

AMSTERDAM

by

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Property of New Regency
Reg. WGA
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TITLE OVER BLACK: "A LOT OF THIS ACTUALLY HAPPENED"

TITLE OVER BLACK: "NEW YORK, 1933"

FADE IN:

INT. BURT BERENDSEN'S OFFICE - DAY

PUSH IN: FULL FRAME OF FROSTED GLASS-PANED OFFICE DOOR: "BURT BERENDSEN M.D. PHYSICIAN & SURGEON"

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
I was working in my office on 138th
Street.

Constructed prosthetic face of a veteran, WAYNE, 45, as BURT CAREFULLY PAINTS IN GAPS BETWEEN PROSTHETIC PARTS - WE SEE THE FACE TAKE SHAPE BEFORE OUR EYES.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
Mostly fixing banged up guys like
myself from the Great War.

Burt holds a mirror to Wayne's face.

BURT BERENDSEN
See? Beautiful.

Wayne nods as he looks at his constructed face.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
All from injuries the world was
happy to forget. Fixing faces-

WHITE PLASTER MOLDS OF MAIMED FACES ON THE WALL.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
Lifting spirits, singing songs-

BURT/WAYNE/VICTOR
(SING)
'Pea-nutssss.'

GLASS EYE DROPS INTO BOWL OF CLEAR LIQUID.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
I left my eye in France. And I was
constantly on probation with the
medical board for trying to make
new medicines. I mean, we needed
medicines that didn't exist yet,
just to get through the day with
the pain and the nerves.

FULL FRAME: A ROUND EXPERIMENTAL WHITE PILL HELD BY BURT'S THUMB AND FOREFINGER.

WIDER SHOT: BURT STARES AT THE NEW PILL HE HAS MADE - PUTS IT INTO HIS MOUTH AND SWALLOWS IT.

ASSISTANTS SHIRLEY (glasses, 60) and MORTY (50, vest, shirt sleeves) watch with concern.

MEDICAL ASSISTANT MORTY

I hope this is a better pill,
that's all I'm saying.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY

I hope you're right.

CUT TO: AN EARLIER TIME IN THE PAST - BURT FALLS ON HIS FACE.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Some pills worked better than
others.

Today, Burt drinks water at small corner sink and feels good.

BURT BERENDSEN

This is my second of the day and I
feel great. Victor, you want to try
one?

PATIENT VICTOR

Yeah, I'll try the new one next
week.

BURT BERENDSEN

All right, that gives you zing.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY

Put your pants on. I repaired them
for you. Are you all right?

Burt walks and lies back on the cot in the small back room as he struggles in pain with the back brace under his shirt.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Because of my war injuries, I had a
back brace I hated.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY

Experimental medicine. They're
gonna put you away if they don't
close this place down.

BURT BERENDSEN

That's not helpful, Shirley.

BURT WALKS TOWARD THE FRONT OF HIS OFFICE, THROUGH SMALL ROOMS HE PASSES WITH PATIENTS -

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
(to patient)
How's the leg, no infection? Oh I got the note, no need to pay yet.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
Burt, you got messages. Your parents called, they can't make it for the holiday. Herb Getz called about the ear drops. And Harold Woodman called: Meet him at this address, walk right in. Urgent.

BURT TAKES IN THIS MESSAGE.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY - 1933

PAN UP AS BURT WALKS BEHIND TWO NUNS TO THE ADDRESS, DOCTOR'S BAG IN ONE HAND, YELLOW FLOWERS IN THE OTHER --

INT. DIM EMPTY ROOM - DAY - 1933

Burt walks in with his DOCTOR'S BAG, not sure where they are.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
I worked with an attorney, my best friend from the war, Harold Woodman.

CUT TO: HAROLD WOODMAN STANDS WAITING TWENTY FEET AWAY, ELEGANT IN HIS ATTORNEY SUIT, HOLDING HIS HAT IN HIS HANDS.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Hey, Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN
What's going on? What is this place?

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's a very important case. It pays very handsomely. We've got a lot of back bills, people depend on us, our business. Most importantly, it's very meaningful for both you and I.

BURT BERENDSEN
Meaningful how?

HAROLD WOODMAN
You care about the annual gala
don't you? You always say it's
important for us vets to have
reunions, to be remembered. And you
say it's great medicine for us to
get together and sing, don't you
say that?

BURT BERENDSEN
Where's this going?

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's going to a particular
procedure and I know how you prefer
some procedures over others.

BURT BERENDSEN
Just tell me what it is. What kind
of procedure?

HAROLD WOODMAN
What are you doing with these
flowers?

BURT BERENDSEN
Dinner date with Beatrice.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Dinner date with Beatrice?

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes.

HAROLD WOODMAN
So disappointing.

BURT BERENDSEN
She's my wife.

SUDDENLY ELIZABETH MEEKINS, A TALL ELEGANT WOMAN, WALKS FROM
INSIDE ANOTHER ROOM.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
Is he all right to perform the
procedure?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Yes, he is, it's OK.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
He's not gonna to do it.

HAROLD WOODMAN
He's gonna do it - calm down.

BURT BERENDSEN
Who is this?

HAROLD WOODMAN
This is Liz Meekins, Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN
Meekins, as in relation to -?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
He's my father. I know you admire
him very much.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We both did - and do.

BURT BERENDSEN
I really do. That's why he's going
to speak at our reunion this year.
Very nice to meet you. Are we
meeting your father here?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Let her finish, Burt.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
My father came back yesterday on a
boat.

BURT BERENDSEN
OK. Goes to Europe on business,
right, did he catch a bug or
something? I'll look at him. Where
is he?

HAROLD WOODMAN
You should see him.

BURT BERENDSEN
Yeah, come on. Let's go.

HE FOLLOWS THEM DEEPER INTO A LARGE ROOM WITH A HIGH CEILING.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
This place is gorgeous.

THEY WALK TO A STOP AT THE END OF THE BIG ROOM.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
So, where is the good General,
'Quiet and Still Bill?'

SOMEONE OFF SCREEN BLOWS HER NOSE, GURNEY WHEELS SQUEAK.

A WOMAN AND ASSISTANT WHEEL IN AN OPEN CASKET OF BILL MEEKINS.

WOMAN MORTICIAN
Excuse me, my allergies are
terrible today. I wake up, it's in
my sinus and it's the whole day. I
don't know what you're doing. I
don't want to know what you're
doing. You have two hours 'til the
embalmer comes.

Burt stares in shock at DEAD BILL MEEKINS.

BURT BERENDSEN
What happened? He was gonna speak
at the gala.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
You will help me, won't you? I'm
not buying that he died of natural
causes. He was a very healthy man.
No one in my family agrees with me.
They're all wrong they're all
liars. I want an autopsy. It's my
right.

HAROLD WOODMAN
That's correct, it is your right.
Your father died intestate. You're
the next of kin. I read the papers.

BURT BERENDSEN
I hate autopsies Harold, you know
that.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We have to do it, Burt. Bill Quiet
and Still Meekins is the reason we
met. He formed our regiment.

BURT BERENDSEN
How did a man like this end up
dead? You're telling me it's
suspicious?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS

Yes, I'm telling you it's
suspicious. Will you please sing
with me. He said you used to sing
with him when you were at war. He
enjoyed it so much.

SHE LAUNCHES INTO THE HYMN 'PRECIOUS MEMORIES.'

Burt and Harold join the hymn.

BURT, HAROLD, ELIZABETH MEEKINS

'Precious memories, unseen angels,
sent from somewhere to my soul-

DOOR SLAMS FROM SOMEWHERE ACROSS THE BIG ROOM.

WOMAN MORITICIAN (O.S.)

Hurry up, you only have two hours
to do whatever it is you're gonna
do.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS

All right, you have to do the
autopsy and immediately after, meet
me at Minter's restaurant. I need
to know what you find.

BURT BERENDSEN

Why did she say two hours?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS

Because we're in the mortician,
they're going to put him in the
ground. Minter's restaurant, after
five. You've got to get him out of
here.

HAROLD WOODMAN

We should get going, Burt.

MILTON KING, 52, Harold's sharp associate, approaches from
the darkness behind the coffin, holding his hat.

MILTON KING

Harold, I don't know what you think
you're doing, excuse me, hello. You
got a dead white man in a box. Not
even a casket, important man, in a
pine box of old wood, doesn't even
have a top on it. His daughter's
crying, who do you think's gonna
get in trouble here? The black man,
that's who.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Milton, right now we need to get
him, our leader who founded our
regiment, into the truck.

BURT, HAROLD, MILTON ROLL THE BOX DOWN THE AISLE TOWARD THE
DOOR, BUMPING INTO PEWS ON THE WAY OUT.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
Do the autopsy. Meet me at Minter's
restaurant immediately after. I
need to know what you found.
Minters Restaurant. After 5! Please
be careful.

MILTON KING
It's got a bum wheel.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
That's not careful.

HAROLD WOODMAN
This is why you're never driving my
car.

MATRON
The embalmer is coming for this.
You better be here - two hours.

MUSIC ACCELERATES - PAN OR CUT TO MEEKINS'S DEAD FACE AS
MEEKINS IS PLACED ONTO METAL TABLE IN HOSPITAL PROCEDURE
ROOM.

INT. HOSPITAL AUTOPSY ROOM

IRMA ST. CLAIR, FAIR TONED, AFRICAN AMERICAN, QUIET INTENSE
UNFLINCHING DEMEANOR, in SURGICAL SCRUBS --

HAROLD WOODMAN
You remember Burt, don't you, Irma
St. Clair --

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Of course. Hello, Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN
Hello, Irma.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Don't be nervous. I do at least two
autopsies a month.

BURT BERENDSEN

I've done two autopsies my whole life: one to prove I didn't leave a clamp on someone's small intestine; the other to remove a clamp I did leave on someone's small intestine.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Now we know you're good with small intestines, Burt. Thank you.

IRMA SNAPS A CAMERA WITH A FLASH OF DEAD MEEKINS'S FACE - AND REPEATS THIS ACTION.

BURT ANXIOUSLY SHIFTS HIS WEIGHT BACK AND FORTH TO INNER RHYTHM.

HAROLD WOODMAN (CONT'D)

Irma, you and Burt should get coffee sometime.

MILTON KING

Maybe YOU and Irma should get coffee sometime.

HAROLD WOODMAN

We're friends, Milton. You know, Irma, Burt's wife wouldn't stand up for him to her family. They haven't lived together in over a year.

BURT BERENDSEN

That's my situation, not now.

HAROLD WOODMAN

I just want to see you happy. Dead man makes you realize time is short, and love is real if you know what it is--

BURT STARES DOWN AT THE DEAD MEEKINS - REALIZING TIME IS SHORT - HE IS MISSING OUT.

BAM THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN -- A WHITE CHIEF NURSE PEERS IN, SEVERE AND BOSSY --

WHITE CHIEF NURSE

What's going on here?

IRMA ST. CLAIR

Autopsy, paperwork -

HOLDS UP THE PAPER SHE TAKES FROM HAROLD'S HAND -

WHITE CHIEF NURSE
Police are waiting to see this body
to return to the mortuary.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
The sooner we start, the sooner
he's out.

The White Administrative Nurse points at both Harold and Milton.

WHITE CHIEF NURSE
These two men need to leave
immediately.

BURT BERENDSEN
They're veterans. They served their
country.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Go wait at McGee's.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We'll be downstairs at McGee's--

MILTON KING
At McGee's.

WHITE CHIEF NURSE
Irma's Portuguese, that's
different.

Harold leaves with Milton and the CHIEF NURSE.

BURT LIT FROM BELOW NEXT TO IRMA, CORPSE BELOW FRAME.

BURT BERENDSEN
I didn't know you were Portuguese.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I'm not. Do you want to start this
or shall I?

BURT BERENDSEN
It's just emotional because I knew
him.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
You can just sign it if you want
that's what Harold needs.

BURT BERENDSEN
No, no, no. I can help.

Burt and Irma prepare to do the autopsy.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
He was such a kind man.

BURT TURNS HIS HEAD FROM THE STENCH OF THE DECEASED, then turns back.

THEY SPEAK IN INTIMATE UNDERTONES AS THEY WORK BELOW FRAME.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Didn't ask how you were doing.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
My man left. This kind of thing happens every day.

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm sorry.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
It's fine. True love is based on choice, not need. Do you NEED your wife? Or do you CHOOSE your wife?

BURT BERENDSEN
Can't it be both?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
No. The second one's the one that truly matters. At the end of the day it is. Choice matters over need.

Burt contemplates this, looking up towards Irma who is focused on the autopsy.

BURT BERENDSEN
I don't like to be alone.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
That sounds like need.

She works on the body with Burt. The camera tilts down to look at the open body.

THEY LOOK DOWN AT THE STOMACH WHICH IRMA OPENS.

IRMA ST. CLAIR (CONT'D)
I'm opening the stomach, look at that--

SHE SCOOPS GREY STOMACH LIQUID WITH SMALL METAL CUP.

BURT BERENDSEN
It's an unusual color. Something...

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Given to him over a period of time.
It's hard to tell how long.

BURT BERENDSEN
He just got back from Europe.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I'll close him up and take more
blood samples. I'll have more news
for you tomorrow. I take it you're
at the same office?

BURT BERENDSEN
Yeah.

Burt washes his hands as Irma turns to face him squarely.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Harold says you deserve a better
circumstance, but you allowed
yourself to be corrupted. He says
you followed the wrong God home.

BURT BERENDSEN
What? Corrupted? Followed the wrong
God home? Why doesn't he say that
to ME? What does that even mean?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I don't know. Maybe you spent
enthusiasms and urgencies you
didn't know you were wasting until
it was too late. You ended up
without a chair by the time the
music ends, even in your own home.

DOORS BURSTS OPEN.

WHITE CHIEF NURSE
We need this room --

IRMA ST. CLAIR
That's perfect because we were just
leaving.

EXT. UPTOWN NEW YORK HOSPITAL - DUSK

Harold and Burt walk out door of the hospital, down steps.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Liz said to meet her after five at Minter's.

BURT BERENDSEN

I want to talk to you about Irma --

HAROLD WOODMAN

The reason I push that is because I want to see you happy and I'm your friend.

BURT BERENDSEN

My friend who thinks I'm corrupted somehow yet doesn't have the guts or decency to tell it to my face.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You don't want to hear that to your face. You got flowers for your wife who won't let you live in your own apartment.

PAN DOWN TO BURT'S FLOWERS FOR HIS WIFE AS HAROLD AND BURT'S FEET WALK OUT OF FRAME. By the next shot, their conversation continues as night has fallen --

EXT. DOWNTOWN NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

DENIZENS AT NIGHT, A DRUNK MAN DRAGGED BY TWO POLICEMEN PASS AN ACCORDION PLAYER.

FIND BURT AND HAROLD ENTERING FRAME RIGHT.

BURT BERENDSEN

Explain the word corrupted or the term, 'Following the wrong God home'.

HAROLD WOODMAN

It's your in-laws, Burt. They hate that we work together, let alone that we're friends.

BURT BERENDSEN

I don't listen to any of that Park Avenue garbage--

HAROLD WOODMAN

Yes you do. You care a little bit. All it takes is a little bit, Burt, then they got you.

(MORE)

HAROLD WOODMAN (CONT'D)

Like that drop of blood from the
cuts you got in the war before I
stabbed that German. Those cuts
clotted your eye, and guess what:
you lost the eye forever.

THEY WALK TO MINTER'S RESTAURANT ILLUMINATED IN THE DARK.
Burt TURNS IN REVERIE about Harold's words.

EXT./INT. MINTER'S - CONTINUOUS

HOSTESS

Welcome to Minter's Restaurant,
gentlemen. Table for two?

HAROLD WOODMAN

We're actually here meeting
someone. Tall woman, blonde,
serious face.

HOSTESS

Yes, right this way.

The hostess leads Burt and Harold through the restaurant to
an empty table with a fresh piece of pie and cup of coffee.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

She was just here. I don't know
what happened.

THEY HEAR THE SIDE DOOR CLOSE WITH A BELL; HAROLD LOOKS UP TO
SEE LIZ MEEKINS WALK PAST THE FRONT WINDOW - SHE SHAKES HER
HEAD AT THEM TO LEAVE HER ALONE.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Miss Meekins! Wait, Miss Meekins!

HAROLD AND BURT HURRY OUT OF MINTER'S RESTAURANT TO--

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - NIGHT

TWENTY FEET AHEAD - ELIZABETH MEEKINS LOOKS BACK CROSSING THE
STREET AWAY FROM HAROLD AND BURT.

SHE WALKS FAST as Harold and Burt follow twenty feet back.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Miss Meekins, we did what you said.
We found something suspicious like
you thought.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
I can't do it. I'm sorry. I spoke
to a personal friend, Mr.- Mr.
Vroze. He said I have to be
careful.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Who? Did he scare you?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
He said it was dangerous.

THEY ARE UNDER AN ILLUMINATED MOVIE THEATER MARQUEE as
Liz steps off the sidewalk to hail a cab.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Miss Meekins, wait.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
I just need to drop it.

BURT BERENDSEN
Come off the street. Come on.

Burt and Harold get her back on the sidewalk under the
marquee lights.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
You knew my father.

BURT BERENDSEN
We loved your father.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
And you knew what he used to say.
He said you can't let fear chase
you around. I know I seem afraid,
and I shouldn't because Mr. Vroze
was just cautioning me. He meant
well. He's a friend of the family.
What did you find?

HAROLD WOODMAN
We believe he might have been
poisoned. Do you know why?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
Is somebody watching me?

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's OK.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
I don't know if I can talk about
this.

CUT TO POV FROM GLASS THEATER TICKET BOOTH UP STEPS.

See Liz Meekins talking to Burt and Harold.

TARON MILFAX (40s), a red-faced man wearing a western hat
steps into frame, watching.

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
He knew something. He saw something
terrible. He did. And they knew he
was going to tell.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Tell what? What did he see?

ELIZABETH MEEKINS
It's dangerous. I think that-

SUDDENLY TARON MILFAX IN THE WIDE BRIM HAT SHOVES LIZ INTO
TRAFFIC-

A TRUCK WITH SCREECHING BRAKES AND GLARING HEADLIGHTS.

LIZ DISAPPEARS UNDER THE TRUCK, her BLACK PURSE tumbles to
Harold's feet as he reaches for her hand too late--

A WOMAN SCREAMS.

BURT BERENDSEN
Oh my God! Miss Meekins!

BURT AND HAROLD TRY TO SAVE HER UNDER THE TRUCK.

TARON MILFAX
These two, they did it. Right
there.

TARON MILFAX POINTS AT HAROLD AND BURT. BURT KNEELS -- SEES
SHE IS DEAD AS HE'S JOSTLED by rubber-neckers - THE TRUCK
DOOR OPENS, HITTING BURT ON THE HEAD. BURT'S GLASS EYE FALLS
OUT.

TARON MILFAX (CONT'D)
They did it. Right there.

BURT FEELS FOR IT AROUND PEOPLE'S FEET WITH HIS DOCTOR'S BAG--

TARON MILFAX (CONT'D)
These two guys right here.

HAROLD WOODMAN
No, you pushed her. I saw you push
her. I saw you sir.

Burt finds his eye and puts it right back in its socket.

TARON MILFAX
They did it.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I'm an attorney. This is a doctor.
She hired us. This is our client.

TARON MILFAX
Look what he's got in his hand.

The purse is in Harold's hands.

PEDESTRIAN WOMAN
He's got her purse!

TARON MILFAX
He's got her purse.

PEDESTRIAN MAN
You killed her and took her purse!

HAROLD WOODMAN
I saw you. You pushed her. I'm an
attorney.

Two men approach Harold, restraining him before he can make
it to Milfax. They struggle against each other, stepping all
over Burt's flowers laid out on the sidewalk.

Taron Milfax takes out a gun from his jacket pocket and
points it at Burt and Harold.

TARON MILFAX
I want to make a citizen's arrest.

POLICE WHISTLE BLOWS -- AS A POLICE OFFICER WALKS THROUGH THE
CROWD AND RAISES HIS GUN TO SHOOT.

GUNSHOTS RING OUT AS BURT AND HAROLD RUN -- PEOPLE SCREAM.

HAROLD AND BURT RUN DOWN AN ALLEY AND HIDE OUT OF BREATH IN
THE SHADOWS AGAINST A BUILDING.

THEY WATCH TARON MILFAX GET INTO A CAR WITH ELI BEPP (40s),
HIS ROUGH CONFEDERATE, across the street.

