

"NINOTCHKA"

Screenplay by

Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder

And

Walter Reisch

Story by

Melchior Lengyel

SHOOTING DRAFT

1939

FADE IN ON:

AN ESTABLISHING SHOT OF PARIS IN THE MONTH OF APRIL

DISSOLVE TO:

THE LUXURIOUS LOBBY OF THE HOTEL CLARENCE

CAMERA MOVES to a CLOSE SHOT of the desk. In the background is a revolving door leading to the street. Through the revolving door comes a strangely dressed individual, obviously one who doesn't belong in such surroundings. It is Comrade Buljanoff, a member of the Russian Board of Trade. Despite the spring climate of Paris, he still wears his typical Russian clothes, consisting of a coat with a fur collar, a fur cap, and heavy boots.

Buljanoff glances around the lobby, obviously over-whelmed by its magnificence. The Manager, puzzled by Buljanoff's strange appearance, approaches him.

MANAGER

(politely)

Is there anything I can do for you,
monsieur?

BULJANOFF

No, no.

He exits toward the street. The Manager returns to his customary duties, when suddenly a second Russian, similarly dressed, pushes his way through the door and gazes around. It is Comrade Iranoff.

The Manager, definitely mystified by now, approaches him.

MANAGER

Yes, monsieur?

IRANOFF

Just looking around.

Iranoff exits. Again the Manager returns to his duties, when suddenly he sees that a third man, dressed in the same fashion, has appeared in the revolving door. It is Comrade Kopalski.

Kopalski doesn't leave the revolving door at all but as it turns, drinks in the whole spectacle of the lobby. The Manager is by now dumfounded.

STREET IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL CLARENCE

A taxi stands at the curb. Buljanoff and Iranoff are waiting beside it, Iranoff holding a suitcase. Kopalski, returning from the hotel, joins the group.

KOPALSKI

Comrades, why should we lie to each other? It's wonderful.

IRANOFF

Let's be honest. Have we anything like it in Russia?

ALL THREE

(agreeing with him)

No, no, no.

IRANOFF

Can you imagine what the beds would be in a hotel like that?

KOPALSKI

They tell me when you ring once the valet comes in; when you ring twice

you get the waiter; and do you know what happens when you ring three times? A maid comes in – a French maid.

IRANOFF

(with a gleam in his eye)

Comrades, if we ring nine times... let's go in.

BULJANOFF

(stopping him)

Just a minute – just a minute – I have nothing against the idea but I still say let's go back to the Hotel Terminus. Moscow made our reservations there, we are on an official mission, and we have no right to change the orders of our superior.

IRANOFF

Where is your courage, Comrade Buljanoff?

KOPALSKI

Are you the Buljanoff who fought on the barricades? And now you are afraid to take a room with a bath?

BULJANOFF

(stepping back into the taxi)

I don't want to go to Siberia.

Iranoff and Kopalski follow him reluctantly.

IRANOFF

I don't want to go to the Hotel Terminus.

KOPALSKI

If Lenin were alive he would say, "Buljanoff, Comrade, for once in your life you're in Paris. Don't be a fool. Go in there and ring three times."

IRANOFF

He wouldn't say that. What he would say is "Buljanoff, you can't afford to live in a cheap hotel. Doesn't the prestige of the Bolsheviks mean anything to you? Do you want to live in a hotel where you press for the hot water and cold water comes and when you press for the cold water nothing comes out at all? Phooey, Buljanoff!"

BULJANOFF

(weakening)

I still say our place is with the common people, but who am I to contradict Lenin? Let's go in.

All three start to leave the taxi, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

LOBBY – HOTEL CLARENCE – AT THE DESK

Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski are approaching the Manager, their only suitcase carried by two of them.

KOPALSKI

Are you the manager?

MANAGER

(eyeing the three suspiciously)

Yes.

KOPALSKI

Pardon me for introducing Comrade Iranoff, member of the Russian Board of Trade.

MANAGER

(bowing with strained politeness)

Monsieur.

IRANOFF

This is Comrade Kopalski.

MANAGER
Monsieur.

BULJANOFF
I am Comrade Buljanoff.

MANAGER
Monsieur.

BULJANOFF
May I ask how much your rooms are?

MANAGER
(trying to get rid of
them)
Well, gentlemen, I'm afraid our rates
are rather high.

BULJANOFF
Why should you be afraid?

The other two nod their agreement. The Manager has noted the
single suitcase.

MANAGER
(haughtily)
I might be able to accommodate you.
Is there some more luggage?

IRANOFF
Oh, yes, but have you a safe here
big enough to hold this?

MANAGER
I'm afraid we have no boxes of that
size in our vault, but there is one
suite with a private safe...

IRANOFF
That's even better.

MANAGER
But, gentlemen, I am afraid...

BULJANOFF
He's always afraid.

The other two exchange a look of agreement again.

MANAGER

(a little annoyed)

I just wanted to explain. The apartment may suit your convenience but I doubt that it will fit your convictions. It's the Royal Suite.

The mention of the Royal Suite startles the three.

BULJANOFF

Royal Suite!

(To the manager)

Just a minute.

The Three Russians take a step away from the manager and go into a huddle.

BULJANOFF

(in a low voice)

Now Comrades, I warn you... if it gets out in Moscow that we stay in the Royal Suite we will get into terrible trouble.

IRANOFF

(defending his right
to a good time)

We'll just say we had to take it on account of the safe. That's a perfect excuse. There was no other safe big enough.

The other two welcome the suggestion with relish.

BULJANOFF AND IRANOFF

That's right. Good, very good.

Suddenly Buljanoff grows skeptical again.

BULJANOFF

Of course, we could take out the pieces and distribute them in three or four boxes in the vault and take a small room. That's an idea, isn't it?

For a moment all three see their bright plans crumble. Then

Iranoff comes to the rescue.

IRANOFF

Yes, it's an idea, but who says we
have to have an idea?

Buljanoff and Kopalski see the logic of this and their faces
light up.

BOTH

That's right... that's right.

BULJANOFF

(turning to the Manager)
Give us the Royal Suite.

The Manager leads the three toward the elevator. The CAMERA
FOLLOWS THEM and NARROWS DOWN to the suitcase carried by two
of the Russians.

DISSOLVE TO:

DARK INTERIOR OF SAFE – ROYAL SUITE

We hear from the outside the turning of a key, the opening
of a door, then the turning of the dial, and then we see the
safe door open. Through the open door we now see the Royal
Suite. The Three Russians are standing in front of the safe.
One of them puts the suitcase into it.

MEDIUM SHOT – ROYAL SUITE OF THE HOTEL CLARENCE

Shooting from the interior of the room toward the safe. The
Three Russians are standing around it. As Buljanoff and
Iranoff close the safe door, Kopalski walks out of the shot.
The CAMERA STAYS for a few seconds on Buljanoff and Iranoff,
then PANS OVER to the center of the room, where a waiter is
setting a breakfast table. He is the former Count Rakonin, a
Russian exile employed by the Hotel Clarence. Rakonin is
looking with great interest toward the safe, and as he does
so we hear Kopalski's voice talking into the telephone.

KOPALSKI'S VOICE

Will you connect me with Mercier...
yes, the jeweler...

Rakonin pricks up his ears and looks toward the telephone.

CLOSE SHOT – KOPALSKI – AT TELEPHONE

KOPALSKI

I want to speak with Monsieur Mercier personally... Hello, Monsieur Mercier? This is Kopalski of the Russian Board of Trade. We arrived this morning... Thank you.

CLOSE SHOT – RAKONIN

As he sets the breakfast table, his interest in the telephone conversation increases.

KOPALSKI'S VOICE

Yes, everything is here. The necklace too. All fourteen pieces... What? No, Monsieur Mercier, the court jewels of the Duchess Swana consisted of fourteen pieces. Why don't you check on that? Naturally, we have all the necessary credentials.

As the voice continues, we

DISSOLVE TO:

SERVICE STAIRCASE – HOTEL CLARENCE

Rakonin hurries down the stairs, buttoning his overcoat around him. He exits through a door to the street.

STREET CORNER NEAR THE HOTEL CLARENCE

WIPE TO:

Rakonin is getting into a taxi.

RAKONIN

(to taxi driver)
Eight Rue de Chalon.

WIPE TO:

INSERT the House Number "8"

above the doorway of a Parisian apartment house. Camera pulls back to medium shot of the whole entrance. Into it is striding

a typical Parisian playboy. He is Count Leon d'Algout.

ENTRANCE HALL – SWANA'S APARTMENT

The door is being opened by Swana's maid. Leon enters like a man thoroughly at home.

MAID

Good morning, Count.

LEON

Good morning.

MAID

Her Highness is still dressing.

LEON

(as he walks toward
Swana's door)

That's all right.

LONG SHOT – SWANA'S ROOM

Swana sits at her dressing table in a negligee. Leon enters with the easy air of an old friend. He kisses her lightly.

SWANA

Hello, Leon!

LEON

Good morning, Swana.

During Swana's long speech he sits down, not paying much attention to her patter, lights a cigarette, and glances through a magazine.

SWANA

It's really a wretched morning...
wretched. I can't get myself right.
I wanted to look mellow and I look
brittle. My face doesn't compose
well... all highlights... how can I
dim myself down, Leon? Suggest
something. I am so bored with this
face. I wish I had someone else's
face. Whose face would you have if
you had your choice? Oh, well, I
guess one gets the face one deserves.

LEON

Your conversation has one marvelous advantage, Swana. However many questions you ask you never expect an answer.

SWANA

Don't you find that restful? ... Why didn't you come last night?

LEON

Darling, I was busy looking out for your interests.

SWANA

Did you win?

LEON

(enthusiastically)

We can forget horse racing, roulette, the stock market... our worries are over! You remember that platinum watch with the diamond numbers? You will be in a position to give it to me.

SWANA

(with humor)

Oh, Leon, you are so good to me.
(She kisses him)

LEON

We can be rich if you say the word. I had dinner with the Guizots last night.

SWANA

(contemptuously)

Those newspaper people?

LEON

You'd be surprised how many nice people dine with the Guizots.

SWANA

What a gruesome proof of the power of the press!

LEON

Now listen, Swana... I sold Monsieur Guizot the idea of publishing your memoirs in the Gazette Parisienne. "The Life and Loves of the Grand Duchess Swana of Russia"!

SWANA

(protestingly)

Oh, Leon!

LEON

Sweetheart, we won't have to bother about our future if you are willing to raffle off your past!

SWANA

Was it for this that I refused to endorse Dr. Bertrand's Mouthwash? I could have made a little fortune by saying that the Vincent Vacuum Cleaner was the only vacuum cleaner ever used by the Romanoffs... and now you want them to smear my life's secrets over the front page of a tabloid?

LEON

I understand how you feel, but there is a limit to everything, particularly pride and dignity. They are willing to pay any price! They have a circulation of two million!

SWANA

Imagine two million clerks and shop girls peeking into my life for a sou! Think of my lovely life being wrapped around cheese and blood sausages! I can see a big grease spot in the midst of my most intimate moments!

Leon knows on which note to play for Swana's benefit.

LEON

Well, I am the last person to persuade you, but don't do it blindly... if

this is your decision, you must be
prepared to face the consequences...

(With the expression
of a man ready to
give his all)

I will have to go to work.

Swana rises and goes over to Leon. His method has been highly
successful.

SWANA

My little Volga boatman! Stop
threatening! I don't deserve this.

(Embracing him)

Are you my little Volga boatman?

LEON

Now, Swana...

SWANA

First tell me, are you my little
Volga boatman?

LEON

(anything to stop her)

Yes, I'm your little Volga boatman.

SWANA

(walking back to the
dressing table)

Well... two million readers... I
know exactly what they want. Chapter
One: "A Childhood behind Golden Bars.
Lovely Little Princess Plays with
Rasputin's Beard."

Leon sits down next to her, growing enthusiastic.

LEON

I've got one chapter Guizot thinks
is terrific. "Caviar and Blood."
Swana escapes over the ice!

SWANA

A couple of bloodhounds and we have
Uncle Tom's Cabin.

LEON

(thinking of another
idea)
Darling, this would be wonderful!
Just once... weren't you attacked by
a Bolshevik?

SWANA
(straining her memory)
Was I? No... not by a Bolshevik!

LEON
Too bad! Brings our price down ten
thousand francs!

There is a knock on the door.

SWANA
Come in.

The Maid enters.

MAID
Count Rakonin asks the privilege of
a few words, Your Highness.

LEON
Count Rakonin?

SWANA
He's a waiter at the Clarence, poor
devil. You know him.

LEON
Oh, yes.

SWANA
Tell him I won't be able to see him
for a half an hour.

MAID
The Count says if it could be as
soon as possible. It is luncheon
time and he is just between courses.

The Maid exits. Swana walks toward the door of the living
room.

LIVING ROOM – SWANA'S APARTMENT

A charming room, which manages to create a little of the atmosphere of Old Russia. Rakonin stands, his overcoat still buttoned about him, waiting nervously. Swana enters, leaving the door ajar. Rakonin approaches her with the respect he would have paid her at the Imperial Court.

RAKONIN

Your Highness.

SWANA

How do you do, my friend.

RAKONIN

Your Highness, forgive this intrusion, but...

SWANA

What is it, Rakonin? Did you lose your job?

RAKONIN

No, madame, something of the utmost importance... it concerns your jewels.

SWANA

My jewels?!

RAKONIN

I remember one birthday of His Majesty, our beloved Czar... I had the honor of being on guard at the summer palace... I still see you bending before His Majesty... You wore your diadem and a necklace... your face seemed to be lighted by the jewels.

SWANA

(puzzled)

Why do you bring this up after so many years?

RAKONIN

They are here!... Your jewels!... Here in Paris!

SWANA

Alexis! Do you know what you are saying?

RAKONIN

This morning three Soviet agents arrived. I overheard a telephone conversation with Mercier, the jeweler. Your Highness, they are going to sell them!

MEDIUM SHOT – DOOR OF BEDROOM

From the door of the bedroom appears Leon, his face alert.

LEON

Did I hear something about jewels?

SWANA

Rakonin, bless him, has given me the most amazing news!

MEDIUM CLOSE – SWANA AND RAKONIN

Swana goes to the telephone.

SWANA

(into phone)

Balzac 2769...

(to Leon)

My lawyer...

Leon steps to her side, highly interested.

RAKONIN

I am sorry... I have to leave.

SWANA

(to Rakonin)

Thank you so much, my friend. I will get in touch with you.

Count Rakonin leaves.

SWANA

(into phone)

This is the Duchess Swana... I want to speak to Monsieur Cornillon... it's very important... please get

him right away... Hello, Monsieur
Cornillon? The most incredible thing
has happened! My jewels are here in
Paris! Three Bolshevik swine are
trying to sell them! Yes... yes...
we must act immediately!... Call the
police... Have them arrested!...
Well, then, get an injunction!...
But do something, Monsieur Cornillon!
(apparently the answer
is some objection
from Cornillon)
...But they are my jewels! There
must be some way of getting them
back!

LEON

(just as nervous as
Swana)

What does he say?

SWANA

(to Leon)

Shhh!

(into phone)

...But how can there be a question?...
Are you my lawyer or theirs?... All
right, I'll let you know!

She hangs up, rises, the legal situation whirling around in
her brain.

LEON

What did he say?

SWANA

(discouraged)

It looks pretty hopeless... there
may be a chance... that's all... The
French Government has recognized
Soviet Russia and he doubts that
they will risk a war for my poor
sake. He might be able to make up
some kind of a case but it would
cost money, money, money!... That's
all they are interested in – those
lawyers!

LEON

(taking her in his
arms)

Darling, calm down. Why do you need
a lawyer? Haven't you your little
Volga boatman?

Swana looks up at him, hope dawning in her eyes, as we

INSERT OF THE JEWELS

DISSOLVE TO:

spread out on a table in the Royal Suite. Camera pulls back
to a LONGER SHOT. We see Mercier, the jeweler, examining the
jewels with an eyepiece screwed in his eye. Around him stand
the Three Russians. Mercier, a middle-aged man of the greatest
suavity and elegance, but a shrewd trader none the less,
looks up.

MERCIER

Very good... superb... excellent...
it would be foolish to belittle the
quality of the merchandise but your
terms are impossible. My counteroffer
is the absolute maximum.

KOPALSKI

But, Monsieur Mercier...

MERCIER

(continuing)

Gentlemen, I'll let you in on a little
secret... we are only undertaking
this deal for the prestige involved,
and, quite frankly, we are expecting
to take a loss.

Iranoff draws Buljanoff aside and whispers in his ear.

IRANOFF

(whispering)

Capitalistic methods...

BULJANOFF

They accumulate millions by taking
loss after loss.

The telephone rings.

BULJANOFF

(answering phone)

Hello... this is Buljanoff, Iranoff,
and Kopalski... Who?... Count
d'Algout?... No, no... it must be a
mistake... we can't be disturbed.

MERCIER

(continuing)

I assure you no one else could meet
the figure named by my syndicate...
at least under the present economic
conditions.

KOPALSKI

We can wait.

IRANOFF

(pompously)

Do we give the impression of people
who are pressed for money?

MERCIER

Yes. Gentlemen... let's put our cards
face down. Right now there is a
Russian commission in New York trying
to sell fifteen Rembrandts. There is
another in London mortgaging the oil
fields in Baku. You need money and
you need it quickly. I think my offer
is fair and does not even take
advantage of your situation.

CLOSE-UP – BULJANOFF, IRANOFF, AND KOPALSKI

KOPALSKI

(to Mercier)

Just a minute.

The Three Russians step to one side.

IRANOFF

(in a low voice)

He's cutting our throat...

BULJANOFF

But what can we do?... We have to accept.

KOPALSKI

Comrades! Comrades! Don't let's give in so quickly. After all we have to uphold the prestige of Russia.

BULJANOFF

All right, let's uphold it for another ten minutes.

SHOT OF THE WHOLE GROUP

There is a knock at the door. Iranoff walks toward it, unlocks it, opens it a little. In the door appears Leon.

IRANOFF

We don't want to be disturbed.

LEON

My name is Count d'Algout. I telephoned.

IRANOFF

If you want to see us you must come later.

LEON

I just want a word with Monsieur Mercier.

IRANOFF

But you can't...

Leon pushes his way in. He approaches Monsieur Mercier. The Russians get between him and the jewels and during the following scene put them back into the safe.

LEON

Monsieur Mercier. May I introduce myself? I am Count Leon d'Algout. I think I had the pleasure of meeting you in your beautiful shop. I was admiring a platinum watch with diamond numbers.

MERCIER

Oh, yes, yes...

LEON

(glancing at the jewels)
Glorious, aren't they?

KOPALSKI

Now, monsieur, you have no right...

LEON

(very charmingly)
Just a moment.
(to Mercier)
I hope you haven't closed this deal,
Monsieur Mercier. It might bring you
into serious difficulties.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Who are you? What do you want? What
is this?

LEON

These jewels are the property of the
Duchess Swana of Russia, and were
seized illegally by the Soviet
Government. I am acting for Her
Highness, the Duchess. Here is my
power of attorney.

He hands it to Mercier, who reads it.

IRANOFF

(excitedly)
You know, Monsieur Mercier, this is
all non-sense.

KOPALSKI

These may have been the jewels of
the Duchess Swana, but, like all
private property, they were
confiscated by the State.

LEON

We'll leave the problem of their
ownership to the French courts.
Meanwhile I have filed a petition
for an injunction to prohibit you
from either selling or removing the

jewels. Here is a copy.

The Russians take the copy of the injunction, read it flabbergasted. As they do so, Leon turns to Monsieur Mercier.

LEON

I thought it my duty to warn you. I would hate to see you get in any trouble, monsieur.

MERCIER

Thank you.

(he turns to the
Russians)

Gentlemen, this introduces a new element into our negotiations. Until this claim is completely settled...

KOPALSKI

We can call our ambassador.

