

Casablanca II:
The Blue Parrot

by Jeff Goode

*based on Casablanca
by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein & Howard Koch*

*itself based on Everybody Comes to Rick's
by Murray Burnett and Joan Alison*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FERRARI	JITKA
VICTOR	ILSA
SAM	HILDE
RICK	YVONNE
UGARTE	PILAR
SACHA	COLLEEN
HEINZE	

Patrons, customers, waiters, police officers,
soldiers, and exotic dancers

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOROCCAN BAZAAR IN CASABLANCA - DAY

The old Moorish section of the city. A marketplace crowded with vendors and swindlers and people of all nations. The year is 1942. The Second World War is in full swing, which means the rush of foreign refugees fleeing war-torn Europe is also in full swing.

HILDE (O.S.)

Please, Signor Ferrari, I am
desperate.

EXT. THE BLUE PARROT - DAY

In a shady corner of the square stands an even shadier cafe called The Blue Parrot. Outside the cafe, a blue parrot sits on a perch. HILDE, an attractive young woman of German descent meets with SIGNOR FERRARI, the proprietor of The Blue Parrot.

FERRARI

Of course you are desperate, my
dear, or you wouldn't be here,
would you? I don't mean here at
the Blue Parrot. I mean here in
Casablanca.

He gestures toward the busy bazaar that surrounds them, filled with peddlers and pickpockets plying their trades.

FERRARI

The city has been a haven for
refugees, since the start of the
Second World War, when all eyes in
imprisoned Europe turned hopefully
toward the freedom of the
Americas.

An airplane roars into the sky, making its ascent from the nearby airport. Civilians and refugees alike turn their gazes upward, following the plane's departure with a shared hope.

Ferrari turns and escorts Hilde into...

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - DAY

Inside the seedy and sparsely-populated cafe, a handful of customers sample spirits and Moroccan coffee. A group of German and Italian soldiers play a round of darts with the map of Europe as their target.

FERRARI

Lisbon has become the great embarkation point. But not everybody can get to Lisbon directly, can they?

Ferrari shoos the soldier's away. He pulls a cluster of darts out of France and uses one of them to trace a line on the map.

FERRARI

So a tortuous, roundabout refugee trail has sprung up. From Paris to Marseille. Across the Mediterranean to Algerian Oran. Then by train or auto or foot across the rim of Africa to Casablanca in French Morocco.

He gestures broadly indicating the cafe's Moroccan decor, but also its diverse patronage.

FERRARI

Here, the fortunate ones, through money or influence or luck, might obtain exit visas and scurry to Lisbon.

Ferrari guides Hilde through a beaded curtain into...

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - BURLESQUE ROOM

A back room where exotic dancers serve stiffer drinks to a stiffer clientele.

FERRARI

And from Lisbon to the New World.

Ferrari seats himself at a table and a waiter brings him tea. He doesn't offer her any.

FERRARI

But the others wait in Casablanca. And wait... and wait... and wait...

COLLEEN, an exotic dancer in a feathered outfit, comes out of the dressing room. Ferrari summons her over with a curt gesture.

FERRARI

(to Hilde)

And so you will wait, too. I don't mean here in Casablanca. I mean here at the Blue Parrot. You will wait tables in the cafe six nights a week. And twice an hour you will dance in the burlesque room.

(to Colleen)

Take her to see Madame Jitka.

(to Hilde)

She'll show you the ropes. If we have a costume that fits you, you're on in twenty minutes.

Colleen escorts Hilde into the dressing room.

EXT. BAZAAR

The bustle of illicit commerce is interrupted by a crackle of static over the tinny public address system.

FRENCH POLICE OFFICER

(over radio)

Attention, all officers. Two German couriers carrying important official documents, murdered on train from Oran.

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - MAIN BAR

Patrons listen intently, paused in mid-conversation.

FRENCH POLICE OFFICER

(over radio)

Murderer and possible accomplices headed for Casablanca.

SIGNOR UGARTE, a particularly suspicious-looking character enters the cafe.

FRENCH POLICE OFFICER

(over radio)

Round up all suspicious characters and search them for stolen document. Important.

Ugarte smiles nervously, then, hearing footsteps approaching, he quickly ducks behind a pillar, as...

A FRENCH POLICEMAN enters. Not seeing Ugarte, he confronts another SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER instead.

POLICEMAN

May I see your papers?

SUSPECT

I don't think I have them on me.

POLICEMAN

In that case, I'll have to ask you to come along.

SUSPECT

Wait, it's possible that--Yes, here they are.

The Suspect produces his papers. The Policeman examines them.

POLICEMAN

These papers expired three weeks ago. You have to come with me.

The Suspect bolts and makes a run for it!

POLICEMAN

Halt! Halt!

The Suspect dashes out into the street, followed by the Policeman.

SFX: Gunshots in the street!

The patrons in the cafe react, shocked at first, but quickly return to their previous conversations.

Ugarte breathes a sigh of relief and assumes a more casual demeanor as he strolls over to the bar and lights a cigarette.

But just when it appears that the coast is clear, HERR HEINZE, the German consul, appears at the front door.

HEINZE

I tell you, there were two of them. The other one must have run in here.

Ugarte abandons his cigarette and darts through the beaded curtain into...

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Ugarte rushes to PILAR, one of the exotic dancers.

UGARTE

Pilar, please, you've got to help me.

PILAR

Why? What have you done this time?

UGARTE

Nothing, I swear it.

PILAR

Then we have nothing to talk about.

UGARTE

Pilar, wait!

PILAR

You promised me you would have the papers. Where are they?

UGARTE

There's no time for that now. You've got to hide me.

PILAR

Hide you from who?

UGARTE

You ask too many questions.

PILAR

You keep too many secrets.

UGARTE

Herr Heinze, the German consul is at the door! Captain Renault, the chief of police, can't be far behind him.

PILAR

Why should that matter to you, if you have nothing to hide?

UGARTE

Of course I've got something to hide! I promised I would, didn't I?

PILAR

Let me see them, then.

UGARTE

Pilar!! Please!

PILAR

All right, be quiet! Come into the dressing room.

Pilar leads Ugarte into the dressing room, as Heinze bursts through the curtain from the main bar. He eyes everyone suspiciously.

INT. MAIN BAR

CAPTAIN RENAULT, the French Prefect, enters the cafe followed by a couple of police officers. He notices Ugarte's cigarette burning in an ashtray. Signor Ferrari hurries over to greet him.

FERRARI

Captain Renault! It's been quite a long while. What possesses you to darken the door of my fine establishment?

RENAULT

I am sure that I am the one who is darkened by the occasion, Signor Ferrari. And that's saying a lot, since I pride myself on being a man of few scruples.

FERRARI

You are too modest.

RENAULT

I am in pursuit of a suspect. Perhaps you have heard.

FERRARI

Yes, the murders of the German couriers. Have you a particular suspect in mind?

RENAULT

I believe you may know him, in fact. Signor Ugarte, a known smuggler.

FERRARI

And why would I know such a disreputable scoundrel?

RENAULT

Don't play games. You are the de facto leader of the Moroccan underworld and you know it. Now, turn him over to me and I won't have to close this place down at once.

FERRARI

You know I am always happy to cooperate with the authorities. Especially, when they leave me no choice. Feel free to search the premises. If I were you, I would start in the back room.

Heinze has just re-entered from the back room.

HEINZE

I already checked. There's no one back there.

FERRARI

And if you were me, you would have checked the ladies' dressing room. It is a very cesspool of privacy.

Renault and Heinze exit through the curtain. Ferrari follows them into...

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Heinze and Renault head straight for the dressing room. MADAME JITKA enters from it, blocking their path.

JITKA

Where do you think you're going, gentlemen?

HEINZE

We have the authority to search the premises.

JITKA

You're gonna need more than authority to get your hands on my premises. There are ladies present, in case you hadn't noticed. Some of them in various states of undress. So show some decorum. This is Unoccupied France, not the Eastern Front. If you want to go poking around a woman's dressing room, you gotta buy her a drink first.

Heinze bristles, thwarted. Renault, not so easily outwitted, pounds on the door to the dressing room.

RENAULT

Everyone, make yourselves decent as you can and come out of there at once!

HEINZE

By order of the Prefect of Police!

RENAULT

They know who I am, Herr Heinze.

VEILED DANCERS hastily emerge from the dressing room, among them, Ugarte, disguised as a fan dancer. Once the exodus of dancers is complete...

RENAULT

Is that all of them?

JITKA

Give or take.

Renault signals his police officers and they rush into the dressing room. After an appreciable ruckus, they come out empty-handed.

POLICEMAN

He's not here.

INT. MAIN BAR

Ugarte edges toward the door. Ferrari cuts off his exit.

FERRARI

That's a lovely dress, Senorita.

UGARTE

(nervously)

Why, thank you.

FERRARI

I believe it is the property of the Blue Parrot. Which means either you have stolen it, or you're up next.

UGARTE

Up next?

FERRARI

To dance.

He gestures toward the back room, as...

SFX: Seductive intro music begins to play.

UGARTE

To dance? Oh... no...

Just then, another dancer (Colleen) rushes over to Ugarte and tries to wrestle the fans away from him.

COLLEEN

What are you doing with my dress?
Let go of those fans!

Ugarte is stripped of his subterfuge, just as Heinze, Renault and the Policemen enter from the back room. Ugarte flees the cafe.

HEINZE

(to Policemen)

Don't just stand there! Go after him!

The Policemen rush out after Ugarte.

HEINZE

(to Ferrari)

You let him get away.

RENAULT

Sheltering a fugitive is a serious offense, Signor Ferrari. Be careful you don't make yourself an accessory.

FERRARI

How much more cooperative do you expect me to be, Captain Renault?

(MORE)

FERRARI (CONT'D)

I have a reputation to maintain,
you know.

RENAULT

Well, perhaps this is for the best. Major Strasser of the Third Reich arrives today. I am to meet him at the airport shortly. We expected to have this matter resolved before his arrival. But perhaps we have been afforded the opportunity to give the Major a firsthand demonstration of the efficiency of my administration. We will simply arrange to apprehend the culprit elsewhere and in his immediate presence.

FERRARI

Why would you arrest him elsewhere? The lighting is so much better here. Let me make a quick phone call and I'm sure I can have him back here in an hour. Shall I reserve you a table?

RENAULT

That won't be necessary. I am sure Signor Ugarte will be at Rick's Cafe later tonight.

FERRARI

Why do you say that?

RENAULT

Don't be offended. You know that everybody goes to Rick's. And when one is trying to make a dramatic impression, one prefers a larger venue.

FERRARI

But you know Monsieur Rick is my direct competition! Why would you arrest him there and deprive my customers of a good show?

RENAULT

Don't be ridiculous. Depriving them of a good show is your job.

Jitka passes through with a tray full of drinks.

JITKA

I take exception to that.

She exits into the back room.

FERRARI

(to Renault)

You and your incompetent minions
are driving me out of business!

RENAULT

The incompetence of my minions is
the only thing that keeps you in
business, Signor Ferrari. You
know that.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Jitka approaches Hilde who is now dressed in an exotic
costume.

JITKA

You the new girl?

HILDE

(nods)

Hilde. From Germany.

Jitka hands her the tray full of drinks.

JITKA

You know what to do?

HILDE

Of course. I've performed all
over Berlin. Then Poland. Then
Paris.

JITKA

Ah, a camp follower. So you'll
know how to tell a general from
his privates.

