

"AMADEO"

- A.P Giannini, Social Justice Warrior
of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake

by

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Based on the novel "AMADEO"

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FADE IN:

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Nestled in a quiet one-way side-street, the Rushman Goldfield boutique investment bank makes up in elegance and tasteful opulence what it lacks in size.

Past scatterings of homeless people, a scrap of newspaper is chased down along the street by a late-summer gust. It ends up flattened against the bronze-and-glass double-doors of the bank entrance.

Smiling out confidently from the page is an attractive ITALIAN-FEATURED WOMAN (27). The headline reads: "DOC. BAGS GIANNINI FELLOWSHIP". The torn caption reads: "Post-doctoral hemophilia researcher Dr. Erm"-.

The adjoining article has a torn headline which reads: "TREMOR BRINGS ONLY MINOR DAM"-.

The wind retreats. The page falls to the welcome mat.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1876

On the welcome mat, a pair of coarse, muddy boots are wiped.

A gnarled, black-nailed hand is thrust out. It knocks peremptorily at the door.

The other arm cradles a muddy black coat, which is wrapped around an ominous rod-like object.

INT. - LOBBY - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Standing beside the elegant elevators, SECURITY GUARD #1 (GENE, 40s, wedding band) carefully wraps up his handgun in its holster belt. Then, bending over, he packs the gun and belt into his gym bag, which rests on the floor.

SECURITY GUARD #2 (CHRIS, 30s, perpetual smirk) sits reading a newspaper at the reception desk.

CHRIS and GENE look up at the entry, from the back, of SECURITY GUARD #3 (RAÚL, 58 - a tall, powerfully built, distinguished-looking Punjabi-Mexican SIKH in a blue turban). RAÚL is evidently relieving GENE. But GENE won't go just yet.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1876

Planting himself defiantly on the doorstep is transient farm laborer JOSE FERRARI (40s, small, slight, dark).

The door is opened by VIRGINIA GIANNINI (21, tallish, a few months pregnant, forceful yet positive personality). Her apron is flecked with red pasta sauce. On seeing FERRARI,

she winces, then stifles a sigh.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

GENE - frowning - transfers his attention from his watch (22:51) to the elegant clock above the elevators (ten to eleven). CHRIS - still smirking - discreetly observes him.

GENE

Mr. Rich! Mr. Rich! Isn't Mr. Rich supposed to be working tonight?!

GENE and RAÚL both look to CHRIS for confirmation. Shrugging, CHRIS shakes out his San Francisco Chronicle - with the same photograph of "Dr. ERM" and tremor reference as in the first scene.

CHRIS

Gene, bankers at Mr. Rich's level keep their own hours. But Raúl ...

Making them wait, CHRIS sips at his cocoa. Then he looks up at GENE, in mock-surprise at still finding him there.

CHRIS

... a man who won't go home to his wife: it means one of two things...

Not amused, GENE stalks off toward the front entrance.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1876

VIRGINIA

(not amused)

Jose, is this your idea of a joke?

VIRGINIA breaks off: coming in from the kitchen is her husband: LUIGI GIANNINI (28, tall, handsome, blue-eyed, broad-shouldered, handlebar mustache). As he walks, LUIGI takes his napkin out from under his chin. Dabbing at his mouth, he stains the napkin with red pasta sauce.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Carelessly spilling some cocoa upon the floor, CHRIS glances over at RAÚL, who removes from his bag two framed photographs and a biggish book.

CHRIS

And what weighty tome is it this time, my friend? The "Unabridged History of the Universe"?!

RAÚL

(American accent; dryly)

I love history. Immigration
history. Economics history. Music
history. Art history... Gives you
... perspective.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA
CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1876

VIRGINIA steps aside, revealing the darkly defiant FERRARI.
LUIGI rolls his eyes and exhales softly. As if by some
obscure premonition, he looks out over the shorter Ferrari's
head toward the yard and orchards beyond: all is deserted.

INT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL
DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

GENE is peering out through the glass doors: the street is
deserted. He glances back toward CHRIS, still smirking over
his cocoa, and toward RAÚL, still busy settling in.

GENE looks at his watch. He looks out at the deserted
street. He looks back toward his waiting gym bag.

He takes out his phone. Fiddling unconsciously with his
wedding band, he sighs. Reluctantly, he turns.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA
CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1876

FERRARI half-turns to glance back at the empty lands behind
him. He is still smarting after having been 'overlooked'.

LUIGI

(wearily)

Look, Jose, we've already settled
this. I paid you a fair wage. The
wage we both agreed upon.

FERRARI

No! I never agree! You owe me!
Still you owe me \$1! \$1! One whole
dollar you owe me! No-one
short-change Jose Ferrari! No-one
insult Jose Ferrari! No-one
disrespect JOSE FERRARI!

LUIGI and VIRGINIA exchange a glance of weary exasperation,
which only infuriates FERRARI all the more.

LUIGI

Jose, please, be reasonable...! I
meant no insult, no disrespect. Be
a man of your word! A man of honor!

FERRARI

Honor...? Honor...?! A man of
HONOR...?! I show you honor!

Eyes bulging insanely, FERRARI rips the muddy coat from around the rod-like object: a sawed-off shotgun.

Gasping, grimacing, VIRGINIA raises one hand to her mouth, and with the other, she clutches at her belly. From Luigi's own hand, the red-stained napkin falls through the air.

Point-blank, FERRARI shoots LUIGI, who flies backward, and crumples to the floor. In wide-eyed disbelief, VIRGINIA opens her mouth, but the scream is still-born in her throat.

Emptied in an instant of his insane rage, FERRARI stares down in belatedly lucid horror at what he has done. He casts the shotgun from him like something unclean. He hesitates as if - absurdly - wanting to offer some explanation.

Then, with shock, he notices something or someone behind Virginia. Swallowing hard, stammering speechlessly, he tears himself away from the double sight, and is gone.

Baptized in blood, VIRGINIA slowly swivels round. And there behind her in the doorway of the passage - mute, gaping, wide-eyed, his napkin stained with red pasta sauce - is her six-year-old son: AMADEO.

ROLL OPENING CREDITS

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE DAWN - 1876

Gathering on the docks, COMMISSION AGENTS, STEVEDORES, and DRAYMEN stare out expectantly over the bay. Approaching is the steamer "Reform".

EXT. - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

The entrance to the Rushman Goldfield basement parking area is situated in a small office block immediately to the left of Rushman Goldfield proper.

On the opposite side of the street, about twenty yards back from the basement parking entrance, a black Bentley Continental GT pulls up. The personalized license plate reads: "RICH 1". The engine purrs deeply and sweetly, then is silent. The car lights die.

EXT. - ON DECK - BAY STEAMER "REFORM" - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO DOCKS - BEFORE DAWN - 1876

CAPTAIN JOHN LEALE looks on in compassionate admiration at a silent mother (VIRGINIA) and her silent little son (AMADEO). LEALE tips his cap to them.

CAPTAIN LEALE

Mrs Giannini. Amadeo.

They silently return his greeting. Then LEALE lets out a small gasp: he has noticed that VIRGINIA is no longer pregnant. But - unbowed, undaunted, determined, and full of

vital energy - she is taking produce from the family farm to sell on the San Francisco waterfront.

Beside VIRGINIA, little AMADEO - sadly pensive, yet equally resilient - silently observes everything around them.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Through the tinted windows of the Bentley, the DRIVER (RICH, 36) is dimly visible. He sits transfixed.

In the near distance, approaching along the Rushman side of the street, are a BOY (RENZO, 10) and his MOTHER (ROSARIA, 29.) Attractive yet detached, ROSARIA bears a striking resemblance - physical, at any rate - to "Dr. ERM".

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - EARLY MORNING - 1876

Drayman LORENZO SCATENA (26) looks on in compassionate admiration as VIRGINIA negotiates with customers and sells her wares. Little AMADEO, meanwhile, is showing a precocious fascination with the mechanics of business.

SCATENA (barrel-chested, gentle, soft-spoken, quietly ambitious) comes over to pay his respects. VIRGINIA returns his gaze, but, for now, hides her attraction to him.

SCATENA

Well, Signora Virginia, this terrible drought must be hard on you! Not to mention all your ... other ... difficulties!

VIRGINIA

(with a steely smile)
We all have our crosses to bear, Signor Lorenzo... If only the bank would give me a loan, though!

SCATENA

(ruefully)
Hmmm. The only purpose of banks is to grant credit to millionaires! To those who - unlike us - don't need to work sixteen hours a day!

Hearing this, AMADEO is quietly astonished and indignant. Gently, SCATENA tousles his hair. AMADEO gazes with affection, respect, and even compassion at his MOTHER, at SCATENA, and at all the struggling, hard-working FARMERS, COMMISSION AGENTS, and STEVEDORES on the docks.

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RENZO

Wow, look, mom! A Bentley Continental, mom! And look at the vanity plate, mom! "RICH 1", mom! Maybe it's some hot rapper, mom!

ROSARIA

(dryly)

Unless it's King Richard the First.

RENZO

Aw, mom! You always make everything a history lesson!

ROSARIA

(dryly)

Well, go figure.

INT. - ONE-ROOM SCHOOL - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - DAY - 1878

The classroom is packed with children of many nationalities: Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Austrian, Armenian, Indian, Japanese, Chinese....

AMADEO (8) calmly brushes off the playful attempts of classmates to distract him from his intense concentration. He is competing against his Chinese friend TOM FOON CHEW (8) in the mental calculation of rows of figures on the blackboard.

AMADEO proudly calls out the result before TOM can, smiling at him in victory, as the TEACHER and CHILDREN applaud. Returning Amadeo's smile at last, TOM joins in the applause.

TOM FOON

Next time, Amador Jennings!

ALVISO CHILDREN

(playfully chanting)

Amador Jennings! Amador Jennings!

Amador Jennings! Amador Jennings...!

AMADEO shakes his head at this comical mispronunciation of his name. Nevertheless, his chest swells with quiet pride.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

ALVISO CHILDREN (V.O.)

... Amador Jennings! Amador Jennings!

Amador -!

Snapping out of a daze, RICH jerks his head up. Then his chest swells, and his head falls backwards.

INT. - CLASSROOM - WASHINGTON STREET GRAMMAR SCHOOL - SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON - 1882

AMADEO (12) throws his head back in joyful anticipation as the bell rings for the end of the school day.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - A WHILE LATER

His school bag tossed to one side, AMADEO looks on, fascinated, while SCATENA (32, wedding band) negotiates with CLIENTS. One CLIENT scratches his head with a pencil.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

To his left temple RICH slowly raises a rod-like black object. At once he lowers it again.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR THE SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - EARLY EVENING - 1882

In his high chair, little HENRY (3) shortsightedly makes circles with a red crayon. At the stove, VIRGINIA (28) is busy whisking the mixture for zabaglione. Greedily looking on are Amadeo's other brothers ATTILIO (8) and GEORGE (6).

AMADEO (12) comes in, accompanied by SCATENA, who - swallowing - has one arm draped around AMADEO's shoulders. At the sight, ATTILIO half-turns away, consumed with jealousy and resentment.

GEORGE

Hi, Pop!

Discreetly removing his arm from AMADEO's shoulders, SCATENA kisses little HENRY, and evenhandedly tousles the hair of ATTILIO and GEORGE. Then - swallowing - he goes up to VIRGINIA and gives her a cautious peck on the cheek. She raises an eyebrow at him. Yet again he swallows.

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

ROSARIA is staring down in astonishment at the face of "Dr. Erm", smiling at her from the bank's welcome mat. ROSARIA picks up the scrap of newspaper and holds it breathlessly before her. Then - as RENZO comes back for her - she begins scratching around in her handbag for her smartphone.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR THE SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - EARLY EVENING - 1882

VIRGINIA

(tossing the salad)

So then, Lorenzo, did you ask your boss ... for that raise? For \$300?

SCATENA

(relieved; sighing,
shrugging)

Sì, cara! But he said \$250 is plenty! Besides, as you know, he's given me two raises already!

VIRGINIA

(quietly undaunted)

Quit your job. Why make all that money for other people? Quit your job. Start your own business. Be your own boss.

Blindsided, SCATENA glances at AMADEO, who breathlessly stares back at him, as if already seeing the possibilities.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Inhaling, RICH points the black object at his left temple. His left hand begins shaking, together with the object.

EXT. - BETWEEN RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL AND THE RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

As they approach the Bentley, RENZO tugs excitedly at ROSARIA's sleeve. With the page in one hand, and pressing speed-dial #2 with the thumb of the other, she gestures him to wait.

EXT. - OPPOSITE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

As they draw level with the driver's window, RENZO lets go of ROSARIA's sleeve. Rooted to the spot, he is staring open-mouthed at RICH. He doesn't even notice ROSARIA walking on. And she, now talking on her phone, doesn't notice that he is not following her.

ROSARIA

(with mixed feelings)

Congrats, li'l sis! Why didn't you tell me the wonderful news?! I've only just seen the newspaper...!

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE MIDNIGHT - 1882

At the kitchen table, SCATENA closes his San Francisco Call, and finishes his coffee. He glances defensively at AMADEO, then at his pocket watch: ten to twelve.

SCATENA

(half-heartedly)

Look, Amadeo. I promised your mother I'd try and make you stay home.

AMADEO

(beaming)

Well, don't feel bad, Pop. At least you tried.

Sighing, SCATENA rises, rinses out his coffee cup, waves goodbye, and leaves. But secretly he is pleased.

Smiling to himself, AMADEO calmly finishes his coffee.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Covering his face with both hands, RICH starts sobbing uncontrollably. He is no longer holding the black object.

His head slumps forward upon the steering wheel and the horn honks loudly. Eyes streaming, he straightens up in shock.

ROSARIA, halted, has half-turned to look back.

INT. - HALLWAY - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE MIDNIGHT - 1882

In the semi-darkness, AMADEO half-turns, and glancing up along the staircase, checks that the coast is clear. His shoes in one hand, he tiptoes out of the house.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RENZO cautiously approaches the Bentley, and RICH finally notices him. For a moment the two are mutually transfixed.

Suddenly galvanized, RICH presses the starter button, and the engine awakes. The Bentley surges forward, then lurches to a stop. A small light flashing in his hand, RICH points something at the basement-parking door, which squeakily rolls up. The Bentley turns, and shoots through the door, which is rolling down again even as the car can be heard screeching to a stop inside, then lurching off once again.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAWN - 1882

Huge sacks of produce are off-loaded from squeaking wheelbarrows. Cursing and shouting in a babel of languages, a world of merchants - Syrian, Russian, Chinese, Italian, Greek, Armenian, Portuguese - battle to outbid each other.

His schoolbag tossed to one side, AMADEO looks on in utter fascination, studying the art and science of the deal.

Shaking his head in wonder, and smiling with pleasure, SCATENA comes over.

SCATENA

Not tired yet, Amadeo?! You still have to go to school, you know!

AMADEO

(beaming)

Don't you worry, Pop - I'll manage all right!

With a visionary gaze off into the distance, AMADEO maps out his future.

INT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Through the glass doors, RAÚL, GENE and CHRIS peer out at what seems to them a deserted street. Then - shrugging, bantering, and smiling - they stroll back toward reception.

EXT. - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

ROSARIA, having rung off, has come back for RENZO.

ROSARIA

(coolly amused)

The rich man in the Bentley was doing what?!

RENZO

He had a gun to his head, mom! A gun! A real gun, mom! I swear!

ROSARIA

Really, Renzo, your imagination does you credit. But he was merely on his phone. Just like me. Can't you tell the difference, between a gun and a cellphone? Hmmm?

RENZO

Like duh, mom!

ROSARIA

Renzo, I really don't have time for this. It's late. Let's get on home. Oh and now you've gone and made me forget the news! About Zia Erminia!

RENZO

Zia?! What news, mom?!

ROSARIA

Remember that A.P. Giannini assignment of yours? Well ...

(MORE)

ROSARIA (cont'd)
 (with mixed feelings)
 Zia Erminia has just been awarded
 ... an A.P. Giannini Fellowship!

RENZO
 Wow, mom! An A.P. Giannini award?!
 That's so cool! But I thought Zia
 was a doctor, mom! Not a banker!

ROSARIA
 I'll explain later. Oh and I could
 have been a doctor like my sister,
 you know! If only that deadbeat dad
 of yours hadn't gone and got me -!

She scratches in her bag, as if looking for something. He touches a finger to an eye, as if removing a speck of grit.

INT. - SCATENA'S OFFICE - L. SCATENA & CO. - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAY - 1882

Rubbing his eyes incredulously, SCATENA riffles through a pile of papers on a table near the door.

SCATENA
 All these new orders - but where do they come from?! I don't know these farmers! I've never solicited their business!

BOOK-KEEPER
 (shrugging)
 I can't take the credit, boss! To me too it's just one big mystery!

Smiling mysteriously in the bg., AMADEO (12) is busy writing at Scatena's desk.

INT. - SCATENA'S DESK - SCATENA'S OFFICE - L. SCATENA & CO. - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

His school bag tossed to one side, AMADEO scrutinizes the penmanship of a business letter he has just finished.

AMADEO
 (to himself)
 "... Do business exclusively with L. Scatena & Co., and we guarantee you honest prices on the barrelhead, and quick service..."

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Having settled in again, CHRIS puts down his newspaper. He is reaching for his cocoa, when he notices RICH on a security monitor. RAÚL does too, and GENE comes over.

On the monitor, RICH emerges from the elevator on the third floor, and slouches dejectedly along the passage. He suddenly appears on another monitor as he reaches his office door, where he wavers.

GENE

When did Mr. Rich get here?! And where's the briefcase today?! He's not a happy chappie either, is he?!

CHRIS

Who can blame him, with a 13th Baroness von Macbethenberg for a wife?!

GENE glares at CHRIS, who - smirking - ignores him.

On the monitor, RICH holds his head in his hands, lets his arms fall forlornly, and slumps against the door. Then, gazing up in sudden realization at the camera, he hastily opens, and is swallowed up by darkness.

The THREE SECURITY GUARDS exchange breathless glances. While CHRIS quickly begins to shrug it all off, RAÚL is so concerned that - for now - he even loses his habitually dry manner of expression.

RAÚL

I've got a BAD feeling about this! Maybe I should go up and check!

CHRIS

(from behind newspaper)
Knock yourself out.

RAÚL sighs, inclines his head to CHRIS, then to GENE, and moves majestically toward the elevators. They look on with a tinge of envy at his impressive stature and physique.

INT. - SCATENA'S OFFICE - L. SCATENA & CO. - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAY - 1882

The short and slightly built old BOOK-KEEPER comes in - out of breath, but smiling. AMADEO - serenely expectant - is observing him.

SCATENA

(to Book-Keeper)
You got it?

The BOOK-KEEPER smilingly passes SCATENA a premium gold pocket watch, on a gold chain.

SCATENA

Amadeo, this ... is for you! No-one deserves it more!

Smiling with gratitude and quiet pride, AMADEO accepts the watch, shakes hands with the two men, and excuses himself.

SCATENA looks on for a moment, then exchanges a wondering glance with the BOOK-KEEPER.

SCATENA

Mark my words. That boy, that boy
is a world-beater! A world-beater!

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Yawning outrageously, CHRIS slouches in his chair. He checks his mug: empty. He glances at GENE, who puts away his phone, sighs, and picks up his gym bag - at last!

Shaking his head with pity, CHRIS glances at the security monitors: nothing there. He glances at RAÚL's book: "Making Ethnic Choices - California's Punjabi Mexican Americans", by Karen Leonard; then at the two framed black-and-white photographs on RAÚL's part of the desk. For the first time, he looks more carefully at the photos.

In one, RAÚL'S MEXICAN GRANDMOTHER (AZUCENA, 35) proudly and reverently transfers her proxy to AMADEO GIANNINI (61).

In the other, AZUCENA (68) stands with snowy-haired, bowed, frail pride outside a 'Painted Lady' Bay Area house. RAÚL (7) stands in front of her while she holds him. With deep love and concern, he has half-turned to gaze back at her.

CHRIS

Why doesn't Raúl sell that 'Painted Lady' of his grandmother's?! He could have retired years ago!

GENE

(from the elevator)

Raúl will never sell the house his abuelita left him when he was 17.

CHRIS

But what is wrong with the man?!

GENE

(pensively)

She bought that house with B of A stock, you know. That was after she got ill and quit her job as a teller. But with the stock she had left, she still had a good income!

The doors close; the elevator descends.

CHRIS

Married men!

Yawning, CHRIS takes up the 'Painted Lady' photo, and sighs.

CHRIS

Now those were dividends!

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - NIGHT - 1885

Indomitable even among grizzled and battle-scarred traders, AMADEO (15) hurls himself with fiery, cool integrity into the rough and tumble of dockyard wheeling and dealing, and emerges victorious. SCATENA (35) looks on in silent wonder.

INT. - BEFORE RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RAÚL listens at the keyhole: silence. Cautiously opening the door, he looks upon darkness. He waits, eyes adjusting.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING - 1885

VIRGINIA (31) is relaxing at the kitchen table. Bent over the stove, SCATENA (35) is tasting the pasta sauce.

AMADEO (15) comes in, and plants himself before her. Tensing, VIRGINIA darts a look of quizzical concern at SCATENA, who shrugs, and comes to sit down beside her.

AMADEO

(serenely)

Ma, I've thought about it. And I've decided: school has nothing more to offer me. There's nothing you can say. I'm quitting school, and I'm going to work full time. With Pop.

VIRGINIA

(breathlessly)

Amadeo, your love of business ... does you credit. But school comes first. Business ... can come later.

AMADEO

(serenely unshakable)

Ma, later is too late. The time, Ma, is now.

VIRGINIA darts a mute appeal at SCATENA, who just shrugs helplessly. But he can't hide how pleased he is.

AMADEO has been observing them. He plays his ace.

AMADEO

But what I will do, Ma, is a three-month course at Heald's Business College: penmanship, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic. It'll be a great help, Ma. When I'm working full time. With Pop.

VIRGINIA shakes her head at her own helplessness before a mere boy. A boy SCATENA is gazing at in silent wonder.

INT. - BEFORE RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

A long, image-covered passage leads all the way to the dimly moonlit office proper, which is open. Halfway down, two doors lead off toward the left: presumably the kitchenette and the bathroom. Becoming visible now in the office are a large desk and a tall wing-backed leather chair turned away toward the window.

INT. - EXAMINATION ROOM - HEALD'S BUSINESS COLLEGE - SAN
FRANCISCO - DAY - 1885

AMADEO is the only one taking the exam. The INVIGILATOR glances at his pocket watch: plenty of time to go. He makes himself comfortable. But not for long: AMADEO rises, plonks his test paper down on the table, inclines his head with serene confidence, and leaves.

As the INVIGILATOR frowningly reaches for the test paper, and begins to flip through it, another STAFF MEMBER enters.

HEALD STAFF MEMBER

Did that Gee-a-ninny boy just write
his final exam?! After only a
month-and-a-half?!

