

SCRIPT TITLE

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EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - COIT TOWER - NIGHT

Artie Shaw's Nightmare plays as fog swirls around Coit Tower.

EXT. - STREET - NIGHT

Foghorns BLEAT as SID CUMMINGS, white, mid-30's, dressed in a grey suit jacket and slacks with a short, red, snowflake print silk tie, a grey fedora hat and two-tone grey leather wing tipped shoes walks quickly down a darkened street.

He crosses the street to get under a street lamp and removes a piece of paper from his suit jacket and reads a handwritten note.

Dogpatch. Illinois & 22nd. 12:15 a.m.

Sid checks his watch, which reads 12:20. He looks around, shaking his head.

SID (V.O.)
Hell, I don't know my way around
Dogpatch. Franklin is gonna go ape.

Sid puts the paper back in his jacket and heads down the street.

EXT. NIGHT - ABANDONED VICTORIAN HOUSE

Sid crosses the street and heads towards the back of the house.

Sid walks slowly up the rotting, wet wooden steps.

He turns the doorknob, which comes off in his hand.

He kneels down and inspects nails sticking out of the door. He pushes the doorknob against the nails on the left side of the door. They slide inward with ease.

Sid smiles.

SID (V.O.)
Good job, Lena. I could kiss you.

Sid pushes the doorknob against the nails on the right and the sound of a heavy board falling to the floor is heard on the other side of the door.

Sid rises and pulls a revolver from his jacket as he pushes the door open.

INT. DARKENED ROOM - NIGHT

Sid closes the door and lights a wooden match. His eyes scan the room back and forth.

SID (V.O.)
No Franklin, no running water, no
German. I don't like this.

The match goes out.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)
I don't like this at all.

Sid lights another match.

Behind him, THE BIG KRAUT, dressed in a double breasted suit, taller, muscular and with short, blonde hair, is illuminated.

The Big Kraut grins, raises a fist and punches Sid in the back of the head, knocking him unconscious.

EXT. MINNA STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Sid lies face down at the end of a dirty alley.

He slowly stirs, gingerly touching a large bump on his head.

He reaches for his Fedora hat and squints against the sunlight.

SID (V.O.)
The Big Kraut must've had iron
boots for fists. That, or I was
getting soft.

Sid places his hat on his head, and heads down the alleyway.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)
I had to get back to the office. I
had to make sure that Franklin was
okay, that Lena wasn't on ice...

He stops short and stares in disbelieving wonder at the contemporary street scene on Market Street.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Where the hell am I?

EXT. MARKET STREET - DAY

Sid crosses the street, dodging a yellow 1940's streetcar, his eyes bordering on terror.

He stops at a bus island and moves away from a group of BLACK TEENAGERS listening to hip hop.

He looks in confusion as he bumps into two WHITE PUNK ROCKERS sitting on the sidewalk, panhandling.

FEMALE PUNK ROCKER

Excuse me, sir. Got any spare change for beer?

MALE PUNK ROCKER

Hey, at least we're being honest.

Sid looks around nervously, crosses the street and hurries down the sidewalk.

A PAIR OF MEN holding hands walk down the sidewalk towards him.

As they pass him, they kiss lovingly.

Sid stops, and slowly turns his head back to look at them, then continues down the sidewalk.

Sid attempts to stop PASSERBY, to no avail.

SID

Excuse me, ma'am. Sir? Sir! Hello, I was wondering...

Sid sees a VENDOR in a San Francisco Chronicle newspaper stand.

Sid heads towards the stand, fishing a quarter out of his pants.

SID (CONT'D)

Gimme one.

The vendor grabs a paper, folds it in half and hands it to Sid.

VENDOR

That'll be a dollar.

SID

A dollar? I wanted a newspaper, not a new Oldsmobile.

Sid gives three more quarters to the vendor, turns away, unfolds the paper and reads the headline.

RECENT BUDGET CONSTRAINTS HALT PLANNED MANNED MISSION TO MARS.

Sid closes the newspaper and throws it in the trash.

He steps into a doorway, pulls out a cigarette and lights a wooden match.

His hand is trembling. He quickly puts the trembling hand in his pants pocket.

SID (V.O.)

Pull yourself together Sidney.
Squirting tears like a little girl
isn't going to help anything.

(lights his cigarette)

Bitches and hoes, aliens asking
money for beer and rockets to Mars.
Either I belong in the booby hatch
or Orson Welles put one hell of a
mickey in my drink.

A WOMAN on a cell phone stops in front of Sid.

WOMAN ON CELL PHONE

I know I'm supposed to update the
web page, but my iPad couldn't find
a Wi-Fi hot spot. Jerry, how can I
post a tweet if I can't log on?

The woman hangs up the phone and looks at Sid.

WOMAN ON CELL PHONE (CONT'D)

Redonkulous!

SID (V.O.)

(watching after her)

All right, Sidney. One thing is
clear. Their brains are scrambled,
but they don't think yours are. So
just get back to the office, and
you can sort this all out. Don't
call attention to yourself. Keep
cool and blend in.

Sid exits the doorway and crosses the street.

The shadow of a jet passes over him and the ROAR of the engine causes Sid to stop and crouch in the middle of the street, eyes closed.

