

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Episode 102: "ONE FOR THE ANGELS"

Written by
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ACT ONE

EXT. SKY [NIGHT]

Shot of the sky... the various nebulae and planet bodies stand out in sharp, sparkling relief. As the CAMERA begins a SLOW PAN across the Heavens --

NARRATOR'S VOICE

There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow -- between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call The Twilight Zone.

The CAMERA has begun to PAN DOWN until it passes the horizon and is flush on the OPENING SHOT (EACH WEEK THE OPENING SHOT OF THE PLAY)

EXT. CITY STREET [DAY]

LONG ANGLE SHOT

Looking down at Lew Bookman -- dumpy, shabby little man in a mangled seersucker suit, the pants too short and the coat too long. A flamboyant tie askew at the neck with a misshapen knot and a summer pork pie hat tilted rakishly and idiotically at an angle on his head -- these set off the odd, bizarre quality of the little man. He has a pitch stand set up in front of him with perhaps two dozen items -- everything from toys to needles and thread, cheap ties, can openers, radio tubes, et al. It's a sweltering July afternoon and Lew goes through a half-hearted, stumbling pitch that attracts no one.

LEW

Here you are, ladies and gentlemen... nice things for the home... wearing apparel, toys... everything. Special July clean-up sale!

LONG ANGLE SHOT LOOKING DOWN ON LEW

As he continues to talk. Over this tableau we hear the Narrator's Voice.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Street scene... summer... the present. Man on a sidewalk -- age, sixtyish; occupation -- pitchman. Name -- Lew Bookman. A fixture of the summer. A rather minor component to a hot July. A nondescript, commonplace little man whose life is a treadmill built out of sidewalks.

(a pause)

Lew Bookman -- a walking rebuttal to the American dream that states that success can be carved, gouged, and grubbed out of log cabins and tenements. Because Lew Bookman has not even a nodding acquaintance with success, and his dreams only extend from the curb to the sidewalk.

A pause.

LONG ANGLE SHOT LOOKING DOWN ON LEW

As he calls forlornly to a couple more passersby and then just seems to give up and stands there, close-mouthed, head half down. Suddenly, instinctively, he looks up.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT OF HIM

From behind. A dark-coated man stands there staring at him. The man turns so that his profile is in the f.g. He's staring down at a small ledger that he carries in his hand. Bookman looks at him interestedly and a little warily.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

But in just a moment Lew Bookman will have something to occupy his time which transcends both success and failure. He'll have to concern himself with survival.

Because as of three o'clock this hot July,

(MORE)

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Mr. Bookman will be stalked by Mr. Death!

DISSOLVE TO:

OPENING BILLBOARD

FIRST COMMERCIAL

FADE ON:

EXT. STREET [DAY]

Lew stands silently by his pitch stand, heaves a couple of extremely deep sighs and then slowly begins to close up the pitch, automatically putting things in their places, retrieving samples and buttoning the whole thing up. Every now and then he rather compulsively looks up to see the man in the dark suit staring at him. Finally he has the whole pitch, buttoned down. He hoists it under his arm and starts to walk. Just once he turns back to look at the man and then continues on his way.

EXT. TENEMENT STREET [DAY]

Typical East Side, flanked by brownstones on either side, pitch carts, children playing by hydrants, and a hot populace sitting on curbstones fanning themselves.

TRACK SHOT LEW

As he walks down the sidewalk. On several occasions children wave and call to him. A few of them follow him to the front stoop.

CHILDREN'S VOICES

Hi, Lew. How you doin', Lew? How'd she go today, Lew?

Lew responds to every call. On occasion he'll stop, cupping a child's face in his hands. The overwhelming sense of all these actions and this interplay is a fabulous rapport between the little pitchman and the children.

MED. CLOSE SHOT FRONT STOOP BROWNSTONE

A little girl, age seven, sits on the stoop playing. She runs excitedly toward Lew when she sees him. He swoops her

into his arms, hugs her tightly then puts her down then he sits down on the steps. The children crowd around him, the little girl in the f.g.