HEALD INVIGILATOR

(pensively)

Yep. Petitioned for an early exam.
Said he wanted to get ahead. Said
he simply didn't have time to waste
hanging around here!

HEALD STAFF MEMBER

Well! Though I have to give him
credit for character, intelligence,
determination, and a memory second
to none! So anyway, how did he do?

HEALD INVIGILATOR

(wryly passing the paper)

See for yourself!

The STAFF MEMBER glances quizzically at the INVIGILATOR, then at the test paper. He looks up in speechless wonder.

INT. - PASSAGE - RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD
BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE
PRESENT

RAÚL moves cautiously and quietly. On the walls, the images are becoming more clear.

IN IMAGE #1, RICH appears with his long-haired WIFE (CLARA, 40) and their THREE YOUNG CHILDREN. Beside a Boesendorfer Imperial concert grand piano ('Louis Seize' model) the family poses beneath a gilt-framed reproduction of the 'Stars-in-her-Hair' portrait of the EMPRESS ELISABETH OF

AUSTRIA (SISI). The setting: Louis Seize furniture, Aubusson tapestries, and Sèvres porcelain - all clashing deliciously with modernistic paintings and sculptures.

Hyper-beautiful, hyper-thin, hyper-confident, hyper-elegant, hyper-refined, and hyper-sophisticated, CLARA stands aristocratically tall and upright. With not a single hair out of place, she scrutinizes the viewer as if to say:

"I'll ... let you know!"

RICH sits gazing up at her in adoration, but also as if terrified of not being good enough. The THREE YOUNG CHILDREN - seated or rather arranged about their parents on the Savonnerie carpet - look up to Clara as Rich does.

IN IMAGE #2, CLARA wears the paraphernalia of a physician, and stands at the focal point of two lines of INTERNS forming a V-shape. One of these is a younger "Dr. ERM". They too gaze upon her in the now familiar attitude.

IN IMAGE #3 - captioned and double-underlined with a red felt-tip pen - "The BARONESS PANNONICA ROTHSCHILD DE KOENIGSWATER aka the JAZZ BARONESS, 37" and "GR-GRANDMAMA: the 10th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 35" are on 52nd Street, proudly flanking a spaced-out "THELONIOUS MONK, 33" and a beatific "CHARLIE PARKER, 30". Standing before the latter - and half-turned to gaze back at him in romantic fascination - is "GRANDMAMA: 11th BARONESS, 14".

IMAGE #4: a large framed reproduction of the famous painting of FRANZ LISZT - self-consciously in profile - seated at a Boesendorfer concert grand piano, before the EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEPH, the EMPRESS SISI, and a select group of ROYALS and NOBLES. A red arrow and a double-underlined red caption identify a PARTIALLY OBSCURED FACE IN THE FOURTH ROW as "GR-GR-GR-GR-GRANDMAMA: the 7th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 20".

IMAGE #5: in a large silver frame there is a small press clipping of a sourly-smiling "ENRICO CARUSO, 32". He has been gleefully button-holed in an antique shop by "GR-GR-GR-GR-GRANDMAMA: the 7th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 53. NY, 1905".

RAÚL

Hmmm. Not the sort of wife - or the sort of family - that a man would want to disappoint!

RAÚL continues cautiously down toward Rich's office.

EXT. - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - DAY - 1887

On horseback, trotting cautiously through the ruggedly dangerous but fertile terrain, AMADEO (17, tall, powerfully built) munches on bread and Parmesan cheese.

Cresting a hill, he looks down at his destination in the distance: a large farm. He smiles with anticipation. Then

something catches his eye: far down the road, a cloud of dust. A rival merchant is heading for the very same farm!

At once, AMADEO stuffs the remains of his meal into his knapsack. He considers, eyes searching over the terrain. As matters stand, his rival will beat him to it....

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

In the semi-darkness, RAÚL edges quietly around the desk, toward the tall, wing-backed leather armchair turned to the window. On the desk, two gilt-framed photographs lie face-down. The three computer monitors are all dead.

Jutting out beyond the back of the armchair, only RICH's left elbow can be seen.

RAÚL hears a deep sigh, followed by the sound of a SAFETY-CATCH BEING CLICKED OFF. Alarmed, yet calm, RAÚL flicks on the light.

EXT. - A MARSH - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - DAY - 1887

... AMADEO has an idea. Hastily he tethers his horse to a tree. He strips naked, and holding his clothes above his head, starts wading across the marsh.

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

The armchair abruptly swings round, to reveal RICH - wide-eyed, blinking - with his pistol pointed at RAÚL.

RAÚL raises an eyebrow ... like an adult surprised at the unaccustomed naughtiness of a well-behaved child.

EXT. - FARMHOUSE ACROSS FROM THE MARSH - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - DAY - 1887

To his chagrin, the RIVAL MERCHANT pulls up just as a beaming AMADEO comes out of the front door beside the FARMER, and concludes the deal with a handshake.

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Gulping with embarrassment, RICH hastily sets down the pistol. RAÚL clicks the safety-catch back on, and sighs.

RAÚL

Mr. Rich, with respect - I think
you have some ... explaining to do?

INT. - PEWS - SUNDAY MASS - CATHOLIC CHURCH - NORTH BEACH - DAY - 1892

AMADEO (22) is the center of much whispering attention. He sports a neatly trimmed handlebar mustache and a Prince

Albert coat. Resting beside him on the pew are his top hat and gloves. His elegant walking stick is propped up against the back of the pew in front of him.

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW

Such a fine young man! And his principles are a credit to him too! Yet, I hear that for L. Scatena & Co. he generates \$100,000 a year!

WOULD-BE WIFE

(yearningly)

No wonder, mother dear, that he's already made partner!

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW

Well, a fine partner he'll make for YOU, my dear! And that is a truth universally acknowledged! So then - patience ... patience ... patience!

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

Patiently sipping coffee, RAÚL waits in one of the two chairs in front of Rich's desk, upon which is a coffee cup, covered with a saucer.

RAÚL swivels his chair round, to see RICH padding in, toweling his hair dry. Barefoot, in trousers and shirtsleeves, RICH has evidently just taken a cold shower. He tosses the towel over the hat-stand, and hunkers down in the free chair before his desk. He remains awkwardly silent.

RAÚL

When you're ... ready, Mr. Rich.

RICH

OK. OK... I'm still trying to ... get my ... head round what just ... what ... almost ... happened...

RAÚL

By all means, take a moment.

RICH

I'm ... all right... Where to begin? OK. Long story short, my wife's family, you see, are Austrian Nobility. Well, Lower Nobility - but don't tell my wife! Anyway, they used to own this 18th-century ... 'palais', they call it. Smaller than a palace. Bigger than a villa.

RAÚL

In Vienna?

RICH

Correct. Anyway, the Austrian Empire collapses. New Socialist government. The Nobility lose their titles, but - in theory - keep their money. In practice, though, with ruinous property taxes, they really struggle to keep their -

RAÚL

Palais in Vienna?

RICH

(sighing and sipping)

Correct! However, lately an opportunity arose to buy it back. Present owner's a history buff and not desperate for money. Offered us a bargain price: \$12 million ...

RAÚL

A bargain if ever I heard one.

RICH

... as long as we paid cash and within 6 months. So, to please my wife, I worked and traded my ass off, scraping together \$10 million.

RAÚL

That's a lot of scraping.

RICH

Anyway, I was wondering how to get the other \$2 million. By strange coincidence, some associates of my wife's then approached me to invest \$10 million for them. Preferably in some sort of community project.

RAÚL

Ah, a community investment project!

RICH

Naturally I said no... Until they offered me a clear 20% commission!

RAÚL

But the deal ... went bad?

RICH

Let's just say I foolishly put too much faith in the power of central bankers to control the markets! You see, my aim was to at least double the money. So as to earn that last two million we need for the palais.

RAÚL
Which presumably you didn't.

RICH
(almost a whisper)
I ... lost everything: \$10 million!

RAÚL
Ouch. That probably won't win you
any popularity contests.

RICH
(self-justifyingly)
Well as ... someone ... said: "A
banker is never popular! People are
always suspicious of bankers!"

RAÚL sighs softly to himself. RICH hunches over in the
chair, and covers his face.

INT. - PEWS - SUNDAY MASS - CATHOLIC CHURCH - NORTH BEACH -
DAY - 1892

WOULD-BE-WIFE covers her face. Because AMADEO only has eyes
for an attractive, petite, graceful, and demure soprano in
the church choir: CLORINDA CUNEO (23). CLORINDA rises for
her solo: the Bach-Gounod 'Ave Maria'.

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW
(to would-Be-Wife;
gleeful)
There-there, dear! Amadeo can
forget about Clorinda! You see,
Clorinda is already engaged!

AMADEO is undaunted: at last, a new challenge! But
WOULD-BE-WIFE - deluded - uncovers her face.

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL
DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RICH is still hunched over in the same position. RAÚL, who
now stands gazing out of RICH's window, swivels round.

RAÚL
You know, Mr. Rich, you modern
bankers could take a leaf out of
the book of Amadeo Giannini.

RICH
(peeking through fingers)
That name... It's ... vaguely ...

RAÚL
I rest my case.

RICH uncovers his face, and straightens up.

RICH

I seem to have ... SEEN that name,
somewhere here in San Francisco.
Some sort of ... populist?!

Sighing, RAÚL sits down in RICH's chair.

RAÚL

You know, my late grandmother
worked for Giannini. She revered
him. Spoke of him constantly.
Steadily accumulated his stock...
(sighing deeply)
¡Oh, mi querida abuelita! ...
(self-consciously)
Anyway, would you like me to ...
tell you a little about Giannini?

RICH

If you must... By the way, aren't
you ... hot ... in that turban?

RAÚL

A Sikh never removes his turban in
public... Anyway, A.P. Giannini -

RICH

Giannini! A.P. Giannini! Now I
remember...! You see, in her 20s,
my wife Clara won an A.P. Giannini
medical fellowship! She conducted
important post-doctoral research,
you know, into hemophilia!

RAÚL

Felicitations. However, around the
corner, at 555 California St., we
also have ... A.P. Giannini Plaza?
And - subsequently part-owned by
the Trump Organization - the former
world HQ of ... Bank of America?

Stunned, RICH palms himself on the forehead.

RICH

What an idiot! Of course! Of
course! How could I forget...?!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - DINING-ROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
CALIFORNIA - LUNCHTIME - 1905

RICH (V.O.)

... Amadeo Giannini: a banker for
the people, all the people...!
Amadeo Giannini: the triumph of
integrity over corruption...!

(MORE)

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

Amadeo Giannini: unsung architect
of California...! Amadeo Giannini -
his selfless and noble legacy ...
selfishly and ignobly betrayed...!

AMADEO P. GIANNINI (35 years and 7 months) is a tall,
powerfully built man of juggernaut force, drive and
determination. Yet he is calm, courteous, grounded, and wise
- even if at times overly suspicious. He is also a man you
cross or betray at your peril.

GIANNINI is at lunch with his devoted but exasperated wife
CLORINDA (a year older than her husband, although she would
never admit it); his beloved stepfather LORENZO SCATENA
(55); and his surviving children: CLAIRE (1 year, in a high
chair); VIRGIL (6 years); LLOYD (7 years and 9 months); and
MARIO (11 years). MARIO is surreptitiously reading the
Finance section of The San Francisco Call, dated Sunday,
December 3, 1905.

Also present are two trusted bank employees: ARMANDO PEDRINI
(35) and ETTORE AVENALI (24).

As the MAID brings in the soup, little CLAIRE bangs her
spoon against the table top, like a judge calling for order.

CLORINDA, meanwhile, is frowning at GIANNINI: as usual, even
at table, he is talking business.

GIANNINI

So then, Pop, boys, if I remember
correctly -

PEDRINI

If you remember correctly, boss!
Figuriàmoci!

GIANNINI

(chuckling)

Anyway, in just one year, our
deposits have risen from an initial
\$8,780 to just over \$700,000 ...
for total assets of - roughly -
\$1,021,290 and 80c!

PEDRINI, AVENALI and SCATENA chuckle together. GIANNINI
exchanges a significant glance with SCATENA, then fixes
PEDRINI and AVENALI with a stern gaze of admonition.

GIANNINI

However, boys, we must always give
credit to the Little Fellows who
made us! We must continue to serve
sincerely, with progressive but
unselfish policies! With lofty but
practical banking ideals! Because
that ... is true banking progress!

SCATENA smiles with fatherly approval. PEDRINI and AVENALI respectfully nod yes. MARIO is paying close attention, even while still hiding the Finance Section under the table.

As for CLORINDA, she couldn't agree more. Nevertheless

GIANNINI

Anyway, if we now extrapolate -

CLORINDA

Amadeo, really! There's a time and a place for ...! And Mario ...!

Sheepishly, MARIO hands the newspaper to the MAID. GIANNINI winks at him, then checks the time on his gold pocket watch, on its gold chain. At the sight of the watch, SCATENA's eyes moisten. So - after an exchanged glance - do GIANNINI's.

Noticing this, MARIO looks inquiringly at his father, who is just about to explain...

INSIDE THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

... Somewhere deep beneath the sea off San Francisco and deep beneath the Earth, the Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries grind and shudder together in a mini-orgasm...

INT. - DINING ROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

... Cutlery is set a-quiver on plates and saucers. Breathless, everyone is staring. The quivering stops. They sigh with relief, and nervously laugh it off.

Stroking his mustache, GIANNINI gazes out of the window.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S (EMPTY) OFFICE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - SIMULTANEOUS

Beneath a photograph of Fire Chief Dennis T. Sullivan (53), a display case holds a full-size ceremonial trumpet of solid silver. It is adorned with silver dolphins and coral pieces, and bears an engraved inscription to the Chief from a Mrs. Rainey. An accompanying embossed card pays stirring tribute to his leadership, courage, humanity, and foresight.

As if being sounded inaudibly by some unseen presence, Fire Chief Sullivan's silver trumpet begins vibrating.

EXT. - JEWELRY STORE - SUTTER STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - SIMULTANEOUS

The street is rocked by a strong yet fleeting earthquake. While nearby buildings show no damage, the display windows of the jewelry store begin to crack, fall, and shatter.

Through gaping holes, jewelry - like ripe fruit - is there for the plucking. But the streets are completely deserted.

INT. - ST DOMINIC'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - CORNER OF STEINER AND BUSH STREETS - SAN FRANCISCO - SIMULTANEOUS

THE REVEREND DRISCOLL is just ending a fiery sermon to his electrified congregation.

THE REVEREND DRISCOLL
 How long, how LONG must we hold our
 noses against the stench of vice,
 the odor of corruption?! But the
 Trumpet, the Trumpet shall sound!
 And Christ shall come again, with
 signs great, and fearful, and -!

A sudden ominous rumbling. Timbers creak and groan. Then the church is rocked by a strong yet fleeting earthquake.

WOMEN swoon. MEN fall to their knees. CHILDREN run out screaming. Rapturously, DRISCOLL lifts his arms to Heaven.

INT. - BASEMENT - CITY HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - (AFTERNOON)

Leaning against a wall, a man holds before his face a copy of The San Francisco Call, dated Tuesday, April 17, 1906.

On the front page, beneath a photograph of aggressively bald and bearded orchestral conductor Alfred Hertz, a brief article announces tonight's appearance by Caruso and Fremstad in Bizet's "Carmen".

The person reading the paper is revealed to be the JANITOR (PROFUMO, 50s). His long nose is clamped shut with a peg. About him are various brooms, mops, and buckets.

Idly munching on a sandwich, PROFUMO scans the sports pages and whistles with disgust. He turns forward and his attention is held by a headline on page 5: "RUEF TO FIGHT FOR HIS PLACE". He reads out aloud, in an Italian accent.

PROFUMO
 "There will be an attempt made
 Wednesday to dispense with the
 office of grand trustee, now held
 by A. Ruef. [He pronounces it
 'Ru-ef'.] Ru-ef is here to
 safeguard his own interests!"

PROFUMO looks up and freezes: someone is coming.

THE SAME - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

City Boss ABE RUEF (42, a lawyer) steps down smartly into the basement. He is followed closely by MAYOR EUGENE SCHMITZ (42, a musician). Recoiling at once, both men hold their noses - SCHMITZ somewhat more energetically than RUEF.

RUEF has an air of noblesse-oblige courtliness. He is highly educated, intelligent and charming. But he hypnotizes you with a vaguely sinister and predatory gaze.

SCHMITZ is tall and good-looking. But his posture is somewhat hunched, as of a man disappointed in himself.

PROFUMO

Mr. Ru-ef sir! Mayor Schmitz sir!

PROFUMO has straightened up. He stuffs the sandwich into a pocket, and - as if doffing a hat to his superiors - politely removes the peg. Wincing, he at once reapplies it. Then he vainly tries to hide the newspaper behind him with one hand, while wiping his mouth with the back of the other.

SCHMITZ is still holding his nose, and his mouth is twisted to one side. With forlorn revulsion, he stares at the endless ooze of leaked sewage licking about their soles.

But RUEF seems nonchalantly determined to raise himself above this squalor. Smirking, he removes a long and almost invisible fiber from SCHMITZ's jacket, at the shoulder. As if awakened from his torpor by this action, SCHMITZ at once assumes a take-charge manner.

SCHMITZ

Come on, Profumo! [He pronounces it "Pro-fume-o".] Don't just stand there, man! Clean up your act!

PROFUMO

Sissignore! Yessir, Mr. Mayor sir!

PROFUMO plonks down his crumpled newspaper on a stool. Then, grimacing, he applies himself manfully to the hopeless task.

RUEF has soon had enough. Unlike SCHMITZ, he no longer holds his nose. With stylish nonchalance, he consults his gold watch. Then he notices the crumpled newspaper, still open at page 5, with his name in the headline. He smiles affably.

RUEF

Oh, Profumo [he pronounces it "Pro-foo-mo"] - don't believe what you read in the papers. Ask anyone. They'll tell you: Ruef stands for the common man! Ruef stands against those money-grubbing bankers!

PROFUMO

(politely indignant)

But-a scoos-a me, Mr. Ru-ef, sir!
What bout-a Signor Giannini, sir?!
You must-a admit-a, Mr. Ru-ef, sir:
Signor Giannini - 'e is a true
banker for-a thee people!

RUEF

(darkening)

Bankers and banking, Profumo, are
never ... "for-a thee people"!

(MORE)

RUEF (cont'd)
 (to Schmitz; brightly)
 Life goes on, Eugene! See you
 tonight! At the opera!

RUEF leaves smartly, whistling 'Toreador' from "Carmen".
 Step by climbing step, reverberating down along the
 stairwell, the jaunty tune dies away into silence.

SCHMITZ
 (palming himself)
 How could I forget?! Caruso!

Above the rising filth, and still wearing his nose-peg,
 PROFUMO closes his eyes in bliss. Inwardly he replays
 Caruso's best-selling record of 'Vesti la giubba'.

INT. - LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - THAT EVENING

The tall, powerful, beautifully groomed and brooding figure
 of AMADEO GIANNINI (36) is like the eye of an electric storm
 of anticipation.

Swirling all around him, San Francisco high society has
 turned out in full force to be a part of history with
 Caruso, Fremstad and the Metropolitan Opera Company.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The lobby is a genteel battleground, where gowns of lavender
 satin, embroidered lace, brocaded silk, pink chiffon, and
 messaline are pitted against pearl necklaces, emerald
 dog-collars, diamond tiaras, and ermine-trimmed opera coats.

Note

*Many of the faces in the opera lobby will be seen again
 in subsequent scenes - but in far less glamorous
 circumstances.*

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

While FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN (54) keeps a beady eye on POLICE
 CHIEF DINAN (40s), DINAN, in turn, keeps a beady eye on his
 DETECTIVES. In uniform and in plain clothes, they mingle
 among the SOCIALITES, who are festooned from head to toe
 with jewelry ripe for the plucking.

At a nod from CHIEF DINAN, THE USUAL SUSPECTS are discreetly
 escorted away from temptation.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA
 Amadeo, you haven't looked so
 dapper since when you came
 a-courting!

GIANNINI

(with a twinkle)

Well, amore, I have to look presentable for the great Caruso, no? Apropos, I hope he'll agree to sing a benefit for our bank's Vesuvius Relief Committee.

CLORINDA

(scolding affectionately)

Hmm. Oh and Amadeo - I really hope I can have just one evening without having to share you with your bank?

GIANNINI

(taking her hand)

Scusa, amore mio! I'll do my level best not to think about business!

Affectionately skeptical, CLORINDA smiles back at him.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

NAIVE SOCIALITE

(peering around vaguely)

Oh there's Lucretia! And there's Lavinia! But it's simply ages now that I haven't seen You-Know-Who! Isn't it strange how quickly she's managed to put on all that weight?!

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

(maliciously amused)

Oh didn't you know? She went abroad, dear ... for one of those ... 'appendectomies'...! If you ... see ... what I mean!

NAIVE SOCIALITE blinks in puzzlement at first. Then as comprehension dawns, her eyes widen, her mouth gapes, and her fan goes into overdrive.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Despite his good intentions, GIANNINI is holding forth to some BUSINESSMEN. CLORINDA sighs philosophically.

All the same, there are clues in the body language of GIANNINI and CLORINDA as a couple that - despite superficial and provisional impatiences and irritations - their relationship remains one of profound togetherness.

In the bg., City Boss ABE RUEF holds court among his 'ENTOURAGE': MAYOR SCHMITZ, standing slightly apart; and several members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors: GALLAGHER (Chairman, a lawyer), REA (a decorator), NICHOLAS (a carpenter), PURRI (a blacksmith), LONERGAN (a baker),

COFFEY (a hackdriver), McCUSSHIN (a saloon-keeper), and SANDERSON (a greengrocer).

GIANNINI

Look, the 'Boodle Board' is in session! What a long, long way Abe Ruef has fallen since his student days! Down, down, down from the starry-eyed heights of his Municipal Reform League!

As if having overheard this, RUEF & CO. interrupt their conversation to peer at GIANNINI from across the room. Contemptuously, he turns his back upon them.

Looking on, FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN smiles with glee.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Discreetly estranged couple ELEANOR and JIM (a doctor) are in the company of LOTTA, a notable chatterbox. LOTTA is pleasantly plump and primly dressed. She has Italian features, but with blond hair tied in a bun, and freckles. Uncharacteristically silent and self-conscious, LOTTA can read the estrangement of the couple in their body language.

In the bg., ATTILIO "DOC" GIANNINI (32) exchanges strained greetings with his elder brother AMADEO, much the taller man. Consumed with jealousy and resentment, ATTILIO rides on the balls of his feet, as if to give himself more height. Then he even half-turns away from AMADEO, as if hoping to avoid a direct comparison with him.

Finally, LOTTA breaks the oppressive silence.

LOTTA

Oh look, there's Prof. William James! Isn't he tone deaf, though?! And there's that banker, Amadeo Giannini! His bank is just a stone's throw from my ... Oh, you know the one! You remember, doctor!

DR. JIM

Gee-a-ninny. He's vaguely ...

