

SECOND DRAFT

August 8, 1989

WHAT MAKES SAMMY RUN?

Screenplay

by

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Based on his novel

Warner Brothers Studio
4000 Warner Avenue
Burbank, CA 94705

EXT. RIVINGTON STREET TENEMENT, MANHATTAN'S LOWER EAST SIDE -
DAY (before 1920)

INT. 4TH FLOOR FLAT - CLOSE ON HANDS OF 3-YR.-OLD BOY

balling page of a newspaper into the heel of a scuffed shoe of
a 5-year-old. The foot of a 3-year-old boy slips into it.

ADULT VOICE (O.S.)
There, Sammele, try it now.

Small foot takes a step and shoe slips off. The child (O.S.)
CRIES.

ADULT VOICE
(continuing)
Whatya cryin' for?

3-YR.-OLD VOICE
Too big. Too big.

ADULT VOICE
(impatiently)
So I fix it. Just a minute...

Business of hurriedly wadding more paper into shoe. Small
foot tries it on again, and walks.

ADULT VOICE
(continuing)
See, Sammy? Now they fit good.

CUT TO

SAME ANGLE DOWN ON SHOES - 8 YEARS LATER

The hand-me-down shoes of a 13-year-old being "fitted" with
balled paper to the foot of an 11-yr.-old with a hole in his
stocking. The dialogue, like that above, is hurried, overlap-
ping, a sense of subliminal.

VOICE OF 11-YR.-OLD
Don't fit.

VOICE OF 13-YR.-OLD
So stick more paper in it.

VOICE OF 11-YR.-OLD
(as hand adds paper)
Do I hafta wear your goddam shoes?

VOICE OF 13-YR.-OLD
Quit y'bitchin'. Ya lucky ya got
'em.

VOICE OF MOTHER
Sammy -- Seymour -- you'll be late
for school.

VOICE OF 11-YR.-OLD
(as shoes move faster)
Shit.

CUT TO

SAME DOWN ANGLE

Only now the foot belongs to an 18-year-old. It's working its way into a shabby sneaker that has gone many miles. Again the business of ripping a page from a newspaper (in this case the front page of the tabloid "New York Record") and balling it inside the heel. In b.g. O.S. a familiar argument:

MALE VOICE
Mama, what do you want from me?
There's twenty million people
unemployed.

MOTHER'S VOICE
But the rent, Seymour. We'll be
out on the street. So you talk to
Mr. Peyser.

MALE VOICE
(defeated)
Mr. Peyser, Mr. Peyser...And you
know what your Mr. Peyser says?
"Talk is cheap. I want my money."

MOTHER'S VOICE
So you tell 'im next week he'll
have it. Next week.

Over this rapid exchange, the foot has jiggled around in the sneaker and more paper has been added.

VOICE OF 18-YR.-OLD
OK. Shed up. Both of ya. I just
got a job.

As the same process begins with the second sneaker -- introduce "RUNNING" MUSIC THEME, to be heard throughout, whenever appropriate.

CLOSE ON SAME SNEAKERS (AND FEET)

racing down stairway inside the tenement.

SNEAKERS RUNNING

down Lower East Side street.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - DOWN ANGLE

as sneakers race in and down the steps.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM

Sneakers push their way through and past others, and run on down the platform as a train appears.

EXT. 42ND STREET SUBWAY ENTRANCE/EXIT

as sneakers rush up the steps and down the street (SOUND is like JAZZ-DRUM PERCUSSION to "RUNNING" MUSIC THEME).

EXT. 42ND STREET BUILDING - LOW ANGLE ON WALL-PLAQUE

reading: NEW YORK RECORD. Sneakers run into SHOT and through swinging glass doors -- action counterpointed by STREET SOUNDS: taxi horns, police-car sirens, ambulances...

INT. STAIRWAY - TO "NEW YORK RECORD" CITY ROOM

as the sneakers fly through. CITY-ROOM SOUNDS: typewriters, teletype bells, telephones, staccato voices, etc.

Sneakers hurry on into City Room.

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)

Copy! Copy!

As sneakers wheel to respond, CAMERA TILTS UP, and we see their wearer for the first time: a lithe, poorly dressed, eager-beaver in his late teens who seems almost literally bursting with energy -- SAMMY GLICK. He is waiting at the water-fountain with two other copyboys, one of them a tough IRISH KID who practically clotheslines him.

IRISH KID

Slow down, Ikey -- I'm Number one
copyboy, get it?

Sammy snarls as "Irish" heads out. Then "Copy!" is heard again and Sammy races off, practically colliding with O'BRIEN, the burly, no-nonsense managing editor just emerging from his office, which opens on the frenetic City Room.

O'BRIEN

Hey, you, what's with the sneakers?

SAMMY

I -- I thought I could move faster
with 'em.

O'BRIEN

Look, maybe you c'n move faster
without a necktie too. But as
long as I'm running the show, I
want a necktie. And I want shoes.

SAMMY

(with big, appealing eyes)
Tell you the truth, sir, these are
the only shoes I got.

O'BRIEN

So save up 'n' buy yourself a
pair, f' Christsake.

SAMMY

Every cent I make goes home to my
mother.

O'BRIEN

Good boy. But I still want shoes.

VOICE (O.S.)

(more insistently)

I said copy! Copy!

Sammy races down aisle to cubicle of AL MANHEIM, who is pounding out a piece with veteran urgency on a typewriter alongside his littered desk. Al's in his mid-30's, intelligent, laid-back, casually dressed.

SAMMY

(rushing in)

Ready, Mr. Manheim!

AL
 (making last-minute
 changes)
 Mmm. So you're the new copyboy.

SAMMY
 That's right, sir. An' believe
 me, it's an honor. Read y' colyum
 every mornin'. Never read nothin'
 better.

AL
 Watch those double negatives, kid.
 You never read anything better.

SAMMY
 Thanks, Mr. Manheim, that's why I
 wanted this job, so I c'n be
 around writers 'n' learn how t'
 talk good.

AL
 (studying him now)
 A pretty smart little fella.

SAMMY
 Well, I keep my ears and my eyes
 open.

AL
 You don't do such a bad job with
 your mouth either.
 (handing him copy)
 It's a rush. Due five minutes
 ago.

SAMMY
 (runs off, reading;
 over his shoulder)
 Opens cute.

AL
 Get the hell outa here.

He watches Sammy run a moment, bemused, then rolls a fresh
 piece of paper in the typewriter, and is typing away when
 O'Brien bustles in, and reads over Al's shoulder.

O'BRIEN
 "Act One, Scene Three. That
 evening..."

(MORE)

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

(rips page from machine)

F' Christ sake, whaddia think I'm
runnin' here, the fuckin' American
Academy of Dramatic Arts?

AL

I've got to do something to get
out of here.

O'BRIEN

If you want it bad enough, you
will. But not on my fuckin' time.
Get out the glad rags, Manheim --
you're covering the Helen Hayes
opening tonight. Burns just
called in sick.

Al reaches for dress shirt and black tie in bottom drawer and
starts to get ready.

AL

Look, O'Brien, the grapevine says
Burns is sick of you and the
paper. He's retiring. Two years
I've been second-string critic.
Isn't it time I moved up?

O'BRIEN

I hear they're bringing in some
fuckin' genius from "Vanity Fair."
But it's not my call. My job is
to take what they give me 'n' kick
ass.

ESTABLISH BLEECK'S ARTISTS & WRITERS CLUB (W. 41ST ST.) -
NIGHT

AL'S VOICE (OVER)

Hit me again, Henry...

BLEECK'S BAR

Al, in black tie, drinking beside veteran rewrite man OSBORNE.
Other Newspapermen, and a few Women, farther along bar or at
tables in b.g. of this traditional newswriters' hangout.

AL

(continuing)

One for the road.

As Bartender pours scotch for them, O'Brien bursts in.

O'BRIEN
Manheim! You're still here?
Curtain's in ten minutes!

AL
Theater's just around the corner,
for Christ sake.

O'BRIEN
Then get your fuckin' ass over
there!

AL
O'Brien, let me ask you a ques-
tion. Have you ever completed a
single sentence without that word?

O'BRIEN
Let me ask you a question. After
you finish drinking your fuckin'
supper and catch the show, tail it
back to the typewriter before you
blow the first edition.

AL
That's not a question.

O'BRIEN
F' you it is. And don't give me
one of your fuckin' deep-think
critical essays. Just knock out
what you think of the show in
twenty minutes and call Sammy the
new copyboy to run it to me.

AL
Sammy? How the hell did you ever
find that little yoyo?

O'BRIEN
He found me. Just walked in and
said, "Hi, Mr. O'Brien, I'm your
new copyboy. I'll work for
nothing -- just for the chance."

AL
If you had your way, we'd all be
working for nothing.

OUTSIDE A BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

Marquee reads: HELEN HAYES - "MARY OF SCOTLAND". Al, hurrying through the first group of departing theatergoers, passes a stylishly dressed Woman (ANNIE) in her late 20's.

ANNIE
How'd you like it, Al? Isn't
Helen Hayes fantastic?

AL
(on the run)
Read my piece in the morning,
Annie -- if I make it in time.

CITY ROOM - NIGHT - ON AL

pounding typewriter. His jacket is on back of chair, his tie off and dress shirt open at the neck, sleeves rolled halfway up; half-smoked cigarettes piled in ashtray. The place is practically deserted now.

AL
Copy! On the double!

Sammy comes running in as if his life depended on it, which to him it does -- "braking" just short of Al's typewriter.

AL
(continuing)
Hey, kid, take it easy.

SAMMY
You said rush, Mr. Manheim.

AL
I didn't say drop dead on me.

SAMMY
I don't drop dead so easy.

Grabs copy from Al and runs with it.

RTL*

AL'S CUBICLE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Al's relaxing now, his feet on the desk, a bottle of whiskey at hand, as Sammy makes a quick return.

* Running Time Lapse (RTL) -- a quick visual of stylized feet racing across the screen; to be used throughout as appropriate (unless replaced by "Running" music theme).

SAMMY

You're all set, Mr. Manheim. The boss seems to like it.

AL

How would you know?

SAMMY

Well, he only said "shit" two times.

(as AL chuckles)

I thought it was great.

AL

(amused)

Oh, you read it, too?

SAMMY

On the run. Only trouble is, you got some jawbreakers in there. Like -- what the hell is "meritry-shous"?

AL

The word is "meretricious." It means unnecessarily fancy -- tricked up -- too showy.

SAMMY

So why not say it? Ever notice who reads the Record? They're in the subways, the nickel-'n'-dime cafeterias. They don't know their ass from meretricious.

AL

Thanks for the advice, Sammy.

Rising as Cleaning Woman starts sweeping up around them.

AL

(continuing)

Time to check out of this joint and check in at the club.

SAMMY

I don't drink, Mr. Manheim, but would I be barging in..?

AL

Yes.

AL - AT BLEECK'S BAR

A few other late-nighters in b.g.

AL
(to BARTENDER)
The usual, Henry.
(then, as SAMMY
approaches)
And for my colleague, a glass of
milk. Make that a double, too.

SAMMY
Thanks, Mr. Manheim.
(looking around
excitedly)
Boy, you newspaper guys really
know how to live!

AL
So you like this game, Sammy --
and your job?

SAMMY
Damn good job, this year.

AL
What do you mean, this year?

SAMMY
If I still have it next year,
it'll stink.

AL
(chuckles; impressed)
Well, maybe in a couple of years
we can slot you in as a cub
reporter.

SAMMY
Screw that! Coupla years as cub
reporter -- very small bucks.
Then the police beat, a little
bigger, and finally you're a star
reporter, or a drama columnist
like you, and it's a hunnerd,
hunnerd-an'-fifty tops the rest of
ya life.

(thumbs-down gesture)
Thanks, Mr. M., but don't do me no
favors.

AL
(irritably)
Any favors!

SAMMY
(defensively)
You don't like me, do you, Mr.
Manheim?

AL
Don't like you? You're downright
loveable. At least to your mother
and father.

SAMMY
(face suddenly
darkening)
My old man. Forget 'im! He
croaked when I was ten.

AL
Oh, I'm sorry, Sammy.

SAMMY
Don't be. Know what he died of?
(pause)
Dumbness.

AL
(shocked)
What? For Christ sake, Sammy --
it's your own father!

SAMMY
Can I help it if that's what he
died of? Got up praying, went to
bed praying, and couldn't earn a
goddam dollar. My stupid brother,
Seymour, he's got it, too: dumb-
ness. It'll kill ya, Mr. M. I
seen it!

AL
Sammy, there's more to this world
than just the big fish gobbling up
the little fish. Give the other
fellow a break -- we'll all live
longer.

SAMMY
Hey, if you want to save souls,
join the Salvation Army.

AL
(exasperated)
Let me try this first. Here's a
pair for "Porgy and Bess" -- third
row center. Hottest ticket on
Broadway. Take your mother,
maybe.

SAMMY
Jesus, ain't you a sentimental
bastard!

AL
Don't say ain't or you'll be a
copyboy forever.

SAMMY
(grabbing the tickets)
Don't bet on it!

SHUBERT ALLEY - NIGHT

RTL

Osborne and Wife (MEG), in evening clothes and holding theater
programs, are on their way toward Sardi's when they run into
Al, also in black tie; he has just left a nearby theater.

AL
Oz, Meg -- hi, what'd you see
tonight?

OSBORNE
"Porgy and Bess."

MEG
We just loved it!

OSBORNE
(joke-singing)
Meg, you is my woman now...

AL
You wanted tickets? You should've
asked me.

OSBORNE

Thanks, Al, but everybody's after you for freebees. So for our twentieth we figured we'd splurge. Two seats down close, on the aisle.

AL

Must've set you back plenty.

OSBORNE

I got lucky. Ran into a bargain.

AL

Scalper in the lobby?

OSBORNE

No, the new copyboy. Sammy Glick.

(as AL reacts)

Said he couldn't go -- his mother was sick.

CITY ROOM - DAY

More aroused than we've ever seen him, Al strides in and shouts:

AL

Copy!

Sammy comes running -- then stops short, bewildered.

SAMMY

Whattia mean, "copy"? You're not even at your desk.

AL

No, I'm at your throat.

SAMMY

Whattia mean? Whattia talkin' about?

AL

Osborne. What you did to Osborne.

SAMMY

(brazenly)

OK, I shoulda told ya. I couldn't go, so instead of wasting the tickets I gave 'em to him. Anything wrong in that?

AL
Just one little detail. You
didn't give them. You sold them.

SAMMY
For half the going price on the
street. The show's a sell-out. I
saved 'im money.

AL
Saved him, hell -- you robbed him!
So give 'im back his money!. He
needs every cent he makes!
(reaching for SAMMY)
Give it back!

SAMMY
I can't.

AL
Dammit, I want the money!

SAMMY
Sorry, Mr. Manheim. I spent it
already.

RTL

IN A FLORSHEIM SHOE STORE, MIDTOWN - DAY

A sleek SALESMAN is serving Sammy. Al, fascinated in spite of
himself, sits alongside.

SALESMAN
These are the ones you ordered,
sir.
(shoehorning them on)
In your exact size -- I got 'em
from our downtown store.

Sammy gets up and walks around self-importantly in his highly
polished, "stylishly" pointed yellow-brown shoes.

SAMMY
Know somethin', Mr. M? These are
the first brand-new shoes I ever
had.

AL
(from anger to
sympathy)
I'll be damned.

SAMMY

All my life I've been wearin' my brother's lousy hand-me-downs.

AL

Sammy, if you needed shoes that bad, you should've asked me. I'm no Rockefeller, but --

SAMMY

Thanks, but no thanks. Leaves you wide open. This way you're sore f' a while, but I don't owe you nothin'.

AL

Don't owe me anything! It's time you learned: two negatives make a positive. If you don't owe me nothing, that means you do owe me something.

SAMMY

So have it your way. I don't owe you anything.

Al shakes his head in exasperation.

RTL

WEST 44TH STREET, OFF SIXTH AVENUE (LOOKING EAST) - NIGHT

As Al strides along, Sammy (who has been tailing him) runs up behind him.

SAMMY

(disguising voice;
falsetto)

C'n I have your autograph, Mr. Manheim?

AL

(wheels -- then
sees who it is)
Oh, f' Christ sake!

SAMMY

Look, Mr. Manheim, I didn't want to bother you about this at the office -- but c'n we go have a drink somewhere?

AL
Sorry, I'm due at the Algonquin...
(indicating marquee
ahead)
Ten minutes ago.

As he continues on, Sammy's right at his elbow.

SAMMY
The Algonquin -- I heard o' that.

AL
You should. It's the hangout for
Murderers' Row. I'm talking
writers, not ballplayers. Ring
Lardner, Dorothy Parker, George
Kaufman's got three plays on
Broadway right now.

SAMMY
Wow! Look, Mr. M, talkin' about
writers, y'know what our paper
needs? A radio column.

AL
Is that what you tracked me down
for tonight? How many times have
you asked me that?

SAMMY
Only three or four. How'd you
like the column I left on your
desk?

AL
Now it's in the wastebasket where
it belongs.

SAMMY
(pulling crumpled
paper from pocket)
No it isn't. I got it back and I
made it better. Here --

AL
(brushing it aside)
Forget it, Sammy -- you can't
write.

As they reach the entrance to the Algonquin Hotel, and the doorman bows Al through the revolving door, Sammy is left outside looking in.

ESTABLISH HOTEL CHELSEA, LOWER MANHATTAN - EARLY MORNING

INSIDE AL'S HOTEL SUITE

He comes out of the bedroom in his bathrobe, opens the hall door, and picks up the "Times" and the "Record." From force of habit he immediately checks his column in the latter.

AL
(exploding at
what he sees)
The little sonofabitch!

Annie, the woman who greeted Al outside the theater, comes up behind him in a nightdress.

ANNIE
What happened?

AL
(slapping paper)
Sammy Glick happened!

CLOSE ON ENTERTAINMENT PAGE, "NEW YORK RECORD"

showing Manheim's "Down Broadway" column side-by-side with the new radio column: SAMMY GLICK BROADCASTING.

AL'S VOICE
(furiously)
What the hell's going on here?

As CAMERA PULLS BACK we see the "Record," opened to the offending page, on O'Brien's desk.

O'BRIEN
Nothing's going on here. Something's going off. Like a chunk of your fuckin' column. You came up short and Sammy came through with something to fill, so I shoved it in.

AL
So now you can shove it up! Dammit, O'Brien, you can't do this to my column!

O'BRIEN
I can't? From now on I want it
shorter all the time. Thirty
lines shorter.

AL
What do you mean, thirty lines
shorter?

O'BRIEN
(with exaggerated
patience)
I mean, thirty lines not as long
as you've been writing it.

AL
I don't believe this. You're not
actually going with this crap from
Sammy Glick the copyboy?

O'BRIEN
No, from Sammy Glick the radio
columnist.

AL'S CUBICLE, CITY ROOM - ON SAMMY
at a new typewriter near Al's, banging away with two fingers.

SAMMY
Copy!

As the Irish Kid runs in, Sammy pulls page from typewriter and
hands it to him imperiously.

SAMMY
(continuing)
What took you so long? This stuff
is hot. On the double!

IRISH KID
(through his teeth)
Yes sir, Mr. Glick.

Over this, Al barges in, wielding the folded "Record" like a
sword.

AL
Dammit, Sammy, if you knew my
piece was short, why didn't you
come and get me?

SAMMY

Wasn't time. You know the boss,
Al. He was in a hurry.

AL

Yeah. So are you. And I see you
got your name in the title. Makes
your byline twice as big as mine.

SAMMY

So why didn't you think of that?

AL

(waving at column)

You'll never get away with this.
The opening is straight out of
Damon Runyon. You can't spell,
you never heard of syntax, for
punctuation you just use three
dots, you make up your own crazy
words, and garbage like --

(reads)

"Scoop of the day: What heavy
lover of the airways is being
called out at home...?"

(slams paper down)

You call that journalism?

