



Scripts.com

# Born Yesterday

By Albert Mannheimer

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Captain!

- Eddie, where's my briefcase?

- Here.

Hang on to it.

All right, already.

Come on.

This way, Mr. Brock.

Sorry I missed your arrival, Mr. Brock.

Welcome to the Washington Statler.

- I've been inspecting your wing...

- I ain't got a whole floor?

You've got an entire wing.

I want the whole floor. I don't

want one wing, I want the whole bird!

Your private elevator.

Private, huh?

That's more like it.

Hello, Mr. Brock.

Mr. Devery asked me to...

I thought you said this was private.

What are you waitin' for? Take off.

You'll be more than satisfied. This  
is the public corridor and elevators.

There's no need to use them,  
but you may if...

The west, east and south suites,  
all duplex.

- Which one's mine?

- The south suite.

Each one a completely private  
and separate apartment.

This is it.

Sleeping quarters upstairs.

Terrace overlooks  
half of Washington.

- I would like to point out...

- It's all right.

I would like to point out, Mr. Brock,  
that this suite is one we...

that this suite is usually  
reserved for foreign diplomats.

Oh, I almost forgot.

We thought you might like this.

- Compliments of the management.

- Okay. Don't bother me.

May I?

May I show you  
the rest of the accommodations?

Hey, Billie!

What?

Not bad, huh?

It's all right.

"All right"? Do you know  
what this place costs a day?

Four hundred.

You told me.

Mrs. Brock seems delighted  
with the arrangements.

- It's not Mrs. Brock.

- Oh?

There ain't no Mrs. Brock  
except my mother, and she's dead.

- I see.

- Look, don't get nosy.

Oh, not at all.

She's a fiancee.

Mine, in fact.

Eddie, take care of him.

Pardon me, sir.

- Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Brock.

- Okay. Don't bother me.

How's the monarch  
of all he surveys?

- You plastered again?

- Still.

- Welcome to our city.

- I got some things that can't wait.

- Hey, I got this ticket to get fixed.

- What's it about?

Some louse  
just as we blew into town.  
Just because I'm a lawyer  
does not mean I own the law.

- What'd I do?

- All right, I'll see what I can manage.

- What did we make out?

- It may cost more than we estimated.

- How much more?
- It's negligible.
- Why more?
- Supply and demand, Harry.  
Crooks are becoming rare  
in these parts.
- Don't worry.
- What do you mean?
- This stuff ain't deductible, you know.
- I'm not so sure.

**Item:**

Eighty? You're very handy  
with my dough, you know it.  
Oh, and you're gonna be interviewed.  
Fella's comin' up here any minute.  
Name's Paul Verrall.  
He's a writer.  
Freelance snoop. Political stuff.  
You know, think pieces.  
I don't wanna talk to no writers.  
I gotta get shaved. Eddie!  
- You'd better talk to this one.  
- Why?  
This is one of the few fellas  
in Washington to look out for.  
The thing to do is take him in.  
Then he doesn't go pokey.  
What's so important?  
What we're after here  
is pretty important.  
Listen, Harry, to get by in this town  
takes power. You got some.  
Takes money.  
You got plenty.  
But above all,  
it takes judgement and intelligence.  
That's why you pay me  
100,000 a year.  
- What's all the excitement?  
- Nothing.  
I'm just trying to make it clear  
where I fit in.  
- Eddie, get me a shave up here.

- Right.  
- What?  
- Barber shop.  
Tell Billie to wear something plain for  
the congressman. He may bring his wife.  
Tell her yourself.  
You ain't pregnant.  
This is Harry Brock's apartment.  
Send a barber and a manicure right away.  
Harry Brock.  
That's right.  
- Make it snappy.  
- And a shine.  
And a shine!  
Be right up.  
Look, don't you worry about Billie.  
One thing,  
she knows how to dress.  
Probably Verrall.  
- Hello, Paul.  
- Hello, Jim.  
Harry Brock, Paul Verrall.  
- How do you do, sir?  
- How are you?  
Ain't I seen you  
someplace before lately?  
- I'll leave you gentlemen.  
- Come in. What'll you drink?  
- Scotch, please, if you've got it.  
- If I got it. Eddie!  
I got everything.  
Where do you think you are?  
Where you been? Stick around  
and get this man a scotch and... soda?  
- Plain water.  
- Right. Ginger ale for you?  
Right.  
He always knows what I feel to drink.  
Worked for me many years now.  
Also, he's my cousin.  
He knows me inside out.  
- That's right.  
- Maybe I should be interviewing Eddie.  
That's pretty good. Maybe you got

something there. Sit down, sit down.

What's it gonna be, pal?

A plug or a pan?

I know how to talk

if I know your angle.

- No angle. Just the facts.

- Oh, a pan, huh?

- Not exactly.

- That's okay. Write whatever you want.

Go on upstairs.

I wanna get shaved.

I look at it this way:

you can't hurt me, you can't help me.

I'm only talking to you

'cause Jim Devery asked me to.

I pay a guy 100 grand a year for advice,

I'm a sucker if I don't take it. Right?

- That's right.

- Butt out, will ya!

Devery likes it

when I get wrote about.

Well, fella,

what do you want to know?

- How much money you got?

- What?

- How much money you got?

- What am I, an accountant?

- You don't know?

- Not exactly.

- Fifty million?

- I don't know.

- Ten million?

- Maybe.

- One million?

- More!

- How much more?

- Plenty.

And I made every nickel of it.

Nobody ever gave me nothin'.

- Nice work.

- So you're gonna give me the business.

- Wait a minute.

- Go ahead. I like it.

- You got me all wrong.

- Pan me. Tell 'em I'm a roughneck.

Everybody gets scared.

That's good. Everybody scares easy.

- Not everybody.

- Enough.

You can't hurt me. All you can do  
is build me up or shut up.

Hey, Eddie.

Have a drink.

No, thanks, really.

Do what I'm tellin' ya!

Who pays ya around here?

When we're home

he shaves me every day.

- I got my own barber chair. Right?

- That's right.

I thought you wanted  
to interview me.

Where were you born?

Jersey.

Plainfield, New Jersey, 1907.

I went to work when I was 12 years old.

I been workin' ever since.

I'll tell you,

my first job was a paper route.

I bought another kid out

with a swift kick in the keister.

- And you've been workin' ever since.

- Yeah.

I'm top man in my racket.

Been in it over 25 years, same racket.

- Steel.

- Junk.

Not steel, junk.

Don't butter me up. I'm a junk man.

I ain't ashamed to admit it.

Let me give you

a little advice, sonny boy.

Never bull a bull artist.

I can sling it with the best of 'em.

- For 25 years, you say?

- Yeah.

I tell ya,

I'm a kid with a paper route.

I got this wagon, and goin' home nights  
I go through alleys pickin' up junk.

I'm not the only one.

The other kids are doing it too.

Only difference is, they keep it.

Not me. I sell it.

First thing you know, I'm makin' eight  
bucks from junk and three from papers.

I can see which is the right racket.

I'm just a kid, but I can see that.

Pretty soon the guy I'm selling to  
is handing me 15-20 a week.

Then he turns around  
and offers me a job for ten. Dumb jerk.  
I'd be selling him his own stuff back,  
and he never knew.

- How do you mean?

- Look. Look.

In the night I'm under the fence,  
I drag it out, I load it up.

In the morning

I go in the front way and collect.

- Twelve years old, you were.

- Yeah, something like that.

- Pretty soon you own the whole yard.

- Right.

This guy, the jerk,  
he works for me now.

You know who else works for me?

The kid whose paper route I swiped.

I figure I owe him.

That's the way I am.

Pretty good years for the junk business,  
the last few.

- I ain't kickin'.

- Do you anticipate any decline now?

- Talk plain, pal.

- Is it still going to be good?

- We'll make it good.

- Who's we?

- "We" is me, that's who.

- I see.

- Fancy talk don't go with me.

- Come right in.



