

"HIS GIRL FRIDAY"

screenplay by

Charles Lederer

Based on the play

"The Front Page"

by

Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur

1939

SHOOTING DRAFT

FADE IN: INT. ANTEROOM CLOSE SHOT SWITCHBOARD

Two telephone operators sit at switchboard busy plugging in and out answering calls.

1ST OPERATOR

This is the Morning Post... The City Room? Just a moment, I'll connect you.

(plugs in call)

2ND OPERATOR

Morning Post... Sports Department? Just a moment –

(plugs in call)

CAMERA PULLS BACK to disclose the rest of the anteroom. To Camera left are the elevators – at back wall directly behind switchboard are chairs and a table for visitors. Next to switchboard are stairs leading downward to the next floor. A waist-high iron grill with a gate in it separates the switchboard from the anteroom, a similar grill separating it again from the city room which stretches on beyond switchboard. At a table in the switchboard enclosure sits an office boy, about fifteen, doing a crossword puzzle. The big

clock on the back wall shows that it is nearly one o'clock.

CLOSE SHOT OFFICE BOY

as he bends over paper. We catch a glimpse of the squares of a crossword puzzle.

MED. SHOT

as a reporter comes out of the City Room, clanging gate to behind him. The office boy looks up.

OFFICE BOY

What's a seven-letter word for –?

REPORTER

Don't ask me! If I knew any seven-letter words, I'd be something better than a reporter!

He catches a glimpse of the far elevator going down.

REPORTER

Hey! Down! Down!

MED. SHOT ELEVATORS

as reporter runs in to the closed elevator door and pounds on it. It comes back, the door opens, and he gets in. The door closes, as elevator goes down. The near elevator comes up and discharges Hildy Johnson and Bruce Baldwin. Bruce carries an umbrella and wears a raincoat.

MED. CLOSE SHOT TABLE

office boy looking over his puzzle as Hildy and Bruce come into the scene.

HILDY

(with a smile)

Hello, Skinny. Remember me?

OFFICE BOY

(looks up; then a glowing smile)

Hildy Johnson!

CLOSE SHOT SWITCHBOARD

Hildy approaches the switchboard.

HILDY
(to operator)
Hello, Maisie.

The first operator looks up.

MAISIE
Hello – Hildy! You coming back?

HILDY
No, just visiting. Tell me, is the
lord of the universe in today?

MAISIE
He is – and in a very bad humor. I
think somebody stole one of his crown
jewels. Shall I announce you?

HILDY
No, never mind – I'll blow my own
trumpet.

THREE SHOT BRUCE, HILDY AND OPERATOR

Hildy turns to Bruce.

HILDY
I won't be more than ten minutes, I
promise you.

BRUCE
Even ten minutes is a long time to
be away from you.

We hear a giggle off scene.

CLOSE SHOT OFFICE BOY

He looks towards Bruce and Hildy and giggles.

TWO SHOT BRUCE AND HILDY

HILDY

What did you say, Bruce?

Bruce, embarrassed, looks at the office boy, then looks back at Hildy as they turn toward second gate leading into City Room.

BRUCE

I said – uh – I said even ten minutes – is a long time – to be away from you.

HILDY

Don't be embarrassed, Bruce. I heard it, but I just wanted to hear it again. I can stand being spoiled a little. The gentleman I'm going to have a chat with did very little spoiling.

BRUCE

(grimly)

I'd like to spoil him just once. Sure you don't want me to go in with you?

HILDY

My job, Bruce. I started it – and I'll finish it.

BRUCE

I suppose you're right – but if it gets rough, remember I'm here.

HILDY

I'll come a-running, pardner.

She starts to push open the iron-grilled gate leading into the City Room. Bruce quickly springs forward and opens it for her. Hildy smiles.

HILDY

Thanks, Bruce.

She kisses his cheek and walks through. He looks after her. The office boy whistles. Bruce pays no attention, but stares after Hildy.

MEDIUM SHOT - SHOOTING DOWN LENGTH OF CITY ROOM

Hildy starts to walk through City Room.

TRUCKING SHOT - HILDY

as she walks the length of the City Room. It's a long walk, because it's a room that takes up practically the whole floor. The scene is a busy one. But, gradually, as Hildy starts down, one after another recognize her. There are cries of: "Hildy!" "Hello, Hildy", etc., from the men as Hildy goes straight down the aisle. She never stops but waves her own greetings: "Jim!" "Hi, good-looking!" "Laura" "Hullo, Pop" "Nan!" "Eddie!" "Hello, Mac" "Pete!" "Frank" "Oscar!", and gets responses from each of them. One man is bent over his desk reading his copy – he is standing up. Hildy slaps him as she goes by. He turns around: "Say, who did that?" As he sees Hildy: "Hello, Hildy!" Hildy: "Hi, Jake." She passes a middle-aged woman, almost an Edna May Oliver type, seated at a desk pounding out copy and smoking a cigarette. As Hildy comes up to her she slaps the woman on the back.

HILDY

Hello, Beatrice. How's "Advice to the Lovelorn"?

BEATRICE

(looking up)

Hildy! I'll be a monkey's uncle!
What are you doing here?

HILDY

Point of information – what does a girl say on meeting her divorced husband? OR:

(What does a girl do,
etc.)

BEATRICE

(illustrating)
My advice is duck and cross with
your right.

Hildy moves on. CAMERA TRUCKS WITH HER to the end of the room where she pauses before the frosted glass partition which separates Walter Burns' office from the rest of the City Room.

INT. BURNS' OFFICE LONG SHOT

as she opens the door. Burns is shaving with an electric razor and Louie is holding the mirror up in front of him.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

shaving, Louie holding the mirror.

LOUIE
A little more round the chin, Boss.

MEDIUM SHOT

There is a sound of the door closing and Burns, without looking up, says:

BURNS
What do you want?

HILDY
Why, I'm surprised, Mr. Burns. That's no way to talk to your wife – even if she's no longer your wife.

BURNS
(grinning)
Hello, Hildy!

HILDY
Hello, Walter.
(to Louie)
Hi, Louie – how's the slotmachine king?

LOUIE

Oh, I ain't doing that any more. I'm retired. I'm one of you fellas now – a newspaper man.

HILDY
Editorials?

BURNS
Get going, Louie. I got company.

The door flies open and Duffy comes busting in.

DUFFY
Walter!

BURNS
I'm busy, Duffy.

DUFFY
Well, you're not too busy to know that the Governor hasn't signed that reprieve!

BURNS
What?

DUFFY
And that means Earl Williams dies tomorrow morning and makes a sucker out of us!

BURNS
You're crazy. Where's Mac?

DUFFY
He's on my phone. He just called me.

BURNS
They can't do that to me!

He grabs the phone on his desk:

BURNS
Give me that call on Duffy's wire!
Hello – Mac? Burns. Where's the

Governor? – What do you mean, you can't locate him?

(apparently pleading
to the one man in
the world who can
help him)

Mac, you know what this means. We're the only paper in town defending Earl Williams and if he hangs tomorrow we're washed up! Find the Governor and when you find him tell him we want that reprieve!... Tell him I elected him and I can have him impeached! Sure, you can do it, Mac – I know you can. I always said you were the greatest reporter in the country and now you can prove it. Get going! Attaboy!

He hangs up.

BURNS

(to Duffy,
sarcastically)

The greatest reporter in the country!
First I gotta tell him what news to
get! Gotta tell him how to get it –
then I gotta write it for him
afterward! Now if you were a decent
City Editor –

CLOSE SHOT DUFFY AND BURNS

with Louie and Hildy in the b.g.

DUFFY

Don't blame me. I'm City Editor in
name only. You do all the hiring
around here.

BURNS

Yeah! Well, I do the firing, too.
Remember that, Duffy, and Keep a
civil tongue in your head.

MEDIUM SHOT

HILDY

I don't like to interfere with
business, but would you boys pardon
us while we have a little heart-to-
heart talk?

DUFFY AND LOUIE

(together)

Well – But I gotta –

They look at Burns.

BURNS

Scram, you guys.

They start to go.

HILDY

You won't miss anything. You'll
probably be able to hear him just as
well outside as here.

They go.

HILDY

Mind if I sit down?

Hildy sits.

CLOSE SHOT DUFFY AND LOUIE

going out of the door. They cast an interested look back and
linger a second. Over scene comes Burns' voice.

BURNS' VOICE

I said scram!

They close the door hurriedly.

MED. CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

HILDY

May I have a cigarette, please?

Burns reaches into his pocket, extracts a cigarette and tosses it on the desk. Hildy reaches for it.

HILDY
Thanks. A match?

Burns delves into pockets again, comes up with matchbox, tosses it to Hildy, who catches it deftly, and strikes the match.

BURNS
How long is it?

Hildy finishes lighting her cigarette, takes a puff, and fans out the match.

HILDY
How long is what?

BURNS
You know what. How long since we've seen each other?

HILDY
Let's see. I was in Reno six weeks – then Bermuda... Oh, about four months, I guess. Seems like yesterday to me.

CLOSEUP BURNS

BURNS
(slyly)
Maybe it was yesterday. Been seeing me in your dreams?

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT THE TWO

HILDY
(casually)
No – Mama doesn't dream about you any more, Walter. You wouldn't know the old girl now.

BURNS

(with conviction)
Oh, yes I would. I'd know you any
time –

He grows lyrical and, rising from his seat, is about to start
toward her, as he continues:

BURNS AND HILDY
(together)
– any place, anywhere –

He sits.

HILDY
(half-pityingly)
You're repeating yourself! That's
the speech you made the night you
proposed.
(she burlesques his
fervor)
"– any time – any place –
anywhere!"

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND BURNS

BURNS
(growling)
I notice you still remember it.

HILDY
I'll always remember it. If I hadn't
remembered it, I wouldn't have
divorced you.

BURNS
You know, Hildy, I sort of wish you
hadn't done it.

HILDY
Done what?

BURNS
Divorced me. It sort of makes a fellow
lose faith in himself. It almost
gives him a feeling he wasn't wanted.

HILDY

Holy mackerel! Look, Walter, that's what divorces are for.

BURNS

Nonsense. You've got the old-fashioned idea that divorces are something that last forever – till 'death us do part'. Why, a divorce doesn't mean anything today. It's only a few words mumbled over you by a judge. We've got something between us nothing can change.

HILDY

I suppose that's true in a way. I am fond of you, Walter. I often wish you weren't such a stinker.

BURNS

Now, that's a nice thing to say.

HILDY

Well, why did you promise me you wouldn't fight the divorce and then try and gum up the whole works?

BURNS

Well, I meant to let you go – but, you know, you never miss the water till the well runs dry.

ANOTHER ANGLE

HILDY

A fellow your age, hiring an airplane to write:

(she gestures above to indicate sky-writing)

'Hildy: Don't be hasty – remember my dimple. Walter.! It held things up twenty minutes while the Judge ran out to watch it.

BURNS

Well, I don't want to brag, but I've still got the dimple – and in the same place – I just acted like any husband who doesn't want to see his home broken up.

HILDY

What home?

WALTER

What home? Don't you remember the home I promised you?

HILDY

Oh, yes – we were to have it right after our honeymoon – honeymoon!

BURNS

Was it my fault? Did I know that coal mine was going to have another cave-in? I meant to be with you on our honeymoon, Hildy – honest I did.

HILDY

All I know is that instead of two weeks in Atlantic City with my bridegroom, I spent two weeks in a coal mine with John Kruptzky – age sixty-three – getting food and air out of a tube! You don't deny that. Do you?

BURNS

Deny it! I'm proud of it! We beat the whole country on that story.

HILDY

Well, suppose we did? That isn't what I got married for. What's the good of – Look, Walter, I came up here to tell you that you'll have to stop phoning me a dozen times a day –

sending twenty telegrams – all the
rest of it, because I'm –

BURNS

Let's not fight, Hildy. Tell you
what. You come back to work on the
paper and if we find we can't get
along in a friendly way, we'll get
married again.

HILDY

What?!!

BURNS

I haven't any hard feelings.

HILDY

Walter, you're wonderful in a
loathesome sort of way. Now, would
you mind keeping quiet long enough
for me to tell you what I came up
here for?

BURNS

(rising, reaching for
his hat)

Sure, come on. We'll have some lunch
and you can tell me everything.

HILDY

(also rising)

I have a lunch date. I just want –

BURNS

You can break it, can't you?

HILDY

No, I can't.

BURNS

Sure you can. Come on.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

HILDY

Don't tell me what to do! We're divorced – I'm a free woman. You're not my husband and you're not my boss! And what's more, you're not going to be my boss.

BURNS

What do you mean by that?

HILDY

Just what I said. That's what I –

BURNS

You mean you're not coming back to work here?

HILDY

That's the first time you've been right today. That's what I –

BURNS

(still interrupting)

You've had a better offer, eh?

HILDY

You bet I've got a better offer.

BURNS

Well, go on and take it. Work for somebody else! That's the gratitude I get for –

HILDY

I know, Walter, but I –

BURNS

(ignoring her)

What were you when you came here five years ago? A little college girl from a School of Journalism! I took a little doll-faced mugg –

HILDY

You wouldn't have taken me if I hadn't been doll-faced!

BURNS

Why should I? I thought it would be a novelty to have a face around here a man could look at without shuddering.

HILDY

Listen, Walter –

BURNS

(going right on)

I made a great reporter out of you, Hildy, but you won't be half as good on any other paper, and you know it. You need me and I need you – and the paper needs both of us.

HILDY

Well, the paper'll have to learn to do without me. And so will you. It just didn't work out, Walter.

WIDER ANGLE

BURNS

It would have worked if you'd been satisfied with just being editor and reporter. But no! You had to marry me and spoil everything.

HILDY

(indignantly)

I wasn't satisfied! I suppose I proposed to you!

BURNS

Well, you practically did! Making goo-goo eyes at me for two years till I broke down. And I still claim I was tight the night I proposed. If you'd been a gentleman you'd have forgotten all about it. But not you!

HILDY

(speechless)
You – you –

She grabs something and chucks it at him. He ducks. The phone rings.

BURNS
(to Hildy)
You're losing your eye. You used to be able to pitch better than that.
(he reaches for phone)
Hello... Yeah... What? Sweeney? Well, what can I do for you?

CLOSE SHOT DUFFY

seated at his desk, talking into phone.

DUFFY
What's the matter with you? Are you drunk? This is Duffy, not Sweeney!

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

Burns into phone:

BURNS
Sweeney! You can't do that to me! Not today, of all days! Jumping Jehosophat! Oh, no, Sweeney... Well, I suppose so... All right. If you have to, you have to.
(he hangs up)
How do you like that? Everything happens to me – with 365 days in the year – this has to be the day.

HILDY
What's the matter?

BURNS
Sweeney.

HILDY
Dead?

BURNS

Not yet. Might just as well be. The only man on the paper who can write – and his wife picks this morning to have a baby!

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

HILDY

Sweeney?
(she laughs)
Well, after all, he didn't do it on purpose, did he?

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

BURNS

I don't care whether he did or not. He's supposed to be covering the Earl Williams case and there he is – waiting at the hospital! Is there no sense of honor left in this country?

HILDY

(practically)
Well, haven't you got anybody else?

BURNS

There's nobody else on the paper who can write! This'll break me, unless –
(he stares at Hildy;
then a light breaks)
Hildy!

HILDY

No!

BURNS

You've got to help me, Hildy.

HILDY

Keep away –

BURNS

It'll bring us together again, Hildy –
just the way we used to be.

HILDY

That's what I'm afraid of. "Any time –
any place – anywhere!"

BURNS

Don't mock, Hildy, this is bigger
than anything that's happened to us.
Don't do it for me! Do it for the
paper.

HILDY

Get away, Svengali.

BURNS

If you won't do it for love, how
about money? Forget the other offer
and I'll raise you twenty-five bucks
a week.

HILDY

Listen, you bumble-headed baboon –

BURNS

All right – thirty-five, and not a
cent more!

HILDY

Please! Will you just –

BURNS

Great grief! What's that other paper
going to give you?

HILDY

I'm not working for any other paper!

BURNS

Oh! In that case, the raise is off
and you go back to your old salary
and like it. Trying to blackjack –

HILDY

Look at this!
(pulling her glove
off her left hand)

CLOSEUP HILDY

She gets glove off left hand and holds up an engagement ring for him to see.

HILDY
Do you see this? Do you know what an engagement ring is?

CLOSEUP BURNS

He looks at ring, swallows, then:

MED. SHOT

Burns and Hildy.

HILDY
I tried to tell you right away but you started reminiscing. I'm getting married, Walter, and also getting as far away from the newspaper business as I can get! I'm through.

BURNS
(himself again)
Get married all you want to, Hildy, but you can't quit the newspaper business.

HILDY
You can't sell me that, Walter.

BURNS
Who says I can't? You're a newspaper man.

HILDY
That's why I'm quitting. I want to go some place where I can be a woman.

BURNS

I know you, Hildy, and I know what it would mean. It would kill you.

CLOSER SHOT

HILDY

(bitterly)

A journalist! Peeking through keyholes – running after fire engines – waking people up in the middle of the night to ask them if they think Hitler's going to start a war – stealing pictures off old ladies of their daughters that got chased by apemen! I know all about reporters – a lot of daffy buttinskies going around without a nickel in their pockets, and for what? So a million hired girls and motormen's wives will know what's going on! No, Walter, I'm through.

BURNS

Where'd you meet this man?

HILDY

Bermuda.

BURNS

Bermuda... Rich, eh?

HILDY

Not what you'd call rich. Makes about five thousand a year.

BURNS

What's his line?

HILDY

He's in the insurance business.

BURNS

(looks up)

The insurance business?

HILDY
(on the defensive)
It's a good, honest business, isn't
it?

ANOTHER ANGLE

BURNS
Oh sure, it's honest. But somehow, I
can't picture you with a guy who
sells policies.

HILDY
Well, I can, and I love it! He forgets
the office when he's with me. He
doesn't treat me like an errand-boy –
he treats me like a woman.

BURNS
He does, does he? How did I treat
you – like a water buffalo?

HILDY
I don't know about water buffaloes,
but I know about him. He's kind and
sweet and considerate. He wants a
home – and children.

BURNS
Say, sounds more like a guy I ought
to marry. What's his name?

HILDY
Well, I'll give you a hint. By
tomorrow they'll be calling me Mrs.
Bruce Baldwin.

BURNS
Tomorrow? Tomorrow... as quick as
that?

HILDY
The quicker the better. Well – I
finally got out what I came in to

tell you.

(she extends her hand)

So long, Walter, and better luck next time.

BURNS

(taking her hand)

I wish you everything I couldn't give you, Hildy.

HILDY

Thanks...

BURNS

Too bad I couldn't see this guy first. I'm pretty particular about whom my wife marries.

HILDY

(laughing)

Well, he's waiting in the anteroom for me now.

BURNS

Say, could I meet him?

HILDY

Oh, better not, Walter. Wouldn't do any good.

BURNS

You're not afraid, are you?

HILDY

Afraid? I should say not!

BURNS

All right then, come on and let's see this paragon.

(gets hat)

Is he as good as you say?

HILDY

Better.

MED. SHOT OFFICE

Burns has his hat. They start toward the door.

BURNS

Then what does he want with you?

HILDY

(laughing)

Now you got me.

BURNS

Nothing personal. I was just asking.

At the door, Burns walks ahead, opens door and walks out.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE BURNS' OFFICE MED. CLOSE SHOT BURNS

BURNS

After all –

He stops as he realizes she's not there. The door opens.
Hildy comes out.

HILDY

You wouldn't believe this, Walter,
but Bruce holds the door open for
me.

BURNS

(incredulous)

No kidding?

INT. CITY ROOM FULL SHOT

Reporters conversing. They stop as Hildy and Burns enter
scene.

TRUCKING SHOT

as Hildy follows Burns through the City Room. This time, in
contrast to Hildy's original walk through the room, the groups
are silent as they watch the two.

HILDY

(trying to keep pace)
And he takes his hat off when he's
with a lady.

BURNS
(over his shoulder)
What for?

HILDY
(shouting)
And when he walks with a lady, he
waits for her!

BURNS
(stops)
Oh, I'm sorry.

Burns, at this point, has reached the switchboard. He says,
under his breath, to Maisie:

BURNS
(under his breath)
Have Duffy call me in the restaurant
in twenty minutes.

Hildy, a little out of breath, catches up with him. At the
iron gate that opens into anteroom Hildy jumps ahead, opens
the gate and holds it for Burns.

HILDY
Allow me.

BURNS
(walking right through)
Thanks.

Hildy follows him out.

INT. ANTEROOM MED. SHOT

as Hildy follows Burns in. Bruce is sitting on the bench. On
the end of a bench sits an old, grizzled Western Union "boy".
Ignoring Bruce, Burns strides over to the "boy", seizes his
hand, shakes it and says:

BURNS

I can see right away my wife picked
out the right husband for herself.

CLOSE SHOT BRUCE

Hildy behind him. Bruce registers amazement at this.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND MESSENGER

The messenger is more amazed than Bruce as Burns keeps pumping
his hand vigorously.

MESSENGER

There must be some mistake. I'm
already married.

BURNS

(you never saw a more
surprised man)
Already married!
(turning to Hildy
o.s.)
Hildy, why didn't you tell me?

CLOSEUP HILDY

She shakes her head at Burns' antics, but can't help smiling
nevertheless.

MEDIUM SHOT BURNS AND MESSENGER

BURNS

(again seizing
messenger's hand)
Congratulations again, Mr. Baldwin!

MESSENGER

But my name –

BRUCE

(as he enters scene)
Mr. Burns!

Burns turns slightly but doesn't release messenger's hand.

BURNS

Yeah? You'll have to excuse me –
I'm busy with Mr. Bruce Baldwin here.
Just leave your card with the boy.

CLOSE SHOT BRUCE AND BURNS

Bruce takes hold of Burns' coat and shakes it to get his attention. Burns turns on him:

BURNS

I'm very sorry, but I'm busy! Look –
(he points o.s.)
– there's the boy. Take your card
and leave it with him.

He turns away again. Bruce, determinedly, takes hold of his sleeve and pulls at it.

BRUCE

Mr. Burns –

BURNS

(wheeling around)
I've just told you I was busy with
Mr. Bruce Baldwin!

BRUCE

I'm Bruce Baldwin!

MEDIUM SHOT

Burns, still pumping the dazed messenger's hand, stops at this, drops hand, and turns to Bruce:

BURNS

You're Bruce Baldwin?

BRUCE

Yes!

BURNS

(accusing to messenger)
Then who are you?

MESSENGER

(falteringly)

My name's Pete Davis.

BURNS

Pete Davis! Well, Mr. Davis, this is no concern of yours and after this I'll thank you to keep out of my affairs!

The messenger isn't quite sure what he's done but he slinks back to his seat as Burns turns to Bruce.

CLOSEUP HILDY

She is beginning to get sore, but reluctantly again she is compelled to smile at Walter's behavior.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND BRUCE

BURNS

(reaches for Bruce's hand but grabs the umbrella and begins shaking the handle up and down)

This is a pleasure, Mr. Baldwin, and I'm sorry about the mistake.