LOTTA

It's pronounced 'Jahn-nee-nee', doctor! Like 'Jool-yah-nee'. Not 'Gee-oo-lee-ah-nee'! Sorry to be such a school-marm! Oh and that's his brother, Attila. Attilio! Also a doctor, you know! But I hear the two of them aren't very ... You can even see that by their body lang-!

(MORE)

LOTTA (cont'd)
 (changing the topic)
 Anyway, as I was saying ... You remember, Ellie, and I'm sure you do too, doctor: Mr. Giannini put Boss Buckley out of business!

ELEANOR smiles her faraway, bittersweet smile. It is not clear if she does in fact remember. JIM is also far away.

LOTTA
 That was before he founded his bank, though. Back then - under City Boss Christopher "Christ Himself" Buckley - we were officially the most corrupt city in America! But Mr. Giannini wouldn't stand for that, no sir! He stood up to that big bad bully Buckley! And he made us all believe that we could too! Next thing you know -
 (sing-song voice)
 bye-bye Buckley!

ELEANOR stares at GIANNINI with newfound interest and respect. And JIM is starting to remember.

LOTTA's eyes suddenly widen. Discreetly, she indicates to ELEANOR that CLORINDA is pregnant.

LOTTA
 But let's hope that, this time, there are no ... complications!
 (confidentially)
 You see, I hear that ... she too -!

ELEANOR and JIM have gone pale. Stunned at her own indiscretion, LOTTA belatedly covers her big mouth.

LOTTA
 Oh Ellie I'm so ...! I didn't ...!
 I wasn't ...! I can't begin to ...!

ELEANOR
 (fighting back tears)
 That's ... quite all ... right, Carlotta ... dear. Excuse me, I ... need a ... bit of ...

Stifling an urge to reach out for the support of JIM's arm, and rummaging blindly in her bag, ELEANOR brushes past the mortified LOTTA, and disappears into the throng.

JIM looks away awkwardly, sorrowfully, absently.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

RUEF

So then the Joiner says to the Panelbeater: "If you can't beat 'em, it sure pays to join 'em!"

Laughter. Then they all look pensively across at GIANNINI.

SUPERVISOR NICHOLAS

They say Giannini is a ... man of destiny! With - some would say - truly bizarre notions of democracy!

SUPERVISOR REA

Well, let's give him credit: rich or poor, he makes no distinction at all between his customers!

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN

Yes, it seems he started his own bank precisely because he refused to ... adapt his thinking to, well, traditional banking practices!

A troubled shaking of heads.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI is still holding forth to the BUSINESSMEN. CLORINDA sighs again.

GIANNINI

A true banker gives credit where credit is due! I myself received excellent training, you know, in my father Scatena's grocery commission business. You see, in order to provide crop financing to farmers -

CLORINDA has noisily cleared her throat. Chastened, GIANNINI observes her discreetly. But CLORINDA'S little victory is shortlived: GIANNINI has caught sight of PEDRINI and AVENALI, who wave to him from across the lobby.

CLORINDA'S shoulders sag and her head falls to her chest.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

RUEF & CO. are discreetly observing GIANNINI & CO. In the bg., AVENALI and PEDRINI have joined the GIANNINIS. CLORINDA suffers PEDRINI to kiss her hand.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

That's Gee-a-ninny's cashier. Pedretti... No... Pedroni!

SUPERVISOR PURRI

Pedrini.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

Pedretti, Pedrini. Gee-a-nonny,
Gee-a-ninny. What's the difference?
Just one more foreign-colony bank!

General sniggering - except for Italian-American Supervisors
PURRI and REA. But the sniggering pensively peters out:
after all, go back far enough, and who is NOT an immigrant?

SUPERVISOR REA

(to Gallagher)

Oh by the way, Jim, it's pronounced
'Jahn-nee-nee'.

Sourly, GALLAGHER looks away.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Several SOCIALITES - including the 7th BARONESS VON
ORSENBERG (54) - have made a point of greeting their
favorite JEWELER.

THE BARONESS VON ORSENBERG

So zen my tiara should look like ze
one you made for Mrs. Vandergilt!
But no emeralds, bitte! Green iss
nott my color...! Auf Wiedersehen!

As the BARONESS takes leave of the JEWELER, a GOGGLE-EYED
ACQUAINTANCE of his looks on, then joins him.

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE

The Baroness von Orsenberg?!

JEWELER

In persona! They're thinking of
moving here, you know! Permanently!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE

And their palais?! In Vienna?!

JEWELER

They'll always have that. The jewel
- exempli gratia - in their crown!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE

Which reminds me! Did the Police
ever catch the would-be burglars of
your jewelry store the other day?!

JEWELER

Oho, listen to this! Remember how
cracked my store windows were?
Well, Police investigation reveals

(MORE)

JEWELER (cont'd)
 that my building is out of plumb!
 Id est - not burglars, but ...
 subsidence!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE
 Subsidence! Well now...! Makes
 sense, though. I mean, in parts of
 San Francisco you could drill down
 200 feet before striking bedrock!

JEWELER
 Hmmm! Certainly gives you that old
 sinking feeling...! Absit omen!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF
 No, no. Visionary types like
 Giannini make me distinctly ...
 uneasy! What is more, the man is
 also an unrepentant populist!

Gasps and groans of horror.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 (pensively)
 Yes, Giannini is a renegade. A
 maverick... The eternal outsider. A
 born trouble-maker... In fact, the
 ultimate ... disrupter!

RUEF
 Hmm. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem
 possible to intimidate Giannini. I
 mean, just look at the size of him!

SUPERVISOR REA
 Well, City Boss Buckley sure tried!
 And we all know how that ended!

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 (ruefully)
 Hmmm. Never scared of a good fight,
 is Giannini! And always settles the
 score with his enemies! Ask Fugazi!

SCHMITZ
 (as if suddenly awakened)
 Ask who?!

RUEF
 (ignoring Schmitz)
 Fugazi Fuschmatzi! No. No.
 (unconvinced)
 Giannini is no ... threat to us!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

NAIVE SOCIALITE

Oh look! Prof. William James! I'm always unsure though: is it his brother Henry who writes fiction, while William writes philosophical psychology, or psychological philosophy? Or is it vice versa?

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

(out of her depth)

Oh I wouldn't know about all that... However, you didn't hear it from me. But according to a person familiar with the matter - who asked not to be named, because the information is private ... Henry, dear, is a 'confirmed bachelor'!

NAIVE SOCIALITE blinks in puzzlement at first. Then as comprehension dawns, her eyes widen, her mouth gapes, and her fan goes into overdrive.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SUPERVISOR SANDERSON

Now, you didn't hear this from me, but at his bank, Giannini doesn't even ... pay himself a salary!

Groans of incredulity.

SUPERVISOR REA

Well, apparently he feels he simply doesn't need any more money.

SUPERVISOR LONERGAN

Doesn't ... NEED any more money...?! Now that is criminal!

RUEF

(mockingly)

Moreover, Giannini has this radical concept of the 'Character Loan'! As if a man's thrift, ambition, and work ethic can count as collateral!

They are thinking about it. Except for GALLAGHER.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

And he calls himself a banker! And he calls himself a businessman! What right-thinking banker ever gives credit to his own community?!

A pensive exchange of glances.

SUPERVISOR PURRI

Mind you, even though Giannini will take risks on the Little Fellows, he is also strangely cautious. You see, I hear that each night, in the vaults of the Crocker-Woolworth Bank, he stores up to \$80,000 in cash and gold!

SUPERVISOR LONERGAN (THE BAKER)

(rapaciously)

\$80,000?! Now that's a lotta dough!

(covering tracks)

Not that ... I ... need ... it!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI

(to Pedrini & Avenali)

You boys had better go and collect our overnight cash from the Crocker-Woolworth a bit earlier tomorrow morning. Let's not be too predictable to the bad guys!

PEDRINI and AVENALI nod yes.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A CLIQUE OF SOCIALITES look on as JOHN BARRYMORE (24) is wafted in late on elegant fumes of alcohol.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Look, there's 'The Great Profile'!

NAIVE SOCIALITE

Doesn't Barrymore look so ... so ... spiritual!

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Yes, I believe he lives on spirits.

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE

You took the words right out of my mouth, dear.

THE BARONESS VON ORSENBERG

I went to see Parrymore in "Ze Tictador". Eizer ze stage vass shaking, or Parrymore vass trunk!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Well you didn't hear it from me, Baroness - but Barrymore has been a drunk since the age of fourteen!

While the SOCIALITES exchange suitably scandalized glances, in the bg., more BUSINESSMEN approach GIANNINI. They nod respectfully to CLORINDA, shake hands with GIANNINI and begin an earnest, hushed discussion with him.

CLORINDA rolls her eyes. GIANNINI, it seems, doesn't notice.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Anyway, isn't it just disgraceful, these Vesuvius-erupting shenanigans over there in Naples, Italy?!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Of course we in America, dear, would simply just not permit such things to happen here!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE

You took the words right out of my mouth, dear.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

SUPERVISOR REA

I hear that - unlike other bankers we know of - Giannini is a solid family man, with family values!

RUEF

What? No mistress?! No yacht?!

Laughter.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

(confidentially)

A little bird told me Giannini's boys have the ... 'Royal Disease'!

RUEF

And here I thought Giannini was a man ... "for-a thee people"!

General sniggering - except from SUPERVISORS REA and PURRI.

SUPERVISOR REA

Excuse me, gentlemen - but having kids with hemophilia is no joke!

The sniggering is snuffed out.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER (A LAWYER)

Still, is it really true that Giannini accepts as customers a riff-raff of ... decorators, carpenters, blacksmiths, bakers, hackdrivers and saloon-keepers?!

(to fellow-Supervisors)

No offense.

For there have been sour smiles in turn from SUPERVISORS REA (a decorator), NICHOLAS (a carpenter), PURRI (a blacksmith), LONERGAN (a baker), COFFEY (a hackdriver), and McCUSSHIN (a saloon-keeper).

RUEF (A LAWYER)

Obviously, Giannini runs his own bank. And yet he has installed, as President, his own stepfather: Scatena, a glorified greengrocer!
(to Sanderson)
No offense.

Sourly, SUPERVISOR SANDERSON smiles back.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

But Giannini's Board of Directors also includes - wait for it - a confectioner, and an undertaker!

Sniggers all round: luckily, there are no confectioners or undertakers among them.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

BUSINESSMAN #1

(shaking hands)

So summing up, A.P., that company has just the right sort of profile!

GIANNINI

Well, we can't allow technicalities to stop us meeting human needs!

The BUSINESSMEN leave at last. CLORINDA sighs with relief.

In the bg., a HIGH SOCIETY CROWD - including ATTILIO "DOC" GIANNINI - is gathering round BARRYMORE.

CLORINDA

Speaking of profiles, look who's making a beeline for Barrymore!

Now it is GIANNINI who rolls his eyes.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

BARRYMORE

Sorry I'm late, darlings! What's up, "Doc"?

Laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

BARRYMORE

Anyway, darlings, I've just come. At ... I mean from ... "À La
(MORE)

BARRYMORE (cont'd)
 Bordelaise" French restaurant ...
 where I had the creamiest, most
 tender ... loin!

Hoots of scandalized laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

BARRYMORE
 Um "Doc", would you mind coming
 round to my left? You see, my
 right profile looks like a fried
 egg! I always keep the best apples
 on top of the barrel, you know!

More laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA
 Oh look, Amadeo, there's Blanche
 Partington, that critic! So sharp
 and waggish! In her review of Mr.
 Dippel's performance she writes:
 "It's a pity someone can't buy him
 a voice. He would sing so well!"

GIANNINI suddenly has a faraway look.

CLORINDA
 Hmm. It was that 'buy', wasn't it?

GIANNINI shrugs and smiles.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

An OVERDRESSED SOCIALITE flounces by, entirely unaware that
 her jewel-encrusted tiara is slowly losing its moorings.

Looking on are Arts Critic BLANCHE PARTINGTON (40) and an
 educationally disadvantaged but aesthetically sensitive
 ACQUAINTANCE (JANE DOE, 20s).

JANE
 When she sees herself in a mirror,
 she'll go red as a high-pressure
 Ashbury fire hydron!

BLANCHE the critic politely refrains from any
 grammatical criticism.

Across the room, meanwhile, orchestral conductor ALFRED
 HERTZ is trying to attract her attention.

JANE
 Oh there's Maestro Hertz, Blanche!
 Wasn't he just triffic last night
 (MORE)

JANE (cont'd)
 in "The Queen of Sheba"?! Lookit
 him beaming at you like a bearded
 billiard ball!

BLANCHE
 (amused; greeting Hertz)
 Hmm. Perhaps he read my review.

JANE
 Oh he sure did, Blanche! 'Cos you
 sure can write!

Modestly, BLANCHE takes a bow. JANE looks around, entranced.

JANE
 What a triffic atmosphere! I can't
 wait to hear the great Caruso!

BLANCHE
 Ditto! But is Fremstad really right
 for the part? After all, the last
 thing we need is a reformed Carmen!

JANE
 "A reformed Carmen"! Triffic,
 Blanche, triffic! Now you be sure
 and put that in your review!

BLANCHE
 Hmm... Perhaps I will!

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

A sophisticated, statuesque, voluptuous REDHEAD (30s) glides
 by. She is gorgeously gowned in green, dazzlingly bejeweled,
 and perilously seductive, with long, curved 'witch' nails
 painted purple. Her scattered CLIENTS acknowledge her - but
 oh-so-discreetly - by the name of COCO.

Glancing wickedly at JANE, BLANCHE hums a few measures of
 the 'Habanera' from "Carmen".

JANE
 (aside)
 Well, if anyone's in danger of
 reformation, it sure ain't Coco
 Gutterich!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

COCO nods in greeting at ABE RUEF, but takes care to avoid
 the searching glances of POLICE CHIEF DINAN.

Catching sight of a dignified PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY
 (ALBERT, 60s), she coyly fans herself in his direction.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

ALBERT smiles back awkwardly at COCO, then turns to his party, which includes his OBLIVIOUS WIFE (VICTORIA, 50s). But he can't resist snatching lecherous glances at COCO. She discreetly fan-taps her watch at him, and glides away.

ALBERT

Oh, Victoria dear, 'fraid I'll need an - ahem! - all-nighter again! Clients must - ahem! - come first!

VICTORIA

Really, Albert, at your age...! Anyway, you won't believe how I'm dying for some steaming hot cocoa!

ALBERT

(growlingly)

Oh me too, Victoria dear! Me too!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF

No. No. Giannini is just a small-time hustler! I mean, for a banker to go round soliciting for new clients! So undignified! So -!

They are interrupted by a well-dressed and CHARMINGLY FURTIVE FAT MAN. Winking, he slips RUEF a proportionately fat envelope, and disappears. RUEF pockets the envelope with a practiced hand. SUPERVISOR REA raises any eyebrow.

In the bg., GIANNINI, shaking his head, has seen everything, as has FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN, beside his WIFE (MAGGIE).

Note

During ACT I, MAGGIE SULLIVAN's face is always obscured.

RUEF

(to Gallagher)

We'll uh settle up later, Jimmy!

GALLAGHER smiles knowingly. LONERGAN and COFFEY rub their hands together. But SCHMITZ is blushing, and REA is outraged.

SUPERVISOR REA

(inhaling; formal)

Pardon me, Abraham, Mayor Schmitz, Chairman Gallagher, gentlemen! But I feel I must protest! I ... am an honorable man! A man with a fami-!

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

(to Rea)

Lou, Lou, please! This isn't the
Municipal Reform League, you know!

RUEF

(darkening)

Gentlemen, if you don't mind! Now
is neither the time nor the place!

They glance around self-consciously. An awkward silence.

INT. - AN ALCOVE - THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

POLICE CHIEF DINAN won't stop giving searching glances to
COCO. She considers, sighs, shrugs, and steels herself.
Smiling professionally, she glides over to him.

THE SAME - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

From her bodice, COCO discreetly retrieves \$50, and slips it
to DINAN. He raises an eyebrow. She sighs, shrugs, smiles,
and forks over another \$25. He raises the other eyebrow.
Sighing, she adds \$25 more. Satisfied - for now - DINAN
pockets the cash with a practiced hand, and returns to his
... official duties.

Once again, GIANNINI and SULLIVAN have seen everything.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

NAIVE SOCIALITE is stealing half-envious, half-admiring
glances at COCO.

NAIVE SOCIALITE

I've never been able to understand
what that Coco woman does exactly!

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Who? Oh you mean Miss 'Tenderloin'!
Well, you didn't hear it from me,
(glancing at Barrymore)
but I have it from an unrepentant
man of the world that Coco, my
dear, 'works' in a ... 'French
restaurant'...! YOU know, with
dirt-cheap gourmet meals DOWN-
stairs! And exorbitant, private ...
'supper bedrooms' UP-stairs!

NAIVE SOCIALITE looks blank.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

She's a ... magdalene!

NAIVE SOCIALITE looks even more blank.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Oh for goodness sake, dear! Coco
Gutterich is a high-class whore...
(self-consciously)
-ticulturalist!

NAIVE SOCIALITE blinks in puzzlement at first. Then as
comprehension dawns, her eyes widen, her mouth gapes, and
her fan goes into overdrive.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In the bg., CLORINDA finally has GIANNINI all to herself.

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN

I hear that Giannini likes having
the Little Fellows as stockholders!
But get this: he strictly limits
the quota of stock allowed to
company insiders, himself included!

Astonishment, bafflement, and even indignation.

RUEF

What is wrong with him?! He could
be the richest man in America!

SUPERVISOR PURRI

(pensively)

Then Giannini really does believe
that serving the needs of others is
the only legitimate business!

In the bg., yet more BUSINESSMEN approach GIANNINI. They nod
respectfully to CLORINDA. Shaking hands with GIANNINI, they
begin an earnest, hushed discussion with him.

Exasperated beyond endurance, CLORINDA throws up her hands.
Sighing, GIANNINI gives the BUSINESSMEN a discreet
cut-throat gesture. As they awkwardly make themselves
scarce, GIANNINI smiles innocently at CLORINDA.

RUEF

Giannini's thinking is beyond me!
He behaves like one who hasn't the
slightest intention of enriching
himself at the expense of his bank,
his customers, or his stockholders!

SUPERVISOR COFFEY

But who can get anywhere with such
a shortsighted philosophy?!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Glancing at COCO, the BARONESS VON ORSENBERG maliciously
whispers something in the ear of SNOBBISH SOCIALITE.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Oh is she really?! Well, Baroness!
I'm just absolutely speechless!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE mechanically opens her mouth, considers, glances at them, and shuts her mouth.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF & CO. are joined by POLICE CHIEF DINAN, who is warmly welcomed by SCHMITZ. They all look across at GIANNINI, who holds his nose at them, then contemptuously turns his back.

SULLIVAN nods with glee, then begins striding purposefully toward them. Too late, RUEF turns his own back on Giannini.

GALLAGHER

Uh-oh! Here comes that ...
proctological pain of a Fire Chief!

Groaning, they brace themselves.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN is in no mood for small talk.

SULLIVAN

Gentlemen - if you'll pardon the expression! Gentlemen, this city is due an earthquake, AND a fire! So then where is our auxiliary water supply, hmmm?! I have been calling for it ever since I became Chief here! But you mark my words! One of these fine mornings -!

RUEF

(sighing)
Chief! Chief! Why all this fuss?!

SULLIVAN

Abe, in this city, whole districts are built on filled-in marshland! In fact, surviving Forty-Niners say that in their day the Bay waters came right up to Montgomery Street!

RUEF

Oh Montgomery-Montshtomery!

SULLIVAN

(painfully polite)
Abe, you forget that it's in this treacherous filled-in marshland that our precious water pipes -!

RUEF

Oh pipe down, will you, Chief!

General sniggering. SULLIVAN turns to SCHMITZ.

SULLIVAN

Eugene, even your cesspool of a City Hall rises on landfill! And with all those building-material monies having been ... 'diverted to other uses' - why, your City Hall walls, so solid on the outside, are nothing but newspaper and garbage!

RUEF

(through gritted teeth)
Sullivan, when will you learn to stop ... blowing your own trumpet?!

Guffaws from CHIEF DINAN and the SUPERVISORS (except REA).

SCHMITZ

(blushing)
Chief, we all appreciate your ... enthusiasm. But be reasonable! The city is surrounded on three sides by Bay water! So what can we possibly need more water for?!

Sniggers and nods of agreement. DINAN pats SCHMITZ on the back. Nearby, in the bg., GIANNINI sadly shakes his head.

SULLIVAN

Mayor Schmitz, it has always amazed me that - faster than a Detective Sergeant can be made Police Chief! - a fine fiddler like you has ended up playing second fiddle to a bunch of fiddlers like these!

SULLIVAN turns his back upon them and leaves. DINAN is furious. GALLAGHER & CO. are scowling. RUEF smiles would-be-nonchalantly. SCHMITZ and REA sheepishly look away.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Well, isn't it exciting, Baroness?! It certainly took effort! But at last San Francisco also has Caruso!

THE BARONESS VON ORSENBERG

It vass a chob vell done, my tear!
But now zat San Francisco finally hass Caruso, San Francisco hass to make sure zat Caruso stayss!

INT. - STAGE - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Don José (CARUSO, 33) has just heard the bugle. Nervously he informs an imperious but Nordically non-seductive Carmen

(FREMSTAD, 35) that duty is calling him away from her.

Disgusted, dismissing him as a coward, she gives him his marching orders. For good measure, she contemptuously throws his hat, sword, and bandolier after him.

Hearty laughter from the AUDIENCE, including GIANNINI and CLORINDA - seated in the middle of the auditorium.

CLORINDA discreetly strokes her baby-bump. Smiling at her with tender solicitude, GIANNINI gently takes her hand.

INT. - RECREATION ROOM - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY
- A WHILE LATER

MEDICAL STAFF notice that some of the PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS are restless and uneasy. Peering at the floor, they explain that the demons of the underworld are up to no good.

With ONE EXCEPTION, the MEDICAL STAFF exchange patronizing glances.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE RECREATION ROOM - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

To one side, hands clasped behind his back, a PATIENT with a professorial air examines the walls, and shakes his head.

PROFESSORIAL PATIENT

No-no-no-no-no! This particular
House of the Unhinged, this Asylum
of Loose Screws, is not so well put
together! Not so well put together
at all! I should know - I'm a
mason...! And when once the Big Bad
Wolf starts to huff and puff and -!

HEAD NURSE

Mr. Brickman! That will do...!
Bedtime! Bedtime for everyone!

NURSES and ATTENDANTS shepherd the muttering PATIENTS out.

INT. - PARLOR - ENRICO CARUSO'S SUITE - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - ALMOST 3 A.M.

Taking pride of place on a mantel in the bg. is a signed photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt.

Wearing an elegant dressing gown, CARUSO kneels on the Persian-carpeted floor. An antique coffee-table before him holds a large, open scrapbook. In it he has been placing reviews of the previous evening's performance of "Carmen".