SID
WHAT IN THE HELL WAS THAT?!

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - FOYER - DAY

Sid stands in an Art Deco lobby reading the registry board.

A SECURITY GUARD approaches him.

SECURITY GUARD
Can I help you sir?

SID
I'm looking for Austin and
Cummings, Private Investigators.

SECURITY GUARD
No office here with that name. Are
you sure you have the right
address?

SID
This is 870 Market?

SECURITY GUARD
Yes. There IS an Austin and
Associates, Suite...

SID
1090. Yes, thank you.

Sid quickly exits the building.

EXT. UNION SQUARE - DAY

Sid stands, nervously examining his surroundings, at the head
of a queue at a Stanley's Steamers hot dog stand.

HOT DOG VENDOR
Next. Hey, buddy. You're next.

SID
Hot dog.

HOT DOG VENDOR
Nothing else?

SID
Mustard.

The vendor gives Sid the hot dog and Sid hands him a twenty
dollar bill.

The vendor takes it, looks at it and then stops.

HOT DOG VENDOR
What is this supposed to be?

SID
A double sawbuck.

HOT DOG VENDOR
Dude, that's a real hot dog. In exchange, I need real money.

SID
That's real money.

HOT DOG VENDOR
(reading from the bill)
"Will pay to the bearer on demand"?

A TOURIST behind Sid moves closer to the hot dog stand.

TOURIST
What did you just say?

The vendor hands the twenty back and motions for the hot dog.

HOT DOG VENDOR
And why are there red numbers on this?

TOURIST
Red ink? Excuse me, do you mind if I see that? Oh! It's a 1934A twenty dollar Federal Reserve note! And look at the condition!

TOURIST'S WIFE
Here we go again.

TOURIST
Sir, if I may, being an ardent coin and silver certificate enthusiast and collector, you would do better...Is that the only one you have or...

SID
(opening his full wallet)
They're all like this.

TOURIST
Oh!!!

TOURIST'S WIFE
Even when we're on vacation!

TOURIST
Sir, please. Do not buy hot dogs,
or anything else for that matter,
with this money. Find a dealer in
old coins and sell it. You have
quite a lot more money in your
wallet than I think you may
realize.

INT. COIN DEALER

Sid looks at coins and bills illuminated by tiny lamps as the PROPRIETOR examines each of his bills.

PROPRIETOR
Quite an unusual and varied
collection. The condition is quite
remarkable. Are you sure you want
to sell all of the bills?

SID
How much?

PROPRIETOR
I'd say, thirty seven hundred.

Sid looks up sharply at the proprietor.

SID
I give you this \$329, and you'll
give me 3,700?

PROPRIETOR
It's a fair price.

Sid nods and the proprietor begins counting off \$100 bills.
Sid picks up one of the bills and stares at it.

SID
And this is legal tender.

The proprietor takes a black counterfeit detector pen and writes a line on one of the bills, shrugs his shoulders and nods.

Sid looks at the proprietor and then the money with a confused face.

INT. MUNI/BART STATION

Sid heads through the crowd.

He stops at the turnstile, noticing there is no slot for his quarter.

A WOMAN pushes passed him, places a blue card on top of the turnstile; the automatic doors slide open and she enters.

Sid scans the station with squinted eyes and notices a billboard on the wall.

CHANGE TO CLIPPER: Your "all in one" transit card.

Sid walks to a ticket machine, looks at it strangely, inserts \$20, receives a card and walks back to the turnstile.

He places his card on top of it and nothing happens.

He lifts the card and places it down again.

A COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE comes from the turnstile.

COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE
Please see agent.

Sid recoils in startled surprise.

He cautiously approaches the turnstile and places his card on top of the turnstile again.

COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE
(CONT'D)
Please see agent.

Sid looks over at the empty metal and glass ticket agent box. He slowly leans halfway down to the turnstile.

SID
(quietly)
There's no agent.

A LINE OF PEOPLE has begun to form behind Sid.

A MAN at the end of the line addresses Sid.

ANGRY MAN
What's the hold up down there?

Sid places his card on top of the turnstile.

COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE
Please see agent.

SID
There's no agent!

ANGRY MAN
Hey buddy, are we gonna get on this
train today or what?

COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE
Please see agent.

Sid punches the turnstile and the door quickly opens.

COMPUTER GENERATED FEMALE VOICE
(CONT'D)
Thank you.

Sid walks through the turnstile.

INT. MUNI STATION

A MUNI train disembarks as Sid scans the station.

A sign on the far wall behind him reads CIVIC CENTER/U.N.
PLAZA.

EXT. MUNI ESCALATOR - DUSK

A YOUNG BOY, standing in front of a white banner with a large
blue Star of David on it and the words BIRTHRIGHT, is selling
candy bars.

All the other passengers hurry towards the escalator, but Sid
stops and stares at the boy. The boy notices.

BOY
Buy a candy bar to help fund
Birthright, Mister?

Sid slowly walks towards the boy, his eyes narrowing.

SID
Last week when I read in Stars and
Stripes about what the Huns had
done to you people...

Sid opens his wallet and stuffs a \$100 bill into the boy's
can.

SID (CONT'D)
I hope you boys get your own land
someday, where no one can hurt you
like that again.



