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The Carpetbaggers

By John Michael Hayes

Every generation has
its modern carpetbaggers,
its adventurers
who gamble everything
to stand head and shoulders
above other men.
Among them could be
a creative giant,
a do-gooder, a tyrant
or a plunderer,
a man who leaves
his personal brand
on everything
and everyone he touches.
I guess in the past generation
it could have been someone
like the fictional and fabulous
Jonas Cord, Jr.--
the best or the worst,
depending on how much
you imagine he might
have hurt you
or how much you believed
he helped you.
The legend of Jonas
spanned almost two decades
and it began
that April morning in the 1920s
in the sky
over the Nevada desert.
There it is, Jonas!
We hit it right on the nose!
Let me take the stick
for a while.
You can't fly.
I've been watching
you. It's simple.
You pull it back and you go up.
You push it forward
and you go down.
Okay, it's yours,
but be careful.
You're gonna kill us!
Get your hands the hell

off that stick, kid!
That felt good.
I'm going to try it again.
Not with me in it.
Well, then get out--
it's my plane.
Look out!
Take her, Joe. Land it.
Hey, Nevada!
Where's your horse?
Still running from
that dive you made.
What the hell is that
pilot trying to prove?
Joe? He's a first-class flyer.
He does have a tendency
to get airsick.
Somebody should take
the plane away from him.
Its not his-- it's mine.
Huh. You can't fly.
I just did.
I might have known it.
All right, what
did the rig cost you?
Nothing. I picked it up
in an all-night poker game
from an unlucky card player
named Buzz Dalton.
Now, he could fly this
through the hole in a doughnut.
You know, your father didn't
like the way you handled it.
My father didn't like the way
God handled the creation.
You scared the pinto beans
out of every Mexican
in the factory.
Nevada, who told the old man
about me and the girl?
The newspapers.
You had a pretty big spread.
Ah, it was a grandstand play.
She didn't want to die.

Came close to it.
Look, the longer we keep
the old man waiting
the more he's like a mule
with a burr under his tail.
Now come on, let's go.
Another ounce ought
to make it about 3:00.
Is that all
you've got to say
after ruining half
a day's production
with another one of
your crazy stunts?
Your message said to get
down here in a hurry.
Not through the roof.
Two more feet and everything
within three miles
of this powder keg
would have vanished.
Yeah. Yeah,
I gave that some thought.
Why the hell didn't you get
out of that hotel room
when McAllister told you?
'Cause the girl
tried to kill herself.
I couldn't leave her alone.
You didn't have
to go to the hospital
and to make a small
story on page ten
into page-one headlines.
Well, it would've read worse
if I tried to hide.
Well, what did you do
that made the girl
want to take her life?
A pretty ordinary thing.
I told her there
wouldn't be any wedding.
And if you had any brains...
Brains?

Right now.
Right now,
sitting in my conference room
there's a pair of vultures
waiting to pick my pockets
for \$30,000 or they'll sue
for breach of promise
and who knows what else?
Tell them to go ahead.
Watch the price drop.
This is the fourth
girl in a year
that you've been
in trouble with.
Are you angry or... jealous?
Disgusted.
A son with everything--
name, money, business--
and he runs around
like some homeless moron.
Now, where do you
think you're going?
Back to Los Angeles.
You don't need me
to make up your mind.
You're either going
to pay him off, or you're not.
Besides, I got a date.
What are you trying to prove?
That you're a man?
Well, a man is judged
by what's in his head...
not in his bed.
You dried-up, impotent old man.
You ought to be glad
somebody in this family
still has what it takes.
otherwise, that
so-called wife of yours, Rina,
might think there was something
wrong with all of us Cords.
Jonas?
Jo...
Age 48. Survivors, wife Rina

Marlowe Cord and Jonas Cord, Jr.
Cause of death,
encephalic embolism.
That's medical for
'blood clot on the brain.'
Will you accept it or
do you want an autopsy?
Can you put down heart attack?
I'm afraid I can't do that.
Then keep it confidential.
I'll make the public
announcement my own way.
Its your privilege.
I'll file it
and have my girl
send you copies.
The German contracts.
They're supposed
to be signed tomorrow.
Who's going to do it?
I am.
Denby,
I said I am.
You don't need
McAllister's permission.
Yes, Junior.
And don't you ever
call me Junior again.
Oh. Those people outside.
Give them \$5,000, get a release
and kick them out.
Suppose, suppose
they won't take it?
Denby, their mother knows
she sent that girl
to trap me into marriage,
and I can prove it.
Yes, Junior, uh, Jonas.
Give the news
to the factory help.
Tell them they get
the rest of the week off,
a five percent
increase in wages,

and see to it they
attend the funeral to a man.
Got it?
Yes, Jonas.
Five percent increase?
But why?
Because next week
I'm going to ask them
to work 20/ harder.
Yes, Jonas.
Good-bye.
I drew up your father's will.
He held 90/
of the stock in his name
and it's yours.
You'd better get it
probated right away.
Looks like I'm going to need
a personal consultant
and lawyer--
someone like you, Mac.
Full-time.
A hundred thousand a year
to start.
Yes or no?
How do you know you can afford
to pay that kind of money?
You're too smart to
say yes if I can't.
Well...
Now, the first thing
we'll have to do
is call a meeting
of the board of directors
and have you officially elected
president of the company.
If I own 90/ of the stock,
I just elected myself president.
Make the happy announcement.
Who owns the other 10/?
Well, two-and-a-half
percent each
Rina Cord and Nevada Smith.
Two percent each, Judge Samuel

Haskell and Peter Carmac,
president of the
Industrial Bank of Reno,
and one percent to
your father's secretary,
Eugene Denby.

What's our cash position?

Solvent, but thin.

What do we need
to be solid?

Oh, about \$200,000.

What have you done about it?

What makes you think

I've done anything?

You're here. My father wouldn't
call you from Los Angeles
just to settle with
that girl's parents.

He could have done
that himself.

I arranged a loan from
Pioneer National Trust Company
of Los Angeles for \$300,000.

Good.

That'll give me enough money
to buy out
the minority stockholders,
not counting Nevada
and Rina, of course.

What's the minority
stock worth?

Maybe \$60,000.

I want complete control.

Offer the others...

But Jo...

They take it or leave it.

Tell them I'm so young
and inexperienced

and have such wild ideas
that in a year, the stock
might only be worth ten.

And after they take it,
tell Denby he's through.

He's too nervous to be honest.

Suppose they turn it down.
They won't,
if you're a good enough actor.
Well, is there anything else
I should take care of,
Counselor?
Well, you might think
over that German contract,
the one you're going
to sign tomorrow.
Contract for what?
Something to do
with a new product.
Plastics, I think he called it.
Have Denby give
you the file on it
before you talk to
him about his stock.
Study it, and give me a
breakdown tomorrow morning.
All right.
If you'd prefer,
I'll clean out that desk,
take care
of the personal things.
Personal things?
He was an impersonal man.
The contents of this desk...
you could never tell he once
had a wife who had his son.
Your father was
a very remarkable man, Jonas.
My father was a greedy, selfish,
insensitive,
unsympathetic drunk.
How he got as far as he did,
I'll never know.
It was a present from my mother.
Have the plane ready,
tomorrow morning, 6:00 a.m.
Airplane?
We're flying to Los Angeles
to get the money.
What about your

father's funeral?

Don't worry.

I wouldn't miss that
for anything.

Welcome home, Mr. Jonas.

Thank you, Jedediah.

My father's dead.

I know.

Mr. Denby called.

I'm deeply sorry, Mr. Jonas.

Anyone else know?

I didn't think it was
my position to tell them.

Mrs. Cord is in her room.

Louise, bring in my robe.

Jonas!

Hi.

Where's Louise?

Downstairs.

Your father wouldn't
like this.

He'll never know.

He will if I tell him.

You won't.

You seem pretty
sure of yourself.

I am.

Jonas, stop that...

What do you think you're...?

Have you gone
out of your mind?

Don't you know
at any minute now,
he could come walking in
that door?

No, he won't.

He won't?

Mrs. Cord, your dearly beloved
husband is dead.

He had a stroke.

He died about...

I better get dressed.

Uh-uh.

I'm not finished.

What is there to finish?
You and me.
Didn't we start out together?
Didn't I bring you home
to show my father my girl?
The only girl?
Oh, Jonas...
Didn't I hold your hand
like a schoolboy?
Never once touching you below
the neck or above the knee.
And in five minutes,
didn't a coarse,
middle-aged rum pot
take you away from me
and straight up to bed?
Oh, Jonas, please...
Now, how did that happen?
What'd he tell you about me?
Jonas, please...
What'd he say?
He said you were too young.
And I don't-don't remember.
Well...
I'm not too young now.
I'm the master,
the head of the house.
And I've stood in line
long enough for you.
You wouldn't dare.
I'll scream. The servant...
Will think
you're screaming with grief.
Oh, Jonas...
Oh, Jonas, Jonas, Jonas...
You want me, Rina?
Oh, yes.
Why now?
Oh, I've always wanted you.
I've always wanted you.
But you chose my father?
I chose money.
I didn't have any.
Oh, Jonas, what

difference does it make?
We can do anything
we want now.
I'm yours any
way you want me.
Oh, love me, Jonas.
Love me, love me, love me.
What for?
You know you want me
more than anything
in the world.
I just wanted to see
how far you'd go
before your late husband
was cold.
I'd go further than
you'd ever dare.
You'd grab at anything now.
Oh, Jonas, you lost me once.
Don't do it again.
The day I take you is when
you've got everything you want--
when you're happy--
when you have nothing to gain
and everything to lose.
You're afraid,
scared you can't make it.
Afraid you're not half the man
that your father was.
And you're not,
you never could be!
You're not a man!
You're just a scared
little boy,
a scared little boy!
Junior!
Junior!
Junior!
Good afternoon.
Why, Mr. McAllister,
we thought you were in Nevada.
I was, four hours ago.
Mr. Moroni in?
Oh, I'm sure he is, but I'm

supposed to say I'll see.
I'll see.
If Denby looked like that,
he'd still be working for me.
I thought the loan
was being made
to the Cord Chemical Company.
Well, Jonas...
A good banker looks through the
company, to the man behind it.
My experience is limited,
but it's still backed
by adequate collateral.
Here are the production
estimates, Mr. Moroni.
Very optimistic.
How well do you know your
business, Mr. Cord?
Not as well as I will
next month or next year.
But this much I do know:
Nothing stays the same.
In the years to come,
there'll be ways of making money
that never existed
in my father's time.
I presume you're referring
to this new product
you're acquiring
by the German contracts.
That's part of it.
And just how much
do you know about plastics?
I heard the word
for the first time yesterday.
And what makes you so sure
it's worth anything?
Eastman and Dupont's interest
in the American rights.
Anything
they're that interested in
has got to be worth something.
And before you agreed
to lend us the money

you must have given it
some thought.

