

BLH 0006

THE BLONDE HURRICANE

Screenplay By
Diane Thomas

Based On The Book By P. Howard

First Draft
August 1, 1984

S.O. BLACK: Dozens of Ticking Clocks
TITLE OVER: London 1922

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, CLOCK DEPT. - NIGHT

Time: stately grandfather's, wall clocks, hand-carved cuckoo's, illuminated glass cases full of wristwatches and pocket watches. The hour approaches ten.

FLOORBOARDS CREAK. JIM HOGAN and IVAN EVENTOFF dart out of the shadows. Hogan crouches behind a counter, Ivan flattens himself against a wall partition. Both wear little, thief masks.

ANGLE

A NIGHT WATCHMAN comes up an aisle; his round lead directly past the clock department.

HOGAN AND IVAN

Hogan, seasoned felon of 55, holds safe-cracker's gear. He keeps a steady eye on Ivan, who looks like he could blow any minute. Ivan, 45 and dashing, clutches a small satchel to his breast as FLOORBOARDS CREAK under the Watchman's approaching steps.

The Watchman passes just beyond the partition, not ten yards off. Suddenly, TIME EXPLODES - GONGS, CHIMES, BELLS, CUCKOOS! Ivan almost quits his skin! The Watchman glances over.

Running late, more clocks CHIME IN. Directly adjacent to Ivan, a cuckoo pops out and sounds off right in Ivan's ear. Hogan mutely urges Ivan to maintain. Ivan glares at the bird, at Hogan, at the bird, stoically suffering through each cuckoo. Mercifully, the cuckoo springs back into the clock, the little door slamming behind him.

The Watchman moves on as, one by one, clocks fall silent. Almost. One last cuckoo goes off. Life is finally too short for abuse. Ivan grabs a travel clock off the counter to throw at the cuckoo - he checks the throw. He knows it will give them away - he weighs the consequences versus the satisfaction.

Ivan Eventoff heaves the travel clock with not a hair of regret.

CUT TO:

AISLE

Reacting to the crash, the Watchman bolts to the nearest alarm, smashes the glass. A FIRE ALARM BLARES throughout the store.

MEZZANINE

Hogan and Ivan speed up an aisle in a running-walk (almost gentlemanly). The Watchman appears behind them, and honoring their pace, politely pursues.

WATCHMAN

I say there! You sirs!

Hogan and Ivan accelerate, but don't break stride. The Watchman ducks up a diagonal aisle to head them off.

ANGLE - AISLES

The trio on a collision course. Hogan and Ivan reach the intersection a step ahead of the Watchman - the Watchman makes a flying tackle - the force throws all three men over onto a dolly loaded with cartons and several mannequins clad in pajamas - the dolly reels forward.

ANGLE

The dolly barrels toward us, the front mannequin's arm extended, rather like Washington crossing the Delaware. Hogan, Ivan, and the Watchman try to get their bearings as they regain their feet on this speeding chariot of fools.

ANGLE

Among the mannequin's blank faces, the startled frowns of gentlemen facing an unexpected fate.

THEIR POV

The mezzanine railing lies dead ahead.

ANGLE

The dolly careens into the railing - catapulting all passengers up and over the top.

FIRST FLOOR, BEDDING DEPT.

Ivan, the Watchman, and several mannequins land on a Murphy Bed - it spring/slams back into the wall, trapping all inside in one gulp.

When Hogan sees the satchel, he keeps it close to his body and throws it at the mannequin.

The satchel lands, its handle slipping neatly over a mannequin's upturned fingers.

Hogan lands on a mattress; 2 female mannequins land beside him, one in each arm. The situation unnerves him. He gingerly extricates his arms, as if trying not to wake them, slithers to the foot of the bed and jumps free in the narrowest escape yet.

Disoriented, Hogan glances around. In the b.g. the closed Murphy Bed vibrates with commotion, the ALARM drowning out the din. Hogan's eyes zero in on the satchel.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - NIGHT

The night echoes with the ALARM'S HOLLOW CLANGING. Satchel in tow, Hogan crawls under a wrought-iron gate separating the store's back entrance from the street - a rusted prong snags his coat sweater. He gives it a jerk, yanks himself free. SIRENS FADE IN.

ANGLE - STORE'S CORNERSTONE

Hogan checks the street. The store window behind him displays a prominent sign: "Estate Exhibit - THE GARTHMORE DIAMOND."

Police and fire SIRENS NEARING, Hogan darts up the street, then slips up an alley that quickly deadends at the back door of "Butterfields Fancy Goods Shoppe."

He looks back down the alley. No one follows. But suddenly, POLICE WHISTLES BLOW somewhere nearby. Hogan hurriedly sets to jimmying the shoppe's lock.

CUT TO:

INT. BUTTERFIELDS/THE WORKSHOP - NIGHT

A kiln on full burn casts a shimmering orange glow over plaster molds, glaze pots, clay, statuettes, etc. Hurrying in, Hogan scans the room, then moves to a bench peppered with unglazed ceramics.

His hands move quickly from object to object, stopping at a unique, drawered-box topped with a delightfully mischievous figure - "THE SMILING BUDDHA."

3-act play
Lea
dotting

Hogan pokes the clay. Soft enough. From the money-laden satchel, he gets a velvet pouch, shakes something wonderfully sparkling into his palm - the priceless GARTHMORE DIAMOND itself. He presses the diamond into the Buddha's belly, smoothes back the clay. (On a shelf above him are 6 gilded statues - Maltese Falcons - but that's another story.)

Diamond concealed, Hogan grabs the satchel - suddenly notes the new silence. The WHISTLES HAVE CEASED. Finally, the pressure is off. Hogan removes his mask, smoothes his hair. He picks up an object, admires it, pockets it. Relaxed, his future secured, Hogan turns to leave.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL SIX BOBBY'S blocking the rear exit. One steps up and takes the satchel - another casually tosses Hogan a small ball of yarn. Hogan stares at it, utterly baffled. As they usher him out past the Buddha, we finally see the back of Hogan's coat sweater - unraveled to the shoulder blades.

WE HOLD on the Buddha. Its eyes twinkle in the pastel light, and the deep-throated hum of the kiln's gas jets is almost a meditation, provocative and mysterious. Under its hum we hear a FAINT TINKLING OF TEMPLE BELLS, inviting us to enter the fateful, playful world of the "Smiling Buddha."

BLA
DISSOLVE TO:

S.O. BLACK: Metronome, Piano, Cello's
TITLE OVER: London 1937

EXT. TENEMENT - MORNING

A lorry chugs up; a DOZEN THUGS climb out. These are big, rough men, types who have feeding times, not hot meals. Checking a scrap of paper, one eyes the tenement across the street.

Three windows on the 2nd story have lace curtains, the cheeriest notes on a tired facade.

CUT TO:

INT. TENEMENT/EVANNA EVENTOFF'S FLAT - MORNING

CLOSE ON a blonde. A lovely blonde. Self-assured, spirited, her face radiates a certain lightness, like the faces of the optimistic. A sour note sounds; the blonde winces and...

WE PAN DOWN a row of children's faces - furled brows, stray tongues, squinched noses - a few kids actually look like they were being tortured. PULL BACK TO REVEAL the instruments of torture. Cellos.

A DOZEN KIDS have chairs drawn around a Spinet played by the blonde, EVANNA EVENTOFF, 30. Though born for slinky satins, even in her modest frock, Evanna could raise eyebrows. Yet she strives for propriety. In bondage of the times, Evanna Eventoff fights down her impulses and takes what's left.

Between notes we hear a SEWING MACHINE; one long-suffering PRIG pointedly clears her throat. Evanna moves to an adjoining room, peeks in with an apologetic smile.

ANGLE - EVANNA'S MOTHER

NELLY, a tea cozy of a woman, glances up from her sewing machine as Evanna closes the door.

ANGLE

Evanna returns to the Spinet sitting room doubling as music school. The room is cheery, the current tune plodding. Evanna sighs - suddenly picks up the tempo. In response, the whole room perks up - kids smile, a light breeze ruffles the lace curtains, more sunlight streams in.

Forgetting herself, Evanna segues into a livelier riff. A few kids keep up, but others give up and enjoy the reprieve. The KID WHO LOVES SWING gets right into it - the PRIG again clears her throat. Evanna returns to the somber concerto, gesturing to several students to resume. They take up their bows, wishing daggers on the Prig. Rising, Evanna circulates, conducting, correcting one kid's death grip on his bow.

ANGLE

Evanna passes the window, oblivious to the street below - the 12 Thugs huddle by a chauffeured sedan. MR. FIPPS climbs out. He stares straight up at Evanna's window. He points to it with his cane.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENEMENT - MORNING

Led by Mr. Fipps, the Thugs move ominously to the tenement. They stealthily file inside, pushing past a puzzled MATRON just arriving with her terrier. *white lab?*

CUT TO:

INT. TENEMENT/VARIOUS FLATS

Overlapping sounds - SCRAPE OF CHAIRS, CLATTERING MUSIC STANDS, KIDS SQUEALING, EVANNA'S MUFFLED OUTCRIES - interrupt tenant's morning routines:

- 1) An ACTIVIST making political placards re Franco, cocks an ear.
- 2) A BACHELOR dancing in his bathrobe turns down the gramophone, looks at the ceiling.
- 3) TWO GOSSIPS smile over tea at the hope of new scandal. They scurry for the door as they hear THUNDEROUS FOOTSTEPS on the stairs.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY

The 12 Thugs charge down the stairs toward us, each carrying a cello and a bow. One Thug carries a KID STILL IN CHAIR with cello.

The banker Mr. Fipps exits the carnaged flat - Evanna is on his heels, students at her skirts, Nelly following.

EVANNA

This is unthinkable, why are you doing-

She spots the Thug carrying the Kid Still In Chair.

EVANNA

Put that boy down!

MR. FIPPS

Madam, rest assured, we will; we at the firm frown on kidnapping.

Tenants port out of flats, lean over bannisters; the Matron's YAPPING TERRIER gloms onto Fipps' cane. They tug back and forth as Evanna and students shadow him down the stairs.

EVANNA

You can't do this, Mr. Fipps.

MR. FIPPS

Observe closely, Miss Eventoff.

EVANNA

But why?!

Fipps stops mid-stairs, yanks back his cane.

MR. FIPPS
Why? - For one reason, Miss
Eventoff, you lied to us.

EVANNA
I would never.

The terrier again snags the cane.

MR. FIPPS
Then why did we learn the
truth of your father by pure
happenstance?

EVANNA
My father...?

MR. FIPPS
(yanking back his cane)
Yes, Ivan Eventoff - it seems
your father was in fact a
common criminal.

In the gallery there is dead silence.

EVANNA
(taken aback)
A criminal...

MR. FIPPS
Yes, a common thief.

Evanna is bombarded with stares and whispers; she glances
up at the 2nd story railing.

ANGLE

Nelly's face flushes with guilt.

EVANNA AND MR. FIPPS

EVANNA
No, you must be mistaken -
my father was a merchant
marine.

Fipps gives her a likely look.

MR. FIPPS

Miss Eventoff, your payment
on these instruments is well
past due.

He continues down the stairs.

EVANNA

(following)

But I told you you'd have
the money by Monday.

MR. FIPPS

I'm sorry.

EVANNA

I've been late before -
you've given me grace.

MR. FIPPS

Those days are past.

EXT. TENEMENT - MORNING

All move for the sedan, the terrier tugging at Fipps' cane.
The Kid Who Loves Swing is burning, though other students
aren't exactly crushed about this. The Prig is all ears.

MR. FIPPS

Breeding is irreversible; like-
father, like-daughter...Miss Even-
toff, our clientele has always
been irreproachable.

Across the street, the Thugs are loading the cellos.

MR. FIPPS

In all our eighty years we
have never dealt with the
criminal element.

EVANNA

I'm not an element.

MR. FIPPS

(opening car door)
Good day, Miss Eventoff.

BLH-0006 CUT TO:

EVANNA

But Mr. Fipps, what will
the children play?!

Fipps yanks back his cane, glancing at the working-class kids.

MR. FIPPS

Let them play marbles. *What a silly game!*

The Kid Who Loves Swing has had it - he snatches Fipps' cane,
throws it to the terrier, who races off, jeering kids following.

Fipps slams the door - the sedan rolls off - the lorry chugs
after it, REVEALING the Kid Still In Chair left at the curbside,
cello-less. He smiles forlornly. Evanna rushes over, checks
for broken bones. *Maybe he has hurt his leg - the front leg!*

EVANNA

Harold, you haven't been
hurt, have you.

HAROLD

Not yet.

A small hand taps Evanna.

ANGLE

Evanna's students present her with the cane, their small
victory. *BLH 0006*

PRIG

You will return it,
won't you?

EVANNA

(stung)

Of course I'll return it.

Evanna regards her students, words coming hard.

EVANNA

I don't know why this
happened but...class...
dismissed.

All the "Swing Kid" run for joy.

EVANNA

(yelling after them)
Temporarily!

CUT TO:

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY

Evanna walks the long walk. Doors open behind her, people peek out. Lugging back chair and cane, she keeps her head high, but feels the arrows.

Outside her flat, Evanna eyes the small plaque - "Eventoff School of Music" - a door CREAKS - she turns - it quickly shuts.

CUT TO:

INT. EVENTOFF FLAT

Evanna is startled - stacked music stands, chairs folded up - the room is immaculate. The SEWING MACHINE HUMS O.S. Avoiding Nelly a moment, Evanna picks up a kid's stray cap, adds her chair to the others. She stares at the folding chairs, self-mockingly hums a few notes...her eyes takes on a faraway look... TWELVE CELLOS FAINTLY REPLY. Evanna hums a second bar; again the CELLOS REPLY. They duet one bar; this time a full SMYTHONY ORCHESTRA REPLIES, the rich and glorious symphony of Evanna's dreams.

Evanna sways with her ghost orchestra, eyes closed. Another tune slowly FADES UP until it overpowers the classical, a hot, pulsating tune right out of some roadhouse - Evanna snaps out of reverie - the MUSIC STOPS. These wild lapses always startle her; what causes them? The base rhythm of the roadhouse tune FADES BACK IN, very faintly, ghostly. Evanna's eyes are drawn to something O.S.

EVANNA'S POV

E.C.U. a candid photograph. At a honky-tonk piano, 5-year-old Evanna sits on the piano player's lap - Ivan Eventoff. Irresistibly dashing, a devil who would raise the roadhouse rafters. This is his music, his ghost.

CUT TO:

ADJOINING SEWING ROOM

CLOSE ON Nelly, concocting a hat. She glances up, quickly returns to the hat.

PULL BACK TO Evanna, in the doorway. Everywhere, stylishly bizarre, little hats, some with fruit, some with small birds, wings fully spread. Perky, quirky hats. Nelly tries on her latest creation.

NELLY
 (nervously)
 What do you think? - you
 like it?

Evanna's gaze doesn't waver; Nelly reconsiders the hat.

NELLY
 You're right, it calls
 out for garnish.
 (adding things)
 A feather maybe? A few shrimp?

EVANNA
 (admonishing)
 Mother...

NELLY
 You're right, no shrimp.

Nelly reluctantly meets Evanna's eyes.

NELLY
 I'm sorry, this should never
 have happened, it's so unfair
 ...though I admit I've never
 told you everything about your
 father.
 (a reminder)
 Ivan was wonderful.

EVANNA
 I remember...but he wasn't
 a merchant marine, was he?

NELLY
 Oh, no, no, he was a merchant
 marine...in his heart.

(Evanna groans)
 He just never joined up. But
 he loved travel - Paris, Panama,
Trenton - all the exotic locales.
 And he loved waterfront bars.

Accustomed to Nelly's logic of convenience, Evanna presses
 on.

EVANNA
 But he didn't really die
 at sea, like you said, did
 he?

NELLY

No, he didn't...he died
trying to escape.

EVANNA

He was imprisoned? - Ooh...

NELLY

Evanna, I'm sorry, I never
knew how to tell you.

EVANNA

I can't believe it, I can't -
he was a common thief.

NELLY

No, no, no Evanna - he was
never common. And hardly a
"common thief." Why he and
old Jim Hogan were the ones
who stole the Garthmore Diamond.

EVANNA

(stunned)

The Garthmore... My God...
the Garthmore Diamond's
been missing for years.

Remembering, Nelly fiddles with the hat, adding a face veil.

NELLY

Seems longer than that.

EVANNA

No one ever found it.

NELLY

They never knew where to look.

EVANNA

(a sudden look)

Mother, then you know
where it is?!

MINNY

Oh heavens, if I knew that...

She places the hat on Evanna, adjusts the face veil.

NELLY

No, only old Mr. Hogan knows.

CUT TO:

INT. DARTMOOR PRISON/VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON Evanna behind the veil, behind a meshed screen.