Sid walks towards the escalator.

The boy looks down at his can and then at Sid.

BOY
It's called Israel.

Sid snaps his fingers and points back at the boy.

SID
THAT name, would be aces.

EXT. U.N. PLAZA - SUNDOWN

City Hall is framed between tall pillars of cement crowned with round Art Deco lit globes of the world.

A one-foot ribbon of grey cement cuts through the red brick of the plaza. Chiseled into the cement are these words:

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

A few feet further along another strip of cement bears these words:

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind.

Sid reads these words, places a cigarette in his mouth, lights it with a snap of his fingernail on a wooden match, and walks slowly towards City Hall.

EXT. 870 MARKET STREET - DUSK

Sid stops in front of the building and then withdraws to a doorway.

He places a matchstick in his mouth and a tall, thin black man in his early 30's, FRANK AUSTIN, exits the building.

Sid throws the matchstick to the ground and calls to him.

SID
Hey buddy. You got a match?

FRANK
I don't smoke.

SID
Nobody...smokes here.

Frank starts to walk away.

SID (CONT'D)
You're Franklin Austin.

FRANK
Frank. I'm sorry, have we met
before?

SID
My name is Cummings. Sid Cummings.

Frank smiles, lifts his hands and starts to walk away.

SID (CONT'D)
I knew your grandfather.

FRANK
(laughing)
My grandfather died in 1945, so I
hardly think...

SID
I knew your father too. But he was
just a little boy.

FRANK
(angrily)
I don't know what game you're
playing, but I've had a rough
day...

SID
I know the feeling.

FRANK
So if you want money for drugs or
whatever, just take this five bucks
and fuck off, okay? I'm not in the
mood for any song and dance.

SID
(looking at the money,
then Frank)
I don't need any dough.

FRANK
Good. Then I keep the five bucks
and you fuck off.

Frank walks away. Sid looks down at his wing-tipped shoes.

SID
Does your family still own that
cabin on Zephyr Cove on Lake
(MORE)

SID (CONT'D)

Tahoe with the red painted porch
and the hidden spring activated
shelf behind the third drawer on
the second cabinet where they hide
the twelve bottles of Scotch so the
kids won't drink it?



Frank turns around as Sid pulls a matchstick from his suit coat.

FRANK

Who are you?

Sid slides the match down the wall, igniting it.

SID

Still gotta kick the radiator three
times in Suite 1090 before she
blows any heat? One, two...

Sid lights his cigarette.

SID (CONT'D)

...Three?

FRANK

No. They fixed that five years ago
when they remodeled. What do you
want?

SID

Frank. I'm in kind of a tight...
(eyes watering)
You're the only person I know here.
Can we get a drink? I'm buying.

FRANK

(warily)
All right.

SID

Is Lefty O'Doul's still around?

INT. LEFTY O'DOUL'S

Frank sits at a table, watching Sid drain a large glass of whiskey in one gulp.

SID

Now we're cooking with gas. First
time I've felt right all day.

A REDHEADED WAITRESS passes by.

Sid holds up his index, middle and ring fingers.

SID (CONT'D)
Sweetheart? I'll take another.
About this deep.
(beat)
Franklin...

FRANK
My name is Frank.

SID
Sorry, you look so much like your
granddad, I get mixed up.

The redheaded waitress puts another large glass of whiskey on the table.

Sid flips her a twenty dollar bill and slugs the drink in one gulp.

SID (CONT'D)
Thanks, doll. Frankl...Frank. I've
been going over this all day in my
head, but it only figures as
screwy. I thought maybe if I said
it out loud, told it to someone, I
could get it straight.

FRANK
Told me what?

SID
(leaning in; quietly, but
urgently)
Last night it was June 17th, 1945.
Last night I left Suite 1090 at 870
Market Street to meet your
grandfather at Illinois and 22nd in
Dogpatch, below Pier 70. When I
burst in the joint, the Big Kraut
blind sided me...

FRANK
(dispassionately)
The Big Kraut.

SID
I don't know his name. And then I
wake up face down in an alley off
Mission, and when I look up, I'm in
San Francisco, but it's NOT San
Francisco. Everything's goofy.
(MORE)

SID (CONT'D)

My office is now my partner's
grandson's office, my money is
worthless, except it's worth ten
times what it was...

The redheaded waitress drops off another whiskey.

REDHEADED WAITRESS

On the house. I wish every tourist
tipped like you.

(beat)

Doll.

Sid pushes his hat back, downs the whiskey and rubs the knot
on his head.

SID

It doesn't figure.

FRANK

I think you need help.

SID

Brother, ain't that the truth.

FRANK

Professional help. You should at
least go to a hospital.

SID

This knot ain't that bad. I've had
plenty worse. Believe me.

FRANK

Undoubtedly you have, as I can see
by your drinking. That's probably
it. You were at some...theme
costume party or something
yesterday, or the day before, and
you've been on some bender and
bumped your head. You're just
confused, that's all.

Sid looks off into the distance.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Go to the hospital, tell them what
you told me and get checked out.

SID

You think I'm making this up.

FRANK

I didn't say that. I think maybe you're just...confused.

SID

What about me knowing about Zephyr Cove?