HILDE

Privates are lower.

JITKA

We'll have to color your hair,
though.

HILDE

But I'm a natural blonde! Half of
your clientele is German.

(MORE)

HILDE (CONT'D)

And soon to be more than half,
before the war is done.

JITKA

That's the problem. Men come to
the Blue Parrot for exotic
dancers. Not a home cooked meal.
I don't suppose you can fake a
Swedish accent?

HILDE

This is humiliating.

JITKA

Close enough. Now get to work.

Jitka nudges Hilde in the direction of the customers,
before exiting into the dressing room to change.

INT. MAIN BAR

Ferrari is still trying to keep Heinze and Renault from
leaving.

HEINZE

If business is as bad as you say,
Signor Ferrari, perhaps in one
respect I can solve your problem
for you. Major Strasser will be
staying in Casablanca for quite a
while. We will not be able to
house him indefinitely at the
consulate. Not comfortably. I
think perhaps he might like to set
up camp in a place like this.

FERRARI

We would be more than happy to
enjoy his patronage.

Renault laughs.

RENAULT

You misunderstand. Major Strasser
will commandeer your cafe, gut the
interior and turn it into a
Gestapo war room.

Ferrari reacts, crestfallen.

FERRARI

Ah, yes, of course. My German is
a bit rusty.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Customers react with a smatter of applause as Jitka emerges onto the small stage in a sultry costume and sings "IT HAD TO BE YOU."

After the song, a table of customers seated near the stage beckons her over.

CUSTOMER

Madame Jitka, you were wonderful!
Won't you have a drink with us?
If that's allowed.

Ferrari appears, as if out of nowhere, and pulls up a seat for Jitka at their table.

FERRARI

In fact, it's encouraged. Madame Jitka always drink with customers. Especially, when they're buying.

JITKA

At the Blue Parrot, there is no separating business and pleasure.
(to Ferrari)
Bring us something from Signor Ferrari's private stock.

Ferrari snatches a bottle of champagne off the tray of a passing waiter and hands it to Jitka.

FERRARI

Here we are, the best that Casablanca has to offer.

JITKA

(examines the label)
Ah, yes! The finest Bordeaux in what's left of Gironde.

CUSTOMER

It sounds overpriced.

JITKA

And worth every penny.

As Jitka pours herself a glass, Ferrari notices Pilar exiting into the front room.

FERRARI

(to Jitka)
Excuse me, a moment.

Ferrari follows Pilar into...

INT. MAIN BAR

Pilar is gazing hopefully out the window, when Ferrari enters. He crosses the room and corners her.

FERRARI

Signor Ugarte seemed very interested in speaking with you earlier.

PILAR

Why shouldn't he? I am an brilliant conversationalist.

FERRARI

He doesn't love you, you know.

PILAR

Why do you say that?

FERRARI

I know the look.

PILAR

What's wrong with his looks?

FERRARI

He looks like a man.

PILAR

Shows what you know. Signor Ugarte has promised to take me away with him. We leave for Lisbon first thing in the morning.

FERRARI

You're not going anywhere with that man.

PILAR

I should have known you would never approve.

FERRARI

I'm sure my approval means very little to your travel plans. But you will need an exit visa. And one of those will cost you considerably more than you can make on a dancer's wages. And tips.

PILAR

For your information, it's already been arranged. That's what Signor Ugarte came here to tell me.

FERRARI

And you believe him? Then you are either more naïve than I took you for...

PILAR

Ha!

FERRARI

(suddenly suspicious)
Or he's given you something more substantial than his word.

PILAR

I don't know what you're talking about.

FERRARI

Those German couriers were carrying letters of transit. Signed by General de Gaulle himself. They cannot be rescinded. Cannot even be questioned. If Ugarte has them--

PILAR

I'm sure it would be none of your business.

FERRARI

On the contrary, trafficking in traffic is the very heart of my business. Did he show them to you? Let you touch them? Did they look authentic?

PILAR

How would I know? I am only a poor, naïve dancer. And tips.

FERRARI

You know he can sell them to the highest bidder for more than you're worth.

PILAR

He can sell all but two of them, and it will be more than enough to pay for our passage.

FERRARI

All but two? Show me the smuggler who can withhold two of anything when there is an offer on the table, and I'll show you a smuggler...

(realizing)

Who doesn't have those two things in his possession.

Ferrari smiles, impressed.

FERRARI

Oh, you are a clever girl. You have pinned your hopes to more than mere assurances.

PILAR

Assurances are not worth the paper they are printed on.

FERRARI

Spoken like a woman who understands collateral.

PILAR

All right, yes! He gave them to me for safekeeping.

FERRARI

But are they safe? You have very few friends here in Casablanca. This place is full of vultures. Perhaps you should let me hold onto them for you.

PILAR

I will take my chances with the vultures.

FERRARI

Those letters would fetch a pretty penny on the black market. And an even prettier Deutsche Mark when you consider the reward for his capture.

PILAR

I'm not interested in money.

FERRARI

Of course not. You came to Casablanca for the social events.

PILAR

I wouldn't expect a man like you to understand.

She turns her back on him.

FERRARI

Keep them then. But sooner or later, you'll have to go out on that stage. And in this outfit, the only official documents you'll be concealing are postage stamps. Or do you suppose they'll be safe in the dressing room? It's only populated with women desperate enough to do anything for money. But you're not one of those.

Pilar sobs and Ferrari walks away, as Jitka comes over to console her.

JITKA

He's right about that. I wouldn't leave my valuables unattended, if I were you. You wouldn't be the first girl to go into that dressing room with more assets than she has coming out.

PILAR

What am I going to do?

JITKA

I'm no fortune teller, but I bet you do it quick, because that sounds like your song Ferrari just asked them to play.

SFX: Music in for Pilar's number.

Pilar takes out an envelope and glances around in a panic. There's nowhere to hide the letters.

PILAR

Madame Jitka, will you take them? I don't like how Signor Ferrari is looking at me.

JITKA

If it's just his looks, you shouldn't like how any man eyes you in this place.

PILAR

Please? You're the only one I can trust.

JITKA

Then you're a poor judge of character.

PILAR

I beg you.

JITKA

All right, I'll hold them for now. But I want these out of my hands by closing time. I don't like Signor Ferrari's looks any more than you do. And I have to be back here tomorrow.

Jitka takes the envelope and hides it in her décolletage. Pilar hurries into the back room to dance, bumping into Ferrari who gives her a smug leer as she passes, then sidles over to Jitka.

FERRARI

It's no wonder business is so awful, when the girls care more about politics than erotics. This burlesque is turning into a cabaret.

JITKA

(smirks)

Where the customer is always left.

FERRARI

Our clientele come here for distraction, not discourse.

(musing)

Perhaps if we added an opium den.

JITKA

It doesn't matter what you do, Ferrari. This is seediest cafe in Casablanca--

FERRARI

Why do you think that parrot keeps coming around?

JITKA

No one's gonna come here as long as they have half a brain and other options.

(MORE)

JITKA (CONT'D)

Half our customer's are here
because they got thrown out of
someplace else for fighting.

As if on cue, a fight breaks out between two of the
patrons. Ferrari sighs and ignores it.

JITKA

If they want music, they'll go to
Rick's. Drink, they'll go to
Rick's. Girls, they'll go to
wherever these girls go when
they're off work.

Colleen walks by.

COLLEEN

Rick's.

JITKA

The point is, you're not the only
game in town. And Rick has a
casino.

FERRARI

I like the way you think, Jitka.
Mind the store, won't you?

He starts to leave.

JITKA

Where are you going?

FERRARI

I think it's time to eliminate the
competition. I'm going to Rick's.

JITKA

You leave him alone, Ferrari.

FERRARI

I've got nothing against Monsieur
Rick. But if I can't beat him,
I'll buy him out. You're right,
the people in this town have too
many options. And nothing's
better for business than a robust
monopoly.

JITKA

He'll never sell you the cafe.

FERRARI

Perhaps I'll purchase him piecemeal. What do you think it would take to acquire the services of his piano player?

JITKA

Sam?

FERRARI

Yes, your old boyfriend. Perhaps I can arrange a reunion. Everybody loves a lounge act with some chemistry. The two of you could be quite a draw.

JITKA

Good luck with that.

FERRARI

Thanks, but I won't need it. I always carry cash.

JITKA

And leave the gun. I'm not bailing you out again.

He hands her his pistol.

FERRARI

Those charges were expunged.

JITKA

That's a load off my mind.

Ferrari exits. Jitka tucks the pistol into her bustier. She peers through the curtain into...

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Pilar is on the stage singing a steamy version of "KNOCK ON WOOD."

INT. MAIN BAR

Enter YVONNE an attractive, blonde French girl, followed by SACHA the lanky Russian bartender from Rick's Café Américain.

SACHA

Please, Yvonne, I love you. But the boss told me to take you home. You've had too many to drink.

YVONNE

I don't care about your boss. From now on, I decide what I've had enough of. And I want a drink.

JITKA

Leave her alone, Sacha. This is none of your business.

SACHA

She has to go home.

YVONNE

I am home.

JITKA

She has to go to work. And so do you. Get back to Rick's.

SACHA

What do I tell Rick when he asks where she went?

JITKA

Where do you tell him your paycheck went, when you're over here every night stuffing his money down other people's blouses?

SACHA

I tell him Carl has a gambling problem.

JITKA

Tonight it looks like Carl lost a whole girl.

SACHA

Carl will be very disappointed.

Sacha slinks out of the cafe.

YVONNE

(to the bartender)
Bring me a champagne cocktail!

JITKA

A lady never drinks alone. It's not cost effective. Why don't you try drowning your sorrows in some Italians?

YVONNE

Don't tell me what to do. You are not the boss of me.

JITKA

While Signor Ferrari is over at Rick's I'm the boss of everybody. Or did you forget you have a shift?

YVONNE

Don't talk to me about Rick Blaine! That devil! Who does he think he is? What kind of fool was I to fall for a man like that?!

JITKA

The usual kind. Now go get dressed.

Jitka shoves Yvonne toward the back room.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Jitka and Yvonne cross to the dressing room, as Hilde takes the stage to the applause of only the German customers. Yvonne exits into the dressing room, while Jitka stops to check on some customers. Hilde sings "BABYFACE."

The finale of the song is spoiled by HYSTERICAL SOBBING from the dressing room. Hilde clenches a fist and turns to go into the dressing room, but Jitka stops her and goes in herself to see what's wrong.

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - DRESSING ROOM

Jitka comes in to find Yvonne in her underwear sobbing into the dressing table.

YVONNE

I can't! I can't do it any more!
I can't go on like this!

JITKA

And yet, you do. What's the matter, darling?

YVONNE

Why won't Rick love me?

JITKA

I'm sure he loves you like any man. From the waist down.

YVONNE

But I want him to take me away from this place.

JITKA

That's all that's bothering you? Sam hasn't taken me anyplace since they bombed Oran.

YVONNE

Why won't Rick take me to America?

JITKA

It's not you, darling, it's him.

YVONNE

He doesn't like to travel?

JITKA

America isn't travel for Rick Blaine. It's extradition. Don't you know? Rick was born in Brooklyn. But he can never go back.

YVONNE

(curiosity piqued)
Really?

JITKA

Not the way Sam tells it, anyway.

YVONNE

Why? What has he done?

JITKA

All I know are rumors. And pillow talk.

YVONNE

Then it must be true.