EVANNA

Please Mr. Hogan...don't you
want out of here?...after
fifteen years, aren't you
ready to just give it up?

EVANNA AND HOGAN

HOGAN

Couldn't say.

Hogan is a tongue-tied old bird. Weak, deathly pale, his
prison suit hangs on him like a shroud. There are OTHER
PRISONERS/VISITORS scattered about. Evanna has an umbrella
and Mr. Fipps' cane in her lap.

EVANNA

Please, where was it hidden?

HOGAN

Couldn't say.

EVANNA

But you did hide it?

HOGAN

Must have...I had it last.

EVANNA

Then please...tell me where.

Hogan teeters slightly. He glances at other prisoners, but
still says nothing.

EVANNA

Well, I'm all out of pleases.

She rises, blinking back a threat of tears, searches her
bag for a hankie. There is none.

EVANNA

You know, if you spoke up they
might release you. I was hop-
ing to be influential, somehow
atone for...why should you care
about my school or that children
are going cello-less? Why give
a good god-

(stopping the impulse)
bless. Mr. Hogan, you have
stolen from your own soul.

She turns for the visitor's door.

HOGAN
Miss Eventoff?

EVANNA
Yes?

Hogan secretively leans toward the screen.

HOGAN
What if I told you the
Garthmore was...
(glancing around)
It's...

He leans closer, keeps leaning until his head meets the
table with a thud.

EVANNA
Mr. Hogan! - No!

TWO GUARDS hurry over. One quickly checks Hogan's pulse.
Evanna holds her breath.

EVANNA
Is he gone?

GUARD
On his way.

They carry Hogan out; the door **CLANKS SHUT.**

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON/INNER YARD - DAY - LIGHT DRIZZLE

BURLY GUARD
(escorting Evanna)
I said visiting hours are over.

EVANNA
But I want to see the Warden.

BURLY GUARD
So get arrested.

He gives her a push; Evanna is outside. The iron door closes
in her face, the recurring theme all morning.

She backs away, sizing up bureaucracy's stone walls. There
are small windows on the 2nd story. Framed in one of them,
the WARDEN picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. SCOTLAND YARD - DAY - DRIZZLE

INSPECTOR REDBUSH
(into phone)
Scotland Yard, we'll do
in a pinch.

REDBUSH beams modestly at his joke, though he is alone.

REDBUSH
Ah, Warden, yes...I see. Sounds
like our last chance. We'll pop
right over then.

Redbush hangs up. His desk is immaculate. He sips his
tea and speaks to the empty office.

REDBUSH
Death-bed confessions have
saved our cherrystones a bit
more than once, eh? Remember
the Garthmore Diamond?

A monolith of paperwork parts like the Red Sea, sending a
paperweight to the floor and revealing INSPECTOR BLACKSTONE,
one tough biscuit. Redbush brushes his wisp of hair over
his pate and hunts up his umbrella.

REDBUSH
(to Blackstone)
Well, could be your name could
mean something again. Seems old
Jim Hogan may be headed for the
hereafter - the lucky stiff.
(roadtesting his
umbrella)
I hear it's lovely there
this time of year.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY - HARD DRIZZLE

Umbrellas. Under one we find Evanna, getting wet as wind
and rain shift. She sidesteps REPORTERS converging outside
a Court Building abutting Barcland's Bank.

CUT TO:

INT. BARCLAND'S BANK - DAY - RAIN

A raindrop lands on a neatly typed letter, bleeding a signature...Mr. Fipps looks up...Evanna places his cane on the desk, shedding another raindrop. Mr. Fipps notes it.

EVANNA

I just wanted you to know
that I didn't know - I would
have told you - If I had known,
I would have told you.

Fipps presses a silent button.

MR. FIPPS

(rising)

I'm a busy man, Miss Eventoff...
As for you, I suggest you go
back to America - that lawless
horde loves a good liar.

(as GUARD appears)

See this woman out.

EVANNA

You think I'm a liar?

(the Guard seizes her arm)

There are other banks, you know.

MR. FIPPS

(glancing at stack of letters)

Not in England...seems teaching
posts have dried up as well.

EVANNA

(being herded out)

The cellos - what about the
money I've already paid?

MR. FIPPS

Interest. All interest.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARCLAND'S BANK - DAY - RAIN

Evanna is ousted into the crowd of Reporters beseiging a meticulous gentleman wearing bowtie, butonniere and monogrammed coat. LORD BANNISTER, 40, desperately tries to reach his Alfa-Romeo. Going against traffic, Evanna heads for a phone booth as Reporters fire questions at the beleaguered Bannister.

REPORTER #1

Think you'll still win the Pulitzer? - Couldn't this scandal affect the vote?

BANNISTER

Please, there are matters far more pressing.

Evanna is lodged in the crowd; Bannister passes; she almost sneezes.

REPORTER #2

(shoving Evanna aside)

Lord Bannister-

Evanna and Bannister's eyes meet for one empathetic moment, registering separate worlds of trouble.

REPORTER #2

What's your reaction to the inquest?

BANNISTER

I'm sailing tonight. must remove the blot on my escutcheon

COCKNEY BYSTANDER

(aside)

On his what?

BANNISTER

Now please.

BYSTANDER'S PAL

(to Bannister)

You should get that looked at.

Bannister ducks into his Alfa - it rolls off - the crowd reverses direction, sweeping Evanna right into the target phone booth. She deposits a coin as the rabble chases after the Alfa.

EVANNA

(into phone)

Hello?...Yes, I'd like to inquire after Mr. Hogan?

CUT TO:

INT. DARTMOOR PRISON - DAY - RAIN

A GUARD's got the phone, eyes glued to a tabloid. (On the back we see a pix of Bannister, a headline: "Noted Scientist Plagued By Scandal.")

GUARD
Old Jim Hogan?...Sure, fully
recovered, why not?

Behind him, a CHAPLAIN hurries past.

CUT TO:

INT. HOGAN'S CELL

The CHAPLAIN murmurs prayers over Hogan. Hogan grapples for pen and paper. Taking them, the Chaplain writes as Hogan dictates.

HOGAN
Dear Miss Eventoff. Life has
very big ears, and low-lives
the biggest ears of all. I
hesitated tellin' ya cause
knowin' anything means trouble.

DISSOLVE TO:

HOGAN'S CELL

A GUARD unlocks the cell for the Chaplain.

HOGAN (V.O.)
(letter cont.)
But as yer ol' man said, if you
don't take risks, the fates lose
interest in you. So with all due
respect to the fates, includin'
my own...In 1922
(voice FADING OUT)
I hid the Garthmore Diamond
inside a...

During the above, the Chaplain seals an envelope, speeds off past the adjacent cell...WE HOLD on the handsome devil inside. Jauntily seductive, dashing, this is GORDON, 35. Whereas Evanna's father was devil-may-care, Gordon is devil-may-take. On his bunk, a small valise is packed and ready to go. He checks his watch and smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENEMENT - DUSK - DRIZZLE

A bicycle hydro-planes to a stop, a Special Delivery pouch slung over the bike's fenders.

EVANNA (V.O. FADING IN)
(letter cont)
Butterfields is still in
business. As of yesterday.

CUT TO:

INT. HOGAN'S CELL - DUSK

A sheet covers Hogan. Inspectors Redbush and Blackstone exit the cell, questioning the Chaplain (MOS). *FROM*

EVANNA (V.O.)
(letter cont)
...and a fancy shop like them
is like to keep records a who
buys what...so who knows and
good luck...

Redbush looks askance at the Guard, who securely locks old dead Jim Hogan inside. *BLH 0006*

CUT TO:

INT. EVANNA'S FLAT - NIGHT

EVANNA
(reading the letter)
I hope the winds of fate blow
ya true, but I warn ya, remem-
ber the big ears. Cheerio,
from old Jim Hogan.

Three SUDDEN KNOCKS rattle the door. Already dazed, Evanna and Nelly trade a frightened stare. Evanna tucks the letter into her bodice while Nelly arms herself with a hatpin. There are LOUDER KNOCKS.

BLACKSTONE (O.S.)
Scotland Yard, open up.

Evanna opens the door a few cracks; Inspectors Redbush and Blackstone crowd the doorway. Nelly peers around Evanna.

REDBUSH
Miss Eventoff?

EVANNA
Yes?

REDBUSH
You paid a call today
on old Jim Hogan.

EVANNA
Yes?

BLACKSTONE
(accusatory)
Shortly thereafter, he
wrote you a letter.

His tone already condemning, Evanna responds on almost pure impulse.

EVANNA
He did? - Oh, how very dear.
Have you brought it?

BLACKSTONE
No we haven't "brought it."
On moral grounds, the Chaplain
refused to divulge its contents,
but admitted he dispatched the
letter. To you. Special Delivery.

EVANNA
The mails are a true misery -
but thank you for alerting me.
I'll write the ministry.

REDBUSH
(tipping his hat)
Anytime, Miss. Call us when
it arrives.

BLACKSTONE
But she's got it, I say.

EVANNA
But I don't. Good-night now.

BLACKSTONE
(bullying the door)
You've got it - I'll prove it
and see you rot behind bars.

Embarrassed for his colleague, Redbush pulls Blackstone back - Evanna shuts the door. As the Inspectors' BICKERING FADES OFF out in the hall, Evanna wanders the room, plunking a piano chord, replaying the day, a quiet storm brewing.

NELLY

(catching her eye)

I can't believe you didn't tell them - when are you going to? You are going to, aren't you?

Evanna passes Ivan's photograph.

EVANNA

(glancing at photo)

Why did you marry him, mother?

NELLY

(knowingly)

There are some men no woman can resist.

Evanna gives her an unbelieving look.

EVANNA

He was a thief.

NELLY

He was many things. A thief the briefest of them - why the Garthmore was really his maiden attempt. It must have been a wild notion...

EVANNA

All the work, the practice, the conservatory, all those years for...?

NELLY

(consoling)

Oh, Evanna.

EVANNA

Well, I won't. I won't be whispered about or carry on through life at the mercy of some little piddle-pot bank manager.

Gripped by a strange calm, Evanna crosses to the phone.

NELLY

What are you doing?

EVANNA

(to operator)

Butterfield's please.

An odd sparkle comes into Nelly's eyes, tempered with surprise.

NELLY

You, Evanna? - You aren't going to try to find the Garthmore.

EVANNA

The real theft here was of honor - I see only one road back - find the Garthmore and return it. Personally.

CUT TO:

INT. BUTTERFIELD'S - NIGHT

MR. BUTTERFIELD is counting register receipts and on the phone.

BUTTERFIELD

That's right, Austin Knickerbock, he's kept our records since Pompeii.

Someone O.S. TAPS ON THE WINDOW; Butterfield shakes his head, points to his watch.

BUTTERFIELD

Sends out our advertising circulars...Yes, Austin Knickerbock, he's your man.

The TAPPING has begun again. Butterfield hangs up.

BUTTERFIELD

(mouthing the words)

We're closed.

ANGLE

Gordon, outside the window. He nods politely. Then he shoves his gloved fist through the front door glass.

CUT TO:

INT. KNICKERBOCK'S DIGS - NIGHT

A perfect smoke ring floats toward us. As its edges dissipate, another follows, to the Mills Brothers' oldie: "Where do they go, those smoke rings I blow each night, oh what do they do, those circles of blue and white...?"

PULL BACK TO AUSTIN KNICKERBOCK, bookkeeper. He is a spindly old guy, who each night sits straight-spined in his armchair, listening to the radio, blowing smoke rings, and remembering back on the people he hates. The DOOR BELL RINGS

Resenting the intrusion, Austin rises, opens the door. Evanna wears one of Nelly's hats: a quirky number sporting a small wren, wings fully spread. There is an experimental shade of determination in her voice.

EVANNA

Austin Knickerbock?

AUSTIN

So?

EVANNA

Mr. Butterfield referred me
I'm trying to trace an old
relic, a Buddha sold in 1922 -
he said you might let me have
the ledger for that year.

AUSTIN

I can't just indiscriminately
hand out my ledgers.

EVANNA

I'd be willing to pay.

AUSTIN

Pay? - Money?

EVANNA

Twenty pounds. All I have.

CUT TO:

AUSTIN'S BACK ROOM

Austin eagerly pulls a ledger from a bookcase, unleashing a powderkeg of dust. As he blows it off the ledger's cover, the label - 1922 - also blows off. He stoops; his bones protest; he lets the label lie.

CUT TO:

AUSTIN'S SITTING ROOM

Evanna nods a thanks, departs, not believing the ledger is actually hers. Austin is thrilled by the money he holds. He loads up his sherry glass. The DOORBELL RINGS; Inspector Blackstone barges in.

BLACKSTONE

The woman - what'd she want -
the one that just left?!

AUSTIN

(rattled)

A ledger, 1922! She collects
Buddha's!

BLACKSTONE

YOU GAVE IT TO HER?!!

Austin glances at the back room, quickly connives.

AUSTIN

No, I didn't actually. She
lacked sufficient funds. If
you, however, have fifty pounds...

BLACKSTONE

Get it! - I've got it!

CUT TO:

BACKROOM

Austin hastily pastes the 1922 label over a label reading 1926. He now wears a second coat of dust.

CUT TO:

SITTING ROOM

So dazed is he by his windfall, Austin doesn't even notice Blackstone left the door open. Recounting his money, he does a little dance; it makes him dizzy. Suddenly, Austin pockets his fortune as Gordon slides in uninvited. A rich man now, Austin thinks himself totally shrewd and cool.

AUSTIN

Evening, my good man.

GORDON

(smiling)

Good evening.

AUSTIN

If it's the ledger for 1922
that you'll be wanting...it
will cost you. Two-hundred
pounds.

GORDON

(a smooth laugh)

For a ledger? A mite steep
isn't that...especially since
you haven't got it. A bloke
just bolted up the street...

(grasping Austin's ascot)
clutching what looked very much
like a ledger - 1922 maybe?

Austin's cool melts as Gordon twists the ascot, forcing
Austin to his knees, almost choking the breath out of him.
Austin sputters out the words...

AUSTIN

No, no, I cheated him...that
was 1926, I sold 1922 to a woman.

GORDON

You a cheat? - I can't
believe that.

AUSTIN

(pulling out money)

Look for yerself, look! -
Seventy pounds! Where would
an old twit get that kind a
whack? *is this a 300 term for day?*

GORDON

(taking the money)

Might be his life-savings.

AUSTIN

No, no, my life-savings are
in the tea tin!

Gordon smiles, pulls Austin back to his feet.

GORDON

(nodding O.S., pleasantly)

Is that your favorite chair?

Scared witless, Austin nods without looking.

ANGLE - ARMCHAIR

A CRUNCH O.S. - Austin flies into frame, lands perfectly sprawled in the chair, a large puff of dust wafting off him at impact.

CUT TO:

INT. EVANNA'S FLAT - NIGHT

E.C.U. Ledger Entry: The Smiling Buddha...Purchased by Lt. Commander Brandon, The Bathgate Arms, London.

NELLY (V.O.)

The Commander wasn't home?

EVANNA (V.O.)

Not home, not expected, and wouldn't be welcomed.

PULL BACK TO Evanna, still in coat and hat, leaning against the wall because some days you can't win. Nelly holds the ledger.

EVANNA

Lt. Commander Brandon is thought to be a traitor.

NELLY

A traitor?

EVANNA

According to the doorkeeper, the Commander was bringing some military document back to England, a map of some sort...instead he vanished with it. The Bathgate all but fumigated his rooms and sent his personal effects to his mother.

NELLY

Well, that's good news anyway.

EVANNA

It's expensive news - she lives in Paris.

NELLY

Paris?!

EVANNA

I guess this ends it - between us we couldn't finance a croissant.

Evanna removes her wren hat, prospects bleak.

NELLY

(suddenly, hushed)

Evanna. Put that back on. And pack. Those strange paintings your father brought back from Brussels? - The man down the street offered one-hundred pounds for the lot.

EVANNA

(incredulous)

You don't mean the ones under the bed?

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ART SHOP - NIGHT

One by one, 5 Magritte's are leaned against a wall. Nelly gives them a parting shudder, then shares a conspiratorial look with Evanna as an ART DEALER counts out the money. Evanna has a shoulder-strapped valise with her.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Evanna and Nelly hurry home, feeling like they had snatched the cat's pajamas.

EVANNA

One-hundred pounds! Can you imagine?

NELLY

I feel so guilty.

EVANNA

If I hurry, I might make that boat.

Stopping at their tenement, Evanna hugs Nelly farewell. For the first time, the voyage takes on a reality.

NELLY

Oh, Evanna, maybe you shouldn't go off like this. Who'll watch over you?

A light wind rustles in the trees as Evanna wonders herself.

