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J. Edgar: The Most Powerful Man in the World

By Unknown

Let me tell you something.
The SCLC has direct Communist ties.
Even great men can be corrupted,
can't they?
Communism is not a political party.
It is a disease.
It corrupts the soul,
turning even the gentlest of men...
into vicious, evil tyrants.
What we are seeing is a pervasive
contempt for law and order.
Crime rates are soaring.
There's widespread,
open defiance of our authority...
and, mark my words,
if this goes unchecked...
it will once again plunge our nation
into the depths of anarchy.
It all starts out peacefully,
doesn't it, Mr. Irwin?
You have to live with the fact...
that you could've helped prevent
the bombings and the violence.
I'm more interested in what this says
about your FBI.
I have worked too long and hard
to just sit back...
and watch the bad guys capture
the spotlight again, haven't I?
The funny thing about notoriety...
especially the kind that needs
adoration, fame for fame's sake...
if unchecked,
it inevitably leads to villainy.
I suggest you look at what this
squabble is really about...
before you destroy the reputation
of the thing we both know you love most.
Sir, the
writer's here from Crime Records...
the PR Department.
Set him up with a typewriter
in my outer office.
Miss Gandy, it's time this generation

learn my side of the story.

Right away.

- Thank you.

In 1919, Agent Smith...

my first boss here

at the Department of Justice...

was Attorney General

A. Mitchell Palmer.

He was a Quaker.

He didn't believe in war, but he understood
the necessity of strength and resolve.

Believe what you will from historians...

most write from a present perspective,
forgetting context.

Mitchell Palmer was a hero.

- Are you all right?

- Unh.

- Are you all right?

- Yes. I think. Yes.

It's all right. Come here.

- It's all right, it's all right.

- No, it's okay.

Are you okay? It's okay.

Are you okay?

You see,

Palmer fought the radicals, just as I have.

And just as I have, he was targeted.

He wasn't alone.

Across the country that night,
eight bombs exploded, all at 11 p.m.

Two United States senators...

four cabinet members,

a Supreme Court justice...

John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan...

all of them targeted

by Bolshevik Communists.

Yeah, it shook the whole thing.

It was clear to me

the radicals bomb went off too soon...

leaving only his blood in the street.

But the inspectors used buckets to
clean up the mess instead of collecting it.

They discarded his gun

instead of preserving its prints.

But you see,
this wasn't clumsy police work.
In those times, it was normal procedure.
This may be the end of days
for this country, Dwight.
It was 1919, before anyone
respected criminal science...
before federal powers, before the FBI.
It was that night my eyes were opened.
That very night.
Is he a neighbor, sir?
No. He works in my office.
"There will have to be murder.
We will kill because it is necessary.
We will destroy to rid the world
of your tyrannical institutions."
You were at Attorney General
Palmer's home that night?
Well, let's leave that
to the reader's imagination.
You see, it's important we give
our protagonist a bit of mystery.
I could allude to a young man
who matches your description.
The best of both worlds.
Where did you get your law degree?
George Washington. I grew up here.
I had a mom to take care of,
so I stayed close.
I received an English degree there also.
Then I don't need to tell you that
what determines a man's legacy...
is often what isn't seen.
What's critical at this moment is...
that we re-clarify the difference
between villain and hero.
How do you think that compares
with today?
I'm not sure, sir. I'd like to hear more.
I could come back tomorrow.
Fine. But the pages stay here.
Of course, sir.
Agent Smith.
Thank you, sir.

Never a good idea to talk too loud.
Good morning, John.
Mr. Palmer has asked that you attend
the emergency meeting today.
Miss Gladwell, please remember...
it's Mr. Hoover.
Two o'clock.
Don't be too early this time.
It's as rude as being tardy.
And who is this lovely addition
to the secretarial pool?
Helen, introduce yourself.
Oh.
Pleased to meet you, Mr. Hoover.
I'm Helen Gandy.
Pleased to meet you.
Welcome to the Department of Justice.
You can notify Mr. Palmer
that I will attend.
Of course.
He's always a charmer.
I wouldn't take anything very seriously.
Jeremy, I need your help.
I need, uh... Uh, help.
I need your help.
Good evening, Mother.
Edgar.
Madame Marcia held court this morning.
I should buy a dress.
She says your father will die soon.
And when he does, you will rise to be
the most powerful man in the country.
Your brother's a good man, Edgar...
but you will restore our family
to greatness.
Edgar?
Edgar? Am I boring you?
I'm listening, Mother. You fired the maid.
I told her when she was through,
she could quit.
I'm not paying for her impudence.
The whole Negro race is in open revolt.
- I could open an investigation.
- Gotten too comfortable.

Did you hear what I said?
I said I could open an investigation.
Say what you mean.
Mr. Palmer called me into a meeting today.
The war against the Bolsheviks has begun.
He's insisted that I lead
a new anti-radical division.
Did you leap like a dog?
I told him this is the greatest
threat our nation has ever faced...
and I cannot take the job unless
I feel certain I can be effective.
Well done. But you'll take it.
Three thousand a year, Mother.
I've got to get new clothes.
You can't look like that anymore.
I have 40 names of suspected radicals
already in only four hours.
I should have 10,000
by end of the month.
And I have my own staff, trusted agents.
Edgar, are you smoking?
- Doesn't come naturally, Mother.
- Listen to the doctor.
With this new burden,
your nerves could get the better of you.
You don't want to end up like your father.
Go and try one now.
You can put your father in his room.
I have to get ready for dinner.
Are you abandoning me tonight?
It's with a typist. She's very organized.
Is it a date?
I think so. I think so.
I'm gonna show her my old card catalog
system at the Library of Congress.
Romance her.
Wear a blue tie.
You look so handsome in your blue tie.
Look at the ceiling.
It's incredible.
I've never been here before.
I helped organize it.
See, every item is assigned

its own index card...
with its own unique code...
indicating the title, author,
location, and topic.
What used to take days to locate
now only takes a matter of minutes.
Go on. Give me an author
or a topic. Anything.
Indiscretion.
What era?
Present day.
Good. Time me.
Hmm.
Heh.
Almost there, heh.
How do you know I didn't mean
political indiscretion?
Well, if you'd like,
I can start all over again.
This will do.
How long did I take?
One minute, 10 seconds.
Now imagine if every citizen in this
country were uniquely identifiable...
by their own card and number,
say, the pattern on their fingers.
Imagine how quickly we could find them
if they committed a crime.
It's all very impressive, John.
Well, would you like to stay here
or would you like to go somewhere else?
It's up to you.
Mr. Hoover.
I'm not sure where you think
this is headed.
Right, of course.
Miss Gandy.
I know we've only known each other
a brief time...
but you would
make the finest of companions.
Your strength, your character,
your education.
Are you poking fun at me?

No. No, no, no. No, no, of course not.
Then please, Mr. Hoover, stand up.
I'd appreciate it
if you wouldn't share this...
with any of the other women
in the typing pool.
No, of course not.
All right. May I ask what... What...
What particular flaw
you seem to find in my character?
No. We just met.
Right, of course.
But I believe that I am a fast
and accurate judge of character.
We've gone out three times,
but I don't need more.
Most people do, but I don't.
I see people right off for what they are.
And please, call me Edgar.
It's what my mother uses.
- Edgar?
- Yes?
Can you keep a secret?
Yes. Of course. You have my word.
I'm not interested in getting married.
My work comes first.
Hmm.
Then perhaps you would consider
a position as my personal secretary.
Yes.
Shall we?
The book.
Right.
After you.
I helped organize that library
just as I did this Bureau.
And many said we didn't need either.
You see, innovators
aren't often celebrated.
Not at first.
Miss Gandy.
The nitwit Kennedy child
rang his baby buzzer again.
Perhaps he'd like a fresh diaper.

Should I find out what
the Attorney General needs?
No, I want the completed transcripts
of the Los Angeles recordings.
When I receive those,
then we'll answer his buzzer.
Very good.
Edgar, Agent Smith is back.
He, uh, has some questions
about the Palmer Raids.
Should I tell him to go?
Helen, do you like him?
I don't have an opinion of him yet.
Hmm.
Well, I like him. I trust him.
- I'll set him up in your outer office.
- No. No, no, no.
Bring him a desk in here.
But in 1920,
how could I protect us from anyone?
Before I moved to this office,
we were powerless.
We had few federal laws,
no right to carry firearms...
and Congress liked it that way.
Criminals ran free, but there was no law
against keeping track of them...
so I made a decision on my own.
I compiled note cards
and over five thousand names...
and called the one department
in Washington...
that still held a small piece
of untested power.
Was that the Department of Labor?
The power to deport, sir?
But only to deport those
who checked two boxes.
They had to be foreign citizens and they
had to be working to harm our country.
And they cooperated with you?
Of course not.
No one freely shares power
in Washington, D.C., Agent Smith.

There is no law
under which you can issue a warrant...
for the arrest of an alien...
when I have certified that
he is subject to deportation?
Without any evidence,
Mr. Attorney General, no.

- There exists a due process of law.
- Due process of law?
- What about the threat?
- There might be a threat...
Might be?