- Good evening.  
- Hello.  
- I'll get out of your way.  
- No, don't go. I like ya.  
Stick around, play your cards right,  
I'll put you on the payroll.  
Once over light and no talk. Just brush  
'em up. I get a manicure every day.  
Over there someplace.  
Okay, fella, go ahead, go ahead.  
I've been wondering  
what you're doing in Washington.  
What are you, some wonder boy?  
- Not so tight.  
- Sorry, sir.  
Sightseein'.  
That's what I'm doin' in Washington.  
Some talk you may be around a long time,  
that you've come to find out about...  
- So far I've been nice. Don't pump me.  
- How is it going?  
How are you getting on  
with King Junk?  
Great. Found out he was born  
in Plainfield, New Jersey.  
- He sure is a tough man to dig.  
- I can't believe it. He loves to talk.  
Oh, Billie. This is my friend  
Paul Verrall. Billie Dawn.  
How do you do?  
- Wait a minute.  
- What's the matter?  
Where do you think you're goin'  
with that? Put it back.  
- I just wanted to...  
- I know what you wanted. Put it back.  
- Why can't I...  
- Because I say you can't.  
We got somebody important comin'.  
I don't want you stinkin'.  
- Can't I just...  
- Go change, and don't give me trouble.  
Do what I'm tellin' ya!  
Barber, what will you take

to cut his throat?

- Some jokes I don't like.

- Don't get excited.

Don't tell me what to do.

Just a joke, Harry.

- That's all.

- I'm not quite finished.

I said beat it.

You too.

- I guess I'll be going too.

- No, don't go. Stick around.

- You're the only friend I got left.

- I live just around the corner.

If anyone starts beating you,  
just scream and I'll come running.

- Bye, Jim. Thanks.

- Good-bye.

I need Billie's signature  
on a few things.

Sure. Billie!

You sore?

Not sore, Harry.

You look funny.

I know.

Don't you feel good?

You want an aspirin?

No, no, I'm fine.

In fact, considering I've been dead  
for 16 years, I'm in remarkable health.

What?

Come over here right away!

Hey, would you please fix  
this safety catch?

He's sure got good lungs.

Yeah. Thanks.

There's a shortcut through the service.

This way.

Oh.

- That's the door down there, honey.

- Thanks, honey.

Sometime I don't  
understand you at all.

Sometime?

- What do you want?

- Jim.

A few things

I want you to sign, honey.

That's all I do around here  
is sign.

Too bad about you.

- What time is this congressman comin'?

- Any time now.

I'd better get fixed up.

She look all right to you?

- Look who's talkin'.

- Tell me if somethin's wrong.

I don't wanna start off  
on no left foot.

What got into him?

Nothing.

Just wants to make a good impression.

So let him.

Two places on this one, please.

What happened to all that stuff

I signed last week?

All used up.

I bet I must've signed  
about a million of these.

That's what you get for being  
a multiple corporate officer.

I am?

What do you know?

You've come a long way  
from the chorus, all right.

I wasn't only in the chorus.

I spoke lines.

- Really?

- Of course.

- How many?

- How many what?

Lines did you speak?

Five.

- I never knew that.

- Ask anybody.

I believe you.

I coulda been a star, probably,  
if Id have stuck to it.

Why didn't you?

Harry didn't want me  
bein' in the show.  
He didn't want to share me  
with the general public.  
I see.  
He's changed, Harry.  
Don't you think so?  
- How?  
- He used to be more satisfied.  
Now he's always  
runnin' around like this.  
- Why'd he have to come to Washington?  
- Long story.  
Well, don't tell it to me.  
I don't care where he goes.  
I just wish he'd settle down.  
- He's ambitious.  
- I know.  
He talks all the time now.  
He never used to.  
He keeps me up half the night  
telling me what a big man he is...  
how he's gonna be bigger,  
run everything.  
He may at that.  
Personally, I don't care  
one way or the other.  
- Take it easy.  
- Look, now don't you start!  
Better if you drink tater,  
after they're gone.  
- Who, this congressman guy?  
- And Mrs. Hedges.  
- Harry says this fella works for him.  
- In a way.  
So what's he puttin' it on for?  
Just he nice.  
And no rough language.  
- I won't open my mush.  
- I didn't mean that.  
I don't have to be down here at all.  
I could go back to my place.  
In fact, I think I will.  
- Harry wouldn't like it.

- All right, all right, all right.

- How are you, Norval?

- Can't complain.

Haven't seen you in a long time, Anna.

Come on in.

You oughta remember this little lady,  
great first-nighter like you.

- She used to be Billie Dawn.

- Oh, yes. Yes, indeed.

Billie, this is Mr. Norval Hedges

I've told you so much about.

- How do you do?

- How do ya do?

And this is Mrs. Hedges, Billie.

- Glad to meet you.

- Glad to meet ya.

It's a lovely evening.

- How about the terrace?

- That would be nice.

- What about a drink?

- Sounds all right to me.

- Scotch?

- Fine.

- Scotch all around, Eddie.

- Right.

He's awfully tired.

Standing over

a hot resolution all day?

Just about.

How do you like Washington,

Mrs. Brock?

I haven't seen it yet.

You mean this is the very first time  
you've been here?

That's what I mean.

I never went on the road.

We must show you around.

Beautiful city.

Too bad the Supreme Court  
isn't in session. You'd love that.

What is it?

Lots of people would like to know  
the answer to that one.

- Hello, everybody.

- Mr. Hedges, Harry Brock.

It's about time we got together.

And I suppose this is Mrs. Hedges.

- Happy to make your acquaintance.

- Thank you.

Sit down.

Congressman.

- Have a good trip down?

- Sure. I came in my car.

Stopped off in Baltimore on the way.

I got a junkyard there.

Second one I picked up.

Before that, I only had one yard.

- How many do you have now?

- I couldn't answer that one, baby...

- Excuse me.

- Oh, that's all right.

I don't know why I like this Baltimore outfit. I just get a feeling from it.

- Sentimental.

- That's it. I'm sentimental.

Well, I think we're all a bit sentimental.

Yeah.

Well, it's a free country.

Do you play bridge, Mrs. Brock?

No. Only gin.

- I beg your pardon.

- Gin rummy.

Oh, yes, of course.

I was going to ask you to join a few of us girls. We meet now and then.

I don't play bridge.

- You could learn!

- I don't think so!

Sure, you could.

She couldn't play gin till I learned her. Now she beats my brains out.

How are you fixed for time tomorrow?

I wanted to bring Harry over.

- 10:

- That's pretty early for me.

I'll say.

- 11:

- Okay.

- I can drop by here, if that's okay.

- Sure. It's right on your way.

We can discuss the entire operation  
and get a head start.

Wanna wash your hands  
or anything, honey?

I hope you're free Friday night.

Doing a little dinner.

- A few people I want Harry to meet.

- And who want to meet him, I'm sure.

I want to thank you, Mr. Brock,  
for everything.

Call me Harry,  
will ya, Congressman?

I haven't written you about it, Harry,  
because... Well, you understand.

You know what I'm interested in.

Scrap iron. I wanna buy it and sell it.

I don't wanna get stuck  
by falling prices.

- I have a copy of the preliminary...

- Give it to me fast.

I didn't come down here  
to do paperwork.

The way I work,  
it's every man for himself.

You gotta get the other guy  
before he gets you.

Exactly.

What I got in mind is  
an operatin' combo all over the world.

There's enough in it for everybody.

Up till now, I'm doing just fine.

Everybody understands everybody.

- I wanna get movin'.

- In legislation of this kind...

That, to me, is just a lot of hot air.

I ain't talkin' about peanuts.

This jam the committee's  
gotten itself into.

Give them enough rope.

I've said so...

The trouble with these professional do-gooders is...

They never seem to know when to stop.

I've said that...

There's a way to get this thing done.

It's up to you and Jim to find out how.

Yes, the Hedges/Keller Amendment, for example...

guarantees government support of scrap iron price levels, foreign or domestic.

- We're trying to get it through quickly.

- See that you do.

That's why I'm here...

to see that I get what I paid for.

How do things look?

- Generally?

- Yes, generally.

I said to Sam only last week, this country will soon have to decide... if the people

are going to run the government...

or the government run the people.

- That's good, sound thinking, Norval.

- Thank you.

- Worthy of Holmes.

- Great man, Holmes.

My personal god.

Who?

- Oliver Wendell Holmes.

- A wonderful man.

He gonna be here Friday night?

