

"CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE"
- A.P. Giannini & the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Nestled in a quiet one-way side-street, the Rushman Goldfield boutique investment bank makes up in elegance and understated opulence what it lacks in size.

A scrap of newspaper, chased down along the street by a late-summer gust, ends up flattened against the bronze-and-glass double-doors of the bank entrance.

An attractive Italian-featured woman (27) smiles out confidently from the page. The headline reads: "POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER BAGS PRESTIGIOUS A.P. GIANNINI FELLOWSHIP". The torn caption reads only: "Dr. Erm".

The wind retreats. The page falls to the welcome mat.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1876

On the welcome mat, a pair of coarse, muddy boots are wiped.

A gnarled, black-nailed hand is thrust out. It knocks peremptorily at the door.

The other dirty hand cradles a muddy black coat, which is wrapped around an ominous rod-like object.

INT. - LOBBY - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A SECURITY GUARD (GENE, 40s, wedding band), standing beside the elevator, carefully wraps up his handgun in its holster belt. He bends over and puts the gun and holster into his gym bag, which rests on the floor.

Another SECURITY GUARD (CHRIS, 30s) sits reading a newspaper at the reception desk. His face is creased by a smirk.

GENE looks up at the entry, from the back, of a third SECURITY GUARD. He is RAÚL (58) - a tall, powerfully built, distinguished-looking SIKH in a blue turban. RAÚL is evidently relieving GENE. But GENE won't go just yet.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1876

Planting himself defiantly on the doorstep is transient farm laborer JOSE FERRARI (40s, small, slight, dark).

The door is opened by VIRGINIA GIANNINI (21, tallish, a few months pregnant, forceful yet positive personality). Her apron is flecked with red pasta sauce. On seeing FERRARI, she winces, then stifles a sigh.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

GENE, frowning, transfers his attention from his watch (10:51) to the elegant clock above the elevators (10:51). CHRIS, still smirking, discreetly observes him.

GENE

Mr. Rich! I thought Mr. Rich was working tonight! Not so, Chris?!

GENE and RAÚL both look to CHRIS for confirmation. CHRIS shrugs, and shakes out his San Francisco Chronicle - with the same photo of "Dr. Erm" as in the first scene. Making them wait, CHRIS sips at his steaming cocoa. Then he looks up at GENE, in mock-surprise at still finding him there.

CHRIS

Raúl, a man who won't go home to his wife: it means one of two things...!

Stalking off towards the front entrance, GENE is not amused.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1876

VIRGINIA

(frostily)

Jose, is this your idea of a joke?

VIRGINIA breaks off: coming in from the kitchen is her husband: LUIGI GIANNINI (28, tall, handsome, blue-eyed, broad-shouldered, handlebar mustache). As he walks, LUIGI takes his napkin out from under his chin. Wiping his hands and mouth, he stains the napkin with red pasta sauce.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Carelessly spilling some cocoa on the floor, CHRIS glances over at RAÚL, who is taking out two framed photographs and a biggish book from his bag.

CHRIS

And what weighty tome is it this time, my friend? The Unabridged History of the Universe?!

RAÚL

(American accent; equably)

I like history. Immigration history. Economic history. Music history. Art history. Gives you ... perspective.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1876

VIRGINIA steps aside, revealing the darkly defiant FERRARI. LUIGI rolls his eyes and exhales softly. As if by instinct, he looks out over Ferrari's head towards the yard and orchards beyond. But all is deserted.

INT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

GENE is peering out through the glass doors: the street is deserted. He glances back towards CHRIS, still smirking over his cocoa, and towards RAÚL, still busy settling in.

GENE looks at his watch. He looks out at the street. He looks back towards his waiting gym bag.

Fiddling unconsciously with his wedding band, he sighs. He turns reluctantly.

EXT. - FRONT DOOR - GIANNINI FRUIT FARM - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1876

FERRARI half-turns to glance back at the empty lands behind him. He is still smarting after having been "overlooked".

LUIGI

(wearily)

Look, Jose, we've already settled this. I paid you a fair wage. The wage we both agreed upon.

FERRARI

No! I never agree! You owe me!
 Still you owe me \$1! \$1! ONE WHOLE
 DOLLAR you owe me! No-one
 short-change Jose Ferrari! No-one
 insult Jose Ferrari! No-one
 disrespect JOSE FERRARI!

LUIGI and VIRGINIA exchange a look of weary exasperation,
 which only infuriates FERRARI all the more.

LUIGI

Jose, please! It's not a question
 of disrespect. Be reasonable. Be a
 man of your word. Be a man ... of
 honor!

FERRARI

Honor?! HONOR!? I show you honor!

Eyes bulging insanely, FERRARI tears away the muddy coat
 from around the rod-like object: a shotgun!

VIRGINIA gasps and grimaces, raising one hand to her mouth,
 and clutching at her belly with the other. The red-stained
 napkin falls from Luigi's hand.

Point-blank, FERRARI shoots LUIGI, who flies backwards, and
 crumples to the floor. VIRGINIA opens her mouth to scream,
 but there is no sound.

Emptied in an instant of his insane rage, FERRARI stares
 down in belatedly lucid horror at what he has done. He casts
 the shotgun from him like something unclean. He hesitates,
 as if - absurdly - wanting to offer some explanation.

Then he notices something or someone behind Virginia.
 Suddenly tearing himself away from the double sight, he
 turns tail, and is gone.

VIRGINIA slowly turns round. And there behind her - mute,
 gaping, wide-eyed - is her six-year-old son: AMADEO.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE DAWN - 1876

Gathering on the docks, commission agents, stevedores, and
 draymen stare out expectantly over the bay, where the
 steamer "Reform" is approaching.

EXT. - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE
- FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

The entrance to the Rushman Goldfield basement parking area is situated in a small, anonymous office block immediately to the left of Rushman Goldfield proper.

On the opposite side of the street, about twenty yards back from the basement parking entrance, a black Bentley Continental GT pulls up. The personalized license plate reads: "RICH 1". The engine purrs deeply and sweetly, then is silent. The car lights die.

EXT. - DECK - BAY STEAMER "REFORM" - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO
DOCKS - BEFORE DAWN - 1876

In the predawn semi-darkness, CAPTAIN JOHN LEALE looks on in admiration at a silent mother (VIRGINIA) and her silent little son (AMADEO). LEALE half-raises his cap.

CAPTAIN LEALE
Mrs Giannini. Amadeo.

They silently return his greeting. VIRGINIA - sadly, no longer pregnant - is taking produce from the family farm to sell on the San Francisco waterfront. Despite her traumatic widowhood - and its aftermath - she looks unbowed, undaunted, determined, and full of vital energy.

Little AMADEO beside her - equally resilient - silently takes in everything around them.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

In the near distance, a boy (RENZO, 10) and his mother (ROSARIA, 29, attractive, detached) are approaching along the Rushman side of the street.

Through the tinted windows of the Bentley, the DRIVER (RICH, 36) is dimly visible. He sits without moving.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - EARLY MORNING - 1876

Drayman LORENZO SCATENA (26) looks on in silent admiration as VIRGINIA negotiates with customers and sells her wares. Little AMADEO, meanwhile, is showing a precocious fascination with the mechanics of business.

SCATENA (barrel-chested, gentle, soft-spoken, quietly ambitious) comes over to pay his respects. VIRGINIA returns his gaze without giving anything away.

SCATENA

Well, Signora Virginia, this terrible drought must be hard on you! Not to mention all your ... other ... difficulties.

VIRGINIA

(with a steely smile)

We all have our crosses to bear, Signor Lorenzo... If only the bank would give me a loan, though!

SCATENA

(ruefully)

Hmm. The only purpose of banks seems to be to lend money to those who don't need it! To those who - unlike us - don't have to work sixteen hours a day!

AMADEO is quietly astonished and indignant at this information. SCATENA gently tousles his hair. AMADEO gazes with affection, respect, and even compassion at SCATENA, at his MOTHER, and at all the struggling, hard-working FARMERS, COMMISSION AGENTS, and STEVEDORES on the docks.

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RENZO

Wow, look, mom! A Bentley Continental, mom! And look at the vanity plate, mom! "RICH 1", mom! Maybe it's some hot rapper, mom!

ROSARIA

(drily)

Unless it's King Richard the First.

RENZO

Aw, mom! You always make everything a history lesson, mom!

ROSARIA

(drily)

Well, go figure.

INT. - ONE-ROOM SCHOOL - ALVISO - SANTA CLARA VALLEY - DAY -
1878

The classroom is packed with children of many nationalities: Portuguese, Spanish, French, German, Austrian, Armenian, Indian, Japanese, and Chinese.

AMADEO (8) calmly brushes off the playful attempts of classmates to distract him from his intense concentration. He is competing with his Chinese friend TOM FOON CHEW (8) in the mental calculation of rows of figures on the blackboard. But it is AMADEO who proudly calls out the result before TOM can. AMADEO smiles victoriously at TOM, as the TEACHER and CHILDREN applaud. Smiling at last, TOM joins in.

TOM FOON

I'll get you next time, Amador
Jenning!

Everyone laughs, including the TEACHER. Amadeo's chest swells with pride.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RICH's slumping posture straightens, his chest swells, and his head falls backwards.

INT. - CLASSROOM - WASHINGTON STREET GRAMMAR SCHOOL - SAN
FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON - 1882

AMADEO (12) throws his head back in joyful anticipation as the bell rings for the end of the school day.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - A WHILE LATER

His school bag tossed to one side, AMADEO looks on in fascination while SCATENA (32) negotiates with CLIENTS. One CLIENT pensively scratches his head with a pencil.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RICH points a black object at his left temple. His left hand begins shaking, together with the object.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR THE SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - EARLY EVENING - 1882

In his high chair at the kitchen table, little HENRY (3) short-sightedly colors in a picture. At the stove, VIRGINIA (28) is busy whisking the mixture for zabaglione. Amadeo's other brothers ATTILIO (8) and GEORGE (6) look on greedily.

AMADEO himself and SCATENA come in. SCATENA - looking somewhat defensive - now wears a wedding-band, and has one arm draped around AMADEO's shoulders. At the sight, ATTILIO half-turns away, resentful.

GEORGE

Hi, Pop!

SCATENA has discreetly removed his arm from AMADEO's shoulders. He kisses little HENRY, and even-handedly tousles the hair of ATTILIO and GEORGE. Then, swallowing discreetly, he goes up to VIRGINIA and gives her a peck on the cheek. She raises an eyebrow at him.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

ROSARIA is staring down in astonishment at the face of "Dr Erm", smiling up at her from the bank's welcome mat. She picks up the scrap of newspaper and holds it breathlessly before her. Then - as RENZO comes back for her - she begins scratching around in her handbag for her smartphone.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR THE SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - LATE AFTERNOON - 1882

VIRGINIA

(tossing the salad)

So then, Renzo, did you ... ask your boss for that raise? For \$300?

SCATENA

(sighing, shrugging)

Sì, cara! But he said \$250 is plenty! Besides, as you know, he's given me two raises already.

VIRGINIA

(undaunted)

Quit your job. Why make all that money for other people? Start your own business. Be your own boss.

SCATENA - blindsided - glances at AMADEO, who stares back at him eagerly, as if already seeing the possibilities.

EXT. - BETWEEN RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL AND THE RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

As they approach the Bentley, RENZO tugs excitedly at ROSARIA's sleeve. With the scrap of newspaper in one hand, and busy pressing speed-dial #2 with the other, she gestures him to wait.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

As they draw level with the driver's window, RENZO suddenly lets go of ROSARIA's sleeve. Rooted to the spot, he is staring open-mouthed at RICH. He doesn't even notice ROSARIA walking on. And she, now talking on her phone, doesn't notice that he is not following her.

ROSARIA
(mixed feelings)
Congratulations, sweetie! Why didn't you tell me the wonderful news?! I've only just seen the newspaper!

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE MIDNIGHT - 1882

At the kitchen table, SCATENA closes his San Francisco Call, and finishes his coffee. He glances defensively at AMADEO, then at his pocket watch: 11:47.

SCATENA
(half-heartedly)
Look, Amadeo. I promised your mother I would try to make you stay home.

AMADEO
(beaming)
Well, don't feel bad, Pop. At least you tried.

Sighing, SCATENA rises, rinses out his coffee cup, smiles goodbye, and leaves. But he is secretly pleased.

AMADEO calmly finishes his coffee, and smiles to himself.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Covering his face with both hands, RICH starts sobbing
uncontrollably. He is no longer holding the black object.

His head slumps forward upon the steering wheel and the horn
honks loudly. Eyes, streaming, he straightens up in shock.

ROSARIA, halted, has half-turned to look back.

INT. - HALLWAY - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NEAR SAN
FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - BEFORE MIDNIGHT - 1882

In the semi-darkness, AMADEO half-turns and glances up along
the staircase, checking that the coast is clear. His shoes
in one hand, he tiptoes out of the house.

EXT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S BENTLEY CONTINENTAL - NEAR RUSHMAN
GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT -
SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RENZO tiptoes closer to the Bentley. RICH finally notices
him. For a few seconds the two are mutually transfixed.

Then, a small light flashing in his hand, RICH points
something at the basement-parking door. The engine awakens
as the door rolls up. The Bentley surges forward, lurches to
a halt. It turns, shoots through the door, which is rolling
down again even as the Bentley can be heard screeching to a
halt inside, then lurching off yet again.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAWN - 1882

Huge sacks of produce are off-loaded from squeaking
wheelbarrows. Cursing and shouting in a babel of languages,
a world of merchants - Syrian, Russian, Chinese, Italian,
Greek, Armenian, Portuguese - battle to outbid each other.

AMADEO looks on in utter fascination, studying the art and
science of the deal. Shaking his head in wonder, and smiling
with pleasure, SCATENA comes over.

SCATENA

Aren't you tired, Amadeo?! You
still have to go to school, you
know!

AMADEO
 (beaming)
 Don't you worry, Pop. I'll manage
 all right.

AMADEO looks off into the distance, as if mapping out his future.

INT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RAÚL, GENE and CHRIS peer out through the glass doors at what seems to them a deserted street. They shrug, then, bantering and smiling, stroll back towards reception.

EXT. - NEAR RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BASEMENT PARKING ENTRANCE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

ROSARIA, having rung off, has come back for RENZO.

ROSARIA
 (coolly amused)
 The rich man in the Bentley was
 doing what?

RENZO
 He had a gun to his head, mom! A
 gun, a real gun, mom! I swear!

ROSARIA
 Really, Renzo, what an imagination
 you have. He was obviously on his
 phone. Just like me. Can't you tell
 the difference, sweetie, between a
 gun, and a cellphone? Hmm?

RENZO
 Like duh, mom!

ROSARIA
 Renzo, I really don't have time for
 this. It's late. Let's get on home.
 Oh and now you've gone and made me
 forget the news! About Zia Erminia!

RENZO
 Zia?! What news, mom?!

ROSARIA
 Remember that A.P. Giannini
 assignment you had last month?
 Well,

(mixed feelings)
Zia Erminia has just been awarded
an ... A.P. Giannini Fellowship!

RENZO
Wow, mom! An A.P. Giannini award?!
That's so cool! ... But I thought
Zia was a doctor, mom! Not a
banker!

ROSARIA
(wearily amused)
I'll explain later. Oh and I could
have been a doctor like my sister,
you know! If only that deadbeat dad
of yours hadn't gone and got me -!

She starts scratching in her bag, as if looking for something. He touches a finger to an eye, as if removing a speck of dust.

INT. - SCATENA'S OFFICE - L. SCATENA & CO. - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAY - 1882

Rubbing his eyes incredulously, SCATENA riffles through the pile of papers on his desk.

SCATENA
All these new orders - where are they coming from?! I don't know these farmers! I've never solicited their business!

BOOK-KEEPER
(shrugging)
It's a mystery to me too, boss!

Writing in the background, his school bag tossed to one side, AMADEO (12) is hunched over Scatena's desk. Smiling to himself, he scrutinizes the penmanship of a business letter he has just finished: "... DO BUSINESS EXCLUSIVELY WITH L. SCATENA & CO., AND WE GUARANTEE YOU HONEST PRICES ON THE BARRELHEAD, AND QUICK SERVICE..."

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Having settled in again, CHRIS sets down his newspaper and reaches for his cocoa. He is just about to have a sip, when he notices RICH on a security monitor. RAÚL does too, and GENE comes over.

On the monitor, RICH comes out of the elevator on the third floor and slouches dejectedly along the passage towards his office. He suddenly appears on another monitor as he reaches his office door. He hesitates.

GENE

When did he get here?! And where's the briefcase today?! He's not a happy chappy either, is he?!

CHRIS

Can you blame him, with a 13th Baroness von Macbethenberg for a wife?!

GENE shoots CHRIS a dirty look. CHRIS, smirking, ignores him.

On the monitor, RICH holds his head in his hands, lets his arms fall forlornly, and slumps forward. Then, gazing up self-consciously at the camera, he hastily opens the door, and is swallowed up by darkness.

The THREE MEN exchange breathless glances. CHRIS quickly begins to shrug off the whole thing. But RAÚL is so concerned that - for now - he even loses his habitually dry manner of expression.

RAÚL

I've got a bad feeling about this one! Maybe I should go up and check.

CHRIS

(from behind newspaper)
Knock yourself out.

RAÚL sighs, inclines his head to CHRIS, then to GENE, and moves majestically towards the elevators. They look on with a tinge of envy at his impressive stature and physique.

INT. - SCATENA'S OFFICE - L. SCATENA & CO. - NEAR SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - DAY - 1882

The short and slightly built old BOOK-KEEPER comes in, out of breath, but smiling. AMADEO - serenely expectant - is observing him.

SCATENA

(to Book-Keeper)
You got it?

The BOOK-KEEPER smilingly hands SCATENA a premium gold pocket watch and chain.

SCATENA

Amadeo, this ... this is for you!
No-one deserves it more!

Smiling with gratitude and quiet pride, AMADEO accepts the watch, shakes hands with the two men, and excuses himself. SCATENA looks on for a moment, then exchanges a wondering, admiring glance with the BOOK-KEEPER.

SCATENA (cont'd)

That boy is a world-beater, I tell you! A world-beater!

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Bored to tears, CHRIS yawns and slouches in his chair. He checks his mug: empty. He glances at GENE, who puts away his phone, sighs, and picks up his gym bag - finally!

CHRIS shakes his head pityingly, then glances at the security monitors: nothing there. He glances at RAÚL's book: Making Ethnic Choices - California's Punjabi Mexican Americans, by Karen Leonard. Then at the two framed black-and-white photographs on RAÚL's part of the desk. He looks at them more carefully, as if seeing them only now.

In one, RAÚL'S MEXICAN GRANDMOTHER (AZUCENA, 35) proudly and reverently transfers her proxy to A.P. GIANNINI (61).

In the other, AZUCENA (68) stands with snowy-haired, bowed, frail pride outside a "Painted Lady" Bay Area house. RAÚL (7) stands in front of her while she holds him. With deep love and concern, he has half-turned to gaze back at her.

CHRIS

Why doesn't Raúl sell that "Painted Lady" of his grandmother's?! He could have retired years ago!

GENE

(from the elevator; simply)
Raúl will never sell the house his abuelita left him when he was 17.

CHRIS

But what is wrong with the man?!

GENE

(pensively)

She bought the house with B of A stock, you know. That was after she got ill and quit her job as a teller. But with the stock she had left, she still had a good income!

The doors close. The elevator goes down to the basement.

CHRIS

Married men!

Yawning, CHRIS takes up the "Painted Lady" photo, and sighs.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Now those were dividends!

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - NIGHT - 1885

Indomitable even among grizzled and battle-scarred traders, AMADEO (15) hurls himself with fiery, cool integrity into the rough and tumble of dockyard wheeling and dealing, and emerges victorious. SCATENA (35) shakes his head in wonder.

INT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

In the silence, RAÚL listens. Then, quietly opening the door, he looks upon darkness. He waits, his eyes adjusting.

INT. - KITCHEN - SCATENA-GIANNINI RESIDENCE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING - 1885

VIRGINIA (31) is relaxing at the kitchen table. Bent over the stove, SCATENA (35) is tasting the pasta sauce.

AMADEO (15) comes in, and plants himself before them. VIRGINIA, tensing, darts a look of quizzical concern at SCATENA, who shrugs, then slowly sits down beside VIRGINIA.

AMADEO

(serenely determined)

Ma, I've thought about it. And I've decided: school has nothing more to offer me. There's nothing you can say. I'm quitting school, and I'm going to work full time. With Pop.

VIRGINIA

(breathless)

Amadeo, it's wonderful that you have such ... enthusiasm for business. But school comes first. There'll be time for business later.

AMADEO

(quietly unshakable)

Later is too late, Ma. The time is now.

VIRGINIA appeals mutely to SCATENA, who just shrugs helplessly. But he can't hide how pleased he is.

AMADEO has been observing them. He plays his trump card.

AMADEO (cont'd)

But what I will do, Ma, is a three-month course at Heald's Business College: penmanship, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic. It'll be a great help. When I'm working full time. With Pop.

VIRGINIA shakes her head at her own helplessness before a mere boy. A boy SCATENA is gazing at in silent wonder.

INT. - OUTSIDE RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A long, image-covered passage leads all the way to the dimly moonlit office proper, which is open. Halfway down, two doors lead off towards the left: presumably the kitchenette and the bathroom. Becoming visible now in the office are a large desk and a tall wing-backed leather chair turned away towards the window.

