

T R U M B O

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TRUMBO PRODUCTIONS, LLC

PUBLISHED DRAFT

TRUMBO

A BLACK SCREEN

As white words FADE UP in silence --

Later, you might ask, "Wait, that really happened?"

A beat, then --

It really happened.

A longer beat, then --

And it mostly happened like this...

CUT TO:

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - 1947 - DAWN

Alone in a vast, serrated mountain range a hundred miles north of Los Angeles, it looks from the outside like a rustic sprawl. The day is a gold sliver in a navy sky.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - BATHROOM - DAWN

Writer DALTON TRUMBO, 41, debonair, heartfelt and combative, is naked in a tub, his copyholder on a wood plank as the steam rises.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - TRUMBO'S STUDY - DAWN

Like the whole home, beautifully appointed. Trumbo, kindled cigarette in its holder, attacks the keys of a typewriter on his desk, the fastest two-fingered typist ever as we --

QUICKLY CUT AROUND HIS OFFICE,

Taking in:

- The American Booksellers National Book Award for his novel, Johnny Got His Gun.
- The poster for his movie, Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo.
- His Oscar nomination for the screenplay of Kitty Foyle.

TIGHT ON TRUMBO'S TYPEWRITER

As the inky letters CHOP movie dialogue across the white paper, Trumbo writing like a boxer working a speed bag --

MANNY: What do you want?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORE QUICK POPS - TO SHELVES AND TABLETOPS

Thick with framed photos of:

- Trumbo with KATHARINE HEPBURN at a United Refugee Committee dinner.

- Trumbo as a World War II correspondent in his dress uniform, boarding a plane.

- Trumbo in muddy fatigues, among battered SOLDIERS on a battle-scarred beach in the South Pacific.

BACK TO A TIGHT CLOSE-UP OF TRUMBO'S WRITING

Words racing across the page:

What we all want.

ATOP HIS DESK - FRAMED FAMILY PICTURES

In them, WE SEE both Trumbo's furious pecking reflected on glass, animatedly overlaying stills under glass of:

- Trumbo's wife Cleo in a stunning portrait.

- Trumbo and Cleo with their three children, blowing out Niki's eighth birthday cake.

BACK TO TRUMBO AT THE TYPEWRITER

Lemony morning light now paints the windows. Trumbo writes:

To not die young, poor...

And now we HEAR --

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (PRE-LAP)
What do you want? What we all
want. To not die young, poor...

-- as the final words of Trumbo's speech strike paper --

...or alone.

-- Trumbo SLAPS the return and in a WHITE BLUR we're now --

INT. A NEW YORK ALLEY (MGM SOUNDSTAGE) - NIGHT

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
...or alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON -- a charismatic, stocky man of 53, both assertive and refined -- plays "MANNY," stepping from a sedan, moving toward a SUPPORTING PLAYER as "ROCCO," on his knees, bloody lip, torn jacket.

"ROCCO"

Manny, these guys... I don't give 'em what they're after, they'll kill me.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY"

Hold it, Rocco.

"Manny" takes out his revolver -- and aims it at "Rocco," who freezes as he stands.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (CONT'D)

If we don't fight these guys, sure, maybe you --

As "Manny" gestures with the gun, its cylinder dislodges from the barrel -- and several bullets FLY out and comically CLATTER to the stage floor at Robinson's feet.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (CONT'D)

Shit.

The director is out of his chair and on his feet -- SAM WOOD, early 60s, sharp, authoritative.

SAM WOOD

Cut! Goin' again, Eddie.

A BELL sounds. The CREW rustles in the shadows.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Sorry, Sam. Sorry, everybody. Of course, the one day the author's among us.

Trumbo sits nearby, in a bespoke suit, calmly smoking. Robinson settles in a canvas chair with his name on the back.

SAM WOOD

(as he glides past to talk to the CAMERAMAN)

"Among us." Sure ain't one of us.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

(keeping it light)

What's the brilliant line, Trumbo?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DALTON TRUMBO

"If we don't fight these guys,
sure, maybe you get that long,
happy life we all want."

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Then what is it you've got me
fighting for again?

DALTON TRUMBO

"Peace on Earth, good will toward
men."

Nearby, Wood SNORTS. *Yeah, right.*

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

You can't do that, this is America.

DALTON TRUMBO

How about sex and money?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

There you go, two things we all
love. None of your little sermons
on citizenship.

EXT. A BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - BACKYARD - NIGHT

A flat half-acre dominated by a massive pool that GLOWS with
a hundred floating candles. A PARTY where:

- MEN are in black tie, WOMEN in gowns, everyone smokes,
everyone drinks. Different time, different world.

- There's MUSIC from a live BIG BAND.

VOICES overlap and compete as we snag snippets:

PARTYGOER 1

"...I don't love it but Zanuck
does..."

PARTYGOER 2

"...make the Indians the good guys,
that's the twist..."

PARTYGOER 3

"Now the actors want to go on
strike. Who's next? Lassie?"

CLEO TRUMBO, 30s, hovers at the edge of a GROUP OF WOMEN
about her age.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's beautiful, observant, sensitive, often silent, as she is here, excusing herself with a warm smile to look for someone at the party, passing by --

A GROUP OF MEN. Louder, more boisterous. Within that group, Edward G. Robinson.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

(in mid-sentence)

...still doing reshoots, what else?
Luckily, Mayer lined up the A Team,
Sam Wood to shoot, Dalton Trumbo
for rewrites, so, fingers
crossed...

From across the lawn, TWO MALE VOICES suddenly RISE, so we hear before we see:

SAM WOOD (O.S.)

...Jesus, Trumbo, a goddamn six-
month strike, for what?

DALTON TRUMBO (O.S.)

(dryly)

Well, I think... money.

Cleo Trumbo turns to that second VOICE with minor dread and as she does, she and Robinson clock one another with the same thought: *Jesus, here we go...*

As they both zero in on:

Director Sam Wood, more than a little drunk.

SAM WOOD

Laugh it up. I had no crew! I
couldn't work --

(shouting at Trumbo)

-- you wouldn't work, God forbid
you cross a picket line. For set
builders. What do set builders
have to do with writing?

DALTON TRUMBO

What writers write, builders build.
What they build, you film. You
make all the money you possibly
can, so do I, why shouldn't they?
And why can't we help them? In the
long run, it's better for everyone -
-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM WOOD

-- said the Swimming Pool Soviet.

DALTON TRUMBO

(calmly)

Sam. You won. The strike's over,
the union's history. We've all
gone back to being good little
worker bees making sweet movie
honey and you --

(now, just a little sharp)

-- might just try being a gracious
winner.

That last comes with a gentle poke into Wood's lapel from
Trumbo's fingers, which hold his cigarette. Wood does not
appreciate the jab or the accompanying smoke in his face.

SAM WOOD

It's never over with you people --
strike, after strike, after strike!

Wood is SHOUTING now. Among the Guests: HEADS turn... SMILES
falter... CONVERSATIONS stop.

SAM WOOD (CONT'D)

Y'know what? I'm going on strike --
against people WHO GO ON STRIKE!

DALTON TRUMBO

And I won't cross your picket line,
either.

Wood might just shove Trumbo now, he's so angry, but --

-- suddenly, Robinson is there to get Wood's arm in a
friendly grasp.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

(with jovial aplomb)

Sam, Sam, Sam, we've got to talk
about those scenes tomorrow,
disaster, who the hell wrote that
crap?

(a wink at Trumbo, steering
Wood away)But first, may I have this
dance...?

At the same time, Cleo takes her husband's hand and moves him
in the opposite direction.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CLEO
Having fun?

DALTON TRUMBO
Eternally.

They kiss and move to the bar, passing --

-- a tall, broad MAN of 39 who eyes Trumbo the way a western sheriff would a gunfighter. We don't know it yet, but:

This is JOHN WAYNE.

And as his eyes follow the Trumbos, he meets the gaze of a WOMAN. Late middle years, trim, striking, grand yet folksy, always in a stylish hat. Wayne and she share a moment of silent understanding. We don't know it yet, but:

This is HEDDA HOPPER.

CUT TO:

INT. LOS ANGELES MOVIE THEATRE 1 - NIGHT

UP ON THE MOVIE SCREEN - A NEWSREEL

Actual black & white documentary footage of a waving WINSTON CHURCHILL, grimly addressing an assembly:

WINSTON CHURCHILL (ON SCREEN)
Nobody knows what Soviet Russia
intends to do. An Iron Curtain has
descended across the continent.

The newsreel CUTS TO a cartoon map of Europe and Asia as an animated red Iron Curtain drops, enclosing Soviet Russia.

NEWSREEL NARRATOR
The front line in a new kind of
war. A Cold War!

SHOTS of Russian military might: ARMIES march, FIGHTERS launch, TANKS roll.

NEWSREEL NARRATOR (CONT'D)
The enemy -- Communists!

BACK TO the cartoon map as the Iron Curtain BECOMES a series of red tentacles --

NEWSREEL NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Their goal -- world domination!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- and those tentacles slither across Europe and Asia, heading for the United States.

REVERSE TO REVEAL - THE MOVIE AUDIENCE

MEN in ties, WOMEN in dresses, KIDS in their Sunday best.

And among them WE FIND Dalton Trumbo with his family: daughter NIKI, 8, son CHRIS, 6, Cleo, and in her lap, their youngest, MITZI, 2, all munching and sipping movie treats, watching --

THE NEWSREEL

As it CUTS TO A SHOT OF the Hollywood sign --

NEWSREEL NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Dateline: Hollywood. The offices of former film starlet, now top columnist, Hedda Hopper.

-- then DISSOLVES TO A SHOT of a newspaper column under the aerodynamically lettered byline, HEDDA HOPPER'S HOLLYWOOD.

Next to the text, Hedda Hopper. As she begins to speak from inside her column:

HEDDA HOPPER (ON SCREEN)

(to camera)

Greetings from our film capital, where all is sun and fun. Or is it?

CUT TO A WIDE SHOT (ARCHIVAL) -- OF WELL-KNOWN MOVIE FOLK. Grouped together a bit awkwardly in bright midday sun:

HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

See the famous faces here? Danny Kaye, Humphrey Bogart, his dishy bride, Lauren Bacall, their good friend, film director John Huston, and many others...

CLOSE-UPS (ARCHIVAL) of these FAMOUS FACES, plus a few LESS WELL-KNOWN.

HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...all of whom have declared solidarity with film crews picketing for higher wages. In walk-outs that quickly turned violent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NEW SHOTS (ARCHIVAL) - OF PEACEFUL STRIKES OUTSIDE FILM STUDIOS that indeed turn violent: POLICE CLUB THE STRIKERS, ATTACK DOGS MAUL, FIRE HOSES SPRAY --

*HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Because these strikes were in fact
the work of dangerous radicals.*

A NEW CLOSE-UP (TO BE SHOT) -- SOMEONE standing on an apple box, addressing a peaceful line of studio PICKETERS:

It's Dalton Trumbo, his black & white face 40 feet high:

*DALTON TRUMBO (ON SCREEN)
...this is what angers and
frightens the studios!*

DOWN IN THE THEATRE

The Trumbo family is silently stunned. Trumbo's own jaw slackens just a bit at the surreal sight of himself up on screen, then he quickly regains his composure. But his oldest child can't help herself --

*NIKI
Dad, is that you?*

He nods curtly, pats her arm and the tiny, color, real Trumbo down here watches:

THE ENORMOUS BLACK & WHITE FACE OF TRUMBO - UP ON SCREEN

Delivering this searing union rallying cry to the assembled, among whom we glimpse an APPLAUDING Edward G. Robinson:

*DALTON TRUMBO (ON SCREEN)
We've discovered where our true
power lies! Builders, cameramen,
painters, drivers, writers, actors,
directors! We are a single,
indivisible brotherhood of workers.
Bargain with a few of us, you
bargain with all of us! Threaten
one, you threaten us all and it's
war! We are many but from this day
forward -- we are one!*

*The Picketers and Movie Stars UP ON SCREEN begin to CHEER
Trumbo as --*

*HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.)
This is writer Dalton Trumbo. Who
is...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A new CLOSE-UP of Hedda Hopper in her office:

*HEDDA HOPPER (ON SCREEN)
...like many of those strikers --
and their supporters -- a
registered Communist.*

BACK TO TRUMBO AND NIKI

*As daughter looks at father, surprised -- is that true?
Trumbo doesn't meet her questioning gaze, just smokes and
stoically takes in:*

HEDDA HOPPER - UP ON SCREEN

Dwarfing him:

*HEDDA HOPPER (ON SCREEN)
Which is why we must know: Who
exactly was behind that walk-out...
and why?*

*The scene now CUTS TO various CONGRESSMEN, INVESTIGATORS and
AIDES mounting the stairs of the U.S. Capitol.*

*HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Our elected leaders will find out.*

The CAMERA SINGLES OUT a bald, fifty-ish New Jerseyite --

*HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Congressman J. Parnell Thomas and
his House Un-American Activities
Committee.*

*CONGRESSMAN THOMAS (ON SCREEN)
Communism is not some faraway
threat; its most dangerous agents
are here, controlling the airwaves
and movie screens, taking over its
employees and their unions. They
need to be identified as the
enemies they are.*

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - LOBBY - LATER THAT NIGHT

*The five Trumbos stream out with the audience. When
suddenly --*

*A YOUNG FATHER WITH HIS KIDS
Hey, that you in the newsreel...?*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

It was, yes --

The Father FLINGS Coke into Trumbo's face, SPLATTERING him --

YOUNG FATHER

Traitor --

-- terrifying Cleo and the kids before taking off.

DALTON TRUMBO

(dripping, calm)

No harm done, everybody okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - CORRAL - DAY

Mountain, meadow and sky dwarf this fine spread. Trumbo walks along the fence while Niki rides a horse next to him.

NIKI

So, are you a Communist?

DALTON TRUMBO

I am.

NIKI

Is it against the law?

DALTON TRUMBO

It is not.

NIKI

That lady with the big hat said you're a "dangerous radical." Are you?

DALTON TRUMBO

Radical, maybe. Dangerous, only to men who fling Cokes.

NIKI

You don't want to overthrow the government?

DALTON TRUMBO

No, we have a good government. But anything good can be better, don't you think?

NIKI

Is Mom a Communist?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

No.

NIKI

Am I?

DALTON TRUMBO

Let's give you the official test.
Mom packs your favorite lunch...

NIKI

Salami.

DALTON TRUMBO

...and you see someone at school
with no lunch -- what do you do?

NIKI

Share?

DALTON TRUMBO

You don't tell them to get a job?

NIKI

(aware she's being teased)

No.

DALTON TRUMBO

Offer a loan at six percent?

NIKI

Dad.

DALTON TRUMBO

Then just ignore them.

NIKI

No.

He studies his oldest daughter with great affection.

DALTON TRUMBO

Well, well. You little Commie.

INT. EDWARD G. ROBINSON'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elegant, tasteful, its walls glowing colorfully with: Six
spotlit French Impressionist paintings. Seated under a
Renoir, Trumbo is debating with Robinson and a small
gathering of DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS, ACTORS and WRITERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Trumbo, as usual, you only make sense to you. Let 'em call you a Communist, me a Democrat -- both legitimate parties, yours is just meaner and duller but nothing illegal about any of it.

DALTON TRUMBO

Yet.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Hunter, tell your friend to dial down the paranoia and have a drink.

This to screenwriter IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER, 32, quick mind, sad eyes, sharp wit, always puffing on a pipe:

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

I don't think he's being paranoid enough.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Not you, too.

Trumbo pulls several booklets of mimeoed paper from a valise.

DALTON TRUMBO

I've drawn up a little pamphlet.
(passing them out)
Subject: "Congress Unaware of Little Thing Called First Amendment."

ARLEN HIRD (O.S.)

They're aware...

Everyone turns to the man saying:

ARLEN HIRD (CONT'D)

...they just don't give a shit.

ARLEN HIRD is 40s, caustic, dyspeptic; the BUTLER offering him a canape, which he waves off --

ARLEN HIRD (CONT'D)

All they care about is this nice, new war of theirs -- these guys love war -- and this is a great one, scary, vague and expensive. Anybody for it's a hero, anybody against it's a traitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DALTON TRUMBO

And anybody who thinks it's about movies is an idiot. Which is why I'm going to go have a chat with the other side.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

You don't mean the Alliance.

DALTON TRUMBO

I do.

A CHORUS of disbelieving MOANS and startled LAUGHS.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Are you out of your mind -- ?

DALTON TRUMBO

They're actors, writers, directors, just like us --

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

They're Nazis, they're just too cheap to buy the uniforms --

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

They invited Congress out here --

DALTON TRUMBO

(to the room at large)

And are they all Sam Wood and Hedda Hopper? Let's not demonize people we don't really know.

