

The Devil in the White City

By Christopher Kyle

Based on the book by Erik Larson

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FADE IN:

EXT. CHICAGO/EL PLATFORM - DAY

DAISY BUTLER descends the steps to the street. She's wide-eyed and dressed with rural simplicity and hardened city folk bustle past her as if afraid she'll ask them for directions. Daisy wanders into the flow of pedestrians, wincing at the screech of the rails, trying to look as though she belongs...

EXT. STOOP - DAY

Daisy squints at a card that's been pinned to the door-- "H.H. Holmes, M.D."-- and checks the newspaper clipping in her hand. She rings the bell, then smooths her hair and stands up straight-- as her mother no doubt warned her to do.

The door eases open and H.H. HOLMES steps into view. He has fine, faintly feminine features and eyes of an almost unnatural blue-- eyes that peer at Daisy. Weighing her.

DAISY
My name is Daisy Butler, sir. Is
this position still open?

She holds out the clipping: "Girl Secretary Wanted." Holmes smiles warmly.

HOLMES
It is indeed. H.H. Holmes. Please
come in.

Daisy steps inside. As Holmes shuts the door, he deftly removes the card and tucks it in his pocket.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICES - DAY

Holmes leads Daisy past an operating table...her eyes linger on a black bag, opened to reveal a surgeon's tools...

HOLMES
I hope you know your way around a
typewriting machine. I need a girl
with quick fingers.

DAISY
I went to business college back
home. That's Iowa.

HOLMES
Iowa? How charming.

DAISY
Thank you, sir.

HOLMES
Staying with relatives, I suppose.

DAISY
No, a boardinghouse. I don't know
a soul in Chicago.

Holmes stops and touches her arm sympathetically.

HOLMES
A girl as pretty as you won't be
lonely very long.

His hand lingers on hers long enough to make her blush.

HOLMES
The machine is in here.

Smiling warmly, he leads her into the outer office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICES - LATER

Daisy is bent over the typewriter, clattering away with a great determination to impress.

Holmes stands at a basin, washing his hands and watching her progress in a mirror. She seems to arouse him...

HOLMES
I'm surprised some handsome lad in
Indiana didn't snap you up.

DAISY
Iowa, sir.

HOLMES
Of course.

He dries his hands on a towel, still watching her. Then he opens a cabinet and peers at an array of bottles...

ON Daisy, as she finishes typing the document and yanks it from the typewriter. She turns toward the basin, where Holmes just was. But he's gone.

DAISY
Mr. Holmes? I'm finished.

Suddenly his hand is on her shoulder. She looks up. Holmes smiles disarmingly as his hand moves slowly down over her breast... Daisy wants to pull away, to protest, but she's mesmerized by his eyes. Her lip trembles on the edge of surrender. Slowly, she tries to pull away...

DAISY
Mr. Holmes, please.

Suddenly Holmes presses the towel over her face and holds Daisy down as she struggles, her limbs flailing...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Holmes smooths his rumpled hair in a mirror...makes sure there's nothing stuck in his teeth...

HOLMES (V.O.)
When an artist paints a portrait he
signs his name. When an architect
erects a tower his accomplishment
can be seen for miles around. But
what about the man whose greatness
is achieved in shadow? How does he
receive the honor he deserves?

Behind him a door yawns...stairs disappear into darkness...

INT. BRICK-LINED BOX - DAY

Daisy awakens and looks around. Faint light through a small glass portal at her feet reveals her predicament:

Daisy is lying in a brick-lined box the size of a coffin.

Her eyes widen with fear. Her breathing accelerates. She tries to sit up, to move. But she can't.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Holmes puts on a bowler hat and sets it at the perfect angle.

HOLMES (V.O.)
I've never asked for fame, only
that respect be paid. If it were
possible to sign my work, I would.

Yes. The reflection in the mirror pleases him.

INT. BRICK-LINED BOX - DAY

Panting, frantic, Daisy wriggles inside her tiny prison, twisting her body to the side, splaying her feet, raising her head a few inches so she see out the little glass portal:

There's nothing there.

DAISY
Help! Please, oh God, please!
Help! Help! Please!

She tries to kick at the portal, then...

Holmes's FACE appears in it-- framed by the oval of glass, his bowler tipped jauntily to the side. And Daisy freezes, startled. Holmes smiles. Chillingly. She whispers:

DAISY
Please don't hurt me.

Holmes watches her a moment longer, then vanishes.

DAISY
Mr. Holmes? Mr. Holmes?

There is a whooshing sound. And Daisy's eyes widen as its source dawns on her...

INT. CELLAR/FURNACE - DAY

Holmes turns a dial, then cocks an ear so as to hear Daisy's muffled screams. He bends to peer again through the small steel door with a glass inset. Flames roar inside...

EXT. PARIS - DAY

A match flares and M. EIFFEL lights his cigar. Beside him a handful of FRENCH ARCHITECTS watch as DANIEL BURNHAM paces back and forth beneath the base of the Eiffel Tower.

BURNHAM
It's marvellous. Incredible. You
have created a masterpiece.

EIFFEL
You flatter me.

Burnham casts his eyes toward the apex as if calculating the height. He speaks with rugged determination:

BURNHAM
I must build something of this
magnitude in America.

Eiffel bows, but his comrades grow stiff at this presumption.

FRENCH ARCHITECT #1
In America, monsieur? Naturally,
you must be joking.

BURNHAM
Not at all.

FRENCH ARCHITECT #2
But the tower was built for the
great Paris Exposition.
(MORE)

FRENCH ARCHITECT #2 (cont'd)
 To build another, one would have to
 make a world's fair in America.
 Such a thing is unthinkable.

BURNHAM
 Is that so?

The Architect looks to his colleagues as if to confirm this
 patently obvious fact. Eiffel seems uncomfortable.

FRENCH ARCHITECT #2
 Oui, monsieur. It is impossible.

Burnham's square jaw seems to harden into stone...

EXT. UNDEVELOPED PARK LAND IN WINTER - DAY

A treeless expanse of sand, tufted here and there with
 grasses. The smoky skyline of Chicago rises in the distance.

BURNHAM (O.S.)
 On this spot a city of dreams will
 rise.

He charges toward Lake Michigan, shouting over the wind:

BURNHAM
 A model for the future, gentlemen.
 Every structure designed and built
 by artists. Broad avenues.
 Canals. Domes of crystal sparkling
 in the light. Man and nature hand
 in hand. A beacon for the world.

A dozen POLITICIANS in top hats and stiff collars trail him,
 struggling for footing on the broken ground. Their
 expressions are as bleak as the weather... But Burnham pays
 no heed. He does not shorten his stride for anyone.

BURNHAM
 Think of the farmer, gentlemen, the
 uneducated laborer who toils in the
 back provinces of our nation
 without ever laying eyes on a body
 of water that stretches to the
 horizon-- a man who has never seen
 a building over two stories tall.
 Think of the pampered aristocrats
 of Europe, coming to America with
 their noses in the air-- think of
 them beholding this majesty, this
 perfection in steel and glass.
 America will be the envy of the
 world.

The Politicians regard the desolate surroundings a moment. Only Burnham could see any "majesty" here.

FIRST POLITICIAN
Do you seriously propose to build
the World's Fair *here*?

BURNHAM
More than a fair. The next century
begins right here.

FIRST POLITICIAN
It can't be done.

Burnham wheels on him, thrusting an arm toward the skyline:

BURNHAM
Nineteen years ago every building
in this city was brought down by
fire. A wasteland. But our people
rebuilt it-- built it better than
before-- made it the most modern
city in the world. No site for
this fair can match Chicago.

SECOND POLITICIAN
(with a smile)
I believe that's a decision for the
Congress, Mr. Burnham.

His smile wilts in the glare of Burnham's intense blue eyes.

BURNHAM
Chicago is progress, gentlemen-- a
bull charging into the future. Do
not stand in our way.

Backed by the skyline he helped build, Burnham's breath
clouds the air. He is the bull.

EXT. CHICAGO STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Drays and carriages and stalled grip cars clog the
intersection. Passengers trickle out and disappear into the
throng. Red-cheeked Policemen watch for rowdiness but the
crowd is strangely muted. No shouting, no clanging bells.
Just hundreds of people huddled together beneath the gently
falling snow. Waiting for something.

A sign in the window of the Tribune Building reads "Current
Tally of the Fair Vote in Congress" and beneath it are the
names of the contenders: Chicago, New York, St. Louis,
Washington. But no numbers.

Then a man inside approaches the window. He holds a paste pot in one hand, a brush and bulletin sheets in the other. The crowd cranes forward...

INT. LOBBY/THE ROOKERY BUILDING - NIGHT

A Messenger Boy dodges past the Merchants and Stenographers heading home and finds the stairwell.

HIGH ANGLE on the Messenger as he sprints up the white marble spiral two steps at a time...darting through a tide of human bodies coming down...clutching the future in his hand...

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE/THE ROOKERY - NIGHT

Burnham stares out the window of his penthouse office. Behind him Colleagues smoke cigars...clear their throats impatiently...fiddle with buttons and cravats... But no one speaks. It's quiet enough to hear the hiss of the gas lamps.

Then the Messenger Boy bursts into the room. All eyes follow him as he approaches Burnham at the window.

Burnham reads the message slowly, somberly. It looks like bad news. Then he turns to the expectant eyes of his friends and a smile starts to form on his lips...

EXT. CHICAGO STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The crowd erupts in cheers. Hats fly into the air. Bells, whistles and horns. Backs are slapped, joyful tears are shed, cigars are passed around...

INT. MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Corks pop...champagne sloshes on the floor...music and drunken laughter fill the air. In a roomful of rollicking "Swells"-- also known as Chicago's leading citizens-- Burnham huddles with his loyal factotum, ARTHUR CROWN:

BURNHAM
Wire them tonight. I need the best architects in America.

ARTHUR
The New York men may not be so keen to help Chicago.

BURNHAM

They'll do it for their country.
 Any man who lets us fail on the
 world stage will carry the shame to
 his grave. And you can tell them I
 said so.

Arthur jots it down. Despite the frivolity, there's a weight in Burnham's eyes-- as if he's just realizing the amount of work ahead. Applause makes him turn:

Giggling, writhing Beauties push a huge papier mache replica of the Eiffel Tower into the room.

A drum rolls...the paper tower trembles and rocks on its base... Suddenly the top pops off like a champagne cork and EMELINE CIGRAND emerges in a shower of glitter. A pale waif, she is covered only by her long, golden hair. The men cheer and applaud.

Burnham is entranced. He stares unblinking as Emeline steps out of the "tower" and walks down the long table toward him. Beautiful, innocent, graceful... In his besotted eyes, she seems to float, like Venus descending from the heavens...

EXT. 63RD AND WALLACE STREETS - DAY

Holmes steps out of a carriage. Crisp and elegant despite the heat, he scans the bustling community around him...

HOLMES (V.O.)

I did not arrive in Chicago by
 chance.

A large, empty lot on the corner seems to beckon to a man with vision...

HOLMES (V.O.)

The World's Fair was going to be
 the forum for all the greatest
 artists of the age to display their
 talents. The "city of dreams,"
 they called it. And what am I if
 not a dreamer?

His attention is redirected by the music of female voices. Two Teenaged Girls walk past him, sneaking glances at the handsome doctor. Holmes lifts his bowler hat and smiles. A perfect gentleman.

INT. E.S. HOLTON PHARMACY - DAY

Customers crowd the counter where MRS. HOLTON bustles about, dispensing nostrums and drawing sarsaparilla from the tap.

Holmes drifts into the prosperous emporium-- taking it in like a predator sizing up a herd: Mrs. Holton, perspiring and overwhelmed...the many Young Ladies who seem to be watching the stranger from the corners of their eyes... Then his gaze falls on the jewelry counter:

Dragging a china doll, PEARL CONNER is tottering toward the jeweler. NED CONNER braces himself with a cane-- he has a club foot-- as he sweeps her up and smothers her with kisses.

JULIA CONNER looks on. A luscious sort of woman, she is a full head taller than her husband-- and further removed than that in dress and manner. If she didn't kiss Ned's cheek we might think he was her liveryman.

JULIA
Do you mind taking her for the
afternoon? I'm having a spell.

NED
She's never a bit of trouble-- are
you, dumpling?

JULIA
You're a dear.

She takes her leave, passing Holmes on her way out. Holmes lifts his hat, maintaining eye contact longer than is ordinarily proper. But Julia doesn't seem offended.

HOLMES
I do beg your pardon, madam. I
feel like the huntsman who stumbled
on the goddess Diana at her bath.

The warmth of his smile could melt lead. Julia blushes... stammers something like "thanks"...and hurries on.

Behind his counter, Ned is watching...curious...

Mrs. Holton looks up from her labors and finds Holmes waiting for her. He bows slightly.

HOLMES
Harry H. Holmes, madam, charmed to
make your acquaintance. Might I
have the privilege of speaking with
Dr. Holton?

MRS. HOLTON
My husband's ill.

HOLMES
Nothing serious, I hope?

Pain flashes in Mrs. Holton's eyes. It *is* serious. Holmes leans closer...lets his voice play tender melodies...

HOLMES
Perhaps you could give him my card.
I'm a graduate of medical school, a
licensed druggist with references--

MRS. HOLTON
You're a druggist?

Holmes lays a hand on her arm. His eyes are moist.

HOLMES
If there's any way I can ease your
burden...

Mrs. Holton looks at him in disbelief. It's a miracle.

INT. E.S. HOLTON PHARMACY - DAY

Eyes bright with concentration, Holmes compounds a
prescription-- his surgeon's fingers flying from jar to jar.
A little of this, a little of that, ground in the pestle...

HOLMES (V.O.)
My first position was modest, I
suppose, but I knew its potential.

A groan from upstairs makes him look up from his work:

Mrs. Holton is scurrying up the steps to tend her husband.
Julia is at the jewelry counter, watching Holmes. Entranced.
Holmes grins at her and she blushes.

EXT. EMPTY LOT - DAY

Holmes paces over the weeds and broken bottles in the lot,
deep in contemplation...

HOLMES (V.O.)
From boyhood I had sketched its
chambers in my imagination. No
mere architect could match me. In
the end an architect always bends
to the will of his client. But I
could build the vision of my soul.

A REAL ESTATE AGENT removes a cigar from his teeth and starts
to speak. But Holmes-- though he doesn't even seem to be
looking at the man-- raises a finger for silence. After a
moment, he turns.

HOLMES
I'll take it.

REAL ESTATE AGENT
Good, real good. Now did you find
yourself a cosigner for that note?

Holmes glances toward the pharmacy.

HOLMES
Will Dr. Holton suffice?

The Agent nods, pleased. Dr. Holton would do nicely.

EXT. STREET/E.S. HOLTON PHARMACY - DAY

Ned Conner helps the Undertakers load a coffin onto a horse-drawn hearse. Julia and Pearl are among the Neighbors who have gathered on the sidewalk to watch.

Holmes and a sobbing Mrs. Holton stand in the doorway of the pharmacy. He offers her a handkerchief.

MRS. HOLTON
I'm completely at your mercy, Mr.
Holmes. If you don't stay on at
the pharmacy...

HOLMES
My dear woman, Napoleon's cavalry
could not dislodge me.

MRS. HOLTON
Bless you.

Her hand grips Holmes's as she watches the hearse clatter away. Holmes leans closer and whispers in her ear:

HOLMES
Come inside, Mrs. Holton. I'll fix
you a cup of tea.

Mrs. Holton nods, grateful for such a friend. Julia watches Holmes lead her inside, touched by his kindness...

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

A Painter stencils new gold letters in the window: "H.H. Holmes Pharmacy."

HOLMES (V.O.)
Not long after she sold me the
pharmacy, Mrs. Holton went to visit
her relations in California and
never returned. I've not been to
California but I hear it's lovely.

Ned Conner emerges from the building with a fretful expression, pulling little Pearl by the hand. He spots Holmes at the empty lot across the street...

Holmes is watching the excavation of the basement like a baron surveying his fields: A steam shovel snorts and gouges the earth. Picks and shovels claw. All for him.

Ned jogs up, dragging Pearl.

NED
Mr. Holmes?

Holmes turns slowly, regarding Ned as if he were a fly floating in his soup. But the little girl is charming...

HOLMES
Taking a break, Conner?

NED
Sorry to be away from the counter but Mrs. Conner is feeling sickly. She asked if you might look in on her.

Holmes bends to stroke Pearl's golden braids.

HOLMES
I will call on her at the earliest opportunity.

Pearl seems to like him. He bares his teeth with a grin.

HOLMES
This angel needs a pipe to play.

He produces a peppermint stick and offers it to Pearl. She glances at her father for his approval.

NED
That's very kind of you, sir.

Holmes waves the thanks away, watching Pearl...moved to tenderness by the sight of a little girl sucking her sweet...

INT. CONNER APARTMENT - DAY

Julia sits up in bed. Holmes is bent over her back, hand beneath her nightgown, in the midst of an examination. Julia is completely still, biting her lip. His touch is electric.

HOLMES
Is my hand too cold, Mrs. Conner?

She shakes her head. Holmes palpates her lymph nodes, turning her face to him. Their eyes meet. There is something almost mesmerizing about Holmes's eyes...

Julia's face flushes but Holmes doesn't seem to notice. He lets his fingers linger on her throat...contemplating...

HOLMES
Open, please.

He leans over and peers into her mouth a moment.

HOLMES
Wider, please.

He puts his fingers on her lower lip-- to keep her mouth open. But he does it so delicately it's a pleasure.

HOLMES
Turn your head, please.

Holmes's fingers trace her ear as he inserts the otoscope... then he takes her chin, so gently, and turns her head to examine the other ear...

Julia scarcely remembers to breathe... The top of her nightgown falls but she makes no move to cover her breasts.

Holmes's eyes travel to her nakedness but he doesn't leer. He seems merely to be assessing the situation...

Julia waits. What will he do? Then Holmes turns to his bag on the nightstand and gathers his implements.

HOLMES
I'll stop in again tomorrow.

Julia pulls her nightgown up. Flushed. Embarrassed. Has she made a fool of herself? Then Holmes turns:

HOLMES
I'm going to have to keep my eye on you.

He smiles. Julia looks into his eyes. Again she lets the nightgown drop...

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE/THE ROOKERY - DAY

A dark-paneled door is opened and two Butlers enter the library with coffee service. They go about their work silently in the preternatural hush of the room.

Bright sunlight streams in from the windows overlooking the lake, casting a glow over the models and drawings that are arrayed on the great table:

Even in Lilliputian form the fair is magnificent. Every structure conveys classical grandeur, poise, and artistry. Domes. Colonnades. Sculptures. Bridges and lagoons. We can almost see tiny people on the avenues in the golden light...hear the music of strolling bands...

Thirty Businessmen and Architects surround the table, bending their ears toward GEORGE POST, his voice barely above a whisper as he discusses the largest model on the table:

POST

The dome at the center will rise
275 feet above the fair, providing
a stunning panorama for the
visitor. I have designed the
Manufactures Building with electric
lamps, inside and out.

He looks up-- suddenly humble before his colleagues.

POST

No building of this size has ever
been electrified but I believe the
engineering hurdles can be
surmounted.

Burnham stares at the table. This is his first glimpse of the dream we heard him describe on the frigid swamp of Jackson Park. He is deeply moved.

BURNHAM

(softly)

Good Lord, Post, no building of
this size has ever been *built*.

His awe is reflected in the faces of the others at the table. They are as quiet and humble as on entering a great cathedral. At last an ARCHITECT grasps Burnham's hand.

ARCHITECT

My God, Burnham, do you realize
what you've done? This is the
greatest meeting of artists since
the fifteenth century.

Burnham looks at the men a moment. Uncharacteristically bereft of language.

BURNHAM

Gentlemen, your buildings are music
frozen into form. This exposition
will be a masterpiece.

INT. BURNHAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dressing for an occasion, Burnham takes a pair of jeweled cufflinks from a box full of them and weighs them against an alternate pair in his hand.

INT. HALLWAY/BURNHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

A LITTLE BOY plays with tin soldiers on the windowsill, smacking their swords together and knocking them to the floor with a clatter as...

Burnham sweeps the Boy into his arms.

BOY

Papa!

BURNHAM

(whispering)

Shh. You'll disturb mother.

The Boy nods so solemnly at the mention of his mother that it seems to make Burnham ache...

BURNHAM

Back to the nursery with you.

The Boy starts off-- comes back to give his father another hug-- then scurries down the hall. Burnham watches him with a smile that vanishes as soon as the Boy turns the corner.

He turns to a door and raps softly.

INT. MARGARET'S BEDROOM - DAY

MARGARET BURNHAM grimaces as her MAID tightens the strings of her corset, then sucks in her breath. She waves a hand: tighter, tighter. The Maid pulls as...