LITTLE GIRL

What you sellin' today, Lew? Toys, Lew?
Were you sellin' toys?

Lew holds up a finger in a gesture of extravagant, mysterious silence. He opens the satchel and takes out a little wind-up toy man, hands one to the child, There are 'oohs' and 'aahs' from the kids.

LEW

Now! You know what they are?

LITTLE GIRL

Toys, Lew, huh?

LITTLE BOY

You wind 'em up, don'cha?

LEW

They may look like toys.
(he shakes his head
pontifically and holds up a
protesting hand)
But they are not just toys, Just toys
anyone can sell. You can go to the five and
dime and get just toys. These are not just
toys. These, my young friends, are the toy
wonders of the world.

LITTLE GIRL

(wide-eyed)

Go ahead, Lew. Give us the pitch.

LEW

(clears his throat, looks
down at the starry-eyed kids
and the words come easily,
effectively, with import and
meaning)

Young ladies and gentlemen, the toys you
now hold in your hand come from a remote
corner of the mysterious Tibetan mountain

(MORE)

LEW (CONT'D)

country. They are patterned, shaped and
forged by strange little men who work
underground. And in their final operation

--

LITTLE GIRL

(unable to hold back, blurts
out)

They are subject to the strange life force!

LITTLE BOY

Aw, come on -- let Lew tell it.

LEW

(laughs, hugs them both to
him)

You both know it by heart.

(then he rises very slowly)

Bookman social and ice cream hour after
supper at the usual time. Don't forget.

He winks and waves again.

TRACK SHOT LEW

He continues up the steps and into the foyer.

INT. FOYER [DAY]

LEW AS HE STARTS UP THE STEPS DIFFERENT ANGLES LOOKING DOWN

About five flights of staircases as Lew trudges up toward
the top, lugging his satchel.

CUT TO:

INT. LEW'S ROOM [DAY]

There's the sound of the key turning, then the door opens
and Lew enters. He goes directly over to the window and
opens the rather threadbare curtains, then humming a little
song, he crosses the room to the sink. The room is a
combination living room, kitchen and everything else. He
fills a small watering can in the sink then takes it over
to a row of flowers that bloom heroically on the
windowsill. Still humming, he puts the can down, starts to

take off his coat and in the process of turning, sees the man in the dark suit sitting in a chair looking at him.

CLOSE SHOT LEW REACTING

TWO SHOT THE TWO MEN

LEW

You're the man from the sidewalk. I saw you today writing things in your book.

He cranes his neck to look over on the man's lap. Sure enough, the little ledger book is in sight.

STRANGER

You are Lew Bookman, aren't you?

LEW

That's right. Lewis J, Bookman. Something I can show you?

(and then in a kind of half-hearted hope)

Something in collar stays, maybe?

STRANGER

Mr. Bookman -- I'm not here to buy anything.

Lew hunches down on a kitchen chair. His fingertips nervously run up and down together.

STRANGER

(looks down at his ledger)

Now let's get to business, shall we? Lewis J. Bookman, age sixty-nine, Right?

LEW

Seventy in September.

STRANGER

Occupation, pitchman. Right?

LEW

(nods)

That's right. Are you a census taker?

STRANGER
(disregarding him)
Born in New York City, 1890?

LEW
That's right. 1890.

STRANGER
Father, Jacob Bookman, mother Flora
Bookman. Father's place of birth, Detroit,
Michigan. Mother's place of birth,
Syracuse; New York. Right?

LEW
(rises, peers over toward
the other man)
That's right. My, you have it all down.

STRANGER
(nods, bored)
We have to keep these things efficient. Now
today is --
(he talks as he writes)
-- the 19th of July. And your departure is
at midnight tonight.

LEW
My departure.

At this moment we hear the sound of running footsteps up
various flights of stairs, then a knock on Lew's door.

LEW
Excuse me.

He opens the door. The little girl stands there.

LEW
Hi, Maggie.

LITTLE GIRL
(holds up the toy)
The key's bent, Lew. Can you fix it?