ARLEN HIRD

Go for it. Be fun. 'Cause ya know who you're gonna be talkin' to?

JOHN WAYNE (PRE-LAP)

I wanna say one thing about a place I love. No, not Hollywood...

And WE REVEAL WE'RE --

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN WAYNE

...I like Hollywood...

Alone on stage, John Wayne, six-feet, four inches of bass-voiced movie icon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
...but I love America!

As WE REVEAL a sign near the stage announcing this is:

**THE MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF AMERICAN IDEALS**

WE SEE the HUGE CROWD of movie pros, from below-the-line crew to above-the-line stars, all CHEERING and APPLAUDING Wayne.

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
And when we talk about America I'm talking about freedom! The kinda freedom we just fought a world war to save! You wanna be a Commie, go be a Commie... but some friends of mine in Washington think you got some questions to answer!

AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM

Trumbo, Hird, Hunter and Edward G. Robinson all stand, studying Wayne, awed and disturbed by his power.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
I never knew he was this good.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
'Cause he's not acting, that's him.

UP ON STAGE

Wayne's voice RISES with the MOB'S CHEERS.

JOHN WAYNE
Still wanna be a Commie? Be a Commie! In Russia! But off ya go 'n' enjoy the Bolshoi Ballet!

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL - LOBBY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Trumbo, Hird, Robinson and Hunter offer copies of Trumbo's pamphlet to THOSE who ignore or shoot them dirty looks. Or put on their hats and throw smug smiles. Including --

SAM WOOD
(as he accepts a pamphlet)
Do svidaniya.

Russian for "goodbye," as he tears it to shreds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
This? Is a nightmare.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
If it were, I'd be in bed.

An elegantly turned out, in-the-flesh Hedda Hopper approaches.

HEDDA HOPPER
Hello, Dalton.

DALTON TRUMBO
Hedda, here you are, of course.
Good evening to you.

HEDDA HOPPER
Eddie, darling.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Hedda. New hat?

HEDDA HOPPER
Daily, dear, daily.
(to Trumbo)
Been to the movies lately?
(before he can answer)
Duke!

John Wayne has crossed the room with IATSE Union Leader ROY BREWER, 40, jowly, jovial and shrewd.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)
Wasn't he? Mag. Nificent.

JOHN WAYNE
Just sayin' what needs sayin'.
(then)
Hiya, Eddie.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Duke.

JOHN WAYNE
Hear you 'n' your pals got a
"pamphlet." Any takers?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Not yet...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ARLEN HIRD

(offers one to Wayne)

Would you like one? We're
Communists.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

(shrugs)

He's a writer.

JOHN WAYNE

(to Robinson)

Ya won't get any takers. Not here.

DALTON TRUMBO

Why not?

Wayne now turns and regards an affable Trumbo.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

All it says is, Congress has no
right to investigate how we vote,
where we pray, what we think, say
or make movies about.

(holds out the pamphlet)

Hello, I'm Dalton Trumbo.

JOHN WAYNE

(takes the pamphlet)

Congress has the right to go after
anything they think is a threat.

DALTON TRUMBO

We disagree. That's the point --
we both have the right to be wrong.

A LOOSE, CURIOUS GROUP has begun to gather, sensing trouble.

JOHN WAYNE

You wanna talk about rights, first
show me whose side you're on.
Russia's no friend, not anymore.
You better wake up.

(then)

'Cause it's a new day. A new day.

DALTON TRUMBO

And?

JOHN WAYNE

Maybe it's not for your kind.

DALTON TRUMBO

My kind, what kind is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN WAYNE

Kind that has no idea why we just
won a war.

Wayne crumples Trumbo's pamphlet, tosses it and starts off.

DALTON TRUMBO

That's the second time you've
brought that up. I was a war
correspondent in Okinawa --
(to Hedda now)
-- your son was stationed in the
Philippines --
(re: Robinson)
-- Eddie was in Europe with the
Office of War Information --
(back to Wayne)
-- where'd you serve again?

JOHN WAYNE

(stops, turns)
You tryin' to say something?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

No, Duke, he wasn't --

HEDDA HOPPER

Stay out of it, Eddie --

DALTON TRUMBO

(right in Wayne's face)
If you're gonna talk about World
War Two like you personally won it,
let's be clear where you were
stationed -- on a film set,
shooting blanks, wearing makeup and
if you're going to hit me, I'd like
to take my glasses off.

Wayne could belt him but camera FLASHBULBS POP.

ROY BREWER

Duke, let's get outta here...

He urges the apoplectic Wayne to a doorway.

HEDDA HOPPER

Thank you, Dalton. My next column
just wrote itself.

She exits. Robinson, Hird and Hunter just stare at Trumbo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ARLEN HIRD

(happy as a clam)

That was... I don't even know what to...

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

Yes, good thing you don't want to demonize anybody or that could've been awkward.

EXT. MGM STUDIOS - DAY

Walking with Robinson, Trumbo crosses the gleaming, BUSY dream factory at the height of its productivity, stops at a newsstand to buy cigarettes and is confronted by a strange and awful sight:

The face of Hedda Hopper on the July 28, 1947 cover of TIME magazine, the copies all hung in a line, creating two dozen identical Heddas. Trumbo is quietly amused, Robinson slightly horrified.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Good God.

(reaches for a copy)

Trumbo, you pick your enemies the way you live -- only the best will do.

INT. MGM STUDIOS - LOUIS B. MAYER'S OFFICE - DAY

LOUIS B. MAYER, 60, warm-hearted, cold-blooded studio president, beams affectionately at Trumbo.

LOUIS B. MAYER

Your next deal's gonna make you the highest-paid writer in Hollywood, which'll make you the highest-paid writer in the world.

BUDDY ROSS, early 30s, a young, go-getter producer, sits off to the side, eyes darting anxiously between the studio president and the writer.

LOUIS B. MAYER (CONT'D)

You earned it. You don't just write happy endings, you actually believe them.

BUDDY ROSS

That's what the people pay to see, that's why you belong here at MGM, right, L.B.?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

Look, I hate to make the wooing too easy for you but: Where do I sign?

LOUIS B. MAYER

Just one thing. If you're going to work for me...

(unfolds a newspaper)

...I never, ever want to see anything like this...

HEDDA HOPPER'S HOLLYWOOD column: a photo of Dalton Trumbo under the headline, "OUR OWN RED MENACE."

LOUIS B. MAYER (CONT'D)

...again.

Trumbo and Mayer lock eyes. Buddy is frozen silent.

DALTON TRUMBO

You won't. I promise.

Mayer nods, satisfied. Buddy could kiss Trumbo.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

Just stop reading Hedda Hopper.

Off Mayer's fury and Buddy's panic --

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - TERRACE - DAY

Overlooking their lake. Trumbo stands at a hot grill, flipping filet of trout, holding court for his family; Hunter, his WIFE and CHILDREN; Robinson and his WIFE; Buddy Ross and a GLAMOROUS INGENUUE GIRLFRIEND.

NIKI

(to Cleo)

Mom, please...?

CLEO

(to Niki)

Not now, honey.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

So what'd L.B. say then?

BUDDY ROSS

Jesus, don't, I haven't eaten since. My job's not hard enough?

DALTON TRUMBO

Your job's not hard at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUDDY ROSS

You think getting Mayer to sign you after those headlines was easy? You have a record-breaking, three-year contract -- to make shit up. You're welcome.

CHRIS

C'mon, Mom!

EXT. A NARROW DIRT ROAD - DAY

A solitary black sedan churns up a plume of dust.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - TERRACE - DAY

Trumbo and the other adults LAUGH and drink away a dazzling summer afternoon.

NIKI

(to Robinson)

She really can! Ask her!

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

(chuckling)

Cleo? Is this true?

CLEO

I... had a very unusual mother.

DALTON TRUMBO

Which means "Stage Mother."

He picks up a glass, a twinkle in his eye.

CLEO

(knows what's coming,
laughs, embarrassed)

Trumbo, no...

He hands Niki the glass, who tosses it to Cleo, which she catches easily, then another, which she catches in her other hand, beginning to lightly JUGGLE the two, causing the children to finally SQUEAL with delight as --

EXT. ANOTHER DIRT ROAD - DAY

-- that black sedan takes a gravel-popping turn and --

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - TERRACE - DAY

-- Robinson and his Wife stare in amazement, watching Cleo expertly JUGGLE two glasses, flipping and catching one behind her back as Trumbo beams.

DALTON TRUMBO

The misspent youth of a child
acrobat.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

My God, how long were you in show
business?

CLEO

(juggling away)
Till I was 15. And it was more
"show-forced-labor."

Niki tosses her mother a third glass, which Cleo catches, now pinwheeling all three easily.

NIKI

She never drops one, ever.

CLEO

Mom had a little saying. "Drop it,
you lose your next meal."

DALTON TRUMBO

(to Robinson)
And "Mom" wasn't kidding. Woman
was a Dickensian harridan.

CLEO

(laughs)
No one even knows what that means.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The black sedan closes in --

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - TERRACE - DAY

-- as Cleo does over-hand grabs, then switches to a circular pattern, the spool of tumblers catching sunlight in dazzling prisms.

AND THROUGH CLEO'S GLASSY WHIRL OF COLOR - WE SEE THAT SEDAN

Pull to a stop and Trumbo sees THREE MEN in suits get out.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - DRIVEWAY - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Family and friends watching, Trumbo greets the three men, among whom we recognize: HUAC Investigator Robert Stripling.

STRIPLING

Mr. Dalton Trumbo?

Stripling hands Trumbo a pink document.

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - ROTUNDA - DAY

Congressman J. Parnell Thomas stands before REPORTERS:

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Nineteen subpoenas have been issued to those we believe have knowledge of the ongoing Communist threat in Hollywood.

This announcement is greeted with a resounding... pause.

REPORTER 1

Uh, what kind of threat is that?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

A conspiracy to corrupt democratic values and bring about the overthrow of this nation.

REPORTER 2

Using... movies.

The CHUCKLING Reporters clearly think this is horseshit.

REPORTER 1

Any movie in particular or...?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

(cutting him off)

Movies are the most powerful form of influence ever created and they are infested with hidden traitors who will be dragged into the light, for all to see and all to judge.

CUT TO:

HEDDA HOPPER'S HOLLYWOOD NEWSREEL

Her talking face again appears alongside her column.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HEDDA HOPPER
 (to camera)
 We travel now...

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. U.S. CAPITOL - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY - THE HEARINGS

And actual newsreel footage in black & white of the Capitol packed with POLITICIANS, EXECUTIVES and STARS.

 HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.)
 ...to Washington, D.C., where
 battle lines are drawn. On one
 side, Communist subversives. On
 the other, studio heads, labor
 leaders and some of our brightest
 stars.

And in actual footage from his testimony that day, RONALD REAGAN, 36, handsome and measured, cooperates with Robert Stripling before a PACKED HOUSE.

 STRIPLING
 Your profession, Mr. Reagan?

 RONALD REAGAN
 Motion picture actor.

 STRIPLING
 And you are currently the president
 of the Screen Actors Guild?

 RONALD REAGAN
 Yes, sir.

 STRIPLING
 Has it been reported to you that
 certain members of the guild were
 Communists?

 RONALD REAGAN
 Yes, sir, I have heard different
 discussions of some of them as
 Communists.

JUMP CUT TO:

More actual news footage -- CONGRESSMAN RICHARD M. NIXON (R-California), 34.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD M. NIXON

Do you believe that the motion picture industry is doing everything it can to rid itself of subversive, Un-American influences?

Then answering, in testimony we recreate in matching black & white --

ROY BREWER

No! The Communists are everywhere! They report directly to Moscow!

Then --

SAM WOOD

Enough is enough! The Communists have to go!

DALTON TRUMBO (PRE-LAP)

What we're about to do...

CUT TO:

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - DAY - BEFORE THE HEARINGS

DALTON TRUMBO

...won't make us too popular.

Trumbo leads a small strategy session with Robert Kenny, Arlen Hird and a HALF-DOZEN of the SUBPOENAED 19 and --

-- Niki, in a corner, quietly taking everything in.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

Our support's not only going to vanish, we're going to get attacked by our own.

ARLEN HIRD

Okay, we get slandered, then what?

ROBERT KENNY

You testify and answer every question they ask, in your own way.

ARLEN HIRD

So don't tell 'em shit.

DALTON TRUMBO

Beautifully put.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In her corner, Niki smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - DAY - THE HEARINGS

 HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.)
Of the nineteen forced to appear,
only ten were called to the stand.

The Hollywood Nineteen wait to be called to testify.

 HEDDA HOPPER (V.O.)
Dubbed "The Hollywood Ten," they
refused to answer every question
about their Communist ties.

 ARLEN HIRD (PRE-LAP)
You know what that's called?

BACK TO:

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - DAY - BEFORE THE HEARINGS

 DALTON TRUMBO
Contempt of Congress.

Beat. The room is silent, Niki transfixed. Then --

 ARLEN HIRD
Maybe I'm missing something, 'cause
all I'm seein' here is jail.

CUT TO:

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - DAY - THE HEARINGS

As Trumbo is sworn in, there's a BLINDING CAMERA FLASH and Congress, the crowds and Trumbo all BURST INTO FULL COLOR --

 STRIPLING
Mr. Trumbo, I will ask various
questions, all of which can be
answered yes or no.

 DALTON TRUMBO
I shall answer yes or no if I
please to. Many questions can only
be answered yes or no by a moron or
a slave.

As the caucus room FLUTTERS with DISBELIEVING MOANS,
supportive LAUGHTER and a few nasty BOOS, WE FIND --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cleo Trumbo, in the gallery, serenely unsurprised by her husband's insolence.

BACK TO:

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - DAY - BEFORE THE HEARINGS

ROBERT KENNY

No one can beat Congress in
Congress. The only place to do
that's in court --

ARLEN HIRD

-- in front of a judge who'll
probably hate Commies and rule
against us --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- in a lower court, yes, we'll
likely lose but on appeal...

ROBERT KENNY

...it'll work. The Supreme Court
is a five to four liberal majority.
They think the Committee's
unconstitutional, they want it
killed and we're gonna hand them
the case to do it.

ARLEN HIRD

Great. Best of luck. I'm out.

And suddenly, Hird is on his feet and gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - TERRACE/LAKE - DAY - BEFORE THE HEARINGS

Mitzi SPLASHES in the water with Chris as Cleo aims a large,
professional camera at them and snaps pictures.

Arlen Hird walks to a nearby tree, leans against it and stabs
a cigarette into his mouth. Trumbo walks up.

ARLEN HIRD

(sighs, beat)

Look, I can't afford what you're
talkin' about... Supreme Court,
legal fees. My wife, it's never
been great, but I raid our savings
for this? She's gone, with both
boys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

I'll cover you. Expenses, travel,
legal fees...

Hird is shocked by Trumbo's casual generosity.

ARLEN HIRD

You don't even like me.

DALTON TRUMBO

I like you fine, you don't like me.

ARLEN HIRD

Also, I don't trust you.

DALTON TRUMBO

I'd say "go on," but I'm afraid you
will.

ARLEN HIRD

Look. I know what I am, okay? I
want this country to be a whole
new... everything. Top to bottom.
And if I get what I want? Nobody
gets their own lake.

DALTON TRUMBO

Seems a little grim.

ARLEN HIRD

For you, yeah. But not the guys
who built all this...
(the ranch, the lake)
...for you, their families,
friends. Which, remember, is kind
of the point. Them, not you. I
mean, if I'm wrong here, tell me,
but ever since I've known you, you
talk like a radical, live like a
rich guy --

DALTON TRUMBO

True.

ARLEN HIRD

-- 'n' I don't think if it gets
right down to it, you're willing to
lose all this just to do what's
right. Radical would, rich guy? I
don't think so.

Trumbo watches his family in the sparkling light of his lake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DALTON TRUMBO

Am I "willing." Hm.

(beat)

Well. I hate martyrs and will not fight a lost cause, so you're right, I'm not willing to lose it all -- I'm willing to risk it. That's why being the radical and the rich guy is the perfect combination. The radical may fight with the purity of Jesus... but the rich guy wins with the cunning of Satan.

ARLEN HIRD

Y'know, the thing is, really?

You're wrong about almost everything and you never shut up.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS (PRE-LAP)

No, no, no, no -- !

CUT TO:

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - DAY - THE HEARINGS

Still in glorious color that reveals the face of Congressman Thomas to be red as a blister as he POUNDS his gavel --

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

-- no, no, no, no, no, no!

-- like a four year old throwing a tantrum.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS (CONT'D)

Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist party?

DALTON TRUMBO

Mr. Stripling, may I read a statement?

STRIPLING

No.

DALTON TRUMBO

May I present my writing?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

No.

DALTON TRUMBO

May I -- ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

No, no, no! Answer the question!

STRIPLING

Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?

