

THE MARRYING MAN

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1 EXT. BEL AIR, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

1

The CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES along the road. Parked on the street is limousine after limousine. Bentleys, Rolls, a few imported sports cars, Packards, all vintage late 1940's. Chauffeurs sit in their cars smoking, listening to the MUSIC coming from the big house on the hill. Others gathered in small groups in jovial conversation. As we PAN, we hear...

VOICE OVER

... It all started on a warm June night in Los Angeles in 1948... My friend, Charley Pearl, had just announced his engagement to the daughter of the most important producer in Hollywood. For me and Charley's friends, it was a rare chance to get into a big time Hollywood mansion, for which we otherwise would have no chance at all. For Charley, it was the beginning of the biggest roller coaster ride in the history of modern romance.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. MANSION - NIGHT

2

It is big, grand and imposing. It should be. It's the home of LEW HORNER, the head of a major studio, in the height of his mogul-dom. The house is filled with the most important actors, stars, directors and opportunists in the film colony. As the CAMERA PASSES through this glittering array, drinking, eating canapes and dancing to the live black tie orchestra, we hear snatches of CONVERSATION. The CAMERA IS LOW, around their legs, and we never see their faces.

DIRECTOR

Read the script, Joan. Would it hurt you to read the script? Read the script and then say no.

JOAN

I read it. It's a piece of shit.

DIRECTOR

I can fix that part.

MOVE on to another set of legs.

(CONTINUED)

1ST MAN

God, I hate this town. Phoney
chiseling cutthroats, every one of
'em.

2ND MAN

Where would you rather live?

1ST MAN

Here, but in a better house.

We MOVE on to two pairs of women's legs.

1ST WOMAN

I can't believe Lew Horner's letting
Adele marry this guy.

2ND WOMAN

What are you talking about? Charley
Pearl is worth thirty million
dollars.

1ST WOMAN

I know, but he makes toothpaste.
Toothpaste, for crise sakes.

The CAMERA PANS to the dancers on the floor. Still
just legs. We MOVE to one particular pair. A couple.
The man moves a little more flashily than the other
dancers. This is ADELE HORNER and CHARLEY PEARL. As
they talk, the CAMERA MOVES UP their bodies until they
are revealed. Adele is pretty but not a knockout.
Charley has the look of a man with a lot of confidence.

ADELE

Say it again, Charley.

CHARLEY

I just said it.

ADELE

I have to keep hearing it to believe
it. Say it, Charley.

CHARLEY

You're the only woman in the world
for me, Adele.

ADELE

In the whole world?

CHARLEY

Even if they found two more worlds.

(CONTINUED)

ADELE

Oh, Charley!

VOICE OVER

Adele Horner was a new type dame for Charley. She had some class and a lotta education. Charley usually went for somethin' like the kid servin' the tidbit tray.

The CAMERA SNEAKS a look at the cute blonde in the short skirt serving hors d'oeuvres.

VOICE OVER (cont'd)

Me and the guys just couldn't get over Charley settlin' down and getting married. To small time bachelors like us, Charley was a God.

The CAMERA SLIDES OVER to a corner table. Four men, all in their early to mid-thirties, are sitting with their GIRLFRIENDS, all budding starlets or cute extras. This group does not quite fit with the elegance of a Lew Horner party. The men are PHIL GOLDEN, a comic; SAMMY FINE, a songwriter; TONY MADDEN, a handsome singer and GEORGE BOUCHET, a baseball executive.

The man whose voice we've been hearing is Phil Golden's. Now we're on him live.

PHIL

(watching the party)

Five feet from where we're sitting are three more directors I'd sell my mother to meet.

SHEILA

You sold your mother last year.

PHIL

They returned her. Don't be funnier than me, alright, sugar? Hey?

SAMMY

Four years I've been tryin' to get Lew Horner to hear my songs and tonight I'm in his-house eatin' off his good silverware.

GEORGE

He ain't got bad silverware.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3)

2

Adele and Charley are dancing cheek to cheek. Charley is having a good time but it's Adele who looks like the one in love. Charley whispers in her ear and she practically coos.

CUT TO:

3 THE BOYS' TABLE

3

TONY

(watching them dance)

He's not in love with her, I'll tell you that.

DEED

How do you know?

TONY

Well, maybe he loves her, but he's not for her.

ARLENE

He told you that?

TONY

I know Charley. He falls in love two, three times a week, but he's only been hot once, twice in his whole life. He's not hot, I'm telling you.

PHIL

Okay, so the hors d'oeuvres are hot, isn't that enough?

He eats one.

CUT TO:

4 THE DANCE FLOOR

4

We watch Adele and Charley dancing around the room, everyone making room for the happy couple.

We hear the boys' VOICE OVER this.

SAMMY

On the other hand, she's hot for Charley. So it may work out.

SHERRY

Then why is he marrying her? He doesn't need the money.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

TONY

And she doesn't need his. So he trusts her. For Charley, that's a hard thing to find.

SHERRY

What about us, Sammy? Do you love me or are you just hot for me?

SAMMY

Hey, I didn't come here to take a test.

Charley takes Adele by the hand and leads her out to the terrace.

CUT TO:

5 THE TERRACE

5

Charley pulls Adele to him and kisses her. When they break, she seems overwhelmed.

ADELE

You scare me sometimes, Charley.

CHARLEY

(he likes that; he smiles)

Why?

ADELE

You're not like anyone I ever met out here.

CHARLEY

Because I don't need a job from your father?

ADELE

Because you don't even seem to need me.

CHARLEY

What do you know about it? Come here.

He nuzzles her neck. She reacts coyly.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Don't you like that?

(CONTINUED)

ADELE

You know I do. You're so damn sure of yourself, Charley. That's what scares me so much.

CHARLEY

A little fear never hurt any romance.

He kisses her strongly.

ADELE

(pulls away)

Let's not get married if it's not forever, Charley. I'm spoiled rotten and I wouldn't know how to handle disappointment.

CHARLEY

Every woman I've ever been with made their living from disappointments. I need someone good and solid to keep me in check.

ADELE

I'll hold you to that, Charley. I'll never let you out of my sight. Does that frighten you?

CHARLEY

No horse ever won the Kentucky Derby with a jockey who had weak hands.
(he kisses her mouth)
Bite my mouth... Go on, bite it hard.

ADELE

No, Charley. I don't want to hurt you.

CHARLEY

You don't get it, Adele. I like it when it hurts.

He moves in closer when we hear a cough from behind.

BUTLER

Beg pardon, sir.

They turn and see the BUTLER.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

BUTLER (cont'd)
Sorry to intrude but your father
would like a few moments with Mr.
Pearl in the library.

ADELE
Now?

BUTLER
From the tone of his voice, I assume
so. Yes.

He turns and goes.

CHARLEY
(to Adele)
Don't look so worried. He already
said yes.

ADELE
He's been known to change his mind.

CHARLEY
It's too late. I already made up
mine.

He smiles at her and walks off. Her eyes follow him.
He truly takes her breath away.

CUT TO:

6 THE LIBRARY

6

A huge, wood paneled room, filled with books and
antique artifacts. LEW HORNER, a small, but strong and
determined man, looks out the window, smoking a large
cigar. Charley enters the room.

HORNER
Sit down, Charley.

CHARLEY
Thank you, sir.

He sits.

HORNER
(offering box)
Cigar?

CHARLEY
No, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

HORNER

Brandy?

CHARLEY

Not for me, thanks.

HORNER

Is it true, Charley, you don't smoke or drink?

CHARLEY

(nods)

It stains the teeth. That's what my father taught me.

HORNER

It makes you look impressive. That's why my father taught me... No vices at all, Charley?

CHARLEY

Oh, sure. All the ones that don't stain the teeth.

HORNER

So I've heard... Would you characterize yourself as a playboy, Charley?

CHARLEY

A playboy... Well, if it tickles the little old lady columnists out here to call me that, that's their business. Up till now I've been free and single and how I spend my youth is my business.

HORNER

It seems to me you've spent your youth some time ago, Charley. How old are you now? 35?

CHARLEY

That seems about right. Yes, sir.

HORNER

You don't give a good goddamn about impressing me, do you, Charley?

CHARLEY

No, sir, you're wrong. I'm trying like hell to make a good impression.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY (cont'd)

But I don't know how I can do that by telling you I go to church every Sunday and call my mother twice a week. You know everything about me. I spotted those two private detectives you've had tailing me for the last month. There's nothing they can tell you about me that I'm not willing to tell you myself. I bet on horses, football, baseball, anything that moves or rolls. I've been out with every starlet from Paramount to Warner Brothers and have had a dandy time doing it. But that was before I met Adele. In two weeks time I place myself among the responsible people in this community. I hope you're impressed with honesty, Mr. Horner, because I'm one hell of a lousy liar.

HORNER

Is it having thirty million dollars that makes you so cocky?

CHARLEY

It might, sir, except I don't have thirty million. My father does. Luckily I'm an only child and Dad's pretty liberal. No, I'm not really cocky. Just a little stupid sometimes.

HORNER

No, I don't think you are. The fact is, I don't know what the hell you are... Why'd you pick Adele? There's a thousand better looking women in this town you could have by just snapping your finger.

CHARLEY

I've already snapped it a thousand times. I don't think you appreciate your own daughter's qualities, Mr. Horner. She's got style, she's got class. She's a thoroughbred and that's one thing I know about... Sure, I could have a hot night with any girl in this town... but I can have a lifetime with Adele.

(CONTINUED)

HORNER

We're not trading horses here, Charley. What is it you really want? You want to produce movies?

CHARLEY

Nah. I'd miss too many ball games.

HORNER

You talk about thoroughbred and baseball. Everything except hard work. Exactly how much schooling have you had, Charley?

CHARLEY

I went to a few Harvard and Yale football games. Let's not kid ourselves, Mr. Horner. I'm not ambitious. I don't have to be. When my mother married my father he was a door-to-door toothpaste salesman. Two years later she had me and the year after that she ran off with a slick-haired tap dancer and besides kissing me goodbye, I never saw her again. My old man poured all his frustration and anger into his work and in ten years he owned the toothpaste company and made up for me not having a mother by giving me everything else I ever wanted. We were never invited into Boston society but if you got the dough, you can buy your way in through the side door. I am what I am, Mr. Horner. No more, no less. I deal my cards straight from the top.

HORNER

In some circles, you'd be referred to as a shiftless bum.

CHARLEY

I've always preferred the term sportsman.

HORNER

There isn't an ambitious writer, actor or director out here who wouldn't marry Adele in two minutes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (4)

6

HORNER (cont'd)
I was hoping for that because they're easy to keep in line. But you're a problem because you have two qualities that threaten someone like me. You're lazy and independent. How am I going to control you, Charley?

CHARLEY
You can't. But Adele can make me do handstands. You've got no worries at all, that's a promise, sir.

HORNER
There's only two things in the world that matter to me, young man. My daughter and my studio. You hurt my studio and I kill you. You hurt my daughter and you'll pray for me to kill you.

CHARLEY
Don't give it a thought, sir. I'm not a praying man... Do you think I could have a cold soda pop? I'm suddenly thirsty.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. A HIGHWAY IN THE CALIFORNIA DESERT - DAY

7

We are SHOOTING UP from the middle of the highway. There is not a car in sight. Just the heat waves coming off the asphalt.

PHIL (V.O.)
Two days later, me, Charley and the guys were headed for what was then just a little dusty town called Las Vegas.

Suddenly, a car appears at the crest of the hill. It's a 1948 white Packard convertible with the top down. Charley is driving, Phil next to him. In the back are Sammy, Tony and George. Phil holds on to his hat as the car speeds towards us.

PHIL (V.O.) (cont'd)
We were throwing Charley a bachelor party. A three day orgy at the Pick-A-Daisy ranch.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PHIL (CONT'D)

Five horny guys and twelve hot
pistol packin' mammas. By the time
Charley went on his honeymoon, it
was Adele who'd have to carry him
across the threshold.

The car whizzes by the CAMERA. We FOLLOW it speeding
down the highway.

PHIL (cont'd)

Will you look at this jack rabbit
drive. We're doing ninety-five
easy. Charley, you're a dirty,
filthy womanizer and that's why I
love you. Mmwah!

He throws him a kiss. Charley smiles at him.

The car hits a bump. They bounce.

TONY

Hey, Charley, take it easy. You
bounce my equipment around for two
hours, it won't work tonight.

SAMMY

Speaking of work, did I tell you
guys Esther Williams likes one of my
songs? If M.G.M. okays it, she
sings it in her next picture.

GEORGE

Where? Under water?

TONY

(to Sammy)

Which song?

SAMMY

"Haven't We Met Before?"

TONY

You dirty bastard, that's my song.
You were going to give that to me.

SAMMY

I'll give it to you after Esther
sings it. What do you want me to
do, turn down M.G.M.?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

TONY

You shit! In two years I'll be
M.G.M.'s hottest star. They'll be
begging me to do pictures with her.
And you'll kiss my ass before I do
one of your songs.

SAMMY

I'll kiss it now. I'm not proud.

GEORGE

(to Tony)

You can't do no Esther Williams
picture. You can't swim.

TONY

How do you know?

GEORGE

Because you never go in the water.
Because you wear a toupee.

TONY

Who wears a toupee?

GEORGE

You do! I can smell the glue on
your head from here.

TONY

(bends over)

You want to pull it? For a thousand
bucks, pull my hair off.

GEORGE

I got better things to pull than
your hair.

TONY

(to others)

I love this guy. He manages the
worst fucking baseball team in the
minor leagues, finishes last three
years in a row and he knows
everything about show business.

GEORGE

I seen umpires makin' twenny bucks a
month wearing better toupees than
that.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

PHIL

Alright! Enough! We're all bored
with your baseball stories, George.
Get some new material.

GEORGE

I don't hear Charley comin' up with
any new stories.

PHIL

That's different. Charley is rich.
We don't mind if he bores us.

(to Charley)

Is this fun, Charley? Is this the
best time you ever had? Goin' to
Vegas with four funny guys who treat
you like an equal. And why do we
take you with us, Charley?

CHARLEY

(smiles, good
naturedly)

Because you let me pick up the tab.

PHIL

Right!

SAMMY

An honor and privilege not accorded
to just anyone.

CHARLEY

(kidding back)

Gee, thanks, guys. I really
appreciate it.

We suddenly hear a BANG as a tire blows out. The car
swerves out of control. Tony grabs his head.

CHARLEY

Damn, it's a tire.

GEORGE

(pointing to Tony)

You see! You see! The first thing
you grabbed was your hair.

CUT TO:

8 A GAS STATION

8

GAS ATTENDANT has the car up on a jack.

(CONTINUED)

He's replacing the tire. George, Tony, Sammy and Phil sit in the shade drinking Cokes. Charley is talking into an outside phone.

PHIL

(to Gas Attendant)

How long is this gonna take, pal?

GAS ATTENDANT

You want it fast or you want it to last?

SAMMY

I'll write the lyrics, friend. Just do the tire.

CHARLEY

(into phone)

Adele?... Charley!... Jeez, honey, I miss you... You do?

TONY

(aside to George)

I still say he's not hot for her.

CHARLEY

(into phone)

About ten miles outside of Vegas. I'm going to drop the guys off and come right back. I just miss you too much.

PHIL

What? What'd he say? The birds were chirping, I couldn't hear that.

CHARLEY

(into phone)

I'll be back tonight... I can't wait either... Love you... 'Bye, hon.

He hangs up, grinning happily.

PHIL

It's a joke. He's joking.

(to Charley)

She wasn't on the line, right?

Don't tell jokes, Charley. You're not funny. We're funny, not you.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLEY

It's no joke. I'm going back. I'll take you there, I'll pay for the weekend, then I'm heading back to L.A.... I miss her, guys.

PHIL

(to the others)

What are you sitting there for? Talk to him. Tell him what he's missing.

TONY

Charley! On my mother's life, these are not just women. They're Goddesses. Am I lying, Sammy?

SAMMY

Goddesses, Charley.

TONY

Every one of them could marry a Prince or a Duke if they had the money to get to Europe.

GEORGE

Big women, Charley. Six two, six three. And there's twelve of them. It's like a mountain of tits.

The attendant looks at them, his eyebrows go up.

PHIL

(snaps fingers at
Attendant)

The tire! The tire, heh?