BRUCE

(he tries to shift the umbrella, calling Burns' attention to it, and offers his hand instead)

BURNS

Oh, I thought there was something funny... You see, Bruce, you don't mind if I call you Bruce, do you? After all, we're practically related –

BRUCE

(completely unnerved)

by this time, and
you can't quite blame
him)

Mr. – well – no – no – not at
all.

BURNS

You see, my wife – I mean, your
wife – that is, I mean Hildy – had
led me to expect that she was marrying
a much older man.

BRUCE

(this is the final
crusher)

Oh.

BURNS

But I see, she didn't mean old in
years. You always carry an umbrella,
Bruce?

BRUCE

Well, er – it looked a little cloudy
this morning.

BURNS

That's right. – Rubbers, too, I
hope? A man ought to be prepared for
any emergency.

Burns looks down. Bruce, in unconscious responses, helplessly
lifts his foot up and we see the rubber.

BURNS

Attaboy!
(taking Bruce's arm
and leading him toward
elevator)
Come on, Bruce.

BRUCE

(going along, but
worried)
Where are we going?

BURNS

Where are we going? I'm going to buy
you two lunch – didn't Hildy tell
you?

BRUCE

(a helpless look back
at Hildy)

No – she didn't.

BURNS

Just wanted to surprise you, I guess.

(as the elevator is
about to pass, he
calls)

Down!

(practically shoving
Bruce in)

After you, Bruce!

(as Bruce disappears
inside he turns toward
Hildy)

Come on, Hildy, my treat!

CLOSE SHOT BURNS NEAR OPEN ELEVATOR

We don't see the passengers. Hildy comes into scene.

HILDY

I suppose I can't call this off
without creating a scene – but
remember, it's your last fling.

BURNS

(hurt)

How do you like that? Here I am being
nice to you and your sweet-heart and
that's the thanks I get!

He jumps into the elevator – in a second he hops out.

BURNS

(very sweetly – he
almost sings it)

Oh – after you, Hildy!

With a look of disgust Hildy gets in. Burns follows and the door slams on them.

CLOSEUP OFFICE BOY

He looks after departed elevator and whistles. Then he grins all over.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT CLOSEUP - A BEAMING WAITER

HE GRINS ALL OVER AND SAYS:

WAITER

Don't tell me it's you, Hildy!

CAMERA PULLS BACK and discloses our three at a restaurant table. Nothing swanky – a place like Jack Blake's in New York, say.

HILDY

(beaming at waiter)

Nobody else.

She extends her hand. The waiter takes it; they shake.

HILDY

How's everything, Gus?

GUS

I can't complain.

BURNS

(studying menu)

Well, I can. I'm hungry. Roast beef sandwich – rare. And some coffee.

GUS

Shall I put a little rum in the coffee? It's a nasty day.

BURNS

Good idea. How about you, Hildy?

HILDY

(discarding menu)

Oh – I'll take the same, I guess.
And coffee.

GUS

Little rum in yours, too?

HILDY

I guess so.

Bruce looks at her. She hurriedly changes her mind.

HILDY

No – just coffee, Gus.

GUS

(crestfallen)

Just coffee.
(to Bruce)
And you, sir?

BRUCE

(putting menu down)

Oh, I'll take the same, I guess. And
a glass of milk.

GUS

(incredulous)

Milk?

BRUCE

(thinks he hasn't
heard)

Yes.

GUS

(shaking his head as
he writes it down)

Milk.

BURNS

And don't put any rum in it, Gus.

CLOSEUP - GUS

Gus gives him a look and goes.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE TRIO AT TABLE

Burns surveys the others quizzically.

BURNS

(a sigh)

Well, so you're getting married tomorrow, eh? How does it feel, Bruce?

BRUCE

Feels awful good. Yes, sir – we're taking the four o'clock train to Albany and tomorrow we'll be married.

BURNS

(it's the Puritan in him)

Taking the train today – and being married tomorrow?

He whistles.

BRUCE

(rising to the bait)

Oh, it isn't like that.

HILDY

(reassuring Mrs. Grundy)

It will be perfectly all right, Walter. Mother is coming with us on the train.

BURNS

Mother? But your mother –

BRUCE

No. My mother.

BURNS

(he gets it and

underlines it)
Oh. Your mother – well, of course,
that relieves my mind.

HILDY
(to Bruce)
Isn't it sweet of Walter – still
wanting to protect me?

She gives Burns that too-sweet look.

BURNS
(apparently taking
this at face value)
I know I wasn't a good husband, Hildy,
but you can always count on me.

TWO SHOT - FEATURING BRUCE AND HILDY

BRUCE
(a little cookily)
I don't think she'll need you very
much – I aim to do most of the
protecting myself.

He pats Hildy's arm – she smiles at him.

THREE SHOT - HILDY, BRUCE AND BURNS

BURNS
Well, I'll tell you one thing, old
man, she never looked at me the way
she's looking at you.

HILDY
I might have, Walter, but you were
never there.

BURNS
Anyway, I'm glad you two are going
to be happy and have all the things
I couldn't give her. You know, Hildy
is about the best reporter in the
country – and that goes regardless
of sex. But all she really ever wanted

was a home.

BRUCE

Well, I'll try to give her one.

BURNS

I know you will, Bruce. Are you going to live with your mother?

BRUCE

Just for the first year.

BURNS

(sighing)

That'll be nice. A home with mother.
A real honeymoon. In Albany, too.
Ow!

That "ow" is sotto voce, but it's the direct result of a kick under the table from Hildy.

BRUCE

Mighty nice little town, Albany.
They've got the State Capitol there,
you know.

BURNS

Yes, I know...

(he chuckles)

Hildy, will you ever forget the night you brought the Governor back to your hotel room and found me taking a bath? She didn't even know I was in town...

His laugh stops cold and he clutches for his shin again.
Hildy just looks. Providentially, the waiter enters the scene.

GUS

Well, here we are.

He begins serving them.

BURNS

(trying to pick up

again after a second)
How's business, Bruce?

BRUCE

Well, Albany's a mighty good insurance town. Most people there take it out pretty early in life.

BURNS

I don't blame them.

Gus, who has just managed to come between Hildy and Burns, lets out a startled "ouch".

HILDY

Oh, I'm sorry, Gus! My foot must have slipped.

GUS

(a pained expression
belies his words)

That's all right.

BURNS

I sometimes wish I'd taken out insurance – but, of course, now it doesn't matter. Still, I suppose it would have been the smart thing to do.

BRUCE

Well, I honestly feel that way. I figure I'm in one line of business that really helps people. Of course, we don't help you much when you're alive – but afterward – that's what counts.

BURNS

I see what you mean.

They fall to.

CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

She sips her coffee and acts surprised.

HILDY

Gus, this –

CLOSEUP - GUS

GUS

(winking)

Good coffee, isn't it?

CLOSEUP - HILDY

She smiles and winks back, and takes another sip.

GROUP SHOT AT TABLE

Gus starts to go.

BRUCE

You've forgotten my milk.

GUS

Oh. The milk. Yes.

He leaves scene, shaking his head. Burns sips his coffee. He likes it. He lifts his cup to Hildy.

BURNS

Here's luck to the bride and
bridegroom.

HILDY

(lifts cup)

Thank you.

BRUCE

(looking for something
to respond with –
apologetically)

He hasn't brought my milk yet.

A bus boy comes into scene and stops before Burns.

BUS BOY

They want you on the phone, Mr. Burns.

BURNS

They would!

Boy goes, Burns rises, starts off, comes back for his cup of coffee, which he then takes off with him.

TWO SHOT - BRUCE AND HILDY

BRUCE

(looking after him)

You know, Hildy, he's not a bad fellow.

HILDY

(looking at him
maternally)

You're so nice, Bruce, you think everybody else is.

BRUCE

Oh, he's not the man for you. I can see that. But I sort of like him. Got a lot of charm.

HILDY

He comes by it naturally. His grandfather was a snake.

BRUCE

(shaking his head)

If anybody had told me I'd be sitting at lunch with him – but he swept me right off my feet.

HILDY

That's what he did to me. Swept me right off my feet – and left me lying on the floor.

INT. PHONE BOOTH FULL SHOT

Burns is listening, has coffee on ledge and sips it now and then.

BURNS

Get this – get Sweeney off that
yarn and out of town on a two weeks'
vacation – and right away... All
right, Duffy, keep your shirt on.
Hildy's coming back... No. She doesn't
know it yet. But she'll be there. I
promise you, Duffy. And tell Louie
to stick around.

He hangs up, smiles, and finishes the coffee. Then he girds
himself for being crushed. He gradually begins to look sunk.
He pulls out a small mirror to study his expression till he
finally gets what he wants. He holds that expression as he
comes out of the booth.

INT. RESTAURANT MED. SHOT AT TABLE

Gus is entering the scene.

GUS

Your milk, sir.

He serves Bruce.

GUS

And I brought you another cup of
coffee, Hildy.

Gus serves her and puts still another cup in front of Burns'
chair.

HILDY

Thanks, Gus.

She takes a sip and almost chokes.

BRUCE

Too hot?

HILDY

(gasping for breath)

No. It's strong.

(quickly)

But I like it that way.

Gus goes, smiling.

BRUCE

(looking off)

Say, what's happened to Burns? He looks sunk, doesn't he?

HILDY

(beaming)

He certainly – hic – does!

Burns comes into scene, looking like a 1929 banker just before jumping off a roof, and sits down.

BRUCE

Anything the matter?

BURNS

Just Sweeney again. One of my best reporters.

HILDY

What now?

BURNS

His wife had twins and he went out to celebrate and got as drunk as a lord. They can't even find him.

(he sips his coffee)

I tell you, drink is the ruin of this nation.

HILDY

(sipping hers)

You said it.

BURNS

So – Sweeney gets twins – and Earl Williams gets hanged tomorrow.

BRUCE

Just what is the lowdown on Williams?

BURNS

It's simple. A poor little dope who lost his job went berserk and shot a cop who was coming after him to quiet him down.

HILDY

If he's nuts, why doesn't the State just put him away?

BURNS

Because it happened to be a colored policeman.

HILDY

(for Bruce's benefit)

The colored vote happens to be very important to the Mayor of this town.

BURNS

Especially with an election coming up in a few days.

BRUCE

Are you sure Williams is not all there?

BURNS

All you've got to do is talk to him. But the Mayor would hang his own grandmother to be re-elected.

BRUCE

But couldn't you show the man wasn't responsible?

CLOSEUP - BURNS

BURNS

(there's a sly expression on his face)

How?

HILDY'S VOICE

You could run an interview that would prove it. Remember the interview I wrote with Jimmy Wellman? That saved his life.

BURNS

(slapping hands together)

Yes, you could do it, Hildy. You could save that poor devil's life.

You could – but –

(the enthusiasm dies away)

– you're going away. I forgot.

THREE SHOT

BRUCE

How long would the interview take?

BURNS

Oh – an hour for the interview.

Another hour to write it.

BRUCE

We could take the six o'clock train, Hildy. If it would save a man's life.

HILDY

No, Bruce, dear. Don't you see? This is a trick to get your sympathy. No, Walter, I've been waiting for something like this – but I wasn't sure when you'd spring it. If you want to save Earl Williams' life, you can interview him yourself. You're still a good reporter. Bruce and I will be on that four o'clock train – and thanks just the same.

BURNS

I'm an editor. I know what ought to be written, but I can't write it the way you could. It needs a woman's heart –

HILDY

Why, Walter, you're getting poetic!

BURNS

(to Bruce)

You see what I had to put up with?
She never trusted me! You argue with
her – otherwise you're going on a
honeymoon with blood on your hands!

Bruce gulps.

BURNS

How can you have any happiness after
that? All through the years you'll
remember that a man went to the
gallows because you were too selfish
to wait two hours! I tell you, Earl
Williams' face will come between you
on the train tonight – and at the
preacher's tomorrow – and all the
rest of your lives!

HILDY

(breaking into applause)

What a performance! Bravo! Don't let
him fool you, Bruce – it's only an
act!

BURNS

What do you mean, only an act? Haven't
you got any feeling?

HILDY

Well, it's either an act on your
part or a miracle on Sweeney's.

BURNS

What do you mean?

HILDY

I happen to know Sweeney was married
only three months ago. If he's got
twins this morning, I claim it was

done with mirrors.

BURNS

(laughs, throws up
his hands)

All right, Hildy, I'm licked. But
I'll make you and Bruce a business
proposition.

HILDY

We're not interested.

BURNS

(to Bruce)

Maybe you'll be. You're a smart young
man. You let Hildy do this story for
me and you can write out a \$100,000.00
insurance policy for me. What do you
say?

BRUCE

I don't use my wife for business
purposes, Mr. Burns!

HILDY

Wait a minute, Bruce. What's
commission on a \$100,000.00 policy?

BRUCE

Well, at his age, twenty payment
life, a little over a thousand
dollars.

HILDY

And what's the matter with a thousand
dollars?

BRUCE

But –

HILDY

According to the budget, we laid out
that's more than our food bill for a
whole year. Listen, Bruce, I don't
want Walter Burns to use me, but I'm

perfectly willing to use him. How long will it take to get him examined?

BRUCE

I could get a company doctor in twenty minutes.

BURNS

Now you're talking!

HILDY

(turning on Burns)

You keep out of this. Bruce, suppose you examine Mr. Burns in his office. I'll get my bag and go over to the Press Room in the Criminal Courts Building. You phone me as soon as Mr. Burns has given you his check. Then I'll go get the interview and you phone Mother that we're taking the six o'clock train.

(back to Burns)

And no tricks, Walter!

BURNS

What tricks would I pull?

HILDY

Oh, nothing! Of course, you might cancel the check. Yes! Wait a minute! What would be his first payment on that policy?

BRUCE

About twenty-five hundred dollars.

HILDY

Better make that a certified check, Walter.

BURNS

(indignantly)

What do you think I am – a crook?

HILDY

Yes — and that's putting it mildly!
No certified check — no story —
Get me?

BURNS

All right. The check will be
certified. Want my fingerprints?

HILDY

(rising)

No thanks, I've still got those.
Well, I'll step into some working
clothes and hop over to the Press
Room for the background on this yarn.
It'll be kind of fun to see the boys
again, too. Remember, Bruce, it must
be certified.

BRUCE

All right, dear.

HILDY

Wait a minute, Bruce. Have you got
that money?

BRUCE

(feeling his pocket)

The five hundred? Sure.

HILDY

On second thought, would you let me
have it? I'll get the tickets.

BRUCE

But —

HILDY

Believe me, Bruce, I know what I'm
doing. He'd get you in a crap game —

BRUCE

But I don't gamble, Hilda!

HILDY

I know a lot of men who didn't do

anything till they met Walter Burns.
Please, dear.

BRUCE
(reluctantly)
All right.
(he pulls out his
wallet)
One – two – three – four – five.
Five hundred. Be careful, honey.

HILDY
I'll be careful, darling. You be,
please.

She kisses him, kisses her hand and pats it to Burns' cheek.

HILDY
So long, husbands.

She goes.

TRUCKING SHOT - HILDY

leaving. She weaves just a bit.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO MEN

They look after her.

BRUCE
(smiling a little)
I never knew Hildy to be so determined
before.

BURNS
You haven't seen anything yet.

Bruce turns to look at Burns – they look at each other.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN: INT. PRESS ROOM - CRIMINAL COURTS BLDG - DAY CLOSE
SHOT AT TELEPHONE

It is ringing. A hand comes in to take the phone. CAMERA
DRAWS BACK A LITTLE to show Endicott taking the phone. He
has an eye shade over his eyes and five cards in his other
hand.

ENDICOTT

(into phone)

Criminal Courts Press Room... This
is Endicott... No, nothing new on
the Williams case yet boss. Well,
you bet I'm here plugging away every
minute.

(hangs up and studies
his cards)

Up a dime.

CAMERA PANS SLOWLY to reveal the other players as they speak.
Playing are reporters Murphy, Endicott, Wilson, Schwartz and
McCue.

MURPHY

(dropping his cards)

By me.

WILSON

(also dropping)

Droparoo.

Schwartz knocks on table and drops cards.

MCCUE

(reluctantly)

I'll call.

ENDICOTT

Three sixes. Is that any good?

HILDY'S VOICE

It sure looks good from here.

The boys all look up toward sound of Hildy's voice.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY JOHNSON

framed in the doorway. She is carrying a bag and has changed

her costume to a tailored travelling suit. She grins and comes into the room.

MED. SHOT REPORTERS

They are all talking at once as Hildy comes into the scene. There are ad libs of "Hildy!" "Where'd you come from?" "Holy Mackerel, Hildy Johnson!", etc. Hildy raises her hand for silence.

HILDY

One at a time, boys.

She enters to a desk, places her bag on top of the desk, takes her hat off and hangs it on a clothes tree in the corner, comes back to desk and opens the travelling bag. All through the above action she is talking rapidly.

HILDY

No, I'm not back for good. I'm just covering the Earl Williams story for Mr. Sweeney who had a sudden attack of something but will be all right by tomorrow. No, I haven't made up with Walter Burns – far from it! As a matter of fact, I'm leaving tonight for Albany and I'll be married tomorrow morning. The lucky man is Mr. Bruce Baldwin, a gentleman in the insurance business – and when I say gentleman, I mean gentleman! Are there any other questions?

Hildy takes notebook and pencil out of bag, looks at the stockings she is wearing, sees she has a run and takes a fresh pair out of the bag. She sits down and begins to put on the new stockings.

ENDICOTT

(grinning)

Well, that about covers everything.

HILDY

Good. Now I want to ask you fellows a couple of questions. Did Earl

Williams know what he was doing when he fired that gun?

MURPHY

If you ask us, no. If you ask the state alienists, the answer is yes.

MCCUE

It's a simple story. Earl Williams works for the E.J. McClosky Manufacturing Company as a bookkeeper for fourteen years. He starts in at twenty dollars a week and gradually works his way up to twenty-two fifty. A year ago the McClosky Company goes out of business and Williams loses his job.

(waving his hand toward Wilson)

Take it away, Fred Wilson!

WILSON

Well – Williams goes a little balmy and begins making speeches on a plan he's got to save the world. Only he makes his speeches, usually, on a very busy street and neglects to get a license for it. Well, the cops let him alone as much as they can because he's harmless and they're kinda sorry for him. But one day he decides to hold a meeting right in the middle of a Veteran's Parade and the cops chase him. He gets scared and goes into hiding.

(gesturing toward Schwartz)

Come in, Dave Schwartz.

SCHWARTZ

His Honor, the Mayor, now comes out with a statement that Earl Williams is a dangerous character in the employ of two or three foreign governments and the police are going to get him

dead or alive. Somebody sends out a tip that this guy is hiding in Molly Malloy's joint. And this colored policeman, Daniels, goes over to pick Williams up. Williams has read the papers, thinks the cop is going to kill him and shoots first. That is all.

HILDY

Thanks, boys. That's all I want to know.

Hildy gets up, rolls the pair of stockings she has just discarded into a ball, crosses to Bensinger's desk and puts the stockings in a drawer.

ENDICOTT

Say, that's old Prissy Bensinger's desk.

HILDY

I know, I just want to give him a thrill.

Hildy crosses back to desk and sits down.

HILDY

All right, boys, now that everything is settled, deal me in.

Hildy glances toward clock on wall. The hands show 2:45 PM.

INSERT: CLOCK - Hands pointing to 2:45 PM.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

She picks up phone nearest her on desk and starts to dial, picking up cards dealt her with one hand.

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello, this is Hildy Johnson. Get me Walter Burns.

(she studies her cards –

then, into phone)
Hello, Walter. How's the old double-
crosser?

CLOSE SHOT WALTER BURNS

Telephone at his ear.

BURNS

Hello, my fine-feathered friend.
Thought I might be hearing from you.
What have you got to report?

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO MEDIUM SHOT and we see that Burns is stripped to the waist. A doctor is applying a stethoscope to his chest. We HOLD the picture a second: Burns listening intently on the phone and the doctor listening intently to his chest.

BURNS

(into phone)
Going all right, eh?

DOCTOR

(nodding)
Fine.

Doctor suddenly realizes what he's said and looks up.

BURNS

(putting hand over
mouthpiece of phone)
Doctor, will you please keep quiet a
minute? How do you expect me to get
any work done?

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Bruce, who has some papers in front of him at the desk. Bruce grins.

DOCTOR

How do you expect me to get anywhere
if you're going to keep on that phone?
If you'll just give me two minutes
more –

BURNS

(into phone)

Well, they haven't finished with me yet but I'm hoping to get my shirt back. Oh, no. I'm in the pink of condition. They found two new dimples.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESS ROOM -
CRIMINAL COURTS BLDG. CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT
TELEPHONE

cards in her other hand.

HILDY

How about that check? All right, Mr. Burns, but remember, no checkee – no story. Well, as soon as they decide whether you live or not will you have that new man of mine call me up? Yes, sir.

(she hangs up)

All right, boys. Up a dime.

ENDICOTT'S VOICE

Right back at you.

MED. SHOT

MCCUE

(dropping his cards)

You fight it cut.

HILDY

And up a dime.

ENDICOTT

(studying a second)

I call. What you got?

HILDY

(displaying her cards)

Three bullets! Any good?

ENDICOTT
(throwing his cards
away)
Beats king up.

Hildy rakes in the money.

MCCUE
What are you going to do with all
that money, Hildy?

WILSON
Yeah – you can't spend it in Albany.

HILDY
Oh, I'll think of something.

MED. SHOT

taking in door and including group. Bensinger, another reporter, comes in from the corridor. He stands out from the others because of his tidy appearance, and carries a book under his arm.

MURPHY
Hello, Harvard! Got anything new on
the hanging?

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER
(cockily)
Why don't you fellows get your own
news?

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

HILDY
Can't you say 'hello' to a fellow?

TWO SHOT FEATURING HILDY AND BENSINGER

BENSINGER
Hildy!

He comes over to shake hands.

BENSINGER

Are you back?

HILDY

No, just a farewell appearance,
batting for Sweeney. I'm going into
business for myself.

BENSINGER

What doing?

HILDY

I'm getting married tomorrow.

BENSINGER

Well, congratulations! Good luck!

THE TABLE ANOTHER ANGLE

ENDICOTT

Why don't you use him for a
bridesmaid, Hildy?

SCHWARTZ

Come on, Hildy, your deal.

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER AT HIS DESK

He opens a drawer, the one in which Hildy put her stockings.

BENSINGER

Say, who put these stockings in my
desk?

(he turns to the group)

McCUE's VOICE I don't know, but I think they got rats in the
building.

BENSINGER

(makes a gesture of
disgust and picks up
telephone)

This is Bensinger. I just saw the

Sheriff. He won't move the hanging up a minute... All right, I'll talk to him again, but it's no use. The execution is set for seven in the morning. Get me a rewrite man.

CLOSE SHOT ENDICOTT

dealing the cards.

ENDICOTT

Why can't they hang that guy at a reasonable hour, so we can get some sleep?

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER

(into phone)

Jake, new lead on the hanging. This new alienist from New York – Dr. Max J. Egelhoffer – is going to interview Williams in about half an hour – in the Sheriff's office.

MED. SHOT AT TABLE - FEATURING MURPHY

Murphy reaches for the phone. Without dropping his cards, he jiggles the hook.