JITKA

Maybe he robbed the church collection. Or slept with a Senator's wife. Maybe a little of both.

YVONNE

Maybe he killed a man!

JITKA

Whatever helps you sleep at night. Now, get dressed. You're gonna need something to take off.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Pilar lingers near the entrance, nervously waiting for something, anything. Hilde circles in on her like a shark.

HILDE

I hear you are friends with the notorious Signor Ugarte.

PILAR

What of it?

HILDE

If he's not careful, he'll get himself killed, or worse, arrested.

PILAR

You don't know what you're talking about.

HILDE

Don't I? I happen to be very close with Herr Heinze, the German consul, after all.

Jitka enters from the dressing room.

PILAR

The two of you are friends?

HILDE

Countrymen. I am like a sister to him. And brother and sisters have their little secrets.

JITKA

(disgusted)

Ugh!

PILAR

What secrets? What did he tell you?

HILDE

Only that the noose is closing in. If Ugarte shows up at Rick's Cafe tonight, they will have him surrounded.

JITKA

That's the trouble with Moroccan night clubs. Not enough exits.

PILAR

I have to go to him. I have to warn him.

She tries to leave, but Jitka stops her.

JITKA

You're not going anywhere.

PILAR

But you heard what she said.

JITKA

I don't hear nothin' don't concern me. And if you're smart, you'll do the same.

PILAR

But he could be in danger.

JITKA

We're all in danger. As long as there's war in the world and men at the wheel. But if you go over there now, you'll only get yourself in the thick of it.

(to Hilde)

And I don't need you riling her up. Now, lay off!

HILDE

I am only telling her what she already knows. Very soon, the enemies of the Reich will learn their lessons.

JITKA

Well, they're gonna need a lot
better teachers.

Jitka glowers and Hilde backs slowly away.

INT. MAIN BAR

Meanwhile, Ferrari returns, irritable.

FERRARI

Bring me my tea!

Jitka enters from the back room.

JITKA

Back so soon?

FERRARI

I couldn't stand another minute.

JITKA

How's the competition?

FERRARI

Deplorable. The place was packed
to the gills. Nothing but bloated
embezzlers and the vermin who feed
on them.

JITKA

Sounds like your kind of place.

FERRARI

They were turning people away at
the door. What a waste.

JITKA

Jealous?

FERRARI

I wouldn't wish his success on my
worst enemy.

JITKA

Did you talk to Rick?

FERRARI

He'll never sell. I don't know
why you let me go over there and
make a fool of yourself.

JITKA

It's one less fool I have to deal with around here.

FERRARI

And your Sam is just as stubborn.

JITKA

He's not my Sam anymore.

FERRARI

He's still wearing that bow tie you gave him.

JITKA

Old habits die hard.

FERRARI

Well, Monsieur Rick is in the habit of running me out of business. And I wish he'd take up another hobby.

JITKA

He'll get rid of that place when he gets bored with Casablanca, and not a day before. Or after.

FERRARI

Would you care to make that a sporting proposition?

JITKA

Rick's greatest joy in life is annoying the people who wish he'd just go away.

FERRARI

Every man has a price. And those without a price can usually be had for far less.

JITKA

What's your price, Ferrari?

FERRARI

I can be had for 10,000 francs cash. Unless you can afford more.

JITKA

No, thanks. I just like to know what the market will bear. So what are you doing back here?

(MORE)

JITKA (CONT'D)

I thought you'd be gone for the night.

FERRARI

I heard a very interesting rumor. It seems the most beautiful woman in Europe is coming to Casablanca.

JITKA

We've got too many blondes already.

FERRARI

We can always make room for one more.

Pilar brings over his tea. Ferrari stops her before she goes.

FERRARI

And they arrested your friend Ugarte.

PILAR

What?

FERRARI

It was very dramatic. I wish I could have charged admission.

PILAR

No!

FERRARI

He's on his way to the police station right now. Once they beat his accomplices out of him, they'll be here any minute. He doesn't seem like a man who takes well to torture.

PILAR

Oh no!

She tries to hurry away, but he gets up and follows her.

FERRARI

If you have any incriminating evidence on you, you might want to dispose of it now, while you still have the chance.

PILAR

I don't know what you're talking about.

FERRARI

Yes, keep practicing that. The repetition will make it sound more natural. It should roll off your tongue like a fact. Or a lie you'd tell to a lover.

JITKA

Leave the girl alone.

FERRARI

No, I want those letters. Give them to me!

JITKA

You planning a trip?

FERRARI

No, but Monsieur Rick will be when they find those letters concealed on his premises. An anonymous tip to the Prefect and that should be more than enough evidence to get him run out of Morocco for good.

PILAR

I don't have them.

FERRARI

Where are they? Where did you put them?

PILAR

Madame Jitka, you've got to help me.

JITKA

Don't ask me to take sides. There's a good chance I will.

Police officers enter.

POLICEMAN

Nobody move! We are going to search everyone.

Pilar looks frantic. Ferrari discreetly hides her behind his large frame. Jitka approaches the police officers, seductively.

JITKA

Everyone, officers? Is that really necessary? Maybe what you're looking for is right in front of you.

POLICEMAN

We're looking for a Spanish girl.

JITKA

Nonsense. I happen to know that you fancy a redhead. And you prefer the athletic type. Can I interest you in an Irish girl with big hands?

One of the policemen spots Pilar trying to make her way toward the door.

POLICEMAN

There she is!

Pilar panics and runs out with the police in hot pursuit.

FERRARI

(to Jitka)

Watch the door.

Ferrari darts into the back room.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Ferrari enters, followed by Jitka.

JITKA

Where are you going?

FERRARI

To search the dressing room. I can't have those incriminating letters found on these premises. They have to be found on Rick's.

He ducks into the dressing room.

Hilde slithers up to Jitka.

HILDE

You don't take sides? I hope you show the same neutrality when they come for me.

JITKA

Why? What will you have done?

HILDE

I haven't decided yet.

JITKA

Well, don't make any plans for this weekend. You might have to pick up a few extra shifts.

HILDE

You are a curious fish, Madame Jitka. You came here from Paris, didn't you?

JITKA

I came here from a lotta places.

Yvonne enters from the dressing room.

YVONNE

What's Signor Ferrari doing in the dressing room?

JITKA

Get back in there and make sure he doesn't take anything that isn't his size.

Yvonne, exasperated, returns to the dressing room.

INT. MAIN BAR

A couple comes in the front door. They are VICTOR LASZLO, the Czech resistance leader, and a very pretty young woman named ILSA LUND. She is so beautiful, in fact, that people turn to stare. Some of the dancers stare daggers. Victor scans the room as they cross to the bar, looking for someone. Ilsa, on the other hand, is drawn to the sound of music in the next room. She goes to the beaded curtain and peeks in.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Jitka is on the stage, singing "AS TIME GOES BY."

After the song, Ilsa approaches her.

ILSA

How do you know that song?

JITKA

A friend of mine taught it to me.

ILSA

It is one of my favorites.

JITKA

He said it was popular in Paris.

ILSA

Your friend is French?

JITKA

No, but he's popular.

ILSA

Well, it was lovely. Do you take requests?

JITKA

Not while I'm working.

INT. MAIN ROOM

Hilde notices Victor and slinks over to him.

HILDE

You look very familiar to me.

VICTOR

That is unlikely.

She indicates the scar on his forehead.

HILDE

Where did you get that?

VICTOR

Europe.

HILDE

If I'm not mistaken, your name is Victor Laszlo.

Victor is surprised, intrigued. Is she his contact?

VICTOR

Perhaps I am familiar after all. Do I know you?

HILDE

I have seen your picture in the papers.

VICTOR

I have only just arrived in Casablanca today.

HILDE

The Czech papers, when I was in Prague. You were a notorious rabble rouser there.

VICTOR

The rabble called me a freedom fighter.

HILDE

There is a reward on your head. Perhaps I can collect it, if I report you to the authorities.

VICTOR

I'm sure the authorities already know my whereabouts. But this is Unoccupied France. I am not a criminal here.

HILDE

No, but soon, perhaps.

VICTOR

You expect me to commit a crime?

HILDE

I expect it to be occupied.

Hilde is starting to make Victor uncomfortable. She stares after Ilsa.

HILDE

And who is the girl? Your accomplice? The one who helped you escape from the concentration camp?

VICTOR

If I enjoyed being interrogated, I would have stayed there.

HILDE

(ignoring him)
Funny. She doesn't look Jewish at all.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Yvonne stares at Ilsa.

YVONNE

You must be new.

ILSA

I just arrived in Casablanca today.

YVONNE

It's not safe for you here.

ILSA

Why? What do you know?

YVONNE

You're blonde. There are too many blondes.

ILSA

I'm not a dancer.

YVONNE

Not yet.

ILSA

I don't want trouble.

YVONNE

Then you came to the wrong place.

Colleen takes the stage to sing "TANGO DELLE ROSE" with a thick Irish brogue.

INT. MAIN BAR

Yvonne enters from the back room. Victor takes the opportunity to slip away from Hilde and speak to Yvonne instead.

VICTOR

I am looking for a Signor Ugarte. We heard he would be here.

YVONNE

You are too late. He has gone to Rick's.

VICTOR

Where is that? Can you give me directions?

Hilde reinserts herself into the conversation.

HILDE

You will be too late there, too.
He was arrested and taken to the
police station.

VICTOR

Where is the police station?

HILDE

You'll be too late for that, as
well. He should be in the morgue
by now.

VICTOR

How do you know this?

HILDE

I don't. But I know German
efficiency.

VICTOR

All the same, we'll try our luck
at Rick's.

(looking around)

Ilsa?

Yvonne is alarmed to learn that they are together.

YVONNE

She's going with you?! You cannot
take her to Rick's.

VICTOR

Why not?

YVONNE

She's exactly his type.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Ilsa is chatting with Jitka when Victor comes in from the
front room.

ILSA

Victor, come here, there's someone
I want you to meet. She's also
from Prague. Tell me, what was
your name again?

But Victor recognizes her immediately.

VICTOR

Hello, Jitka.

ILSA

You know each other?

VICTOR

It's a small world.

JITKA

And I thought you were out of mine.

VICTOR

(to Ilsa)

We were friends in Prague.

JITKA

I wouldn't call us friends.

Sam enters, fuming, looking for Jitka.

SAM

Jitka! Why you gotta go sending your boss over to buy me like an old Victrola? You can't just put me in a corner and I'll play your favorite tunes.

JITKA

I didn't send him. I wouldn't do that to you.

SAM

We're through, Jitka. That's what you keep telling me anyway. When are you gonna get that through your head?

JITKA

I don't need a man to remind me when he's not my man. I'm not that slow on the uptake.

SAM

(uncertain)

Well, good. That's what I like to hear.

Ferrari enters from the dressing room and saunters over.

FERRARI

Hello, Sam. I thought I heard your dulcet voice.

(MORE)

FERRARI (CONT'D)

Have you reconsidered my offer?
You rushed over here so promptly.

SAM

I gotta get back to work. My
break's about over.

Sam quickly exits.

VICTOR

(to Jitka)

Won't you join us for a drink?

Again, Ferrari quickly pulls up a seat for Jitka at their
table.

FERRARI

Coming right up!

But Jitka remains standing.

JITKA

I don't think I will.

She walks away. Ferrari is a little flustered by the
poor salesmanship.

FERRARI

Well! A precedent is being set.
A disturbing and not very
profitable precedent.