Beside the scrapbook, in a pile, are neatly mutilated copies of the early newspapers, dated Wednesday, April 18, 1906. CARUSO has almost finished clipping out the last review - Blanche Partington's - from The San Francisco Call.

MARTINO - his valet - knocks, and enters with warm milk.

MARTINO

Good reviews, Maestro?

CARUSO smiles modestly. Unsatisfied, MARTINO makes conversation, while trying to get a glimpse of the reviews.

MARTINO

Fancy hotel, eh, Maestro! And so safe too, they tell me here! You see, Mr. Ralston, the founder, gave this hotel its very own water supply! So it's fireproof, for sure! And as for earthquakes -!

CARUSO is glaring at him. MARTINO covers his big mouth, palms himself on the forehead, and makes himself scarce.

CARUSO shakes his head as if waking himself up from a nightmare. Then he finishes clipping out Blanche's review. With quiet self-satisfaction, he reads out a sentence:

CARUSO

"He made one forget ... that it was only ... an opera"!

Giving the review a big, smacking kiss, CARUSO places it lovingly in the scrapbook.

He glances at his gold pocket-watch and his eyes widen: 3 a.m. He yawns, as if prompted by the watch. He closes the scrapbook, and yawns again - this time, unprompted.

He gets up, rubs his legs, stretches, and moves toward his bedroom. Suddenly pensive, he pauses at the door.

CARUSO

ONLY ... an opera?!

He shrugs, yawns, and goes in.

INT. - ENGINE HOUSE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The HORSES are strangely skittish.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A WHITE CAT snatches up its KITTEN from the cat-basket and escapes through the side-door cat-flap out into the street.

EXT. - GROUNDS - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

The night is clear, with a crescent moon. For no obvious reason, restless GUARD DOGS start baying and howling.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI is fast asleep in bed, and CLAIRE, in her crib. Outside, dogs bark and howl. Without waking up, GIANNINI grunts, then turns over onto the other side.

CLORINDA's place in the bed is empty, and her bedside lamp is on. After a few moments, she comes in from the bathroom. Checking on CLAIRE, she takes off her elegant satin dressing gown, under which she wears a silk nightdress in pale blue. She drapes the dressing gown over a chair at the foot of the bed, and slips back under the covers.

GIANNINI sleepily wakes up. CLORINDA glances at CLAIRE.

CLORINDA

Go back to sleep, Amadeo... If only these blessed dogs would be quiet!

GIANNINI

Like Mt. Vesuvius, and Mt. Rainier!

CLORINDA

Yes, good news! At last! Curious, though, how all these volcanic systems are somehow interconnected.

GIANNINI

Hmm, perhaps, beneath the surface, everything is connected! Who knows - perhaps even human beings!

CLORINDA

Not so you'd notice...! Oh thank goodness! Those dogs have stopped howling! Finally!
(flicking off the light)
Ah! Peace! And ... quiet!

Eyes closed, they snuggle up blissfully together.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RICH

Wow! And this is just hours before the Great 1906 Earthquake, right?!

RAÚL

Calm down. Let's see what happens.

RICH

You ... sure you won't ... remove that turban? ... Just for a bit?

RAÚL

A Sikh, in public, never removes
his turban.... But let's get back
to Giannini....

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
BEFORE DAYBREAK - APRIL 18, 1906

CLORINDA and CLAIRE are fast asleep. GIANNINI is sitting up
in bed with a cup of coffee.

He sets down the cup on the bedside table and reaches for
his book. It is St. Bonaventure's "Life of St. Francis", in
the 19th-century English translation by Cardinal Manning.
Pencil in hand, GIANNINI makes underlinings and annotations
as he reads.

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE STREET -
SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In a corner is a music stand with a closed music score: J.S.
Bach's "Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin". On a closed
parlor grand piano, a closed violin case gathers dust.

Upon the walls, photographs of SCHMITZ as violinist,
orchestral conductor and President of the Musicians' Union
recall long-gone days of pride and high-minded independence.

But now, sitting anguished at his desk and still in his
dressing gown, SCHMITZ sets down his pen and hunches over in
his wing-backed leather chair. One hand is clamped over his
mouth. The fingers of the other nervously tap out some empty
tune. He shuts his eyes tight. Unseen before him lie his
open briefcase and a pile of underlined newspapers.

INT. - CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET
FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN is snoring contentedly. Then - without waking
- he groans, sighs, and turns over onto the other side.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET
STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In two frying pans, a WIFE (JILL) cheerfully prepares a
breakfast of fried bread, eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, and
pork sausages.

Sitting with his legs up on a bench at the kitchen table,
her equally cheerful HUSBAND (JACK) is looking over Blanche
Partington's review of "Carmen". Neither one of them has
noticed the empty cat-basket.

JACK

Listen to this, Jill dear! "The
audience forgot ... everything but
(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
the electric performance of Caruso,
the wonderful"!

JILL
I told you, Jack dear! We really
should have made the effort to go!

Wistfully, JACK gazes out of the window. At the stove, JILL cheerfully turns the gas up.

The SOUND of someone whistling the first few measures of Bizet's 'Habanera'.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In the streets, meanwhile, the gas lighting is being turned OFF.

Absently whistling, a POLICEMAN strolls into view over the crest of a hill. He stops, catches his breath, yawns, and looks around.

Through the early-morning mist, the rising sun sleepily blinks. Its rays tinge the sails of the fishing boats with a sinister orange luster.

The streets are deserted except for a few early risers, who ruefully pick their way through the horse droppings.

A produce wagon clip-clops past. Blithely, the blinkered horse further complicates the pedestrian obstacle course.

In the bg., cable cars roll drowsily into motion, and a milk delivery wagon clatters downhill.

Sighing with contentment, and setting off again, the POLICEMAN whistles the next few measures of the 'Habanera'.

INT. - COCO'S SUPPER BEDROOM - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Before the dressing-table mirror, in nothing but black high-heels and red lace underwear, COCO bends over provocatively, and forages in a drawer for her lipstick.

In the carved four-poster bed behind her, ALBERT reluctantly wakes up to reality. A sottishly climactic smile is still plastered over his face. He catches sight of COCO's shapely up-ended rump, and his smile is disfigured into a leer.

ALBERT
(growlingly)
Come to papa, my steamy little cup
of coquette! My cup of cocotte!

COCO answers with a titillated, musical, half-comprehending giggle. Then, righting herself - but sticking out her rump - she brandishes the lipstick like a prize morsel.

COCO

Bottoms up!

INT. - ENGINE HOUSE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

For no obvious reason, the HORSES suddenly neigh in fright, and break out of their stalls.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

From deep below the city, in a writhing, loathsome, frantic mass, hordes of RATS ooze up like a running sore, and seep darkly away along the streets toward the waterfront.

Hopelessly outnumbered, a WHITE CAT, looking on, sets down its KITTEN upon the sidewalk, and ruefully licks its lips.

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Miaowing, a BLACK CAT rubs against the jamb of the study door. SCHMITZ opens his eyes and looks round in a daze. Taking a very deep breath, he flips through the underlined newspapers: in article after article, San Francisco Bulletin editor Fremont Older openly implicates him and City Boss Abe Ruef in systemic bribery and corruption.

SCHMITZ hunches over his desk and sighs mournfully. His brows are furrowed. His eyes are moist. His hands are pressed together against his lips in supplication.

EXT. - OVER THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

As if in answer, from deep within the Earth, a sullen, malignant rumbling starts to rise.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA and CLAIRE are still sleeping, and GIANNINI is still reading and annotating his biography of St. Francis.

At once the windows rattle. Quivering upon its saucer, the cup spills the dregs of the coffee over the brim. The chandelier swings lightly to and fro above Giannini's head, and so does the chiming mobile above Claire's.

Over an image of St. Francis, Giannini's pencil is breathlessly suspended.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

JILL

Just another minute now, Jack dear,
and I can turn the gas off.

(giggling)

Oh do read that Fremstad bit again!

They still haven't noticed the empty cat-basket. Or even the pans quivering on the stove.

EXT. - CEMETERY - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY -
MOMENTS LATER

Trees and shrubbery are swaying, as if under a strong wind. But there is no wind.

Like an eerie, random domino chain reaction, tombstones begin toppling over in different directions.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

JACK
(giggling hysterically)
Found it, Jill dear! "Fremstad ...
is temperamentally at war with the
role... We don't want a reformed
... Carm-... Carm-... Carm-...!"

The two frying pans are rattling madly over the gas. JILL stares at them in wonder. JACK - his giggles throttled in his throat - gazes up from the newspaper in alarm.

INT. - COCO'S SUPPER BEDROOM - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The room is violently shaken, along with ALBERT's leer and COCO's lipstick-applying hand.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

A sudden lull. Wild cries echo along the corridors, together with demonic laughter and the sound of the VIOLENT PATIENTS rattling their cell bars.

SECURITY GUARDS and MEDICAL STAFF freeze in utter panic.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

In her sleep, CLORINDA moves restlessly. Chuckling and gurgling, CLAIRE stretches out her little hands in wonder toward the mobile which chimes and dances above her.

Anxiously, GIANNINI is glancing over at CLAIRE and CLORINDA, when another and stronger tremor strikes. He looks down at the book to discover that his pencil has inscribed a sort of seismogram over the image of St. Francis.

Outside, a bedlam of church bells. Groggily, CLORINDA wakes.

CLORINDA
Amadeo ... what's happening?!

INSIDE THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

Somewhere deep beneath the sea off San Francisco and deep beneath the Earth. With the monstrous mating clash and cry of two prehistoric beasts, the Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries grind and shudder together in a cataclysmic orgasm.

EXT. - OVER THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Fences, tunnels, water pipes, dams, roads, bridges, railways, and other structures crossing the fault line are displaced, deformed, raised, and ruptured.

Like matchsticks, trees are snapped in two.

Like a toy, a train is tipped over.

INT. - MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

A silver-framed photograph of an infant topples off a shelf.

Immaculate, and tragically empty, a crib bounces petulantly up and down upon the floor, breaking its casters.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

A convulsion hurls GIANNINI and CLORINDA from their bed. But CLAIRE, though crying, is still securely wrapped in her crib, which, somehow, has managed to remain standing.

GIANNINI crawls toward CLORINDA and CLAIRE. Then, holding CLORINDA in one arm and Claire's crib in the other, he looks anxiously toward the door.

INT. - FIRE ALARM STATION - CHINATOWN - MOMENTS LATER

The city's fire alarm system consists of glass jars holding wet cells. All of this topples down and shatters.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S OFFICE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Out of its elegant display case, Chief Sullivan's ceremonial trumpet of solid silver crashes down to the floor, along with the embossed card which sings his praises in vain.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SULLIVAN is startled awake. His eyes goggle in horror.

INT. - CABLE CAR - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A lone PASSENGER is going slowly uphill. Suddenly perplexed, he looks down: How can it be? From beneath his feet, the

little cable car seems to be making the noise of a monstrous freight-train!

Despite himself, he half-turns to look back.

Recoiling, and clutching feverishly at a handrail, he gapes in rooted horror as the street comes up after him in waves.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NEW YORK

Rocked and lulled by loving waves, CARUSO dreamily looks around. It doesn't surprise him in the least to find himself on an oarless rowing-boat out at sea.

Languorously supine, and clad in nightshirt and nightcap, he waves goodbye to the receding STATUE OF LIBERTY. She winks back like a 1906 Iggy Azalea.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Wharves laden with food tilt seaward and slide into the bay. Nearby, the ground subsides - or rises - by several inches. Like riverbeds in a drought, the streets crack open.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

From deep below the surface come frantic exclamations in Cantonese, and heartbreaking screams.

EXT. - ST DOMINIC'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - CORNER OF STEINER AND BUSH STREETS - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The church is rapidly falling into utter ruin. Looking on, while clinging in desperation to the heaving earth, the REVEREND DRISCOLL - on this occasion - is not enraptured.

INT. - PROF. WILLIAM JAMES'S BEDROOM - THE JAMESSES' COTTAGE - STANFORD UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - MOMENTS LATER

A sinister, soul-invading, soul-possessing rumble fills the air. Cracks furrow the plaster. Objects crash down from shelves and ledges. Chests and bureaus slide around and topple over. Yet upon his bed, PROF. JAMES (64) is kneeling in glee.

PROF. WILLIAM JAMES

At last! A real earthquake!

A convulsion knocks him flat on his face. Laboriously he lifts himself back into a kneeling position. But he is still beside himself with scholarly delight.

Something occurs to him. He looks toward the door.

PROF. WILLIAM JAMES

(to himself)

Alice.

INT. - CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

While the room gyrates all about him, CHIEF SULLIVAN holds on for dear life to the railings of his bed. But at the same time, he too is looking anxiously toward his bedroom door.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - ADJOINING BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Unbeknown to Chief Sullivan, the dome and chimney stacks are shaking ominously above him.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NAPLES

Dreamily holding on to the sides of his bobbing little boat, CARUSO squints ahead.

Out of the rumbling darkness beyond, Mt. Vesuvius rears up, haloed by eerie blue lightning. All-too-briefly illuminated are the sea and the sky and the sullen red-blue lava snaking lazily down toward Naples.

Although bathed in a sinister glow, CARUSO shrugs, and shuts his eyes contentedly.

INT. - BATHROOM - BARRYMORE'S HOTEL SUITE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Holding a half-full whisky glass, BARRYMORE unsteadily pads in, barefoot and naked under his loosely tied dressing-gown. As the world rocks and heaves about him, he wags a finger of indulgent warning at the whisky glass.

Blithely, he staggers toward the shuddering mirror. Before it - his face contorted, his eyes squinting askew - he labors to compare his left and right profiles.

The room convulses.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

Still holding his whisky glass - now half empty - BARRYMORE peers around in a boozy haze. To his mild surprise, he finds himself lying flat on his back in the bath, with his legs and elbows draped over the rim.

Shrugging, he raises his glass to the bathtub.

BARRYMORE
Well hello, stranger!

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE ST - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Startled out of his gloomy reverie, SCHMITZ peers round in a daze.

On the longcase clock, time has frozen still. But like a pendulum, it is the chandelier which now swings to and fro.

The piano strings are vibrating sympathetically, and the piano lid is rattling, together with the violin case on top of it. The music-stand teeters, but does not topple over.

From the mantel, a heavy vase crashes to the floor. Onto the desk, a dusty Bible falls open at the Book of Revelations. Against a wall, a portrait of one of Schmitz's dour-faced ancestors brusquely turns its back on him.

SCHMITZ stares at Revelations, and at the newspapers. He stares at the about-turned portrait.

He stares at his Bach score for solo violin, now jolted open. He swivels round to stare at the rattling piano lid, and at his violin case, now shaken free of dust.

He stares at his briefcase, and at his dressing-gown.

Despite the shaking, SCHMITZ rises steadily - like a man who has found his mission.

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

With enormous difficulty, an anguished but determined CHIEF SULLIVAN edges along the heaving passage.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - ADJOINING BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The dome and chimney stacks are on the verge of toppling.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Amid a stampede of cows, horses, dogs, cats, and chickens, thousands of hysterical, half-naked Chinese - with terror-crazed children and random possessions in their arms - escape from Chinatown toward Portsmouth Square.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NAPLES AND SAN FRANCISCO

Still bobbing dreamily on his little boat, CARUSO is not in the least surprised to find Naples now within sight on his right, together with San Francisco, on his left.

But he raises an eyebrow when - with an Iggy Wink - the ROMAN GODDESS LIBERTAS rears up out of Mt. Vesuvius. Her skin is green, her breasts are bared, and her head is crowned with a pileus of thorns.

She reaches out all the way across the Atlantic, and across the North American landmass. Seizing San Francisco in her now prehistorically predatory jaws, she shakes it with awe-inspiring ferocity. Then, with her torch, she coolly sets it on fire.

CARUSO scratches his head in utter mystification.

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR -
BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN is still edging grimly along.

EXT. - A TALL CHIMNEY ON A ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

The chimney collapses, damaging the roof. But the building, though rocked to its foundations, is still standing.

It is the Giannini residence, in San Mateo.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

From the ceiling, a small piece of plaster falls down upon the face of the dozing CARUSO. Cautiously, without moving, he opens first one eye, then the other.

Above him the chandelier is doing a mad dance. And all around him the room is twisting weirdly in and out of shape.

CARUSO

San Fran-CESCO!

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR -
BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Panting and grimacing, CHIEF SULLIVAN is now only yards away from MAGGIE.

MAGGIE (OFF)

Dennis...! Dennis...! For God's
sake...! DENNIS...!

SULLIVAN

(in a choked voice)

Almost ... there ... Maggie!

(clearing his throat)

Hold on...! Just ... hold on...!

I'm ... almost ... ALMOST ...!

INT. - OUTSIDE A BEDROOM DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The door is thrown open. A woman - not particularly afraid - comes forward to embrace someone.

That someone is WILLIAM JAMES; the woman is his wife ALICE.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS
LATER

Finally, the dome and chimney stacks topple over onto the adjoining fire station.

INT. - OUTSIDE MAGGIE'S BEDROOM DOOR - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Half-dead with exhaustion, CHIEF SULLIVAN stretches out a quavering, dusty hand. But just as he is turning the handle, everything gives way: he, MAGGIE, together with the entire 3rd floor, go crashing all the way down to the cellar.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Floorboards sag and frozen clocks stare down in apoplectic muteness from bulging walls. Liquids spill from their containers, and sash windows are wrenched up as if by invisible hands. Loose objects crash and shatter; hanging objects swing crazily to and fro. Like paper plates, a piano and a strongbox skitter across the floor; yet feather-light vases, though shaken, blithely hold their places.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

The PROFESSORIAL PATIENT might be crazy, but he knows his masonry. For at last the cracked walls give way, the roofs cave in, and the buildings of the Asylum complex - not so very well put together after all - crash to earth in a pitiless blizzard of glass shards, dust and rubble.

Killed instantly are the PROFESSORIAL PATIENT himself, along with SCORES OF OTHER PATIENTS, and the HEAD NURSE, along with SEVERAL OTHER STAFF MEMBERS.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

His bedroom rocking and quaking all about him, CARUSO labors to open an upper-floor window. Succeeding at last with an heroic effort, he leans out and looks down upon the street.

Covering his ears, unsure if he is fully awake, hoping and wishing that he isn't, CARUSO goggles in horror.

EXT. - BELOW CARUSO'S BEDROOM WINDOW - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Buildings dance drunkenly upon their foundations, then crumble and crash to earth in tinkling clouds of dust. Over the heaving, fissured streets, HALF-NAKED PEOPLE stagger, stumble, crawl and clamber about in seasick frenzy and confusion.

A dazed, bleeding YOUNG WOMAN reaches out toward a wall for support; the wall moves back as if refusing it.

From sheer terror, a tattered, wild-haired and bruised OLD WOMAN drops stone dead.

Bearing a bitterly ironic 'No Exit' board, a SIGN-WRITER is buried instantly under tons of masonry.

Holding their noses with one hand, THREE PEOPLE point with the other hand toward leaking gas mains.

And at once several buildings burst into flames.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

CARUSO staggers back from the window, and his entire life flashes before his eyes:

A straitened childhood in the shelter of Mt. Vesuvius... The famished, candle-lit years of studious obscurity... Street-singing for his supper, shivering and down-at-heel... His proud first purchase: a shiny new pair of shoes... The thick-skinned, one-shirted struggle for recognition ... Vindication, triumph, glory, rare stamps, and tax bills... The ignominious eviction of Don José.

INT. - PARLOR - CARUSO'S SUITE - PALACE HOTEL - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Seizing his signed photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt from the mantel, CARUSO scampers out to safety.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

Upon the floor, GIANNINI holds CLORINDA and THE THREE BOYS safe in his wide embrace; they, in turn, hold on tight to CLAIRE'S CRIB. Grimacing in secret, CLORINDA clutches discreetly at her belly.

All around them, while a sinister roaring takes possession of the soul of things like some insidious malignancy, the room is heaving and tossing and groaning like a passenger ship at sea. Sliding ottomans and bureaus compress the Persian carpets into waves. Family photographs topple over in their frames. Rosaries and paintings rattle against the walls. Cabinet panes crack and shatter, spilling precious books and keepsakes upon the floor. China ornaments and alabaster statuettes are offset, maimed, and smashed.

Yet in the very midst of all this mayhem, GIANNINI murmurs tender words of calm and comfort to his terror-stricken family. In his protective presence, they ride out the earthquake.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

With a gigantic sighing shudder, the shaking stops.

The air seems tinged with bluish yellow. The streets are a tangle of wreckage and live-wires, which wriggle like electric snakes spitting out spiteful blue sparks.

Everywhere, crushed and mangled HUMAN AND EQUINE CORPSES lie scattered. But here and there SOME CORPSES are pristine, except for the burn mark of an electrocuting live-wire.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - OAKLAND POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #1 checks that his COLLEAGUES are unhurt. All his dials and controls seem to be working.

CHIEF ENGINEER #1
Phew! That was close! At least the
power is still ...!

Something has occurred to him. Electrified, he hastens to switch OFF the power for the whole of Oakland.

His COLLEAGUES stare at him in wonder. Then they understand.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 checks that his COLLEAGUES are unhurt. All his dials and controls seem to be working.

CHIEF ENGINEER #2
Phew! Looks like it's all over now,
boys! And we caught a lucky break:
the power ... is still ... ON!

General relief, backslapping, and high-fiving.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A MOTHER and CHILD are anxiously searching for someone. But stumbling into live-wires, they are instantly electrocuted.

INT. - CELLAR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

FIREMEN look on anxiously as MEDICAL PERSONNEL extricate CHIEF SULLIVAN and MAGGIE from the rubble. Her injuries are not life-threatening. But he looks to be in very bad shape.

The FIREMEN exchange glances of despair.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Frenzied with terror, a HERD OF CATTLE stampede from Sixth and Folsom Streets into Market Street. Several people are gored or trampled to death.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Most SURVIVORS are still in their nightclothes, or are wrapped only in bedsheets. A few are stark naked. And they all seem anesthetized by a nightmare from which they cannot or will not awake.

In among them, STREET URCHINS merrily run, each wearing several hats, rings, pearl necklaces, and pocket watches.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen is in complete disarray, with smashed crockery everywhere, and drawers of cutlery shaken free from their cabinets.

The gas stove has toppled over, strewing the intended breakfast of fried bread, eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, and pork sausages over the walls, skirting-boards and floor.

But worst of all, the curtains are ablaze. Frantically trying to beat out the flames, JACK and JILL succeed only in spreading them to the rest of the kitchen.

Despairing, they turn and run for their lives.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Still clutching billiard cues, PATRONS stagger drunkenly out of "McCusshin's Saloon". Its windows are all shattered.

All around, buildings are ruined or lean together like drunkards unsteadily supporting each other.