MURPHY

That must be the tenth alienist they've had on Williams. Even if he wasn't crazy before, he would be after ten of those babies got through psychoanalyzing him.

(into phone)

Gimme the desk.

ENDICOTT

This Egelhoffer's pretty good.

MURPHY

Yeah? What did he ever do for his country?

ENDICOTT

Don't you remember? He's the guy
went to Washington to interview the
Brain Trust, and gave out a statement
that they were all sane. It created
a sensation!

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

He is referring to his notes as he talks:

BENSINGER

(into phone)

Here's the situation on the eve of
the hanging:

CLOSE SHOT MURPHY

He continues playing his cards:

MURPHY

(into phone)

This is Murphy. More slop on the
hanging.

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER

(into phone)

A double guard's been thrown around
the jail, municipal buildings,
railroad terminals, and elevated
stations to prepare for the expected
general uprising of radicals at the
hour of execution.

CLOSE SHOT MURPHY

MURPHY

(into phone)

Ready? The Sheriff's just put two
hundred more relatives on the payroll
to protect the city against the Red
Army – which is leaving Moscow in a

couple of minutes.
(consults his hand)
Up a dime.

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER
(into phone)
The Sheriff has just received four more letters threatening his life, but he says nothing can interfere with his duty.

CLOSE SHOT MURPHY

MURPHY
(into phone)
And to prove to the voters that the Red Menace is on the level, the Sheriff has written himself four more letters, threatening his life. I know he wrote 'em on account of the misspellings.

MED. SHOT AT TABLE FEATURING HILDY

ENDICOTT
Trouble is, when the Red Menace shows up the Sheriff will still be crying 'Wolf!'

MURPHY
What have you got, Hildy?

HILDY
Kings and sixes.

MURPHY
(throwing down)
That's good.

HILDY
(sweeping coins in)
'Kings and sixes The pot affixes'...
Poetry. I learned that at my grandma's

knee.

WILSON

That's why I keep losing. My grandma was a modest woman – nobody ever saw her knees, not even my grandpop.

INT. WALTER BURNS' OFFICE MED. SHOT

The doctor has gone. Burns is adjusting his shirt. Bruce is sitting at the desk.

BRUCE

I don't know. This makes me feel funny.

TWO SHOT

BURNS

Why shouldn't I make Hildy my beneficiary? I've got nobody else to leave it to.

BRUCE

I feel I ought to take care of her.

BURNS

Well, you'll take care of her. After all, if that doctor's right, I'm going to live for a long time yet. Look, Bruce, this is a debt of honor. I was a very bad husband: Hildy could have got a lot of alimony if she'd wanted to, but she wouldn't take any. She had it coming to her, but she was too independent.

BRUCE

Well, I'm independent, too.

BURNS

Figure it this way: I ought to be good for twenty-five years. By that time, you'll probably have made enough so that the money won't mean anything.

But suppose you haven't made good –
don't you think Hildy's entitled to
a quiet old age without any worries?

BRUCE

Well, of course, if you put it that
way.

BURNS

(everything he has on
the ball)

And remember this, Bruce! I love
her, too.

BRUCE

I'm beginning to realize that.

BURNS

And the beauty of it is she'll never
have to know 'till I've passed on.
Maybe she'll think kindly of me —
after I'm gone.

BRUCE

(a lump in his throat)

Gee, you almost make me feel like a
heel – coming between you.

BURNS

No, Bruce, you didn't come between
us. It was all over for her before
you came on the scene. For me –
it'll never be over.

He turns away, wipes his eyes, and sneaks a glance to see
how that goes over. It goes over big – Bruce hurriedly wipes
a tear away.

MED. SHOT

as Duffy comes into the room. He advances toward the desk.

DUFFY

(placing check on
desk)

Here's that certified check, Walter.
(sotto voce)
I drew out my wife's savings, and if
this isn't back by 5:30 I'm a ruined
man!

BURNS

(also sotto voce)

Don't worry, Duffy, you'll have it
back by five.

(louder)

Thanks, Duffy. Stick around.

(picking up check he
rises)

He walks over to Bruce.

BURNS

Well, Bruce, here you are – certified
and everything.

BRUCE

(also rising)

Certified! I'm afraid Hildy'd feel
ashamed to think she hadn't trusted
you.

CLOSEUP DUFFY

He reacts to this sweetly solemn thought.

BURNS AND BRUCE

CAMERA FOLLOWS THEM as Burns walks Bruce toward door, his
arm around him.

BRUCE

Well, she'll know some day.

BURNS

That's all I ask. Oh, wait a minute.

He releases Bruce, runs back and gets umbrella and brings it
to him.

BURNS

Don't want to forget this, you know.
Might start to rain again.

BRUCE

Thanks. I'll phone Hildy right away
to get that story.

They are at the door. Burns opens the door for Bruce.

SHOT FEATURING LOUIS

Louis is sitting at a desk, apparently engrossed in a newspaper. He is all alert, however. Bruce and Burns come into the scene talking.

BURNS

Well, anyway, I know Hildy's getting
a good man.

BRUCE

(embarrassed)
Thanks a lot.

They pass Louis. He looks up.

BRUCE AND BURNS

Bruce, still embarrassed, looks down. Burns turns and signals to Louis.

CLOSE SHOT LOUIS

watching.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

Burns points to Bruce's back.

CLOSE SHOT LOUIS

Louis nods.

BRUCE AND BURNS

BURNS

Well, I got to get back. You can find your way out, can't you?

BRUCE

Oh, sure.

(he extends his hand)

Well, thanks for everything.

BURNS

Don't thank me. I should thank you. So long.

BRUCE

So long.

He turns and goes. Burns watches him.

REVERSE ANGLE

Bruce is going out, his back toward Camera. Burns watches. Louis comes between Burns and Bruce and follows Bruce out as we see Bruce going toward outer door.

CLOSEUP BURNS

He rubs his hands in glee as he starts back for his office.

INT. PRESS ROOM SHOT FEATURING HILDY

She is raking in a pot.

HILDY

I don't know why you boys are so good to me.

MCCUE

(throwing cards down)

Your poker's improved a lot, Hildy. Lend me two bucks, will you?

HILDY

Nothing doing. I'm playing for keeps.

There is a whirr and crash from the gallows. They start.

BENSINGER AT WINDOW

BENSINGER

I wish they'd stop that practicing.

The others drift into the scene and look out of the window.

INT. COURTYARD THE GALLOWS

The trap is sprung by two or three earnest men.

INT. PRESS ROOM GROUP AT WINDOW

HILDY

(turns away)

Well, anyhow, I won't be covering stuff like this any more.

SCHWARTZ

What's the matter? Getting yellow?

MED. SHOT

A phone rings. McCue answers it.

MCCUE

For you, Hildy.

Hildy goes toward phone.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT PHONE

HILDY

Hildy Johnson... Oh, hello, Bruce.
Have you got it? Is it certified?

INT. PHONE BOOTH CLOSE SHOT BRUCE

BRUCE

Certified and everything. Got it right here in my wallet... What? No, he's not here – I'm in a phone booth.

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT PHONE

McCue is hovering near.

MCCUE

Certified, eh? Who is it – your milkman?

HILDY

(in phone)

But, Bruce, don't keep it in your wallet!... Well, you see –

(she is thinking rapidly)

– there's an old newspaper superstition that the first big check you get you – you put in the lining of your hat. That brings you good luck for ten years.

MCCUE

Say, I've been a reporter twenty years and never heard any hooley like that. Where'd you get it?

HILDY

(to McCue)

I made it up just now, and who's asking you?

(into phone)

I know it's silly, honey, but do it for me, won't you?... Yes, right now.

INT. PHONE BOOTH CLOSE SHOT BRUCE

BRUCE

All right. Wait a minute.

He takes check out of wallet, folds it into lining of hat.

BRUCE

All right. I've done it. Now, are you satisfied?

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT PHONE

HILDY

Fine. And here's a kiss for you.

She blows a kiss into the phone. Immediately we hear kiss sounds all over. She looks up and glares. Then back to phone:

HILDY

Now, darling, you go back to the hotel and pack and you and Mother pick me up here about half-past five. Goodbye, dear.

INT. PHONE BOOTH CLOSE SHOT BRUCE

He blows a kiss into the phone and hangs up.

EXT. OUTSIDE RESTAURANT LOUIS

Studying a paper, reads it for a moment. Bruce comes out of restaurant and starts out. After a second, Louis follows him.

INT. ENTRANCE TO A CELL BLOCK OF COUNTY JAIL MED. SHOT

Warden Cooley sits at a desk near the grilled doorway that leads to the cells. He is studying a Racing Form. Hildy's hand reaches into the shot and flicks the newspaper. He looks up. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Hildy.

COOLEY

Hello, Hildy! What are you doing around here?

HILDY

I want to interview Earl Williams, Warden. How about a little service?

COOLEY

No more interviews. Besides, a doctor's coming over.

Hildy reaches down out of camera range – comes up with bill.

HILDY

Say, isn't this your twenty dollars?

COOLEY
(looks at bill eagerly)
I think it is.

HILDY
(handing it over)
I thought so. Come on, I'm in a hurry.

Cooley pockets the twenty and reaches for his key ring.

EXT. STREET SCENE

There is a milling mob around a center of activity that the Camera can't find.

SHOT OF COP

as he sees this and strolls determinedly toward it.

THE CROWD

The cop comes in and breaks ranks. He pushes his way toward center and looks down.

CLOSE SHOT BRUCE

lying down, held by Louis.

MED. SHOT

COP
What's going on?

LOUIS
This guy stole my watch.

COP
(lugging them both to feet)
Have you got his watch?

BRUCE
He's crazy. I haven't any watch.

LOUIS

I saw him. He put it in his back pocket.

BRUCE

I haven't got –

COP

Wait a minute.

The cop reaches into Bruce's back pocket. Watch comes out.

COP

(to Louis)

Is this yours?

LOUIS

Yeah! That's it!

COP

What about it?

BRUCE

I never saw it before.

Cop grabs Bruce. Louis grabs his other arm.

COP

Come on!

He whistles.

COP

(to mob)

Beat it!

CLOSE SHOT THREE

as they go through crowd. The look on poor Bruce's face, muddy anyhow, is something. Suddenly, Bruce cries:

BRUCE

My hat!

COP
Get his hat, somebody.

CLOSEUP BRUCE'S HAT

lying top up, in a puddle. Hand reaches in and picks it up.

CLOSE SHOT THREE

as hat is passed to cop, who jams it down on Bruce's head.
Another taken from Bruce.

INT. COUNTY JAIL MED. CLOSE SHOT

at the door of Earl Williams' cell. Hildy sits on a stool at the door, pencil and copy paper in hand. Earl Williams sits at the edge of his cot, facing Hildy. There is a bouquet of roses in a water pitcher by the cot. Our first impression of Williams is that he's a rational, well-poised citizen. It is only under Hildy's questioning that he gradually reveals himself.

WILLIAMS
I couldn't plead insanity, because
you see I'm just as sane as anybody
else.

HILDY
(puzzled and worried)
You didn't mean to kill that
policeman?

WILLIAMS
Of course not. I couldn't kill anybody –
it's against everything I've ever
stood for. They know it was an
accident. They're not hanging me for
that – they're hanging me for my
beliefs.

HILDY
What are your beliefs, Earl?

WILLIAMS
They're very simple. I believe in

the Golden Rule. I'm not the first man to die for preaching it. But if they would only listen to it – we could have a fine, decent world instead of this mass of hate that makes man do such cruel things.

HILDY

How would you go about applying the Golden Rule, Earl?

WILLIAMS

I'd do away with the profit system and have production for use only. There's enough food and clothing and shelter for everybody if we'd use some sense.

HILDY

(writing)

"Production for use only." Well, maybe that's the answer.

WILLIAMS

It's the only answer. Everything has a use and if we let it be used for its purpose, we could solve all our problems. Food was meant to be eaten, not stored away in restaurants while poor people starved; clothing was meant to be worn, not piled up in stores while people went naked. Doesn't that make sense?

CLOSEUP HILDY

HILDY

(thoughtfully)

Yes, that makes a lot of sense, Earl.

WILLIAM'S VOICE

Just use things for what they were meant, that's all.

HILDY

Sure.
(she studies him a
moment)
What's the purpose of a gun, Earl?

CLOSEUP WILLIAMS

WILLIAMS
A gun?
(he thinks – then a
revealing smile breaks
out)
Why – to shoot, of course.

MED. CLOSE TWO SHOT

HILDY
Is that how you came to shoot the
policeman?

WILLIAMS
Sure. You see, I'd never had a gun
in my hand before and I didn't know
what to do with it. Well, when I get
stuck, I know that there's an answer
for everything in production for
use. So it came to me in a flash:
what's a gun for? To shoot! So I
shot. Simple isn't it?

HILDY
(writing)
Very simple, Earl.

WILLIAMS
There's nothing crazy about that, is
there?

HILDY
No, Earl, not at all.
(she indicates the
flowers)
Who sent you the flowers, Earl?

WILLIAMS

(reverently)
Miss Mollie Malloy. She's a wonderful
person.

HILDY
(pointing to picture
pinned on wall)
Isn't that her picture?

WILLIAMS
(turning toward it)
Yes. Isn't she beautiful?

INSERT: PICTURE OF MOLLIE

HILDY'S VOICE
If you should be pardoned, are you
figuring on marrying Mollie?

EARL'S VOICE
Oh, no, she's much too good for me.

HARTMAN'S VOICE
How'd you get in here?

MEDIUM SHOT

Sheriff Hartman has come into the scene. Hildy turns toward
him.

HILDY
Same way you did.
(pointing)
Through that gate.

HARTMAN
I gave strict orders that nobody was
to interview Williams without my
permission.

HILDY
All right, then, I'll just run the
story that Sheriff Hartman is afraid
to let reporters interview his
prisoner. Of course, with election

coming, that might do you a lot of harm, but just as you say.

HARTMAN

Now, wait a minute! I'm not afraid of anything. What were you going to write about Williams?

HILDY

Oh, nothing much. Just that the state had proved he was sane – and he admits it himself. If you don't want me to run it –

HARTMAN

(beaming)

Oh, that'll be all right, Hildy. Go ahead, run it. And you can say I treated him well, too.

(turning toward Williams)

'Lo, Earl. How are you feeling?

WILLIAMS

Fine, thanks, Sheriff.

HARTMAN

That's good, Earl. Oh, they've got another alienist to see you. He ought to be here any minute. Don't go to sleep, will you?

WILLIAMS

I won't.

HARTMAN

(to Hildy)

Hildy, how'd you like a couple of tickets for the hanging?

HILDY

(in a low voice so Williams won't overhear)

No, thanks Sheriff. I'm leaving town

tonight.

HARTMAN

(just as loud as ever)

You ought to stay over. You always wrote a good hanging story, Hildy.

HILDY

That's awful kind of you, Sheriff. I've got to get started on my interview. See you later.

WILLIAMS

Don't forget about production for use.

HILDY

I won't, Earl.
(she goes)

INT. PRESS ROOM GROUP SHOT POKER GAME - NIGHT

The game is on. Bensinger, at his desk, is reading a book. The electric lights have been switched on.

MURPHY

(raking in a pot)

Well, a guy can win when Hildy ain't around.

ENDICOTT

Who's this guy she's gonna marry?

WILSON

Baldwin – his name is.

SCHWARTZ

I give that marriage six months.

MCCUE

Why?

SCHWARTZ

Hildy won't be able to stay away from a paper any longer than that.

Did you see her eyes light up when she came in here? Like an old fire horse.

MURPHY

She says she's gonna write fiction.

ENDICOTT

Well, if she's gonna write fiction, there's nothing like being a reporter.

SCHWARTZ

I'll give ten to five that marriage won't last six months. Hildy's a newspaper man. She's got headlines in her veins – the way we all have or we'd be out of these lousy jobs.

Mollie Malloy appears in doorway. She moves slowly into the room.

MCCUE

Well, well – Miss Mollie Malloy.

MURPHY

Hello, Mollie.

WILSON

How's tricks, Mollie?

CLOSE SHOT MOLLIE

MOLLIE

I've been lookin' for you tramps.

MED. GROUP SHOT

ENDICOTT

Kid, those were pretty roses you sent Earl. What do you want done with them tomorrow morning?

MOLLIE

(tensely)

A lot of wise guys, ain't you?

SCHWARTZ
(uncomfortably)
You're breaking up the game, Mollie.
What do you want?

MOLLIE
I want to tell you what I think of
you – all of you.

Hildy appears in the doorway and comes into the room.

MURPHY
Keep your shirt on.

MOLLIE
(to Murphy)
If you was worth breaking my fingers
on, I'd tear your face wide open.

Hildy goes to desk and begins typing away.

MURPHY
What are you sore about, sweetheart?
Wasn't that a swell story we gave
you?

MOLLIE
You crumbs have been making a fool
out of me long enough!

BENSINGER
(rising and coming
over)
She oughtn't be allowed in here!

CLOSEUP MOLLIE

MOLLIE
(flaring)
I never said I loved Earl Williams
and was willing to marry him on the
gallows! You made that up! And about
my being his soul-mate and having a
love-nest with him.

CLOSE SHOT ENDICOTT

looking up at her.

ENDICOTT

You've been sucking around that cuckoo ever since he's been in the death-house. Everybody knows you're his sweetheart.

CLOSEUP MOLLIE

She blows up.

MOLLIE

That's a lie! I met Mr. Williams just once in my life when he was wandering around in the rain without his hat and coat on, like a sick dog, the day before the shooting. I went up to him like any human being would and I asked him what was the matter, and he told me about being fired after working at the same place for fourteen years, and I brought him up to my room because it was warm there.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

She is typing away, stops to look over at Mollie, then resolutely turns away, studies her stuff, and begins typing again.

MURPHY'S VOICE

Aw, put it on a phonograph!

MED. SHOT MOLLIE AND OTHERS

MOLLIE

Just because you want to fill your lying paper with a lot of dirty scandal, you got to crucify him and make a stooge out of me!

ENDICOTT
(to Mollie)
Got a match?

MOLLIE
(heedless)
I tell you he just sat there talking
to me – all night. And never once
laid a hand on me. In the morning he
went away, and I never saw him again
till that day at the trial!

The boys laugh.

CLOSEUP MOLLIE

She lashes out at them.

MOLLIE
Go on, laugh! I'd like to know some
curses bad enough for your greasy
souls! Sure, I was his witness –
the only one he had. Yes – me –
cheap little Mollie Malloy! I'm
everything the District Attorney
said I was. And still I was the only
one with guts enough to stand up for
him! I told the truth and the District
Attorney knows it! That's why you're
persecutin' me! Because Earl Williams
treated me decent and not like an
animal – and I said so!

MEDIUM SHOT

MURPHY
(finally irritated)
Go into your dance! This is the Press
Room. We're busy.

WILSON
Why don't you go and see your boy-
friend?

ENDICOTT

(winks at the others)

But you'll have to hurry up – he
left a call for seven A.M.

MOLLIE

(through her teeth)

It's a wonder a bolt of lightning
don't come down and strike you all
dead!

From o.s. comes sound of the gallows. Mollie gasps.

ENDICOTT

(suddenly uncomfortable)

Don't get hysterical, kid.

MOLLIE

(begins to sob)

Shame on you!

CLOSE SHOT MOLLIE – TAKING IN MURPHY

MOLLIE

(hysterically)

A poor little fellow that never meant
nobody no harm! Sitting there alone
this minute with the Angel of Death
beside him, and you cracking jokes!

CLOSEUP HILDY

typing away furiously, regardless of this. She ends a page.
The sound of Mollie sobbing comes over the scene. Hildy
inserts a fresh page.

MURPHY'S VOICE

If you don't shut up, we'll give you
something to cry about!

Hildy looks o.s. and rises determinedly.

MEDIUM SHOT - MOLLIE BACKING AWAY FROM MURPHY

She is still sobbing. Hildy comes into scene and puts her

arm around Mollie.

HILDY

(gently)

Come on, Mollie. This is no place
for you.

(she leads Mollie
toward door)

MOLLIE

They're not human!

HILDY

They're newspaper men, Mollie. They
can't help themselves. The Lord made
them that way.

MOLLIE

(one look back as
Hildy leads her out
door)

It wasn't the Lord! It was the devil!

Hildy and Mollie exit. There is a pause. The boys look at
each other uncomfortably. The phone rings. Wilson goes to
answer.

MURPHY

(picking up cards)

You guys wanna play some more poker?

ENDICOTT

What's the use? I can't win a pot.

CLOSE SHOT WILSON AT PHONE

WILSON

(into phone)

Who? Hildy Johnson? She just stepped
out. She'll be back in a second.

Who? Oh, Mr. Baldwin. Well, if you'll
hang on a minute, she ought to be
right in. All right.

(he covers transmitter)

MED. SHOT TAKING DOOR

WILSON

(to others)

Baldwin. The blushing bridegroom – himself.

SCHWARTZ

What's he want?

WILSON

Wants Hildy – and sounds very excited.

Hildy comes back. Looks at them and stares contemptuously.

HILDY

Gentlemen of the Press! Always picking on somebody who can't defend himself – the littler the better.

WILSON

Phone for you, Hildy.

HILDY

(going toward it)

Who is it?

WILSON

Oh, some insurance man. Are you in?

HILDY

(grabbing phone)

Give me that!

CLOSEUP HILDY

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello! Hello! Bruce?... what?...

Where are you?... You're where?...

How did that happen?...

(she listens

unbelievably a second)

I'll be right over!

MED. SHOT

as Hildy hangs up and darts out of room. The others watch in amazement.

MURPHY

Boy, did you see her go?

ENDICOTT

Lioness Rushes to Defense of Cub.

WILSON

I told you Baldwin was in trouble.

MCCUE

Probably went out without his hankie and wants Mamma to wipe his nose.

SCHWARTZ

I still give that marriage six months.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

at phone.

BENSINGER

Hello, baby, get me the Sheriff's office, will you... Hello, Sheriff Hartman?... This is Bensinger. How about that favor? You know what: once and for all, will you hang this guy at five A.M. instead of seven? It won't hurt you and we can make the City Edition.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE CLOSE SHOT SHERIFF HARTMAN

at phone.

HARTMAN

(indignantly)

Once and for all, I'm not going to

hang anybody except at the legal hour... What? Don't threaten me, Bensinger! I'm not afraid of any newspapers. Yeah?... Oh, shut up!

(he hangs up; an
afterthought – he
calls up operator)

And, operator, I told you not to disturb me! I don't care who calls – I don't want to be disturbed again till I tell you!

(he hangs up – turns
to somebody o.s. and
speaks)

How do you like that, Dr. Egelhoffer? Want me to hang Williams at their convenience!

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO A MED. GROUP SHOT, showing Williams, Sheriff Hartman and Dr. Egelhoffer. They are the only occupants of room. Williams is seated facing a large standing searchlight.

EGELHOFFER

The newspapers! Sheriff, they're the scum of modern civilization.

HARTMAN

You said it!

EGELHOFFER

They're always after me for interviews.

HARTMAN

Me, too.

EGELHOFFER

(fencing)

Of course, I sort of promised them I would give out a statement when I got through here. You don't mind?