Well, buying an option
and knowing what to do with it
are vastly different matters.
The day after the funeral, I'll
be on the first ship to Germany
to learn all there is to know
about plastics.

And while you're gone?
Mr. McAllister has agreed
to join us.

He'll run the company.
You will note that although
the loan is for \$300,000
we are extending your credit
to the maximum of \$500,000.

One of my banking
principles, Mr. Cord.

I don't believe in budgeting
my clients too closely.
Sometimes, a few dollars more
makes the difference
between success and failure.

Or the difference
between profit and loss
on the loan to the bank.

No strings
on the additional money?

Only my approval
when you spend it.

Thank you, Mr. Moroni.
Now, would you gentlemen like
to be my guests
at dinner this evening?

Well, unfortunately
we're due back
in Nevada tonight.

Tonight?

Well, the afternoon
train has already left.

I own my own plane.
We'll be home at 9:00.

you-you better fly carefully

Mr. Cord.

After all, we just gave you
a lot of money.

Well, if anything happens to us
on the way down,
just stop payment on the check.
You must live
a terribly exciting life.

-Oh...

-What's your name?

Lisa.

Hey, Jonas!

What a surprise.

Hello, Buzz.

Mr. Dalton, Mr. McAllister,
Mr. Moroni.

How are you?

Mr. Dalton.

Glad to meet you.

Mr. Dalton is the pilot
from whom I secured the plane.

What are you doing here, Buzz?

Trying to get a stake
for another poker game?

In a way.

I've been trying
to see Mr. Moroni.

I got a mail contract.

L.A. to Frisco, 12 months
guaranteed at \$10,000 a month.

But I have to pass it up,
unless I can find the dough
to buy the three planes
that I need.

How much it cost?

and 10 to keep them flying
until the first check comes in.

Are these the figures?

Yeah, got it all worked out.

I can net five grand a month
after expenses and amortization.

You got your money,
on two conditions.

I get 50/ of the stock

in your company
and a chattel mortgage
on your planes
amortized
over a 12-month period,
both payable to Cord Chemicals.

Partner...

you now own
a brand-new business.

Mr. Moroni, would
you be kind enough
to arrange the
details for me?

Certainly, Mr. Cord.

Make the loan for 50,000.

Wait a minute.

I only asked for 30.

Yes, but I just
learned something
about good banking.

An honest man always needs more
than he asks for.

Good luck, Buzz.

Let's go, Mac.

Hey, what do we call
the company?

International Airways.

International?

We're only going
from L.A. to Frisco.

This year.

Next year, who knows?

Watching you pack gives me
travel fever.

Take something for it.

I'm going to.

A powder, tonight.

No need to.

Its your house now.

He left it to you.

I'm selling it.

You are?

Mm-hmm. To you.

For \$100,000.

It only cost 55.
Along with it goes my stock
in Cord Chemicals.
The stock isn't
worth the difference.
Under the laws
of the State of Nevada
I'm entitled to one-third
of your father's estate
will or no will.
Facts of life, Jonas.
I could tie you up in court
for five years.
I can wait. Can you?
No.
Well, let's make it easy
on you, then.
I'll take 50,000 now
and your note
endorsed by the company
for 10,000 a year
for the next five years.
How do you like
my widow's weeds?
If you'd worn those
to the funeral
you wouldn't be a widow.
He'd have climbed right
out of the coffin.
The first installment.
Jonas...
You'll get my note
for the balance
tomorrow morning.
No, it's not that.
I'm sorry for what happened
the other day.
Neither of us meant
what we said.
I did.
Jonas, what can I do?
You can live well on \$100,000.
Then at least do me one favor.
The way you feel,

it should be easy.
Uh-uh.
The way I feel
doesn't include favors.
Well, then give
yourself a present.
Get your revenge over with.
Do it now.
Mistreat me,
make love to me, anything,
only get it over with.
No, thank you.
Jonas, please,
it has to be done.
Anything, everything,
then throw me out.
That's what you enjoy,
the only thing
you really want, isn't it?
You don't know any more
about love than I do.
You want sensation--
the uglier, the better.
The more it hurts,
the nicer it is.
The more improper,
the more exciting.
I just want
to get this over with
so that you can have
your satisfaction
and I can pay my debts.
Who knows?
You might find out
you like me
more than you realize.
I do like you, Rina.
I like you a lot.
And I'm going
to go on liking you...
because for someone
with your hunger
that's the best torture
I can think of.

Now you have a nice time
with your paycheck.
Come in.
Well, Rina just pulled out
considerably richer
than when she arrived.
So I heard.
Where are you going?
Germany.
Hit the trail myself.
I figured on
taking you with me.
Oh, no, not me.
Stay here then.
I just bought my house.
I'll be back
in a couple of months.
No, I'm leaving tonight.
Why?
Oh, some houses just die.
Its better to get out
of them quick.
You're the only friend I got,
Nevada.
You're my real father.
Now, don't split up the family.
Nicely said, Junior,
but I'm a hired hand,
and all jobs have
to end sometime.
Just remember what I taught you:
Choose your side, draw fast,
but don't hit
any innocent bystanders.
I'll try.
If you're determined to leave,
I guess you'll need some money.
No. No, I'm okay.
Its a going-away present.
Max Sand-- ever hear of him?
Cowboy father, indian mother,
grew up wild.
Went after three outlaws
who tortured and killed

his parents.
Gunned them down,
one at a time.
Bodyguard in a fancy house
in New Orleans.
Killed another man there.
Went to a prison camp,
escaped.
Robbed banks, hid in Mexico.
Satisfied more women
than a cavalry regiment
on leave.
Wanted in six states.
Then something happened.
He hung up his guns,
turned soft.
Took a job as a companion
to a boy with no mother,
no father to speak of.
Max Sand.
Did you ever hear of him?
Well, I'll be.
Did you dig up
all this information yourself?
And that's the only copy.
Even your father didn't know.
Nobody did.
Nobody does.
How much you asking for this?
Nothing.
Take it with you.
But if you're ever tempted
to preach me a sermon sometime
just open it to any page
and recall your own sins.
Who has a better right
to preach than the sinner?
Junior, you're not going
to make me pay for this someday
are you?
Depend on it.
By the way, I almost forgot.
I have something for you.
What is it?

All my stock in Cord Chemical,
signed over to you,
lock, stock and barrel.
Nevada, this is, this is...
Don't say anything.
Its no use to me.
All right.
Well...
good-bye, Junior.
Good-bye, Nevada.
Keep in touch.
Sure.
Nevada?
Yeah?
Where you going?
What are you going to do?
Join up with a couple
of old saddle tramp buddies,
take a Wild West circus
around the country.
Something I've always
wanted to do.
I just wondered.
Jonas?
Jonas?!
Jonas, where are you?
Jonas?!
Jonas, what are you doing
in this room?
I was just...
I was just...
I told you never to come
in here again.
I was only looking!
Looking?
Looking for what?
There's nothing here anymore.
I want to see my brother.
You can't see him.
He's gone.
Your brother is gone.
The past is gone.
This room has nothing
to do with our lives now,

so get out and don't let me
catch you in here again.
No! No! I only want to see.
Come on out of here.
Let me go! Let me go!
You little...
Let me go!
Let me go! Let me go!
Let me go! Let me go!
Let me go! Let me go!
Someday I'll kill you!
Someday I'll kill you!
Now, now, Mr. Jonas.
Just be quiet.
Take it easy.
Everything's going
to be all right.
Now, just come out of there.
Now, you know you shouldn't
go in there.
All it does is upset you,
to no purpose.
Come on.
I know, Jedediah.
Come on now.
Take it easy.
I know.
Hi.
Hi.
I'm going to change into
a flannel shirt and be natural.
Now, tell me
why did you want to come down
here tonight?
Because you were
going to be here.
Oh, let me button it.
I'm not helpless.
I want to do it.
My chest is already buttoned.
How old are you, Nevada?
You want the truth?
Not if a lie
is more interesting.

Born 1882. That makes me 43.
You look 30.
How old are you?
You look 30.
We're the same generation.
Ma'am, do you always
talk with your body?
It speaks several languages,
fluently.
Mine's downright illiterate.
By morning, I'll have you
speaking like a native.
Ma'am...
we're taking different
trails out of here.
Let's still end up
liking each other, huh?
No sense of humor.
I came here to forget
all that's happened
and to have a high old time,
like after a roundup.
I'll sober up a little bit,
get myself a good honest job.
No problems.
No problems.
No trouble.
No trouble.
So I recommend you act your age
and I'll act mine.
That's a wonderful idea.
I haven't acted my age in years.
Ought to be fun.
You know, another time,
another place,
you might be just
the woman for me.
Sure.
During the next couple
of years,
Jonas started writing that
chapter of history for himself--
burning the Cord brand
on every factory and rooftop

he could buy or build.
Nevada's Wild West show
was too much fun to make money.
After the Sheriff padlocked it
in California,
the only place his kind
of cowboy was needed
was in the movies.
That's all. Right here.
That's all.

Rina just naturally headed
for the place
with the most action-- Paris,
and helped give
the Lost Generation its name.
They have a great
downhill slide there,
greased with fancy men,
fancy clothes
and absinthe.

Vive la...I

Vitel Vitel Vitel

Vive la France!

We're way out in front, Buzz.
and we're almost home.

If nothing happens,
we've not only won the race,
we've got us another mail
contract from Uncle Sam.

We've got more than that.

We got a new business.

What new business?

Passengers.

Six at a time?

There's no money in that.

With what airplane,
you dreamer?

With the new Cord passenger
plane we're going to build.
Where you going to build it,
in your backyard?

We'll buy a factory.

Oh, sure, go buy Lockheed,
Martin or Curtis Wright.

Only you better find
a gold mine first.
Of course, I hear that Winthrop
Aviation is having trouble.
There is no Winthrop Aviation.
Take a look down there.
What's this thing you have
for painting
your name on rooftops?
I'd paint it higher
but skywriting's
too impermanent.
Congratulations.
You've won yourself
a race, Mr. Cord.
I've won something that
last's longer than that--
a new mail contract.
How do you feel?
Numb.
Richer.
Is it true that you now
own Winthrop Aviation?
Cord Aviation.
Are you going to build
military planes?
Passenger planes.
A year from now,
I'll be flying passengers
coast to coast in 24 hours.
Think of all the sleep you can
lose traveling that fast.
Are you trying to corner
the world, Mr. Cord?
There's an idea.
Mr. Cord, why is it
you're not married?
Why aren't you a millionaire?
Just lucky, I guess.
Me, too.
Let's go, Jedediah.
What's his rush?
Its the world
that's turning too slow.