Fine. There is a threat to our country.
But with no proof of a crime,
there's no cause for deportation.
We'll see about that.
You'll be hearing from me.
But one of their heads was a Mr. Caminetti.
He was weary of our Justice Department,
but he hated one person even more.
I am a revolutionist by nature...
and as such...
I claim the right to rebel
and resist invasion...
by all means, force included.
Emma Goldman. She was the hero
of the radical movement.
If I could hand Caminetti Emma Goldman,
he would deport her without a thought.
But she was a citizen.
Would you like to stop, sir?
No.
I know it's hard for you to imagine today,
but there was a time...
when the average American feared
for their safety and survival, Agent Smith.
In Chicago, a coal strike started
by communist labor shut off all the power.
Riots followed.
And on Armistice Day
in Centralia, Washington...
veterans fresh back from the war
were murdered by radicals.
The red revolution had arrived on our soil.

No, no. We can't take them down
one by one.

They'll go underground and we'll have
a bomb inside every senator's mailbox.
We need to have a simultaneous raid,
hitting all of them at once.

- Who are "they"?

- You're here to find out.

Now listen, I want a card on every
radical person in this country.

Against the wall, gentlemen.

I wanna know who, where they're from,
what group, what they say.

Who have already committed crimes?

I care more whether they intend to.

Against the wall, gentlemen, thank you.

- How many are on our team?

- Only you four for now.

I'll have locks installed.

No, Miss Gandy.

That would bring too much attention.

Nothing is to be alphabetically ordered.

I want the cards to be broken down
into subjects and categories.

Now, this system should be easy enough
if explained.

If not, finding information
should prove impossible.

And trust no one,
not even our fellow agents.

Half our colleagues are on both sides
of the payroll.

But the crimes we're investigating
aren't crimes, they're ideas.

Well, if your idea...

Against the wall, gentlemen. Thank you.

If your idea is to come into our country
and plot the overthrow of our government...

then, yes, indeed, that is a crime.

Mrs. Goldman married a U.S. citizen.

The man she married hasn't visited
her once in prison, yet this man...

the man she's lived with since her
wedding, he visits nightly.

What happens when we raid this
list of yours and find nothing?
No guns, no bombs,
just innocent people deported.
From every corner of this nation,
the American people...
have urged the Attorney General
to do something about this...
and return the United States
back to peace.

Now, I'm happy to send your objections
to Mr. Palmer himself...
but, in the meantime,
expose Miss Goldman's sham marriage...
and you will change that suit of yours.

- Pardon me, John?
- Your suit, sir, your suit.

This isn't a saloon.
Have respect for yourself,
but, more importantly...
have respect for this department.

Miss Gandy?
Miss Goldman, are you an anarchist?
I decline to answer.
Do you deny that you are an anarchist?
I decline to answer.
Do you believe in the overthrow
of the government of the United States?
I refuse to answer.
Do you advocate the assassination
of public officials?
I refuse to answer.

This alien has refused to answer questions
pertaining to the charges in the warrant...
notwithstanding the fact that
every opportunity was afforded her.
I recommend deportation.
And just like that, we had our precedent.
Edgar, should I arrange our travel
to Paterson on Valentine's Day?
Yes, of course, Miss Gandy.
I took the train to Paterson,
New Jersey, on February 14th.
If I could catch these

radicals red-handed...
then the Labor Department would have
to put them all on boats back home.
So agents of the Bureau,
alongside local police...
began raiding gathering places
of known communist radicals...
all across this country.
These people are armed and violent.
They're prepared to kill to avoid capture.
Take one. Go on.
- Are we allowed to use these, sir?
- These are gifts.
There is no law that prevents us
from using our own weapons.
Gentlemen, grab your guns.
Gentlemen, quickly.
Let's move.
Police! This is a raid!
He's going for the window, stop him!
That's enough!
The leaflets matched exactly.
We'd solved the bombings.
And, in the end, we arrested nearly
and deported over 500 of them.
It was accomplished against great odds
and at great personal peril.
They found the counterfeiting press,
five pistols, two automatics.
And in Trenton, they found gunpowder,
copper, brass wire, and batteries.
- A bomb factory.
- Yes.
One hundred and twenty arrests in Detroit,
But everyone in the Bureau involved
lost their job, correct?
Even Palmer himself?
Some did, and there's the lesson.
You see, the bombs stopped,
and peace came.
The American people had forgotten
there ever was a threat.
So when political adversaries
attacked Palmer...

for trying to protect this nation
from communism...
our countrymen allowed it to happen.
Because like today, they've forgotten
the bombs, the blood, the fear.
But why Palmer and not you,
if you orchestrated the raids?
I was 24 years old, Agent Smith.
I was just following orders.
I understand, sir.
And if we hadn't, you may very well
have been born into a communist state...
rather than the country you love today.
- Am I right?
- Of course, sir.
Hmm.
Edgar?
Ignore him.
Edgar?
I am in a meeting, Mr. Tolson.
I'll be out in a moment.
Don't forget about your appointment
with the Attorney General, Edgar.
Files are not yet completed, Mr. Tolson.
Please go away.
Thank you.
Thank you, sir. I apologize.
I'll finish this chapter tonight.
Very well, Agent Smith.
In the Academy, do they tell the story
of how I got here?
Yes, sir. Uh, you were called into
the new Attorney General's office...
- Harlan Fiske Stone.
- Yes, sir, Attorney General Stone.
He called you into his office
and told you to sit down, sir.
Sir, there are over a dozen vacancies
in Chicago.
And with the robbery rates rising,
it would profit the Bureau...
to start filling vacancies
and make recoveries.
I have files on potential suspects,

and with a congressional hearing...
Lower the treble, son. You didn't call
this meeting, I did. Sit down.
Yes, sir.
Everyone you've worked with here is gone.
And there's a reason for that.
This Bureau is of exceedingly bad odor.
Would you agree?
Yes, sir.
And, no offense,
you seem to have no social life.
No wife, no girlfriend.
As far as I can tell, no pals at all.
That is accurate, sir.
And you're shamelessly distracted
by this hodgepodge fingerprinting affair.
Sir, it wouldn't be hodgepodge if we could
centralize the prints here, I assure you.
It's a speculative science at best.
Yes, sir.
And why do they call you Speed?
Who calls me that?
They all do, behind your back, evidently.
I gained a reputation for delivering
groceries when I was 10 years old.
I was the fastest in the neighborhood.
It was just a nickname.
You sure it's not for the way you talk?
Perhaps, sir.
Young man, I want you to be acting
director of the Bureau of Investigation.
I will take the job, Mr. Stone,
but only on certain conditions.
What are they?
The Bureau must be divorced from politics
and not be a catchall for political hacks.
Recruits must be college-educated.
Appointments must be based on merit.
Promotions will be made on proven ability.
And, well, the Bureau will be
responsible only to you, sir...
the Attorney General.
I wouldn't give you the job
under any other conditions.

That's all. Good day.

Well, thank you, sir.

I am determined to summarily dismiss
from this Bureau...

any employee whom I find
indulging in the use of intoxicants.

It is my belief that when a man
becomes a part of this Bureau...

he must so conduct himself,
both officially and unofficially...
as to eliminate even
the slightest possibility of criticism...
as to his conduct.

- And what is your name, sir?

- Agent Williams, sir.

- Pleasure to meet you, Agent Williams.

- You too, sir.

And your name?

Agent Caffrey, sir.

- Your assignment?

- I'm headed to Kansas City...

to aid in the search
for bank robber Frank Nash, sir.

Mm, that is dangerous work,
and when you return...

you will be rewarded for your service.

You still fancy facial hair, Agent Stokes?

- The ladies appreciate it.

- Hmm.

And I suppose the ladies' opinions
are more important than the Bureau's?

No.

Sir.

Perhaps you are better suited
for the police force...
than the Bureau of Investigations.

I've been with the Department and
the Bureau for seven years.

Almost as long as you.

No.

You were with the old Bureau seven years,
and that Bureau is now gone, sir.

And so are you.

I quickly dismissed all agents

Education, physical fitness...
but, above all, loyalty.
I've had two made.
Same cut, different pattern.
And two suits for you.
They'll be delivered on Friday.
Thank you, Mother.
It's platinum...
six diamonds and a star sapphire.
- Heh.
- It's absolutely beautiful, Mother.
Thank you.
I've told the whole neighborhood
about you. They all know.
No, I shouldn't,
I've been gaining weight, Mother.
It's solid weight. There's nothing wrong
with solid weight on a man.
- All right.
- I'm so incredibly proud of you, Edgar.
I'm starting an album for you.
I'm gonna put everything in it.
This is just the beginning.
"Johnny Hoover appointed acting director
of the Bureau of Investigations."
Can you read that?
You proud of your uncle?
Gentlemen.
I want to introduce you. Come with me.
Edgar, good to see you.
Good to see you, Lawrence.
I'd like to introduce you
to Mr. Clyde Tolson.
Graduated from George Washington
University tonight with a law degree.
Hmm.
Congratulations, Mr. Tolson.
Thank you, Mr. Hoover. I believe you are
one of our most distinguished alumni.
I did, yes. I, uh, do have a degree
from the school, yes.
I was admiring your suit, Mr. Tolson.
You should take a lesson, Lawrence.
Thank you, sir. It's a custom cut,

from Garfinkel's department store.

