

THE RUM DIARY

based

on the novel

by

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Screenplay by
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1: EXT. HORIZON. DAY.

1.

It is the year of our lord, nineteen hundred and sixty, and the airways are soiled with a hit called, "Volare." Music to heave along with. Mr DEAN MARTIN at the mike.

In vigorous contrast we've got the view. Nothing phony about this. Pink coral in reefs of clear water under a seriously blue sky. It could be a postcard from heaven.

Volare oh oh

Right out there in the cloudless void a red speck comes into picture. It's a small biplane towing some kind of banner. But it's way too far off the beach to identify.

Cantare oh oh oh oh

Suddenly the candy/coloured plane skipping paradise is all the picture there is. It punches into frame close enough to smell the exhaust. I don't know how it happened, but somehow the plane and song get into an audio/visual sinc, our hearts borne aloft in aeronautical joy.

2: INT. P.O.V. PILOT. AIRPLANE. DAY.

2.

Sunlight flares into the cockpit as the pilot turns it around. He's flying at about two hundred feet and DEAN is on the breeze. Sparkling ocean becomes stone/white sand, and beyond is the big island. You can see people on the beaches and now their hotels. Tower after tower compete for space on the shore, like one side of a zip.

3: EXT. P.O.V. FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE BAY. DAY.

3.

It's already clear what the plane is up to. Hauling 30 yards of advertising it works the hotels, tiresome as a fly. See it once and you get the message but the happy sunbathers are required to see it again and again. You can read it from the beaches, but not from here, and no-one's looking anyway, not even the CAMERA. Isolating a concrete monstrosity it moves in towards an upper floor.

4: INT. BEDROOM/BALCONY. HIGHRISE HOTEL. DAY.

4.

A room behind one of the balconies. Night clings on and curtains are still drawn. Outside something passes with the discretion of a freight train. A man on a bed moans, one EYE exploring the rudiments of vision. It looks like a bullet hole. The misuse of alcohol can't be ruled out.

There's chaos on the floor. Clothes and books spill from a suitcase, plus compromised food/remains, bent coat/hangers and a portable typewriter. Weaving a passage through, feet negotiate more paperbacks, scattered newspapers, ashtrays and empty bottles. The drone of an approaching airplane intensifies as the feet arrive at lime/green drapes.

4 Cond.

4.

A curtain is drawn aside and beyond are the realities of daylight. A face looks out reacting unfavourably. About 35 years old with an animal of a hangover. It seems his equilibrium took the brunt, and as he steps onto the balcony he must seek stability in the rail. Tropical vistas at either side and vertigo 15 floors down. A SHOCKINGLY RED PLANE becomes parallel with his vision. It tows its message up the beach: PUERTO RICO WELCOMES UNION CARBIDE.

5: INT. BATHROOM/BEDROOM. HOTEL. DAY.

5.

A mouth guzzles direct from a tap, and now a face stares back from the mirror. Handsome despite the carnage, and nothing aspirin can't handle. But never mind that. His face is plastered in some kind of evil grease that he determines is lipstick. But from whence did it come? Was there a woman in here? Is she still in the fucking bed? Relief she isn't is simultaneous with a ringing doorbell.

KEMP

Who is it?

It's room/service and it says so. KEMP gets it focused.

.. leave it out there,
I'll get to it ..

But the voice wants a signature. The door gets opened on a security/chain, and KEMP looks suspiciously at a WAITER.

What is it? Is it eggs?

WAITER

.. I don't know, sir, I
didn't order it ..

Whatever it is comes in on a trolley. The WAITER sets up places for two orders and KEMP swallows multiple aspirins.

WAITER

You want some water with that?

KEMP

Not right now ..

WAITER

Looks like you had a night?

Is that what it looks like? KEMP fights off an aspirin gag.

WAITER

Is someone joining you, I
got two breakfasts here?

5 Cond.

5.

KEMP

That's O.K. she left,
I'll eat them both ..

He Zippos a cigarette [Menthol Kool], and whips the lid off eggs. "They look perfect." But the WAITER is looking at something else. A small refrigerator [mini/bar] is part of the debris. Someone hauled it out and tried to rifle it open. No luck with coat/hangers and kicked shit out of it. KEMP is aware of the WAITER'S interest.

KEMP

(re fridge)

.. I intended to bring that
to the attention of a member
of staff .. I had some difficulty getting it to open ..

WAITER

.. it's the little key,
on the door key ..

KEMP

Oh, right ..
(finds it)
I was looking for some nuts.

The mini/bar is on its back. On knees KEMP successfully opens it, revealing a trove of miniature liquor bottles..

I tend to avoid alcohol ..
(looking up)

When I can ..

Maybe time for a smile but there's a slam/cut into titles. HOUND DOG TAYLOR & THE HOUSE ROCKERS hit it loud with inimitable blues. This song is called "The Sun is Shining."

"THE RUM DIARY"

6: INT/EXT. TAXI/BOULEVARD. SAN JUAN. DAY.

6.

Slam right into the mouth of fat chrome. It's the radiator grill of a '53 De Soto. And indeed the sun is shining. Flamboyant trees make it a pretty street. But the houses that once looked out onto beach now look out onto hotels.

I don't like describing camera moves. But this is tracking back in front of the cab until a cut takes us inside. There's a DRIVER who looks like he needs sleep and a man in the back behind a newspaper entitled, "The Daily News."

DRIVER

Primero tiempo e San Juan?

6 Cond.

6.

KEMP

I don't speak Spanish ..

So that's the end of that relationship. There's a sharp change in KEMP'S appearance. Everything that needed it got attention. He's showered and shaved and behind Ray-Bans. Shakes out a Kool and a Zippo momentarily flares.

By now they're speeding along a causeway. A radiant sea with occasional fishermen doing their thing. All in all the day's shaping nicely, and with a pocketful of miniatures it might get even better. He swallows one and considers another. Outside the landscape is changing into suburbs of San Juan. The taxi is moving but wouldn't be anywhere else. This is dog eat dog and screw the lights.

7: INT/EXT. TAXI/STREETS. OLD SAN JUAN. DAY.

7.

This part of town is picturesquely colonial, [what guide-books describe as a Spanish Flavour]. You can barely see for car exhaust but the DRIVER finally thinks he's there.

KEMP

El News? The Daily News?

Shit/English and indifferent, the DRIVER nods at a street.

.. what's the matter with
going down it?

DRIVER

Quatro cinco .. no change ..

KEMP has already slammed the door. Abandoned and miffed at the rip/off, he pays the bastard and heads down a hill.

8: EXT. CALLE PLACE COLON. SAN JUAN. DAY.

8.

So many motor/horns in the city it takes a while to understand why they're concentrated here. Traffic is blocked in a honking/cacophony and Cops try to clear it. Various drivers have lost their rag and shout about it in Spanish.

For reasons yet unknown a contingent of angry workmen are protesting in the street. If they've got a placard they wave it. If they've got a bugle they blow it. Some have rotten fruit and look for targets. Clearly something has made them very cross with the offices of "THE DAILY NEWS."

KEMP heads toward it but isn't associated with the building until he reaches its steps. Suddenly he's converted into some kind of "Black Leg," [whatever that might be in Spanish.] Doors are locked and he hits a bell. Nothing happens until a Cop arrives with a key. Grapefruits and mouldy lemons splatter glass doors as KEMP is allowed in.

9: INT. NEWS ROOM [SECOND FLOOR]. DAILY NEWS. DAY. 9.

It's a big room with all the usual paraphernalia of putting a newspaper together. Virtually every cliché is evident, [typewriters, telex machines, and ceiling fans that can't cope.] The air is almost blue with cancerous smoke.

About a dozen desks in business, and most are on the telephone. At one a Journalist hammers it into a typewriter. Got a phone clamped to his neck, typing it as he hears it.

KEMP

I'm looking for Mr Lotterman?

DONAVON

End of the room ..

He slams the carriage back, and KEMP weaves through desks. The big room terminates in offices. One with a very shut door is evidently the one KEMP was looking for. Focusing his act, he taps on frosted glass and gets a frosty reply.

VOICE (O.S.)

Not now.

The rebuff was unexpected but explained by a passing voice.

SALA

He's having the Friday Crisis ..

The voice belongs to a man behind glasses. Cigar between teeth he carries Kodacrome boxes with a cup of coffee balanced on top. Of indifferent age he needs shampoo and is possibly in need of a rehab. But despite the unlauded aura there's something attractive about him. Dumping his boxes onto a nearby desk he smiles across at the stranger.

SALA

You Kemp?

(affirmative)

He was expecting you yesterday?

KEMP

We had some weather ..

SALA

Yeah, I heard ..

A red light glows on a phone, he heads for a coffee/maker.

.. big snow in New York?
He's still on the call,
you want some coffee?

KEMP

(negative)

What's all the fuss out front?

9 Cond.

9.

SALA

You came in the front? We
don't use that door. Not
when Los Jibaros pitch up ..

KEMP

What do they want?

SALA

I dunno, some fucked idea of
a living wage, they been out
there one and off for months ..
(offering hand)

By the way, my name's Sala,
Bob Sala, staff photographer ..

KEMP

Pleased to meet you, Bob ..

They already like each other. The phone/light goes out.

SALA

He's off .. you might wanna
try another subservient knock?

KEMP heads for the hot door. Gets a last bit of advice.

Don't notice the wig ..

10: INT. LOTTERMAN'S OFFICE/NEWS ROOM. DAY.

10.

The first thing you notice about LOTTERMAN is the wig [or rather toupee]. It's like a limp hat with an unfortunate colour scheme. Lifting a glance toward KEMP he gets back to some heavy/weight reading. A red pencil is frequently used. Without interest in anything else he finds a voice.

LOTTERMAN

If you're who I think you
are, you better sit down ...

The instruction is followed and KEMP looks about. LOTTERMAN is something out of the old school, mid 60's, striped shirt and suspenders. One or two things about his office are worth pointing out. There's a big map of Puerto Rico on a wall and crossed flags of the same country and U.S.A. on his desk. Behind him are windows looking out into the street. The protesters are raising volume and there is a wail of distant sirens. More editing with the red pencil, and eyes twist back with a reference to KEMP'S sunglasses.

LOTTERMAN

.. you find it a little
bright in here ..

10 Cond.

10.

KEMP

I'd take them off, but I
have a medical condition ..

LOTTERMAN

What d'you mean, you're blind?

KEMP

Conjunctivitis, Sir ..

LOTTERMAN

The old, 'red eye' ..

A slow fan swivels on his desk. He tosses the edit aside.

You arrive at a very trying
time, Mr Kemp, one of those
days stacking up. So if you
don't mind, we'll skip the
niceties and get right to it?

KEMP

It's how I like to proceed ..

LOTTERMAN

(finds a file)

I was impressed by your C.V.,
you've worked your way up
some interesting titles, and
I like the "fluent Spanish" ..
The only thing that bothers
me about it is the bits that
are missing? What happened
between St Louis & New York?

KEMP

A time I'm trying to forget.

LOTTERMAN

How well are you doing?

KEMP

Not so good ..

LOTTERMAN

Then Let's hear it?

KEMP

.. it was one of those "star-
crossed" things .. she was
young, and innocent, and I ..

LOTTERMAN

I'm not looking for Edith
Wharton .. just the gist?

10 Cond.

10.

KEMP

.. a bad divorce, I lost everything ..

LOTTERMAN

And then?

KEMP

.. then I taught English, basically the poets .. I forget how many years, but my passion was always to get back to journalism ..

LOTTERMAN

Why Puerto Rico?

KEMP

You know how it is, when you're starting over? You weigh up the jobs .. some more possible than others ..

LOTTERMAN

I didn't think you were down here to spite the Washington Post .. this C.V. is a bunch of bullshit .. you're either overqualified or you're lying ..

The door flies open and in comes a man who doesn't need to knock. He's Spanish/American and that'll do for now.

SEGURRA

This is two days off the wire.
(proffering a telex)
A day dead. We don't have it.

LOTTERMAN's shallow sigh is a study in minimalistic fury.

LOTTERMAN

.. what's the matter with Moburg? .. He's about as much use as a dug-up-body?

A resigned and bitter smile takes over. There may be an issue of blood/pressure. SEGURRA and his telex are gone.

The problem with this newspaper, Mr Kemp, is that I am among many who don't enjoy reading it. We have an ailing circulation, and I only have to look around this building to understand why .. a

10 Cond.

10.

LOTTERMAN (cond)
lack of commitment, and too much
self indulgence .. I got people
on salary here who come in like
guests .. on days like this, I
feel like I'm running the thing
on my own ... so, I'm looking for
some enthusiasm .. some energy ..
some fresh blood, and the ques-
tion I'm asking myself, is how
much alcohol is usual in yours?

KEMP
My fresh blood?

LOTTERMAN
How much do you drink?

KEMP
(weighing a shrug)
I suppose, at the upper end of
social. I'm poised to give up.

LOTTERMAN
Puerto Rico might not be the
best place on earth to do that ..

Is KEMP jittery with nerves? Or jittery with withdrawal?

Don't look so anxious, Kemp, I
wouldn't be paying for a hotel
if I hadn't already hired you ..
but this isn't the last chance
saloon, and I got no place for
another heavy drinker which, I
perceive from the condition of
eyeballs behind the sunglasses,
you might very well qualify as?

Police sirens are close now. The vibe isn't comfortable.

KEMP
.. this is a medical/condition,
Mr Lotterman .. I know it might
look like something else ..

LOTTERMAN
It looks like a fucking hangover.

By now the SIRENS have arrived and LOTTERMAN is on feet
at the windows, staring down into the street. Satisfac-
tion at the view is obvious, he beckons KEMP to share it.

[P.O.V.] Police in riot/gear erupt from vans and assault

10 Cond.

10.

everyone in the vicinity. Helmets, and truncheons, and kicking. One zealous moron repeatedly puts the boot in.

LOTTERMAN

.. that's the kind of commitment I like to see in a man ..
(showing teeth)
.. determination, balanced
with appropriate humanity ..

He turns to KEMP with manic eyes, their faces very close.

Which side d'you dress, Kemp?

KEMP

I beg your pardon?

LOTTERMAN

Politics?..

KEMP

I kind of hang in the middle ..

While the fracas continues LOTTERMAN discovers a cigar in the ashtray. Accepts a light from KEMP who Zippos a Kool.

LOTTERMAN

This is a schitzoid society ..
(exuding smoke)
.. they got two languages, two
flags, two anthems, and two loy-
alties .. we bring them stuff
they never had, and they either
hate it, or want more of it ..

Opening the door he escorts KEMP back into the News Room.

.. it's a reluctant part of
America, like an England with
tropical fruit .. Hey, Bob ..
you're the man I wanna see ...

SALA is where we left him. His boss forces introductions.

This is Paul Kemp .. he's
joining us from New York ..

SALA

Yeah .. we already met ..

LOTTERMAN

(other faces)

Mr Clive Donavaon, Sports ..
Mr Hubert, our accountant ..

10 Cond.

10.

LOTTERMAN (cond)

(to Sala)

.. do me a favour, will you,
show him around a little ..
the do's & don'ts .. intro-
duce him to some of the guys ..

SALA

I'll take him up to Al's ..

LOTTERMAN

.. the hell you will, take
him to the library, pull out
some volumes .. I want him
to get a sense of the paper ..

(steering Kemp)

Go back a few years, take some
notes, paying particular att-
ention to the bowling alleys ..

(navigating desks)

Bowling and Bowling Alleys is
big, they're up like mushrooms,
a new one premieres every week ..

DONAVON

You been to Puerto Rico before?

KEMP

No.

LOTTERMAN

You're gonna fall right into it,
there's a boom on, Kemp, it's
an open door .. play it right,
you can surf the place .. What
do you know about Horoscopes? ..

KEMP

Nothing ..

LOTTERMAN

If I can write one .. you can ..

They arrive at a desk, [star/charts, astrological books],
it's clear somebody was working this junk until recently.

.. it's every day with a spec-
ial "Star's Star" featured Sat-
urdays .. Betty Grable .. Neil
Sedaka .. that kind of thing ..

(selling it)

You'll find everything you
need right here .. it's call-
ed, "Madam La Zonga Predicts" ..

10 Cond.

10.

KEMP

.. what happened to Madam
La Zonga ..

SALA

He got cancelled ..

KEMP

What do you mean, fired?

LOTTERMAN

They raped him to death.

KEMP

They raped him to death?

SALA

There are very few places on
this island I'd decline to
visit, but the toilets frequ-
ented by sailors on the west
side of Candado Pier is one ..

LOTTERMAN

La Zonga died in a cubical ..
(eyes asking)
Not artistic are you, Kemp?

KEMP

No, Sir ..

LOTTERMAN

.. you might wanna reconsider
those refrigerated cigarettes,
they don't do anything for you ..

11: INT. ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY. DAILY NEWS. DAY. 11.

Archives of the newspaper include volume after volume of
back issues. There are several tables with reading lamps
and filing cabinets one end. Extracting a file, SEGURRA
glances down the room at KEMP. He sits with an overflow-
ing ashtray and stack of volumes. Another page turns re-
vealing another Schmuck with a cup in some bowling alley.

KEMP raises eyes as a man in a snazzy suit walks in. Like
a t.v. presenter, with instant charisma, everything about
him reeks confidence. On his way to confer with SEGURRA,
he smiles at KEMP, apparently aware what he's doing here.

The last volume is replaced with the next and KEMP lights
another. Gets an unexpected hand on his shoulder. White
teeth and cologne, the man in the suit is already leaving.

11 Cond.

11.

SANDERSON

I looked over your stuff ..
(gets a blank)
The cuttings you sent to
Lotterman? Good writing ..

KEMP

Thanks ..

SANDERSON

I won't disturb you now ..
(finds it)
We'll talk ..

He snaps a business/card on the desk like he just won at poker. Before there's time to read it SANDERSON is gone.

12: INT. COMPOSITOR/PRINT ROOM. DAILY NEWS. DUSK. 12.

Like a subterranean parking/lot full of machines. Even the air throbs in here. Fresh newspapers pass overhead and descend on a conveyor. It's as good an opportunity as any for a reveal. SALA all but hollers to get heard.

SALA

.. they put in new machines
about six months ago .. mech-
anised almost everything ..

A river of newspapers heads for the rear of the building. Here's where they get packed and slung into waiting vans.

.. there used to be fifty guys
down here, now there's five ..
hence happiness in the street ..

He expertly snatches a newspaper. Slaps it over to KEMP.

Souvenir .. day one ..

Twilight outside security gates. Someone SALA recognises is on his way through. It will slam itself automatically.

Hold that gate ..

Out they all go leaving the metal door to get on with it.

13: INT/EXT. AL'S BAR/TERRACE. SAN JUAN. DUSK. 13.

A bar at one end and open terrace at the other. Bamboo furniture and a string of coloured lights. It's a dive except it's upstairs and for anyone who wants it there's a view over the port. But no one's looking and no one's listening to a Black Guy sweating nostalgia from a piano.

13 Cond.

13.

Meanwhile the place is half full of staff from 'The News,' [who'll get introduced if they need to be]. SALA and company have just arrived at the bar where shots are already poured. The man who held the gate is fighting middle age but losing with the gut. He passes a grubby menu to KEMP. A hamburger it has to be. SALA raises his rum in a toast.

SALA

.. here's to pretty women
with filthy thoughts ..

WOLSLEY is a seedy looking cove, almost certainly English.

WOLSLEY

How was the induction?

KEMP

Somewhat fraught ..

SALA

No disrespect, Paul, but he
didn't have a lot of choice ..

(swallows rum)

You know how many people applied for the job? One. You.

KEMP

(amused)

Is that right? .. even then
I thought I'd blown it, he
zeroed in on my weakest spot ..

WOLSLEY

Which is what?

KEMP

.. two and a half unpublished novels, and references of equal fiction ..

WOLSLEY

You're a novelist?

KEMP

.. in a manner of speaking,
I can't even get it read ..
so I figured I'd do some
words for money, see how it's
looking in a year or two ..

SALA

At El News?

(flags more rum)

I hate to tell you this on

13 Cond.

13.

SALA (cond)
the way in, but this publication is on the way out ..
and as far as I'm concerned,
it can't come soon enough ..

WOLSLEY
Not gonna happen ..

SALA
You like a little vonga on
that? I'll give you 13 to
2 this thing's over by June,
they're gonna cut the cord ..

KEMP
Then why put in new machinery?

WOLSLEY
.. precisely my point, and
he can't answer it ..

SALA
Like I'm tired of arguing the
obvious? .. C'mon, let's eat ..

WOLSLEY
.. I gotta see a man about a
horse, good to meet you, Paul ..

He becomes gone and SALA finds a table. "These Foolish
Things" on the piano and lights coming on all over town.

SALA
.. another night unfolds
over old San Juan ..

KEMP
You been here long?

SALA
.. too long, this place is
like someone you fucked and
they're still under you ..

KEMP
Then why don't you quit?
(lights it)
Life's full of exits ..

SALA
Because I'm waiting for it
to collapse, so I get the
pay/off .. three grand redundancy puts me in Mexico ..

13 Cond.

13.

SALA

Don't .. look .. left ..

Something unpleasant passes and loiters in the vicinity.

That's an introduction
you don't wanna have ..

KEMP

Who is he?

SALA

.. a living example of the
state this paper's in .. his
name's Moburg, our crime and
religious affairs correspon-
dent .. Lotterman can't fire
him because he never sees him,
he's rarely out in daylight ..

KEMP

Looks like he enjoys a drink?

SALA

The entire sub/structure of
his brain is eaten away with
rum. Bits and pieces work
depending on the time of day ..

KEMP

That is not a wholesome look.

When you see MOBURG you'll know what he's talking about.

SALA

You wouldn't want to get in
the way of his breath .. I'm
telling you, this enterprise
is doomed .. there's maybe
three or four professionals
in the building .. Donavon,
Wolsley, Frankie Morrel and
me, running the entire show ..

KEMP

Who's, Hal Sanderson?

It's a gold/edge business card and KEMP hands it across.

In the library? Who is he?

SALA

.. he used to work for the paper,
now he's what he says he is, a P.

13 Cond.

13.

SALA (cond)
R. Consultant, selling this place
street by street to the Yanquis ..
(drinks)
.. he keeps a greasy little bas-
tard of a contact called Segurra ..