BURNHAM

May I come in?

He slips into the room behind them.

MARGARET

I'm not decent.

Burnham turns sideways to avert his eyes.

BURNHAM

I thought we might ride to the site together. I can give you a tour before the groundbreaking.

MARGARET
I'm afraid I won't be ready.

She grimaces as the Maid helps her into her dress.

MARGARET
I've taken a turn for the worse.
These ceremonies are such a strain.

BURNHAM
I'll find you another doctor.

MARGARET
I hope you don't intend to look for
him in Chicago. No man of quality
would squander his talents on this
humid, vile-smelling swamp.

Burnham seems familiar with this jibe, but can't let it go...

BURNHAM
(quietly)
You greatly underestimate Chicago.

MARGARET
I would rather live on the plains,
surrounded by savages.

Burnham resists the impulse to continue the argument. Taking this as a sign of surrender, Margaret turns to the mirror with an air of triumph. But she can't enjoy it long: In the glass she sees Burnham slipping out of her bedroom...

EXT. JACKSON PARK/SHORELINE - DAY

Black plumes of smoke rise from a steam-powered dredge. The contraption, which is about as big as a barn, gnaws slowly at the edge of the lakeshore as men with shovels and horse-drawn graders scrape the land raw.

HOLMES (V.O.)
The idea for the Chicago exposition
was not original, of course. The
Paris Exposition of 1888 was the
first, with its magnificent Eiffel
Tower. That was a windmill no sane
man would tilt at.

Only one building rises out of the swamp: a rough, wooden structure known as the "Shanty."

HOLMES (V.O.)
But Burnham told everyone he had a
vision that would outshine Eiffel's
tower. The truth is-- and I say
this as a friend-- he had nothing.

A stream of fine carriages is rolling up to the Shanty.

EXT. JACKSON PARK - DAY

Burnham hurries toward the Shanty, weaving through the white stakes that mark the outlines of the buildings with his aide Arthur Crown. They're late.

ARTHUR

She's no longer employed by the same establishment, Mr. Burnham. She may have left Chicago.

BURNHAM

I don't care if she left the country. Find her.

ARTHUR

It's not my concern of course, but if Mrs. Burnham--

BURNHAM

I assure you, Arthur, Mrs. Burnham doesn't give a damn.

Suddenly he stops: In the clutch of Reporters and Dignitaries gathering near the Shanty, Margaret is standing in her open carriage, surveying the landscape with distaste...

EXT. MARGARET'S CARRIAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Burnham tries to help Margaret down but she balks at the bottom step. The ground beneath her is a quagmire of mud and horse droppings. That a woman of her delicate sensibilities should have to endure such...

BURNHAM

Is something wrong?

He glances toward the Dignitaries-- he's running late.

MARGARET

I'll watch from the carriage.

She frowns.

MARGARET

How on earth did you persuade them to build the fair here?

Burnham smiles with a well-practiced patience.

EXT. THE "SHANTY" - DAY

Burnham steps into the arrangement of Dignitaries at the door. A banner over their heads says "The Work Begins."

A Photographer aims his boxy camera. Behind him, Reporters strain at a velvet rope:

FIRST REPORTER
Mr. Burnham! Will your fair be the
equal of Paris?

BURNHAM
Boys, we're building a monument to
the human spirit. Europe has never
seen anything like it.

SECOND REPORTER
What about the tower?

THIRD REPORTER
Is it true Monsieur Eiffel has been
hired to design a new attraction
for Chicago?

BURNHAM
This exposition will be designed by
Americans. Period.

FOURTH REPORTER
Will your tower be taller than
Eiffel's?

BURNHAM
Write this down, boys: We're going
to outshine Paris in every way.
Including Eiffel's tower.

He beams as the Reporters scribble. But some of the
Dignitaries seem uncomfortable with his boast...

PHOTOGRAPHER
Absolutely still, gentlemen.

He lifts his lens cover. For Burnham, the act of being still
is excruciating.

EXT. STREET IN ENGLEWOOD - NIGHT

Most windows are dark at this hour, but in the apartment
above the pharmacy a lamp is burning.

INT. PHARMACY/UPSTAIRS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Holmes peers into a stereopticon on the table. He adjusts the placement of a candle behind the stereo photograph so its light will pass through the thin paper.

THROUGH VIEWFINDER: Twin photographs, hand-colored, of Michelangelo's "The Last Judgment" merge to create the illusion of depth. The colors come to lurid life in the candlelight, giving the Renaissance masterpiece an impressionistic feel: Christ stands in judgment over the earth...snakes and demons torture the damned...a skull stares at us from beneath a cowl...skeletons rise from the earth...

Holmes enters a trancelike state. His breathing is slow. The hairs rise on his neck. He doesn't seem to notice Julia as she wanders up behind him, nude and yawning.

JULIA

What are you looking at?

There is a pause before Holmes turns to her. He looks at her with only the faintest hint of recognition...

HOLMES

See for yourself.

He turns the device to her and moves the candle closer. Julia peers into the viewing lenses.

JULIA

Oh, it's beautiful.

HOLMES

It's from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel. The greatest masterpiece ever painted.

Julia pulls back from the viewer.

JULIA

What else do you have?

Holmes just looks at her a moment...as if one needed anything "else"... Then the clock chimes. One a.m.

JULIA

Good lord. Ned will kill me.

Frantic, she looks for her clothes. Holmes carefully puts away the photograph.

HOLMES

I told him you had a fainting spell during your examination and I thought it best to let you rest a while in my chambers.

Julia stops her search.

HOLMES
He was most grateful for my
consideration.

Julia laughs and embraces him. Holmes is so brilliant...

JULIA
All I want is to leave him.

HOLMES
After the construction is complete
I'll have the resources to make Ned
go away quietly. None of us could
bear a scandal.

He kisses her, then holds her out for a long look. His eyes
rake her body up and down...

Julia feels suddenly naked and reaches for her clothes.
Holmes steps on her petticoat so she can't pick it up.

HOLMES
There is something I must tell you,
love. I should've mentioned it
before but I suppose I was afraid.

JULIA
What is it?

Holmes looks off...he bears a great weight...

HOLMES
My father is traveling from England
to see the fair. And me, of
course.

Julia looks confused. England? Holmes nods solemnly.

HOLMES
He's a man of some importance, a
lord as it happens--

JULIA
A lord?

HOLMES
I realize it must seem shocking-- a
humble man like me-- but I guess
you'd say I'm the black sheep of
the family. Years ago I came to
America hoping to make a reputation
out of my father's shadow.

JULIA
But you have. You *have*.

Holmes smiles at the intensity of her feeling.

HOLMES

You are so good, Julia, so dear.
When my father sees what a charming
creature you are-- after we
dispense with Ned, of course...

JULIA

Do you think he'll approve of me?

HOLMES

How could he not love you? But
I...

He shakes his head and glances out a window: Across the
street his new building is half-complete. Dark and jagged
against the sky, it looks like a Gothic ruin.

HOLMES

If only I could finish my dream in
time, perhaps I wouldn't be such a
disappointment to him.

JULIA

But it will be finished-- won't it?

HOLMES

It's the bank...

He waves a hand and fights a tear. He hates to trouble her
pretty mind with business matters... Julia clasps his hand.

JULIA

Ned has money. From his
inheritance.

A beat. Then Holmes turns to her as if he's seeing a ray of
sunshine crack the clouds...

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

Ned watches proudly as a Painter scrapes "H.H. Holmes" from
the lettering on the door. On the window nearby his work is
already done: "Ned Conner Pharmacy."

Little Pearl holds out a sheaf of handbills announcing the
store's new ownership. Ned takes her hand.

NED

Look at papa's store, hm?

Pearl grins. Ned looks across the street, where a crowd has
gathered to watch Holmes's construction project.

Ned picks up Pearl and limps toward the crowd.

EXT. HOLMES'S BUILDING/UNFINISHED THIRD FLOOR - DAY

A BRICKLAYER toils in the bright sunshine. Then a shadow crosses his back and he turns: Holmes is standing over him. He strokes his moustache thoughtfully.

HOLMES
That looks like hard work. A smart fellow like you should earn his keep the easy way.

The Bricklayer wipes the sweat from his face. Interested. Holmes leans closer, almost whispering:

HOLMES
See that fellow in the gray hat?

The Bricklayer peers at the sidewalk below. The "fellow in the gray hat" is Ned. He's passing out his handbills and pointing to the pharmacy across the street.

HOLMES
He's my brother-in-law but there's no love between us. If you were to accidentally drop one of your bricks...on his head, perhaps...we might both be the richer.

He looks at the Bricklayer placidly, as if he were asking him to pick up his laundry. The Bricklayer is stunned.

BRICKLAYER
You're joking.

Holmes just keeps staring at him-- into him-- with an iciness that could stop the heart... The Bricklayer stands abruptly and gathers his tools.

BRICKLAYER
I'll take my wages and be gone.

HOLMES
Should I pay you for a job half done?

The Bricklayer just stares. He wants to punch Holmes but those eyes chill him... The Bricklayer walks away.

Holmes peers at the pile of bricks...looks around to see who's watching...then tips the top brick off the pile...

The brick tumbles, end over end, and shatters on the sidewalk below-- right at the feet of BENJAMIN PITEZEL. Pitezel looks up. He's a hulking man with a vestige of the respectability he long ago traded for whiskey.

Holmes regards him for a moment...then smiles.

HOLMES
You there! Come up a moment.

EXT. CASTLE/UNFINISHED SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Pitezel clambers to the top of the scaffold, seething-- only to find Holmes approaching him with open arms.

HOLMES
Glad to see you're still in one piece, my good man.

PITEZEL
You almost killed me.

Holmes pumps his hand with a grin.

HOLMES
Harry H. Holmes. This is my building here. I don't suppose you're looking for work, Mr. ...?

PITEZEL
Pitezel. Ben Pitezel.

Holmes scans his face...the tremor in his hand...

HOLMES
I need a sober man.

PITEZEL
Never touch the stuff.

HOLMES
Ever do any bricklaying?

PITEZEL
Not much to it, I guess.

Holmes nods toward the edge of the roof.

HOLMES
See that fellow in the gray hat down there? If I were to pay you \$50, would you drop one of these bricks on his head?

Pitezel starts, then searches Holmes's eyes, looking for a sign he's joking. But there's none. Pitezel doesn't say yes, but his expression tells Holmes he's just desperate enough to think about it... Suddenly Holmes cracks a grin.

HOLMES
You thought I was in earnest. Don't pretend you didn't.

He laughs. Pitezel sort of...grunts.

HOLMES

Look here, I'm going to hire you,
Benny. You don't mind if I call
you Benny, do you?

He slaps Pitezel on the back and turns him toward the fair's
construction site, silhouetted against the shimmering lake...

HOLMES

They're building a fair on the
lake, you know, for all the world.

PITEZEL

So I hear.

HOLMES

Think of the poor innocents who'll
come to Chicago without a thought
of what a city is-- hungry,
lonesome, looking for shelter.
This, Benny...this will be their
home. From this day forward, you
must tell your friends that you
work at the World's Fair Hotel.

He beams. Pitezel looks toward the lake. And shrugs.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Burnham works his way toward the dais, shaking hands and
slapping backs. A banner: "American Academy of Engineers
Welcomes Daniel H. Burnham."

INT. LECTURE HALL - LATER

Burnham at the lectern, in the middle of a fiery speech:

BURNHAM

No obstacle is too great for men of
vision. Not the pyramids. Not the
Colosseum. Certainly not the
Eiffel Tower. Nothing less than
the judgment of the world is at
stake. America's fair must have a
wonder of engineering as brave and
original as the one in Paris.

INT. THE "SHANTY" - DAY

Burnham watches an Engineer point to a drawing of an Eiffel-
like tower as he describes its features...

BURNHAM (V.O.)
 I don't know what it is, gentlemen,
 but I know what it is not: It is
 not a tower. Any tower we build
 will never be more than an
 imitation of Eiffel.

INT. THE "SHANTY" - LATER

Another Engineer. Another tower. This one also has a spider's web of elevated railways that descend from its peak in every direction of the compass...

The Engineer turns to Burnham for approval. Burnham is sinking into his armchair, his mouth a thin line.

BURNHAM (V.O.)
 What we need is something better...

INT. THE "SHANTY" - LATER

Another Engineer. Another tower. But here it's made of logs and crowned with a *log cabin*.

BURNHAM (V.O.)
 ...something impossible, *something*
that has never been built before.

At the open door Burnham sees more Engineers milling about with portfolios and rolled sketches. But he's losing hope.

INT. LECTURE HALL - RESUME

Burnham leans over the lectern like a cat ready to pounce.

BURNHAM
 Make no small plans, my friends.
 Nothing small will ever stir the
 hearts of men. Give me a vision
 that startles, something to make
 Atlas lose his grip on the globe.

The Engineers sit rather sullenly during this exhortation. Except for a YOUNG ENGINEER with chiseled features at the back of the hall. He's scribbling madly on his program...

EXT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Burnham hurtles through a clutch of Reporters. "Tower," "taller," and "Eiffel" are among the words that rise above the babble, but Burnham ignores the questions and climbs into his carriage.

The Young Engineer, trapped in the crowd at the exit, waves his hand but fails to get Burnham's attention.

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

As the carriage jerks into traffic, Arthur Crown hands Burnham a sheaf of papers.

BURNHAM

They greeted me with blank stares
and drool at the corners of their
mouths. The whole enterprise lives
and dies on this-- can't they see
that?

Unimpressed with the papers, he gestures impatiently toward an envelope on the seat beside Arthur.

BURNHAM

Nobody remembers a thing about
Paris except the god damned tower.

He takes a stack of photographs from the envelope and sorts through them: All are portraits of women. Actresses, prostitutes, dancers. Some nudes. None is Emeline Cigrand.

BURNHAM

Not her. Not her. Not her. Not
her. Not her.

Exploding, he throws the pictures at Arthur:

BURNHAM

In the name of Christ, Arthur, why
can't you find her?

EXT. THE "SHANTY" - DAY

Burnham steps out of his carriage. The Young Engineer from the lecture is waiting for him in a state of excitement, clutching his scribbled-on program.

YOUNG ENGINEER

Sir, I have a proposal for the
fair. It's not a tower. It's
nothing you've ever seen before.

He accosts Burnham with an energy reminiscent of his own...

EXT. HOLMES'S CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

A walk-in safe rises on a system of chains and pulleys, each crank lifting it closer to the unfinished third floor of Holmes's building, which now dominates the block. Brick turrets and battlements line the street-facing sides.

A considerable crowd of Neighbors has gathered on the street to admire the progress of the safe. Ned Conner limps among them. Pearl is riding his shoulders; Julia is beside him. All three seem awed by the proceedings.

HOLMES (V.O.)
 Though I blush to say so, the
 progress of my structure was a
 sensation among the neighbors.

Atop the building Pitezell and other Workers guide the safe to a secure landing. The crowd applauds.

Holmes steps to the edge of the roof, lifts his hat and bows to his admirers...basking in their attention...

Ned applauds and whistles, too-- until he glances at Julia and notes a little too much enthusiasm for Mr. Holmes in her expression. She feels his stare and looks away...

HOLMES (V.O.)
 To my amusement, they began to
 refer to it as "The Castle."

INT. CASTLE HALLWAY - DAY

Pitezell follows Holmes down a gloomy, crooked corridor. Too many doors line its walls and the window at the end seems to have been set in such a way as to admit the least possible amount of light. Pitezell pauses near a door that's ajar.

HOLMES (V.O.)
 But they scarcely knew a tenth of
 its wonders.

Pitezell peers through the crack...something inside is curious, even a bit disturbing... He starts to push it open, but then he feels Holmes's eyes on him and hurries on.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

A slop sink. An examination table. Open crates filled with colorful vials.

HOLMES (V.O.)
 Its best features were assembled
 independently. None but myself
 could comprehend the full design.

Holmes steps into a closet and slides open a panel at the back. He squeezes himself into a hand elevator and begins to crank himself down...

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Behind a boiler a small partition opens and Holmes wriggles out. He strolls into the next room, where a crew of Workmen are lighting a newly installed furnace...

HOLMES (V.O.)
Every aspect had been honed by a
lifetime's contemplation. Nothing
was left to chance.

The flames whoosh to life. Holmes watches, mesmerized by their dance...

INT. CRAWL SPACE - DAY

Holmes crouches beneath the floorboards, holding up a lantern to examine an array of valves and switches...pipes surround him, veering off in every direction...

HOLMES (V.O.)
Others might have finished sooner,
I suppose. But I was in no hurry.

Holmes takes out a handkerchief and polishes one of the valve handles...stroking it with tenderness...

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - DAY

Julia is at the window, peering through the curtains:

Across the street Ned is standing in the doorway of his pharmacy, struggling to understand a document being held out to him by a Man in a Dark Suit.

HOLMES (V.O.)
Sometimes the anticipation is more
delightful than the act itself.

Then Holmes's face materializes in the glass and Julia turns from the window with a gasp. How did he get in without her seeing him? Holmes just smiles...

INT. OUTER OFFICE/THE CASTLE - DAY

LUCY BURBANK, Holmes's red-haired secretary, hunts and pecks. Two Salesmen wait, eyeing the door to Holmes's sanctum.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Pitezel presses his ear to the door of the walk-in safe we saw before. It's now built into the wall of Holmes's office.

A faint knocking comes from inside and Pitezel pushes down the lever and swings the door open. Holmes steps out.

HOLMES
Well? What did you hear?

PITEZEL
Nothing.

Holmes seems pleased...but he's still not sure...

HOLMES
Would you mind?

Pitezel's rheumy eyes widen. Maybe he's claustrophobic.

HOLMES
It'll only take a moment.

Pitezel steps into the safe cautiously.

HOLMES
Scream as loudly as you can. If
you would.

He slams the door shut and presses an ear close to listen.

INT. SAFE - DAY

Sheer blackness. Pitezel's cries echo off the steel walls.

PITEZEL
Hello! Hello! Mr. Holmes? Do you
hear me?

There's fear in his voice.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Holmes listens to the faint whispers of Pitezel's shouts and his lips curl into a chilling smile. His pupils dilate. The pulse throbs in his neck...

The cries inside grow more urgent-- let me out!-- then fists pummel the other side of the door like muffled drumbeats.

At last Holmes pushes down the lever and opens the door. Pitezel steps out eagerly. He's sweating and all the color has drained from his face.

Holmes doesn't seem to notice Pitezel's discomfort-- he's too agitated. He presses a coin into Pitezel palm and strolls away, his voice a distant whisper:

HOLMES

Thank you, Benny, you've been a great help.

Pitezel stares at the suddenly ominous safe.

EXT. UNFINISHED M.L.A. BUILDING - DAY

The breeze whistles through the steel skeleton of Post's Manufactures and Liberal Arts building. Holding their hats against the wind, Burnham and the Young Engineer from the lecture are inspecting the progress of the construction.

Running down the center of the vast structure is a wooden "traveler," a derrick that consists of three towers rolling on three pairs of railroad tracks, topped with a platform. Workers on the platform are lifting one of the giant iron trusses that will support the roof.

The Engineer pants a bit as he tries to talk and keep up at the same time.

YOUNG ENGINEER

It's all in the drawings.

BURNHAM

The drawings are brilliant but it's got the strength of gossamer. Never hold up in a wind like this.

YOUNG ENGINEER

I'll stake my reputation on that design.

BURNHAM

I consulted engineers with twice your experience. It's an invitation to disaster.

YOUNG ENGINEER

Those are the same men who told Eiffel he was a fool!

Burnham pauses a moment. This is probably true.

BURNHAM

Look, I admire your imagination, George, but the thing just can't be built with any margin of safety.

YOUNG ENGINEER
After all this you're going to
build another tower, aren't you?

Burnham sighs. And shrugs. What choice does he have?

YOUNG ENGINEER
I knew it.

Arthur Crown hurries up and hands Burnham a message.

BURNHAM
You'll have to excuse me.

The message must be urgent because he walks away abruptly.
The Engineer calls after him:

YOUNG ENGINEER
Without me, this fair will never
live up to Paris. The world will
scoff at your tower, Burnham.
Chicago will never live it down.

Burnham glances back a moment-- the words are too close to
the truth-- then hurries on again. The wind kicks up and
blows the Young Engineer's hat toward the girders overhead...

INT. VICTORIAN MANSION/FOYER - NIGHT

Burnham steps inside, his eyes darting over unfamiliar
territory. He's dressed with rare flair tonight, down to the
gardenia in his lapel.

HAT CHECK GIRL
May I?

Burnham seems flummoxed by the Girl's outstretched hand and
refuses to surrender his hat.