EVANNA

How about me? - You always said I could.

NELLY

At least I should walk you to the motor bus.

EVANNA
No, no, you'll catch
your death.

She backs off, blowing Nelly a kiss. Nelly wats
daughter head into the breezy evening, then turn

In the shadows, two unidentifiable men dart after

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON - NIGHT

The streets are deserted. Evanna hurries along, paralleling
a fence. She thinks she hears something - footsteps? She
stops suddenly, looks back. No footsteps, no one in sight.
She presses on, listening.

From behind the fence, we only see Evanna's hat, just the
wren bobbing along. We follow it, like eyes.

Still wary, Evanna walks slower, tensing. She looks back
once more, turns ahead, and...simultaneously: Evanna screams,
an enormous black paw swipes the air, just missing the hat!

A bionic tomcat leaps from the fence to a low-flying branch
as Evanna laughs in relief. There is a nearby CATERWAUL,
set off by Evanna's scream. The tom's eyes glow back at Evanna
as MORE CATERWAULING erupts throughout the neighborhood.

CUT TO:

BUS BENCH - NIGHT

It sits under a tree, backed by shrubbery bordering a park.
CATERWAULING is now in full swing, distant and near. A few
people hurry by, spooked by the eerie howls and wails. Evanna
is also edgy, but sits perfectly proper. Eternity ticks by.

SERIES OF SHOTS

From behind the shrubs, we see only Evanna's hat - the wren,
a still-life in flight. WE MOVE TOWARD IT, like a creature
on the stalk.

A double-decker's headlamps appear way up the block.

Evanna gets coins from her valise. A cat trots by, his cat
bell ringing.

From behind the shrubs, WE MOVE CLOSER to the hat.

The headlamps slowly chug nearer.

A bird flits down, perches on the bench. He eyes the hat. Abruptly, he takes off as WINGS FLUTTER in the tree overhead.

WE MOVE CLOSER STILL to the hat.

A gruesome-faced hulk, BEEFY, is crouched between the shrubs, sneaking up. He is but two feet from Evanna. A light breeze RUFFLES THE TREETOPS, and under the sound, we hear FAINT TEMPLE BELLS.

Simultaneously: Evanna rises - Beefy lunges - 3 cats dive from the tree! Beefy screeches as cats bounce off his head, Evanna screeches, cats screech.

Evanna bounds to the bus - cats bound off - Beefy grimaces, blood streaking from scratches across his face.

The bus doors WHOOSH shut - Evanna briefly stares back at Beefy as the bus chugs on.

Gordon appears from behind a parkland tree. He saunters over to hand Beefy a handkerchief, but his eyes track the bus. Nodding to Beefy to follow, he hails a passing taxi.

BLH 0000
CUT TO:

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Evanna opens the ledger, and still shaking, tears out the tell-tale page and rips it into a billion pieces. A nearby PASSENGER watches askance; he changes his seat. Evanna stashes the useless ledger under the seat.

CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Inspector Blackstone heatedly rifles his ledger. Calmly sipping tea, Redbush gracefully spirits it away and reflects on its cover. Blackstone is, by nature, offended.

ANGLE - THE LABEL

The barest hint of a second border peeks out from under the "1922" label. A hand peels off the fake.

MEN'S CLUB

REDBUSH

Square one, old chap.

Blackstone glowers. Several GENTLEMEN decorate the club, some quite old. A few stop at the table, in mirthful conspiracy.

1st MEMBER

I say, my wallet's been lifted.
Maybe you'd look into it when
you find the time.

2nd MEMBER

These boys find the time?

3rd MEMBER

Why these boys couldn't
find Big Ben.

With repressed mirth, they ho-ho and move off, all thinking they have been terribly amusing. Blackstone takes it to heart, and even Redbush is perturbed.

BLACKSTONE

They won't be laughing long -
I'll recover the Garthmore.

REDBUSH

Not without help, you won't.
(rising)
This calls for the best.

BLACKSTONE

But you're not the best.

REDBUSH

Hmm, that is a handicap, isn't
it?...Must be someone who is.

Preoccupied with "who is," Redbush starts off, catching sight of old BENTLEY, teapot and tea things set before him. Bentley's eyes are closed, and he is deathly pale.

REDBUSH

(to passing WAITER)

Say, Bentley there doesn't
look so awfully well.

WAITER

Yes, it's rumored that
yesterday at high tea
he passed on, sir.

REDBUSH

(in parting)

Well, Good Lord Man!
Clear away his dishes!

CUT TO:

MEN'S CLUB CLOAK ROOM

Redbush struggles to get on his rubbers, Blackstone hovering.

BLACKSTONE

...and I was right about
the Eventoff woman, wasn't I?

REDBUSH

(hurt)

Blondes always lie to me
...why I-

(sudden inspiration)

I know who! We need a master
of deceit, England's master
of disguise himself.

BLACKSTONE

(protesting)

But he's on special assignment!

REDBUSH

Still, he might give us a hand.

BLACKSTONE

He's probably already left England!

Redbush throws down his rubbers.

REDBUSH

Blast it all, man! - I mean
to crack this case and mean to
contact our man even if he's
tunneling to China disguised
as a red shoe.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOVER BOAT DOCK - NIGHT

FULL SCREEN E.C.U. a blinding flashbulb goes off.

P.J. HOLLAR (V.O.)
One more, don't move.

PULL BACK TO P.J., a back-slapping journalist changing bulbs. Our vision of him is marred by strange, floating circles - flashbulb blindness.

GASTON and his broad-beamed wife AUGUSTINE blink peculiarly. Glasses chained about her neck, Augustine sneaks them on at significant moments while smiling incessantly. A SMALL BAND renders the French anthem as porters bustle past, farewells are played, and passengers file aboard. There is a MUFFLED DIN O.S. Gaston and Augustine glance over.

P.J.
I said DON'T MOVE.

They instantly resume poses, but P.J. checks out the commotion. His eyes narrow furtively...

Just as a butonniered Lord Bannister escapes journalists curtailed by Ticket Takers, P.J. robustly slaps his back, jarring Bannister's very teeth.

P.J.
How 'bout an interview? -
Bannister, isn't it?

He steers Bannister around the crowd - an unexpected gust shoots through - everyone on the quay holds their hats a moment.

P.J.
(again thumping his back)
So where ya headed, old
Banny boy?

BANNISTER
(wincing at P.J.'s manner)
Paris first, then on to Afri -
have we met?

Augustine squints, sneaks on her glasses, descends.

AUGUSTINE
LORD BANNISTER! We think we
not see you until our wine-
tasting. Gaston, look who's
here!

Gaston doesn't look; he obediently holds his earlier pose, thinking of jam tarts.

AUGUSTINE
(peering around)
And where is Lady Bannister,
already on board?

BANNISTER
(fumbling)
Yes, ah, already on board, of
course.

AUGUSTINE
Wonderful! We dine, dance all
night, and greet the dawn, oui?

BANNISTER
(edging away)
I never fraternize with the
dawn. Forgive me, but-

P.J.
(dragging him back)
Let's just get a shot here
hold that.

At that moment: Evanna hurries out of the terminal, the
BOAT WHISTLE BLASTS, a blast of wind hits the quay.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Hats fly off - derbies, bowlers, berets, fru-frus. A hat
blows into a tuba - a beret blows off a man's head, another
hat blows on - people scurry. Augustine SCREAMS in horror -
a wren flies straight at her face - she bats it away...
right into Bannister's hands. He gapes at the wren -
Augustine flees up the gangplank, towing Gaston - P.J.
chases after his pork-pie.

The BOAT WHISTLE EMITS COUNTLESS SHORT BLASTS as Evanna
approaches Bannister.

EVANNA
Excuse me, but-
(recognizing him, a
proper awe)
Lord Bannister, oh. Excuse
me, but that's my hat.

BANNISTER
(sotto voce)
Ah. You wear it.

He gingerly surrenders it.

EVANNA
Pardon?

BANNISTER
(helpfully)
I say, you might consider
having its wings clipped.

Evanna inhales sharply, twice, about to sneeze. Eyes closed, she blindly reaches for Bannister's coat handkerchief.

Bannister responds very strangely: he panics, recoils, plucks the handkerchief from a PASSING GENT'S breast pocket, pushes it on Evanna, and toting his shoulder-strapped valise, vanishes up the gangplank.

Evanna sneezes, her eyes open. The Passing Gent stands before her registering the bitter distaste he normally reserves for mismatched cutlery. The TUBA PLAYER huffs on his horn - the hat blows back out as the BOAT WHISTLES AN ENDLESS BLAST.

INT. MINISCULE STATEROOM - NIGHT

Muted shrieks of laughter, music. The bedside lamp snaps on. Eyes sleepless, hair tossed, Evanna rises. The room is hot. She tries opening the porthole; it's jammed. Evanna hesitates, then impulsively throws on her dressing gown.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR

Evanna peeks around a corner - the low-lit corridor stretches fore to aft, seemingly forever. The coast is clear.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Music louder, Evanna cautiously peers around another corner, quickly ducks back.

ANGLE

A short way off, a drunken, "conga-like" line in tuxedos and party dress dances by, led by Augustine, MUSICIANS bopping alongside.

CUT TO:

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Evanna breathes in the sea air. Wild, raucous laughter and music still go on somewhere on the ship. VOICES APPROACH; Evanna slips off.

P.J. rounds the corner, draped in cameras. He helps a CHAGRINED WIFE deposit her SOUSED SPOUSE on a deck chair. The matron tries to wrest away his champagne bottle as P.J. prowls off.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR (SERIES OF SHOTS)

Hurrying back to her room, Evanna slows - a hulking shadow is projected on the way around the corner. It doesn't move; it just lurks. Evanna shakes off her paranoia, disappears around the corner - the shadow grabs hers in synch with the BOAT'S WHISTLE BLAST! The shadows grapple - her shadow knees his - he doubles over - Evanna comes running back around the corner.

A bizarre Harpo-ish skirt-chaser, the SMALL FIEND, steps out of his stateroom just as Evanna streaks by in her bathrobe. He is smitten.

SMALL FIEND
(running after her)
Wait!

ANGLE

Gordon steps out of Evanna's stateroom, dressed to kill. Behind him, Evanna's few things are scattered.

GORDON
Bring her to my cabin.
Go on, man.

Beefy painfully staggers off after Evanna.

CUT TO:

STAIRWAY TO UPPER LEVEL

The Small Fiend has caught Evanna from behind, arms bulldoggedly clamped around her waist.

EVANNA
Let go, would you let go!
Someone's after me!

SMALL FIEND
I know; I love you!

She breaks free; he goes right after her. Moments later, Beefy follows.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR

Evanna streaks down the long, long, long hall, the Small Fiend on her heels, Beefy a distant third.

ANOTHER DECK

Evanna races through frame, then the Fiend...then Beefy.

LOUNGE AREA (SERIES OF SHOTS)

The Small Fiend again has Evanna from behind, dragging her toward a lounge chair. Trying to wrest free, she turns - gasps! Face buried in Evanna's back, the Fiend doesn't see Beefy five steps away, four...Evanna is scared screamless... three steps away...at that moment...

Double doors behind Evanna burst open - coughing out the drunken "conga" line led by Augustine - Beefy jumps back as Augustine automatically hitches onto the Small Fiend, making Evanna the leader by default.

Musicians emerge from another door - a splinter conga line rounds the corner behind Beefy and hitches onto him.

EVANNA
(pointing to Beefy)
That man mauled me - He's
after me!

Music and gaiety drown her out - Evanna leads her line away from Beefy. Left no choice, Beefy leads his line after Evanna's, a surprisingly spry dancer for his size.

Evanna glances back - Beefy's line is gaining - she moves her line faster - the musicians adjust the tempo.

Down a long deck, the two lines speed toward us, run-kick-hop, run-kick-hop.

CUT TO:

INDOOR POOL AREA

Evanna's line emerges on the 2nd tier - she takes the right split at the divergent staircase, half her line splits to

to the left - Beefy's line bottlenecks in the entrance, Beefy's eyes tracking Evanna.

As Evanna's line passes the pool, the last dancer slips in, one by one pulling the whole line with him. Just before the plunge, Evanna breaks away, TEARING her robe.

Beefy brakes at the stairway landing - his line topples over him and onto a slide; they stream down into the pool like a river of blacktie.

Evanna dashes for the opposite staircase - Beefy barges after her. In the pool, the conga line is already re-forming and emerging from the shallow end, right in step.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR

Evanna rattles stateroom knobs, pounds on doors. Locked, no answers. She looks back - Beefy is coming - she cuts across a narrow passage linking port to starboard.

CUT TO:

INT. BANNISTER'S LUXURY STATEROOM - SAME TIME

E.C.U. An oriental garden. Birds, trees, enshrined Buddha, bridge, lovers moving toward its middle.

PULL BACK to Lord Bannister in monogrammed dressing gown. He carves another flower in the intricate miniature, deeply engrossed. Sketches, papers blanket the table.

Suddenly. The papers scatter with a cross-gust as Evanna bursts through the door, locks it, immediately pushes a dresser across it, stacks a chair atop that, and puts her back to the barricade.

Breathless, bathrobe torn, she actually stares at Bannister a moment before it registers that someone is in the room.

EVANNA
Lord Bannister!

Still manning the barricade, she laughs a bit shrilly, makes a stab at a conversational tone.

EVANNA
How nice to see you again.

Someone RATTLES the doorknob, moves on.

EVANNA

(lowering her voice)

I had hoped I'd get the chance
to thank you for rescuing my
hat. As someone almost said, a
bird in hat is worth two-

(she winces)

So, are you enjoying the crossing?
The weather is-

She realizes her robe is slung open, revealing a sheer
negligee; she yanks it shut, pretense crumbling.

EVANNA

Oh, I'm sorry - bursting in,
clad in pajamas, making cheap
puns - God, what must you think?

Bannister, who has been quite agog, is as embarrassed as she.

BANNISTER

I think you should leave.

EVANNA

Leave. Yes. I know I should.
But I can't, not yet - there
are some very strange people
on this ship; you wouldn't
believe it.

Bannister eyes the furniture stacked at the door.

BANNISTER

No, I suppose not.

EVANNA

All I need is one corner.
I'll just sit quietly.

Beginning to feel cornered himself, Bannister gathers
his scattered papers off the floor. He is both guarded
and gracious, sweet and acerbic.

BANNISTER

No, that would never do.

EVANNA

(hurrying to help)

Not ordinarily, but...I can't
explain exactly, but I seem to
be in a little trouble.

BANNISTER

And now you've brought it here. How generous.

EVANNA

No one saw me come in - the last thing I would ever do is place you in danger.

(impulsively touching his hand)

You must believe that.

BANNISTER

(sincerely)

I believe you...

(withdrawing his hand)

But you'll have to go. I have troubles of my own.

EVANNA

(rising)

Of course you do. Trouble never plays favorites. Thanks anyway.

She pulls down the chair..right into Bannister's hands. Ambivalently befuddled, he invites her to sit. She collapses, holds her forehead. Bannister fills a cup.

BANNISTER

Tea?

EVANNA

Thank you.

BANNISTER

You're welcome. Miss...?

EVANNA

Evanna Eventoff.

Bannister retreats to his table, carves on his garden. Evanna starts.

EVANNA

You made that?!

(he modestly nods)

I'd never guess you whittled.

BANNISTER

(wincingly)

Whittled.

EVANNA
It's exquisite.

BANNISTER
It's a miniature of the
gardens at my country estate;
my beloved - OF COURSE!
You're from the press, aren't
you?

EVANNA
No, I'm from London.

BANNISTER
Oh. Well, that's a relief -
the press has brought me
nothing but trouble.

EVANNA
Don't worry, I never even
read the papers.

She closes her eyes. After a moment, Bannister looks over.
His blonde for a night is fast asleep. She looks so pretty,
he dreams on her a moment; her robe gently falls open.
Suddenly all afluster, Bannister delves back into his
garden.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - DAWN

Gordon, shaved and well-rested, prowls the deck, Beefy with
him. A champagne CORK POPS somewhere; Gordon sends Beefy
to investigate as he slides through a door.

POOL AREA

Gordon looks in - a MUSICIAN sits in the shallow end,
blowing drunken notes on his clarinet. Behind him, 5
dancers are capsized on a row of deck chairs, right in line,
as if they all tipped over and passed out at once.

Gordon spots P.J., looking a little shaggy, prowling on
the lower tier. He drifts after him.

CUT TO:

INT. BANNISTER'S STATEROOM - DAWN

Bannister awakens, still at the table. He sleepily scowls
at some dream.

EVANNA (O.S.)
(dreamily)
Good morning.

Bannister looks up, surprised. He hastens to the door, promptly begins pushing back the dresser.

EVANNA
(still sleepy)
Wait, let me help.