- I don't think so.

- Too bad.

- Well, we mustn't keep you.

- No, we mustn't.

- Good night, Mrs. Brock.

- Good night.

- Good night, Norval.

- Good night, Jim.

- **See you at 11:**

- That's right.

- Good night, Anna. It's been so nice.



- Good night. And thank you.  
For what? Wait till I'm here a while.  
I'll give you somethin' to thank me for.  
Good night, all.

- Drips.  
- What?  
- They're drips.  
- Who are you to say?  
- I'm myself, that's who.  
- Well, nobody asked you. Shut up.

Pardon me for living.

- Get lost.  
- Not yet.

Get lost, I told ya.

- She's gonna be in the way, that dame.  
- What are you gonna do about it?

I feel like givin' her the brush.

- Pretty complicated.  
- Yeah, I know.

She owns more of you than you do  
on paper.

She's gonna louse me up  
all the way down the line. Dumb broad.

You may be right.

Listen, Harry.

- Send her home.  
- No.

Why not?

I'm nuts about her.

- Can't have your cake and eat it.  
- What?  
- Just a saying.  
- That don't make any sense.

All right.

- What's cakes got to do with it?  
- Nothing, Harry.  
- Must be a way we can smarten her up.  
- I suppose so.

Some school we could send her to?

- I doubt that.  
- Then what?

We might be able to find someone  
who could smooth the rough edges off.

- How?

- Let me think about it.  
- I'd like you to think about something.  
- What?  
- About marrying her right away.  
- Why get married all of the sudden?  
If you ever got dragged into court, a wife can't testify against her husband. Anyway, you've been engaged seven years. Why have you waited this long?  
I didn't want to be rushed.  
This way, I give her something, I'm swell.  
We get married, she's got it comin'... she thinks.  
- Billie's not like that.  
- A broad's a broad.  
- You'll be sorry.  
- All right, I'll let you know.  
But if I do or don't, we stilt gotta do somethin' about her. Every time she opened her kisser tonight somethin' wrong come out.  
- Couldn't you talk to her?  
- It'd take more than a talk.  
- Then what?  
- It's not easy to make a person over.  
- Maybe impossible.  
- Wait a minute.  
That interview guy. What's his name?  
He's a pretty smart cookie.  
- Paul Verrall.  
- He knows the angles.  
- He's very classy.  
- He could do it, but he won't.  
- Why not?  
- Well, he's not...  
- I'll pay him whatever he wants.  
- I don't think so.  
- I'll bet you. What's his number?  
- Harry, I'm not sure...  
I like it. What's his number?  
Come on, come on, come on.  
- You ate already, huh?  
- Yeah.

- You want some pie?

- No, thanks.

- How about a drink?

- No, thanks.

Okay, pal,

I wanna ask you somethin'.

Sure.

- How much you make a week?

- What am t, an accountant?

I love this guy.

- What's your name again?

- Verrall.

- I mean your regular name.

- Paul.

Look, Paul, I got a friend, a good kid.

Maybe you seen her around. Billie?

- Oh, yes.

- She's a good kid, but a tittle stupid.

It's not her fault, mind you.

I got her out of the chorus.

For the chorus she was smart enough,

but she might be unhappy in this town.

Never been around such people.

You know?

- No, I don't.

- A guy like you could help her out.

- Me too.

- How?

Show her the ropes.

Kinda explain things to her.

- What do you say?

- No, I don't think I could handle it.

It'd mean an awful lot to me.

I'll give you \$200 a week.

- All right, I'll do it.

- I love this guy.

- When do I start?

- Right now.

- Fine.

- Come with me. I'll introduce ya.

You can take it from there.

Come down here a minute.

Come on in.

She's a nice kid.

You're gonna like her.

- I'm gettin' dressed.

- It's all right.

He's a friend of the family.

Come on, I'm tellin' ya!

- Honey, this is Paul Verrall.

- Yes, I know.

- He wants to talk to you.

- What about?

You'll find out.

Jim and I got some work to work on.

I'm gonna have to leave you two.

Well, your friend Mr. Brock

has an idea.

He'd like us to spend

a little time together.

You and me, that is.

- You don't say.

- Yes.

Well, what are you,

some kind of gigolo?

- Not exactly.

- So what's the idea?

Well, it's nothing special.

He'd just like me

to put you wise to a few things...

show you the ropes,

answer any questions.

- I got no questions.

- I'll give you some.

Thanks.

It might be fun for you.

There's a lot to see down here.

I'd be glad to show you around.

- You know the Supreme Court?

- Yes.

- I'd like to take that in.

- Fine.

- We're on, then?

- How do you mean?

The arrangement.

I don't mind.

Got nothin' much to do.

Good.

What's he paying you?

- Two hundred a week.
- Sucker. You could've got more.
- He's got plenty.
- I'd have done it for free.
- I would.
- Why?

This isn't work.

I like it.

He thinks I'm too stupid, huh?

He's right.

I'm stupid, and I like it.

- You do?
- Sure.

I'm happy.

I got everything I want.

Two mink coats.

Everything.

There's somethin' I want,  
I ask.

If he don't act friendly...

I don't act friendly.

So, as long as I know how to get  
what I want, that's all I wanna know.

- As long as you know what you want.
- Sure.
- What?
- As long as you know what you want.
- Are you tryin' to mix me up?
- Well, no.
- I'll tell you what I would like.
- Yes?
- I'd like to learn how to talk good.
- All right.
- Is it hard to learn?
- I don't think so.

What do I have to do?

Well, I might give you  
a few books to start with...  
and every now and then I'll correct you,  
if you don't mind.

- Go ahead.
  - Well, that is, when I know.
- I don't talk so good myself.

- You'll do.  
- Good.  
I never say "ain't."  
Did you notice that?  
- Oh, I do.  
- I'll correct you, then.  
Do that.  
Since I was very small,  
I never say it.  
We had this teacher,  
she used to slug you if you did it.  
- Did what?  
- Said "ain't."  
So I got out of the habit.  
- You think it was worth the slugging?  
- Oh, not hard.  
There's too much slugging.  
I don't believe in it.  
- I don't believe in it either.  
- Good.  
- I learn pretty fast, don't I?  
- You're great, Miss Dawn.  
Billie.  
- Sort of an odd name, isn't it?  
- Half the kids I know are named it.  
- Anyway, it isn't my real name.  
- Oh? What is?  
Holy cats. Emma.  
What's the matter?  
Do I look like an Emma?  
You don't look like a Billie either.  
- What do I look like?  
- To me?  
Yeah, you.  
You look like a lovely girl.  
Oh.  
Let me ask you.  
Are you one of these talkers...  
or would you be interested  
in a little action?  
What?  
I got a yen for you right off.  
Well, do you get many?  
- Now and then.

- What do you do about them?  
- Stick around, you'll find out.  
- All right, I will.  
If you want a tip, I'll tell you.  
Sweet-talk me. I like it.  
Like that "lovely girl" line.  
Don't worry about him.  
He don't see a thing.  
He's too dizzy  
from bein' a big man.  
Well, this is gonna be  
a little different than I thought.  
- Do you mind?  
- No.  
It's only fair.  
We'll educate each other.  
Yeah.  
- Now, about those books...  
- Yes.  
I'll look around my place. If there's  
anything interesting, I'll drop it by.  
All right.  
You can drop it by,  
even if it's not so interesting.  
You two gonna get together?  
I think we're all set.  
Great. Appreciate it.  
So do I.  
I guess I'll be going.  
So tong, kid!  
So tong, kid.  
Gin!  
Forty-one.  
- Forty-one?  
- Forty-one.  
If you pay attention,  
that Verrall guy can do you some good.  
All right.  
You're in the big league now,  
and I want you should watch your step.  
All right.  
You gotta learn to fit in.  
Can't have you around if you don't,  
and that's no bull.

Have to be careful  
of what you do and what you say.

Three.

Twenty-eight.

- Twenty-eight?

- Twenty-eight!

You could use a little education  
yourself, if you ask me.

- Who asked ya?

- Nobody.

So shut up!

- Can't I talk?

- Go on, play your cards.

It's a free country.

That's what you think.

Baby

Do you mind?

Gin.