BURNHAM
I won't be long.

He drifts away, turning the hat nervously in his hands...

Burnham peers into an adjacent parlor where a Pianist plays
Strauss while scantily clad Prostitutes waltz with well-
dressed Gentlemen. Other Gents recline on sofas with
cocktails and cigars. Then one squints at Burnham with
recognition and starts to rise...

Burnham turns away, mortified. He eases back to the door, on
the verge of bolting, the hat spinning in his hands. Then
the MADAME's hand lands on his arm and he practically jumps.

MADAME
May I present Miss Emeline Cigrand.

The hat tumbles from Burnham's fingers. Flustered, he bends to pick it up but then he sees:

Emeline Cigrand, the golden-haired waif who climbed out of the Eiffel Tower, is descending the stairs. She is even more beautiful than he remembered.

Burnham straightens up and takes a step toward Emeline but manages to kick his hat-- which rolls to a stop at her feet. Burnham looks at her helplessly, a fish gasping on dry land.

Emeline grins.

INT. MANSION/UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Burnham and Emeline stand in the open doorway of her bedroom. She is now wearing a dressing gown and holding Burnham's gardenia to her nose.

BURNHAM

I must see you again tomorrow.

EMELINE

I'll be here.

BURNHAM

Not here.

EMELINE

Wherever you like.

BURNHAM

I'll send a coach for you.

Burnham watches as Emeline tucks the flower into her hair...

BURNHAM

Is Emeline...I mean to say, is that your real name?

EMELINE

Only one I got.

BURNHAM

I'd like you to wear something modest. If anyone happens upon us, I'll say you're my niece.

EMELINE

I'll see what's in my wardrobe.

BURNHAM

If you need funds for clothes...

EMELINE

Aren't you a dear one?

She grins and kisses his cheek.

BURNHAM
Forgive my clumsiness. I'm not
accustomed to...

EMELINE
To girls like me?

BURNHAM
There are no other girls like you.

It's not a line; he means it. And Emeline seems touched.

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

A "Grand Opening" banner hangs over the entrance. A crowd has gathered for a ceremony. But across the street, things don't look so festive:

Several Men in Dark Suits are marching into Ned's pharmacy.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

Ned stands helplessly, holding a legal document. Around him the Men in Dark Suits remove the cash from the till...box up nostrums from the shelves...take the watches and jewelry from the glass counter...

Ned stares at the document with growing dismay. Something about "repossession for non-payment of debt."

NED
Isn't there some other way?

DARK SUIT
Nothing I can do. Whoever sold
this place stuck you with his
debts.

It's all just too much. Ned charges out into the street.

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Ned pushes through the crowd and runs into the building...

INT. OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Lucy Burbank looks up as Ned charges in and peers into Holmes's empty office.

NED
Where is he?

INT. CASTLE STAIRWAY/HALL - DAY

Panting, Ned rushes up the stairs...down the hall...pushes into Holmes's apartment...

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ned races past Pearl, who is sitting on the floor, dressed for a party and playing with her doll. He pauses slightly-- what is she doing here? Then he charges down a corridor...

NED
Mr. Holmes?

...and pushes into the bedroom:

Holmes has Julia pressed against the wall. His trousers are at his ankles...her skirts are hiked up...

Julia gasps. Ned just stares in disbelief. Holmes slowly turns his head. He makes no apology or explanation. It is all he can do to contain his annoyance at this unwarranted intrusion on his privacy...

Ned looks like he's going to be ill. He turns and runs out...past little Pearl, who is now peering into the bedroom.

Holmes kicks the door shut.

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

The windows of "Ned Conner's Pharmacy" are papered over. Notices for his eviction and a bank auction are on the door.

Ned hoists his humble trunk onto the back of a wagon and climbs into the seat. He takes a final look across the street, up to a second floor window of the Castle...

Julia and Pearl are watching. But Ned is too bitter to wave. He just snaps the reins and rolls away down the street.

As his wagon merges into the hurlyburly of the traffic, a dark figure enters the window behind Julia and Pearl. Holmes puts his arm around the statuesque mother and pats the child on the head. A charming family portrait.

EXT. UNFINISHED M.L.A. BUILDING - NIGHT

The wind ruffles the tarps spread over the now-empty worksite and makes an eerie moan. Without the bustle of work, without the sun, the structure has a haunted mien.

The only light in the blackness comes from Burnham's shanty.

INT. THE "SHANTY" - NIGHT

A voice squeals with delight. Then a pretty pair of legs race past the fire fluttering in the grate.

Emeline, half-covered by a sheet, dodges around the tables covered with architectural models, breathless and laughing. Burnham chases her, red-faced. Finally he corners her.

BURNHAM

The snare tightens...

Emeline giggles as he advances on her... Suddenly she whips off her sheet, throws it over his head and ducks past him with a squeal. Burnham spins, unable to see, and falls in a heap. He lies motionless.

Emeline stops laughing. Is he hurt? She edges closer. Closer still. Now she's really worried.

EMELINE

Poppy?

She bends down... Burnham yanks the sheet off his face and pulls her to him, tickling her. She giggles and squeals as they roll across the carpet. They kiss.

BURNHAM

You taste of peach.

EMELINE

I stole it while you were napping.

BURNHAM

Thief.

EMELINE

It's the least of my crimes.

Burnham laughs.

BURNHAM

God, I wish I could've met you before.

EMELINE

Before what, Poppy?

BURNHAM
It's impossible-- you would've been
a child.

EMELINE
I was never a child. I just hadn't
grown my tits yet.

She laughs but there's a tinge of sadness in Burnham's eyes.

EMELINE
Don't be sad.

She covers his face with kisses.

BURNHAM
I could take you away from that
house.

EMELINE
Where would I go?

BURNHAM
I'll get you your own place.

EMELINE
To sit and wait while you work all
the time? I'm prone to boredom.

BURNHAM
You can do whatever you like, I
don't mind. I just hate to think
of you in that house.

Emeline thinks it over, tempted, but then her eyes fall on a
photograph of Burnham with his family and her expression
clouds. Burnham turns...sees what she's looking at...and
starts to speak.

EMELINE
You don't have to say anything.

BURNHAM
Even if she knew, she wouldn't
care.

This is true, of course, but to Emeline they sound like words
she's heard before. Burnham reaches for her, but Emeline
rises and starts gathering her clothes...

EXT. THE "SHANTY" - NIGHT

Burnham watches a carriage roll away. As it disappears, his
pleasure turns to remorse and guilt. He heads inside, but...

A tremendous shrieking sound pierces the calm.

Burnham runs toward it, vanishing into the darkness...

EXT. UNFINISHED M.L.A. BUILDING - NIGHT

One of the great steel trusses, twisted free by the wind, falls against the others, knocking them down like dominoes. The steel cries out as it bends. Wooden scaffolds are shattered like toothpicks. Fragments of wood and untethered tarps fly in the tempest.

Workers and Guards are running toward the disaster from every direction, but Burnham gets there first. He stares in disbelief as the cacophony of crashes and groans finally comes to a halt-- with half the trusses in a jumbled mass.

The victorious wind howls. Then a FOREMAN appears beside Burnham-- ready for his execution.

FOREMAN

Good lord, sir-- the wind. I never braced anything that big before.

Burnham just stares a moment. Stunned.

BURNHAM

The gods are turning against me.

FOREMAN

What's that, sir?

Burnham looks upward, toward the winds. Is this some divine retribution for his sins? He turns back to the Foreman.

BURNHAM

First thing in the morning, start putting it back up.

FOREMAN

Yes, sir, Mr. Burnham.

BURNHAM

They won't beat me. Not the wind. Not the Congress. Not the god damned French.

He stares at the twisted steel, muttering, reminding himself:

BURNHAM

No small plans. No small plans.

INT. CASTLE BASEMENT - NIGHT

Flames roar in the open furnace and cast eerie shadows on the wall... We hear footsteps...the sound of something heavy shoved across the stone floor...

We TRACK around the furnace, pushing deeper into the murky light: a crimson-hooded lantern glows up ahead...at a table a man's figure is bent over work we can't discern... Something falls from his hand and pings against the floor.

Closer: a knife glows red in the lantern light...

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julia bolts up in bed and staggers to the washstand--reaching the basin just in time to vomit.

She wipes her mouth with a towel and glances back at the bed. Empty. Julia wanders into the parlor...

JULIA

Harry?

Fumbling in darkness, Julia squints at the clock...the silent street outside...and continues to the hall... Something isn't right. She quickens her pace.

Julia eases open the door to Pearl's room. Her breath is coming shorter. Some irrational fear is working on her but she fights it. She knows everything is fine. But...

Pearl's china doll is sprawled on the floor beside the bed. The covers are jumbled. No form is distinct among them...

Julia pads over to the bed and pulls back the covers:

Pearl's golden ringlets flow over the pillow. She's sleeping peacefully. Julia lets herself breathe again.

Then a coachman's whip cracks in the street below... horseshoes beat the cobblestones...

Julia turns to the window in time to see a wagon carrying a single trunk rolling away in the fog.

Julia feels her gorge rising again. She covers her mouth and runs for the bedroom...

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Julia crawls back into bed and plumps the pillows. She lies back, tries to drift off, but she's agitated. She throws off the covers and rises. Then she sees:

The closet door is ajar. Inside is a faint glow.

Julia opens the closet. Light bleeds around the edges of a trap door. She lifts it. Stairs wind into the depths...

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Julia pads down the stairs in her bare feet. Dim gaslights hiss as she passes.

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Julia emerges from the stairwell. The basement is dank and gloomy. There are no gaslights burning here, only a glow from the roaring furnace.

JULIA

Harry?

Julia creeps past the furnace...in the distance she can make out the shape of the table but there's no red lantern now, no figure of a man... She starts to tremble.

JULIA

Harry?

A door shuts. Julia panics...runs for the stairs...

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Julia races up the stairs and collides with someone on his way down. She screams-- then sees it's Holmes.

HOLMES

What's wrong, my dove?

In the flickering light his teeth have a wolfish gleam.

JULIA

I was looking for you. Where have you been?

HOLMES

I went for a stroll. When I returned I saw the trap door was open...

JULIA

Why didn't you tell me about these stairs?

Holmes shrugs. It must've slipped his mind.

HOLMES

What's the matter?

JULIA

I have a child in me.

Holmes looks at her a long moment. Expressionless. Cold. Then he wipes away a phantom tear.

HOLMES

You've made me the happiest man on earth.

He embraces her.

JULIA

We must be married at once.

HOLMES

Of course, of course. As soon as my father arrives. How pleased he'll be to celebrate our wedding.

Julia clings to him.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Several Commissioners of the Fair pass engineering sketches around a large table. We catch only disjointed glimpses: spokes and axles, triangular towers of steel. But the Commissioners faces are creased with concern and confusion. How can this contraption possibly work?

Burnham watches them with eerie calm. Beside him the Young Engineer shifts nervously from one foot to the other.

BURNHAM

I'm satisfied the safety concerns have been adequately addressed.

But one of the Commissioners shakes his head dubiously.

COMMISSIONER

Why not build one of the towers?

BURNHAM

A tower? Chicago would be a laughingstock.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

I don't see how we can approve a design this radical. If some catastrophe were to occur--

BURNHAM

I will not subject the artists in my employ to the whims of a committee. You have in your hands a work of genius. If you cannot see that, perhaps you should find another director for this fair.

Silence. The Commissioners stare. He can't be serious...

EXT. THE MIDWAY UNDER CONSTRUCTION - DAY

An explosion shatters the frozen ground, spewing clods of dirt high into the air. Workers jump into the fresh hole with shovels and pick axes and start to dig.

Other Workmen open the valve at the end of a thick hose. A jet of steam shoots out and the men struggle to keep it aimed at the frosted earth-- and not their comrades. Behind them a portable boiler shakes and vibrates on its wheels.

Burnham brushes the dirt from his hat. The Young Engineer is standing beside him.

YOUNG ENGINEER
The topsoil is frozen, underneath
it is quicksand, and on this
quicksand I'm to lay my foundation?

BURNHAM
Welcome to Chicago.

Splayed out on the ground around them is a vast collection of steel: girders, axles and spindles of many shapes and sizes. A gigantic Erector set.

YOUNG ENGINEER
If I could've begun earlier, before
the winter...

BURNHAM
The Opening Day has been set by
Congress. I can't postpone it.

YOUNG ENGINEER
I won't be ready by Opening Day.

BURNHAM
When?

YOUNG ENGINEER
August. Maybe July.

BURNHAM
The first of June.

YOUNG ENGINEER
I can't possibly--

BURNHAM
Your attraction is the symbol of
this whole enterprise, George. If
it works, your name will be famous
in every corner of the globe.
(MORE)

BURNHAM (cont'd)
If it fails, we'll both be ruined.
I am prepared for either of those
possibilities. What I am not
prepared for is the damned thing
not opening at all.

His intense gaze makes the Engineer squirm.

YOUNG ENGINEER
June?

BURNHAM
Believe, George. Believe.

Another explosion spews dirt on them.

EXT. THE MIDWAY - DAY

Rain pours on the Young Engineer's construction site. Two tapering steel towers have been completed but much of the steel is still stacked on the ground. Pumps chug, removing water from the excavation, but they're overwhelmed. A bucket brigade tries to control the overflow...

The Young Engineer is passing buckets with his Workers. He's got the thousand-yard stare.

EXT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAY

Sheets of rain. Beneath a tarp that sags with accumulated water, a crew of Painters whitewashes the facade.

Burnham slogs through the mud, umbrella whipped inside out by the wind, and goes inside. Arthur Crown tries to keep up.

INT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAY

Burnham stares up at the iron-ribbed ceiling of the cavernous space. Cataracts of water fall more than 200 feet into buckets and tubs on the floor below. Some Workers fight the leaks with hand pumps and hoses. Others are spreading tarps over the ornately carved exhibit booths. High above, Crewmen on scaffolds try to fix the roof.

BURNHAM
Nothing can stop us, boys!

His voice echoes, drawing the eyes of weary Workmen.

BURNHAM
We cannot be deterred by nature or
the doubts of men. The world will
soon see what America can build.

There's no applause or huzzah. Just the stares of dog-tired men who don't really know what to say. Nonetheless, Burnham radiates confidence as he lifts his hat and turns to go.

Arthur looks at him as if concerned for his sanity...

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Burnham dresses at the window, staring at the rain falling on his fairgrounds.

Emeline stretches across the bed...checks to see if Burnham is watching...then slides his jeweled cufflinks off the night table and slips them under her pillow.

EMELINE

Don't be so blue, Poppy. We've still got three weeks before we catch up with Noah.

Burnham turns from the window. Emeline makes a face-- don't be so serious-- and Burnham smiles.

BURNHAM

What would I do without you?

Then he notices the empty space on the night table where his cufflinks were. He says nothing about it; he simply puts on his jacket with his cuffs unfastened.

Emeline giggles-- pleased to get away with it-- and wraps her arms around Burnham's legs, trying to hold him there.

EMELINE

Take me out tonight. I want to go to a restaurant.

BURNHAM

Nothing would make me happier.

EMELINE

Then why don't you do it?

BURNHAM

When this fair is over, I'll take you to all the best places. I won't care what anybody says.

She rises, pressing herself against him like a cat...

EMELINE

What if I can't wait that long?

For a moment Burnham's eyes register alarm. Exactly what Emeline wanted to see. She smiles and kisses him...

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Pearl Conner stands at the rainy window, clutching her china doll. Julia buttons her daughter's new dress and plumps her curls. Julia is also dressed in new clothes and has a jittery air of anticipation about her.

JULIA

Don't forget to curtsy when you meet Lord Holmes and call him "your lordship" and don't say a word unless he asks you.

Pearl nods glumly. This doesn't sound like much fun.

Holmes strolls into the parlor, barefoot and buttoning his collar to his shirt.

HOLMES

Would you mind running down to the office, my dove? I can't find the cable that says which train my father is on.

JULIA

Good gracious, Harry! What if we're late?

Holmes shrugs calmly.

HOLMES

I'm sure it's in the office.

As Julia bustles into the hall, he turns to Pearl with a luminous grin. The child just stares.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Julia lifts the stereopticon so she can shuffle through the papers on Holmes's desk...but she can't find the cable.

JULIA

Lucy?

She steps toward the outer office but it's empty.

Starting to get frantic, Julia turns back and sees the door to the safe is open. There are more file cabinets inside.

Julia starts toward it, then realizes she's still holding Holmes's beloved stereopticon. She puts it on the desk.

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Pearl sits on the floor, alone now, whispering to her doll. Holmes is humming in the bedroom.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE/THE SAFE - DAY

Inside the safe now, Julia flips through papers. A document flutters from a folder. She bends to pick it up.

A shadow crosses her but she doesn't see. She puts the errant document back in its folder and returns to her search.

INT. HOLMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Pearl looks toward the bedroom curiously. She's heard something. She rises and walks toward it.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE/THE SAFE - DAY

Julia struggles to fit the folder back in its slot. Suddenly the beam of light through the doorway narrows and the heavy steel door swings shut with a THUD.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Pearl wanders down the hall, her doll dangling by an arm.

INT. SAFE - DAY

The room is pitch dark. The only sound is Julia's breathing.

JULIA

Harry?

We hear her stumble...dropped folders hitting the floor...her fist rapping against the door...

JULIA

Can you come to the safe? Harry?

We hear her pound on the door with all her might.

JULIA

Please! I can't breathe.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Only the faintest cries and muffled thumps are able to penetrate the thick steel door.

INT. SAFE - DAY

Julia pants in the blackness-- panicking-- using up the available oxygen rapidly.

JULIA
Harry? Can't you hear me? Harry,
please. It's Julia.

Suddenly there's a hissing sound. She sniffs. Then gags.

JULIA
I smell gas! Oh, my God! Please!
Help me! Help me!

She keeps pounding, even as a coughing fit overtakes her.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Pearl ambles through the outer office and into Holmes's sanctum. She is casual-- drawn by curiosity, not concern...

Then she sees the closed safe door. Something about it gives her a chill... She turns, frightened, starts to run, but--

Holmes is standing in the door.

HOLMES
Where are you going in such a
hurry, my little angel?

He bares his teeth with a smile. Then he steps toward her...

HOLMES
Don't be afraid.

EXT. LAGOON/NEAR MLA BUILDING - DAWN

The sun is rising in a sky washed clean by days of rain. The broad white facade of the MLA Building is reflected on the sparkling water. Flags ripple from its parapets...

Then the pretty reflection is shattered by an electric launch cutting silently across the lagoon.

Burnham sits upright in the boat, uncomfortable in top hat and tails. With him are Arthur; COLONEL RICE, the chief of security; and a pair of blue-uniformed Columbian Guards. No one speaks. The two Guards have a dazed, distant expression. As if they were in shock.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND/DOCK - DAWN

The launch bobs in the water. Through the trees behind it a pagoda peeks out, part of the Japanese exhibit.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND/WATER'S EDGE - DAWN

One of the Guards holds back a branch so Burnham, Arthur and the Colonel can step through. Burnham's feet slip on the sodden ground. His fancy shoes are muddied. Then he stops.

BURNHAM

Good Lord.

Just a few steps before him, half on the beach and half still afloat, is the pale, nude body of a very tall woman: Julia Connor. From her forehead to her waist, the skin has been severed and peeled apart to reveal muscle and viscera.

Burnham turns away, feeling ill. Arthur actually vomits. Colonel Rice, no doubt hardened by battlefield experience, looks at the corpse without any visible emotion.

COLONEL RICE

Looks like a half-skinned jackrabbit. Not even her own mother could recognize her.

BURNHAM

Have you notified the police?

COLONEL RICE

No, sir. With the opening today, I didn't figure you'd want a lot of Irishmen trooping about. Nothing they can do anyhow. These type of girls come to the city with no prospects, no job or family to rely on, and they end up whores on the levee. Must be two or three go missing every day.

COLUMBIAN GUARD

(staring at the body)

Looks like Jack the Ripper's come to Chicago.

Burnham seems chilled by the thought... He turns to Arthur, who's wiping his mouth with a handkerchief.

BURNHAM

(quietly)

Has the President arrived?

ARTHUR

Last night, sir. He's breakfasting
with members of Congress, the mayor
and several ambassadors.

Burnham glances through the trees at the white buildings of
the Court of Honor in the distance.

ARTHUR

Sir, if the police come in the
newspapers will be all over--

BURNHAM

(to Rice)
Who else knows about this?

COLONEL RICE

Just these two boys that found her.

Burnham turns to the Guards, focusing his gaze on the one who
made the "Ripper" remark. He has made his decision.