He goes back to work...

CHARLEY

(gets himself a
Coke)

You don't get it, guys. In six days I'm getting married. I don't want to screw around anymore. That's all I've done my whole life is screw around. But now, for the first time in my life, I'm really in love.

SAMMY

Then why'd you come with us?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

It's my bachelor party. You're my buddies. We're having laughs. We're having a good time. I'm enjoying myself.

PHIL

This is your bachelor party? Five cokes and a flat tire?

CHARLEY

No. We'll stop off at the Rancho Vegas, have a couple of drinks, then we'll hug and kiss each other and you guys'll go get laid and I'll go get happy.

TONY

Can I ask you one question, Charley? ... Are you hot for Adele?

CHARLEY

I just told you. I'm nuts about her.

TONY

We're not talking nuts. Nuts is a different topic altogether. We're talking now about "hot".

CHARLEY

I've had hot before. Hot always got me into trouble. Hot always cost me a bundle of dough and a kick in the ass. I want a woman I can depend on.

GEORGE

Why can't you have both?

CHARLEY

Because you can't. A hot woman screws up your mind. You ever hear of Crimes of Passion? A guy walks in a room and sees the woman he loves in bed with another man, he kisses her off. He catches a guy with the woman he's hot for, he shoots the bastard up the nose.

We hear a BANG. They all turn.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (4)

8

The Attendant has pulled the jack out and the car has fallen into place. The tire is on.

ATTENDANT

That's three dollars, plus the Cokes, three and a quarter.

Charley pays him as they all get back in the car.

TONY

(getting in)

Charley, just this last weekend. It's no fun without you. Don't be a pain in the ass.

PHIL

Hey! Hey! Leave him alone. If the man doesn't want to go, he doesn't have to go. Forget it. He's not interested.

Charley starts the car and pulls out fast. We watch the car driving away from us. Then after a moment...

GEORGE

... Not even for a mountain of tits, Charley?

CUT TO:

9 EXT. RANCHO VEGAS HOTEL - NIGHT

9

We are on the glittering sign of the old Rancho Vegas. Not as glitzy as modern-day Vegas but for 1948, it seemed exciting.

CUT TO:

10 INT. HOTEL - THE GAMBLING CASINO

10

It has more the feeling of the old West than the contemporary show biz atmosphere of today.

The CAMERA MOVES AROUND the room showing the slot machine play, the wheel, Baccarat, Blackjack, the craps table, etc. Not only is the dress different in the forties but the stakes were cheaper.

CUT TO:

A five-piece Band is playing on the small stage. Phil, George, Sammy and Tony are seated around a table with their drinks. Charley is over at a phone booth, one finger in his ear and a big smile on his face. It's clear he's talking to Adele.

The boys watch this with consternation.

PHIL

We should have killed this romance when it started. A man in love is a man who dumps his friends.

SAMMY

I'm gonna miss Charley, I swear.

TONY

It's the ringside seats at the fights we're going to miss. The box at Santa Anita.

PHIL

The poker games where none of us ever lost.

GEORGE

I had an outfielder who hit 34 home runs for me until he falls for this doll. She starts coming to the games, blowing him kisses. So he chases a fly ball into a brick wall. The only thing that wasn't broken was his cap.

SAMMY

What did you do?

GEORGE

I had the entire infield tell him they made it with her. He gives her a one-way bus ticket to Memphis and he hits 19 home runs in July.

SAMMY

You think he's gonna believe it if we tell him one of us made it with Adele?

PHIL

Come on. No way.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

TONY
He'd believe me. But I ain't got
the heart.

CUT TO:

12 CHARLEY ON THE PHONE

12

He is smiling happily. He hangs up and makes his way
back to the table.

CHARLEY
One in a million, guys. I found the
one girl in a million. You ask me
if I'm hot for her. I'm better than
hot. I'm crazy for her, nuts for
her, totally insane for her.

PHIL
That's great, Charley. And maybe
one day you'll be hot for her, too.

He looks at the bandstand, an innocent look on his
face.

CUT TO:

13 THE BANDSTAND

13

The bandleader, WOODY, steps to the microphone.

WOODY
... and now, ladies and gentlemen,
here's a young lady I know you're
going to enjoy. A very fine
vocalist, lovely to look at,
delightful to hear, Miss Vicki
Anderson.

VICKI ANDERSON steps out into the spotlight. She's a
terrific looking blonde with a great figure. She
smiles warmly and starts to sing. It's a pleasant
enough voice but stardom isn't in sight.

CUT TO:

14 THE TABLE

14

Charley is not really looking at her, still engrossed
in Adele.

CHARLEY
I don't know.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

I was never able to talk to a woman like I talk to Adele. She hangs on every word I say, every syllable. She wants to put my picture on the ceiling so it's the first thing she sees when she wakes up. I wish we didn't have to wait six days. I wish we could get marr --

And suddenly, he stops as he looks at Vicki.

PHIL

You wish you could what? We're listening to you, Charley. What?

CHARLEY

... Who's that?

They all turn and look at the stage.

CUT TO:

15 VICKI

15

She sings as well as she can. As for her looks, she doesn't have to try.

CUT TO:

16 THE BOYS AT THE TABLE

16

TONY

Cute... You like her, Charley?

CHARLEY

Good voice, don't you think?

GEORGE

Great voice. Maybe it's the song that's lousy.

TONY

Who is she, Sammy?

SAMMY

Must be a new kid. Never saw her before.

CUT TO:

17 CLOSEUP - VICKI

17

She sings with an innocent sensuality. She is very appealing

CUT BACK TO:

TONY

Nice quality. Right, Charley?

CHARLEY

She's er... She's got er....

TONY

Good phrasing?

CHARLEY

Right. Her phrasing. It's good.

SAMMY

First thing I noticed when she came out was her phrasing.

PHIL

Well, we've got to move on.

(gets up)

Come on, Charley, we'll walk you to your car...

CHARLEY

I just want to hear the end of this song. Go on, guys. I'll be alright.

GEORGE

(aside to Tony)

He wants to meet this broad.

TONY

It's in the bag.

PHIL

Sammy, how many shows does Woody and the band do?

SAMMY

Friday night? Maybe three. They'll be here till two, three-thirty in the morning.

CUT TO:

Vicki finishes her song. There is polite applause from the small crowd, but Phil, Sammy, Tony and George are on their feet, applauding loudly.

SAMMY

Wonderful! Wonderful! Who is that girl?

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

PHIL
Brava! Bravissima!

George and Tony get on their chairs and whistle.

CHARLEY
(shakes his head,
better not start in)
Well, I'd better get going.

He starts to stand. Phil shoves him back in his chair.

PHIL
Charley, where's your manners? At
least tell the lady how much you
appreciate her phrasing.

CHARLEY
I told Adele I'd be back by --

PHIL
Sammy, ask Woody if the lady will
join some admirers for a drink.
She'd get a kick out of meeting you,
Charley. Okay, Sam?

SAMMY
Can do.

He leaves.

PHIL
If the man says can do, can do.

CUT TO:

20 THE BANDSTAND

20

Sammy crosses to the bandstand as Vicki is singing her next song. Sammy motions to Woody, who plays clarinet, to come over to the side. They greet and shake hands. Sammy points back to the guys and then indicates Vicki. Woody looks over to the table, then talks into Sammy's ear. Sammy looks surprised, nods to Woody, says good-bye, turns and goes back, to the table.

CUT TO:

21 THE TABLE

21

Sammy slides into his seat, the guys look at him expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY

No good. Bad idea. No can do.

PHIL

What do you mean, no can do? She won't have a drink with us?

SAMMY

She's busy. She's seeing a guy. She's spoke for, okay?

TONY

Let me talk to her. Leave it to me, Charley.

He starts to get up.

SAMMY

Forget it. She's "Bugsy" Siegel's girl.

Everybody but Charley freezes. Tony sits.

GEORGE

Figures. A dame looks like that.

PHIL

(to Sammy)

Did you tell Woody we're not interested?

(calls to Woody)

It was a joke, Woody, just kidding.

(to others)

Charley, pay the check, leave a very big tip and let's get the hell out of here.

CHARLEY

What's wrong with asking her to have a drink?

SAMMY

Charley, she's "Bugsy" Siegel's girl. They'll bury the five of us in the same box.

CHARLEY

I just want to say hello.

TONY

And you know how fast you'll say "goodbye"?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

GEORGE

They don't call "Bugsy" Bugsy
because he's friendly.

PHIL

Come on.

He and Sammy take Charley under the arms and help him
up.

CHARLEY

There's just... I don't know,
something special about that girl.

SAMMY

You're just nervous before the
wedding. Suddenly every other girl
looks good.

As they leave, Charley keeps looking at Vicki.

PHIL

Don't look back. They got little
cameras in the ceiling.

CHARLEY

You didn't think she was beautiful?

PHIL

I didn't want to say it before but
she's a little common looking. Cute
but cheap.

GEORGE

Tough. Very tough. Good date for a
sailor.

They are out of lounge.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOTEL

22

PHIL

It's too late to drive home,
Charley. Come on, give the girls at
the ranch a break, whaddya say?

CHARLEY

No, I want to get back to Adele.

A cab pulls up, the four guys get in.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

TONY

(smiles)

Right. Bust a couple of broncos for me, guys.

SAMMY

We'll see you at the wedding.

CHARLEY

You bet.

The cab starts to pull away as Phil sticks his head out the window.

PHIL

(to Charley)

You're a lucky man, Charley. Having a real lady waiting for you. And slobs like us have to kill three days humping twelve crazy Amazons.

Phil laughs, hits the side of the cab with his hand and they pull away.

Charley watches it drive out of sight, then turns and goes back into the Rancho Vegas.

CUT TO:

23 INSIDE THE CAB

23

TONY

Maybe he's making a mistake marrying Adele.

GEORGE

He had the hots for that broad in there, that's for sure.

PHIL

Whaddya crazy? He's better off wed than dead... Move it, cabbie, go! Time is money.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 INT. RANCHO VEGAS BAR

24

Charley is sitting near the end of the bar, nursing a Coke, looking up at the clock.

CHARLEY

Is that clock right? Three o'clock?

(CONTINUED)

BARTENDER

(looks)
I guess so. You're the first one in Vegas who ever asked me what time it was... Another Coke?

CHARLEY

Sure. Why not?

He refills his glass. Charley drinks. Suddenly a woman's voice.

VICKI

How you doin', Charley?

Charley turns and sees Vicki sitting on the stool a few feet from him. She's in her street clothes, still looking great. She lights a cigarette.

CHARLEY

(smiles)
I'm doing fine, thanks.

BARTENDER

The lady's talking to me, mister.

CHARLEY

Oh. My name's Charley, too.
(to Vicki)
Honest.

She looks at him, or through him to be more accurate. The Bartender gives her a martini.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

I saw your show tonight. All three shows, as a matter of fact. You're very good, you know.

BARTENDER

(leans over to Charley)
The lady likes to drink alone. Why don't you show her a little professional courtesy?

He nods his eyebrows at Charley and backs off.

CHARLEY

(to Vicki)
I'm not really trying to pick you up. I'm getting married in six days.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
(disinterested)
I couldn't be happier for you.

The Bartender, hearing this, picks up the phone.

BARTENDER
Gus? I got a talker down here.

He hangs up.

CHARLEY
(to Vicki)
Yes, sir. I'm finally tying the old knot. Never thought it would happen to me. I'm up here on a bachelor party.

VICKI
(looks around)
Quiet party.

CHARLEY
No, no. I left early. Me and the guys really whooped it up... Now, I'm on my way back to L.A. I just stayed to hear your last show... Is there an album of yours I can buy somewhere?

VICKI
(looks at him
almost laughing)
They don't waste wax on nobodies, mister.

CHARLEY
Well, someone around here should open their eyes because I think you have a hell of a future.

VICKI
Yeah?... You in show business?

CHARLEY
(smiles)
No. In toothpaste.

VICKI
No wonder you smile so much.

Disinterested again.

CHARLEY
My name is Pearl. Charley Pearl.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

You say it like I should know it.

CHARLEY

I thought you might. I'm in the columns now and then.

VICKI

Really? Selling toothpaste?

CHARLEY

I race cars, speedboats, play a little polo. You like polo?

VICKI

Yeah. I got a private box... I woulda thought a man getting married in six days would behave himself.

CHARLEY

Am I out of line?

VICKI

You got your foot right on the edge, pal.

She sips her martini, bored as usual. Two large hoods place themselves on either side of Charley. Their names are GUS and DANTE.

GUS

Excuse me, sir, but this section just closed. If you care to move down to the other end of the bar, we'd be very glad to pick up your tab.

CHARLEY

Have I offended anyone?

(to Vicki)

Have I offended you, miss?

VICKI

(shrugs)

It's not my hotel, Charley.

CHARLEY

(to hoods)

See? No one's complaining.

GUS

I asked you nice once. The second time gets ugly.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

He's harmless, Gus. He's gettin'
married in six days.

GUS

I just want to make sure he shows
up.

(to Charley)

You got two minutes to finish your
drink. Then we run out of them.

Gus and Dante move down to the other end of the bar and
watch him.

CHARLEY

(to Vicki)

Well, those guys must think you're
pretty important.

VICKI

Yeah. They're my fan club.

CHARLEY

... Listen, I have some influential
friends in your business. Is there
any place they can -- sort of get in
contact with you?

VICKI

Sure. In the lounge. I'll be
singing there for the next sixty-
five years. Best wishes to the
bride, Charley.

She is about to get off her stool when Charley grabs
her arm.

CHARLEY

Don't go yet.

VICKI

(quietly)

Don't touch, Charley. Those guys
know how to turn wives into widows.

He lets go.

CHARLEY

Stay one minute, please.

She looks at him, then sits.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY (cont'd)

I mean it when I say you're good.
You should be doing records, big
clubs, movies. You should have big
talent agents coming out to see
you.

VICKI

You know who comes out here,
Charley? People who run out of gas.

CHARLEY

(inches over)

You should be playing L.A., Chicago,
even New York... For no obligation,
I'd like to arrange this for you.

VICKI

Charley, I'm gonna save your life.
Do you know who I am?

CHARLEY

Yeah. You're "Bugsy" Siegel's girl.

Vicki gives a quick look down at Gus and Dante.

VICKI

Jesus! If they hear you call him
"Bugsy", they'll turn you into a
roulette wheel.

CHARLEY

Listen, I'm not brave and I'm not
stupid. I've got about thirty
seconds to finish this drink and
then they show me the door. Is it
possible to see you later tonight?

VICKI

Sure, if you don't mind looking up
from a grave.

CHARLEY

I'll take my chances. Just tell me
where to come.

VICKI

(it dawns on her)

Charley Pearl! The toothpaste king!
Jesus, why do you want to die when
you're worth forty million bucks?

CHARLEY

Thirty million and I don't want to
die. I just want to see you tonight.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Why?

CHARLEY

Some things are worth risking your life for.

(he looks back to

Gus, then to her)

You've got five seconds to think it over.

She looks at him, maybe for the first time.

PHIL (V.O.)

There are two things that women are pushovers for. Getting flowers, and a guy who's willing to die for them.

VICKI

He'll kill us both if he catches us.

CHARLEY

(smiles)

Makes life interesting, doesn't it?

Vicki sees Gus and Dante slowly walking towards them.

VICKI

(whispers as she

puts on her lipstick,

looking in hand mirror)

211 Charlotte Street. Don't come if the front light is on. Use the side window, I'll leave it open. I must be nuts.

Gus puts his hand on Charley's shoulder. Charley gulps his drink.

CHARLEY

(to Gus)

No, thanks, I've had enough.

(to Vicki)

I really enjoyed the show. Next time I'll bring the wife.

(to Gus)

I know the way out.

Charley leaves.

VICKI

(to Gus)

The creeps they let in here.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (7)

24

GUS
Ready to go home?

VICKI
I thought you'd never ask.

She finishes her drink and leaves with them.

CUT TO:

25 CARS ON THE ROAD - NIGHT

25

Dante is driving, Vicki in the middle, Gus on her right.

VICKI
When is Benny getting back from Chicago?

GUS
Never can tell with Benny. Don't go to sleep early. He's gonna call you about four.

VICKI
You know I can't sleep when Benny's gone.