HARTMAN

(not liking it)

Well, I don't know if that's ethical.
You see, all statements are supposed
to come from me.

EGELHOFFER

(he'll bargain)

We'll have to satisfy them. What
would you say to giving them a joint
interview? I could give them some of
the psychological aspects of the
case and you could give them the
legal aspects.

HARTMAN

(he buys)

A joint interview, eh? That might be
all right. We could have our pictures
taken together, Doctor.

EGELHOFFER

Yes, shaking hands. I don't take a
very good picture, though.

HARTMAN

It doesn't matter. The publicity's
the main thing.

EGELHOFFER

Yes, I suppose so. It all helps.

WILLIAMS

(just a spectator up
to now)

Are you gentlemen all through with
me?

EGELHOFFER

Oh, I'm sorry. I forgot you were
here. No, Mr. Williams, we still
have some questions for you. Sheriff,
will you kindly extinguish the lights?

The Sheriff puts out the lights and the Doctor switches on
the searchlight, which shines in Williams' face.

EGELHOFFER

You know you are to be executed, Mr. Williams. Who do you feel is responsible for that?

WILLIAMS

The system. But I'm not afraid to die, Doctor. I'm dying for what I believe.

EGELHOFFER

I see. You realize, however, that you committed a crime?

CLOSEUP WILLIAMS

WILLIAMS

In a legal sense, yes. But not actually. Actually, I'm innocent. I didn't do anything.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLICE CELL CLOSEUP BRUCE

BRUCE

I'm innocent. I didn't do anything. I never stole a watch in my life.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to show us Bruce in police cell. Hildy outside. A police lieutenant with her in b.g.

HILDY

I know you didn't, Bruce.

She whirls on lieutenant.

HILDY

(to lieutenant)

Let him out of here, Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT

(conciliatingly)

But, Hildy, I can't. He's accused of stealing a watch. And they found the

watch on him.

HILDY

And who accused him? Diamond Louis!
One of the worst crooks in town! Why
don't you arrest Louis instead of
innocent people that he frames?

LIEUTENANT

Now, Hildy –

HILDY

Don't Hildy me! Are you going to let
him out?

LIEUTENANT

I can't.

HILDY

All right. You can't. But tomorrow
the Post will run the story of that
roulette game on 43rd Street that
your brother-in-law runs. And we'll
print that you get five hundred a
month for forgetting about it!

LIEUTENANT

Now, Hildy, don't be hasty! I can't
let him out.

HILDY

You can let him out on bail, can't
you?

LIEUTENANT

Five hundred dollars.

HILDY

You'll take fifty and like it!

LIEUTENANT

(wavers)

Well, all right. But I'm liable to
get into a jam.

He starts to open cell door.

HILDY

You'll get into a worse one if you don't.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TAXI (PROCESS SHOT)

Hildy is combing Bruce's hair. He begins to look presentable. He fumbles in his breast pocket.

HILDY

What's the matter?

BRUCE

I lost my wallet.

HILDY

(stops)

The check, Bruce!

Bruce picks up his hat and gets check out of lining.

BRUCE

That's right here. Gee, it was lucky your telling me about that old newspaper superstition.

HILDY

(taking check and putting it away)

Yes, wasn't it?

BRUCE

I can't imagine who did it. I can't think of any enemies I have.

HILDY

(looking at him fondly)

I'm sure you haven't any.

BRUCE

For a minute, I thought maybe Walter

Burns was at the back of it. But then I realized he couldn't have been.

HILDY

Oh, no. How could you ever think of such a thing?

BRUCE

Oh, I realized right away. He's really a very nice fellow, Hildy – I found that out.

HILDY

Yes, he is... Look, Bruce, we're taking that next train – and when I say next train, this time I mean it!

BRUCE

Did you finish the interview?

HILDY

(to driver)

The Criminal Courts Building.

The driver nods.

HILDY

(to Bruce)

No – but I'm sure it'll be all right with Walter.

BRUCE

But, gee, Hildy – he gave us that insurance business – and you promised –

HILDY

Well, the story's practically finished. I'll just go upstairs and send it over with a messenger.

The cab stops. Hildy gets out and Bruce starts to follow. Hildy turns and pushes him back in the cab.

EXT. STREET MED. SHOT HILDY

at door of cab. Bruce in cab.

HILDY

No, you stay here. I'm not taking any more chances. I'll be down in three minutes – and don't you dare move!

Hildy turns and starts for stairs of Criminal Courts Building.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT AT HILDY'S DESK

Schwartz is reading Hildy's interview to the other boys, who are grouped around. Bensinger is at his desk, a book open, but listening.

SCHWARTZ

(reading)

"But the State has a production for use plan, too. It has a gallows and at seven A.M., unless a miracle occurs, that gallows will be used to separate the soul of Earl Williams from his body. And out of Molly Malloy's life will go the one kindly soul she ever knew –"

(he stops)

That's as far as Hildy got. But, I ask you, can that girl write an interview?

BENSINGER

I don't think it's very ethical reading other people's stuff.

ENDICOTT

Don't give us that ethics stuff. You'll be the only one who'll swipe any of it.

SCHWARTZ

I still say anybody that writes like

that ain't going to give it up permanently to sew sox for a guy in the insurance business. Now I give that marriage three months and I'm laying three to one. Any takers?

HILDY'S VOICE

I'll take that bet.

They turn. Hildy comes into the scene.

HILDY

(going to her phone)

It's getting so a girl can't step out of the room without being discussed by a bunch of old ladies.

(into phone; her voice assumes a silken quality)

Hello, Post... Mr. Walter Burns, please.

CLOSE SHOT SCHWARTZ

SCHWARTZ

(embarrassed)

Well, Hildy, we were only saying that a swell reporter like you wouldn't give this up so easily.

MED. SHOT FEATURING HILDY

HILDY

(into phone)

This is Hildy Johnson...

(to Schwartz)

Oh, I can give it up all right. Without a single quiver. I'm going to live like a human being – not like you rats.

(into phone)

Oh, is that you, Walter dear? Oh, I didn't mean "dear." That was just habit, I guess. Oh, be yourself, Walter. I've got some news for you...

Yes, I got the interview, but I've got some news that's more important.

The others are listening, suspecting a scoop.

HILDY

Better get a pencil out and write it down. All ready?

(then with a sudden change of pace)

Get this, you double-crossing chimpanzee, there ain't gonna be any interview and there ain't gonna be any story... Huh? That certified check of yours is leaving with me in twenty minutes. And if I ever see you again, it's going to be just too bad... Eh?... Oh, you don't know what I'm angry about, do you? If you come over I'll be very glad to tell you the story of Louie's watch. I dare you to come over, you – you – skunk in sheep's clothing! And bring that bodyguard of yours, too – you'll need him.

QUICK CUTS OF REACTION FROM OTHERS

CLOSEUP HILDY

HILDY

...And I just want you to listen to one more thing.

She gets her story out of typewriter, applies it to transmitter and tears it up.

HILDY

Hear that? That's the interview I wrote... Yes, I know we made a bargain. I just said I'd write it – I didn't say I wouldn't tear it up. Yes, it's all in little pieces now, Walter, and I hope to do the same for you some time!

She hangs up.

MED. SHOT FEATURING HILDY

She reaches under her desk, pulls up bag, talking all the time. The others are too startled to do anything but listen.

HILDY

And that's my farewell to the newspaper game. I'm going to live a normal life and have a home.

She reaches into the drawer of desk and gets some stuff which she puts into bag.

HILDY

I'm going to be a woman, not a newsgetting machine. I'm going to have babies and nurse them and love them and give 'em cod liver oil and worry about their new teeth – and the minute I catch one of them even looking at a newspaper, I'm going to brain him! Where's my hat?

Someone points to her hat. She rises and goes toward it. Her bag is still open. Her phone rings. Schwartz answers it.

SCHWARTZ

(subdued tones)

Hello, Mr. Burns. Yes, she's still here.

HILDY

(stopping midway to her hat)

I'll take it.

(she comes over to phone)

What's the matter, Mr. Burns – don't you understand English? – Why, your language is shocking, Mr. Burns – positively shocking! I don't mind because I was married to you and

know what to expect, but suppose
Central is listening in... Oh, did
you hear that, Central? We ought to
report him, don't you think?... Oh,
foeey on you!

She pulls the phone out of the wall, walks toward window and
tosses it out of the window. She waits for the crash, turns
back and says:

HILDY

Now where was that hat? Oh, yes.

She starts toward it.

INT. SHERIFF HARTMAN'S OFFICE MED. SHOT

WILLIAMS

I hope you're pretty nearly through
with me, Doctor, I'm getting a little
fatigued.

HARTMAN

Yeah, you don't want to tire him
out, Doctor.

EGELHOFFER

Just one thing more. I'd like to
reenact the crime, Mr. Williams. May
I have your gun, please, Sheriff?

Hartman starts to take gun out, hesitates.

HARTMAN

I don't know –

EGELHOFFER

(insistently)

Come, come, Sheriff, lightning doesn't
strike in the same place twice.
Nothing's going to happen.

Hartman hands him the gun.

EGELHOFFER

Now, the Sheriff will be Mollie Malloy, in whose room you were. You will be Earl Williams. And I will be the policeman. Follow me, Mr. Williams?

WILLIAMS

Yes, sir.

Egelhoffer hands the gun to Williams and then backs up a few paces.

EGELHOFFER

So – now I say to you: 'Earl Williams, you are under arrest!' and you point your gun at me.

WILLIAMS

(hesitantly)

Well, it wasn't exactly that way –

EGELHOFFER

(insistently)

Point the gun at me!

Williams does so.

EGELHOFFER

Then what did you do?

Williams hesitates for a moment and then pulls the trigger. Hartman promptly dives under the desk as Egelhoffer topples over.

WILLIAMS

(pathetically)

Now can I go, please?

There is a loud banging on the door and a voice calling:

VOICE

Hey, Sheriff! Open up! What happened?

Williams, alarmed by voice, turns and starts toward window.

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. GROUP SHOT

Hildy is now wearing her hat and gloves. She picks up her bag and starts for the door.

ENDICOTT
Goodbye, Yonson.

MCCUE
So long, Hildy.

MURPHY
Send us a postcard, kid.

SCHWARTZ
Who'll keep the lamp in the window
for you.

BENSINGER
Goodbye, Hildy.

Hildy has crossed to doorway, the CAMERA TRUCKING WITH HER. She turns and faces the room to make a last bravura speech.

HILDY
Well, goodbye, you wage-slaves. When
you're crawling up fire escapes,
getting kicked out of front doors,
and eating Christmas dinners in one-
armed joints, don't forget your pal,
Hildy Johnson! And, remember, my
husband sells insurance!

She turns and starts on a bit of verse:

HILDY
"It takes a heap o' livin' to make a
house a home."

She is interrupted by a terrific fusillade of shots in the courtyard. A roar of excited voices comes up. For a tense second, everyone is motionless. There is another volley of shots. Wilson, Endicott and Murphy jump for the window.

CLOSE SHOT AT WINDOW

VOICES FROM COURTYARD

Get the riot guns! Spread out, you fellows! Etc.

WILSON

There's a jail-break!

MURPHY

(at window,
simultaneously)

Cooley! What's the matter What's happened?

VOICES FROM YARD

Watch the gate! He's probably trying the gate!

Outside, a siren begins to wail.

ENDICOTT

(out the window)

Who got away? Who was it?

VOICE OUTSIDE

Earl... Williams!!!

THE REPORTERS

Who? Who'd he say? Earl Williams! It was Earl Williams! He got away! Etc.

SHOT AT DESK

MCCUE

Holy —! Gimme that telephone!

(works hook frantically)

Hurry! Hurry up! This is important!

MED. SHOT TAKING IN DOOR

Searchlights hit the windows, sweeping from direction of the jail. Hildy stands paralyzed, her bundle in her hand. There is another rifle volley. Two windowpanes crash into the room. Some plaster falls. Gongs sound above the siren. The boys are jumping for their telephones. Another windowpane goes.

MCCUE
(screaming)
Look out!

CLOSE SHOT AT WINDOW

MURPHY
(out the window)
Look out where you're aiming, will
you?

A QUICK MONTAGE

of reporters at their various phones follows: "Gimme the desk!" "Flash!" "Earl Williams just escaped!" "Don't know yet – call you back.", etc., are shouted into the phones by Schwartz, Wilson, McCue, Endicott, Bensinger and Murphy. After each man communicates with his paper, he dashes for the door.

MEDIUM SHOT

The last of the reporters is gone.

CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

Her bag, almost unnoticed, falls to the floor. CAMERA TRUCKS WITH HER as she moves back into the room, absently grabbing and trailing a chair.

ANOTHER ANGLE

HILDY
Ahhh –

She lets go of the chair and takes one of the telephones.

HILDY
Morning Post?... Get me Walter Burns –
quick! Hildy Johnson calling.

Very calmly she sits on the long table, her back against the wall and waits.

CLOSEUP - HILDY

HILDY

Walter?... Hildy. Earl Williams just escaped from the County Jail. Yep... yep... yep... don't worry! I'm on the job!

She hangs up.

MEDIUM SHOT

There is another volley outside. Hildy sails her hat and starts peeling off her gloves as she jumps for the door.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY MEDIUM SHOT - AT THE GATE

There are the reporters joining armed guards who are leaping into squad cars ready for the chase. Cooley is beside the gate. As the reporters and guards pile into the cars, the gate opens and out they go.

MEDIUM SHOT AT DOOR LEADING FROM BUILDING TO COURTYARD

Hildy comes on a run from this door, hesitates a moment, then sees something o.s. and runs for it.

MED. SHOT - SQUAD CAR

as it comes careening across courtyard toward gate. Hildy tears into scene, jumps for and makes the running-board, and hangs there as the car swerves up to the gate.

MED. SHOT - AT GATE

Hildy notices Cooley as the car, gathering speed, goes by him. She leaps from the running-board and lands clump on Cooley.

CLOSE SHOT - HILDY AND COOLEY

Cooley has been knocked to the ground by the impact of Hildy's leap. She is sitting on him.

HILDY

Cooley, I want to talk to you.

COOLEY

(trying to get up)

Hildy – I can't. I'm busy – I –
Let me up, Hildy. Earl Williams has
escaped –

He struggles.

HILDY

There's money in it, Cooley.

COOLEY

I can't Hildy. It means my job! It
means –

HILDY

(interrupting him)

A lot of money.

(she opens her bag)

Four hundred and fifty dollars –

She fingers the bills.

COOLEY

How much?

HILDY

Four hundred and fifty dollars. Is
it a deal?

COOLEY

It's a deal. Let me up.

Cooley gets up and dusts himself off.

COOLEY

Let's see the money.

HILDY

(money still in her
hand)

First we talk. How did Earl Williams
get that gun?

Cooley looks around quickly.

COOLEY

Come on, and I'll tell you.

He jerks his head, indicating to Hildy to follow him.

MEDIUM SHOT

They move off as the gates are closed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRESS ROOM - CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - DAY FULL SHOT

The room is empty. All the telephones are ringing crazily.
Endicott enters hurriedly, crosses to his phone.

ENDICOTT

(into phone)

Endicott talking.

CLOSE SHOT ENDICOTT - AT PHONE

ENDICOTT

(into phone)

No – nobody knows where he got the gun, but I think Mollie Malloy smuggled it in to him. He ran up the fire-escape, and went back in the infirmary window. Then he got out through the skylight. He must have slid down the rain-pipe to the street.

MURPHY'S VOICE

Gimme the Desk.

MED. TWO SHOT

including Murphy and Endicott at separate phones.

ENDICOTT

No, I tell you! Nobody knows where he got it.

MURPHY

The Crime Commission has offered a reward of ten thousand dollars for Williams' capture.

ENDICOTT

Call you back.

He hangs up swiftly and goes out.

MURPHY

No clue yet as to Earl Williams' whereabouts. Here's a little feature though: There's been an accident about a tear bomb –

Wilson enters and picks up his phone.

WILSON

(into phone)

Wilson talking.

MURPHY

Yeah – tear bomb. Criminals cry for it.

MEDIUM SHOT

including Murphy, Wilson and doorway. The Sheriff enters, turning as he enters. As he turns back to someone in corridor:

HARTMAN

If the Mayor wants me, he knows where I am.

MURPHY

(into phone)

This tear bomb went off unexpectedly in the hands of Sheriff Hartman's Bombing Squad.

HARTMAN

What went off?

MURPHY

(into phone)

Four of Mr. Hartman's Deputy Sheriffs
were rushed to the hospital –

HARTMAN

A fine fair-weather friend you are!

MURPHY

(remorselessly, into
phone)

The names are Merwyn D. Mayor, who
is the Mayor's brother-in-law –

HARTMAN

After all I've done for you –

MURPHY

(continuing)

Howard Shenken, the Sheriff's uncle
on his mother's side –

WILSON

(into phone)

Hello, Jim? Sidelights on Sheriff
Hartman's manhunt.

The Sheriff spins around – another enemy. At this moment
Hildy enters the room and crosses casually to her telephone
where she stands waiting.

MURPHY

(into phone)

William Lungren, who is the Sheriff's
landlord, and Lester Bartow who
married the Sheriff's niece. You
remember, the very homely dame. Call
you back.

He hangs up.

WILSON

(into phone)

Mrs. William Tausig, age fifty-five,
scrub lady, while at work scrubbing

the eighth floor of the Commerce Building, was shot in the left leg by one of Sheriff Hartman's deputies.

Hartman groans. There is a sound of machine-gun firing in the courtyard.

HILDY

There goes another scrub lady.

WILSON

(into phone)

I'll go right after it.

He hangs up and exits.

MURPHY

(to Hildy)

Any dope yet on how he got out?

HILDY

From all I can get the Sheriff let him out so's he could vote for him.

HARTMAN

I'm very disappointed in you, Hildy Johnson.

He turns and exits.

CLOSE SHOT AT TABLE NEAR HILDY'S PHONE

taking in Hildy and Murphy.

MURPHY

How do you suppose Williams got that gun?

As Hildy shrugs, there is another flurry of machine-gun fire. Murphy leaves precipitately. Hildy, alone at last, picks up the phone.

HILDY

(into phone)

Give me Walter Burns – quick –

She lays down the telephone receiver and crosses to the door which she closes, then returns to the phone.

HILDY

(picking up phone)

Walter, listen. I've got the inside story on how Williams got the gun and escaped.

INT. WALTER BURNS' OFFICE - DAY CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

at his desk, telephone to his ear.

BURNS

Exclusive? That's great.

INT. PRESS ROOM - DAY CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

It cost me four hundred and fifty bucks to tear it out of Cooley.

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

BURNS

Never mind that. What's the story?

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

Never mind it? That's not my money!
That's Bruce's money!

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

BURNS

You'll get it. Now what's the story?
(he raises his hand)
I'll have the paper send the money right down to you. I swear it on my mother's grave.

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

Wait a minute. Your mother's alive.

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

BURNS

I meant on my grandmother's grave.
Don't be so technical, Hildy. What's
the story?!

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

Well, this expert Dr. Egelhoffer,
from New York, decides to make
Williams re-enact the crime –

She starts to giggle at the thought.

HILDY

Well, I'm coming to it. It seems the
Professor had to have a gun to re-
enact the crime with – and who do
you suppose supplied it? Nobody else
but that great thinker, Sheriff
Hartman!

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

BURNS

(laughing)
No kidding, Hildy.
(suspiciously)
Say, this isn't a rib?

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

No, this is on the level, Walter.
I'm not good enough to make this one
up. The Sheriff gave his gun to the
Professor, the Professor gave it to
Earl, and Earl gave it right back to
the Professor – right in the stomach!
Who? No, Egelhoffer wasn't hurt badly.

They took him to the County Hospital where they're afraid he'll recover.

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT - BURNS

BURNS

That's great work, Hildy... Huh? Oh, will you stop worrying about the money? I'll see you get it in fifteen minutes.

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT - HILDY

HILDY

It better be fifteen minutes, because Bruce is waiting downstairs in a taxicab and that meter's clicking away to beat the band.

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT BURNS

BURNS

Hold on a minute.

CAMERA PULLS BACK disclosing Louis and a blonde sitting on a divan in Walter's office. Burns' beckons the blonde:

BURNS

(his hand carefully over receiver of phone)

Come here. There's a guy waiting in a taxi in front of the Criminal Courts building. His name is Bruce Baldwin. Can you do your stuff?

BLONDE

I've never flopped on you, have I?

BURNS

Then scram! You've got about two minutes.

She exits.

BURNS

(into phone)

Sorry to keep you waiting. How much was it again? Four hundred and fifty dollars? Hang on a second.

He puts his hand over the phone again and beckons to Louis.

BURNS

(to Louis)

I need four hundred and fifty dollars in counterfeit money. You know where I can get it?

LOUIS

It's awful funny – I happen to have some on me.

BURNS

(into phone)

It's coming right over. I'm sending it over with Louis. Thanks for the story and good luck on your honeymoon.

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT HILDY AT TELEPHONE

HILDY

Keep the thanks, but just see that the money gets here!

She hangs up. The door opens and McCue enters and crosses to his phone.

MCCUE

Hello, Hildy. I thought you were gone.

HILDY

I thought so, too.

Hildy takes a look at the clock, rises and begins to pace up and down, pounding her hands together.

CLOSE SHOT MCCUE AT PHONE

MCCUE

(into phone)

McCue speaking. Mrs. Phoebe DeWolfe, eight-sixty-one and a half South State Street, colored, gave birth to a pickaninny in a patrol wagon with Sheriff Hartman's special Rifle Squad acting as nurses. Well – Phoebe was walking along the street when all of a sudden she began – that's right. So the police coaxed her into the patrol wagon and they started a race with the stork. When the pickaninny was born the Rifle Squad examined him carefully to see if it was Earl Williams who they knew was hiding somewhere.

MED. SHOT

Hildy is still pacing. McCue laughs at his own joke.

MCCUE

(to Hildy)

Did you get that, Hildy?

HILDY

No – what?

Hildy's phone rings. She answers.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT PHONE

HILDY

Hello – Bruce! I thought you were downstairs in a – What? Arrested again! What for this time, Bruce? Mashing! Oh, Bruce, can't I leave you alone for three minutes even? Well, where are you? The 27th Precinct? All right, I'll be right over –

(she breaks off and looks down at her bag on the desk)

I'll be over in twenty minutes, Bruce.
(she hangs up)
If I ever see Walter Burns –
(she picks up phone
and dials viciously)
Get me Walter Burns... Hildy Johnson!
Well, he was there just a minute
ago! Have him call me back!

She hangs up.

MEDIUM SHOT

HILDY
(to McCue)
If Walter Burns calls, hold the wire
for me, will you? I'll be right back.
(she goes out)

MCCUE
Okay, Hildy.
(into phone)
Well, we can't get any official
statement –

MEDIUM SHOT ANOTHER ANGLE

The door opens and the Mayor enters.

MCCUE
(into phone)
Oh, wait a minute – here's the Mayor.
Maybe he'll give us one.

CLOSEUP THE MAYOR

turning away with a wave of his hand.

MAYOR
Don't pester me now, please. I got a
lot on my mind.

