOT WHEEL

as it spins, slows, stops.

114. GROUP AROUND TABLE

CROUPIER:

Red. Odd. Second dozen.

Vivian laughs, triumphant, for the first time her excitement seems to come through as she lets go for the moment. Then she stops, watches the croupier add the bills to her bet, then with the rake shove the whole thing across to her. Mars smiles faintly, expressionless still, takes up the wallet, puts it back into his pocket, goes back to the door and exits.

115. INT. ENTRANCE LAS OLINDAS CLUB MARLOWE

at the checkroom, gets his hat and coat, drops a coin into plate, goes toward the door, putting on coat.

116. EXT. ENTRANCE LAS OLINDAS NIGHT MARLOWE

buttoning his coat, comes out, walks on.

117. EXT. SHRUBBERY-BORDERED PATH NIGHT MARLOWE

as he enters, stops, looks about. His face is intent,

watchful. He listens, puts his hand into his pocket, draws out a pipe, looks at it, tosses it slightly, contemptuously, regretful, shrugs, thrusts pipe into his side-pocket, his hand still clutching it, goes on moving quietly and stealthily now, pauses, listens again, is about to go on when SOUND OF A SLIGHT COUGH comes from ahead. Marlowe steps quickly and soundlessly into the shrubbery.

118. CLOSE SHOT

MARLOWE

hidden behind a shrub, peering out. Ten feet away another man crouches behind a shrub beside the path, watching the path. He turns his head; we see that he wears a mask. He watches the path again, reacts as FAINT SOUND OF FEET begins. Vivian enters, walking rapidly along the path, clutching her handbag to her. As she passes the shrub, the man steps quickly out. Vivian stops but makes no sound.

THUG:

(quickly; low-tone)

This is a gun, lady. Gentle now.
Just hand me the bag.

For a moment Vivian does not move. Then she draws a deep breath as if to scream, still clutching the handbag.

THUG:

Yell, and I'll cut you in half.
(he opens the bag,
thrusts his hand inside)
It better be here --

MARLOWE:

(quietly, from behind him)
Hi, pal.
(the thug stops dead.
After a second his empty
hand starts to steal upward)
Easy now.

As Marlowe and the thug stare it out tensely, two shadowy figures emerge from the shrubbery. One of them slugs Marlowe from behind. As he falls, the other grabs for Vivian, apparently about to do the same for her. She lets out a wild scream and starts shooting from the pocket. One of the thugs cries out in mingled pain and

anger -- in the distance people begin to shout -- the noise has attracted attention.

THUG:

You clumsy yap . . .

SECOND THUG:

Let's get outa here.

They run, vanishing into the dark shrubbery. Vivian crouches beside Marlowe, helping as he tries to sit up.

MARLOWE:

(in pain, holding his head)

Agh -- good thing I got a thick skull --

People from the club, parking attendants, etc., run up. Flashlights play on them.

CROWD:

(ad lib)

What's the matter? . . . What happened? . . .

The guy's hurt. . . .

MARLOWE:

(rising groggily)

It's okay. Just a slight holdup -- the lady flashes too much dough around.

(to Vivian)

You all right?

VIVIAN:

Yes -- are you?

MARLOWE:

Let's go. I don't like crowds.

They get away from the curious onlookers, walking down a dark path toward the parking lot.

MARLOWE:

You got a car with you?

VIVIAN:

I came with a man. He's dead drunk. Forget him. What are you doing here, besides playing bodyguard?

MARLOWE:

We both seem to have been doing
a bit of that -- Eddie Mars wanted
to see me.

VIVIAN:

What for?

MARLOWE:

He changed his mind. He never did
tell me.

VIVIAN:

You lie.

MARLOWE:

All right. I'm lying.

They walk on.

DISSOLVE TO:

119. EXT. PARKING LOT MARLOWE AND VIVIAN

enter, cross to Marlowe's coupe.

MARLOWE:

(pauses)

What are trembling for? Tell
me you're scared, because I won't
believe that.

VIVIAN:

(draws him on)

I wasn't used to being high-jacked.
Give me a little time.

MARLOWE:

High-jacked. That's -- all it was?

VIVIAN:

What else?

MARLOWE:

(studying the holes
in her coat)

You always go heeled?

VIVIAN:

I feel safer, around the heels
I go with.

MARLOWE:

(laughing)
You're terrific.

120. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE'S COUPE MARLOWE AND VIVIAN

He helps her in, gets in, shuts door, starts engine.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

121. INT. MOVING CAR DESERT NIGHT MARLOWE AND VIVIAN

The car is going pretty fast, Marlowe intent on the road.
Vivian seems nervous, is looking about, smoking.

VIVIAN:

(smoking nervously)
So Eddie had you come all the way
up here and then wouldn't tell
you what he wanted?

MARLOWE:

(drily)
That's right. I'm still lying.

Suddenly she flings the cigarette out the window.

VIVIAN:

Have you got a drink?

MARLOWE:

Sure.

(still driving, watching
the road, he leans, takes a
flask from dashboard com-
partment, hands it to her)

VIVIAN:

(takes flask)
I can't drink like this. Stop
the car.

Marlowe stops the car.

VIVIAN:

(puts flask unopened back
into compartment, slams
it shut)

I don't want a drink. Let's talk.

MARLOWE:

Do we need to? The General paid me
off today -- I'm all washed up.

VIVIAN:

Are you?

MARLOWE:

All right. What's Eddie Mars got
on you?

VIVIAN:

(easily; lifts the hand-
bag, slaps it)

This, for instance. And tonight's
not the first time.

MARLOWE:

Which would make Eddie Mars sore.
So we'll pass that and start over.
What's he got on you?

VIVIAN:

Wittier, please, Marlowe. Wittier.

MARLOWE:

I can't. I'm too old to learn now.

VIVIAN:

But not old enough to outgrow
some of your other habits.

MARLOWE:

For instance?

VIVIAN:

Killing people.

(she stares at him,
secretive, while he tries
to follow her, catch up
with what's going on)

So you're a killer.

MARLOWE:

Does that mean Geiger, or Brody --
or maybe both of them?

VIVIAN:

Why not?

(she looks at him. Suddenly her manner changes; she speaks with a quiet and complete sincerity)

I wish I was sure you had done it.
Then I could thank you -- in my grandfather's name. He still has pride, at least.

MARLOWE:

And you and your sister haven't.

VIVIAN:

(with bitter contempt)

Carmen and me. . . .

(rapidly)

We're his blood. That's where the hurt is. That Father might die despising his own blood. It was always wild, but it wasn't always rotten.

(she pulls herself together, takes out a cigarette, slumps back in the seat as Marlowe strikes a match. But when he holds the match to her, he sees her lying back in the seat, the cigarette in her mouth, looking at him with lazy and inviting challenge. When he brings the match near, without moving she blows it out. When she speaks it is almost a whisper)

Move closer.

Marlowe stares at her. After a moment he flings the dead match deliberately away, puts his arm around her, approaches his face to hers. Suddenly Vivian flings the unlighted cigarette over her shoulder toward the window, clasps him in her arms.

VIVIAN:

Hold me close!

They kiss, a long kiss. Marlowe raises his head at last.

VIVIAN:

Where do you live?

MARLOWE:

Hobart Arms.

VIVIAN:

I've never seen it.

MARLOWE:

Would you like to?

VIVIAN:

Yes.

MARLOWE:

What's Eddie Mars got on you?

She is motionless in his arms for a second. Then she flings him back with one arm, sits violently up.

VIVIAN:

So that's the way it is.

MARLOWE:

That's the way it is.

VIVIAN:

(controls herself; takes out
a wisp of handkerchief and

scrubs her lips savagely with it)

Men have been shot for less than this,
Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

Men have been shot for less than nothing.
The first time we met I told you I was a
detective. Get it through your lovely
head. I work at it, lady. I don't play
at it.

VIVIAN:

What makes you think Eddie Mars has

VIVIAN: (Cont.)
anything on me?

MARLOWE:
He lets you win a lot of money, then he has a gunpoke meet you in the back yard and take it all away from you. And you're not even surprised. You don't even thank me for saving it for you.

VIVIAN:
Do I need to tell you what I think of you, Mister Detective?

MARLOWE:
You don't owe me anything. Your father paid me. I owe you something for the kiss.

VIVIAN:
Let me congratulate you on keeping your head.

MARLOWE:
Maybe I didn't.

VIVIAN:
Take me home.

Marlowe starts the car again, drives on.

DISSOLVE TO:

122. INT: MARLOWE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

As Marlowe enters, closing the door behind him. The only light in the room filters in from a streetlamp outside. Marlowe flings his hat carelessly toward a chair, evidently out of long habit, and starts across the room toward the kitchen; in search of a drink and in too much of a hurry to bother turning on lights:

123. INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT REVERSE ANGLE FROM KITCHEN
NIGHT

As Marlowe approaches, his body filling the f.g. As he reaches the kitchen door a lamp goes on suddenly behind him. He freezes, his body blocking the view

of what is behind him. Then, as he turns slowly, we see past him -- Carmen Sternwood sits in an armchair, the one, in fact, into which Marlowe has pitched his hat. Carmen holds it up, smiling. She wears an evening gown, more or less covered by a light wrap.

CARMEN:

(cooly)

What does the hatcheck girl get for a tip?

MARLOWE:

(grimly)

I'm trying to think of something appropriate -- How did you get in here?

CARMEN:

Bet you can't guess.

MARLOWE:

(bleakly, lighting a cigarette)

Bet I can. You came in through the keyhole, like Peter Pan.

CARMEN:

Who's he?

MARLOWE:

Guy I used to know around the poolroom.

CARMEN:

You're cute.

MARLOWE:

And getting cuter every minute. How did you get in?

CARMEN:

I showed your manager your card. I stole it from Vivian. I told him you told me to come here and wait for you.

MARLOWE:

Fine. Now tell me how you're going to get out.

CARMEN:
(slipping off her wrap)
I'm not going.

She looks at him -- a surprisingly honest, steady look. This is a different Carmen -- a puzzled, half-frightened girl who seems to be waking from a dream -- not sure she wants to, but unable to help herself. Marlowe looks back at her, nastily. But he senses a difference, and his voice is surprisingly gentle when he speaks.

MARLOWE:
Listen, Carmen. I'm tired. I've had a hard day's work. I like you, I'm your friend, and any other time I'd be tickled to death to see you. But not now. Will you please go home?

CARMEN:
(quietly, hungrily)
Are you really my friend, Phil?