Thirty-four.

- Thirty-four?

- Thirty-four!

- Schneider!

- Where do you get that?

Fifty-five dollars and sixty cents.

All right, that's enough.

- Pay me now.

- What's the matter? Don't you trust me?

Sore loser.

Shut up!

Fifty-five dollars and sixty cents.

Thanks.

You gonna play like that  
all night?

What?

Hurt your eyes.

Gee, I like to see you  
lookin' swell

Baby

Diamond bracelets

Woolworth doesnt sell

I tried your suite.

No answer.

Yeah, I know.

I'm not in.



- Morning papers.  
- Oh.  
You could've saved yourself the trouble.  
I don't read papers.  
Never?  
Once in a while the back part.  
The funnies.  
I think you should. The front part.  
The not-so-funnies.  
- Why?  
- Well, because it's interesting.  
- Not to me.  
- How do you know if you never read it?  
If you're gonna turn out to be a pest,  
we can call the whole thing off now.  
- Sorry.  
- Oh.  
I look at the paper sometimes,  
but I just never understand it...  
so what's the sense?  
I tell you what.  
Read these, and anything you don't  
understand just make a circle around it.  
Then tomorrow I'll explain  
whatever I can.  
- All right?  
- All right.  
And I thought  
you might like these.  
I'll try.  
Look, just start reading.  
If you don't like it, stop.  
Start something else.  
There's only one thing:  
My eyesight isn't so hot.  
- Why don't you wear glasses?  
- Glasses?  
- Sure. Why not?  
- 'Cause they're terrible.  
Of course,  
they're not so bad on men.  
- Good night, Billie.  
- Good night.  
Is Miss Dawn around?

- Have you seen Miss Dawn?  
- In her room.  
- Hello!  
- Yes?  
- Ready to start.  
- Come on up!  
Been reading, huh?  
That's good.  
Yeah.  
- Sit down.  
- Thanks.  
- Did you have your breakfast yet?  
- And lunch.  
Oh.  
There's a few things here.  
Which?  
Read it out.  
You want me to read?  
Billie, I feel that things  
are complicated enough without...  
complicating them further.  
I oughta take this pencil  
and make a circle around you.  
- Here are a few places you oughta see.  
- A few?  
Let's start with the Capitol.  
I'll tell you all I know about it.  
Then we'll join one of the tours.  
Senate's in session today.  
We might be able to take that in.  
But first let's go to the rotunda.  
It's famous for...  
Come on.  
You'll find it interesting.  
Im comin'.  
Is now before the Congress.  
On the walls of this rotunda...  
are eight historical paintings...  
which immediately catches  
the eye of the stranger.  
Starting with the landing of  
the Pilgrims over the east door...  
four Revolutionary War paintings...  
depicting the start

and the finish of that war...  
and its two greatest battles.  
The east wall contains paintings  
which pre-date the Revolutionary Period.  
Around the circular room are  
statues of Washington, Jefferson...  
the spirit of George Washington.  
Washington is the figure  
with the purple robe across his legs.  
The figures around him  
represent liberty and victory...  
and the 13 original states.  
Brumidi did most of that work  
while lying on his back...  
on a scaffold  
built from the floor to the dome...  
a distance of 180 feet  
and three inches.  
How could anybody  
paint upside-down like that?  
Give me one of those.  
- Hello.  
- How are ya?  
Come here.  
I wanna show you something.  
There's the Constitution...  
the Declaration of Independence...  
and... Come here.  
And the Bill of Rights.  
- Know how old these rights are?  
- Oh, about 180 years.  
Who told you?  
- What else do you know about 'em?  
- What else?  
For instance, this whole country is  
founded on these three pieces of paper.  
This whole country?  
"The right of the people...  
to keep and bear arms...  
shall not be 'infringed.'  
Infringed.  
Good thing it's covered with glass.  
I'd be makin' circles all over it.  
How about some ice-cream?

Anything but tutti-frutti!

- How's chocolate?

- Fine.

- I like you better with them on.

- What?

Your glasses!

Thanks. You know,  
chocolates the most popular.

I read that.

It's interesting how many interesting  
things a person could learn...

if they read.

I don't suppose you got a chance  
to read my piece.

What are you talkin'?

Of course I read it. Twice.

What did you think?

It's the best thing I ever read.

I didn't understand one word.

What didn't you understand?

None of it.

Here, show me what.

What's so funny?

That I'm blind, practically?

"Practically" blind.

- You're wonderful.

- I'm sorry I look funny.

Don't be. They make you  
look lovelier than ever.

You sound like one of those ads  
for eyeglasses.

- Now, what didn't you understand?

- Well, like the name of it.

"The Yellowing Democratic Manifesto."

- Simple.

- To who?

Whom? Who?

Anyway, not to me.

- Well, you know what "yellowing" means.

- Not this time.

Well, when a piece of paper gets old,  
what happens to it?

Throw it away?

No. It turns yellow.

- It does?

- Of course.

What do you know?

"Democratic."

You know what that means?

Not Republican.

Well, not exactly.

It means...

It just means, pertaining to our form of government, which is a democracy.

Oh.

What's "pertaining"?

Has to do with.

"Pertaining."

Nice word.

- All right, "manifesto."

- I don't know.

- Why didn't you look it up?

- I did. I still don't know.

When I say "manifesto," I mean a set of rules, principles, ideals and hopes...

on which

the United States is based.

The ideas of those men

who wrote that Constitution up there.

- So you think it's turning yellow?

- Yes.

A lot of the original inspiration has been neglected and forgotten.

- And that's bad.

- And that's bad.

"Even a cursory...

examination of contemporary...

society in terms of the Greek...

philosophy,

which defines the whole...

as a representation of its parts...

sends one immediately

to the consideration...

of the individual as a citizen...

and the citizen as an individual."

- Well?

- I looked up every word!

Listen.

Thousands of years ago  
a Greek philosopher said...  
that the world could only be as good  
as the people who lived in it.

Makes sense.

So I said, you take one look  
at America today...  
and you figure you'd better look  
at the people in it, one by one.

- Yeah?

- That's all.

- That's this?

- Sure.

Well, why didn't you say so?  
What's the name of this number,  
did you say?

"Beethoven's Second Symphony,  
Opus 38."

I didn't ask you who made it up.  
I just asked you what's the name of it.  
Here, wait a minute.

- There.

- Thanks.

I can't get over it.

Music that bad?

The music?

No, it was swell.

Well, then what?

I got a letter today  
from my father.

- New York?

- Yeah.

- I can't get over it.

- Why?

It's the first time he ever wrote me  
in about eight years.

We had a fight, sort of.

He didn't want me to go with Harry.

What does he do?

- My father?

- Yeah.

Gas company.

He used to read meters, but he  
can't get around so good anymore...

so they gave him a different job...  
elevator man.  
He's a goofy old guy.  
He used to take a frying pan and Sterno  
to work every day to cook his own lunch.  
He said everybody  
should have a hot lunch.  
I don't know how he did it.  
There were four of us... me and my three  
brothers. He had to do everything.  
My mother died.  
I never knew her.  
He used to feed us and give us  
our baths and buy our clothes.  
Everything.  
All my life I used to think  
I'd like to pay him back.  
It's funny how it worked out.  
One night I brought home \$100  
and gave it to him.  
You know what he did?  
Well, it sure didn't  
do the plumbing no good.  
I thought he was gonna hit me,  
but he didn't.  
In his whole life  
he never hit me once.  
How'd he happen to write you  
after all this time?  
- 'Cause I wrote him.  
- Oh?  
He says he's thought about me  
every day.  
Gosh.  
I haven't thought about him once,  
even, in five years.  
That's nothin' against him.  
I haven't thought of anything.  
Be nice to see him, maybe.  
I guess so.  
He says I should write him again  
and have a hot lunch every day...  
and I should let him know  
how I am.