LEW

(takes the toy, studies it)
Here's your trouble right here. See this
little cog wheel? You've pushed down on the
key when you've been winding it.

The two of them bend over the toy.

LEW

(looks up at the man)
I'd introduce you two, only I don't know
your name.

STRANGER

(smiles)
No need.

LITTLE GIRL

I think I got it now, Lew.

He stands there, intent on the toy.

LEW

This gentleman here has come to ask me a
lot of questions.

(and then as a frightened
afterthought)
You're not the police, are you?

STRANGER

(shakes his head)
Hardly.

LEW

(to the little girl)
Kind of gave me a turn. I'm glad he's not
the police. I've got my vendor's license
here someplace. I thought maybe I'd forgot
to renew it or something.

LITTLE GIRL

(still intent on the toy)
Who's the police, Lew?

LEW
This gentleman here.

LITTLE GIRL
(looks up briefly)
What gentleman?

LEW
(points to the chair)
That gentleman.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT THE GIRL

CUT TO:

SHOT OF THE CHAIR GIRL'S P.O.V.

It's empty.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT THE GIRL

LITTLE GIRL
What gentleman?

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT LEW

As he looks.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT THE MAN IN THE CHAIR LEW'S P.O.V.

STRANGER
Mr. Bookman, she can't see me or hear me.

MED. SHOT

LEW
(looking from the man to the
girl)
Why not?

LITTLE GIRL

Why not what, Lew?

LEW

Why can't you hear him or see him?

LITTLE GIRL

See who, Lew?

(and then delighted that the
toy is fixed)

It works great now, Lew. Thanks an awful
lot. See you after supper, huh?

She starts toward the door.

LEW

Wait a minute. What about our manners.
Aren't you going to say goodbye?

LITTLE GIRL

(at door)

Oh, yeah! Good-bye, Lew. Thanks a lot.

LEW

I mean to the gentleman.

LITTLE GIRL

(looks toward empty chair,
laughs)

Oh, it's a game! The invisible man. Good-
bye, invisible man. See you after supper,
Lew.

With this she gambols out of the apartment and we hear her
running footsteps, two at a time; down the stairs. Lew
closes the door very, very thoughtfully and turns toward
the man.

LEW

(very hesitantly)

I can see you... yet she can't.

STRANGER

Only those who are to accompany me can see
me. Understand, Mr. Bookman.

(and then pointedly)

(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Only those who are to accompany me can see me!

(a pause)

Now don't you think you'd better start making your arrangements?

LEW

(softly)

Arrangements for what?

STRANGER

For your departure.

LEW

My departure where?

STRANGER

(rises, staring at him)

You still don't get it!

(he takes a deep breath)

I just never will understand you people. You get this idiotic notion that life goes on forever, and of course it doesn't. Everyone has to go sometime.

LEW

Go? You mean --

STRANGER

(nods, walking around the room, surveying things)

That's right.

He stops and looks down at the flowers on the windowsill.

LEW

I won second prize last year at the YMHA flower show. Wisteria, open class.

STRANGER

How nice.

(he turns and looks at Lew)

And what I further don't understand is how little you appreciate the nature of your departure.

(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Think of the poor souls who go in violent accidents. These are the non- precognition victims. We're not permitted to forewarn them. You, Mr. Bookman, fall into the category of --

(he clears his throat)
natural causes.

LEW

(takes a step toward him)

Natural causes?

(he points a slightly
wavering finger at the
stranger)

I find you a very devious sort. This is not to say dishonest. Why don't you say what you mean?

STRANGER

Mr. Bookman, I have done everything but phone your own undertaker. How much clearer do you want it? If you still don't know who I am --

(he turns toward the
flowers)

then you are the most dense man I've come up against.

CLOSER SHOT STRANGER

As he touches one of the flowers. It wilts under his touch, falls forward on its stem and dies.

EXTREMELY TIGHT CLOSE SHOT THE FLOWER

The CAMERA PANS UP for a shot of Lew as he reacts.

LEW

You're... death?

STRANGER

(another deep sigh)

Exactly, Mr. Bookman. Now shall we get down to business? Time of departure is midnight tonight. I trust that will suit you.