DALTON TRUMBO

Have I been accused of a crime? If so, what is it and where is your evidence?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

You're not asking the questions!

DALTON TRUMBO

Well, I was.

STRIPLING

The witness will answer.

DALTON TRUMBO

I see. And then what would you like? My voting record, union membership, religion?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Answer the question!

DALTON TRUMBO

You believe this Committee has the right to compel testimony, indict opinion --

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Typical Communist tactics!

DALTON TRUMBO

-- criminalize thought -- but that right does not exist and the day it does, God help us all.

CUT TO:

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - DAY - THE HEARINGS

-- Arlen Hird is now on the stand.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist party?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARLEN HIRD

*Congressman, first I need to call
my doctor.*

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Your doctor? I don't un --

ARLEN HIRD

*To see if he can surgically remove
my conscience.*

*EXPLOSIVE LAUGHTER no amount of GAVELLING by Thomas can stop.
Trumbo sits beside Cleo in the gallery, delighted and
surprised. And our HEARING MONTAGE ENDS.*

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Trumbo and Hird walk as Hird begins to COUGH, can't stop.

DALTON TRUMBO

What? What is it?

ARLEN HIRD

Cancer.

DALTON TRUMBO

Jesus. How long've you known?

ARLEN HIRD

Couple months.

DALTON TRUMBO

Months? Are you being treated -- ?

ARLEN HIRD

I don't like the options. It's
lung cancer. Bad if they operate,
bad if they don't.

DALTON TRUMBO

Is there anything I can do?

ARLEN HIRD

No! No. It's cancer, Jesus.

(then)

Yes. Make sure this fuckin' plan
of yours works.

CUT TO:

A HEADLINE FROM NOVEMBER 24, 1947:

THE NEW YORK TIMES: "'HOLLYWOOD 10' CHARGED WITH CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS"

Under that, a group photo of The Hollywood Ten, PUSHING IN ON the grainy faces of Hird and Trumbo.

INT. MGM STUDIOS - LOUIS B. MAYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Other faces, in framed photos on a wall: CLARK GABLE, JUDY GARLAND, FRED ASTAIRE, more. Being studied by Hedda Hopper.

Mayer enters, sees Hedda is focused on a group photo with a row of SILENT STARS where, squeezed between RAMON NAVARRO and GRETA GARBO, a younger Hedda stands alongside a boyish Mayer.

HEDDA HOPPER

Look at us. God, we thought we knew everything...

LOUIS B. MAYER

We did.

HEDDA HOPPER

Not me.

(then)

I didn't know how much I loved it all, till I hit a certain birthday and the parts started drying up. I remember thinking, when you love something and it stops loving you back, what do you do...?

LOUIS B. MAYER

You fight.

HEDDA HOPPER

That's a man's answer.

(he concedes, waits)

You love it more. Till it surrenders.

LOUIS B. MAYER

Well. You never left MGM. Or my heart. How's your boy? Still in the Navy?

HEDDA HOPPER

First lieutenant.

LOUIS B. MAYER

You raised a real hero.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEDDA HOPPER

Which is why I'd like to tell him
we're doing as much for this
country as he is.

(then)

Are we?

LOUIS B. MAYER

It's complicated. Trumbo, the
others, all have contracts...

HEDDA HOPPER

You helped build this business, so
did I, we're not gonna watch these
pissants defile it --

LOUIS B. MAYER

I'm running a studio here, you
think I love every person on my
payroll? Grow up.

HEDDA HOPPER

Then how about I make crystal clear
to my thirty-five million readers
who runs Hollywood and won't fire
these traitors? How about I name
names, real names? Like yours,
Lazar Meir; or Jack Warner, *Jacob*
Varner; Sam Goldwyn, *Schmuel*
Gelbfisz --

LOUIS B. MAYER

You watch what you say to me --

HEDDA HOPPER

No, you watch! This isn't 1920!
I'm not your STARLET, you don't
tell me what to do! Never, ever,
ever, ever, EVER AGAIN!

LOUIS B. MAYER

Enough, Hedda --

HEDDA HOPPER

Forty years ago, you're starving in
some shtetl, the greatest country
on Earth takes you in, gives you
wealth, power and the second we
need you, you do nothing!

(then)

Just what my readers expect from a
business run by kikes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LOUIS B. MAYER

Get out.

She sits. Takes a cigarette out of her case. Lights it. She blows a wall of smoke between them.

HEDDA HOPPER

Now listen, L.B. I'm fond of you. Some of my happiest years were spent on this lot.

(then)

Not in your office, of course, you always trying to fuck me on the couch, me maintaining my virtue. Barely.

(lightly)

But... times change. Now I'll happily fuck you.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM STUDIOS - LOUIS B. MAYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Black & white NEWSREEL, created by us, of Mayer, flanked by all the other studio heads, reading a press statement to camera:

LOUIS B. MAYER

Forthwith, all studios unanimously agree to discharge the Hollywood Ten. Without compensation. Effective immediately.

(then)

Further, no studio will ever employ a member of the Communist Party or anyone refusing to cooperate in our mighty struggle against this terrible new menace.

INT. HEDDA HOPPER'S OFFICE - DAY

Hedda reads her copy into a large microphone.

HEDDA HOPPER

He's been loved by film fans for almost twenty years. But have you noticed? He hasn't been on-screen much lately. Bad box office? No. Bad politics. Bad news indeed. For Mr. Edward G. Robinson.

INT. EDWARD G. ROBINSON'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robinson addresses a small GROUP, many of whom would rather not be here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

The Hollywood Ten's going to court for all of us. It'll be long, expensive. So please, give as much as you can to the defense fund.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The gathering has thinned. Trumbo studies Robinson's Impressionist paintings. Robinson wanders over with Cleo.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

This little gathering doesn't quite have the zip and zing of yesteryear, does it?

CLEO

Where're all the liberals all of a sudden?

DALTON TRUMBO

At their lawyers'. Or psychiatrists'.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Likely both. Anyway...
(hands Trumbo a check)
...for the defense fund.

DALTON TRUMBO

(hesitates)
You working again?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Eh. It's a little slow.
(to Trumbo)
I'll be fine, kid, take it.

Trumbo does, reluctantly, then:

DALTON TRUMBO

You sold one.

Cleo looks at the wall and sees a discolored space. There were six paintings; now only five.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

The Renoir. I got a good price.

Trumbo is moved beyond words -- a rare occurrence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

Eddie, I...
(overcome)
...well... I...

CLEO

What he's trying to say is, he
loves you.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

(to Cleo)
I love him, too, the warty son of a
bitch.
(then, to Trumbo)
Oh and I got a great offer on the
Monet, if you want to bribe the
jury.

INT. THIS SAME WASHINGTON, D.C. COURTHOUSE - DAYS LATER

As the JURY FOREMAN reads:

JURY FOREMAN

In the matter of the United States
versus Dalton Trumbo...

Trumbo stands at the bar, next to attorney Robert Kenny.

JURY FOREMAN (CONT'D)

...we find the defendant guilty of
contempt of Congress.

He was ready for this, but the reality hits hard. His eyes
betray just a flicker of agony. Then, aware of all the
stares, his battler's armored visage returns.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Trumbo and Kenny exit the courtroom in a river of COURT FOLK.

DALTON TRUMBO

I have total contempt for Congress,
I just thought a jury'd see why.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Trumbo and Kenny fight their way through the clinging PRESS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT KENNY

(to Reporters)

The Supreme Court will drop kick
this verdict into speeding traffic
and end the most shameful chapter
of Congressional history I ever
want to live through.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURTHOUSE - STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Trumbo and Kenny.

ROBERT KENNY

How're you doing for money?

DALTON TRUMBO

Broke as a bankrupt's bastard.
Why?

ROBERT KENNY

You owe me thirty-thousand dollars.
The appeal's gonna be twice that.

DALTON TRUMBO

Well, better get to work.

ROBERT KENNY

Doing what?

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo writes furiously on his typewriter. The sounds of
LAUGHTER pierce his CLATTER. He looks up at the window, then
rises, crossing to it.

AT THE WINDOW - TRUMBO SEES

Cleo on the driveway, where a ping-pong table's been set up.
She's teaching Niki, 4-year-old Mitzi and Chris how to play
the game. There is much GIGGLING amid the missed shots.

TRUMBO WATCHES,

Silently separated from his family by the sheet of glass.
Then he has to let the curtain drop back across the window.
Back to it.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - NIGHT

One light on. Trumbo's study.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Arlen Hird lies in a weakened, post-surgery stupor. His eyes open and he sees Trumbo setting down some flowers.

DALTON TRUMBO

How are you?

ARLEN HIRD

Breathin'. With one lung. Which is half as good as two. How bad're things out there?

DALTON TRUMBO

Everybody envies you.

Hird looks around the pleasant, private room.

ARLEN HIRD

Why not. Got the best room in the joint. You oughta know, you paid for it.

(then, woozy)

Thanks. By the way.

Trumbo smiles at Hird, whose eyes flutter shut.

INT. A MODERN BUILDING - ENTRY - DAY

BUDDY ROSS (PRE-LAP)

Mayer's a dinosaur...

Over the streamlined entrance, a steel-sculpted banner: *ROSS INTERNATIONAL PICTURES*.

BUDDY ROSS (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

...they all are, extinct and don't even know it.

INT. ROSS INTERNATIONAL - BUDDY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Enormous and pristine.

BUDDY ROSS

Let's see now, to, uh...

Buddy, Trumbo and other MOVIE-INDUSTRY COMPATRIOTS raise champagne glasses in the winter of 1948.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUDDY ROSS (CONT'D)

...to no more MGM, no more Mayer, I am strictly independent, got cans of film, wads of Wall Street dough and my favorite boss -- me!

(all CHUCKLE, CLINK, sip, then to Trumbo)

And you, you crazy son of a bitch, are gonna write all my movies, once this Washington crap clears up.

A throat is CLEARED. Trumbo is a bit more pensive than we've seen him.

DALTON TRUMBO

And how'll that happen?

BUDDY ROSS

Hey. I'm not political. Thank Jesus. But if they called me in, accused me? I'd just say, yep, did it, sorry, didn't mean it.

Trumbo nods, willing to move on. But somehow just can't help himself.

DALTON TRUMBO

(evenly)

So Congress asks, "Are you now or have you ever been a Democrat...?"

BUDDY ROSS

"I am... and God, I just feel awful about it, never again..."

DALTON TRUMBO

But now they want the names of other Democrats.

(points at random MEN)

Bill... Stan... Earl... Nat.

BUDDY ROSS

Then I say go to hell.

DALTON TRUMBO

Really. And how many banks fund enemies of the state? Your money's gone. Unless you give the names of your friends here. They'll never work again. But it's the only way you ever will.

(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

We're all friends here, we all know each other... we hope. What would you do, Buddy?

Buddy stares, chilled. Silence. Then --

BUDDY ROSS

Piss on the best day of a guy's life! Only you!

BIG LAUGHS all around. But from those four men Trumbo singled out, nervous ones. And from Trumbo, not so much as a smile.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - STUDY - NIGHT

Trumbo hard at the keys, surrounded by full ashtrays, piles of typescript and a half-empty scotch bottle. He pauses to shift in his seat and twist his aching back.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

He lies on the couch, scotch on his chest, pillow under his back, scribbling on typed copy, still in some pain. Niki, almost 11 now, walks in wearing her nightgown.

DALTON TRUMBO

Morning, Nikola.

NIKI

I thought you weren't allowed to write anymore.

DALTON TRUMBO

No. Just can't put my name on it or get paid.

NIKI

How's that work?

INT. DINER - DOWNTOWN L.A. - DAY

Niki eats a sundae, watching Trumbo and Hunter as the latter thumbs a dog-eared screenplay with scribbles on many pages and bold handwriting on the cover.

DALTON TRUMBO

Well?

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

(the script)

It's funny, breezy, romantic.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER (CONT'D)
(then, sarcastically)
Who the hell wrote it?

DALTON TRUMBO
You did, old boy. Stick your name
on my labor, hand it in to your
studio and --

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
Look, it's just dumb luck I wasn't
subpoenaed. The hearings're gonna
start up again soon, I'm gonna get
called and canned...

DALTON TRUMBO
Then quick, lad, let's sell this
little beauty and split the take,
fifty-fifty.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
Ridiculous. I'll take ten percent.

DALTON TRUMBO
You'll take twenty. No, thirty.
That's my final offer.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
You are the worst businessman,
ever.
(then)
I hate the title.

NIKI
Me too.

She gets a sharp look from her father that drives her back to
her ice cream.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
I mean, The Princess and the
Peasant...
(scribbling on the cover)
...sounds like a puppet show.

DALTON TRUMBO
(shrugs)
Change it.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
I did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He slides the script across the table to Trumbo, its new title atop the cover page's handwritten notes, in bold felt and circled. Trumbo's distaste for it is immediate.

DALTON TRUMBO

Now, who the hell's going to go see
a movie called Roman Holiday?

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - ROTUNDA - DAY

Congressman Thomas moves with a small CLUSTER of many of the same REPORTERS from Scene 30, all now his acolytes --

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

...I'm going to introduce
legislation so in the event of
national emergency, all Communists
will be sent to internment camps...

REPORTER 2

Does the president support this?

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

He'd better.

Stripling now appears at Thomas' shoulder, WHISPERS in his ear as he shows him a sheaf of monetary columns.

Both Stripling's hushed, unheard words and the document's top sheet get Thomas' full attention.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS (CONT'D)

(to the Reporters)

Excuse me, gentleman.

He and Stripling peel off, away from the Reporters.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS (CONT'D)

I've told you, Bob, these are
legitimate, salaried employees from
my home state --

STRIPLING

What you didn't tell me is, every
one of them is a relative.

CONGRESSMAN THOMAS

Which is completely legal.

STRIPLING

Except none of them have paid
taxes.

(as Thomas tries to explain)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRIPLING (CONT'D)

Don't say anything else without a lawyer.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - DAY

Cleo gets out of her car, carrying mail and The L.A. Times. She walks past a half-finished addition, abandoned at framing. She scans the front page of the paper.

CLEO

(suddenly shaken)

...no...

JEFF, their contractor, sun-baked, 30s, has been waiting.

JEFF THE CONTRACTOR

Mrs. Trumbo? Ma'am, I gotta get paid.

She looks up, truly at a loss.

JEFF THE CONTRACTOR (CONT'D)

Please, I got men with families.

CLEO

Jeff. We owe everyone. But my husband can't get work.

Before Jeff can respond, Trumbo speeds up in his car and skids to a stop and bounds out with two bottles of champagne.

DALTON TRUMBO

(ecstatic once again)

We're rich!

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - KITCHEN - DAY

Trumbo signs a check with a flourish and hands it to Jeff.

JEFF THE CONTRACTOR

Thanks. You sure lead exciting lives. Boy.

He pockets it as Trumbo reaches for the champagne.

DALTON TRUMBO

It sold, Cleo, Roman Holiday, Paramount, credited to our dear Hunter and what, what's the matter?

CLEO

Justice Rutledge died.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO
No, Justice Murphy, last --

CLEO
And Rutledge. This morning.

She hands him the Times. As he reads, she holds him.

INT. ROBERT KENNY'S LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

ROBERT KENNY
The two most liberal judges on the
Supreme Court...

Trumbo, a still-frail Arlen Hird and members of The Ten sit solemnly before a heartsick Kenny.

ROBERT KENNY (CONT'D)
...back to back. This is just...

He lets it hang in the air. A long, ten-man silence.

DALTON TRUMBO
Well. I'll be goddamned if I know
what to say.

ARLEN HIRD
One upside, anyway.

ROBERT KENNY
Our appeal's gonna be denied.
You're all going to prison.

INT. ROBERT KENNY'S LAW OFFICE - ELEVATOR - DAY

Trumbo helps Hird in. Hird pushes the button, then leans on his cane.

Both men stare straight ahead as they descend. As sick as Hird is, Trumbo is paler. He looks gutted. The CLANKING descent seems eternal. Then:

ARLEN HIRD
I wouldn't change a thing. Not
one. Would you?

Trumbo considers this carefully before:

DALTON TRUMBO
Let's ask each other in a year.

EXT. LOS ANGELES AIRFIELD - NIGHT

June, 1950. NO SOUND at first, just MUSIC as Trumbo, Cleo, Niki, Chris, 9, and Mitzi, now 5, cross the tarmac to a waiting DC-3 prop passenger plane. Suddenly aware of --

A CROWD gathering at the edge of the light, moving toward them. Then, TWO PEOPLE raise a banner, the words spread out on a sheet between two poles:

DALTON TRUMBO IS GOING TO JAIL! FREE THE HOLLYWOOD 10!

The crowd closes around the surprised Trumbos. Hands are offered and shaken. More signs raised. More PEOPLE cluster. Cameras are brought out and --

MOMENTS LATER - TRUMBO

Slightly embarrassed, is surrounded by family, well-wishers and more huge, handwritten signs bearing his name and plight.