IRANOFF

I give you my word! They were confiscated legally!

MERCIER

Please try to understand my position. I am not with-drawing. My offer stands and as soon as you produce a clear title, approved by the French courts, the deal is settled. Until then, good day.

He bows and starts toward the door. Leon accompanies him, opening the door as though he were the host.

LEON

(intimately)

I hope you will forgive me, Monsieur Mercier.

MERCIER

(in a low voice)

On the contrary. I consider myself very lucky. Good day.

He bows.

LEON
(bowing)
Good day, monsieur.

Mercier leaves. Leon closes the door and turns back into the room to the three outraged Russians.

LEON
(jauntily)
Well, gentlemen... how about a little lunch?

IRANOFF
Get out of here!

LEON
Don't look so gloomy, gentlemen. All is not lost. You may have a chance.

KOPALSKI
(bursting forth)
We may have a chance.

LEON
Yes... a very slim one. I want to be fair. I don't deny that you might make out some kind of a case.

KOPALSKI
We haven't anything to discuss with you. We'll talk to a lawyer!

LEON
All right – go ahead... you talk to the lawyer and I'll talk to the judge!

IRANOFF
That won't help you! You can't intimidate us!

KOPALSKI
Soviet Russia will put all its might behind this case.

BULJANOFF
You think because you represent the former Duchess...

LEON
The Duchess...

BULJANOFF
The former Duchess!

LEON
In any case, gentlemen, a charming,
beautiful, exquisite woman. I warn
you, if this case comes to trial it
will be before a French court, and
when the Duchess takes the stand...

IRANOFF
All right, go ahead, get her on the
witness stand! What can she say?

LEON
But how will she look? The fashions
this spring are very becoming to
her. Gentlemen, the judge will be
French, the jury will be French,
everybody in that courtroom will be
French. Have you ever seen a French
court when a beautiful woman sits on
the witness stand and lifts her skirt
a little? You sit down and pull up
your pants and where will it get
you?

IRANOFF
I suppose you expect us to hand over
the jewels?

LEON
Oh, no, no. I am not a highwayman,
I'm just a nuisance. All I'm trying
to do is make things as difficult as
possible.

BULJANOFF
Not that we are giving in one inch,
but tell us... what is in your mind?

LEON
Well, gentlemen, how about my
proposition?

IRANOFF
What proposition?

LEON
I just said let's have a little lunch.
(picking up the
telephone)
Room service.

MEDIUM SHOT – CORRIDOR OF THE HOTEL CLARENCE

DISSOLVE TO:

shooting toward door leading to the Royal Suite. Two waiters are wheeling in a table on which is a block of ice filled with caviar and a collection of the most delicious hors d'oeuvres. They enter the room. After the door is closed we hear from within loud SOUNDS of approval from Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski. The CAMERA STAYS on the door. After a few seconds a very good-looking cigarette girl enters the room and from within we HEAR even louder SOUNDS of approval. Next a waiter enters carrying champagne and another with glasses on a tray. As they are going into the room, the cigarette girl comes out and runs excitedly down the corridor. Camera pans with her away from the door as she starts down the staircase.

MEDIUM SHOT – DOOR OF THE ROYAL SUITE

Some of the waiters come out, others go in, carrying further delicacies.

MEDIUM SHOT – HEAD OF STAIRCASE

Up the staircase pants the cigarette girl, followed by two other cigarette girls. Camera pans with them as they rush toward the door of the Royal Suite and enter. From within we HEAR terrific greetings. The CAMERA REMAINS ON THE DOOR as we SLOWLY DISSOLVE INTO EVENING.

The electric lights are lit and a band of five Hungarian musicians enters carrying typical Hungarian instruments, including a cimbalom.

LONG SHOT – ROYAL SUITE

The orchestra is playing; the Three Russians, very high by now, are dancing with the girls. One of them is wearing the

cigarette tray of one of the girls. It is a harmless but loud and hilarious party. Apart from all the hullabaloo sits Leon at the desk, a telegraph blank before him.

LEON

Hey, Sascha! Serge! Misha!

The three come to him, all in the gayest, most agreeable mood.

KOPALSKI

Yes, Leon...

IRANOFF

(pawing him)

What is it, my boy?

LEON

About this telegram to Moscow. Why should you bother? I'll write it for you.

BULJANOFF

Leon... Leonitchka...

(he embraces Leon)

Why are you so good to us?

(he kisses Leon)

IRANOFF

(kissing Leon too)

Leon, my little boy.

KOPALSKI

(joining them)

Oh, Leon, you are so good.

LEON

(freeing himself as best he can)

What's the name of that Commissar on the Board of Trade?

IRANOFF

Razinin.

LEON

(writing)

Razinin, Board of Trade, Moscow.

KOPALSKI

You wouldn't like Razinin.

BULJANOFF

He's a bad man. Sends people to
Siberia!

IRANOFF

We don't like Razinin.

BULJANOFF

(again pawing Leon)

We like you, Leon – don't we like
Leon?

The others join him and kiss Leon.

IRANOFF AND KOPALSKI

Yes, we like Leon... little
Leonitchka.

This brings on a new frenzy of Russian affection. Leon frees
himself and rises.

LEON

How does this strike you? Commissar
Razinin, Board of Trade, Moscow.
Unexpected situation here. Duchess
Swana in Paris claims jewels, and
has already brought injunction against
sale or removal. After long and
careful study we suggest in the
interest of our beloved country a
fifty-fifty settlement as best
solution. Iranoff, Buljanoff, and
Kopalski.

KOPALSKI

If we say that, Leon... we'll be
sent to Siberia!

IRANOFF

And if we have to go to Siberia...

LEON

(still looking over
the telegram)

I'll send you a muff.

BULJANOFF

Oh, why are you so good to us?

IRANOFF AND KOPALSKI

Yes, you are so good, Leon.

Again they overwhelm Leon with an avalanche of Russian affection. At this moment Rakonin enters with some new bottles of champagne. The Russians immediately leave Leon and direct their affection toward Rakonin, embracing and kissing him.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Comrade waiter, dear waiteritchka!...
Why are you so good to us? You good waiter!

After Rakonin has turned over the champagne to the Russians, Leon takes him aside.

LEON

Take this telegram to the telegraph office at once!

RAKONIN

Yes, monsieur.

He leaves the room.

CLOSE SHOT –

DOOR LEADING TO CORRIDOR OF HOTEL CLARENCE

Rakonin comes out with the telegram. The CAMERA PANS with him as he hurries down the corridor, reading it. The CAMERA NARROWS DOWN on an insert of the telegram as we

DISSOLVE TO:

TELEGRAPH WIRES OVER A WIDE SWEEP OF COUNTRY

DISSOLVE TO:

TELEGRAPH WIRES OVER THE ROOFS OF MOSCOW

Pan down past the roof of an official building to a CLOSE SHOT of a window. Behind it stands Razinin, reading the telegram. He is a violent, militant Bolshevik.

The telegram fills him with rage. As he crumples it, and stares into space, his expression bodes ill for Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski.

FADE OUT:

MEDIUM SHOT – UPPER CORRIDOR OF HOTEL CLARENCE

FADE IN:

shooting toward door of elevator. The elevator comes up and stops, the door opens, and the Three Russians step out. They are very smartly dressed and look like any urbane gentlemen coming from the races. Two of them have racing glasses. As they walk toward the Royal Suite, Lady Lavenham, an elderly English aristocrat, comes out of her room.

LADY LAVENHAM

Good afternoon, messieurs, mes Comrades.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Good afternoon, Lady Lavenham.

KOPALSKI

And how is Lord Lavenham?

BULJANOFF

...and little Lady Beatrice?

LADY LAVENHAM

Very well. Did fortune favor you at the races?

IRANOFF

Comme ci, comme ca.

LADY LAVENHAM

I understand... nothing to write home about.

BULJANOFF

(alarmed)

Who wants to write home about it?

LADY LAVENHAM

It's just a saying. How about joining

us Saturday night for dinner? We're having a few friends.

KOPALSKI
Are we free, Buljanoff?

BULJANOFF
Possibly.

IRANOFF
We'll manage.

LADY LAVENHAM
Then let's say at nine.

BULJANOFF
Black tie or white tie?

LADY LAVENHAM
Oh, let's make it white.

BULJANOFF
Certainly!

LADY LAVENHAM
Au revoir.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS
Au revoir.

As they walk into the Royal Suite, Buljanoff tosses off an urbane comment.

BULJANOFF
Nice people.

ANTEROOM OF ROYAL SUITE

As the three enter, the telephone rings. Buljanoff and Kopalski go into the living room. Iranoff answers the telephone.

IRANOFF
(into telephone)
Yes, Leon...
(a little bit annoyed)
What is it, Leon?... You can't hurry such things... You must give Moscow

a little time... There's nothing we
can do about it... why don't you
drop in later?... Au revoir...

He steps into the living room.

LIVING ROOM

As Iranoff enters Buljanoff rushes toward him.

BULJANOFF
Misha! Misha!

IRANOFF
What is it?

BULJANOFF
A telegram from Moscow! It must have
been here all day!

KOPALSKI
(joining them and
reading telegram)
Halt negotiations immediately. Envoy
extraordinary arrives Thursday six
ten with full power. Your authority
cancelled herewith. Razinin.

IRANOFF
It is Thursday!

BULJANOFF
It's six o'clock already!

They rush into the bedroom.

KOPALSKI
I always said it would be Siberia!

DISSOLVE TO:

LOBBY – HOTEL CLARENCE

Manager at desk. Iranoff, Buljanoff, and Kopalski rush from
the direction of the elevator. Iranoff pauses at the desk.
The others go on to the door and wait for him there.

IRANOFF

(to Manager)
A Special Envoy is coming from Moscow.
He'll occupy the Royal Suite. Move
our things to the smallest room you've
got.

MANAGER
Yes, monsieur.

IRANOFF
Right away... instantly!

From the door Buljanoff and Kopalski call impatiently.

BULJANOFF AND KOPALSKI
Iranoff!

IRANOFF
I'm coming!

As he starts toward the door, we

DISSOLVE TO:

PLATFORM – PARIS RAILROAD STATION

The train has already arrived as the Three Russians hurry
down the platform. Neither do they know the name of the Envoy
Extraordinary, nor his appearance, and they are searching
the crowd for some clue.

IRANOFF
This is a fine thing. Maybe we've
missed him already.

KOPALSKI
How can you find somebody without
knowing what he looks like?

Iranoff points to a bearded man with a knapsack.

IRANOFF
That must be the one!

BULJANOFF
Yes, he looks like a comrade!

They follow the man, but just as they are ready to approach

him he is greeted by a German Girl. Both raise their hands in the Nazi salute.

BEARDED MAN AND GIRL
Heil Hitler!

As the two embrace, the Three Russians stop in their tracks.

KOPALSKI
No, that's not him...

BULJANOFF
Positively not!

By now the platform is almost empty. As the Russians in the foreground look around helplessly, we see in the background a woman who obviously is also looking for someone. It is Ninotchka Yakushova, the Envoy Extraordinary. The Russians exchange troubled looks and go toward her. Ninotchka comes forward. As they meet she speaks.

NINOTCHKA
(to Iranoff)
I am looking for Michael Simonovitch Iranoff.

IRANOFF
I am Michael Simonovitch Iranoff.

NINOTCHKA
I am Nina Ivanovna Yakushova, Envoy Extraordinary, acting under direct orders of Comrade Commissar Razinin. Present me to your colleagues.

They shake hands. Ninotchka's grip is strong as a man's.

IRANOFF
Comrade Buljanoff...

NINOTCHKA
Comrade.

IRANOFF
Comrade Kopalski...

NINOTCHKA
Comrade.

IRANOFF

What a charming idea for Moscow to surprise us with a lady comrade.

KOPALSKI

If we had known we would have greeted you with flowers.

NINOTCHKA

(sternly)

Don't make an issue of my womanhood.
We are here for work... all of us.
Let's not waste time. Shall we go?

The Russians are taken aback. As Ninotchka bends down to lift her two suitcases, Iranoff calls:

IRANOFF

Porter!

A Porter steps up to them.

PORTER

Here, please...

NINOTCHKA

What do you want?

PORTER

May I have your bags, madame?

NINOTCHKA

Why?

KOPALSKI

He is a porter. He wants to carry them.

NINOTCHKA

(to Porter)

Why?... Why should you carry other people's bags?

PORTER

Well... that's my business, madame.

NINOTCHKA

That's no business... that's a social injustice.

PORTER

That depends on the tip.

KOPALSKI

(trying to take
Ninotchka's bags)

Allow me, Comrade.

NINOTCHKA

No, thank you.

Ninotchka takes both suitcases and walks away with the Three Russians, whose nervousness has increased with every word from the Envoy Extraordinary.

BULJANOFF

How are things in Moscow?

NINOTCHKA

Very good. The last mass trials were a great success. There are going to be fewer but better Russians.

The hearts of the Three Russians drop to their boots, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

LOBBY – HOTEL CLARENCE

Ninotchka, followed by the Russians, comes through the lobby, observing every detail of these unfamiliar surroundings.

Suddenly she stops. In the showcase of a hat shop in the lobby is displayed a hat of the John-Frederic's type.

NINOTCHKA

What's that?

KOPALSKI

It's a hat, Comrade, a woman's hat.

Ninotchka shakes her head.

NINOTCHKA

Tsk, tsk, tsk, how can such a

civilization survive which permits women to put things like that on their heads. It won't be long now, Comrades.

She walks out of the shot toward the elevator, followed by the Three Russians, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

ROYAL SUITE

Ninotchka enters, followed by the Three Russians, who by now are frightened to death.

BULJANOFF

This is the apartment we have reserved for you, Comrade Yakushova. I hope you like it.

NINOTCHKA

(glancing around the tremendous room)

Which part of the room is mine?

IRANOFF

You see... it is a little different here. They don't rent rooms in pieces. We had to take the whole suite.

Ninotchka begins to unpack her things and puts her typewriter on the desk.

NINOTCHKA

How much does this cost?

IRANOFF

Two thousand francs.

NINOTCHKA

A week?

IRANOFF

A day.

NINOTCHKA

Do you know how much a cow costs, Comrade Iranoff?

IRANOFF

A cow?

NINOTCHKA

Two thousand francs. If I stay here a week I will cost the Russian people seven cows.

(with an outburst of emotion)

Who am I to cost the Russian people seven cows?

BULJANOFF

We had to take it on account of the safe.

IRANOFF

For ourselves... we are much happier now since we moved to a little room next to the servants' quarters.

Ninotchka takes Lenin's picture from her bags.

NINOTCHKA

I am ashamed to put the picture of Lenin in a room like this.

(she puts the photograph on the desk)

Comrades, your telegram was received with great disfavor in Moscow.

KOPALSKI

We did our best, Comrade.

NINOTCHKA

I hope so for your sake.

(she sits at her desk and starts to type her report)

Let us examine the case. What does the lawyer say?

BULJANOFF

Which lawyer?

NINOTCHKA

You didn't get legal advice?

BULJANOFF

We didn't want to get mixed up with lawyers. They are very expensive here. If you just say hello to a lawyer... well, there goes another cow.

KOPALSKI

We dealt directly with the representative of the Grand Duchess. I am sure if we call him he will give you a very clear picture.

NINOTCHKA

I will not repeat your mistake. I will have no dealings with the Grand Duchess nor her representative.

Ninotchka continues to type. The Three Russians watch her nervously. Each click pounds on their consciences.

NINOTCHKA

(looking up)

Comrade Buljanoff...

BULJANOFF

Yes, Comrade?

NINOTCHKA

Do you spell Buljanoff with one or two f's?

BULJANOFF

(with fright in his voice)

With two f's, if you please.

Ninotchka goes on with her typing. Suddenly she looks up at Iranoff, who becomes self-conscious and fixes his tie. As he does so he sees that Ninotchka's glance is concentrated on the spats which he was wearing and in his hurry forgot to remove. He knows it is too late to do anything about it except to stand one foot behind the other, as Ninotchka types faster, the clicking of her keys twice as loud. Ninotchka picks up the telephone.

NINOTCHKA

(into phone)

Will you send me some cigarettes,
please?

(suddenly getting up)

Comrades, I am not in a position to
pass final judgment but at best you
have been careless in your duty to
the State.

(with utmost gravity)

You were entrusted with more than a
mere sale of jewelry. Why are we
peddling our precious possessions to
the world at this time? Our next
year's crop is in danger and you
know it. Unless we can get foreign
currency to buy tractors there will
not be enough bread for our people.
And you three comrades...

KOPALSKI

We did it with the best intentions...

NINOTCHKA

We cannot feed the Russian people on
your intentions. Fifty per cent to a
so-called Duchess!... Half of every
loaf of bread to our enemy! Comrade
Kopalski, go at once to our Embassy
and get the address of the best lawyer
in Paris.

KOPALSKI

Yes, Comrade.

NINOTCHKA

You, Comrade Iranoff, go to the Public
Library and get me the section of
the Civil Code on property.

BULJANOFF

Is there anything I can do, Comrade?

NINOTCHKA

You might get me an accurate map of
Paris. I want to use my spare time
to inspect the public utilities and
make a study of all outstanding

technical achievements in the city.

BULJANOFF

Yes, Comrade.

The buzzer rings.

NINOTCHKA

Come in.

The three Cigarette Girls enter.

CIGARETTE GIRLS

(gaily)

Hello! Hello! Cigarettes?

Ninotchka looks up astonished. Seeing her, the Cigarette Girls freeze. The Russians stand by quietly.

NINOTCHKA

(looking at the
Russians)

Comrades, you seem to have been
smoking a lot.

FADE OUT:

MEDIUM SHOT – LOBBY – HOTEL CLARENCE – EVENING

FADE IN:

shooting past the desk toward the revolving door. The telephone rings and the Desk Clerk answers.

DESK CLERK

Desk... yes, Monsieur Kopalski...

(he writes down the
message)

...you are expecting Count d'Algout...

uh huh... but he is not to go to the
Royal Suite under any circumstances.

He should go to your new room, 985?

Thank you, monsieur.

(he hangs up the
receiver)

A few seconds later Ninotchka, naturally completely unaware of the telephone conversation, passes by. She carries a map

in her hand.

DESK CLERK

Good evening, madame.

NINOTCHKA

Good evening. She exits out the door.

EXTERIOR, HOTEL CLARENCE

Ninotchka emerges, unfolds the map.

CLOSE-UP – MAP OF PARIS

in the hands of Ninotchka. The CAMERA ZOOMS down to a CLOSE-UP of the little drawing of the Hotel Clarence on the map. The CAMERA then PANS OVER from the Clarence toward the opposite side of the street, but before we reach the opposite side we see that in the center of the street is a little isle of safety. The CAMERA proceeds PANNING to the opposite side of the square and we

DISSOLVE TO:

The Real Location Corresponding to That Seen on the Map and seen from the same ANGLE. It is evening, and along the street comes Leon on his way to the hotel. The CAMERA PANS with him as he crosses the street. He reaches the isle of safety and there passes Ninotchka, who has come from the other side. They pass on the little isle without noticing each other. Suddenly we hear the whistle of a traffic policeman and both Ninotchka and Leon have to step back to the little isle.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA AND LEON

on the little isle. Wanting some information Ninotchka turns to him – completely impersonal.

NINOTCHKA

You, please.

LEON

Me?

NINOTCHKA

Yes. Could you give me some information?

LEON

Gladly.

NINOTCHKA

How long do we have to wait here?

LEON

Well – until the policeman whistles again.

NINOTCHKA

At what intervals does he whistle?

LEON

What?

NINOTCHKA

How many minutes between the first and second whistle?

LEON

That's funny. It's interesting. I never gave it a thought before.

NINOTCHKA

Have you never been caught in a similar situation?

LEON

Have I? Do you know when I come to think about it it's staggering. If I add it all up I must have spent years waiting for signals. Imagine! An important part of my life wasted between whistles.