Jonas, you need a week off...
a month off.
Otto Strauss in Berlin
came up with a new high-speed
plastics injection mold.
I cabled him an offer,
he accepted.
That's how much
money we need.
You better hightail it
to New York
and make the arrangements.
We're moving too fast.
By whose clock?
I spend half my time
borrowing money.
Which we pay back.
And every year
a new business.
Its called growth, Mac.
Maybe, but we're
so cross-collateralized--
so interdependent,
that if one business goes,
the others might go with it.
Don't let one go.
Why don't we buy a hotel
with lots of beds.
That's an idea.
Make a note of that, Mac.
You'd better get some rest.
Sure.
You get right down
to the station.
Take the first
train to New York.
Tonight?
I haven't even packed a bag.
That's a hundred-dollar suit.
It ought to keep its press.
Jedediah, let Mr. Dalton
sleep...
all the way back
to the factory.

Right, sir.

I thought this
was a private bar.
That's what makes
it so attractive.

Mmm.

Now, how in this world
did you ever guess?
Wingspread 37, fuselage 25...
and hand-rubbed, by the way.
Tail assembly 36,
shockproof landing gear
and never stalls in a dive.
Well, come in for a landing.
Tell me what you want.

Well, to be straightforward
about the whole thing

I'm a newspaperman.

You can get arrested
in those clothes.

I was using
the generic term.

That's a relief.

What paper?

Oh, it's just a
little scandal sheet
called the Star Telegram
Picayune Times Bulletin.
Show me your press pass.

Oh, no.

You don't get to see that
until after I get the story.

Well, what do
you want to know?

How much money do I have?

How does it feel to run
ten corporations
or what speed record
am I going to break next?

Heaven's no.

I leave stuffy old things
like that to the city editor.

I'm strictly feature.

I go for the offbeat story.

Like?

Like, what do you
sleep in at night?

Depends on how lucky I am.

Well, now, who would you
most like to be stranded
on a desert island with?

The world's greatest
boat builder.

Let me put it this way--
which do you prefer,
quantity or quality.

Do I have a choice?

We're known as
a liberal newspaper.

Ma'am, you have
just won yourself
an exclusive
full-page layout.

Its probably just
my city editor.

I'll disguise my voice.

Mr. Cord's suite.

Who is this?

Its my father.

Jonas Cord.

Who's the dame, Jonas?

Its a body I picked up
at a rental agency.

Ah!

They said you wanted to see me.

I do.

Okay, I'll be right up.

Uh-uh. I'll be right down.

Well, we can't very well
meet here in the lobby.

Okay, I need a shave anyway.

I'll meet you in
the second floor washroom.

You knew he was coming.

Yeah, but I didn't
know you were.

Yes, you did.

If you'll excuse me,

I have to get my razor
and \$25,000.

Is that all, Jonas?

Yes, that's all, Monica.

Did you come here thinking
there'd be more?

Jonas...

Try to do it nicely.

I mean, give him something
to walk away with besides money.

If he doesn't try
to con me, I will.

Jonas.

Do you need him, Monica?

No.

I did when I was little,
but he never had
any time for me.

And now I've got my own
money and my own life...
and you.

What else do I need?

Well, you see
the truth is, Jonas,
I need another \$10,000.

What happened to all the money
you got when you sold the stock?

Well, it's gone.

Creditors, ex-wives, judgments.

You know how much I owed.

Amos, your contract
doesn't provide
for advances like this.

I know, but this is important.

Won't happen again, I promise.

Its... it's for Monica.

Monica?

What about her?

Well, I want to send her to her
mother in England.

She's getting too much
for me to handle, Jonas.

She's seeing some
playboy on the sly,

and... well, he's
teaching her bad habits.
Do you know who he is?
I wish I did.
I'd kill him
with my bare hands.
A nice, sweet, innocent
kid like her.
I've got to get
her away from him.
You ever talk to her?
I've tried, but you know
how kids are nowadays.
Give them everything
and get nothing.
Hmm. You could try
being a father.
What the hell makes you
such an expert?!
Wait till you get
kids of your own.
Now, what about
the money, Jonas?
Its important to me
and Monica, and...
All right, I'll give
it to you, Amos.
As a matter of fact,
I'll give you \$25,000...
on one condition.
Why sure. Sure,
anything you say, Jonas.
I want your resignation.
You mean... from
Winthrop Aviation?
From Cord Aviation.
But I founded the company!
I can help you make it grow.
Take the money, Amos.
No!
No, that, that factory is me.
I laid out every machine,
the production, technique...
Take the money, Amos.

Like hell I'll take it.
I won't sell my life
for \$25,000.
If you spend it carefully,
it'll keep you in booze
for ten years.
Oh, Jonas.
Please.
One day you'll need help, too.
If I do, I won't bargain
with anything as precious
as my only daughter to get it.
Did he take it?
Yes.
It won't last him long.
It should if he's smart.
All he understands
is machinery and production.
Not people.
Not even himself.
A perfect description
of the late Jonas Cord, Sr.
No mothers, no home life,
fathers too busy with business.
You know, when you
think about it Jonas,
we're really very much alike.
But you're prettier.
But you're more exciting.
What are your plans, Monica?
Plans?
I don't know. Play?
Burn the candle at both ends
while I still got something
to light it with.
Who knows?
Maybe like my father
I'll get paid off one day
and disappear into the woodwork.
Unless you find somebody.
I already have.
But what can a gold miner
offer the gold,
except maybe a pretty pan

and even that tarnishes fast.
What's the wildest thing
you've ever done?
I was hoping
I hadn't done it yet.
You know all the answers
to interest a man, don't you?
No. Only when I'm lucky enough
to get the right questions.
Go ahead. Ask me something.
Something I can't answer.
Go on. I dare you.
-Good-bye.
-Good luck.
Sorry.
Congratulations.
Cold?
Mm, scared.
I can't believe it happened.
What do I tell'em, mister?
Back to the airport.
What'd you like to see
on your honeymoon?
Lots of lovely ceilings.
Merci beaucoup.
Taxi! Taxi! Taxi.
Excuse me.
This is probably
a foolish question.
You're not by any chance
a Miss Marlowe, are you?
This is probably a foolish
answer, but yes.
Forget-me-nots.
That's for the D.A.R.
You're strictly long-stemmed,
American Beauty roses.
Well, they're lovely anyway.
Nevada said
a very old friend of his.
I was expecting to meet
his first grade school teacher.
Well, on the way into town
I'll give you

a lesson in geography.
I think I've already had one.
Well, this way, please,
to the wheelchair.
All aboard!
My, my.
This is the first 12-cylinder
steer I've ever seen.
Fabulous, isn't it?
Designed it myself.
Whenever Nevada Smith
rolls through town
they know he's somebody
important.
Just think what you
could have done
for Abraham Lincoln.
How about this interior?
Just run your hand
over that leather.
Isn't that nice?
Feel like I've been
swallowed by a buffalo.
Showmanship-- public eats it up.
After all, Nevada Smith's
just about the most important
thing in movies.
Kids all over the country
are crazy about him.
He does all his own
stunts, you know?
Tell me something.
Mm-hmm.
Who are you?
Oh, now, honey,
come on.
I'm Dan Pierce.
I'm Nevada's agent,
his manager.
Yes, I-I get him pictures,
make his deals, bank his money,
and, well, handle him,
personally.
I get ten percent.

That is, of everything
he gets.
Let me ask you,
Mister, uh...
Pierce. Dan Pierce.
Do you handle everybody,
personally?
Only those who show
possibilities.
Here, I'll trade these
for a drink.
If we get arrested
I hope they put us
in the same cell.
Do the kids know
about that?
Oh, no. No,
we carry milk in here
on personal appearances.
You see, Nevada never drinks
at a picture
and he never kisses
the girl.
I guess that's the real
reason I never became
a cowboy star.
Here, I saved
ten percent for you.
Well, thanks.
Say, do you mind
if I ask you
a rather personal question?
Not at all.
What is your, uh, relationship
to Nevada Smith?
Oh, nothing important.
I'm going to marry him.
Reach!
Don't shoot.
I'm innocent.
Innocent?
I thought you were
Rina Marlowe.
Nevada.

Oh, Nevada!
Welcome home, Rina.
Nobody in the world
thought about me but you.
The money, tickets, love,
everything.
Robin Hood
of the Rio Grande-- that's me.
Are those guns loaded?
Let's see.
Oh!
Blanks.
Now I'll ride off
into the sunset
if I can find
dark glasses for my horse.
What's your hurry,
partner?
Isn't there
some generous way
a lonesome widow
can show her gratitude?
As a matter of fact,
there is.
Got any buttermilk?
Buttermilk?
Whatever happened
to bottles of red-eye
dance hall girls?
That's the villains.
I'm strictly a hero.
I can believe it.
That outfit, this house
that car of yours.
I just try to act out

people's dreams:

purity over passion,
goodness over evil.
But evil can be fun.
Oh, not when Nevada rides.
Killing, yes, but kissing, no.
How did it all happen?
Oh, I joined a Wild West show

that folded in Los Angeles.
I became an extra, did stunts
and people started
writing in about me
and here I am.
Do you like it?
Yes, I do. Its fun.
Nobody gets hurt,
and maybe it helps a little.
Do you ever see Jonas?
Talk about success.
There's a man who's going
to end up running the world.
You can't ride, fly,
shoot a gun, mail a letter,
make a phone call,
or drink a cup of coffee
that Jonas doesn't have
something to do with it.
But you never see him?
No. In the same town,
but different worlds.
You know he's married?
I didn't.
I heard he spent his honeymoon
going from one of his factories
to another,
making new business deals
with bankers.
Something borrowed,
something blue.
Poor girl.
So, let's forget him.
Its the hero's night off.
And for once, he's going
to let the lonesome widow
be properly grateful.
Properly?
Not if I know the widow,
and I do.
Can you really forget Jonas?
Jonas who?
The only Jonas I ever heard of
was swallowed by a whale.