And yet, nearby, other buildings seem strangely untouched and, indeed, untouchable.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

After several minutes of shocked, quivering speechlessness, SURVIVORS begin finding their voices: muttering; gibbering; weeping; screaming; and praying - with their arms, and their streaming, tight-shut eyes raised to Heaven.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Scrambling to their feet, SURVIVORS stumble about dizzily in all directions. To SOME, the general half-nakedness is a source of scandal, titillation or even amusement. OTHERS risk going back home to clothe themselves.

In their shock and confusion, SEVERAL SURVIVORS are entirely unaware that their bare feet are being cut by shards of glass. Clutching at their heads, clutching at their hearts, they forlornly call out the names of loved ones.

In the bg., TERROR-STRICKEN CHILDREN cling to any OLDER PERSON at random.

And a BLOODSTAINED, WEEPING MAN tenderly bears in his arms the MANGLED BODY OF HIS WIFE.

INT. - UPPER FLOOR - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

HOTEL EMPLOYEES are running around like headless chickens.

Clutching his photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt, CARUSO together with MARTINO, MET COLLEAGUES, and other TERRIFIED PATRONS stampede toward the elevators.

THREE WOMEN, noticing their semi-nakedness in cracked mirrors or in the stares of others, hasten back to their rooms. SOME PATRONS are completely dressed except for their shoes. OTHERS are dressing on the go. But in the crush, their clothes are almost torn from their bodies anyway.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

The elevators don't work. PATRONS stampede toward the stairs, down which they crawl, slide, tumble or jump.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A DAZED WOMAN sits muttering at the side of the road.

DAZED WOMAN

It's the end of the world... We
have no hope... No hope... No hope
... No hope...

EXT. - FRONT GATE - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

While a NEIGHBORING COUPLE discreetly look on, GIANNINI - in a blue suit - is about to leave for San Francisco. His briefcase rests upon the ground beside him; his hat, upon his briefcase.

With MARIO to his right, GIANNINI carries little CLAIRE on his left arm. She is cooing and playing with his mustache. Facing him, and flanked by VIRGIL and LLOYD, is CLORINDA.

GIANNINI

Well, amore, the house was badly
shaken, but it's still standing.
Let's hope the bank is too!

CLORINDA

Amadeo, it might be a small bank.
For now. But it's a very solid
bank. On very solid foundations.

GIANNINI gazes deep into CLORINDA's eyes. Then he tenderly kisses little CLAIRE and places her in CLORINDA's arms. He kisses VIRGIL and LLOYD on the cheek.

MARIO has tried to control himself hitherto. Now - his eyes moist, his voice broken - he clings to his father.

MARIO

Papà, I don't want you to go! I
don't want you to go!

GIANNINI

(on one knee; gently)

Listen, Mario. The people who put their money in our bank are depending on me to look after it for them. So I have to go, and make sure their money - their livelihood - is safe. You understand?

MARIO

(trying to be strong)

I ... understand, Papà!

GIANNINI exchanges a conspiratorial glance with CLORINDA.

GIANNINI

You are the man of the house now, Mario. So you must look after Mamma, Claire, Lloyd and Virgil!

MARIO dries his eyes, clears his throat, and stands tall.

MARIO

Yes, Papà!

GIANNINI

(tousling Mario's hair)

Like St. Francis, we must DO good, not just talk about it. Not so?

(rising; severely)

And remember, boys: no running, and no ball games! Understood?!

The BOYS glumly nod yes. GIANNINI kisses MARIO on the cheek. CLORINDA steels herself.

NEIGHBORING HUSBAND

And you can count on us to keep an eye on them, A.P!

NEIGHBORING WIFE

Oh absolutely!

GIANNINI gratefully shakes their hands. Then he embraces and kisses CLORINDA and CLAIRE.

GIANNINI

I'll be back just as soon as I can.

CLORINDA

Be careful, Amadeo! Do you have enough food and water?

GIANNINI nods yes. He glances at his watch, takes a deep breath, and clasps CLORINDA's free hand. Then he picks up his hat and briefcase, looks again at each of the CHILDREN in turn, then at the NEIGHBORS, once again at CLORINDA, and sets off.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS
LATER

In the horse and buggy of Giannini's brother-in-law Clarence Cuneo, PEDRINI and AVENALI have just arrived from the Crocker-Woolworth Bank with the overnight cash.

The Bank of Italy building is still standing, as is North Beach in general. Mightily relieved, PEDRINI and AVENALI set about moving the cash inside.

EXT. - CITY HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

ATTENDANTS look on sheepishly. Briefcase in hand and smartly dressed, SCHMITZ stands frowning before the ignoble ruin of City Hall. He sighs with resignation.

SCHMITZ

Up in 20 years. Down in 20 seconds!

(to Attendants)

... Hall of Justice! Follow me!

His briefcase hugged to his body, SCHMITZ strides off in the direction of Portsmouth Plaza.

Taken aback by this newfound independence of judgment and action, the ATTENDANTS quicken their pace behind him.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Many of the VIOLENT PATIENTS are still alive. Horrifying laughter from their cells mingles with the shrieks and groans of the MAIMED and the DYING.

STAFF stand paralyzed. The PATIENTS are running the asylum.

EXT. - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Out of the elegant front entrance, half-naked PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY and 'WHORE-TICULTURALISTS' inelegantly exit.

EXT. - NEAR HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Striding along - with his ATTENDANTS trailing behind him - SCHMITZ frowns at the sight of LOOTERS working with furtive glee in several ruined and abandoned buildings. One LOOTER wears a long overcoat with capacious pockets.

Inhaling indignantly, SCHMITZ presses on with even greater purpose. Dismayed, the ATTENDANTS scamper after him.

INT. - GIANNINI'S TRAIN - NEAR SAN MATEO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The train is moving in fits and starts. GIANNINI stares with pensive impatience at his hat and briefcase, beside him on the seat. The train grinds and shudders to a complete stop. GIANNINI slowly shakes his head. He gets up and leans out of

a window: ahead, the train tracks are hopelessly buckled and wrenched from the ground.

Sighing, GIANNINI picks up his hat and briefcase.

EXT. - GIANNINI'S TRAIN - NEAR SAN MATEO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

OTHER PASSENGERS look on as GIANNINI clambers down from the train, clamps on his hat, and strides away.

After some hesitation, ONE PASSENGER follows suit. ANOTHER is thinking about it. THE REST just dig themselves in - as if, at any moment, by magic, the train will start moving again.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Gas mains have ruptured. Burning oil lamps, oil stoves and gas stoves have been overturned. Many fires have started and are quickly spreading.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The sun has not fully risen, but the air is tinged with a lurid glow from the east: the warehouse district is aflame.

EXT. - COASTLINE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Almost as one, scores of docked vessels slip their cables and discreetly remove themselves from danger.

INT. - READING ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - relaxes in a wing-backed leather armchair. Lightly holding a yellow-jacketed French novel - "Le secret de Raoul" - he takes a sip from a cup of steaming cocoa.

With self-conscious elegance, MEANS sets down the cup. A small aftershock sets it rattling delicately upon its saucer. MEANS looks on with an almost aesthetic appreciation, which he then transfers to his French novel.

Noticing him, an ATTENDANT approaches, eyebrows raised.

ATTENDANT

Uh aren't you a ... doctor, sir?!

MEANS

Navy Surgeon Victor Means, at your service!

ATTENDANT

But what are you doing HERE, sir?!

MEANS

Waiting, my good man, for orders.

And with that, MEANS languorously returns to his novel. The ATTENDANT gapes at him in disgust and disbelief.

INT. - LT. UDELL'S ROOM - NAVAL HOSPITAL - MARE ISLAND -
MOMENTS LATER

MARINE LT. UDELL has got out of bed and has almost finished changing into his uniform. Upon the unmade bed, a book lies open, with a bookmark inside it.

UDELL reaches down and closes the book: Emerson's "The Conduct of Life". Setting it down on the bedside table, he doubles up with pain. But gritting his teeth, he starts making his bed - with quiet, calm, efficient determination.

A NURSE passes by, does a double-take, and enters.

NURSE #1

Lt. Udell, what d'you think you're doing?! You are in no condition to go anywhere!

UDELL

(leaving)

That's where you're wrong, Nurse.
But I'll be back. In due course.

Following belatedly, the NURSE looks on wide-eyed as UDELL strides down the passage.

NURSE #1

But you have Bright's Disease!

UDELL

(brightly)

Well don't tell him, or he'll want
it back!

EXT. - ON A WAGON - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND
SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

With his hat and briefcase in his lap, GIANNINI sits on the back of a wagon: the only one going toward San Francisco.

WAGON DRIVER

(pulling up)

Mister, this is where I turn off.

GIANNINI

(alighting)

No problem. You've been a big help.
Thanks and a very good day to you!

His briefcase swinging, GIANNINI strides away.

EXT. - STREET NEAR "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT -
DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Holding on tight to each other, COCO and ALBERT hurry terror-stricken along a crowded street. She - grotesquely lipsticked - is still in lace underwear and high-heels. He is only in underpants, and his naked back bears all the marks of her impassioned 'witch' nails.

EXT. - STREET CORNER NEAR "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH
RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

COCO still clings to ALBERT's arm, but now more for balance than safety. The press of FUGITIVES all around them is such that she is often obliged to step down from the sidewalk.

THE BARONESS VON ORSENBERG
(half-naked yet gleeful)
Look zere at Coco: finally pack in
ze gutter!

Turning the corner, COCO and ALBERT almost collide with his wife VICTORIA. With her hair in pink curlers, she is clad only in bunny slippers and a negligee.

A frozen moment: while COCO looks on wryly, both ALBERT and VICTORIA are desperately seeking some innocent explanation.

Belatedly, ALBERT becomes conscious of COCO's witch-nailed hand upon his arm. Panicking, he pulls away so brusquely that COCO topples over backward. Arms flailing, she lands heavily upon her well-upholstered rump, and ends the maneuver with an unintended can-can.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

Bewitched, a passing ELEGANT OLDER GENTLEMAN helps COCO to her feet, and gallantly offers her his fur-lined overcoat. Sizing him up in an instant - and making sure to give him a good look at her curves - COCO gratefully accepts. Mutually transfixed, and without a word, they go off arm in arm.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

Tearing himself away from the sight of the rapidly receding COCO, ALBERT turns to face the music. VICTORIA, alas, has noticed the scratch-marks all over his back. Her wonted obliviousness finally seems unsustainable ... Unless ...

ALBERT
Oh dearest Victoria, thank the
merciful Heaven I found you at
last! Are you hurt, my love? Still
in one piece? Is the house still
standing? And how's the cat?

VICTORIA

(through gritted teeth)

Albert ... dear - would you mind explaining to me just what you and that ... lacy ... Lorelei ... were doing here ... together ... at this hour ... in your ... UNDERWEAR?!

ALBERT

Who? Oh you mean, that little ...! Don't be silly, dearest one! Since when was gallantry a sin, hmmm? Besides, what with this unspeakable catastrophe, the whole world and his wife are going round in a most indecent state of undress!

On cue, VICTORIA at once becomes conscious of her very own indecent state of undress. And now her belated modesty helpfully displaces more pressing anxieties.

Gallantly, ALBERT offers VICTORIA an arm. And blushing with shame - while rejoicing in her status as a lady of the very highest respectability, married to a pillar of the community - she proudly goes off with him.

But she averts her gaze from the truth told by his back.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Rousing themselves from their torpor, SURVIVORS begin to make the effort to help both themselves and others: calming the frantic; freeing the imprisoned; relieving the injured; recovering the bodies of the dead.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

ATTENDANTS use sledge-hammers to break open the mangled iron cell doors of the VIOLENT PATIENTS. Some of these tear free from their RESCUERS, who give chase.

OTHER PATIENTS, looking on excitedly, dare to make their own wild, screaming dash for freedom.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

From his briefcase, SCHMITZ removes the underlined copies of the San Francisco Bulletin, and tosses them into the trash.

INT. - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Traumatized FIREMEN begin to rouse themselves.

FIREMAN #1

Come on, boys! Let's not give in! Let's do this for the Chief! It's what he would have wanted!

General assent. They spring into action, but have great difficulty in hitching their terrified horses to the steam-pumping engines. Besides, the engine house is so damaged that it is impossible to move some engines at all.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

From surrounding districts, fire engines hasten to the rescue.

On sidewalks and in the streets, flame-spitting live-wires writhe. FIRE TEAMS run into them, and HORSES are instantly electrocuted.

OTHER FIREMEN run up, and earnestly discuss the problem.

EXT. - SEVENTH STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A wholesale drug house explodes, throwing up a multicolored cloud of capsules high into the air.

On unwary WOMEN and CHILDREN below, the capsules then fall as a surreal, scalding rain.

EXT. - NEAR SEVENTH STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

FIREMEN hurriedly unwind their hoses and connect them to hydrants. There is an initial rush of water. Which quickly peters out into a trickle. And then ... nothing.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 glances at his dials and controls. Something is beginning to bother him. He glances round at his COLLEAGUES. Something is beginning to bother them too.

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 twists his mouth to one side.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The live-wires go dead.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Useless fire engines are removed to outlying districts or simply abandoned where they are.

Fires spread unchecked. Helpless and hopeless, FIREMEN look on. A pall of black smoke hangs over the business district.

Succumbing both to despair and to the gas fumes, SOME FIREMEN collapse upon the ground. OTHER FIREMEN run up to help them, then point out of the source of the problem.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

FIREMEN systematically identify the gas leaks. Then they desperately try to plug them with anything they can find.

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

While the sky fills with smoke and cinders, thousands of distraught DEPOSITORS - many only scantily clad - clamor to get their money out. But a FEW among them - including JACK and JILL - want to take gold and other valuables IN.

Unnoticed by JACK, JILL and the DEPOSITORS, PICKPOCKETS coolly and callously exploit their distraction and distress.

INT. - LOBBY - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Overseen by sweating BANK OFFICIALS, SECURITY STAFF check that the doors are firmly secured against the 'intruders'.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

His briefcase swinging with rhythmical determination, GIANNINI strides onward. Without stopping, he tears a piece of bread from within the briefcase.

Peering ahead, GIANNINI sees convoys of wagons approaching in the distance. Frowning and chewing, he presses on.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Pen in hand and quietly self-satisfied, SCHMITZ looks over a handwritten list on his desk. Beside it is a handwritten sheet entitled 'MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION'.

ASSISTANT

(knocking and entering)

Mr. Mayor sir - General Funston and Police Chief Dinan have arrived.

SCHMITZ

Ah! Send them in! At once!

Still blinking in wonder at this 'new' Schmitz, the ASSISTANT flashes an uncertain smile and shuts the door.

Twirling his pen importantly, SCHMITZ leans back in his chair. He is now the very picture of the Man in Charge.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GENERAL FUNSTON (40, pint-sized) and POLICE CHIEF DINAN are seated uncertainly before SCHMITZ. The ASSISTANT enters and sets down a tray with coffee and cookies.

ASSISTANT

(innocently)

I'm sure you gentlemen will look after yourselves!

FUNSTON
 (innocently)
 No short supplies here! Don't mind
 if I do!

But SCHMITZ and DINAN are squirming as if accused of a
 crime.

SCHMITZ
 (sourly)
 Thank you. Dear. That will be all.

The ASSISTANT makes herself scarce. Meanwhile, FUNSTON and
 DINAN are looking around as if expecting someone else.

SCHMITZ
 (irritated)
 Shall we ... begin?!

FUNSTON and DINAN exchange a discreet glance.

SCHMITZ
 Gentlemen, it has come to my notice
 that certain elements are cynically
 exploiting this disaster for their
 own ends! Advancing their private
 agendas! Tightening their grip upon
 the city's precious resources!

Tut-tutting from DINAN and FUNSTON.

SCHMITZ
 Gentlemen, the public looks to us
 for leadership and protection! We
 must get tough on crime!

DINAN
 With you there all the way, Mr.
 Mayor! All the way! What the city
 needs is sanity, and sanitation!

Inflating himself to a somewhat greater height and volume in
 his chair, the diminutive FUNSTON nods in warm agreement.

SCHMITZ
 (looking up from List)
 Now then. I propose, first, the
 immediate closure of all saloons!

Vigorous nods from DINAN. FUNSTON clears his throat.

FUNSTON
 This problem must be dealt with in
 short order! But as to the delicate
 matter of uh Marshal Law ...!

SCHMITZ
 Well, legally speaking, shouldn't
 the ... Governor ...?

FUNSTON

Is this a time to be short-changed
by overheated consciences?! I say:
action now, authorization later!

DINAN

That's the way! That's the way! Now
then, what about looters?

SCHMITZ

Just coming to that! I have here,
gentlemen, the draft of a Mayoral
Proclamation which should ... bring
the desired results! With your
permission, I'll read it out, and I
welcome your suggestions.

All ears, FUNSTON and DINAN move their chairs closer.

INT. - UPPER-FLOOR OFFICE - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN
SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

BANK OFFICIALS look on discreetly as the DEPOSITORS begin to
disperse - with 'encouragement' from the POLICE.

Down among the crowd, JACK and JILL are dismayed to find
that their wallet and purse are missing.

But BANK OFFICIALS, mightily relieved, return to packing up
their books, papers, and valuables.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO
- A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI strides past trundling wagons piled high with
possessions and REFUGEES.

TWO REFUGEES in particular glance at him as if he were
crazy. Shaking their heads, they pass on.

REFUGEE MOTHER

Any case, donchu wirry, son! She'll
turn up! She's simwhere safe fir
sure! So stop yir wirryin'!

REFUGEE SON

I can't help but wirry, Ma! Ya
knows how ... highly strung she be!

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS
LATER

Veering toward a COUPLE, a YOUNG WOMAN whispers intensely at
them. She seems agitated and depressed at the same time, yet
disconnected from her very own agitation and depression.

Staring at her as if she were crazy, the COUPLE back away.
Undeterred, she veers off toward RANDOM MAN #1.

DISCONNECTED YOUNG WOMAN

You seen my husban', mister? You
seen my mo'er-in-law, that ol'
witch?! My husban' 'd know me
anywhere! Anyhow, anyway, anywhere!
You seen him, mister?! You seen
him?! You seen him?! You seen him?!

She doesn't stay for an answer. Veering off, she buttonholes
RANDOM MAN #2. Staring at her in alarm, he too backs away.

DISCONNECTED YOUNG WOMAN

Why d'y'all think I's royalty?!

Cackling dementedly, she looks round for RANDOM PERSON #3.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN
FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

FUNSTON

In short, only the military has the
networks, training, transportation,
AND supplies to avoid being caught
short by a catastrophe like this!

DINAN raises an eyebrow at FUNSTON, who ignores him. SCHMITZ
is gazing wistfully at a framed photo of himself as an
erstwhile orchestral conductor.

FUNSTON

(gleefully)

And without water to make short
work of the fire, we shall need ...
dynamite!

SCHMITZ

(balefully)

I sincerely hope you don't intend
blowing up the mansions of my
supporters ... Brigadier-General!

FUNSTON

(poisonously)

Rest assured ... Maestro, that my
troops will not encroach upon city
jurisdiction. Except ... where
absolutely unavoidable...!

(damage control)

Not that I meant to be short with
you, but -

Scraping his chair, SCHMITZ rises abruptly. With an icy
smile, he pointedly consults his watch.

SCHMITZ

Gentlemen, we're done.

DINAN rises too. But the diminutive FUNSTON, unwilling to
show himself at a vertical disadvantage, remains seated.

SCHMITZ and DINAN are frowning down at him, and the 'Little General' is at last forced to rise. However, 'cutting short' any direct comparisons, he nods curtly and is gone.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

TROOPS guard banks, discourage looting, prevent people from entering damaged buildings, or escort them out - a perilous job, owing to suddenly collapsing beams and masonry.

EXT. - MCCUSSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN looks on with sputtering indignation as POLICEMEN and TROOPS unceremoniously break open his boarded-up saloon and carry out all his liquor.

A band of WINOS - transfixed - is also looking on.

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN

This. Is. An. Out! Rage. I am a Supervisor, I'll have you know! A personal acquaintance of Mayor Ruef! Schmitz! AND of Detective Sergeant Dinan! Police Chief!

Ignoring MCCUSSHIN, the OFFICERS pour out the liquor - but not all of it - into the gutters. Even more distraught than MCCUSSHIN at such a waste, the WINOS rush forward and - on hands and knees - lap up the dregs like dogs.

With the 'confiscated' liquor hidden behind their backs, the OFFICERS look on and sneer. MCCUSSHIN appeals mutely to the smoke-darkened heavens.

EXT. - NEAR MCCUSSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A strong aftershock. The façade of a building teeters tipsily, then crashes down into the street, like a drunk passing out. Other structures follow, raising great clouds of blinding, choking dust. In among the buildings, mocking tongues of fire are suddenly stuck out.

Mass panic returns. Any thought of remaining in the city is abandoned.

And thus begins the agonizing exodus of American refugees to the ferry, to the Presidio, and to Golden Gate Park.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Without stopping, GIANNINI tears off some cheese from inside his briefcase, and munches while peering into the distance.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JACK & JILL sighingly pay a small fortune in gold to a HACKDRIVER (COFFEY) to have their goods transported.

They are just about to start loading, when POLICEMEN arrive and unsympathetically seize their ride.

POLICEMAN #1

We'll be needing this. For the dead
and the wounded. You understand.

The POLICEMAN rests a hand upon the holster of his pistol - just in case there should be any doubt about his seriousness. Swallowing, JACK and JILL take a step back.

Then they remember their gold and look round for SUPERVISOR COFFEY. He is nowhere in sight.

JACK

Well, Jill dear, we're stuck in
this city! But we still have some
gold left, so we can rent. At least
it can't get any worse!

JILL

(through gritted teeth)
Jack dear, I'd be obliged if you'd
finally learn to STOP saying that!

EXT. - NEAR MCCUSSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

POLICEMEN and TROOPS have polished off the liquor they 'confiscated' from McCusshin. Now, scrambling tipsily to their feet, they disperse with teetering authority.

INT. - ROCKY REALTY CO. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Ex-boxer ROCKY and some EMPLOYEES are trying to salvage ledger books, papers and valuables from the wreckage.

An ALCOHOL-SOAKED SOLDIER literally stumbles in upon them, and takes them for looters. Even while they staring at him in astonishment, one by one he shoots them down dead.

EXT. - NEAR ROCKY REALTY CO. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Cold sober, his shirtsleeves rolled up, BARRYMORE is helping TROOPS clear away debris. Further away, OTHER TROOPS are dynamiting buildings in the path of the fire.

BARRYMORE

Right. We've blown up. Now where to
from here?

EXT. - ROAD BETWEEN MARE ISLAND AND SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

LT. UDELL is getting a lift in an army vehicle. All the other traffic is going against them.

ARMY DRIVER

Getting into the city will be hard, sir. But we'll find ways and means!

UDELL glances impatiently at his watch.

INT. - COURTYARD - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Yawning at his watch, NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in slacks and sunglasses - stretches out on desk-chair. Languorously he draws at a cigarette in an elegant cigarette holder.

Noticing him, a NURSE in a blood-bespattered uniform frowningly approaches.

