

Summary  
3/14/17, 3:37:08 PM

Differences exist between documents.

<b>New Document:</b> <a href="#">hisgirlfridayeditedrevisions</a> 182 pages (312 KB) 3/14/17, 3:36:39 PM Used to display results.	<b>Old Document:</b> <a href="#">HisGirlFriday-original</a> 193 pages (334 KB) 3/14/17, 3:36:37 PM
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[Get started: first change is on page 1.](#)

No pages were deleted

### How to read this report

**Highlight** indicates a change.

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 indicates pages were changed.

 indicates pages were moved.

HIS GIRL FRIDAY

by

Charles Lederer

Based on the play  
"The Front Page"

by

Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur

p.d. 1939

SHOOTING DRAFT

Final Draft transcription sample by:  
Proofreader@ProofMySpec.com

FADE IN:

INT. MORNING POST - SWITCHBOARD - DAY (1930S)

Two female telephone OPERATORS busily answer calls, plugging in and out.

1ST OPERATOR

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

She plugs in the call.

2ND OPERATOR

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

She plugs in the call.

ANTEROOM

A bank of elevators are across from the switchboard. At the back wall directly behind the switchboard is a waiting area. Next to the switchboard is an exit to stairs.

A waist-high iron grill gate separates the switchboard from the anteroom. A similar grill separates it again from the city room, which stretches on beyond switchboard.

At a table in the switchboard enclosure sits an OFFICE BOY, 15, doing a crossword puzzle.

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

As a REPORTER comes out of the City Room, clanging the gate behind him, the office boy looks up.

OFFICE BOY

What's a seven-letter word for --?

REPORTER

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

He catches a glimpse of the far elevator going down.

REPORTER

Hey! Down! Down!

▲ ELEVATORS

The reporter runs into the closed elevator door and pounds on it. It comes back, the door opens, and he gets in. The door closes and the elevator goes down. The near elevator comes up and discharges HILDY JOHNSON, in a dress and stylish hat, and BRUCE BALDWIN who carries an umbrella and wears a raincoat.

Office boy looks over his puzzle as Hildy and Bruce approach.

HILDY  
(with a smile)  
Hello, Skinny. Remember me?

OFFICE BOY  
(looks up; then a glowing  
smile)  
Hildy Johnson! ▲

Hildy approaches the switchboard.

HILDY  
(to operator)  
Hello, Maisie.

The first operator looks up.

1ST OPERATOR/MAISIE  
Hello -- Hildy! You coming back?

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

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

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

Hildy turns to Bruce.

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

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

Office boy looks toward Bruce and Hildy and giggles.

HILDY

What did you say, Bruce?

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

BRUCE

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

HILDY

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

BRUCE

(grimly)

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

HILDY

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

BRUCE

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

HILDY

I'll come a-running, pardner.

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

HILDY

Thanks, Bruce.

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

CITY ROOM

Hildy starts the long walk of the room that takes up practically the whole floor. The scene is a busy one. But, gradually, as Hildy starts down, one after another of the STAFF recognize her.

STAFF MEMBERS (AD LIB)

"Hildy!"  
"Hello, Hildy."

Hildy goes straight down the aisle without stopping but waves her own greetings...

HILDY (AD LIB)

"Jim!"  
"Hi, good-looking!"  
"Laura."  
"Hullo, Pop."  
"Nan!"  
"Eddie!"  
"Hello, Mac."  
"Pete!"  
"Frank."  
"Oscar!"

...and gets responses from each of them.

JAKE, standing, is bent over his desk reading copy. Hildy slaps him as she goes by. He turns around.

JAKE

Say, who did that?

He sees Hildy.

JAKE

Hello, Hildy!

HILDY

Hi, Jake.

She passes BEATRICE, a middle-aged Edna May Oliver type woman seated at a desk pounding out copy and smoking a cigarette. As Hildy comes up to her she slaps her on the back.

HILDY

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

BEATRICE

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

HILDY

Point of information -- what does a girl say on meeting her divorced husband?

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

Hildy moves on to the end of the room where she pauses before the frosted-glass partition which separates an office from the rest of the City Room.

▲INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As she opens the door, WALTER BURNS is shaving with an electric razor and LOUIE is holding the mirror up for him.▲

LOUIE  
 A little more 'round the chin,  
 Boss.

The sound of the door doesn't make Walter look up.

WALTER  
 What do you want?

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

WALTER  
 (grinning)  
 Hello, Hildy!

HILDY  
 Hello, Walter.  
 (to Louie)  
 Hi, Louie -- how's the slot-machine  
 king?

LOUIE  
 Oh, I ain't doing that anymore. I'm  
 retired. I'm one of you fellas now  
 -- a newspaper man.

HILDY  
 Editorials?

WALTER  
 Get going, Louie. I got company.

The door flies open and DUFFY comes busting in.

DUFFY  
 Walter!

WALTER

I'm busy, Duffy.

DUFFY

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

WALTER

What?

DUFFY

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

WALTER

You're crazy. Where's Mac?

DUFFY

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

WALTER

They can't do that to me!

He grabs the phone on his desk.

WALTER

(into phone)

Give me that call on Duffy's wire!... Hello -- Mac? Burns. Where's the Governor? -- What do you mean, you can't locate him? (apparently pleading to the one man in the world who can help him) Mac, you know what this means. We're the only paper in town defending Earl Williams and if he hangs tomorrow we're washed up! Find the Governor and when you find him tell him we want that reprieve!... Tell him I elected him and I can have him impeached!... Sure, you can do it, Mac -- I know you can. I always said you were the greatest reporter in the country and now you can prove it. Get going! Attaboy!

He hangs up.

WALTER

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

DUFFY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

DUFFY AND LOUIE

(together)

Well -- But I gotta --

They look at Walter.

WALTER

Scram, you guys.

They start to go.

HILDY

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

They go.

HILDY

Mind if I sit down?

Hildy sits.

INT. OUTSIDE THE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Duffy and Louie exit. They cast an interested look back and linger a second.

WALTER (O.S.)

I said scram!

They close the door hurriedly.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

HILDY

May I have a cigarette, please?

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

HILDY

Thanks. A match?

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

WALTER

How long is it?

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

HILDY

How long is what?

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

(slyly)

Maybe it was yesterday. Been seeing  
me in your dreams?▲

HILDY

(casually)

No -- Mama doesn't dream about you  
anymore, Walter. You wouldn't know  
the old girl now.

WALTER

(with conviction)

Oh, yes I would. I'd know you any  
time --

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

WALTER AND HILDY

(together)

-- any place, anywhere --

He sits.

HILDY

(half-pityingly)

You're repeating yourself! That's the speech you made the night you proposed.

(she burlesques his fervor)

"-- any time -- any place -- anywhere!"

WALTER

(growling)

I notice you still remember it.

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

Done what?

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

Now, that's a nice thing to say.

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

A fellow your age, hiring an airplane to write:

(she gestures above to indicate sky-writing)

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

What home?

WALTER

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

♪HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

Well, suppose we did? That isn't what I got married for. What's the good of -- Look, Walter, I came up here to tell you that you'll have to stop phoning me a dozen times a day -- sending twenty telegrams -- all the rest of it, because I'm --

WALTER

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

HILDY

What?!!

WALTER

I haven't any hard feelings.

HILDY

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

WALTER

▲ (rising, reaching for his hat)

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

HILDY

(also rising)

I have a lunch date. I just want --

WALTER

You can break it, can't you?

HILDY

No, I can't.

WALTER

Sure you can. Come on. ↴

HILDY

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

WALTER

What do you mean by that?

HILDY

Just what I said. That's what I --

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

You've had a better offer, eh?

HILDY

You bet I've got a better offer.

WALTER

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

↴HILDY

I know, Walter, but I --

WALTER

(ignoring her)

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

Listen, Walter --

WALTER

(going right on)

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

(indignantly)

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

(speechless)

You -- you --

She grabs her purse off the desk and chucks it at him. He ducks. The phone rings.

WALTER

(to Hildy)

You're losing your eye. You used to be able to pitch better than that.

(reaches for phone)

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

Hello... Yeah... What? Sweeney?  
Well, what can I do for you?

CITY ROOM

Duffy sits at his desk, talking into the phone.

DUFFY

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

WALTER'S OFFICE

WALTER

(into phone)

Sweeney! You can't do that to me!  
Not today, of all days! Jumping  
Jehosophat! Oh, no, Sweeney...  
Well, I suppose so... All right. If  
you have to, you have to.

(he hangs up)

How do you like that? Everything  
happens to me -- with three hundred  
sixty-five days in the year -- this  
has to be the day.

HILDY

What's the matter?

WALTER

Sweeney.

HILDY

Dead?

WALTER

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

HILDY

Sweeney?

(she laughs)

Well, after all, he didn't do it on  
purpose, did he?

WALTER

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

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

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

HILDY  
No!

WALTER  
You've got to help me, Hildy.

HILDY  
Keep away --

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

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

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

HILDY  
Get away, Svengali.

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

HILDY  
Listen, you bumble-headed baboon --

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

HILDY  
Please! Will you just --

WALTER

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

HILDY

I'm not working for any other paper!

WALTER

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

HILDY

Look at this!

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

HILDY

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

He looks at the ring, swallows.

HILDY

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

WALTER

(himself again)

Get married all you want to, Hildy, but you can't quit the newspaper business.

HILDY

You can't sell me that, Walter.

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

(bitterly)

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

WALTER

Where'd you meet this man?

HILDY

Bermuda.

WALTER

Bermuda... Rich, eh?

HILDY

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

WALTER

What's his line?

HILDY

He's in the insurance business.

WALTER

(looks up)

The insurance business?

HILDY

(on the defensive)

It's a good, honest business, isn't it?

ANOTHER ANGLE

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

Tomorrow? Tomorrow... as quick as that?

HILDY

The quicker the better. Well -- I finally got out what I came in to tell you.

(she extends her hand)

So long, Walter, and better luck next time.

He takes her hand.

WALTER

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

HILDY

Thanks...

WALTER

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

HILDY  
 (laughing)  
 Well, he's waiting in the anteroom  
 for me now.

WALTER  
 Say, could I meet him?

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

WALTER  
 You're not afraid, are you?

HILDY  
 Afraid? I should say not!

WALTER  
 All right then, come on and let's  
 see this paragon.  
 (gets hat)  
 Is he as good as you say?

HILDY  
 Better.

▲ They start toward the door.

WALTER  
 Then what does he want with you?

HILDY  
 (laughing)  
 Now you got me.

WALTER  
 Nothing personal. I was just  
 asking.

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

▲ OUTSIDE THE OFFICE

WALTER  
 After all --

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

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

WALTER  
 (incredulous)  
 No kidding?

INT. CITY ROOM - DAY

Reporters converse. They stop as Hildy and Walter rush through. This time the staff are silent as they watch the two.

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

WALTER  
 (over his shoulder)  
 What for?

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

WALTER  
 (stops)  
 Oh, I'm sorry.

Walter, at this point, has reached the switchboard.

WALTER  
 (to Maisie, under his  
 breath)  
 Have Duffy call me in the  
 restaurant in twenty minutes.

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

HILDY  
 Allow me.

WALTER  
 (walking right through)  
 Thanks.

Hildy follows him into the

ANTEROOM

Bruce sits on a bench. On the end of a bench sits an old, grizzled Western Union MESSENGER "boy." Ignoring Bruce,

Walter strides over to the MESSENGER, seizes his hand, shakes it.

▲ WALTER

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

Hildy stands behind▲ Bruce who registers amazement at Walter.

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

MESSENGER

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

WALTER

(surprised)

Already married!?

(turns to Hildy)

Hildy, why didn't you tell me?▲

Hildy shakes her head at Walter's antics, but can't help smiling nevertheless.

Walter again seizes the messenger's hand.

WALTER

Congratulations again, Mr. Baldwin!

MESSENGER

But my name --

BRUCE

▲ Mr. Burns!

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

WALTER

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

▲▲ Bruce takes hold of Walter's coat and shakes it to get his attention. Walter turns on him.

WALTER

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

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

BRUCE  
Mr. Burns --

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

BRUCE  
I'm Bruce Baldwin!

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

WALTER  
You're Bruce Baldwin?

BRUCE  
Yes!

WALTER  
(accusing to messenger)  
Then who are you?

MESSENGER  
(falteringly)  
My name's Pete Davis.

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

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

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

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

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

Bruce tries to shift the umbrella, calling Walter's attention to it, and offers his hand instead.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(completely unnerved by this time)

Mr. -- well -- no -- no -- not at all.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(it's the final crusher)

Oh.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

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

WALTER

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

Walter looks down. Bruce, in unconscious response, helplessly lifts his foot up to see the rubber.

WALTER

Attaboy!

Walter takes Bruce's arm and leads him toward the elevator.

WALTER

Come on, Bruce.

BRUCE

(going along, but worried)

Where are we going?

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(a helpless look back at Hildy)  
No -- she didn't.

WALTER

Just wanted to surprise you, I guess.  
(as the elevator is about to pass, he calls)  
Down!

The elevator stops and opens.

Walter practically shoves Bruce in.

WALTER

After you, Bruce!

As Bruce disappears inside Walter turns toward Hildy.

WALTER

Come on, Hildy, my treat! ♪

HILDY

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

WALTER ♪

(hurt)  
How do you like that? Here I am being nice to you and your sweetheart and that's the thanks I get!

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

WALTER

(very sweetly -- he almost sings it)  
Oh -- after you, Hildy!

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

The office boy looks after the departed elevator and whistles. Then he grins all over. ♪

INT. RESTAURANT † DAY

A beaming WAITER grins big.

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

The trio are at a table in the not-too-swank eatery.

HILDY  
(beaming at waiter)  
Nobody else.

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

HILDY  
How's everything, Gus?

WAITER/GUS  
I can't complain.

WALTER  
(studying menu)  
Well, I can. I'm hungry. Roast beef sandwich -- rare. And some coffee.

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

WALTER  
Good idea. How about you, Hildy?

HILDY  
(discarding menu)  
Oh -- I'll take the same, I guess.  
And coffee.

GUS  
Little rum in yours, too?

HILDY  
I guess so.

Bruce looks at her. She hurriedly changes her mind.

HILDY  
No -- just coffee, Gus.

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

BRUCE  
 (putting menu down)  
 Oh, I'll take the same, I guess.  
 And a glass of milk.

GUS  
 (incredulous)  
 Milk?

BRUCE  
 (thinks he hasn't heard)  
 Yes.

GUS  
 (shaking his head as he  
 writes it down)  
 Milk.

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

Gus gives him a "glad I'm not you" look and goes.

Walter▲ surveys the others quizzically.

WALTER  
 (a sigh)  
 Well, so you're getting married  
 tomorrow, eh? How does it feel,  
 Bruce?

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

WALTER  
 (piously)  
 Taking the train today -- and being  
 married tomorrow?

He whistles.

BRUCE  
 (rising to the bait)  
 Oh, it isn't like that.

HILDY  
 (reassuring and proper)  
 It will be perfectly all right,  
 Walter. Mother is coming with us on  
 the train.

WALTER

Mother? But your mother --

BRUCE

No. My mother.

WALTER

(he gets it and  
underlines it)

Oh. Your mother -- well, of course,  
that relieves my mind.

HILDY

(to Bruce)

Isn't it sweet of Walter -- still  
wanting to protect me?

She gives Walter that too-sweet look.

WALTER

▲ (apparently taking this  
at face value)

I know I wasn't a good husband,  
Hildy, but you can always count on  
me.▲

BRUCE

(a little cockily)

I don't think she'll need you very  
much -- I aim to do most of the  
protecting myself.

He pats Hildy's arm -- she smiles at him.▲

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

BRUCE

Well, I'll try to give her one.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

Just for the first year.

WALTER

(sighing)

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

(sotto voce)

Ow!

The "ow" is a direct result of a kick under the table from Hildy.

BRUCE

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

WALTER

Yes, I know...

(he chuckles)

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

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

GUS

Well, here we are.

He begins serving them.

WALTER

(trying to pick up again  
after a second)

How's business, Bruce?

BRUCE

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

Gus manages to come between Hildy and Walter.

WALTER

I don't blame them.

GUS

Ouch!

HILDY

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

GUS

(a pained expression  
belies his words)

That's all right.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

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

WALTER

I see what you mean.

Hildy sips her coffee and acts surprised.

HILDY

Gus, this --

GUS

(winks)

Good coffee, isn't it?

She smiles and winks back, and takes another sip.

Gus starts to go.

BRUCE

You've forgotten my milk.

GUS

Oh. The milk. Yes.

He leaves, shaking his head.

Walter sips his coffee. He likes it. He lifts his cup to Hildy.

WALTER

Here's luck to the bride and  
bridegroom.

HILDY

(lifts cup)

Thank you.

BRUCE

(looking for something to  
respond with --  
apologetically)

He hasn't brought my milk yet.