SAMMY

(unfazed; snarls
back)

I call it sellin' papers, baby!
People're gonna buy the "Record"
just to be in on stuff like that.
So I say "ain't" and use double
negatives? Tough tit! So do my
readers -- I'll have a million of
'em -- while you turn 'em off with
all ya highdome stuff about Eugene
O'Neill they don't give a shit
about. Hell, in three months my
column'll be payin' your salary,
Mister Second-string Critic!

As Al glares at him and goes to work --

RTL

NEWSPAPER DELIVERY TRUCK - DAY - MOVING SHOT

On its side, a huge poster with a glorified blown-up photo of Sammy, reading:

READ "SAMMY GLICK BROADCASTING"
EVERY DAY -- ONLY IN
THE NEW YORK RECORD

"MAYBE IT AIN'T ART, BUT YOUR
FAVORITE COLUMNIST GIVES IT 4
SAMMIES!"

And, on the side of a BUS MOVING DOWN BROADWAY:

4 SAMMIES IS LIFE!
4 SLAMMIES IS DEATH!
DON'T MISS
"SAMMY GLICK BROADCASTING"
IN
THE NEW YORK RECORD

RTL

OUTSIDE THE GOTHAM BOOK MART, WEST 47TH STREET - DAY

Al is browsing through an open book-table. Sammy runs up to him, wearing what he considers an outfit befitting a hot showbiz columnist. He's even added a little Havana cigar.

SAMMY
Hey Al, you got enough books.
C'mon, I'll buy you a drink.

AL
(teasing)
Don't do me no favors.

SAMMY
Any favors.

AL
You learn fast, kid.

SAMMY
Al, Monday's my birthday, also the first birthday of my column, so I thought since you gave me my start --

AL
Your start! I told you -- I hated your column from Day One. I despise it! I abhor it! I --

SAMMY
 (typically ignoring
 his barbs)
 So how about dinner with me 'n' my
 girl Rosalie at the Algonquin?

AL
 Sammy, I'm glad to say there's an
 opening I have to cover Monday
 night. The new O'Neill that
 nobody gives a shit about.

SAMMY
 So we'll make it Sunday night. It
 wouldn't be a party without you,
 Al. I already told Rosalie how
 you're teaching me grammar 'n'
 everything. And that you're my --

AL
 I know -- your mentor, God help
 me.

THE ALGONQUIN'S OAK ROOM - NIGHT

Sammy and Al in a corner booth with ROSALIE GOLDBAUM, a thin,
 pale, pretty girl, extremely shy and clearly out of place
 here. At other tables are animated, prosperous-looking
 literary and theater types. The SOMMELIER approaches.

SOMMELIER
Bon soir, m'sieu. The wine list.
 (handing it to SAMMY,
 who looks confused)
 Does anything strike your fancy?

SAMMY
 (knowing he's over
 his head, hands list
 to Al)
 Here, Al, what, uh, strikes your
 fancy?

AL
 Mmm, maybe the '33 Haut Medoc.

SAMMY
 (authoritatively,
 to SOMMELIER)
 The '33 Oh-Maydock, right away.

ROSALIE
Sammy, isn't that awfully expensive?

SAMMY
How many times do I get to celebrate like this with my best girl and my best friend?

A PHOTOGRAPHER moves in and quickly grabs a shot.

PHOTOG
OK, Sammy?

SAMMY
Thanks, Joe.

AL
(almost admiringly)
You don't miss a trick, do you?

ROSALIE
(as SAMMY grins)
You know, Mr. Manheim, writing that column isn't what Sammy really wants to do.

AL
(dryly)
I know, we forced it on him.

ROSALIE
(heartbreakingly earnest)
I know that some day he's going to be a great writer. Because he's really a poet. You should see what he writes me. Like -- "Oh our love is stronger by far than the love/of those who are older than we..."

SAMMY
(nervously)
C'mon, Rose, some things are private.

ROSALIE

(carried away)

"And neither the angels in heaven
above/or the demons down under the
sea,/Can ever dissever my soul
from the soul/ of my beautiful
Rosalie."

(pauses)

See what I mean?

AL

Congratulations, Sammy. You've
moved up from Damon Runyon to
Edgar Allen Poe.

SAMMY

(aside)

Shh. What's the diff? If it
makes her happy...

IN ALGONQUIN LOBBY, AT REVOLVING DOOR TO STREET

as Sammy follows Rosalie into the next partition.

AL

(behind SAMMY)

Look, it's George Gershwin.

Sammy, already in the revolving door, circles all the way
around and back into the lobby again, where GERSHWIN has
greeted Al.

SAMMY

(grabbing GERSHWIN's
hand)

Hi, Mr. Gershwin, I'm Sammy Glick
the columnist. Al Manheim's
colleague on the Record.

GERSHWIN

(politely)

Mr. Glick.

(starts to go but
SAMMY holds on to him)

SAMMY

(signalling PHOTOG
in b.g.)

Your "Porgy 'n' Bess" is terrific,
Mr. G. Gets better every time I
see it.

The flashbulb goes off with Sammy and Gershwin smiling nose-to-nose.

GERSHWIN
(going off)
Thanks, son. See you, Al.

AL
(to SAMMY)
"Better every time I see it." How many times, Sammy?

SAMMY
(grinning)
Who counts?

CLOSE ON NEWSPHOTO OF SAMMY GLICK AND GEORGE GERSHWIN
with Al in b.g. -- on entertainment page of the "Record."

PULL BACK TO SHOW PAGE on bulletin board in Al/Sammy's City Room cubicle. Al is reading the picture-caption aloud, sarcastically:

AL (begins as V.O.)
"Of Thee I Sing, Sammy!" Broadway columnist Sammy Glick and world-famous composer George Gershwin celebrate Sammy's birthday at the Algonquin. Also on hand: Sammy's fellow-columnist, Al Manheim.
(ripping page from board)
Sammy, Sammy, Sammy! Dammit, you've done it again!

VOICE BEHIND AL
Excuse me, sir...

Al turns to see an intelligent, sensitive, bespectacled "nerd" in his late 20's, approaching timidly. This is JULIAN BLUMBERG. He has a typewritten script in hand.

JULIAN
I'm looking for Mr. Glick. Is he expected back soon?

AL
(dryly)
Well, this is his morning for shoes. You might find him at Florsheim's...Wait a minute, I
(MORE)

AL (CONT'D)
 think he mentioned Church's on
 Madison, where his great pal
 Gershwin gets his.

JULIAN
 (hurrying out)
 Oh, thank you. Thank you very
 much!

EXT. CHURCH'S SHOE STORE (MADISON AVE. AT 49TH) - DAY

Sammy is seen through window trying on shoes. Church's is
 clearly several notches above Florsheim's, with a floorwalker
 in cutaway, and shoe clerks dressed Ivy League-style. Then,
 also through window, we see Julian hurry in, introduce him-
 self, and hand Sammy the script.

ON SAMMY AND JULIAN

SAMMY
 (slipping foot into
 sleek new shoe)
 OK, kid -- I'll try to find time
 to look at your story.

JULIAN
 (almost overcome)
 Oh, thank you, Mr. Glick. I don't
 know if it's any good, but you
 being such an expert on comedy...

SAMMY
 Leave it to me, son. If I can
 help you in any way...

JULIAN
 Gee, thanks, Mr. Glick. Thanks a
 lot...

(as he leaves, SAMMY
 begins to scan the
 script)

SAMMY
 "Girl Steals Boy" -- nifty title.
 (chuckles)
 Hmmm...fun-nee. Fun-nee!

SHOE CLERK
 (indicating "jazzy"
 two-tone shoes)
 Are you taking these, Mr. Glick?

SAMMY
 (absorbed in the
 script)
 I'll wear 'em...I'll wear 'em...

RTL

SAMMY'S NEW SHOES

hurrying out of Church's toward "Record" office, to rhythm of
 "RUNNING" MUSIC THEME.

AL'S/SAMMY'S CUBICLE - ANGLE ON SAMMY

as Julian approaches. Al is profiled at typewriter in f.g.

SAMMY
 (highly condescending)
 It's not bad, kid, for a first
 try.

JULIAN
 You really like it, Mr. Glick?

SAMMY
 Well, maybe with a little more
 work I can pull something out of
 it. And then I'll give it to my
 Hollywood agent.

JULIAN
 Gee, Mr. Glick, I didn't expect
 all that!
 (glancing at watch)
 Better get back to the mail-room.
 (all but kissing
 SAMMY's hand)
 How can I ever thank you?

AL
 (as JULIAN runs out)
 Don't worry, he'll find a way.

SAMMY
 (changing moods --
 all business now)
 Hey, Al, you know Hollywood pretty
 good, don't you?

AL
 Barely. Myron Selznick is still
 trying to sell an unproduced play
 of mine.

SAMMY

Myron Selznick -- is he big out there?

AL

The biggest. Handles Gable and Tracy, Nelson Eddy, Jeanette MacDonald...His only competition is the William Morris Agency.

SAMMY

Yeah? Maybe I'll give him a try.

AL

(straight-faced)

Sammy, I never saw you so shy before. I'm sure Mr. Selznick will never forgive you when he finds out how you hesitated about giving him your business. If I were you, I'd put in a call to him right now.

SAMMY

How do I reach him?

AL

Myron Selznick and Company, Beverly Hills, is all you need.

Sammy looks at him a moment and then impulsively picks up the phone. Al stares in disbelief.

SAMMY

(on phone)

Operator? I wish to speak to Mr. Myron Selznick, Myron Selznick and Company, Beverly Hills. Tell him Sammy Glick is calling, Entertainment Editor of the "New York Record." Person to person -- and get right back to me, sweets.

AL

My God, Sammy, have you no shame? First you muscle in on Blumberg's story and then you tell him you've got a --

SAMMY

(very intense)

Please, Al -- I gotta concentrate.

AL

Sammy, you're wasting your time.
You're lucky if you get through to
his secretary!

SAMMY ON PHONE -- INTERCUT AL'S REACTIONS

SAMMY

Hello, Mr. Selznick? I'm sorry --
I refuse to talk to anyone but Mr.
Selznick himself. This is Mr.
Glick calling for the New York
Record. Person to person...Sammy
Glick...

(pause)

Oh, Mr. Selznick, I'm sure you've
heard of me -- listen, one of your
clients, Al Manheim, happens to be
my fellow-columnist on the New
York Record. In fact, he suggest-
ed I call you --

AL

Sammy!

SAMMY

(gathering steam)

He sends you his best. Now
listen, Mr. S., we both know two
of your hottest meal-tickets are
opening their new flick here at
the Astor next week. As Enter-
tainment Editor of the biggest tab
in town I'm in a position to throw
'em lots of ink -- like a full
column on Nelson and Jeanette back
to back -- a Sammy Glick first!
Have your P.R. man get in touch
with me to set it up, OK?

(winks at AL)

What's in it for me? Well, in the
first place, I'm crazy about light
opera -- wanna see more great
voices in the movies. What? You
like light opera too, if it sells
tickets? Hah, hah, hah, I'm with
you, Mr. S.

(pause)

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Wait, wait -- lemme do you one more favor. I've got an original story that's right down your alley: "Girl Steals Boy." Al Manheim read it -- you know what a critic he is -- well, he's crazy about it.

(AL shakes his head
at SAMMY'S chutzpah)

Now don't give me that "maybe" shit. The most sure-fire story-sale that's come your way in years and you're telling me maybe? Well, maybe I've got a few maybe's of my own, Mr. Selznick. Like maybe I'll give the Morris office first crack at it instead...Oh, I'm paying good money for a long-distance call just to make jokes, huh? Well, if that's the way you feel, let's stop wasting each other's time...

(to an imaginary
secretary -- for
Selznick's benefit)

Honey, get me Bill Morris on his direct line...Oh, that's different! Now you're talking my language. "Girl Steals Boy" will be on your desk day after tomorrow...Call me right away. Collect. You bet yer ass! So long, Myron.

He hangs up, almost gasping for breath, then lets down -- like a marathoner after crossing the finish line. Al's mood has gone through noticeable changes, from surprise to exasperation to outrage to downright awe.

AL

(quietly)

Sammy, were you scared?

SAMMY

Funny thing, Al, I'm scared now -- scared shitless. But I wasn't when I was talkin' to 'im. I didn't even think about being scared.

AL
 (more and more
 intrigued)
 What were you thinking about?

SAMMY
 Me. I just kept thinking nothing
 but me. Just kept saying "Sammy
 Glick, Sammy Glick" over 'n' over
 in my head, an' it kept growing
 louder -- "SammyGlick SammyGLICK
 SAMMYGLICK SAMMYGLICK SAMMY-
 GLICK..."
 (pause)
 You know what I mean?

AL
 (looking at him like
 Frankenstein confronting
 his monster)
 I think I'm beginning to.

AL IN HORN & HARDART CAFETERIA - DAY

He's at the apple-pie dispenser, depositing two nickels.
 Glass door opens and he reaches in for a slice-of-pie on a
 plate. An additional nickel in a different slot produces cup
 of coffee.

Sammy enters to Al excitedly, in fact triumphantly. His
 appearance has improved dramatically: a flashy new suit, a
 carnation in his buttonhole, and suede shoes that shout NEW!

SAMMY
 Hey, Al, they told me I'd find you
 here.
 (looks around in
 distaste at the
 humble clientele)
 I useta eat here myself when I
 couldn't afford nothin' better.

AL
 (taking his pie &
 coffee to nearby
 table)
 Every once in a while it's nice to
 go someplace where you don't have
 to talk to anybody, even waiters.

SAMMY
(following him)
Al, I gotta thank you.

AL
For what?

SAMMY
For putting me together with Myron
Selznick. You changed my life.
(handing him a
telegram)
This just came in.

AL
(reading)
"Sold your story to World-Wide
Studios for ten G's, with seven-
year contract starting at two-
fifty a week."
(astonished)
Ten thousand dollars? Astronom-
ical!
(pause)
What does Julian get?

SAMMY
Don't worry, I'll take care of
'im.

AL
When you say, "Don't worry," it's
time to start worrying. Two-fifty
a week?

SAMMY
For starters. And there'll be
plenty more where that comes from.

AL
You mean from Julian Blumberg?

SAMMY
C'mon, Al. If I didn't run with
it, it's down the toilet. He's
lucky I bothered with 'im.

AL
He's lucky -- I'm lucky -- your
girlfriend Rosalie's lucky --
anybody who ever did anything for
you is lucky, right?

SAMMY

The trouble with you, Al, you
worry too much about other people.
Slows you down.

AL

They'll never say that about you,
Sammy.

RTL

FLASH - SAMMY FUCKING ROSALIE

Way beyond love-making, it becomes a violent demonstration of
success, triumph, power...

ROSALIE

(virtually raped)
Sammy Sammy Sammy Sammy....!

SAMMY

Hang on, baby. Way I feel, I
could make the Statue o' Liberty
come t'night!

CITY ROOM

Feverish late-afternoon activity interrupted by Sammy's
arrival in a wrap-around polo coat and sporty new hat, and
gesturing with a Havana cigar like a scepter.

SAMMY

Well, fellers, I'm off to Holly-
wood. Just dropped in to say
goodbye.

(a deafening
silence)

Well, aren't you going to say
anything?

AL

(looking up from
typewriter)
Goodbye.

OSBORNE

Al speaks for all of us.

ALL THE NEWSMEN
 (including IRISH KID
 and PHOTOG seen
 earlier -- in unison)
 Good-bye!

AL
 And Julian goes back to the
 mail-room?

SAMMY
 What could I do? World-Wide only
 wanted me. But I told you I'd
 give him something out of my
 share.

AL
 (shaking his head)
 Your one-hundred-percent share of
 his hundred-percent work.

OSBORNE
 You're really getting two-fifty a
 week? That's almost five times
 what I'm making. And I've been
 here ten years.

SAMMY
 (gaily)
 That's your problem.

OSBORNE
 (breaking into song)
 America, America, God shed His
 grace on thee...

SAMMY
 (turning to go)
Adios, fellers. This is Sammy
Glick signing off. See you in the
 movies.
 (to AL)
 And Al, I'll see you at the Brown
 Derby, soon as I'm in solid.
 (really leaving)
 So long, slaves!

OSBORNE & ALL
 And crown thy good with brother-
 hood,/ from sea to shining sea!

Al is staring intently after Sammy. As others continue mock-singing, Osborne stops to ask:

OSBORNE

What are you thinking, Al?

AL

(still staring off;
obsessed)

I'm thinking, What makes him run?
What makes Sammy run...?

BELVEDERE FOUNTAIN, CENTRAL PARK - AL WAITING

on bench as Rosalie Goldbaum approaches. She's extremely uneasy, and looks as if she's been crying.

ROSALIE

It's awfully nice of you to see
me, Mr. Manheim.

AL

Look, there was something in your
voice...How can I help?

ROSALIE

Well, since you're Sammy's best
friend...

AL

Am I?

ROSALIE

Please, Mr. Manheim, could you --
would you ask him for me? Why has
he stopped writing?

AL

Well, he's in a new place, prob-
ably busy as hell -- and maybe
finding it tougher than he
thought.

ROSALIE

But he promised to send for me the
first month he was out there. I
even quit my job. Got rid of
everything I couldn't take along.

AL

Jesus.

ROSALIE

Call him for me, please. And ask him why -- why is he torturing me?

AL

Listen, Rosalie, you're not -- ?

ROSALIE

Even if I were, I wouldn't tell you.

(dabs eyes)

He promised to send me the fare.

AL

I'm sorry, dear, but a Sammy Glick promise is like Confederate money. Looks great -- just don't try to cash it.

ROSALIE

(starting to weep)

What should I do, Mr. Manheim?
What should I do..?

AL

Don't cry, Rosalie. Please. I'll try to get you a job on the paper. Find yourself another apartment. Get used to living without Sammy Glick. I have.

OUTSIDE THE "21" CLUB (W. 52ND STREET)

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Phone call, Mr. Manheim. Long distance.

AL AT THE BAR

with Annie. Also at bar: a few celebs, business execs, etc.

MAITRE D'

(continuing)

You can pick up in one of the booths -- or right there on the bar.

Al nods and picks up phone at end of the bar.

AL

Hello...

SAMMY'S VOICE

(loud and clear)

How they hangin', Alsy-palsy?

AL

Oh for Christ sake!

SAMMY - IN HIS WORLD-WIDE STUDIO WRITER'S OFFICE

Fairly spacious, if not yet up to the \$2500-a-week class. Sammy's in full writer's regalia: creamy slacks; loud, expensive sports jacket; and, leaning back in his leather chair, he parks his lizard-skin loafers on his desk, which is piled with film scripts.

SAMMY

What the hell you doin' in "21"?
Simon Legree finally give you a
raise?

INTERCUT SAMMY AND AL

AL

What happened, they catch up with
you? You're fired?

SAMMY

Ha - ha - ha! They love me! You
should see the office I got. Now
listen, hang on to the bar or the
piece of ass you got with you, if
any -- you're on your way to
Hollywood. I just got Monogram to
option your play.

AL

My play? How'd you get it? From
Myron Selznick?

SAMMY

Hell, no, his secretary can't even
find it. Before I left I copped
it out of your bottom drawer. You
had three copies. Well, look
again, you got two.

AL

I'll be damned.

SAMMY

Lucky you got me in your corner, baby. I got you a sweet little deal on the screenplay -- two G's -- an' eight weeks t' do it. Try that on your harmonica.

AL

(accepting it)

This is going to break O'Brien's heart, you know that.

SAMMY

Monogram ain't exactly Metro or World-Wide but get a credit over there and I'll have you here with me in the big leagues.

AL

Don't say ain't -- or you'll be a screenwriter forever.

SAMMY

(laughs)

I've missed you, Al. All them big words, an' the little needles you're always stickin' into me. Now get your ass out here. We got a new flight that only takes sixteen hours.

BACK TO AL AND ANNIE

AL

You remember Sammy Glick?

ANNIE

Please -- you talk about him all the time.

AL

He sold a play of mine out there. He actually went to bat for me.

ANNIE

(a shrug)

So he's not a complete shit.

(pause)

But why's he doing it, Al?

AL

I don't know. Something about him seems to need me.

ANNIE
(searchingly)
Maybe you need him, too?