FRANK

Our family's name is on the mailbox by the side of the road. Sometimes we rent it out. During the Super Bowl, things like that. Maybe you saw it once, maybe you stayed there.

SID

What about the radiator?

FRANK

It's an old office building. I've only rented that space for eight years, you could have...

SID

(forcefully)

And my wallet full of money from the '30's and '40's? What about them?

FRANK

Show me a bill.

SID

(beat; very, very quietly)

I changed them all this afternoon.

Frank rolls his eyes, sighs and then rises.

FRANK

I'm not trying to be an asshole. You asked me to listen and I listened. Everything you've told me can be explained. I think you've had some sort of head trauma and should seek medical attention.

Frank pulls out his Blackberry. Sid stands too.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Look, I'll call you in a couple of days, see if you're all right. Give me your cell.

SID
You want my CELLS?

Frank stares at Sid with an expressionless face.

FRANK
Your phone number.

SID
Won't do any good.

FRANK
Why not?

SID
Because if you dial Montgomery 456,
it's just going to ring at Suite
1090.
(exits)

INT. DARKENED HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Sid sits smoking in a chair.

His face and a bottle of whiskey on the side table are illuminated by the large red neon sign outside his window.

SID (V.O.)
"My grandfather died in 1945."
Franklin's dead. 1945. That means
Franklin, Lena, my mother...

Sid rubs a hand across his forehead and sighs.

SID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Maybe the kid was right. This whole
damn thing's above my pay grade.
Maybe I'm just dreaming this. Maybe
I never had an office at 870
Market. Maybe if I drove up to
Tahoe and went to the cabin with
the little red porch I'd see in the
driveway a black 1936 DeSoto S1
Airstream Deluxe Touring Sedan
license number 6Y175189.

Sid takes a long drink of whiskey from a plastic cup.

SID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Like hell I would.

INT. SUITE 1090 - DAY

Frank sits behind his desk, pencil in his mouth, staring out the window.

The radiator begins clicking and THREE BURSTS OF STEAM come out of it; two quick bursts and then the third.

Frank turns his head towards the radiator as his telephone rings.

FRANK

Hello? Oh hi, Vanna. Yeah, I was gonna...I don't know. I find out this afternoon if I have to fly down to L.A. or not. Probably, though. Friday at the latest. No, I'll be back in plenty of time. We'll go to Suppenkuche first, then...where? The Wine Cellar? The Weinkeller. No, I don't know where that is. Look, I'll call you if I get delayed and we'll just meet at the U.N. Plaza in front of City Hall. Yeah, okay, hey, I'll try and swing by before I leave today?

(smiles)

'K. Bye.

Frank hangs up and his SECRETARY enters looking over papers, but not at Frank.

SECRETARY

Here are the papers from the Swiss lawyers. The company wants you to decide whether or not to sign by Monday. Take them with you on your flight and look them over.

FRANK

So I am going?

The secretary nods her head and leaves the room.

EXT. MARKET STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Sid stands in a doorway watching the street parade.

SID (V.O.)

Well Franklin, you used to ask, "Where do you start when you've got nothing to work on? With the rules, stupid."

(MORE)

SID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(lights a cigarette)
Never, never, trust your client.
That's rule number one. Now, Frank
Austin wasn't exactly my client,
but he was the only connection
between where I was and where I was
supposed to be. My cush was still
at three large and change, but I
figured I'd better get moving
before I was down to twos and fews.

Sid watches as Frank exits 870 Market.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)
This one's for you, Franklin.

Sid pulls his sunglasses from his suit jacket.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)
I put on my cheaters and got to
work.

Sid follows Frank from across the street, and then runs
across traffic when Frank boards at the head of a cable car.

EXT. CALIFORNIA STREET CABLE CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Sid watches Frank from the back of the Cable Car.

The cable car lurches to a stop and rings its bell just above
Chinatown. Frank jumps off.

Sid waits a block and then jumps off too.

EXT. CALIFORNIA STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Sid watches Frank greet VANNA BURKHARDT, blonde, buxom, late
20's, in front of an office building.

Frank kisses Vanna on the side of the face, they hail taxis,
enter, and leave separately.

Sid comes to a stop where the two had left, and looks up at
the office building Vanna had exited.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING

ANGELA BREWSTER, frumpy, early 20's, wearing a name tag
bearing her first name, sits behind the receptionist desk.

Sid enters and sits in a leather chair.

He picks up and opens a Time Magazine with PRESIDENT OBAMA on the cover as he scans the room.

Sid's eyes glance down at the magazine as he looks from left to right and his expression freezes.

His eyes look back to the article.

His head then turns to the magazine and his expression changes to confusion as he begins reading.

He flips the magazine closed to look at the front cover, and then looks slightly above the magazine.

SID
(quietly)
Huh!

Sid looks up at the receptionist's desk as one of Angela's BOSSES enters and throws a pile of papers her across her desk.

BOSS
Jesus Christ, Brewster! These things have to be in order! You wanna file shit willy-nilly you can go STRAIGHT back to account-temps. Got it?

The boss exits and Angela picks up and straightens the papers while fighting off tears.

Sid is suddenly in front of the desk.

SID
You know how to tell that the boys upstairs are really sharp?

Angela looks up at Sid.