(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)

The preordination is for death during nap.
I presume this too will meet with your
approval. You'll find this a relatively
simple and painless and barely noticeable

--

CLOSE SHOT LEW

Nervous fingers beat a tattoo all over his face and finally
he shouts.

LEW

Please! I don't want to go!

TWO SHOT

STRANGER

(to himself)

They never do.

LEW

But I can't go yet. There's nothing wrong
with me. I'm a healthy man. Outside of a
cold last winter and an infected sliver, I
don't think I've been sick a day in the
past twenty years.

STRANGER

That's as it may be, but departure time is
set for midnight and departure time will be
at midnight.

LEW

Don't I have anything to say about that?

STRANGER

We do listen to appeals.

(he opens the ledger)

But frankly, Mr. Bookman, I must tell you
quite frankly that there's very little here
in the way of an extenuating circumstance.
There are three major categories of
appeals. One is hardship cases. Now do you
have a wife or family who might suffer your

(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)
demise beyond a reasonable point?

LEW
(shakes his head)
No, no family.

STRANGER
Second category is priority cases.
Statesmen, scientists. Men on the verge of
discoveries.

(he looks up at Lew then
over to the pitchman's
satchel)
I take is you're not working on any major
scientific pursuit at the moment.

LEW
(in a whisper)
No, I'm not.
(then after a pause)
What about the third category?

STRANGER
Well, Mr. Bookman, that would be unfinished
business of a major nature.

LEW
(turns to look at the
stranger)
I've never made a truly successful pitch. I
mean... I mean a big pitch. I mean a pitch
so big the sky will open up.
(and then with intensity)
A pitch for the angels.
(a pause)
I guess that wouldn't mean much to you.
(he turns away again)
But it would mean a great deal to me. It
would mean... it would mean that --
(his face is very soft now
and reflective)
I could have one moment in my whole life
when I was successful at something. Just
one moment when the children would be able
(MORE)

LEW (CONT'D)
to... would be able to feel proud of me.

STRANGER
(displaying no emotions at
all)
The children?

LEW
(nods, his face suddenly
carries with it a peculiar
brightness)
I've always had rather a fondness for
children.

CLOSE SHOT STRANGER

STRANGER
(dispassionately)
That's in the record here.
(then there's barely a
perceptible softening of his
face as he stares intently
at Lew)
Problem here, Mr. Bookman, is that you'd
require a delay until --

TWO SHOT LEW AND STRANGER

LEW
Until I could make a pitch. I mean the kind
of pitch I told you about.

STRANGER
(with a half-smile)
One for the angels, you mean?
(there's a brief pause)
I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Bookman... you see
these categories are fairly specific and
when reference is made to unfinished
business of a major nature, well the only
interpretation to be made here is simply
that... what I mean is that unfortunately,
Mr. Bookman, the ability to achieve success
in a given professional venture is really
(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)

hardly of a major --

He stops abruptly, suddenly conscious of the face of Lewis J. Bookman. Suddenly aware of the poignance of it, the pathos of it, the infinite sadness, and with it the infinite gentleness and kindness. The Stranger clears his throat, looks away, drums with his fingers on the ledger, then looks back at Bookman.

STRANGER

Mean a great deal to you, does it?

LEW

(intensely)

A great deal.

STRANGER

Uh huh.

(purses his lips, drums
again with his fingers,
walks over to the window
then turns back to Lew)

All right, Mr. Bookman. Under the
circumstances I believe we could grant you
a delay.

LEW

Until?

STRANGER

(pettishly)

What do you mean, "until?" Until you've
made this... this "pitch" you're talking
about.

LEW

I can stay alive until then?

STRANGER

That's the arrangement.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

As his eyes narrow and a very wise, rather cat-got-canary
look covers his face. Then he smiles.

LEW

I think that's a fine bargain. It's been awfully nice talking to you... Mr... I didn't get your name.

He opens the door and motions.

TWO SHOT

STRANGER

(heading toward the door)

Now about this pitch, Mr. Bookman. When might we expect it?

