

FADE IN:

INT. PROVENCE, ART STUDIO OF MAX ERNST - DAY

Max Ernst puts the finishing touches on his surrealist painting "Ubu Imperator," a red top personified, with cartoon hands and Mickey Mouse gloves, but no head. His wealthy French wife sits at an easel, drawing. French police barge in and arrest him.

OFFICER OF THE SURETE

Max Ernst, we arrest you as a hostile alien. Madame, we advise you to return to Paris.

The lovers grasp hands and are torn asunder.

EXT. BRICK FACTORY (LES MILLES CONCENTRATION CAMP) - DAY

As French police escort Max to the entrance, a crowd of artists and writers line up behind barbed wire to greet him.

OPENING SHOT:

Colored map of Europe centering on France, Spain and Portugal. It lies flat on a table. On top of the map, a red top spins and spins.

VOICEOVER

Europe, 1940. Hitler is taking over.

The top falls down on France.

EXT. MARSEILLE, STAIRS FROM TRAIN STATION, AUGUST - DAY

American journalist Varian Fry pauses at the top of steps and takes in the panorama of Marseille. Dressed in a 3-piece suit, he wears horn-rim glasses. He descends the steps, followed by a porter with baggage. They cross the square.

EXT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE - DAY

Varian looks up at the facade of the Splendide. The hotel stands on Rue Grignon at the corner of the Boulevard d'Athènes. Neon sign of the old world hotel shines dimly. Varian and the porter enter the lobby.

INT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE, VARIAN FRY'S ROOM - DAY

In Room 307, the porter gives Varian the key and sets his suitcase on a holder. Varian thanks him and gives him some francs. Bolting the door, Varian washes and puts on a clean shirt. He pulls up a trouser leg to tear off the tape holding a large package of dollars. Taking out a pocket knife, he unscrews the mirror inside the armoire and hides maps and money behind it, then screws it back on.

He unpacks and explores the room. Looking out the window, he can see a courtyard of a girls' school. Sound: GIRLS' VOICES as they play outside at recess. When the girls go inside, the city is eerily quiet. In the distance the cathedral stands high on a hill south of the Vieux Port. Varian sits down at a writing desk. From his luggage, he takes out a list of artists on "Museum of Modern Art stationery." On hotel paper, he starts writing letters to the political refugees with known addresses. The first one is Max Ernst, Les Milles.

VARIAN

On behalf of Mrs. Roosevelt and the
Emergency Rescue Committee, I would
like to offer our assistance. We
feel you are an important artist and
must be free to continue your work.

INT. AMERICAN CONSULATE - DAY

Varian walks up to the desk. A bleached blond with blue eye shadow gives him a glittering once-over, smiles flirtatiously.

VARIAN

Bonjour, I'm here to see the consul
about visas.

BLONDE

Take the trolley to Montrédon.

She hands him a slip of paper with an address typed on it.

EXT. TROLLEY -DAY

The trolley rolls along Avenue de Prado to the sea, following the coast. Beach houses, palm trees, arid landscape. At Montrédon the trolley stops. Varian emerges in a crowd of ruffled, bewildered refugees. They walk up a long drive lined with plane trees, stirring up a cloud of dust, to the big brick house. Refugees sit on the porch and parapet, dangling their legs. Varian walks up the steps and into the center room.

INT. VISA DIVISION - DAY

A young tough walks up to Varian. He is the doorman.

YOUNG TOUGH

Faites cela comme il faut!
Attendez la! (Subtitles: Do it
right, wait over there!)

VARIAN

Would you give the consul my card,
c'il vous plait.

Varian hands him his card, walks over to a bench and sits down with the others. He checks his watch, which reads 2 o'clock, and waits. He watches the miserable, nervous, shabby people shuffling in and out of the office door, bullied by the doorman. He waits. (time lapse) He checks his watch, which reads 4 o'clock. He gets up and leaves.

INT. HOTEL DU LOUVRE ET DE LA PAIX - NIGHT

Varian enters the lobby and goes to the reception desk.

VARIAN

(to the desk clerk) Mr. and Mrs.
Mahler.

Desk clerk looks alarmed, turns his back and phones. After a long wait, he beckons Varian over and whispers the room number.

INT. THE WERFELS' HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Franz Werfel greets Varian. Heavy-set, his hair thin on top and long on the sides, he shakes Varian's hand with both of his and sits down heavily, picking up a manuscript, which he reads in the lamplight. Alma Werfel is a beautiful middle-aged woman. She serves chocolates, and pours from a bottle of Benedictine into tumblers. Franz Werfel puts aside his manuscript.