BURBANK AIRPORT - DAY

Among passengers arriving or departing, CAMERA FINDS AL, with suitcase and portable typewriter. From o.s. comes MUSICAL AUTO HORN ("California, Here I Come") as a glittery-new yellow Caddy convertible races in. Sammy's at the wheel, sporting a California tan and checkerboard sports coat, a yellow ascot around his neck and a matching handkerchief in his breast pocket.

SAMMY
Hiya, chump! Welcome to the City
of Lost Angels. Hop in!

AL
(getting in)
Like your tie.

As they speed along toward Hollywood --

SAMMY
Hey, I was having a drink with
your producer at Monogram an' he
was laughin' at how he got you for
a lousy two hundred a week.

AL
You told me you set the deal.

SAMMY
(covering quickly)
I made the pitch an' let Myron
fill in the numbers -- but he
didn't hold out for two-five-oh
like I told him to.

AL
Thanks anyway, Sammy -- I'll
manage.

SAMMY
On two bills a week? You'll just
about break even. Plus out here
you gotta have wheels. Like this
baby.

AL

You own it -- or rent it?

SAMMY

This is the Land of Opportunity -- people are gettin' their options dropped all the time -- losin' their cars, their houses...

(pause)

I'll see what I c'n pick up for you.

AL

I'll find something. Looks like you've got more used-car lots than people out here.

SAMMY

What'll you get -- a repainted jalopy? That's death, pal. In this town, you are what you drive.

Sammy sounds his "California, Here I Come!" horn and speeds around a slower car.

RTL

INSIDE THE WORLD-WIDE STUDIO COMMISSARY - DAY

A large, crowded room, with tables of various sizes, and BUZZING with excitement. (At the "stars' table," actors and actresses in costume.) Sammy enters with Al.

SAMMY

(showing it off)

How do you like it, Al?

(pointing to French doors at one side)

In there's the private dining room for the head of the studio and the other biggies. And see the table back there? That's where the stars eat. And next to them, the big-picture directors. The low-budget directors are farther down.

(as they approach a table)

And here's the top-writers' table -- fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred a week. Like Harold Godfrey Wilson.

As Sammy sits down with Al at another table, he waves to WILSON, a bald, bulky, middle-aged man with a florid complexion and a "British" accent.

SAMMY

Harry! Didn't expect to see you up so early.

WILSON

(grinning)

I don't know if I'm up yet or not, laddie.

Sammy grins back and turns to Al.

SAMMY

Harry threw a terrific party last night. Everybody had to come as their pet aversion. You know, Benedict Arnold, Al Capone...

AL

How many came as Sammy Glick?

SAMMY

(grinning)

Still trying to get a rise out of me, huh?

AL

The way Rosalie Goldbaum used to?

SAMMY

(forcing it)

You could give elephants memory lessons. OK, Al -- how is she?

AL

Swell. Just swell. High and dry.

SAMMY

(meaning it)

I couldn't help it. I'm sorry, Al. I swear to God.

(AL nods non-committally)

I never said I was gonna bring her out here. She just took it for granted and I didn't want to hurt her.

AL

So now you're just killing her
with kindness.

SAMMY

Aw come on, Al -- what c'd I do
with her in Hollywood? Her one
idea in life is to stay home 'n'
have kids. Only in this town ya
gotta circulate.

(as several provocative
extra-girls swing past)

You won't believe how much pussy
there is in this town. Un-fuckin'-
believable. If I hadda die I'd
like t' come back as Gary Cooper's
cock!

(laughs)

I tell ya, Rosalie'd be lost out
here. She'd go nuts in a month.

AL

She had to be nuts to fall for you
in the first place. The least you
can do is let her down easy with a
nice letter and enough money to
get started again.

SAMMY

(after a moment)

How much would you sent if you
were me?

AL

God forbid! Every cent I could
spare.

SAMMY

How's for two big ones?

AL

(startled)

You have that much put away?

SAMMY

From playing gin-rummy with my
producer. The drunker he gets,
the bigger he bets. He's good for
three, four hundred every time.

AL

OK, I'll write Rosalie the money's on the way, just in case it slips your mind.

SAMMY

I sprinkle rosin on my mind every morning. Nothing ever slips up there.

THE WORLD-WIDE LOT

Al and Sammy leaving the commissary.

AL

So how's "Girl Steals Boy"? Finished yet?

SAMMY

It's in the cutting room now. I made a new buddy -- the film editor. That's how ya learn t' put 'em together. What a business, Al! They're shootin' my next one any minute.

AL

Who wrote that one for you, Sammy? Which reminds me, what ever happened to Julian Blumberg?

SAMMY

Look, I brought 'im out here. Paid his way. I've been keeping him going.

AL

I'll bet you have.

SAMMY

OK, Julian's a better writer'n me. But he don't know how t' talk -- gotta be able t' sell ya stories 'fore you get a chance t' write 'em. And he dresses like an usher at Forest Lawn. This town is strictly showbiz, Al. Gotta know how to be on all the time.

AL
So you really have a new picture
in the works? Already?

SAMMY
Football yarn. It's called
"Quarterback Sneak." About the
son of a gangster who becomes a
star quarterback. His old man's
boss wants him t' throw the game
but --

AL
Don't tell me how it ends. I want
to be surprised.

SAMMY
You know, it's finding the right
story that sells the tickets.

AL
And of course you know where to
find them?

SAMMY
Do I ever! You think I need a
Julie Blumberg? I got writers
make him look like wooden nickels.

He gestures Al toward --

INSIDE THE STUDIO LIBRARY

Spacious, booklined, many filing cabinets...but almost empty.
As Sammy enters with Al, the LIBRARIAN is obviously glad to
see him. She's in her 40's, a little dumpy, wears glasses,
but not at all immune to Sammy's blandishments.

LIBRARIAN
Oh, Sammy! Is there something
you're looking for?

SAMMY
You know what I'm looking for,
Leona. Sooner or later, it's got
to happen.

LIBRARIAN
He's such a little devil.

SAMMY

See that shelf over there, Al?
Solid Balzac. And solid gold.
Terrific yarns. And Leona's got
synopses on every one of 'em.

LIBRARIAN

I don't think people in the studio
appreciate how complete a file we
have.

SAMMY

Well, I do, sweetheart. And over
here -- Charles Dickens. Herman
Melville. Joseph Conrad. Leona's
been opening my eyes. They're
better writers than Harold Godfrey
Wilson.

AL

Are you sure?

SAMMY

Scene after scene reads like a
movie script. And the beauty part
is, it's all P.D. -- Public
Domain. All for free.

Sammy leads Al toward filing cabinets.

SAMMY

(continuing)

And get a load of these files.
Hurricanes. Indian Wars. Prison
Riots. A million stories in here
just begging to be put into movie
scripts. Am I right, Leona?

LIBRARIAN

It's our own little castle.
Everything from the classics to
newspaper clippings.

AL

(to SAMMY)

So all you have to do is pull it
out and put a word-man on it.
Some ink-stained wretch like
Julian Blumberg.

SAMMY

Hey, maybe you'll do better out here than I thought.

(leaving)

Thanks, Leona. Don't forget now, you and I are celebrating your 29th birthday dancing at Ciro's cheek-to-cheek.

LIBRARIAN

(loving it)

Isn't he terrible?

OUTSIDE THE "BACK LOT" NIGHT CLUB, HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

A cab drives up and Al jumps out.

INSIDE THE "BACK LOT"

A garishly decorated, smoke-filled, after-hours spot with a postage-stamp dance floor, packed with dancers, plus a bar where patrons are standing two- and three-deep -- a melange of jazz MUSIC, drunken LAUGHTER, strident AD-LIBS. Sexy Hostesses, in gaudy evening gowns, at bar and also seated with patrons at tiny tables.

Al's at the bar, looking the room over.

AL'S POV - THE CROWD

milling around, with some Hostesses moving through. His eyes focus on one Girl (BILLIE RAND) -- mid 20's, well-proportioned inside a tight satin gown, with reddish hair combed back and falling gracefully to her bare shoulders. Her hips move seductively as she works her way through the tables to one occupied by another Hostess, a cute but tired-looking blonde in her early 20's (SALLY ANN JOYCE).

At the table with Sally is a man with back to CAMERA. Now he turns around -- it's Sammy Glick! Peering toward the bar, he sights Al and rushes to embrace him.

SAMMY

Well, if it ain't -- isn't Alsy-palsy! What're ya doin' up so late? And how'd ya find this joint?

AL

I'm still on New York time. And the cabdriver said it's the only after-hours spot around.

SAMMY
(taking him by
the arm)
Lookin' for action, huh? You
found it. C'mon!

"COLONIAL HOUSE" APARTMENTS OFF SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Trendy and costly. Sammy drives up in the Caddy, Sally beside him. Al's in the back with Billie.

INSIDE SAMMY'S APARTMENT

A long, elegantly furnished, dimly lit living room, a fake fireplace at one end. DANCE MUSIC from Sammy's record-player. Al is dancing slowly with Billie, while Sammy, on a big overstuffed couch, is doing a number on Sally.

SAMMY
Am I hearing right -- you don't
wanna be in my new movie?

SALLY
Who needs it? You gotta get up
too early in the morning.

SAMMY
(to AL)
That's my Sally Ann -- strictly a
night-worker.

He pulls her up from the couch and they head for his bedroom.

SAMMY
(continuing)
Anybody asks for me, I'm fuckin'
busy -- or vice versa.

Laughing, he exits with Sally into the bedroom, the door closing behind them.

GUEST ROOM BEYOND SAMMY'S BEDROOM - AL AND BILLIE

in bed. Their quiet post-coital mood contrasts sharply with the animal-like GRUNTS, GASPS, and SCREAMS from the other side of the wall.

BILLIE
(shaking her head)
Sound effects by Sammy Glick.

Al lights her cigarette. They smoke together, then --

AL
Billie -- what do you really think
of him?

BILLIE
Oh, I don't know. He's pretty
smart, but...

AL
But what? Friend to friend.
Level with me, Billie.

BILLIE
Well...I'd hate to go to bed with
him.

AL
Oh? You don't think he's sexy?

BILLIE
I'm just talking for me. I've
always liked to do it because it's
just about the most fun you get
out of life and because -- I bet
you laugh at me for this -- it's
always seemed like the friendliest
thing two people can do. But
somehow I've always felt that if I
ever went to bed with Sammy Glick
-- I'd feel like I was doing it
for money.

Al grins appreciatively and draws her to him again.

RTL

PRODUCER'S OFFICE, MONOGRAM STUDIOS - LATE AFTERNOON

Much less grand than Sammy-the-writer's (Monogram is a cheapie outfit). The producer -- BERT PITTMAN, 40, fleshy, tanned, horn-rim glasses -- is pacing the floor while Al sits resignedly in a chair alongside his desk.

PITTMAN

I don't know, Al. I don't know,
but something about this last
draft bothers me.

AL

What? What bothers you, Bert?

PITTMAN

I don't know! It just doesn't
have the -- oomph I'm looking for,
know what I mean? And if there's
one thing that "makes" a Bert
Pittman picture --

AL

(sardonically)

It's oomph.

LIVING-ROOM, SAMMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sammy, making a pitcher of martinis at the built-in bar, is
only half-listening to a disgruntled Al.

AL

Sammy, I just don't belong out
here. I give him a kidnap, a
forest fire, I even give 'im a
train wreck -- and my genius
producer says "It still needs
oomph!"

SAMMY

Al -- stop worrying about Bert
Pittman. He's a lightweight.

AL

He's putting another writer on
with me. A moron named Pancoast.

SAMMY

Oh, I know him. Watch out, Al --
he's a credit-grabber.

AL

(dead-pan)

That's bad, huh?

SAMMY

The worst.

Doorbell RINGS o.s.

AL
Want me to -- ?

SAMMY
Naa, my Jap'll get it.
(pouring three
Martinis)
Al, get set for the most terrific
thing you ever met.

A moment -- then KIT SARGENT strides in, hands deep in the pockets of a smartly-tailored suit. She's in her mid-20's, neatly put together, tanned skin, walnut-brown hair combed back in a thick coil, fingernails cut short and unpainted. Sammy goes to her with open arms.

SAMMY
(continuing)
Oh, baby...baby...

KIT
(deftly freeing
herself)
Hope I haven't kept you waiting.
Spent the whole day ducking my
producer, so of course who do I
bump into on my way out?
(including AL now)
Ever try putting over a story you
know is falling apart as you go
along? Great way to lose weight.
(extending her hand)
My name's Sargent.

SAMMY
(as AL takes her hand)
The sweetest guy in the world, Kit
-- Al Manheim. Al, this is Kit
Sargent, my favorite screenwriter.
Also Sidney Fineman's -- he runs
World-Wide. He even forgives her
for being a big wheel in this new
cockamamie Screen Writers Guild.

KIT
It won't be so cockamamie when we
get the studios to recognize us.

SAMMY
Don't hold your breath.

KIT

You signed up the minute I asked you. Why?

SAMMY

Three good reasons. The way you look, the way you talk, the way you write.

(to AL)

She's doing the new "Jekyll and Hyde."

AL

(startled)

You're Catherine Sargent? I've read all your books!

(she smiles)

That last novel of yours -- I found it fascinating. And frightening.

KIT

The main thing is you found it. Millions never did.

SAMMY

Hey, it still sold thirty thousand copies and got her a deal to write the screenplay.

AL

And how did you like the book, Sammy?

SAMMY

What I read was terrific.

KIT

The whole first chapter. Fast talker, slow reader.

SAMMY

(good-naturedly)

Come on, drink up. My first sneak preview -- "Girl Steals Boy!"

RTL

OUTSIDE THE WESTWOOD VILLAGE MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

On Marquee: TONIGHT - MAJOR STUDIO PREVIEW! Ticket-buyers are going in. Sammy, clearly nervous, approaches with Kit and Al.

KIT
It's a tough house, Sammy -- they only laugh when it's funny. Real funny.

SAMMY
(defiantly)
What d'ya think I wrote -- "Stella Dallas?"

INSIDE THE THEATER

House lights down. Led by Sammy, Kit and Al move down the aisle to the roped-off reserved-seat section. From o.s. screen, introductory MUSIC, then -- on screen -- title (GIRL STEALS BOY) and credits begin to roll...to:

INSERT - CREDIT CARD

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
by
SAMUEL GLICK

BACK TO KIT, AL, SAMMY

Al darts a glance at Sammy, who is smirking to himself with sensual pleasure -- and clapping.

AL
Solo credit, huh?

SAMMY
(still clapping)
Like I told you -- Julie can't sell for shit. I hadda carry the ball myself. But that's Hollywood.

AL
Like hell! That's Sammy Glick.

Al shakes his head as the APPLAUSE is picked up and spreads through the house. Sammy grins, then concentrates on the o.s. screen -- from which light flickers amid snatches of DIALOGUE. Frequent AUDIENCE LAUGHTER. Al sees Sammy holding a CLICKING device in one hand and scribbling on a pad with an illuminated pen.

SAMMY
 (explaining)
 I'm clocking the laughs...Eleven
 in the first three minutes...

CAMERA SPEED-UP: Sammy taking notes, Fineman watching screen,
 audience LAUGHING, etc. Through this:

SAMMY'S V.O.
 (continuing)
 Eighteen...Ummm -- that's a dead
 spot they can kill when they trim
 it...Thirty-two...Oh, that's a
 good one!...Forty-three...That
 goddam ham, he murdered my line...!
 Fifty-eight...Seventy-four...Nine-
 ty-one...One hundred ten even!

CURTAIN MUSIC signals movie's end. Generous APPLAUSE. House
 lights up as Sammy, Kit, and Al get up to go. Sammy hurries
 up the aisle to where SIDNEY FINEMAN has been sitting at the
 back of the reserved section. Fineman, in his 50's, has a
 pink, gentle, sensitive face.

FINEMAN
 Nice work, son. It could be a
 winner.

SAMMY
 (he's "in" now)
 Gee, Mr. Fineman -- thank you!

FINEMAN
 Come on -- let's all talk outside.

As Sammy starts off with Fineman, Kit grabs Al's arm, heading
 them toward a side door.

KIT
This way -- before we get sucked
 into that curbside conference.

ALLEY ADJOINING PARKING LOT

dimly lit. Kit and Al come out of the theater.

AL
 So that's the Boss Man -- Sidney
 Fineman.

KIT

One of the few old-timers still on top. The man has class, Al. His idea of a big evening is to lock himself in his library, and read.

AL

Then why would he want to work with Sammy?

KIT

Because Wall Street has moved in on his company. He's starting to worry that if his pictures don't start making more money, they'll take his name off the door. He's convinced Sammy is a money writer.

AL

Two guesses who convinced him.

JULIAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Manheim! Mr. Manheim...

Julian comes out of the shadows, with:

JULIAN

(continuing)

I -- I'm Julian Blumberg. From the "New York Record"...?

AL

(embarrassed
by JULIAN's
embarrassment)

I remember you, Julian. In fact, I've asked Sammy about you.

(introducing KIT)

Julian Blumberg -- Kit Sargent.

JULIAN

Mr. Manheim, I've got to talk to you right away. In private.

(desperately)

I need to talk to you in private.

AL

How about lunch tomorrow? Musso and Frank's -- one o'clock?

JULIAN

That's the earliest you can make it?

AL

Twelve-thirty?

JULIAN

OK -- that'll give me just enough time. Thanks, Mr. Manheim --
(running off)

Thanks!

Al looks after him a moment, then to Kit:

AL

How about a beer at Barney's?

KIT

Sorry -- late date with Sammy.

AL

(shaking his head)

Kit Sargent and Sammy Glick -- terrible casting. You're pro-labor and he's pro-Sammy. You're a serious writer, he's a -- I don't get it.

KIT

I didn't either, at first. Then the -- sense of excitement I felt around him got to me. He does something to the air -- intensifies it. Like a siren -- a shrill note held too long. Makes you want to scream.

AL

I've just met you, but I can't believe you'd let anyone get to you like that.

Sammy runs in, a batch of 3x5 cards in one hand.

SAMMY

I'm over the hump, kiddies! See these preview cards? Two hundred GREATs, a hundred VERY GOOD, fifty GOOD, thirty POOR -- fuck them! From now on I c'n write my own
(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)
 ticket. Only I'm gonna wait till
 it's held over a third week in New
 York and starts t' clean up outa
 town...

Kit and Al stare at him, catching some of his excitement
 themselves.

SAMMY
 (continuing;
 hugging KIT)
 I'm in a terrific spot, sweet-
 heart! Nothin' c'n stop me now!

RTL

EXT. MUSSO & FRANK'S RESTAURANT, HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - DAY

JULIAN (V.O.)
 You saw what happened last night,
 Mr. Manheim...

INT. RESTAURANT - AL IN BOOTH WITH JULIAN

JULIAN
 (going right on)
 "Girl Steals Boy" is a smash. So
 what does Sammy get? A new
 contract at seven-fifty a week,
 with options that jump to a
 thousand, fifteen hundred -- and
 you know who wrote that "smash-
 eroo"?

AL
 (ironically)
 "Original screenplay by Samuel
 Glick."

JULIAN
 He should live so long!
 (showing AL a
 bound script)
 The script I wrote -- word for
 word what was on the screen! Read
 it, please.
 (as AL takes it)
 You should have seen my wife,
 Blanche. She got so worked up she
 ran out and drove home by herself.
 (MORE)

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I had to take the bus, and you know how the busses run out here -- or maybe you don't. When I got home, the door was locked.

AL

Tough lady.

JULIAN

We got married right out of high school. A beautiful person, really -- also a big mouth. The names she calls me for not standing up to Sammy!

(blurting out)

Mr. Manheim --

AL

Al.

JULIAN

You've got to help me. So I'm making more than back in New York -- terrific! My whole life is falling apart -- my marriage... Al, he treats me like shit but you're his best friend, so maybe --

AL

Sorry, Julian -- really -- but I'm barely making it myself. Out here they shuffle writers like cards. I could get canned any minute.

JULIAN

Please, Al, I'm not asking, I'm begging --

(looks up)

Christ, here she comes!