INT. - EXAMINATION ROOM - HEALD'S BUSINESS COLLEGE - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY - 1885

AMADEO is the only one taking the exam. The INVIGILATOR glances at his pocket watch: plenty of time to go. He makes himself comfortable. But not for long: AMADEO rises, plunks his test paper down on the table, nods his head with serene confidence, and leaves.

Frowning, the INVIGILATOR reaches for the test paper, flips through it, eyebrows raised. Another STAFF MEMBER enters.

HEALD STAFF MEMBER

Did that Gee-a-ninny boy just write his final exam?! After only a ... month-and-a-half?!

HEALD INVIGILATOR

(pensively)

Yep. Petitioned for an early exam. Said he wanted to get ahead. Said he simply ... didn't have time to waste hanging around here!

HEALD STAFF MEMBER

Well! ... Though I admit I've never met anyone with a memory like his! So then, how did he do?

HEALD INVIGILATOR

(wryly passing the paper)

See for yourself.

The STAFF MEMBER glances quizzically at the INVIGILATOR, then at the test paper. He looks up in speechless wonder.

INT. - PASSAGE - RICH'S OFFICE SUITE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RAÚL moves cautiously and quietly. The images on the walls are becoming more clear.

In one, RICH appears with his long-haired WIFE (CLARA, 40) and their THREE YOUNG CHILDREN. Alongside a Boesendorfer grand piano (Louis Seize model) the family poses beneath a gilt-framed reproduction of the "Stars-in-her-Hair" portrait of the long-haired EMPRESS ELISABETH OF AUSTRIA (SISI). The setting: Aubusson tapestries, Sèvres porcelain, and Louis Seize furniture, all clashing deliciously with modernistic paintings and sculptures.

Hyper-beautiful, hyper-thin, hyper-confident, hyper-elegant, hyper-refined, and hyper-sophisticated, CLARA stands aristocratically tall and upright. With not a single hair out of place, she scrutinizes the viewer as if to say: "I'll ... let you know!"

RICH sits gazing up at her in adoration, but also as if terrified of not being good enough. The THREE YOUNG CHILDREN - seated or rather arranged about their parents on the Savonnerie carpet - look up to Clara as Rich does.

In another image, CLARA wears the paraphernalia of a physician and stands at the focal point of two lines of

INTERNS forming a V-shape. They too look at her in the now familiar attitude.

In the next image - captioned and double-underlined with a red felt-tip pen - "The BARONESS PANNONICA ROTHSCHILD DE KOENIGSWATER aka the JAZZ BARONESS, 37" and "GR-GRANDMAMA: the 10th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 35" are on 52nd Street, proudly flanking a spaced-out "THELONIOUS MONK, 33" and a beatific "CHARLIE PARKER, 30". Standing before the latter - and half-turned to gaze back at him in romantic fascination - is "GRANDMAMA: 11th BARONESS, 14".

The next image: a large framed reproduction of the famous painting of FRANZ LISZT - self-consciously in profile - seated at a Boesendorfer concert grand piano, before the EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEPH, the EMPRESS SISI, and a select group of ROYALS and NOBLES. A red arrow and a double-underlined red caption identify a PARTIALLY OBSCURED FACE IN THE FOURTH ROW as "GR-GR-GR-GR-GRANDMAMA: the 7th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 20".

And the final image: in a large silver frame there is a small press clipping of "ENRICO CARUSO, 32" in an antique shop, with beside him "GR-GR-GR-GR-GRANDMAMA: the 7th BARONESS von ORSENBERG, 53, NY, 1905".

RAÚL

Hmm. Not the sort of wife, or the sort of family, you want to disappoint!

RAÚL continues cautiously down toward Rich's office.

EXT. - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - DAY - 1887

On horseback, trotting cautiously through the ruggedly dangerous but fertile terrain, AMADEO (17, tall, powerfully built) munches on bread and Parmesan cheese.

Cresting a hill, he looks down at his destination in the distance: a large farm. He smiles with anticipation. Then something catches his eye: far down the road, a cloud of dust. A rival merchant is heading for the very same farm!

At once, AMADEO stuffs the remains of his meal into his knapsack. He considers, eyes searching over the terrain. As matters stand, his rival will beat him to it...

INT. - INSIDE RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

In the semi-darkness, RAÚL edges quietly round the desk, towards the tall, wing-backed leather armchair turned towards the window. On the desk, two gilt-framed photographs lie face-down. The three computer monitors are all dead.

Jutting out beyond the back of the armchair, only RICH's right elbow can be seen.

RAÚL hears a deep sigh, followed by the sound of a SAFETY-CATCH BEING CLICKED OFF. Alarmed, yet calm, RAÚL flicks on the light.

EXT. - A MARSH - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - CALIFORNIA - DAY - 1887

AMADEO has an idea. He quickly tethers his horse to a tree. Then he undresses, and holding his clothes above his head, begins to wade across the marsh.

INT. - INSIDE RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

The armchair abruptly swings round, to reveal RICH - wide-eyed, blinking - with his pistol pointed at RAÚL.

RAÚL raises an eyebrow ... like an adult surprised at the unaccustomed naughtiness of a well-behaved child.

EXT. - FARM ACROSS FROM THE MARSH - SACRAMENTO VALLEY - DAY
- 1887

To his chagrin, the RIVAL MERCHANT pulls up just as AMADEO - beaming - comes out of the front door with the farmer, and concludes the deal with a handshake.

INT. - INSIDE RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Gulping with embarrassment, RICH hastily sets down the pistol. RAÚL clicks the safety-catch back on, and sighs.

RAÚL

Mr. Rich, with respect - I think
you have some ... explaining to do?

INT. - PEWS - SUNDAY MASS - CATHOLIC CHURCH - NORTH BEACH -
DAY - 1892

AMADEO (22) sports a neatly trimmed handlebar mustache and a Prince Albert coat. Resting beside him on the pew are his top hat and gloves. His elegant walking stick is propped up against the back of the pew in front of him. He is the center of much whispering attention.

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW

A fine young man! And so principled! And yet they say that for L. Scatena & Co. he generates \$100,000 a year!

WOULD-BE WIFE

(yearningly)

No wonder, mother dear, that he's already made partner!

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW

(conspiratorially)

Well, a fine partner he'll make for you, my dear! And that is a truth universally acknowledged! ... So then - patience! Patience!

INT. - INSIDE RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RAÚL, sipping coffee, waits patiently in one of the two chairs in front of Rich's desk, upon which is another coffee cup, covered with a saucer.

RAÚL swivels his chair round, to see RICH padding in, toweling his hair dry. Barefoot, in trousers and shirtsleeves, RICH has evidently just taken a cold shower. He tosses the towel over the hat-stand and hunkers down in the free chair before his desk. He remains awkwardly silent.

RAÚL

When you're ... ready, Mr. Rich.

RICH

OK. OK... I'm still trying to ... get my ... head round what just ... what ... almost ... happened...

RAÚL

By all means, take a moment.

RICH

I'm ... all right... Where to start? ... OK. Long story short, my wife's family, you see, are Austrian Nobility. Well, Lower Nobility - but don't tell my wife! Anyway, they used to own this 18th-century ... "palais", they call it. Smaller than a palace. Bigger than a villa.

RAÚL

In Vienna?

RICH

Exactly. Anyway, the Austrian Empire collapses. New Socialist government. The Nobility lose their titles but keep their money. In practice, though, with ruinous property taxes, they can't maintain their -

RAÚL

Palais in Vienna?

RICH

(sighing and sipping)

Exactly. However, an opportunity arose lately, you see, to buy it back. Present owner's a history buff and not desperate for money. Offered us a bargain price: \$12 million ...

RAÚL

A bargain if ever I heard one.

RICH

... as long as we paid cash and within 6 months. So, to please my wife, I worked and traded my ass off, scraping together \$10 million.

RAÚL

That's a lot of scraping.

RICH

Anyway, I was wondering how to get the other \$2 million. Then, by strange coincidence, some associates of my wife's approached me to invest \$10 million for them.

(MORE)

RICH (cont'd)
 Preferably in some sort of
 community project.

RAÚL
 Which presumably didn't end well.

RICH
 Not exactly... Anyway, of course I
 said no. But then they offered me a
 clear 20% commission on whatever I
 made above the principal...

RAÚL
 But the ... deal went ... bad?

RICH
 Let's just say I ... foolishly put
 too much faith in the power of
 central banks to control the
 markets! ... You see, my aim was to
double the money. So as to earn
 that last \$2 million for the
 palais.

RAÚL
 Which presumably you didn't.

RICH
 (almost a whisper)
 I lost everything... \$10 million.

RAÚL
 Ouch. That probably won't win you
 any popularity contests.

RICH
 (self-justifyingly)
 Well as someone said - I forget
 who: "A banker is never popular!
 People are always suspicious of
 bankers!"

RAÚL sighs softly to himself. RICH hunches over, covers his
 face, and slowly shakes his head.

INT. - PEWS - SUNDAY MASS - CATHOLIC CHURCH - NORTH BEACH -
 DAY - 1892

WOULD-BE-WIFE covers her face. Because AMADEO only has eyes
 for CLORINDA CUNEO, a sweet-throated singer in the church
 choir. CLORINDA rises for her solo: the Bach-Gounoud "Ave
 Maria". She is attractive, petite, graceful, and demure.

WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW
 (to would-Be-Wife)
 There-there, dear! Amadeo can
 forget about Clorinda! You see,
 Clorinda is already engaged!

AMADEO has overheard, but he is undaunted: at last, a new
 challenge! WOULD-BE-WIFE, deluded, uncovers her face.

INT. - INSIDE RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK -
 FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

RICH is still hunched over in the same position. RAÚL, who
 stands gazing out of RICH's window, turns round.

RAÚL
 You know, Mr. Rich, you modern
 bankers could take a leaf out of
 the book of A.P. Giannini.

RICH
 (peeking through fingers)
 That name... It's ... vaguely ...

RAÚL
 I rest my case.

RICH
 (straightening up)
 I seem to have ... seen that name,
 somewhere here in San Francisco.

RAÚL sits down pensively in Rich's chair.

RAÚL
 My late grandmother used to work
 for Giannini, you know, as a
 teller. She revered him, spoke of
 him constantly. Bought his stock
 each and every chance she could...
 (sighing deeply)
 ¡Oh, mi querida abuelita! ...
 (self-consciously)
 Anyway, would you ... like me to
 ... tell you a little about
 Giannini?

RICH
 If you like... By the way, aren't
 you ... hot in that ... turban?

RAÚL

A Sikh never removes his turban in public... Anyway, A.P. Giannini -

RICH

Giannini! That's how I know his name! You see, my wife Clara, in her mid-20s, won an A.P. Giannini medical Fellowship! She conducted ground-breaking post-doctoral research, you know, into hemophilia!

RAÚL

Felicitations. However, just round the corner, at 555 California St, we also have ... A.P. Giannini Plaza? Bank of ... America?

RICH - stunned - palms himself on the forehead.

RICH

What an idiot! Of course! Of course! How could I have forgotten?! ...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - DINING-ROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - CALIFORNIA - NOON - 1905

RICH (V.O.)

... Amadeo Giannini! The victory of integrity over corruption! A bank - and a banker - for the people! All the people! ... A just and noble legacy, ignobly betrayed...!

AMADEO P. GIANNINI (35 years and 7 months) is a tall, powerfully built man of juggernaut force, drive and determination. Yet he is calm, courteous, grounded, and sagacious, even if at times overly suspicious. He is also a man you cross or betray at your peril.

GIANNINI is at lunch with his devoted but exasperated wife CLORINDA (36 years and 9 months - though she would never admit it); his stepfather LORENZO SCATENA (55); and his surviving children: CLAIRE (1 year, in a high chair); VIRGIL (6 years); LLOYD (7 years and 9 months); and MARIO (11 years). MARIO is surreptitiously reading the Finance section of The San Francisco Call, dated Sunday, December 3, 1905.

Also present are two trusted bank employees: ARMANDO PEDRINI (35) and ETTORE AVENALI (24).

As the MAID brings in the soup, CLORINDA is frowning at GIANNINI: as usual, even at table, he is talking business.

GIANNINI

So then, Pop, boys, if I remember correctly -

PEDRINI

If you remember correctly, boss! Figuriàmoci!

GIANNINI

(chuckling)

Anyway, in just one year, our deposits have risen from an initial \$8,780 to over \$700,000. For total assets of - roughly - \$1,021,290 and 80c. Correct?

PEDRINI, AVENALI and SCATENA chuckle together. GIANNINI exchanges a glance with SCATENA, then fixes PEDRINI and AVENALI with a stern gaze of admonition.

GIANNINI (cont'd)

However, remember, boys - we must never forget the Little Fellows who made us! We must continue to serve sincerely, with progressive but unselfish policies. With lofty but practical banking ideals. With goodwill toward all... That is true banking progress!

PEDRINI and AVENALI nod yes. MARIO is paying attention.

GIANNINI (cont'd)

In any case, if we now extrapolate

-

CLORINDA

Amadeo, really! There's a time and a place for ...! And Mario ...!

MARIO sheepishly hands the newspaper to the MAID. GIANNINI winks at him, then checks the time on his gold pocket watch, on its gold chain. At this, SCATENA's eyes moisten. So, after an exchanged glance, do GIANNINI's.

MARIO, noticing this, looks inquiringly at his father, who is just about to explain...

DEEP INSIDE THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

... Somewhere deep beneath the sea off San Francisco and deep beneath the Earth. The Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries grind and shudder together in a mini-orgasm...

INT. - DINING ROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

... Cutlery is set a-quiver on plates and saucers. Everyone is staring breathlessly. The quivering stops. They nervously laugh it off. GIANNINI strokes his mustache.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S OFFICE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Beneath a photograph of Fire Chief D. T. Sullivan (53), a display case holds a full-size ceremonial trumpet of solid silver. It is adorned with silver dolphins and coral pieces, and bears an engraved inscription to the Chief from a Mrs. Rainey. An accompanying embossed card pays stirring tribute to his leadership, humanity, courage and foresight.

As if being sounded inaudibly by some unseen presence, Chief Sullivan's silver trumpet begins vibrating.

EXT. - JEWELRY STORE - SUTTER STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The street is rocked by a strong but short-lived earthquake. While nearby buildings show no damage, the display windows of the jewelry store begin to crack, fall and shatter. Through the gaping holes jewelry, like ripe fruit, is there for the plucking. But the streets are completely deserted.

INT. - ST DOMINIC'S CHURCH - CORNER OF STEINER AND BUSH STREETS - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

THE REVEREND DRISCOLL is just ending a fiery sermon to his electrified congregation.

REV. DRISCOLL

How long, how LONG must we hold our noses against the stench of vice, the odor of corruption?! But the Trumpet, the Trumpet shall sound! And Christ shall come again, with signs great, and fearful, and -!

A sudden ominous rumbling. Timbers creak and groan. Then the church is rocked by a strong but short-lived earthquake.

WOMEN swoon. MEN fall to their knees. CHILDREN run out screaming. DRISCOLL lifts his arms rapturously to Heaven.

INT. - BASEMENT - CITY HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - (AFTERNOON)

Leaning against a wall, someone holds up before his face a copy of The San Francisco Call, dated Tuesday, April 17, 1906.

On the front page, beneath the photograph of aggressively bald and bearded orchestral conductor Alfred Hertz, a brief article announces tonight's appearance by Caruso and Fremstad in Bizet's Carmen.

The person reading the paper is revealed to be the JANITOR (PROFUMO, 50s). His long nose is clamped shut with a peg. About him are various brooms, mops and buckets.

Idly munching on a sandwich, PROFUMO scans the sports pages and whistles with disgust. He turns forward and his attention is held by a headline on page 5: "RUEF TO FIGHT FOR HIS PLACE". He reads out aloud, in an Italian accent.

PROFUMO

"There will be an attempt made
Wednesday to dispense with the
office of grand trustee, now held
by A. Ruef. Ruef is here to ...
safeguard his own interests"!

PROFUMO freezes: someone is coming.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

City Boss ABE RUEF (42) steps down smartly into the basement. He is followed closely by MAYOR EUGENE SCHMITZ (42). Both men recoil at once, holding their noses - SCHMITZ somewhat more energetically than RUEF.

RUEF has an air of noblesse-oblige courtliness. He is highly educated, intelligent and charming. But he hypnotizes you with a vaguely sinister and predatory gaze.

SCHMITZ is tall and good-looking. But his posture is somewhat hunched, as of a man disappointed in himself.

PROFUMO
 (greeting)
 Mr. Ru-ef. Mayor Schmitz.

PROFUMO has straightened up and thrust the sandwich into a pocket. As if doffing a hat to his superiors, he politely removes the peg. Grimacing, he at once replaces it. Then he vainly tries to hide the newspaper behind him with one hand, while wiping his mouth with the back of the other.

SCHMITZ is still holding his nose, and his mouth is twisted to one side. He stares with forlorn revulsion at the never-ending ooze of leaked sewage licking about their soles.

But RUEF seems nonchalantly determined to raise himself above this squalor. Smirking, he removes a long and almost invisible fiber from SCHMITZ's jacket, at the shoulder. As if awakened from his torpor by this action, SCHMITZ at once assumes a take-charge manner.

SCHMITZ
 Come on, Profumo! [He pronounces it "Pro-fume-o".] Don't just stand there, man! Clean up your act!

PROFUMO
 Sissignore! Yessir, Mr. Mayor sir!

PROFUMO plunks down his crumpled newspaper on a stool. Then, grimacing, he applies himself manfully to the hopeless task.

RUEF has soon had enough. Unlike SCHMITZ, he no longer holds his nose. With stylish nonchalance, he consults his gold watch. Then he notices the crumpled newspaper, still open at page 5, with his name in the headline. He smiles affably.

RUEF
 Oh, Profumo [he pronounces it "Pro-foo-mo"] - don't believe what you read in the papers. Ask anyone. They'll tell you. Ruef stands for the common man! Ruef stands against those money-grubbing bankers!

PROFUMO
 (politely indignant)
 But-a scoos-a me, Mr. Ru-ef sir! What bout-a Mr. Giannini, sir?! [He pronounces it "Jahn-nee-nee".] You must-a admit-a, Mr. Ru-ef, sir: Mr. Giannini, 'e is a true banker for-a thee people!

RUEF
 (darkening)
 Bankers and banking, Profumo, are
never ... "for-a thee people!"
 (to Schmitz; brightly)
 Life goes on, Eugene! See you
 tonight! At the opera!

RUEF leaves smartly, whistling "Toreador" from Carmen. The tune reverberates up the stairwell, dying, step by step, into silence. SCHMITZ slowly shakes his head.

SCHMITZ
How could I forget?! Caruso!

In the bg., PROFUMO's eyes are closed in bliss above the rising filth. Still wearing his nose-peg, he inwardly replays Caruso's best-selling record of "Vesti la giubba".

INT. - LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - THAT EVENING

The tall, powerful, beautifully groomed and brooding figure of A.P. GIANNINI is like the eye of an electric storm of anticipation. Swirling all around him, San Francisco high society has turned out in full force to be a part of history with Caruso, Fremstad and the Metropolitan Opera Company.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The lobby is a genteel battleground, where gowns of lavender satin, embroidered lace, brocaded silk, pink chiffon and messaline are pitted against pearl necklaces, emerald dog-collars, diamond tiaras and ermine-trimmed opera coats.

[NOTE: Many of the faces in the crowd will be seen again in subsequent scenes - but in very different circumstances.]

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI, with long-suffering CLORINDA beside him, is talking animatedly to some BUSINESSMEN.

[NOTE: There are clues in the body language of GIANNINI and CLORINDA as a couple that their relationship is one of profound togetherness - despite superficial and provisional impatiences and irritations.]

In the bg., City Boss ABE RUEF is holding court among his "ENTOURAGE": MAYOR SCHMITZ, standing slightly apart; and several members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors: GALLAGHER (Chairman), REA, NICHOLAS, PURRI, LONERGAN, COFFEY, McCUSSHIN, and SANDERSON.

GIANNINI

Look, the "Boodle Board" is in session! What a long, long way Abe Ruef has fallen since his student days! Down, down, down from the starry-eyed heights of his Municipal Reform League!

As if having overheard this remark, RUEF & CO. interrupt their conversation to peer at GIANNINI from across the room. He contemptuously turns his back upon them. Looking on, FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN (54) smiles with glee.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Discreetly estranged couple ELEANOR and JIM (a doctor) are in the company of LOTTA, a notable chatterbox. LOTTA is pleasantly plump and primly dressed. She has Italian features, but with blond hair tied in a bun, and freckles. Uncharacteristically silent and self-conscious, LOTTA can read the estrangement of the couple in their body language.

In the bg., ATTILIO "DOC" GIANNINI (32) exchanges strained greetings with his elder brother A.P., much the taller man. ATTILIO rides on the balls of his feet, as if to give himself more height. Then he even turns slightly away from A.P., as if hoping to avoid a direct comparison with him.

LOTTA finally breaks the oppressive silence.

LOTTA

Oh look, there's Prof. William James! Oh and there's that banker, A.P. Giannini! His bank is just round the corner from my ... Oh, you know the one! You remember, doctor!

JIM

A.P. Gee-a-ninny... He's vaguely ...