BANNISTER
(cranky)
I am quite able, thank you.

EVANNA
(helping anyway)
Didn't sleep too well, eh?

BANNISTER
If you're bent on knowing,
I was up most of the night.

EVANNA
Oh.
(courting a smile)
Well, how did I sleep?

Bannister opens the door, unamused.

BANNISTER
Please, all I ask is you
leave before I lose what
little remains of my reputation.

AUGUSTINE (O.S.)
LORD BANNISTER!

Removing her glasses, Augustine staggers up with champagne and bloodshot entourage. P.J., just arriving, snaps a picture, catching Bannister and Evanna in mortified cringe.

AUGUSTINE
(pumping her hand)
And Lady Bannister! What a
pleasure! All night I am
thinking, you must stay with
us in Paris!

BANNISTER
(retreating)
No, I, we always stay at the
Ritz. Good morning.

AUGUSTINE
(rapping on closed
door)
But tonight we see you two,
oui oui?

BANNISTER (O.S.)
(from inside)

Oui.

CUT TO:

INT. BANNISTER'S STATEROOM

Bannister frets, quite unsettled.

EVANNA
That was very gallant -
Lady Bannister is lucky
to have you.

BANNISTER
She doesn't - we're recently
divorced.

EVANNA
Oh, I'm sorry. How recent?

BANNISTER
Saturday, and don't be sorry.
Ours was a marriage of cordial
disgust. I was cordial and
she was disgusted.

Bannister winces at his breach of manners.

BANNISTER
Oh, I shouldn't have said
that...

EVANNA
Sounded too candid to regret.

He gives her an unhappy smile.

BANNISTER
I must shave immediately
I'm never myself until I
shave.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHARF - MORNING

The Soused Spouse, still in tuxedo, is draped over suit-cases on a luggage cart, passed out cold. His chagrined Wife tips two PORTERS, who push off the cart, REVEALING Evanna and Bannister.

Planted on opposite sides of the Alpha-Romeo, they wave to Augustine and Gaston in their departing motorcar. Bannister's smile vanishes. He retreats to the trunk, rubbing a smudged fender on his way.

ANGLE

Two small valises, side by side. Nearly identical.

EVANNA AND BANNISTER

EVANNA

(approaching)

I think mine's scuffed.

Nicked it on a -

She inhales sharply, points to his boutonniere.

EVANNA

Is that a carna-

She closes her eyes, gropes for his handkerchief - again, Bannister panics. He plucks the handkerchief from a passing pocket - a fastidious CHAP'S - But Evanna now has Bannister's.

He snatches it back, foisting the loaner on Evanna. She sneezes as the Chap backs away, certain Bannister is among the lower life forms.

EVANNA

(smiling apologetically)

Carnations and I never...

Bannister stuffs the carnation in his pocket, throws a bag in the trunk, picks up his valise.

EVANNA

Well, guess I'll be leaving now.

BANNISTER

Your hand on it.

EVANNA

Yes, you won't see me again, I promise. And I'm sorry. You've been quite wonderful... I don't think I'll ever quite forget you.

BANNISTER

(stiffly)

And I shall certainly never forget you.

She wraps another lap of her long, blonde scarf around her neck and picks up her valise.

EVANNA

Well, good-bye, then.

BANNISTER

Yes, ta-taah.

Bannister watches her vanish down the quay. An odd twinge of sadness hits him. Abruptly, he dismisses the feeling and begins re-folding his handkerchief...now WE SEE that it is but half a handkerchief, marked with words and map-like lines.

Bannister swiftly pockets the handkerchief as someone passes. Their eyes meet, though with no apparent recognition. Bannister climbs into the Alpha, staring after the passerby - a stout cigar-smoker with a club-footed gait. ADAMS.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRANCE - MORNING

The Orient Express, speeding through the countryside, tracks at this point a fair distance from the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - MORNING

Evanna enters the diner, freezes - a few tables in, the Small Fiend dunks biscuits. Evanna ducks back out, right into the arms of...

GORDON - BETWEEN CARS

EVANNA

Oh! Excuse me.

Gordon smiles easily, but doesn't let go. Instead, he studies her face.

EVANNA

No, you don't know me.

GORDON

Oh, but I wish you looked so familiar.

The man is quite disarming; Evanna blushes. She starts to pull away; Gordon maintains a certain hold, both physically and, ah, physically.

GORDON

Don't go yet. Let me buy
you some...furs.

He gives her a teasing smile; she almost smiles back.

EVANNA

I don't wear furs.

She pulls away; he puts an arm up, cornering her in a
friendly, sexy way.

GORDON

But you wear a mean perfume,
and I suspect you could wear
out a man's imagination.

Tongue-in-cheekiness is Gordon's forte. With mesmerizing
savvy, he almost touches her hair; Evanna shies back,
feeling a defenseless hot flush.

GORDON

God, you've lovely. I
love how blonde you are...
I always wondered what that
must be like.

EVANNA

Being blonde?
(picking up the game
of it)
Being blonde means never
having to say anything.

She tries ducking past; he stops her with another finessed
move.

GORDON

Can I tell you something?

EVANNA

You can try.

GORDON

I hate to see it.

EVANNA

What?

GORDON

Paris. Without you. Where
are you staying?

EVANNA
I don't know.

GORDON
Visiting someone, possibly?

Evanna is backed against the wall.

EVANNA
I have to go, please; let
me by.

GORDON
(kissing her hand, stepping back)
Of course. My name is Gordon,
and you are?...Evanna Eventoff.
(off her look)
Lucky guess. Evanna, you're
going to see me in Paris, and
you're going to need me. To
protect you.

EVANNA
From what?

GORDON
(a cocky laugh)
From men like me.

He bows out, into the dining car. Suspicious, yet a bit swept
away, Evanna stares after him. She turns - only to be grabbed...
by Beefy. His hand stifles her outcry; he pushes her into a
corner.

BEEFY
The Buddha, sweet eyes, who
bought the Buddha?

Pulling her scarf tight around her neck, he releases her
mouth. She can barely choke out an answer.

EVANNA
The Buddha?...what Buddha?

Beefy tightens the scarf - Evanna jams her elbow into his
neck, wrenches away, the scarf unwinding into Beefy's hands.
He re-grabs Evanna, releasing the scarf.

ANGLE

The long, blonde chiffon scarf blows from the train.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING (SERIES OF SHOTS)

Lord Bannister tools along in his convertible, sunshine pouring in. Under the engine's purr, WE HEAR THE FAINTEST TEMPLE BELLS.

Bannister glances over the fields at the ~~Orient Express~~ - the blonde scarf blows out of nowhere, right across his face, its long ends wrapping round and round, whipped by the wind. Blinded, he struggles to get free. The car swerves as...

The road curves...Alpha and Orient Express both speed toward a point of intercept.

Three FIELD HANDS spot impending doom. They look at the Alpha, the train; they grimace.

Beefy bends Evanna over backwards, pulling his knife.

The Alpha swerves onto the shoulder, uprooting a row of shrubs - several tumble up over the windshield, burying Bannister.

Bannister hits the brakes.

The Alpha fishtails back onto the road, skids to a stop - dead center of the railroad tracks.

The locomotive bears down.

Field hands race toward the Alpha - they won't be in time.

The ENGINEER throws the brake.

Beefy is thrown off Evanna by the jolt.

Train wheels scream against the track!

The locomotive stops, inches from the Alpha, Bannister still buried under a giant scoop of shrubs.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - DAYCAR

Evanna escapes, hurtling passengers still sprawled on the floor. Something out the window stops her cold.

EVANNA'S POV

The Alpha is pushed into view by the field hands, Bannister's presence evidenced only by vibrating shrubs. Track cleared,

the Hands back off - the Alfa keeps rolling, vanishing over the rim of an incline.

ANGLE

Evanna is thrown onto a seat as the train lurches forward.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - SAME TIME

The Alfa coasts down the incline, shrubs jettisoned as it comes, rolls to a stop. Bannister pops upright, with fierce desperation, finally yanks off the scarf. Disoriented, he looks around: tranquil meadows, sunshine, the train chugging off in the distance. All in all, a lovely morning.

Bannister scowls at the scarf, about to discard it. Something stops him - a soft fragrance. He holds the scarf close and breathes in. An odd fondness overcomes him. There is a LOW WHISTLE OF WIND and strange gust. Bannister looks about.

BANNISTER'S POV

A small, renegade eddy whirls across the road, leaves twirling in its funneled maelstrom.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CAFE - DAY

E.C.U. a glass of pernod, set on a counter. A Piaf-ish ballad on the radio, water is added to the pernod, turning it to a milky cloud.

EVANNA (V.O.)
Mr. Wilmington?

PULL BACK TO MR. WILMINGTON, a pale, nervous type, snide to the bone.

EVANNA
The Charwoman said I'd find you here - I understand Madam Brandon is taking the waters in Baden-Baden and won't be back for some time.

WILMINGTON
Who in hell are you?

EVANNA
Evanna Eventoff.

WILMINGTON
How fabulous.

He turns away.

EVANNA
Please, Madam Brandon's
son, the Lt. Commander?
(Wilmington turns
eyeing her more closely)
He possessed a family heirloom
I recently traced to his mother's.
It was sent from London, a large
package perhaps. The charwoman
doesn't remember it arriving
I thought you might.

WILMINGTON
As caretaker, I'm not required
to keep track of the old bat's
postal deliveries. Now leave
me the hell alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE - LATE DAY

Evanna stands in the fading sunlight. At a loss, she
falls in step with other pedestrians - we follow her
closely - suddenly she is spun around.

EVANNA
(a gasped whisper)
Don't shoot!

ANGLE - STREET

JEALOUS LOVER
You aren't Suzette!

He races off, brandishing a pistol. Evanna stares after
him - he spins around another blonde, apologizes, presses
on. Reminded of her own dangers, Evanna looks about. She
turns ashen.

Across the street, a man with Beefy's exact build is hidden
behind a newspaper. He moves off; not Beefy. But Evanna scans
the whole area, slowly backs away.

Men loiter all along the Seine, buried in newspapers, many with Beefy's build. All wear trenchcoats, save one who wears a bright red outfit.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON CEMETARY - LATE DAY - DRIZZLE

Umbrellas shroud club members encircling a gravestone: Bentley's. The first shovel of dirt is cast.

REDBUSH

(the highest praise)

In his younger days, no one could touch him - I knew no man who made a better cup of tea.

CLUB MEMBERS

Hear, hear.

All move off, Redbush arrogantly nodding to the three jokers from the club; Blackstone notes it.

REDBUSH

(in explanation)

I made contact. He had interesting news and promised to squeeze in some assistance ...seems blondes have always lied to him, as well.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRENCH QUARTER/MADAM BRANDON'S FLAT - DUSK

A husky CHARWOMAN emerges, taking a trash bundle to the curb, leaving the hall door ajar.

Evanna is stewing nearby. If she is going to take action, this would be the time. The option terrifies her. On impulse, Evanna bolts up the stoop and slips inside.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON FLAT/SUMPTUOUS FOYER

Evanna darts into the coat closet a moment before the Charwoman returns. Picking up a broom, the Charwoman heads straight for the closet. She grasps the knob, pulls - she pulls harder, harder yet.

INSIDE CLOSET

Evanna holds the knob with all her might. There is a CLATTER out in the foyer.

FOYER

The Charwoman pries at the door with a crowbar (the storage cupboard under the stairs is open). The Charwoman is almost winning - the hall clock STRIKES SIX - the Charwoman immediately abandons the project, returns the crowbar, gets her purse. She times it perfectly - on the last stroke of six, she is out the door.

Evanna steps out, a nervous wreck. But the flat is quiet and all hers. Almost suddenly, Evanna relaxes. Maybe this is going to be easy, after all.

CUT TO:

DRAWING ROOM

Evanna flips on a light, only to be overwhelmed. She has found what few seek.

GEE-GAW HEAVEN

Whatnots, souvenirs, baubles. Crammed into curio cabinets, adorning tables and sideboards. A life's collection visible through french doors opening from drawing room into dining room and beyond.

Dazed, Evanna rolls up her sleeves, turns to the first cabinet. At a SOUND, Evanna stiffens.

A window is being slid up by two large hands.

Evanna vanishes into the dining room - Gordon climbs in the window. He casually flicks dust from his trousers. There are more sounds - THE FRONT DOOR LATCH, VOICES. Gordon vanishes into the dining room.

DINING ROOM

Gordon ducks behind a drape hung across a doorway - coming face-to-face with Evanna in a service pantry so small it lacks room to sweat. Evanna can't believe it.

GORDON

(whispered)

I follow you everywhere.

*Evanna
tells her
to go
from the
pantry*

*Book
Caterer*

BLH 0006

He gives her a taunting smile as the voices become intelligible.

ADAMS (O.S.)

After you.

WILMINGTON (O.S.)

Would you not point that
gun at me?

ADAMS (O.S.) *or better*

Give me a better target.

*Gordon does
with the
holding*

Gordon pointedly nods to Evanna, then teasingly blows at a curl of her hair.

DRAWING ROOM

Adams settles in a chair, steel-nerved, raspy-voiced, gun trained on Wilmington. He pulls out a cigar, searches for matches.

ADAMS

You're no caretaker,
Wilmington. The charade's
up.

WILMINGTON

(mock innocence)

Parlor games?

BLH 0006

Wilmington nods to a "gun-cigarette lighter" on the table - Adams picks it up. Holding one gun, he lights his cigar with the other.

WILMINGTON

(tight-lipped)

Don't you have me mistaken
for another contestant?

ADAMS

I made no mistakes. I want
the map.

With a blank look, Wilmington makes for the liqueur cart.

WILMINGTON

Map?...Would you settle
for a pernod?

SERVICE PANTRY

Both listen, but Gordon also takes advantage of their tight proximity. His fingers play along Evanna's neck.

ADAMS (O.S.)
I never settle.

DRAWING ROOM

Adams holds his cigar perfectly still; Wilmington figets with his glass

WILMINGTON
"Never?" How pure of you.

ADAMS
Yes, it won't pain me in the slightest to put a bullet through your skull. When the ash falls...

Wilmington's eyes bead in on the growing cigar ash.

WILMINGTON
You have a great poker face for an old bluffer.

ADAMS
I never bluff.

SERVICE PANTRY

Gordon runs his hand down from Evanna's neck and lightly grazes her breast. She grabs his hand, pulling it away.

ADAMS (O.S.)
I know about you - hiring on as caretaker here gave you the opportunity to intercept Madame Brandon's mail. All England thinks her son sold out to Germany.

Smiling, Gordon leans in, kisses Evanna's neck. She grimaces, bracing herself against some definite stimulus.

DRAWING ROOM

The ash has grown. Wilmington steals glances at it.

ADAMS
But he didn't.

ADAMS (cont)

Germany is still after the map. In light of the coming war, it could turn tides - it's a priceless document and you're just waiting for the highest bidder.

SERVICE PANTRY

Gordon pulls back, the word "priceless" spurring his interest. Evanna recuperates. Face flushed, ire up, she is involuntarily aroused.

WILMINGTON (O.S.)

Tell me, did you learn to rasp like that in spy school?

Tracking the conversation, Gordon presses his body against Evanna's.

DRAWING ROOM

The ash grows to 3 inches; Wilmington's eyes are riveted.

ADAMS

I wouldn't stall - other agents are on your trail - those lucky enough to catch Brandon in a lucid moment.

(off Wilmington's look)

Yes, he's alive. Though you left him for dead. He's back in Morocco, trying to re-trace the map. He's in Marbouk, going by the name of Mr. Faubles.

SERVICE PANTRY

Evanna catalogs the information; Gordon is still pressed against her...glasses on a high shelf are fogged over.

ADAMS (O.S.)

He's not too coherent, mind you. Not since your interrogation. I hear Lt. Commander Brandon has taken to wandering the streets at night, wearing a silver crown and telling everyone he's a widowed queen.

Gordon kisses Evanna fully.

DRAWING ROOM

The ash grows to four inches.

ADAMS

Still, in the lucid moment...
he mentioned you to my contact.
And to others. So before we
are joined...the map.

The ash grows to five inches; a hint of hysteria creeps
into Wilmington's voice.

WILMINGTON

When I caught Brandon, he
was burning the map.

ADAMS

But he's made another copy.

WILMINGTON

Yes, but he knew agents
were after him - he mailed
it off somewhere.

ADAMS

And you guessed where. To
someone he could trust.

WILMINGTON

I'm trying to tell you, I
haven't got it!

Wilmington can't take his eyes off the cigar.

ADAMS

Ash to ashes, Wilmington.

WILMINGTON

You're missing the point.

Adams cocks his gun.

ADAMS

I never miss.

The ash must be six incredible inches now.

WILMINGTON

All right, I'll get it!
...but it won't quite
solve anything, you'll see.