NINOTCHKA

In other words you don't know.

LEON

No.

NINOTCHKA

Thank you.

LEON

You're welcome.

Ninotchka gets out her map, starts to unfold it.

LEON

Can I help you?

NINOTCHKA

You might hold this for me.

LEON

Love to.

NINOTCHKA

(engrossed in her
geography)

Correct me if I am wrong... We are
facing north, aren't we?

LEON

(bewildered)

Facing north... I'd hate to commit
myself without my compass... Pardon
me... are you an explorer?

NINOTCHKA

No... I am looking for the Eiffel
Tower.

LEON

Is that thing lost again?... Listen...
if you are interested in a view...

NINOTCHKA

I am interested in the Eiffel Tower
from a technical standpoint.

LEON

Technical... I couldn't help you
from that angle. You see, a real
Parisian only goes to the top of the
tower in moments of despair to jump
off.

NINOTCHKA

How long does it take a man to land?

LEON

Now, isn't that too bad! The last
time I jumped I forgot to clock it!

(looks at map)
Let me see... Eiffel Tower... Your
finger, please.

He takes her finger and points to the map with it.

NINOTCHKA
(skeptically)
Why do you need my finger?

LEON
Bad manners to point with your own...
Here... the Eiffel Tower.

NINOTCHKA
And where are we?

LEON
(shifting her finger
back to the hotel)
Here... here we are... here you are
and here I am... feel it?

NINOTCHKA
I am interested only in the shortest
distance between these two points.
Must you flirt?

LEON
I don't have to but I find it natural.

NINOTCHKA
Suppress it.

LEON
I'll try.

Ninotchka starts to fold her map.

NINOTCHKA
For my own information would you
call your approach toward me typical
of the local morale?

LEON
Madame, it is that kind of approach
which has made Paris what it is.

NINOTCHKA

You are very sure of yourself, aren't you?

LEON

Nothing has occurred recently to shake my confidence.

NINOTCHKA

I have heard of the arrogant male in capitalistic society. It is having a superior earning power that makes you like that.

LEON

A Russian! I love Russians! Comrade... I have been fascinated by your Five-Year Plan for the past fifteen years!

NINOTCHKA

Your type will soon be extinct.

She walks away from him coldly. Leon stares after her, fascinated.

ENTRANCE – GROUND FLOOR OF THE EIFFEL TOWER

DISSOLVE TO:

Camera moves with Ninotchka as she enters. She approaches an Attendant.

NINOTCHKA

Please... can you tell me the exact width of the foundation on which the piers are resting?... and the depth?

ATTENDANT

You don't have to worry. The thing is safe.

NINOTCHKA

I am not afraid... I want to know...

Leon, who apparently has taken a taxi and prepared himself otherwise, enters the scene, reading from a book.

LEON

(reading)
The foundation is one hundred and
forty-one yards square...
(he tips his hat and
interjects)
I hope you'll forgive me but I thought
you'd...

NINOTCHKA
(interrupting)
Go ahead.

The CAMERA goes with Ninotchka and Leon as they walk toward
the steps.

LEON
(continuing)
Four massive piers of masonry are
sunk to a depth of forty-six feet on
the side of the Seine, and twenty-
nine and one-half feet on the other
side. The girders of interlaced iron-
work which stay the structure have
an inclination of fifty-four
degrees...

NINOTCHKA
That's a strange angle.

LEON
Yes, very strange.

By now they have reached the staircase. They start up.

LEON
(continuing to read)
Ascending to the tower is a staircase
consisting of eight hundred and twenty-
nine steps...
(this disclosure
frightens Leon as he
realizes the climb
ahead of him. He
reads on as they
walk up)
...and an additional two hundred and
fifty-four steps to the very top...
(now Leon stops but

Ninotchka proceeds
on out of the picture.
Leon calls after her
and reads from his
book in a loud voice)
There is an elevator included in the
price of admission!

Ninotchka continues to climb.

MEDIUM SHOT – STAIRS (FROM LEON'S ANGLE)

Ninotchka, paying no attention to him, walks up the stairs,
two at a time.

CLOSE SHOT – LEON

He looks after Ninotchka, then makes up his mind and returns
down the stairs.

GROUND FLOOR – EIFFEL TOWER, shooting toward the elevator
door. The elevator with several passengers is just about to
leave when Leon hurries into it. The door closes and the
elevator starts to ascend quickly.

DISSOLVE TO:

HIGHEST PLATFORM – EIFFEL TOWER

The CAMERA ANGLE includes the elevator door and a beautiful
background view of Paris. The elevator door opens and Leon
emerges leisurely. He is just about to step to the top of
the staircase, when suddenly, to his great amazement, he
sees Ninotchka, who stands at the balustrade overlooking
Paris. She has climbed the tower faster than he despite the
elevator. Dumbfounded, Leon approaches her. Ninotchka turns,
very matter-of-fact.

NINOTCHKA

You gave me some very valuable
information. Thank you.

LEON

(looking at the
dazzling view)

And thank you for getting me up here.
I've never seen this before.
Beautiful, isn't it?

NINOTCHKA

Yes, it is.

LEON

I'm glad I saw it before becoming extinct.

NINOTCHKA

Do not misunderstand me. I do not hold your frivolity against you.

(she looks him up and down)

As basic material you might not be bad, but you are the unfortunate product of a doomed culture. I feel sorry for you.

LEON

You must admit that this doomed old civilization sparkles... It glitters!

Night View of Paris with Its Lights Ablaze, as seen from the Eiffel Tower.

NINOTCHKA AND LEON

NINOTCHKA

I do not deny its beauty, but it is a waste of electricity.

LEON

What a city! There are the Grands Boulevards... blasted out of the heart of the old streets. The Arc de Triomphe... made to greet Napoleon's army. The Opera! And Montmartre... Montparnasse... La Bohème... and now I'll show you the greatest attraction!

(he steps to a telescope and, taking some money from his pocket, drops a coin in the slot)

It will cost me a franc but it is worth it.

(he adjusts the telescope)

The most wonderful spot in all Paris –
unique! Here, look....

(she looks in telescope)

What do you see?

NINOTCHKA

I see a house that looks like any
other house. What's remarkable about
it?

LEON

It's not the structure but the spirit
which dwells within. There are three
rooms and a kitchenette dedicated to
hospitality.

NINOTCHKA

So that is your house?

LEON

Well, let's say I live in it. Such a
pleasant place... all kinds of
comfort, easy to reach, close to
street car, bus, and subway...

NINOTCHKA

(straight from the
shoulder)

Does that mean that you want me to
go there?

LEON

(feeling that he has
offended her)

Please don't misunderstand me...

NINOTCHKA

Then you don't want me to go there.

LEON

(in a pickle)

Now I didn't say that either...
naturally nothing would please me
more.

NINOTCHKA

(simply)

Then why don't we go?

(looking at him)
You might be an interesting subject
of study.

LEON
I will do my best.

They walk toward the elevator as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR, ENTRANCE HALL – LEON'S APARTMENT

In the foreground stands a console on which is a telephone.

Gaston, Leon's elderly, dignified butler, is answering the
phone.

GASTON
(into phone)
No... Count d'Algout is still out.
Yes, as soon as he returns I'll tell
him. Yes... I'll tell him Monsieur
Buljanoff.

He puts down the receiver as Leon opens the door with his
key. Ninotchka and Leon enter. Ninotchka, during the following
scene, is studying every detail of the apartment with the
eye of a technical expert.

LEON
Good evening, Gaston.

GASTON
Good evening, Monsieur.

NINOTCHKA
Is this what you call the "butler"?

LEON
Yes.

NINOTCHKA
(takes Gaston's hand)
Good evening, comrade.
(to Leon)
This man is horribly old. You should
not make him work.

LEON

He takes good care of that.

NINOTCHKA

He looks sad. Do you whip him?

LEON

No, though the mere thought makes my mouth water.

NINOTCHKA

(to the completely
flabbergasted Gaston)

The day will come when you will be free. Go to bed, little father. We want to be alone.

Leon opens the door to the living room. Ninotchka enters. Just as he is about to follow her, Gaston addresses him.

GASTON

(in a low voice)

Count d'Algout, there have been several telephone...

LEON

Go to bed.

INTERIOR, LIVING ROOM – LEON'S APARTMENT

Leon enters the room. Closes the door. Ninotchka is examining the room.

LEON

Well, may I offer you a drink, or how about something to eat?

NINOTCHKA

Thank you. I've had all the calories necessary for today.

Leon feels a little uncertain as to how to approach this creature.

NINOTCHKA

What do we do now?

LEON

We take off our hat and coat.

(he takes her things)

We sit down – we make ourselves comfortable. We adjust ourselves to the prospect of a most enjoyable evening. We look at each other. We smile.

(Ninotchka doesn't respond)

Well... we don't smile. How about some music?

NINOTCHKA

Is that customary?

LEON

It helps. It has ever since King David wooed Bathsheba with the harp. As I am not so fortunate as to have my harp at hand, I shall turn on the radio.

NINOTCHKA

(the observer)

I should say this room is eighteen by twenty-five.

LEON

Not too big and not too small. What I'd call the typical room of an average man. Or shall we say a little above average. Now if there are any special aspects you wish to study I have nothing to conceal. Just look around. That's my desk. Those are my books, and here am I. Where shall we begin?

NINOTCHKA

I will start with you.

LEON

That's great. I'm thirty-five years old. Just over six feet tall. I weigh a hundred and eighty-two pounds stripped.

NINOTCHKA

And what is your profession?

LEON

Keeping my body fit, keeping my mind alert, keeping my landlord appeased. That's a full-time job.

NINOTCHKA

And what do you do for mankind?

LEON

For mankind not a thing – for womankind the record is not quite so bleak.

NINOTCHKA

You are something we do not have in Russia.

LEON

Thank you. Thank you.

NINOTCHKA

That is why I believe in the future of my country.

LEON

I begin to believe in it myself since I've met you. I still don't know what to make of it. It confuses me, it frightens me a little, but it fascinates me, Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA

You pronounce it incorrectly. Ni-notchka.

LEON

Ni-notchka.

NINOTCHKA

That is correct.

LEON

Ninotchka, do you like me just a little bit?

NINOTCHKA

Your general appearance is not distasteful.

LEON

Thank you.

NINOTCHKA

Look at me. The whites of your eyes are clear. Your cornea is excellent.

LEON

Your cornea is terrific. Tell me – you're so expert on things – can it be that I'm falling in love with you?

NINOTCHKA

You are bringing in wrong values. Love is a romantic designation for a most ordinary biological, or shall we say chemical, process. A lot of nonsense is talked and written about it.

LEON

Oh, I see. What do you use instead?

NINOTCHKA

I acknowledge the existence of a natural impulse common to all.

LEON

What can I possibly do to encourage such an impulse in you?

NINOTCHKA

You don't have to do a thing. Chemically we are already quite sympathetic.

LEON

(bewildered, and yet completely intrigued)

You're the most improbable creature I've ever met in my life, Ninotchka, Ninotchka...

NINOTCHKA
You repeat yourself.

LEON
I'd like to say it a thousand times.

NINOTCHKA
Don't do it, please.

LEON
I'm at a loss, Ninotchka. You must forgive me if I appear a little old-fashioned. After all, I'm just a poor bourgeois.

NINOTCHKA
It's never too late to change. I used to belong to the petty bourgeoisie myself. My father and mother wanted me to stay and work on the farm, but I preferred the bayonet.

LEON
(bewildered)
The bayonet? Did you really?

NINOTCHKA
I was wounded before Warsaw.

LEON
Wounded? How?

NINOTCHKA
I was a sergeant in the Third Cavalry Brigade. Would you like to see my wound?

LEON
(dumfounded)
I'd love to.
(she pulls the blouse off her shoulder and shows him her scar)
Tsk, ts, tsk.

NINOTCHKA
A Polish lancer. I was sixteen.

LEON

Poor Ninotchka. Poor, poor Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA

(readjusting her blouse)

Don't pity me. Pity the Polish lancer.

After all, I'm alive.

More and more puzzled and fascinated, Leon sits down close to her.

LEON

What kind of a girl are you, anyway?

NINOTCHKA

Just what you see. A tiny cog in the great wheel of evolution.

LEON

You're the most adorable cog I ever saw in my life. Ninotchka, Cogitska, let me confess something. Never did I dream I could feel like this toward a sergeant.

A clock strikes.

LEON

Do you hear that?

NINOTCHKA

It's twelve o'clock.

LEON

It's midnight. One half of Paris is making love to the other half. Look at the clock. One hand has met the other hand. They kiss. Isn't that wonderful?

NINOTCHKA

That's the way a clock works. There's nothing wonderful about it. You merely feel you must put yourself in a romantic mood to add to your exhilaration.

LEON

I can't possibly think of a better reason.

NINOTCHKA
It's false sentimentality.

LEON
(trying desperately
to make her mood
more romantic)
You analyze everything out of existence. You analyze me out of existence. I won't let you. Love is not so simple. Ninotchka, Ninotchka, why do doves bill and coo? Why do snails, coldest of all creatures, circle interminably around each other? Why do moths fly hundreds of miles to find their mates? Why do flowers open their petals? Oh, Ninotchka, Ninotchka, surely you feel some slight symptom of the divine passion... a general warmth in the palms of your hands... a strange heaviness in your limbs... a burning of the lips that is not thirst but a thousand times more tantalizing, more exalting, than thirst?

He pauses, waiting for the results of his speech.

NINOTCHKA
You are very talkative.

That is too much for Leon. He takes her into his arms and kisses her.

LEON
Was that talkative?

NINOTCHKA
No, that was restful. Again.

Leon kisses her again.

NINOTCHKA
Thank you.

LEON

Oh, my barbaric Ninotchka. My impossible, unromantic, statistical...

The telephone rings.

LEON

(continuing)

Glorious, analytical...

NINOTCHKA

The telephone is ringing.

LEON

Oh, let it ring.

NINOTCHKA

But one of your friends may be in need of you. You must answer.

Leon exits out of shot to answer telephone.

CLOSE SHOT – AT DESK

Leon enters, sits down, takes the telephone.

LEON

(into phone)

Hello?... Yes... I'm sorry but I couldn't make it. I ran into a friend from the army... What?... The deal is off! Are you crazy, Buljanoff?...

CLOSE-UP – NINOTCHKA

She is startled by the name.

LEON – AT TELEPHONE

LEON

...A special envoy arrived... What?... That sounds better. I'll be glad to see her any time she wants... Oh, she doesn't want to see me? What do you know about that? Why?... Well, I'll get in touch with her myself. What's her name?...
(he takes a pencil

and a piece of paper)
...What?... Yaku... How do you spell
it?... Heavens! those Russian names!
(he starts to write
it down)
...I... Oh, Y...

Camera pulls back and Ninotchka enters the shot. She takes pencil from Leon's hand, writes out the name, and leaves again. At first Leon is not aware of the full significance of her action. Then it dawns on him.

LEON
(continuing)
Yakushova... Ninotch...

At last the situation is entirely clear to him.

LEON
(into phone)
All right. Thank you.

He hangs up and stares at Ninotchka. She is putting on her jacket.

LEON
(camera panning with
him as he walks over
to her)
Ninotchka...

He takes her arm.

NINOTCHKA
I must go.

LEON
Ninotchka, or shall I say Special
Envoy Yakushova...

NINOTCHKA
Let's forget that we ever met.

LEON
I have a better suggestion. Let's
forget that the telephone ever rang.
I never heard that you are
Yakushova... you are Ninotchka... my

Ninotchka...

NINOTCHKA

(firmly)

I was sent here by my country to fight you.

LEON

All right, fight me, fight me as much as you want, but fight me tomorrow morning! There's nothing sweeter than sharing a secret with a bitter enemy.

NINOTCHKA

(uncompromisingly)

As a representative of Moscow...

LEON

Tonight let's not represent anybody but ourselves.

NINOTCHKA

It is out of the question. If you wish to approach me...

LEON

You know I want to...

NINOTCHKA

Then do it through my lawyer!

LEON

(desperate)

Ninotchka, you can't walk out like this... I'm crazy about you, and I thought I'd made an impression on you. You liked the white of my eye.

Ninotchka looks at him for a second, then pulls herself together.

NINOTCHKA

I must go.

She starts for the door.

LEON

But, Ninotchka, I held you in my arms. You kissed me!

NINOTCHKA
I kissed the Polish lancer too...
before he died.

As she goes out, we

FADE OUT:

THE ENTRANCE HALL – LEON'S APARTMENT

FADE IN:

(Note: We have to invent some brief scene to indicate that three days have gone by. From this we)

DISSOLVE TO:

The butler opens the door. Swana enters, her manner showing her complete familiarity with the place.

GASTON
Good morning, Your Highness.

SWANA
Good morning, Gaston.

GASTON
Count d'Algout is still asleep.

SWANA
(as she walks toward
Leon's room)
That's all right.

LEON'S BEDROOM

The curtains are drawn. The night light is still on. Leon, a dressing gown over his pajamas, is sound asleep in a big arm chair. As Swana enters, she sees him with some alarm.

SWANA
Leon! What in heaven's name...!

LEON
Huh?

SWANA

Is anything wrong? Are you ill?

LEON

No.

SWANA

Don't tell me the bed has lost its best friend.

LEON

I just couldn't sleep. I got up and went back... and then got up again. These last few days... whew!

SWANA

Darling, you're taking my business affairs far too seriously. Much as I'd love to rob the Bolsheviks of their filthy money, I won't do it at the expense of your health. Particularly as we know we won't get much.

(tenderly)

You look so pale... pale but interesting.

There is a knock at the door.

SWANA

Come in.

Gaston enters with a breakfast tray.

GASTON

Your breakfast, monsieur.

LEON

I don't feel like any breakfast.

SWANA

Nonsense. How can you fight the Reds and make yourself agreeable to the Whites if you don't keep up your strength.

GASTON

Shall I draw your bath, sir?

LEON

Make it ice cold.

SWANA

Not in your condition.

(to Gaston)

Make it tepid, Gaston... tepid and tender. And lay out his gray suit.

(to Leon)

Afterwards I'll drive you through the Bois. Slowly... in Waltz time.

GASTON

A blue shirt, perhaps?

SWANA

Blue? Let's offset his mood. Find a striped one, and brighten it with a great blaze of tie.

GASTON

Very well, Your Highness.

Gaston disappears into the bath-dressing room. Swana makes Leon sit down and seats herself beside him.

SWANA

Now... here we have two very handsome soft-boiled eggs. Do you suppose hens mind what happens to their eggs? Probably not. They have such unfeeling eyes. We'll put in a great nugget of butter, plenty of pepper and salt... Darling, I haven't seen you for three livelong days... seventy-two hours!

LEON

(irritably)

Oh, please, Swana! I don't know whether I'm standing on my head or my heels. Here you are blaming me for neglecting you when I'm trying to concentrate on another woman and can't get near her.

SWANA

You haven't seen her yet?

LEON

No, and believe me I've tried everything! I must have telephoned her a hundred times. I've sent her telegrams, I've sent her flowers... I asked her to dinner... I offered her seats for the Opera...

SWANA

That proletarian! In the old days we'd have had her flogged.

LEON

That wouldn't have done any good. Not with her.

(forgetting himself)

She's the most incredible creature I've ever seen.

SWANA

You just told me you hadn't seen her.

LEON

Well... er... I caught a glimpse of her when she walked through the lobby.

SWANA

Imagine the carpets of a self-respecting Parisian hotel dirtied by the boots of a muzhik! What does she look like?

LEON

You can't imagine.

SWANA

That bad?

(Leon nods)

Old or young?

LEON

Timeless. When she comes into a room you'd think that the Bolsheviks had taken over Paris. She wears her cheap miserable blouse as though it were

the latest model by Schiaparelli.
What a woman! What a woman! There is
a Russian snowstorm in each of her
eyes.

SWANA

You saw all that in one glimpse?