LOTTA

It's pronounced "Jahn-nee-nee", doctor! Like "Jool-yah-nee". Not

(MORE)

LOTTA (cont'd)

"Gee-oo-lee-ah-nee"! Sorry to be such a school-marm! Oh and that's his brother, Attila. Attilio! He's a doctor too, you know! But I hear the two of them aren't very ... You can even see that by their body lang-!

(blushingly changing the topic)

Anyway, as I was saying about A.P. You remember, Ellie, and I'm sure you do, doctor! A.P. put Boss Buckley out of business!

ELEANOR smiles her faraway, bittersweet smile. It is not clear if she does in fact remember. JIM is also far away.

LOTTA

That was before he founded his bank, though. Back then - under City Boss Christopher "Christ Himself" Buckley - we were officially the most corrupt city in America! But A.P. Giannini wouldn't stand for that, no sir! He stood up to that big bad blind bully Buckley! And he made us all believe that we could too! And next thing you know -

(sing-song voice)

bye-bye Buckley!

ELEANOR stares at GIANNINI with newfound interest and respect. And JIM is starting to remember.

LOTTA's eyes suddenly widen. She discreetly indicates to ELEANOR that CLORINDA is pregnant.

LOTTA (cont'd)

But let's hope that, this time, there are no ... complications!

(confidentially)

You see, I hear that ... she too -!

ELEANOR and JIM have gone pale. LOTTA, stunned at her own indiscretion, belatedly covers her big mouth.

LOTTA

Oh Ellie I'm so ...! I didn't ...!
I wasn't ...! I can't begin to ...!

ELEANOR
 (fighting back tears)
 That's ... quite all ... right,
 Carlotta ... dear. Excuse me, I ...
 need a bit of ...

Stifling an urge to reach out for the support of JIM's arm,
 and rummaging blindly in her bag, ELEANOR brushes past the
 mortified LOTTA, and disappears into the throng.

JIM looks away awkwardly, sorrowfully, absently.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF
 So then the Joiner says to the
 Panel Beater: "Well, if you can't
beat 'em, it certainly pays to join
 'em!"

Laughter. Then they all look pensively across at GIANNINI.

SUPERVISOR PURRI
 They say Giannini is a ... man of
 destiny! With - some would say -
bizarre notions of democracy!

SUPERVISOR REA
 Well, I know he makes no
 distinction between his customers,
 rich or poor!

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN
I hear he started his own bank in
 the first place because he refused
 to ... adapt his thinking ... to,
 well, traditional banking
 practices!

A troubled shaking of heads.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI
 But as I was saying, gentlemen, a
 banker must know when and how to
 grant credit. I myself received
 excellent training, you know, in my
 father Scatena's grocery commission
 (MORE)

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 business. You see, in order to
 grant crop financing to farmers -

CLORINDA noisily clears her throat. GIANNINI observes her discreetly. Then he catches sight of PEDRINI and AVENALI, who wave to him from across the lobby. CLORINDA's shoulders sag and her head falls to her chest.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF & CO. are discreetly observing GIANNINI & CO.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 They say Giannini's boys have the
 ... "Royal Disease"!

RUEF
 And here I thought Giannini was a
 man ... "for-a thee people"!

General sniggering - except for SUPERVISORS REA and PURRI.

SUPERVISOR REA
 Excuse me, gentlemen! But having
 children with hemophilia is no
 joke!

The sniggering is snuffed out. In the bg., AVENALI and PEDRINI have joined the GIANNINIS. CLORINDA suffers PEDRINI to kiss her hand.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 But is it really true that Giannini
 accepts as customers a riff-raff of
 decorators, carpenters,
 blacksmiths, bakers, hackdrivers
 and saloon-keepers?!
 (to fellow-Supervisors)
 No offense.

For there have been sour smiles in turn from SUPERVISORS REA (a decorator), NICHOLAS (a carpenter), PURRI (a blacksmith), LONERGAN (a baker), COFFEY (a hackdriver) and McCUSSHIN (a saloon-keeper).

RUEF
 Apparently Giannini has this
 radical concept of the "Character
 Loan"! As if a man's thrift,
 ambition and work ethic can count
 as collateral!

They are thinking about it. Except for GALLAGHER.

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 And he calls himself a banker! And
 he calls himself a businessman!
 What right-thinking banker would
ever take the risk of banking on
 his very own community?!

A pensive exchange of glances.

SUPERVISOR PURRI
 Well, even though Giannini takes
 risks on the Little Fellows, he is
also strangely cautious. For
 instance, I hear he stores up to
 \$80,000 in overnight bank cash at
 the vaults of the
 Crocker-Woolworth!

SUPERVISOR LONERGAN (THE BAKER)
 (rapaciously)
 Now that's a lotta dough!
 (covering tracks)
 Not that I need it!

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER
 Obviously, Giannini manages his own
 bank. And yet he has installed, as
 bank president, his own stepfather:
 Scatena, a glorified greengrocer!
 (to Sanderson)
 No offense.

SUPERVISOR SANDERSON smiles back sourly.

RUEF
 Anyway, I hear Giannini's Board of
 Directors also includes a
 confectioner and an undertaker!

Sniggers all round: luckily, there are no confectioners or
 undertakers among them.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
 FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI
 (to Pedrini & Avenali)
 Perhaps you boys had better pick up
 the overnight cash a bit earlier
 tomorrow. We don't want to be too
 (MORE)

GIANNINI (cont'd)
predictable to the criminal
element!

PEDRINI
Whatever you say, boss.

GIANNINI
Are you ... yessing me?!

PEDRINI
(clearing his throat)
Who, me, boss?! Uh by the way,
boss, why isn't our own safe good
enough?!

GIANNINI is glaring at him. PEDRINI stares at his feet.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

While FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN keeps a beady eye on him, POLICE
CHIEF DINAN keeps a beady eye on his DETECTIVES. In uniform
and in plain clothes, they mingle among the BEJEWELLED
SOCIALITES. At a nod from DINAN, the USUAL SUSPECTS are
discreetly escorted away from temptation.

All of this goes unnoticed by the SOCIALITES, several of
whom have made a point of greeting their favorite JEWELER.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The 7th BARONESS VON ORSENBERG (54) is just leaving the
JEWELER. An ACQUAINTANCE of his looks on, then joins him.

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE
The Baroness von Orsenberg?!

JEWELER
In persona! ... They're thinking of
moving here, you know! Permanently!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE
And their ... palais ... in
Vienna?!

JEWELER
They'll always have that. The jewel
- exempli gratia - in their crown!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE

Which reminds me! Did the Police ever catch the would-be burglars of your jewelry store the other day?!

JEWELER

Oho, listen to this! You remember how cracked my store windows were? Well, Police investigation revealed that my building is out of plumb! Id est, not burglars, but subsidence!

JEWELER'S ACQUAINTANCE

Subsidence! Well now! Makes sense, though. I mean, in parts of San Francisco you could drill down 200 feet before striking bedrock!

JEWELER

Hmm! Certainly gives you that old sinking feeling! ... Absit omen!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A CLIQUE OF SOCIALITES are discreetly keeping an eye on the gowns and jewels of RIVAL CLIQUES.

In the bg., more BUSINESSMEN approach GIANNINI. They nod respectfully to CLORINDA, shake hands with GIANNINI and, in hushed tones, begin an earnest discussion with him.

CLORINDA rolls her eyes. GIANNINI, it seems, doesn't notice.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Isn't it just dreadful about this awful Vesuvius-erupting business over there in Naples, Italy!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Of course we in America, dear, have far too much sense to allow such things to happen here!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE

You took the words right out of my mouth, dear.

NAIVE SOCIALITE

But please let's not lower the tone, with such talk of catastrophe!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Yes, it's so un-American, isn't it?

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE

You took the words right out of my mouth, dear.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

BUSINESSMAN #1

(shaking hands)

In short, A.P., I think that company has just the right sort of profile!

GIANNINI

Well, we can't allow technicalities to stop us meeting human needs!

The BUSINESSMEN leave at last. CLORINDA sighs with relief.

In the bg., JOHN BARRYMORE (24) is wafted in late on elegant fumes of alcohol. A HIGH SOCIETY CROWD - including ATTILIO "DOC" GIANNINI - at once gathers round him.

CLORINDA

Speaking of profiles, look at your brother making a beeline for Barrymore!

Now it is GIANNINI who rolls his eyes.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

BARRYMORE

Sorry I'm late, darlings!

(to Attilio)

What's up, "Doc"?

Laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

BARRYMORE

Anyway, darlings, I've just come. At I mean from À La Bordelaise, where I had the creamiest, most tender loin!

Hoots of scandalized laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

BARRYMORE (cont'd)

(to Attilio)

Um "Doc", would you mind coming round to my left? You see, my right profile looks like a fried egg! I always try to keep the best apples on top of the barrel, you know!

More laughter. ATTILIO is forced to join in.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA

(scolding affectionately)

Amadeo, I really hope I can have just one evening without having to share you with your bank!

GIANNINI

(taking her hand)

Scusa, amore mio! I'll do my best not to think about business!

CLORINDA smiles back politely. Someone catches her eye.

CLORINDA

Oh look, Amadeo, there's Blanche Partington, the critic! She's so sharp and witty! In her review of Mr. Dippel's performance she writes: "It is a pity someone can't buy him a voice. He would sing so well"!

GIANNINI suddenly has a faraway look.

CLORINDA

It was that "buy", wasn't it?

GIANNINI smiles back innocently.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

An OVERDRESSED SOCIALITE flounces by, entirely unaware that her jewel-encrusted tiara is slowly losing its moorings.

Looking on are Critic BLANCHE PARTINGTON (40) and an educationally disadvantaged but aesthetically sensitive ACQUAINTANCE (JANE DOE, 20s).

JANE

When she sees herself in a mirror,
she'll go red as a high-pressure
Ashbury fire hydron!

BLANCHE the critic politely refrains from any grammatical criticism. Across the room, meanwhile, orchestral conductor ALFRED HERTZ is trying to attract her attention.

JANE (cont'd)

Oh there's Maestro Hertz, Blanche!
Wasn't he just triffic last night
in The Queen of Sheba?! Lookit him
beaming at you like a bearded
billiard ball!

BLANCHE

(amused; nodding at Hertz)
Hmm. Perhaps he read my review.

JANE

Oh he did, Blanche, he did! 'Cos
you sure can write!

BLANCHE modestly takes a bow. JANE looks around, entranced.

JANE (cont'd)

What a triffic atmosphere! I can't
wait to hear the great Caruso!

BLANCHE

Ditto! But as for Fremstad, is she
really right for the part? The last
thing we need is a reformed Carmen!

JANE

"A reformed Carmen"! Triffic,
Blanche, triffic! Now you be sure
and put that in your review!

BLANCHE

Hmm... Perhaps I will!

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

A sophisticated, statuesque, curvaceous REDHEAD (30s) glides by. She is gorgeously gowned in green, dazzlingly bejeweled, and perilously seductive. CLIENTS acknowledge her - discreetly! - by the name of COCO.

BLANCHE wickedly hums a few measures of the "Habanera" from Carmen.

JANE

Well, she's in no imminent danger
of reformation!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

COCO nods in greeting at RUEF, but takes care to avoid the searching glances of POLICE CHIEF DINAN.

Catching sight of a dignified PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY, she coyly fans herself in his direction.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY smiles back sheepishly at COCO. He quickly turns back to his party, which includes his OBLIVIOUS WIFE. But he just can't resist snatching lustful glances at COCO. She discreetly taps her watch at him, before gliding off to mingle. The PILLAR turns to his WIFE.

PILLAR

Oh by the by, dear - 'fraid I'll -
ahem! - have to do an all-nighter
again! Can't be helped!

OBLIVIOUS WIFE

Dear, really, at your age! Anyway,
you won't believe how much I'm
dying for some steaming hot cocoa!

PILLAR

(growlingly)

Oh me too, dearest! Me too!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

RUEF

No, no - Giannini is just a small-time hustler! I mean, for a banker to go round soliciting for new clients! So undignified! So -!

They are interrupted by a well-dressed and charming FURTIVE FAT MAN. He slips RUEF a proportionately fat envelope, winks, and disappears. RUEF pockets the envelope with a practised hand. SCHMITZ and the SUPERVISORS - except for REA - look the other way.

In the bg., GIANNINI, shaking his head, has seen everything, as has FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN, beside his WIFE (MAGGIE). [NOTE: MAGGIE SULLIVAN's face is always obscured during ACT I.]

RUEF (cont'd)

(to Gallagher; confidentially)

We'll uh settle up later, Jimmy!

GALLAGHER knows the ropes. LONERGAN, gleeful, rubs his hands together. SCHMITZ is blushing. REA is outraged.

SUPERVISOR REA

(inhaling; formal)

Pardon me, Abraham, Mayor Schmitz, Chairman Gallagher, gentlemen! But I feel I must protest! I am an honorable man! A man with a fam-!

SUPERVISOR GALLAGHER

(to Rea)

Lou, Lou, please! This isn't the Municipal Reform League, you know!

RUEF

(darkening)

Gentlemen, if you don't mind! Now is neither the time nor the ... place!

They glance around self-consciously. An awkward silence.

INT. - AN ALCOVE - THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

POLICE CHIEF DINAN won't stop giving searching glances to COCO. She considers, sighs, shrugs, steels herself. Smiling professionally, she glides over to him.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

COCO discreetly retrieves \$75 from her bodice and slips it to DINAN. He raises an eyebrow. She sighs, shrugs, smiles, and hands over another \$25. Satisfied for now, DINAN pockets the cash with a practised hand, and returns to his ... official duties.

Once again, GIANNINI and SULLIVAN have seen everything.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

NAIVE SOCIALITE is stealing half-envious, half-admiring glances at COCO.

NAIVE SOCIALITE

I've never been able to understand
what that Coco woman does exactly!

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

Who? Oh you mean Miss "Tenderloin"!
Well, you didn't hear it from me,
(glancing at Barrymore)
but I have it from an impenitent
man of the world that Coco, my
dear, "works" in a "French
restaurant"! You know, with
dirt-cheap gourmet meals
downstairs! And exorbitant private
"supper bedrooms" upstairs!

NAIVE SOCIALITE looks blank.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE

She's a ... magdalene, dear.

NAIVE SOCIALITE looks even more blank.

WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE (cont'd)

Oh for goodness sake, dear! Coco is
a high-class ...
"horticulturalist"!

NAIVE SOCIALITE blinks in puzzlement at first. Then as comprehension dawns, her eyes widen, her mouth gapes, and her fan goes into overdrive.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In the bg., CLORINDA relishes having GIANNINI to herself.

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN

I hear that Giannini likes having the Little Fellows as stockholders! However, he strictly limits the quota of stock allowed to company insiders - himself included!

Astonishment, bafflement and even indignation.

In the bg., yet more BUSINESSMEN approach GIANNINI. They nod respectfully to CLORINDA. Shaking hands with GIANNINI, they begin an earnest, hushed discussion with him.

SUPERVISOR SANDERSON

Well, you didn't hear this from me, but at his bank, Giannini doesn't even ... pay himself a salary!

Groans of anguished incredulity.

SUPERVISOR REA

Apparently he feels he simply doesn't need any more money!

SUPERVISOR LONERGAN

Doesn't need any more money?! ... Now that's tragic!

In the bg., CLORINDA, at the end of her tether, throws up her hands. GIANNINI, sighing, gives the BUSINESSMEN a discreet throat-slitting gesture. They make themselves scarce. GIANNINI smiles innocently.

RUEF

What is wrong with him?! Giannini could be the richest man in America!

SUPERVISOR PURRI

Hmm. It seems Giannini really does believe that serving the needs of others is the only legitimate business!

SUPERVISOR COFFEY

But who can get anywhere with such a shortsighted philosophy?!

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Under FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN's gaze, RUEF & CO. - now joined by POLICE CHIEF DINAN - look across at GIANNINI, who contemptuously holds his nose at them, then turns his back.

SULLIVAN nods with glee, then begins striding purposefully towards them. RUEF - too late - turns his back on GIANNINI.

GALLAGHER

Uh-oh! Here comes that
proctological pain of a Fire Chief!

Groaning, they brace themselves.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

SULLIVAN is in no mood for small talk.

CHIEF SULLIVAN

Gentlemen - if you'll pardon the expression! Gentlemen, San Francisco is due an earthquake, and a fire! So then where-oh-where is our auxiliary water supply?! You mark my words! One of these fine mornings -!

RUEF

Chief. Chief. Why all this fuss?

SULLIVAN

(sighing)

Abe, in this city, whole districts are built on filled-in marshland! Forty-Niners who are still alive say that in their day the Bay waters came right up to Montgomery Street!

RUEF

Oh Montgomery-Montshtomery!

SULLIVAN

(painfully polite)

Abe, you forget that it's in this treacherous filled-in marshland that our precious water pipes -!

RUEF

Oh pipe down, will you, Chief!

General sniggering. SULLIVAN turns to SCHMITZ.

SULLIVAN

Eugene, even your City Hall is founded on landfill! And with all those building-material monies having been ... "diverted to other uses" - why, the very walls of City Hall are but newspaper and garbage!

RUEF

(through gritted teeth)

Sullivan, when will you learn to stop ... blowing your own trumpet?!

Sniggers from the SUPERVISORS and POLICE CHIEF DINAN.

SCHMITZ

(conciliatory)

Chief, we all appreciate your ... enthusiasm. But be reasonable! The city is surrounded on three sides by the waters of the Bay! So what can we possibly need more water for?!

Sniggers and nods of agreement. GIANNINI, having caught this last remark, sadly shakes his head. SULLIVAN is sighing.

SULLIVAN

Mayor Schmitz, it has always amazed me that a fine fiddler like you has ended up playing second fiddle to a bunch of ... fiddlers like these!

SULLIVAN turns his back upon them and leaves. DINAN is furious. GALLAGHER & CO. are scowling. RUEF smiles would-be nonchalantly. SCHMITZ and REA stare sheepishly at the floor.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE LOBBY - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE

Well, isn't it exciting, Baroness?! It certainly took effort! But at last San Francisco also has Caruso!

THE BARONESS VON ORSENBERG

It voss a chob vell done, my dear!
 But now zat San Francisco finally
hass Caruso, San Francisco must
 make sure zat Caruso stayss!

INT. - STAGE - OPERA HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Don José (CARUSO, 33) has just heard the bugle. He nervously informs an imperious but Nordically non-seductive Carmen (FREMSTAD, 35) that duty is calling him away from her. Disgusted, dismissing him as a coward, she gives him his marching orders. For good measure, she contemptuously throws his hat, sword and bandolier after him.

Hearty laughter from the AUDIENCE, including GIANNINI and CLORINDA - seated in the middle of the auditorium.

CLORINDA discreetly strokes her baby-bump. GIANNINI, smiling at her with tender solicitude, gently takes her hand.

INT. - RECREATION ROOM - AGNEWS ASYLUM - SANTA CLARA VALLEY
 - A WHILE LATER

NURSES and ATTENDANTS notice that many of the PATIENTS have become restless and uneasy. Peering down at the ground, they explain that the demons of the underworld are up to no good.

With ONE EXCEPTION, the NURSES exchange patronizing, knowing glances.

INT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE RECREATION ROOM - AGNEWS ASYLUM -
 SANTA CLARA VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

To one side, a PROFESSORIAL PATIENT - his hands clasped behind his back - examines the walls. He shakes his head.

PROFESSORIAL PATIENT

No-no-no-no-no! This particular House of the Unhinged, this Asylum of Loose Screws, is not so well put together. Not so well put together at all! And I should know! I'm a mason! ... And once the Big Bad Wolf starts to huff and to puff and to -!

HEAD NURSE

That will do, Mr. Brickman! ...
 Bedtime! Bedtime for everyone!

NURSES and ATTENDANTS shepherd the muttering PATIENTS out.

INT. - PARLOR - CARUSO'S SUITE - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - ALMOST 3 A.M.

On a mantel in the bg. a SIGNED PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT takes pride of place.

Wearing an elegant dressing gown, CARUSO kneels on the Persian-carpeted floor. An antique coffee-table before him holds a large, open scrapbook. In it he has been placing reviews of the previous evening's performance of Carmen.

Beside the scrapbook, in a pile, are neatly mutilated copies of the early newspapers, dated Wednesday, April 18, 1906. CARUSO has almost finished clipping out the last review - Blanche Partington's - from The San Francisco Call.

MARTINO - his valet - knocks, and enters with warm milk.

MARTINO

Good reviews, Maestro?

CARUSO smiles modestly. MARTINO, unsatisfied, makes conversation, while trying to get a glimpse of the reviews.

MARTINO (cont'd)

Fancy hotel, eh, Maestro! And so safe too, they tell me here! Mr. Ralston, the founder, you see, gave this hotel its very own water supply! So it's fireproof, for sure! And as for earthquakes -!

CARUSO is glaring at him. MARTINO covers his big mouth, and makes himself scarce.

CARUSO shakes his head as if waking himself up from a nightmare. Then he finishes clipping out Blanche's review. With quiet self-satisfaction, he reads out a sentence:

CARUSO

"He made one forget that it was only an opera"!

CARUSO gives the review a big smacking kiss and places it lovingly in the scrapbook.

He glances at his gold watch and his eyes widen: 3 a.m. He yawns, as if prompted by the watch. He closes the scrapbook, and yawns again - this time, unprompted.

He gets up, rubs his legs, stretches, and moves towards his bedroom. Suddenly pensive, he pauses at the door.

CARUSO (cont'd)

Only an opera?!

He shrugs, yawns, and goes in.