ADAMS

Get it.

Wilmington reveals a wall safe, spins the tumblers.

SERVICE PANTRY

Evanna breaks off the kiss, breathing hard. Gordon likewise. He is real pleased with himself. Glaring, she starts to say something; he puts his finger to her lips. Then he takes her hand, tries sliding it under his waistband. Evanna resists.

Evanna's free hand searches the shelf, closing around a silver creamer - she raises it up behind Gordon's head - then hesitates - is life finally too short for abuse?

DRAWING ROOM

Wilmington pulls an orange envelope from the safe.

ADAMS

Put it on the table...
now step back.

He does - there is a GROAN O.S. - the ash falls

Evanna darts through the dining room Adams fires!

The wren on the bird hat takes the bullet and skyrockets, feathers exploding.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Evanna dives under a table - Wilmington grabs the envelope - Adams fires - the bullet spins Wilmington to the floor - Adams makes for the dining room - Gordon stumbles out, drawing his gun - Adam and Gordon collide and crash back into the drawing room, guns flying.

Bleeding profusely, Wilmington retrieves the map, crawls to a hidden gun - Gordon and Adams are in physical gridlock - they see Wilmington take aim - another gun enters frame, held to Wilmington's temple.

EVANNA (O.S.)

Don't dare...lay it down.

PULL BACK TO Evanna, scared wild. Wilmington lays down the gun, Evanna snatches the envelope - Adams and Gordon roll and crash into the dining room.

Wilmington weakly reaches for the envelope, toupee askew.

EVANNA

(as bait)

You can have it back - the
Lieutenant's effects, the
package from London, did
you see it?

WILMINGTON
I unpacked it.

EVANNA
What was in it?

WILMINGTON
Nothing! A few hand towels
and some cologne called
"Moonlight in the Balkans."
That's all, I swear. Now,
the envelope!

EVANNA
(tucking it away)
Sorry, I may need this.

FOYER

Evanna is steps from the front door when it shudders under
weight thrown against it.

DRAWING ROOM

Wilmington grabs at Evanna's hemline as she dashes by,
tearing the front pleat up past the thigh.

DINING ROOM

Evanna grabs her valise - Gordon and Adams, still at it,
glimpse her climbing out onto the fire escape.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDON FLAT/ALLEY - NIGHT

SIRENS WAILING, GENDARMES pull up at the street fronting
the alley - Evanna heads UP the fire escape.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON FLAT/FOYER

The door gives. Five agents tumble inside (trench coats
from outside the travel agency, and the man in red).

CUT TO:

EXT. FOUR-STORY ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Numerous GUNSHOTS ECHO BELOW. Evanna stuffs the envelope
in her valise, straps it across her shoulder. She groans as
a gun-wielding hand appears over the fire escape. Evanna
runs along the roof, takes refuge behind a chimney.

GORDON (O.S.)
Evanna?...don't hide.
Let me help you.

A SHOT IS FIRED.

ANGLE

Gordon leaps for cover as Adams jumps from the fire escape and also bivouacs. Gordon peeks out - Adams fires - Gordon ducks back.

ANGLE

Evanna crawls along the roof's gargoyled wall as Gordon and Adams trade gunfire. She peeks over a wall.

EVANNA'S POV

Clotheslines crisscross an alley on all four stories. A narrow ledge circles the building, at one point passing inches above an open window.

SERIES OF SHOTS

It is funny that she has to jump
Firing at Gordon, Adams dives behind a chimney for a clear shot at Evanna - he aims - seeing him, she closes her eyes, points her gun - both fire - Adams' gun CLICKS EMPTY, Evanna's gun CLICK ignites a small flame atop the "cigarette lighter" - Evanna stares at it, numbly drops it in her valise as she views Adams reloading. There's only one way out...

Evanna lowers herself over the wall to the ledge and inches toward the window, mortality hinging on her fingertip hold on the roof above her. Only her tiptoes reach the ledge.

Adams alternates shots at Gordon, at Evanna's hands, which move faster and faster - inches from the window, Evanna's foot slips from the ledge - she grabs a gargoyle - it holds her - Adams fires - the bullet cleaves the back of the gargoyle - Before Evanna's very eyes, the gargoyle slowly breaks off...

Evanna drops - she grabs the window's open shutter, hangs a moment - the hinge's screws slowly pull out of the facade - her hands slide down the shutter...

Evanna drops - grabs a 3rd story clothesline - its fibers slowly unravel - it snaps...

Evanna falls - lands in crisscrossing clotheslines forming a back alley cat's cradle - the supporting lines slowly rend apart - Evanna grabs one line - the pulley reels wildly...

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

An old BUTLER is taking a tepid bath and shampooing his hair. He squints.

HIS POV

A tangle of clothes zooms toward the window. Feet first, Evanna glides through the open window and is swallowed by a large laundry basket - it tumbles over and rolls past the tub and out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ENTRANCE FOYER

A SMALL BOY redesigning the wallpaper with crayolas eyes the laundry basket bumping down the stairs. Estimating its exit path, he pads over to the door. As if it were the most natural of occurrences, he waits for the last possible moment, then opens the door to let the basket pass. He nods, proud of his precision timing.

EXT. SMALL INNER COURTYARD - NIGHT

The basket bumps down five steps, rolls down a path. A KITCHEN HELPER opens a back door, quickly steps aside as the basket rolls through...

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT

The rolling basket stops at a pair of spit-shined shoes. Evanna crawls out with valise, staggers to her feet. Dress in provocative shambles, hair crazed, she is a sight. She shakes the whooze from her head, sees...

THREE WAITERS, hoity-toity. They stare with measured distaste. Evanna peels a static-clinging undershirt off her arm...

EVANNA

(dropping it)

These economy tours are hell.

Feigning airs, she limps off thorough the dining room.

DINING ROOM

Patrons openly gawk or discreetly look away as Evanna braves the passage. Up ahead lies the precious exit. Seven tables, six, five...

WILLIAM...
 AUGUSTINE (O.S.)
 Lady Bannister!

Evanna turns, turns crimson.

ANGLE

Guests flank a table set with crystal stemware, the wine-tasting presided over by Lord Bannister in white monogrammed tails and boutonniere. He is beyond distress. There is an awkward, gaping silence.

EVANNA
 (diving in, to
 Bannister)
 Darling! There you are!

AUGUSTINE
 (eyeing her dress)
 Lady Bannister, whatever
 has happened to you?

Evanna's imagination goes blank.

EVANNA
 Me? I was, I was...
 attacked by spies

Everyone is silent. Then Augustine laughs.

AUGUSTINE
 Oh, Lady Bannister, you
 do have a wit, don't you?
 Spies...

OTHERS
 (group chuckles
 in chorus)
 Spies, spies...

AUGUSTINE
 It's all right, you can
 admit it - you crossed
 against the light, didn't
 you?

EVANNA
 I lost my head.

AUGUSTINE
 (to Bannister)
 And you worry for nothing -
 I tell you, her headache
 will pass.

EVANNA

Yes, but it's back. I
have to leave immediately.

AUGUSTINE

Oo, c'est tragique. - we
lose your wonderful husband.

Bannister dutifully rises with a dazed nod to the table.
They turn to leave as...

SERIES OF SHOTS

Evanna inhales sharply, reaches for Bannister's breast
pocket - his handkerchief is gone - Her eyes beseech
him to help.

Flustered, Bannister falls back on old patterns - he
reaches into the nearest breast pocket at the adjacent
table and pulls...and pulls. The handkerchief keeps
coming and changing colors, like a magician's prop.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL a DARK-EYED MAN with a pencil-thin
moustache.

Gaston offers his handkerchief, but fumbles it - Evanna
desperately grabs someone's lap napkin, inadvertantly
catching up the tablecloth - she jerks it toward her -
pulling the entire tablecloth with it!

Everyone gasps. Nothing breaks, but two dozen glasses
teeter. Clinking and re-clinking, like one giant toast.
Delighted, Augustine raises her glass.

AUGUSTINE

Cheers.

Everyone drinks. Recoiling his handkerchief, the Dark-eyed
Man stands and hands Evanna his card.

GENT

(presenting himself)
The Great Huntington. My
card and my esteem.

He clicks his heels.

CUT TO:

HAT CHECK COUNTER

Bannister claims his top hat, cape, and oddly enough, travel
valise. He stares straight ahead, shouldering the indig-
nities. Evanna impatiently waits, starts at a DISTANT RETORT.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Gordon digs his last bullets out of his pockets.

GORDON

Look, we can stay up here until the cows melt and both lose. The blonde has information vital to me and a map vital to you.

ADAMS (O.S.)

What do you suggest?

GORDON

Partnership, what else?

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

P.J. Hollar rolls up on a motorcycle, just in time to see Bannister close Evanna's door. Bannister spots P.J. and bolts for his door.

P.J.

Hey, Banny boy, how 'bout an interview?

The Alpha speeds off - an instant later, a Packard peels out after it. It sits fishy with P.J. - he guns his bike and pursues.

CUT TO:

INT. ALPHA

BANNISTER

I can't believe it! How did you find me again?

EVANNA

It was coincidental.

BANNISTER

Hah! You sought me out, you ARE from the press!

Evanna hits the deck - up ahead, gendarmes are piling Wilmington and the spies into a paddy wagon. Bannister eyes her oddly.

BANNISTER
Why are you on the floor?

Evanna shrugs.

BANNISTER
(eyeing gendarmes)
Good God...you're an advent-
uress.

EVANNA
(offended)
An adventuress? - I'm a
cello teacher.

BANNISTER
A cello teacher?! - No cello
teachers of mine ran around
cruise ships in their bath-
robes.

EVANNA
(pleasantly surprised)
Oh, do you play?

He swerves to miss creaming two men darting out of an alley -
Gordon and Adams.

CUT TO:

STREET

Gordon eyes the vanishing Alpha as the Packard skids to
a stop and Beefy leans out.

BEEFY
Hey, Cap'n!

INT. PACKARD

Gordon and Adams slip in.

BEEFY
Hurry it up! - They're in
the Alpha!

ADAMS
They?

The Packard moves off.

GORDON
She's tied in with some
tube head. Bannister.

ADAMS
(perplexed)
Not Lord Bannister?

GORDON
(nodding)
I knew they'd hook up again,
so I glued Beefy to his
tail.

CUT TO:

INT. ALPHA

BANNISTER
You don't fool me, Miss
Eventoff. I know why
you stalk me...
(a dark look)
You know, don't you?

EVANNA
Know what?

BANNISTER
About my trip! My trip to-

He stops himself, no longer positive she does know.

EVANNA
Please, just get me out of
Paris and I'll hire the first
car I find and be gone, I
promise.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The Alpha speeds through the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. ALPHA

Bannister turns on the wipers as a light rain pelts the
windshield.

EVANNA
I'm sure there'll be a
garage any mile now.

Bannister looks skeptical.

EVANNA

You must be the last
gallant man.

BANNISTER

Why must I?

EVANNA

I only meant, ferrying me
out of Paris, going to
such great lengths...you're
pretty wonderful.

(he snickers)

I wouldn't say it if I
didn't mean it - I have
nothing to gain by lying
to you.

BANNISTER

(a considered pause)

Except practice, of course.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRY INN - NIGHT - RAIN

Alpha out front, a garage next door offering cars for hire.
Evanna and Bannister are dashing to the porch awning with
valises.

BANNISTER

You can't mean to press
on in this?

EVANNA

I'm afraid to stop.

ANGLE - PORCH

EVANNA

Have you ever attempted
something that, well, it
starts out one thing but...
oh, I don't know.

BANNISTER

(wrestling his suspicions)

You mean you're actually
leaving? Now? Without me?
Going on?

EVANNA

Yes, this is where we part.

BANNISTER
Well, I suppose we'll
always have Paris.

EVANNA
You won't see me again,
I promise.
(gratefully)
I don't think I'll ever
quite forget you.

The sweet sincerity leaves Bannister confused.

BANNISTER
And I shall certainly
never forget you.

EVANNA
Well, good-bye, then.

She touches his hand, then dashes out into the rain.

BANNISTER
(befuddled)
Yes, ta-ta.

As he watches her vanish across the garden, an inexplicable wave of sadness washes over him, as if a small light in his life had suddenly gone out. Stupefied, he turns inside.

CUT TO:

INT. INN/HALLWAY

The DESK CLERK leads Bannister to a room, handing him a dressing gown and towel.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE

Evanna waits. She notes a small sign: "Please Ring Bell." She obeys. No one appears. She gazes out the rain-washed window.

EVANNA'S POV

Bannister is visible through the french doors on a 2nd story room above the garden. He is staring out into the rain, still wearing his top hat.

EVANNA

Her gaze lingers. She turns away, again rings the bell.

EVANNA
Anyone here?

Headlights illuminate the window and sweep across the rafters. Evanna looks back outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. INN

The Packard stops behind the Alpha. Gordon and Beefy sprint to the porch, Adams lumbering behind.

PORCH

Gordon peeks into the lobby.

GORDON
Quiet enough.

BEEFY
I don't mind witnesses.

ADAMS
(arriving)
I mind. I want this quiet.
I can handle the woman if
you two make sure her friend
is sent packing.

BEEFY
Packing?
(pulling his knife)
Where he's going, he won't
need no clothes.

There is a RUSTLE in the bushes; they glance off; the WIND GUSTS.

ADAMS
(to Gordon)
Look, we don't need kill
this Bannister chap.

GORDON
Sure, sport. He needn't
die. No one need die.

Gordon grins like Mr. Sincere and steps inside. His pals follow. Through the windows, we see a dinner party filter out of the dining room. Gordon moves to the desk as Adams and Beefy immediately lurk by a painting, pretending to be art lovers.

CUT TO:

INT. BANNISTER'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Lightning flashes outside, THUNDER CLAPS. Crammed into his borrowed dressing gown, Bannister stares at his oriental garden. Exhausted, he snuffs the light.

CUT TO:

LOBBY

CLOSE ON registry, a hand signing in. Above the name reads: Lord Bannister, Room 7.

PULL BACK TO Gordon. The Desk Clerk hands him a key. The WIND HOWLS.

BLH 0006

CUT TO:

BANNISTER'S ROOM

Bannister fast asleep. The french doors suddenly blow open and BANG the walls. Bannister's eyes open.

HIS POV

Evanna is framed in the doors, backlit by a bolt of lightning, like a wild, wind-blown woman who haunts one's visions.

ANGLE

Bannister rolls over, certain it a dream.

EVANNA
(hushed panic)
Lord Bannister.

He groggily drags himself up.

BANNISTER
You're back...

EVANNA
(rushing over)
We have to go!

BANNISTER
Are you sure?

She drags him from bed. Her hands have grease stains.

EVANNA
Killers, downstairs!

BANNISTER
Well, as long as they stay
there, I don't see why-

EVANNA
(shaking him awake)
They're coming up! Please
trust me!

Something in her voice convinces him. He reaches for his
pants - she swipes them away, hands him his shoes.

EVANNA
No time - just the essentials.

She rushes to the dresser, pushes it across the door.
Bannister slips on his shoes, and from the table, selects
his watch, wallet, and glancing outside, top hat, cape
and towel.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY

Gordon, Beefy and Adams stop at #7.

CUT TO:

BANNISTER'S ROOM

The door gives, dresser toppling, Beefy sprawling inside.
Gordon hurdles Beefy and races to the balcony.

CUT TO:

BALCONY/GORDON'S POV

Evanna flees across the garden with Bannister in shoes,
night shirt, cape and top hat. Both with valises.

CUT TO:

EXT. INN

Evanna and Bannister vault into the Alpha, Gordon and pals rushing from the lobby behind them. The Alpha peels out; Beefy jumps into the Packard, but Gordon takes aim.

CUT TO:

INT. ALPHA

A bullet neatly pierces Bannister's top hat.

BANNISTER
Why the cads.

He floors the pedal - the Alpha lurches forward - Evanna looks back.

HER POV

The Packard's hood is up.

BLH 0006
CUT TO:

EXT. INN

Under the hood, countless wires are pulled. Beefy starts sorting them out, but with a glance, Gordon heads for the garage.

CUT TO:

ROAD - NIGHT

The Alpha careens down the drive onto the highway, spraying up a wave of water over P.J. Hollar just arriving on his motorcycle.

P.J.'s eyes widen in recognition. He presses on after the Alpha's disappearing taillights.

CUT TO:

ROAD - NIGHT - RAIN

The Alpha cuts the darkness at breakneck speed.

INT. ALPHA

BANNISTER
I haven't bathed, shaved or
slept, we're hurtling toward
Spain, cut-throats behind us,
(MORE)

BANNISTER (cont.)
civil war lying ahead - I
demand to know what this
is about!

EVANNA
(tired)
Just drive, would you?