CLOSEUP MCCUE

MCCUE

(into phone)
His Honor won't say anything.

He hangs up and exits out of scene.

MED. CLOSE SHOT MAYOR TAKING IN DOOR

McCue comes in to him. Murphy and Endicott come in.

MAYOR
(to McCue)
Have you seen Sheriff Hartman?

MCCUE
It's hard to say, Your Honor. The
place is so full of cockroaches.

MURPHY
Say, Your Honor, what effect's this
jail-break going to have on the
colored voters?

CLOSEUP THE MAYOR

MAYOR
Not an iota. In what way can an
unavoidable misfortune of this sort
influence the duty of every citizen,
colored or otherwise?

MED. SHOT INCLUDING GROUP

ENDICOTT
Your Honor, is there a Red Menace or
ain't there?

The Sheriff comes scooting in.

MAYOR
(to the Sheriff)
Hartman, I've been looking for you!

He closes in on the Sheriff, followed by the reporters.

MURPHY

So have we!

ENDICOTT

What's the dope, Sheriff?

MURPHY

Who engineered this getaway?

CLOSE SHOT

HARTMAN

Just a minute! We've got him located.

ENDICOTT

Williams?

MURPHY

Where is he?

HARTMAN

Where he used to live. You can catch the Riot Squad – it's just going out.

The boys beat it, fast.

MAYOR

Pete, I want to talk to you!

HARTMAN

I ain't got time, Fred, honest. I'll see you after.

MAYOR

Did you actually give Williams that gun?

HARTMAN

(a wail)

The professor asked me for it – I thought it was for something scientific!

MAYOR

Pete, I've got a mighty unpleasant

task to perf –

The Sheriff suddenly nudges him for quiet, and the Mayor, turning, sees:

ANOTHER ANGLE FEATURING SCHWARTZ

coming in and going to the phone. He is whistling.

SCHWARTZ

Hiya, Your Honor.

(into phone)

Schwartz calling.

(to the Mayor)

How about it, Your Honor? Any statement on the Red uprising tomorrow?

MAYOR

What Red uprising?

HARTMAN

There'll be no Red uprising!

SCHWARTZ

(into phone)

Gimme rewrite –

(to the Mayor)

The Governor says the situation calls for the militia.

MAYOR

You can quote me as saying that anything the Governor says is a tissue of lies.

SCHWARTZ

(into phone)

Hello, Jake. Here's a red-hot statement from the Governor. He claims that the Mayor and the Sheriff have shown themselves to be a couple of eight-year-olds playing with fire.

CLOSEUP SHERIFF AND MAYOR

SCHWARTZ' VOICE

Quote him as follows: "It is a lucky thing for the city that next Tuesday is Election Day, as the citizens will thus be saved the expense of impeaching the Mayor and the Sheriff." That's all – call you back.

MED. SHOT SCHWARTZ

He hangs up and starts out.

SCHWARTZ

Nice to have seen you, Mayor.

He exits, whistling.

MAYOR

We've got to go somewhere private, Pete. I've got to talk to you straight from the shoulder.

They start out.

MED. SHOT SHERIFF AND MAYOR

As they start for the door it opens. As they exit Hildy enters, almost crossing them but not quite noticing them as she starts pounding her hands together and pacing up and down Press Room.

MED. SHOT MAYOR AND SHERIFF

as they start down the hall, CAMERA TRUCKING WITH THEM.

HARTMAN

(beside himself)

Now, listen, Fred. Just give me a few hours before you make any decisions. I'll get results. I'm doing everything humanly possible. I've just sworn in four hundred deputies.

MAYOR
Four hundred! Do you want to bankrupt
this administration?

HARTMAN
(pleadingly)
I'm getting them for twelve dollars
a night.

MAYOR
Twelve dollars! – For those rheumatic
uncles of yours?
(gesturing)
Out shooting everybody they see for
the fun of it?

HARTMAN
(with dignity)
If you're talking about my brother-
in-law, he's worked for the city
fifteen years.

They come to the door of the Sheriff's office. Hartman opens
door and the Mayor enters, Hartman following.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE MED. CLOSE SHOT

Hartman closes door and turns to Mayor, who faces him
portentously.

MAYOR
Pete, you're through!

HARTMAN
(stunned)
What do you mean – through?

MAYOR
I mean I'm scratching your name off
the ticket Tuesday and running
Czernecki in your place. It's nothing
personal. And, Pete – it's the only
way out. It's a sacrifice we all
ought to be glad to make.

HARTMAN
(David to Jonathan)
Fred!

MAYOR
Now, Pete! Please don't appeal to my
Sentimental side.

HARTMAN
Fred, I don't know what to say. A
thing like this almost destroys a
man's faith in human nature.

MAYOR
I wish you wouldn't talk like that,
Pete.

HARTMAN
Our families, Fred. I've always looked
on Bessie as my own sister.

MAYOR
(wavering and desperate)
If there was any way out...

As a phone rings:

HARTMAN
There is a way out. I've got Williams
surrounded, haven't I? What more do
you want?
(into phone)
Hello... Yes... Hello!
(wildly)
Four hundred suppers! Nothing doing!
This is a man-hunt – not a
banquet!... The twelve dollars
includes everything!!

He hangs up.

HARTMAN
That gives you an idea of what I'm
up against!

MAYOR

(hotly)

We're up against a lot more than that with that nutty slogan you invented: 'Reform the Reds With a Rope'.

Sheriff winces.

MAYOR

Williams ain't a Red, and you know it!

HARTMAN

Well, there's a lot of Communistic sympathizers around –

MAYOR

I know it! But they've got nothing to do with this case! Do you realize there are two hundred thousand votes at stake and unless we hang Earl Williams we're going to lose 'em?

HARTMAN

But we're going to hang him, Fred. He can't get away.

A knock on the door.

MAYOR

What do you mean he can't get away?! He got away, didn't he?

Knocking louder.

MAYOR

Who's out there?

VOICE OUTSIDE (PINKUS)

Is Sheriff Hartman in there?

Sheriff starts for door.

HARTMAN

(relieved)
Ah! For me!

MED. SHOT TAKING IN DOOR

Sheriff opens the door. A small, very colorless and ineffectual man named Pinkus is there.

HARTMAN
(as he opens door,
disclosing Pinkus)
I'm Sheriff Hartman. You want me?

PINKUS
(coming in)
You're certainly a hard fellow to
find, Sheriff.

MAYOR
(annoyed)
What do you want?

PINKUS
(taking a document
from his pocket and
proffering it to
Sheriff)
I'm a messenger at the State House.
This is from the Governor.

MAYOR
What's from the Governor?

PINKUS
The reprieve for Earl Williams.

HARTMAN
(stunned)
For who?

PINKUS
(amiably)
Earl Williams. The reprieve.

MAYOR

W-wait a minute.

Getting his bearings.

HARTMAN

(bursting forth)

The Governor gave me his word of honor he wouldn't interfere. Two days ago!

MAYOR

And you fell for it, Pete. It frightens me what I'd like to do to you.

(to Pinkus)

Who else knows about this?

The Sheriff, with shaking hands, opens and begins to read the thing.

PINKUS

They were all standing around when he wrote it. It was after they got back from fishing.

MAYOR

(to Sheriff)

Get the Governor on the phone!

PINKUS

(helpfully)

You can't get him on the phone. He's out duckshooting now.

MAYOR

Fishing! Duckshooting! How do you like that. A guy does nothing more strenuous for forty years than play pinochle – he gets elected Governor and right away he thinks he's Tarzan!

HARTMAN

(thrusting the document at the Mayor)

Read it! Insane, he says.

(shaking a finger in
Pinkus' face)
He knows very well that Williams
ain't insane!

PINKUS
Yeah. But I –

MAYOR
(interrupting)
Pure politics!

HARTMAN
An attempt to ruin us!

The phone rings. Hartman starts for it.

MAYOR
(reading)
Dementia praecox Oh-h-h!

HARTMAN
We got to think fast before those
lying reporters get hold of this.
What'll we tell 'em?

MAYOR
Tell 'em the party is through in
this State on account of you.

HARTMAN
Ah, Fred –
(into phone)
Hello... this is Hartman –

MAYOR
(apoplectic)
And you can tell 'em as an
afterthought that I want your
resignation now!

HARTMAN
(from the phone)
Sssh. Wait, Fred.
(excitedly, into phone)

What?... Where?... Where? Holy Moses!

MAYOR

What is it?

HARTMAN

They got him!

(back to phone)

Wait a minute – hold the wire.

(to the Mayor)

They got Earl Williams surrounded –
the Riot Squad has – in his house.

MAYOR

Tell 'em to hold the wire.

HARTMAN

I did.

(into phone)

Hold the wire.

MAYOR

Cover up that transmitter!

Sheriff does so. Mayor faces Cooney.

MAYOR

Now, listen! You never arrived here
with this – reprieve. Get it?

PINKUS

(blinking)

Yes, I did, just now. Don't you
remember?

MAYOR

How much do you make a week?

PINKUS

Huh?

MAYOR

(impatiently)

How much do you make a week? What's
your salary?

PINKUS
(reluctantly)
Forty dollars.

HARTMAN
(into phone)
No – don't out me off.

MAYOR
How would you like to have a job for
three hundred and fifty dollars a
month. That's almost a hundred dollars
a week!

PINKUS
Who? Me?

MAYOR
(exasperated)
Who do you think!

Pinkus is a little startled; the Mayor hastens to adopt a milder manner.

MAYOR
Now, listen. There's a fine opening
for a fellow like you in the City
Sealer's office.

PINKUS
The what?

MAYOR
The City Sealer's office!

PINKUS
You mean here in the city?

MAYOR
(foaming)
Yes, yes!

HARTMAN
(at phone)

Well, wait a minute, will you? I'm in conference.

PINKUS

(a very deliberate intellect)

No, I couldn't do that.

MAYOR

Why not?

PINKUS

I couldn't work in the city. You see, I've got my family in the country.

MAYOR

(desperate)

But you could bring 'em in here! We'll pay all your expenses.

PINKUS

(with vast thought)

No, I don't think so.

MAYOR

For heaven's sake, why not?

PINKUS

I got two kids going to school there, and if I changed them from one town to another, they'd lose a grade.

MAYOR

No, they wouldn't – they'd gain one! And I guarantee that they'll graduate with highest honors!

PINKUS

(lured)

Yeah?

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Hold your horses – will you, Olsen?

Hurry up, Fred!

MAYOR

Now what do you say?

PINKUS

This puts me in a peculiar hole.

MAYOR

No, it doesn't.

(hands him the reprieve)

Now, remember: you never delivered this.

(rushing him to the door)

You got caught in the traffic, or something.

(opening door)

Now, get out of here and don't let anybody see you.

PINKUS

But how do I know...?

MAYOR

Come in and see me in my office tomorrow. What's your name?

PINKUS

Pinkus.

MAYOR

(taking out his wallet)

All right, Mr. Pinkus, all you've got to do is lay low and keep your mouth shut. Here!

(he hands him a card)

Go to this address. It's a nice, homey little place, and they'll take care of you for the night. Just tell 'em Fred sent you. And here's fifty dollars on account.

He pushes money into Pinkus's hand and pushes him through the door. Pinkus goes.

HARTMAN
(into phone,
desperately)
Will you wait, Olsen? I'll tell you
in a minute!

The door opens again and Pinkus comes back in.

PINKUS
You forgot to tell me what a City
Sealer has to do.

MAYOR
(turning hastily toward
Pinkus)
I'll explain it tomorrow!

PINKUS
Is it hard?

MAYOR
No! It's easy – it's very easy!

HARTMAN
(pleadingly, into
phone)
Just one second –

PINKUS
That's good, because my health ain't
what it used to be.

MAYOR
(pushing him out the
door)
We'll fix that, too.
(he closes the door
after him)

HARTMAN
(into phone – one
more plea)
Just – one – second!

He turns to the Mayor with a gesture of appeal. The Mayor closes the door and turns to Hartman.

MAYOR

(huskily)

All right. Tell 'em to shoot to kill.

HARTMAN

What?

MAYOR

Shoot to kill, I said.

HARTMAN

I don't know, Fred. There's that reprieve if they ever find out.

MAYOR

Nobody reprieved that policeman he murdered. Now, do as I tell you.

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Hello, Olsen... Listen...

(his voice is weak)

Shoot to kill... That's the orders pass the word along... No! We don't want him! And listen, Olsen, five-hundred bucks for the guy that does the job... Yes, I'll be right out there.

(hangs up)

Well, I hope that's the right thing to do.

MAYOR

Now take that guilty look off your face, Pete – and stop trembling like a horse.

HARTMAN

(mopping his brow)

If we didn't have election Tuesday I'd have this on my conscience.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT

Louie comes from the direction of the stairs and crosses toward door to Press Room. He pauses a moment, puts his hand in his pocket, pulls out some bills, counts them and opens the door.

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT

Hildy is still pacing, pounding her hands together and glancing every so often at the clock on the wall. Suddenly she crosses to her phone, picks up transmitter –

HILDY
(into phone)
Will you try –

LOUIE'S VOICE
Hildy.

HILDY
(wheeling towards
door)
Louie!

She drops the phone and hurries towards him.

HILDY
Have you got my dough?

LOUIS
Oh, sure. The boss sent me over with it. Four hundred dollars, wasn't it?

HILDY
Four hundred and fifty and I'll cut your throat if you try any tricks!

LOUIS
All right, all right. You can't blame a guy for tryin', can you?

HILDY
Come on with that money!

LOUIS

First you got to sign a receipt.
(he pulls out a receipt)

HILDY

Where's the money?

LOUIS

Keep your shirt on. I got it – right here.

(he picks out money
and counts)

One hundred – two hundred – three hundred – four hundred – and fifty.
Now sign.

HILDY

(grabs money and signs)
Here!

LOUIS

Thanks. So long, Hildy!

HILDY

(grabbing him)
So long, nothing! Where's Bruce Baldwin's wallet?

LOUIS

Huh?

HILDY

None of that innocent stuff, you double-crossing hyena! You stuck Bruce Baldwin in jail this afternoon on a phony charge that he swiped your watch, and you frisked his wallet! Now, give me that wallet or I'll stick you in jail and it won't be on any phony charge either! It'll be for life!

LOUIS

Now don't get excited, Hildy! I don't know what you're talking about –

but is this Mr. Baldwin's wallet?

He takes Bruce's wallet out.

HILDY
(grabbing it)
You know it is!

LOUIS
I didn't frisk him. He must have
dropped it in Burns' office. I didn't
know whose it was.

HILDY
No – and you don't know that your
cheap boss has had Mr. Baldwin
arrested again – do you?

LOUIS
(surprised)
What – already? Why, the dame left
only a minute before I did!

He suddenly realizes what he's said and sprints for the door.
Hildy chucks something at him. It just misses as he ducks
out of the door.

MED. SHOT ANOTHER ANGLE

Hildy casts a savage look after the departed Louie, takes
another look at the clock and grabs a phone and starts to
dial.

HILDY
(into phone)
27th Precinct Station House?

Hildy stops short, arrested by a sound from the open window.
She turns and sees Earl Williams, looking more inoffensive
and exhausted than ever, indeed on the verge of collapse. He
carries a large revolver. The search-lights that have been
playing in the courtyard strike into the windows again.

WILLIAMS
(pointing gun at her)

Drop that phone –

Hildy drops the phone back on the hook.

WILLIAMS

(supporting himself
by holding on to
edge of desk)

You're not going to phone anybody
where I am.

HILDY

(bracing herself)

Put down that gun, Earl.

He advances steadily toward Hildy, the gun aimed at her.

HILDY

You're not going to shoot me, Earl.
I'm your friend, remember? I've got
to write that story about your
"Production for Use".

WILLIAMS

Yes – that's right. Production for
use.

Hildy starts walking toward him, slowly.

HILDY

Earl, you don't want to hurt your
friends, do you?

WILLIAMS

Don't move!

Hildy stops.

WILLIAMS

Maybe you're my friend and maybe
you're not – but don't come any
nearer. You can't trust anybody in
this crazy world. Say, I'll bet I
could shoot you from here.

HILDY

Sure you could, Earl – but you wouldn't want to do that, would you? You wouldn't want to kill anybody.

WILLIAMS

No, no, you're right. I don't want to kill anybody. All I want to do is be let alone.

Hildy sneaks another step forward.

HILDY

Earl, there's just one thing I ought to clear up for the interview.

WILLIAMS

What's that? Only – you're getting too near. I don't trust anybody.

HILDY

I don't blame you, Earl.
(another step forward)
If I were in your place I wouldn't trust anybody, either.

WILLIAMS

(suddenly)
Keep away!

He points the gun at Hildy, pulls the trigger and we hear a faint "click!"

WILLIAMS

(weakly)
I guess I used all the shells.

CLOSE TWO SHOT

He drops the gun and clutches at the edge of the desk for support. Hildy lurches forward and she grabs the other side of the desk for support. And at this moment she looks more tired than he does. She looks at Earl and breathes heavily.

HILDY

Earl, you must never do that again.

WILLIAMS

Oh, I'm awful tired. I couldn't go through another day like this.

HILDY

(more her old self
now)

Well, maybe you think I could!

CAMERA FOLLOWS HER as she retrieves the gun and jams it in her purse, jumps to the windows, pulls down the shades.

EARL'S VOICE

I'm not afraid to die. I was tellin' the fella that when he handed me the gun.

Hildy crosses swiftly to the door, locks it and puts out the lights, so that they are visible only faintly in the light from the areaway.

HILDY

Don't talk too loud.

WILLIAMS

(babbling on as she
moves about)

Wakin' me up in the middle of the night – talkin' to me about things they don't understand. Callin' me a Bolshevik. I'm an anarchist. It's got nothin' to do with bombs. It's the philosophy that guarantees every man freedom. You see that, don't you?

HILDY

Sure I do, Earl.

Hildy is looking around for a hiding place for him.

WILLIAMS

I wish they'd take me back and hang

me. I done my best.

He abruptly crumples and falls to the floor. Hildy stands for a second, desperate. Then she picks him up and half carries, half drags him over toward a chair and places him in it. Then she makes a quick dash for her phone.

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello... Gimme Walter Burns – quick!

Another phone there rings. Hildy answers it, propping the receiver of her own phone between ear and shoulder.

CLOSEUP HILDY AT PHONE

HILDY

(into second phone)

Hello – hel – Oh, hello, Bruce...

Oh, Bruce, please – I know I said

I'd be down in fifteen minutes, but

something terrific's happened! Hang

on, Bruce –

(into first phone)

Walter?... Hildy. Come over here –

right away!... Wait!

(into second phone)

Bruce, just a second, Bruce – I'll

explain everything.

(into first phone)

Walter! Get this: I've got Earl

Williams... Yes! Here in the Press

Room... Honest! On the level. Hurry –

I need you.

She hangs up and turns into second phone.

HILDY

Bruce, this is the biggest thing

that ever happened...

(lowers voice)

I just captured Earl Williams – you

know – the murderer –

There is a knocking on the door, but she doesn't hear it.

HILDY

Bruce, I'll be down – Well, Bruce,
the minute I turn him over to the
paper I'll be right down. Bruce,
don't you – Bruce, I can't now – I
can't, don't you realize?

There is a click from the phone. He has hung up. Hildy
dejectedly hangs up the phone. There is the sound of knocking
on the door. She springs up.

MED. SHOT

taking in door. Hildy glares apprehensively, then crosses to
it.

HILDY

(cautiously)

Who's there?

MOLLIE'S VOICE

It's me, Mollie Malloy! Let me in.

Hildy carefully unlocks the door. Mollie bounds in like a
wildcat and seizes her.

MOLLIE

Where are they gone? You know where
they are?

HILDY

Wait a minute, Mollie.

She manages to relock the door, then turns, leaning against
it, facing Mollie.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND MOLLIE

MOLLIE

They got him surrounded some place –
gonna shoot him like a dog!

HILDY

Mollie, they haven't got him. You

gotta help me, Mollie! We've got to do something!

MOLLIE
What do you mean?

There is a sound – a groan – as Williams starts to come to.

MOLLIE
(spinning around)
What's that?

HILDY
Quiet, Mollie!

MOLLIE
There's somethin' funny going on around here.

MED. SHOT

Mollie crosses to wall and switches on the lights. She sees Williams, sobs and rushes over to him.

CLOSEUP EARL AND MOLLIE

Mollie gets down on her knees and begins ministering to Earl. He opens his eyes.

WILLIAMS
Hello, Mollie.

Mollie begins to sob.

WIDER ANGLE SHOT

Hildy comes over and says:

HILDY
Quiet, Mollie, quiet!

WILLIAMS
(putting out hand to stroke her hair)

Don't cry, Mollie, there's nothing to cry about.

HILDY

How'd you get here, Earl?

WILLIAMS

Down the drainpipe. I didn't mean to shoot him. You believe me, don't you, Mollie?

MOLLIE

(coming up)

Of course I believe you.

WILLIAMS

I forgot to thank you for those roses. They were beautiful.

MOLLIE

That's all right, Mr. Williams...

(to Hildy)

You're a woman. You got to help us. You got to get him out of here, some place where I can take care of him.

HILDY

Stop screaming, Mollie or we're sunk. I'm trying to think of something before those reporters get back.

WILLIAMS

Let 'em take me. It's better that way.

MOLLIE

No – I'll never let 'em!

The door is tried outside.

MOLLIE

They'll get him! They'll get him!

HILDY

Ssh!

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRESS ROOM DOOR CLOSE SHOT

Endicott at door is trying to get in.

ENDICOTT

Who locked the door?

INT. PRESS ROOM BACK TO HILDY

HILDY

(calling)

Just a second, Mike —

(whispering to Mollie)

Mollie, I got it!

MED. CLOSE SHOT AT DESK

Hildy jumps in to the desk and opens it, turning to cry in a tense whisper to Earl:

HILDY

Can you get in this desk?

INT. CORRIDOR CLOSE SHOT

Wilson is there too, now, and he and Endicott are pounding on the door.

WILSON

What's going on in there?

INT. PRESS ROOM HILDY, MOLLIE AND EARL

Mollie and Earl are with Hildy in front of desk now. They are speaking in whispers.

WILLIAMS

What good'll it do?

HILDY

We'll get you out in ten minutes.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR

ENDICOTT
Open up there, will you!

INT. PRESS ROOM HILDY, MOLLIE AND EARL

HILDY
(crying)
All right – all right!

MOLLIE
(to Earl)
Go on!
(shoving him to desk)
Please!

WILLIAMS
They'll find me anyhow.

There is further and louder pounding on the door. Earl gets in the desk. Hildy and Mollie pull the roll-top down over him.

HILDY
(calling)
I'm coming!
(to Earl)
Keep dead quiet. Don't even breathe.

MOLLIE
(to Earl)
I'll be right here. I won't leave you.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR

ENDICOTT
(giving door a terrific kick)
Hey!

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND MOLLIE

HILDY
(to Mollie)
Mollie, drop down here! You've

fainted!

MOLLIE
What's the idea?

HILDY
Never mind! Just play dead.

Hildy rapidly unbuttons Mollie's waist and throws it back.
The kicking at the door continues.