A BUS BOY approaches Walter.

BUS BOY

They want you on the phone, Mr.  
Burns.

WALTER

They would!

The boy goes, Walter rises, starts off, comes back for his  
cup of coffee, which he then takes off with him.

BRUCE

(looking after him)

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

HILDY

(maternally)

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

BRUCE

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

HILDY

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

BRUCE

(shaking his head)

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

HILDY

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

▲ INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Walter listens, has coffee on ledge, and sips it now and  
then.

WALTER

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

He hangs up, smiles, and finishes the coffee. Then he girds  
himself for being crushed.

He gradually begins to look sunk. He pulls out a small mirror  
to study his expression till he finally gets what he wants.

He holds that expression as he comes out of the booth.

INT. RESTAURANT - TABLE - DAY

Gus approaches Hildy and Bruce.

GUS

Your milk, sir.

He serves Bruce.

GUS

And I brought you another cup of  
coffee, Hildy.

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

HILDY

Thanks, Gus.

She takes a sip and almost chokes.

BRUCE

Too hot?

HILDY  
 (gasping for breath)  
 No. It's strong.  
 (quickly)  
 But I like it that way.

Gus goes, smiling.

BRUCE  
 (looking off)  
 Say, what's happened to Burns? He  
 looks sunk, doesn't he?

HILDY  
 (beaming)  
 He certainly -- hic -- does!

Walter approaches, looking like a 1929 banker just before  
 jumping off a roof, and sits down.

BRUCE  
 Anything the matter?

WALTER  
 Just Sweeney again. One of my best  
 reporters.

HILDY  
 What now?

WALTER  
 His wife had twins and he went out  
 to celebrate and got as drunk as a  
 lord. They can't even find him.  
 (he sips his coffee)  
 I tell you, drink is the ruin of  
 this nation.

HILDY  
 (sipping hers)  
 You said it.

WALTER  
 So -- Sweeney gets twins -- and  
 Earl Williams gets hanged tomorrow.

BRUCE  
 Just what is the lowdown on  
 Williams?

WALTER  
 It's simple. A poor little dope who  
 lost his job went berserk and shot  
 (MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

a cop who was coming after him to quiet him down.

HILDY

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

WALTER

Because it happened to be a colored policeman.

HILDY

(for Bruce's benefit)

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

WALTER

Especially with an election coming up in a few days.

BRUCE

Are you sure Williams is not all there?

WALTER

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

BRUCE

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

WALTER

(a sly expression on his face)

How?

HILDY

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

WALTER

(slapping hands together)

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

(the enthusiasm dies away)

-- you're going away. I forgot.

BRUCE

How long would the interview take?

WALTER

Oh -- an hour for the interview.  
Another hour to write it.

BRUCE

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

Why, Walter, you're getting poetic!

WALTER

(to Bruce)

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

Bruce gulps.

WALTER

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

HILDY

(breaking into applause)  
What a performance! Bravo! Don't let him fool you, Bruce -- it's only an act!

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

WALTER

What do you mean?

HILDY

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

WALTER

(laughs, throws up his hands)  
All right, Hildy, I'm licked. But I'll make you and Bruce a business proposition.

HILDY

We're not interested.

WALTER

(to Bruce)  
Maybe you'll be. You're a smart young man. You let Hildy do this story for me and you can write out a ~~hundred-thousand-dollar~~ insurance policy for me. What do you say?

BRUCE

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

HILDY

Wait a minute, Bruce. What's commission on a ~~hundred-thousand-dollar~~ policy?

BRUCE

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

HILDY

And what's the matter with a thousand dollars?

BRUCE

But --

HILDY

According to the budget we laid out that's more than our food bill for a whole year. Listen, Bruce, I don't want Walter Burns to use me, but I'm perfectly willing to use him. How long will it take to get him examined?

BRUCE

I could get a company doctor in twenty minutes.

WALTER

Now you're talking!

HILDY

(turning on Walter)

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

(back to Walter)

And no tricks, Walter!

WALTER

What tricks would I pull?

HILDY

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

BRUCE

About twenty-five hundred dollars.

HILDY

Better make that a certified check, Walter.

WALTER

(indignantly)  
What do you think I am -- a crook?

HILDY

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

WALTER

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

HILDY

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

BRUCE

All right, dear.

HILDY

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

BRUCE

(feeling his pocket)  
The five hundred? Sure.

HILDY

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

BRUCE

But --

HILDY

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

BRUCE

But I don't gamble, Hilda!

HILDY

I know a lot of men who didn't do anything till they met Walter Burns. Please, dear.

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

HILDY  
 I'll be careful, darling. You be  
 [?], please.

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

HILDY  
 So long, husbands.

She goes, just a bit tipsy.

The two men look after her.

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

WALTER  
 You haven't seen anything yet.

Bruce turns to look at Walter -- they look at each other.

▲ INT. ▲ CRIMINAL COURTS BLDG - PRESS ROOM - DAY

A telephone rings. A hand comes in to take the phone.

ENDICOTT takes the phone. He has an eyeshade over his eyes  
 and five cards in his other hand.

ENDICOTT  
 (into phone)  
 Criminal Courts Press Room... This  
 is Endicott... No, nothing new on  
 the Williams case yet boss. Well,  
 you bet I'm here plugging away  
 every minute.  
 ▲ (hangs up and studies his  
 cards)  
 Up a dime.

The other players come into view as they speak. Playing at  
 table with several phones on it are weary reporters MURPHY,  
 WILSON, SCHWARTZ and MCCUE.

MURPHY  
 (drops his cards)  
 By me.

WILSON  
 (also drops)  
 Droparoo.

Schwartz knocks on table and drops cards.

MCCUE  
 (reluctantly)  
 I'll call.

ENDICOTT  
 Three sixes. Is that any good?

HILDY (O.S.)  
 It sure looks good from here.

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

Framed in the doorway, Hildy carries a travel bag and has changed into a tailored traveling suit with matching hat. She grins and enters.

The reporters all talk at once.

REPORTERS (AD LIB)  
 "Hildy!"  
 "Where'd you come from?"  
 "Holy Mackerel, Hildy Johnson!"

Hildy raises her hand for silence.

HILDY  
 One at a time, boys.

As she speaks rapidly, she goes to a desk with a typewriter on it, places her bag on the desk, takes her hat off and hangs it on a clothes tree in the corner, comes back to the desk and opens the travel bag:▲

▲HILDY  
 No, I'm not back for good. I'm just covering the Earl Williams story for Mr. Sweeney who had a sudden attack of something but will be all right by tomorrow. No, I haven't made up with Walter Burns -- far from it! As a matter of fact, I'm leaving tonight for Albany and I'll be married tomorrow morning. The lucky man is Mr. Bruce Baldwin, a  
 (MORE)

HILDY (CONT'D)

gentleman in the insurance business  
-- and when I say gentleman, I mean  
gentleman! Are there any other  
questions?

Hildy takes a notebook and pencil out of the bag, looks down and notices she has a run in her stockings. She takes a fresh pair out of the bag, sits down and begins to change into the new roll-up stockings.

ENDICOTT

(grinning)

Well, that about covers everything.

HILDY

Good. Now I want to ask you fellows  
a couple of questions. Did Earl  
Williams know what he was doing  
when he fired that gun?

MURPHY

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

MCCUE

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

(waves his hand toward  
Wilson)

Take it away, Fred Wilson!

WILSON

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

(MORE)

WILSON (CONT'D)

(gestures toward  
Schwartz)

Come in, ~~Dave~~ Schwartz.

SCHWARTZ

His Honor, the Mayor, now comes out with a statement that Earl Williams is a dangerous character in the employ of two or three foreign governments and the police are going to get him dead or alive. Somebody sends out a tip that this guy is hiding in Molly Malloy's joint. And this ~~colored~~ policeman, Daniels, goes over to pick Williams up. Williams has read the papers, thinks the cop is going to kill him and shoots first. That is all.

HILDY

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

Hildy gets up, rolls the pair of stockings she has just discarded into a ball, crosses to ~~a roll-top~~ desk and puts the stockings in a drawer.

ENDICOTT

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

HILDY

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

Hildy crosses back to ~~the table~~ and sits down.

HILDY

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

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

 Hildy picks up ~~the~~ phone nearest her on ~~the table~~ and starts to dial, picking up cards dealt her with ~~her free~~ hand.

HILDY

(into phone)

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

(she studies her cards --  
then, into phone)

Hello, Walter. How's the old double-crosser?

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

Telephone at Walter's ear.

WALTER

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

Walter is stripped to the waist. A DOCTOR applies a stethoscope to his chest.

Walter listens intently on the phone and the doctor listens intently to his chest.

WALTER

(into phone)  
Going all right, eh?

DOCTOR

(nodding)  
Fine.

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

WALTER

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

▲ Bruce, who has some papers in front of him at the desk, grins.

▲ DOCTOR

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

WALTER

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

Hildy looks at her cards while talking into the phone.

HILDY

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

(she hangs up)

All right, boys. Up a dime.

ENDICOTT

Right back at you. ♪

MCCUE

(drops his cards)

You fight it cut.

HILDY

And up a dime.

ENDICOTT

(studies a second)

I call. What you got?

Hildy shows her cards. [Three aces.]

HILDY ♪

Three bullets! Any good?

ENDICOTT

(throws his cards away)

Beats king up.

♪ Hildy rakes in the money.

MCCUE

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

WILSON

Yeah -- you can't spend it in Albany.

HILDY

Oh, I'll think of something.

Taking in door and including group, BENSINGER, another reporter, comes in from the corridor. He stands out from the others with his tidy appearance. He carries a book under his arm.

MURPHY

Hello, Harvard! Got anything new on the hanging?

▲BENSINGER▲

(cockily)

Why don't you fellows get your own news?

▲HILDY▲

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

▲BENSINGER

(notices her)

Hildy!

He comes over to shake hands.

BENSINGER

Are you back?

HILDY

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

BENSINGER

What doing?

▲HILDY

I'm getting married tomorrow.

BENSINGER

Well, congratulations! Good luck!▲

ENDICOTT

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

SCHWARTZ

Come on, Hildy, your deal.

Bensinger goes to his roll-top desk, opens the drawer in which Hildy put her stockings.

BENSINGER

Say, who put these stockings in my desk?

(he turns to the group)

MCCUE

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

Bensinger makes a gesture of disgust, picks up a telephone and speaks into it.

BENSINGER

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

Endicott deals the cards.

ENDICOTT

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

▲BENSINGER▲

(into phone)

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

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

MURPHY

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

(into phone)

Gimme the desk.

ENDICOTT

This Egelhoffer's pretty good.

MURPHY

Yeah? What did he ever do for his country?

ENDICOTT

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

Bensinger refers to his notes as he talks into the phone.

BENSINGER▲

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

Murphy continues playing his cards.

MURPHY

(into phone)

This is Murphy. More slop on the hanging.

▲▲BENSINGER▲

(into phone)

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

MURPHY

(into phone)

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

(consults his hand)

Up a dime.

▲BENSINGER▲

(into phone)

The Sheriff has just received four more letters threatening his life, but he says nothing can interfere with his duty.▲

MURPHY

(into phone)

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

The card game continues.

ENDICOTT

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

MURPHY

What have you got, Hildy?

▲HILDY

Kings and sixes.

MURPHY

(throws down)

That's good.

HILDY

(sweeps coins in)

"Kings and sixes, The pot  
affixes"... Poetry. I learned that  
at my grandma's knee.

WILSON

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

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

The doctor has gone. Walter adjusts his shirt and sits in a  
chair. Bruce sits at the desk.

BRUCE

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

WALTER

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

BRUCE

I feel I ought to take care of her.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

Well, I'm independent, too.

WALTER

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

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

made good -- don't you think  
Hildy's entitled to a quiet old age  
without any worries?

BRUCE

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

WALTER

(uncharacteristically  
honest)

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

BRUCE

I'm beginning to realize that.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(a lump in his throat)

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

WALTER

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

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

▲ Duffy enters and places a check on the desk.

DUFFY ▲

Here's that certified check,  
Walter. ▲

▲ (sotto voce)

I drew out my wife's savings, and  
if this isn't back by five-thirty  
I'm a ruined man!

WALTER

(also sotto voce)

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

(louder)

Thanks, Duffy. Stick around.

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

(picks up check, rises)

He walks over to Bruce.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(also rising)

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

Duffy reacts to this in solemn thought.

Walter walks Bruce toward the door, his arm around him.

BRUCE

Well, she'll know some day.

WALTER

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

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

WALTER

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

BRUCE

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

Walter opens the door for Bruce.

Louie sits at a desk, apparently engrossed in a newspaper. He is all alert, however. Bruce and Walter approach talking.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

(embarrassed)

Thanks a lot.

They pass Louie. He looks up. ▲

Bruce, still embarrassed, looks down. Walter turns and signals to Louie.

Louie watches.

Walter points to Bruce's back.

Louie nods.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

Oh, sure.

(extends his hand)

Well, thanks for everything.

WALTER

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

BRUCE

So long.

Bruce turns and goes. Walter watches him.

Louie comes between Walter and Bruce and follows Bruce out as he heads toward the exit.

Walter rubs his hands in glee as he starts back to his office.

INT. PRESS ROOM - DAY

Hildy rakes in a pot.

HILDY

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

MCCUE

(throws cards down)

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

HILDY

Nothing doing. I'm playing for keeps.

A whirl and crash from the gallows startle all.

Bensinger goes to the window, looks out.

BENSINGER

I wish they'd stop that practicing.

The others drift over to look out of the window.

EXT. COURTYARD THE GALLOWS - SAME

The trap is sprung by two or three earnest men.

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

HILDY  
 (turns away)  
 Well, anyhow, I won't be covering  
 stuff like this anymore.

SCHWARTZ  
 What's the matter? Getting yellow? ♪

A phone rings. McCue answers it.

♪ MCCUE  
 For you, Hildy.

Hildy takes the phone and speaks into it.

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

INT. PHONE BOOTH - SAME

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

McCue hovers near.

MCCUE  
 Certified, eh? Who is it -- your  
 milkman?

HILDY  
 (into phone)  
 But, Bruce, don't keep it in your  
 wallet!... Well, you see --  
 (she is thinking rapidly)  
 -- there's an old newspaper  
 superstition that the first big  
 check you get you -- you put in the  
 lining of your hat. That brings you  
 good luck for ten years.

MCCUE

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

HILDY

(covers receiver; to McCue)

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

(into phone)

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

▲ INT. PHONE BOOTH - SAME

BRUCE

All right. Wait a minute.

Bruce takes the check out of his wallet, folds it into the lining of his hat.

BRUCE

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

HILDY

Fine. And here's a kiss for you.

Hildy blows a kiss into the phone. Immediately kissing sounds fill the room. She looks up and glares.

HILDY

(into phone)

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

INT. PHONE BOOTH - SAME

He blows a kiss into the phone and hangs up.

EXT. ▲ RESTAURANT - DAY

Studying a paper, Louie reads ▲ for a moment. Bruce comes out ▲ and starts down the street. After a second, Louie follows.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - CELL BLOCK ENTRANCE - DAY

WARDEN COOLEY sits at a desk near the grilled doorway that leads to the cells. He studies a racing form.

Hildy's hand reaches and flicks the newspaper. Cooley looks up to see Hildy.

COOLEY

Hello, Hildy! What are you doing around here?

HILDY

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

COOLEY

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

Hildy reaches down -- comes up with a \$20 bill.

HILDY

Say, isn't this your twenty dollars?

COOLEY

(looks at bill eagerly)  
I think it is.

She hands it over.

HILDY

I thought so. Come on, I'm in a hurry.

Cooley pockets the twenty and reaches for his key ring.

EXT. STREET - DAY

There is a milling mob around an unseen center of activity.

A COP sees this and strolls determinedly toward the crowd.

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

Bruce is held down on the ground by Louie.

COP

What's going on?

LOUIE

This guy stole my watch.

The cop lugs Bruce and Louie to their feet.

COP  
Have you got his watch?

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

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

BRUCE  
I haven't got --

COP  
Wait a minute.

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

COP  
(to Louie)  
Is this yours?

LOUIE  
Yeah! That's it!

COP  
What about it?

BRUCE  
I never saw it before.

The cop grabs Bruce. Louie grabs his other arm.

COP  
Come on!

The cop whistles.

COP  
(to mob)  
Beat it!

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

BRUCE  
My hat!

COP  
Get his hat, somebody.

Bruce's hat lies top up, in a puddle. A hand from the crowd reaches in and picks it up.

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

▲ INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

At the door of Earl Williams' cell, Hildy sits on a stool, pencil and copy paper in hand.

EARL WILLIAMS sits at the edge of his cot, facing Hildy. There is a bouquet of roses in a water pitcher by the cot.

At first, Williams seems a rational, well-poised citizen. ▲

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

What are your beliefs, Earl?

