

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

by

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Working Script For

THE SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

FADE IN:

EXT. INT. GLOBE NEWSPAPER BUILDING - DUSK - N.Y.

A row of newspaper delivery trucks is lined up against the long loading bay, waiting for the edition. In the foreground a large clock establishes the time as 8:10 PM. A rumbling noise warns the men to take their positions; a few seconds later the bales of newspapers come sliding the spiral chutes onto the moving belts from which they are manhandled onto the trucks. Much noise and shouting.

The front truck moves out to the city street. As it does CAMERA EMPHASIZES the big poster on its side. The design features a large pair of spectacles with heavy rims - a trademark of Hunsecker's. (It will later be seen as the masthead of the gossip column.)

"GO WITH THE GLOBE"

Read

J. J. HUNSECKER

"They eyes of Broadway"

EXT. BROADWAY - DUSK - N.Y.

The truck starts on its journey along Broadway. Some shots are of the vehicle moving through very heavy traffic (taken from a camera car). Others are from the inside of the truck; as it slows down, the delivery man tosses the heavy bundle of papers onto the sidewalk. CAMERA following the truck, holds it in foreground against the blazing electric signs of Broadway and Times Square.

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

The southeast corner of the intersection of Broadway and 46th Street, CAMERA, fairly high, shoots north towards the impressive vista of electric signs, silhouetted against the darkening sky. Very heavy traffic and crowded sidewalks. CAMERA descends towards the Orange Juice stand on the corner, passing the booth which sells souvenir hats. It moves through the congestion of chattering passersby, steadily approaching a smartly dressed young man, who stands at the counter of the Orange Juice stand. Oblivious of the hub-bub around him, SIDNEY FALCO is concerned only with his private problems.

He turns sharply as a newspaper truck pulls up at the curb behind him; this is what he has been waiting for...

CLOSER ANGLE - NIGHT

The news truck delivery man tosses a bundle out onto the sidewalk besides a newsstand.

DETAIL

The bundle of newspapers. It hits the sidewalk with a smack. CAMERA PULLS BACK as Sidney Falco crosses the sidewalk. The owner of the newsstand, IGGY, comes to pick up the bundle; he is a grizzled gnome with a philosophical sense of humor; Sidney snaps his fingers with impatience. Iggy wears spectacles and is clearly more or less blind, he has to grope for the cord that binds the papers.

IGGY

Aw Lady, if I looked like you, I'd--

SIDNEY

C'mon...C'mon...

IGGY

(recognizing Sidney's voice)

Keep ya sweatshirt on, Sidney.

Majestically taking his time, Iggy lifts the bundle to his stand and cuts the cord.

IGGY

Hey, Fresh, the Globe just came in -- Hey, Sidney, want an item for Hunsecker's column? Two rolls get fresh with a baker! Hey, hot, hot, hot -- etc.

Annoyed, Sidney throws him a dime, seizes a paper and

returns briskly to the orange juice stand.

ORANGE JUICE STAND - NIGHT

Sidney's place at the crowded counter has been taken by newcomers. Rudely, he recovers his half-consumed glass of orange juice and sandwich. He takes them further down the counter to a quieter corner at which he can examine the paper. CAMERA MOVING WITH HIM, picks up further snatches of overheard dialogue. (See dialogue attached at the end of the scene) We move close enough to see Sidney's hands open the paper expertly at HUNSECKER'S column - identifiable by the picture of the spectacled eyes. Over scene there is a babble of offstage dialogue.

CLOSE UP OF SIDNEY

His face is sullen as his eyes run rapidly down the column. He is reacting to a not unexpected disappointment.

EXT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - BROADWAY - NIGHT

CAMERA SHOOTS WEST on 46th Street, as Sidney comes down the side street from the newsstand in background. Irritably, he jerks open the door of a shabby entrance. As the glass door closes, Sidney is seen striding up the stairs.

FIRST FLOOR - OUTSIDE SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Beside the top of the stairs is the door to Sidney's office. On it there is a cheaply printed cardboard sign which reads:

SIDNEY FALCO

Publicity

From inside comes the sound of desultory typing. Sidney comes up the stairs two at a time and turns into the door.

INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SALLY is on the phone as Sidney strides in.

SALLY

Just a minute, Mr. Weldon. I think...

Sidney vigorously indicates that he doesn't want to take the call.

SALLY

(to phone)

I'm sorry. I thought that was Mr. Falco returning. Yes, I'll tell him when he comes in. I know he's been trying to reach you.

She hangs up.

SALLY

That's the third time he's called today.

SIDNEY

He wants me to break a leg?

SALLY

(literally)

No, an arm, he said.

(then)

I told him you were sure the item would be in Mr. Hunsecker's column in tomorrow's...

SIDNEY

(interrupting, sharply)

It isn't. I've just seen the early edition.

SALLY

But...

SIDNEY

But what?

SALLY

That makes five days in a row that Mr. Hunsecker's cut you out of his column.

SIDNEY

May I rent you out as an adding machine.

He has begun to change his clothes.

SIDNEY

Get me Joe Robard.

Sally goes back into the outer room.

SIDNEY

Who else phoned?

SALLY

The renting agent and the tailor.

SIDNEY

Pay the rent. Let the tailor wait.

SALLY

It won't leave much of a balance in the bank...

(to phone)

Mr. Robard? Could you locate him?

Sidney, in a state of semi-undress, comes to take the phone from her.

SIDNEY

(gloomily)

Watch me run a fifty yard dash with my legs cut off!

Very abruptly, he comes alive on the phone. A real laughing boy.

SIDNEY

(effusively)

Sidney, Joe. How do you like it? I'm running out of alibis! No, I asked Hunsecker to withhold the item, until he could give it a fine, fat paragraph. The column was running over and I didn't want you kissed off with just a line...

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Robard is a stolid, secure man, balding and with a moustache. He has a morose sense of humor. He is speaking from a telephone on a little desk at the end of the bar. In background, the Club is open, but there are few customers as yet. Some recorded jazz is being played while the musicians are still arriving, strolling past in background, depositing their overcoats and music cases in the little closet assigned to them.

ROBARD

(in answer to Sidney)

Of course.

(he listens to

protest from Sidney)

What is this, Sidney, a kissing game? You're a liar - that's a publicity man's nature. I wouldn't

hire you if you wasn't a liar. I
pay you a C-and-a-half a week
wherein you plant big lies about me
and the Club all over the map.

(a pause)

Yeah, I mean in that sense. But
also in the sense that you are a
personal liar, too, because you
don't do the work I pay you for.

(new protests on the
other end of the line)

Oh, stop it, Sidney. You're from
the country, not me.

RESUME SIDNEY

Sally is watching him, unhappy on his behalf.

SIDNEY

(to phone)

Now, wait a minute, Joe. When I
saw J.J. last night he said...

But Robard has cut off. Sidney hangs up. A silence. Sally
tries to be comforting.

SALLY

I wish I could help in some way,
Sidney.

SIDNEY

(aggressively)

Help me with two minutes of silence!

Sally, hurt, says nothing. Presently, he adds:

SIDNEY

Go home, Sally. It's late...

SALLY

I hate to see you like this --

Sidney, with another mercurial change of manner, begins some
sarcastic clowning.

SIDNEY

(horsing around)

Yes, but as a new subscriber you're
under no obligation to take more
than three books. And if you mail
the enclosed card within ten days --

SALLY

(pleadingly)

Sidney, I know you by now. Don't do a dance with me...

SIDNEY

(still clowning)

You mean you don't want the extra free gift of a colorful giant map of the world???

SALLY

(distressed)

Sidney, please, dear, if you feel nervous...

Sidney is abruptly savage.

SIDNEY

(with cruelty)

So what'll you do if I feel nervous? You'll open your meaty, sympathetic arms...?

SALLY

(breaking down)

Sid...you got me so...I don't know what...

She is crying. Sidney feels uncomfortable. Not too generously, he relents:

SIDNEY

You ought to be used to me by now.

SALLY

(pathetically)

I'm used to you...

SIDNEY

(with a touch of bitterness)

No. You think I'm a hero. I'm no hero. I'm nice to people where it pays me to be. I gotta do it too much on the outside, so don't expect me to kow-tow in my own office. I'm in a bind right now with Hunsecker so --

(grimly)

Every dog has his day!

(going)

Lock up and leave the key.

The phone rings. Sidney is dressed by now. As Sally goes for it, he makes for the outer door.

SIDNEY

If that's for me, tear it up!

SALLY

Take a top coat.

SIDNEY

And leave a tip in every hat-check room in town?

He is already gone as she picks up the phone.

SALLY

Sidney Falco office... Oh, Miss Kay, he tried to reach you. No, he's at the barbers now. No, that's held over till the Tuesday column...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELYSIAN ROOM - NIGHT

The quintet. As the dissolve clears, a clatter of polite applause greets the end of a previous number. CAMERA is on the bandstand, moving smoothly through the group of five musicians as the rhythm of a new number is set up: first the leader (a guitarist) snaps his fingers, giving the tempo to...the bass, who "walks" with the beat, bringing in...the drums, which start a quiet, insistent wire-brush background for...the cello and the flute, whose introductory phrases, set the stage for...

STEVE DALLAS

...the guitar, the leader again. It comes in after this short preamble with the first statement of melody. (The tune has a faint echo of significance because it is one of the themes of the film, already heard as a phrase in the background score of the title music.) CAMERA lingers a moment on the guitarist, STEVE DALLAS. He is a youth of pleasant, intelligent appearance. He plays with the intent air of the contemporary jazz musician who takes his work very seriously indeed and affects a much greater interest in the music and his fellow musicians than in the listening audience.

SIDNEY

A close shot. Sidney has just entered the club, strolling into the vestibule near the entrance. He wears an expression of oddly unsuitable antagonism, as he looks forward...

DALLAS

Seen in long shot from Sidney's viewpoint. CAMERA moves to include Sidney in foreground again. He turns as he is accosted by RITA, the cigarette girl of the club. She is a pert creature, attractive and not unaware of the fact.

RITA

Don't you ever get messages,
Eyelashes? I called you twice.

SIDNEY

(irked)
I've been up to here. Listen,
honey, tell me something. You know
Susan Hunsecker...?
(Rita nods)
Has she been in? I mean lately, in
the last coupla days...?

RITA

I don't think so.

SIDNEY

You're sure. Find out for me.

RITA

(with a nod)
Sidney, can I talk to you a minute?

Rita wears an injured air. Sidney, preoccupied with other worries, callously ignores it.

SIDNEY

Is Frank D'Angelo around?

RITA

At the bar - Sidney...

But Sidney has moved away from her.

D'ANGELO

He is at the bar, listening with satisfaction to the music, watching the performers and studying the audience. Sidney comes up behind him. We see Sidney's eyes flick from D'Angelo towards the bandstand and back again. Then, as he

takes the stool next to D'Angelo, he assumes a different manner, a sulky resentment. D'Angelo sees Sidney.

D'ANGELO

(to the bartender)
Joe, give my nephew a drink.

SIDNEY

(sullen)
Your nephew doesn't want a drink.

D'Angelo is still watching the quintet. The guitar can be heard again.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Shooting past D'Angelo and Sidney towards the bandstand.

D'ANGELO

That's a lollipop that, boy. The kid is only great.

SIDNEY

And with ten percent of his future, you're great, too, Frank.

D'Angelo looks quickly at Sidney, sensing the undercurrent. Then he turns his back on the musicians, remarking in a quiet tone.

D'ANGELO

Went over to Philly yesterday an' seen the folks...it's nice you send them the fifty a month...

SIDNEY

(after a pause)
See my mother?

D'ANGELO

(shaking his head)
I only had a few hours.

A glum moment. Frank sips his highball: Sidney lights a cigarette, animosity on his face.

D'ANGELO

Thanks for the publicity spread you got the boys for the benefit tomorrow.

SIDNEY

(begrudgingly)
Robard's my client. I did it for
him and his club, not your boys.

Frank again notes Sidney's resentful manner. Sidney looks
towards the musicians.

SIDNEY

(quietly)
Frank, I think maybe you lied to me.

D'ANGELO

(quietly)
Looka, Sidney, you're my own
sister's son, but where does that
give you the right to call me a liar?

SIDNEY

(looking towards Steve)
You told me that your boy was
washed up with Susie Hunsecker,
didn't you?

D'ANGELO

Yeah, and it's the truth, to the
best of my knowledge. And, frankly,
I'm glad. For Steve's sake, I'm
glad, not yours. I manage these
boys and I got their best interests
at heart. Steve shouldn't get
mixed up with no bimbo at his age.

SIDNEY

(narrowly)
You told him that?

D'ANGELO

Not in those exact words - you know
what a temper he's got.

A pause. Sidney is thinking.

SIDNEY

When do these hot-headed boys of
yours go on the road?

D'ANGELO

Coupla weeks. For eight weeks.

SIDNEY

That's a nice tour. All booked?
(Frank nodding)

When was Susie around here last?

D'ANGELO

Four five nights ago. That's how I know the romance is off. Also Steve's in a very bad mood.

SIDNEY

(abruptly)

Listen, Frank, you'd better make sure you're telling me the truth.

D'ANGELO

(annoyed)

I don't like this threatening attitude. When it comes to it, what the heck is it your business what they do, this boy and girl...

RITA

Locating Sidney, she comes up behind him. He turns away from D'Angelo as she whispers to him. As she departs, Sidney turns back.

SIDNEY

If you knew Hunsecker as well as I did, you might understand why it's my business. Maybe you're walking around blind, Frank, without a cane.

Sidney gets off his stool. Casually, but to effect, he adds:

SIDNEY

...and in case you didn't know it, Susie Hunsecker's out there on the back step right now.

He turns away, glancing towards Steve on the bandstand behind him.

D'ANGELO

He looks disturbed.

INT./EXT. BACKSTAGE AND COURTYARD

From D'Angelo's point of view. CAMERA LOOKS UP at Steve. The Quintet is now reaching the end of the number, a driving rhythm of considerable excitement. A waiter passes in f.g. and the CAMERA CRANES BACK through the curtained doorway to the backstage part of the club. This movement is continued

as we see some other employees, including Jerry Wiggins, the intermission pianist, who is waiting in the corridor near the fire-exit. As he steps out of the door to discard a cigarette, CAMERA AGAIN CONTINUES ITS MOVEMENT, CRANING BACK AND DOWNWARD into the little courtyard. Here, it discovers the figure of a young woman who is waiting in the shadow near the steps of the fire-escape, listening to the music.

CLOSER ANGLE

This is SUSAN HUNSECKER. She wears an expensive mink coat. It is oddly in contrast with her personality; the face is sensitive and intelligent, but childlike and tragic. A girl in adolescence already burdened with problems beyond her capacity. Over scene, the music continues. Susan shifts her position, knowing that the session will soon be at an end and that the musicians will be coming backstage.

INT. ELYSIAN ROOM

Steve is playing the last bars of the number; the whole group now in unison.

QUINTET

The music comes sharply, dramatically to its finish. There is some applause. The boys relax. Steve reaches for the microphone and in the characteristically casual manner of the "cool" musician, announces the end of the set, thanking the audience, identifying the quintet by name and introducing the intermission pianist. During this, Carson, Chico and Paul wander off the bandstand behind him.

EXT. BACKSTAGE AND COURTYARD

Chico, Paul and Carson come through to the corridor backstage. As they do so, Chico, glancing out of the open door sees Susan in the courtyard. He goes out onto the fire-escape; Paul following behind.

CHICO

Hi! Susie...

SUSAN

Hello, Chico. Paul.

CHICO

(to Paul)

Throw a rope round this chick while
I go get Steve.

Chico goes swiftly back into the club. Paul remains with

Susan. There is a momentary silence; Paul is embarrassed because Susan is. Susan makes an effort at conversation, she nods towards the club.

SUSAN

Full house...?

PAUL

Packin' 'em in.

INT. CLUB

Steve has been trapped by a young woman in spectacles, a much-too-earnest devotee of progressive jazz.

DEVOTEE

I'm terribly interested in jazz -- serious jazz. You studied with Milhaud, didn't you? This is such an interesting fusion of the traditional, classical form with the new progressive style, I just wanted to ask you how you came to form the group...-

CHICO

He comes through the curtains of the doorway, pausing as he sees that Steve is involved with the Intellectual Young Woman.

REVERSE ANGLE

Steve glancing at Chico over the shoulder of the Intellectual Young Woman. Seeing that Chico has something to say to him, he wriggles out of the young woman's clutches by passing the buck to the unfortunate to Fred Katz, who is descending from the bandstand behind him.

STEVE

Well, we just sort of got together.
(turning to introduce Fred)
Maybe if you ask Mr. Katz...He writes the stuff, you know.

FRED

(blankly)
Huh?

RESUME CHICO

Steve joins Chico and they go through the curtains into the corridor outside.

CORRIDOR

Chico, smiling, explains:

CHICO

Don't waste your time there, man.
You've got something better waiting
outside...

(as Steve looks at him)
Susie's out there.

STEVE

His reaction betrays some emotion. (Over scene the intermission pianist has begun to play a Blues number.) Steve moves a quick step towards the door to the courtyard, then hesitates - almost as if he was afraid to go out. He meets Chico's eye again.

STEVE

What did she say...?

CHICO

He is amused, but sympathetic.

CHICO

You proposed to her, not me.
(slapping him on the back)
Go get your answer...

COURTYARD

Susan, waiting at the foot of the iron steps, turns as Steve comes out on the fire escape above. Steve comes quickly down the steps towards her, slowing down when he gets a few paces away from her.

SUSAN

She looks up at Steve.

STEVE

A CLOSE SHOT. In his expression we read his mute inquiry...

RESUME SUSAN

Quite deliberately, with her eyes moistened by love and affection...she nods.

REVERSE ANGLE

Great relief and happiness can be seen in the boy's face. After a moment, he moves to her and she to him. They embrace swiftly, hold each other close and then kiss with passion. Presently, when the kiss is over, Susan speaks softly.

SUSAN

(in a whisper)

Steve...I'll...I'll try to make a good wife.

Steve is still too choked with relief to speak. For answer, he clasps her more tightly to him. The beam of light which falls on the iron stairs behind them, narrows and then is extinguished...

CORRIDOR

Paul has closed the door. Turning, he shares a look with the grinning Chico and Fred Katz who has managed to escape from the young woman. Before there is time for either of them to make a remark, Sidney comes through the curtains from the Club.

SIDNEY

Hi, Fellows. Where's the Chief?

Sidney's manner is very friendly. But it is immediately apparent from the reaction of the other three boys that none of them likes Sidney. Fred is deliberately uncomprehending.

FRED

Who?

SIDNEY

(who gets the point)

Dallas. Is he around?

Chico's back is to the closed door which opens onto the courtyard. Chico nods in the opposite direction towards the stairs.

CHICO

(unhelpfully)

Yeah, he's around somewhere. Upstairs, maybe.

SIDNEY

(coldly, as he goes)

Thanks.

COURTYARD

Steve and Susan are still embracing. Steve is exultantly proud and happy.

STEVE

(incoherent)

This is big, you know. Very big!
Let's go out later, drink some
firewater. With the boys. Fred
can call Millie and -

SUSAN

Steve, I'd rather you didn't say
anything for a day or two...until I
tell my brother...

STEVE

His sobering reaction shows this is something important.

STEVE

(gently)

You haven't told him yet...

SUSAN

SUSAN

I'm telling him in the morning
after breakfast.

STEVE AND SUSAN

Turning her head, she makes a little gesture, an unconscious movement, putting her fingers to her brow as if feeling a headache.

STEVE

He isn't going to like it.

Susan says nothing. She looks to Steve, smiling, but the smile is not too confident.

STEVE

You sure you don't want me to be
with you...?

Susan stoutly shakes her head. Defensively she reassures Steve:

SUSAN

Steve, my brother isn't as bad as he's painted. He isn't perfect, but -

STEVE

But he isn't going to like this, Susie. And he makes you nervous, not me. No, I take that back - he makes me nervous, too. But I wouldn't give him a second thought if not for you.

The topic evidently makes Susan uneasy. In an effort to dismiss something that she does not want to think about, Susan puts her arms around Steve's neck again.

SUSAN

Let's forget him and -

But Steve is not so ready to change the subject.

STEVE

His stooge, Falco, is around - I saw him walk in.

(soberly)

He's been spying on me for weeks, Susie.

SUSAN

(quickly, perhaps too quickly)
Darling, I don't care - really I don't. Sidney'd had a secret crush on me for years, but nothing we do is his business -

STEVE

(gently insisting)

But he could be reporting back to your brother, couldn't he?

SUSAN

(pleading)

Steve, dear, please forget all of this. What can it matter after tomorrow?

Now Steve responds. He grins, holds her closer.

STEVE

(softly)

I have a message for you; I love you.

(kissing her lightly)
May I dedicate the next number to
you?...And the next, and the next.
Every Sunday I'll buy you a new
bonnet -

SUSAN

(amused, but moved)
If the stores are open -

STEVE

And on Monday, I'll take it off and
stroke your light brown hair and -

SUSAN

And on Tuesday - Hasenpfeffer.

STEVE

(abruptly grinning)
How do you think I realized I love
you?

SUSAN

I made you write a beautiful song...

STEVE

No, you had me eating that Chinese
food!...

They laugh and enjoyably; but then, as the CAMERA MOVES, we
realize that Sidney is there on the fire escape above them;
his manner is affable.

SIDNEY

Can more than two enjoy this joke...
(to Susan)
Hello, Susie, I didn't expect to
find you here.

Steve says nothing. But he obviously resents the intrusion
and finds it difficult to conceal the fact. Sidney comes
down the fire escape towards them.

SIDNEY

Where's those glossy prints you
promised? Tonight's the latest I
can place them -

STEVE

(barely polite)
Well, thanks, anyway - let's forget
it.
(to Susan)

It's cold out here, Susie.

Steve makes a move to lead Susan back inside. It is a gesture which appears to dismiss Sidney. Sidney chooses to take umbrage:

SIDNEY

(lightly sarcastic)
Let me apologize for getting you
that press spread. It's been an
honor to serve you gratis.

Steve turns to Sidney; his manner is quiet but challenging:

STEVE

(levelly)
I get the feeling, Falco, that
you're always snooping around...

SUSAN

(quickly intervening)
Steve, stop it please...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Frank D'Angelo has followed Sidney out onto the fire escape; other members of the Quintet have also appeared.

D'ANGELO

What are you boys fighting about?

Aggressively indignant, Sidney throws up his hands; he knocks on the metal of the fire escape.

SIDNEY

(sarcastic)
Kill me! Find me a door somewhere -
I walked in without knocking!

Sidney is trying to needle Steve; Steve's temper would normally have exploded; but now he controls it.

STEVE

I'm feeling too good to fight with
you, but that isn't what I said - I
said you snoop. For instance, what
were you doing around my hotel the
other night?

SIDNEY

(needling)
Begging your pardon, I haven't been

down the bowery in years!

D'ANGELO

(soothingly)

Come on boys, break it up...

STEVE

(overriding D'Angelo)

The next time you want information,
Falco, don't scratch for it like a
dog - ask for it like a man!

SIDNEY

His face tightens; he appears to be mortally insulted and controlling himself with difficulty. He turns his back swiftly on Steve, addressing Susan in a voice that has a sharp edge.

SIDNEY

If you're going home, Susie, I'll
drop you off...

Sidney starts quickly up the fire escape. This makes Steve angry and he steps forward to follow him. But Chico contrives, without seeming to interfere to obstruct Steve.

CHICO

(easily)

Time for the next set, Chief...

STEVE

Just a minute, Chico.

CORRIDOR

Sidney comes inside. When he is out of sight of the group in the courtyard, his manner swiftly changes. It's obvious now that his indignation was assumed; now he looks back towards the courtyard and there is shrewdness in his eyes; he is assessing Steve's temper. But, presently, seeing D'Angelo and the boys returning, he moves back to the curtains into the Club.

COURTYARD

As D'Angelo and the other boys go inside, Steve turns back to Susan.

STEVE

(fondly)

Just so you don't leave me in a

minor key.

INT. CLUB

Rita has succeeded in recapturing Sidney near the entrance to the club. Sidney, alert and interested, listens to her while keeping his eye on the bandstand in b.g. where the intermission pianist is finishing his performance and the quintet are returning, ready to mount the bandstand again.

SIDNEY

Don't tell me you started a polka with Leo Bartha?

RITA

(shaking her head)

No. That's what I mean - I'm being fired for what I didn't do.

Sidney is amused. Rita continues in a confidential manner which is heavily loaded with sex appeal and not-very-convincing air of injury.

RITA

(soto voce)

He came in last week on a very dull rainy night. I know who he was, but I didn't let on.

(emphatically)

He didn't take his eyes off me all night. Listening...?

Rita has mistaken Sidney's shrewdly calculating expression for inattention.

SIDNEY

Avidly. He was staring.

RITA

(continuing)

Staring. Consequently, when he approached me on his way out I wasn't surprised, but I didn't let on.

SIDNEY

(prompting)

He was writing a special Sunday piece on...?

RITA

(nodding)

...cigarette girls... And naturally -

SIDNEY

You were thrilled to be interviewed.
(she nods)
Were you "interviewed"?

RITA

In his apartment -

SIDNEY

And where was his wife?

RITA

I don't know - it's a big apartment.
But I wasn't interviewed. In fact,
I was totally unprepared for what
happened.

SIDNEY

(grimacing)
We're old friends, Chickie - quit
it! A big columnist comes in this
room, without his ball-and-chain
and you make like a delicatessen
counter! What did you think would
happen in his house?

RITA

(with a nod)
But, Sidney darling, the man must
be out of his mind - it was only
eleven o'clock in the morning!

Despite himself, Sidney chuckles; but she is distressed.

RITA

For a moment I was so taken aback
that I said anything that popped
into my sleepy head. If I'm not
mistaken, I even ordered the man
out of his own house.

Sidney's eyes have been caught by something at the other end
of the big room.