SID (CONT'D)
It's by who they put out front. Who is the first person a potential client sees? Is it some togged to the bricks tomato? No, if the boys have got any sense they won't do that. No one remembers the company. They'll only remember the broad with the painted-on face and cans.
(MORE)

SID (CONT'D)

But you put a dame who knows what she's doing, someone everyone can identify with, a gal who represents the company by being quiet, efficient, a behind the scenes person who gets things done and is invaluable without ever hearing a word of recognition...That is mark of a smart company.

ANGELA

(beat)

Can I help you, Mister...?

Sid pulls an envelope from his jacket.

SID

Cummings. I was supposed to meet my brother Franklin Austin here. I was going to give him this before...

ANGELA

Your brother?

SID

Well, I'm an old friend of the family.

ANGELA

He's already left. With Ms. Burkhardt.

SID

Ms. Burkhardt...already left...

ANGELA

Only Mr. Austin. Ms. Burkhardt's still here. In The City.

SID

Well, maybe I can give this to her, and she can give it to him.

(smiling)

Should I leave it here with you?

ANGELA

Um. She won't be back this evening.

SID

Know where I can find her?

ANGELA

Well, it's Wednesday. She usually goes to The Silver Cloud. She loves to sing.

SID

Where is that again?

ANGELA

1994 Lombard.

Sid smiles deeply, raps his knuckles on the desk and winks.

SID

Thanks, Angel-A.

Angela watches as Sid turns and leaves through the front door.

ANGELA

(quietly)

I sometimes go there.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

TWO SWISS MEN in their late 50's, STEFAN VOGEL and JAN TRINKL sit at a conference table.

On the video screen is CHRISTIAN KELLER.

Frank enters the room, slightly out of breath, carrying a manila folder.

He gives a nervous smile and sits down.

FRANK

Sorry, L.A. traffic.

STEFAN

Mr. Austin? I'm Stefan Vogel.

FRANK

How do you do?

STEFAN

Jan Trinkl. Frank Austin.

FRANK

(nods)

Pleasure.

STEFAN
(motioning towards the
screen)
And you already know Christian
Keller.

FRANK
Doctor.

CHRISTIAN
You've had a chance to go over the
papers?

FRANK
Yes, on the flight down.

CHRISTIAN
And what is your opinion?

FRANK
Well, I've really only glanced over
them.

JAN
Billions of Swiss francs went into
that research.

STEFAN
(calmly)
He has five more days to read, Jan.

CHRISTIAN
Herr Vogel is right. We did not
reach our own conclusions after
only one afternoon.

FRANK
What I've seen is most impressive.
If it actually works...

JAN
It will be like a bomb going off
over the entire world.

Frank snorts a laugh, but his smile quickly fades as Jan
stares at him expressionlessly.

CHRISTIAN
May I assume that you are leaning
favorably, Mr. Austin?

FRANK
Yes. You could say that. No one
else knows about this formula?

CHRISTIAN

There are a few, but the number is small. You know us, and our company. We know others, higher up, who know others.

STEFAN

We should let Mr. Austin get back up to San Francisco. He has a lot of important reading to do.

FRANK

Dr. Keller. Why the rush?

CHRISTIAN

We go public in six months. I'll be honest, Frank. Yours wasn't the only company we looked at.

FRANK

That's another thing. My firm is so small...and this is huge.

STEFAN

Your company IS small Mr. Austin. The smallest of all we looked at.

JAN

Which is precisely why you have been chosen.

CHRISTIAN

Because your firm is so small, your share worth makes your corporation attractive to us.

STEFAN

Without offence, the relative low worth of your stock...

CHRISTIAN

The six months will give us time to set up offshore dummy companies, who will quietly buy stock in your company at a modest price.

JAN

Which in turn will garner the highest windfall for our investors and ourselves.

FRANK

(laughing)

Isn't that illegal?

JAN
(leaning back in his
chair)
Purely a formality to avoid
excessive taxation.

CHRISTIAN
It's the way things are done.

JAN
You will be rich 100 times over.

STEFAN
(rising and offering a
handshake)
Have a pleasant flight, Mr. Austin.

Frank looks at Jan; Jan merely nods.

Frank collects his folder and heads out the door.

CHRISTIAN
Oh, and, uh, Frank. This meeting
never happened.

Frank looks down at his folder and then exits the room.

EXT. PARKING LOT - RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

UNDERCOVER SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DETECTIVE JOEL EPSTEIN
watches Frank enter his car and drive away.

Joel lights a cigarette.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Christian closes his briefcase and looks sternly at Stefan
and Jan.

CHRISTIAN
Verstanden?

Christian leans forward and the video screen goes black.

Stefan prepares to leave but Jan stops him with a hand on his
arm.

JAN
A moment, Stefan. We need to talk.

Stefan picks up his briefcase and heads towards the door.

STEFAN

I've got a 9 O'clock flight.

JAN

I think we need to begin phase two.

STEFAN

We have five more days.

JAN

Did it seem to you that Mr. Austin had the face of a man who is going to sign anything in five days?

STEFAN

No, but after further reading, perhaps...

JAN

The nearer we get to the date, the faster events are sure to accelerate.

Stefan heads into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Stefan and Jan head down the hallway towards the front door.

