

THE PAINTED MAN

A Screenplay for  
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&  
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Written by  
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SECOND DRAFT

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EXT. HILL - DUSK

TITLE: One day, somewhere, long ago.

The scene of a beheading about to commence some time in the seventeenth century. From a distance, five figures can be made out through a light fog: a PRIEST, MAGISTRATE, HATCHET MAN, GRAVE DIGGER and the VICTIM, who we faintly see from behind; on their knees with their head on a stump.

We're closer now, chest high on the death squad. It's all very routine. The Priest prays to heaven, the Magistrate gives the signal and the Hatchet Man does his job. THUD.

The Priest crosses himself then looks down. They all do. What they witness rocks them to their core.

PRIEST

Dear God.

Shock turns to horror. The Grave Digger faints. The other men run like hell, screeching like frightened schoolboys.

FADE TO:

EXT. ITALIAN CONVENT - EVENING

TITLE: Assisi. 1676.

A stone convent with a small wooden barn in the Italian countryside.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDROOM

ELIZABETH is asleep in her narrow bed, wearing a matronly nightgown. She is striking with angular features and dark, shoulder-length hair. She appears to be in her mid-thirties.

She snaps awake to see four VERY OLD NUNS hovering over her, scowling. They are: Sisters AGNES, ANTONIA, MARY and SILVIA. Sister Antonia grills her in SUBTITLED LATIN:

SISTER ANTONIA

What are you?

Elizabeth, quickly, also in SUBTITLED LATIN:

ELIZABETH

A handmaid of the precious blood.  
Betrothed to the eternal King.

SISTER AGNES  
 (in English)  
 Horseshit!

The interrogation continues in English.

ELIZABETH  
 Sister Agnes!

SISTER MARY  
 You broke your vow of silence.

SISTER AGNES  
 (to Elizabeth)  
 You've been with us for thirty years  
 and you haven't aged a day.

SISTER SILVIA  
 I was a lively forty-three when you  
 arrived. Now look at me.

ELIZABETH  
 I think you look quite lovely.

SISTER ANTONIA  
 She looks like a shriveled lemon.  
 What are you?

ELIZABETH  
 I'm just a woman, in love with her  
 Lord.

SISTER AGNES  
 I say she's the devil incarnate.

SISTER MARY  
 Maybe she's possessed.

SISTER SILVIA  
 (gravely)  
 I said a widow would be trouble.

SISTER AGNES  
 We should drain her blood.

SISTER ANTONIA  
 It's been a while since we've  
 performed an exorcism.

SISTER MARY  
 Let's just crucify her.

ELIZABETH  
 (rashly)  
 Goat semen!

SISTER MARY  
 What?

ELIZABETH  
 It's goat semen. That's my secret.  
 Goat semen.

SISTER MARY  
 Do you drink it?

ELIZABETH  
 What? No. I...I apply it to my skin  
 in the evening to keep it looking  
 young. Please forgive my vanity, and  
 for violating the animals. But here,  
 feel for yourself.

She places Sister Silvia's hand and on her cheek.

SISTER SILVIA  
 (amazed)  
 So soft.

The other Sisters begin to caress Elizabeth's face.

SISTER AGNES  
 It's miraculous.

Elizabeth can't believe they're buying it.

INT. BARN

The Sisters coat their faces in semen as three male goats  
 stare at them, confused.

SISTER ANTONIA  
 (to Sister Agnes)  
 You missed your cheek.

SISTER AGNES  
 (rubs her cheek)  
 This one?

SISTER MARY  
 Sister Elizabeth, how long do we keep  
 it on?

They look around for Elizabeth. She's not there.

SISTER MARY (cont'd)  
Sister Elizabeth?

EXT. BARN

Elizabeth sprints away from the barn, making her escape over the hills and into the darkness.

FADE TO:

EXT. SPANISH MARKETPLACE - DUSK

TITLE: Cádiz. 1731.

A vibrant gulf-side marketplace in Spain's port city. There are VENDORS of every variety. STREET PERFORMERS add to the carnival-like atmosphere.

A beaming Elizabeth saunters through it wearing a Rococo dress as she takes a pleasurable bite of panxineta. She hasn't aged a day because she stopped aging long ago. She has a half-full hobo bag around her torso.

A MAN'S voice catches her attention from off-screen:

RAUL (O.S.)  
I have something for you.

She turns to face RAUL, an elegant man in his early forties. He presents her with a beautiful citrine necklace. In SUBTITLED SPANISH, as he places it around her neck:

ELIZABETH  
Raul. You shouldn't have. But I accept.

RAUL  
(in English)  
Very excellent. Your Spanish is much improving. Let me look at you.

She turns to model it for him.

RAUL (cont'd)  
Hermosa. You are exquisite.

ELIZABETH  
(in English)  
And you are quite the charmer. Keep this up and I might just let you buy me that opal bracelet over there.

Her eyes shift in the direction of a Vendor's table with a stunning opal bracelet on display. He rushes to buy it. She has that kind of power over men. It vexes her.

An unmistakably loud MALE voice interrupts from off-screen:

LEO (O.S.)  
Attention humans!

She sees an American STILT WALKER. He is four-and-a-half feet tall and about fifty years in age. He wears a top hat, patterned ascot and well-worn suit. This is LEO.

LEO  
I present you a simple choice. Place coins in my hat, or I will sing in your mother tongue. I assure you, I am not the bird of song I appear to be.  
(in Subtitled Spanish)  
You pay or I sing.

He lowers his hat for coins. No one agrees to his ultimatum.

LEO (cont'd)  
Very well.

He begins to wail, poorly:

LEO (cont'd)  
*Todas las flores en el campo. Toda la fruta en los árboles. Todos los peces en el mar. Todas monedas solo para mí.*

Spaniards rush to him, joyfully placing coins in his hat, playfully begging him to stop.

LEO (cont'd)  
Gracias. Gracias. Muy amable.

Elizabeth chuckles at the spectacle. She approaches and drops a coin in his hat. He nods with appreciation and they hold their gazes a beat. Something undeniable about each other.

She watches him stilt-walk away high above the sea of people as if he is walking on them.

She returns to Raul, who is down on one knee with a large ring in his hands. A gawking CROWD has gathered around him. They again speak in SUBTITLED SPANISH:

ELIZABETH

Raul.

RAUL

I saw this and something stirred deep inside me. Elizabeth, I realize it's only been a few days, but you are the most beguiling woman I have ever encountered. I cannot close my eyes without seeing your face. My heart, it aches at the thought of you.

ELIZABETH

Please stop.

The Crowd grows larger with each romantic word.

RAUL

Please marry me. I want to love you for the remainder of my days.

ELIZABETH

But you will grow old and die.

RAUL

Well, yes. Eventually. We all do. But I will die the happiest man of all time. What do you say?

The Crowd awaits her answer as it lurches forward.

ELIZABETH

Oh, Raul. You sweet man.

She rushes toward the gulf, jumps in a boat, and to everyone's shock, begins to row away into the setting sun, which becomes:

MATCH CUT TO:

AN EXPLOSION OF MORTAR FIRE

EXT. ALGERIAN COAST - DAY

TITLE: Algiers. 1771.

A Mediterranean beach during the outbreak of the Danish-Algerian war. SOLDIERS drag the bodies of their fallen comrades across the sand. Algerian artillery fires counter strikes at Dutch ships in the harbor, damaging their hulls.

INT. MEDICAL TENT

Wounded soldiers lay on the floor in various levels of distress. Some cry out in Arabic. A SENIOR OFFICER forces Elizabeth into the tent against her will. She's dressed in a traditional karakou and still has her hobo bag. He yells at her in SUBTITLED ARABIC:

SENIOR OFFICER  
Help them! Help them!

ELIZABETH  
(in English)  
Stop yelling at me! I told you, I'm  
not a doctor.

He continues to yell at her, his pitch rising. She fires back in SUBTITLED ARABIC:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I said stop yelling at me!

He rears back his hand to slap her. She doesn't flinch. He's stymied by her fearlessness and quickly storms away. She is now alone with the wounded men, who gape at her in awe. She addresses them in English:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I'm really not a doctor. I was just  
beginning to like it here. It's such  
a lovely coast...and now this.  
(irritated)  
Bloody wars. Murdering each other.  
And for what? Killing is wrong. I  
will not be party to it.

They do not understand a word she says. She sighs, scans the room and asks in SUBTITLED ARABIC:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Help?

All hands point to the corner of the room in the direction of the ELDEST SOLDIER, a man in his sixties. She approaches and kneels at his side. He has a flesh wound on his abdomen. She reacts as an experienced mother would.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(in English)  
We should clean this.

She finds cloth and a bottle of alcohol then douses the cloth.



ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
It's going to hurt.

She reaches into her bag and pulls out an 18-inch jeweled-handled dagger in a jeweled sheath. She removes the dagger from the sheath. His eyes fill with fear.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Bite down on this.

She places the sheath in his mouth, then presses the cloth to the wound. He writhes in pain as his jaws clamp down on the sheath.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
It's a gift I received in Portugal.  
It's much older than you are. As am I. Unless of course you're also quite ancient.  
(searching his  
confused eyes)  
No? Very well. You know, I had a son who lived to be about your age. I don't suppose your mother is still alive.

He just stares at her. His eyes flutter from pain.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Well, you'll get to see her when it's your time. Just not right now.  
(re: his wound)  
We're going to need some hot metal for this. And a touch of medicine for me.

She takes a swig of the alcohol. It burns going down.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. JAPANESE MINKA - EVENING

TITLE: Tokyo. 1833.

Elizabeth is drinking from a bottle of shochu. She wears a simple nightshirt. A handsome, young Australian SAILOR paws at her playfully.

SAILOR  
My turn.

She hands him the bottle. They're drunk. Her, more so. She flops onto the bed and beckons him with her finger. He sets the bottle down, removes his shirt and joins her. They kiss.

SAILOR (cont'd)  
Sail away with me.

ELIZABETH  
No.

SAILOR  
It's lonely out there.

ELIZABETH  
It's lonely everywhere.

SAILOR  
I'll make you love me.

ELIZABETH  
No you won't, you silly man.  
(searches his eyes)  
Can you keep a secret?  
(off his nod)  
I am three-hundred and thirty years old.

SAILOR  
You're drunk.

ELIZABETH  
Unquestionably. And I am also old enough to be your mother's, mother, mother, mother, mother--

SAILOR  
Can you stop saying mother?

ELIZABETH  
But I was. I had a husband and three beautiful children more than two centuries ago. They all grew old and died, and I buried them in our family plot. I vowed that I would never go through that pain again. I could come to love you, but I will not. You're just a handsome tonic. One of many.

SAILOR  
And I am King Neptune.

She shoves him away, then reaches for her hobo bag, which is full. She pulls out a pair of sapphire earrings.

ELIZABETH

Kashmir. Forty years ago. A gift from a wealthy carpet merchant.

She pulls out a silver, baroque-era cup.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Germany. Sixteen-ninety five from a mercenary with questionable taste in gift giving.

She pulls out the citrine necklace Raul gave her.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Cádiz. That's in Spain. Seventeen-thirty one. His name was Raul and I turned down his proposal.

The Sailor's eyes light up with each new reveal. He peers into the bag. It's full of treasure.

SAILOR

(still not believing)

You're a thief?

She takes a moment, then says flatly:

ELIZABETH

I don't quite know what I am.

He reaches for the bottle, takes a vigorous swig, then offers it to her. She drinks to wash away the sorrow.

INT. JAPANESE MINKA - MORNING

Elizabeth wakes up with a hangover. The Sailor is gone, and after some frantic searching, she discovers the hobo bag and its treasures are gone as well. She trips on something on her way back to the bed. It's the silver cup.

She sits on the bed, stares at the floor, and laughs as tears begin to pool in her eyes.

EXT. CITY STREET

The street is alive with activity. Elizabeth walks alone, ignoring the intrusion of LOCALS who gawk at the tall white woman in a kimono. An unmistakably loud MALE voice catches her attention from off-screen:

LEO (O.S.)  
Attention humans!

She sees Leo many yards away, performing his act, just as he did more than a century ago. He hasn't aged a day. She's motionless. He wears a different well-worn suit and ascot, but no longer has a top hat. He holds out a brass cup.

LEO  
I present you a simple choice. Place coins in my cup, or I will sing in your mother tongue. I assure you, I am not the bird of song I appear to be.

(in Subtitled  
Japanese)  
You pay or I sing.

No one agrees to his ultimatum as expected.

LEO (cont'd)  
Very well.

He wails, poorly:

LEO (cont'd)  
*Firudo ni aru subete no hana. Ki no subete no kudamono. Umi subete no sakana. Watashi no tame dake no subete no koin.*

On cue, people rush to place coins in his cup. Elizabeth witnesses it all as if seeing a ghost.

EXT. SHACK - EVENING

A rundown door-less shack on the edge of a lake. Leo sits by a fire, counting his coins. Elizabeth rounds the corner and watches from several feet away. He senses her.

LEO  
Please don't stare.

He turns and freezes. He remembers her.

ELIZABETH  
I enjoy your act.

He stands and extends the cup in a bid for coins.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I don't have money. A sailor stole my  
bag. All my treasures were in it.

He sits and resumes his count. She approaches.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I've seen you before. In Cádiz.

He stops counting.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
It was a little more than a hundred  
years ago. Do you remember?

He doesn't reply. She presses on:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
You sang that funny song and I placed  
a coin in your top hat.

She moves around to face him.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
It was you. And you haven't aged a  
day. Neither have I. We're alike.

LEO  
I was never there. And what you're  
suggesting isn't possible. Now,  
please leave. You're making me lose  
count.

ELIZABETH  
(looks at his coins)  
Not much there.

LEO  
Now you're making me lose patience.

She holds out the silver cup as an offering.

LEO (cont'd)  
What's this?

ELIZABETH  
A cup I acquired in Germany in  
sixteen-ninety five. Solid silver.  
It's all I have left. Take it.

LEO  
I have a cup.