(to Ilsa)

Champagne for the lady?

ILSA

The last time I had Champagne was
the day the Germans marched into
Paris. I haven't had the stomach
for it since.

FERRARI

It is an acquired taste. Moroccan
coffee, then?

ILSA

That will be fine.

FERRARI

And please, allow me to introduce
myself--

VICTOR

(abruptly)

I don't think I like the atmosphere here.

He stands and starts to leave.

ILSA

But Victor--?

VICTOR

Perhaps we'll have a better reception at Rick's.

He turns and walks out, just as Yvonne brings Ilsa some coffee. She leans in and whispers to Ilsa.

YVONNE

Rick's is where luck goes to die.

Ilsa gets up and exits after Victor.

FERRARI

Wait! Your cheque!

Ferrari runs after them.

WIPE TO:

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The cafe is closed. Jitka is drinking alone at the bar. Yvonne enters from the back room about to leave for the night.

YVONNE

Madame Jitka, what are you doing?

JITKA

I never refuse a drink.

YVONNE

There's no one here but you.

JITKA

I don't make the rules.

YVONNE

Forgive me if I seem presumptuous. I know there is something between you and Monsieur Victor.

JITKA

You're forgiven.

YVONNE

But is that any reason the bourbon
has to suffer?

JITKA

It knows what it's done.

The door opens and Yvonne turns to see a figure
silhouetted in the doorway.

YVONNE

You've got a visitor.

JITKA

Tell him he's still dead to me.
And I don't believe in ghosts.

YVONNE

It's Sam.

Sam enters.

JITKA

Sam? What are you doing here?

Sam nods to Yvonne and she silently lets herself out. He
turns to Jitka.

SAM

I figure I owe you an apology.

JITKA

None taken. Now, get out of here
before you make me say something
we both regret.

SAM

I didn't like it your boss coming
over bothering me at work. And
then I turn around and do the same
thing to you. I'm sorry.

JITKA

I hope you got that off your
chest. Now, go on, get home
before Rick misses you.

SAM

If it's all the same, I think I'll
stay.

JITKA

You weren't invited.

SAM

Why you got to be so mean when you drink?

JITKA

It's the only way to sterilize the wound.

SAM

Well, I don't think you oughta be alone right now.

Sam sits down at the piano and plays.

JITKA

You gonna tuck me in and sing me a lullaby? I hear that's the way Rick likes it.

SAM

I don't have to listen to this, you know.

JITKA

Then why do you keep making me say it? Go away! Go home! I don't need you! I don't need anyone anymore!

SAM

Everybody needs someone. Don't you know that?

JITKA

No, but if you hum a few bars...

SAM

That Mister Victor come by the cafe tonight. I saw him here earlier. He's got a good face.

JITKA

I didn't notice.

SAM

Kinda seems like your type. I know you like battle scars.

JITKA

I like war stories. Because they only get told by survivors.

(MORE)

JITKA (CONT'D)

And Victor Laszlo is a walking
dead man.

SAM

Sounds like he will be when you
get your hands on him.

JITKA

I'm not the one came looking for
me.

SAM

No, you always mind your business.
So nobody gets hurt. How's that
workin'?

She doesn't answer.

SAM

You know, I think you're right, I
believe I do hear Mister Rick
calling me.

Sam exits. Jitka drinks.

JITKA

Of all the girlie joints in all
the world, he had to walk into
mine.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE - FLASHBACKS - MEMORIES OF PRAGUE

EXT. PRAGUE - DAY

Breathtaking aerial shot of Prague from afar. To
establish:

EXT. STREETS OF PRAGUE - DAY

The less breathtaking reality. Nazi Panzers roll through
the streets. Civilians flee down side streets.

EXT. MUNITIONS FACTORY - DAY

A gritty munitions factory on the outskirts of Prague
chugs smoke into the overcast sky.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

Jitka is a factory worker on an assembly line. She looks out a dusty window and sees:

EXT. MUNITIONS FACTORY / PRISON CAMP - DAY

A queue of prisoners filing in to the nearby prison camp. One of the prisoners seems to walk taller than all the rest. It is Victor.

WIPE TO:

EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

Prisoners are gathered at the wire, staring helplessly out at factory workers shuffling home from work. Victor is among them. Jitka can't take her eyes off him. She moves closer. He slips her a note.

WIPE TO:

INT. ABANDONED GARRET - NIGHT

Jitka meets with members of the Czech Resistance. She shows them the note. They are excited that she can take them to Victor.

WIPE TO:

EXT. FACTORY - NIGHT

An isolated outbuilding on the factory grounds.

INT. FACTORY OUTBUILDING - NIGHT

The building is little more than an old tool shed where Jitka and the Resistance Fighters are gathered around a freshly-dug tunnel. PRISONERS crawl out of the tunnel and exit into the night.

The last one out of the tunnel is Victor. He takes Jitka in his arms and kisses her. Then he takes her by the hand and they exit, as a GERMAN GUARD comes crawling out of the tunnel after them!

EXT. STREETS OF PRAGUE - NIGHT

Victor and Jitka lead German soldiers on a twisting, turning, flight through the streets of Prague. Victor catches a stray bullet, but manages to keep going.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Jitka and Victor duck into an alley. They've managed to elude their pursuers! But Victor has lost too much blood. He slumps to the ground, as she tearfully tries to rouse him. But it's no use.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. JITKA'S FLAT - DAY

Victor lies in a bed, bandaged. Jitka is tending to his wounds, as he regains consciousness.

VICTOR
You're still here.

JITKA
That makes two of us.

VICTOR
You saved me.

JITKA
I thought you might like that.

VICTOR
(half-serious)
You should have minded your own business.

JITKA
I promise it won't happen again...
Until the next time.

He smiles.

VICTOR
Till next time.

They kiss. Through the window behind them, we see...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JITKA'S FLAT

German soldiers patrolling the neighborhood.

WIPE TO:

INT. JITKA'S FLAT - DAY

A few weeks later. Victor is feeling better. He puts on a black Resistance jacket over his bandages.

VICTOR

I have to leave Prague. It isn't safe for you as long as I'm here.

JITKA

Then let me come with you.

He brushes her hair back from her cheek as he considers her.

VICTOR

How well do you know me, Jitka?

JITKA

Well enough.

VICTOR

The correct answer is "Not at all."

(seriously)

Can you say that?

She smiles.

JITKA

Not at all.

They kiss again.

WIPE TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE OF JITKA'S FLAT - DAY

Victor and Jitka, dressed for stealth, cautiously peek out the front door, before stepping outside.

VICTOR

There is a train that leaves for Vienna at dusk. I'll meet you there. Don't be late.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(on second thought)
And don't be too early.

He kisses her and secretly slips a card into the pocket of her coat. They separate and exit in opposite directions.

WIPE TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DUSK

Jitka waits on the platform. Victor isn't there and the train is about to depart. She looks worried. She feels something in her pocket. It's the card. She takes it out and reads it, then, weeping, runs onto the train. The card flutters to the ground.

INSERT CARD

"Until next time. --V."

INT. TRAIN

Jitka tearfully takes her seat in a private compartment, as the train pulls away from the station.

EXT. TRAIN STATION

As the train pulls out of the station, Victor dashes out of the bushes that line the tracks and climbs onto the last car.

INT. TRAIN - PRIVATE COMPARTMENT

Jitka sits, staring tearfully out the window. Suddenly, the door slides open and Victor steps into the compartment.

JITKA
Victor, where have you been?

He sets down a pack of supplies.

VICTOR
(smiles)
You have to learn to mind your own business.

Jitka and Victor kiss. Suddenly, the door bursts open again. GESTAPO OFFICERS grab Victor and pull him out into...

INT. TRAIN - CORRIDOR

Germans hustle Victor down the aisle. Gestapo officers restrain Jitka, as Victor is taken to the end of the car, shot in the head, and his body thrown from the train.

Jitka is too horrified to make a sound. Her silence probably saves her life, as the Gestapo officers turn maliciously toward her.

GESTAPO OFFICER

How do you know this man?

Jitka fights back tears, as she remembers the correct answer:

JITKA

Not at all.

She stares stonily back at them, as a single tear runs down her cheek.

END OF FLASHBACK MONTAGE

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - MAIN BAR - NIGHT

Jitka is still crying into her drink, when the door opens. She turns to see a figure silhouetted in the doorway. This time, it's Victor.

JITKA

Well, if it isn't the late Victor Laszlo. About three years late by my clock.

She stands and wipes away any tears.

JITKA

I always knew you'd be back to haunt me. But I figured you'd be dead at the time.

VICTOR

I'm sorry, Jitka.

JITKA

What will your new girlfriend think about your being here? Or is that none of my business?

VICTOR

She thinks I'm at a meeting of the Underground.

She slaps him.

JITKA

How could you leave me like that?
Wondering if you were dead or
alive.

VICTOR

I'm sorry.

JITKA

That's all you have to say?

VICTOR

Yes.

JITKA

You said I didn't know you at all.
It seems that was true.

VICTOR

You know that I love you.

JITKA

Do I?

VICTOR

If you have to ask... Then
perhaps you don't.

JITKA

You should leave. And never come
back. And this time, try not to
screw up the last part.

VICTOR

This isn't what you think.

JITKA

It never is.

VICTOR

Please, can't we just talk?

JITKA

Are you going to say something
that's gonna make it right between
us?

He sighs.

VICTOR

No.

JITKA

Then if it's all the same, I
prefer the wrong, silent type.

VICTOR

I guess there's nothing to say
then.

JITKA

You've already said too much.

He hangs his head and turns to go.

JITKA

I just have one question.

VICTOR

Yes?

JITKA

Are you happy?

VICTOR

Miserable.

JITKA

Thank you for saying that.

She drinks. He hangs his head and leaves.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BLUE PARROT - DAY

Yvonne is scrubbing down tables, while Jitka supervises.
Hilde enters.

HILDE

Have you heard the good news?
That Spanish girl and her smuggler
are both dead.

JITKA

How is that good?

HILDE

One less enemy of the Reich. And
you promised me those extra
shifts.

YVONNE

How do you know?

HILDE

I heard about it at dinner last night with Herr Heinze.

JITKA

You were here last night. You heard about it over breakfast.

HILDE

He told me they took them both into custody last night.

YVONNE

And now they're both dead? How could that happen?

JITKA

Was it a double suicide or were they shot trying to escape?

HILDE

I don't think they've decided yet.

Ferrari enters, feeds the parrot.

JITKA

You're here early.

FERRARI

A shipment arrived this morning on the bus from Rabat. I had to wake early to bribe the customs official.

He hands a bottle of cognac to Yvonne.

FERRARI

Yvonne, would you put that under my desk?

YVONNE

Imported cognac? Where did you get this?

FERRARI

It fell off a truck. Monsieur Mahmet will be by later to pick up the other five bottles that didn't.

Ferrari winks at Jitka knowingly.

FERRARI

I hear you were up late.

Jitka glares at Yvonne.

YVONNE

(caught)

I didn't tell him.

Yvonne exits quickly.

FERRARI

I hope you're not still pining
over that Victor Laszlo.

JITKA

What makes you think I'm pining?

FERRARI

I know that look in a woman's eye.
I see it so rarely.

JITKA

Don't worry, that's over. I'll
never see him again.

FERRARI

Of course you will. I'm sure he's
on his way here right now.

Ferrari begins setting up a makeshift "office" at a table
in a secluded nook.