NURSE #2

Uh Navy Surgeon Means, if I'm not mistaken!

MEANS

At your service!

NURSE #2

Uh might I inquire, sir, what it is exactly that YOU, sir ... are doing HERE?!

MEANS

(blithely)

Waiting, my good woman. For orders.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI glances impatiently at his watch, and quickens his pace. Ahead are a group of distraught REFUGEES on foot. They transport a bewildering variety of possessions, using wheelbarrows, wheelchairs, go-carts, baby carriages, toy wagons and other improvised vehicles. Often they have to stop and pick up what has spilled out onto the road.

REFUGEE #1

It's very bad, mister! I promise you, whatever you're looking for, it's not in San Francisco!

GIANNINI smiles back and presses on. They shake their heads.

EXT. - VAN NESS AVE. - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Bizarrely oblivious of the disastrous reversal in her fortunes, a familiar young OPERA SOCIALITE (LUCRETIA) is seated grandly on the sidewalk. Her bodice ripped open, her

clothes soiled, a frying pan for a mirror, she studies her dim reflection with ironically cool objectivity. Her MAID, standing behind her, matter-of-factly arranges her hair.

Another familiar OPERA SOCIALITE (LAVINIA) - with singed hair - is passing by. She gapes at LUCRETIA in alarm.

LAVINIA

Lucretia dear! But what in heaven's name are you DOING, dear?!

LUCRETIA

(grandly)

Lavinia dear! What a lovely surprise! But do stay to luncheon!

(giggling hysterically)

Luncheon! What am I saying?! Dearie me, my poor mind's on vacation! Breakfast, dear! I mean breakfast!

The MAID glances up at LAVINIA and sadly shakes her head. Then, sighing and shrugging, she matter-of-factly goes back to arranging the hair of her grief-crazed mistress.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Parched refugees seek in vain for water at public fountains. A few embolden themselves to drink from a muddy puddle.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A MOTHER and THREE SMALL CHILDREN are approaching GIANNINI.

LITTLE GIRL

Mom, I'm so thirsty! Please give me some water! Please, please, mom!

MOTHER

There's no water, my angel! The whole city is thirsting for water!

GIANNINI

(taking out a flask)

I have water! Here, little one!

The LITTLE GIRL gratefully takes the flask, drinks, and is instantly revived. Sweetly asking GIANNINI's permission with a look, she passes the flask to her SISTER, who drinks, and passes it to their BROTHER, who passes it to their MOTHER.

GIANNINI

That's the way! Here, take these.

GIANNINI gives the MOTHER the substantial remnants of his bread and cheese.

GIANNINI

I have an apple and some ham left
too. But if you don't mind, I still
have to walk a long, long way!

He tousles the hair of the CHILDREN. Glancing at his watch,
he waves goodbye and presses on. The FAMILY wave back.

LITTLE GIRL

Mom, is that nice big tall man
taking water to the burning city?

The MOTHER looks up at the cloud of thick black smoke rising
over San Francisco in the distance.

MOTHER

My angel, I certainly hope so!

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO
- A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI looks worried. Without breaking his stride, he
glances at his watch, and takes his last piece of ham from
his briefcase. Chewing pensively, he peers ahead.

Over San Francisco in the near distance, to the sound of
muffled detonations, the sun rises dark-red behind an
ominous cloud. GIANNINI slowly shakes his head.

GIANNINI

"What does San Francisco need more
water for?" indeed!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

An ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE stands looking around as if for
someone or something. A MAN brushes past her, does a
double-take, and is about to flirt with her, when a
detonation goes off nearby. Without warning, a pile of
masonry showers down upon him, and kills him.

PEDESTRIANS stare at him in shock. Then, as one, they all
look up, and step back out of danger. The BRUNETTE faints to
the ground. After some hesitation, TWO PEDESTRIANS -
exchanging awkward glances - come to her aid.

EXT. - MARGARET'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN
FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

As GIANNINI strides past, MARGARET and her FAMILY, having
gathered together a few belongings on their porch, are
abandoning their house to the advancing flames.

But in a rocking chair on her own porch, their SPINSTER
NEIGHBOR swings defiantly in and out of view.

MARGARET

Please come with us, Miss Wilson!

MISS WILSON

Not a chance! I jus' paid my rent
yest'day, and no earthquake nor
fire's gon' make me budge one inch!

MARGARET and her FAMILY sigh, shrug and start leaving. Then another aftershock strikes. They look back: rent or no rent, MISS WILSON lies crushed to death under fallen masonry.

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI whistles quietly to himself as he gazes upon the ravaged, burning city. He has finally arrived. But he is still far from his destination. He stops, sets down his briefcase, and wipes his brow.

A sinister black fog is rolling in from the sea, and the darkened sky reflects a lurid glare.

GIANNINI glances at his watch, picks up his briefcase, takes a very deep breath, and presses on.

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A flatnosed WELTERWEIGHT BOXER and his WIFE are fleeing from the flames. The BOXER lugs their possessions in two suitcases. The WIFE has their 3-YR-OLD SON on one arm, while dragging a large canvas bag with the other.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Pensively, GIANNINI strides along. Approaching the burnt-out wreck of an empty baby crib, he sighs mournfully. He stops, removes his hat, bows his head, and says a silent prayer. He sighs again, lifting his questioning but not impious gaze to Heaven. He inhales, clamps on his hat, and presses on.

EXT. - TEMPORARY CEMETERY - THE PRESIDIO - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Overseen by TEENAGE SOLDIERS, a GROUP OF MEN in their shirtsleeves have been forced to dig graves. Their jackets lie neatly folded or carelessly tossed upon the ground.

Looking up, TEENAGE SOLDIER #1 sees TWO WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MEN approaching. Then, from among the group, he picks out TWO OLDER MEN, who exchange a worried glance.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1

Right! You two geezers! You've done
your bit! Off you go! Git...! Git!

Scarcely believing their good luck, the TWO OLDER MEN belatedly pick up their jackets, and make themselves scarce.

Meanwhile, looking round in elegant confusion, the TWO WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MEN blithely pass the TWO OLDER MEN.

WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MAN #1
 Ah! Let's ask that soldier-fellow
 there... My good man, a moment!

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1
 (darkly)
 You boys! Here! On. The. Double!

The TWO YOUNG MEN demur. The SOLDIER calmly unbuttons his holster, rests a hand on the butt of his pistol, and raises an inquiring eyebrow at them. To his amusement, the TWO YOUNG MEN suddenly find that, yes, in fact they are indeed more than willing to cooperate after all.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1
 The city's an undertaker's
 paradise, boys! So on. The. Double!

Under the gleeful gaze of the other 'VOLUNTEERS', the TWO YOUNG MEN remove their jackets and sourly begin digging. They are clearly virgins to manual labor.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1
 (darkly amused)
 First time fir everything, eh? Put
 yir backs into it! On. The. Double!

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - GENERAL STORE - SOUTH OF MARKET
 STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The BOXER and his WIFE notice a store. For sale outside, all tied together with string, are ten baby carriages.

BOXER
 Just what we need! Two of those
 buggies will do us very nicely!

His WIFE vigorously nods yes.

INT. - COUNTER - GENERAL STORE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET -
 SAN FRANCISCO - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The tall, heavy-set, balding STORE-OWNER rapaciously sizes up the BOXER and his WIFE.

RAPACIOUS STORE-OWNER
 (doffing his hat)
 Good day, folks! Aren't those just
 the finest baby buggies you've ever
 seen! Special price today! Only ...
 let's say ... oh, \$50 apiece!

The BOXER and his WIFE exchange glances of astonishment, dismay, and disgust. The LITTLE BOY starts crying. The BOXER glances back at the advancing flames. He rapidly considers, and decides. He smiles politely at the STORE-OWNER.

BOXER

Pardon me, but would you care to
remove your hat, for just a moment?

The STORE-OWNER is puzzled. However, anything to seal the deal! Removing his hat, he sets it down on the counter.

BOXER

Much obliged.

And with that, the BOXER calmly plants a textbook short left hook on the point of the STORE-OWNER'S chin. The STORE-OWNER is flung backwards against his cash register, which shoots open with a 'ka-ching'. Out cold - and not saved by the bell - the store-owner slides down ignominiously to the floor, where, semi-recumbent, he is propped up by the counter.

The LITTLE BOY stops crying. With utter seriousness, and as best he can remember, he counts the STORE-OWNER out.

Coolly amused, the BOXER shuts the drawer of the cash register, and removes several dollars from his trouser pocket. Then, politely replacing the store-owner's hat upon his head, he slides the banknotes in under the hat.

And then, still as calm as can be, he unties all ten baby carriages. He piles the suitcases and canvas bag into one, and rolls another over to his dumbstruck WIFE, who belatedly puts their LITTLE BOY into it.

Finally, for the use of the general suffering populace, he rolls the other carriages downhill, and dusts off his hands.

BOXER

That's that. Come along, dear.

EXT. - NEAR GENERAL STORE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Half-way down the hill, GIANNINI is crossing the road. He does a double-take at the surreal, squeaking approach of eight baby-carriages. He smiles, shrugs, and presses on.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI comes to a stop and surveys the scene:

In scale and intensity, the destruction is awe-inspiring, yet strangely random: pristine buildings stand defiantly or obliviously beside ones which are lopsided or completely ruined. Streets are cracked and fissured. Streetcar tracks are bent into fantastical wave-forms. Sidewalks are buckled and broken. Iron pillars are twisted like play-dough.

From broken mains, water shoots up thirty feet into the air. Precious water thus rendered useless for putting out the hundreds of fires dotting the city.

Exhausted FIREMEN collapse upon the sidewalks. After a short while, they rouse themselves and renew the struggle.

There are TROOPS everywhere. The streets are strewn with the BODIES of PEOPLE and HORSES felled by masonry or electrocuted by live-wires. Here and there - clutching bottles and glasses - DRUNK PEOPLE stagger among the dead.

Nearby and in the distance, thousands of REFUGEES stream toward the ferry. SOME seem calm or subdued. OTHERS seem half-crazed with horror. In their arms, or in all manner of vehicles, they carry randomly salvaged possessions.

GIANNINI now notices something on a nearby bench. He picks it up: MAYOR SCHMITZ'S PROCLAMATION. GIANNINI scans it and frowns. Leaving it on the bench, he presses on.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A familiar LOOTER is moving stealthily along the street in a long overcoat with capacious pockets. From one, a silver candlestick protrudes. From within another, unseen metal objects bulge and clatter.

A gust of wind blows SCHMITZ'S PROCLAMATION onto the street. The LOOTER picks it up and scans it with weary contempt.

LOOTER

"... have been authorized by me to
kill ... persons ... engaged in
looting or ... any other crime".

(sniggering)

Except of course, corruption!

He is about to tear up the Proclamation when, smirking, he changes his mind. Carefully, he folds it up, puts it into a breast pocket, pats it, and continues stealthily on his way.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is peering up at a handwritten sign nailed to a pole: "SEWERS BLOCKED - DO NOT USE TOILETS OR GET SHOT".

He frowns, shrugs and, looking round, continues on his way.

EXT. - STREET WITH MAKESHIFT LATRINE - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

In elegant dressing-gowns and slippers, SNOBBISH SOCIALITE and NAIVE SOCIALITE approach. Discreetly clutching her stomach, NAIVE SOCIALITE casts yearning sidelong glances at the latrine.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Try not to point your eyes, dear,
in ... unmentionable directions!

NAIVE SOCIALITE

But I really need to ... you know!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Horse feathers, dear! A lady learns
to rise above such inconveniences!

Sighing, NAIVE SOCIALITE steals one last yearning look.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is reading a handwritten sign on the latrine door:
"NO GENTLEMEN ALLOWED".

GIANNINI frowns, and looks behind him. To one side is a
gaping hole beneath the now ironically appropriate legend:
"OPEN FOR BUSINESS".

Checking that the coast is clear, GIANNINI heads for a
ruined alleyway opposite the latrine.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The LOOTER reads the latrine sign: "NO GENTLEMEN ALLOWED".

LOOTER

Well, I'm no gentleman!

Smirking, he removes Mayor Schmitz's Proclamation from his
breast pocket, and kisses it. He slips into the latrine and
stealthily begins closing the door behind him.

INT. - THE LATRINE - NEAR MARKET STREET - MOMENTS LATER

As the door slowly closes, GIANNINI - buttoning his fly -
can be seen emerging from the alleyway opposite.

EXT. - OPPOSITE THE LATRINE - MOMENTS LATER

Emerging simultaneously from a nearby building, TEENAGE
SOLDIER #2 eyes GIANNINI suspiciously.

GIANNINI briefly considers, then goes straight up to him,
and begins explaining his behavior.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 is not interested. He orders GIANNINI to
start clearing debris. GIANNINI sighs, smiles, then speaks
amiably but intensely to him. The bumptiousness of TEENAGE
SOLDIER #2 soon deserts him. Reluctantly he waves GIANNINI
on his way. He hasn't even seen the LOOTER.

EXT. - RUINED BUILDING - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Still marveling at Giannini's persuasiveness, TEENAGE
SOLDIER #2 passes a doorway, then stops dead. Stealthily he
retraces his steps.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Amid the ruins, GIANNINI sees a sign saying: "RESURGO INVICTUS". He nods quietly to himself, and presses on.

INT. - RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO
- MOMENTS LATER

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 sees a SUSPICIOUS MAN who seems to be partially embracing a RICH DEAD WOMAN on the floor.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2
Hey, you there! Wotchu doin'?!

The SUSPICIOUS MAN lifts his head: it is the LOOTER. He considers, decides. He turns his head round, and his features are now the very picture of bottomless grief.

LOOTER
(fake upper-class accent)
Officer, you startled me! It's my
... mama! The only one ... only
relative I had! But now! All alone
in an oh-so-cruel world! Oh! Oh!

Crumpling in a blubbering heap over the DEAD WOMAN, the LOOTER showers kisses upon her richly bejeweled fingers.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2
Beg pardon, sir! Firra moment there
I took you firra ...! Or even a
...! But pardon! Pardon me, sir!

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 awkwardly leaves them.

EXT. - NEAR RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN
FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Something is starting to bother TEENAGE SOLDIER #2. The mental image comes to him of a silver candlestick protruding from a capacious overcoat pocket. Cursing, he doubles back.

INT. - RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO
- A SHORT WHILE LATER

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 stealthily looks in. The LOOTER has vanished. Like the rings on the DEAD WOMAN's fingers.

He palms himself, shakes his head, and gazes skyward.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

With a dry, absent, hollow, ventriloquistic laughter, a WOMAN sits hunched at the roadside. Her features are completely expressionless. Yet she is picking broken glass from her bare, bleeding feet. A trail of bloody footprints - back-to-front - leads from her to the bodies of her HUSBAND and CHILD, lying crushed nearby under fallen masonry.

All around her the road suddenly sinks by several inches. Once again she laughs her absent, hollow laugh.

EXT. - ANOTHER PART OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Everywhere there are REFUGEES, makeshift ambulances, and images of devastation. And even garbage wagons are being used to transport the dead.

On one side, GRIEVING RELATIVES look on as Dr. JIM, VOLUNTEER NURSES including his wife ELEANOR, and other RED CROSS PERSONNEL respectfully remove CRUSHED AND MANGLED BODIES from a ruined building.

GIANNINI is approaching a MOTHER who cradles a SWADDLED CHILD by the roadside. In the distance the detonations continue. The MOTHER gazes up at GIANNINI with dead eyes. She speaks in a dead voice.

CRAZED MOTHER

Mister, make them stop that awful boom-boom-boom. My child's asleep now. Hush, little one. Hush. Hush.

GIANNINI now sees that the CHILD is not sleeping, but dead: its skull is crushed in; its skin is turning purple. With powerless compassion, he gazes upon the grief-crazed MOTHER. Then he notices the RED CROSS PERSONNEL.

CRAZED MOTHER

Will you make them stop, mister?
Will you? Will you? Will you?

GIANNINI

I'll do ... whatever I can, my dear. You just ... hold on.

GIANNINI lightly squeezes her arm, then goes to speak to Dr. JIM and ELEANOR. They listen, nod, and approach the MOTHER, who is humming a lullaby to her DEAD CHILD and rocking it in her arms. JIM and ELEANOR gently try to take the DEAD CHILD from her. But, with unexpected fury, she drives them off.

ELEANOR starts sobbing. JIM sadly shakes his head at GIANNINI, who turns reluctantly. Head bowed, he presses on.

GIANNINI doesn't even notice the sweaty FAT MAN passing him. The FAT MAN lovingly cradles a huge bird cage. Inside it, the little swing squeaks to and fro. The cage is empty.

EXT. - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The Palace is still standing. And now, as a protection against the advancing flames, STAFF are hosing the hotel down with its very own water supply.

But to their utter dismay, FIREMEN arrive en masse and begin attaching their hoses to the Palace's dedicated hydrants.

PALACE HOTEL MANAGER

Oh how Mr. Ralston must be turning
in his grave!

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A CROWD stare up at the flat roof of a burning hotel. There,
THREE TERROR-CRAZED MEN are trapped beyond hope of rescue.

Below, an OFFICER calmly considers, and decides: he orders
his TROOPS to shoot the MEN. Among the CROWD no-one flinches
as the shots ring out and the MEN fall down out of view,
with the flames beginning to reach them.

EXT. - ENTRANCE - ST FRANCIS HOTEL - UNION SQUARE - SAN
FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Hugging his photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt,
CARUSO stands at the entrance. Over his pajamas he wears a
mink coat, with a towel round his neck for a scarf.

Lighting a cigarette, CARUSO looks out over the square,
which is surging with refugees. He slowly shakes his head.

Brushing past CARUSO, ELEANOR and Dr. JIM enter the hotel.

On the square, meanwhile, GIANNINI is just arriving.

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

All around GIANNINI, wild rumors are swirling.

RUMOR-MONGERS

Chicago is drowned! - Portland is
washed away! - LA is flattened by
an earthquake! - The whole of New
York City is burnt to ash...!

GIANNINI shakes his head and begins to cross the square. It
is full of REFUGEES fleeing the fires South of Market
Street. They stand looking around helplessly, their trunks
and bundles beside them. WOMEN cradle their BABIES, while in
cages upon the ground, outraged PARROTS squawk. And nearby
THREE PEOPLE are trying to revive a WOMAN who has fainted.

All apart in one corner, fatalistically sitting or standing
and waiting, are the city's CHINESE CITIZENS.

GIANNINI gazes up at the Dewey Monument. Like other
monuments he has passed, it has suffered no serious damage.
And unshaken by cataclysms, securely grasping her trident
and wreath, poised with balletic serenity upon a single foot
atop her soaring column, the STATUE OF VICTORY looks out
over the city, unbeaten and unbowed.

GIANNINI inhales, and nods yes. But noticing the smoke over
Chinatown, he starts doubling back to Market Street.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI peers ahead with encouragement: almost there! Without stopping, he looks around: a degree of order has been imposed upon the city: unsafe buildings have been roped off; and there are no longer any drunk people staggering about the streets. Behind him, however, an office block bursts into flame.

Nearby, TEENAGE SOLDIERS are forcing PASSERSBY to clear debris. GIANNINI quickly turns down a side street.

EXT. - OFF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

POLICEMAN #2 and SOLDIER #1 - both drunk - stand eyeing each other over a DEAD BODY on the ground. Behind them there is a wagon.

POLICEMAN #2

Right! You take that body, and put it in that wagon!

SOLDIER #1

Me?! That's a laugh! You do it!

POLICEMAN #2

My friend, this is a Police matter! So I give orders to you!

SOLDIER #1

My friend, this is Martial Law! The Army is running this here show!

POLICEMAN #2

Ha! If you and that strutting little sawed-off shotgun of a -!

SOLDIER #1 has taken out his pistol. In cold blood, he shoots down the open-mouthed, wide-eyed POLICEMAN #2.

GIANNINI has seen everything. Quietly he slips away.

EXT. - OVER AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

From Santa Clara, SCORES OF PEOPLE come running to assist.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is blocked by a wall of fire, with a line of POLICE and TROOPS before it. Doubling back, he finds that even his former route is ablaze. He searches for another way through.

EXT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - A WHILE LATER

From the ruins, the LIVING and the DEAD are retrieved. The LIVING are calmed and bandaged. The DEAD - many of them unrecognizably disfigured - are laid out gently upon the

grass.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI's path is blocked by piles of bricks and mortar. Undaunted, he begins clambering over them.

EXT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - A WHILE LATER

The VIOLENT PATIENTS have been recaptured. The problem now: where to secure them? At last a reluctant temporary measure is adopted: tying them to trees on the asylum grounds.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is blocked by TROOPS. He tries explaining his situation. Not interested, they wave him away with their rifles. He frowns, considers, and doubles back.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Glancing at his watch, PEDRINI comes out of the front entrance and looks round. Grimacing, he scratches his head and looks up. Clouds of dark smoke and burning cinders fill the sky. He slowly shakes his head, and goes back inside.

EXT. - CEMETERY - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - A WHILE LATER

Scores of the DEAD are solemnly laid to rest.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI has taken a detour along the waterfront. Here too the damage is strangely random. And in sidings, streetcars smolder eerily. But at least he is finding a way through.

EXT. - OVER AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - JUST BEFORE NOON

SUBSTITUTE MEDICAL STAFF and SECURITY PERSONNEL are in place. PATIENTS are untied from the trees and led into temporary cells. A measure of order has been restored.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - NOON

GIANNINI finally arrives. To his great relief, the bank is still standing. He raises his head in thanks to Heaven.

But only a few blocks away, the detonations continue, the smoke climbs, and gigantic fires rage.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RICH

Wow! And now this is where Giannini moves the \$80,000, right?! 80,000! In 1906 dollars! Imagine having to ... move all that ... 'hot money'!

RAÚL

(amused)

No comment.

RICH

(amused)

And speaking of feeling the heat, you sure you ... don't want to ...?

RAÚL

A Sikh, in public - never...! But let's get back to Giannini....

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - ABOUT 12:30 P.M. - APRIL 18, 1906

At his desk in the one-room Bank of Italy, GIANNINI is looking over the books. PEDRINI stands by, listening absently to the unceasing rhythm of detonations in the bg. Pensively, GIANNINI lifts his head.

GIANNINI

So then you managed to bring back all of the overnight cash? \$80,000?

PEDRINI nods yes.

GIANNINI

Hmm... Before we do anything else, Armando, I think you'd better go and check on the fire.

PEDRINI

(leaving)

Right away, boss!

Stroking his mustache, GIANNINI slowly gets up.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A monstrous fire is cremating the earthquake-wreckage of entire city blocks built upon filled-in marshland.

Overwhelmed, and lacking leadership - not to mention water - professional and 'volunteer' FIREFIGHTERS flail about haphazardly and counterproductively.

PEDRINI has seen enough. He turns, and hurries back.

INT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Before the safe, GIANNINI stands stroking his mustache. Breathless and despairing, PEDRINI hurries in.

PEDRINI

Boss, it's BAD! The Call Building and the Palace Hotel - eaten alive by the flames! And next is us!