He turns his eyes away, not giving her an inch. She begins to sing his song:

ELIZABETH

*All the flowers in the field. All the  
fruit in the trees. All the fish in  
the sea. All the coins just for me.*

He hesitates, then offers her a coin. She brings her cup forward and he drops it in. *Clink.*

LEO

Now we're alike.

He stands, and as he walks off into the darkness:

ELIZABETH

I thought I was the only one!

INT. SHACK - MORNING

Elizabeth is asleep on the floor. Leo's stilts lean against a wall in the corner. He returns and is surprised to see her. He enters as quietly as he can, but his footsteps wake her. He quickly takes the stilts and attempts to leave even faster. She blocks the doorway.

ELIZABETH

Are we gods?

LEO

Do I look like a god?

ELIZABETH

You look like a man who will outlive  
the youngest trees in the woods.

He tries to pass. She continues to block him.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Admit it.

He tries to outmaneuver her, but she's too big. He threatens to strike her with his stilts.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

You wouldn't dare.

He hits her in the shin and quickly makes his escape.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

That hurt!

LEO  
You'll live.

He marches away from the shack and into

THE WOODS

She catches up with him.

ELIZABETH  
Are there more like us?

LEO  
There is no "us."

ELIZABETH  
...Because I've always wondered. But how does one know? You can't just walk up to someone and say, "Excuse me, but do you remember where you were the year Anne Boleyn was executed?" I tried it once in Egypt and received the nastiest look. In my defense, she looked old enough to have known.

Her strides are longer than his. She stops and realizes that she's many feet ahead. He marches past if she isn't there. She alters her strides so they are side-by-side.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
If what I'm suggesting isn't possible, then why do I know how beautiful the sun looks as it rises over the Tatra Mountains? Why can I still taste the sweetness of Indian saffron on my tongue? How is that I know the smell of an Algerian soldier's burning flesh, and can still hear the delicate whistle of the Greek kingfisher in my ears? How many women do you know who can do this? "Es esto comestible? Is dit eetbaar? Je toto jedlé? Är detta ätbart? Kore wa shokuyodesu ka? Czy to jest jadalne?"

She speeds up and stops in front of him.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I buried my youngest son in sixteen-twelve, not long after his eighty-second birthday.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I spent thirty years in an Italian  
convent--ten of them in complete  
silence.

LEO  
I see you're making up for it.

ELIZABETH  
I was alive during the treaty of  
Westphalia! How do you explain that?

LEO  
I couldn't begin to.

He walks around her and marches on.

ELIZABETH  
Well I wish somebody could!

EXT. PORT

Leo approaches a sailing ship. Elizabeth is not far behind.

ELIZABETH  
Where are you going?

LEO  
South.

A BURLY SAILOR stands at the foot of a gangplank. Leo hands  
him a satchel of money. The man nods that he can board.  
Elizabeth stops. She has no money. Leo starts up the plank.

ELIZABETH  
So that's it? You're just going to  
leave me here?  
(thinks, then)  
What happened to your top hat?

LEO  
It was stolen.

He realizes his slip-up even before she replies:

ELIZABETH  
I was right. You were there. In  
Cádiz.

He walks toward her and admits:

LEO  
"Is this edible?"



ELIZABETH

Yes! You speak languages.

LEO

I do what's necessary to fit in. I've also heard the delicate whistle of the Greek kingfisher. I wasn't moved.

He looks at her a beat, then walks up the plank onto the ship and out of view.

ELIZABETH

You make a terrible second impression!

She stands there a moment, then walks off.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Elizabeth walks aimlessly. She stops to let a cart cross her path then notices a RICH JAPANESE MAN ogling her as men have done before. He smiles wantonly, then takes a step forward.

She stiffens, then turns away and marches off, feeling liberated.

Several yards ahead, she passes a courtyard where SAMURAI WOMEN practice Kenjutsu, the sunlight gleaming on the steel of their swords like diamonds. She doubles back, watches with admiration, then cocks her head.

EXT. SHIP - DECK - EVENING

A group of SAILORS sing a shanty under the moonlight. The Sailor who stole Elizabeth's hobo bag is one of them and has the bag around his torso.

SAILORS

*I see my wife standing on the quay.  
The tears do start as she waves to me.  
I'll tell you the truth and I'll tell you no lie;  
If I don't love that girl I hope I may die.  
And now I'm bound for a foreign strand,  
with a bottle of whiskey in my hand.  
I'll drink a glass to the foreign shore,  
and to the girl that I adore.*

INT. SHIP - BELOW DECK

Leo sits alone in the dank, dark hold as the singing continues above.

SAILORS (O.C.)  
*Heave away, heave away! Oh, heave  
 away you rolling king! We're bound  
 for South Australia!*

The compartment grows darker and the sound of their singing begins to morph into different SINGING as we:

FADE TO:

INT. LONDON THEATER - DAY

TITLE: London. 1889.

A theater for commoners. It's rowdy and smokey. A TROUPE in Elizabethan costumes with ruffle collars performs the burletta, *Midas*. Leo is one of them. They sing with gusto:

TROUPE  
*Lovely nymph assuage my anguish, at  
 your feet a tender swain. Prays you  
 will not let him anguish; one look  
 wou'd ease his pain. Did you know the  
 lad that courts you, he not long need  
 sue in vain; prince of song of dance,  
 of sports, you scarce will meet his  
 like again.*

EXT. STREET - LATER

Leo, in trousers, turtleneck and flat cap, keeps his head down as he weaves through a crowd of PEASANTS and VENDORS.

INT. LEO'S FLAT

A tidy one-room flat. There's a bed, floor chest, standing wardrobe, washing area and a few pedestal tables with potted flowers. Leo enters and sets his pouch of wages on a table near the door. He hesitates a moment, then crosses toward the bed. A petite body comes flying out of a shadowy corner.

VICTORIA  
 AIYEEEE!

She tackles Leo, her momentum sending them crashing onto the bed. This is VICTORIA. She's many years his junior and about six inches taller. She kisses him repeatedly.

VICTORIA (cont'd)  
I want to eat you up.

LEO  
(concerned)  
Why aren't you in Norwich?

VICTORIA  
Changed my mind. I'll wait 'til the show closes so we can visit together.

LEO  
I wish you would have told me.

VICTORIA  
I didn't come to the decision 'til after you left.  
(stops kissing)  
Aren't you happy to see me?

LEO  
(masking  
disappointment)  
Of course. I just don't like surprises.

VICTORIA  
Oh. Well, now I know. No more surprises for you. It's too bad.  
(seductively)  
I had something special in mind for you.

LEO  
Well, I guess I could grow to like surprises.

VICTORIA  
(giggles)  
You're a naughty one, aren't ya?

She resumes kissing him.

INT. LEO'S FLAT - LATER

Leo and Victoria are in bed, undressed from the waist down. She has him trapped in a post-coital embrace.

VICTORIA

If you're wondering, I for one happen to love surprises. So I wouldn't mind it one bit if you surprised me with a fancy necklace.

LEO

It wouldn't be a surprise.

VICTORIA

Then buy me pearl earrings instead.

LEO

I couldn't afford them.

VICTORIA

Yes you could. You just don't like to spend your money. Aren't I worth it?

LEO

I'm saving it.

VICTORIA

You're hoarding it. And for what?

She expects an answer to her non-rhetorical question.

LEO

Huh?

VICTORIA

What's more valuable than me?

LEO

Oh, um, it's a surprise.

She narrows her eyes with suspicion.

INT. LONDON THEATER - DAY

Another performance complete. The Troupe takes its bows, accepting the raucous CROWDS' cheers, jeers and flying vegetation. Leo expertly ducks a rotten head of lettuce. He hears a familiar FEMALE voice rise above the crowd:

ELIZABETH (O.C.)

Attention humans!

His face goes white at the site of Elizabeth standing on a bench in riding pants and a Victorian blouse.

ELIZABETH

I present you a simple choice.

(points to Leo)

Place coins in *that man's* hands,  
or I will sing in our mother tongue.  
I assure you, I am not the bird of  
song I appear to be.

The crowd laughs, thinking she is part of the show.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Very well.

(wails)

*All the flowers in the field. All the  
fruit in the trees. All the fish in  
the sea. All the coins just for me.*

The crowd pelts her with vegetables as she nears the end of the song. She skillfully swats away some of it then looks toward the stage. Leo is gone.

INT. THEATER - DRESSING ROOM

Leo is out of costume and in trousers, high collar shirt, ascot and jacket. He quickly packs a bag. Elizabeth bursts in like a detective catching a burglar.

ELIZABETH

There you are! You abandoned me in Japan.

LEO

You have to truly love someone to abandon them. At least that's what I've been told.

ELIZABETH

I'm a lady, and you left me in my hour of need.

He shoots her an incredulous look.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

I was penniless.

LEO

Yet somehow you made it here.

ELIZABETH

No thanks to you.

LEO  
How did you find me?

ELIZABETH  
I wasn't looking for you. Yet here we are, together again. You know what this means don't you? We're destined to be together.

LEO  
That sounded even worse than your singing.

A male performer named ALBERT enters.

ALBERT  
Great show, mate. We're really going to miss you.

He sees Elizabeth. He's instantly aroused.

ALBERT (cont'd)  
Well hello love. The name's Albert, master thespian.

ELIZABETH  
Elizabeth Sweeney Wallis, of Lancashire.

ALBERT  
That was quite a performance out there. You come to take his place in the baretta? We could share a dressing room if you'd like.

ELIZABETH  
(humoring)  
That's very tempting Albert. Would you be undressing first? Or would we undress each other simultaneously?

ALBERT  
(stunned)  
Whatever you desire.

ELIZABETH  
Splendid. Wait for me outside, won't you darling?

ALBERT  
Anything for you, Lizzie.  
(to Leo)  
Safe travels, mate.

He gives him a roguish look then exits.

ELIZABETH

I hate when people call me Lizzie. So where are we going?

LEO

We're not.

ELIZABETH

Oh, come on. Two people. Alive for centuries. Continuing to cross paths in this great big world? It's fate.

LEO

My fate is in Rome.

ELIZABETH

I adore Rome. Why are we going?

LEO

I'm searching for The Painted Man.

ELIZABETH

The Painted Man?

LEO

A man with markings painted on his body. He's inflicted with the same curse we are and he knows how to reverse it.

ELIZABETH

(slightly nervous)

You're mad.

He pulls a frayed, rolled-up poster from his bag and hands it to her. She unfurls it to see a circus promotion for a heavily tattooed, Teutonic-looking man in his forties. It reads: "The Painted Man! He's a Thousand Years Old!"

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

(dismissively)

He's a carnie.

LEO

It's genius. He lives the truth out in the open and no one questions the sideshow freak.

ELIZABETH

People pay to be lied to all the time. So what.

LEO

I recently traveled with two gypsy jugglers who were in the same circus. They said one night he got wildly drunk and admitted that it was true: he's a thousand years old. And, he once witnessed the death of someone even older than him, but keeps how it happened a secret.

ELIZABETH

He was drunk. It proves nothing.

Leo takes back the poster. As he rolls it up:

LEO

Doubt me all you like. He's in Rome and I intend to find him so I can learn how to reverse this curse and die a normal death. I've lived enough lifetimes for one lifetime.

Elizabeth can tell he's serious. He grabs his bag, exits the dressing room and into a

CORRIDOR

Elizabeth follows.

ELIZABETH

Why do you keep calling it a curse?

LEO

You buried your youngest son not long after his eighty-second birthday. Would you call that a blessing?

ELIZABETH

How do you know our lives aren't going to end naturally? Maybe we're just meant to live longer than most people.

He turns, dead serious:

LEO

For what purpose?

ELIZABETH

(flummoxed)

I don't know. But I want an answer. Maybe it will be revealed to us in Rome.

(MORE)



ELIZABETH (cont'd)

You would have a hard time finding a more experienced travel companion than me. But don't expect any sexual favors. I'm off men.

LEO

I suspect it's because you've nearly run out of them.

ELIZABETH

(gasps)

You rude--

(stops herself from  
saying little)

--man. I did it once before and I shall do it again.

(a beat)

Are we going or not?

They hold each others' stares. That undeniable feeling again.

LEO

Slow me down and I will leave you behind.

She smiles, victorious. He marches out with her in tow.

INT. THEATER

The theater is empty with the exception of Albert. He looks around, waiting.

INT. LEO'S FLAT

Leo enters quickly, followed by Elizabeth. He sets down his bag, unlocks a chest and pulls out a previously packed bag. He slides the chest aside to reveal a patch of loose flooring. He removes the patch, pulls out several pouches of money and places them in the second bag. He sets the patch in place and slides the chest over it.

ELIZABETH

I don't trust banks either.

(looking around)

It's quite the charming flat.

She picks up a woman's undergarment from the bed.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 Somehow I don't think you're the  
 decorator.

Leo sees her holding the undergarment. Victoria enters  
 before he can get a word out. She's surprised to see Leo and  
 Elizabeth, and they are surprised to see her.

VICTORIA  
 Who's this? And what is she doing  
 with my knickers?

ELIZABETH  
 (to Leo)  
 You're married?

LEO  
 It only feels that way.

Victoria marches toward Elizabeth and snatches the garment.  
 She notices the bags.

VICTORIA  
 What's all this about?

LEO  
 I'm...

ELIZABETH  
 Is she not going with us?

VICTORIA  
 Going where? And who's "us?" Who is  
 this tree?

ELIZABETH  
 I beg your pardon.

LEO  
 I'm leaving England.

VICTORIA  
 You're what?

LEO  
 Surprise.

ELIZABETH  
 (gets it)  
 Right. No goodbye. Cleaner that way.

VICTORIA  
 Like hell you are.

ELIZABETH  
 She's very direct.

VICTORIA  
Who the hell is this? Leo!

ELIZABETH  
Your name's Leo? It really suits you.

VICTORIA  
She doesn't even know your name?!

ELIZABETH  
Yes, but he and I go back ages.

Victoria gets in Leo's face.

VICTORIA  
Step one foot out of this flat and  
you're a dead man.

ELIZABETH  
I'm quite certain he'd welcome it.

VICTORIA  
Get this tramp out of here.

ELIZABETH  
(to Leo in Subtitled  
Dutch)  
I'm going to ignore that given the  
circumstances.