Bannister skids to a stop on the shoulder.

BANNISTER
Not another mile!

Evanna pulls out the "gun-cigarette" lighter," points it.

BANNISTER
Good God, what's that?

EVANNA
It's a cigarette lighter,
what do you think it is?

BANNISTER
(recoiling)
And I trusted you

EVANNA
Listen, friend, there may
be more at stake than I
dreamed, but all I'm trying
to do is swap some envelope
for a small chance at honor.
I hate that houligans think
you're involved, but I have
never lied to you. Now
drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPAIN - MORNING

Rolling enfenced pasture sprawl out from a distant
hacienda, livestock dotting the rolling landscape.

ROAD

The Alpha streaks toward us down a knoll. There is a
sudden HISSING - steam furls from the engine.

CUT TO:

ROADSIDE

A sunny, but breezy morning. A small creek parallels a fence. Evanna anxiously surveys the road behind them, still carrying the "gun." The hood is open, radiator letting off steam. Bannister pulls his valise from the Alpha.

BANNISTER

Well, at least I needn't
see Spain unshaven.

EVANNA

(looking around)
Spain seems too pretty
to be at war, doesn't it?

Bannister notes the scuff marks on the valise, drops it at Evanna's feet.

BANNISTER

(cooly)
Indeed, as do you.

BLH 0006
CUT TO:

ROAD - MORNING

A bright red, low-slung roadster overtakes P.J. Gordon, Beefy and Adams inside.

CUT TO:

ROADSIDE - MORNING

Bannister returns from the creek, whipping up a froth in his initialed shaving cup. His mirror is set up on the fence, shaving towel slung over the gate, near the latch.

ANGLE - OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE ALPHA

The door is open, Evanna half sitting in the car. She opens the orange envelope and pulls out...

E.C.U. Half a handkerchief marked with map tracings, the missing half of Bannister's.

ANGLE

Evanna troubled by what she holds.

EVANNA

In Paris, I heard men
talking about the "coming
war." Is there really another
war coming?

ANGLE

Bannister's shaving cup foameth over. He sets it on the
fence rail, adjusts the mirror.

BANNISTER

Battles will be fought.

He picks up his shaving brush, and we hear the FAINTEST
ECHO of bells. He turns to his cup - the breeze blows
the brimming layer of froth - straight into Bannister's
eyes.

EVANNA (O.S.)

Some say this war is being
waged mainly to test new
weapons.

Eyes squinched shut, Bannister gropes for his towel.
Instead, he hits the gate latch - the gate drifts open,
taking the towel with it.

EVANNA (O.S.)

They say this isn't a
real war.

In search of the railing, Bannister bumbles into the
pasture, pawing at thin air.

BANNISTER

(frustration escalating)

Blast it, war is always real.

Behind Bannister, over the knoll, comes an ... ENORMOUS
BULL. His eyes lock in on the invader.

EVANNA (O.S.)

Still, it's hard to
believe.

BANNISTER

WHAT?

EVANNA

Slipping the handkerchief back into the envelope, she
looks up at the blue sky.

EVANNA

That on such a beautiful morning, somewhere in Spain, men's lives are at risk.

PASTURE (SERIES OF SHOTS)

The bull charges - Bannister, eyes still shut, cocks his head - the bull closes ground - at the perfect moment, Bannister takes a step back and turns, his cape swirling about - the bull gallops past, Bannister obviously executing a successful pass.

The bull stops, turns.

Bannister stands there, puzzled. Did he hear hoofbeats?

BANNISTER

Could you give me my towel? - I've got cream in my eyes.

EVANNA

She turns - voice and heart catch in her throat - she numbly drops the envelope into the valise, moves for the pasture.

SERIES OF SHOTS

The bull charges - Bannister stumbles over a rock and falls into a narrow trench - the bull jumps over - Bannister climbs out of the trench.

Terrified for Bannister, Evanna tries to sound calm.

EVANNA

Your towel isn't far off - start walking straight ahead - slowly.

BANNISTER

(complying)

Slowly.

The bull contemplates another charge.

EVANNA

But when I say, I want you to jump back and pivot.

BANNISTER

Do what?

EVANNA
(as bull charges)
JUST DO IT OR I'LL SHOOT!

BANNISTER
All right!

Evanna times the precise moment.

EVANNA
Jump and pivot!

Bannister jumps back and pivots, cape twirling out - the bull roars past.

ANGLE

Evanna yanks Bannister from the pasture and slams the gate. Over-reacting, she grabs the towel and dabs the froth from his eyes, but keeps hugging him, grateful he is alive.

BANNISTER
Miss Eventoff-

EVANNA
God, talk about close
shaves.

BANNISTER
Close shaves? - Who's
had a moment to shave?

He does a curious take at the glaring bull behind the fence. Evanna hugs him again.

BANNISTER
Miss Eventoff, what is this? -
Moments ago you were ready
to ply me with bullets.

EVANNA
I would never - here, take it.

She stuffs the gun in his cape pocket, hugs him one last time. Arms still about him, her eyes still blue - Bannister feels an impulse to kiss her - she feels it, too.

A BULLET RIPS into the fence. Both glance O.S.

THEIR POV

A red roadster up the road, coming fast.

ROADSIDE

Evanna tears back to the car.

EVANNA

Time to go!

Bannister hurriedly puts something into his valise - we don't see what. Another bullet just misses him.

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSTER

Adams, in back, is awakened by the shooting.

CUT TO:

ROADSIDE

Bannister grabs his valise, sprints for the Alpha - a BULLET whizzes past him and obliterates half the gate latch - the WIND BLOWS - the gate drifts open.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Bannister dives into the Alpha, throwing his case in back with Evanna's.

The bull trots out of the gate, looking for trouble.

The red roadster draws closer.

The Alpha sputters, won't start.

The bull glances right, then left. Then charges.

Gordon, Beefy and Adams oddly stiffen.

THEIR POV

The bull is charging the fastest moving threat - them.

The Alpha again sputters.

The bull remains on collision course.

Beefy wrenches the wheel.

The roadster veers off the road, crashing through a fence and bumping up a pastured knoll.

P.J. Hollar skids into a U-turn.

The bull, on a hell-bent course, thunders after P.J.

The roadster drops over a knoll and disappears from view.

Bannister throws open the hood, Evanna beside him.

CUT TO:

PASTURE

The roadster is at the knoll's base. It sits in the center of a cow pond, water up past the windows. Gordon, Adams and Beefy are wading through the muck. Suddenly. All freeze.

THEIR POV

Five young, fighting bulls stand silhouetted against the sky.

ANGLE

The men stand in the pond. The bulls stand on the knoll. Like sentries. They know the men will one day leave the pond. Gordon sardonically laughs at this twist of fate. There is a motorcycle CRASHING-THROUGH-FENCE SOUND somewhere O.S.

BLH

CUT TO:

ROADSIDE

Bannister tinkers with wires. Evanna pours water in the radiator. Both look toward an APPROACHING ROAR.

P.J. careens down the same knoll the bull first appeared. He glances back.

The motorcycle's tire hits the same rock Bannister stumbled over.

P.J. is launched.

The bull appears on the knoll - there is a SPLASH O.S. - the bull stops to get his bearings.

The motorcycle crashes through the fence and lies down a few yards from Bannister and Evanna. They look at it, at the bull.

The bull glances around.

BULL'S POV

The trough, a pork-pie floating on top - The Alpha - Evanna and Bannister (with valises) sneaking toward the motorcycle.

SERIES OF SHOTS

The bull snorts, lowers his head to charge.

Bannister does a wheelie on the motorcycle, Evanna clining on the back - the motorcycle wobbles all over - Bannister guns it - the bike blasts ahead, crashing through a fence and up the slope on the opposite roadside.

The motorcycle flies off the slope's crest. A moment later, the bull flies off the crest.

CUT TO:

PASTURE

The motorcycle roars across a field, the bull in hot pursuit.

KNOLL

The sentry bulls simultaneously glance O.S.

COW POND

Gordon and pals, sitting on the hood, take heart as the sentry bulls abruptly vanish back over the knoll. The trio hurriedly slosh back the way they came.

PASTURE

The five bulls light out after the motorcycle - we hear the FAINT TINKLE of bells - the bulls veer off.

ADJACENT PASTURE

Cows. Coming home. Little bells around their necks.

ANGLE

Bannister's top hat blows off as the motorcycle grows smaller and smaller withing the rolling hills of Spain.

CUT TO:

INT. EVENTOFF FLAT - MORNING

E.C.U. HEADLINE: "Evanna Eventoff Sought For Espionage."
Accompanied by a shot of her and one of Wilmington in
hospital bed.

PULL BACK TO Inspectors Redbush and Blackstone, hovering over
Nelly, who worriedly scans the story.

BLACKSTONE

What do you have to say
about this?

NELLY

Gracious.

REDBUSH

We're in touch with one of
our most ruthless agents...
anything you say now might
help her later.

NELLY

We're all in God's hands.

BLACKSTONE

And I guess he makes sure
everybody gets what's really
coming to them, doesn't he?

CUT TO:

EXT. SPAIN - DAY

Small town crouching between rolling hills. The motorcycle
ends its voyage at a hotel. Evanna and Bannister pry them-
selves off the bike and unfold their bones.

Across the street, stretchers are stacked, a truck unloads
the afternoon papers.

Neither Evanna or Bannister have the jump to jump. With a
weary glance, Bannister stumbles into the hotel like a veteran
somnambulist. Fatigue robs Evanna of words. She unhappily
peels the valise strap from her shoulder, notes it is scuffless.

EVANNA

Lord Bannister? - your
valise.

A HIGH-PITCHED WHINE pierces the ears - the moment Bannister steps back out of the hotel, the lobby explodes. EXPLOSIONS commencing all about, Evanna and Bannister glance O.S.

Loyalist troops retreat over a hill, running toward town.

Evanna, Bannister, and Citizens stumble through choking smoke...

BANNISTER
(stopping)

Isn't that my...it is!

The Alpha cruises in, carrying Gordon, Beefy, and Adams. Bannister heads toward it.

EVANNA
(dragging him off)
The killers!

Abandoning the Alpha by a church, the Equally exhausted trio pursue.

CUT TO:

BOMBED-OUT LOBBY

Evanna and Bannister are halfway up the stairs when MAIDS, GUESTS, come stampeding down. There is a HIGH-PITCHED WHINE - people dive, leap off the staircase. BL4 0206

ANGLE

Evanna behind the front desk, face to the floor - someone lands on top of her...

GORDON
I've missed you.

EVANNA
(covered by him)
Not by much.

GUNFIRE in the streets, EXPLOSIONS OUTSIDE, plaster showers down.

GORDON
Spain, Evanna? - Then Morocco?
The Lieutenant bought the
Buddha, didn't he?

EVANNA
What Buddha is that?

A MAID crawls over them.

GORDON
Evanna, we can have it
all. The Garthmore, the
map...

EVANNA
I know better.

More falling plaster.

GORDON
We'd have fun.

EVANNA
I still know better.

Three GUESTS dive over the front desk, knocking Gordon off
and burying him, a rain of plaster burying all but Evanna.

Crawling out, Evanna wildly looks for Bannister. Beefy and
Adams are trapped under a fallen chandelier by the door.

CUT TO:

STREET

Evanna climbs out a window, searches the smoke. Citizens
race past with stretchers as a dazed Bannister emerges from
the smoke. He and Evanna numbly embrace, re-united survivors
who spot a ray of hope.

Just beyond a roasting vegetable cart sits the Alpha, miracu-
lously pristine.

Bannister can't believe it. He staggers toward it - there is
a DEEP RUMBLE, then BIG BOOM. A chunk of street becomes a
fiery pit.

A tank rounds a corner - it's gunmount swivels, gets a sight.

ANGLE - ALPHA BY THE CHURCH

ANGLE - EVANNA AND BANNISTER

BANNISTER

No!

SERIES OF SHOTS

The tank fires! - The church spire takes the hit - Bannister and Evanna rush toward the Alpha - the bell tower topples - Bannister and Evanna freeze - the tower obliterates the Alpha.

EVANNA

Oh, no...

BANNISTER

(in British stride)

It was only a new motor-car.

Special - see s. 11

Soldiers sweeping through, Bannister and Evanna cut up a side street and slip through a door. Two beats later, Gordon and pals follow.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVERTED HOUSE/FIELD HOSPITAL

A crowded room, DOCTOR, Nurses, Senoras, attend the wounded. Soldiers with minor wounds hold rifles.

Gordon and pals weave their way across the room - Evanna and Bannister spot them, are about to escape through a door...

DOCTOR

(to Bannister)

Por favor, Senor.

The Doctor holds out an I.V. piped into a soldier.

BANNISTER

(taking it)

Certainly.

He holds it above the soldier, earning a startled though admiring look from Evanna. A Senorita fanning a patient hands the fan to Evanna, moves off with the Doctor. Evanna cozies nearer an armed soldier as Adams creeps up.

BLH 0006

ADAMS

(exhausted whisper)

Gordon told me what you're after...it's your affair. But the envelope you took will only bring you grief. I promise you. You don't stand a chance.

EVANNA

(fanning patient)

I'll take them anyway.

(re: Bannister)

But the samaritan to my left here? - He's not involved in this, he's an outsider. Let him be.

Bannister nods in support as the over-worked Doctor barks at Beefy, pointing to a surgical tray - Beefy brings it.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVERTED HOUSE/FIELD HOSPITAL - LATER

Plaster dust thickens the air. The war is muted, almost dream-like. Everyone keeps an eye on everyone else, fight-to stay awake. Adams now holds the I.V. Bannister and Evanna bandage a man's shoulder, Gordon fans someone, elbowing Beefy, who almost nods off.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVERTED HOUSE - LATER

Adams is asleep on his feet. Beefy dozes, Gordon's eyes shut, open, shut. Bannister finishes stitching a man's arm; Evanna cuts the thread. They share a satisfied moment, then glance around. Patients attended to, sleeping cut-throats, Bannister nods to the back door.

CUT TO:

SMALL CONVERTED BEDROOM

Medical supplies everywhere. Bannister and Evanna try a back door - blocked by rubble - they put their shoulders to it.

GORDON (O.S.)

Don't you two ever sleep?

Gordon smiles as Beefy slips inside the room after him, knife drawn. They advance...

BANNISTER
That's far enough.

He hesitates, then pulls the gun from his cape. Evanna glances at the weapon, winces...

EVANNA
He's warning you.

Bannister fires at the ceiling as proof. Literally "fires," unfortunately.

BANNISTER
(almost happy)
You weren't lying!

EVANNA
(innocently)
Me?

Beefy again advances - A BOMB WHINES - all hit the deck.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Ceiling pieces fall - bottles crash off a high-boy onto terracotta tiles - pictures break - spilled liquid seeps into an area rug where Beefy lies face down, Gordon near him - Bannister protectively covers Evanna.

The dust clears - Beefy opens one eye - the door is half-blown, Bannister and Evanna making for it - Beefy passes out.

Gordon is still on the floor...

GORDON
(pulling his gun)
Hold it!

Evanna and Bannister turn - Gordon's eyes go woozy...

EVANNA
(suddenly smiling)
Hey, Gordon?

GORDON
What....

EVANNA
Sweet dreams.

BLA 0006

Gordon goes out like a light, his head landing beside a shard of broken bottle, its label reading: Ether.

CUT TO:

HILLSIDE - DUSK

One last soldier vanishes over the rim.

CUT TO:

TOWN - DUSK

The war is gone. A few souls resume business-as-usual: haul off rubble, sweep, water geraniums. A hotel stands among buildings left intact. Evanna and Bannister approach, running on empty. They look like they've been through a war together.

BANNISTER

What are you going to do then?

EVANNA

That airstrip outside town? - maybe there's a mail plane, or a plane for hire, if any survived...I'll sleep then

BANNISTER

You know, I have business in Morocco myself. Perhaps...

EVANNA

No...

They stop at the hotel.

EVANNA

Contrary to every shred of our experience together... this isn't your battle.

BANNISTER

Whatever it is must be very important to you.

EVANNA

Vital...and maybe to England's future as well.

BANNISTER
Be careful, will you?
...Maybe you'll need
this back.

He holds out the gun, smiles.

EVANNA
No, I don't smoke.

BANNISTER
(keeping it)
A souvenir, then.

Both their smiles fade. They hold the moment.

EVANNA
Lord Bannister, I don't
think I'll ever...

BANNISTER
And I shall certainly
never...

He kisses her hand.

EVANNA
Well...good-bye, then.

BANNISTER
Yes...
(sotto voce)
Ta-ta.

His gaze lingers as she departs; he forces himself to turn
away - suddenly bolts.

P.J. (O.S.)
Hey, Banny Boy!