STEFAN

I think you're being precipitous.

JAN

If bold action is not taken by junior partners, they shall remain as such indefinitely.

STEFAN

(stopping)
Christian Keller...

JAN

Dr. Keller has been working on Frank Austin with no visible success long enough. We have but five days left.

STEFAN

Other contingencies are being employed.

JAN
(turning and walking down
the hall)
For instance?

STEFAN
(quickly following after
him)
We have an agent. On the ground.

JAN
Who has produced as many results as
Dr. Keller.

STEFAN
These things take time, Jan.

JAN
And you feel comfortable with the
time allotted us?

STEFAN
No. But...

JAN
Phase two.

STEFAN
We were instructed to keep this
above board. 100% and strictly
legal. If it is traced back to
us and there is any inference of...

JAN
If anything is traced, Stefan, it
will end with the arrest of Mister
Choo.

Stefan stops in front of the door.

STEFAN
But Jimmy Choo? Why would you want
to rely on that gangster?

JAN
(opening the door)
In times of famine, Herr Vogel, the
Devil feeds on flies.

EXT. PARKING LOT - RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Joel Epstein puts out his cigarette while watching Jan and Stefan exit the building. He watches them enter their cars and then drive away.

Joel starts his and drives away too.

INT. SILVER CLOUD

Sid sits in the middle of a GROUP of CLIENTELE at a Karaoke bar.

THREE YOUNG WOMEN are singing Oasis' "Wonderwall" out of tune.

SID (V.O.)

I cast an eyeball around the joint.

Sid lights a cigarette with a wooden match and numerous people begin COUGHING passive-aggressively.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)

It was a cozy little Gin mill where a group of asthmatics gathered to watch canaries chirp into a machine with a Jap name.



Sid begins watching the front door and Vanna and two of her FRIENDS enter.

Vanna makes her way over to the Karaoke machine; the three women finish their song and laugh, stepping off the stage as no one applauds.

Vanna picks up the microphone, waits for the music and then begins to sing Bette Midler's "The Rose".

VANNA

Some say love it is a river
That drowns the tender reed
Some say love it is a razor
That leaves your soul to bleed.

Sid stands up and stubs out his cigarette.

SID (V.O.)

The song was breaking my heart.
I went over to the bar to frisk
my whiskers.

INT. BAR

A young male BARTENDER wipes glasses clean as Sid sits at a stool and begins scanning the bottles of booze.

BARTENDER
What'll you have?

SID
Not sure. Any suggestions?

BARTENDER
Sex on the Beach? Jager Bomb?
Pixie Piss?

Sid looks over at the bartender, and then his eyes narrow.

SID
Tell me something, Jackson. They
still make bore-bon?

BARTENDER
(laughing)
Yeah. They still make bourbon.

Sid holds up his index, middle and ring fingers.

SID
About this deep.

Angela, dressed in a vintage black hat with a black veil, apprehensively approaches Sid, tapping him on the shoulder.

ANGELA
Good evening. Mr. Cummings.

SID
Angel-A. Say! That hat's Fifth
Avenue.

ANGELA
You really like it?

SID
It's the bee's knees.

ANGELA
I bought it at La Rosa, on Haight.
(beat)
Today.

Sid's attention wanders back to Vanna.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 She has a beautiful voice, doesn't
 she?

Sid nods. The bartender gives Sid his drink.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 Would you like me to introduce...?

SID
 Not really a circumstance where
 I'd need a woman's help.

Angela nervously looks around and then exhales slightly.

ANGELA
 I'm going to sing tonight too.

Sid looks back at her momentarily.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 I go next.
 (beat)
 Well, not next, but after the
 people who are next.
 (beat)
 After them, the people after her.

Sid looks back at her.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 I'm next.
 (beat)
 Will you stay long enough to...?

SID
 Just you try and stop me, Angel-A.

Angela closes her eyes a little too long.

ANGELA
 Then I'll see you later, Mr.
 Cummings.

Angela exits as Vanna finishes to applause.

SID
 (to bartender)
 Better make that one more.

Vanna enters and sits next to Sid, smiling at the bartender.

VANNA
 Hey, Barry.

The bartender gives Sid his new drink and smiles at Vanna.

BARTENDER

Usual?

VANNA

Yeah.

Sid raises his glass and turns to Vanna.

SID

That song you sang was solid murder.

Vanna looks at Sid askance.

VANNA

You're putting me on.

SID

No, really. On the square.

VANNA

WHERE did you get that tie?

SID

Woolworth's. Three dollars and a quarter.

VANNA

(turning away from Sid)

Well, it looks like you paid three bucks for it.

SID

My name's Cummings. Sid Cummings.

BARTENDER

(placing a drink in front of Vanna)

There you go, Vanna.

SID

Vanna!? That's a Cracker Jack name for a frail.

Vanna SNORTS into her drink.

VANNA

Cracker Jack? Mr. Cummings...

SID

Sid.

VANNA

(sipping on her drink)
 Sid. I can honestly say I've never
 gotten a reaction about my name
 from anyone quite like that before.

SID

Vanna, what's it mean?

Vanna downs the rest of her drink in one gulp.

VANNA

It means my parents watched too
 much Wheel of Fortune.