MARLOWE:
Sure . . .

CARMEN:
I need a friend, Phil . . . someone to --

She stops, apparently confused, groping for words.

MARLOWE:
Someone to what, Carmen?

CARMEN:
I don't know.

She looks up at him again, searching his face. As though Marlowe is a magnet, she is drawn to her feet, still looking at him. She comes close, but does not touch him.

CARMEN:
(almost to herself)
What is it in you? . . . I'm afraid of you, and yet . . . there's something straight and hard . . . Phil, I wish I'd met you before -- a long time ago . . .

MARLOWE:
(trying to josh
her out of it)
Hey, hey. . . . What's all this?

CARMEN:
I don't know.
(angrily)
Why did you have to come? I was
all right. I was fine.

MARLOWE:
And now?

CARMEN:
(almost weeping)
I don't know.

MARLOWE:
Look -- you and I want to go on
being friends -- and you shouldn't
be here.
(holding her wrap for her)
Be a good girl.

During this speech, Carmen seems to take the wrap.
But the wrap falls on to the floor, revealing the
fact that Carmen is holding Marlowe's hand.

CARMEN:
Do you think I can be a good girl?

MARLOWE:
It doesn't matter what I think.

Carmen kisses his hand.

CARMEN:
But don't you want me to try?

MARLOWE:
(trying to free his
hand now)
I just want you to get out of here.

CARMEN:
(clinging to his hand)
You've got funny thumbs. Can I
bite it?

Before he can answer, she raises his hand, starts to put his thumb into her mouth. With a sharp violent motion he flings her hand away.

MARLOWE:

Stick to your own thumb. Hasn't it carried you all right all your life?

CARMEN:

(obediently)

All right.

She puts her thumb in her mouth, or her hand to her face in such a way as to appear to be sucking her thumb as usual. Marlowe takes up the fallen wrap and approaches with it.

MARLOWE:

Okay. Take your thumb now and get out of here.

CARMEN:

(giggling)

It's not my thumb. See?

She removes the object from her mouth and holds it up for him to see. It is the white queen from his set of chessmen. Marlowe stares at her for a moment, then he slaps her terrifically across the face, rocking her back. The chessman falls from her hand and she stares at Marlowe, frightened now, as he walks toward her.

CARMEN:

Do that again.

MARLOWE:

(seething with repressed
rage; almost whispering)

Get out.

CARMEN:

Maybe if people had done that to me more often, I would have been good now.

Marlowe reaches her, grasps her arm, hurries her across to the door, jerks the door open, almost hurls her through it, flings the wrap after her, slams the door,

turns the bolt as she rattles the knob, then begins to hammer on the door. He turns and crosses the room rapidly to the bath while she still beats on the door, and washes his hand savagely with soap and water, his face now actually beaded with sweat. The KNOCKING CONTINUES. He examines his hand, is still not satisfied, jerks open shaving cabinet, looks at the innocuous bottles of mouthwash, etc., when what he needs is carbolic acid, goes to the kitchen while the knocking still continues, jerks savagely from the shelf his last bottle of whiskey. It is about half full. He jerks the stopper out, flings it away and pours about a dollar's worth of expensive Scotch over his hand, flings the bottle away, returns to the living room, and while the KNOCKING STILL CONTINUES, he kneels at the hearth, lays the delicate chess piece on it and with a heavy fire-dog hammers the chess-piece into dust, still beating even after the piece has vanished, his blows at last drowning out the SOUND of the knocking on the door.

FADE OUT.

124. FADE IN

INT. MARLOWE'S BEDROOM TELEPHONE ON BEDSIDE TABLE

ringing. Marlowe wakes, rises onto elbow and takes the phone. He holds it loosely, so that we can HEAR OHLS' rasping VOICE from the other end.

MARLOWE:

Yeah?

OHLS' VOICE:

Marlowe? Come down here. I want to see you.

MARLOWE:

I'm not up yet. I haven't had breakfast.

OHLS:

Never mind the breakfast. If you're not in my office in thirty minutes, you'll be eating it on the county.

Ohls' telephone clicks shut. Marlowe puts his down, throws covers back to get up.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

125. INT. OHLS' OFFICE OHLS AND MARLOWE

OHLS:

Lay off.

MARLOWE:

Lay off what?

OHLS:

If you don't know what, it ought
to be easy not to do it.

They stare at each other. Ohls takes up a box of
cigarettes from the desk, offers it.

OHLS:

Smoke?

MARLOWE:

(not moving)

I haven't had breakfast yet. Who
says for me to lay off?

OHLS:

The D.A. does.

MARLOWE:

And beyond him?

OHLS:

So you want to know. Okay it came from
your client. That satisfy you?

MARLOWE:

I haven't got a client. General Sternwood
paid me off yesterday. I'm through.

OHLS:

Well, apparently he don't think so. And
he's a friend of the D.A. and the D.A. is
the chief crime prosecutor of this county,
and I'm the D.A.'s head man Friday, and
all three of us tell you to lay off.

MARLOWE:

Will you tell me one more thing: Why
General Sternwood thinks I haven't laid off?

OHLS:

No. But I'll tell you what he might be thinking. That you are trying to uncover enough stuff about his family affairs to put the squeeze on him yourself.

MARLOWE:

That's a lie. General Sternwood never told the D.A. nor you nor anybody else that. I don't think the message even came from General Sternwood. It was --
(he stops, but Ohls
has already broken in)

OHLS:

Never you mind what you think. You just lay off. You get it?

MARLOWE:

(quietly)
I get it. Or else I lose
my license and take my pick and
shovel out of the mothballs.

Thoughtful, he reaches out and takes a cigarette from the box.

OHLS:

(watching him)
Changed your mind, huh?

MARLOWE:

(recovers, sees the cigarette in his
hand, drops it back into the box)
No. I haven't changed it.

DISSOLVE TO:

126. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE LATER MARLOWE

The TELEPHONE IS RINGING. Marlowe takes it up.

MARLOWE:

Yes, speaking --

127. INT. STERNWOOD HOME. VIVIAN STERNWOOD AT TELEPHONE

She wears hat and coat as if about to depart.

VIVIAN:

(rapidly)

I've found Shawn. I'm leaving at once to meet him. We'll send you a picture postal from Mexico perhaps. So you can call off the bloodhounds, and many thanks.

(she hangs up)

128. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE AT PHONE

as the click of Vivian's phone comes through it.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

129. EXT. STERNWOOD HOUSE AT FRONT DOOR MARLOWE (RAIN)

facing Norris, who has answered the bell. Norris stands holding the door half open, as if barring Marlowe from entering.

NORRIS:

(courteous, inscrutable)

No, sir. She left no address. We don't expect to hear until she and Mr. Regan reach Mexico City perhaps.

MARLOWE:

So she found him.

NORRIS:

(inscrutable)

Yes, sir. We are all most happy.
-- Was there anything else?

MARLOWE:

The General . . .

NORRIS:

Is resting. I won't disturb him now.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

Norris watches him, still barring him from entering. He turns. Norris closes the door. Marlowe walks on.

DISSOLVE TO:

130. CLOSE SHOT PLYMOUTH COUPE PARKED AT CURB DAY (RAIN)

the same car which was following Marlowe yesterday. Marlowe passing, recognizes it, pauses, thoughtful, walks on.

131. EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET MOVING SHOT MARLOWE

as he passes the mouth of a narrow alley two men step out quickly. One of them saps Marlowe expertly -- they drag him out of sight.

132. EXT. ALLEY A DEEP DOORWAY (RAIN)

Marlowe is dazed, but not out. He fights, but the two boys give him an expert going-over, very quickly and efficiently. Marlowe goes down onto the wet bricks. One of the men leans over him.

THUG:

(gently)

This is just our way of saying --
lay off. Get it, Marlowe? Lay off.

He boots Marlowe in the stomach -- the pair of them depart while Marlowe is getting rid of his breakfast. Presently, while Marlowe is trying unsuccessfully to stand up, HARRY JONES comes up to him. Harry is small, hardly five feet, in a cheap snappy 'underworld' suit. Yet in his wizened ugly face there is independence, honesty, reliability, courage. He helps Marlowe to his feet, steadies him, hands him a handkerchief.

MARLOWE:

(still groggy --
wiping his face)

You're the guy that's been tailing me.

JONES:

Yeah. The name's Jones. Harry
Jones. I want to see you.

MARLOWE:

That's swell. Did you want to see
those two guys jump me?

JONES:

I didn't care one way or the other.

MARLOWE:

You could have yelled for help.

JONES:

A guy's playing a hand, I let him play it. I'm no kibitzer.

MARLOWE:

(grinning)

You got brains. Come on up to the office.

DISSOLVE TO:

133. INT. MARLOWE'S OFFICE MARLOWE AND JONES

Marlowe removes his coat and hat, hangs them up. Jones watches him. Marlowe is reasonably steady now, gradually getting his wind back.

MARLOWE:

Might as well take yours off too.
We may be here a good while, unless
I get another case.

He goes to the desk, sits down, lights a cigarette, pours a stiff shot from the office bottle, then starts to riffle through a small stack of mail on his desk. Jones watches him. He opens top letter, reads it.

JONES:

I been around too. Used to run a little liquor. Rode the scout car with a tommy gun in my lap. A tough racket.

MARLOWE:

(reading, squinting
through smoke)

Terrible.

He tosses the letter into wastebasket, takes up the next, opens it, sees Jones still standing.

MARLOWE:

Sit down. You make me nervous
standing there.

Jones sits on edge of a chair; Marlowe opens and rapidly
reads the next letter, tosses it in wastebasket, opens
the next one. Jones watches him.

JONES:

Maybe you don't believe me.

MARLOWE:

(throws letter
into wastebasket)

What do you want?

JONES:

(approvingly, man to
man fashion)

That's better. I got something to
sell -- cheap, for a couple of C's.

MARLOWE:

(opens next letter)

Then don't let me stop you.

JONES:

(baffled)

Don't you even want to know who
I am.

MARLOWE:

(rapidly reading letter)

I already know. You're not a cop.
You don't belong to Eddie Mars,
because I asked him.

(throws last letter into
wastebasket, sits back
and looks at Jones)

So Agnes is loose again, huh?

JONES:

(taken aback)

How'd you know?

MARLOWE:

Well -- she's a blonde.

JONES:

She's a nice girl. We're talking
of getting married.

MARLOWE:

She's too big for you. She'll
roll on you and smother you.

JONES:

(injured)

That's a dirty crack, brother.