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

I'd do away with the profit system and have production for use only. There's enough food and clothing

(MORE)

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

and shelter for everybody if we'd use some sense.

HILDY

(writing)

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

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

(thoughtfully)

Yes, that makes a lot of sense, Earl.

WILLIAM

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

HILDY

Sure.

(she studies him a moment)

What's the purpose of a gun, Earl?

WILLIAMS

A gun?

He thinks -- then a revealing smile breaks out.

WILLIAMS

Why -- to shoot, of course.

HILDY

Is that how you came to shoot the policeman?

WILLIAMS

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

(MORE)

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

flash: what's a gun for? To shoot!  
So I shot. Simple isn't it?

HILDY

(writing)

Very simple, Earl.

WILLIAMS

There's nothing crazy about that,  
is there?

HILDY

No, Earl, not at all.

(she indicates the  
flowers)

Who sent you the flowers, Earl?

WILLIAMS

(reverently)

Miss Mollie Malloy. She's a  
wonderful person.

HILDY

(pointing to picture  
pinned on wall)

Isn't that her picture?

WILLIAMS

(turning toward it)

Yes. Isn't she beautiful?

INSERT: PICTURE OF MOLLIE

HILDY

If you should be pardoned, are you  
figuring on marrying Mollie?

EARL

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

HARTMAN (O.S.)

How'd you get in here?

SHERIFF HARTMAN approaches. Hildy turns toward him.

HILDY

Same way you did.

(pointing)

Through that gate.

HARTMAN

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

HILDY

All right, then, I'll just run the story that Sheriff Hartman is afraid to let reporters interview his prisoner. Of course, with election coming, that might do you a lot of harm, but just as you say.

HARTMAN

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

HILDY

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

HARTMAN

(beaming)

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

(turning toward Williams)

'Lo, Earl. How are you feeling?

WILLIAMS

Fine, thanks, Sheriff.

HARTMAN

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

WILLIAMS

I won't.

HARTMAN

(to Hildy)

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

▲HILDY

(in a low voice so

Williams won't overhear)

No, thanks Sheriff. I'm leaving town tonight.

HARTMAN

(just as loud as ever)

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

Don't forget about production for  
use.

HILDY

I won't, Earl.

She leaves.

INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

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

MURPHY

(rakes in a pot)

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

ENDICOTT

Who's this guy she's gonna marry?

WILSON

Baldwin -- his name is.

SCHWARTZ

I give that marriage six months.

MCCUE

Why?

SCHWARTZ

Hildy won't be able to stay away  
from a paper any longer than that.  
Did you see her eyes light up when  
she came in here? Like an old fire  
horse.

▲MURPHY

She says she's gonna write fiction.

ENDICOTT

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

SCHWARTZ

I'll give ten to five that marriage  
won't last six months. Hildy's a

(MORE)

SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

newspaper man. She's got headlines  
in her veins -- the way we all have  
or we'd be out of these lousy jobs.

MOLLIE MALLOY, pretty, street-tough, appears in the doorway.  
She moves slowly into the room.

MCCUE

Well, well -- Miss Mollie Malloy.

MURPHY

Hello, Mollie.

WILSON

How's tricks, Mollie?▲

MOLLIE

I've been lookin' for you tramps.▲

ENDICOTT

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

MOLLIE

(tensely)

A lot of wise guys, ain't you?

SCHWARTZ

(uncomfortably)

You're breaking up the game,  
Mollie. What do you want?

MOLLIE

I want to tell you what I think of  
you -- all of you.

Hildy appears in the doorway and comes into the room.

▲MURPHY

Keep your shirt on.

MOLLIE

(to Murphy)

If you was worth breaking my  
fingers on, I'd tear your face wide  
open.

Hildy goes to the typing desk and begins typing away.

MURPHY

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

MOLLIE

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

BENSINGER

(rises and comes over)

She oughtn't be allowed in here!

▲MOLLIE▲

(flaring)

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

Endicott looks up at her.

ENDICOTT

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

Mollie blows up.

▲MOLLIE

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

Hildy types away, stops to look over at Mollie, then  
resolutely turns away, studies her notes, and begins typing  
again.

MURPHY

Aw, put it on a phonograph!▲

MOLLIE

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

ENDICOTT

(to Mollie)

Got a match?

MOLLIE

(heedless)

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

The boys laugh.

Mollie lashes out at them.

MOLLIE

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

MURPHY

(finally irritated)

Go into your dance! This is the Press Room. We're busy.

WILSON

Why don't you go and see your boyfriend?

ENDICOTT

(winks at the others)

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

MOLLIE

(through her teeth)

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

The sound of the gallows comes from outside. Mollie gasps.

ENDICOTT  
(suddenly uncomfortable)  
Don't get hysterical, kid.

MOLLIE  
(begins to sob)  
Shame on you!

Mollie stares at Murphy.

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

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

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

Hildy looks back and rises determinedly.

Mollie backs away from Murphy, still sobbing. Hildy gets up and puts her arm around Mollie.

HILDY  
(gently)  
Come on, Mollie. This is no place  
for you.

She leads Mollie toward the door.

MOLLIE  
They're not human!

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

Mollie gives one look back as Hildy leads her out door.

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

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

MURPHY  
 (picking up cards)  
 You guys wanna play some more  
 poker?

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

▲▲ WILSON  
 (into phone)  
 Who? Hildy Johnson? She just  
 stepped out. She'll be back in a  
 second. Who? Oh, Mr. Baldwin. Well,  
 if you'll hang on a minute, she  
 ought to be right in. All right.

He covers the transmitter, eyeing the door.

WILSON  
 (to others)  
 Baldwin. The blushing bridegroom --  
 himself.

SCHWARTZ  
 What's he want?

WILSON  
 Wants Hildy -- and sounds very  
 excited.

Hildy comes back. Looks at them and stares contemptuously.

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

WILSON  
 Phone for you, Hildy.

HILDY  
 (going toward it)  
 Who is it?

WILSON  
 Oh, some insurance man. Are you in?

HILDY  
 (grabbing phone)  
 Give me that!

▲HILDY▲  
 (into phone)  
 Hello! Hello! Bruce?... What?...  
 Where are you?... You're where?...  
 How did that happen?...  
 ▲ (she listens  
 unbelievably a second)  
 I'll be right over!

As Hildy hangs up and darts out of room, the others watch in amazement.

MURPHY  
 Boy, did you see her go?

ENDICOTT  
 "Lioness Rushes to Defense of Cub."

WILSON  
 I told you Baldwin was in trouble.

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

SCHWARTZ  
 I still give that marriage six  
 months.

Bensinger on the phone.

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

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SHERIFF HARTMAN on the phone.

HARTMAN  
 (indignantly)  
 Once and for all, I'm not going to  
 hang anybody except at the legal  
 (MORE)

HARTMAN (CONT'D)

hour... What? Don't threaten me, Bensinger! I'm not afraid of any newspapers. Yeah?... Oh, shut up!

He hangs up. In afterthought, he calls the operator.

HARTMAN

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

He hangs up and turns to someone unseen in the room.

HARTMAN

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

Williams, Sheriff Hartman and DR. EGELHOFFER are the only occupants of room. Williams is seated facing a large standing searchlight.

EGELHOFFER

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

HARTMAN

You said it!

EGELHOFFER

They're always after me for interviews.

HARTMAN

Me, too.

EGELHOFFER

(fencing)

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

HARTMAN

(not liking it)

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

EGELHOFFER

(he'll bargain)

We'll have to satisfy them. What would you say to giving them a joint interview? I could give them

(MORE)

EGELHOFFER (CONT'D)

some of the psychological aspects of the case and you could give them the legal aspects.

HARTMAN

(he buys)

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

EGELHOFFER

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

HARTMAN

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

EGELHOFFER

Yes, I suppose so. It all helps.

WILLIAMS

(just a spectator till  
now)

Are you gentlemen all through with me?

EGELHOFFER

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

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

EGELHOFFER

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

WILLIAMS

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

EGELHOFFER

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

▲▲ WILLIAMS

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

INT. POLICE CELL - NIGHT

Bruce looks out through the bars.

BRUCE

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

▲ Hildy is outside. A police LIEUTENANT is with her in the b.g.

HILDY

I know you didn't, Bruce.

She whirls on the lieutenant.

HILDY

(to lieutenant)

Let him out of here, Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT

(conciliatingly)

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

HILDY

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

LIEUTENANT

Now, Hildy --

HILDY

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

LIEUTENANT

I can't.

HILDY

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

LIEUTENANT

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

HILDY

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

LIEUTENANT

Five hundred dollars.

HILDY

You'll take fifty and like it!

LIEUTENANT

(wavers)

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

He starts to open cell door.

HILDY

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

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

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

HILDY

What's the matter?

BRUCE

I lost my wallet.

HILDY

(stops)

The check, Bruce!

Bruce picks up his hat and takes the check out of the lining.

BRUCE

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

Hildy takes the check and puts it away.

HILDY

Yes, wasn't it?

BRUCE

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

HILDY

(looking at him fondly)  
I'm sure you haven't any.

BRUCE

For a minute, I thought maybe Walter Burns was at the back of it. But then I realized he couldn't have been.

HILDY

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

BRUCE

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

HILDY

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

BRUCE

Did you finish the interview?

HILDY

(to driver)  
The Criminal Courts Building.

The driver nods.

HILDY

(to Bruce)  
No -- but I'm sure it'll be all right with Walter.▲

BRUCE

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

▲HILDY

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

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

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Hildy's at door of the cab. Bruce is in the cab.

HILDY

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

Hildy turns and starts for the stairs of Criminal Courts Building. †

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

At the typing desk, Schwartz reads Hildy's interview to the other boys, who are grouped around. Bensinger is at his roll-top desk, a book open, but listening.

SCHWARTZ

(reading)

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

(he stops)

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

BENSINGER

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

ENDICOTT

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

†SCHWARTZ

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

HILDY (O.S.)

I'll take that bet.

They turn. Hildy comes in and goes to her phone, picks it up.

HILDY

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

(into phone; her voice assumes a silken quality)

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

SCHWARTZ

(embarrassed)

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

HILDY

(into phone)

This is Hildy Johnson...

(to Schwartz)

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

(into phone)

Oh, is that you, Walter dear? Oh, I didn't mean "dear." That was just habit, I guess... Oh, behave yourself, Walter. I've got some news for you... Yes, I got the interview, but I've got some news that's more important.

The others are listening, suspecting a scoop.

♣HILDY

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

(then with a sudden change of pace)

Get this, you double-crossing chimpanzee, there ain't gonna be any interview and there ain't gonna be any story... Huh? That certified check of yours is leaving with me in twenty minutes. And if I ever see you again, it's going to be just too bad... Eh?... Oh, you don't know what I'm angry about, do

(MORE)

## HILDY (CONT'D)

you? If you come over I'll be very glad to tell you the story of Louie's watch. I dare you to come over, you -- you -- skunk in sheep's clothing! And bring that bodyguard of yours, too -- you'll need him.

The others hold back their impressed and awed reactions.

HILDY

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

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

HILDY

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

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

HILDY

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

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

HILDY

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

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

SCHWARTZ  
 (subdued tones)  
 Hello, Mr. Burns. Yes, she's still  
 here.

HILDY  
 (stopping midway to her  
 hat)  
 I'll take it.

She comes over and takes the phone, talks into it.

HILDY  
 What's the matter, Mr. Burns...  
 don't you understand English?...  
 Why, your language is shocking, Mr.  
 Burns -- positively shocking! I  
 don't mind because I was married to  
 you and know what to expect, but  
 suppose Central is listening in...  
 Oh, did you hear that, Central? We  
 ought to report him, don't you  
 think?... Oh, phooey on you!

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

HILDY  
 Now where was that hat? Oh, yes.

She starts toward it.

INT. SHERIFF HARTMAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

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

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

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

Hartman starts to take gun out, hesitates.

HARTMAN  
 I don't know --

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

Hartman hands him the gun.

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

WILLIAMS  
 Yes, sir.

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

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

WILLIAMS  
 (hesitantly)  
 Well, it wasn't exactly that way --

EGELHOFFER  
 (insistently)  
 Point the gun at me!

Williams does so.

EGELHOFFER  
 Then what did you do?

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

WILLIAMS  
 (pathetically)  
 Now can I go, please?

There is a loud banging on the door.

DEPUTY (O.S.)  
 Hey, Sheriff! Open up! What  
 happened?

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

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

ENDICOTT  
Goodbye, Yonson.

MCCUE  
So long, Hildy.

MURPHY  
Send us a postcard, kid.

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

BENSINGER  
Goodbye, Hildy.

Hildy has crossed to the doorway. She turns and faces the room to make a last bravura speech.

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

She turns and starts on a bit of verse:

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

She is interrupted by a terrific fusillade of shots in the courtyard. A roar of excited voices follow.

For a tense second, everyone in the room is motionless. There is another volley of shots. Wilson, Endicott and Murphy jump for the window.

DEPUTIES (AD LIB) (O.S.)  
"Get the riot guns!"  
"Spread out, you fellows!"

WILSON  
There's a jail-break! ▲

MURPHY  
Cooley! What's the matter? \*  
What's happened?

COOLEY (O.S.)  
Watch the gate! He's probably  
trying the gate!

Outside, a siren begins to wail.

ENDICOTT  
(out the window)  
Who got away? Who was it?

COOLEY (O.S.)  
Earl... Williams!!!

▲ REPORTERS (AD LIB)  
"Who? Who'd he say?"  
"Earl Williams!"  
"It was Earl Williams!"  
"He got away!"

MCCUE  
Holy --! Gimme that telephone!  
(works hook frantically)  
Hurry! Hurry up! This is important! ▲

Searchlights hit the windows, sweeping from the direction of the jail.

Hildy stands paralyzed, her bundle in her hand.

There is another rifle volley. Two windowpanes crash into the room. ▲ Some plaster falls. Gongs sound above the siren.

The boys jump for their telephones. Another windowpane goes.

MCCUE  
(screaming)  
Look out! ▲

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

A QUICK MONTAGE - REPORTERS AT THEIR PHONES

REPORTERS (AD LIB)  
"Gimme the desk!"  
"Flash!"  
"Earl Williams just escaped!"  
"Don't know yet -- call you back."

After each man communicates with his paper, he dashes for the door until the last of the reporters is gone.

Hildy's bag, almost unnoticed, falls to the floor as she moves back into the room, absently grabbing and trailing a chair.

HILDY

Ahhh --

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

HILDY

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

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

HILDY

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

She hangs up.

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

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

The reporters join armed guards leaping into squad cars ready for the chase.

Cooley is beside the gate. The gate opens and out they go.

EXT. DOOR LEADING FROM BUILDING TO COURTYARD - NIGHT

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

EXT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

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

EXT. GATE - CONTINUOUS

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

Cooley, knocking him to the ground. She ends up sitting on him.

HILDY  
Cooley, I want to talk to you.

COOLEY  
(trying to get up)  
Hildy -- I can't. I'm busy -- I --  
Let me up, Hildy. Earl Williams has  
escaped --

He struggles.

HILDY  
There's money in it, Cooley.

COOLEY  
I can't Hildy. It means my job! It  
means --

HILDY  
(interrupting him)  
A lot of money.  
(she opens her bag)  
Four hundred and fifty dollars --

She fingers the bills.

COOLEY  
How much?

HILDY  
Four hundred and fifty dollars. Is  
it a deal?

COOLEY  
It's a deal. Let me up.

Cooley gets up and dusts himself off.

COOLEY  
Let's see the money.

HILDY  
(money still in her hand)  
First we talk. How did Earl  
Williams get that gun?

Cooley looks around quickly.

COOLEY  
Come on, and I'll tell you.

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

They move off as the gates are closed.▲

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

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

ENDICOTT▲

(into phone)

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

MURPHY (O.S.)

Gimme the Desk.

▲ Murphy and Endicott are at separate phones.

ENDICOTT

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

MURPHY

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

ENDICOTT

Call you back.

He hangs up swiftly and goes out.

MURPHY

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

Wilson enters and picks up his phone.

WILSON

(into phone)

Wilson talking.

MURPHY

Yeah -- tear bomb. Criminals cry for it.

Hartman enters as he turns back to someone unseen in the corridor.

HARTMAN

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

MURPHY

(into phone)

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

HARTMAN

What went off?

MURPHY

(into phone)

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

HARTMAN

A fine fair-weather friend you are!

MURPHY

(remorselessly, into phone)

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

HARTMAN

After all I've done for you --

MURPHY

(continuing)

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

WILSON

(into phone)

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

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

MURPHY

(into phone)

William Lungren, who is the Sheriff's landlord, and Lester Bartow who married the Sheriff's

(MORE)

MURPHY (CONT'D)

niece. You remember, the very  
homely dame. Call you back.

He hangs up.