STEVE AND SUSAN

From Sidney's viewpoint. Susan has come back into the club
with Steve and seems to be taking leave of him. She starts
to walk through the club on her way out.

RESUME SIDNEY AND RITA

Sidney, with half his attention on Susan and Steve, listens to Rita's rueful protest.

RITA

(rapidly)

He was furious and, by the time I could have put on a Tropical Island mood, I was out on the street!...

(dolefully)

That night Mr. Van Cleve calls me into his office here. He's got nothing against me, he says but he can't afford to antagonize columnists. I told him I still have Sonny at military academy, but Van Cleve's made of ice...

Aware that Sidney is moving to leave her so that he can catch Susan, Rita detains him with an appeal:

RITA

(tentative)

Do you think you could do something, Sidney?

SIDNEY

(a quick nod)

That's what I'm thinking, Rita. Maybe...

Rita is anxious to cement the offer. Delicately, she asks:

RITA

Do you still keep your key under the mat?

SIDNEY

(eyeing her)

Can you be there by two-thirty?

She drops her eyes, nods. Sidney pats her arm and is gone. She looks after him.

SIDNEY AND SUSAN

Sidney overtakes Susan at the front entrance in time to open the door for her. He has now reverted to another mood in which he appears to be sulking over the insult delivered to him by Steve. He goes out ahead of her.

BANDSTAND

The quintet are resuming their positions on the stand. Steve lingers a moment, his guitar already in his hand while he talks to D'Angelo.

STEVE

Frank, I don't want any secrets from you. I proposed to Susie tonight.

D'Angelo hides his feelings, asks:

D'ANGELO

Did she accept?

STEVE

You don't like it, do you. I think she will accept, but I'm not sure. She may be too dependent on her brother.

He mounts the bandstand.

D'ANGELO

(solemnly)

Lots of good people in this town are dependent on her brother...

Steve sits on the stool, quietly gives the beat to his group and begins at once the guitar opening of a very simple and lonely melody. (The Sage.)

ANOTHER ANGLE

While D'Angelo watches him, the boy continues. CAMERA tracks slowly back through the club as the chatter and babble of the customers begins to diminish in appreciation of the quiet melancholy of the music.

OUTSIDE THE ELYSIAN ROOM

Susan is standing beside the poster which features Steve, listening to the music from inside the club. Sidney comes to join her. He is now pretending to be hurt.

SUSAN

You're touchy, Sidney - don't be so touchy...

SIDNEY

(gruffly)

I wasn't looking for a brawl. I
came to bring him a present.

(then)

Wanna bite to eat?

Susan shakes her head. She looks up as she hears the doorman's whistle off screen. Sidney moves forward to escort her to the taxi.

LONGER SHOT

They cross the sidewalk and get into the cab. It starts off and CAMERA PANS with it.

INSIDE CAB

Susan is relaxed, content but thoughtful. Sidney flicks her a quick, anxious look. Finally, gloomily:

SIDNEY

Feels like a Monday night, don't
it...?

SUSAN

(softly)

Not to me. Sometimes, the world
feels like a cage. Then someone
comes along and opens the door...and
it's never Monday night again...

(turning to Sidney)

I wish you and Steve could like
each other.

SIDNEY

(grimacing)

We stick in each others craw.

SUSAN

Yes, but why?

SIDNEY

Well, for one thing, he thinks J.J.
is some kind of monster.

SUSAN

Quizzically, she studies Sidney.

SUSAN

Don't you?

SIDNEY

He looks up sharply, (he is momentarily startled at Susan's insight.) Swiftly, he assumes a protesting air.

SIDNEY

Susie, your brother's one of my
best friends, and -

RESUME SUSAN

She is not totally convinced by this performance. She smiles skeptically.

SUSAN

I know. But someday I'd like to
look into your clever mind and see
what you REALLY think of him -

RESUME SIDNEY AND SUSAN

Sidney makes a show of indignation.

SIDNEY

Where do you come off to make a
remark like that?

SUSAN

(quietly)
Who could love a man who keeps
jumping through burning hoops, like
a trained poodle?

Sidney doesn't immediately answer. Susan drops her eyes, becoming absorbed in her own problems. Cautiously, Sidney lets the momentary silence continue. Then:

SUSAN

(thoughtfully)
Do you think J.J. likes Steve...?

SIDNEY

(glibly)
Frankly, yes, to my surprise. He
thinks he's very gifted - those
boys'll go a big mile, he thinks.

Susan says nothing. Sidney, watching her closely, probes further:

SIDNEY

(gently)
You feel pretty strong about this

boy?

A pause. Then Susan nods. She is not looking at Sidney and cannot see the watchfulness in his face. Sidney prompts again:

SIDNEY

Wedding bells, you mean?

Again Susan nods.

SUSAN

He wants me to go on the road with them. It's an eight month tour, all the way to Oregon...

SIDNEY

The news has considerable impact on him. But he hides it, saying lightly:

SIDNEY

Well, congratulations. But don't go just for the ride! Or didn't you accept the proposal?

RESUME SUSAN AND SIDNEY

Susan continues.

SUSAN

I'm going to discuss it with J.J. in the morning.

A pause. Each is concerned with private thoughts. Susan, relaxed, adds quietly:

SUSAN

(softly)

It's given me a big lift to know that some people want me for myself, not just because I'm my brother's sister.

SIDNEY

Chickie, I'll have to laugh at that - an attractive girl like you...!

Susan ignores his remark, continuing thoughtfully:

SUSAN

I hope that J.J. really likes
Steve, that it isn't an act.

SIDNEY

(with an indignant edge)
Why should he put on an act? Your
brother has told PRESIDENTS where
to go and what to do!

The taxi has pulled to a stop. Susan sits for a moment
before she remarks.

SUSAN

The act would be for my sake, not
Steve's...

Realizing that they have come to their destination, Susan
gets up, moving out of CAMERA as she disembarks from the
taxi. CAMERA catches a glimpse of apprehension in Sidney's
eyes. Quickly, he decides to follow her.

EXT. BROADWAY

Susan, getting out of the taxi, moves past CAMERA. Sidney,
following her, instructs the driver.

SIDNEY

(to cabbie)
Wait for me. I'll be right back.

LONGER SHOT

Sidney moves after the girl, calling: "Susie!"

SUSAN

Hearing him, Susan turns back. Sidney walks into shot to
join her.

SIDNEY

(lightly)
It's not my nature, Susie, but I'll
talk to you like an uncle...

SUSAN

(smiling)
But I don't need an uncle, Sidney.

They move through the doors.

REVERSE ANGLE

Sidney quickly corrects himself, saying earnestly:

SIDNEY

No, I mean because I admire you -
in fact, more than admire you -
although that's neither here nor
there.

(quickly skipping to
the important point)

Susie, don't sell your brother
short. Talk this over with him, I
mean - you'll find him a real friend.

SUSAN

Susan looks thoughtful, making no comment.

RESUME SIDNEY AND SUSAN

Carefully (again probing) he prompts her:

SIDNEY

Any message, in case I see J.J.
later?

Susan turns away and walks out past CAMERA. Sidney watches
her.

SUSAN

She looks back at Sidney, quietly firm.

SUSAN

Yes. Tell him for me that Steve
Dallas is the first real man I've
ever been in love with...

She turns away and walks through the inner door, going down
the corridor towards the elevators in background.

RESUME SIDNEY

The sincerity of the girl's manner strikes home to Sidney.
Now that her back is turned we see the sharp twinge of pain
with which he hears the statement of her feelings for
another man. Angered, he wheels, striding out of the door
onto Broadway.

EXT. BROADWAY

Sidney returns to the cab, instructing the driver:

SIDNEY

The Twenty One Club.

He climbs in and the taxi drives off down Broadway.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TWENTY ONE CLUB - NIGHT

CAMERA HIGH, SHOOTING WEST down 52nd Street, as Sidney's cab pulls up, double parking in front of the 21 Club. Sidney maneuvers his way between the parked cars towards the entrance and the CAMERA DESCENDS to SHOOT ALONG the courtyard towards the entrance. We see the figure of Jimmy Weldon and his girl friend coming out of the Club.

CLOSER ANGLE - NIGHT

Jimmy Weldon is coming out of the Club accompanied by a girl; he is slightly tight. As he steps through the outer doors, Weldon again spies Sidney on the sidewalk; he steps to one side of the entrance way.

Sidney slips through the congestion, but just as he tries to enter the Club, Weldon's hand shoots out, neatly ambushing him, pulling him aside into the narrow courtyard. Sidney is instantly resentful of this manhandling, but has to adjust himself, assuming a quick smile for the benefit of Weldon.

SIDNEY

Jimmy! This is a coincidence. I
am just going -

WELDON

(overlapping)

Yeah. A coincidence you should run
into the very man you've been
ducking all week!

(to the girl)

This is my press agent, Joan.

Weldon, jibing at Sidney, plays his remarks off the girl, who is amused; Sidney, of course, is not.

SIDNEY

(quickly)

I tried to reach you twice -

WELDON

(overlapping)

What do you do for that hundred a
week. Fall out of bed?

SIDNEY

Jimmy, I'm on my way inside right now to talk to Hunsecker. I can promise you -

WELDON

(horsing)
Joan, call a cop! We'll arrest this kid for larceny!

Sidney flinches, his pride touched.

SIDNEY

Listen, when your band was playing at Roseland -

WELDON

(cutting in)
That was two months ago. Take your hand out of my pocket, thief!

The girl tries to quiet Weldon, who has gone from horsing to loud contempt.

THE GIRL

Take it easy, Jimmy dear...

WELDON

(indignantly)
Why? It's a dirty job, but I pay clean money for it, don't I?

Abruptly Sidney bursts out, giving as good as he has taken:

SIDNEY

No more you don't! What is this - You're showing off for her? They're supposed to hear you in Korea?

WELDON

(smirking to the girl)
He's intuitive - he knows he's getting fired!

SIDNEY

If you're funny, James, I'm a pretzel! Drop dead!

Weldon, shepherded by the girl, is already on his way across the sidewalk.

WELDON

It was nice knowing you, Sidney.
Not cheap - but nice. Happy
unemployment insurance.

INT. TWENTY ONE CLUB - NIGHT

Sidney, entering the Club, threads his way through the crowded foyer, coming up to CAMERA near the foot of the staircase. There he meets a Captain who turns to him.

CAPTAIN

How are you tonight, Mr. Falco?

SIDNEY

(nodding towards the restaurant)
Is "he" inside?

CAPTAIN

But of course...

SIDNEY

Alone or surrounded?

CAPTAIN

A Senator, an Agent and Something -
With - Long - Red - Hair.

Sidney moves past CAMERA, coming a couple of paces towards the door to the restaurant. He pauses.

REVERSE ANGLE

From Sidney's viewpoint. Shooting through the doorway into the restaurant, we can see the group at the table. (Hunsecker's back is turned to us.) CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Sidney in foreground. He decides not to go into restaurant and turns away out of shot.

INT. LOUNGE

Sidney comes round the corner from the foyer and walks through the lounge to the door into the alcove where the phone booths are, CAMERA PANNING.

PHONE BOOTHS

Sidney moves briskly past the girl at the switchboard, instructing her:

SIDNEY

Honey, get me Mr. Hunsecker.

The girl reaches for a book of phone numbers, then remembers:

OPERATOR

He's right inside, Mr. Falco.

SIDNEY

(from inside the booth)
So it isn't Long Distance.

As the girl, shrugging, puts through the call, CAMERA moves closer to Sidney in the booth. He hears the connection made, speaks at once.

SIDNEY

(to phone)
J.J.? It's me --

We are close enough to the instrument to hear the sound of a voice on the other end. Though the words are not distinguishable, it is quite clear that the speaker is not talking to the phone. Sidney seems to relax, as if this is something that happens often. He waits, studying his manicured fingertips...

Presently Sidney hears the voice on the other end become clearer. It asks: "Yes?" CAMERA moves closer as Sidney says:

SIDNEY

J.J., it's Sidney. Can you come outside for one minute?

Hunsecker's voice, filtered through the sound of the telephone, is sharp and tiny; but the words are now very clear.

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

Can I come out? No.

SIDNEY

(tensely)
I have to talk to you, alone, J.J., that's why.

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

You had something to do for me - you didn't do it.

SIDNEY

Can I come in for a minute?

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

No. You're dead, son - get yourself buried!

There is a click as Hunsecker hangs up. Sidney, more slowly, also hangs up. Brooding, he comes out of the booth.

INT. TWENTY ONE CLUB - LOUNGE

Sidney comes out of the door to the phone booths, walks through the lounge to the hallway. He turns towards the dining room.

INT. HALLWAY

Sidney comes to the door into the dining room, CAMERA tracking with him. Here he pauses, looking towards...

HUNSECKER

From Sidney's viewpoint. Hunsecker is seated at a table which is cleverly his habitual position. We see him only in semi-back view, a broad and powerful back. He is listening to a man who has paused at his table, stooping over Hunsecker to whisper in his ear. As the columnist listens, his hands play with an omni-present pad and pencil which lie on the dinner table amongst an assortment of envelopes, mimeographed sheets and a telephone. Beyond Hunsecker and the man talking to him are the SENATOR, the AGENT, and an attractive, if fatuous GIRL.

HUNSECKER

I'll check it in the morning, Low - thanks.

The man leaves; Hunsecker is scribbling a note on the pad. Meanwhile the Senator whispers something to the girl, who giggles softly.

REVERSE ANGLE

Sidney comes across to the table, nervous but deliberate. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hunsecker in foreground. Sidney, without accosting him, stands a few feet from the columnist's elbow and deliberately lights a cigarette. Hunsecker, barely turning his head, sees him. We have heard of Hunsecker as a monster, but he is evidently in a mild phase of his metabolism, for he seems gentle, sad and quiet, as he turns his gaze casually to the Senator, totally ignoring the young man who stands behind him.

HUNSECKER

(softly)

Harvey, I often wish I were dead
and wore a hearing aid...with a
simple flick of a switch I could
shut out the greedy murmur of
little men...

SIDNEY

A close shot. Sidney shows no reaction to this insult. He
steps in closer, an Indian fixity in his face.

SIDNEY

J.J., I need your ear for two
minutes...

REVERSE ANGLE

Shooting across Sidney, onto Hunsecker. J.J. turns - but
not to Sidney. He raises his hand in a small gesture which
summons a passing Captain, who steps into picture at Sidney's
elbow.

HUNSECKER

Mac! I don't want this man at my
table...

SIDNEY

(quickly but quietly interrupting)
I have a message from your sister.

The Captain is already there. But now Hunsecker's eyes have
switched to Sidney's face. For the briefest of moments,
nothing happens. Then Hunsecker, seeming to relax and
ignoring the Captain whom he has summoned, turns back to
casual conversation with the Senator as if nothing had
happened.

HUNSECKER

Forgive me, Harvey. We were
interrupted before -

In foreground, Sidney turns to the Captain with a carved
smile, indicating that Hunsecker's change of topic is to be
interpreted as sanction for Sidney to remain. The Captain,
not entirely convinced, retreats. Sidney finds himself a
chair, places it and takes a seat which is near enough to
the table to establish his presence. During this:

SENATOR

(who is mildly
surprised and faintly embarrassed)
Err...the Supreme Court story, I

was telling you - Justice Black.

HUNSECKER

(nodding)

Yes, the Justice, that's right.
But I think you had it in the column.

SIDNEY

(smoothly, casually)

Last July, the lead item...

Sidney's interjection is quietly well-mannered. Hunsecker totally ignores it. The other members of the party are a little astonished at the interplay. The girl, in particular, is fascinated; she clearly admires Sidney's looks. The Senator, noting this, glances at Sidney, accepting the point:

SENATOR

(laughing)

And I believe that's precisely where I read it, too. You see, J.J., where I get my reputation for being the best-informed man in Washington.

HUNSECKER

Now don't kid a kidder.

THE SENATOR, THE GIRL, AND THE AGENT

The girl looks again towards Sidney. The Senator again sees this, addresses Sidney pleasantly.

SENATOR

I don't think we caught your name, young man.

REVERSE ANGLE

Group shot. The Senator in foreground, Sidney beyond Hunsecker in background, and the others on edge of shot.

SIDNEY

Sidney Falco, sir. And, of course, everyone knows and admires you, Senator Walker.

SENATOR

(humorously)

Every four years I get less convinced of that. This young lady is Miss Linda James.

(indicates the Girl)
She's managed by Manny Davis.
(he indicates the Agent)

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Sidney nods pleasantly to the Girl and the Agent.

SIDNEY

I know Manny Davis.

HUNSECKER

(quietly)
Everyone knows Manny Davis...
(as the phone rings
on the table)
...except MRS. Manny Davis.

Hunsecker is picking up the phone, continuing:

HUNSECKER

Yes? Go ahead, Billy - shoot...

REVERSE ANGLE

To intercut with the above. The Senator, the Agent and the Girl watching Hunsecker. The Agent's reaction to Hunsecker's remark is a sickly smile.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He repeats aloud a story which is told him over the telephone.

HUNSECKER

Uh huh. Sports cars in California
are getting smaller and
smaller...the other day you were
crossing Hollywood Boulevard and
you were hit by one...you had to go
to the hospital and have it
removed...
(coolly)
You're not following the column: I
had it last week.

During the speech, CAMERA eases back to include Sidney again.
At the end, Sidney looks up in the direction of the Senator.

SIDNEY

Do you believe in capital
punishment, Senator?

RESUME REVERSE ANGLE

The Senator, amused, asks:

SENATOR

Why?

RESUME HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Sidney glances sidelong at Hunsecker.

SIDNEY

(pointing to the phone)

A man has just been sentenced to
death...

Hunsecker's face hardens; aware of Sidney's impertinence, he does not design to react directly; he turns towards the Agent.

HUNSECKER

Manny, what exactly are the UNSEEN
gifts of this lovely young thing
that you manage...?

THE AGENT AND THE GIRL

The Agent glances uneasily at the Girl beside him.

AGENT

Well, she sings a little...you
know, sings...

GIRL

(by rote)

Manny's faith in me is simply awe-
inspiring, Mr. Hunsecker. Actually,
I'm still studying, but -

RESUME HUNSECKER

He studies the Girl intently.

HUNSECKER

What subject?

RESUME THE AGENT AND THE GIRL

GIRL

Singing, of course...straight
concert and -

RESUME HUNSECKER

Hunsecker's glance flicks between the Girl and the Senator.

HUNSECKER

Why "of course"? It might, for instance, be politics...

As the Girl betrays herself with a nervous glance at the Senator beside her, CAMERA eases back to include him. The Senator is unruffled; gravely, he lights a cigar. The Girl laughs.

GIRL

Me? I mean "I"? Are you kidding, Mr. Hunsecker? With my Jersey City brains?

RESUME HUNSECKER

Again his glance links the Girl and the Senator.

HUNSECKER

The brains may be Jersey City, but the clothes are Trainor-Norell.

THE SENATOR, THE AGENT AND THE GIRL

The Girl and the Agent are both nervously uneasy. The Senator closely examines the tip of his cigar and, with deliberation, turns towards Sidney.

SENATOR

Are you an actor, Mr. Falco?

GIRL

(supporting the change of subject)
That's what I was thinking. Are you, Mr. Falco?

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Hunsecker, for the first time, half-turns in Sidney's direction, amused.

HUNSECKER

How did you guess it, Miss James?

RESUME THE AGENT, THE GIRL AND THE SENATOR

They all look at Sidney.

GIRL

He's so pretty, that's how.

RESUME SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Sidney bitterly resents the adjective, but contrives to hide the fact; he smiles, gracefully accepting the compliment. Hunsecker (who knows what Sidney feels) is pleased; he turns towards Sidney expansively.

HUNSECKER

Mr. Falco, let it be said at once, is a man of FORTY faces, not one, none too pretty and ALL deceptive. See that grin? It's the charming street urchin's face. It's part of his "helpless" act - he throws himself on your mercy. I skip the pleading nervous bit that sometimes blends over into bluster. The moist grateful eye is a favorite face with him - it frequently ties in with the act of boyish candor: he's talking straight from the heart, get it? He's got about half-a-dozen faces for the ladies, but the real cut one to me is the quick dependable chap - nothing he won't do for you in a pinch. At least, so he says! Tonight Mr. Falco, whom I did not invite to sit at this table, is about to show in his last and most pitiful role: pale face with tongue hanging out. In brief, gentlemen and Jersey Lilly, the boy sitting with us is a hungry press agent and fully up to all the tricks of his very slimy trade!

Hunsecker has started his speech lightly, but it has built up to enough cold contempt and feeling to embarrass and intimidate the others at the table. In conclusion, Hunsecker, his eyes on Sidney, picks up a cigarette and waits expectantly...

HUNSECKER

(quietly)

Match me, Sidney...

SIDNEY

(coolly)
Not just this minute, J.J....

Amused, Hunsecker lights his own cigarette, turns towards a man who comes up to the table.

HUNSECKER

A single close up, to intercut with the above.

SIDNEY

A matching single; Sidney's reaction to Hunsecker and to the others at the table.

THE AGENT, THE GIRL AND THE SENATOR

To intercut with the above; their reactions of embarrassment.

GROUP SHOT

A florid MAN comes up to the table, obviously anxious to catch Hunsecker's attention. Hunsecker, in the act of lighting, his own cigarette, scarcely looks at the man as he dismisses him:

HUNSECKER

I know - that loafer of yours opens
at the Latin Quarter next week.
(more sharply)
Say goodbye, Lester!

The florid man retreats. To cover the embarrassment, the Senator makes a sally in Sidney's direction.

SENATOR

May I ask a naive question, Mr.
Falco? Exactly how does a press
agent work...?

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Sidney doesn't answer.

HUNSECKER

Why don't you answer the man,
Sidalee? He's trying to take you
off the hook.

SIDNEY

(to the Senator)
You just had a good example of it.

A press agent eats a columnists dirt and is expected to call it manna.

RESUME THE AGENT, THE GIRL AND THE SENATOR

GIRL

What's manna?

RESUME HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Hunsecker glances spitefully at the Girl.

HUNSECKER

Heaven dust.

RESUME THE AGENT, THE GIRL AND THE SENATOR

The Senator continues to Sidney:

SENATOR

But don't you help columnists by furnishing them with items?

RESUME SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Sidney leans forward, indicating to the Senator some of the items of paper that litter the table in front of Hunsecker; these are both handwritten notes and mimeograph sheets, scraps of assorted items from professional and amateur agents who supply the columnist. Sidney fingers some of them.

SIDNEY

Sure, columnists can't get along without us. Only our good and great friend, J.J., forgets to mention that. We furnish him with items -

Sidney lifts a mimeographed sheet, as an example.

HUNSECKER

What, some cheap, gruesome gags?

SIDNEY

(to Hunsecker now)
You print them, don't you?

HUNSECKER

Yes, with your clients' names attached. That's the only reason those poor slobs pay you - to see

their names in my column all over the world! Now, as I make it out, you're doing ME a favor!

SIDNEY

I didn't say that, J.J.

HUNSECKER

The day that I can't get along without press agents' handouts, I'll close up shop, lock, stock and barrel and move to Alaska.

THE AGENT, THE GIRL AND THE SENATOR

The Agent makes the mistake of trying to agree with Hunsecker.

AGENT

(nodding)

Sweep out my igloo, here I come.

CAMERA pulls back as Hunsecker leans forward across the table. He vents upon the unfortunate Agent some of the annoyance prompted by Sidney's impertinence.

HUNSECKER

(to the Agent)

Look, Manny, you rode in here on the Senator's shirt tails, so shut your mouth!

The Senator doesn't like this treatment of others and his manner and face show it.

SENATOR

(slowly)

Now, come, J.J., that's a little too harsh. Anyone seems fair game for you tonight.

HUNSECKER

(not as harsh, but -)

This man is not for you, Harvey, and you shouldn't be seen with him in public. Because that's another part of a press agents life - he digs up scandal among prominent men and shovels it thin among the columnists who give him space.

SENATOR

He finds Hunsecker's manner disturbing, but addresses him frontally.

SENATOR

There is some allusion here that escapes me...

HUNSECKER

HUNSECKER

(an edge of threat)
We're friends, Harvey - we go as far back as when you were a fresh kid Congressman, don't we?

RESUME SENATOR

SENATOR

Why does everything you say sound like a threat?

RESUME HUNSECKER

He leans back, speaking more quietly, enjoying himself.

HUNSECKER

Maybe it's a mannerism - because I don't threaten friends, Harvey. But why furnish your enemies with ammunition? You're a family man. Someday, with God willing, you may wanna be President. Now here you are, Harvey, out in the open where any hep person knows that this one...

AGENT

Hunsecker leans into shot pointing directly at the Agent.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)
...is toting THAT one...

Hunsecker points to the Girl and the CAMERA makes a slight crab movement to include the Girl as Hunsecker points in turn to her.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)
...around for you...

Another CAMERA movement. Now Hunsecker is directly

challenging the Senator.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He smiles disarmingly.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

...Are we kids or what?...

Hunsecker rises.

GROUP SHOT

As Hunsecker stands up, Sidney follows suit. The Agent, very nervous, gets to his feet and the Girl does likewise. The Senator, whose face is sober, also rises from the table.

HUNSECKER

(to the Senator, affably)

Next time you come up, you might
join me at my TV show.

With Sidney making way for him, Hunsecker walks round the end of the table to the Senator. The Senator faces Hunsecker solemnly.

SENATOR

(quietly and cautiously)

Thank you, J.J., for what I consider
sound advice.

Hunsecker matches the Senator's solemnity.

HUNSECKER

(deadpan)

Go, Thou, and sin no more.

Hunsecker moves out of shot. Sidney murmurs a "pleased to meet you" to the Senator; then he follows Hunsecker. The Senator remains looking after Hunsecker. Behind him, the Agent and the Girl, watch him apprehensively. The Senator, his face now showing the traces of guilt which he did not reveal to Hunsecker, seems unwilling to turn back to face them.