LEW

When?

(he giggles)

Oh, soon. Soon. Maybe not this year. Maybe not next year, but soon.

CLOSE SHOT STRANGER

By the door.

STRANGER

Mr. Bookman, I have a very odd feeling that you're taking advantage of us.

LEW

Do you really? Well now that's a pity.

(then he giggles again and slams the door shut and shouts)

Because I am!

(he turns from the door and rubs his hands together)

I just won't make any pitches at all. I won't even hardly open my mouth.

(he strides over toward the windowsill)

Think you'll get me, huh? Well, I just won't --

He stops dead, staring toward the mirror over the sink. There, he sees the reflection of the stranger back in the room.

STRANGER

Really, Mr. Bookman, this is much more serious than you imagine --

Lew goes to the door in a rush, flings it open and hurries out, starting down the steps.

CUT TO:

FIRST LANDING

The stranger stands there and waggles a reproving finger at Lew as he passes him.

STRANGER

It's much more complex than you realize -- what you've just done.

Lew keeps going past him, shutting his eyes in the hopes that perhaps he'll disappear.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER LANDING

As Lew comes down. The stranger stands here too.

STRANGER

Here we have gone out of our way to help you and this is the way you repay us --

Lew takes a long, shuddering breath as he waves the Stranger off, going past him down the steps.

CUT TO:

FOYER ANGLE SHOT LOOKING UP THE STEPS

As Lew comes down. The Stranger steps out into the frame, his back to the camera and facing Lew.

STRANGER

Mr. Bookman, it won't just end here, you understand. There'll be consequences, you see!

CLOSE SHOT LEW

As he wiggles his head back and forth in a gesture of disdain, points a wavery finger at the man, his voice fairly dripping with contempt and with power.

LEW

FYI! That means, for your information -- you have made your bed and you shall now sleep in it! You say I won't go until I make the pitch -- well all right! You'll have to wait till I make the pitch! And young man... this I can say to you without fear of contradiction -- you have got a long wait!

CLOSE SHOT THE STRANGER

His eyes narrow thoughtfully.

STRANGER

That may well be, Mr. Bookman. But since you won't come with me -- we have been forced to select an alternative!

At this moment there's the sound of shrieking brakes from outside. A woman's scream. And then a jumble of excited, frightened, horrified voices. Lew turns, pushes open the front door. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him outside.

EXT. STREET MOVING SHOT BEHIND LEW

As he pushes his way through the crowd and finally reaches a little knot of people on the curb. They part for him and reveal the body of the little girl lying on a blanket on the sidewalk. The truck driver, in a leather jacket, kneels beside her then looks up, wringing his hands.

TRUCK DRIVER

I swear I didn't see her. She just jumps off the curb and I didn't have no chance to stop! I swear to you, I never had no chance to stop!

LEW

Has someone gone for the doctor? The ambulance coming?

There's a chorus of assent.

CLOSE SHOT LITTLE GIRL

As Lew bends down by her. He pushes a wisp of hair off the tortured little face and kisses her cheek.

LEW

You're gonna be all right, Maggie, darlin'.
You're gonna be just fine.

The little girl opens her eyes, smiles wanly.

LITTLE GIRL

Hi, Lew!

Then her eyes travel past Lew as a shadow crosses over her face. She looks a little frightened.

LITTLE GIRL

Lew? Lew, who's that man?

CLOSE SHOT LEW

As his face turns.

ANGLE SHOT OVER LEW'S SHOULDER LOOKING TOWARD THE STRANGER

Who stands over them.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

Reacting, his eyes wide with horror.

MED. CLOSE SHOT LEW

As he rises.

LEW

(in a voice that trembles
with intensity)

You can't take her. No siree -- you can't
take her! I'll go. I'll go as planned.

(MORE)

LEW (CONT'D)

Never mind the pitch. I'll go right now. I don't want to wait, even. I want to go right now!

LONG ANGLE SHOT LOOKING DOWN THE SIDEWALK

As Lew races in one direction, shouting.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT LOOKING DOWN THE SIDEWALK

As he turns and races toward the camera.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT FROM THE TOP OF THE STEPS

As Lew races up them until the camera is extremely tight on him.