BURNHAM

I see no reason to think this
tragedy occurred on the
fairgrounds. With all the rain
we've had, anything could've washed
in from the lake. As you say,
Colonel, she's probably a
prostitute from the levee. And
I'll be damned if I'm going to risk
the fair over a whore.

Arthur's eyes drift toward the body again. He's horrified
but he can't look away...

BURNHAM

Let these boys clean up, Colonel...
give them some consideration for
their trouble...and that will be
the end of it.

COLONEL RICE

Yes, sir.

Burnham drapes his arms over the Guards' shoulders, somewhere
between a bear hug and a choke hold...

BURNHAM

You'll go far, boys. Count on it.

He breaks off and charges toward the launch.

BURNHAM

Arthur! We have work to do.

Arthur tears his eyes away from the body and follows...

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS/ENTRANCE GATE - DAY

Holmes hands his ducat to the Ticket Taker and passes from the shadow of the pavilion to the glare of the White City. He crunches a peppermint stick as he takes it in:

The model from Burnham's office has come stunningly to life: The lawns, broad avenues and canals set off the classicism of the buildings, so white they burn the eyes. The gondolas may suggest Venice but the scale, the soaring domes, could only have been approached in ancient Rome.

Holmes smooths his moustache as he takes it in-- perhaps trying to mask an expression of awe. The crowd scurries by, headed for the dome of the Administration Building, but Holmes pauses, his face fretted with admiration and envy. An artist beholding the work of a greater talent.

HOLMES (V.O.)

At first glance the fair was something of a wonder. So grand, so many white facades to dazzle the eye... The commoners immediately began to refer to it as "The White City." But their admiration was misplaced. It was no more than a stage set. The marble was not marble at all, just plaster spread over a frame-- like the paint an actor uses to hide his true nature. In truth, the White City's beauty went no deeper than a whore's. One well-aimed cut and all her dark and foul guts would spill.

Behind him we spot Emeline, running late, hurrying to catch up with the throng. She doesn't notice Holmes. Holmes doesn't notice her.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND and the youthful FIRST LADY take their places on the platform, near a flag-draped table.

Behind the President, in the first row of Dignitaries, Margaret fans herself, taxed by the heat. Beside her, in body if not in spirit, Burnham spots someone in the crowd:

Standing at the front, his head barely over the velvet rope, is Burnham's Son. He's holding his Nanny's hand and waving at his papa.

Burnham winks at the boy.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND - DAY

Holmes drifts down the path, whistling, and pauses at a stand of trees. He glances back toward the Pagoda:

Neither the daydreaming Columbian Guard nor the handful of Visitors is paying attention to him.

Holmes slips into the cover of the leaves.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Emeline works her way toward the front of the crowd. One look at her and Gentlemen seem eager to make way...

On the platform President Cleveland reads his address from a paper in his beefy fist:

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND
And now, as by a touch the
machinery that gives light to this
vast Exposition is set in motion...

He glances at one of his Aides...he *knows* he's supposed to do something here... The Aide nods toward a golden telegraph key on the flag-draped table.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND - DAY

Holmes pushes through the low-hanging branches and underbrush, charging toward the water's edge, his excitement building with each step...

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Emeline nears the velvet rope marking the front of the assembly as the President concludes his remarks:

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND
...so at the same instant let our
hopes and aspirations awaken forces
which in all time to come shall
influence the welfare, the dignity
and the freedom of the world.

The crowd that surrounds the platform leans forward as the President reaches out to touch the key...

Burnham projects an air of calm, certain the miracle will occur, while Margaret seems to settle backward, as if to distance herself from any potential embarrassment...

Then Burnham glances toward his Son and spots Emeline passing behind the boy, smiling at a Young Man in the front who lets her take his place at the rope. Emeline looks at Burnham with a devilish smile and the color drains from his face.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND - DAY

Holmes breaks through to the water's edge and stops. He stares at the mess of footprints in the mud...the broken reeds, some speckled with red...

The body is gone. And Holmes-- panting, the veins in his neck throbbing-- smiles with utter satisfaction.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

The key clicks into place. The President looks out toward the McMonnies Fountain and thousands of eyes follow his...

It's quiet enough that an old man's cough seems as loud as a marching band.

But nothing seems to be happening.

Emeline pays no attention. She just watches Burnham and his wife with smoldering envy. Trying to make him look at her.

Then the crowd gasps in unison:

Pressurized water surges from the McMonnies Fountain and sprays high into the air, droplets sparkling in the sun. Some visitors raise their umbrellas against the spray...

The canvas covering the statue known as Big Mary drops away and her gold-leafed bulk glows in the sun...

Steam whistles shriek...distant cannons fire a salute...and the spectators' oohs and ahhs grow into a roar of approval that ripples out across the fairgrounds...

President Cleveland turns to Burnham and bids him rise. Burnham stands to face the adulation of the crowd...the Dignitaries behind him applaud as well...even the President claps for him...

Burnham bows, then brings the reluctant Margaret to her feet and poses with her for the Photographers. The fair is a masterpiece and Burnham is its hero.

Unable to watch any longer, Emeline turns and forces a path through the applauding crowd...

ON Burnham, his eyes drifting over the crowd, toward the Wooded Island... He seems to shudder.

INT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAY

Emeline stalks into the building, weaving through a smattering of Visitors who are escaping the ceremonies...

High above their heads, a blue haze of dust blurs the intricate bracing of the roof...gigantic electric chandeliers hang from the steel and glass ceiling and beneath them spreads an indoor city of gilded domes and glittering minarets, mosques, palaces, kiosks and brilliant pavilions...

Everything is bright, hushed and magical. Glorious jewelry, china, objets d'art and technological wonders await at every booth. But Emeline is in no mood for wonders. She darts among the exhibits like a child looking for something she can get away with breaking. Nothing seems to satisfy.

Then the sound of applause makes her turn:

At the Edison Exhibit a COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE is conducting a demonstration:

EDISON REP.

Why, a man in Europe can talk to his wife in America by boxing up a cylinder full of conversation and sending it by express.

Emeline eases closer. The Representative holds up a wooden box with a cylinder of brown wax and a small trumpet horn on top. His audience looks skeptical.

EDISON REP.

Any sound can be recorded on Edison's Phonograph, ladies and gentlemen. Music, dictation... letters of love.

There's a titter in the mildly scandalized crowd. Emeline keeps working her way toward the front.

MAN IN CROWD

Let's hear it.

EDISON REP.

A skeptic, ladies and gentlemen, a doubting Thomas. You'll have your proof, my friend, I guarantee it. I merely need a volunteer.

He scans the crowd. At first his eyes pause on a SHY LITTLE GIRL, her hand barely raised above her waist, but then Emeline slips into his field of vision...

EDISON REP.

Miss, if you please...

Emeline stares at the odd contraption...

INT. M.L.A. BUILDING/STOVES EXHIBIT - DAY

Holmes paces around an enormous, gleaming stove. It's big enough to hold a man, perhaps with his wife and children. Intrigued, Holmes opens the door and sticks his head inside.

INT. M.L.A. BUILDING/EDISON EXHIBIT - DAY

The Edison Representative sets the stylus against the spinning wax and turns to Emeline. Starting tentatively but building as she gains confidence, she sings "After the Ball":

EMELINE

After the ball is over, after the
break of morn;
After the dancers' leaving; after
the stars are gone;

INT. M.L.A. BUILDING/STOVES EXHIBIT - DAY

The song floats over the exhibit. Slowly Holmes withdraws his head from the stove and cocks an ear...

EMELINE (O.S.)

Many a heart is aching, if you
could read them all;
Many the hopes that have vanished
after the ball.

INT. M.L.A. BUILDING/EDISON EXHIBIT - DAY

Emeline finishes the song to applause but the Edison Representative raises his hand for silence. He moves the stylus back to the beginning and sets the cylinder spinning again. A moment later Emeline's scratchy voice whispers from the trumpet: "After the ball is over..."

If the Representative had just taken flight, Emeline could not look more surprised. Grinning, he whispers to her:

EDISON REP.

May I have your name, Miss?

EMELINE

I want to try it again.

EDISON REP.

(laughing)

She wants to try it again!

The crowd voices its approval, craning forward for a better look. Other people are joining them, curious.

Holmes appears at the periphery, straining to see over the hats. Suddenly he is stopped in his tracks:

Emeline is waiting for the phonograph to be ready...fielding song suggestions from the crowd...tossing her head with laughter...glowing... Her mood has lifted.

Then she sees Holmes. He's handsome; intriguing. Somehow Emeline can't look away from him...

Holmes smiles and lifts his hat. He holds her eyes a moment longer. Then he walks on-- unwilling to fight the crowd.

The Representative turns to Emeline-- he's ready now-- but she's distracted. Holmes's receding figure is in the corner of her eye...

EXT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAY

Burnham leads President Cleveland, Foreign Dignitaries and other Top Hats on a tour...

BURNHAM

...represents the largest area ever enclosed within a single structure. Its observation deck rises some 24 stories above the ground.

As they crane their necks to see the top, Burnham pulls Arthur Crown aside.

BURNHAM

(sotto voce)

Find her and get her out of the park. I don't want her within a mile of Mrs. Burnham.

Arthur nods and slips away.

BURNHAM

Why don't we take in the view?

He steps aside to let the President go up the steps first.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS/LEMONADE CART - DAY

Emeline hands a nickel to the Concessionaire.

EMELINE

One, please.

She takes her cup of lemonade and steps back from the cart--right onto somebody's foot.

EMELINE
Oh, I'm--

She sees it's Holmes. It's *him*.

EMELINE
I'm so sorry.

HOLMES
It's nothing.

EMELINE
Are you sure? I'm so clumsy.

HOLMES
On the contrary, I should take more caution.

He holds her gaze a moment...

HOLMES
You have a lovely voice.

EMELINE
Oh. Were you...

HOLMES
It was my privilege.

EMELINE
You're very kind.

HOLMES
I felt I was in the presence of true beauty. Like the huntsman who stumbled on the goddess Diana at her bath.

Emeline laughs.

EMELINE
Not *really*.

She sees Holmes doesn't care to be laughed at...

EMELINE
It just seems a bit much.

HOLMES
I should introduce myself. Harry H. Holmes of Chicago.

He presents his card. Emeline peers at the card then hands Holmes her lemonade so she can put it in her handbag.

EMELINE
This is nice. I don't have a card.
With me.

HOLMES
But you must have a name.

EMELINE
Emeline.

HOLMES
How charming.

EMELINE
Miss Cigrand, I mean.

HOLMES
Of course.

EMELINE
You own a hotel?

HOLMES
Among other endeavors. If you're
in need of employment, I can always
use another girl in my office.

EMELINE
Really? Does that pay well?

HOLMES
(a grand sum)
Fifteen dollars a week.

Emeline frowns. Do people really live on so little?

EMELINE
You wouldn't want to hire me.

HOLMES
I most certainly would.

EMELINE
I sleep till ten and my penmanship
is atrocious.

HOLMES
Penmanship is not one of the
qualities I treasure in a girl.

Intrigued, Emeline steps closer to him-- near enough for a
kiss-- but all she does is retrieve her lemonade.

EMELINE
You're a stranger, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES
Surely not for long.

EMELINE
And bold.

HOLMES
I disdain ceremony, Miss Cigrand.
Life is very short.

EMELINE
I think your wife would be appalled
to see you flirt this way.

He raises his ringless hands...

HOLMES
I'm not one for entanglements.

...and holds her with his eyes a moment. Emeline smiles.

EMELINE
Do you know your way around the
fairgrounds, Mr. Holmes? I seem to
have lost my map.

Holmes offers his arm...

EXT. DOCK/LAGOON - DAY

Holmes helps Emeline into a boat.

HOLMES
Careful.

She steps in carelessly. Unbalanced, the boat rocks wildly
back and forth.

EMELINE
Help!

She grabs at Holmes, who manages to steady the boat before
she goes over. He glances down: Emeline is gripping his arm
with white knuckles. Her fear thrills him.

HOLMES
Are you all right?

Emeline nods and Holmes carefully takes his place in the
boat, letting their knees brush together. Emeline doesn't
pull away. He grips the oars with a practiced air.

HOLMES
Anywhere in particular, Miss
Cigrand?

EMELINE

I want to see everything.

HOLMES

As you wish, mademoiselle.

He lifts his hat and bows. The exaggerated gentility makes Emeline smile. He's amusing, this one. Not stuffy like *some* people. Holmes rows them out on the placid water, toward the Wooded Island and its pagoda...

EXT. LAGOON NEAR WOODED ISLAND - DAY

The boat drifts near the bank.

CLOSER: Holmes leans back against the bow. Emeline reclines opposite him, letting her hand play in the water-- pretending not to notice the hunger in his eyes. But loving it.

HOLMES

Perhaps it was London, or San Francisco. Have you been to California?

EMELINE

If we'd met I think you would remember, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES

That I would. Still, I feel I know you somehow.

EMELINE

Oh, I doubt that. I'm terribly mysterious.

Holmes smiles and bends toward her...

EMELINE

If you were to kiss me right now, I'd scream.

HOLMES

Perhaps I'd like that.

EMELINE

You wouldn't.

HOLMES

If I were to kiss you properly, you wouldn't make a sound at all.

EMELINE

You're thoroughly conceited.

Holmes leans in...her lips seem to pucker...her eyelids droop... Suddenly Emeline splashes water in Holmes's face. And laughs at the look on his face.

Holmes dries himself with a handkerchief. Very slowly.

EMELINE

Tell me more about your hotel, Mr.
Holmes. I'm quite impressed.

She smiles in a way that seems to mock him but Holmes doesn't respond. He has gone quite chillingly silent. The lapping waves push the boat into a tuft of reeds along the bank...

EMELINE

What did you say the neighbors call
it? "The Castle"?

Holmes nods.

EMELINE

How daunting. Is it very tall?

HOLMES

Three floors.

EMELINE

Can you see the fair from the roof?

HOLMES

You can see the world.

EMELINE

I very much doubt *that*.

HOLMES

Don't doubt me, Miss Cigrand.

He smiles but his eyes are cold. Emeline doesn't see it.

EMELINE

It's so pleasant here. Isn't it?

As the boat continues to drift we recognize the broken reeds, some flecked with red...the muddy, trampled ground...a woman's shoe, forgotten among the leaves...

Holmes's eyes devour Emeline. The pulse pounds in his neck. His hand trembles.

Suddenly Emeline darts toward him and kisses him impulsively, startling him, knocking him back...

The boat rocks to and fro in the reeds.

EXT. LAGOON - NIGHT

The little boat is silhouetted against the stars and the dazzling lights of the fairgrounds. Music floats on the balmy air. Crickets chirp.

Holmes rows, the outline of his bowler crisp. Emeline is not visible.

CLOSER: Emeline lies on the bottom of the boat...very still, her arms splayed over her head... We wonder if she's alive.

Suddenly her head turns toward us.

Emeline smiles, looking at the stars. She reaches her hand up and Holmes takes it. The boat drifts toward the lights...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Holmes helps Emeline into a carriage but retains possession of her hand.

HOLMES
Dinner, perhaps? Tomorrow evening?

EMELINE
I don't think so.

HOLMES
Thursday, then. Or Friday.

Emeline shrugs. Both are impossible.

EMELINE
I should be going.

HOLMES
May I call on you then? Where do you live? Take pity on me, Miss Cigrand. I'm at your mercy.

Emeline looks at him a moment. Weighing the possibilities.

EMELINE
Fridays I like to walk in Washington Park.

She withdraws her hand and closes the carriage door. The carriage begins to roll away.

HOLMES
Wait-- where shall I meet you?

But Emeline just smiles. Holmes chases the carriage a few steps then lets it rattle on. Looking for all the world like a young man in love.

A Newsboy comes around the corner, waving his wares and Holmes's reverie is broken. He remembers something. He signals to the boy-- a spark of anticipation in his eye...

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE/THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Discarded tabloids are everywhere...headlines like "The White City Dazzles"...pictures of Burnham and the President and the Young Engineer's unfinished structure...

Holmes paces, flipping through yet another paper with a fury that rends the pages as he turns them.

HOLMES (V.O.)

When a man cries out from the mountaintop, he expects to hear an echo. There was only silence.

He hurls the paper across the room.

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Emeline stares at the lights of the fair through her window. She seems restless. Caged.

There's a soft rap at the door and she practically flies to it. She lets Burnham in and smothers him with kisses. He's stern for a moment.

BURNHAM

I saw you at the fair today.

EMELINE

It's like a dream, Poppy. I want to spend every day there.

BURNHAM

Do you really?

EMELINE

I saw ostriches and cannibals and electric stoves-- oh, and I sang and Mr. Edison's machine stole my voice right out of the air...

Thawing, Burnham takes her in his arms.

EMELINE

I was dead set on hating it-- seeing you up there with your wife... But I couldn't hate it, I couldn't. It's too beautiful.

BURNHAM

I'm glad it pleases you.

EMELINE

I want to see it with you, Poppy,
under the stars some evening, watch
the belly dancer...

Burnham's smile loses a few watts.

EMELINE

I'll say I'm your niece.

BURNHAM

Someday, I promise.

EMELINE

Then have supper with me here, stay
the night. Now that it's open
you're not so busy, right?

BURNHAM

The grand ball is tonight.

Emeline nods. She remembers now.

BURNHAM

Some morning, before the gates
open, I'll take you on a private
tour. Would you like that?

Emeline nods dutifully.

EMELINE

Naturally I would.

BURNHAM

Just tell me when you want to come
so we won't have any more...
misunderstandings.

Emeline straightens his bow tie.

EMELINE

You can't be late, Poppy. You're
the guest of honor.

Burnham lets his eyes linger in hers. How easy it would be
to stay here...

EMELINE

Off with you.

Burnham kisses her and goes. Emeline watches the door fall
shut and then she sees...

He left a dainty gold watch on the table for her.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE/OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Holmes leans in the doorway of his office, watching Lucy Burbank, hunched over her typewriter. The light plays delightfully on her coppery hair.

HOLMES (V.O.)
Like every artist sometimes I
create a work that does not meet my
standards and it ends up in the
fire. Only the very finest pieces
are worthy of display.

Holmes sidles closer, drawing a few sticks of penny candy from the jar on Lucy's desk, savoring their aroma as if they were fine cigars and tucking them into his coat pocket.

HOLMES (V.O.)
There are times, however, when I'm
in the thrall of a masterpiece,
when I see the work laying out so
perfectly before my eyes, that it
is only by sheer effort that I
refrain from buttonholing every
passerby to tell him of my plans.

At last Lucy seems to sense she's being watched and turns.

HOLMES (V.O.)
Of course I do keep silent. It's
very bad luck to discuss a piece
before it's...executed.

Holmes offers her one of the candy sticks.

HOLMES
Is that a new dress, Lucy?

LUCY BURBANK
Why, yes. Do you like it?

HOLMES
It's charming. Simply charming.

Lucy blushes.

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

A pulley squeaks as Pitezell lowers a hand elevator containing a trunk and a couple of carpetbags. Pitezell looks at the trunk curiously. Its label says "Julia Conner, Ames, Iowa."

Holmes rolls a bicycle past Pitezell.

PITEZEL
Mr. Holmes?

Holmes pauses, as if it were too painful to speak of...

HOLMES
Julia's taken the child and gone
back to Ned.

Pitezal grunts, embarrassed to have brought it up, and puts the carpetbags on a cart. Pearl Conner's china doll falls out of one of them and he picks it up. He turns to Holmes:

PITEZEL
What girl would leave without
her...?

But the back door is already falling shut. Pitezal looks at the doll a moment...then stuffs it back in the carpetbag.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Holmes careens among the drays and carriages on a bicycle. He rides at breakneck speed, changing direction without warning, provoking shouts and waved fists-- all without dislodging his bowler from its rakish angle.

EXT. WASHINGTON PARK - DAY

Holmes rides down the path like a show-off-- hands off the handlebars-- and raises his hat to a group of Ladies with Parasols as he passes...

Emeline sits on a bench, reading a book. A shadow crosses her...a spoked wheel rolls to a stop near her feet...

At last she looks up. Holmes is beaming at her.

EXT. TREE LINED PATH - DAY

Holmes races forward on the bicycle, Emeline riding across his lap, clinging to him. He weaves and dodges, making her squeal and squeeze him tighter.

EMELINE
You'll kill us both!

Holmes laughs and pedals even faster...the wheels spin...

EXT. THE MIDWAY - DAY

Burnham charges through a shadow that resembles a gargantuan bicycle wheel, Arthur Crown at his heels.

The main avenue of the Midway is quiet. Vendors lean on their carts, hungry for customers. A handful of Visitors is scattered about, outnumbered by the exotics on display.

Arthur recites figures from a tablet:

ARTHUR
...only 10,000 Thursday and not
much better today. If attendance
doesn't pick up--

BURNHAM
It will.