But he doesn't want to see me if  
I'm still living in any way unethical.  
I looked it up.  
He always said, "Never do nothin'  
you wouldn't want printed...  
on the front page  
of the New York Times."  
I just realized I practically told you  
the whole story of my life, practically.  
I enjoyed it very much.  
How about the story of your life?  
Oh, no.  
Much too tong.  
And mostly untrue.  
Hey, this is even more gorgeous  
than the Radio City Music Hall, even.  
And you notice, it smells nice.  
It does!  
- Come on, sit down.  
- No.  
You're tired.  
I'm not a hit tired.  
See?  
You know that thing you gave me  
about Napoleon?  
- No. What?  
- By Robert G. Ingersoll?  
- Oh, yes.  
- I'm not sure I get that.  
- There's no deep meaning there.  
- There must be.  
He says about how goes  
and looks in Napoleons tomb...  
and he thinks of Napoleon's  
whole sad life...  
and then in the end he says he himself  
would've rather been a happy farmer.  
"I said I would rather have been  
a French peasant and worn wooden shoes.  
I would rather have lived in a hut  
with a vine growing over the door...  
and the grapes growing purple  
in the kisses of the autumn sun.  
I would rather have been



that poor peasant...  
with my loving wife by my side...  
knitting as the day  
died out of the sky...  
with my children upon my knee  
and their arms about me.  
I would rather have been  
that man...  
and gone down to the tongueless silence  
of the dreamless dust...  
that to have been that imperial  
impersonation of force and murder...  
known as Napoleon the Great."  
How do you remember all that stuff?  
So he'd rather have been a happy peasant  
than Napoleon. So who wouldn't?  
So Harry wouldn't, for one.  
- What makes you think that?  
- Ask him.  
He probably never heard  
of Napoleon.  
What's worse, he probably  
never heard of a peasant.  
Do you hate him like poison?  
- Who, Harry?  
- Yeah.  
- No.  
- You don't like him.  
- On account of me and him?  
- One reason.  
- There are lots more.  
- What?  
Think about it.  
You'll see Harry's a menace.  
He's not so had.  
I seen worse.  
Has he ever thought of anyone  
but himself?  
- Who does?  
- Millions of people, Billie.  
The history of the world is the struggle  
between the selfish and unselfish.  
I can hear you.  
All that's bad around us

is bred by selfishness.  
Sometimes selfishness  
can even get to be a cause...  
an organized force,  
even a government.  
Then it's called fascism.  
Can you understand that?  
Sort of.  
Well, think about it.  
You're crazy about me,  
aren't ya?  
- Yes.  
- That's why you're so mad at Harry.  
Listen, I hate his life, what he does,  
what he stands for, not him.  
He just doesn't know any better.  
I go for you too.  
I'm glad of it.  
"I have sworn upon  
the altar of God...  
eternal hostility  
against every form of tyranny...  
over the mind of man."  
So that's Thomas Jefferson, huh?  
I heard quite a bit about him.  
I mean, even before  
I hit town, even.  
Come in.  
What are you trying to do  
with those books, hatch 'em?  
Blue?  
Nice, huh?  
Beethoven, Op. 36.  
What's up, Billie?  
It's all on account of you  
I started doing all this.  
- I guess you know.  
- No, I didn't.  
A lot of good it did me.  
I never had this kind  
of trouble before, I can tell you.  
- Trouble?  
- Sure.  
After I first met ya I figured

everything was gonna work out dandy.  
Then when you wouldn't  
step across the line...  
I figured maybe the way to you  
is through your head.  
Welt, no.  
Anyway, what's the "diff" now?  
Difference.  
But I like you, anyway.  
- It's too late for the rest.  
- Why?  
Why? Oh, look, Paul.  
There's a certain time  
between a fella and a girl...  
when it either comes off or not.  
If it doesn't then,  
then it never does.  
Maybe we haven't got  
to our time yet.  
I think we did,  
and you dropped the ball.  
Don't be so sure.  
Well, I never thought I'd go through  
a thing like this for anybody.  
- Like what?  
- Like gettin' all mixed up in my head...  
like wondering and worrying  
and thinking, stuff like that.  
Last night, I went to bed,  
I started to think.  
I couldn't fall asleep  
for ten minutes.  
I don't know if it's good  
to find out so much so quick.  
Nobody's born smart.  
You know what the stupidest thing  
on Earth is? An infant.  
What have you got against babies  
all of the sudden?  
Nothing. I've got nothing  
against a brain...  
that's three weeks old and empty,  
but after it hangs around...  
30 years and hasn't absorbed anything,

I begin to wonder about it.  
- What makes you think I'm 30?  
- I didn't mean you.  
- Oh, yes, you did!  
- I swear it.  
- You certainly know how to get me sore.  
- I'm sorry.  
- Thirty! Do I took 30 to you?  
- No.  
- Then what'd you say it for?  
- I don't know.  
- How old are you?  
- Twenty-nine.

Don't stop it.

I meant, don't stop studying.

Will ya?

I don't know why  
it's so important to you.  
It's sort of a cause.  
I want everybody to be smart.  
I want 'em to be as smart  
as they can be.

A world full of ignorant people  
is too dangerous to live in.

I know.

That's why I wish  
I was doing better.

- You're doing wonderfully.  
- It's no use.

Most people would just laugh at me  
if they knew what I was trying to do.

- I'm not laughing.  
- I am.

I started laughing at myself.

Who do I think I am anyway?

Once in a while,  
just for a change.

Don't try so hard. Please.

You miss the whole point.

I like to like  
what's better to like.

There's room for all sorts  
of things in you.

The idea of learning

is to be bigger, not smaller.

- Do you think I'm gettin' bigger?

- Yes.

Glad to hear it.

But all them books!

It's not only books.

I told you a hundred times.

- It's mostly.

- It is not. Look, who said this:

"The proper study  
of mankind is man."

- I don't know.

- You should.

- Why?

- I told you.

- I forgot.

- Pope.

- The Pope?

- Not the Pope. Alexander Pope.

- "The proper study..."

- "...of mankind is man."

- That means women too.

- Yes.

Yes, I know.

I've been doing some studying  
of a different mankind lately...

like the ones you told me...

Thomas Jefferson last week...

and this week, Tom Paine.

And all by myself,

I got to thinkin' about Harry.

He works so hard to get

what he wants, for instance.

But he doesn't know

what he wants.

- More of what he's got, probably.

- Money.

Money, more people

to push around, more money.

- He's not so bad as you think he is.

- Hello.

Hello, Harry.

We were just talking about you.

Yeah? That ain't

what I pay you for.

She knows enough about me already.

Too much, in fact.

- Jim phone?

- No.

- I had a date with him.

- What'd you find out about Tom Paine?

- He was quite a fella.

- Where was he born?

London, or England.

Someplace like that.

What do you mean, London or England?

That's the same thing.

- It is?

- London's in England. London's a city.

- England's a whole country.

- I forgot.

- Oh, brother, you've got patience.

- Take it easy.

How can anybody

get to be so dumb?

- We can't all know everything.

- Who's Tom Paine, for instance?

- What?

- You heard me. Tom Paine.

- What do I care who he is?

- I know.

If I wanted to know who he is, I'd know.

I just don't care.

Go on, go on.

Don't let me butt in.

Which of his hooks

did you like best?

I didn't read by him yet,  
only about him.

- But I made a list.

- Who's Rabbit Maranville?

- Who?

- Rabbit Maranville.

- I didn't know any Rabbit.

- Think you're so smart, huh?

He used to play shortstop

for the Braves, didn't he?

What are you, some kind

of genius or something?

I hire and fire geniuses  
every day.

- I'm sure you do. Where's the list?

- Here.

Well, suppose you start with

The Age of Reason.

- The Age of Reason?

- Mm-hmm. Then next...

- Who's Willy Hoppe?

- National billiard champion.

- And it's pronounced "hoppy."

- That's what I said.

- But I didn't ask you, I asked her.

- Sorry.

- Where were we?

- The Age of Reason.

Yes. Next, The Rights of Man.

- The Rights of Man.

- I think that'll...

What's a peninsula?

You think you're so smart.

What's a peninsula?

- It's a...

- Not you, her.

It's that new medicine.

- It is not.

- What then?

It's a body of land surrounded

on three sides by water.

- So what's that to know?

- So what's that "Sam Paine" to know?

There's some difference between...

Tom Paine, not "Sam Paine."

Tom Paine practically

started this whole country.

- You mean he's dead?

- Of course!

What are you learning her

about dead people for?