ON THE WAY TO THE FOYER

Hunsecker and Sidney. Hunsecker addresses the Captain on his way out of the restaurant.

HUNSECKER

Mac, don't let the Senator pay that check...

CAPTAIN

I'll take care of it, Mr. Hunsecker.

CAMERA tracks with Hunsecker and Sidney as they move out towards the hat check stand.

HUNSECKER

(murmuring)

President! My big toe would make a better President!

By now they are at the coatroom, Hunsecker smiling.

ATTENDANT

Mr. Hunsecker's coat, Joe.

HUNSECKER

Find me a good one, Joe.

He accepts the proffered coat as he moves past CAMERA.

LONGER SHOT - NIGHT

The Doorman on the sidewalk has noticed Hunsecker, almost before the columnist has appeared. The Doorman wheels, snapping his fingers and signaling towards the car park attendant, who can be seen at some distance in the background under the lights of the Kinney Car Park. The attendant is seen to react with alacrity, running into the Park.

HUNSECKER

Putting on his overcoat, he addresses another of the Captains who has escorted him out of the Club.

HUNSECKER

Dan, anyone calls, tell 'em I'll be at the Morocco, maybe the Embers.

DAN

Very good, Mr. Hunsecker.

Sidney catches up with Hunsecker as he moves out onto the sidewalk.

HUNSECKER

Where's your coat, Sidalee? Saving tips?

Sidney thinks of an impertinent reply, decides not to be drawn and says nothing.

HUNSECKER

(to Sidney)

My curiosity is killing me; what are you so rambunctious about tonight?

Sidney again does not answer; this time he points across the street...

SIDNEY

There's your fat friend.

LONGER SHOT - POLICE CAR - NIGHT

The car is framed in foreground; We can read the sign POLICE attached to the visor. Two men in plain-clothes, detectives, are in the front seats. The man nearest is HARRY KELLO. Wanting to look like a prosperous business man, Kello looks soft, fat, mild and well-barbered; but he is dangerous; he knows it and enjoys it. With "big shots" he is playful and kidding, always says just enough, not too much. He is very relaxed, and mild in manner, but underneath there is not only an animal energy, but a feral pressing at you. His voice is on the hoarse side. He measures situations automatically and instantly.

The police radio is chattering. Also in evidence is the telephone, the radio link with headquarters. The detective at the wheel nudges Kello, pointing across the street. Kello gets out of the car and moves to meet the columnist.

HUNSECKER

(as he approaches)

Hello, Harry.

KELLO

(cheerfully)

Bonna sera, commendatore. Come sta?

Sidney follows a couple of paces behind Hunsecker; he is in no hurry to meet the detective, whom he clearly dislikes.

HUNSECKER

(turning to Sidney)

You see, Sidalee, that shows that Lt. Kello likes your people.

REVERSE ON KELLO

Kello offers his hand to Hunsecker.

KELLO

It's my Brooklyn background, J.J.
I'm good on Yiddish, too.

Hunsecker accepting the handshake, winces with pretended pain at what is clearly an over-enthusiastic grip.

HUNSECKER

Harry, am I supposed to say "uncle"?

Kello laughs, releases the grip; Hunsecker strolls past him stoops to lean into the car listening to the police calls on the radio.

HUNSECKER

Anything fit to print, tonight?
(to the policeman in
the car)
Hello, Phil. How're the kids.

The detective inside the car answers, respectfully.

PHIL

Fine, Mr. Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER

Any news fit to print tonight?

KELLO

(joining Hunsecker)
I just checked "downtown". Quiet
everywhere tonight.

HUNSECKER

Incidentally, what happened to that
doll? - You gave me the item last
night. Still alive?

KELLO

Yeah. At Bellevue. Still hanging
on. But they still don't know if
she was pushed.

HUNSECKER

She mighta jumped. Love suicide?
(to the policeman in
the car)
Check it for me, Phil...it's a real
heart throb.

While Phil lifts the radio phone, calling headquarters, Hunsecker turns back to Kello and Sidney.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Mischievously, Hunsecker nods at Sidney.

HUNSECKER

(to Kello)

Say hello to Sidney Falco. Tickle him - he's been a bad boy tonight. He called you my fat friend.

KELLO

(mildly)

I don't believe it.

Instantly aware that J.J. is toying with Sidney, Kello offers his large hand to Sidney, who refuses it.

SIDNEY

I know...I know you're the strongest cop in town.

KELLO

(with a laugh)

I call him the boy with the ice cream face!

HUNSECKER

(laughing)

Say, that's good - it's nice - in fact, it's APT, Harry!

KELLO

(modestly)

Yeah, I got eyes. I put things together.

HUNSECKER

I remember ONCE when you didn't quite "put things together". Boy! Was the Mayor mad!

The memory of something unpleasant clouds Kello's face.

KELLO

Citizens committees! I didn't mean to hit the boy that hard. Yeah, that's when a feller needed a friend and I won't forget his initials, J.J.

The policeman in the car sticks his head out of the window.

PHIL

(to Hunsecker)
She died twenty minutes ago, Mr.
Hunsecker. They're still
investigating.

HUNSECKER

(shaking his head
with total dismissal)
That's show business. Thanks, Phil.
(to Kello)
See you.

ANOTHER ANGLE - 52ND STREET - NIGHT

Kello gets into the police car.

KELLO

(as he does so)
Hasta La Vista, J.J. Hasta Luego.

ANOTHER ANGLE - 52ND ST. - NIGHT

The car moves off eastward. Sidney and Hunsecker walk westward. Sidney, falling into step with Hunsecker, glances back at the departing police car.

SIDNEY

Spahish...that must show he likes
"spigs", too.

HUNSECKER

I like Harry, but I can't deny he
sweats a little.

CAMERA now SHOOTs down 52nd Street. Hunsecker, back to CAMERA, studies the evening, hearing the sound of a screech of female laughter from one of the groups in the distance. A drunk is being thrown out of one of the strip tease joints.

HUNSECKER

I love this dirty town.

Amused, Hunsecker turns back; he signals across the street to the car park, indicating that the big black Lincoln Continental should follow as he strolls with Sidney.

HUNSECKER. SIDNEY FOLLOWING.

HUNSECKER

(after a pause)

Conjugate me a verb, Sidney. For instance, TO PROMISE!

CAMERA TRACKS with them in a CLOSE TWO SHOT. Sidney is alert now.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

You told me you'd break up that romance - when?

SIDNEY

(hesitantly)

You want something done, J.J., but I doubt if you yourself know what's involved.

HUNSECKER

(soft and sardonic)

I'm a schoolboy - teach me, teach me.

SIDNEY

(carefully)

Why not break it up yourself? You could do it in two minutes flat.

Hunsecker pauses, halts.

HUNSECKER

(harshly)

At this late date you need explanations...? Susie's all I got - now that she's growing up, I want my relationship with her to stay at least at par! I don't intend to antagonize her if I don't have to.

(starting to walk again)

Now, be warned, son - I'll have to blitz you...

Sidney follows quickly.

SIDNEY

Frankly, J.J., I don't think you got the cards to blitz me.

HUNSECKER

I don't?

SIDNEY

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I
don't think so...

HUNSECKER

(turning to eye him)
I'll listen one more minute.

Sidney steps in front of Hunsecker, blocking his way for a moment.

SIDNEY

(very rapidly)
About a year ago, you asked me to
do a favor. It was a thing - well,
I never did a thing that dirty in
all my life.

Hunsecker, totally disinterested in Sidney's problems of conscience, signals to his car again, walks past Sidney, who continues rapidly:

SIDNEY

Awright, that brings us up to five
weeks ago. "Sidney, I got a nasty
little problem here." Did I say no?
I'm frank to admit - it don't jell
as fast as we like... But all of a
sudden I CAN'T GET YOU ON THE PHONE
NO MORE! WHY?... And why, as of
this date, am I frozen out of the
column...

HUNSECKER

(scornfully)
Are you finished?

SIDNEY

(quickly)
No, lemme finish. I DON'T LIKE
THIS JOB! That boy is dumb only on
matinee days - otherwise he's got a
head. And Susan, like you said,
she's growing up. Two heads.
What I mean, we got a slipperly,
dangerous problem here!

HUNSECKER

(incisively)
Not "we", Sidney, you!

SIDNEY

(gamely)
Correct me if I'm wrong - WE!
Because when I'm out on this very
slippery limb for you, you have to
know what's involved.

HUNSECKER

(sardonically)
Ha! My right hand hasn't seen my
left hand for thirty years!

Sidney quickly moves into J.J.'s path, desperate to hold his
attention.

SIDNEY

I'll do it, J.J. - don't get me
wrong - in for a penny, in for a
pound. I'll see it through, but
stop beating me around the head.
Let me make a living!

HUNSECKER

(his mouth tight and mean)
What you promised - do it! Don't
finagle around. It's later than
you think.

Hunsecker walks past Sidney, now making for the car at which
the attendant still waits.

SIDNEY

(as Hunsecker passes him)
Excuse it, but it's later than you
think. That boy proposed tonight.

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker is HIT: he stops in his stride; he pauses and he
turns slowly to look at Sidney. Lowering, he hesitates,
mind clicking...

HUNSECKER

Susie told you that...?

REVERSE ANGLE - FAVORING SIDNEY

Sidney, his eyes bright, nods. Hunsecker studies Sidney,
then:

HUNSECKER

No wonder you've been so 'feisty'
tonight.

A pause.

HUNSECKER

(quietly)
Can you deliver?

Sidney nods.

SIDNEY

Uh huh.

HUNSECKER

When?

SIDNEY

Tonight. Before you go to bed.
The cat is in the bag and the bag
is in the river.

HUNSECKER

Expressionless, he examines Sidney. Then he walks off toward the car. He tips the attendant, who thanks him, but instead of getting into the back of the car, he makes a small authoritative gesture to Nikko (double) to move over so that Hunsecker himself may drive. While Nikko does so, Hunsecker turns back to Sidney, whom the CAMERA now includes.

HUNSECKER

(quietly)
Don't be a two time loser, Sidalee.
The sentence could be severe...

SIDNEY

He is satisfied.

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker gets into the driver's seat beside Nikko, the Japanese houseboy. CAMERA is CLOSE on Hunsecker who does not look back but is clearly aware of the position of Sidney as he puts the car into gear, revving the engine...

SIDNEY - NIGHT

The big car accelerates with impressive power. In doing so, it sends a cloud of fumes and a swirl of dust in Sidney's direction. He leaps out of the way, too late. CAMERA MOVES closer to him as, with anger and ignominy he inspects his precious clothing for damage. But, as he looks after the

car, his face hardens into grim humor; he senses that this petty gesture from Hunsecker is an indication of his vulnerability, not his strength. As, dusting his coat, Sidney walks away, CAMERA RISES, watching his jaunty figure cross the street in the direction of 51st Street.

QUICK LAP DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TOOTS SHOR'S RESTAURANT

A LONG SHOT looking over the round bar towards the entrance. Sidney comes in through the revolving doors and comes toward CAMERA. His eyes search among the crowd.

CLOSER ANGLE

REVERSE ANGLE. A CAPTAIN approaches Sidney.

CAPTAIN

Hello, Sidney. Wanna table?

SIDNEY

(shaking his head)

Just hopping tonight. Leo Bartha been in?

CAPTAIN

Yeah, having supper with the Mrs. She's over there.

The Captain nods towards a booth on the other side of the bar where Mrs. Bartha is sitting alone. Seeing that Bartha is not with her, the Captain looks around the bar...

CAPTAIN

He's somewhere...

SIDNEY

(interrupting)

Thanks, I see him...

Sidney is looking back towards the entrance hall, where...

BARTHA

Bartha comes forward (from the Men's Room) passing the Captain and Sidney. Sidney moves to intercept him.

SIDNEY

Hello, Leo. How goes that Sunday piece on cigarette girls?

ANOTHER ANGLE

A CLOSE SHOT on Bartha as he turns towards Sidney, stopping.

BARTHA

(cautiously)

Who told you about it?

SIDNEY

Sidney smiles at Bartha, but the threat is clear.

SIDNEY

The cigarettes girl...Rita. And she took out all her hairpins, too.

RESUME BARTHA

He throws a quick glance at his wife in the booth in background. CAMERA PULLS BACK as Sidney, who has noted the look, moves closer to Bartha.

SIDNEY

I never had the pleasure of meeting your wife. You know what I wonder, Leo? Could you use a hot little item for tomorrow's column?

Sidney is pulling out of his pocket a pad on which to scribble the item. But Bartha faces him squarely, speaking sotto voce but with emphasis:

BARTHA

What is this, blackmail? Beat it!

Bartha turns on his heel and turns to walk towards his wife beyond.

SIDNEY

Sidney's face tightens. After a pause, he makes a decision and walks towards the booth.

BARTHA AND HIS WIFE

Bartha's wife is reading a tabloid and sipping champagne while her husband resumes eating a sandwich. These two are antagonists in a long war. Sidney comes up to the table, repeats:

SIDNEY

Leo, I've never had the pleasure of

meeting your wife...

Bartha looks up. What can he do? Begrudgingly:

BARTHA

Loretta...Sidney Falco...

WIFE

(chatty)

How do you do, Mr. Falco. If you know anything about horses, sit a minute. Help yourself to a glass of this N.Y. State champagne - that's what my husband buys me.

Mrs. Bartha pushes the champagne bottle in Sidney's direction as Sidney sits pleasantly; Bartha concentrates on his sandwich.

SIDNEY

All the imported wines aren't what they're cracked up to be.

WIFE

Whose side are you on, Mr. Falco, his or mine?

SIDNEY

Frankly, Mrs. Bartha, I'm a neutral observer for the United Nations.

WIFE

Mrs. Bartha laughs, enjoying his deftness; then:

WIFE

What's your first name?

SIDNEY

(over scene)

Sidney.

Mrs. Bartha turns to concentrate on the names in the racing column of the tabloid.

WIFE

(searching the column)

No horse running tomorrow by that name...

BARTHA, WIFE AND SIDNEY

An ANGLE favoring Bartha and Sidney. Bartha glowers at his wife, resenting the fact that she has permitted Sidney to join them.

BARTHA

You ought to stop this nonsense,
Loretta, these two dollar bets.

WIFE

(cheerfully)
It's compensation, Leo, for the
marginal life we lead.
(to Sidney)
Sidney, did you hear the story
about the cloak-and-suitor who -- ?

BARTHA

(sharply interrupting)
That's right! Tell him, so I can
read it in Hunsecker's column first!

WIFE

(to Sidney, brightly)
Oh, are you a spy for the other side?

SIDNEY

No, I actually sat down to give Leo
an item.

produces his pad again, begins to write on it.

WIFE

Leo, he wants to give you an item -
don't be sullen.

Bartha notes Sidney's writing.

BARTHA

(to his wife)
Will you mind your own business!

WIFE

(calmly)
Hitler!

She returns to her paper, ignoring them, Sidney finishes
scribbling the item.

SIDNEY

Just in case you'd like to print
it, Leo. It's a blind - no names
mentioned. But for your private

information, the guy's name is
Dallas.

He pushes the item to Bartha, who reads it, briefly.
Meanwhile:

WIFE

(concentrating on the tabloid)
There isn't a single name here that
gives off vibrations...

Bartha pushes the item back towards Sidney. Sidney glances
quickly at Bartha's stony face then, significantly, turns
towards his wife.

SIDNEY

Anything there with a name like
"cigarette girl"?

Bartha raises his head, looks squarely at Sidney with
contempt and anger. His wife is unaware of this reaction.
Still looking at the paper, she murmurs:

WIFE

Mmmmm... "cigarette girl"... No, no
horse with a name like that...

Sidney pushes the item back towards Bartha.

WIFE

Mrs. Bartha's attention is attracted by Sidney's gesture.
She looks up, made aware of this strange by-play.

BARTHA AND SIDNEY

A CLOSE TWO SHOT. Sidney waits; Bartha is white-lipped, but
pushes the item back again:

BARTHA

I don't print blind items.

RESUME WIFE

She looks from Sidney to her husband and back.

WIFE

What is this, chess or checkers...?

RESUME BARTHA, MRS. BARTHA AND SIDNEY

The THREE SHOT favoring Bartha and Sidney. Both Sidney and

Bartha are now aware of Mrs. Bartha's curiosity.

SIDNEY

(pointedly)
Neither does Hunsecker.
(fractional pause)
He likes to use the real names...

A moment of chill silence. Then Bartha gets to his feet, signals for a waiter. As Sidney rises also:

WIFE

Where are we running? What am I missing here?

BARTHA

Waiter, the check.
(to wife)
This man is trying to hold a gun to my head!

WIFE

(abruptly)
That's the horse! Shotgun -
Shotgun in the fifth!

She quickly studies her newspaper again. As quickly, Bartha leans across the table and snatches it out of her hands. In doing so, he upsets the glass of champagne, which contains only a few drops.

SIDNEY AND BARTHA

Bartha turns challengingly to Sidney.

BARTHA

(sternly)
What do you want to tell my wife, Sidney...?

WIFE

She is brushing her lap with her napkin.

WIFE

(indignantly)
He wants to tell me that you poured champagne all over my lap.

RESUME BARTHA AND SIDNEY

Bartha ignores her, again challenges Sidney.

BARTHA

Go on, tell her, I'm waiting!

SIDNEY

(flustered)

What are you talking about? Are you nuts or what?

The Waiter arrives in picture beside them, puts the check on the table and goes. Bartha picks it up.

RESUME WIFE

Still mopping her dress with her napkin, she waits for her husband to speak.

BARTHA

He glances unhappily at his wife.

BARTHA

Lorry, I can't let this man blackmail me...

MRS. BARTHA, BARTHA AND SIDNEY

A THREE SHOT favoring Mrs. Bartha, her husband and Sidney in foreground.

WIFE

Blackmail...?

Sidney decides to retreat. He turns, starts to go. But Bartha blocks his way, holding Sidney and explaining to the Wife.

BARTHA

He wants me to print a dirty smear item for keeping his mouth shut

A momentarily pause. Then:

WIFE

About what?

RESUME BARTHA

He is uneasy, ashamed of himself.

BARTHA

Foolishly, Lorry, and I hope you'll

understand... this cigarette girl...I was kidding around with her...this girl, I mean...I was kidding around and she took it seriously. It was a case of bad judgment, Lorry, bad taste...and I'm just sorry, Lorry, that's all...

RESUME WIFE

She says nothing.

RESUME BARTHA, SIDNEY AND MRS. BARTHA

The ANGLE favoring Bartha and Sidney, Mrs. Bartha in foreground. Bartha now turns on Sidney.

BARTHA

Your friend Hunsecker - you can tell him for me - he's a disgrace to his profession. Never mind my bilious private life - I print a decent, responsible column - that's the way it stays! Your man - there's nothing he won't print if it satisfies his vanity or his spite! He'll use any spice to pepper up his daily garbage! Tell him I said so and that, like yourself, he's got the morals of a guinea pig and the scruples of a gangster!

Sidney tries to brazen it out, sneering:

SIDNEY

What do I do now? Whistle "The Stars and Stripes Forever?"

Mrs. Bartha slides along the seat, reaching for her fur.

MRS. BARTHA

CAMERA PULLS BACK with her as she collects her belongings, slides out between the tables and comes forward, passing Sidney to her husband.

WIFE

(lightly)

What you do now, Mr. Falco, is crow like a hen - you have just laid an egg.

She presents her fur to her husband, and turns her back, inviting him to put it around her shoulders.

BARTHA AND WIFE

ANOTHER ANGLE, favoring Bartha. He has not fully understood the significance of his wife's gesture. He studies her. She confirms his hopes as she adds:

WIFE

Leo, this is one of the cleanest things I've seen you do in years...

With the fur around her shoulders, she turns and takes her husband's arm with some pride. They walk away. CAMERA ERASES BACK to include Sidney. He is angry at himself - more for the failure of his efforts at blackmail than any sense of shame at the attempt.

OTIS ELWELL

A MEDIUM LONG SHOT. At a booth on the other side of the bar sits a dapper gentleman with a twinkle of malice in his eyes. He has been watching the altercation with keen interest and satisfaction. Elwell gives some instructions to a waiter who is serving him with drinks, pointing towards Sidney.

SIDNEY

Sidney's face shows a burning resentment. He glances about him to see how much of the embarrassing scene has been observed. As he moves away, the waiter walks into shot, addressing him.

WAITER

A waiter approaches Sidney. He has a message.

WAITER

Otis Elwell wants to see you, Sidney.

The waiter nods towards the other side of the circular bar. Sidney, his humiliation and rage still burning, looks off towards...

OTIS ELWELL

From Sidney's viewpoint. Elwell beckons.

SIDNEY

He comes round the circular bar. He shows no eagerness to join Elwell, but approaches the table. Elwell makes a gesture, inviting Sidney to sit. Sidney doesn't accept it.

ELWELL

(pleasantly)

I see Bartha gave you cold tongue for supper.

(as Sidney starts to leave)

Hey, wait a minute!

SIDNEY

(hesitating)

I'm late for a date with a dame.

Then, returning, he leans over the table addressing Elwell with quiet anger.

SIDNEY

Otis, if you're trying to blow this brawl into an item for your column - forget it!

REVERSE ANGLE

Across Sidney and Elwell. Elwell is quietly enjoying Sidney's display of hurt dignity.

ELWELL

(affably)

How is dear old J.J. by the way?

SIDNEY

(his anger relapsing)

Call him up and ask - he might drop dead with shock.

ELWELL

(lightly)

If it were that easy, you wouldn't find an empty phone booth for the next two hours...

SIDNEY

A CLOSE SHOT. While Elwell continues, he is not looking at Sidney. Elwell's expression of dislike of Hunsecker is not overemphatic; but Sidney senses, nevertheless, that it is very real - and this gives him a new idea.

ELWELL

(continuing over scene)

...Talk of a wake! - they'd club
each other to cater the affair for
free!

RESUME ELWELL AND SIDNEY

Elwell looks up at Sidney as he continues.

ELWELL

(happily)

By the way, did I hear something
about J.J. giving you the flit gun
treatment - he shut you out of the
column.

(amused)

Why?

REVERSE ANGLE

Sidney has rapidly resumed his manner of resentment (in
order to exploit Elwell's dislike of Hunsecker).

SIDNEY

You don't know that lunatic yet?
Whims - egotistic whims! Like the
gag - when you got him for a
friend, you don't need an enemy!

(a pause, then:)

That's what the fight with Bartha
was about. "Leo", I says, "Hunsecker
froze me out. So I'm eating humble
pie this month - please print me an
item."

ELWELL

(pleased)

And, instead, he printed his heel
in your face?

SIDNEY

(morose)

I see you're full of human
feelings...

ELWELL

He has lost interest in Sidney.

ELWELL

(with a shrug)

Like most of the human race,
Sidney, I'm bored. I'd go a mile

for a chuckle...

Elwell's voice fades: his attention has been caught by...

REVERSE ANGLE

...three people are passing the table, squeezing their way past; a man with two very fetching young women. Elwell's eyes are riveted to the anatomy that is temptingly displayed.

SIDNEY

(noting Elwell's preoccupation)
...and two miles for a pretty
girl...?

ELWELL

He is unembarrassed at Sidney's all-too-accurate estimate.

ELWELL

(lightly)
Three...even four...

Elwell turns back towards the papers on his table, a zippered document case and some publications among which a columnist might search for scandal; among these is a magazine of semipornographic nature.

ELWELL

(continuing, casually)
Then you're really washed up with
Hunsecker...?

REVERSE ANGLE

The nature of Elwell's reading tastes is also not lost on Sidney. With his eyes glancing at the magazine, Sidney now accepts the original offer to sit down. He produces the slip of paper that Bartha rejected, offering it as illustration.

SIDNEY

This is how much I'm washed with
J.J....

As Elwell reads, Sidney continues giving a passing scrutiny - apparently casual - to a picture of a girl on the magazine cover.

SIDNEY

Look, Otis, I make no brief for my
bilious private life, but he's got

the morals of a guinea pig and the
scruples of a gangster.

Elwell shows no undue enthusiasm for the item.

ELWELL

(dryly)

A fine, fat dirty item.

(offering it back to Sidney)

Who's it about?

But Sidney doesn't take the paper back; he explains:

SIDNEY

A kid named Dallas, who runs a
dinky jazz quintet.

(he leans closer)

He keeps company with J.J.'s
screwball sister...

ELWELL

This does get a reaction, a flicker of genuine interest.
Elwell reads the item for a second time.

SIDNEY AND ELWELL

Watching Elwell read, Sidney encourages:

SIDNEY

It's a real goody if, like me, you
wanna clobber J.J.!

Now Elwell lays the item down in front of him. Clearly, he
is considering it. Sidney prompts again.

SIDNEY

He's got his TV tomorrow. He'd
read it just before rehearsals.

Elwell nods. But he is still reluctant.

ELWELL

(cautiously)

Mmm. Trouble is I can't think of
any good reason why I should print
anything you give me. I can't even
think of a bad reason.

SIDNEY

Sidney drops his eyes to the magazine once more. He fingers

it in a preoccupied but significant way.

SIDNEY

(gently)

Suppose I introduce you to a lovely
reason, Otis. One that's good and
bad...and available?

ELWELL

His eyes go from the magazine to Sidney; he gets the point
alright.

ELWELL

I'm not an unreasonable man...

Elwell reaches for the slip of paper once more.

SIDNEY AND ELWELL

In picking it up, Elwell clearly implies his readiness to
accept the item - on conditions. Sidney, in his turn, gets
this point. He turns towards the passing waiter.

SIDNEY

Waiter! The check.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rita is in the bedroom. She appears to have some familiarity
to the premises... She hears the doorbell. She makes swift
adjustment to her appearance and takes a swift gulp of a
drink as she carries it through to answer the door.

