

*A Sentimental Journey:  
Rejuvenating Great American Soundscapes in a New Film Musical*

**An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)**

**by**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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## Abstract

The United States of America has had a long and rich musical history, but a significant portion of its popular music remains inaccessible to, unknown to, and overlooked by modern audiences. In particular, songs from the early “Tin Pan Alley” era, roughly 1890-1925, not only represent one of the nation’s most prolific songwriting periods, but many contain lyrics and messages still relevant to life today. In order to re-introduce this period of musical heritage in a manner accessible to and appreciable by present-day audiences I have written the script for an original feature-length film musical using songs from 1893 to 1921 as musical numbers. In addition to the script I have also created supplemental artwork and supervised sheet music song arrangements that help bring this bygone period back to life.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Vanessa Theme Ament-Gjenvick for her enormous enthusiasm and guidance as my project advisor. Her wisdom allowed me to transition from being my own worst obstacle to a genuinely productive artist. It has been a pleasure to work with her these past five months.

I would secondarily like to thank my peer Mr. Stephen Weigel, whose musical talent and expertise far surpasses my own and without whom I would not have been able to present my vision. Katie, Kyle, and Kelly, also deserve thanks for lending their voices to some of the demo tracks.

I would like to indirectly acknowledge and thank the Library of Congress and other such research libraries for preserving and making publically available vast amounts of original sheet music from this often overlooked era.

Lastly my sincerest thanks go out to Bill, Donna, Kyra, and Drew for their fervent support throughout the creative process.

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## Author's Statement

It is impossible to make a good movie out of a bad script.

I know. I've tried.

Of course, a million other little pieces factor into making a good movie, from casting, to lighting, to costuming, to line delivery, to editing, to the underlying soundtrack, just to name a few. All of these elements in fact contribute to my firm belief that motion pictures are the ultimate storytelling medium, a medium capable of combining photography, literature, graphic arts, theatre, music, dance, and more.

But it all starts with the writing. So many things can go wrong with a good script, but with a bad script very little can ever go right.

So I thought I'd give the former a try.

Back in the fall of 2013 I had convinced myself that my Senior Honors Project would be to write and direct a black and white short film shot in the style of an Alfred Hitchcock suspense thriller. It seemed like the perfect project because I could utilize so much of my accumulated knowledge as a Telecommunications major, such as lighting techniques, camera focal lengths, how to use background lines to direct the eye, proper editing, and so on. I felt that I could really show off what I'd learned. Yet I slowly began to realize that to accomplish this plan effectively and entertainingly would take several thousand dollars and a crew of about twenty unpaid peers, neither of which would be easy to obtain. I could have scaled back my ambitions and lowered my proposed production values, but I chose to focus on a different concept entirely. I reasoned that if I wanted a job post-graduation as a screenwriter that the impressive thing to do would be to write a feature-length script, one incorporating not only the lessons and theories from my Telecommunications major but those from my Theatre minor as well. I would write a script integrating all the possibilities that movies could offer: the photography, the literature, the graphic arts, the theatre, the music, the dance.

In short, I decided to write a musical.

Rather, I would create a complete film prospectus such as one that might get presented to an actual film studio, a packet comprised of a script, art book, and song demos. The supplements would help sketch out exactly what I envisioned, a difficult enough task for a regular film, but necessary additions if I wanted to tackle filmed musical theatre. Luckily I already had an idea, and even more importantly it was an idea where I didn't actually have to write the music.

For that I can thank United States copyright law. Under normal circumstances copyright law protects artists and inventors from having others steal or profit from their work by designating a period of exclusivity to the author wherein he or she must grant permission for others to use copies of the work. In the United States this is a right granted by Article 17 of the Constitution. This period of exclusivity is limited, however, and after a defined period of time all creative work falls into the public domain. Once in public domain anyone can perform, copy, adapt, or alter it for their personal use or gain. The tune to "Jingle Bells," for example, written in 1850, can be

used by anybody free of charge. Congress has extended this period of exclusivity several times, most recently in 1998 with the Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA).

The CTEA set copyright two terms: the life of the author plus 70 years for individually authored works, and 95 years after first publication or 120 years after creation (whichever comes first) for corporately authored works. The CTEA was not retroactive though, and under the previous term limits established by the Copyright Act of 1976 all works created before January 1, 1923 would still be allowed to fall into public domain and would not have their copyrights reestablished. On the other hand, under the CTEA term lengths no new material would fall automatically into public domain until 2019.

Legally, therefore, I could craft a musical around any songs published in 1922 or earlier without having to worry about paying anyone royalties. I saw this as a great opportunity for three reasons. First, there was the historical angle. I knew that the Tin Pan Alley era was one of the first great periods of American songwriting, the period at the very dawn of the recording industry that first introduced the likes of Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter, and other great pillars of American popular music. Secondly, focusing on that era alone, roughly from 1895 to 1922 (my legal cutoff) gave me a defined set of songs to work with similar enough in scope, tone, and rhythm to feasibly sound like they might belong together in a single musical. I likened the idea to the film musical *Singin' in the Rain* using only preexisting Nacio Herb Brown songs, or the stage musical *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* using only preexisting Al Dubin and Harry Warren songs, both to great effect. Thirdly, I connected numerous historical parallels between life then in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and life now in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. By highlighting these connections in my story I knew I could create something that could resonate with modern audiences. For example, the “robber barons” of the Progressive Era, who amassed staggering industrial wealth in contrast to their impoverished employees, strike a very similar chord to the “one-percenters” who hold most of the nation’s wealth today. With such connections in place it would make *sense* to use songs from the 1910s to illustrate the same sort of problems and situations still common in the 2010s.

My new musical would use old songs to both raise awareness of this often-overlooked period of music, as well as to serve as a reminder that although history may repeat itself to an extent we can overcome the challenges we now face. Not that the story would be overtly political, patriotic, or idealistic; that would be uncomfortable to write and patronizing to watch. In fact, these are precisely the reasons why I threw out the first two versions of the script.

In those earliest drafts of the project the musical was simply titled *Tin Pan Alley* and followed a “journey” framework. Set during the turn of the century, it featured two musician best friends as they travelled from New Orleans to New York in order to “make it big” and become successful. Along the way they would encounter numerous characters and situations named after and featuring notable Tin Pan Alley and Dixieland songs, such as running into Alexander’s Ragtime Band (after Irving Berlin’s 1911 hit) and a big production number before intermission where our heroes would embark on a steamboat up the Mississippi while singing “Waiting for the Robert E. Lee” (1912). It was meant to showcase the best that the era had to offer. There was a girl too, who one of the friends would fall in love with, but

the story felt flat. Moving the whole thing to the present day in the second draft didn't help, and in fact felt even more out of place. It simply felt too convenient to have a musical where the main characters are a singer and his pianist pal, and so too with the journey structure where any new song could be justified by a change in location. Most importantly the songs I was finding to fit that progression of action felt like they could have worked in any "lost love" situation, not being particular to the 1910s/2010s parallel I believed was so central to the project.

With all of this in mind I made the most meaningful change when I threw out the journey plot entirely and went back to musical theatre fundamentals. Foremost among these unofficial "rules" is the idea that a character sings when he no longer express himself through dialogue, and dances when he can longer express himself through song. Under this imperative it is not necessary for characters in a musical to possess inherent musical talent. That is, they don't have to be musicians in the world of the story, indeed most are not. They are gangsters, teachers, townsfolk, street gangs, sailors, lumberjacks, and more. Characters in musicals are merely regular people that break into song and dance. And since most musicals are love stories at heart, another good "rule" is to have a male lead and a female lead that are "natural opposites." This ensures that the two that will fall in love have a strong sense of conflict, and actually gives them differences to overcome in the process of falling for one another. In *The Music Man* it's pairing a librarian with a con man. In *Guys & Dolls* it's pairing a gangster with a Salvation Army worker. In *My Fair Lady* it's pairing an educated professor with a lowly flower girl. Really it's as simple as pairing a Beauty with a Beast.

For my "natural opposites" I eventually decided to pair an oil tycoon with an environmentalist leader. He wants to save his oil company; she wants to save the wetlands. Natural opposites with a natural conflict. Moreover, the idea of an "oil baron" resonates just as much today in the era of BP oil spills and fluctuating gas prices as it did back in the era of John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil and cutthroat competition. Railroads, copper, and steel may not be the "trusts" worth "busting" that they once were, but oil is still definitely still on top. In fact, I named my main character John D. Hickenlooper to strengthen the comparison. Once I discovered a song from 1913 titled "Gasoline," which bemoans the high price of gas (even back then), I knew I was on to something.

"Gasoline" was the first of a few happy coincidences, as well as my first luck using an online database to find music. For the first two drafts I had relied mostly on printed reference anthologies listing song titles and publication dates. Occasionally these sources would give blurbs about the song's composers and what inspired the lyrics. An interesting feature about a large number of Tin Pan Alley songs is how many would simply use the first line of the refrain as a title. Therefore, you might end up with a title as short as "Swanee" (1919) or as long as "Would You Rather Be a Colonel with an Eagle on Your Shoulder or a Private with a Chicken on Your Knee?" (also 1919). I simply combed through lists of song titles looking for words that might work in particular situations, and could then check the rest of the song if the title seemed like a good fit first. However, I quickly grew tired of doing so manually through book indexes. A much-improved method was to keyword search through the online databases of the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress not only has

lists of American popular songs and their publication dates, but also physical scans of tens of thousands of copies of period sheet music, for free. To have so many songs and their sheet music right at my fingertips was immensely helpful.

For example, once I decided that I wanted to set a majority of the modern day plot's action in a Floridian seaside resort (burgeoningly popular in the 1910s as well), I knew I needed a song to establish the setting. So I searched the Library of Congress sheet music collection with words such as, "Florida," "shore," "sand," "palms," and "waves," looking for any song that might contain those words as the title or lyrics that I could then fit the plot around. When I searched the word "beach," one of the results was a song called "You're Not the Only Pebble on the Beach" (1896), where the title is a metaphor for a man telling a woman to value his love more since he has a wide range of other girls to choose from. This was perfect for a number early in the musical, since it not only reinforces the Floridian setting but also sets up our leading man John as something of a womanizer. Later drafts unfortunately made this number unfeasible when I rewrote John's character motivation, but the general process continued to work wonders.

Using the online database method I located eleven separate musical numbers to structure the plot around, a plot that follows thusly: John D. Hickenlooper is hosting a company retreat for the investors of his brand new company, Medallion Oil. But when their oil tanker ship crashes just off shore, he has to pretend to seduce the leader of a passionately anti-oil environmentalist group in order to keep her from noticing and ruining the new company with bad press. Needless to say he accidentally falls in love with her for real. I titled it *Mister Slick* as a double-meaning title, where John is "Mr. Slick" since he's smooth with woman, and also "Mr. Slick" since it's his fault that his company causes an oil spill.

Once I had finished this whole third draft of the script I staged a very limited table reading with friends from the theatre department reading the lines. This gave me some indication of where my writing was weak and what I needed to fix. The most glaring problem that needed fixing was that John's philandering was both uneven and ill-motivated throughout. To increase the comedic potential I have him in a love-triangle between him and three other women: Katherine, the environmentalist; and Danica, an heiress. In that version the motivation for him choosing Katherine, his natural opposite, didn't feel natural enough. In fact, it didn't even happen on screen. They fell for each other during a conversation we only saw the last tenth of, if that. As an audience member you never could tell if you really liked John or not.

The solution, as often happens, came when I wasn't looking for it. I had recently watched the Howard Hawk's 1952 film *Monkey Business* starring Cary Grant, and realized that while I was definitely writing a musical I was also writing a screwball comedy. Screwball comedy is a film genre that was particularly popular in the 1930s and '40s. As a satirization of the traditional love story they feature a rational unassertive male lead tormented by an eccentric and dominating female. She believes they are meant for each other and he believes, at first, that she is slightly insane. Over the course of the picture, however, she invariably helps him out of his "shell," so to speak, and they end up falling in love. Screwball comedies delight in the humor of opposites. Philosophically they assert that we reside in an ultimately crazy, irrational world, and the best way to cope with it is to embrace some of the craziness.

Therefore, the final great development in my script came with molding John not as a smarmy womanizer, but as an earnest businessman. Seeing beautiful women turns him into a complete klutz. He gets a “tingly feeling” and ruins the day several times over by trying to impress girls, since things inevitably go amiss. His relationships never go anywhere because he makes a fool out of himself before any feelings can blossom. Twice, actually, a beautiful body driving him to distraction causes major setbacks for his company. Yet his character grows when Katherine, the environmentalist leader, almost witnesses one of these setbacks and John tries to seduce her to keep her from finding out. He thinks he’s completely safe since Katherine, a fairly plain-looking young woman, doesn’t give him that “tingly feeling” which precedes catastrophe. After spending time with her, however, (and dodging the sexual advances of Danica, the other woman) the “tingly feeling” comes back stronger than ever. He learns to appreciate someone for her inner beauty as well as her outer beauty, and this time it all works out in the end. This creates a strong moral message, and in the end, a better movie.