WILSON

(into phone)

Mrs. William Tausig, age fifty-  
five, scrub lady, while at work  
scrubbing the eighth floor of the  
Commerce Building, was shot in the  
left leg by one of Sheriff  
Hartman's deputies.

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

HILDY

There goes another scrub lady.

WILSON

(into phone)

I'll go right after it.

He hangs up and exits.

MURPHY

(to Hildy)

Any dope yet on how he got out?

HILDY

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

HARTMAN

I'm very disappointed in you, Hildy  
Johnson.

He turns and exits. ⚡

MURPHY

How do you suppose Williams got  
that gun?

⚡As Hildy shrugs, there is another flurry of machine-gun fire.  
Murphy leaves precipitately.

Hildy, alone at last, picks up the phone and speaks into it.

HILDY ⚡

Give me Walter Burns -- quick --

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

HILDY  
 (picking up phone)  
 Walter, listen. I've got the inside  
 story on how Williams got the gun  
 and escaped.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

Walter is at his desk, telephone to his ear.

WALTER  
 Exclusive? That's great.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

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

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE ▲- SAME

WALTER  
 Never mind that. What's the story?

INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

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

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE ▲- SAME

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

▲INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

HILDY  
 Wait a minute. Your mother's alive.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE ▲- SAME

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

INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

HILDY

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

She starts to giggle at the thought.

HILDY

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

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE ▲- SAME

WALTER

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

INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

HILDY ▲

No, this is on the level, Walter.  
I'm not good enough to make this  
one up. The Sheriff gave his gun to  
the Professor, the Professor gave  
it to Earl, and Earl gave it right  
back to the Professor -- right in  
the stomach! Who? No, Egelhoffer  
wasn't hurt badly. They took him to  
the County Hospital where they're  
afraid he'll recover.

▲INT. WALTER'S OFFICE ▲- SAME

WALTER

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

INT. PRESS ROOM ▲- NIGHT

HILDY ▲

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

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

WALTER

Hold on a minute.

Louie and a BLONDE sit on a divan in Walter's office. Walter beckons the blonde, his hand carefully over the receiver.

The blonde stands up and approaches.

WALTER

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

BLONDE

I've never flopped on you, have I?

WALTER

Then scram! You've got about two minutes.

She exits.

WALTER

(into phone)

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

Walter puts his hand over the phone and beckons to Louie. Louie stands.

WALTER

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

LOUIE

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

WALTER

(into phone)

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

HILDY

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

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

MCCUE

Hello, Hildy. I thought you were  
gone.

HILDY

I thought so, too.

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

▲MCCUE▲

(into phone)

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

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

▲MCCUE

(to Hildy)

Did you get that, Hildy?

HILDY

No -- what?

Hildy's phone rings. She answers.▲

HILDY

Hello -- Bruce! I thought you were downstairs in a -- What? Arrested again! What for this time, Bruce? Mashing! Oh, Bruce, can't I leave

(MORE)

HILDY (CONT'D)

you alone for three minutes even?  
Well, where are you? The Twenty-  
seventh Precinct? All right, I'll  
be right over --

(looks at her bag on the  
desk)

I'll be over in twenty minutes,  
Bruce.

(hangs up)

If I ever see Walter Burns --

(picks up phone and dials  
viciously)

Get me Walter Burns... Hildy  
Johnson! Well, he was there just a  
minute ago! Have him call me back!

She hangs up. ▲

HILDY

(to McCue)

If Walter Burns calls, hold the  
wire for me, will you? I'll be  
right back.

She goes out.

MCCUE

Okay, Hildy.

(into phone)

Well, we can't get any official  
statement --▲

The door opens and the MAYOR enters.

▲MCCUE

(into phone)

Oh, wait a minute -- here's the  
Mayor. Maybe he'll give us one.

The Mayor turns away with a wave of his hand.

MAYOR

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

MCCUE

(into phone)

His Honor won't say anything.

He hangs up.

The Mayor looks at the door.

Murphy and Endicott come in.

MAYOR  
 (to McCue)  
 Have you seen Sheriff Hartman?

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

MURPHY  
 Say, Your Honor, what effect's this  
 jailbreak going to have on the  
 colored voters?▲

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

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

Hartman comes scoting in.

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

He closes in on Hartman, followed by the reporters.

MURPHY  
 So have we!

ENDICOTT  
 What's the dope, Sheriff?

MURPHY  
 Who engineered this getaway?▲

HARTMAN  
 Just a minute! We've got him  
 located.

ENDICOTT  
 Williams?

MURPHY  
 Where is he?

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

The boys beat it, fast.

MAYOR

Pete, I want to talk to you!

HARTMAN

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

MAYOR

Did you actually give Williams that  
gun?

HARTMAN

(a wail)

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

MAYOR

Pete, I've got a mighty unpleasant  
task to perf --

Hartman suddenly nudges him for quiet, and the Mayor, turns  
to see:

Schwartz comes in and goes to the phone. He is whistling.

SCHWARTZ

Hiya, Your Honor.

(into phone)

Schwartz calling.

(to the Mayor)

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

MAYOR

What Red uprising?

HARTMAN

There'll be no Red uprising!

SCHWARTZ

(into phone)

Gimme rewrite --

(to the Mayor)

The Governor says the situation  
calls for the militia.

MAYOR

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

SCHWARTZ

(into phone)

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

SCHWARTZ

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

Schwartz hangs up and starts out.

SCHWARTZ

Nice to have seen you, Mayor.

He exits, whistling.

MAYOR

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

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

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hartman and the Mayor walk down the hall.

HARTMAN

(beside himself)

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

MAYOR

Four hundred! Do you want to bankrupt this administration?

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

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

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

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

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

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

MAYOR  
 Pete, you're through!

HARTMAN  
 (stunned)  
 What do you mean -- through?

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

HARTMAN  
 (heartbroken)  
 Fred!

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

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

MAYOR

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

HARTMAN

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

MAYOR

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

A phone rings.

HARTMAN

There is a way out. I've got  
Williams surrounded, haven't I?  
What more do you want?

(into phone)

Hello... Yes... Hello!

(wildly)

Four hundred suppers! Nothing  
doing! This is a man-hunt -- not a  
banquet!... The twelve dollars  
includes everything!!

He hangs up.

HARTMAN

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

MAYOR

(hotly)

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

Hartman winces.

MAYOR

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

HARTMAN

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

MAYOR

I know it! But they've got nothing  
to do with this case! Do you  
realize there are two hundred  
thousand votes at stake and unless

(MORE)

MAYOR (CONT'D)

we hang Earl Williams we're going to lose 'em?

HARTMAN

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

A knock on the door.

MAYOR

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

Knocking louder.

MAYOR

Who's out there?

PINKUS (O.S.)

Is Sheriff Hartman in there?

Hartman starts for the door.

HARTMAN

(relieved)

Ah! For me!

Hartman opens the door. PINKUS, a small, very colorless and ineffectual man is there.

HARTMAN

▲ I'm Sheriff Hartman. You want me?

Pinkus enters.

PINKUS ▲

You're certainly a hard fellow to find, Sheriff.

MAYOR

(annoyed)

What do you want?

Pinkus takes a document from his pocket and proffers it to Hartman.

PINKUS

I'm a messenger at the State House. This is from the Governor.

MAYOR

What's from the Governor?

PINKUS  
The reprieve for Earl Williams.

HARTMAN  
(stunned)  
For who?

PINKUS  
(amiably)  
Earl Williams. The reprieve.

MAYOR  
W-wait a minute.

The Mayor gets his bearings.

HARTMAN  
(bursting forth)  
The Governor gave me his word of honor he wouldn't interfere. Two days ago!

MAYOR  
And you fell for it, Pete. It frightens me what I'd like to do to you.  
(to Pinkus)  
Who else knows about this?

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

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

MAYOR  
(to Hartman)  
Get the Governor on the phone!

PINKUS  
(helpfully)  
You can't get him on the phone. He's out duck shooting now.

MAYOR  
Fishing! Duck shooting! How do you like that? A guy does nothing more strenuous for forty years than play pinochle -- he gets elected Governor and right away he thinks he's Tarzan!

HARTMAN  
 (thrusting the document  
 at the Mayor)  
 Read it! Insane, he says.  
 (shaking a finger in  
 Pinkus' face)  
 He knows very well that Williams  
 ain't insane!

PINKUS  
 Yeah. But I --

MAYOR  
 (interrupting)  
 Pure politics!

HARTMAN  
 An attempt to ruin us!

The phone rings. Hartman starts for it.

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

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

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

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

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

HARTMAN  
 (to Mayor)  
**Shh.** Wait, Fred.  
 (excitedly, into phone)  
 What?... Where?... Where? Holy  
 Moses!

MAYOR  
 What is it?

HARTMAN

They got him!

(back to phone)

Wait a minute -- hold the wire.

(to Mayor)

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

MAYOR

Tell 'em to hold the wire.

HARTMAN

I did.

(into phone)

Hold the wire.

MAYOR

Cover up that transmitter!

Hartman does so. Mayor faces Pinkus.

MAYOR

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

PINKUS

(blinking)

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

MAYOR

How much do you make a week?

PINKUS

Huh?

MAYOR

(impatiently)

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

PINKUS

(reluctantly)

Forty dollars.

HARTMAN

(into phone)

No -- don't cut me off.

MAYOR

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

PINKUS

Who? Me?

MAYOR

(exasperated)

Who do you think!

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

▲MAYOR

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

PINKUS

The what?

MAYOR

The City Sealer's office!

PINKUS

You mean here in the city?

MAYOR

(foaming)

Yes, yes!

HARTMAN

(into phone)

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

PINKUS

(a very deliberate  
intellect)

No, I couldn't do that.

MAYOR

Why not?

PINKUS

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

MAYOR

(desperate)

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

PINKUS

(with vast thought)

No, I don't think so.

MAYOR

For heaven's sake, why not?

PINKUS

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

MAYOR

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

PINKUS

(lured)

Yeah?

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Hold your horses -- will you, Olsen?

(to Mayor)

Hurry up, Fred!

MAYOR

Now what do you say?

PINKUS

This puts me in a peculiar hole.

MAYOR

No, it doesn't.

(hands him the reprieve)

Now, remember: you never delivered this.

The Mayor rushes Pinkus to the door.

MAYOR

You got caught in the traffic, or something.

(opens door)

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

PINKUS

But how do I know...?

MAYOR

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

PINKUS

Pinkus.

MAYOR

(takes out his wallet)

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

The Mayor hands Pinkus a card.

MAYOR

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

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

HARTMAN

(into phone, desperately)

Will you wait, Olsen? I'll tell you in a minute!

The door opens again and Pinkus comes back in.

PINKUS

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

MAYOR

(turns hastily toward Pinkus)

I'll explain it tomorrow!

PINKUS

Is it hard?

MAYOR

No! It's easy -- it's very easy!

HARTMAN

(pleadingly, into phone)

Just one second --

PINKUS

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

The Mayor pushes Pinkus out the door.

MAYOR

We'll fix that, too.▲

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Just -- one -- second!

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

MAYOR

(huskily)

All right. Tell 'em to shoot to kill.

▲HARTMAN

What?

MAYOR

Shoot to kill, I said.

HARTMAN

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

MAYOR

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

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Hello, Olsen... Listen...

(his voice is weak)

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

(hangs up)

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

MAYOR

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

HARTMAN

(mopping his brow)

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

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRESS - NIGHT

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Hildy still paces, pounds her hands together and glances every so often at the clock on the wall. Suddenly she crosses to her phone, picks it up.

HILDY  
(into phone)  
Will you try --

LOUIE (O.S.)  
Hildy.

HILDY  
(wheeling toward door)  
Louie!

She drops the phone and hurries towards him.

HILDY  
Have you got my dough?

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

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

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

HILDY  
Come on with that money!

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

HILDY  
Where's the money?

LOUIE  
Keep your shirt on. I got it -- right here.

(MORE)

LOUIE (CONT'D)

(he picks out money and counts)

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

Hildy grabs the money, signs and gives the receipt back.

HILDY

Here!

LOUIE

Thanks. So long, Hildy!

She grabs him.

HILDY

So long, nothing! Where's Bruce Baldwin's wallet?

LOUIE

Huh?

HILDY

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

LOUIE

Now don't get excited, Hildy! I don't know what you're talking about -- but is this Mr. Baldwin's wallet?

He takes Bruce's wallet out. She grabs it from him.

HILDY

You know it is!

LOUIE

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

HILDY

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

LOUIE

(surprised)

What -- already? Why, the dame left  
only a minute before I did!

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

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

HILDY

(into phone)

Precinct Station House?

Hildy stops short, arrested by a sound...

She turns and sees Earl Williams standing in front of the open window, looking more inoffensive and exhausted than ever, indeed on the verge of collapse. He points a large revolver at her.

The search lights that have been playing in the courtyard strike into the windows again.

WILLIAMS

Drop that phone --

Hildy drops the phone back on the hook.

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

(braces herself)

Put down that gun, Earl.

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

Yes -- that's right. Production for  
use.

Hildy walks toward him, slowly.

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

Don't move!

▲ Hildy stops.

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

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

Hildy sneaks another step forward.

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

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

WILLIAMS

(suddenly)  
Keep away!

He pulls the trigger. A faint "click!"

WILLIAMS

(weakly)  
I guess I used all the shells.▲

He drops the gun and clutches at the edge of the roll-top desk for support.

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

HILDY

Earl, you must never do that again.

WILLIAMS

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

HILDY

(more her old self now)

Well, maybe you think I could!

She retrieves the gun and jams it in her purse, jumps to the windows, pulls down the shades.

WILLIAMS

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

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

HILDY

Don't talk too loud.

WILLIAMS

(babbles on as she moves about)

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

HILDY

Sure I do, Earl.

Hildy is looking around for a hiding place for him.

WILLIAMS

I wish they'd take me back and hang me. I done my best.

He abruptly crumples and falls to the floor, unconscious.

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

HILDY  
 (into phone)  
 Hello... Gimme Walter Burns --  
 quick!

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

HILDY  
 (into second phone)  
 Hello -- hel -- Oh, hello, Bruce...  
 Oh, Bruce, please -- I know I said  
 I'd be down in fifteen minutes, but  
 something terrific's happened! Hang  
 on, Bruce --  
 (into first phone)  
 Walter?... Hildy. Come over here --  
 right away!... Wait!  
 (into second phone)  
 Bruce, just a second, Bruce -- I'll  
 explain everything.  
 (into first phone)  
 Walter! Get this: I've got Earl  
 Williams... Yes! Here in the Press  
 Room... Honest! On the level. Hurry  
 -- I need you.

She hangs up and turns into the second phone.

HILDY  
 Bruce, this is the biggest thing  
 that ever happened...  
 (lowers voice)  
 I just captured Earl Williams --  
 you know -- the murderer --

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

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

There is a click from the phone. He has hung up. Hildy dejectedly hangs up the phone.

The sound of knocking on the door captures her attention.  
 Hildy glares apprehensively, then crosses to the door.

HILDY  
 (cautiously)  
 Who's there?

MOLLIE (O.S.)  
 It's me, Mollie Malloy! Let me in.

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

MOLLIE  
 Where've they gone? You know where they are?

HILDY  
 Wait a minute, Mollie.

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

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

HILDY  
 Mollie, they haven't got him. You gotta help me, Mollie! We've got to do something!

MOLLIE  
 What do you mean?

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

MOLLIE  
 (spinning around)  
 What's that?

HILDY  
 Quiet, Mollie!

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

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

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

WILLIAMS  
Hello, Mollie.

Mollie begins to sob.▲

Hildy comes over.

HILDY  
Quiet, Mollie, quiet!

Williams strokes Mollie's hair.

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

HILDY  
How'd you get here, Earl?

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

They get up.

MOLLIE▲  
Of course I believe you.

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

MOLLIE  
That's all right, Mr. Williams...  
(to Hildy)  
You're a woman. You got to help us.  
You got to get him out of here,  
some place where I can take care of  
him.

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

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

MOLLIE  
No -- I'll never let 'em!

The door is tried outside.

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

HILDY  
Shh!

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRESS ROOM - SAME

Endicott tries to get in.

ENDICOTT  
Who locked the door?

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

HILDY  
(calling)  
Just a second, Mike ---  
(whispering to Mollie)  
Mollie, I got it!▲

Hildy jumps up to the roll-top desk and opens it, turning to Williams in a tense whisper:

HILDY  
Can you get in this desk?

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

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

WILSON  
What's going on in there?

▲INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

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

WILLIAMS  
What good'll it do?

HILDY  
We'll get you out in ten minutes.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

ENDICOTT  
Open up there, will you!

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

HILDY  
(crying)  
All right -- all right!

MOLLIE  
(to Williams)  
Go on!  
(shoves him to desk)  
Please!

WILLIAMS  
They'll find me anyhow.

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

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

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

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

Endicott gives the a door a terrific kick.

ENDICOTT  
Hey!