LEO  
(replies in Subtitled  
Dutch)  
I don't think ignorance is ever a  
challenge for you.

VICTORIA  
What sort of devil's tongue was that?

ELIZABETH & LEO  
Dutch.

VICTORIA  
I want her out of our home this  
minute. Then I'll deal with you.

LEO  
It was never your home. But it is  
now.

He reaches into the bag, pulls out two pouches and hands  
them to Victoria.

LEO (cont'd)  
For the rent.

She musters all the dignity she can.

VICTORIA  
I don't want anything of yours. But  
I'll keep the money.  
(looks him over,  
sneers)  
I'd say I earned it.

She turns to leave, fakes lunging at Elizabeth, which makes Elizabeth flinch, then storms out.

ELIZABETH  
Lovely girl.

Leo slides the wardrobe away from the wall, reaches behind and pulls out Elizabeth's hobo bag. She's astounded by the sight of it. He sets it on the floor.

LEO  
I hate thieves. Especially boastful  
ones.

She picks up the bag, sits on the bed and opens it. Pause.

ELIZABETH  
How did you...? I don't know what to  
say.

LEO  
...I imagine for the first time in  
centuries.

ELIZABETH  
(notices)  
The jeweled dagger. It's missing.

LEO  
I used it to pay for my passage out  
of Australia.

ELIZABETH  
I thought you hated thieves.

LEO  
I hated Australia even more.

She snorts a laugh, which makes him crack a smile. Maybe this won't be so bad after all.

ELIZABETH  
 (re: Victoria)  
 So...

LEO  
 ...Victoria.

ELIZABETH  
 You didn't love her.

LEO  
 I got lonely.

She nods, knowing all too well. He collects his bags and approaches the doorway.

ELIZABETH  
 Why did you rescue this for me?

LEO  
 I had a bad feeling I would see you again.

ELIZABETH  
 (following him)  
 You know what that's called, don't you?

EXT. SHIP - DECK - DUSK

A three-masted lugger crossing the Straight of Dover to France. Elizabeth and Leo sit at the bow, eating mutton sandwiches.

ELIZABETH  
 When were you born?

LEO  
 I don't know.

ELIZABETH  
 You've forgotten your birthday?

LEO  
 The women who raised me in Virginia said I arrived on their doorstep October second in the year sixteen-ten. I was maybe a few weeks old.

She tries to suppress laughter.

LEO (cont'd)  
How is that funny to you?

ELIZABETH  
I was born March twelfth *in fifteen hundred and three.*  
(does the math)  
I'm a hundred and seven years older than you.

LEO  
And you don't even look it. Another victory for you.

ELIZABETH  
When do you think you stopped?

LEO  
Not sure. When I was seventy-five I realized I still looked just as young as I did when I was fifty. At the time, I was living in what would become New Jersey and others began to notice as well. They started to fear me. It got even worse as people died of old age. They called me a "cursed elf" and...

He stops there, leaving something unsaid.

ELIZABETH  
I was in my middle thirties. At least I think I was. They separated me from my family then banished me from our village.

LEO  
Lancashire.

ELIZABETH  
(nods, then)  
New Jersey. That's in America.

LEO  
When they chased me out, I stowed away on the first ship I could find. It was bound for Portugal. I've never returned.

ELIZABETH  
I've always wanted to see America.

LEO  
Why haven't you?

ELIZABETH  
I don't know. I guess I've been  
enjoying this side of the world too  
much. Isn't that funny?

LEO  
Not really. The food is good here.

ELIZABETH  
Well, no matter. It's not like time  
is running out on me.

They hear laughter from off-screen. It's coming from a young  
FAMILY.

LEO  
No. It's running out on them, and  
they have the benefit of knowing it.

ELIZABETH  
And that's what you want.

He says with absolute certainty:

LEO  
I want a reason for my days to have  
meaning. Death grants us that.

LITTLE GIRL  
(pointing excitedly)  
Look papa!

They all turn to see the French shoreline come into view.

EXT. SHIP - DECK

The ship has docked in Calais. Elizabeth and Leo frown as  
two STOCKY CREWMEN shake down the young Family and other  
PASSENGERS for money to disembark. Leo grips his bags and  
Elizabeth clenches her fists as the muggers approach.

ELIZABETH  
We paid when we boarded.

STOCKY CREWMAN 1  
Now you have to pay to unboard. Those  
are the rules.

ELIZABETH

Those are most certainly not the rules.

STOCKY CREWMAN 2

Look who's making up the rules now.

(to Leo)

What about you, wee man? Got any rules in your bags? Or are you just gonna hand over the money you owe us?

LEO

Like the lady said, we paid when boarded.

STOCKY CREWMAN 2

I'm gonna have a good laugh tossing you around.

Out of the corner of her eye, Elizabeth spots a broken whipstaff resting against the railing. She opens her clenched fist and slowly moves her hand toward it.

LEO

(sighs)

...Thieves.

Before Elizabeth can inch closer, Leo grabs one of his bags with both hands and swings it into the thug's knee. It connects with thunderous force, suggesting something hard and heavy inside. The man doubles over and is quickly knocked cold by an upswing of the bag. The second goon reaches for Leo, who spins around like an Olympic hammer thrower and fells the man with a single blow.

LEO (cont'd)

(to Elizabeth)

That's how I rescued your bag.

She looks at Leo with new awe. He picks up his second bag and steps over the unconscious hulks. Elizabeth follows, mocking them as she passes:

ELIZABETH

...Wee man.

We're close in on the ship's railing now and see: a sea slug's head detach from its lifeless body and slowly crawl away.



## EXT. WAGON - EVENING

Elizabeth and Leo ride in the back of a horse-drawn wagon en route to Paris. The altercation with the goons has lifted his mood. He reaches into his bag of clothes and removes a heavy iron ball.

LEO  
There used to be a shackle and chain attached to it.

ELIZABETH  
You were a prisoner?

LEO  
(playful)  
I prefer "fugitive."

ELIZABETH  
Oooo, a wanted man. Tell me more.

LEO  
I can't divulge all my secrets so soon. We would have nothing left to talk about before we arrive in Rome.

ELIZABETH  
Somehow I doubt that. After all, you are two hundred and seventy-nine years old, *young man*.

LEO  
You enjoy having that over me, don't you?

ELIZABETH  
I love it.

The wagon continues toward the horizon.

## EXT. PARIS - DAY

It's the Exposition Universelle of 1889 (World's Fair). All of Paris is abuzz with excitement. The Eiffel Tower has just been completed and serves as the event's grand centerpiece.

## EXT. WAGON

It pulls into Paris. Elizabeth and Leo soak it all in. The wagon stops and they get out. Elizabeth wants to be part of the action.

ELIZABETH

This is incredible! Where should we start?

LEO

We don't have time for this. We have to get to Rome.

ELIZABETH

Look around you! Rome isn't going anywhere.

LEO

It's not Rome I'm worried about.

ELIZABETH

Your "painted man" will be there. Besides, all of this traveling has worn me out. I require a day of rest.

LEO

(sighs)

One day.

ELIZABETH

I wasn't quite asking for permission. Now let's get to that tower! Have you ever seen anything like it?

EXT. EIFFEL TOWER - BASE

Excited fair ATTENDEES ascend the narrow winding stairway to the viewing platform. Elizabeth and Leo arrive and tilt their heads upward at the giant phallic structure. He looks down at his crotch.

ELIZABETH

Oh stop being a man.

(a beat)

Come on, let's climb to the top.

She leaves his side to join the other Attendees.

LEO

I thought you were tired.

EXT. EIFFEL TOWER - VIEWING PLATFORM

They arrive at the top. Leo is winded.

LEO  
 You're carrying the heavier bag on  
 the way down.

She ignores him, too spellbound by the view. All of Paris and the exposition are on display. The Central Dome and the Coutan Fountain. The Pavilions on the Esplanade des Invalides. The Galerie des Machines. A hot air balloon floats by.

ELIZABETH  
 Leo, look! Isn't it breathtaking?

LEO  
 If I had an ounce of breath in my  
 body left to take, then yes, it would  
 be breathtaking.

ELIZABETH  
 Can you just enjoy this, please? I  
 think even you would agree this tops  
 the delicate whistle of the Greek  
 kingfisher.

He gives in and looks out at the city. It's enchanting even to him. Then he looks at her, framed by the sky and still fully enraptured by the view. She's truly lovely.

He moves closer to her to enjoy the magical view together.

LEO  
 It's growing on me.

INT. GALERIE DES MACHINES - LATER

The gallery of machines. An enormous iron and glass arched structure awash in natural light that illuminates hundreds of industrial inventions. The future is on display and a throng of ATTENDEES has flocked to see it.

Elizabeth and Leo walk side-by-side as they near the science and technology pavilion. They stop near a large crowd of Attendees and JOURNALISTS that has formed in front of two men, CHARLES and NORTON OTIS, of the Otis Elevator Company of America. They stand beside an iron structure that mimics a leg of the Eiffel Tower. An elevator rests at top, held by a cable. They boast with great pride:

CHARLES  
 Our father, Elisha Otis, invented the  
 safety elevator in eighteen fifty  
 two.

(MORE)

CHARLES (cont'd)

My brother Norton and I formed a partnership after his passing and have spent the past three decades perfecting what our late, great father created, *in America*.

NORTON

These are the very same elevators that will soon take passengers up the north and south legs of the spectacular tower constructed by your very own Mr. Gustave Eiffel.

LEO

(to Elizabeth)

We could have taken an elevator?

ELIZABETH

You're the one who was in such a hurry to leave.

CHARLES

Now, we understand that your French journalists have expressed concern about the safety of our elevators.

The brothers share a disdainful look: the nerve.

CHARLES (cont'd)

But we assure you, our American-made technology is the very finest on God's green earth.

NORTON

(pointing upward)

To prove it, we've filled that elevator car with three-thousand kilograms of lead to simulate a car full of passengers.

CHARLES

Or maybe just five passengers that have eaten one too many of your delicious French pastries.

The brothers react to the rehearsed joke with rehearsed laughter. Elizabeth rolls her eyes. Norton, with an axe in hand, ascends the structure's staircase.

CHARLES (cont'd)

On my signal, my brother will cut the cable with an axe, sending the car into free fall.

(MORE)

CHARLES (cont'd)  
 Watch, as the American-made safety  
 brakes of the Otis Elevator company  
 stops the car and its "passengers"  
 from crashing into the ground and  
 meeting a gruesome death. Ready  
 Norton?!

NORTON  
 Ready Charles!

CHARLES  
 On my signal! One! Two! Three!

Norton cuts the cable and the car free falls down the leg  
 toward the ground...and the crowd. Attendees shriek and step  
 back. The safety breaks engage as advertised and halt the  
 fall ten feet above the ground. The crowd is amazed and  
 gives them a loud ovation. The Brothers proudly accept the  
 approval, doing their best to hide their relief.

Elizabeth is hooting and hollering as loud as anyone:

ELIZABETH  
 Yes! Bravo! Go America!  
 (to Leo)  
 Wasn't that amazing?

He's not there.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 Leo?  
 (worried)  
 Leo?

She hurries away and finds him moments later standing near a

LARGE DEMONSTRATION

of Thomas Edison's latest inventions, including his improved  
 chronograph. He's hypnotized by the faint crackling sound of  
 recorded violin music coming from the wax cylinder.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 There you are. You missed the very  
 best part.

LEO  
 I knew it would stop.

ELIZABETH  
 You didn't tell me you were leaving.

LEO  
Listen to this.

ELIZABETH  
I don't want to.

LEO  
I've always loved violin music.

ELIZABETH  
(still miffed)  
I heard it once. Wasn't moved.

LEO  
I'm sorry I walked away. I just knew  
it would stop.

ELIZABETH  
How could you know such a thing?

LEO  
Why would they come all this way to  
fail?

Pause. She can't argue his point.

ELIZABETH  
I'm hungry. I want to eat.

LEO  
You don't need my permission.

She smirks at his comeback. He's fun to spar with.

EXT. BRIDGE - EVENING

Elizabeth and Leo stroll side-by-side eating macarons. She says sarcastically:

ELIZABETH  
Leo, these macarons are to die for.  
Wouldn't you agree?

He rolls his eyes.

A group of WOMEN pass wearing the finest French fashions. They giggle when they see Elizabeth, who is still in the riding pants and Victorian blouse she was wearing in London. Her travels have taken a toll on them.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

(to Leo)

Give me the ball.

LEO

No.

She sneers at the women. He has thought.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

A small room with a bed, loveseat, wash bowl, folding screen, window, and lit gas lamp.

Elizabeth and Leo burst in singing lyrics from *Pomone*, the first French opera.

ELIZABETH/LEO

*Passons nos jours dans ces vergers.*

*Loin des amours et des bergers.*

*Passons nos jours. Passons nos jours.*

*Loins des bergers et des amours.*

She's wearing a brand new riding habit (tailored jacket, shirt and long skirt), and feels fabulous. She tosses the hobo bag on the bed and strikes a dramatic pose.

ELIZABETH

How do I look?

LEO

Durable.

ELIZABETH

I was searching for stately but I'll take it. Thank you again, Leo. It was very generous.

LEO

You're welcome.

(a beat)

Well...good night.

He turns to leave.

ELIZABETH

Where are you going?

LEO

I prefer to sleep outdoors.

ELIZABETH

You're a marginal singer, but a terrible liar.

LEO

I've spent more money on this journey than I anticipated. I could only afford the one room. You should have it.

ELIZABETH

Nonsense. For your information I had two brothers. At least I think I did.

(off his look)

I'm joking. I did have two brothers and we shared a room through our formative years. *I've seen it all.* You're staying right here.

She closes the door. He approaches the loveseat.

LEO

I'll sleep here.

She slips behind the screen to undress, which makes him uncomfortable. He removes his jacket and shoes, then washes his face. She reappears wearing a corset and split crotch bloomers. There is a nasty scar just below her right shoulder. It's the first time we've seen it. She catches Leo staring at it as she sits. She explains:

ELIZABETH

A bloodletting. The priests and doctors were convinced my blood had healing powers, so they held me down and took it. "Don't fight fate, Lizzie. It's your divine destiny." I bled buckets upon buckets. I should have died.