MARLOWE:

You're right. I've been running
around with the wrong people lately.
Let's cut out the babble. What do
you want?

JONES:

You're looking for something.
Will you pay for it?

MARLOWE:

If it does what?

JONES:

Helps you find Regan.

MARLOWE:

Is that what you want the two C's
for -- for telling me I'm looking
for Regan? People have been
telling me that for two days now.
I don't even give cigars for
it anymore.

JONES:

(patiently)

Do you want to know what I got,
or don't you?

MARLOWE:

I don't know. Two C's buys a lot
of information in my circle.

JONES:

Would you pay two hundred dollars to
know where Eddie Mars' wife is?

JONES: (Cont.)

Would you pay two hundred bucks for that, shamus?

MARLOWE:

(leans forward and
rubs out cigarette)

I think I would. Where?

JONES:

Agnes found her. She'll tell you -- when she has the money in her hand.

MARLOWE:

You might tell the coppers for nothing.

JONES:

(quietly)

I ain't so brittle.

MARLOWE:

(speculatively)

Agnes must have something I didn't notice.

JONES:

(quietly, with
dignity even)

I ain't tried to pull anything. I come here with a straight proposition -- take it or leave it; one right guy to another. Then you start waving cops at me. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

MARLOWE:

(quietly too)

I am. -- Okay. Two hundred it is. I'll have to go to the bank.

JONES:

(rises)

Okay. After dark'll be better, anyway. You know Puss Walgreen's office -- Fulwider building -- four-twenty-eight at the back?

MARLOWE:

I can find it.

JONES:

I'll meet you there at seven o'clock
tonight. You bring the money, and
I'll take you to Agnes. Okay?

MARLOWE:

Okay.

JONES:

(going out)
So long then.

He exits.

DISSOLVE TO:

134. EXT. FULWIDER BUILDING ESTABLISHING SHOT MARLOWE
RAIN EVENING

enters.

135. INT. FULWIDER BUILDING LOBBY MARLOWE

It is deserted. Marlowe pauses at elevator, the door
is open, a shabby old man is asleep on the stool.
Marlowe goes on.

136. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE AT FIRE DOOR

pushes the door open, enters stairs, door closes behind him.

137. INT. CORRIDOR (DIM) MARLOWE

standing flattened against the wall beside a door lettered:

"L. D. WALGREEN -- INSURANCE"

The transom above it is open, light shines through.

JONES' VOICE:

(beyond transom)

Canino? Yeah, I've seen you
around. Sure.

CANINO'S VOICE:

(purring)

I thought you'd remember.

Marlowe steals quietly back along the wall, reaches another door, pushes it quietly. It is locked. He takes out his wallet, removes his driver's license from its celluloid, takes the envelope and slips back the door-lock, opens the door carefully and quietly, enters, shuts the door.

138. INT. OFFICE (DIM) MARLOWE

as he stands beside an inner door which is slightly open, a light burning beyond it. Through the crack in the door Harry Jones can be seen, sitting behind a shabby desk. The other man, CANINO, is not in sight at this angle. Jones is sweating; he cannot help that. But there is no fear in his voice and he is not trembling either.

CANINO'S VOICE:

So you go to see this peeper, this Marlowe. That was your mistake. Eddie don't like it. And what Eddie don't like ain't healthy.

JONES:

You know why I went to the peeper. Account of Joe Brody's girl. She's got to blow. That takes dough. She figured the peeper could get it for her.

CANINO'S VOICE:

Dough for what?

JONES:

You know about the night the kid bumped Brody? Well, the young Sternwood girl was there. She not only dropped in, she took a shot at Brody. Only the peeper didn't tell the cops that. So Agnes figures it's railroad fare for her as soon as she can get hold of the peeper. You get it?

CANINO'S VOICE:

Sure thing. Where's this Agnes?

JONES:

What do you care? All she wants is
to touch the peeper and blow --

His voice stops. He sits back, staring at Canino off,
shows terror now despite himself, but still no fear.

CANINO'S VOICE:

(purring)

That's right. Look at it. You'll
tell me, little man. Where's Agnes?

JONES:

Listen --

CANINO'S VOICE:

You want me to count three or some-
thing, like a movie? Where's Agnes?

JONES:

(gives in, collapses)

You win. She's in an apartment at
28 Court. Apartment 501. I guess
I'm yellow, all right.

CANINO'S VOICE:

You just got good sense. I ain't
going to hurt her. If everything's
like you say, I'll tell Eddie it's all
jakeloo. We'll even dip the bill on it.

As Canino's hand comes into sight setting a whiskey
bottle on the desk, Marlowe steps quickly back.

CANINO'S VOICE:

Got a glass?

JONES:

(stares at the bottle,
hopeless now, sweating
but still bravely)

There at the cooler.

As Canino enters, Marlowe steps quickly out. Canino
crosses the open door. We now SEE HIM; a stocky,

vicious man in brown: a killer.

139. ANOTHER ANGLE MARLOWE FLATTENED AGAINST THE WALL

beside the door. Jones cannot be seen now, only Canino as he takes the glass from water cooler and crosses the door again. Now he too is not visible. Marlowe follows him by SOUND ALONE as he returns to the table, clicks the bottle against the glass as he pours the drink.

CANINO'S VOICE:

(purring, falsely
hearty)

There you are. Drink her down.
Mud in your eye.

Jones' breathing can be heard as he pants. When Canino speaks next, his voice is a little sharper.

CANINO'S VOICE:

Drink it. What do you think it
is -- poison? I bet that Agnes
of yours wouldn't turn it down.

JONES:

No.

(SOUND of his movement
as he takes the glass)

Success.

CANINO'S VOICE:

Lots of it.

SOUND as Jones drinks, dies, the glass CLINKS as he drops it, his body thuds as he falls forward, gasps, chokes. Marlowe starts forward, catches himself. The other room goes dark. SOUND as Canino leaves it: his feet, the other door opens, closes again.

140. GLASS DOOR MARLOWE'S ANGLE

The door opens on the corridor. With the light gone, the glass in the door is faintly luminous, lettering in reverse, Canino's shadow crosses it. SOUND of his feet dies away. Marlowe moves swiftly toward the inner door.

141. INT. OTHER OFFICE MARLOWE

his hand on the switch as he turns on the light, looks for an instant at Jones sprawled dead across the desk, the whiskey bottle and overturned glass beside him. Marlowe pauses only a second. He looks about, sees what he wants, crosses to telephone, takes it up, dials hurriedly.

MARLOWE:

(into phone)

Information, can you give me the
phone number of Apartment 301,
28 Court Street?

(he lowers phone,
waits, raises phone
quickly again,
listens attentively)

Thanks.

(puts phone down,
takes it up
again, dials)

Is Agnes in?

The VOICE that answers is a MAN'S VOICE, burly and loud, so that it can be heard over the phone.

VOICE:

No Agnes here, buddy. What
number you want?

MARLOWE:

Wentworth two-five-two-eight.

VOICE:

Right number, wrong gal. Ain't
it a shame!

MARLOWE:

Yeah. Can you put me back on
to the switchboard?

VOICE:

Here you go.
(phone clicks,
whirrs)

MARLOWE:

Hello, Manager? This is Wallis,
Police Identification Bureau,

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
is there a girl named Agnes
Lozelle registered at your place? . . .
Well, have you got a tall blonde
with green eyes, either alone, or
with a little chap that weighs
about a hundred pounds, green
hat, gray overcoat. . . . Yeah, must
have been the wrong address. Thanks.

He puts the phone down, turns, looks at Jones.

MARLOWE:
(musing aloud,
with admiration)
Well, you died like a poisoned rat.
But you drank your poison like a
man before you split on your girl,
didn't you?

He approaches, gingerly and carefully shifts Jones
enough to reach inside his coat, is about to search
Jones, the telephone rings. Marlowe pauses, thinks,
makes decision, takes up phone.

MARLOWE:
(into phone)
Yeah? . . . Hello, Agnes . . . Marlowe,
the guy you want to see. No, he's
not here. He's gone, beat it. But
I've got the money. Where are you? . . .
I don't know where he went. Do you
want the two C's or don't you? . . .
In half an hour. Right.

He puts the phone down, takes out his handkerchief and
wipes his fingerprints off of it, crosses to the light
switch, wipes it off too, turns it with the handkerchief,
goes to the door, through which he came, exits.

142. INT. CORRIDOR DOOR HE ENTERED BY MARLOWE
as he wipes off the knob with his handkerchief.

DISSOLVE TO:

143. INT. AGNES' CAR MARLOWE AND AGNES RAIN NIGHT

as Marlowe gets into the car -- the gray Plymouth. Beyond the rain-streaked windows a Los Angeles street is visible; lighted store windows, etc.

AGNES:

I thought you were never coming. . . .
Give me the money.

Marlowe hands her folded bills. She counts them rapidly by the dash light, then puts them in her handbag.

AGNES:

This is a getaway stake, copper.
I'm on my way. What happened to Harry?

MARLOWE:

I told you he ran away. Canino got wise to him somehow. Forget Harry. I've paid for information and I want it.

AGNES:

You'll get it. Joe and I were out riding Foothill Boulevard a couple weeks ago. We passed a brown coupe, and I saw the girl who was driving. She was Eddie Mars' wife. There was a guy with her -- the watchdog, Canino. They're people you don't forget, even if you only saw them once. So we got curious, and Joe tailed them. About a mile east of Realito there's a side road, and nothing around it but brush and hills. Just off the highway there's a two-bit garage and paintshop run by a guy named Art Huck -- hot car drop, likely -- and a frame house behind it. That's where Eddie Mars' wife is holed up. . . .

MARLOWE:

(studying her coldly)
You're sure of that?

AGNES:

Why should I lie? . . . Well, goodbye,

AGNES: (Cont.)

copper -- wish me luck. I got a raw deal.

MARLOWE:

Yeah. Your kind always does.

He turns and opens the door to get out.

DISSOLVE TO:

144. INSERT: A HIGHWAY MARKER RAIN NIGHT

illuminated by the spotlight of a car. Above a black arrow the sign says:

"REALITO -- 7 MILES"

DISSOLVE TO:

145. EXT. HIGHWAY LONG SHOT RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe's car spinning along at high speed. The highway runs between miles of orange groves, with mountains in the b.g.

146. RAPID MONTAGE NIGHT

Orange groves -- a neon sign: "WELCOME TO REALITO" -- small lighted store fronts -- a bar -- a theatre -- then dark, barren fields.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

147. EXT. HIGHWAY LONG SHOT RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe's car rushing along the wet highway, which now runs through barren country close to the foothills. The car takes an S curve, skidding dangerously.