They go through the gate of the fenced-in construction area.

ARTHUR
The governing committee wants to
reduce the budget.

BURNHAM
I'll burn this exposition to the
ground before I let those bankers
run it.

Suddenly he stops and pulls Arthur aside. Whispers.

BURNHAM
Did someone squawk about the girl
in the lagoon?

ARTHUR
I've read every single paper, sir.
No one breathed a word.

BURNHAM
We've got to keep it that way.

ARTHUR
I'll do my best, sir.

BURNHAM
She haunts my dreams.

He shakes his head, as if to banish the memory.

YOUNG ENGINEER (O.C.)
Mr. Burnham!

Burnham turns. The Young Engineer leaps down from his steel web and waves to them. Burnham puts on a smile.

YOUNG ENGINEER
She's gorgeous, no? We're almost
there, sir.
(MORE)

YOUNG ENGINEER (cont'd)
In a couple of days we'll give her
the first turn and after that it's
just a matter of hanging the cars.

BURNHAM
What if it doesn't turn?

YOUNG ENGINEER
She'll turn.

Burnham looks up at the Engineer's attraction and we track
his eyes, getting our first full-on view of...

The Ferris Wheel. Without cars but recognizable nonetheless.

BURNHAM
Without your wheel, Mr. Ferris,
this fair is doomed.

EXT. OUTDOOR ARENA/BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST - DAY

In the smoke and crackle of gunfire, BUFFALO BILL CODY leads
a handful of Blue-coated Federals against an overwhelming
tide of "Savages."

The dust is drenched with blood. Men are shot and fall from
their horses, sabers plunge through abdomens, the wounded
shriek in agony, bloody scalps are taken. With a dramatic
flourish of his saber, Buffalo Bill cuts down a charging
Brave before he can finish off a wounded Trooper...

In the stands, Emeline reaches for Holmes's hand, unable to
take her eyes off the show... All around them, ladies gasp
and even swoon, stunned by the realism of the re-enactment.
Even a few men avert their eyes.

But not Holmes. He watches the savagery before him, the
shrieks and flying blood, as if it were a stunning ballet.
He is transported. Mesmerized. Not even the touch of
Emeline's hand against his own can pull his gaze away...

EXT. BUFFALO BILL'S ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Holmes pulls Emeline through the crowd around Buffalo Bill's
ornately carved dressing wagon. He's in a state of extreme
excitement; a string pulled too tight...

EMELINE
You know Colonel Cody?

HOLMES
He's a genius.

Emeline nods-- Holmes is not to be contradicted right now--
and follows in the wake he's creating...

Buffalo Bill is working his way to his dressing wagon. He waves, shakes hands, and signs autographs-- all without slowing his momentum toward the safety of his wagon...

Suddenly Holmes slips in front him with a pretty, panting girl on his arm. Holmes smiles and reaches for Buffalo Bill with a familiar air.

HOLMES

Colonel Cody-- Harry H. Holmes, I'm sure you remember me from--

BUFFALO BILL

Good to see you, good to see you.

He brushes by Holmes, nearing his goal: the door. But Holmes will not be brushed aside. He grabs the Colonel's arm.

HOLMES

I only wanted to say your program was thrilling-- thrilling. The battle was the most authentic ever staged. I could practically smell the blood. Thrilling.

BUFFALO BILL

You're very kind.

He tries to pull his arm away. But Holmes won't let go.

HOLMES

One moment, please. I'd like to--

BUFFALO BILL

Unhand me, sir.

HOLMES

I want to introduce Miss--

Buffalo Bill grabs Holmes's arm and twists it hard.

BUFFALO BILL

Let go. Or I'll cut your throat.

His eyes belie the smile that's frozen on his lips. These are the eyes of a man who has killed face-to-face. And Holmes is intimidated. He lets go.

HOLMES

I merely wanted to--

But the Colonel is already walking on. Holmes turns, humiliated, grasping for a way to explain things to Emeline.

HOLMES

I'm afraid--

EMELINE
He's very full of himself.

Holmes sees she's staring at Cody's trailer. Fuming.

HOLMES
It's not important.

EMELINE
Why, it's rude. Utterly. If you weren't a gentleman, you might've broken his nose.

Holmes's eyes linger on her...she's constantly surprising...

EMELINE
Some people are terribly impressed with their own reflection.

She clasps his hands.

EMELINE
I think it was truly noble of you to introduce me to Colonel Cody.

HOLMES
I might've chosen a more opportune moment. In the crush I don't think he recognized me.

EMELINE
Take me out, will you? Let's go to a restaurant, dancing-- everywhere.

Holmes grins and takes her arm.

EXT. EMELINE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Holmes and Emeline round the corner. She's giddy, wobbly on her feet, but very happy. Holmes eyes the grand building.

HOLMES
This is where you live?

Emeline, who has been looking up and down the street, just smiles. She pulls Holmes inside.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Holmes and Emeline breeze by the desk, where a Clerk offers a stack of messages. Emeline peers at the first one, crumples the lot and tosses them back to the Clerk with a giggle.

EMELINE
Come on.

She pulls Holmes toward the elevators.

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The lights of the exhibition twinkle in the windows. Pop! A champagne cork bounces off the window and lands at Holmes's feet. He seems stunned by these luxe surroundings.

Emeline laughs at her own clumsiness and fills two glasses from the foaming bottle. She offers one to Holmes, who makes an apologetic gesture.

EMELINE

Oops, forgot. You don't consume "intoxicating spirits." That's a good quality in a husband, don't you think? If you ever marry anybody.

She grins and drinks most of a glass in one swallow.

EMELINE

Well, sit down for goodness sake. Make yourself at home.

HOLMES

Please.

He waits for her to sit on the settee, then takes the place beside her. His snake eyes flit around the room.

EMELINE

Poppy pays for it, if you're wondering.

HOLMES

He must be very rich.

EMELINE

Poppy is awfully good to me.

HOLMES

He lives here, too?

EMELINE

Oh, no. He's too busy building things to live anywhere.

HOLMES

And there's no grandmother or maiden aunt to chaperone you.
(smiles)

You're a fortunate girl.

Emeline sighs and lets her head fall onto his shoulder.

EMELINE

You're the prettiest man I ever
saw.

Holmes drapes his arm around her and she snuggles close, drowsy from alcohol. Then he lifts her chin and kisses her. Long. Tenderly. Romantic dreams flicker behind Emeline's lids but Holmes's eyes are open-- cataloguing the room.

Carriage wheels clatter on the street below. Emeline seems to awaken. She rises, pulling Holmes to his feet.

EMELINE

I want to look at the White City.

She drags him to the window and kisses him again, pressing herself against him. Holmes begins to undo some of the dozens of buttons along the back of her dress. Their kissing grows more passionate...

In the street Burnham's carriage has stopped opposite the window. Emeline's eyes drift toward it. She seems to be weighing something. Just as Holmes's ardor is rising...

Suddenly Emeline pulls away from him.

EMELINE

Not yet.

HOLMES

Is something wrong?

EMELINE

I'm not experienced, Mr. Holmes.
Please don't press me.

HOLMES

I wouldn't dream of it.

EMELINE

If I'm to surrender a girl's
greatest gift, the moment must be
perfect.

HOLMES

Naturally.

Without Holmes quite understanding how it's happening, she is leading him to the door.

EMELINE

Thank you again for a lovely day.
Will you call on me tomorrow?

HOLMES

Of course.

EMELINE
 (whispering in his ear)
 I knew you were too much of a
 gentleman to take advantage.

She opens the door. Down the hall an elevator door slides open and a Lady with a Dog steps off. The Operator glances down the hall to see if he should wait. Emeline waves.

EMELINE
 You're in luck.

She kisses Holmes's cheek, eases him out and shuts the door. He stares at it. In a daze.

ELEVATOR OPERATOR
 Shall I hold it for you, sir?

Holmes stalks toward the elevator.

EXT. STREET/CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Burnham stares through the window of his carriage, looking up toward Emeline's windows, where her silhouette is shutting the drapes.

When the last window goes dark, and his agony is complete, Burnham raps the carriage roof with his walking stick and it begins to roll away over the cobblestones as...

Holmes emerges from the hotel and watches the carriage fade into the mist. Something about it strikes him. There is no "eureka," but his instincts are aroused...

HOLMES (V.O.)
 Hers was the sort of beauty that
 makes shipwrecks of men's souls.

INT. JEWELRY SHOP - DAY

Holmes pores over an array of necklaces on the counter-- pearls, diamonds, rubies-- as the JEWELER and his ASSISTANT bring out others for their finicky customer.

HOLMES (V.O.)
 And it wasn't chance that brought
 her to the bosom of my affection.
 It was more. Serendipity, perhaps.
 Or Providence.

Holmes steps back with an air of disappointment. None of the necklaces is quite right. But...there is one diamond bauble that might do in a pinch...

HOLMES (V.O.)
The Lord works in mysterious ways.

Holmes holds the necklace up to the light. Sighs.

HOLMES
Will you accept a bank draft?

He offers a business card: "Herman W. Mudgett, Financier."

JEWELER
Of course, Mr. Mudgett. Of course.

Holmes withdraws his checkbook...

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Burnham yanks open the drapes and bright sunshine falls across Emeline's sleeping figure. She groans and covers her face with a pillow.

BURNHAM
It's almost noon.

He sits beside her on the bed and tries to lift the pillow.

EMELINE
I'm sleeping.

BURNHAM
Who were you entertaining last night, my child?

Emeline lowers the pillow. A beat.

EMELINE
No one.

BURNHAM
I saw a man in the window.

EMELINE
Did you? Maybe it was the bellman.
I wanted some flowers brought up.

BURNHAM
I don't see any flowers.

EMELINE
They were hideous. I made him take them away.

She smiles sweetly. Burnham rises, agitated.

BURNHAM
Please don't lie to me, Emeline.
Anything but that.

EMELINE
You're jealous, aren't you? Don't
worry, Poppy, he's not the sort I'd
fall in love with.

BURNHAM
Who is he?

EMELINE
No one you'd know.

BURNHAM
(intense)
I don't want you to see him again.

EMELINE
Don't look at me that way; you're
scaring me.

Burnham takes a moment to control himself.

BURNHAM
What do you need? Money? I'll
give you anything you want.

EMELINE
No you won't.

BURNHAM
After the fair, Emeline, I'll take
you to Paris, we'll elope--

EMELINE
After, after, after.

BURNHAM
Be reasonable. I have to think of--

Emeline stalks away, covering her ears like a child.

EMELINE
Don't tell me about your wife!

BURNHAM
Keep your voice down.

EMELINE
I won't hide anymore. I can't
stand it.

BURNHAM
Emeline, please.

EMELINE
Don't you love me, Poppy?

Suddenly she bursts into tears.

BURNHAM
Of course I do.

He goes to comfort her.

BURNHAM
Please don't cry.

Emeline pushes him away and runs for the bathroom. Burnham starts to follow but she slams the door in his face.

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

Pitezal dozes on his rancid cot, mouth open, snoring. A coin tumbles through the air and falls into his mouth. Pitezal awakens, gagging and spluttering until he spits it out.

Holmes smiles and rattles some other coins in his hand.

HOLMES
Why don't you take in the fair tomorrow, Benny? I'm conducting an experiment and I want it quiet around here.

PITEZEL
Who's gonna look after the hotel guests?

HOLMES
They'll be at the fair, of course.

Pitezal looks at him a moment, a tincture of suspicion in his mind... But the jingle in Holmes's palm is very enticing.

HOLMES
I can count on you, then?

Pitezal holds out his hand.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Emeline breezes in and accepts a pile of messages from the Clerk. She is prepared to disdain them all when one unfamiliar envelope catches her eye...

She opens it and finds the diamond necklace and a note in Holmes's florid hand. As she reads, a wide grin spreads across her face...

EXT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

Emeline looks through the glass at a gorgeous gown.

INT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

Emeline models the same dress before a bank of mirrors as a Seamstress tries to pin the hem between Emeline's twirls.

Another Seamstress offers the bill; Emeline waves it away.

 EMELINE
 Send that to Mr. Daniel H. Burnham.
 My uncle.

She loves the way the silk catches the light...

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

There's a soft knock on the door. Then another. Then a key rattles in the lock and Burnham slips inside.

 BURNHAM
 Emeline?

The room is empty. He lays his bundle of flowers on the table and heads for the bathroom...

 BURNHAM
 Are you in the bath?

...but it's empty, too. Burnham checks his watch.

INT. CROOKED HALLWAY/THE CASTLE - DAY

Flickering gaslights hiss...a shadow moves at the end of the hall...footsteps...the creak of a door...then silence...

INT. OUTER OFFICE/THE CASTLE - DAY

Lucy Burbank is at her desk, engrossed in a dime novel, when one of the electric bells on the call board behind her RINGS and startles her. She nearly jumps out of her chair...

INT. STAIRWELL/HALLWAY - DAY

Lucy pads upstairs. There doesn't seem to be a soul stirring today. Her footsteps reverberate.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY/HOLMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Lucy pauses outside the door to Holmes's apartment. She sniffs the air. What's that smell?

The door is ajar. She eases inside...

LUCY BURBANK
Mr. Holmes?

The room is empty. She takes a step inside.

LUCY BURBANK
Mr. Holmes?

A door shuts in the corridor outside. Lucy starts.

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

At a washstand covered with fair trinkets and brochures, a HOTEL GUEST dampens a cloth in her basin and bathes her face with it. Pale, still in her nightgown and robe, she is apparently too sick to go abroad today.

She looks up as footsteps pass by in the hall.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Lucy squints as she makes her way down the crooked, gloomy passage, which dog-legs back and forth, then narrows so she almost has to turn sideways.

It's all very strange-- and a little uncomfortable. Then she sees a light shining beneath a door up ahead and she relaxes. He must be in there...

Lucy reaches up to knock on the door, then pauses. There's that smell again... She knocks softly. Waits. Knocks again, a little louder.

LUCY BURBANK
Mr. Holmes? Did you want me?

She pushes the door open and peers inside:

It is a laboratory, brightly lit, with bottles of colored fluids and gleaming implements... But Holmes isn't there.

Lucy bites her lip, trying to banish the silly thoughts swirling in her head...

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The Guest eases back against the pillows, lays the wet cloth over her forehead and tries to sleep.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Satisfied Holmes isn't in the laboratory, Lucy shuts the door and heads back down the crooked hallway. Then the gaslights dim to a pale glow. Lucy slows...squinting in the half-light... what's going on?

Suddenly the silhouette of a man in a bowler hat rises on the wall behind her...

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The Guest is just drifting off to sleep when a MUFFLED CRY starts her back to wakefulness. She listens intently to see if it will be repeated. But there is only silence.

She labors to get out of the bed, then presses her ear to the door. She hears footsteps...a scraping sound...

INT. THIRD FLOOR LABORATORY - DAY

Lucy's high-button shoes drag the floor as Holmes struggles to lift her onto a table. He's a delicate man and perhaps she's heavier than he expected...

With a grunt he gets her up at last and rolls her on her back. Lucy's bosom heaves; she's unconscious but breathing. Holmes presses an ear to her heart...and smiles, his face flushing with anticipation...

Holmes lifts himself from the warmth of her breast and begins his preparations. He moves with ritualistic precision, restraining the unruly beast inside him...

He washes his hands in a basin...unfolds his case of ghastly surgical implements...holds a slender blade to the light and polishes it with a cloth...

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The Guest listens at the keyhole, somewhere between apprehension and curiosity. But all is quiet.

INT. THIRD FLOOR LABORATORY - DAY

Holmes turns to Lucy. The breath stutters in his throat. The knuckles around his knife clench tight...

Suddenly Lucy's eyes flutter and open. Startled, Holmes takes a step back. Lucy stares at him, in a fog, until at last the outline of his face becomes clear to her.

LUCY BURBANK
Mr. Holmes...

She smiles, relieved, as if awakening from a strange dream. She reaches for Holmes's hand.

For a moment he seems flummoxed by this turn of events. But Lucy's brain is too fogged to see anything but benevolence in her employer.

LUCY BURBANK
Did you ring for me?

Holmes comes closer...bends over her...a lepidopterist examining a most unusual catch...

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The Guest is at the keyhole... Suddenly a woman's SHRIEKING breaks the stillness in the hall. She is crying out in terror, weeping, begging for mercy-- her words indistinct but their meaning clear as crystal...

And then the shrieking stops. The silence is more frightening than the scream.

INT. THIRD FLOOR LABORATORY - DAY

Beneath the table, Holmes's legs shift his weight back and forth as he works. We hear his staccato breathing but we can't actually see what he's doing. A faucet seems to have been left on: we hear a steady drip, drip, drip.

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The frightened Guest pushes the washstand in front of her door. Water sloshes out of the basin...fair trinkets tumble to the floor...the legs screech over the floorboards...

INT. THIRD FLOOR LABORATORY - DAY

...and the sound carries down the hall. Holmes's legs stop their little dance. But there is no further sound. Except for the dripping.

We follow Holmes's legs as they step quietly around the table. Then he pauses, as if listening. A dark orb shudders in the air and splatters on his shoe.

Holmes's legs leave the frame but we hold as another orb follows and hits the floor, landing in a puddle. It's followed another and another... Drip, drip, drip. Blood.

INT. GUEST ROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

The Guest huddles by the washstand, listening. Footsteps approach in the hall. She holds her breath. The footsteps pass by the door and stop. Silence.

Then the footsteps are coming closer again. They pause right outside her door. Someone is hovering...

The Guest shuts her eyes in prayer. The footsteps move on and fade away. Silence. She breathes again.

The Guest stretches out to peer under the door and her hand lands in a puddle. The water that spilled from the basin.

She pats the water, gauging its extent and growing concerned: it has spread beneath the washstand...under the door...a trickle is *flowing into the hall*...

The Guest jumps to her feet, in a panic, she has to get out of there but the exit is blocked. She starts to push the washstand away from the door...

As the mirror on the back of the washstand slides, it catches a reflection of the closet door and *we see what she doesn't*:

The closet door behind her is opening...

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Holmes's foot steps in a little stream of water as he shuts the Guest's door behind him.

He straightens his tie...cocks his bowler to the proper angle...and notices a dark red spot on his cuff. That was very careless of him. With a note of self-reproach, he pulls his jacket sleeve down to cover the blemish and strides off.

Back toward the laboratory.

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - DUSK

The sinking sun casts an orange glow over the fairgrounds.

Burnham sits near the window, watching the long shadows on the floor, trying not to worry. A thousand possibilities swim in his brain; none of them is pleasant.

He rises abruptly and goes to Emeline's wardrobe...stares at her dresses hanging there...then pulls a sleeve to his face, filling his nostrils with her scent. Then his eyes fall on a row of handbags at the bottom of the armoire.

Burnham picks one up and rifles it, not sure what he's looking for, but suddenly consumed with a need to pry. Of course it's empty. So he looks through the others, hurriedly, but they're all empty. Ashamed of himself, he puts a wad of cash in the last one and tosses it back.

He stalks away. This is driving him mad.

Suddenly a key rattles in the lock... Burnham glances at the jumbled handbags. He leaps to the armoire and frantically tries to put them back in order...

The door opens...Burnham turns...

Arthur Crown steps into the room. He looks at his boss, on his knees in front of the armoire, a ladies' purse in his hand. He doesn't know what to say.

Burnham slams the doors of the armoire shut.

BURNHAM
Can't you knock?

ARTHUR
The desk said you were alone, sir.

BURNHAM
What the hell business is it of theirs?

ARTHUR
I don't--

BURNHAM
Everything I've ever done has been respectable, Arthur. *Look at me.*
How can I be such a fool?

Arthur is struck dumb for a moment...

ARTHUR
It's the wheel, sir. You need to come at once.

These are perhaps the only words that could induce Burnham to leave. He bolts past Arthur and into the hall.

INT./EXT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/LOADING BAY - NIGHT

Holmes watches anxiously as Pitezal strains to pull a heavy trunk off the hand elevator. He's unsteady. Drunk.

HOLMES

Careful.

Pitezal sets it on a hand cart. He rolls it toward the open loading door, where a wagon stands waiting. He avoids Holmes's eyes-- just staring at the trunk. But the agitation of his mind does not escape his master's attention:

HOLMES

Lucy was engaged. I can't believe she didn't mention it to you.

PITEZEL

She was in the office this morning.

HOLMES

Until her train left. Here. Look.

He produces a wedding announcement card and holds it out for Pitezal. Pitezal shrugs.

PITEZEL

Don't read much.

HOLMES

"Mr. and Mrs. Edward Burbank of Lafayette, Indiana are pleased to announce," etc., etc. Keep it.