MINUTES AFTER THAT - A MONTAGE

Capturing the final, sad moments of Trumbo's goodbye:

- Tiny Mitzi hugs Trumbo. She can't be pried off.
- Trumbo whispers into Chris' ear:

DALTON TRUMBO

I'm counting on you. Your mother needs to laugh. Once a day. At least. Deal?

Chris nods and refuses to cry. Father and son shake hands.

- Trumbo hugs Niki.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

Don't be afraid.

NIKI

I'm not.

She's angry at herself for tearing up. Trumbo hands her his silk pocket square.

- Trumbo kisses Cleo one last time on the lips.
- Trumbo is led off by TWO U.S. MARSHALS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

- Trumbo is up on the ramp of the plane. A FLASHBULB POPS. The moment is FROZEN into an old sepia photograph.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Trumbo family car rumbles home from the airport.

INT. TRUMBO FAMILY CAR - DRIVING - CONTINUOUS

In the backseat, Niki consoles Mitzi. Up front, Chris rides alongside Cleo, who is driving. Everyone is grieving in their own way. Then --

CLEO
(suddenly blurting)
I was married before.

Well, this certainly gets the attention of all the kids.

CLEO (CONT'D)
Your father's my second husband.

NIKI
Holy shit.

CLEO
Niki...

NIKI
Mom, gimme a break, you can't just say that and not --

CLEO
I'm saying it for a reason. When I met your father, I had a boyfriend.

CHRIS
What was his name?

CLEO
Hal.

CHRIS
Hal. Heh.

NIKI
Did you love him?

CLEO
That's not the point.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

What'd you think of Pop back then?

CLEO

I couldn't stand him.

NIKI

So how'd you end up marrying him?

CLEO

I was waitressing. He came in for a hamburger, we talked a little, I brought him the check and he proposed.

CHRIS

Seriously?

Cleo catches Niki's look in the rear view, a smile that says, *that's Pop*.

CLEO

I said he was crazy but he kept coming back, night after night. Talking and talking. And the tips! On a ninety-cent check, he'd leave ten dollars! After a year, I had over a thousand dollars. I saved every penny, I wasn't going to let him think he could buy me. But... also... I just, I'd never met anyone like him, ever, I couldn't stop thinking about him. And guess who didn't like that much?

NIKI

Hal.

CLEO

Hal. Who got mad, then jealous, then went and got a wedding license and a judge.

CHRIS

That must've made Pop mad.

CLEO

No. He just asked if I could see myself with Hal in twenty years and I burst into tears -- I couldn't see myself with him for twenty more minutes. He was big and crude and had all these rules...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLEO (CONT'D)

(then)

Your father was such a good friend,
I'd never had anyone like him in my
life... and do you know what he
did? Hired a private detective.

CHRIS

Wow.

CLEO

And found out Hal was already
married.

All the kids let out LAUGHS and SHOUTS and pound the seats.
They love seeing this new side of their mother.

NIKI

Mom, how could you not tell us this
before? This is great!

CLEO

I'm telling you now because when he
did all that, your father proved
when he believes in something... or
someone...

*EXT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - DAY**Large, remote, set amid thick green Kentucky forest.*

CLEO (POST-LAP)

*...it doesn't matter what anybody
else thinks, says or does...*

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - PRISONER PROCESSING - DAY

CLEO (POST-LAP)

...he will try, fail...

*Trumbo is naked, along with a GROUP of prisoners who are
undergoing a body and cavity search by GUARDS. Trumbo is
stoic.*

CLEO (POST-LAP) (CONT'D)

*...fall down, get up, fall again.
But never, ever give up.*

INT. TRUMBO FAMILY CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

CLEO

So don't waste your time being mad
at the people trying to stop your
father.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Feel sorry for them.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - LOADING DOCK - DAY

On a blazing summer afternoon, Trumbo off-loads 50-pound slabs of frozen beef rib from a truck, balancing one on his shoulder, sweating and moving past TWO PRISON GUARDS.

PRISON GUARD 1
(mid-story)
...so he files a complaint, says I
don't treat him fair.

PRISON GUARD 2
Nigger said that?

PRISON GUARD 1
So warden says I gotta do right.
Boy wanna better job? I put him in
charge o' the whole goddamn supply
room. 'Cause I know somethin' the
warden don't. Nigger can't read!

Finally, Trumbo gets his huge side of beef to the pallet and manages to drop it. He stands, soaked, catching his breath. There's a sharp pain in his back. He tries not to let it show.

PRISON GUARD 2
(laughing)
Can't read, that's good!

PRISON GUARD 1
Serve the jig and warden both
right, supply gonna be a goddamn
mess!

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - SUPPLY ROOM - DAY

Very much a mess. Reports and records in random piles and sloppy stacks. But also a cool, dark basement relief from the swelter above.

A wrung-out Trumbo hands a clipboard to a powerful, severe black man named VIRGIL BROOKS.

DALTON TRUMBO
Beef's unloaded. Driver needs a
signature.

Brooks nods and takes the clipboard. Without really looking, he scribbles a line near the bottom of the page.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

Actually, he needs it... here.

Trumbo points to the still-blank signature line. Brooks signs again.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

If you could use help, I used to be in shipping, at a bakery.

BROOKS

I heard you was a writer.

DALTON TRUMBO

That, too.

BROOKS

And a Commie.

(with a hard look)

Fuck is wrong with you people?
This is a great country.

DALTON TRUMBO

Agreed.

Well, he tried. Heads out.

BROOKS

You type?

DALTON TRUMBO

Eighty words a minute.

BROOKS

Bullshit.

MOMENTS LATER - TRUMBO TYPES

With two fingers, copying off a rule book. Brooks glances at his watch and chops the air. Trumbo stops.

BROOKS

Now if only I could read it.

(then, off typewriter page)

"Protocol as to return of goods:
There shall be triplicate copies of
form 14-A filed with Supply,
Shipping and office of the warden."

Trumbo looks up at Brooks, surprised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKS (CONT'D)

You think you gonna teach me the alphabet so I shake your hand all grateful 'n' say, "Thankee Missuh Trumbo, you done changed mah life, suh, I never fuhgit you."

(then)

This ain't no movie and I ain't Mr. Bojangles. I got twenty years for killin' a white man tried to rob my bar, I did it and I'd do it again. Look down on me and I will fuck you up like you never been fucked up in your whole bullshit Beverly Hills life. I'm here to build my time and get paroled, you wanna help make that happen?

Brooks hefts a box of files onto the desk with a THUD.

BROOKS (CONT'D)

Welcome to fuckin' Supply, comrade.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - PRISONER DORM - NIGHT

1951. One of the few prisoners still awake, Trumbo sits on his cot in a single cone of light, scribbling on a pad.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)

(starting a letter)

Dear Cleo.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - CLEO'S DARK ROOM - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)

I don't count the days or hours. I count the seconds.

She switches the red light off and opens the shades. Summer sun REVEALS developing equipment and dozens of photos hung to dry. All of the children: fishing, on horseback, playing tag, sitting for a group portrait.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)

Sometimes I think I'll die of boredom. Other times, fear.

As she inspects each critically, she passes something we don't expect: a boxer's speed bag hanging from the ceiling, which she gives a single, light WHACK without looking.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - SUPPLY ROOM - DAY

Immaculately organized now.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
Not of this place.

Trumbo sits, dutifully typing at top speed.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
So far...

Prison Guard 1 enters, shocked at the crispness of the room --

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
...its challenges are all
surmountable. Augmented by days of
lovely boredom, so flat and calm in
the wake of all that churning,
ugly, luckless battle.

-- and the report Brooks writes with a fuck-you smile.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
No, my fear is for what will
happen...

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - DRIVEWAY - DAY

*Cleo is playing a furious game of ping-pong against both
Chris and Mitzi --*

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
...when I get out. To our
family...

*-- while Niki sits nearby, absorbed in a copy of the Daily
Worker, with its headline: "NEW COMMUNIST HOLLYWOOD HEARINGS
BEGIN."*

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
...and our country.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
Not all the national news is
worrisome. Some reminds me that
what the imagination can't conjure,
reality delivers with a shrug.

Nearly deserted but for Trumbo as he enters with a sheaf of reports, crossing past a lone figure mopping the floor:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Congressman J. Parnell Thomas, wearing a prison uniform identical to Trumbo's. He stops mopping. Trumbo pauses in a doorway. The two men regard one another.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
And reality has delivered, in all
its beatific wonder, to the federal
penal system, former Congressman
and head of HUAC, J. Parnell
Thomas. Convicted of tax evasion.

Thomas goes back to work. Trumbo's eyes linger on Thomas as the former inquisitor dips his mop then swabs the floor.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
Proving the truism...

Trumbo deposits his sheaf on a table top and exits.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
"...Character is destiny."

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - KITCHEN - DAY

On a sunny morning, her three children eating breakfast around her, Cleo finishes this letter.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
*Yet in all this, I know I'm the
luckiest unlucky man ever to live...
because you and the children warm,
feed, clothe, pacify and rejuvenate
me, by never leaving my heart.
Love, Prisoner Number 7551.*

She touches the paper tenderly, gets up and moves to shoeboxes that overflow with Trumbo letters, adding this one.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS HALL - NIGHT

All chairs face a screen as Trumbo and SEVERAL HUNDRED PRISONERS and GUARDS watch a war movie.

UP ON THE MOVIE SCREEN - JOHN WAYNE

Plays a gung-ho soldier, barking orders amid backlot GUNFIRE.

BACK DOWN IN THE AUDIENCE

Trumbo smokes and watches. Sitting next to him, Virgil Brooks is totally caught up in the war drama.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Trumbo, Brooks, Prisoners and Guards walk back to the dorm.

BROOKS
You know John Wayne?

DALTON TRUMBO
I do.

BROOKS
What's he like?

DALTON TRUMBO
You'd love each other.

EXT. THE BROWN DERBY - TO ESTABLISH - DAY

It was, in fact, an enormous, brown, stucco hat.

INT. THE BROWN DERBY - CONTINUOUS

Near the front door, the MAITRE D' slides Hedda's coat on.

A MAN (O.S.)
'Scuse me? Are you Hedda Hopper?

She turns and sees a YOUNG ENLISTED MAN in an army uniform, awkward, nervous, respectful, whose empty right sleeve is pinned up. He's lost an arm.

HEDDA HOPPER
I -- yes, hello, how do you -- ?

She holds out her right hand, is instantly mortified, but the Enlisted Man clasps her right with his left.

ENLISTED MAN
I don't mean to bother you, I'm here with my cousin, he's a gaffer at Columbia? Thought he'd treat me to the big time. I read you a lot, all the guys do. Not just the showbiz stuff. You get what's really going on, with Russia, the Commies here, the investigations. Thank you.

HEDDA HOPPER
Where did you serve?

ENLISTED MAN
Korea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HEDDA HOPPER
And you're how old...?

 ENLISTED MAN
 (proudly)
Next month I'll be twenty.

She has no words, just looks at this boy, struck to her core.

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - LAKE - DAY

March, 1951. An Appaloosa horse stands against the mountain range, lazily dipping its head to chew grass, then raising it to scan the horizon.

Nearby, Cleo focuses her camera on the majestic animal. She CLICKS off several shots. Chris is nearby, holding spare film canisters and lenses.

 CHRIS
Mom.

 CLEO
Mm?

 CHRIS
I've got a new one.

She glances at Chris, who uses his hands to shove his cheeks in toward each other -- then smiles, making his mouth kind of a chubby vertical smile. Cleo chuckles and aims her camera at him.

 NIKI (O.S.)
Mom!

She turns. Her daughter is at the back door of the main house.

 NIKI (CONT'D)
You better come quick!

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chris and Cleo enter, Niki crouched in front of the enormous radio, dialing a clearer reception.

 STRIPLING (ON RADIO)
...ever been a member of the
Communist Party?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)
I am not now nor have I ever been a
member of that party, no...

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
...I have always been a liberal
Democrat.

Robinson is in the same seat Trumbo occupied. But no longer
a packed circus, it is now a rehearsed *degradation ceremony*.

Robinson speaks into radio microphones splayed before him as
he looks into the eyes of Investigator Robert Stripling.

STRIPLING
But in your home, over the years,
there have been political meetings.
Attended by those we now know to be
Communists.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Yes sir, yes, that has now been
made clear to me... there were
tremendous activities that went on
in my house during the war...

EXT. TEXARKANA FEDERAL PRISON - DAY

A cinder-block Texas facility on a brown, scrubby flat.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)
...but I did not know then their
true affiliations... the work they
were up to...

INT. TEXARKANA FEDERAL PRISON - HOSPITAL WING - CONTINUOUS

Arlen Hird lies in a bed among A DOZEN other infirm
PRISONERS, hearing through an old oaken radio:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)
...the lies...

Most of these prisoners could not care less -- but Hird is
gravely riveted by Robinson's testimony.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO) (CONT'D)
...the deception.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS HALL - DAY

Most PRISONERS ignore the hearing CRACKLING on a small radio, but a FEW, including Virgil Brooks and Trumbo, listen.

Congressman Thomas, wiping down tables, is far away... but listens intently, glancing occasionally at --

Trumbo, stony, a flicker of sadness in his eyes --

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- as Robinson's eyes harden, a man determined --

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

I was duped and used. I was lied to.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- Cleo's eyes close. The kids are transfixed.

STRIPLING (ON RADIO)

Who used you?

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Well, these... sinister forces who ran these... organizations in which I became a member, these.... uh, so-called Communist fronts.

STRIPLING

Tell us the names of individuals.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS - CONTINUOUS

Trumbo and Thomas, across the room from one another, both wait.

STRIPLING (ON RADIO)

(after a beat)

Mr. Robinson?

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Well, you had Albert Maltz, uh, Ring Lardner, Jr., and that top fellow who they say is the, uh, commissar out there...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRIPLING

Arlen Hird?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Yes...

INT. TEXARKANA FEDERAL PRISON - HOSPITAL WING - CONTINUOUS

Arlen Hird is unflinching as he hears --

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)

...Arlen Hird. Waldo Salt, Ian
McLellan Hunter.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS - CONTINUOUS

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)

And Dalton...

-- as is Trumbo --

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - CAUCUS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

...Trumbo.

-- Robinson feels relief, hoping this is all now behind him.

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - MESS - CONTINUOUS

Brooks looks at the radio, disgusted, as we hear --

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (ON RADIO)

But at the time, it never entered
my mind that any of these people
were Communists...

BROOKS

(to Trumbo)

That guy's a friend of yours?

(no response from Trumbo)

Lucky he's out there.

And though he speaks to Trumbo, he speaks at Thomas:

BROOKS (CONT'D)

Snitch like that in here, you're
fuckin' dead.

Trumbo leaves a terrified Thomas with a smiling Brooks.

INT. MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE OFFICES - LOBBY - DAY

BUSTLING. CROWDED. Edward G. Robinson is seated. Waiting. His eyes flick to a closed door. Stenciled on it: *JOHN WAYNE, PRESIDENT.*

INT. MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE - WAYNE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Wayne, Roy Brewer, Hedda and a FEW OTHERS meet.

JOHN WAYNE

Eddie oughta go back to work, he did what he had to.

HEDDA HOPPER

He did what he was forced to.

JOHN WAYNE

Point is, he did it.

HEDDA HOPPER

Brave men are fighting this battle, sacrificing in ways we can't even imagine, and you talk about some asshole's "career"? I'd see Eddie Robinson and everyone like him dead if it'd bring one boy back from Korea. One.

JOHN WAYNE

So what're you saying? Guys like Eddie cooperate and get nothin'?

(then)

That isn't right.

HEDDA HOPPER

Careful, Duke.

JOHN WAYNE

Or what, Hedda?

They stare at each other, neither moving or blinking.

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)

If I'm not careful. What?

The room is frozen, cigarette smoke the only moving thing. Then Hedda breaks the tension with a quick smile.

HEDDA HOPPER

I had no idea you were such a softie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wayne studies her, then allows himself a grin.

JOHN WAYNE
That's me. All cuddles.

INT. MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE OFFICES - LOBBY - DAY

Wayne walks Robinson out.

JOHN WAYNE
I'm proud of ya, Eddie.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
(flat, far off)
Thanks, Duke.

JOHN WAYNE
Wasn't easy, I know, but ya did
good. I'm gonna call the studios,
the offers'll pour in.
(off Robinson's mute nod)
Y'okay?

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Sure. Thanks. And tell Hedda...
(beat)
Give her my love, willya?

JOHN WAYNE
Not sure she'd know what to do with
it. That is one hard broad.