KEMP
I saw him .. we didn't meet ..

SALA
I wouldn't bother, piss on the
make .. the boy Segurra is in-
to property wickedness .. I'm
not sure where Sanderson fits ..
(returns card)
.. neither are to be trusted,
but Sanderson's worth cultiv-
ation; got some good connect-
ions, good for some freelance ..
(a change of song)
Anything but "Night and Fucking
Day." This place is depress-
ing me beyond belief tonight ..
You're at Plage Xanadu, right?
(correct)
C'mon, I'll give you a ride ..

KEMP
What about the hamburgers?

SALA
We'll take another snifta,
and eat them in the street ..

14: EXT. STREET. OLD SAN JUAN. NIGHT.

14.

It's a hot Caribbean night, music here and there and moon-
light everywhere. Gas/lamps on a steep cobble/stone hill.
As they descend SALA and KEMP munch hamburgers, the latter
a tad unsteady on feet, but more likely fatigue than booze.
Twisting in the street, he stares up at breathtaking stars.

KEMP
(quoting Keats)
.. "bright star, would that
I were steadfast as thou art" ..
(turning around)
.. I never seen so many stars,
how would I write them down ..

SALA
.. you don't have to take .
it too literally .. the

14 Cond.

14.

SALA (cond)
dead guy got it from books ..

KEMP
I didn't exactly mean that ..
(chuckling)
.. all I want is to be a writer, and I am Madam La Zonga ..

SALA gets the irony but doesn't find it as funny as KEMP.

SALA
Are you kaput?
(negative)
.. then I got the perfect
hell/hole for our nightcap ..

KEMP
.. not tonight .. tonight is
swimming night .. they got a
pool with a palm tree, I been
thinking about it all day ..

SALA
Dog Shit! Dog fucking shit!

He squeezes his hamburger into a ball of as yet unexplained rage, and pitches it like a grenade into a nearby wall.

Look what they did to my car.

The car is a tiny open/roofed Fiat 500 and some moron has filled it with garbage. Obviously a revenge attack. Rotten vegetables and fish/parts erupt out over the sidewalk.

KEMP
Who did it?

SALA
.. Union Goons and other
allied bastards ..

With eyes aflame he launches a cantaloup into the darkness.

15: EXT. BOULEVARD. OLD SAN JUAN. NIGHT.

15.

Garbage falls down the highway like confetti. Empty cans and other unpleasanties spin away. Craning away from the road the CAMERA tracks fast behind the little car. Almost all the rubbish is gone and the ejections become sporadic.

SALA (O.S.)
These guys don't know which
side it's buttered .. they

15 Cond

15.

SALA (cond)
want an enemy? They got me ..

16: INT. FIAT 500 CONVERTIBLE/BOULEVARD. NIGHT.

16.

This is one of history's smallest cars. Space is further reduced by presence of a large domestic wireless set. Wires dangle but the dial glows and apparently it works.

SALA
.. this is what you get for
sympathising...

He tosses out a pineapple tuft, KEMP produces miniatures.

KEMP
You want a drink?

SALA
Where'd you get them?

KEMP
.. they put them in the
room .. I got Cointreau,
Tia Maria .. and gin ..

SALA
I'll take a gin ..
(swigs)
How long's he putting you up?

KEMP
Didn't say anything about it.

SALA
He will ..
(smelling it)
.. there's something
lingeringly putrescent .. ?

KEMP
(finding it)
oh my god ..

SALA
Throw it out ..

A sizable and stinking lobster vanishes into the night.

17: EXT. FORECOURT. LA PLAGÉ XANADU HOTEL. NIGHT.

17.

Money making an eye/sore of itself for 20 floors. There are circumcised palms and glamorous autos, plus a black

17 Cond.

17.

DOORMAN in a brown top hat. The Fiat rattles in looking like a car that won't get its door opened and it doesn't.

SALA

.. I was thinking .. if you need somewhere, I got a room for rent .. not the best address in town, but it's got a fridge and t.v., 60 a month ..

KEMP

Sounds inviting ..
(sprucing up)
I might re/mention that ..

He's out and heading for the HAT. SALA calls after him.

SALA

Meanwhile, bleed it ..

18: INT. FOYER/BANQUET ROOM. XANADU HOTEL. NIGHT. 18.

Inside looks like outside except it's full of Yanquis in party togs. Anyone who passes KEMP will be aware of his association with garbage. He arrives at glass doors with an illuminated swimming pool beyond. But doors are locked and seeking alternate entrance he heads towards music.

Chandeliers the size of cars and a throng of middle aged Americans. Any face that isn't white is serving tables. Unfucked wives with sagging upper arms and rum delivered in hollowed out pineapples. DON DICK and his "Tropical Swing Men" supply the music, obviously a major night out.

Not a few of the elderly ladies sit behind FACE LIFTS of the wind/tunnel variety, and none like the look of KEMP. Here comes a fussy looking little asshole of a MAITRE D.

KEMP

I was looking for the pool?

MAITRE D

The pool's closed tonight ..

Guests in the vicinity are aware of the intrusive STENCH.

KEMP

What's going on here?

MAITRE D

The Union Carbide party ..
It's a private function ..

A WOMAN with a 100 mile an hour face/lift recoils in dis-

18 Cond.

18.

gust at the intruder. KEMP leans into her ancient HUSBAND.

KEMP

(confiding)

.. she's spending too much
time on the motorcycle ..

19: EXT. PRIVATE BEACH. XANADU HOTEL. NIGHT.

19.

Bright red paint reveals itself as a paddle/boat. Shoes on laces around his neck KEMP pushes into moonlight. It seems the booze has finally registered and slumping back he peddles an erratic course towards an horizon of stars.

Fifty yards from the shore and nothing but lapping water, although if you bother you can just about hear the music.

Too wasted to swim he snaps a Cointreau and for a moment thinks he's hallucinating. A VISION has arisen from the deep. Honey blonde hair drenches her shoulders and eyes blue as bluebells. At a glance she looks entirely naked and is possibly the most beautiful girl he has ever seen.

GIRL

.. I'm sorry, I didn't realise anyone was there .. I thought it was just floating ..

KEMP

It is just floating ..

GIRL

Are you doing what I'm doing?

KEMP

I don't think so ..
(sitting up)
What are you doing?

GIRL

Escaping a dreadful party, I just snuck out and unzipped ..

KEMP

That's very courageous of you ..

Translucent water like she's dancing naked in moonlight.

I thought maybe you were a mermaid .. they tell me the coast's infested with them ..

GIRL

I'm from Connecticut .. my

19 Cond.

19.

GIRL
boyfriend's making a speech ..
(killer smile)
It takes exactly 21 minutes.

KEMP
So it's pointless me in-
viting you for a drink?

GIRL
What you got?

KEMP
I mean, at the bar?

GIRL
Yeah, pointless .. I gotta go
before they wonder where I went ..

KEMP
Wait a minute, what's your name?

GIRL
Let's keep it a secret ..

KEMP
I don't even know it?

GIRL
.. then you'll keep it even
better .. sweet to meet you ..

He stares after her naked ass, drunk and utterly smitten.

KEMP
Alright, your star/sign? I'm
an experienced astronomer ..

GIRL
You could try Pices, the fish.

She disappears into reflections of the hotel and is gone.

KEMP
oh god, why did she have to
happen? Just when I thought
I was doing good without her?

He swigs and slumps back in the seat, eyes investigating
the heavens. How anybody can make sense of that mess is
beyond him, but what of the girl under the sign of Pices?

.. I don't know if I want to
live in Connecticut anyway ..

19 Cond.

19.

His head is so far back it turns the horizon upside down.
The moon shatters into a clutch of spinning bowling pins.

20: INT. BOWLING ALLEY. SAN JUAN. DAY.

20.

KEMP is hunched in the bowling alley like he's been watching the same ball travel a thousand miles. P.O.V. of the ball as it careers down the alley. Pins disintegrate and the machine resets them and a CHAMPION with a mountainous gut punches the air in joy. From time to time flashbulbs pop. But here comes another ball and the same thing happens over again. This is the dictionary definition of the word repetition. Hell probably looks something like this.

KEMP

(taking notes)

.. what would you say you
like most about Puerto Rico ..

CHAMP

The alleys and the casinos ..

(his wife)

She likes the Duty Free ..

Both are dressed like 4 year olds, shorts and ankle socks.

WIFE

.. the more you spend,
the more you save ..

Dialogue continues over a baleful montage. Fat hands work slot/machines, faces in glee as they win. Nothing is more significant in their day than appearance of 3 RED CHERRIES.

KEMP (O.S.)

.. have you seen a lot
of the island ..

CHAMP (O.S.)

We never leave the hotel ..

WIFE (O.S.)

It isn't safe ..

KEMP (O.S.)

But you're having fun?

CHAMP (O.S.)

Oh yeah, a lotta lotta fun ..

And back into the nightmare as another ball thunders down the endless alley and fresh skittles shatter. KEMP wears a new white Panama that he tilts over eyes. Seeks consolation in a miniature, overwhelmed by the crashing 10 pins.

20 Cond.

20.

KEMP (V.O.)

.. have some fun with a fuck-
ing Luger .. these alleys are
magnets to the glutton .. they
come off the boats like locusts ..
beasts of obesity, asses that
wouldn't feel an arrow .. the
Great Whites, probably the most
dangerous creatures on earth ..

Is this another hallucination, or a facet of fantasy real-
ised? The 10/Pin replacing apparatus has just put down a
clutch of pristine bottles. Rum flagons stand in waiting
and here comes the ball. A galaxy of booze and glass exp-
plode in slow/motion as the ball delivers a perfect strike.

21: INT. SALA'S DARKROOM. THE DAILY NEWS. [DAY]. 21.

A dissolve is already in progress. At its end is violet
light and a developing picture of the Champ and his Wife.

SALA

There's your baby ..
(photo)
Walt and his Woman ..

He pulls it dripping from the tray and hangs it on a line.
KEMP is perched somewhere on a stool in dense cigar smoke.

KEMP

.. bowling alleys isn't
what I had in mind ..

SALA

.. tread it till the snow
melts, then join the exodus ..

There's a knock on the door and SALA shouts, "Red Light."
A voice responds, "Looking for Kemp?" and it's Lotterman.

22: INT. NEWS ROOM. THE DAILY NEWS. DAY. 22.

All the usual sounds and mess of the news room. LOTTER-
MAN and KEMP walk through, the latter hearing criticism.

LOTTERMAN

(re manuscript)
.. too many adjectives, too
much cynicism .. nobody wants
what's wrong with the place,
they wanna read what's right ..

KEMP

It's a rewrite ..

22 Cond.

22.

LOTTERMAN

I'm aware of that, and you
might want to rewrite the
title? Call it "10 Things
I Love about Puerto Rico." ..

They've arrived at KEMP's desk. LOTTERMAN makes a smile.

.. how's the sobriety
coming along ..

KEMP

I'm cutting down ..

LOTTERMAN

By that I assume you mean
the size of the bottles ..
(hotel bill)

How does anyone drink one
hundred and sixty one min-
iatures? You're averaging
ninety three miniatures a
week, they must be stocking
the thing four times a day?

KEMP

They're not complimentary?

LOTTERMAN

No, Mr Kemp, they are not ..
and neither is wine or long-
distance phone calls .. As
of Monday, you are no long-
er a resident at the Xanadu ..

The end of a sentence becomes the beginning of a new one.

.. and what exactly brings
you into the building ..

MOBURG

.. don't hassle me, I got
the X Rays .. I got less
than a week to live ..

LOTTERMAN

Hazle you? What are you talk-
ing about, you Sweedish Twerp?
(instant anger)
.. it may have crossed what's
left of your mind that I'm here
to run a newspaper .. we got
something called "news" going
on out there, and as far as

LOTTERMAN (cond)
you're concerned, I may as well
look out the fucking window ..
(confronting him)
.. what d'you want in here?
this is a newspaper, there's
nothing for you in here ..

MOBURG
.. two of the best scoops you
ever had came outta my brain,
and you better moderate your
language or I'll go elsewhere ..

LOTTERMAN
You'll go elsewhere? Else-
where where? You couldn't
get work as a fly/repellant ..

MOBURG's face looks like someone taking a difficult shit.

.. you're worthless, Moburg,
the last onion in the jar ..

MOBURG
Don't push me, Lotterman,
I'm dangerous when pushed ..

LOTTERMAN
I know why you're here, you're
here because it's pay/day, ex-
cept in your case deferred on a
permanent basis. You're fired.

MOBURG
.. you can't fire me, you owe
me money, and you better pay
it, or I'll come through the
roof and turn this place into
an insurance claim ..

LOTTERMAN
Are you threatening me?

DONAVON
Let's take it easy, guys?

MOBURG
You wanna suffer some Voodoo?

LOTTERMAN
You twerp ..

Grabbing the toupee MOBURG raises it like a saucepan lid.

22 Cond.

22.

MOBURG

Eat the death/pill, Lotterman.

A flashbulb explodes catching the wig hovering at 2 feet.

KEMP

C'mon .. we're walking ..

Rigid with indignation, but also attempting to reinstate dignity in respect of the toupee, LOTTERMAN allows himself to be led. KEMP fixes a destination on his office.

LOTTERMAN

.. you hear what he said to me? .. this guy's my blood-pressure, this guy will kill me, (and I want the negative of that picture destroyed) ..

He shouts at SALA [who took it] KEMP keeps him walking.

.. I never want to see that animal in this building again .. he is hygienically unacceptable .. you see the side of his nose, blackheads like braille, they should have him put down ..

They've arrived in the office before KEMP realises the wig is on back to front. But otherwise LOTTERMAN finds focus.

.. Moburg is history, outta here at the earliest opportunity, and the earliest opportunity is you .. you understand what I'm saying, Kemp?

KEMP

I think I get the drift ..

LOTTERMAN

I want you to immerse yourself in this paper, you got the talent and I think you got the will. Make it grow, and you grow along with it ..

His enthusiasm seems genuine despite the reversed hairdo.

KEMP

I'm not best placed to do that?

LOTTERMAN

.. it's not my intention to keep you on horoscopes, re-

22 Cond.

22.

LOTTERMAN (cond)
writes and bowling alleys ..
(pulling \$ wad)
.. as a matter of fact, I'm
gonna move you now .. Get a
cab, go out to the airport ..
the Mayor of Miami's coming
in, make him sound nice. I
want a picture and an inter-
view .. make it work, Paul ..

23: INT. TERMINAL. SAN JUAN AIRPORT. DAY.

23.

Open plan in the days before paranoia hit. Several D.C.7.
are parked out in the heat. A coterie of slick/suited His-
panics mill at the windows waiting for the same flight as
KEMP. He props the bar with a beer and battered suitcase,
and like the men with the suits has been waiting some time.

SANDERSON (O.S.)
(re suitcase)
Are you leaving us already?

Where did he arrive from? KEMP looks pleasantly surprised.

KEMP
.. I'm moving home, if this
mayor/guy ever turns up ..
(re board)
.. they keep changing del-
ayed to delayed ..

SANDERSON rations a smile. Both shift eyes to the SUITS.

Who are these guys?

SANDERSON
.. footnotes in the wake of
a deal .. no one gives a
fuck for any of them, but
they grin when I do .. You
wanna have some breakfast?

The charm comes off like cologne, irresistibly persuasive.

.. a little lobster on the
beach, I'm 20 minutes away?

KEMP
It sounds inviting, but
I gotta wait for the man ..

SANDERSON
He isn't coming. Cancelled.

23 Cond.

23.

KEMP

.. that's not what it
says on the board? ..

SANDERSON

.. it will in a minute, I
just called Miami ..

As he says it the board confirms it and SANDERSON grins.

Come and have some break-
fast .. I got a couple of
things might interest you ..

Checking his watch KEMP reaches for suitcase and camera.

KEMP

I better call in ..

SANDERSON

You can phone from the car ..

24: EXT. WIDE OVER TROPICAL LANDSCAPE. DAY.

24.

Back in picture/postcard land. It's a Rousseau painting
except for the road. A red Alpha Romeo with the EVERLEY
BROTHERS blaring descends through silver mist to the sea.

25: EXT/INT. COUNTRY ROAD/ALPHA CONVERTIBLE. DAY.

25.

Crazy looking cliffs soar out of the foliage. Luxurious
orchids and screech of tropical birds. The landscape is
totally unspoiled and with so much beauty about it seems
a shame to cut into the car. But if you've got to have
one, what better than a gleaming new Italian Convertible.

KEMP looks bewitched by it all but pretends not to be im-
pressed by the radio/phone. Finishing his call he hands
it over and SANDERSON snaps it back into place. They're
both playing games, but from opposite sides of the fence.

SANDERSON

(re phone)

There's only two on the
island .. maybe three ..

The engine sounds peachy, KEMP is dazzled by the scenery.

KEMP

.. no one told me it
was so pretty ..

SANDERSON

God's idea of money ..

25 Cond.

25.

SANDERSON

(grinning)

You know what makes this place a gold mine? Something that doesn't exist?

KEMP

How's that?

SANDERSON

Land .. there isn't enough of it, and those who know how to get it, get the gold ..

They may have already gone through gates but now they're outside a house. Crisp architecture and swooning palms, it's what you might want to call art/concrete. SANDERSON looses the car like a tossed hat and KEMP follows inside.

26: INT. BEACH HOUSE/PRIVATE BEACH. DAY.

26.

The back of the house is all view of the ocean. Beyond is a private beach with Rousseau either side and twenty five feet of brand new yacht out on the azure. This is no place for the envious. Everything KEMP sees he likes [envies] but the big one doesn't hit until they walk out onto a terrace. Fixing rum on ice SANDERSON shouts down the beach. An audit of the approaching girl is unavoidable. Naked except for jewelry and a virtually transparent sarong, she's a stunner [previously believed to be a mermaid.] Making introductions, SANDERSON brings drinks.

SANDERSON

.. Paul's joining us for breakfast that looks like it's gonna be a lunch ..
(kisses her)

This is, Chénault ..

Surprise to see each other and attraction in equal measure. SANDERSON gets a reading via his impeccable radar.

You two know each other?

A definite no in CHENAULT's eyes, and KEMP plays it O.K.

KEMP

.. I thought we may have met on the plane? ..

CHENAULT

.. I don't think so, I flew boy/friend airlines ...

In a rather disconcerting way she slips into high heels, and clearly belongs to him like everything else on show.

CHENAULT

You like lobster, Paul?

KEMP

.. you know what, I might not have time today .. I didn't realise the drive was gonna take so long ..

SANDERSON

How long have you got?

KEMP

In fifteen minutes, I'm late.

CHENAULT

I'll cut up a pineapple ..

SANDERSON

(after her)

.. and you might want to put on some clothes ..

(half a smile)

She sunbathes in the nude, and a few of the over/tanned locals tend to treat it as a tourist attraction ..

KEMP

It doesn't surprise me .. I mean .. in a tasteful way ..

SANDERSON

.. you mean, you'd like to fuck her to a pulp .. it's a private beach .. they shouldn't be here .. Sit down .. c'mon, Paul, sit down, we'll get you a cab ..

A choice of white/leather and SANDERSON refreshes drinks. As KEMP sits a dazzle comes from the floor. It's a live tortoise, encrusted with phoney diamonds. This creature and Chenault share something in common. Both get jewels and both are in situ, and owned, to compliment SANDERSON.

SANDERSON

.. his name's Harry, I got the idea from a book ..

(sitting)

.. I wanted to talk because I'm looking for someone who

26 Cond.

26.

SANDERSON (cond)
can assimilate contradict-
ory points of view, and
make them into one voice ..
(the charm)
You're a novelist, right?

KEMP
Where'd you hear that?

SANDERSON
Newspapers are full of gossip ..
(scooping Harry)
I'm looking for someone who's
good with words. Next day you
turn up, and coz I believe in
good luck, I thought maybe you
were it? What I need is some-
one with the right kind of eyes ..

KEMP
For looking at what?

SANDERSON
Looking at that ..

He gestures expansively at the amazing and unspoiled view.

27: EXT. SHORELINE. BEACH/BEACH HOUSE. DAY.

27.

Something surreal about all this. SANDERSON carries his
tortoise like a purse, puts out a million refractions of
sunlight. He strolls barefoot along the shoreline, KEMP
munching pineapple, and both drinking rum on crushed ice.

SANDERSON
.. the art of politics is
making people believe what
we want is what they want ..
(Harry dazzles)
.. and I have some clients
who presently want some-
thing quite badly .. this
is where you might find a
place in the picture .. I
want the public to want it
as much as my clients, and
to be honest as much as me ..

KEMP
What is it they want?

A shout from the terrace interrupts, "Paul's cab's here."

27 Cond.

27.

The moment goes on hold, and they head towards the house.

SANDERSON

.. why don't you come over
one weekend, meet some people,
I'll let you know when ..

KEMP

Assuming I can help these
people with what they want,
what can they do for me?

SANDERSON

How much is the paper paying
you, Paul? You don't need to
lie, I already know. If this
works out, you can treble it,
they're very generous people ..

Back on the terrace CHENAULT has a leg in the air drying
fresh nail polish. You don't want to risk a second look.

.. you're getting on well
with Sala, right?

KEMP

I'm moving into his apartment.

SANDERSON

.. you should maybe edge over
into a drink or two with Seg-
urra .. he's no nite/out, but
his dad owns the biggest cem-
ent plant on the island ..

KEMP

Nice to meet you, Chenault ..

CHENAULT

Come see us again ..

SANDERSON

He's coming back ..

He escorts KEMP into the hall. A Driver loiters outside.

The cab's paid for ..

28: INT. STAIRWAY. OLD BUILDING. SAN JUAN. DAY. 28.

Ancient stairs ascend into gloom. As KEMP peers up from
the hallway a heap of flotsam crashes down the stairwell,
primarily cardboard and bundles of newspaper. Midway up

28 Cond.

28.

the stairs he runs into SALA who struggles with a sack of empty bottles and similar refuse that couldn't be thrown.

SALA

.. hey .. you made it ..

Rejecting a hand he disappears with his clattering junk.

it's right at the top ..

29: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. DAY..

29.