SIDNEY'S OFFICE

The outer room is lit only by one of the lamps on the desk.
Rita crosses and goes to the door. Sidney's shadow can be
seen through the frosted glass. At the door, Rita opens it
slowly and with a seductive manner.

RITA

(coyly)

Hi!

Sidney steps into the room. Rita begins to close the door
prior to stepping into his embrace. Sidney puts one arm
about her. But now she reacts to...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Otis Elwell stands on the landing outside. In most gentlemanly fashion, he takes off his hat.

RITA

This new arrival gets a dismal reaction from the girl.

SIDNEY

(unembarrassed)

Rita, say hello to Otis Elwell.

RITA

(with no welcome whatsoever)

Hello.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Elwell is not unaware of his cool reception. He glances at Sidney as he comes into the room. But his manner is suave.

ELWELL

Friends call me Otis - sometimes
Tricky Otis.

SIDNEY

Otis was outraged when I told him
Van Cleve was going to fire you.
Tell him not to pay any attention
to anything you-know-who says about
you-know-what.

(to Otis)

Right, Otis?

ELWELL

Right!

Elwell sits down on the settee, stretches his limbs, smiles at the girl. Rita still says nothing. Sidney mistakes her attitude for acquiescence. He swallows his drink, sets it down.

SIDNEY

I thought you two could talk the
whole thing over till I got back.

Rita looks at him sharply.

RITA

Back?

SIDNEY

One of those business meetings,
honey - always coming up in the
middle of the night.

He grins at Rita. She doesn't respond. Turning, she goes
swiftly through the door into the bedroom.

RITA

(sharply)

Hold on. You can drop me off on
your way...

Emphasizing the asperity in her voice, she closes the door
behind her.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Elwell looks at Sidney; Sidney looks at Elwell. Elwell gets
up slowly from the settee.

ELWELL

(amused by acid)

Consternation reigns...

Sidney is uncomfortable, not sure how Elwell is taking the
rejection. Elwell glances at his wristwatch, lays down his
drink.

SIDNEY

(quickly)

Now, Otis...

Elwell shrugs, remarks pleasantly but with significance:

ELWELL

I hate J.J. -- but not that much at
this moment...

SIDNEY

Give me a chance --

He goes into the bedroom, closing the door after him.

INT. BEDROOM

Rita is in a flurry of indignation. Sitting on the bed, she
is fastening one high-heeled shoe. Sidney stands glaring at
her.

SIDNEY

Don't you know who that man is?

RITA

(bitingly)

Yeah. Otis Elwell. The columnist.

SIDNEY

(nodding with emphasis)

Yeah!

RITA

(aggressively)

And he's a perfect stranger to me.

SIDNEY

(explosively)

So take five minutes! Get acquainted! He's an important man - he's lonely - don't be dumb!

Rita, who one shoe on, has begun to search for the other.

RITA

What do you want all of a sudden - Lady Godiva...? Where's my other shoe?

SIDNEY

What kind of an act is this?

Rita jumps to her feet. Her righteous indignation is handicapped by the lop-sided stance caused by the lack of one shoe.

RITA

Don't you think I have any feelings? What am I? A bowl of fruit? A tangerine that peels in a minute?

SIDNEY

(caustic)

I beg your pardon! I turn myself inside out to help you and now I'm a heavy.

(stooping swiftly as
he discovers her shoe)

Here's your shoe, there's your coat, that's the door!

Contemptuously he thrusts the coat and the shoe into her arms. The positive force of his manner gives the girl pause. There is a silence. Rita searches for words to explain the offense to her sensibilities.

RITA

Sidney...I...I don't do this sort of thing...

SIDNEY

What sort of thing?

RITA

(emphatic)

This sort of thing!

SIDNEY

(as emphatic)

Listen, you need him for a favor, don't you! And so do I! I need his column--tonight.

(then)

Didn't you ask me to do something about your job? Don't you have a kid in Military School?

A pause. Sidney has struck brutally home. Rita's lower lip trembles.

RITA

You're a snake, Falco. You're a louse, a real louse.

Sidney's manner becomes swiftly sympathetic - but still urgent.

SIDNEY

(persuasively)

Honey - he's going to help you!
You want to lose your job?

Rita begins to waver, her moral indignation losing ground before Sidney's reminders of her dire necessity.

RITA

(remonstrating)

A girl needs a little romancing before she -

SIDNEY

(cutting in)

Next time I'll call in a guy to paint silver stars on the ceiling!

RITA

(in a small voice)

What would you think of me if -

SIDNEY

(cutting in to
reassure her)

Nothing I didn't think of you before.

RITA

(dryly, with significance)

- that's what I mean!

This attempt at humor signals to Sidney that he has brought her round. He comes to her, pats her in an encouraging manner - to which she does not respond.

He turns to the door, and picks up the glasses she has set down on the table behind it.

SIDNEY

(as he opens the door)

How many snorts does it take to put
you in that Tropical Island Mood?

Sidney goes out.

SIDNEY'S OFFICE

Elwell overhears the last remark and as Sidney passes him, he winks. While Sidney pours another drink, Elwell faces the doorway. Rita comes into it, stands on the threshold. She is still far from enthusiastic.

ELWELL

(an inspiration)

Havana! That's where we met!

Rita shakes her head morosely. Sidney comes and puts a stiff drink into her hand. Elwell raises the glass toasting the girl, encouraging her to drink. Rita responds dimly.

RITA

(to Otis)

Here's mud in your column!

Sidney laughs, more from relief than from the joke.

SIDNEY

Blessings on thee, the both...well...
Gotta run now. See you two kids
later!

ELWELL

(lightly)

Hurry back.

At the door Sidney takes cheerful leave of them.

SIDNEY

Don't do anything I wouldn't do.
That gives you lots of leeway.

HALLWAY OUTSIDE SIDNEY'S APARTMENT

Closing the door, Sidney seems pleased with himself. He goes swiftly down the stairs.

INT. SIDNEY'S OFFICE

Rita remains on the threshold of the doorway between the two rooms. There is an uncomfortable silence. Elwell carries it off by coming to the girl, offering her a cigarette. She accepts it. Elwell studies her, smiling affectionately. Rita meets his eyes, avoids them again, then quietly offers the information:

RITA

Palm Springs. Two years ago.

Elwell begins to laugh. Whatever the memory, it seems to amuse him vastly because he continues to laugh.

ELWELL

(delighted)
That's right!

Rita drinks. She adds glumly:

RITA

Don't tell Sidney.

Elwell continues to laugh as we...

CUT TO:

ORANGE JUICE STAND - NIGHT

Shooting east on 46th Street walks Sidney, coming out of the entrance of his apartment, towards CAMERA. He is pleased with himself, satisfied with his ingenuity in dealing with Rita and Bartha.

The streets behind him are dark and empty (it is about 3:00 in the morning). CAMERA moves with Sidney as he steps briskly into the orange juice stand and lifts the receiver from the pay telephone. There are no other customers at the

counter, but the man behind is squeezing orange halves for the day ahead, piling up a mountain of empties some of which fall at Sidney's feet.

EXT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA shoots up at the penthouse on the roof of the Brill Bldg. The Budweiser sign is extinguished, a black silhouette against the sky. A light burns in the window of Hunsecker's apartment.

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The ringing of the telephone is heard in the big room - an impressively furnished apartment which has a decor indicating that the owner thinks of himself in epic terms.

CAMERA moves to discover Hunsecker in robe and pajamas, tapping at his typewriter. Taking his leisurely time, he picks up the phone and eventually answers it.

HUNSECKER

(to phone)

Yes...? You sound happy, Sidney.
Why should you be happy when I'm not?

(then)

I'll see the papers when I get up.
How do you spell Picasso, the French painter?

(languidly writes
down Picasso on his
scratch pad, answering
a query, dryly)

It's an item - I hear he goes out with three-eyed girls.

ORANGE JUICE STAND - NIGHT

CAMERA shoots past Sidney at the phone toward Broadway, which is now deserted. A street-flushing truck goes by, moving through the dead city.

SIDNEY

(to phone)

It would be nice if you mentioned R-O-B-A-R-D - Robard's jazz joint -- it's his 20th anniversary. Don't begrudge it to me, J.J. - I owe him lots of favors.

(glancing toward the attendant to see that

he has not overheard)
I think you understand, don't you,
that the Dallas skull is badly
dented? Oh, real bad... starting
today, you can play marbles with
his eyeballs.
(even coquetting)
Don't hold out on me, J.J., mention
Robard. R.O. -
(hangs up and walks
to street)

HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Hunsecker is writing Robard's name on his pad, but he says
into the phone:

HUNSECKER

We shall see what we shall see...
(lazily)
And don't ever use this apartment
phone again; I have a nervous sister.

He cradles the phone, looks at it for a moment, switches his
eyes and then physically follows them, rising to stroll
towards the glass doors onto the terrace. He moves out and
turns aside to look in at the adjoining window, which
belongs to Susan's bedroom.

INT. SUSAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA shoots across Susan in foreground; she is asleep, a
tired, helpless, sweet kid. The figure of her brother is
seen - a dark shape on the terrace outside. He moves away
across the terrace.

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

Hunsecker turns from the window. CAMERA is close on his
brooding face. CAMERA tracks with him as he crosses towards
the parapet. At this height there is a wind which blows his
hair and the movement of the camera emphasizes a remarkable
vista of the New York skyline. The buildings are now dark,
only a few of the electric signs are left on all night.
CAMERA comes to rest looking over Hunsecker's shoulder; it
tilts downward to a view of Broadway below, Duffy Square in
the distance.

HUNSECKER - NIGHT

A close-up; Hunsecker is looking down on his "kingdom". But
there is little love in the man's face, only authoritarian

power.

EXT. FROM THE TERRACE - NIGHT

From Hunsecker's viewpoint. The streets empty, except for an occasional passing taxi. The street flushing truck comes up Broadway from Duffy Square...

LAP DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

EXT. FROM THE TERRACE - DAY

The identical camera set-up. Through the dissolve the light changes from night to day; Broadway magically becomes a roaring stream of traffic.

EXT. GLOBE BUILDING - DAY

In foreground a NEWS VENDOR. Sidney comes out of the exit of a subway, reaching for his pocket as he approaches the news vendor who offers him a paper.

NEWS VENDOR

The Globe?

SIDNEY

(shaking his head)

Gimme The Record.

Sidney buys and opens the paper. CAMERA MOVES closer to shoot over his shoulder. We see the gossip column which bears a photograph of Otis Elwell at the top. Smirking with satisfaction, Sidney turns away from the CAMERA and throws the paper into a trash basket before he disappears into the impressive entrance of a large office building. The sign above the doorway reads: THE NEW YORK GLOBE.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GLOBE BUILDING

Mary, Hunsecker's secretary, occupies a cubicle which is separated from the rest of the newsroom by a partition. From the big room beyond, comes the hum and chatter of a big newspaper. The walls of the urgent murmur of the staff of a big newspaper. The walls of Mary's cubicle are covered with photographs; filing cabinets are piled high with unopened mail; two wire service teletype machines click desultorily. Mary is plain but attractive, past 30, a level-headed woman with a sense of integrity. She is on the phone just now, bored with the insistent voice on the other end. Beside her an earnest young LAWYER waits with several papers in hand.

MARY

(to phone)

I have no power to retract, Mr. Cummings... I'm only Mr. Hunsecker's secretary. No. Nor can I agree that can retraction is necessary. Thank you for calling.

Sidney has come through the newsroom in background. He pauses tactfully, seeing Mary occupied with the lawyer.

LAWYER

(huffily)

I fail to see what's amusing about these papers.

MARY

I'll get the boss to sign them.

LAWYER

(giving her the papers)

They're important.

MARY

You've said that six times - that's why I'm smiling.

As the disgruntled lawyer leaves, Sidney comes in, wearing his most winning smile. With a glance after the lawyer, making sure that he is not observed, Sidney greets Mary, assuming a brogue:

SIDNEY

Hello, Mary, me darlin' and phwat are ye up to today?

Sidney's hand caresses her shoulder with a gesture which indicates a certain intimacy between them.

MARY

That's a question I usually like to ask YOU. Your secretary phoned.

SIDNEY

What about?

MARY

(shrugging)

Something about a Frank D'Angelo trying to reach you...

Sidney reaches for the phone. As he does so, Mary hesitates and glances at a copy of The Record which lies on the desk open at Otis Elwell's column. She picks it up.

MARY

(continuing)

Is that the man who manages Susie's boyfriend?

Sidney murmurs casually, "Yeah. Why?" as he dials. Mary holds up the paper, indicating the item.

MARY

Have you seen this? In Otis Elwell's column.

(reads)

"The dreamy marijuana smoke of a lad who heads a highbrow jazz quintet is giving an inelegant odor to that elegant East Side Club where he works. That's no way for a card-holding Party Member to act. Moscow won't like, you naughty boy!"

Sidney accepts the paper from Mary, examines the item while he talks to Sally on the phone.

SIDNEY

(into phone)

Sally? I got the message. If D'Angelo calls again, tell him I'll be at the office around noon.

He hangs up, continuing to read.

MARY

Could this be that boy?

SIDNEY

(casually)

Dallas? Could be. He doesn't look like a reefer smoker...

He discards the paper with a show of disinterest. Mary picks it up again.

MARY

(looking at The Record again)

If this is true, J.J.'s going to hit the ceiling...

Sidney moves around behind Mary. His eyes are fixed on a spike which sits on Mary's desk. On it is impaled a proof of Hunsecker's column. Meanwhile, he remarks:

SIDNEY

Can it be news to you that J.J.'s ceiling needs a plaster job every six weeks?

INSERT

From Sidney's viewpoint, Hunsecker's column. The shot is just too distant for us to be able to read the print.

SIDNEY AND MARY

Sidney is looking at the column. Mary is concentrated on papers before her. Without looking up, she is clearly aware of Sidney's efforts to read the proof.

MARY

(quietly)

Sidney, you know that J.J. doesn't like people to look at the column proof in advance...

Sidney, caught "in flagrante", laughs.

SIDNEY

Mary, I'm not "people" - there's Falco blood, sweat and tears in that column.

He turns away, changing the subject (apparently).

SIDNEY

How about dinner tonight?

Mary turns to study him.

MARY

Bribing me again?

SIDNEY

(uncomfortable under her scrutiny)

And why should I bribe the woman who holds most of my heart?

Mary is thoughtful. Without malice, in a detached sort of way, she examines Sidney.

MARY

You're a real rascal, Sidney. I'd certainly dislike you if I didn't like you. You're an amusing boy, but there isn't a drop of respect in you for anything alive - you're too immersed in the theology of making a fast buck. Not that I don't sometimes feel that you yearn for something better...

Sidney finds this analysis hard to take. Again he tries to laugh his way out of it.

SIDNEY

(cynical)

Mary, don't try to sell me the Brooklyn Bridge. I happen to know it belongs to the Dodgers.

Mary, smiling, decides "to let him off the hook". She takes the spike and the column and passes it across to Sidney's side of the desk, as she returns briskly to her business.

MARY

(affably)

I don't mind you looking at the proof of the column in advance, as long as J.J. doesn't know. But don't do it like a boy stealing gum from a slot machine.

Sidney doesn't like this; but, on the other hand, he does want to look at the column. After only a momentary struggle, he picks the column off the spike and reads.

SIDNEY

Who put this item in about the comic?

(reading)

"If there's a more hilarious funny man around than Herbie Temple at the Palace, you'll have to pardon us for not catching the name. We were too busy screaming." Does this Temple have a press agent?

MARY

No. It's one of J.J.'s occasional beau gestes. Evidently the fellow's funny, so he gave him a plug.

He goes to the door, grinning.

SIDNEY

What's your favorite ribbon to go
around your favorite chocolates?

MARY

Let's wait till Christmas - it's
more legitimate then.

She looks after Sidney, thinks about him for a moment. Then she types.

EXT. PALACE THEATRE - DAY

Sidney comes down 47th Street from Broadway, making for the stage door entrance of the Palace theatre. He walks confidently into the alleyway, paying no attention to the old doorman gossiping with the shoeshine boy at the chairs next to the entrance. The doorman turns, protesting:

DOORMAN

(calling out)

Hey!

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

Sidney, without halting, looks back towards the Doorman, addressing him with the patronizing manner of a superior.

SIDNEY

Herbit Temple here yet?

DOORMAN

Yeah, but you can't come in now!

SIDNEY

I'm in, Sonny Boy!

He is already on his way into doorway.

INT. BACKSTAGE OF PALACE THEATRE

The movie will soon be finished and the comedian who opens the stage show is ready and made-up in the wings. He sits with his agent, (AL EVANS) a small, worried, bespectacled man, who waves an unlighted cigar as big as himself. They converse in loud whispers, talking against the muffled and echoing sound of the film sound track, silhouetted against the ghostly, distorted images on the big screen seen at a weird angle behind them.

EVANS

I didn't waste words, Herbie, take my word. I says, "look, Figo, I'm not selling you a dozen eggs, I'm selling you HERBIE TEMPLE", I says, so don't gimme your lip!

The comedian, Herbie Temple, looks up. Sidney comes through a fire-proof door which separates the stage from the corridors to dressing room. In background two chorus girls in costume are squeezed into a telephone booth. Sidney joins the comedian and the agent; he smiles to the comedian, while he addresses the agent.

SIDNEY

Hiya, Al!

The agent looks from Sidney to Temple, surprised and displeased.

EVANS

Since when did you two get acquainted?

Sidney has clearly never met Evans; blandly he chooses to regard the agent's remark as an introduction; he offers his hand with generous amiability.

SIDNEY

How do you do, Mr. Temple...

The comic accepts the hand doubtfully.

EVANS

(uncertain)
Delighted.

SIDNEY

I'm Sidney Falco.

TEMPLE

(still dubious)
Yeah, delighted...

Evans stands up, warns the comic.

EVANS

Watch this guy, Herbie, he's a press agent.

Temple's smile congeals.

TEMPLE

You watch him, Al, I s...s...stutter!

SIDNEY

(in no way discouraged)
Temple, I caught your act the other
night and -

TEMPLE

Did you now? On which bounce?

SIDNEY

- and I just had to drop by and
tell you how great I thought you
were.

TEMPLE

(dryly)
Cheers. What time is it, Al?

EVANS

You got ten minutes.
(to Sidney)
Hope you don't mind, Falco: we're
busy and if -

Sidney stands up.

SIDNEY

No, I don't mind. I'm busy too.

TEMPLE

(scowling)
Good! We're all off to Utica, so
excuse me, Mr. Frannis-on-the-
Portisan.

Sidney moves toward the doorway onto the corridor. The
chorus girls have now vacated the phone booth.

SIDNEY

But can I ask one impertinent
question here? With no criticism
intended, because I know, Al, you
earn your ten percent, how come you
let a sock act like Herbie Temple
tip-toe through town without a
publicity build...?

Smiling wise, Evans shakes his head.

EVANS

We're not buying it, Falco - no fish today.

Sidney presses, as if annoyed.

SIDNEY

I'm not selling. I'm just curious, that's all.

Temple turns away from Sidney, leaving him to Evans.

TEMPLE

Answer the man, Al, if he asks you a question. Quick, before he thinks up another!

Evans moves to Sidney, trying to shepherd him out the way he came.

EVANS

Mr. Temple doesn't believe in press agents - does that answer you something?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Evans makes the mistake of laying a hand on Sidney's elbow. Sidney doesn't like people touching him. He reacts in anger, as we have seen before - fixes a burning eye on Evans.

SIDNEY

Take your hand off, lump!
(more politely, to Temple)
No one believes in press agents, Temple, when they make claims they can't perform. I got nothing to sell - I didn't come here to peddle - but if I tell a client that Hunsecker will give him space, it's not just talk!

Sidney stops briskly up the stairs into the corridor. Evans, angry, is stalled for a moment of delay action by mention of the magic name of Hunsecker.

EVANS

(after hesitation)
Listen, you bull artist - !

TEMPLE

Let him go, Al...

SIDNEY

But Sidney has already stepped to the phone booth and is dialing.

SIDNEY

(to phone)

Hello? Mary, let me speak to J.J.,
please...it's Sidney Falco...

REVERSE ANGLE

Shooting past Sidney in foreground onto Temple and Evans beyond, they watch him, open-mouthed. Sidney notes their reaction.

SIDNEY

(to phone)

Tell him it's important...

INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gloria is at her desk, bewildered as she speaks into the phone.

GLORIA

What? Is this Sidney?...

RESUME BACKSTAGE OF PALACE THEATRE

SIDNEY

(to phone)

Sure, I'll wait...

While doing so, he glances back with disinterest at Evans and Temple. The comedian and the agent exchange looks. Evans is uneasy; he comes up the steps into the corridor to address Sidney with a deflated manner.

EVANS

(hesitant)

Look, nobody hired you! We didn't
talk any deal, and -

With his hand over the mouthpiece, Sidney addresses Evans with contempt.

SIDNEY

Relax, lump! I told you I'm not
selling fish...

(abruptly reverting
to the phone)

J.J...Sidney!...How are you,
sweetheart?

(laughing)

Yeah...

(then seriously)

Listen, I know it's late, J.J., but
is it too late to add something
important to the column?

(grinning)

No, not a relative, but important...

RESUME - GLORIA IN INT. OF SIDNEY'S APARTMENT

Shaking her head, Gloria places the phone down on the desk, looks at it as it chatters away. She considers returning to her typing, but, worried, picks the phone up again. Sidney's chattering voice is barely audible: "You know Herbie Temple, the comic...? What about him? He's at the Palace and he's great. That's what about him. And you'd do me a big bunny basket of a favor if you would say it in tomorrow's column.

RESUME BACKSTAGE PALACE THEATRE

Temple and Evans are now staring at Sidney with considerable respect.

REVERSE ANGLE

The comedian and the agent in foreground, Sidney still on the phone beyond.

SIDNEY

Yeah, if you got a pencil there
I'll suggest a word or two.
Uh...uh...

The comedian and the agent in foreground, Sidney still on the phone beyond.

SIDNEY

(to phone, continuing)

If there's a funnier man in the
world than Herbie Temple at the
Palace...uh...pardon us for not
catching the name, we were too busy
laughing. No, make that 'screaming'.

(then)

It's sweet of you, J.J., thanks.
Probably see you at Twenty One
tonight. No, for supper, late.
Right. 'Bye...

TEMPLE

Speak to this lad, Al, ... to Mr.
Falco.

SIDNEY

See me in my office.

He turns and walks away down the corridor. As he vanishes,
Temple starts after him.

CORRIDOR

Sidney walks off in the direction of the exit -- (not so
fast that he can't be overtaken). Temple hurries into the
corridor and comes after him. Evans also follows, though
not so eagerly.

TEMPLE

Wait a minute.
(turning back to
encourage Evans)
Speak to him, Al.
(to Sidney, apologetically)
Al makes all my deals.

Sidney permits himself to be detained.

SIDNEY

(coolly, looking
toward Evans)
I don't like a guy that's quick
with the hands.
(to Temple)
Temple, you've been three passes
behind for twenty years. This
could start you off big - T.V. and
anywhere.

Evans, not as wholly convinced as the comedian, comes up to
join them. Temple looks at the agent.

TEMPLE

And it would cost a pretty penny,
huh?

SIDNEY

(to Evans)
You tell him, I stutter!

EVANS

(shrewdly)
Uh...Why don't we wait till tomorrow?

Sidney, shrugging, makes a negligent exit.

SIDNEY

(as he goes)

Wait as long as you like - you know
where my office is.

They look after him. Evans face is cold and suspecting, but Temple's face contains fresh warmth.

DISSOLVE TO:

STAIRS OUTSIDE SIDNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Sidney comes briskly up the stairs. Outside his door he pauses, listens, hearing the murmur of voices inside. Then he walks in casually.

INT. SIDNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Sidney steps in, closing the door. He pretends surprise as he sees...

ANOTHER ANGLE

...Steve and D'Angelo waiting for him. Sidney comes into SHOT. Sally remains at her desk while Steve and D'Angelo are silent, looking at Sidney.

SIDNEY

(perkily)

What is here, a wake?

D'Angelo rises from the couch, crossing to Sidney to hand him a copy of the tabloid, The Record. It is folded open at Elwell's column. As he passes it to Sidney, D'Angelo marks with his thumbnail an item near the bottom of the column. Sidney takes the paper and reads. (He reads a little too quickly.) Then he hands it back to D'Angelo.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Steve notes Sidney's too-perfunctory reading.

STEVE

You read as you run, don't you?

Sidney turns on Steve, coldly:

SIDNEY

It's a habit with me. So now I'm

briefed. So what?

STEVE

(glancing at D'Angelo)
Frank thinks I shouldn't have come
here -

D'ANGELO

(a quick correction)
Excuse me, Steve. I said namely
you shouldn't go around wild,
blaming people without justification.

STEVE

(watchfully, to Sidney)
I thought you might have a faint
idea of how this item originated.

REVERSE ANGLE

Favoring Sidney. He pauses.

SIDNEY

Why me...?

STEVE

Why not you?

SIDNEY

That's your idea of logic? I tell
the Judge I didn't murder the man -
the Judge says, "Why not you?"

STEVE

Only two men in this town could be
responsible for that smear - you or
Hunsecker or both.

SIDNEY

(explosively)
Dallas, ask your own manager - he's
standing here like a pained
wolfhound - Hunsecker and Elwell
are enemies to the knife. So how
do you get him doing J.J. a favor?

STEVE

(quickly)
It is a favor, isn't it?

SIDNEY

(as quickly)

According to you, yeah.

(continuing rapidly
and with heat)

Dallas, your mouth is as big as a basket and twice as empty! I don't like you, comma, but neither do I go along with this column saying you smoke marijuana and belong with the Reds. Also, since we're talking repulsive, J.J. won't like this for two cents! Don't give me that look, Dallas - J.J. believes in fair play. And secondly, this could splatter his sister with rotten egg by implication - your her boyfriend!