CUT TO:

NEWSREEL FOOTAGE - STOCK

*Of the end of the ROSENBERG espionage trial. The Couple has
been found guilty of selling atomic secrets to Russia and
sentenced to death, then...*

CUT TO:

NEWSREEL FOOTAGE - STOCK

*Of SENATOR JOSEPH McCARTHY'S rise as he purports to uncover
Communists throughout the United States.*

INT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - PRISONER PROCESSING - NIGHT

Spring, 1951. The same room where Trumbo was stripped naked
and examined upon his entrance. Now he is back in his suit,
tie and overcoat. His wedding ring, lighter, cigarette case
and holder are returned by a GUARD.

EXT. ASHLAND FEDERAL PRISON - OUTSIDE THE FRONT GATE - NIGHT

A taxi idles. Cleo waits. A SILHOUETTE approaches on the other side of the closed gate, which RUMBLES open, revealing Trumbo, now free. Cleo smiles, they move into one another at last and kiss, then --

EXT. LAZY-T RANCH - DAY

-- Trumbo drowns in the hugs of Chris, 10, and Mitzi, 6.

DALTON TRUMBO
Giants! What have you huge,
beautiful strangers done with my
little ones?

Niki appears in a dress. Tall. Almost 13. A young woman.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Good God.
(as he moves to her)
Lipstick?

NIKI
(embarrassed)
Da-aaad.

He takes her hands and kisses her cheek. Then the five reunited Trumbos move into the house, REVEALING:

A "FOR SALE" sign on a fence and tacked across it: "SOLD."

INT. CHASEN'S - DAY

CROWDED. Trumbo enters and sees Arlen Hird at the far end of the bar, makes his way to him, as a KNOT OF BUSINESSMEN cross his path. Trumbo bumps one.

DALTON TRUMBO
Pardon me, I'm terribly --

It's Buddy Ross. Trumbo is delighted.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Buddy. How are you?

Buddy is highly aware of the men in his group, watching him.

BUDDY ROSS
(to Trumbo, icy)
I got nothin' to say to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Buddy turns and strides off, followed by the men, all of whom WHISPER to each other.

INT. CHASEN'S - AT THE BAR - LATER

Trumbo and Hird sip their cocktails.

DALTON TRUMBO

So. Jail's given us the plague.

ARLEN HIRD

Buddy was always an asshole.

He glances into the restaurant dining area, where he can see Buddy animatedly making a pitch to that group of men.

ARLEN HIRD (CONT'D)

And he's in trouble. Three movies, three flops.

(re: Buddy's sweaty chatter)

Look at him. Tryin' to sell his soul but can't find it. Just hope he stays afloat long enough to get the shit sued out of him.

DALTON TRUMBO

By whom?

ARLEN HIRD

You, me, all of us, go on the offensive this time, sue the studios, all these guys, use their own capitalist system against them, in civil court -- make 'em admit under oath --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- No, no, no, Jesus, haven't you spent enough time in court? I have.

ARLEN HIRD

What do you, got a better idea?

DALTON TRUMBO

Do the one thing everyone says we can't. Work.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOLLYWOOD BACK STREET - DAY

Trumbo crosses a courtyard of slouching palms and tobacco-colored bungalows, the offices of: *KING BROTHERS PICTURES*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK KING (PRE-LAP)
Look. You're a great writer...

INT. KING BROTHERS PICTURES - FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Trumbo sits across from a beefy, harried, vaguely menacing man in his 40s named:

FRANK KING
...we make shit. I don't see it.

DALTON TRUMBO
Mr. King, I'm a screenwriter. If I
couldn't write shit, I'd starve.

On the walls, lurid posters of King Brothers movies: star-free gangster, horror, sci-fi and western quickies.

FRANK KING
We can't afford you.

DALTON TRUMBO
How much did you pay for the script
of...
(points to western poster)
...that?

FRANK KING
Twelve-hundred bucks.

DALTON TRUMBO
I'll write you a movie for twelve
hundred, then.

FRANK KING
And you don't want your name on it.

DALTON TRUMBO
No, you don't want my name on it.

HYMIE KING (O.S.)
You got that right...

And in a corner WE REVEAL Frank's younger brother, HYMIE, owlsh and clenched with worry.

HYMIE KING (CONT'D)
...especially if you're still...
y'know... up to stuff. Are ya?

DALTON TRUMBO
Perpetually.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HYMIE KING

Jesus.

FRANK KING

Got any ideas?

DALTON TRUMBO

Well, I just got out of prison, how about crime? The story of a gangster, his rise and fall?

FRANK KING

I've seen that a few times.

DALTON TRUMBO

Because it always makes money.

FRANK KING

And when do I get the product?

DALTON TRUMBO

(rising)

Three days.

FRANK KING

A hundred page script in three days? You tryin' to fuck me? You fuck me and I will fuck you --

DALTON TRUMBO

Mr. King, I've heard this speech. It was better in jail.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - STUDY - NIGHT

Trumbo writes, cigarette fuming like a factory chimney. The shelves are stripped, moving boxes piled everywhere. He arches, his back hurting so much he actually stops.

INT. LAZY-T RANCH - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Trumbo is naked in the tub again. He adds scotch to his coffee and scribbles on typed scripts, pain-free.

INT. KING BROTHERS - OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Trumbo waits in the room's only guest chair. A CURVACEOUS RECEPTIONIST hunts flies with a swatter.

A door jerks open and a flushed Frank King stands hugely in the doorway, holding a script.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK KING

Are you kiddin' me with this?

Trumbo looks up at him, alarmed. The Receptionist freezes in mid-swat. Frank lunges at Trumbo, grabs his right hand, shakes it hard, then YELLS into another doorway:

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

Hymie! Get out here! Pay the man!

Hymie emerges, pulls out a roll of cash, peels off fifties.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

Now look, we got this one, killer in a swamp? Best character's the swamp. Plus, women in prison, fighting in their underwear -- it's perfect except it stinks.

(to Hymie)

What else?

HYMIE KING

Pirates. Can't afford the ocean.

FRANK KING

Fix 'em all.

EXT. HIGHLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

1952. A working-class section of Los Angeles. Small, neat houses; older cars. On this Sunday, MEN in sport shirts tend to both, while WOMEN walk baby carriages or trim flowers and KIDS play. A moving truck RUMBLES past, followed by --

INT./EXT. TRUMBO'S CAR - DRIVING/HIGHLAND PARK - CONTINUOUS

Trumbo at the wheel, Cleo beside him, the three kids in back, all taking in this new block.

Trumbo's gaze settles on a presidential election lawn sign: *EISENHOWER/NIXON*, featuring photos of the two candidates.

Trumbo focuses on Nixon's wide grin.

EXT. THE NEW TRUMBO HOME - HIGHLAND PARK - DAY

Lovely, compact. MOVERS unload furniture from their truck. Niki pours lemonade for some who take a break.

NIKI

Hard work, you holding up okay?

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BACK PATIO - DAY

Beside a shimmering pool, Trumbo and Mitzi tend to a tiny, injured bird. She is upset, Trumbo warmly calm.

DALTON TRUMBO

It's a broken wing but he's going to be just fine, sweetie.

MITZI

He's scared.

DALTON TRUMBO

We'll get him some water, some nice, yummy worms, go inside, ask mom for a shoebox.

She runs into the house. Trumbo cups the bird.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAYS LATER

The house has been completely moved into. Cleo comes down the stairs in a bathing suit.

CLEO

C'mon, Mitzi!

Mitzi races down the stairs, also in a bathing suit. Mother and daughter cross through the house, excited. They pass a YAWNING Trumbo still in his robe. He opens the front door --

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

-- to get the paper and lying next to it, sees a plain envelope.

Trumbo picks it up and opens it. It reads in block letters --

WELCOME TRAITOR. WE DID THE POOL. - YOUR NEIGHBORS

Alarmed, Trumbo hurries out to --

INT./EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BACK PATIO - CONTINUOUS

-- where Cleo comforts Mitzi, upset as Trumbo exits the house to see --

-- their pool fouled with garbage, dirt, floating dead rats. Trumbo immediately moves to his wife and child.

DALTON TRUMBO

All right. Inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He glances across his fence and sees his NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR, 30s, tight white t-shirt, watering his lawn. And an unmistakably big, shit-eating grin on his face.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Trumbo presides over the family dinner.

DALTON TRUMBO

There are many ignorant, angry people in the world. And they appear to be breeding in record numbers. All we can do is stay together and remain vigilant.

EXT. LOS ANGELES MOVIE THEATRE 2 - NIGHT

Fall, 1953, as WE FIND the bright marquee, announcing:

Roman Holiday. Starring Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn. Below that, a lit poster for the breezy romantic comedy. TIGHT on the movie's credits and ISOLATE:

Original Story by Ian McLellan Hunter.

INT. LOS ANGELES MOVIE THEATRE 2 - CONTINUOUS

Among the ROWS of MOVIE FANS, Dalton and Cleo Trumbo enjoy a lovely, funny scene, LAUGHING with the rest of the audience, though perhaps with a bit more restraint.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER (PRE-LAP)

Big hit, great reviews --

INT. DINER - DOWNTOWN L.A. - DAY

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

-- haven't worked in nine months.

Trumbo sips coffee. Hunter reaches for the cream.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER (CONT'D)

You?

DALTON TRUMBO

There aren't quite enough zeroes in a King Brothers salary to survive --

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo at the typewriter, surrounded by empty shelves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
 -- but they need scripts like an
 army needs food. Quality, minimal;
 quantity, maximal.

THIS OFFICE MORPHS OVER THE YEAR

As Trumbo writes, never leaving the desk, as if chained. And
 WITHOUT A SINGLE CUT, all around him, the shelves fill with
scripts, the office growing more and more cluttered.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
 Every work week is seven days,
 every day is fourteen hours, every
 minute I'm behind. And I'm
 becoming a stranger in my own home.

BACK TO:

INT. DINER - DOWNTOWN L.A. - DAY

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
 They need five of you.

Trumbo smiles slyly.

INT. MUSSO AND FRANK - NIGHT - TIGHT ON A TABLE

Of FIVE MEN, including Ian McLellan Hunter and Arlen Hird.
 Though they're sipping cocktails and coffee, they have the
 clenched look of people in the middle of a job interview.
 Which is not far from the truth because --

FRANK KING (O.S.)
 The only question is, can these
 pinkos write?

SEVERAL TABLES AWAY - FRANK AND HYMIE KING AND TRUMBO

Sit, the Kings looking over the table of writers like used
 goods at a garage sale:

DALTON TRUMBO
 (points)
 That's Ian McLellan Hunter.

FRANK KING
 (impressed)
 Guy wrote Roman Holiday.

HYMIE KING
 Guy just got subpoenaed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK KING

Guy just got nominated.

DALTON TRUMBO

Everyone at that table's been nominated.

Frank nods. A waiter delivers drinks as a BUXOM STARLET bends to whisper to Frank, who nods, kisses her hand, sends her along. Hymie looks faintly ill with dread.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

It'd be like this... I find the writer and work with him. He delivers the script to me. If it's good, I'll give it to you, if it's bad, I'll fix it. Nobody gets paid till you're happy.

HYMIE KING

(scared, whispers)

And these writers are... all... all, uh...

FRANK KING

Blacklisted, Jesus, you're such a chickenshit.

HYMIE KING

Y'know, we're at war with the Communists.

FRANK KING

No, we're not.

HYMIE KING

It's a new kind of war.

FRANK KING

Yeah, doesn't exist, very new.

HYMIE KING

What about the Rosenbergs?

FRANK KING

What about 'em?

HYMIE KING

They stole the atom bomb.

FRANK KING

They didn't steal it off a fuckin' camera truck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Four of the five writers try to appear blandly appealing. Only Arlen waves, coquettish. Hunter throws him a glare.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
(to Trumbo, earnestly)
Look. We bought a gorilla suit.
And we gotta use it.

INT. MUSSO AND FRANK - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hird, Hunter and the other blacklistees confer with Trumbo.

ARLEN HIRD
So you had five jobs, now we got
'em all and you got none?

DALTON TRUMBO
I'm now free to go get five more
jobs and five more writers. Then
you each get five more jobs, five
more writers --

ARLEN HIRD
To keep that going, we'd need to
write every script in the business.

DALTON TRUMBO
(faux innocence)
What a thought, Arlen. Lord,
you're a devious lad.
(then)
So who wants to write a gorilla
movie?

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
Who doesn't?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - DINING AREA - DAY

Trumbo stands. His wife and three children sit.

DALTON TRUMBO
We now work at midnight, in thick
fog, among strangers.

The four Trumbos stare at him, all confused.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Not... literally.
(then)
We're running a family business.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
We'll be adding new phone lines.

A phone on a table. Then ANOTHER DISSOLVES IN alongside it.
Then ANOTHER. One RINGS.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
When you answer, never say "Trumbo
residence," just --

Chris, 12, picks up the phone.

CHRIS
Hello.

A MAN'S VOICE (ON PHONE)
Is John Abbott there?

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)
Whoever they ask for, find me or --

CHRIS
No, sir, may I take a message?

He listens as he writes a message for "John Abbott."

BACK TO:

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO
The door must be answered at all
hours.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

A DOORBELL CHIMES. Mitzi, 8, opens it. A UNIFORMED
MESSENGER stands, checking a clipboard.

MESSENGER
Got a pickup from... Sally
Stubblefield?

Mitzi checks a side table stacked with large envelopes, finds
the one marked "Sally Stubblefield" and hands it to the
Messenger.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)
Can I get your dad to sign?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She scribbles on the clipboard like a pro and shuts the door.

BACK TO:

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO

Dictation, short hand and typing
will be learned. Those of legal
age will have one of the most
important jobs imaginable.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIPPERT PICTURES - DAY

A scruffy little independent company.

DALTON TRUMBO (V.O.)

Courier.

*Cleo's car pulls up, she exits, moves to a delivery entrance.
The door opens. A WOMAN'S HAND holds out an envelope.*

INT. TRUMBO'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Cleo checks the envelope, fat with twenty-dollar bills.

BACK TO:

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DALTON TRUMBO

(to his family)

Questions? Comments?

Niki raises her hand.

NIKI

Is there a schedule?

DALTON TRUMBO

A what.

NIKI

I need to know when I can do
homework. And I'm on a fundraising
committee for Negro Voting Rights,
plus --

CLEO

All right, honey, we'll work it
out.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO (CONT'D)
(as Trumbo begins to object,
she throws him a look)
Won't we.

He doesn't answer. Trumbo and Niki lock eyes in uneasy silence.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Niki watches a bulky new television set, the picture jittery:

ON TV - AFRICAN-AMERICAN PROTESTERS

In actual black & white news footage MARCH outside schools.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)
...and protests continued as the
Supreme Court takes up the issue of
racial segregation...

NEARBY, TRUMBO TYPES

Then pulls rough copy from his carriage and holds it out to Niki, but she is riveted by --

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)
...while throughout the nation,
heated debate over integration...

-- until she sees the page he proffers, SIGHS, takes it, moves to a second typewriter and begins HAMMERING out the final carbon, her eyes straying to the TV images of PROTESTS.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Trumbo is alone, the TV is off. Trumbo opens a drawer, takes out a pill bottle, shakes out one tablet, then decides two would be better.

As he pops them in his mouth, Cleo appears in the doorway, a question on her lips. She sees her husband down the pills with a shot of scotch. She quickly decides the question can wait and retreats.

BACK TO:

INT. KING BROTHERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Hunter, Hird and Trumbo sit as Frank King gives "notes."

FRANK KING
(picks up a script)
Which one's "Graham Topper"?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The three writers look at one another, unsure.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
Nympho nun.

Ah. Hunter raises his hand.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
Great job.

He hands Hunter his script back.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
"Elwood Carr"? Murder at the
circus?

Trumbo nods, King slides him the script.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
Needs work. I knew it was the
clown.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
(consoling Trumbo)
It's always the clown.

Now King levels a malevolent gaze at Hird.

FRANK KING
So. You're the alien and the farm
girl.

ARLEN HIRD
Yeah.

FRANK KING
You wrote...

He opens the script to the middle, showing pages and pages
and pages of single-spaced, typewritten speeches.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)
...the alien talking about "the
rights of workers," the "pathology
of capitalism"?
(enraged)
The "dialectic"? I don't even know
what that IS and I fucking hate it.

ARLEN HIRD
All right, so it's a little dense --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK KING

I pay for a script about a guy with a giant bug head balling a girl in a haystack, you give me shit that'll get me subpoenaed. And also? Stinks!

(then)

Never. Again. Fix it.

But that last was not to Hird, it was to Trumbo. As King shoots the script across the table at him.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Hird and Trumbo go over Hird's screenplay.

ARLEN HIRD

Oh, fuck Frank King.

DALTON TRUMBO

(scribbling in the script margins)

I said, until he's happy, I rewrite.

ARLEN HIRD

So you're gonna stay up all night with this crap, to what, get it to his high literary, political standards?