INT. - ENGINE HOUSE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The HORSES are strangely skittish.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A WHITE CAT takes up its KITTEN from the basket and escapes through the side-door catflap out into the street.

EXT. - GROUNDS - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

The night is clear, with a crescent moon. Restless GUARD DOGS begin howling for no apparent reason.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI is fast asleep in bed, and CLAIRE, in her crib. Outside, in the distance, dogs bark and howl. Without waking up, GIANNINI grunts, then turns over on the other side.

CLORINDA's place in the bed is empty, and her bedside lamp is on. After a few moments, she comes in from the bathroom. Checking on CLAIRE in her crib, she takes off her elegant satin dressing gown, under which she wears a silk nightdress in pale blue. She drapes the dressing gown over a chair at the foot of the bed, and slips back under the covers.

GIANNINI sleepily wakes up. CLORINDA glances at CLAIRE.

CLORINDA

Go back to sleep, Amadeo... If only these blessed dogs would be quiet!

GIANNINI

Apropos, I read that, like Vesuvius, Mount Rainier is quiet now.

COLORINDA

Good news! At last! Curious, though, how all these volcanic systems and whatnot seem somehow interconnected.

GIANNINI

Yes, perhaps, beneath the surface, everything is connected. Who knows - perhaps even human beings!

COLORINDA

Hmmm. Not so you'd notice! ... Oh thank goodness! Those dogs have finally stopped howling!
(flicking off the light)
Ah! Peace! And quiet!

Eyes closed, they snuggle up blissfully together.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RICH

Wow! And this is just hours before the Great 1906 Earthquake, right?!

RAÚL

Calm down. Let's see what happens.

RICH

You ... sure you won't ... take off your turban? ... Just for a bit?

RAÚL

Sikhs never remove their turbans in public... But let's get back to Giannini...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - BEFORE DAYBREAK - APRIL 18, 1906

COLORINDA and CLAIRE are still fast asleep. GIANNINI is sitting up in bed with a cup of coffee.

He sets down the cup on the bedside table and reaches for his book. It is St. Bonaventure's Life of St. Francis, in the 19th-century English translation by Cardinal Manning. Pencil in hand, GIANNINI makes underlinings and brief annotations while he reads.

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In a corner is a music stand with a closed music score of J.S. Bach's Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin. Nearby on a closed upright piano, a closed violin case gathers dust.

Upon the walls, photographs of SCHMITZ as violinist, orchestral conductor and President of the Musicians' Union recall long-gone days of pride and high-minded independence.

Sitting anguished at his desk and still in his dressing gown, SCHMITZ sets down his pen and hunches over in his wing-backed leather chair. One hand is clamped over his mouth. The fingers of the other nervously tap out some empty tune. He shuts his eyes tight. His open briefcase and a pile of underlined newspapers lie unseen before him.

INT. - CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN is snoring contentedly. Then - without waking - he frowns, sighs, and turns over on the other side.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In two frying pans, a WIFE (JILL) cheerfully prepares a breakfast of fried bread, eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, and pork sausages.

Sitting with his legs up on a bench at the kitchen table, her equally cheerful HUSBAND (JACK) is looking over Blanche Partington's Caruso review. Neither of them has noticed the empty cat basket.

JACK

Listen to this, Jill dear! "The audience forgot ... everything but the electric performance of Caruso, the wonderful"!

JILL

I told you, Jack dear! We really
should have made the effort to go!

JACK gazes wistfully out of the window. JILL cheerfully turns up the gas.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The gas street lighting is being turned off.

Absently whistling a few measures of Bizet's "Habanera", a policeman strolls into view over the crest of a hill. He stops, catches his breath, yawns, and looks around.

The rising sun blinks sleepily through the early-morning mist, its rays tingeing the sails of the fishing boats with a sinister orange luster.

The streets are deserted except for a few early risers, who pick their way ruefully among the horse droppings.

A produce wagon clip-clops past. Blithely, the blinkered horse further complicates the pedestrian obstacle course.

Cable cars roll drowsily into motion. A milk delivery wagon clatters by.

The policeman sighs contentedly and, continuing on his rounds, whistles another few measures of the "Habanera".

INT. - SUPPER BEDROOM - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT
- DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In nothing but black high-heels and red lace underwear, COCO bends over provocatively before the dressing-table mirror. She begins foraging in a drawer for her lipstick.

In the carved four-poster bed behind her, the PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY reluctantly wakes up to reality. Last night's sottishly climactic smile is still plastered all over his face. He sees COCO and his smile is disfigured into a leer.

PILLAR

(growlingly)

Come to papa, my little cup of
coquette! My little cup of cocotte!

COCO answers with a titillated, musical, half-comprehending giggle. Then, righting herself, she brandishes the lipstick like a prize morsel.

COCO
Bottoms up!

INT. - ENGINE HOUSE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS
LATER

For no apparent reason, the HORSES suddenly neigh in fright,
then break out of their stalls.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Hordes of RATS pour out from the sewers of the city. In a
dark, writhing, loathsome, frantic mass they scurry away
towards the waterfront.

Hopelessly outnumbered, a WHITE CAT, looking on, sets down
its kitten upon the sidewalk, and ruefully licks its lips.

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE ST - SAN
FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Miaowing, a BLACK CAT pads past the study door. SCHMITZ
opens his eyes and looks round in a daze. Taking a very deep
breath, he flips through the underlined newspapers: in
article after article, San Francisco Bulletin editor Fremont
Older openly implicates Mayor Schmitz and City Boss Abe Ruef
in systemic bribery and corruption.

SCHMITZ hunches over his desk and sighs mournfully. His
brows are furrowed. His eyes are moist. His hands are
pressed together over his lips as if in supplication.

EXT. - OVER THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

From deep within the Earth a sullen, malignant rumbling
starts to rise.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA and CLAIRE are still sleeping, and GIANNINI is
still reading and annotating his biography of St. Francis.

At once the windows rattle. Quivering upon its saucer, the
cup spills the dregs of the coffee over the brim. The
chandelier swings lightly to and fro above Giannini's head,
and so does the chiming mobile above Claire's.

Giannini's pencil hangs over an image of St. Francis.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

JILL

Just another minute now, Jack dear,
and I can turn off the gas.

(giggling)

Oh do read that Fremstad bit again!

They still haven't noticed the empty cat basket. Or even the pans quivering on the stove.

EXT. - CEMETERY - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

Trees and shrubbery are swaying, as if under a strong wind. Like an eerie domino chain reaction, tombstones topple over in different directions.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

JACK

(giggling)

Found it, Jill dear! "Fremstad ...
is temperamentally at war with the
role... We don't want a re- ..."

(giggling uncontrollably)

"... a re- ... a reformed Carm-!"

The two frying pans rattle madly over the gas. JILL stares at them in wonder. JACK, his giggles throttled in his throat, looks up from the newspaper in alarm.

INT. - SUPPER BEDROOM - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The room is violently shaken, along with the PILLAR's leer and COCO's lipstick-applying hand.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

A sudden lull. Wild cries echo along the corridors, together with demonic laughter and the sound of the violent patients rattling their cell bars.

SECURITY GUARDS and MEDICAL STAFF freeze in utter panic.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

CLORINDA moves restlessly in her sleep. CLAIRE, chuckling and gurgling, stretches out her little hands in wonder towards the mobile which chimes and dances above her.

GIANNINI is glancing anxiously over at CLAIRE and CLORINDA, when another and stronger tremor strikes. He looks down at the book to discover that his pencil has inscribed a sort of "seismogram" over the image of St. Francis.

Outside, crazed church bells are ringing. CLORINDA groggily wakes up.

CLORINDA
What's happening, Amadeo?!

DEEP INSIDE THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - MOMENTS LATER

Somewhere deep beneath the sea off San Francisco and deep beneath the Earth. With the monstrous mating clash and cry of two prehistoric beasts, the Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries grind and shudder together in a cataclysmic orgasm.

EXT. - THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Fences, tunnels, water pipes, dams, roads, bridges, railways, and other structures crossing the fault line are displaced, deformed, raised, and ruptured. Like matchsticks, trees are snapped in two. Like a toy, a train is tipped over.

INT. - MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE -
SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

A silver-framed photograph of an infant topples off a shelf.

Immaculate, and tragically empty, a crib bounces petulantly up and down upon the floor, breaking its casters.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO -
MOMENTS LATER

A convulsion throws GIANNINI and CLORINDA from their bed. But CLAIRE, though crying, is still wrapped securely in her crib, which has just managed to remain standing.

GIANNINI crawls towards CLORINDA and CLAIRE. Then, holding CLORINDA in one arm and CLAIRE's crib in the other, he looks anxiously towards the door.

INT. - FIRE ALARM STATION - CHINATOWN - MOMENTS LATER

The city's fire alarm system consists of glass jars holding wet cells. All of this topples down and shatters.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S OFFICE - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Chief Sullivan's ceremonial trumpet of solid silver crashes out of its display case to the floor, along with the embossed card which sings his praises in vain.

INT. - FIRE CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SULLIVAN is startled awake. His eyes goggle with horror.

INT. - CABLE CAR - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A lone PASSENGER is going slowly uphill. Suddenly perplexed, he looks down: How can it be? From beneath his feet, the little cable car seems to be making the noise of a monstrous freight-train!

Despite himself, he turns to look back. Recoiling in shock and clutching feverishly at a handrail, he gapes in rooted horror as the street comes up after him in waves.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NEW YORK

Rocked and lulled by loving waves, CARUSO drowsily looks around. It doesn't surprise him in the least to find himself out at sea on an oarless rowing-boat. Clad in nightshirt and nightcap, he stretches out languorously on his back.

He waves a dreamy, smiling goodbye to the rapidly receding STATUE OF LIBERTY. She winks back like a 1906 Iggy Azalea.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Wharves laden with food tilt seaward and slide into the bay. Nearby, the ground subsides - or rises - by several inches. Like riverbeds in a drought, the streets crack open.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

From deep below the surface come frantic exclamations in Cantonese, and heartbreaking screams.

EXT. - ST DOMINIC'S CHURCH - CORNER OF STEINER AND BUSH STREETS - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The church is rapidly falling into utter ruin. Looking on, while clinging in desperation to the heaving earth, the REVEREND DRISCOLL - on this occasion - is not enraptured.

INT. - WILLIAM JAMES'S BEDROOM - THE JAMESSES' COTTAGE - STANFORD UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - MOMENTS LATER

A sinister, soul-invading, soul-possessing rumble fills the air. Plaster is cracking. Objects crash down from shelves and ledges. Chests and bureaus slide around and topple over. Yet PROF. JAMES (64) kneels in glee upon his bed.

WILLIAM JAMES
At last! At last! A real
earthquake!

A convulsion knocks him flat on his face. He lifts himself with effort back into a kneeling position. But he is still beside himself with scholarly delight. Something occurs to him. He looks towards the door.

WILLIAM JAMES
(to himself)
Alice!

INT. - CHIEF SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

While the room gyrates all about him, CHIEF SULLIVAN holds on for dear life to the railings of his bed. But at the same time he too is looking anxiously towards his bedroom door.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - ADJOINING BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Unbeknown to CHIEF SULLIVAN, the dome and chimney stacks are shaking ominously above him.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NAPLES

Holding on to the sides of his bobbing little boat, CARUSO squints out dreamily into the ominous, rumbling beyond.

Out of the darkness, Vesuvius rears up, haloed by eerie blue lightning which briefly illuminates the sea and the sky and the dully-red lava snaking lazily towards Naples.

Bathed in a sullen red glow, CARUSO sighs, shrugs, and contentedly shuts his eyes.

INT. - BATHROOM - BARRYMORE'S HOTEL SUITE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Holding a half-full whisky glass, BARRYMORE pads in unsteadily, barefoot and naked under his loosely tied dressing-gown. As the world rocks and heaves about him, he wags a finger of indulgent warning at the whisky glass.

He staggers blithely towards the shuddering mirror. Before it - his face contorted, his eyes squinting askew - he labors to compare his left and right profiles. The room suddenly convulses.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

Still holding his whisky glass - now half empty - BARRYMORE peers around in a boozy haze. To his mild surprise, he finds himself lying flat on his back in the bathtub, with his legs and elbows draped over the rim. Shrugging, BARRYMORE raises his glass to the bathtub.

BARRYMORE
Well hello, stranger!

INT. - STUDY - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S RESIDENCE - FILLMORE ST - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The piano lid is rattling and the piano strings are vibrating sympathetically. Jolted out of his gloomy reverie, SCHMITZ needs a few moments to register what is happening.

The longcase clock has stopped. The chandelier - all gilt - swings squeakily to and fro. From the mantel a heavy vase crashes to the floor. A portrait of one of his dour-faced ancestors brusquely turns its back on him. The music-stand teeters, but does not topple over.

SCHMITZ stares at the underlined newspapers. He stares at his briefcase. He stares at his dressing-gown.

He stares at his Bach score, now jolted open. He swivels round to stare at the rattling piano lid, and at his violin case, now shaken free of dust.

Like a man who has found his mission, SCHMITZ rises steadily, despite the shaking.

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

With enormous difficulty, an anguished but determined CHIEF SULLIVAN edges along the heaving passage.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - ADJOINING BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The dome and chimney stacks are just minutes from toppling.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Amid a stampede of cows, horses, dogs, cats and chickens, thousands of hysterical, half-naked Chinese - with terror-crazed children and random possessions in their arms - escape from Chinatown towards Portsmouth Square.

EXT. - ON A BOAT - OUT AT SEA WITHIN SIGHT OF NAPLES AND SAN FRANCISCO

Still bobbing on his little boat, CARUSO is not in the least surprised to find Naples now within sight on his right, and San Francisco, on his left.

But he is surprised when - with an Iggy Wink - the ROMAN GODDESS LIBERTAS rears up out of Mount Vesuvius, her skin green, her breasts bared, her head crowned with a pileus of thorns. She reaches out all the way across the Atlantic, and across the North American landmass.

Seizing San Francisco in her now prehistorically predatory jaws, she shakes it with awe-inspiring ferocity. Then, with her torch, she coolly sets it alight.

CARUSO scratches his head in utter mystification.

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR -
BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN is still edging grimly along.

EXT. - A ROOF - (GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO) - MOMENTS
LATER

A chimney collapses, damaging the roof. But the building,
though shaken to its foundations, is still standing.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

A piece of plaster falls from the ceiling and hits the
dozing CARUSO in the face. Without moving, he cautiously
opens first one eye, then the other.

All around him, the room is twisting out of shape, and the
chandelier is swinging wildly in all directions.

CARUSO
San Fran-CESCO!

INT. - PASSAGE - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR -
BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF SULLIVAN, panting and grimacing, is now only yards
away from MAGGIE.

MAGGIE (OFF)
Dennis! ... Dennis! ... For God's
sake, DENNIS...!

SULLIVAN
(choked voice)
Almost ... there ... Maggie!
(clearing his throat)
Hold on!... Just ... hold on! ...
I'm ... almost ... ALMOST ...!

INT. - OUTSIDE A BEDROOM DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The door is thrown open. A woman, not particularly afraid, comes forward to embrace someone. That someone is WILLIAM JAMES; the woman, his wife ALICE.

EXT. - ROOF - CALIFORNIA HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The dome and chimney stacks finally collapse upon the adjoining fire station.

INT. - OUTSIDE MAGGIE'S BEDROOM DOOR - THE SULLIVANS' QUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Just as CHIEF SULLIVAN is opening MAGGIE's door, he, she, and the entire third floor go crashing all the way down to the cellar.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

Floors sag and frozen clocks stare down in apoplectic muteness from bulging walls. Liquids spill from their containers, and sash windows are wrenched up by invisible hands. Loose objects crash to the floor; hanging objects swing crazily to and fro. Like paper plates, a piano and a strongbox skitter across the floor; yet feather-light vases, though shaken, hold their places.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

At last the cracked walls crumble, the roofs cave in, and the buildings of the Asylum complex - not so very well put together after all - crash to earth in a pitiless blizzard of glass shards, dust and rubble. Several staff members and scores of patients are killed instantly.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

With the bedroom rocking and quaking all about him, CARUSO labors to open an upper-floor window. Succeeding at last with an heroic effort, he leans out. Covering his ears, unsure if he is fully awake, hoping and wishing that he isn't, he goggles in disbelieving horror.

EXT. - BELOW CARUSO'S BEDROOM WINDOW - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Buildings dance drunkenly upon their foundations, then crumble and crash to earth in tinkling clouds of dust. Over the heaving, fissured streets, HALF-NAKED PEOPLE stagger, stumble, crawl and clamber about in seasick frenzy and confusion.

A dazed, bleeding YOUNG WOMAN reaches out towards a wall for support; the wall moves back as if refusing it.

From sheer terror, a tattered, wild-haired and bruised OLD WOMAN drops stone dead.

A WORKER carrying a No Exit sign is buried instantly under tons of masonry.

Holding their noses with one hand, several PEOPLE point with the other towards leaking gas mains.

And at once several buildings burst into flames.

INT. - CARUSO'S BEDROOM - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

As CARUSO staggers back from the window, his entire life flashes before his eyes:

... A straitened childhood in the shelter of Vesuvius... The hungry, candle-lit years of studious obscurity... Street-singing for his supper, shivering and down-at-heel... His proud first purchase: a new pair of shoes... The mulish, thick-skinned, one-shirted struggle for recognition ... Vindication, triumph, glory, rare stamps, and tax bills... The ignominious eviction of Don José.

INT. - MAIN BEDROOM - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

On the floor, GIANNINI holds CLORINDA and THE THREE BOYS safe in his wide embrace; they, in turn, hold on tight to CLAIRE'S CRIB. (CLORINDA, grimacing, clutches at her belly.)

While a sinister roaring takes possession of the soul of things like some insidious malignancy, the room heaves and tosses and groans like a passenger ship at sea. Sliding ottomans and bureaus compress the Persian carpets into waves. Rosaries and paintings rattle against the walls. Family photographs topple over in their frames. Cabinet panes crack and shatter, spilling precious books and

keepsakes all over the floor. China ornaments and alabaster statuettes are offset, maimed, and smashed.

Yet in the very midst of all this mayhem, GIANNINI murmurs tender words of calm and of comfort to his terror-stricken family as they ride out the earthquake.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

With a gigantic sighing shudder, the shaking stops.

The air seems tinged with bluish yellow. The streets are a tangle of wreckage and of live-wires, which wriggle like electric snakes spitting out spiteful blue sparks.

Crushed and mangled HUMAN AND EQUINE CORPSES lie scattered everywhere. But here and there SOME CORPSES are pristine, except for the burn mark of an electrocuting live-wire.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - OAKLAND POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #1 checks that his COLLEAGUES are unhurt. All his dials and controls seem to be working.

CHIEF ENGINEER #1
Phew! That was close! At least the
power is still ...!

Something has occurred to him. Galvanized, he hastens to switch off the power for the whole of Oakland.

His COLLEAGUES stare at him in wonder. Then they understand.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 checks that his COLLEAGUES are unhurt. All his dials and controls seem to be working.

CHIEF ENGINEER #2
Phew! Looks like it's all over now,
boys! And we caught a lucky break:
the power ... is still on!

General relief, backslapping, and high-fiving.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A MOTHER and CHILD are anxiously searching for someone. Stumbling into live-wires, they are instantly electrocuted.

INT. - CELLAR - BUSH STREET FIRE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

FIREMEN look on anxiously as MEDICAL PERSONNEL extricate CHIEF SULLIVAN and MAGGIE from the rubble. Her injuries are not life-threatening. But he looks in very bad shape.

The FIREMEN exchange glances of despair.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Frenzied with terror, a herd of cattle stampede from Sixth and Folsom Streets into Market Street. Several people are gored or trampled to death.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Most SURVIVORS are still in their nightclothes, or are wrapped only in bedsheets. One or two are stark naked. And they all seem anesthetized by a nightmare from which they cannot or will not awake.

In among them, STREET URCHINS merrily run, each wearing several hats, gold rings, and pearl necklaces.

INT. - KITCHEN - JACK & JILL'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen is in complete disarray, with smashed crockery on the floor, and drawers of cutlery shaken free from their cabinets.

The gas stove has toppled over, strewing the intended breakfast of fried bread, eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, and pork sausages over the walls, skirting-boards and floor.

But worst of all, the curtains are burning. Trying desperately to beat out the flames, JACK and JILL succeed only in spreading them to the rest of the kitchen.

Despairing, they run for their lives.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Many buildings are ruined or lean together like drunkards unsteadily supporting each other. And yet, nearby, other buildings seem strangely untouched and, indeed, untouchable.

THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

After several minutes of shocked, quivering speechlessness, SURVIVORS begin finding their voices: muttering; gibbering; weeping; screaming; praying, their arms and their streaming, tight-shut eyes raised to Heaven.

Scrambling to their feet, they stumble about in all directions. In their shock and confusion, some are unaware that their bare feet are being cut by shards of glass. Clutching at their heads, clutching at their hearts, they forlornly call out the names of loved ones.

Some are scandalized or amused by the scantiness of their dress. Others risk going back home to change. A gallant but discreetly titillated GENTLEMAN offers his overcoat to an exuberantly curvaceous LADY clad only in lace underwear.

TERROR-STRICKEN CHILDREN cling to any OLDER PERSON at random.

A BLOODSTAINED, WEEPING MAN tenderly bears in his arms the MANGLED BODY OF HIS WIFE.