Sid finishes his drink in one gulp and holds up his empty
 glass.

SID

(to bartender)
 Three fingers of King Kong.
 (beat, turning to Vanna)
 You want some more giggle juice,
 Vanna?

VANNA

Some what?

SID

We don't have to get out on the
 roof, but we could tip a few.

Vanna smiles and laughs slightly, fully eyeing Sid for the
 first time.

VANNA

Okay, Sid.
 (beat)
 Okay.

INT. SILVER CLOUD - STAGE

Angela approaches the Karaoke machine, eyes down on the
 floor, and then begins to sing The Squirrel Nut Zippers' "It
 Ain't You".

ANGELA

I've been searching all over for
 someone I can tell my troubles to.
 Searching all the wide world over.
 Is it you?

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)
(raises her eyes to look
at Sid)
Is it you?

EXT. SILVER CLOUD - NIGHT

Sid and Vanna exit the bar and head towards the sidewalk.

Sid lights a cigarette as Vanna holds up her arm to hail a cab.

VANNA
Well, Sidney. I thank you for a
most...entertaining evening.

SID
Don't get many of them, do you?

Vanna's face drops.

SID (CONT'D)
Or much else that you want.

VANNA
You don't know anything about me.

SID
I know enough.

Vanna's face turns indignant and she turns from Sid to more actively hail a cab.

VANNA
Do you?

SID
I think so. See, you're the kind
of twist who draws the bees like
honey. In swarms. But that's all
they are to you; just a crowd of
drones. Not one of them standing
out from the other, all of them
just wanting your honey, none of
them seeing you. And so you spend
your life looking just over this
swarm at some distant tomorrow
and never looking straight at what
you want, because you've lost faith
that someone, anyone, will be able
to give you what you want. What you
need.

A taxi stops in front of Vanna.

VANNA
And what, exactly, Mr. Cummings,
is it that I need and want?

SID
To feel like a woman.

Vanna opens the taxi door and turns back to Sid.

VANNA
(sneering)
And how would one go about doing
that?

Sid slowly looks Vanna up and down as he answers her.

SID
By grabbing you by the hips,
pinning you against a wall and
kissing you; Un. Til. You. STAYED
that way.

Vanna's lips part slightly as she stares at Sid.

VANNA
(breathless)
Get in the taxi.

INT. DARKENED APARTMENT - NIGHT

The SOUND of KEYS opening a lock are heard.

Vanna and Sid enter the room.

Vanna throws her purse across the room and the two begin
kissing passionately. Sid begins talking between kisses.

SID
From the first time I saw you
Vanna.

VANNA
Shut up.

SID
This ain't the jittersauce talkin'
neither.

VANNA
Shut.
(beat)
Up.

Vanna kicks the door closed behind her and Sid grabs her hips, pushes her against the door and kisses her hard.

Vanna moans, puts her hands on Sid's chest and pushes herself an inch away.

VANNA (CONT'D)
You wait right. Here.

Vanna enters the bathroom and closes the door behind her.

Sid reaches into his pocket and pulls out his last cigarette as he scans the darkened apartment. He crushes the empty pack in his hand.

He sees a waste paper basket and starts to drop the empty pack into it. He looks inside it curiously and then pulls out a torn sheet of paper.

He snaps a match lit and reads what is written on the paper.

Versicherung, C. Keller. Chemisch, J. Trinkl. Fertigung, S. Vogel. Ingenieurwesen, C. Keller.

Sid looks at the bathroom door, puts the paper in his pocket and silently leaves through the front door.

Vanna exits the bathroom dressed in black thigh-high tights, black panties and a black lace bra. She has a condom wrapper between her teeth.

VANNA (CONT'D)
(sing-song)
Sid-ney!

Her face grows confused as she begins looking through her dark kitchen and living room.

VANNA (CONT'D)
Sid?

She removes the condom wrapper from her teeth.

VANNA (CONT'D)
You gotta be fucking kidding me.

EXT. RUSSIAN HILL APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Sid exits the building and pulls a cigarette out.

SID (V.O.)

Maybe it was a coincidence that the gal stringing along my partner's grandson happened to have a piece of paper laying around with Kraut words on it. And maybe it'd be a coincidence if I laid out twenty saucers of milk in a dark alley, I'd have more cats around me than a single woman in her forties.

Sid lights the cigarette, and pulls out the piece of paper.

SID (CONT'D) (V.O.)

This was the first real clue I had to work on. Maybe I COULD still stop the Big Kraut by Monday. All I had to do now was just find someone who Deutsch sprechen.

Sid puts the paper in his pocket and walks away.

TWO MEN, one BLONDE the other ASIAN, emerge from the shadows on opposite sides of the street and watch Sid walk away.

They then turn and look silently at each other.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frank, carrying an overnight bag and the manila folder, opens the front door, a stack of mail in his teeth.

He gets a beer from the refrigerator and sits down. He begins opening his mail.

The first is a statement from VISA; he is \$20,000 in debt.

The second is a statement from MASTERCARD; he is \$17,000 in debt and he is delinquent on his monthly payment.

The third is a statement from his student loans at NORTHWESTERN; he owes \$124,000 and is delinquent on his last monthly payment.