LEON

(getting up)

Darling, if we're going to get
anywhere someone has to keep his
eyes open!

(he walks over to the
bathroom)

SWANA

Now, darling, soak in your beautiful
pine bath and let Gaston shave you.

Leon exits into the bathroom. As he does so a bell rings.

SWANA

Gaston!

There is no answer. After a slight pause she herself goes to
answer the bell.

DISSOLVE TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – ENTRANCE HALL – LEON'S APARTMENT, shooting
toward the door.

Swana goes to the door and opens it. The Three Russians stand
outside. Seeing Swana, they are a little intimidated.

THE THREE RUSSIANS

How do you do?

Swana suspects that for the first time she is being confronted
by representatives of the Soviet government.

SWANA

Yes?

KOPALSKI

We want to talk to Count d'Algout.
My name is Kopalski.

SWANA

Oh... you are the three gentlemen
from Moscow?

KOPALSKI

Yes.

SWANA

(icily)

You may wait.

She closes the door.

STAIRCASE HALL – IN FRONT OF LEON'S DOOR

The Three Russians, very impressed, stand looking at the
door which has just been closed.

BULJANOFF

That's her.

KOPALSKI

Imagine! The niece of the Czar opening
the door for us.

BULJANOFF

Once in Petersburg I was driving
down the Nevsky Prospect in my cart
and Her Highness in her troika swept
down from the opposite direction,
and when I couldn't make way quick
enough she spat in my face.

IRANOFF

Now look here, Buljanoff. You never
were in Petersburg, you never owned
a cart, and she never spat in your
face. Who are you trying to impress?

At this moment the door is opened by Leon in his bathrobe.

LEON

Hello, boys.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Leon!

LEON
Come in, come in.

They enter.

LIVING ROOM – LEON'S APARTMENT

Leon and the Three Russians enter.

LEON
What's new?

KOPALSKI
(excitedly)
Leon, Leonitchka, she is not going to negotiate! She is going to fight that injunction. She's going to make a precedent of it!

IRANOFF
She says she won't be intimidated by parasites. She called the Duchess a blood-sucking aristocrat and a blackmailer.

LEON
(eagerly)
What did she say about me?

IRANOFF
(after a moment's consideration)
I think she covered you with the parasites.

Leon is disappointed.

BULJANOFF
And Leonitchka! What she said about us...!

IRANOFF
And they might believe her in Moscow.

BULJANOFF
What do you mean they might – they will!

KOPALSKI

We don't blame you, Leon, but when we came from Russia we believed in simplicity...

IRANOFF

We avoided luxury and extravagance and today... well, if you were to offer us a glass of champagne, we wouldn't say no.

Leon is so engrossed in his thoughts that he overlooks the hint.

LEON

Well, boys, I'd like to help you but what can I do? Yesterday I waited six hours in the lobby!

KOPALSKI

She doesn't leave her room! She has been locked in for the last two days with lawyers and law books!

LEON

All right, then make an appointment with her so I can see her!

KOPALSKI

We can't... but you are so ingenious, Leon...

IRANOFF

You found your way to us and we weren't easy to reach, were we?

LEON

No, no.

BULJANOFF

Didn't we put up a strong resistance?

LEON

Oh, yes, yes.

KOPALSKI

You must help us, Leon... if you don't win her over we're on our way

to Siberia!

BULJANOFF
Or it might be the firing squad!

KOPALSKI
Or we can't go back to Russia!

An idea dawns on Iranoff.

IRANOFF
What's wrong with that?

Kopalski and Buljanoff seize on the same idea.

BULJANOFF
Yes! We could stay with Leon!

IRANOFF
Leon, how would you like to have
three lifelong friends?

LEON
Boys, boys... don't forget Russia is
your mother country. Three sons
walking out all at once... that's
too much for any mother.

BULJANOFF
Well, if your mother turns against
you, you have to look for someone to
adopt you.

Swana's voice comes from the next room.

SWANA
Leon! Just a minute...

Leon goes back to the other room.

LEON'S BEDROOM – CLOSE SHOT, shooting toward the door of
the living room.

Swana stands putting on her gloves.

SWANA
I'm leaving, dear. I'm lunching at
Fouquet's if you can make it, and...

Leon, remember, a man should think it over twice before he decides to become a mother.

She kisses him lightly and walks out.

LIVING ROOM – ROYAL SUITE – MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – AT THE DESK

It is piled deep with law books and papers. Ninotchka sits at it, conferring with two Lawyers.

FIRST LAWYER

(uncertainly)

I seem to remember some additional injunctive provision dealing with the property of foreigners residing in France.

NINOTCHKA

(with the precision of a machine)

You are referring to paragraph 59b, section 25f of the Civil Code.

The Lawyers exchange a glance of surprise at her knowledge. One of them takes up one of the law books and as he starts to look up the case, Ninotchka speaks.

NINOTCHKA

Page eight hundred twenty-four.

Again the Lawyers exchange a glance of astonishment.

NINOTCHKA

And do not fail to read the three footnotes. While you are studying it I will eat.

(She picks up the telephone)

Food please.

A LITTLE CORNER IN THE ROOM SERVICE PANTRY

Rakonin is answering the telephone.

RAKONIN

(into phone)

Room service... Just a moment please.

He beckons to someone out of the scene. Leon enters the scene and takes the telephone.

LEON

(with an assumed French
accent – into phone)

Room service speaking.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA – AT THE PHONE

NINOTCHKA

(into phone)

Send me a plate of raw carrots and
beets, beets predominating on a ratio
of sixty-forty... What? There is a
strike in the kitchen? Good! Will
you assure the strikers of my hearty
sympathy in their cause. I hope they
will not weaken in their demands and
tell them to put no dressing
whatsoever on my vegetables... What?
You won't serve me either? Now look
here, Comrade, I think it is a fine
idea to let the capitalists go without
luncheon but when you keep food away
from me you're weakening the people.

CLOSE SHOT – ROOM-SERVICE PANTRY – LEON AT PHONE

LEON

(into phone)

So! You want to make a strike breaker
out of me! I am surprised at you,
Comrade! Is it too much for the
workers of the world to ask you to
walk around the corner for lunch?
All I can say to you is take your
hammer and sickle and get out of
that Royal Suite!

He hangs up the telephone with a triumphant smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

LOBBY OF THE HOTEL CLARENCE

Ninotchka emerges from the elevator and starts toward the street. As she passes the showcase of the millinery shop again, she stops and looks at the same hat. Again she shakes her head sadly.

NINOTCHKA

Tsk, tsk, tsk.

She walks toward the street, as we

EXTERIOR, HOTEL CLARENCE

DISSOLVE TO:

A taxi is parked at the curb. Ninotchka comes from the hotel and goes to the taxi.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA AND TAXI DRIVER

The Driver puts his hand on the handle of his cab's door expectantly.

TAXI DRIVER

Where to, madame?

NINOTCHKA

Can you recommend a restaurant?

TAXI DRIVER

Well, there's Pruniers if you care for seafood. If you want to lunch in the Bois, there's...

NINOTCHKA

(interrupting)

Where do you eat?

TAXI DRIVER

At P, re Mathieu's.

NINOTCHKA

Where is that?

TAXI DRIVER

It's just a place for workmen.

NINOTCHKA

Where is it?

TAXI DRIVER
Eight blocks down in the Rue de
Poivrel.

He opens the door of his cab.

NINOTCHKA
Thank you.

She turns and starts away in the direction he has indicated.
The Driver looks after her astounded.

The CAMERA PANS from her to the car which stands behind the taxi. It is Leon's smart roadster. Leon sits at the wheel. He too is looking after Ninotchka, astonished. He gets out of his car and starts in the direction she has taken. As he does so, we

DISSOLVE TO:

PARIS STREET – IN FRONT OF P,RE MATHIEU'S

P,re Mathieu's is a workman's restaurant set a few steps below the level of the sidewalk. A few typical French workmen are going in for lunch. Ninotchka enters the scene, looks around for a second, then goes in too.

INTERIOR – P,RE MATHIEU'S

It is a pleasantly simple place crowded with workmen sitting at lunch. An electric piano is playing. P,re Mathieu, greeting all his guests like a typical restaurateur, sees Ninotchka enter.

P,RE MATHIEU
This way, madame. Are you alone? By
the window perhaps?
(He leads the way)
Or a nice little corner table?

NINOTCHKA
This will do.
(She sits down)

P,RE MATHIEU
I think this is the first time you
have been to my little place. Your

face is new to me. Now, what shall it be?

NINOTCHKA
Raw carrots and beets.

P,RE MATHIEU
(horrified)
Oh, madame! This is a restaurant, not a meadow.

He hands her a slate on which the menu is written.

P,RE MATHIEU
Here is what we are offering today. Please make your choice. I am sure you will find something to tempt your appetite.

Suddenly Ninotchka stares in the direction of the door.

MEDIUM SHOT – AT THE DOOR

Leon has just entered. The CAMERA follows him as he makes his way casually in Ninotchka's direction affecting not to see her. He seats himself at the table directly opposite Ninotchka and pretends to be overwhelmed with surprise as he sees her.

LEON
Why, hello! It certainly is a small world!

SHOT INCLUDING BOTH TABLES

P,RE MATHIEU
(to Ninotchka)
Well, madame? Shall we start with soup? Fish soup today. I got up at five to fish them from the Seine.

LEON
(calling over to P,re Mathieu)
Crayfish soup for me!

P,RE MATHIEU
(to Leon)

Very well, monsieur.
(back to Ninotchka)
Then, may I suggest an omelet with mushrooms?

NINOTCHKA
Bring me something simple. I never think about food.

P,RE MATHIEU
(horrified)
But, madame! If you don't think about food what do you think about?

NINOTCHKA
The future of the common people.

P,RE MATHIEU
(sagely)
That also is a question of food, madame. I'll bring you a nice little lunch , la P,re Mathieu.
(he exits)

Leon leans toward Ninotchka with mock humility.

LEON
Pardon me for addressing you but you insulted him, you know that. You hurt his feelings. It was just like telling a musician you don't like music. That good old man believes in food as you believe in Karl Marx. You can't go around hurting people, Comrade Yakushova, but maybe you can make it up to him. Do you know how?
(He changes to the chair at his table which is closest to her table)
By eating everything with relish, by drinking everything with gusto, by having a good time for the first time in your natural life!

NINOTCHKA
I don't like your following me.

LEON

I didn't follow you.

NINOTCHKA

Then how did you get here?

LEON

I always eat here.

NINOTCHKA

This is a place for workmen.

LEON

(laying it on thick)

But my dear child, I am most at home among working men. I hate the places where you circulate – the Hotel Clarence... This is my natural element. After all, what are any of us? Workingmen! At least, those of us who are worth our salt. Hyah?

He waves off scene to a truckman.

TRUCKMAN

He is in the middle of an enormous gulp of food. He registers surprise, winks at his companion, and then, deciding to humor a drunk, waves back energetically at Leon in greeting.

CUT BACK TO:

CLOSE SHOT – LEON AND NINOTCHKA

Leon has been so successful with the truckman he tries it on another.

LEON

Hyah!

Another truckman responds with equal exuberance.

LONG SHOT – RESTAURANT

Leon, intoxicated with his success, waves to the whole room.

LEON

Hyah, fellows!

He gets a wonderful response from all. They realize that a swell drunk is among them.

LEON AND NINOTCHKA

LEON
(boastfully)
They are all my friends. They're a
swell bunch!

P,re Mathieu enters the shot and serves a plate of soup to
Leon and one to Ninotchka.

LEON
(trying his bluff on
P,re Mathieu)
Ah, my friend! I'm happy to see you
again!

P,RE MATHIEU
I'm always glad to meet a new
customer, and I hope this first visit
will not be your last.

He exits out of shot.

Ninotchka, her suspicion confirmed, looks at Leon.

LEON
Just an old man. His memory is getting
weak.

NINOTCHKA
What are you after?

LEON
Must one always be after something?

NINOTCHKA
Your tactics are useless. My name is
neither Buljanoff, Iranoff, nor
Kopalski.

LEON
Oh, Ninotchka, who wants to talk
business. If you win the suit, fine.
If we win the suit, better. You do

me an injustice.

(He moves over to her
table, leaving the
soup at his table)

When we went to my apartment did I
have the slightest idea that you had
any connection with this deal?

NINOTCHKA

But you have now, and I know now
that you are a man who employs
business methods which in Russia
would be punished by death.

LEON

Death! Death! Always so glum! What
about life, Ninotchka! Do Russians
never think of life? Of the moment
in which we are living? The only
moment we really have? Don't take it
all so seriously, Ninotchka. Nothing
is worth it. Please... relax... I
beg you, Sergeant... smile!

NINOTCHKA

(astonished)

What?

LEON

Will you smile?

NINOTCHKA

Why?

LEON

Just smile.

NINOTCHKA

At what?

LEON

At anything. At the whole ludicrous
spectacle of life. At people being
pompous and taking themselves
seriously and exaggerating their own
importance. If you can't find anything
else to laugh at you can laugh at
you and me.

NINOTCHKA

Why?

LEON

Because we are an odd couple.

NINOTCHKA

Then you should go back to your table.

LEON

No, I can't leave you. I won't. Not yet. Not until I've made you laugh... at least once.

To get rid of him Ninotchka emits a joyless sound which approximates a laugh.

NINOTCHKA

Ha! Ha! Now go back.

LEON

That's not a laugh! I mean a laugh from the heart. Now let's see. I'm going to tell you a funny story. Just a moment... I've got it! Well, it seems there were a couple of Frenchmen who went to America...

NINOTCHKA

On which boat?

LEON

(thrown off by her
methodical thinking)

Well, er... let's drop it. I don't think you would care for that one.

NINOTCHKA

Probably not.

LEON

Do you like Scotch stories?

NINOTCHKA

I have never heard one.

LEON

Two Scotchmen met on the street...
and I don't know the name of the
street and it really doesn't matter.
Well, anyway, one's name was McIntosh
and the other's was McGillicuddy.
McIntosh says to McGillicuddy, "Hello,
Mr. McGillicuddy," and McGillicuddy
says to McIntosh, "Hello, Mr.
McIntosh," and then McIntosh says to
McGillicuddy, "How is Mrs.
McGillicuddy?" and then McGillicuddy
says to McIntosh, "How is Mrs.
McIntosh?"...

NINOTCHKA

I wish they had never met.

LEON

(disarmed)

So do I.

(after a little pause)

Now, here's a great one... Ha! Ha!

Ha!

(he looks at Ninotchka
and her expression
stops him)

Well, maybe it's not so good. Let's
forget it! How's this? Two men are
looking at the moon. One says to the
other, "Is it true that a lot of
people live on the moon?" "Yes, it
is," says the other, "five hundred
million." "Whew!" replies the first,
"they must get pretty crowded when
it's half moon!" Ha! Ha! Ha!

There is no response from Ninotchka.

LEON

(starting to get sore)

I suppose you don't think that's
funny?

NINOTCHKA

No.

LEON

It seemed funny to me when I first

heard it. Maybe the trouble isn't
with the joke. Maybe it's with you!

NINOTCHKA

I don't think so.

LEON

Maybe you haven't any sense of humor.
Well, I'll give you one more chance!
Now listen!

He gets up and speaks in a threatening voice audible to the
entire room.

LEON

When I heard this joke for the first
time I laughed myself sick. Here
goes! A man comes into a restaurant
and sits down and says, "Waiter! Get
me a cup of coffee without cream."
After five minutes the waiter comes
back and says, "I'm sorry, sir, we're
all out of cream, can it be without
milk?"

GROUP OF SEVERAL WORKMEN

They have overheard the story and all burst into laughter.

NINOTCHKA AND LEON

Ninotchka continues to eat her soup without a shadow of a
laugh.

LEON

(furious)

Not funny, huh?

NINOTCHKA

No.

LEON

So you don't think that's funny? It
is funny! Everyone else thinks so!
Maybe you didn't get it.

He sits down again.

LEON

(threateningly)

I'll tell you that joke again. A man comes into a restaurant. Did you get that?

NINOTCHKA

Yes.

LEON

He sits down at the table and says to the waiter... Did you get that too?

NINOTCHKA

Yes.

LEON

Well, so far it isn't funny, but wait. He says to the waiter, "Waiter! Bring me a cup of coffee." So the waiter comes back five minutes later and says, "I'm sorry, sir, we have no coffee."...

(he realizes he has made a mistake)

Wait a minute... wait a minute...

I'm all mixed up...

(he starts over again)

A man comes in a restaurant, he sits down, he calls the waiter and he says, "Waiter! Get me a cup of coffee without cream," and five minutes later the waiter comes back and says, "I'm sorry, sir, we have no cream, can it be a glass of milk!"

He gets up and goes over to his table furiously.

LEON

Ah! You have no sense of humor! That settles it! You have no sense of humor! None! No humor!!

In his excitement he leans on the shaky table. It topples forward. Simultaneously his feet shoot from under him and he sits violently on the floor, the contents of the table crashing about him, hot soup in his face.

A terrific roar of laughter arises; the whole restaurant is rocking with laughter.

For a split second Ninotchka makes an effort to control the irresistible impulse to laugh but loses the battle and herself roars with laughter.

LEON
(indignantly)
What's funny about this?

Ninotchka's laughter is uncontrollable.

After a moment Leon gets up and sits next to her. As he dries himself with his napkin he sees the humor of the situation and starts to howl with laughter too. The ice is broken at last!

On their mutual wild hilarity, we

FADE OUT:

LIVING ROOM – ROYAL SUITE

FADE IN:

A conference is in session – Ninotchka, her two Lawyers, and the Three Russians. Ninotchka sits at the desk, leaning back in the chair, looking into space, and apparently weighing every point which is brought up. One of the lawyers is reading from a document.

LAWYER
(reading)
In addition to the arguments above enumerated for lifting this injunction, we wish to cite the decision of the High Court of Paris, rendered in the case of Princess Marishka against the Government of Montenegro on the fifth day of August, 1897. Comparing the facts in that case with our present set of facts we feel that the Treaty between the Republic of France and the U.S.S.R. should prevail over all...

Suddenly Ninotchka laughs. Everyone looks at her astonished.
Ninotchka gets up.

NINOTCHKA

I'm sorry, gentlemen. The other day
I heard such a funny story...

(she laughs again)

It still makes me laugh. It is very
funny.

(a little embarrassed)

I am sorry. Oh yes... about this
injunction...

LAWYER

(very businesslike)

The hearing is set for the twentieth
of this month.

NINOTCHKA

(not thinking of the
injunction)

That's two weeks from Thursday...

LAWYER

We did our utmost to have it set
ahead.

NINOTCHKA

(her attitude
completely different
from her former
business conferences)

I know, gentlemen, but it is in the
hands of the Court. We're helpless,
aren't we?

LAWYER

Yes. It is unfortunate.

NINOTCHKA

Well, there's nothing we can do about
it. Why get excited?

The Three Russians as well as the Lawyers are puzzled.

The Russians exchange hopeful glances.

LAWYER

We'll leave these papers here for your further consideration. Au revoir, madame.

NINOTCHKA
Au revoir.

The Lawyers leave.

Left alone with the Russians, Ninotchka is unable to conceal her happiness entirely.

NINOTCHKA
Well, it means another two weeks in Paris.

IRANOFF
(with exaggerated efficiency)
Too bad we have to waste all that time.

KOPALSKI
I acted on your suggestion and got in touch with the Power and Light authorities. Whenever you want to visit their plants they are open to you.

NINOTCHKA
(a little bit dreamily)
Oh yes, Power and Light. Thank you.

BULJANOFF
There's something else which I know will appeal to you. A visit to the Paris sewers. They tell me it is extremely instructive.

NINOTCHKA
Huh?... Why don't you get a haircut, Buljanoff? You all look so wintry, Comrades. And why do we always keep the windows closed?
(she opens the window)
Isn't it amazing, at home there's still snow and ice and here... Look at the birds. I always felt a little

hurt that our swallows deserted us in the winter for capitalistic countries. Now I know why. We have the high ideal but they have the climate... well, Comrades, I don't think I need you any more.