Ah.

Do you have a card, Mr. Tolson?

I do, yes, of course.

Here you go.

Good to see you, Lawrence.

Thank you, sir.

"Well-educated, highly recommended,
willing to guarantee five years service.

Has a family in New York
and a new baby."

No interview.

The family in New York or the baby?

Miss Gandy, five years is not enough.

We need men willing to dedicate their lives.

How many is that so far?

- That's 320 denied and 21 interviews.

- Hmm.

Did we receive an application
from a Mr. Tolson?

Yes.

Yes, his report states
he has confidence, poise...
his diction is excellent.

But although physically fitted for it,
might be displeased with rugged work.

His only interest is to gain experience
that would benefit a private law practice.

And he has no interest in being here
for any period of time...

which would render
employment speculative.

Hmm.

He did receive
a letter of recommendation...
from the executive assistant
of the Secretary of War.

That's fantastic, Miss Gandy.

Yes. It mentions here that Mr. Tolson
showed no particular interest in women.

Then again, some of our best agents excel
because they have no family encumbrance.

Yes, you're right. Set up an interview.

You know what the problem is,

Miss Gandy?

These men, they don't...

They don't look up to me.

Of course they do.

I don't mean figuratively.

I mean they don't look up to me.

Well, if you could conduct the entire interview from behind your desk...

instead of walking about the office, I could correct that.

Indeed.

Miss Gandy, suppose I had information on someone in a position of power...

harmful information.

It goes against my nature to destroy such information...

but I don't trust it in the general files either.

Could I trust it with you?

If we were to create a confidential file?

Of course, Edgar.

Thank you, Miss Gandy.

Information is power.

It protected us from the communists in 1919...

and since has been vigilantly collected, organized, and maintained by our FBI.

Attorney General Kennedy's Office.

Did you always have this fireplace or did you have it put in?

It was put in.

What were you doing with wiretaps in that house?

You asked that I pursue this organized crime element, Mr. Kennedy...

and I did so, sir, with diligence.

- Do you use the fireplace?

- Rarely.

Who else has heard the recording?

I have filed the matter personal and confidential.

I'm the only person with access to it.

Mr. Hoover, I asked you to pursue a real threat.

Instead, you've publicly denied
the existence of organized crime...
and now this gross display
of intimidation.

Mr. Attorney General,

I was only following orders.

We bugged the basement of a home
in Los Angeles...

that was a known gathering place
for lawbreakers.

How was I to know that an East German
communist would be down there...

having sex with your brother,
the President of the United States?

Do not shoot the messenger, sir.

I am here to protect you both.

Remember that.

What do you want from me?

If this information were to go public...
it would create widespread distrust
in your brother's leadership capabilities.
And above all else, I hold the well-being
of our country paramount.

So how may I help you, Mr. Hoover?

Well, if I am to pursue the elements
that you consider a threat...

I humbly request that you allow me
the same power and access...

to follow the groups that I see
as an immediate threat.

It's not 1920 anymore.

You know who Stanley Levinson is, sir?

A lawyer.

A white, communist lawyer
organizing at the highest levels...
including the SCLC.

Now, their group is growing.

They are entirely self-serving...
and their leadership is openly critical
of this department here.

Did you read the memos that I sent?

No, no, I can't say that I have.

It says right here, Mr. Kennedy.

They claim we are...

"unable to get convictions in even the worst, most heinous crimes..." and that we have "faltered under the pressure, complexities... and responsibilities of our office," in print.

- Right here in "The Washington Post."

- You can't bear a little criticism?

Well, it depends on what their aim is.

They are gaining considerable power.

Their priorities are singularly focused on their own issues.

They are trying to incite revolt.

Frankly, they sound more critical of your office than mine.

There's a new face to communism, Edgar, and this isn't it.

Communism is a foreign threat now, not domestic.

Mr. Kennedy,

before you were even born...

I heard that very same argument from a Mr. Mitchell Palmer.

Do you know what it took to change his mind?

A bomb.

If he would have sat in his rocking chair five more minutes in 1919...

we'd have been lucky enough to find an intact index finger.

Now, I do not want that to happen to you or your brother, sir.

There's no reason

we both can't get what we want.

We can wage a war on two fronts, sir.

You understand?

You can go now, Mr. Hoover.

Yes, sir.

Please leave the transcripts here with me.

Yes, sir.

Oh, and feel free and share them with your brother.

Oh, and let him know that I have a copy of my own in safekeeping.

- Unh.

- **Your 4:**

Thank you, Miss Gandy.

Send him right in, thank you.

Please, have a seat, Mr. Tolson.

- Mr. Hoover, thank you for this opportunity.

- Yes. Please.

- Have a seat.

- Thank you, sir.

There were several problems
with your application, Mr. Tolson...
not the least of which is the fact
that you did not show...
the proper requirement to the Bureau...
nor the proper dedication
to protecting the American people...
and the American way.

May I remind you
that this is not a platform...
to a fatter paycheck in
private practice, Mr. Tolson?
Is there something the matter,
Mr. Tolson?

No, sir.

Is exercise a requirement
for all agents, sir?

Yes. All our agents need to be
in top physical condition.

We must outsmart and outmatch
the public enemy at every turn.

Yes, of course.

So, uh, what routine do you do, sir?

Push-ups, sit-ups, and squatting.

I see.

Would you like me to fix the curtain?

Or perhaps I could open a window.

I always prefer
a little bit of air after exercise.

Don't you?

If it would please you.

And, sir, where I may fall short
in terms of resume...

I apparently far exceed

the rest in terms of honesty.
I didn't lie to get this appointment, sir.
Like the rest, yes,
I would like to start a practice...
but I could be persuaded otherwise
if the right opportunities were to arise.
Hmm.
Fair enough, Mr. Tolson.
Fair enough.
These sleeves seem to be
the correct length.
I found you two tie options.
This one is a bit more fashion-forward...
but it would complement this suit
and cut and fabric.
It's too loud, don't you think?
Too loud? Okay, which is why
I found this one, the backup.
- It's a bit more directorial, a little bit more...
- It's a little bit more reserved, I agree.
Let's keep this as a second option, please.
Thank you, Clyde.
Are you Mr. John Hoover?
I am. Is there a problem?
It seems there's a Mr. John Hoover
whose credit has gone bad with us.
That would appear to be you.
That is not me, sir, on my word.
My mother calls me Edgar, my niece calls
me J.E., and I sign John E., not John.
Well, sir, if you're a friend
of Mr. Tolson's...
just choose one name and reapply.
All right.
Thank you very much.
Morning, Miss Gandy.
What? You don't like it?
Mr. Hoover,
there's been a massacre in Kansas City.
One of our own?
Special Agent Caffrey?
Let him have it!
By 1930, the communist threat
had been beaten back...

but the Depression had hit
and there was a new threat.
The bank robber, the car thief,
and the kidnapper.
But, unfortunately, as with communism,
America didn't react with scorn.
They gave the American gangster
admiration.
And the defiance by desperate,
armed criminals...
of the forces of society and
civilization can no longer be ignored.
Bugs Moran and Al Capone
top the list of public enemies.
Look around you.
They could be anywhere.
May I remind you that the Bureau of
Investigation seeks to be your protector.
It belongs to you. It is as close to you
as your nearest telephone.
And with your help...
Warner Bros. presents
"The Public Enemy."
James Cagney plays
public enemy number one.
- Why, you.
- Aah!
There you go with that wishing stuff again.
Maybe you found someone
you like better.
Coming soon to your neighborhood theater.
Fantastic.
That summer, a single crime opened
the door to set things right.
Do you know what that was, Mr. Jones?
Sorry, sir, what was that?
Who is the most famous man
of the 20th Century thus far?
Joe McCarthy, sir?
Mr. McCarthy was an opportunist...
not a patriot, Mr. Jones.
Who is the most famous man
of the 20th Century thus far?
The most famous?

Is that you, sir?

Well, I suppose his notoriety depends on the field that he is in. His field was in the clouds.

Well, then Charles Lindbergh, sir.

Yes?

Charles Lindbergh's baby has been kidnapped from his home. Send officers from Trenton. I'll be on the first train.

What is it?

Charles Lindbergh...

Lindbergh's baby's been kidnapped.

You've got to find him.

He has to be brought home alive.

Yes, Mother.

Yes, Mother, I know.

When we arrived at Mr. Lindbergh's home that morning in 1932...

we began an investigation that would forever change our Bureau.

This morning we've heard from the Pennsylvania Railroad, Will Rogers...

President Hoover,

Governor Roosevelt, Customs...

the U.S. Mail, and the Boy Scouts.

All of you. Get off of that dirt.

You're trampling evidence.

Immediately! Get off!

There's nothing there. We checked.

No defined footprints.

It appears he was wearing fabric on his shoes.

You don't think the size could've held some value?

How did he get up there? Are there marks on the window and wall as well?

A ladder.