HAROLD WOODMAN
 (whispers)
 That's the man.

TARON MILFAX
 We gotta stay organized. We're an
 organization. Stay organized.

THEY GET INTO THE CAR AND DRIVE OFF.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - CONTINUOUS

Burt and Harold run across the street and hail a passing bus;
 it stops at the corner. The door of the bus opens for them,
 they look down the street before boarding.

HAROLD WOODMAN
 They're still watching us.

BURT BERENDSEN
 You think?

HAROLD WOODMAN
 I think so.

BURT STARES TO CAMERA TO SEE DOWN STREET: FREEZE FRAME

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 Holy shit. What fresh hell is this?
 You don't get here without things
 starting a long time ago.

CUT TO:

INT. VANDENHEUVEL RESIDENCE - NEW YORK - 1918

BURT FOURTEEN YEARS YOUNGER, UNSCARRED BY WAR, sits profile,
 stares intensely to answer someone important off screen.

BURT BERENDSEN
 You want me to go to our favorite
 tree -- and get bark? In the
Argonne forest, where they are
 blowing people up?

WE NOW SEE DOCTOR AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL and wife ALVELIA
 VANDENHEUVEL (50s) STIFF PARK AVENUE SOCIETY

With THEIR DAUGHTER, BURT'S WIFE: BEATRICE, YOUNG, BEAUTIFUL,
 COMPLICATED, RICH.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL
It will be honorable, glorious.
Good for the family.

BEATRICE
It's good, Burt. It's good. You'll
fit in better when you have more
medals.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL
You'll fit in on Park Avenue.
People respect military service.

BURT BERENDSEN
I could be killed.

BEATRICE
You cannot think that way. Of
course you won't be killed.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
Ahh, Beatrice.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRANCE ARMY STOCKADE (PRISON) - RAINY DAY - 1918

Milton King, younger, stands next to Victor Barnes in a
stockade.

MILTON KING
I didn't come all this way to be
talked to like a damn dog.

BURT IS WALKED TO THE STOCKADE BY A TOBACCO CHEWING HARSH
SERGEANT.

HARSH SERGEANT
It's a crime against the flag. I
don't think they have the ability
to possess the admiration or the
confidence to wear the uniform.

BURT BERENDSEN
Who are we talking about?

MILTON KING
One of these crackers get in my
way, I'm gonna shoot 'em in the
back.

HARSH SERGEANT GETS INTO YOUNG HAROLD WOODMAN'S FACE.

HARSH SERGEANT
We know you'd like this even more.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I thought I was done talking to
you.

HARSH SERGEANT
You'll never be done talking to me.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS WALKS UP, TALL AFFABLE, KIND, AND
GENTLE.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
That's enough, Sergeant.

HARSH SERGEANT
Yes sir, General Meekins.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
You don't need to be involved
anymore. Your attitude doesn't
help. That's why I was bringing you
in as our medical officer,
Bernstein.

BURT BERENDSEN
Berendsen, sir.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
Sorry. This is Mister Woodman. We
gotta situation here that I thought
you might be able to help with.

BURT BERENDSEN
What is the situation sir?

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
Mister Woodman, why don't you tell
him why you're here in a stockade.

BURT BERENDSEN
Why are we in a stockade?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Insubordination.

BURT BERENDSEN
Were you insubordinate?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Yes.

BURT BERENDSEN

Why?

HAROLD WOODMAN

They gave us Jim Crow officers,
like that knucklehead. But we
refused to continue, until they
replaced him with somebody good.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS

Someone descent and respectful.

BURT BERENDSEN

Is that supposed to be me?

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS

That is you, Berendsen.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

I mean, the people you meet in
these circumstances of tremendous
stress are bonded to you for life.

SOLDIER WOODMAN LOOKS CLOSELY AT DR. BERENDSEN'S FACE.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Are you the kind of doctor who's
gonna leave me bleeding out and
I'll have to shoot in the back?
Because let me tell you, the
officers that they had, they didn't
care whether we lived or died.

BURT BERENDSEN

I am not going to let anyone bleed
out and I do not want to get shot
in the back. I'm the son of a
mechanic from Elmira. I am married.
I am half-Catholic, half-Jewish. I
am a doctor, I have a practice on
Park Avenue, and I think that my in-
laws sent me here to get rid of me.

HAROLD WOODMAN

That all sounds pretty good except
for that in-laws part. But maybe
that's why I can trust you. So
we'll make a pact. You see to it
that we don't die. And I'll make
sure you won't get killed.

BURT BERENDSEN

We'll look out for each other.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Harold Thaddeus Woodman.

BURT BERENDSEN
Burtram Berendsen.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Welcome to the 369th.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank you.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
Finally, that's what I've been
looking for. Some decency and
respect. Now let's go deal with
this unfortunate uniform situation.

MILTON KING
Yeah, let's go deal with this
uniform shit.

CUT TO: BURT, HAROLD, MILTON PUT ON BLUE FRENCH UNIFORMS.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Welcome to my army.

BURT BERENDSEN
Why are we wearing French uniforms?

HAROLD WOODMAN
American soldiers don't want to be
seen with us.

GENERAL BILL MEEKINS
It's disgraceful. I fought to
create the regiment in the spirit
of kindness and unity. I hope to
see you on the other side of the
Argonne in good shape. God be with
you.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL IN FRANCE - DAY

HIGH POV LOOKING DOWN ON FAST MOVING BLOODY GURNEYS WITH
SCREAMING BURT AND HAROLD, FACES AND BODIES BLOODY.

Bloody face Burt shredded back DOCTORING BLOODY FACE HAROLD,
SHREDDED BLOODY SHIRT --

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 I saved Harold. He saved me and
 there was this French lady saving
 both of us.

VALERIE VOZE, force of nature, 20, dark hair back, no nurse
 hat; she is FAST, DIRECT, and LIVELY IN her HANDLING, without
 hesitation, of ALL BLOODY SOLDIERS ON GURNEYS with SHRAPNEL
 WOUNDS.

Her SPIRIT IS PALPABLE, CRISP, KIND AS SHE METICULOUSLY, WITH
 TWEEZERS, pulls each fragment of shrapnel from the bloody
 backs of Burt and Harold -- she drops the metal fragments
 into a metal bowl - in an ongoing series of CLINKS.

ANOTHER FRENCH NURSE reaches for Valerie's bowl of bloody
 shrapnel on a nearby counter top.

FRENCH NURSE
 Donnez-moi le reste. [Give me the
 rest of it]

Valerie immediately grabs the bowl back from the nurse.

VALERIE VOZE
 NE JETEZ PAS CA! [Do not throw
 these away!]

FRENCH NURSE
 Pourquoi vous voulez garder ça?
 C'est insalubre? [Why do you keep
 this it's unsanitary]

VALERIE VOZE
 ÇA NE VOUS REGARDE PAS. [It's none
 of your business!]

FRENCH NURSE
 Pourquoi vous voulez --[Why do you
 keep it--]

VALERIE VOZE
 Comment? Sortez d'ici. [WHAT?! Get
 out of here!]

Valerie snatches the nurse's hat off of her head and tosses
 it.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
 Sortez d'ici. [Get out.]

NURSE
 Oh non, non.

Valerie flicks a syringe before injecting it into Burt's arm.

Valerie takes all of the shrapnel that she collected in the bloody bowls and dumps them in a grey metallic box as Burt and Harold watch from the other side of the room.

VALERIE LOOKS AT THE LARGE MACABRE BOWL OF BLOODY METAL NIBS, FLAKES, SHARDS --

INT. HOSPITAL IN BELGIUM - LATER

Burt watches as she leans down, looks into Harold's eyes -- connecting - and WITH TWEEZERS, REMOVES MORE METAL BITS FROM HIS NECK - AS PING, PING - they fall into a metal bowl.

SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF FAST APPROACHING OMINOUS MARCHING UNISON BOOT STEPS IN THE HALL -- PAN TO:

MARCHING BELGIAN CHURCH OFFICIALS OPEN THE GLASS PANED DOOR. VALERIE, BURT, HAROLD LOOK UP.

CHURCH OFFICIAL

Arrêtez cette atrocité! C'est indécemment! C'est criminel! Vous blasphémez en gardant ce métal indecent. [Stop this atrocity! It's indecent! It's criminal! You are blaspheming by keeping this bloody metal!]

HAROLD WOODMAN

ELLE blasphème? [SHE blasphemed?]

HOSPITAL OFFICIAL

Oui. [Yes]

VALERIE VOZE

MOI je blasphème? [I blasphemed?]

HOSPITAL OFFICIAL

Oui. [Yes]

VALERIE VOZE

C'était obscène quand elle y est rentrée, je la rachète quand je la retire. Vous préférez que tout soit cache. Non. [It was obscene when it went in, it is redeemed when I take it out; you prefer it all be hidden.]

SHE HOLDS OUT HER OPEN PALM FULL OF BLOODY SHRAPNEL.

HOSPITAL OFFICIAL
C'est une insulte à Dieu et aux
familles des morts et des blessés.
[It insults God and the families of
the wounded and the dead.]

HAROLD WOODMAN
Non, elle a raison! Non, elle a
raison. [No, she's right. No, she's
right.]

VALERIE VOZE
Merci. [Thank you.]

HAROLD WOODMAN
Elle peut garder le métal couvert
de sang. [She can keep the bloody
metal.]

VALERIE VOZE
Merci. [Thank you.]

HAROLD WOODMAN
Elle a raison. [She's right.]

VALERIE VOZE
Vous voyez? [You see?]

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Vous voyez, allez. Tout le monde.
Tout le monde! [You see, let's go.
Everyone. Everyone!]

THE OTHER INJURED VET PATIENTS START TO SHOUT IN AGREEMENT
WITH HAROLD - THE OFFICIALS LOOK STUNNED --

BURT BERENDSEN
Take it easy, Harold--

MILTON KING
Comment osez-vous. [How dare you?]

BURT BERENDSEN
Oh my God.

HAROLD LEADS THE WARD IN CHANT AS INJURED VET PATIENTS THROW
THINGS AT THE HOSPITAL OFFICIALS.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
I don't know what is happening!

THE HORRIFIED HOSPITAL OFFICIALS AND OTHERS LEAVE, THROUGH
THE GLASS DOORS -- THEY LOCK WITH A KEY.

HAROLD AND VALERIE
A NOUS LA LIBERTE! ARRETEZ DE NOUS
MENTIR! [Freedom! Stop lying!]

HAROLD AND VALERIE RAISE CLASPED HANDS.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Liberte! [Liberty!]

Valerie smiles at Harold and kisses him happily on the cheek.

VALERIE VOZE
Mr. Woodman, I believe I owe you my
gratitude.

HAROLD WOODMAN
You speak English?

VALERIE VOZE
Yes.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I thought you were French.

VALERIE VOZE
No, I'm Valerie Bandenberg.

HAROLD WOODMAN
You're not French?

VALERIE VOZE
No. May I buy you a drink?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Yes. We can do that here?

VALERIE VOZE
I can.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We can drink here?

BURT BERENDSEN
Harold, what the hell are you
doing?

MILTON KING
Young man! Where are you going?

VALERIE VOZE
Oh, he's in safe hands with me.

MILTON KING

If those Mississippi crackers could
see you now.

BURT BERENDSEN

What happened to the pact? I lost
an eye here.

INT. HOSPITAL IN BELGIUM - CORRIDOR

HAROLD AND VALERIE GO DOWN AN ABANDONED CORRIDOR.

Valerie takes out a short wooden pipe from a metal box she
keeps in a drawer, and lights it.

HAROLD WOODMAN

A woman who smokes from a pipe.

VALERIE VOZE

Are you intimidated?

HAROLD WOODMAN

A little bit right now.

She pours them drinks and they toast -- and stare at each
other intimately.

VALERIE VOZE (V.O.)

When you see someone and you really
see them, you see the kid that used
to be them. You see the part of
them that's vulnerable. Harold and
I had that kind of seeing each
other right from the start.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Now that the war is over, I just
want to be a person. I just want to
walk around, free, as a person.
Just living my life. Here in
Europe.

VALERIE VOZE

That's the ticket. Just live and be
free. I highly recommend it. I've
walked around Europe. It's done
wonders for me.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)

Without too many words, she's
looking right into your soul.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You wear it well.

They cheers each other with their glasses.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)
Both of our lives were in the
balance before God, right there.

Valerie smiles at Harold before taking another sip of her drink.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Can I ask you something?

HE STEPS CLOSER TO VALERIE.

HAROLD WOODMAN (CONT'D)
What do you do with the bloody
shrapnel that you take from our
bodies?

VALERIE VOZE
I can't give you that for nothing.
You have to trade me something. You
don't get that for free.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Trade you. OK. What does it cost?

VALERIE VOZE
Something beautiful. Something to
live for.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I'm looking at that right now.

He stares at Valerie. CUT TO:

BURT'S HEAD PEERS SIDEWAYS FROM AFAR LIKE A BIRD WATCHING
WITH GREAT INTEREST.

HAROLD WOODMAN (CONT'D)
I already gave you pieces of metal
shrapnel from my body.

VALERIE VOZE
You know actually I took a lot more
pieces of metal from your friend's
body. What's his name?

BURT BERENDSEN
(in hospital gown
BANDAGED)
His name is Burt Berendsen.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Oh boy.

BURT BERENDSEN

And he's hobbling along here remembering something about a friendship pact. Do you remember that? Remember me? Here I am.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Good to see you, Burt.

VALERIE VOZE

My apologies, Burt Berendsen. Never again will I pour two without a third.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Hey Burt, you've got to help me trade something beautiful. In return, she's gonna show us what she does with all of the bloody metal she took from our bodies. Her name is Valerie.

BURT BERENDSEN

What do you do with all that shrapnel, Valerie?

VALERIE VOZE

If you want to know, you'll have to trade me something.

HAROLD WOODMAN

She told me the same thing.

BURT BERENDSEN

I got nothing.

*

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Nonsense song.

HAROLD WOODMAN

That's a good idea. How about that?

VALERIE VOZE

What's a nonsense song?

INT. HOSPITAL IN BELGIUM - EMPTY ROOM

They pull pieces of paper with words on them out of a hat.

BURT BERENDSEN

(sings)

'Le soleil rouge--'

HAROLD WOODMAN

'Des pamplemousses--'

VALERIE VOZE

'Le mouchoir--'

BURT BERENDSEN

'Quand tu appelles, mon nom a moi/
C'est le moment aimer etre'

HAROLD, VALERIE, BURT

'Quand tu appelles, mon nom a moi/
C'est le moment aimer etre/ Le
soleil rouge/ Du pamplemousse/ Le
mouchoir/ Quand tu appelles, mon
nom a moi/ C'est le moment aimer
etre.'

SCORE TAKES OVER WARM AS Valerie OPENS THE WOOD BOX -- CAMERA
PANS DOWN TO A PURE VISUAL SEQUENCE OF HER ART WORK IN COLORS
AND BLACK AND WHITE -- ONE AFTER THE OTHER TO THE MUSIC full
frame:

VALERIE VOZE

I've taken all of these pieces out
of people's bodies. Look, this is
more primitive, this stuff.

SILHOUETTE PORTRAITS AND ABSTRACTS MADE FROM SHRAPNEL ON
CARDBOARD, SOME PAINTED - BEAUTIFUL COLOR PATTERNS MADE FROM
SHRAPNEL, painted and unpainted -- TO THE MUSIC AS -

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

I'm having a tea party. This is
made out of gun powder and
shrapnel.

SHE THEN TAKES OUT A VANITY SET MADE OF SHRAPNEL, A "MIRROR",
A "COMB", AND A "BRUSH" SHE PRETENDS TO USE. THEN A TEA SET
MADE OF SHRAPNEL. SHE PANTOMIMES POURING, DRINKING
DELICATELY.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

The height of civilization.

VALERIE PUTS ON A VEIL OF SHRAPNEL-- HER FACE SEEN THROUGH IT

VALERIE HOLDS UP A FRAME OF TWO EYES ON A HANDLE.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

(in a deep voice)
Welcome to my world.

VALERIE HOLDS UP A PAPER MASK WITH ONE HAND WHILE HOLDING A PAPER HAND IN THE OTHER. SHE PRETENDS TO APPLY LIPSTICK TO THE LIPS ON THE MASK.

VALERE

I'm doing my makeup. Oh do I only have a half a face? How did that happen?

VALERIE VOZE (V.O.)

As long as I have my lipstick.

VALERIE HOLDS UP AN IMAGE WITH HER GLOVED HAND.

VALERIE VOZE

Pretty.

SHE HOLDS UP NEW ART PIECES.

VALERIE VOZE (V.O.)

You've got to know what you love. And you've got to get a real kick out of it. Or there's too much damn trouble in it to spoil this affair of living from beginning to end if you let it. Why not live it for the beautiful things? Even if you were a bit broke.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL IN BELGIUM

VALERIE REMOVES BANDAGES COVERING BURT'S RIGHT EYE, revealing it is SEWN SHUT, EYE IS LOST, WITH SLASH SCARS AROUND IT.

CUT TO:

VALERIE POURS TEA FOR HAROLD AND BURT IN ANOTHER ROOM - DAY

BURT BERENDSEN

(quietly)

What's my Beatrice gonna make of this missing eye business and the scars, and the scars on my back? Can we do anything about that, Valerie?

VALERIE VOZE

I know benefactors in a hospital in Amsterdam. They'll give you a new eye.

BURT BERENDSEN
In Amsterdam?

VALERIE VOZE
When I was going through France a couple of years ago, things were a little more difficult. I had to stab a guy, I had to hit a lady with a brick one time.

BURT BERENDSEN
What?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Wow.

★

VALERIE VOZE
It's a long story. But with you two, it'll be a cakewalk. And besides, I'm far better at forging documents now.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Come on, Burt, let's go to Amsterdam.

BURT BERENDSEN
OK.

CUT TO:

MUSIC ELEVATES as Burt and Harold WALK WITH coats and SMALL BAGS. VALERIE LEADS, BRANDISHING FORGED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS as she speaks in French over a PRESIDING NURSE --

VALERIE VOZE
Excusez-moi, attention, pardon, nous avons l'ordre officiel de transfert pour Amsterdam et nous aurons besoin d'un véhicule. Merci, merci madame. [Excuse me coming through, we have official orders to transfer to Amsterdam and we will need a vehicle. Thank you, thank you, ma'am.]

PAN - CUT TO :

EXT./INT. AMSTERDAM MANSION- - DAY

Valerie opens the door to an expansive hopeful large room where TWO WELL DRESSED MEN STAND WAITING AT THE FAR SIDE.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Bonjour mes amis.

TWO MEN

Bonjour!

VALERIE VOZE

Ça va?

CUT TO:

BOX OPENS TO TRAY OF FORTY GLASS EYES FULL FRAME - TILT UP TO PAUL CANTERBURY cheerful exuberant BRITISH GENTLEMAN, perfectly dressed, BRISK MANNER, 50, AN ALMOST MAGICAL PERSON WHO SPEAKS BRIGHTLY INTO LENS:

PAUL CANTERBURY

Paul Canterbury, Canterbury Glass, London, England. We make the finest prosthetic glass, industrial glass, top secret glass, military glass, every kind of glass, except window glass... unless of course it's bullet proof. Have no fear, a friend of Miss Valerie is a friend of Paul Canterbury, who offers you a lifetime supply of Canterbury glass eyes. As you can see I've got the same injury as you.

Paul pulls down skin below his right eye.

PAUL CANTERBURY (CONT'D)

Or perhaps you CAN'T see due to the fine craftsmanship of Canterbury glass. Let me see, I believe you are a dark hazel green, am I correct sir?

BURT BERENDSEN

That's correct.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Huzzah very good. This is my American colleague, Henry Norcross.

HENRY NORCROSS, TALL, 45, DARK BLUE SUIT, VEST, WATCH CHAIN, CONFIDENT, AUTHORITATIVE IN BLUNT AMERICAN WAY.

HENRY NORCROSS

How do you do, we've been friends of Valerie's family through international business for many years. We've kept her safe on her adventure and in return she's helped serve the good of the world.

HAROLD WOODMAN
How did she do that, exactly?

HENRY NORCROSS
By attending various dinners and functions and then telling us what she's learned about banks and troop movements so on and so forth.

BURT BERENSEN
They're spies.

HENRY NORCROSS
Oh, no sir, he works for a glass business and I work for the department of the treasury.