GUS
(with a smirk)
How would I know?

CUT TO:

26 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

26

Their car pulls up to a small bungalow-type house. The number on the door is 211. The light over the front door is on. All three get out of the car. Vicki searches her bag for her key but Gus takes his key out first and opens it.

GUS
You shouldn't be talking to strangers at the bar. Benny'd get mad if I told him.

VICKI
Go ahead. Tell him. And I'll tell him how you always rub your knee against mine in the car.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

GUS

(smiles)

When Benny gets tired of you, you'll
need a friend, sweetheart... Double
lock your doors.

VICKI

Same to you.

(to Dante)

G'night, Dante.

DANTE

Huh?

VICKI

Never mind. It was a tough
question.

Vicki goes in and we hear her LOCK the door. Gus and
Dante drive away.

DISSOLVE TO:

27 ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES LATER

27

Charley's white Packard, the top now covered, pulls
silently across the street and stops, turns off his
lights.

From inside the car, we see Charley nervously watching
the house.

PHIL (V.O.)

Charley knew that what he was doing
was dumb and dangerous... which was
exactly what he liked about it.

The front light on the house goes off. Charley gets
out of his car, cautiously runs across the street and
around to the side of the house. He tries the side
window. It is open. He lifts it and goes in, closing
window behind him.

CUT TO:

28 INSIDE THE HOUSE

28

The room is dark. A tiny crack of light comes from the
bathroom. Charley looks around, confused.

CHARLEY

(whispers)

Where are you?

(CONTINUED)

No answer. Suddenly a red ember from a lit cigarette glows in the dark. It comes from a chair in the corner.

VICKI

Pulling the shade down would be a smart move.

CHARLEY

Right.

He pulls the shade down. A lamp goes on, giving a soft red glow to the room. Vicki is sitting in a club chair, in a Japanese silk robe, smoking.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

(smiles)

Hi!

VICKI

Okay, so you're here. Now what do you want?

CHARLEY

Well -- I thought we'd talk.

VICKI

About what?

CHARLEY

Well, about your career, your singing, about your er... your er... what do you mean about what? I'm risking a bullet in my head to see you, that's about what. I had the feeling back there you liked me.

VICKI

I was impressed with you... So what do you want to do?

CHARLEY

Well, a drink would be nice. A little soft music maybe.

VICKI

About my career.

CHARLEY

Oh. Well, I meant what I said. I can introduce you to some very important people.

VICKI

More important than Benny Siegel?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLEY

Without those two gunsels around,
Benny Siegel is no more important
than the doorman.

VICKI

I tried L.A. I tried Dallas,
Phoenix, and Houston. Benny was the
only one who gave me a chance to
sing. I was down to changing
quarters for the slot machine.

CHARLEY

Well, no impertinence intended, but
judging from your looks and your
bungalow, he had other things in
mind. Am I right?

VICKI

And you don't suppose. What are
you, a music lover?

CHARLEY

Maybe he gave you this job but he's
not going to push your career. He
doesn't want you touring the
country. That is until he gets
tired of you. Then you'll be out of
the lounge, out of this bungalow,
and out on your -- own. But I'm
willing to pick up the phone right
now and get you an appointment with
Decca Records.

VICKI

Why would you do that for me?

CHARLEY

Why did you leave the side window
open?

VICKI

Because Benny's getting ready to
dump me. That's what he went to
pick up in Chicago.

They look at each other. She crosses to the bar and
pours two drinks. She turns on her phonograph.

CHARLEY

I couldn't take my eyes off you in
the club. Sitting close to you at
the bar, I had to fight to keep my
hands off you.

(CONTINUED)

She hands him his drink; he puts it down.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
Sometimes something special,
something mysterious, happens to a
man and woman when they meet. He
could be wrong for her and she could
be wrong for him, but it happens
anyway. And there's not a damn
thing either one of them can do
about it.

She looks at him and suddenly laughs.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
Are you laughing at me?

VICKI
Yeah... but don't go away.

CHARLEY
On the other hand, Adele, the girl
I'm going to marry, is the absolute
right woman for me.

VICKI
Lucky Adele.

She starts to move a little to the rhythm of the MUSIC.
Charley is entranced.

CHARLEY
Except I don't want to devour every
inch of her flesh the way I do right
now. Do you know what I'm talking
about?

VICKI
... Maybe we've done enough talking.

He moves in closer and starts to kiss her face, his
hands moving all over her body. The CAMERA MOVES
around them. He slowly pulls her down to the floor,
kissing her shoulders and breasts.

The phone RINGS.

But they can't stop. Charley is everywhere on her
body.

The phone RINGS again. She is more than Charley ever
expected. He is more than she ever experienced.

The phone RINGS again.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI (cont'd)
It's Benny. I have to answer it.

Charley is trying to take off her garments. She is trying to reach the phone.

It RINGS again.

VICKI (cont'd)
Let me up. If I don't answer it, those two gorillas'll swing over in a tree.

Breathless, she pulls herself away from Charley and grabs the phone.

VICKI (cont'd)
(gasping for breath)
Hello?... Oh, Benny. Hi, honey...
No. No. I was working out on the floor... Well, I know you'll be home in a few days and I wanted to get in shape for you. I know how solid you like everything to be... Sure, I missed you. What'd you think?... I can't wait either... You know I do, Ben... Hurry home.
(she hangs up)
Yeah, he's got someone new alright. I can tell. Well, screw him.
(she pulls Charley up)
Come on, Charley. Maybe we got something to offer each other after all.

She pulls him into the bedroom, leaving the door open and turning the lamp off as she goes. The house is dark.

CUT TO:

29 THREE SUITCASES AND A POLO COAT ON THE FLOOR

29

As we PULL BACK, we are in "BUGSY" SIEGEL's office in Vegas. A flashy new Blonde in a fur coat is seated, doing her nails. "Bugsy" has just hung up the phone. Gus and Dante stand on the other side of the desk.

BUGSY
She was working out on the floor...
What did this guy look like?

GUS
Pretty. Flashy smile. Country club shithead.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

BUGSY

This is very disappointing to me.
Know what I mean?

CUT TO:

30 INT. VICKI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

30

She and Charley are in bed, nude, under the sheets, in the last throes of lovemaking. They collapse back on the bed, exhausted.

VICKI

Jesus, you're an animal.

CHARLEY

This couldn't have been our first time. Nothing is this good the first time.

VICKI

This girl you're marrying... What's her name?

CHARLEY

Adele Horner.

VICKI

Well, tell Adele Horner she's gonna have a short but happy life.

CHARLEY

... I once swung at a golf ball and thought I missed it clean until I see it climbing into the sky, 200 yards away, still climbing, and then drops on the green two inches from the pin. It was the only time I ever felt anything perfect in my whole life -- until tonight.

VICKI

First time I ever felt like a golf ball.

They both laugh.

CHARLEY

I've got to see you again, Vicki.
We've got to work it out somehow.

VICKI

It's not my problem, Charley. Take it up with "Bugsy".

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

From the darkened room, we hear Bugsy's VOICE.

BUGSY

That's the first time you ever
called me "Bugsy".

Vicki bolts up in bed and turns on the lamp.

Sitting in a chair in the center of the room is
"Bugsy". Gus and Dante are standing on either side of
his chair.

CHARLEY

Oh, shit. Oh, God. This is bad.
This is so bad.

BUGSY

Well, I couldn't see much but it
didn't sound good, kid.

VICKI

Benny, listen to me, please.

BUGSY

That's okay, honey. Call me
"Bugsy". 'Cause Benny would be an
insult to me now.

CHARLEY

Mr. Siegel, it was all my fault.
She turned me down at the bar. I
followed her car out here and broke
into her room. I forced her, I
swear to God.

BUGSY

(nods)

I believe this to be true because
Vicki would never do such a thing to
me. So you what? You ripped off
her clothes and dragged her into
bed, right?

CHARLEY

Right. Yes.

BUGSY

The poor kid tried to fight you
off. She kicked and screamed and
begged you not to do it but you said
what? "Shut up, baby, I'm takin'
what I want." Like that?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

Right. Yes. That's exactly what I said.

BUGSY

Is that right, sweetheart? Is that the way he did it?

VICKI

Yes. Yes, Benny... No. I don't know. I'm so scared, I don't know what to say.

BUGSY

Don't be scared. I won't let him do it again... The thing I don't get, kid, is -- what's your name?

CHARLEY

Charley?

BUGSY

What I don't get, Charley, is why? You knew she was my girl. You knew what would happen if you got caught. Were you that hot to get in her pants?

CHARLEY

I... I must have been drunk. Too much celebrating. I was here for my bachelor party.

BUGSY

Right. I heard. You're getting married. Congratulations.

CHARLEY

Oh. Thank you.

BUGSY

So, Vicki, tell me, doll. This ever happen before?

VICKI

Never. I swear. It's the first time, Benny. I wouldn't have talked to him but I'm just so lonely. You leave me alone too much, Ben.

BUGSY

(to Gus and Dante)

You hear this, boys? It's my fault.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (3)

30

BUGSY (CONT'D)
(to Vicki and Charley)
Well, listen, I'm sure you're as embarrassed about this as I am. Why don't you both get dressed? I think we have to talk. We'll get an ice cream soda somewhere. Some place far from here.

He smiles and they are terror-stricken.

CUT TO:

31 INT. BUGSY'S CAR - NIGHT

31

It's a Cadillac limousine. Dante is driving. In the backseat are "Bugsy", Vicki and Charley. Gus is on the jump seat.

BUGSY
... Charley Pearl, yeah, sure, I hearda you. Toothpaste, right? So whaddya worth, Charley? Ten, twenny million?

CHARLEY
Twenty, thirty, around there. It's my father's company. I just work for him.

BUGSY
So he gives you what? Like an allowance?

CHARLEY
Yes. Right.

BUGSY
I got an allowance from my old man. He said I could keep whatever I took from my old lady's pocketbook.
(no one laughs)
What would you say your old man would pay for you, Charley?

CHARLEY
Pay for me? You mean a ransom?

BUGSY
No. No ransom. This ain't a kidnap. This is a probable cement job... A couple of million, you think?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

CHARLEY

I don't know. If we could avoid involving my father, Mr. Siegel... He's old and he's sick. But I'll give you whatever I have.

BUGSY

You gonna pay for Vicki, too, or are you two kids going Dutch?

VICKI

I'm sorry about this, Benny. I am so sorry.

BUGSY

(pats her knee)

Is he really an animal like you said, honey?

VICKI

(shrugs)

It was just something to say.

Charley suddenly starts to laugh. They all look at him.

BUGSY

Tell us what's so funny, Charley.

CHARLEY

(laughing)

I'm just scared. I mean I'm really scared. I've never been this scared in my whole life.

He continues laughing.

BUGSY

Relax, kid. It's gonna be over real quick.

CUT TO:

32 A NEON SIGN

32

Saying: "L'IL OLE WEDDING CHAPEL"

CUT TO:

33 INSIDE THE CAR

33

The car has stopped. Charley and Vicki look at the sign.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

What are we doing here?

BUGSY

Well, my problem is this, Charley. Vicki was on the way out anyway. She and I had some good times and I'm a generous man, so it would cost me something.

(pats her hand)

Set her up in a little business somewhere, but a few bucks in a bank account. Two years with Benny entitles you to a little security, don't you think, honey?

VICKI

It's okay, Benny. I'll make out, I swear.

BUGSY

On the other hand, if a guy screws my girl, he's gotta pay for it. So why not pay both bills at the same time. You marry her, Charley, that takes care of her security. She marries you and I fuck up your life 'cause she's no damned good. Everybody gets something. That's how I run the biggest hotel in Las Vegas.

CHARLEY

I -- I can't marry her, Mr. Siegel. I'm marrying someone else next week.

BUGSY

Right. The Horner dame. Daughter of that big-time Hollywood guy, right? I think when he reads the morning papers, Charley, he cancels the caterers.

Gus opens the door and gets out.

BUGSY (cont'd)

Okay, Vicki. Take the arm of your animal and step up to the altar...

CHARLEY

We don't have a wedding license.

BUGSY

It's okay. I own the chapel.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

They step out of the car.

CUT TO:

34 INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

34

Charley and Vicki are standing in front of a Norman Rockwell JUSTICE OF THE PEACE. He wears a robe over pajamas. His wife plays the organ. "Bugsy", Gus and Dante stand behind them, the witnesses.

JUSTICE

... and do you, Victoria Rosemary Anderson, take Charles for your lawful wedded husband?

VICKI

(barely audible)

I do.

BUGSY

Sorry. We didn't hear that in the back.

JUSTICE

She's a little nervous. Speak up, dear.

VICKI

I do.

JUSTICE

And do you, Charles Raymond Pearl, take Victoria to be your lawfully wedded wife, for as long as you both shall live?

CHARLEY

I, er... I do.

JUSTICE

Did you hear that, Mr. Siegel?

BUGSY

Perfect.

JUSTICE

Then with the power vested in me by the State of Nevada, I now pronounce you man and wife.

Charley nods unhappily, turning, not knowing where to go.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

BUGSY

No kiss? Where's the kiss? I seen
the other stuff, I want to see a
kiss.

Charley gives a perfunctory, quick kiss to Vicki.

The Wife plays the organ rhapsodically.

CUT TO:

35 OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL

35

"Bugsy", Gus and Dante step out first. As Charley and
Vicki step out, Gus and Dante throw rice at them from a
rice box. A Photographer snaps a picture of the
newlyweds, with a smiling "Bugsy" in the picture.

BUGSY

(to photographer)

Rush it, Tony. We wanna make the
early edition.

Charley's white Packard pulls up, driven by another of
Bugsy's boys, and gets out.

CHARLEY

Are we free to go now?

BUGSY

You can go now, Charley, but I
wouldn't say you were free.

Charley and Vicki quickly get in the car. Bugsy
crosses to the window. Vicki is holding her pitiful
nosegay of flowers.

BUGSY (cont'd)

Hey!! Your wedding license.

As Vicki takes it:

BUGSY (cont'd)

You know what, Charley? I got a
feeling one day you're gonna wish we
gave you the cement job.

He smiles as Charley speeds away.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. THE CALIFORNIA DESERT - DAWN

36

The sun is just coming up. It's going to be a
magnificent morning.

CUT TO:

Charley is driving, steaming mad. Vicki looks out the window forlornly, smelling her flowers.

CHARLEY

Dumb! Dumb! How the hell could I be so dumb to get myself trapped in a stupid thing like this?... What's Adele going to say?... What's her father going to say?... What's my father going to say?

VICKI

Quit bitching, will you? You're lucky we're not floating in the Hoover Dam.

CHARLEY

Just yesterday I was saying to the guys, Hot gets you into trouble every time. When you're hot for a woman, you can bet it's going to screw up your life.

VICKI

I didn't rape you, Charley. I just left the window open a little... Too bad you don't have the balls in the morning that you had last night.

CHARLEY

I'm not blaming you. Did I blame you? It was my mistake. I made the first stupid move, not you.

VICKI

Gee, thanks. Are you always gonna be this cheerful in the mornings, sweetheart?

CHARLEY

What mornings? This is the first morning and the last morning. And what I said last night was the truth. It was the best experience I ever had in my life. I want you every time I look at you. I just don't want to be married to you.

VICKI

(laughs)

I can't believe I'm driving in a white Packard convertible, married to a man worth thirty million bucks and I want to throw up.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

CHARLEY

Oh, really? So I was the only one
having a good time last night, huh?
Well, let me tell you something.
You act better than you sing.

VICKI

No, it was terrific last night...
But I haven't been happy with you
since the minute we got married.
We'll get it annulled as soon as we
get to L.A. Is that fast enough for
you, lover boy?

CHARLEY

No. We can do it quicker. I've got
a lawyer friend in Palm Springs...
We'll be there in twenty minutes.

VICKI

Fine. Does breakfast go with it?

CHARLEY

(he looks at her)

Look! This isn't your fault. It's
mine. I'll make good. Figure out
some kind of settlement with you.
Ten, twenty thousand, whatever you
need.

VICKI

Don't insult me. I don't want your
lousy money. I'll split the lawyer
bill just to get rid of you. I'll
owe you, but I'll pay you.

CHARLEY

Don't be a chump. Take something.
I can afford it. What is it you
want?