Its the only thing
big enough
to take his ego.
to take his ego.
If my calculations
are correct,
we should be able
to carry 20 passengers,
in addition to the
pilot and copilot,
at a cruising speed
of about 250.
Should be able
to fly for seven hours
before refueling,
depending on the wind.
Fly from here to New York
with only two stopovers?
I don't believe it.
What would it cost
to build the first one?
A half a million bucks
for one airplane?
Who do you think we are,
the government?
You guys are nuts.
We'll never make
our money out of this.
First-class passage,
coast to coast by train
with compartment, meals
and tips comes to over \$250
and takes four full days.
This plane can carry passengers
the same distance
at the same cost in one day
and save three working days.
Build it.
As stockholder who owns
half the stock--
that's me--
just cancel that order.
Cord Chemicals owns
the other half

and also holds over
half a million dollars
in mortgages
on International planes,
most of which are
past due right now.
You want to foreclose now,
make it official.
You're a great pilot, Buzz.
You'd risk your life with
a quart of gas over the Rockies.
Now don't freeze up
when I throw
a few figures at you.
I should
have known better, Jonas.
I should have learned
my lesson
when I lost that Waco to you
in a poker game.
Let me gamble the money.
I'll make you rich.
Fate it, shake'em and roll.
They told me this was
where the action was.
Why, Mrs. Cord, good evening.
Mr. Morrissey, Buzz.
Hi, Monica.
What brings you down here?
Oh, I don't know.
The dishes were all done
and Amos and Andy was over.
I'll have these duplicated
in the morning.
Don't let me break up
the conference.
No, we were through.
I'll think I'll go home
and wash my one shirt
in case we lose it.
Go home and order a silk one.
As soon as we finish
this plane,
we're going to start

designing another one--
meals served on board.
That's what I was
really afraid of, Jonas.
Good night, all.
Oh, good night,
Mrs. Cord, Mr. Cord.
Good night.
The car's outside, darling.
Want a ride home?
Mm, I'd like to...
Oh, good.
...but I have to go
to the laboratory.
Get them started
building a wind tunnel.
Tonight?
Yeah.
I have to fly to Washington.
I'm building a plane to carry
passengers coast to coast,
and I haven't even got
a franchise yet.
Ready to go?
Not this time, Jonas.
Why not?
Why me?
Only bride I know
who spent her entire honeymoon
at 5,000 feet,
who's always airsick
instead of morning sick.
I am an earthling.
Haven't you noticed?
Lovely valleys,
beautiful mountains.
Then cut your motor.
Come in. Have fun.
I thought we had fun.
In between oxygen masks,
chemical samples and bankers.
You really must learn
to take one thing
at a time.

For example, take me.
Any time, any place.
Home, now.
I can't.
You sure?
Yeah?
Put her on.
Its my father's widow.
Hello, Rina.
I thought you were in Europe.
Yes, I did.
We all were.
What kind of trouble?
Hold it, hold it.
Look, where can I
meet you tonight?
I'll see you there
in half an hour.
Come on, I'll drop you off
at the hotel.
A minute ago,
nothing in the world
could have kept you
from flying off on business.
The money vultures
are after Nevada Smith.
Oh.
My name's Cord.
Where's the commissary?
Straight ahead, Mr. Cord.
Hello, Rina.
Hello, Jonas.
This is Mr. Ellis, the director.
How do you do?
Mr. Cord.
If you'll excuse us
for a minute.
Sure.
Congratulations.
Your bride's
a very pretty girl.
You said Nevada
was in trouble.
How much trouble?

Two million dollars worth.
I heard he was doing great,
making half a million a year.
He was, but...
Well, Nevada wanted to make
a picture his own way.
Put up everything he owned
for the chance.
Then something went wrong
and they don't want
to release it.
Is it a stinker?
I don't really know.
They told him
that the theaters
would only play
talking pictures.
Now the bank's
calling his loan
and that big operator
Bernard B. Norman
won't advance
any more money.
I see.
Jonas, you've got to help him.
I haven't got to do anything.
One time you wanted something
and he gave it to you.
His Cord Chemical stock?
It didn't cost him \$2 million.
What's it worth now?
Close.
Rina and Mr. Ellis
showed me the picture.
Max Sand.
The going away present
you gave to me.
I put it in a script.
Wait a minute.
Something, uh...
here I don't understand?
Its a private joke.
Why did you withdraw
your guarantee, Mr. Norman?

Because he's a thieving,
unprincipled, son of a...
Please, please,
now let's deal in business
and not personalities.
Anger is for fools.
You call ruining
a man's life business?
I'm not ruining anybody's life.
This is gambling-- some days
we win, some days we lose.
You're the richest loser
I know, I know that.
Look at him, the biggest
star you have on the lot.
-Biggest cowboy star...
-Your bread and butter.
I make other pictures,
you know.
Art pictures that
don't make a dime.
They add dignity and culture
to the business.
They add three starlets
a week to your bed.
I don't have to listen
to this flesh-peddler.
Listen, let's sit down.
Let's sit down.
Mr. Pierce...
Now, why did you withdraw
your guarantee, Mr. Norman?
Talking pictures, that's why.
I can't sell The Renegade's Coat
for peanuts.
Why didn't you make
a talking picture?
I didn't think sound
was here to stay.
Who did?
What happens to the picture now?
You just throw it
in the ash can?
Maybe we can salvage

a few pennies out of it--
South America,
Australia... who knows.
It still leaves Nevada
out in the cold.
My heart bleeds
for him-- truly.
Oh, I think
I'm going to be sick.
Take it easy, Dan,
I asked for it.
Well, you didn't ask to
get your pockets picked.
Mr. Cord, if you'll back Nevada
with your cash, this pirate here
won't be able
to touch the picture.
Now we can't let him get away
with everything for nothing.
Well...
Go easy making up your mind,
Junior.
You could blow the whole bundle.
Nevada, don't start talking him
out of it.
Mr. Cord, I agree with Nevada.
What do you know about
making talking pictures?
Nothing,
but right now, who does?
How many talking pictures
have you made?
One.
I'll take the shot, Nevada,
on one condition:
it'll be strictly my picture.
I give the orders
and everyone does as he's told,
including you.
If I'm going to lose a hand,
the least I want to do
is deal the cards.
Your father's favorite saying.
Sorry I used it.

Well?

Its a deal.

Don't think you've caught
yourself a sucker, Pierce.

By the time we finish
this picture,
you're going to earn your 10/
three times over.

First, line up
all the good talkies there are.

I want to see them.

And second, get the writers in.

We're going to start
redoing the script.

What's the matter with it?

No women.

In the real West,
I heard there were
a number of them-- real women.

The kind men
killed each other for...

robbed banks to buy.

The kind the real Max Sand
built a reputation satisfying.

Its time somebody
gave the West

back to the grownups.

Anything else, Mr. Cord?

Mr. Norman, you'll
have to make room for us.

Get the best sound man
in the business.

And find a cameraman
who'd rather photograph
women than horses
and a dress designer
who doesn't use much cloth.

And, Nevada,
start looking like Max Sand.

Go out
and get that suit dirty.

Hello?

Yes, Mr. Cord is here.

Oh, just a moment.

Your wife.

Excuse me, gentlemen.

Yes?

Now, don't tell me that was
your stepmother who answered.

As a matter of fact,
it was.

A voice like that... I suppose
you've been spending the night
reminiscing about dad
and good ol' days.

Monica, what do you want?

You, of course.

Darling,

when are you coming home?

You know we have some
interrupted business.

I'm on my way
to the factory.

I'll get in touch
with you later.

Trouble in paradise?

Places, please!

Quiet!

Come on, quiet down!

Starting position!

Sound ready!

Get ready to roll.

Interlock.

Interlock okay.

All right, roller!

Quiet, please!

Quiet. Action.

I run a pretty big place here.

Downstairs there's several
gaming rooms and three bars.

Upstairs we provide other,
uh, natural pleasures.

With so much money,
drinking and passion
under one roof,

there's some kind of
explosion every night.

I need a bodyguard.

To replace the one
who got killed?
Well, uh, I hoped
you hadn't heard.
But, uh, if you still
want the job...
I do.
My hours will be your hours,
and, uh, you'll live upstairs.
Uh, you'll collect \$100 a month,
but no drinking.
And the first time I catch you
sleeping in any other
room than your own...
All right. Cut. Cut.
Cut it!
Mr. Cord, what's wrong?
Her. Get her off the set.
She's fired.
Just a minute, Mr. Cord.
Just a minute here!
What the hell is going on?
She can't be fired.
Miss Randall is the most
important star we have.
That's what you told me
and I believed you.
I just had my first lesson
in this business:
don't listen to you.
Now look here, Miss Randall
has a contract for this picture.
You know that.
She must have signed it
in your bedroom.
Listen, Sonny...
me, you can forget
but you owe Miss Randall a
public apology for that insult.
If that woman
ran an immoral house
she'd have to pay me.
Oh, Bernie-cuns!
Oh...

Bernie, baby...
Get away. Get away!
I'll give you five minutes
to get her off the set,
or I'll close down this picture
and hit you with the biggest
lawsuit you ever saw.
Mr. Cord...
Mr. Cord!
I'll fix you for this.
I'm not fooling.
One of these days, I'll fix you.
You'll see... someday...
someday I'll fix you.
Get of my way!
I'll fix you!
Excuse me.
Sorry, no dice.
Marion Davies is working.
Look, I've called everybody.
Garbo's agent won't
even talk to us.
Sally Eilers, Ranee Adoree,
Clara Blore...
all of them, tied up.
Everybody seems
to be conveniently
"occupied" at the moment.
Why?
Thought you might be hungry,
so I sent out for these.
Would you like
something to eat?
What do you got?
Oh, tuna, ham and
cheese, chicken.
-Thanks.
-Mm-hmm.
Say, I've got an idea.
Maybe I should get
to New York
and start looking
for an actress there.
We've got to have

somebody great.
Everyday we don't shoot,
it costs us a fortune.
What do you think?
Rina, come here.
Look, I know a little...
You're going to test
for the role.
Mr. Cord,
do you realize...
Oh, don't be ridiculous.
I'm no actress.
Come to think of it,
you're the best actress I know.
You never said an honest line
in your life.
Don't talk that way to her.
You call it, Nevada--
she tests,
or we all go home broke.
Hi, Jonas.
Well, I know it's been
a long time
since you've seen me,
but you haven't forgotten
what your wife looks like,
have you?
How are you, Monica?
Why don't you get in,
and I'll tell you all about it
on the way home.
Where are we?
I thought we were
going to the hotel.
No questions, please.
Out.
Welcome home, Mr. Jonas.
Did he say home?
Come on.
Merry Christmas.
It can't be Christmas yet.
Oh, it is here.
Monica, did you buy this place?
No.