▲ INT. PRESS ROOM CLOSE SHOT HILDY AND MOLLIE

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

MOLLIE  
What's the idea?

HILDY  
Never mind! Just play dead.

Hildy rapidly unbuttons Mollie's vest and throws it back.

The kicking at the door continues. ▲

Hildy rushes over to the windows and pulls up the shades.

Mollie lies quietly on the floor with her eyes closed.

Hildy rushes over to the water cooler and gets a paper cup full of water. She throws the water in Mollie's face.

MOLLIE  
(spluttering)  
Hey --

HILDY  
(fiercely)  
Shut up, you!

Hildy crosses swiftly to the door.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

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

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

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

WILSON  
Smelling salts! What's going on  
here?

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

▲ENDICOTT  
Mollie Malloy -- what happened to  
her?

▲Endicott and Wilson enter the room.

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

INT. PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mollie shakes her head.

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

HILDY  
Give me a hand with her, will you?

ENDICOTT  
Okay.

Endicott lifts Mollie up.

ENDICOTT  
Up you go, Mollie.

Hildy helps Endicott lift Mollie into a chair. Wilson crosses to his phone. ▲

WILSON  
(into Phone)  
City Desk. ▲

ENDICOTT  
She'll be all right.

Endicott crosses to his phone.

ENDICOTT  
(into phone)  
The Desk.

WILSON  
(into phone)  
Well, they surrounded the house,  
all right, only they forgot to tell  
Williams, and he wasn't there. ▲

Murphy comes in, sees Hildy ▲ who has been fastening Mollie's vest.

MURPHY  
Hildy, I thought you were gone --

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

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

Murphy crosses to his phone.

McCue comes in.

MCCUE  
 (panting)  
 What a chase!

ENDICOTT  
 (into phone)  
 No luck on Williams, yet -- call  
 you back.

He hangs up.

WILSON  
 (into phone)  
 Okay, later.

He hangs up.

MURPHY  
 (into phone)  
 Murphy talking.

Schwartz comes in.

HILDY  
 Any news?

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

He picks up his phone.

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

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

He hangs up -- puts his feet on the desk. ▲

HILDY  
 Are you all right, now?

MOLLIE  
 Yeah, I'm feelin' fine. ▲

MURPHY

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

MCCUE ▲

Yeah, hold the line.

(turns from phone)

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

ENDICOTT

Aw, nuts with chasing around anymore. I spent a dollar forty on taxis already.

SCHWARTZ

I say we don't go out anymore. Let Earl Williams come to us. ▲

HILDY

A fine bunch of reporters. Biggest story in two years and they're too lazy to go after it. ▲

ENDICOTT

It's easy for you to talk. You're retired. We're still working.

▲MCCUE

Okay.

(into phone)

Forget it.

(he hangs up)

HILDY

What's the matter with you boys? Afraid it might rain? If you want to go, I'll cover this end.

MURPHY

Say, Hildy, if I know you, you sound pretty anxious to get rid of us. Are you trying to scoop us or something?

ENDICOTT

Something smells around here. If you ask me Mollie gave her the story on how Williams got that gun.  
(turning on Mollie)

(MORE)

ENDICOTT (CONT'D)

Did you smuggle that gun in to Williams, Mollie?

MOLLIE

I didn't do nothin'.

MCCUE

(crossing to Mollie)  
Come clean, Mollie.

Wilson, Endicott and Murphy follow McCue toward Mollie.

ENDICOTT

Better let us in on it, Mollie.

HILDY

Aw, why don't you let her alone?  
She's ill!

MURPHY

Oh, you two are pals now -- I think you're right, Endicott. Mollie did give her some kind of story.

ENDICOTT

I tell you, it's a screwy set-up.  
We better hold on to 'em both.

MRS. BALDWIN appears in the doorway. Hildy gasps and starts for her.

▲ Mrs. Baldwin is in a very righteous mood.

MRS. BALDWIN

Well?

Hildy comes ▲ to her.

HILDY

Mother!

MRS. BALDWIN

Don't you mother me! Playing cat-and-mouse with my poor boy! Keeping him locked up -- making us miss two trains -- and supposed to be married tomorrow!

HILDY

Mother, I can explain everything.  
I'll go with you in five minutes  
and --

MRS. BALDWIN

You don't have to go with me at all! Just give me my son's money and you can stay here forever as far as I'm concerned. Stay with that murderer you caught!

The reporters catch this. Reactions as they glance at one another.

MRS. BALDWIN

(continuing)

Which one of these men is it? They all look like murderers to me!

MURPHY

Where does she get that stuff?

SCHWARTZ

Shall we tell her what he looks like?

ENDICOTT

Wait a minute! What murderer did you catch, Hildy?

▲ The reporters are looking intently at Hildy and Mrs. Baldwin.

HILDY

I don't know what she's talking about. I never said any such thing.

MRS. BALDWIN

I'm quoting my son, and he has never lied to me.

The reporters move toward Hildy and Mrs. Baldwin.

REPORTERS (AD LIB)

(all at once)

"I knew something stunk around here."

"Who says she caught him?"

"What do you mean she caught a murderer?"

HILDY

(desperately)

But I never said anything like that!

MRS. BALDWIN

Yes, you did! ▲

MOLLIE  
She never told her that!▲

HILDY  
I said I was trying to catch one.  
(to Mrs. Baldwin)  
You got it balled up, Mother.

▲ Murphy stalks toward Mollie.

MURPHY  
What do you know about it? How do  
you know she didn't?

He grabs Mollie cruelly by an arm.

MOLLIE  
Let go!

▲ ENDICOTT  
Hold on to her, Jimmy -- she's in  
with Hildy on this.▲

Hildy is tense with anxiety, her eyes on Mollie.

Murphy lets Mollie go and jerks Hildy by an arm.

MURPHY  
Who you holding out on? Come clean,  
or we'll make you wish you had --

The rest of the reporters surround Hildy menacingly.▲

ENDICOTT  
Hildy, are you gonna cross us for  
Walter Burns after the way you told  
him off?

WILSON  
Give in, Hildy -- you can't get  
away with it.

▲ MOLLIE  
(wildly)  
Wait! You stool-pigeons! She don't  
know where Williams is. I'm the one  
that knows.

The reporters turn on Mollie.

ENDICOTT  
What do you mean, you know?

They start for Mollie.▲

Mollie begins backing slowly around the table, away from them, toward the window.

▲MOLLIE

Go find out, you heels! You don't think I'm gonna tell!

Hildy remains riveted at desk.

HILDY

Let her alone! She's goofy! ▲

Hemmed in by the massed reporters, Mollie makes a sudden lunge for the door.

REPORTERS

"Look out!"

"Close that door!"

They split, some of them heading her off at the door, others from the opposite side of the table, so that she runs back between window and table.

MCCUE

You ain't gettin' out o' here!

ENDICOTT

Now, where is he?

WILSON

Where you hidin' him?

MOLLIE

I ain't gonna squeal! I ain't goin' to!

MURPHY

(leaning across table)

Come on, you! Before we slap you down.

ENDICOTT

Do you want us to call the cops and have them give you the boots?

MURPHY

Where is he, before we beat it out of you?

MOLLIE

(backs up)

Don't you come near me, you kidney foot!

▲ Murphy continues to advance on her. The reporters start for her from the other side. Mollie snatches up a chair and swings it at the advancing circle of men.

MOLLIE  
(wild and blubbering)  
Let me alone or I'll knock your  
heads off!

ENDICOTT  
Put down that chair!

SCHWARTZ  
Get around -- get on the side of  
her.

MOLLIE  
(still backs up)  
No, you don't!  
(screams)  
Keep away!

WILSON  
Grab her!

▲ last, wild look at her encircling foes.

MOLLIE  
You'll never get it out of me!  
(hurls chair at them)  
I'll never tell! Never!

She makes a desperate leap for the open window and disappears out. Her scream of terror is heard as she drops. ▲

The reporters rush to the window and look out, an assortment of awed and astonished exclamations rising from them.

Mrs. Baldwin turns away from the window and hides her face in her hands.

MRS. BALDWIN  
Take me out of here! Take me --  
(a moan)  
Oh-h --

She collapses to a chair.

▲ MCCUE  
(turning)  
Get the cops, somebody.

MURPHY

(turns)

Come on, fellas.

They start in a rush for the door and exit.

Hildy crosses, dazed to the window.

HILDY

Gee! The poor kid... the poor kid.

Reaching the window, she looks out.

EXT. PAVEMENT BELOW - SAME

The form of Mollie on the pavement below moves slightly in the moonlight as GUARDS rush to her.

GUARDS (AD LIB)

"Get a doctor!"

"Take her to the infirmary!"

"She ain't killed -- she's moving!"

INT. PRESS ROOM - SAME

Hildy turns, shaken, back into the room from the window and sees advancing to her across the room Walter Walter.

Diamond Louie has entered with him and stands leaning by the door.

Mrs. Baldwin's face is still hidden by her hands.

Hildy starts for Walter.

HILDY

Walter! D-did you see --  
(gesturing back to  
window)  
-- that?

WALTER

Yes. Where is he?

Hildy is in a dazed.

HILDY

She jumped out of the window.

WALTER

I know. Where is he, I said.

[MISSING PAGE - TRANSCRIBED FROM FILM]

HILDY

Anyway, she isn't dead--

Walter pries her attention back.

WALTER

Come to, Hildy. Where have you got Williams?

She thinks a second.

HILDY

He's in the desk.

Walter crosses to the desk.

HILDY

I'm glad she didn't kill herself.

Walter opens the roll-top a few inches.

WALTER

How you doing?

WILLIAMS

Let me out. I can't stand it.

WALTER

Keep quiet. You're sitting pretty.

Mrs. Baldwin rushes to the desk.

MRS. BALDWIN

What's in there?

WALTER

(turns to her, surprised)

Who are you?

MRS. BALDWIN

What are you doing?

Hildy hurries over. Walter turns to her and points at Mrs. Baldwin.

WALTER

Who is she?

HILDY

This is Mrs. Baldwin, Bruce's mother.

MRS. BALDWIN

What are you doing here?

WALTER

Shut up!

MRS. BALDWIN

I won't shut up! You're doing something wrong. What's in that desk?

Walter slams closed the desk and steps to Louie.

WALTER

Louie, take this lady over to Polack Mike's and lock her up. See that she doesn't talk to anyone on the way.

MRS. BALDWIN

What's that -- what's that?

Louie goes to Mrs. Baldwin.

HILDY

Wait a minute, Walter. You can't do that!

Louie extends his hand as if to shake hands with Mrs. Baldwin.

LOUIE

My name is Louie Peluso.

She responds, only to find herself jerked and spun around so that one of Louie's arms is about her waist and the other hand over her mouth. Louie leads her to door.

WALTER

Tell 'em it's a case of delirium tremens.

Hildy catches up to Louie.

HILDY

Now, let go of her, Louie. Listen, Walter, this'll get me in a terrible jam with my fiancé and I don't stand so well with him now. Don't worry, Mother, this is only temporary.

At the door, Louie gets Mrs. Baldwin out and disappears with her. Hildy starts after them, when Walter's arm catches her.

WALTER

Where do you think you're going?

HILDY

Let go o' me! I've got to get Bruce out of jail! Oh, Walter, why did you have to do this to me?

WALTER

(scornfully)

Get Bruce out of jail! How can you worry about a man who's resting comfortably in a quiet police station while this is going on? Hildy, this is war! You can't desert now!

HILDY

Oh, get off that trapeze!

(indicates desk)

There's your story! Smear it all over the front page -- Earl Williams caught by the Morning Post! And take all the credit -- I covered your story for you and I got myself in a fine mess doing it -- and now I'm getting out! I know I told you that twice before today -- but this time I mean it!

WALTER

You drooling idiot! What do you mean, you're getting out! There are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year one can get married -- but how many times have you got a murderer locked up in a desk? -- Once in a lifetime! Hildy, you've got the whole city by the seat of the pants!

HILDY

I know, but --

WALTER

You know! You've got the brain of a pancake! That wasn't just a story you covered -- it was a revolution! Hildy! This is the greatest yarn in journalism since Livingstone discovered Stanley for the New York Herald!

Walter quickly closes the door.

HILDY

(slightly bewildered)

Wait a minute -- wasn't it Stanley who discovered Livingstone?

WALTER

Don't get technical at a time like this! Do you realize what you've done? You've taken a city that's been graft-ridden for forty years under the same old gang and with this yarn you're kicking 'em out and giving us a chance to have the same kind of government that New York's having under La Guardia! We'll make such monkeys out of these ward-heelers next Tuesday that nobody'll vote for them -- not even their wives!

HILDY

(the fire upon her)

I'd like to think.

WALTER

Well, think it then, because it's true! We'll crucify that mob. We're going to keep Williams under cover till morning so the Post can break the story exclusive. Then we'll let the Governor in on the capture -- share the glory with him.

HILDY

(excited)

I get it!

WALTER

You've kicked over the whole City Hall like an **applecart**. You've got the Mayor and Hartman backed against a wall. You've put one administration out and another in. This isn't a newspaper story -- it's a career! And you stand there **bellyaching** about whether you catch an eight o'clock train or a nine o'clock train! Still a **doll-faced mug!** That's all you are.

HILDY

Let me get at that typewriter and I'll show you how a doll-faced **mug** can write!

WALTER

Attagirl! Why, they'll be naming streets after you -- Hildy Johnson Street! There'll be statues of you in the parks, Hildy. The radio'll be after you -- the movies!

(slaps his fist against  
his open palm)

By tomorrow morning I'll betcha there's a Hildy Johnson cigar! I can see the billboards now. Light up with Hildy Johnson!

HILDY

Whoa -- wait a minute. We can't leave Williams here. One of the other fellows'll --

WALTER

We're going to take him over to my private office.

(turns)

Where's our phone?

HILDY

That one -- how you gonna take him? They'll see him.

Walter takes a phone and jiggles the hook.

WALTER

(to Hildy)

Not if he's inside the desk. We'll carry the desk over.

(into phone)

Give me Duffy!

HILDY

You can't take that desk out. It's crawling with cops outside.

WALTER

We'll lower it out of the window with pulleys. Quit stallin'.

Hildy seems distracted.

WALTER

Hildy!

HILDY

(coming to)

Huh!?

WALTER

Get the lead out of your typewriter and start pounding out a load, will you? Snap into it!

HILDY

How much do you want on it?

WALTER

All the words you've got.

HILDY

(turning)

Where's some paper?

She looks around.

WALTER

(into phone)

Hello...! Hello!

Hildy goes to the roll-top desk and turns to Walter.

HILDY

Can I call the Mayor a bird of prey -- or is that libelous?

WALTER

Call him a love-child, if you want to.

(into phone)

Duffy!

Having opened the drawers of Bensinger's desk, Hildy tosses play manuscripts, syringes, patent medicines and old socks into the air in a frantic search for paper.

HILDY

(calling to Walter)

How about the time he had his house painted by the Fire Department?

WALTER

Give him the works.

(into phone)

Hello, Duffy, get set! We've got the biggest story in the world. Earl Williams caught by the Morning Post -- exclusive!

Hildy has unearthed a package of Bensinger's private stationery. She rises with it.

WALTER

(to Hildy)

Fine!

(into phone)

Now, listen, Duffy -- I want you to tear out the whole front page... That's what I said -- the whole front page! Never mind the European war! We've got something a whole lot bigger than that. Hildy Johnson's writing the lead and I'll phone it over to you as soon as she's finished.

(starts to hang up...  
thinks of something  
else)

Oh, Duffy! Get hold of Butch O'Connor and tell him I want him to come up here with half a dozen other wrestlers -- right away! Tell him we'll run his picture on the sport page for two weeks straight. What? I've got a desk I want moved. Never mind what desk!

EXT. STREET — NIGHT

A taxi darts through traffic, narrowly avoiding cars, trucks, etc., it comes almost head-on to an oncoming car.

INT. TAXICAB — NIGHT

Louie, worried, ducks unconsciously. Mrs. Baldwin faints across his lap.

EXT. STREET — SAME

The taxi swerves just in time to duck the oncoming car. As it starts forward again a truck comes toward the cab, head on.

INT. TAXICAB — NIGHT

Diamond Louie pushes Mrs. Baldwin into an upright position, takes a look through the windshield, sees the truck and gives a big "takem" and faints across Mrs. Baldwin.

EXT. STREET — NIGHT

The truck and taxicab crash and the screen blacks out.

INT. PRESS ROOM — NIGHT

At the typewriter, smoke rising from her cigarette, a fairly disheveled Hildy types away furiously.

WALTER

(into phone)

"The blackest cesspool in American city life!" Hold on Duffy, I'll see if she's got any more.

Walter tears a page out of Hildy's typewriter.

Hildy inserts another one without noticing.

Walter goes back to the phone as she continues mad typing.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy -- Duffy!