VARIAN

Is that another Werfel poem?

FRANZ

(Austrian accent) No, it's the story of Bernadette. When we were in Lourdes, I went to the spring and I promised her that if we were rescued, I would write a book about her. (sitting forward in his chair) You must save us, Mr. Fry.

ALMA

Oh *ja*, you must save us. A little more Benedictine, *ja*? (pours more before Varian even finished his)

FRANZ WERFEL

We have American visas. We applied for French exit visas, but there was no answer.

VARIAN

Don't worry. There are ways of getting you out of France.

ALMA

Ja, we have heard of people going down to the frontier and getting over safely. But what happens to them in Spain? Maybe they are
(more)

ALMA (cont'd)
arrested and handed over to the
Gestapo. What are we to do?

VARIAN
I just arrived and am forming a team
to explore the possibilities. You'd
better stay in hiding. I'll be in
touch. (kisses her hand) You're
still just as beautiful as when you
posed for Klimt.

ALMA
Ach, you mean "the Kiss," naughty man.
I don't look like that any more.

INT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE, VARIAN FRY'S ROOM - DAY

Varian opens his door and sees a line of refugees waiting in the hall and down the stairs. He invites the first one in for an interview and sits across from him, taking notes on a white card. The dark-haired young man radiates confidence and enthusiasm.

VARIAN
What is your name?

HERMANT
Albert Hermant.

VARIAN
(skeptical) Like the poet?

HERMANT
(smiles broadly) You're right, it's
not my real name. Even the French
don't remember that poet.

VARIAN
Do I detect a Berlin accent?

HERMANT
Ja, when I speak English it comes
out. But when I speak French, *voilà!*
Because I studied in Paris.

VARIAN

(nods) You do speak perfect French.

HERMANT

(gazes off into space) I left Germany in thirty-three. A little problem with the fascists. I fought on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. Served in the French army. So now I'm a traitor to the Reich. My lieutenant gave me a new identity as French. Are you familiar with the System D?

VARIAN

Faut se débrouiller?

HERMANT

(nods) Every man for himself and devil take the hindmost. Outsmart the other guy. I can be your fixer.

VARIAN

Fixer?

HERMANT

Ja, I know the blonde at the consulate. Fullerton's girlfriend. I can get passports, demobilization papers, and money on the black market.

VARIAN

Passports and money. You might prove useful. I like your smile, it's positively beamish. Can you help me locate any refugees on my list?

He reaches into a file and gives him the list. Hermant studies it, nodding. His smile disappears and a grimace takes over.

HERMANT

Ernst Weiss took poison when the Germans entered Paris. Irmgard Keun did too. This art critic, Karl
(more)

HERMANT (cont'd)

Einstein, hanged himself. This one too.

Varian crosses four names off his list. Hermant drifts off for a moment, then looks at Varian with a bleak expression.

HERMANT

Marseille is a city of doom. We expect the Germans to take over... next Wednesday. Some of the refugees are older people who cannot adapt to life without money. They cannot adjust to the idea of not being able to pay rent, that you have to go beg someplace. (studying the list) But Breitscheid and Hilferding, you see them every day on the boulevard.

He beckons to Varian and they walk out into the corridor where a line of refugees waits. They surge toward Varian, pestering him with pleas, tugging on his clothes. He politely reassures them that he will be right back. At the front window, Hermant shows the two German statesmen sitting at a café table.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFÉ ON BOULEVARD D'ATHÈNES IN FRONT OF THE NORMANDIE HOTEL - NOON

Two men, one tall with white hair, one short with greying blond hair, sit at a café table drinking glasses of beer. Both statesmen dress in suits, although it's a warm day. They're looking at the clouds over the old port of Marseille, reminiscing. Rudolph Breitscheid and Rudolph Hilferding speak German to each other.

HILFERDING

Na, Herbst kommt bald. (Well, Fall's coming soon.)

BREITSCHIED

This morning I felt a chill in the air, and I wished I had one of those Oktoberfest beers from my home town.

HILFERDING

(exclaims) *Ach, the Oktoberfest where I grew up was the best in the world.*

BREITSCHEID

This French beer is like water compared to ours. *Ach, how I miss Deutschland.*

HILFERDING

I too am homesick. And they've fouled it up so horribly, *Deutschland* will never be the same.

Varian Fry walks up to the table.

VARIAN

Guten Tag, meine Herrn. Ich heisse Varian Fry. (Subtitles: Good afternoon, gentlemen. My name is Varian Fry.)

Breitscheid and Hilferding stand up and shake hands.

VARIAN

Es freut mich sehr. (Pleased to meet you.) (to the waitress) *La cuvée du patron.* (House wine).