(a beat)

When they finished, they pressed a hot iron to my arm to cauterize the wound. It was agony. I can still hear the crackling of my skin.

LEO

What did your husband do?

ELIZABETH

There was nothing he could do. He was one of the dying who needed to be cured. I couldn't save him. I couldn't save any of them.



Silence. The memory saddens her. Leo approaches, unbuttoning his shirt.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(put off)  
I imagine you intend to "comfort me."

He has the shirt off and reaches for his ascot.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Really, why do men get aroused by suffering?

He removes the ascot to expose his big secret: a scar that rings the entirety of his neck. It throws her.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
What happened?

LEO  
I was beheaded.

ELIZABETH  
(thinks he's joking)  
No...

LEO  
They dragged me to the top of a hill and made me put my head on a tree stump that was covered in dried blood. Then, blackness one moment, daylight the next. I remember looking up at them and seeing the horror on their faces. They ran off but I was just as frightened as they were.

ELIZABETH  
Stop it. This is not funny.

LEO  
I can't explain it. And I don't know anyone who can.

ELIZABETH  
Leo--

LEO  
I didn't put up a struggle. I mean, I couldn't, but...I was so tired of fighting it Elizabeth. I wanted to die that day. I was at peace with it. But the curse wouldn't allow it. And it gave me this as punishment.

She says it slowly, with continued skepticism:

ELIZABETH  
They cut off your head, and it healed  
itself.

LEO  
Well, you "bled buckets upon buckets"  
and you're still breathing.

ELIZABETH  
I didn't say they lopped off my  
bloody head!

LEO  
Only because they couldn't reach that  
high!

ELIZABETH  
Oh, you...

She throws her pillow at him. He ducks. Pun intended:

LEO  
You nearly took my head off.

That did it. She bursts with laughter, falling back on the  
bed and cackling uncontrollably.

ELIZABETH  
You've such a good head on you, mate!

He playfully tosses back the pillow.

LEO  
I'm ahead of my time.

She uses the pillow to stifle her laughter. They could go on  
all night but:

LEO (cont'd)  
We need to get sleep. We leave for  
Rome tomorrow and travel by foot.

ELIZABETH  
(whines)  
Do we have to?

LEO  
Yes.

He turns off the lamp and lays on the loveseat. She  
realizes:

ELIZABETH

Oh my goodness, Leo! I don't even know your last name.

LEO

You never asked.

ELIZABETH

You never offered.

LEO

I don't have one.

ELIZABETH

Stop.

LEO

They always thought a nice family would come along and give me theirs.

ELIZABETH

Then I shall bequeath you mine. I hereby dub thee, Sir Leo Sweeney Wallis of Virginia. It's official. You now have a "sur" name.

(snorts and cackles)

He thinks the moment may be primed:

LEO

I suppose we should consummate it.

ELIZABETH

(quickly)

Off. Men.

LEO

(plays it off)

I was simply testing your will.

ELIZABETH

Uh-huh. Bonne nuit, Sir Wallis.

LEO

Bonne nuit, Elizabeth.

They settle in, pondering this new, platonic union.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Leo wakes up. Elizabeth is not in bed. Her clothes and hobo bag are also gone.

LEO  
 (worried)  
 Elizabeth?

EXT. HOTEL

Leo quickly exits and stops in his tracks. Elizabeth is standing arm-in-arm with an immaculately dressed, eighty-year-old FRENCHMAN named MARCEL. She greets him brightly:

ELIZABETH  
 There he is!

MARCEL  
 Vespucci!

She leaves Marcel and approaches.

ELIZABETH  
 You're a very sound sleeper.

LEO  
 Who is he?

ELIZABETH  
 His name is Marcel. I told him you're an American. He made his money in the sesame trade and he's delightful. He's been kind enough to secure us rail passage on the express.

LEO  
 (implying)  
 In exchange for what?

ELIZABETH  
 Don't be crass.

Marcel approaches.

MARCEL  
 Are you well, mon chéri?

ELIZABETH  
 Yes, I was just explaining our arrangement to Leo. He accepts.

MARCEL  
 HA HA! Merveilleux!  
 (offering his hand)  
 Marcel Chevalier de Montéclair, at your service.

Leo refuses his hand.

LEO  
I don't need your money. I'm more  
than capable of paying.

MARCEL  
Bullshit.  
(chuckles)  
I like your spirit.

ELIZABETH  
I need to use the "toilette" before  
we depart. Leo, I'll fetch your  
things while you boys get acquainted.

Marcel gives her a flirtatious pat on her fanny as she goes.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(feigning offense)  
Monsieur de Montéclair!

She enters the hotel. Leo scowls at Marcel.

MARCEL  
Rome, eh? Très romantique.  
(off Leo's look)  
Oh, do not worry, Vespucci. I will  
not steal your woman. Those days have  
long since passed. I am not the young  
stallion you are. But I still enjoy  
the presence of a beautiful girl. You  
would not deny me that, would you?

LEO  
My name is Leo. And she's my travel  
companion. That's all.  
(threatens)  
But do not touch her like that ever  
again.

MARCEL  
(chuckles)  
American cowboy.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - LATER

A private compartment on the Rome Express. Elizabeth and  
Marcel sit across from Leo. Marcel reaches into a bag and  
offers them pain aux raisin.

MARCEL

Pain aux raisin. From Stohrer, the  
oldest patisserie in Paris.

Elizabeth regards hers as the delicacy it is. Leo hesitates  
then takes a cautious nibble.

ELIZABETH

Oh, Marcel. It is delicious. Merci.

LEO

(meekly)

Thank you.

MARCEL

You see Vespucci? I am not so bad.

ELIZABETH

Please, Marcel: Leo.

LEO

It doesn't bother me. I've been  
called worse.

MARCEL

This I do not doubt.

(darkly)

It's an unkind world out there my  
friend. It's up to men like us to  
fight the dark forces that infiltrate  
our societies.

ELIZABETH

Oh, it's up to men, is it?

LEO

(intrigued)

What forces?

A TRAIN CONDUCTOR appears in the doorway.

CONDUCTOR

Tickets.

Marcel reaches into the inner pocket of his coat to withdraw  
the tickets. Leo sees Elizabeth's citrine necklace hanging  
from the pocket. He frowns.

Marcel hands the tickets to the Conductor, who surveys them  
then hands them back. Marcel eyes him with suspicion as he  
leaves.

MARCEL

Dark forces.

The train enters a tunnel, casting the compartment in blackness.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - EVENING

Elizabeth is asleep, her body leaning on the compartment wall. A line of drool trickles from her mouth. Leo and Marcel admire her like artwork.

MARCEL

How lucky we men are. What is more powerful than the love of a beautiful woman, eh?

LEO

You tell me. I've only loved one woman in my life and she was perhaps the most unsightly woman the world has ever known.

MARCEL

Who was this unfortunate creature?

LEO

One of the women who raised me. And I loved her deeply. There's something to be said for inner beauty, wouldn't you agree?

MARCEL

No. I would not. I never wanted to fuck my mother. Ha! Ha!

LEO

You speak remarkably good English for a vulgar Frenchman.

MARCEL

My late wife was a baroness of the British royal court.

Pause. Leo's eyes shift from Marcel to Elizabeth.

MARCEL (cont'd)

Yes, she reminds me of her. She has her sparkle. I miss it terribly. One day so will you.

They return their gazes toward Elizabeth.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - MORNING

They are all awake and eating pain aux raisin. Elizabeth turns to the men and asks like a mother:

ELIZABETH  
Were you two boys up all night  
talking about the evils lurking among  
us?

Leo and Marcel look at each other, eyebrows raised. Marcel quickly recovers.

MARCEL  
Yes, Vespucci, I was going to show  
you my book.

He reaches into his travel bag and pulls out the first volume of *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobism* by Augustin Burruel. He waves it at them.

MARCEL (cont'd)  
The history of Jacobism. Eh? Burruel  
was right! Voltaire. Freemasons. The  
Illuminati!  
(hushed)  
Even the Jews. It's all here.

ELIZABETH  
What is?

MARCEL  
The conspiracy that led to the French  
Revolution! Radicals in Voltaire's  
circle were the ones who stirred up  
the people.  
(grimly)  
*The dark forces.* I'm on my way to a  
secret meeting of the Rosicrucians.  
You should join me.

Elizabeth and Leo share an uneasy look.

ELIZABETH  
(leans toward Leo)  
He seems to know quite a lot. Perhaps  
the rosy people will know about The  
Painted Man.



MARCEL  
 (alarmed)  
 Did you say, "The Painted Man?"

LEO  
 (hopeful)  
 You know of him?

Marcel leaps up and closes the compartment door.

MARCEL  
 My contacts spoke of him in their letters. He is a hunted man and very dangerous. Is this why you are traveling to Rome?

Leo reaches into his bag and hands Marcel the poster.

ELIZABETH  
 He may know the answer to a question we have.

LEO  
 He *will*.

ELIZABETH  
 He *may*.

MARCEL  
 You have to turn back.

LEO  
 I can't.

MARCEL  
 You could be risking your life.

LEO  
 It's what I'm counting on.

Marcel admires his courage.

MARCEL  
 (chuckles)  
 American cowboy.  
 (hands Leo the poster)  
 I have to piss. Do not leave.

He exits. Elizabeth and Leo process the news.

ELIZABETH  
 You didn't say this would be dangerous.

LEO  
 You can get off whenever you like.  
 Maybe he'll return your necklace.

She's surprised.

LEO (cont'd)  
 I saw it in his coat. It's the one  
 you were wearing in Cadíz.

ELIZABETH  
 You remember that?

LEO  
 (accuses)  
 You gave it to him so he would buy  
 our tickets, didn't you?

ELIZABETH  
 I can do what I want with it.

LEO  
 I had the money to pay.

ELIZABETH  
 Yes, well don't bother to thank me,  
 you hypocrite. You gave away my  
 dagger to escape Australia. *And* you  
 insinuated I gave away something more  
 to Marcel. So you're a hypocrite *and*  
*a pig.*  
 (makes an oink-oink  
 sound)

He has no counter point. She wins, then wants to know:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 How did you remember my necklace?

It catches him off guard.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 You saw me wear it more than a  
 century ago, yet you remember it as  
 if it were yesterday. I want to know  
 how.

He says very matter of fact:

LEO  
 It sparkled.

They look at each other. Pause. Marcel returns and senses the tension.

MARCEL

It looks like you're ready for a fight. That's good.

EXT. ROME - PIAZZA - DUSK

It's quiet. Elizabeth, Leo and Marcel enter with caution.

MARCEL

You're certain about this?

Leo is. Elizabeth isn't.

MARCEL (cont'd)

Wait here.

He hurries off and disappears around a corner.

ELIZABETH

(looking around)

...So beautiful. It's a pity you've come here to die.

LEO

I'm only here for the answer. I don't plan on dying today.

ELIZABETH

Well that's good to know, because I'm not properly dressed for a funeral.

LEO

What about you? What if you find the answer to your question and there is no purpose to living this long? What then?

ELIZABETH

Then I suppose this is where we part.

Silence. An unexpected twinge of regret. Marcel returns with MATTEO, a roughly dressed Roman in his mid twenties.

MARCEL

This is Matteo. The Rosicrucians speak highly of him. He says he can take you to see The Painted Man.

Elizabeth and Leo study Matteo. Olive skin on a face that gives nothing away.

ELIZABETH

Thank you Marcel.

MARCEL

Be careful, mon cheri. Au revoir...  
Leo. Take good care of our girl.  
Marcel Chevalier de Montéclair bids  
you adieu!

He turns to go, quickly turns back and kisses Elizabeth on the lips with a flourish.

MARCEL (cont'd)

HA HA!

He saunters off and disappears around the same corner. Matteo surprises them in English with:

MATTEO

The Painted Man is a man eternal. Are  
you blessed with the same miracle?

Without thinking:

LEO

It's actually more of a  
curse.

ELIZABETH

Yes, but isn't all life a  
miracle?

MATTEO

This way.

He quickly leads them down a long, narrow street, then makes a sharp turn into a dead end--and a trap.

Three VATICAN GUARDS are waiting for them with swords drawn. One of them hands an extra sword to Matteo and they surround Elizabeth and Leo with pointed steel.

One of the Guards takes Leo's bags and rifles through them. He finds the poster and hands it to Matteo. He looks at it, sneers, then rips it up.

ELIZABETH

I don't think he's taking us to see  
him.

MATTEO

The Painted Man fled to America after  
killing one of the Vatican guards.

(MORE)

MATTEO (cont'd)  
That will not go unpunished. But  
first, we must take you in.

LEO  
We'll outlive you all.

MATTEO  
Not if we have your blood.

ELIZABETH  
Others have tried. It doesn't work.

The circle begins to close. Leo steps in front of Elizabeth to protect her.

MATTEO  
Save your lies for the Cardinal.

ELIZABETH  
Sorry, but that's not my destiny  
today.

Her Kenjutsu training takes over. She quickly spins around Leo, disarms Matteo of his sword, then levels him with a hammerfist strike. Now with his sword, she performs a series of moves as Leo backs up to a wall for safety.

She's a whirlwind of sharpened steel, fluid and fierce. The Guards step back in disbelief, harden themselves, then attack. They are no match for her.

In a flash, she knocks their swords to the ground, then weakens each man with precision fist strikes. She finishes in a waki-gamae stance, thrusting the length of the sword behind her body. *SHHHHHT*.

The blade pierces Matteo just above the abdomen as he attempted to grab her from behind. Silence. She looks to Leo: what have I done? His expression confirms the worst.

The Guards, their bodies and egos bruised, hobble away. She turns to face the stricken young man.

MATTEO  
(wincing)  
Save me.

ELIZABETH  
I cannot.

She gently caresses his cheek to comfort him.

MATTEO

Then what good are you?

He collapses to the ground, blood flowing from his wound and puddling near Leo's bags. Elizabeth is motionless. Leo regains his wits and takes her hand.

LEO

We have to leave. Now.