DRUNKARDS - still clutching billiard cues - stumble out of "McCusshin's Saloon". Its windows are all shattered.

INT. - UPPER FLOOR - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

HOTEL EMPLOYEES are running around like headless chickens.

Clutching his ROOSEVELT PHOTOGRAPH, CARUSO together with MARTINO, MET COLLEAGUES, and other TERRIFIED PATRONS make for the elevators. Some are dressing on the go. Others are completely dressed except for their shoes. But in the crush, their clothes are almost torn from their bodies, anyway.

SOME WOMEN, noticing their semi-nakedness in cracked mirrors or in the stares of others, hasten back to their rooms.

The elevators don't work. PATRONS make a rush for the stairs, down which they crawl, slide, tumble or jump.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A DAZED WOMAN sits muttering at the side of the road.

DAZED WOMAN

It's the end of the world... We
have no hope... No hope... No hope
... No hope... No hope...

EXT. - FRONT GATE - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

While a NEIGHBORING COUPLE discreetly look on, GIANNINI - in a blue suit - is about to leave for San Francisco. His briefcase rests upon the ground beside him; his hat, upon his briefcase.

With MARIO to his right, GIANNINI carries little CLAIRE on his left arm. She is cooing and playing with his mustache. Facing him, and flanked by VIRGIL and LLOYD, is CLORINDA.

GIANNINI gazes into CLORINDA's eyes. Then he tenderly kisses little CLAIRE and places her in CLORINDA's arms. He kisses VIRGIL and LLOYD on the cheek.

MARIO has tried to control himself hitherto. Now - his eyes moist, his voice broken - he clings to his father.

MARIO

Papà, I don't want you to go! I
don't! I don't want you to go!

GIANNINI

(on one knee; gently)
Listen, Mario. The people who put
their money in my bank are
depending on me to look after it
for them. So I have to go, and make
sure their money, their livelihood,
is safe.

MARIO

(trying to be strong)
I ... understand, Papà.

GIANNINI

(tousling Mario's hair)
Like St. Francis, we must do good,
not just talk about it. Not so?
(rising; severely)
And remember, boys: no running! And
no ball games! Understood?!

The BOYS glumly nod yes. GIANNINI kisses MARIO on the cheek. CLORINDA steels herself.

NEIGHBORING HUSBAND

And you can count on us to keep an eye on them, A.P!

NEIGHBORING WIFE

Oh absolutely!

GIANNINI gratefully shakes their hands. Then he embraces and kisses CLORINDA and CLAIRE.

GIANNINI

I'll be back just as soon as I can.

CLORINDA

Be careful, Amadeo! Do you have enough food and water?

GIANNINI nods yes. He glances at his watch, takes a deep breath, picks up his hat and briefcase. He clasps CLORINDA's free hand, looks again at each of the CHILDREN in turn, then at the NEIGHBORS, then once again at CLORINDA, and sets off.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In the horse and buggy of Giannini's brother-in-law Clarence Cuneo, PEDRINI and AVENALI have just arrived from the Crocker-Woolworth Bank with the overnight cash.

The Bank of Italy building is still standing, as is North Beach in general. Mightily relieved, PEDRINI and AVENALI set about moving the cash inside.

EXT. - CITY HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

ATTENDANTS look on sheepishly. Briefcase in hand and smartly dressed, SCHMITZ stands frowning before the ignoble ruin of City Hall. The surrounding buildings have also been reduced to rubble. SCHMITZ sighs resignedly.

SCHMITZ

Up in 20 years. Down in 20 seconds!
(to Attendants)
Hall of Justice! Follow me!

His briefcase hugged to his body, SCHMITZ strides off in the direction of Portsmouth Plaza.

Taken aback by this newfound independence of judgment and action, the ATTENDANTS quicken their pace behind him.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

Many of the VIOLENT PATIENTS are still alive. Horrifying laughter from their cells mingles with the shrieks and groans of the MAIMED and the DYING.

STAFF stand paralyzed. The PATIENTS are running the asylum.

EXT. - "À LA BORDELAISE" FRENCH RESTAURANT - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Naked and half-naked CLIENTS and "HORTICULTURALISTS" come pouring out of the elegant front entrance.

From an upper-floor balcony, the PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY peers out in horror upon the chaos and devastation below. Equally horrified, still in her underwear, and grotesquely lipsticked, COCO appears beside him.

Their horror only increases when his OBLIVIOUS WIFE, passing below, looks up and sees them. Frozen for a moment in shock, she runs off sobbing, and cruelly cured of obliviousness.

EXT. - NEAR HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Striding along, with his ATTENDANTS still struggling to keep up, SCHMITZ frowns at the sight of LOOTERS working with furtive glee in several ruined and abandoned buildings.

SCHMITZ inhales indignantly and presses on with even greater purpose and determination. The ATTENDANTS, dismayed, scurry after him as best they can.

INT. - TRAIN - NEAR SAN MATEO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The train is moving in fits and starts. GIANNINI stares with pensive impatience at his hat and briefcase, beside him on the seat. The train grinds and shudders to a complete halt. GIANNINI slowly shakes his head.

He gets up and leans out of a window: the train tracks are hopelessly buckled and wrenched from the ground.

GIANNINI picks up his hat and briefcase.

EXT. - TRAIN - NEAR SAN MATEO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

OTHER PASSENGERS look on as GIANNINI clambers down from the train, clamps on his hat, and strides away.

After some hesitation, a PASSENGER follows suit. ANOTHER is thinking about it. THE REST just dig themselves in - as if, by magic, the train will start moving again at any moment.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Gas mains have ruptured. Burning oil lamps, oil stoves and gas stoves have been overturned. Many fires have started and are quickly spreading.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The sun has not fully risen, but the air is tinged with a lurid glow from the east: the warehouse district is aflame.

EXT. - COASTLINE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Almost as one, scores of docked vessels slip their cables and discreetly remove themselves from danger.

INT. - READING ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - relaxes in a wing-backed leather chair. Lightly holding a yellow-jacketed French novel, he takes a sip from a cup of steaming cocoa.

Noticing him, an ATTENDANT approaches, eyebrows raised.

ATTENDANT

Uh excuse me, sir! But aren't you a
... doctor, sir?!

MEANS

Navy Surgeon Means, at your
service!

ATTENDANT

Uh then may I ask, what are you
doing here, sir?! Surely your
services are required ... outside!

MEANS

Which, my good man, is precisely
why you find me here waiting for
orders!

And with that, MEANS languorously returns to his novel. The ATTENDANT is still staring at him in disbelief.

INT. - LT. UDELL'S ROOM - NAVAL HOSPITAL - MARE ISLAND -
MOMENTS LATER

MARINE LT. UDELL has got out of bed and has almost finished changing into his uniform. Upon the unmade bed, a book lies open, with a bookmark inside it.

UDELL reaches down for his book - Emerson's The Conduct of Life. Setting it on the bedside table, he suddenly doubles up with pain. But gritting his teeth, he starts making his bed - with quiet, calm, efficient determination.

A NURSE passes by, does a double-take, and enters.

NURSE

Lt. Udell, what d'you think you're
doing?! You are in no condition to
go anywhere!

UDELL

(leaving)

That's where you're wrong, Nurse.
But I'll be back. In due course.

Following belatedly, the NURSE looks on wide-eyed as UDELL strides down the passage.

NURSE

But you have Bright's Disease!

UDELL

(brightly)

Well, don't tell him or he'll want
it back!

EXT. - WAGON - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN
FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

With his hat and briefcase on his lap, GIANNINI sits on the back of a wagon: the only one going toward San Francisco.

WAGON DRIVER
 (pulling up)
 This is where I turn off, mister.

GIANNINI
 (alighting)
 No problem. You've been a big help.
 Thanks and a good day to you!

His briefcase swinging, GIANNINI strides away.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Rousing themselves from their torpor, SURVIVORS begin to make the effort to help both themselves and others: calming the frantic; freeing the imprisoned; relieving the injured; recovering the bodies of the dead.

INT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - MOMENTS LATER

ATTENDANTS use sledge-hammers to break open the mangled iron cell doors of the VIOLENT PATIENTS, some of whom tear free from their RESCUERS, who give chase.

OTHER PATIENTS, looking on excitedly, dare to make their own wild, screaming dash for freedom.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

From his briefcase, SCHMITZ removes the underlined copies of the San Francisco Bulletin, and tosses them into the trash.

INT. - FIRE STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Traumatized FIREMEN begin to rouse themselves.

FIREMAN #1
 Come on, boys! Let's not give in!
 Let's do this for the Chief! It's
 what he would have wanted!

General assent. They spring into action, but have great difficulty hitching their terrified horses to the steam-pumping engines. Besides, the engine house is so damaged that it is impossible to move some engines at all.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

From surrounding districts, fire engines hasten to the rescue.

On sidewalks and in the streets, flame-spitting live-wires writhe. FIRE TEAMS run into them, and HORSES are instantly electrocuted.

OTHER FIREMEN run up, and earnestly discuss the problem.

EXT. - SEVENTH STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A wholesale drug house explodes, throwing up a multicolored cloud of particles high into the air.

On WOMEN and CHILDREN below, the particles then fall as scalding rain.

EXT. - NEAR SEVENTH STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

FIREMEN hurriedly unwind their hoses and connect them to hydrants. There is an initial rush of water. Which quickly peters out into a trickle. And then ... nothing.

INT. - CONTROL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO POWER STATION - MOMENTS LATER

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 glances at his dials and controls. Something is beginning to bother him. He glances round at his COLLEAGUES. Something is beginning to bother them too.

CHIEF ENGINEER #2 twists his mouth to one side.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The live-wires go dead.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Useless fire engines are removed to outlying districts or simply abandoned.

Fires spread unchecked. Helpless and hopeless, FIREMEN look on. A pall of black smoke hangs over the business district.

SOME FIREMEN, succumbing to despair and to the gas fumes, collapse upon the ground. OTHER FIREMEN run to help them, then point out of the source of the problem.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

FIREMEN systematically identify the gas leaks. Then they desperately try to plug them with anything they can find.

EXT. - FRONT ENTRANCE - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

While the sky fills with smoke and cinders, thousands of distraught DEPOSITORS - many only scantily clad - clamor to get their money out. But a FEW among them - including JACK and JILL - want to take gold and other valuables in.

Unnoticed by JACK, JILL and the DEPOSITORS, PICKPOCKETS are coolly and callously exploiting their distraction.

INT. - LOBBY - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Overseen by sweating BANK OFFICIALS, SECURITY STAFF check that the doors are firmly secured against the "intruders".

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

His briefcase swinging with rhythmical determination, GIANNINI strides onwards. Without stopping, he tears a piece of bread from within the briefcase.

Peering ahead, GIANNINI sees convoys of wagons approaching in the distance. Frowning and chewing, he presses on.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Pen in hand and quietly self-satisfied, SCHMITZ is looking over a handwritten list on his desk. Beside it is a handwritten sheet entitled "MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION".

ASSISTANT

(knocking, then peering in)
General Funston and Police Chief
Dinan are here, sir.

SCHMITZ

Ah! Send them in!

Still blinking in wonder at this "new" Schmitz, the ASSISTANT flashes an uncertain smile and shuts the door.

SCHMITZ sets down the pen and leans back in his chair. He is now the very picture of the Man in Charge.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

FUNSTON (40) and DINAN, seated before SCHMITZ, are looking around as if expecting them to be joined by someone else.

SCHMITZ
(irritated)
Shall we ... begin, gentlemen?!

FUNSTON and DINAN exchange a discreet glance.

SCHMITZ (cont'd)
General, Chief, it has come to my attention that certain ... elements are cynically exploiting this disaster for their own ends!

Tut-tutting from DINAN and FUNSTON.

SCHMITZ (cont'd)
The public looks up to us for leadership and protection! We must get tough on crime!

DINAN
With you all the way, Mr. Mayor!
All the way! What the city needs is sanity, and sanitation!

The pint-sized FUNSTON, lifting himself to a somewhat greater height in his chair, nods in vigorous agreement.

SCHMITZ
(looking up from List)
Now then. I propose, first, the immediate closure of all saloons!

Nods from FUNSTON and DINAN. FUNSTON clears his throat.

FUNSTON
However - concerning the uh delicate matter of uh ... Marshal Law ...!

SCHMITZ
Well, legally speaking, shouldn't the ... Governor ...?!

FUNSTON

Is this a time for ... overheated consciences?! We have no choice but to act now! Doubtless, the necessary authorization ... will ... be forthcoming ... in due course!

DINAN

That's the way! That's the way! Now what about looters?

SCHMITZ

Just coming to that! I have here, gentlemen, the draft of a Proclamation which should ... bring the desired results! With your permission, I'll read it out, and I welcome your suggestions.

FUNSTON and DINAN, all ears, move their chairs closer.

INT. - UPPER-FLOOR OFFICE - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN
- SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

BANK OFFICIALS watch discreetly as the DEPOSITORS begin to disperse - with "encouragement" from the POLICE.

Down among the crowd, JACK and JILL are dismayed to find that their wallet and purse are missing.

BANK OFFICIALS, however, are mightily relieved. They return to packing up their books, papers and valuables.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO
- A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI strides past trundling wagons piled high with possessions and REFUGEES.

TWO REFUGEES in particular glance at him as if he were crazy. Shaking their heads, they turn away.

REFUGEE MOTHER

Any case, donchu wirry, son! She'll turn up! She's simwhere safe fir sure! So stop yir wirryin', will ya!

REFUGEE SON

I can't help but wirry, ma! Ya know
how ... highly strung she be!

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS
LATER

Veering towards a COUPLE, a YOUNG WOMAN whispers intensely at them. She seems agitated and depressed at the same time, yet disconnected from her very own agitation and depression.

Staring at her as if she were crazy, the COUPLE back away. Undeterred, she veers towards RANDOM MAN #1.

DISCONNECTED YOUNG WOMAN

You seen my husban', mister? You
seen my mo'er-in-law, that ol'
witch?! My husban' 'd know me
anywhere! Anyhow, anyway, anywhere!
You seen him, mister?! You seen
him?! You seen him?! You seen him?!

But she doesn't even stay for an answer. Veering off, she buttonholes RANDOM MAN #2. He stares at her in alarm, then backs away.

DISCONNECTED YOUNG WOMAN

Why d'y'all think I's royalty?!

Laughing dementedly, she looks around for RANDOM PERSON #3.

INT. - MAYOR SCHMITZ'S NEW OFFICE - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN
FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

FUNSTON

But of course only the military,
Mr. Mayor, has the networks,
training, transportation and
supplies to cope with a catastrophe
such as this!

DINAN is raising an eyebrow at FUNSTON, who ignores him.

FUNSTON (cont'd)

(gleefully rubbing his hands)
And without water to fight the
fire, we shall need ... dynamite!

SCHMITZ
 (balefully)
 I hope you don't intend blowing up
 the mansions of my supporters ...
Brigadier-General!

FUNSTON
 (poisonously)
 Rest assured ... Eugene, that my
 troops will not encroach upon city
 jurisdiction... Except of course
 where absolutely unavoidable!

With an icy smile, SCHMITZ pointedly consults his watch.

SCHMITZ
 (abruptly rising)
 Gentlemen, we've done. For now.

DINAN rises too. But the diminutive FUNSTON, reluctant to show himself at a vertical disadvantage, is still seated. SCHMITZ and DINAN are frowning down at him, and the "Little General" has no option but to rise at last. But "cutting short" any direct comparisons, he nods curtly and is gone.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

There are TROOPS everywhere. They guard banks, discourage looting, prevent people from entering damaged buildings, or escort them out - a perilous job, owing to suddenly collapsing beams and masonry.

EXT. - MCCUSSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN looks on with righteous indignation as POLICEMEN and TROOPS unceremoniously break open his boarded-up saloon and carry out all his liquor.

A band of WINOS - transfixed - is also looking on.

SUPERVISOR MCCUSSHIN
 This. Is. An. Out! Rage. I am a
Supervisor, you know! A personal
 acquaintance of Mayor Ruef!
 Schmitz! Chief Dinan will hear of
this!

Ignoring MCCUSSHIN, the OFFICERS pour the liquor out into the gutters. The WINOS, even more distraught than MCCUSSHIN at such a waste, rush forward and lap up the dregs on hands and knees.

As the OFFICERS look on with headshaking condescension, MCCUSSHIN appeals mutely to the smoke-darkened Heavens.

EXT. - NEAR MCCUSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

A strong aftershock. The façade of a building teeters tipsily, then crashes down into the street, like a drunk passing out. Other structures follow, raising great clouds of blinding, choking dust. In among the buildings, mocking tongues of fire are suddenly stuck out.

Mass panic returns. Any thought of remaining in the city is abandoned.

And thus begins the agonizing exodus to the ferry, to the Presidio, and to Golden Gate Park.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Without stopping, GIANNINI takes some cheese from his briefcase, and munches while peering into the distance.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JACK & JILL sighingly pay a small fortune in gold to a HACKDRIVER (COFFEY) to have their goods transported.

They are just about to start loading, when POLICEMEN arrive and seize their ride. The POLICEMEN are unsympathetic.

POLICEMAN #1

We'll be needing this. To carry the dead and wounded. You understand.

The POLICEMAN rests a hand upon the holster of his pistol - just in case there should be any doubt about his seriousness. JACK and JILL, swallowing, take a step back.

Then they remember their gold and look round for SUPERVISOR COFFEY. He is nowhere in sight.

JACK

(philosophically)

Well, Jill dear, it seems we're stuck in this city. But we still have some gold left, so we can rent. At least it can't get any worse!

JILL
 (through gritted teeth)
 Jack dear, I'll be so grateful when
 you finally learn to stop saying
 that!

EXT. - NEAR MCCUSSHIN'S SALOON - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO -
 A WHILE LATER

POLICEMEN and TROOPS have secretly kept back some of
 McCusshin's liquor. Now, somewhat the worse for wear, they
 scramble up, and disperse with teetering authority.

INT. - ROCKY REALTY CO. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE
 LATER

Ex-boxer ROCKY and some EMPLOYEES are trying to salvage
 ledger books, papers and valuables from the wreckage.

An ALCOHOL-SOAKED SOLDIER literally stumbles in upon them,
 and takes them for looters. Even while they staring at him
 in astonishment, he shoots them down dead.

EXT. - NEAR ROCKY REALTY CO. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A
 WHILE LATER

BARRYMORE - cold sober, his shirtsleeves rolled up - is
 helping TROOPS clear away debris. Further away, OTHER TROOPS
 are dynamiting buildings in the path of the fire.

BARRYMORE
 Right. We've blown up. Where to
 from here?

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO
 - MOMENTS LATER

GIANNINI glances impatiently at his watch, and quickens his
 pace. Approaching him are a group of panic-stricken REFUGEES
 on foot. They transport a bewildering and bizarre variety of
 possessions, using wheelbarrows, wheelchairs, baby
 carriages, go-carts, toy wagons and other improvised
 vehicles. Often they have to stop and pick up articles that
 have spilled out onto the road.

REFUGEE #1
 It's very bad, mister! I promise
 you, whatever you're looking for,
 it's not in San Francisco!

GIANNINI smiles back and presses on. They shake their heads.

EXT. - VAN NESS AVE. - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Bizarrely oblivious of the disastrous reversal in her fortunes, a familiar young OPERA SOCIALITE (LUCRETIA) is seated grandly on the sidewalk. In soiled and tattered robes, with a frying pan for a mirror, she studies her dim reflection with ironically cool objectivity. Her MAID, standing behind her, matter-of-factly arranges her hair.

Another familiar OPERA SOCIALITE (LAVINIA) - with singed hair - is passing by. She gapes at LUCRETIA in alarm.

LAVINIA

Lucretia dear! But what in heaven's name are you doing, dear?!

LUCRETIA

(grandly)

Lavinia dear! Why, what a lovely surprise! But do stay to luncheon!

(giggling hysterically)

Luncheon?! What am I saying?!

Dearie me, my poor mind's gone on vacation! Breakfast, dear! I mean breakfast!

The MAID glances up at LAVINIA and shakes her head. Then, sighing, shrugging, she matter-of-factly goes back to arranging the hair of her grief-crazed mistress.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Parched refugees seek in vain for water at public fountains. A few embolden themselves to drink from a muddy puddle.

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A MOTHER and THREE SMALL CHILDREN are approaching GIANNINI.

LITTLE GIRL

Mommy, I'm so thirsty! Please give me some water! Please, mommy!

MOTHER

There's no water, my angel! The whole city is thirsting for water!

GIANNINI
 (taking out a flask)
I have water! Here, little one!

The LITTLE GIRL gratefully takes the flask, drinks, and is instantly revived. Sweetly asking GIANNINI's permission with a look, she passes the flask to her SISTER, who drinks, and passes it in turn to her BROTHER.

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 That's the way! And here - take these too.

GIANNINI gives the MOTHER the substantial remnants of his bread and Parmesan cheese.

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 I have an apple and some ham left too. But if you don't mind, I still have to walk a long, long way!

He tousles the hair of the CHILDREN. Glancing at his watch, he waves goodbye and presses on. The FAMILY wave back.

LITTLE GIRL
 Mommy, is that nice big tall man taking water to the burning city?

The MOTHER looks up at the dark cloud of smoke rising over San Francisco in the distance.

MOTHER
 My angel, I certainly hope so!