I only leased it for six months
so you could have the pleasure
of buying it yourself.
Come on,
I'll give you a tour.
The living room.
Painting from a French palace,
fireplace of italian marble
and hand-woven Persian rugs.
Out there are four acres
of land with oranges, lemons,
avocados, assorted flowers,
swimming pool, bathhouse,
barbecue and tennis court.
This way.
The den.
To improve your mind,
ruin your stomach
and work if you must.
Grownup's playroom.
For guests.
Or if anyone unexpected
turns up
we can always just paint it
pink or blue overnight.
Monica, you're not
pregnant, are you?
Well, not that I know of,
but these things happen.
I mean, look
at all the Chinese.
Besides, most accidents
take place in the home.
Well?
I've seen enough plays
to know what it means
when a man has to pour
himself a stiff drink
before he answers.
The heroine is about to be
told the ugly truth.
Monica, why this?
For all the normal reasons.
Home is where people live.

You and I were hotel babies.
The stuffy elevators,
coffee shops,
convention drunks and cigarette
burns on the rugs.
I thought we both missed this.
Needed it.
What I need is the most freedom
and the fewest responsibilities.
Why did you get married?
Because I thought you
were the same kind.
Hotels are
my way of life.
Room service like that--
day and night.
No trees to prune,
no grass to cut.
Girls sent up
by the bell captain.
Well, don't forget,
I met you in a hotel.
Oh.
Jonas, we can do
everything right here
we do in your hotel suite.
Only with more privacy...
more meaning.
Give it a try. Please.
More than a playgirl,
I can be wife.
And mother?
Yes.
If you want.
I don't want.
Excuse me, I have to get down
to the factory.
Can't that airplane wait?
I don't like to be
second in anything.
But I planned dinner here.
Tomorrow morning I'll be
down at the studio
working on the picture.

The studio days
and the factory nights.
You might not see me
for quite awhile.
What do you want me to do
while I'm waiting?
Get a divorce.
Jonas, you... can't mean that.
Afraid I do.
Just like that?
Just like that.
Mrs. Cord, when would
you like dinner served?
Jedediah, you've
known Mr. Cord
a long time, haven't you?
Since he was born.
Tell me about him.
Mr. Jonas is not
easy to tell about.
Jedediah... Mr. Jonas
is not an easy man to love,
but I'm trying.
And I'll try.
Please sit down.
Thank you.
To be honest, I wasn't sure
what kind of feeling
you had for Mr. Jonas.
But now, I have some idea
so I'd like to tell you
what nobody else knows
about him but me...
I've got to eat my words,
Mr. Cord.
Rina's great. A natural.
In fact, she's fabulous.
Greatest screen test
I ever saw, Ed.
She makes the Old West
look like a new girl in town.
Well, she's a long way
from being an
actress yet, Mr. Cord.

Thank you.
But she does have
the most important thing--
that rare quality
of screen magnetism.
Commonly called S-E-X.
Oh, thank you.
We can teach her the rest.
Fine.
Thank you, Mr. Ellis.
See you on the set tomorrow.
Good night.
Good night.
Good night.
Walk me to the car,
will you, Dan?
Sure thing.
I can't do everything.
Building a plane--
trying to run eight
other businesses.
I want you to come
to work for me.
You really know the business.
You know when to fight
and when to take orders.
Well, my agency keeps
me pretty busy.
Sell it.
If this picture goes,
I'm in the movies to stay.
I'll give you ten percent
of the profits
and stock options later.
Well, I don't know...
what about
an expense account?
As big as you need.
Money's the one thing
nobody talks back
to in this town.
You can live on the expenses
and bank your salary.
By noon tomorrow I'll be

out of the agency business
and hip deep
in Cord Productions.
Now that you're
working for me,
I'd like you to do
a couple of things.
Anything you say, boss.
We'll get the writers
to go over
the script again.
Build up Rina's part.
Well, where does
that leave Nevada?
What do you care?
You're not working
for him anymore.
There's a certain logic
in that, I guess.
By the way, have you got
a little black book?
One of the best.
Good. Line me up
some girls.
But I... I thought
you were just... married.
I want girls to take out,
to be seen with.
Get my name in the columns.
Pictures whenever you can.
Girls, names, pictures.
You're the boss.
Close the door, will you, Dan?
Oh, certainly.
Let's go, Jedediah.
One more thing-- fire Ellis.
Well, who's going
to direct the picture?
I am.
I just discovered I know as much
about directing as he does.
Hold it, Mr. Cord,
please, for a picture.
Thank you.

Still... good.
The work looks all right...
what there is of it.
We're more than a week
behind the schedule we set up.
What happened?
Well, I, uh...
I don't know, Jonas.
Maybe I was wrong
about the schedule.
Maybe I should have
allowed more time...
Cut it out, will you, Morrissey?
The only thing wrong
with our schedule is you.
Every bolt,
every screw, every nut
has to have your personal
thumbprint on it.
You act as if we've never
seen an airplane before.
Only the great Jonas Cord
knows everything.
You expect us to work
all day for the company
and all night for you?
Well, Jonas Cord
might be a genius,
but Morrissey and me
are human beings
who get annoyed,
frustrated and damn tired.
You just wasted another minute.
I expect you to make that week
up whether you sleep or not.
Now, if you can't do it, I will.
You'll never do it playing
amateur movie producer
and a cavalry officer
on your casting couch.
Let's get back
to what we started.
Hello, Jonas.
Hello.

Do you have time for your wife?

No.

Make time.

I'm going to talk to you, Jonas,
and I'll do it

in front of Buzz and Phil
if that's what you want.

I think I'll get a drink.

We're married.

We live in the same town,
but you never come home.

I don't have a home.

They won't even let me
in your hotel room.

I'm rarely there anyway.

The only time I see you
is in the newspapers
with some other girl.

They aren't

very good pictures.

Jonas, how much can I take?

There aren't any stress tables
for brunettes.

Would you stop talking
like a damn footnote?

Why don't you just...

say something that makes sense?

This makes sense-- I'm busy,
I don't want to be disturbed.

Jonas...

Get out of here!

All right, Jonas.

Go talk to your lawyer.

I don't have a lawyer
and I don't want one.

Good!

Its the Battle of
Bull Run, Armistice Day
and the stock market crash
all rolled into one.

The picture killed them,
or should I say Rina did?

Thank you, thank you.

Listen to this, listen, Jonas.

"Excellent".
"Excellent". "Excellent".
"Superior".
"Superior". "Excellent".
All the cards are
coming through that way.
She's outside.
Yeah, the crowd
doesn't want to leave.
They're trying to tear
her clothes off,
get her autograph
or just to touch her.
Jonas, she's the biggest
thing to hit this town
since the Spanish landed.
Its incredible.
Yeah, all you can smell
in there air is gold.
You ought to be here.
I don't have to be there, Dan--
I knew it would happen.
Give her 15 more minutes
with the crowd,
then hustle her out of there.
I want her here in my hotel

suite at 11:

I don't think I can tear her...
Dan, I don't care.
Just tell her.
Hello.
Jonas!
How are you?

Your hotel, 11:

I'll be there on the minute.
Good-bye.
Come in.
Signed, sealed and delivered.
Rina Marlowe, the cowboy's
home companion,
reporting for duty
as ordered.

And overdressed.
The bedroom's that way.
The Jonas Cord
Collection Agency.
We never sleep...
alone.
You're too cheerful about it.
By the way, I told Nevada
I was coming up here.
Why the hell did you do
a stupid thing like that?
Because Nevada and I
are going to be married.
I told him I wanted
to be the first
to give our closest
friend the word.
You can't marry him,
he's on his way out.
After this picture's released,
you'll be the biggest star
in the business.
So they tell me.
You've got nothing
to gain by marrying him.
I gain a man who helped me once
and who needs me now.
Making you
a star was my idea.
I didn't ask you for it!
I never wanted it!
You even built up my part
as a monument to your own ego
while you cut his to the bone.
I didn't see you trying
to stop me.
He's on the booze.
We both know his days
are numbered.
That's why he needs me
more than ever.
Why do you think
I did all this?
As always, just to give

and take on your own terms.
Besides, what do you care
about Nevada and me?
You're already married.
Miss Marlowe,
I'd like you
to meet my wife, Monica.
Monica, this
is my stepmother.
Would you like a drink or what?
I've seen what
you brought me here to see.
I'll file for divorce
in the morning.
Oh, you dirty, filthy,
perverted monster.
You can do better than that.
You are the meanest, cruelest
most loathsome thing
I've ever met.
Except for yourself.
Oh...
We belong together.
We're a set.
I promised to marry Nevada.
Who said anything
about marrying?
Oh, you really are
completely no good.
But that's what's always
excited you, isn't it?
You're just like me.
You can't make love
to anyone you like.
We've known that, both of us.
Haven't we?
Oh, yes, yes.
Oh, damn it, yes!
By the authority vested in me
by the State of California
I now pronounce you
man and wife.
You may kiss the bride.
All right, now.

Break it up, break it up.
I'll take my ten percent now.
Calling Dr. Kelly.
Calling Dr. Kelly.
Report to superintendent
on floor five.
Jonas.
Hello, Monica.
You know, I heard about
the passenger flight.
I think
that's so marvelous.
I don't know how
you do it so quickly.
Monica, about the baby...
Did you see her?
Yes.
Isn't she absolutely
beautiful?
I'm no expert on babies.
You can see that she is.
I'm calling her Joanne.
Just a name I liked.
I hope you don't mind.
Whose baby is it?
It's mine, of course.
That's not what I mean.
Who's the father?
You are, Jonas.
I'm not.
But you are.
When I filed for divorce
I didn't know I was pregnant,
but I was.
Are you sure?
Sure?
I don't have to prove anything.
I'm the mother,
and you're the father,
and that's the way it is, Jonas.
Don't worry
about the great Cord name.
I'm calling her
Joanne Winthrop,

so you have no worries,
no responsibilities,
no fears.
Now, get out of here.
Am I listed on the birth
certificate as father?
Of course you are.
You expect me to put down
"father unknown"?
I just wanted to know.
I'm on my way to Europe.
Well, stay there
and don't ever come back.
If you need anything
for the child--
money for clothes...
nurses...
special teachers...
That baby only needs
what you can't give it,
'cause you don't have it--
faith!
Faith in yourself,
faith in your child
and faith in the future!
What do you mean?
Oh...
You know exactly what I mean,
Jonas Cord, Jr.
Seven or eight years went by.
The world was crippled
by the Crash
and the Depression.
Everyone suffered from it,
except Jonas.
He was above it.
We can carry
eight more passengers in this
and one more crew member
and cruise 60 miles
an hour faster.
That's with an
increased gas load.
How much of an increase?