VICKI

(touches her flowers)

... Don't treat me like I'm a bimbo.
It's my wedding day.

CHARLEY

(looks at her)

I'm sorry... I didn't mean to... I'm
really sorry.

CUT TO:

38 A SIGN ON THE ROAD

38

"WELCOME TO PALM SPRINGS"... They speed past it.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. SMALL OFFICE BUILDING - PALM SPRINGS

39

Charley and Vicki come out of the building, down the stops. They stand on the sidewalk, looking around, not quite knowing what to do.

CHARLEY

Three months? I thought it would take quicker than that.

VICKI

What does "consummated" mean?

CHARLEY

What?

VICKI

He said "the marriage was never consummated."

CHARLEY

It means we never made love during the marriage.

VICKI

Oh. I thought it had something to do with soup.

Charley sees a newsstand. He crosses to it and picks up a newspaper.

40 INSERT - THE FRONT PAGE

40

A picture of Charley and Vicki as they get pelted with rice. Next to them is a smiling "Bugsy Siegel."

41 BACK TO SCENE

41

CHARLEY

(slaps the paper)

Shit!

Vicki takes the paper from him.

VICKI

(pleased)

First time I was ever on the front page... Could I have a few copies? I want to send it to my family.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

She takes a pile off the newsstand. Charley takes the rest of them and gives them to her, throwing down two-dollar bills.

CHARLEY

I wish I could buy them all up in L.A.

VICKI

If she loves you, she'll wait for you.

CHARLEY

Yeah. I'm sure her father is waiting for me, too.

He starts to walk towards his car. She hasn't moved. He turns.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Well? You coming?

VICKI

I don't think so... no.

CHARLEY

What do you mean, no? You don't have a bag, you don't have clothes, you don't have money, you don't have anything! I'll get you an apartment in L.A. I'll get you an agent. I'll take care of you till you get back on your own feet again.

VICKI

(she looks around, thinking)

... To Benny I'm a slut and to you I'm a bimbo. To me, I'm a song stylist. Millionaire or mobster, you guys are all alike... and I'm not taking any handouts anymore because I end up with zippos, including my self-respect. Right here is where I stop and right here is where I start.

CHARLEY

Vicki, listen to me --

VICKI

Two things I'm gonna do from now on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

VICKI (CONT'D)
 I'm going to earn my own living
 and I'm going to leave my side
 windows shut!... So long,
 Charley. Give my regards to the
 new Mrs. Pearl.

She turns away, walking with her large pile of news-
 papers. He watches her, not believing it, then turns
 for his car.

VICKI (cont'd)
 Hey!
 (as he turns back
 and looks at her)
 Let me know when the annulment comes
 through. If it's one thing I am,
 it's faithful.

She turns and walks away again.

CUT TO:

42 CLOSEUP - LEW HORNER'S FACE

42

He is looking straight INTO THE CAMERA, his face red
 with rage.

HORNER
 Three months??? You want Adele
 Horner to wait three months until
 you get annulled from some cheap
 bimbo cocktail waitress?

43 WIDE SHOT

43

We are in Horner's study. Charley is sitting in front
 of the desk. Adele sits near her father, dabbing her
 wet eyes with a hanky.

CHARLEY
 She's not a cocktail waitress. She
 sings with a band. And I did not
 marry her of my own free will. I'm
 trying to tell you we were kidnapped
 and forced to get married at
 gunpoint.

HORNER
 (to Adele)
 Are you listening to this? I warned
 you about him, didn't I?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HORNER (CONT'D)

(to Charley)

Nobody gets forced to get married at gunpoint except hillbillies. And you're no hillbilly, you polo-playing Goddamned playboy!

CHARLEY

I'm trying to explain to you. She was "Bugsy" Siegel's girlfriend. I happened to strike up a conversation with her at the bar. Anyone can tell you that "Bugsy" Siegel is crazy and when he saw us together, he wanted to kill us... but for some lunatic reason, he made us get married instead.

HORNER

(nonplussed)

He made you marry his girlfriend?

CHARLEY

She was his girlfriend. He's got a new girlfriend now.

HORNER

Why would he make you marry his ex-girlfriend?

CHARLEY

Well... it was cheaper than setting her up in her own business. He was paying her off with me.

HORNER

... Do I look stupid to you?

CHARLEY

No, sir.

HORNER

Do I look like a schmuck to you?

CHARLEY

No, sir.

HORNER

"Bugsy" Siegel may be crazy, but stupid he's not. These people out there kill for power, for money. But this thing he did was for revenge.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HORNER (CONT'D)

(face-to-face with
Charley)

... For talking to his ex-girlfriend, he might break your legs. But your legs look fine to me, Charley.

(whispers)

So what did you do besides talk to her?

Charley looks at Adele, embarrassed, then whispers in Horner's other ear.

CHARLEY

Well, sir, the rest of the story contains some indelicacies which are best discussed among men.

HORNER

"Indelicacies"??... We sent out four hundred wedding invitations. The Governor and both Senators are flying in from Washington. On the front page of this morning's Los Angeles Times is a picture of you, "Bugsy" Siegel and the bimbo getting married in a Las Vegas quickie wedding chapel. On page twelve of the same paper, is the announcement of the engagement of my daughter to the same man who's fucking wedding picture is on page one. You still want to talk about "indelicacies"?

CHARLEY

I can see you don't want to hear my side of the story.

HORNER

They're laughing at me this morning at every studio in this town. I make family pictures for families who bring their kids. Children sing songs and buy toy bunny rabbits and baby ducks that go quack from my pictures. I'll break your ass, you fucking little shithead. Get out of my house, you hot, horny bastard, before I kick you the hell out.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

(gets up)

I'm sorry, Adele. I never meant to hurt you. I don't expect you to forgive me, but I hope one day you'll let me explain. I won't give up trying because I'm still very much in love with you. Goodbye, Adele. Goodbye, Mr. Horner.

He starts out of the room

HORNER

(follows him)

You better start eating at home, you little creep, because you won't get into a restaurant in this city.

Charley continues down the steps. Horner stands on the top of the steps, bellowing at him.

HORNER (cont'd)

You won't get a table, a chair, a plate, a fork, a glass of water or a piece of lettuce that dropped off a tray. You're through in this town, Pearl. You're a dead man. In tomorrow morning's obituaries, I'm putting in "Died today. Charles Raymond Pearl of Boston. Cause of death, a fucking flaw in his fucking character"...

Charley exits as the butler opens and closes the door behind him.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. CHARLEY'S HOUSE - HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

44

It's a house with a beautiful view of the city below. Sitting out on the patio having a barbeque dinner are Phil, Sammy, George and Tony. A Chinese cook, WOO LING, is serving. Charley sits forlornly gazing at the view, not eating.

PHIL

Is this food great or what? Don't we live a great life, Charley? Heh?

Charley doesn't respond.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

(eating)

This guy cooks everything Chinese.
Spaghetti, hot dogs, enchiladas,
it's all Chinese.

WOO LING

(smiles)

More chili con carne?

GEORGE

You hear? With soy sauce.

SAMMY

(to Charley)

You're not eating, Charley. You
haven't eaten in weeks.

CHARLEY

I'll eat.

Woo Ling goes back in the house with some emptied
dishes.

TONY

(while he eats)

Forget her, Charley. No woman is
worth starving for.

PHIL

Right. She's just another broad.

CHARLEY

Adele Horner is no broad.

PHIL

Sorry. I thought you were thinking
of Vicki.

SAMMY

You've got to get out more, Charley.
You can't stay cooped up out here on
the patio, looking out at the same
panoramic view every night.

GEORGE

Yeah. There's plenty of restaurants
we can still get into... way
downtown.

TONY

Hey, there's a great new Mexican
restaurant I heard about. Food you
can't believe.

(CONTINUED)

PHIL

Where is it?

TONY

In Mexico. Why don't we go, Charley? Charter a plane for the weekend. We could all use some laughs.

SAMMY

Not a bad idea, Charles. Hot food and wom --

He stops himself as he looks at the others.

PHIL

Have you heard from her at all, Charley?

CHARLEY

Vicki?

PHIL

No. Adele.

CHARLEY

They won't put my calls through.

SAMMY

I hear she's in San Diego.

CHARLEY

Adele?

SAMMY

No. Vicki. She's singing in some joint.

CHARLEY

I just can't get that woman out of my mind.

They all look at each other, wondering which woman he means. Phil shrugs to the others.

GEORGE

I'm gonna say something, what the hell? Why don't you call that great lookin' redhead from last year, Charley?

CHARLEY

Marian?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (3)

44

GEORGE

No. Vivian.

Woo Ling comes back in.

WOO LING

Excuse, Mr. Pearl. Lady here to see you.

CHARLEY

Here?

WOO LING

Look very unhappy. She say very important.

Charley bolts up out of his seat and rushes inside.

TONY

Seven to five it's Vicki.

PHIL

Even money it's Adele.

SAMMY

I'll take a hundred on the song bird.

GEORGE

I'll go with the Horner filly.
Class will out every time.

CUT TO:

45 THE DEN

45

It's a leathery man's room. Lots of photos of Charley playing polo, racing cars, boats, winners circle at the track. It's dimly lit. Charley walks in and stops.

CHARLEY

You got my letter.

CUT TO:

46 ADELE

46

She turns and looks at him. She's extra pretty tonight.

ADELE

I swore to my father I'd never see you again. I swore to myself I'd never see you again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ADELE (CONT'D)

But I didn't swear I wouldn't read
your letter.

Charley moves toward her.

ADELE (cont'd)

Don't Charley. Don't touch me or
smile at me or breathe near me. I
hate you so much because I'm still
in love with you. Partly because
you're so bad and partly because
you're so honest. I don't know
another man who'd admit to his
future wife that he slept with
another woman six days before their
wedding. I think Mr. Siegel let you
off easy. If I walked in that room
and found you in bed with that
woman, I would have shot you and her
on the spot... especially her... And
then you write all those loving
things to me on the last page and I
don't know what to think... Do you
still want to marry me, Charley?

CHARLEY

Yes, Adele... Yes.

ADELE

Why?

CHARLEY

Because I'm in love with you.

ADELE

Then why did you sleep with her?

CHARLEY

You won't like my answer.

ADELE

Say it anyway.

CHARLEY

I just had to have her.

ADELE

You're right. I hate it... Do you
still see her?

CHARLEY

No.

(CONTINUED)

ADELE

Do you still want her?

CHARLEY

No.

ADELE

Don't lie.

CHARLEY

A little. It'll go away.

ADELE

Oh, Charley.

CHARLEY

Marry me, Adele, and I'll never see her and I'll stop wanting her. I swear.

ADELE

You're still lying, Charley. Not to me but to yourself.

CHARLEY

We're two rich kids, Adele. Spoiled rotten from the day we were born. We want it all and we usually get it. But we're grown up now and we can't have it all anymore. We can't be perfect for each other because we both need so much. I need you because you bring out the good in me. You need me because I bring out the bad in you. I think good and bad adds up to wonderful.

ADELE

(looks at him)

... I'm going to Europe with my father for three months. You should be free from that -- person -- by then. I'll be home on September 9th. Call me September 10th... Goodbye, Charley.

She leaves, walking past him. He doesn't move.

CUT TO:

EXT. A POLO FIELD - DAY

A polo match in session. Charley, on a beautiful horse, is in the thick of the game.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

PHIL (V.O.)

... so Adele went to Europe to think
and Charley buried himself in work
-- which which was being a playboy.
But his heart just wasn't in it.

Another player hits the ball and it sails through the
air, hitting Charley in the head and knocking him off
his horse.

CUT TO:

48 A SPEEDBOAT RACE

48

We see the boats racing in hot conflict.

49 CLOSEUP OF CHARLEY

49

in his speedboat. His boat suddenly spins out of con-
trol and does a full loop in the air.

CUT TO:

50 A MOTOR RACEWAY

50

Charley behind the wheel of a racing car. He tries to
pull ahead of the leader, but skids and goes flying
over a fence and out of sight.

PHIL (V.O.)

If Adele didn't come home soon,
there wouldn't be much of Charley to
come home to.

CUT TO:

51 CHARLEY'S DEN

51

He paces the floor. He limps, leaning on a cane. A
patch over his eye.

PHIL (V.O.)

Then finally it came. September
10th.

Charley sits and dials the phone.

PHIL (V.O.)(cont'd)

The morning line on Adele saying
"Yes" was eight to five. I took the
odds and bet on Cupid.

We hear Adele on the line.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

ADELE (V.O.)

Hello?

CHARLEY

It's September 10th... How was the trip?

ADELE (V.O.)

I liked Greece but Turkey was dusty... My father and I talked about you a lot.

CHARLEY

Fondly, I hope.

ADELE

Can you come over at seven? For dinner?

CHARLEY

I'm starved. I haven't eaten since you left.

ADELE

One word of warning, Charley. When my father talks, just keep saying "Yes."

The telephone CLICKS off. Charley smiles and snaps his fingers.

52 INT. HORNER DINING ROOM - NIGHT

52

Lew Horner at the head of the table. Charley and Adele sit on either side of him. They are eating dessert.

HORNER

(pushes his plate
away)

So... did you miss Adele, Charley?

CHARLEY

Yes, sir.

HORNER

Have you been behaving yourself?

CHARLEY

Yes, sir.

HORNER

You haven't been seeing anyone you shouldn't be, have you?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

Yes, sir... I mean, no, sir.

HORNER

I was young once myself, Charley. And I also made some big mistakes in my time. But I did everything I could to rectify those mistakes.

CHARLEY

Yes, sir.

HORNER

It would take you over twelve hundred years to rectify yours, Charley. But that's a long time to wait to start a family.

CHARLEY

I understand, sir.

HORNER

So here's the deal. You get married one week from tonight. A simple ceremony. No guests. As quiet as a grave. A retired judge will do it in my study. The servants will be given the night off. I'm taking no chances on another scandal, you understand?

CHARLEY

Perfectly, sir.

HORNER

One other item. I want you to put up a half million dollar bond, to be held in escrow. At the end of the ceremony, it'll be returned to you. If you don't show up, you'll be the generous benefactor of a local orphanage... Is that acceptable to you?

ADELE

It's not to me. I don't think I should have to buy someone to marry me.

HORNER

He's not being bought to marry you. But he's paying up if he doesn't.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

That's acceptable to me, sir.

HORNER

The final item. Not a word of this wedding to anyone. If there's a leak, or a breath of rumor, it's off.

CHARLEY

You have my word, sir.

HORNER

Leave the check on the desk in my library. Make it out to the Culver City Boys Orphanage. I'll have it certified in the morning.

(he gets up)

I regret using such foul language at our last meeting, Charley. It was uncharacteristic of me.

CHARLEY

Don't give it a thought, sir.

HORNER

I'll see you here one week from tonight, Charley. If I don't, not even the dark side of the moon will be a safe place for you.

He gives Charley a deadly stare and leaves.

CHARLEY

Whew!

(big smile to Adele)

We made it, honey. It's all set. Now we have to get a blood test, the license and plan a honeymoon.

ADELE

It's done. Daddy did it all.

CHARLEY

Oh?... Where are we going?

ADELE

He won't tell me. He's being so cautious. Can you blame him?

CHARLEY

No. I understand.

(reaches for her)

I haven't even touched you yet. I haven't even kissed you.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

ADELE

(puts hand up)

Not yet, Charley. I don't want it
to be -- the way it was with "her."

CHARLEY

Alright. Okay. I can be patient...
Can we at least go out for dinner
tomorrow night?

ADELE

Not yet. He doesn't want us to be
seen together. He doesn't want
people talking.

CHARLEY

Well, the thing is, my pal Tony is
opening at the St. Tropez tomorrow.
He's singing three new songs that
Sammy wrote for him. I can't miss
their opening, hon.

ADELE

Of course not. You go and tell me
about it... alone, I mean.

CHARLEY

I've been alone for three months
now, Adele.

(he holds her hand)

It's hard to wait even for a week.
How do you feel?

ADELE

Awful.

CHARLEY

You do?

ADELE

About the check. I can't even stand
to watch you make it out.

(she gets up)

Just leave it on the table, Charley.
I'll call you tomorrow. I love you.

She starts for the door.

CHARLEY

You're leaving?

ADELE

I find this distasteful.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (4)

52

CHARLEY

It's no big deal.