RESUME REVERSE ANGLE

Sidney's manner is a little too vigorous. (In adopting an aggressive tone, he is really trying to needle Steve.) Steve, though on the verge of losing his temper, is sharp enough to notice the point:

STEVE

You're talking very fast.

SIDNEY

(expostulating)

Well, I'll tell you what - excuse me for breathing, will ya?

(wheeling to Sally)

How do you like it? He comes to my office and -

D'ANGELO

Sensing the danger, D'Angelo moves forward soothingly between them.

D'ANGELO

Boys, this gets nobody nowhere - you're over excited, Steve and -

STEVE

(sharply)

Don't apologize for me, Frank!

D'ANGELO

...excited with good reason, I wanted to say.

(to Sidney)

Because this endangers the future
of the whole quintet...

SIDNEY

(lightly)
Should I cry...?

Steve, with a glare at both men, goes to the phone on
Sally's desk. He dials.

D'ANGELO

(continuing)
...People catch on quick to such an
item. Van Cleve already called
me - he's firing the quintet.

SIDNEY

Then what are you doing here? Go
over there and fight! If Van Cleve
fires your boy, it gives a lie the
ring of truth!

In background Steve speaks quietly into the phone:

STEVE

I want to speak to Miss Hunsecker,
please.

D'ANGELO

(replying to Sidney's question)
We're on our way there now...

SIDNEY

(who has wheeled on Steve)
What are you calling her for...?

STEVE

Sidney's reaction to the mention of Susan's name gives Steve
food for thought. While he waits for Susan to be summoned
to the phone, he studies Sidney.

STEVE

(to Sidney)
I'm the boyfriend, remember? I
hope one day she'll be my wife...
(into the phone, gently)
This is Steve, Susie. Don't be
alarmed, Susie, but I want you to
look at Elwell's column in The
Record...today...No, about me...

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - SUSAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Susan is on the phone. Listening to what Steve says, she is frightened - almost too frightened; it is as if, in some curious sense, she had been expecting this blow. It brings an echo of an earlier tragedy.

SUSAN

A smear?...What...What kind of smear...? Where are you?

INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT

Steve is on the phone in foreground, the others watching him. In particular, Sally, who stands near Steve, is studying him with obvious sympathy. She looks slowly towards Sidney.

STEVE

(to the phone)

We're on our way to the Elysian Room to dicker with Van Cleve - he's fired us already. I'll call you later, dear... 'Bye!...

He hangs up quietly, looks at Sidney and walks towards the door.

STEVE

Come on, Frank.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the door closes behind Steve, Frank follows, more slowly. As D'Angelo reaches the door, he pauses with his hand on the doorknob and turns back to study Sidney.

SIDNEY

He feels uneasy under D'Angelo's scrutiny. Sally, in background, is also watching Sidney.

SIDNEY

(to D'Angelo)

What are you looking at...?

D'ANGELO

He does not answer for a moment. The unspoken accusation in his look is very clear. Then:

D'ANGELO

(quietly)

The ugly world, Sidney...
(a pause)
If I told Steve what I really
think, he'd tear your head off...

RESUME SIDNEY

He brazens it out.

SIDNEY

(sneering)
Tell him.

RESUME D'ANGELO

D'Angelo shakes his head.

D'ANGELO

No. I'm interested in his future.

D'Angelo goes slowly out.

RESUME SIDNEY

He hesitates before turning towards Sally (because he realizes that this exchange with D'Angelo must have confirmed Sally in her suspicions).

SALLY

Her face shows that Sidney is right. Sally is deeply hurt, disillusioned.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sidney turns to her, challenging.

SIDNEY

What's the matter?

SALLY

(not looking at him)
Nothing...

Resentfully, Sidney moves about the room. Sensing the silent accusation against him, he is aggressive.

SIDNEY

You know, Sally, sometimes I get
the impression you think you live
in Star-Bright Park. This is life,
kid - get used to it!

Sidney comes to the phone on her desk. He dials. Then he glances swiftly at Sally and, carrying the phone, walks into the bedroom, dragging the long cord behind him.

INT. BEDROOM

When the phone comes alive, Sidney pushes the bedroom door shut. The gesture is as casual as he can contrive to make it. Keeping his voice fairly low so that it cannot be heard in the other room, he says:

SIDNEY

(to phone)

Nikko, is Mr. Hunsecker there?
This is Mr. Falco. Well, have him
call me as soon as he can. It's
important.

He sets the phone down on the bedside table, looks at it thoughtfully before he goes back to the bedroom door, opens it and goes back into the office.

INT. OFFICE

Sidney stands on the threshold, studying Sally. His manner is now more sympathetic as he asks:

SIDNEY

Did you send my folks in Philly the
check...?

SALLY

Yes.

Leaving the bedroom door open, Sidney comes up to her, watches her shrewdly, cautiously.

SIDNEY

(softly)

I put a lotta trust in you,
Chickie...

SALLY

(low-voiced)

I know you do, Sidney.

SIDNEY

Don't judge a situation where you
don't know what's involved...

Sally is putting paper in the typewriter, trying to hold her

head up.

SALLY

I'm not judging...

Sidney comes closer to her. He puts his hand on the nape of her neck, carrassing her. Under his touch, the girl is unhappy, and yet at the same time, responsive. Sidney still has power over her but she is disturbed by feelings of shame. Feeling her relaxed, Sidney bends and kisses her on the side of the throat with more than negligence, for something about her always excites him; his aggression tune in with her submissiveness.

SALLY

(pathetically)

I swear, Sidney, I can't help it -
sometimes I wonder what I see in
you...

SIDNEY

(murmuring)

That's no way to talk...

SALLY

Or what you see in me, for that
matter...

SIDNEY

Stay down town tonight. Maybe
we'll take in a show, etc.

SALLY

If you want me to -

The phone in the bedroom rings. Sidney, reacting sharply, forgets his advances to Sally as he turns towards the bedroom.

SIDNEY

(exhilarated)

You see? Hunsecker's gotta phone ME!

He goes into the bedroom, closing the door as he goes. Sally looks at the closed door.

INT. BEDROOM

Sidney has picked up the phone.

SIDNEY

(calmly)

Hello, J.J....I presume you saw the

Elwell smear.

(smiling)

No, no medals - not yet. Oh, it's worse than that - Aunty Van Cleve is firing them...from the horse's mouth... They were just here - in a panic...

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - THE STUDY - DAY

Hunsecker wears a dressing gown as he sits at his breakfast table. Behind him are the big glass windows to the terrace overlooking the Manhattan skyline. The papers are at Hunsecker's elbow; his manner is crisp and cold:

HUNSECKER

Who was just there?

(then)

You'll be the death of me. Sidalee! Why? Didn't you just tell me that they've already traced this smear to you? All they have to do now is to put two and two together and I'm a chicken in a pot!

RESUME SIDNEY'S APARTMENT

Sidney smiles confidently, answers calmly:

SIDNEY

J.J., peace on earth, good will to men - it's working out just the way I planned. Yeah, I guarantee this bomb will pop right on schedule, but you have to play your part - you be a Saint and let me be the Devil. But I wanna talk to you first...

RESUME HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE

Hunsecker pauses, eyes full of cold voltage.

HUNSECKER

Don't come here. Susie is up and about.

(listening)

He called her? You'd better see me at the TV - three o'clock.

He bangs down the phone, tense thought in his manner.

INT. SIDNEY'S APARTMENT

Sally is busy with her typing again, but in a depressed mood when Sidney comes out of the bedroom to put the phone down on her desk again. He seems satisfied with himself, smug. Sally watches him for a moment. Then:

SALLY

What are you going to do?

Sidney prepares to leave the apartment. His tone is full of confidence, self-assertive. (For once Sidney is certain that he is smarter, more cunning than even Hunsecker).

SIDNEY

(the wise one)

Chickie, a lotta people think they're smart. You watch. They're dumb: they'll do the work for me! Just watch.

Sidney makes for the door, goes out.

INT. CIGAR STAND - LOBBY

Susan buys paper - DOLLY with her - toward elevator - she gets in.

INT. HUNSECKER'S LIVING ROOM

J.J. has not moved; he is thoughtful and morose. Nikko, the Japanese butler, comes in to remove the breakfast table.

HUNSECKER

The table can wait. No calls. I have to think about my TV show.

NIKKO

Pleased to do. I will come back later.

HUNSECKER

(abruptly)

Did you put the bread out on the terrace for the birds?

NIKKO

Yes, but they don't come no more this time of year.

Smiling, Nikko leaves. Hunsecker picks up a pencil and makes a note on a pad, about birds no doubt. Abruptly he looks up, calling:

HUNSECKER

Susie! Come in a minute, dear...

She has been trying to pass unnoticed to her room. She comes forward to him; her manner is serious and wary. His act is one of a tasteful Mammy singer, but he is watchful, too.

HUNSECKER

Susie, you're very much in my thoughts today.

SUSAN

Why?

HUNSECKER

What a question, dear, with that newspaper in your hand...

SUSAN

(pausing)

Did Sidney tell you about it?

HUNSECKER

Yes, he phoned. I don't know this boy too well. Anything in these charges?

She shakes her head.

HUNSECKER

Not being partial, are you?

SUSAN

(with quiet certainty)

No, I'm not. I'm not!

He soothes, smiles indulgent, but watchful:

HUNSECKER

Susie, take it easy. I'll trust your judgment - you don't have to protest with me.

With a paternal gesture of affection, he holds out his arms, inviting her into his comforting embrace. Not wanting to, she walks into his open waiting arms.

HUNSECKER

Why are you trembling, dear...?

SUSAN

History repeats itself. Everything that happened to Alan Leslie...began with a smear like this...

Hunsecker considers this gravely, as if it was a new and troubling thought.

HUNSECKER

Yes...

She leaves his arms; he watches keenly.

SUSAN

(incoherent)

It's just as if I've seen a ghost today...

HUNSECKER

(quickly)

But that wasn't your fault, dear, what happened to Leslie. I've told you that a million times...

He goes to her gently; she appraises both him and her wrenched life with brooding, frightened eyes.

SUSAN

Then whose fault was it, J.J.? It was someone's fault, wasn't it?

HUNSECKER

(gravely)

I wouldn't have called the boy exactly balanced...

SUSAN

(stronger)

Alan was not...unbalanced when I married him. And he was not...'indifferent to women' no matter what they said!

HUNSECKER

(simply)

I'm not fighting with you, puss...

She gets up and walks around in considerable agitation.

SUSAN

He never would have killed himself if I hadn't gone through with the annulment. Don't you see that made

all the rumors seem true? I should
have stood up for him...not run out.

She turns to Hunsecker, her manner firmer.

SIDNEY

J.J., I want you to get them back
their job, Steve and the Quintet.

HUNSECKER

("incredulously")
You mean they've been fired already,
on the basis of this crude smear?

He walks away with a wag of indignation, but turns, asking:

HUNSECKER

Susie, you're sure there isn't some
fire where there's this much smoke?

Susan shakes her head emphatically.

SIDNEY

(earnestly)
I know Steve. No.

HUNSECKER

Then maybe you can tell me if he's
as solid as you say, why does he
rap me every chance he gets?

SUSAN

(involuntarily)
Sidney is a liar!

HUNSECKER

Who said Sidney?

SUSAN

(defiantly)
I said Sidney!...

Staring, he pauses; then he deftly changes the subject.

HUNSECKER

You know, dear, we're drifting
apart, you and I, and I don't like
that.

SUSAN

I thought we were talking about
Sidney?

HUNSECKER

(with rasp)

Let me finish, dear. You had your say, now let me have mine...

SUSAN

(interrupting)

I haven't said anything yet, J.J., but if -

Susan hesitates. Hunsecker waits for her to continue. But she isn't yet sure enough of herself or of the point she means to make. She turns away.

HUNSECKER

(gently)

I started to say we're drifting apart. A year ago, in your wildest dreams, would you have walked by that door without taking up this situation with me? Today I had to call you in!

SUSAN

I'm taking up the situation with you now...

HUNSECKER

(interrupting)

Susie, I want to help you--, there's nothing I won't do for you. You're all I've got in the whole, wide world.

Hunsecker strides about, elaborately playing on a note of disillusion and pain.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

Well, what have I got? Alimony to a pair of tramps? They're of no concern to me. It's you who count, but don't get me wrong - I don't intend to let you break your neck again!

SIDNEY

J.J., you said you want to help me - prove it!

HUNSECKER

(quietly)
How?

SIDNEY
Get Steve back his job...please...

HUNSECKER
(pausing)
He means that much to you...?

SIDNEY
(simply)
Yes.
(then)
With your "prestige" it only takes
a minute - ten cents worth of
American Tel and Tel.

HUNSECKER
You're picking up my lingo, hon.

SIDNEY
(levelly)
I read your column every day...

He looks at her with pursed lips and, for a change, some real interest. Her level, straightforward manner has pinned him down completely; he shows a slow, charming grin, as he goes for a private phone book:

HUNSECKER
Susie, I like this new attitude of yours. You're growing up and I like it! I don't like it when you're limp and dependent, when you're odd and wayward. This gives you a chance for real survival in a very lousy world. Because, don't forget, dear, you won't always have me with you, will you...?

SIDNEY
No, I won't...

He crosses to the white desk phone, delaying dialing for a moment:

HUNSECKER
This Dallas boy must be good for you. Why not bring him around today, before the show? This time I'll clean my glasses for a better

look.

Susan doesn't like this idea, is evasive:

SIDNEY

I'm not sure I can reach him in time.

HUNSECKER

(easily)

Sure you can if you want to, and I know you'll want to...

(then)

By the way, what's your beef against little Sidney?

SUSAN

(steadily)

When I'm certain, I'll let you know...

HUNSECKER

A man couldn't ask for a squarer shake.

(into phone)

Let me have Billy Van Cleve...

(then)

Don't ever tell anyone, Susie, how I'm tied to your apron strings...

(to phone)

Billy! J.J.! What's this about that boy? What boy? Where are we, lug, in a drawing room comedy? You're brain is warming up, sweetheart - yeah, Dallas!...

(then)

No, don't explain your point of view, but...

EXT. TV THEATRE - DAY

CAMERA SHOOTS TOWARDS the entrance to the TV theatre. A line of people are queuing for Hunsecker's TV Broadcast which is advertised by large posters beside the entrance. A taxi drives up in foreground; Susan Hunsecker gets out.

SIDNEY

Sidney comes up Sixth Avenue towards the theatre. As he reaches the corner of the building, he halts, having seen...

SUSAN

Susan is seen in the act of paying the driver. As the taxi pulls away, Susan walks CAMERA left.

TV THEATRE

Susan pauses, deciding not to enter the theatre; turning she looks about her and waits on the sidewalk outside.

SIDNEY

Sidney decides that this is not the moment to approach Susan. He glances down the sidestreet then moves off in that direction.

SIDESTREET

Sidney moves down the sidestreet towards a stage entrance, through which are emerging some TV technicians. He slips inside.

INT. TV STATION

Hunsecker is standing at a table, stop watch in hand, reading aloud from a script which he is rehearsing and timing. Beside him sits Mary busy typing more of the material from Hunsecker's handwritten note. Mary is calm, but he is irritable, trying to concentrate despite the bustle around him.

An old movie star, MILDRED TAM, sits waiting in one of the canvas-backed chairs supplied for the guests on the show. BURTON, a manager, also waits, deadpan, at Hunsecker's elbow. Hunsecker clicks his stop watch as he reads:

HUNSECKER

"I was reminded of it this morning, when I noticed that the birds had gone South. We want the same kind of freedom for ourselves - that's what the man said!

(he clicks the watch,
pauses to underline
the phrase, continues:)

A man has the right to face his
accusers! That's the American Way!
Who said? The man said! From..."

He turns in exasperation to Burton.

HUNSECKER

Burton, don't stand around. If I
go over I'll cut some items off the

tail...

Burton departs. Mary whips a second sheet out of the typewriter, hands it to Hunsecker. As he accepts it, Hunsecker looks off towards the auditorium.

SIDNEY

SHOOTING towards the auditorium, from Hunsecker's viewpoint. Sidney mounts the steps onto the stage. Seeing that the columnist is surrounded but knowing that J.J. wants to talk to him privately, Sidney loiters so that J.J. can join him as soon as he chooses to. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hunsecker. Only momentarily distracted by private considerations connected with Sidney's arrival, Hunsecker returns to the business of timing the script. He clicks the watch again...

HUNSECKER

"From Washington through to Jefferson, from Lincoln and F.D.R. right up to today - the Democratic Way of Life! That's what the man said! Nowadays it doesn't export to well...

(then, concluding)

But you know...and I know...that our best secret weapon is D-E-M-O-C-R-A-C-Y.

(dropping to a modest tone)

Let's never forget it, ladies and gentlemen."

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sidney lingers beside the old movie star who is listening, rapt, to Hunsecker's words. Sidney is less impressed with J.J.'s eloquence. At the conclusion, Mildred applauds lightly. She stands up and moves towards J.J. J.J. wants to talk to Sidney but is frustrated by the old movie star.

MILDRED TAM

That's grand, just grand, J.J.!

(then, anxiously)

Is my makeup all right? You know, despite the scads of movies I've made, I've never appeared on TV yet...

HUNSECKER

(cutting her short)

Of course, Mildred. Of course.

You look fine.
 (swiftly summoning Mary)
Mary, help Miss Tam - anything she
wants; she's our star today.

Under the pretense of studying the typed script, J.J. walks
away across the stage. Sidney strolls after him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A TRACKING SHOT. Sidney comes up beside Hunsecker, falls
into step beside him. As they cross towards a water cooler
at the back of the stage, they talk in rapid undertone.

HUNSECKER

I got that boy coming over here.
 (a glance at Sidney)
What's so funny?

SIDNEY

 (who is smiling faintly)
With a pocket fulla firecrackers -
good.

HUNSECKER

 (narrowly)
I think you loused this up but good.
If I can trust my eyes, and I think
I can, Susie knows all about your
dirty work.

SIDNEY

 (shrugging)
Can't hurt...

HUNSECKER

 (incredulously)
Can't hurt? I had to get him back
his job.

SIDNEY

 (smugly)
I like that, too.
 (closer, faster)
Look, J.J., we can wrap this up in
one neat bundle, addressed to the
dumps - to oblivion. We're going
great, but please play it my way.
I cased this kid.
Know his ins and outs...He's fulla
juice and vinegar, just begging for
some big shot like you to give him

a squeeze. Do little Sidney a favor: squeeze! - You know, J.J. - the porcupine bit - needles.

HUNSECKER

But it's too late. I got him back the job...

SIDNEY

(impatiently)

No, that's the point - he won't accept your favor! The manager yes, but not the boy.

A pause. Hunsecker renumerates.

HUNSECKER

Well he's got her in a tizzy, I'll tell you that!

SIDNEY

Sure, he steams her up - wants her to stand on her own two feet and all that jazz!

HUNSECKER

And who's feet is she on now?

SIDNEY

Presumably yours...

(a hasty addition)

That's according to St. Dallas.

HUNSECKER

What's this boy got that Susie likes?

SIDNEY

Integrity - acute, like indigestion.

HUNSECKER

What does that mean - integrity?

SIDNEY

(repeating as before)

A pocket fulla firecrackers - looking for a match!

(grinning)

It's a new wrinkle to tell the truth... I never thought I'd make a killing on some guy's "integrity".

Hunsecker gives him certain slow begrudging admiration:

HUNSECKER

Full of beans, ain't you? But you know that you'll stand or fall by what you're doing now...

SIDNEY

(grins; confidently)
Calculated risk. Only we happen to know, J.J., that you like me. I'm your star pupil -- I reflect back to you your own talent.

Hunsecker permits himself a faint smile. Burton is approaching with script in hand.

HUNSECKER

I wouldn't like to take a bite of you; you're a cookie full of arsenic.

Sidney smirks. He turns away and goes off towards the auditorium in the background.

EXT. TV STATION - DAY

Frank D'Angelo pays a taxi out of which he and Steve have just emerged. Frank turns towards the boy, resuming a conversation as they stroll across the sidewalk towards the entrance of the theatre.

STEVE

(depressed)
I still think he's responsible for the smear.

D'ANGELO

Not that I'm convinced, but you'll never prove it in a million years.
(gently)
Steve, you'll do what you want, but it can't hurt; he offers you an olive branch - so today like olives!

STEVE

I guess you're right, but -

Steve completes the sentence with a slow shake of the head; compromise is a gesture which he finds very difficult.

D'ANGELO

D'Angelo studies the boy with a paternal affection.

D'ANGELO

Steve, sometimes it's better not to look at your own honesty; but to look the other man in the face. Not because you're my meal ticket - which you are - but because I like you and the boys, please take my advice: we -

D'Angelo stops, halted by an expression which he sees in Steve's face.

STEVE

He is looking through the glass doors of the TV Theatre, no longer listening to D'Angelo's words; his face has hardened in anger.

INT. TV THEATRE FOYER

From Steve's viewpoint. Sidney has come out of the curtained entrance to the auditorium. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Steve in foreground. With a movement that suggests his annoyance at discovering Sidney present, Steve jerks open the glass door and moves in.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Susan is waiting in the foyer. She is standing in a position where she has not been able to see Steve until he enters; now she moves forward to greet him. As soon as she is near him, she speaks in a quiet, urgent manner:

SUSAN

(in an undertone)

Steve, before we go in - I'd like to...

But she, too, is halted as Steve lays a hand on her arm. Seeing his look over her shoulder, she turns...

SIDNEY

He is already strolling forward to join them. CAMERA PANS with him to include Susie, Steve and D'Angelo.

SIDNEY

Hey, Susie - This is a real surprise -- not one but three. J.J.'s just finishing up his rehearsal.

STAGE

Hunsecker comes forward to the front of the stage looking towards...

STEVE, SUSAN, D'ANGELO AND SIDNEY

In the group that comes down the aisle of the empty theatre.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He studies them, then calls out:

HUNSECKER

Looks like a wedding.

REVERSE ANGLE

Hunsecker back to CAMERA in foreground; he begins to whistle The Wedding March to the rhythm of Steve and Susan's walk.

STEVE

He breaks the rhythm of his stride, his face rigid.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He descends to meet them; his manner is full of welcome.

REVERSE ANGLE

Susan nervously makes the introduction - Steve is nervous; D'Angelo hangs behind warily; Sidney is in background.

SUSAN

Steve, you remember my brother...

STEVE & HUNSECKER

(together)

Of course.

Steve shakes the hand that the smiling Hunsecker gives.

HUNSECKER

Well, son, looks like you went out and bought yourself a packet of trouble...

STEVE

You've been very kind about it, Mr. Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER

Give Susie credit for that. I took her word that there was nothing to the smear. Matter of fact, I'll have my say about smears on the show today. That's why I'd like YOUR personal assurance, too.

STEVE

(quietly)

Mr. Hunsecker, there's nothing to that smear. You have my sincere word...

HUNSECKER

(nodding judicially)

I'll by that, son. Now, you owe ME a favor.

(pausing; to Susan)

Be good to my kid sister...

SIDNEY

(solemnly)

Yeah, she's had a peck of trouble for a kid...

Hunsecker flicks a look at Sidney. No one else, warier by the minute, knows what to say. Hunsecker purrs onward:

HUNSECKER

Susie likes to keep her girlish secrets. But in her heart of hearts I imagine, Dallas, that she fancies you in an uncommon way. Now, what about YOU, son? Not just tom-cattin' around...I hope?

SUSAN

(quickly)

J.J., Steve isn't...

Hunsecker cuts her off with lazy good nature:

HUNSECKER

Take it easy, Susie. He wouldn't be much of a man if he didn't understand my concern. Would you, son?

STEVE

(pausing, quietly)

No, I wouldn't...

HUNSECKER

(nodding)

Serious as a deacon...I like it. I like your style, son! In a world of old rags and bones, I like it! For instance, take Sidney.

Hunsecker crosses toward Sidney.

HUNSECKER (CONT'D)

If Sidney got anywhere near Susie I'd break a bat over Sidney's head!

(smiling faintly)

Sidney lives so much in a moral twilight that, when I said you were coming here, he predicted disaster. You wouldn't take my favor -- you'd chew up the job, he said, and spit it right back in my face!

(sniffing)

Any truth in that...?

D'ANGELO, STEVE AND SUSAN

Steve is thrown for a loss momentarily; Frank steps in.

D'ANGELO

No, Mr. Hunsecker, and if I can amplify --

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

HUNSECKER

(motionless)

Don't amplify.

RESUME D'ANGELO, STEVE AND SUSAN

D'ANGELO

Steve wants a thank you for this favor. He --

GROUP SHOT

SIDNEY

(provocatively)

Frank, you don't listen! J.J. just told you to shut your mouth!

STEVE

(hotly)

Don't you think it's about time you shut yours? Who are you to tell a man like Frank D'Angelo to shut up?!

D'ANGELO

(warningly)

Steve, that isn't important --

But Steve, on a heated rip, has turned to Hunsecker:

STEVE

Does he have to be here in our hair?

HUNSECKER

HUNSECKER

Why, has he bothered you before?

STEVE, D'ANGELO AND SUSAN

STEVE

Is it news to you?

HUNSECKER

HUNSECKER

Son, lots of people tell me I'm a gifted man, but I still can't see around corners.

GROUP SHOT

HUNSECKER

(tolerantly)

Just exactly what are you so hot about?

(waiting)

I mean, I know it's a difficult thing to be an artist in this crudest of possible worlds, but --

STEVE

(impatiently)

Nuts! I'm not here as an artist! I'm here as an average Joe, who happens to love your sister Susie!

HUNSECKER

(with ironic smirk)

Well, just be careful you don't knock her down, huh?

Steve stops dead. Then, strangely and dangerously, he picks up Hunsecker's smile. On each man's face the smile broadens and grows up into a chuckle from each; but the meanness still flickers around Hunsecker's mouth. Steve is out of the net!

HUNSECKER

(affably)

Frankly, son, you lost me on that last hill. Just give us the punch line...

STEVE

(agreeably)

No punch line. Maybe I was just admiring your know-how---yours and Falco's.