I want you to teach her

how to act with live people.

Education's a very difficult

thing to control.

- Work on her, not me.

- No extra charge.

I don't need nothin' you can tell me.

I'm sure we could tell each other  
some very interesting things.

- What's that mean?

- Just trying to be friendly.

Who asked you?

You know, the more I see of you,  
I don't like you as much.

For a chump who got no place,  
you're awful fresh.

You better watch out.

I got my eye on you.

All right.

We'll both watch out.

If I wanted,

I could knock your block off.

I know.

Just do what you're supposed to do,  
and that's all.

- Well, we'll stop for now.

- No, go on, go on.

- I wanna see how you do it.

- Not just now, if you don't mind.

I've gotta go and lie down.

You don't realize how hard I work.

Some joke.

Two hundred bucks a week,  
and I can't even watch.

Take you on separately, Harry.

Glad to.

Got a special course  
for backward millionaires.

"London or England."

Why don't you give up?

What?

What's this business we're in down here?

Could you tell me?

What do you mean, "we"?

I figure I'm sort of partner.

- A silent partner.

- So?

So shut up!



- I got a right to know.  
- You got a right to keep out of my hair.  
Put your nose in the book  
and keep it there!  
I don't wanna do anything if it's  
against the law. That's one sure thing.  
You'll do what I tell ya!  
I think I know what it is,  
only I'm not sure.  
What's the matter with you?  
You're doing all right, ain't ya?  
Something you want  
you ain't got, maybe?  
- Yeah.  
- What?  
I want to be  
like the happy peasant.  
All right, I'll buy it for you.  
Now, will you quit crabbin'!  
Well, I finished finally.  
- Thanks loads for the loan of it.  
- How did you like it?  
Uh, not me.  
I don't go for these stories...  
where everyone has a big beef  
against the world.  
Me, I like to look  
on the cheerful side.  
Yeah, well, you see...  
All right!  
Can the coffee klatch!  
- You, knock off!  
- Sorry, Mr. Brock.  
You don't have to get  
so pally with everybody.  
- Paul said that...  
- Never mind, Paul says. I don't like it.  
- You know what you are?  
- What?  
- Antisocial!  
- You can say that again.  
Where do you guys think you've been?  
You know what time it is?  
- Sorry.

- You're always sorry.  
My fault. How do you do?  
- How do you do?  
- How are you, Billie?  
Superb. A new word.  
- All right! What happened?  
- It's just this.  
- It may take a little more time.  
- And a little more money.  
- Why more?  
- The amendment has to be redrafted.  
I don't like you. You make me feel  
like some kind of sucker.  
- I'm sure Norval is doing his best.  
- His best ain't good enough.  
Don't he unreasonable. There are  
a great number of votes up there.  
- Norval is just one guy.  
- He's the wrong guy!  
Let's get the wheels rollin'!  
We're all in this deal. You pull your  
weight or I'll get someone who can!  
- Quite a temper, hasn't he?  
- Don't mind him.  
He's always lived  
at the top of his voice.  
So long, Norval.  
I don't think Harry  
should talk to you like that.  
- After all, you're a congressman.  
- Oh, well.  
I don't think anybody should talk to  
a congressman like that, or be able to.  
A member of Congress  
is a wonderful thing.  
Thank you.  
You know, I think  
I could use a drink.  
Oh, sure, Congressman.  
Come on in.  
The way it looks to me,  
if he pushes you around...  
it's like he's pushing  
a few million people around.

- How do you mean?  
- The ones who picked you.  
- Well, not quite that many.  
- How many then?  
306,434.  
That's quite a few  
to push around.  
You are not one of my constituents  
by any chance, are you?  
I mean, are you one of the people  
who voted for me?  
- I never voted for anybody.  
- Why not?  
I don't know.  
I wouldn't know how, I guess.  
It's simple.  
You just press a button.  
Yeah, but which one?  
Well, you listen to the speeches,  
you make up your own mind.  
That's all there is to it.  
Yeah, but why do you take it from Harry?  
That's what I wanna know.  
You're more important than him.  
You're a congressman.  
Yes, and as such I have  
a great many duties...  
and responsibilities and...  
The operation of government  
is very complex.  
Why should it be?  
I understand it pretty good in a book  
and when Paul tells me.  
But when I see something like this  
happen, it's like, different.  
How?  
Well, when it gets down to what  
should he the laws and what shouldnt...  
is Harry more important  
than anybody else?  
Then how come he's got  
so much to say?  
Who ever voted for him?  
Well, well have a nice long talk

about it sometime.

All right.

- Good-bye.

- Good-bye.

And thank you.

- Quite a tittle girl.

- Oh, yeah.

- Billie?

- Come in.

Will you come inside?

A few things for you.

Sign those, will ya, honey?

- What is this?

- Same old stuff.

- What?

- Take too long to explain.

No, it wouldn't. I like  
having things explained to me.

- I found that out.

- Some other time.

Now.

It's just an agreement  
about some merger.

Merger? What's that?

Several companies  
being formed into one.

- All Harry's?

- No.

- Whose then?

- A few of Harry's and some others.

French, Italian, and so on.

A cartel!

- What are you talking about?

- About cartels!

If that's what it is, I'm against it.

Paul explained me the whole thing.

- It's perfectly all right. Don't worry.

- Are you sure?

- Ask Harry.

- I will.

- He won't like it.

- Why not?

He just won't.

He doesn't like people butting in.

- I'm not people.  
- Listen to me. Be smart.  
How can I be smart if nobody  
ever tells me anything?  
- I'm telling you something.  
- What?  
Sign this stuff  
and don't start up with him.  
- Tomorrow.  
- Why tomorrow?  
I wanna look it over,  
know what I'm doin'.  
- It's all right.  
- It must be something fishy.  
- If not, you'd tell me.  
- Take my word for it.  
I know what you feel bad about.  
You don't like doin' his dirty work  
'cause you know you're better than him.  
That's enough!  
But I'm not so sure.  
Maybe you're worse.  
Interesting?  
Not very.  
I suppose you're used  
to reading more high-tone stuff.  
Yes, I am.  
- What's the matter, kid?  
- Nothin'.  
- All of the sudden...  
- I don't like that Jim.  
Why?  
- What'd he do to ya?  
- He didn't do nothin'... anything to me.  
- It's what he's done to himself.  
- Done what?  
Paul told me he could've been  
assistant attorney general...  
of the whole United States.  
- Who?  
- Jim.  
So what's wrong with that?  
So nothing's wrong with it.  
Look at him now.

Hangs around,  
helps you promote.  
Lets you walk all over him  
just 'cause you pay him for it.  
So we finally get around to me.  
I'm not sure I like you either.  
You're selfish.  
That's your trouble.  
- Since when is all this?  
- Since now.  
I used to think  
you were a big man.  
I'm beginning to see you're not.  
All through history there's been bigger  
men than you, and better. Now too.  
- Who, for instance?  
- Thousands.  
Name one.  
My father.  
Twenty-five a week.  
Listen, cutie, don't get nervous  
just 'cause you read a book.  
- You're as dumb as you ever were.  
- You think so, huh?  
Yeah, but I don't mind.  
- You know why? 'Cause you're the...  
- Leave me alone!  
Come here!  
I've never seen you like this.  
I've never been like this!  
I feel like I wanna go away!  
- Where?  
- I don't know!  
- In a couple weeks, we'll go to Florida.  
- I mean alone!  
- I think you've gone nuts!  
- Maybe!  
- Calm down!  
- I can't!  
- Why not?  
- I don't know!  
I just know I hate my life.  
There's a better cut. I know it.  
And if you'd read some of these hooks,

you'd know it too.  
Maybe it's right what you say:  
I'm still dumb.  
But I know one thing  
I never knew before.  
There's a better kind of life  
than the one I got.  
Or you!  
I suppose you'd be better off  
with that lousy saxophone player.  
- At least he was honest!  
- He was a dime-a-dozen chump!  
He worked for a living!  
That's one thing!  
I've worked since I was 12!  
Nobody never gave me nothin'!  
If a man goes and robs a house,  
that's work too.  
In my whole life...  
In my whole life,  
I never robbed a house.  
- What are you talking about?  
- You can hardly understand anything.  
Get off that high horse,  
you dumb tittle putt!  
You... menace!  
I picked you up out of the gutter!  
I can throw you back!  
You never had a decent meal  
until you met me!  
I haven't had one with you!  
You eat terrible! You got no manners!  
Taking your shoes off all the time,  
picking your teeth.  
You're just not couth!  
I'm as couth as you are!  
And that cheap perfume  
you put on yourself.  
Cheap. I don't own  
nothin' cheap, except you.  
You don't own me. Nobody can  
own anybody. There's a law that says.  
If I was scared of the law,  
I wouldn't be where I am!