ANGLE

P.J. Hollar limps up the street. He watches Bannister
vanish through the hotel door, glances at Evanna retreating
up the street. P.J. stands there a moment. He looks a lot
meaner than he once did. His lip has taken a nasty curl,
his eyes seem dark.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bannister listlessly sits on the bed, unopened valise beside him. He removes his shoes. There is a KNOCK. Bannister straightens his hair, spirits rising.

BANNISTER

Yes, come in!

His hopes are dashed: a ROOM-SERVANT enters with supper tray, tea and newspaper. Bannister utters instructions, in perfect Spanish.

The Room-Servant sets up things at the table: we see the paper's front page carries a picture of Evanna and the "Eventoff Espionage" story.

Bannister, again glum, suddenly smiles - Evanna stands in the doorway, unheralded this final time by breezes, gusts or typhoons - Bannister hurriedly gets his cape and shoes.

EVANNA

What are you doing?

BANNISTER

(not unhappy)

Don't we have to leave immediately?

Evanna holds out the valise in reply

BANNISTER

Ah.

They exchange valises.

BANNISTER

(heading for table)

How about tea?

EVANNA

(wistful smile)

My plane's waiting...thank you, though.

And then she's gone. Then the Room-Servant is gone. Bannister feels lost; he retreats to his one touchstone. He gets his oriental carving from his valise and takes it to the table.

Evanna's picture stares up from the front page. Bannister pours tea. He carves on his garden, perfecting the woman coming up the bridge - he does a take on the paper. He

does a second take, and another! It registers. He devours the story, fury building. Suddenly, his whole body goes rigid - a TIBETAN GONG BONGS! His eyes jump to his valise.

BANNISTER

She's taken it, of course!

His fist pounds down, smashing the delicate oriental garden. He pounces on his valise and pulls out something we don't yet see. The REVERBERATIONS OF THE GONG continue as he comes up with a small drawer and dumps out the shaving kit it holds. He extricates something taped to the drawer's underside - his famous handkerchief half. Still there.

Bannister's thoughts race. He tucks the handkerchief into the drawer...REVERBERATIONS REVERSE, GROWING LOUDER AGAIN as...

Lord Bannister slides the drawer back into the small box topped with an old acquaintance. on a final GONG WE HOLD on the "Smiling Buddha."

CUT TO:

EXT. TANGIERS/MEDINA - NIGHT

Flames char broiling lamb, and smoke furls up past the heavy-lidded eyes of a hooded vendor, joining other smoke fires furling up toward Allah. The old market crackles with sellers, buyers, fires in fast-food carts. Hashishers and mint-tea drinkers eye the only blonde in town.

An URCHIN leads Evanna past a hotel rigged with scaffolding, a HAWKER extolling the hotel's virtues. He leads her past other hawkers, up to a RUG DEALER who recently escaped from the Old Testament.

The Urchin relays the arabic low-down; the Dealer closely eyes Evanna.

DEALER

You wish to cross the land
of fear and thirst where
the nameless and unknown
perish leaving no ripple
behind them?

EVANNA

(nervous bravura)
Sure, doesn't everybody?

DEALER

In two days. A caravan
leaves.

EVANNA

Nothing sooner?

DEALER

Tonight. One leaves. But
it is a caravan of thieves
and cut-throats whose motto
is: Live and kill everybody
else.

EVANNA

So you're saying I should
wait?

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Out the window, the tops of minarets. Evanna, passed out
in a new tog, wakes and sleep-walks to the door as someone
RAPS.

MUFFLED VOICE (O.S.)

Bell-hop.

Hell hath no wrath like man betrayed. Evanna's smile flees
as she sees the heart-stopping expression on Bannister's
face. He wears a burnoose, he carries his valise, he
clutches a newspaper, all but squeezing the words from the
page.

BANNISTER

(advancing)

A cello teacher...

EVANNA

(retreating)

What is it; what's happened?

BANNISTER

I don't think England has
hung a cello teacher in years.

EVANNA

Oh no, they're not hanging
cello teachers again, are
they?

Bannister brandishes the newspaper, Evanna only catching glimpses of the headline.

EVANNA
What's that say...?

BANNISTER
(still coming)
Where've you hidden the
missing half of the map?

EVANNA
You know?

His eyes find Evanna's valise - on the table by the open window, three steps down the split-level room. Bannister rushes past her, trips on his burnoose and flies over the table and out the window.

EVANNA
(rushing to the window)
Lord Bannister!

BLH 0006
CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

Evanna peers over the third story sill, anticipating the hideous aftermath...

EVANNA'S POV

Bannister, clinging to a scaffolding plank, climbs up on the board suspended several feet below the window. He pulls the rope/pulley apparatus, hauling himself back up to Evanna.

ANGLE

Other planks are suspended from ropes and pulleys, the gear fastened to protruding timbers below the roof-line. As Bannister raises his plank, one just south of Evanna's window lowers.

BANNISTER
You didn't get my half,
did you?

EVANNA
You have the other half?!

BANNISTER
(overlapping)
I'm sharper than you thought.

EVANNA

I thought we were - friends.

BANNISTER

(seething)

You bring squalor to the word's very meaning - you betray my homeland - the men pursuing you were the King's men, weren't they?

EVANNA

No, they're-

She stops, glancing over her shoulder, suddenly grabs her valise and climbs onto the plank lowered to the south. Gordon, Beefy and Adams materialize at the window...Gordon reaches for Evanna's plank ropes.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Evanna throws two paint cans off her plank - she shoots up - Bannister's plank plunges - Bannister kicks off three cans - Evanna plunges!

BANNISTER

(shooting up)

Grab her!

Beefy reaches out - Evanna kicks off three cans - Bannister plunges - Evanna shoots up. Gordon peers down at Bannister with a quizzical look, then nods to Adams. Both duck back into the room.

BLH 0006

CUT TO:

OPEN-AIRED CAFE

Tea drinkers pass a long kief pipe and gaze across the street. Eyes track up, others down, faces radiating a remarkable blase.

THEIR POV

Simultaneously: paint cans plummet - Evanna plunges! - Bannister skyrockets! Gordon appears in a fourth story window, Adams in a weird window between floors. A caravan is passing between the cafe and hotel.

CAFE

A waiter, eyes riveted O.S., pours a waterfall of tea from two feet up; he ceases at the precise moment, not one drop breaking the rim of the glass.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

P.J.
 (on phone)
 I promised I'd deliver and
 I will, - got that?... Look, I
 just flew in, I'm -
 (looking O.S.)
 You won't believe this.

Evanna goes by on her plank outside his window.

CUT TO:

HOTEL FACADE - SERIES OF SHOTS

Gordon reaches out from his fourth story window and snags the rope - he starts reeling Evanna upward - she approaches Adams' window.

BANNISTER
 (calling down)
 Your lies are numbered.

Almost to Adams, Evanna grabs a flower pot off his sill - she drops a few feet - Bannister jerks upward - Evanna's plank is just above Beefy's outstretched hands - Bannister throws his watch overboard - Evanna drops an inch, almost to Beefy's grip - she pulls the orange envelope out of her valise, jettisons the valise - she moves up toward Adams again - she jettisons the flower pot - she whizzes by, eluding Adams' grasp.

Evanna jerks to a stop, just below Gordon - the incensed Bannister removes his valise, almost jettisons it, remembers what it contains.

Gordon smiles down at Evanna; she's out of paint cans, flower pots and valises. He grabs her plank's rope.

GORDON
 (to Bannister)
 Hold your end, old boy.

Bannister pulls his pulley rope taut - Gordon shimmies down Evanna's rope - his feet touch - Evanna backs away - the rope begins slipping through Bannister's fingers - Evanna's plank begins descending - Adams leans out to nab her - she turns as he grasps her shoulder - she pulls away but loses her balance - Adams, extended over the sill, also fights for his balance - Evanna falls from the plank.

BANNISTER
 No!

Evanna lands in caravan's camel-drawn cart of straw, hits her head - Adams loses his balance, falls onto the plank with Gordon - Bannister zooms up! - Gordon and Adams plummet toward Beefy - Beefy grabs the rope, gets a tentative hold...

Beefy is dragged over the sill - he falls onto the plank - Bannister shoots up - the three-man plank plummets toward us - Bannister bonks his head on the protruding roof timber - his valise tumbles off the plank - it bounces off a sill...

The valise bounces into the cart, sinking into the straw with Evanna - Gordon, Adams and Beefy spill off their plank at street level - Bannister's plank rattles toward earth - Gordon and pals dizzily stumble to their feet - Bannister's plank clomps their backs, knocking them silly, then out as Bannister flies off and lands in a stall of sheep skins... he opens his eyes one starry moment, passes out.

CUT TO:

DESERT - NIGHT

The caravan moves over a moon-silvered dune....

CUT TO:

DESERT - DAWN

WE PAN DOWN the caravan of THIEVES, each man scarier than the last. In her cart, Evanna groggily pulls straw from her hair. A rush of anger overcomes her as she spots Bannister's valise...as if casting out the man himself, she impulsively flings it high and away!

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

Thieves shout - Evanna realizes whom she's with - men leap from the camels - Evanna vaults out and runs - the thieves pursue - Evanna stumbles, looks back - the thieves mysteriously stop - eyes knowingly fearful - they back away and re-mount - Evanna is baffled, she looks about...

The valise landed this side of a brick well. In the distance are the palms of Marbouk Oasis.

ANGLE

The Oasis lies straight ahead. But the caravan stretches in a half-circle, carefully circumventing an area bordered with stones, the area surrounding the foreboding brick "Well to Hell."

Evanna lies frozen as the caravan moves on...but the place is creepy...she scoots a few inches back the way she came.

CUT TO:

OASIS - MORNING

Evanna goes from man to man...

EVANNA

Lt. Brandon?...You don't know a Lt. Brandon?...I'm looking for Lt. Brandon?

(remembering)

Faubles - Do you know Mr. Faubles?

CUT TO:

FLY-BAG CAFE

Evanna drags to a new table.

EVANNA

Do you know a Mr. Faubles?
A Lt. Brandon?

The nine men at the table shrug. Evanna stares at them; they stare back. Flies buzz; the heat swelters.

EVANNA

(expecting zip)

...and I don't suppose anyone knows a man who wanders the desert at night wearing a silver crown and telling everyone he's a widowed queen?

SEVERAL MEN

Ah, the queen, yeah-yeah, the Queen, sure, we know the Queen.

CUT TO:

INT. QUEEN BRANDON'S PLACE

E.C.U. Halved handkerchief map.

EVANNA (O.S.)

But you drew this.

EVANNA AND QUEEN BRANDON

QUEEN BRANDON

I like to draw, yes...

EVANNA

(earnest)

Lt. Brandon, I think this map is important - don't you remember why?

QUEEN BRANDON

Sometimes. Did you know the king is dead?

QUEEN BRANDON is dressed in black and has the child-like but peculiar eyes of those who frequent parallel realities. Evanna and the Queen are at a table and appear to have been at it all morning. A caged canary TWERPS, wind-chime BELLS STIR outside.

EVANNA

Yes, I'd heard, but...this map...

(prompting him)

It leads to...? You drew it because...the other half is...

The Queen shrugs, unhappy he can't help. He idly doodles.

EVANNA

And the Buddha still rings no bells?...Butterfields...?

QUEEN BRANDON

You seem tired...

(brightening)

Why don't you let me draw you a bath and after, we can talk.

EVANNA

Okay.

Evanna rubs her eyes. It's hotter than hell, faintfully hot. The Queen hands Evanna a scrap of paper.

QUEEN BRANDON

Here you go.

Evanna laughs weakly - on the paper, the Queen has drawn a clawed tub and spigot.

EVANNA

Thank you, very refreshing.

The Queen is pleased. Evanna again looks at her bath, gets a thought.

EVANNA
Queen Brandon, how about if
we go back to the Buddha again?

QUEEN BRANDON
Splendid idea, yes.

Evanna rapidly draws a proximation of the described box and Buddha.

QUEEN BRANDON
(seeing it)
Oh, that Buddha. Of course.
I bought that for my brother -
he's balmy for all that
oriental fuss.

EVANNA
Your brother?

The wind chimes STIR.

QUEEN BRANDON
Yes, Lord Bannister

The news, the heat, the divine coincidence...Evanna feels faint.

EVANNA
(woozily)
But your name is Brandon...

QUEEN BRANDON
Well, yes - my brother
inherited his title - you
inherit the whole package.

WE HOLD ON Evanna as the Queen's voice fades...

QUEEN BRANDON(O.S.)
Town house, country estate,
the name itself...

Evanna goes out...some moments later, water is sprinkled on her face. PULL BACK TO the Queen, flicking droplets from a water glass.

EVANNA
(distantly)
Bannister has the Buddha...?

WE HOLD ON Evanna again.

QUEEN BRANDON (O.S.)
For years, keeps his shaving
things in it, I believe.

Evanna faints dead away...moments later a glass of water
drenches her face. PULL BACK TO REVEAL Gordon, Adams
and Beefy. Five LOW-LIFES are with them.

CUT TO:

DESERT - DAY

Lord Bannister bobs like an apple, stiffly astride a
trotting camel. He wears a kind of hi-rise turban that's
shaped a lot like an upside-down wedding cake on top of
his head. The turban inches down toward his eyes; he
pushes it back up; he does a double-take.

BANNISTER'S POV

In the vast, lifeless landscape sit isolated, tallish rocks.
Lying perfectly framed in a pool of shade cast by one,
a white-shirted man wearing sunglasses. A glass of water
sits next to him.

CUT TO:

QUEEN BRANDON'S PLACE - DAY

INTERCUT: Adams slapping Evanna/Beefy slapping the Queen.

ADAMS
Where's the map?

BEEFY
Where's the Buddha?

ADAMS
Where's the map?

BEEFY
Where's the Buddha?

ADAMS
Where's the map?

Gordon thwarts Adams' next slap, nods to Beefy, who backs
off. Patience tried, Gordon strolls about the room, eyes
continually coming back to Evanna. She returns his look,
holding her reddened cheek.

A low-life fingers his worry beads, another smears honey on bread. Adams takes the bread from him, sighing loudly as the Queen pipes up.

QUEEN BRANDON
The king is dead, you know?

BEEFY
(grabbing them)
Would ya quit with the
worry beads already?

Gordon sighs, passing the low-life pouring honey on more bread - the honey gives him pause. He pulls Evanna to her feet. He pulls her close. Her eyes are unglving.

CUT TO:

EXT. OASIS - DAY

Two low-lives carry a large ceramic vessel.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDON'S PLACE - DAY

Out back. Desert stretching off forever. Evanna scarily eyes the vessel held by the low-lives. Beefy holds her.

GORDON
Last chance, Evanna.

He enlarges a shoulder tear in her dress, exposing more skin. Then he produces a cup and dips into the vessel. Evanna tenses... Gordon tips the cup above Evanna's shoulder...she braces for the pain...finally, the cup's contents emerge.

A golden, syrupy substance slowly cascades down...it lands on her skin...nothing happens...it oozes down her arm. Gordon pours another cup, it rolls down, coating the fabric over her breasts. Evanna is bewildered.

GORDON
(ladeling another
cup, smiling)
Honey, my sweet, only
honey.

Rolling down her arms, rolling down her back, coating her thighs.

CUT TO:

DESERT - DAY

E.C.U. The sun high, a burning ember.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDON'S PLACE - DAY

Evanna is staked to the desert floor, Gordon affixing a mouth gag. With a cold, parting glance, he retreats.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S PLACE

Gordon enters, pours a tall, mint tea.

GORDON
(to Adams)
Only a matter of time now.

CUT TO:

DESERT - SAME TIME

E.C.U. One ANT. Its antennae twiddle.

CUT TO:

DESERT

E.C.U. Sun beating down.

BLH 0006

CUT TO:

ANTHILL

One ant goes in...an army swarms out.

CUT TO:

BRANDON'S PLACE

Gordon, Adams and Beefy drink tea, waiting. The Queen doodles.

CUT TO:

DESERT

Columns of ants march from the south - they march from the north - ants jump on leaves and ferry across a narrow irrigation canal.

CUT TO:

EVANNA

Spotting the first ants crawling up her arm.

CUT TO:

DESERT - DAY

In the distance is a lone camel rider Bannister doesn't see - Bannister's camel is on its knees, refusing to budge.

BANNISTER

And you call yourself a
ship-of-the-desert. You
rental camels are all alike.

A gust of wind sand-blasts him; he looks east - a solid, mile-high wall of sand is on the move, beige-browning the sky for miles and miles.

BANNISTER

(sotto voce giving
the storm name)

Evanna...

The camel leaps to its feet and lurches off, knocking Bannister half out of the saddle.

CUT TO:

DESERT

More ants cover Evanna's arms. WE PAN to her face. Pained, sweat rolling off. She squints up at the glare.