JITKA

You're meeting with him?

FERRARI

I assume so. Monsieur Laszlo
needs an exit visa. Which he will
never be able to get through
proper channels, as I'm sure
Captain Renault is informing him
even as we speak. His next step
will be to the black market. And
in Casablanca, that means me, as I
am the only reliable merchant of
questionable documents.

JITKA

You're not going to help him, are
you?

FERRARI

Don't be ridiculous. Too many
eyes are on Monsieur Laszlo. It
would not be worth the risk to
assist him in any way.

JITKA

So you're setting up shop today just so you can tell him that you're closed for business?

FERRARI

Precisely.

HILDE

Why bother?

FERRARI

Because customer service is the soul of any successful business. Being German, you wouldn't understand that.

JITKA

You're not in this for the satisfied customers. What gives?

FERRARI

You see, it occurred to me that Signor Ugarte did not have the letters of transit on him when he was arrested. Neither did our Pilar. Which can mean only one thing.

HILDE

You have them?

FERRARI

Of course not.

JITKA

I have them?

FERRARI

Don't be absurd.

JITKA

Then where are they?

FERRARI

I would surmise that Ugarte gave the letters to Monsieur Rick before his arrest, it's the only explanation. When Monsieur Laszlo and his lady friend ask about them, I will simply direct them to Rick's Cafe. And when the police follow them there, my rival will be incriminated...

(MORE)

FERRARI (CONT'D)

(to Jitka)

And you will finally have your runaway paramour right where you want him.

JITKA

Where's that?

FERRARI

Under indefinite detention in a Moroccan prison.

JITKA

Why would I want that?

FERRARI

Conjugal visits, my dear, conjugal visits.

Enter JAN and ANNINA BRANDEL, a young, attractive refugee couple from Bulgaria.

FERRARI

What have we here?

JITKA

It looks like business is picking up already.

Jan hesitantly approaches Ferrari, while Annina hangs back.

JAN

Signor Ferrari, may I speak to you?

FERRARI

Certainly, young monsieur. Come with me. You have the furtive look of someone who would like to converse in private.

Ferrari and Jan exit into Ferrari's office nook.

Annina looks around nervously. She approaches Jitka.

ANNINA

Mademoiselle, may I ask you something?

JITKA

You don't have to ask. You're a natural brunette, you're hired.

ANNINA

Oh, no, it's not that. It's just... You work with Signor Ferrari, don't you?

JITKA

If you can call it work.

ANNINA

Please, you have to tell me-- Can he be trusted?

JITKA

As far as you can throw him.

ANNINA

We heard that Signor Ferrari is a reputable forger.

JITKA

He does have a reputation.

ANNINA

So people respect him?

JITKA

That's not what I said.

ANNINA

Jan always says I should trust him to handle this kind of business, but he has never done anything like this before. We are refugees, but we are not criminals.

JITKA

Well, you couldn't pick a better time to learn.

ANNINA

I'm worried that if they arrest us, they will put us in separate prisons.

JITKA

You should request it, in fact.

ANNINA

How could we have escaped such horrors in our own country only to end in a Moroccan prison?

JITKA

If you want to avoid trouble with the law, your best bet is to bribe an official.

ANNINA

We already spoke to Captain Renault, but the fees he asks are very high. And we only have a little money.

JITKA

Then you're not going to get far with Ferrari either. What were you thinking?

ANNINA

My Jan is very persuasive. He swore he would find a way to get us out of here.

JITKA

And you believe him?

ANNINA

Of course.

JITKA

Then you both married idiots.

Annina bursts into tears.

ANNINA

(sobbing)

I'm sorry, you're right. We didn't know what to expect when we came here. The world is so much bigger on the outside. And now we are stuck here. Do you know what it's like to follow a man with all your heart and find out he has led you to your ruin?

JITKA

I never had a heart that big.

ANNINA

I am so afraid for what lies ahead if Jan can't find a way to book us a passage.

JITKA

Listen to me. You're a woman. You're not powerless.

(MORE)

JITKA (CONT'D)

Men like to think they're the master of our destinies. But that's only because we let them.

She leans in and whispers more confidentially to Annina.

JITKA

You're going back to the Prefect's office, and this time, don't let your husband do all the talking. If you can get five minutes alone with Captain Renault, trust me, you'll get what you want.

Jitka sends her to Ferrari's table.

JITKA

(to herself)

And if you're not careful, so will he.

Over at the bar, Hilde and Yvonne are flirting with the same ITALIAN OFFICER who can't decide between them. Hilde glances out the window.

HILDE

(to Yvonne)

Isn't that your Mr. Rick coming this way?

YVONNE

Where?

Hilde nods toward the window. Yvonne glances outside and then quickly adjusts her cleavage and leans seductively against the bar.

RICK BLAINE, the owner of Rick's Café Américain, enters the cafe and walks right past Yvonne without noticing her as he surveys the room.

But the Italian notices. He abandons Hilde and turns to flirt with Yvonne, who tries to ignore him while showing even more cleavage. Hilde, outraged, throws a drink in Yvonne's face. Yvonne gasps, soaked, and runs into the back room. The Italian runs after her. Hilde runs after the Italian.

Rick appears to notice none of this, as he continues across the room, reaching Ferrari's office, just as Ferrari emerges with Jan and Annina, who look disappointed.

FERRARI

There, don't be too downhearted.
Perhaps you can come to terms with
Captain Renault.

JAN

Thank you very much, Signor.

Jan leads Annina away.

RICK

Hello, Ferrari.

Ferrari turns around. He's pleased to see Rick.

FERRARI

Ah, good morning, Rick!

They shake hands.

RICK

I see the bus is in, I'll take my
shipment with me.

FERRARI

No, hurry, I'll have it sent over.
Have a drink with me.

RICK

I never drink in the morning. And
every time you send my shipment
over, it's always just a little
bit short.

FERRARI

Carrying charges, my boy.
Carrying charges. Here, sit down.
There's something I want to talk
over with you, anyhow.

He hails a waiter.

FERRARI

The bourbon!
(to Rick, sighing
deeply)
The news about Ugarte upsets me
very much.

RICK

You're a fat hypocrite. You don't
feel any sorrier for Ugarte than I
do.

Ferrari eyes Rick closely.

FERRARI

Of course not. What upsets me is the fact that Ugarte is dead and no one knows where those letters of transit are.

RICK

Practically no one.

FERRARI

If I could lay my hands on those letters, I could make a fortune.

RICK

So could I and I'm a poor businessman.

FERRARI

I have a proposition for whoever has those letters. I'll handle the entire transaction, get rid of the letters, take all the risk, for a small percentage.

RICK

And the carrying charges?

FERRARI

Naturally, there will be a few incidental expenses. That's the proposition I have for whoever has those letters.

RICK

I'll tell him when he comes in.

Ferrari grins. He's learned what he needs to know.

FERRARI

Rick, I'll put my cards on the table. I think you know where those letters are.

RICK

You're in good company. Renault and Strasser probably think so, too.

Rick looks out a window and sees Ilsa and Victor walking toward the cafe.

RICK

That's why I came over here. To give them a chance to ransack my place.

FERRARI

Rick, don't be a fool! Take me into your confidence. You need a partner.

Rick isn't listening to him. He looks through the open window and sees Ilsa separate from Victor and move toward the linen bazaar. Rick gets up.

RICK

Excuse me, I'll be getting back.

EXT. THE BLUE PARROT

Victor reaches the entrance to the cafe, just as Rick comes out of it.

VICTOR

Good morning.

RICK

Signor Ferrari's the fat gent at the table.

As Rick exits, Victor looks after him with a puzzled expression. He turns and goes into...

INT. THE BLUE PARROT

Victor enters and sees Jitka at the bar. He crosses over to her.

JITKA

Returning to the scene of the crime?

VICTOR

Said the spider to the fly.

JITKA

Why did you come here last night? To tell me you still loved me?

VICTOR

I did.

JITKA

Sorry I wasn't in any condition to receive you.

VICTOR

That's all right.

JITKA

Let's give it another shot. I've had my morning coffee.

VICTOR

I don't think so. There are casualties in any war. It seems our love was one.

JITKA

It doesn't have to be. We're both survivors. Some more than others.

VICTOR

Then maybe we should leave it that way. Perhaps it's best that Prague remain a pleasant memory.

JITKA

A distant memory. Not so pleasant for some of us.

VICTOR

You'd rather have the bullet to the head?

JITKA

Is that still an option?

VICTOR

I'll be leaving Casablanca soon and you'll never have to see me again.

JITKA

Still running away? I guess you've got to stick with what you know.

VICTOR

I thought you would understand. You of all people. But I guess it was too much to ask. Too much has happened. Too many complications. Even with all the fighting, Prague was a simpler time. Try to remember me that way.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

And forget about last night. I know I'd like to.

JITKA

Prague's just a memory now. But once it was my whole world.

VICTOR

We're both well-traveled now.

(Beat.)

I didn't mean that the way it sounds.

JITKA

Call me names, if you like, but I only need one for you. Coward. How will the world like the great Victor Laszlo when they find out he abandoned a girl to the camps?

VICTOR

If that is what you want to believe.

JITKA

And what does your girlfriend believe? That you're some sort of hero? A brave resistance fighter who never leaves a man behind? Only the women.

Victor tries to walk away.

JITKA

Some day you'll run out on her, too. And I won't be there to come crawling back to.

VICTOR

No, Jitka. Ilsa is my wife. And always has been, even when you knew me in Prague.

Sam walks in and sees them.

SAM

What are you two gabbin' about?

JITKA

Nothing. We don't have anything more to say to each other.

SAM

That's a lotta lips movin' for not sayin' much.

JITKA

Leave it alone, Sam.

SAM

If this fella's bothering you, just say the word.

Sam turns toward Victor, but he's already gone. Sam turns back to Jitka, a little embarrassed.

SAM

Yeah, he better run.

JITKA

My hero.

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - FERRARI'S OFFICE

Ferrari is seated at a small table in a secluded nook off the main room that serves as the office for his underworld dealings. Victor enters.

VICTOR

Excuse me. I'm afraid we weren't properly introduce yesterday.

FERRARI

What are a few pleasantries between friends?

Ferrari gestures to the chair opposite.

FERRARI

Won't you have a seat?

VICTOR

Thank you.

Victor sits.

VICTOR

One hears a great deal about Signor Ferrari in Casablanca.

FERRARI

And about Victor Laszlo everywhere.

(to waiter)

Coffee for two.

VICTOR
None for me, thank you.

FERRARI
(to waiter)
Just two, then.
(to Victor)
The lady will be joining us, won't she? Or did you have a falling out?

VICTOR
No. Oh, yes, of course.
(to waiter)
Two.

WAITER
(sarcastically)
So, two, then?

FERRARI
Go on!

Waiter exits.

FERRARI
She is very attractive. If she weren't with you, I should have to offer her immediate employment.

Victor shifts uncomfortably.

FERRARI
How might I be your humble servant?

VICTOR
You see it is important that I get out of Casablanca to Lisbon.

FERRARI
Monsieur Rick informed me that you might be coming. It is a shame you did not come to me first.

VICTOR
How so?

FERRARI
A day ago, I might have been able to lay my hands on an exit visa for you.

VICTOR

And today?

FERRARI

Things are a bit more complicated.

VICTOR

How complicated?

Ferrari looks out a window to the bazaar.

FERRARI

I see the lovely Mademoiselle is doing her souvenir shopping. That might be a bit optimistic.