148. CLOSER SHOT ON MARLOWE'S CAR

as it swings into another curve, a sharp one, and deliberately skids off the shoulder, jarring finally to a stop in the ditch.

149. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he climbs out and bends to inspect the tires. It

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is raining heavily.

150. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE RAIN NIGHT

as he lets the air out of the two right-hand tires.

151. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he straightens up and looks ahead.

152. EXT. HUCK'S GARAGE LONG SHOT MARLOWE'S ANGLE

A SMALL DINGY GARAGE, with a frame house behind it.
Lights show dimly through shaded windows.

153. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he nods, satisfied, then gets back into the car.

154. INT. MARLOWE'S CAR RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe takes the license holder from the steering post
and puts it in his pocket, then leans lower behind the
wheel.

155. EXTREME CLOSE FRONT OF THE CAR SEAT NIGHT

as Marlowe's hand pushes open a weighted flap, disclosing
a secret compartment with two guns in it. He weighs them,
selects the heavier of the two, and draws it out. The
flap swings shut.

156. EXT. HIGHWAY AT HUCK'S GARAGE RAIN NIGHT

Marlowe approaches the garage. There is a sign on the
blank side wall -- Marlowe holds a flashlight on it,
and we SEE the lettering of the sign:

A R T H U C K

AUTO REPAIRS -- PAINTING

Marlowe goes round to the front. The big doors are
closed, but a streak of light shows through the crack.
Marlowe hesitates, then walks past them to glance at
the house.

157. EXT. FRAME HOUSE MARLOWE'S ANGLE RAIN NIGHT

The only signs of life are the light from the shaded windows and Canino's brown coupe parked in front by a row of stunted trees.

158. EXT. HUCK'S GARAGE

RAIN NIGHT

At the door, as Marlowe goes up and hammers on it with the butt of his heavy flashlight. There is a moment of silence. Then the inside light goes off. Marlowe centers his flash in a white circle of light on the doors.

HUCK:

(speaking through
the door)

Whaddaya want?

MARLOWE:

Open up, I got two flats back on
the highway and only one spare.

HUCK:

Sorry, mister. We're closed up.
Better try Realito.

Marlowe doesn't appreciate this. He kicks the door, hard, and keeps on kicking it, until a second voice -- Canino's voice -- speaks from close inside. Then he stops to listen.

CANINO'S VOICE:

Okay, Art -- open up for the wise guy.

A BOLT SQUEALS, and half the door opens inward. Marlowe's flash outlines a gaunt hard face, Huck's face. Then Huck swings a gun down across the flash, knocking it out of Marlowe's hand, still burning.

HUCK:

Kill that spot, bud.

Marlowe picks up the flash, turning it off. Light goes on inside the garage, revealing HUCK, a tall man in dirty coveralls. He backs away from the door, keeping Marlowe covered.

HUCK:

Come inside and shut the door.

159. INT. HUCK'S GARAGE

NIGHT

as Marlowe closes the door behind him. There is the usual paraphernalia of a garage, and two cars. One is being painted, a spray-gun lying on the fender, the other is Carmen Sternwood's Packard convertible. Canino lounges easily in the shadows by the bench. The RAIN BEATS on the tin roof.

MARLOWE:

(indicating Huck's gun)

You could scare off a lot of trade that way.

HUCK:

I'm too far out of town to take chances.

(pointedly)

You can get yourself hurt, kicking on doors.

CANINO:

(softly)

Cut it out, Art. You run a garage, don't you?

MARLOWE:

(not looking at Canino)

Thanks.

(to Huck)

I suppose you can fix flats.

HUCK:

(putting the gun
in his pocket)

As good as you can make 'em, bud.
But right now I'm busy.

CANINO:

(pleasantly)

Art -- you got time to fix his tires.

MARLOWE:

You can use my spare -- that'll help some.

HUCK:

Listen, I told you I'm busy with
a spray job. . . .

CANINO:

It's too damp for a good spray job,
Art. Get moving -- and take two
jacks.

HUCK:

Now wait a minute. . . .

Canino looks at Huck with a soft quiet-eyed stare, then
away again, not saying anything. Huck wilts and
moves away, pulling on a raincoat and banging out with
a socket wrench, a hand jack, and wheeling a dolly.
Canino closes the door behind him and returns to the
workbench. Marlowe watches silently, lighting a cigarette.

CANINO:

Bet you could use a drink. Wet
the inside, and even up.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

Canino produces a bottle and two glasses from under the
bench, pours two shots, and hands one to Marlowe. They
salute -- Canino drinks, and Marlowe, remembering Harry
Jones and the cyanide cocktail, hesitates, then drinks also.

CANINO:

(casually)
Live around here?

MARLOWE:

No. Just got in from Reno and
Carson City.

CANINO:

The long way round, huh?
Business trip?

MARLOWE:

Partly. And in a hurry.

CANINO:

Too bad -- you may have a long wait.

CANINO: (Cont.)
(reaching for Marlowe's
empty glass)
How about another, to pass the time.

DISSOLVE TO:

160. EXTREME CLOSE A WHEEL NIGHT

-- the tire already on a spreader and loose from the rim.
A man's hands and feet working at the job viciously.
The CAMERA PULLS BACK to show Art Huck as he rips out
the tube. Marlowe and Canino stand almost as before,
by the workbench.

HUCK:
(grumbling over
above action)
I don't have enough to do -- guys have
to get flats in the middle of a
cloudburst.

CANINO:
(laughing)
Don't crab so much. You can use
an extra bath.
(taking a roll of coins
out of his pocket,
tossing them idly
in the palm of his hand)
Just get busy.

Huck carries the tube to an airhose and starts to fill it.

HUCK:
I am busy, brother. Plenty busy.

He starts to place the tube in the galvanized tub
under the hose, then turns swiftly, lifting the tube
high, and brings it down over Marlowe's head and
shoulders, a perfect ringer. Marlowe, unable to
reach the gun in his pocket, bends forward, trying to
throw Huck over his back. Canino steps in lightly,
like a dancer, his hand closed hard over the roll of
coins, and hangs one with delicate precision on
Marlowe's jaw. Marlowe's tough -- he goes on fighting,
although he's already out on his feet. Huck pulls him
head back by the hair as Canino clips him again with

the weighted fist. Marlowe tries, but it's no use.
He goes down and stays that way.

161. INT. MARS' HIDEOUT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

A small room, in keeping with the exterior -- furnished comfortably but not luxuriously. The only light comes from a floor lamp beside the davenport where Marlowe lies. His hands are cuffed behind him, his feet roped to the leg of the davenport. He is still out, his face considerably the worse for wear. Vivian sits beside him on a straight chair, holding a half empty glass in her hand. She seems to have forgotten about it. She seems to have forgotten everything but Marlowe -- who begins to come out of it. He opens his eyes presently and looks at Vivian -- he doesn't seem surprised. He winces and shuts his eyes again.

MARLOWE:

(thickly)

Move the light, honey. . . .

Vivian rises and turns the light away from his face.
He looks up at her again.

MARLOWE:

(still groggy)

That's better -- where are the
boys -- out digging a grave?

VIVIAN:

(desperately)

Phil, why did you have to go on
with this?

MARLOWE:

Why did you?

Vivian turns away from him -- she's obviously keyed up,
scared, desperate.

VIVIAN:

I've only known one fool as big as
you. . . .

MARLOWE:

(after a pause)

You might spare me a little of that

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
drink you're not using.

Vivian goes to him, sits down, and holds the glass to Marlowe's lips, then touches his battered face with her fingertips.

VIVIAN:
(shakily)
Your face looks like a collision
met. . . .

MARLOWE:
It won't last long, even this good.
(after a pause, looking
up at Vivian softly)
I'll give it back to you -- I've
only known one fool as big as you.

They hold it, a twisted uncomfortable moment, and then MONA MARS enters. She is tall, blonde, strikingly beautiful -- a woman who knows her way around, yet having a certain dignity and fineness.

MARLOWE:
You would be Mrs. Eddie Mars . . . the
blond that Shawn Regan didn't run
away with.

MONA:
Why did you have to make trouble?
Eddie wasn't doing you any harm.
I was never in love with Shawn --
we were just good friends. But
you know perfectly well that if
I hadn't hid out here when Shawn
disappeared, the police would have
been certain Eddie killed him.

MARLOWE:
(quietly)
But he did kill him.

MONA:
(after a pause,
with quiet dignity)
Eddie's not that sort of man.

MARLOWE:

You mean Eddie never kills people.

MONA:

No.

MARLOWE:

You really believe that, don't you?
And in a way, I suppose you're right. . . .

MONA:

(sincerely)

I'm married to Eddie Mars. I love
him. I know what's inside of him.

MARLOWE:

Well, if Eddie's such a nice guy,
I'd like to talk to him without
Canino around. You know what Canino
will do -- beat my teeth out and then
kick me in the stomach for mumbling.

VIVIAN:

You'll get your talk, Phil. Canino's
gone for Eddie.

MARLOWE:

Leaving Art Huck within call, I
suppose. Well, I suppose nobody's
luck holds forever.

(to Vivian)

You could really have gone to Mexico,
you know. You'd have liked it better.
Blood doesn't spatter that far.

MONA:

Oh, stop talking that way!

Vivian and Marlowe are no longer conscious of her
presence, having retired into a private world of their
own.

MARLOWE:

But then you couldn't go, could you.
The border police would have checked
you through alone, and too many people
might have seen you -- without Shawn
Regan. Much safer to come down here

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

with Mona. Much safer -- especially
for Eddie Mars.

VIVIAN:

I did it as much for you. . . . Why wouldn't
you believe me? Why wouldn't you stop?

MARLOWE:

Too many people tried to make me. And
besides I knew Shawn Regan -- and I
know you.

They look at each other -- and Mona Mars takes herself
quietly out of the room.

VIVIAN:

Why did I have to meet you? Why
out of all the men in the city, did
my father have to call you in?

MARLOWE:

Things happen that way, sometimes. . . .
Light me a cigarette. . . .

She takes one from a table, lights it, and bends over
to place it between Marlowe's lips. Marlowe's eyes
hold her as though his hands were on her shoulders;
she sits down.

MARLOWE:

(softly)

You know what they're going to do,
don't you? You know the only thing
they can do.

Vivian's hands grip the shoulders of his coat. She
shuts her eyes and drops her head, holding herself
rigid.