(he takes out pen
and checkbook)

Was that the Culver City Orphanage?

ADELE

"Boys" orphanage.

She blows him a kiss and goes. Charley shrugs and
begins to write.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. ST. TROPEZ CLUB - NIGHT

53

On the billboard outside, we see a sign announcing
tonight's opening starring Tony Madden and under this,
with smaller billing, "Featuring Amber Wayne, song
stylist."

CUT TO:

54 INT. ST. TROPEZ CLUB

54

It is small and smoky.

At a table, Phil and Charley are sitting with Sheila
and Sherry. There is a vacant chair for Sammy.

PHIL

(to Charley)

So what happened with Adele? You
never told us.

CHARLEY

Nothing much. I spoke to her.
She's fine. That's all.

PHIL

I can't get a word outa this guy.
Something's going on, Charley, I can
tell.

CHARLEY

Nothing. I swear.

SHERRY

If you're lonely, Charley, I know a
beautiful airline stewardess who
would miss her flight tonight to be
here.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

PHIL
(to Sherry)
What's wrong with you? There may be
children flying on that plane.
Leave the man alone.

Sammy, looking distraught, sits down next to Sherry.

SAMMY
It's not my night. Everything's
going wrong. Tony's nervous because
the MGM people didn't show yet and
then the opening act cancels on
us. She's got laryngitis.

SHERRY
Oh, what a shame.

PHIL
No opening act? What do you need,
twenty, thirty minutes? I would do
this for Tony, no one else.
(he starts to get up)
Thank God he's got friends like me.

SAMMY
(pushes him down)
They got someone else. I don't know
who.
(looks up)
Give me a break, God. take care of
show people tonight.

The house lights lower, DRUMROLL. In the dark, the
voice of an ANNOUNCER.

ANNOUNCER
Ladies and gentlemen, the management
regrets Miss Amber Wayne will be
unable to appear tonight... but
delights presenting, in her first
Los Angeles appearance, Miss Vicki
Anderson.

CUT TO:

55 CHARLEY

55

He closes his eyes and lowers his head.

CHARLEY
Jeez!

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

PHIL
You know what the odds are on this
happening? Impossible to one.

CUT TO:

56 THE SMALL STAGE

56

Vicki comes out. she looks better than before, if
that's possible. A new hairdo and some self-esteem
have gone far. She begins to sing, with more confi-
dence now.

CUT TO:

57 THE TABLE

57

Charley finally looks at her. It's clear the old feel-
ing has not gone.

SHEILA
She looks familiar to me... Oh, my
gosh. Charley, isn't that the girl
you were marr -- Oww!!

As she gets kicked under the table by Sammy.

SAMMY
I didn't know it was going to be
her, Charley, I swear.

CHARLEY
I've got to get out of here.

He starts to get up.

PHIL
And walk out of Tony's opening?
He'll never forgive you.

CHARLEY
If Lew Horner finds out she and I
were in the same club together,
he'll call everything off.

SAMMY
Call what off?

PHIL
That's it! I knew it! You and
Adele are getting married.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

CHARLEY
Not unless I beat it.
(to the girls)
I'm sorry. Please tell Tony that I
got sick.

He leaves.

SHERRY
What's wrong with him?

PHIL
A slight heart attack.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 BACKSTAGE

58

It's a small, dark area with two tiny dressing rooms.
We see Tony pacing nervously. The MANAGER stands next
to him at the backstage mike.

TONY
(to Manager)
The MGM people get here yet?

MANAGER
Just walked in. Too bad they missed
that girl. She's a real looker.

TONY
Timing. Everything in life is
timing.

Vicki comes off to a very nice round of APPLAUSE. She
walks through the drapes to the backstage area.

TONY (cont'd)
(to Vicki)
Hey! Terrific, kid. I mean it.

VICKI
They seemed to like it, didn't they?

TONY
What's not to like?... I'm Tony
Madden. I'm a good friend of
Charley Pearl's.

VICKI
Oh?... was he out there tonight?

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

TONY

Yeah.

VICKI

I'm glad I didn't know. Would have made me nervous... Good luck.

TONY

Thanks.

The Manager speaks into the mike.

MANAGER

And now, ladies and gentlemen, the star of our show, RCA recording star...

TONY

Big! Big! Louder!

MANAGER

(louder)

The St. Tropez proudly presents Hollywood's new sensation, Mr. Tony Madden.

TONY

Esther Williams, here I come.

He goes through the drapes to big APPLAUSE.

CUT TO:

59 VICKI

59

She enters her dressing room and sits down at her table. She lets out a sigh of relief, then looks in the mirror and suddenly sees that Charley is sitting in a chair against the wall behind her.

CHARLEY

There was no window in here so I used the door... How are you?

VICKI

(doesn't turn)

Pretty good, Charley.

CHARLEY

It didn't take you that long. Getting back on your own two feet, I mean.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Well, it's just for one night... Was I any good, Charley?

CHARLEY

You know I'm a big fan... I really shouldn't be here talking to you now.

VICKI

That's what they told you in Las Vegas.

CHARLEY

I shouldn't be telling you this either but I'm getting married on Tuesday.

VICKI

Good for Adele. She hung in there.

CHARLEY

What about you? Seeing anyone?

VICKI

I haven't had time. I've only been annulled two weeks.

CHARLEY

Tony's going to kill me for not being out there watching him.

VICKI

Your life's always being threatened, isn't it, Charley?

CHARLEY

(nods, smiles)

Well, I just wanted to come by and say hello. I'm glad the breaks are finally coming your way.

VICKI

Have a nice life, Charley.

He looks at her, then crosses to the door and opens it.

CHARLEY

The truth is, I just wanted to come back here and see if I could be close to you and still want to get married on Tuesday.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

She looks at him with questioning eyes.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
I guess I'm reasonably safe.

He smiles at her.

VICKI
I'm always glad to see somebody
happy.

He nods, then leaves and closes the door. Vicki throws
her powder puff angrily at the dressing mirror.

The door opens again and Charley sticks his head in.

CHARLEY
Look, if you're not going to be too
long, I could give you a lift home.

VICKI
Thanks, but I've got a car.

CHARLEY
Mine is bigger.

She looks at him.

CUT TO:

60 A BEDROOM - NIGHT

60

Probably her hotel room. It is dark and Charley and
Vicki are in bed, once again in the final throes of
elegant pleasure. Exhausted, Charley falls over on his
side.

CHARLEY
Jesus! That just cost me half a
million bucks.

VICKI
No, Charley. That was just for old
times sake. Get out now before you
screw up our lives. Not to mention
Adele's.

CHARLEY
It's too late and you know it.
We're bonded, you and I. It's not
just the sex. It's like a fever you
know you're going to be running for
the rest of your life.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

(sits up)

Goddammit, you don't know what the hell you want, Charley Pearl. You come on to me while you're engaged to another girl and then she dumps you, so you come on to her again and the poor dumbbell says yes to you once more, then the minute she's hooked, you show up here and come on to me again. I'm not spending the rest of my life playing musical chairs with you, me and Adele.

CHARLEY

Adele's not playing. It's going to be tough on her, I know... On the other hand, there's going to be some very rich orphans in Culver City.

VICKI

(gets out of bed,
puts on robe)

I'm not giving up my career. I got my foot in the door, don't slam it on me, Charley. It's the only thing that keeps someone like me safe from someone like you.

CHARLEY

Have your career. I won't stop you. Sing to your heart's content. And when you come home at night then we'll both be content.

VICKI

Damn you, Charley. What's a girl gonna do when you offer her everything?

CHARLEY

Take it. Everything is all I have to offer.

VICKI

Do you love me, Charley? Aside from all this, do you really love me?

CHARLEY

You can bet your house on it.

VICKI

I don't have a house.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

60

CHARLEY

Don't worry. You will.

VICKI

Because I'm crazy about you. I knew it when I saw you tonight. And then when you walked out of my dressing room like you were never coming back, I wanted to die.

CHARLEY

... Would the ex-Mrs. Pearl be interested in being the next Mrs. Pearl?

VICKI

Are you proposing again, Charley?

CHARLEY

I didn't propose last time. "Bugsy" did. This one's my idea.

VICKI

I like your ideas, Charley. Only this time let's "consummate" it!

She jumps into bed on top of him.

CUT TO:

61 EXT. CHARLEY'S PATIO - DAY

61

A wedding ceremony. Charley and Vicki in front of a Justice of the Peace. The four guys and their girls are in attendance.

PHIL (V.O.)

... So Charley and Vicki got married for the second time. I was the best man and did forty minutes of boffo material. Tony sang a new song that Sammy wrote for the wedding called, "The Girl that I Married and Married"... The other girls, all being single, naturally cried at the wedding... and somewhere else in Hollywood, someone was crying more than anyone.

CUT TO:

62 CLOSEUP OF ADELE'S FACE

62

She is bawling like a banshee.

CUT TO:

63 CLOSEUP OF LEW HORNERS' FACE

63

HORNER

(into CAMERA)

He's dead! The man is dead! I'll
get pictures of him dead and you can
pin 'em on your wall and throw darts
at them.

We PULL CAMERA BACK. We are in Lew Horner's study. He
is pacing. Adele is prostrate on the sofa, hysterical.

HORNER (cont'd)

Last time he tells us he got married
at gunpoint. What'd they have this
time, a cannon up his ass?

ADELE

You scared him away. You scare
everyone away.

HORNER

Well, don't worry. This time I'll
blow the bastard away. I'll make
"Bugsy" Siegel look like a Goddamned
pansy... For your sake I let him off
the hook the first time. This time
he'll spend his honeymoon on the
bottom of the Pacific fucking ocean.

ADELE

Please, Daddy, don't kill him.
Maybe he'll change his mind again.

Horner looks at her like she's a lunatic.

HORNER

Stay out of this, Adele. From now
on I'll pick out who you marry...
Now pack your bags. After I take
care of this shithead, we're going
to China for a year.

CUT TO:

64 VICKI'S OLD BUNGALOW IN LAS VEGAS - DAY

64

"Bugsy" Siegel is sitting on the sofa reading a
newspaper and listening to the RADIO.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

His new Blonde sits brushing her hair. Gus and Dante stand around. Gus looks at his watch. The NEWS is on the radio. Gus opens the window slightly.

ANNOUNCER

(a Walter Winchell
type)

... and, Mr. and Mrs. America, this just in from Hollywood. Millionaire toothpaste playboy Charley Pearl married for the second time today. And who's the lucky girl? It's the first Mrs. Pearl, Vicki Anderson, former girlfriend of Ben "Bugsy" Siegel, Las Vegas's answer to Murder Incorporated...

BUGSY

(proudly)

You hear that? I just made Walter Winchell.

GUS

Well, we're hungry, boss. We're going to dinner.

BUGSY

Dinner? You just had lunch an hour ago.

GUS

Yeah, but it was Chinese food. Should we bring you something?

BUGSY

Nah. I got a headache.

They go and close the door. The news continues on RADIO.

CUT TO:

65 THE WINDOW THAT GUS OPENED

65

We see a double-barreled shotgun slide in under the open window.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. HOUSE

66

Gus and Dante come out and stop.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

Gus looks at his watch. We suddenly hear a double-barreled shotgun BLAST.

GUS

(smiles to Dante)

I bet he don't have no headache now.

CUT TO:

67 INT. BEDROOM - CHARLEY'S HOUSE - DAY

67

Charley and Vicki are both packing their valises.

VICKI

Can you imagine, Charley? Blowing Benny's head off in my old living room. It could have been me... or you.

CHARLEY

Let's never make friends with mobsters again, okay?

The downstairs doorbell RINGS.

VICKI

I can't wait to get to Paris... I can't believe I'm going to London.

CHARLEY

Don't forget Madrid and Barcelona.

VICKI

You sure you don't mind my working, Charley? On our honeymoon?

CHARLEY

One week out of two months? That's nothing. You'll knock 'em dead in London.

VICKI

Thanks for arranging it, Charley. I cry when I think about it.

CHARLEY

My wedding gift to you.

The doorbell RINGS again. Charley yells down.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Woo Ling! Don't you hear the doorbell?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

VICKI

He went into town. They called and said your new shoes were ready.

CHARLEY

New shoes? I didn't buy any new shoes.

The doorbell RINGS again.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

Finish my bag, will you, hon? It must be the airport limo.

He leaves the room as she continues to pack.

CUT TO:

68 HALLWAY

68

Charley comes down the stairs. The doorbell RINGS again.

CHARLEY

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm coming.

He opens the door. Two BIG BURLY MEN stand there.

1ST MAN

Mr. Pearl?

Charley looks over their shoulders to the big limousine parked outside.

CHARLEY

We're almost packed. I'll call you in a few minutes to get the bags.

Charley starts to close the door but the 2ND MAN stops it with his huge hand.

1ST MAN

We have a going away gift for you... from a friend.

Charley looks at the limo again. Lew Horner peers out from the rear window. Charley reacts and starts to back away slowly into the house. The Two Men move slowly towards him.

CHARLEY

Wait a minute, fellas. If he can pay you, I'll pay you double.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

1ST MAN

He already paid us double.

Charley turns and runs up the stairs. They're after him in hot pursuit. As Charley gets to the top of the stairs, they grab his ankle. Then they pull him down the stairs, Charley's head bouncing on each step on the way down. At the bottom of the landing, they pick Charley up and commence to beat him mercilessly. They beat him in the hallway and they beat him into the living room.

Vicki comes out to the top landing, sees what's happening and screams.

Finally, the bigger man picks Charley up and throws him through the living room window out onto the front lawn.

CUT TO:

69 OUTSIDE

69

Charley lays motionless on the ground. The huge Man kicks Charley in the head for good measure. Then they get into the front of the limo.

CUT TO:

70 INSIDE LIMO

70

In the backseat, Lew Horner turns to Adele, who is crying.

HORNER

Alright? Have you seen enough?

Adele nods.

HORNER (cont'd)

Okay.

(to driver)

Let's get the hell to China.

CUT TO:

71 FRONT LAWN

71

Vicki comes running out, rushes to Charley, who tries to open his eyes. She holds his head in her arms and cradles it.

VICKI

Oh, Charley, Charley, I'm so sorry.

CUT TO:

72 A HOSPITAL ROOM

72

Charley is in bed with a broken arm, and other injuries. Vicki sits in a chair near the window, reading a magazine.

CHARLEY

... I'm sorry about the honeymoon.

VICKI

It's okay, Charley.

CHARLEY

It's the second time you didn't have one.

VICKI

It's okay, Charley.

CHARLEY

I'm sorry about the job in London. They said maybe next year.

VICKI

It's okay, Charley.

A NURSE comes in with a vase of flowers.

NURSE

Flowers, Mr. Pearl. From the Culver City Boys Orphanage.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. CHARLEY'S PATIO - DAY (TWO MONTHS LATER)

73

Charley sits in a lounge chair. Phil, Tony and Sammy sit around him, grinning like kids with a secret.

TONY

... so tomorrow morning at eight o'clock I start taking swimming lessons. I lose Esther to Fernando Lamas at the end of the picture, but what the hell!

SAMMY

Original score by Frank Loesser, additional songs by Sammy Fine.

CHARLEY

(half-heartedly)
That's great, guys. Just great.

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Wait! There's more.

PHIL

Me, Fred Astaire, Rita Hayworth...
in one picture.

CHARLEY

Co-starring?

PHIL

Better. I play a funny taxi driver.
One dynamic scene. Let Fred and
Rita carry the heavy plot.

CHARLEY

Terrific, guys.

SAMMY

And don't forget George. He's got
Cincinnati in seventh place. It's
not good but it's the big leagues.

PHIL

And Charley's got Vicki. We all
finished in the money.

CHARLEY

(gets up)

Listen, guys, I have to call Vicki.
She's auditioning today at
Paramount. I want to see how she
made out.

He goes into the house. They wait till he's gone.

PHIL

I can tell him how she made out.
They're not hiring any wives of
Charley Pearl in this town. Who
wants Lew Horner for an enemy?

SAMMY

The irony is, if he married Adele,
Vicki would be working today.

TONY

Hey, let's be honest. Vicki is cute
but she's never gonna cut it as a
movie star. And Charley knows it
too.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: (2)

73

PHIL
I see trouble, guys. Trouble in
paradise.