(clicks the phone  
furiously)

Operator! Operator! Get me Duffy back. Somebody cut us off!

▲ Bruce Baldwin enters.

BRUCE

Hildy!

WALTER

What the devil do you want? Listen, Bruce, you can't come in here now! We're busy!

(suddenly, into phone)

Where you been, Duffy? Stick around! What? What Chinese earthquake? The deuce with it... what's that?

Hildy types away madly. Bruce approaches.

BRUCE

Hildy!

HILDY

(looks up very casually)

Hello, Bruce...

She resumes her typing, then suddenly realizes and jumps up.

▲ HILDY

BRUCE!! How'd you get out?

BRUCE

(the hands-off attitude)

Not through any help of yours, Hildy.

HILDY  
Bruce, I know, but I was in the  
biggest jam --

WALTER  
Hildy!

▲ Hildy turns toward, Walter, who still has the phone in his  
hand.

WALTER  
For Pete's sake, Hildy, they're  
waiting for the rest of that story!

HILDY  
(resignedly)  
Okay, Walter.

Hildy sits down at her typewriter again, types.

BRUCE  
I waited and waited and then I had  
an idea and wired Albany to send me  
a hundred dollars so I could get  
out on bail...  
(desperately)  
I don't know what they'll think --  
they sent it to the police station!

HILDY  
(she barely stops typing)  
We'll explain the whole thing to  
them.

She types madly.

▲ BRUCE  
I know I got you into this, Hildy,  
but it does seem to me that you  
can't care much for me if you're  
willing to let me stay locked up  
for two hours.

HILDY  
Bruce, you know I'm mad about you  
and stop talking like that.  
(calls to Walter)  
Walter!

WALTER  
(into phone)  
Take the President's speech and run  
it on the funny page...

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

(turns to Hildy)

What is it, Hildy?

HILDY

What was the name of the Mayor's first wife?

WALTER

You mean the one who drank so much? Tillie! ♪

HILDY

Thanks.

She types furiously.

The roll-top opens slowly and Williams' head sticks out. ♪

WALTER

(screaming)

Get back in there, you mock turtle!

The desk-top falls, the fugitive disappearing within.

Bruce turns around toward Walter.

BRUCE

Did you say anything, Mister Burns?

Walter covers, fast.

WALTER

No -- I was just talking to one of the guys at the office.

(indicating phone in his hand)

♪ BRUCE ♪

(to Walter)

Oh.

(turns to Hildy)

I wonder what's keeping mother? She was supposed to come down and get you.

HILDY

Oh, she was here.

BRUCE

Where'd she go?

HILDY

Out some place.

She types away. Bruce grabs her and stops her.

BRUCE  
Hildy! Where's mother?

HILDY  
Oh -- mother -- she -- I don't know  
where she went.

BRUCE  
Did you give her the money?

HILDY  
No, I was going to give it to her --  
but she left hurriedly.

BRUCE  
Then suppose you give me the money.  
Four hundred and fifty dollars.

HILDY  
Oh, yes. Here it is.

She gets the wallet. Walter comes into the scene and pulls  
another page out of her machine.

HILDY  
Here it is, Bruce. One -- two --  
three -- four hundred -- and fifty  
dollars.

BRUCE  
(dryly)  
Thank you.

Walter watches this with a grin.

BRUCE  
(to Hildy)  
And I'll take that certified check,  
too. I've decided I can handle  
things around here...

WALTER  
Come on, Hildy, we've got to keep  
going! Sorry, Bruce, but --

HILDY  
Just a second, Walter. Here, Bruce,  
here's the check... And, oh, Bruce,  
here's your wallet. I got it back.

BRUCE  
 (taking it and surveying  
 it coldly)  
 You got it back, eh? There's  
 something funny going on around  
 here.

WALTER  
 Hildy!

HILDY  
 All right, Walter.

She sits down and begins to type.

BRUCE  
 I'm taking the nine o'clock train,  
 Hildy. And you can meet us at the  
 station.

HILDY  
 Fine.

▲ She types away.

WALTER  
 (approaches Bruce)  
 I'll see she's there, Bruce, I  
 promise you.

BRUCE  
 (dramatically)  
 If she's not there, mother and I  
 are leaving anyhow!

But Hildy continues typing and doesn't even get it.

Walter leads Bruce away toward the door.

WALTER  
 I know how you feel, Bruce, but  
 you've got to forgive her. She's  
 only a woman, after all.

BRUCE  
 Suppose she is -- I have feelings,  
 too! Do you know where I've been  
 for the last couple of hours?  
 Locked up in a police station and  
 she didn't move to do anything  
 about it.

WALTER  
 Ts! Ts! Ts!

BRUCE

And now I don't know where my mother is. She may be lost.

WALTER

I'll find her, Bruce, if I have to put every detective in the city on the job. Tell you what -- go over to the Missing Persons Bureau and describe your mother. What does she look like?

BRUCE

She's -- well, she's very motherly. That's about the best description I know.

WALTER

(nodding)

That's the kind of stuff they want!

▲ They go out the door.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Bruce and Walter come out.

WALTER

Oh, Bruce, let me see that money Hildy gave you.

BRUCE

The money? Why?

WALTER

There's a lot of counterfeit big bills going around.

BRUCE

(worried)

Gee! Take a look, will you?

He hands the money to Walter. Walter looks at it carefully and hands it back.

WALTER

Oh, this is all right, Bruce. I just wanted to be sure.

BRUCE

Say, I want to be sure, too!

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Hildy types furiously. Walter enters, grinning, locks the door behind him and goes to the phone and picks it up.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy. Good. Stick close.

He turns and crosses quickly to look out the window.

WALTER

(despairingly)

Now the moon's out!

He turns away, crossing to the desk where he taps three times, being answered by three taps from within.

WALTER

Fine. Three taps is me. Don't forget! You're sitting pretty now. Got enough air?

He raises the roll-top an inch or two and fans air in to Williams.

WALTER

Is that better? Now breathe deep!

An intake of breath from inside the desk.

WALTER

Attaboy!

Walter closes the desk and turns back to the table. He passes Hildy, who still types rapidly.

WALTER

That's the stuff! Lam it into 'em, Hildy.

He jerks the sheet from Hildy's machine, crosses to his desk and picks up the phone.

WALTER

(into phone)

Hello! Duffy, ready? Here we go!

Walter reads from the page he has taken from Hildy's typewriter.

WALTER

(into phone)

"In the darkest hour of the city's  
history..."

INT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT

At the end of the hall are glass doors through which can be seen a turmoil of activity in the street outside -- newsboys, a crowd, and a mounted policeman or two.

Bruce comes down the hall, his face set and angry. As he goes, he sees a sign set over a doorway in the hall. It reads: "MISSING PERSONS BUREAU." He stops and enters.

▲ INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Walter speaks into the phone.

WALTER

Listen, did you impress it on Butch that I want him and his gang here right away? You did? Every minute counts. All right.

(puts receiver down on  
table)

Duffy's getting old! ▲

HILDY

Where's Butch?

WALTER

He's on the way.

HILDY

(over her typing)

He'd better hurry. The boys'll be coming back to phone.

WALTER

(peers over her shoulder)

Well, keep going! We want an extra out on the streets before it's too late!

HILDY

(looking up suddenly)

Where's Bruce?

WALTER

Bruce? Oh -- er -- he went out to get the tickets.

HILDY  
What tickets?

WALTER  
Railroad tickets.

HILDY  
Is he coming back here?

WALTER  
Didn't you hear him? Of course he's  
coming back here. Keep going, will  
you?

Walter leaves Hildy and goes over to pick up his phone again.

WALTER  
(into phone)  
Duffy!

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR - NIGHT

Finding the door locked, Bensinger knocks.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Another knock comes.

HILDY  
(calls)  
Who is it?

EXT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

BENSINGER  
What's the idea of locking this?

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Hildy looks at Walter.

HILDY  
That's Bensinger. That's his desk.

WALTER  
(whispering)  
What's his name?

The door knob rattles violently.

HILDY  
Bensinger -- of the Tribune.

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DOOR - NIGHT▲

BENSINGER▲  
Open this door!

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

Walter starts for the door.

WALTER  
I'll handle him.

He goes to the door.

WALTER  
The Tribune, eh? Watch me!

He opens the door. Bensinger enters.

BENSINGER  
Ain't you got any more sense than  
to --?  
(sees Walter and is  
overcome)  
Oh, h-hello, Mr. Burns. Why, quite  
an honor having you come over here.

WALTER  
(casually)  
Hello, Bensinger.

BENSINGER  
Excuse me, I just want to --

He starts for the desk. Hildy's typing goes on.

Walter suddenly blocks Bensinger's path.

WALTER  
Quite a coincidence, my running  
into you tonight. Isn't it, Hildy?

HILDY  
Yeah.

BENSINGER  
How do you mean?▲

WALTER  
I was having a little chat about  
you just this afternoon -- with our  
Mister Duffy.

BENSINGER  
 (essaying a pleasantry)  
 Nothing -- ah -- detrimental, I  
 hope.

WALTER  
 I should say not! That was one  
 swell story you had in the paper  
 this morning.

BENSINGER  
 (deeply moved)  
 Oh, did you -- care for the poem,  
 Mr. Burns?

WALTER  
 (startled)  
 The poem?... The poem was great!

BENSINGER  
 (blinking at these words)  
 Remember the ending?  
 (and he recites)  
 " -- and all is well, outside his  
 cell, But in his heart he hears the  
 hangman calling and the gallows  
 falling And his white-haired  
 mother's tears..."

WALTER  
 (overcome)  
 Heartbreaking! How would you like  
 to work for me?

BENSINGER  
 What?

WALTER  
 (to Bensinger)  
 We need somebody like you. All  
 we've got now are a lot of low-  
 brows. Like Johnson here.

He starts shoving Bensinger away from the desk, toward the  
 table.

BENSINGER  
 Seriously, Mr. Burns?

Clinging to him, Walter takes him to the phone.

WALTER  
 (into phone)  
 Duffy! I'm sending Bensinger over  
 (MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

to see you.

(looks up at Bensinger)  
Mervyn, isn't it?

BENSINGER

No. Roy. Roy V.

WALTER

(laughs at his own  
forgetfulness)  
Of course!  
(into phone)  
Roy Bensinger, the poet. Of course  
you wouldn't know! You probably  
never heard of Shakespeare, either!  
Put Mr. Bensinger right on the  
staff.

(to Bensinger)

How much are you getting at the  
Tribune, Roy?

BENSINGER

Seventy-five.

WALTER

I'll give you a hundred and a by-  
line. 

(into phone)

Let him have everything he wants.

(puts down the receiver;  
turns to Bensinger)

Now hustle and write me a story  
from the point of view of the  
escaped man.

Walter acts it out...

WALTER

He hides, cowering... Afraid of  
every light, of every sound...  
hears footsteps... his heart going  
like that... And all the time  
they're closing in... Get the sense  
of an animal at bay!

BENSINGER

Sort of a Jack London style?

WALTER

Exactly!

 Leads him hurriedly to the door.

BENSINGER

(indicates desk)

I got my rhyming dictionary in --

Walter shuffles him to the door.

WALTER

It doesn't have to rhyme!

▲ Bensinger turns at the door.

BENSINGER

Gee, I'm terribly grateful, Mister Burns. Do you suppose there might be an opening some time as foreign correspondent? I parley a little French, you know.

Walter shakes hands with him and opens the door with the other hand.

WALTER

I'll keep you in mind.

BENSINGER

(going)

Au revoir, mon capitaine.

WALTER

Bon jour!

Walter gets the door closed and relocked and turns for the table, singing as he does so:

WALTER

Mademoiselle from Armontieres,  
parlay ▲

Walter returns alertly to the table, not noticing that Hildy has stopped typing, and sits.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy! Get this! ▲ A rat from the Tribune is coming over to get a job -- Bensinger, the guy I told you about. Handle him with kid gloves. Tell him to get busy writing poetry... No, we don't want him. Stall him along until the extra comes out. Then tell him his poetry stinks and kick him downstairs.

He lays down receiver.

Hildy looks up at him.

HILDY

▲ Double-crossing swine!

WALTER

You said it! But this'll teach him a lesson. He won't quit his paper without giving notice after this.

Hildy doesn't bother to reply. She rests her chin on her hands and stares moodily ahead.

WALTER

Tear into it, will you? Don't sit there like a frozen robin!

HILDY

I'm finished.

WALTER

Finished!

He grabs the last sheet of paper out of her typewriter, kisses her and rushes over to the telephone.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy! All right -- here we go! And get it out as soon as you can. I want this paper out on the streets in half an hour!

▲ (reading Hildy's copy)

"So once more the Morning Post --"

EXT. CRIMINAL COURTS BLDG - NIGHT ▲

Diamond Louie, bearing evidence of a mishap, his hat crushed, his face bruised and his clothes torn, comes running down the sidewalk and up the steps into the building.

INT. PRESS ROOM - NIGHT ▲

Hildy is up now, pacing.

HILDY

Bruce ought to be back by now. Walter, you're not trying anything again, are you?

WALTER

Hildy, you think I could? After this story?

(takes a flask from his

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

pocket)

Here! You're just nervous.

Hildy takes the flask and takes a drink. There is a knock on the door. Walter takes the flask from her, restores it to his pocket and goes to the door.

WALTER

Who is it?

LOUIE (O.S.)

It's me, Boss -- Louie.

WALTER

(opens the door)

It's Louie!

Louie slips in and Walter relocks the door.

WALTER

(seeing Louie's disarray)

What's the matter?

Hildy crosses to Louie.

HILDY

(frantically)

Where's Mrs. Baldwin?

WALTER

What did you do with her?

HILDY

(almost afraid to speak)

What happened?

WALTER

You been in a fight?

LOUIE

(still out of breath)

Down Western Avenue. We were going sixty-five miles an hour. You know what I mean?

WALTER

Take that mush out of your mouth!

HILDY

Where's the old lady?

LOUIE

I'm telling you!

Louie gets breath and blurts:

LOUIE

We run smack into a police patrol.  
You know what I mean? We broke it  
in half!▲

HILDY

(moaning)  
Oh-h-h... was she hurt?

WALTER

Where is she? Tell me!

HILDY

Louie!

LOUIE

I'm telling you. Can you imagine  
bumping into a load of cops?! They  
come rollin' out like oranges!

HILDY

(seizing him)  
What did you do with her?

▲ LOUIE

Search me! When I come to I was  
running down Thirty-fifth Street.

HILDY

▲ You were with her. You were in the  
cab, weren't you?

LOUIE

(exposing his bruised  
scalp)  
Was I? The driver got knocked cold.

WALTER

Butter-fingers! I give you an old  
lady to take somewhere, and you  
hand her over to the cops!

LOUIE

What do you mean, I handed her? The  
patrol wagon was on the wrong side  
of the street.

WALTER

Now everything's fine. She's  
probably squawking her head off in  
some police station.

LOUIE  
I don't think she's talking much...  
You know what I mean?

He winks reassuringly. ♪

HILDY  
(paralyzed)  
Don't tell me -- was she killed?

WALTER  
(hopefully)  
Was she? Did you notice?

LOUIE  
Say, me with a gun on my hip and a  
kidnapped old lady on my hands, I  
should stick around asking  
questions from a lot of cops! You  
know what I mean?

Hildy sinks into a chair.

♪HILDY  
Dead... dead! That's the end!

Walter goes to her.

WALTER  
It's Fate, Hildy. What will be,  
will be.

HILDY  
(wildly)  
What am I going to say to Bruce?  
What'll I tell him?

WALTER  
If he really loves you, you won't  
have to tell him anything.  
(whacks her on the  
shoulder)  
Snap out of it! Would you rather  
have had the old dame dragging the  
whole police force in here?

HILDY  
I killed her. I'm responsible. Oh-  
h... what can I do now? How can I  
ever face him? Oh, I hope he never  
comes back!

She buries her face in her hands.

WALTER

Look at me, Hildy --

HILDY

(springing up)

I'm looking at you -- you murderer!

WALTER

If it was my own mother, I'd carry on! You know I would. For the paper!

HILDY

(to Louie)

Louie, where'd it happen? I'm going out! ▲

The Post phone rings.

WALTER

(grabs Hildy)

You stay here. I'll find out everything.

LOUIE

(to Hildy)

Western an' Thirty-fourth.

Hildy jumps for the outside phone on the desk.

WALTER

(into phone)

Hello -- hello...

HILDY

(into phone)

Gimme Western four-five-five-seven.

WALTER

(guarded)

Who?

(wildly)

Hello, Butch! Where are you?

HILDY

(into phone)

Mission Hospital? Gimme the Receiving Room.

WALTER

(into phone)

What are you doing there? Haven't you even started?

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello -- Eddie? Hildy Johnson. Was there an old lady brought in from an auto smashup?

WALTER

(into phone)

Oh, for --

(yelling)

H. Sebastian -- Butch! Listen, it's a matter of life and death! Listen!

HILDY

(into phone)

Nobody?