EXT. - SAN BRUNO ROAD - BETWEEN SAN MATEO AND SAN FRANCISCO
 - A WHILE LATER

Glancing at his watch, GIANNINI looks worried. Without breaking his stride, he takes his last piece of ham from his briefcase. Chewing pensively, he peers ahead.

Over San Francisco in the near distance, to the sound of muffled detonations, the sun rises dark red behind an ominous cloud. GIANNINI slowly shakes his head.

GIANNINI
 "What does San Francisco need more water for?" indeed!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

An ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE stands looking around as if for someone or something. A man brushes past her, does a double-take and is about to flirt with her when a detonation goes off nearby. Almost instantly, without warning, a pile of masonry showers down lethally upon him.

People nearby stare at him in shock. Then, as one, they all look up, and step back out of danger.

The BRUNETTE faints to the ground.

EXT. - MARGARET'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

MARGARET and her FAMILY, having gathered together a few belongings on their porch, are abandoning their house to the advancing flames. But in a rocking chair on her own porch, their SPINSTER NEIGHBOR swings defiantly in and out of view.

MARGARET

Please do come with us, Miss
Wilson!

MISS WILSON

Not a chance! I jus' paid my rent
yest'day, and no earthquake nor
fire's gon' make me budge one inch!

MARGARET and her FAMILY sigh, shrug and start leaving. Then another aftershock strikes. They look back. Rent or no rent, MISS WILSON lies crushed to death under fallen masonry.

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI whistles quietly to himself as he gazes upon the ruined, burning city. He has finally arrived. But he is still far from his destination. He stops, sets down his briefcase, and wipes his brow.

An ominous black fog is rolling in from the sea, and the darkened sky reflects a lurid glare.

GIANNINI glances at his watch, picks up his briefcase, takes a deep breath, and presses on.

EXT. - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A flatnosed WELTERWEIGHT BOXER and his WIFE are fleeing from the fire. The BOXER has his hands full, lugging their possessions in a trunk. The WIFE carries their 3-YR-OLD SON on one arm, and a large canvas bag in the other.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI, pensive, strides along. Approaching the burnt-out wreck of an empty baby crib, he sighs mournfully. He stops, takes off his hat, bows his head, and says a silent prayer. He sighs again, lifting his gaze to Heaven. He inhales, puts on his hat, and presses on.

EXT. - TEMPORARY CEMETERY - THE PRESIDIO - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Overseen by TEENAGE SOLDIERS, a GROUP OF MEN in their shirtsleeves have been forced to dig graves. Their jackets lie neatly folded or carelessly tossed upon the ground.

Looking up, TEENAGE SOLDIER #1 sees TWO WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MEN approaching. Then, from among the group, he picks out TWO OLDER MEN, who exchange a worried glance.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1
Right! You two geezers! You've done
your bit! Off you go! Git! ... Git!

Scarcely believing their good luck, the TWO OLDER MEN belatedly pick up their jackets, and make themselves scarce.

Meanwhile, looking round in elegant confusion, the TWO WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MEN blithely pass the TWO OLDER MEN.

WELL-DRESSED YOUNG MAN #1
Ah! Let's ask that soldier fellow
there... One moment, my good man!

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1
(darkly)
You boys! Here! On. The. Double!

The TWO YOUNG MEN demur. The SOLDIER calmly unbuttons his holster, rests a hand on the butt of his pistol, and raises an inquiring eyebrow at them. To his amusement, the TWO YOUNG MEN suddenly find that, yes, in fact they are indeed more than willing to cooperate after all.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1 (cont'd)
 The city's an undertaker's
 paradise, boys! So ... On. The.
 Double!

The TWO YOUNG MEN, sourly smiling, take off their jackets and begin digging graves as best they can. They are clearly unaccustomed to manual labor.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #1 (cont'd)
 First time fir everything, eh? Put
 yir backs into it! On. The. Double!

EXT. - GENERAL STORE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The BOXER and his WIFE notice a store with ten baby carriages for sale outside, all tied together with string.

BOXER
 Just what we need! Two of those
 buggies will do us very nicely!

His WIFE vigorously nods yes.

INT. - GENERAL STORE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The tall, heavy-set, balding STORE OWNER rapaciously sizes up the BOXER and his WIFE.

RAPACIOUS STORE OWNER
 (doffing his hat)
 Good day, folks! Aren't those just
 the finest baby buggies you've ever
 seen! Special price today! Only ...
 let's say ... \$50 apiece!

The BOXER and his WIFE exchange glances of astonishment and disgust. The WIFE's head falls to her chest. The LITTLE BOY starts crying. The BOXER glances back at the advancing flames. He considers, decides, and faces the STORE OWNER.

BOXER
 Pardon me, but would you mind
 taking off your hat for just a
 moment?

The STORE OWNER is puzzled. However, anything to seal the deal! Removing his hat, he sets it down on the counter.

BOXER

Much obliged.

And with that, the BOXER calmly plants a textbook short left hook on the point of the STORE OWNER's chin. The STORE OWNER is flung backwards against his cash register, which shoots open with a "ka-ching". Out cold - and not saved by the bell - the STORE OWNER slides down ignominiously to the floor, where he is propped up against the counter.

The LITTLE BOY has stopped crying. As best he can remember, he starts counting out the STORE OWNER.

Coolly amused, the BOXER shuts the drawer of the cash register. Then, politely replacing the store owner's hat upon his head, he removes several dollars from his own trouser pocket, and slides them in under the hat.

And then, still as calm as can be, he unties all ten baby carriages, and rolls one over to his dumbstruck WIFE, who belatedly puts their LITTLE BOY into it. Into another, the BOXER packs the trunk and the canvas bag.

Finally, for the benefit of the general suffering population, he rolls the remaining carriages downhill.

BOXER

That's that, then. Come along, dear.

The BOXER pushes off. The WIFE belatedly follows.

At the bottom of the hill, GIANNINI is striding past. He looks up at the squeaking approach of eight baby-carriages, does a double-take, smiles, shrugs, and presses on.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI comes to dead stop and looks around him. There are troops everywhere. The destruction is awe-inspiring in scale and intensity, yet strangely random: pristine buildings stand defiantly or obliviously beside ones which are lopsided or completely ruined.

From broken mains, water shoots thirty feet into the air. Precious water thus rendered useless for putting out the fires which have sprung up all about.

Wherever GIANNINI turns his gaze there are destroyed buildings, tottering walls and twisted iron pillars. Streets are cracked and fissured. Streetcar tracks are bent into fantastical wave-forms. Sidewalks are buckled and broken.

Everywhere PEOPLE and HORSES lie felled by masonry or electrocuted by live-wires.

Exhausted FIREMEN collapse upon the sidewalks. After a short while they rouse themselves and renew the struggle.

Thousands of REFUGEES are pouring towards the ferry. Some seem calm or subdued. Others seem half-crazed with horror. In their arms, or in all manner of vehicles, they carry randomly salvaged possessions.

GIANNINI notices something on a nearby bench. He picks it up: MAYOR SCHMITZ'S PROCLAMATION. GIANNINI scans it and frowns. He leaves it on the bench and presses on.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A familiar LOOTER is moving stealthily along the street in a long overcoat with capacious pockets. A silver candlestick protrudes from one pocket, and unseen metal objects bulge and clatter from within another.

A gust of wind blows SCHMITZ'S PROCLAMATION onto the street. The LOOTER picks it up and scans it with weary contempt.

LOOTER

"... have been authorized by me to
kill ... persons ... engaged in
looting or ... any other crime".

(sniggering)

Except of course, corruption!

He is about to tear up the Proclamation. Then, smirking, he changes his mind. He carefully folds it up, puts it into an upper pocket, pats it, and continues stealthily on his way.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is looking up at a handwritten sign nailed to a pole: "SEWERS BLOCKED - DO NOT USE TOILETS OR GET SHOT".

He frowns, shrugs and, looking round, continues on his way.

EXT. - STREET WITH MAKESHIFT LATRINE - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is reading a handwritten sign on the latrine door: "NO GENTLEMEN ALLOWED".

GIANNINI frowns, turns, and looks behind him. To one side is a gaping hole beneath the now ironically appropriate sign: "OPEN FOR BUSINESS".

Checking that the coast is clear, GIANNINI makes for a ruined alleyway opposite the latrine.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The LOOTER reads the latrine sign: "NO GENTLEMEN ALLOWED".

LOOTER

Well, I'm no gentleman!

Smirking, he removes Mayor Schmitz's Proclamation from his pocket and kisses it. He enters the latrine and stealthily begins closing the door behind him.

INT. - THE LATRINE - NEAR MARKET STREET - MOMENTS LATER

As the door closes, GIANNINI - buttoning his fly - can be seen emerging from the alleyway opposite.

EXT. - OPPOSITE THE LATRINE - MOMENTS LATER

Emerging simultaneously from a nearby building, TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 eyes GIANNINI suspiciously.

GIANNINI briefly considers, then goes straight up to him, and begins to explain his behavior.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 is not interested. He orders GIANNINI to start clearing debris. GIANNINI sighs, smiles, then speaks amiably but intensely to him. The bumptiousness of TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 soon deserts him. Reluctantly he waves GIANNINI on his way. He hasn't even seen the LOOTER.

EXT. - RUINED BUILDING - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Still marveling at Giannini's persuasiveness, TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 passes a doorway, then stops dead. Stealthily he retraces his steps.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Amid the ruins, GIANNINI sees a sign: "RESURGO INVICTUS". He nods quietly to himself, and presses on.

INT. - RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO
- MOMENTS LATER

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 sees a SUSPICIOUS MAN who seems to be partially embracing a RICH DEAD WOMAN on the floor.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2
Hey, you there! Wotchu doin'?!

The SUSPICIOUS MAN lifts his head: it is the LOOTER. He considers, decides. He turns his head round, and his features are now the very picture of bottomless grief.

LOOTER
(fake upper-class accent)
Oh officer, you startled me! It's
my ... dear mama! The only one ...
only relative I had! But now! All
alone in an oh so cruel world! Oh!
Oh! Oh!

Crumpling in a blubbering heap over the DEAD WOMAN, the LOOTER showers kisses upon her richly bejeweled fingers.

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2
Beg pardon, sir! Firra moment there
I took you firra ...! Or even a
...! But pardon me! Pardon me, sir!

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 awkwardly leaves them.

EXT. - NEAR RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN
FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Something is starting to bother TEENAGE SOLDIER #2. The mental image comes to him of a silver candlestick protruding from a capacious overcoat pocket. Cursing, he doubles back.

INT. - RUINED BUILDING - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO
- A SHORT WHILE LATER

TEENAGE SOLDIER #2 stealthily looks in. The LOOTER has vanished. Like the rings on the DEAD WOMAN's fingers.

He palms himself on the forehead and gazes heavenward.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

With a dry, absent, hollow, ventriloquistic laughter, a WOMAN sits hunched at the roadside. Her features are completely expressionless. Yet she is picking broken glass from her bare, bleeding feet. A trail of bloody footprints - back-to-front - leads from her to the bodies of her HUSBAND and CHILD, lying crushed nearby under fallen masonry.

Suddenly the road sinks by several inches all around her. Once again she laughs her absent, hollow laugh.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Everywhere there are REFUGEES, makeshift ambulances and images of devastation. And even garbage wagons are being used to transport the dead.

On one side, GRIEVING RELATIVES look on while Dr. JIM, VOLUNTEER NURSES including his wife ELEANOR, and other RED CROSS PERSONNEL respectfully remove CRUSHED AND MANGLED BODIES from a ruined building.

GIANNINI is approaching a MOTHER who cradles a SWADDLED CHILD by the roadside. In the distance the detonations continue. The MOTHER gazes up at GIANNINI with dead eyes. She speaks in a dead voice.

CRAZED MOTHER

Mister, make them stop that awful boom-boom-boom. My child's asleep now. Hush, little one. Hush. Hush.

GIANNINI can now see that the CHILD is not in fact sleeping, but dead: its skull is crushed in, and its skin is turning purple. He gazes with powerless compassion upon the grief-crazed MOTHER. Then he notices the RED CROSS PERSONNEL.

CRAZED MOTHER

Will you make them stop, mister?
Will you? Will you? Will you?

GIANNINI

I'll do ... whatever I can, my dear. You just ... hold on.

GIANNINI lightly squeezes her arm, then goes to speak to Dr. JIM and ELEANOR. They listen, nod and approach the WOMAN, who is humming a lullaby to her DEAD CHILD and rocking it in her arms. JIM and ELEANOR gently try to take the DEAD CHILD from her. But, with unexpected fury, she drives them off.

ELEANOR starts sobbing. JIM shakes his head at GIANNINI, who turns reluctantly. Head bowed, he continues on his way.

GIANNINI doesn't even notice the sweating FAT MAN passing him. The FAT MAN lovingly cradles a huge bird cage. Inside it, the little swing squeaks to and fro. The cage is empty.

EXT. - PALACE HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The Palace is still standing. And now, as a protection against the advancing fire, STAFF are hosing the hotel down with its very own dedicated water supply.

But to their utter dismay, FIREMEN arrive en masse and begin confiscating this water. All the fire-fighting precautions of founder William Ralston have been in vain.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A CROWD stare up at the flat roof of a burning hotel. There, THREE TERROR-CRAZED MEN are trapped beyond hope of rescue.

Below, an OFFICER calmly considers, and decides. He orders his TROOPS to shoot the MEN. Among the CROWD no-one flinches as the shots ring out and the MEN fall down out of view, with the flames beginning to reach them.

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI pauses for a breather. All around him, wild rumors are swirling.

RUMOR-MONGERS

LA is flattened by a gigantic
earthquake! - Chicago is drowned! -
New York is burnt to ash! -
Portland is washed away by tidal
waves...!

GIANNINI shakes his head and begins to cross the square. It is full of REFUGEES fleeing the fires South of Market Street. They stand looking around helplessly, their trunks and bundles beside them. WOMEN cradle their BABIES, while outraged PARROTS squawk in cages on the ground. To one side, PEOPLE are trying to revive a WOMAN who has fainted.

GIANNINI gazes up at the Dewey Monument. Like other monuments he has passed, it has suffered no serious damage. Atop its 85-foot column, the STATUE OF VICTORY - unshaken by cataclysms, securely grasping her trident and wreath, poised

with balletic serenity upon a single foot - looks out over San Francisco, unbeaten and unbowed.

GIANNINI inhales, and nods yes. But noticing the smoke over Chinatown, he starts doubling back to Market Street.

EXT. - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI peers ahead with encouragement: almost there! Without stopping, he looks around: a degree of order seems to have been imposed upon the city; unsafe buildings have been roped off; and there are no longer any drunk people staggering about the streets. Behind him, however, an office block suddenly bursts into flame.

Nearby, TEENAGE SOLDIERS are forcing PASSERSBY to clear debris. GIANNINI quickly turns down a side street.

EXT. - OFF MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A POLICEMAN and a SOLDIER - both slightly tipsy - stand eying each other over a DEAD BODY on the ground. There is a wagon behind them.

POLICEMAN

Right! You take that body, and put it in that wagon!

SOLDIER

Me?! That's a good one! You do it!

POLICEMAN

My friend, this is a Police matter! So I give orders to you!

SOLDIER

My friend, this is Martial Law! The Army is running this here show!

POLICEMAN

Ha! If you and that strutting little sawn-off shotgun of a -!

The SOLDIER has taken out his pistol. In cold blood, he shoots down the open-mouthed, wide-eyed POLICEMAN.

GIANNINI has seen the whole thing. He quietly slips away.

EXT. - OVER AGNEWS ASYLUM - A SHORT WHILE LATER

From Santa Clara, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE come running to assist.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is blocked by a solid wall of fire, with a line of POLICE and TROOPS before it. There is no way through, so he doubles back. But now even his former route is ablaze. He looks round for another way through.

EXT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - A WHILE LATER

The LIVING and the DEAD are retrieved from the ruins. The LIVING are calmed and bandaged. The DEAD - many disfigured unrecognizably - are gently laid out upon the grass.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI's path is blocked by piles of bricks and mortar. He inhales, then begins clambering over them.

EXT. - AGNEWS ASYLUM - A WHILE LATER

The VIOLENT PATIENTS have been recaptured. The problem now: where to secure them? At last a reluctant temporary measure is adopted: tying them to trees on the asylum grounds.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI is blocked by TROOPS. He tries explaining his situation. Not interested, they wave him away with their rifles. He frowns, considers, and decides.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Glancing at his watch, PEDRINI comes out of the front entrance and looks round. Grimacing, he scratches his head and looks up. Clouds of dark smoke and burning cinders fill the sky. He slowly shakes his head, and goes back inside.

EXT. - CEMETERY - AGNEWS ASYLUM - A WHILE LATER

Scores of the DEAD are solemnly laid to rest.

EXT. - SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT - A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI has taken a detour along the waterfront. Here too the damage is strangely random. And in sidings, streetcars smolder eerily. But at least he is finding a way through.

EXT. - OVER AGNEWS ASYLUM - JUST BEFORE NOON

SUBSTITUTE MEDICAL STAFF and SECURITY PERSONNEL are in place. The PATIENTS are untied from the trees and led into temporary cells. A measure of order has been restored.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - NOON

GIANNINI at last arrives. To his great relief, the bank is still standing. He raises his head in thanks to Heaven.

But only a few blocks away, the detonations continue, the smoke climbs, and the fires rage.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - THE PRESENT

RICH

Wow! And now this is where
Giannini moves the \$80,000,
right?! 80,000! In 1906 dollars!
Imagine having to move all that ...
"hot money"!

RAÚL

No comment.

RICH

(amused)

And speaking of feeling the heat,
you sure you ... don't want to ...
?

RAÚL

A Sikh, in public, never - you
know! But let's get back to
Giannini...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - ABOUT
12:30 P.M. - APRIL 18, 1906

GIANNINI stands staring at the safe. PEDRINI hurries in,
breathless and despairing.

PEDRINI

It's bad, boss! The Call Building
and the Palace Hotel - eaten alive
by the flames! We're next!

GIANNINI

(checking watch; pensively)
Right. We close up. We move the
money.

PEDRINI

But ... where to, boss?! ...
Oakland? ... The Presidio?!

GIANNINI

No... Back home, to San Mateo... By
day is too risky, though. First,
we'll have to take the money to my
brother-in-law's place in North
Beach, and wait for nightfall...
But to make this money invisible,
we'll have to hide it in plain
sight!

PEDRINI frowns in puzzlement.

INT. - PARLOR - JANE'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN
FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Blanche Partington's acquaintance JANE and her FATHER are
taking stock of the damage. Bric-a-brac shards are strewn
over everything. The piano has left skid marks on the floor.
A life-size portrait of her brother has been ripped from its
frame by the earthquake and thrown clear across the room.

And yet, and yet - pristine on the mantel, stretching forth
in a simple, elegant, eloquent gesture: a LILY IN A VASE.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI has commandeered two teams of L. Scatena & Co. horses and wagons. A mattress is propped up against the side of each wagon, and several crates of oranges are stacked nearby, together with a new Burroughs adding machine.

GIANNINI and his brother-in-law CLARENCE CUNEO, together with PEDRINI and AVENALI, are transferring boxes from the bank to the wagons.

Into one wagon go the money and securities. Into the other go the bank books, forms, and stationery. Then crates of oranges go on top of the money and bank books. And finally, a mattress goes on top of each wagonload.

AVENALI

And the adding machine, boss?!

GIANNINI

Well, there's clearly no space for it. Besides, it would attract too much attention.

PEDRINI

(grimly amused)

Well this is one way to move money around!

GIANNINI

(not amused)

I'll stow the adding machine in the safe and lock up.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

SAN FRANCISCANS have begun to accept the presence of the TROOPS as something completely natural. TWO CITIZENS demur.

CITIZEN #1

Judging by appearances, Martial Law has officially been declared!

CITIZEN #2

Hmm. But doesn't the Gospel urge us not to judge by mere appearances?!

EXT. - LONERGAN'S BAKERY - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

SOLDIERS commandeer a supply of bread, over the protests of the BAKER - none other than SUPERVISOR LONERGAN.

SERGEANT
(merrily)
Desperate times, sir!

LONERGAN
But this is unheard-of! Outrageous!
Mayor Schmitz will hear of this!

SERGEANT
(not so merrily)
I'm sure he will also want to hear
about your interesting recent
"price adjustments"! But I'm sure
you don't want to make further
trouble. We've shot 300 people so
far! ... So git!

LONERGAN
Since you ... put it like ...
Nevertheless, I must -!

The SERGEANT has calmly fired a warning shot into the air. LONERGAN, swallowing hard, makes himself scarce. The SOLDIER smiles, even while shaking his head in disgust.

EXT. - NEAR MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The pint-sized FUNSTON is like a bossy child playing an important game. He shouts out orders left, right and center to dynamite-wielding SOLDIERS and VOLUNTEERS.

Two JUNIOR OFFICERS exchange troubled glances.

LIEUTENANT
(looking down at him)
Uh sir, if I may, sir? Uh shouldn't
we uh be uh checking with the Mayor
first, sir?! Not to mention the uh
property owners themselves?!

FUNSTON
(looking up at him)
Lieutenant, I am the Big Noise in
this town! And I say dynamite is
the only way to go!

LIEUTENANT

Sir! Yessir!

The LIEUTENANT takes a step back. FUNSTON nods to the DYNAMITERS and covers his ears. There is a terrific explosion, at which FUNSTON and the JUNIOR OFFICERS flinch as if slapped across the face.