Pitezal sticks the card in his pocket. They have reached the end of the loading bay and Pitezal shoves the trunk aboard the wagon. Too roughly to suit his boss.

When he turns, Holmes is in his face...calm but menacing...

HOLMES

I've scraped better men than you from the bottom of my shoes.

Pitezal mumbles an apology but Holmes doesn't wait for it. He glides onto the wagon to examine the trunk.

HOLMES

No harm done, I guess.

He turns back to Pitezal and his lips form a smile. But those eyes are cold as ever. He steps into the wagon's seat, snaps the reins and rattles off into the night.

Watching him from the dock, Pitezal shudders. He reaches for the flask in his pocket...

EXT. THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Workmen train spotlights on the towering silhouette of the Wheel.

Without its cars-- spread over the site like a derailed train-- the Wheel seems preposterously delicate. Gossamer shining in the moonlight.

In the pit beneath the Wheel, the Young Engineer sprints around the enormous engines, supervising the crew that's attaching the great chain to the sprockets. He examines the connection and turns to a Foreman:

YOUNG ENGINEER
Get the steam up.

He grins and so does the Foreman. The Young Engineer's excitement is infectious...

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Burnham paces on the highest of the six passenger-loading platforms. The wait is interminable.

BURNHAM
Tell him we have to do it before
sunrise. I don't want anybody
watching if the thing collapses.

Arthur Crown is peering down into pits below.

ARTHUR
He knows.

EXT. THE PIT/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

The pistons begin to pump up and down-- hiss, hiss, hiss. The moment is near. The Young Engineer waves the Foreman to the gear controls and sprints up the ladder...

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

The sound of the machinery operating draws Burnham to the rail with Arthur. He holds a palm against the glare of the spotlights. What's going on down there?

Suddenly the Young Engineer is leaping onto the platform, out of breath, running toward them.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Are you ready, Mr. Burnham?

BURNHAM
For God's sake...

The Young Engineer grins.

YOUNG ENGINEER
 (shouting over the edge)
 Let her fly!

EXT. THE PIT/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

The Foreman shoves the lever that engages the drive gears... metal grinds against metal...the chain begins to move, turning the sprockets...

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Burnham, the Young Engineer and Arthur Crown stand frozen, watching as the great Wheel shudders...strains against inertia...and then... Moves. Inch by inch, it moves.

As it turns, iron missiles fall, pelting the platform.

YOUNG ENGINEER
 (to Burnham)
 It's nothing. Loose bolts.

Arthur takes cover from the metal rain but Burnham is frozen, watching the miracle unfold: Faster and faster it turns, inches becoming feet...

BURNHAM
 The damn thing works.

YOUNG ENGINEER
 Of course it does.

BURNHAM
 It works. My God, it's amazing.

YOUNG ENGINEER
 Isn't it?

Burnham claps him on the back and wraps an arm around Arthur, letting out his relief in a great bellow:

BURNHAM
 It works!

He turns abruptly to Ferris.

BURNHAM
 How soon can you put the cars on?

YOUNG ENGINEER
 A week.

BURNHAM
 Three days. Three days.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Three days.

BURNHAM
Did you hear that, Arthur? The
Ferris Wheel opens in three days.

ARTHUR
I'm putting it in my calendar, sir.

Suddenly an ear-splitting growl shatters the night, a
horrible scraping of metal... Burnham spins around. But the
Engineer is grinning.

YOUNG ENGINEER
He's testing the brakes.

Burnham starts to laugh. The brakes. Of course. The Wheel
begins to slow...

BURNHAM
George, let me buy you a drink.

He starts to lead the Young Engineer away but then he stops:

Colonel Rice is running up the steps of the platform as fast
as a man his age can manage them. The expression on his face
tells Burnham it's bad news...

INT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - NIGHT

Half-jogging, Burnham and Arthur follow Colonel Rice down the
aisle. Nobody speaks. The raspy sound of Holmes whistling
"After the Ball" echoes in the hall...

They pass by a couple of shell-shocked Columbian Guards,
reach the Edison exhibit-- and stop cold:

Lucy Burbank's eviscerated corpse-- we recognize her by the
red hair, not by what's left of her face-- has been arranged
in an armchair so she appears to be listening to the speaker
horn of the phonograph. This is the source of the singing.

BURNHAM
Stop that noise.

Rice shuts off the phonograph.

COLONEL RICE
It's no accident this time. The
work crews start coming in an hour
from now. Whoever did this meant
for them to find her.

Burnham can't take his eyes off the corpse.

BURNHAM
My God-- she's so young.

COLONEL RICE
I'll double the watch, sir. Triple it. We can clean this up like the last one-- nobody has to know.

BURNHAM
What about the next time, Colonel? How many girls are you prepared to clean up?

Arthur steps closer to them, gripping his watch.

ARTHUR
Sir, we need to act quickly.

BURNHAM
Notify the police.

ARTHUR
You can't do that. The papers--

BURNHAM
Damn the papers. Somebody has to put a stop to this.

He wheels on Colonel Rice, raging:

BURNHAM
I give you everything you ask for, thousands of men, and still this son of a bitch makes an ass of you.
(to Arthur)
Get the police!

ARTHUR
Sir, we'll have a panic-- *you might as well close the fair.*

Burnham is silenced.

ARTHUR
You can't risk it, not now, not when the Wheel is almost ready. The whole country is counting on you, sir.

Burnham sighs. His eyes drift again to the girl. He shakes his head at the injustice of it all. Then:

BURNHAM
Find me a private detective.

COLONEL RICE

There's a man at the Pinkerton
Agency. Stagg. Very discreet.

BURNHAM

Get him right away. And make sure
she has a decent burial.

A beat. He turns from the body and walks away.

EXT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAWN

A crowd has gathered on the steps: Laborers, Exhibitors,
Delivery Boys-- all the invisible cogs that make the grand
exhibition hall run. A few check their watches. Things are
running behind this morning.

There's a studious fellow among them, a man in bowler with
his eyes fixed on a small ledger book-- as if he had a head
for figures. Holmes looks up from the ledger and smiles to
himself. On the verge of ecstasy.

A Columbian Guard hurries up the steps, making apologies as
he goes. He unlocks the doors.

Wearing tweeds and clutching a briefcase, Holmes blends in
perfectly with the workaday gents streaming into the
building. Oh, perhaps his step is a bit livelier. He seems
to be resisting the temptation to run...

INT. MANUFACTURES AND LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAWN

Holmes moves so casually among the Workers they don't realize
he's overtaking them. Soon he is in the midst of a large
group headed down a familiar aisle: "Thomas A. Edison and
Co." reads one of the signs overhead...

Holmes licks his dry lips, laboring to control his
excitement. He cranes his neck to see what's ahead...

As the crowd nears the Edison Exhibit, a Man up ahead shouts.
Holmes's eyes flash to him...he eases forward for a better
view...the moment has arrived at last...the Man is staring
right at the Exhibit...right at his masterpiece...

But then the Man turns back in Holmes's direction. He's
smiling and patting his Friend on the back. It was a shout
of laughter, not of horror. Someone told a joke.

Holmes's ecstasy morphs into concern. He pushes forward,
rudely, drawing stares, until he can see it for himself:

The Edison Exhibit looks perfectly normal. The armchair is
empty. The phonograph and other exhibits are exactly where
they should be. There is no body. No blood. Nothing.

Holmes's eyes widen. His fists clench. It's all he can do not to cry out in agony. *Where is it?*

The Edison Representative steps past him, keys jingling, and sets about unlocking a storage cabinet. Then he notices Holmes staring.

EDISON REP.
Lose something?

Holmes turns on his heel, charging for the exit, fury barely restrained beneath the veneer...

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

Holmes stalks past Pitezel without a word...opens the door that leads to the basement...and shuts it behind him.

HOLMES (V.O.)
It is the tragedy of the modern age
that mediocrity is celebrated and
greatness ignored.

Pitezel creeps over to the door and listens.

HOLMES (V.O.)
Like a jeweler who peddles paste
diamonds to fools while he keeps
the genuine article for himself,
the gatekeepers of our culture
laugh at us behind their fists.

Pitezel hears only silence.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Stripped to the waist, Holmes stands near the furnace, staring at the bare flesh of his belly...

HOLMES (V.O.)
Fame is not a garland they can
bestow as they see fit. Fame
belongs to any man who earns it.

Slowly, with complete premeditation, he rakes his fingernails across the skin-- deep, gouging scratches that draw blood. Anyone else would cry out with pain, but his face is grim.

HOLMES (V.O.)
My share was stolen.

Holmes stares at the blood on his fingertips. His own blood. Then he tastes it.

EXT. WOODED ISLAND - DAY

DETECTIVE STAGG of the Pinkerton Agency examines a woman's shoe at the site where the first body was found. He is a stolid fellow, conservative in dress and stingy with words.

Burnham watches, Arthur at his side.

BURNHAM

I'm sure I don't need to tell a representative of the Pinkerton Agency that discretion is of the utmost importance in this case.

Stagg holds the shoe to his nose. Interesting...

BURNHAM

Whatever resources you require, Detective, just say the word. My office is at your service.

STAGG

I need a list of your enemies.

BURNHAM

I am not in the habit of cultivating enemies.

STAGG

Maybe not. But you got one now.

Burnham stares at him a moment. Then turns to Arthur:

BURNHAM

Make the list.

He walks away.

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Emeline is reflected in the window, wearing her new dress. Hands reach around from behind, securing a diamond necklace around her throat...the necklace Holmes bought her...

EMELINE

Tell me where we're going.

HOLMES

And spoil the surprise?

EMELINE

You're terrible.

Holmes turns her so he can see the necklace from the front.

HOLMES
I can tell you this: Every man
there will envy me.

EMELINE
Really? Do you like my dress?
It's all hand-stitched.

HOLMES
Everything about you is perfect,
Emeline. To be at your side
tonight fills me with such joy I
can barely...

He hesitates, apparently overwhelmed by his feelings...

HOLMES
Tell me you know my affection for
you is sincere. Whatever my
faults, I do love you.

Emeline seems moved by this declaration. But she cannot
return it in kind. So she grasps his hands.

EMELINE
You are such a dear man.

Holmes waves a hand.

HOLMES
I'm not, I'm not.

EMELINE
You are.

She kisses him gently but Holmes pulls her into an embrace...
and a more passionate kiss...

EMELINE
(whispers)
You'll ruin my dress.

She steps back, smiling. And glances out the window as she
retrieves her purse...

INT. BURNHAM'S CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Burnham's hands wring the neck of his walking stick...

Through the window of the carriage he watches Holmes and
Emeline emerge from the hotel and wait for their cab.

In the gas lamp's glow Holmes is revealed to Burnham for the
first time: a strutting Bourgeois with too much color in his
cravat and too much shine on his shoes. To see his precious
girl with such a fraud...

BURNHAM
I want his name.

Arthur Crown leans out of the shadows opposite him.

ARTHUR
Sir, the Governor is expecting you.

Burnham raises a hand to silence him-- without ever taking his eyes off of Emeline.

Through the window: Emeline squeezes Holmes's arm and seems to glance in Burnham's direction. Then the cab rolls up and stops, blocking his view.

As soon as their cab pulls away, Burnham pounds the roof of his carriage with the walking stick. Arthur looks ill...

INT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Holmes leads the wide-eyed Emeline through its dark-paneled elegance...clouds of tobacco smoke dull the brilliance of a hundred gas lamps...Bankers and Cattlemen feast on raw oysters and slabs of bloody beef...silk-clad Ladies whisper cattily while their Husbands discuss business...

HOLMES (V.O.)
By reputation it was the finest
restaurant in Chicago, the haunt of
artists and ambassadors. Indeed,
much of the fair's design was
sketched at its tables. I felt
perfectly at home there.

Holmes helps Emeline into her chair and whispers to the Maitre d' as if he were an old friend. Champagne in an ice bucket arrives before Holmes has settled into his seat.

Emeline squeezes his arm-- it's all so wonderful. Holmes's lips practically caress her ear:

HOLMES
(a whisper)
Would you care to dance?

Emeline glances at the dance floor, where a few couples twirl in a stately rhythm...

EMELINE
Isn't it remarkable? So many
beautiful ladies.

HOLMES
You put them all to shame.

Emeline starts to giggle.

EMELINE

Don't I?

The Waiter pours...champagne bubbles over the rim of her glass...

EXT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Burnham steps out of his carriage, followed by a reluctant-looking Arthur.

DOORMAN

Good to see you again, Mr. Burnham.

BURNHAM

Good evening.

Arthur tries to pull him aside...

ARTHUR

(sotto voce)

I don't think this is a good idea.

BURNHAM

I need to eat, Arthur. Wait here.

He marches into the restaurant...

INT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Holmes plays the aristocrat with the Waiter:

HOLMES

Fois gras and a bit of caviar to start. Then the Filet Mignon ala Rossini. Sil vous plait.

The Waiter bows and retreats.

Emeline sips her champagne...eyes filled with the pageant around her...until she sees:

Burnham is snaking through the tables. Heads turn...Men rise to shake hands...Burnham is clearly well known here. But he doesn't stop to chat. He returns the greetings with a minimum of courtesy and continues on his way.

Holmes, who has followed Emeline's eyes, leans close:

HOLMES

Do you know him?

Emeline doesn't need to answer. Burnham is making a beeline for their table...

Holmes seems to read the history in Emeline's trembling lip and shifting eyes. He rises coolly as Burnham reaches the table and offers a hand.

HOLMES

Mr. Burnham, isn't it? This is an honor. H.H. Holmes. Are you acquainted with Miss Cigrand?

Burnham grasps his hand to pull him close.

BURNHAM

(a quiet rumble)

You're out of your league, Holmes.

HOLMES

I must congratulate you on the magnificence of the fair, sir. It's the eighth wonder of the world.

BURNHAM

(quietly, to Emeline)

I want you to leave.

She can't look him in the eye.

EMELINE

I'm having supper with Mr. Holmes.

Holmes beams at Burnham...exasperatingly smug...

BURNHAM

You're a fool. She's using you.

HOLMES

Would you care for a glass of champagne, old fellow?

BURNHAM

I assure you, Mr. Holmes, I am not a man to trifle with.

HOLMES

I believe the lady's made her preference clear.

BURNHAM

She does not prefer poverty, sir, nor the trinkets you rescue from the pawnbroker.

Holmes glances at Emeline reassuringly but she is already fingering the gems on her necklace...

BURNHAM

She may not see you for what you are, but I do. Making airs among your betters-- trying to pass in that cheap suit. What are you, Mr. Holmes? A shopkeeper? A clerk?

Holmes smiles with an eerie patience.

HOLMES

You should know me, Mr. Burnham. I'm an exhibitor at the fair.

BURNHAM

Somehow your name has escaped my attention.

HOLMES

Give me time, sir. Give me time.

Burnham turns to Emeline with a withering look. It's gone too far, now...she's on the verge of tears...

BURNHAM

Shall I have your things sent to Mr. Holmes's residence?

EMELINE

Don't be so mad, Poppy. I only want to go out once in a while.

BURNHAM

You may go out all you like. But this is the last time you'll make a fool of me.

He spins and heads out of the restaurant. The Patrons eye Burnham as he goes. They aren't sure what's happened but they smell a scandal...

Holmes sits again with a satisfied smirk. But Emeline's resolve is melting as she watches Burnham's figure recede...

Suddenly she leaps to her feet and hurries after Burnham, upending the champagne bucket in the process and knocking her glass into Holmes's lap.

He rises, brushing the champagne off his pants as all eyes turn his way. Waiters hurry over to clean up the mess. Holmes's date has turned tail on him, and is chasing another man toward the exit. His eyes burn with the humiliation.

WAITER

Shall I get another bottle, sir?

INT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT/HAT CHECK AREA - NIGHT

Burnham makes his way toward the exit, ignoring the greetings of friends and colleagues. Suddenly Emeline reaches him... grabs his arm...turns him... Her face is wet with tears.

Burnham's anger melts. He gets out a handkerchief and dries her tears. Then, despite the prying eyes of gossips, he puts his arm around her waist and leads her out. Chin up, unafraid. As if she were his wife.

Burnham beams at Emeline...sees her smile returning...how happy she is to be with him in public...and then that hideous necklace fills his vision...

Burnham yanks Holmes's necklace from her throat and drops it on the polished marble floor...

EXT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Arthur frets, peering through the windows of the restaurant, as Burnham leads Emeline out to the carriage...

ARTHUR
Sir? What happened?

BURNHAM
Give the Governor my regrets.

He steps into the carriage with Emeline and shuts the door in Arthur's face. The carriage lurches into traffic.

Arthur runs into the restaurant.

INT. KINSLEY'S RESTAURANT/HAT CHECK - NIGHT

Arthur passes by Holmes, who is on his way out. Of course they don't recognize each other. Arthur looks for the Maitre d'...hurries toward him...

Holmes nears the door, then stops suddenly, staring at the floor...at the necklace he gave Emeline...

HOLMES (V.O.)
Although the restaurant was grossly overrated, it did provide me with the inspiration for my masterpiece.

INT. BURNHAM'S CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Emeline lays her head on Burnham's broad shoulder, safe and happy in his arms...

HOLMES (V.O.)
I hope I don't flatter myself to
think that Michelangelo must have
felt something of the same
exhilaration when he first laid
eyes on the Sistine Chapel.

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/THE CASTLE - NIGHT

A pulley squeaks as Pitezell plays out the rope, sweating from the effort.

Holmes stands in the elevator holding his stereopticon.

HOLMES (V.O.)
It was as if a blinding vision had
seared my eyes so that I might
never look upon the world in quite
the same way again. In such a
moment a true artist knows he has
been chosen to speak to eternity.

Holmes descends slowly until, like the Cheshire Cat's smile, his bowler is the last thing to disappear...

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Burnham steps into the elevator, humming. He fixes his cuff links...straightens his collar...

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Emeline stands at the window in her nightgown. From the bathroom we hear the sound of the tub filling.

In the street below her, Burnham pauses at the door to his carriage and lifts his hat. Emeline blows him a kiss and he waits, as if giving it time to land on his cheek. Then, reluctantly, Burnham steps into the carriage...

Emeline draws the drapes and falls back on the bed, grinning with her triumph. Burnham is hers. Then she remembers her bath and pads into the bathroom...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Emeline turns off the taps and starts to pin her hair up. The open window beside her rattles...rain spatters the panes...a gale is brewing. Emeline shuts the window and gets back to work on her hair.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The wind stirs the drapes, casting billowy shapes on the walls...raindrops collect on the sills...the lamps burn but can't reach every corner...mysteries lie in the shadows...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Just as Emeline gets into the tub she remembers something.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emeline tiptoes to the nightstand for a book. Then she notices the drapes billowing and the rain coming in...

She shuts the windows and heads back to her bath. But she stops halfway to the door. Something doesn't look right. On the table is...

The stereopticon.

Emeline stares at it, curious. Did she not notice it before? She looks around: The door is closed. Surely that service cart would have been taken by any bellman who delivered this. She feels a sudden chill.

Emeline edges closer. Then she spots a little note attached to the stereopticon: "Love, Poppy." She smiles, relieved. And peers through the viewing lenses...

She can't see much. So she lights an oil lamp on the table and sets it behind the picture. Then she looks again. Her expression turns rapturous...it's so beautiful...

Through the viewfinder: Michelangelo's masterpiece glows with strange beauty and intensity...pinholes in the paper let light burn through the eyes of the angels and demons...

Then suddenly the light behind the picture goes out.

Emeline looks up from the stereopticon, confused. ON HER EYES as they widen with fear...

HOLMES (O.S.)
Isn't it beautiful?

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

Burnham strolls down the hall with a huge floral arrangement. He knocks softly on Emeline's door. Then more firmly. But there is no answer.

Burnham searches for his key.

INT. EMELINE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Burnham looks around: Emeline is not at home. The bed is unmade. Clothes are strewn about. Burnham's smile droops.

Then he sniffs. There's a strange odor in the air...

INT. CASTLE BASEMENT - DAY

Holmes closes the grate of his furnace and brushes off his hands. Something is burning inside.

He opens a heavy door at the back of the basement and disappears into a narrow passage.

Pitezal is silhouetted at the top of the stairs. Watching.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Arthur Crown scans a newspaper as...

The elevator dings. Burnham charges out with a head of steam and Arthur scrambles after him.

BURNHAM
She's gone off with that Holmes.

ARTHUR
But I thought--

BURNHAM
Her trunk is missing.

He suddenly realizes he's still holding the damn flowers. He hurls them at a Bellman as they pass out into the...

EXT. STREET/HOTEL - DAY

Burnham stalks toward his carriage. The Driver hurries to open the door for him.

BURNHAM
H.H. Holmes. I don't know where he lives. Arthur, I need a city directory.