- Where are ya?  
- All right, you talked enough!  
You don't like it here, beat it!  
Wait a minute!  
- First, this!  
- Not now!  
Right now! Come here!  
I'm not signin' anything tilt I know  
what I'm signin' from now on!  
Do what I'm tellin' ya!  
Harry, please, don't!  
Here!  
All right, now go on.  
Blow!  
I don't want you  
bawlin' around here.  
I've been too good to ya.  
You don't appreciate nothin'!  
So go on, blow! Sit on a park bench  
and learn how to behave.  
Go on, beat it!  
This way out.  
- I gotta put somethin' on.  
- Hurry up.  
I don't want you around here  
like this. You bother me.  
Big fascist!  
- All set?  
- Certainly, all set.  
You think I'm gonna let  
a broad talk back?  
- Where is she?  
- I told her to take a walk.  
One thing I can't stand is a crier.  
- What's she crying about?  
- How do I know?  
- She's becoming a strange girl.  
- She's all right.  
All these books got her nervous,  
that's all.  
It looks as though your passion  
for educating her was a mistake.  
I didn't know it was gonna  
turn out like this, did I?



Remind me to fire  
that four-eyed Verrall skunk.

- Why blame him?  
- He taught her too much.  
You know what she called me before?  
A fascist!  
- She did?  
- That don't make sense.  
I was born in Plainfield, New Jersey.  
She knows that.  
What's the matter?  
I love that broad.  
Hey, you think we could find somebody  
to make her dumb again?  
Don't be late if you  
don't want no bloody nose.  
- Would you do me a favor?  
- What?  
Drop dead.  
I have sworn  
upon the altar of God...  
eternal hostility...  
against every form of tyranny...  
over the mind of man.  
Hello?  
Chestnut 7-1-8-0.  
I'd like to speak  
to Thomas Jefferson, please.  
No, I mean Thomas Verrall.  
No, Paul Verrall.  
Paul Verrall.  
Well, it's very important.  
Well, I'll hold on.  
- Jim!  
- Yes?  
- What time is it already?

- **11:**  
I'll stug her senseless  
when she gets back.  
- If.  
- I've had this with her before.  
She always winds up  
where I want her.

I hope so.

- Yes?

- What time is it?

- **11:**

- You said that before.

- **11:**

- She's been gone eight hours.

- Maybe she's seeing a double feature.

- Yeah.

That don't take eight hours.

- Could've got in an accident.

- You'd hear.

Could've got attacked.

Happens all the time.

Not to Billie. Maybe the other way around, but not to Billie.

- She here?

- What do you mean, she here?

- No! Go look some more.

- I've been all over town.

Welt, go over it again!

- Do what I'm tellin' ya!

- Sure.

Just changin' my socks.

- Harry.

- What?

Marry her.

- Still harping, huh?

- I'm thinking of your legal safety.

- On paper, she owns...

- I know what she owns.

You've got to do it.

They always hook you  
in the end, them broads.

This whole trouble is on account  
of a dame reads a book.

It's the new world.

Force and reason changing places.

- What?

- Knowledge is power.

I don't like the way  
things are goin' around here...

you stewed all the time  
and that broad out of line.  
- And some fine congressman you bought.  
- I think he's cute.  
Yeah, well,  
I've got to trade him in.  
- On what, for instance?  
- For instance, on a senator.  
On a senator.  
Take those blinders off  
and let in a little light.  
Just for a second.  
It won't hurt much.  
You don't go around this town  
buying senators and congressmen...  
as if they wore price tags.  
These guys are honest,  
sincerely trying to do a job.  
Once in a while, you find  
a rotten apple like Hedges.  
Then you can have them,  
hut just once in a while...  
in a great while.  
Are you sure you're ringing  
Mr. Brock's suite, Operator?  
How about the bedroom?  
Well, ring a few more times, honey.  
I wanna make sure.  
- He's not in.  
- Just one more ring.  
Let's go.  
The stuff's in his briefcase...  
in his bedroom.  
I probably won't see you again.  
- So I wanna say good-bye.  
- What?  
- And thanks for everything.  
- Where are you going?  
Just away from here,  
that's all I know.  
Where?  
- You can tell me.  
- I don't know.  
I thought I might go see

my father for a while.  
- I've got a better idea.  
- What?  
Let's get married.  
You must be daffy.  
I love you.  
You don't love me.  
You just love my brain.  
That too.  
I'll think it over, but I can  
tell you now, the answer's no.  
What are you doin'?  
Well, if you don't know,  
I must be doing it wrong.  
Fine time!  
- Hello, Harry.  
- Where ya been?  
I took a walk like you told me.  
I met Paul.  
Okay, buster, knock off!  
- Good night, Paul.  
- Good night, Billie.  
Good night, Harry.  
What's the matter?  
You miss me?  
I decided to tell ya somethin' good.  
I don't like to wait when I get an idea.  
- Yeah, I know.  
- Now I'm not so sure I should tell it.  
- Why not?  
- Running out, talking fresh.  
I knew you'd be back though.  
- You did, huh?  
- I told Jim. He was worried, not me.  
Not yet.  
- What took ya so long?  
- I had a lot to think.  
- For instance?  
- Just where I stand around here.  
- I've been tryin' to tell ya that.  
- What?  
Where you stand around here.  
First, that Verrall stuff is out.  
It gets in my way.

I don't like to see you upset.

It's bad for you.

- Next thing, we're gonna be married.

- No.

But you gotta learn how to behave...

No?

- What do you mean, no?

- I don't wanna. That's what I mean. No!

In fact,

I've never been so insulted.

Who are you to say no

if I tell ya?

Don't knock yourself out.

You got a lot of surprises comin'.

- Look! Just tell me first.

- What?

- How can you not wanna marry me?

- For one thing, you're too dumb.

I just got a different kind

of life in mind entirely.

I'm sorry, but you

just wouldn't fit in.

Listen, I don't understand

what's happenin' around here.

- I do.

- What did I do? What did I?

All right, I talk rough to you

once in a while.

Maybe I hit you

a couple of times... easy.

Is that any reason

to treat me like this?

I done good for you too.

Couldn't we straighten this out?

- No.

- Why not?

Well, all that stuff

I've been studying...

what Paul's been telling me,

it just mixed me up.

But when you hit me before,

it was like everything...

knocked itself together

in my head and made sense.

All of the sudden  
I realized what it means...  
how some people are always givin',  
and some takin'.  
It's not fair,  
so I'm not gonna let ya anymore...  
or anybody else.  
Listen, kid, I got an idea.  
You wanna come to Florida?  
We used to have some good times  
together. Remember, honey?  
I think you should  
marry me, don't you?  
I want you to marry me.  
I don't wanna argue about it.  
You do what I'm tellin' ya,  
or you'll be sorry!  
I'm not scared of ya anymore.  
That's another thing.  
You're not, huh?  
Hit something else.  
I'm leavin'.  
- What?  
- For good.  
Let's get organized around here!  
You just can't walk out!  
You're in too deep! I'm in the middle  
of the biggest thing I ever done!  
Maybe I was wrong  
hookin' ya in, but you're in!  
- I'm not gonna be, I decided.  
- All right, fine!  
- You wanna wash it up?  
- Yeah.  
All right! I'm too important  
to monkey around with what you think!  
Jim, wake up!  
- What is it?  
- Come on! You got some work to do!  
All right.  
Be right with you.  
Okay, well, get a move on!  
Ill fix it so you're out of here  
in no time!

You're spoiled, and I spoiled ya!  
I was gonna make ya real partners!  
You don't want it? Fine!  
Let's see how ya do without me!  
You don't look like you looked  
nine years ago. In fact, you look lousy.