A thousand miles.
New York's fogged in,
we can still make
Washington, Philadelphia,
Boston with fuel to spare.
Point that out
in the advertising.
You could fire a
cannon off that nose
without it deviating a degree.
Good prototype for a bomber?
Yeah.
Waist guns, tail guns,
bomb bay.
Better than any plane
I can think of.
Get busy.
Knock off a two-engine bomber
and get a four-engine job
on the drawing boards.
Now, look, Jonas.
We're just beginning
to show a profit again...
There's a war coming.
Which has nothing
to do with us.
Every war's got
something to do with us.
One day, three-star generals
will be scrambling around
like scared ants
looking for military planes.
What about our overseas
passenger franchise?
That'll have to wait.
Tell McAllister to come in.
Just keep it steady.
Keep the nose above the horizon.
Don't push on anything.
Morrissey, when we get back,
I've got some sketches
of a pursuit plane
I want to show you,
courtesy of the enemy.

What enemy?
Time.
Great plane, Jonas.
Years ahead
of anything in the air.
Thanks.
How much stock do we have
in Norman Pictures?
Four or five thousand shares.
I want control.
Start buying.
Use intermediaries.
That's only a hobby for you,
Jonas. There's...
Now, don't argue
with me, Mac.
Just buy the stock.
You know,
you've always given me orders,
and I've carried them out.
But you've never treated me
like the village idiot before,
and I don't like the feeling.
I'm turning in my badge.
You want more money?
No, I want a rest--
a vacation from you
and your wild schemes
and midnight phone calls
and from living up in the air
like a rich seagull.
Stick with me
a while longer, Mac.
I need you.
What you need
is the same thing--
a vacation from yourself.
More than the rest of us, even.
You're about to come apart
at the seams.
Will you buy the stock?
Yes, yes, like always.
Only instead,
why don't we buy stock

in a mental institution,
a whole string of madhouses?
That's where we're
all going to end up.
I need some coffee.
You take it, Mac.
Good morning, David.
Good morning.
Stock's gone up
another point and a half
this morning, Uncle Bernie.
How 'bout that, huh?
Well, it excites you?
Well, eight points
in two weeks?!
Look what you picked up!
David, I'm a fat old elk
who's picked up
a hungry wolf on his trail.
I don't get it.
Stock goes up
because someone is buying.
Why do people buy things?
So they can own them.
And who wants to own
the studio?
Jonas...?
Jonas Cord, that's right.
But he can't own the studio.
You have 51% of the stock.
for the right price.
You'd sell?
David, we're a one-star studio.
We always have been.
Now, who's our star
for this week?
Rina Marlowe.
Rina Marlowe.
That's right.
A lush, a bottle baby.
Arrested five times
already for drunken driving.
And what it costs to
get her out of trouble

and to keep it quiet...
Don't ask what it costs.
So, I made the mistake
of calling her on the
carpet for last month
and now she won't
even talk to me.
How do you like that?
Hmm. Here.
Here's a script.
Blue Goddess.
Its about Africa,
written especially for her.
She won't even read it.
Now, without her--
or someone like her--
what do you think my 51 /
is going to be worth next year?
Well, if it's that bad,
then, well, then sell.
David, buying and selling
is an art.
Its an art in which
I have few equals
including Jonas Cord.
When I sell, I'll pick the time.
You know,
you're a good-looking boy.
Well, what has that got to do
with buying and selling?
Here.
Take this script
to Miss Marlowe.
Maybe she'll read it for you.
Wh...
I-I don't know. D...
Do you think she would?
David, by the thousands
they write in for a photograph,
autograph, a lock of hair.
If they only knew it
all they have to do
is push a doorbell--
they get everything.

Go ahead.
Go, go, go.
So, Uncle Bernie's
worried, is he?
Jonas made a mistake
putting me under contract
at the studio
instead of Cord Chemicals.
What did you say
your name was?
Uh, David.
"Little David was small...
but, oh, my".
Are you small, but, oh, my?
I... don't exactly...
Jonas hates me.
Oh, well, nobody could hate you,
Miss Marlowe.
That's sweet.
Most foolish statements are.
But he also loves me.
Oh, well, of course.
I mean, we all contain the seeds
of, uh, of our opposites.
Oh...
I like intelligent men.
I like men.
Or maybe I hate them.
I'm not always sure.
Are you strong?
Jonas likes to think
he's strong and tough
and bad.
When he wants to be tough
he goes out
and buys another company.
So, he wants Norman Pictures.
When he wants to be bad
he needs me.
So, he wants to buy me.
You know something?
No.
I think he's going to do both.
Well...

If you'll excuse me,
Miss Marlowe.

I...

have to be getting
back to the studio.

I-I'm trying to
learn the business.

Ambitious, too?

Well, you've come
to the right place.

I'm something
of a schoolmarm myself.

Oh-oh, really?

Mm-hmm.

Until you learn about people
and their emotions
you don't know anything.

Oh, but I-I just want
to be a producer,
not an actor.

Well, how do you think
producers cast pictures,
from books?

Well, all right then.

Then you read the script
and then I can...

Oh, I'd like to,
if you'll stay
and read it with me.

Mmm.

You know, Jennie, baby,
you've got the world
by the tail.

So I've heard.

Want a drink?

For 200 bucks, I should get
a champagne bath, shouldn't I?

Honey, you can leave
any time you like.

Oh, no, sweetie, don't get sore.

No, seriously, Jennie,
you're...

you're nothing short
of terrific.

I just know my job.

Mmm.

You like it?

For God's sakes.

Do I like it?

How did I get started?

You going to ask those
same ol' john questions?

I thought you were
a sharp operator.

If I really were,
I wouldn't have to be here,
would I?

You know, that's the
first intelligent thing
I ever heard you say.

Every now and then I get weak
and turn honest.

It won't happen again.

I'm sure.

Well... here's to Adam and Eve.

They hold the original
patents

but you've certainly
improved on them.

Honey...

come around here, sit down.

You know...

Mmm...

Honey, I got an idea.

Mmm, that wasn't
hard to guess.

How would you like
to be in pictures?

I was once.

Mmm?

All I wore was goose pimples.

Oh, that.

No, I-I mean the kind
that you can...

...show at the corner bijou.

Oh, now, come on,

Mr. Pierce.

I've heard that one before.

I run a strictly
cash-and-carry business.
No checks, no promissory notes
no pie in the sky.
Did you ever hear
of Jonas Cord?
You ever hear
of anybody who didn't?
He's everywhere,
like the flu.
Twice as irritating,
they say.
I'm his right-hand man.
The price is still
the same.
You're the kind of girl
he'd like, you know?
Monday's open--
send him up.
You know, he made a star
out of Rina Marlowe.
Of course,
she's on the bottle now,
earmarked for oblivion.
But somebody's got
to take her place.
Mmm, look,
a joke's a joke.
I'll give you \$300
for the test
and \$750 a week
if we sign you.
You know what I am.
Jonas Cord doesn't.
I've got a feeling
that you've got what he likes
in a woman.
Its crazy.
That's what Eve probably
said to Adam.
Look what that lead to.
This is a strange world.
Anything is possible.
Is she dead?

Not quite.
She's unconscious.
The doctor didn't give
anything
for her chances
of coming out of it.
Have you told Jonas
about this?
No, I'm afraid to.
That's why I came here first.
I'm trying to work
my way up to him.
How could she do this
to me?
How could she do it?
Cord wants my studio
more than anything else
in the world.
When he finds out
about Rina
I won't have a chance
of selling it.
You know, I never realized
what a cold-blooded...
character you are.
Now, listen, this is
a one-star studio.
When she goes, we go.
Now, I can't keep
her alive, can I?
No.
No, I got to think
about the living
and that's me.
Go ahead, laugh.
Its you, too.
Your job dies with Rina.
-I never thought of that.
-Mm-hmm.
You get to be
pretty cold-blooded fast
yourself, don't you?
You just shot me
with an icicle.

All right, now listen.
Maybe you can fix it
so that you never...
you never have to work
for anybody again, ever.
I-I, I don't follow.
Are you sure Jonas doesn't
know anything about this?
Yeah, I'm pretty sure.
Do you think you can keep Jonas
from learning about the accident
for a couple of hours?
Oh, now, wait a minute, Bernie.
Just what kind of a louse
do you think...?
Just a minute yourself.
How much was he willing to pay
to buy me out?
I don't know,
three or four million.
All right, I'll start with five.
If the deal works,
you get 15%.
I get...?
You heard me, 15%.
Now, it's worth it.
I waited a long time
for a chance like this.
Suppose he...?
Suppose he finds out...?
I mean, about my
setting him up for the...?
Oh, no.
I'd be taking
a terrible chance. I...
Listen, it's worth
every penny of it.
This way, you come out
with something!
Without Rina,
or the studio
how long do you think
it's going to take
before he fires you?

Come on, get smart.
Suppose he won't meet
this morning?
Well, see that he does.
\$750,000.
Yeah. Nice little
nest egg, isn't it?
Come on, get busy.
I'll pull my lawyers
out of bed
and draw up two papers
of agreement.
We'll sign yours first.
Bernie...
Yeah, sure.
Good. This is the day
we pluck Jonas Cord's
feathers.
Now, listen you.
You be at his hotel

at 8:

Not a minute late.
Sure. Not a minute late.
Yes!
Why this morning, like that?
Well, he's scared.
You know he's had a
couple of heart attacks
and last night
his doctor told him
he was on the edge of a third
and possible final attack
and he called me.
He wants to retire.
Jonas, you got him
on the hook.
Don't let him get away.
I'll get it.
Hello.
No, he's not at the moment.
I-I really don't know.
That's funny.
Norman's lawyer.

Probably wants
to talk him out of it.
How much does he want?
Five million.
What'll he take?
Well, he wouldn't say.
Guess.
Oh, four... and a half.
Uh, could you hold it
just a moment, please?
Oh, Mr. Woolf, Mr. Norman.
Come in, won't you, please?
Yes?
Uh, no, no.
No, you can't.
Morning, Mr. Cord.
Hold all calls
for the next half hour.
Hold them anyway.
My nephew, David.
Mr. Cord.
Well, well, well.
We all finally get together
in one room.
Oh, here, Bernie,
you better sit down.
Excuse me.
So you want to sell

at 8:

Mr. Cord...
that's a trick
I learned from you.
You see, you're at
your best late at night.
Me, I'm an early riser.
I figure it gives me
some advantage.
Besides...
I could be dead in 24 hours.
So, not another minute
do I want to work
in this business.
How much?