(visibly frightened)

I didn't even tell her where I was going.

BLANCHE

comes striding toward them -- short, strongly built, bursting with pent-up energy.

JULIAN

How'd you find me?

BLANCHE

(very positive;
Bronx accent)

Where do all the writers eat when they're not in the studio commissary?

(glances off)

That's William Faulkner over there, probably working for peanuts like my little schmegeggi here.

JULIAN

Now Blanche...

BLANCHE

Don't "now-Blanche" me. Maybe you can take Sammy's bullshit but after last night, no more for me! I'd rather have you back on the "Record" running the postage meter in the mail room. Look, I'm leaving on the bus in the morning. And if you're not with me, that's it -- we get a divorce.

JULIAN

(stricken)

Blanche, for God's sake, what do you think I'm doing here? I'm asking Mr. Manheim to help me.

BLANCHE

(to AL)

My Julian -- he writes like an angel -- but he's a schlemiel! He lets Sammy walk all over him. For what? A hundred dollars a week so he can vomit his supper in the toilet! I've had it up to here, Mr. Manheim. If I don't take the bus I promise I'm gonna kill somebody. And his initials will be S.G.!

(to JULIAN)

If I don't kill you first!

AL

(galvanized by
her anger)

Hold it, Blanche -- hold it. I'll talk to Sammy. I promise.

BLANCHE
(suspiciously)
This afternoon?

INT. SAMMY'S OFFICE - DAY

Al enters to Sammy, who has one expensive shoe off while
LUIGI, an Italian "bootmaker," measures his stockinged foot.

SAMMY
How soon c'n you have 'em for me,
Luigi?

LUIGI
(finishing measuring,
straightening up)
Mr. Glick, did they give a dead-
line to Michelangelo?

SAMMY
(grinning)
Get ahta here!
(as LUIGI goes)
Al, baby, I don't need three
guesses what you're here for.
You're in trouble with your
producer.
(as AL hesitates)
I know all about it. He told me
last night. Too many big words --
you're writing over their heads.
Just like back in New York. Out
here we aim at a mass audience --
twelve-year-old minds.

AL
With I.Q.'s of sixty-five. Only I
came to see you about someone with
an I.Q. of a hundred-and-sixty-
five.

SAMMY
(intrigued)
A fuckin' genius..?

AL
That's right, an unknown, under-
ground, underpaid genius -- Julian
Blumberg.

SAMMY

Oh, for Christ's sake! Al, you know why you're such a flop out here?

AL

You told me: I worry too much about other people. Like I worried about your girlfriend, Rosalie Goldbaum. Like I worry about Julian and Blanche.

SAMMY

(stung)

Survival of the fittest, baby!

AL

Who's more fit to write screen-plays, you or Julian?

(pause)

Sammy, she's walking out on him for this.

SAMMY

So let her walk. A ball-breaker from the Bronx. I'm giving Julian a big fat raise.

AL

And keeping his name off the scripts he writes for you?

SAMMY

Listen, old pal, I'm getting in a position where I can do you some good one of these days. And when I get there I don't wanna remember wotta jerk you're making out of yourself.

AL

Sammy, just once in your life -- be fair.

SAMMY

Fair! What kind of sissy word is fair? This isn't kindergarten -- this is the world.

AL

Your world.

SAMMY

Fuckin' right! And you can tell Julian for me if he's so unhappy with what I'm giving 'im, he can shit in his hat, pull it over his head, and call it curls!

Al stares at him, shocked and sickened, then wheels and slams out. Sammy laughs, and presses the buzzer. His blonde, slightly over-the-hill SECRETARY enters.

SECRETARY

What's his problem?

SAMMY

He's a nice man. That's his problem, Terry. He's a nice man.

KIT'S OFFICE, WORLD-WIDE WRITERS BUILDING - DAY

Al's pitching hard (for Julian) to Kit -- he has interrupted her in the middle of a script. (The office looks worked-in; there's a page in her typewriter and her desk is strewn with papers.)

AL

(as she looks at him thoughtfully)

Please, Kit -- Julian's a talent, a decent human being, and --

KIT

(angrily)

And the guy who's pushing him around is a member of the Guild!

AL

And you signed him up yourself.

KIT

Right!

(getting up)

OK -- I've got a helluva deadline, but I'll see what I can do.

(heading out)

For Julian Blumberg and the Screen Writers Guild!

(over shoulder)

See you on Sheridan Square!

CUT TO

"SHERIDAN SQ." STREET SIGN ON THE "GREENWICH VILLAGE" SET,
WORLD-WIDE BACK LOT - DAY

KIT (V.O.)

Yes, Al, when the Writers Building
gets too much for me, I come out
here, to my old stamping-ground...

CAMERA LOWERS, TO SHOW KIT JOINING AL on a brownstone stoop.

KIT

(continuing)

So -- what happened?

KIT

You can tell your decent human
being to check in at nine tomorrow
morning, ready to come out writ-
ing.

AL

Julian has a real job? For real
money?

KIT

Three-fifty a week and his name on
the screen.

AL

Beautiful! Blanche'll feel like a
queen. Even if Sammy's making
twice as much. How the hell did
you swing it?

KIT

It's a Guild rule, to protect
writers from unfair practices --
even by other writers.

AL

Since when did Sammy play by the
rules?

KIT

Since I told him Julian would get
up at the next membership meeting
and tell all.

AL

So what? You still don't have a
contract with the studios.

KIT

Not yet. But we're coming closer and closer to a showdown. It'll be bloody, but there's a fighting chance.

AL

And you scared Sammy into line with that?

KIT

Al, what's Hollywood? Half a dozen studios, half a dozen restaurants -- and writers talk a lot. So when six hundred of 'em all start saying the same thing about the same person...

RTL

RUNDOWN APARTMENT HOUSE, NORTH OF HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - DAY

Al hurries to it from his car.

HALLWAY

Al, entering quickly, knocks on an apartment door. It's opened by Sammy. Behind him are Julian and Blanche.

AL

(surprised)

Sammy! So you beat me to it -- as usual.

SAMMY

(putting an arm
around JULIAN)

Yeah, I finally talked the studio into giving Julie a break.

AL

(dryly)

The Good Samaritan. One of these days your generosity is going to break you.

SAMMY

(frowning)

C'mon, Al!

(to JULIAN and
BLANCHE)

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Tonight we celebrate. At Chasen's
-- I called Dave myself.

(as THEY react)

Al, how about you?

AL

Well, I'd really like to toast the
man who made you what you are
today, but I've got a script to
finish tonight.

SAMMY

Do it after -- I'll slip you some
bennies.

(as AL hesitates)

Know who's joining the party?
Your favorite writer and labor
leader...

BOOTH IN CHASEN'S RESTAURANT

Kit with Sammy, Al, Julian, and Blanche. Waiter is removing
dessert dishes as Wine Steward pours champagne. Al's a little
high, Blanche giggly.

SAMMY

(raising glass)

...And for the grand finale, I
give you the hottest writing team
in town -- Glick and Blumberg!

AL

(mimicking an
Oscar winner)

Thank you, thank you -- and
special thanks to my team-mate
Whatsisname -- who did all the
writing.

SAMMY

(as the OTHERS
chuckle)

Al -- let me make the jokes.

(glancing toward
entrance)

Hey, everybody's here tonight...

Sidney Fineman and MRS. FINEMAN are entering with an expen-
sively dressed Harold Godfrey Wilson (seen earlier, in commis-
sary), and his smartly gowned young WIFE; along with WARREN

MADDOX, 45, the studio manager -- dapper, hard-nosed, all business -- with MONA MORAY, a spectacular-looking big-time movie star.

SAMMY

(continuing)

Whatta line-up: Sidney Fineman -- Warren Maddox, his studio manager -- Mona Moray, only the biggest star on the lot -- and Harold Godfrey Wilson!

BLANCHE

Harold Godfrey who?

SAMMY

Wilson -- hottest writer in town. Pulled the hat trick -- three hits in a row.

KIT

(dryly -- to BLANCHE)

That's why he gets to use three names. He's one of the fat cats who say we don't need a Writers Guild -- we're not workers, we're artists, individualists! Have you ever seen an individualist ass-kisser? Well, that's Harold Godfrey Wilson.

Sammy's on his feet, lighting a cigar, his eyes on Fineman.

SAMMY

Just gonna slip over 'n' say hello.

JULIAN

(getting up
with BLANCHE)

Sammy, I think we'll turn in. It's been emotionally draining...

BLANCHE

And so unexpected.

(to AL and KIT)

Nighty-night, you two. And thanks.

SAMMY
(automatically
taking credit)
My pleasure, my pleasure.

Heading out, Sammy taps the empty champagne bottle in the wine cooler, and calls to Waiter:

SAMMY
(continuing)
Garsons -- hit us again.

As he makes his way toward Fineman's table, smoking his cigar and pausing to greet a columnist here, a name-actor there --

AL
Thar he blows -- Moby Glick!

KIT
(laughing)
Moby Glick -- love it!

AL
All that running. And running.
Doesn't he ever get tired?

KIT
He reminds me of the whippet at
the dog-track, chasing that
mechanical rabbit.

AL
Funny, I always think of him as a
ferret, or a weasel.

KIT
Women and men don't think the same
way, I guess.

AL
Only you think more like a man
than any woman I've ever known.

KIT
Every time a man finds a woman who
thinks at all, the only way he can
explain it is -- she has a man's
mind.

AL
(struck with the
truth of it)
Guilty as charged.

KIT

You just don't know me, Al. I'm feminine as hell.

AL

(boldly if quietly)

Well, I'm ready to know you better. Any time you say.

AT FINEMAN'S TABLE-FOR-SIX

as Sammy approaches. The three men are conversing together; the three women ditto.

WILSON

(to FINEMAN)

I do wish I could help you, old boy. Believe me, if I weren't up to my eyebrows on "The Forsyte Saga," I'd jump right in and --

FINEMAN

I know, Harry, I know. Every top writer on the lot is jammed up.

MADDOX

I wonder if Eugene O'Neill would come out from New York...

FINEMAN

I reached him in Provincetown. He hung up on me.

SAMMY

(barging in)

Hi, Mr. Fineman -- everybody -- I hope I'm not interrupting..?

MADDOX

(to FINEMAN)

Bright kid -- maybe he could come up with something.

SAMMY

(reacting)

Anything I can help with..?

FINEMAN

Well, we've got Mona here --

(patting her hand)

For a South Seas picture that's supposed to start in eight weeks.

WILSON

Has a bloody good title: "Monsoon."

SAMMY

Mona Moray...in "Monsoon"? Wow!
(blows her a kiss)

MONA

(throatily)

It may sound a little immodest,
but I think I could top Joan
Crawford in "Rain."

FINEMAN

(wryly)

That's our Mona.

MADDOX

It's booked into the Music Hall
Easter Sunday. It's got every-
thing -- a subject! A title! A
theater! A star!

FINEMAN

All we need now is a story.

Sammy jerks the cigar from his mouth in simulated astonishment.

SAMMY

Well, of all the goddam coinci-
dences I ever heard of! 'Scuse
me, ladies.

(to FINEMAN)

You're looking for a South Sea
story?

Maddox and Wilson exchange glances (Is Sammy for real?).

FINEMAN

Don't tell me you've got one?

SAMMY

(yelling)

Have I got one? I've got the
greatest South Sea story since
"Rain"!

MADDOX

Sidney, you never made a mistake
in your life when you played your
hunches -- right?

FINEMAN

(nods, then:)

Son, why don't you sit down and tell it to me right now?

SAMMY

Look, Mr. Fineman, I'd love to -- but this story, for someone with the star-quality of Mona Moray --

(looking at her
worshipfully)

I'd like to make a few changes so it'll fit you like a glove.

(back to FINEMAN)

What if I come out to your place with it day after tomorra -- Sunday?

FINEMAN

Well, time's short -- but Sunday it is. For lunch.

SAMMY

I'll be there, Mr. Fineman. With your story.

(a grin as he goes)

Come "rain" or come shine!

BACK TO KIT AND AL

as Sammy hurries toward their table. He's on a high.

AL

Now I know what the cat looks like when it swallows an eagle.

SAMMY

(sliding into
his chair)

Get this, keeds -- I'm sellin' Fineman a South Seas story for Mona Moray -- "Monsoon" -- that'll top Joan Crawford in "Rain!"

AL

Since when do you get a South Sea story?

SAMMY

Since Mr. Fineman said he needs it. Either of ya know a good one I c'n borrow?

AL

You could always try Leona and her magic files.

SAMMY

C'mon, I need it right now. For starters, Kit -- what's "Rain" about?

KIT

Sammy, now I know you're a great man. What other writer in the world could compare his story, which he hasn't written, with a story he's never read?

SAMMY

I saw the movie. But all I can remember is Joan Crawford shaking her cute little ass in the minister's face.

KIT

That's the plot, all right. What more can I tell you?

SAMMY

Look, baby, this is life-and-death. Help me, for Christ's sake!

PATIO OFF SAMMY'S LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

Lanai-type awning, Chinese lanterns. Kit's on a chaise, Sammy hunkered down in front of her, listening intently. Al's perched on the patio railing, listening indulgently.

KIT

The minister is an uptight missionary named Davidson. He comes to the South Seas and runs into Sadie Thompson, a sensational looker --

AL

And hard-core hooker.

Sammy nods thoughtfully, plot-wheels turning.

KIT

Davidson puts the fear of God into her, and she gives up hooking. But then he gets the hots for her and jumps on her bones. This breaks her heart and she starts turning tricks again.

AL

Shame on her!

SAMMY

Shut up!

(leaping up)

I got it -- I got it! All ya gotta do is give it the switch-eroo!

AL

From what to what?

SAMMY

Instead of the minister, you got the minister's daughter, Mona Moray! Her old man kicked off with a tropical fever and she's carrying on his good work -- a regular saint.

AL

Mona Moray -- a saint?

KIT

She can't act, Sammy -- not with her clothes on.

AL

She can't act with her clothes off, either -- but somehow you don't mind it so much.

SAMMY

Please -- I'm thinking.

(pause)

OK -- instead of Sadie Thompson you got a louse racketeer who comes there to hide out. Someone like Humphrey Bogart, OK?

(not waiting for
any response)

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

So Mona sets out to save his soul but all he's out for is a good lay. Only before he knows it, he's watching the sunrise with her without even trying to feel 'er up. The soul crap is getting to him, see what I mean? He tells her she's the first dame he ever met he didn't think about that way. Now, give me a second to dope this out.

AL

Take a whole minute. Longer, even.

SAMMY

Oh yeah -- how about this? Just when Bogie is ready to start singing in her choir every Sunday morning, they get caught in a storm and have to spend the night huddled together in a cave. Well, you can see what's coming -- Mona can't help herself and lets him slip it to her.

AL

Now that's a switcheroo.

SAMMY

(unstoppable)

When they realize what they've done, they both go bananas. Bogie goes back to the booze, saying all dames look alike upside down --

KIT

How true.

SAMMY

And Mona feels she's betrayed her old man. So you know what she does? She throws herself off a cliff into the sea.

AL

Figures.

SAMMY

But Bogie comes by and jumps in right after her. Then you play a helluva love scene in the ocean where the waves rip the clothes off of her. She's naked as a grape -- naked but pious again. Get the idea? The water purifies 'em!

(acting it out)

Jesus, can't you see it, Bogie coming up with Mona in his arms, and he's hollerin', "Oh God, if You get us outa this, I'll work like a bastard for You the rest of my life!" And then you're into your final fade with Mona and Bogie getting married and going after new souls to save -- together.

(looking at them expectantly)

Of course, it's still a little rough.

AL

Where does the monsoon come in?

SAMMY

Huh? Glad you reminded me. What the hell is a monsoon?

KIT

The sequel to a typhoon.

SAMMY

Only bigger?

(she nods)

So it's building up all the time they're in the cave. It'll be a natural for intercutting. Symbolical. Then when she does her swan-dive from the cliff she lands right in the middle of it. That'll really give us the topper!

KIT

(dead-pan)

Right. I couldn't quite see how an ordinary ocean could purify them. But a monsoon'll do it every time.

SAMMY

What do you think of it, Al?
Seriously?

AL

Seriously, I think you can't be serious.

KIT

I think Fineman will buy it.

Sammy gives her a hearty, theatrical "smack" on the cheek, then turns to Al with a self-satisfied grin.

SAMMY

Shows what you don't know about story-values, pal.

AL

(reacting to the
SAMMY-KIT chemistry)
Shows what I don't know about a lot of things, Sammy baby.
(checking watch)
Hey, midnight. I better go before you start charging me rent.

SAMMY

At least have a nightcap with us.

AL

No thanks. Two's company -- three's a movie I've seen too many times already.
(with a salute)
Night.

KIT

Night, Al.

Sammy walks him to the door. Al notes that Kit is letting her hair down, over her shoulders. It softens her face, making her look almost girlish -- and sending Al up the wall.

RTL

INT. AL'S OFFICE, MONOGRAM STUDIO - DAY

A Poverty Row set-up, in contrast to the Art Deco elegance of World-Wide. Al passes through the narrow Secretary's cubicle to the only slightly larger office adjoining, where he is

confronted by a formidable, feisty, middle-aged Woman (EMILY ROSS ROBINSON), with a syrupy Southern accent.

AL
Excuse me. You must be in the
wrong office.

ROBINSON
Excuse me, I was given this
office.

AL
Since when?

ROBINSON
I just checked in. They bought my
novel, "May and December."
Perhaps you've heard of me --
Emily Ross Robinson?

AL
(bitterly)
Rings a faint bell. Very faint.

ROBINSON
If you don't believe me, you can
check with the studio manager.

AL'S SECRETARY
(entering from
her cubicle)
I'm sorry, Mr. Manheim -- they
sent you this.
(handing him an
envelope, from which
he pulls a pink slip)
They usually tell you at the gate.

AL
Jesus! In New York they give you
fifteen minutes to clean out your
desk!

AL IN PHONE BOOTH - DAY

AL
Hello - is Miss Sargent there?

LIVING-ROOM, KIT'S BEACH COTTAGE, MALIBU

A dumpy, talkative WOMAN answers. There's a fat white cat on her lap, and another sleeping on the covered typewriter.

WOMAN

No, she's not. I'm her cat-sitter. Y'know, I'd do this job f' nothin'. I jus' love kitty-cats.

INTERCUT AL AND WOMAN

AL

Are you sure your name isn't Emily Ross Robinson? Only kidding. Any idea where Miss Sargent might be?

WOMAN

Well, you might try Mr. Glick. I heard her talkin' to 'im on the phone. Said she'd be back late Sunday night.

AL

(mounting frustration)

Thanks! Take good care of those kittycats!

He slams phone down, takes a deep breath, gets out his pocket phone-book and dials again.

BILLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Al and Billie (the night-club Hostess) are naked under a sheet, their love-making completed. A record-player is playing the sensuous Mexican song, "Sabor a mi."

AL

(sleepily)

Billie, hey Billie, listen -- d'ya love me?

BILLIE

Y'know, you're cute when you're drunk.

AL

Not drunk, Billie. Just in love with you. Seriously. Call you tomorrow 'n' I'll say the same thing sober.

BILLIE

Don't be serious, honey. Love's much nicer when it isn't serious.

AL

But damn it, I love you. Wanna marry you.

BILLIE

Al, whenever a fella says he wants t' marry me, I know he's in love with somebody else.

AL

I swear, Billie, you know more about love than anybody.

(pause)

Hey, maybe you know about Sammy Glick, too.

BILLIE

What?

AL

Billie, I never asked you this before, but maybe you know what makes him run.

BILLIE

Close your eyes, baby. Get some sleep. I'll turn off the music.

As she goes to the record-player, naked, Al remains caught up in his obsession. MUSIC OUT.

AL

Big question, Billie. Once we know what makes Sammy run, it'll be a great thing for the world. Like discovering the cause of cancer.

BILLIE

(returning)

Yeah. Now let's cuddle up together.

AL

(as THEY "cuddle")

Could be only one person in the world knows what makes Sammy run.

BILLIE
Kit?