At the same time that I introduced the “tingly feeling” idea, I realized too that I was missing a great opportunity for humor within the setting. When I first created it I imagined the seaside resort where the story takes place as a grand and luxurious throwback to the hotel palaces of yesteryear. I envisioned the hotel as gleaming, glittering, and glamorous, a place where real millionaires, even today, would be happy to stay. And yet a central point of the plot uncovers the fact that John and his uncle, even though they founded this new oil company, they aren’t rich at all. They are in fact drowning in debt. Their entire livelihoods rest with the safe delivery of their company’s first shipment of crude oil, and until then they must simply pretend to have money in order to bolster their image. In that case they would not book their stay at a ritzy, fabulous, expensive hotel, but at a cheap hotel that merely looks somewhat posh.

This again works on two levels. In the current draft the Tangeray Palms Hotel is a hotel frozen in time, built in 1922... and not updated since. This provides ample comic fodder since as John’s life starts to fall apart around him, so does the hotel. Doorknobs break, fuses blow, the antique manually-operated elevator plummets three stories, etc. More importantly the setting now reflects the music. A majority of the songs featured have not been recorded by any artist in close to a hundred years, if they were ever recorded at all. Many people today would look at them as old, worn-out, and not worth a second look, let alone revival. The hotel too looks old, worn-out, and not worth a second look to many. But when the characters emotions become so pitched that they can only express them through song, they take these tired old songs and breathe life back into them. Similarly, when true and honest love blossoms there this tired old building has new life breathed back into it. Now that I’ve decided it, I don’t believe that any other setting would be as appropriate as a building from the same period of the songs. Sure the building isn’t perfect, and neither are the songs, but each have their one unique sense of fun and wonder from an age gone by.

Reinvigorating this Tin Pan Alley, ragtime, Dixieland, wonderful music makes this project so much more of a joy than a chore. These century-old tunes can be just as clever, catchy, and toe-tapping as modern hits today, but many of them remain locked in sheet music notation or in scratchy vintage gramophone recordings,



neither of which are readily accessible or appealing to the casual listener. I wanted to free this music by arranging re-recording it with a slightly more modern sound, just as it would be featured in *Mister Slick*. I would need outside help for this, though, since music theory does not come easily to me. With Dr. Ament-Gjenvick's guidance I enlisted the help of Stephen Weigel, a music composition major. At an initial meeting where we discussed the project and he impressed me with his ideas and musical talent on the piano. He agreed to fully arrange five of the musical numbers in the script, some with up to four simultaneous vocal parts. Recording the demo tracks in a sound studio was an adventure all its own, which only reinforced the value of planning ahead. Because of his talent and enthusiasm Stephen has been a joy to work with.

In fact, working with Stephen has only increased by desire to work collaboratively in the future. He has supplied me with better results than I ever could have attained working individually, which I am beginning to see would have been useful with the art book portion of the project as well. I am not a professional visual artist of any kind, yet I attempted scenic painting, costume design, and graphic design. Professional guidance at the very least would have made each of these several times better than I have created on my own.

This project really has been a fantastic learning experience. I thought I could go into it just using what I had learned in college up to this semester, but probably learned just as much in this short time span, at least in terms of creating such a large-scale project. I am proud of what I have made. Hopefully it will prove a boon when searching for jobs as a screenwriter in the near future. Perhaps in the future I will have gained enough experience, connections, and clout to turn these paper ideas and demos into a real movie on the big screen. I don't see why it couldn't happen.

I think I have written a good script.

## Character Descriptions

The following is a summary of the principal characters in the film script for *Mister Slick*.

- John D. Hickenlooper – 29, the dashing master planner behind the newly-minted Medallion Oil Company, who has an incurable fixation with beautiful women.
- Andrew Hickenlooper – 53, John’s nervous maternal uncle and the figurehead president of Medallion Oil.
- Katherine Seward – 27, an uptight biology professor at the Oread Women’s Institute.
- Danica Nobel – 23, the vampy heiress to the Nobel dynamite fortune.
- Darren “Daddy” Nobel – 62, Danica’s father, an ironfisted business mogul and president of the Nobel Dynamite Company.
- Roscoe Martinez – 33, a general employee of the Tangeray Palms Hotel, who seems to do just about everything.
- Carol Wieneke – 26, a freshman at the Oread Woman’s Institute, warm-hearted and naïve
- Sheryl Zimmerman – 22, a senior at the Oread Woman’s Institute, suspicious, cynical, and the unofficial ringleader of the bunch
- Dr. Charles “Walden” Pond – 47, the absent-minded senior biology professor of the Oread Women’s Institute.

Film Script: *Mister Slick* draft 5.2

The following is a 112-page draft of the original musical *Mister Slick*, complete in its story arc from beginning to end. It is formatted to preferred film industry standards and reproduced here in its entirety.

MISTER SLICK

by

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FADE IN

EXT. STREET - DAY

Present day. A gray downpour tramples the streets of Mobile, Alabama. Among the people scrambling to stay dry, a MAN clutching a newspaper as a makeshift umbrella hails a taxicab and tosses it aside as he clammers inside. The paper flutters to the ground as the cab drives off.

The day's headline of the Mobile Press-Register reads: "More Drilling a Chance for More Spilling," but it quickly melts into an inky mess, trickling away and pooling into black swirls in a sidewalk puddle. From those swirls emerge the title of the picture:

"Mister Slick"

Lightning flashes and as thunder claps as a short

MONTAGE

depicts a dozen or so construction sites, each one the locale of new gas stations in various states of completion. Some sport the shell of a main building, while others merely boast holes in the ground. Piles of construction materials and equipment abound. At the last of these the rain tapers away to a cloudy day.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

A sign affixed to the outside of the chain link fence surrounding the site proclaims "Coming Soon" above a picture of a gleaming modern filling station. A group of construction WORKERS arrives by foot and pickup truck and quickly sets about building. To the accelerating rhythm of their labor they begin to sing GASOLINE.

WORKERS

"What is it keeps this world of  
ours a-going?

What is it makes us happy night  
and day?

What is the precious thing for  
which we're blowing every blessed  
dollar of our weekly pay?

Gasoline!  
 Gasoline!  
 Everywhere you go you smell it,  
 every motor seems to yell it."  
 Gasoline!  
 Gasoline!  
 That's the cry that echoes through  
 our dreams!  
 Gasoline!  
 Gasoline!  
 In this land of milk and honey,  
 't isn't love, isn't money rules  
 the world now ain't it funny?  
 Gasoline! Gasoline!"

To the accompaniment of the first half of the chorus a large crane lowers an giant gas tank into a hole in the ground, which workers then set about securing in place.

WORKERS

"Gasoline!  
 Gasoline!  
 In this land of milk and honey,  
 't isn't love, isn't money rules  
 the world now ain't it funny?  
 Gasoline! Gasoline!"

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

With no break in the underlying music an emphatic PREACHER in black robes addresses his congregation assembled for a special meeting. Behind him a sign asks "Are Fossil Fuels the Lord God's Tools?" a subject clearly in doubt among those present. Raising his arms toward the heavens he invokes the old Christian spiritual GIVE ME OIL IN MY LAMP, only jazzier than normal.

PREACHER

"Give me oil in my lamp,  
 keep me burning!  
 Give me oil in my lamp,  
 I pray!  
 Give me oil in my lamp,  
 keep me burning!  
 Keep me burning 'til the  
 light of day!"

The empowered congregation springs to their feet.

CONGREGATION

"Give us oil in our lamps,  
keep us burning! (Burning, burning!)  
Give us oil in our lamps,  
we pray! (Hallelujah!)  
Give us oil in our lamps,  
keep us burning! (Burning, burning!)  
Keep us burning 'til the  
light of day!"

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - DAY

The doors of the church burst open and the congregation and preacher, still singing, march militarily down toward the construction site, which is just across the street.

CONGREGATION

"Give us oil in our lamps,  
keep us yearning, churning  
burning!  
Give us oil in our lamps,  
we pray! (Hallelujah!)  
Give us oil in our lamps,  
keep us burning!  
Keep us burning 'til the  
light of day!"

They collect in front of the fence protecting the site, and the number really takes off, with the congregation and construction workers singing in counterpoint.

CONGREGATION

"Sing Hosanna!  
Sing Hosanna!  
Sing Hosanna  
to the King  
of Kings!

Sing Hosanna!  
Sing Hosanna!  
Sing Hosanna  
to the King!"

WORKERS

"Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
Everywhere you  
go you smell it,  
every motor  
seems to yell  
it.  
Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
That's the cry  
that echoes  
through our  
dreams!"

Under the melodic line to GASOLINE the congregation raises a rabble that earns the notice of the construction FOREMAN. He dispatches men with pamphlets to confront them. Those men pass out pamphlets promising "25% Off" to part of the congregation, "50% Off" to the other part, and to the preacher one reading "Free!" In response the congregation changes their proverbial tune.

CONGREGATION

"Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
Gasoline  
will get us  
everything!

Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
Gasoline  
will make us  
Kings!"

WORKERS

"Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
Everywhere you  
go you smell it,  
every motor  
seems to yell  
it.

Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
That's the cry  
that echoes  
through our  
dreams!"

CONGREGATION & WORKERS

"Gasoline!  
Gasoline!  
In this land of milk and honey,  
't isn't love, isn't money rules the  
world now ain't it funny? Gasoline!  
Gasoline!"

The workers not preoccupied with assuaging the congregation now begin using the crane to lift the large circular sign onto the pole in front of the station.

CONGREGATION

"Give us oil!"

WORKERS

"Gasoline!"

CONGREGATION

"Give us oil!"

WORKERS

"Gasoline!"

CONGREGATION & WORKERS

"Give us G-A-S,  
it's gas-O-line!!!"

The sign rotates as it's lowered atop the pole, revealing the logo of a yellow rearing horse on a blue background, framed by the words "Medallion Oil."

End of song.

CROSS DISSOLVE TO

A BEACHBALL

similarly colored to the Medallion logo, which has just come to a stop rolling along the sand.

EXT. SARASOTA BEACH - DAY

The white powdery beach of Sarasota, Florida. A young TODDLER chases after the ball, which the wind has blown to a deserted stretch of sand. Far down the shoreline a crush of sunbathers and beachgoers crowd the sands in front of an endless line of high-rise apartments, hotels and condominiums. But this section is empty.

The toddler grabs his ball and stands up, and in so doing sets eyes on the shock of forebodingly overgrown jungle that buttresses this portion of the beach. A path leads in, but its depths recede into mysterious blackness. Through the treeline, however, he can just glimpse a derelict Spanish tower far beyond.

The toddler's MOTHER rushes up to him.

MOTHER

Jimmy, come away from there!

As she scoops him into her arms we rise above the trees for a first reveal of the entire once-splendid

TANGERAY PALMS HOTEL



The Tangeray is a hotel in denial, a hotel that hasn't seen a major renovation since before the war. World War II, that is. Having catered in the past to the likes of Rockefellers and Kennedys she now stands on the brink of both financial and structural collapse, looking as though she could barely withstand a light breeze let alone a hurricane.

Her rounded ballroom juts out the back of the property toward the sea.

EXT. BALLROOM VERANDA - DAY

A flock of millionaires and moguls, all in vacation attire, mill about on the balcony surrounding the ballroom. It overlooks the overgrown grounds, and they can just see the sea as they lean on the ramparts, sipping complimentary drinks and chatting idly.

INVESTOR 1

What a dump.

INVESTOR 2

Of all the places in Sarasota-

INVESTOR 3

*Here?*

INVESTOR 1

Nobody who's anybody's stayed at the Tangeray Palms in fifty years.

INVESTOR 3

I mean, really.

INVESTOR 4

First all the protest business, and now this!

INVESTOR 5

Sometimes I wonder if Hickenlooper knows what he's doing.

INVESTOR 2

Here, here.

INVESTOR 5

I mean, *I* couldn't have pulled it off  
but still-

INVESTOR 3

*This?*

INVESTOR 4

Right!

Et cetera. And who should be listening on the other side of an enormous decorative palm bush but Andrew Hickenlooper himself, UNCLE ANDREW, that is. A nervous-looking man in his fifties, he swallows hard. He then sidles over to the refreshments table and downs a flute of champagne.

JOHN

There you are! Ready, Uncle Andrew?

He is met by JOHN D. HICKENLOOPER, his nephew. John is a dashing young man, of the sort people are always saying are bound to "go places." He looks about as excited as Uncle Andrew looks nauseous.

UNCLE ANDREW

No, not yet.

He downs another champagne.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Maybe.

And another.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Just one more...

JOHN

(grabbing the drink)

Stop that! Come on.

He puts an arm around his Uncle and leads him in through one of the many open large glass doors leading inside the ballroom. A sign on the outside of the wall reads "Ballroom & Indoor Pool." Once inside he nods toward ROSCOE MARTINEZ, the hotel's jack-of-all trades, complete with bellhop

uniform, who has been roping off a section of floor in front of a mechanical control panel embedded in the wall.