You can probably smell it before you see it. KEMP lowers his suitcase and begins to show himself around. The area designated as kitchen exercises the greatest pull. Much has been eaten in here but little cleaned up. A Goldfish indulges a limited quality of life in the only example of clean water. Apart from an incongruous [brand new] spin/dryer for clothes everything else is comprehensively vile.

Degradation expands to engulf the apartment, made claustrophobic with photographs. Most walls are plastered and many are crime/scene horrors. Disturbing events are ubiquitous [a head in a street catches Kemp's eye]. The rest is threadbare and thrift/store. A pair of armchairs face the only window, though why this should be so isn't clear.

Two rooms remain to be explored. He heads for one when a cockerel crows in another. Was it a cockerel? How can a cockerel be up here? KEMP pushes at a bedroom door. The bed was expected, but not a bunch of cages on top of each other wherein various live foul are resident. One or two are swaddled head to foot in bandage like balls of string.

KEMP closes the door on them, checks out an antediluvian radio/gram and its stack of records. Discovers something of interest as SALA reappears, wasted and dripping sweat.

SALA

.. was trying to get
the place ship/shape
before you arrived ..

Detouring via a refrigerator he hands KEMP a beer, "Salut."

KEMP

(re record)

"Adolph Hitler Speaks"?

SALA

.. not mine .. the Nazi
stuff belongs to Moburg ..

KEMP

Moburg lives here?

29 Cond.

29.

SALA

He keeps his uniform here,
I never see him, from one
month's end to the next ..
(selling it)
.. you can see, it's quite
spacious? Don't look at the
kitchen .. the water's off,
it's a problem in the valve ..

KEMP

I thought you had a t.v.?

SALA

I said, I kind of have a t.v.

He gestures at the armchairs facing the opposite building.

the guy across the alley has
a t.v..... I have binoculars ..
(finds them)
His wife's deaf, with the win-
dow open, you hear every word ..

A terrible gurgling echoes in pipes and SALA is vindicated.

It's coming up ..

KEMP

.. I notice you have some
chickens in the bedroom ..

SALA

Cockerels .. I'm sweating the
grease out .. don't worry about
them, they're moving to my room ..

KEMP

What d'you do? Eat them?

SALA

Eat them?
(drinks)
Nahh ... I don't eat them ..

30: EXT. COCKPIT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE. DAY.

30.

A pair of fighting cocks clash mid/air. A roar goes up
from an encirclement of black faces. I could tell you
about the blood and the dust and the feathers, but it'll
read like half/assed Hemmingway. All I know is it's go-
ing to cost thousands of feet of film to get this right.
The birds are an expression of arrogance, strutting like
rock/stars in the insolence of their breed. No such des-

30 Cond..

30.

cription applies to the frenzy of spectators. Not a few are Mulatto, a few more Black, but most are Jiberos from the interior, harsh faces with wild eyes and lousy teeth. Every contorted face is subconsciously fighting with the roosters, winning, loosing, laughing and cursing, shrieking in Spanish and waving mangy dollar bills in new bets. SALA and KEMP are just about the only white men. In the melee of excitement and shifting smoke it's suddenly over and SALA's cock has won! Jubilation is shared with KEMP.

SALA

On a trade wind, my boy ..

Money changes hands and like the Jiberos SALA administers first/aid to the victor with his mouth, sucking and spitting blood. Simultaneously the ring is prepared for fresh contenders. The dirt is raked and a sign of the cross is scratched into the floor. A pinch of holy/dust is rubbed into beaks of the combatants and tethers released. Beady eyes engage a paralysed stare, provoking the first strike.

.. you know something? If
you gave these guys the best
food on earth, but kept 'em
tied, they'd ignore the food
and stare at each other un-
til they starved to death ..

SALA has his money on a black and gold, instantly engrossed as KEMP finds interest elsewhere. He pushes through the mob leaving Birds and the Cariadors to get on with it.

31: EXT. STREET. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE. DAY.

31.

Everything looks like 200 years ago. Starved horses and barking dogs. A catholic church up the hill and poverty everywhere else. Although its source isn't clear, smoke hangs in the air with a disagreeable odour. KEMP wanders and might even take an occasional photograph. Clutching precious birds, more men and boys are on their way to the fights. Strictly a male affair, the women and girls take what meagre advantage they can with sad little stalls at the roadside. Rattan is spread under trees where you can buy seashell/trinkets, sugarcane, black tobacco, and rum.

A pair of ramshackle trucks full of garbage trundle past, but KEMP is looking at a MAN ON A HORSE. Obviously a personage of some importance, he wears a red and yellow bandanna tied like a turban with a filthy Panama hat on top.

Either side of his saddle are cages, one transporting the biggest fucking chicken KEMP has ever seen. Except this isn't a chicken of course, it's a nightmare of a COCKEREL.

31 Cond.

31.

A gang of kids chase after the Rider while KEMP's attention returns to the trucks. Belching exhaust they vanish where the sky becomes asthma and seagulls hover overhead.

32: EXT. GARBAGE DUMP. NEAR VILLAGE. DAY.

32.

The trucks dump their load and gulls celebrate their arrival. KEMP peers across a wasteland of putrescence, despoiling what was once a beautiful landscape. City filth stretches for as far as he cares to look. But his interest orientates around the immediate foreground. The sub/poor live here in hulks of American cars. Kids and dogs and cooking fires in the rat/lands. To describe it as a shanty would invest it with a status. KEMP is genuinely moved to discover such deprivation. He takes the photograph of an exquisite child living in a rusted Chevrolet.

33: EXT. COCKPIT. VILLAGE. DAY.

33.

A COCKEREL crows in defiance above its vanquished enemy. It's the big chicken, the nine pound nightmare that arrived on horseback. It swaggers the pit daring any punk hen to challenge it. At some point KEMP has reappeared.

SALA

.. they call him, "El Monstruo," they say he's never lost a fight in three years ..
(focusing Kemp)
Where have you been?

KEMP

Looking around ..

SALA

C'mon, we're outta here ..

SALA dumps his chicken cage in the back of the Fiat and shouts in Spanish to a bunch of kids. For a handful of coins they agree to start the car. A moment later SALA and KEMP are on their way with a dozen children pushing.

34: INT. FIAT CONVERTIBLE/COUNTRY ROAD. DAY.

34.

The motor kicks in and they take off in a cloud of dust. Cockerels stare from the back, KEMP sorts out the beers.

SALA

.. that's a breed I don't know .. I never seen anything like it, he was fighting it with spurs upside

34 Cond.

34.

SALA (cond)
down, and still it won ..

'Accelerating' up a hill he hands KEMP a wad of dollars.

.. I tell you, we were
on a roll till that thing
turned up ..

KEMP
(counting)
217 dollars ..

SALA
Not bad ..

KEMP
Two hundred and seven-
teen dollars? That's
a shit/load of money?

SALA
.. relatively a shit/load,
they're expensive to train ..
(drinks)
.. I've seen guys win two
thousand, ten on North Beach ..

KEMP
Ten thousand dollars?
Why don't he take "El
Monstruo" down there?

SALA
You're talking the envir-
ons of the Hilton Hotel ..
they wear bow/ties and
shiny shoes .. there's no
hook for his kind of hat ..

KEMP
Stop the car. Stop the car.

SALA stops and KEMP goes after the view. It's obviously
something he'd only glimpsed, now it's necessary to climb.
Still clutching beer bottles, SALA goes with him and they
arrive at the crest and get a panoramic view of landscape.

From here you can see across the garbage/dump and all the
way to the coast. The view is a self/inflicted crime ag-
ainst humanity. The Bay of Guayanilla looks like someone
rebuilt industrial Detroit. For mile upon mile of shore-
line the petro/chemical and allied industries are concen-
trated. Gaseous fires burn day and night and giant smoke
stacksretch eternal into the air. Although over fifteen

34 Cond.

34.

miles away, the bad smell in the village has become a potent stench. The sky and even sea in the bay are brown, a low smog of pollution hanging over all like the worst Los Angeles ever got. Somewhere beyond all this is a sunset.

KEMP

That bites, don't it?

Yeah, even for SALA, it's an outrage that makes you sick.

SALA

Every country has its asshole.

35: INT. [P.O.V. BINOCULARS] APARTMENT. DAY.

35.

Massive close/up of RICHARD NIXON on a black & white t.v. He's participating in the so/called, "Great Presidential Debates" of 1960 and lying about something or other. At the other side of the debate is a youthful J. F. KENNEDY, brimming charm, and Dick can't compete. The proceedings are adjudicated by a sycophant with a crew/cut, his questions about as penetrating as an assault with marshmallow.

KEMP (O.S.)

.. how long can this blizzard of shame go on? Look at this asshole, besotted with his own righteousness .. this ingrate Nixon is sick. but not as sick as the t.v. .. that permanent smile on his face as he pretends inquisition, a boy scout could ask better questions .. "black is a very dark shade of white," well, thank you very much, Mr Nixon, and now we'll all clap like trained seals ..

Both stare through binoculars. KEMP first to lower them.

.. I can't listen to anymore of this .. he lies like he breathes .. imagine spending your entire life lying ..

At some point KEMP gets to the fridge and hauls out beer.

.. holy/christ, it never got worse. The only eventuality worse than him, is you know one day, some filthy whore-beast will come along, and make him look like a liberal ..

35 Cond.

35.

He sits at a portable typewriter, papers and photographs.

KEMP

.. the only up/side with
Nixon is he ain't gonna win ..

SALA

He's got the grin ..

KEMP

.. he ain't gonna win. The
Irish guy will win, but
they'll never let him live ..

SALA

How do you know that?

KEMP

I do horoscopes ..

By now he's picked up where he left it on the typewriter, shuffles notes and Zippos a butt. Referencing pictures taken at the garbage/dump, he converts them into a burst of words. SALA is back on the binoculars and it takes a while to realise MOBURG has arrived. Dressed in sandals and raincoat, he carries a plastic sack into the kitchen, a presence insisting itself, like a low/life Santa Claus.

KEMP

.. I thought you said
he never came here? ..

SALA

He's got filters ..

MOBURG is transferring the saturated content of his sack into the spin/dryer. KEMP follows SALA into the kitchen.

KEMP

What filters?

SALA

He goes over the wall
at the Barcardi plant ..

MOBURG

.. these filters are last
in line in the distillation
process, they contain more
ethenol than rocket/fuel ..

Hence the brand new spin/dryer. He closes the lid and extraction begins. It will end via a small tap at the bot-

35 Cond.

35.

tom of the machine. In anticipation (and looking more and more like a freaked alchemist) MOBURG empties his pockets of bottles and used jam/jars, crouching to fill the first.

KEMP

What's it like?

MOBURG

A hand on the brain. Off the scale, it's 470 proof.

KEMP

There's no such thing as 470 proof alcohol ..

MOBURG

.. a certainty you might be required to moderate ..
(filling)
.. no smoking in the extraction area, if you please ..

KEMP

Don't be ridiculous ..

The wizard and his broth have been challenged. A disturbing sneer emerges. Stepping away MOBURG takes a mouthful of brew and striking a match puts fire up the room like a flame/thrower on a tank. KEMP is momentarily taken aback.

MOBURG

Not for the social drinker.
(proffering)
Wanna quaff?

KEMP

Not right now .. I got a dead/line, I gotta write ..

MOBURG corks a bottle for SALA, suspicious eyes after KEMP.

MOBURG

Whass he writing?

SALA

He's lifting the stone on the American Dream ..

Reseating at the typewriter, KEMP waves a wad of pictures.

KEMP

Guayanilla Bay ..

35 Cond.

35.

MOBURG

Oh, yeah, it's bad up there ..
(Kemp types)
You might find such a topic
attracts a limited readership ..

KEMP

I only need one ..
(stubs butt)
I'm taking it into Lotterman.

MOBURG

Did I hear someone say, "Good
Luck" .. I went in there this
morning, and he un/fired me on
a "temporary basis," maggot
that he is .. I'd like to take
something into Lotterman, like
a slide/action, fuck/you gun ..

SALA

Don't drink that here ..

MOBURG

.. just a nipperoo, old boy,
quality test ..

He takes a substantial hit, gets back to killing Lotterman.

.. slow/motion murder, like they
do in the movies .. see him fly-
ing backwards, fucken arms flap-
ping in the air .. "O.K. Mother,
look upon the last face you see
this side of hell." Bam! Down
he goes, morsels of vital/organ
spinning away into slow/motion
flesh/orbit .. Bam! There goes
his ass/hole .. Bam! There goes
his dick .. Bam! Bam! Fuck you,
Lotterman, you're in a B/Fucken
Movie, and I am the Death/Machine ..

He has become psychotically drunk, and the others alarmed.

Shall we have some Adolph?

KEMP

Definitely not ..

SALA

.. on your way, Moburg,
we're expecting guests ..

35 Cond.

35.

MOBURG

You said he was writing a book.

KEMP

I said, I was writing an essay,
and it requires some shut/mouth.

MOBURG

.. don't waste your time with
junk/yard losers ..

(swilling brew)

.. this country was built on
genocide and slavery .. we
killed all the black guys
who were here, then shipped
in new black guys of our
own .. then we brought Jesus
in like a bar of soap ..

SALA

Let's go ..

MOBURG

You know it .. I am the
religious correspondent ..

MOBURG seems unaware SALA is hassling him through the door.
The CAMERA corkscrews from above as he descends the stairs.

.. fuck off with your Jesus
police .. if the bible's
god's book, why didn't he
give it to everyone ...

36: INT. LOTTERMAN'S OFFICE. DAILY NEWS. NIGHT. 36.

The cork/screwing visual continues. Starting close on a
sheet of typed manuscript; it expands to include the man
reading it. The air is filled with cigar smoke and it's
clearly very late. LOTTERMAN licks a forefinger to turn
a page and looks up. The camera has arrived at KEMP who
sits at opposite side of the desk smoking in expectation.

LOTTERMAN

.. "we give more money
to parking meters than
we do to kids to eat," ..

KEMP

Don't read me like that,
I've done the research ..

Another twelve pages of it. LOTTERMAN looks over glasses.

KEMP

.. a twelve thousand ton rust
bucket went down in the bay,
full of hydrochloric acid ..
it killed everything in the
sea, killed off the fishermen,
their kids are picking garbage ..

LOTTERMAN

.. don't get angry, it's hot
outside .. you want a Scotch ..

Sure he does and LOTTERMAN pours them and reseats himself.

.. 10 years ago, 5 years ago,
I may have said, go after it.
Now I say, go with it, there's
nothing you can change .. some
times you just gotta spew over
the side, and keep rowing ..

KEMP

Into a nut/brown sunset?

LOTTERMAN

... we are in a land of multiple
outrage .. thousands trodden on
before you wake up for breakfast ..
(swallows scotch)
.. that isn't "news," it's a
commercial reality, and provid-
ing it isn't their sunset, no-
one gives one fifth of a fuck ..

KEMP

You underestimate your readers.

LOTTERMAN

I don't think so ..

KEMP

You underestimate me. You told
me, make it work, and that's what
I wanna do .. wind down this La
Zonga crap, and make a newspaper ..

LOTTERMAN

Let me tell you some home truth ..
this paper has been on its knees
to a bank since the day it open-
ed. Like almost every newspaper
on earth, it's financed by its
advertising. Without advertising,
not only is there no "La Zonga",

LOTTERMAN (cond)
there's no newspaper to write it
in .. thus, there are one or two
things we don't write about ..

KEMP
In other words, nothing at all?

LOTTERMAN
In one other word, "discretion" ..
(elbows)
.. you are not a foreign cor-
respondent in some far/flung
foreign land, this is America ..

KEMP
This is Puerto Rico ..

LOTTERMAN
This is America. You think a
plumber from Normal Illinois
saves for 25 years to come here
on a cruise/ship to read about
bad times on the sugar/plantat-
ions? They don't give a fuck ..
(didactic smile)
.. the average guy don't rock
the boat coz he wants to climb
aboard it. Our readership is
vividly average. They don't
wanna know who the losers are,
they wanna know who won. Who
won the bowls, who won the rac-
es, who won the pot on the slot-
machine? Look at me, Kemp, you
are not sleeping, you are wide-
awake, and this is the American
Dream ..

KEMP
It's an anaesthetic ..

He hits the Scotch in one, retrieves his essay and stands.

There's so many hotels,
you can't see the sea ..

LOTTERMAN
You can see the sea by
checking into the hotels ..

KEMP
Pay to see the sea ..

36 Cond.

36.

LOTTERMAN

What's the matter with that?
You're paying to be in the
Dream .. It's a thin veneer,
Kemp, between the Dream and
the Reality .. wake them up,
and people might start asking
for their money back ..

KEMP heads for the door, tearing his manuscript as he goes.

KEMP

You're the boss ..

LOTTERMAN

Not quite ..

By now the pages are confetti, fall like it as KEMP exits.

.. the editorial policy of this
newspaper is owned by the Dream ..

And swooning violins [like canned Mantovani], dissolve into a dazzling sea like it might be a dream. Amongst the light are a pair of silhouettes. Naked in waist/deep water, they cling together, her legs wound round his hips and her arms around his neck. Her head is thrown backwards and her hair drenches the water, like someone actually caught a Mermaid.

37: EXT. SEASCAPE/TERRACE. BEACH HOUSE. DAY.

37.

SANDERSON and CHENAULT are making love in the sea. Nobody should be looking and maybe KEMP wishes he wasn't. But he is, and can't stop himself. Clutching a bunch of flowers, he's obviously just arrived on the terrace. A rush of emotions are instant [embarrassment, jealousy, and fascination.] The latter momentarily insists and he watches transfixed, although finally it's jealousy that turns him away.

Retreating to the living room, he looks about for anything as good to look at. Sees the encrusted tortoise and tells it to scram. His interest turns yet again to a tall brass telescope on a tripod. Maybe he'll take just another peek?

P.O.V. as the telescope comes into focus. It briefly passes the anchored yacht before discovering the lovers. This close it's almost unbarable. CHENAULT is reclining on the ocean as SANDERSON gives it to her. With arms outstretched like wings, she arches her back and KEMP is almost disabled with lust, "Oh, God, don't do that. How could you do that?"

Lascivious commentary continues as KEMP imposes his own emotional take on the proceedings. Suddenly he jerks his eye away and clutches his face, "Ah, Ah, Ah." It's too much to bear but too much to miss, and he goes in for another view.

37 Cond.

37.

SANDERSON stands naked on the yacht pulling CHENAULT out of the water. He gets into swimming shorts and she her bikini, attending to the bra between kisses. "Oh, my God, will you look at that?" Meanwhile a middle/aged couple have arrived via the hall. I'll get to describe them when there's time.

KEMP

(spying)

You are so bad/sweet .. ahhh ..

MRS ZIMBURGER

Hal?

KEMP whips around and stares at them like they stare at him.

KEMP

I'm a friend of Hal's. I was looking at his. Boat.

ZIMBURGER

.. she's a sweet little beauty .. you been aboard?
(he hasn't)
Great little island/hopper ..

MRS ZIMBURGER

We've all been down on her, it's a wonderful experience.

38: EXT. SHORELINE. PRIVATE BEACH. DAY.

38.

SANDERSON exits the sea with a spear/gun and CHENAULT follows with a sack of lobsters. Both seem delighted to see KEMP. He and ZIMBURGER have sauntered down to greet them.

SANDERSON

.. you guys are early ..
(shaking hands)
did you meet?

KEMP

We got first names ...

SANDERSON

Art Zimburger, late of the U.S. Marines, great friend of mine .. this is Mr Paul Kemp, of the New York Times ..

ZIMBURGER

You're the writer?

CHENAULT

Paul's a novelist ..

38 Cond.

38.

KEMP

That kind of thing ..

Off they all walk towards the house, ZIMBURGER escorted by CHENAULT. Legs and legs and TITS and LEGS and KEMP doesn't look. Puts an aside to SANDERSON as they walk behind.

KEMP

New York Times?

SANDERSON

.. he don't know one from the other .. just go with it .. this guy is key ..

KEMP

Key to what?

SANDERSON

.. key to the discussion we're about to have ..
(spots them)
Look at those mothers ..

He refers to some SWARTHY FACES hidden in the undergrowth.

Come with me, Kemp ..

Sucked along in the wake of anger KEMP finds himself part of the confrontation. Two of the faces have already gone, but one remains to defy SANDERSON. He's a brutal looking bastard in his 20's, good looks spoiled by a deep scar on his cheek. Clearly this isn't simply about spying on the Yanquis, it's about resentment at the white/mans presence.

SANDERSON

This is a private beach ..

The INTRUDER stands his ground, staring acid at the Yanks.

INTRUDER

We are not on it ..

SANDERSON

Yeah, but we are, and what we do is private ..

The INTRUDER alternates his contempt between the white men.

Now get the fuck gone ..

Reeking animosity the Puerto Rican finally decides to walk.

.. If I see your face

38 Cond.

38.

SANDERSON (cond)
again, you gonna have
a 12 gauge shotgun tel-
ling you what to do ..

39: INT. LIVING ROOM/TERRACE. BEACH HOUSE. DUSK. 39.

A blood/red sunset outside and candles already lit in here. SANDERSON sports casual silk and plays the impeccable host. Several guests have arrived, Golden Mariners, on their way to "meet the yacht in St Lucia." There's a lot of tan and perfume about, unlikable music on the stereo and conversation oiled by booze. CHENAULT is in and out of her guests delivering top/ups from a pitcher of white rum. She wears white heels and the kind of scant dress revered by wankers.

Despite his entrapment in conversation, she's a magnet for KEMP. He takes every opportunity to look at her. And is it a delusion that she seems just as often looking at him?

The ZIMBURGERS are a pair of reactionary twats. One uses a grin and the other doesn't. MRS ZIMBURGER has a budget lift and lipstick on excessively white teeth. She squats next to an affluent looking suit with a dog/collar, so we can assume he's got something to do with a god. ZIMBURGER is wasted on rum and until CHENAULT arrives with more, it doesn't matter whether we hear the yelling bastard or not.

ZIMBURGER
.. if ever there was a kingdom
of Satan, the Soviet Union is
it .. there's only one way you
come to terms with Communism,
and that is to destroy it, hit
it before it hits up, in a dev-
astating democratic strike ..

Lunging across his wife he directs anger at REVEREND HOLE.

.. they need a guy to press
the button? I am that man ..

Fragments of masticated pistachio accompany the invective. CHENAULT tops up the glasses. A discreet whisper to KEMP.