They sit and a waitress brings wine and glasses.

VARIAN

So how did you come to Marseille?

BREITSCHEID

As you may know, during the Weimar Republic I was the leader of the Social Democratic party in the Reichstag, and my friend Rudolph Hilferding here was my finance minister. When Hitler took over, we fled to Paris. When the Germans occupied Paris, we went to Marseille. People say it is the gateway to freedom in other lands.

HILFERDING

We are too well-known to travel on false passports so we are waiting for a boat.

VARIAN

You know, my friends, it might not be such a great idea to sit out in the open like this every day. If the powers-that-be in Vichy decide to come after you, you could end up in a concentration camp or worse.

HILFERDING

I cannot leave without my wife. She is still in Paris, hiding from the Gestapo.

BREITSCHIED

Do you expect us to leave without visas? Where are we going to go?

VARIAN

We're trying to get you to the United States.

Hilferding's face lights up with a faraway dream.

HILFERDING

(enunciating each syllable)
Amerika. Ah, that's so far. So different from here.

BREITSCHIED

We are waiting for exit visas. Then we go.

VARIAN

We're working on getting a boat.

A man wearing a suit and a green fedora sits down across from them, pretending not to watch and listen. Varian raises his glass in a toast to make it seem like a casual celebration.

VARIAN (cont'd)
Bon Été du Saint Martin. (Happy
Indian Summer).

All drink.

INT. ROOM 307 AT THE HOTEL SPLENDIDE - NIGHT

Crowded into the small room are several refugees being interviewed by Varian Fry and Albert Hermant, who sits at a writing table. Varian sits on the edge of the bed, also writing at a small table. Women and men and children are dressed in dirty, worn clothing flung on in haste. The two men interview the refugees and write the facts on white cards. As the last of the refugees departs, the two men adjourn to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

They turn on the sink and bathtub taps so that nothing they say can be recorded, and discuss cases, each advocating for his clients. Varian types up a cable to New York with names and references of applicants for U.S. visas.

VARIAN
(to Hermant) Come, Beamish, let's
send the cable.

HERMANT
OK, Buster.

EXT. STREETS AND ALLEYS OF MARSEILLE - NIGHT

Hermant and Varian walk through the dark and narrow Rue des Dominicaines to small police station in an alley behind Rue Colbert. Rats jump up from the garbage and run for cover as they pass. Streetlights burn faintly. Blue lights on either side of the door mark the police station.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

They wake up a slumbering gendarme who glances at Varian's passport and stamps the cable.

EXT. STREETS AND ALLEYS OF MARSEILLE - NIGHT

Varian and Hermant walk to the post office in a big empty square in back of the stock exchange.

INT. POST OFFICE - NIGHT

Hermant pulls the bell cord and the night window opens in a wooden partition wall. Varian pushes the telegram through. The hairy hands of the post office clerk appear in the opening as he counts the words and takes money, makes change.

EXT. STREETS AND ALLEYS OF MARSEILLE - NIGHT

Varian and Hermant walk back to the Splendide dodging gangsters, prostitutes and drunken sailors. In front of the hotel a large car with a German license plate pulls up. A chauffeur opens the door and five German army officers get out. They wear long grey overcoats, peaked caps turned up in front, and shiny black leather boots. Gilt eagles and swastikas adorn their caps. Hermant and Varian stand in the shadow of the building, under the taped windows of the dining room, and watch them pass through the revolving door. Then they enter the hotel and sit at the bar.

INT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE LOBBY BAR - NIGHT

VARIAN

(to the bartender) Brandy!

He and Hermant both toss back a brandy to steady their nerves.

VARIAN

Shwew, that's better. *Bon soir*,
Beamish.

HERMANT

Bon soir, Buster.

They shake hands and Hermant departs to the Hotel Lux.

INT. SPLENDIDE, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Varian sits at his desk, working on case files. He types with two fingers and grimaces at the page. TWO KNOCKS on the door

and Varian opens it to see a young redhead who smiles warmly and invites herself in.

LENA

Bonjour, I'm Lena Fischmann. The YMCA sent me. I speak six languages.

VARIAN

(smiles) You're hired.

Breezily Lena shoos him into the corner and circles the room, picking up the clutter and tidying as she goes. She makes the bed, talking nonstop.

LENA

I was in Paris working for the High Commission for Refugees. When the Germans came, I ran south and made it to Spain, but I was sent back. There was a car by the roadside, abandoned when they ran out of gas. I clipped a Red Cross symbol from a cotton box and taped it to the windshield. I said I was on official business and demanded extra gas rations.