CUT TO:

74 THE SKY

74

It is dark and ominous. Storm clouds gather and
thunder BOOMS in the sky.

CUT TO:

75 CHARLEY'S DEN

75

It's a few days later. Charley looks out the window,
watching the rain on the windows.

Suddenly Vicki rushes in, excited, happy, and wet.

VICKI
Charley!... Charley, they want to
test me at Monogram. Monogram
Pictures. I know it's kind of a
crummy studio, but they really liked
me. And it's not a werewolf
picture. It's a musical. A big
musical... I've got to learn two
songs by Wednesday morning and I'd
better take some real fast dancing
lessons.

(she hugs him)
Oh, God, Charley, if only I could
show them what I --
(notices his glumness)
What's wrong, Charley?

CHARLEY
I leave for Boston in two hours. My
father had a stroke. They don't
think he'll last out the week.

VICKI
Oh, Charley. I'm so sorry.

CHARLEY
I never thought about him dying. He
just wasn't the type, you know what
I mean?

VICKI
Yeah. My father died when I was
six... Did you speak to him?

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

CHARLEY

Not much. He's on oxygen. A couple of words.

VICKI

What'd he say?

CHARLEY

He wants to meet you. He said he's not going anywhere until he meets his daughter.

VICKI

Even after what he's read about me?

CHARLEY

Especially.

VICKI

(thinks a moment)

... I'll start packing. I'm going with you.

CHARLEY

I'll call Monogram. They can postpone the test for a few days.

VICKI

(shakes head "no")

They start shooting Friday. Ten other girls are testing besides me... It was a long shot, anyway.

CHARLEY

I'll make it up to you, honey. I swear.

VICKI

I'm just glad he wants to meet me.

She puts on a brave smile as she leaves the room.
Thunder CLAPS overhead.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. LARGE HOUSE - BOSTON - DAY

76

It's in the elegant Back Bay section. A large, stately house.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

PHIL (V.O.)
So Charley and Vicki flew to Boston
and when they got there, Charley's
father was in a coma.

CUT TO:

77 INT. BEDROOM

77

Charley's FATHER, a man in his mid-seventies, lies in a
big bed, in a coma.

Vicki and Charley sit at the side of the bed, watching
the father for signs of life.

PHIL (V.O.)
They watched and waited and waited
and watched for five solid days for
the old man to meet Vicki.

The old man lays there, eyes closed.

VICKI
(whispers to Charley)
You think it's alright to go to the
bathroom a second?

Charley nods to her. She gets up and tiptoes to the
bathroom, closing the door behind her.

His Father suddenly opens his eyes and looks at
Charley.

FATHER
Where is she? Where is she?

Charley, stunned, stands up and yells:

CHARLEY
Vicki! Vicki, hurry up!

The Father falls back on the bed, lets out a gasp and
his arm falls limply to the side. He's dead.

Vicki rushes out of the bathroom.

VICKI
What?

CHARLEY
You missed it.

78 A CEMETERY - DAY

78

A cold, bleak day in Boston. The burial service is taking place.

PHIL (V.O.)

Charley lost his father and Vicki lost the part at Monogram. The girl who got it was "Bugsy" Siegel's girl the day he lost his head in Vegas. You know what the odds are on that happening? You couldn't place the bet.

The service is over. Friends and stodgy Business Men and Wives cross to Charley to offer condolences. They're distant and cool to Vicki.

CUT TO:

79 INSIDE LIMO

79

Charley and Vicki riding in the back.

CHARLEY

I'm sorry he never got to meet you.

VICKI

He had a nice face. So gentle like.

CHARLEY

Well, he was in a coma.

VICKI

(nods)

So when do you think we'll go home?

CHARLEY

Well, I've got some business things to attend to. It really bores me but I'm the President of the company now.

VICKI

Sure. I understand... So how long you think we'll be here?

CHARLEY

(looks out the window)

Not more than two years.

VICKI

Two years?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

After that, we'd only have to spend seven or eight months a year here.

VICKI

Two years??

CHARLEY

We have a Board of Directors. If I don't go to work, they could kick me out.

VICKI

Without any money?

CHARLEY

No, but I'd lose my stock options.

VICKI

What would that leave you?

CHARLEY

About twelve million.

VICKI

What's wrong with twelve million?

CHARLEY

It's not thirty million.

VICKI

Charley... I think you and I have to have a talk.

CUT TO:

80 THE STUDY IN THE BOSTON HOUSE - DAY

80

Charley is sitting looking into the fireplace, drinking coffee. Vicki paces furiously. She is angry.

CHARLEY

You want a cup of coffee?

VICKI

No!

CHARLEY

You want a drink?

VICKI

No!

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

Look, I know two years is a long time.

VICKI

No. It's not. It's not a long time, Charley. It's forever!! It's the rest of my life. You should have told me this at the cemetery. You could have buried me there and saved an extra trip.

CHARLEY

Alright! Alright! Just cool down. We can work something out. How long is the outside you would stay?

VICKI

Till Thursday. The latest, Friday.

CHARLEY

You've got to give me at least a year and a half, Vicki. Look, if a picture comes up, you go back to L.A. and do it. The rest of the time you stay here.

VICKI

Pictures don't come up in Boston. They don't do screen tests in Massachusetts. You don't meet directors and producers on Plymouth Rock. I had enough trouble getting into a studio when I was there every day. And why was that, Charley? Do you have any idea why that was? Heh?

CHARLEY

It's a tough business.

VICKI

Yeah. Especially if you're married to the guy who dumped the daughter of the most powerful man in Hollywood.

CHARLEY

Right. And who did I dump her for? For you! Isn't that worth two years of your time? What is it, such a torture to live in a place like this?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

This is high society, kid. This is the best America has to offer.

VICKI

I don't want the best. I just want what's coming to me. A chance to make it on my own. What's wrong with that?

CHARLEY

Because maybe you wouldn't make it on your own. It takes more than wanting it to get it, you know.

VICKI

What does that mean?

CHARLEY

You know why I don't play second base for the Boston Red Sox? Because I can't hit, I can't field and, if I did, there's eighty thousand guys who can do it better than me. I'm not even good at selling toothpaste. You know what I'm good at? I'm good at inheriting money. I may be one of the best in my field. And I think a person should do with their life the thing they do better than any other people can do.

VICKI

I see. And what is it I do that no one can do as good as me?

CHARLEY

Make me happy. There's no one in the world who can hold a candle to you when it comes to that.

VICKI

I'm not good at inheriting money, Charley. I don't feel good unless I earn it.

CHARLEY

Then I'll put you on salary. I'll pay you top dollar for not becoming a movie star. I just don't want you away from me, hon.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

You really don't think I can make it, Charley?

CHARLEY

I didn't say that. But it'll still be there for you in two years. Voices are like good wine. They mellow with age.

VICKI

Cheap wine goes sour... I don't know what to do.

CHARLEY

I'll leave it up to you. Whatever you want is okay with me.

VICKI

Trapped again. You know I can't go without you for two years.

A deep sigh.

Charley takes her in his arms and hugs her.

VICKI (cont'd)

(looks around room)

I don't think the best America has to offer is going to be a lot of laughs.

CUT TO:

81 INT. FACTORY

81

We see the assembly line process of toothpaste tubes getting filled.

PHIL (V.O.)

So they settled in Boston and, for the first time in his life, Charley went to work. He started at the bottom, learning how to get the toothpaste in the tube.

CUT TO:

82 A CORNER TABLE AT A RESTAURANT - DAY

82

Vicki sits with four society MATRONS, all wearing hats. Vicki is still wearing her Las Vegas Clothes.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

PHIL (V.O.)

The blue-nose ladies took Vicki under their blue-nosed wings and taught her how to dress, how to talk and how to eat.

MAUDE

(to Vicki)

The first thing we've got to do, Vicki, is get you to join the country club. You'll meet all the right people there.

CARLOTTA

Do you play golf, dear?

VICKI

Golf? Oh, yeah. Charley and I played it the first night we met.

She takes a forkful of salad as the ladies look at her, puzzled.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. FACTORY - NIGHT

83

Only one light shines in an upstairs window.

PHIL (V.O.)

Charley burned the midnight oil.

CUT TO:

84 VICKI

84

in a riding outfit, learning to ride with a trainer.

PHIL (V.O.)

And Vicki went riding at dawn.

CUT TO:

85 A BOARDROOM

85

Charley presides over a board meeting. He fights to keep his eyes open.

PHIL (V.O.)

Charley became a responsible businessman.

CUT TO:

86 A BRIDGE GAME

86

Vicki and three others are playing bridge.

PHIL (V.O.)
And Vicki became a model
businessman's wife.

CUT TO:

87 A TRUCK LOADING CARTONS OF TOOTHPASTE

87

Charley watches it, consulting his ledger.

PHIL (V.O.)
Charley learned the ropes of
shipping out the goods.

CUT TO:

88 VICKI IN A COUTURIER'S SALON

88

She is trying on clothes. They look sort of staid and
Bostonian.

PHIL (V.O.)
And Vicki got the hang of shopping
for the best.

CUT TO:

89 A BOX AT THE OPERA

89

Vicki, Charley and another couple, all in evening
clothes. We hear the OPERA in the b.g. Charley yawns
and looks at his watch.

The man behind Vicki leans over, whispers something in
her ear and she laughs. She turns to the man.

VICKI
Je ne sais quois. Jamais repondez-
vous.

CHARLEY
(annoyed, whispers
to Vicki)
When did you learn French?

VICKI
Tuesday.

She goes back to watching opera through her opera
glasses.

CUT TO:

Charley and Vicki on the way home from the opera.

CHARLEY

Can't we stay home just one night
this week?

VICKI

How? We have the dog show
Wednesday, the horse show Thursday
and the Immigrants Charity Ball on
Friday.

CHARLEY

You've got too many friends. Too
many charities to go to. Too many
luncheons, too many art classes.
How come you're suddenly interested
in everything?

VICKI

I'm trying to kill two years,
Charley. Isn't that what you wanted
me to do? Isn't this how you wanted
me to be?

CHARLEY

I don't know. You suddenly dress
like everyone else... and talk like
everyone else.

VICKI

Sorry.

She dabs behind her ear from a tiny perfume decanter.

CHARLEY

And now you smell like everyone
else.

CUT TO:

91 CHARLEY AND VICKI IN BED - NIGHT

91

They finish making love, but it feels empty somehow.
Charley turns on his back and looks up at the ceiling.

PHIL (V.O.)

And after two years in Boston, a
miracle happened... Charley lost the
hots for Vicki!

VICKI

... What's wrong with us, Charley?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

Nothing. I'm just a little tired.

VICKI

You were never tired for this.
What's happened?

CHARLEY

I don't know. I've got things on my
mind I've never had before.

VICKI

We've changed. The both of us.
We've stayed too long, Charley. The
two years are up on Saturday. It's
time to go back home.

CHARLEY

I can't go now. The Board wants to
expand the business. If I leave
now, I'll lose control.

VICKI

And if you stay, you'll lose me. I
mean it. Two more weeks in this
place and I'll start saying Havid
and Bahstin. I'm going, Charley,
whether you go or not.

CHARLEY

I understand.

VICKI

You're not coming?

CHARLEY

I can't.

VICKI

You're making a mistake.

CHARLEY

I know.

VICKI

I could have made that picture at
Monogram.

CHARLEY

It was a turkey. You saw it.

VICKI

I know. But at least I would have
been in it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (2)

91

VICKI (CONT'D)
 (she turns her back
 to him)
 Good night, Charley. I'll leave the
 clothes in the closet.

Charley turns his back to her and stares off into
 space.

CUT TO:

92 EXT. HIGHWAY - CALIFORNIA DESERT - DAY

92

Not a car in sight.

PHIL (V.O.)
 Three months later, Charley and
 Vicki were divorced for the second
 time.

A brand-new Cadillac convertible appears on the
 horizon, with the top down.

PHIL (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And two weeks after that, tragedy
 struck one of our own. Sammy Fine
 announced he was getting married.

CUT TO:

93 THE CAR

93

Tony is driving, Charley sits next to him. In the back
 are Phil, Sammy and George.

PHIL (V.O.)
 The next morning we headed for the
 Pick-A-Daisy Ranch to pay our last
 respects to Sammy's bachelorhood.
 Charley flew in from Boston,
 carrying a torch bigger than the guy
 who lights the Olympics.

TONY
 So what do you think about Adele,
 Charley?

CHARLEY
 What?

TONY
 You didn't hear? She eloped to
 Mexico with her chauffeur. Lew
 Horner cut her off without a cent.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY

So the chauffeur dumps her in
Acapulco and takes the car with him.

GEORGE

And Adele is slinging tacos in an
enchilada joint.

Charley shakes his head in disbelief.

PHIL

Marriage is for losers. Forget
it. Present company excluded.

TONY

Since I made it big, there's no
point in getting married. I think
about it, but there's too many
gorgeous women who want me, you
know?

GEORGE

Why don't you marry someone without
the toupee and screw around with the
toupee?

PHIL

Funny, George. Did you hear that,
Charley?... Charley?

Charley is lost in thought.

PHIL (cont'd)

Get out of the toothpaste business,
Charley. It's wrecked you as a
conversationalist.

CHARLEY

When was the last time we all did
this?

SAMMY

The last time? Two and a half years
ago.

PHIL

Two and a half years down the drain,
Charley. Married twice to the same
broad and you've got nothing to show
for it except an extremely
depressing personality.

CHARLEY

I was so hot for her.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

Slept with my arms around her, never letting go... and then one day, it stopped, just like that. Why?

SAMMY

Why? Because you're a man, Charley. And men are crazy, fucked-up sons of bitches. We want what we can't have and, when we can have it, we don't want it anymore... Look at me. I'm going to a whorehouse so I can get hot for my wife on our honeymoon, who I already shtupped twelve hundred times. Nuts! We're all nuts!

We see a large billboard up ahead at the side of the road.

CHARLEY

Slow up.

TONY

What for?

CHARLEY

Just slow up.

They slow up as they pass the billboard. It's a big ad for the new Rancho Vegas Hotel. The billboard tells us that VIC DAMONE is singing in the Paradise Room and, in smaller letters, "Vicki Anderson" is singing in the lounge.

PHIL

You know that the odds are on this?... Predictable!

CHARLEY

Let's stop by for a drink.

PHIL

(whining)

No! No, Charley, please! Every time we stop by for a drink, you get married a couple of times.

CHARLEY

I just want to wish her luck.

GEORGE

We're gonna miss the Amazons, I know it.

CUT TO:

94 INT. LOUNGE - RANCHO VEGAS HOTEL - CLOSEUP - VICKI 94

She's on the bandstand with a new band. Her voice is still not her fortune; but, as ever, looks great.

CUT TO:

95 A TABLE IN THE CROWD 95

Gus, with a big cigar and a new, improved wardrobe, sits with Dante watching Vicki.

CUT TO:

96 THE ROOM 96

Charley and the boys are being seated at a table.

CUT TO:

97 GUS'S TABLE 97

Dante notices Charley. He nudges Gus, who turns and looks. He gives a smug look at him, then snaps for the WAITER.

INTERCUT Vicki singing.

CUT TO:

98 THE BOYS' TABLE 98

TONY

She still looks great, huh?... I don't mean that great, Charley. She looks good. Nice. Regular.

SAMMY

I've seen this before, Charley. Beautiful girls without the talent, but they've got the bug for stardom and they're never gonna let go. It's a waste, you know what I mean?

CHARLEY

The lady's entitled to live her own life.

PHIL

Who said different? Who said "No"? So now you've seen her. Alright? You want to sit here for the rest of your life listening to her sing a little flat? Heh?

(CONTINUED)

TONY

You're not looking at her now the way you looked at her the first time, Charley.

PHIL

So it's over. Kaput. Finito. Come on, guys. Let's go.

The Waiter puts a bottle of champagne in a cooler next to them.

GEORGE

What's this? We didn't order no champagne.

WAITER

Compliments of Mr. Dinado.

TONY

Who's Mr. Dinado?

WAITER

The number one man at the hotel.

He indicates Gus. They all look over.

PHIL

Oh, great. They went from "Bugsy" to Crazy.

CHARLEY

(to Waiter)

Tell Mr. Dinado thanks and tell Miss Anderson we'd like her to share a glass with us after her set.