GIANNINI

Right. We close up. We move the money.

PEDRINI

But ... where to, boss...?! Oakland...? The Presidio...?!

GIANNINI

San Mateo. By day is too risky, though. So we'll wait for nightfall at my brother-in-law's place in North Beach... Now then - to make this money invisible, we'll have to hide it ... in plain sight!

PEDRINI frowns back in puzzlement.

INT. - PARLOR - JANE'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Blanche Partington's acquaintance JANE and her FATHER are taking stock of the damage. Bric-a-brac shards are strewn over everything. The piano has left skid marks on the floor. A life-size portrait of her brother has been ripped from its frame by the earthquake, and thrown clear across the room.

And yet, and yet - pristine on the mantel, stretching forth in a simple, elegant, eloquent gesture: a LILY IN A VASE.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI has commandeered two teams of L. Scatena & Co. horses and wagons. A mattress is propped up against the side of each wagon, and several crates of oranges are stacked nearby, alongside a spanking new Burroughs adding machine.

GIANNINI, his brother-in-law CLARENCE CUNEO, PEDRINI, and AVENALI are transferring boxes from the bank to the wagons.

Into one wagon go the money and securities; into the other, the bank books, forms, and stationery. Then crates of oranges are packed on top of the money and bank books. And finally, a mattress is secured on top of each wagonload.

AVENALI

And the ... adding machine, boss?!

GIANNINI

Well, there's clearly no room for it. Besides, it would attract too much attention.

PEDRINI

(grimly amused)

Now this is one way to move money around!

GIANNINI

(not amused)

I'll stow the adding machine in the safe, and lock up.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The air is filled with the insidiously invasive grating SOUND OF REFUGEES DRAGGING THEIR TRUNKS.

There are TROOPS everywhere, and most San Franciscans have begun to accept their presence as completely natural. But TWO CITIZENS demur.

CITIZEN #1

Judging by appearances, Martial Law has officially been declared!

CITIZEN #2

Hmm. But doesn't the Gospel urge us NOT to judge by mere appearances?

EXT. - LONERGAN'S BAKERY - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

SOLDIERS commandeer a large supply of bread, over the protests of the BAKER - none other than SUPERVISOR LONERGAN.

SERGEANT

(brightly)

Desperate times, sir...!

LONERGAN

But this is outrageous! Unheard-of! Mayor Schmitz will hear of this!

The SERGEANT rests a hand upon the butt of his pistol.

SERGEANT

(darkly)

I'm sure he'll also want to hear about your interesting recent ... 'price adjustments'! You know, so far, we've shot 300 people

SUPERVISOR LONERGAN

Since you ... put it like ...
Nevertheless, I feel I must -!

The SERGEANT has calmly fired a warning shot into the air. Swallowing hard, LONERGAN makes himself scarce. The SERGEANT smiles to himself, even while shaking his head in disgust.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The pint-sized FUNSTON is like a bossy child playing an important game. He shouts out orders left, right and center to dynamite-wielding SOLDIERS and VOLUNTEERS.

Two much taller JUNIOR OFFICERS exchange troubled glances.

FUNSTON

Oh Lieutenant, I want the tug
"Priscilla" seized and dispatched
in short order to Point Pinole ...
for more explosives!

LIEUTENANT #1

(looking down at Funston)
But sir, isn't that tug being used
for fighting the fire with sea
water?! After all, sir, the Navy is
also doing most creditable -!

FUNSTON is glaring up at him.

LIEUTENANT #1

Sir! Yessir!

LIEUTENANT #2

(looking down at Funston)
Uh sir, if I may, sir? Uh shouldn't
we uh be uh checking with the Mayor
first, sir?! Not to mention the uh
property owners themselves?!

FUNSTON

(looking up at him;
unctuously)
Lieutenant, the long and the short
of it is: I am the Big Noise. And I
say dynamite is the only way to go.

LIEUTENANT #2

Sir! Yessir!

The LIEUTENANT takes a step back. FUNSTON nods to the DYNAMITERS, and covers his ears. A terrific explosion makes FUNSTON and the OFFICERS flinch as if slapped in the face.

As they listen to the sound of tinkling glass and crashing masonry, FUNSTON's features are aglow with glee. When the smoke clears, all that remains of a mansion is a flight of stone steps leading nowhere. However, the dynamite has

served only to spread the fire and blow up TWO VOLUNTEERS.

FUNSTON touches his joined hands pensively to his lips.

LIEUTENANT #1

And your ... report, sir?!

FUNSTON

(smiling sourly)

Oh, my report will ... look after
itself!

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE
CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

In the lead wagon, GIANNINI sits grimly beside CLARENCE, who
is driving. AVENALI and PEDRINI are in the following wagon.
They all listen absently to detonations in the distance.

EXT. - ENTRANCE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN
FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Emergency use has been made of a billboard and several
trees. They are covered in a multitude of cards, letterheads
and scraps of paper upon which San Franciscans give notice
of their present location, or inquire after that of others.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

The park teems with perhaps 100,000 HOMELESS PERSONS of
every class, condition and nation. The EX-RICH rub shoulders
with the EVER-POOR; the SOCIALITE, with the SEAMSTRESS; the
SIKH, with the IRISHMAN; the CHILEAN, with the CHINAMAN.

Together with their rescued CATS and CANARIES, REFUGEES sit
or curl up in tents improvised out of blankets, bedsheets,
carpets, and clothing.

Each tent has a bundle of household belongings before it on
the grass. And each is tagged with the surname and former
street address of the occupants.

TENT-DWELLER #1

Well now, we've come full circle,
haven't we?! Didn't San Francisco
start out as a tent city?!

EXT. - RELIEF KITCHENS - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK -
SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

REFUGEES form orderly, patient, tolerant queues.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

On crude stoves of brick and stone, OTHER REFUGEES choose to
do their own cooking. Old and battered cooking utensils,
once discarded, are now indispensable.

And even the park's DUCKS have, literally, become fair game.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The going is frustratingly slow and hard. The streets are damaged and clogged with debris not only from the earthquake but also from PEOPLE COOKING on improvised sidewalk stoves.

Endless processions of traumatized and exhausted REFUGEES plod wearily along the streets. Everyone is carrying or pulling or pushing something.

At public fountains, people seek in vain for water.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

TROOPS drive through the park on wagons mounted with water barrels. MASSES OF PARCHED REFUGEES crowd around them. Each has to make do with only one drink.

EXT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Under a cypress tree, in a flowing white beard and sackcloth, a self-anointed PROPHET quivers with ecstasy.

Looking on, TWO SOLDIERS exchange troubled glances.

PROPHET

Most High God Himself vouchsafes
unto ME the authority to call down
perdition upon this ... Babylon of
the West! But wait! There's more!

The TWO SOLDIERS exchange another glance. Then they move within striking distance of the oblivious PROPHET, who is deeply flattered by this most welcome 'attention'.

PROPHET

For I say unto you, it is predest-!

One of the SOLDIERS has calmly knocked the PROPHET out cold with a telegraphed uppercut. Yet he never saw it coming.

The CROWD doesn't bat an eyelid, dispersing without a word.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

To the distress of the LIVING HORSES, DEAD HORSES bestrew the streets.

SCATTERED TROOPS try to maintain order. But they can't be everywhere.

EXT. - FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - A WHILE LATER

The QUEUE is a microcosm of San Franciscan social strata - without the stratification. For now, the MAID and the MILLIONAIRESS are one. But some are still adjusting.

DOWAGER

One has of course often given to charity... But never before now has one actually had to receive it!

MOST WOMEN are bareheaded. SOME contrive to adorn themselves with improvised makeup. MANY WOMEN still wear only their nightclothes or underskirts. A FEW sport a piece or two of fine jewelry, or garments of silk or French lace.

However, everyone draws strength from a common misfortune.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI thinks he sees WOULD-BE ROBBERS on every street corner. And he is partly right, because predatory GANGS OF RUFFIANS are prowling about. But two wagons of orange crates topped with mattresses are not exactly enticing.

The RUFFIANS turn away, and GIANNINI sighs with relief.

EXT. - NEAR WOMEN'S LATRINE QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - A WHILE LATER

With concern, revulsion, and pensiveness, a clique of OPERA SOCIALITES are remarking upon the proximity to the public relief kitchens of the fly-ridden, unroofed latrines.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

And just look at those people there
- spitting within spitting distance
of the 'No Spitting' signs!

Dr. JIM passes by. Wearing the insignia of a Red Cross Surgeon, he is conducting a site inspection with a COLLEAGUE. Both of them are as troubled as the women.

The COLLEAGUE, eyebrow raised, points out something near the shrubbery, where flies buzz. JIM holds his nose. Comparing notes, the two pensively continue their inspection.

EXT. - WOMEN'S LATRINE QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Last in the queue is SNOBBISH SOCIALITE. Ahead of her are PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE, and WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE - now less world-weary, and holding a newspaper.

They are joined by NAIVE SOCIALITE, now fan-less, and less naive. She wears a dressing gown and slippers, along with something new: an engagement ring.

Going in the opposite direction, and hiding her head with shame, the half-naked BARONESS VON ORSENBERG manages to creep past unnoticed.

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE
(discreetly gleeful)
Oh hello there, dear. I see even you aren't above using the ... emergency sanitary engineering!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
(smiling sourly)
It's the one exception, dear, which proves the rule! I suppose Funston has blown up your house too.

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE
Well yes, dear, 'fraid so!
(almost convinced)
But it was for the common good!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE
(glumly)
You took the words right out of my mouth, dear.

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
(noticing the ring)
I didn't know you were engaged, dear!

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE
(blushing)
With nowhere to go, I swallowed my pride and ... proposed to Nolan!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
Hmm... Look, there's You-Know-Who! My, but she's lost weight since her trip abroad!

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE and LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE exchange a superior, knowing glance.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
(to Less World-Weary Socialite)
Hmm... Anyway, I see you are making do with a newspaper there, dear.

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
Well, yes. Appropriately enough, The Call...! And what have you?

From a pocket in her dressing gown SNOBBISH SOCIALITE blushingly takes out a few pages torn from a book.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

A few of us, in direst need, raided
the Associated Colleges library!
I'm sure I needn't explain!

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE

(discreetly gleeful)
Some things are best left unsaid!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE

(glumly)
You took the words right out of my
mouth, dear.

INT. - BASEMENT - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO -
AFTERNOON

MAYOR SCHMITZ is about to address a cross-section of FIFTY
PROMINENT CITIZENS, including social services pioneer KITTY
FELTON. (Many faces are familiar from the Opera Lobby.) Ruef
and the Board of Supervisors, however, are nowhere in sight.

JAMES PHELAN and RUDOLPH SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

PHELAN

Well, at least it smells better
than City Hall!

SPRECKELS

But just how legal, I wonder, is
this Committee?!

PHELAN

As legal, no doubt, as the Martial
Law!

SPRECKELS cuts short a guffaw as SCHMITZ clears his throat.

SCHMITZ

Gentlemen - and Lady! - I have
invited you all here today to aid
me in aiding our stricken city...!
Let it be given out that three hun-
... that three men have already
been shot for the crime of looting!

DINAN

They had it coming, Mr. Mayor!

GARRETT W. ENERNEY raises a hand.

SCHMITZ

Mr. Enerney?

ENERNEY

I move that Mayor Schmitz be
authorized to draw checks for
whatever amounts may be necessary!

CHIEF DINAN enthusiastically seconds the motion. PHELAN and SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI

Chin up, boys! Only another few miles, and we'll be feasting on my sister-in-law's minestrone!

The others lick their lips - then grit their teeth.

INT. - BASEMENT - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE AFTERNOON

SCHMITZ

But moving on -

A loud explosion nearby. The Hall of Justice shakes. Glass and cornice-work come crashing down. General alarm.

J.D. HARVEY

Uh Mr. Mayor, your life is too valuable, at this dreadful juncture in our history, for unnecessary risks to be taken! May I suggest we vacate the building at this time?

Rising, SCHMITZ scrapes his papers together with ruffled dignity. Led by J.D. HARVEY, they all quickly file out.

EXT. - PORTSMOUTH SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Under the supervision of POLICE CHIEF DINAN, crates of beer are commandeered from a nearby saloon. Simultaneously, piles of police records are being carried out to the square from the burning Hall of Justice. Then the records are covered with a sheet of canvas. And as a fire-retardant, the beer is poured over the sheet.

Traumatized, a band of WINOS stand helplessly looking on.

EXT. - CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Just arrived, GIANNINI & CO. exchange glances of relief.

GIANNINI

We'll wait here till sunset. In these conditions, in the dark, the 17 miles to San Mateo won't be easy! But security comes first.

The OTHERS exchange grim looks. But they know he is right.

EXT. - DINING ROOM - CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH -
SAN FRANCISCO - SUNSET

GIANNINI, CLARENCE, AUGUSTA CUNEO, PEDRINI, and AVENALI are just finishing supper.

GIANNINI

Complimenti, Augusta! Now don't tell Clorinda, but that was the most welcome minestrone of my life!

General assent. AUGUSTA modestly takes a bow. GIANNINI looks out of the window.

GIANNINI

We can leave soon.

PEDRINI

(sudden realization)

What about Schmitz's curfew, boss?!

GIANNINI

We'll just have to risk it.

GIANNINI plans his next move. The OTHERS steel themselves for another grueling, nerve-racking, heartbreaking journey.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A PATROLLING SOLDIER passes a streetcar made into a sleeping place by THREE REFUGEES. But with the tumult of sirens, car horns and detonations, sleep is well-nigh impossible.

In the streetcar, someone lights a candle.

PATROLLING SOLDIER

You there! Martial Law! Lights out!

At once the candle flame is blown out.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Out of the surrounding darkness, under a pall of smoke which hangs like the image of despair, the Great San Francisco Fire flares up miles and miles into the sky.

EXT. - BACK YARD - CARUSO'S FRIENDS' HOUSE - OUTSKIRTS OF
SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Under a lonely winking star - and upon the cold, hard ground - CARUSO prepares a sleeping place for himself and his photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt.

His MET COLLEAGUES appeal to him to come inside. Doggedly he refuses, lies down, and makes himself as comfortable as he can. They look on helplessly, then shrug and slowly go in.

INT. - PARLOR - JACK & JILL'S NEW HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

Sick of fumbling and stumbling in the dark, JACK & JILL daringly light a candle. Sighing with relief, they pour themselves a glass of muscat. But they keep glancing guiltily at the candle, which sheds an uncertain glow.

JILL

I know it's against the curfew,
Jack dear, but let's be reasonable!

JACK

Besides, Jill dear, it's not as if
a decent, uncorrupted, tax-paying
man and his wife can be arrested
for lighting a candle, is it now?!

Chuckling, they innocently clink their glasses.

EXT. - JACK & JILL'S NEW HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT
WHILE LATER

Passing by their open window, the PATROLLING SOLDIER stares indignantly at JACK & JILL. Then he calmly shoots them both: first JACK, in the head; then JILL, who tumbles after.

PATROLLING SOLDIER

Serves 'em right! This is Martial
Law! I'm just following orders!

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A SENTRY looks on while exhausted and soot-blackened FIREMEN stagger in upon the square from burning buildings all around. TROOPS dole out dedicated food and water to them, and even a revivifying swig from a bottle of whisky. Then the FIREMEN collapse in heaps just where they are standing.

INT. - THE STAGE - BALLROOM - FAIRMONT HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO
- ABOUT 11 P.M.

The COMMITTEE OF FIFTY are distributed along the edge of the stage and upon packing cases.

SCHMITZ

(checking notes)

So that's, what, 19 subcommittees?
Excellent! I remain confident that
much of the city can still be saved
from the flames! So let's reconvene
here again first thing tomorrow!

(rising)

Thanks, and good night to you all!

The haggard COMMITTEE OF FIFTY slowly disperse.

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - ALMOST MIDNIGHT

Curled up on piles of clothes, REFUGEES snatch what sleep they can, between detonations and aftershocks.

But the FIREMEN and VOLUNTEERS, in the death-like sleep of utter exhaustion, have no such problem. GROUPS OF ADMIRING AND GRATEFUL WOMEN go round from man to man, gently spreading rugs and blankets over them.

The SENTRY clears his throat discreetly.

SENTRY

Twelve o'clock and all is well!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - DAYBREAK

A SOLDIER slowly passes, his face covered by a newspaper: The Call-Chronicle-Examiner, dated Thursday, April 19, 1906.

The headline: 'EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE: SAN FRANCISCO IN RUINS'.

EXT. - FRONT GATE - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

As day breaks, GIANNINI & CO. - jubilant even in their exhaustion - finally arrive. Stiffly, they clamber down, stretch their limbs, and pat and feed the sweating horses.

The BOYS and CLORINDA come out running to greet them.

GIANNINI

Don't run, boys! I'll come to you!

GIANNINI hasn't noticed, but CLORINDA is no longer pregnant.

EXT. - GARDEN - JANE'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Wiping his brow, Jane's FATHER climbs out of a big hole he has dug in the garden. He thrusts his spade into the ground beside a large open trunk. It is carefully packed with silverware, cut glass, and fine china. Near each end, two lengths of rope have been slipped in underneath.

JANE comes down the stone steps with a batch of documents, which she carefully adds to the trunk.

JANE

Phew! I think that's the lot, Papa!

PAPA

(closing the trunk)

Right then. Let's get to it!

With infinite care, as if it were a coffin holding a beloved family member, they lower the trunk into the 'grave'. Then they stand silently looking on, as if paying their respects.

PAPA

Dead and buried. Safely dead and buried! But she will rise again!

INT. - FRANKLIN HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE AFTERNOON

Once more, the COMMITTEE OF FIFTY have had to move.

SCHMITZ

Now as to those relief funds -

Everyone looks around as RUEF coolly enters. Making a beeline for SCHMITZ, he brazenly stands behind his chair.

PHELAN

(aside to Spreckels)

The Power ... behind the Throne?!

RUEF

My invitation must have been mislaid. No matter. I'm here now.

But there is no seat for RUEF. Wincing, and sighing discreetly, SCHMITZ offers him a corner of his desk.

SCHMITZ

Now where were we? Ah yes. How best can we administer the overwhelming influx ... of relief funds?

Instantly, RUEF's ears prick up. PHELAN and SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The profile of Chinatown has been reduced by the fire to windsifted ash. Smoking holes pockmark the ground.

'ARCHEOLOGIST' #1

They say there's a secret Chinatown down there up to 3 stories deep!

'ARCHEOLOGIST' #2

This is no time for the finer points of city planning! Remember what we're here for: Archeology!

'ARCHEOLOGIST' #1

Point taken! Point taken!

Foraging among the ashes, they retrieve lumps of molten gold and silver, with ornaments of porcelain, bronze, and jade.

'ARCHEOLOGIST' #2

Now this is Archeology 101!

TROOPS arrive, firing warning shots. The 'archeologists' escape with their 'liberated' 'cultural artifacts'.

INT. - FRANKLIN HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

RUEF

In short, if offers of relief funds from abroad were to be declined by the President, that would be most regrettable!

PHELAN and SPRECKELS roll their eyes. SCHMITZ frowns.

SCHMITZ

In any case, Abe will chair the Subcommittee for Relocating the Chinese. Besides, Cantonese is one of his languages! But moving on -

RUEF

Eugene, if I may... The Chinese can NOT be allowed to return to Chinatown! After all, it is one of the city's most desirable areas!

KITTY FELTON

(pointedly)

Abe, wasn't Chinatown once an abandoned business district?

RUEF

(sourly)

Kitty, we live. And learn.

PHELAN

(cynically)

I myself have learned, Abe, that you personally have sustained real estate losses of roughly 1 million!

SPRECKELS

Now that's rough!

General but discreet sniggering.

RUEF

Be that as it might, I propose moving Chinatown to Hunter's Point.

KITTY FELTON

But that's miles away! The Chinese won't stand for that!

RUEF

They'll learn to live with it.

KITTY FELTON

Oho! When women have the vote?!

SCHMITZ

(conciliatory)

Aren't we forgetting the tourists?

KITTY FELTON

Precisely! Portland and Seattle would love to have the Chinese! But can San Francisco - especially now - afford to give up its Chinatown tourist revenue?!

Mutterings and murmurings.

SPRECKELS

It occurs to me that even as we sit here squabbling, ABC Chinatown businessmen like Tin Eli are no doubt planning to -!

RUEF

Look, Rudi, I don't care even if XYZ Chinatown businessmen are -!

KITTY FELTON

Gentlemen, it is always a tactical error to underestimate the Chinese!

RUEF and PHELAN stare back sourly at her.

EXT. - FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

QUEUING MAN

A truly biblical catastrophe! And all the city records destroyed!

QUEUING WOMAN

What, even the birth certificates?!

QUEUING MAN

Dust to dust, my dear! And ashes to windswept ashes!

In the bg., the ears of a CHINESE COUPLE have pricked up - discreetly. QUEUING WOMAN notices them - indiscreetly.

QUEUING WOMAN

But just think of the poor ABCs!

QUEUING MAN

A-B-Cs?!

QUEUING WOMAN

American-Born Chinese, my dear. Now they will never be able to prove that they were born here! That they are citizens by right!

QUEUING MAN is not really interested. Exchanging a despairing glance, the CHINESE COUPLE slowly turn away.

EXT. - NEAR FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK -
SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The CHINESE COUPLE suddenly come to a dead stop, their features transfigured. Exchanging glances, they realize that they have simultaneously had the very same brilliant idea.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - SUNRISE

GIANNINI stands ruefully in what is left of the Bank of Italy building: the safe and the adding machine inside it are nothing but a blackened, molten lump.

With deep compassion, GIANNINI looks at the devastation all about, where RESIDENTS wander among the smoldering ruins of their homes or sit in numb despair upon the ashy ground.

GIANNINI notices a PREMATURELY AGED WOMAN (LOTTA, now less plump, and without her bun). LOTTA's sooty face is channeled with tears. She has just salvaged a charred rectangular object from the ground. Tenderly she blows off the ash. The object is now recognizable as a picture frame.

With a low, aching sigh LOTTA looks upon the emptiness of the frame. She throws back her head. With her eyes open yet unseeing, she stares briefly up at Heaven. Then she closes her eyes and tenderly, seemingly, she kisses the empty space where the photograph used to be. Hugging the frame to herself, LOTTA waves a small, sad goodbye to the burnt-out remnants of her home, and slowly turns away.

Softly sighing, GIANNINI looks at LOTTA. He looks at the HOMELESS PEOPLE. He looks at the ruined houses. He looks at the molten safe. He strokes his mustache.

EXT. - CARUSO'S WAGON - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO -
AFTERNOON

The wagon moves at a maddeningly slow pace, but the DRIVER seems in no great hurry. All about: devastation, fire, heat, and pitiful REFUGEES.

Seated between a MET COLLEAGUE and MARTINO, CARUSO is still hugging his photograph of President Theodore Roosevelt. While puffing on a cigarette, he covers his ears against the unceasing detonations. He rubs his stiff, aching limbs.