Well, it's a sacrifice.
I have to-I have
to think of others.
My family...
How much?
Take it off my hands--
\$5 million.
It pains me to see you
make such a sacrifice.
I'll give you three.
That's a million below
the market.
Which I helped to make.
All right.
Listen, four-and-a-half.
Three-and-a-half.
Four.
Three-and-a-half.
And if you say four again,
I'll go back to three.
Mr. Cord...
you're cheating a sick man.
All right.
All right.
Here's two letters
of agreement.
Just fill in the amount
and sign it.
I've already signed it.
Witness that.
David.
I told you to hold the calls.
Sorry, wrong number.
Thank you.
Thanks.
Well...
that's it, Mr. Cord.
You now own Bernard
P. Norman Pictures.
Thanks.
"Thanks".
You remember once
I told you, "One day"?
"One day".

Do you remember?
Well, this is the
day, Mr. Smart One.
When you bought Norman Studios,
you bought a corpse.
What's that supposed to mean?
At this moment, your great
drunken star, Rina Marlowe,
is in the hospital dying
of an automobile accident.
Here, you'll need it.
I-I didn't know.
Not until this very
second, I swear it.
Jonas, I work for you.
How-how could
you even...?
Hey, there he is now.
Here he is,
ladies and gentlemen.
Here he is, Jonas Cord.
I'm Virginia Gray.
My radio audience wants
to know, did you love her?
When did you hear, Mr. Cord?
Was she really your
mother, Mr. Cord?
Was she really your mother?
Did you say was?
She's dead.
She died 20 minutes ago.
Good morning,
and welcome back to the world.
How long I been here?
Little over a week.
You know, I've seen some big
drinkers
on Third Avenue in my day--
my own father,
God have mercy on his soul--
but in my sight,
you take the record.
New York, huh?
I hope I didn't mistreat you.

Never laid a glove on me.
Wasn't a woman
you were looking for.
It was the sorrow you were
trying to boil out of you.
Its all there
except I took out
for the whiskey.
Hey, take it easy.
Come on.
Sit down.
When you feel up to it,
there's a razor in the bathroom.
And while you're shaving,
I can take your clothes
down to the cleaners
and have them pressed up a bit.
Get you some food,
if you think you
can keep it down.
You're in the wrong business.
You ought to be
an angel of mercy.
The irish make
lousy hookers.
We always get sentimental
over drunks.
Do you mind if I
give you a sermon?
What?
She's dead, you know.
And all the whiskey
in the world
won't be bringing
her back to life.
Now, if you'll
try and stand up
and take your clothes off
you and I will get
on to the business
of living the best way we can.
...late from the office,
at least it's late...
If you plan on working for me

stop looking
like small-town librarians.
Fix your hair,
put on higher heels,
shorter skirts
and half your looks.
Bring your books.
Get the head of
the Art Department.
I want this place redecorated.
Send somebody to my hotel
to pick up my clothes.
Call my tailor.
Order four more suits,
same color.
Get rid of this stuff.
Have the barber in here
every morning, 7:00 a.m. sharp.
Tell maintenance to open
the best cottage on the lot.
I'm going to live here.
And have the commissary keep
a cook on day and night.
Take the name Norman off
everything in this studio--
from the main gate
to the back lot--
and put my name up,
even on the roof.
Order the studio police to
keep Dan Pierce off this lot
till one of us dies.
Set up appointments.
Nevada Smith...
David Woolf,
McAllister,
my business associate,
and Buzz Dalton,
International Airways.
When you get that done,
come back.
There's more.
Don't you read the papers?
The German army is

overrunning Europe.
The world is at war.
You've got a dozen businesses
standing by for orders,
and you sit here in this
Alice in Wonderland world,
cutting out paper dolls
or trying to find
some big-busted blonde
to splash on a billboard.
Specifically, Buzz,
what do you want?
Your attention, for one thing.
In case you haven't heard,
the government just gave us
a big contract
for a two-engine bomber.
I heard.
Our Burbank plant is straining
at the seams
with passenger planes
and a new interceptor.
We can't even start
to build a bomber.
Get me the head of
the Story Department.
Of course I know
it doesn't compare
to a good sexy
boy-meets-girl situation,
but it's the biggest first-act
curtain I've seen this year.
Question is,
where's our second act?
This morning, I bought an
airplane factory in Buffalo.
I hired a private detective
agency to find Amos Winthrop.
I want him to run it.
Is there anything else
you'd like to know?
Yeah, just for the record,
what the hell makes you tick?
I want you to make a series

of low-budget westerns
based on the Max
Sand character.
You've got a long
and steady future
in this business, if we bring
your pictures in at a price.
Did Rina say anything to you
before she died?
Not to me.
Not a word.
Jonas?
What?
Why didn't you try to help her?
You were the only one who could.
She was doomed
from the start, Nevada.
There are people
on this Earth like that,
beyond human help.
Maybe you're right.
When do I start?
Monday.
Make sure the new contract
for the talent school
includes the right
for the studio
to change the actors'
names if we want to.
Anything else, Mac?
Mac?
Well, there's one thing more.
Jonas, I'm tired.
I want out.
Sure, Mac.
Take a month off,
two, if you need it.
We'll manage.
Oh, you'll manage,
all right, but I can't.
No, for years, I've been hoping
to get things organized
so that...
I'm a neat man, Jonas.

And you don't like
my corporate mess?
Its exciting.
Too exciting for me.
Its eating me up.
Oh, I'm supposed to be
second-in-command
yet I'm not really sure
what it's all about
because I... well,
because it's not in here.
Its all in your head.
Only you know
how all the pieces fit.
You like it that way,
keep it that way.
You're the boss,
the total boss.
The rest of us are
messenger boys,
yes men.
What you're trying to say is
you don't like my being involved
in all this?
No, what I'm trying to say
is that,
from a business standpoint,
you're crazy.
You're fired.
Here's where you get off.
Good-bye, Mac.
That's a good line, Jonas.
And now it all makes sense.
You're not Jonas Cord, Jr.
at all.
You're somebody else.
You're acting out a part,
trying to be somebody else.
No wonder all this make-believe.
It was inevitable.
You've been acting
all your life,
and you've finally found
a big enough stage.

Well, I must say,
it was a bang-up, first-class,
fascinating performance.
Even I couldn't tell
the real from the unreal.
What do you know!
Anyway, good-bye, Jonas.
It was one hell of a play.
There's only one more thing
I could ask for.
I'd like to be around when you
finally take off the makeup.
I'd give a year's pay to know
who you really are underneath.
Who knows?
You might even be the devil.
Miss Denton is here, Mr. Cord.
Who?
Miss Jennie Denton.
She's here for a screen test.
Never heard of her.
Well, apparently,
Mr. Pierce had set it up.
Pierce. Cancel it.
Miss Denton, you...
I just wanted to see
what you look like.
The great, towering,
remote Jonas Cord
who makes and breaks
who stamps his foot
and everything trembles
for miles around.
Snaps a switch and
the world goes off.
I never really thought there
would be a screen test,
but just for laughs, I
thought I'd go all the way.
Well, now I've seen you.
I can check you off my list.
The Lincoln Memorial,
the Washington Monument,
the Grand Canyon,

Jonas Cord.
You're my first
disappointment.
I will say this for you.
At least there's
no Latin inscription
on your forehead.
I'm lousy at Latin.
Well, tempus fugit
(el tiempo pasa).
What did he promise you?
Pierce?
Probably what he
promises everybody.
Three bills for the test
seven and a half a week
if and, and so on...
Come back here.
Please.
Please.
I like you.
Oh, now, Mr. Cord,
you're embarrassing me.
I'm sending a girl named Jennie
Denton for a screen test.
Give her all the time
and training she needs.
I want her to have the best
this studio can offer.
I'll direct it myself.
Very well, Mr. Cord.
Hello?
Oh, yeah.
Monica, it's for you--
long distance.
Hello?
Jonas, what a surprise.
Its nearly eight years.
My father? Why do you
want to know?
Yes, I do, but I gave him my
word I wouldn't tell anybody.
Yes, he's off it,
he's all right.

You really want him for that,
Jonas? Really?
May I have a cigarette, please?
Well, I don't know.
The last time I mentioned
your name, he...
Yes, I know it's important,
but he hates you thoroughly.
No... no, I don't.
All right, if it's that vital
he's in Chicago,
working in a factory.
He's running a lathe
under an assumed name.
Because that's the way
he wanted it.
Well, certainly not
before Friday night.
I have a magazine to get out.
The... Ambassador.
Yes. Definitely.
Good-bye, Jonas.
Now, which Jonas
is that?
Is there more than one?
Good morning, boss!
What are you so
happy about today?
Oh, I feel like
somebody important.
Like a queen, maybe.
Everywhere I go on the lot,
people smile at me and wave
or say, "Hi, Jennie",
"Hello, Jennie",
"Good morning, Miss Denton".
Hey, was the test
that good?
You're just the kind of girl
people like to smile
at, wave at, look at.
What's this?
Six copies of a seven-year
contract with Cord Studios.

Check them over
with your lawyer.
If you like it, sign 'em.
Jonas, I'm going
to ask you something
that might make you mad.
Ask it now, instead of later.
Will I be under contract
as an actress...
or as some executive's
girlfriend?
That contract's
strictly for the screen.
I like you.
Well enough to fly
to Chicago with me
in a couple of hours?
Mm, I don't know about that.
It gets pretty cold in Chicago.
I'll find some way
to keep you warm.
...paragraph one of this
memorandum, "You agree"...

-In there.

-Yes, sir, Mr. Cord.

"You agree to render
such services
"as the undersigned
corporation may request of you
"under and pursuant to the
provision that employment"...

They're beautiful!
'...shall request during said
period of your incapacity...'

Thank you, Mr. Cord!

"...in less case,
on such day or days
"you shall be actually be unable
to render such"...

Yeah?

Hello, Jonas.

You look wonderful, Monica.

Jonas, I want you
to meet Joanne.