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

HUNSECKER

Why do you keep coupling me with Falco?

STEVE, D'ANGELO AND SUSAN

STEVE

(innocently)

He's here, isn't he? Do you think, sir, when he dies he'll go to the dog and cat heaven?

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Even Hunsecker smiles. Sidney likes neither the ridicule or the turn of events. He moves quickly past CAMERA.

SIDNEY, STEVE, D'ANGELO AND SUSAN

Sidney comes round the row of theatre seats to attack Steve.

SIDNEY

Let's forget cats and dogs and other pseudo-literary remarks--- I'll just lay it on the line! What about that big rumpus in my office today? You were there, Frank! Where, according to St. Dallas, J.J. was responsible for the Elwell smear!

HUNSECKER

HUNSECKER

Don't go wild, Sidney.

GROUP SHOT

SIDNEY

Wild? Take a look at them and see
who's wild...

Playing along nicely, Hunsecker looks at Steve and Frank and slowly removes his arm from Susan; he pauses before asking Dallas:

HUNSECKER

What about that...?

D'ANGELO

(uneasily)
Steve was excited...he didn't mean
it exactly the way it's stated
here...

HUNSECKER

(to Steve)
How did you mean it...?

SIDNEY

What he likes to---

SUSAN

J.J., I don't want to say---

With a roar Hunsecker takes them both out of play; he stands up.

SIDNEY, STEVE, D'ANGELO

Hunsecker enters from behind CAMERA.

HUNSECKER

Both of you keep quiet!
(to Sidney)
You've made more damage here in one
minute than a plague of locusts!
If you're tired, Susie, sit down---
this needs investigation!
(to Steve, quieter)
How did you mean it...?
(waiting)
Come on, let's go! Let's go!...

Steve is cornered, the other completely out of play. He pauses:

STEVE

I don't take kindly to you and Falco selling me ethics. Who's the injured party here, you?

HUNSECKER

(with contempt)

Right now you're in no position to ask questions! And your snide remarks---

STEVE

(stronger)

Wait a minute, I haven't handed over punishing privileges to you YET! Put the whip down and I might respect what you're saying...

Switching his leonine tail, Hunsecker looks broodingly at Susie. Frank says one beseeching word, "Steve...", but no one hears him.

HUNSECKER

Susie, did you know about this accusation...?

SUSAN

SUSAN

(mutely)

No...

HUNSECKER

HUNSECKER

(abruptly)

Before you leave, son, I'll answer your question---Susan Hunsecker is the injured party here!

(balefully)

Or will I be hearing next that I don't even have my sister's welfare at heart...

STEVE AND SUSAN

Steve hesitates defensively but can't resist a small smile; he moves nearer to Susan.

STEVE

Mr. Hunsecker, you've got more twists than a barrel of pretzels.

HUNSECKER

(unturning)
You hear that, Susie...
(to Steve)
Continue please...

STEVE

(shaking his head)
I'm afraid I can't cope with them.

REVERSE ANGLE

Susan in foreground, Steve, Hunsecker and Sidney beyond.

STEVE (CONT'D)

(simply)
You're too shrewd for me so I'll
just be honest. Susie and I love
each other, if I'm not mistaken,
and we want to get married.

Hunsecker pauses; Sidney throws in a stage whisper:

SIDNEY

Give him credit---the boy's gall is
gorgeous!

STEVE

Why don't we hear what Susie has to
say?

HUNSECKER

(sardonically)
That's stout of you, Dallas, but
Susie may not care to air her
dismal views in public...

Steve walks to Susie, trying to lift her with his hopes and
air of gentle urging and support.

STEVE

Susie...?

SUSAN

She stares at the floor.

RESUME REVERSE ANGLE

Hunsecker doesn't like the drift of things; his mouth
tightens and he speaks to Susan with veiled warning:

HUNSECKER

Susie, as always, is free to say anything she thinks. Go on, dear, say exactly what's on your mind, dear.

STEVE

Those "dears" sound like daggers. May I suggest that you stop DARING her to speak?

HUNSECKER

May I lift my eyebrows? What is this? What are you trying to do?

STEVE

(strongly)

I'm trying to get Susie to stand up to you. But your manner is so threatening that she's afraid to speak!

HUNSECKER

Son, you raise your voice again and you'll be outa here on your golden pratt!

SUSAN

Suddenly Susan lets loose, with restrained nervous energy; she is near to tears.

SUSAN

Steve, if only for my sake, I want this stopped! And the same goes for you, too, J.J.!

HUNSECKER

He interjects.

HUNSECKER

(contritely)

Susie, I'm sorry if---

RESUME SUSAN

SUSAN

(bitterly)

Sometimes I think ALL men are fools!...

Restraining tears, she runs up the steps to the stage.

STEVE, HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Steve looks after her. Sidney watches intently. Hunsecker's smile is frostily taunting:

HUNSECKER

You see, Dallas, a plague on both
our houses...

(then)

We may have to call this game on
account of darkness...

Steve turns a blank-eyed stare at him. Tension gone, a slow mumbling fatigue has set in. Hunsecker plays it light:

HUNSECKER

If looks could kill, I'm dead...

STEVE

(slowly)

No, I don't care about you --
you're fantastic. My whole
interest, if it's not too late, is
in Susie...and how to undo what
you've done to her...

HUNSECKER

(smiling)

And what have I done to her,
besides not buy her a new fur coat
lately? Sidney, you were right --
the boy's a dilly.

STEVE

(stung)

Why? Because I don't like the way
you toy with human lives? - Your
contempt and malice? Because I
won't be the accomplice of your
sick ego - and the way it's crippled
Susie...? You think of yourself -
you and your column - you see
yourself as a national glory...but
to me, and thousands of others like
me, you and your slimy scandal,
your phony patriotics - to me, Mr.
Hunsecker, you are a national
disgrace!

HUNSECKER

(blandly)
Son, I don't fancy shooting
mosquitoes with elephant guns. So
suppose you just shuffle along and
call it a day...

He turns and stares away, but Steve stops him with---

STEVE

But my day with Susie isn't over
yet and--

HUNSECKER

(cold)
Ten'll get you fifty you're playing
hookey from a padded cell!

STAGE

Hunsecker comes up the steps from the auditorium, Sidney following closely behind. In background, beyond, Steve and D'Angelo are walking up the aisle to the exit. CAMERA TRACKS CLOSE on Sidney and Hunsecker. Hunsecker's face is rigid. Sidney, close at his elbow, whispers:

SIDNEY

(softly)
You did it, J.J., you did it good...

Sidney is full of confidence. But Hunsecker barely hears him (Hunsecker has been hurt very deeply by the boy's attack; in particular, by the appalling fear that what Steve has said is the kind of thing which Susan may also secretly believe.)

ANOTHER ANGLE

Susan is still standing in the wings. Mary is with her, obviously sympathetic. The girl is drying her eyes with Kleenex, and Mary glances at her employer with a look of reproach. Hunsecker walks round the table, obviously trying to approach Susan; seeing this, Susan turns away and moves further from him. Hunsecker stops.

HUNSECKER

There is some emotion in his face as he looks towards the girl. More gently, he moves forward past CAMERA...

SUSAN

Sensing the approach of Hunsecker behind her, she moves away

again; she is still crying, but is trying to recover. Presently Hunsecker approaches her again. He speaks very gently, soothingly, comforting...

HUNSECKER

(softly)

You in a mood, Susie, to run over to Milgrim's later and buy a few new frocks?

SUSAN

(a small voice)

No. I'm going home.

Hunsecker again tries to come nearer to her.

HUNSECKER

Want Sidney to drive you over?

Ignoring the shake of her head, he calls to Sidney.

HUNSECKER

Drive Susie home.

HUNSECKER

Again we see some emotion in his face as he studies the girl. His eyes flick towards the stage behind him where Sidney stands watching. He moves gently forward and then speaks in a quiet voice which reveals how desperately he needs her reassurance:

HUNSECKER

Susie...I...I'd have to take it very much amiss if you ever saw that boy again.

SUSAN

After a pause, she turns towards him; she looks him straight in the face.

SUSAN

(levelly)

I'll never see him again.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He seems to take this as a gesture of forgiveness from her. Now he touches her. His need for her is apparent; he tries to reach her, tries to find an excuse to embrace her. She submits to this very passively.

SUSAN

A VERY CLOSE SHOT. We see the effort with which she is controlling herself.

RESUME TWO SHOT

Satisfied with this crumb of affection from his sister, Hunsecker lets her go. Susan moves away, still avoiding his eyes. Then she goes off towards the steps down into the auditorium. Sidney looks at Hunsecker, then after Susan and follows her.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He goes back to Mary and the script. He instructs her:

HUNSECKER

Call Van Cleve. Tell him he was right. Tell him I said the Dallas boys are not worthy of his club.

Poring over the typewritten pages, he senses Mary's eyes on him. He speaks to her quietly without raising his head and there is still an undertone of feeling in his voice:

HUNSECKER

(without looking up)
Mary...for Susie's own good...don't give her misplaced sympathy...

Mary says nothing. Hunsecker gathers his papers and with a visible effort to resume his public personality turns towards the machinery of the television broadcast in background.

INT. TV THEATRE FOYER

Susan crosses towards the doors out onto the street. Sidney comes behind her, watchful as he overtakes her near the doors. He goes past her to open the door for her.

SIDNEY

I'll get you a cab...

Susan stops dead.

SUSAN

(coldly)
Get away from me.

She goes out into the street. Beyond, we see a crushing cab. Hesitating, Sidney adds:

SIDNEY

J.J. asked me to drive you over
and -

But Susan has already moved out of shot, hurrying across the sidewalk to hail the taxi.

RESUME SIDNEY

Uncertain what to do, whether to follow her or not, he moves after her.

SUSAN

She has already opened the door of the taxi. She turns to see Sidney come up behind her. As he enters SHOT, she repeats:

SUSAN

I told you to leave! I don't know
if Steve'll ever talk to me again
and I'm ready to blame it all on you!

She starts to get into the cab...

SIDNEY

Alert, he moves to detain her (anxious to know exactly the extent of her suspicion.)

SIDNEY

Susie...!

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Sidney steps up, he grasps at the door of the taxi, trying to hold it open, but Susan pulls it shut, catching his fingers in the door. Sidney steps back in pain...

TAXI

It drives off down Sixth Avenue.

SIDNEY

Nursing the injury to his hand, he looks after the disappearing taxi. As he recovers from the pain, his expression slowly changes to one of thoughtful appraisal. (Susan's suspicions maybe of less importance than some other

considerations.)

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TWENTY ONE CLUB WASHROOM - NIGHT

Hunsecker and Sidney are washing in adjoining basins. Coat off, the former is in one of his punitive moods of silence. Sidney, despite his throbbing, bandaged finger, is feeling satisfied and self-confident. He hums quietly. Hunsecker throws him annoyed side-glances, but Sidney refuses to "catch on". The following dialogue is spaced between the washing, the drying and hair-combing.

HUNSECKER

So that's what "integrity" looks like. Well, I'm always willing to learn...

(later)

How is that slob, D'Angelo, your uncle?

Sidney no longer hums; after a moment, he answers.

SIDNEY

My mother's side--her brother. That reminds me, J.J., Susie looks run down. She can stand a vacation and so can you. People say, "Oh, the great J.J., he's made of iron!", but you can use a rest, guy.

Sidney's cheerfulness annoys Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER

What are you so chipper about? If I put a cross on every one of your mistakes, you'd look like a graveyard!

SIDNEY

(smiling)

But not for anything I did today...

HUNSECKER

Sidney, I know human nature. Susie lied to me - she'll see that boy again.

Hunsecker moves out of shot.

SIDNEY

You're right, J.J. - she won't give him up, but it doesn't matter. Because the real "money ball" is the boy, not Susan. And if --

Hearing the sound of the door, Sidney turns sharply. CAMERA MOVES to discover that Hunsecker has gone out. Sidney, quickly, finishing the brushing of his hair, follows...

INT. DINING ROOM - "21" CLUB

Two waiters are fussing over Hunsecker's table at which places are already set for Sidney and Hunsecker. Matre d' hands him an envelope as he passes.

MATRE D'

Mr. Hunsecker this was to be delivered to you personally -

When the columnist comes up to the table, the waiters quickly pull out the table for him. Sidney comes to join him; Sidney gets some attention, but considerably less.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER.

HUNSECKER

These drinks are warm.

WAITER

You said you like to have them on your table.

HUNSECKER

What are you a critic?

WAITER

I'll change --

HUNSECKER

Forget it.

(to Sidney)

The real money ball is the boy...

SIDNEY

Yeah, the boy...we're on the verge of a farce, a real farce. As I see it, if Susie had stood behind him today he might have proved a threat. But since primarily he's wedded to his work, he's not going to be able to take it.

A waiter shifts the position of the salad dish at Hunsecker's

elbow.

HUNSECKER

(to waiter)

Stop tinkering, pal - that horse
radish won't jump a fence!

The waiter retreats rapidly.

SIDNEY

In brief, J.J., it's all over
because any hour now the boy will
give her up. Is it a farce or not?

Delicately salting his oysters, Hunsecker looks obliquely at
Sidney.

HUNSECKER

This syrup you're giving out,
Sidney, you pour over waffles, not
J.J. Hunsecker! What do you mean
that lousy kid will give up my
sister?

Hunsecker, with a casual gesture, tugs lightly at the end of
Sidney's tie.

Hunsecker's gesture is playful, but it inflicts great injury
to Sidney's dignity; Sidney cannot bear to be touched; he
finds this liberty on J.J.'s part as intolerable as anything
he has experienced, and only with great difficulty controls
himself. The SHOT FAVORS Sidney.

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Hunsecker continues:

HUNSECKER

Are you listening?

SIDNEY

(warily)

How does it matter who's sister?
The main thing, they're through
and -

HUNSECKER

From Sidney's viewpoint. Without turning, Hunsecker
interrupts:

HUNSECKER

Am I supposed to forget how that
boy talked to me today?

RESUME SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

Sidney senses a warning in Hunsecker's manner. He protests:

SIDNEY

J.J., is he worthy of a second
glance from a man like you? Is he,
I mean?...

HUNSECKER

From Sidney's viewpoint. Pausing during the process of
eating, Hunsecker reaches into an inside pocket.

HUNSECKER

Brief epitaph: "The boy was talking
when he should have been listening."
(then)
Bite on this.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Sidney as Hunsecker tosses in
front of him an envelope. Sidney opens it, extracts two
steamship tickets.

SIDNEY

Steamship tickets?

HUNSECKER

(as he eats)
For the next sailing of the Mary.
Susan's run down - she's never been
abroad and as you so cogently put
it, I'm not made of iron.

Sidney slowly pushes the envelope back to Hunsecker, who
leaves it lying on the table before him.

SIDNEY

That's good. Now that louse is
outa Susie's hair for good.

SIDNEY

He has an instinct to laugh; but something tells him not to.

HUNSECKER

As Sidney makes no response, Hunsecker slowly, carefully
continues in a voice which is dangerously soft:

HUNSECKER

I want that boy taken apart.

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

SHOOTING ACROSS Hunsecker onto Sidney. Sidney puts down his fork. He sees now that the issue is serious and must be faced.

SIDNEY

(seriously)

Why do something that would drive them right back into each other's arms? Not to mention that this time Susie would know who shot the arrow...

HUNSECKER

(interjecting quietly)

She knows now.

SIDNEY

(quickly)

Why give her real proof? You nearly ruined her with her first husband - and you were right, J.J., - but she almost followed him out the window. What do you want - a chronic invalid?

HUNSECKER

He wants no advice from Sidney. He interrupts with quiet savagery.

HUNSECKER

I know how to handle Susie. You just handle the boy, Sidney...

(scribbles on scratch pad)

...preferably tonight.

(pushes pad across to Sidney)

SIDNEY AND HUNSECKER

SHOOTING ACROSS Hunsecker onto Sidney. Sidney feels sick.

SIDNEY

Why, what's tomorrow - a holiday?

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER as Sidney picks scratch pad up. We can read two words: "Get Kello".

SIDNEY

I think I'll go home - maybe I left
my sense of humor in another suit.

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker finishes eating. During the ensuing speech, which he begins quietly and sensibly, Hunsecker's venomous feelings are unexpectedly betrayed.

HUNSECKER

You've got that God-given brain -
learn to use it! Do you think it's
a personal matter with me, this boy?
Are you telling me I see things in
terms of personal pique? Don't you
see that today that boy wiped his
feet on the choice, on the
predilections of sixty million men
and women of the greatest country
in the world! If you had any
morals yourself, you would
understand the immorality of that
boy's stand today! It was not me
he criticized - it was my readers!...

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Sidney. Hunsecker manages to control himself; he reaches with nervous fingers toward his scribbling pad.

SIDNEY

Sidney's face has tightened. He has begun now to realize the extent of this man's megalomania. After a moment he says:

SIDNEY

I'm leaving, J.J....

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

SHOOTING ACROSS Sidney onto Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER

(a quiet warning)
Don't remove the gangplank, Sidney;
you may wanna get back on board.

SIDNEY

Sidney feels the chill of despair upon him.

HUNSECKER

This crab gumbo - terrific!

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

SHOOTING ACROSS Hunsecker onto Sidney. A waiter has come to serve the next course. Hunsecker appears relaxed, but Sidney is sightlessly staring at the piece of paper in his hand. He speaks with a quaver in his voice, for he has worked hard to make a life which is now ready to relinquish:

SIDNEY

J.J., it's one thing to wear your dog collar...but when it gets to be a noose...I'd rather have my freedom.

HUNSECKER

The man in jail is always for freedom.

Sidney begins to get up from the table.

SIDNEY

(as he rises)

Except, if you'll excuse me, I'm not in jail.

Hunsecker looks up at Sidney.

HUNSECKER

From Sidney's viewpoint.

HUNSECKER

(easily)

Sure you're in jail, Sidney. You're a prisoner of your own fears, of your own greed and ambition; you're in jail.

SIDNEY

From Hunsecker's viewpoint.

SIDNEY

J.J. If you're trying to -

He leans over Hunsecker and the CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hunsecker in f.g.

HUNSECKER

(interrupting)
You, little boy, don't know who you are! Talking around corners with the big shots, ten dollar dinners - fourteen suits and cashmere coats - you tell yourself THAT'S who you are! Later you won't know who you are without a penthouse on upper Park! But underneath it all, rattling around from day to day, you DO know who you are! You're a fearful, ignorant nobody - a poor wop kid from the slums of Philly - hoping nobody else finds it out!

SIDNEY

A CLOSE UP. He knows the truth of what is said. But he takes refuge in quiet retaliation:

SIDNEY

A little hunch occurs to me - you have just painted a self-portrait. You know who YOU are because you scare people - that's what you've got against this boy. He -

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker is prepared to give it out, but not take it.

HUNSECKER

(cutting in)
I told you what I want you to do tonight!

SIDNEY

He looks down on Hunsecker, leans over the table.

SIDNEY

You're blind, Mr. Magoo. This is a crossroads for me. I won't get Kello. Not for a life-time pass to the Polo Grounds. Not if you serve me Ingrid Bergman on a plate.

CAMERA has PULLED BACK to include Hunsecker, whose attention has returned to his food.

HUNSECKER

(over patient)

Sidney, I told you -

SIDNEY

(continuing)

J.J., I swear to you on my mother's
life, I won't do it.

(he leans even closer)

If you gave me your COLUMN I
wouldn't do a thing like that...

But as he speaks the last words, Sidney's voice falters
because he has glanced down at the table...

SIDNEY

We see that an idea has entered his head - an idea that
takes the wind out of his indignation. His eyes lift
rapidly to Hunsecker's face.

HUNSECKER

(delicately touching
the envelope)

And who do you think writes the
column while Susie and I are away
for three months?...

RESUME SIDNEY

He is quite speechless. Over scene Hunsecker's voice:

HUNSECKER (V.O.)

(continuing)

...The man in the moon?

HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

CAMERA SHOOTS across Sidney again onto Hunsecker. Hunsecker
leans back, looks at Sidney.

Seeing that Sidney has accepted the proposition, he smiles.

HUNSECKER

(softly)

Thank you, Sidney.

In a pleasantly affable way, he leans across the table to
tap the hand with which Sidney is leaning on the table.

HUNSECKER

And, Sidney, I'll have that piece
of paper back...

Helplessly, Sidney unclenches a fist and reveals the slip of paper which he had meant to keep. Hunsecker takes it. With his eyes on Sidney, he slowly tears it up...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

CIGAR STAND AND PHONE BOOTH - EVENING

D'Angelo is buying a cigar at the counter. He turns as Steve opens the door of one of the booths and comes out. Steve is in a gloomy, irksome mood; D'Angelo is sympathetic and fatherly.

STEVE

She'll be down in a minute.

CAMERA TRACKS with them as they come out into the hallway. They move towards the side entrance, away from the elevators.

D'ANGELO

What does she wanna see you about?

The boy shrugs impatiently.

STEVE

She didn't say.

Some passersby come down the hall and enter a waiting elevator, barely glancing at D'Angelo and the boy. D'Angelo feels uneasy.

D'ANGELO

I could think of better places to meet her, instead of here. He lives on the whole top floor.

STEVE

(carelessly)

I doubt that it matters any more.

D'ANGELO

He addresses Steve soberly.

D'ANGELO

Steve. You made a very dangerous enemy of him today. Matter of fact, I'm very glad we got the tour ahead. If I'm any judge, you hurt him today where he lives... He won't forget it and he won't forgive...

RESUME STEVE AND D'ANGELO

Steve is silent. He hears the sound of the elevator door opening and turns.

Susan comes out of the elevator, the one farthest from them, and looks around.

SUSAN

(as she comes forward
to join them)

Good evening, Mr. D'Angelo.

D'Angelo acknowledges her greeting, touches his hat and retires tactfully. Susan faces Steve. It's an awkward meeting. Each does not know where the other stands. She has thrown her fur coat about her shoulders like a cloak; it will keep slipping off. He is faintly embittered, a little hurt and baffled, but he is sympathetic; he is involved and concerned.

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT OVER SHOULDER - SUSAN TO STEVE

SUSAN

Hello, Steve. I'm glad you could come.

STEVE

Why did you call me?

SUSAN

Would you buy me a cup of coffee?
In there...

REVERSE ANGLE

Susan nods in the direction of the door into the little cafe.

STEVE

Sure.

As he walks with her towards the cafe:

STEVE

We're on our way to Robard's for a benefit. I've only got five minutes...

INT. CAFE

As they enter the cafe, the Counterman looks up from counting

the day's take at the far end.

COUNTERMAN

Too late for service.

STEVE

Just two cups of java.

COUNTERMAN

(with a twinkle)

We serve here only moka coffee.

STEVE

(smiling faintly)

Make it moka.

The Counterman goes to the urn for the coffee.

SUSAN AND STEVE

A closer angle. They talk in quiet undertones. Steve waits for her to speak first; she starts slowly, hesitantly, with difficulty:

SUSAN

Steve...what you tried to do today...you tried to take me up on a high mountain...I couldn't go all the way...I failed you...

(a pause)

Will you forgive me?

(then)

Have I lost you, Steve? Have I...?

STEVE

Well, maybe I was wrong, too... But there's no doubt, Susie, that we have to face some serious things...

SUSAN

No one's ever stood up to my brother the way you did.

STEVE

(quietly, to the point)

But you didn't do much about it, Susie. You walked out, and there I was...solo...and not too good at that.

SUSAN

I just didn't think that I could

antagonize him, Steve -- for OUR sake, I mean.

STEVE

STEVE

Susie, I was there for OUR sake, too. But what a world it would be if we were all afraid to learn to walk and talk because it might offend poppa! By the way, I think your brother was completely responsible for the smears...

SUSAN

This accusation is made lightly, in passing. But Susan reacts to it, trying to interject:

SUSAN

Steve, I...

STEVE

(overriding her)

But I don't care about that now. He knew what he was doing today. He was laying down the conditions under which he MIGHT consent to our marriage - if I would bend to every whim of his, like Sidney! I couldn't do that, Susie...

SUSAN

After a pause, she says:

SUSAN

You're saying goodbye, aren't you?

SUSAN AND STEVE

Steve flares up.

STEVE

No! I'm saying that for your sake you have to make a clean break with your brother!

SUSAN

(wrenched)

But, please, Steve, please - one step at a time! I was born only

yesterday!...

STEVE

(pausing, softer)

I told your brother I couldn't be his accomplice. I can't be yours either, Susie, and encourage him to go on pulverizing you. I know what type - he's my old man all over again!

Susan, pathetically despairing, fingers the handle of her coffee cup, which she has not touched. The coat slips from her shoulders...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Steve stoops to pick it up, replaces it on her shoulders.

STEVE

This beautiful coat is more than just a coat... I hate it! It's a mink straight-jacket!

Susan turns to him. She is deflated, lacking all will power.

SUSAN

(drooping)

Steve, I feel exhausted...what do you want me to do?

STEVE

(not sure of himself)

Not what you're doing now. At least don't ask me - don't ask him. You're fighting for your life! What do YOU want to do?

SUSAN

(pausing, woodenly)

You are saying goodbye, aren't you...?

STEVE

He reacts vigorously, protesting:

STEVE

(impatiently)

That's fish four days old...! I can't buy it, Susie! Right out of that mouth I love, like you're a

ventriloquist's dummy, your BROTHER
is saying goodbye! Gee!...you want
me to be honest, don't you?!

SUSAN

A despairing cry:

SUSAN

No, Steve, I don't. I don't. Not
if it KILLS me I don't!...

SUSAN AND STEVE

It takes her a moment to recover. When she does so, she
gets up, leaving the counter.

SUSAN

(without luster)
Let's not talk any more...you have
to go...

She moves towards the exit into the hallway; he follows.

HALLWAY

D'Angelo is waiting for them. Silently they come up to join
him, very depressed. Susan looks towards D'Angelo, speaks a
little pathetically:

SUSAN

Goodbye, Mr. D'Angelo. Take care
of Steve.