DALTON TRUMBO

It shouldn't be to anyone's political standards. What the hell were you thinking...?

Hird snatches Trumbo's pen. Trumbo glares at him.

ARLEN HIRD

I was thinking. It's why I'm a writer. To say things that matter. Jesus Christ, look at us.

(then)

I was a reporter, I got nominated for a Pulitzer, I fought in Spain! I know Ernest Hemingway! I actually, I know him! And he knows me! I walk into a bar in Paris, he'd -- maybe he doesn't know my name but...

(then)

You won the National fucking Book Award. What're we doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Trumbo stands and moves to the bar. He takes two glasses.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The two men, several drinks in, fairly hammered, trying to work.

ARLEN HIRD

So the alien... the alien... why does he... want to impregnate the farm girl? To start a race... propagate, so they can all take over...

DALTON TRUMBO

(shakes head)

She's cute.

Hird considers this solemnly. Then --

ARLEN HIRD

Uh. Fine.

(a defeated pause)

I mean, don't you ever miss writing something, forget great, just good? You gotta have actual ideas... still... don't you?

Trumbo smokes. Then:

DALTON TRUMBO

A few. One keeps buzzing around up there... won't go away. Cleo and I were in Mexico at a bullfight, years ago. Bull died and... a thousand people cheered. Three didn't. Cleo, me... and a little boy down front. Crying. I always wondered why.

ARLEN HIRD

You write it, you'll know. Just, promise me, not for Frank King.

DALTON TRUMBO

The day I don't have to and just want to.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Spring, 1954, Oscar Night, the Trumbos, minus Niki, eat snacks and chat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MITZI

Niki! Hurry!

The sound of a toilet FLUSHING, then feet running.

NIKI

(racing in)
Who's doing it?

MITZI

Kirk Douglas!

As they all settle and watch their black & white TV --

ON TV - MOVIE STAR KIRK DOUGLAS

38 years old, chiseled and dashing in white tie and tails:

KIRK DOUGLAS

...the envelope? And the Oscar
goes to...

(pulls out the card)

...Roman Holiday! By Ian McLellan
Hunter!

The *THEME* from Roman Holiday and APPLAUSE, while Douglas
scans for the writer who will never appear.

IN THE LIVING ROOM - THE TRUMBOS

Sit for a moment, not sure how to react to this, until --

NIKI

So, do we get to be happy now?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo, Hunter and between them: that gold Oscar statuette.

DALTON TRUMBO

I don't want it.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

Well, I don't want it.

DALTON TRUMBO

Your name's on it.

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

You wrote it.

DALTON TRUMBO

They gave it to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER
And it's done me wonders.
(hands Trumbo a script)
Here's the gorilla movie.

Chris enters.

CHRIS
Phone for you, Dad.

DALTON TRUMBO
Which name?

CHRIS
No. You. Some guy named Buddy
Ross.

Trumbo is surprised as he picks up the extension.

DALTON TRUMBO
(teasing, into phone)
Buddy who...?

INT. ROSS INTERNATIONAL - BUDDY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

This is not the Buddy Ross we've known. He vibrates with exhausted panic as he takes a seat near Trumbo.

BUDDY ROSS
So's it true, the rumor? You wrote
Roman Holiday?

Trumbo just looks at him, then --

DALTON TRUMBO
What can I do for you, Buddy?

Buddy hesitates, barely knowing where to begin.

BUDDY ROSS
My movies've all bombed, dug me
into a hole. I finally got
something going. Classy. Three
big stars. The script...
(he can't finish)
What script, there's no script, I
got eleven writers who fucked me,
now the actors're gonna pull out
'n' if they do, I lose everything.

DALTON TRUMBO
When do you shoot?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUDDY ROSS

Ten days.

DALTON TRUMBO

Is there anything?

He hands Trumbo three typed pages. Trumbo studies them.

BUDDY ROSS

There'd be no credit, obviously, I can't pay you till we start shooting, and I wouldn't blame you if you spit in my face. But we did good stuff, back then, we really did. Please?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo and Hird.

DALTON TRUMBO

I owe the Kings a rewrite, I can't do both, I need you to take over.

ARLEN HIRD

So you can help out that great guy, Buddy Ross.

DALTON TRUMBO

So we can keep tearing down the blacklist.

ARLEN HIRD

Oh, Jesus, here we go...

DALTON TRUMBO

This is a huge movie, if Buddy gets a good script --

ARLEN HIRD

-- which you're gonna give him --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- which I'm going to sell him.

ARLEN HIRD

Yep. Money. Always money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

Why do you not see this? We get one big movie, we could get all the big movies and the whole rotten thing'll collapse from the sheer irony that every unemployable writer is employed.

ARLEN HIRD

Jesus, do you ever say anything that isn't gonna get chiselled on a rock?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Near an open window overlooking the back patio, Cleo dries some dishes at the sink. Trumbo and Hird's ARGUMENT can be heard but is muffled by doors and walls.

Cleo HUMS to herself, as nearby --

Chris cleans his trumpet, while Mitzi tends to another wounded bird. Mitzi catches Cleo's eye and --

Cleo smiles and TOSSES a water glass into the air, then a second, then a third, JUGGLING them. Mitzi LAUGHS with delight, Chris smiles then --

ARLEN HIRD (O.S.)

(suddenly loud)

...I am not gonna help you help Buddy Ross!

The kids are startled --

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

ARLEN HIRD

We should be suing that cockroach into the ground, along with every studio, congressman, producer --

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

-- as is Cleo, who manages to keep the glasses aloft --

DALTON TRUMBO (O.S.)

(exploding)

Brilliant -- !

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO
-- keep losing, give all your money
to lawyers --

ARLEN HIRD
I'd rather lose for the right
reason than --

DALTON TRUMBO
(roaring)
WHY?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cleo's deft hands flutter, a glass FUMBLES off her fingertips
and HITS the floor in an EXPLOSION of shards --

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO
It's LOSING!

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Cleo sweeps her children out.

CLEO
C'mon, kids, we're going to the
store.

CHRIS
(to Cleo)
But --

DALTON TRUMBO (O.S.)
I lose -- !

CLEO
(to her kids)
Now.

DALTON TRUMBO (O.S.)
-- you lose -- !

MITZI
Which store?

DALTON TRUMBO (O.S.)
-- we ALL lose -- !

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO

Any store.

Cleo's calm but sharp demeanor is not to be ignored. The kids follow her out.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO

-- and the whole goddamn country stays scared and dead! You want to live like this forever? Or do something? We can beat them, we can win!

ARLEN HIRD

I don't care if I win --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- Oh, bullshit, everyone wants to win --

ARLEN HIRD

No, you wanna win, I wanna change things.

DALTON TRUMBO

I want to win so I can change things --

ARLEN HIRD

No, you want the Oscar you can't have and the money you burn through writing shit for idiots.

DALTON TRUMBO

Why do I have to explain everything like you're a fucking child?

A beat, as Hird retreats quietly...

ARLEN HIRD

You don't. Okay? You don't.

(heads for exit)

Do what you do. It's fine. For you.

Trumbo, sensing he's perhaps gone too far --

DALTON TRUMBO

(calming)

Arlen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARLEN HIRD

I know what I'm fighting for. You
want another lake. And you know
what? You're gonna get it.

Hird is gone. Trumbo is alone in the sudden quiet.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo sits, still and silent, smoke curling off the
cigarette in his fingers, staring at a blank typewriter page.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

The tub is full of hot water, Trumbo is in there, writing at
about half-speed, pausing every few words to smoke and rub
his head.

INT. KING BROTHERS - OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Cleo drops off a script to the Secretary, gets the cash
envelope.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Trumbo in the tub again, writing at top speed as WE RACK
FOCUS TO that pill bottle we saw in his office. And REVEAL
here it's Benzedrine. From downstairs, he can just barely
hear CHEERFUL FAMILY VOICES --

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Niki, just turning 16 now, blows out the candles on her
birthday cake. APPLAUSE from Cleo, Chris and Mitzi, all
hugging her.

MITZI

You sure we shouldn't go knock?

CLEO

I'm sure.

Niki stares at her smoking candles, angry.

NIKI

He can't take five minutes -- ?

CLEO

No.

NIKI

(testing)

Two minutes. One minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO

Chris. Get the good plates.

NIKI

I'll do it.

She exits and --

INT. TRUMBO HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- parks herself outside the closed bathroom door. She hesitates, then KNOCKS. The typing STOPS.

NIKI

Dad? We're having birthday cake.

The door flies open and there's Trumbo, soaked, half-in his robe, enraged.

DALTON TRUMBO

When I'm working, you don't knock!

NIKI

But it's my --

DALTON TRUMBO

You don't knock! Ever!

NIKI

So the house is on fire, you don't want to know?

DALTON TRUMBO

I work in a BATHTUB! Surrounded by WATER! So even if the whole WORLD catches fire --

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO

(raging at Niki)

-- I can still be this family's personal goddamn SLAVE and all I ask is not to be interrupted for every fucking slice of FUCKING CAKE you see fit to -- !

Cleo appears, slicing a look into Trumbo that shames him into silence. He takes a breath, all is still, then he SLAMS the door and is gone. Niki, terrified and humiliated, runs down the hall, crying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cleo stands, unsure what to do. She lifts her hand to knock on the bathroom door, again hears TYPING and thinks better of it. She then follows the sound of her daughter's SOBS.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

A bone-tired Trumbo heads for the master bedroom. Through the open door, he sees the bluish flicker of a black & white TV and some familiar words from long ago...

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (V.O.,
O.S.)

*What do you want? What we all
want.*

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - MASTER BDRM - CONTINUOUS

Trumbo enters, sees Cleo watching an old movie on TV. It's the one from MGM, 1947. Trumbo is transfixed.

ON TV - WE FINALLY GET TO SEE THE WHOLE SCENE

Smoothly acted, shot and cut together under lush MUSIC:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (ON TV)
To not die young, poor or alone.

"ROCCO" (ON TV)
*Manny, these guys... I don't give
'em what they're after, they'll
kill me.*

"Rocco" starts to go.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (ON TV)
Hold it, Rocco.

"Manny" takes out his revolver -- and aims it at "Rocco," who freezes.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (ON TV)
(CONT'D)
*If we don't fight these guys,
sure, maybe you get that long,
happy life we all want... but your
eyes never really close again...
'cause you spend that life scared
of every noise in the dark. We
both do.*

(beat)
*I can't let you do this, Rocco...
so I just have to convince you I'm
right.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then -- "Manny" TWIRLS the gun with practiced élan, so he's now holding the barrel as he HANDS it to "Rocco," butt-first. "Rocco," thrown and relieved, takes it.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON/"MANNY" (ON TV)
(CONT'D)

(grins)
After all, kid, what're friends for?

TRUMBO AND CLEO BOTH WATCH, NEVER LOOKING AT EACH OTHER

As she's taken back to that simpler time a decade ago.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - NIKI'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

She is still enraged. Her mother KNOCKS.

NIKI

Don't defend him, okay? He knows he's wrong, he just doesn't like that I saw it before he did.

CLEO

I think he was just surprised. To see another adult in the house.

NIKI

He has to be right, all the time. How do you stand it?

CLEO

Well, there are times... especially lately...
(beat)
C'mon.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - CLEO'S DARK ROOM - DAY

Cleo and Niki stand at that speed bag, hanging from the ceiling.

Cleo JABS it once, it bounces, she JABS again, it bounces faster, then again and again and again and again and to her daughter's amazement, Cleo is as expert as a pro.

NIKI

Do you imagine that's his head?

CLEO

No.

Cleo stops. Offers Niki a chance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO (CONT'D)

But you can.

Niki hesitates, then crosses over, lifts her fist and --

INT. ROSS INTERNATIONAL - BUDDY'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Niki crosses past SECRETARIES and CREW in a whirl of pre-production. She delivers the script to Buddy. He takes it, kisses it with a LOUD SMACK. He holds his hand out to shake hers but she's already turned to exit, stone-faced.

INT./EXT. AN OLD APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Trumbo KNOCKS on a peeling door, soon opened by an earnest YOUNG MAN.

DALTON TRUMBO

I'd like to see Arlen Hird?

YOUNG MAN

I'm Andrew, his son...

DALTON TRUMBO

(shakes hands)

Dalton Trumbo. I'm certain your father's said awful things about me, I assure you they're all true but I've opted for early senility and forgotten everything, so...

ANDREW HIRD

Mr. Trumbo...

The young man pauses, unsure how to go on.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

A cheap closed casket.

His son Andrew sits in the front row. Next to him, a YOUNGER BROTHER. Both wearing yarmulkes. And behind them, row after row, all empty. And in the very back, Trumbo sits with Ian McLellan Hunter.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - HALL - DAY

Hunter and Trumbo shake hands with the two Hird boys. Andrew reaches into his coat.

ANDREW HIRD

Dad left something for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He hands a small ledger to Trumbo.

ANDREW HIRD (CONT'D)

A record... money he owed you, some other people. I'm sorry, I wish we could pay you back.

Trumbo is moved, shakes his head, lays a hand on the boy's shoulder.

DALTON TRUMBO

No, Andrew... no. I owed him. The debts are all mine.

INT. EDWARD G. ROBINSON'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Trumbo waits alone, admiring Robinson's magnificent and huge collection of French Impressionists. Where before there were five or six paintings here, now:

Over twenty famous works of art crowd the spotlight walls.

Robinson enters, pauses in the doorway with his BUTLER, nods for him to leave, then gathers himself, striding in.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Well.

DALTON TRUMBO

Hello, Eddie.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

This is a bit of a surprise...
What, uh... what can I do for you?

Trumbo takes an envelope out.

DALTON TRUMBO

Arlen died.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

I heard, I was on location.

Trumbo offers the envelope. Robinson just looks at it.

DALTON TRUMBO

He left a record of his debts.
(the envelope)
This is the money you gave us. For the defense fund. It's everything we owe you. Arlen included.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
No, now that was a gift --

DALTON TRUMBO
We'd like it off the books.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
What is this supposed to be, some kind of message? What you and Arlen and the Great Hollywood Ten all think of me?

Trumbo lays the envelope on a table and starts to go.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (CONT'D)
Fine. Fine. But first, you're gonna listen.

Trumbo pauses. Robinson gathers himself.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON (CONT'D)
After you went to jail, I didn't work for a year. No offers, not even an audition. People'd see me, cross the street, people I loved, people I made rich.

(then)

I sat in front of that Committee... why? I didn't do anything, none of us did anything, we were just stupid babies, with no business in any of it!

(long beat)

I just wanted my life back. They had every name -- yours, Arlen's, everybody's, I didn't give them anything they didn't already have, I ended it, is all, I just... ended it.

DALTON TRUMBO
Eddie, you don't end something like this by giving them what they have no right to ask for.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON
You're gonna tell me how I shoulda handled it? Like you handled Congress?

DALTON TRUMBO
Are you proud of what you did, is that what you're saying?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Proud? Who the hell gets to be proud? You! With your fake names and fronts, got all the work you want, I gotta go out in the world, every day, this --
(his own face)
-- is my work -- I got no one else to be, I did what I had to --

DALTON TRUMBO

(comes at him, hard)
You did what you wanted. And you did it for more! More movies, more money, more dead bullshit on your walls!

Robinson is pale and shaken. Trumbo takes a step back. Tries to calm himself. Starts to go.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

What I did, I did. But you get to wonder how many years you hacked off Arlen's life to show the world what a rebel genius you are. Live with that.

INT. ROMANOFF'S - NIGHT

Trumbo downs a shot at the stylish, CROWDED industry watering hole as the BARTENDER pours him another.

HEDDA HOPPER (O.S.)

Drinking alone?

He turns. She smiles. A beat as he adjusts to her presence.

DALTON TRUMBO

Preferably. You?

HEDDA HOPPER

Work. What're you up to these days?

DALTON TRUMBO

You know, Hedda, one more...
(downs his next shot)
...and I just might tell you.

HEDDA HOPPER

Then I'm buying.
(signals for two more)
Come on, I hear the rumors.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

Show me you're still in the game,
fighting the good fight.

(lowers voice, leans in)

Rub my face in it. Whisper a movie
you've written in secret. Maybe
I've even heard of it.

DALTON TRUMBO

Maybe you have.

A familiar face breaks through the CROWD --

BUDDY ROSS

(to Hedda)

Sorry, sorry, sorry, I'm shooting,
it's crazy, I --

He sees Trumbo and freezes. Hedda clocks that.

HEDDA HOPPER

Buddy. You know Dalton Trumbo.

A long pause as the two men look at one another.

DALTON TRUMBO

We worked together.

(then)

At MGM. A million years ago.

HEDDA HOPPER

(to Buddy)

I hear the script for your new one
needs work. Hire Dalton, he used
to be pretty good... and price-wise
he'd be bargain basement.