AL
(annoyed)
How did you know?

BILLIE
You were talking about her. When
you...came, you were calling me
Kit.

AL
Oh God, I'm sorry.

BILLIE
That's OK. What're friends for?

AL
(closing his eyes)
If she doesn't know, Billie, she's
the closest to finding out --
(barely audible)
What makes Sammy run..?

THE "COLONIAL HOUSE" ROOFTOP POOL - DAY

Sammy's sunning himself on a lounge -- in shorts, with dark
glasses -- and reading scripts while puffing on a cigar.
Girls in brief suits swim in the pool, others in b.g. apply
oil and bask in the sun. Al hurries in.

AL
Your message said "urgent."
What's so urgent?

SAMMY
I heard you got the heaveroo at
Monogram.

AL
(nodding)
I'm unemployed. In Hollywood,
lepers are more popular. But at
least I have time now to finish
something I really want to write.

SAMMY
(nods)
"Imperial Valley" -- how to
squeeze grapes and broads.

AL

Sammy, it's about a kid in the lettuce fields growing up to be a man. A helluva story and how did you get hold of it?

SAMMY

Look, you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

AL

Huh?

SAMMY

First you do a polish on my "Monsoon" script...

(as AL frowns)

OK, my script and Julie's. The story's all mine.

AL

Why, Sammy? Why me? Hell, you know what I think of "Monsoon."

SAMMY

Don't fight it, Al -- just make it better. How soon can you start?

(as AL hesitates)

Three big ones, Al.

AL

Since when are you handing out assignments?

SAMMY

Since my pictures started making money. And if "Monsoon" hits big, Al -- I'll fix it so World-Wide buys "Imperial Valley" and puts you on the screenplay, solo. OK?

AL

(accepting the trade-off)

You're looking at the last man in the world who figured he'd ever do a polish on a Sammy Glick switch-eroo.

AL'S NEW OFFICE, AT WORLD-WIDE - DAY

Three times the size of his cubicle at Monogram. Al is working at his desk when Kit knocks and strides in with a bound script labelled "Monsoon."

AL
Hi. Finished already?

KIT
(excitedly)
Once I started reading it, I couldn't put it down. You didn't just polish "Monsoon," you did a major rewrite. It almost makes sense now, dramatic sense. God help us, Mona Moray could walk off with an Academy Award!

AL
(self-deprecatingly)
Guess I got carried away. Like Sammy

KIT
You're really making it now, Al. Fixing an "A" picture, joining the Guild...

AL
For all the good it'll do.

KIT
What you don't know is, I've been talking to Warren Maddox and the other studio honchos. They're making noises about meeting with us.

AL
(pleased)
How soon?

KIT
Any day now.

AL
Give or take a month or two.

IN A STUDIO CUTTING ROOM - SAMMY

is peering into a noisy Movieola machine, with a film editor, MAXIE, looking on. As the film in the Movieola runs out --

SAMMY

(looking up --
excited)

That's it, Maxie -- with a cherry
on top! I don't know how you did
it, but the ending packs a real
wallop now!

MAXIE

Rhythmic editing, that's all. I
synched it to the beat of the
tom-toms in the b.g. --
(mimicking sound)
Music Department gave me a tape.

SAMMY

OK, put it all together now an'
we'll run it. What d'ya need --
an hour? Two hours?

MAXIE

Two. This is final cut?

SAMMY

(full of himself)
Unless I get another idea.

OUTSIDE THE WORLD-WIDE PROJECTION ROOM - DAY

Sammy's smoking a cigar in short, assertive puffs when Al
strolls toward him.

SAMMY

Al, wait'll you see how I recut
the last two scenes. Rhythmic
editing, Al, synched to the
tom-tom beat. Sensational!

AL

(meaning it)
Damned interesting idea.

SAMMY

Know who's coming out for the
opening? H.L. Harrington from New
York!

AL

Who's that?

SAMMY

Harrington? He owns the company that just took over World-Wide. Sidney Fineman's big, but Harrington's where the money is!

AL

Sammy, you want something. What?

SAMMY

Something you'll like. Take Kit off my hands for the opening.

AL

Huh? Aren't the two of you still --

SAMMY

Sure, but that night I hafta be with Mona Moray.

AL

As a reward for her great performance?

SAMMY

Al, she is great in this picture -- you'll see!

(with a grin)

Especially when the storm rips her sarong away and she's left with only --

AL

Her talent?

SAMMY

(laughing)

Don't knock it -- "Monsoon" could outgross "Rain." Then I'll have enough clout to keep you here on a long-term contract.

The film editor sticks his head out the door.

MAXIE

We're ready for you now, Sammy.

Sammy nods and heads in with Al.

GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER, HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - NIGHT

Al in tux, Kit in modish evening gown, cross sidewalk to the lobby, which is decorated in a South Seas motif (palm trees, colorful blow-ups of Gauguin paintings, etc.). TAHITIAN MUSIC in b.g.

KIT

Am I pissed at Sammy for ditching me tonight?

(a shrug)

Writers are OK-dates for sneak previews, but for big openings -- all those frantic fans behind the ropes...

(as light-bulbs flash)

The photogs...

Fans strain against the plush ropes for glimpses of favorite stars. Photogs jostle for position. Giant searchlights -- the works.

Behind Kit and Al, Sammy is seen helping the dazzling, daringly gowned Mona Moray from a limo -- as the crowd SCREAMS her name and tries to surge forward.

KIT

(continuing)

Sammy needs an eye-catcher, a column item like Mona Moray. I'm not jealous. It's just business -- movie business.

Kit and Al move down the red carpet toward the theater entrance, followed by Julian and Blanche, dramatically transformed in evening clothes. After them come the much-gawked-at, much-photographed Mona, with Sammy managing to get his face into every shot.

Receiving special attention from World-Wide's press people and studio executives is a hawk-nosed, silver-haired man in his 60's (H.L. HARRINGTON), in a Savile Row tuxedo. An opinionated, arrogant Wall Streeter, he looks displeased with his surroundings and his associates, but has the good manners to hide his irritation.

With him is a striking-looking, high-style, self-possessed blonde in her late 20's (LAURETTE). The Harringtons are being escorted by Sidney Fineman and his wife.

KIT

(continuing)

There's H.L. Harrington, here to check on his latest acquisition.

AL

And that's his young wife?

KIT

No, his not-so-young daughter, Laurette. Ten years ago, the darling of the debs. Married to an Italian count for about ten minutes. Some people work overtime, she screws around overtime -- from Palm Springs to Monaco.

Theater officials and studio execs hover around the Harringtons and the Finemans, obsequiously, as Sammy and Mona work their way through.

SAMMY

(to LAURETTE,
carefully)

Miss Harrington? I'm Sammy Glick -- I wrote "Monsoon." I'm afraid it may strike you as a little... meretricious. I prefer sophisticated comedy myself.

LAURETTE

("friendly" smile)

Oh, I can see that right off, Mr. Glick. You're sort of an American Noel Coward.

SAMMY

(undaunted)

Well, from what I hear, Noel Coward keeps a mighty sharp eye on the box office. Just what Mr. Fineman and I try to do.

LAURETTE

And I'm sure you succeed, Mr. Glick. You have a nose for money, don't you?

HARRINGTON

(sharply)

That will do, Laurette!

SAMMY

That's OK, Mr. Harrington. I've been kidded by experts. What I've learned from Mr. Fineman is, we're
(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

not making pictures for your lovely daughter and people like that. When the public starts talking back to us -- then we're in trouble.

HARRINGTON

Fineman, you seem to have found yourself a very bright young man.

FINEMAN

Part of my job, H.L.
(putting paternal
arm around SAMMY)
Come along, son.

Beaming, Sammy proudly escorts Mona into the theater with all the biggies.

RTL

STUDIO PRESS PARTY ON SOUND STAGE, WORLD-WIDE LOT - NIGHT

decorated in Hollywood-South Seas style, palm trees, tropical flowers, and all. One eyecatching feature: ornately framed "tableaux vivants" of Gauguin paintings, with dusky-skinned, bare-breasted young women in typical Tahitian poses. Other "Polynesian" maidens are serving as waitresses with trays of drinks, hors d'oeuvres, etc. In addition, there are long buffet tables, heaped with luau-style goodies, and a number of small tables for eating and crowd-watching. A Hawaiian band plays loudly. Many couples are dancing -- and watching Mona Moray in the arms of a succession of "hunks."

Escorted by Fineman and Sammy, Harrington strolls through the area, viewing the party goings-on with a disapproving eye. As they pause near a table at which Julian is seated with Blanche --

HARRINGTON

Quite a party, Fineman. But my God, is all this necessary?

FINEMAN

Well, these people worked mighty hard on "Monsoon," H.L.

HARRINGTON

They got paid for it -- handsomely, from the figures I've seen. I suggest you watch expenditures more carefully from now on --

(including SAMMY)

All of you.

SAMMY

Absolutely. We see eye to eye on that.

HARRINGTON

(eyeing Mona and other bizarre sights)

Good. I'd also like to see more respect for family values at World-Wide, on-screen and off. Look at this place! I feel I'm in Sodom and Gomorrah: men hugging men, women kissing women -- too much of everything!

Fineman and Sammy exchange uneasy glances. Just then, Warren Maddox and a PRESS AGENT hurry in; they're toting copies of tomorrow's "Daily Variety" and "Hollywood Reporter."

PRESS AGENT

Here yuh are, Mr. Fineman. An honest-to-God rave!

(reading headline)

"'Monsoon' Promises Boffo Biz!"

MADDOX

Variety's even better, Sid.

(reading)

"'Monsoon' Out-Rains 'Rain!'"

FINEMAN

(beaming)

Splendid. Splendid!

(turning to SAMMY)

Congratulations, my boy.

Julian and Blanche, overhearing, react in their different ways to:

FINEMAN

(continuing, to

HARRINGTON)

His original story, you know.

HARRINGTON

(to SAMMY)

What's "Boffo Biz"?

SAMMY

Hollywood talk for a big success at the box office -- a smasher -- and the trade papers say that's what's coming our way.

FINEMAN

Thanks in good part, Sammy, to the role you created for Mona Moray.

Julian has to restrain Blanche's fury.

MADDOX

Could be an Oscar for her. For the picture, too.

(to HARRINGTON)

That'd be worth millions more in rentals, H.L.

HARRINGTON

(coldly)

We'll see. You know, gentlemen, in acquiring World-Wide I was more than a little concerned about your cost-profit ratio. Granted it's a high-risk business, there has to be a way to minimize the downside.

SAMMY

(almost smacking his lips)

Minimize the downside! I like the way you put things, sir -- I sure do. And in Mr. Fineman you've got your kind of a studio head -- he never loses sight of the bottom line.

Laurette drifts over, glass in hand.

FINEMAN

Thank you, Sammy. Now, H.L., let's get us something to eat.

(leading him off)

Some fish, perhaps. Mahi-mahi.

HARRINGTON
(suspiciously)
What's that, Jew food?

FINEMAN
No, Hawaiian.

LAURETTE
(as THEY go)
Dad's a charmer -- isn't he, Mr.
Glick?

SAMMY
I never argue with a braw -- with
a lady. Look, this party's gotta
be a drag for you. I know you
don't like pictures much...

LAURETTE
Oh, but I do. I was looking at
pictures all afternoon.

SAMMY
No kidding. What did you see?

LAURETTE
One I finally caught up with here
in California. "The Blue Boy."

Julian and Blanche get up to approach them, in time to hear:

SAMMY
"Blue Boy"? What is it, a foreign
picture?

LAURETTE
Yes, it was done in England.

SAMMY
Who made it -- Gaumont-British?

LAURETTE
No, an independent. Gainsborough.

SAMMY
Gainsborough? Never heard of that
outfit.

JULIAN
(impulsively)
Sammy -- she's putting you on.
Thomas Gainsborough painted "The
Blue Boy."

SAMMY

(recovering quickly)

Thanks.

(to LAURETTE)

You tell funny stories, Miss Harrington. I'll have to remember that one.

(to BLANCHE and JULIAN)

C'mon, keeds -- I'll buy ya a drink.

And he strides off with them, leaving Laurette momentarily alone with her "triumph."

PORCH OF KIT'S BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

Al and Kit are looking out at the moonlit ocean. The white cats are dozing in a roomy cat-bed.

KIT

I love this place. Swimming out here at night helps me face the studio in the morning.

(hands him a drink from the bar)

Aren't you glad we're not at the party?

AL

I can hear Sammy now.

KIT

(mimicking SAMMY)

Well, Mr. Harrington, you couldn't have come out at a better time! We got us another boffo smasheroo!

AL

(with a chuckle)

Kit, maybe I shouldn't ask, but -- what's the real story on you and Sammy?

KIT

You still want to know..?

AL

Uh-huh -- how the heroine managed to wind up with the heavy.

KIT

(after a moment)

Some people could see him as a heavy -- the public Sammy, that is. But I see something in him that --

AL

I know, I've seen you watching him -- and reacting. Success is an aphrodisiac, isn't it?

KIT

All right -- if we have to talk about it. Half the time I want to tear him limb from limb...

AL

And the other half?

KIT

From the first time he burst into my office I had this crazy desire to know what it would feel like to have all that drive and ambition and frenzy inside of me.

(seeing AL's reaction)

I'm sorry. It makes you uncomfortable.

AL

(trying to swallow his jealousy)

Well, I asked for it. I'm glad you told me.

KIT

I like you, Al. More and more. You make me feel as if I've opened a window and hung my mind out to air.

AL

Yeah, and when you open that window, in jumps Sammy Glick.

AL'S OFFICE AT WORLD-WIDE - DAY

Al's working hard at his typewriter. Sammy bounces in, something on his mind.

SAMMY
(urgently)
Al -- got a minute?

AL
Well, I'm up to my hips in lettuce, but --

SAMMY
I gotta tell you what happened last night.

AL
I heard what happened. From Julian -- he says Laurette Harrington cut you up for bait.

SAMMY
I know, she's from a different world -- I'd never get to first base. But she knocks me out, Al. That long blonde hair, those thoroughbred legs -- the way she talks...it just spells class to me, Al, with a capital C. I can't get her outa my mind.

AL
(wryly)
I know what you mean.

SAMMY
Goddammit, I think I'm falling in love. And I've never even taken her out!

AL
So take her out.

SAMMY
Huh? You think she'd...naah! Miss Park Avenoo. The Deb of the Year...She'd hang up on me. She's outa my league.

AL
Myron Selznick was out of your league once. Remember?

Sammy nods, staring at the phone.

SITTING ROOM OF LAURETTE'S VILLA, BEL AIR HOTEL - DAY

Elegant luxury. She's been working out in a leotard and is breathing hard. Phone RINGS.

LAURETTE

(picking it up)

Yes..?

CUT TO

SAMMY ON PHONE IN HIS OFFICE

SAMMY

(in a rush)

Hi, Miss Harrington, this is Sammy Glick, remember me? The American Noel Coward, the dope who thought Gainsborough was a movie studio -- place me now?

INTERCUT LAURETTE AND SAMMY

LAURETTE

Mr. Glick, I like your sense of humor.

SAMMY

Good. How about dinner with me tonight at Romanoff's -- then we hit the Mocambo, maybe the Clover Club -- whatever suits your fancy, OK?

LAURETTE

Well, it's the best offer I've had so far. Why don't you come by at seven-thirty and see if I'm still in the mood? Ciao.

SAMMY

(admiringly)

Ciao!

RTL

OUTSIDE LAURETTE'S VILLA - NIGHT

Sammy vaults out of his convertible and heads for the door.

THE SITTING ROOM

Empty now. The doorbell RINGS.

LAURETTE'S VOICE (O.S.)
Entrez! It's open.

Sammy enters excitedly, as Laurette saunters in from the bedroom, wearing a more daring gown than at the studio party.

SAMMY
 Hey, you look sensash! Even sharper than last night -- and then you killed the people.

LAURETTE
 Last night was for them. Tonight is for me.

SAMMY
 My lucky night. Well, shall we?

Room phone RINGS.

LAURETTE
 (picking it up)
 Yes?
 (then, high-keyed)
 Babe! What a surprise! You're here -- with Tex? Fantastic! I can't wait to see you both. Hurry, love!
 (putting down phone)
 Sorry, Mr. Glick, your offer was the best of the day -- till now. I've just had a better one.

SAMMY
 (poker-faced)
 Yeah? Who's it from?

LAURETTE
 I doubt if you know her. Babe Lynch.

SAMMY
 The air-racing broad -- won the Seattle-to-San Diego today?

LAURETTE
 That's the broad. She's on her way in from the airport with Tex McAvoy, her mechanic -- and they want me to celebrate with them.

SAMMY

So we c'n make it a foursome.

LAURETTE

Sorry, Mr. Glick. Flyers are funny about outsiders: And you really can't talk their language -- all you care about is movies, and they couldn't care less.

(moving him toward
the door)

I hope you're not too disappointed.

SAMMY

I'll live. An' the way I always figure is, when I don't win something, I learn something.

(starting out)

And you can tell Babe and Tex t' go fuck themselves!

LAURETTE

(sweetly)

I think they already have.

He strides out.

ROOSEVELT HOTEL, HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - NIGHT

Marquee carries WRITERS GUILD MTG TONITE; similar message on sandwich-board at entrance. Latecoming Writers straggle in.

HOTEL BALLROOM

set with rows of folding chairs and dais with lectern. It's a bedlam of BOOS, CATCALLS, and GAVEL-POUNDING; the room is crowded with Writers -- a very mixed group (80% male), 25-55, well-dressed/scuzzy, trim/overweight, compliant/defiant, boisterous/silent, etc. Prominent among them: Sammy, Julian, Al, and the woman writer from Monogram, Emily Ross Robinson. Kit's on the dais, flanked by fellow-Guild leaders.

Seated in the front audience-row are Harold Godfrey Wilson, some of his top-writer supporters, and a poised, natty Warren Maddox. He's the target of the BOOS and the cause of Kit's gavel-pounding at the lectern.

KIT
Order, ladies and gentlemen --
order, please! I call this
meeting to order!

WRITER #1
What's Maddox doing here?

WRITER #2
Who the hell invited him?

WILSON
(jumping up --
a shout)
I did!
(momentary quiet)
And I say, we'd best hear him out!

WRITER #3
I say, Throw him out!

WRITER #4
Shut up, you Commie bastard!

A pushing-punching fight starts, broken up by members from
either side.

AL
I thought this was a writers'
meeting -- strictly for writers!

ROBINSON
Yes, but somebody has to hire us!

BOOS and AD-LIBS ("You bet!" etc.).

WRITER #4
Let's hear what Maddox has to say!

KIT
(over CROWD NOISE)
Order! Order!

WILSON
(on his feet)
Madame Chairman, I demand the
floor!

KIT
You have it.

WILSON

Mr. Maddox is here on behalf of
all the majors in the Industry --
the people who take our written
words and breathe life into them.
(CHEERS and GROANS)
I move we allow him to address us.

SAMMY

(quickly)
Second the motion.
(to AUDIENCE)
What the heck, what's fair is
fair.

MANY VOICES

Vote...vote!

KIT

(resignedly)
All right, all right. All in
favor of allowing Mr. Maddox to
speak, raise your hand. One hand
to a customer!

A bare majority of the audience raises hands.

KIT

(continuing)
OK. All opposed?

Hands are raised by a sizable minority. Kit and the other
leaders confer quickly.

KIT

(continuing)
I'm afraid the ayes have it.
(to MADDUX)
So -- an official welcome to this
membership meeting of the Screen
Writers Guild.
(introducing him)
Warren Maddox, studio manager of
World-Wide Productions.

She steps back as he rises and comes to lectern.

MADDUX

Thank you, Miss Sargent.
(to AUDIENCE)
(MORE)

MADDOX (CONT'D)

And thank you, ladies and gentlemen for this opportunity. As Mr. Wilson just told you, I'm here on behalf of all the major studios, including my own. Now, you people have been pressing us, to put it mildly, to recognize your Guild as -- how do you put it? -- the sole collective bargaining agent for all of you, right?