Roscoe nods back, steps out to the veranda, and produces a miniature gong from inside his uniform. He rings it.

ROSCOE

(announcing)

Ladies and gentlemen! Will you please take your seats; the meeting is about to begin!

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

The crowd of eighty or so millionaires has taken their seats at a pack of white linen-topped tables overlooking a makeshift stage. At one end the stage is a long table seating six men: John, Uncle Andrew, three other members of the Board of Directors, and an empty chair. At the other end of the stage is a podium. Behind, a banner reads "Medallion Oil Company - First Annual Retreat."

BOARD MEMBER

(at podium)

...Here he is, the founder and president of Medallion Oil, Mr. Andrew Hickenlooper.

To light applause Uncle Andrew rises from the stage table and slinks up to the podium while the Board Member sits down.

UNCLE ANDREW

Friends-!

Horrible audio feedback screeches through the hall, making the crowd wince. Uncle Andrew jerks back from the microphone. The noise ceases.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

(almost shaking)

F-Friends. Entrepreneurs. Benefactors. Welcome to the first annual company retreat of the Medallion Oil Company...

A harrumph of appreciation from the crowd.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

...a company *you* all made possible!

Two harrumphs.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Thanks to your c-c-combined interests our beloved conglomerate is now the fifty-second largest oil concern in the United States!

Three harrumphs. And a stray hiccup.

Uncle Andrew glances over to John, who flashes him a reassuring smile. It doesn't help much, and Uncle Andrew fiddles with the paper that he's reading verbatim from.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Ah-hem. When I founded Medallion just three years ago I had no idea my little venture would reach s-such heights. To see you all here in sunny Florida brings such joy and warmth to my horse- I mean, "heart"! -- There will be time for business later. At two o'clock we have arranged for our flagship oil tanker the *Petroleum Princess*, to sail through Sarasota harbor for us. But first, some fun! And for that I'd like to introduce my diligent nephew, and your vice president of affairs, John D. Hickenlooper.

He steps away from the podium as John bounds up to it and claps him on the back.

JOHN

Thank you, Uncle Andrew! We actually have quite a lot of *awfully* fun activities planned for this weekend, but we thought we'd start off with something a little more dignified. Right?

UNCLE ANDREW

Um, right.

JOHN

We're going to start out by crowning a Miss Medallion! And for that we'll need the prettiest girl in the room!

John unclips the microphone from its holster and hops down into the crowd. He makes his way among the tables as the crowd murmurs with interest.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Now let's see, how about... Mrs. Spaulding! Let's hear some noise if you think Mrs. Spaulding here is the prettiest girl in the room!

He holds his hand above the head of MRS. SPAULDING, a middle aged woman. Some light applause. John moves on.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hmm, I dunno about that. How about... Mrs. Macready? Hmm? Or who's this?

MRS. MACREADY

My niece.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Your niece? Fantastic. All right, how about Mrs. Macready's niece, everybody?

He holds his hand above NIECE MACREADY, a buck-toothed young woman. Louder applause. John moves on.

JOHN (CONT'D)

No? Ah ha! Now I've got it! How about Mrs. Amelia Muntz! What do you think?

He holds his hand above MRS. MUNTZ, an extremely obese older woman, who looks tickled pink that John would even consider her. MR. MUNTZ next to her, however, does not look pleased. Even louder applause.

At that point John notices DANICA NOBEL sneak into the side of the room. A drop-dead beauty with a model's smile-free face she wears a bathing suit, skirt, and sunhat.

Not only can John not help but stare, but all audio fades away to what shall henceforth be called his inner-mind's "tingle music," a sumptuous blend of high violin tremolo and chimes running up and down arpeggios. His vision goes a bit fuzzy, but he blinks a few times and the sounds of reality return just as Danica turns to leave again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Just a minute! Just a minute folks, I think we found her! We've found our most beautiful girl!

He runs up and catches Danica by the arm. She seems surprised by the attention.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Yes, I'm awfully certain. Although, I'm sorry I don't know your name.

DANICA

Um, Danica-

JOHN

Danica, everybody! How about this girl!

John leads her onstage accompanied by applause quieter than those for Mrs. Muntz. Uncle Andrew looks at him quizzically but hands him a sash and tiara anyway.

UNCLE ANDREW

Well, it certainly looks like you've found the prettiest girl in the room, Johnny.

DANICA

Really, what is this all-

JOHN

Without further ado then, I crown you Miss Medallion!

John removes her sunhat, drapes the sash over her shoulder, and places the tiara on her head.

DANICA

Well now-

JOHN

Uncle Andrew, the champagne, please!

UNCLE ANDREW

A toast! To Medallion Oil!

He hands John an uncorked bottle of champagne. John begins working to open it.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(from the crowd)

How about a picture?

JOHN

Oh, sure!

He stops fiddling with the champagne cork and puts his arm around Danica to pose for a picture. Right before the photographer takes it, however, Danica turns to give him a kiss on the cheek.

As if in response to this, the bottle at that moment "pops its cork" and sends it rocketing across the room... right into the roped-off control panel, where it presses the exact wrong button.

A blue light starts flashing, a shrill bell rings out... and the floor starts to split down the middle.

The hotel's indoor swimming pool is hidden beneath a retractable floor in the ballroom, which is obviously the pool house when not in use for formal occasions. But the investors get up and scramble out of the way as the gap widens.

JOHN

Yikes!

John leaps down and over to the roped-off control panel as the Board of Directors, Uncle Andrew, and Danica scramble off of the stage, the middle of which has started to collapse into the water.

UNCLE ANDREW

Do something!

JOHN

I'm trying!

He presses several buttons but nothing happens as the pool continues to swallow tables and chairs.

MRS. MUNTZ (OS)

Help! Help!

The enormity of MRS. MUNTZ has fallen down and is having tables and chairs crush around her as the floor continues to pull back. John abandons the control panel to help her.

JOHN

Oh dear. Just a moment, Mrs. Muntz!

He tugs at her with minimal success.

MRS. MUNTZ

Ouch, you're hurting me!

JOHN

I'm *awfully* sorry!

But he does eventually get her up and toward safety just as MR. MUNTZ rushes up to John.

MR. MUNTZ

Get your hands off my wife!

He winds up and socks John in the jaw. John stumbles backwards to the edge of the pool, teeters on the edge, and then falls in with a splash.



INT. JOHN AND UNCLE ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

The Hickenlooper's miniscule and sparse hotel room, in the old days meant not for guests but as staff quarters. John reclines on the single twin bed, fully dressed but with an ice pack to his jaw. Uncle Andrew sits at the tiny writing desk, fidgeting and staring out of the open window. John's ruined suit hangs in a corner.

JOHN

I admit again, it could have gone better.

UNCLE ANDREW

Better! It's bad enough we're booked in this old ruin, but you practically wrecked your own meeting! I mean, look!

He tosses a smartphone onto the bed and John picks it up. It's an online trade journal article, headlined "Oil and Water Don't Mix." John scrolls down and hits an animated gif picture someone snapped of John toppling backwards into the pool... over and over and over and over. He sets it aside with a grimace.

JOHN

It might be a blessing in disguise, you know. Any publicity is good publicity.

UNCLE ANDREW

Well while you were up here counting blessings, I've been calming investors all morning. Me! I'm not a people person, Johnny. Luckily no one's pulled out after yesterday's fiasco.

JOHN

I said I was *awfully* sorry. Is the bruising down?

Uncle Andrew inspects his chin.

UNCLE ANDREW

Yes, it's fine. But you drive me to drink sometimes. You know that? Speaking of...

Uncle Andrew rummages through the desk drawer. Then through their luggage, then under the bed.

JOHN

Quit looking. I poured it out.

UNCLE ANDREW

What! What kind of a no-good nephew are you?

JOHN

The sobering kind.

Uncle Andrew slumps down in the desk chair.

UNCLE ANDREW

You're a good kid. You are, but when you go girl crazy you go off the deep end.

JOHN

I can't help it! It's not like I mean to. I just see a beautiful girl and things go -- fuzzy.

UNCLE ANDREW

It's amazing how much fuzz your eyeballs can pick up.

JOHN

You say that like it happens all the time.

UNCLE ANDREW

It does happen all the time!

JOHN

Oh yeah?

UNCLE ANDREW

There was the waitress in  
Chattanooga, the claims adjuster in  
Montgomery, the florist in Biloxi,  
and that coat check girl in Orlando.

JOHN

Oh yeah.

UNCLE ANDREW

And that's just off the top of my  
head. If you're not going to be a  
team player we had might as well call  
the whole thing off!

JOHN

(sitting up)

Now hold up. I'm getting awfully fond  
of being a millionaire.

UNCLE ANDREW

Well you're not one yet.

JOHN

No, but I'm awfully good at  
pretending. And I'll say it again;  
presentation is three-quarters of  
performance.

UNCLE ANDREW

I can't do this. Not dry. I'm a  
nervous wreck. I keep telling you  
you should be the President of  
this outfit.

JOHN

And I keep telling you nobody's going  
to trust a twenty-eight year old  
mechanic with a multi-million dollar  
corporation.

UNCLE ANDREW

So why should they trust a fifty-  
seven year old mechanic?

JOHN

(standing)

Because *you* look the part. And people'll believe anything if it looks the part and comes with the proper paperwork. You've done great. Great so far. Just look at us.

UNCLE ANDREW

I suppose.

JOHN

No "I suppose" about it. We've got real captains of industry throwing money at us left and right.

UNCLE ANDREW

Humph.

JOHN

I mean it! Bigwigs. High rollers. Caviar consumers. In another couple of years we could have emperors and kings eating out of the palms of our hands.

UNCLE ANDREW

(softening)

Not bad for two boys from Steubenville.

JOHN

That's the ticket! And after that tanker delivers its cargo in Mobile next week, we'll be two genuine millionaires from Steubenville! You can pay off your loans and people won't know the Hickenloopers from the Rockefellers.

UNCLE ANDREW

Then we've got work to do. I'm a drunk and you're a woman chaser. Still, they say the first step is admitting it.

JOHN

What's the second step?

UNCLE ANDREW

Avoiding temptation.

JOHN

(incredulous)

Oh, Uncle Andrew!

He begins to sing TEMPTATION IS HARD TO RESIST. When each takes a verse they pantomime the actions described.

JOHN (CONT'D)

"Should a lady stop near you  
to fasten her shoe,  
temptation is hard to resist!  
Of a tapering ankle  
to catch a quick view,  
temptation is hard to resist!  
And if it should prove  
quite an obstinate tie  
to beauty's assistance  
you promptly would fly,  
then to give the small foot  
a soft press on the sly,  
temptation is hard to resist!"

UNCLE ANDREW

I know just what you mean.

(singing)

"When you're caught in the rain  
near the house of a friend,  
temptation is hard to resist.  
'Tis a chance to make pleasure  
and profit well blend,  
temptation is hard to resist!  
For if your umbrella  
should happen to break  
to place it just near his  
and work an old fake  
that of taking his good one  
by thoughtless mistake,  
temptation is hard to resist!"

JOHN

"After all we are human  
and cannot be blamed,  
temptation is hard to resist!  
to do things for which  
we are later ashamed,  
temptation is hard to resist!  
If when sitting close  
to a charming young miss  
Your pulses beat high  
with the thought of what bliss  
it would give you to print  
on her red lips a kiss,  
temptation is hard to resist!"

JOHN & UNCLE ANDREW

"Temptation is hard,  
since it comes by the yard,  
yes temptation is hard to resist!"

End song.

INT. JOHN AND UNCLE ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY - LATER

John reclines on the bed, arms folded, twiddling his thumbs.

JOHN

(under his breath)

"Stay in the room," he says. "There's  
no girls in the room," he says.

(his stomach rumbles)

Yeah, but there's no lunch either.

He sits up and starts to stand, but hesitates and sits again. He gets up and walks to the door but stops, goes back and sits again. He grabs the ancient telephone from the nightstand and dials zero.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Hello? -- Hello, room service? --  
Anybody? Hello?

He sets the phone on the bed and pulls on its ancient cloth cord. It comes up loose, chewed through at the end. He looks around the bottom of the nightstand to find a mouse hole in the wall. He frowns.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

John shuffles into the Hotel's grand lobby. Its once-grand marble floors have not been properly polished in years and the massive decorative ferns likely died when Eisenhower was in office. He spies Roscoe at the far end of the room struggling with a ladder, and proceeds towards him, head down to "avoid temptation."

But he runs straight into Danica anyway, toppling down on top of her.

DANICA

Oh!

JOHN

I'm *awfully* sorry. Oh, it's you!

DANICA

You really know how to knock a girl off her feet.

The "tingle music" swells up again as John stares at her, just inches from her face.

DANICA (CONT'D)

Would you mind getting off of me?

The music stops and John scrambles up before starting to help her to her feet.