As they listen to the sound of tinkling glass and crashing masonry, FUNSTON's features are aglow with glee. However, the detonation has served only to spread the fire and to blow up TWO VOLUNTEERS.

FUNSTON touches his joined hands pensively to his lips. When the smoke clears, all that remains of a blown-up mansion is a flight of stone steps leading nowhere.

LIEUTENANT

And your ... report, sir?!

FUNSTON

(sourly)

Oh, I'll ... think of something!

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

In the lead wagon, GIANNINI sits grimly beside CLARENCE, who is driving. AVENALI and PEDRINI are in the following wagon. They all listen absently to detonations in the distance.

EXT. - ENTRANCE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

A billboard and several trees have been put to emergency use. They are covered in a multitude of cards, letterheads and scraps of paper on which San Franciscans give notice of their present location, or inquire after that of others.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The park has become the refuge of perhaps 100,000 HOMELESS PERSONS of every class, condition and nationality. The EX-RICH rub shoulders with the EVER-POOR; the SIKH, with the IRISHMAN; the CHILEAN, with the CHINAMAN; the SOCIALITE, with the SEAMSTRESS.

Together with their rescued cats and canaries, REFUGEES sit or curl up in tents improvised out of blankets, bedsheets, carpets and clothing.

Each tent has a bundle of household belongings lying before it on the grass. And each is tagged with the surname and former street address of the occupants.

TENT-DWELLER #1
Well, we've come full circle,
haven't we?! Didn't San Francisco
start out as a tent city?!

EXT. - RELIEF KITCHENS - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK -
SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

REFUGEES form orderly, patient, tolerant queues.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

On crude stoves of brick and stone, OTHER REFUGEES choose to do their own cooking. Old and battered cooking utensils, once discarded, are now indispensable.

And even the park's DUCKS have, literally, become fair game.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE
CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

The going is frustratingly slow and hard. The streets are damaged and clogged with debris not only from the earthquake but also from PEOPLE COOKING on improvised sidewalk stoves.

Endless processions of traumatized and exhausted REFUGEES plod wearily along the streets. Everyone is carrying or pulling or pushing something.

At public fountains, people seek in vain for water.

EXT. - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - A
WHILE LATER

TROOPS drive through the park on wagons mounted with water barrels. MASSES OF PARCHED REFUGEES crowd around them. Each has to make do with only one drink.

EXT. - ANOTHER PART OF THE REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK -
SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

Under a cypress tree, a self-anointed PROPHET quivers with ecstasy. He wears a flowing beard, home-made clothes of sackcloth, with a crude home-made Cross round his neck.

TWO SOLDIERS exchange concerned glances.

SELF-ANOINTED PROPHET
Most High God himself vouchsafes
unto me the authority to call down
perdition upon this ... Babylon of
the West! But wait! There's more!

The TWO SOLDIERS exchange another glance. Then they move within striking distance of the oblivious PROPHET, who is deeply flattered by this most welcome "attention".

SELF-ANOINTED PROPHET (cont'd)
For I say unto you, it is predest-!

One of the SOLDIERS has calmly knocked the PROPHET out cold with a telegraphed uppercut. Yet he never saw it coming.

The CROWD doesn't bat an eyelid, dispersing without a word.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE
CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

To the distress of the LIVING HORSES, DEAD HORSES bestrew the streets.

SCATTERED TROOPS try to maintain order. But they can't be everywhere.

EXT. - FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - A
WHILE LATER

The QUEUE is a microcosm of San Franciscan social strata, but now without the stratification. All social distinctions have been erased, or at least blurred. For now, the MAID and the MILLIONAIRESS are one. A FEW WOMEN, however, are still adjusting to their new circumstances.

DOWAGER
One has of course often given to
charity... But never before now has
one actually had to receive it!

MOST WOMEN are bareheaded. SOME have contrived to adorn themselves with improvised makeup. MANY WOMEN still wear only their nightclothes or underskirts. A FEW sport a piece or two of fine jewelery, or garments of silk or French lace.

However, everyone draws strength from a common misfortune.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI thinks he sees WOULD-BE ROBBERS on every street corner. And he is right, because predatory GANGS OF RUFFIANS are prowling about. But two wagons of orange crates topped with mattresses are not exactly enticing. The RUFFIANS turn away. GIANNINI sighs with relief.

EXT. - WOMEN'S LATRINE QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - A WHILE LATER

With concern, revulsion and pensiveness, SEVERAL WOMEN are remarking upon the proximity to the public relief kitchens of the fly-ridden, unroofed, unscreened latrines. And in the bg., SEVERAL PEOPLE are even spitting within spitting distance of the NO SPITTING signs.

Dr. JIM passes by. Wearing the insignia of a Red Cross Surgeon, he is conducting a site inspection with a COLLEAGUE. Both of them are as troubled as the women.

The COLLEAGUE, eyebrow raised, points out something near the shrubbery, where flies buzz. JIM shakes his head. Comparing notes, the two men pensively continue their inspection.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Last in the queue is NAIVE SOCIALITE, now fan-less, and a little less naive than before. Besides her new engagement ring, she wears only a dressing gown and slippers.

Just ahead of her are SNOBBISH SOCIALITE and PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE. They are joined by WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE, holding a newspaper, and now a little less world-weary than before.

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE

Oh hello there, dear. I see you
also have to use the ... emergency
sanitary engineering!

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
 Oh don't we all, dear - sooner or
 later! ... I suppose Funston has
 blown up your house too!

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE
 Well yes, dear, 'fraid so!
 (almost convinced)
 But it was for the common good!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE
 (glumly)
 You took the words right out of my
 mouth, dear.

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
 (noticing the ring)
I didn't know you were engaged,
 dear!

LESS NAIVE SOCIALITE
 (blushing)
 I have nowhere to go. So I
 swallowed my pride and ... proposed
 to Ronald!

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
 (to Less World-Weary
 Socialite)
 Anyway, I see you are making do
 with a newspaper there, dear.

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
 Well, yes. Appropriately enough:
 The Call! ... And what do you have?

From a pocket in her dressing gown SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
 blushingly takes out a few pages torn from a book.

SNOBBISH SOCIALITE
 A few of us, in direst need, raided
 the Associated Colleges library!
 I'm sure I ... don't need to
 explain!

LESS WORLD-WEARY SOCIALITE
Some things are best left unsaid!

PARROT-BEAKED SOCIALITE
 (glumly)
 You took the words right out of my
 mouth, dear.

INT. - BASEMENT - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO -
AFTERNOON

MAYOR SCHMITZ rises to address a cross-section of fifty prominent citizens, including social services pioneer KITTY FELTON. (Many faces are familiar from the Opera Lobby.) Ruef and the Board of Supervisors are nowhere in sight.

JAMES PHELAN and RUDOLPH SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

PHELAN
(aside to Spreckels)
At least it smells better than City
Hall!

SPRECKELS cuts short a guffaw as SCHMITZ clears his throat.

SCHMITZ
Gentlemen - and Lady! - I have
invited you all here today to aid
me in aiding our stricken city...!

PHELAN
(aside)
And just how legal, I wonder, is
this Committee?!

SPRECKELS
(aside)
As legal as the Martial Law, no
doubt!

SCHMITZ
... Let it be given out that three
hun- ... three men have already
been shot for the crime of looting!

CHIEF DINAN
They had it coming, Mr. Mayor!

GARRETT W. ENERNEY raises a hand.

SCHMITZ
Mr. Enerney?

ENERNEY
I move that Mayor Schmitz be
authorized to draw checks for
whatever amounts may be necessary!

CHIEF DINAN is one of the most vocal supporters of this motion. PHELAN and SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

EXT. - GIANNINI WAGONS - BETWEEN BANK OF ITALY & CLARENCE
CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI

Chin up, boys! Another few miles
and we'll be feasting on my
sister-in-law's mouth-watering
minestrone!

The others lick their lips - then grit their teeth.

INT. - BASEMENT - HALL OF JUSTICE - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE
AFTERNOON

SCHMITZ

But moving on -

A loud explosion nearby. The Hall of Justice shakes. Glass
and cornice-work come crashing down. General alarm.

J.D. HARVEY

Uh Mr. Mayor, your life is too
valuable, at this dreadful juncture
in our history, for unnecessary
risks to be taken! May I therefore
suggest that we ... vacate the
building at this time?

Rising, SCHMITZ scrapes his papers together with ruffled
dignity. Led by J.D. HARVEY, they all quickly file out.

EXT. - CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO
- A SHORT WHILE LATER

GIANNINI& CO. exchange glances of relief.

GIANNINI

We'll wait here till sunset. In
these conditions, the seventeen
miles to San Mateo in the dark
won't be easy. But security comes
first.

The OTHERS exchange grim looks. But they know he is right.

EXT. - DINING ROOM - CLARENCE CUNEO'S HOUSE - NORTH BEACH -
SAN FRANCISCO - SUNSET

GIANNINI, CLARENCE, AUGUSTA CUNEO, PEDRINI, and AVENALI are
just finishing their minestrone.

GIANNINI

Complimenti, Augusta! Now
don't tell Clorinda, but that was
the most welcome minestrone of my
life!

General assent. AUGUSTA modestly takes a bow.

GIANNINI (cont'd)

(looking out of the window)
We'll be able to leave soon.

PEDRINI

(sudden realization)
What about Schmitz's curfew, boss?!

GIANNINI

We'll just have to risk it.

GIANNINI plans his next move. The OTHERS steel themselves
for another grueling, nerve-racking, heartbreaking journey.

EXT. - STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A PATROLLING SOLDIER passes an abandoned streetcar, now
turned into a sleeping place by THREE REFUGEES. The problem:
with the incessant tumult of sirens, car horns and
detonations, sleep is well-nigh impossible.

In the streetcar, someone lights a candle.

PATROLLING SOLDIER

You there! Martial Law! Lights out!

At once the candle flame is blown out.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

In the surrounding darkness, under a pall of smoke which
hangs like black despair, the Great San Francisco Fire rises
miles and miles and miles into the sky.

EXT. - BACK YARD - CARUSO'S FRIENDS' HOUSE - OUTSKIRTS OF
SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Under a lonely winking star - and upon the cold, hard ground
- CARUSO prepares a sleeping place for himself and his
PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

His MET COLLEAGUES appeal to him to come inside. He doggedly
refuses, lies down, and makes himself as comfortable as he
can. They look on helplessly, then shrug and slowly go in.

INT. - PARLOR - JACK & JILL'S NEW HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO -
MOMENTS LATER

Sick of fumbling and stumbling in the dark, JACK & JILL
daringly light a candle. Sighing with relief, they pour
themselves a glass of muscat. But they keep glancing
guiltily at the candle, which sheds an uncertain glow.

JILL

I know it's against the curfew,
Jack dear, but let's be reasonable!

JACK

Besides, Jill dear, it's hardly as
if a decent, uncorrupted,
tax-paying man and his wife will be
arrested for lighting a candle, is
it now?!

Chuckling, they innocently clink their glasses.

EXT. - JACK & JILL'S NEW HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT
WHILE LATER

Passing their open window, the PATROLLING SOLDIER frowns at
JACK & JILL. Then he calmly shoots them both: first JACK, in
the head; then JILL, who tumbles after.

SOLDIER

Serves 'em right! This is Martial
Law! I'm just following orders!

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

While a SENTRY looks on, exhausted and soot-blackened
FIREMEN stagger in upon the square from burning buildings
all around. TROOPS dole out dedicated food and water to
them, and even a revivifying swig from a bottle of whisky.
The FIREMEN collapse in heaps just where they are.

INT. - THE STAGE - BALLROOM - FAIRMONT HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO
- ABOUT 11 P.M.

The COMMITTEE OF FIFTY are distributed along the edge of the stage and upon packing cases.

SCHMITZ

(checking notes)

So I make that, what, nineteen subcommittees? Excellent! I remain confident that much of the city can still be saved from the fire! ...

So I suggest we reconvene here again first thing tomorrow!

(rising)

Thanks, and a good night to you all!

The haggard COMMITTEE OF FIFTY slowly disperse.

EXT. - UNION SQUARE - SAN FRANCISCO - ALMOST MIDNIGHT

Curled up on piles of clothes or blankets, REFUGEES try to snatch a few minutes of sleep between detonations and aftershocks. Dotted among them, FIREMEN and VOLUNTEERS sleep the death-like sleep of utter exhaustion.

GROUPS OF ADMIRING AND GRATEFUL WOMEN go round, gently spreading rugs and blankets over them.

The SENTRY discreetly clears his throat.

SENTRY

Twelve o'clock and all is well!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - DAYBREAK

A SOLDIER slowly walks past, his face covered by a newspaper: "The Call-Chronicle-Examiner", dated Thursday, April 19, 1906. The headline reads: "EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE: SAN FRANCISCO IN RUINS".

EXT. - FRONT GATE - GIANNINI RESIDENCE - SAN MATEO - MOMENTS LATER

As day breaks, GIANNINI & CO. - jubilant even in their exhaustion - finally arrive. They climb down stiffly, stretch their limbs, and pat the sweating horses.

The BOYS and CLORINDA come out running to greet them. GIANNINI hasn't noticed, but CLORINDA is no longer pregnant.

GIANNINI

Don't run, boys! Don't run! I'll
come to you!

EXT. - GARDEN - JANE'S HOUSE - SOUTH OF MARKET STREET - SAN
FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Jane's FATHER clammers sweating out of a big hole he has dug
in the garden. He thrusts his spade into the ground beside a
large open trunk. It is carefully packed with silverware,
cut glass and fine china. Near each end, two lengths of rope
have been slipped in underneath.

Wiping his brow, he looks up as JANE comes down the stone
steps with a batch of documents.

JANE

(putting in the documents)
Phew! I think that's the lot, Papa!

PAPA

(closing the trunk)
Right then. Let's get to it.

With infinite care, as if it were a coffin holding a beloved
family member, they lower the trunk into the "grave". Then
they stand silently looking on, as if paying their respects.

PAPA

Dead and buried. Safely dead and
buried! ... But she will rise
again!

EXT. - BAR - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE MORNING

NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - leafs
idly through a back issue of Horse and Hound magazine.

BARMAN

Ahem! Might I enquire, sir - what
exactly are you doing here, sir?!

MEANS

Not that it's any concern of yours,
my good fellow. But I'm ... waiting
... you see ... for orders...

The BARMAN polishes a glass in polite disgust.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

LT. UDELL is helping to rescue people from ruined buildings. Suddenly doubled up in agony, he clutches discreetly at his back. He takes a deep breath, and springs back to work.

INT. - FRANKLIN HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE AFTERNOON

The COMMITTEE OF FIFTY have had to move yet again.

SCHMITZ

Now as to those relief funds -

Everyone looks around as RUEF coolly enters. Making a beeline for SCHMITZ, he brazenly stands behind his chair.

SPRECKELS

(aside to Phelan)

The Power ... behind the Throne?!

RUEF

My invitation must have been mislaid. No matter. I'm here now.

But there is no seat for RUEF. Wincing, and sighing discreetly, SCHMITZ offers him a corner of his desk.

SCHMITZ

Now where were we? Ah yes. The problem of how to administer the overwhelming influx of relief funds!

RUEF's ears prick up instantly. PHELAN and SPRECKELS exchange cynical glances.

EXT. - CHINATOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The profile of Chinatown has been reduced by the fire to windsifted ash. Smoking holes pockmark the ground.

"ARCHEOLOGIST" #1

They say there's a secret Chinatown down there up to three stories deep!

"ARCHEOLOGIST" #2

This is no time for the finer points of city planning! Remember what we're here for: Archeology!

"ARCHEOLOGIST" #1
Point taken! Point taken!

Foraging among the ashes, they find lumps of molten gold and silver, with ornaments of porcelain, bronze, and jade.

"ARCHEOLOGIST" #2
Now this is what they call
Archeology 101!

In the bg., TROOPS arrive, firing warning shots. The "archeologists" escape with their "liberated" "cultural artefacts".

INT. - FRANKLIN HALL - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

RUEF
So in short, it would be
regrettable if the President were
to decline any offers of relief
funds from abroad!

PHELAN and SPRECKELS roll their eyes. SCHMITZ frowns.

SCHMITZ
In any case, Abe Ruef will chair
the Subcommittee for Relocating the
Chinese. After all, Cantonese is
one of his languages! But moving on
-

RUEF
Eugene, if I may... The Chinese can
not be allowed to return to
Chinatown! After all, it is one of
the city's most desirable areas!

KITTY FELTON
(pointedly)
Abe, wasn't Chinatown once an
abandoned ... business district?!

RUEF
(sourly)
Kitty, we live. And learn.

PHELAN
(cynically)
I myself have learned, Abe, that
you personally have sustained real
estate losses of roughly \$1
million!

SPRECKELS
Now that's rough!

General but discreet sniggering.

RUEF
Be that as it may, I propose moving
Chinatown to Hunter's Point.

KITTY FELTON
But that's miles away!

SCHMITZ
Aren't we forgetting the tourists?!

KITTY FELTON
Precisely! Portland and Seattle
would love to have the Chinese! But
can San Francisco - especially now
- afford to give up its Chinatown
tourist revenue?!

Mutterings and murmurings.

SPRECKELS
It occurs to me that even as we sit
here squabbling, ABC Chinatown
businessmen like Tin Eli are no
doubt planning to -!

RUEF
Look, Rudi, I don't care even if
XYZ Chinatown businessmen are -!

KITTY FELTON
Gentlemen! It is always a strategic
error to underestimate the Chinese!

RUEF and PHELAN are staring back sourly at her.

EXT. - FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN
FRANCISCO - EVENING

QUEUING MAN
What a biblical catastrophe! And
all the city records destroyed!

QUEUING WOMAN
What, all?! Even down to the birth
certificates?!

QUEUING MAN

Dust to dust, my dear! And ashes to
windswept ashes!

In the bg., the ears of a CHINESE COUPLE have pricked up -
discreetly. QUEUING WOMAN notices them - indiscreetly.

QUEUING WOMAN

But just think of the poor ABCs!

QUEUING MAN

A-B-Cs?!

QUEUING WOMAN

American-Born Chinese, my dear. Now
they will never be able to prove
that they were born here! That they
are citizens by right!

QUEUING MAN is not really interested. Exchanging a
despairing glance, the CHINESE COUPLE slowly turn away.

EXT. - NEAR FOOD QUEUE - REFUGEE CAMP - GOLDEN GATE PARK -
SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The CHINESE COUPLE suddenly come to a dead stop, their
features transfigured. Exchanging glances, they realize that
they have simultaneously had the very same brilliant idea.

EXT. - BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - SUNRISE

GIANNINI stands ruefully in what is left of the Bank of
Italy building: the safe and the adding machine inside it
are nothing but a blackened, molten lump.

With deep compassion, GIANNINI looks at the devastation all
around, where RESIDENTS wander among the smoldering ruins of
their homes or sit in numb despair upon the ashy ground.

GIANNINI notices a PREMATURELY AGED WOMAN whose sooty face
is stained with tears. She has just salvaged a charred
rectangular object from the ground. Tenderly she blows off
the ash. The object is now recognizable as a picture frame.

With a low, aching sigh she looks through the emptiness of
the frame. She throws back her head and with her eyes open
yet unseeing, stares briefly up at Heaven. Then she closes
her eyes and tenderly, seemingly, she kisses the empty space
where the photograph used to be. Hugging the frame to
herself, she waves a small, sad goodbye to the burnt-out
remnants of her home, and slowly turns away.

Softly sighing, GIANNINI looks at her for a few moments. He looks at the HOMELESS PEOPLE. He looks at the ruined houses. He looks at the molten safe. He strokes his mustache.

EXT. - CARUSO'S WAGON - MARKET STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON

The wagon moves at a maddeningly slow pace, but the DRIVER seems in no great hurry. All around: fire, heat, devastation, and pitiful REFUGEES.

Seated between a MET COLLEAGUE and MARTINO, CARUSO - still hugging his ROOSEVELT PHOTOGRAPH - covers his ears against the unceasing detonations, while puffing on a cigarette. He rubs his stiff, aching limbs.

MET COLLEAGUE

Serves you right, Enrico, for
sleeping on the cold, hard ground!

CARUSO

Better I sleep on bricks than 'ave
a ton of bricks fallin' on my 'ead!

EXT. - FERRY STATION TO OAKLAND - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI stands looking on:

A common desperation has brought together THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE of all races, languages, and classes. People desperate to escape the flaming destruction behind them. Maniacally they claw at the iron gates of the ferry station. Unable to break the bars, some take out their frustrations on those nearest them.

Amid all the noise, amid all the confusion and clutter of a bizarre assortment of salvaged possessions, EXHAUSTED PEOPLE sleep upon pallets of rags and other improvised bedding.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

As GIANNINI continues to watch, the ferry is drawing up to the slip and the ferry gates are thrown open.

Instant pandemonium. THOUSANDS OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN fight like wild beasts to get on board. Shirts and bodices are ripped open in the frenzy. FAINTING WOMEN are quickly propped up lest they be trampled underfoot. A wild TIDE OF HUMANITY is swept up into the ferry.

EXT. - ON THE FERRY - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

To the sound of dynamite detonations, several of Caruso's MET COLLEAGUES stand peering out in vain over the wharf. (GIANNINI is still there.)

In the bg. a WOULD-BE THIEF calmly tries to steal the rings from the very fingers of an astonished WOMAN in the crowd. A SOLDIER calmly approaches.

MET COLLEAGUE

No sign of him! I hope he hasn't -!