Chorus of affirmative AD-LIBS from audience ("Damn right! You bet!...About time!" etc.)

MADDOX

(continuing)

Well, my friends, I've got to tell you that the studios I'm representing tonight are united -- unanimously -- in saying No, we will not recognize you...

(over BOOS and
CATCALLS)

You don't need a Guild!

KIT

(shouting over
CROWD UPROAR)

Who are you to tell us what we need or don't need?

MADDOX

Look, we simply want to see all you boys and girl writing, instead of carrying on like a bunch of dockworkers!

WILSON

Hear, hear!

KIT

Dockworkers don't turn out ten pages of screenplay a day, Mr. Maddox! We do -- while you and the people you're talking for sit on their tails and shuffle papers.

JULIAN

Right! And if we turn out a hit, the studio gets the profit and the credit.

AL

And if it's a flop, we get the gate!

KIT

(over general GRUMBLING)

Look, Mr. Maddox, the grips have a union. And the cameramen and the actors. Even the extras. And they'd all have nothing to shoot or act without our stories, our characters, our lines to read. But we're still at the bottom of the totem-pole -- the least respected and the least protected!

As most of the Writers CHEER and APPLAUD, Al and Julian look pleased, Sammy nervous, and Harold Godfrey Wilson and his cohorts are openly contemptuous.

MADDOX

Hold it right there, Kit! Every studio chief in town respects good writers. I'm not talking Monogram or Poverty Row, I'm talking majors. Look at my own boss, Sidney Fineman, he was a writer himself once. He's willing to treat every writer fairly -- on an individual basis.

KIT

Sorry, Warren, we've got nothing against good guys like Mr. Fineman, but they don't make the deals and handle the business end -- you and your buddies do. That's why we all need the Guild.

MADDOX

Do you? Let's check that out. One -- H.L. Harrington and Manhattan Trust are bankrolling World-Wide now. Two -- Wall Street is looking at other majors with an eye to buy. And the money men feel pretty damn strongly about this Guild. Strongly against. So strongly, boys and girls, they'd like everyone of you to sign one of these --

(MORE)

MADDOX (CONT'D)

(producing a form)

A letter of resignation from the Guild. My people will hand 'em out at the door.

From mid-point of the above, Writers have been AD-LIBBING angry remarks and curses. Now they explode with BOOS, FOOT-STOMPING, etc.

KIT

Quiet, everybody! Order, dammit!

(NOISE down)

I just want to make sure we all understand what Mr. Maddox is getting at.

(to MADDOX)

What happens if we don't resign?
Are we fired?

MADDOX

Not at all. Each case will be taken up individually.

(to AUDIENCE)

But if you think of yourself as a member of the World-Wide family, or the MGM family, or the Paramount --

KIT

(impatiently)

We get it, we get it. When you want something from us, we're a family. And when you don't, we're orphans!

WILSON

(jumping up again)

Listen, everyone! Some of us better-known playwrights had a meeting in my office just before coming over -- and we've come up with what we think is a jolly good compromise.

(producing some
printed cards)

Sign one of these and you become a member of the Screen Playwrights -- an independent writers' organization that understands the special needs of our Industry...

KIT
In plain English -- a company union?

WILSON
You pinkos can call it anything you wish, but --

OLDER WRITER
Harold -- I'll sign up.

ROBINSON
So will I!

Several other Writers sign up, too.

WILSON
How about you, Sammy?

Sammy looks guiltily at Kit, then accepts a card.

KIT
(to WILSON and SAMMY)
So you had this stab in the back all set when you walked in..?
(to MADDOX)
And World-Wide can't wait to recognize your company union.
(to AUDIENCE)
We've been had, fellers. Back to your studios and meet with your shop stewards. Everybody from World-Wide -- except these finks -- regroup in my office. Right now!

Julian, Al, and some 20 other Writers storm out after her; scores of others hurry off with their shop stewards; and Wilson, Sammy, and their fellow-defectors cluster around a triumphant Maddox.

KIT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

It's overflowing with Writers, including Julian and Al. Kit's perched on a corner of her desk.

JULIAN
Kit, I've got to level with you. I've been offered a long-term contract, starting at five-hundred and going up to two-thousand-five. Am I supposed to turn down a chance like that?

KIT

Julian, you're not supposed to do anything except what your conscience tells you to do.

JULIAN

Trouble is, my conscience says one thing and my wife says another.

AL

(over LAUGHTER)

I'd hate to tangle with her.

JULIAN

You're telling me! But you people fought for me. I wouldn't be in this room if it hadn't been for you and Kit...

(agonized)

So I don't think I can resign from the Guild.

KIT

Thanks, Julian. I know I'll never sign that damn form. But I'm not twisting anybody's arm.

AL

Kit, Fineman's given me the first respectable assignment I've had out here -- he's actually letting me do "Imperial Valley." And now...

(stares at form)

KIT

(wearily)

So sign it -- I won't hold it against you.

(at point of tears)

Some of us -- some of us are more vulnerable than others.

Fighting back tears, she runs out. A moment, then Julian and others straggle out. Al stares at the resignation form, then signs and pockets it disgustedly.

RTL

WORLD-WIDE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Al is heading for his respectable, used convertible when a shiny Dusenbergs pulls alongside, Sammy at the wheel.

SAMMY

Hey, Al -- nice goin'. I hear ya signed it.

AL

That's right.
(holds up form,
unhappily)

SAMMY

OK, now you're with the big boys. Not like that nebbish Julian, a big brave labor leader all of a sudden. Fuck him! Turn that thing in an' I'll give ya his job, Alsy-baby. And after "Imperial Valley," you 'n' me c'n do my next picture together -- a big credit right off the bat.

(AL stares at him,
thoughtfully)

Julian was getting too big for his britches -- and I need somebody in the lower brackets to balance what I'm getting. But Al, as I go up, you'll go with me -- you'll be hitting seven-fifty before you know it -- a thousand, even. What do you think of that?

AL

(quietly)

Here's what I think of that.

Slowly and deliberately, he tears the form in two and drops the pieces at his feet.

SAMMY

You just signed your own death warrant, Mister!

AL

Now that's one line I'm sure you wrote yourself.

SAMMY
 (as usual, not
 listening)
 Kit, she's got an in with Fineman
 and a big picture in the works,
 she'll probably survive. But you,
 you marginal people, you better
 start packin' -- you're dead in
 the water now!

The Dusenbergs burn rubber speeding off. Al picks up the
 pieces of paper, stuffs them in his pocket, and gets into his
 car.

RTL

SAMMY'S BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

Kit takes a negligee from the closet, adding it to personal
 articles in an overnight bag.

SAMMY'S VOICE
 (from living room)
 Kit...?

KIT
 In here.

SAMMY
 (entering -- surprised)
 What is this? Hey -- you're not
that steamed about the Guild
 thing, are you?

KIT
 It was the last straw, Sammy --
 the eye-opener. You don't work
 with people, ever -- you work
against them. For yourself. For
 Sammy Glick!

SAMMY
What do you want from me? You
 want me to be half a success, half
 a man?

Picking up her overnight bag, she starts out.

SAMMY
 (continuing;
 grabbing her)
 You're not walking out on me!

KIT
 (fighting to
 free herself)
 Watch me!

She slaps him hard across the face, loosening his hold, and runs out.

SAMMY
 (screaming after her)
 Whattia wanna bet you're back by morning?

RTL

OUTSIDE KIT'S BEACH COTTAGE - NIGHT

Al is leaning against his car, waiting. Kit drives up. Going to her, he reaches into his pocket and hands her the torn-up resignation form.

KIT
 Thanks.

AL
 I'm heading back to New York tomorrow.

She looks at him thoughtfully, then:

KIT
 Come on in for a drink.

COTTAGE BEDROOM - DAWN

Kit and Al wake up in bed together. She stretches out an arm to raise the windowshade, startling the two white cats off the bed, and SHOWING the early sun rising over the beach.

KIT
 (tender smile)
 Hello.

AL
 (smiling back)
 You know, you make love the way you write, the way you fight for the Guild, the way --

KIT

You know the trouble with writers?
They talk too much.

(he grabs her
and kisses her)

AL

Look -- you know I'm going to call
you the moment I get to New York.
So why don't you save us both a
lot of time and come with me?

KIT

I can't. The Guild fight isn't
over -- it's just beginning. Al,
they elected me!

AL

(upset)

Yeah, yeah. Who d'you think you
are, Eleanor Roosevelt? What
about us?

KIT

I was afraid of this all along --
starting something we can't
finish.

AL

I don't want to finish.

KIT

I'll split the phone bills.

(he laughs)

Al, I'm going to miss you like
crazy.

RTL

SAMMY'S NEW PRODUCER'S OFFICE - DAY

The decor is more Wall-Street-banker's, less Hollywood-gaudy.
Sammy, seated at a simple but imposing desk, is dressed like
Tom Buchanan in "The Great Gatsby." Harold Godfrey Wilson
storms in past Sammy's agitated, gorgeous new Secretary.

WILSON

So now you won't even see me!

SAMMY

Harry -- what're ya sayin'?

WILSON
(losing his accent)
You phony little son of a bitch!

SAMMY
Harry, I was just gonna call ya.
I love ya new script!

WILSON
Put a sock in it, you bloody sod!
You knew I was promised a producer's job if I set up the Screen Playwrights and split the Guild -- I even told you!

SAMMY
Look, Harry --

WILSON
(overlapping)
So what do you do? Rush in and beat me to it. So now you're the big producer -- in charge of all the pictures I was supposed to make -- and I'm still a lousy writer!

SAMMY
Hey, is it my fault the front office calls me in an' tells me I'm --

WILSON
Drop dead, Mr. Prick!
(turning away)
I'm so fuckin' mad I'm ready t' quit the Playwrights 'n' go back to the Guild!

RTL

AL'S OLD CUBICLE, "RECORD" CITY ROOM

Al is typing furiously as O'Brien enters.

O'BRIEN
(beaming)
Oh, that's music to my ears -- fuckin' Mozart. Only it'd sound sweeter if you had your column in ten minutes earlier.
(MORE)

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)
 (leaning over
 AL's shoulder)
 What the fuck is this?
 (reading)
 "Act Two, Scene Two...!"
 (raging)
 Goddammit, Manheim, I thought when
 you escaped from Hollywood you'd
 be a newspaperman again. But
 three months later...
 (tears up the page)
 I run the fuckin' "New York
 Record," not the fuckin' Theatre
 Guild!

AL
 (as O'BRIEN
 stomps out)
 I got the column -- just one more
 stick, f'Chri-sake!
 (rolls another page
 into typewriter and
 bangs out some lines)
 Copy!

VOICE (O.S.)
 Coming, sir!

Sammy, resplendent in polo coat -- backed by a swarthy,
 muscular young man (SHEIK DUGAN) who looks like a well-dressed
 hood -- runs in behind Al. Without looking up, Al hands the
 copy to him over his shoulder.

AL
 On the double -- I'm running a
 little late.

SAMMY
 Aah, why bother? Nobody reads
 this shit anyway.

AL
 (looking up now)
 Huh? Oh, no!

SAMMY
 (to DUGAN)
 Hey, Sheik, it worked! What'd I
 tell ya?
 (DUGAN gestures
 an "OK")

AL
So now you got a bodyguard.

SAMMY
Right-hand man -- Sheik Dugan.
Sheik, this is my best buddy, Al
Manheim.

DUGAN
(super-polite)
It's an honor.

SAMMY
Sheik went to school with me --
used t' beat me up every day.

DUGAN
Yeah, only the way he kept gettin'
up, blood all over 'im -- it got
kinda scary, know what I mean? So
I figured this was one tough
mockie, an' I left 'im alone...
(admiringly)
But Sammy never forgot me. Soon's
he made it big, he sent for me --
record or no record.

SAMMY
(explaining)
Sheik did a little time for armed
robbery. Look, Al --

O'BRIEN (in b.g.)
(screaming)
Dammit, Osborne, where's the
fuckin' rewrite?

OSBORNE (in b.g.)
(calling back)
One more minute!

SAMMY
Al, how c'n a smart guy like you
settle for this rat's nest?

AL
It's only a rat's nest when
there's a rat in it.

SAMMY

That's the kind of hard-hitting dialogue we need. That line goes in the script.

AL

What script?

SAMMY

Don't ya read the trades any more? I'm assisting Sidney now with the whole production program, an' my next picture's straight up your alley: "Deadline!" I want it to be the real thing, Al -- the way you and I know it.

AL

Wait a minute -- I'm still on the blacklist. I tore up my resignation from the Guild -- remember? I've got to be persona non grata.

SAMMY

Are you trying to insult me in Spanish or something? C'mon Al, everything is changing. That Joan of Arc o' yours and that Guild of hers have a big election comin' up -- National Relations, what d'ye call it?

AL

N.L.R.B. -- National Labor Relations Board.

SAMMY

Yeah, and even Maddox admits Wilson's bunch're outnumbered five to one. So you know what I say? "Bygones is bygones."

AL

Nice ring to it. But no thanks, Sammy, I'd rather stay right here and finish my new play.

SAMMY

Right here? Three thousand miles from your one-and-only, who happens to be meshugah for you?

(to DUGAN)

He needs help.

AL

Look, Kit and I -- we've got our problems, but we don't need you to fix 'em.

(getting up)

Goodbye, Sammy.

SAMMY

(who can't bear rejection)

Wait, Al! Instead of a final yes-or-no, why don't you catch me later at the Waldorf? Drinks, then on to my new opening at the Music Hall.

AL

"Cyclone" -- even bigger than "Monsoon"...

(gesturing to full-page tabloid ad on bulletin board)

We've been running it all week.

SAMMY

Please, Al.

AL

(after a moment)

Oh, what the hell. Maybe I can use it in my play.

RTL

LIVING ROOM, WALDORF TOWERS SUITE

Sheik Dugan leads Al into an enormous room overlooking Manhattan, then exits. Sammy, in monogrammed silk dressing gown over tuxedo pants and dress shirt, is seated in a throne-like chair while a SHOE FITTER kneels to outline his stockinged feet on special graph paper.

Prominent on an easel is a large, lobby-size, full-color poster featuring an idealized drawing of Mona Moray in a rain-soaked minimal sarong. Promo lines: "From the team that gave you MONSOON!...MONA MORAY will sweep you away in CYCLONE!...Another great WORLD-WIDE PRODUCTION!"

SAMMY

Hi, Al -- with you in a sec. He's from McAfee's of London. Measuring me for some shoes.

AL

Oh. For a minute I thought he was praying to you.

SAMMY

Lemme hear about your play -- maybe there's a picture in it.

AL

I don't think it's your type of story, Sammy.

SAMMY

Look, if it's got a boy an' a girl, and it has a beginning, a middle, and an end, it's my type o' story.

FITTER

(British accent)

Your left foot, Mr. Glick, is eight and three-fifths, width B-minus. The right is eight and two-fifths, width an even B.

SAMMY

(to AL)

That's why I have 'em made to order. So they cost a little more, but you know how many miles I walk in those story conferences. If shoes don't fit me perfectly, I get headaches.

(to FITTER)

When c'n I have 'em?

FITTER

All six pairs? My people will need three months.

SAMMY

OK, shoot 'em out out to me, straight to the studio.

FITTER

(backing out as from royalty)

Yes sir, Mr. Glick.

SAMMY

OK, Al, give it to me in a capsule. What's the play about -- mother love, male rivalry, man against nature? What's the handle, kid?

AL

It's a play about success.

SAMMY

What kind of success?

AL

About the scramble to the top of the heap, and the losers who get hurt on the way.

SAMMY

Well, Sidney says he doesn't mind a picture with a message -- if it's entertaining.

AL

Well, I'm building my play around a very entertaining character.

SAMMY

Finish it and I'll buy it.

DUGAN

(re-entering room)

Toots, it's just about time.

SAMMY

(checking watch)

Right.

Nearby phone RINGS.

SAMMY

(continuing)

Pick it up, Al -- it's for you.
(leaving the room
with DUGAN)

AL

Huh?

(picking up phone)

Hello...Kit! Are you calling
Sammy?

INTERCUT AL AND KIT (ON PORCH OF BEACH COTTAGE)

She's in a beach robe, but books and writing materials on table indicate she's been working.

KIT
He's calling me. What are you doing up there?

AL
He wants me to write a picture for him -- "Deadline."

KIT
Oh the clever little bastard! He asked me to work on it and I put him off. The injection worked, Al. I can pass my Sammy Glick immunity test.

SAMMY LISTENING-IN ON EXTENSION PHONE - DUGAN NEARBY

SAMMY
(to DUGAN)
They're putting the knock on me.
I love it!
(waving DUGAN out)
Cigar!

AL AND KIT

AL
(overlapping)
How about the Al Manheim test?

KIT
Same answer as last time. If I ever have a husband, you're definitely it.

AL
A comforting thought to take to my grave. "Here lies the husband chosen by Kit -- she never had a husband but he definitely was it."

SAMMY
(breaking in again)
Ha ha. Al, with talent like that, you gotta come back with me.

AL

Sammy, don't you know wire-tapping is illegal?

SAMMY

Look, is there a law against getting a bright guy and my favorite lady writer cohabiting -- I mean collaborating with each other?

KIT

Al, maybe we could do "Deadline" together. I know the technique, but it needs --

AL

The feel of the City Room? The real thing..?

KIT

Mostly it needs you, Al. Dammit, I need you.

SAMMY

Hear that, Al?

AL

I need you too, Kit. But it's a New York story. Why not write it back here?

KIT

We've got a major election coming up and the New Deal's behind us now. I've been working my tail off on it, Al!

SAMMY

You two c'n write at home, as long as ya bring me what they're startin' t' call "the Sammy Glick Touch."

AL

Look, Sammy, I'm going to cost you. My soul comes high.

SAMMY

I never talk money with friends. I'll work it out with Myron.

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

(DUGAN returns
with cigar)

OK, keeds, we're in business. You
two lovebirds keep on singin' --
I'm signing off now.

He puts down the phone, strips off dressing gown, and starts
tieing his bow tie while addressing Dugan:

SAMMY

(all wound up)

Hey, Sheik, I just wanna be sure
we're completely in synch for
tonight. You sent the tux and the
evening gown for Momma and Seymour
-- ya double-checked the sizes,
right?

DUGAN

Listen, Sammy --

SAMMY

(racing on)

Make sure the limo's on time to
pick 'em up and get us all to the
theater -- and the photogs better
be ready to grab us -- Momma on
one side, Seymour on the other, me
in the middle -- I wanna show
Harrington I'm into "family" up to
my ass...

DUGAN

Sammy, will ya listen?

SAMMY

(unheeding)

Momma and Seymour won't be going
on to the party -- let's not open
that can o' worms! -- so see the
Number Two limo is ready to take
'em straight home. Sheik, I got
the whole thing cut in my mind
like a movie!

DUGAN

Sammy --

SAMMY

(still a mile-
a-minute)

And be sure you stick with Mona
an' the new boy so she gets there
in time for some shots with me an'
Fineman all goin' in together.
Lots to do before show-time, baby,
so stay on top of it, and --

DUGAN

Shut up already!

SAMMY

(shocked)

What?

DUGAN

He's not coming!

SAMMY

Harrington?

DUGAN

Your crazy brother, Seymour. He
called, and --

SAMMY

You told 'im the limo'll pick 'em
up at six --

DUGAN

I never got that far. He hung up
on me.

SAMMY

So you call 'im right back, you
tell 'im --

DUGAN

Sammy, he's your crazy brother. I
c'n handle crazy broads, an'
coked-up actors, but --

Al enters from the sitting-room.

AL

Got to hand it to you, Sammy --
you sure know how to put a deal
together.

SAMMY

Hey, maybe you can help.

AL
Help how -- what?

SAMMY
(grabbing him)
I'll tell ya on the way!

RTL

HALLWAY IN LOW-RENT HOUSING PROJECT (LOWER EAST SIDE)

Drab but clean. Sammy is banging angrily against an apartment door. Al looks on, concerned.

SAMMY
What the fuck ya mean, you're not coming with me?

SEYMOUR'S VOICE
(through door)
Watch your mouth, boychik! Momma can hear every word!