▲ (jiggles hook)

Morningside three-one-two-four.

WALTER

(into phone)

I can't hear... You got who? Speak up! A what?... You can't stop for a dame now!

HILDY

(into phone)

Is this the Community Hospital?

WALTER

(howls into phone)

I don't care if you've been after her for six years! Butch, our whole lives are at stake! Are you going to let a woman come between us after all we've been through?

HILDY

(into phone)

Hello, Max, Hildy Johnson. Was there an old lady --?

WALTER

(into phone, drowns out Hildy)

Butch! I'd put my arm in fire for you -- up to here!

(indicates up to where)

Now, you can't double-cross me!... She does? All right -- put her on. I'll talk to her... Hello! Oh, hello, Madam... Now listen, you ten-cent glamour girl, you can't keep Butch away from his duty... What's

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

that? You say that again and I'll come over there and knock your eye out! Hello?

(turning, as he hangs up)

I'll kill 'em! I'll kill both of 'em!

(into Post phone)

Duffy!

(to the universe)

Mousing around with some big blonde Annie on my time! That's cooperation!

(screams into phone)

Duffy!!

HILDY

Shut up, will you?

(into phone)

You sure? Nobody?

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy!!!!

(listens)

Duffy!!!!

(listens)

Well, where is Duffy?

(throws receiver on desk)

Diabetes! I ought to know better than to hire anybody with a disease.

(turns)

Louie.▲It's up to you.

LOUIE

(loyally)

Anything you want, Boss.

WALTER

Beat it out and get hold of some guys.

LOUIE

Who do you want?

WALTER

(starts for the door,  
followed by Louie)

Anybody with hair on his chest. Get 'em off the street -- anywhere. Offer them anything -- only get them.

(confidentially)

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

We've got to get this desk out of here.

He unlocks the door.

LOUIE

You know me. The shirt off my back.

WALTER

You got plenty of money?

LOUIE

Sure, boss.

WALTER

I mean real money -- not counterfeit!

LOUIE

I always have both.

Louie goes out.

WALTER

(calls after him)

And don't bump into anything.

Walter relocks the door.

HILDY

Lafayette two-one-hundred.

WALTER

(turns from door)

That dumb immigrant'll flop on me. I know it.

(bitterly)

Can you imagine Butch doing this to me -- at a time like this?

Walter steps into scene.

WALTER

(confidentially)

If Louie doesn't come back in five minutes we'll get it out alone. There's millions of ways. We can start a fire and get the firemen to carry it out in the confusion.

He crosses to the desk and inspects it.

HILDY  
 (into phone)  
 Ring that number, will you?

WALTER  
 (to Hildy, oblivious of  
 her telephoning)  
 Come here. See if we can move it.

HILDY  
 (into phone)  
 Hello -- hello! Is this the Lying-  
 In Hospital? Did you have an auto  
 accident in the last --

WALTER  
 Will you come here?

HILDY  
 (into phone)  
 Oh, I see. I beg your pardon.

WALTER  
 When I'm surrounded, with my back  
 against the wall, you're not going  
 to lay down on me, are you --

HILDY  
 Yes.

She jiggles the phone hook.

WALTER  
 (going to her)  
 Hildy, you just can't leave me out  
 on a limb now. It -- it wouldn't be  
 cricket!

HILDY  
 I don't care what you say. I'm  
 going to find Bruce's mother.  
 (jiggles the hook madly)  
 Oh-h...  
 (hangs up)  
 I'm going out and find her!

Grabbing her hat and purse, Hildy starts for the door.▲

There is a loud knocking on the door.

WALTER  
 Don't open that!

HILDY

Who says? I'm going to the morgue --  
to look --

She unlocks the door.

Hildy flings the door open only to find Hartman, accompanied by two DEPUTIES and surrounded by McCue, Murphy, Schwartz, Wilson and Endicott.

MURPHY

There she is!

MCCUE

Say, Hildy...

Hildy makes a decision and tries to push through them, but Hartman grabs her and pushes her back.

HARTMAN

Just a minute, Johnson!

HILDY

Let go o' me. What's the idea?

MCCUE

What's your hurry?

MURPHY

We want to see you.

The deputies seize her.

HILDY

Take your paws off me!

HARTMAN

Hold her, boys!

Walter comes into scene.

WALTER

(to Hartman)

Who do you think you are, breaking  
in here like this?

HARTMAN

You can't bluff me, Burns. I don't  
care who you are or what paper  
you're editor of.

HILDY

(struggles)

Let me go!

(MORE)

HILDY (CONT'D)

(hysterically)

▲ Fellows, something's happened to my mother-in-law.

HARTMAN

Hang on to her! Keep her in here!▲

▲ Hildy breaks loose and retreats back into the room before Hartman and the deputies.

MCCUE

We know what you're up to.

ENDICOTT

Probably goin' out to get Williams.

SCHWARTZ

The door was locked.

WILSON

She and Mollie were talking.

HILDY

I don't know anything, I tell you. There's been an accident.

HARTMAN

Johnson, there's something very peculiar going on.

HILDY

You can send somebody with me if you don't believe me!

HARTMAN

I wasn't born yesterday. Now the boys tell me you and this Mollie Malloy --

HILDY

Nobody's trying to put anything over on you. I'm getting out of here and you can't stop me!

MURPHY▲

You're not going anywhere.

(to Hartman)

She's got the story sewed up, Pete.▲ That's why Burns is here.

▲ SCHWARTZ

We're on to you, Hildy. Let us in on it.

WALTER

(purrs)

If you've any accusations to make, Hartman, make them in the proper manner. Otherwise, I'll have to ask you to get out.

HARTMAN

(pop-eyed; stammers)

You'll ask me to what?

WALTER

Get out!

HARTMAN

(to deputies)

Close that door. Don't let anybody in or out.▲

MURPHY

Come on, Pinky! Give 'em a little third degree.

ENDICOTT

Make them talk and you got Williams, Pinky!

HARTMAN

Johnson, I'm going to the bottom of this. What do you know about Williams? Are you going to talk or aren't you?

HILDY

What do I know about Williams?

HARTMAN

All right, boys. Take her along. I got ways of making her talk.

The deputies seize Hildy. She struggles.

HILDY

Look out, you --

▲MCCUE

(nervously)

What's the use of fighting, Hildy?

Hildy manages to get in a few resounding smacks on the deputies' faces. The reporters swarm around the struggling trio.

REPORTERS (AD LIB)

"I got her!"  
 "No, you don't!"  
 "Aw, Hildy..."

In the struggle, Hildy suddenly drops her purse. It lands with a clank and comes open. A gun is revealed on the floor. Hildy picks it up.

DEPUTIES (AD LIB)

"Hey, she's got a gun!"  
 "Look out, she's got a gun!"

The deputies and reporters start to close in on her cautiously.

HILDY

(faces all directions)  
 No, you don't! Walter!

WALTER

What is it? Here!

She tosses the gun to Walter, but one of the deputies intercepts the throw.

HARTMAN

Gimme that.

Hartman takes the gun from the deputy and stands frozen, staring at it.

HARTMAN

(to Hildy)  
 Where'd you get this?

HILDY

I've got a right to carry a gun if I want to.

HARTMAN

Not this gun!

Walter comes into scene.

WALTER

(easily)  
 I can explain that, Hartman. When Hildy told me she wanted to interview Earl Williams I thought it might be dangerous and I gave her a gun to defend herself.

HARTMAN

Oh, you did! Well, that's very, very interesting. This happens to be the gun that Earl Williams shot his way out with!

REPORTERS (AD LIB)

"What?"

"What's that?"

WALTER

(advancing on Hartman)

Are you trying to make me out a liar?

MURPHY

(bitterly at Hildy)

It's the last time I ever trust a woman, Hildy.

SCHWARTZ

Maybe Williams was gonna be her best man.

WILSON

That's pretty rotten, Hildy. Crossing your own pals.

HARTMAN

(shoves up to Hildy;  
trembling)

Where is Earl Williams? Where you got him?

WALTER

(sympathetically)

You're barking up the wrong tree, Hartman.

HARTMAN

I'll give you three minutes to tell me where he is.

HILDY

He went over to the hospital to call on Professor Egelhoffer.

HARTMAN

(outraged)

What?

▲ HILDY

With a bag of marshmallows.

Hartman stands silent -- then hastily turns.▲

REPORTERS (AD LIB)

"Come on, Hildy. Where is he?..."

"This is a sweet trick, Hildy..."

"I thought we were friends..."

(to Hartman)

"Look here, Pete! What about Mister Burns?..."

"Ask the Master Mind! What's he doing over here?"

HARTMAN

(grabs Walter's arm)

Speak up! What do you know about this.

Walter gently but firmly disengages Hartman's hand.

WALTER

My dear Hartman!

He holds his place before the desk.

MURPHY

Can that! Where is he?

WALTER

(to Hartman)

The Morning Post is not obstructing justice or hiding criminals. You ought to know that.

HARTMAN

No? Well --

(turns to Hildy)

Johnson, you're under arrest.

(turns to Walter)

You, too, Burns.

WALTER

(calmly)

Who's under arrest? You pimple-headed, square-toed spy -- do you realize what you're doing?

HARTMAN

I'll show you what I'm doing.

Burns, you're guilty of obstructing justice and so is the Morning Post.

▲ I'm going to see that the Post is fined ten thousand dollars for this.

WALTER

You'll see nothing of the kind,  
Sheriff.

HARTMAN

We'll just start by impounding the  
Post property.

(points to Bensinger's  
desk, addresses Hildy)

Is that your desk?

HILDY

(jumps)

No!

WALTER

(almost simultaneously)

Yes! What are you afraid of Hildy?  
I dare him to move that desk out of  
here.

HARTMAN

Oh, you do, eh?

(to deputies)

All right, boys. Confiscate that  
desk.

Several of the deputies start toward the desk.

WALTER

(trying to intercept  
deputies)

Hartman, if you take this desk out  
of this building, I'll put you  
behind bars.

HARTMAN

You will, eh? Well, we'll see about  
that.

(to deputies)

All right, boys. Take it.

WALTER

I'm warning you -- it'll be a  
Federal offense.

(to deputy nearest him)

And you'll be an accessory!

▲ HARTMAN

We'll take a chance on that, Burns.

(to deputies)

Go ahead, boys.

The deputies continue toward the desk.

INT. CORRIDOR ▲- NIGHT ▲

Flanked by two POLICEMEN, Mrs. Baldwin, disheveled, with her hat over one ear, marches toward the Press Room, bound for vengeance.

Bruce, considerably upset, is with her.

As they reach the door to the Press Room, Mrs. Baldwin stops.

MRS. BALDWIN  
You wait outside, Bruce.

BRUCE  
But, mother --

MRS. BALDWIN  
(firmly)  
No! You'll weaken when you see that little Jezebel! I'm going to tell her what I think of her!

She plumps her hat down more firmly on her head and marches into the Press Room followed by the two policemen. Bruce remains outside the door.

INT. PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Baldwin, followed by the policemen, comes in.

HILDY  
(leaps forward)  
Mother!

MRS. BALDWIN  
(points out Walter to the policemen)  
That man there!

Hildy hugs Mrs. Baldwin.

HILDY ▲  
Mother! Oh, I'm so glad to see you!  
Are you all right? Tell me.

Mrs. Baldwin indignantly shakes her off.

HARTMAN  
What's the idea here?

▲ POLICEMAN  
This lady claims she was kidnapped.

HARTMAN

What?

MRS. BALDWIN

They dragged me all the way down  
the stairs --

HARTMAN

Just a minute. Did -- did --

(points to Walter)

-- this man have anything to do  
with it?

MRS. BALDWIN

He was the one in charge of  
everything! He told them to kidnap  
me!

WALTER

(amazed)

Are you referring to me, Madam?

MRS. BALDWIN

You know you did!

HARTMAN

What about this, Burns? Kidnapping,  
eh?

WALTER

(round-eyed)

Oh, trying to frame me, eh! I never  
saw this woman before in my life!

MRS. BALDWIN

Oh, what a thing to say! I was  
standing right here - after the  
girl jumped out of the window.

HARTMAN

Did you get the Mayor?

DEPUTY

He's coming over.

WALTER

(to Mrs. Baldwin)

Now, Madam -- be honest.▲ If you  
were out joy-riding, drunk, and got  
into some scrape, why don't you  
admit it, instead of accusing  
innocent people?

MRS. BALDWIN  
 (beginning to doubt her  
 senses)  
 You ruffian! How dare you say a  
 thing like that?

HILDA  
 Please, Mother, he's just crazy!

MRS. BALDWIN  
 (to Hartman)  
 I'll tell you something more. I'll  
 tell you why they did it!

WALTER  
 (fidgets)  
 Come on, Sheriff. We've got to get  
 bail.

MRS. BALDWIN  
 (continues crescendo)  
 I was in here -- and they had some  
 kind of murderer in with them. They  
 were hiding him!

This is a bombshell. The room is electrified.

HARTMAN  
 Hiding him? In here?▲

MURPHY  
 Hiding him where?

HILDY  
 Mother!

REPORTERS (AD LIB)  
 "Where was he?..."  
 "Where'd they have him?..."

WALTER  
 ▲ (with superb indignation)  
 Madam, you're a cockeyed liar! And  
 you know it!

To emphasize his righteousness, he pounds on the desk three  
 times. Then, realizing what he has done, he winces.

Walter advances from the desk. The others retreat before him.

WALTER  
 (anxiously)  
 Come on, Sheriff, we've got to get  
 bail.

Three answering knocks come from the desk.

Everyone jumps around to face the desk.

HARTMAN  
(whispering)  
What was that?

REPORTERS (AD LIB)  
"He's in the desk!"  
"For the love of"  
"He's in there!"

HARTMAN  
Aha! I thought so! Stand back,  
everybody!

1ST DEPUTY  
Look out, Sheriff. He may shoot!

HARTMAN  
Get your guns out!

The policemen and deputies get out their guns.

HILDY  
He's harmless.

HARTMAN  
Don't take any chances. Shoot  
through the desk.

HILDY  
He can't hurt anybody. You've got  
his gun.

MRS. BALDWIN  
(panic-stricken)  
Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

WALTER  
You gray-haired old Judas!

MRS. BALDWIN  
Let me out! Let me out of here!

She beelines for the door, flings it open and goes. The reporters tear off to their telephones and begin barking orders to their respective papers.

HARTMAN  
(to policeman)  
You stand there!

MURPHY

City Desk! Quick!

SCHWARTZ

Gimme the Desk!

HARTMAN

(to another policeman)  
You there!

ENDICOTT

City Desk! Hurry!

MCCUE

Gimme Emil...

HARTMAN

(to a Deputy, pointing  
with his gun toward the  
window)  
You cover the window.

MURPHY

(to Hartman)

Look out where you're pointing that  
gun!

Hartman draws his men in around the desk, their guns drawn on  
it.

WILSON

Lemme have the Desk! Quick!

MURPHY

Hold the wire! I've got a flash for  
you!

WALTER

(to Hildy)  
Call Duffy!

HARTMAN

No, you don't!

WALTER

(to Hartman, furiously)  
Do you want to get us scooped?

MCCUE

Emil? Hang on for a second.

HARTMAN

Now then, everybody aim at the  
center. And when I say three --

HILDY  
That's murder!

HARTMAN  
(changing his mind)  
All right! Carl! Frank! One of you  
get on each side of the desk. Take  
hold of the cover.

The two deputies flank the desk and grab on.

HARTMAN  
Now then! We got you covered,  
Williams. Don't try to move. Now!  
Everybody quiet and ready for an  
emergency. I'm going to count to  
three.

The reporters shout into their phones.

SCHWARTZ  
Hold it! Something coming up.

HARTMAN  
One!

ENDICOTT  
Hold the phone!

MURPHY  
I'll have it in a minute.

HARTMAN  
Two!

WILSON  
Right away now!

HARTMAN  
(turns back to desk)  
Everybody ready? All right. Now  
then, up with it.

Two deputies raise the cover. Williams is revealed, cowering  
in the desk, his hands over his face. Hartman rushes on him,  
jabbing his gun into him.

HARTMAN  
Got you, Williams!

WILLIAMS  
(a wail)  
Go on -- shoot me!

As the police and deputies come in to assist Hartman, the reporters are telephoning in, the police shouting -- all the voices mixing together in incredible confusion as Hartman rushes Williams to the door and takes him out.

MURPHY

Earl Williams was just captured in the Press Room of the Criminal Courts Building, hiding in a desk.

DEPUTIES AND POLICEMEN (AD LIB)

(all talking at once)

"Grab him!"

"That's him!"

"Don't let him shoot!"

"Stick 'em up!"

MCCUE

...Williams in a roll-top

WILSON

-- nabbed Williams hiding --

ENDICOTT

-- found Williams' hiding place.