JOHN

Oh yes, I really am *awfully* sorry. We keep getting off on the wrong foot, don't we.

DANICA

I wouldn't say that. You're kind of cute.

He nearly drops her, but catches her and yanks her up so she steadies herself close to him. They look into each other's eyes, and John kisses her. She accepts the kiss.

DANICA (CONT'D)

Mmm, you know, you've got the wrong idea about me. I'm not involved with your oil company at all.

JOHN

You're not?

DANICA

Uh-uh. I'm here on holiday. Daddy and I come to the Tangeray every year. For sentimental reasons.

JOHN

Daddy?

DANICA

Oh Daddy wouldn't like you at all. He doesn't like me kissing strangers.

JOHN

(sly)

Well then, let's not be strangers. I'm John D. Hickenlooper. Of the Ohio Hickenloopers.

DANICA

(playing along)

What an interesting name. Pleased to meet you. I'm Danica Nobel.

He smiles and leans in for a kiss.

DANICA (CONT'D)

Of the Dynamite Nobels.

JOHN

Dynamite?

DANICA

Yeah, you know. "Boom"? They use it in mines and stuff-



JOHN

Yes, I'm aware what dynamite is. Uncommon line of work. But I bet you've got just the explosive personality to go with it.

DANICA

Oh, I've been known to light things up from time to time.

JOHN

I'll bet you could be pretty dangerous.

DANICA

As long as Daddy's not around...

She kisses him again, powerfully, and John staggers backward. He trips over the ropes surrounding a 1906 Ormond Special two-seater open-body racecar displayed in the lobby, and onto the car with a crash. Roscoe rushes over. Danica giggles.

ROSCOE

Oh, Mr. Hickenlooper, please don't touch that! That's a land speed record holder!

JOHN

(getting helped up)

I was speeding myself, just now.

ROSCOE

I know it may not look like much, but in 1906 they clocked it in at a hundred twenty-two miles an hour out on the beach. That was quite a speed in those days!

DANICA

He's very sorry, Roscoe. It won't happen again.

ROSCOE

Oh hello, Miss Nobel. Enjoying your stay?

DANICA

As I do every year, Roscoe.

ROSCOE

Good, good. Well, I've gotta get going.

(to John)

Don't touch the car.

JOHN

I won't, I won't.

Roscoe exits to go back to his ladder.

JOHN

Unfortunately I have to be going as well. Business and all that.

DANICA

Oh pooh. But here, if you're ever bored, come up and see me sometime. Just make sure Daddy's not around first.

She drops a room key into his pocket and pats it there before sauntering off the opposite direction. John stares after her until she turns a corner. He takes out the key and looks at it, with the number 508 printed on the fob, but his stomach rumbles again and he goes after Roscoe.

EXT. HOTEL FRONT DRIVE - DAY

John strolls out the main entrance to the hotel to find Roscoe atop one of two ladders set of on either side of it, attempting to hang a banner above the door. He already has one side pinned up and is about to pin the other when the first comes fluttering down.

ROSCOE

Rats.

JOHN

Um, Roscoe?

ROSCOE

Yes? What can I do for you, Mr. Hickenlooper?

JOHN

I'm awfully sorry to bother you. I wanted to order some room service but my room phone's out. Mice, I think.

ROSCOE

Again? Rats.

JOHN

No, mice.

ROSCOE

Yes, mice. Rats. I mean, just a minute and I can make you something. In fact, could you help me out here?

JOHN

Oh yeah, sure.

John picks up the downed end of the banner and hikes up the second ladder. Only once he's got it stretched up and ready to pin does he realize that the banner proclaims, "Welcome Spring Breakers!" Not good for avoiding temptation. He pins it with trepidation.

ROSCOE

Thanks! And just in time, too!

A large touring bus pulls up the Hotel's front drive, "Oread Women's Institute" printed on its side. It parks right in front of the main entrance and its doors swing open. John watches in horror as a bevy of beautiful young college girls comes streaming out.

JOHN

Oh no!

He averts his eyes from the massive temptation, and tries to climb down the ladder, but loses his footing and topples into the bushes below.

INT. HOTEL DRAWING ROOM - DAY

About twenty girls from the Oread Women's Institute gather in a drawing room off the hotel lobby. They chat with each other excitedly. KATHERINE SEWARD, their teacher and chaperone, steps forward to address them. Young, fit, but

nevertheless somewhat matronly, she wears large unbecoming spectacles, almost of a government-issue type. She is frazzled, both physically and emotionally.

KATHERINE

Girls! Girls, settle down! Please!

The idyll chatter dies away.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Now girls, you all have your room assignments?

OREAD GIRLS

Yes, Miss Seward.

KATHERINE

Good, good. Then you can all get settled in in a few minutes. But first I wanted to stress again that this is *alternative* spring break. You're here to have fun, yes, but you're also here to learn something.

OREAD GIRLS

Yes, Miss Seward.

KATHERINE

So no wild partying.

OREAD GIRLS

No, Miss Seward.

KATHERINE

No drinking.

OREAD GIRLS

No, Miss Seward.

KATHERINE

And no *men*.

OREAD GIRLS

Of course not, Miss Seward.

Katherine looks wistfully into the distance. CAROL WIENEKE, a gold-hearted freshman, steps forward.

CAROL  
Is something wrong, Miss Seward?

KATHERINE  
No. -- Well, yes.

Katherine she sits in a chair.

GIRL 1  
What is it?

KATHERINE  
I don't mind telling you all now. The  
Institute wants to fire me.

GIRL 2  
What!

GIRL 3  
They can't do that!

CAROL  
You're our favorite!

GIRL 4  
But why?!

KATHERINE  
Apparently my research is costing too  
much money.

GIRL 5  
That's ridiculous!

SHERYL  
Fire Dr. Pond! He's weird!

SHERYL ZIMMERMAN is the most caustic and cynical of the  
group.

KATHERINE  
Girls, girls! Dr. Pond has tenure.  
And besides, he's a good friend of  
mine.

SHERYL

Just making a suggestion before he gets here.

CAROL

Why's it always have to be about money?

KATHERINE

Well, Carol, you know as well as I do that Oread is a small school. We depend very much on donations from sponsors and alumni, and frankly they're way down.

CAROL

But your research is making the world a better place! Oil algae could help the Earth towards a cleaner tomorrow. Isn't that worth funding?

SHERYL

Not when their choice is between a cleaner tomorrow or a cappuccino today.

Katherine stands and walks among the girls. There, she begins to sing ALL GOING OUT AND NOTHING COMING IN.

KATHERINE

"Money is the root of evil, everywhere you go."

SHERYL

"But nobody has any objection to the root now ain't that so."

GIRL 1

"You know how it is with money and how it makes you feel at ease."

GIRL 2

"Things look brighter all around and your friends are thick as thieves."

## KATHERINE

"But when your money's running low  
and your clinging to a solitary dime,  
no one can see when you come in, that  
is the awful time."

## KATHERINE &amp; SHERYL

"That is the time,  
oh that is the time,  
oh when it's all going out and  
there's nothing coming in,  
oh that is the time when the troubles  
begin.  
You're money's getting low,  
people say 'I told you so,'  
and you can't borrow pennies from any  
of your kin  
when it's all going out and there's  
nothing coming in."

## SHERYL

"I've had my share of this world's  
trials,  
so one knows how I've tried  
so to keep my little boat from  
sinking  
and to battle with the tide.  
You know when you've got your money,  
how easy just to keep afloat,  
your friends are mighty numerous, and  
they'll help you to row your boat.  
Oh when your money is running low, times  
are bad and things look mighty blue.  
You look for help and find that all  
of your friends are paddling their  
own canoe."

The girls start to pick up their luggage and one by one  
exit the drawing room to head up to their hotel rooms.

## OREAD GIRLS

"That is the time,  
oh that is the time,  
oh when it's all going out and  
there's nothing coming in,  
oh that is the time when the troubles  
begin.

You're money's getting low,  
 people say 'I told you so,'  
 and you can't borrow pennies from any  
 of your kin  
 when it's all going out and there's  
 nothing coming in."

Katherine is left standing alone in the drawing room. She strolls out to the

LOBBY

and sighs as she gazes after the girls heading up the staircase. She then notices a black felt board sign with white changeable letters headed "Medallion Oil Retreat Itinerary." It lists the schedule of events for the oil company's retreat. She looks more closely at it and smiles.

KATHERINE

(singing to herself)

"...and you can't borrow pennies from  
 any of your kin  
 when it's all going out and there's  
 nothing coming in."

EXT. THE GULF OF MEXICO - DAY

A blue-hulled, white-topped 120,000-ton oil tanker ship plows through the waters of the Gulf. "Petroleum Princess" is painted on its hull.

EXT. THE HOTEL TERRACE - DAY

John and Uncle Andrew enter onto the terrace. A large area resembling a Spanish courtyard, except for the side open to the sea over a balcony, the terrace is filled with little metal café tables and chairs, and tastefully sculpted trees. The same millionaires from the day's earlier meeting mill about chatting casually and sipping drinks from yet another a table of refreshments. A waiter with a single flute of champagne on a tray strolls past, and John snags it and downs it before Uncle Andrew gets the chance.

DANICA

Mr. Hickenlooper!



UNCLE ANDREW

Yes?

Danica hails John from across the crowd.

DANICA

Oh, no, sorry, I meant the younger  
Mr. Hickenlooper.

UNCLE ANDREW

(aside)

They always do.

JOHN

Don't leave me!

UNCLE ANDREW

Don't worry, I'll be right over  
there. At the bar.

He leaves to try and find a drink while Danica approaches John with a starchy-looking older man on her arm.

DANICA

You see, I told you I'd met him. You  
remember me, don't you, Mr.  
Hickenlooper?

JOHN

Certainly! And you must be Daddy. Er-  
Mr. Nobel.

John and DADDY NOBEL shake hands.

DADDY NOBEL

I certainly am. Here, my card.

He hands John a business card reading "Nobel Dynamite Co.,  
D. Nobel, President." He pockets it.

DADDY NOBEL

My little Dani was just telling me  
what you're like in person, said you  
bumped into each other twice today.  
Said you were very inviting.

JOHN

Oh, did she?

DADDY NOBEL

Yes, said she tried to get to know you socially but all you wanted to talk about was business.

JOHN

Oh, yes, well-

DADDY NOBEL

No shame in that. No shame a-tall. In fact I admire a man who can keep focused on figures when my little girl is around.

DANICA

Daddy!

JOHN

Well, she has quite a figure herself.

DANICA

Now, both of you be nice.

JOHN

Well it was *awfully* nice meeting you, Mr. Nobel. Danica.

(kisses her hand)

But if you'll excuse me, I have a ship coming in.

DADDY NOBEL

Of course, of course. I hope we'll meet again.

John jogs over to in front of the balcony.

JOHN

Ladies and Gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention, please! First, I'm glad to see everyone out and having a good time after this morning's little upset, for which I profoundly apologize. From here on out it'll be smooth

sailing for the Medallion Oil Company. And speaking of sailing, here again is your President, and my uncle, Andrew Hickenlooper.

Polite applause as Uncle Andrew steps forward. He's gotten ahold of a few drinks and doesn't even hide the fact that he's simply reading a pre-written speech.

#### UNCLE ANDREW

Friends, entrepreneurs, benefactors. You know as well as I that this great nation of ours was founded on oil. Oil for lighting our homes, for cooking our food, and for powering our mighty dynamos! But oil does not come bubbling up from the ground as kerosene, as motor oil, as gasoline. No, it starts as black crude. Black gold that will make the poor of us rich, and the rich of us richer. Medallion's superior oil is drilled from the fossil-rich swamps of Louisiana, a relatively untapped market that you all have helped to thrust open. But it must be refined from that mighty crude in our chartered plant in Mobile, Abalama. Excuse me: Alabama. To get the product from point to point we have arranged shipment on the proudest of this nation's oil fleet, the ship you see before you today, filled to the brim with 25,000 barrels of pure Medallion crude, the *Petroleum Princess!*

Polite applause again as Uncle Andrew lifts an arm to present the ship. Yet the *Princess* is rather small in the distance, and not that impressive to the naked eye. The investors cluster against the balcony for a better look.

#### DANICA

Kinda small, isn't it?

Many investors murmur in agreement.

JOHN

What? No, it's a hundred-twenty thousand ton tanker!

DANICA

Well that can't be right. Our yacht looks bigger than that.

She points to the only other significant boat in the bay, a white steam-powered yacht anchored to the North.

JOHN

Well it's just closer is all. I assure you the *Princess* is awfully big. Just watch.

He pulls his cell phone from his pocket and makes a call.

INT. THE BRIDGE OF THE PETROLEUM PRINCESS - DAY

CAPTAIN BRIGGS stands at the helm of the ship, confidently steering it as one would a masted battleship instead of diesel oil tanker. His white uniform gleams. A COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER calls to him from his controls.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Captain, you have an incoming call on the main line.