MARLOWE:

(still softly)

It's not pretty, is it -- even from a
distance. And when you're right on top
of it, it isn't pretty at all.

VIVIAN:

(rising abruptly)

Oh, stop it, Phil. Stop it!

VIVIAN: (Cont.)

Nothing's going to happen. . . .

MARLOWE:

Mona's in love with Eddie Mars, but you're not. Are you going through with it?

Vivian moves away, as far from him as she can get, and stands with her back to him, rigid, staring at the curtained window as though she could see through it. Marlowe studies her, then laughs, a quiet sardonic chuckle and relaxes, leaning back on the cushion.

MARLOWE:

Pride is a great thing, isn't it?
And courage -- and honor -- and love. All the things you read about in the copybooks -- only in the copybooks nothing ever gets tangled. The road always lies so straight, and clear, and the signs say to love and honor and be brave. . . . Take this thing out of my mouth, will you, honey? It's burning me.

Vivian comes slowly to him and takes the cigarette stub from his lips. She hesitates, then goes down onto the couch, dropping the cigarette on the floor. Her arms go around Marlowe, her mouth crushed to his. When she breaks for air, putting her cheek against his, she is almost crying. Marlowe is far from unmoved himself, turning his head against hers, hard.

MARLOWE:

(after a pause,
whispering)

Get a knife, and cut this rope off me. . . .

Vivian rises, runs out of the room. The SOUND of a kitchen drawer being opened comes OVER from o.s., then the RATTLE of CUTLERY. Vivian returns almost at once with a knife and slashes the rope from Marlowe's feet. Dropping the knife, she helps him get up -- he's not too steady on his legs. They cross the room together, Vivian with her arm around Marlowe. The handcuffs glittering on Marlowe's wrists. From outside comes the SOUND of a car skidding to a stop. Mona Mars appears

in the doorway, holding a gun.

MONA:

(quietly, without menace)

Eddie is here -- I think you'd
better wait.

162. EXTREME CLOSE CANINO'S HAND

opening, playing idly with the roll of coins. The
CAMERA PULLS BACK -- we are still in the living room.
Marlowe is sitting on the couch, Vivian beside him --
his hands are still cuffed behind him, but his feet
are free. Canino leans unobtrusively against the
wall -- near Marlowe. Eddie Mars holds center stage,
moving like a lion keyed up for the kill. Mona Mars,
the gun forgotten in her hand, sits in the b.g., watching.
Her face is still, intent.

VIVIAN:

(quietly)

Eddie -- this is where I get off.

MARS:

You bought a ticket for the whole
run, Countess -- destination unknown.
Keep your mouth out of this.

(to Marlowe)

You're making it tough for me,
soldier.

MARLOWE:

Not me, Eddie. Murder. Murder can
make things tough for anybody. You
keep tripping over it, all the time.

MARS:

(contemptuously)

Murder! I haven't killed anybody.

MARLOWE:

Not personally, maybe -- but your
hand is behind Canino's, aiming the
gun -- or pouring the cyanide into
Harry Jones' glass.

(as Mars gives him a
startled look)

Yeah -- I was there, in the next

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

room. Canino had a gun and I didn't, so all I could do was watch . . . I kind of liked Harry Jones.

MARS:

You kind of like too many people, soldier.

MONA:

Eddie -- what does he mean? What's happened? Who was Harry Jones?

MARS:

He's just talking. Maybe you better get out, Mona. We may have to push him around a little before we get through.

MARLOWE:

(to Mona)

Yeah -- push me a little, right over the edge. Eddie won't spoil his manicure to do it -- but Canino won't mind. He's used to having his hands dirty.

Canino leans over and slaps Marlowe hard across the face. Vivian springs up, toward Canino -- Eddie Mars grabs her, looking toward Mona. Mona has never seen that look on Eddie's face before.

MARS:

(quietly)

Get out, Mona.

MONA:

Eddie. . . .

MARS:

Get out.

Mona studies him -- it seems that she is looking at a stranger, a stranger who frightens her, someone evil and beyond the pale. She seems to grow in stature and dignity, even as her heart realizes how far down the wrong road it has travelled. She turns, then, slowly,

and goes out. After she has gone, Vivian wrenches free from Mars' grip. There is something rather wonderful about her now -- a blazing, catlike courage. She faces Eddie Mars.

VIVIAN:

You don't dare go through with this, Eddie.

MARS:

You think I can't get away with it?

VIVIAN:

You think I'm going to let you get away with it?

Mars studies her, then Marlowe -- realizes what the score is, and smiles sardonically.

MARS:

You women kill me. You'll spend years and wreck lives to get something you want, and then throw it all away in a minute because some guy has a new way of putting his mouth on yours.

(sitting down,
easily, smiling)

All right, Countess. While we're doing all this thinking . . . do you think you're going to have a chance not to let me get away with it?

Silence as this sinks in. Vivian sits down quietly beside Marlowe, who looks at both her and Mars with a cold, cynical smile.

MARLOWE:

(laughing softly)

It's amazing how fast a beautiful friendship breaks when a dead body falls on top of it. . . . Which one of you killed Regan? If he was shot in the back, I'll bet on you, Eddie, because that's the only way you could have got to him. But if he took it from the front --

(looking at Vivian)

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

I can see how you both would have
been jealous of Mona.

Vivian stares at him, a hard, shocked look as though Marlowe is something not human. Marlowe gives it back to her -- then almost at once Canino steps forward and places his hand on Marlowe's head, bending it back, his fingers and thumb biting cruelly into Marlowe's temples. Canino smiles, as though he is very fond of Marlowe.

CANINO:

(gently amused)

Ever see a dick with such a one-track mind? He's sitting right on the edge of a hole in the ground, but he still cares who killed Regan. Want to tell him, Eddie? Want to send him to bed happy?

Mars makes an annoyed gesture and starts to get up, then freezes as Mona speaks from the doorway.

MONA:

(very quietly)

Eddie. . . .

Everyone turns to look at her -- there is a quality of fate in her voice. She leans almost negligently against the door jamb, wearing a heavy coat, holding a big felt hat in her hands.

MONA:

I've been a good wife to you, Eddie --
as good a wife as you'd let me be.
I believed in you, and there wasn't
anything I wouldn't have done for you --
anything but this.

MARS:

Don't be a fool, Mona. Can't you see. . . .

MONA:

(slowly)

I can only see one thing. I've been
married to a killer, and I've helped
him kill.

She turns and goes out. Mars rises, looking after her.

MARS:

(to Canino)

Hold the fort, Canino. I'll be back.

He goes out after Mona, not even waiting for Canino's nod of assent. Canino goes to a window and peers through the crack of the blind, still keeping Marlowe covered. We HEAR a car start outside and drive off.

CANINO:

(sardonically)

He made it. And he can talk about love!

He turns back into the room. Vivian has risen, she stands by a table lighting a cigarette with a wooden match from a box which she retains in her left hand.

163. INSERT THE MATCH BOX IN VIVIAN'S HANDS

An ordinary small box of matches. The cover has been pushed almost shut, leaving the head of one match protruding. Vivian holds the flaming match with which she has just lighted her cigarette to the uncovered match head, igniting it.

164. INT. MARS HIDEOUT THE LIVING ROOM

As Vivian blows out the first match and drops it casually into an ash tray, shielding the box in her hand from Canino's view. Canino strolls back, looking Marlowe over with sadistic humor.

CANINO:

I don't really mind the boss leaving.
I can have a lot more fun alone.

165. INSERT THE MATCH BOX IN VIVIAN'S HAND

The match has burned back, charring the paper cover. Smoke rises from the box.

166. INT. MARS HIDEOUT THE LIVING ROOM

VIVIAN:

Canino --

CANINO:

(looking around, grinning)

Save your breath, baby --

The match box burst into flame. Vivian hurls it into Canino's face, then turns aside, clutching her scorched fingers.

VIVIAN:

(over above action)

Phil!

Marlowe throws himself forward into Canino's legs -- they roll, struggling.

167. CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE AND CANINO

as Canino comes out on top of Marlowe, at an angle, and whips his pistol down at Marlowe's head. Marlowe wrenches aside -- the gun barrel misses by a fraction, smacking hard on the carpet. Marlowe doubles his knees into his chest and lets go with his feet, getting both heels under Canino's jaw. Canino goes backward and down, dropping his gun, but he's not clear out -- the blow was glancing. He grabs Vivian as she tries to get by him, pulling her down. Marlowe manages to get the gun in his shackled hands. Canino pulls another, fires at him, misses, tangled up with Vivian. Marlowe makes it out the door.

168. EXT. MARS HIDEOUT AT THE FRONT DOOR (RAIN) NIGHT

As Marlowe comes out and runs down the steps toward Canino's car. Over by the garage Art Huck stands, scared but undecided. Marlowe snaps a shot at him. Huck makes up his mind in a hurry. He vanishes -- a second later we HEAR a car start and race off down the highway, o.s. Marlowe, working fast but awkwardly because of the handcuffs, opens the door of Canino's car, backs in.

169. INT. CANINO'S CAR MARLOWE (RAIN) NIGHT

fumbling for the ignition key and starter button, behind him. He starts the motor, then slides out again, quickly, hugging the ground by the rear wheels, offside.

170. EXT. MARS HIDEOUT MARLOWE'S ANGLE (RAIN) NIGHT

As a darkened window goes up. THREE SHOTS are fired from it. We HEAR the whine of the bullets, their impact on the coupe. Marlowe cries out as though hit. Then again there is silence, except for the beating rain and the purring motor. Presently the house door opens -- there is no light behind it. Vivian appears, walking stiffly, and behind her is Canino, shielded from possible fire. They walk slowly toward Marlowe and the car.

CANINO:
Can you see anything?

VIVIAN:
(tonelessly)
Nothing. The windows are all
misted.

They come steadily closer to the dark car. Suddenly Vivian stops, rigid, and lets go a thin, tearing scream.

VIVIAN:
Behind the wheel!
(as though pleading
with Marlowe not to fire)
Phil!

Canino shoves her roughly aside, dropping to one knee, and pours three SHOTS through the car window. His gun is now empty. No shots answer him -- he is satisfied that Marlowe is dead. He rises, moving to open the car door, as Marlowe emerges from behind the car.

MARLOWE:
Finished?

Canino whirls around, and Marlowe, the gun pressed awkwardly against his side, puts four bullets in him. He collapses into the mud and stays there.