SCHWARTZ

He offered no resistance.

MCCUE

Williams put up a desperate struggle but the police overpowered --

MURPHY

-- tried to shoot it out with the cops but his gun wouldn't work, so --

WILSON

-- trying to break through the cordon of police

ENDICOTT

Williams was unconscious when they opened the desk --

Walter grabs the Post phone.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy! The Morning Post just turned Earl Williams over to the Sheriff.

Hartman re-enters with the two policemen and leaps to get the phone away from Walter.

WALTER

(into phone)

Duffy!

HARTMAN

(indicates Walter and Hildy)

Put the cuffs on those two!

The police handcuff Hildy and Walter.

ENDICOTT

An anonymous note received by the Sheriff led to Williams' capture. More later.

He hangs up.

MURPHY

(into phone)

An old sweetheart of Williams' doublecrossed him. Call you back.

He hangs up.

REPORTERS (AD LIB)

"Where's that old lady?"

"Hey, Madam!"

"Where'd she go?"

"Where's the old dame?"

They run out after Mrs. Baldwin, the Mayor entering just after they go. Walter and Hildy, handcuffed together, stand near Hartman.

HARTMAN

(into phone)

Hello, girlie -- gimme Cooley. Quick!

WALTER

Hartman, you're going to wish you'd never been born!

The Mayor comes into scene.

MAYOR

Fine work, Pete! You certainly delivered the goods. I'm proud of you.

HARTMAN  
 (holding the phone)  
 Look kind o' natural, don't they,  
 Fred?

▲MAYOR  
 (happily)  
 A sight for sore eyes!

HARTMAN ▲  
 Aiding an escaped criminal! And a  
 little charge of kidnapping I'm  
 looking into.  
 (into phone, suddenly)  
 But that's the jail! There must be  
 somebody there!

MAYOR  
 Well! Looks like about ten years  
 apiece for you birds!

WALTER  
 Does it? You forget the power that  
 always watches over the Morning  
 Post.

MAYOR  
 Your luck's not with you now!

HARTMAN  
 (into phone)  
 Cooley?... I caught Williams single-  
 handed -- we're going to proceed  
 with the hanging per schedule!

He wiggles the hook for another call.

WALTER  
 (to Mayor)  
 You're going to be in office for  
 exactly two days more and then  
 we're pulling your nose out of the  
 feed bag.

HARTMAN  
 (into phone)  
 Give me the District Attorney's  
 office.  
 (to Walter)  
 I'll tell you what you'll be doing -  
 - making brooms in the State  
 penitentiary.  
 (into phone)  
 Hello, D'Arrasty! This is Hartman.  
 (MORE)

HARTMAN (CONT'D)

Come over to my office, will you?  
I've just arrested a couple of  
important birds and I want to take  
their confessions.

▲ He hangs up. Walter makes a sudden lunge for the Morning Post  
phone and cries into it.

WALTER

(into phone)  
Duffy! Get Liebowitz!

MAYOR

All the lawyers in the world aren't  
going to help you!

WALTER

This is the Morning Post you're  
talking to!

MAYOR

(enjoying himself)  
The power of the press, huh!

He laughs. Pinkus, the Governor's messenger, plentifully  
stewed, reels in the door. He approaches the Mayor and  
Hartman who have their backs to him.

WALTER

(at the Mayor)  
Bigger men than you have found out  
what the power of the press is...  
President!... Yes -- and Kings!

PINKUS

(woozy; hands Sheriff the  
reprieve over his  
shoulder)  
Here's your reprieve.

The Mayor and Hartman spin around.

MAYOR

(in a panic)  
Get out of here!

PINKUS

You can't bribe me!

WALTER

What's this?

HARTMAN

Get out of here, you!

PINKUS  
I won't. Here's your reprieve.

HILDY  
What?

PINKUS  
I don't want to be City Sealer. I  
don't like seals anyhow. They  
smell.

MAYOR  
Who is this man?

HARTMAN  
(to a deputy)  
Throw him out, Frank.

HILDY  
(seizes Pinkus with her  
free hand)  
Who was bribing you?

Walter also seizes Pinkus who is being pulled out of shape.

PINKUS  
They wouldn't take it.

MAYOR  
You're insane!

WALTER  
(triumphant)  
What did I tell you? An unseen  
power!  
(to Pinkus)  
What's your name?

PINKUS  
Silas F. Pinkus.

MAYOR  
You drunken idiot! Arrest him! The  
idea of coming here with a cock-and-  
bull story like that!

HARTMAN  
It's a frame-up! Some imposter!

HILDY  
Wait a minute!  
(to the deputies)  
Let go there!

WALTER

(to Hartman and Mayor)  
Murder, huh?

HILDY

Hanging an innocent man to win an election!

HARTMAN

That's a lie!!

MAYOR

I never saw him before!

WALTER

(to Pinkus)  
When did you deliver this first?

HILDY

Who did you talk to?

PINKUS

They started right in bribing me!

HILDY

Who's "they"?

PINKUS

(indicates the Mayor and Hartman)  
Them!

MAYOR

That's absurd on the face of it, Mr. Burns! He's talking like a child.

WALTER

Out of the mouths of babes.

MAYOR

He's insane or drunk or something. Why, if this unfortunate man, Williams, has really been reprieved, I personally am tickled to death. Aren't you, Pete?

HILDY

Go on, you'd kill your mother to get elected!

MAYOR

That's a horrible thing to say, Miss Johnson, about anybody!

(MORE)

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Now, look here, Walter, you're an intelligent man --

WALTER

Just a minute. All right, Mr. Pinkus. Let's have your story.

PINKUS

Well, I been married for ten years and --

WALTER

Skip all that.

MAYOR

(loudly)

Take those handcuffs off our friends, Pete. That wasn't at all necessary.

HARTMAN

(springing to obey)

I was just going to!

He gets the key from the deputy.

MAYOR

Walter, I can't tell you how badly I feel about this. There was no excuse for Hartman to fly off the handle.

HARTMAN

(unlocks the handcuffs)

I was only doing my duty. Nothing personal in it.

They are set free.

HILDY

You guys better quit politics and take in washing.

MAYOR

(looks over the reprieve)

Sheriff, this document is authentic! Earl Williams has been reprieved, this Commonwealth has been spared the painful necessity of shedding blood.

WALTER

Save that for the Tribune.

MAYOR  
(to Pinkus)  
What did you say your name was --  
Pinkus?

PINKUS  
That's right.

He shows the Mayor a locket.

PINKUS  
Here's the picture of my wife.

MAYOR  
A very fine-looking woman.

PINKUS  
(mysteriously angered)  
She's good enough for me! And if I  
was to go home and tell my wife --

MAYOR  
I understand perfectly, Mr. Pinkus,  
and as long as I am Mayor --

WALTER  
Which ought to be about three hours  
more, I'd say.

HILDY  
Just until we can get out a special  
edition asking for your  
impeachment.

WALTER  
And your arrest. You'll each get  
about ten years, I think.

MAYOR  
Don't make any hasty decisions, Mr.  
Burns. You might run into a  
thumping big libel suit.

HILDY  
You're going to run into the  
Governor.

MAYOR  
(tries to brush it off)  
Now, my old friend the Governor and  
I understand each other perfectly.

HARTMAN  
(eagerly)  
And so do I!

MAYOR  
(with superb contempt)  
So do you what, you hoodoo!  
(to Pinkus, suavely)  
And now, Mr. Pinkus, if you'll come  
with us, we'll take you over to the  
Warden's office and deliver this  
reprieve.

Hartman, Pinkus and the Mayor go out of scene.

WALTER  
(dreamily)  
Wait till those two future  
jailbirds read the Morning Post  
tomorrow.

Walter turns to Hildy and they suddenly smile at each other.

HILDY  
How was that for a tight squeeze?

WALTER  
Don't tell me you were worried!

HILDY  
Worried! I was petrified. Weren't  
you?

WALTER  
Uh-uh. As long as we were in there  
together pitching -- they couldn't  
lick us. Well, it's been a lot of  
fun.

HILDY  
In a way.

WALTER  
(laughs)  
I mean -- working together. Just  
like the old days. The things we've  
been through, Hildy.

HILDY  
We've certainly been in some swell  
jams.

WALTER

Remember the time we broke into the D.A.'s office, and copied Fifi Randell's diary?

HILDY

Yeah. What about the time we hid the missing heiress in the sauerkraut factory? Six scoop interviews!

WALTER

Yeah - but that time we stole Old Lady Haggerty's stomach off the Coroner's physician. We proved she was poisoned though, didn't we?

HILDY

(laughing)

We sure did, but we had to go in hiding for a week.

WALTER

In the Shoreland Hotel. And our only chaperon was the poor old lady's stomach.

HILDY

Don't remind me. That's how we happened to --

She breaks off. There is a moment's pause.

WALTER

Sorry, Hildy. I didn't mean to be making love to another man's fiancée.

HILDY

That's all right, Walter. It's as much my fault as yours.

WALTER

(glancing at the clock)

Bruce is making the nine o'clock train. I told him you'd be on it -- unless you want to write this story yourself.

HILDY

Well, if it's my last story, I'd like it to be a good one. But -- I guess I can't, Walter.

WALTER

Suit yourself, kid. This isn't for me to decide. Of course, you could make a later train and still be in Albany tomorrow morning.

HILDY

Yeah. I suppose I could. But, Walter --

WALTER

He's going to have you the rest of his life, Hildy. Can't you give me another hour?

HILDY

I don't know what to do, Walter.

WALTER

Flip a coin.

HILDY

All right.

(takes coin from her bag)

Heads I go -- tails I stay to write the story. Ready?

Walter gazes nervously at the hand holding the coin.

WALTER

Ready. ♪

She flips and catches the coin. She holds it tightly clasped in her hand, afraid to look. They stare at each other a second.

WALTER

(nervously)

Well -- what is it?

HILDY

(almost breaking)

What's the difference? I'm going to write that story -- and you know it!

She puts the coin away without looking at it. Walter rushes to her, tries to take her in his arms.

WALTER

Hildy!

HILDY  
 (furiously)  
 Don't touch me! I'm not doing it  
 for you!

WALTER  
 (softly)  
 Then why are you doing it?

HILDY  
 Because I'm a newspaper woman,  
 Heaven help me!▲

MONTAGE - THE STORY

CITY ROOM - Hildy types away furiously. Copy Boy tears sheets from her typewriter as she writes.

Walter comes in and tears sheets from typewriter.

Linetype machines.

Presses going.▲

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Headline: "THE POST SAVES EARL WILLIAMS!"

The sound of newsboys call "Extra! Extra!"

The subtitle: "Impeachment Proceedings Launched Against Mayor For Attempting to Conceal Governor's Reprieve!"

The byline: "By Hildegarde Johnson"

Walter and Hildy look at the paper on Walter's desk.

WALTER  
 (enthusiastically)  
 The greatest yarn ever written by  
 anybody. My hat's off to you,  
 Hildy!

HILDY  
 (grimly)  
 Thanks.

WALTER  
 And what a way to quit. While  
 you're still champion! That's the  
 way to leave, Hildy!

HILDY

Yeah. Only -- only I'm not leaving, Walter.

WALTER

What do you mean? Bruce'll be waiting for you in Albany.

HILDY

No, he won't. I wired him that I wasn't coming.

WALTER

Where'd you wire him?

HILDY

On the nine o'clock train. That's the one he took, isn't it?

WALTER

Sure. ♪

HILDY

It's awfully clear now. Bruce needs a wife who can give him a home -- and affection -- and peace. I couldn't do that for him, Walter. I'm what you made me -- a cheap reporter who'd give up her soul for a story!... Is that job still open?

WALTER

Both jobs are open, Hildy. The paper -- and being Mrs. Walter Burns.

♪HILDY

Thanks, Walter, but it's no good. We tried it.

WALTER

Sure, it was good -- it was wonderful! Only you expected it to be like other marriages. It can't be like other marriages -- we're different! We're a different world. Look at what we went through today. I wouldn't trade that for any honeymoon in the world. I bet you wouldn't, either.

HILDY

A fine honeymoon, with a murderer  
right in the boudoir! And that  
other honeymoon in a coal mine!

WALTER

That's what makes it romantic.  
Every other married couple goes  
away on a honeymoon and for two  
weeks the bride knows just where  
the groom is, and vice versa. But  
us -- you never know where I am and  
I'm not sure where you are. That's  
Romance!

HILDY

Well, maybe I'd like to know just  
once!

WALTER

Hildy, if that's what you want, all  
right. We'll even go to -- how  
about Niagara Falls?

HILDY

(jumps)

Niagara Falls! Walter, you don't  
mean that?

WALTER

Sure I do. And I'll tell you  
something else -- I'd like a baby.

HILDY

Walter!

WALTER

Sure, I can't last forever. I want  
a son I can train to take my place  
on this paper.

HILDY

What would you do if it was a  
daughter?

WALTER

Well, if she looked like you --  
Say! My brains and your looks --  
that mightn't be such a bad  
combination.

HILDY

What's the matter with my brains?

WALTER

What's the good of arguing about something that probably doesn't exist? Look, Hildy, I'm proposing to you. What do you say?

HILDY

Well, I'd like to be lady-like and think it over.

WALTER

I don't want to rush you. Take a couple of seconds.▲

Louie marches in with a JUDGE, half-dressed. Louie has the judge in a tight grip.

WALTER

Hello, Judge!

JUDGE

This is an outrage, Mr. Burns! Sending a gunman to kidnap me!

WALTER

Now, wait a minute, Judge. This isn't a kidnapping. You've got the legal power to perform a marriage ceremony, haven't you?

HILDY

What!?

WALTER

▲ Now don't argue, Hildy.  
(to Judge)  
How about it, Judge?

JUDGE

Yes, but --

WALTER

Then go ahead. Come on, Hildy.

HILDY

Nobody's going to rush me into anything!

▲ Louie sticks a gun in her ribs.

HILDY

(scared)

You keep away from me!

LOUIE  
All right, Judge.

INT. CITY ROOM - DAY

Reporters stand on desks to watch through the glass partition of Walter's office.

1ST REPORTER  
I'll be doggoned! A shotgun marriage!

2ND REPORTER  
Don't they usually keep the gun on the man?

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

The Judge reads the marriage ceremony.

JUDGE  
"... so long as you both do live?"

WALTER  
I will. ♪

HILDY  
That's what he said the last time.  
Don't believe him, Judge.

WALTER  
Hildy, from this time on no tricks,  
no double-crossing -- everything on  
the level!

HILDY  
You're not fooling anybody. ♪

JUDGE  
"Hildegarde Johnson, will you have  
this man as your wedded husband, to  
live together in the ordinances and  
estate of Matrimony?"

HILDY  
What would you do with a gun in  
your back?

LOUIE  
(poking her)  
Quiet!

JUDGE

"Will you love him, comfort him,  
honor and keep him in sickness or  
in health; --"

HILDY

If I know where he is.

JUDGE

" -- and, forsaking all others,  
keep thee only unto him, so long as  
you both do live?"

HILDY

I will -- if he will.

JUDGE

(to Walter)

Have you got a ring?

Walter starts searching his pockets. He looks at Hildy's engagement ring.

WALTER

How about Bruce's?

HILDY

Walter, you can't do that!

WALTER

Sure, I can. Look at the policy I  
gave him!

He removes her ring, then places it back on while reciting:

BRUCE

"With this ring I thee wed and with  
all my worldly goods I thee endow:  
And thereto I plight thee my  
troth."

INT. CITY ROOM - SAME

REPORTER

Say, I'm surprised she got the ring  
back!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

JUDGE

"... pronounce you Man and Wife."

Walter throws his arms around Hildy and kisses her.

WALTER

Hildy, darling!

HILDY

Yes -- "Hildy, darling." I'm just a fool. That's what I am. I know what it's going to be like.

WALTER

It'll be Heaven!

HILDY

Sure, Heaven! You've probably thought up another coal mine to send me down in -- to get a new story for your paper!

Hildy turns over copy of the extra lying on Walter's desk.▲

She stops cold.

HILDY

Walter!

INSERT - NEWSPAPER:

"COUNTERFEIT PASSER CAUGHT!"

▲ "Attempting to pass five hundred dollars worth of counterfeit money at the Union station, a man giving his name as Bruce Baldwin of Albany, New York, was arrested last night --"

BACK TO SCENE

HILDY

Counterfeit money! That's the money you sent me, Walter! You -- you --

WALTER▲

But, Hildy, listen --

Walter retreats from Hildy. She runs after him. He dashes through the door into an adjoining office.

Hildy throws her bag at him and it smashes the glass pane in the door.

INT. ADJOINING OFFICE - DAY

Hildy pursues Walter around a desk.

WALTER

But, Hildy -- I can explain --

HILDY  
You -- you!!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME

LOUIE  
(to Judge)  
I think it's going to work out all  
right this time.

FADE OUT:

THE END