VARIAN

Very resourceful. Can you type?

LENA

Mais oui. And I take dictation.

She sits down at the desk and types rapidly, humming a jazz song "Parce Que Je Vous Aime." Varian smiles at her.

VARIAN

Where are you staying?

LENA

Hotel des Postes.

He looks appalled.

VARIAN

That's a bad part of town.

LENA

Mais oui, there was a murder outside my window.

VARIAN

I'll try to get you in here.

LENA

That's all right, I'm happy where I am. It's cheap and close to the action.

VARIAN

I have to go out, to the Consulate. As the refugees come in, interview them and write up white cards like this. Hermant will be by shortly. Let him know if you need anything.

LENA

(smiling) *Oui, Monsieur Varian.*

EXT. TROLLEY - DAY

The trolley rolls along Avenue de Prado to the sea, following the coast. At Montrédon the trolley stops. Varian emerges in a crowd of refugees and walks up the long drive lined with plane trees, to the big brick house. Refugees sit on the porch. Determined and angry, Varian walks up the steps and into the center room.

INT. VISA DIVISION - DAY

Harry Bingham walks out of the office to greet Varian and warmly clasps his hand. This takes the wind out of Varian's sails.

HARRY

So good to meet you, Mr. Fry. I'm Harry Bingham, the vice consul in charge of visas. I'll do everything I can to help you.

VARIAN

Likewise.

HARRY

Come on into my office.

They walk into the Vice Consul's office and close the door.

INT. VICE CONSUL'S OFFICE - DAY

VARIAN

We need visas for the people on this list.

He hands Harry a copy of the 6-page list.

HARRY

I'll do everything I can to help you, within the law.

VARIAN

That's good. The last time I was here they refused to see me.

Harry looks around and lowers his voice.

HARRY

I'm sorry. Consul General Fullerton is a hard-liner. He's not an evil man, but nervous, and keen to do nothing that might antagonize the Vichy authorities. I do all I can to speed up visas, but it means disobeying direct orders and I am outgunned. (raising his voice) But come to my villa tonight on Boulevard Rivet. We'll have dinner and talk. You can meet Captain Dubois. He's an officer of the Sûreté but he's friendly to England and America, and I think it would be useful for you to know him.

EXT. HARRY BINGHAM'S VILLA - NIGHT

Harry, Varian and Captain Dubois sit in the courtyard near the swimming pool. A bottle of cognac and glasses stand on the garden table. A candle lantern throws light that moths swarm around.

VARIAN

(to Dubois) What do the police here have against me?

DUBOIS

(with a sly smile, thick Marseille accent) Smuggling people out of the country.

VARIAN

Anything else?

DUBOIS

Yes, trading currency, ninety francs to the dollar when the official rate is thirty.

Deadpan, he gestures like pulling taffy.

VARIAN

Is that all?

DUBOIS

Yes, that is all.

VARIAN

Is it serious?

DUBOIS

What do you mean, serious?

HARRY BINGHAM

Hugh Fullerton said he could get put in jail or deported.

DUBOIS

(laughs scornfully) That's a joke.

HARRY

Anyone for a swim?

VARIAN

I'm for that.

The two men strip and dive into the pool, soon followed by Captain Dubois. Sounds: SPLASHING AND LAUGHING.

INT. VARIAN'S ROOM AT SPLENDIDE - NIGHT

A portly German sits across the desk from Varian.

VARIAN

Ernst Heinz Oppenheimer?

OPPY

(smiles) You can call me Oppy. I ran a relief agency in Holland. I can help you set up an office, and I know bookkeeping. You can disguise illegal expenses in various ways, beautiful, legal, above board. One set for the authorities, with false names, and one for us.

VARIAN

You come highly recommended and I'd like to offer you the position as our office manager and treasurer. What do you think we should call the storefront?

OPPY

How about *Centre Américain de Secours*. It's fine French.

VARIAN

(smiles) I like it.

INT. SPLENDIDE, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hermant in bathtub fully clothed, dictating letters to Lena. She sits on the floor with a typewriter on the bidet.

Oppy sits at a desk in the bedroom. Varian loosens his tie and detaches his collar, tossing them into the armoire, then unbuttons his shirt. He sips Armagnac from a snifter. Everyone is beading with sweat in the hot room with hardly a breeze from the windows.

VARIAN

Is anyone else hot? I'm melting.

LENA

Ils ne faut pas exagérer. (You don't have to exaggerate.)

OPPY

(teasing) He's not exaggerating, Fischgirl.

Varian takes off his shirt and trousers and tosses them into the armoire. He sits on the bed wearing nothing but "black watch" plaid boxers and an undershirt.