MARLOWE:
(to Vivian)
Get the keys, honey.

Vivian, white-faced and silent, gets the keys from Canino's pocket and unlocks the handcuffs. Marlowe rubs his wrists -- they look at each other, both tired and drained of emotion -- there seems to be nothing to say.

MARLOWE:

(quietly)
You played that hand all right,
Countess.

VIVIAN:

(dully)
I don't know why I cared. . . .

She turns and walks away from him toward the garage and her car, not looking back. Presently Marlowe goes back into the house.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN

171. INT. STERNWOOD HALL NORRIS AND MARLOWE MORNING

As Norris stands in the open door, in the act of admitting Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

The General sent for me. . . .

NORRIS:

Yes, sir. He's waiting, in the orchid house.

Marlowe enters, walking along the hall toward the rear with Norris. Subtly, Norris has the air of a guard. Marlowe looks tired and sombre, the marks of last night's encounter still plain on his face. He has obviously not been home; he wears the same rumpled suit, no tie, and he has not shaved. Vivian comes out of an adjoining room, as though she has been waiting, and stops them.

VIVIAN:

I'd like to see you, Mr. Marlowe.

She gives Norris the nod -- he goes away, and Marlowe follows Vivian into the room, closing the door.

172. INT. SMALL SITTING ROOM MARLOWE AND VIVIAN

lavishly furnished. Vivian also looks exhausted, stony, but giving an impression of submerged but volcanic emotion. She does not look at Marlowe.

VIVIAN:

Well?

MARLOWE:

I kept you out of it. I told a straight story, and Canino left his thumbprint on Harry Jones' door to back me up. I don't know whether they believed me, but there's nothing they can do about it. I'm clear -- self defense. And all Eddie Mars has to say is that Canino was roughing me on his own time.

VIVIAN:

(looking at him now,
forced to admire him)

It wasn't as easy as you make it sound.

MARLOWE:

(shrugging)

My neck is usually stuck out, one way or another. It's a little tougher than the General's, that's all.

VIVIAN:

(after an uncomfortable
pause)

It's too bad Father can't know what you've done for him. I'm afraid he's . . . angry with you.

MARLOWE:

Why not? Everybody else is.

VIVIAN:

You -- won't say anything to him?

MARLOWE:

Of course not.

VIVIAN:

Phil. . . .

MARLOWE:

(brutally)

Listen . . . I'm tired. I killed a man last night. I stink of cops, and I've

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

still got a rotten taste in my mouth.
I want a hot bath with strong soap,
and I can't have it until I've seen
your father. Do you mind if I go now?

VIVIAN:

(going close to him)
Phil -- I didn't kill Shawn Regan.

MARLOWE:

(cold, deadpan)
Is he dead?

Vivian stares at him, getting a slow, deadly look in
her eyes.

VIVIAN:

(very calmly)
It's quite possible. He's been
gone a long time, and he's not a
peaceful man.
(turning away)
I'll send you my personal check in
the morning, Mr. Marlowe.

MARLOWE:

Your personal check?

VIVIAN:

I'm sure my father would wish you
to be repaid for your . . . extra
services, last night.

MARLOWE:

(quietly, after pause)
I'm sure your father would know
better . . . and I know you do. --
What about Eddie Mars?

VIVIAN:

What about him?

MARLOWE:

You think he's going to forget
all this?

VIVIAN:

I'm tired, too. Get out, Marlowe.

Marlowe shrugs, goes toward the door. He speaks over his shoulder with an air of casual politeness.

MARLOWE:

How's Carmen?

Vivian, her back to him, takes the question just a little too easily.

VIVIAN:

She's fine. She went up to Santa Barbara last night.

MARLOWE:

That ought to be nice for her.

VIVIAN:

Yes.

There seems to be nothing more to say. Marlowe exits.

DISSOLVE TO:

173. EXT. STERNWOOD REAR GARDEN MARLOWE AND NORRIS DAY

as they walk down the path toward the orchid house. Marlowe glances around, apparently looking for something he doesn't see. Norris opens the door, permitting Marlowe to pass him into the greenhouse.

174. INT. ORCHID HOUSE MARLOWE

As he follows the path between the banks of orchid to the place where General Sternwood sits, as before -- in the wheelchair, wrapped in robe and blanket -- only his eyes are alive, proud and piercing.

STERNWOOD:

Sit down, Mr. Marlowe.

Marlowe pulls up a chair, already beginning to suffer with the heat. He starts to remove his coat, then something in Sternwood's attitude makes him change his mind.

STERNWOOD:

I didn't ask you to look for Shawn Regan.

MARLOWE:

You wanted me to, though.

STERNWOOD:

You assume a great deal. I usually ask for what I want.

(as Marlowe does
not answer)

The money I paid you is of no consequence. I merely feel that you have, no doubt unintentionally, betrayed a trust.

MARLOWE:

Is that all you wanted to see me about?

STERNWOOD:

You're angry at that remark.

MARLOWE:

You have an advantage over me, General. It's an advantage I wouldn't want to take away from you. You can say anything you like to me, and I wouldn't think of getting angry. I'd like to offer you your money back. It may mean nothing to you. It might mean something to me.

STERNWOOD:

What does it mean to you?

MARLOWE:

It means I've refused payment for an unsatisfactory job. That's all.

STERNWOOD:

(after a pause)

Why did you go to Captain Gregory?

MARLOWE:

I suppose I played a hunch. I was convinced you put those Geiger notes up to me chiefly as a test, and that you were a little afraid Regan might somehow be involved in an attempt to blackmail you. Besides, as I said -- I knew Regan. It meant

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
something to me to find out, too.

STERNWOOD:
And you allowed Captain Gregory to
think I had employed you to find Shawn?

MARLOWE:
Yeah, I guess I did -- when I was sure
he had the case.

STERNWOOD:
And do you consider that ethical?

MARLOWE:
Yes, I do.

STERNWOOD:
Perhaps I don't understand.

MARLOWE:
Maybe you don't. When you hire a
boy in my line of work it isn't
like hiring a window-washer and showing
him eight windows and saying:
"Wash those windows and you're through".
You don't know what I have to go
through or over or under to do your
job for you. I do it my way. I do my
best to protect you, and I may have
to break a few rules, but I break them
in your favor -- After all, you didn't
tell me not to go to Captain Gregory.

STERNWOOD:
(with a faint smile)
That would have been rather difficult.

MARLOWE:
Well, what have I done wrong? Your man
Norris, seemed to think the case was over
when Geiger was eliminated. I don't see
it that way. I'm not Sherlock Holmes. I
don't expect to go over ground the police
have covered and pick up a broken penpoint
and build a case from it. If you think
there's anybody in the detective business
making a living doing that sort of thing,

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

you don't know much about cops. If they overlook anything, it's something much looser and vaguer, like a man of Geiger's type sending you his evidence of debt and asking you to pay like a gentleman. That isn't normal. Why did he do that? Because he wanted to find out if there was anything putting pressure on you. If there was, you'd pay him. If not, you'd ignore him and wait. But something was putting pressure on you. Regan. You were afraid he'd stayed around and been nice to you just long enough to find out how to play games with your bank account.

(interrupting Sternwood,
as he starts to speak)

Even at that, it wasn't your money you cared about. It wasn't even your daughters. You've more or less written them off. It's that you're still too proud to be played for a sucker -- and you really liked Shawn Regan.

STERNWOOD:

(quietly, after a pause)

You think entirely too much, Marlowe --
Are you still trying to solve that
puzzle?

MARLOWE:

No. I've been warned to quit. The boys at the City Hall think I play too rough. That's why I thought I should give you your money back -- because it isn't a completed job by my standards.

STERNWOOD:

(smiling)

Quit, nothing. I'll pay you another thousand to find Shawn Regan. He doesn't have to come back. I don't even have to know where he is. A man has a right to live his own life. And he must have had his reasons for running off like that. I only want to know that he's all right. I want to know it from him directly, and if he should happen to need money, I

STERNWOOD: (Cont.)

should want him to have that also. Am I clear?

MARLOWE:

Yes, General.

Sternwood leans back in the chair, his eyes closed wearily.

STERNWOOD:

(trying to smile)

I guess I'm a sentimental old goat, and no soldier at all. Find him for me, Marlowe. Just find him.

MARLOWE:

(rising)

I'll try. You'd better rest now. I've talked your arm off.

He starts away. Sternwood's voice stops him.

STERNWOOD:

(quietly)

You have a lot that Shawn had. Strength -- and a steady eye.

Marlowe stands a moment, remembering Vivian's words. Then he turns quietly and goes away.

175. EXT. GREENHOUSE DOOR MARLOWE

as he emerges, mopping again, finds Norris waiting for him, already holding Marlowe's hat for him. Marlowe, surprised at this, is still further surprised when he looks up and sees his car, which he left in front of the house, now in the drive not far away and already turned so that it is headed back toward town.

NORRIS:

I took the liberty of turning it around for you, sir. Since you were in the greenhouse, I brought it on around here at the same time.

MARLOWE:

(ironically)

So that now I won't lose hardly any

MARLOWE: (Cont.)
time getting back to work, huh?

NORRIS:
(impenetrable)
You will always be welcome here, sir,
if only to receive our gratitude.

MARLOWE:
(stuffs handkerchief
into pocket, takes his
hat, turns)
Thanks.

He walks toward the car. But still Norris walks beside him. Marlowe already realizing that he is being practically frog-walked off the place. They reach the car. Norris steps ahead, opens the door, holds it open for Marlowe to get in.

MARLOWE:
You don't even need a gun, do you?

NORRIS:
I've never had occasion for one, sir.
I don't think I ever will.

MARLOWE:
Neither do I.
(nods toward
greenhouse)
What do you think of him this
morning?

NORRIS:
He's stronger than he looks. As
you would see for yourself if
occasion arose -- which, thanks to
you, it will not now.

MARLOWE:
Yeah -- What did Regan have that got
to the General so?

NORRIS:
Youth, sir. And the soldier's eye.

MARLOWE:
Like yours.

NORRIS:

Thank you, sir. And yours.

MARLOWE:

Thanks.

(he starts to get
into the car, Norris
still holding the door)

So Miss Carmen went to Santa Barbara.

NORRIS:

Yes. This morning.

MARLOWE:

(getting into car, stops)

Mrs. Rutledge told me she went
last night.

NORRIS:

(smoothly)

It was near midnight, sir. I
thought it was later. I was
probably wrong.

MARLOWE:

I see.

He gets in. Norris shuts the door. Marlowe starts
the engine, puts car in gear.