CHENAULT
You need rescuing?

MRS ZIMBURGER
.. don't take him away,
he's very entertaining...
 (gets a refill)
We were discussing Cuba,
but kind of veered off ...

39 Cond.

39.

REVEREND HOLE

Paul presents us with a somewhat 'liberal' point of view.

ZIMBURGER

.. there's no such thing as a liberal .. a liberal is a Communist with a collage education, thinking negro thoughts ..

SANDERSON is at the front door greeting new arrivals. ZIMBURGER finishes his tirade before getting up to join them.

.. and here's a fact for you,
76 point 4 percent of negroes
are controlled from Moscow ..

MRS ZIMBURGER

Why Castro gets an easy ride ..

ZIMBURGER

.. in my view we should bomb
Cuba off the face of earth and
let its people live in peace ..

Off he goes with HOLE following into handshakes. SEGURRA has arrived with a 65 year old Hispanic in sunglasses and a thousand dollar suit. SANDERSON escorts them all out to the terrace where cigars are lit and sliding doors closed.

KEMP

Who's that?

CHENAULT

Segurra's Daddy .. it's
who you're waiting for ..

He's more interested in her and it's difficult not to be. Filling his glass she sits on the arm of the sofa. Pure sex in a lot of proximity and no question putting it out.

Thank you for the roses.

KEMP

I didn't think you noticed?

She's utterly intoxicating, red lips in a whispering pout.

CHENAULT

Of course, I noticed ..

He's right inside her perfume. Lips close enough to kiss. It's a moment of promise and risk and sudden interruption.

39 Cond.

39.

SANDERSON

Paul, would you come in here?

CHENAULT slides into the sofa where he just sat. Watches the terrace doors close on handshakes before they all sit.

40: EXT. TERRACE. BEACH HOUSE. DUSK.

40.

LOUIS MUNOZ SEGURRA doesn't have to contribute to be centre of discussions. What he says goes, and he doesn't need to say anything. It's his son and SANDERSON who talk the talk.

SEGURRA

.. let me just start by saying this is a purely informal meeting, and incidentally, you don't worry about Lotterman ..

ZIMBURGER

Lotterman?

(surprise)

.. what's Lotterman got to do with the New York Times?

SANDERSON

(covering)

Mr Kemp subs for a variety of newspapers, occasionally writes for the News .. what he does in his spare time, is his affair ..

KEMP

That's how I like it ..

SEGURRA

.. we'd like you to do some writing for us ..

KEMP

So I gather. About what?

SANDERSON

.. in a sentence, we wanna set something up and have the public as our friends? And there are various ways we can do that ..

(charm on auto)

.. one of the easiest, is to throw a rock through their window, then knock on the door and sell them all a burglar alarm ..

KEMP

I'm not certain I follow you?

40 Cond.

40.

SANDERSON

Let me tell you how this kind of thing works, Paul. Suppose, by way of example, you wanted to put up taxes by five percent? The smart way of doing it, is to float the idea of a ten percent hike? Let them all shout about it, get themselves in a fuss? Then you offer "concessions," how about seven percent? No way, they will say. Alright, let's stay friends, and make a compromise at five? .. Bingo .. they think they won something, and you've got the five percent you wanted in the first place?

SEGURRA

.. the same thing applies to real/estate. You wanna build five houses, put in a planning application for fifty ..

KEMP

How many do you wanna build?

SEGURRA

None ..

(gets to it)

We want to build one hotel ..

So what's the deal with that? KEMP hardly bothers a shrug.

KEMP

Looking around this place, I don't think anyone'll notice?

SEGURRA

It isn't in this place ..

SANDERSON

.. it's an island, sensitive for a variety of reasons, we don't want to get into now .. but we do need to start throwing some rocks at it. Nobody wants a paradise choked with hotels, but everybody will be pleased to compromise at one ..

SEGURRA

.. this is going to require some clever writing in various

40 Cond.

40.

SEGURRA (cond)
carefully placed articles ..

KEMP looks at faces looking at him, it begins to look iffy.

KEMP
Isn't that kind of thing illegal?

REVEREND HOLE
.. my church will have a television transmission facility on the island, so the question of illegality is hardly appropriate ..

KEMP
Where's the island?

SANDERSON
Can't tell you. Not yet.

SEGURRA
Discretion is paramount,
if you join us, you'll
need to sign some papers ..

The door is already on the slide, CHENAULT puts a smile in.

CHENAULT
.. there's a man outside in
a funny little car for Paul ..

KEMP
(standing)
.. oh, yeah .. I didn't
realise it was so late ..

CHENAULT
You can't stay? .. the mermaids come out in moonlight?

Meaning some fun in the ocean? He gets handshakes instead.

SANDERSON
.. you don't have to come
to any decision now; Paul,
and I fully understand any
reservations you may have ..

SEGURRA
.. we have a meeting on
Monday in Hal's office ..
if you wanna be part of
what will be a very exciting project, come along ..

41: INT/EXT. FIAT CONVERTIBLE/JUNGLE ROAD. NIGHT. 41.

Yellow light from the wireless. A pointer scans channels for a station. But it's all Spanish trash or Connie Francis so she wins it. The headlights are like candles on a spooky jungle road. SALA drives with his cockerels on the back seat. He's annoyed because they're lost and KEMP is no help. He's too drunk to think of anything but Chenault.

KEMP

.. from the moment we met
I knew there was going to
be something between us ..

SALA

It's called her Fiancee ..

A reality KEMP can't face and he all but writhes in agony.

KEMP

oh, god, I'm so hopelessly
and progressively in love ..

SALA

Do not confuse love with lust
nor drunkenness with judgement ..

He's forced to stop the car. A swamp steams in headlights.

.. what other ideas do you
have in respect of navigation?

KEMP

.. I said, straight down
the street and turn left ..

SALA

.. we already are straight
down the street, and there
is no left .. it's a swamp ..

KEMP

Alright, back up ..
(backing up)
How were the fowl?

SALA

.. a public humiliation,
the bastards disgraced me ..

Reverse finds another dirt road. SALA shoves it into gear.

KEMP

You never realise the genius
of some of these love
songs until you're smitten?

41 Cond.

41.

SALA
You want my advice?

KEMP
If it involves her, no ..

SALA
Stay away from her, and
stay away from Sanderson,
you're way out of depth ..

KEMP
.. I got no brief for Sander-
son, or his pissy rip/off is-
land .. I just want some apple
blossom, lipstick, and fucks ..

SALA
.. you are in total denial,
she's fucking someone else,
and as I understand it, ab-
out to be married to him ..

KEMP
(hands over ears)
Ah Ah Ah Ah

SALA
You won't even make an invite ..
(violent stop)
.. I don't believe this, we
are back where we started ..

Coloured lights about 50 yards down a dirt road. A shot/up
sign reads "Cafe Cabrones," and SALA points in exasperation.

That's the same Cabrones
we passed ten minutes ago ..

Slumping back he punches the steering wheel. Reaches for a
flagon. He takes a breathtaking swig and shoves it across.

We need directions ..

KEMP hits it and a noise comes from his throat. Something
like cold water suddenly introduced to a boiled/dry kettle.

Let's get in there and
get something to eat ..

KEMP
No ..
(trying to breathe)
No ..

41 Cond.

41.

SALA

.. I haven't spent all day on
a beach, munching lobster with
criminals, and I'm starving ..

42: EXT. DINING TERRACE. CAFE CABRONES. NIGHT.

42.

A couple of strings of blue lights and a bunch of dirty old
palms. Sand on boards, trash out of a jukebox, and the dyn-
amic isn't friendly. Smoke loiters with nowhere to go just
like Jiberos at the bar. No white faces, and the Yanks att-
ract head turns as the only Gringos. Subsequent to seating,
a GIRL with an ass the size of a wrecking/ball presents her-
self as waitress. Nobody sober would ever ask her for food.

SALA

Two beers, two rums, one steak.

GIRL

The kitchen is closed ..

KEMP

Alright, two beers, two rums ..

SALA

And one steak ..

GIRL

Cerrado, Mister ..

SALA

Yeah, but let's not bother me
with that? .. you got a sign
up here saying Food till Mid-
night, and I want a steak ..

All but sneering she thumps off with SALA'S eyes in pursuit.

.. a Girl of the Swamp .. and
that reminds me, we need a map ..

KEMP raises the brim of his Panama revealing parboiled eyes.

KEMP

.. you know what, we're
drinking too much rum ..

SALA

There's no other way ..

KEMP

.. I'm getting double ash/
tray and a double salt/pot ..

SALA

You got a Moburg bi/focal ..

KEMP

Christ, this is heinous ..

(one eye)

imagine what it must be
like to be an alcoholic ..

More alcohol arrives delivered by a man in a greasy apron.
It's clearly his place and these boys ain't welcome in it.

PATRON

Two dollars ..

(drinks down)

You pay and you go ..

SALA

I don't see a steak?

PATRON

No steak ..

SALA

What do you mean, no steak?

KEMP

I think he means, no steak?

PATRON

The kitchen is closed. I
got no way of serving you.

SALA

Listen, you don't wanna hear
about my bad day, and I don't
want no graveside out of you?
(posturing)
If you can't cook it, bring it
like it is and I'll eat it raw.

PATRON

Two dollars. You pay and go.

SALA

Don't bother me ..

PATRON

You pay now or I call the cops.

SALA

If you have no intention of
serving me steak, why don't
you do your best to fuck off?

42 Cond.

42.

The PATRON retreats to his bar where sympathetic ears wait to hear. SALA has his back to them and KEMP gets the view.

KEMP

.. it seems to me there's
a bad vibe developing ..

The number of young Jiberos around the bar has mysteriously multiplied with incremental possibilities of group violence.

.. there's one or two odd-
ities giving us the eye ..

SALA

Don't get paranoid ..

KEMP

He's on the phone ..

SALA

For what? Ordering food in
a restaurant .. let's hope
he's through to the F.B.I. ...
(noticing it)
.. what's the matter with
you, what are you smiling at?

It's a paralysed shiteater through which he manages to talk.

KEMP

.. I'm not smiling, I'm
maintaining a casual face ..
(here's why)
.. a guy just walked in who
has good reason for regard-
ing us in a negative light ..

SALA

Us?

KEMP

Me, and he's just seen me. He
wants revenge on the white man.

SALA

The fuck are you talking about?

He turns and is taken aback by the cluster of hostile faces.

KEMP

How about the one with the dent?

No mistaking the one with the dent. Staring with a psychot-

42 Cond.

42.

ic eye it's the BRUTE WITH THE SCAR threatened by Sanderson.

SALA

The one with the eye?

KEMP

The very same ..

SALA

Do we walk or run?

KEMP

Walk. I'll push the car.

By now both are smiling and stand avoiding the one with the eye. But what about the drinks? KEMP has nothing and SALA not much more. He makes it clear the birds cleaned him out.

KEMP

Let's walk and hope he's happy.

Leaving a pile of pennies they promenade towards the carpark.

43: EXT. CARPARK/DIRT TRACK. NIGHT.

43.

Sultry darkness with fireflies and fog. SALA is doing approximately 1 mile an hour. He sits at the wheel while KEMP pushes the Fiat in soft sand. At a point approaching death from asphyxiation the clutch jolts in and the engine fires.

Gasping for air KEMP makes it to a door. Simultaneously a shower of pennies hit the car accompanied by some emotional language in Spanish. You don't need to look but the PATRON is backed by various Jiberos including the ONE WITH THE EYE.

PATRON

Espurio .. Bastard yanquies .. you think bastards drink free in Puerto Rico ..

Black muscle and eyes reeking animosity. Is that the glint of a machete? This is developing into one of those cliches that is actually happening. It's time to bid a gentle farewell before these low/life looking ingrates tear them apart.

44: INT. FIAT CONVERTIBLE/JUNGLE ROAD. NIGHT.

44.

500 cubic centimetres of clapped/out engine plunge them into an otherwise silent night. As they reach the end of the track SALA switches eyes to the mirror, hoping against hope.

SALA

.. don't let me see head-

44 Cond.

44.

SALA (cond)
lights .. please don't let
me see headlights ..
(a flare)
I've just seen headlights ..

KEMP
Put your foot down ..

SALA
.. where exactly d'you
think I've got it ..

Flat out and about as fast as a roller/skate the Fiat is no competition for the car behind. It's a monster convertible from the early 50s, four or five yelpers on board, swilling from the bottle and poised for fun. It's traditional stuff, bumping interspersed with threatening headlights. Then the big Ford overtakes and someone throws a jack/handle through the Fiat's windshield. Glass everywhere and SALA loses it.

SALA
We're gonna be killed,
we're gonna be killed.

Now in front, the Ford brakes like a mother and sends everything spinning to avoid it. The lights and tyres and insanity are suddenly all in reverse. One of the fighting Cocks is out [and you can believe me or believe me not] but it's perched on top of SALA's head. Round and round in circles they go. Crazy faces and homicidal screeches. Empty beer bottles rain down on the Fiat at every passing opportunity.

SALA
Get ready to run .. run
in opposite directions ..

By some process of centrifugal chaos the Fiat is once again in front. The ONE WITH THE EYE is waving a machete and the Ford is alongside like these maniacs are preparing to board.

KEMP
Gimme the Brew ..
(standing)
Gimme the fucken Brew ..

The flagon finds itself in KEMP's hand with a Zippo in the other. He swigs a mouthful and spews out a shocking lance of flame. Not so funny in the Ford but delight in the Fiat at the weapon's success. Twisting in circles they deliver another dose. A kaleidoscope of fire and madness. KEMP is drunk and astonishingly enjoying himself. He's got it down and works the Brew and his Zippo in perfect synchronisation.

Ha Ha Ha ..

44 Cond.

44.

SALA wrestles the wheel like a mariner in a storm. It's a merry-go-round of panic and bad/craziness and the cockerel is still on his head. All he sees is flame and blue light, flame and blue light, and nobody saw the police van arrive.

A sideways shunt and the Jiberos clamber the Fiat like ants on an apple. Trying to shake them off SALA spins it before some really bad news. The engine stalls inviting a conglomerate of knuckle/dusters, switch/blades, and enraged faces.

First up gets full fry ..

He douses the bastards with flaming Brew. The ONE WITH THE EYE ducks but the one behind him doesn't. It's a Copper in a uniform with a hat now comprehensively on fire. The fire ball doesn't do a lot for his moustache nor stimulate benevolence from those accompanying him. The bad guys evaporate and KEMP and SALA become recipients of official fury. Billy-Clubs beat them out of the car followed by some select footwork. The last thing KEMP sees is an approaching black boot.

COMPARE [V.O.]

.. Ladies and Gentlemen ..
would you please welcome
the Head with one Foot ..

[I was unconscious once and I saw a big RED HEAD with a leg coming out where its throat should be. It bounced about on a large foot singing a song that wasn't entirely out of key]

45: INT. COP STATION/COURT HOUSE. SAN JUAN. NIGHT. 45.

Intermittent flashing blue/light on the police van. It arrives outside the station and escorts its cargo up the steps. SALA and KEMP are handcuffed, the latter almost unconscious.

SONG [V.O.]

.. fare thee well, fare
thee well, fare thee well
my fairy fay, for I'm off
to Louisiana for to see my
Suzianna, singing Polly-
Wolly-Doodle all the day ..

A flash/bulb pops but you can't really see the faces beyond.

46: INT. HOLDING CELL. COURT HOUSE. NIGHT.

46.

A steaming compost of humanity, about sixty in a cell built for six. Last strains of the Polly/Wolly/Doodle song coincide with wake up for KEMP. Blood mats his hair, and generally fucked up. The first face he sees belongs to a BLACK SAILOR from the Condado Toilets. Smudged lipstick and stub-

46 Cond.

46.

ble through stale Max Factor. But he definitely likes KEMP, although he's last thing you need with a headache from hell.

SAILOR

.. so what little wicked-
ness puts you out of sorts
with the world ..

(who are you)

My name's Auntie Mable ..

Faces like fish in sardine oil, one of them belongs to SALA.

SALA

.. we had a small piece of
luck .. I saw Moburg .. at
least, I think he saw us ..

A SHOUT

What is this, fucken Belsen?

KEMP is too busted to remember what happened and may say so.

SALA

.. they got some kind of nite-
court going ..

SAILOR

You on the sugar/train, honey,
the justice according to rum.

47: INT. COURTHOUSE. SAN JUAN. NIGHT.

47.

A crumbling remnant from Colonial Spain. Ceiling fans and unpleasant neon. The JUDGE wears shades and might not be sober. An acid looking POLICEMAN is presently on his feet reading aloud in Spanish. The charges are formidable and it seems he wants these dangerous Yanks locked up for ever.

KEMP and SALA are guilty, if only by appearance. Both are handcuffed, filthy and bleeding, archetypal representatives of low/life characterising this place. But it's even worse than that. SALA (in the middle) is also handcuffed to some anonymous DRUNK who has nothing to do with their case. For the most part he hangs forward semi/comatose and would seem the cops included him by mistake. KEMP doesn't understand a word, forcing SALA to whisper a surreptitious translation.

SALA

.. he says, we were animals
on a rampage of drunken an-
archy .. poured gasoline on
one of his cops ..

The Cop in question stands to advertise his damage. A char-

47 Cond.

47.

red uniform and a bald head minus moustache tell the story.

SALA

oh my god, we're doomed ..

Next on the stand is the PATRON from Carbones. Once again in Spanish, he waves arms and emotes like he's auditioning for some kind of opera. Fist shaking at the defendants, it seems they are guilty of everything except raping his chef.

JUDGE

You have something to say?

SALA

.. yes, your honour, I do ..
firstly, this guy handcuffed
to me, I never seen in my
life .. second, we'd like a
translation of the charges ..

JUDGE

You heard what they said?

SALA

.. with respect, I heard
people speaking Spanish ..

JUDGE

What kind of language do
you think we speak in
this country, Mister? ..

The DRUNK vomits over the side of the box like it's a boat.

KEMP

He's not with us ..

SALA

The cops attached him
to get a conviction ..

JUDGE

(ignoring him).
.. did you leave the Cafe
Cabrone without paying?

By now the DRUNK has collapsed, dragging SALA down with him.

.. did you set fire to the
police officer, yes or no?

KEMP

.. unfortunately he put him-
self in the way of our flame ..

SALA

(half up)

.. that's right .. no way
did we pour gasoline on his
head and laugh as we did
it .. it wasn't like he said ..

JUDGE

"Like he said"? .. Like you
say, you don't speak Spanish?

SALA

(caught out)

Mr Kemp doesn't speak Spanish.

JUDGE

.. he will have plenty of
opportunity to learn ..
(here it is)
.. the charges against you
are grave .. resisting arrest
carries a tariff alone of one
year in prison .. never mind
assault with a deadly weapon ..

The ancillary defendant farts like everything in a farmyard.

.. I am going to refer this
case to a higher court ..
meanwhile I remand you both
in custody for thirty days ..

The gavel is about to crash down when a voice makes itself
heard from the back of the court. It's SANDERSON asking if
he can have a word? It isn't clear if the JUDGE knows who
he is, but an official whispers in his ear and now he does.

Go ahead, Mr Sanderson ..

SANDERSON

Thank you, Your Honour ..

(moving forward)

.. it isn't my purpose to
interrupt proceedings, but
if the intention is to re-
mand these two gentlemen, I
would respectfully ask for
a brief recess to allow me
to contact their Council ..

JUDGE

Who is who?

SANDERSON

Alfredo Quinones ..

47 Cond.

47.

We don't know who Quinones is. But the JUDGE clearly does.

SANDERSON

.. it would necessitate getting him out of bed, of course, but given the importance of these gentlemen to various interests, I'm sure he would be pleased as I to come down here at 3 o'clock in the morning? ..

(you dig?)

.. perhaps we could have just a minute or two, in private?

48: INT. PURGATORY ROOM. COURT HOUSE. NIGHT.

48.

I don't know how to get into this, but maybe some ugly wall-clock ticks a minute? Released from their third/party SALA and KEMP feel bad in this room, waiting to hear, and expecting the worst. Finally MOBURG walks in with a rancid smile.

MOBURG

.. you got bail .. thousand dollars a/piece ..

49: EXT. COURTHOUSE. SAN JUAN. NIGHT.

49.

The very first sense of dawn over the architecture. SANDERSON climbs into his Alpha. SALA and MOBURG are coming down steps of the court house. But KEMP is the first to arrive.

KEMP

I can't thank you enough ..

SANDERSON

(the smile)

Don't be late ..

Shoving the car into gear he takes off into silent streets.

50: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. DAY.

50.

A Cockerel crows up a new day. Birds are going off all over the flat. Motoring on bile KEMP emerges from a bedroom and makes it to the kitchen on one eye. This is patently a hang-over of great significance. Stiff from the beating and suffering almost total dehydration he goes for the taps. Gets a gurgling in the pipes but no water. Such a circumstance offers scant debate and he all but drinks the goldfish bowl dry.

Simultaneously an agonised plaint rents the air, "Mother of Balls!" followed by SALA. Like KEMP he's half dressed and monumentally hung/over, but focused on a different priority.

50 Cond.

50.

SALA

We got to rescue the car ..

Tearing the fridge open he slakes thirst with a can of beer.

KEMP

.. not now, we'll do it
later .. I got a meeting ..

SALA

We do not have later .. they
already had it 12 hours. I
know how these bastards work ..
(dressing)
.. they can strip a train to
axles in 12 minutes .. we'll
be lucky to find an oil spot ..

51: INT. TAXI. OUT OF TOWN. DAY.

51.

KEMP and SALA are back of the Buick on a rough country road.
Every bump adds new dimension to KEMP's headache. Plus the
DRIVER favours a station they hate but are too wasted to get
switched off. Hats and shades and SALA has a stash of beer.

KEMP

How long is this gonna take?

SALA

How would I know?

KEMP

I can't be late ..

SALA

.. I don't know why you're
going at all .. that guy
is bad company .. a manip-
ulative prick ..

KEMP

.. manipulated us outta
jail, didn't he ...

SALA

Oh, sure ..

Trumpets blare on the radio, SALA gives direction in Spanish.

And now he fucking owns us ..

KEMP

I got tongue. Like a towel.

51 Cond.

51.

SALA
Want a beer?