MED. SHOT

Hildy rushes over to windows and pulls up the shades. Mollie is lying quietly on the floor with her eyes closed. Hildy rushes over to water cooler and gets a paper cup full of water. She throws the water in Mollie's face.

MOLLIE
(spluttering)
Hey –

HILDY
(fiercely)
Shut up, you!

Hildy crosses swiftly to the door.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR

The door opens in Endicott's face and there is Miss Johnson, quite cool.

ENDICOTT
Kind of exclusive, ain't you? We got
calls to make, you know.

HILDY
Run down and get some smelling salts,
will you?

WILSON
Smelling salts! What's going on here?

They catch sight of Mollie, stretched out on the floor.

ENDICOTT

Mollie Malloy – what happened to her?

HILDY

(as Endicott and Wilson enter room)

Came up here – had hysterics and passed out. I've been trying to get her to come to.

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT

Mollie is shaking her head.

ENDICOTT

She looks as though she's going to come to.

HILDY

Give me a hand with her, will you?

ENDICOTT

Okay.

(lifting Mollie)

Up you go, Mollie.

Hildy and Endicott lift Mollie and seat her in a chair. Wilson crosses to his phone.

CLOSE SHOT WILSON AT PHONE

WILSON

(into Phone)

City Desk.

MED. CLOSE SHOT

Taking in Hildy, Wilson and Mollie and Endicott.

ENDICOTT

She'll be all right.

(crosses to his phone)

The Desk.

WILSON

(into phone)

Well, they surrounded the house, all right, only they forgot to tell Williams, and he wasn't there.

MED. LONG SHOT TAKING IN DOOR

Murphy comes in.

MURPHY

(seeing Hildy, who has been fastening Mollie's blouse)

Hildy, I thought you were gone –

HILDY

Well – I was going, but Mollie fainted away and I thought I ought to do what I could.

MURPHY

Some Hallowe'en goin' on outside. The whole police force standing on it's ear.

Murphy crosses to his phone. McCue comes in.

MCCUE

(panting)

What a chase!

ENDICOTT

(into phone)

No luck on Williams, yet – call you back.

He hangs up.

WILSON

(into phone)

Okay, later.

He hangs up.

MURPHY
(into phone)
Murphy talking.

Schwartz comes in.

HILDY
Any news?

SCHWARTZ
Yeah. I was never so tired in my
life.

He picks up his phone.

MCCUE
(into phone)
Where? Harrison Street Station? All
right, connect me.

SCHWARTZ
(into phone)
Schwartz calling... Out with Hartman's
deputies. I'm in a drugstore. You
can't call me back because I'm going
right on with them.

He hangs up – puts his feet on the desk.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND MOLLIE

HILDY
Are you all right, now?

MOLLIE
Yeah, I'm feelin' fine.

MED. SHOT GROUP

MURPHY
Sure, Mollie, you never looked better
in your life.

MCCUE

(turning from phone)
Yeah, hold the line. Hey, this looks good. An old lady just called the detective bureau and claims Williams is hiding in her cellar. Well - we've looked every other place. Want to go out on it?

ENDICOTT

Aw, nuts with chasing around any more. I spent a dollar-forty on taxis already.

SCHWARTZ

I say we don't go out any more. Let Earl Williams come to us.

CLOSEUP HILDY

HILDY

A fine bunch of reporters. Biggest story in two years and they're too lazy to go after it.

MED. SHOT GROUP

ENDICOTT

It's easy for you to talk. You're retired. We're still working.

MCCUE

Okay.

(into phone)

Forget it.

(he hangs up)

HILDY

What's the matter with you boys? Afraid it might rain? If you want to go, I'll cover this end.

MURPHY

Say, Hildy, if I know you, you sound pretty anxious to get rid of us. Are you trying to scoop us or something?

ENDICOTT

Something smells around here. If you ask me Mollie gave her the story on how Williams got that gun.

(turning on Mollie)

Did you smuggle that gun into Williams, Mollie?

MOLLIE

I didn't do nothin'.

MCCUE

(crossing to Mollie)

Come clean, Mollie.

Wilson, Endicott and Murphy follow McCue toward Hildy.

ENDICOTT

Better let us in on it, Mollie.

HILDY

Aw, why don't you let her alone?
She's ill!

MURPHY

Oh, you two are pals now – I think you're right, Endicott. Mollie did give her some kind of story.

ENDICOTT

I tell you, it's a screwy set-up. We better hold onto 'em both.

At this point Mrs. Baldwin appears in the doorway. Hildy gasps and starts for her.

MED. SHOT AT DOOR

Mrs. Baldwin is in a very righteous mood.

MRS. BALDWIN

Well?

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

as she comes in to her.

HILDY
Mother!

MRS. BALDWIN
Don't you mother me! Playing cat-and-mouse with my poor boy! Keeping him looked up – making us miss two trains – and supposed to be married tomorrow!

HILDY
Mother, I can explain everything.
I'll go with you in five minutes and –

MRS. BALDWIN
You don't have to go with me at all!
Just give me my son's money and you can stay here forever as far as I'm concerned. Stay with that murderer you caught!

CLOSE SHOT REPORTERS

as they get this. Reactions as they glance at one another.

MRS. BALDWIN'S VOICE
(continuing)
Which one of these men is it? They all look like murderers to me!

MURPHY
Where does she get that stuff?

SCHWARTZ
Shall we tell her what she looks like?

ENDICOTT
Wait a minute! What murderer did you catch, Hildy?

MED. SHOT GROUP

The reporters are looking intently at Hildy and Mrs. Baldwin.

HILDY

I don't know what she's talking about.
I never said any such thing.

MRS. BALDWIN

I'm quoting my son, and he has never
lied to me.

The reporters move toward Hildy and Mrs. Baldwin speaking
simultaneously.

REPORTERS

I knew something stunk around here –
Who says she caught him –? What do
you mean she caught a murderer –?
etc.

HILDY

(desperately)

But I never said anything like that!

MRS. BALDWIN

Yes, you did!

CLOSEUP MOLLIE

MOLLIE

She never told her that!

MED. CLOSE SHOT GROUP

HILDY

I said I was trying to catch one.
(to Mrs. Baldwin)
You got it balled up, Mother.

CLOSE SHOT

taking in Mollie, with Murphy coming into scene to her.

MURPHY

What do you know about it? How do
you know she didn't?

He grabs her cruelly by an arm.

MOLLIE

Let go!

Endicott comes into scene.

ENDICOTT

Hold on to her, Jimmy – she's in
with Hildy on this.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND MRS. BALDWIN

Hildy tense with anxiety, her eyes on Mollie, off. Murphy
comes viciously into scene to her and jerks Hildy by an arm.

MURPHY

Who you holding out on? Come clean,
or we'll make you wish you had –

MED. SHOT

as the rest of the reporters surround Hildy menacingly.

ENDICOTT

(to Hildy)

Hildy, are you gonna cross us for
Walter Burns after the way you told
him off?

WILSON

Give in, Hildy – you can't get away
with it.

CLOSEUP MOLLIE

AS SHE CRIES WILDLY:

MOLLIE

Wait! You stool-pigeons! She don't
know where Williams is. I'm the one
that knows.

SHOT OF REPORTERS

as they turn on Mollie.

ENDICOTT

What do you mean, you know?

They start for Mollie.

MED. SHOT

Mollie begins backing slowly around the table, away from them, toward the window.

MOLLIE

Go find out, you heels! You don't think I'm gonna tell!

CLOSEUP HILDY

who has remained riveted at desk.

HILDY

Let her alone! She's goofy!

MOLLIE AND REPORTERS

Hemmed in by the massed reporters, she makes a sudden lunge for the door.

REPORTERS

Look out! Close that door! etc.,
etc.

They split, some of them heading her off at door, others from opposite side of table, so that she runs back between window and table.

MCCUE

You ain't gettin' out o' here!

ENDICOTT

Now, where is he?

WILSON

Where you hidin' him?

MOLLIE

I ain't gonna squeal! I ain't goin'
to!

MURPHY

(leaning across table)

Come on, you! Before we slap you
down.

ENDICOTT

Do you want us to call the cops and
have them give you the boots?

MURPHY

Where is he, before we beat it out
of you?

MOLLIE

(backing)

Don't you come near me, you kidney
foot!

Murphy continues to advance on her. The reporters start for
her from the other side. Mollie snatches up a chair and swings
it at the advancing circle of men.

MOLLIE

(wild and blubbering)

Let me alone or I'll knock your heads
off!

ENDICOTT

Put down that chair!

SCHWARTZ

Get around – get on the side of
her.

MOLLIE

(still backing)

No, you don't!

(a scream)

Keep away!

WILSON
Grab her!

With a last, wild look at her encircling foes.

MOLLIE
You'll never get it out of me!
(hurls chair at them)
I'll never tell! Never!

She makes a desperate leap for the open window and disappears out. Her scream of terror is heard as she drops. THEN RUSH FORWARD TO:

CLOSE SHOT AT WINDOW

as the reporters rush in and look out, an assortment of awed and astonished exclamations rising from them.

CLOSE SHOT MRS. BALDWIN

She turns away from the window and hides her face in her hands.

MRS. BALDWIN
Take me out of here! Take me –
(a moan)
Oh-h –

She collapses to a chair.

SHOT AT WINDOW

MCCUE
(turning)
Get the cops, somebody.

MURPHY
(turning)
Come on, fellas.

They start in a rush for the door.

MED. SHOT AT DOOR AND DESK

as the reporters rush out, and Hildy crosses, dazed to the window.

HILDY

Gee! The poor kid... the poor kid.

Reaching the window, she looks out.

EXT. PAVEMENT SHOOTING DOWN FROM HILDY'S ANGLE

The form of Mollie on the pavement below moves slightly in the moonlight, as guards rush into scene to her.

VOICES

(of guards rushing in)

Get a doctor! Take her to the infirmary! She ain't killed – she's moving!

INT. PRESS ROOM SHOOTING INTO ROOM FROM WINDOW

Hildy turns, shaken, back into the room from the window and sees advancing to her across the room Walter Burns. Diamond Louie has entered with the Boss and stands leaning by the door. Mrs. Baldwin's face is still hidden by her hands. Hildy starts for Burns.

HILDY

Walter! D-did you see –
(gesturing back to window)
– that?

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

BURNS

Yes. Where is he?

HILDY

(comes in to him)
She jumped out of the window.

BURNS

I know. Where is he, I said.

[MISSING PAGE]

CLOSE SHOT MRS. BALDWIN

looking up at them, off.

MRS. BALDWIN
What are you doing?

BURNS' VOICE
Shut up!

MRS. BALDWIN
I won't shut up! That girl killed
herself. Oh-h, you're doing something
wrong. What's in that desk?

CLOSE AT DESK - TAKING IN LOUIE AT THE DOOR

Burns slams closed the desk and steps to Louie.

CLOSE SHOT

BURNS
Louie, take this lady over to Polack
Mike's and lock her up. See that she
doesn't take to anyone on the way.

CLOSEUP MRS. BALDWIN

MRS. BALDWIN
What's that – what's that?

CLOSE SHOT GROUP

as Louie comes in to Mrs. Baldwin.

HILDY
Wait a minute, Walter. You can't do
that!

LOUIE
(extending his hand
as if to shake hands
with Mrs. Baldwin)

My name is Louis Peluso.

Unluckily for her she responds, only to find herself jerked to her feet and spun around so that one of Louie's arms is about her waist and the other hand over her mouth. Louie starts her to door.

BURNS

Tell 'em it's a case of delirium tremens.

TRUCKING SHOT

with them – Hildy catching up.

HILDY

Now, let go of her, Louie. Listen, Walter, this'll get me in a terrible jam with my fianc_e and I don't stand so well with him now. Don't worry, Mother, this is only temporary.

At the door, Louie gets Mrs. Baldwin out and disappears with her. Hildy starts after them, when Burns' arm comes into scene, catching her.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

BURNS

Where do you think you're going?

HILDY

Let go o' me! I've got to get Bruce out of jail! Oh, Walter, why did you have to do this to me?

BURNS

(scornfully)

Get Bruce out of jail! How can you worry about a man who's resting comfortably in a quiet police station while this is going on? Hildy, this is war! You can't desert now!

HILDY

Oh, get off that trapeze!

(indicating desk, off)

There's your story! Smear it all over the front page – Earl Williams caught by the Morning Post! And take all the credit – I covered your story for you and I got myself in a fine mess doing it – and now I'm getting out! I know I told you that twice before today – but this time I mean it!

BURNS

You drooling idiot! What do you mean, you're getting out! There are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year one can get married – but how many times have you got a murderer locked up in a desk? – Once in a lifetime! Hildy, you've got the whole city by the seat of the pants!

HILDY

I know, but –

BURNS

(interrupting)

You know! You've got the brain of a pancake! That wasn't just a story you covered – it was a revolution! Hildy! This is the greatest yarn in journalism since Livingstone discovered Stanley for the New York Herald!

(quickly closes the door)

HILDY

(slightly bewildered)

Wait a minute – wasn't it Stanley who discovered Livingstone?

BURNS

Don't get technical at a time like this! Do you realize what you've

done? You've taken a city that's been graft-ridden for forty years under the same old gang and with this yarn you're kicking 'em out and giving us a chance to have the same kind of government that New York's having under La Guardia! We'll make such monkeys out of these ward-healers next Tuesday that nobody'll vote for them – not even their wives!

HILDY

(the fire upon her)

I'd like to think.

BURNS

Well, think it then, because it's true! We'll crucify that mob. We're going to keep Williams under cover till morning so the Post can break the story exclusive. Then we'll let the Governor in on the capture – share the glory with him.

HILDY

(excited)

I get it!

BURNS

You've kicked over the whole City Hall like an apple-cart. You've got the Mayor and Hartman backed against a wall. You've put one administration out and another in. This isn't a newspaper story – it's a career! And you stand there belly-aching about whether you catch an eight o'clock train or a nine o'clock train! Still a doll-faced mugg! That's all you are.

HILDY

Let me get at that typewriter and I'll show you how a doll-faced mugg can write!

BURNS

Attagirl! Why, they'll be naming streets after you – Hildy Johnson Street! There'll be statues of you in the parks, Hildy. The radio'll be after you – the movies!

(slapping his fist
against his open
palm)

By tomorrow morning I'll betcha there's a Hildy Johnson cigar! I can see the billboards now. Light up with Hildy Johnson!

HILDY

Whoa – wait a minute. We can't leave Williams here. One of the other fellows'll –

BURNS

We're going to take him over to my private office.

(turning)

Where's our phone?

HILDY

That one – how you gonna take him? They'll see him.

SHOT AT TABLE

as Burns gets phone and jiggles the hook.

BURNS

Not if he's inside the desk. We'll carry the desk over.

(into phone)

Give me Duffy!

HILDY

You can't take that desk out. It's crawling with cops outside.

BURNS

We'll lower it out of the window
with pulleys. Quit stallin'.

As Hildy seems abstracted:

BURNS
Hildy!

HILDY
(coming to)
Huh!

BURNS
Get the lead out of your typewriter
and start pounding out a load, will
you? Snap into it!

HILDY
How much do you want on it?

BURNS
All the words you've got.

HILDY
(turning)
Where's some paper?

Goes out of scene.

BURNS
(into phone)
Hello...! Hello!

SHOT AT DESK

As Hildy comes in, going to desk, she turns to call back:

HILDY
Can I call the Mayor a bird of prey –
or is that libelous?

CLOSEUP BURNS AT PHONE

BURNS
Call him a love-child, if you want

to.
(into phone)
Duffy!

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

Having opened the drawers of Bensinger's desk, she is tossing play manuscripts, syringes, patent medicines and old socks into the air, in a frantic search for paper.

HILDY
(calling to Burns)
How about the time he had his house
painted by the Fire Department?

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

BURNS
Give him the works.
(into phone)
Hello, Duffy, get set! We've got the
biggest story in the world. Earl
Williams caught by the Morning Post –
exclusive!

TWO SHOT HILDY AND BURNS

Hildy has unearthed a package of Bensinger's private stationary. She rises with it.

BURNS
(to Hildy)
Fine!
(into phone)
Now, listen, Duffy – I want you to
tear out the whole front page...
That's what I said – the whole front
page! Never mind the European war!
We've got something a whole lot bigger
than that. Hildy Johnson's writing
the lead and I'll phone it over to
you as soon as she's finished.
(he starts to hang
up, then thinks of
something else)

Oh, Duffy! Get hold of Butch O'Connor and tell him I want him to come up here with half a dozen other wrestlers – right away! Tell him we'll run his picture on the sport page for two weeks straight. What? I've got a desk I want moved. Never mind what desk!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET NIGHT MED. LONG SHOT

as the taxi darts through traffic, narrowly avoiding cars, trucks, etc., it comes almost head-on to an oncoming car.

INT. TAXICAB - NIGHT - PROCESS CLOSE SHOT

Louie, worried, ducks unconsciously. Mrs. Baldwin faints across his lap.

EXT. STREET MED. LONG SHOT

The taxi swerves just in time to duck the oncoming car. As it starts forward again a truck comes toward the cab, head on.

INT. TAXICAB - PROCESS CLOSE SHOT

Diamond Louie pushes Mrs. Baldwin into an upright position, takes a look through the windshield, sees the truck and gives a big "takem" and faints across Mrs. Baldwin.

EXT. STREET MED. SHOT

The truck and taxicab crash and the screen blacks out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT CLOSE SHOT HILDY

at typewriter, smoke rising from her cigarette. As the CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS we see a fairly disheveled Hildy typing away furiously.

BURNS' VOICE

(Into phone)

"The Blackest cesspool in American city life!" Hold on Duffy, I'll see if she's got any more.

Burns comes into the scene, tears a page out of Hildy's typewriter. She inserts another one without noticing.

MED. SHOT

Burns goes back to the phone as Hildy continues to type furiously.

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy – Duffy!

(clicking the phone furiously)

Operator! Operator! Get me Duffy back. Somebody cut us off!

ANOTHER ANGLE FAVORING DOOR

as Bruce Baldwin enters.

BRUCE

Hildy!

BURNS

What the devil do you want? Listen, Bruce, you can't come in here now! We're busy!

(suddenly, into phone)

Where you been, Duffy? Stick around! What? What Chinese earthquake? The deuce with it... what's that?

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

typing away madly. Bruce comes into the scene.

BRUCE

Hildy!

HILDY
(looking up, very
casually)
Hello, Bruce...

She resumes her typing, then suddenly realizes the situation and jumps up.

HILDY
BRUCE!! How'd you get out?

BRUCE
(the hands-off attitude)
Not through any help of yours, Hildy.

HILDY
Bruce, I know, but I was in the
biggest jam –

BURNS' VOICE
Hildy!

MED. SHOT

As Hildy turns toward his voice, Burns, still with the phone in his hand, keeps talking to her.

BURNS
For Pete's sake, Hildy, they're
waiting for the rest of that story!

HILDY
(resignedly)
Okay, Walter.
(sits down at her
typewriter again)

CLOSE TWO SHOT BRUCE AND HILDY

Hildy begins typing again.

BRUCE
I waited and waited and then I had
an idea and wired Albany to send me
a hundred dollars so I could get out

on bail...
(desperately)
I don't know what they'll think –
they sent it to the police station!

HILDY
(she barely stops
typing)
We'll explain the whole thing to
them.
(resumes typing)

BRUCE
I know I got you into this, Hildy,
but it does seem to me that you can't
care much for me if you're willing
to let me stay locked up for two
hours.

HILDY
Bruce, you know I'm mad about you
and stop talking like that.
(calling o.s. to Walter)
Walter!

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

BURNS
(into phone)
Take the President's speech and run
it on the funny page...
(turns to Hildy, o.s.)
What is it, Hildy?

HILDY'S VOICE
What was the name of the Mayor's
first wife?

BURNS
You mean the one who drank so much?
Tillie!

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND BRUCE

HILDY

Thanks.
(she types furiously)

CLOSE SHOT THE DESK

Its top opens slowly and Williams' head sticks out.

CLOSEUP BURNS INCLUDING DESK IN B.G

BURNS
(screaming)
Get back in there, you mock turtle!

The desk-top falls, the fugitive disappearing within.

CLOSEUP BRUCE

turning around toward Burns.

BRUCE
Did you say anything, Mister Burns?

CLOSEUP BURNS

covering up, fast.

BURNS
No – I was just talking to one of
the guys at the office.
(indicating phone in
his hand)

MED. CLOSE SHOT BRUCE AND HILDY

BRUCE
(to Burns)
Oh.
(turns to Hildy)
I wonder what's keeping mother? She
was supposed to come down and get
you.

HILDY
Oh, she was here.

BRUCE
Where'd she go?

HILDY
Out some place.

She types away. Bruce grabs her and stops her.

BRUCE
Hildy! Where's mother?

HILDY
Oh – mother – she – I don't know
where she went.

BRUCE
Did you give her the money?

HILDY
No, I was going to give it to her –
but she left hurriedly.

BRUCE
Then suppose you give me the money.
Four hundred and fifty dollars.

HILDY
Oh, yes. Here it is.

She gets the wallet. Burns comes into the scene and pulls
another page out of her machine.

HILDY
Here it is, Bruce. One – two –
three – four hundred – and fifty
dollars.

BRUCE
(drily)
Thank you.

CLOSEUP BURNS

watching this with a grin.

MED. SHOT

Featuring the threesome.

BRUCE

(to Hildy)

And I'll take that certified check,
too. I've decided I can handle things
around here...

BURNS

Come on, Hildy, we've got to keep
going! Sorry, Bruce, but –

HILDY

Just a second, Walter. Here, Bruce,
here's the check... And, oh, Bruce,
here's your wallet. I got it back.

BRUCE

(taking it and
surveying it coldly)

You got it back, eh? There's something
funny going on around here.

BURNS

Hildy!

HILDY

All right, Walter.

She sits down and begins to type.

BRUCE

I'm taking the nine o'clock train,
Hildy. And you can meet us at the
station.

HILDY

Fine.

She types away.

BURNS

(coming over to Bruce)

I'll see she's there, Bruce, I promise you.

BRUCE
(dramatically)
If she's not there, mother and I are leaving anyhow!

But Hildy continues typing and doesn't even get it.

CAMERA TRUCKS WITH BURNS

as he leads Bruce away toward door.

BURNS
I know how you feel, Bruce, but you've got to forgive her. She's only a woman, after all.

BRUCE
Suppose she is – I have feelings, too! Do you know where I've been for the last couple of hours? Locked up in a police station and she didn't move to do anything about it.

BURNS
Ts! Ts! Ts!

BRUCE
And now I don't know where my mother is. She may be lost.

BURNS
I'll find her, Bruce, if I have to put every detective in the city on the job. Tell you what – go over to the Missing Persons Bureau and describe your mother. What does she look like?

BRUCE
She's – well, she's very motherly. That's about the best description I know.

BURNS
(nodding)
That's the kind of stuff they want!

They go out the door.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR MED. CLOSE SHOT

as they come out.

BURNS
Oh, Bruce, let me see that money
Hildy gave you.

BRUCE
The money? Why?

BURNS
There's a lot of counterfeit big
bills going around.

BRUCE
(worried)
Gee! Take a look, will you?

He hands the money to Burns. Burns looks at it carefully and hands it back.