In the bg., the SOLDIER has calmly shot the WOULD-BE THIEF. He falls down dead to the ground, where blood begins to pool. No-one makes much of it.

THE SAME - A WHILE LATER

There is still no sign of Caruso. His MET COLLEAGUES check their watches and shake their heads despondently.

In the bg., the SOLDIER is having a second look at a FAT MAN, who moves with difficulty in a capacious overcoat. As if to convince himself, the SOLDIER glances up at the sky, where the sun is indeed warmly shining.

Thus emboldened, the SOLDIER calmly rips open the overcoat of the FAT MAN. People laugh to discover that he is in fact a THIN MAN, with bags of provisions taped all over his body.

The SOLDIER is not amused. Neither is GIANNINI.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

And at last there he is: CARUSO! He brushes past the ruminating GIANNINI and runs up to the OFFICERS controlling access to the ferry. A furious argument ensues.

Absently stroking his mustache, GIANNINI strides off.

EXT. - WHARF - FERRY STATION - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The OFFICERS wave CARUSO away. But he brandishes like a passport his large signed PHOTOGRAPH OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

OFFICER #1

"With - kindest - regards - from -
Theodore - Roosevelt!"

The OFFICERS exchange a glance, considering.

OFFICER #1
Well, if you're a friend of
Teddy... Come in and make yourself
at home!

Like a conquering hero, CARUSO boards the ferry, which is loaded up to the water line with CHEERING PASSENGERS.

INT. - BILLIARD ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - is playing billiards all by himself. An ATTENDANT notices him and approaches.

ATTENDANT
Still here, sir?!

MEANS
(self-pityingly)
Yes, still waiting ... For orders!

EXT. - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

LT. UDELL is helping to fight fires. Suddenly doubled up in agony, he clutches discreetly at his testicles. He takes a deep breath, and springs back to work.

EXT. - ON THE FERRY - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

As the ferry pulls away, PEOPLE are still trying to jump aboard. Only TWO make it. SOME are clinging to the side of the ferry. MOST fall into the water.

All the while, ear-shattering detonations resound, bringing hundreds of fish up to the surface.

Jammed together on deck, CARUSO and his FELLOW-PASSENGERS stand awe-struck by the sight of San Francisco in flames. Like torrid dragon's breath, a wind from the city sweeps over the waters towards them. Everyone takes a step back.

Puffing on a cigarette, CARUSO turns to a FELLOW-PASSENGER.

CARUSO
You know, my friend, in that 'otel
room, in that h'earthquake, I felt
like a songbird swingin' in a cage!
What a shakin'! What a roarin'!
Like a 'idden monster growlin' and
(MORE)

CARUSO (cont'd)
 grindin' its teeth, and its belly
 rumblin' with unfillable 'unger!
 ... 'Ell of a place! 'Ell of a
 place! No-no-no! I no come back
 'ere!

EXT. - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO -
 MORNING

The bank is still standing, but its elegant walls are
 blackened by fire and its windows are all boarded up.

INT. - OUTSIDE THE MAIN VAULT - PLEYCE HOULDYNGE BANK -
 DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL #1 gives the nod. Nervous, gloved
 SECURITY STAFF shrug and begin opening the great vault.

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL #2
 Uh pardon me, sir. But wouldn't it
 be uh prudent to uh wait just a -?!

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL #1
 Wiseman, there is a time to be
 prudent, and there is a -!

They are interrupted by yelps of alarm from flinching
 SECURITY STAFF: at the very first contact with the air, the
 contents of the vault have burst into flames.

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL #2 is fighting the urge to say "I
 told you so!"

SWEATING BANK OFFICIAL #1 is looking round for someone else
 to take the blame.

INT. - OUTSIDE LT. UDELL'S ROOM - NAVAL HOSPITAL - MARE
 ISLAND - MID-MORNING

The NURSE walks absently past the door, does a double-take,
 retraces her steps, and grimaces with sarcasm.

UDELL, reading nonchalantly in bed, has almost completed
 Emerson's The Conduct of Life.

NURSE
 Why, Marine Lt. Udell, welcome
 back! Been sowing your wild oats,
 have you now?! Well, as long as
 (MORE)

NURSE (cont'd)
 you've gone and got it out of your
 system!

UDELL smiles back mysteriously and returns to Emerson. The NURSE shakes her head in disgust and turns away.

INT. - READING ROOM - COSMOS CLUB - SAN FRANCISCO - LATE MORNING

The Cosmos Club is virtually deserted. Deep in an armchair, NAVY SURGEON VICTOR MEANS - in elegant casual dress - is checking the Personals in The San Francisco Call.

A SUPERIOR OFFICER enters at the far end of the room and looks round. Spotting MEANS, he makes a beeline for him.

THE SAME - A SHORT WHILE LATER

SUPERIOR OFFICER
 (balefully)
 Ah, Means. I'd like a word with
you!

MEANS
 (rising obliviously)
 Ah, at last! By all means, sir!

SUPERIOR OFFICER
 (darkly)
 After you, Means!

MEANS
 (flattered)
 Why, thank you, sir!

MEANS steps ahead self-importantly. The SUPERIOR OFFICER looks on in wonder and disgust. Then, smiling ominously to himself, he follows.

INT. - PARLOR - LEADING BANKER'S MANSION - OUTSKIRTS OF SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON

Saturday, 21 April, 1906. A private meeting of San Francisco BANKERS, BUSINESSMEN and PROMINENT CITIZENS, including KITTY FELTON.

The mood is grim, even hopeless. PARTICIPANTS are mostly seated or semi-seated on sofas, chairs or pouffes around the HOST. Others look on from standing positions.

In an alcove, partially hidden in shadow, a POWERFULLY-BUILT MAN is seated on a low stool before a window which looks out over the burning city below. Though he listens intently to the proceedings, the man directs his gaze towards San Francisco.

The tense silence is broken by someone clearing his throat. A PROMINENT BANKER shakily stands up. In a voice cracked and hoarse with strain he addresses the assembly.

BANKER #1

Gentlemen, Miss Felton - San Francisco is like some biblical object of God's wrath! San Francisco our beloved! San Francisco the beautiful! First shaken to pieces! Now being burnt to a cinder!

The gloom has only increased. KITTY FELTON stands up.

KITTY

Gentlemen, what of our starving, homeless, frightened people?! Who will lead them to safety? Who will give them courage, give them hope?!

KITTY looks round expectantly. But no-one stirs. No-one answers. No-one meets her gaze.

The MAN IN THE ALCOVE gazes out of the window upon the burning city below. He strokes his mustache.

ANOTHER BANKER stands up.

BANKER #2

With respect, Miss Felton, many who only days ago were millionaires, now are virtually mendicants! And even those who in theory have the means to help, in practice are helpless!

General assent. The MAN IN THE ALCOVE strokes his mustache.

YET ANOTHER BANKER stands up.

BANKER #3

Our bank vaults, though fireproof, are heated hotter than Hell! And when can they safely be opened? In days? Weeks? Months?!

General assent.

BANKER #4

Yes, I'm afraid our assets are effectively "frozen" - as it were!

Sour laughter. But general assent.

BANKER #5

I suggest we keep our banks closed until the insurance companies start paying! Say, for six months or so?!

Vigorous assent.

BANKER #1

I must agree! The banks need more time. The city needs more time. The situation ... needs more time... Our heads are in a fog, and our actions are the actions of sleepwalkers!

The MAN IN THE ALCOVE has heard enough. He stands up, turns round, and reveals himself: GIANNINI. He buttons his jacket, moves the low stool closer to them, and steps up onto it.

He speaks simply, directly, powerfully. His demeanor and booming voice are alive with strength, confidence, compassion - and more than a hint of criticism.

GIANNINI

Miss Felton, I honor your life of timely, compassionate and enlightened service. But gentlemen, you must speak for yourselves! My head has never been more clear! My actions will be as bold, direct and decisive as the situation demands! How can we tell our devastated people to wait?! The time for action is now!

Mutterings and murmurings.

BANKER #1

Mr. Gee-a-ninny, we all appreciate your ... good intentions! But the risk - it's simply too great!

Vigorous assent. GIANNINI is pensive.

GIANNINI

Yes, perhaps it will not be possible for our customers to

(MORE)

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 repay. Even so, we must take the
 chance to help them rebuild our
 beloved city!

More mutterings and murmurings. GIANNINI steps down.

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 Gentlemen, if you keep your banks
 closed, they will stay closed!

GIANNINI inclines his head towards KITTY FELTON, and moves
 towards the exit, where he turns and pauses.

GIANNINI (cont'd)
 Gentlemen, I for one will start
 serving my customers immediately!
 And I urge you all to do the same!

GIANNINI fixes them with a piercing stare, and leaves.

EXT. - OVER SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Only now, when it is too late, when the fires are all
 extinguished, the city is drenched by a cold, driving rain.

EXT. - NEAR NEWSPAPER STAND - DOWNTOWN - SAN FRANCISCO -
 MORNING

Dr. JIM and ELEANOR - equally haggard - have just bought a
 copy of the San Francisco Chronicle dated Sunday, April 22,
 1906. ELEANOR is anxiously looking through an article on the
 front page. The headline reads: "BRAVE DOCTOR LOSES AN EYE".

ELEANOR
 Oh my goodness! Poor Dr. Edwards!

JIM
 What's that?!

ELEANOR
 It seems, dear, that Dr. Edwards
 ran to assist soldiers injured by
 an explosion, only to be injured
 himself by a subsequent explosion!
 Yet in no time he was back on duty!

JIM
 Poor Clarence. He deserves a medal.

ELEANOR

So do you, dear! Credit where it's due!

JIM

Tell that to Fire Chief Sullivan, dear. He died early this morning.

ELEANOR

Oh poor brave man!

JIM

In the land of the blind, the farsighted man preaches to the none-so-deaf!

EXT. - RUINED HOUSE NEAR BANK OF ITALY - NORTH BEACH - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Up above, the sun shines brightly. Down below, a HOPELESS MAN ("NONO" SPERANZA) is seated among the ashes of his house. His WIFE (SISI) and LITTLE DAUGHTER (LILY) are trying to cheer and encourage him. But to no avail. (Their faces are all familiar from previous scenes.)

SISI

Come on, dear! Snap out of it! We started from nothing once. We can start from nothing once again! Where's that old pioneering spirit?!

"NONO"

No. No use. No point. No hope.

As SISI and LILY are exchanging a disappointed glance, several NEIGHBORS run past excitedly in the bg. (Some of their faces are familiar.) SISI and LILY look up at them with astonishment. "NONO" shows only a flicker of interest.

One of the NEIGHBORS stops, and runs up towards them.

EXCITED NEIGHBOR

(to Other Neighbors)

Look, it's Sisi, Lily and "Nono"!

(to the Speranzas)

The wharf, the wharf! Giannini is on the wharf! His bank is on the wharf!

(running off again)

Giannini! Can you believe it?!

Giannini is open for business!

Even SISI can't quite believe it. But she wants to.

"NONO"

Giannini's bank has burned to the ground! "Open for business" indeed!

EVEN MORE PEOPLE run past excitedly. SISI shakes off her doubt. A look of fierce determination comes into her eyes.

EXT. - NEAR THE WHARF - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

LILY emerges round a corner, followed by "NONO", being dragged along "kicking and screaming" by her and pushed by SISI. They all come to a dead stop, their eyes wide.

A YOUNGISH COUPLE with TWO SMALL, EXCITED CHILDREN pass slowly by them without even noticing them. The HUSBAND is counting out banknotes to his WIFE, who re-counts them.

COUNTING HUSBAND

Imagine! He remembered exactly how much we had in our account!

RE-COUNTING WIFE

And he seems to know the value of every single property in North Beach! With a brain like that, in no time he'll be a millionaire!

She begins stuffing out her modest bodice with the notes, taking care that both sides are evenly balanced.

SISI, LILY and "NONO" turn round and face the wharf.

EXT. - THE WHARF - SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

The tall, powerful, genial figure of A.P. GIANNINI is like the eye of an electric storm of anticipation.

Along with THE RESIDENTS OF NORTH BEACH, the SPERANZAS look on in wonder. In the bg., PEOPLE are constantly arriving.

All about: fallen masonry; charred and skeletal buildings; twisted girders; cracked and orphaned walls; sheared-off cast-iron columns; and sunken, fissured, undulating streets.

Yet in the very midst of such devastation, GIANNINI is a figure of indomitable strength, determination, confidence, faith and humanity. Here are no mere "good intentions". Here is the courage of far-sighted compassion in action.

In the midst of the greatest disaster in the history of San Francisco, A.P. GIANNINI is making cash loans to people who might not even have the capacity to repay.

And GIANNINI's confidence is becoming contagious.

"NONO", wide-eyed, exchanges a look with SISI. Then he looks up at the brightness of the sky, as if noticing it only now.

EXT. - QUEUE BEFORE WHARFSIDE BANK - SAN FRANCISCO - A WHILE LATER

GIANNINI's emergency bank is a bag of money on a plank supported by two barrels.

While GIANNINI serves his CUSTOMERS, a CLERK on his left makes notations in a ledger book. Looking on from GIANNINI's right is his beloved stepfather LORENZO SCATENA.

GIANNINI is just finishing up with a loan to the PARETI family. The SPERANZAS are next in line.

GIANNINI

That's the ticket, Mr. Pareti! The phoenix of San Francisco will rise again, thanks to people like you!

MR. PARETI

No, it's thanks to you, Mr. Giannini!

GIANNINI

Not at all! The credit is due to the brave people of San Francisco!

The PARETIS smilingly make way for the SPERANZAS.

GIANNINI smiles a genial welcome. He has quickly sized up "NONO"'s state of mind. He shakes hands with SISI and "NONO", and tousles the hair of little LILY.

GIANNINI

Heartily welcome! Cheer up, Mr. Speranza! While there's life, there's ... hope! Not so?!

(to Clerk)

These are the Speranzas: Lily, Sisi and "Nono" - I mean Thomas! Tom!

Crossing out "Nono", then "Thomas", the CLERK writes "Tom".

GIANNINI (cont'd)

They're also in the fruit & veg trade, Pop!

(to the Speranzas)

Look, you're not alone in this. My father here has also lost everything. But we must all start again, mustn't we?

(tousling Lily's hair)

After all, our children are depending on us! Aren't they, Lily?!

TOM almost recoils with the shock of a belated realization. He peers guiltily and apologetically at LILY.

GIANNINI has been observing. He makes a rapid mental calculation.

GIANNINI

Now then - the Bank of Italy stands ready to make cash loans to those wanting to rebuild. But we have adapted our usual procedure.

(pointing at Clerk's book)

This book over here we call our Calamity Day Book. In these difficult times, we are making loans mainly on character, and in a spirit of compassion and community service. How much would you be needing?

The SPERANZAS exchange a look.

SISI

Is ... \$3,000 ... too much?!

GIANNINI exchanges a glance with SCATENA.

GIANNINI

(booming voice)

Everyone knows that our thrifty, family-minded and civic-minded Italian community here has an understandable distrust of the banks of the past! Which is why so many of us prefer to keep our gold under the mattress, or buried in the garden!

Another exchange of glances with SCATENA.

GIANNINI

So tell you what.

(booming voice)

You supply one half, and we'll supply the other. In that way, there'll be enough for everyone!

The SPERANZAS exchange a shy glance, then nod yes.

GIANNINI

That's the spirit! We'll fix up your loan...!

(chuckling)

... On the barrelhead!

GIANNINI nods to the CLERK, who makes an entry in the Calamity Day Book. As GIANNINI counts out the money, LILY is paying close attention.

LILY

This money ... smells like oranges!

Smiling broadly, GIANNINI shakes hands with SISI and TOM, then lifts up LILY in his powerful arms.

GIANNINI

It's easy to see that our Lily here has a ... good nose for business!

(tousling her hair)

You'll see, little one! You and I - and all who join us - are going to make this city bloom again!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - RICH'S OFFICE - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - SMALL HOURS - THE PRESENT

RICH

Wow! What a man! What an inspiration! ... And what a disappointment I would be to him!

RAÚL nonchalantly gets up from RICH's chair, stretches, and moves towards the door, where he faces RICH.

RAÚL

Don't be so hard on yourself. Besides, you can always give back the 10 million. Or invest it in some long-term community project.

RICH
Give back?! The 10 million?! The
\$10 million I so stupidly lost?!

RAÚL
(patiently)
No. The \$10 million for the palais
in Vienna. Clara could probably
suggest a suitable community
investment.

RICH
You mean, use that money ...?! Use
our saved-up money ... to ...?!

RAÚL
(patiently)
Precisely. After all, if you had
killed yourself, Clara would have
had to use that money, for that
very purpose, anyway. So you would
have killed yourself - and
destroyed your family - for
absolutely nothing.

RICH slowly gets up, goes to the window, and stares out.

RAÚL
By all means, take a moment.

RICH
(turning)
OK.. OK... I see where you're ...
But how to ... explain it to
Clara?!

RAÚL
Somewhat more easily, I imagine,
than explaining to her that you've
blown her friends' money with no
possibility of repayment. And not
to mention, blown your brains out.

RICH slowly sits down in his own chair.

RICH
I find myself ... upon reflection
... starting to ... come round to
your way of thinking.

RAÚL
Good. All the same, perhaps I
should hold on to that. Just for
now.

RAÚL is pointing at the pistol, still on the table. RICH stares at it in shock and embarrassment, as if seeing it for the first time. Seeing all it might have represented, had RAÚL not come in when he did. Breathlessly, RICH gestures to RAÚL to take the pistol. RAÚL puts it in a pocket and glances at his watch. His eyes widen.

RAÚL

Chris will be wondering where I am.
Unless of course he's fast
asleep... Oh and by the way, those
Calamity-Day character loans that
Giannini made to the North Beach
community - every single one of
them was repaid! Makes you think,
hey?

RAÚL inclines his head in greeting, and leaves.

RICH watches him go, takes up the two framed photographs lying face-down on his desk, and gazes upon them, sighing.

One is of CLARA - all by herself. The other is of the CHILDREN - all by themselves. And both CLARA and the CHILDREN - all by themselves - are noticeably more carefree. Noticeably less pressured by perfectionism.

Hugging the photographs, RICH begins sobbing uncontrollably.

INT. - RECEPTION DESK - RUSHMAN GOLDFIELD BANK - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - SAN FRANCISCO - A SHORT WHILE LATER

As RAÚL emerges from the elevator, CHRIS - his head thrown back - is snoring in bliss. Groggily, he wakes up.

CHRIS

What's happening?! What did I
miss?!

RAÚL

History. History past, and present.

CHRIS rolls his eyes, throws back his head, and promptly falls asleep again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - LOBBY - BANK OF AMERICA BRANCH - SAN MATEO - DAY - A FEW WEEKS LATER

RICH and CLARA (who are holding hands) - with RAÚL beside them - are silently and reverently reading the inscription to A.P. GIANNINI on the wall:

"HE MARSHALLED THE SMALL RESOURCES OF THE MANY AND MADE THEM AVAILABLE FOR THE COMMON GOOD. HE TEMPERED HIS JUDGMENT WITH FAITH IN MAN'S INTEGRITY, AND PROVED THAT THIS WAS JUSTIFIED. HE FOUND SATISFACTION FOR HIS OWN AMBITIONS IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THOSE HE HELPED. HE CHANGED THE FACE OF BANKING BY EMPHASIZING ITS OBLIGATION TO SERVE."

They remain in silence for a few moments after reading. CLARA's features and manner are noticeably softer, sweeter.

RICH

I could never measure up to that!

CLARA

Have you ever tried, Rich darling?

CLARA kisses him lingeringly on the lips. Then she hooks one arm into RICH's and the other into RAÚL's.

CLARA

Now let's go and see where such a great man was laid to rest!

EXT. - GIANNINI-SCATENA FAMILY PLOT - HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CEMETERY - COLMA - SAN MATEO COUNTY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Before the grave of A.P. GIANNINI, RICH, CLARA and RAÚL stand bowed in the early-autumn silence.

Eyes closed, a breeze caressing her white veil, CLARA prays inwardly. Then she makes the Sign of the Cross, and opens her eyes ... to see RAÚL reverently removing his turban. As RAÚL's never-cut salt-and-pepper hair cascades down, RICH's eyes almost pop out of his head.

CLARA

(delighted)

My goodness! Your hair is even longer than Empress Sisi's!

RICH

But-but-but ... a Sikh! ... A Sikh ... in public ... never ...!

RAÚL

(impenitent; drily)

True. But when they made up that particular rule, they never imagined, did they now, that such a man could ever exist as Amadeo Giannini.

RICH is still scandalized. But CLARA raises herself balletically on the point of one foot - like the Statue of Victory in Union Square - and gives RAÚL a peck on the cheek. Then she tousles RICH's hair, clasps his right hand ... and bites it.

While RICH and RAÚL are still staring open-mouthed at this, CLARA nonchalantly removes her veil and puts it in her bag.

CLARA

In France, you know, I could be arrested for wearing this veil!

And now, as if having proved to herself that she is indeed capable of levity, CLARA is suddenly all business. RAÚL - busy re-adjusting his hair and putting on his turban - exchanges a knowing, rueful glance with RICH.

CLARA has taken a notebook and a red felt-tip pen from her bag. Opening the notebook, she double-underlines something.

CLARA

Now then, as to a suitable community investment, here are my thoughts ...

And, heads all bowed in concentration, CLARA, RICH and RAÚL slowly walk away...

THE END