KEMP
Do I want a beer? .. No,
I do not .. I am never
gonna touch alcohol again ..

52: EXT. JUNGLE ROAD. MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. DAY.

52.

The cab pulls away shifting interest to KEMP before passing to SALA. He moves towards the Fiat with escalating anxiety.

SALA
What Fresh Hell is this?

Things are bad but not as bad as they seem. The valve/radio has gone as have both the doors. Why anyone would steal the doors off a Fiat 500 is a question without an answer. Worse is theft of the seats. Both have vanished leaving fresh air between the steering wheel and back seat. This one has been left, but no doors and no seats make the car look undrivable.

KEMP
That's a rite/off, isn't it?

SALA takes affront at the suggestion. The engine and wheels are there. All they need is something to sit on to drive it back. Before such details are confronted, they need to make sure it starts. SALA gets in and tries kneeling to operate the clutch. This isn't going to work. He reverses himself like a surf/board. With head and shoulders on the rear seat he can just about get a foot on the clutch. Notwithstanding the hangover KEMP pushes and the engine splutters into life.

KEMP
I sense disaster ..

SALA
.. you know what, I
got a brilliant idea ..

53: EXT. COUNTRY INTERSECTION/MAIN ROAD. DAY.

53.

A truck passes heading for the city. The Fiat pulls on to the main road. In any other automobile this wouldn't work, but the 500 is a very tiny car. SALA sits on the back seat with KEMP sitting on his lap. By this means they are able to progress like a normal vehicle. As antidote to the missing windshield, KEMP wears shades and SALA a snorkel mask.

54: EXT. SUBURBS. SAN JUAN. DAY.

54.

Wide over the streets but getting closer. Trailing exhaust

54 Cond.

54.

the Fiat joins a flow of traffic heading into the old city.

55: INT. FIAT CONVERTIBLE/BOULEVARD. DAY.

55.

All in all this is going rather well. Except it isn't staying that way. A suspicious grating sound develops somewhere.

KEMP

What's that?

SALA

.. too much weight on the
axle, try and sit forward ..

KEMP hunches closer to the steering wheel and SALA hangs on like a pillion on a motor/cycle. A shift of weight has the desired effect. Less groan as they approach traffic lights.

KEMP

.. I'm gonna be late, I'm
gonna be a week late ..

Lights change and off they go again. KEMP notices a subtle change in the dynamic of his seating. Slowly at first, but definitely happening, SALA undulates like he's making love.

KEMP

What are you doing, Sala?

SALA

I suddenly realise how
much I like you .. what
d'you mean, "what am I
doing?" .. there's something
wrong with the axle ..

And with every yard it's getting worse, cranking SALA up and down like the proverbial fiddler's elbow. The Fiat is dying and they would almost certainly abandon it were it not for a black and white Police Cruiser that just appeared along side.

From the police point of view they've got a wrecked car with no doors and men engaged in sexual deviance. Via his snorkel/mask SALA recognises the face with the missing moustache.

SALA

.. oh my god, it's the
cop we set on fire ..

KEMP

Try and look normal ..

By now SALA is bugging for the U.S.A. and doesn't look normal. Both are obliged to acknowledge the cops with shit/eat-

55 Cond.

55.

ers. This doesn't go down well and gets a siren in response.

SALA

Make a left, make a left.

KEMP

What left, there is no left.

SALA

Any left ..

Any left takes them into a narrow dead/end with an Everest of steps the only way out. It's a no/choice and they can't stop anyway so down they go. Pedestrians and washing lines and expressions of sheer horror as they descend like tandem pilots in a wingless plane. Wipe out a cart/load of melons and more horror at more stairs. SALA is still bugging as six flights down they vanish through somebody's front door.

56: EXT. SHANTY TOWN. [CONSTRUCTION SITE]. DAY. 56.

A roadway full of garbage and stinking puddles. At either side is a shanty town of tin/roofed shacks, half naked kids and starved dogs. A taxi navigates pot/holes and pulls up. KEMP gets out looking considerably refurbished. Buttondown shirt and tie and a borrowed jacket. Too late to hurry but clearly late. He pays the taxi and looks beyond the barbed wire. Towering above the slum (with more on the way) are a clump of new buildings. KEMP raises eyes to the top of one.

57: INT. RECEPTION. HIGH/RISE OFFICE BUILDING. DAY. 57.

Big glass and cool grey carpet. Everything new and pleased to be it. KEMP steps out of the elevator and makes his way to a reception desk. A pretty BLONDE that could double for Doris Day listens as he mouths through predictable bullshit.

KEMP

.. there were unexpected developments. I had to go home, start the day again ..

BLONDE

It happens ..

KEMP

.. plus, I couldn't find the road in ..

BLONDE

It's on the beach side ..

(gesturing)

Take a seat, Mr Kemp, I'll

57 Cond.

57.

BLONDE (cond)
let them know you're here ..

He's barely into the sumptuous leather before he's up again. SANDERSON appears through glass doors, "Hi, Paul, come on in." Necessity for further apology is swamped by his friendliness.

SANDERSON
.. tell me about it .. some
days are two sizes too small ..

58: INT. CONFERENCE ROOM. HIGH/RISE BUILDING. DAY. 58.

Panoramic views are incredible. Blue sea and waterfront all the way from here to the Hilton Hotel. Greetings are at the end of a white granite table, where ashtrays and coffee cups tell the story. SEGURRA isn't included in the introductions.

SANDERSON
.. I'm afraid one or two of
us had to leave .. Mr Zim-
burger, you know, and this
is Mr Green, of First Nat-
ional Maritime Bank ..

Handshake with a man who only needs fangs to be a full/blown snake. As they sit SANDERSON checks out an empty coffee pot.

You want some coffee?

SEGURRA
I think we should move right
along, Hal .. I gotta go ..

SANDERSON
Sure ..

Various maps and architectural drawings are scattered. SANDERSON reaches for a leather album and passes it to KEMP. It features aerial photographs of an idyllic looking archipelago.

SEGURRA
.. the island is owned by
the U.S. government, part
of it presently used as a
target range by the navy ..
(points it out)
.. we know from internal
sources ..

ZIMBURGER
(chuckling)
Is that what you call me? .

58 Cond.

58.

SEGURRA

.. we know that the government are preparing to relinquish the lease, and this place wakes up as 32 square miles of magnificent and untouched real/estate ..

SANDERSON

.. it'll knock your eyes out .. no prettier beaches in the Caribbean ..

ZIMBURGER

.. orientated around one hell of a beautiful marina ..

KEMP

I thought it was one hotel?

SEGURRA

We start with one hotel ..

SANDERSON

.. it's a foot in the door. once we are up and running, we are servants of a market.

KEMP

Like here?

SANDERSON

Like here ..

ZIMBURGER

You look worried, Mr Kemp?

SANDERSON

He's not worried .. Paul and I shared a tricky little night ..
(winks)
Right, Paul?
(owns him)
Neither of us got much sleep ..

At least one of them didn't. The other one woke up grinning.

SEGURRA

(to Green)

Gotta go ..

MR GREEN

.. we'll leave you gentlemen to it ..

58 Cond.

58.

Everyone on their feet and escorted by SANDERSON to the door.

MR GREEN

Has Mr Kemp signed the papers?

Into reception where SANDERSON leads the way to the elevator.

SANDERSON

We're gonna do that right now.

KEMP

What am I actually signing?

SANDERSON

.. it's just a confidentiality
agreement, affirmation of trust ..

ZIMBURGER

.. so we're sitting in the same
jakuzzi, if a turd floats up ..
(smiles bad teeth)
if you know what I mean?

Handshakes as the elevator arrives. In they go and are gone.
With much bon/ami SANDERSON pilots KEMP towards another door.

59: INT. SANDERSON'S OFFICE. HIGH/RISE. DAY.

59.

Just as much view, but more personal. There's a photograph
of Chenault somewhere. Gesturing chairs SANDERSON shuffles
through papers and they both end up either side of his desk.

SANDERSON

(a document)

Here you go .. it's just a
technicality, Paul, means
you promise not to talk to
anyone about the project ..

(finds a pen)

How's the head?

KEMP

Unpleasant ..

(signing)

Got to thank you again
for putting up the bail ..

SANDERSON

I didn't put up anything, it's
held on my cognizance, and I
think it more than likely to
slip various minds. This place
is a sea of money, Paul, un-

59 Cond.

59.

SANDERSON (cond)
believable money, practically
every major corporation hides
its cash off/shore, and that's
good news for us, because we
are the shore .. and not one
dollar that wings its way into
Puerto Rico pays a cent in tax ..

KEMP
Nothing?

SANDERSON
Not penny one .. and that in-
cludes chemical companies, oil
companies, and mining companies ..
(finds cigar)
There are 12 billion dollars
worth of copper in mountains
less than 20 miles from here ..
(cuts it)
a dozen billion dollars. And
then there's people like me
who know how to get it out ..
(lights it)
.. so, putting it into context,
I don't envisage the breaking of
bones to get at a thousand bucks ..

Anointing himself in smoke SANDERSON finds another paper.

Because you weren't here, I
agreed to an itinerary with
Zimburger on your behalf ..
(tossing it)
You'll be travelling down in
the morning, hope that's O.K.

KEMP
What about the paper?

SANDERSON
.. I wouldn't worry too
much about the paper ..
(kind of weird)
It'll take care of itself ..

Time to stand and both do, KEMP with something on his mind.

What d'you need, Paul?

KEMP
(how to say it)
.. just in context of this
Zimburger thing, you think

59 Cond.

59.

KEMP (cond)

there's a change of an advance? I don't like to ask, but Lotterman's pretty erratic with the pay cheque .. I need to get hold of a car ..

SANDERSON

You don't have a car?

KEMP

Nothing too reliable ..

(moreover)

and sooner or later, I'm going to have to find a flat ..

SANDERSON

.. we can help you with that, when you get back, we'll sort you out something with a view ..

(picks up phone)

Carol .. what do we have in the garage? .. no, no, no, not that .. O.K. .. sure .. yeah, that'll do just fine ..

(cans it)

Got a car for you, she'll give you keys on the way out ..

Meantime he pulls a roll of dollars, peels KEMP a tidy wad.

Feels like five hundred ..

Nothing if he isn't generous. He detains KEMP at the door.

Oh, Paul, how's your afternoon?

KEMP

A half written horoscope ..

SANDERSON

Do me a favour, will you .. drive out to the beach and pick up Chenault .. I need her downstairs by six ..

60: EXT. HIGH/RISE BUILDING. BEACH/SIDE. DAY. 60.

Fledgling palms at base of the tower and entrance to underground parking at the side of it. Headlights and sound of a powerful engine. The big V/8 pushes a Chevy Corvette up the ramp with KEMP at the wheel. It's blood red with wire wheels and a poor boy's dream. Suddenly the day got three hundred and fifty horse power better. Pausing in sunlight,

60 Cond.

60.

KEMP takes off ocean/side, like the cat that got the cream.

61: EXT. OCEAN BOULEVARD. JUNGLE ROAD. DAY.

61.

No point in bullshitting the azure sea stuff [and can we afford a helicopter] The Chevy is on its way from Sanderson's office to Sanderson's house. A variety of shots do the job in whatever the order. But it's a bit of an ODE TO JOY, and I don't know whether the band plays Mozart or rock and roll.

62: EXT. ENTRANCE/FORECOURT. BEACH HOUSE. DAY.

62.

The Chevy clears elaborate gates, pulls up in front of the house. KEMP checks his cool in the mirror and pleased with most of it exits the car without bothering to use the door. CHENAULT calls from a balcony. The second dream of the day.

KEMP

I've come to pick you up?

CHENAULT

I know .. come on in, I
wanna show you something ..

63: INT. LIVING ROOM/TERRACE. BEACH HOUSE. DAY.

63.

Black sequins, brown thighs, and a flash of lace panties as CHENAULT twirls a new outfit in front of KEMP. He attempts objectivity when all he wants is to rip it off and fuck her dead. Grabbing another creation she holds it up to herself.

CHENAULT

This one or the other one?

Anyone of them if she's in it. They come with snazzy hats.

KEMP

What is it, a party?

CHENAULT

It's for the carnival? Didn't he say anything about it?
(he didn't)

You've gotta come .. we're
all going down on the boat ..

KEMP

He didn't invite me ..

CHENAULT

It isn't his carnival ..
(posing)
O.K. which dress, this

63 Cond.

63.

CHENAULT (cond)
one, or the other one?

KEMP
I think I like the other one.

64: INT. CHEVY CONVERTIBLE/COUNTRY ROADS. DAY.

64.

Somebody else's car and somebody else's lady but apart from that the afternoon couldn't be more perfect. All legs and lipstick CHENAULT radiates sex from the passenger seat. It is an unequivocal reality, like the big V/8 throbbing under KEMP's foot. Power plus her pouting equals an intoxication.

KEMP
Love this car ..

CHENAULT
Did he give it to you?

KEMP
I wish .. it's fast ..

Everything she does is like something to do with sex. What she just did was press in the cigar/lighter and use it on a pair of cigarettes. Puts one in his mouth and he tastes the lipstick. He looks across and gets heat from the same lips.

CHENAULT
You want a little bet?

KEMP
A bet about what?

CHENAULT
That you scream before I do?

KEMP
I scream before you do?
(smiling)
In relation to what?

CHENAULT
How fast does it go?

KEMP
I don't know ..

CHENAULT
That's the bet ..

He enjoys the flirting but isn't too fascinated by the idea.

64 Cond.

64.

KEMP

.. I already crashed one
car today ..

CHENAULT

O.K. .. I'll go sit in the
foyer and wait for him ..

She's just doing what she does and KEMP is a willing victim.

KEMP

What do I get if I win?

CHENAULT

I'll let you know if you do.

Which for all the world sounds like something involving his
dick. A freeway sign happens to offer itself and KEMP goes
for it. I'm not into describing what the rush does to CHEN-
AULT, but she's loving it, and so is he. 90/100/110 on the
clock and the Chevy hasn't finished yet. Clouds of ominous
dust begin to mass in its wake and here's why. This end of
the road is still under construction, intermittent placards
urging caution. 130 miles an hour and still some more to go.
CHENAULT's breasts are pressed against her shirt in a fabul-
ous description. "Faster, Faster," as Mr Thompson once put
it, "Until the thrill of speed overcomes the fear of death."

Flirting with CHENAULT is different to flirting with death.
Out of road and the tyres are burning. Parallel streaks of
rubber put down by the brakes.. The Chevy ploughs through a
bunch of wood/chevrons and totals a sign advertising a skull
and cross/bones. It stops at death's door. Paralysed with
terror and exhilaration, they stare without questioning who
will yell first, spontaneously both scream at the same time.

An echo sounds over a tropical valley and they're literally
yards from a precipice. When construction continues it will
feature a bridge across a gorge. Meanwhile it's a 300 foot
drop. They have reached a DEAD END and a sign actually says
so. It isn't clear whether the symbolism of this statement
registers for KEMP. Quitting the Chevy both stare across an
unspoiled landscape, a beautiful vista of sunlight and mist.

CHENAULT

.. you will come to St
Thomas, won't you ..

KEMP

Saint where?

CHENAULT

The carnival ..

Something entirely different has overtaken CHENAULT in her
eyes. There's a kiss coming up and neither can prevent it.

64 Cond.

64.

KEMP
(after kiss)
Why'd you do that?

CHENAULT
Didn't you want me to?

He's got the car, got the girl, but it's a road to nowhere.

KEMP
C'mon, I'll take you back.

They walk towards the car and into a slow dissolve. Piano music seeps in, daft but appropriate, "These Foolish Things."

65: INT/EXT. TERRACE. AL'S BAR. DUSK.

65.

I forget the name of the Pianist, but he's playing as usual to people who don't hear. Al's is relatively busy, several recognisable JOURNALISTS who's names we don't know. MOBURG is busy with rum and KEMP at a nearby table with a full ash-tray and bottle of Coke. With his thoughts everywhere else, he's trying to compose a horoscope and catches MOBURG's eye.

KEMP
.. what would a Sagitar-
ian have to beware of? ..

MOBURG
.. fiends with a Black
and Decker, trying to
drill a hole in his head ..

Running a hand through hair KEMP stubs it. Simultaneously SALA appears. Bandaged and furtive he joins his companions.

KEMP
Where have you been?

SALA
Asleep ..

Ordering rum he slaps a newspaper on the table. It's called "El Diario" and headlines a picture of Sala/Kemp arriving at the police station. The text is in Spanish but clear enough.

KEMP
Where'd they get this?

SALA
I don't remember ..
(freaked)
I've been slightly
avoiding Lotterman ..

65 Cond.

65.

MOBURG

You got me to thank
for your freedom ..

SALA

Thanks ..

(dying)

I have a feeling of total
anxiety .. trying to put
my anxieties together in
a single, coherent lump ..

MOBURG

Report it stolen ..

KEMP

I told him about the car ..

SALA

They saw us driving it ..
(rum arrives)

I'm fucked without a car ..

KEMP

I got us a car ..

MOBURG

(sneering)

.. it's the Chevy outside,
belongs to Mr Sanderson ..

KEMP

So what ..

(standing)

I gotta type this up ..

Rum in one, SALA goes with him, with wise words from MOBURG.

MOBURG

.. those who stoop to
kiss ass, are already in
position to get shat on ..

66: INT. NEWSROOM. THE DAILY NEWS. NIGHT.

66.

Three hours to print and the dynamic is evident. Chatter of typewriters/telex and faces on phones. There's a lot of row, but most of it coming from behind Lotterman's office windows.

A full/blown shout/out appears to be in progress, and if you can avoid it you will. SALA and KEMP cross the newsroom trying for just that. Bump into WOLSLEY on his way to his desk.

WOLSLEY

.. I don't know what's go-

66 Cond.

66.

WOLSLEY (cond)
ing on .. he's freaking out
and we're down to 12 pages ..

It's a sour atmospheric indeed. Lotterman's door suddenly
flies open and MORRELL comes out shouting. He's had it with
Lotterman, had it with his pathetic little paper, and quits.

LOTTERMAN
.. you better frigging do it ..
I see your filthy animal face
again, I'll have you locked up ..

Wig askance he glares after him, switches attention to SALA.

.. and what particular part
of the building are you
creeping towards, Sala ..

SALA
Darkroom ..

LOTTERMAN
Cops are looking for you ..

SALA
Looking for me?

LOTTERMAN
Looking for you ..

On retreat to his office he snatches a nearby "El Diario."

And it ain't just that ..

Tossing the paper in the air he bulldozers behind a slammed
door. SALA pushes on to the darkroom with KEMP in his wake.

67: INT. DARKROOM. THE DAILY NEWS. NIGHT.

67.

A dangling wire activates a red light. SALA crumples into
one of the benches, rousing himself only to find his stash.

SALA
What a day .. what a week ..
(pouring)
I tell you, I'm outta here,
one way to frigging Mexico ..

He offers a swig of rum, but KEMP declines, "I've given up."

KEMP
.. listen, I got a trip to-
morrow, Sanderson's island ..

67 Cond.

67.

SALA

oh dear ..

KEMP

It's green money .. and I'm thinking of cutting across for the carnival? They got a carnival in Saint Thomas?

SALA

I know. Fun.

KEMP

.. why don't you come with me .. give the cops a few days to forget it ..

68: EXT. DOCK ROAD. SAN JUAN HARBOUR. DAWN.

68.

Giant cruise/ships are moored and still fast asleep. Headlights flare along a harbour road. The Chevy looks one way and then the other. Finally stops opposite a marina filled with yachts. But where in christ name is Zimburger's boat? KEMP and SALA get out of the car. Nothing happening either direction. Just when KEMP thinks there's some mistake they hear the sound of an engine. A magnificent little seaplane appears. It taxis towards a pier and this has got to be it.

69: EXT. PIER. SAN JUAN HARBOUR. DAWN.

69.

Alloy wings gleam in the sunrise. A PILOT assists KEMP to climb inside. Some twat with a briefcase sits with ZIMBURGER, the latter surprised as SALA and cameras clamber aboard.

ZIMBURGER

Who's he?

KEMP

He's my consultant ..

70: EXT/INT. BIG SKY/SEAPLANE. DAY.

70.

We'll shoot the take/off but probably cut it. By now they are flying just above the sunrise. It's a six seater, ZIMBURGER and his weaselish associate in the middle, KEMP and SALA in the back. No question they look happy to quit San Juan. If you look out the window you can see it disappear.

71: INT. PASSENGER CABIN. SEAPLANE. DAY.

71.

ZIMBURGER and the WEASEL study documents, a New York Times

71 Cond.

71.

emerging from one of the briefcases. Loud in here and ZIMBURGER has to shout as he shoves the paper over a shoulder..

ZIMBURGER

You see this?

(feature)

Your Russian buddies ..

KEMP

They're not personal friends.

ZIMBURGER

They're in your paper ..

SALA

(reading)

This is about India?

ZIMBURGER

Same thing. Commies. If the British had any balls they'd take it back. We got a twenty four hundred megaton missile-gap. That is a short/fall of two billion, four hundred million tons of T.N.T. equivalent ..

SALA mouths, "He's a nut," but KEMP enjoys the bullshitting.

KEMP

.. those are frightening figures, Major ..

ZIMBURGER

.. damn A, they're frightening, and if Kennedy gets in, they're frightening yet ..

(grabbing the paper)

.. that prick in the Kremlin wants to do it, but he doesn't dare .. by definition, the communist mind is that of a coward ..

SALA

What d'you mean, a yellow red?

ZIMBURGER

I mean 256 Polaris submarines.

The airplane banks revealing an atoll of picture/postcards.

We need to take action before 1962 or, mark my words,

71 Cond.

71.

ZIMBURGER (cond)
the entire western hemisph-
ere will be a smoking ruin ..

KEMP
Or covered in hotels ..

ZIMBURGER
How's that?

SALA
.. he said, he couldn't
agree with you more ..

72: EXT. TROPICAL ATOLL. CARIBBEAN. DAY.

72.

The seaplane touches down in the cobalt and indigo. Taxis translucent water to a ramshackle pier. Many small fishing boats in evidence, painted in colours of tropical fish. A picturesque village basks in heat. ZIMBURGER leads the way through lobster/pots and fishing nets. Dogs and mules, but no cars except one. Driven by a Spanish Boy who doesn't get introduced, an open Jeep waits to meet them. As they climb aboard, there's a sinister atmospheric/whistle, followed by a distant thud of explosion. ZIMBURGER is proud to explain.