The Bartender brings the two shots.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

(to Trumbo)

Of course, you'd never. Not after
Buddy named names.

Trumbo tries to hide his surprise. And almost succeeds.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

You didn't know? Mm-hm. Word was,
he'd hired someone he shouldn't
have. So he got subpoenaed,
testified. Closed session, no
press. Makes it easier.

(beat)

He named you, of course.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

 HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

 Now he's been cleared. Gets to go
 make his movie. In a way, thanks
 to you.

Buddy looks like he's being turned on a spit. Trumbo downs
his shot and exits as he SLAPS a bill on the bar.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

WHAP! A below-the-fold headline is SLAPPED onto Trumbo's
desk by Niki, highlighting the headline:

 "CONGRESSMEN DEMAND RACIAL SEGREGATION"

 "'Negroes Have No Federal Right To Equality,'
 Say Leading Democrats"

 NIKI

 (appalled, angry)
 Can you believe it?

Trumbo is at his desk, sliding pages into a manila envelope
as Chris waits, wearing a sport coat and tie, and Niki raises
a clipboard of signatures she holds.

 NIKI (CONT'D)

Democrats. Voting for segregation.

 DALTON TRUMBO

 (correcting)
 Southern Democrats.

 NIKI

 Here's the petition.
 (her clipboard)
 I've already got over a thousand
 signatures.

 DALTON TRUMBO

 (signs)
 Happy to make it a thousand and
 one.
 (hands Chris his envelope)
 And the new draft. I need it
 delivered to Hymie King in Agoura.

 CHRIS

 Wait, I thought the Kings, in
 Hollywood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO

No, these are the rewrites, being shot tonight, Hymie needs them on set, now.

NIKI

Agoura's fifty miles.

DALTON TRUMBO

I'm sure Chris knows that.

NIKI

Well, he can't --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- excuse me?

NIKI

He has a date.
(to Chris)
Tell him.

CHRIS

(hating this)
I...

DALTON TRUMBO

(to Chris)
Is she your girlfriend? Is it serious? Does she have some objection to romantic Agoura?

NIKI

He's taking her to a movie.

DALTON TRUMBO

All right, Nikola, then you deliver the pages.

NIKI

I have a protest.
(the clipboard)
For this.

DALTON TRUMBO

Since when do protests have hard start times -- ?

CHRIS

I'll do it --

DALTON TRUMBO

Niki. Will do it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NIKI

I said, I can't --

DALTON TRUMBO

Young lady, you will --

NIKI

(her clipboard)

-- this is important --

DALTON TRUMBO

(his envelope)

-- so is this --

NIKI

This is important to me -- the date's important to Chris -- figure something else out --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- I'll tell you what I've figured out, that under this roof resides a moody, self-righteous malcontent.

NIKI

Yep. We all live with him.

She coolly exits past a rattled Chris, and as she turns in the hall, passes Cleo, who's been listening. Trumbo, who can't see Cleo, nods for Chris to pick up the scenes. Chris does so obediently, and also exits the study... under Cleo's protective gaze. She has now made a decision.

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - NIGHT

One light on, upstairs.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trumbo enters in his pajamas. Cleo, in robe and slippers, sits by the window, looking out.

DALTON TRUMBO

She hasn't been gone that long and it's not that late. This is a blatant attempt to manipulate worry.

CLEO

Do you know when I realized I had to leave Hal?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO
(beat; thrown; then)
Hal, Hal who?

CLEO
My first husband.

DALTON TRUMBO
(struck)
Jesus Take The Wheel...

CLEO
It wasn't when you hired that
detective... or asked me if I
really loved him... because by then
we both knew the answer was no.
(then)
It was my wedding night.
(to clarify for him)
My first wedding night. With Hal.

Nothing about this turn in the conversation is anything he
ever expected.

DALTON TRUMBO
If we're going to travel back in
time to that unholy coupling, I
have a medical obligation to drink.

And he heads for a small tray of glasses and scotch on the
bureau top, pouring himself three fingers.

CLEO
I saw this was not a man I could
have children with. He'd bully me,
them and we'd end up like every
miserable family since forever.
But I knew you'd never be like
that. Whatever went on out there,
the only thing that'd matter,
really matter, was us.

DALTON TRUMBO
All that matters is us --

CLEO
No, not anymore, you have no idea
what you could lose --

DALTON TRUMBO
My career, the first amendment, the
country? Am I missing anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLEO

Us, you're losing us. Since prison, you don't talk or ask, just snap and bark -- I keep waiting for you to start pounding the dinner table with a gavel --

DALTON TRUMBO

So in addition to being a pariah out in the world, I now have the supreme joy of battling insurrection --

CLEO

-- please, "insurrection" --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- in my own home, where these ten fingers literally feed, clothe and shelter us --

CLEO

This isn't just happening to you. We all hurt! Niki, me, your friends --

DALTON TRUMBO

Friends, what friends? Who the hell has the luxury of "friends"? I've got allies and enemies, there's no room for anything else!

CLEO

(quietly)

We know. Believe me.

DALTON TRUMBO

Good, then this discussion ends.

CLEO

This isn't a discussion, it's a fight. And this ends it: I will not let our children be raised by a bully -- any bully.

INT. DINER - DOWNTOWN L.A. - NIGHT

Niki sits with THREE AFRICAN-AMERICAN TEENAGERS. Leaning against the table, the handwritten signs from their protest. All the kids chat animatedly, then stop... seeing a somber Trumbo approach.

EXT. DINER - DOWNTOWN L.A. - NIGHT

Trumbo exits with Niki. Then she stops.

NIKI

I didn't want to fight in front of
my friends but --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- I'm not here to fight --

NIKI

-- I'm not coming home.

She folds her arms and stands. He pauses, then speaks
carefully, quietly, almost hesitantly.

DALTON TRUMBO

Your mother is a quiet person.

(dry)

Normally.

(then)

The effect of which is... she can
actually make me hear myself... and
lately, it's not a sound I like
much. Because what I hear mostly
is just... how afraid I am.

This is not what Niki expected. She softens, listening.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

Afraid this is scarring you, all of
you... and what if it's all for
nothing? How do I live with that?

(then)

So I fight. It's all I know how to
do anymore, just... rage... at
anyone in my way.

(looking tenderly at her)

But you've never been in my way,
Nikola, not once... and never could be.

Tears in her eyes now, she leans against him, allowing him to
put one arm across her shoulders and kiss her head.

NIKI

It's crazy how mad you make me,
since all I ever wanted is to be
just like you...

DALTON TRUMBO

You are. Which I wouldn't wish on
anybody.

INT. KING BROTHERS - FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Frank sits at his desk -- across from Roy Brewer.

ROY BREWER

We know. Okay? It's a small town
and the gossip's always true.

(then)

Fire Dalton Trumbo and the rest of
'em or you got pickets, headlines
and boycotts. We will put you
right out of business.

FRANK KING

We...?

ROY BREWER

Motion Picture Alliance for the
Preservation of American Ideals.
Me, Ronald Reagan, Hedda Hopper,
the guilds, studio heads. John
Wayne.

FRANK KING

I love John Wayne.

ROY BREWER

I'll introduce you. You guys could
do a movie together.

FRANK KING

That'd be great, only...

Frank King rises, holding a baseball bat.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

...I don't think you and me are
gonna be pals.

King swings viciously and SMASHES a lamp. Brewer covers up,
SCREAMS and goes for the door. Locked. Frank comes at him.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

You gonna stop me hiring union?
I'll go downtown, grab some winos
and hookers, there's my next cast
'n' crew! It doesn't matter! I
make garbage!

He swings and SHATTERS a poster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

Wanna call me a pinko in all the papers? Do it! Nobody who goes to my movies can fuckin' read!

Another tight swing and he BLASTS a second poster.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

I'm in this for the money and the pussy and they're both fallin' off the trees. Take that away from me.

Frank jams the tip of the bat into Brewer's throat.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

Go ahead. I won't "sue" you. But this --
(the bat)
-- will be the last fuckin' thing you see when I beat you to fuckin' death with it.

Brewer just stands, hyperventilating with terror. Frank TAPS the door with the bat and it opens from the outside. Roy Brewer bolts --

INT. KING BROTHERS - OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

-- tears across the room, passing Hymie and practically tripping over a seated, startled Dalton Trumbo and --

-- Brewer glances at Trumbo, acknowledging the writer with disbelief as he tumbles out the door.

FRANK KING

Fuck do you want?

DALTON TRUMBO

New script.

FRANK KING

Yeah?

DALTON TRUMBO

Family film, something I've been mulling for a while. About a Mexican boy and his pet bull.
(hands it to him)
One problem.

TIGHT ON the title page: The Brave One. By Robert Rich.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KING
Expensive?

DALTON TRUMBO
Worse. Good.

INT. LOS ANGELES MOVIE THEATRE 3 - NIGHT

Fall, 1956. Hundreds of eyes drink in the vivid color:

UP ON THE SCREEN

The Brave One's opening credits. Stirring MUSIC. Vibrant Mexican imagery of a boy and his bull.

IN THE AUDIENCE

Amid a sea of clean-cut '50s FAMILIES WITH KIDS and a FEW YOUNG CALIFORNIA-CASUAL COUPLES we find:

THE FIVE TRUMBOS

Dalton, Cleo, Niki, Chris and Mitzi, munching popcorn, as:

UP ON THE SCREEN

The writing credits appear and we see:

Original Story by Robert Rich.

CLOSE ON DALTON TRUMBO'S FACE

And that writing credit is reflected in his glasses -- as if tattooed across his eyes, marking him: Robert Rich.

CLEO

Looks down and adjusts the pleats of her dress until the credit passes.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Trumbo, stone-frozen with shock, is on the phone:

DALTON TRUMBO
Who told you?
(beat)
What else did they say?

Cleo appears in the doorway. Sensing something.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
You, too. Goodbye, Frank.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He hangs up. Cleo is tense with dread.

CLEO

What?

DALTON TRUMBO

The Brave One was nominated for an Academy Award.

INT. KING BROTHERS - FRANK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

FRANK KING

No, Hymie, this is nothing like Roman Holiday.

Frank, Hymie and Trumbo are gathered.

FRANK KING (CONT'D)

Roman Holiday had a guy with a name and a body they could give the award to. There is no Robert Rich. If it wins, who gets the thing?

HYMIE KING

Well, maybe it won't. I mean, it's not that good.

(to Trumbo)

No offense.

DALTON TRUMBO

None taken.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Spring, 1957 and another Oscar telecast, on a slightly larger black & white TV screen. Trumbo, Cleo, Chris, Niki, and Mitzi are all assembled once again. Tense. Expectant.

ON TV - MOVIE STAR DEBORAH KERR

Sparkling with sexy sophistication (in actual footage of the telecast) as she takes the card from the envelope --

DEBORAH KERR

The Brave One! Robert Rich!

INT. MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE OFFICES - BULLPEN - DAY

An agitated Roy Brewer is pacing, on the phone:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROY BREWER

We're looking into it, we can't find Mr. Rich anywhere, he apparently doesn't --

(beat)

No. Don't print tha --

Suddenly, in the open doorway, a grimly hatted Hedda Hopper.

ROY BREWER (CONT'D)

(hanging up)

I gotta go.

HEDDA HOPPER

Who the hell is Robert Rich? And it had better not be who they say.

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BACK PATIO - DAY

1958. A playful Trumbo holds court before FIVE JOURNALISTS.

JOURNALIST

Mr. Trumbo, are you Robert Rich? Did you write The Brave One?

DALTON TRUMBO

My policy is, never claim credit for any one movie. That way, it's possible I had something to do with all of them. Except the stinkers, all written by my enemies.

The Journalists all CHUCKLE and scribble, eating it up.

JOURNALIST

What's your position on the blacklist?

DALTON TRUMBO

Well, on it. Along with thousands of others.

JOURNALIST

Are you using this Robert Rich controversy to try and end it?

DALTON TRUMBO

The Brave One's a nice little movie. If rumors of my involvement can sell a few tickets, then good.

He sees Niki exit the house and approach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

And if the strange circumstances of its authorship can get a few questions asked, even better.

NIKI

(whispers)

Dad? Sorry, some crazy guy on the phone says he's Kirk Douglas.

INT./EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Opened by Niki, revealing a tan, grinning, dimple-chinned --

KIRK DOUGLAS

Niki?

(holds out his hand to the stunned teen)

Kirk.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Trumbo settles into a chair across from Douglas.

DALTON TRUMBO

Apologies. We've had more than our share of crank calls lately.

KIRK DOUGLAS

I can't imagine.

DALTON TRUMBO

So.

KIRK DOUGLAS

So. I'm doing a new picture. And I just got the script.

From a valise he hefts a document the size of a phone book.

DALTON TRUMBO

That's about seven hours of entertainment here.

KIRK DOUGLAS

And not a single page is entertaining. But there's a good story in there, somewhere. About one man...

(a knowing smile)

...who tried to take on the whole world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO
You've got me so far.

KIRK DOUGLAS
He was a slave who led a revolt
against the Roman Empire...

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

On a nearby stool, we glimpse a water-dappled script cover:

SPARTACUS

Screenplay by Sam Jackson

Trumbo is in the tub, writing and talking on the phone:

DALTON TRUMBO
...no, I can't tell you what I'm
working on now except to say, the
blacklist is alive and well and so
is the black market.
(beat)
Yes, you can quote me. Seeing my
name in the paper drives certain
people out of their minds...

INT. PERINO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Hedda Hopper and Kirk Douglas greet with a kiss.

HEDDA HOPPER
Kirk, I'd like you to meet a friend
of mine, Bob Stripling...

HUAC Investigator Robert Stripling shakes Douglas' hand.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)
...House Un-American Activities
Committee. Drink?

KIRK DOUGLAS
No, thanks. You said it was
important...

HEDDA HOPPER
Only if you hired Dalton Trumbo.

KIRK DOUGLAS
Who I hire is my business.

STRIPLING
No, Mr. Douglas. It's ours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIRK DOUGLAS

Why?

STRIPLING

We have to keep this country safe.

KIRK DOUGLAS

And how're you doing that?

STRIPLING

Why don't I show you by putting you on the stand?

KIRK DOUGLAS

Hedda, is your friend trying to scare me?

HEDDA HOPPER

He's trying to tell you the way things are.

KIRK DOUGLAS

Maybe I don't like the way things are.

HEDDA HOPPER

We've known each other a long time, Kirk.

KIRK DOUGLAS

We have.

HEDDA HOPPER

When did you become such a bastard?

KIRK DOUGLAS

(rises)

Oh, I was always a bastard. You just never noticed.

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - DAY

A lustrous black Rolls Royce passes Trumbo's t-shirted Neighbor in his driveway, working on a Ford, staring in mute disbelief as --

The spectacularly out of place Rolls parks in Trumbo's drive, a CHAUFFEUR exits, opens the back door and --

A BALD MAN in Saville Row tailoring emerges. He views this scrubby neighborhood as he does the world: with utter superiority.

INT./EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

The bell ECHOES, Cleo opens the door and --

THE BALD MAN
(in a clipped Austro-
Hungarian accent)
I wish to see the man who wrote
this.

He holds up a copy of the screenplay Spartacus.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Trumbo, in pajamas and robe, sits with a COCKATIEL. The Bald Man stands, wielding the rolled-up Spartacus script like a cudgel.

THE BALD MAN
I am Otto Preminger.

Beat. Trumbo rubs his tired eyes.

OTTO PREMINGER
(annoyed)
The director.

DALTON TRUMBO
No, I know who you are, I just
finished work a few hours ago.

OTTO PREMINGER
(the script)
A copy of which I have read.

DALTON TRUMBO
I sent it in this morning, how -- ?

OTTO PREMINGER
I am Otto Preminger. The director.

DALTON TRUMBO
Is it too early for a drink?

OTTO PREMINGER
Never.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo, still in his robe, mixes drinks. Preminger studies a strange contraption:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A homemade aviary of chicken wire, built out from an open window onto the lawn. In it, a new bird with a slightly bent wing hops about, pecking at water.

DALTON TRUMBO

My youngest believes I can end the suffering of all broken birds.

OTTO PREMINGER

As can I. With a broiler.

(accepts his drink)

Are your duties completed for Mr. Kirk Douglas?

DALTON TRUMBO

I've got two weeks for Christmas...

OTTO PREMINGER

During which time you will work with me.

DALTON TRUMBO

Will I.

OTTO PREMINGER

If you are as intelligent as your writing... and as greedy as your reputation.

(then)

It is an adaptation of the novel Exodus. You've read it?

DALTON TRUMBO

No.

OTTO PREMINGER

A colossal best-seller. Very nearly a perfect piece of shit.

But --

DALTON TRUMBO

-- there's a good story in there, somewhere.