KOPALSKI

If there is anything we can do for you...

NINOTCHKA

No, not a thing. Would you like to go out?

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Thank you, Comrade.

NINOTCHKA

Have you any money?

The Russians stammer a negative answer.

Smiling benevolently, Ninotchka goes to the table, takes several bills from her handbag, and goes back, extending a fifty-franc bill to Kopalski.

NINOTCHKA

Well, here are fifty francs.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

(overwhelmed)

Thank you, Comrade, thank you.

NINOTCHKA

Bring me forty-five back.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

(terribly disappointed)

Naturally, Comrade.

The Three Russians leave. Ninotchka waits a moment. Then hurries to the door and turns the key. Camera follows her as she goes into the bedroom. She proceeds to the door leading to the corridor and turns its key. She goes to the table and takes a little key from her handbag, goes to the bureau and unlocks the drawer, opens it, and, just as she is about to take out something, her eye falls on the night table, where

she sees the picture of Lenin which she brought with her from Moscow. She walks over to it and turns its face against the wall, then goes back to the bureau and takes from the drawer the very hat which twice aroused her disapproval when it was displayed in the millinery shop in the lobby.

She moves over to the large mirror, puts the hat on her head, is uncertain whether it is right side to fore, and changes it. She looks at herself, aghast at seeing a complete stranger. She sits down, still staring in the mirror, then leans forward and rests her chin on her hand. As she sits studying the new Ninotchka suspiciously, we

LIVING ROOM – LEON'S APARTMENT

DISSOLVE TO:

It is evening. Leon is walking nervously up and down. Gaston is puttering over the drink table.

LEON

(consulting his watch)

What time have you, Gaston?

GASTON

Eight forty-two, sir.

LEON

I guess it is eight forty-two.

GASTON

You seem to be a bit nervous, sir.

LEON

I am, Gaston.

GASTON

If you will forgive me, ever since you met that Bolshevik lady I've noticed a distinct change in you, sir.

LEON

(complacently)

Have you?

GASTON

Decidedly. Yesterday I was greatly

amazed when I came from the market
and found that you had made your
bed, sir.

LEON

And Gaston, I was happier all day
long. I felt I'd contributed
something.

GASTON

Well, sir, if you should do it again,
which I hope you won't, please
remember the order. Counterpane,
blanket, blanket, sheet, sheet.

LEON

Ah, there's something poetic about
the simple processes of labor.
Counterpane, blanket, blanket, sheet,
sheet... it should be set to music!

GASTON

May I add, sir, that it was with
great amazement that I found a copy
of Karl Marx's Capital on your night
table. That is a socialistic volume
which I refuse to so much as dust,
sir. I view with alarm, sir, the
influence over you of this Bolshevik
lady.

LEON

I can't follow you, Gaston, isn't it
about time that you realized the
unfairness of your position? You
being my servant? Wouldn't you like
to stand on an equal footing with
me?

GASTON

No, sir.

LEON

Isn't there any revolt in you?
Sometimes when I order you around
don't you feel like kicking me in
the pants?

GASTON
(emphatically)
No, sir.

LEON
Oh, you're a reactionary! Don't you look forward to the day when you can come in here and stand square on your two feet and say, "Hey, you, d'Algot! from now on it's going to be share and share alike"?

GASTON
(outraged)
Emphatically not, sir. The prospect terrifies me. Now, don't misunderstand me, sir, I don't resent your not paying me for the past two months, but the thought that I should split my bank account with you... that you should take half of my life's savings... that is really too much for me.

The door bell rings. Gaston starts for the door. With a gesture Leon stops him.

LEON
Go to bed, little father, go to bed.

Gaston leaves through the other door as Leon exits toward the entrance hall.

ENTRANCE HALL – LEON'S APARTMENT

Leon enters the scene. He opens the door. Outside stands Ninotchka wearing her new hat timidly as well as a completely new outfit which she has bought, apparently to match the new hat. It takes Leon a few seconds to digest her new splendor. He takes her hand and leads her in, closing the door. He looks at her again and kisses her hand.

NINOTCHKA
I don't look too foolish?

LEON
Foolish? If this dress were to walk down the boulevard all by itself I

would follow it from one end of Paris to the other, and when I caught up with it I would say, "Just a moment, you charming little dress, I want you to meet Ninotchka... you two were meant for each other." Ninotchka feels more comfortable.

Leon leads her into the living room.

LIVING ROOM – LEON'S APARTMENT

They both enter. Ninotchka pauses a second and looks around.

LEON

You remember this room?

NINOTCHKA

I've never been here before. I wonder whom you're thinking of. Oh, I know, a girl with a map, figuring out each step, worrying about north and south. Today... now this might shock you... I went up to a taxi and said "Eight Rue du Bois" ... and here I am.

LEON

You see? Life can be so simple.

NINOTCHKA

For twelve francs, seventy-five.

LEON

Twelve seventy-five from the Clarence?
The son-of-a-gun made a detour!...
(charmingly)
But he got you here.

At this moment the clock starts to strike. They both look toward it.

INSERT – CLOCK

The hands register nine o'clock.

LEON AND NINOTCHKA

Leon wants to take her in his arms. She resists a little.

NINOTCHKA
(reprimanding him)
It's nine o'clock.

LEON
That's when one half of Paris says
to the other half, "What are your
plans for this evening, madame?"

NINOTCHKA
(getting more and
more in the spirit
of her change of
appearance)
Well, first I should like to take
off my hat and jacket.
(Leon takes them)
Then could we have some music?

LEON
A wonderful idea! Radio or records?

NINOTCHKA
Not radio. Let's have music that's
just for ourselves.

Leon turns on the victrola.

LEON
(with great feeling
and sincerity)
I'll play it softly because I have
things to tell you about which I
can't shout.

He walks back to Ninotchka, who by now is seated in an
armchair. He sits on the arm of the chair. He tries to make
a declaration of his love. He stammers several words.

LEON
Well, my darling... I... we...

It is no use. In a sudden outburst of emotion he takes her
in his arms and kisses her.

LEON
(as they come out of

the kiss)
You see I couldn't shout that.

NINOTCHKA

(with great feeling)

Leon, you know the jokes you told me a few days ago? I wake up in the middle of the night and laugh at them. Now, Leon that's wrong. I know they're not funny, they're silly. They're stupid. And still... I laugh... and when I look at Buljanoff and Iranoff and Kopalski I know they are scoundrels and I should hate them – then I realize who made them like that, and instead of sending my report to Moscow I tear it up and go down and buy a ridiculous hat... and if this keeps on... am I too talkative?

LEON

(radiantly)

No... go on.

NINOTCHKA

Leon, I want to tell you something which I thought I never would say, which I thought nobody ever should say, because I thought it didn't exist... and, Leon... I can't say it...

They kiss again. As the kiss ends they look at each other for a second.

Ninotchka gets up and goes toward the desk, sits in the desk chair, opens her handbag, which lies there, and takes from it a little mirror and a lipstick. Before she uses it she looks at Leon with guilty happiness. Leon looks at her with great tenderness and walks over to the desk and stands looking at her as she makes up her lips.

LEON

What a gesture for a sergeant.

As soon as she is finished, Ninotchka slips the mirror and lipstick back into her handbag and, as she does so, glances

at the top of the desk.

NINOTCHKA

Leon, I would like to ask you something.

LEON

Anything, Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA

If you don't want to answer, you needn't. But if you do, you must tell me the truth.

LEON

I promise... I swear.

NINOTCHKA

(seriously)

Did you make any change in this room?

LEON

I don't think so.

NINOTCHKA

When I was here before I noticed a photograph of a woman on the desk in a wide silver frame. I thought what a waste of silver. That's all that interested me then. Now I would like to know... what happened to the woman?

Leon too is completely serious by now. For answer he quietly opens the drawer of the desk. Ninotchka looks in and takes from the drawer the photograph. As she looks at it she rises.

NINOTCHKA

The Duchess.

Leon nods gravely.

NINOTCHKA

(looking at the picture)

She is very attractive. She has great elegance.

(she looks back at
Leon)

She's what you call a woman of the

world, isn't she?

LEON

(after a little pause)

Ninotchka, I love you.

NINOTCHKA

I suppose she is very entertaining...

It must be lots of fun to be with her, so witty, so glamorous...

LEON

Ninotchka, you're jealous.

Ninotchka nods sadly.

NINOTCHKA

(with great feeling)

Leon, don't ever ask me for a picture of myself... I couldn't bear the thought of being shut up in a drawer... I couldn't breathe, I couldn't stand it.

LEON

My darling.

As he takes her in his arms, we

FADE OUT:

INTERIOR, SMART NIGHT CLUB

FADE IN:

Duchess Swana enters with a party consisting of General Savitzky and five other smartly dressed people of the world. The Headwaiter hurries to greet Swana.

HEADWAITER

Good evening, Your Highness.

SWANA

Good evening, Louis. You seem to be very crowded tonight. Can you manage a table near the floor?

HEADWAITER

Certainly, Your Highness, this way please... Count d'Algout made the reservation this afternoon.

SWANA
(puzzled)
Count d'Algout...

HEADWAITER
It is only a small table but it will be no trouble to put in some extra chairs.

Swana has grasped the situation by now.

SWANA
No, that's another party.

In order to save the situation one of the ladies makes a suggestion.

LADY
Why don't we go some other place?
It's so crowded here.

SWANA
(delighted at her luck)
No, no! This is glory! At last I'm going to have a look at that female Bolshevik. Can you give us another table?

HEADWAITER
Only one in the rear, I'm afraid.

SWANA
That's perfect!

Camera moves with the group as the Headwaiter leads it toward a table.

ANOTHER WOMAN GUEST
You mean Leon's bringing the Bolshevik you told us about?

SWANA
Isn't it divine?

ANOTHER GUEST

I wouldn't have missed this for the world.

SWANA

(very gay, in anticipation of a triumph)

Now, we must be very discreet. If she sucks her soup and drinks out of her finger bowl, I don't want anyone to laugh.

(everybody in the party giggles)

We must not embarrass little Leon. He is going through enough for my sake. We mustn't add insult to injury

By now they have reached the table in the rear.

HEADWAITER

Is this satisfactory?

SWANA

Thank you, Louis.

They sit down. The Headwaiter bends over General Savitzky, an elderly Russian aristocrat, who sits next to Swana.

HEADWAITER

Is it to be dinner, monsieur?

GENERAL SAVITZKY

Possibly later. We'll just start with champagne.

SWANA

(to the party)

I'm only afraid that the doorman may spoil our fun. If only he lets her in!

Swana laughs and everyone joins in her laughter.

GENERAL SAVITZKY

Your Highness...

SWANA
Yes, General Savitzky?

GENERAL SAVITZKY
I want you to know all the White Russian exiles in Paris are keeping their fingers crossed about the jewels. They are very interested in the case. Swana suspects her countrymen.

SWANA
Are they indeed? Thank you.

GENERAL SAVITZKY
They hope the settlement will bring you a fortune.

SWANA
General, please... if you hear any rumors that I am a charitable person, will you please kill them at their source?

As she is lighting a cigarette a guest suddenly looks toward the entrance and sees Leon.

GUEST
Look! There's Leon!

Joyfully Swana looks toward the entrance, as does everyone else at the table.

EVERYONE AT THE TABLE
Oh yes! Where? There! Oh! How exciting!

CLOSE SHOT – LEON AT THE ENTRANCE

Suddenly, through the door of the cloakroom comes Ninotchka, radiant in a beautiful evening gown.

SWANA'S TABLE

Swana's expression freezes as she sees Ninotchka. The rest of the guests stare in an embarrassed silence, save for one bird-brained little guest, named Marianne, who feels it her mission to save the situation.

MARIANNE
Isn't she something?

A neighbor nudges her warningly. Swana withers her with a glance and rises.

SWANA
Shall we dance, General Savitzky?

Swana and the General leave for the dance floor. The guest who has nudged her turns to Marianne.

GUEST
Are you crazy?

ANOTHER GUEST
How could you make such a remark?

THIRD GUEST
Swana isn't stupid.

MARIANNE
What did I say? I just said "isn't she something?" I didn't say something what.

CLOSE SHOT – LEON'S TABLE

Leon and Ninotchka are seated and a Waiter stands by them presenting a bottle of champagne to Leon for his approval.

LEON
(to Waiter)
Is it dry?

WAITER
Yes, monsieur.

LEON
(to Ninotchka)
Is that right or do you prefer it sweet?

NINOTCHKA
I wouldn't know. The closest I ever came to champagne was in a newsreel. The wife of some president was

throwing it at a battleship.

LEON

It's always good luck to launch something with champagne; a battleship... or an evening.

By now the Waiter is filling their glasses. Ninotchka lifts her glass and looks at it.

NINOTCHKA

It's funny to look back. I was brought up on goat's milk, I had a ration of vodka in the army, and now champagne.

LEON

(gaily)

From goats to grapes. That's drinking in the right direction.

Ninotchka takes her first sip of champagne. Leon drinks and watches her. The first sip proves a painful surprise. Ninotchka's face is that of a child who has been fed a bad medicine.

NINOTCHKA

Ugh... um... oh...

(slowly the delight of champagne dawns on her and her face breaks into a smile)

It's good.

She drinks the whole glass at once. Leon looks at her in amused surprise. He drinks too. The Waiter fills their glasses again.

NINOTCHKA

From what I read I thought champagne was a strong drink. It's very delicate. Do people ever get drunk on this?

LEON

There have been cases... but the headache the next morning is worth while – if you drink it with the right toast.

(he raises his glass
again fondly)
To us, Ninotchka!

They clink glasses and drink again, looking at each other.

LONG SHOT OF THE TABLE, including part of the dance floor.

As Leon and Ninotchka lift their glasses again, Swana and General Savitzky start to dance by the table. Swana stops, pretending complete astonishment.

SWANA
Hello, Leon! What a surprise! You of
all people! How are you, my dear?

Leon gets up. Ninotchka watches the scene tensely.

LEON
(embarrassed)
Hello, Swana. How do you do, General
Savitzky?

GENERAL SAVITZKY
How do you do?

SWANA
(to Leon)
You're looking magnificent, Leon...
(to General Savitzky)
...isn't he, General Savitzky?

GENERAL SAVITZKY
Yes.

Leon knows that Swana wants to embarrass him but is embarrassed nevertheless.

LEON
Thank you.

SWANA
Is this your new dress suit?

LEON
Yes, Swana.

SWANA

Didn't I tell you Benson and Benson
were the tailors for you?

LEON
(patiently)
Yes, Swana, you did.

SWANA
It's a dream of beauty. He never
takes my word for anything, but I
was right, wasn't I?

LEON
Yes, Swana.

SWANA
(forcing an
introduction)
Am I interrupting?

LEON
Not at all. Your Highness, may I
present Madame Yakushova?

SWANA
How do you do?

NINOTCHKA
How do you do?

LEON
And General Savitzky.

GENERAL SAVITZKY
How do you do?

NINOTCHKA
How do you do?

SWANA
I've some wonderful news for you,
Leon. It's about Punchy... do you
mind if I sit down?

LEON
(realizing that he
cannot prevent it)
No... please...

Swana sits down.

SWANA

(to General Savitzky)

General, would you mind making my excuses at our table? I'll be back in a few moments.

GENERAL SAVITZKY

Certainly.

He bows and leaves.

CLOSE SHOT – ALL THREE SITTING AT THE TABLE

SWANA

Well, Leon, we can be proud of our Punchy. He had a triumph at the dog show.

During the following speech, Ninotchka's expression does not change. She knows exactly the game Swana is playing.

SWANA

(continuing)

He won another blue ribbon and bit the judge. Ha! ha! ha! I bought him the cutest sweater as a reward. You should see him strut down the street in it. He looks like a little boulevardier.

(to Ninotchka)

You see, Count d'Algout gave me Punchy for my birthday.

(to Leon)

You must have searched weeks before you found anything as divine as Punchy, didn't you, Leon?

LEON

(fed up with Swana's tactics)

Months, Swana.

SWANA

(to Ninotchka)

Poor Madame Yakushova... here we are

talking in mysteries.... I'm sure
you wonder what it's all about.

NINOTCHKA

(dry and direct)

Not at all.... I understand perfectly,
Count d'Algout gave you a dog. You
made it very clear, madame.

SWANA

Dear me... I must be losing my
finesse. If I'm not careful I'll be
understood by everybody.

LEON

(acutely uncomfortable)

There's a charming crowd here tonight,
isn't there?

SWANA

I'm going, Leon...

(she rises, as does
Leon, delighted to
get rid of her)

but before I leave I must compliment
you on your gown, Madame Yakushova.
Is that what they're wearing in Moscow
this year?

NINOTCHKA

No, last year, madame.

Swana sits again, as does Leon.

SWANA

Isn't it amazing! One gets a wrong
impression of the new Russia.

(cynically)

It must be charming. I'm glad
conditions are so improved. I assume
this is what the factory workers
wear at their dances?

NINOTCHKA

Exactly. You see, it would have been
embarrassing for people of my sort
to wear low-cut gowns in the old
Russia. The lashes of the Cossacks

across our backs were not very becoming, and you know how vain women are.

SWANA

You're absolutely right about the Cossacks. We made an unpardonable mistake when we let them use their knouts. They had such reliable guns.

Leon has grown more and more uncomfortable as the two ladies fence.

LEON

Will you do me a favor? Stop talking about the good old days.

SWANA

A very wise suggestion, Leon. I'm afraid madame and I will never agree.
(she plays her trump card)

The only thing we have in common is our lawsuit and that will be decided next week. I understand everything will be over by Thursday. Am I right?

Ninotchka and Leon realize the malice and yet the truth of her words.

NINOTCHKA

You're right, madame, it will all be over by Thursday.

SWANA

(rubbing it in)

It is unfortunate that you have so few more days in Paris.

(she turns to Leon)

Be sure and redouble your efforts so that madame can take some pleasant memories when she returns to Moscow.

(she rises, Leon rising too)

Good night.

(Ninotchka nods without answering. To Leon)

Good night, Leon.

LEON
(coldly)
Good night, Swana.

Swana leaves the table. Leon sits again. The mood of the two has been changed by the problem of their separation, which has been brought before them. They sit in silence for a moment. Ninotchka speaks first.

NINOTCHKA
Now I think I need a glass of
champagne.

Leon fills their glasses. They drink. Then Leon takes Ninotchka's hand.

NINOTCHKA
(trying to break the
mood)
Quickly, please... tell me one of
your funny stories.

LEON
A funny story?

NINOTCHKA
You never finished the one about the
two Scotchmen with the names.

LEON
Well, there were two Scotchmen. One
was named McIntosh and one was named
McGillicuddy. They met on the street.

He stops.

NINOTCHKA
Go on.

LEON
No, darling. I'll tell you another
story, a much better one.
(with deep sincerity)
The only thing that will be over on
Thursday is the lawsuit. There will
be no Thursday for us. Not next week
or any week. We won't let it happen.

I'll tear it out of the calendar. Is
that a good story?

NINOTCHKA
(touched)
Wonderful – if one could believe
it.

LEON
You must, darling.

NINOTCHKA
(lifting her glass)
To the loveliest story I ever heard.

They drink. The orchestra starts a number.

NINOTCHKA
(afraid of where the
conversation may
lead)
Shall we dance?

They both start toward the dance floor.

CLOSE SHOT – LEON AND NINOTCHKA, DANCING A WALTZ

At the second turn Ninotchka starts to feel the effect of
the champagne.

NINOTCHKA
(tipsily)
Oo! Darling! Something is the matter.

LEON
You just made that trip from goats
to grapes a little too fast.

NINOTCHKA
Oh, everything is so wonderful! It's
getting farther and farther away!

LEON
What, darling?

NINOTCHKA
Thursday.