FREEZE FRAME

Gentle gong sounds as a super of text reads, "UK MI6 Intelligence" over Paul Canterbury; "US Naval Intelligence" over Henry Norcross.

END FREEZE FRAME

VALERE
They're old friends, they've helped me out, I've helped them out, now I think they'll help you out.

HENRY NORCROSS
Paul and I have even found the time to do a little birding here. We're avid birders.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Yes, it's an exquisite hobby, really.

Paul and Henry motion over to a display of birds they have along the wall.

HENRY NORCROSS
This is the African Gray crown crane. These are extinct.

PAUL CANTERBURY
We have the last two.

Henry motions over to another bird on display.

HENRY NORCROSS
The Nicobar Pigeon.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Yes.

HENRY NORCROSS

They were alive at one point.

Henry motions over to the last bird they have displayed on their shelf.

HENRY NORCROSS (CONT'D)

This is the North American pheasant.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Yes, the North American pheasant, which I like to call the peasant of pheasants. They're so common, you see. But they are beautiful. The plumage is really outstanding.

HENRY NORCROSS

So, ya know, we're happy to pay for the faces. Whatever cosmetic healing you might need, top shelf, nothing but the best.

PAUL CANTERBURY

As well as a good life here in Amsterdam where you deserve a rest and some freedom after what you've been through.

HENRY NORCROSS

We'll come a-calling some time in the future when we need good people like you to help. Because there will come a time to say "enough" to these madmen who created this war we can't make any sense of.

HAROLD WOODMAN

How could this monstrosity repeat itself?

BURT BERENDSEN

It was supposed to be the war to end all wars.

VALERIE VOZE

Because the dream repeats itself since it forgets itself, that's why it repeats itself. This is the good part;

(MORE)

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
the bad part will come one day. But
for now, this is the good part, in
Amsterdam.

INT. VALERIE'S AMSTERDAM APARTMENT - DAY

Valerie wearing her cape and hat OPENS THE DOOR TO her
Amsterdam apartment, turns in silhouette to switch on the
lights--

VALERIE VOZE
These are the lights right here.
They can be a little tricky. You
gotta go up, down, up, down, up.
It'll flicker a little bit. See?
Lumiere. I mean it's a big place.
Paul and Henry organized it for me,
but it's a wreck...

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
She was right, this was the good
part. It was fantastic.

VALERIE VOZE
... When you use the water it'll do
that.

Points to the shaking vibrating kitchen faucet she turns on.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
That's normal.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
The world was suddenly our oyster
and it was glorious. Yeah,
Amsterdam is in the heart, and was
there all along.

PAN TO ANOTHER DAY: Burt, Harold, and Valerie wear new plaid
clothes in Valerie's shared apartment.

PAN TO PARTY AT PAUL AND HENRY'S OFFICE ANOTHER DAY:

HENRY NORCROSS
Paul! Show them the sand dance.

The oriental carpet is rolled up; sand is shaken onto the
wood floor.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
The sand dance! The crazy British
Empire sand dance.

PAUL CANTERBURY in costume performs a choreographed British dance - a tradition of Egypt.

Burt and Harold clap along with Henry Norcross and General Meekins, cheering Paul on --

AS VALERIE LAUGHS, FILMING IT ALL WITH AN EARLY MOVIE CAMERA

Pan to Burt pushing Valerie on her swing, suspended in the middle of the room.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
She was brilliant and nuts. But she
was our kind of nuts. So our pact,
now had three. I stayed in
Amsterdam for a while because it
was glorious there.

The trio lie on the carpeted floor, holding each other's arms.

CUT TO:

Valerie and Harold lie naked, backs to the camera.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
He was steady and strong. She was
bold and luminous. It was what the
French call a "coup de foudre" --
love at first sight.

CUT TO:

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
She made her art.

FULL FRAME: rhythmic flurry of Valerie's art - one image after another, often using photographs of Harold, Burt, Valerie.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
I was their best friend with my new
eye.

Burt lies on his single bed, holds his new glass eye, puts it into the eye socket, taps it with his fingernail -- click click.

CUT TO:

AMSTERDAM STORE FRONT - BURT, HAROLD, AND VALERIE OPERATE A MULTI-SERVICE OFFICE: PLASTER FACES ON THE WALL FOR PROSTHESIS AS Burt gives veterans medical advice, Harold gives travel advice, and Valerie works on crafting prostheses.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
We helped vets passing through town.

INT. AMSTERDAM TANGO HALL -- NIGHT

The backs of Burt, Valerie, Harold, walk away from camera into a tango hall with balls of light across the ceiling.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
We went dancing all the time. It was magnificent.

THEY SOAR AND DANCE IN A GROUP OF FOUR TWIRLING AND LAUGHING, CHANGING PARTNERS.

BURT BERENDSEN
These tango parlors. You really feel like you're flying.

INT. VALERIE'S AMSTERDAM APARTMENT - DAY

BUT NOW: Harold and Valerie sit on the bed to face Burt in a serious moment.

VALERIE VOZE
You can't go.

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's terrible over there right now. What are you talking about?

BURT BERENDSEN
I'd like to see my wife.

VALERIE VOZE
Burt, I have a very bad feeling about this. I think it's a bad omen if you leave. Please don't go.

BURT BERENDSEN
I became a doctor on Park Avenue.

VALERIE VOZE
Park Avenue?

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm married.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We can figure it out. Right?

VALERIE VOZE
I know a thing or two about Park Avenue. Please don't go.

BURT BERENDSEN
Valerie, let's be realistic. This can't last forever. How are we supposed to live?

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
I missed Beatrice. Even though her family sent me off to war.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL (O.S.)
Serve your country.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
When I first met her, I was at a charity event at medical school.

SEE: BURT'S MEMORY OF LUMINOUS BEATRICE, HIS WIFE.

BURT BERENDSEN
And I see this woman. She was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. Oh my God you should have seen her. And we danced all night. We were giddy, we were laughing, we were in love. I had no idea that she was the daughter of the guy who gave me this scholarship. In his eyes, this half-Jew, he said, "You can have the scholarship, but my daughter, uh-uh. Off limits."

VALERIE VOZE
Sounds bad.

BURT BERENDSEN
You can choose your friends - you are my family. I choose you, and this -- I'm getting embarrassed because you might not feel the same way -- but this relationship is probably the most important thing in my life.

VALERIE VOZE
We agree! So stay.

BURT BERENDSEN
I can't quit Beatrice. I love her.

Burt hugs Valerie and Harold goodbye.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
Sure, they say you'll have medals.
You'll fit in on Park Avenue.

CUT TO:

EXT. VANDENHUEVEL PARK AVENUE MEDICAL OFFICE - NYC- DAY -
AROUND 1920

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
This was the hero's welcome that I
received.

BURT IS EJECTED WITH TWO BLACK PATIENTS BY HIS FATHER-IN-LAW,
DR. VANDENHEUVEL. BEATRICE IS TORN APART AS SHE WATCHES.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL
No, I told you before, you cannot
treat these patients here. It's
completely inappropriate.

BURT BERENDSEN
The only reason I know these
patients is because you made me go
to war.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL
You don't understand. This does not
happen on Park Avenue and you're
taking too much morphine. You stay
away from my daughter. You're
blacklisted.

BEATRICE
Don't go to the apartment. I'll
send your clothes. Burtram I'm
sorry.

CUT TO: BACK ALLEY NYC - NIGHT

BURT TREATS A LINE OF VETERANS AND OTHERS WHO WAIT.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
How could I not help the veterans?
I had relocated my practice to an
alley off of Great Jones Street. It
got a little out of control with
the pain medicine.

BURT SHOOTS HIMSELF WITH MORPHINE AND DRINKS LIQUOR.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

I was given an enforced arrest
courtesy of the state of New York.

BURT LAYED OUT ON MORPHINE IS CARRIED OUT BY POLICE. MUSIC
PROPELS --

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

I wrote my friends to help get me
out. I had no idea what it would do
to them.

INT. VALERIE'S AMSTERDAM APARTMENT - DAY

HAROLD WOODMAN

If your family has the kind of
influence that could help get Burt
out of jail then I think you should
do it. I mean the pact is the pact,
Valerie.

VALERIE VOZE

I told you I ran away from
something, didn't I? That's all you
need to know. But yes, my family
could possibly help him. But if I
contact them, they'll know where I
am, and if they know where I am,
they will find a way to possibly
drag me back. And they are very
persuasive.

HAROLD WOODMAN

All he was doing was trying to help
the regiment. I hear those guys
have it rough back at home.

VALERIE VOZE

I think we both knew where this was
headed anyway.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What do you mean by that?

VALERIE VOZE

We only exist in Amsterdam. You
know, and you've spoken a lot about
the things you plan on doing back
in America. Maybe it's time.

HAROLD WOODMAN

I said I wanted to become a lawyer to fight for people. People like those soldiers back at home. People who couldn't fight back -- couldn't fight for themselves. Use the law.

VALERIE VOZE

You also said that you wanted to live in Amsterdam with me.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Yes. I want to do both. I want to go back home and fight, and I want to stay here with you. And I want to live. I want to truly live.

VALERIE VOZE

How do you have both of those things?

HAROLD WOODMAN

There's a way. But right now we have to help Burt.

Valerie takes Harold face in her hands, looking straight into his eyes.

VALERIE VOZE

What will happen to us? I love you.

HAROLD WOODMAN

We've got to help Burt.

Valerie kisses Harold and turns out of frame.

INT. VALERIE'S AMSTERDAM APARTMENT - DAY

Harold wakes up alone in the Amsterdam apartment. A letter sits on the bed.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

She vanished one day soon after. Without a word to Harold, except a note.

INT. BURT'S/HAROLD'S NEW OFFICE - DAY 1921

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

I got suddenly released from jail. Never heard from her. Harold came back to New York and got his law degree.

Injured veteran gets helped through the door to Burt and Harold's medical and law office.

HAROLD WOODMAN
You have a claim. The good doctor
and I will take good care of you.

Burt holds up a bottle of pills hopefully for the patient.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
We worked together for ten years.
All kinds of trouble we got people
out of... until the Meekins case.

BACK TO:

FREEZE FRAME NIGHT - BURT AND HAROLD BOARD NYC STREET BUS ON
THE LAM, 1933

Unfreeze, bus door closes, they look out the bus window as it
takes off.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
We may very well not survive.

EXT. EMPTY UPPER EAST SIDE STREET - NIGHT - LATER

BURT, HAROLD WALK THROUGH AFFLUENT RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

BURT BERENDSEN
Oh my God, that poor girl. I can't
bear this. Something is very wrong,
Harold.

The two come to a stop.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
What's that thing that you always
say to me?

HAROLD WOODMAN
We'll fight through it. We'll find
a way no matter what.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank you. I needed that.

Burt turns away from Harold and up the steps to a brownstone.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Where are you going?

BURT BERENDSEN
It's safe here, we can get off the street.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Oh, I know where we are. Not that woman, Burt.

INT. BEATRICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Inside: well-to-do three bedroom apartment of prosperous daughter in peach tones.

HAROLD WOODMAN
The lights are off. Is it a surprise dinner?

THEY QUIETLY ENTER A ROOM AT THE BACK OF THE APARTMENT.

INT. BURT'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

BURT BERENDSEN
She knows people from Liz Meekins' world.

HAROLD WOODMAN
This place looks the same. Smells of mothballs like your marriage.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thanks, pal.

HAROLD WOODMAN
What are friends for if not honesty?

BURT RINSES HIS EYE IN A GLASS OF VODKA HE POURS, THEN POPS HIS EYE BACK IN.

BURT BERENDSEN
That burns. How we looking?

Burt taps his glass eye into place.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Good? Help me.

Burt then brings a patch to his face in order to cover the scars under his eye which Harold helps locate.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Oh I see, you're putting it on nice for her, huh?

THEY HEAR A DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE in the apartment.

BEATRICE (O.C.)
Burtram? Are you here?

BURT BERENDSEN
Sit down, relax. Do me a favor, try
to be optimistic.

BURT CLOSES THE POCKET DOORS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BURT'S OLD APARTMENT WITH BEATRICE

Burt's estranged wife, BEATRICE, dark hair bobbed forward at the jaw line faces the camera as she looks at Burt.

BEATRICE
Oh, look at you.

In return, Burt raises his arms in greeting, holding the mashed yellow flowers he's been carrying all night for her.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)
There is no dinner, I'm sorry. I'm
sorry. It was a mistake.

BURT BERENDSEN
Then why did you invite me?

BEATRICE
Because I had a moment of weakness.

BURT BERENDSEN
That's what we've become, a moment
of weakness?

BEATRICE
My father can't even know that I'm
doing this because he'll take away
all kinds of privileges.

INT. BURT'S STUDY

Harold searches the contents of murdered Liz Meekins' purse on the desk.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BURT'S OLD APARTMENT WITH BEATRICE

BURT BERENDSEN
What's wrong here, do you remember
when we had nights of Emily
Dickinson poetry and singing
together just looking at each
other?

BEATRICE

I remember. That's why I love you.

INT. BURT'S STUDY

Harold picks up a pamphlet from the purse of Liz Meekins: it reads "Committee for a Sound Dollar."

INT. LIVING ROOM - BURT'S OLD APARTMENT WITH BEATRICE

BEATRICE

Did you fall? Did you hurt your
back? Let me take a look at it.

Burt throws the yellow flowers to the floor, the Emily Dickinson volume on top of it.

BURT BERENDSEN (O.C.)

My back's been killing me all day.

BEATRICE

Let me look at it come on.

She slides Burt's clothes above his shoulders REVEALING A WORN LEATHER AND METAL BACK BRACE THAT ENCASES HIS TORSO and is LACED UP THE BACK.

THEY SIT ON THE SOFA AS BEATRICE TRACES HER FINGERS OVER THE SHRAPNEL SCARS THAT COVER BURT'S BACK. MEANWHILE -

INT. BURT'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Harold watches Burt and Beatrice through the crack of the pocket doors.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BURT'S OLD APARTMENT WITH BEATRICE

BEATRICE

You were once so beautiful.

BURT BERENDSEN

Oh, for God's sake, Beatrice.

BEATRICE

Now you're just hideous and
grotesque so ugly and deformed.
It's so hard to look at you. And
you wear a corset like a woman,
you're helpless.

BURT BERENDSEN

Beatrice. I can't do this anymore.
This deviance you've come to have
about my scars.

Burt sits up to look into Beatrice's eyes.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Do you choose me? Or do you need
me?

BEATRICE
What kind of question is that?

BURT BERENDSEN
I was talking to someone today and
they said that love is CHOOSING
someone, not needing them for some
other reason.

BEATRICE
Did you need me when we met? Or did
you choose me as a person? Was it
the people around me? The prestige
of my family in medicine when you
were a scholarship student from
upstate New York. Or did you choose
me? Just me?

The doors to the study open and Harold steps out.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I asked Burt that exact same
question just a little while ago.

BEATRICE
Harold Woodman. Why do you have a
woman's purse?

BURT BERENDSEN
Bill Meekins' daughter Liz was
pushed in front of a truck tonight.

BEATRICE
What? Are you serious?

HAROLD WOODMAN
She hired me, because we were close
to her father. That's why she
trusted us.

BURT BERENDSEN
Somehow, they think we did it, and
we need somebody. We need
something. We need someone to help
us.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What about the name Rose? That's the last thing Liz Meekins said before she died. That a Mister Rose could help her.

BEATRICE

Liz would never know a Rose, that's a Jewish name--

BURT BERENDSEN

Oh, thank you, Beatrice.

BEATRICE

You're only half. Harold, you misheard.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Why?

BEATRICE

Because it has to be VOZE with a 'V', that's a prominent family in the social register. The Vozes are at the top of it.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Burt, this is what I'm talking about. This is your world we're in trouble in. Not mine.

SCARY URGENT POUNDING ON THE APARTMENT DOOR DOWN THE HALL FOLLOWED BY SMACK OF DOOR AS IT'S OPENED.

BEATRICE

What's that?

Beatrice looks shocked as she marches back to living room.

BEATRICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

How dare you come in here.

Harold and Burt follow to see, already inside the apartment, DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER, 44, ROUGH, TALL, AND A THICKER, MALEVOLENT DETECTIVE named HILTZ, curly hair, overly eager.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

The door was unlocked.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

This is still your listed address, right?

BURT BERENDSEN

Apparently so. Detective Getweiler, what brings you here at this hour? You need more pills, Lem? I know you have the same brace as I do. Unlike Mr. Hiltz here, those flat arches stopped the Germans from seeing you in the Rhineland.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

You know why I'm here, Burt. You and Woodman fled the scene after you pushed the Meekins woman under a truck.

BURT BERENDSEN

Why would you possibly think that was us?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

There's not too many people who fit the description of a doctor looking for his eye on the ground with his black attorney.

BURT BERENDSEN

The woman who died hired Harold Woodman to look into her father's death. I did an autopsy on him this afternoon. He was the general of the regiment we served in, Lem.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

Witnesses say you pushed her --

HAROLD WOODMAN

We had to get out of there, it was chaos. A fight broke out. The killer pointed at us. He's very good at being a criminal.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

Well I know one thing -- I need to give my captain answers, at the moment, you two are the suspects. Can you prove you have an employment contract with Liz Meekins? That she hired you to be her attorney?

HAROLD WOODMAN
 Absolutely, I can get that to you,
 plus I can get you the preliminary
 autopsy report, and the Bill
 Meekins estate papers.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
 Good.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
 No, we gotta take you in.

Hiltz grabs Harold by the shoulders to arrest him.

HAROLD WOODMAN	DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Take your hands off me, I'm a	Hiltz, Hiltz!
member of the New York State	
bar association.	

*
 *

DETECTIVE HILTZ
 I don't even like -- that this man
 is a lawyer.

HAROLD WOODMAN
 Columbia law school. Maybe those
 flat arches make that hard for you
 to comprehend.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
 Don't talk about my flat arches,
 I'll crack your head right here.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
 No you won't, Hiltz, knock it off.

BURT BERENDSEN
 What if we got someone to vouch for
 us, someone on the Social Register?
 Would that get your captain's
 attention? Someone like Mister
 Voze, who knew Bill Meekins.

BEATRICE
 Burtram...

BURT BERENDSEN
 Beatrice.

BEATRICE

My family are longstanding members of the state medical board and I can attest to the fact that both of these men are horrible liars, to each other, let alone to the police. If you take them in before giving them the chance to give you everything they've offered, I'm afraid it could cost you your job. My father has a lot of friends at City Hall.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

Get us everything you promised.

BURT BERENDSEN

We understand. You and me. We got something in common. We served, unlike this guy.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

What about the missing purse? Where did that go? This -- this could be evidence!

Hiltz grabs a glass bowl of papers from a nearby table.

BEATRICE

What are you doing with that? Put that down.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

What's in here? What is this?

BURT BERENDSEN

Put it down.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

Put that back!

*

Detective Hiltz goes to put it back, drops it, with a shatter.

Beatrice grunts in annoyance.

BEATRICE

What is the matter with you?

DETECTIVE HILTZ

I'm sorry. I was being careful.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

He's learning, Burt. He can be a good detective.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER (CONT'D)

And when you've spoken to Voze, you let me know right away. I'm not gonna wait that long. Do you hear me, Burt?

BURT BERENDSEN

Yes.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

I'll give you a few days, but if I have to I'll bring you in myself.

BURT BERENDSEN

I understand.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

And I need some pills too.

BURT BERENDSEN

I got it.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

I'll be seeing you in your office pretty soon. But it's a bad situation.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

It's very bad.

DETECTIVES GETWEILER AND HILTZ LEAVE. BURT STARES AT BEATRICE.

BEATRICE

Well, that was exciting. Go get your things; don't get killed on the way home.

EXT. BEATRICE'S BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

Burt and Harold make their way down the steps of Beatrice's apartment onto the street. Suddenly, a car pulls up with Taron Milfax and his confederate, Eli Bepp, sitting next to him.

Milfax sticks his gun out the window, points it at Burt and Harold and draws a number five in the air.

TARON MILFAX

Committee of the Five, stay alive. Keep your mouth shut.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Why not just drive up and shoot us?

In Burt's mind: A replay of the exact scene plays out with Taron Milfax and Eli Bepp shooting at Burt and Harold.

BACK TO: REAL TIME SCENE PULLS AWAY.

TARON MILFAX
(as he drives off)
Committee of the Five, always
alive! We're everywhere.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
What else did this guy have in mind
for us?

Burt and Harold watch the car pull away.