VICTOR

What do you mean?

FERRARI

(ignores his question)

She and Monsieur Rick seem very friendly. She is your wife, isn't she?

VICTOR

She is... very important to me.

FERRARI

Ah, my mistake. She is an asset?

VICTOR

I suppose that's one way of putting it.

FERRARI

Then if you don't mind my saying, in Casablanca, a man must protect his assets. Or he shall find himself with none.

VICTOR

That's true of many places.

FERRARI

All the same, it's good that you are not married, because there may be something I can do for her after all, so long as there is no direct connection between you.

Enter Ilsa.

FERRARI

Ah, good morning.

ILSA

Hello. I hope I'm not interrupting.

She sits with Victor and Ferrari, as the Waiter brings them coffee.

ILSA

Oh, thank you.

FERRARI

I was just telling Monsieur Laszlo that unfortunately I'm not able to help him.

ILSA

Oh.

VICTOR

You see, my dear, the word has gone around.

FERRARI

As leader of all illegal activities in Casablanca, I'm an influential and respected man. It would not be worth my life to do anything for Monsieur Laszlo. You, however, are a different matter.

VICTOR

Signor Ferrari thinks it might just be possible to get an exit visa for you.

ILSA

You mean for me to go on alone?

FERRARI

And only alone.

VICTOR

I'll stay here and keep on trying. I'm sure in a little while--

FERRARI

Might as well be frank, Monsieur. It would take a miracle to get you out of Casablanca. And the Germans have outlawed miracles.

ILSA

We are only interested in two visas, Signor.

VICTOR

Please, Ilsa, don't be hasty.

ILSA

No, Victor, no.

FERRARI

You two will want to discuss this. Excuse me. I'll be at the bar.

Ferrari rises and walks away.

INT. MAIN BAR

Ferrari notices a suspicious-looking FRENCHMAN in a trench coat seated at the bar. Ferrari approaches him.

FERRARI

How may I help you, gendarme?

FRENCHMAN

Me? You are mistaken. I am no gendarme.

FERRARI

I apologize. I lack your obvious skill at detection.

FRENCHMAN

Why, thank you. I mean, no! I am no detective. You see I am in plain clothes.

FERRARI

Yes, but you are sitting in a bawdy cafe in a trench coat. And you are wearing clothing underneath!

FRENCHMAN

Well, uh...

FERRARI

You are neither ogling the women. Nor sampling the wine. Isn't that right, Colleen?

COLLEEN

He asked for coffee.

FRENCHMAN

Not everyone is here for the wine
and women, Monsieur.

FERRARI

Yes. But you are French! Now get
out!

Ferrari backs the flustered Frenchman toward the door.

FRENCHMAN

Captain Renault will hear about
this!

FERRARI

See that he does.

The Frenchman comes back in.

FRENCHMAN

And I'll have that wine now!

FERRARI

(to waiter)
Give him a bottle on the house.

[OPTIONAL] INT. FERRARI'S OFFICE

Victor and Ilsa seated, as before.

VICTOR

No, Ilsa, I won't let you stay
here. You must get to America.
Believe me, somehow I will get out
and join you.

ILSA

But, Victor, if the situation were
different. If I had to stay and
there were only visa for one.
Would you take it?

VICTOR

Yes, I would.

Ilsa smiles faintly. She doesn't believe it for a
moment.

ILSA

Yes, I see. When I had trouble
getting out of Lille, why didn't
you leave me there?

(MORE)

ILSA (CONT'D)

Or when I was sick in Marseille
and held you up for two weeks and
you were in danger every minute of
the time? Why didn't you leave me
then?

VICTOR

I meant to. But something always
held me up. I love you very much,
Ilsa.

She smiles again.

ILSA

Your secret will be safe with me.
Ferrari's waiting for our answer.

[END **OPTIONAL** SCENE]

INT. MAIN BAR

Ilsa and Victor come in, as Ferrari talks to the waiter.

FERRARI

Not more than fifty francs,
though.

Ilsa and Victor walk up to him.

VICTOR

We've decided, Signor Ferrari.
For the present, we'll go on
looking for two exit visas. Thank
you very much.

FERRARI

Well, good luck. But be careful.
You know that you're being
shadowed?

VICTOR

Of course. It becomes an
instinct.

Ferrari leers appreciatively at Ilsa.

FERRARI

I observe that you, in one
respect, are a very fortunate man,
Monsieur.

(MORE)

FERRARI (CONT'D)

I am moved to make one more suggestion - why, I do not know, because it cannot possibly profit me - but have you heard about Signor Ugarte and the letters of transit?

VICTOR

Yes, something.

FERRARI

Those letters were not found on Ugarte when they arrested him.

VICTOR

Do you know where they are?

FERRARI

Not for sure, Monsieur. But I would venture to guess that Ugarte left those letters with Monsieur Rick.

Ilsa's expression darkens. Victor quietly observes.

VICTOR

Rick?

FERRARI

He's a difficult customer, that Rick. One never knows what he'll do or why. But it is worth a chance.

VICTOR

Thank you very much. Good day.

ILSA

Goodbye. Thank you for your coffee, Signor. I shall miss that when we leave Casablanca.

FERRARI

It was gracious of you to share it with me. Good day, Mademoiselle, Monsieur.

VICTOR

Good day.

As Ilsa and Victor leave the cafe, Ferrari nonchalantly swats a fly on a table.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - BURLESQUE ROOM - DAY

A GERMAN OFFICER tries to flirt with Yvonne.

GERMAN OFFICER

What is your name?

YVONNE

That is none of your business.

GERMAN OFFICER

No, but it might be business for you, if you know what's good for you. I am prepared to be very generous.

YVONNE

I am familiar with German generosity.

GERMAN OFFICER

And I with French resistance. It is very feeble.

She pulls away from him. He goes after her.

YVONNE

Leave me alone. I am seeing someone.

GERMAN OFFICER

Of course, you are.

YVONNE

And even if I weren't, I wouldn't be caught dead with the likes of you.

GERMAN OFFICER

That is all good news for me.

YVONNE

How so?

GERMAN OFFICER

I never met a French girl yet who did not have a jealous boyfriend she would like to make more jealous with an infuriating dalliance. And who better than a boorish and appalling man like myself to serve both our purposes?

YVONNE

You are not as dull as I might
have imagined.

GERMAN OFFICER

You see? I am already exceeding
expectations.

YVONNE

Meet me outside in five minutes.
You are taking me to Rick's.

They exit into...

INT. MAIN BAR

Jitka intercepts Yvonne and the German Officer, as they
enter the room.

JITKA

(to German)
Hands off the girl.
(to Yvonne)
What do you think you are doing?

GERMAN OFFICER

She's my girl now.

JITKA

I don't see your name on her.

GERMAN OFFICER

I didn't get a receipt, if that's
what you mean. But she'll be
handsomely paid for her time, rest
assured.

YVONNE

Madame Jitka, please. It will
only take a few minutes.

JITKA

You better not be taking him over
to Rick's.

YVONNE

And what if I am? You're not my
mother!

Jitka grabs Yvonne by the hair.

JITKA

I'm not old enough to be your mother!

GERMAN OFFICER

Is this a cabaret or a kindergarten?

Jitka lets go of Yvonne and turns on the German instead.

JITKA

You take that back!

Jitka grabs the German and deftly twists him to the ground in a painful thumb hold. Ferrari leaps up and hurries over.

FERRARI

What are you doing?

JITKA

Teaching this Schweinigel some manners.

FERRARI

He's a customer, Jitka. They're supposed to misbehave.

Jitka reluctantly lets the German up.

JITKA

You'd better bring her back without a scratch.

GERMAN OFFICER

(dusting himself off)
I won't be the one doing the scratching.

Jitka punches the German.

GERMAN OFFICER

(in German)
Ach! Witch!

Jitka breaks a bottle and threatens him with it.

JITKA

(in Czech)
If I see you again, I will kill you!

Ferrari jumps between them again. The German hides behind Yvonne.

FERRARI

Have you lost your senses? He's a German officer!

JITKA

He's about to be German schnitzel.

She lunges at the German who flinches. Ferrari stops her.

FERRARI

It pains me to have to do this, Jitka. But you are terminated.

Jitka abruptly drops her weapon and storms into the back room. The German comes out of hiding.

GERMAN OFFICER

My superiors will hear about this!

FERRARI

Yes, yes, we appreciate the word of mouth.

(to Yvonne)

Get him out of here.

YVONNE

(to German)

Come, Schätzchi, we've got to be going.

Yvonne helps the German out the door.

INT. BURLESQUE ROOM

Ferrari enters from the front room, just as Jitka enters from the dressing room with her belongings.

FERRARI

Where are you going?

JITKA

You fired me, remember?

FERRARI

You left me little choice. Do you know what you've done?

JITKA

There are always choices, Ferrari. Just no good ones.

FERRARI

Herr Heinze will hear about this,
and Major Strasser.

JITKA

And they'll tell two friends, and
they'll tell two friends...

FERRARI

This isn't a joking matter.

JITKA

You wanted a good show.

FERRARI

They'll gut this place and turn it
into a Gestapo canteen!

JITKA

They would have shut you down,
eventually, Ferrari. At the end
of a gun or the next fiscal
quarter.

FERRARI

So you are going to abandon me?
Like a rat on a sinking catamaran.

JITKA

Wars aren't won by profiteers,
Ferrari. You gotta know when to
cash in.

Ferrari realizes she's right. He's beaten.

FERRARI

You're right. It's over. It was
always going to be over someday.
Where are my dancers? Play us
another song!

(to the customers)

Ladies and Gentlemen, why so glum?
From now till the music ends, the
drinks are on the house!

The dancers perform a rousing medley of "MARSEILLAISE"
and "WACHT AM RHEIN."

Ferrari dances with them, then grabs a tray of empty
glasses and goes into the main bar to fetch another
round.

INT. MAIN BAR

Enter a French policeman. He finds Ferrari at the bar.

FRENCHMAN

Monsieur! Monsieur Ferrari!
Captain Renault sent me over to
reserve him a table.

FERRARI

The good Captain has never needed
a reservation before. He is
welcome any time! And as you can
see, we have plenty of room.

FRENCHMAN

Yes, but you are about to have a
run on your establishment. The
Prefect has closed down Rick's
Cafe. All of his customers are
bound to come over here any
minute.

Ferrari springs into action.

FERRARI

Stop the music! Close the taps!
Double the prices! Battle
stations, everyone!

Customers begin pouring into the cafe. Jitka and the
dancers scramble to seat everyone.

Victor comes in, looking for someone.

VICTOR

Ilsa?

(to Jitka)

Have you seen Ilsa? Did she come
in here?

JITKA

Why would she?

VICTOR

I thought she might seek shelter
here awhile. It is dangerous in
the street.

HILDE

It offends me that you think it is
safe in here.

VICTOR
(avoiding Hilde)
Maybe she went back to the hotel.

Victor exits.

COLLEEN
We're out of cognac!

FERRARI
There's a bottle under my desk!

Sam comes in, looks around at the bustle and mayhem.
Jitka greets him at the door.

JITKA
So they closed you down early?

SAM
I don't know why. We never done
nothing but make people laugh and
let 'em gamble.

JITKA
It's always the showmen who
suffer. You need a drink?

SAM
More than you know.

He sits at the bar.

SAM
And keep 'em coming.

JITKA
Well, now I'm worried. What's
troubling you, Sam?