MET COLLEAGUE

Serves you right, Enrico, for
sleeping on the cold, hard ground!

CARUSO

Better I sleep on bricks than 'ave
a ton of bricks fallin' on my 'ead!

EXT. - FERRY STATION TO OAKLAND - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE
LATER

GIANNINI stands looking on:

A common desperation has brought together THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE of all races, languages, and classes - a desperation to escape the flaming destruction behind them. Maniacally they claw at the iron gates of the ferry station. Unable to break through, SOME take out their frustrations on those nearest them.

Amid all the noise, amid all the confusion and clutter of a bizarre assortment of salvaged possessions, EXHAUSTED PEOPLE sleep upon pallets of rags or other improvised bedding.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

As GIANNINI continues to watch, the ferry is drawing up to the slip, and the ferry gates are thrown open.

Instant pandemonium: THOUSANDS OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN fight like wild beasts to get on board. Shirts and bodices are ripped open in the frenzy. FAINTING WOMEN are quickly propped up lest they be trampled underfoot. A wild TIDE OF HUMANITY is swept up into the ferry.

EXT. - ON THE FERRY - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

To the sound of dynamite detonations, several of Caruso's MET COLLEAGUES stand peering out in vain over the wharf. (GIANNINI is still there.)

On the wharf, a WOULD-BE THIEF calmly tries to steal the rings from the very fingers of an ASTONISHED WOMAN in the crowd. SOLDIER #2 calmly approaches.

MET COLLEAGUE #1

No sign of him! I hope he hasn't -!

SOLDIER #2 has calmly shot the WOULD-BE THIEF. He falls down dead to the ground, where blood begins to pool. Yet no-one makes much of it.

THE SAME - A WHILE LATER

There is still no sign of Caruso. His MET COLLEAGUES check their watches and shake their heads despondently.

On the wharf, SOLDIER #2 is having a second look at a FAT MAN, who moves with difficulty in a capacious overcoat. As if to convince himself, SOLDIER #2 glances up at the sky, where the sun is indeed warmly shining.

Thus emboldened, SOLDIER #2 calmly rips open the overcoat of the FAT MAN. Everyone laughs to discover that he is in fact a THIN MAN, with bags of provisions taped all over his body.

SOLDIER #2, however, is not amused. And neither is GIANNINI.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

And at last there he is: CARUSO! Brushing past the deeply ruminating GIANNINI, he runs up to the OFFICERS controlling

access to the ferry. A furious argument ensues.

Meanwhile, stroking his mustache, GIANNINI strides off.

EXT. - WHARF - FERRY STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The OFFICERS wave CARUSO away. But as if it were a passport, he hands them his signed photograph of the President.

OFFICER #1

"With kindest regards ... from
Theodore Roosevelt!"

The OFFICERS exchange a glance, considering.

OFFICER #1

Well, if you're a friend of Teddy,
come in and make yourself at home!

Like a conquering hero, CARUSO boards the ferry, which is loaded up to the water line with CHEERING REFUGEES.

INT. - BILLIARD ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - is playing billiards all by himself. An ATTENDANT notices him and approaches.

ATTENDANT

You - a doctor - still HERE, sir?!

MEANS

(self-pityingly)
Navy Surgeon Victor Means, at your
service! And waiting.... Still
waiting...! For orders...!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

LT. UDELL is helping to fight fires. Suddenly doubled up in agony, he clutches discreetly at his testicles. He takes a deep breath, and springs back to work.

EXT. - ON THE FERRY - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

As the ferry pulls away, PEOPLE are still trying to jump aboard. Only TWO make it. SOME are clinging to the side of the ferry. MOST fall into the water.

All the while, ear-shattering detonations resound, bringing hundreds of stunned and dead fish up to the surface.

Jammed together on deck, CARUSO and his FELLOW-REFUGEES stand awe-struck at the sight of San Francisco in flames. Like torrid dragon's breath, a wind from the city sweeps over the waters toward them. Everyone takes a step back.

CARUSO sighs, shakes his head, and lights a cigarette. Recognizing him, a FELLOW-REFUGEE approaches.

FELLOW-REFUGEE

Maestro Caruso! What an honor! How lucky for music that you survived!

CARUSO smiles back modestly. Meanwhile, upon the wharf - across the barrier of the waters - SEETHING MASSES are beckoning and almost praying to them.

CARUSO

You know, my friend, in that 'otel room, in that h'earthquake, I was a songbird swingin' in a cage! What a shakin'! What a roarin'! Like a 'idden monster growlin' and grindin' its teeth, and its belly rumblin' with unfillable 'unger! 'Ell of a place! 'Ell of a place! No-no-no! I no come back 'ERE!

EXT. - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MORNING

The bank is still standing, but its elegant walls are blackened by fire, and its windows are all boarded up.

INT. - OUTSIDE THE MAIN VAULT - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SWEATING BANK MANAGER gives the nod. Nervous, gloved SECURITY STAFF shrug and begin opening the great vault.

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL

Uh pardon me, sir, but wouldn't it be uh prudent to uh wait just a -?!

SWEATING BANK MANAGER

Wiseman, there is a time for prudence, and a time for -!

Yelps of alarm from flinching SECURITY STAFF interrupt them. At the very first contact with the air, the cash and documents in the vault have burst into flames.

WISEMAN is fighting the urge to say "I told you so!"

SWEATING BANK MANAGER is looking round for someone else to take the blame.

INT. - OUTSIDE LT. UDELL'S ROOM - NAVAL HOSPITAL - MARE ISLAND - MID-MORNING

NURSE #1 walks absently past the door, does a double-take, retraces her steps, and grimaces with sarcasm.

UDELL, reading nonchalantly in bed, has just completed Emerson's "The Conduct of Life".

NURSE #1
 Why, Marine Lt. Udell, welcome
 back! Been sowing your wild oats,
 hmmm?! Well, as long as you've gone
 and got it out of your system!

Smiling back mysteriously, UDELL closes his book. Shaking her head in disgust, NURSE #1 turns away.

INT. - READING ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE MORNING

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. Deep in an armchair, NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - is checking the Personals in The San Francisco Call.

A SUPERIOR OFFICER enters at the far end of the room and looks round. Spotting MEANS, he makes a beeline for him.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

SUPERIOR OFFICER
 (balefully)
 Means, I'd like a word with you!

MEANS
 (rising obliviously)
 Ah, at last! By all means, sir!

SUPERIOR OFFICER
 (ominously)
 After you, Means!

MEANS
 Why, thank you, sir!

MEANS steps ahead self-importantly. The SUPERIOR OFFICER looks on in wonder and disgust. Smiling darkly, he follows.

INT. - GRAND PARLOR - LEADING BANKER'S MANSION - OUTSKIRTS OF SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON - SATURDAY, 21 APRIL, 1906

A private meeting of San Franciscan BANKERS, BUSINESSMEN, and PROMINENT CITIZENS, including KITTY FELTON.

The mood is grim, even hopeless. Participants are mostly seated or semi-seated on sofas, chairs or pouffes around the HOST. Others look on from standing positions.

In an alcove, partially hidden in shadow, a POWERFULLY-BUILT MAN sits on a low stool before a window which looks out over the smoldering city below. Although he listens intently to the proceedings, he directs his gaze toward San Francisco.

A tense silence. Someone clears his throat. A PROMINENT BANKER shakily stands up. In a voice cracked and hoarse with strain he addresses the assembly.

BANKER #1

Gentlemen, Lady, the city was first shaken to pieces in the monster's jaws! Now, even as we speak, it is rapidly being burnt to a cinder!

The gloom has only increased. KITTY FELTON stands up.

KITTY FELTON

Gentlemen, what of our starving, homeless, frightened people?! Who will lead them to safety? Who will give them courage, give them hope?!

KITTY looks round expectantly. But no-one stirs. No-one answers. No-one meets her gaze.

The MAN IN THE ALCOVE gazes out of the window upon the smoldering city below. He strokes his mustache.

ANOTHER BANKER stands up.

BANKER #2

With respect, Miss Felton, many who only days ago were millionaires, now are mendicants! And even those who in theory have the means to help, in practice are helpless!

General assent. The MAN IN THE ALCOVE strokes his mustache.

YET ANOTHER BANKER stands up.

BANKER #3

Our bank vaults, though fireproof, are heated hotter than Hell! And when can they safely be opened? In days...? Weeks...? Months...?!

General assent.

BANKER #4

Yes, I'm afraid our assets are effectively frozen - as it were!

Sour laughter. But general assent.

BANKER #5

I say we keep our banks closed until the insurance companies start paying! For 6 months or so! After all, we can't just allow the public to withdraw 'their' money whenever they just damn-well feel like it!

Vigorous assent.

BANKER #1

In short, the banks need more time;
the city needs more time; the
situation needs more time. Frankly,
our heads are in a fog, and our
actions are those of sleepwalkers!

The MAN IN THE ALCOVE has heard enough. He rises, and reveals himself: GIANNINI. He buttons up his jacket, moves the low stool closer to them, and steps up onto it.

He speaks simply, directly, powerfully. His demeanor and booming voice are alive with strength, confidence, compassion - and more than a hint of criticism.

GIANNINI

Miss Felton, your life of timely, compassionate, and enlightened service does you credit. But gentlemen, you must speak for yourselves! My head has never been more clear! My actions will be as bold, direct, and decisive as the situation demands! How can we tell our suffering fellow-citizens to wait?! The time for action is now!

Mutterings and murmurings.

BANKER #1

Mr. Gee-a-ninny, we all credit your ... good intentions! But this is no time for populist sentimentality! The risk - it's far too great!

Vigorous assent. GIANNINI eyes them with cool irony.

GIANNINI

Yes, perhaps our customers might not be able to repay. But even so, we simply have to help them rebuild their lives, and our beloved city!

More mutterings and murmurings. GIANNINI steps down.

GIANNINI

Gentlemen, if you keep your banks closed, they will stay closed!

GIANNINI goes to the exit, where he turns and pauses.

GIANNINI

Gentlemen, I for one will start serving my customers immediately! And I urge you all to do the same!

GIANNINI fixes them with a piercing stare, but they look away. GIANNINI sighs to himself. Then, inclining his head toward KITTY FELTON, he clamps on his hat, and strides out.

EXT. - OVER GOLDEN GATE PARK - NIGHT

Only now - when it is too late, when the fires are all out - is the city drenched by a cold, driving rain.

Thinly-dressed REFUGEES run for cover. Looking on, SOME scratch their heads at the inscrutable ways of Providence. OTHERS are secretly or even openly cynical. STILL OTHERS mouth a silent prayer of thanks.

EXT. - NEAR NEWSPAPER STAND - DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - MORNING

Dr. JIM and ELEANOR - equally haggard - have just bought a copy of the San Francisco Chronicle dated Sunday, April 22, 1906. ELEANOR is anxiously looking through an article on the front page. The headline reads: 'BRAVE DOCTOR LOSES AN EYE'.

ELEANOR

Oh my goodness! Poor Dr. Edwards!

JIM

What's that, dear?

ELEANOR

It seems, dear, that Dr. Edwards ran to assist soldiers injured by an explosion - only to be injured himself by a subsequent explosion! Yet in no time he was back on duty!

DR. JIM

Poor Clarence. He deserves a medal.

ELEANOR

So do you, dear! Credit where it's due!

DR. JIM

Tell that to Fire Chief Sullivan, dear. He died early this morning.

ELEANOR

Oh poor brave man!

DR. JIM

I'm afraid, dear, that in the land of the blind, the farsighted will always preach to the none-so-deaf!

EXT. - RUINED HOUSE NEAR RUINED BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Up above, the sun shines brightly. Down below, a HOPELESS MAN ('NONO' SPERANZA) is seated among the ashes of his house. His WIFE (SISI) and LITTLE DAUGHTER (LILY) are trying to cheer and encourage him. But to no avail.

Note

From previous scenes, their faces are all familiar.

SISI

Come on, dear! Snap out of it! We started from nothing - we can start from nothing once again! Where's that old pioneering spirit?!

'NONO'

No. No use. No point. No hope.

In the bg., as SISI and LILY are exchanging a disappointed glance, several NEIGHBORS run past excitedly. One of them is LOTTA; and another, the City Hall janitor: PROFUMO (now without his nose-peg). SISI and LILY look up at them with astonishment. But 'NONO' shows only a flicker of interest.

Noticing them, LOTTA stops, turns, and runs up.

LOTTA

(to Other Neighbors)

Look, it's Sisi, Lily and 'Nono'!

(to the Speranzas)

The wharf! Giannini is on the wharf! His bank is on the wharf!

(running off again)

Giannini! Can you credit it?!

Giannini is open for business!

'NONO'

Giannini's bank has burned to the ground! "Open for business" indeed!

YET MORE PEOPLE run past excitedly. Into the eyes of SISI comes a look of fierce determination.

EXT. - NEAR THE WHARF - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

LILY emerges round a corner, followed by 'NONO', being dragged along kicking and screaming by her and pushed by SISI. They all come to a dead stop, their eyes wide.

A YOUNGISH COUPLE with TWO SMALL, EXCITED CHILDREN pass slowly by them without even noticing them. The HUSBAND is counting out banknotes to his WIFE, who re-counts them.

COUNTING HUSBAND

Imagine! Mr. Giannini knew exactly how much we had in our account!

RE-COUNTING WIFE

And he seems to know the value of every single property in North Beach! With a brain like that, in no time he'll be a millionaire!

She begins stuffing out her modest bodice with the notes, taking care that both sides are evenly balanced.

SISI, LILY and 'NONO' turn and face the wharf.

EXT. - THE WHARF - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

As the SPERANZAS look on in wonder, the tall, powerful, genial figure of A.P. GIANNINI is like the eye of an electric storm of anticipation, with the RESIDENTS OF NORTH BEACH swirling all around him.

The scene: fallen masonry; charred and skeletal buildings; twisted girders; cracked and orphaned walls; sheared-off cast-iron columns; and sunken, fissured, undulating streets.

Yet in the very midst of such devastation, GIANNINI is a figure of indomitable strength, determination, confidence, faith, and humanity. Here are no mere 'good intentions'. Here is no mere 'populist sentimentality'. Here is the courage of far-sighted compassion in action.

In the midst of the greatest disaster in the history of San Francisco, A.P. GIANNINI is making cash loans to the devastated survivors, who might not even be able to repay.

And GIANNINI's confidence is becoming infectious. Wide-eyed, 'NONO' exchanges a look with SISI. And only now, lifting his gaze, he notices the brightness of the sky.

EXT. - QUEUE BEFORE WHARFSIDE EMERGENCY BANK - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI's 'bank' is a bag of money on a plank supported by two barrels.

While GIANNINI serves his CUSTOMERS, a CLERK on his left makes notations in a big book. Looking on from GIANNINI's right is his beloved stepfather LORENZO SCATENA.

GIANNINI is just finishing up with a loan to the PARETI family. The SPERANZAS are next in line.

GIANNINI

That's the ticket, Mr. Pareti! The phoenix of San Francisco will rise again, thanks to folks like you!

MR. PARETI

No, it's thanks to you, Mr. Giannini!

GIANNINI

Not at all! The credit is due to the brave people of San Francisco!

The PARETIS smilingly make way for the SPERANZAS.

GIANNINI smiles a genial welcome. He has quickly sized up 'NONO's state of mind. He shakes hands with SISI and 'NONO', and tousles the hair of little LILY.

GIANNINI

Heartily welcome! And cheer up!
 While there's life, Mr. Speranza,
 (with a twinkle)
 there's ... hope! Not so?!
 (to Clerk)
 These are the Speranzas: Lily, Sisi
 and 'Nono' - I mean Thomas! Tom!

Crossing out 'Nono', then 'Thomas', the CLERK writes 'Tom'.

GIANNINI

They're also in the fruit & veg
 trade, Pop!
 (to the Speranzas)
 Look, you're not alone in this. My
 father here has also lost
 everything. But we must all start
 again, mustn't we?
 (tousling Lily's hair)
 After all, our children are
 depending on us! Not so, Lily?!

TOM almost recoils with the shock of a belated realization.
 He peers guiltily and apologetically at LILY.

Looking on, GIANNINI makes a rapid mental calculation.

GIANNINI

In these difficult times, we are
 making loans mainly on character,
 and in a spirit of compassion and
 community service. What our clerk
 has here is not our usual ledger,
 but what we call our Calamity Day
 Book. How much would you need?

The SPERANZAS exchange a look.

SISI

Is ... \$3,000 ... too much?!

GIANNINI exchanges a glance with SCATENA.

GIANNINI

(booming voice)

Everyone knows that our thrifty,
 family-minded and civic-minded
 community here has an
 understandable distrust of the
 banks of the past! Which is why so
 many of us keep our gold under the
 mattress, or buried in the garden!

Another exchange of glances with SCATENA.

GIANNINI
 (booming voice)
 So tell you what. You supply one
 half. We'll supply the other. That
 way, there's enough for everyone!

The SPERANZAS exchange a shy glance, then nod yes.

GIANNINI
 That's the spirit! We'll fix up
 your loan ... on the barrelhead!

Chuckling, GIANNINI nods to the CLERK, who makes an entry in
 the Calamity Day Book. As GIANNINI counts out the money,
 LILY is paying very close attention.

LILY
 This money ... smells like oranges!

Smiling broadly, GIANNINI shakes hands with SISI and TOM,
 then lifts up LILY in his powerful arms.

GIANNINI
 It's easy to see that our Lily here
 has a ... good nose for business!
 (tapping her nose)
 You'll see, little one, you'll see!
 You and I - and all who join us -
 will make this city bloom again!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL
 DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - SMALL HOURS - THE PRESENT

RICH
 Wow! What a man! What an
 inspiration...! And what a
 disappointment I would be to him!

RAÚL nonchalantly gets up from RICH's chair, stretches, and
 moves toward the door, where he faces RICH.

RAÚL
 Don't be so hard on yourself. You
 can always give back the 10
 million. Or invest it in some
 long-term community project.

RICH
 Give back?! The 10 million?! The
 \$10 million I so stupidly lost?!

RAÚL
 (patiently)
 No. The \$10 million for the palais
 in Vienna. Dr. Clara could no doubt
 suggest a suitable community
 investment.

RICH

You mean, use our saved-up money
for the Vienna palais ... to ...?!

RAÚL

(patiently)

Indeed. Besides, if you HAD killed
yourself, Clara would have ended up
using that money, for that very
purpose, anyway. So you would have
killed yourself, and destroyed your
family, for no reason at all.

RICH slowly gets up, goes to the window, and stares out.

RICH

(turning)

OK. OK. I see where you're ... But
how to ... explain it to Clara?!

RAÚL

Somewhat more easily, I imagine,
than explaining to her that you've
blown her friends' money with no
possibility of repayment. And not
to mention, blown your brains out.

RICH slowly sits down in his own chair.

RICH

I find myself ... upon reflection
... starting to ... come round to
... your way of thinking.

RAÚL

Good. All the same, I'd better ...
hold on to that.... Just for now.

RAÚL is pointing at the pistol, still on the table. RICH
stares at it in shock and embarrassment, as if seeing it for
the first time. Seeing all it might have represented, had
RAÚL not come in when he did. Breathlessly, RICH gestures to
RAÚL to take the pistol. RAÚL puts it in a pocket, and
glances at his watch. His eyes widen.

RAÚL

Chris will be wondering where I am.
Unless of course he's fast
asleep.... Oh and by the way, those
Calamity-Day character loans that
Giannini made to the North Beach
community - every last one of them
was repaid. Makes you think, hey?

RAÚL inclines his head in greeting, and leaves. With
moistened eyes, RICH watches him go. Then he takes up the
two photographs lying face-down on his desk, and gazes at
them, sighing.

One photograph is of CLARA - all by herself. The other is of the CHILDREN - all by themselves. And both CLARA and the CHILDREN - all by themselves - are noticeably more carefree. Noticeably less pressured by perfectionism.

Hugging the photographs, RICH begins sobbing uncontrollably.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

His head thrown back, CHRIS is snoring in bliss. As RAÚL emerges from the elevator, CHRIS groggily awakes.

CHRIS

Raúl! What's up?! What did I miss?!

RAÚL

History. History past. And present.

Rolling his eyes, CHRIS throws back his head, and promptly falls asleep again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - LOBBY - BANK OF AMERICA BRANCH - SAN MATEO - DAY - A FEW WEEKS LATER

With RAÚL beside them, RICH and CLARA (who are holding hands) gaze reverently at the inscription to A.P. GIANNINI on the wall. CLARA's features and manner are softer, sweeter, kinder, and more accepting.

RAÚL

(pensively)

"He marshaled the small resources of the many, and made them available for the common good. He tempered his judgment with faith in man's integrity, and proved that this was justified ..."

CLARA

(pensively)

"... He found satisfaction for his own ambitions in the achievements of those he helped..."

RICH

(pensively)

"... He changed the face of banking by emphasizing its obligation ... to serve..." I could never measure up to that!

CLARA

(with a twinkle)

Have you ever tried, Rich darling?

CLARA kisses him lingeringly on the lips. Then she hooks one arm into RICH's and the other into RAÚL's.

CLARA

Now let's go and see where such a great man was laid to rest!

EXT. - GIANNINI-SCATENA FAMILY PLOT - HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CEMETERY - COLMA - SAN MATEO COUNTY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Before the grave of A.P. GIANNINI, RICH, CLARA and RAÚL stand bowed in the early-autumn silence.

In the bg., RENZO (10), ROSARIA (29), and ERMINIA (27) - all dressed in black - pensively pass by.

Eyes closed, a breeze caressing her white veil of Venetian lace, CLARA prays inwardly. Then she makes the Sign of the Cross, and opens her eyes ... to see RAÚL reverently removing his turban. As RAÚL's never-cut salt-and-pepper hair cascades down, RICH's eyes almost pop out of his head.

CLARA

(delighted)

My goodness! Your hair is even longer than the Empress Sisi's!

RICH

But-but-but ... a Sikh! ... A Sikh ... in public ... never ...!

RAÚL

True. But when they made up that particular rule, they never imagined that such a man could ever exist ... as Amadeo Giannini!

Raising herself balletically upon the point of one foot - like the Statue of Victory in Union Square - CLARA gives RAÚL a little kiss. Then she tousles RICH's hair, clasps his right hand ... and bites it.

While RICH and RAÚL are still marveling at this, CLARA nonchalantly removes her veil, and puts it in her bag.

CLARA

You know, in France - our sister land of liberty, equality, and fraternity - in France, for wearing this veil, I could be arrested!

And now, as if having proved to them and to herself that she is indeed capable of levity, CLARA is suddenly all business. Busy re-adjusting his hair and putting on his turban, RAÚL exchanges a knowing, rueful glance with RICH.

CLARA has taken a notebook and a red felt-tip pen from her bag. Opening the notebook, she double-underlines something.

CLARA

Now as to a suitable community
investment, here are my thoughts...

And - heads all bowed in concentration - CLARA, RICH and
RAÚL slowly walk away....

THE END