Captain Briggs snaps out of his steering trance to pick up a phone receiver.

CAPTAIN BRIGGS

Ahoy. Captain Briggs speaking.

THE TERRACE

JOHN

Yes, hello, this is John D. Hickenlooper, vice president of affairs at Medallion Oil. I- Yes- I- Well, how the hell are you too. Look, I'm over at the Tangeray Palms Hotel on Sarasota beach. -- Yes. "The tiny crumbling one." You're doing an awfully good job so far and we can see you, Captain. Your timing is

impeccable. But frankly you're a little tiny.

THE BRIDGE

CAPTAIN BRIGGS

Uh-huh. -- Uh-huh. -- Well technically it's against regulations for a vessel this size to sail in any closer than a mile off shore when there's no port to enter. -- I realize you're putting on a show. But what if the Coast Guard is watching? -- Triple, huh? You sure you can afford that? -- Well if you're sure you're you can afford it. Aye-aye, sir. Just say "when."

He casually turns the wheel hard to the right and the whole ship lurches starboard.

THE TERRACE

John approaches Uncle Andrew.

JOHN

*Awfully* well done on the speech. Very regal, very inspiring.

UNCLE ANDREW

That's the way you wrote it.

JOHN

I've told the ship to pull a bit further into the bay. It looks *awfully* small out there. I want people to be able to imagine just how much oil is on it.

DADDY NOBEL

Twenty-five thousand barrels, I thought I heard you say.

Nobel and daughter saunter up to the balcony next to Hickenlooper and nephew. The four of them stare out at the ship in the bay.

JOHN

You heard correctly.

DADDY NOBEL

That'd run you close to a two-million dollar haul in today's market, no?

UNCLE ANDREW

Around that. And it's just the first shipment of many.

DANICA

That's a good chunk of mullah. Why don't we leave you two to talk?

JOHN

I have to tell the Captain- I'm not sure if that's-

DADDY NOBEL

Of course Danni, don't let us old men bore you with business.

Danica takes John by the hand and leads him behind a topiary sculpture where she pulls him into another kiss. The "tingle" music flares up again. Meanwhile Daddy Nobel and Uncle Andrew continue their chat.

UNCLE ANDREW

Are you an oil man, sir? I don't believe we have you on our list of investors.

DADDY NOBEL

No, no, here, have my card. I'm in ballistics. Dynamite.

UNCLE ANDREW

Dynamite?

DADDY NOBEL

Yes. You know. "Boom"? They use it in mines and stuff-

UNCLE ANDREW

Yes, I'm aware what dynamite is.

There is a bang in the distance.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Hmm, sort of sounds like that,  
actually.

A red flare just went up above the "Petroleum Princess," which, incidentally, has stopped. The crowd applauds ignorantly. John pulls away from Danica and steps out from behind the bush, Danica pouting after him.

DADDY NOBEL

That's odd. They're only supposed  
use the red flares in case of  
distress.

JOHN

(into his phone)

"When!" "When!"

THE BRIDGE

A red light flashes and an alarm blares loudly. Crewmen run around frantically in the background.

CAPTAIN BRIGGS

(shouting)

Yes, Hickenlooper? A little late for  
that. We've run into a bit of a  
problem.

THE TERRACE

John stands ashen-faced as he listens on his phone to the Captain.

JOHN

(dazed)

Yes. -- I see. -- You don't say. --  
Really. -- Thank you Captain.

He slowly and deliberately hangs up and pockets the phone.

UNCLE ANDREW

Well?

John leans in and whispers in his ear.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Crashed?!

Uncle Andrew finds a nearby bottle of champagne and begins chugging it.

JOHN

(calming him)

Well, more like run aground.

UNCLE ANDREW

Run aground?! On what?

JOHN

The bottom of Sarasota Bay, apparently. It seems... I... didn't... say "when" in time...

DADDY NOBEL

I couldn't help but overhear, but if your ship's run aground, that's certainly going to eat into your profits, my boy.

Somewhat contained until this point, an investor overhears Daddy Nobel and the news spreads like wildfire throughout the crowd. They begin to turn into a frenzy. They advance on the Hickenloopers.

JOHN

Just a minute, just a minute! The worst thing to do at a time like this is panic! Isn't that right, Uncle Andrew? One collapse today is enough!

INVESTOR 4

But what about the ship?

INVESTOR 5

Is it sinking?

INVESTOR 6

Who cares about the ship, what about the oil?



INVESTOR 7

Is it leaking?

JOHN

Not really, they may have lost a barrel or two-

The crowd takes this information poorly, to say the least, barraging John with more questions and pressing him ever closer over the terrace ledge.

UNCLE ANDREW

Hey! Everybody! Leave my nephew alone!

Uncle Andrew has stood up on a café table, drained bottle in hand. He speaks on pure liquid courage.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Don't talk ask the boy. What crisis has he (hiccup) handled? Ask a man of experience!

MR. MUNTZ

Alright, what do you think we should do?

UNCLE ANDREW

Nothing.

INVESTORS

Nothing!

UNCLE ANDREW

Nothing. The fact is it doesn't matter what *is*. What matters is how we all react to it. A wise man once told me that presentation is three quarters of performance.

Here begins the spoken word intro to I'VE BEEN FLOATING DOWN THE OLD GREEN RIVER.

## UNCLE ANDREW

Friends! Friends! Friends, as I once  
learned in my youth, sometimes the  
best thing to avoid can be the truth!

He tosses the bottle aside where it shatters.

## UNCLE ANDREW

"Half past four,  
little me came sneaking to my  
mother's door.  
She'd been waiting up all night,  
waiting for me to go to bed.  
I just smiled, like a child, but my  
mother grew very wild.  
"Where have you been all night long?"  
she cried,  
and this is what I replied:

I've been floating down the old green  
river on the good ship Rock and Rye.  
But I floated too far,  
I got stuck on a bar,  
I was out there alone,  
wishing that I was home.  
The ship got wrecked with the captain  
and crew,  
and there was only one thing left to  
do,  
so I had to drink the whole Green  
River dry to get back home to you."

He jumps down amongst the investors, palling around and  
dancing rather drunkenly until they're much less mutinous.

## UNCLE ANDREW &amp; INVESTORS

"We were floating down the old green  
river on the good ship Rock and Rye.  
But we floated too far,  
We got stuck on a bar,  
We were out there alone,  
wishing that were home.  
The ship got wrecked with the captain  
and crew,  
and there was only one thing left to  
do,

so we had to drink the whole Green  
River dry to get back home to-  
Get back home to-  
Get back home to you!"

End song.

Uncle Andrew collapses into a nearby chair, exhausted, and the investors, armed with the strategy of lying if asked about the ship, begin to quietly dissipate back into the Hotel.

UNCLE ANDREW

I tap out. I'm done. Your turn.

JOHN

I didn't know you had it in you.

UNCLE ANDREW

Neither did I. I could use a Rock and Rye about now.

JOHN

You deserve one. You know, I think we may just survive this. The ship is fixable easy enough, and if we hire a tug we can pull it back off the bottom of the harbor.

UNCLE ANDREW

Fine. Good, I'll get the board on that.

JOHN

We just have to make sure that the press doesn't get wind of this.

UNCLE ANDREW

I thought, "any publicity is good publicity."

JOHN

Not when we've actually done something wrong! A hundred-twenty-thousand tons of crude oil marooned on one of the most pristine beaches in the world? The protesters would

have a field day! And that'd be  
goodbye millionaires, goodbye  
Rockefellers, hello Steubenville!

UNCLE ANDREW

(panicking)

We're ruined!

At the other end of the terrace Katherine enters from the lobby.

JOHN

Now calm down! I'll go get you a cup  
of coffee. You just stay here. And  
don't talk to *anybody*.

He pats Uncle Andrew on the back as Uncle Andrew slumps over a table. He then starts walking in the directions of the kitchens and gets about twenty feet away while Katherine circles around to try and see Uncle Andrew's face.

KATHERINE

Um, Mr. Hickenlooper? My name is  
Katherine Seward, and I'm a biology  
professor at the Oread Women's  
Institute. I was wondering if I could  
have a word with you.

John over hears this and stops dead in his tracks.

UNCLE ANDREW

Oh? Well, I, um-

KATHERINE

I've read a little about you online  
and I hear you've got a little  
problem with some crude oil leakage.

UNCLE ANDREW

(hot under the collar)

Oh did you? Well, um, I-

John, now wearing dark sunglasses, suddenly collides with Katherine and sends her toppling to the ground. John looks around in the manner of a blind man, arms outstretched and grasping at air.

JOHN  
Eh? Who's there?

UNCLE ANDREW  
(shocked)  
You just flattened the poor girl!

JOHN  
Did I? Girl? Oh my, I'm *awfully*  
sorry!

Katherine gets up slowly and dusts herself off.

KATHERINE  
Oh, that's quite alright. It was an  
accident, I'm sure.

UNCLE ANDREW  
What do you think you're doing, my  
boy?

KATHERINE  
It's nothing, really. -- Do you two  
know each other.

UNCLE ANDREW  
Know him? Why I-

John crushes Uncle Andrew's foot with his heel, causing him  
to cry out. He continues to feign blindness.

JOHN  
Oh dear, my fault again. No, I'm  
afraid I know very few people here.  
So sorry, sir.

He puts an arm around Katherine and starts slowly leading  
her away from Uncle Andrew back towards the hotel. Uncle  
Andrew stares after him, and when Katherine isn't looking  
he raises his sunglasses and gives Uncle Andrew a wink.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
But I really am concerned I've hurt  
you. Did you say you were a  
biologist?

KATHERINE

I really am fine. Please, I wanted to speak to-

JOHN

Do tell me about your work. Do you get out in the field much?

KATHERINE

(trying to be polite)

Well, swamps more than fields but yes. I teach college biology but I'm also a confirmed environmental activist. Now please, I-

JOHN

(wanting to keep her hooked)

You don't say! I'm an environmental philanthropist myself! I donate money to activists all the time! You know, for the trees -- and whatnot.

Katherine stops, believing she's accidentally stumbled upon a lucky break.

KATHERINE

You do? -- What did you say your name was?

JOHN

(unprepared)

I didn't. My name? It's um-  
 (fishing Mr. Nobel's  
 card from his pocket)  
 Nobel. Danny Nobel. I work in dynamite.

He presents the card in front of him as if he doesn't know where she is and she takes it.

KATHERINE

Dynamite?

JOHN

Yes. You know. "Boom"? They use it in mines and stuff-

KATHERINE

Yes, I'm aware what dynamite is.

JOHN

Aren't we all.

KATHERINE

Well, Mr. Nobel, perhaps I could show you my work then. I'm sorry, I mean, not "show," obviously-but, describe, maybe-

JOHN

Shh, shh. I never let my condition inconvenience me, Miss Seward. You've got to appear strong. After all, presentation is three quarters of performance.

KATHERINE

Well what has that got to do with-

JOHN

Lead on!

He takes her by the arm and starts muscling her toward the lobby again, but "accidentally" walks straight into a column before going two feet. He bows to it apologetically.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Beg pardon, m'am.

(to Katherine)

Lead on!

INT. HOTEL DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Back in the hotel drawing room the Oread girls have set up their scientific headquarters. Numerous collapsing tables are piled with books, arrays of glass tubing, laptops, and more. It's an entire transplanted classroom.

The 20 girls, however, are not working on science at the moment, but sit in chairs clustered around a large TV screen. They each hold a band instrument, and Carol sits in front of an old upright piano.

On the screen is DR. CHARLIE "WALDEN" POND, both senior biology professor and band teacher at the Oread Women's Institute. Bearded, bespectacled, and bizarre, he leads the girls in an almost dirge-like rendition of WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE via live video feed. It is an extremely old and dainty song, and the girls look bored to death playing it.

WALDEN

(operatic)

"Woodman, spare that tree!  
Touch not a single bough!  
In youth it sheltered me,  
and I'll protect it now.  
'Twas my forefather's hand,  
that placed it near his cot.  
There woodman, let it stand,  
thy axe shall harm it not!"

Sheryl, on the trombone, nods off and the others seem ready to follow. They play the instrumental interlude with lackluster.

WALDEN (CONT'D)

"That old familiar tree,  
whose glory and renown  
are spread o'er land and sea.  
And wouldst thou hew it down?  
Woodman--"

Katherine opens the door and tries to enter without disturbing the girls, followed by John. From his point of view he observes the room full of beautiful college girls and the "tingle music" stars to flare up. So he shuts his eyes tight, leading him to bump into Sheryl, who wakes up in a huff. The song peters out pitifully.

End song.

SHERYL

Hey! Watch where you're going! What,  
are you blind?

JOHN

Yes, actually.

CAROL

Sheryl, you should be ashamed!



SHERYL

He should be more careful.

WALDEN

(on the TV, henceforth)

What's going on?

The girls part down the middle so that the camera above the TV can see John and Katherine. She steps toward it.