D'ANGELO

(softly)
I will, Miss Hunsecker.

He walks a little way down the corridor, again leaving them
alone.

SUSAN AND STEVE

She smiles at him, trying to smile, trying to make a joke.

SUSAN

Say something funny...Mr.
Hasenfeffer.

Steve steps to her quickly, kisses her. Then he turns and
swiftly walks off down the corridor without a backward
glance. He goes past D'Angelo, who walks quietly after him

towards the exit in background.

SUSAN

She remains just in the attitude in which he left her.

EXT. BRILL BUILDING - NIGHT

Steve comes out of the door, pauses without looking back.
D'Angelo comes up behind him.

STEVE

(after a moment)

Look back, Frank, see if she's
still standing there...

D'Angelo looks discreetly over his shoulder.

SUSAN

From D'Angelo's point of view. She is still standing where
Steve left her.

RESUME STEVE AND D'ANGELO

D'Angelo turns back to Steve.

D'ANGELO

Still there...

Steve, still without looking back, walks up the street;
CAMERA TRACKING WITH THEM.

D'ANGELO

(with sympathy)

Not that I don't like her - she's a
very lovely person, but who can
tell? A year from now you might
thank your stars that it turned out
this way.

(changing the subject)

By the way, Robard said that...

Steve, his manner full of pain, stops.

STEVE

Frank, I don't want to make the
benefit. They'll be jammin' all
night, and the way I feel -- I'd
like to be alone -- I'd like just
to walk and walk and never come back.

D'Angelo takes him firmly by the arm.

D'ANGELO

No. I don't leave you alone on a night like this. And, anyway, you promised...

Steve looks at him, knowing that he can never shake off the devoted Frank; he shrugs. They walk past CAMERA.

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The heavy brass doors of the elevator slide open and the Elevator Man pulls open the grille. Susan, still in the mood in which Steve left her, stands in the elevator for a moment before she realizes that she has reached the top floor. As she walks out, the Elevator Man looks at her anxiously. CAMERA PANS with Susan towards the door to the apartment. Susan fumbles for her key.

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE

The apartment is dark as Susan enters. She does not switch on the lights. She walks through the shadows of the big room, which has a grim and menacing atmosphere. She kicks off her shoes and, hugging the coat about her for warmth walks to the glass windows of the terrace. After a moment she opens them and steps out.

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

Susan walks across the terrace. At this height the wind is very strong. CAMERA TRACKS with the girl, emphasizing the dizzying panorama of New York at night. The girl's manner is strange; she moves as if under compulsion, a sleepwalker. When she reaches the stone parapet, she leans against it with her body slumped, still hugging the fur coat as if it were some protection against her misery.

EXT. FROM THE TERRACE - NIGHT

Vertically downward. From Susan's point of view. The stone sidewalks of Broadway are a terrifying distance below.

SUSAN

An angle, shooting sharply upwards against the night sky. Wind blows the girl's hair, as she looks fixedly downwards. Her face is blank, expressionless. (For a moment we may fear for her, afraid that she may have suicide in mind.) But presently she lifts her head looking towards the horizon...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

CAMERA SHOOTS PAST the entrance to Robard's Club, framing the outline of the bridge in sky in background. From inside comes the sound of music -- the Quintet.

The taxi drives up; Sidney gets out; he glances at his wristwatch, looks around and then makes his way into the club.

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Steve Dallas' Quintet on the stand. CAMERA FRAMES the group in foreground, SHOOTING towards the entrance way.

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Sidney has come in through the entrance. He is taking off his overcoat. He moves forward past the hat check room on the left, approaching the recess in which several music cases are stacked beside a coat rack on which the musicians' overcoats are hung.

DETAIL

As he hangs up his coat, Sidney identifies the other coat, a black and white check raglan which he (and we) saw Steve wearing when he visited Hunsecker at the TV Studio.

SIDNEY

A CLOSE SHOT. The coat appears to have some significance for him; Sidney is under tension.

A waiter, carrying a carton of beer cans, comes out of the doorway just behind Sidney, moving between him and the overcoat. Thus interrupted, Sidney turns away.

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Robard is standing at the bar, surrounded by a group of his cronies. Drink is flowing and there is a sentimental mood of celebration.

As Sidney arrives at the bar, ordering a drink, FRANK D'ANGELO is seen coming from the interior of the club where Dallas and the Quintet can be seen playing; D'Angelo accosts Robard:

D'ANGELO

Lew, Steve don't feel too good...

ROBARD

(interjecting)

I'm sorry to hear it.

REVERSE ANGLE

CAMERA shoots past D'Angelo and Robard in f.g. towards Sidney, who overhears:

D'ANGELO

(continuing)

...So, if you don't mind, he'll leave after this set.

In b.g., Sidney sets down his drink, reacting to this information. Robard clamps D'Angelo on the shoulder, reassuring him with warm emphasis:

ROBARD

I like that boy, Frank. Anything he does is okay with me...

SIDNEY

Sidney, thinking rapidly, leaves the bar, moving unobtrusively but purposefully towards a telephone booth. He enters and closes the door.

PHONE BOOTH

A CLOSER ANGLE. Shooting through the glass panel we see Sidney dialing. His manner is urgent.

QUICK LAP DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

A long shot of the club exterior. A different musical number is now being played in the interior. (GOODBYE BABY). A black car comes swiftly under the bridge, turns into the little square opposite the club, braking sharply.

CLOSER ANGLE

As the car comes to a stop, CAMERA shoots across the hood onto the windshield where we see the insignia: POLICE. The occupants of the car are not visible.

INT/EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB

Sidney lingers near the doorway of the club. He is looking

across the square towards the car which can be seen in b.g. Now he turns and walks towards the coat rack, CAMERA tracking with him. He takes his own coat and, as he thrusts his arm into the sleeve, contrives neatly to slip some unseen object into the pocket of Steve's overcoat; CAMERA notes the gesture, but only very briefly. Overscene a voice addresses Sidney:

D'ANGELO (O.S.)

Hey!.....

SIDNEY

A CLOSE UP. As he turns in swift apprehension, we note the moment of panic in his face.

REVERSE ANGLE

CAMERA shoots past Sidney in foreground towards D'Angelo who advances on Sidney. D'Angelo's manner is unfriendly; for an instant we feel, like Sidney, that D'Angelo may have seen Sidney tampering with Steve's coat, but then we are reassured as D'Angelo, deliberately using Sidney's surname, says:

D'ANGELO

(continuing)

Mr. Falco...I hate to give you this satisfaction - they broke it off tonight for good.

REVERSE ANGLE

Shooting across D'Angelo onto Sidney, who now relaxes, his fears ungrounded.

D'ANGELO

(continuing)

Tell that to Hunsecker - tell him we agree - he's a big man - he wins all the marbles!

SIDNEY

As D'Angelo moves away again Sidney looks after him. Once more his face goes tense. (He asks himself, does this development - which he himself anticipated - change the situation?) He turns away, moving out of shot.

ANOTHER ANGLE

CAMERA moves with Sidney as he walks towards the doorway. There he hesitates again; he looks back into the club.

DALLAS

From Sidney's viewpoint. A LONG SHOT of Steve on the bandstand. CAMERA PANS deliberately towards the coatrack in f.g. A group of newly arrived musicians walk into the shot, setting down their instrument cases and starting to hang up their coats. (Clearly, Sidney could not now return to the coat rack - even if he decided that he did want to undo his handiwork.)

RESUME SIDNEY

CAMERA, shooting out across the square, frames Sidney in f.g. Facing the inevitable, Sidney turns away, walks across the sidewalk. On the other side of the square the headlamps of the car blink twice. Sidney walks towards it.

POLICE CAR

A big man gets out of the seat next to the driver. As he comes round the hood of the car, the headlamps of a passing truck illuminate him, identifying HARRY KELLO. CAMERA PANS as he walks to meet Sidney.

CLOSER ANGLE

Kello pauses as Sidney comes up to him, asks affably:

KELLO

What's all the rush? You said
three o'clock.

SIDNEY

(glancing back
towards club)
He's leaving early. After this
"set". He'll be out in a couple of
minutes...

They wait for a moment, listening to the sound of the music in the distance. It is a blues number (GOODBYE BABY) Kello hums nonchalantly; Sidney glances at him with irritation, finding something gruesome in his relaxed manner.

INT. POLICE CAR

There are two plainclothes policemen inside, one at the wheel, the other in the back seat. The latter leans forward to ask the former:

1ST POLICEMAN

What's this deal tonight?

MURPH

(the 2nd policeman)
One of the lieutenant's "surprise parties", I think.

Murph's tone shows obvious repugnance. The 1st Policeman broods for a moment; he adds in a quiet, but viciously resentful manner:

1ST POLICEMAN

One of these days I'd like to turn in my badge and tangle with "POPSIE" myself - he's no good.

RESUME KELLO AND SIDNEY

Sidney, increasingly uncomfortable, turns to Kello.

SIDNEY

Can't you wait up the block? It's not going to look so good, right in front of the club...

To Kello this is a great joke. He laughs, enjoying Sidney's uneasiness. He begins to "cat and mouse" Sidney.

KELLO

(heavily humorous)
It's nice, Sidney, that you give me this tip...

SIDNEY

(interjecting)
- He's got them on him.

KELLO

(solemnly nodding his approval)
...And he's got them on him. I appreciate a thing like that - I appreciate where you are looking out for the virtue of the city.

Sidney, annoyed at this sarcasm, moves past Kello, not deigning to respond. As he goes by, Kello grasps him forcibly by the arm.

KELLO

What's your hurry, Snooks?

CAMERA HAS PANNED to SHOOT towards the car out of which

emerges a second detective.

SIDNEY

(revolted)

Take your hands off, Kello...

Kello, holding Sidney, turns towards the second detective in background.

KELLO

Murph, how do you like this face?
Why, I'll be darned -- it's melting!
Something got you scared, Sidney...?
Listen, rectify me a certain thing.
Wasn't you kidding, Snooks, when
you told J.J. I was fat...?

Sidney jerks his arm away, rapidly retreats a few yards, a safe distance from Kello. CAMERA PANS with him to the bottom of the steps.

SIDNEY

Sleep in peace, Kello -- you're
skinny -- but J.J. says you sweat!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sidney in foreground, Kello and Murph beyond. Kello laughs; but obviously he would like to be nearer to Sidney. Perhaps to detain Sidney, Kello draws:

KELLO

Is that a fact? He's a dilly,
ain't he? By the by, what did he
have against this boy?

SIDNEY

He goes out with girls.

KELLO

Well, I'll be darned. And what
does J.J. think he SHOULD do?

SIDNEY

(impudently)

Go out with DIFFERENT girls!

KELLO

He moves forward a little.

KELLO

(softly now)
I get the peculiar impression,
Snooks, that you don't like me.
Could I be wrong?

SIDNEY

He turns swiftly and goes up the stairs out of Kello's reach.

SIDNEY

(as he goes)
You could be right, you fat slob?

ANOTHER ANGLE

From half-way up the stairs. Sidney comes up the steps two at a time. Kello and Murphy are seen beyond.

KELLO

(with a guffaw)
Come back here, Sidney...I wanna
chastise you!...

FROM THE BRIDGE

Sidney reaches the top. He comes along the pedestrian walk up to CAMERA, slowing down he turns across the rail and looks down towards the square. CAMERA MOVES to take in the scene in WIDE ANGLE: Sidney in foreground, the police car and detectives below, the entrance to Robard's across the square. Sidney waits. In the distance we can hear the music of Dallas' last number coming to an end.

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB

The last bars of the number. Enthusiastic applause.

STEVE

He responds to the ovation, nicely but a little wearily. He gets down off the stand. There is too much noise to hear his parting words to his fellow musicians, but it is clear that he is urging them to stay without him. He walks off towards the entrance to the club.

D'ANGELO

D'Angelo leaves the bar, in search of Steve. He sees...

INT/EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Steve is putting his guitar away in the case, collecting his

overcoat. In this gesture he is arrested by the sound of D'Angelo's voice over scene.

D'ANGELO (O.S.)

(urgently)

Steve!

Steve, mildly startled, looks up.

REVERSE ANGLE

Shooting into the club. D'Angelo comes forward from the bar. He is a little drunk, a little emotional. He waddles toward Steve, then takes the white carnation out of his buttonhole and puts it in the buttonhole of Steve's coat, saying:

D'ANGELO

(fondly)

Press this in your friendship
book...Love is a crooked thing,
friendship not...

(then, sheepishly)

You see, it comes out in the wash
of a few drinks -- I'm a very
sentimental guy.

RESUME ROBAR'S CLUB

Steve is touched.

STEVE

I like it that way, Frank...don't
change.

He picks up his guitar case and makes for the door. D'Angelo goes a few paces with him, CAMERA TRACKING. Then it moves past D'Angelo, following Steve out onto the sidewalk, where he stands under the light of the club framed against the dark background of the square.

FROM THE BRIDGE

CAMERA PANS from the small figure of Steve to include Sidney big in foreground. Below him Kello and Murph turn towards the club.

KELLO

CLOSER ANGLE downward from Sidney's viewpoint. Kello turns deliberately to look at the bridge above.

RESUME BRIDGE

Sidney sees Kello's look; he nods deliberately. Below him we see Kello and Murphy move swiftly to get into the car. Sidney, as if shrinking from a sight from which he doesn't wish to witness, draws back from the balustrade. He turns and begins to walk towards CAMERA.

POLICE CAR

A LOW ANGLE SHOOTING upwards at the car, the stairs to the bridge in background. As the doors of the car slam, it starts to move forward and, abruptly, its headlamps are switched on, glaring into the lens.

EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Steve, concerned only with his only melancholy thoughts, walks down the sidewalk under the bridge. The car headlamps illuminate him in their glare as they move across him. Steve, without undue interest, glances back but continues on his way.

CAMERA SHOOTS eastward towards the silhouette of the bridge. The Police Car turns as it comes out of the square under the bridge towards CAMERA. It moves slowly; again its headlamps flare into the lens. CAMERA PULLING BACK includes Steve in foreground. Behind him the Police Car slows down at the curb; it barely stops as Kello slips out of the off-side door; then the car moves forward along the curb leaving him behind Steve. As the car goes out of picture past CAMERA, Kello strolls across the sidewalk, following Steve. Steve, looking past CAMERA, notices...

REVERSE ANGLE

CAMERA SHOOTS toward 2nd Avenue. The Police Car slows down again at the curb and Murph gets out of it, turning to face Steve.

RESUME

Steve, seeing the man ahead of him, notes something slightly menacing in his manner and slows down in his walk. Then, instinctively, he realizes that there is a second man behind him, turns to look at Kello. Kello approaches.

KELLO

Hey, fella...!

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER and CLOSER on Steve. In his face we see a growing sense of something wrong...

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB

A JUMP CUT. Loud noise, Chico Hamilton on the drums...

INT. BAR

Another jump cut in the sound track. Silence. It is an empty saloon, occupied only by a solitary drinker at one end of the long bar, nursing a beer, and by the bartender who is making out a dope sheet. Sidney enters, strides to the bar and throws down a jangling half dollar.

SIDNEY

A bunch of nickels, mister!

While the change is made, Sidney stands with cocked head, listening in reality or imagination to what is happening down the street. As the barman supplies the change, Sidney goes to the juke box and loads it with nickels saying over his shoulder:

SIDNEY

A double Johnny Walker Black. Or whatever you got. Scotch.

Sidney puts both hands on the juke box as if leaning on it. With a click, drop and whirl, the music box comes to life; music blares out. Pausing a moment, Sidney turns back toward the bar.

SIDNEY

He reaches for his drink, downs it. He is shivering.

INT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Once more, an abrupt sound transition: the jam session at full blast. CAMERA FRAMES the musicians in foreground, but moves away from them towards the entrance in background. Near the doorway there is some activity; an attendant beckons to Robard who is drinking with D'Angelo. Robard moves toward the entrance.

INT/EXT. ROBARD'S CLUB - NIGHT

CAMERA STARTS on D'Angelo at the bar. He looks off after Robard. There is little concern in his face, but as he watches, curiosity grows. He strolls out after the proprietor. CAMERA TRACKS with him as D'Angelo comes to join the little mob of two or three people on the sidewalk. PANNING, THE CAMERA now SHOOTS TOWARDS 2nd Avenue. Beyond the bridge we can see the Police Car. Kello and Murphy are

beside one of the open doors (into which Steve has been carried). Murphy turns back, walks a few paces across the sidewalk and picks up Steve's music case, which he carries back to the Squad Car. He gets in and the car drives off.

BOUNCER

Hey, Robard, somebody just picked up one of your boys.

ROBARD

What sa -- Wha --

REVERSE ANGLE

D'Angelo's face shows a bewildered astonishment and dismay as he turns back to the couple of people who are talking to Robard. D'Angelo is a little befuddled with drink. He pushes towards Robard.

D'ANGELO

(dazed)

Whatsa matter, Lou?

ROBARD

(turning to D'Angelo)

I'm trying to find out myself. They just picked up Steve.

LOITERER

(blankly)

Some fat guy...

2ND LOITERER

A cop, a couple of cops.

LOITERER

They smeared him all over the lot.

D'ANGELO

He turns to look back towards the direction in which the Police Car has departed. He seems unable to comprehend what he has heard; but a slow and terrible fear is dawning on him...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

Susan opens the door to discover Frank D'Angelo in lobby. He speaks at once:

D'ANGELO

I'm looking for your brother. Is

he home?

SUSAN

No.

(sensing the
seriousness of his manner)

Mr. D'Angelo - is something wrong?

D'Angelo has no wish to become involved with the girl; he doesn't reply.

D'ANGELO

When does he usually gets in, your
night-owl brother?

SUSAN

Seldom before five.

(again)

What's the matter? Would you care
to come in a minute?

D'Angelo backs away, shaking his head.

D'ANGELO

No...no. Thanks.

He turns back to the elevator. Susan closes the door, but slowly; she is watching D'Angelo. CAMERA MOVES WITH D'Angelo as he goes to the bell of the elevator and rings it. He remains in this position, waiting for the elevator, but now (believing himself to be alone) he leans his head against the wall and begins to weep, quietly. Surprisingly, Susan is abruptly at his elbow, she seizes him forcibly by the arm, demanding:

SUSAN

(taut)

Something's happened. To Steve.

D'Angelo, with his face contorted in grief and bitterness, can no longer refuse to answer her.

D'ANGELO

(in a broken voice)

He's in the hospital...He's under
arrest, too... They planted reefer
cigarettes on him...in his overcoat
pocket.

Susan is becoming hysterical.

SUSAN

(wildly)
Where is he...I want to go to him...

D'Angelo recovers his self control. There is force and authority in his voice as he insists:

D'ANGELO

Miss Hunsecker, if you see him
again they might...might kill him.

Susan is sobered by his seriousness.

SUSAN

(slowly)
Who is "they"?

D'ANGELO

Don't ask foolish questions.

(then)

Tell your brother I'm a sensible
man. He understands only two
things - power-politics and homage -
tell him I came tonight to pay
homage!

INT. HALLWAY - HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE

The elevator door opens and Sidney steps out: He crosses to the door of the apartment, pushes the button. The bell is heard ringing inside. While he waits, Sidney produces a handkerchief, dabs his face, straightens his tie; clearly he is trying to sober up. He goes to the bell push to ring again. Now he notices something that had escaped him before: the door is not quite shut. He pushes it open.

INT. HUNSECKER'S PENTHOUSE

From inside. Sidney hesitates, enters tentatively.

LONGER ANGLE

The apartment appears empty. Only one light is lit; the place is eerie.

RESUME SIDNEY

Sidney closes the door, goes into the main living room, CAMERA pans with him. Something chills him, he calls softly, "J.J.?"

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sidney walks towards the study, there is nobody there either. He goes back towards the stairs to the upper floor; in doing so he repasses the door of Susan's bedroom, sees that it is half open, goes to look in.

INT. BEDROOM

From Sidney's viewpoint. The bed has been slept in but is unoccupied. The room is empty.

On the seat at the foot of the bed is a drawer that has been pulled out of the wardrobe; it contains a collection of miscellaneous objects, a snapshot album, letters, souvenirs, disarranged as if someone had been looking at them.

SIDNEY

He looks at the empty room, disturbed.

RESUME BEDROOM

The curtains of the window onto the terrace are blowing: the window is open. Sidney walks into shot from behind CAMERA. He calls:

SIDNEY

Susan?

Susan steps into the room from the terrace, confronting Sidney. She is dressed, wearing the fur coat over a skirt and blouse. Her manner is very strange; the effect of the drugs, no doubt.

RESUME SIDNEY

Sidney is very uncomfortable in her presence; Susan is the last person he wants to have conversation with.

SIDNEY

Where's J.J.?

He retreats across the threshold of the bedroom, into the outer room.

RESUME SUSAN AND SIDNEY

She walks forwards.

SUSAN

He isn't here...

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sidney stands back to let her pass.

SIDNEY

But he called and said...

Susan comes out of the bedroom, walks past CAMERA.

SUSAN

No, I called...

He studies the girl, says nothing.

LONGER ANGLE

She walks listlessly across the room, moving like a somnambulist.

SUSAN

Mr. D'Angelo phoned about Steve...I
went down to the hospital, but they
wouldn't let me in. He promised to
keep in touch with me - Mr.
D'Angelo, I mean...

RESUME SIDNEY

He watches her cautiously, not sure of how to deal with her.

SIDNEY

(carefully)
It's all over town about Dallas...
(moving towards her)
How is he?

SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. Susan's expression is blank; her eyes are unseeing.

SUSAN

He's...unconscious...

There is a tone of great despair in her voice. Presently, she recovers, CAMERA eases back to include Sidney beyond. She glances at him.

SUSAN

I...I gave Steve up...
(then)
Why did you and J.J. do it?

RESUME SIDNEY

Sidney looks at her, tensely. Her voice is so calm, so certain that Sidney finds it difficult to play-act innocence. He protests a little too loudly:

SIDNEY

Susie, if I get your meaning,
you're pitching very wild balls.
What -

RESUME SUSAN AND SIDNEY

Susan interrupts, with a simplicity which is damaging.

SUSAN

Don't bother to lie, Sidney.
(moving away)
I don't care anymore.

LONGER ANGLE

Sidney decides that it is wiser not to argue. He assumes a tolerant sympathy. He moves towards her.

SIDNEY

Listen, get a good night's sleep -
tomorrow's another day. Feeling
sorry for yourself won't help.

SUSAN

(shaking her head)
I'm sorry about Steve, not myself.
I'm even sorry for my brother. To
be so lonely, without one real
friend in the world - to have to
hang on to a worthless rag of a
girl like me because she's his only
real family -

SIDNEY

(moving towards her again)
Come on now, chickie, why don't you
go to bed...?

Now she turns to him.

SUSAN

And I'm sorry for you, too, Sidney.
You're going down with the ship.

SIDNEY

What ship?

She walks past him, still aimlessly wandering about the room; then she turns back, indicates herself.

SUSAN

THIS ship.

She studies Sidney.

SUSAN

Don't you know how my brother will see you after tonight? You'll be the man who drove his little stainless sister to suicide...

REVERSE ANGLE

Shaken, Sidney decides to ridicule the implied threat.

SIDNEY

Honey, I'll just have to smile at that.

He walks past CAMERA.

RESUME SUSAN

Sidney walks into shot, going past her on his way to the door.

SIDNEY

(as he goes)

It's late and I'm going home...

Susan, in foreground, remains quite still, says nothing. In background, Sidney slows down, his confidence failing him; he looks back at her.

SIDNEY

He can't go. Probably, she's bluffing. But he can't be certain. He is suddenly angry.

RESUME SUSAN AND SIDNEY

He strides back towards her.

SIDNEY

Susie, whatever problems you have with J.J. - I didn't invent them! What're you blaming me for? If you learned to let out your hatred you would be better off!

SUSAN

Like you?

SIDNEY

Yeah! Like me! I don't choke on my own gall - I fight back! Let THEM choke, not me!

SUSAN

I'm not a man, Sidney, I'm -

SIDNEY

I know that bit - you're a girl; you need a man to give you strength! So what do you pick such weak sisters for? Don't you know yet that you fight fire with fire, not with tear drops?

SUSAN

I could almost forgive you if what you did to Steve came from jealousy and love...

SIDNEY

(quickly)

I didn't do anything!

SUSAN

...but you did it for greed, Sidney - and that's pathetic.

She moves past him. He grips her, turning her around.

SIDNEY

Don't run away - I was always the man for you! I'm talking to you out of two years of silence - listen to what I say! Inside of six months -

SUSAN

(helplessly)

Please, Sidney, I can't stand this -

CAMERA HOLDS Sidney and Susan in foreground. But it is now shooting towards the door of the apartment. A PANNING movement has included a figure at the other end of the big room...

HUNSECKER

He is taking off his overcoat near the door of the apartment. We don't know how long he has been there, how much he has overheard. Without appearing to be consciously spying, Hunsecker is listening to Sidney's voice over scene.

SIDNEY

(over scene)

Listen to me, lunatic! All your life you've been doing penance for crimes you never committed! I could change that, I'd teach you, I'd show you - !

CAMERA PANS round with Hunsecker who strolls across the room, making his presence known. Sidney breaks off, drops his hands, releasing the girl. Susan turns towards Hunsecker. Hunsecker lays his briefcase and papers on the table. He addresses Susan without looking at her.

HUNSECKER

Go to bed, Susie. It's late...

Susan makes no move. Hunsecker glances at her, sees Sidney but treats Sidney as if he were invisible.

HUNSECKER

(to Susan)

What is he doing here?

Susan walks towards Hunsecker.

SUSAN

I called him.

Sidney moves forward also.

SIDNEY

(carefully)

She was depressed - she heard about Dallas.

Hunsecker still ignores his existence, he walks past Susan carrying his papers to the desk. Susan turns, watching him.