- I'll be glad to be rid of ya!
- And as far as Im concerned...
- Yeah?
- Vice versa.

You're back. All set?

- Shut up!
- What's the matter?

She's goin' off! We're gonna settle  
things and get her out of here!

- You sure you know what you're doing?
- First time in my life I do know.
- Where's that stuff you wanted signed?
- In your bedroom.
- Come on!
- No!
- What do you mean, no?
- I mean...

Let's take the shortcut.  
The sooner, the better.  
They're in the bottom drawer.

- Blue covers?
- Yeah.
- Three copies?
- That's right.
- Paul took them.
- When?
- Just now.
- What for?

What do you think for?  
To get put in the newspapers, I guess.

- Some kinds of jokes I don't like.
- It's no joke.

Paul said it's the biggest swindle  
since the tea pot. Somethin' like that.  
What are you gettin'  
so white about?  
You told me yourself  
it was perfectly all right.

- Why, you double-crossing little...  
- I don't see it like that!  
If there's a fire and I call the engine,  
who am I double-crossing?  
The fire?  
We're in trouble. If this stuff breaks,  
nobody will play with us.  
What's to do?  
It might be best under  
the circumstances to call it off.  
- What?  
- Let him publish.  
- If nothing happens, he looks silly.  
- I've been down here for two months!  
I've spent I don't know how much dough.  
I'm supposed to let all that ride?  
- Play it safe.  
- I want what I came after!  
- It's gonna be tough to get.  
- Because some little weasel gets noisy?  
- I'll cut his tongue out!  
- Listen, Harry...  
- You're chicken!  
- You think so?  
You're angry because it looks like  
I've been right and you've been wrong!  
Shut up!  
I'll handle this.  
All right.  
Lookin' for someone?  
- Billie.  
- Come on in.  
I'm tired. I was down...  
I think you've got something  
by mistake belongs to me.  
That so?  
How about it?  
Sit down.  
- Hello.  
- How you been?  
- Fine. And you?  
- Fine.  
- Go to his place and get the stuff.  
- It's not there.



Where then?

You wanna play rough?

I know how to do that too.

Listen, you two heels. I make business.

I got too much at stake here.

If you want out of here alive,

you better give it hack!

I'm no blowhard! Tell him.

He's no blowhard.

He's had people killed before.

- Six years ago, there was this guy...

- Shut up!

You ain't gonna be tellin'

nobody nothin' pretty soon.

- Double negative, right?

- Right.

You don't get the idea!

You've never been in trouble like this

unless you do what Im tellin' ya!

Wait a minute.

There's another way to handle this.

You've really pulled a boner, friend.

My advice to you is lay off.

And mine to you is stop sticking

your noses in my business.

- Yeah.

- Talkin' about stickin' noses!

You're the biggest buttinsky

I've ever run into!

Told you once before, that's my job.

That's why your papers...

are in the U.S. mails

addressed to myself.

Your job? What?

Gettin' in my way?

- Not exactly.

- What then? I'd like to know.

To find out what goes on

and get it to the people.

- What people?

- The people.

- I never heard of 'em.

- You will, someday.

They're gettin' to be more and more

well-known all the time.

What if I told you this whole operation is strictly according to law?

Then I'd say

the law needs revision.

- Who are you, the government?

- Of course.

- Since when?

- Since 1779, right?

Right.

What do you think you've got?

A connection between Harry's combine and the congressman's amendment.

All right, but why single us out to make a fuss over it?

- Yeah, why?

- What we're doing isn't uncommon.

- It's done every day.

- Done every day. That's right.

For all I know, there's an undiscovered murder every day.

And what does that prove?

All this undercover pressure.

This bribery, corruption, government between friends.

Sure, it goes on all the time, and it's tough to crack!

Just ask me.

I've tried for years.

You need more than knowing about it.

You gotta have facts and figures.

And most important, the names.

And he's got 'em.

All right, let's get down to it.

- What'll you take?

- I'll take a drink, please, if I may.

Don't get fancy! I ain't met a guy yet didn't have his price!

- I have.

- I'm talkin' about big numbers!

You and your big numbers!

You don't watch out, you'll be wearin' one across your chest!

I'll get to you later!

Now make up your mind.  
There's two ways we can do business.  
One, you play ball,  
and I'll make it worth your while.  
Two, start watching your step,  
'cause there's no place you can walk...  
no place you can live  
if you monkey wrench me.  
Now, what do you say?  
I'd like to think it over.  
All right, you got two minutes.  
Come on, Billie.  
Wait a minute! Harry!  
- Cut it out, Harry!  
- Operator!  
You stupid fool!  
What do you think you are?  
Can't you see all this muscle stuff  
is a thing of the past?  
You cut it out, or you'll be  
a thing of the past too!  
I got mad.  
Who are you to get mad,  
you big baboon?  
You ought to be grateful  
you're allowed to walk around free.  
You don't know me good enough  
for that kind of talk.  
I know ya.  
A kick in the keister...  
a crooked play,  
and your problems are all solved.  
Bigger problems, bigger kicks.  
Who's next? The government? The nation?  
Don't blow your top.  
I'm still ready to do business.  
How's a hundred grand?  
A hundred grand is beautiful,  
but I can't take it.  
Why not?  
- My girl wouldn't like it, would she?  
- She certainly wouldn't.  
All right, then!  
What's your idea?

Nothing. No idea.

I'm just trying to show you that...

legislation's not meant

for buying and selling.

This country, with its institutions,

belongs to the people who inhabit it!

- Inhabit!

- Inhabit it!

I always did what I want.

I'm always gonna.

- Try it.

- Who's gonna stop me?

- Us two.

- Don't make me split a gut.

It'll be some fine day when a 100-a-week

hick and a dumb broad can stop me.

What are you standing around

like a dummy? What do I pay you for?

- Say something!

- All right, I'll say something.

- Well?

- They're right.

Whose side are you on?

What do you want?

- Rye ginger ale.

- Who asked you! Butt out!

Tell that congressman of yours

he's all washed up, I guarantee it.

As far as you're concerned, you're not

gonna get away with it, not this time.

- Don't worry about me.

- Oh, but I do.

I worry like the devil.

I stay up nights.

You know, when you live in Washington,

it's enough to break your heart.

You see a perfect piece of machinery...

the democratic structure.

Somebody's always tampering with it,

trying to make it hit the jackpot.

When you steal from the government,

you steal from yourself, ya dumb ox!

You two, go ahead.

Im going right ahead.

Wait a minute.

I'll tell you where you're goin'.

- You?

- Sure.

In this whole thing, I guess you forgot about me... about how I'm a partner.

Jim once told me...

126 different yards I own.

- Control.

- Same thing.

So here's how it's gonna be.

I don't want 'em.

I don't want anything to do with you, so I'm gonna sign 'em all back.

- All right.

- Not all at once. Just one at a time.

One a year.

Only you gotta behave,

'cause if you don't...

I could let go on everything!

For what you've done,

even since I've known you...

I bet you could be put in jail for about 900 years.

You'd be a pretty old man when you got out.

- What's goin' on around here?

- A revolution.

Come on, Paul.

I'll send for my things.

You little crumb! You'll be sorry for this day. Just wait and see.

Go ahead and go with him, but you don't stand a chance.

If I've ever seen anybody outsmart themselves it's you.

- Good-bye, all.

- And you!

- Me?

- Yeah! You're fired.

Sorry, Harry.

I enjoyed working for you.

- Open up.

- All right?

Do what I'm tellin' you!  
How do you like that?  
He could've had 100 grand.  
She could've had me.  
Both wind up with nothin'.  
Dumb chump.  
Crazy broad.  
To all the dumb chumps  
and all the crazy broads...  
past, present and future...  
who thirst for knowledge  
and search for truth...  
who fight for justice  
and civilize each other...  
and make it so tough  
for crooks like you...  
and me.  
License, please.  
- No, not this license.  
- Oh, sorry.  
Okay, forget it. My wedding present.  
Take it easy, or you'll never make it.  
Oh, don't worry.  
We'll make it.  
It's a clear case  
of predestination.  
- "Pre... " what?  
- Look it up.