ARTHUR
Sir, I don't think...

He offers his paper as he follows Burnham into the carriage.

ARTHUR
You're in the gossip sheet. Not
your name of course but anyone
could figure out--

BURNHAM
Damn the gossip sheet.
(to Driver)
Find this Holmes. Now.

INT. BURNHAM'S CARRIAGE - DAY

The carriage lurches into traffic.

BURNHAM
I said I'd give her everything she
asked for. Divorce, no matter the
scandal. Christ.

ARTHUR
If there's a scandal, sir--

BURNHAM
It's none of their business.

ARTHUR
They'll take it away from you. The
governing committee will take the
fair away from you.

Suddenly the rage explodes from inside Burnham and he smashes
the window of the carriage with his walking stick. Arthur
sits there in stunned silence a moment.

BURNHAM
I want her back by nightfall-- is
that understood? Whatever the
cost.

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Detective Stagg consults his notebook and rings the bell.
Then he steps back for a better look at the building:

Mildew stains from a leaky gutter streak the wall. Stagg
follows their path to the lintel of one of the storefronts:
The running water has worn away the paint, exposing the
"marble" lintel as a mere block of wood.

Holmes opens the door.

HOLMES
Yes?

STAGG
Are you Mr. Holmes?

HOLMES
I am.

Stagg tips his cap and offers Holmes his card.

STAGG
Detective Stagg of the Pinkerton
Agency.

Holmes looks at the card's trademark open eye: "We Never
Sleep."

HOLMES
I'm familiar with your agency, Mr.
Stagg. Apparently your powers of
detection far exceed the capacities
of the police.

STAGG
They might at that.

Holmes steps aside, pleased with his illustrious visitor.

HOLMES
Do come in.

INT. STAIRWELL/THE CASTLE - DAY

Holmes offers a cigar case as he ascends the stairs. Stagg
takes one.

HOLMES
Take two, Detective.

STAGG
Much obliged.

Holmes strikes a match on the bannister and lights the cigar.
Stagg has an enjoyable puff.

STAGG
Excellent.

HOLMES
Please, have another. I can't
smoke myself. Weak lungs.

Stagg helps himself as Pitezel slinks by them, on his way
downstairs. Holmes produces one of his candy sticks.

HOLMES
This is my only vice.

He runs it beneath his nose as if it were a cigar.

HOLMES
You are employed by Mr. Burnham,
are you not?

STAGG
I'm not at liberty to say.

HOLMES
I should warn you, that gentleman
has a volatile temperament.

Stagg smiles patiently.

STAGG
So while you were dining with Miss
Cigrand at the restaurant...

HOLMES
Yes, at Kinsley's. Here I'd gone
to considerable trouble to make an
impression on Miss Cigrand, only to
find she was merely toying with my
affections.

STAGG
And you haven't seen her since?

HOLMES
She made her feelings clear. A
little fellow like me can't hope to
compete with giants.

STAGG
Any notion where she's gone?

Holmes gives it some thought. Through the ironwork of the
bannister, Pitezel's head is visible on the landing below
them. He's eavesdropping.

HOLMES
She mentioned an ailing grandmother
once. I may have the address...

STAGG
I'd be much obliged if you could
find it.

Holmes leads him upstairs. He sighs.

HOLMES
I was on the point of proposing
matrimony, you know. But who can
fathom the heart of a woman?

STAGG
I'm a bachelor.

HOLMES
A wise course, Detective. I only
wish that I could follow it.

As they reach the next floor, his eyes flit toward the lower
landing. Toward Pitezell.

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE - DAY

Stagg's eyes canvas the room as Holmes searches through a
file cabinet...

STAGG
You ought to get a secretary for
that.

HOLMES
You wouldn't believe how many girls
I've gone through, Detective. Just
can't seem to hold onto them.

Stagg's gaze falls on the heavy steel door of the safe.

STAGG
Maybe it's in there.

HOLMES
I only keep precious documents in
there. It's 100 percent fireproof,
you know.

STAGG
Is that right?

He peers into the safe.

HOLMES
Please. Have a look inside. I'll
only be a minute.

He steps into the outer office.

Stagg pokes his head into the safe, eyeing the cabinets...
Then he spots something odd and steps in for a better look:

There's a little hole in the steel near the ceiling. What
looks like end of a pipe protrudes through it. Stagg squints
at it, curious... Then he senses something and turns around:

Holmes is standing at the vault's door with an odd
expression. He could have slammed the door. But he didn't.

HOLMES
I found the address.

Stagg reaches for the paper. His antennae are rising:
there's something queer about this fellow...

STAGG
You've just made my job a lot
easier, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES
Say nothing of it. I might've been
a detective myself, you know. I
have a keen eye.

STAGG
Is that a pipe?

HOLMES
Hm?

Stagg points toward the ceiling.

STAGG
Looks like a gas pipe.

HOLMES
Oh, no. Not at all.

Suspicious, Stagg squints again at the pipe. A smile dances
in Holmes's eyes...this is thrilling...

HOLMES
As a matter of fact, it's part of
the ventilation system I designed.
Chicago's humidity can be ruinous.

STAGG
I see.

HOLMES
If you have a moment, Detective,
I'd be delighted to show you around
the building. I've supplied it
with many intriguing innovations.

STAGG
I'd like that very much.

Holmes stands aside so Stagg can step out of the safe.

HOLMES
Right this way.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Pitezal slinks down the stairs and makes his way to the furnace...

A blackened bundle inside is still smoldering. It looks like clothing or rags. Pitezal grabs a poker and starts to root around inside...

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Stagg is laughing as he comes out the door with Holmes.

STAGG
Well, sir, it's been a pleasure.

HOLMES
I hope I was of some assistance.

STAGG
I'd say you've pretty much cracked
it for me.

Holmes beams. They shake hands. And Stagg turns to go.

STAGG
Oh, I almost forgot. After you
left the restaurant last night,
where did you go?

HOLMES
Home to nurse my wounds.

STAGG
Did you speak to anyone?

HOLMES
Just the custodian. Ben Pitezal.

STAGG
Might I have a word with him?

A tiny flicker of concern passes over Holmes...

HOLMES
He's supposed to be on an errand.
But I suggest you try the nearest
saloon.

STAGG
I was headed that way anyhow.

He grins and strolls away. Holmes stalks back inside...

HOLMES
Benny!

EXT. MIDWAY/FERRIS WHEEL COMPOUND - DAY

Pitezal skulks among the Visitors on the Midway, in desperate need of a drink...

As he nears the Ferris Wheel compound he stops a moment to watch: The Wheel turns...just a bit...then stops. Sounds of bustling activity drift over the high fence...

Pitezal heads for the gate but a pair of Columbian Guards immediately block his path.

COLUMBIAN GUARD
Don't open till tomorrow.

PITEZEL
I need to see Mr. Burnham. It's
very important.

The Guards laugh at him.

COLUMBIAN GUARD
Move along.

Pitezal slinks away, eyeing the fence for another gate...

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL/LOADING PLATFORM - DAY

Ferris and his Crew check a car's alignment with the platform. The Foreman opens the door over the step, checks the clearance and calls to an Operator:

FOREMAN
Mark that! Next!

He shuts the car's door as it begins to rise and a second car comes up to take its place...

On another part of the platform, Arthur watches nervously for eavesdroppers as Burnham and Staggs converse:

STAGGS
She may be at her grandmother's. I
sent a wire to confirm it.

Burnham's expression softens with relief.

BURNHAM
She's not with Holmes?

STAGGS
I checked his place top to bottom.
She is not on the premises.

BURNHAM
I want to know the minute you have
a response to your wire.

STAGG
Still, though, it doesn't quite add
up. I'd say Mr. Holmes is in the
habit of abusing the truth.

He puffs on one of Holmes's cigars. Ruminating.

STAGG
I put a tail on him. Just in case.

Burnham's relief evaporates...

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

A razor glides back and forth against a leather strop.

Already lathered, Holmes looks up from his newspaper-- "Wheel
Opens Tomorrow!"-- and glances at the Pinkerton Agent smoking
casually at the curb outside. Holmes seems amused.

The Barber approaches with the razor...

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL COMPOUND - NIGHT

It's late; the Midway has gone quiet. The lights on the
Wheel flicker and go out.

Pitezel is slumped against a tree, a bottle of liquid courage
in his hand. Then voices stir him. He squints:

Burnham and Arthur are coming through the gate of the
compound, talking. A Worker chases them:

WORKER
Mr. Burnham! Mr. Burnham! Wait!

Burnham slows and takes some papers from the Worker.

At the sound of the word "Burnham," Pitezel drags himself to
his feet and stumbles toward them.

PITEZEL
Burnham?

Burnham turns. Who is this? Arthur steps toward Pitezel,
hands up to fend him off.

PITEZEL
I gotta talk to Mr. Burnham.

ARTHUR
Another time.

PITEZEL
No, I gotta show him this.

He holds up some trinket. Burnham keeps walking...

PITEZEL
It's Emeline's.

Burnham stops. Comes toward him. Pitezel holds out the trinket with a trembling hand. It's a lady's watch, black with soot, but much like the one Burnham gave Emeline.

Burnham grabs the watch and steps under a street lamp. He cleans off the soot with his sleeve. Then he turns on Pitezel, menacing...

BURNHAM
Where did you get this?

EXT. THE CASTLE - NIGHT

The sidewalks are quiet. Down the street a carriage waits. Burnham's carriage.

INT. BURNHAM'S CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Arthur frets alone, eyeing the Castle through the window.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND CASTLE - NIGHT

Burnham stands beside the back door, looking up and down the lonely alley. Waiting. Then the door opens. Pitezel.

PITEZEL
He's out.

He ushers Burnham inside.

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM - NIGHT

Pitezel opens the door to the basement. Total darkness looms below. He hands Burnham a bullseye lantern.

PITEZEL
I'll wait for you here.

He strikes a match; lights the lantern. Burnham studies him.

BURNHAM
Is she down there or not?

PITEZEL
She was, sir. That's all I know.
I found them clothes and things in
the furnace.

Burnham peers down the stairs and gets a chill...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Burnham eases down the steps. The solid thud of the door behind makes him start-- and extinguishes all light save the skinny beam of his lantern. He presses on...

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM - NIGHT

Pitezel locks the door to the alley and rolls a heavy cart in front of it.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Burnham creeps across the dirt floor. Macabre shapes seem to hover outside the beam of his lantern but when he shines the light on them they turn benign: pipes, a bundle of rope, tack and harness... He whispers:

BURNHAM
Emeline?

The beam of his lantern finds a heavy door. Closer: a black handprint stains the wood. Burnham yanks it open.

BURNHAM
Emeline?

Silence. A dank little corridor extends before him...

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM - NIGHT

Pitezel retrieves the whiskey bottle from his jacket and falls heavily on his cot in the corner. One eye stays fixed on the door to the basement...

EXT. THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Arthur waits on the sidewalk now, looking up and down the deserted street. He checks his watch...lights a cigarette with a trembling hand...

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The passage narrows as Burnham pushes on. He has to squat to keep his head from hitting the ceiling. Stray roots and cobwebs tickle his face.

Suddenly he turns his beam to the side and holds his hand by the rough-hewn planks that form the sides of the tunnel. He can feel a breeze.

BURNHAM

Emeline?

He pulls at the planks. They're loose and come out easily. Burnham shines his light into a little chamber and his beam falls on...

A large trunk.

Burnham scrambles into the chamber and rushes over to the trunk. He tugs on the lid. It's stuck but his fury forces it open. Desperate to see what's inside, he raises the lantern but...

It's empty. Bloody fingernails have scratched the lining.

Then in a corner of the trunk he sees a hole with a rubber tube sticking through it. He rises, following the tube to where it connects to a pipe fitting on the wall.

Burnham pulls the tube free...opens the valve...and sniffs... He makes a face and shuts it off. It's gas.

Burnham shakes his head...the whole thing is too horrible... he steps backward and his foot sinks into the earth. It's soft. He probes with his foot. There's a large soft area. He shines the lantern around:

A shovel leans against the wall.

EXT. THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Cigarette butts litter the sidewalk. Arthur shifts his weight, watching the first glow of dawn on the horizon.

He can't stand it. Arthur jogs toward the alley that goes behind the Castle...

INT. BASEMENT BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Knee-deep in the hole, Burnham digs in a frenzy.

His spade uncovers a mess of golden hair. Beautiful. Intact. He tosses the shovel aside. A stench rises. He holds a handkerchief to his face and digs with his bare hand.

The outline of a head emerges. A little girl with carefully tended ringlets. Moved, Burnham reaches out to stroke the pretty hair. But the scalp, weighted by the plaited hair, *slithers wetly from the skull* and comes off in his hand...

Burnham groans in horror...staggers back...out of the hole...and knocks over his lantern...

BLACKNESS. We hear Burnham breathing...and scrabbling...as he claws his way to the exit...

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL COMPOUND - NIGHT

A Columbian Guard unlocks the gate and holds it open for the Young Engineer and his Foreman. They walk across the maintenance yard toward the Wheel.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Sorry to wake you, Morton.

FOREMAN
No trouble, Mr. Ferris. But I thought we had her locked down till the opening tonight.

The Young Engineer offers an embarrassed smile.

YOUNG ENGINEER
I couldn't sleep.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND CASTLE - NIGHT

Arthur knocks on the locked back door.

ARTHUR
(hissing)
Mr. Burnham, sir? Mr. Burnham?

He looks up and down the alley. Is that a wagon approaching? He has an urge to bolt... Suddenly the door flies open. Arthur stumbles back, startled.

Burnham stands in the doorway, scratched and covered with dirt, his eyes glassy with shock...

ARTHUR
What is it?

Burnham pushes past him and lurches down the alley...

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - DAWN

A steam engine chugs and hisses as it gets underway.

The Young Engineer mounts the steps of the platform with the Foreman as one of the giant cars rises into position and stops at platform level.

The Young Engineer opens the door to check its clearance over the platform.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Dead on. Mark it.

The Foreman nods to the Operator.

FOREMAN
That's a mark.

The Young Engineer gazes into the car-- large enough to hold 60 people and serve them lunch from its small counter. The fittings glow in the morning light. Perfect. Just as he dreamed it would be...

FOREMAN
Mr. Ferris, sir?

The Young Engineer catches himself and shuts the door.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Next.

Gears whir and pistons hiss. He steps back and watches proudly as the car starts its slow ascent toward the top of the Wheel. But...

As the bottom of the car clears the platform, something falls from its undercarriage and hangs suspended between it and the car beneath:

A woman's body. Flayed. Bloody. Hanged by the neck.

YOUNG ENGINEER
Stop! Stop!

Brakes screech. The cars stop moving. And twisting on the rope, the woman's face gradually turns toward us...

INT. ICE HOUSE/FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

The body is laid out on a table, surrounded by blocks of ice packed in straw. A blood-soaked sheet masks the savagery done to her torso but her face is uncovered. And untouched.

Emeline is as beautiful as ever.

Burnham stands over her-- muddy, his suit in rags-- in shock. He strokes her cheek...turns her face toward him...then something trickles off her neck and onto the table:

The diamond necklace from Holmes. Mocking him. Burnham erupts with a bellow of grief and rage...

Then Stagg steps into the room, hat in hand. Somehow Burnham knows instantly. He wheels on the detective, raging:

BURNHAM

What are you doing here? Find him.
There is no expense I will not pay,
no humiliation I will not bear, as
long as that monster is hanged. He
is from hell, do you understand me?
From hell.

Stagg nods and Burnham realizes he is holding him by the collar. He lets Stagg go.

INT. FIRST FLOOR STOREROOM/THE CASTLE - DAY

Pitezal sleeps on the cot, his respirations stuttered by whiskey... Suddenly a pair of HANDS reach around from beneath the cot and hold a dripping rag against his face.

His eyes pop open, he tries to resist, but his hands and feet are tied to the cot. Pitezal's struggling slows...his murmurs trail off...slumber returns...

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

As their carriage bounces over the cobblestones, Stagg and five Pinkerton Agents load revolvers with a grim precision.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

Pitezal awakens to find himself gagged and strapped to a chair. There's a noose around his neck and the rope extends into the opening of the elevator shaft.

Pitezal's eyes widen. He mumbles through the gag.

Holmes leans close...cocking an ear as if he were trying to understand. Then he shoves Pitezal into the shaft...

Slack rope plays out a moment...then goes taut.

INT. BASEMENT/ELEVATOR SHAFT - DAY

Pitezal's head rolls out of the elevator shaft and comes to rest near the furnace.

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Stagg's carriage pulls up at the curb. He leaps out, followed by his Agents.

Another carriage pulls up right behind. More Pinkertons.

INT. CASTLE BASEMENT - DAY

Holmes steps over Pitezell's head and opens the door we saw Burnham go through earlier. We hear him lock it from the inside. Footsteps fade away.

EXT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Weapons bulging beneath their suit coats, the Pinkertons fan out around the building, covering every possible exit. Pedestrians pause to watch the commotion.

Stagg gets the signal from one of his men: all is ready. He puts a shoulder to the front door and charges in.

INT. THE CASTLE - DAY

Various angles as Stagg and the Pinkertons search the building for Holmes:

Holmes's office...the safe...his apartment...the first floor storeroom...down the basement stairs...

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

A Pinkerton tries the door Holmes went through. Then he draws his pistol and aims it at the lock...

INT. EMPTY STOREFRONT - DAY

Holmes ascends a spiral stair. Kraft paper and "to let" signs cover the glass of the windows. He peers through a tear in the paper:

Across the street another carriage full of Pinkertons is arriving at the Castle. Everyone has his back turned to where Holmes really is.

He smiles and strolls toward the back of the store...

EXT. MIDWAY/THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Fireworks explode over the Ferris Wheel. Crowds throng the Midway, watching the pyrotechnics, waiting to see if the wonder will actually turn.

EXT. SPEAKER'S PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Burnham's Son and wife Margaret are among the Dignitaries standing behind the Young Engineer as he addresses the crowd:

YOUNG ENGINEER

More than one fellow told me I had wheels in my head. Well, I never denied it. But, as you can see tonight, I managed to get them out of my head and onto the Midway.

Applause. Burnham's Son cranes his neck to look at the wheel in a way that echoes Burnham at the Eiffel Tower.

YOUNG ENGINEER

I hereby dedicate this wheel to my friends and colleagues, the engineers of America.

More applause. He turns to his Wife, who hands him a gold whistle. The band strikes up again. Champagne corks pop. Reporters scribble. Cameras flash.

Then Burnham slips in beside Margaret, late and obviously preoccupied. Though he puts on a brave show of good cheer.

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL/LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT

Burnham stands at the door to the VIP car, numbly greeting the Dignitaries as they enter. His eyes drift toward the Wheel Operator's cubicle...

Through the glass he sees Arthur hovering over a Telegrapher. Arthur catches Burnham's eye and shrugs: no word yet.

Burnham turns back to the VIP car, which is packed. Margaret is just inside the door, jostled by the crowd, waiting for him with a pinched expression. The Boy watches him too; he seems to sense his father's distress...

EXT. LOWER PLATFORM/THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

On the platform below (there are six platforms altogether, in a U-shape) Burnham hurries past a surprised-looking Usher...

BURNHAM

I'll ride this one.

He steps into the empty car and closes the door behind him.
Alone at last.

EXT. THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

A hush falls. The music stops. And then, with a groan of steel and the grinding of gears, the Wheel begins to turn...

A massive cheer erupts. VIPs wave from their car as it ascends toward the summit.

INT. BURNHAM'S CAR - NIGHT

Burnham's car rises. Faint sounds of the revelers in the VIP car above drift down to him, but here there is only calm.

Burnham stands at the window, the reflection of his face superimposed over the White City as he watches it fall away beneath him. The fair's majesty, set off so perfectly against the black shroud of night, gives him no comfort.

And then, like a ghost emerging from the mist, another face is reflected on the glass. Burnham has only a split second to recognize Holmes before the dripping rag is over his face.

Burnham struggles for a moment but his attacker's grip is surprisingly sure. Soon Burnham's eyes roll back and he slumps to the floor beside an open trap door:

Through the hatch the fair is whizzing by and a fresh breeze drifts up. Holmes kicks the door shut.

EXT. THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

The gates that lead to the loading platforms are opened and the eager crowd surges into the covered walkways...

The VIP car reaches the summit. Here the Dignitaries can enjoy the view from 25 stories above the fair...

Arthur stands on the highest platform, watching with envy.

INT. BURNHAM'S CAR - NIGHT

Burnham stirs from unconsciousness and finds himself sitting cross-legged on the bench. He turns: Holmes is sitting beside him as if they were companions on a train.

HOLMES

What a picture this would make.
The great architect and the...what
was it? Shopkeeper?