LEON

Yes. Don't worry. Everything will be all right.

In the gayest mood, Ninotchka addresses the crowd on the dance floor.

NINOTCHKA

Comrades! Comrades!

LEON

(embarrassed)

Darling, darling... please!

NINOTCHKA

I must talk to my brothers!

LEON

Shhh! Shhh!

NINOTCHKA

Don't shush me. I am People! I want to make a speech. I want to overthrow the Duchess!

Leon starts to lead her off the dance floor.

LEON

But, darling, you can't do that.

NINOTCHKA

Comrades! Good people of France!

LEON

Now, Ninotchka... please!

NINOTCHKA

They are all Duchesses here... thousands of Duchesses... and I am going to tell them.

By now they have almost reached the powder room.

LEON

Quite right... yes, yes, yes, but first you're going in that door and you're going to take a little spirits of ammonia and lie down.

NINOTCHKA
(sweetly)
No speech?

LEON
(as though he were
addressing a little
child)
No speech.

NINOTCHKA
I love you, my little Leonitchka!

LEON
And I adore you, Ninotchka.

Ninotchka goes unsteadily into the powder room. Leon wipes his forehead in relief and goes to the bar, followed by the CAMERA.

LEON
(to the bartender)
Give me a double brandy.

CLOSE SHOT – DOOR OF THE POWDER ROOM

A group of four to six women come out whispering excitedly about something which must have happened within.

CAMERA goes with them as they go to the Manager of the restaurant and crowd about him and whisper what has happened.

CLOSE SHOT – BAR

The bartender gives Leon his double brandy and Leon tosses it off. The Manager comes into the shot and addresses Leon.

MANAGER
(very excitedly)
I'm very sorry, Count d'Algout, it is most embarrassing, but the lady you brought with you tonight is spreading communistic propaganda in the powder room.

Leon stares at him for a second, then turns to the bartender.

LEON

Give me another double brandy.

MANAGER

That kind of propaganda is bad anywhere, but inciting the attendants of a powder room to go on strike.... Well, if she succeeds the consequences will be disastrous.

LEON

What can I do about it?

MANAGER

She has been asked to leave the powder room but without success. We would appreciate if you would see to it yourself.

LEON

(horrified)

You want me to go in there?

MANAGER

I'm sorry, sir, but I must insist.

The Manager bows and walks away. Leon gulps down the second double brandy. The CAMERA follows him as he proceeds toward the powder room like a hero going into battle. Just as he is about to enter, a very dignified elderly lady comes out, is surprised at his attempted entrance, and glares at him. Leon loses his courage and FOLLOWED BY THE CAMERA goes back to the bar to strengthen it with some of the Dutch variety.

LEON

(completely exhausted –
to the bartender)

Make it a triple brandy. As we

DISSOLVE TO:

LIVING ROOM – THE ROYAL SUITE

Rakonin, the waiter, opens the door. Ninotchka and Leon, both very tipsy by now, enter the room. Leon is carrying a bottle of champagne in a napkin. As he passes the waiter he speaks:

LEON
(to Rakonin)
All right... you can tell the
Duchess... you can tell everybody...
they know anyhow... it doesn't make
any difference... now get out!

Rakonin, who seems very interested in the situation, closes
the door.

Leon goes to Ninotchka. Both sit on a couch.

NINOTCHKA
(moving close to him)
Don't tell them where we're going,
sweetheart.

LEON
No. Nobody will find us.

Ninotchka is lyrically tight. Through her there shines a
great happiness.

NINOTCHKA
Are we going to build our little
house?

LEON
Yes... a little white house.

NINOTCHKA
Not white, darling.

LEON
All right, we'll make it red.

NINOTCHKA
No, don't let's have it any color...
no color... just a house house...
let's form our own party.

LEON
Right: Lovers of the world unite!

NINOTCHKA
(delighted)
And we won't stretch up our arms...

LEON
No! No!

NINOTCHKA
...and we won't clench our fist...

LEON
No! No!

NINOTCHKA
(tenderly)
Our salute will be a kiss.

LEON
Yes... a kiss... salute!

She sinks into his arms and they kiss.

NINOTCHKA
(still in his arms)
I am so happy. No one can be so happy
without being punished. I will be
punished and I should be punished.
(she gets up)
I want to confess, darling.

LEON
I know... it's the Russian soul.

NINOTCHKA
(her gaiety mixed
with sadness)
Everyone wants to confess and if
they don't confess they make them
confess. I am a traitor. When I kissed
you I betrayed the Russian ideal.
Leon, I should be stood up against
the wall.

Leon gets up.

LEON
(sympathetically)
Would that make you any happier?

NINOTCHKA
Much happier.

LEON

All right.

Still carrying the champagne bottle, Leon leads her to the end of the room and stands her against the wall. He takes the napkin from the champagne bottle and puts it over her eyes. The CAMERA moves with him as he goes away from Ninotchka, and as he walks he starts to open the champagne. The cork pops.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA, as she sinks gently into a chair.

NINOTCHKA

(happily)

I have paid the penalty. Now let's have some music.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA AND LEON

LEON

Let's turn on the radio.

NINOTCHKA

Radio! What is radio?

LEON

It's a little box that you buy on the installment plan and before you tune it in they tell you they have a new model.

NINOTCHKA

(getting up)

Oh yes, yes. It has a little knob that turns... a little knob... it must be somewhere around here... yes... here... I see...

Confusedly Ninotchka starts looking for something, repeating, "a little knob... a little knob." Followed by Leon she goes toward the safe, opens the concealing door, and both are delighted as they see the safe's dial.

NINOTCHKA

(triumphantly)

Here it is!

Leon nods approval and starts to turn the dial.

LEON

What shall we get? The news!

NINOTCHKA

No, no news. We don't want to know what's happening in the world. We want to be left alone, don't we?

LEON

Yes, sweetheart... all by ourselves.

NINOTCHKA

(remembering vaguely)

Well, then we turn twice to the right and stop at seven...

Leon follows her instructions.

NINOTCHKA

(after a little pause,
sadly)

It's dead.

LEON

Well, it has to warm up... you have to give it a chance... just like people... like you and me... first you wanted to fight me and now we belong to the same party... salute!

He takes her in his arms and again they embrace.

NINOTCHKA

(as though she were
in heaven)

Now twice to the left and stop at seventeen.

Leon again follows her instructions.

INTERIOR – SAFE, shooting toward the door.

Leon opens the door and both look into the safe.

NINOTCHKA

(disappointed)

No music.

LEON
(also disappointed)
No, no music.

Through her fog, Ninotchka becomes aware of the case containing the jewels.

NINOTCHKA
(bitterly)
There it is... Thursday... you can't
rip it out of the week....

LEON
(helpfully)
But I can throw it out of the window.

NINOTCHKA
(philosophically)
It wouldn't be fair to the man in
the street.
(she pushes back the
lid)
There they are... they are terrible
things, those jewels....

LEON
...but big.

NINOTCHKA
...they are the tears of Old Russia...
see that stone?

LEON
Who cried that one?

NINOTCHKA
Czar Peter gave it to his wife,
Catherine the Great. For it he sold
ten thousand serfs in the market.

LEON
Now, darling, don't get impatient,
wait until we are married. You know
that worthless butler of mine...
that reactionary? Some day when I
come home to you I may say, "Darling,
I drove Gaston to the market and

look what I got from him!"

From the case of jewels he takes a beautiful diadem and holds it in front of her.

NINOTCHKA

(the economist now)

First ten thousand serfs... now just Gaston. It is very encouraging.

Leon takes her by the hand and leads her from the safe.

LEON

Come, sweetheart. Let me put it on you. You will teach these jewels. For the first time they will learn how they can look.

NINOTCHKA

They belong to the people.

LEON

(in a ceremonial voice)

I give them back to the people...
(as formal and steady
as possible under
the conditions he
puts the diadem on
her head)

I make you Ninotchka the Great...
Duchess of the People!... Grand
Duchess of the People!

Ninotchka falls in with the spirit of this imaginary coronation.

NINOTCHKA

Is this the wish of the masses?

LEON

It is their wish.

NINOTCHKA

Thank you, Leon... thank you, masses.

(in a low voice)

Can I make a speech now?

LEON

Please.

Ninotchka turns to an imaginary assemblage.

NINOTCHKA

Comrades! People of the world! The
revolution is on the march... I
know... wars will wash over us...
bombs will fall... all civilization
will crumble... but not yet, please...
wait, wait... what's the hurry?

(mixing reality with
fantasy)

Let us be happy... give us our
moment....

(turning to Leon)

We are happy, aren't we, Leon?

LEON

(fondly)

Yes, sweetheart.

(he holds her in his
arms)

NINOTCHKA

(her voice getting
dimmer and dimmer)

So happy and so tired.

She falls asleep in his arms. Leon gathers her up and carries her into the bedroom, the diadem still on her head.

BEDROOM – THE ROYAL SUITE

Leon carries Ninotchka to the bed, puts her down on it. She is now sleeping soundly. He kisses her once more and then turns, the CAMERA PANNING with him, and starts toward the door to the corridor and exits. As he closes the door with an uncertain hand, it slams.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA, as she lies on the bed

On the night table beside her is a photograph of the stern-faced Lenin. The crash of the slamming door awakens Ninotchka for a moment. Completely content and happy, she turns around and sees the disapproving face of the photograph.

NINOTCHKA

(charmingly)
Smile, little father, smile.

INSERT OF PHOTOGRAPH OF LENIN

The photograph of Lenin starts to smile in approval, as we...

FADE OUT:

AN ESTABLISHING SHOT OF PARIS – DAY

FADE IN ON:

IN THE FOREGROUND a clock shows that it is a quarter to twelve.

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG SHOT – LIVING ROOM OF THE ROYAL SUITE

It is taken from an ANGLE which includes the door. The lights are still on, the curtains drawn, the empty champagne bottle and glasses litter the room. We hear the buzzer of the corridor door ring several times without an answer.

CAMERA moves through the door into the bedroom, never disclosing the bed. The lights in the bedroom are still lighted also and the curtains drawn. CAMERA stops on the door from the bedroom to the corridor. The buzzer rings. Apparently the caller has moved from the living-room door to the bedroom door.

CLOSE SHOT OF THE BED

Ninotchka is lying on the bed, still in her evening dress. The diadem is no longer on her head, but no special emphasis is laid on that detail in the camera angle. We hear the sound of the buzzer ringing again and again. Ninotchka half wakens and calls out something which sounds like "come in" without being fully aware of what she is doing.

BEDROOM – AT THE DOOR

The door is opened from the outside by a maid, who lets in the Duchess Swana, dressed in a smart morning outfit. Swana looks around, surprised and amused at the state of the room. She walks over to the bed where lies Ninotchka, still not enough awake to face reality. Swana is delighted to have

surprised Ninotchka in this condition.

SWANA
(ironically)
Good morning.

NINOTCHKA
(awakening gradually)
What?

SWANA
It is tomorrow morning... tomorrow
noon, to be exact. I hope you will
forgive me. I know it's extremely
cruel to waken anyone at such an
hour. Don't you recognize me? I am
the Duchess Swana.

By now Ninotchka is awake. She gets up and realizes to her
acute embarrassment the condition in which Swana has found
her.

SWANA
I know how you feel, my dear. The
morning after always does look grim
if you happen to be wearing last
night's dress. Don't be embarrassed
by my presence, though. You couldn't
have found anybody more sympathetic
to your condition. I remember once
in Petrograd when I felt exactly as
you do. I had to bow from a balcony
to the crowd. My dear, the masses
have no understanding of the feelings
of a lady before noon. Don't you
find that true?

During Swana's speech Ninotchka has found herself completely.

NINOTCHKA
I think we can cut your visit short.
Leon is not here.

SWANA
Of course not, my dear! I didn't
come here with any such suspicion.
How ridiculous!
(with a glance toward

the living room)
Nor did I come here to pick up his
hat.

CLOSE SHOT – LEON'S HAT, shot through the bedroom door into
the living room where it lies on the table.

LONG SHOT – LIVING ROOM – TOWARD BEDROOM DOOR

By the bed stand Ninotchka and Swana. Swana starts toward
the living room, Ninotchka following her.

SWANA

(as she reaches the
threshold)

How stale last night's gaiety looks!
It has the taste of a dead cigarette.

NINOTCHKA

If you were encouraged to come here
by our meeting last night I am afraid
you misunderstood my attitude.

SWANA

Don't worry, you were quite rude
enough.

(during the following
speech, she draws
the curtains and
opens the windows)

Do you mind if I let in a little
fresh air and sunshine? I'm sure it
will make you feel better and I want
you to be at your very best. In full
possession of your faculties, at
least.

NINOTCHKA

(regaining her usual
firmness)

Please come to the point. What is it
you want?

SWANA

I just dropped in to have a little
heart-to-heart talk with you.

NINOTCHKA

We have nothing to discuss.

SWANA

Now there you are completely wrong.
If we sit down for a little chat,
I'm sure we won't run out of
conversation and what's more it won't
be dull.

NINOTCHKA

Madame, what is it you people always
say, regardless of what you mean...
"I am delighted to have you here"? I
have not reached that stage of
civilization.

SWANA

That's all right... I grow on people.

NINOTCHKA

I must ask you to leave.

SWANA

Leave? That's exactly what I came
here to ask you to do. Leave! I don't
mean this hotel and I don't mean
Paris... I mean France. There's a
plane for Moscow at five-forty.

NINOTCHKA

(puzzled)

Madame, if you...

SWANA

Don't worry. I have already made
reservations. It's perfect flying
weather. They assure me there's a
fine tail wind which will sweep you
back to Moscow in no time.

NINOTCHKA

(still not

understanding)

If this is meant to be a joke it is
not funny. Or do you still think
you're issuing orders from your palace
in Petrograd?

Ninotchka's words for the first time sting Swana out of her apparently superficial attitude.

SWANA

(bitterly)

My palace in Petrograd... yes, you took that away from me. You took away my czar, my country, my people, everything I had...

(with emphasis)

but nothing more – I warn you.

NINOTCHKA

(simply)

People cannot be taken away, madame, neither a hundred and sixty million nor one. Not if you have their love. You hadn't. That's why you're not in Russia any longer, and that's why you came here this morning.

SWANA

Very interesting, my dear, but couldn't you write all that from Moscow? A dissertation on love on Soviet stationery – would be an amusing paradox.

NINOTCHKA

It is not enough to be witty, madame. People grow tired of being entertained. You made that mistake before. Problems were never solved by bowing from a balcony.

SWANA

My dear, you don't know how impressive I could be. Did you ever see me in my regalia with my diadem and all my jewels?

The word diadem startles Ninotchka. She starts to remember the night before, and she looks toward the safe.

INSERT OF THE DOOR OF THE SAFE, which is closed by now.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA AND SWANA

Ninotchka stares in the direction of the safe as Swana chatters on.

SWANA

You can't deny we gave the people their money's worth – almost – eight tumbling Romanoffs – eight!

NINOTCHKA

(desperately)

I must insist that you leave.

SWANA

Not before you agree to use those reservations to Moscow.

NINOTCHKA

In that case I can only say good-by.

Abruptly she walks toward the bedroom.

TRAVELING SHOT OF NINOTCHKA

She enters the small room connecting the living room and bedroom and closes the door to the living room. She walks into the bedroom toward the bed and glances at it. The diadem is not there. After going back into the anteroom, she opens the outer door of the safe and pulls on the inner door. It has not been properly closed and opens at once. The safe is empty. Ninotchka stands staring in frozen horror for a moment, then rushes to the telephone by the bed.

NINOTCHKA

(into the telephone)

lys,e 2763.

LONG SHOT – NINOTCHKA AT THE TELEPHONE, waiting for her connection

In the background the door to the living room is opened by Swana.

SWANA

(standing in the door)

I wouldn't waken Leon. After last night I would say not before three o'clock at the earliest.

NINOTCHKA

I told you to go, madame.

SWANA

Believe me, Leon can't help you. He doesn't know anything about the jewels... I give you my word... I swear it.

Ninotchka hangs up the receiver and stares at Swana. She walks toward her.

LIVING ROOM, SHOOTING INTO THE BEDROOM. In the foreground Swana, in the background Ninotchka, who is hurrying toward her.

NINOTCHKA

Where are they?

SWANA

You were very careless with our precious jewels, my dear. They're too expensive a toy for two children to play with.

NINOTCHKA

Where are they?

SWANA

Don't worry. Fortunately last night a very trustworthy friend kept his eyes open. Perhaps he overstepped his function as a waiter but he fulfilled his duty as a Russian.

(she draws back the fur scarf she is wearing, revealing a diamond star, one of the jewels we have seen)

I just put this on for sentiment. The rest are absolutely safe. I assure you. But if you feel like notifying the police...

NINOTCHKA

You leave me no choice.

SWANA

Won't it be rather embarrassing for a Soviet Envoy to disclose the circumstances under which she lost them?

NINOTCHKA

I will have to face the consequences, but so will you. Don't forget they will ask how you got them.

SWANA

That's very simple to answer. They were given to me by my mother. They were given to her by her mother, in fact they're mine, you cannot steal what belongs to you!

She proceeds into the living room, followed by Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA

They always belonged to the Russian people. They were paid for with their sweat, their blood, their lives and you will give them back!

SWANA

(triumphantly)

I told you we had plenty to talk about. Shall we sit down?

They both sit.

SWANA

(very matter-of-fact)

Now, let's free ourselves from emotionalism and try to solve the problem in a practical way. Our situation has changed considerably. Before I had only a claim to the jewels. Now I have the jewels.

NINOTCHKA

In other words moral ideas have no weight with you... all right, then let's deal with legal facts. You know that France has recognized the Soviet.

SWANA

Unfortunately.

NINOTCHKA

Under Soviet law the jewels belong to the State. France is going to uphold that ownership.

SWANA

My lawyer agrees with you. He says France will uphold it in every court, but I will drag you through every court, don't forget that. And when I say it will take two years I am, as always, conservative.

NINOTCHKA

Won't those two years in court be expensive for you? I know that money was no object as long as you could squeeze it from the pockets of the people, but now...

SWANA

I may run out of money, but you have already run out of bread. Two years is a long time for your comrades to wait.

NINOTCHKA

I see. You have calculated in terms of hunger.

SWANA

No, I just wanted to be absolutely impartial. Both of us are faced with two rather uncomfortable years. We can condense these two years to two minutes if you want to accept my proposition. Ninotchka now realizes what she is after.

NINOTCHKA

Go on.

SWANA

I am willing to hand over the jewels

and sign the necessary papers if you take that five-forty plane to Moscow.

NINOTCHKA

(quietly)

That's not the way to win him back... not Leon.

SWANA

I think I know Leon quite as well as you... possibly a little better. Leave that worry to me. Five-forty leaves you time enough to close the deal with Monsieur Mercier, but naturally you'll be too busy for any farewells. I'll see to it that everything is done in the most expeditious manner and I will also see you to the airport. That's my proposition, Comrade Yakushova.

Ninotchka knows herself to be faced with an inevitable decision. For a moment she cannot answer. The telephone rings. Ninotchka takes the receiver.

NINOTCHKA

(into telephone)

Yes...

(it is Leon)

Oh hello...

Much as she wants to talk to him she hesitates in the presence of Swana. Swana realizes the situation, gets up, and walks over to the window, where she stands looking out.

CLOSE-UP – NINOTCHKA AT TELEPHONE

NINOTCHKA

Good morning, Leon...

(forcing herself to be gay so that he will not suspect anything)

... no, you didn't waken me... I am fine, thank you.... Yes, it was... marvelous.... What? ... for luncheon? I'm afraid I can't. I am going to be very busy...