MARLOWE:

If the General has any more trouble,
you know how to call.

NORRIS:

And whom to call. Thank you
again.

Marlowe drives on. In the mirror he can see Norris
standing in the drive still watching him, guarding the
house which Marlowe realizes he is not to enter again.

DISSOLVE TO:

176. INT. MARLOWE'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

Marlowe has just entered. He kicks the door shut,
crosses the living room, shedding his hat and suit

coat on the floor as he passes.

177. INT. MARLOWE APARTMENT BEDROOM

as Marlowe continues on his way to the bath, still peeling. He vanishes into the bath -- we HEAR the shower turned on. In the bedroom the PHONE RINGS. Marlowe returns, picks up the phone.

MARLOWE:

Yeah?

The voice of Eddie Mars comes clearly from the instrument.

MARS' VOICE:

Hello, soldier.

MARLOWE:

Hello, Eddie. I been waiting to hear from you.

MARS' VOICE:

Got a little news for you, soldier. I'm skipping the manicures, till I finish up this job.

MARLOWE:

Yeah, I kind of thought you would. I got a T.L. for you, too, Eddie. Sternwood offered me a thousand bucks to find Shawn Regan. I took it.

MARS' VOICE:

(softly, after a pause)

Maybe I can help you earn that grand. You remember that stuff that Joe Brody moved out of Geiger's back room?

MARLOWE:

Yeah.

MARS' VOICE:

Well, I tracked it down where Joe stashed it, and moved it back up to Geiger's place after the cops got through. You might take a look at it.

MARLOWE:

Yeah -- I might.

MARS' VOICE:

(laughing softly)

After last night I'm beginning to think
you're as tough as you look. I told
you we could do business together.
So long, soldier.

MARLOWE:

Be seeing you.

The receiver clicks. Marlowe sets his instrument down
slowly, looks at it a moment, then returns to the
shower, dropping his shirt in the doorway.

DISSOLVE TO:

178. INT. MARLOWE APARTMENT BEDROOM

as Marlowe comes out of the bath, buttoning his pajama
coat. He is freshly shaved, his hair still damp and
rumpled from the shower. He pulls down the shades,
putting out the daylight, and collapses into the bed.
Just as he is comfortably settled, already half asleep,
the doorbell RINGS. It rings insistently, with a quality
of nervous urgency. Marlowe finally gets up to answer
it, pulling on a dressing gown.

179. INT. MARLOWE APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

as Marlowe admits Vivian. She is obviously in a fine
state of nerves. She enters quickly -- he shuts the door.

VIVIAN:

Phil. . . .

MARLOWE:

All right, now what?

VIVIAN:

Eddie Mars just called me. He's
out to get you.

MARLOWE:

We knew that a long time ago.

VIVIAN:

But now you must believe it. You must get out of town -- now.

MARLOWE:

You better sit down, baby, and catch your breath.

He sits down on the davenport.

VIVIAN:

Phil, how do you feel about me?

MARLOWE:

Just like I feel about a stick of dynamite. Smooth on the outside -- but it makes a mess when it goes off.

VIVIAN:

I got a diffirent idea last night. Or maybe you're not a man except when two or three people are trying to murder you.

They kiss -- one of those kisses. Vivian frees herself.

VIVIAN:

Now go. At once. I'll give you money -- a thousand -- five thousand if you'll get out of town now -- today. . . .

MARLOWE:

That would be stage money. I like to earn my money. I can't earn that much at one time, but what I do earn doesn't smell bad to me.

VIVIAN:

Would you get out of town if you knew Shawn Regan was dead?

MARLOWE:

Is Shawn Regan dead?

VIVIAN:

Would you?

MARLOWE:

How did he die?

VIVIAN:

Kiss me.

MARLOWE:

Later -- maybe. How did Shawn die?

VIVIAN:

I killed him. By accident. He was teaching me to shoot and the gun went off.

MARLOWE:

And that's what Eddie Mars has got on you. And so he sent you here, to buy me off with you.

Vivian stares at him, slaps him viciously across the face. Marlowe takes it.

MARLOWE:

Will you have the kiss now, too?

She slaps him again. He takes it.

MARLOWE:

You're good, you're very good, but you can't do it, baby. It won't wash.

VIVIAN:

You fool, I killed him, I tell you. Just as you're going to be dead if you don't get out of town. Don't you see Eddie Mars can't let you stay alive now?

MARLOWE:

Eddie never developed that trouble this morning. Now I'll ask you one. What's your game with me?

VIVIAN:

There's no game -- with you.

MARLOWE:

You've been playing spin the bottle with me ever since I met you. It's 'please, Phil' one minute, and 'get out, Marlowe' the next. You haven't

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

told me a straight truth since the first day. . . .

VIVIAN:

That's a lie. I'm trying to play straight now. You fool, don't you realize you're going to die if you stay here?

MARLOWE:

No. All you've told me is that you want me out of town at any price -- and that you still believe I can be bought if you can just find the right currency. Sure I'm a fool. I try to do my job and keep my nose clean. I risk my whole future, the hatred of the cops and Eddie Mars' gang. I dodge bullets and eat saps. But I'm not supposed to feel anything about it either way, because anybody can buy my immortal soul with a few bucks -- or maybe just a kiss. Sure, I'm a fool.

She stares at him, her eyes blazing. Suddenly she raises her hand, but before she can slap him, he speaks and she pauses.

MARLOWE:

That's right. Have another. I throw them in free to old clients..

She stops, stares at him, suddenly takes his face between her hands, stares at him.

VIVIAN:

You're going to find Shawn Regan?

MARLOWE:

Yeah.

VIVIAN:

No matter who gets hurt?

MARLOWE:

No matter who gets hurt.

VIVIAN:
 (letting her hands
 drop to his shoulders)
 All right, Phil. It's funny -- I
 think I really like you now, for
 the first time.

She turns to the door, her head high, her voice very
 cool and steady. Only her eyes, hidden from Marlowe,
 tell how she feels.

VIVIAN:
 Goodbye, Phil.

She goes out.

DISSOLVE TO:

180. EXT. HOBART ARMS AT FRONT ENTRANCE NIGHT

as Marlowe comes out, wearing a hat and trench-coat
 against the rain which has begun to fall. He gets into
 his car and drives off. As he does so, a second car,
 a dark convertible seen indistinctly in the shadowy
 street, swings around the corner behind him, slows,
 falters, then picks up speed, following Marlowe.

181. EXT. LAVERNE TERRACE RAIN NIGHT

as Marlowe drives slowly, cautiously toward Geiger's
 house. The street is dark, deserted. Marlowe drives
 without lights. He stops in the tree-shadows by the
 angle of Geiger's hedge and slides quietly out of the
 car, keeping close to the hedge. His gun gleams faintly
 in his hand.

182. EXT. LAVERNE TERRACE RAIN NIGHT

A section of the road over which Marlowe has just come.
 The dark convertible creeps along in the shadows, also
 without lights. It is still impossible to see who is
 driving.

183. EXT. GEIGER'S PLACE RAIN

as Marlowe makes his way like a stalking cat through
 the garden, toward the front door. Nothing stirs. There
 is no sound but the rain. Marlowe crosses the exposed

bridge at a crouching run. Nothing happens. He pauses in the shadows by the front door, then tries the knob. Silently the door swings open. He waits, then darts swiftly inside.

184. EXT. LAVERNE TERRACE

The dark convertible, still shrouded in the heavy shadows of the trees, parks quietly behind Marlowe's car across the road.

185. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Marlowe stands beside the door, which he has closed, listening. He is only a shadow among shadows. The house is utterly still. Marlowe, still cautious, crosses into the rear part of the house, then returns.

MARLOWE:

(laughing softly)

Okay, Eddie. I get it -- on the way out.

He draws the heavy curtains quickly across the windows, turns on the lights and sheds his hat and coat. The packing box from Geiger's back room stands on the hearth-rug. Marlowe bends over to look inside.

186. INSERT: THE PACKING BOX

filled with manila filing envelopes, ledgers, etc. On the top of the stack is a folder labelled "Sternwood". It has obviously been placed there on purpose.

187. INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Marlowe picks up the folder -- a KNOCK SOUNDS on the front door. Marlowe reacts, dropping the folder, and raises his gun. He moves quickly to turn out the lights, then stands beside the door, flat against the wall.

MARLOWE:

Yeah?

CARMEN'S VOICE:

Phil -- let me in.

MARLOWE:

(after a pause, unlocking
the door)

Come in fast and shut the door
behind you.

He retains his wary position while Carmen obeys. When he is sure she's alone, he sighs, relocks the door and turns on the lights. His face is beaded with sweat, his hand shaking slightly. Carmen is lightly clad, without hat or coat. Apparently she has left home in a hurry.

CARMEN:

Did I scare you?

MARLOWE:

(drily)

No -- I was expecting visitors. . . .
I thought you were in Santa
Barbara.

CARMEN:

They had me locked in my room.
They even had my clothes locked
up. But I climbed down the drain
pipe. I had to see you again.

MARLOWE:

Why did you come here?

CARMEN:

You were just driving away when I
got to your place. I followed.

She is obviously wrought up, in a highly emotional state.

MARLOWE:

It must have been important.

CARMEN:

It was. Phil, I -- I'm sorry about
the other night.

MARLOWE:

Forget it.

CARMEN:

I can't. Phil, you . . . I don't know

CARMEN: (Cont.)

quite how to say this . . . have you ever seen something, perhaps in a dream? Something perfect and beautiful, a long way off, and you try to reach it but there are too many things in your way?

MARLOWE:

Yeah. I know what you mean.

CARMEN:

Maybe if everything had been different -- if I hadn't been born a Sternwood, if my mother had lived -- if I'd known a man like you before. . . . Oh, Phil, is there ever any way back?

MARLOWE:

That depends.

CARMEN:

(softly, intensely
serious)

You could help me find the way.

He looks at her, saying nothing. She comes closer to him, childlike, pleading.

CARMEN:

Phil, you've got to help me. I'm getting lost. I don't know where I'm going any more, and I'm scared.

MARLOWE:

Why me, Carmen?

CARMEN:

Because. . . . Just because you came into the house, and I saw you. Just a little thing like that. Don't you understand, Phil? You've got something I need, something I've got to have. Strength, maybe. I don't know. But I've got to have it, or -- I don't know what's going to happen to me.

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She puts her hands on his chest, looking up into his face. For once she's completely honest.