WAITER

Sorry, sir, Miss Anderson doesn't drink with guests.

PHIL

(to Waiter)

Hey, chum! This is not a guest. This is Charley Pearl. He was both her husbands, understand?

WAITER

I'm sorry. Mr. Dinado's orders.

He leaves.

CHARLEY

So she's taken up with Gus.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY (CONT'D)

I should have figured. Cheap hoods
were always her style.

GEORGE

What do you care, Charley? She's a
minor leaguer. She had her shot in
the majors, but she couldn't hit the
fastball.

CHARLEY

Her face is getting a little puffy,
did you notice that?

PHIL

On my mother's life, I was going to
say that, but I was afraid to.

They gets up to leave.

CHARLEY

Little weight around the hips, too.
Did you see the hips?

TONY

In two years you wouldn't be able to
get her on the freight elevator.

They are gone.

CUT TO:

99 OUTSIDE THE HOTEL - NIGHT

99

Tony gives his ticket to the car valet. George is the
last one out the door.

PHIL

I thought she had two sandwiches in
her mouth, I swear.

SAMMY

You got rid of her just in time,
Charley, believe me.

They look around.

TONY

Where's Charley?

GEORGE

He stopped to go to the john.

PHIL

Alone? Why didn't you go with him?

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

GEORGE

I don't go into johns unless I gotta do something.

They all rush back into the hotel.

CUT TO

100 THE LOUNGE

100

Vicki finishes her last song. She walks off into the:

101 BACKSTAGE AREA

101

She is on her way to her dressing room. Charley steps out of the shadows and grabs her arm.

CHARLEY

Is this what you gave up Boston for? I thought you left me for something better than this joint.

VICKI

(pulls her arm away)

I like my career. Do you like yours, Charley? Having a lot of laughs coming up with next year's flavor?

CHARLEY

No, but at least it's next year's. You went back to last year's. You like working for Gus as much as you liked working for "Bugsy"?

VICKI

Excuse me while I look for my divorce papers. I want to see where it says you can ask me questions about my personal life.

CHARLEY

We don't have to still be married for me to stop worrying about you.

He suddenly sees Dante down the corridor. Dante watches them, then darts away. Charley grabs her arm and pulls her to an exit door. He opens it and they are --

VICKI

If you've got anything to say to me,
say it in ten seconds because that's
when I'm calling the boys.

CHARLEY

Oh, cute. The "boys!"... What are
you doing to yourself, Vicki? Is it
Gus who's slipping into your side
window now or does he still have his
key to the front door?

She takes a swing at him but he catches her wrist
before her hand gets to his face.

VICKI

No one, understand? No one's laid a
hand on me since the night you
stopped laying your hands on me...
or don't you remember?

CHARLEY

I don't know how that happened. You
changed. You became somebody else.
I didn't know you anymore.

VICKI

(laughs)

Right. And who was the one who
changed me, Charley? If you wanted
Adele, you should have married her
in the first place... or the second
place.

She opens the door and goes back in. Charley follows
her in.

She crosses towards her dressing room.

CHARLEY

I made a mistake. I see that now.
But so did you. I gave you enough
money not to have to play a crummy
place like this.

VICKI

I bought my mother a house with that
money. I feel cheap unless I earn
my own way.

CHARLEY

Okay. Fine... Maybe it really is over for you and me.

VICKI

Maybe??

(she laughs)

Can we go out to the Casino and bet on that?

CHARLEY

I'm just asking you not to throw our life away, that's all.

VICKI

That's a laugh. I threw the best two years of my life away in Boston. Throwing dinner parties for 22 dead people. Two years, Charley. You know how many girls grew up and got beautiful in those two years? There's a million of them out there now with perky little noses and cute little asses and I'm fighting for my life. I've got two places left to sing, Charley. Here or the Salvation Army. Gus gave me a break because I was Benny's girl and he wants to show everyone he can get what Benny got. And don't ask me what I'm giving Gus in return because I've got more class than you for asking the question.

CHARLEY

You really are a tramp at heart, aren't you?

VICKI

Not here, Charley. Only in Boston...

He gets up, starts to go. She gets up and yells.

VICKI (cont'd)

You loved the tramp in me but you kissed it goodbye when you made me raise my pinky holding a teacup.

(she throws a cream jar at him, just missing his head)

Goddamn you, you're not going to made me feel ashamed of myself.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

VICKI (CONT'D)
I'm a lady, you understand? I can't
be bought by you or anyone. Now get
out. Get out, goddamn you!

And she starts hitting him with both her hands.
Charley tries to stop her.

CHARLEY
Stop it, Vicki! Cut it out!

VICKI
Get out, dammit, before I call my
gentleman friend.

GUS
You don't have to. He's here.

CUT TO:

105 THE DOOR

105

Gus stands in the open doorway, Dante behind him. Gus
closes the door, Dante remains outside.

GUS
(to Charley)
Didn't you hear the waiter? You
need my permission to see the star.

CHARLEY
This is none of your business, Gus.
Why don't you go back to the bar and
try to look like "Bugsy"?

GUS
Once I was nice enough to give you a
warning. Now I'm not that nice
anymore.

CHARLEY
Who's your tailor, Gus? I think he
put the lining on the outside.

Gus hauls off and hits Charley on the chin. Charley
falls back against the dressing mirror.

VICKI
Gus, leave him alone. Please. He's
leaving.

CHARLEY
Yeah. Give me a break, Gus. Count
to three before I go. Or is two
your highest number?

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

Gus hits him again and once more Charley smashes against the mirror.

VICKI

Charley, shut up. You want to get yourself killed?

GUS

Keep talking, playboy. I can do this all night.

CHARLEY

Is it true, Gus, that you go out to the cemetery every night and kiss where "Bugsy's" ass used to be?

Gus is furious now.

VICKI

Gus, he's drunk. He doesn't know what he's saying.

CHARLEY

That's what Vicki told me. Didn't you, honey?

Gus grabs Charley by the throat with one hand and pins him against the wall. Charley can hardly breathe.

VICKI

Stop it, Gus, stop it. You're killing him.

GUS

I'm going to ask you one question and the answer better be "Yes"... You'll never come around and bother Vicki again, is that right?

He squeezes his throat harder.

VICKI

Yes! Yes! He promises! Let him go, Gus. Please!

GUS

(to Charley, squeezing)

Is that right?

Charley is about to pass out. Vicki looks around, picks up a champagne bottle and hits Gus over the head with it, knocking him out. Charley starts gasping for air-

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: (2)

105

VICKI

You lunatic! Were you trying to get yourself killed?

CHARLEY

No. I was trying to get you fired.
Come on.

He takes her by the wrist and opens the door. Dante stands there. He looks down and sees Gus on the floor, then grabs Charley by the throat in his one huge hand.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

(eyes bulging)

Don't you guys grab any place else?

CUT TO:

106 BACKSTAGE HALLWAY

106

The four guys come down the hallway.

PHIL

I'll bet we're too late. I bet he's already proposed to her.

They come to the open doorway. They look in and see Gus on the floor and Dante choking Charley.

SAMMY

Jesus! It's a massacre.

GEORGE

Somebody get Vicki out of here.

PHIL

I'll do it! I'll do it!

He takes Vicki by the arm and pulls her out of the room.

DANTE

(he squeezes Charley's
throat tighter; to
the guys)

First I'll take care of him, then
it's your turn.

GEORGE

There's four of us and only one of
you.

Dante squeezes Charley tighter.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

TONY

I think he likes the odds, George.

George closes the door.

CUT TO:

107 THE HALLWAY - GEORGE AND VICKI

107

PHIL

They're better off without me,
believe me.

We hear the SOUNDS of fighting from inside. Furniture and glass CRASHING and BREAKING. Suddenly the door opens and Tony, George and Sammy come out, helping Charley, who's almost out. Dante is on the floor, a busted chair around his neck.

GEORGE

Who hit him with the chair? I had
him, for crissakes.

TONY

Let's go. These people have
friends.

He grabs Vicki's arm.

VICKI

I'm not going. I have a job here.

CHARLEY

(very hoarse)

You'll be singing like this when Gus
gets through with you.

They pull her along and rush out through the backstage
exit.

CUT TO:

108 THE PARKING LOT

108

They all pile into Tony's car and speed off.

Gus and Dante come out of the building. A couple in a car pull up to park. Gus and Dante open the doors and pull the couple out. They get in and speed off after Tony's car.

CUT TO:

109 INSIDE TONY'S CAR

109

Tony is driving, Vicki in the middle next to Charley.
In the back are Phil, Sammy and George.

PHIL

I begged him, let's not stop by for
a drink. The man never listens.

TONY

We're dead men in Las Vegas, guys.

SAMMY

They have friends in L.A., too.

PHIL

I can see us all now, playing small
clubs in Argentina.

GEORGE

(looking back)

If we're lucky. They're right
behind us.

Dante leans out of his window and SHOOTs at them.

110 IN TONY'S CAR

110

A BULLET goes through the rear window, just missing the
boys. They all duck.

PHIL

Where's a bathroom? I've got to get
to a bathroom.

VICKI

Just once I'd like to leave that
town with my clothes.

CHARLEY

(hoarsely)

You'll thank me for this one day.

VICKI

Oh, be quiet.

CHARLEY

(hoarsely)

I am.

He holds his throat.

111 SHOT OF CAR CHASE AGAIN

111

Dante SHOOTs a few more times.

112 IN THE BOYS' CAR AGAIN

SAMMY

Can't you pull down a side street?

TONY

Where? It's all desert.

VICKI

Make a right near that billboard.

TONY

There's no road there.

VICKI

Just do it!

She grabs the wheel and makes a sharp right turn. They skid and careen and head into the darkness.

Gus's car drives right past the spot where they turned. Gus stops, backs up and makes the same right turn.

113 INSIDE THE BOYS' CAR

113

TONY

I can't see a damn thing.

GEORGE

It's like looking for a ball park in the minor leagues.

PHIL

(bouncing up and down)

This is what we should have been doing at the Pick-a-Daisy.

SAMMY

(looks back)

They're still coming.

We see the lights of Gus's car a few hundred yards behind them.

VICKI

Turn off your lights.

TONY

Are you crazy? I don't know what's out there.

VICKI

Neither do they.

CHARLEY

Do what she says.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

Tony turns off the lights and they are thrown into darkness.

PHIL

Listen, if there's a bus stop around here, I'd like to be let out.

VICKI

Make another right.

TONY

Where?

VICKI

Anywhere.

TONY

You can't make a right anywhere. It has to be somewhere.

Vicki grabs the wheel again and makes a sharp right turn. The car goes over even bigger bumps.

GEORGE

I think we're going over a watermelon patch.

CHARLEY

(looks in rearview mirror)

They've stopped.

We see Gus's car stop.

GEORGE

We lost 'em, guys.

TONY

(to vicki)

I hope you know where we're going.

VICKI

So do I.

PHIL

Why don't we just follow Gus's car back into town?

TONY

How far do I go?

VICKI

Just keep driving.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (2)

113

TONY
Me? I haven't been driving for the
last twenty minutes.

DISSOLVE TO:

114 TWENTY MINUTES LATER

114

They are still bumping and bouncing in the dark... and suddenly the road smooths. No more bumps. They all look at each other.

GEORGE
No more bumps.

PHIL
Maybe we're driving on a lake.

VICKI
Alright, turn on your lights.

Tony turns on the lights. They are on a paved two-way road and a sign in front of them that says: "NEVADA -- INTERSTATE 107"... The boys all cheer and applaud.

PHIL
The greatest feat of navigation
since Lindy flew to Paris.

GEORGE
She's got eyes like an umpire.

CHARLEY
(to Vicki)
How did you do that?

VICKI
I grew up around here.

The car starts to CHUG.

TONY
(to Vicki)
Can you make gasoline, because we're
out of it.

VICKI
There's a motel about a mile from
here. Men push, women drive.

DISSOLVE TO:

115 THE ROAD

115

The five men are pushing the car up a very steep hill. Vicki is behind the wheel. When the car gets to the crest of the hill, gravity takes over and the car coasts down the hill the rest of the way, leaving the exhausted men on top of the hill.

PHIL

(to Charley)

I love travel. You meet such interesting people.

CUT TO:

116 EXT. MOTEL

116

It's quite rundown. The exhausted men arrive carrying their coats over their shoulders. Vicki comes out of the manager's office.

VICKI

The gas station doesn't open till seven. I got us some rooms.

SAMMY

(sarcastically)

What? You mean they took us without reservations?

PHIL

This is where Dracula stops on camping trips.

VICKI

(holds up two keys)

They only had two rooms left.

(she throws one key
to Charley)

See you in the morning.

TONY

Five guys in one room?

GEORGE

In the minor leagues, the whole team
slept in one room.

The guys go off to their room; Charley looks at Vicki.

CHARLEY

Thanks.

VICKI

For what?

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

CHARLEY

You saved my life back there. How
can I pay you back?

VICKI

... You'll think of something.

She turns and goes. Charley watches her. He has that
old gleam in his eye again.

CUT TO:

117 INT. VICKI'S ROOM - LATE THAT NIGHT

117

She is in bed, the blanket pulled up to her neck. We
PAN over to the window. She has left it half-open.

Charley appears at the window and climbs in.

VICKI

(without opening
her eyes)

Where were you? I'm freezing.
Close the window.

CHARLEY

(closes the window)

I'll have you warmed up in a minute.

He starts for the bed.

VICKI

Stop right there.

(as he stops)

We have to talk first. Sit over
there.

She points to a chair. He sits.

CHARLEY

Can we talk fast? I'm cold, too.

VICKI

Is it back, Charley? The old
feeling? The feeling you'll go nuts
if you don't get to touch me?

CHARLEY

(nods)

Yeah. It's back.

VICKI

I thought you lost it in Boston.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

It came back bouncing around next to you in the car.

VICKI

The truth is, you never got over me, did you?

CHARLEY

Oh, yeah. I did. It lasted three days. Then I started breaking antique furniture. I couldn't believe you really left me.

VICKI

I couldn't believe you were stupid enough to let me go.

CHARLEY

We both made a mistake, didn't we?

VICKI

No. Nothing's changed. I still want a career. I still want to sing. And you still want to be Chairman of the Board.

CHARLEY

Not as bad as I want to get into that bed next to you.

VICKI

Something's got to give, Charley. Someone's got to give up something.

CHARLEY

I already did. I gave up my stock options. I sold my house. I don't even brush my teeth anymore. I use floss.

VICKI

I took the job in Vegas because I knew it was the only place you'd find me.

CHARLEY

(gets up)

I would have found you if you were playing on the moon.

He moves towards the bed.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

It's a curse, Charley. It's okay to love someone, but its neurotic to think you can't live without them. I read that in Reader's Digest.

CHARLEY

I'll be honest with you. I tried other women. I made the effort. The only time it worked was when I thought of you.

VICKI

Spare me your fantasies, okay?

CHARLEY

I want you back, Vicki. We'll live in L.A... You can sing, you can act, you can juggle six balls in the air, as long as we're together.

VICKI

You won't regret it, Charley. I promise you.

CHARLEY

(sits on the bed)

Let's get married in the morning.

VICKI

(disgusted)

Ah, shit, Charley! I don't want to get married again. It doesn't work for us.

CHARLEY

It will this time. We've rehearsed it twice. We're practically professionals now.

VICKI

Why can't we just live together?

CHARLEY

There's no commitment in living together. There's no bond to tie us to each other.

VICKI

We were tied together twice and here you are still proposing to me.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: (3)

CHARLEY

I need to know you'll never leave me again.

VICKI

I won't! I promise! Okay? I'll put my old ring back on. That's as good as married, isn't it?

CHARLEY

No. We'll do it legal in the morning.

He takes off his pants and slides under the covers with her.

VICKI

... I want a honeymoon. I never got my honeymoon.

CHARLEY

Wherever you want. For as long as you want. I'm unemployed now anyway.

He starts kissing her neck.

The CAMERA PANS over to the window. The sun is just coming up, filling the room with sun rays. We hear their VOICES:

VICKI (O.S.)

You get to me, Charley. I don't know what it is, but you're the only man who ever got to me.

CHARLEY (O.S.)

It'll never stop, honey. As long as I live, it'll never stop.

VICKI (O.S.)

We're cursed, Charley. Somebody put a love curse on us.