ZIMBURGER
Our guys .. twelve inch
naval, fourteen miles out ..

You can see the shells kicking up hell far across the lagoon.

Another week, they're gone ..

SALA watches through a telephoto/lens. The Jeep takes off with Kids in its wake. Some of the villagers simply stare.

KEMP
.. I didn't know anyone
lived here? ..

ZIMBURGER
.. don't worry about them,
they'll all be gone too ...

73: EXT. RURAL TRACK. TROPICAL ISLAND. DAY.

73.

Wild sugar and dazzling orchids. If you know anywhere more beautiful keep it secret. The Jeep cuts a track in virgin landscape. Hard to imagine anywhere could be nearer to god than this paradise, and that's before you've seen the beach.

If there's any place on earth that should be protected from humans, this is it. Waterfalls splash down through a castle

73 Cond.

73.

of hills. No point in troubling with adjectives here, it's heaven intense, the most beautiful beach KEMP has ever seen.

74: EXT. HEADLAND/BEACH. ISLAND. DAY.

74.

ZIMBURGER leads a way down through palms. Making their way across clinically/white sand they approach a stand of tents. In near proximity are blackened remains of a burned/out hut. The tents are actually make/shift offices, open at the front with awnings against the sun. Cheap aluminium furniture and everyone in shades. On arrival ZIMBURGER selects one of the faces to introduce. A regular looking chap in his early 30s.

ZIMBURGER

.. Mr Lazar, our much put upon site/architect .. Mr Monk, I think you know? ..

MONK/WEASEL

.. I assist Mr Green, First Maritime Bank ..

ZIMBURGER

.. this is Mr Kemp, of the New York Times .. and what do you say your name was?
(Sala says it)

Mr Sala .. of the American Travel Writers Association ..

Handshakes over and apologies for the clutter. Clearing a table ZIMBURGER finds space to snap locks on his briefcase.

.. Mr Kemp is preparing our brochure, "wish you were here"

LAZAR

Beer in the cooler, Gentlemen ..
(gesturing)
I have everything next door ..

ZIMBURGER

What happened to the huts?

LAZAR

.. burned down last week,
hence the new home ..

MONK

.. we had warning of this,
we're gonna need security ..

ZIMBURGER

Razor/wire. 600 yards out.

74 Cond.

74.

Chatter from walkie/Talkies, plus thud of distant explosions.

LAZARD

.. where do you wanna
start, Mr Kemp ..

KEMP

I think with a walk ..

75: EXT. PARADISE BEACH. DAY.

75.

KEMP and SALA stroll the waterline about 100 yards from the tents. Anywhere you want it is beauty and SALA takes photographs. KEMP fixes a different set of pictures in his head.

KEMP

Ten thousand waiters, maids,
bellhops, janitors and clerks.
Plus whores for the fat man.

A voice hollers from the tents. ZIMBURGER wants them back.

SALA

Hard to believe they'd do it?

KEMP

You know what I'd like to
do, murder the lot of them,
leave them for the crabs ..

76: INT/EXT. AWNING [SECOND TENT]. BEACH. DAY.

76.

An architectural model of the envisaged development is focus of discussions. Contours of the hills are set out with various lozenges of balsa/wood, painted blue or red. Dozens of tiny boats are glued in the "Marina," overshadowed by a pair of high/rise hotels. The rest of the facsimile is cluttered with villas, like someone won everything on a Monopoly Board.

ZIMBURGER

(all but drooling)

.. this and this are the main
hotels, 22 floors, guardians
of the bay, so to speak ..

KEMP

Why the different colours?

MONK

.. blue for public dissemination,
red for the investors ..

ZIMBURGER

.. hill/villas, ocean condos,

76 Cond.

76.

ZIMBURGER (cond)
(pointing out)
Marina, parking for 2000 cars ..

SALA
There's no roads?

ZIMBURGER
(joshing)
Damn it, Lazar! You forgot
roads! We're building them ..

MONK
Where we came in will ultimat-
ely become a roll/on ferry port.

KEMP
You think cars are a good idea?

MONK
(misreading Kemp)
We have some very healthy pro-
jections.. The auto population
in Puerto Rico, is growing at
twice the speed of the indigen-
ous birth rate .. for every kid
that's born, we get two cars ..

LAZARD
Plus, auto/rental ..

ZIMBURGER
.. it's a valuable franchise,
let's have some lunch ..

77: EXT. PARADISE BEACH. DAY.

77.

Pink and gold masses on the horizon, not actually sunset but
on its way. KEMP has hauled one of the aluminium chairs to
the shore/line, sits alone with bare feet in the sea, indul-
ging a sombre mood. He reads [V.O] from a grubby paperback.

"And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe :
For all averred, I had killed
the bird
That made the breeze to blow ..
Ah wretch! said they, the bird
to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!"

Big thoughts occupy KEMP. SALA arrives with a can of beer.

77 Cond.

77.

SALA

.. talking to that architect
kinda guy .. he's going to
St Thomas, if we want a ride ..

KEMP

When?

SALA

.. how do I know when?
(drinks)
when he's finished here?

The silence belongs to KEMP. A while before he disturbs it.

KEMP

You know what Oscar Wilde said:
"They know the price of every-
thing, and the value of nothing" ..

78: EXT. HARBOUR. SAINT THOMAS ISLAND. NIGHT. 78.

Rockets explode over the town, light up the harbour in flashes of colour. It's packed with boats (mainly up/market) but here comes one that isn't. A launch finds a space to tie up.

79: INT/EXT. OLD MOTOR LAUNCH. HARBOUR. NIGHT. 79.

Skilful manoeuvres from a wizened old bastard on the bridge. LAZARD makes him a proposition. More star/bursts as the engine dies and LAZARD joins KEMP/SALA in the well of the boat.

LAZARD

.. he says, you can have the
cabin, but it's ten dollars ..

KEMP

Ten dollars?

LAZARD

You'll never get a hotel ..

SALA

Where are you staying?

LAZARD is running for a plane, a cab already waits dock/side. Pleased to meet you handshakes, gives KEMP his business card.

LAZARD

If ever you're in Miami ..

KEMP has torn and tossed the card overboard before the taxi has vanished. Dazzling fireworks and echoes of a steel/band.

79 Cond.

79.

KEMP

Think we should check it out?

Not tonight. Tonight he's dead. And so in reality is KEMP.

80: INT. CABIN. OLD MOTOR LAUNCH. NIGHT.

80.

It's cramped and stinking with a bunk either side. KEMP is already stretched on one under a dismal lightbulb. Smokes a cigar and yawns as he browses his paperback. SALA excavates stolen beer bottles from his camera bag. Lines them up like he's planning something and turns attention to his feet. He tugs shoes off and then socks, judging them pessimistically.

SALA

.. guess I'll get another
day out of the bastards ..

He offers a beer (declined) and stretches out with a bottle.

What's the book?

KEMP

Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner.

Rockets continue to explode. Intermittent flashes of light.

SALA

Ancient Manager?

KEMP

Mariner. Written in 1797 by
a junkie, called Coleridge ..

SALA

Shit, does this place stink ..

KEMP

Your feet ..

SALA

You're right ..

KEMP

.. wrote it when he was 25
years old .. I been dragging
a typewriter around with me
for 10, and written nothing ..

SALA

You've written some books ..

KEMP

I got no voice .. I don't

80 Cond.

80.

KEMP (cond)
know how to write like me ..

81: EXT. PLAZA. OLD TOWN. SAINT THOMAS. DAY. 81.

Carnival comes down like an explosion. Trumpets on the cut and the rest is colour and sunshine. So many people in the plaza you can barely move, just go with the rhythm of pounding steel drums. Most of the faces are black, but white Americans here and there in carnival hats. Everyone's in hats and feathers and crazy paint, and everyone's swilling booze.

Rum and music are everywhere, conspiring to push the energy. Every sidewalk has its make/shift booze stall where violent slugs are doled out in paper cups. I don't know where KEMP and SALA turned up; but suddenly they're in the thick of it.

A shot of rum costs 25 cents, and BARMEN work feverishly to supply demand. KEMP pushes through and finally gets served.

KEMP
Two rums, two cups of ice.

SALA
I thought you'd given up?

KEMP
I finally beat my will power.

Happy grins as they hit them in one. Shift themselves as a truck hoots through. Another steel/band on the back of it, with some juicy looking dancing girls dressed as pineapples.

Maybe an hour later. Maybe only minutes. KEMP and SALA are other side of the plaza dancing in a throng of people. You might call it dancing. But in fact it's a human snake shunting through the crowd in synchronised jive to the Salsa Band.

Being drunk is the only requirement to join in and KEMP and SALA are fully qualified. By the time they find a way out, both are dripping with sweat and more booze is the antidote.

SALA fixes it at the nearest stall. KEMP points to a colonial looking building across the square. It's a sizable hotel and he wants a detour to change his shirt, get a wash/up.

SALA
Why?

KEMP
.. coz I don't wanna stink
like you ..

82: INT. GROUND FLOOR. COLONIAL HOTEL. DAY. 82.

A slightly more up/market throng, although almost as packed as the street. Lazy ceiling fans and Calypso Music upstairs.

82 Cond.

82.

Considerably freshened [clean shirt, clean teeth and shaved] KEMP emerges from subterranean stairs [dirty laundry confined to his rucksack.] He looks about for Sala, and gets the eye from various quarters. A lot of talent in respect of ladies, and if you cared to you could fuck yourself billious. Following the music he pushes up a staircase towards another bar.

83: INT. UPSTAIRS BAR/BALCONY. HOTEL. DAY.

83.

Just as loud in here but less people. It doesn't take long to find SALA. He's propping the bar with a couple of Girls, one with a guitar slung across her back. Introductions are made but KEMP doesn't really hear. "Rosy is a singer." No beauty, but better than a kick in the balls. KEMP gets rum instead of a handshake and makes his way towards the balcony.

From here you can see right across the square. It's an anarchy of madness and colour and you'd have to be real lucky to single anyone out. KEMP just got lucky. Can it really be her? She vanishes momentarily behind a phalanx of faces, arms waving above her head as she sways with the music. He waits, and stares, and she turns. It's definitely CHENAULT.

84: EXT. PLAZA. DAY.

84.

KEMP shoves his way through the insanity, SALA behind holding ROSY's hand. They can't find Chenault and SALA doesn't care. Yakking in Spanish he's persuaded to escort his date to a dance hall. A rendezvous is agreed and KEMP pushes on.

One of the coolest spots to dance is under the fountain. A breeze puts haze in the air. And there she is, shirt stuck to her breasts and focus of much attention as she flaunts it for the local boys. All want to dance real close, and many do. But then she sees KEMP, embracing him like a lost love.

KEMP

Where's Hal?

CHENAULT

Boat .. I was here with
my girlfriend .. lost her ..

Half drunk and totally happy, she's pleased to get led away.

85: INT. DANCE HALL. DAY.

85.

Those that can do it Tango, those that can't try. SALA passes like an audition for Groucho Marx. But the room is too animated to notice, much less to criticise. CHENAULT can't resist and screw the protests, KEMP is coerced to the floor.

Tight red skirt, high/heelled sandals, a tango of sorts gets danced. They orbit each other high as kites. She snuggles

85 Cond.

85.

her back into him, his arms around her, Jesus, this lady is made of sex. Some tanned snooty/bitch with a South African accent calls to CHENAULT. She just rediscovered her friend.

86: EXT. STONE STAIRWAY. OLD TOWN/HARBOUR. DAY. 86.

Ancient steps find a way through crooked houses. CHENAULT leads descent towards the port. Apart from the white South African Girl, all are more or less drunk. KEMP may already have misgivings, but SALA and ROSY [plus guitar] are too involved to notice. The stairs finally arrive at a quay/side.

Anybody who's been to St Tropez will get the picture. This is where the money docks. Sloops and up/market yachts from Miami and Bermuda, sport French, British and American flags.

The rich are showing off their wealth and CHENAULT seems familiar with not a few. Waves to various faces taking sun and champagne on their decks. Meanwhile an al/fresco restaurant is being set up on the quay to feed the maritime bourgeoisie.

KEMP

Is this a good idea?

CHENAULT

He's in happy mode ..

87: EXT. SANDERSON'S YACHT. HARBOUR. DAY. 87.

Like walking the plank in reverse they invade a small drinks party. If SANDERSON was in happy/mode it may just have changed. But ever the diplomat he keeps it to himself. Several recognisable faces among the introductions. SEGURRA and his pretty lady, and REVEREND HOLE in swimming shorts [who has a ring of 'tan deprived' pure white skin around his neck where the dog/collar is usually worn] CHENAULT doesn't understand the atmospheric and pours her new pals champagne. SANDERSON however, escorts KEMP to the bows for a discreet word or two.

SANDERSON

.. did you take Sala to the island? ..

(no answer)

.. you shouldn't have done that, Paul, it's why we have a confidentiality agreement?

KEMP

He isn't interested ..

SANDERSON

He's got a mouth like an A.P. wire .. I don't know what he was doing there,

87 Cond.

87.

SANDERSON (cond)
and sure as shit, don't
know what he's doing here?

Or in other words, what's KEMP doing here? Before they can get into it there is an interruption. Brash tooting announces the arrival of a Bentley Convertible. It's driven by a 50 year old piss/artist with a racy young thing at his side. More money than brains, he stands in his seat to wave roses and champagne. Clearly they are friends SANDERSON expected.

SANDERSON
Hey, Digby .. My man ..

KEMP
If you want us to leave?

DIGBY and his sexy little lady are already on the gangplank.

SANDERSON
(loaded)
Be my guest ..

88: EXT. SANDERSON'S YACHT. DUSK.

88.

ROSY plays her guitar, a sad song of the people, and she's actually very good. Dead champagne bottles upended in the ice/buckets, a lot of booze gone down. Sun going down too, at end of the day and beginning of the evening. SANDERSON and some of his guests are apparently below taking a siesta.

REVEREND HOLE, SEGURRA's WIFE, DIGBY and his LADY are still on deck, plus CHENAULT and KEMP. He's in love with her and she's unobtainable. With ROSY still singing he gets up and drifts to the bow of the boat. SALA is crashed on the deck in inebriated sleep. KEMP stares across reflections of the harbour, watching the onslaught of another enormous sunset.

He doesn't need to look back to know CHENAULT is looking at him. But you need better cards for that kind of game. ROSY finishes her ballad and now you can hear music from the bars. The waterfront is waking, mysterious hotels with red and yellow lights, and people heading for parties aboard the yachts.

CHENAULT
.. not going glum on us,
are you ..

A sensual touch of finger tips, he had no idea she was there.

KEMP
Just thoughts ..

CHENAULT
Tell me one?

88 Cond.

88.

KEMP

.. How to make things into words .. how to be a real writer .. writing is like trying to remember something that hasn't happened ..

CHENAULT

(means it)

That's a tough dollar ..

He nearly kisses her again. Or is it she that nearly kisses him? The moment becomes academic as SANDERSON appears from below. Gucci shoes with no socks, all silk suit and cologne.

SANDERSON

.. Chenault, would you get changed, darling .. we're going to eat ..

CHENAULT

You guys hungry?

SANDERSON

Where's Sala?

KEMP

Taking a nap, I'll wake him.

SANDERSON

Let him sleep ..

Which isn't an entirely subtle way of denying an invitation.

89: INT. AL FRESCO RESTAURANT. QUAYSIDE. NIGHT. 89.

The obscenely rich dine on their schooners, the filthy rich dine here. The glitterati scoff their way through suckling pigs and Crystal under crucibles of flame and fairy/lights. They're almost done at SEGURRA's table when KEMP pitches up.

KEMP

.. thanks for the afternoon, maybe see you in town ..

CHENAULT

Where are you going?

She's got the new dress on. Looks too delicious to look at. KEMP gestures over to SALA/ROSY, waiting at the peripheries.

KEMP

.. her brother's playing in a band .. we're gonna go check it out ..

CHENAULT
We wanna come ..

SANDERSON
I'll rephrase that, we
don't wanna come ..

CHENAULT
.. yes we do, us girls
wanna dance ..

SANDERSON
You're dancing tomorrow ..

CHENAULT
.. what's with coming to a
carnival if everything is
preplanned? I wanna dance
tonight, and if you won't
take me, I'll go with them ..

DIGBY
She's got you trumped, Hal?

SANDERSON
Sit down. You're drunk.

CHENAULT
So what, so's everyone else.

SANDERSON could cut KEMP's throat, DIGBY defuses the moment:

DIGBY
.. oh, come on, let's do
it .. it may be amusing ..

90: EXT. PLAZA. ST THOMAS. NIGHT.

90.

Crowds in the plaza but just about possible to drive through.
DIGBY'S Bentley is stuffed to the brim. He drives with SAND-
ERSON and CHENAULT up front. His LADY sits in the back with
SALA and ROSY, the SNOOTY GIRL drunk enough to perch on KEMP.

91: EXT. BACK STREETS. ST THOMAS. NIGHT.

91.

High above the port where tourists would never go. Barking
dogs and no street lights. Headlights find their way up the
hill. Blue lights around a door and a sound of Regge Music.

92: INT. NIGHTCLUB. ST THOMAS. NIGHT.

92.

A place where mother/fuckers congregate. It's a hell/hole
of sweat and sex and CHENAULT can't wait to get into it. A

92 Cond.

92.

Regge Band pound it out with no exits. The ambiance is so loud and so dynamic you're either a part of it or you're in the street. At some point it may be noticed that KEMP and his gang are the only white faces. But that isn't necessarily important. At least not yet. The Band are at the end of their set. Much rum and black faces in blue light. Not entirely to SANDERSON's taste. But everybody happy to meet Rosy's Brother, and he gets preferential service at the bar.

SALA

You want rum or beer?

CHENAULT

Both ..

Everything in close/up because there's no other way of seeing. You can smell the dope even if you don't know what it is. Even DIGBY is a part of the energy, although SANDERSON probably fakes it. Whistles and claps as the line/up changes. Star turn is a rather different outfit. Thunder stabs from an electric guitar. Two hundred mouths yell encouragement as they snap in the jacks, put out shocks of feed/back.

Once again I refer to HOUND DOG TAYLOR. His is the kind of music I want. A real friendly face with a Strat and a grin, hits a slug from his on/stage bottle. "You alright?" "You alright?" Sure they're alright. Two hundred faces alright.

Adrenaline out of a raw guitar. Caribbean turned into black rock and roll. Walls of black muscle put eyes on the little white girls. CHENAULT and her GIRLFRIEND are riding cloud 9.

"Kitchen Sink Boogie," or something similar. Rock like it's coming out of the floor. The whole room is busted but SANDERSON becomes an observer. Look at this guy, dancing behind his girl with hands inside her blouse. Black Angel with red lipstick. Almost fucking her. It's all over for DIGBY and he drags his sweltering LADY out. Has to shout to get heard. O.K. they're leaving. SANDERSON is leaving. CHENAULT isn't.

SANDERSON

We're going, Chenault ..

He grabs her wrist but she isn't having it. Just the beginning of something tense. If he wants to go, that's O.K. but she wants to dance. A whole bunch of blue/black faces dance around her. Her fuses are blown and SANDERSON moves on KEMP. He brought her here. He better get her out. KEMP will try.

HOUND DOG

.. I just wanna get funky
with you .. you feel like
getting funky, Mr Brewer ..

Dirty fucking music. CHENAULT in there somewhere. A white

girl/magnet, black hands clapping, twisting in her spangled skirt. Pretty legs and bitch guitar. "You alright?" "You alright?" You don't know where else to look because nothing is happening but HOUND DOG and CHENAULT strutting her stuff.

The rhythm is repetitive. Insistent. Hear it once and you understand what's developing. CHENAULT is becoming more provocative and outrageous and people are making space for her.

A variety of partners evolve into one. He's a powerful looking BLACK STUD sleek with muscle. Dancing close to CHENAULT she mirrors his sexuality like it's some kind of competition.

"Do it like that." Clapping hands encourage the excitement. CHENAULT hardly needs it. Promiscuity like a narcotic. She seems as mesmerised by the music as by the man. It's a difficult arena to invade and when KEMP attempts it the response is predictable. He shouts to get heard but it's just another voice. He tries to grab her but gets grabbed himself.

.. she's dancin', man ..
incidentally, this is
my finger in your face ..

It points him backwards. Like how about the exit? By now a sweltering wall has formed around the dancers. CHENAULT and her PARTNER are the only show in town. She's advertising and he wants it. Unbuttons his shirt and hauls it off, and now it's her turn. Wild applause as she opens her top.

Beautiful breasts in a chic/silk brassiere. It's a hard/on for everyone but SANDERSON. This is every man's bad dream. The greater her sensuality, the greater his rage, and greater the promise of violence. He shouts but she doesn't hear. CHENAULT has completely lost the plot. Arms above her head, she puts out while her paramour raises the hem of her dress.

Do it like that. Do it like that.

She's doing it like they want it and they clamber tables for a better view. Her exquisite dress becomes a lascivious experiment. She teases him to raise it higher, and soon there is nothing between her high/heels and panties but legs. He lifts the dress right over her head and the music wants more. Everyone wants more, wants her naked, maybe she wants it too.

There may be worse places to get into a fight but it's hard to imagine one. The dynamic is so overwound it's going to snap and when it does SANDERSON tastes the blood. Blood all over his white/silk suit. You don't want to get hit by this guy twice and count yourself lucky to be leaving here alive.

Venomous eyes and supremely bad vibes. The dilemma belongs to KEMP. He's got to get SANDERSON out before he kills someone (or more likely) someone kills him. But more than that, he's got to extract CHENAULT without getting killed himself.

92 Cond.

92.

Midway through the crowd SANDERSON refreaks. He lashes out and hands that try to restrain him rip shit out of his suit. He's going crazy. One welcome face emerges from the fracas. SALA is among many who struggle to get SANDERSON out. KEMP pushes back into a nightmare. And if anything it got worse.

You might just see the blade, just a flash in flashing light. It comes out of the frenzy, deftly severing the back of CHENAULT'S bra. Straps slip off her shoulders, for a moment she clasps it to her breasts. Brute carnality that no one could stop. Not her. Not anybody. And that means you, white man.