CUT TO:

EXT. VOZE MANSION CURVED DRIVEWAY - NEXT DAY

Burt and Harold get out of the car and fix their jackets and hats.

BURT BERENDSEN
So now we have to lie to get into
this guy's house.

They walk together up the long curved gravel driveway to the brick mansion ahead.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
It doesn't matter how, but we are
going to see Mr. Voze.

THEY STOP AS Harold puts a charity pin in Burt's lapel.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
What is this charity?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Okay, that's the episcopal charity.
The door opens and you say--

CUT TO HIGH WIDE SHOT:

INT. VOZE MANSION - GRAND FOYER

BURT BERENDSEN
Hello, my name is Burt Berendsen.
This is Harold Woodman, Esquire
Medal of Honor recipient.

Burt and Harold stand at the front door speaking to housekeeper Mrs. Moran who walks off to get someone.

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's the Croix de Guerre, not the
Medal of Honor, and you know that.

BURT BERENDSEN
Croix de Guerre. Sorry.

HARD CLICK OF SQUARE HEELS ON MARBLE: WOMAN OF THE HOUSE,
MRS. LIBBY VOZE, 28, AUTHORITATIVE MEETS NERVOUS, WALKS
DIRECTLY TO CAMERA TO MEET HAROLD AND BURT.

LIBBY VOZE
We know how the Episcopalians love
Mr. Voze. He'll be sorry to have
missed you. He's not in.

BURT BERENDSEN
When do you think he'll be back?

LIBBY VOZE
I don't know, perhaps you could
leave that letter with me?

HAROLD WOODMAN
We need to hand this directly to
Mr. Voze, on orders from the
bishop.

LIBBY VOZE
Right, well then you can leave a
card. I'm sorry to disappoint you
gentlemen.

BURT BERENDSEN
However, do you mind --I'm looking
at this cabinet--

Burt motions to a glass cabinet at the side with crafted
trinkets inside.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
--and I couldn't help but recognize
these crafts. Are these made in a
hospital by any chance?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Looks like the works of veterans.

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes.

LIBBY VOZE

All by veterans. Mr. Voze's primary charity. They send them all the time as thanks.

BURT BERENDSEN

We, in fact, are veterans--

A DOOR TO SIDE OPENS AS IN WALKS -

VALERIE VOZE HERSELF - WEARING A BLACK HANDMADE work SHIRT and holding a handmade doll of cloth and metal parts with a pointed hat.

VALERIE VOZE

Libby can I have the remedy please?
I've got that numbness in my hands
with the chills and the nerves and
the shooting pains.

BURT WATCHES CLOSELY - HE RECOGNIZES VALERIE from a distance, Harold stares in shock.

LIBBY VOZE

Valerie please go into your room or
go back upstairs. Can't you see we
have company present?

Valerie notices Burt and Harold standing in her house. She looks back and forth between them, shocked.

VALERIE VOZE

What are you doing here?

HAROLD WOODMAN

What are YOU doing here?

LIBBY VOZE

No, don't talk to her. She's not
well. Valerie, don't talk to these
men.

VALERIE VOZE

I'm not a hemophiliac Libby, I can
talk to people.

LIBBY VOZE

Yes, you're not a hemophiliac but
you are epileptic and you have a
nervous disorder--

Valerie holds up the strange doll.

LIBBY VOZE (CONT'D)
No, we talked about the doll.

VALERIE VOZE
(holds doll to speak)
I'll bite your ears off.

LIBBY VOZE
No, I told you not to do that with
the doll. Mrs. Moran! Carlton!

VALERIE VOZE
Carlton!

LIBBY VOZE
You know that disturbs me Valerie,
how DARE you! Carlton!

LIBBY DISAPPEARS INTO THE HOUSE LOOKING FOR HELP as Valerie
mocks her.

VALERIE VOZE
Carlton!

LIBBY VOZE (O.S.)
Valerie, honestly! We spoke about
leaving me alone with her.

VALERIE STARES AT BURT AND HAROLD, FINALLY ALONE WITH HER.

VALERIE VOZE
Come in here, we can talk in here.

VALERIE OPENS THE DOOR TO THE ROOM SHE CAME OUT OF.

BURT HURRIES ACROSS THE FOYER, FOLLOWS HAROLD AND VALERIE
INTO THE ROOM --

BEFORE CLOSING THE DOOR, VALERIE looks out as she CLOSES THE
DOOR BEHIND THEM.

INT. VALERIE'S WORK ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

SHE LOCKS THE DOOR. THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER SPEECHLESS.

THE ROOM IS FILLED WITH VALERIE'S ART -- PAINTINGS AND
PHOTOGRAPHS HUNG ALONG STRING; SKULL SCULPTURES WITH LARGE
OPEN EYES AND NO TONGUE; X-RAYS OF PEOPLE'S HEADS, RIBCAGES
LINE THE WALL.

HAROLD WOODMAN
How is this coincidence possible?

VALERIE VOZE

Because it's not a coincidence. I told Liz Meekins to hire you two.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What do you mean you told Liz Meekins to hire us?

VALERIE VOZE

She's a friend of mine. She needed someone she could trust. Someone outside our social circle.

BURT BERENDSEN

Ahh - this is so strange.

VALERIE VOZE

I never told you my real last name. Bandenberg was a traveling name. But that was our deal in Amsterdam. Nothing about the past, right?

HAROLD WOODMAN

You lived in New Jersey this whole time?

VALERIE VOZE

Yeah.

HAROLD WOODMAN

This is a big house. This is how you live?

VALERIE VOZE

Yeah.

HAROLD WOODMAN

No letter. Not a phone call.

VALERIE VOZE

I was embarrassed. This is not who I once was. It's not who you met in Amsterdam.

She sways a bit.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What's wrong with your balance?

VALERIE VOZE

I have a nerve disorder.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You never had that before.

BURT BERENDSEN
No, she never had that before.

Harold and Burt look at each other then Valerie.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
We are here for a reason, Harold.
Let's not forget, it's pretty
urgent. Valerie, do you know Tom
Voze?

VALERIE VOZE
Of course I know Tom.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We're in a lot of trouble, Valerie.
We need him to vouch for us.

VALERE
He's a good guy, but I don't think
he'll vouch for you. He avoids
controversy, he doesn't like that.
He's easily intimidated.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Is he your husband?

VALERIE VOZE
No, he's not my husband, he's
married to the woman out there
screaming to have you kicked out.
He's my brother.

HAROLD WOODMAN
After everything we had in
Amsterdam, turns out Burt and I
have no idea who you were.

VALERIE VOZE
You know exactly who I am, and I
know exactly who you are. All three
of us. Burt too. We know each other
the way it counts. And if you two
still have an arrangement then I'm
still a part of it.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Maybe not after twelve years.

VALERIE VOZE
Yes, after twelve years. Yes
because I ended up here. And I came
back - because of you - and you.

BURT BERENDSEN

That's true.

VALERIE VOZE

I told you when you left Amsterdam something bad would happen. I said it would be the bad part of the dream, did I not say that?

BURT BERENDSEN

That's true.

Libby knocks on their door, interrupting their conversation.

VALERIE VOZE

And here we are.

LIBBY VOZE (O.C.)

Valerie, Carlton is on his way. Open the door.

VALERIE VOZE

But we can get out of it.

They hear keys jingling at the door.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Well it's different here, so I don't know about that.

LIBBY VOZE

Carlton is coming, Valerie.

DOOR BURSTS OPEN.

BURT BERENDSEN

I have a feeling this is Carlton.

Burt turns AND IS PUNCHED IN THE FACE - DIRECTLY TO LENS BURT'S POV - BY THE FIST OF CARLTON, THE VERY LARGE HOUSEMAN, WHITE, 50.

BURT CRASHES TO THE FLOOR, HIS GLASS EYE DROPS ONTO THE CARPET.

CARLTON NOW TURNS TO HAROLD WHO HOLDS UP HIS HAND.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Wait.

Carlton walks right into Harold's left hook, which drops him right to the ground alongside Burt.

LIBBY VOZE

Oh!

Harold, Valerie, and Libby all lean over Burt's body, looking at him in his POV. Harold is waving away the pain in his hand from punching Carlton.

LIBBY VOZE (CONT'D)

Valerie, do you see what happens?
How do you possibly know any of
these men?

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. VOZE MANSION - TOM VOZE'S STUDY - DAY

POV of Burt as his eyes open: the face of

TOM VOZE, 45 refined in a sweater and tie, authoritative while gentle.

TOM VOZE

There he is. The brandy, Mrs.
Moran.

Mrs. Moran hands Tom a glass of brandy. Tom puts the brandy under Burt's nose.

BURT BERENDSEN

No thank you, I don't drink.

TOM VOZE

I don't think I trust a man who
doesn't like a drink especially at
a time like this.

BURT BERENDSEN

Maybe I like it too much.

Burt holds his fingers up to his missing eye.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Where is my eye? Harold?

HAROLD WOODMAN

Right here.

Harold hands Burt his glass eye.

TOM VOZE

I never expected two decorated soldiers to get knocked out at my own home.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Just one sir.

TOM VOZE

Oh, that's right, Mr. Woodman. You were too fast for Carlton.

Carlton sits with a frowning expression on his face. He holds an icepack up to the cheek that Harold punched him in.

HAROLD WOODMAN

I was.

LIBBY VOZE

They started talking to Valerie and she's not well, and please, darling girl, stop crying.

TOM VOZE

It's only natural for her to cry, Libby. She just found out her friend is dead. We couldn't keep it from her for forever.

VALERIE VOZE

I'm not so ill that I can't talk to people.

LIBBY VOZE

You leave me here with this invalid when you know very well that she should be hospitalized--

TOM VOZE

Libby!

LIBBY VOZE

It's for her own good.

VALERIE VOZE

Don't you ever say that to me again or I'll put you in a hospital. I'll send you to a witch trial.

TOM VOZE

Please, ladies! Stop!

Tom takes a moment to collect himself and regain composure.

TOM VOZE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I'm sorry I had to raise
my voice.

LIBBY VOZE
She was talking to these men like
she knows them. That terrified me.

TOM VOZE
Do you know one another?

Yes.	VALERIE VOZE	No.	LIBBY VOZE	*
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BURT BERENDSEN
Yes.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We do indeed. Europe.

BURT BERENDSEN
Amsterdam.

VALERIE VOZE
The hospital.

LIBBY VOZE
They said that they were from the
Episcopal charities.

TOM VOZE
Is there any truth to that at all?

Absolutely.	BURT BERENDSEN	In part.	HAROLD WOODMAN	*
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LIBBY VOZE
In part?

BURT BERENDSEN
The gala's coming up. Mostly a
veteran event, but there might be
Episcopalians there. And Bill
Meekins was our featured speaker,
but we find ourselves in this
terrible situation where we're
accused of killing Liz Meekins,
which is not true in any way.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Liz mentioned the name Voze and so
we thought you might know who was
after her and could help clear our
names.

BURT BERENDSEN

We're veterans. We're respectable.
We wouldn't be involved in any of
this, except to help.

TOM VOZE

Bill Meekins was a graham cracker
of a man. Not a mean bone in his
body.

VALERIE VOZE

Why did I have to help her? Why did
I have to encourage her and go
around everyone we know to hire
these two?

TOM VOZE

I did help her, darling. I told her
to come to me for help before it
got bad. Now look what happened.

LIBBY VOZE

Yes, look what you did Valerie. I'm
sorry it's unfortunate, but you
shouldn't have gotten involved.

TOM VOZE

It's not her fault. It's not her
fault.

LIBBY VOZE

Tom. How is this not her fault?
Some things are her fault.

Valerie starts crying.

VALERIE VOZE

Tom... Tom.

LIBBY VOZE

(mimicking Valerie)

Oh, Tom. Please.

Tom comforts his sister by kissing her on the head.

Burt raises his hand.

BURT BERENDSEN

If we can find out who killed Bill
Meekins, it's probably the same
people who killed his daughter for
looking into it. And that
information would clear our names.

(MORE)

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

The autopsy indicated he was possibly poisoned by too many medicines while he was in Europe. Do you know who he was traveling with or who sent him?

TOM VOZE

I can help you find out, but I can't get personally involved-

VALERIE VOZE

You're a coward, Tom.

LIBBY VOZE

Don't you dare call him a coward. You know that's what he was called by those prep school kids, it's cruel, Valerie and you know it.

TOM VOZE

They want me to get involved in all these committees and clubs. You know what I do instead? I'm a birdwatcher. That's what I do.

HAROLD WOODMAN

That must be good, gets you outside.

VALERIE VOZE

He's a birdwatcher. He's ridiculous.

LIBBY VOZE

He's no more ridiculous than you are with your movies, razor blades, teacups the horrid things you make, Valerie, honestly, they're demented.

Tom laughs.

BURT BERENDSEN

Excuse me. You said that you could help us find who traveled with him to Europe. Who would know?

TOM VOZE

Gil Dillenbeck would know. Do you know him?

BURT BERENDSEN

The whole country knows him.

HAROLD WOODMAN

He's the most decorated marine in U.S. history.

TOM VOZE

Dillenbeck was friends with Meekins. They were both generals. I never got involved with the military I just ran the family's textile company. Dillenbeck can tell you who was traveling with Meekins. I wouldn't trust anyone else, and I don't have access to that kind of information myself.

HAROLD WOODMAN

We met him twice. Took a picture with him once in Belgium, and another at the Bonus Army March in Summer '32. We still have those pictures, Mr. Voze.

TOM VOZE

He's very particular about who he'll speak to. If you've met him and you're soldiers he respects, your chances are far better than mine. He distrusts people of means.

LIBBY VOZE

If you meet him, please do let us know. I would love to shake his hand.

VALERIE VOZE

Libby saw Dillenbeck in the newsreel and she has a crush on him.

LIBBY VOZE

Oh don't be ridiculous, Valerie.

VALERIE VOZE

You have talked about that newsreel a lot.

LIBBY VOZE

He's a very impressive man and I happen to like that newsreel--

VALERIE VOZE

Don't play it, Tom.

LIBBY VOZE

We should play it before they go.
Valerie, Gil Dillenbeck is the one
hope your friends have of getting
out of all this trouble.

Tom turns to Harold and Burt and opens his hands in wryness.

TOM VOZE

Would you like to see the newsreel?

Burt nods and frowns, why not.

LIBBY VOZE

Oh good!

CUT TO: BLACK AND WHITE NEWSREEL OF THE BONUS ARMY MARCH.

NEWSREEL NARRATOR

The veterans marched last summer
for benefits under the leadership
of General Gil Dillenbeck. Veterans
benefits are still unpaid, but the
brave general remains their
spokesperson.

GIL DILLENBECK IN SHIRTSLEEVES ADDRESSES THOUSANDS OF
VETERANS BEFORE THE U.S. CAPITOL.

GIL DILLENBECK

It makes me so damn mad, a whole
lot of people speak of you as
tramps, tramps! You men are tramps!
Who are these people who dare call
you that? You're soldiers. You
sacrificed your lives, your limbs.
You've suffered that for your
country.

CUT TO: U.S. MILITARY TANKS AND TROOPS FIRE ON THE VETERANS

NEWSREEL NARRATOR

The government burned them out of
the nation's capitol. Veterans
never got one benefit.

GIL DILLENBECK IS ON-SCREEN AGAIN GIVING HIS SPEECH.

GIL DILLENBECK
 Who in the hell has done all of the
 bleeding for this country and this
 law and CONSTITUTION but YOU
 fellas!

THE NEWSREEL STICKS IN THE PROJECTOR, CELLULOID BURNS ON
 THE STUCK FRAME OF DILLENBECK WITH HIS ARM IN THE AIR.

VALERIE VOZE
 Tom, it ruined the newsreel.

TOM VOZE
 I'm so sorry, darling. I will
 replace that.

VALERIE VOZE
 Libby's precious newsreel.

BURT BERENDSEN
 We were there. We took pictures
 with the General.

LIBBY VOZE
 Such a handsome man, such a strong
 man. Now that, is true character in
 a man. Tom is also an excellent
 character. And yes, he prefers
 birding to politics...

All exit while HAROLD AND VALERIE linger behind to speak
 intimately in alcove of the screening room.

HAROLD WOODMAN
 You said you'd come back.

VALERIE VOZE
 Why? So you could leave me?

HAROLD WOODMAN
 I didn't know if I was a fleeting
 adventure or if you even thought
 about me at all, Valerie.

VALERIE VOZE
 I never thought of anyone else, not
 really. What about you?

HAROLD WOODMAN
 No. Not really.

VALERIE VOZE
 Really?

HAROLD WOODMAN

Yes. And what did you mean embarrassed? What did you mean by that? Embarrassed to contact me all these years?

VALERIE VOZE

To see me like this. It's not who I was in Amsterdam. And for what? We can't be together in this country.

They embrace, gripping each other tightly. CUT TO:

INT. VOZE MANSION - GRAND MAIN FOYER - CONTINUOUS

TOM VOZE

Do you see that garden outside? I spend at least an hour there every day.

BURT BERENDSEN

Oh, that's great.

TOM VOZE

I see a rose breasted grosbeak, a dark-eyed junco it reminds me of God's green Earth.

BURT BERENDSEN

Yeah. I don't know those birds.

TOM VOZE

There's this man from England who has violated every sacred rule of birding by going into twenty-four nests of a nearly extinct species-- to take twenty-four eggs -- all for one man's selfish glorification to get his name in a bird book for some meaningless discovery. And THAT is the type of person who I think very likely did something awful to Bill Meekins and his daughter.

BURT BERENDSEN

I'm trying to follow you here, sir, are you saying: That man, the bird thing, England, the nest, and the book -- that he killed Bill Meekins?

TOM VOZE

I'm trying to make a point. That type of man.

BURT BERENDSEN

OK. I'm still not certain what you mean.

TOM VOZE

Dr. Berendsen, you seem like a good person with your medicines and your veterans. You shouldn't be hindered, you should be helped. But I'm only one person.

BURT BERENDSEN

Sir, we didn't do anything. And we need the police to know that.

TOM VOZE

Maybe Dillenbeck.

BURT WATCHES TOM WALK OFF. BACK TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM - ALCOVE

Harold and Valerie end their long embrace.

VALERIE VOZE

Tomorrow?

HAROLD WOODMAN

Tomorrow?!

VALERIE VOZE

Can you come back tomorrow? The house will be empty, they'll be at the other house for one of Libby's culture talks. Please.

Footsteps approach.

HAROLD WOODMAN

SHH.

BURT BERENDSEN

What do you mean, shush? What are you guys doing? I've been discussing crimes of the bird society of England. Your brother's a little kooky.

VALERIE VOZE

Burt, I don't know what's happening, but it's far beyond Meekins and his daughter. And I don't trust my medications now either.

BURT BERENDSEN

We just have to get Dillenbeck. That's it.

VALERIE VOZE

Great, take me with you.

BURT BERENDSEN

Valerie--

VALERIE VOZE

I can come. I can help.

HAROLD WOODMAN

She can, it's true.

VALERIE VOZE

The three of us, we were inseparable. We did things, we got things done, and most of all we lived.

BURT BERENDSEN

Harold--

VALERIE VOZE

I have to get out of here, please.

HAROLD WOODMAN

She's right. Burt, she can help us.

LIBBY VOZE (O.S.)

Valerie! What are you doing? It's time to get your friends to the door. Doctor Malin is coming.

VALERIE STARES AT HAROLD AND BURT.

INT. VOZE MANSION - GRAND FOYER

Burt, Harold, Valerie walk out of the screening room as Libby stands on the magnificent staircase.

LIBBY VOZE

Thank you for coming. Sorry for the trouble.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank you this turned out very
helpful, please say goodbye to
Carlton for me.

Mrs. Moran opens the door for Harold and Burt. They walk out,
taking one last look at Valerie before leaving.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Thank you. Talk to you soon!

VALERIE STANDS WATCHING BURT AND HAROLD GO, HOPING THEY WILL
RETURN. LIBBY SPEAKS TO VALERIE'S BACK AS VALERIE FACES
CAMERA.

LIBBY VOZE
Valerie, Doctor Malin will be here
with the remedies you asked for.
Remember?

Valerie nods, staring after Harold and Burt.

EXT. VOZE MANSION - SUNSET - DAY OR NIGHT

As Burt and Harold walk out of the mansion, they see AN OLDER
PHYSICIAN, DOCTOR MALIN, approach the house with a doctor
bag.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Are you Doctor Malin?

DOCTOR MALIN
Yes, yes I am.