BURNS
Oh, this is all right, Bruce. I just
wanted to be sure.

BRUCE
Say, I want to be sure, too!

INT. PRESS ROOM MED. SHOT

Hildy is typing furiously. Burns enters, grinning, locks the door behind him and goes to phone and picks it up.

BURNS
(into phone)
Duffy. Good. Stick close.

He turns and crosses quickly to look out the window.

AT WINDOW

Burns coming in to window.

BURNS
(despairingly)
Now the moon's out!

He turns away, crossing to the desk, the CAMERA TRUCKING with him. At the desk he taps three times, being answered by three taps from within.

BURNS
Fine. Three taps is me. Don't forget!
You're sitting pretty, now. Got enough
air?

He raises top an inch or two and fans air in to Williams.

BURNS
Is that better? Now breathe deep!

We hear an intake of breath from inside the desk.

BURNS
Attaboy!

He closes the desk and turns back to the table. As he passes Hildy, who is still typing rapidly:

BURNS
(looking over her
shoulder)
That's the stuff! Lam it into 'em,
Hildy.

He jerks the sheet from Hildy's machine, crosses to his desk and picks up the phone.

BURNS
(into phone)
Hello! Duffy, ready? Here we go!

CLOSEUP BURNS

reading from the page he has taken from Hildy's typewriter.

BURNS

(into phone)

"In the darkest hour of the city's
history –"

INT. MAIN FLOOR CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING LONG SHOT

At the end of the hall are glass doors through which can be seen a turmoil of activity in the street outside – newsboys, a crowd, and a mounted policeman or two. Bruce comes down the hall, his face set and angry. As he goes, he sees a sign set over a doorway in the hall. It reads: MISSING PERSONS BUREAU. He stops and enters.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT CLOSEUP BURNS AT PHONE

BURNS

(into phone)

Listen, did you impress it on Butch that I want him and his gang here right away? You did? Every minute counts. All right.

(puts receiver down
on table)

Duffy's getting old!

CLOSE SHOT HILDY

HILDY

Where's Butch?

BURNS' VOICE

He's on the way.

HILDY

(over her typing)

He'd better hurry. The boys'll be coming back to phone.

BURNS

(coming into shot to

peer over her shoulder)
Well, keep going! We want an extra
out on the streets before it's too
late!

HILDY
(looking up suddenly)
Where's Bruce?

BURNS
Bruce? Oh – er – he went out to
get the tickets.

HILDY
What tickets?

BURNS
Railroad tickets.

HILDY
Is he coming back here?

BURNS
Didn't you hear him? Of course he's
coming back here. Keep going, will
you?

MED. SHOT

as Burns leaves Hildy and goes over to desk and picks up his
phone again.

BURNS
(into phone)
Duffy!

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR - NIGHT CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

Finding the door locked, he knocks.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT MED. CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

as another knock comes, they take it big.

HILDY

(calling)
Who is it?

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR - NIGHT CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER
What's the idea of locking this?

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

HILDY
That's Bensinger. That's his desk.

BURNS
(whispering)
What's his name?

The door knob is rattled violently.

HILDY
Bensinger – of the Tribune.

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR - NIGHT CLOSE SHOT BENSINGER

BENSINGER
Open this door!

INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT BURNS

He starts for the door.

BURNS
I'll handle him.

CAMERA TRUCKS WITH HIM to the door.

BURNS
The Tribune, eh? Watch me!

He opens the door.

AT DOOR

BENSINGER
(as he comes in)

Ain't you got any more sense than to –
?

(sees Burns and is
overcome)

Oh, h-hello, Mr. Burns. Why, quite
an honor having you come over here.

BURNS

(casually)

Hello, Bensinger.

BENSINGER

Excuse me, I just want to –

He starts for the desk. Hildy's typing goes on, coming in
over the scene.

BURNS

(starting for the
desk, suddenly
blocking his path)

Quite a coincidence, my running into
you tonight. Isn't it, Hildy?

HILDY'S VOICE

Yeh.

BENSINGER

How do you mean?

CLOSEUP BURNS AND BENSINGER

BURNS

I was having a little chat about you
just this afternoon – with our Mister
Duffy.

BENSINGER

(essaying a pleasantry)

Nothing – ah – detrimental, I hope.

BURNS

I should say not! That was one swell
story you had in the paper this
morning.

BENSINGER
(deeply moved)
Oh, did you – care for the poem,
Mr. Burns?

BURNS
(startled)
The poem?... The poem was great!

BENSINGER
(blinking at these
words)
Remember the ending?
(and he recites)
" – and all is well, outside his
cell, But in his heart he hears the
hangman Calling and the gallows
falling And his white-haired mother's
tears..."

BURNS
(overcome)
Heartbreaking! How would you like to
work for me?

BENSINGER
What?

MEDIUM SHOT

taking in table, Hildy typing there.

BURNS
(to Bensinger)
We need somebody like you. All we've
got now are a lot of low-brows. Like
Johnson here.

He starts shoving Bensinger away from the desk, toward the
table.

BENSINGER
Seriously, Mr. Burns?

Clinging to him, Burns takes him to the phone.

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy! I'm sending Bensinger over to see you.

(looking up at

Bensinger)

Mervyn, isn't it?

BENSINGER

No. Roy. Roy V.

BURNS

(with a little laugh

at his own

forgetfulness)

Of course!

(into phone)

Roy Bensinger, the poet. Of course you wouldn't know! You probably never heard of Shakespeare, either! Put Mr. Bensinger right on the staff.

(to Bensinger)

How much are you getting on the Tribune, Roy?

BENSINGER

Seventy-five.

BURNS

I'll give you a hundred and a by-line.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Burns continues.

BURNS

(into phone)

Let him have everything he wants.

(puts down the

receiver; turns to

Bensinger)

Now hustle and write me a story from

the point of view of the escaped man.

(acting it out)

He hides, cowering... Afraid of every light, of every sound... hears footsteps... his heart going like that... And all the time they're closing in... Get the sense of an animal at bay!

BENSINGER

Sort of a Jack London style?

TRUCKING SHOT

BURNS

Exactly!

Leads him hurriedly to the door.

BENSINGER

I got my rhyming dictionary in –
(indicating desk)

BURNS

(getting him to door)
It doesn't have to rhyme!

CLOSE SHOT - AT DOOR

as Bensinger turns there.

BENSINGER

Gee, I'm terribly grateful, Mister Burns. Do you suppose there might be an opening some time as foreign correspondent? I parley a little French, you know.

Burns shakes hands with him and opens the door with the other hand.

BURNS

I'll keep you in mind.

BENSINGER
(going)
Au revoir, mon capitaine.

BURNS
(never at a loss in
any language)
Bon jour!

Continuing his French, he gets the door closed and relocked and turns for the table, singing as he does so:

BURNS
Mademoiselle from Armontieres, parlay –

MED. SHOT

Burns returns alertly to table, not noticing that Hildy has stopped typing, and sits staring moodily before her.

BURNS
(into phono)
Duffy! Got this!

CLOSEUP BURNS - AT PHONE

BURNS
A rat from the Tribune is coming over to get a job – Bensinger, the guy I told you about. Handle him with kid gloves. Tell him to get busy writing poetry... No, we don't want him. Stall him along until the extra comes out. Then tell him his poetry stinks and kick him downstairs.

He lays down receiver.

WIDER ANGLE

taking in Hildy. She looks up at him.

HILDY
(to Burns)
Double-crossing swine!

BURNS

You said it! But this'll teach him a lesson. He won't quit his paper without giving notice after this.

Hildy doesn't bother to reply. She rests her chin on her hands and stares moodily ahead.

BURNS

Tear into it, will you? Don't sit there like a frozen robin!

HILDY

I'm finished.

BURNS

Finished!

He grabs the last sheet of paper out of her typewriter, kisses her and rushes over to the telephone.

CLOSEUP BURNS

at phone.

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy! All right – here we go! And got it out as soon as you can. I want this paper out on the streets in half an hour!

(reading Hildy's copy)

"So once more the Morning Post –"

EXT. CRIMINAL COURTS BLDG. - NIGHT MED. SHOT

Diamond Louie, bearing evidence of a mishap, his hat crushed, his face bruised and his clothes torn, comes running down the sidewalk and up the steps into the buildings.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT MED. SHOT

Hildy is up now, pacing.

HILDY

Bruce ought to be back by now. Walter,
you're not trying anything again,
are you?

BURNS

(coming over to her)

Hildy, you think I could? After this
story?

(taking a flask from
his pocket)

Here! You're just nervous.

Hildy takes the flask and takes a drink. There is a knock on
the door. Burns takes the flask from her, restores it to his
pocket and goes to the door.

BURNS

Who is it?

LOUIE'S VOICE

It's me, Boss – Louie.

BURNS

(opening the door)

It's Louie!

Louie slips in and Burns relocks the door.

BURNS

(seeing Louie's
disarray)

What's the matter?

Hildy crosses to Louie.

HILDY

(frantically)

Where's Mrs. Baldwin?

BURNS

What did you do with her?

HILDY

(almost afraid to

speak)
What happened?

CLOSE SHOT - THE THREE

 BURNS
You been in a fight?

 LOUIE
 (still out of breath)
Down Western Avenue. We were going
sixty-five miles an hour. You know
what I mean?

 BURNS
Take that mush out of your mouth!

 HILDY
Where's the old lady?

 LOUIE
I'm telling you!

CLOSEUP - LOUIE

as he gets breath and blurts:

 LOUIE
We run smack into a police patrol.
You know what I mean? We broke it in
half!

BACK TO GROUP

 HILDY
 (moaning)
Oh-h-h... was she hurt?

 BURNS
Where is she? Tell me!

 HILDY
Louie!

 LOUIE

I'm telling you. Can you imagine bumping into a load of cops?! They come rollin' out like oranges!

HILDY
(seizing him)
What did you do with her?

LOUIE
Search me! When I come to I was running down Thirty-fifth Street.

HILDY
– You were with her. You were in the cab, weren't you?

LOUIE
(exposing his bruised scalp)
Was I? The driver got knocked cold.

BURNS
Butter-fingers! I give you an old lady to take somewhere, and you hand her over to the cops!

LOUIE
What do you mean, I handed her? The patrol wagon was on the wrong side of the street.

BURNS
Now everything's fine. She's probably squawking her head off in some police station.

CLOSEUP - LOUIE

LOUIE
I don't think she's talking much...
You know what I mean?

He winks reassuringly.

BACK TO GROUP

HILDY
(paralyzed)
Don't tell me – was she killed?

BURNS
(hopefully)
Was she? Did you notice?

LOUIE
Say, me with a gun on my hip and a kidnapped old lady on my hands, I should stick around asking questions from a lot of cops! You know what I mean?

Hildy sinks into a chair.

CLOSE SHOT HILDY IN THE CHAIR

HILDY
Dead... dead! That's the end!

Burns comes into scene to her.

BURNS
It's Fate, Hildy. What will be, will be.

HILDY
(wildly)
What am I going to say to Bruce?
What'll I tell him?

BURNS
If he really loves you, you won't have to tell him anything.
(whacking her on the shoulder)
Snap out of it! Would you rather have had the old dame dragging the whole police force in here?

HILDY
I killed her. I'm responsible. Oh-

h... what can I do now? How can I
ever face him? Oh, I hope he never
comes back!

She buries her face in her hands.

BURNS
Look at me, Hildy –

HILDY
(springing up)
I'm looking at you – you murderer!

BURNS
If it was my own mother, I'd carry
on! You know I would. For the paper!

HILDY
(calling off to Louie)
Louie, where'd it happen? I'm going
out!

MED. SHOT GROUP

The Post phone rings.

BURNS
(grabbing Hildy)
You stay here. I'll find out
everything.

LOUIE
(to Hildy)
Western an' Thirty-fourth.

Hildy jumps for the outside phone on the desk.

TWO SHOT INCLUDING BURNS AT PHONE AND HILDY AT PHONE

BURNS
(into phone)
Hello – hello...

HILDY
(into phone)

Gimme Western four-five-five-seven.

BURNS

(guarded)

Who?

(wildly)

Hello, Butch! Where are you?

HILDY

(into phone)

Mission Hospital? Gimme the Receiving Room.

BURNS

(into phone)

What are you doing there? Haven't you even started?

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello – Eddie? Hildy Johnson. Was there an old lady brought in from an auto smashup?

BURNS

(into phone)

Oh, for –

(yelling)

H. Sebastian – Butch! Listen, it's a matter of life and death! Listen!

HILDY

(into phone)

Nobody?

(jiggles hook)

Morningside three-one-two-four.

BURNS

(into phone)

I can't hear... You got who? Speak up! A what?... You can't stop for a dame now!

HILDY

(into phone)

Is this the Community Hospital?

BURNS

(howling into phone)

I don't care if you've been after her for six years! Butch, our whole lives are at stake! Are you going to let a woman come between us after all we've been through?

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello, Max, Hildy Johnson. Was there an old lady –?

BURNS

(into phone, drowning out Hildy)

Butch! I'd put my arm in fire for you – up to here!

(indicates up to where)

Now, you can't double-cross me!...

She does? All right – put her on.

I'll talk to her... Hello! Oh, hello,

Madam... Now listen, you ten-cent

glamour girl, you can't keep Butch

away from his duty... What's that?

You say that again and I'll come

over there and knock your eye out!

Hello?

(turning, as he hangs up)

I'll kill 'em! I'll kill both of 'em!

(into Post phone)

Duffy!

(to the universe)

Mousing around with some big blonde

Annie on my time! That's co-operation!

(screaming into phone)

Duffy!!

HILDY

Shut up, will you?

(into phone)

You sure? Nobody?

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy!!!!

(listening)

(into phone)

Duffy!!!!

(listening)

Well, where is Duffy?

(throwing receiver to
desk)

Diabetes! I ought to know better
than to hire anybody with a disease.

(turning)

Louie.

MED. SHOT GROUP

BURNS

(to Louie)

It's up to you.

LOUIE

(loyally)

Anything you want, Boss.

BURNS

Beat it out and get hold of some
guys.

LOUIE

Who do you want?

BURNS

(starting for the
door, followed by
Louie)

Anybody with hair on his chest. Get
'em off the street – anywhere. Offer
them anything – only get them.

(confidentially)

We've got to get this desk out of
here.

He unlocks the door.

LOUIE

You know me. The shirt off my back.

BURNS

You got plenty of money?

LOUIE

Sure, boss.

BURNS

I mean real money – not counterfeit!

LOUIE

I always have both.

He goes out.

BURNS

(calling after him)

And don't bump into anything.

He relocks the door.

HILDY

Lafayette two-one-hundred.

BURNS

(turning from door)

That dumb immigrant'll flop on me. I know it.

(bitterly)

Can you imagine Butch doing this to me – at a time like this?

CLOSE SHOT HILDY AT PHONE, TAKING IN DESK

Burns steps into scene.

BURNS

(confidentially)

If Louie doesn't come back in five minutes we'll get it out alone.

There's millions of ways. We can

start a fire and get the firemen to
carry it out in the confusion.

He crosses to the desk and inspects it.

HILDY

(into phone)

Ring that number, will you?

BURNS

(to Hildy, oblivious
of her telephoning)

Come here. See if we can move it.

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello – hello! Is this the Lying –
In Hospital? Did you have an auto
accident in the last –

BURNS

(interrupting)

Will you come here?

HILDY

(into phone)

Oh, I see. I beg your pardon.

BURNS

When I'm surrounded, with my back
against the wall, you're not going
to lay down on me, are you –

HILDY

Yes.

She jiggles the phone hook.

BURNS

(going to her)

Hildy, you just can't leave me out
on a limb now. It – it wouldn't be
cricket!

HILDY

I don't care what you say. I'm going
to find Bruce's mother.

(she jiggles the hook
madly)

Oh-h...

(she hangs up)

I'm going out and find her!

Grabbing her hat and purse, she starts for the door.

MED. SHOT OF HILDY, TAKING IN DOOR

There is a loud knocking on the door.

BURNS

(coming into scene
after Hildy)

Don't open that!

HILDY

(at the door)

Who says so? I'm going to the morgue –
to look –

She unlocks the door.

CLOSE SHOT AT DOOR

as Hildy flings the door open, only to find the Sheriff,
accompanied by two deputies – Carl and Frank – and
surrounded by McCue, Murphy, Schwartz, Wilson and Endicott.

MURPHY

There she is!

MCCUE

Say, Hildy...

Hildy makes a decision and tries to push through them, but
the Sheriff grabs her and pushes her back.

HARTMAN

Just a minute, Johnson!

HILDY

Let go o' me. What's the idea?

MCCUE

What's your hurry?

MURPHY

We want to see you.

The deputies seize her.

HILDY

Take your paws off me!

HARTMAN

Hold her, boys!

Burns comes into scene.

BURNS

(to Sheriff)

Who do you think you are, breaking
in here like this?

HARTMAN

You can't bluff me, Burns. I don't
care who you are or what paper you're
editor of.

HILDY

(struggling)

Let me go!

(hysterically)

Fellows, something's happened to my
mother-in-law.

HARTMAN

Hang onto her! Keep her in here!

MED. SHOT

as Hildy breaks loose and retreats back into the room before
Hartman and the deputies.

MCCUE

We know what you're up to.

ENDICOTT

Probably goin' out to get Williams.

SCHWARTZ

The door was locked.

WILSON

She and Mollie were talking.

HILDY

I don't know anything, I tell you.
There's been an accident.

HARTMAN

Johnson, there's something very
peculiar going on.

HILDY

You can send somebody with me if you
don't believe me!

HARTMAN

I wasn't born yesterday. Now the
boys tell me you and this Mollie
Malloy –

HILDY

Nobody's trying to put anything over
on you. I'm getting out of here and
you can't stop me!

MURPHY

(comes into scene)

You're not going anywhere.

(to the Sheriff)

She's got the story sewed up, Pete.

(indicating Burns)

That's why Burns is here.

SCHWARTZ

We're on to you, Hildy. Let us in on
it.

TWO SHOT - SHERIFF AND BURNS

BURNS

(purring)

If you've any accusations to make, Hartman, make them in the proper manner. Otherwise, I'll have to ask you to get out.

HARTMAN

(pop-eyed; stammering)

You'll ask me to what?

BURNS

Get out!

HARTMAN

(to deputies, off)

Close that door. Don't let anybody in or out.

MED. SHOT - THE GROUP

MURPHY

Come on, Pinky! Give 'em a little third degree.

ENDICOTT

Make them talk and you got Williams, Pinky!

HARTMAN

Johnson, I'm going to the bottom of this. What do you know about Williams? Are you going to talk or aren't you?

HILDY

What do I know about Williams?

HARTMAN

All right, boys. Take her along. I got ways of making her talk.

The deputies seize Hildy. She struggles.

HILDY

Look out, you –

MCCUE

(nervously)

What's the use of fighting, Hildy?

Hildy manages to get in a few resounding smacks on the deputies' faces. The reporters swarm around the struggling trio. There are shouts of: "I got her!" "No, you don't!" "Aw, Hildy...", etc. In the struggle, Hildy suddenly drops her purse. It lands with a clank and comes open. A gun is revealed on the floor. Hildy picks it up.

DEPUTIES

Hey, she's got a gun! Look out, she's got a gun!

The deputies and reporters start to close in on her cautiously.

HILDY

(trying to face in all directions)

No, you don't! Walter!

BURNS

What is it? Here!

She tosses the gun to Walter, but one of the deputies intercepts the throw.

HARTMAN

Gimme that.

He takes the gun from the deputy.

CLOSER SHOT

The Sheriff stands frozen, staring at the gun.

HARTMAN

(to Hildy)

Where'd you get this?

HILDY

I've got a right to carry a gun if I want to.

HARTMAN

Not this gun!

Burns comes into scene.

BURNS

(easily)

I can explain that, Hartman. When Hildy told me she wanted to interview Earl Williams I thought it might be dangerous and I gave her a gun to defend herself.

HARTMAN

Oh, you did! Well, that's very, very interesting. This happens to be the gun that Earl Williams shot his way out with!

REPORTERS AD LIB

What? What's that? Etc...

BURNS

(advancing on Sheriff)

Are you trying to make me out a liar?

MURPHY

(bitterly at Hildy)

It's the last time I ever trust a woman, Hildy.

SCHWARTZ

Maybe Williams was gonna be her best man.

WILSON

That's pretty rotten, Hildy. Crossing your own pals.

HARTMAN

(shoving up to Hildy;
trembling)

Where is Earl Williams? Where you got him?

BURNS

(sympathetically)

You're barking up the wrong tree, Hartman.

HARTMAN

I'll give you three minutes to tell me where he is.

HILDY

He went over to the hospital to call on Professor Egelhoffer.

HARTMAN

(outraged)

What?

HILDY

With a bag of marshmallows.

The Sheriff stands silent – then hastily turns.

MED. SHOT GROUP AROUND HILDY

REPORTERS AD LIB

Come on, Hildy. Where is he?... This is a sweet trick, Hildy... I thought we were friends... Etc.

(to Sheriff)

Look here, Pete! What about Mister Burns?... Ask the Master Mind! What's he doing over here?

HARTMAN

(grabbing Burns' arm)

Speak up! What do you know about this.

BURNS

(gently but firmly disengaging his hand)

My dear Hartman!

He moves casually to a post before the desk and maintains it.

MURPHY

Can that! Where is he?

BURNS

(to Sheriff)

The Morning Post is not obstructing justice or hiding criminals. You ought to know that.

HARTMAN

No? Well –

(turning to Hildy)

Johnson, you're under arrest.

(turning to Burns)

You, too, Burns.

BURNS

(calmly)

Who's under arrest? You pimple-headed, square-toed spy – do you realize what you're doing?

HARTMAN

I'll show you what I'm doing. Burns, you're guilty of obstructing justice and so is the Morning Post. I'm going to see that the Post is fined ten thousand dollars for this.

BURNS

You'll see nothing of the kind, Sheriff.

HARTMAN

We'll just start by impounding the Post property.

(pointing to

Bensinger's desk,
addressing Hildy)

Is that your desk?

HILDY
(jumping)
No!

BURNS
(almost simultaneously)
Yes! What are you afraid of Hildy? I dare him to move that desk out of here.

HARTMAN
Oh, you do, eh?
(to deputies)
All right, boys. Confiscate that desk.

Several of the deputies start toward the desk.

BURNS
(trying to intercept
deputies)
Hartman, if you take this desk out of this building, I'll put you behind bars.

HARTMAN
You will, eh? Well, we'll see about that.
(to deputies)
All right, boys. Take it.

BURNS
I'm warning you – it'll be a Federal offense.
(to deputy nearest
him)
And you'll be an accessory!

HARTMAN
We'll take a chance on that, Burns.
(to deputies)
Go ahead, boys.
(the deputies continue
toward the desk)

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRESS ROOM - NIGHT MED. SHOT

Flanked by two policemen, Mrs. Baldwin, dishevelled, with her hat over one ear, is marching toward the Press Room, bound for vengeance. Bruce, considerably upset, is with her. As they reach the door to the Press Room, Mrs. Baldwin stops.

MRS. BALDWIN
You wait outside, Bruce.