He leads her away, her eyes still fixed on her dying victim.

INT. VILLA - BEDROOM - EVENING

The second story of an abandoned villa on the city's edge. The room is barren and cast in moonlight. Elizabeth is curled on the floor, still in shock. Leo is on his knees just inches behind, trying to comfort her.

LEO

It was an accident. You could have killed them all if you wanted to. Anyone could see that. But you didn't. You spared them.

(a beat)

This is all my fault. I left you behind in Japan. I insisted we come to Rome. I'm to blame. Not you.

Her mind is elsewhere. Pause.

ELIZABETH

I can't see their faces anymore.

LEO

Who?

ELIZABETH

My family. My husband. My children. I see shapes and colors but no details. All I can see now is that young man, asking me to save his life as they once did. He's right. What good am I?

LEO

(pause)

What were there names?

ELIZABETH

I can't--

LEO  
Tell me their names. Please.

ELIZABETH  
Roger. Charles. Henry.  
(breaks)  
...Katharine.

LEO  
Again.

ELIZABETH  
Roger. Charles. Henry. Katharine.

LEO  
Your family lives on for as long as  
you do. They will live in your heart  
forever. That is your greatest good.  
It's why there's so much life in you.  
(pause)  
I'll take you home to Lancashire. It  
will bring you closer to them. It  
will help you remember. I'll stay for  
a little while then search for The  
Painted Man on my own.

She turns to him, with a different decision:

ELIZABETH  
I don't want to remember them. I want  
to see them again. We need to go to  
America and find him. That is my  
purpose now. I need to end this. I  
want to die.

It hurts him to hear someone else say it, especially her.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I tried to outrun the pain. I thought  
I could numb it. But I just took a  
young life, and no god or man or  
treasure will ever be able to heal  
that wound.

LEO  
You're not thinking with a clear  
head.

ELIZABETH  
I've never been more lucid. Nor have  
I ever been more encouraged.

She rises, finds her spirit and begins to stretch and bounce as if she's readying for an Olympic event.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

I'm going off to die, but at least I know I'm not going to die alone. We have each other; in it 'til the end.

LEO

America is a big country. It could take years to find him.

ELIZABETH

I found you again didn't I? And I wasn't even looking. Don't tell me you're changing your mind.

LEO

I'm just giving you fair warning. Your timely death may take more time than you wish.

ELIZABETH

Sir Leo Sweeney Wallis: wordsmith.  
(a beat)  
I'm hungry. The cover of darkness should help us find something to eat.

He makes one final attempt:

LEO

I lost my bags. We don't have the money to cross the Atlantic.

ELIZABETH

(picks up her hobo bag)

Let me worry about that.

INT. MERCANTILE SHOPPE - DAY

A storefront in the bowels of the city. The PROPRIETOR looks like a man who could procure anything you need, illegal or otherwise. Elizabeth, with Leo a step behind, sets her hobo bag on the counter and opens it. His eyes go wide. She says in SUBTITLED ITALIAN:

ELIZABETH

...We're also going to need new clothing and documentation.



The shifty man takes the bag then gestures toward the back. They follow him into the

BACK ROOM

There's a camera and equipment to create new identities. He sets the bag on a shelf next to a hand-tooled metal pot from seventeenth century India. Elizabeth spots it as a clue.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(draws his attention)

Leo.

He sees it. The Proprietor looks alarmed and reaches for a hammer. Elizabeth is on him in a flash, pinning him to the wall. All in SUBTITLED ITALIAN:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
That's hand-tooled silver from India.  
Early seventeenth century. Where did  
you get it?

PROPRIETOR  
(frightened)  
I know nothing.

LEO  
Elizabeth, please. You've already  
killed one Roman this week.

PROPRIETOR  
(panicked)  
The Painted Man! It was the Painted  
Man.

Leo picks up a slip of paper from a table. Another clue.

LEO  
Elizabeth.

It's an ink-splotted copy of identification for a man named "Hans Pflüger" with a photo of The Painted Man.

ELIZABETH  
Talk.

PROPRIETOR  
He exchanged the antique for passage  
and services. He left for America. I  
know nothing else. I swear to God.  
Please don't kill me.

She searches his eyes. He's telling the truth. Pause.

ELIZABETH

Make sure you capture my good side.

She releases her grip and pats his cheek.

EXT. NAPLES - PORT - DAY

A steamship bound for America. Hundreds of Italian IMMIGRANTS are herded aboard, silent and uncertain of what awaits them on the other side.

Elizabeth and Leo are in the middle of the throng, dressed just like them in drab black and grey, carrying small duffels--and one well-traveled hobo bag.

ELIZABETH

No one's smiling.

FADE TO:

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN - DAY

TITLE: Manhattan. One week later.

It's dirty and dense. A collection of slums to hold the wave of IMMIGRANTS inside the concrete melting pot. The streets and sidewalks are packed with LABORERS, HAWKERS and the occasional shitting horse.

Elizabeth and Leo trudge on like two vagabonds, grimy from the voyage.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING

They follow a cigar-smoking LANDLORD down a dank, narrow hallway. We can hear shouting ADULTS and crying BABIES behind closed doors. He stops in front of a door and opens it. Elizabeth and Leo step inside the

APARTMENT

It's a decaying firetrap with two beds and substandard plumbing. He stares at them with a look that says, "Well?"

From her bag, Elizabeth offers him a gold Persian bracelet adorned with griffin heads.

ELIZABETH

It's Persian. From the Achaemenid Empire.

He shrugs and takes the bracelet. Before he goes she holds up the copy of Hans' ID.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
You wouldn't happen to know a man  
named Hans Pflüger, would you?

He responds with a vacant stare and blast of smoke to her face. He leaves.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Charming.

She walks to the window and opens the dusty curtains. Leo collapses on a bed, exhausted.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(all business)  
Where should we begin looking?

LEO  
How about under my eyelids?

ELIZABETH  
There's no time for that. Hans could  
be anywhere.

LEO  
Exactly. He could be anywhere by now.  
New Jersey. Massachusetts. Virginia.  
An alert needle in a giant haystack.

ELIZABETH  
But a needle with a name and a  
pendant for body art. I say we begin  
where they do that sort of thing.

LEO  
Chase death without me. I'm dead  
tired.

ELIZABETH  
(kicks his bed)  
Get up!

LEO  
Stop it! It was a long trip and I  
need sleep. We'll start fresh in the  
morning.

And with that, he rolls over and closes his eyes. She hesitates, then lays down on the other bed, wondering aloud:

ELIZABETH  
Where are you, Hans Pflüger?

She stares at the ceiling as Leo begins to snore.

EXT. THE BOWERY - DAY

An area on the decline marked by flophouses, knickknack stores, dirty saloons and prostitution.

INT. BOWERY TATTOO PARLOR

It's a four-walled tetanus factory. Elizabeth and Leo enter. An erotic TATTOO ARTIST in her thirties emerges from the back.

ELIZABETH  
Hello.

No reply.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
We're looking for a man named Hans Pflüger.

She holds up the ID like a detective.

TATTOO ARTIST  
You want a tattoo?

ELIZABETH  
I want to find this man.

TATTOO ARTIST  
I'm not talking to you, string bean.  
I'm talking to him.

She approaches Leo with all her seductive power.

TATTOO ARTIST (cont'd)  
I'd love to leave my mark on you.

LEO  
We're just looking for a man.

TATTOO ARTIST  
(runs her fingers  
through his hair)  
So am I.

He appreciates the attention. Elizabeth steps in.

ELIZABETH  
Do you know Hans Pflüger or not?

TATTOO ARTIST  
(eyes the ID)  
I worked on him.

ELIZABETH  
Where can we find him?

TATTOO ARTIST  
Easy, your majesty. You want something.  
(looks at Leo)  
I want something.

Leo is alarmed, uncertain of what is about to happen.

CUT TO:

The Tattoo Artist has begun tattooing a sailing ship on Leo's bicep. He winces. Elizabeth sits nearby studying an ancient ivory ring with a dragon's head.

TATTOO ARTIST (cont'd)  
He gave it to me as payment. Said it could be worth something.

ELIZABETH  
It's stunning.

She slides it on her finger. It's too big.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
He must have thick fingers.

LEO  
It's an ivory cock ring. It intensifies the pleasure. They're popular in China.

This arouses the Tattoo Artist. He enjoys her reaction. Elizabeth shoots him a look then promptly removes the ring.

ELIZABETH  
Alright, enough of this. Where is he?

TATTOO ARTIST  
Pennsylvania.

ELIZABETH  
What? How do you know?

TATTOO ARTIST

He had me do a robin before he  
skipped town. It's a New York bird.  
Said he's going through a phase and  
his next one's gonna be a grouse.  
That's a Pennsylvania bird. I imagine  
a fancy cat like Hans will land in  
Philadelphia.

(a beat)

Never seen ink like that on a man.  
Stuff from all over the world. Some  
of it even looked...ancient.

ELIZABETH

(rises)

We're done here.

LEO

(protests)

She's not finished!

ELIZABETH

It looks like a ship. Lovely work.  
Let's go. We're off to Philadelphia.

She proceeds to the door. Leo hesitates, frowns, then leaves  
the chair with his unfinished tattoo. As he goes:

LEO

Enjoy the ring.

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - LATER

Elizabeth and Leo enter. She begins packing in a frenzy.

ELIZABETH

If we hurry we can catch the next  
train.

LEO

(flashing the half-  
tattoo)

...Or we could sail there. Oh wait,  
the ship's not complete.

ELIZABETH

Stop bellyaching. You won't have to  
live with it for very long. Start  
packing.

He holds up his small duffel to make a point:

LEO

Done.

ELIZABETH

You said you would leave me behind if  
I slowed you down. Your words.

She's finished packing too, their possessions are so few.  
She looks around and begins removing the ratty curtains.

LEO

I know you're hurting.

ELIZABETH

Do not pretend to know how I feel.

LEO

You can't take the curtains. They're  
not yours.

She stops and clutches them to her chest. Pause.

LEO (cont'd)

(reassures)

We're going to find him.

(rubbing his arm)

But we can't torture each other in  
the process.

INT. BOWERY TATTOO PARLOR - DAY

Three hard-looking ROMAN MEN enter. Everything about them  
says danger. The Tattoo Artist emerges from the back. She's  
immediately nervous. They're not customers. One of the men  
locks the door. On his hand: a tattoo of the Vatican seal.  
He turns the Open sign to Closed.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. REPERTORY COMPANY - DAY

Title: Philadelphia. Five months later.

A sign in a door that says Closed. The door opens. Leo and a  
man, MR. HOWARD, exit the Victorian storefront. Leo looks  
lively wearing modern trousers, a shirt and neckerchief.

MR. HOWARD

Goodnight, Wallis.

LEO  
See you tomorrow, Mr. Howard.

They go their separate ways.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DUSK

A neat one-room space with single beds on opposite sides, a stove, and a folding screen. It's a small step up from the NYC tenement. Leo sets dinner on the table. Elizabeth enters looking defeated but pretty in a modest afternoon dress.

LEO  
Just in time. I made beef stew.

She shoots him a look of concern.

LEO (cont'd)  
I got my wages today.

She walks behind the folding screen, pees in a bucket, then returns to the table and tosses Hans' ID on it. Leo's eating and his mind is elsewhere.

ELIZABETH  
He's not here. We've been to every tattoo parlor and police station in the city and no one knows him. I think it's time to move on to Pittsburgh.

He's not paying attention.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Did you hear what I said?

LEO  
Huh? Oh, sorry. I was just thinking about what happened at work today. Benny Barnes actually tried to *educate us* about the War of Austrian Succession. The clod gets a library card and speaks as if he was there. He has no idea what he's talking about. He's lucky I held my tongue. He was only doing it because Mr. Howard was within earshot and Benny is trying to impress him because *he* wants to play Dogberry. Well, two can play that game, and I think you and I both know who has the advantage.



ELIZABETH

Leo!

LEO

Hmm?

ELIZABETH

I said it's time to move to Pittsburgh.

LEO

It's too soon. Give it more time.

ELIZABETH

More time is the last thing I want.

He knows better than to argue when she's like this.

LEO

(reassuring)

Maybe I'll have better luck tomorrow.

She sighs and begins to eat. It's good. He watches her, hoping for acknowledgement. She notices.

ELIZABETH

It's delicious. Thank you.

They continue to eat in silence as couples often do.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - EVENING

Elizabeth and Leo are in their beds for the night.

ELIZABETH

Who do you most look forward to seeing? When we get to the other side I mean.

LEO

Heaven? I'm not so sure there is one.

ELIZABETH

Of course there is. I was a nun for God's sake. ...Just not a very successful one.

LEO

I don't know. Man was convinced the world was flat. Pythagoras proved otherwise.

ELIZABETH

What does that have to do with anything? Heaven exists.

LEO

Prove it.

ELIZABETH

You know I can't bloody well prove it. No one can. You just have to believe it's there.

LEO

That's what people do when they're afraid of death...they believe in the afterlife. It's comforting.

ELIZABETH

People are not naive for believing in fluffy clouds and pearly gates if that's what you're suggesting.

LEO

Then does hell exist? Can't have one without the other.

ELIZABETH

Yes, hell exists. And I'm in it right now by having this tête-à-tête with you. Sorry I asked.

Pause.

LEO

Would it make it better if I said, *you?*

ELIZABETH

No, it wouldn't. And I wouldn't believe you now anyway. Heathen. Good night.

LEO

Good night Elizabeth.

They lay in silence and smirk. It was good for both of them.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Leo, dressed in a Shakespearean costume, runs straight at us on a life-or-death mission. He's charging toward a kind-faced MAN who is unaware of an oncoming streetcar.

He knocks the Man to safety, landing on top of him. The Man looks at Leo with eternal gratitude.

EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DAY

Somewhere high above Philadelphia. Leo and Elizabeth hold flutes of champagne, dressed in their Sunday best. The balloon is piloted by the Man that Leo saved. He's wearing aviator goggles and a leather jacket.

Elizabeth and Leo are thrilled. Not a thought about Hans or death today. She looks at Leo with appreciation. What a grand gift. She has a thought.