OPPY

Instead of travel expenses, I will list these as living expenses.

HERMANT

A stroke of genius, Oppy.

VARIAN

I need a larger room.

INT. LARGER HOTEL ROOM AT SPLENDIDE - DAY

Lena Fischmann interviews a refugee couple.

LENA

Who are your references?

WOMAN

The mayor of Aachen.

LENA

Who's he? *Je n'ai jamais couché avec.* (I never slept with him.)

WOMAN

His name is Rochault.

Outside the window, from a height, view of café where Breitscheid and Hilferding sit, sipping red wine.

LENA

(to Varian) We have a couple here we can help. They have passports and overseas visas, but couldn't get a French exit visa.

Varian beckons them over to his desk, while Lena takes the next person. Varian sketches a map for the couple.

VARIAN

(in a soft voice) Take the train to Cerbere. Go along the cemetery wall and follow the path uphill. A guide will meet you. When you arrive in Spain, at the first border post, you will get your passport stamped and declare your money. Cross Spain to Portugal, and I'll see you soon in New York.

Elated, they wring his hands and smile.

WOMAN

Thank you, Mr. Fry. God bless you.

Varian wads up the sketch and burns it in the ashtray.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL 4th FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

Miriam Davenport, an American co-ed with dark braids pinned up around her head. She waits in the line of refugees in the corridor to speak to Varian Fry. The door opens and Hermant beckons her inside and closes the door.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL ROOM - DAY

MIRIAM

(to Hermant) I have news of Walter Mehring.

Hermant looks over at his boss, who nods. Miriam approaches, admiring Varian's saintly look in the light of a west-facing window. Varian is dressed in a shirt with cufflinks, good shoes, a Patek-Philippe watch. He wears horn-rim glasses. He stands up, shakes hands with her and offers her a chair.

MIRIAM

I have a note for you from Walter Mehring. He's a songwriter who used to ridicule the Nazis in the cabarets, and made everybody laugh.

VARIAN

Yeah, I met him in Berlin before the war. He was just here yesterday, funny as ever.

MIRIAM

(nods) He was arrested on his way home, but he escaped. He's hiding and he needs your help.

She passes Varian a letter and he looks it over and puts it in his shirt pocket.

VARIAN

I'll meet him in the Pelikan tomorrow at eleven.

He pulls over a pad of paper, poised to write.

VARIAN (cont'd)

Tell me about yourself.

MIRIAM

My name is Miriam Davenport. I was studying art in Paris when the Germans occupied.

VARIAN

Can you type?

MIRIAM

No.

VARIAN

Do you speak French? German? Do you need a job?

MIRIAM

Yes, yes and yes!

VARIAN

We'll name you secretary general of the committee. All you have to do is interview people and sign the annual report. We'll pay you three thousand francs a month.

MIRIAM

Thank you, Mr. Fry. Thank you very much!

She thinks of something and looks troubled.

MIRIAM (cont'd)

Just one thing, it might only be for a couple of months. I have a fiance in Yugoslavia and I plan to go there as soon as it's safe.

VARIAN

That's fine. You can work for us while you're waiting.

EXT. PELIKAN CAFÉ - DAY

A blue awning with bright yellow letters spells out "Pelikan Café Bar". Shady plane trees make the terrace a cool oasis in the city. A gravel patio holds tables and chairs full of refugees and locals.

Varian Fry crosses the patio and walks into the doorway.

INT. PELIKAN CAFÉ - DAY

Walter Mehring sits smoking a cigarette. A notebook in front of him on the table sits blank. He has lank hair, large eyes, small mouth. He jumps up as Varian Fry enters. Varian strides over and shakes his hand.

VARIAN

It's nice to see you again.

Mehring pushes away the notebook.

MEHRING

I can't write any more. Only drivel about exile, and being stateless. Outside of Berlin, I feel like a fish out of water.

VARIAN

We'll can get you a passport, and bring you to Spain. And from there to the United States. Don't worry. Next year, I'll see you in New York.

Varian hands him folded money. With a sigh of relief, Mehring pockets the cash. He clings to Varian's side as they walk out of the café.

EXT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Next to the line of refugees along the sidewalk, Varian greets an athletic young American wearing an ambulance driver's uniform. Two young women hang around the muscular youth, flirting and cooing to "Shar-lee".

CHARLIE

(in a Southern drawl, to Varian)
Are you the man in charge?

VARIAN

Yes.

CHARLIE

I'm looking for work.

VARIAN

We need a doorman and bouncer to keep order in case we have trouble here.