Frank pushes the rest of the mail across the table, sighs, opens the manila folder and begins drinking his beer as he looks over the papers inside.

INT. SMOKE SHOP - NIGHT

Two Iranian SHOPKEEPERS, one 60, the other 40, are ARGUING loudly in Farsi over the BLARING Googosh song playing on the stereo as Sid enters.

OLDER MAN

In mordeshouri ra koja gozashti?

YOUNGER MAN

Hamoon jaye hamishegui, pireh khereft!

SID

Hey Jackson. Let me get a deck of gaspers. Fatimas.

The older man approaches the counter.

OLDER MAN

Let me ask you something my friend. Do YOU speak English?

SID

(indignant)
I speak American.

OLDER MAN

Then tell me, what is it that you would like to purchase?

SID

Fatimas.

OLDER MAN

No.

SID

Alright. Kent.

OLDER MAN

No.

SID

Uh, Old Gold?

OLDER MAN

No.

SID

(beat, staring expressionlessly at the man)
Phillip Morris.

OLDER MAN
No.

 SID
Pell Mell.

 OLDER MAN
Pall Mall? No.

 SID
You do sell cigarettes here.

A HIPSTER COUPLE enter and order from the other attendant.

 HIPSTER GIRL
Two packs of Parliaments.

Sid looks at the older attendant and nods.

INT. LEFTY O'DOUL'S

Sid enters looking around at the clientele and passes the redheaded waitress, who is taking orders from a group of ITALIAN TOURISTS.

 REDHEADED WAITRESS
Hey, Bogie. How's tricks?

 SID
Sweetheart.

Sid continues on, scanning each table.

He at last comes to a table with THREE DRUNK GERMAN TOURISTS.

 SID (CONT'D)
You Gents wouldn't mind if I
joined you, would you?

 FIRST GERMAN TOURIST
Hinsetzen, hinsetzen! We are ALL
friends! The whole WORLD is
friends!

Sid sits down and reaches into his pocket.

 SID
I'll make a deal with you boys.
I'll buy the next round, you
furnish me with some information.

 SECOND GERMAN TOURIST
Ja! Noch ein Bier!

Sid pulls out the torn piece of paper from his suit jacket.

SID
Whiskey's better.

The bartender LOUDLY calls time.

BARTENDER
LAST CALL!!!

The redheaded waitress saunters over to Sid's table, gives the tourists a once over and looks at Sid with a questioning raised eyebrow expression while holding up her index, middle and ring fingers side wards.

Sid responds by slowly holding up the same three fingers side wards and then turning four fingers upwards.

The waitress nods and winks at the same time and saunters back to the bar.

Sid lays the piece of torn paper on the table.

SID
Versicherung, You know what that means?

FIRST GERMAN TOURIST
Of course! I am in Insurance myself, that's how I...

SID
Chemisch?

SECOND GERMAN TOURIST
Almost like in English. Chemical.

Sid takes a pencil out of his pocket and begins writing the translations.

The waitress drops off the order and looks around the table as she puts the four glasses of whiskey down.

REDHEADED WAITRESS
Y'know Bogie, it might be safer for you to have these four instead of sharing.

SID
(flipping her a \$100 bill)
I'll make sure they behave.
(beat)
Fertigung?

THIRD GERMAN TOURIST
(sipping from the whiskey)
Um. To make. Production.
Industrial.

SECOND GERMAN TOURIST
Nein, nein. Manufacturing.

SID
Ingen...?

THIRD GERMAN TOURIST
Ingenieurwesen.

SECOND GERMAN TOURIST
It means Engineering.

SID
(raising his glass)
Well, bitte schon, boys. A deal's
a deal.

All four down the whiskey in one gulp.

Sid leaves as one German tourist beings coughing violently,
one spits his whiskey all over the table and the third
immediately falls asleep.

The waitress leans against the wall near the exit. She is
shaking her head as Sid approaches.

REDHEADED WAITRESS
I told you.

SID
I'll make it up to you sweetheart.

Sid exits as the waitress kicks herself off the wall and
walks back into the bar.

REDHEADED WAITRESS
You've already done that.

EXT. LEFTY O'DOUL'S - NIGHT

Sid exits, lights a cigarette and begins walking.

As he passes by an alley, the Blonde man and the Asian man
emerge from the shadows.

ASIAN MAN
Hey Mac. You got a light?

SID
I don't smoke.

BLONDE MAN
We want to talk to you friend.

SID
(walking away)
People in hell want ceiling fans,
but that ain't what they get.

The Asian man grabs Sid and pulls him into the alley.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The Blonde man punches Sid in the ribs, knocking him to the ground.

BLONDE MAN
We'd like you to stop seeing Vanna
Burkhardt.

Sid holds his ribs and turns painfully to lean against the alley's brick wall.

SID
What's it to you?

ASIAN MAN
What's it to her boyfriend?

BLONDE MAN
You don't, we have another
conversation. A long one.

ASIAN MAN
You staying around here?

SID
Yeah. In a hotel.

ASIAN MAN
Which one?

SID
The hotel fuck you.

The Blonde man shakes his head.

BLONDE MAN
No.

He then violently kicks Sid in the mouth, knocking him unconscious.

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)

The hotel night-night.

The Blonde man and the Asian man exit the alley.