LEW

(shouts)

Mr. Death? Mr. Death -- I'll go. You mustn't take the little girl. I'll go. Please, Mr. Death.

FADE TO BLACK:

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE ON:

EXT. BUILDING [NIGHT]

LONG SHOT LOOKING TOWARD THE FRONT STOOP THROUGH THE OPEN
DOOR INTO THE FOYER

We see several neighbors crowded around the little girl's
apartment door. Somber, waiting, silent people. A doctor
comes out, putting his sleeves down, walks through the
neighbors. We hear hushed questions.

VOICES

How is she? Is she gonna be all right, Doc?
How's the little girl, Doc?

The Doctor continues through the crowd outdoors to the
front stoop where Lew stands waiting.

LEW

Doctor?

DOCTOR

(takes out a cigarette,
lights it, inhales deeply)
I don't know. She's a mightily sick little
girl. But we'll know by midnight. I think
she'll hit a crisis by then.

LEW

(looks up at him)
By midnight?

DOCTOR

(nods)
I think by then.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

His features look set, grim.

LEW

He won't come in! I won't let him come in!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLANSKY APARTMENT [NIGHT]

The little girl, Maggie, in bed beside the window. She is unconscious. A cheap alarm clock, in on the table beside the bed, reading: 11:40.

EXT. BUILDING [NIGHT]

LONG ANGLE SHOT LOOKING DOWN

On the front stoop. It's very late now. Lew sits there, a long figure guarding the front door. Alongside of him is his pitch stand. He looks at his watch and intermittently scans the street.

LONG SHOT LOOKING AT THE SIDEWALK

As suddenly the light from the street lamp is momentarily eclipsed by a big black shadow.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

Reacting. He looks up and across the street.

LONG SHOT ACROSS THE STREET

Out of the shadows and into the periphery of light around the street lamp comes the Stranger. He walks very slowly across the street to stand a few feet away from Lew. Lew looks up.

LEW

You got business in there?

STRANGER

(nods)

I most certainly do.

(he takes out a pocket
watch, snaps it open, looks
at it, snaps it shut, puts
it back in his pocket)

It's a quarter to twelve. In fifteen
minutes. Midnight. That's my appointment.

LEW

Mr. Death... the little girl is only six
years old.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

(and now a hysteria creeps
into his voice. He takes a
step down toward the
Stranger)

Please... I'm ready now.

STRANGER

(firmly but not urgently)

I'm sorry, Mr. Bookman. We had to make
other arrangements. It's impossible to
change it now. She's to come with me at
midnight.

(he makes a gesture
resigned, hopeless)

So I must be in there at midnight.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

His features work. His voice is strained and tight.

LEW

And if you're not in there by midnight?

STRANGER

(with a short laugh)

That would be pretty much unheard of. If I
didn't get there at precisely midnight then
the whole timetable would be upset. Oh my,
no... it's unheard of.

FULL SHOT THE STEPS

As Lew starts to very slowly walk back up toward his pitch
stand, picks it up, carries it down to the sidewalk, opens
it up and starts to arrange the merchandise.

STRANGER

What are you doing, Mr. Bookman?

LEW

(over his shoulder)

What am I doing? Oh, nothing. Just setting
up a pitch is all.

STRANGER

At this time of night?

LEW

Oh, I very often have a late-night sale.
Very often.

STRANGER

(looks up and down the
street)

Not many customers.

LEW

(again over his shoulder)

They come! They show up.

(he turns now, the pitch
stand set up, standing
behind it, looking at the
Stranger)

You're here anyway.

STRANGER

(laughs softly)

Oh, yes, I'm here. But I'm afraid I --

(he waves toward the
merchandise)

I'm not much of a customer.

LEW

How do you know? Have you ever seen my
stock?

(a pause)

Now you take a tie like this right here --

STRANGER

Like what?

Lew looks down. In his shaking hand he's holding a toy
walking man.

LEW

Excuse me. Right here.