KATHERINE

Oh hello, Dr. Pond! They got the video link up and running I see. How's sailing?

WALDEN

Fine, Katie, fine! Got it on auto pilot for a while and figured the girls could use their practice.

KATHERINE

How efficient of you. You'll be here soon?

WALDEN

Tomorrow morning, if the weather holds out. -- Who's that fella?

John has been groping around blindly behind her. She grabs him and moves him toward the camera.

KATHERINE

Oh yes. Everyone, this is Mr. Danny Nobel. He's an environmental philanthropist and he might just solve our problem for us.

(to John)

Mr. Nobel, these are my students, and over video link is my colleague, Dr. Charlie Pond. But everyone calls him "Walden."

JOHN

Oh, "Walden Pond." How Thoreau.

WALDEN

Precisely. Strictly non-violent protest.

JOHN

Oh? Whom against?

WALDEN

Oil companies, mostly.

John cringes.

CAROL

Dr. Pond is a leading authority on oil pollution. He also owns a tugboat, which he's driving here, because-

SHERYL

Because he's a nut...

CAROL

Yeah. I mean, no!

JOHN

So you're all biology students, then?

GIRL 4

Nah.

GIRL 6

Not really.

GIRL 9

I'm a business major.

GIRL 14

I'm in English.

GIRL 17

I'm in Phys. Ed.

KATHERINE

But they are all in the biology *club*, Mr. Nobel.

JOHN

Which also has a brass band?

WALDEN

I'm also the school's band teacher.

JOHN

Oh. You're all in the biology club  
and you all play instruments?

CAROL

Oh, sure. We're all multitalented.  
Most of us are in five or six extra  
curriculars. You've gotta be to get  
into a school like Oread.

The other girls nod their heads.

JOHN

That was some tune you were playing.  
When was it written?

WALDEN

1837.

JOHN

Is that all? Look, I don't mean to  
crash the party, but you mind if I  
offer my two cents? As I understand  
it, part of your problem is  
marketing, attracting donor interest.  
Well, the only think you're gonna  
attract with that is flies. Because  
it's pretty dead. Not that it should  
be thrown out entirely. The bones are  
good, but the meat is spoiled. Um,  
mind if I take a crack at it?

He stumbles over to the piano and Carol gives him her seat.

WALDEN

Um, sure, Mr. Nobel. Anything to drum  
up business.

JOHN

Now let me see. "Woodman, woodman,  
spare that tree, yadda, yadda,

yadda." Ok. Ok. Let's give this a shot. Just try and keep up, folks.

À la Ray Charles he lets loose a skilled jazz riff opener on the piano, beginning WOODMAN, WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE! The girls are soon clapping along.

JOHN (CONT'D)

"Woodman, woodman, spare that tree  
touch not a single bough.  
For years it has protected me  
and I'll protect it now.  
Chop an oak, a birch or pine,  
but not this slippery elm of mine.  
It's the only tree my girl can't climb  
So spare that tree!"

Collective laughter at the turn the song has taken. At this point the girls launch into full jazz band orchestration to supplement the piano.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(spoke-sung)

"Yes, a great big tree grows near our  
house.  
It's been there quite some time.  
This tree's a slippery elm tree, and  
very hard to climb.  
But when my girl starts after me  
up in that tree I roost.  
I go up like a healthy squirrel  
and never need no boost.  
The other day a woodman came  
to chop the refuge down  
and carve it into kindling wood  
to peddle 'round the town.  
I says to him, "I pray thee cease,  
desist, refrain, and stop!  
Lay down that crazy razor, man,  
chop not a single chop!"

OREAD GIRLS

"Woodman, woodman, spare that tree  
touch not a single bough.  
For years it has protected me  
and I'll protect it now.  
Chop an oak, a birch or pine,

but not this slippery elm of mine.  
 It's the only tree my girl can't climb  
 So spare that tree!"

JOHN

(spoke-sung)

"I said to him, You see that hole  
 Up near that old treetop?  
 I've got five dollars there, that's  
 yours,  
 if you refrain to chop.  
 No beast but me can climb that tree  
 'cause it's too slippery.  
 I can get up myself unless my girl is  
 after me.  
 So get my wife and I'll call her a  
 very naughty word.  
 And then you'll see me give an  
 imitation of a bird.  
 You may not know just where to go,  
 when my girl comes around,  
 but when she comes remember this  
 if I'm not on the ground:"

OREAD GIRLS

"Woodman, woodman, spare that tree  
 touch not a single bough.  
 For years it has protected me  
 and I'll protect it now.  
 Chop an oak, a birch or pine,  
 but not this slippery elm of mine.  
 It's the only tree my girl can't climb  
 So spare that tree!"

John and the girls complete the number with a flourish.  
 They all seem much happier.

End Song.

JOHN

Haha, one of the more obscure uses  
 for trees, but a worthwhile one, I  
 assure you.

WALDEN

Well it looks like you've got the most impressive donor there, Katie. Sadly it looks like I've got to sign off. There's some tricky seas ahead.

JOHN

(waving in the wrong direction)

Pleasure to meet you, sir.

WALDEN

So long, girls.

Walden waves goodbye and the TV screen goes blank. John rises from the piano.

KATHERINE

Well wasn't that fun. Now, Mr. Nobel, I wanted to show you my research.

She takes him to stand by one of the tables as the girls pack up their instruments.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Do you know much about algae, Mr. Nobel?

JOHN

The green stuff?

KATHERINE

Yes, that. I'm developing a strain of algae meant to counteract oil spills.

GIRL 5

It's really rather clever.

KATHERINE

You see, normally, oil spills cause vast environmental destruction because the spilled oil depletes the water of oxygen.

And it upsets the whole food chain since no oxygen first kills the algae and plankton, then the fish, and then larger mammals.

In the background, Sheryl mimes a suffocating larger mammal.

JOHN

How *awful*.

KATHERINE

Yes, but my special algae can help. It's genetically modified to both depend on much less oxygen to multiply *and* it actually *eats* the carbon structures comprising the oil. It basically cleans up the mess.

JOHN

Well isn't that something.

SHERYL

Too bad it doesn't work.

JOHN

It doesn't?

KATHERINE

Well, not yet. But that's why I need more funding, and the Institute is reluctant to give it.

JOHN

Well I'd love to help. How much do you need?

KATHERINE

About fifty thousand dollars.

John blanches at the amount. At the same time Carol approaches Katherine.

CAROL

Miss Seward? We've got some free time now and Sheryl and I wanted to take a rowboat out to test the pollutant levels in the bay. Is that alright?

KATHERINE

Well of course. That sounds like a very smart thing to do, doesn't it, Mr. Nobel?

JOHN

(gulping)

Does it?

KATHERINE

I'll bet they can prove that there's oil pollution in that bay, same as everywhere. Maybe even guilt these oil tycoons into a donation or two.

JOHN

(jumping on it)

I want to go too.

KATHERINE

Well I don't see why not.

SHERYL

Aw, does he have to?

JOHN

Lead on!

EXT. SARASOTA BEACH - DAY

Katherine, Carol, and Sheryl emerge from the pathway in the overgrown Hotel grounds and march toward the beach. They're now in bathing suites: the girls in bikinis and Katherine in a tasteful one-piece. John lags behind carrying a tray of test tubes.



The group approaches the boathouse at the beach end of the Tangeray Hotel's pier that leads out into the bay. It's a lopsided old wooden structure, but bears a sign reading "rentals" above a shop window.

Katherine rings bell for service and Roscoe emerges from the back.

ROSCOE

Afternoon, what can I do for you?

KATHERINE

We'd like to rent a boat, please.

SHERYL

Or some jet skis!

CAROL

Sheryl, those are dangerous!

SHERYL

No they're not. They're fun!

ROSCOE

Sorry ladies, I'm afraid we only have canoes and rowboats.

SHERYL

Darn.

KATHERINE

Will a rowboat seat all of us?

ROSCOE

I don't see why not.

KATHERINE

Then we'll have one of those.

She rummages through a purse for some money. John has been playing with the test tubes behind the girls and nearly drops them, but catches them with a jangle of glass.

ROSCOE

Oh, hello! I didn't see you there  
Mr. Hick-

John violently mimes for Roscoe to shut up. When the girls turn to look at him he's moving his head around blindly again.

ROSCOE (CONT'D)

I mean, I didn't see you there,  
you hick. You old beach bum, you.

The turns turn to look back at Roscoe and John gives him a thumbs up. Roscoe can't help looking puzzled.

KATHERINE

You know Mr. Nobel?

ROSCOE

Oh I know Mr. Nobel, alright. He's  
a regular at the Hotel, but-

JOHN

I'm afraid we have to get going,  
Roscoe. Science waits for no man.

ROSCOE

Is that right..

JOHN

Yes, sir.  
(to the girls)  
Lead on!

EXT. SARASOTA BAY - DAY

The foursome sits in an old long rowboat, with Sheryl at the fore, Katherine and Cheryl at the aft, and John rowing in the center. They're a fair ways out to sea.

KATHERINE

A little more to the left, Mr.  
Nobel.

JOHN

Veering left.

CAROL

How exciting, to be by the  
beautiful sea!

JOHN

Oh yes, *awfully* thrilling.

The row in silence for a few moments.

KATHERINE

You know, I wonder what that big tanker ship is doing here. It hasn't moved since we got to the beach.

JOHN

What? Where? I don't see an oil tanker.

SHERYL

You don't see anything!

CAROL

And who said it was an oil tanker?

JOHN

Oh, nobody. Nobody did. -- But I suppose that would make sense, what with those Hickenloopers staying at the hotel and all.

KATHERINE

You're quite right, Mr. Nobel.

SHERYL

Geez, those oil guys think they can do anything they want, don't they? Makes me just wanna slug one.

KATHERINE

Sheryl! You will not be slugging anyone while I'm around.

CAROL

Here should be good.

KATHERINE

Alright. You can stop now, Mr. Nobel.

John sets up the oars with a groan. The girls take the tray of test tubes and uncork one. Carol leans over the side of the boat and dips the tube in the water. As the others watch, John peers over the top of his sunglasses and glances around. He pushes them back up.

JOHN

Wait a second. What's that?

KATHERINE

What's what?

JOHN

That sound.

CAROL

What sound?

JOHN

Sounds like a bee. Or a wasp.

CAROL

A bee!

SHERYL

I don't hear any bee!

JOHN

That's because you don't have the super-hearing of the blind. It's -  
- right over there!

He points to underneath Carol. Carol screams and jumps up.

KATHERINE

Carol, honey, you can't stand up!  
It'll be ok!

CAROL

But I'm allergic to bees!

Katherine sits Carol back down but John jumps up.

JOHN

Uh-oh! It's over here now!

SHERYL

I don't see it!

John crawls over to Katherine and Carol, making the boat rock as he does.

JOHN

Don't let it sting me!

Carol screams and rushes toward Sheryl at the other end.

JOHN (CONT'D)

No! Now it's going that way!

Sheryl screams at Carol bearing down on her and from the excitement.

KATHERINE

Please, everybody sit down!

John stands straight up.

JOHN

It's every man for himself!

The girls scream and the rowboat teeters violently before finally capsizing, sending John, Katherine, Carol, Sheryl, and all their testing equipment tumbling into the waters of the Gulf.

EXT. HOTEL TERRACE - NIGHT

The entire terrace has been decorated with tiki torches and grass skirts around the tables. The Medallion investors, the Nobels, and the Oread girls have all turned out for a luau put on by the hotel. The girls, however, are up on a tiny makeshift stage in front of the sea view.

They're treating the crowd to some live music, specifically THERE'S A GARDEN IN HAWAII. Carol is in the middle as the vocal soloist and also plays the ukulele as the other girls crowd around her.

CAROL

"There's a land a-way out yonder,  
when at night I sit and ponder,  
there in dreams of love I wander,  
far across the sea."

OREAD GIRLS

"There's a garden in Hawaii,  
where we loved beneath the palms.  
I could see the love-light gleaming  
while I held you in my arms.  
When you kissed me and caressed me  
all my dreams of love came true.  
There's a garden in Hawaii  
where I fell in love with you."

They all play a jazzy interlude.

OREAD GIRLS

"When you kissed me and caressed me  
all my dreams of love came true.  
There's a garden in Hawaii  
where I fell in love with you!"

End song.

The rest of the crowd applauds enthusiastically as the girls return to their seats. At the same time, John and Uncle Andrew enter from the lobby, dressed in eveningwear. John reaches into his pocket and pulls out the dark sunglasses. Before he puts them on, however, Uncle Andrew reaches out a hand to stay him.

UNCLE ANDREW

Are you sure you know what you're  
doing, Johnny?

JOHN

She'll be so smitten I could steer  
her and her girls clear of the  
*Princess* for the next week, let  
alone a few days. Trust me, I don't  
even like "Miss Seward." And you  
know I can tell. When I look at her  
there's no tingle. No fuzzy feeling.  
Nothing. And *that* means that it'll  
be fine.

UNCLE ANDREW

I still don't like it.