CHARLIE

Sounds good. My name is Charlie Fawcett.

They shake hands.

VARIAN

Come on inside.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Varian leads Charlie down a corridor toward the back of the building, up a flight of stairs, down another dark hallway leading to two rooms at the front. In the first room, beneath a large American flag that takes up one wall, Miriam is interviewing a refugee at a table. Other tables stand vacant, each with two stiff wooden chairs. Oppy sits bent over an accounting ledger, which he claps shut.

INT. VARIAN'S OFFICE AT DE SECOURS - DAY

Varian ushers Charlie into his private office. Lena looks up from her typing and smiles. Varian sits down at his desk and Charlie remains standing.

VARIAN

(to Lena) Thank you, Lena. That will be all for now.

She nods graciously and stands up from her desk, leaves the room and pulls the door closed behind her.

VARIAN

(to Charlie) How old are you?

CHARLIE

Twenty one.

VARIAN

I heard you helped some British airmen escape.

CHARLIE

Well, that was mah pleasure. We just dressed up like Germans and the guards handed them over.

VARIAN

Where'd you get the uniforms?

CHARLIE

Mah friend in the ambulance corps has a cousin in the German army. You might find this interesting. A German officer told mah friend, "Sure, we know all about Fry. We know he's trying to get our political enemies out of France. We don't worry. We're confident he won't succeed."

Varian sits up straight, galvanized.

VARIAN

I'll show them they're wrong!

He smiles a determined smile. Reaching into his desk, he picks up a revolver in a shoulder holster and hands it to Charlie. Charlie takes off his jacket, slips on the strap, and puts his jacket back on.

VARIAN

Part of your job will be guarding the office. Burn all the papers when you lock up at night.

CHARLIE

Yes, sir. Are you ever afraid?

Varian looks Charlie in the eye.

VARIAN

(thoughtfully) All the time.

EXT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Charlie Fawcett manages the crowd of refugees. Wearing an ambulance driver's uniform, he shows gallantry toward women, but he can be tough and bounces some pushy Germans when they cut in line.

MIRIAM

(opens the door, calls to Charlie)
Next!

Charlie ushers in a refugee, a sad-faced Cuban Negro.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Hermant is inside standing with Varian. Miriam leads her client to a desk and they sit down.

MIRIAM

Hello, could I have your name please?

MAN

Wifredo Lam. I am an artist.

Widening her eyes in amazement, then quickly hiding it, Miriam hands him a sketch pad.

MIRIAM

If you're an artist, draw me a sketch of the old port.

WIFREDO

Si, okay.

Exit Wifredo.

VARIAN

I've heard of Wifredo Lam. Didn't he study with Dali?

MIRIAM

It was Picasso. One of the few students Picasso ever took.

VARIAN

Then why did you send him out to test him?

MIRIAM

That sketch will be worth money.

She laughs herself into a coughing fit and lights a cigarette. Hermant gives his rare beaming smile that lights up his large, innocent eyes.

VARIAN

(to Miriam) I'd like to get you out of the city. I think the air here is bad for your health.

Everyone laughs.

HERMANT

We're all facing death and he worries about our health. Thank you, Varian.

VARIAN

That's because I love you, Beamish. You too, Miriam.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Hermant, Varian and Miriam discuss cases at the nightly conference while Lena types up the cable.

MIRIAM

My friend Mary Jayne wants to help us.

VARIAN

(surly) I know her type. A dilettante rich playgirl. Flies her own plane and consorts with gangsters. People don't just barge in and offer money for no reason.

Lena continues typing.

MIRIAM

Won't you meet with her? She needs help getting her money wired from the States. She's offered us three thousand dollars if we can free up the money.

VARIAN

How do we know she's trustworthy?

MIRIAM

She's a de Gaullist. She hates the Nazis. And her friend Danny, she stayed with his mother when Danny worked at the Paris Prefecture--

VARIAN

Prefecture of Police did you say? I've had enough trouble with the police without putting one of them in my office. No! Not on your life! Ridiculous!

Varian turns around, picking up the typed pages to study them. Hermant takes Miriam aside, into the bathroom.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hermant whispers to Miriam.

HERMANT

Miriam, take me to your friend. I'll help her.

She nods and they return to the bedroom.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Varian, Miriam, Hermant and Lena discuss cases.

VARIAN

Walter Mehring went against my advice. He left with a false passport.

HERMANT

(scoffs) He'll be back.

MIRIAM

(to Varian) I'd like to add Wifredo Lam to the list for a visa.

VARIAN

He wasn't on the original list. Is he endangered?

MIRIAM

I'll report back on him. I've located André Breton. Victor Serge knew which hotel he was in.