(looking for excuses)
well, I have a lot of things to attend
to today.... What?... Well to tell
you the truth I am a little tired
and I would like to rest..
(she forces herself
to laugh)
you may be right... perhaps it is
the champagne.... For dinner?... Of
course... seven o'clock here?...
(realizing that she
will be gone by then)
seven o'clock is all right....
Where?... That will be lovely....
Yes...
(there is a knock on
the door)
Come in.
(into the telephone)
Yes?...
(looking toward the
door she sees
something which makes
her stop the
conversation)
Just a moment...
(she puts the receiver
on the table and
walks toward the
door)

ANTEROOM BETWEEN LIVING ROOM AND CORRIDOR, shooting toward
the living room. In the background we see Swana standing at
the window. Ninotchka comes into the anteroom, closes the
door in order to shut off Swana's view. Camera pans with
Ninotchka as she walks toward the hall door where the bellboy
is putting down a big flower basket.

NINOTCHKA
(to bellboy)
You can leave it here.

The bellboy exits. Ninotchka looks at the basket of flowers
for a moment, then takes the envelope which is attached to
the handle. She opens it and reads the enclosed letter. It
must be a love note, for her eyes grow wet. She turns to the
last page.

INSERT

"...and sweetheart, I have kept my first promise. I sent poor old Gaston to the market this morning and if you will look deep into the flowers you will see what I got for him...."

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA

She puts her hand in the basket and takes out a bottle of milk.

INSERT OF THE BOTTLE

On the label we see a picture of a goat.

NINOTCHKA

She smiles sadly and goes to the telephone, which is on the console in the anteroom.

NINOTCHKA

(into telephone)

Operator, will you switch the call please?... Hello?... Darling, your present just arrived.... It's very silly and very wonderful... thank you... No, I won't forget... seven o'clock....

(with great tenderness)

Good-by, my darling.... What?...

Oh...

(softly)

salute!

She puts down the receiver. Camera pans with her as she goes to the door of the living room. She opens the door and goes in. Swana turns from the window.

NINOTCHKA

I am sorry to have kept you waiting, madame.

SWANA – AT THE AIRPORT

DISSOLVE TO:

shooting from a HIGH ANGLE. We hear the SOUND of an airplane

just taking off. Camera pulls back so that Swana seems to be photographed from the airplane. Finally the SHOT discloses the whole airport and Swana disappearing into the crowd.

ENTRANCE HALL – SWANA'S APARTMENT

Swana's maid is opening the door for Swana, who enters in the highest spirits.

SWANA

Good afternoon, Jacqueline.

MAID

Good afternoon, Your Highness.

(hesitantly)

Madame, I...

SWANA

You didn't find my glove. All right, you're forgiven.

MAID

Thank you, Your Highness. Count d'Algout is waiting. He's been here some time.

Swana inspects herself briefly in the hall mirror, proceeds into the living room.

LIVING ROOM – SWANA'S APARTMENT

Leon is pacing up and down. Swana enters.

SWANA

Leon, darling, how nice! Have you ordered tea or a cocktail?

LEON

No thanks, Swana.

SWANA

Did I act stupidly last night? Should I apologize?

LEON

I'm the one who should apologize. I should have talked to you before.

SWANA

Is this, by any chance, going to be a confession?

LEON

Yes.

SWANA

Oh, no, my little Volga boatman. Have you forgotten our First Commandment: Never Complain – Never Explain. It has worked so often and so perfectly, don't let's break the rule. And please don't look so guilty, otherwise I'll...

LEON

This time, Swana – just this once – I must ask you to listen.

SWANA

All right, I'll listen.

LEON

I know you hate the obvious but do you mind if, at this moment, I'm not in the least subtle?

SWANA

Brutal frankness, if you insist.

LEON

There are a hundred ways to approach it, but I feel it can best be said in one simple phrase. I'm in love, Swana.

SWANA

And I thought it was something serious! How could you frighten me so?

LEON

It must be serious, Swana. Not long ago I'd have considered such a statement rather juvenile and rather middle class. Now I can say it without stammering, without a blush. I'm in

love, Swana.

SWANA

Say it over and over again, Leon.
Words are a wonderful safety valve,
and that's what you need – because
you know it's impossible, don't you?

LEON

I have to be simple again, Swana,
and you may find it shockingly banal.
I've thought it over and I'm willing
to take all the consequences, even
if it means a complete readjustment
of my way of living.

SWANA

Leon! This has the ugly sound of
regeneration.

LEON

I'm afraid that's what it is.

SWANA

The same old trouble, Leon. You're
always late. Whether you're taking
me to the Opera or calling for me at
a beauty shop, you're never on time.
And now, when it's a question of
your reform – late again.

(she glances at her
wrist watch)

By about five minutes.

LEON

What is this, Swana?

SWANA

Knowing the efficiency of the French
Air Service I think I can guarantee
that Madame Yakushova has already
taken off for Moscow.

LEON

Has done what?

SWANA

She's gone, Leon.

LEON

Do you expect me to believe that?

Swana picks up the receiver of the telephone and holds it out to him.

SWANA

Here's the telephone. If you call the hotel you will find that you have no seven o'clock appointment.

THE MOSCOW PLANE

It is flying past the Eiffel Tower.

CLOSE SHOT – AIRPLANE WINDOW

Behind the window we see Ninotchka looking at Paris for the last time. Camera moves over to the next window and we see Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski also giving Paris a sad farewell look.

ANOTHER VIEW OF PARIS, from the air. The mist has closed in by now so that only the top of the Eiffel Tower is visible above it.

CLOSE-UP – NINOTCHKA, looking down on the Tower

INTERIOR, Airplane – Ninotchka, Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski

Ninotchka turns from the window and leans against the back of her chair. The Russians follow her example. There is a moment of silence and sadness.

BULJANOFF

Imagine, for once in our lives we were in Paris and we never went to the Eiffel Tower.

KOPALSKI

That's right.

IRANOFF

They tell me it has a wonderful restaurant on the second floor.

KOPALSKI

While you eat, you look at the view.

CLOSE-UP – NINOTCHKA

She is trying to overcome all sentimentality, but as the following speech progresses she cannot escape the personal implication involved.

NINOTCHKA

Yes, it is an amazing piece of engineering. Still the most remarkable iron structure in the world. Leading to the top there is a staircase of over a thousand steps... but an elevator is included in the price of admission.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INSERT OF A PARIS NEWSPAPER

HERALD DU MATIN

Camera zooms down on a headline of an article.

Mercier buys priceless russian jewels. Russian commission has left for moscow.

STREET IN PARIS – MORNING

Camera follows Leon as he walks excitedly and nervously along the boulevard. He turns into a Russian Intouriste Bureau, one of the travel bureaus maintained by the Soviet government in foreign countries to supply information regarding travel, give visas, etc.

INTOURISTE BUREAU

It is a typical travel bureau. Behind the counter are attendants and some people getting information and pamphlets. Leon enters, looks around, and sees a door which says "Visas and Passport Department." He enters.

INTERIOR, VISA ROOM

It is a room smaller than the previous one. Behind the counter stands a typical Bolshevik Official. In front of the counter is an elderly English lady. Leon takes his place behind her, nervous at having to wait. The Official stamps the English lady's passport and hands it to her.

OFFICIAL

Well, everything is in order. I hope you will enjoy your trip to Russia, madame.

ENGLISH LADY

Thank you. Oh, by the way, I've heard so many rumors about laundry conditions in Russia. Is it advisable to take one's own towels?

OFFICIAL

Certainly not, madame. That's only capitalistic propaganda. We change the towel every week.

ENGLISH LADY

Oh... thank you.

She leaves. Leon moves up to the Official.

OFFICIAL

Yes, please?

At this moment the telephone rings. The Official takes the receiver.

OFFICIAL

(into phone)

Yes... Comrade Cazabine? No, I'm sorry... he hasn't been with us for six months. He was called back to Russia and was investigated. You can get further details from his widow.

He hangs up the receiver. Leon, thinking of Ninotchka, is horrified by this statement.

LEON

Pardon me, I am very interested in what you just said – you mean when an envoy goes back to Russia – if

they don't like what he has done
they put him out of the way?

OFFICIAL

Not always... look at me... I've
been back twice.

(he knocks on wood)

LEON

(his alarm growing)

Here's my passport... Please give
me a visa. I have to leave for Russia
immediately.

OFFICIAL

(reading passport)

Count Leon d'Algout... a count!... a
nobleman!

LEON

Don't hold that against me... please!

OFFICIAL

Why should an aristocrat want to go
to Russia?

LEON

Business.

OFFICIAL

What business?

LEON

Private.

OFFICIAL

There is no privacy in Russia. This
whole thing seems very suspicious.
What's the real reason? If you ever
want to get into Russia, take my
advice... confess!

LEON

(dismayed)

Confess what?

OFFICIAL

Are you sympathetic to the former

Czaristic government – the White Russians?

LEON

On the contrary – I don't want to have anything to do with them.

OFFICIAL

You believe in our cause?

Leon, feeling that he has to go to the rescue of his girl, whips up an enormous enthusiasm for the cause.

LEON

Oh... I think it's great! Everyone works – everyone contributes – that's what I want to do – work! I make my own bed – you can call up my butler! I don't believe in the right of the individual. I like the Bolshevik ideal – everyone being the same. You just like me – me just like you – I use your comb – you use my toothbrush – oh, it's a great life.... Please... give me that visa!

At this moment Swana enters.

SWANA

Hello, Leon darling!

LEON

(startled)

Hello.

SWANA

(suavely) After our talk last night I took it for granted that you would drop in here this morning. Knowing how difficult it is to get into Soviet Russia, I thought I might be of some assistance to you.

(to the Official)

May I introduce myself? I am the Duchess Swana of Russia... another Russia.

The Official gasps in surprise.

LEON

Now, please, Swana.

SWANA

(to the Official)

Count d'Algout was for several years
my personal representative and if it
is necessary to sign any affidavit
for him I'll be delighted.

LEON

(bitterly)

That does it, Swana.

(he leads her toward
the door)

Now you mustn't miss your appointment
with your hair-dresser.

SWANA

(stopping at the door)

Just in case they don't give you
your visa to Russia I want you to
know that I have signed a contract
for my memoirs and rented a lovely
little chateau in the Touraine, and
if you feel the need of a change...

LEON

Thank you, Swana. You are very
gracious.

His words are unmistakably a final dismissal. She walks out.
Leon looks after her for a second, then goes back to the
Official. He tries to laugh off the incident.

LEON

She must have her little joke.

(the Official responds
with a stony look)

You're not going to take that
seriously.

OFFICIAL

The Grand Duchess Swana... active in
the White Russian movement?

LEON

Believe me, I have no connection with her any longer... I swear I haven't!

OFFICIAL

But you had!

LEON

Listen, I want to be absolutely frank with you. I have no business in Moscow.

OFFICIAL

I think so too.

LEON

I want to see a friend of mine... a very dear friend.... It's a personal matter which has nothing to do with politics or social philosophies.... It's a girl.

OFFICIAL

So it's love which drags you to Moscow.

LEON

Yes!

OFFICIAL

No visa.

LEON

(fighting for his point)

I must get into that country of yours!

OFFICIAL

Oh no. No visa.

LEON

(more aggressively)

That's impossible! Nobody has the right.... You can't do that!... If you don't give me that visa...

OFFICIAL

(ironically)
You're going to force us... huh?

LEON
(growing violent)
Now look here... you advertise all over the world that you want people to go into your country and when someone tries to get in, you keep him out!

OFFICIAL
Why should I take a chance?

LEON
On what?

OFFICIAL
How do I know you don't want to blow up a factory?

LEON
What for... why?

OFFICIAL
Or a tunnel or a bridge...

LEON
Suspensions... nothing but suspicions!... That's the trouble with you! If you don't let me in I'll stand in front of this office of yours and warn people to keep away from Russia!... I'll picket your whole country....

The Official laughs in a superior way.

LEON
I'll boycott you, that's what I'm going to do!... No more vodka... no more caviar... no more Tchaikovsky... no more borscht.... Wait a minute, I know something better than that...

The Official leans forward sarcastically.

OFFICIAL

What?

With a knock-out blow, Leon sends him to the floor, then, leaning over the counter, he shouts.

LEON

And you can tell the Kremlin that's just the beginning!

He strides out.

The Official's head emerges from the counter. As he adjusts his bruised jaw, he speaks.

OFFICIAL

No visa.

Establishing Shot of Russia – First of May – Stock Shot of May Day Parade on the Red Square

FADE IN ON:

DISSOLVE TO:

RADIO ANNOUNCER

RADIO ANNOUNCER

March, march, march! Comrades of the World, never has there been such a May Day parade as this! Already for four hours the pavements of Moscow have resounded to the tread of a million boots! Thousands of gun-carriages have thundered past. Thousands of tanks, combined with our mighty air force, have demonstrated to a belligerent neighbor that we are ready and invincible! Now past me marches the great army of our civilians! Men and women of all ages. All servants of the State united in one thought and ideal.
Group of Several Units Marching

Workmen, soldiers, tanks, airplanes, etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

Column of Women, dressed in typical Russian May Day parade fashion, marching and saluting. The CAMERA NARROWS DOWN to a CLOSE SHOT OF Ninotchka marching with the others. All her individuality is gone. She is one of many, a cog in the Russian machine. With a stern expression she is looking straight ahead when suddenly something attracts her attention and she glances to one side.

A Column of Male Workers is coming in the opposite direction. Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski are recognizable among them.

CLOSE SHOT –
BULJANOFF, IRANOFF, AND KOPALSKI MARCHING. All three are already pretty exhausted from the long march. Kopalski sees Ninotchka. He whispers it to the others. The three look toward Ninotchka and lift their shoulders with a gesture which says, "Look where we are now."

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA, answering them with a sad smile. After they have passed she stares straight forward again with the same stern expression.

DISSOLVE TO:

PANNING SHOT – STAIRCASE IN NINOTCHKA'S TENEMENT HOUSE

It is an overcrowded house. People are walking up and down stairs, standing grouped in front of the various apartments; children are sliding down the banisters and playing games under the feet of the adults.

Ninotchka trudges upstairs wearily. Camera pans with her as she goes into an apartment which is divided into several sub-apartments. Finally she opens the door of her own room and goes in.

NINOTCHKA'S ROOM

It is a comparatively small room, which she shares with two other girls. As she enters only one girl is present. It is Anna, a cello player, who sits on the edge of her bed practicing on her cello. Apparently Ninotchka has not adjusted herself completely to the Moscow which she once thought so great.

NINOTCHKA
Good evening, Anna.

ANNA
Good evening, Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA
Aren't you late?

ANNA
No, the opera starts an hour later
tonight on account of the parade.

During the following scene Anna puts her cello in its case and gets ready to go to her job. Ninotchka starts to arrange the table in the center of the floor for a party of four. Out of her cupboard she takes very primitive-looking dishes, a flower pot, glasses, and a kind of shawl which serves as a tablecloth.

NINOTCHKA
Didn't you march?

Anna is apparently not a fanatical believer in the Bolshevik regime and takes a cynical and humorous attitude toward it.

ANNA
They didn't let me. I am in disgrace.
Last week at the performance of Carmen
I played a sour note. The conductor
got so excited he yelled, "There's
sabotage in the string section!"

NINOTCHKA
Too bad... you missed an inspiring
day, Anna.

ANNA
I know... my heart is sad... but my
feet are happy. When all the tanks
and guns were roaring over the Red
Square I sat here all by myself and
played a Beethoven sonata. Not bad
at all.
(she has noticed
Ninotchka's
preparations)
Are you expecting someone?

NINOTCHKA
A few friends... just a little dinner

party.

ANNA

What are you serving?

NINOTCHKA

An omelet.

ANNA

(puzzled)

An omelet! Aren't you living a little above your ration?

NINOTCHKA

Well, I've saved up two eggs and each of my friends is bringing his own so we'll manage.

ANNA

It just goes to prove the theory of our State. If you stand alone it means a boiled egg but if you're true to the collective spirit and stick together you've got an omelet.

(devilishly)

That reminds me... have you heard the latest they're telling about the Kremlin?

At this moment a door to one of the adjoining rooms opens and Gurganov, a middle-aged man with a sour stool-pigeon expression, walks quietly through the room to another door, taking in the girls with one sly glance and giving the impression that not only his eyes but his ears are open. Anna breaks off her remark.

ANNA

(whispering)

I'll tell you later.

(after Gurganov has disappeared into the other room she continues)

That Gurganov, you never know whether he's on his way to the washroom or the Secret Police.

NINOTCHKA

You should be more careful, Anna.

ANNA

And you too, Ninotchka.

NINOTCHKA

(amazed)

About what?

ANNA

Ever since you have been back from Paris...

NINOTCHKA

I haven't talked to anyone about Paris. I haven't said a word.

ANNA

That's just it. It makes people feel queer. I don't want you to get in any trouble.

NINOTCHKA

I have nothing to hide.

ANNA

You should. I'll show you.

She walks over to her cupboard and takes out a piece of lingerie and comes back to Ninotchka with it.

ANNA

When I passed through the laundry yard today I saw all the women huddled around this so I brought it up here. Things like this create a bad feeling. First they didn't know whose it was. Then they saw the Paris label and did it start a commotion! Some said it's what we all ought to wear and others said it's like hanging foreign ideas on our clothesline. It undermines our whole cause.

NINOTCHKA

(aware of the pettiness
which surrounds her)

I see.

ANNA

You know how it is today... all you have to do is wear a pair of silk stockings and they suspect you of counter-revolution.

NINOTCHKA

Thank you, Anna. I'll dry it up here when I wash it next. I should hate to see our country endangered by my underwear.

ANNA

(confidentially)

Ninotchka, you know I am your friend, you can trust me.... Did you bring back anything else?

Ninotchka suddenly is transported to Paris in her memory.

NINOTCHKA

(with feeling)

No, I left everything in Paris. I just happened to be wearing this.

ANNA

Tell me... what else did you have?

NINOTCHKA

(enjoying the thought)

Well, a hat...

ANNA

What was it like?

NINOTCHKA

It was very silly.... I would be ashamed to wear it here.

ANNA

As beautiful as that? What else? Come, tell me.

NINOTCHKA

An evening gown.

ANNA

(puzzled)
Evening gown?

NINOTCHKA
A dress you wear in the evening.

ANNA
What do you wear in the morning?

NINOTCHKA
When you get up you put on a negligee,
and then you change to a morning
frock.

ANNA
You mean to tell me you wear a
different dress for different times
of the day?

NINOTCHKA
Yes.

ANNA
Now, Ninotchka, you're exaggerating.

NINOTCHKA
No, my dear, it is true. That's how
they live in the other world. Here
we dress to have our bodies covered...
to keep warm....

ANNA
And there?

NINOTCHKA
Well, sometimes they're not completely
covered but... they don't freeze.

ANNA
(fingering the piece
of lingerie)
They must have wonderful materials
to make a thing like this so soft...
something you don't even see.

NINOTCHKA
You feel it, though.

ANNA
(hesitantly)
Ninotchka, I wouldn't bring this up
if we weren't such good friends.

NINOTCHKA
What is it, Anna?

ANNA
You know I told you that Pavlov and
I are going to get married when he
comes back from the maneuvers. Would
it be asking too much...

NINOTCHKA
You want this?

ANNA
Just for the honeymoon.

NINOTCHKA
You can have it for good. It is my
wedding present.

Anna is for a moment speechless over this generous gift. She
embraces and kisses Ninotchka.

ANNA
Ninotchka! Ninotchka!

She kisses her again, takes her cello, and starts to leave.

ANNA
Am I going to play that cadenza
tonight!

Anna exits, closing the door. Ninotchka is left alone. Her
thoughts are still in the other world, obviously with Leon.
Mechanically she looks over the table to see if everything
is all right, then she walks over to the radio (a primitive
little machine). As she turns the knob she smiles again
reminiscently. As she does, the blare of a Russian speech
brings her back to reality.

VOICE ON RADIO
Individuals? Yes, as atoms in the
cosmos of Soviet Russia. Family?
Yes. One great family of one hundred

and sixty million, struggling,
fighting, victorious Russian
proletarians. Thus shall we pursue
our way into the future, fists
clenched, hearts encased in steel
armed against bourgeois sentimentality
and...