OTTO PREMINGER

Actually, I have no idea. But I have Paul Newman.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - CLEO'S DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Cleo checks contact sheets as Trumbo fiddles with his cigarette holder, studying Preminger on their hall phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO
You're doing it?

Trumbo has a small, secret smile on his lips.

DALTON TRUMBO
I think it's the only way to get
him to leave.

CLEO
I know that smile.

DALTON TRUMBO
(faux innocence)
Why, what ever do you mean?

CLEO
Poor Mr. Preminger... thinks he's
the cat and you're the mouse...

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Christmas morning, 1958. Under a glittering tree, Cleo, Niki, 20, Mitzi, 13, and Chris, 18, all unwrap presents at the tree, LAUGH and CHATTER. Trumbo sips coffee, digging into his stocking.

Otto Preminger looms in the doorway, glancing at his watch.

OTTO PREMINGER
Christmas? Is over.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Trumbo walks Preminger to his study.

DALTON TRUMBO
Did you read my new scenes?

OTTO PREMINGER
Dreadful. Keep up this level of
work, I will see to it your name is
on my movie. To take the blame.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Trumbo sits, making notes on typewritten script pages. Preminger paces as he reads a new, clean script copy. He stops reading. He lowers the pages. He looks out the window. Trumbo studies him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OTTO PREMINGER

Better. Yes. But. There's no other way to say it. It simply... lacks genius.

Trumbo takes this in, amused and sanguine.

DALTON TRUMBO

Otto. If every scene is brilliant, your movie will be utterly monotonous.

Preminger takes this in with a thoughtful pause.

OTTO PREMINGER

I tell you what.
(hands the pages back to Trumbo)
You write every scene brilliantly. And I will direct unevenly.

Though amused, Trumbo starts to object when Mitzi enters -- with Kirk Douglas. Douglas is surprised Trumbo's not alone.

OTTO PREMINGER (CONT'D)

Kirk.

KIRK DOUGLAS

Otto. How are you?

The two shake hands.

OTTO PREMINGER

I'm very well.

KIRK DOUGLAS

I, uh, don't mean to interrupt --

DALTON TRUMBO

Not at all, you'll excuse us, Otto?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Trumbo and Douglas -- able to glimpse Preminger through the open study doorway.

KIRK DOUGLAS

I sort of feel like I walked in on my wife. Do you love him?

DALTON TRUMBO

It's far more lurid than that. He's paying for my services.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIRK DOUGLAS

So am I.

DALTON TRUMBO

And you'll have me again, January second, as promised.

KIRK DOUGLAS

I just need you a few days on some the new scenes.

DALTON TRUMBO

Not till the second...

KIRK DOUGLAS

I wouldn't ask but I've never had a director who's a bigger pain in my ass than Stanley Kubrick. Worst part is, he's right.

DALTON TRUMBO

And I wouldn't refuse, but...
(he hesitates)
This has to stay between us.

KIRK DOUGLAS

Of course.

DALTON TRUMBO

Preminger has indicated... well, what he said was, "Keep up this level of work and I will see to it your name is on my movie."

Douglas isn't so much surprised as slightly irritated.

KIRK DOUGLAS

Really.

DALTON TRUMBO

His exact words.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Preminger and Trumbo watch Douglas getting into his car outside.

OTTO PREMINGER

I suppose he wants you back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO
(reading script pages)
Hm? No. Just came by to talk
about, ah, screen credit.

OTTO PREMINGER
On Spartacus?

DALTON TRUMBO
I shouldn't have said anything.
You understand.

INT. UNIVERSAL PICTURES SOUNDSTAGE - SPARTACUS SET - DAY

With a piece of the slave gladiator training compound in the background, SLAVE EXTRAS sip coffee and gossip with ROMAN SOLDIER EXTRAS.

CREW MEMBERS adjust lights and tweak wardrobe. In a dark corner, Kirk Douglas, in costume as the rebel gladiator, confers with the boxy, no-nonsense head of Universal, ED MUHL.

ED MUHL
Hedda Hopper says the American Legion is going to boycott us unless you fire Trumbo.

KIRK DOUGLAS
Ed, he's not done with the script, his name'll never be on the thing, what's anybody boycotting?

ED MUHL
Twenty-million Americans are saying loud and clear they will never buy a ticket to our movie unless you fire one writer.

Muhl hands Douglas a sheet of typewritten paper.

ED MUHL (CONT'D)
Here's fifty. Pick one.

INT. KING BROTHERS - FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Central to the whole room now is a framed one sheet for The Brave One, announcing it as an "Academy Award Winner!" Frank stomps past, watched cautiously by Hymie and Trumbo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK KING

You can't admit you're Robert Rich,
so twenty-seven people with twenty-
seven lawyers all say they're
Robert Rich and we owe 'em money...
'cause they wrote The Brave One.

(tosses a thick document
onto his desk)

Five-hundred-thousand dollar
lawsuit.

(then another)

Two-million-dollar lawsuit. And my
favorite...

(another)

...a teacher from Eagle Rock who
wants eleven-thousand five-hundred
dollars, plus mileage and meals.

HYMIE KING

We settle, we're wiped out.
Confess, we get subpoenaed.

DALTON TRUMBO

Gentlemen, I can say in all
honesty, this I did not see coming.

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - BACK PATIO - TWILIGHT

Trumbo smokes alone, gazing into another perfect sunset,
mulling this latest twist in the road.

NIKI (O.S.)

Trumbo? Mind if I stick my nose
in?

He turns as she exits the house.

DALTON TRUMBO

Please.

NIKI

He knows.

She means their Neighbor in the white t-shirt, watering his
lawn on the other side of the fence.

NIKI (CONT'D)

He sees Kirk Douglas in and out of
here and Otto Preminger in his
Rolls. He's an idiot but he's not
stupid.

(sits near Trumbo)

Has he called the FBI? Congress?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NIKI (CONT'D)

No. Because everything they can
do, they've done.

(then)

That Oscar belongs to you. Get it.

DALTON TRUMBO

Good God, you're nothing like me.

(delighted)

You're worse.

EXT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - NIGHT

January, 1959. News vans and equipment trucks clog the
drive. Cables snake into the brightly-lit house. The
Trumbos' next-door Neighbor and OTHERS from the block stand
and rubberneck.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOME - STUDY - NIGHT

Trumbo and an INTERVIEWER are on camera in a blast of lights.

TV INTERVIEWER

For the record, you're Robert Rich.

DALTON TRUMBO

I am.

INT. KIRK DOUGLAS' MANSION - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Douglas is on the phone. In front of him, Muhl's list. Most
of the names have been crossed out. But a few are circled.

KIRK DOUGLAS

(into phone)

Yeah, he'd be all right, and I
guess he's free, interested...

Nearby, the TV is on. Douglas can't keep his eyes off it.

TV INTERVIEWER (ON TV)

...and you wrote The Brave One.

DALTON TRUMBO (ON TV)

I did.

INT. HEDDA HOPPER'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hedda, hosting a COCKTAIL PARTY, looks through a doorway into
her home office, where A FEW GUESTS are glued to the TV.

TV INTERVIEWER (ON TV)

Why come forward now?

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO

As someone who's been thoroughly investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee, I started wondering...

INT. HEDDA HOPPER'S MANSION - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO (ON TV)

...why hasn't anyone ever taken a good, long look at them? And their work in the movie industry?

She approaches Trumbo's TV face here in her home, her party guests as awkward as caught children.

INT. OTTO PREMINGER'S HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Preminger dresses for dinner, half-watching:

DALTON TRUMBO (ON TV)

They were convened to uncover enemy agents, expose Communist conspiracies and write anti-sedition laws.

INT. KIRK DOUGLAS' MANSION - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Douglas has the phone to his ear but is mostly watching:

DALTON TRUMBO (ON TV)

Now here we are, thousands of hours and millions of dollars later: agents uncovered -- zero; conspiracies exposed -- zero; laws written -- zero.

INT. OTTO PREMINGER'S HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Preminger CHUCKLES, loving it.

INT. HEDDA HOPPER'S MANSION - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DALTON TRUMBO (ON TV)

All they do is deny people the right to work and they can't even get that right. Academy Awards --
(self)
-- two.

(CONTINUED)

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trumbo is just sitting down to breakfast. He has the Cockatiel.

DALTON TRUMBO
What do you think?

OTTO PREMINGER
My answer is on the front page of
today's New York Times.

Trumbo picks up one of several papers there. And is stoically astonished by a headline of January 20, 1960:

"OTTO PREMINGER ANNOUNCES EXODUS WRITTEN BY DALTON TRUMBO"

He is without words as he fully takes this in. Then:

DALTON TRUMBO
You hate it that much.

OTTO PREMINGER
Merry Christmas, Mr. Trumbo.

INT. UNIVERSAL PICTURES - SCREENING ROOM - DAY

Ed Muhl enters the dark, empty room, FLICKERING with a rough-cut scene of:

Spartacus hurled against the wall by the African slave, DRABA, pinned with his trident.

In a corner of the screening room, our Douglas is pleased, picks up the phone. Notices Ed Muhl.

KIRK DOUGLAS
Hi, Ed, hang on.
(into intercom)
Put up the speech before the big
battle?
(into phone)
Warren, I'd like you to put out a
press release, saying the
screenplay for Spartacus was
written by Dalton Trumbo. Thanks.

Douglas hangs up. Ed Muhl doesn't like this. One bit.

ED MUHL
Kirk. If you won't get rid of
Trumbo, I will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIRK DOUGLAS

And right after I quit, you can
reshoot all my scenes. See, Ed,
for better or worse... I am
Spartacus.

INT. AMERICAN LEGION HALL - DAY

Hedda Hopper and John Wayne are both on stage, addressing TWO-
THOUSAND LEGIONNAIRES.

HEDDA HOPPER

There's a picture coming out.
Starring Kirk Douglas. Written by
Dalton Trumbo.

HISSES and BOOS echo.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

It's called Spartacus. And don't
believe it if there's some other
writer's name on it. We're onto
them! Aren't we?

APPLAUSE and mounting CHEERS.

JOHN WAYNE

We sure are. 'Cause it's a new
day!
(the crowd ROARS)
A NEW DAY!

INT. LA SCALA RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ed Muhl threads through the sleek industry CROWD, picks up a
phone at the bar:

ED MUHL

Yes?

INTERCUT:

INT. MOTION PICTURE ALLIANCE OFFICES - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

HEDDA HOPPER

Ed. Every theatre that movie is
in'll get picketed unless you pull
the prints, tonight, and take that
fucking traitor's name off.

ED MUHL

Hedda, that's expensive and
pointless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEDDA HOPPER

Then kiss your movie, your studio
and your miserable ass goodbye!

EXT. GLAMOROUS HOLLYWOOD MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

October, 1960. The world premiere of Spartacus. (ARCHIVAL
FOOTAGE)

INT. GLAMOROUS HOLLYWOOD MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

The movie has begun. Black-tie AUDIENCE eyes drink in:

THE OPENING CREDITS OF SPARTACUS - UP ON THE SCREEN

We hear the percussive SCORE and see the stunning titles.

TRUMBO AND CLEO

Sit a few seats from Kirk Douglas and his WIFE as --

UP ON THE SCREEN - THE NAME DALTON TRUMBO APPEARS

Under the words "Screenplay by."

TRUMBO'S OWN NAME

Is reflected in his glasses. And strikes him deeply.

CLEO

Grips her husband's arm, holds her breath, savors this.

INT. TRUMBO HIGHLAND PARK HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Undressing, Trumbo hears a quiet SOB from across the room.

DALTON TRUMBO

Cleo?

She is at her vanity table, in her robe, CRYING.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)

What, what is it?

CLEO

It's over, isn't it.

DALTON TRUMBO

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEO

And we made it...
 (she can't believe it)
 Jesus, we made it, didn't we...

DALTON TRUMBO

We did.

His eyes glisten. They clasp hands.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

January, 1961, and below the marquee announcing Spartacus, SIXTY OR SO MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION picket. There is a HEAVY POLICE PRESENCE. Suddenly, the doors of the theatre open, disgorging MEN IN DARK SUITS protecting --

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

As REPORTERS close in around him (a mix of actual news footage and recreation), trying to get a comment --

TV COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

President Kennedy enjoyed a rare evening off, attending the new Kirk Douglas film, Spartacus.

Breezing by the glowering Legionnaires, he's asked --

TV REPORTER (V.O.)

It's a very controversial film, what did you think?

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

It's a, ah, fine picture and...

INT. HEDDA HOPPER'S MANSION - HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A hatless Hedda sits alone and watches:

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY (ON TV)

...I think it's going to be a big hit.

Hedda turns him off, while on a glassy wall of her many magazine covers, sees herself in 1947 under the masthead:

TIME

As we hear the sound of POLITE APPLAUSE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MASTER OF CEREMONIES (PRE-LAP)
...this next award is given to that
member who has advanced the
literature of motion pictures. I
am proud to present The Writers'
Guild of America Laurel Award...

INT. A BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

MASTER OF CEREMONIES
...to Dalton Trumbo.

On March 13, 1970, the MASTER OF CEREMONIES is on the stage
of a black-tie Writers' Guild gala, where LIGHT CLAPPING
greeted an older but still spry Trumbo, who regards his award
with a mixture of gratitude and amusement, then:

DALTON TRUMBO
(at the mic)
Often, when I stand before the film
community, there is an elephant in
the room -- me.
(mild LAUGHS ripple)
I thought I might address that.
(and begins his speech)
The blacklist was a time of evil.

As he speaks, voice echoing, WE CUT AROUND THE ROOM TO:

CLEO

At a table, unchanged in her simple, radiant elegance.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
And no one who survived it came
through untouched by evil.

WITH HER, CHRIS, MITZI AND NIKI

Now grown, beaming, proud.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Caught in a situation that had
passed beyond the control of mere
individuals, each person reacted as
his nature...

IAN MCLELLAN HUNTER

Listens with a sad and knowing smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
...his needs, convictions and
particular circumstances compelled
him to.

THEN TRUMBO SEES EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Staring stonily, almost daring the writer to continue.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
(thrown, pausing, then)
There was good faith and bad.
Courage and cowardice.

And we keep CUTTING AROUND THE ROOM TO:

OTTO PREMINGER

In all his shiny-domed glory.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Honesty and dishonesty.

KIRK DOUGLAS

Still buffed to movie star perfection.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Selflessness and opportunism.

THE KING BROTHERS

Hymie, ever-nervous, and Frank, deeply gratified.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
So when you look back on that dark
time, as I think you should now and
then, it will do no good to search
for heroes or villains. There were
none. There were only victims.

AND NOW WE GO BACK TO EDWARD G. ROBINSON

Disarmed, Trumbo's compassion the last thing he expected.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
Victims because each of us felt
compelled to say or do things we
otherwise would not. To deliver
and receive wounds we truly did not
wish to exchange.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NIKI

In particular is moved by this.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
That is why none of us -- left,
right or center -- emerged from
that long nightmare without sin.

TRUMBO'S EYES AGAIN FIND ROBINSON

And neither man looks away.

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
What I say here is not intended to
be hurtful to anyone. It is
intended to repair a hurt. To heal
wounds which years ago we inflicted
on each other and most of all...
ourselves.
(then)
Thank you.

And as the room RISES to give him a STANDING OVATION...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MGM STUDIOS - SUNSET

The once-bustling dream factory is weedy and deserted but for
a defiantly dapper Trumbo, saying goodbye to TWO YOUNG
PRODUCERS who sport the era's regulation jeans and beards.
As they move off, Trumbo pauses to light his cigarette.

JOHN WAYNE (O.S.)
Well, well.

Trumbo turns to see John Wayne getting up out of a
convertible: heavier, older, but still a mighty presence.

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
What're you doin' here?

DALTON TRUMBO
Working with some young producers.

JOHN WAYNE
Me too.
(glares at Trumbo's shaggy
pair)
Yours look just like mine. All
growin' the hair we're losin'.
(then)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
I read in the paper. 'Bout your
award. Speech. Got me...

Trumbo waits as Wayne picks his words carefully:

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
Ya fight when ya have to... maybe
not always the way ya want to.
What I mean is...

DALTON TRUMBO
I know what you mean.

They stare at each other. Anything might be said, anything
could happen. After a long silence:

DALTON TRUMBO (CONT'D)
It's a new day.

And with those words, Dalton Trumbo holds out his right hand.
John Wayne looks down at it... then clasps it in his own.

JOHN WAYNE
Each 'n' every morning.

These two powerfully different men shake hands, then:

JOHN WAYNE (CONT'D)
Better mosey. My producers need a
diaper change. You stay outta
trouble.

DALTON TRUMBO
That I will not.

Wayne concedes a smile as Trumbo strolls away, cigarette
smoke wreathed around his head like laurel, vanishing into
the shadows of a studio at twilight.

FADE OUT.

THE END