The vibes couldn't be more dangerous. Last thing KEMP sees is the brassiere held in the air, then kissed by her partner.

93: INT/EXT. ENTRANCE/STREET. NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT. 93.

Some bad stuff gone down on the steps. SANDERSON crouches at the bottom like a crushed snail. Clearly grief with the brothers ended bad. One of the sleeves hangs off his suit, and the rest is dirt and blood. SALA says, "They called a cab." Any attempt to get him on feet is aggressively rejected, SANDERSON wants no help from KEMP. Here comes the cab, and somehow he gets bundled in and somebody slams the door.

Music from the club is drowned in a roar. Maybe they're already fucking her? Tail lights vanish down the hill. Pandemonium inside and KEMP climbs steps to confront it. But I don't think so, and neither do faces top of the stairs. He gets jive from the man in the hat, and this place is closed.

KEMP

I gotta get the girl ..

MAN IN HAT

She having a good time ..

(you deaf?)

I said, we closed, man ..

Bad eyes in a harsh face and what he means SALA understands.

SALA

No way, Paul. No way.

94: EXT. BEACH. SAINT THOMAS. DAWN.

94.

Wide over the beach with thunder in the air. Gold in black cloud. It won't rain now. But it's going to rain tomorrow. KEMP pitches up in dispirited mood, it's two parts hangover and the rest anxiety for Chenault. SALA is sprawled on cameras (at least one of them got some sleep). KEMP sits next to him and tells the story just as soon as he wakes to hear.

KEMP

.. I looked everywhere, man,

94 Cond.

94.

KEMP (cond)
even went to the gendarme ..

SALA
And ..

KEMP
.. we went up there .. nothing .. nobody there, just an old woman with a mop .. and she's more help than the cop ..
(mimicking)
.. "what can I do if your girl friend likes someone else?" etcetera, etcetera ..

A conclusion SALA agrees with, but first he finishes a yawn.

SALA
.. he's right about that, Paul, she's not your girl-friend .. did you sleep? ..

KEMP
I don't remember ..

SALA
.. we're gonna need some breakfast .. then we'll think it through ..
(lacing boots)
.. maybe she went back to the boat? Did you try the boat?

KEMP
I don't think he'd let her on?

95: EXT. HARBOUR. OLD TOWN. DAY.

95.

More thunder and sky like lead, like the entire harbour is sleeping it off. Chairs and tables stacked at last night's restaurant. Here and there staff are beginning to clear up, decks washed on one or two yachts. SALA munches a hamburger. He and KEMP approach Sanderson's birth with understandable feelings of unease. They expect the worst, and get it. Only one craft in the harbour is on the move and it is SANDERSON's. Exhaust gurgles from the stern as he backs it out. SANDERSON sees KEMP as he sees him, SEGURRA is also on deck.

KEMP
Is she with you?

No answer from SANDERSON, a dozen feet of water between them.

95 Cond.

95.

KEMP

Is she with you?

SANDERSON slams a lever across, propellers change direction.

SANDERSON

.. why don't you mind your
own god/damned business ..

Thrusting a hand out he snaps fingers like KEMP is a waiter.

I want the keys? The Chevy?

Keys are found and tossed across, expertly caught on arrival.

You blew it, Kemp ..

He shoves forward on the lever, the yacht heads for open sea.

96: EXT. STREET. OLD SAN JUAN. DAY.

96.

Music survives the dissolve into a rain swept street. KEMP shelters under a battered black umbrella. He and SALA inspect a clapped out motorbike/sidecar. Owned by MOBURG, it's evidently for sale. KEMP circles it isolating deficiencies.

KEMP

I've seen better tyres hanging over the side of a tug ...

MOBURG

You want it or not?

KEMP looks at SALA [beggars and choosers] yeah they want it.

97: INT. STAIRWAY/APARTMENT. OLD BUILDING. DAY.

97.

MOBURG wheezes up the stairs in his saturated raincoat. He carries a tool/bag full of spares [which includes a busted-wing/mirror] and KEMP brings up the rear with a spare wheel.

MOBURG

.. everyone turns up for the
Friday cheque, right .. no
cheque, no Lotterman .. so I
go round to see that unforgiv-
ably ugly wife of his, & she
tells me, he's gone to Miami ..

SALA

For what?

MOBURG

.. you don't know, I don't

97 Cond.

97.

MOBURG (cond)

know, but the Scabs are back ..

SALA unlocks and they shuffle in. Rain lashes the windows and a Cock Crows. KEMP carries his wheel into the kitchen.

Since Morrell went, the News
took a turn for the worse ..

Ha Ha Ha! he says, seeing a blow/up of himself lifting Lott-
erman's wig. Ha Ha Ha! Sala stuck the picture up on a wall!
Upending empties he looks for a bottle with something in it.

Is anything in the spinner?

SALA

We need a fresh sack ..

KEMP hacks rust off the wheel. And discovers nothing else.

MOBURG

.. maybe I could interest you
gentlemen in something else ..

KEMP

Like what
(the wheel)
death?

MOBURG

Like the most powerful drug
in the history of narcotics ..

A small brown bottle is produced from his pocket. It's got
a rubber/bulb. The kind of thing they dish/out for earache.

I'm not at liberty to disclose
or discuss .. all I can tell
you is, this stuff is so power-
ful they give it to communists ..

KEMP

Who does?

MOBURG

The F.B.I.

SALA

.. why would the F.B.I get
communists high? ..

MOBURG

That, I can't help you with ..
(the breath zone)
You take it like eye/drops ..

97 Cond.

97.

SALA

In the eye?

MOBURG

So I understand .. it makes
the eye see things .. you
see a different reality ..

KEMP

(examining vial)

What d'you want for it?

MOBURG

I'll throw it in with the
bike, if you do me a favour?

KEMP

Alright, what's the favour?

MOBURG

I want one of you to come
into the bathroom with me?

Looks like SALA's call and KEMP heads to his room for money.

KEMP

Fifty dollars, right?

Slam/cut on the much depleted wad. KEMP pulls fifty for the
bike/drugs. Walks back to the room where SALA is disgusted.

SALA

.. he wants me to look at
his dick. I flatly refused.

KEMP

.. what does he want
you to look at it for?

SALA

He says there's some-
thing wrong with it ..

MOBURG

It's a gentleman's matter ..

SALA

I'm not looking at it ..

MOBURG

O.K. give me the drugs back.

Anything but give the drugs back. KEMP looks at MOBURG and
then spots his tool/bag. A busted wing/mirror is prominent.

97 Cond.

97.

KEMP

.. O.K. I'll look at it ..
view it in the mirror ..

Actors can do this better than I can write it. KEMP gets behind MOBURG and the lowered trouser. Tension in teeth as he brings the wing/mirror into play. It makes your mouth water.

MOBURG

Is it clap?

KEMP

A standing ovation.

98: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

98.

Enormous close/up of an eye. Drip, Drip, Drip. The liquid goes in. They don't know the dose or even what the drug is. I can help them with that. It's called Lysergic Acid Diethylamide Tartrate. In a year or two it will be known as LSD.

Candlelight separates KEMP and SALA. They share a constant reciprocity of anticipation. Anyone familiar with LSD will know that fuck/all happens until something actually happens. They are not familiar with LSD and don't know what it'll be or when. Thus they sit in a vacuum of deflated expectation.

KEMP

.. we'll give it another
five minutes ..

SALA

And then what? ..

[P.O.V. T.V.] across the alleyway, they watch "I Love Lucy," via binoculars. Because it's slashing with rain the sound isn't so good. But SALA seems amused by Miss Ball's jokes.

KEMP [O.S.]

How long since we took it?

SALA

I don't know .. a while ..

KEMP

It's bullshit, isn't it?

Bullshit or not, there's something quite extraordinary about that rain running down the window. It seems extraordinarily liquid and KEMP abandons binoculars to look at it. A weird illusion. It's just rivulets of rain. But it's glistening rain. Almost imperceptibly the room becomes more closely observed. Everything requires a close/up. SALA opens a beer, and the hiss around the cap is as important as anything else.

98 Cond.

98.

KEMP lights a cigarette and that's important too. The Zippo needs a close/up to fully cover the event. Fire escapes the flint like an F.16. taking off. Inhalation makes the end of his cigarette very red. He tosses the pack on the table and watches it land. For some occult reason, it seems to have a significance. He stares at SALA, still nothing is happening.

KEMP

You feel anything?

KEMP blows smoke/rings. Looks at rain on the windows. Silver rain trickles down and in its way is curiously beautiful. He might wonder why he'd never noticed that before? [But it rarely rains so why should he?] and anyway his attention has switched to the GOLDFISH. Like everything else it requires a close/up and then [somewhat weirdly] its own point of view.

[P.O.V. GOLDFISH.] It stares out via its fish/eye lens from one world to another. Watches KEMP and SALA peering at each other in the yellow light. Maybe only the Fish can hear the Music? Without music this alchemy can't be happening. It's called, "Col Legno," by an American named RALPH TOWNER. His composition features nothing but a double bass and drum. It results in a sublime mix of expectation and menace. Similar sentiments attend KEMP and SALA. They've taken the most powerful substance on planet earth, and the bastard just cut in.

No way do I try and describe the mechanics of this sequence with a typewriter. Only a camera can tell the tale. Don't ask how, but both MUSIC and FISHEYE/LENS have quit the bowl, and are out in the room. The fish/eye doesn't survive long, but the MUSIC intensifies and begins to own the environment.

This isn't going to be an entirely pleasant introduction to LSD. What you might call variable. They stare from opposite chairs. Everything looks normal, but it isn't. A Cock Crows [thrice] and the MUSIC comes into its own. [It can't be stressed enough that without this sinister rhapsody nothing can be envisaged] The Double Bass is resonant with malign promise. KEMP knows something AWFUL is going to happen.

SALA smiles and that's precisely it. It's HORRIBLE, like a wound. A surge of putrescent adrenaline creases KEMP. He needs to tell SALA he doesn't like the smile, but something about it has wiped out his ability to criticise. What can be done if everything is SLOW/MOTION, muscles can't work at this depth. The swine SMILES again, flopping out a TONGUE.

It protrudes but an inch, wagging from side to side in imitation of THE VIPER. Is this an hallucination? It cannot be, it's HAPPENING. Suddenly the most god/awful rasp emits from the Bass, like a fucked hinge on the back gate of hell.

KEMP

Jesus ..
(horrified)
.. your tongue is like an

98 Cond.

98.

KEMP (cond)
accusatory gliblet ..

The tongue moves a yard from SALA's face with the accompanying toll of a drum. It is an anatomical insanity, an abrogation of all rules pertaining to the tongue. KEMP is paralysed with alarm and poleaxed with revulsion. As the TONGUE approaches he pushes back in his chair like a man on a crashing plane. Goya drew faces like this at the moment of death.

Here it comes towards him, probing forth, ever extending as it explores. It's out four feet, and then six, a khaki limb, browned at the root from three and a half million cigarettes.

At twelve feet it seems to have reached some fearful zenith. It quivers accusatively before veering east. KEMP's responsibility is clear, and he forces his way out of slow/motion.

KEMP
For christ sake, keep it out.

Grabbing a newspaper he unwalks forward in a menacing stoop.

SALA
What are you talking about?

KEMP
Your tongue belongs to Satan.

SALA
Are you out of your mind?

KEMP
Keep it out .. it's rotten to
the root .. if it goes back
in your mouth, it'll kill you ..

He goes for the TONGUE absorbing toxic spittle in the paper.

.. it's a bag of mauve pulp ..
we gotta get it into the sink ..

SALA
(standing)
Stop it .. you're giving
me fear .. I've got fear ..

KEMP
So have I .. fuck you ..

SALA
.. you're high, you fool,
drink some rum ..

Drink some rum? That's the best idea he's heard since 1956.

99: EXT. CONDADO. SAN JUAN BAY. NIGHT.

99.

KEMP and SALA are revealed on a pier. Ocean one side, distant cruise ships the other. The rain turned into mist. The initial rush of fear has been superseded by mutual pleasure.

KEMP

.. thought I was loosing
grip in there ..

Strings of multicoloured lightbulbs disappear into the mist.

What did we take?

SALA

I don't know ..

KEMP

We need to get some more.

Swapping hits on a bottle they walk into the weather. Here and there are enclaves of slot/machines. Nobody about and no interest, but further on is a machine that attracts KEMP.

A huge GRINNING LOBSTER reclines on its top, a claw pointing to a slot inviting money. Shove in a quarter and you get to operate a mechanical crane. The device hovers over a filthy aquarium. Should you be successful you win a LIVING LOBSTER.

A DEAD LOBSTER floats on the mire and its hapless companions are just about visible underneath. KEMP can't believe what he's looking at. He may have seen such a machine with teddy bears and trash candy, but never with PRIZES THAT ARE ALIVE.

KEMP

That explains it, doesn't it?

SALA

Explains what?

KEMP

The world .. And us ..

SALA doesn't know what he's talking about. There is a separation of minds. For KEMP this is a "Microcosm of the World," and he might even say so. Blown away by the LOBSTER MACHINE he clasps its sides, forehead pressed into the glass. A massive close/up takes care of his mouth and COLERIDGE the verse.

"The very deep did rot

O Christ

That ever this should be

Yea, slimy things did crawl

with legs

Upon the slimy sea .."

MUSIC that's been threatening finally bursts through. It's

99 Cond.

99.

called, "The Unstable Table and the Infamous Fable." Hearing it may explain it, but I'm not going to try it in words any more that force visuals through a typewriter. Once again, it's an occult choreography and business of the CAMERA.

The sequence is a construct of FACES [melded into a single face] like every face Kemp has ever seen. Face after Face, like black & white celluloid run at super high/speed. Images, Images, "I got all the images any hick/poet ever shat out," as William Burroughs once put it. But already swept away in the storm of Faces. STALIN, TRUMAN, LINCOLN, MARX, Faces pushing through Faces at the velocity of a nightmare, each mouthing its own ugly words, CASTRO, OPPENHEIMER, JESUS, MAU, KHRUSHCHEV, BETTY BOOP, and fifty thousand more, a million, billion ugly words exit the MOVING MOUTH, talking it, telling it, lying it, and selling it. McCARTHY, HITLER, EINSTEIN, RICHARD NIXON, and MICKY FUCKING MOUSE. Suddenly it's all over. The solitary face belongs to JOHN F KENNEDY, the face at the end of the American Dream. The freeze doesn't survive, replaced by t.v. ads of the 1960s. It's HAPPY TIME, bigger n better time, and it's got the Dream for sale.

100: EXT. CITY SQUARE. SAN JUAN. DAWN.

100.

Just before dawn on the deserted plaza, everything wet with rain. The sun is about to rise and the streets will be red. KEMP sits alone on a bench watching open/air t.v. It looms in a metal shroud on top of poles. This black and white facility was provided by government for those who couldn't yet afford it. KEMP is moving back into real/time, coming down, as the vernacular has it. Although he's unaware of it, something of significance has happened in his head [had his moment on the Road to Rome, so to speak] and henceforth he will be a different kind of writer [and we all know who that is.]

Mesmerised by advertising he peers at the t.v. A WOMAN is selling the virtues of her new FOOD MIXER. She's replaced by a FAMILY in a delirium of HAPPINESS over their new FORD.

The CAMERA and the MUSIC close in on KEMP. He's already into a dissolve with a clatter of typewriter at the end of it.

101: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. DAY.

101.

Letters like crooked teeth smack into the paper. KEMP sits at a table bashing it out on his ancient portable. Wreathed in cigar smoke, he wears a towel over his head like a boxer.

KEMP [V.O.]

.. La Bas, down there, where the
beasts are all blind and the doom-
ed scream all night in the dark-
ness. Joe McCarthy is down there,
and Richard Nixon will join him

101 Cond.

101.

KEMP (cond)
soon enough .. it's a special
kind of hell for utterly failed
politicians, the shameless ones,
those rare and rotten talents
whose only genius is to slip seam-
lessly from one enemy to another ..

SALA [O.S.]
Gotta go ..

SALA is in and out of the background, trying to get dressed
and drink coffee at the same time. KEMP is exhausted, runs
hands through the sweat in his hair. That was a night, and
now there's a knock at the door. No idea who's there until
he opens it. Too wasted for surprise. But surprised he is.
CHENAULT stands outside looking abandoned and lost as a ref-
ugee. She probably hasn't eaten and obviously hasn't slept.
You don't need to ask the questions to know she's in crisis.

SALA
We gotta go ..

Too rushed for the bullshit, he's out as KEMP brings her in.

KEMP
(to Sala)
Gimme a minute ..

102: EXT. CALLE PLACE COLON. SAN JUAN. DAY. 102.

The SCABS are back on the streets outside El News. A Union
Leader bellows Spanish crap through a bullhorn. Here comes
SALA and KEMP. The former drives and the latter rides pass-
enger in the motorcycle/sidecar. They head for the offices.

103: INT. NEWSROOM. THE DAILY NEWS. DAY. 103.

Nobody at their desks, but everybody crowded around LOTTER-
MAN's office door. The entire journalistic contingent is
here [sports desk, news desk, editorial, etc] and now KEMP
and SALA. The mood is mutinous and sour, probably exacer-
bated by shouting Scabs and Cop Sirens in the street below.

KEMP
What's happening?

WOLSLEY
A strike...

KEMP manages to find a better view. LOTTERMAN is sweating.

LOTTERMAN
.. it's a big favour I'm ask-

LOTTERMAN (cond)
ing, and I know it is .. but
I'm not asking it for myself,
I'm asking it for the paper ..

MOBURG
Such self/sacrifice ..

LOTTERMAN
.. I been breaking my ass for
this paper .. fighting for it,
which means, fighting for you ..

They're not buying it and LOTTERMAN must lie a little harder.

.. O.K. I'm pleased to tell
you we now have finance in
place with a bank in Miami ..

DONAVON
Who's the bank?

LOTTERMAN
.. you're gonna have to trust
me on specifics, but it's a
written guarantee .. I'm just
asking for one more week, then
everyone gets a \$100 bonus ..

MOBURG
I don't think so ..

LOTTERMAN
You have my word of honour ..

MOBURG
I can't pay my rent with your
word of honour .. this is the
second week we didn't get paid?

DONAVON
That's right, Fred ..

LOTTERMAN
.. what d'you want, a crucifix-
ion? I'm doing the best I can ..
(re briefcase)
.. I'm on my way to sign the
papers, and the longer you
keep me here, the less signed
they get .. C'mon, guys, please,
it's Monday, we pull together
till Friday, we can get through ..

They've got no choice and LOTTERMAN adds a welcome sweetener.

103 Cond.

103.

LOTTERMAN (cond)
.. meantime, provided no
one goes crazy, I'll pick
up the tab at Al's ..

This seems to do the trick and everyone drifts back to work.
LOTTERMAN clears sweat with a handkerchief and notices KEMP.

How nice of you to drop in.

KEMP
I was covering the carnival.

LOTTERMAN
That's not what I heard,
I heard you were in the
moonlight for Sanderson?

On hands and knees he snatches various papers from his safe.

KEMP
I was what?

LOTTERMAN
Moonlighting for Sanderson?

Slamming the safe he returns to his desk. More papers from
a drawer and then a framed photo of his seriously ugly wife.

KEMP
Where's Segurra?

LOTTERMAN
.. Mr Segurra is no longer
with us ..

KEMP
I got a story for you ..

LOTTERMAN is too preoccupied to listen no matter what it is.

LOTTERMAN
.. you may have noticed,
I'm somewhat busy ..

Stuffing documents into his briefcase he's anxious to leave.

KEMP
.. this is real important,
involving Mr Segurra ..
(proffering them)
.. you should take a look
at these photographs ..

103 Cond.

103.

LOTTERMAN

.. let me tell you just how
important it isn't .. I got
twenty one jobs on the line,
and a newspaper going under ..

KEMP

Print this, and you sell it ..

Scant attention from LOTTERMAN, already heading out the door.

.. it's a planning scam .. lit-
erally despoilation of a para-
dise, meanwhile 1000 people get
swept into the sea like garbage ..

LOTTERMAN

You're-weird, Kemp .. it's
not what it's doing to them,
it's what it does to you ..

KEMP

It's called, Journalism ..

LOTTERMAN

.. make me laugh .. I ask
you to tidy up the booze, you
couldn't sweep out a room ..

Midway up the News Room and everyone is looking up to listen.

.. why d'you think you're work-
ing here? You are everything
that's wrong with a journalist ..

KEMP

.. and you are everything
that's wrong with this insult
of a newspaper ..

MOBURG

Unanimously agreed ..

LOTTERMAN

Why don't you shut it, Moburg?
(beast livid)
If this paper is floundering,
it's because of people like
you .. eaten away from the in-
side by people like you. You
are a waste of human/sperm ..

He ploughs on towards the exit. MOBURG hollering after him.

MOBURG

.. die a prolonged and rel-

103 Cond.

103.

MOBURG (cond)
entlessly agonising death ..

104: EXT. DRIVEWAY. BEACH HOUSE. DUSK.

104.

Such a sunset going down over the jungle. The music is poignant, although I don't know what it is. KEMP stands outside the house while SANDERSON tosses his ex/girlfriend's belongings through the front door. No jewels, but dresses, shoes, hats and a clutch of lingerie. An empty suitcase comes last.

SANDERSON
Enjoy her ..

KEMP
Fuck you, Sanderson ..

He gathers the satin and lace. Stuffs it into his side/car.

105: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

105.

Now I know what the music is, sad old blues cranking out of Sala's record player. It's a sad old evening, SALA somewhat done in on rum, KEMP fixing a mug of hot tea in the kitchen.

SALA
So what's the prognosis?

KEMP
She won't talk about it ..

A kettle whistles and he pours it, heads toward his bedroom.

but I get the idea she went
back, and he kicked her out ..

SALA
How long's she staying?

KEMP
She's going to New York ..

106: INT. KEMP'S ROOM. APARTMENT. NIGHT.

106.

Last dregs of light at the window. You can always tell when a room's full of misery and this is one. CHENAULT is exhausted with tears. KEMP puts a cup by the bed and quietly sits.

KEMP
I made you some tea ..

She smiles but doesn't want it, and more tears seem imminent.

You should try and sleep ..