With an inarticulate grunt of rage, Burnham moves as if to strangle Holmes but finds his limbs have been tethered to the bench. He cannot move at all. Holmes smiles.

BURNHAM
I'll kill you.

HOLMES
Mr. Burnham, if there's to be any killing in this car I suggest you leave it to an expert.

He produces a leather case from his coat pocket and opens it on the bench between them. Slender blades gleam. Burnham stops struggling against the ropes.

HOLMES
You might say you're out of your league.

Burnham looks Holmes in the eye.

BURNHAM
If you think you can intimidate me, you'll be sorely disappointed.

HOLMES
I wouldn't dream of it. I only mean to converse with you, one artist to another.

BURNHAM
I have nothing to say to you. Do what you like.

HOLMES
You have no idea what that means.

BURNHAM
You're nothing, Holmes-- beneath contempt-- dog shit stuck to my shoe--

Holmes darts closer to him...in a fury...

HOLMES
Do not insult me again.

His febrile eyes silence Burnham. Holmes paces away... regaining control of himself...

HOLMES
Your insults have already cost you so dearly, Mr. Burnham.

BURNHAM
If there is a God in heaven, you'll
hang for what you did.

HOLMES
If there were a God in heaven,
Emeline wouldn't be catching a
chill in the ice house.

Burnham stares at him-- how does he know where the body is?

HOLMES
I added a stunning ornament to your
wheel, Mr. Burnham. And yet you
abuse me, you hide my artistry from
the public--

BURNHAM
You're a butcher.

HOLMES
That's like calling Beethoven a
songwriter. Emeline is my
signature piece, Mr. Burnham. She
craves exposure.

BURNHAM
No one will ever know what you did
to her. I'll bury her in a place
you'll never see.

Holmes shakes his head slowly...Burnham doesn't get it...

HOLMES
I'm sorry but that just won't do.
You simply must put her in a place
of prominence-- it needn't be on
the fairgrounds. What matters is
that she be found and celebrated in
every journal of the city.

BURNHAM
Never.

HOLMES
If I see the headlines, I will
leave Chicago forever. If I do
not, I will haunt this fair until
no sane man dares set foot in its
manicured gardens.

He waits for his proposal to sink in. Burnham is silent.

HOLMES
Are you listening now?

He turns to the window...the fair glitters...

HOLMES

This, I think, is the only thing
you love quite so much as Emeline.
It would be such a shame to lose
them both in one day.

Burnham struggles against the ropes...a raging bull...

HOLMES

Smile, Mr. Burnham. We're about to
make history.

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL/LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT

Arthur watches the Wheel turn. As the second (Burnham's) car
reaches the apex, he notices something strange:

A man in a bowler hat is standing at the window. *Holmes.*

INT. HOLMES'S OFFICE/THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Pinkertons are turning the place upside down. In the safe,
all of Holmes's cabinets are open. Stagg stares at
reproductions of great works of art-- many of them from
Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel...

Then a breathless Agent runs in, holding out a message...

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL/LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT

Arthur leads Colonel Rice and a handful of Columbian Guards
through the throng waiting their turn on the Wheel and out
onto the platform for Burnham's car... Arthur mutters:

ARTHUR

The arrest must be made with
absolute discretion...

EXT. THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Stagg and other Pinkerton Agents-- dozens of them-- run out
of the building and jump into carriages...

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL/LOADING PLATFORM - NIGHT

Arthur, Colonel Rice and the Columbian Guards watch as the
VIP car rolls slowly past the edge of the platform...its
occupants still laughing and toasting one another...and then
it's gone...and the roof of Burnham's car comes into view...
very slowly now...it's almost stopped...and then the windows,
which reveal nothing...and then the door rises into position
above the platform and the car stops...

No one can be seen inside. Arthur opens the door:

Burnham is slumped over on the bench. Holmes is nowhere to be seen. Arthur runs to Burnham and checks. His pulse. Rice and his men are on his heels. Arthur looks up:

ARTHUR
Send for a doctor.

Rice is staring into the open trap door at his feet.

EXT. THE MIDWAY - NIGHT

HIGH ANGLE: Stagg and his Men enter the Midway from several directions...weaving through the crowd in pairs...moving cautiously toward the Ferris Wheel...trying as best they can not to cause alarm as they move to seal off the exits...

EXT. THE PIT/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Holmes slinks down a ladder into the engine pit underneath the wheel. Aided by the steam and racket of the giant machinery, he slips past the Workmen...

EXT. MIDWAY/THE FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

A Little Boy wanders through the crowd, looking for his mother, ignored: Everyone's eyes are on the Wheel.

Suddenly Holmes is before him, smiling, on one knee to look him in the eye, offering a stick of candy. The Child takes the candy and Holmes puts a matching one into his mouth. Then he takes the Child's hand and leads him through the crowd...

...past a Pinkerton Agent, who looks right at Holmes but doesn't suspect a thing...

...until he finds the Child's frantic Mother, who embraces her son with tears of joy. Holmes tips his hat and ambles on without waiting for thanks...melting into the crowd...

EXT. SPEAKER'S PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Stagg steps onto the platform and peers over the crowd, checking the positions of his Agents...

Then, in the sea of faces turned toward the incandescence of the Wheel, he spots a single pair of bright blue eyes--trained on him, watching him, as if waiting to be noticed.

Holmes flashes a grin at Stagg and slips back into the crowd, calmly chewing on his peppermint stick.

Stagg hops down from the platform and grabs his Partner's arm, hissing in his ear, turning him toward Holmes...

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS/ENTRANCE GATE - NIGHT

Backdropped by the rotating Wheel, Holmes strolls through the turnstile and across the plaza. The crowd is thin here: Nearly everyone is at the Wheel.

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

The Columbian Guards holding back the crowd part to let a Doctor through. He hurries into Burnham's car with his bag.

EXT. THE WHITE CITY - NIGHT

Holmes wanders along the path beside the lagoon, tipping his hat to the Ladies he passes. The White City shines in the surface of the water...the lamps of distant electric launches look like shooting stars as they zip along...

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS/ENTRANCE GATE - NIGHT

Stagg comes through the turnstile with his Partner and scans the landscape...a hound sniffing the air... But he's lost the trail. Then he glimpses a bowler hat near the lagoon...

STAGG

This way.

EXT. THE LAGOON - NIGHT

Stagg and his Partner follow the bowler-hatted Man along the path...splitting up as they close on him...then they pounce on him from either side. The Man turns, startled:

It's not Holmes.

EXT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

Holmes pauses at the bottom of the steps. A hundred yards to his right is one of the fair's gates. But the squad of Columbian Guards there looks awfully alert...

EXT. THE LAGOON - NIGHT

Stagg and his Partner stand forlorn in the path, looking every direction and seeing nothing.

Disgusted, Stagg starts to walk back the way they came but something crunches beneath Stagg's foot and he pauses:

Half a peppermint stick is at his feet. Stagg jumps onto a park bench so he can see farther:

In the distance, another man in a bowler hat is mounting the steps of the Palace of Fine Arts.

STAGG

Get more men.

He runs toward the domed building...

INT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

In the lobby, a reception is underway for a group of Japanese Dignitaries. Holmes accepts a cup of tea from a Waiter and bows in thanks. In the Japanese manner.

INT. BURNHAM'S CAR - NIGHT

The Doctor waves smelling salts under Burnham's nose and he comes to, smacking the bottle out of the Doctor's hand. He lurches to his feet, raging as Arthur tries to hold him back.

BURNHAM

Where is he? Where is Holmes?

Then he sees Col. Rice knifing through the crowd, approaching the car with Stagg's Partner. Burnham charges toward them.

INT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS/PORTRAIT HALL - NIGHT

Holmes wanders alone in a hall of portraits. He pauses to examine the paintings, but frowns. None of them is quite up to his standards...

INT. MAIN LOBBY/PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

Stagg confers with a Security Guard, then heads upstairs. The Guard signals to a pair of Colleagues and follows...

EXT. LOADING PLATFORM/FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Burnham bolts through the VIPs on the platform, ignoring their congratulations and pats on the back. Arthur tries to keep up with him as he charges through the throng...

Suddenly the Young Engineer is in front of him, embracing him, oblivious to the intense purpose in Burnham's eyes...

YOUNG ENGINEER

By God, we've done it. Look at all these people. The wheel's a smash.

Burnham pushes past him without comment and hurries toward the exit. The Engineer looks stunned.

Colonel Rice, Stagg's Partner and a contingent of Columbian Guards rush by in Burnham's wake.

INT. PORTRAIT HALL - NIGHT

Dwarfed beneath a giant painting, Holmes pauses in his appreciation and cocks an ear... Then we hear it, too: Footsteps on the marble stair. Moving just a bit too fast.

With absolute calm, Holmes strolls over to a curtain...slips behind it...opens a door-- he obviously knew it was there-- and disappears down a back staircase...

Stagg enters the Portrait Hall in time to spot a slight ripple in the curtain...

INT. BASEMENT/PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

Holmes weaves among the crated paintings and sculptures and the frozen figures of statues that have been unpacked. He pauses to admire a neoclassical statue-- not Michelangelo, but not bad... Distant footsteps echo. Such a bother.

Holmes breezes onward to a door that leads outside. As he is about to open it, he stops. Through the glass he sees Columbian Guards jogging up the path toward the door.

Holmes thinks as footsteps echo behind him. Then he turns... walks toward the footsteps until the shadows of approaching men are visible...and slips between a pair of cherubs...

Stagg and the Security Guards pass by the cherubs, headed toward the back door. Holmes strolls down a corridor...

INT. MACHINE ROOM - NIGHT

Holmes looks with some envy at the enormous furnace and boiler-- not running, of course; it's summer-- then turns his attention to more pressing matters...

The small, eye-level windows teem with the legs of patrolling Guards. Useless. Holmes tries a coal chute, but when he opens the door his hand is sullied by black dust. He brushes it off and turns his eyes elsewhere.

The footsteps are approaching again. Holmes follows a six-inch pipe that leads from the boiler into the dark recesses of the room. Where the pipe enters the wall, he finds rat traps on the floor and a large board covering an opening.

Holmes slides the board over just enough so that he can wriggle through...

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Holmes strikes a match and creeps along the passage.

INT. MAIN LOBBY/PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

Burnham, Arthur, Colonel Rice, and the Pinkertons charge through, drawing stares from the Japanese Dignitaries.

INT. MACHINE ROOM - NIGHT

Stagg and the Guards search the room but see no sign of Holmes. Then Stagg hears a click: he's sprung one of the rat traps. And there's a board against the wall...

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL/ALCOVE - NIGHT

Footsteps crunch behind Holmes as he presses on...the Guards' lanterns bob like fireflies...

The steam pipe goes around a corner and Holmes follows it into a small alcove...where the tunnel abruptly ends. Holmes looks around. The pipe bends to vertical and heads to the surface. Moonlight filters through a grate high above...

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Stagg and the Guards slow as their lanterns reveal the bend in the tunnel. Revolvers are drawn...hammers cocked...

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL/ALCOVE - NIGHT

Holmes's shoe reaches for a tiny ledge as he inches up the rough surface of the wall. Lantern beams bounce below him. Shouts echo. He's about halfway to the grate when suddenly lights shine down through it as well. He's trapped.

HOLMES (V.O.)

Then I knew: My moment had arrived.

A lantern beam catches him in the face: He's smiling.

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Holmes steps out of the alcove. All the revolvers rise to their target, but Holmes puts his hands up. Calm. He has no intention of putting up a fight.

HOLMES
Believe me, gentlemen, I can
explain everything.

STAGG
Put your hands straight out in
front of you, Mr. Holmes.

Holmes complies. Handcuffs are produced.

HOLMES
(confidentially)
Remember this well, Detective. The
public will want every detail.

He grins, chin high, above it all... Suddenly his eyes dart toward some slight commotion behind the Guards. A tall silhouette emerges from the glare of lanterns:

Burnham. He glances at Stagg and a silent understanding is reached. Holmes's smile fades as Burnham advances on him. Holmes looks at tight grip of the Guards on his arms...at Stagg's pitiless eyes...

Burnham hits him. Then hits him again. And again. Each blow is controlled, deliberate-- and savage.

HOLMES (V.O.)
Many a great artist has been
reviled in his own lifetime.

As Holmes shudders with yet another blow...

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a pork chop...as a knife slices off a dainty bite. Holmes raises the meat to his lips.

HOLMES
I hold no grudge. In some future
age, I have no doubt, my work will
find its audience.
(sighs)
Patience is the cross I bear.

He smiles and pops the morsel into his mouth.

HOLMES
My compliments to the chef.

EXT. THE CASTLE - NIGHT

Searchlights from the fair sweep over the upper stories.

HOLMES (V.O.)
I know there are those who call me
a monster...a fiend...the devil
himself...

Police wagons swamp the street. Chicago Police have cordoned off the building. Hotel Guests evicted from their rooms watch in robes and pajamas as Officers flow in and out.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Holmes polishes a spoon with his napkin.

HOLMES
Perhaps they wonder that I do not
have pointed ears and horns growing
out of my skull. But that is quite
absurd... The devil is a very
handsome man.

He grins at his reflection in the spoon.

HOLMES
The story will be on page one, will
it not, Mr. Sutton?

CONNOR SUTTON, a doughy reporter, looks up from his pad.

SUTTON
You'll be the lead in every Hearst
paper from coast to coast.
(holding up his pad)
This is going to make you the most
famous criminal of all time.

HOLMES
Splendid.

Beaming, he spoons sugar into his coffee. Several spoonfuls.

INT. CASTLE BASEMENT - NIGHT

A Young Policeman with a shovel clatters down the stairs and into the shadowy basement. He passes fellow Officers and Pinkertons-- smoking, dazed from their excavations-- and continues with mounting apprehension... Beyond the furnace a light shines up through the floor itself. This is the opening to a subbasement that glows like the portal of hell.

The Young Policeman heads below...

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Holmes nibbles a slice of pie as Sutton skims over the notes and sketches on his pad.

SUTTON
I'm still not clear on how many
people you killed altogether.

Holmes disdains the question...numbers...

SUTTON
Was it more than Jack the Ripper?

HOLMES
That amateur?

SUTTON
More than twenty? Fifty?

HOLMES
Your aim is low.

SUTTON
Oh, my God. But-- but *why*?

HOLMES
I was born with the devil in me. I
could not help the fact that I was
a killer, no more than the poet can
help the inspiration to sing.

Sutton practically leaps up-- what a quote! He struggles to get it word for word as Holmes peers at the pad...

SUTTON
Do you have any regrets? Remorse?

The words register no emotion on Holmes's face.

HOLMES
Did Michelangelo regret the Sistine
Chapel?

INT. CASTLE SUBBASEMENT - NIGHT

The Young Policeman pauses on the steps. In the glow of lanterns he sees bones in pits of lime...a bloodstained dissecting table...a box of savage knives...and skulls and scalps and little trinkets of lives snuffed out.

The gorge rises in his throat.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Two Guards stand watch as Sutton takes his leave of Holmes.

SUTTON
I'll be back in the morning. I
want to get your last words for the
evening editions.

HOLMES
Don't be late. They intend to wake
me at a most indecent hour.

INT. CASTLE SUBBASEMENT - NIGHT

The Young Policeman moves cautiously toward a mass grave.

His Comrades, shirtless and sweating, dig in the eerie light.
Skulls and desiccated cadavers emerge from the fouled
earth...human dust shimmers in the beams of lanterns...two
Policemen pull a torso from the mire.

It is a horror... Dantesque... And reminiscent of the
torments at the bottom of Michelangelo's "Last Judgment"...

EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING - NIGHT

Clutching his precious notepad, Sutton mounts the steps and
approaches the glass doors with "The Sun" stenciled on them.
Just as he's about to push through, however, a face looms out
of the darkness on the other side of the glass:

Stagg.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Prison Guards wait as Holmes checks his teeth in the mirror
and turns to them: ready for his close-up.

HOLMES
Eddie, I have a surprise for you...

He gets his stereopticon from the table and offers it to the
older of the Guards.

GUARD
Thank you, Mr. Holmes. It's a real
nice picture.

HOLMES
It's a masterpiece.

INT. THE ROOKERY - NIGHT BEFORE

Sutton clears his throat nervously as Stagg follows him up the white marble stairs.

SUTTON
How long will this take, Detective?
I have a deadline.

INT. JAIL CORRIDOR - DAY

A Priest mumbles an invocation as the Guards lead Holmes toward a sunlit archway.

HOLMES
Where is Mr. Sutton?

The Guard shrugs and unlocks the gate. Holmes peers through the iron grid:

A scaffold waits for him in the courtyard. But no Sutton.

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE/THE ROOKERY - NIGHT BEFORE

Stagg ushers Sutton into the office. Burnham and a TALL GENTLEMAN rise to greet their visitor.

BURNHAM
You must be Mr. Sutton. It's a pleasure. Daniel Burnham. Perhaps you've already met Mr. Hearst.

SUTTON
Mr. Hearst? No, I--

HEARST
Always good to meet one of my writers.

He extends a bony hand. Stagg gives Burnham the notepad...

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Holmes scans for Sutton as he's led to the gallows. There is no sign of the reporter or of anyone else, save a few Guards and Officials. Where is everybody? A flicker of concern creeps into Holmes's expression.

HOLMES
Are the trains running on schedule this morning?

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE/THE ROOKERY - NIGHT BEFORE

Burnham flips through the notepad, his face reddening with fury. Sutton watches him, sweating, while Hearst calmly puffs on a cigar...

EXT. THE GALLOWS - DAY

Holmes's manacled feet shuffle onto the trap door. As the Hangman sets to work, Holmes scans the portals, looking for his chronicler. Beads of sweat form on his forehead...

HOLMES

Perhaps a slight delay might be possible. I was expecting someone. Five minutes? He'll pay.

The Hangman just tightens the noose around his neck. Holmes summons a brave face.

HOLMES

Let no pangs of conscience trouble you this evening, my good man. You only think you're killing me. But my name will live forever.

He turns to the empty courtyard as if to face the public, trying to project confidence even as his lip trembles. But where the hell is Sutton? Where is *everybody*?

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE/THE ROOKERY - NIGHT BEFORE

Burnham stuffs the notepad into his stove. Sutton watches in silent agony as the flames consume his masterpiece. As Burnham slams the stove door shut...

EXT. THE GALLOWS - DAY

The Hangman yanks the lever...and Holmes falls...

INT. CITY HALL/PRESS ROOM - DAY

Flashbulbs pop. Burnham stands on a dais with the MAYOR, flanked by some of Chicago's most prominent gentlemen.

MAYOR

Thanks to the World's Columbian Exposition, the great city of Chicago-- and, indeed, the entire nation-- has risen to its proper place in the world. What has been built here will never be forgotten.

The room is packed with Photographers and Scribblers...

MAYOR

So it is with deep gratitude that I
present this medal of distinction
to the man who made it possible,
the architect of America's fair,
Daniel H. Burnham.

He places a gold medal around Burnham's neck. Cameras flash again and hardened Reporters burst into applause. It is the culmination of Burnham's success, but in the moment of triumph he seems to question his own achievement.

INT. BURNHAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Burnham sets the medal from the mayor on a dresser. Wearily he removes his tie, unfastens his cufflinks... Something about the cufflinks makes him pause-- triggers a memory.

Burnham stares at them until tears roll down his cheeks...

Behind him, the door eases open and his Son steps into the bedroom. In his pajamas.

BURNHAM'S SON

Papa? Will you tell me a story?

Burnham doesn't turn-- he doesn't want the Boy to see his tears. With effort he keeps his voice even and pleasant.

BURNHAM

Of course I will. Run along to
bed. I'll be right behind you.

But the Boy seems to sense something is amiss with his father. He goes to Burnham and takes his hand. Burnham squeezes the tiny little hand in his a moment...

BURNHAM

Run and say your prayers. I'll be
there before you say amen.

Reassured, the Boy skips off. Burnham watches him go in the mirror. Then this great bull of a man breaks down in sobs...

EXT. POTTERS FIELD - DAY

A plain wooden coffin at the bottom of a grave. Then two streams of cement hit the coffin, gushing over it...

Burnham and Arthur watch in a raw wind. The field behind them is as bleak and barren as the fairgrounds were when Burnham began. Plain wooden crosses, many broken, are all that mark the graves.

The coffin has disappeared beneath cement. Two Workmen, their wheelbarrows empty, wait-- not sure what to do next. Finally, Burnham turns and walks away.

ARTHUR

There is to be no marker or record
of his grave of any kind. No one
can ever find it.

The Workmen nod. Arthur fills their palms with money, his eyes on Burnham as he fades away across the muddy field of crosses...

FADE OUT