BURT BERENDSEN
Well I'm a doctor. If you don't
mind my asking, in your
professional opinion what is her
condition?

DOCTOR MALIN
Hereditary nervous disorder. It
affects her blood pressure, her
balance, her nerves, and movement.

HAROLD WOODMAN
She never had that before, Doctor.

DOCTOR MALIN
It advances with age.

Burt and Harold continue down the long driveway to the car.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank you. Thank you, Doctor.

<p>HAROLD WOODMAN My God. I can't believe we saw Valerie. She looks great. It's such bad luck she got that ailment.</p>	<p>BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D) First thing tomorrow. Is we go see Dillenbeck. First thing is that we go to Dillenbeck's, and we hope we * get in.</p>
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INT. BURT BERENDSEN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

SECRETARY SHIRLEY APPROACHES BURT'S OFFICE WHILE A PHONE
RINGS OUT IN THE BACKGROUND.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
Dillenbeck said no, Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN
Dillenbeck said no? What do you
mean he said no? Did you talk to
him?

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
I talked to his wife, she said no,
they get too many visitors.

BURT BERENDSEN
We have to keep trying. Did you
send the photographs of when we met
him?

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
No. Because you have to bring the
pictures yourself.

BURT BERENDSEN
Alright, where's Harold? He was
supposed to take me to
Dillenbeck's. He was meant to be
here hours ago.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
I don't know. But the police are
here. And they want to talk to you.

BURT BERENDSEN
OK, everything all at once.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY
Irma St. Clair is waiting also.

BURT BERENDSEN
Oh God. Alright. Ahh.

Burt turns to Patients Wayne and Patient Victor who take it as their cue to sing the their song for the gala.

PATIENTS WAYNE AND VICTOR
Pea-nutsssss!

BURT BERENDSEN
Not now, not now, not now.

INT. VOZE MANSION - VALERIE'S ART ROOM

Valerie pulls Harold by the hand from behind the camera into her art room.

HAROLD WOODMAN	VALERIE VOZE
Are you sure this is safe,	Come on. Yes, it's safe.
Valerie?	They're at the other house.
	They'll be there all day.

*

Valerie shows Harold some of her art. The first is three distorted photographs of Burt, Valerie, and Harold put next to each other.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Remember this?

Valerie holds up a movie camera, filming Harold.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
You look perfect.

Harold holds up a metallic wired sculpture of a face.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
That's you.

They stare at the x-rays clipped to a string along the windows. Harold points to an x-ray of a skull in profile.

HAROLD WOODMAN
That's you.

Valerie nods and smiles. CUT TO: THE RECORD PLAYS ON THE RECORD PLAYER - AS THEY DANCE CHEEK TO CHEEK, VALERIE WITH HER SHOES OFF softly on the carpet.

Now, Harold is filming Valerie with the camera.

VALERIE VOZE
Pourquoi?

HAROLD WOODMAN	VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Say Amsterdam.	Amsterdam.

*

Valerie looks directly into the lens.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

Amsterdam.

Now Harold looks directly into the lens, matching the same shot.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Amsterdam.

INT. BURT BERENDSEN'S OFFICE - DAY

SECRETARY SHIRLEY and MEDICAL ASSISTANT MORTY, wait for Burt at the door to his office.

They watch as he puts a pill in his mouth.

ASSISTANT MORTY

This pill has got to be better.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY

Of course.

BURT BERENDSEN

Morty, this pill is for the pain
and the nerves.

BURT WALKS TOWARD THE FRONT OF HIS OFFICE, PASSING PATIENTS
IN THE SERIES OF EXAMINATION ROOMS HE PASSES - HE GETS TO:

MEDICAL LAB AT FAR END OF BURT'S OFFICE -- SHELVES FULL OF
POWDERS AND SOLUTIONS

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER holds a syringe about to inject
himself under his own back brace.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Detective Getweiler, you want the
medicine, let me do that for you.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

My back is killing me.

BURT BERENDSEN

Come on, come on. Give it to me.

Burt takes the needle and injects Detective Getweiler in his
torso, near an open part of his back brace.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Please, please, please let me do
that for you next time. What are
friends for?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
I think there won't be a next time,
Burt, we might have to close out
your office.

BURT BERENDSEN
Lem. Close down the office?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Yeah, close down your office.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
We need hard evidence.

HE CLAPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER HARSHLY.

BURT BERENDSEN
Detective Hiltz, look, you don't
understand.

Burt motions to Detective Getweiler's back brace, and his
own.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
This and this, tell him Lem.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Exactly. We got metal in our blood,
metal in our brain. Imagine that.

BURT BERENDSEN
You got flat arches. You couldn't
serve. We understand.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
You're still our chief suspect.

BURT BERENDSEN
Why? You know, we didn't do this.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
Everyone says you did.

BURT BERENDSEN
Everyone says? There was one man.
He did it.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Now my captain needs to know why
you did that hush-hush autopsy.

BURT BERENDSEN
There was nothing "hush-hush" about
it. Liz Meekins authorized it.

(MORE)

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Completely legal, Harold can verify that.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Let's see the autopsy results.

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes, let me get the autopsy results from Irma St. Clair in here.

HILTZ STOPS BURT IN THE DOORWAY TO THE NEXT OFFICE WHERE IRMA WAITS.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
Excuse me, Doctor, I understand overseas they have medicines for strength, do you have anything here for strength?

BURT BERENDSEN
What?

DETECTIVE HILTZ
Power.

BURT BERENDSEN
Can I get the autopsy report from Irma St. Clair?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Yes, thank you.

BURT ENTERS THE NEXT OFFICE CLOSING THE DOOR ON THE DETECTIVES.

INT. BURT'S PRIVATE FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Irma St. Clair stands wearing a white swing coat over her shoulders.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I understand we've both had an unusual time since last we saw each other.

BURT BERENDSEN
What happened? Why is your coat over your shoulder?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
That's what I wanted to tell you. I was filing the autopsy results when this red faced man with an angry face, and this other one --

BURT BERENDSEN
What happened?

Irma reveals a bandaged wrist under her coat.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
They threw me down, Burt, they
broke my wrist, and they took the
autopsy results. They took
everything. But it wasn't--

BURT BERENDSEN
That's not well done.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I know.

BURT BERENDSEN
That is angulated. That needs to be
reset or else that is going to be
very bad. Can I?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
OK.

BURT BERENDSEN
Let me take your coat.

Burt leads Irma to a desk where she can sit down. Irma clasps
Burt's shoulder to brace herself. Burt speaks over her
shoulder as she holds him.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Remember that one time you were
telling me you liked a Spanish
melody or was it classical?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Classical--

Irma cries and shouts into Burt's shoulder as Burt resets her
broken wrist, she blinks tears.

BURT BERENDSEN
That's it. That's it. We're done.
It's OK. It's OK. You alright?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Yes.

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm going to get a sling. Just keep
that supported. I'm so sorry that
you got mixed up in all this.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I'm an autopsy nurse. I get mixed
up in all sorts of things. Besides,
it brought me closer to you and to-

Burt leans in and they share a tender kiss for a moment.

IRMA ST. CLAIR (CONT'D)
They're waiting for us.

BURT BERENDSEN
Let them wait.

Burt turns on the radio, turns the dial until a French song
plays. CUT TO:

Other side of the door, Detectives Getweiler and Hiltz
listen.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
Why is he playing music?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
He likes music, I don't know why
he's playing it now.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
Do you like this music?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Me? I mean, I don't know.

Burt and Irma silently digest this moment, each taking a turn
to walk to the window and look out while the other waits at
the desk - not a word is spoken as the music plays and now
Burt sits next to Irma on the edge of the desk when the
reverie is broken --

As suddenly the door swings open and Beatrice storms in.

BURT BERENDSEN
Beatrice.

Beatrice slaps Burt hard across the face.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

BEATRICE
Who is this woman?

BURT BERENDSEN
This is Irma. We work together.

BEATRICE

Mhm.

BURT BERENDSEN

She's an autopsy nurse.

Beatrice abruptly turns the radio off. The camera pans to the Detectives staring.

BEATRICE

Don't give me that. Come home. I'll defy my family so we can be together.

BURT BERENDSEN

Is this real? Why are you here now? Of all times? You never come here.

BEATRICE

Because Shirley is on my side, and she calls me and tells me when to protect my husband. My father controls your medical license, you know that.

BURT BERENDSEN

Can you get your parents to put their names on the committee for the gala for the veterans so we can get respect and dignity? And you can tell your parents that Tom Voze might be involved.

BEATRICE

Yes, but how will you get him? You won't get him.

BURT BERENDSEN

I already met him.

BEATRICE

Well, I introduced you.

BURT BERENDSEN

You didn't introduce us. You told us about him, and then me and Harold, we met him.

BEATRICE

I'm really sorry, Burt. I think you should think about who you are and what you want to be.

Beatrice leans in for a kiss, it is awkward, Burt does not want to kiss her - she has not kissed him the entire movie - why now? Beatrice turns and leaves staring down Irma.

BURT BERENDSEN
Shirley, not helpful!

Burt leads Irma and the detectives out of the room and back into the reception office.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
We need a sling!

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Where are the autopsy results?

BURT BERENDSEN
She was rolled, Lem. Quite possibly
by the same man who pushed Liz
Meekins.

SECRETARY SHIRLEY (O.S.)
I got the sling.

Burt helps fix the sling around Irma's wrist and shoulder.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I can give you a description--

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
You mean they were stolen?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
Yes. They were stolen.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
What about the results?

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I can tell you the results. I
remember them. I found mercury,
luminal, and somnifene in his
stomach. And they were in high
amounts. I believe they were given
to him the last week of his life.

BURT BERENDSEN
Last week? Which means, probably on
the boat.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
So we don't have anything to give
our captain. Right?

BURT BERENDSEN
She just gave you the evidence.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
I can give you an affidavit, I do them all the time, I'm bonded by the city and certified.

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes! We're doing your job for you.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
What about the dead daughter? Throw this guy in jail.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Let me handle this, let me handle it.

Detective Hiltz turns to Valerie's shrapnel tea set.

DETECTIVE HILTZ
What's this degenerate tea set?

BURT BERENDSEN
That is art. That's art.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
You've got to get rid of this. It's obscene. No, that's not art. Art is beautiful, lovely, it evokes thoughts. *

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
That's what that is.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
That's what that is?

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Why would you take a tea set -- a lovely tea set -- and turn it into an instrument of violence. It makes no sense.

BURT BERENDSEN
That's a great question. Perhaps Lem, the question of the century. Don't think about it too much. Lem, where is the camaraderie? We were in the Argonne, let's live, allons vivre. New pill. Remember this. You owe me.

He gives Lem the pill case.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Okay, but you owe me too. Get me
Harold's contract with Liz Meekins.

BURT BERENDSEN
Truth is possible. And I think that
love maybe is even possible. And
this pill is working.

Burt collapses face first onto the floor, Shirley is late
arriving with a pillow to brace the fall. CUT TO:

EXT. 142ND STREET NY - DAY

LOUD CAR HORN on street.

Burt helped by Irma down the sidewalk with her one good arm.

BURT BERENDSEN
Harold has the car and I've only
got one eye. They won't let me
drive.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
You'll find Harold, it's OK.

SUDDENLY THEY ARE SERENADED ON THE SIDEWALK BY THE HINSON
BROTHERS, WHO SING 'LADY OF SPAIN' VERY WELL.

BURT BERENDSEN
Oh my God, That sounds terrific.
Larry!

HINSONS
It's not canceled, is it?

BURT BERENDSEN
The gala is definitely not
canceled. The reunion is a gem and
you're going to sing! We are going
to perform!

Burt and Irma walk to HAROLD'S STOREFRONT CORNER LAW OFFICE --
'HAROLD T. WOODMAN, COUNSELOR AT LAW.'

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
You be careful.

IRMA ST. CLAIR
You be careful.

INT. HAROLD'S OFFICE - 140TH STREET - DAY

Burt walks into Harold's office.

BURT BERENDSEN

Milton, Harold was supposed to be
at my office hours ago.

MILTON KING

Are you OK, you don't look good.
Things have gotten more
complicated, haven't they? You know
my grandfather shot a guy in the
face. And he got shot in the face.
Separate occasions, separate
occasions. Not the same guy. And it
all worked out.

BURT BERENDSEN

Good.

CLIENT #1

Dr. Burt. I've got a pinched nerve.

BURT BERENDSEN

I don't know what to do with that
yet.

BURT WALKS TO THE BACK OFFICE WHERE HAROLD HOLDS AN ICEPACK
AND VALERIE TALKS ON THE PHONE.

VALERIE VOZE

We'll be right there. Good.

She hangs up the phone.

BURT BERENDSEN

Where have you been? I've been
worried sick.

HAROLD WOODMAN

We went on a drive and found out a
lot of things.

URT BERENDSEN

Well you're not supposed to go on a
drive when you're supposed to meet
Gil Dillenbeck, and the police are
waiting on papers that you promised
them.

VALERIE VOZE

Did someone slap you, Burt? Because
you've got a red mark on your face.

BURT BERENDSEN
I fell. I got slapped. Carlton
punched me.

VALERIE VOZE
Yeah, I was there for that one. We
got roughed up too.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We were in quite a situation.

BURT BERENDSEN
Please not now. In the car.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Milton, give these documents to
Detective Getweiler. This is Liz
Meekins' employment contract.

MILTON KING
Did I mention that I predicted
extreme trouble from a white man in
a box? Then added to by a WHITE
WOMAN under a truck?

BURT BERENDSEN
Good point, Milton.

MILTON KING
You know, I'd rather be on trial
for killing five white men than one
white woman, because this can lead
to one black man or more dead in a
box.

BURT BERENDSEN
Please, let's get going. We should
have left for Dillenbeck's hours
ago. That's the only hope that we
have to get out of this situation
with the police.

EXT. WALDORF ASTORIA - DAY

WIDE SHOT AS HAROLD'S CAR PULLS UP TO THE VALET AT THE
WALDORF.

BURT BERENDSEN
Why are we stopping here? This is
not Buck's County, this isn't even
out of the city.

VALERIE VOZE
We're making a quick stop at the
Waldorf.

BURT BERENDSEN
Is Dillenbeck at the Waldorf?

HAROLD WOODMAN
We're not here to see Dillenbeck.

HAROLD GETS OUT WITH VALERIE leaving Burt alone in the car.

BURT BERENDSEN
What are you talking about? What
are we doing? Harold? Valerie?
Unbelievable!

THE VALET APPROACHES.

VALET
Welcome to the Waldorf Astoria, how
long will you be staying--

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm not staying at the Waldorf.

He gets out of the car irritably.

EXT. FRONT OF THE WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

BURT BERENDSEN
We had one thing to do today,
Harold. One thing. Try to talk to
Gil Dillenbeck, and maybe have an
event with even a modicum of
dignity and--

HAROLD WOODMAN
This is my situation from the past
that we saw today, Burt.

VALERIE VOZE
And it's my peace of mind that's
been twisted, Burt. Dillenbeck
can't help us until we know what's
really going on.

BURT BERENDSEN
Well what is going on?

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
I don't know, but we're going
to find out. *

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
Give me the keys. Give me the keys.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Absolutely not. You can't drive,
you one-eyed nut.

Harold throws the car keys to the Valet. Harold, and Valerie walk into the hotel followed by Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN
Harold, this is not smart.

INT. LOBBY OF WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Burt, Harold, and Valerie enter the lobby

BURT BERENDSEN
At least just tell me who we're
seeing here.

VALERIE PAUSES AT ENTRANCE TO THE TEA COURT, ANSWERS OVER HER SHOULDER.

VALERIE VOZE
Paul Canterbury.

INT. WALDORF TEA COURT - CONTINUOUS

She walks off, leaving them standing.

BURT BERENDSEN
Paul Canterbury? The glass eye guy?

HAROLD WOODMAN
From Amsterdam, the benefactor. She
still talks to them, Burt.

INT. TEA COURT OF THE WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

PAUL CANTERBURY, the British intel man from Amsterdam, sits wearing a brown chalk stripe suit.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Oh Valerie how are you? There you
are. Harold.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Paul Canterbury.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Berendsen, how are you?

Paul opens for Burt a box of glass eyes.

PAUL CANTERBURY (CONT'D)
Here you go. Dark hazel green. Box
of six.

BURT BERENDSEN
Very kind of you. Thank you.

A chime sounds and the lights dim.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Ah, tea time. Is it just me who
fancies claret? I like to have it
going in one hand and tea in the
other.

A WAITER pours Paul red wine from a small decanter.

VALERIE VOZE
We're in a bit of a predicament,
Paul. Thank you for taking the time
to see us.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Valerie, we're prepared to do
anything we must, as gentlemen.

A DRINK IS THROWN IN PAUL'S FACE BY A BRITISH GENTLEMAN, 60

BRITISH GENTLEMAN
You bounder, you cheat. You disgust
me.

PAUL CANTERBURY
History will redeem me.

BRITISH GENTLEMAN
Like hell it will.

The others watch, shocked, and Paul stands drying his face
with linen napkin.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Sorry everyone. Drinks on me,
literally.

CUT TO:

INT. WALDORF SUITE 1101

Paul leads the trio into the middle of a busy intelligence
headquarters.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Hello. This way please.

TICKER TAPE MACHINES CLICK away with news of the world into a SECRETARY'S hands; TREASURY AGENTS IN SHIRTSLEEVES, WITH HOLSTERS AND GUNS, DRINK COFFEE, ONE SITS ON A SOFA and READS DOCUMENTS.

CUT TO: A MAN WRITES NOTES ON A LEGAL DOCUMENT:

"NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER."

CAMERA TILTS UP TO REVEAL:

HENRY NORCROSS, dark suit, seven button vest and dark tie, extremely vigorous.

PAUL CANTERBURY (CONT'D)

You remember Henry Norcross. He's --

HENRY NORCROSS

A federal employee they don't need to talk about or I trust they wouldn't be here.

BURT BERENDSEN

What does all of this have to do with a "glass business" in England and financing in Washington?

HENRY NORCROSS

They overlap, lots of things overlap, Berendsen, the whole world overlaps in its most treacherous ways if you pay attention and hello Burt, Harold, and Valerie.

VALERIE VOZE

Hello Henry.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You're looking good, Henry.

HENRY NORCROSS

It's good to see you, too, as we gather once more on the right side of history. Paul, I understand you had a drink thrown in your face in the tea court just now.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Yes. It's just old business from England, Henry.

HENRY NORCROSS

No, no, no, a drink in your face is a drink in my face.

(MORE)

HENRY NORCROSS (CONT'D)

I'd like to hear about it, please,
then we'll get onto new business.

PAUL CANTERBURY

It was someone from the
Ornithological Society of Great
Britain.

HENRY NORCROSS

Ah one of those rotten bastards.
What?

BURT BERENDSEN

I was told a story about a misdeed
in the bird society of England, and
I'm starting to wonder if that
story is about you.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Our discovery was hardly trivial.

HENRY NORCROSS

Yes. We proved the cuckoo lacks the
capacity, the civility, the
character to build its own nest.

BURT BERENDSEN

Wow. How is that possibly
significant or interesting to
anybody or anything?

PAUL CANTERBURY

Because it shows the cuckoo's a
parasitic bird; it tricks better
birds to build nests. The cuckoo
destroys the host's own eggs and
then destroys the nest itself.

HENRY NORCROSS

Berendsen, the cuckoo doesn't give
a damn. I'd say it's a profound
statement about the parasitic
destructive behavior of nature,
including humans.

VALERIE VOZE

That's especially true after what
we saw today.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Burt, it's the story about what
happened to us. Listen up.

VALERIE VOZE

We have been trying to tell you,
and I think Paul and Henry should
hear this too. We ended up in a
very strange clinic today, and we
found this.

Valerie holds up a small glass vial of medical powder. On the
vial are a symbol on paper of two crossed backward fives.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

Those symbols were everywhere.

Henry takes the vial from Valerie. Him and Paul begin to
inspect it, focusing on the symbols.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Have you seen it before? The
Committee of the Five.

Harold draws a five in the air with his finger.

HAROLD WOODMAN (CONT'D)

I went to see Valerie as we'd
arranged. But then we noticed
somebody was watching us.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. VOZE MANSION - VALERIE'S ART ROOM - DAY

Harold and Valerie suddenly stop to look out the window. They
point at someone outside.

HAROLD WOODMAN

That's the man who pushed Liz
Meekins.

VALERIE VOZE (V.O.)