SAM
You don't wanna know.

JITKA
Yeah, but I asked, so take your
best shot.

SAM
There's only two people in this
whole world I care about. And
lately I feel 'em both slipping
away.

JITKA
Let me guess. Rick's one.

SAM

And I'm not gonna tell you the other. 'Cause I don't want it going to your head.

JITKA

Aren't you sweet. I'm still not taking you back.

SAM

I know that.

(Beat.)

Miss Jitka, can I ask you something? And you can tell me the truth.

JITKA

Why start now?

SAM

When you were in Prague...

He's not sure how to say it.

SAM

That must have been something.

JITKA

That's exactly what it was.

SAM

Did you ever get lonely?

JITKA

There was a war on. One is never alone enough.

SAM

What I'm trying to say, and it's okay if you don't want to tell me: I'm not the only man you ever loved, am I?

JITKA

Oh, Sam.

She pats him consolingly.

JITKA

Nobody's that good.

Sam nods.

SAM

I guess I had that coming.

JITKA

You shouldn't want a woman who's never loved, Sam. Only one who will never love again.

SAM

You're probably right. But I guess it's human nature.

JITKA

What is?

SAM

The heart. It's always looking. Don't always find what it's looking for. But you gotta give it credit for trying.

Jitka laughs and pours him another drink, as rowdy customers begin singing a beer hall version of the "MARSEILLAISE."

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The cafe is closed. Ferrari and Jitka sit at the bar, looking over the ledgers. Ferrari looks worried.

FERRARI

How much more of this can we take?

JITKA

Why are you complaining? Business is good for a change.

FERRARI

We're out of cheap beer and we're out of local wine. If this keeps up, we'll have to start serving the customers what they order. And then my profits will be out the window. What about the bus that came in today?

JITKA

You sent most of that shipment over to Rick's.

(MORE)

JITKA (CONT'D)

All you got left is a case of vermouth he didn't want and 100 cartons of American cigarettes you shorted him to pay for the vermouth.

FERRARI

This is a nightmare. Success is driving me out of business. The customers keep coming. And there's nowhere to put them. Do you know how it pains me to turn people away at the door?

JITKA

Would you rather have a giant ballroom like Rick's and nobody in it?

Ferrari gets an avaricious gleam in his eye.

FERRARI

That's it! We'll send them over there!

JITKA

I think you're forgetting how this works. Rick's is closed. And he's the competition.

FERRARI

Rick's is only closed down because Major Strasser doesn't like his political sympathies. Perhaps a change of management could persuade the Major to reopen Rick's.

JITKA

A change in management?

FERRARI

If I could buy the café now, I'd be doing Rick a favor.

JITKA

And since he's at an economic disadvantage, you'd be doing yourself a favor, too.

FERRARI

Everybody wins. I have to make a phone call.

Ferrari exits into the back room.

Victor enters. Jitka closes her ledgers.

VICTOR

Can I have a word with you?

JITKA

Take two, they're small.

VICTOR

I've come to say goodbye.

JITKA

You finally got that exit visa you were looking for?

VICTOR

No. Ilsa is in love with another man. I know it now.

JITKA

With Rick?

VICTOR

So it seems everyone knows it.

JITKA

He's always had a thing for blondes. Or maybe he just had a thing for her.

VICTOR

(sobbing)

What a fool I was to trust a young woman alone in Paris.

JITKA

Yeah. Blame it on Paris.

VICTOR

I can't live like this anymore. I can't stay with her.

JITKA

You can't stay with me.

VICTOR

I have to get out of Casablanca.

JITKA

But you don't have a visa.

VICTOR

I'll be stopped at the border, if I try to escape. I'll be shot in the street, if I remain.

JITKA

Sounds like you don't have a way out.

VICTOR

There's still one.

Victor pulls out a gun! Jitka reacts, startled at first, then Victor puts the gun to his own head.

VICTOR

Are you going to call me a coward now?

JITKA

You're worse. You're a traitor.

VICTOR

What?

JITKA

You'd hand the German's a victory that has eluded them across half of Europe? Over a girl? The Victor I knew was stronger than that. The Victor I knew didn't let love interfere with his mission. Or distract him from his cause.

(staring him down)

Why didn't you come back for me? Had I outlived my usefulness?

VICTOR

I'd been shot.

JITKA

You got better.

VICTOR

And left for dead.

JITKA

That makes two of us.

VICTOR

You were taken to a prison camp, Jitka. There was no escape.

JITKA

You escaped.

VICTOR

I had help.

JITKA

And now you can't even escape from
a tourist trap.

VICTOR

The borders are sealed. I don't
have the papers I need.

JITKA

I do.

Victor eyes her quizzically.

JITKA

The extra letters of transit.
Ugarte gave them to his mistress.
He thought she was worth it.

Victor, desperate, turns the gun on Jitka.

VICTOR

Give them to me! I mean it, hand
them over!

Jitka remains chillingly calm.

JITKA

That won't be necessary. You can
have them over my dead body. If
your cause means that much to you,
you won't let your feelings for me
stand in the way. You'll stop at
nothing.

She presses herself into the barrel of the gun.

JITKA

Go ahead shoot me. You'll be
doing me a favor.

He can't do it.

VICTOR

I never thought I'd see you again.
They told me you were dead. I
thought it was my fault.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

By the time I learned you were alive, you had already found your own way out of the camps. I thought it was for the best, your not knowing. You were safer without me. Everyone is safer. Death follows me like a lover.

JITKA

While your lover's left for dead.

VICTOR

Had I known you were here living in Morocco...

JITKA

You would have taken a different route?

VICTOR

Until I saw you here two nights ago, I couldn't even be sure if the rumors were true.

JITKA

Rumors never lie. They just oversimplify.

VICTOR

The day they shot me on that train. I thought I'd lost you forever. Now, that I've found you, how can I ever let you go?

He takes her in his arms. They kiss.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. BLUE PARROT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Victor and Jitka are still sitting and talking.

JITKA

And then?

VICTOR

I had lost a lot of blood. I lapsed into a coma. Members of my Underground unit found me. They had been monitoring our escape.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

By the time I regained consciousness, I was halfway to France. The Nazis had discovered I had a wife there. If I didn't reach Paris before the German Army, she would be in danger. I had already lost one woman who trusted me. I wasn't going to have another death on my conscience.

JITKA

But I wasn't dead.

VICTOR

The train you were on was diverted to Terezin. We thought escape would have been impossible. How did you do it?

JITKA

You taught me everything I know.

She grins.

JITKA

The truth is, I didn't escape. The Nazis let me go. They knew I'd watched you die. They thought it humorous to leave me scrambling through ditches looking for your body. They figured I'd be picked up by the next patrol. But I slipped through their lines and made it to Marseille and then to Casablanca. But my name is still on the roll of escaped prisoners. I could never get a visa to Lisbon.

VICTOR

So we're both trapped here.

JITKA

But now I have the letters of transit. You and I can both get away together.

VICTOR

And leave Ilsa here?

JITKA

She'll be fine, I'm sure. Once you're gone.

VICTOR

She's my wife. Once I'm gone,
they will arrest her and torture
her.

JITKA

Not if they knew you left her for
another woman. Or don't you love
me that much?

VICTOR

More than anything in the world.

JITKA

Except her.

VICTOR

You don't understand. It was
never a choice between you. Ilsa
was young. We married in secret
to hide her father's wealth from
the Reichskommissariat. It wasn't
supposed to last. But for now,
her inheritance funds half the
Resistance in Europe. It doesn't
matter what happens to me, as long
as she can make it to Lisbon.

JITKA

Where is Ilsa now?

VICTOR

At the hotel. She thinks I've
gone to a meeting of the
Underground.

Ferrari enters from the back room, hanging up a phone.

FERRARI

And so you have. After a fashion.
As the leader of the criminal
underworld I am in charge of all
things illegal. And when Freedom
becomes a crime, that falls under
my jurisdiction, too. But your
presence here jeopardizes all of
our safeties. So it is time for
you to do what any leader should.
Sacrifice himself for the good of
the cause. Get out now. The
police are on their way.

SFX: Police sirens.

Victor flees out a window, just as the Police burst through the door.

FERRARI
(pointing)
You just missed him.

The Police officers rush back out, as Captain Renault comes in.

RENAULT
Thank you for your call, Signor Ferrari.

FERRARI
I don't know what you mean. I'm sure the call was anonymous.

Ferrari smirks and exits into the back room. Renault eyes Jitka suspiciously. And she him.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Ferrari rifles through the dancers' belongings. Jitka enters. Ferrari reacts, cornered.

FERRARI
Why don't you knock?

JITKA
This is the ladies' room.

FERRARI
So it's my fault?

JITKA
You're the one looting.

FERRARI
Looting?! These girls should be so lucky. This is barely pilfering. They haven't got twenty francs between them.

JITKA
Just put everything back. I need you to do me a favor.

FERRARI

Ah! Why didn't you say so? The doling of favors is exponentially more lucrative than fencing cheap costume jewelry.

Ferrari empties his pockets of stolen jewelry. Somewhat.

FERRARI

How may I be of service?

JITKA

Victor Laszlo is in a holding cell at the Prefecture thanks to you.

FERRARI

You're welcome.

JITKA

I need Ilsa Lund to leave Casablanca without him.

FERRARI

I've already offered her an exit visa for herself. And she's already refused.

JITKA

Now you'll need two. And you won't offer them to her. Sell them to Rick Blaine. He'll take her out of the country.

FERRARI

What makes you think she'd any sooner go with Rick?

JITKA

Because she's in love with him. And vice versa. And with Victor in jail, he'll want to get her as far away from here as possible.

FERRARI

I see. Well, this will take some time. And I'll have to charge double my ordinary commission.

JITKA

Triple it, if you like. But I want it done tonight.

FERRARI

Patience, my dear. You cannot rush a good forgery.

JITKA

I don't need your forgeries. I have Pilar's letters of transit. I just need you to make the arrangements.

FERRARI

You have the letters? Well, this is an interesting development. But if that's the case, why do you need me at all? Give them to him yourself and cut out the middle man.

JITKA

They can't know where they come from. Victor can never know that I was the one who provided the means for her escape. By the time he gets out of jail, I need her to be gone.

FERRARI

And you'll finally have Victor all to yourself.

JITKA

That's my business. Your business is to see that she goes.

FERRARI

Very well, I'll do it. But only because it profits me enormously. Let me have the letters.

JITKA

I'm not stupid, Ferrari. The minute I put them in your hands, they'll go to the highest bidder. No. They are for Rick and Ilsa only. You make the arrangements. I'll deliver the letters.

FERRARI

Consider it done. I'd better be going.

(MORE)

FERRARI (CONT'D)

If Rick Blaine is really leaving Casablanca at long last, then I have another bit of business to attend to as well.

WIPE TO:

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - FERRARI'S OFFICE - DAY

A waiter brings tea to Rick and Ferrari, who sit alone at a table in a secluded nook off the main room.

FERRARI

Shall we draw up papers? Or is a handshake good enough?

RICK

It's certainly not good enough. But since I'm in a hurry, it'll have to do.

Ferrari pours a cup for Rick, who takes a sip.

FERRARI

Ah, to get out of Casablanca and go to America. You're a lucky man.

RICK

Oh, by the way, my agreement with Sam has always been that he gets 25% of the profits. That still goes.

Ferrari chuckles.

FERRARI

I happen to know he gets 10%, but he's worth 25.