(he picks up a tie now)

See this? What's it look like to you?

STRANGER

It looks like a tie.

LEW

Feel it.

STRANGER

(feels it, shrugs)

So?

CAMERA DOLLIES IN FOR EXT. TIGHT CLOSE SHOT LEW

As he starts to talk. We go in and out of focus on him several times as he speaks, interspersing this with shots of the Stranger standing there open-mouthed at the spiel. At each dissolve more and more people come into the scene to listen.

LEW

If you'll feast your eyes, my good man, on probably one of the most exciting inventions since atomic energy. A simulated silk so fabulously conceived as to mystify even the ancient Chinese silk manufacturers. A perfection of detail... an almost unbelievable attention to detail. A piquant interweaving of gossamer softness.

He continues to talk, the words spewing out on top of one another and intermittently we see the Stranger, his mouth half open, almost mesmerized by the pitch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLANSKY APARTMENT [NIGHT]

The little girl, Maggie, in bed beside the window. She is unconscious. The alarm clock on the table beside the bed, reading: 11:50.

TWO SHOT LEW AND THE STRANGER

Under his arm the Stranger now has several boxes of ties and Lew is still talking. He's holding up a piece of thread.

LEW

Witness, if you will, a demonstration of tensile strength. Feel this, if you will, sir.

The Stranger tentatively touches the thread. Lew yanks it away.

LEW

Unbelievable, isn't it? As strong as steel and yet as delicate as Shantung Silk. Picture, if you will, three hundred years of backbreaking research and labor to develop this, the absolute ultimate in thread, And what will you pay for this fabulous... I say fabulous, incredible and amazing development of the tailor's art? Will you pay twenty dollars or ten dollars? Or even five? You might indeed if you were trying to purchase this at a store. But this fantastic thread is unavailable in stores. It is smuggled in by Oriental birds specially trained for ocean travel, each carrying a minute quantity in a small satchel underneath their ruby throats. It takes eight hundred and thirty-two crossings to supply enough thread to go around one spool and tonight as my special get-acquainted, introductory, mid-July, hot summer sale I offer you this thread not at thirty dollars. Not at twenty or ten, but for the ridiculously low price of twenty-five cents a spool.

CLOSE SHOT THE STRANGER

His shirt is open. The tie askew. He looks punchy.

STRANGER

I'll take all you have.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLANSKY APARTMENT [NIGHT]

Maggie in bed. Clock reads: 11:55.

DIFFERENT ANGLE LEW

Now the stranger is loaded down with boxes, bags, etc. Behind him and flanking him are other people, also holding onto things they've bought.

ANGLE SHOT LOOKING DOWN

At the top of the pitch stand as Lew's hands rummage through, pulling out things, yanking at them, separating them, and his voice constantly over this in a steady stream of chatter.

LEW

Sewing needles. Yarn. Simulated cashmere socks. Odd lots of leather. Marvelous plastic shoelaces. Genuine static eradicator. Fits in any standard radio. Suntan oil. Eczema powder. Athlete's feet destroyer. How about nice Shantung scarves?

CLOSE SHOT LEW

Sweat rolls down his face. The merchandise comes in and out of his hands as he grabs at other things while he talks.

CLOSE SHOT THE STRANGER

He's only semi-conscious now, his eyes lolling, his mouth hanging open.

INT. POLANSKY APARTMENT [NIGHT]

The little girl, Maggie, in bed beside the window. She is still unconscious. The alarm clock on the table beside the bed reading: 11:57.

EXT. APARTMENT TWO SHOT LEW AND STRANGER

LEW

And now for the piece de resistance. The bargain of the evening. An item never before offered in this or any other country.

(he waits a dramatic beat)

One guaranteed, live, human, genuine

(MORE)

LEW (CONT'D)
manservant.

STRANGER
(weakly)
How's that?

LEW
For what I ask you, sir, receive a willing,
capable, worldly, highly sophisticated,
wonderfully loyal right-hand man to be used
in any capacity you see fit.

STRANGER
(again mystified)
How's that?