VARIAN

Breton is on the list. Serge isn't.

MIRIAM

Okay.

Hermant takes her aside, into the bathroom again.

INT. SPLENDIDE HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hermant whispers urgently to Miriam.

HERMANT

Miriam, you've got to advocate for your clients. You're every bit as good a judge of merit as we are. If you care about your clients, state their case, or they might get lost in the shuffle.

MIRIAM

You're right. Thank you!

They return to the bedroom.

INT. HOTEL SPENDIDE, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Varian sits on the bed, sipping Armagnac. He sings in a deep voice.

VARIAN

(sings) "When Israel was in Egypt land, let my people go. Oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go. Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt land..."

Lena looks at him fondly, smiling.

MIRIAM

(to Varian) Wifredo Lam is an important artist and he needs to go home to Cuba. Also, Victor Serge is in danger because he's a communist.

VARIAN

Yes, he's a notorious Trotskyite. Stalin wants him dead. Okay, we'll get them money for room and board and see about getting them out.

MIRIAM

And visas.

VARIAN

(surprised at her vehemence) Yes, ma'am. Add their names to the cable, my smiling Polish friend.

Lena finishes typing up the cable and pulls the page from the typewriter.

HERMANT

I'll take it.

He gets ready to leave, but pauses.

Come Miriam, I'll walk you to your hotel. Coming Lena?

LENA

No, you go ahead.

She picks up Varian's jacket and hangs it in the armoire.

EXT. STREETS OF MARSEILLE - NIGHT

MIRIAM

(to Hermant) Who is Varian, and why is he here? What makes him do it?

HERMANT

I wonder about that too.

MIRIAM

The people he's rescuing are mostly Jews.

HERMANT

Ja, his list gets longer every day.

INT. VICHY OFFICE OF DR LIMOUSIN, EARLY SEPT. - DAY

Dr. Limousin, a pasty-faced young fascist, springs to attention and gives the Heil Hitler salute as SS Captain Hugo Geissler enters the room. Geissler, a blond, blue-eyed Alsatian who is educated and speaks French, returns the salute and both men seat themselves on either side of the desk.

DR. LIMOUSIN

Bonjour, Captain Geissler.

GEISSLER

Bonjour, Herr Doktor Limousin. I have inspected the camps and find them satisfactory. We are expecting more prisoners soon. We have sent our men to Madrid, and Spain is closing her borders.

Dr. Limousin gives a triumphant smile.

GEISSLER

We have ordered the arrest of
Mehring, Breitscheid and
Hilferding.

Limousin chuckles.

EXT. PERPIGNAN, SEPTEMBER - DAY

Having made it to the frontier, Walter Mehring sits at a café. The small, baby-faced refugee wears clothes that were once in good taste. His jacket, shirt and vest are shabby due to not having been washed or mended. Police hustle him out of the café and into a black maria.

INT. PREFECTURE OF POLICE - DAY

MEHRING

I need to go to the toilette, please.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Mehring tears up his fake Czech passport, looks down the "Turk" toilet which is a hole in the ground, and puts them back in his pockets.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

Mehring sprinkles paper bits along the railroad tracks. The train arrives at a siding with barbed wire and a sign "St. Cyprien". It is a concentration camp.

EXT. BASSOS IN THE VIEUX PORT SEPTEMBER DAY

Varian, Miriam, Mary Jayne and Danny Bénédite sit at a round table having an aperitif. Mary Jayne's poodle Dagobert sits at her feet.

MARY JAYNE

I taught him a cute trick. (mutter)
Dagobert, heil Hitler! Hitler!
Hitler!

Dagobert growls and barks furiously. Everyone laughs.

VARIAN

(to Mary Jayne) Did you join the
exodus from Paris?

MARY JAYNE

Yes, I flew to Bordeaux and stayed
with Madame Leduc. What a
reactionary!

VARIAN

Come round to the office. You can
join the staff as an interviewer.

MARY JAYNE

Thank you, Mr. Fry. I'm glad to help.
My friend Danny here would like to
be of service, too. He's just the man
for the committee. He helped a lot
of refugees when we were in Paris.
He has great moral courage.

Danny and Varian shake hands.

DANNY

It's an honor to meet you, Mr. Fry.

VARIAN

I was thinking, someone that knows
the French bureaucracy and police
procedures could be useful to our
committee. Why don't you come in for
an interview?

DANNY

Merci. And by the way, I'm not a
fascist. (lowers his voice) I'm a
socialist. There's another side to
me.

MIRIAM

(to Varian) Hey, where are Breitschied and Hilferding? I haven't seen them sitting outside the Normandie lately.