RICK

And Abdul, Carl and Sacha, they stay with the place or I don't sell.

FERRARI

Of course they stay. Rick's wouldn't be Rick's without them.

RICK

Well, so long.

Rick gets up, followed by Ferrari. They shake hands to seal the deal.

INT. MAIN BAR

Rick walks to the door, then stops and turns to Ferrari.

RICK

And don't forget you owe Rick's
100 carton of American cigarettes.

FERRARI

I shall remember to pay it. To
myself.

Ferrari chuckles to himself again. Rick leaves. Ferrari picks up a fly swatter and swats a fly.

Jitka enters from the back room.

JITKA

How did it go? Did you sell him
the letters?

FERRARI

I didn't have to. It seems
Monsieur Rick has already acquired
letters of his own.

JITKA

How?

FERRARI

If my suspicions are correct, he's
had them all along. Signor Ugarte
managed to slip him the letters
before his untimely arrest, after
all. He always was a crafty
little weasel. May he rest in
peace.

JITKA

Then why hasn't Rick used them
before now? He's not planning to
stay, is he?!

FERRARI

That seems unlikely. He just sold
me his cafe. There's nothing to
keep him here now. He will leave
Casablanca with Ilsa tonight, as
you planned. Congratulations.

JITKA

And to you.

FERRARI

And now the remaining letters of transit, which you have in your possession, can be sold for a handsome profit. Less commission, of course.

JITKA

Or I could use them to get Victor and myself out of Casablanca, as well.

FERRARI

That is the trouble with you romantics. Always so short sighted. Where is your avarice? I thought I taught you better.

JITKA

Stop pouting. You get Rick's Cafe. Rick gets Ilsa. Everyone is happy. I'd better go try and talk Renault into letting Victor out on bail.

Jitka adjusts her cleavage.

FERRARI

Oh, Monsieur Rick already took care of that for you, as well.

JITKA

What? Why? What good will that do him?

Sam bursts in.

SAM

What have you done?!

JITKA

What do you mean?

SAM

Why do the two of you always have to go messing in other people's business.

FERRARI

We really don't know what you're talking about, Sam.

SAM

(to Jitka)

You think I'm gonna come back to you now, is that it?

(to Ferrari)

You gonna play matchmaker, Mr. Ferrari?

JITKA

Not this again.

FERRARI

Frankly, I think you make a delightful couple.

JITKA

Don't encourage him.

SAM

Why can't you two just leave people alone?

JITKA

Nobody's done anything to you, Sam.

SAM

We're not talking about me!

JITKA

We're not?

SAM

Mister Rick is planning on leaving Casablanca!

JITKA

Oh, that.

SAM

He just sold my stake in the cafe to Mister Ferrari for 25% of the house.

FERRARI

That's more than twice what you're making now. And I'm not giving you a penny more.

SAM

You think I care about money? You ever hear me bucking for a raise? I ain't got time to spend what I make now.

JITKA

And Rick will be happy in America.

SAM

Mister Rick won't be nothing but buried in America. Not after what he done there.

JITKA

That was years ago, Sam. I'm sure it's all water under the bridge by now.

SAM

You may know war, Miss Jitka, but you don't know Brooklyn. The folks he crossed don't got short memories. Ain't that right, Mr. F?

FERRARI

(evasively)

Well, I'll just leave you two to your privacy.

JITKA

What do you know, Ferrari?

FERRARI

Sam's right. Through my underworld connections, I have a long-standing contract of 20,000 francs for any information about the travel plans of Monsieur Rick vis-à-vis the Americas. As soon as he sets foot in New York, he'll be apprehended and made to pay for his... well, I guess you wouldn't call them "crimes". What's the word, when the victims are all criminals?

SAM

Justice?

FERRARI

I was going to say "turnabout".

Ferrari yanks the handle off his fly swatter to reveal a small, concealed knife blade, which he holds it to Sam's throat.

FERRARI

Now, I can't have you running off to find Rick. And I can't have Rick changing his mind and staying in Casablanca. So we're all just going to sit patiently and let matters run their course. Have a seat, Sam.

Sam sits.

FERRARI

And Jitka, I know Sam is only your 2nd or 3rd favorite man in Morocco, but I wonder if you still have enough affection for him to place those letters we spoke about on the table where I can see them.

She complies. He picks up the letters, grinning.

FERRARI

There now, you see? This works out better for everyone.

SAM

Everyone but Mister Rick. You may think he's just another Brooklyn street tough that made good. But he never hurt nobody wasn't asking for it.

(to Jitka)

He bailed your Victor out this morning. You try and live with yourself after they gun him down at Port Authority. And Miss Ilsa. I know love makes ya blind. But why's it gotta make ya stupid and forgetful as well?

Victor enters, frantic.

VICTOR

Jitka! There you are!

JITKA

What's wrong?

VICTOR

I think I'm being followed. I think it's a trap. Rick convinced Renault to release me from custody. He said I'm going with Ilsa to America.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

But I know she plans to leave with Rick. I think they're conspiring to have me arrested at the airport.

FERRARI

And perhaps you would be, were you not going by boat instead.

VICTOR

What?

FERRARI

With Mademoiselle Jitka, of course. I've taken the liberty of making all the arrangements. I have here the missing letters of transit. And for a small negotiated fee, the two of you will soon be boarding a tramp steamer for Lisbon. With you out of the picture, Rick and Ilsa will happily be off to America, no strings attached, and the authorities will be none the wiser. Isn't that right, Jitka?

She hesitates, puzzling it out, thinking it through.

JITKA

No.

FERRARI

What?

JITKA

It isn't a trap. But it's meant to look like one.

VICTOR

What??

JITKA

Why would Rick get you out of jail just to have you arrested? No, I think he really means for you to leave with her.

VICTOR

Why would the man let the love of his life go without a fight?

JITKA

(pointedly)

Because he knows she'll be safer without him. And maybe because he knows there'll be somebody there to protect her.

Victor wavers, unconvinced.

Jitka pulls the pistol out of her bustier. She turns it on Ferrari.

JITKA

Tear up those letters.

VICTOR

What? Why?

FERRARI

Is this really necessary?

JITKA

Do it!

Ferrari tears up the letters. It pains him greatly.

VICTOR

Why are you doing this?

JITKA

Just eliminating options.

VICTOR

But we could all escape safely.

JITKA

No, Victor, it only looks that way. That's the real trap. You have to trust me. And I've got to trust Rick. He's sending you to America. I know it. And you're going with Ilsa. You can't stay here, you'll die here. And he'll die there. When are you supposed to meet him?

VICTOR

We're leaving on the last plane. I'm supposed to get Ilsa from the hotel and take her to Rick's.

SAM

That's a 10 o'clock plane. You're already late.

JITKA

Ferrari, call Rick. Tell him that Victor is on his way. And to wait for him.

Ferrari picks up the phone and dials.

FERRARI

(on phone)

Hello, Rick. This is Ferrari. Victor Laszlo is delayed because he had to slip Renault's watchdogs. But he is on his way to your place right now.

He hangs up the phone with a mischievous glint in his eye.

CUT TO:

INT. RENAULT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Renault is on the phone, perplexed.

RENAULT

Hello? Hello?

He hangs up the phone and presses a buzzer on his desk. A police officer quickly enters.

RENAULT

Pull my car around. Immediately!

The police officer exits, as Renault stares at the phone, suspicious.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BLUE PARROT - MAIN BAR - NIGHT

Jitka, Victor, Sam, Ferrari, as before.

JITKA

Sam, take Signor Ferrari into the next room.

SAM

Be my pleasure.

(to Ferrari)

I hope this won't reflect on our working relationship.

Sam and Ferrari exit into the back room. Jitka and Victor are alone.

JITKA

I'm sorry it had to be this way.

VICTOR

After the war. After awhile.
Perhaps we'll find each other in
another time. In another place.
But till then, we'll always have
Prague.

JITKA

I thought I lost you once. I
thought that Prague was a lie.
But you can't believe the rumors.

VICTOR

Not at all.

They kiss.

Suddenly, Hilde springs up from a hiding place behind the bar.

HILDE

I knew you all had Allied
sympathies!

She draws a pistol.

HILDE

But you won't get away with it.

She trains the weapon on Victor.

HILDE

Especially not you.

JITKA

Put the gun down! What do you
think you're doing?

HILDE

This is none of your business,
Frau Jitka. This is between me
and the saboteur.

VICTOR

If you strike me down, a thousand
more will take my place.

HILDE

That would be a neat trick. I wonder how many will replace Ilsa Lund?

Hilde picks up the telephone and dials.

VICTOR

I'm warning you...

Jitka takes out her own gun.

JITKA

Put down that phone, Hilde!

HILDE

(on phone)

Hello? Major Strasser?

Ferrari and Sam rush in from the back room.

FERRARI

What in the world--?

Hilde spins to fire at Ferrari, but Jitka shoots first and Hilde falls dead.

CUT TO:

INT. GERMAN CONSULATE - NIGHT

Strasser is on the phone.

STRASSER

Hello? Hello?

He hangs up, baffled.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUE PARROT - MAIN BAR - NIGHT

Jitka, Victor, Ferrari, Sam, as before. Victor checks Hilde's pulse. She's dead.

JITKA

Sam, get her into the dressing room.

Sam starts dragging Hilde's body into the back room. Victor tries to help, but Jitka stops him.

JITKA

No. You have to go. Now.

VICTOR

We may never see each other again.

She knows he is right.

JITKA

Until the next time.

Victor nods and starts for the door, but he stops short at the sound of someone coming! Victor ducks behind the pillar, as...

Renault enters.

RENAULT

(to Ferrari)

What was the meaning of that phone call?

Jitka and Sam freeze, caught. Ferrari realizes he has all the power. He calmly pulls back the beaded curtain to reveal Hilde's body.

RENAULT

What's this?

FERRARI

During a routine search of the ladies' dressing room, I discovered evidence that Hilde, one of my dancers, was having a torrid affair with Victor Laszlo.

RENAULT

Laszlo is here?!

FERRARI

He seduced her in an attempt to gain access to the letters of transit which were in her possession. Then spurned her when he learned that she had already sold them to Rick Blaine. Victor Laszlo is on his way there now.

RENAULT

And she, poor thing, obviously, drank herself to death.

FERRARI

Uh... approximately.

While Renault is distracted with Ferrari's story, Victor slips out the front door and escapes into the night.

RENAULT

And you'll testify to this in court?

FERRARI

If it ever comes to court... I will, of course, say what I have to.

Renault is satisfied.

RENAULT

Everything is going according to plan, then. I'm sorry I will never be able to thank you officially, Signor Ferrari.

FERRARI

I wouldn't have it any other way.

RENAULT

But should you ever need a character reference during sentencing, your service will be duly noted.

FERRARI

Likewise, I'm sure.

Renault straightens his cap and rushes out. Jitka, Sam and Ferrari consider each other.

SAM

So I guess we got a restaurant to run now?

Sam starts scrubbing down tables.

FERRARI

In fact, I think this might be the beginning of a very profitable partnership.

Jitka taps him on the shoulder.

JITKA

Sam gets 25%, I want 25%.

Jitka starts wiping down the bar.

FERRARI

Not as profitable as I might have
hoped.

Ferrari starts setting up chairs.

FERRARI

But one can hardly complain.

In the distance we hear the sound of an aircraft flying
low overhead - the plane from Lisbon coming in for a
landing, as we...

FADE OUT.

THE END