And he must have got bored waiting
because he decided to leave, and we
decided to follow him, and he led
us to Rockland County.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)

To an unmarked brick building.

INT. CORRIDOR CLINIC - DAY

The backs of Harold and Valerie walk in slowly to see a
reception room and surgery rooms separated by lots of glass.

They see PATIENTS in gowns with partially shaved heads and
scars. Harold and Valerie enter one of the rooms.

Valerie sees a glass vial with SYMBOLS on a table and nicks one without anyone noticing.

Harold and Valerie are surprised when a woman patient violently hits the window of another room trying to leave.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)
They assumed that we were patients
for a procedure.

VALERIE VOZE (V.O.)
To be sterilized.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
It was a forced sterilization
clinic.

Harold looks to his right down a narrow corridor and there is Taron Milfax, the red-faced man who pushed Liz Meekins.

Milfax walks down the corridor toward Harold and Valerie.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)
Then I saw the man. This red-faced
man. The man who pushed Liz
Meekins. And he looked right at me,
and he said:

TARON MILFAX
This is your moment to end your
inferiority. You're going to have
that procedure here.

Milfax withdraws his PISTOL, Harold knocks it away and punches him. THEY STRUGGLE OVER THE GUN as

ELI BEPP, MILFAX'S ACCOMPLICE, CLOSES UPON VALERIE FROM THE SIDE.

VALERIE PULLS OUT A SMALL POCKET PISTOL, POINTS IT AT BEPP.

VALERIE VOZE
Don't move!

She fires her pistol once in Bepp's face - CLICK it doesn't work.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Shit.

Shakes the pistol pointing up - it fires BLAM hits a BEAKER OF GRAY MEDICAL POWDER that clouds the room.

Harold beats red-faced Milfax to the ground and flattens the Bepp.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

Come on.

Valerie and Harold run out as camera pushes in to symbol on glass window: 'THE GREAT NATION SOCIETY PRIVATE FOUNDATION' with a kind of SWASTIKA.

HAROLD WOODMAN (V.O.)

Valerie's gun finally went off, it hit the glass, and we got out of there, headed back to the city.

BACK TO:

BURT BERENDSEN

My God. Well I'm glad you're alright. But if you didn't get the Red-Faced Killer's identification. Then it's of no help, whatsoever.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What are you talking about Burt? It has everything to do with everything. Today what happened--

BURT BERENDSEN

How?

HAROLD WOODMAN

It starts with me, it starts with me. A long time ago, I told some friends in Longview, Texas not to visit a horrifying clinic, a lot like the one we saw today. A mob of white men chased me, they harassed me, they tried to kill me. They were unsuccessful, they were very unsuccessful. I left Longview, Texas and I never looked back.

HENRY NORCROSS

It's not just about you in Texas or today in Rockland. There is an organization that wishes to do this all over the world.

BURT BERENDSEN

What does it mean?

PAUL CANTERBURY

It means there's a cabal in this country tied to another in Germany who supports these clinics, who want to rule the world.

BURT BERENDSEN

Rule the world?

HENRY NORCROSS

Exactly correct.

HE SITS BACK IN HIS CHAIR WITH HIS HANDS BEHIND HIS HEAD FOR EMPHASIS.

VALERIE VOZE

Who's in the cabal?

HENRY NORCROSS

Maybe 'who' is the wrong question, instead ask 'why'.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Go see Dillenberg. Ask him 'why' his fellow General Meekins was murdered.

HENRY NORCROSS

Dillenberg, he's been leading on this cabal to find out who they are, what they plan. Committee of the Five.

PAUL CANTERBURY

The organization named them Committee of the Five. We're trying to figure out who they are.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Committee of the Five.

PAUL CANTERBURY (CONT'D)

(in German)

Komitee der funf.

HENRY NORCROSS

I think it would be wonderful if Dillenberg was the speaker at your reunion.

PAUL CANTERBURY

It seems your event's become rather important, Berendsen. If you can get Dillenberg to speak, perhaps it might attract more influential people of the cabal.

HENRY NORCROSS

The killer from the street, or the higher ups paying for it all.

BURT BERENDSEN

Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, no. I don't want our event, Harold's and my event to be used like this by anybody.

HENRY NORCROSS

Used? No. Think of it as protecting what you love.

PAUL CANTERBURY

We told you in Amsterdam we'd come a-calling and here we are.

BURT BERENDSEN

And here you are. Well are we done or do you want to talk more about birds?

HENRY NORCROSS

You know a lot of people assume that it's about the tranquility or the communion with nature. But I find birdwatching so fascinating because it forces you to decide what you are looking at. I am honing my art of discernment. And I want you to trust me that I believe now is the time to intervene. We get Gil Dillenbeck to speak at this event, he will be the magnet that draws all the nails out of the wood and brings this house of treachery down to the ground. So, what do you say, Burt, please?

PAUL CANTERBURY

Please try, Burt.

INT. LOBBY OF THE WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

BURT, VALERIE, HAROLD WALK ACROSS THE LOBBY TO LEAVE.

VALERIE VOZE

I don't like to say I told you so but this is all turning out to be a lot larger than any of us imagined.

BURT BERENDSEN

If the gala is used by Paul--

VALERIE LOSES HER BALANCE WITH VERTIGO, THEY CATCH HER.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Are you okay?

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D) *
You good?

VALERIE VOZE
It comes and goes. I'm fine.

BURT BERENDSEN
Yeah you feel fine then all of a sudden vertigo and you get dizzy?

VALERIE VOZE
It comes and goes. At first they told me that I had epilepsy. I never had a seizure, but they told me that the seizures would come sooner or later, but that could be avoided if I took medication. And so I did. And then I started having other symptoms, more symptoms. And they said that's hereditary, that's from your Mother's side. So they gave me new medications and I kept taking that. And now, years and years have gone by and I'm barely leaving the house and I feel like I'm a patient and I can't live -- I'm starting to question all of it.

Burt and Harold each stare at Valerie as she walks ahead of them, straight to camera.

EXT. GENERAL DILLENBECK'S MODEST BUCK'S COUNTY STREET - DAY

PUSH IN: Burt, Harold, and Valerie get out of the car, fix their hats -- walk across into the empty wide intersection to Dillenbeck's clapboard corner house. Valerie's balance is unsteady.

BURT BERENDSEN
Are you OK?

VALERIE VOZE
I can do this, don't hold me, I'm fine I can do this I just need a minute here to rest.

SHE STAGGERS FORWARD TO THE WAIST HIGH STONE WALL AND LEANS ON IT LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN TO CAMERA ON GROUND.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch. Oh yes. I'm fine.

SHE STANDS WITH DETERMINATION AND MARCHES UP THE CEMENT STEPS AND PATH, WITH HER ARM IN THE AIR, ON HER WAY TO DILLENBECK'S FRONT DOOR. CUT TO:

CONTINUOUS POV FROM SECOND FLOOR WINDOW as GENERAL DILLENBECK stares down at this scene unfolding on his path.

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)
I can go up stairs with no vertigo.
No vertigo, I'm fine. I can run I
can jump-

SHE SUDDENLY JERKS OFF BALANCE AND DROPS OUT OF SIGHT.

BURT BERENDSEN
Valerie!

HAROLD WOODMAN
Valerie!

*

SUDDENLY MRS. DILLENBECK BRANDISHING A WOODEN COOKING SPOON IS UPON BURT CHASING HIM OFF THE PROPERTY.

MRS. DILLENBECK
Collect that drunk woman and go!

BURT BERENDSEN
We know the General. We have
pictures.

She hits Burt with a rolled newspaper as he tries to show the photos, then places them at her feet.

MRS. DILLENBECK
I don't want the pictures go now-

BURT BERENDSEN
I am a doctor, I am a veteran-

MRS. DILLENBECK
You're gonna NEED a doctor when I'm
through with you - go or I'm gonna
call the police.

BURT BERENDSEN
Just a few minutes. I just need
some time.

MRS. DILLENBECK, A HANDSOME BROWN-EYED WOMAN, WALKS BACK TO THE HOUSE AND SLAMS THE FRONT DOOR.

POV FROM SECOND FLOOR WINDOW GENERAL DILLENBECK WATCHES AS BURT, HAROLD, AND VALERIE gather at the bottom of the steps.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
There goes our one chance to clear
our names.

(MORE)

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Valerie you have got to change your medicine and your doctor.

VALERIE VOZE

Son of a bitch. I was fine.

THEY WALK BACK ACROSS THE STREET TO THE CAR IN DEFEAT.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Maybe it's time for me to leave anyway.

VALERIE VOZE

What do you mean, leave?

HAROLD WOODMAN

Well even if we solve Meekins, out of the three of us, I'm the one that's going to jail. The system is rigged.

BURT BERENDSEN

Harold, I told you from the get-go this job was a bad idea. Milton told you this job was a bad idea. But, SHE had to get us hired.

VALERIE VOZE

Oh, "she"? "She" had to get us hired? She also got you out of jail which you seem to forget. You can't turn your backs on me now.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You broke the pact, remember?

BURT BERENDSEN

I broke the pact? When?

HAROLD WOODMAN

We told you not to leave, Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN

At least you found love. Even if you can't get it, I've never been lucky enough to know what the hell it is. And that's a terrible affliction I never wish on anyone.

VALERIE VOZE

I wish I never did find it. Because it hurts too much.

MRS. DILLENBECK (O.S.)
(yells O.S.)
Wait, wait!

Mrs. Dillenberg, with her wooden spoon, crosses the street.

MRS. DILLENBECK (CONT'D)
(out of breath)
The General wants to meet you.

They walk toward the house.

BURT BERENDSEN
Don't screw this up.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Straighten up.

VALERIE VOZE
Help me walk.

Valerie grabs Harold and Burt's arms as they walk towards the house. THEY SPEAK AS THEY WALK BEHIND MRS. DILLENBECK.

MRS. DILLENBECK
(walking)
I'm sorry about the
misunderstanding before.

BURT BERENDSEN
(walking)
Oh, never mind. Never mind.

MRS. DILLENBECK
We get so many uninvited guests
here.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Of course.

MRS. DILLENBECK
People we don't want to see. I'm
sorry.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank you.

VALERIE VOZE
I'm not drunk.

MRS. DILLENBECK
Young lady, what is wrong with you,
are you alright?

VALERIE VOZE

It's a touch of vertigo and a couple of other things -- I'm coming off some medication.

MRS. DILLENBECK

I had vertigo once and the world kept moving. I'd offer you a drink but we don't keep alcohol in the house.

VALERIE VOZE

Oh that's fine.

INT. DILLENBECK'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MRS. DILLENBECK

You can put your hat and coats over there. We're going up this way.

BURT BERENDSEN

Are we jumping ahead of another visitor?

MRS. DILLENBECK

Oh, Mr. Maguire comes every month to discuss something my husband can never get a clear answer about. Right, Mr. Maguire?

BURT BERENDSEN

Ah.

IN THE FOYER THEY PASS MAGUIRE, STOLID, 37, DARK HAIR COMBED TO THE SIDE, STANDING WITH A HEAVY LEATHER BAG OF SOMETHING --

Burt gives a slight wave as he passes Maguire who remains in the foyer with his bag.

THEY WALK UP THE STAIRS FOLLOWING MRS. DILLENBECK.

MRS. DILLENBECK

What do I know? I'm just trying to make bouillabaisse because the General had it once in France.

INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - DILLENBECK'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

They arrive at the landing where Mrs. Dillenberg pauses AT THE CLOSED BEDROOM DOOR and knocks.

MRS. DILLENBECK

(to closed door)

General, the visitors are here.

BURT BERENDSEN
You call your husband General?

MRS. DILLENBECK
Only on the weekdays.

BURT BERENDSEN
What do you call him on weekends?

MRS. DILLENBECK
That's a very personal question.

HAROLD WOODMAN
(to Burt)
What are you doing? What's the
matter with you? Are you nervous?

VALERIE VOZE
(to Burt)
Are you trying to get us kicked out
of here?

DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL GIL DILLENBECK, 70, STOLID COMPACT
QUIETLY FIERCE MAN, WIRE RIMS; SEEN A LOT OF DEATH AND
ADVENTURE. IN OFF-WHITE SHIRT WITH A LIGHT COLORED TIE TUCKED
INTO THE SHIRT AND SUSPENDERS AS HE FEEDS TREATS TO A SMALL
DOG HE HOLDS.

GIL DILLENBECK
She's pulling everybody's leg half
the time, that's why I love her.

BURT BERENDSEN
What an honor, sir. Was it the
pictures that made you change your
mind about seeing us?

CUT TO: INT. DILLENBECK'S STUDY - DILLENBECK'S HOUSE

Dillenberg sits holding up the picture of HAROLD AND BURT
WITH DILLENBECK.

GIL DILLENBECK
How can I know this is you really
in the pictures?

BURT BERENDSEN
Yes sir, so I'm the doctor. She's
the nurse, he's the attorney. We
all met in Belgium, which if you
recall, is where we met for the
first time.

HAROLD WOODMAN
As well as Washington last summer
for the VEF March.

GIL DILLENBECK
I'll tell you one thing that I can
remember quite clearly, you did
something -- you sang a song, I
believe.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Which one, sir?

GIL DILLENBECK
Well that's for you to remember. I
met thousands of people, you just
met me twice and so you should
remember the song. I'd like you to
sing it for me now and then I'll
know it's you.

VALERIE VOZE
Sing a song.

BURT AND HAROLD LOOK AT EACH OTHER TO REMEMBER A SONG.

HAROLD, BURT, VALERIE (SING)
Did you ever see a dream walking?
Well I did. Did you ever see a
dream talking? Well I did --

GIL DILLENBECK
Oh, no, no, no that's not it.

Burt and Harold look at each other.

VALERIE VOZE
Was it in French?

GIL DILLENBECK
I'll know it when I hear it.

VALERIE VOZE
(begins to sing)
"Le soleil rouge, du pamplemousse"

The three of them sing THE NONSENSE SONG.

BURT, HAROLD, VALERIE
(three part harmony)
"Le mouchoir, quand tu appelles, le
visage a déchiffrer, de qui, mon
nom a moi --"

GIL DILLENBECK

Yes, that was it.

BURT BERENDSEN

That's right.

VALERIE VOZE

We made it up it's not supposed to make sense because it's a nonsense song.

HAROLD WOODMAN

But it makes us feel good.

GIL DILLENBECK

And you're the doctor.

BURT BERENDSEN

That's right, sir.

GIL DILLENBECK

And you evacuated four thousand men in one day, you're very famous.

BURT BERENDSEN

Different doctor. That's the social guy from San Francisco. Story of my life.

GIL DILLENBECK

Not you?

HAROLD WOODMAN

Burt and I did evacuate a couple of thousand men in one day though, sir.

GIL DILLENBECK

(to Harold)

And you sir, you stabbed thirty Germans with your knife and they called you "Black Death?"

HAROLD WOODMAN

No sir, that was "Black Death" Henry Johnson, but I did get twelve of them before they gave me this.

Harold points to the scar on his jaw line.

VALERIE VOZE

I also saved a lot of lives.

GIL DILLENBECK

You did.

VALERIE VOZE

Yeah.

GIL DILLENBECK

Well that's something to be proud of. It's shameful they made you wear those French uniforms, you should wear your own country's uniform.

HAROLD WOODMAN

From your mouth to God's ear, sir. Thank you.

BURT BERENDSEN

So General, Bill Meekins.

GIL DILLENBECK

Bill Meekins was a friend of mine, it's a tragedy what happened to him and his daughter, and it's a disgrace that no one cares.

VALERIE VOZE

Well we care.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Indeed. The late Elizabeth Meekins hired us actually.

GIL DILLENBECK

She hired you? Why?

HAROLD WOODMAN

She didn't believe that her father died of natural causes.

VALERIE VOZE

On his way back from Europe.

GIL DILLENBECK

The last time I spoke to my friend, he called me from Rome. He called me from the hotel, and he told me something monstrous that he had seen. It disturbed him greatly. That was why Bill was killed. Did you see the man downstairs when you came in?

(MORE)

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

Every couple of weeks, he comes and he brings -- did you see a bag? A bag of money, he offers to me.

BURT BERENDSEN

Money for what?

GIL DILLENBECK

To give a speech. He won't tell me who is behind him, I ask him. And I'll say, "who is this from?" But he doesn't give me an answer.

VALERIE VOZE

They're paying you to be their mouthpiece.

GIL DILLENBECK

That's right, exactly.

VALERIE VOZE

And they know that the veterans will follow.

HAROLD WOODMAN

The Committee of the Five.

GIL DILLENBECK

Somebody is trying to do something dark and treacherous. Come here.

VALERIE VOZE

(whispering to Burt)

Ask him if he'll speak at the Gala.

HAROLD WOODMAN

(whispering to Burt)

Push further, like Henry said.

BURT BERENDSEN

Sir, if these guys are meeting you, and you want to find out who's behind it all. Why not go further and lead them to our reunion Gala event? They might show themselves in some fashion.

Dillenbeck opens the door to his room and looks downstairs.
THEY SEE MAGUIRE SITTING WITH HIS BAG.

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

GIL DILLENBECK
(over the staircase)
Maguire can you tell me why do come
every month?

MAGUIRE
Well General, I can't speak about
it in front of other people.

GIL DILLENBECK
Well why not? You say that there's
nothing to hide and it's in the
name of a good cause.

MAGUIRE
Yes sir, but not everybody
understands it.

GIL DILLENBECK
What I don't understand is who or
what you represent. Can you tell
me?

Dillenberg walks down the stairs by himself while Harold,
Burt, and Valerie watch from the top of the staircase.

MAGUIRE
Oh, I'm not at liberty to say who I
represent, sir. But they are very
important people and they have a
very important organization that is
going to change everything for the
better. The purpose, as I've told
you sir, is to lead this nation
properly in this time of economic
crisis. There's a cripple in the
White House. Roosevelt is weak.
We'd like you to speak on behalf of
the veterans and new leadership.

GIL DILLENBECK
Well that's what elections are for
Maguire. Don't you believe in the
constitution?

MAGUIRE
Of course, but we feel that action
is urgently needed now.

GIL DILLENBECK
From a retired General before the
election?

(MORE)

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

Do you want me to be a dictator? Is that what your big sponsors want?

MAGUIRE

A dictator? No, it doesn't have to be said like that.

GIL DILLENBECK

OK, a "chancellor"? Does that make it better? It still violates the Constitution.

MAGUIRE

They did this with veterans in Germany and Italy, very successful.

Maguire holds up the leather bag in his arms.

MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

Eighteen-thousand, sir, from the Committee of the Five -- Committee for a Sound Dollar.

GIL DILLENBECK

From who?

BURT BERENDSEN

Committee of the Five?

MAGUIRE

Committee for a Sound Dollar. The nation needs your leadership. Do you see where I'm going, sir?

GIL DILLENBECK

Mr. Maguire, I've changed my mind. I decided I will do the speech.

MAGUIRE

This is very exciting.

GIL DILLENBECK

I'll choose the event. I'm most comfortable speaking with the veterans Bill Meekins knew from the regiment he created. I'll speak at their reunion.

MAGUIRE

Of course, but--

GIL DILLENBECK

Because I want to see the men who put the money in that bag.

(MORE)

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

And I want to look them in the eye
and I want to shake their hand.

MAGUIRE

Given that we're partners now, I
can guarantee that you'll meet the
distinguished gentlemen on the
Committee for a Sound Dollar.
They'll be there to meet you
personally, although we might need
to be in a private room.

GIL DILLENBECK

OK.

MAGUIRE

Thank you. This is wonderful.

Maguire tries to hand Dillenberg a speech.

MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

This is the speech.

GIL DILLENBECK

Mr. Maguire, take that bag.

MAGUIRE

Yes sir.

GIL DILLENBECK

So you still won't tell me who they
are? Is that true?

Maguire tips his hat as he answers Dillenberg's question.

MAGUIRE

At the event, sir.

MAGUIRE LEAVES BRIMMING WITH HAPPINESS. DILLENBECK LOOKS AT
BURT, HAROLD, VALERIE.

GIL DILLENBECK

Whoever offers me more money and
tells me what to say and what not
to say in my speech, very likely
killed Bill Meekins and his
daughter and is behind all of this.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

And so, two soldiers, and a nurse,
found themselves in league with the
great honorable decorated General
Dillenberg.

BURT BERENDSEN
General, you should really speak to
Tom Voze, Valerie's brother.

INT. VOZE MANUFACTURING - LUXE EXECUTIVE LOUNGE - DAY

HUGE ROOM HIGH WINDOWS SPECIFIC QUIET OF WEALTH.