106 Cond.

106.

CHENAULT
I stole your bed ..

KEMP
It's O.K. I'm gonna write ..

CHENAULT
(hardly audible)
I'm so sorry ..

KEMP
Don't be sorry, you did me
the best favour I ever had ..

Tears well and she denies them. The silence belongs to him.

.. there is no Dream, Chen-
ault .. it's just a piss-
puddle of greed, spreading
throughout the world ..

107: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

107.

Just about as late as it gets. KEMP hammers his typewriter.

KEMP [V.O.]
.. difficult it is to believe
that a truthless ingrate with
the soul of a cockroach may be
sworn as President of the Un-
ited States .. and he will bring
his gang with him, a mean net-
work of lawyers and salesmen and
pimps who will loot the national
treasury, warp the laws, mock
the rules, and stay awake twenty
two hours a day looking for at
least one reason to declare war ..

108: INT. SHOWER/BATHROOM. APARTMENT. DAY.

108.

KEMP washes off a night at the typewriter. Basking in sham-
poo when the water runs out. Another failure in the bastard
pipes. Miffed and dripping he gets out looking for a towel.

109: INT. APARTMENT. DAY.

109.

Wrapped in a gown with a towel over his head KEMP arrives in
the kitchen. Sleep has revitalised CHENAULT. Almost herself
again, she's squeezed oranges and made coffee. KEMP's pleas-
ure is short/lived, ending with the woe in SALA's expression.

SALA
One for you. One for me.

109 Cond.

109.

He hands KEMP a sizeable envelope. Inside is a heart/sinker.

KEMP

.. oh man, I would rather
not start the day with this ..

CHENAULT

What is it?

SALA

It's a writ ..

KEMP

(reading)

Means we're going to court?

SALA

.. it means they can arrest
us, should they so desire,
any damned minute they like ..

(freaked)

We need to speak to a lawyer ..

KEMP

We don't even have a phone?

SALA

.. there's an old guy I know,
Spanish Advocate, he kind of
owes me one .. you should get
dressed, we'll get over there ..

KEMP

I'm covered in soap ..

Alright SALA will do what he can. A moment later he's gone.
A vacuum of anxiety is left, focusing on rereading the writ.

CHENAULT

What's it for?

KEMP

I'm afraid it's Hal .. he
put up bond on this thing
for us, now he's pulled it ..

CHENAULT has something to say. But takes a while to say it.

CHEANULT

You know he's a crook, Paul?

KEMP

I know he sails close ..

CHENAULT

They're working a scam with
federal grants .. siphoning
money into parasite accounts ..

KEMP

How?

CHENAULT

He's got a contract with the
city, and a rat on a lead in
the bank, a man called Green?
(he remembers him)
.. when the new money comes in,
they match it with money they
already creamed off, pay out
of the parasite accounts, and
the new money is up for grabs ..

KEMP

And we get the writs ..

CHENAULT

.. please don't ever say I
told you .. I honestly believe
he'd have me killed ..

She doesn't have to worry, he doesn't have to say. He loves
her and it stays secret. A loud gurgle surges in the pipes.

KEMP

At least the water's back on ..

110: INT. SHOWER/BATHROOM/BEDROOM. APARTMENT. DAY. 110.

KEMP picks up the shower where he left off. Steam and rushing
water. Shampoo runs off and suddenly CHENAULT is there.
He didn't hear her arrive, but she's here now and obviously
wants to join him. KEMP isn't arguing as she undresses, bra
and panties evaporating with the jeans. She steps into the
shower and turns into the most seductive thing a naked girl
could be with soap. Hands all over each other, hands spread
over her back and breasts as her lips are all over his mouth.

CHENAULT

Come to New York with me ..

KEMP

I will ..

Nothing between their kisses but steam and streaming water,
and more whispers inside the embrace, "Come to bed with me."

He sure fucking will, and by cinema/magic vertical becomes
horizontal. What started in a bathroom continues on a bed.

110 Cond.

110.

CHENAULT's hair drenches the pillow, clinging to her still saturated limbs. Although ravenous for her, KEMP takes it easy with kisses, jealous of every delirious moment. What ever he wants is already his. But they both want too much for much more of this and are about to get it when a voice starts yelling from another room. To pretend it isn't happening isn't an option. And anyway the volume is going up.

ADOLPH HITLER was a lot of things but an aphrodisiac he wasn't. Howling his ludicrous mouth off, he addresses a rally at Munich. They're just about to fuck in here when two hundred and fifty thousand brain/dead Prussians begin to cheer.

CHENAULT

What is it?

KEMP

Hitler...

Zeig Heil! Zeig Heil! No lovers on earth could cope with that. To have any hope it's got to be dealt with and KEMP wraps himself in a towel. He knows where it's coming from and tears the needle off the record. But doesn't immediately see MOBURG. Wearing his Nazi Helmet, he sprawls where he will, a flagon in action, and drunk as a fucking beaver.

MOBURG

It's over ..

KEMP

What is?

MOBURG

They shut us down ..

Although possibly expected KEMP is stunned by the news. He looks vacantly towards the bedroom. Hiding in a towel CHENAULT stares at him from around the bedroom door. It's just a moment shared, but might be a moment changing Kemp's life.

111: EXT. TERRACE. AL'S BAR. SAN JUAN. DUSK. 111.

Another night congeals over old San Juan. The piano plays as usual but doesn't match the mood. A clutch of redundant work men, principally Journalists, crowd out the terrace. Many of the faces are recognisable even if they don't come with names. One that does is DONAVON and he seems to be the impresario of corporate grief. Everyone shares his devastation of betrayal.

DONAVON

.. he just stood there, in
that office, and lied to us ..
he knew it was going down,
knew he was selling out, and

111 Cond.

DONAVON (cond)
he just stood there and lied ..
(shared disbelief)
.. he don't have the morality
of a clapped/out cash/register ..

HUBERT
It was to avoid severance ..

WOLSLEY
.. we all know what it was for,
Charlie, what are we gonna do?

DONAVON
.. nothing, there's nothing
we can do, except report him
to the Labour Board, which
is the same as doing nothing ..

KEMP
.. I disagree .. we've gotta
strike back, and by what ever
means it takes, nail this bas-
tard to his own front door ..

DONAVON
And how, pray, do we do that?

KEMP
.. by doing what we know how
to do, by printing the paper ..

He puhses through tables, commanding a place of prominence.

We got stuff on Lotterman and
his pals, and we go for them,
every happy maggot with his
hand in the till, we all know
who they are? Maybe the last
ever issue, but we go out in
a blaze of rage, hold these
pricks & his paper to account?

HUBERT
It costs 22 hundred a shot ..

KEMP
So, we didn't have 22 hundred
yesterday, or the week before,
and we still put the paper out?
(agreement)
So, what's different? They're
Webb/Offsets, it prints itself?

DONAVON
It doesn't tie itself up in bun-

111 Cond.

111.

DONAVON (cond)
dles and climb into the back of
vans? Even if it's printed it's
gotta be packed and distributed.

KEMP
We bring in the Scabs ..

DONAVON
.. they're picketing over
money, you're through the
looking glass .. we don't
have the money for drinks ..

WOLSLEY
Reneged on that as well ..

KEMP
.. I'll get the money? We
could do this? What do we
need to pay the Scabs? A
thousand dollars, I'll get
us a thousand dollars ..

DONAVON
.. forget it, Kemp .. this has
been coming down the pike for
months, it ain't worth the fight ..

That just about sums it up, and everyone just about agrees.

.. you gotta know it's over
when it's over, and this lousy
little Caribbean rag is now a
wrapping for fish heads ..

KEMP
Like I say, what's different?

WOLSELY
.. the difference is, the
doors are locked ..

KEMP
.. fuck the locks, we walk
in .. this isn't just about
Lotterman betraying us, it's
about us betraying oursel-
ves .. we're all Scabs now ..
(silence)
So hands up who's with me?

No takers except MOBURG. But what about the man at the bar?

Bob?

111 Cond.

111.

SALA
(drained)
You know I'm with you ..

112: EXT. MOTORCYCLE/SIDECAR. BOULEVARD. NIGHT. 112.

Flamboyant trees and a blur of street lights. Piano Music from Al's travels with them. SALA drives with MOBURG pillow and KEMP in the side/car. A flagon in transit and all already oiled, rum doing little to ease KEMP's frustration.

SALA
.. the difference is, we
don't own the premises ..
we put one foot in that
building, we are guilty of
criminal trespass, not to
mention theft of thirty-
five thousand yards of ink ..

Dismissed by KEMP as bullshit. SALA stops for a red light.

.. by the way, I saw the
man .. he can't help us ..

KEMP
Meaning what?

SALA
.. meaning, we pay the
bond, or get arrested ..

KEMP
.. that cock/sucker, Sand-
erson .. if there's a god,
I'll bust that bastard ..

The bike takes off and the CAMERA doesn't trouble to follow.

113: INT. SALA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT. 113.

Fingers flash a light switch. On/off, on/off, but no light.

SALA
We didn't pay the bill ..

While SALA hunts for matches, KEMP looks for something else. Where the hell is Chenault? He pushes into the bedroom and even in this gloom can see she's gone. No suitcase no nothing, but back in the living room he discovers a note on his typewriter. SALA lights a candle and KEMP moves in to read.

KEMP
She's gone to New York ..

KEMP

(single \$ bill)

.. left me a hundred dollars .. I don't believe that, she didn't have any money ..

SALA

You should use it to go with her, red/eye for fifty bucks ..
(another candle)
.. by some means, I gotta get to Mexico ..

KEMP

.. I'm not going anywhere, not till I've done what I gotta do ..
(patrolling)
.. by some means or another, I'm gonna put the paper out .. the "Truth Issue", print the asshole, and then we're gone ..

SALA

Face the reality, Paul .. no work, no money, (no girl) and a warrant out for our arrest?
(more rum)
there's no contest, Donavon's right, it ain't worth the fight ..

KEMP

.. I am not like Donavon, I'm not like the others. I'm not gonna sit there like some t.v. whore, with dog/food for a brain .. I'm going after them ..

Long shadows follow as KEMP shifts his anger around the room.

.. and I'm telling you, next time some greasy moron starts bullshitting me, I'm going after him, all the way up to the President of the United States ..

SALA

(exasperated)

.. it's the System, Paul, you can't beat the System, they got it sucked off .. you put one foot in that building, they'll tear you up like ass/hole paper ..

113 Cond.

113.

KEMP

.. I just wanna win one,
once .. one sheet, if we
could print one sheet ..

SALA

.. you ain't gonna get far
on a hundred dollars ..

I don't know about the silence but SALA heads for the fridge.

We're out of beer ..

MOBURG

.. it's as if god in a fit
of disgust has decided to
wipe us all out ..

More silence than anybody knows what to do with. Somewhere
probably Sala's room, a melancholy COCKEREL echoes the mood.

Yea, the Cock Crows Thrice.

KEMP

(like a light)

What about, El Monstruo? Bet
the hundred on, "El Monstruo"?

114: EXT. PANORAMIC. MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE. DAY.

114.

Big music slams in and the view is bigger still. Wide over
mountains with a distant motorcycle climbing a country road.
SALA pilots with KEMP on the back and this time MOBURG is in
the side/car. Various shots bring them to the village where
Sala's hen met El Monstruo. A brutal wind fills the streets
with dust. The bike gets parked too far off to hear voices.

SALA needs to hold onto his hat as he dismounts. He engages
a pair of crumpled old bastards who are spending the rest of
their lives on a veranda. An exchange in Spanish as he asks
for directions. A gnarled finger points beyond the mountain.

115: EXT. RURAL TRACK. FARM. DAY.

115.

Half a mile down the hill is a ramshackle little farm. The
track is more pot/hole than anything else. As they descend
KEMP reiterates instructions SALA may be bored with hearing.

KEMP (O.S.)

.. you gotta tell him, it's
fighting for its country ..
standing up for the people ..

SALA (O.S.)

You really want me to say that?

115 Cond.

115.

KEMP (O.S.)
What else is it?

MOBURG (O.S.)
It's a chicken ..

The bike clatters into a yard full of chickens. It's a run down hacienda, with a broken/back truck and a scrawny horse.

SALA
.. you better let me do
this on my own ..

He gets off and walks to the house, KEMP staring after him.

MOBURG
If he gets it, we'll
take it to Papa Nebo ..

KEMP
Who?

MOBURG
.. my witch/doctor, she
cured my prick .. she's
an hermaphrodite ..

116: EXT. RIDGE/HACIENDA. DAY.

116.

A boot crushes a cigarette butt. It's one of two or three. KEMP turns on the reveal and has clearly been waiting some time. He and MOBURG have wandered up the ridge. The wind plays the trees and wants their hats. Just when they think the waiting is forever, SALA emerges from the house. He's alone and it looks like bad news. No smiles and no chicken. He's halfway across the yard when a couple of children appear, followed by a man in a turban holding the deadly fowl.

TURBAN MAN
(calling)
Hombre ..

Suddenly it's a big happy and they've got their killer hen.

117: EXT. JIBEROS VILLAGE. NIGHT.

117.

A spooky wind puts itself about the almost deserted village. The moon is in and out of racing cloud and the headlight is just better than a candle. The motorcycle cruises the ruts.

MOBURG (O.S.)
.. she drives a garbage truck
by day, by night, she becomes
Papa Nebo, the hermaphroditic

117 Cond.

117.

MOBURG (cond)

oracle of the dead .. when permission is granted by Papa Sam-edi, the keeper of the cemetery, she'll visit to dig up a corpse ..

They turn into a street full of homesteads built out of junk.

.. certain organs of these dis-grounded stiffes are indispensable for use in "ouangas." Most of the sugar/cutters baste the edge of their blades with drips from the brain, or goo from the eyes, so their machetes will "see" to cut well, and with "intelligence" ..

This is it and they pull up. It's a tin/shack with attitude.

SALA

This is horseshit, isn't it?

MOBURG

If you want the chicken to win?

SALA sits in the side/car with the most enormous chicken on earth on his lap. Alright, go for it, and they all walk in.

118: INT. WITCH DOCTOR'S HUT. NIGHT.

118.

There's a general odour of carcass, and what with wind rattling the tin roof, it's not what you'd call a salubrious abode. Apple/crates to sit on and a mummified monkey head on a pike complete the decor. MOBURG lights a candle revealing an altar upon which are the Sword and SACRED BLADDERS. According to MOBURG, "She won't come until a cloud covers the moon," and anticipating such an eventuality all sit to wait.

One obviously just went over because a disturbing sight just walked in. Dressed to represent PAPA NEBO, she wears a mix of male and female togs. A full white cotton dress is worn under a Victorian frock/coat with satin lapels. She's got a top hat on her head and a human skull under her arm. A pick-axe [presumably for digging them up], is carried with handle down like a walking stick. All in all, an imposing presence.

Within seconds a fire is alight and PAINTED BONES come out. The preliminaries are brief, MOBURG acting as intermediary.

MOBURG

.. she wants to know
what you want ..

KEMP

.. we want her to empower

118 Cond.

118.

KEMP (cond)
this fowl .. we want it
blessed, and anything that
tries to fight it, dead ..

MOBURG
(translating)
Bring forth the Fowl ..

The PRIESTESS menaces various bones around the Bird's head, garbling nonsense like she's throwing up. All watch with bated breath as the ceremony continues, climaxing with the incitement of fire. White/Eyed incantations as she throws powder at the flames. [It's probably some sort of gun/powder and each handful brings a devilish gust of smoke]. The BIRD stands transfixed as everyone else. NEBO begins gurgling, calling on the undead to obey and they apparently do.

MOBURG
.. she says, no fowl on
earth could challenge this
cockerel and survive ..

SALA
Great ..

KEMP
How's she off for curses?

MOBURG
Pretty good ..

KEMP
.. let's have a curse on
Sanderson, and that piece
of shit in the bank ..
(with precision)
Green .. Mister Green ..

The name is transmuted into a curse and she spits out a toad.

SALA
Jesus ..

MOBURG
Curse active ..

The TOAD fucks off and the COCKEREL crows. NEBO freaks and a fistful of dust lights up like a stage/effect from Aladin.

119: INT. SPORTING FACILITY. CONDADO. DAY.

119.

Dean Martin may well be singing again. It's a grubby little shit/house, claustrophobic with smut, like the dregs of Las

Vegas. Chandeliers hang over a maize of slot/machines, crap tables and right at the end, the ring where they fight birds. Cigarette smoke and Cigarette Girls selling more. SALA and KEMP sport their best togs, ties even, in effort to blend in with the tone of the clientele. You put your bet on and get chips in exchange. Odds on the board are understood by SALA, and KEMP defers as \$100 goes down. With El Monstruo in its cage, they push through Cariadors, SALA explaining the wager.

SALA

.. it's an accumulator, winnings on the win become the next bet, it's got to win 3 ..

KEMP

Why not one?

SALA

I don't wanna frighten the odds ..

Extracting the Big Bird, SALA deals with the technicalities. I'm not getting into the mechanics of this, there's too many angles to write down. The first Cockerel pitched against EL MONSTRUO takes one look and runs for it. The Monster chases him round the ring and a clump of feathers later it's declared void. Jubilation from KEMP/SALA. "One down. Two to go."

KEMP

(re watch)

I've got to call Moburg ..

KEMP hangs on to a payphone, endless ringing tone increases anxiety. Did he get the number wrong? He checks his notebook and re/dials. Once again the phone rings into a void.

EL MONSTRUO is already into the second fight, murdering the contender. KEMP arrives back in a dilemma. Excitement because his bird is winning, apprehension over the unanswered call. What's worse, the fight, or grotesque faces watching? SALA is too engrossed to hear and KEMP has to wait to speak.

KEMP

He isn't there ..

SALA

He has to be?

KEMP

He isn't there ..

And his absence is more important to KEMP than anything happening in the ring. His expression is a mix of expectation and foreboding. The gladiators spill feathers and there's a chance of slow/motion. But whatever the action, it is over-

119 Cond.

119.

shadowed by the sound of a ringing phone. Almost imperceptible at first, it escalates as the CAMERA closes in on KEMP.

120: EXT. REAR OF NEWS BUILDING. DUSK.

120.

A dead end street at the back of the News Building. Garbage blows in vortexes, otherwise it's utterly deserted. Halfway up is a public pay/phone, ringing endlessly into nothing. A series of set/ups get closer and closer to the phone. Close enough to read numbers on the dial when at last a hand picks up. The empty street has already told the story, and everything MOBURG says is untrue. "Where the hell have you been?"

MOBURG

.. I .. never heard the
phone .. how's it going?

KEMP [O.S.]

.. winning .. we're winning .. is everyone there ..
(no answer)
Is everyone there?

MOBURG

Yeah .. everyone's here ..

KEMP [O.S.]

How about vans?
(no answer)
How about vans, Moburg?

MOBURG

Yeah .. vans ..

121: INT. PAY/PHONE. SPORTING FACILITY.

121.

From here KEMP can see across the facility. SALA is suddenly visible. Arms in the air he punches with clenched fists and when he sees KEMP he does it again. Elation is instant, and for a moment the phone is held out as though it can see.

KEMP

(into phone)

You hear that? You hear
it? .. we're on our way ..

122: EXT. STREET. REAR OF NEWS BUILDING. NIGHT.

122.

A taxi pulls up at the end of the street. SALA (plus champion chicken) and KEMP get out. Before the latter has paid the fare it's apparent something is very wrong. Apart from a lone street light the place is glum as a grave. No Scabs, no Vans, no Moburg. They walk towards the building with a

sense of enveloping doom. The News Building is in darkness, steel/mesh security gates at its rear closed and pad/locked.

KEMP

.. what the hell's going
on? He said he had the men?

I don't know who finds it, but there's a NOTICE attached to the gates. Several lines of legalese conclude with the only part of killer relevance to KEMP. He whispers out the text.

.. "all claims against its
former owners, will be duly
considered by the receivers,
signed on behalf of First
Maritime Bank, Miami .. by
Sanderson's pal, Mr Green."

Enough to make a pig spew. Before KEMP can indulge utter defeat, a face emerges from gloom the other side of the gates.

MOBURG

.. I'm sorry, Paul .. I
didn't know how to say ..
(gesturing)
.. they took the machines
out .. not everything ..
just the parts that matter ..
(turning away)
I'll let you in ..

123: INT. COMPOSITOR/PRINT ROOM. DAILY NEWS. NIGHT. 123.

Cavernous and eerie the THREE MEN and their COCKEREL become a small part of the print room. KEMP may check out the machines, but on the other hand he may not. A profound sense of failure attends the echoes, and somehow voices seem detached.

MOBURG

.. it's probably for the
best .. we'd probably
never have pulled it off ..

KEMP

.. the paper's set .. all
I wanted was a front page ..

Footsteps go where they will, emergency lamps the only light.

MOBURG

How much did you win?

SALA

Just under six grand ..

123 Cond.

123.

MOBURG

.. at least you can pay
off the bond ..

KEMP

.. screw the bond, we're
out of here ..

Peeling greenery KEMP shoves a fistful at a delighted MOBURG.

SALA

There's a midnight Pan Am?

KEMP

.. I'm not risking the
airport .. figure this
island owes us a boat ..
(a dead smile)
.. you smell it? .. it's
the smell of bastards, but
also the smell of truth ..
(a moment more)
I can smell ink ...

124: EXT. DOCK ROAD/HARBOUR. SAN JUAN. NIGHT.

124.

The motorcycle/sidecar arrives on the dock and I don't care
who drives. But KEMP is already gone. He chooses a boat, a
sleek/bitch painted black. It's a nostalgic interlude, made
worse because suddenly it's clear SALA isn't coming with him.

SALA

I gotta take the hen back ..
(embrace)
Find yourself a trade wind ..

A harsh wind blows, KEMP starts the boat without problem and
points it towards about two hundred million stars. SALA and
MOBURG watch it pull away but don't hear MUSIC going with it.

KEMP [V.O.]

.. sure, he'd lived, and he'd lived the
way he wanted .. "to live my life like
I want to," he said, "Is the least I can
do." And that had worked for him. And
when it was over, he knew it was over &
required no explanation .. he had spent
half a life blowing his brains out with
booze, and the bullet was just a period,
at the end of no sentence in particular ..

Hunter S Thompson

1937 2005