INT. MUSIC HALL - DAY

A stately room with incredible acoustics. Elizabeth and Leo, again in their Sunday best, enjoy a performance of *Saint-Saëns's Violin Concerto in B Minor* as the SOLOIST executes the technical fireworks of the thrilling finale. We've never seen Leo so happy. Neither has she. It pleases her.

The MUSICAL DIRECTOR, a woman in her seventies, stands off to the side holding a pair of sapphire earrings we've seen before.

INT. PATISSERIE - DUSK

A quaint shop with an international selection. Elizabeth and Leo browse the display, craving more pleasure.

ELIZABETH

Have you ever had Spanish pantxineta?

LEO

No. Is it good?

ELIZABETH

Sinfully so. Whoever dreamed of it must have been snogging at the time.

LEO

I wonder if they have it.

The Baker, a WOMAN in her fifties, has her back turned. He gets her attention:

LEO (cont'd)

Excuse us?

She turns around and is wearing an elaborate Egyptian necklace from the 1500s. Elizabeth and Leo smile at each other, then set their sights on the now-worried Baker.

ELIZABETH

The sign in the window says you deliver.

INT. HANS' APARTMENT - EVENING

The door looks like it was kicked open. Elizabeth and Leo enter carefully carrying pale blue pastry boxes.

ELIZABETH

Hello? Mr. Pflüger? Delivery.

The single room is in shambles. Smashed furniture. Shattered antiques. And three dead bodies in the center. It's the Romans from the tattoo parlor. Their necks are violently broken. Some limbs too.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

(calls out)

Mr. Pflüger? *Mille-feuille*.

Still no reply. Elizabeth scans for clues as Leo approaches the bodies. He spots the Vatican tattoo.

LEO

The Vatican. They found him...and he did this.

ELIZABETH

He had to defend himself.

She stares at the broken hitmen. Leo's deductive reasoning:

LEO

Hans is surely gone. He left Philadelphia and will make it so he's never found again.

ELIZABETH

Don't presume anything.

LEO

Alright. I am certain these men are dead.

Long pause. A very dead end. And they were so close. They dread:

ELIZABETH  
I'll never see my family again.

LEO  
I'm going to live forever.

ELIZABETH  
(the irony)  
I used to say that as a child.

LEO  
I never thought I would live beyond  
twenty.

ELIZABETH  
Well you're "ahead" of these blokes.

She blurts out a laugh, then covers her mouth, ashamed of her gallows humor. But it's too late. They're tittering like children. It encourages her to search the darkness for a bright side:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Maybe I've been right all this time.  
It's not a curse. It's a test. We  
have to endure living longer than  
normal people, but we could just as  
easily die of extremely *old* age  
tomorrow.

(a beat)  
I didn't want to fill you with false  
hope, but you are starting to gray a  
bit.

LEO  
(hopeful)  
I am?

ELIZABETH  
...In your hair. I noticed the other  
night during supper.

LEO  
(deflated)  
It was flour...because I do all the  
cooking.

ELIZABETH  
What are you implying?

LEO  
...That I do all the cooking.

ELIZABETH  
I know how to fix a meal.

LEO  
I've yet to see it.

ELIZABETH  
My family ate well! I butchered pigs!

LEO  
Well, we don't have a pig, but  
there's chicken at home and pastry in  
these boxes.

She glares at him then picks up the gauntlet.

ELIZABETH  
Fine. Chicken it is.  
(motions to the door)  
Prepare to be chuffed to bits.

Satisfied, he steps around the corpses and they exit  
together, leaving three dead killers and the specter of The  
Painted Man behind.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - LATER

The kitchen table. A chicken carcass in the middle of two  
empty plates, wine goblets and pastry boxes.

Elizabeth and Leo are splayed on their beds, fully satiated.

LEO  
So that's chuffed to bits.

ELIZABETH  
(smiles)  
...You've been given a proper  
chuffing.

LEO  
I would have looked forward to more  
of that.

ELIZABETH  
What do you mean?

LEO  
It's over. Hans. Chasing mortality.  
Even America if you wish. You don't  
have to do this anymore. You're free  
to go on with your life.

She sits up, concerned. Fearing that lonely future.

ELIZABETH

...My life. Always moving. Avoiding suspicion before it's time to move on again...

He says nothing. He knows all too well.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

What about you? Will you stay here?

LEO

Mr. Howard says good things about Boston.

ELIZABETH

I adore Boston.

He sits up, guarded yet intrigued.

LEO

You've never been to Boston.

ELIZABETH

It's named for a town in England. What's not to adore?

The two friends look at each other. Together less than six months, but it feels like a lifetime. Would more time together really be torture? They gently map it out.

LEO

I suppose it wouldn't be necessary for us to share an apartment any longer.

ELIZABETH

No. I suppose not.

(a beat)

I still have a few treasures at my disposal.

LEO

No, don't give it all away. I can help.

ELIZABETH

Absolutely not.

LEO

I insist.

ELIZABETH

(concedes)

Thank you. It's very kind. But I will find employment straight away and pay you back.

LEO

Really?

She replies as if being interviewed:

ELIZABETH

I was a domestic manager for a time. I'm responsible. Determined. Very well traveled.

LEO

(helping)

...You speak several languages fluently.

ELIZABETH

Excelente punto!

LEO

You're hired! When can you start?

ELIZABETH

I've already begun.

They smile, happy with their new accord and heartened to still be together. Pause.

LEO

...To Boston.

ELIZABETH

...Chuffed to bits.

We slowly move back to one of the pale blue pastry boxes.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOSTON - MORNING

TITLE: Boston. Two months later.

Elizabeth carries a pale blue pastry box as she and Leo hurry along the city's commercial hub. She's frazzled but stylish in a new Edwardian riding habit. Leo looks professional in a wool suit and bowler.



LEO  
Please slow down.

ELIZABETH  
Tardiness makes a poor first  
impression.

LEO  
(eyes the box)  
So does bribery.

An alarming thought stops her cold.

ELIZABETH  
Did I leave my water running?

LEO  
I don't know. Did you?

ELIZABETH  
(thinks)  
No. I turned it off after I washed my  
bum.

She sighs relief then picks up the pace. He catches up and  
coaches:

LEO  
Remember to smile at all times. If  
someone tells a joke, it's the  
funniest you've ever heard. No  
challenge is too grand, and no task  
is beneath you. And if they ask when  
you were born...

ELIZABETH  
...Eighteen fifty six.

LEO  
You're ready.

They arrive at their destination: the John Hancock Building.

ELIZABETH  
How do I look?

He wants to say something else, but settles on:

LEO  
Employable.

She thinks better of the box and hands it to him.

LEO (cont'd)

Good luck.

She steadies herself then enters the world of insurance.

INT. VATICAN - CARDINAL'S CHAMBER - DAY

The ornate office of a high-ranking CARDINAL who is behind his desk preparing a mass. An ASSISTANT enters and whispers something in his ear. Grim news. The Cardinal nods and the Assistant exits.

The Cardinal opens a drawer and pulls out the torn poster of The Painted Man. He approaches the fireplace and tosses the poster in the fire. The search is over.

EXT. HANCOCK BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Leo eats a doughnut from the box while he waits. Elizabeth exits and strikes a victorious pose. She got the job. They attempt to hug--for the first time ever. Their height difference, her skirt and the box make it a failure.

ELIZABETH

Let's go before they change their minds.

They hurry off to celebrate.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - EVENING

A respectable working-class building. Elizabeth and Leo return from a night out celebrating her success.

ELIZABETH

Let's go to the museum in the morning and take a stroll down memory lane.

LEO

You report to work in the morning.

ELIZABETH

How rude of them. Very well...we'll go after I "knock off for the day."

A beat.

LEO

Good night Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Good night Leo.

(with great sincerity)

And thank you for being such a good friend. Some days you remind me so much of my eldest brother Rupert. He was kicked to death by a horse, but the point is, we were always there for each other...until he tried to mate with that horse.

They let it to float in the air a moment, then:

LEO

...Sleep well.

They approach two separate doors and enter their

ADJOINING STUDIO APARTMENTS

The screen is split by the thin wall between them. The spaces are clean and modestly appointed with current furnishings; luxurious by recent standards.

They pause for a moment to take in the emptiness of being alone, then begin their normal bedtime routines: undressing, washing up, dressing for bed, getting into bed.

They lay awake in the dark with no one to spar with then close their eyes. Black.

We begin to hear the opening bars of *Sometimes I'm Happy, Sometimes I'm Blue*, from the 1927 musical, *Hit the Deck*. It carries us through thirty-six years as a CHORUS sings.

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Leo teaches Elizabeth to stilt walk on a glorious spring day. Just two big kids having fun.

CHORUS (V.O.)

*Sometimes I'm happy.*

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT - EVENING

It's the early 1900's. The apartment has changed a little. More furnishings and personal touches. Elizabeth and Leo play cards. Pleasant, yet mundane.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*Sometimes I'm blue.*

EXT. STREET - DAY

Elizabeth and Leo are astounded by the site of a Ford Model T as it and its DRIVER sputter past them.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*My disposition*

EXT. STREET - DAY

Elizabeth drives a Model T with unbridled joy as a giddy Leo waves to a happy FORD DEALER holding a diamond and ruby tiara from the eighteenth century.

CHORUS  
*depends on you.*

INT. HANCOCK BUILDING - SWITCHBOARD ROOM - DAY

Elizabeth clenches her fists as a MALE EXECUTIVE harasses a fellow FEMALE SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*I never mind*

EXT. HANCOCK BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

GUARDS and the Executive, with his freshly broken nose, escort Elizabeth from the building.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*the rain from the sky,*

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Elizabeth removes the last treasure from her hobo bag: the silver, baroque-era cup.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*if I can find the sun*

INT. LEO'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Christmas. Leo unwraps a gift as Elizabeth watches. It's the cup. He smiles, the meaning of it not lost on him, or her.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*in your eyes.*

EXT. STREET - DAY

Armistice Day. 1918. The street is packed with overjoyed REVELERS cheering and waving flags. Strangers kiss strangers because simple handshakes just won't do today.

Elizabeth and Leo are in the middle of it all, swept up by the jubilation. He's wearing a costume from the 1918 musical *Sinbad* and is riding on the shoulders of a five-foot-tall MALE CAST MEMBER.

An OLD MAN kisses Elizabeth then turns to kiss another WOMAN. Leo, who was just kissed by a YOUNGER WOMAN, turns for another kiss and comes face-to-face with a kiss-ready Elizabeth. They stop. So does the music.

Their lips have never been this close. Their unspoken attraction has never been this tested. Something keeps them from acting upon it. The music resumes as suddenly:

An uninhibited SOLDIER spins Elizabeth around and plants a kiss on her ala the famous Times Square V-J Day photo. It's a powerful kiss that frees something locked inside her.

Leo turns away, looking for someone else to kiss.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*Sometimes I love you. Sometimes I  
hate you.*

INT. LEO'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Leo has his ear pressed to the wall. His expression is vacant. On the other side

IN ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT

Elizabeth moans uncontrollably as she pleasures herself beneath the sheets; decades of repression released.

IN LEO'S APARTMENT

He has the wrong idea.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*But when I hate you, it's 'cause I  
 love you.*

EXT. NORTH STREET - EVENING

A federal-style row house. Leo exits quickly and discretely. A red lamp lights up in a second-floor window. Elizabeth spies this from across the street, hiding her eyes behind the cloche hat that covers her newly-bobbed hair.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*That's how I am, so what can I do?*

INT. LEO'S APARTMENT - DAY

Elizabeth and Leo quietly playing cards again. No words. Little eye contact. Just an air of uneasiness.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*I'm always happy when I'm with you.*

INT. RESEARCH FACILITY - DAY

A top-secret facility. MEN in lab coats and overalls unload equipment marked "Top Secret" and "By Order of J. Edgar Hoover": beakers and vials, centrifuges, surgical supplies, microscopes, hospital beds with leather straps, examination tables, birthing tables, and a tank of live sea slugs. Overseeing it all is a FEMALE SCIENTIST. Smart looking. Auburn hair. Forties. This is DR. SCOVELL.

AGENTS stockpile guns and nightsticks in a nearby room.

The music and singing swell as the Chorus repeats:

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*That's how I am, so what can I do?  
 I'm always happy!*

EXT. BEACON HILL - DAY

A charming district with freestanding mansions and row houses. Elizabeth holds a classified ad and strides with purpose and looking mod in tunic-top blouse, hip-length sweater, knife-cut skirt and cloche hat. She enters a house with a sign proclaiming: Andrew Yates. Photographer.

CHORUS (V.O.)  
*So very happy!*

INT. THEATER - EVENING

It's *Hit the Deck*. Leo is in the CHORUS, dressed like a sailor. They belt out the final lyrics:

CHORUS  
*I'm always happy, when I'm with you!*

Big applause. Leo looks to the audience. Elizabeth is there. They lock eyes, searching for happiness.

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Another card game. Elizabeth lays down her final cards.

ELIZABETH  
 Gin.

The game is over. But it doesn't feel like there's a winner.

TITLE: 1927

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A cheap hotel on the outskirts of Boston. Two ITALIAN SPIES, hard-looking, like chiseled marble, sit at a table playing the card game Briscola. Running water can be heard behind the bathroom door. They speak in SUBTITLED ITALIAN:

SPY 1  
 (cocksure)  
 When this is over and we return home,  
 Benito will make me his second in  
 command.

SPY 2  
 (dares)  
 I would like to see you call him  
 Benito to his face.

Irritated, Spy 2 shouts at the bathroom:

SPY 1  
 Hurry up in there! We don't all have  
 forever like you!

Three AGENTS like the ones at the research facility burst in guns blazing and execute the Spies. The water stops running.

The bathroom door opens. We do not see who it is. The Agents nod at their accomplice. Job well done.

INT. NORTH STREET BROTHEL - EVENING

A foyer doing its best to appear regal. Victorian features covered in deep shades of purple. Leo enters and is greeted with familiarity by the MADAM:

MADAM  
Hello Romeo.

LEO  
(as usual)  
Agatha.