JOHN

Well I think you'd like going back  
to being an auto mechanic even less,  
so unless you have any better ideas...

Uncle Andrew releases his arm and John puts on the  
sunglasses.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Just stick to the plan.

UNCLE ANDREW

I know, I know.

(looking at the crowd)

This had better work.

They set off in opposite directions, John towards Katherine  
and the Oread girls, Uncle Andrew toward the Nobels. John  
passes by Mrs. Muntz, the obese Medallion investor, on his  
way and she sticks her nose in the air.

MRS. MUNTZ

Really! Wearing sunglasses at night...

John smiles and bows toward her as she walks away.

JOHN

Oh, yes. And what a fine evening it  
is, Mrs. Muntz.

Carol and Sheryl pass right behind him and as he turns he  
runs into Sheryl yet again. Carol hits her arm.

CAROL

Sheryl, you really should stop  
bumping into Mr. Nobel.

SHERYL

He should stop bumping into me!

JOHN

(patting her on  
the head)

*Awfully* sorry. Honest mistake. Could  
happen to anybody.

It only takes a moment for him to realize how awkward this  
is, and start sidling blindly away.

SHERYL

(calling after him)

Hey, if you're blind, how come you  
don't use a walking stick, anyway?

John stops.

CAROL

Sheryl! You can't just ask blind  
people why they don't use a stick!  
Maybe it's his pride or something.

JOHN

No, no, it's quite alright. I, um-  
don't use a cane because I've  
mastered the art of echolocation. I  
simply make these little clicks with  
my tongue when I walk-

SHERYL

I never hear any clicks.

JOHN

I said "little" clicks! And then the  
sound bounces back to my sensitive  
ears, and depending on how long the  
bounce back takes I can "see" what's  
in front of me.

CAROL

Well isn't that clever!

JOHN

Yes. Isn't it.



He bows to the pair of them, and starts walking off, but stumbles over a lip in the sidewalk and catches himself. He bows toward them again and heads off, now audibly making a clicking noise with his tongue.

SHERYL

There's something about that guy..

Katherine sits alone at her table. John comes clicking up behind her.

JOHN

Ah, Miss Seward, is that you?

KATHERINE

Mr. Nobel, hello! Are you feeling better?

JOHN

The swim back to shore was a little taxing, wasn't it. But now I'm just as ship-shape as ever. And you?

KATHERINE

I'm quite recovered thank you. Won't you join me?

JOHN

Well, I'm *awfully* flattered that you would ask. But I was hoping to ask you the same thing.

Meanwhile Uncle Andrew has approached the Nobels' table. Mr. Nobel sits slumped in his chair while Danica twists not far off on the dance floor. Uncle Andrew nods at her and she smiles.

UNCLE ANDREW

Evening, Mr. Nobel.

DADDY NOBEL

Oh, it's you, Hickenlooper. What do you want?

UNCLE ANDREW

Well... I thought we could discuss a little business.

DADDY NOBEL

Business, eh? Say no more; I wondered when you'd come to me.

UNCLE ANDREW

You did?

DADDY NOBEL

No need to be coy about it, Hickenlooper. You've got a good head on your shoulders. I can see that. But I could also see on your face after that fiasco in the bay this afternoon that you wanted to branch out. Sit down.

Uncle Andrew sits facing him. Daddy Nobel sits up.

UNCLE ANDREW

Um- branch out?

DADDY NOBEL

And I'd be more than willing to help you! What's the point of making tens of millions if you can't make a few friends along the way?

UNCLE ANDREW

Yes... quite.

Daddy Nobel signals a waiter with two fingers, and Roscoe immediately brings two tropical drinks to the table.

DADDY NOBEL

That's an important lesson right there. It should never be about the money. It should be about doing something that makes you happy.

UNCLE ANDREW

Here, here.

They raise their glasses.

From over at Katherine's table John sees Uncle Andrew and Daddy Nobel chink glasses and Uncle Andrew gives him a thumbs-up while Daddy drinks.

KATHERINE

I'd love to come up to your room,  
Mr. Nobel.

JOHN

Fantastic. But Mr. Nobel is *awfully*  
formal. Please, it's Danny.

KATHERINE

In that case I'm Katherine.

JOHN

Wonderful. Just give me 15 minutes  
to spruce the place up, and then  
head right up. Room 508.

He bows slightly and strolls toward the Hotel.

KATHERINE

See you soon!

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

John, his sunglasses now on top of his head, emerges from around a corner and puts his key into the lock of room 508. He holds a bucket of champagne.

INT. THE NOBELS' ROOM

The Nobels have an actual multi-room suite at the Tangeray, comprised of an entry hall, two bedrooms, two baths, a large seating area, a dining area, a kitchenette and a veranda. John slips inside, sets the champagne down, and quietly closes the door before setting off to work. He brings the drinks into the seating area and draws all the thick curtains in the main room. This makes it rather dark so he puts on some mood lighting. He then checks the rooms one by one.

THE TERRACE

Daddy Nobel prattles on about business while Uncle Andrew struggles to stay awake. His head flops over, but he jerks it up and looks around. Danica is no longer on the dance floor.

UNCLE ANDREW

..And so, you see, that is why it is never prudent to invest in long-term expenditures along the Congo-

UNCLE ANDREW

Um, Mr. Nobel, where did your daughter go?

DADDY NOBEL

Danni? I'm not sure. Hmm, let's see.

(glancing around then  
taking his cellphone  
from his pocket)

Seems she had a bit of a headache. Went upstairs about ten minutes ago.

UNCLE ANDREW

She did!?

DADDY NOBEL

Oh I wouldn't worry. She gets little headaches all the time. She usually gets over them with a soak in the tub.

#### THE NOBELS' ROOM

John continues to check each of the rooms, opening the second bedroom and lastly the bathroom. He opens it and Danica is just standing up in the bathtub, completely naked [shot from over her shoulder]. The "tingle music" flares up but John shields his eyes.

DANICA

Oh! John!

JOHN

Sorry! Sorry! So sorry!

He tries to blindly back out into the hall.

DANICA

Johnny, wait! I appreciate that you've come to play; I just wish you would've knocked first. Care to join me?

JOHN

Um, perhaps you'd better just towel off.

DANICA

(all smiles)

Alright. Give me a moment to slip into something more comfortable.

JOHN

Um. Right.

He slowly exits the bathroom and starts pacing in the seating area.

DANICA (VO)

(from the bathroom)

Put on some music, why doncha?

John finds a stereo and puts on some soft instrumentals. Danica emerges in a monogrammed bathrobe and walks over to kiss John hard on the mouth.

DANICA

Oh, you brought champagne! How sweet! But you really shouldn't have, we have a whole fridge full.

JOHN

Oh. Really?

DANICA

Yup. Whenever you're really feel free to follow me.

She kisses him lightly again and then saunters toward the main bedroom. When she gets to the door she lets the robe fall off her shoulders and to the door. John gulps. Still showing only her backside, Danica winks at him before going in the room. There is a knock at the outside door. John shoots a furtive look between the hall door and Danica's

door before quickly going to the hall door. Just remembering his sunglasses, he answers the hallway door and admits Katherine. After locking the door with the deadbolt he leads her to the seating area.

JOHN

Please, come in. We don't want any interruptions.

KATHERINE

Hello again, Mr. Nobel. My, what a lovely room.

JOHN

Oh yes, it's modestly alright, I suppose.

KATHERINE

Modestly alright? I'd say it's rather posh.

JOHN

Well, I suppose you can tell better than I can.

KATHERINE

(laughing)

I suppose I can.

JOHN

Please, um, have a seat, Katherine. I've got to go into the other room and grab something.

He sits Katherine in an elegant couch and quickly slips into Danica's room. She looks oblivious but still displeased. He haltingly approaches her.

DANICA

Who was that knocking? And what's up with the glasses?

JOHN

(flipping glasses up)

That? Oh, that was just a man bringing up another bottle of champagne. Oh well, what can you do?

DANICA

Well let's hope we don't have any more mix-ups, shall we?

JOHN

We can hope.

EXT. HOTEL ROOF - NIGHT

A gust of wind lifts a roofing panel, simultaneously loosening a brick and causing it to fall. This brick hits a power line strung across the building and it sparks.

DANICA'S ROOM

All the lights go out and the screen goes black.

DANICA

Ooh, Johnny. Setting the mood?

The sounds of her kissing John with wild abandon.

JOHN

(fighting her off)

Oh, no. I-I-didn't. I was right here. We must have blown a fuse or something.

The sounds of him clambering off of her bed.

DANICA

Where're you going?

JOHN

I'd better see if I can get them back on. You never know what could happen in the dark.

DANICA

Don't just leave me here alone-

JOHN

You just snuggle under your blanket and you'll be plenty safe. I won't let anything get you. But, um, just in case. You'd better keep quiet. Be right back.

The sounds of him quickly opening her bedroom door, exiting, and closing it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Miss Seward? You still here? Are you alright?

KATHERINE

Yes, I'm here, but something's happened to the lights.

JOHN

Has it? That's strange. I hope you're not-

The sound of him tripping over the coffee table and sprawling across the floor.

KATHERINE

Oh, Danny! Are you hurt?

JOHN

(wincing)

No, no, I'm great. You didn't move that coffee table, did you?

KATHERINE

I'm afraid not. Here, sit by me.

JOHN

Sure, sure. We'd might as well get cozy.

THE TERRACE

Daddy Nobel stares at Uncle Andrew.

UNCLE ANDREW

It really is a shame that your daughter couldn't join us. She's so terribly pretty.

DADDY NOBEL

Yes. She is.



UNCLE ANDREW

I'm sure she's very popular with the boys, looking the way she does.

DADDY NOBEL

Popular?

UNCLE ANDREW

Well I know if I was her age I'd like to take her out and-

A vein begins to throb on Daddy Nobel's forehead.

UNCLE ANDREW (CONT'D)

Um, discuss art and literature at a polite distance from each other. From the opposite side of the room, even.

DADDY NOBEL

I don't like your tone.

UNCLE ANDREW

Tone?

DADDY NOBEL

My little Danni is a delicate flower of virtue. I believe you are suggesting otherwise about the apple of my eye.

UNCLE ANDREW

(muttered)

Well somebody's going to take a bite out of her.

Daddy Nobel stands with vigor.

DADDY NOBEL

Hickenlooper, if I were a younger man I would slug you. But suffice it to say that I don't want you or your nephew anywhere near me or my daughter again.

UNCLE ANDREW

(aside)

Probably a little late for that.

DADDY NOBEL

What!

Uncle Andrew claps his hands over his mouth and shrugs. Daddy Nobel stares at him, vein throbbing, then looks sharply upward in the direction of his hotel room, then back at Uncle Andrew. He throws his napkin on the table and strides off. But before he gets to far he returns, socks Uncle Andrew in the face, and then leaves. Uncle Andrew falls out of his chair.

UNCLE ANDREW

Mr. Nobel, Mr. Nobel wait!

Daddy Nobel strides off toward the Hotel.

THE NOBELS' ROOM

Darkness still prevails.

KATHERINE

Well there's no need to just sit here in the dark. A big suite like this -- there must be a flashlight or some candles or something.

The sounds of Katherine rummaging around the immediate area.

JOHN

You think so?

KATHERINE

I do. -- Ah ha! See? Here's a whole box of candles.

JOHN

Really?

KATHERINE

Yes, and a matchbook too. What luck!

She strikes a match and holds it to the wick of the "candle" but instead of just burning it starts to fizzle and spark like a sparkler.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Oh my!

Katherine stares at the sparking stick in her hand, but in its light John can see behind her to the wooden crate she got it from. It was under the coffee table and covered by a sheet, but even in the dim light clearly reads "Nobel Dynamite Co." on its side. He blanches and grabs the "candle" away from her and starts trying to blow it out.

JOHN

Don't play with that!

KATHERINE

Oh, thank you. I suppose it's some sort of trick candle.

JOHN

(panicked)

I'd rather not wait around to find out!

He lifts the bottle of champagne out its ice bucket and plunges in the stick of dynamite, dousing it and throwing them all back into darkness with a hiss.

THE LOBBY

Daddy Nobel marches through the lobby toward the main staircase and bounds up it.

HOTEL ROOF

A ladder leans against the gutter next to the downed wire, and Roscoe climbs up it. He sets a large metal toolbox on the roof and starts removing tools.

THE NOBELS' ROOM

Darkness still prevails.

KATHERINE

Perhaps I ought to try another one...

JOHN

No, I really don't think *any* of those candles would be any different.

KATHERINE

What a shame. I suppose we'll just have to get comfortable in the dark then.

JOHN

Oh, you think so, eh?

KATHERINE

I do.

JOHN

How comfortable?

KATHERINE

Very, very comfortable.

There is the sound of a kiss. From the darkness, John's "tingle music" swells up fuller and richer than ever before.