We found it 100 yards away.

We moved it inside.

You moved it?

Yes, for safekeeping.

Congratulations, Mr. Schwarzkopf.

You have contaminated the crime scene.

Now, get your boots off this property.
And what right do you have
to be here, Mister, uh...?
J. Edgar Hoover,
director of the Bureau of Investigation.
We've been sent by President Hoover
to ensure the investigation...
The president has authorized access
to all documents and evidence.
Mr. Hoover, you're free to observe, but
New Jersey's not the president's domain.
And where is Mr. Lindbergh?
I'd like to hear his opinion on the matter.
- Mr. Lindbergh's around back.
- After you, sir.
He's been up all night.
Mr. Lindbergh himself
came down to meet me.
He shook my hand and expressed his
gratitude and faith in our young Bureau.
He fell five feet.
Who did?
The kidnapper, with the child in his arms.
That's speculation, Mr. Hoover.
Mr. Lindbergh, sir, if the ladder had split
while the person was on their way up...
it would have collapsed.
You see, it was a miscalculation.
It was meant to bear the weight of a man,
but not the weight of a man and child.
We have other theories.
Where's the ransom note?
Of course.
And you are touching that
with your bare hands as well?
We checked.
There are none of those finger imprints
that you fancy so valuable.
Please hand it over, Mr. Schwarzkopf.
That's Colonel Schwarzkopf.
"Have 50,000 dollars ready,"
spelled R-E-D-Y.
"We will inform you where,"
spelled W-E-R-E, "to deliver the money"...

spelled M-O-N-Y.

"We warn you for making anything public
or for notify the police.

Indication for all letters are signature,"
S-I-N-G, "singnature."

Three holes.

I want this letter and the ladder.

No jurisdiction.

I've showed what you asked for.

- It's time for you to go.

- Mr. Lindbergh, please...

Mr. Hoover, thank you. As you can see,
we have everything under control.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Lindbergh.

Clyde.

Clyde, I'm afraid for his boy.

He trusts the local police more than us.

He thinks we're all fools.

He'll go around them too.

He's going to bargain with the kidnapppers.

President Hoover called me the morning
the child was taken...

and asked me to do whatever was
in my power to solve this crime.

But do you know what all the power
of the Bureau means...

without federal laws, without arms,
without the ability to make arrests?

It means nothing.

Mr. Chairman, I urge passage
of the Lindbergh Law...

making kidnapping a federal offense.

To immediately deliver all the fingerprints
in this country to my office...

so that we may create a central file.

To help arm our agents

so that they have a fighting chance...

against the submachine guns of some
of the most dangerous characters...

in the history of American criminality.

And I urge you to do this

in the name of Little Lindy.

Because if he can be taken,

then what child is safe?
And if we cannot aid in his safe return,
then what use are we?
Every fingerprint
from the local authorities...
across the country began flowing in.
Finally, we had a centralized system.
What is it, Edgar?
The last of the fingerprints came in
from Chicago.
You know our new president has scheduled
a meeting with me, Miss Gandy?
Do you know that there are talks
of reorganizing the Bureau?
Yes, I've heard similar whispers.
Hmm.
Have you?
Miss Gandy, do you remember that file
we created on his wife?
Mrs. Roosevelt?
Yes.
Will you make a copy for me, please?
Yes, of course.
Thank you, Miss Gandy.
Lindbergh hired criminals to find his son.
Off the desk now, Agent Garrison,
follow me.
Yes, sir.
He even got an offer from Al Capone
to help pay the ransom money...
but, in the end, he employed an
eccentric by the name of John Condon...
who placed a newspaper ad to act
as a go-between with the kidnapers.
Now, was Condon a criminal too?
He most certainly wasn't
an agent of the law, Mr. Garrison.
Why are you doing this?
So a mother may have her baby again.
And you may know that the
American people are grateful...
for the honor bestowed upon them
by your pluck and daring.
And how do we know the kidnapper is the

same that wrote the letters that you have?
The symbol, uh, matches
the original letter's symbol, doesn't it?
What is it, Mr. Lindbergh?
In a moment of thoughtlessness...
I showed the symbol
to some other men...
and I'm not sure
that they were trustworthy.
I'm not sure anyone is trustworthy.
I will be having your letters analyzed...
to make sure that they
are from the same author.
And while Mr. Lindbergh
placed his faith in hoodlums...
we began cultivating the one thing
criminals couldn't fight...
with all the guns in the world.
Gentlemen, please leave this room.
Clear all these tables. Time to go, now.
Where can we smoke, sir?
Not my concern. Out of my sight.
- Mr. Osborne, tell us what you need.
- Uh, bright lights, a microscope...
measuring instruments,
magnifying glasses. A, uh, projector.
You have the full resources of the Bureau.
Don't be shy.
Paper samples from
every regional manufacturer.
Mr. Osborne, this is Mr. Tolson.
Supply Mr. Osborne whatever he needs...
to conclude without a doubt that
these letters came from the same author.
Hmm?
Gentlemen, please. Thank you.
- Should we tell the attorney general?
- So he can say no a third time?
- Just post a sign, like this one.
- What would you like it to say, "keep out"?
"The Bureau of Investigations
Technical Laboratory."
Have it carved and nailed to the wall.
If he wants it gone, he'll have to tear it out.

Lt's time we at least have one thing
the bad guys don't.
Decorating skills?
Science, Clyde. Science.
Uh, the ink is different,
but the handwriting is a match.
Whoever Mr. Condon is corresponding with
is the person who wrote the original note.
Or Condon wrote all the notes himself.
Lindbergh is planning on using
Condon to deliver the ransom.
- May have already happened.
- Call the Internal Revenue Service.
Get them to Lindbergh's home.
I insist that all those bills be marked.
Yes, sir.
Is that all, Mr. Hoover?

I have a 2:

No, you don't.
Consider your pay doubled.
You work for your country now,
Mr. Osborne. Congratulations.
Doctor!
Have you gotted the money?
I can't bring the
money till I see the baby.
I promise you there's no police.
It's too dangerous.
Stop! Stop this now!
No one's gonna harm you.
If they catch me, they will.
No, they only want the child.
They'll give me 30 years if I'm caught.
They could burn me.
No. No.
I didn't do it.
I'm only the messenger.
Eh!
What if the baby is dead?
Would I burn if the baby is dead?
Why would we be meeting
if the baby was dead?
Place another ad in the paper

when you have the money.
So if a ransom had to be paid,
we needed those bills traced.
We brought in the IRS, and, for his
own good, we had to force his hand.
I thought gold notes were going
out of circulation, Mr. Irey.
That's our hope.
It'll make these bills more identifiable.
I have no need for the money.
I just want my son.
This isn't just about your son,
Mr. Lindbergh.
If these kidnapers go free,
then no child in this country will be safe.
That's why I've assembled a 26-man team,
headed by Special Agent Sisk here.
And if they find out you're involved,
I may never see my son again.
Mr. Lindbergh, sir,
we will not pursue a single lead...
until your child is safe
in his mother's arms.
You have my word, sir.
The kidnapping of
Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., was a tragedy...
not only to Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh,
but to the nation.
His abduction from his Hopewell home
was a challenge to America.
This ladder, the only clue
to the kidnapping, was homemade.
Let the developments in the Lindbergh
case start a new drive...
to wipe out the stain,
not only of that wanton kidnapping...
but of all kidnapping and crimes.
Hey, doctor!
Give your word not to open for six hours.
Thank you.
I talked him out of 20,000 dollars.
I'd prefer him happy than save the money.
I don't want to upset him.
Where is the baby?

I promised not to open this for six hours.
You gave your word, I did not.
"The boy is on boat Nelly.
It is a small boat, 28 feet long.
Two persons are on the boat.
They are innocent.
You'll find the boat between Horseneck's
Beach and Gay Head near Elizabeth Island."
That's Nantucket, right?
What was in the boat?
There was no boat.
Lindbergh didn't trust us.
He wanted to do things his way.
And who can blame him?
No one respected us at that time.
Mr. Hoover, we've been calling.
Edgar.
Time to go, Agent Garrison. Right now.
The Attorney General has authorized
your wiretaps.
Very good, Miss Gandy.
Edgar, are you sure about this?
Once you do this, Edgar, it's done.
When I prove myself correct, we will have
saved this country another revolution.
History will remember that, Clyde.
But if you are wrong...
history will remember it as an
illegal move over a petty grudge.
Do you consider our reputation petty,
Mr. Tolson?
- No, I...
- Then order the wires.
- Can we discuss this over dinner?
- After you've ordered the wires.
Yes, sir.
The director's on his way.
- Ahem.
- After you.
Wait, please.
Harvey's Restaurant, sir?
- No, to the White House.
We were in the midst
of a Great Depression...

and breaths away from
history's worst war.
We needed more power to protect,
but, as with every new president...
this Bureau's future and my very job
was being drawn into question.
- The president is ready to see you now.
- Alrighty.
Come in. Have a seat, Mr. Hoover.
It's the same dance each time.
They make me wait.
They imagine I'm sweating, that they're
gonna show me who's boss, I play along.
Thank you.
And then did you show him
the transcript?
No. He didn't want to read it.
That was unique.
He wanted me to tell him about it.
What, how you came across it?
No, I explained to him up front
we never expected to find Mrs. Roosevelt...
in the bedroom of
a known communist agitator...
much less having what sounded like
an intimate moment.
That I needed his advice
on how to proceed.
I wanted to let him know he had an ally.
Before he had a chance
to ask you to resign.
Exactly.
When I was finished,
he simply pushed the file aside...
as if he was unconcerned with it.
Clyde, the President of the United States
is afraid.
What, he's afraid of you?
Of a potential invasion from abroad.
We'll have two glasses
of your finest champagne.
Of course, Mr. Hoover.
Ahem.
- You're drinking now?