LEW
(without missing a beat)
Me. Lewis J. Bookman. The first model of
his kind. He comes to you with an absolute
guarantee. All parts interchangeable. A
certificate of four year's serviceability.
Eats little. Sleeps little. Rests only a
fraction of the time. And there he is at
your elbow. At your beck and call whenever
needed.

CLOSE SHOT STRANGER

He shakes his head as if getting out of the trance and he
has to smile.

STRANGER
Mr. Bookman -- you are a persuasive man --

LEW
I challenge any other store, industry, or
wholesale house to even come close to
matching what I offer you here. Because, my
dear man, I offer you...
(and now suddenly for the
first time his voice starts
to fade)
I offer you here...

CLOSE SHOT LEW

His features suddenly go lax. His eyes half close. The sweat pours down his face. Suddenly his hands fall to his sides. His head goes down. He has to support himself on the railing. He stands there for a long silent moment and then from off screen we hear the sound of a child crying. And concurrent with this after a moment is the sound of distant chimes that ring twelve times.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

As he looks up, listening.

CLOSE SHOT STRANGER

As his hands dive into his pocket to pull out the stopwatch.

STRANGER

(wailing)

It's midnight. It's midnight and I've missed the appointment.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

His eyes close in massive relief.

MED. LONG SHOT THE DOOR

As it opens. The doctor comes out carrying his black bag, Mrs. Polansky behind him.

DOCTOR

Just give her the sedatives every three hours, Mrs. Polansky. All she needs now is rest. But she's going to be all right!

He winks, smiles, goes down the steps past Lew and then down the sidewalk, disappearing. The CAMERA PANS OVER for a shot of the Stranger who slowly shuts his watch and puts it back in his pocket.

STRANGER

One minute past twelve, Mr. Bookman. And you made me miss my appointment.

LEW
(nods, softly)
Thank God.

Slowly, as if in a dream, he shuffles over to the pitch stand and starts to shut it up. He pauses for a moment then sits down, buries his face in his hands.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

He's suddenly aware of the Stranger standing very close to him. He looks up.

TWO SHOT

STRANGER
A most persuasive pitch, Mr. Bookman. An excellent pitch. It had to be to... to make me miss my appointment.

LEW
(nods and smiles)
Yes, quite a pitch. Very effective. Best I've ever done.
(then he smiles, looks off a little dreamily)
That's the kind of pitch I've always wanted to make. A big one. A pitch so big... so big the sky would open up.

CLOSE SHOT THE STRANGER

STRANGER
A pitch for the angels.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

LEW
(nods)
That's right. A pitch for the angels.
(and then suddenly his smile fades, his eyes look down, he turns away)
I guess... I guess it's time for me now.

TWO SHOT

STRANGER
(with a deep sigh)
As per our agreement.

LEW
(tilts the hat on the back
of his head)
Well, I'm ready.

STRANGER
After you, Mr. Bookman.

The two men start to walk down the steps to the sidewalk.
They take a few steps down the sidewalk, then Lew suddenly
stops, turns.

REVERSE ANGLE

Looking at the pitch stand on the stoop.

CLOSE SHOT LEW

LEW
You'll excuse me for a minute? I forgot
something.

LONG SHOT LOOKING AT HIM

As he walks back to the stoop, folds up the pitch stand,
hoists it under his arm and then walks back down the steps
toward the waiting Stranger.

TWO SHOT

LEW
(patting the stand)
You never know who might need something up
there!
(then a pause as suddenly
his face takes on a
questioning look)
Up there?

STRANGER
(nods and smiles)
Up there, Mr. Bookman. You made it!

Lew smiles, hoists up the stand again.

LONG ANGLE SHOT

Of the two men as they slowly walk down the sidewalk away from the building. Over their walk we hear the Narrator's Voice.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Lewis J. Bookman. Age, sixtyish. Formerly a fixture of the summer. Formerly a rather minor component to a hot July. But throughout his life a man beloved by the children and therefore... a most important man.

(a pause)

Couldn't happen, you say? Probably not in most places. But it did happen in... The Twilight Zone.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END