BRUCE
But, mother –

MRS. BALDWIN
(firmly)
No! You'll weaken when you see that little Jezebel! I'm going to tell her what I think of her!

She plumps her hat down more firmly on her head and marches into the Press Room followed by the two policemen. Bruce remains outside the door.

INT. PRESS ROOM

Taking in door as it opens and Mrs. Baldwin, followed by the policemen, comes in.

HILDY
(leaping forward)
Mother!

MRS. BALDWIN
(pointing out Burns to the officers)
That man there!

HILDY
(hugging Mrs. Baldwin)
Mother! Oh, I'm so glad to see you!
Are you all right? Tell me.

Mrs. Baldwin indignantly shakes her off.

HARTMAN

What's the idea here?

POLICEMAN

This lady claims she was kidnapped.

HARTMAN

What?

MRS. BALDWIN

They dragged me all the way down the stairs –

HARTMAN

Just a minute. Did – did –

(points to Burns)

– this man have anything to do with it?

MRS. BALDWIN

He was the one in charge of everything! He told them to kidnap me!

BURNS

(amazed)

Are you referring to me, Madam?

MRS. BALDWIN

You know you did!

HARTMAN

What about this, Burns? Kidnapping, eh?

BURNS

(round-eyed)

Oh, trying to frame me, eh! I never saw this woman before in my life!

MRS. BALDWIN

Oh, what a thing to say! I was standing right here - after the girl jumped out of the window.

HARTMAN

Did you get the Mayor?

DEPUTY

He's coming over.

BURNS

(to Mrs. Baldwin)

Now, Madam – be honest. If you were out joy-riding, drunk, and got into some scrape, why don't you admit it, instead of accusing innocent people?

MRS. BALDWIN

(beginning to doubt
her senses)

You ruffian! How dare you say a thing like that?

HILDA

Please, Mother, he's just crazy!

MRS. BALDWIN

(to Sheriff)

I'll tell you something more. I'll tell you why they did it!

BURNS

(fidgeting)

Come on, Sheriff. We've got to get bail.

MRS. BALDWIN

(continuing crescendo)

I was in here – and they had some kind of murderer in with them. They were hiding him!

This is a bombshell. The room is electrified.

HARTMAN

Hiding him? In here?

Murphy, followed by the reporters, comes into scene.

MURPHY

Hiding him where?

HILDY

Mother!

REPORTERS

Where was he?... Where'd they have him?... Etc.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS

at the desk.

BURNS

(with superb
indignation)

Madam, you're a cockeyed liar! And you know it!

To emphasize his righteousness, he pounds on the desk three times, forgetting that that is his signal to Williams. Then, realizing what he has done, he gasps.

MED. SHOT

Burns advances from desk, the others retreating before him.

BURNS

(anxiously)

Come on, Sheriff, we've got to get bail.

Three answering knocks come from the desk.

GROUP SHOT WITH DOORWAY IN B.G

They jump around to face the desk.

HARTMAN

(whispering)

What was that?

REPORTERS AD LIB

He's in the desk! – For the love of –
He's in there! Etc.

HARTMAN

Aha! I thought so! Stand back,
everybody!

DEPUTY

Look out, Sheriff. He may shoot!

HARTMAN

Get your guns out!

The policemen and deputies get out their guns.

HILDY

He's harmless.

HARTMAN

Don't take any chances. Shoot through
the desk.

HILDY

He can't hurt anybody. You've got
his gun.

MRS. BALDWIN

(panic-stricken)

Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

BURNS

You grey-haired old Judas!

MRS. BALDWIN

Let me out! Let me out of here!

She streaks for the door, flings it open and goes. The
reporters tear out of scene to their telephones.

HARTMAN

(to policeman)

You stand there!

MURPHY'S VOICE

City Desk! Quick!

SCHWARTZ' VOICE

Gimme the Desk!

HARTMAN
(to another policeman)
You there!

ENDICOTT'S VOICE
City Desk! Hurry!

MCCUE'S VOICE
Gimme Emil...

HARTMAN
(to a Deputy, pointing
with his gun toward
the window)
You cover the window.

MURPHY'S VOICE
Look out where you're pointing that
gun!

The Sheriff draws his men in around the desk, their guns
drawn on it.

WILSON'S VOICE
Lemme have the Desk! Quick!

MURPHY'S VOICE
Hold the wire! I've got a flash for
you!

BURNS
(to Hildy)
Call Duffy!

HARTMAN
No, you don't!

BURNS
(to Sheriff, furiously)
Do you want to get us scooped?

MCCUE'S VOICE
Emil? Hang on for a second.

HARTMAN

Now then, everybody aim at the center.
And when I say three –

HILDY

That's murder!

HARTMAN

(changing his mind)

All right! Carl! Frank! One of you
get on each side of the desk. Take
hold of the cover.

They do.

HARTMAN

Now then! We got you covered,
Williams. Don't try to move. Now!
Everybody quiet and ready for an
emergency. I'm going to count three.

SCHWARTZ

Hold it! Something coming up.

HARTMAN

One!

ENDICOTT

Hold the phone!

MURPHY

(into the phone)

I'll have it in a minute.

HARTMAN

Two!

WILSON

(into phone)

Right away now!

HARTMAN

(turning back to desk)

Everybody ready? All right. Now then,

up with it.

Two deputies raise the cover. Williams is revealed, cowering in the desk, his hands over his face. The Sheriff rushes on him, jabbing his gun into him.

CLOSE SHOT SHERIFF AND WILLIAMS

HARTMAN

Got you, Williams!

WILLIAMS

(a wail)

Go on – shoot me!

MEDIUM SHOT

as the police and deputies come in to assist the Sheriff. The reporters are telephoning in, the police shouting – all the voices mixing in, in incredible confusion, as the Sheriff rushes Williams to the door and takes him out.

MURPHY'S VOICE

Earl Williams was just captured in the Press Room of the Criminal Courts Building, hiding in a desk.

OFFICERS AD LIB

(all talking at once)

Grab him! That's him! Don't let him shoot! Stick 'em up! – Etc.

CLOSEUP MCCUE AT PHONE

MCCUE

(into phone)

...Williams in a rolltop –

CLOSEUP WILSON AT PHONE

WILSON

(into phone)

– nabbed Williams hiding –

ENDICOTT'S VOICE

– found Williams' hiding place.

SCHWARTZ' VOICE

He offered no resistance.

CLOSEUP MCCUE AT PHONE

MCCUE

(into phone)

Williams put up a desperate struggle
but the police overpowered –

CLOSEUP MURPHY AT PHONE

MURPHY

(into phone)

– tried to shoot it out with the
cops but his gun wouldn't work, so –

WILSON'S VOICE

– trying to break through the cordon
of police –

CLOSEUP ENDICOTT AT PHONE

ENDICOTT

(into phone)

Williams was unconscious when they
opened the desk –

CLOSEUP BURNS

grabbing the Post phone.

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy! The Morning Post just turned
Earl Williams over to the Sheriff.

CLOSE SHOT THE SHERIFF

coming in the door with two policemen and leaping to get the
phone away from Burns.

MED. SHOT BURNS AT PHONE, HILDY BESIDE HIM

BURNS
(into phone)
Duffy!

The Sheriff and police come into scene.

HARTMAN
(indicating Burns and
Hildy)
Put the cuffs on those two!

The police handcuff Hildy and Burns.

ENDICOTT
An anonymous note received by the
Sheriff led to Williams' capture.
More later.

He hangs up.

CLOSEUP MURPHY AT PHONE

MURPHY
(into phone)
An old sweetheart of Williams'
doublecrossed him. Call you back.

He hangs up.

MED. SHOT TAKING IN DOOR

REPORTERS
Where's that old lady? Hey, Madam!
Where'd she go? Where's the old dame?
Etc., etc. They run out after Mrs.
Baldwin, the Mayor entering just
after they go. Burns and Hildy,
handcuffed together, stand near the
Sheriff.

HARTMAN
(into phone)
Hello, girlie – gimme Cooley. Quick!

BURNS

Hartwell, you're going to wish you'd never been born!

The Mayor comes into scene.

MAYOR

Fine work, Pete! You certainly delivered the goods. I'm proud of you.

HARTMAN

(holding the phone)

Look kind o' natural, don't they, Fred?

MAYOR

(happily)

A sight for sore eyes!

HARTMAN

(rolling in catnip)

Aiding an escaped criminal! And a little charge of kidnapping I'm looking into.

(into phone; suddenly)

But that's the jail! There must be somebody there!

MAYOR

Well! Looks like about ten years apiece for you birds!

BURNS

Does it? You forget the power that always watches over the Morning Post.

MAYOR

Your luck's not with you now!

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Coolley?... I caught Williams single-handed – we're going to proceed with the hanging per schedule!

He wiggles the hook for another call.

BURNS

(to Mayor)

You're going to be in office for exactly two days more and then we're pulling your nose out of the feed bag.

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Give me the District Attorney's office.

(to Burns)

I'll tell you what you'll be doing – making brooms in the State penitentiary.

(into phone)

Hello, D'Arrasty! This is Hartwell. Come over to my office, will you? I've just arrested a couple of important birds and I want to take their confessions.

He hangs up. Burns makes a sudden lunge for the Morning Post phone and cries into it.

BURNS

(into phone)

Duffy! Get Liebowitz!

MAYOR

All the lawyers in the world aren't going to help you!

BURNS

This is the Morning Post you're talking to!

MAYOR

(enjoying himself)

The power of the press, huh!

He laughs. Pinkus, the Governor's messenger, plentifully

stewed, reels in the door. He approaches the Mayor and Sheriff who have their backs to him.

BURNS

(at the Mayor)

Bigger men than you have found out
what the power of the press is...
President!... Yes – and Kings!

PINKUS

(woozy; handing Sheriff
the reprieve over
his shoulder)

Here's your reprieve.

The Mayor and Sheriff spin around.

MAYOR

(in a panic)

Get out of here!

PINKUS

You can't bribe me!

BURNS

What's this?

HARTMAN

Get out of here, you!

PINKUS

I won't. Here's your reprieve.

HILDY

What?

PINKUS

I don't want to be City Sealer. I
don't like seals anyhow. They smell.

MAYOR

Who is this man?

HARTMAN

(to an officer)

Throw him out, Frank.

HILDY
(seizing Pinkus with
her free hand)
Who was bribing you?

Burns also seizes Pinkus who is being pulled out of shape.

PINKUS
They wouldn't take it.

MAYOR
You're insane!

BURNS
(triumphant)
What did I tell you? An unseen power!
(to Pinkus)
What's your name?

PINKUS
Silas F. Pinkus.

MAYOR
You drunken idiot! Arrest him! The
idea of coming here with a cock-and-
bull story like that!

HARTMAN
It's a frame-up! Some imposter!

HILDY
Wait a minute!
(to the officers)
Let go there!

BURNS
(to Sheriff and Mayor)
Murder, uh?

HILDY
Hanging an innocent man to win an
election!

HARTMAN

That's a lie!!

MAYOR

I never saw him before!

BURNS

(to Pinkus)

When did you deliver this first?

HILDY

Who did you talk to?

PINKUS

They started right in bribing me!

HILDY

Who's 'they'?

PINKUS

(indicating the Mayor
and Sheriff)

Them!

MAYOR

That's absurd on the face of it, Mr.
Burns! He's talking like a child.

BURNS

Out of the mouths of babes.

MAYOR

He's insane or drunk or something.
Why, if this unfortunate man,
Williams, has really been reprieved,
I personally am tickled to death.
Aren't you, Pete?

HILDY

Go on, you'd kill your mother to get
elected!

MAYOR

That's a horrible thing to say, Miss
Johnson, about anybody!

(to Burns)
Now, look here, Walter, you're an
intelligent man –

BURNS
(interrupting)
Just a minute.
(to Pinkus)
All right, Mr. Pinkus. Let's have
your story.

PINKUS
Well, I been married for ten years
and –

BURNS
(interrupting)
Skip all that.

MAYOR
(loudly)
Take those handcuffs off our friends,
Pete. That wasn't at all necessary.

HARTMAN
(springing to obey)
I was just going to!

He gets the key from the officer.

MAYOR
Walter, I can't tell you how badly I
feel about this. There was no excuse
for Hartwell to fly off the handle.

HARTMAN
(unlocking the
handcuffs)
I was only doing my duty. Nothing
personal in it.

They are set free.

HILDY
You guys better quit politics and

take in washing.

MAYOR

(looking over the
reprieve)

Sheriff, this document is authentic!
Earl Williams has been reprieved,
this Commonwealth has been spared
the painful necessity of shedding
blood.

BURNS

Save that for the Tribune.

MAYOR

(to Pinkus)

What did you say your name was –
Pinkus?

PINKUS

That's right.

He shows the Mayor a locket.

PINKUS

Here's the picture of my wife.

MAYOR

A very fine-looking women.

PINKUS

(mysteriously angered)

She's good enough for me! And if I
was to go home and tell my wife –

MAYOR

I understand perfectly, Mr. Pinkus,
and as long as I am Mayor –

BURNS

Which ought to be about three hours
more, I'd say.

HILDY

Just until we can get out a special

edition asking for your impeachment.

BURNS

And your arrest. You'll each get about ten years, I think.

MAYOR

Don't make any hasty decisions, Mr. Burns, you might run into a thumping big libel suit.

HILDY

You're going to run into the Governor.

MAYOR

(trying to brush it off)

Now, my old friend the Governor and I understand each other perfectly.

HARTMAN

(eagerly)

And so do I!

MAYOR

(with superb contempt)

So do you what, you hoodoo!

(to Pinkus, suavely)

And now, Mr. Pinkus, if you'll come with us, we'll take you over to the Warden's office and deliver this reprieve.

The Sheriff, Pinkus and the Mayor go out of scene.

BURNS

(dreamily)

Wait till those two future jailbirds read the Morning Post tomorrow.

Walter turns to Hildy and they suddenly smile at each other.

HILDY

How was that for a tight squeeze?

BURNS

Don't tell me you were worried!

HILDY

Worried! I was petrified. Weren't you?

BURNS

Uh-uh. As long as we were in there together pitching – they couldn't lick us. Well, it's been a lot of fun.

HILDY

In a way.

BURNS

(laughs)

I mean – working together. Just like the old days. The things we've been through, Hildy.

HILDY

We've certainly been in some swell jams.

BURNS

Remember the time we broke into the D.A.'s office, and copied Fifi Randell's diary?

HILDY

Yeah. What about the time we hid the missing heiress in the sauerkraut factory? Six scoop interviews!

BURNS

Yeah - but that time we stole Old Lady Haggerty's stomach off the Coroner's physician. We proved she was poisoned though, didn't we?

HILDY

(laughing)

We sure did, but we had to go in

hiding for a week.

BURNS

In the Shoreland Hotel. And our only chaperon was the poor old lady's stomach.

HILDY

Don't remind me. That's how we happened to –

She breaks off. There is a moment's pause.

BURNS

Sorry, Hildy. I didn't mean to be making love to another man's fiancée.

HILDY

That's all right, Walter. It's as much my fault as yours.

BURNS

(glancing at the clock)

Bruce is making the nine o'clock train. I told him you'd be on it – unless you want to write this story yourself.

HILDY

Well, if it's my last story, I'd like it to be a good one. But – I guess I can't, Walter.

BURNS

Suit yourself, kid. This isn't for me to decide. Of course, you could make a later train and still be in Albany tomorrow morning.

HILDY

Yeah. I suppose I could. But, Walter –

BURNS

He's going to have you the rest of his life, Hildy. Can't you give me

another hour?

HILDY

I don't know what to do, Walter.

BURNS

Flip a coin.

HILDY

All right.

(takes coin from her
bag)

Heads I go – tails I stay to write
the story. Ready?

CLOSEUP BURNS

gazing nervously at the hand holding the coin.

BURNS

Ready.

CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

She flips and catches the coin. She holds it tightly clasped
in her hand, afraid to look. They stare at each other a
second.

BURNS

(nervously)

Well – what is it?

HILDY

(almost breaking)

What's the difference? I'm going to
write that story – and you know it!

She puts the coin away without looking at it. Burns rushes
to her, tries to take her in his arms.

BURNS

Hildy!

HILDY

(furiously)

Don't touch me! I'm not doing it for you!

BURNS

(softly)

Then why are you doing it?

HILDY

Because I'm a newspaper woman, Heaven help me!

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE SHOTS

INT. CITY ROOM - Hildy typing away furiously. Copy Boy tearing sheets from her typewriter as she writes.

Burns coming in and tearing sheets from typewriter.

Linetype machines.

Presses going.

Headline: THE POST SAVES EARL WILLIAMS!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BURNS' OFFICE

Headline: POST SAVES EARL WILLIAMS!

Over this sound of newsboys calling "Extra! Extra!"

CAMERA DRAWS BACK to rest of story:

"Impeachment Proceedings Launched Against Mayor For Attempting to Conceal Governor's Reprieve!"

CAMERA DRAWS BACK FURTHER to the by-line –

By Hildegard Johnson.

CAMERA DRAWS BACK STILL FURTHER to disclose Burns and Hildy looking at paper on Burns' desk.

BURNS

(enthusiastically)

The greatest yarn ever written by anybody. My hat's off to you, Hildy!

HILDY

(grimly)

Thanks.

BURNS

And what a way to quit. While you're still champion! That's the way to leave, Hildy!

HILDY

Yeah. Only – only I'm not leaving, Walter.

BURNS

What do you mean? Bruce'll be waiting for you in Albany.

HILDY

No, he won't. I wired him that I wasn't coming.

CLOSEUP BURNS

BURNS

Where'd you wire him?

HILDY

On the nine o'clock train. That's the one he took, isn't it?

BURNS

Sure.

MED. SHOT

HILDY

It's awfully clear now. Bruce needs a wife who can give him a home – and affection – and peace. I couldn't

do that for him, Walter. I'm what you made me – a cheap reporter who'd give up her soul for a story!... Is that job still open?

BURNS

Both jobs are open, Hildy. The paper – and being Mrs. Walter Burns.

HILDY

Thanks, Walter, but it's no good. We tried it.

BURNS

Sure, it was good – it was wonderful! Only you expected it to be like other marriages. It can't be like other marriages – we're different! We're a different world. Look at what we went through today. I wouldn't trade that for any honeymoon in the world. I bet you wouldn't, either.

HILDY

A fine honeymoon, with a murderer right in the boudoir! And that other honeymoon in a coal mine!

BURNS

That's what makes it romantic. Every other married couple goes away on a honeymoon and for two weeks the bride knows just where the groom is, and vice versa. But us – you never know where I am and I'm not sure where you are. That's Romance!

HILDY

Well, maybe I'd like to know just once!

BURNS

Hildy, if that's what you want, all right. We'll even go to – how about Niagara Falls?

HILDY

(jumping)

Niagara Falls! Walter, you don't mean that?

BURNS

Sure I do. And I'll tell you something else – I'd like a baby.

HILDY

Walter!

BURNS

Sure, I can't last forever. I want a son I can train to take my place on this paper.

HILDY

What would you do if it was a daughter?

BURNS

Well, if she looked like you – Say! My brains and your looks – that mightn't be such a bad combination.

HILDY

What's the matter with my brains?

BURNS

What's the good of arguing about something that probably doesn't exist? Look, Hildy, I'm proposing to you. What do you say?

HILDY

Well, I'd like to be lady-like and think it over.

BURNS

I don't want to rush you. Take a couple of seconds.

MED. SHOT AT DOOR

Louie marches in with a judge, half-dressed. Louie has the judge in a tight grip.

MED. CLOSE SHOT

BURNS

Hello, Judge!

JUDGE

This is an outrage, Mr. Burns! Sending a gunman to kidnap me!

BURNS

Now, wait a minute, Judge. This isn't a kidnapping. You've got the legal power to perform a marriage ceremony, haven't you?

HILDY

What!

BURNS

Now don't argue, Hildy.
(to Judge)
How about it, Judge?

JUDGE

Yes, but –

BURNS

Then go ahead. Come on, Hildy.

HILDY

Nobody's going to rush me into anything!
(as Louie sticks a gun in her ribs)
You keep away from me!
(but she's scared)

LOUIE

All right, Judge.

INT. CITY ROOM MED. SHOT

Reporters are standing on desks to watch through the glass partition of Burns' office.

1ST REPORTER

I'll be doggoned! A shotgun marriage!

2ND REPORTER

Don't they usually keep the gun on the man?

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT JUDGE

reading the marriage ceremony.

JUDGE

(continuing)

" – so long as you both do live?"

BURNS

I will.

GROUP SHOT

HILDY

That's what he said the last time.
Don't believe him, Judge.

BURNS

Hildy, from this time on no tricks,
no double-crossing – everything on
the level!

HILDY

You're not fooling anybody.

JUDGE

(continuing)

"Hildegarde Johnson, will you have
this man as your wedded husband, to
live together in the ordinances and
estate of Matrimony?"

HILDY

What would you do with a gun in your

back?

LOUIE
(poking her)
Quiet!

JUDGE
"Will you love him, comfort him,
honor and keep him in sickness or in
health; –

HILDY
If I know where he is.

JUDGE
" – and, forsaking all others, keep
thee only unto him, so long as you
both do live?"

HILDY
I will – if he will.

JUDGE
(to Burns)
Have you got a ring?

Burns starts searching his pockets, then, to Hildy:

BURNS
(he takes ring off)
How about Bruce's?

HILDY
Walter, you can't do that!

BURNS
Sure, I can. Look at the policy I
gave him!
(placing Bruce's ring
on Hildy's finger)
"With this ring I thee wed and with
all my worldly goods I thee endow:
And thereto I plight thee my troth."

INT. CITY ROOM CLOSE SHOT

REPORTER

Say, I'm surprised she got the ring
back!

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT GROUP

JUDGE

" – pronounce you Man and Wife."

Burns throws his arms around Hildy and kisses her.

BURNS

Hildy, darling!

HILDY

Yes – 'Hildy, darling'. I'm just a
fool. That's what I am. I know what
it's going to be like.

BURNS

It'll be Heaven!

HILDY

Sure, Heaven! You've probably thought
up another coal mine to send me down
in – to get a new story for your
paper!

Hildy turns over copy of the extra lying on Burns' desk.

CLOSEUP HILDY

She stops cold.

HILDY

Walter!

INSERT: NEWSPAPER –

"COUNTERFEIT PASSER CAUGHT!"

"Attempting to pass five hundred dollars worth of counterfeit
money at the Union station, a man giving his name as Bruce
Baldwin of Albany, New York, was arrested last night – "

TWO SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

HILDY

Counterfeit money! That's the money
you sent me, Walter! You – you –

WALTER

(starting to run)
But, Hildy, listen –

MED. FULL SHOT

Burns retreats from Hildy, she runs after him. He dashes
through glass-paned door into adjoining office. Hildy throws
her bag at him and it smashes the glass pane in the door.

INT. ADJOINING OFFICE CLOSE SHOT BURNS AND HILDY

She is pursuing him around table similar to one in Burns'
office.

BURNS

But, Hildy – I can explain –

HILDY

You – you!!

INT. BURNS' OFFICE CLOSE SHOT JUDGE AND LOUIE

LOUIE

I think it's going to work out all
right this time.

FADE OUT:

THE END