We're celebrating, Clyde,
we're celebrating.
You know I feel I could trust you
with anything, right?
Well, I'd like to think so.
The president signed a secret order...
granting me increased power
of surveillance...
secret surveillance of communists
and radicals, without warrant.
Is that legal?
Sometimes you need
to bend the rules a little...
in order to keep
your country safe, right?
And to make sure I hadn't heard it wrong, I
clarified this with Secretary of State Hull.
And he said, and I quote, "You go ahead
and investigate those cocksuckers."
- Vulgar.
- Hmm, agreed.
Clyde...
I've been meaning
to ask you something.
Feel free.
I need someone who understands
what's at stake here...
you understand?
Someone who I can trust...
an associate director of the Bureau.
I know you've only been in your
current position for, what, 12 months now.
Oh, almost 18 now, sir.
You're missing my point, Clyde.
I want you to be my number-two man.
I'm not much for the spotlight, Edgar.
I need you, Clyde.
Do you understand? I need you.
On one condition.
Good day or bad,
whether we agree or disagree...
we never miss a lunch
or a dinner together.
Well, I would have it no other way.

Hey, pull over.

- Only a half a mile to Mount Rose.

- Can't wait.

Orville!

In the end, the child's body
was found just within sight...

of Mr. Lindbergh's home.

The body was blackened...

the left leg missing

from the knee down.

There was a visible fracture on the skull.

He'd suffered a violent blow to the head.

I told them months ago.

He must've fallen on the way down,

with the baby in his arms.

We are the sinners, Edgar.

We tolerated lawlessness in the land
until it grew to diabolical proportions.

The baby's blood is on all our hands,

Edgar.

On your hands, Edgar.

Yes, Mother.

Six weeks after the kidnapping...

Congress passed the Lindbergh Law...

making kidnapping a federal offense.

The right to make arrests followed

and the right to bear arms.

So I continued collecting the finest
scientific minds in the country.

He claims to be the world expert

on wood analysis.

It's easy to be the expert if you're the
only person in the world with any interest.

He does claim he can tell

as much from a cut of wood...

- ...as a doctor can from an autopsy.

- Ah.

He has, um, social difficulties.

He is mentally ill, isn't he?

He's only as mad as you are. Sir.

This was supposed to be temporary,

Mr. Hoover.

If you want your Sherlock Holmes
playing time...

Where do you suggest we go, sir, where?

I suggest you take your case
to Congress.

Fine, sir. Have it your way.

I'll tell people we could not solve the case
because we could not afford laboratories...
and the Attorney General
wouldn't allow us to use his lounge.

Fine. Now get your science fair project
out of here.

Yes, sir. Right away, sir.

Gentlemen, keep working.

Mr. Tolson,

let's get the president on the phone.

The depravations of vicious outlaws, roving
from state to state like packs of wolves...
amounts to an actual
armed invasion of America.

We must outsmart and outwit the criminal,
foreign and domestic.

They have chemists building bombs.

We need chemists tracing their efforts.

We must have the most advanced
force in the world...

if we are to have the safest nation
on earth.

And, please, gentlemen, let us not
for a moment lose sight of our goals:

To protect the honest citizen...

to teach the criminal that
regardless of his subterfuges...

his twisting, his squirming
and slimy wriggling...

he cannot escape the one
inexorable rule of law enforcement...

that you can't get away with it.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Hoover.

But your agency is already one of the most
well-funded in Washington, is it not?

Yes, that is true, sir...

but our car and bank robbery recoveries
totaled 6.5 million last year...

and our budget is only,

well, two million.

Unlike other departments in Washington,
we actually run a profit.

We cannot quantify

the value of our successes...

with the hoodlums Pretty Boy Floyd,

Baby Face Nelson, Machine Gun Kelly...

and other hoodlums of that nature.

Mr. Hoover, is it true that you spend
the Bureau's money on advertising?

We are not permitted to engage
in advertising of any kind, sir. No.

But you take part, for instance, in the
making of radio shows and comic books.

I've listened to several
of these G-Men programs.

Your picture seems to be shown
in conjunction with them quite frequently.

We declined emphatically to lend
any form of endorsement...

had nothing to do with their production,
furnished no advice, technical or otherwise.

Well, the very advertisement says
that broadcasts were...

"true reflections,
as contained in the official records...

based on actual cases from the files
of the Federal Bureau of Investigation...

Saturday night at 8:00."

Mr. Hoover,

what are your exact qualifications...

for your position of leadership
in this Bureau?

My qualifications, sir?

Nineteen years with the

Department of Justice. Nineteen.

Twelve as director.

In all that time,

you ever make an arrest yourself?

I have made investigations.

I administer several cases at once.

Well, that's not what I asked.

The comic books show you with a machine
gun, making arrests. Is that just fiction?

I am responsible for
thousands of arrests, sir.
So you admit it is pure fiction.
In fact, it wasn't you who hunted down
and captured John Dillinger at all.
It was Agent Purvis. Is that correct?
I was in charge of all of those
investigations...
but, no, sir, I have not personally
made an arrest.
Any other questions, gentlemen?
Let's bring it to a vote.
Put those away.
Well, that didn't go well.
We spend our lives working
and we get a political attack?
What does he expect, crimes to go
unsolved? Why is he fighting me?
I want you to start a file
on Senator McKellar.
I want four agents on him at all times.
I want to know what's in his trash,
photograph him at dinner.
Don't get in the car. You can walk back.
We have lunch.
We don't miss lunch, no matter what.
You pulled away from me in there.
You perjured yourself, Edgar,
and the lie was an easily provable one.
There's no telling
how much worse it could've been.
Find Agent Purvis. He is to be
demoted immediately or, better yet, fired.
Firing the man who killed John Dillinger
would be a PR disaster.
Then he is to spend the rest of his career
behind a desk.
And if he'd like to keep that job,
he'd best stay out of the papers. Go.
I don't know who I can trust anymore.
Only you.
Only you, Mother.
You're all I have to keep me safe,
you understand that?

Please, Mother,
let me take you to a doctor.
A simple examination isn't unholy, is it?
Mother.
Mother, please.
Faith, Edgar.
Faith.
Don't wilt like a little flower.
Be strong.
Yes, Mother.
I will.
If what Congress valued more
than wits and brains was muscle...
if what they hungered for
was an armed American hero...
then I was willing to risk my very life
and give them both.
Move.
Go.
Hold it, government agents!
The arrest is mine to make!
Move.
Mr. Karpis, you are under arrest.
Mr. Hoover himself.
I'm gonna be famous.
Put the handcuffs on him.
Don't move, Mr. Mahan.
Blow it down.
Move.
Mr. Brunette, you are under arrest.
Alvin Karpis said he couldn't be taken alive,
but we took him without firing a shot.
And let me tell you, he shook all over.
His voice, his hands, and his knees.
You arrested Harry Campbell in Toledo
and Brunette in Manhattan?
And William Mahan in California.
But let me clarify
without a shadow of a doubt...
this was a "we" job, not an "I" job.
Edgar, look at this.
We made the Post Toasties box.
"Melvin Purvis,
the FBI agent that caught Dillinger."

Write the cereal-maker.
Let them know...
Oh. "Junior G-Man." Hmm.
Tell them they ought to print any further
boxes to read "former agent of the FBI."
Sit down, Clyde.
I'm gonna read something.
"Only eight more days.
Funny how even the dearest face
will fade away in time.
Most clearly, I remember your eyes...
with a sort of teasing smile in them,
and the feeling of that soft spot...
just northeast of the corner
of your mouth against my lips."
What is it?
It's a letter from Lorena Hickok...
the White House reporter with
the bad breath, to Mrs. Roosevelt.
No. What are you gonna do with it?
Nothing. I accused her
of having an affair with a man...
and Old Horse Face is having
an affair with Mrs. Bat Breath!
- A woman! Can you believe it?
- Mm.
Oh, excuse me, Mr. Hoover.
They'd like to see you in the laboratory.
Yes, Miss Gandy. You tell them
I'll be there in one minute. Thank you.
We'll get to this later.
Speaking of horses, Clyde,
I'm going to Del Mar this weekend.
I was thinking of taking
a quick vacation...
and, well,
I thought you'd like to join me.
Well, I've never been
to the horse races, Edgar.
Well, it's wonderful.
And between me and you, when I lose,
the track, they actually cover the losses.
- So, what happens if you win?
- They still pay.

Then where's the thrill?