HUNSECKER

("controlling" his feelings)

That subject it might be better not to start me on.

(angry)

He's made all the papers tonight.

Hunsecker studies the item in the paper.

SUSAN

She is staring at her brother. Suddenly, she is unable to suffer his authoritative air; she goes to him; he ignores her...

HUNSECKER AND SUSAN

Childishly, she snatches the paper from his hand, throws it to the floor. He looks at her. Patiently, as with a hysterical infant, he stoops, recovers the paper.

HUNSECKER

("mildly")

Is there something you wanted to say...?

(as she does not
answer, continuing
with growing viciousness)

I've put up with a lot of your guff, Susie, because you were a child. But you're a woman now and I suspect, despite my best intentions, more than a bit of a slut...

SUSAN

Her head comes up sharply at the insult.

HUNSECKER AND SUSAN AND SIDNEY

Hunsecker glances at Sidney, clearly reminding them of the compromising situation in which they were found. Sidney moves to answer.

SIDNEY

(quickly)

J.J., if you think -

SUSAN

(cutting in)

Don't explain, Sidney... It doesn't matter now...

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

Whose arms will I have to pry you out of next? Not that I don't think you didn't invite it! I know

that look of yours, that pose of
being wronged - and how it arouses
the crusading instinct in even a
Sidney Falco -

Hunsecker's rising tide of brutality is having some effect
on Susan, and Sidney, fearing for her, tries to intervene.

SIDNEY

I was trying to build her up, not
tear her down -

HUNSECKER

(viciously)

Is that why you were romancing her,
you mutt!

(turning back to Susan)

Let's call it quits, my dear. I'd
like it fine if you found another
home. That means the front door is
open! Pack your things, rent a
moving van and GIT!

(pacing the room)

And as for marriage, let me hit you
with a few choice facts: you aren't
ready for marriage! You're
incompetent - a capricious and
shaky frail with a sick fatality
for frail and useless men!

Susan is staring sightlessly at the floor near Hunsecker's
feet. After a moment she turns and moves to the door of her
bedroom; her walk is a little unsteady; she goes inside,
closes the door in Hunsecker's face.

INT. BEDROOM

With the door closed, she leans against it as if afraid of
falling. She gropes for the door handle, finds the key and
turns it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Hunsecker is studying the closed door.

HUNSECKER

(to himself)

Another crisis past.

(walking away)

She'll be fast asleep in five
minutes, loaded with those headache
pills...

SIDNEY

Sidney seems not to hear this remark. He is concentrated on the door; he moves hesitantly towards it, apprehensive. CAMERA includes Hunsecker in background.

HUNSECKER

Now we'll get to you, Sidney.

(turning to Sidney)

As far as the column is concerned - tonight you have forfeited every ethical consideration I ever felt for you...

Much more concerned with his anxiety for Susan, Sidney interrupts.

SIDNEY

(cutting in)

Look, J.J., I'll grant you anything you want.

(as Hunsecker is about to interrupt)

Susie's off her rocker tonight! Go in and see what she's doing! Go in and talk to her quietly - unless you want a corpse!

Sidney's conviction is impressive. But Hunsecker is unwilling to admit the danger, he continues.

HUNSECKER

(acid)

Let me finish what I started to say -

Seeing that Hunsecker is not taking his advice, Sidney strides swiftly to the door of Susan's bedroom. He knocks on it.

INT. BEDROOM

SHOOTING TOWARDS the door. Susan is sitting on the bed in foreground. In a methodical, hypnotic way, she is destroying the contents of the drawer, tearing letters into small fragments. Sidney's voice is heard outside: "Susie!" Susan appears not to hear it; CAMERA TRACKS closer to her. Sidney's voice is heard again, louder: "Susie!" Susan turns sharply towards the door.

SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. Susan rises to her feet, staring at the door. She begins to back away from it.

RESUME REVERSE ANGLE

CAMERA PULLS BACK as Susan glances down at the record player beside her. She turns the knob. We hear the clatter of a record dropping and music begins. The tune is "The Sage."

INT. LIVING ROOM

CLOSE SHOT of Sidney. He hears the music starting.

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker has come forward. But now, as he listens to the gramophone record playing in the bedroom, Hunsecker relaxes, assuming that this is a sign that Sidney's suspicions are unfounded.

HUNSECKER

(coming forward)

What a cornball you are, Sidney...

CAMERA TRACKS to include Sidney. He does not share Hunsecker's confidence; he knocks again, calling:

SIDNEY

(anxiously)

Susie!

(in growing fear)

SUSIE!

CAMERA TRACKS closer to Sidney. As he tries the doorknob, CAMERA TILTS DOWN. Sidney's hand tries the doorknob, finds it locked, shakes it forcefully.

DETAIL

From inside the bedroom. We see the doorknob rattled.

RESUME SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. She realizes that Sidney means to insist. She turns away towards the blowing curtains in background.

RESUME LIVING ROOM

A DETAIL SHOT. Sidney's hand is still shaking the doorknob. He releases it. CAMERA PULLS BACK to a TWO SHOT of Sidney and Hunsecker as Sidney retreats from the door in

apprehension. Now Hunsecker has begun to share Sidney's anxiety. He moves to the door, knocks and then pounds on it.

HUNSECKER

(with authority)

Susie, this is J.J.! Open up!

SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. She comes forward past the blowing curtains. The wind whips at her hair. Over scene we hear the rumble of the traffic on Broadway far below.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He is pounding on the door again. CAMERA makes a quick pan to Sidney who, in a split second, realizes that Susan may have gone out on the balcony. He turns, dashes towards the study to look out on the terrace.

RESUME SUSAN

She has now started to climb onto the parapet. Sidney leaps into shot, dragging her bodily off the parapet and out of shot. We hear Susan cry out, a hysterical gasp. CAMERA, looking through the windows of Susan's bedroom, sees the door fly open as Hunsecker bursts into the room. He looks swiftly around, advances towards the open window. Exasperated by the sound of the gramophone, he switches it off; he steps out onto the terrace. CAMERA PANS with him as he turns to look back into the study where Susan's inanimate figure is sprawled on the floor, half across the low upholstered footstool. Sidney, white and shaking, is standing over her.

REVERSE ANGLE

CAMERA at floor level. Susan is framed in foreground. The lower half of Sidney can be seen beside her. Hunsecker is on the terrace in background. Shocked, he moves quickly into the room.

HUNSECKER

A CLOSE UP. He looks down at his sister. He is badly shaken. The sharp bite of terror produces a reaction of something akin to anger. But he swiftly controls it. He moves past CAMERA.

REVERSE ANGLE

Hunsecker stoops into shot. Tenderly, he lifts the girl's

body to get it into the arm chair. Susan is quite lifeless, limp with the dead weight of a creature that has lost any instinct for self-preservation. But as she feels her brother's arms, and as she recognizes who it is, she breaks out in hysteria.

SUSAN

(wildly)

No! NO! Don't touch me!

HUNSECKER

(sharply)

Susan!...

But Susan strikes at him, a vicious gesture of revulsion. Hunsecker lets her go. She falls into the arm chair, her face hidden from him; she begins to sob.

SUSAN

(her body shaking)

Go away!...Go away!...

Hunsecker would like to comfort her, but he dare not touch her again for fear of inviting another rebuff. He is deeply hurt and wounded. Embarrassed that Sidney should watch this moment, Hunsecker rises. To cover his emotion, he walks to the tray of drinks in background; he pours a brandy and comes back. Stooping, he offers it to Susan. Her only reaction is again to wrench herself away from him, facing the opposite direction.

SUSAN

(sobbing bitterly)

GO AWAY!

Hunsecker sets down the drink, stands up.

HUNSECKER

(in a choked voice)

Talk to her, Sidney...

SIDNEY

(hushed)

Talk to her yourself...

Over scene the telephone rings. It is ignored. While Hunsecker looks down at the girl, helplessly, the telephone continues to ring.

SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. It is she who first becomes aware of the

telephone. Her weeping has stopped now. Slowly, she raises her head. CAMERA EASES BACK to include Sidney beyond her; he notes this movement, seeing in it a revival of the girl's will to live; he is moved.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The telephone is framed in foreground, Susan beyond. It continues to ring. As Hunsecker crosses to his desk to pick up the instrument, CAMERA PULLS BACK. Hunsecker speaks:

HUNSECKER

Yuh...Yuh...
(he listens)
Just a minute...
(turning back to Susan)
Susie, it's Mr. D'Angelo - from the
hospital...

RESUME SUSAN

A CLOSE SHOT. She raises her head higher, still weakly. We see in her face a mixture of terror and hope.

REVERSE ANGLE

Hunsecker comes forward to set down the telephone in front of her, on the footstool. Hunsecker and Sidney watch. She reaches a hand, which is still trembling, picks up the receiver. Her voice as she speaks to the instrument is barely audible.

SUSAN

Yes...yes...yes...

Presently, she hangs up. When she becomes aware that Hunsecker and Sidney are waiting for an explanation, she tells them:

SUSAN

(speaking with difficulty)
Steve...is out of danger...

HUNSECKER

Hunsecker nods. He already knows this. Then:

HUNSECKER

(soberly)
That means a lot to you?

SUSAN

She does not look at him, she lowers her eyes but answers with a nod. And then, more positively:

SUSAN

Yes.

RESUME HUNSECKER

He studies the girl. His face has hardened. He moves, beginning to pace. (And also beginning his 'manipulations'.)

HUNSECKER

But I have to warn you, Susie - for your own sake - he'll still do time...

CAMERA FOLLOWS Hunsecker. It now takes in Sidney who is standing beside him. Sidney has begun to stare fixedly at Hunsecker. (He is now realizing that Hunsecker, although he has been faced with this demonstration of the girl's willingness to kill herself, has still learned nothing, is still continuing in the old pattern.)

HUNSECKER

(continuing, warming to his theme)

He's a hop-head - that's a felony in New York. I can try, of course, to...

SIDNEY

A CLOSE UP. Revolted, Sidney breaks in:

SIDNEY

You're unholy, J.J.! You'd rather kill this girl than let her go!

GROUP SHOT

Hunsecker wheels on Sidney, bellowing:

HUNSECKER

(in blind rage)

GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE!

Sidney, with equal heat, spins round to Susan, crying out before he has time to check himself:

SIDNEY

(impulsively)

Susie, YOU get out of this house! -
Get out before it's too late!

SIDNEY

Sidney has gone too far now to pull back. Inevitably, he continues. During the speech, CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Susan and then Hunsecker.

SIDNEY

(with sincerity)
Listen with care - this will cost
me everything, so you know I'm
telling you the truth!

HUNSECKER

(trying to stop him)
You're incapable of the truth...

SIDNEY

(who will not be stopped)
Susie, there's nothing wrong with
Dallas!
(turning toward Hunsecker)
Your brother and I arranged it all.
And if the Leslie boy is still a
squooshy item in your life, forget
it! - your brother arranged that
one, too! I don't usually give
away presents; but this is my gift
to you: Get out of here! Leave
this man!

During the latter part of the speech, Susan rises slowly to her feet, staring first at Sidney and then, with fearful significance, at her brother. Hunsecker does not look at her; he is concentrated on Sidney. Twice he has been about to demolish Sidney, but he now stops, A THOUGHT IN HIS HEAD.

HUNSECKER

He is perfectly controlled, smiling.

HUNSECKER

Like most Italians, Sidney's got a
big gift for dramatics. I, however,
prefer the cool and stubborn facts.
Sidney has not appeared in my
column in weeks - check that fact
with Mary. That leads right to
another fact: Sidney had nothing to
lose tonight! To the contrary,

dear - ONLY HIS OBVIOUS GREED TO
BEAT HIS WAY BACK INTO THE COLUMN
EXPLAINS HIS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ME!
In brief, BLACKMAIL!

Hunsecker pauses impressively.

GROUP SHOT

Framing Hunsecker in foreground, Susan and Sidney beyond. Susan listens to Hunsecker objectively, with a mounting sense of his diseased reasoning.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

Mind you, not that one true fact didn't come out of Sidney's mouth tonight: self-admittedly, he committed a vicious crime of jealousy against Steve Dallas!

(pausing)

Now we have to clear Dallas, don't we?...But I'll have to sacrifice him...

(he indicates Sidney)

...to do it.

(turning to Susan)

Am I doing right?

SUSAN

She is looking at Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

(over scene)

Yes or no, Susie...?

Slowly, Susan nods.

REVERSE ANGLE

SHOOTING ACROSS Susan onto Hunsecker. Hunsecker turns away from her and walks to the telephone. He picks it up and begins to speak. While the scene continues, we hear his voice off screen, speaking to the phone, saying: "This is J.J. Hunsecker. I want you to get a message through to Lieutenant Kello. Ask him to ring me back. It's urgent." Susan backs slowly away from Hunsecker. Then she turns into CAMERA, which TRACKS with her and includes Sidney. Susan looks at Sidney and then, ashamed, avoids his eye. But Sidney comes nearer to her. Susan is deeply distressed.

SUSAN

(very quietly)

He's sick.

She looks again at Sidney. Deliberately, Sidney nods.
Susan walks toward her bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Susan comes into the room, finding shelter from the revelation which has so appalled her. Inexorably Sidney follows her. He comes across the threshold, closes the door.

SIDNEY

(quietly)

Yes, he's sick and you're the only
idiot alive who didn't know it.

A pause. Sidney moves closer to her.

SIDNEY

But what are you going to do?

There are some tears of pity in Susan's eyes. Once more she moves away from Sidney. Sidney senses that her compassion for Hunsecker might easily lead her once again to slip back into the trap. He insists:

SIDNEY

(with emphasis)

You don't owe your brother a cup of
water!

Another pause. Sidney again repeats:

SIDNEY

What are you going to do?

She moves away from Sidney, CAMERA following her. After a moment, she answers:

SUSAN

Go to Steve.

SIDNEY

Sidney is moved, having done his solitary act of chivalry. To hide his feelings, he is harsh:

SIDNEY

(sharply)

For Pete's sake, straighten out the

seams of your stockings - comb your hair - don't be so helpless all the time!

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Susan. From the other room, we hear the telephone ring. Sidney turns and goes quickly out. After a moment, Susan looks back at the door through which Sidney has disappeared.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Hunsecker is framed in foreground, speaking into the telephone. Sidney is in background, outside the door of Susan's bedroom. Hunsecker is fully aware of Sidney's presence, as he says:

HUNSECKER

(to phone)

No, he's admitted that, Harry. My kid sister's a witness.

SIDNEY

A CLOSE SHOT. He watches Hunsecker with a curious detachment. Producing a cigarette, he lights it and then looks up towards Hunsecker.

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

(over scene)

No, he admits he planted the stuff on the Dallas boy...

RESUME HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Hunsecker framed in foreground, Sidney beyond. Hunsecker has at the same time been tapping a cigarette on the desk. Sidney walks across to Hunsecker, offers the lighted match.

HUNSECKER - REVERSE ANGLE

As he accepts the light he continues speaking to the phone:

HUNSECKER

Yeah...jealousy.

RESUME HUNSECKER AND SIDNEY

Sidney turns on his heel, walking out of the apartment.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

...He's been trying to make my

sister behind my back.

CAFE ON BROADWAY

Kello is in a phone booth.

KELLO

(to phone)

Oh, that's serious, J.J. Real reprehensible...

Kello leans out of the booth into the cafe signaling through the window to the street outside where the squad car pulls ahead to a position ready for him outside the door.

KELLO

(to phone)

Don't worry, I'll get there. I'm on Broadway now.

Kello hangs up. Hurries out. We see him get into the squad car which rapidly accelerates.

INT. HUNSECKER'S LIVING ROOM

Hunsecker has hung up. He stares at the telephone for a moment. Then he moves towards Susan's door, CAMERA TRACKING with him. He comes to the threshold, looks at Susan who is standing in much the same position in which Sidney left her.

SUSAN

Unaware that her brother is watching her, she picks up the fur coat on the bed. (She is about to start packing her belongings.) She turns as she hears Hunsecker speak.

HUNSECKER

(over scene)

That's a pretty coat.

REVERSE ANGLE

SHOOTING ACROSS Susan, towards Hunsecker. Hunsecker comes into the room.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

- but it's about time you had a new one.

Susan turns squarely to face him.

RESUME SUSAN

She braces herself to tell him:

SUSAN

(soberly)

I'm leaving, J.J.

RESUME REVERSE ANGLE

He does not sense any danger in the seriousness of her tone (or, if he does, refuses to recognize it.)

HUNSECKER

(with a faint scoff)

Don't kid a kidder. I'll see you
for breakfast around eleven.

Without waiting for a response, Hunsecker goes out, closing the door. Susan stares at it for a moment. Then she moves to get a small suitcase which she lays on the bed.

TERRACE

Hunsecker opens the windows onto the terrace, comes out and looks over the parapet, (looking to see how far Sidney has got, hoping to see Kello's squad car.)

RESUME SUSAN

She completes her simple packing, closing the suitcase. With a gesture that is obviously automatic, she starts to put on the fur coat; then she halts, realizing what she is doing. She pauses; CAMERA MOVES CLOSER. Now, deliberately she throws the coat back on the bed. CAMERA PANS down with the gesture. She looks down at the coat, the discarded symbol of her dependence upon her brother. CAMERA PULLS BACK again as she takes a quick look round, then goes to take a duffle coat from the wardrobe. She throws this over her arm, picks up the suitcase, goes to the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Susan comes out of the door. She moves with a sober determination, expecting to find Hunsecker in the room. CAMERA TRACKS with her. But then she realizes that Hunsecker has gone out on the terrace. She takes a step or two towards him, then pauses.

HUNSECKER

From Susan's viewpoint, SHOOTING through the big glass

windows. Hunsecker is at the parapet. He is impatiently looking down into Broadway.

SUSAN

A CLOSE UP. She now realizes that there is no point in saying goodbye to him: she has already told him that she is leaving and, if she becomes involved in further argument with him, it can do no good. Yet there is some emotion on her face as she takes a last look at her brother; she turns away.

HUNSECKER

Framing him in foreground at the parapet. Susan can be seen through the windows before she disappears to the door. Hunsecker reacts as he catches sight of a vehicle on Broadway below...

EXT. BROADWAY

The squad car comes down Broadway at speed.

EXT. DUFFY'S SQUARE

Sidney is walking across the square. The squad car appears in foreground; it pauses hardly at all as Kello slips out of it, and starts to move after Sidney. Then the car accelerates round Duffy Square to cut Sidney off on the other side.

SIDNEY

Sidney comes up towards CAMERA. Seeing something ahead, he halts...

SQUAD CAR

From Sidney's viewpoint. The car breaks to a stop. It's door opens and a detective gets out slowly. It is Phil.

RESUME SIDNEY

Sidney is framed in foreground, the squad car beyond. Sidney knows what this means. He starts to speak before he turns to look over his shoulder.

SIDNEY

Hello, Harry...

REVERSE ANGLE

Kello, moving silently up behind Sidney, slows down, amused at Sidney's prescience.

KELLO

Hi!

(coming to join Sidney)

I just been on the phone to J.J.

Kello's manner is almost affectionate. He shakes his head, admonishing Sidney.

KELLO

(mildly)

You been a bad boy, Sidney. J.J.'s going to write about you in his column tomorrow.

REVERSE ANGLE

SHOOTING ACROSS Kello onto Sidney. Sidney's smile is tired.

SIDNEY

I thought he would.

KELLO

Yeah...

(then)

And another thing - he's gonna say you 'resisted arrest'...

(as Sidney nods)

You know J.J....!

Sidney turns away to look back towards Phil. Then, taking Kello totally by surprise, he wheels, striking the cop viciously across the mouth.

KELLO

Kello's head jerks back. Recovering at once, he guffaws, lurches into CAMERA with a sudden vicious movement. There is a sharp guttural cry over scene.

LONGER ANGLE

Phil runs forward towards the figures of Sidney and Kello seen beyond him. In doing so, he blocks the view so that we do not clearly see the violence with which Kello strikes Sidney down. Phil, in foreground, is seen to relax. When he moves aside, clearing the view, Sidney is writhing on the ground at Kello's feet.

CLOSER ANGLE

Kello wipes his knuckles on his handkerchief. He signals to Phil to help lift the body at his feet. Phil enters shot and they raise Sidney, half carrying, half dragging him out of shot.

LONG SHOT

The cops carry the figure of Sidney Falco across Duffy Square; they bundle him into the police car. The pigeons in the square, circle.

HUNSECKER'S TERRACE

CAMERA LOOKS down towards Duffy Square in the distance. The police car can be seen moving off, circling the square and disappearing southward on Broadway. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hunsecker in foreground.

HUNSECKER

A CLOSE SHOT, SHOOTING sharply upward at Hunsecker. He looks down, quiet impassively, and there is a slightly insane grandeur, a paranoiac superiority in the way that he turns back, dismissing Sidney from his thoughts.

INT. LIVING ROOM

CAMERA SHOOTS towards the closed door of Susan's room. Hunsecker walks into the shot, stops before the door. He begins to take off his tie and unbutton his shirt, clearly preparing to go to bed. As an after-thought, he comes back to the door, addresses it:

HUNSECKER

(gently)

Susie?

(getting no answer)

Are you in bed...?

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER. It is at a low level, still emphasizing the man's dignity. He strolls for a few paces.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

I don't have to tell you, of course, that I cleared your boyfriend's name; I didn't let you down...

CAMERA has now moved so that we are shooting past Hunsecker onto Susan's door. He gets no answer except silence.

HUNSECKER

A CLOSE SHOT, REVERSE ANGLE. We now see in his face a flicker of fear. With what is clearly an effort, he reassumes a confident manner.

HUNSECKER

...I was saving this news for breakfast, but I think I'll jump the gun! I'M GONNA GIVE YOU AND **DALLAS THE BIGGEST WEDDING THIS TOWN HAS EVER SEEN!**

Still no answer from inside the bedroom. Hunsecker's forced expression remains unnaturally fixed upon his face. He calls out:

HUNSECKER

Susie...?

INT. BEDROOM

The room is quite empty. CAMERA SHOTS across the bed towards the door in background. Susan's discarded fur coat lies on the bed. And the doors of the wardrobe are open. Hunsecker's voice can be heard continuing over scene:

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

(outside)

I'm getting the Mayor to perform the ceremony and - NO, I think I'll fly the Governor down from Albany...

(a pause)

Do you hear...?

A pause. Then, very tentatively, the bedroom door is opened.

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

(outside)

Are you listening...?

Now he opens the door and comes in.

HUNSECKER

A BIG CLOSE UP. The sight of the empty room freezes his face for a moment. His eyes look round.

INT. BEDROOM

From Hunsecker's viewpoint. A PANNING SHOT, from the open

door of the cupboard to the fur coat. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hunsecker. He steps to the bed, picks up the coat.

REVERSE ANGLE

There is a dazed, incredulous look on his face. But, as he glances over his shoulder, CAMERA ZOOMS PAST him towards a little door in the wall behind him: It is ajar, showing a couple of inches of light.

RESUME HUNSECKER

Once again Hunsecker reassures himself that Susan must be behind the door. But his voice is even more false as he declares:

HUNSECKER

(a note of anger
appearing in his voice)

Susie!...You won't threaten
me!...Nobody walks out on J.J.
Hunsecker!

CAMERA NOW MOVES CLOSER and closer to Hunsecker. The ANGLE is a weird one, tilting grotesquely upward.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

You need me - you all need me!...

Hunsecker, his fists clenching fiercely at the fur coat, walks towards the door. CAMERA PANS with him. He stands a few inches from the narrow opening. He seems about to push the door open further, but is afraid to do so.

INT. BATHROOM

CAMERA SHOOTS ACROSS the bathtub, showing enough of the tiny room to make it clear that it, too, is completely empty. Through the slit in the door, we can see only a glimpse of the movement of Hunsecker outside. Hunsecker's voice continues:

HUNSECKER (O.S.)

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall
not want".

(a sneering laugh)

That's bunk in a book! I'm the
Shepherd of millions of little men
and women!...

INT. BEDROOM

A DOWNWARD ANGLE, SHOOTING past Hunsecker to the door. As Hunsecker retreats from the door, he is still clutching the fur coat. He stands alone in the middle of the room and his gestures are a little wild. CAMERA rises higher to shoot down at Hunsecker, alone in the little room.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

...I don't ask them to get on their knees, but they come to me for advice and guidance! Who are you to reject me!

With an increasingly eccentric manner, Hunsecker strides out of the bedroom door into the living room again.

INT. LIVING ROOM

A similar ANGLE, SHOOTING down on Hunsecker as he comes out of the bedroom. But as he starts to roam the vast room, CAMERA rises higher still, pulling backwards and upwards to a LONG SHOT which holds the entirety of the big room in all its ugliness.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

What makes YOU fit to sit in judgment on a man like me. Only a great person understands another great person, and that leaves you out!

Hunsecker is now addressing the whole of the apartment, no longer pretending even to himself, that the girl is still listening. He moves off towards the windows to the terrace where the curtains are now blowing in the morning wind. He goes out towards the terrace, his voice becoming more distant - a man shouting empty nonsense, addressing no one.

HUNSECKER

(continuing)

- That leaves you ALL out! You're pigmies! You're all sick, weak midgets! I'm proud to be alone!...

EXT. BROADWAY

CAMERA SHOOTS STEEPLY UP towards the top of the Brill Bldg. (At this angle Hunsecker's terrace will not be visible but its position is established in relationship to the Budweiser sign.) CAMERA PANS DOWN to pick up the figure of Susan Hunsecker as she pushes her way out of the brass doors onto

Broadway.

CLOSER ANGLE

Susan pauses on the sidewalk. She stays there for a moment. She breathes in the fresh morning air, looking around with the expression of someone who sees the world with new eyes. Then she starts up Broadway - away from the Times Square area. The girl's step has a purpose in it; she has confidence and courage. Music for the end titles is quiet, simple and lyrical.

END OF PICTURE