SAMMY
Let me in, dammit! So I can straighten this out!

SEYMOUR'S VOICE
There's nothing to straighten out. We're not going.

MOMMA'S VOICE
Seymour, please. Please...

Door opens suddenly, disclosing SEYMOUR -- pot-bellied, balding, only two years older than Sammy but looking middle-aged.

SEYMOUR
(furious)
I'm only doing it for Momma!

Sammy strides in, Al following at his signal.

IN THE LIVING-ROOM

Drab and clean, like the hallway, with overstuffed furniture and heavy draperies. On the walls, photos of Sammy and one-sheet posters of "his" movies ("Girl Steals Boy," "Quarter-back Sneak," and others, including "Monsoon"). MOMMA Glick,

wearing a simple housedress, rushes past Seymour to take Sammy to her outsize bosom.

MOMMA

(sobbing)

Sammele! Sammele!

SAMMY

OK, Ma, OK.

(freeing himself)

Hey, you're not dressed yet --

(including SEYMOUR)

Either one o' ya. Didn't the clothes fit?

MOMMA

It -- it's a beautiful dress, Sammele...

SEYMOUR

(to SAMMY)

For one of your Hollywood hoors, maybe! Where d'you come off, anyway, sending clothes to us? You think I don't make a living? We don't need your charity -- and we don't need a Hollywood big shot coming by once every five years. When you need something -- oh, do I know you, you momser -- when you want something!

SAMMY

(to AL)

What did I tell ya? I've never been able t' talk to 'im, not once. Would you try, please?

AL

(reluctantly)

OK. Look, folks -- I know this is a mess, but maybe --

SEYMOUR

Maybe you should stay out of it, Mister! This is just between me and my lousy brother!

SAMMY

Momma, you try 'n' talk some sense into him, will ya? Why d'you

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

think I want you at the opening of my new movie? Only so you c'n see what your little Sammele has made of himself!

(starting to sob)

Please, Momma -- please!

SEYMOUR

(shouting)

Go ahead, cry! Like you did over Poppa -- not one real tear. And you killed him, you broke his heart with your cursing, your stealing, your hooring -- like the goy you always wanted to be, you good-for-nothing anti-Semit!

SAMMY

(shaken)

Seymour, for God's sake --

SEYMOUR

Don't soil His name with your lips! Not in this house!

SAMMY

(to AL)

What can you do? He's sick in the head.

SEYMOUR

I had to be sick, to make a home for you and Momma after Poppa died. And when you left, I had to be sick to pay --

SAMMY

Listen, you gotta get dressed an' come to my opening! I got photog-raphers waiting.

SEYMOUR

(spitting it out)

Photographers!

SAMMY

You really hate me, don't ya?

SEYMOUR

But you love Momma and me? What
did you ever really love except
shoes, nooky, money -- and Sammy?

SAMMY

(coldly)

Y'know, you're gonna die from
dumbness just like Poppa did.

With a ROAR, Seymour hurls himself at Sammy, smashing him in
the mouth and sending him to the floor.

MOMMA

(horrificed)

Sammele! Sammele!

AL

(kneeling beside him)

Sammy! Are you all right?

SAMMY

(feeling his cut lip)

Is there any blood on my shirt?

AL

(looking)

No.

SAMMY

Good, then I won't hafta change it
for the opening.

RTL

ESTABLISH LATE-30'S COAST-BOUND AIRLINER - DAY

INSIDE THE FIRST-CLASS SECTION

Dugan, seated across from Sammy, is scanning New York news-
papers, including the "Record." Pretty STEWARDESS approaches
with wine bottle and glasses.

STEWARDESS

Champagne, gentlemen?

They nod. She pours.

DUGAN

(putting down
paper; to SAMMY)

The way I read it, Toots, "Cy-clone"'s gonna break the record you set with "Monsoon."

SAMMY

(savoring it)

It really hits hard, right?

DUGAN

Can Joe Louis punch? Boy, outside o' the pictures you been makin' for Fineman, his program stinks up the studio so bad ya need a gas-mask to go through the hall.

Sammy chuckles, lifting his glass to Dugan in a toast.

RTL

PATIO OF FINEMAN'S BEL AIR MANSION - DAY

Al, Kit, and Sammy are seated with Fineman around a wrought-iron table.

FINEMAN

(to KIT and AL)

You've given us a fine script, you two. Powerful writing.

(then, to SAMMY)

Putting them together on "Deadline" was an inspiration. Now cast it right, and we'll have another winner.

SAMMY

Thank you, Mr. Fineman. Let's hope so.

FINEMAN

I wonder, though, if the ending is quite right. I'm not sure about the tag.

SAMMY

(to KIT and AL)

Why don't you take another crack at it?

Al and Kit look at each other and nod.

KIT

It's only two pages...

AL

(exiting with her)

We'll have it for you in the morning.

Fineman lights his pipe, takes a few puffs, then clears his throat.

FINEMAN

Sammy, in this business it doesn't matter what you did last year or the year before. If your last few pictures don't top the ones before them, you're in big trouble...

(involuntary shiver)

That's why I'm levelling with you, Sammy. I know you appreciate what I've done for you -- and I hope you'd be willing to help me.

SAMMY

("sincerely")

I'm your man, Sidney. Just say the word.

FINEMAN

Harrington and some of his people are coming out next week.

SAMMY

Again? Why?

FINEMAN

They're...concerned about our box-office figures. They'll want to know why we've dropped to Number Three among the majors. Harrington could even be thinking about a new production chief.

SAMMY

To replace you? You've got to be kidding!

FINEMAN

I wish I were. Sammy, these men don't know pictures -- they have adding machines in their brains.

(MORE)

FINEMAN (CONT'D)

They do know that the pictures I let you make have been our only real box-office hits, so they'll want to hear what you have to say.

(almost a plea)

You know what I mean, don't you?

SAMMY

I'm not sure I do.

FINEMAN

Well, I want them to know -- from you -- that we're working together very well. And if they keep me on, Sammy, I'll let you make six of the biggest pictures on next year's program -- your own unit, if you want. How does that strike you?

SAMMY

Sid, old pal, you're in! Just let them come to me -- I'll give them an earful. And it'll come --

(tapping his breast-pocket)

From right here.

FINEMAN

Thank you, Sammy.

SAMMY

Only why wait for them to come to me? Wouldn't it be a lot smarter for me to start working on them the night they hit town?

FINEMAN

(over his pipe)

Mmm..?

SAMMY

Like if I throw 'em a big party at my new house -- with all our stars there?

FINEMAN

Isn't it my place to give the party?

SAMMY

Sid, if I'm at your party, what does it mean? You're my boss -- I hafta be there. But if I give it, celebrating our first year of working together..

RTL

OUTSIDE SAMMY'S BEVERLY HILLS SHOWPLACE - DAY

Al drives up in his modest new roadster. Sammy greets him at the door.

SAMMY

(with a grin)

Welcome to "Glickfair." I know -- it's not up to Sidney's...

AL

But you're getting there.

He gets out, and Sammy starts showing him around the vast, elaborately landscaped grounds.

SAMMY

Next Saturday night, Al, it's lights, action, camera -- the joint'll be jumping! Just the biggest names in town. You 'n' Kit are invited, natch.

AL

Thanks, I'll have to clear it with her.

SAMMY

Writing teams usually fight 'n' break up. But somehow you're still together.

AL

Permanently, I hope.

SAMMY

What I'm ready for! Man in my position ought to settle down -- get some dignity in his life.

AL

(amused)

You sound like Harrington.

SAMMY

He's right. This town needs more stability. Respectability. More of a stake in life. He's been married to the same woman for forty years.

AL

I've seen her. He deserves a medal.

SAMMY

Hey, you can learn a lot from H.L. He hates all this playing around. The way he sees it, a solid marriage is a business asset.

AL

I read you, Sammy. I hear the wedding bells.

SAMMY

Why not? Why shouldn't I have what every guy wants: a sweet, healthy girl who's crazy about me -- always there when I come home from work -- dying to give me kids t' carry on my name...

AL

You know who you just described? Rosalie Goldbaum.

SAMMY

Now that's a helluvan idea! I almost forgot about her.

AL

I haven't. She sends me a post-card once in a while. I got her a job on the "Record."

SAMMY

Rosalie Goldbaum. Modest. Conservative. A homebody. Got "family values" written all over her...

AL

Made to order for H.L.

SAMMY

Hey, maybe I should fly her our here -- announce the engagement -- let it hit the trades the day he gets in...

(deciding)

Yeah, that's what I'll do.

AL

Love comes to Sammy Glick.

SAMMY

Love?! When the hell did I ever have time to love anybody?

RTL

SAMMY AT DESK IN HIS PRODUCER'S OFFICE - DAY

SECRETARY'S VOICE

(on intercom)

Miss Goldbaum is here, Mr. Glick.

SAMMY

OK, OK -- send her in.

Enter Rosalie, looking plain, drab, unsure of herself, tired -- in fact, downright unattractive. Sammy, shaken, doesn't make much of an effort to hide the let-down.

SAMMY

(continuing)

Rosalie! Well -- how are you?
How was the trip?

ROSALIE

Awfully scary -- I never was up in a plane before. Sammy, I just couldn't believe it when you called. I thought I was dreaming.

(taking in the office)

So elegant..! I kept trying to picture you out here. You should see my scrapbook. It's got every word they ever wrote about you.

SAMMY

Yeah, yeah, that's great. Rosie, I still got a lotta business t' take care of this afternoon. I'll have the driver run you over to

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

the hotel -- got you a suite at the Beverly Hills. Catch ya later, OK?

ROSALIE

Of course, Sammy -- I know how busy you are. But we will have a chance to talk -- tonight, maybe?
(as if to kiss him)
It's been a long time, Sammy.

SAMMY

(anxious to get rid of her)
Sure has, Rosie, sure has. Now get a good rest at the hotel... Yeah, an' maybe grab some sun at the pool.

The moment she's out the door, he rushes to the phone and dials.

SAMMY

(continuing;
desperately)
Al? I got trouble! Family values is fine, but Jesus, wait'll you see Rosalie -- she's got D-O-G written all over her! If I announce our engagement in the trades, I'll be a laughing-stock. I can't even ask her to the party. Listen, is Kit with you? Good -- put her on...

RTL

INSIDE SAMMY'S SHOWPLACE - NIGHT

The party's in full swing; Big Band MUSIC and trays of champagne. Guests are making their way along the elaborate buffet (featuring an ice sculpture of an eagle, wings outspread, atop a "World-Wide" globe). All the men are in white tie and tails, the women in evening gowns. Among the guests are a seductively sequined Mona with a new stud in Westernized tuxedo, and a tanned, smartly-dressed Julian and Blanche, now obviously "making it."

At one side of the broad, flower-bedecked terrace, Sammy is energetically engaged with a trio of Harrington's New York Board Members.

Off the terrace is a spacious anteroom (to a powder room), where Al is pacing with a champagne glass in hand. Kit emerges in a gown that's both daring and tasteful.

AL
(handing her the glass)
Hi. I thought you were lost in there.
(peering past her shoulder)
Where is she?

KIT
Putting on the finishing touches.

AL
My God, you two've been doing that all afternoon.

KIT
Al, you ain't seen nuthin' yet.

From the powder room, Rosalie Goldbaum appears. A transformed Rosalie, actually managing to look stunning -- exquisitely gowned and coiffed, with becoming make-up for the first time, but underneath all this gloss, still endearingly shy.

AL
You know what, Rosalie? Disney would sign you in a minute. You look like Cinderella at the ball. Positively gorgeous!

ROSALIE
Thanks, Mr. Manheim -- for turning me over to Kit. She's been like my Fairy Godmother.

AL
As Sammy would say, My pleasure, my pleasure.

ROSALIE
I just hope he'll say I'm gorgeous.

KIT
He will, dear. Or words to that effect.

AL
Uh-huh -- like boffo, smash...
maybe even smasheroo.

In b.g., Sammy finishes his chat with the Board Members, and approaches Kit, Al, and Rosalie (from the rear).

SAMMY
Everything copasetic on this side
o' the room?

The three turn to greet him.

AL
Hi, Sammy.

SAMMY
(spotting ROSALIE without recognizing her)
Hel-lo! And where have you been
all my life?

ROSALIE
Sammy -- don't you know me?

SAMMY
Huh? My God, Rosalie!
(looking her
up and down)
I can't believe it. Kit, what'd
you do to her?

KIT
Well, we started just where all
your leading ladies start, in
Make-Up. World-Wide happens to
have the best in town. Have you
ever seen Mona Moray first thing
in the morning?
(pause)
Don't answer that question.
Before she goes to Make-Up?

As Sammy WHISTLES appreciatively at the delighted Rosalie --

KIT
(continuing)
I've got news for you, Sammy.
Rosalie's prettier than Mona. She
just doesn't know it yet.

The band strikes up "Peanuts" (a spirited Latin hit of the day).

AL

C'mon, Kit -- you rhumba, I'll do my usual box-step. You game?

KIT

(nods; going off with him:)

See you two later.

ROSALIE

Sammy, I do feel like Cinderella. This is like a party in a fairy palace.

SAMMY

Honey, I know it looks like a party, but it's really a business meeting -- me an' my boss an' some biggies from Wall Street. Everybody else is strictly for decoration.

ROSALIE

I...understand.

SAMMY

("sincerely")

But when everybody goes home, I'm alone, know what I mean? -- with nothing but studio hassles t' keep me company. Believe me, it's lonely as hell.

ROSALIE

I believe you, Sammy. There always was something inside of you that was lonely and...

As she moves into his arms --

CUT TO

MANSION FOYER -- HARRINGTON AND LAURETTE ARRIVING

Butler takes their things. Laurette can upstage the movie stars in a strapless white satin gown that seems sculpted to her sensational figure. Dugan, looking like a ballroom dancer in white full-dress, hurries to greet them.

DUGAN

Welcome back! Mr. Glick told me
to let 'im know the minute you got
here. 'Scuse me!

As he hurries off, Laurette sees Sammy ending his intimate
chat with Rosalie with a "serious" kiss on the forehead.
Laurette reacts, subtly, but the meaning is clear: she smells
competition, and challenges turn her on.

Alerted by Dugan, Sammy leaves Rosalie and, heading over,
passes Fineman chatting with Mona Moray and her new throb, and
signals Fineman to follow him.

SAMMY

(to the HARRINGTONS)

Well, good evening! Good evening!
As we say out here, "My house is
your house."

HARRINGTON

(eyeing the Greek pillars
and intricate marble floor)

Nice little bungalow. You sure
came up in a hurry, son. My own
townhouse is ninety years old.
Everything's so damnably new out
here!

SAMMY

(smoothly)

That's the exciting part, Mr.
Harrington. Where we're standing
right now was an orange grove five
years ago. It's a new business --
growing fast.

FINEMAN

(gentle smile)

With the help of old money.

HARRINGTON

Only if it brings in new money,
Fineman.

LAURETTE

I'll tell you a little secret.
Dads actually has his money washed
and ironed. It's one of his
foibles -- isn't it, Dads?

HARRINGTON

All right, Laurette. And I've asked you a hundred times, call me anything but "Dads."

("good-humoredly")

She's impossible.

FINEMAN

But I must say, exceptionally lovely tonight.

LAURETTE

Thank you, Mr. Fineman -- you always say the right thing. I was wondering if Mr. Glick would say that.

SAMMY

(dismissively)

My boss speaks for me, ma'am -- and vice versa.

As the band "swings" into a current hit --

LAURETTE

Does he dance for you, too? Marvelous band...

(dancing in place)

I'm in the mood.

SAMMY

(indicating DUGAN)

My assistant handles that for me.

DUGAN

(to LAURETTE)

Whenever you say.

LAURETTE

You're improving, Mr. Glick.

Looking off, she notices Rosalie, dancing with Al.

LAURETTE

(continuing)

Who's that pretty girl you were kissing so chastely when we came in?

SAMMY

Oh, that's Rosalie...Grauman.
You've heard of Grauman's Chinese,
Grauman's Egyptian. A very dear
friend.

LAURETTE

Is it...serious?

SAMMY

Lady, if you get to know me
better, you'll learn everything
about me is serious.

(turning to H.L.)

Look, Mr. Harrington, how'd you
like to join Sidney and me, and
your people from New York, and
talk business --

(leading the way)

In my den.

(turning back to

LAURETTE, briefly:)

This could be a long session, Miss
Harrington. So if I don't see you
again...

LAURETTE

You know, Mr. Glick, you're
absolutely the first man I ever
met who told me to go screw
myself. Are you really that
unsinkable?

SAMMY

(brazenly)

Try holdin' me under sometime, and
see for yourself.

Bitting back a riposte, Laurette takes Dugan's waiting arm and
heads for the dance floor as Sammy confidently leads the
business group toward his den.

SAMMY'S DEN

A set-decorator's idea of an elegant manor-house library, with
leather-bound sets of Balzac, Dickens, Melville, et al.;
leather-bound scripts, comfortable leather chairs, antique
brass fixtures, etc. Sammy is "talking business" -- hard --
with Harrington, his three Board Members, and an uneasy
Fineman.

SAMMY

Of course our earnings are down -- maybe ten percent under last year -- but the whole Industry's in a slump, and you know why? Not enough new ideas up there on the screen. Too many ticket-buyers saying, "Didn't we see that same movie last week?"

FINEMAN

Well, I wouldn't go quite that far. These things do run in cycles, but --

HARRINGTON

I admit I'm new to this business, but maybe that's an asset. I wonder how many of you people think of movies as a commodity -- merchandise..?

SAMMY

Well, I was reading the "The Wall Street Journal" yesterday --

HARRINGTON

Hmm, I thought you fellows only read those little trade papers of yours.

FINEMAN

(defensively)

I read "The New York Times" every morning. Then the trades.

HARRINGTON

(to SAMMY)

Go on, son -- what caught your eye?

SAMMY

(picking up a copy of WSJ which just happens to be prominent on his desk)

A big soap company took a poll of housewives and found their favorite color is blue. So now they're pitching a new soap-powder, Nu-Blu -- N-U, B-L-U, and it's outselling Lux!

FINEMAN

Of course the content of our films is a little more complicated than soap-powders...

HARRINGTON

But I see Glick's point. Let "The New York Times" worry about the art of the cinema. My company has bought into the movie business, emphasis on "business."

SAMMY

Nu-Blu came straight out of market research. For some reason we're the only major industry still not testing potential markets.

FINEMAN

We've made some great pictures out here by trusting our own judgment.

HARRINGTON

But dammit, that's just hit-or-miss -- and you're in a billion-dollar industry!

SAMMY

(as if appealing
to FINEMAN)

After all, Sidney, pictures are shipped out in cans. Every shipment should show a profit.

HARRINGTON

Market research. Years overdue!

(as BOARD MEMBERS
nod; to FINEMAN:)

Get on it right away.

FINEMAN

Don't worry, gentlemen. Sammy and I are prepared to do everything in our power to turn things around. Right, son?

SAMMY

I'm with you, Sidney!
(to the approving
GROUP)

I'm with all of you!

WIPE TO

THE DEN (HOURS LATER)

Sammy is alone at his desk, full-dress tailcoat draped on the back of his chair, white tie off, pleated Sulka shirt open. The room's only light is over the desk as he works intently over box-office figures, budget breakdowns, etc., making hurried notes.

OUTSIDE THE MANSION

A sleek, silver Bentley convertible speeds up the long driveway, an unidentifiable woman at the wheel.

BACK TO SAMMY

winding up his homework. He turns out the lights, exits.

MASTER BEDROOM

As Sammy enters and switches on the light, he's startled to discover Laurette standing by the triple-size bed in her clinging white satin, a Mona Lisa smile on her face.

SAMMY

Holy shit! I don't believe
this...

LAURETTE

(sublimely "cool")
I just thought I'd come by and see
if you really are unsinkable...

She turns slightly, her unzipped gown falling away. Now, naked as Aphrodite, she opens her arms to him. As if mesmerized, Sammy moves toward her.

RTL

MARBLE BATHROOM (ADJOINING MASTER B.R.)