In the sun that falls on the stands,
the hotel rooms, the service...
the restaurants, but, most of all,
Clyde, it's the company.

- Come with me.

- I'd love to.

Fantastic. I'll have Miss Gandy
make all the arrangements.

Well, I can't go now. But maybe
in a couple months after I've saved up.

- It's completely covered, Clyde.

- Edgar, I can't let you do that.

Listen, you've done so much for me,
for this Bureau. Consider it a thank you.

I don't know that I'd feel comfortable.

I'll get a suite with adjoining rooms...
rather than having us stay separate.

That'll be savings enough.

Deal.

What do you have for me, Mr. Koehler?

Well, as you can see, ahem,
there are several kinds of wood here.
Pine, birch, fir, and, if you look closely,
you will see...

- Thank you.

- Mr. Tolson.

That each has its own internal markings,
rings and knots...

and its own external markings from the
machinery used to mill the raw timber...

and these that mark the tools
used to build the ladder.

The question is, how does this help us
identify the kidnapers, Mr. Koehler?

I need more money, sir.

- More money, sir, for what?

- Postage.

I need to write every mill
on the East Coast...

and see if their blades
match these marks.

Hmm.

I want a report from each mill

and a map tracking all leads.
By the time I get back from New York,
I want something to report.
Good day.
Just like the communist radicals
before them...
the gangster fell from favor.
Now, finally, children dreamed
of joining the FBI.
On your feet. On your feet.
Yeah?
He's taking his shower. Any message?
There ain't any shower there, copper.
Miss Temple!
Mr. Hoover, I was wondering
if you would join my police force.
Why, yes, Miss Temple.
If you agree to be an honorary G-Woman,
and give me one little kiss.
I don't know if your wife would approve,
Mr. Hoover.
But, you see,
I still live with my mother.
Oh. Okay.
- Look this way!
- That's real spiffy.
Nice smile. Thank you very much.
Excuse me, sir. Can we get a statement?
How'd you like the picture?
This way, Mr. Hoover!
After you, Mother.
Should we go to the club?
After we drop Mother off at the hotel.
I have you at a table with Anita Colby.
Lela Rogers and her daughter Ginger
have asked if they can join.
As long as it's near the front.
Miss Rogers, pleasure to meet you.
This must be your mother.
Hello.
J. Edgar Hoover. This is Clyde Tolson.
Anita, good to see you.
The bullet entered
the back of the head...

and exited through the front
near his cheek.

The thing that most people don't
realize is that there is little blood.
The heat from the bullet actually
seals the wound as it enters...
so the crime scene is far more peaceful
than is depicted in your moving pictures.
And little Lindy.

Did you see the child with your own eyes?
Those are details I wouldn't disclose...
with a refined group of women
such as yourselves.

I couldn't bear to make you shed a tear.
But I assure you this, we are on the case.
I saw the Lindberghs in Paris.
I hardly recognized them.

Hmm.

Only justice can bring reason
back to their lives.

But I might share one confidential
clue with you, if you swear to secrecy.
Of course.

The gold notes from
the ransom money have surfaced.
And can you guess where?

Tell us. Please, Mr. Hoover.

In the Bronx, on three occasions.
And each one of the shop owners claim...
they received them from a man with
a pointed chin and a German accent.

Take my word for it, Mr. Hoover.
All the admiration in the world
can't fill the spot love goes.

Hmm.

Or keep your bed warm.

I serve my country, Miss Colby.

The nation's admiration
is more than enough for me. Heh.

But it likely makes for a cold bed.

Mr. Hoover, would it be out of the question
to bother you for a dance?

Oh, uh, how do you mean?

Well, simply a dance.

You do dance, don't you?
Well, that is a skill
that, um, I haven't yet mastered.
And the night is getting long,
isn't it, Mr. Tolson? Mr. Tolson?
No time like the present.
It's my favorite song, come on.
It's time we leave.
Uh, we have a great deal of work.
We... We...
We have a great deal of work tomorrow...
and I'm afraid we don't have time
to dance. We're very busy, aren't we?
Yes.
And my sincere apologies. I...
Right now, Mr. Tolson.
Thank you very much.
- Good evening.
- Ha, ha.
Good night.
I don't...
I...
I don't... I don't like to...
I don't like to dance, Mother.
- I don't like to da...
- Edgar, go look in the mirror.
Talk the way the doctor taught you to.
Be my little Speedy.
I can spit my words out with... With...
I can spit my words out with precision,
diction, and clarity.
I can sp... Spit my words out with
precision, diction, and clarity.
I'm a proficient, remarkable lad,
capable of remarkable feats.
I'm a profic... Mother.
Mother, I don't like to dance.
Mostly I don't like to dance with women.
I think it's time you knew this.
And I find it humiliating
and I refuse to be humiliated.
Edgar, stop.
Do you remember Barton Pincus?
Yes, Mother.

His father was a watchmaker.
He was 10 years younger than me
and you used to call him...
Birdy or Daffy
or something to that effect.
And do you remember
what happened to Daffy?
After the school custodian discovered him
in a hoop skirt and flower bonnet?
He was made to stand outside
in front of the school...
wearing the bonnet and skirt
as punishment.
Did you ever wonder why
we called him Daffy?
For his odd behavior, I believe.
It's short for "daffodil," Edgar.
Do you remember what happened
to Daffodil Pincus?
Yes, Mother. He...
He shot himself six weeks after.
That's right.
And I thank God every day that my own
sons don't suffer from his condition.
Edgar.
I'd rather have a dead son
than a daffodil for a son.
And now, I'm gonna teach you to dance.
Yes, Mother.
- Bring this right over here, please.
- Sure, sir.
All right. Now, when did you get
this shipment?
It's a long while back.
I'm thinking, uh, November 1931.
Three months before the kidnapping.
All right. Thank you.
The lumberyard is a cash business,
there aren't any receipts or names.
It tells us where he was shopping
before we were looking.
Show me the addresses of where
the ransom bills have shown up.
It's 456 West Third.

And 476 West Third.
And down the street right here.
We knew who we were looking for.
Someone who'd done business
in this neighborhood for years.
Someone who was still there.
He was average height, blue eyes.
High cheekbones and a pointy chin.
Yes, sir, a pointed chin
and an accent, like a...
German accent, maybe?
A German with big cheekbones.
Am I, uh, going to get him
in some kind of trouble?
Not if he didn't do anything wrong.
We're the FBI, son. We're the good guys.
It was deposited by Walter Lyle.
He manages the gas station
up on Lexington and 127th.
Walter Lyle?
You remember the man
that paid with this?
Yes, I remember him.
He bought 89 cents worth of gas.
And he paid with this bill?
Yes, sir. But I don't know him.
I haven't seen him since.
You would remember him
if he came in again?
Yeah, he was German, I think,
I mean, with an accent and pointed chin.
- High cheekbones, right?
- Yeah. I looked at the bill funny.
He assured me he had
a hundred more like it at home.
You had a conversation with him?
No, that was it.
Thank you, Mr. Lyle.
I wrote down the license plate number.
That's the writing
along the edge of the bill.
Let's go.
Miss Gandy, get Mr. Tolson.
Agent Sisk.

The New York Motor Vehicles Bureau describes it as a blue 1930 Dodge sedan. The owner is a carpenter born in Germany... lives at 1279 East 222nd Street in the Bronx. His name is Bruno Richard Hauptmann. Let's move. On September 19th, 1934... before we could arrest the most wanted man in America... he'd been pulled over by a local cop for a broken tail light. Can't believe this. Pull over. FBI, put your hands up! - Put them up! - Is there a problem? Get out of the car! Bruno Hauptmann... you are under arrest for the kidnapping and murder of Charles Lindbergh, Jr. Cuff him, boys. We finally had him. Now we had to convict, but unlike trials of the past... we now had forensics, expert witnesses, and facts. We need a title, Agent Garrison. Right away, Mr. Hoover. We are working, Miss Gandy. The tape came in. Bring it to my private office. That'll be all for now, Agent Garrison. I just have to say... you looked so beautiful sitting across that bar. I saw you watching me. I have to admit I was watching you... for a long time. Slow down a little bit. All right. Let me take this off. Turn around.

You got it?
Miss Gandy, I told you
I am not to be disturbed.
I'm sorry. Mr. Hoover?
Yes, it's urgent. I have Agent Shanklin
on the line from Dallas.
My apologies, Mr. Hoover.
I told Miss Gandy to put me through.
What is it, Agent Shanklin?
Sir, the president has been shot.
Who else knows about this?
No one, sir. I thought you should know
before the press reports it.
- Thank you, Agent Shanklin.
- Yes, sir.
Oh, that feels so good.
Get me Robert Kennedy immediately.
Mr. Hoover?
Mr. Kennedy,
the president has been shot.
What?
Mr. Hoover? What?
Mr. Hoover?
It's Frosty Mountain in front...
by a length and a half.
That's Jazz third by six.
Slapjack's fourth, final head.
Popstar Morell three quarters.
Turning for home, Frosty Mountain under the
left by a fraction and a length and a half.
Number five. He's gaining on them.
It's Frosty Mountain, now.
I'm not sure if I bet on that one.
Ah. We lost again, Clyde.
Dextro back by a half-length on the rail.
Dextro now making his move.
Findlay gives him the whip.
Oh, there he goes, there he goes!
Come on, Dextro, come on, Dextro!
- Did you see his shoes?
- Ha, ha.
Desi Arnaz?
You mean the crocodile ones
with the horrible buckles across the top?