MARLOWE:

(quietly)

Was that what you wanted from
Shawn Regan?

She draws away from him, very slowly, her eyes changing, hardening, becoming wary.

CARMEN:

Perhaps . . . Phil . . .

MARLOWE:

(gently)

I'm sorry, Carmen. That's how it
goes. People have to find their
own way -- wherever they're going.
You can, if you really want to.

He turns away, to let Carmen have that moment to herself.

MARLOWE:

(after a pause)

Before you go . . . I have something
that belongs to you.

CARMEN:

(dully)

What?

MARLOWE:

Your gun. I've been carrying it
around, thinking I'd see you.

He hands her the little gun, out of his coat pocket.

MARLOWE:

Careful of it, now. It's cleaned
and loaded in all five.

CARMEN:

(taking the gun)

Thanks.

Marlowe moves past her, as though to open the door.

CARMEN:

Turn around.

He does so -- she has the gun levelled, and there's no doubt what she's going to do with it.

MARLOWE:

Carmen!

CARMEN:

It's Vivian, isn't it?

MARLOWE:

That has nothing to do . . .

CARMEN:

It was Vivian with Shawn, too. It's always Vivian.

She fires point blank as Marlowe takes a step toward her, continues to fire, four shots in all. Then she waits until he has almost reached her and thrusts the pistol almost into his face. He catches her wrist just before she fires, pushes her hand aside as the shot goes off. She snatches her hand free, steps back, hurls the pistol at his chest. It falls to the ground. He stoops and picks it up.

MARLOWE:

So that's the way it was with Shawn.

CARMEN:

(dazedly)

But he died . . . why didn't you?

MARLOWE:

I blanked the shells.

CARMEN:

(still stunned,
breathless)

You knew I -- You knew --

MARLOWE:

I sort of figured it that way. And .
I'd like it better if Shawn had taken
it in the back after all, from Eddie

MARLOWE: (Cont.)

Mars. -- He was teaching you to shoot, wasn't he? That's what he thought he was doing. Only you didn't fire at the target.

CARMEN:

(with half-dreamy
vindictiveness)

No -- they put him in the sump --
down where the old wells are.

MARLOWE:

Couldn't you have found a cleaner place?

CARMEN:

He didn't mind.

MARLOWE:

No. I suppose oil and water are
the same as wind and air when you're
dead . . . So Vivian paid Eddie Mars,
and covered up for you.

CARMEN:

Yes. You'd like to do something
about it, wouldn't you? But you
can't. I'm always safe.

MARLOWE:

How do you figure that?

CARMEN:

Because Vivian won't let you. And
you won't do it, anyhow. You like
my father, just as Shawn did. You
know what would happen if you took
me into court. Pictures, and long
columns in the newspapers, and the
Sternwood name all over the head-
lines. You know what that would
do to father.

A pause. She is looking at him like a wicked changeling.

CARMEN:

(continuing)

And Vivian's in on this, too. Way

CARMEN: (Cont.)
in. You wouldn't want to see her
go to prison.

MARLOWE:
No. I wouldn't want that. And
the old man. I wouldn't want to
kill him -- for you.

His attitude is one of defeat. Carmen is pleased,
triumphant. Marlowe turns away dejectedly, picks up
his hat and coat.

MARLOWE:
(not looking at her)
Better take these, Carmen, it's
raining.

CARMEN:
Thanks.

She puts them on quickly, then stands looking at Marlowe.

CARMEN:
I think I'm glad I didn't kill
you. This is going to eat you.
You're going to lie awake nights,
thinking about it. And every so
often you'll see me somewhere, and
I'll laugh at you. . . . Goodbye, Phil.

She turns quickly toward door. Marlowe steps quickly
to the light switch. As she opens the door and steps
through it, he snaps off the light. There is a brief
pause -- then gun fire.

188. EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE AT FRONT DOOR

as Carmen crumples silently onto the doorstep. There is
silence. The door swings open. Presently from the
dark shrubbery Eddie Mars comes, walking slowly toward
the silent shape. His gun is in his hand. He crosses
the footbridge and moves the dead head with his foot.

Marlowe snaps the switch inside the door; light floods
suddenly out over Mars. Marlowe stands in the door,
facing Mars across Carmen's body as Mars reacts.

MARLOWE:

You were a little too quick on the trigger that time, too, Eddie.

His voice seems to break the spell. Mars goes for his gun, starts to raise it, but Marlowe fires first. Mars drops beside Carmen. As Mars falls, the SOUND of a man running away through the garden comes OVER. Marlowe whirls, snaps a shot toward the running man, takes a few quick steps, but stops as the SOUND of a car starting and roaring frantically away comes OVER. Marlowe turns toward the door.

189. INT. HOUSE CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he gathers up the Sternwood folder out of the box of blackmail stuff, puts it in his pocket as he turns.

190. INT. TELEPHONE PAY STATION CLOSE SHOT MARLOWE

as he speaks into phone.

MARLOWE:

Bernie? It's me, Marlowe. I've got a couple of dead people up here at Geiger's. . . . Yeah . . . Carmen Sternwood and Eddie Mars. . . . No, I didn't shoot -- but one of them . . . Yeah, I hear you. And you hear me, too. I'll be at Sternwood's. I can talk just as well there.

He starts to put the phone down. As he does so, Ohls' angry voice comes OVER.

OHLS' VOICE:

Marlowe -- !

Marlowe puts the phone down, turns to leave the booth.

191. INT. STERNWOOD HOUSE MARLOWE

-- as Norris opens the front door, admits him. Norris stares at Marlowe, divines the truth by intuition.

NORRIS:

It -- has happened?

MARLOWE:

So you knew, ~~top~~, did you? But
of course you did: she would have
needed somebody just to keep the
nightmares off. Where is she now --
Mrs. Rutledge --

As he speaks, Vivian enters. She stares at him as
Norris had done, divining the truth too.

VIVIAN:

Phil --

MARLOWE:

It's all right. I was just telling
Norris. It's all all right.

(Vivian sways)

Catch her, Norris!

Norris catches Vivian, supports her as Marlowe moves in,
puts his arm around Vivian.

MARLOWE:

We've got a few minutes until the
police get here.

NORRIS:

In here, sir.

They half carry Vivian out.

192. INT. ALCOVE VIVIAN, MARLOWE AND NORRIS IN B.G.

Vivian has recovered control now.

VIVIAN:

Poor Carmen. Even after that --
that -- Tell me it was quick.

MARLOWE:

It was quick. She didn't even know,
probably. Eddie did. He had a good
half second to watch his coming.

NORRIS:

(to Vivian)

She was in the darkness, and Mr.
Marlowe turned the light on for

NORRIS: (Cont.)

her -- don't you see?

VIVIAN:

I know. Would you really have sent her to -- to the --

MARLOWE:

(quietly)

Yes. You don't kill people for free, you know.

VIVIAN:

Yes, I know.

MARLOWE:

So you gave Eddie Mars Shawn's fifteen thousand dollars to put him into the sump.

VIVIAN:

Only it was my fifteen thousand. I pawned the jewels mother left me. I still have Shawn's money, hoping to find his relatives -- if he had relatives. Not that it matters. I know what you must think of me.

MARLOWE:

Do you? -- There's one thing bothering me. It's not the sump. Shawn wouldn't care about that now. But he was a Catholic --

VIVIAN:

I had prayers said for him in the Cathedral. And I brought the Father out here, too. I couldn't lie to him. He stood beside the sump and blessed Shawn. I prayed too -- for me, at least.

Marlowe puts his hand under her chin, tilting her head back.

MARLOWE:

You're okay, soldier. A little dumber than I am, but okay.

(straightening up)

I'm going to see your father now.

VIVIAN:

(rising)

Yes. We must tell father --

MARLOWE:

Not we, unless you mean Norris and me. You wait here. You may have to keep Bernie Ohls from throwing me into his basement dungeon before I open my mouth.

193. INT. CONSERVATORY STERNWOOD

-- watching as Marlowe and Norris approach him. He, too, seems to read something by instinct.

STERNWOOD:

Come, come, what's happened to my daughter now? Didn't you tell me days ago that I no longer have a heart to break?

NORRIS:

It's Miss Carmen, sir --

STERNWOOD:

Yes? Tell me.

MARLOWE:

She's dead, sir.

Sternwood closes his eyes, otherwise he doesn't move. Norris moves quickly and anxiously toward him, but he opens his eyes again, as black and fierce as ever.

STERNWOOD:

Well? Am I to know how?

Norris hesitates in dread, but Marlowe speaks smoothly.

MARLOWE:

It was a car crash, sir. She was on her way back from Santa Barbara. It was instantaneous. I don't think she suffered at all.

STERNWOOD:

And will no more -- since it was a car crash.

MARLOWE:

And there's one more thing. I
found Shawn Regan. He's all right.
Take my word for it.

Again Sternwood's eyes shut, then open fierce and black
again.

STERNWOOD:

But he will not return.

MARLOWE:

No. He sends you his affection
and respect, but he won't come
back.

STERNWOOD:

Norris --

MARLOWE:

(interrupts)

We'll forget the pay on this. I
didn't do anything. It was dropped
in my lap --

They all react as Vivian enters.

VIVIAN:

Phil -- they're here.

STERNWOOD:

The police?

MARLOWE:

What would the police be doing here,
sir?

STERNWOOD:

Yes. What would the police be doing
here. Go to your friends, sir. I
am a little tired and will ask to be
excused. Goodnight, and thank you
for everything.

MARLOWE:

Goodnight, sir.

He and Vivian walk away, Norris following.

194. INT. STERNWOOD HALL

as Marlowe, Vivian and Norris come out of the conservatory.
Norris draws ahead, then pauses.

NORRIS:

(to Marlowe)

May I add my own thanks, sir?

MARLOWE:

You're welcome, soldier.

Norris inclines his head, then goes off down the hall.
Marlowe and Vivian give each other one of those looks,
and Marlowe takes her hand, drawing her close to him.
They follow Norris.

195. AT THE FRONT DOOR GROUP SHOT OHLS ACCOMPANIED
BY POLICE

As Marlowe and Vivian approach.

OHLS:

All right, Marlowe. I'm waiting
to see how you're going to talk
yourself out of this one.

MARLOWE:

(laughing)

For once I'm going to tell the
truth.

OHLS:

It had better be good.

MARLOWE:

(turning to Vivian)

It'll be good, Bernie. It'll be
very good. Because you won't have
to hold me here. I've decided
already myself to stay.

FADE OUT.

T H E E N D .

*