She winks then disappears behind a curtained doorway. Moments later AGATHA appears in a silk robe. Twenties, lanky and bearing a striking resemblance to Elizabeth.

AGATHA  
(familiar)  
Hey handsome.

INT. ANDREW'S PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - EVENING

A spacious studio with framed portraits of Boston's elite in varying sizes on every wall. Elizabeth and ANDREW YATES sit at a romantic dinner table in the middle. It looks like they're being observed.

She's wearing her best roaring twenties chemise dress. He's in his forties, and looks very dashing in his suit and tie. He's vain, but quite the catch. They dine on champagne and oysters and have an easy rapport.

ANDREW  
I caught them myself. Dove right into the harbor.

ELIZABETH  
Liar.

ANDREW  
If I failed to mention it, you look radiant.



ELIZABETH

You did. But you're just saying that to be polite, Mr. Yates.

ANDREW

(for the hundredth time)

Andrew. I'm just delighted to see the money I pay you does not go to waste.

They pause for a sip of champagne.

ANDREW (cont'd)

There's something I need to tell you. But first, I want to give you something.

He reaches under the table and presents a small portrait of him with one leg propped on a footstool like he hunted it.

ANDREW (cont'd)

It's a going away present.

ELIZABETH

But I'm not going away.

ANDREW

No, silly. I am. I'm leaving Boston.

She's surprised--and more surprised to be unhappy about it.

ANDREW (cont'd)

It's why I asked to see you. I'm through immortalizing these high society snobs. I'm venturing west to preserve the picturesque grandeur of our great land for all eternity. Let Ansel Adams have Yosemite. I'll take the rest of it. I wanted you to have that as remembrance, but now that we're sitting here alone together with you looking as stunning as you do, remembrance doesn't feel right at all. That would be too painful for me. I guess what I'm saying is: come with me.

She says nothing. She's been in this position before. He pours his heart out:

ANDREW (cont'd)

I love you Elizabeth. I loved you the moment you walked through the door and cleaned my lenses with your hot breath. Being in your presence is like being in a photograph. Time just stands still. Love me.

Pause. She doesn't run for the door or escape out the window. Maybe it's his words. Maybe it's the champagne and oysters. She just looks at him and says evenly:

ELIZABETH

Yes.

ANDREW

Yes, you'll love me?

ELIZABETH

No, I could never love you. And I will not go west with you. But you can have my body.

He nearly coughs up an oyster.

INT. NORTH STREET BROTHEL - BEDROOM - EVENING

Leo sits on the bed still dressed as Agatha strips. He sees a tattoo of a black-capped chickadee on her right shoulder blade. She catches him looking.

AGATHA

Like it? Got it last week.

LEO

I have the beginning of a boat.

AGATHA

It's a black-capped chickadee. That's a Massachusetts bird.

This gets his attention.

AGATHA (cont'd)

One of my other johns has them all over his body. Says he's been around the world getting' them. It's kinda icky if you ask me.

Leo is numbed. It can't be.

LEO  
What's his name?

AGATHA  
I'm not supposed to name names.

He opens his wallet and offers her cash. She takes it.

AGATHA (cont'd)  
(quietly)  
George. I don't know his last name.

Leo pulls a fragile piece of folded paper from his wallet. It's Hans' ID. He shows it to her.

LEO  
Is this him?

AGATHA  
That's him. Who's Hans?

LEO  
Do you know where he lives?

AGATHA  
(eyes his wallet)  
Sometimes I make house calls.

EXT. BOSTON'S CHINATOWN - EVENING

It has all the hallmarks of a 1920s Chinatown. Low-rent housing. Restaurants. Laundries. Garment factories. Leo marches through on a mission.

INT. HANS'/GEORGE'S APARTMENT

Leo stands at the open doorway, staring at wreckage. Another violent fight. No dead bodies this time, but shots were fired. A gun barrel presses against his head.

LEO  
(calmly)  
You have quiet feet.

An ASIAN WOMAN'S voice responds:

WOMAN (O.S.)  
Tell me why I not put a bullet in your head.

LEO  
 It'll hurt a great deal, but it won't  
 kill me. You would only be wasting a  
 good bullet.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
 Inside.

He steps inside, followed by LILY, an Asian woman in her  
 sixties dressed in a floral cheongsam.

LILY  
 Who are you?

LEO  
 My name is Leo. I'm looking for a man  
 named Hans Pflüger.

LILY  
 I don't know that man.

LEO  
 How about George?

LILY  
 Why you want Mr. George?

LEO  
 I need to ask him an important  
 question. I mean him no harm.

LILY  
 What question?

Pause. Then, with great sentiment:

LEO  
 Has he ever loved someone.

He turns around, slowly. She senses he may be harmless.

LEO (cont'd)  
 What happened?

LILY  
 Men with guns come for him.  
 (waving hers)  
 This one of them. Mr. George, he see  
 them coming and beat them good.  
 Nearly kill one with his hands. They  
 no come back.

She attempts to put the room back in order, the gun still pointed at him.

LILY (cont'd)  
I do everything for Mr. George. Cook. Clean. Do laundry. He rarely go out. Worried men would find him. He always here and I do everything. Except for hanky panky. For that he go to North Street.

Leo begins to help.

LILY (cont'd)  
He pay me good money too. Sometimes, he give me treasure. He once give me a metal bowl. Say it was five-hundred year old. My dog eats out of it.  
(cackles)

LEO  
Did he ever say how old he was?

LILY  
He say he one-thousand year old. Crazy German.

LEO  
I'm three-hundred and seventeen.

LILY  
(mocks)  
Oh you spring chicken.

LEO  
What is he like?

LILY  
Mr. George very kind. And smart. He know everything about everything. Spoke every language. Even Mandarin. We talk for hours. But too many tattoos. It's why he go to North Street.

LEO  
Where is he hiding?

She points the gun at him.

LILY  
You no find Mr. George.

LEO

Please.

She cocks it. He searches for a solution. He spots dry blood on a wooden stool. Just like the tree stump. He carefully reveals his scar.

LILY

(amazed)

Just like Mr. George.

LEO

Please.

She lowers the hammer. He slowly exhales.

LILY

California. With my uncle.

She took a potentially grave risk and he knows it.

LEO

(tenderly)

What's your name?

LILY

Lily.

LEO

(in Subtitled  
Mandarin)

You are a beautiful flower Lily.

She smiles slightly.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - EVENING

Elizabeth returns, swirling with mixed emotions. Leo is waiting outside her door, a sober look on his face.

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT

Elizabeth stares at a slip of paper with a handwritten address: 3870 Hibiscus Dr. Los Angeles. Leo explains:

LEO

...She says he'll be hiding there with her uncle. He now goes by the name George. He never gave her a last name.

ELIZABETH  
How did you find him?

LEO  
As it happens, we have a mutual  
friend.

She knows exactly what it means and it peeves her.

ELIZABETH  
You said he could never be found. You  
allowed me to believe it...all these  
years.  
(even worse)  
You made me care for someone again.

LEO  
...Just not enough to care for me as  
anything more than a brother.

She wants to punish him, so she does:

ELIZABETH  
I'm talking about Andrew Yates.

He feels like he was just beheaded again. A long beat.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
We'll leave for California and get it  
over with.

LEO  
I'm not going. I want us to be  
together.

ELIZABETH  
Leo Sweeney Wallis--

LEO  
I AM NOT YOUR HUSBAND!

His outburst startles her. He knows it's now or never.

LEO (cont'd)  
And you are not my wife. But I would  
like you to be.

No reply from her. Just an icy stare.

LEO (cont'd)

I don't have a ring, but I am ready to burn that piece of paper and leave plotting our own deaths behind us forever. I've been such a fool, too frightened to--

ELIZABETH

No! You don't get to make this better with some rubbish speech. *You don't get the soliloquy.* Save it for your North Street whore.

LEO

(points at the wall)  
I can hear you having sex!

ELIZABETH

I'VE BEEN MASTURBATING!

INT. APARTMENT BENEATH ELIZABETH'S - CONTINUOUS

An ELDERLY COUPLE in armchairs has stopped reading the day's paper and is now staring at the ceiling.

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

They're silent and sheepish. The air is thick with shame. He meekly bends to one knee to try again.

ELIZABETH

(not having it)  
Oh get up!

He obeys. She laments:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

I thought I would never make another friend the rest of my life. Then I meet you. Why can't that ever be enough?

LEO

Because it's not. Not anymore.

ELIZABETH

I'm going to confront Hans or George or whatever he's calling himself and bring an end to this once and for all.



LEO  
If you love me at all you'll stay.

ELIZABETH  
(unmoved)  
Thank you for your time.

She walks out on him.

INT. ANDREW'S HOME - LATER

It's late. A half-awake Andrew opens the door in pajamas.

ELIZABETH  
(all business)  
I *will* go west with you. To  
California. But soon after I will be  
gone forever. No fair warning. No  
good-bye. Can you live with that?

He nods, foggy but pleased.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
We'll leave as soon as possible. Good  
night.

He leans forward for a kiss but she's already off.

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Elizabeth exits her apartment carrying heavy luggage followed by Andrew, who is carrying nothing and talking her ear off:

ANDREW  
...the flash went off, the horse  
bucked and he fell right on his  
pompous ass!

He expects a laugh but doesn't receive it.

ANDREW (cont'd)  
You can't say I didn't warn him, can  
you. Can you? Elizabeth?

She's not listening. She's standing in front of Leo's apartment. The door is open and all his possessions are gone--with the exception of the silver cup, which he left on the bed for her to find.



FADE TO:

EXT. NEW JERSEY - VARIOUS - DAY

TITLE: Newark. Four years later.

The Great Depression. Misery and strife. SOUP LINES.  
Desperate people doing whatever they can to survive.

EXT. STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

The lot is next to a five-and-dime. A YOUNG BOY guards a bucket with a sign: Tip the Pole Sitter. ONLOOKERS gather near its flagpole, peering up.

We track up to the top of the pole where Leo is perched on a tiny platform. His hair is longer, he's grown a beard and he's depressed. A REPORTER with a camera asks:

REPORTER

How long's he been up there?

ONLOOKER

Thirty-two days!

REPORTER

Holy smokes! A new state record!  
This'll make the wires.

He points his camera and:

FLASH!

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD THEATER - EVENING

TITLE: Hollywood.

The flash of a paparazzi's camera. The birth of Hollywood's golden age. It's the red-carpet premier of "Bachelor's Fancy. Directed by Andrew Yates."

Andrew looks dashing in a tux. He's all smiles and has a YOUNG BLONDE STARLET on his arm. A PHOTOGRAPHER calls out:

PHOTOGRAPHER

Give 'er a kiss, Mr. Yates!

Andrew doesn't hesitate. He kisses his lover. Flashbulbs.

## ACROSS THE STREET

Elizabeth watches from behind parked cars wearing a mid-length bias-cut dress. Her hair is past her shoulders and slightly sun-kissed. She shakes her head and walks away.

## INT. ELIZABETH'S LA APARTMENT - LATER

It's cute and cozy, even when lit by a single floor lamp. Elizabeth sits at a table and begins to polish the silver cup, which is a nightly ritual.

## EXT. FLAGPOLE - EVENING

Leo is still on the flagpole and still miserable.

## INT. ELIZABETH'S LA APARTMENT - EVENING

Elizabeth enters with a takeout meal, sits at the table and polishes the cup as she eats.

## EXT. FLAGPOLE - DAY

Leo is still on the flagpole. Longer hair. Longer face.

## INT. ELIZABETH'S LA APARTMENT - EVENING

Elizabeth enters brightly holding the evening paper. She sits and reads an article about Leo's flagpole record.

ELIZABETH  
(smiles)  
New Jersey.

## EXT. FLAGPOLE - DUSK

Leo is fatigued. Heavy clouds form behind him. A flash of lightning in the distance. Thunder. He looks down at the young boy. One coin in the bucket. He tilts up: enough.

## INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

Small AUDIENCE. The film is in progress. It's "Bachelor's Fancy." Leo, hair cut and beard trimmed, finds a seat.

On screen: a dinner party scene in the Bachelor's swanky apartment. The Young Blonde Starlet is one of the well-heeled guests. The Bachelor makes a play for her.

BACHELOR

Why won't you give me the time of day?

STARLET

I have no time for a playboy like you.

BACHELOR

Then why did you accept my invitation and show up in that dress?

STARLET

Don't flatter yourself. I simply needed a reason to wear it.

Someone catches Leo's eye. A disinterested COCKTAIL WAITRESS serving champagne. It's Elizabeth. She's an extra in the film. He leans forward, his eyes fixed on her as we hear:

BACHELOR (O.C.)

Maybe I'm the one who wanted to see you in this dress.

STARLET (O.C.)

You'll see the inside of my hand across your face if you're not careful.

BACHELOR (O.C.)

Of all the women in this great big world, why did I fall for a dame like you?

STARLET (O.C.)

I guess you're just lucky.

Leo gets up and walks out, not noticing an AGENT spying him from a few rows back. The Agent turns his eyes to the screen a moment then follows Leo.

INT. ELIZABETH'S LA APARTMENT - DAY

Her suitcases are out. The place is in a state of mid-pack. She enters with a bag of groceries, turns to close the door then turns again and comes face-to-face with MATTEO. He hasn't aged a day.

She gasps. The bag falls. Her hand barely raises to strike him before an AGENT jabs a needle in the side of her neck.

BLACK.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ROOM 2 - DAY

We're behind closed eyelids. Beginning to open. Harsh light creeps in. Focusing. White floor. White walls. Sitting directly across is Dr. Scovell.

DR. SCOVELL  
Hello Mr. Wallis.

Leo is in hospital whites, propped upright in a bed. He's groggy, and can now see the Agent from the theater standing off to the side.

INT. HALLWAY

Dr. Scovell and Leo exit his room, followed by the Agent, who stays back. Leo follows her, still clearing the cobwebs. He notices a small bandage on his arm; the result of a blood draw.

Agents and LAB TECHS pass them. Bandages on noses, cheeks, foreheads. Black eyes. They've been in a fight.