GENERAL DILLENBECK AND BURT WAIT.

DILLENBECK POINTS TO THREE PICTURE FRAMES COVERED WITH WHITE
CLOTH on the wall behind Berendsen.

GIL DILLENBECK
I never saw that.

BURT BERENDSEN
Maybe it's modern art.

GIL DILLENBECK
I kinda want to go over there and
take a look at it.

HAROLD AND VALERIE SIT ON A BENCH TEN FEET BEHIND BURT AND
THE GENERAL.

HAROLD WOODMAN
I want to try again in Amsterdam.

VALERIE VOZE
You would?

HAROLD WOODMAN
Yes.

VALERIE VOZE
Well let's hope this goes well.

PRIVATE DOOR OPENS AND TOM AND LIBBY WALK IN BRIMMING WITH
EXCITEMENT.

BURT BERENDSEN
Mr. Voze. May I call you Tom?

TOM VOZE
Of course.

BURT BERENDSEN
Mrs. Voze, let me introduce you to
General Dillenberg.

GIL AND TOM SHAKE HANDS.

TOM VOZE

General.

Libby rushes over to the General, her excitement palpable and intense. She excitedly clasps his outstretched hand with both of her hands.

LIBBY VOZE

General Dillenbeck, it is an honor to meet you. I think you are a man of such honor and strength, and such a... such a... truly such a dignified and wonderful, and I truly believe everything you say.

TOM VOZE

Libby.

Libby holds on to the General's hand, at a loss for words, uncomfortably close to the General.

LIBBY VOZE

Such a... Such strong hands.

HAROLD WOODMAN

She's so excited.

VALERIE VOZE

Very excited. Inappropriately excited.

Tom pulls Burt to the side.

TOM VOZE

Have you ever broadcast live on the radio?

BURT BERENDSEN

No, never.

TOM VOZE

Can you imagine? Think of your veteran friends in Cheboygan, Michigan or Carbondale, Illinois, sitting at home, listening to the radio, hearing your songs Burt. And your speech, General.

GIL DILLENBECK

The speech Maguire gave me.

TOM VOZE

No, no, YOUR speech. The speech that you want to give. I don't know who Maguire is, but I want you to speak from your heart to vindicate Bill Meekins and all of those voiceless veterans who have been abandoned.

BURT BERENDSEN

YES.

TOM VOZE

You lead the way and the rotten apples, whatever they did to Bill Meekins, will reveal themselves.

GIL DILLENBECK

I'll give the speech my way. I want to tell the truth.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

The trick was to let the Committee of Five and Maguire think that the General would give THEIR speech for new leadership in the White House, immediately, no election, conning the veterans into supporting it. And Tom, as promised, had gotten us off the hook with the police--

DOOR OPENS, DETECTIVES GETWEILER AND HILTZ WALK IN HOLDING THEIR HATS.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

-- who now to our great surprise were together with us, united in this plan to stop it. And we all supported the General. He was using himself as bait.

TITLE: NEW YORK VETERANS REUNION GALA

EXT. GALA EVENT HALL - NIGHT

DRAMATICALLY LIT BY SPOTLIGHTS ON THE GROUND --

CUT TO:

INT. MODEST ROOM - PARALLEL ACTION

Burt, Harold, Valerie as they, adjust and help each other with their formal attire for the event, preparing. They go in for a cheers with their glasses.

WILKIN HARTSDALE (O.S.)
 Good evening, America, this is
 Wilkin Hartsdale reporting to you
 live from the annual veterans'
 reunion gala.

DOUBLE DOORS OR A CURTAIN TO THE RIGHT PART AND OPEN --
 REVEALING PAUL CANTERBURY AND HENRY NORCROSS, WITH A TREASURY
 AGENT BEHIND THEM ON A RADIO WITH HEADPHONES.

BURT BERENDSEN
 Paul, Henry, he's here for you. He
 has questions.

Gil Dillenbeck walks into the room.

GIL DILLENBECK
 Norcross, Canterbury. I've never
 seen such a big picture of George
 Washington. Let me ask a very
 simple question, whose side are you
 guys on?

PAUL CANTERBURY
 We're on your side of course, same
 God, different church, same lady,
 different dress. We're on the exact
 same side.

GIL DILLENBECK
 Do me a favor, explain this to me
 very carefully because I'm about to
 do something that could cost me my
 life.

HENRY NORCROSS
 The trick with all of this is to
 wait until the absolutely very last
 second to expose as much of the
 criminality as we are able to
 capture.

GIL DILLENBECK
 At my expense?

HENRY NORCROSS
 No, sir. Never at your
 expense. Please.

PAUL CANTERBURY
 No sir, no sir.

*

GIL DILLENBECK
 There's a lot of people that I care
 about here, tonight.

HENRY NORCROSS
Trust our powers of discernment,
General.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Yes, the cuckoo is in the nest and
the cuckoo is about to be trapped!

Henry clasps his hands together.

Burt stares at the agents with a look of disbelief.

GIL DILLENBECK
Cuckoo?

Gil exits through the curtain.

BURT BERENDSEN
And, please, let us have our gala,
let us celebrate our lives. Get the
son of a bitch who killed Meekins
and those bastards who want to
hijack our government. Yes?

Burt exits through the curtains as well. Henry turns to look
at Paul.

HENRY NORCROSS
I hope this son-of-a-bitch thing
works.

Paul takes a slight pause.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Or else we're fucked.

CUT TO:

INT. EVENT STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Burt stands in the center of the Gala's stage. A lively band
of veterans are behind him. To his right are Patients Wayne
and Victor, standing by a second microphone.

BURT BERENDSEN
Welcome to the fourteenth annual
gala for the 369th, 42nd, and the
33rd New York Regiments!

The band breaks out into fun song while the crowd cheers.

Valerie and Harold film each other with a movie camera
laughing. Tom and Libby dance.

Valerie films Harold and Milton dancing.

PUSH IN TO SMALL RECTANGLE WINDOW WHERE

Paul and Henry watch the performances on the stage from a little opening on the other side of the theater.

HENRY NORCROSS

This looks promising.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Very promising, Henry.

Burt sings on stage the song he's practiced in his office with patients.

BURT BERENDSEN

(sings)

'PEA-NUTS! PEA-NUTS! 'If you
haven't got bananas don't be blue,
peanuts in a lit-tle bag are
calling you./ Don't waste them' -

PATIENTS WAYNE AND VICTOR

(sing with passion)

'Don't waste them, No tummy ache!
We'll taste them, when you awake.'

BURT BERENDSEN (O.S.)

(sings)

'PEA-NUTS! PEA-NUTS!

Valerie and Harold admire Burt's performance from the audience.

VALERIE VOZE

I mean, he is good.

Detective Getweiler and Detective Hiltz also watch from the audience.

DETECTIVE HILTZ

He's a little bit flat.

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER

Why don't you do it?

BURT BERENDSEN (O.S.)

(sings)

'PEA-NUTS! PEA-NUTS!

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)

Thank you Wayne Katowski and Victor
Barnes! Oh God!

INT. PAUL AND HENRY'S BACK ROOM

Paul and Henry look at a floor diagram with the seating arrangement.

HENRY NORCROSS
So there's Detective Getweiler.
There is Harold. Dillenbeck's right
there.

INT. GALA HOUSE

A veteran approaches General Dillenbeck and asks him for an autograph.

GIL DILLENBECK
What's your name?

INT. GALA STAGE

Burt revels in the applause while he walks off stage. He spots the Hinson brothers and shakes their hands as they congratulate him for a great performance.

WILKIN HARTSDALE (O.S.)
Dr. Berendsen says he believes that
music is medicine for each and
every one of these wounded
veterans.

BURT BERENDSEN
Tony!

INT. GALA HOUSE

Gil Dillenbeck signs an autograph for another Veteran.

GIL DILLENBECK
What's your name?

ALVIN
Alvin, sir.

Valerie stands with Harold. She points behind him to the other side of the theater.

VALERIE VOZE
Is that the Vandenheuvels?

Harold turns to look.

WILKIN HARTSDALE (O.S.)
In just a moment, music will
continue.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Yes. That's Dr. Vandenheuvel and his wife. And there's Beatrice over there too.

VALERIE VOZE

Ooh.

Burt is in the middle of a conversation with Beatrice and her family.

ALVELIA VANDENHEUVEL

We're very proud of you.

BURT BERENDSEN

Wow. What a difference a day makes. Should I move my shaving kit back in?

BEATRICE AND HER PARENTS LAUGH NERVOUSLY.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL
The Hebrew sense of humor.

BEATRICE
Father, please.

DR. AUGUSTUS VANDENHEUVEL (CONT'D)

I think it's time the medical board reassessed your situation, son. I can make that happen. I'd be happy to.

BEATRICE

Did you hear that? It's the perfect evening. This is happening, finally.

Beatrice laughs.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)

It would mean so much if you would introduce us to General Dillenbeck.

BURT BERENDSEN

Mean so much to you or mean so much to your family?

TOM AND LIBBY VOZE APPROACH BEAMING.

TOM VOZE

We're so very proud of Burtram it's quite a coup he's been able to pull off.

BEATRICE

Very proud.

LIBBY VOZE

Have you met the General? He truly is the most wonderful specimen of a man. Clammy, already truly clammy.

Libby holds up both of her palms.

TOM VOZE

She never gets that clammy for me, perhaps I should travel more on business.

LIBBY VOZE

Oh, Tom.

Beatrice laughs OVER EXCITED BY THE HIGH SOCIETY OF IT ALL.

GENERAL DILLENBECK FACES THE VANDENHEUVELS.

GIL DILLENBECK

I want to tell you what a fine veteran Burt is, and a wonderful doctor, and he deserves love.

The Vandenneuvels, called out, stare back at Dillenbeck at a loss for words.

BURT BERENDSEN

Thank you, sir.

Valerie films this all with her movie camera.

VALERIE VOZE

Hi, Burt.

LIBBY VOZE

Valerie, please, darling could you stop filming people?

VALERIE VOZE

Well we're documenting the night, Libby it could be a historical event, you know.

LIBBY VOZE

Yes, but some people appreciate their privacy.

POV BLACK AND WHITE OF VALERIE'S CAMERA:

VALERIE VOZE

You don't mind, do you General?

GIL DILLENBECK

No, no, no.

VALERIE VOZE

Burt?

BURT BERENDSEN

We should go see those guys.

GIL DILLENBECK

Yes, yes we should.

TOM VOZE

Valerie and her home movies.

VALERIE VOZE

It's art.

BURT BERENDSEN

Beatrice, will you dance with me?

BEATRICE

My darling that IS Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mother! That IS Cornelius Vanderbilt and he's standing right next to Alice Marble. She might win the U.S. Open. My parents have to meet them. They've wanted to meet Alice Marble the whole time. Can you just wait for two seconds and we'll come back? Did you hear what father said about you moving in? Isn't that exciting?

BURT BERENDSEN

No, thank you.

BEATRICE

What? What do you mean?

BURT BERENDSEN

No, thank you.

BEATRICE

What does "No, thank you" mean?

BURT BERENDSEN

I've waited too long for the wrong thing. It turned into something very different than it ever once could be.

BEATRICE
I think terrible things might
happen to you.

BURT BERENDSEN
What a thing to say to anyone, let
alone your beloved.

Beatrice brushes past Burt to meet Alice Marble.

Valerie and Harold embrace Burt.

HAROLD WOODMAN
It's OK, Burt.

VALERIE VOZE
Yeah, you still have us.

BURT BERENDSEN
Thank God, I'm running out of
people fast.

CUT TO:

Libby and Tom speak to General Dillenbeck.

TOM VOZE
There are some important men who I
believe you wanted to meet,
General? Is that right?

GIL DILLENBECK
Yes, I would like to meet them.
Berendsen, we can meet these people
we talked about.

LIBBY VOZE
Valerie, you looked so lovely
dancing. Maybe you should stay here
with your friends.

INT. PAUL AND HENRY'S BACK ROOM

Paul and Henry watch the scene play out from the small
opening in their wall.

HENRY NORCROSS
There's Tom Voze talking to the
General.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Going to meet the Committee of the
Five, I believe.

INT. WINGS

Tom and the General are followed by Libby, Burt, Harold and Valerie to a back room.

GIL DILLENBECK
I spent my whole life avoiding
these people.

TOM VOZE
I feel the exact same way, General.
But these might be some of the
better ones, worth giving a chance.

THEY WALK THROUGH A SLIDING DOOR TO A PRIVATE ROOM.

INT. PRIVATE BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dimly lit, beautiful lamps, oriental carpets; THREE AFFLUENT LEADERS turn in black ties as they stand together at a bar.

TOM VOZE
General Dillenberg, this is Mr.
Nevins of Nevins
Telecommunications. Mr. Belport of
Belport Chemicals. Mr. Jeffers of
Jeffers News Chain.

GENTLE DEEP GONG

With super of text, "Nevins Telecommunications" beneath Nevins; "Belport Chemicals International" beneath Belport, "Jeffers Publishing" beneath Jeffers.

TOM VOZE (CONT'D)
We wanted to have Mr. Tomlinson,
legendary auto inventor, but he
couldn't be here tonight. He has a
FANTASTIC operation in Munich.

MR. BELPORT
Gil - may I call you Gil?

GIL DILLENBECK
No. You can call me General.

LIBBY VOZE
He prefers General.

MR. BELPORT
Gil. I understand. We understand.

BURT BERENDSEN
He prefers to be called General.

MR. NEVINS

How's it going, Gil? I'm Andrew Nevins, you can call me Andy.

GIL DILLENBECK

I'll call you Andy, you call me General. I'm here to reckon for the death of my friend, Bill Meekins.

MR. NEVINS

Oh, who's that?

BURT BERENDSEN

Bill Meekins? We're honoring him tonight?

LIBBY VOZE

He ran the bond exchange.

MR. NEVINS

Of course. I'm terribly sorry about what happened. I almost forgot.

MR. BELPORT

Tragedy with the daughter.

MR. JEFFERS

Terrible tragedy.

MR. BELPORT

I look forward to speaking with you tonight about business opportunities overseas. Our plant in Munich is getting fantastic returns because of strong leadership, knowing how to get things done over there.

TOM VOZE

Let's have a toast.

A WAITER PUTS A TRAY BETWEEN THEM WITH FIVE BRANDY GLASSES.

MR. BELPORT

Yes, good, we're the three, Tom you can be the fourth, like we're playing golf and for good luck, we need a proper fifth. General, won't you please step in?

The five of them raise their glasses together to toast: FIVE GLASSES AT THE CENTER.

TOM VOZE
To the General.

MR. BELPORT / MR. NEVINS /
MR. JEFFERS
To the General.

*

BURT SEES THIS, looks back to Harold and Valerie at the door where Harold holds up five fingers then draws the symbol of the Committee of the Five in the air.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
Talk about following the wrong God home, what's more un-American than a dictatorship built by American business?

TOM VOZE
There are two properties General, should you ever want to use them, you or your family.

MR. BELPORT
Pioneer Point in Maryland, the home state of Belport Chemicals. A great retreat for you or the veterans.

MR. JEFFERS
And another one in East Hampton. You and your family might like it.

GIL DILLENBECK
I'll think about it. Though the wife and I enjoy a little place on the Jersey Shore.

MR. BELPORT
Maybe you need a larger imagination, General. That's how we all ended up here.

LIBBY VOZE
Never mind these men, General. They think they own the world. It's time to be getting on with your speech.

MR. BELPORT
I'm looking forward to your speech.

The General takes a moment, places his drink back on the tray and walks out followed by Burt, Tom, Libby.

Camera pushes in to Valerie, who is still standing at the entrance of the room, holding a camera under her arm. We hear the faint sound of film rolling through the gate.

GIL DILLENBECK

Let's go.

INT. GALA STAGE - CONTINUOUS

AUGGIE, a veteran with only one leg, plays the singing glasses on stage at the Gala.

WILKIN HARTSDALE (O.S.)

And now, a featured star of the
369th, Auggie on the glasses.

INT. WINGS OF STAGE - CONTINUOUS

LIBBY HOLDS UP A BOTTLE OF GERMAN PERVITIN EYE DROPS.

BURT BERENDSEN

What is that?

TOM VOZE

This is one of the finest
innovations from Zurich. It removes
all pain, all anxiety...

Tom tilts his head back as Libby drips Pervitin in each eye.

TOM VOZE (CONT'D)

All needless thoughts that occupy
the mind.

Burt leans forward eager to try it as well, Tom takes the bottle and gives droplets to Burt's eyes.

BURT BERENDSEN

My back is killing me, normally,
guys like me, we have to turn to
booze or to morphine, and that can
lead to addiction and -- Oh, that's
fast. That's advanced. Oh that is
tremendous energy. I feel no pain.

TOM VOZE

It's good, isn't it?

BURT BERENDSEN

This is good.

TOM VOZE

There's more where this came from,
Burt.

BURT BERENDSEN

I want to know more about this. I would love to have the chemical compound.

Libby leans her head back; Tom brings the dropper to her eyes.

LIBBY VOZE

When I get together with my sisters at the Vrill Society, we hold a seance where we let our hair down, and it acts as a kind of antenna. It allows us to communicate with the greater race. Honestly, they come from a different galaxy, it's truly fascinating.

BURT AND THE GENERAL stare at Libby incredulous at what she is saying.

INT. GALA STAGE

The Hinson Brothers take the stage with the opening notes of "Lady of Spain."

WILKIN HARTSDALE (O.S.)

And now, the Hinson Brothers.

THE HINSON BROTHERS (SING)

'Lady of Spain I adore you, Right
from the night I first saw you-'

INT. WINGS OF STAGE - CONTINUOUS

TOM VOZE

I wanted to say, for your speech tonight, General, some friendly advice.

BURT BERENDSEN

Oh please, please, please, don't give him any friendly advice.

GIL DILLENBECK

Oh yeah? Well what's the friendly advice?

TOM VOZE

Tonight, people will be listening to you on the radio. You'll never have a bigger audience with more excited attention from everyone.

(MORE)

TOM VOZE (CONT'D)

They'll be looking to you for inspiration. Remember the veterans who have bled and died on our behalf, and remember Bill Meekins, and honor him respectfully.

LIBBY VOZE

If you improvise and get lost in the woods on some complicated criminal situation over Meekins' death, it will reflect badly on you. And we don't want that for you General.

BURT BERENDSEN

The General was very clear that he was going to honor Bill Meekins, and tell the truth.

TOM VOZE

That's exactly what I mean. Focus on the good qualities that Meekins had -- his quietness and his kindness.

GIL DILLENBECK

That's what I intend to do in my own way.

Tom beckons to an associate WHO PASSES A THICK VALISE TO TOM.

BURT BERENDSEN

What is that?

TOM VOZE

Feel this. This is walrus.

Burt feels the valise.

BURT BERENDSEN

Oh, that is soft.

General Dillenbeck quickly touches the valise with a few of his fingers, then he takes his hand away.

GIL DILLENBECK

A walrus was killed for this?

TOM VOZE

No sir, he died of old age. He lived a long and happy life because he made smart choices. It's a contribution to your foundation.

GIL DILLENBECK
I don't have a foundation.

TOM VOZE
Well maybe you should start one, I
can help you, \$36,000, General.
Think of everything you can do with
Dr. Berendsen and your medical
innovations.

LIBBY VOZE
So much could be accomplished. You
have to take the money.

GIL DILLENBECK
What do you mean I have to take it?

TOM VOZE
Listen to me. Someone, not me, they
will take your face and your name,
put it in the New York Times, and
wipe their dog's ass with it. Think
of everything you've accomplished
in your life. It will be forgotten,
erased. You'll be treated like an
old kook, and buried by history.
That's what they can do. Make the
right speech. Or they'll turn you
into a martyr and say an anarchist
did it.

LIBBY VOZE
Don't make the mistake like Bill
Meekins.

TOM VOZE
That was a tragic theft of a life.

Burt and the General stare at Tom and Libby as the closing
notes of "Lady of Spain" ring out.

INT. GALA STAGE

The Hinson Brothers bow on stage to applause. MILTON TAKES
THE MIC AS Master of Ceremony.

MILTON KING
That was the Hinson Brothers! The
Hinson Brothers! They were great,
right? Yes, the Hinson Brothers.
Doing "Lady of Spain." I met a lady
of Spain once, she turned me into a
gentleman of pain.
(MORE)

MILTON KING (CONT'D)

The gentleman that I'm about to bring up right now is a doctor of our regiment, and a man I like to call a friend. Please welcome Burt Berendsen. Come on Burt.