We hear the SPRINGS in the bed begin to bounce.

CUT TO:

118 INT. JUSTICE OF THE PEACE'S HOUSE - DAY

118

Charley and Vicki stand before the JUSTICE. She holds a small bouquet of flowers, but still in the dress she sang in the previous night.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

Phil, George, Sammy and Tony stand behind them. Sammy is half-asleep, his eyes almost closed. The Justice drones on...

GEORGE

(nudges Sammy)

Wake up. You're missing the wedding.

SAMMY

I've seen it before.

PHIL

They're going to wallpaper their room with wedding licenses.

JUSTICE

Do you, Charles Raymond Pearl --

CHARLEY

I do.

JUSTICE

Not yet... Take Victoria, to be your lawfully wedded wife --

CHARLEY

I do.

JUSTICE

(glares at them)

-- for as long as you both shall live?

(nods to Charley)

Now!

CHARLEY

I do.

PHIL

(aside to Sammy)

If the man says Can do, Can do!

JUSTICE

And do you, Victoria Rosemary Anderson, take Charles to be your husband, in sickness and in health, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, so long as you both shall live?

Vicki looks at the Justice and hesitates. She looks at Charley, still hesitating.

(CONTINUED)

TONY

(to Sammy)

I don't think she's coming out of
the gate.

SAMMY

The filly is nervous. Never a
winner on this track.

GEORGE

(aloud)

Take your pitch and swing, baby!

VICKI

(snaps to)

I do!

JUSTICE

Then with the power vested in me by
the State of Nevada, I now pronounce
you man and wife. You may kiss the
bride.

CHARLEY

(turns to Vicki)

This is the happiest day of my life.

VICKI

I always love these days, too.

They kiss. The boys surround them, congratulating
them.

PHIL

(to Vicki)

The greatest comeback in marital
history. Good luck, babe.

He kisses her.

SAMMY

(to Vicki)

After Sherry and I get married,
we're gonna get divorced. This is
so romantic.

He kisses Vicki.

TONY

(to Vicki)

Better make this one stick. You're
running out of fingers.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: (3)

118

He kisses Vicki.

GEORGE
(to Vicki and Charley)
Marriage is no different than
baseball. Three strikes and you're
out.

The others all razz George. He kisses Vicki.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE

119

We are ON the tail fender of Tony's car. A sign on it
says: "JUST MARRIED... U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM GOLD
MEDALISTS."... Tin cans are tied to the fender.

Vicki and Charley are getting pelted with rice.

PHIL
(to Sammy)
You know what we should have done?
Bought rice on the commodity market.

Vicki and Charley get into Tony's car. He starts the
MOTOR.

SAMMY
(to Charley)
Hey, Charley! Now that you're out
of work, what are you gonna do after
the honeymoon?

CHARLEY
Go on another one.

He REVS the engine and pulls away fast. The others
wave to them, Tony looking unhappy.

TONY
Why did I give them my car?
We FOLLOW the car as it slowly disappears down the
road.

PHIL (V.O.)
... and so Charley and Vicki lived
happily ever after... for a while.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. PARIS, LONDON AND ROME - SERIES OF SHOTS

120

PHIL (V.O.)

Vicki finally got her honeymoon, six months in Europe. Charley invested his twelve million bucks in stocks and bonds, and Vicki was ready to go back to work. Things were finally looking good for the kids.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. CHARLEY'S HOLLYWOOD HOUSE

121

A limo pulls up. Woo Ling, in chauffeur's outfit, gets out and opens the door. Charley gets out.

PHIL (V.O.)

But when they got home, Charley had lost three million in the market and Vicki was six months' pregnant.

Vicki gets out of the car wearing a maternity dress. Charley helps her into the house.

PHIL (V.O.) (cont'd)

So Vicki waited five more months before her career got started again, and Charley invested his money in real estate... and in one year he parlayed his nine million into two million.

A man appears and knock a "FOR SALE" sign on the front lawn.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. MOVIE MARQUEE

122

We see that the picture playing is "That Girl From Chile." starring Tony Madden, Rita Hayworth and Phil Golden. A big life-size picture cut-out of the three stars in front of the theatre.

PHIL (V.O.)

In the meantime, the rest of us were riding the tail of a comet. Tony and me were starring with La Hayworth, Sammy had a hit musical on Broadway and George had Cincinnati in second place.

CUT TO:

123 A HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - DAY

123

It's a very modest home.

PHIL (V.O.)

Vicki gave birth to a girl named Amy and went back to singing in local clubs. Charley went into the used car business and in six months moved into a house half the size, and his two million was now half the size... He had a great gift for losing money but it was a talent that didn't pay off in this town.

A station wagon pulls up in the driveway and Charley gets out, not dressing nearly as well as he did in the good days.

PHIL (V.O.) (cont'd)

But the one talent he did have was finally paying off big.

A little girl about three rushes out of the house, into Charley's arms. Vicki comes to the front door. She is now about eight months pregnant.

PHIL (V.O.) (cont'd)

Amy was followed by Andy and Andy was followed by Susan.

Two more kids, a boy and a girl, in ever larger sizes follow Vicki out and greet Charley.

CUT TO:

124 A CHURCH - SUNDAY MORNING

124

Among the churchgoers we see Charley and Vicki, pregnant again, with five children, in still larger sizes, accompanying them.

PHIL (V.O.)

Vicki was still looking to make it big, but this was bigger than she hoped for... Charley was as hot as ever for her, so Vicki started to go to church on Sundays, praying for him to cool off.

CUT TO:

125 EXT. HORNER HOUSE - NIGHT

125

Same shot as opening of the film.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

The cars are a little newer now.

The chauffeurs still outside listening to the MUSIC coming from the big house.

PHIL (V.O.)

It was twelve years since the night me and the guys were in Lew Horner's house, but this time, as fate would have it, we were the big name guests.

CUT TO:

126 INT. HOUSE

126

The CAMERA once again SWEEPS the feet of people dancing. The MUSIC is now updated.

PHIL (V.O.)

Adele got remarried to a Mexican bartender and Lew Horner died of apoplexy. The big house on the hill was sold to none other than --

CUT TO:

127 TONY DANCING WITH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL

127

PHIL (V.O.)

-- our own, Tony Madden, not only the biggest star at MGM, but finally caught in that evil spider's web that traps us all -- marriage!

Tony kisses his wife as they circle the dance floor.

CUT TO:

128 THE TABLE

128

The same one they sat at twelve years ago. Phil is with his wife, Shelia; Sammy and his wife, Sherry; George and his wife, GRACE. They are watching Tony and his wife, LOUISE.

SHERRY

(to Sammy)

Gee, they look happy, don't they?...
Sammy, please dance with me.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY

Dance? We've been married nine years. Haven't we done enough dancing?

GEORGE

I wonder if she knows it's a toupee.

GRACE

You mean that's not his real hair?

GEORGE

It is, but when it fell out, he had it made into a toupee.

PHIL

You see those four guys sitting over there?

CUT TO:

129 FOUR YOUNG MEN AT A TABLE

129

with their young girls.

130 BACK TO THE GUYS

130

PHIL

That was us twelve years ago. You think they'll make it as big as we did?

SAMMY

Nah. We're the last of our breed.

PHIL

We've become snobs, guys. Success makes snobs of us all.

(big smile)

Don't you love it!

He laughs and hits the table.

Tony and his wife, Louise, sit down.

TONY

Who would have thought this? Lew Horner's house and it belongs to me.

LOUISE

(to Tony)

Isn't one of your friends still missing, darling?

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

TONY

Charley. Charley Pearl and Vicki.

LOUISE

They're awfully late. I hope nothing's wrong.

GEORGE

Nah. They probably just stopped off to have a baby.

CUT TO:

131 INSIDE CHARLEY'S CAR

131

The car is about ten years old. They are en route to the party. Charley is wearing a rented tuxedo and Vicki wears an old Las Vegas dress. Vicki is looking very bedraggled.

VICKI

I don't know if I'm up to this, Charley. I look awful, don't I?

CHARLEY

No, you look swell.

VICKI

My hair has no life in it. It's like straw. My skin is all dried out. We can't have any more kids, Charley. I feel like a pumped out oil well.

CHARLEY

Listen, I don't want any more kids either.

VICKI

Then you have to leave me alone sometimes. You get me when I'm not prepared. I wake up in the middle of the night and see you on top of me. It scares me sometimes.

CHARLEY

I'm sorry, honey, I can't help it. I roll over in bed and my skin touches your skin... It sure doesn't feel dry to me.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

I don't know where it all went. All the years. I never expected to grow old so fast.

CHARLEY

Old? What are you talking about? You're not old, for crissakes. You're in your prime.

VICKI

I left my prime in the maternity ward. I'm popping babies like hot buttered corn and you're banging away at night and up and out in the morning. God, sometimes I wish I was a man.

CHARLEY

What are you saying? That I got it easy? I'm working, ain't I? I'm feeding eight people and four animals, ain't I? All this is what you wanted, isn't it?

VICKI

No! No, I never wanted this!! I wanted a career. I wanted to sing. I don't sing anymore. I yell. "Scotty, don't do this." "Betsy, go find the dogs." I don't have any voice left. I've blown it. I missed my chance. My time in the sun has come and gone. It's cloudy weather for the rest of my life and I have you and your over-active hormone glands to thank for it.

He is furious. He jams on the brakes and stops the car.

CHARLEY

You blew it? You missed your chance? What the hell do you think I missed?? I gave up thirty million bucks. Thirty million. That was twelve years ago. That thirty million could have been sixty by now!

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

And the sixty would become the few thousand we got left. You're a lousy businessman, Charley. Maybe the worst I've ever seen. You couldn't sell feathers to a naked bird...

CHARLEY

Oh! Oh! Miss Talent knows all about business, doesn't she? You managed your own career pretty good, I suppose. You couldn't get yourself booked singing in the shower, so don't tell me.

VICKI

I want my years back, Charley. Give me all the years I lost with you and you can keep the house, the furniture and the dwindling bank account and let's call it even.

CHARLEY

I don't believe this. I don't believe what I'm hearing. I gave up the greatest life any single man ever had. I was my own hero. Guys like Phil and Sammy and George and Tony kissed my feet just for the privilege of hanging around me. I could have had every beautiful woman from L.A. to Boston, from Toronto to Texas, and I gave it all up for you. For you, baby, don't tell me the rain is pissing on your parade because I'm standing knee-deep in baby shit and you don't hear me complaining that I look like a fucking old man or that I have to wait in line to take a dump in my own house. I was a multi-millionaire, baby! You understand? Goddamn you!!

VICKI

... You go to hell and back because that's how long it'll be before I ever want to see you again!

She gets out of the car, slams the door and walks away into the night.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED: (3)

131

CHARLEY

Where the hell are you going?
Vicki?... Goddamn her.

He gets out of the car, slams his door even harder.
She is walking away from the road.

CHARLEY (cont'd)

You get back in this car, you hear me?... You can't walk out on this, Vicki, we're stuck with it. We are nailed and chained and handcuffed and sewn together at the hip whether we like it or not. And I don't like it! But that's it... I'm not going through another divorce, you hear me? I'm not divorcing you three times because I'm fucking embarrassed to tell it to my friends... I'm as sick of you as you are of me, but I'm not going in front of a judge and explaining to him that we can't live with each other anymore for the third time in a row... Vicki? ...Vicki!!! ... You owe me the rest of your life!!!

It is quiet a moment, then, from out of the dark...

VICKI

I gave you the rest of my life...
But the hereafter is mine.

He stands there. He can't see her anymore.

CHARLEY

Goddamn you, Bugsy Siegel, I hope
you burn in hell.

PHIL (V.O.)

... and they got divorced a third
time... And Bugsy Siegel burned in
hell.

CUT TO:

132 A RAINY STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

132

The rain is coming down hard. In the middle of a
street in a rundown neighborhood, we see a small
nightclub bar. MUSIC is heard faintly from the club.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

PHIL (V.O.)

Three years went by and not me or Sammy or any of the guys ever heard a single word from or about Charley Pearl. Vicki took what money she had left, put a couple of the kids in boarding school... The Pick-a-Daisy ranch left Vegas and moved to San Francisco and me and the guys went there to celebrate Sammy's 12th wedding anniversary... Boys still will be boys.

A cab comes down the street. We hear Vicki's voice SING from the club.

PHIL (cont'd)

(from inside the
cab)

Wait a minute! Wait a minute!...
Stop the cab!

The cab stops.

DRIVER

This ain't the address, mister.

PHIL

I know it. Be quiet... Sammy!
Tony! Who's that singing?

They listen.

SAMMY

Vicki... That's Vicki.

PHIL

We'll get off here, Cabby. George,
pay the man.

They get out of the cab and cross the rainy street and look through the window of the club. Through half-closed blinds, they see Vicki on a small stage, a small band behind her. She is heavier and looks older, but she's giving it her best.

CUT TO:

133 INSIDE THE CLUB

133

The boys go in and are shown a small table. It's half empty with people who are more interested in booze than entertainment.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

WAITER

What'll it be?

TONY

Four beers.

WAITER

We got a five dollar minimum.

TONY

We'll save up for it.

The Waiter leaves.

We watch Vicki singing. She hasn't seen the boys through the smoke-filled room. She's still putting her heart into it.

134 BACK TO THE BOYS

134

PHIL

This is all she ever wanted, isn't it?

GEORGE

Well, I'll say one thing. She's finally singing a lot better than she looks.

A SAILOR and a Girl in front of them get up and start to leave.

SAMMY

(to Sailor)

Where you going? This girl is good.

SAILOR

(pointing to his
girl)

So is this one...

They leave.

TONY

Charley gave up everything for her... and she gave up everything for this.

SAMMY

It's sad... but there's something beautiful about it.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

PHIL
Jesus! I don't believe it.

TONY
What?

PHIL
Charley. It's Charley.

He looks toward the entrance. They all look.

CUT TO:

135 THE ENTRANCE

135

Charley comes in. He is drenched. His hat flattened from the rain, his suit collar up. He blows on his hands, then takes a seat at an empty table.

CUT TO:

136 THE BOYS' TABLE

136

PHIL
You know what the odds are on this happening?

GEORGE
Even money.

SAMMY
Come on.

They all get up and cross to Charley's table. They sit down around him. He looks haggard and unshaven.

TONY
Charley?

Charley looks at them, but not with any surprise.

TONY (cont'd)
Charley, it's Tony.

PHIL
It's us, Charley.

CHARLEY
(smiles, as if time
hadn't passed)
Hi, guys. Nice to see you.

He turns and watches Vicki.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE
Where have you been, Charley?

CHARLEY
(still watching
her)
I've been around.

SAMMY
Around where?

GEORGE
What have you been doing?

CHARLEY
A little of this, a little of that.
Ssshhhh.

PHIL
(whispers)
Why haven't we heard from you?

CHARLEY
Well, I didn't hear from you either.

He goes back to watching Vicki.

TONY
Does Vicki know you're here?

CHARLEY
Oh, yeah. I come in three, four
nights a week.

PHIL
Are you two -- you know -- together?

CHARLEY
No, no. Nothing like that... She's
a hard nut to crack, you know?

They all look at each other.

SAMMY
Are you okay, Charlie?

CHARLEY
Me? Yeah, I'm fine...

GEORGE
You want a drink, Charley?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLEY

A drink?... No. You know I don't
drink... Listen... Can I ask you
guys a question?

PHIL

Of course, Charley... What?

Charley reaches in his pocket.

CHARLEY

You think she'll like this?

He shows them a small diamond ring. They all look at
each other again.

SAMMY

It's beautiful, Charley.

TONY

What's the occasion?

CHARLEY

What do you think? I'm going to pop
the question.

GEORGE

Tonight.

Charley looks at them, smiles and winks. Then goes
back to watching Vicki as the boys look at each other
once again.

PHIL

(leans in close)

Tell me, Charley... Why do you want
to marry the same woman four times?

Charley gets a secretive look on his face, then looks
right at Phil.

CHARLEY

... It fits!

A big grin crosses his face. He watches Vicki again.

CUT TO:

Sings for everything she has.

CUT TO:

138 CHARLEY

138

CHARLEY

(to boys)

She's hot, isn't she?

The CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see the boys and the club
and Charley and Vicki and --

FADE OUT.

THE END