Sammy is luxuriating in a bubble-bath in an oversize, tiled, sunken, Roman tub -- confiding in Al, seated on an appropriate stool nearby.

SAMMY

Al, it went on for hours. She
knows more about keepin' it hard
than all the girls out here put
together.

AL

(annoyed)

That's the "emergency" you called me over for? So you fucked each other's brains out. Congratulations.

SAMMY

Al -- that was only for openers. Then we sat out on my balcony and talked 'n' talked and all of a sudden the sun was coming up.

AL

I can see it now: Cary Grant playing Sammy Glick -- in glorious Technicolor.

SAMMY

Goddammit, listen to me! I had her all wrong, see? All that sophisticated shit is just a smokescreen. I mean, underneath, there's something very...needy, very real. Believe me.

(trying it on
for size)

So -- what would you think of "Sammy and Laurette Glick"?

AL

You're kidding.

SAMMY

Come on, Al.

AL

Why should you care what I think?

SAMMY

Why? Because you're different. You think the ass-kissers fool me? Like, you never asked for nothing for anything. I mean, for yourself. OK, I sold your play, and I got you writing for me, but you're my friend. My only friend.

KNOCK on the bathroom door.

HOUSEBOY'S VOICE
 (through door --
 Japanese accent)
 Telephone, Meester Gleek. Mees
 Gol'baum. She call again.

Sammy reaches for phone on tiled wall, hesitates, then --

SAMMY
 (shouting toward door)
 Tell 'er I'm outa' town, Naga --
 way up in snow country, north of
 Big Bear -- no phones -- snowed
 in! No tellin' when I'll be back.
 Got it?
 (leaning back
 again in tub)
 Now where were we?

AL
 I was being your only friend.

SAMMY
 Damned right! I'm only human, Al.
 Every man's got to have a wife and
 a friend.

AL
 Rosalie could be both to you.
 Jesus, Sammy, that's what you
 brought her out for. Family
 values, remember?

SAMMY
 But Al, what c'n I do? I fell in
 love with Laurette. She's every-
 thing I need. Sexy. Brainy.
 Class! Where I'm heading, Al, I
 don't just need a wife, I need a
 First Lady, and she's it -- right
 outa the Blue Book!

AL
 (tonelessly)
 The Wedding of the Year.

SAMMY
 (getting out of tub)
 Not so fast. I still got a
 mountain to climb. Mount Har-
 rington.

FLASH MONTAGE -- SAMMY'S COURTSHIP

Sammy taking Laurette to the Academy Awards...dancing at Santa Barbara...powerboating off Malibu (Laurette water-skiing)...in a box at Santa Anita racetrack...conversing "intimately" in the Polo Lounge...etc., etc. Everyplace, they seem to be having a great time together. MONTAGE ENDS with HARRINGTON AND SAMMY, ON A BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL SUITE TERRACE

having a low-key private lunch. Room-service Waiter nearby.

SAMMY

(nervously)

Mr. Harrington, there's only one way I know how to talk, and that's straight. So I'll come right out with it: Laurette an' I are in love with each other and, well, we both feel we'd like to --

HARRINGTON

Come on, Glick, spit it out. You want to get married. But you need my consent.

SAMMY

You know, Mr. Harrington, I'm not exactly the shy type. But I certainly wouldn't want to take any steps that didn't have your support -- I'm talking both personal and business.

HARRINGTON

Let me tell you something, son. Before I took over World-Wide, I would've said, "Hell no, I don't want a Glick in the family." Fact is, I've got no use for kikes, niggers, micks -- I mean in social life I prefer my own kind...

SAMMY

(anxiously)

No offense, Mr. H., but I -- happen t' be Jewish myself.

HARRINGTON

That's all right, Sammy -- you're my kind of Jew: tough as nails. The kikes I worry about are the

(MORE)

HARRINGTON (CONT'D)
Finemans. They've got a soft
streak in them, the touch of the
poet -- it makes me nervous.

He rises from the table, paces the secluded terrace, Sammy
following.

HARRINGTON
(continuing)
I'll tell you something else,
strictly between us: Laurette
makes me nervous, too. Spoiled
her rotten, I guess. Only person
in the world I've never been able
to handle. But I've watched you
with her and by God, even if your
mother isn't a member of the
D.A.R., I think you've got what it
takes to do it.

SAMMY
(overwhelmed)
Don't worry, sir -- I'll keep her
in line!

HARRINGTON
I'm sure you will.
(suddenly shaking
SAMMY's hand)
Congratulations, son! It fits in
perfectly.

SAMMY
Fits in -- with what, sir?

HARRINGTON
We're contemplating some major
changes at the studio. I feel
your record entitles you to...
major consideration.

SAMMY
Thank you. But it's only fair to
tell you how much I've learned as
Sidney's assistant. Everything I
know about production came from
him. Yes sir, Sid's taught me
everything he knows.

HARRINGTON

Perhaps he's given all he has to give, Sammy. He let too many costly flops slip into the program this year.

SAMMY

He did the best he could, sir. It's not entirely his fault if production costs got out of hand.

HARRINGTON

Out of his hand, you mean?

SAMMY

I don't like to talk about my superiors. Especially a man like Fineman, who was such a pioneer in this business. Heck, I can still remember some of the great silent pictures he made.

HARRINGTON

Sammy -- our first loyalty is to World-Wide.

SAMMY

Believe me, Mr. H., you couldn't find a better man than Sid among the older producers.

HARRINGTON

No doubt. But what our studio needs is new leadership. Young blood. You, Sammy.

SAMMY

I -- I don't know what to say. Except thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

HARRINGTON

You've earned it, son.
(lifting glass)
To you and Laurette.

SAMMY

(lifting his)
And to World-Wide!

CUT TO

DOWN ANGLE ON WORLD-WIDE STUDIO STREET - DAY

The street is thronged with dress-extras, grips, gaffers, animal-wranglers with horses, burros, etc.

SAMMY (V.O.)

Now it's mine, Al. Everything's mine...

SAMMY'S OFFICE

He's standing at the window, looking down into the street.

Now he turns to face Al, seated across from the desk.

SAMMY

Everybody's always saying you can't have everything, but I got it! I've got the studio and I've got the Harrington connections and I'm getting the perfect woman to run my home and have my children.

AL

(after a moment)

How does it feel, Sammy? How does it feel to have everything?

SAMMY

(smile turning
into a smirk)

Makes me feel kinda...patriotic.

The door opens suddenly and a broken, ghostly Sidney Fineman looks in.

SAMMY

(continuing)

Sidney! I -- I was just...

FINEMAN

(a deadened monotone)

Sammy -- Sammy -- Sammy --
Sammy...

SUPER TRADE-PAPER HEADLINE:

SIDNEY FINEMAN DEAD AT 58
Heart Attack Fells Film Pioneer,
Ex-World-Wide Production Chief

HEADLINE FADES OUT OVER:

INSIDE THE MAIN CHAPEL, FOREST LAWN

The large room is bedecked with outsize floral "arrangements." Sammy is at the podium, Mrs. Fineman and family in the front row. The hundreds of mourners include Al and Kit, Dugan, Julian and Blanche, Maddox, Harold Godfrey Wilson and scores of other Writers (from the Guild meeting), Bert Pittman and other Producers, Mona Moray and other actors/actresses seen at the "Monsoon" opening and party (Mona's in the sexiest-possible black mourning costume) -- and Harrington and Laurette, dressed in prim good taste.

In fact, everybody is here, even librarian Leona and film-editor Maxie, hostesses Billie and Sally Ann, Al's and Sammy's secretaries, extras, grips, gaffers, and all.

SAMMY

(stentorian tones)

What more can you say of a man who was a legend in his own time? Whose list of great pictures includes three Academy Awards -- and who went on to win the Academy's most prestigious honors: the Irving Thalberg Award for quality and the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award?

(brief pause)

Taking his place, reluctantly, on the Board of the Academy, I will move immediately to establish the Sidney Fineman Award, combining the highest esthetic standards with his profound compassion for his fellow-man...

CUT TO

AL AND KIT

AL

(whisper)

You write that?

KIT

(same)

No, I'm afraid Julian did.

AL

(a nod)

Once a ghost writer, always a ghost writer.

BACK TO

SAMMY

turning now directly to Mrs. Fineman, below him, as she dabs at her eyes.

SAMMY

Ida Fineman, the greatest regret of my career is that I've had to take the reins from the failing hands of the man who had driven our stagecoach so long and taken it so far. And I think you know how glad I'd be to step down from the driver's seat this minute, if it would only bring our beloved Sidney back to us again.

(turning to casket)

To my old friend, my inspiration, my mentor, I say goodbye for now -- goodbye from all of us who loved you at World-Wide -- and may you have smasheroo after smasheroo in the Big Studio you'll be running in the sky.

With a "touching" farewell salute, Sammy hurries down to embrace Mrs. Fineman, both with tears streaming down their faces -- other mourners hugging them -- some (including Dugan) even murmuring, "Beautiful, Sammy -- beautiful!"

OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL

Amid hoopla suggesting a major opening, Photogs jostle for position to catch Mrs. Fineman and entourage getting into limos (Sammy and Dugan helping them in) -- movie stars surrounded by more Photogs and Reporters -- Fans pushing forward with autograph books -- Cops trying to control the crowd, some surging through to a gratified Mona Moray (who manages to maintain her grief-stricken attitude).

CUT TO

DUGAN AND SAMMY (AS PALLBEARERS)

DUGAN

(low; admiringly)
You really did it, baby.

SAMMY

(hoarse stage whisper)

He died of dumbness, too.

Al, passing by with Kit, overhears this and reacts, then moves on with her. Limos stream by. As Mona's limo joins the departing parade --

WIPE TO

ANOTHER LIMO-PARADE APPROACHING SAMMY'S MANSION - DAY

A sunny re-run of the Forest Lawn madness. Mona's limo arriving with scores of others. Again the Cops and barricades, hyped-up Fans, Photogs and Reporters (and Radio Broadcasters with equipment) -- except that now all the guests have exchanged their mourning togs for festive high-fashion outfits.

SAMMY'S MANSION GARDENS - DAY

A pavilion-tent has been set up in b.g. as the wedding-production begins in front of hundreds of guests. SUPER "Hollywood Reporter" headline: GLICK NUPTIALS TO HIT ALL-TIME HIGH / THE WEDDING OF THE YEAR...

Escorted by Harrington in afternoon-formal regalia, Laurette comes down garden steps in a white satin wedding gown -- a ghostly beauty floating through the Hollywood haze -- as a "wedding march" is played in symphonic grandeur. Sammy enters from the opposite side, flanked by "best man" Dugan, in afternoon cutaways and gray double-breasted vests. Bride and groom meet at an orchid-draped pulpit, where an Episcopalian MINISTER conducts the ceremony.

Looking on are Kit and Al...the New York Board Members... Julian and Blanche...and BABE LYNCH with her flying buddy, TEX McAVOY.

MINISTER

...I now pronounce you man and wife.

As Sammy takes Laurette in his arms, and she removes her veil so they can kiss, a professional mixed CHORUS steps forward and sings "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life."

BABE

(to KIT and AL)

You know something? Babe and Tex need a drink.

(MORE)

BABE (CONT'D)
(heading for bar)
How about you kids?

AL
See you over there.

As Babe exits with Tex, Al glances over toward the bridal couple, standing with Harrington and a battle-ax Mrs. Harrington to receive congratulations from their guests.

AL
(continuing)
Well, Boy Steals Girl.

KIT
Or Girl Steals Boy. Two of a kind.

AL
Made for each other. Know what I feel like doing? Joining The Flying Wallendas at the bar and getting smashed.

KIT
I forbid it. Absolutely forbid it!

AL
You're getting awfully possessive lately. We're not married -- are we?

KIT
We haven't even got a license.

AL
Hey, let's drive down to Tijuana! You don't need a license there. Just five bucks and a woman.

KIT
Tijuana's just an out-house for San Diego.

AL
Who cares? We won't even see Tijuana. C'mon, Kit. We can get there in four hours.

KIT
Too much like a Hollywood elope-
ment. Why don't we just go down
to City Hall and get it over with?

AL
(as it sinks in)
Kit! Darling! Kiss me!

KIT
(as he grabs her)
Al! Behave yourself!

AL
You sound like an old married
woman already.

KIT
Just like Laurette.

AL
Bite your tongue!
(kisses her
passionately)

WIPE TO

THE PAVILION IN SAMMY'S GARDENS - LATE AFTERNOON

Dugan is drinking champagne with a pair of appreciative
Starlets when Sammy signals to him from the entrance.

DUGAN
(joining him)
Problem?

SAMMY
Laurette -- been looking all over
for her. You see her?

DUGAN
Inside, going upstairs. But that
was a while ago.

SAMMY
(on his way)
Thanks.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Sammy racing up the grand staircase; poking his head into room after room without result. Then he gets to the master bedroom, and opens the door -- to see Laurette's wedding gown on the floor alongside the bed. Also an open bottle of champagne. Then CAMERA TILTS TO SHOW LAURETTE in bed -- between Babe Lynch and Tex McAvoy, both giggly-drunk.

SAMMY
(stricken, incredulous)
Laurette...! What the fuck's going on?

LAURETTE
(smiling at his shock)
Now, Sammy, let's not make a scene.

He strides to the bed and rips off the covers, revealing all three totally nude. As Laurette looks up at him insolently --

SAMMY
You fuckin' animals -- what're you tryin' to do to me?

BABE
(a drunken giggle)
Not to you, Sammy. We do this to everybody.

TEX
(same)
Always room for one more!

SAMMY
(attacking murderously)
Get outa here! Before I kill you!

While Tex grabs his clothes and runs, Sammy seizes Babe and, over her CURSING protests, rushes her out into the hall, slamming the door with a BANG. Then he wheels on Laurette, now getting back into her wedding gown, and slaps her across the face -- knocking her back onto the bed. She rebounds like a tigress, clawing at his face and drawing blood.

SAMMY
You fuckin' bitch! I'm gonna kick your fancy ass right off the balcony and back to the Bel Air Hotel!

LAURETTE
Fine, darling. That's where Dads is staying.

SAMMY

(reacting)

What are you going to tell him?

LAURETTE

Don't worry, I'll think of something -- I always do. That's why he's always given me anything I wanted. Even you.

SAMMY

Jesus, if I lose H.L. ...

LAURETTE

Trust me, darling -- you won't. Now zip me up -- and don't look so devastated...

(as he zips her)

Look at it this way: You've got what you want. Dads has what he wants. And little Laurie's going to get what she wants.

SAMMY

What? What're you saying?

LAURETTE

(stepping into her high-heel slippers)

I know why you married me, and I'll never let you down. I'll be the best hostess this town ever had. And I'll be careful -- I won't let my private life interfere with your career.

SAMMY

OK...

(absorbing it)

OK. Now go back to the party -- only remember, there are a lot of snoops around, so stay out of the two-shots...

She nods -- then, smiling boldly, she dabs at his bloodied cheek with a corner of the bed sheet, and kisses him on the forehead.

SAMMY

(continuing)

Unless they're with me.

LAURETTE
All right, dear.

WIPE TO

SAMMY, IN HIS ENGLISH-LIBRARY DEN - NIGHT

SAMMY
(mimicking)
"All right, dear." That's just
how she said it, like we'd been
married twenty years. "All right,
dear."

CAMERA BACKS TO INCLUDE AL.

AL
Where is she now?

SAMMY
(hopeless shrug)
How the hell do I know? With Babe
and Tex -- or maybe at night she
goes for Great Danes and midgets.
(pours himself a
stiff brandy)
And the night I made her, I
thought I was the greatest guy in
the world. Only she's a -- she's
nothing but a...
(anguished)
What am I gonna do, Al? What
would you do?

AL
Sammy, you made your bed. Now lie
in it. Even if it's a little
crowded.

SAMMY
You hate my guts, don't you? Like
Seymour. Like all the rest of
'em.

AL
That's right. Only I've come to
see it's too late to hate you --
or change you.
(musing)
You can't have your brothers and
eat 'em, too. You're alone, pal.
(MORE)

AL (CONT'D)

That's the way you wanted it,
that's the way you learned it,
that's the way you got it.

SAMMY

Don't give me that psychology
shit! I'm in a spot -- what
should I do?

AL

If I were you, I'd pull out of
this set-up so fast --

SAMMY

(trapped)

I can't get out -- Old Man Harrington.
I gotta keep 'im in my
corner!

AL

(getting up)

I hope you and H.L. will be very
happy.

SAMMY

(grabbing his arm)

No -- ya gotta help me think this
out!

AL

(still leaving)

Sorry, gotta go. Getting married
tomorrow.

SAMMY

(following him out)

You're a lucky guy, Al. Got
yourself a great girl.

AL

(at his car in driveway)

I know. Oh by the way, Rosalie's
on her way home. She said to tell
you she hopes you'll be very
happy.

SAMMY

Thanks. OK, get in your damn
jalopy and go!

AL
 (getting behind
 the wheel)
 I'm sorry, Sammy.

SAMMY
 Nobody has to feel sorry for Sammy
 Glick! Nobod --
 (sudden realization)
 I got it. I got it! I tell H.L.
 what I saw -- only I promise t'
 Keep it to myself. Our secret --
 him an' me. Boy, will he ever owe
 me one! Will he ever..!

AL
 (as he drives off)
 Enjoy it, Sammy. Enjoy it. I
 think you wrote the end of my
 play.

SAMMY
 (calling after him)
 Laurette handed me a club I c'n
 use on 'im the rest of his life!
 I got 'im by the balls, Al! I got
 the world by the balls!

RTL

HARRINGTON'S PRIVATE OFFICE, WALL STREET - DAY

An impressive "old" room, with impressive furnishings. Harrington nods approvingly at something Sammy's just said, and puts an arm around his shoulders as they start across toward the tall, ornate, double-doors. Sammy has undergone still another sea-change: dressed Harrington-style, he has also taken on a new, more dignified persona -- not just a mogul now, but a magnate among magnates.

HARRINGTON
 From now on, Sammy, I intend to
 tie you into everything. Come
 along, son.

They proceed through the double-doors into

THE ELEGANT BOARD ROOM

Walnut-panelled walls, leaded-glass windows, etc. Seated around a 20-foot-long 19th-century refectory table are the distinguished-looking directors of the various companies comprising the "Harrington Group."

HARRINGTON
 (pointing SAMMY to the
 vacant seat at his left)
 Gentlemen -- some of you haven't
 met Samuel Glick, the head of our
 motion-picture division...but
 you've all seen the figures.
 Excellent results!

SAMMY
 (very dignified)
 Good morning, gentlemen.

The directors nod cordially as Sammy seats himself.

HARRINGTON
 Mr. Glick, we welcome you as a new
 member of our executive board. As
 you know, the Harrington Group
 also includes overseas
 investment...
 metropolitan real estate...ship-
 ping...publishing...oil...air
 lines...and utilities.

As each "division" is named, its director nods.

HARRINGTON
 (continuing)
 Regarding our oil operations, Mr.
 Glick has come up with an idea I'd
 like him to present this morning.

SAMMY
 It's simply this: Since oil has
 been discovered at MGM, just south
 of our own studios, let's have our
 geologists run tests on World-
 Wide's back lot. The space is
 only used thirty percent of the
 time, so we may be letting valu-
 able real estate -- and oil
 profits -- go to waste.

HARRINGTON
 (over MURMURS of
 approval)
 I tell you, I like the way this
 young man thinks -- and I'm not
 saying so merely because he
 happens to be my son-in-law.

SAMMY

Well, as you said on the Coast,
H.L., it's a young man's business...

SNEAK "RUNNING" MUSIC THEME UNDER Sammy's mounting intensity
as he turns from Harrington to address his fellow-directors.

SAMMY

(continuing)

And I'm not just talking movies,
gentlemen. I'm talking Harrington
Group -- the new Harrington Group
-- vigorous, daring, growing fast.
Faster and faster..!

As we see Harrington getting the message, and as Sammy turns
back to him with a murderously polite smile -- bring "RUNNING"
MUSIC THEME UP FULL to

THE END