Joanne, this is Mr. Cord.
How do you do, Mr. Cord?
You're a big girl.
Just as pretty as your mama.
Nobody's that pretty.
Mommy, you said we
were going to have lunch.
Joanne...
I think it's a great idea.
I never ate in a hotel
dining room before.
Okay, Joanne, it's
the Pump Room for us.
I'll get my coat.
Jonas, it's beautiful...
Oh, I...
I'm sorry.
I beg your pardon,
Jonas.
I seemed to have played
this scene before.
-Come on, Joanne.
-Mommy...
I said, come on.
Monica,
wait a minute.
There's the name and address
that you wanted.
Do both of us a favor...
don't ever come near me again.
Jonas...
I didn't mean
to louse things up for you.
You didn't do anything.
Things were loused up
a long time ago.
You like the coat?
So much, I don't know
what to say.
Then don't say anything--
just show me.
Oh, Jonas!
I'm speechless.
You don't have to say much.

"Yes" or "no" will do.
But you've done so much
for me already.
You don't have to...
I never do what I have to--
only what I want to.
Oh, Jonas.
Oh, darling...
There's no one like
you in the whole world.
My, my. You really hit
the jackpot this time
didn't you, honey?
Mm-hmm.
Old star-maker
marriage broker,
Dan Pierce.
Pyg... malion's agent.
Takes a handful of...
shall we say... dirt?
And makes it into
a diamond ring.
A rag, a bone,
and a hank of hair
and presto--
the Bride of Frankenstein.
You grateful?
-Extremely.
-Then show it.
Well, not with
this script, Dan.
Its not for me.
It is if you say it is.
What Jennie wants,
Jennie gets these days.
While you're laying on
the pillow, whisper in his ear,
and he'll buy it,
and for \$300,000.
You used to get 200 bucks.
Wouldn't it give you a kick
to hear somebody tell you
it was worth \$300,000?
I couldn't do that to him.

Too much for an old pal
who showed you
the way to millions, huh?
Its too much.
Ooh! Conscience,
character...
Well, I always say,
there's nothing more righteous
than a reformed hooker.
Well, Jenny girl,
you leave me no choice.
A little present...
for you.
Pandora's box.
Go ahead, open it up.
Oh, here, let me help you.
Jennie Denton's
first starring role.
Recognize yourself
in the group?
You're the one that's
wearing the goose pimple.
Jennie, I'll... I'll
leave this... for you.
Course, being
a far-sighted fellow,
I have a couple
dozen more copies,
just in case you wanted
to give some to your friends...
or I do.
By the way,
it might make
a nice wedding gift
for Jonas.
He could run it on your
honeymoon for inspiration.
And information, too.
Jennie, dear,
read the script again.
I think you'll
love it this time.
You know, Jennie baby, Jonas
doesn't know about you.

He's a great man
with a corporation,
but when it comes to people,
he's a real... jerk.
Oh, when the check arrives,
you can have the other copies.
Well, toodle-oooh, Jennie.
Onward and... upward.
Jonas?
In here.
-Hi, Jennie.
-Hello, Jennie!
Hello, honey.
I've been trying
all day to reach you.
Well, I had to fly to Vegas.
I just got in.
I've got to talk to you, Jonas.
Sure, but take off your coat
and have a drink first.
Now. Its important.
All right.
Drink up,
we'll be right back.
What happened?
Jonas, I can't go
through with it.
All right, you can't
go through with it.
Let's eat dinner.
Does it mean
that little to you?
No, but I'll pay you
the compliment
of taking your word
the whole thing's wrong
and let it go at that.
I don't want to
take the easy way out
because I love you.
Of course you do--
and we've got hungry
friends waiting out there.
No, Jonas, you don't

know anything about me--
who I am, where I come from,
what I've done...
I know all I need to.
No, you don't.
You couldn't.
Well, gentlemen...
the betting window
is now open.
I'll give you Cupid
and ten points
and back the devil.
Put me down for \$100
and pay me off
at the wedding, huh?
Son, you're on.
But there ain't
gonna be no wedding.
Little Ella is on her
way back to the cinders.
What made you say that?
Experience... percentage...
track record...
plus the fact that
she's obviously in there
making some last
minute confession.
To Jonas, the word confession
reads the same as "excuse",
and you know what
he thinks of that word.
Jennie Denton--
lovely young screen star.
Desired, envied, sought after.
Well, there she is in her
greatest starring role.
Let's all have
one for the road, which--
if we're smart--
we'll hit... post-haste.
Jonas...
I'm sorry.
I'm more than sorry...
I'm ashamed.

You were so good to me,
you deserve better.
All I can give you
in return is the truth,
as dirty as it is.
We'll pay Pierce's blackmail,
then I'll take care
of him my own way.
And what good will that do?
Another Pierce will show up,
and then another.
Even you haven't got
enough money
to buy off
all the Dan Pierces
who had your lovely
fiance before you did.
Let me worry about that.
Oh, Jonas, I'm only good
for one thing!
I can't even have children!
Don't you think I know that?
How could you?
I know everything about
everybody who works for me.
You were born at 7:02 a.m.,
delivered by Dr. Corn.
You were attacked, successfully,
by three boys in a public park
at the age of 15.
You worked as a student nurse,
liked better things,
turned pro at 20.
New Orleans, San Francisco,
Las Vegas,
your house in Coldwater Canyon.
I can name you dollars, dates,
and anything else you want.
As for this film...
I've seen it twice.
You had good lighting
and a bad director.
You knew.
Of course I did.

You were no good,
that's why I wanted you.
You were beautiful
and no good,
that made it better.
And when I found out you
couldn't have children,
-you were perfect.
-Jonas, don't!
Don't say anymore!
One of us is crazy, but I'm not
sure which one it is.
Don't you ever say that to me!
Jonas!
Why do you think
I put you in a movie,
spent \$2 million on publicity,
crammed your face and figure
down everyone's minds
till they could
never forget it-- why?
Because I wanted to make you
important enough
to marry Jonas Cord,
and when you do--
and you will--
no one will dare
raise his voice against you,
or I'll step on him
like an ant.
This is the best sale
you ever made...
and all I ask for is your beauty
and your sex.
I don't want love or children
or home-baked cookies.
I just want a woman
who's there when I need her.
In return,
you'll live like a queen.
Now pick up the ring.
Now, let's go to dinner,
make the happy announcement.
We all heard what

happened in there.
Buzz and Morrissey
couldn't listen anymore.
You think the two of us
can eat a dinner for five?
I've watched over you
rode with you, taught you,
believed in you
since you were a boy.
I know. But...
You've done some strange things.
Foolish things.
And brilliant things.
I've tried to understand them.
Yes, and?
I've watched your meanness
and your cruelty.
I stood by while you grew big
in power and small in humanness.
I've seen you make men
throw up with fear
and woman cry
with misery and shame.
Oh, dialogue from one
of your old movies, Nevada.
But never
until this moment
have I judged the full measure
of your cruelty and madness.
To put it bluntly,
Jonas,
I think you're crazy.
I'm glad you did that, kid.
Now I don't need an excuse.
Come on, get up,
you jailbird, you killer.
Get up and show me
how to be normal.
Get up.
I advise you
to sell everything you own,
vanish into the hills.
Your luck just ran out
in this town.

By the order of Jonas Cord, Jr.
From the law
of supply and demand.
Nothings like you
are no longer needed.
Well, go on,
cowboy star, get out.
Just don't try to act
your way out the door,
you'll never make it.
If it hadn't been for me,
you'd be back
where you belong--
shoveling steer manure.
You don't know when
to quit, do you?
If you don't mind,
I don't usually drink
with hired hands
or ignorant half-breeds.
You don't drink with anybody
because nobody can stand you.
Just the sound of your name
makes people sick.
Only the weak and the jealous.
I took a one-horse factory,
run by an alcoholic misfit
and built into something
that nobody'll ever forget.
Only because
he gave you the means.
Oh, he gave me nothing.
If he could, he'd have locked me
in a room, like he...
Like he did your brother?
I haven't got a brother.
Your twin brother.
Never had one.
Get out, Nevada.
"Joseph Cord died
before he really lived".
Recognize that?
Its off his tombstone.
I said get out.

Born with you, died without
you at the age of nine.
Incurably insane.
Incurably insane.
He died before
I could ever speak to him.
And the day he died,
my father took to this...
and against me.
He looked at me
as if I were a leper.
Watching, waiting for the other
apple in the same barrel
to turn rotten on him.
So your brother
died raving mad
and your father
turned against you
and you decided to take it out
on everyone else around you.
That's your excuse?
That is my explanation.
Its not good enough.
Why did you take it out on Rina?
I gave her as good as I got.
And Jennie?
I made her a star.
And Monica?
She wanted to be a mother.
Was that wrong?
Me as father, it was.
I haven't got the right
to be anybody's father.
Because you might have
some of your brother in you.
I don't know,
but I've lived with
the fear of it all my life.
Racing against time,
thinking any minute
of any day it could happen.
You rest easy, Junior.
You're not mad at all,
you never will be.

You see, you're not
like your brother.
You're just like your father.
I never was,
I never could be like him.
You even sound like him.
-Shut up!
-Hollering to make
-Don't say that.
-yourself important.
Wobbling around red-faced
with a drink in your hand.
I said shut up!
All right, look at him!
Need anymore proof?
Nevada.
What can I do?
Junior, I haven't
the faintest idea.
Let's change this color
and make it more compatible...
Switching the color,
that's fine,
but the colors have to go
in this space...
Hello, Monica.
Jonas, I'm busy.
I have to talk to you. Now.
There's nothing to talk about.
Just go away.
Well, I don't want
to make a scene
but if I have to, I will.
Jonas, I told you
I wanted you out of my life.
I never wanted
to see you again.
Monica, I only want
two minutes of your time.
Would you please
keep your voice down.
Do you want me to lose
my job?
If I have to,

I'll buy this place.
Now that's typical
Cord procedure.
Something gets in your way,
just buy it.
I'm not buying anymore,
Monica, I'm selling.
I've sold the movie studio,
\$40 million's worth
of assorted industries,
and tomorrow morning
I'm meeting with...
What's that
supposed to mean?
First I've got
to tell you something.
I've been living
with a secret.
Oh, there are
no secrets about you, Jonas.
This is something
that nobody knows.
A long time ago,
Jedediah told me
all about your father
and your brother
and what it did to you.
Why do you think I let you do
the things you did to me?
Why I didn't remarry
and I waited
hoping you'd find out
there was nothing wrong with you
and nothing wrong
with your daughter?
You know, someday,
you ought to take a look
at her report card.
I'm not promising
anything, Monica.
I am asking for a chance,
for you, for my daughter,
but mostly for me.
And spend the rest of my life

walking into hotel suites
finding naked girls
all wrapped up in fur coats?
Well, no thank you, Jonas.
I've canceled
all my hotel suites.
I bought a house...
for you.
I love you
and I need you.
You do need me.
You need me.
Vtg