They pass a large window of a lab filled with test tubes, centrifuges, bodily fluids, and a lot of blood. Techs exit, leaving for the day. Opposite this, double doors.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM

The double doors open. Dr. Scovell enters, then Leo. He sees it. He freezes.

She approaches the table. A dead body on it. Covered with tattoos. Some ancient. She politely slides a stool in front so Leo can see better. He stands on it and meets what's left of The Painted Man.

His chest is cut open and hallowed out like a dissected frog. His body is scarred with bullet wounds and other traumas. He has a scar like Leo's camouflaged by body art. He's been through hell.

DR. SCOVELL

(in awe)

He arrived riddled with bullets and lived. He refused to eat for sixty-three days and still had the strenght of a grizzly. We drained every ounce of blood from his body and it just produced more. No matter what he suffered he fought to the very end. I've never seen anything like it.

LEO

How did he die?

DR. SCOVELL

(simply)

We took his heart. It hurt me to do it but we had to know what makes a warrior like him vulnerable.

LEO

How did you find him?

DR. SCOVELL

J. Edgar Hoover finds everyone.

He continues to stare at the corpse as she moves toward a tank of sea slugs, some without bodies.

DR. SCOVELL (cont'd)

Do you believe in evolution, Mr. Wallis?

He steps down and joins her at the tank.

DR. SCOVELL (cont'd)

We're discovering new links to our ancestry all the time; evolutionary paths that trace back hundreds of millions of years. Mutations we can't even fathom. Take these slugs for example. They can remove their heads from their bodies and regenerate a new one in a matter of weeks. I believe there are extraordinary people among us who descended from these slugs.

She looks at Leo. He touches his scar.

INT. HALLWAY

They exit the autopsy room and walk toward Room 2.

DR. SCOVELL  
Serological testing is still in its infancy, but we have the world's best science at our disposal. We'll know more about your bloodline soon.

They arrive at Room 2. The Agent opens the door and motions for Leo to enter. Before the door closes:

DR. SCOVELL (cont'd)  
We also took a sperm sample while you were unconscious.

LEO  
(offended)  
Who are you people?

DR. SCOVELL  
The good guys.

The door slams shut. The Agent stands watch as she walks down the hall and passes Room 1.

INT. ROOM 1

Elizabeth is reclined in a bed wearing a hospital gown. Her arms and legs are strapped to the sides. A bandage from a blood draw. She wakes to see Matteo at her bedside, smirking and sharply dressed. She struggles to break free.

MATTEO  
I told them how dangerous you are.

She glares at him. He enjoys this.

MATTEO (cont'd)  
It's an incredible gift we share. But I get the feeling you don't fully appreciate it the way I do.

ELIZABETH  
Give it time.

MATTEO  
Oh I will. I enjoyed Hollywood. I think I'll return when this is over. They worship eternal youth. I'll be a big a star. What do you think?



He models his profile. She's in no mood to humor him.

MATTEO (cont'd)

You were telling the truth, by the way. Our blood cannot heal the dying. But Mussolini runs Italy now and he's not interested in saving people. He wants to rule them.

(scoffs)

We struck a deal when he came for me like the Church once came for The Painted Man: I will help him create "an elite squad of immortal warriors born to the fascist cause."

(leans in, heartless)

I told him all I need is the right woman to help me breed.

ELIZABETH

(in Subtitled Italian)

Go to hell.

MATTEO

Sorry, but that's not my destiny today.

He chuckles and rises.

MATTEO (cont'd)

Don't worry. The Americans are taking all the fun out of it. "Artificial insemination." They say you'll deliver many babies at a time...like a bitch.

ELIZABETH

Americans?

MATTEO

Everything changed since the war. The Americans spend more to build an army. I made out quite well. Mussolini was informed of my "death" and of course denied ever knowing me. The dirty deeds of powerful men. It's all very clean.

(grins)

Maybe I'll play a spy in my first film. Hm?

She again struggles with the straps.

MATTEO (cont'd)  
 Save your strenght. Big day for us  
 tomorrow, Lizzie. Ciao.

INT. HALLWAY

Matteo exits. The Agent is in a chair, posted between Rooms  
 1 and 2.

INT. ROOM 1

Elizabeth screams at the door:

ELIZABETH  
 Barbarians! The Visigoths had more  
 class than you!

INT. ROOM 2

Leo heard Elizabeth through the ventilator between their  
 rooms.

LEO  
 Elizabeth? ELIZABETH!

INT. ROOM 1

ELIZABETH  
 Leo?

INT. ROOM 2

He runs toward the wall and speaks toward the ventilator.

NOTE: We cut back and forth between them.

LEO  
 Elizabeth. Are you alright?

ELIZABETH  
 I'm strapped to a bed!

He thinks about it a beat too long.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
 (annoyed)  
 LEO!

He runs to the door. It's locked. He returns to the wall.

LEO  
The door's locked. I'm trapped.

ELIZABETH  
Like the pig you are.

He winces. Then, an apology long overdue:

LEO  
I'm sorry for the way I behaved. I shouldn't have pressured you to marry me. But you've given me something I no longer thought was possible: a reason to live.

In the HALLWAY, the Agent overhears this and rolls his eyes.

AGENT  
Oh, jeez...

ELIZABETH  
You're not to blame. I am. Men just fall to pieces around me.

He smiles. Pause.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
You never told me how you felt. You never once said you loved me. Not even as a friend or an oddly attractive sister.

LEO  
You know how I feel about you.

ELIZABETH  
It still would have been nice to hear it.

He thinks a beat, then begins to serenade her.

LEO  
*Toutes les fleurs du champ. Tous les fruits dans les arbres.*

The admission of love moves her. She joins in:

ELIZABETH/LEO  
(harmonize)  
*Tous les poissons de la mer. Toutes les pièces juste pour moi.*

Pause. Then with great affection:

ELIZABETH  
I love that song. And I'm in love  
with you too.

It feels good to finally say it.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(brightly)  
I saved the silver cup. I polished it  
every evening because I "had a bad  
feeling I would see you again." You  
know what that's called, don't you?

No reply.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Don't you? Leo?

*CLANK! CLANK! THUNK!* A sickening sound from Room 2.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Leo?

The Agent heard it too. He's on his feet and unlocks the door.

AGENT  
(looks in)  
Oh jeez!

ELIZABETH  
LEO?!

The Agent rushes in. Leo has hung himself with his sheets. Two metal chairs knocked over just feet away. He uprights a chair, stands on it and holds Leo's lifeless body as he tries to untie the noose. Leo opens an eye. It worked.

Elizabeth shakes her arms violently, trying to free herself. *WHUMP! WHUMP! CLANK! THUD!* From Room 2.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(fearing the worst)  
Leo...?

The door unlocks. The handle turns. Leo rushes in, redness around his neck.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Leo!

LEO

Hi.

ELIZABETH

What happened?

LEO

You said you were in love with me. So I hung myself.

He quickly gets to work undoing her straps.

ELIZABETH

I like the beard. It makes you look older.

LEO

I was hoping for swashbuckling. But I'll take it.

(a beat)

I caught your acting debut.

ELIZABETH

(frowns)

Andrew. One day photographing redwoods and he decides he wants to be the next Cecil B. DeMille so he can shag leading ladies half his age.

LEO

I never cared for him or his work. How hard is it to capture someone that's standing still?

ELIZABETH

Harder than it looks. It's an art.

LEO

Is that what he called it? He's more pretentious than his subjects.

ELIZABETH

Snob.

They smile. It feels good to spar again. He frees one side then moves around to the other.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

The young Roman I stabbed. Matteo. He's not dead. He's here. He's behind all of this.

LEO  
(pauses)  
What?

ELIZABETH  
He's like us.

LEO  
(relieved)  
So you didn't kill him.

ELIZABETH  
No. But if I get my hands on him  
again I'll murder the bastard.

Her other side is free. She springs from the bed.

INT. HALLWAY

They exit Room 1, quickly and cautiously.

LEO  
Hans is dead.

ELIZABETH  
He is?

LEO  
He was their guinea pig. He's in  
there.

He motions to the autopsy room. She wants to see for  
herself.

LEO (cont'd)  
Don't--

She enters then quickly reappears, repulsed.

ELIZABETH  
Oh dear...

They quickly advance down the hallway. Four bandaged AGENTS  
round the corner holding nightsticks in one hand and ready  
to pull their guns with the other.

LEO  
Your turn.

ELIZABETH  
(re: her gown)  
I'm in a johnny!

The Agents slowly approach.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
Oh, let's get on with it.

They rush at her and she expertly thrashes them. Leo picks up a fallen nightstick which allows him to get in a few whacks. With the Agents unconscious and sticks in hand, they disappear around the corner.

EXT. STREET - WASHINGTON DC - MOMENTS LATER

Elizabeth and Leo run out of a large building and into an empty street. They look around to orient themselves and realize they're in Washington, DC. They can see the Capitol Building in the distance.

ELIZABETH  
Oh my god.

A car with three AGENTS screeches around the corner. They run.

INT. MUSEUM OF HISTORY - MOMENTS LATER

Elizabeth and Leo quickly weave between the displays searching for a place to hide.

ELIZABETH  
(as they pass)  
Well this all looks familiar.

INT. PORTUGUESE EXHIBIT

Ancient Portuguese artifacts. Elizabeth and Leo enter. She spots something that stops her in her tracks.

ELIZABETH  
That's my dagger.

Suspended in a glass case is her jeweled-handled dagger and its jeweled sheath. They get closer.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I can see the bite marks on the sheath.

LEO  
What a small worl--

She smashes the case with her nightstick, setting off an alarm. She grabs the dagger and sheath.

LEO (cont'd)  
Why did you do that?!

ELIZABETH  
I hate thieves!

The alarm gives them away. They hear the Agents nearing. They run. A gun shot rings out overhead.

INT. GREEK EXHIBIT

A larger chamber with marble statues and busts. They race in. Dead end. Two more shots fired, chipping a statue. They take cover behind the sculpture of Laocoon and His Sons because it has the largest base in the room.

LEO  
Think you can fight them off?

Another warning shot fired. They're closing in.

ELIZABETH  
Swords and sticks are one thing.  
Bullets are another matter entirely.

LEO  
I won't let them hurt you.

ELIZABETH  
No, you don't understand. They're not going to kill me. They're going fill me with Matteo's seed like a farm animal so they can build some wicked army. They'll do it over and over again.

Another shot. She sees no other way out:

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
How did Hans die?

LEO  
No.

ELIZABETH  
Please, Leo, don't let them do that to me. Please.

Another shot. This one even closer.



LEO  
They took his heart.

She looks at the dagger.

LEO (cont'd)  
I can't. I won't.

ELIZABETH  
Well don't make me do it.

Another shot. Closest one yet. This is it.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
I love you.

LEO  
I love you too.

They kiss for the first time. It's a kiss for the ages. A kiss that changes everything.

ELIZABETH  
How did you come up with that song?

LEO  
One of the women who raised me. She would sing me to sleep.

ELIZABETH  
What was her name?

LEO  
Millicent.

ELIZABETH  
(likes the sound)  
Millicent.  
(a beat)  
It's not a curse, Leo. This life of ours. It's a blessing. It brought us together.

She kisses him tenderly.

INT. GREEK EXHIBIT - MOMENTS LATER

Three bandaged AGENTS are in the room and just feet from the sculpture's base. Leo emerges weeping and holding the bloody dagger. His hospital whites are covered in blood. A nervous YOUNG AGENT shoots, grazing Leo's shoulder.

YOUNG AGENT

Drop it!

The dagger falls. An OLDER AGENT looks at the Young Agent and shoots him a scornful look. Leo falls to his knees.

The Older Agent walks toward the base and peers around it.

OLDER AGENT

(sickened)

Oh...aw...

He convulses and turns away. The other Agents arrive to look. One vomits. They hurry out of the room to catch their breaths, leaving Leo unguarded.

INT. GREEK EXHIBIT - LATER

The Agents lead Dr. Scovell and Matteo to the scene.

OLDER AGENT

Ma'am I wouldn't look if I was you.

DR. SCOVELL

Shut up.

She knows what she's going to see, and not see.

DR. SCOVELL (cont'd)

You idiots!

Matteo arrives at her side. We see what they do: a pool of blood behind the base of the statue. They're gone.

MATTEO

FIND THEM!

Dr. Scovell sees the dagger and picks it up.

DR. SCOVELL

Hoover's going to have our heads.

FADE TO:

EXT. TAHITIAN BEACH - DAY

TITLE: Tahiti. 1988.

A pristine beach. A boat docked near a tropical home. A necklace of seashells being carried by the hand of a man we know well. He has a wedding band on his ring finger and a complete tattoo of a sailing ship on his bicep.

We follow the necklace into a

LIVING ROOM

Open to the beach. The necklace is placed around a woman's long, slender neck near the scar that rings it.

LEO

She made this for you. I helped a little.

Elizabeth smiles as she caresses her new treasure.

ELIZABETH

I love it.

They kiss as married couples do.

EXT. TAHITIAN BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

Elizabeth and Leo step from the house onto the beach. Her hair is long and windswept. She wears a loose-fitting sarong to cover her second trimester baby bump. He's in a tank top, board shorts and sports a face-framing ponytail.

They approach their adorable five year-old daughter, MILLICENT, who is using the silver cup to make a sand castle. She runs to her mommy.

MILLICENT

Do you like your necklace, Mommy?

ELIZABETH

(kneels down)

I love it. Thank you Millicent.

They hug.

MILLICENT

(in Subtitled  
Tahitian)

You're welcome.

ELIZABETH

Very good!

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (cont'd)  
(in Subtitled  
Tahitian)  
You are so smart and beautiful and  
strong.

MILLICENT  
Huh?

ELIZABETH  
(smiles, in English)  
Don't worry pumpkin, we have plenty  
of time to work on it.

MILLICENT  
I'm hungry.

ELIZABETH  
Me too. Your sister is ravenous.

She gets to her feet with an assist from Leo.

LEO  
Who's ready to be chuffed to bits?

MILLICENT  
Me!

ELIZABETH  
Then chuffed you shall be.

The family of three--soon to be four--walk into the house as  
we float up and away, leaving them to a happiness with no  
end.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END