INT. WINGS OF STAGE

Burt pauses to takes off a patch that covers his eye scars as he steps onto the stage.

MILTON KING (O.S.)

Come on and give your speech Burt.
Burt. Dr. Burt Berendsen.

INT. GALA STAGE

Burt takes the microphone at the podium.

BURT BERENDSEN

My name is Burt Berendsen. Most of you know me. I am the son of a mechanic from Elmira. As a child, we love the world naturally. And we hope that the world loves us. As my friend Harold says, sometimes I might have followed the wrong God home. But not this man. He always followed the right God home.

APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS AS THE GENERAL STEPS TO THE MICROPHONE.

CROWD OF VETS

DILL-EN-BECK! DILL-EN-BECK!

SUDDENLY A GROUP OF PROTESTORS IN SPECIAL UNIFORMS CHANT IN GERMAN.

INT. PAUL AND HENRY'S BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul and Henry watch through their window in the wall.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Listen to those Bund bastards,
shallow bleeders, rotters.

INT. GALA STAGE - CONTINUOUS

GIL DILLENBECK

If the few people shouting at me in German had any courage, you would behave with dignity.

Crowd applauds as the Bund stand still and cold.

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

I've fought in five wars on three continents. People shot at me my whole life, my whole life! I know fear, and I know facing fear, but the one thing I truly detest, the one thing I truly, truly detest is cruelty. I've been offered money to become the self appointed leader of the veterans -- veterans like you. To be put in the White House without an election, as some sort of advisor by popular demand, of you. These same people want me to emulate a certain European leader named Mussolini. They think he's the type of leader that this country needs. The type of leader who ran over a child and never stopped his car. The type of leader whose excuse was "What's one person in the affairs of the state?" General Bill Meekins was in that car. He was a friend of mine. He was a good person. But when he told that story, and when he intended to tell it again, here on this stage, he became another person whose life was worth nothing in the affairs of the state. He was murdered.

The crowd reacts in shock.

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

Yes, he was murdered and dishonored, as I might be murdered or dishonored for telling that story here tonight. What kind of country does this become when that happens? I became a Marine to serve the constitution, which intends for us all to be equal in the brotherhood of mankind. But what good is it when powerful people make exceptions for the people who stand in their way? Some people of influence and power like it when regular folks are fired up by hatred because it distracts us from fairness and kindness. They don't want us to think about too much just so they can get more and more of what they already have, which is vast wealth.

(MORE)

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)

This is your country. This is YOUR country. Don't let the big men take it away from you.

THE AUDITORIUM BURSTS INTO THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

INT. EVENT HALL - CURTAINS - CONTINUOUS

Harold and Valerie watch from inside the gathered red curtains of the wings.

They SEE SOMEONE MOVING BACKSTAGE TO THE SIDE.

VALERIE VOZE

Look, it's that guy.

They watch Red Faced Man Milfax walk up the stairs backstage to the rafters.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Where's Paul and Henry?

VALERIE VOZE

Not here.

HAROLD WOODMAN

What about the detectives?

VALERIE VOZE

Also not here.

They leave the curtains to pursue Milfax as--

The General's speech continues in the background.

INT. UP IN THE RAFTERS ABOVE STAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Harold and Valerie walk up the stairs, whisper to each other in a corner - and split up to go separate ways to trap the Taron Milfax.

HAROLD TAKES HIS POSITION ON THE LEFT; VALERIE APPEARS ALONG THE WALL TO THE RIGHT.

THEY WATCH MILFAX TAKE POSITION TO AIM HIS PISTOL AT GENERAL DILLENBECK ON THE STAGE. VALERIE AND HAROLD SIGNAL TO EACH OTHER --

THEY CONVERGE ON THE SHOOTER FROM BOTH SIDES AT ONCE.

HAROLD GRABS MILFAX IN CHOKE HOLD AS VALERIE ELBOWS THE MAN IN THE FACE AND KNEES HIM.

BUT MILFAX MANAGES TO HIT HAROLD, LOOSENING HIS GRIP enough
for HIM to GET OFF ONE SHOT to the stage --

IT SHATTERS THE WATER PITCHER ON THE PODIUM IN FRONT OF
DILLENBECK.

GIL DILLENBECK
Whoever's shooting at me is a
coward.

CROWD SHOUTS -- BURT STEPS IN FRONT OF THE GENERAL -
searching for the shooter.

ANOTHER SHOT RINGS OUT FROM ABOVE -- AND HITS BURT IN THE
TORSO, JUST BELOW HIS RIB. HE LOOKS AT IT.

GIL DILLENBECK (CONT'D)
Are you all right?

DETECTIVE LEM GETWEILER
Burt are you alright?

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm fine, Lem.

ABOVE - HAROLD AND VALERIE STRUGGLE WITH MILFAX UNTIL THE GUN
CLATTERS TO THE FLOOR - THEN HAROLD AND VALERIE HOIST MILFAX
OVER THE RAILING.

MILFAX falls AND LANDS NEXT on the side of the stage.

TARON MILFAX GRABS HIS GUN AND LIMPS ONTO THE STAGE WITH HIS
GUN RAISED IN THE AIR.

TARON MILFAX
Sic semper tyrannus. Dillenberg's a
traitor.

GIL DILLENBECK
Stop that man!

TARON MILFAX
Tom Voze is a great man. Tom Voze
is a great man.

BURT KNEELS ON MILFAX'S ARM AND CHEST.

GIL DILLENBECK
Keep that man down!

TARON MILFAX
We're official and legal. Ask Mr.
Voze.

SUDDENLY A GROUP OF MEN AT THE FAR SIDE OF HALL START TO SING
A BAVARIAN ANTHEM -- HEARTY AND PROPULSIVE --

GERMAN AMERICAN BUND
(chant in German)
Strength, the father land, the
strongest Norse gods of the galaxy
to the sword of destiny.

On the other side of the room, A CROWD OF VETERANS LED BY
MILTON AND, NOW JOINED BY HAROLD and VALERIE, SING BACK 'MY
COUNTRY TIS OF THEE'.

US VETERANS
(singing over the Bund)
'My country tis of thee, sweet land
of liberty, of thee I sing.'

THE TWO GROUPS CHANT BACK AND FORTH - A FIGHT ERUPTS IN THE
MIDDLE BETWEEN THE GROUPS -- DETECTIVES GETWEILER AND HILTZ
BREAK IT UP AND PUSH THE BUND OUT AS ON STAGE --

Burt puts handcuffs the Red Faced Taron Milfax.

BURT BERENDSEN
I'm a veteran and a patriot, you
fool.

BURT BERENDSEN (CONT'D)
You killed Liz Meekins, you son of
a bitch, and for all I know, her
father too.

PEOPLE FLEE THE THEATER IN SHOUTING CHAOS - AS

Henry Norcross walks against the tide of people with his
Treasury Agent badge held high.

HENRY NORCROSS
United States Treasury, everyone
leave!

INT. EVENT HALL - PRIVATE BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Valerie rushes into the backroom to find Burt standing.
Harold and Milton follow behind her.

VALERIE VOZE
Are you all right?

Burt nods he is fine.

LIBBY VOZE

This is terrible, we never meant
for anything like this to happen.

TOM VOZE

This is an outrage.

GIL DILLENBECK

You're going to be charged, you
are, Tom. You, yes, you.

TOM VOZE

No sir, you are confused.

GIL DILLENBECK

No, I'm not confused, you're
confused.

CLOSE UP ON BURT BERENDSEN as he stands listening to it all,
swaying slightly.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Between my own pill and getting
shot, these eye drops are the only
reason I'm standing and I feel no
pain. And holy shit! Look what's
happening in this room.
Everything...

PAUL CANTERBURY

-- Committee of the Five. He called
you by your name, Tom, with pride.

TOM VOZE

I don't know that man.

VALERIE VOZE

We just fought that man for our
lives.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Burt and I saw him push Liz
Meekins. He's the killer.

HENRY NORCROSS

There is enough evidence, I'm sorry
to say, that the man who took a
shot at General Dillenberg, on that
stage tonight, was the same man on
the boat as Bill Meekins, on a
ticket purchased by your
foundation!

LIBBY VOZE

There is no need to raise your voice.

HENRY NORCROSS

Yours, Mr. Voze.

VALERIE VOZE

Tom, what's happening?

LIBBY VOZE

What are the charges?

PAUL CANTERBURY

The charges are against you and the guests you invited.

HENRY NORCROSS

The Committee of the Five.

TOM VOZE

For what?

VALERIE VOZE

The Committee of the Five.

HENRY NORCROSS

Conspiracy to bribe a United States General, attempted assassination, conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. Government, trading with dictators: Italy, Germany, a few murders your foundation seems to be responsible for: Meekins and his daughter.

VALERIE VOZE

Tom, did you do this?

TOM VOZE

I felt it was wrong that Meekins died. That was a tragic theft of a life. But something had to be done, because he didn't see the opportunity of the new ways to live.

LIBBY VOZE

He didn't understand, Meekins didn't understand. Do you understand that?

HENRY NORCROSS

You need to slow it down.

VALERIE VOZE

Tom, please tell me you didn't have anything to do with my medication.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Tom influenced your doctor, Valerie, as he had done with your mother before.

VALERIE VOZE

Is that true?

TOM VOZE

A little.

VALERIE VOZE

A little?

TOM VOZE

I did it for your own good.

VALERIE VOZE

You poisoned me?

TOM VOZE

If that's what you want to call it, fine. I was looking after you, your best interests. You're reckless, like a child. Listen to me, you're running around all over Europe, you're saying bad things about the war, consorting with a black man.

MILTON KING

Consorting with a free man, in Amsterdam that fought for you!

HAROLD WOODMAN

Like the clinics, Tom?

TOM VOZE

What clinics?

VALERIE VOZE

Committee of the Five.

HAROLD WOODMAN

You know what clinics I'm talking about, Tom.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Forced sterilization.

TOM VOZE
We'll see about that.

HAROLD WOODMAN
We saw the Committee of the Five
symbol there.

VALERIE VOZE
Stop lying!

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
That Tom had an angle was no
surprise, but the horror of it, my
God, right under Valerie's nose.
They kept her distracted with the
invented condition. Goering,
Hitler's right-hand man, and Hitler
himself. Most people didn't even
know who he was yet. Tom even paid
Goering to write in the Jeffers
papers about the new Aryan
government, whatever that was. Tom
had just finished the topiary with
the symbol -- you couldn't see it
except from above. I mean, you've
gotta be some kind of super fanatic
believer to make your bushes like
that.

VALERIE VOZE
Don't you look at me like that,
Libby.

LIBBY VOZE
Valerie, darling, all great
societies are built this way. You
live in a dream world with your
strange sculptures and that's fine,
you can have that. But it won't
make the world go around.

VALERIE VOZE
I'm very happy to be unimportant
and live in a place that has love
and beauty. Art and love, that's
what makes the life worth living,
while you're building this big,
gigantic, terrifying future. What a
waste of your imagination.

TOM VOZE
I made plenty for us rebuilding
Germany.

(MORE)

TOM VOZE (CONT'D)

I wanted to stand with the
strongest leaders in the world, but
I'm also happy to go to war against
them.

BURT IN CLOSE UP:

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Another war? But we just did all of
that. You mean to tell me, that
these rich guys will support
dictators or fight them? They
believe in nothing but making
money. And that's why Meekins was
killed Because he wouldn't go along
with that or support it --
insanity. And we had walked right
into it.

FLASHBACK EARLIER

INT. VOZE MANSION - VALERIE'S ART ROOM

Burt gets punched by Carlton and falls to the floor as his
glass eye falls onto the carpet next to him.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Tom quickly saw us as his best
chance to get the General.

CUT TO:

INT. VOZE MANSION - TOM VOZE'S STUDY

Earlier scene as Burt and Harold see Tom for the first time.

TOM VOZE

If you get someone like Gil
Dillenbeck involved with your
event, it would help me to get
involved.

VALERIE VOZE

So you need someone. You always--
He always needs someone.

LIBBY VOZE

Valerie, would you give it a rest?

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. EVENT HALL - PRIVATE BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GIL DILLENBECK

You thought you'd use these men to get me, but I used them and their event to reveal you and stop your plan for at least a decade, maybe two or three more, hopefully.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

We did stop the plot. This is true. The Committee of the Five didn't get their American dictator.

CUT TO:

NEWSREEL OF GIL DILLENBECK

GIL DILLENBECK

I appear before the congressional committee, the highest representation of the American people, under subpoena, to tell what I...

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

The General testified to Congress, and they agreed he was right. What do powerful people want? Is it never enough? They do the craziest things.

BACK TO:

INT. EVENT HALL - PRIVATE BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Libby start laughing at how they will face no consequences.

VALERIE stands next to them upset when -

WHAM!! VALERIE'S PISTOL FIRES INTO LIBBY AND TOM'S FACES from Valerie's folded arms.

TOM AND LIBBY'S FACES ARE SPLATTERED WITH BLOOD from the bird shot of the small pistol.

PAUL CANTERBURY

My God! What's the matter with you?

HENRY NORCROSS

What the hell did you do?

TOM VOZE

Valerie, what have you done?

GIL DILLENBECK

What's the matter with you? What did you do?

HENRY NORCROSS

We had everything we needed to prosecute, and now it's all out the window!

PAUL CANTERBURY

It's a huge problem now. Yes, well done.

LIBBY VOZE

Tom my face, she ruined my face.

VALERIE VOZE

I couldn't help it. They're so awful.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Woman, have you lost your mind?

TOM VOZE

I told you she was trouble.

LIBBY VOZE

Yes, that was rather stupid, Valerie.

TOM VOZE

You could go to jail, Valerie.

VALERIE VOZE

Tell them the truth, Harold.

SUDDEN CUT BACK IN TIME TO THE MOMENT JUST BEFORE THE GUNSHOT WHEN

VALERIE IS UPSET AND SHAKING WITH EMOTION.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Are you alright, Valerie? You're shaking.

VALERIE VOZE

Oh, I'm alright, I was thinking of shooting Tom and Libby in the face but I won't do it, don't worry.

GIL DILLENBECK

Well, that's a good decision, thank God.

PAUL CANTERBURY

Yes, that would have bollocksed everything, we'd have no case.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

You have to stand up to them, as we have done. And you have to live your truth.

VALERIE VOZE

I love Harold. He's given me the greatest happiness of my life. As has Burt.

Valerie and Harold face each other. She holds Harold's face and kisses him with love.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

There it is, look at that. That's how you face such a world. You must have love in your heart for your life. It is love versus hate. I love my life, and the people in it. Even Beatrice. And clear, not Portuguese, I'm in love with her Irma. Milton. Shirley at the office, with Morty. A tapestry, everything in it. Even my glass eye, Dillenbeck's dog, and the bouillabaisse we didn't get to have. Each one of us is given a tapestry, our own opera. This person and this person. Thinking about it. Love is not enough, you've gotta fight to protect kindness. You get attached to people and things, and they might just break your heart. But that's being alive.

MONTAGE OF ALL BURT'S REFLECTIONS LEADS TO BURT STANDING NOW AS HE RAISES HIS SHIRT, SHOWING HIS BLOODY BACK BRACE AND GUNSHOT WOUND.

MILTON KING

You lucky bastard.

THEY LAUGH AT BURT'S LUCK.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 My back brace that I so disliked
 had saved me from this bullet.
 And we three had helped stop this
 terrible plot: Burt Berendsen,
 Harold Woodman, and Valerie Voze.

Henry pulls Tom's hands behind his back to cuff him.

TOM VOZE
 Jerks...

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 Tom would not stay arrested long.
 Those people never do.

TOM VOZE
 ... Talk to my lawyer! You'll see.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 The Committee of the Five never
 faced any charges. They disappeared
 as they can do. Tom and his friends
 smeared the General. It was a
 warning of what they were capable
 of. Maguire died mysteriously at
 the age of 37. He knew too much.
 Valerie and Harold were no longer
 safe in this country.

MONTAGE SHOWS ALL THESE MOMENTS BURT DESCRIBES; CUT TO:

EXT. MARINA DOCK OF FREIGHTER - NIGHT

ON THE BACKS OF BEST FRIENDS BURT AND HAROLD AS THEY WALK
 THROUGH CARGO TO THE DOCK OF A SHIP AT NIGHT.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)
 Friends for life means friends for
 life. You do whatever it takes. We
 had to get them on a boat that very
 night.

THEY STOP AND TURN TO SEE VALERIE APPROACH THROUGH THE
 STACKED CARGO IN HER ELEGANT DRESS AND CAPE, CARRYING HER
 THINGS IN A BAG.

HENRY NORCROSS
 Woodman, you should--

HAROLD WOODMAN
 Thank you Henry, I'm way ahead of
 you. I made my decision.

Harold and Valerie step toward the ship on the dock being loaded.

VALERIE VOZE
Harold's coming with me.

HAROLD WOODMAN
No you're coming with me.

VALERIE VOZE
No you're coming with me.

THEY ARE SMILING AS THEY HOLD HANDS AND TURN AROUND TO SAY GOODBYE TO BURT.

HAROLD WOODMAN
You'll be seeing me again, Dr. Berendsen, because history repeats itself. Goodbye, old friend. We'll see you in Amsterdam.

HENRY NORCROSS
Oh, you're not going to Amsterdam.

BURT BERENDSEN
What?

PAUL CANTERBURY
It's only a matter of time before the Gestapo kicks down your door.

VALERIE VOZE
What's the Gestapo?

PAUL CANTERBURY
Ahhh-

HENRY NORCROSS
You don't want to know.

HENRY NORCROSS (CONT'D)
We'll send you somewhere safer.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Beautiful weather this time of year and the blue-headed vireo migration to boot.

HENRY NORCROSS
Yes, spectacular bird country.

PAUL CANTERBURY
Isn't it though?

HENRY NORCROSS
Yeah I'm jealous.

VALERIE VOZE

Burt, why don't you come with us?

BURT BERENDSEN

I choose to stay. Who knows, maybe
I'll find a new life and a new
love.

VALERIE VOZE

I hope so. Because when it comes to
love, there's nothing quite so good
as clarity.

HAROLD WOODMAN

I agree.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

I stayed to stand up for my country
so that one day my best friends
could come back.

VALERIE VOZE

Goodbye, Burt.

Valerie gives him a big hug. Harold gives him an even bigger
hug.

HAROLD WOODMAN

Au revoir, my good friend.

Harold and Valerie walk towards the boat.

VALERIE VOZE

Be happy Burt!

HAROLD WOODMAN

VALERIE VOZE (CONT'D)

Henry, Paul, General, Milton. Farewell for now. *

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

Part of me wishes I did run with my
friends.

CUT TO: BURT RUNS TO THE BOAT TOGETHER WITH HAROLD AND
VALERIE. BACK TO:

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

But I didn't.

BURT STANDS WATCHING HIS FRIENDS LOAD ONTO THE BOAT.

BURT BERENDSEN (V.O.)

You want for your heart, and for
your people to follow the right God
home.

CUT TO: CANDLELIT COT IN BURT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

BURT AND IRMA SIT TOGETHER HAPPY AS IRMA REACHES AND caresses Burt's face with her hand.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL IN BELGIUM

The earlier moment of Burt, Harold, and Valerie happy together, laughing after the "Nonsense Song" when they first met.

CUT TO:

INT. VALERIE'S AMSTERDAM APARTMENT

Burt and Harold smile at Valerie's portrait of herself.

CUT TO:

INT. VOZE MANSION - VALERIE'S ART ROOM

Harold looks directly into the lens filmed by Valerie.

HAROLD WOODMAN
Amsterdam.

CUT TO VALERIE INTO THE LENS:

VALERIE VOZE
Amsterdam.

END

REAL ARCHIVAL NEWSREEL OF

MAJOR GENERAL SMEDLEY BUTLER actual testimony from 1933.

GENERAL SMEDLEY BUTLER
I appear before the Congressional
Committee, the highest
representation of the American
people under subpoena, to tell what
I knew of activity, which I believe
might lead to an attempt to set up
a fascist dictatorship.

Parallel side by side shot of General Dillenbeck testifying to Congress; their audio syncs up as they read the same speech.

GIL DILLENBECK / GENERAL SMEDLEY
BUTLER

The plan outlined to me was to form
an organization of veterans to use
as a bluff or as a club, at least,
to intimidate the government, and
break down our democratic
institutions.