No, I didn't notice them one bit.
You'd think with their money
they'd have a bit of fashion sense...
Ha, ha.
- ...or at least pay someone to have it.
Oh, and his faux-ginger wife.
When she walked in, I thought a hunter
was gonna pull a rifle on that hat of hers.
It was like this, you see, like...
Ha-ha-ha. That's right, with the feathers.
You know, I care so very much
for you, Clyde. I do.
And I love you, Edgar.
Is everything okay?
Yes, yes, I'm fine.
I'm fine.
I've been meaning
to ask you something, Clyde.
Anything.
What do you think of Dorothy Lamour,
the actress?
With Rudy Vallee at the Stork Club?
Yes. That's the one.
She's a little camp for me, but, heh...
Well, I've been thinking of taking her up
on a proposal is all.
For dinner?
No, no, not dinner.
We've been to dinner several times now.
When?
Oh, in New York, when I've gone up
on the weekends.
I see.
I suppose what I'm... What I'm trying
to say here, Clyde, is, well...
I think it may be
time for a Mrs. Hoover.
What, you don't like her? Is that it?
Don't you make a fool of me, Edgar.
I'm not, Clyde,
I'm not making a fool of you.
Have you...? Have you become physical?
Yes, we have.
What is it, Clyde?

Do you want me to be half a person?
Remain incomplete, is that what you want?
Is that what I am to you, incompleteness?
Clyde, pick that glass up immediately!
No, I will not! I have no reason to!
I refuse! So, go on, fire me.
Do it. Now!
Get a hold of yourself.
You're acting like a fool!
- Agh!
- Stop this!
Clyde! You have no shoes on,
for God's sakes!
No. No, I will not!
I won't even listen to you!
You will never tell me what to do!
You just lost that right!
- Stop it!
- I see right through you!
You're a scared, heartless,
horrible little man!
- Unh! Don't you dare!
- Unh!
Don't you ever do that again.
I won't.
Cly...
Clyde, where are you going?
Clyde, please. Clyde, don't leave me!
Clyde, please.
Clyde, I'm sorry!
Clyde, please don't leave me!
Clyde, I'm begging you!
I'm begging you, Clyde! Clyde, please.
After all...
After all, we have another day of races.
If you ever mention a lady friend again...
it will be the last time
that you share my company.
Love you, Clyde.
Love you.
Mr. Meter looks promising.
- Unh. Ugh.
- What is it, Clyde?
Clyde?

Someone get a doctor.

Clyde.

Someone get a doctor now!

Someone get a doctor!

Clyde, look at me. Look at me.

Someone get a doctor now!

Help!

He'll recover most of his function...

but a stroke like this,

it will limit the hours he can work...

the information he can process.

Are you okay, Mr. Hoover?

Yes, I'm fine. I just... I was playing
with my dog in the yard on Saturday.

Perhaps it's dehydration.

That could do it, but it may be wise
to reduce your hours as well.

At your age, it's important to take leave.

Miss Gandy, please, give us some privacy.

Let me tell you, if you ever denigrate me
in front of my staff again...

I'll have you railroaded out of your
profession. Understand?

I apologize, sir.

Tell me something.

What do you have for energy?

We have diet medications
which tend to give a boost.

So I could lose a few pounds
and have more energy as well?

Wouldn't worry about your weight, sir.

It's solid weight.

Hmm.

Schedule a daily visit.

Yes, sir.

They're giving King the Nobel Prize.

Can you believe it?

The degenerates and radicals
are being lifted up internationally.

It's like it's 1920 all over again.

Don't.

When he finds out
that we have this audiotape...
that we know the truth

about his character...
he's going to decline the award,
Clyde, believe me.
President Johnson...
Wait.
- Clyde.
- Wait.
You're gonna have to learn to enunciate.
I can't seem to understand you.
We have no legal tools.
You see, our laws have not kept pace...
with the improved tactics
of today's criminals.
I'm gonna do this for you.
What's your idea?
Well, we have friends in the press, right?
We plant stories with them to ensure...
that the activities of suspected
radicals see the light of day.
They'll trace it.
Well, only if it's true.
See, it's called counterintelligence,
Clyde.
The more untrue the story,
the more dramatic the impact.
Now, I'm going to send
the hotel recording...
along with a personal letter
the day before he gets the Nobel Prize.
And if he accepts the award,
we'll send the tape straight to the press.
Are you sure that you want to be involved
with that kind of surveillance?
Well, that's why the letter
won't be from me.
It'll be a fictitious letter
from one of his own.
Then there can be no room for error.
I'm not sure that we could ensu...
I cannot understand what
you're saying, Clyde. Please.
Come on now. Learn to speak up.
Now, listen, I'm gonna need you
in the office tomorrow. No time to relent.

I can't.

Yes, you can.

Now eat.

You'd think after all this time
she'd be able to cook my egg correctly.

What exactly are in these shots?

Oh, it's just vitamins...

a little extra pick-me-up.

"Look into your heart.

You know you are a complete fraud and a
great liability to all of us Negroes."

I said "us," Miss Gandy, "us," not "the."

You're a Negro now, sir?

Write every word as I say it,
is that understood?

Now, "White people in this country
have enough frauds of their own...

but they do not

have one at this time...

that is anywhere near your equal.

- I repeat..."

- Sir, what is this exercise?

Miss Gandy, I am not going to entertain
questions during my dictation, now write.

"I repeat, you are a colossal fraud
and an evil, vicious one, at that!

You do not believe in God. You do not
believe in any personal moral principles!"

Sir, may I ask who this
will be addressed to...

The question is not to whom,
Miss Gandy, not to whom...

but from whom and it is not from
this office, is that understood?

"You have turned out to be not a leader...
but a dissolute, abnormal,
moral imbecile.

There's only one thing left to do
and you know what that is.

There's but one way out,
and you better take it...

before your filthy, abnormal,
fraudulent self is bared to this nation."

Did you get everything?

- Edgar.

- Type it up.

Type it up.

I understand that you work for our
PR department, is that correct?

For two years now, sir.

Then you are familiar
with my earlier work...

against Edward Clarke
and his Ku Klux Klan, are you not?

Yes, sir.

He was arrested for a violation
of the white slave traffic act...
for crossing state lines
to have an affair with a white woman.

Is that correct, sir?

That is correct. It was the strongest law
at my disposal at the time.

I'll have you know
that I'm very proud of that work.
Miss Gandy told me that you stopped
with Bruno Hauptmann's arrest.

- Would you like to start there?

- Yes, yes, I think we shall.

Mr. Hauptmann was brought to trial...
on January 2nd, 1935.

H.L. Mencken called this
the biggest story since the resurrection.
From the looks of things,
this may be bigger.

Well, you see, no two saws
make the same markings.

This saw from Bruno Hauptmann's
tool chest makes markings identical...
to those found on the ladder
used in the crime.

In the ransom note
and Mr. Hauptmann's writings...
he wrote the word "anyding"
for "anything", uh, "gut" for "good"...

"boad" for "boat,"
and notice the inverted capital N's.

And the Y's that look like J's.

Mr. Lindbergh, you

said you heard a voice...
in the cemetery that night.
Yes, very clearly.
A voice,
to the best of my belief...
calling Dr. Condon in a foreign accent.
"Hey, doctor."
Since that time...
have you heard the same voice?
Yes, I have.
Whose voice was it that you heard
in the cemetery that night...
saying, "Hey, doctor"?
That was Hauptmann's voice.
But did he act alone?
He never confessed,
but what sociopath ever does?
The evidence was clear.
He was indicted for murder in the
first degree while perpetrating a burglary.
In New Jersey,
that is punishable by death.
Mr. Hauptmann...
you've had an opportunity
in this courtroom today...
to tell the whole truth.
Have you told the truth?
I told the truth already.
And the statements...
to District Attorney Foley.
Did you tell him the truth?
To a certain extent.
To a certain extent you didn't
tell him the truth. Is that right?
This board that was found
in your closet, S-204...
has these numbers written on it.
It's a little blurred now, isn't it?
Looks like it.
Between are some words.
It looks like Decatur and Sedgwick.
You see that?
You know what that means, don't you?
That address on there?