Quickly she turns the knob and again there is a burst of
Russian oratory.

SECOND VOICE ON RADIO

...From the Exploiters for the Toilers. We are going full
steam ahead through industrialization toward socialism. Let
us put the Union of Socialistic Soviet Republics into an
automobile and the muzhik into a tractor, and then let the
capitalists try to keep up with us! The same thing happens
for a third time.

THIRD VOICE ON RADIO

...and thirty million peasants, eighty-five per cent of the
population owned three hundred forty-three million four
hundred and sixty-nine thousand acres of land, sixty-five
per cent of the total area. And one hundred and fifty thousand
nobles possessed thirty-five per cent of the country's natural
wealth!

Ninotchka turns off the radio. She closes her eyes for a
moment and with a sad smile murmurs to herself.

NINOTCHKA

No music.

At this moment the door opens, and Buljanoff, Iranoff, and
Kopalski enter. There follow warm greetings between Ninotchka
and the Three Russians.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

Ninotchka! Ninotchka!

A moment of silence follows. The four look at each other as
people do who share a secret.

NINOTCHKA

(with great warmth)

How are you, you three scoundrels?

KOPALSKI

(wryly)

Well, we're back home.

BULJANOFF

(sourly)

You know what they say – there's nothing like home.

IRANOFF

That's right... and we might as well face it.

NINOTCHKA

(trying not to say
what she feels)

Come, now, you must not talk that way.... You have to adjust yourselves.... We must be brave.

IRANOFF

Brave... that's right.

BULJANOFF

Let's be happy that we're all alive.

IRANOFF

And that's something we owe to Ninotchka.

KOPALSKI

If you hadn't given Commissar Razinin such a wonderful report about us, who knows what would have happened?

BULJANOFF

I can tell you exactly.

NINOTCHKA

Now let's forget everything except that we're together.

BULJANOFF

That's right.

IRANOFF

Let's do that.

KOPALSKI

(falling in with her
attempt)

It's a real Paris reunion.

IRANOFF

If you close your eyes and listen to
our voices we might be in Paris.

NINOTCHKA

Let's not close our eyes. There are
many good things to see here too.

BULJANOFF

(cynically)

I think I need my glasses.

KOPALSKI

(reprimanding him
quietly)

A little more tact... look how nicely
she's fixed the table – all for us.

BULJANOFF

(in a loud voice,
trying to make up
for his faux pas)

How nicely you've fixed the table,
Ninotchka.

IRANOFF

What a lovely room you have here.

BULJANOFF

How many families live here with
you?

NINOTCHKA

Only myself and two other girls. One
is a cello player in the opera and
the other a street-car conductor.

IRANOFF

(impressed)

Just three people in a room this
size? Whew!

KOPALSKI
(inspecting the room)
And your own gas cooker? That's
marvelous!
(forgetting himself)
Naturally it's not the Royal Suite...

NINOTCHKA
Sssh! Once and for all, we're in
Moscow!

KOPALSKI
(walking over to the
window)
Yes, there's no doubt of that...
(sarcastically)
Just look out of the window and there
it is.

NINOTCHKA
And it's great! Think what it was a
few years ago and what it is now.

Iranoff and Buljanoff have joined them at the window.

IRANOFF
She's right...
(under his breath)
anyhow let's talk ourselves into it.

BULJANOFF
Just see how happy the people look...
from here....

KOPALSKI
Can you blame them?... at least the
May Day parade is over.

BULJANOFF
That's another thing... it's spring.

NINOTCHKA
The same spring we had in Paris.
Just as good.

KOPALSKI
Even the swallows are back.

BULJANOFF AND IRANOFF
Yes, that's right.

IRANOFF
Maybe that's the same swallow we saw
in Paris!

BULJANOFF
It is, Ninotchka! It is! He must
have been in Paris! You can see it
in his whole attitude! He just picked
up a crumb of our black bread, shook
his head, and dropped it.

KOPALSKI
If you asked him why he left France
I bet he couldn't name one good
reason.

BULJANOFF
I should be a swallow! Right now I
would be sitting in front of the
Caf, de Paris picking up flakes of
French pastry that would melt in my
bill.

NINOTCHKA
Now, comrades... there is something
better in life than crumbs of French
pastry.

KOPALSKI
(the realist)
Yes, a good piece of apfel strudel....

NINOTCHKA
We will get that... we'll get
everything... maybe a little bit
later but we'll get it... We must be
patient... Finally we got the spring,
didn't we? We got the swallows, and
you will get your apfel strudel too.

BULJANOFF
(consolingly)
And if it is too late for you your
children will eat it.

IRANOFF

(breaking the mood)

Let's forget the future... let's
stop being sentimental... let's start
that omelet.

KOPALSKI

That's right.

(he takes a little
box out of his pocket)

Here's my egg.

(he hands it to
Ninotchka)

Iranoff unties his egg from his handkerchief.

IRANOFF

And here's mine.

He hands it to Ninotchka.

Buljanoff reaches in his pocket and from his expression we
see that a catastrophe must have happened.

BULJANOFF

Comrades... I'm out of the omelet.

NINOTCHKA

Don't worry... there will be enough.

IRANOFF

Come, Ninotchka, let's make it in
real Parisian style!

The group all go to the gas cooker and Ninotchka starts to
make the omelet. The others stand around as though they were
watching a great event.

KOPALSKI

Let's fill it with confitures, des
prunes...

BULJANOFF

...des raisins de Mad, re, des
framboises...

(...with grapes of
Madeira, with
raspberries...)

IRANOFF

...des petites fraises des bois...
de la cr_ me de Bretagne...
(...with small wild
strawberries... with
cream...)

KOPALSKI

...so it blows up that big... what
they call an Omelette Surprise!

BULJANOFF

And the surprise is there's nothing
in it.

KOPALSKI

I know, but if we can't put in all
these wonderful things at least let's
put in some imagination.
(he raises his voice)
In that one omelet we'll taste the
whole of Paris!

The door through which Gurganov disappeared opens and Gurganov
comes out.

IRANOFF

(seeing him)
Sssh!

The conversation stops. Gurganov walks quietly through the
room, again observing everything. He goes out at last.

IRANOFF

A man like that... all he has to do
is to walk through a room and the
omelet drops.

There is a dead silence. All are again aware of the reality
which surrounds. They concentrate quietly on the frying pan.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT OF THE FRYING PAN

The eggs are gradually taking the shape of an omelet.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT OF A PLATE ON THE TABLE

Only the last scraps of the omelet are on it. Buljanoff's hand comes in with a big piece of bread with which he sops up every fragment that is left.

DISSOLVE TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – NINOTCHKA'S ROOM – EVENING

The curtains are drawn and the lamp lighted. All four are sitting around the table, in the center of which is a samovar. In front of each of them is a glass of tea. One of the Russians is playing a balalaika and all are singing gaily, "Paris."

Ninotchka is enjoying their companionship. After a little while the door to the corridor opens and Ninotchka's other roommate, the street-car conductor, strides in. She is a squareset, unfriendly woman in uniform.

At sight of her one of the Russians nudges Ninotchka, makes the gesture of ringing up a fare, and accompanies it with an inquiring look. Ninotchka nods. The Russians change their tune quickly to the "Volga Boatman" in order not to awaken animosity.

The street-car conductor goes to her bed and starts to take off her shoes and her coat, then draws the curtain. During the following scene we hear the splash of water and the sound of gargling.

Again Gurganov crosses the room, this time accompanied by his little son.

Suddenly the door is opened by Vladimir, a friendly old man.

VLADIMIR
(calling into the
room)

Comrade Yakushova, here, the postman
left a letter for you.

He hands her a letter and exits.

CLOSE SHOT – NINOTCHKA

She takes the letter, glances at the envelope, and is stunned. She turns the envelope – an expression of breathless wonder comes over her face.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

What is it, Ninotchka?

NINOTCHKA

It's from Paris.

IRANOFF AND BULJANOFF

From Paris?

KOPALSKI

A bill?

NINOTCHKA

From Leon.

ALL THREE RUSSIANS

From Leon!... How is he?... Come, tell us... open it... tell us... how is he?

Ninotchka sits in the chair nearest the lamp. All three are looking over her shoulder. Ninotchka hesitates to open the letter, obviously wanting to read it all by herself. Realizing her feelings, the Three Russians walk to the far end of the room and sit down on a little bench, looking toward Ninotchka with childlike expectancy. In great anticipation Ninotchka opens the letter. She starts to read it. Suddenly her expression changes to one of terrific disappointment. She turns the letter over, glances at the second page, then puts the letter down on the table. The Russians have followed her expression closely. Slowly they walk over to her.

IRANOFF

(very sympathetic)

Bad news?

NINOTCHKA

Look for yourselves.

Iranoff picks up the letter. All three look at it.

Insert of First Page of Letter, held in Iranoff's hand. In Leon's handwriting we read:

"Ninotchka, my darling,"

The rest of the writing is blocked out, line by line, and across the page is a big stamp which says "Censored." Iranoff's hand turns the page. The second page is also censored except for the final words,

"Yours, Leon."

SHOT OF THE WHOLE GROUP

Iranoff puts the letter back on the table. They all understand and realize that Ninotchka wants to be alone.

KOPALSKI

Well, I think it's getting late.
Good night, Ninotchka.

IRANOFF

Thank you for a wonderful dinner.

Ninotchka rises and shakes their hands.

NINOTCHKA

(with great warmth)
Good night, my friends.

The three start to leave but Buljanoff returns and whispers to Ninotchka.

BULJANOFF

They can't censor our memories, can they?

Ninotchka presses his hand. He walks quietly out with the others.

Ninotchka, left alone, sits down. She is heartbroken. Her thoughts are too sad and too far away to be disturbed by the snoring which comes from the corner where the street-car conductor has gone to bed.

FADE OUT:

CLOSE SHOT – THE WINDOW OF RAZININ'S OFFICE

FADE IN:

shooting from the inside. Through the window the background of Moscow. It is winter and snow is on the roofs. The CAMERA PULLS BACK and discloses Razinin sitting at his desk, reading a report with a stern expression.

MEDIUM SHOT – RAZININ'S OFFICE

Ninotchka enters carrying several folders. She walks to Razinin's desk and stands waiting for him to recognize her presence. She is a tired, stern girl. Razinin looks up.

RAZININ

Good morning, Comrade.

NINOTCHKA

(very businesslike)

Good morning, Comrade Commissar.
Here is my report on the materials available for trading in the next four months.

RAZININ

Does this include the products of the Far Eastern provinces?

NINOTCHKA

Yes, it does.

RAZININ

You mean you have finished the whole investigation?

NINOTCHKA

Yes.

RAZININ

That's marvelous.... You must have worked day and night.... Don't you ever sleep?

NINOTCHKA

I need very little sleep. We must be extremely careful what goods we take in exchange. I have already started a survey of our most urgent needs.

RAZININ

Well, Comrade, I am afraid you will have to turn over that work to someone else.

NINOTCHKA
(startled)
May I ask why?

RAZININ
Please... sit down.

Ninotchka sits.

RAZININ
Cigarette?

NINOTCHKA
Thank you.

RAZININ
Well, Comrade, have you heard from your friends Kopalski, Buljanoff, and Iranoff?

NINOTCHKA
No.

RAZININ
I haven't either, but I've heard about them. You must realize it was only on the strength of your Paris report that I sent them to Constantinople; without that I never would have trusted them on a mission as important as the fur deal.

NINOTCHKA
May I ask what has happened?

RAZININ
As soon as our representatives go to a foreign country they seem to lose all sense of balance. If I told you what's going on in Constantinople right now you wouldn't believe it. Those three have been sitting there for six weeks and haven't sold a piece of fur.

(he points to the folder)

This anonymous report was sent me. They are dragging the good name of our country through every caf, and night club. Here...

(he reads from the report)

"How can the Bolshevik cause gain respect among the Moslems if your three representatives, Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski, get so drunk that they throw a carpet out of their hotel window and complain to the management that it didn't fly?"

Ninotchka has to suppress a smile of amusement at the antics of her three old friends.

NINOTCHKA

Oh, they shouldn't do such things. Are you sure this report is correct?

RAZININ

It gives details which couldn't be invented. Naturally I want to verify it and that's why I need you.

NINOTCHKA

(apprehensively)

You want me to go to Constantinople?

RAZININ

Yes... leaving immediately.

NINOTCHKA

(her one object to escape the mission)

I appreciate the confidence you show in me, but I must ask you to entrust someone else with this mission. I should hate to interrupt my present work. I am positive that my survey is more important than finding out whether three of our comrades have been drinking some extra glasses of champagne.

RAZININ

(austerely)

That is for me to decide, Comrade Yakushova.

NINOTCHKA

I am sorry, I don't want to overstep my position – but please... don't send me.

RAZININ

I don't understand.

NINOTCHKA

(making a last effort)

How can I make myself clear... It is difficult to express but I'd rather not go to foreign countries any more. Please, Comrade... let me stay here... let me finish my work... I am in the rhythm of it now... I don't want to go away. I don't want to be sent into that foreign atmosphere again. It throws one out of gear.... Let me finish my work... I have concentrated everything in it... Please... don't make me go.

RAZININ

Please don't waste my time, Comrade. Do your duty. Good-by.

NINOTCHKA

I will do my best.

She exits, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

ESTABLISHING SHOT OF CONSTANTINOPLE, on a bright sunlit day, if possible with the circling shadow of an airplane.

DISSOLVE TO:

LONG SHOT – AIRPORT IN CONSTANTINOPLE, shooting from an airplane angle. A crowd is awaiting the arrival of a plane. The CAMERA goes down to a CLOSE SHOT of Buljanoff, Iranoff, and Kopalski, standing in the crowd.

All three are very elegantly and gaily dressed. They are in the happiest mood. One of them carries a large bouquet of flowers to greet Ninotchka.

DISSOLVE TO:

LIVING ROOM OF A VERY LUXURIOUS HOTEL SUITE IN CONSTANTINOPLE. Its style should suggest the locale. Ninotchka enters with the Three Russians, who are very happy to have her with them again.

KOPALSKI

(indicating the room)

How do you like it, Ninotchka? Isn't it wonderful?

IRANOFF AND BULJANOFF

Tell us... tell us.

Ninotchka protests, but during the whole scene it is evident that behind her protestations there is none of the force and conviction she displayed in a similar situation in the Royal Suite.

NINOTCHKA

But Buljanoff, Iranoff, Kopalski...

IRANOFF

Now, please, Ninotchka, don't start figuring it out in cows.

NINOTCHKA

You've done it again and I am responsible. How can you forget yourselves this way? You were sent here to make money, not to spend it.

IRANOFF

Buljanoff, she still has those old-fashioned Bolshevik ideas.

BULJANOFF

It is high time you got out of Russia.

NINOTCHKA

(not knowing what to do with the three

rascals)
I must be stern with you.

KOPALSKI
(delighted)
That's our old Ninotchka!

BULJANOFF AND IRANOFF
(agreeing with him)
Yes, yes.

NINOTCHKA
Don't forget, the day will come when
you will have to face Razinin.

BULJANOFF
(cockily)
Good old Razinin! Is he still alive?
How does he manage?

NINOTCHKA
But, Comrades...

KOPALSKI
(with the happiness
of being free again
in his voice)
We are not comrades any more... we
are friends, Ninotchka.

BULJANOFF
Imagine, we don't have to whisper
any longer.

IRANOFF
We can say whatever we want. We can
shout... we can complain... Look...
(he opens the door
leading to corridor)
The service in this hotel is terrible!
(he closes the door)
See? Nobody comes... nobody pays any
attention. That's freedom.

BULJANOFF
(dryly)
No, that's bad management.

NINOTCHKA

Is it possible to bring you back to reality for a moment? I must have a complete report of your negotiations and a detailed expense account.

BULJANOFF

Don't ask for it, Ninotchka. There is a Turkish proverb which says, "If something smells bad, why put your nose in it?"

NINOTCHKA

And there is a Russian saying: "The cat who has cream on his whiskers had better find good excuses."

BULJANOFF

With our cream situation what it is, it is Russia which should apologize to the cats.

NINOTCHKA

(helplessly)

Friends... friends, Buljanoff, Iranoff...

KOPALSKI

(afraid of being left out)

...and Kopalski.

NINOTCHKA

(pleadingly)

Don't make it difficult for me. This is no more a pleasure trip for me than it is for you.

IRANOFF

That was our idea when we first came. All we thought we would get out of this trip was a Turkish bath, but... we learned better.

KOPALSKI

Ninotchka, we are in the magic East, the country of Aladdin and His Lamp...

IRANOFF

...Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves...
into one single hour you can crowd a
thousand and one nights.

BULJANOFF

All you have to do is say "open
sesame."

NINOTCHKA

I don't know how I can get you out
of it this time. How will it end?
What will happen to you?

BULJANOFF

(intimately)

Shall we tell her?

IRANOFF AND KOPALSKI

Yes.

BULJANOFF

(proudly)

Ninotchka, I hope you'll be our guest.

NINOTCHKA

Guest?

BULJANOFF

We have opened a restaurant...

IRANOFF

...we have a wonderful electric sign:
"Dine With Buljanof, Iranoff, and
Kopalski."

NINOTCHKA

You mean you are deserting Russia?

KOPALSKI

(singing the song of
freedom)

Don't call it desertion. Our little
restaurant... that is our Russia...
the Russia of borscht, the Russia of
beef Stroganoff, blinis with sour
cream...

IRANOFF

...the Russia of piroshki... people
will eat and love it.

BULJANOFF

We are not only serving good food,
we are serving our country... we are
making friends.

NINOTCHKA

(completely bewildered)

Who gave you this idea? What is
responsible for all this?

KOPALSKI

(with a gleam in his
eye)

There's something in Constantinople...
something irresistible....

IRANOFF

...it is in the air... it may come
around the corner as you walk down
the street....

BULJANOFF

...it may step out of a bazaar... it
may wait for you in a corridor... it
may hide in the shadow of a
minaret....

KOPALSKI

(pointing to the
balcony)

Right now it's on the balcony.

Ninotchka looks toward the balcony and is dumbfounded as she
sees Leon standing there smiling at her. He walks quietly
toward her.

LEON

(looking longingly at
Ninotchka)

They wouldn't let me in so I had to
get you out.

NINOTCHKA

(still taken aback)

So – you're behind all this. I should have known.

Leon takes her hand and kisses it. The Three Russians exchange glances. The CAMERA PANS WITH THEM –leaving Ninotchka and Leon as Russians walk discreetly out of the room and close the door behind them.

CLOSE SHOT – LEON AND NINOTCHKA

LEON

Trying to keep me away from you! It couldn't be done. Naturally I couldn't go on forever punching passport officials in the nose – but I found a way, didn't I? Darling, I had to see you. I wrote and wrote but all my letters came back.

NINOTCHKA

The one I got they wouldn't let me read.

(carried away by emotion)

It began, "Ninotchka, my darling," and ended, "Yours, Leon."

LEON

(with great feeling and sincerity)

I won't tell you what came between... I'll prove it. It will take a long time, Ninotchka... at least a lifetime.

Ninotchka is aware that she is facing a decision. She knows what she wants but still tries to evade a definite answer.

NINOTCHKA

But, Leon, I am only here for a few days.

LEON

If you don't stay with me, I'll have to continue my fight. I'll travel wherever Russian commissions are. I'll turn them all into Buljanoffs, Iranoffs, and Kopalskis. The world

will be crowded with Russian
restaurants. I'll depopulate Russia.
Once you saved your country by going
back. This time you can save it by
staying here.

NINOTCHKA

Well, when it is a choice between my
personal interest and the good of my
country, how can I waver? No one
shall say Ninotchka was a bad Russian.

Leon takes her in his arms, they kiss as we

FADE OUT:

THE END