EVANNA'S POV (OVERLAPPING IMAGES)

Hallucinations jump from the fireball overhead: cellos, a piano under water, laughing cellos, glowing cat's eyes, bull's eyes, laughing Buddha's, gargoyles, a strange furry head with donkey ears and a long snout.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S PLACE

On a MUTED SHRIEK outside, Gordon smiles at Adams. ANOTHER SHRIEK dissolves into LAUGHTER. A long, low-throated giggle. Another shriek.

GORDON

Hysteria. The first sign.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRANDON'S

E.C.U. Evanna's face. Laughing. Not at all pained.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S PLACE

More LAUGHTER O.S., sounding a lot like true glee. Gordon is perplexed.

CUT TO:

DESERT

E.C.U. a tongue. Fourteen inches flash out.

CUT TO:

DESERT - SERIES OF SHOTS

Evanna laughing - a tongue zotting Evanna's ribs - another long tongue zotting Evanna's thighs - her neck.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL two donkey-eared ardvaarks (African anteaters). Pigging out. A DOOR SLAMS O.S. The aardvarks scamper off.

ANGLE

Gordon appears out the back gate to find Evanna reeling with giggles. Antless. He looks around. The aardvarks have vanished. He is mystified. In the yard, the WIND CHIMES STIR...They CONTINUE, a light breeze here to stay.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S PLACE

Gordon all but carries Evanna back inside, so weakened is she by laughter. Every few moments, she laughs, remembering back.

GORDON

I want the Buddha, damn you.

EVANNA

(silly with heat and memories)
He wants the Buddha... great.

ADAMS
(to Gordon)
Don't forget the map.

EVANNA
(to Queen Brandon)
Let's give it to him, give
him the Buddha. What d'ya
say?

The Queen smiles with her as she hands Gordon the sketch
of the Buddha she herself drew. Gordon yanks her to him -
she smiles - Gordon tosses her on the pillows, like a rag.
She laughs, punch-drunk. The Queen laughs.

Beefy, on his own, suddenly grabs Queen Brandon, and
puts his knife to the Queen's throat.

QUEEN BRANDON
(embracing his fate)
Oh, yes, how England loves
to torture the Queen.

Evanna sobers. Quickly.

EVANNA
No! He's not...feeling
well.

GORDON
The Buddha, Evanna...

ADAMS
And the map.

Evanna glances at the table.

EVANNA
The map...I can take you
to the Buddha.

GORDON
(to Adams, quickly)
First things first.

CUT TO:

DESERT - LATE DAY

QUEEN BRANDON
(something stirring)
The Well...

The whole group approaches the perimeter of the strange
area surrounding the brick well. Scattered dunes, dead
palm trees, a wide, circular perimeter marked with stones.

The Low-lives hang back, MURMUR, fingering their worry beads. Adams notes their hesitancy.

ADAMS

What is this?

QUEEN BRANDON

(to himself)

The Wells to Hell...

GORDON

(to Evanna)

What are you pulling?

EVANNA

Nothing. I think the Buddha's in that.

She points to the valise, resting midway between the stoney perimeter and the Well. The breeze stiffens heralding the brown storm to the east.

Gordon notes the fear among the low-lives. He and Adams trade mute question. Gordon holds out money to the Low-lives, gestures to the valise. They eye the money, the valise - three step forward, one grabbing the dough.

SERIES OF SHOTS

The low-life makes a bold dash everyone watches, not all sure what to expect - the low-life gets ten yards - his legs sink to the knees, the sands churn - Evanna gasps! The low-life is sucked under the surface within seconds, with a odd CRACKING SOUND like rotten wood breaking.

Evanna is devastated. A life snuffed so quickly. The sand innocently lies in wait, the finer particles blowing across the surface with the GROWING WIND.

Gordon holds up more dough - another low-life volunteers. He takes a zig-zag course into the strange area - WE HOLD on Evanna as a SCREAM ends his voyage O.S.

The sands are smootheagain, all treachery hidden beneath its glassy surface. Everyone is phased, especially Evanna.

Gordon offers more money - there are no more volunteers whatsoever. He glances at Adams - Adams is staring east - Gordon looks - the sandstorm is nearer.

GORDON

I guess it's your show,
Evanna.

He raises his gun.

EVANNA

Me?

Gordon glances off, sees Queen Brandon wander behind some odd rock formations a ways off...

GORDON

You.

Evanna takes the first step...the next...each one rides on a prayer. Step by precarious step, she inches toward the valise. The ordeal is draining - she stops a moment - Gordon cocks his gun - HOOFBEATS behind Gordon...

A camel charges down a dune, headed straight for the hidden sink-holes - Bannister is half aboard. Turban slipped over his eyes...

Gordon, Adams and Beefy jump from the camels' path - the beast charges into the strange area - Evanna grabs at the saddle-trappings as the camel roars past - the camel gallops wildly to the far perimeter, transporting Evanna, who clings on but barely.

Bannister loses his hold, falls on Evanna - both are dumped just beyond the perimeter opposite Gordon and pals.

CUT TO:

EVANNA AND BANNISTER

Bannister regains his feet, turban over his eyes - only Evanna notes the gun slip from his burnoose - Bannister pulls his turban back up. In mock sweetness...

BANNISTER

Why Miss Eventoff.

EVANNA

(overlapping)
Lord Bannister!

BANNISTER

(grabbing her)
The map!

EVANNA

I gave my half to your brother.

BLH 0006

Camel
stop
+ all
all full
off

BANNISTER
(thrown)
You what?

EVANNA
(in a rush)
And the killers wanted it,
but I think your brother
ate it or something be-
cause it disappeared.

BANNISTER
For God's sake, whose
side are you on?

EVANNA
(glancing off)
Your side.

Bannister looks where she has looked - the Gordon contingent
is moving into the strange area, headed for the valise.

Gordon, by gun-point, forces the three remaining low-lives
to walk point for him, Beefy and Adams. Adams' gun is
also out, but he seems reluctant somehow.

Bannister spots the valise...

BANNISTER
That couldn't be... is
that one-

EVANNA
It's yours.

BANNISTER
(starting off)
They must know.

EVANNA
(grabbing his arm)
You can't go in there.

The wind is picking up.

BANNISTER
(unglued)
And if my brother didn't
eat your half?
(off her look)
The other half's in my
Buddha.

He jerks away - Evanna grabs the fallen gun.

EVANNA
Don't move, Bannister!

BANNISTER
(thrown again)
Of course - now that you
know where the other half
is-

A SCREAM draws their eyes - a low-life is sucked below the
sands. Evanna and Bannister are horrified.

EVANNA
I can't let you go.

BANNISTER
Spies...
(to Evanna, quietly)
You all should be blind-
folded and shot.

WELL TO HELL AREA (SERIES OF SHOTS)

CLOSE ON a worry bead, dropping to the sand. PULL BACK TO
Gordon dropping large beads to mark their route. The contin-
gent freezes as the fourth Low-life suddenly vanishes with that
odd wood cracking sound. Gordon looks ahead in odd wonder...

Bannister walks point, the unraveled turban fabric wrapped
around his eyes, Evanna's gun to his back. Tears of horror
fill her eyes, but she is scared strong.

Beefy uneasily eyes the last Low-life, glancing at Gordon,
sneaks out his knife.

Queen Brandon appears from around the rock formation, indif-
ferently surveys the two contingents moving for the valise.

Sweat beads Evanna's brow. A gust of WIND WHISTLES through...

The wall of sandstorm is nearer.

Gordon steel-eyes Evanna, both contingents equi-distance from
the valise. Again the WIND WHISTLES. Gordon starts as...

Surface sands shift, covering half the dropped worry beads.

Gordon, for once, looks unnerved.

LOW-LIFE
Allahaaaaaaa!

3E H 0006
CUT TO:

The sands claim the last Low-life - Gordon spins his gun on Beefy - Beefy reluctantly drops his knife - Gordon shrugs apologetically, Beefy shrugs, and making a macho show, moves to point.

Both contingents move within feet of the valise, Beefy and Evanna sweating the most sincerely. The WIND GROWS...

Sands shift, exposing all the beads.

Beefy's feet are suddenly sucked from under him - he extends an arm to Gordon - Gordon steps back - Beefy is gone.

Adams jumps aside, sand flurries...

Simultaneously: Gordon shoves past Adams - Gordon and Evanna grab the valise handle - Bannister collides with Adams.

Evanna and Gordon crash into Adams and Bannister - 3 guns fly - everyone shields their eyes as sand whips past.

Within the sand flurry: Evanna yanks away the valise, Bannister loses his turban - three hands grab three different guns.

The flurry abates: Adams has a gun on Bannister, Gordon has a gun on Evanna, Evanna dangles the valise over the Well To Hell.

EVANNA
I'll drop it!

No one moves, and the wind keeps whistling. Evanna pulls out the Smiling Buddha. For a fleeting moment, it is hers.

EVANNA
(to Gordon)
It's yours, if you'll
disarm...your friend.

Gordon casually quick shoots the gun from Adam's grip.

GORDON
Done.

Catching whiff of something in the well, Evanna recoils a second, then looks at Bannister.

EVANNA
Such a faraway land, all
this way I came, to prove
that...

She almost laughs. Instead, she takes the handkerchief from the Buddha's drawer and hands it to Bannister.

EVANNA

I wish it were more -
what good's half a map?

BANNISTER

You don't want this?

Hair wind-blown, smile her own, Evanna looks at him, a world of affection in the moment.

EVANNA

Never. I only wanted
the Buddha.

BANNISTER

The Buddha...?

Evanna

(to Gordon)

Toss your gun and I'll
toss you the Buddha.

GORDON

Okay, that's a deal.

Their eyes lock...Gordon tosses his gun, Evanna tosses the Buddha, after holding back a few seconds. The moment the Buddha falls into Gordon's arm, he whips out the last gun and smiles.

GORDON

The real dangers are
unseen, Evanna, always.

EVANNA

Just pick up your not-to-
worry beads, would you, and
go.

GORDON

I intend to.

He tosses Bannister the Buddha.

GORDON

But what good's half
a map? Unless...

*Frank #2
upt etc*

BLH 0006

He produces the handkerchief-half missing at Queen Brandon's.

GORDON
(to Bannister)
Ante your half, sport.

Bannister hesitates - Gordon turns his gun back on Evanna. Repressing a quiet wrath, Bannister complies and tosses back the Buddha.

Gordon tucks his half in the drawer, and grinning, backs from one worry bead to the next, picking them up as he goes.

(Sand particles bite at Evanna and Bannister's faces as chances for honor slip away...suddenly both exchange a quick look.

Behind Gordon, Queen Brandon has entered the Well To Hell area, one by one picking up worry beads as he comes. More and more sand blows.

Evanna and Bannister watch something emerging in the sand behind Queen Brandon...

The crumbling rim of an old well is partially visible as wind reshapes the sand.

Bannister stares at Gordon, wrath peaking.

Queen Brandon is almost behind Gordon...

QUEEN BRANDON
(looking off,
rhetorically)
Things seem closer
today, don't they?

Gordon has spun around - sand hits his eyes. Bannister charges, coming as the crow flies - sand hits his eyes. He keeps coming and flies into Gordon, the Buddha tumbling away. to the edge of the well.

Wind intensifying, Evanna crouches below the Well wall, Adams beside her - Queen Brandon stumbles/blows past.

Bannister and Gordon roll with wind and struggle, fighting for the gun, and as winds blast, the rims of many old water wells emerge, some just breaking the sand, others fully exposed.

Banging into a well, Queen Brandon holds fast to it and peers over.

Vanished sand has exposed rotten boards, half broken away...
and beneath the boards a black abyss.

QUEEN BRANDON

I'm here.

His eyes dart from well to well.

Still crouched, Evanna fights off the sand, eyes searching
the storm...

Bannister and Gordon roll into a well wall - Gordon gains
the gun - he holds it to Bannister's gut and fires.

Literally. The wind blows the gun-cigarette lighter flame
over to Bannister's burnoose, igniting the sleeve. Bannister
stumbles to his feet as the wind feeds the flame, Gordon dart-
ing off.

EVANNA (O.S.)

(drown out)

Bannister! ROLL!

Instead, Bannister rips the burnoose over his head and releases
it to the storm...

Evanna streaks toward Bannister and Adams takes off after
Gordon as the flaming burnoose, fanned by wind, is swept
upward...it dips toward the Well To Hell.

Queen Brandon comes running like hell, arms upstretched, eyes
both wild and euphoric.

QUEEN BRANDON

Run! The WELLS TO HELL!

Evanna and Bannister run with him, not totally sure why.

The flying flaming burnoose whirls in an updraft, then is
hurtled down, into the mouth of the Well To Hell. A moment
later...

A giant geyser of flame explodes up out of the Well's mouth,
hurtling up flaming clay bricks and a tidal wave of sand.

Thrown down, Evanna, Bannister, and the Queen scramble up
and keep running.

Another old well blows flame and sand - there's an underground
explosion.

BANNISTER
(excited)
Gas?!

QUEEN BRANDON
(ecstatic)
The king lives!

The three race beyond the area as all the wells blow, casting up enormous tongues of flame and mountains of sand far and wide. A wall of cascading sand suddenly aborts our view.

CUT TO:

DESERT

Feet stop at a protruding gun butt. A hand retrieves it.

CUT TO:

LOW DUNE

Evanna, Bannister, and Queen Brandon crawl out from under, stagger to their feet, and survey the devastated area. A gas jet burns up from a half-blown well, scattered wood fragments and clay bricks still flame, mounds of sand border deep depressions.

The wind is backing down, visibility improving.

BANNISTER
...the map led here.

EVANNA
To gas?

BANNISTER
Deeper...to England's hopes.

QUEEN BRANDON
(happily)
My oil field.
(a shadowed musing)
The wells to new hell.

Evanna gazes off over the wind-swept area. Bannister turns to her, greatly perturbed with himself.

BANNISTER
Evanna, how could I have doubted you?

EVANNA
It was all the rage.

BANNISTER
I apologize. Your hand in
this has ensured my brother's
vindication - he'll return
a hero and I'll-

QUEEN BRANDON (overlapping)
Pretty Evanna...

BANNISTER
(getting excited)
I know - I'll throw a ball,
a grand ball for you - I'll
deck the halls and gardens
of my beloved Garthmore in
honor of you.

EVANNA
Garthmore?!

QUEEN BRANDON
Evanna, look!

The bald head of the Smiling Buddha emerges nearby as a mound of sand quakes. The belly of the Garthmore Diamond shining through.

The mound quakes, further dissolves, revealing the Buddha gripped in Gordon's outstretched arms. Gordon is laid as he was tackled, his ankles secured in Adams' outstretched arms.

Evanna scoops up the Buddha as Adams scrambles up, pinning Gordon with a well-placed foot on the neck. As he whips out a badge, Evanna hands off the Buddha to Bannister.

EVANNA
I believe this is yours.

ADAMS
(to Evanna)
I'm forced to arrest you.

BANNISTER (overlapping)
What?

ADAMS
For hoping to steal the
Garthmore.

BLH 0006

Handwritten notes:
Buddha
Adams
meeting
for the
diamond

QUEEN BRANDON (overlapping)
(eyeing badge)
Scotland Yard?

BANNISTER
Steal? - Why I hired Miss
Eventoff to find my diamond.
And I must say, good show,
Evanna. Jolly good show.

Adams frowns, life being highly irregular. Evanna laughs.
All glance up...

A man, faced masked against the sand, leads a limping camel.
He holds a gun by his side.

BANNISTER
Always another spy...
(smug)
Well, you're a little
late for the map.

MUFFLED VOICE
I don't want any map.

BANNISTER
Ah. Of course.

He holds up the Buddha.

MUFFLED VOICE
You think I want trinkets?

BANNISTER
Well, blast it man, what
in hell is it you do want?

Pausing darkly, raising the gun, P.J. pulls down the mask.

P.J.
An exclusive.

CUT TO:

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES TWIRLING OUT

"Brandon Cleared of Espionage" - "Lord Bannister Wins Pulitzer" -
"Evanna Eventoff Honored at Buckingham" - "Music School Receives
Funding."

CUT TO:

GARTEMORE GARDENS - DUSK

Evanna and Bannister blink peculiarly. PULL BACK TO P.J. changing his flash. Lord Bannister puts one hand on Evanna's waist, she places one on his shoulder. Cello play...

PULL BACK TO Evanna's original cello section, responded to by a full orchestra behind them. Evanna and Bannister do what should be done. They dance. Past Nelly and Redbush beaming over tea, past the scowling Blackburn, past Queen Brandon. And past the stone Buddha presiding over Garthmore's oriental gardens, who having played out his little prank, is smiling to beat the band.

Why

FADE OUT

BLH 0006