Not exactly.
It is the address and telephone number
of Dr. Condon...
the man who paid the ransom...
written in your writing,
found on a board in your closet.
Mr. Hoover, the doctor's here to see you.
Following Dr. King's historic speech...
many said that day brought about a new
awakening in the conscience of the nation.
Others called it a national disgrace.
In the long history of man's cruelty
to man, this was a day of hope.
I have a dream...
that one day...
this nation will rise up...
and live out the true meaning
of its creeds.
A man's legacy is determined by where
the story ends, Agent Owens.
Let's think about that tonight
and make a decision tomorrow.
Is this about a man's legacy?
Or an institution's reputation?
The two are connected, Agent Owens.
One invented the other and vice versa.
Good day to you.
Yes, sir.
We the jury find the defendant,
Bruno Richard Hauptmann...
guilty of murder in the first degree.
Your Honor,
I ask for immediate sentencing.
According to the law of this state...
I rule that Mr. Bruno Hauptmann
suffer death...
at the time and place
and in the manner provided by law.
It's death for Hauptmann!
The trial of the century...
the criminal shamed,
the FBI cemented as the public hero.
That's our, that's our ending, agent.
But did he do it alone?

Is he the one who actually took the child?

How can you be sure?

Well, the mountain of evidence

we discovered, uncovered...

confirmed, and clarified,

you cannot dispute it.

- Clarence Darrow did.

- Of course. Heh.

Of course, Agent Owens.

That's what he does.

Mrs. Roosevelt issued

a statement questioning his guilt.

Well, she has enough to hide on her own

when it comes to un-American activities.

Well, if you're comfortable with it

as an ending, I'll do my best with it.

Yes. Yes, I am.

Sir.

Watch this with me.

He received my letter

and the audio tape last night.

President Johnson affixes his signature...

using more than 100 pens.

One of the coveted souvenirs

goes to the Nobel prize-winner...

Martin Luther King,

a dedicated leader...

Go on, say it, Clyde.

It just seems so risky, Edgar,

over a couple negative articles.

He's deliberately surrounded himself

with communists...

and, with the power he's gathering,

he's now our greatest domestic threat.

On behalf of the Nobel Committee...

- ...we hand over to you the insignia...

- He's going to decline the award, Clyde.

He knows what we have can ruin him.

Of the Nobel Peace Prize,

the diploma and the gold medal.

There's no question about it.

He's done.

Accept the Nobel Prize for Peace...

at a moment when 22 million Negroes

of the United States...
are enga...
Sorry to interrupt, sir.
Your next appointment is here.
The doctor first, Miss Gandy.
Yes, of course.
Send him in in a few minutes. Thank you.
Stay strong, Edgar.
You stay strong, Edgar.
Stay strong. Unh!
The parade as it makes its way...
to the Capitol Building
for the inauguration.
You can see the Roosevelt High
Marching Band leading the way.
The motorcade is making progress
down Pennsylvania Avenue...
carrying our 37th president.
Richard Milhous Nixon
waves to the crowd.
Yep, there's the president
and his wife Pat...
happily waving.
When morals decline...
and good men do nothing...
evil flourishes.
Every citizen has a duty to learn of this
that threatens his home...
his children.
A society uninterested and unwilling
to learn from the past...
is doomed.
We must never forget our history.
We must never lower our guard.
Even today, there are organizations
that have America as their prime target.
They would destroy the safety
and the happiness of every individual...
and thrust us into
a condition of lawlessness...
immorality that passes the imagination.
The president will see you now,
Mr. Hoover.
Alrighty.

Edgar, come in.
Oh, I am so sorry, Mr. Hoover.
You weren't answering your telephone.
You had a photo session
with a retiring agent.
He's leaving now.
Where's Clyde?
It's a bad day for him, sir.
Will you...? Will you schedule
a dinner for us, please...
in our old corner booth?
I'm afraid he's too tired today, sir.
Perhaps you'd like to dine at his house?
I think he'd like that.
Yes.
Yes, thank you, Miss Gandy.
Helen?
Yes?
Do I kill everything that I love?
He's not gone yet, Edgar.
And everything that we've built?
No.
The Bureau is stronger
than just you and me now.
Your child is sure
and keeps this country safe.
Helen, if any...
If anything ever happens to me, I need you
to do something for me, do you understand?
Of course.
Nixon, he's gonna come for it all.
He'll crucify me and my Bureau.
I'm afraid of what will happen
if I'm not here to protect it, Miss Gandy.
Your private files, sir?
Then no one will ever find them.
Thank you, Helen.
No matter what kind of pressure
they put on?
No matter how much?
Yes, Edgar.
No matter how much pressure.
I promise you.
Thank you, Helen.

Well, did Nixon ask for your resignation?
No, he wanted to know
what we had in the files on him.
What did you say?
L said, "What files, sir?"
But he knows.
He wants us to expand our wiretaps
to include news reporters now, Clyde.
We can't do that, especially not now.
That's the problem, Clyde.
If I don't agree to do his black bag jobs,
he'll create his own private force.
Oh, that's illegal.
Yes, well, he didn't say it outright,
but I saw it in his eyes.
He won't be controlled, Clyde.
He's a menace who'll do anything
to hold on to power.
Right. I see.
Yes. See, I never played his game,
that's the problem.
And if to some what I did
seemed like rule-bending...
then perhaps they need to figure out
what it is they did...
that made them feel blackmailed
or intimidated.
L wasn't thinking that.
Then what? What were you thinking?
L was thinking it might be time
for us to retire.
Shut up, Clyde.
You built a great thing, Edgar.
And if you stop now,
you'll be celebrated.
That's what you've
always wanted, isn't it?
Our country's lasting adoration?
Well, there's a chance you could have it.
Yes. Yes, and why wouldn't I? Hmm?
Why wouldn't I, Clyde?
L saved this country
from a Bolshevik invasion...
rid this country of radicals,

captured Machine Gun Kelly...
killed Dillinger, captured Karpis,
convicted Bruno Hauptmann.
And now, with my last breath when I try
to help save this country again...
I'm rewarded with a forced retirement?
L will not go down,
and the fact that you suggest that...
makes me question your very loyalty.
My loyalty, Edgar?
Yes, your loyalty, Clyde.
L read your manuscript, Edgar.
You didn't arrest Karpis.
And you know as well as I do
there was no white horse in the street...
no gun in the back seat.
And you didn't kill Dillinger.
Agent Purvis did.
But you kept all the glory for yourself.
And Machine Gun Kelly never said,
"Don't shoot, G-Men."
You made that up
to sell comic books, Edgar.
And when we went to the scene
of the greatest crime of the century...
Mr. Lindbergh didn't come out
and shake your hand...
and express his faith in the FBI.
He called you a fussy little man,
and he refused to even meet you.
And you didn't arrest Hauptmann.
Agent Sisk did.
You weren't even at the scene, Edgar.
Only the photo op.
Edgar, most of what you wrote
is exaggeration...
some of it blatant lies, and I don't
even know if you realize it anymore.
Edgar...
you can lie to everyone else,
the whole world...
for your own sake,
for the sake of the Bureau...
but you cannot lie to me.

L should've never given you
your job, Clyde.
You know that?
You weren't even qualified.
You remember the day
you came in for your interview?
L do.
You walked into my office
and you fixed my window...
you picked up my handkerchief.
You handed it to me.
You remember why I was sweating,
Clyde?
It's because you were exercising.
No, I was...
I was sweating because I...
I knew at that very moment...
I knew at that very moment that I...
I needed you.
And I've never needed anyone else
in my entire life.
Not like that.
So I began to perspire.
L know.
Edgar, are you all right?
Yes, yes, it's...
It's just indigestion, Clyde.
Let's go to dinner tomorrow night,
shall we? Our old corner booth.
Perhaps if I feel better.
Yes.
And you must...
You must...
We have a great many things to discuss.
And now I can't trust anyone else
at the Bureau right now.
Can only depend on you.
Thank you, Edgar.
Good night, Clyde.
Good night, Edgar.
Welcome home, Mr. Hoover.
Oh, thank you, Annie.
Bozo, Bozo, G-Boy, come here.
The very essence of our democracy...

is rooted in a belief
in the worth of the individual.
That life has meaning that transcends
any man-made system...
that love is the greatest force
on earth...
far more enduring than hatred...
or the unnatural divisions of mankind.
Yes?
This is Annie from Mr. Hoover's residence.
Mr. Hoover has passed.
- Yeah?
- Sir.
Jesus Christ.
That old cocksucker.
I'll get a speech prepared.
We should go on television.
Not yet.
First seal off his office, change his
locks, do whatever you have to do.
I want those fucking files.
Yes, sir.
Oh, good.
Come in.
He's upstairs.
Ladies and gentlemen, it is with
a profound sense of personal loss...
that I learned of the death
of J. Edgar Hoover.
This truly remarkable man
has served his country for 48 years...
under eight presidents,
as director of the FBI...
with unparalleled devotion
and ability and dedication.
For 25 years, from the time I came to
Washington as a freshman congressman...
he has been one of my closest
personal friends and advisors.
And every American, in my opinion,
owes J. Edgar Hoover a great debt...
for building the FBI into the finest
law enforcement organization...
in the entire world.

I've ordered that all the flags of the
government buildings be flown at half mast...
but I will say that, in doing so,
that Edgar Hoover...
because of his indomitable courage
against sometimes very vicious attack...
has made certain that the flag
of the FBI will always fly high.
The FBI is the eternal monument
honoring this great American.
Funny how even the dearest face...
will fade away in time...
but most clearly I remember your eyes
with a sort of teasing smile in them...
and the feeling of that soft spot...
just northeast
of the corner of your mouth.