HOTEL ROOF

Roscoe has one arm on the fixture to reattach the electric wire, but drops the tool in his other hand into the gutter. He reaches across himself to grab it, but one of the metal buttons on his uniform touches the live wire, sending several thousand volts coursing through him.

THE NOBEL'S ROOM

The lights flicker on and off as John and Katherine kiss passionately on the couch, but neither notice as the tingle music continues.

HOTEL ROOF

An electrocuted Roscoe shoves the live wire in its proper socket, and a flash of sparks knocks his ladder backward sending him crashing down.

## THE NOBEL'S ROOM

The lights stay on as they break their kiss and hold each other. He looks at her with new eyes... under the sunglasses.

KATHERINE

(smitten)

Well hello there.

JOHN

(smitten as well)

Well, hello- I mean, are the lights back on?

KATHERINE

They are. -- You know, you're not like anyone I've ever met. You're different, somehow.

JOHN

How so?

KATHERINE

I can't quite put my finger on it, just the sense that you're a wonderful, honest, dependable man.

JOHN

(guilt-ridden)

That's being *awfully* generous.

KATHERINE

I mean it! Around you I get the sense that nothing could really ever go wrong.

He glances off toward Danica's room when he notices someone jostling the handle to the door leading to the outer hallway. He gets up from the couch.

JOHN

I just remembered I never grabbed that thing I said that I was going to... I'm so sorry, please excuse me.

DADDY NOBEL (OS)

Danni! Danni, open this door at once!

JOHN

(on the brink)

Oh who now?

DADDY NOBEL (OS)

Danni, dearest darling, open this door or I will break it down!

JOHN

(realizing)

Nuts.

He almost dives into Danica's room and shuts the door.

DANICA

Johnny, where have you been! And who's that pounding on the door? I'm scared.

JOHN

Well... It appears to be your father.

DANICA

Daddy! Oh no! You've got to get out of here! He'll break your neck if he catches you with me!

JOHN

Alright then. Bye.

He awkwardly kisses her cheek, pats her head, and slips out into the living area. Katherine approaches him.

KATHERINE

Danny there's a man at the door shouting your name!

JOHN

It's, um, it's a debt collector! Big Daddy, they call him. Not that I'm in debt. I was once, and once they get a taste of you they just keep on biting.

KATHERINE

No need to explain to me, I've had plenty of debts in my lifetime.

The pounding increases in intensity.

DADDY NOBEL (OS)

Danni, you're making Daddy angry!

JOHN

Ah yes, well this is one of those debt collectors that'll break my neck if he gets ahold of it.

KATHERINE

Ok. Quick, we can escape over the balcony.

JOHN

We can?

KATHERINE

Sure! Just like in pictures. Come on!

JOHN

But what about my, um, condition?

KATHERINE

You never let it inconvenience you. You said so yourself. I'll help you; now hurry!

She gathers her things and rushes out the double French doors leading to the room's terraced balcony five stories up. He starts to follow, but doubles back to snatch a bottle of champagne from the ice bucket before running out to join her. But Katherine's already gone.

JOHN

Katie!

KATHERINE

Down here! Hurry up.

He leans over the balcony to find that she's already climbed over it. She yanks him to safety over the edge just as Daddy Nobel bursts through the hallway door, wrenching

out its deadbolt. John and Katherine laugh silently as she holds his hand and they shimmy down a flower trellis to safety.

EXT. HOTEL ROOFTOPS - NIGHT - LATER

John and Katherine sit snuggled on top of a corner of the Hotel's roof. He has his arms wrapped around her and they're both smiling. The empty champagne bottle lies nearby. He begins to sing I'M AWFULLY GLAD I MET YOU.

JOHN

"I used to wonder why  
all lovers used to sigh  
and hold each others' hands at night.  
With them I've often chaffed,  
at times I've even laughed  
and thought it such a funny sight."

KATHERINE

"I used to think it queer  
But since I've met you dear  
it seems the proper thing to do.  
For when you are away,  
I'm lonely all the day  
and think of nothing else but you."

JOHN

"I am *awfully* glad I met you,  
and I want to tell you true  
that I never can forget you,  
that no other girl will do."

KATHERINE

"There is something sweet to live  
for,  
since I fell in love with you,  
I am *awfully* glad I met you, deary,  
aren't you glad you met me too?"

JOHN

"Now times when I feel blue  
as fellows often do  
I only need to see you smile.  
Whenever you are near,  
all worries disappear  
that's why I love you all the while."



KATHERINE

"It suits me to appease,  
both you and I agree  
we seek each other every way.  
Whatever pleases you,  
Is sure to please me too  
and that's the reason why I say."

JOHN & KATHERINE

"I am *awfully* glad I met you,  
and I want to tell you true  
that I never can forget you,  
that no other one will do.  
There is something sweet to live for,  
since I fell in love with you,  
I am *awfully* glad I met you, deary,  
aren't you glad you met me too?"

They melt into each other's arms and kiss again.

End song.

JOHN

Gee, I like you an *awful* lot.

KATHERINE

And I you! We oughta get married.

JOHN

Yeah! We oughta. Wait, a minute, I  
just met you..

She kisses him.

KATHERINE

I was joking, silly. But that sounds  
nice.

JOHN

Oh. Ho-hum. I don't suppose we can  
sit up here forever.

KATHERINE

No, I suppose not. But I really did  
have fun getting to know you, Danny.

JOHN

And I you, Katherine. You're ok to get back yourself? You don't need an escort?

KATHERINE

Not if I want to get back to my own bed. Can you get back up?

JOHN

I'll find a window somewhere. After all, I never let my condition inconvenience me, right?

KATHERINE

Right. Goodnight, Danny.

JOHN

Goodnight, Katie. Or rather, good morning!

She kisses him one last time and then skillfully shimmies down a drainpipe and out of sight. He watches her leave, dumbstruck, and then flips up his glasses and hurriedly calls Uncle Andrew.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hello? ... Yes. I don't think we'll have any problems from Miss Seward. -  
- She thinks I'm going to donate fifty thousand dollars to her research. -- Of course not. -- No, I don't think she'll be going near the *Princess* anytime soon. She's- she's wonderful, Uncle. Gorgeous and smart, and-and- yes I'll talk to you tomorrow. -- Goodnight.

He puts his phone away and stares out over the moonlit bay. He gets up and slides down the drainpipe himself, landing on

THE TERRACE

where he strolls a few paces and then chuckles to himself.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 (incredulous)  
 Ha! Married.

He sighs.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 (wanting it)  
 Married.

He looks out over the bay, past the *Petroleum Princess* and the Nobel's yacht all the way over to where the boats of the Sarasota marina can just barely be seen in their docks. As he looks he sings THEY DID'T BELIEVE ME.

JOHN  
 "And when I told them how beautiful  
 you are,  
 they didn't believe me.  
 They didn't believe me.  
 Your lips, your eyes,  
 your cheeks, your hair  
 are in a class beyond compare. You're  
 the loveliest girl that one could  
 see.  
 And when I tell them,  
 and I'm certainly going to tell them,  
 that I'm the man whose wife you'll  
 one day be,  
 they'll never believe me.  
 They'll never believe me.  
 That from this great big world you've  
 chosen me!

And when I tell them,  
 and I'm certainly going to tell them,  
 that I'm the man whose wife you'll  
 one day be,  
 they'll never believe me.  
 They'll never believe me.  
 That from this great big world you've  
 chosen me!"

The number ends with chords of the exact same violin tremolo and chimes as the "tingle music." But as John smiles out across the bay a bolt of lightning strikes in

the Gulf right behind the *Petroleum Princess*. A storm is brewing, literally.

The notes of the "tingle music" switch from happy major chords to horrified minor chords as John remembers that falling in love inevitably brings disaster to his company.

He stares out at the tanker, and then turns and runs back toward the hotel.

End song.

INT. KATHERINE'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Katherine lies in bed in her modest hotel room, face down, her head under her pillow. There is a knock at the door, but she doesn't move. Several louder knocks stir her from sleep, and she groggily rises. Although very sleepy, she smiles uncontrollably, still punch-drunk on love. She slips a light bathrobe over her pajamas, and answers the door. Roscoe stands there.

KATHERINE

Yes, what is it?

ROSCOE

(regretful)

I have a message for you, Miss Seward. I'm sorry it's so early, but he asked me to deliver it personally.

She slowly takes the folded letter from his hand.

KATHERINE

(concerned)

Thank you.

Roscoe nods and she closes the door. She stumbles back to the bed, where she sits and unfolds the letter.

JOHN (VO)

Dear Katherine. You are a wonderful woman: smart, beautiful, and kind. But I'm afraid I may never see you again. Urgent business has called me away from Florida, business I can't explain. I promise, however, that I

will wire you the fifty thousand dollars for your research in one week's time. Under one condition, you and your girls must return to the Institute immediately. I'm sorry I had to go, but this is goodbye. Yours sincerely, Danny Nobel.

Katherine finishes reading, trying to hold back tears. She falls over onto the pillow and sobs lightly. Soon after, however, her cell phone rings on her nightstand and she answers it.

KATHERINE

(drying her eyes)

Hello? -- Oh. Walden. -- You're here?  
-- Yes, I'm fine.

INT. THE CABIN OF THE MARJORY DOUGLAS - MORNING

Walden reclines in a chair in the cabin of his vintage tugboat, the *Marjory Douglas*. The docks of the Sarasota Marina are visible through the windows.

WALDEN

You don't sound fine, Katie. What's wrong? -- He did? -- But if you're still getting the money then- -- Oh. I think I understand. -- No, no. Please don't rush. It looks like I got into port just in time, though, there's quite the squall coming in.

KATHERINE'S ROOM

KATHERINE

Good. I'd hate to have anything happen to you. You're a good colleague and a better friend. -- Yes, I'll be fine. I just think I need some time. -- I'll see you soon.  
-- Bye.

She ends the call and sets the cellphone down before picking up the letter again. She stands and looks at herself in the mirror. She sings the song I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU NOW as a confession to herself.

## KATHERINE

"You've done it.  
 You've done it.  
 You've made me love you.  
 And since you've stolen my heart,  
 I'm wond'ring what you meant to do.  
 If you will love it dear  
 or break it in two.  
 Why don't you?  
 Why don't you?  
 Why don't you love me?  
 Love me the way I love you?  
 My heart is aching, breaking,  
 waiting for your reply.  
 And this is why.

I can't, no I can't stop  
 from loving you now.  
 My heart from the start  
 kept on teaching me how.  
 Like time and tide my love will go on  
 I've got to keep it up  
 keep it up  
 keep it up.  
 Begun all in fun,  
 then in grew to be real.  
 Each kiss has more bliss than  
 I thought I could feel.  
 The more I get,  
 the more I crave,  
 I just can't make my loving behave.  
 Oh no I can't,  
 Oh no I can't,  
 I know I can't stop loving you now."

End song.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

John slips out of the door to his hotel room. He still wears the dark glasses, but also a hat and a coat with the collar up, as if he were trying to be covert. Suitcase in hand, he shuts the door and starts to sneak down the hall before realizing that the doorknob has come off in his hand.

He walks back over to the door and tries to jiggle the knob back into place but it simply falls back out. He stares at it, and glances at his surroundings at large, then shrugs and continues back down the hall.

INT. ELEVATOR STAIRWELL - MORNING

John enters the stairwell and presses the elevator call button. The elevator itself is an ancient steel cage elevator, manually operated until it was retrofitted. The stairs wrap around its gilt shaft all the way down five stories. The elevator is already at the top floor so the double pair of inner/outer gates slide open and John enters. He presses the button for the first floor and frowns as he begins to descend excruciatingly slowly.

On the next floor down, however, who should also be waiting for the elevator but Danica. It stops on her floor and she enters. John pulls his coat collar up higher.

DANICA

Hello, sir.

She nearly presses her floor button but turns back to him

DANICA (CONT'D)

John? Is that you?

JOHN

Oh, hello, Danni. I didn't, um, see you there.

DANICA

What are you doing in that coat?

JOHN

I'm just- hiding.

DANICA

Silly, you don't have to hide anymore. Daddy's gone to bed.

JOHN

Oh, good for him.

DANICA

Besides, I convinced him that you were never even there! Here, you look ridiculous in that hat.

She tries to yank the baseball cap off of his head but he fights to keep it on.

JOHN

Danni, please!

She lets go of him and pouts.

DANICA

What's the matter with you, John Hickenlooper? First you're hot and then you're cold. I can't make sense of it!

JOHN

Danni, don't get me wrong, I'd like to be hot for you, but-

DANICA

But what? Can't you see I'm crazy about you?

She presses him against the side of the elevator and starts to sing LIGHT YOUR LITTLE LAMP OF LOVE.

DANICA (CONT'D)

"Light your little lamp of love for me,  
Light your little heart with sympathy,  
When you're sad and feeling oh so blue,  
just remember I feel lonesome too!  
My darling write and tell me that you can't forget,  
write and tell me that you love me yet,  
when the night is falling,  
somewhere a voice is calling  
light your little lamp of love!"