DANNY

They've been picked up, under the new law against foreigners and Jews. Placed under forced residence in Arles.

VARIAN

We've got to get them out.

Hermant comes by, nods hello to the others and beckons to Varian.

HERMANT

Can I see you for a minute? There's someone I want you to meet.

Varian stands up, throws his napkin on the plate and leaves some money.

VARIAN

(to the others) See you at the office.

Hermant and Varian walk across the street to another café where a man and woman sit at a table. She is thin with dark hair. He is tall and thin and wears a beret.

HERMANT

Hans and Lisa Fittko, this is Varian Fry.

Varian extends his hand, smiling. The two shake his hand, but don't crack a smile. They are activists who have dedicated their lives to fighting the Nazis.

HERMANT

I think we should work together.
(to Varian) They know of a route from Banyuls-sur-Mers, over the Pyrenees to Spain.

VARIAN

That's excellent! How much would you charge to smuggle people out?

Hermant gapes in dismay as Lisa starts up from the table, furious.

LISA

(bristling with indignation) How dare you suggest such a thing. We wouldn't take money for rescuing people.

HANS

We act out of conscience, not for money.

VARIAN

Forgive me, I didn't realize.

HANS

Calm down, Lisa. He didn't mean to insult us.

Lisa sits down, and Hans unfolds a small map.

HANS

This is the route Mayor Azema showed us. We can disguise people as vineyard workers and bring them up this hill, into the mountains and across. It's a hard climb. Even if you're strong and young, it takes hours.

HERMANT

So you see, Varian, we have an alternate route. Let's call it the "F Route" in honor of our friends here.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Otto, Lena, and Miriam work with refugees. Varian reads a telegram.

VARIAN

(to Hermant) They caught Mehring.
He's in Saint Cyprien.

Lena and Miriam look upset. Otto shakes his head.

HERMANT

We will get him a lawyer. I know
somebody.

INT. PREFECTURE OF POLICE - DAY

Attorney Murzi, a Corsican operator, brings Varian to meet
Monsieur Barellet, the chef du service.

MURZI

Monsieur Barellet knows what to do.

MONSIEUR BARELLET

Since Monsieur Mehring's residence
permit has expired, we need a
doctor's certificate stating that
he was too ill to apply for the
renewal. I have a doctor in mind...

INT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE - DAY

Mehring in bed pretending to be sick. He is fully dressed and
has the covers pulled up to his chin. A doctor signs a
certificate.

DOCTOR

You are suffering. Unable to call at
the prefecture until at least the
middle of November.

Varian comes in.

VARIAN

(to doctor) What's the diagnosis?

DOCTOR

He is too ill to leave the room.

MEHRING

(hoarse) I am not going anywhere.

VARIAN

(wryly) Make yourself at home.

MEHRING

How can I ever thank you? I will volunteer my services to your committee, as an arts consultant.

VARIAN

Oh that's just...peachy. *Merci*, Doctor.

He hands the doctor folded money and the doctor departs.

EXT. CAFE IN FRONT OF HOTEL NORMANDIE - DAY

Varian meets Heinrich Mann and Mrs. Mann. He is an elderly novelist and she is a portly lady.

VARIAN

Pleased to meet you. I hear you are looking to emigrate.

HEINRICH MANN

Oh, *Herr Fry*, if you could only help us. And please include my nephew Golo, Thomas Mann's son, in the company. Get him out of Les Milles.

VARIAN

Okay, we will go to the frontier as soon as you have your transit visas.

INT. HOTEL SPLENDIDE, SEPTEMBER - DAY

Sound of the shower as Walter is using the bathroom. Varian's suitcase lies open on the bed. Varian slides a nautical chart under the lining and pastes down the cloth. Lena folds shirts and places them in the suitcase.

WALTER

Is there any soap?

LENA

No, Baby.

VARIAN

(to Lena) I'm going to escort the
Manns and Werfels to Lisbon. (wryly)
Alma Werfel finally found a hatbox.

LENA

Don't forget to bring back some
soap.

VARIAN

(distracted) Yes, Lena.

LENA

I will stay here in your room and
watch the Baby.

She tears a sheet of paper into slips and writes on each
"Soap", "Seife", "Savon", tucking the notes among his
clothing. She smiles as she imagines him finding her notes.

EXT. GARE ST. CHARLES - DAY

Varian meets Franz and Alma Werfel, Heinrich and Mrs. Mann
and Golo Mann, Heinrich's young nephew, at the train station.
Alma Werfel presides over 12 suitcases. Dismayed, Varian
gestures at all the bags and expostulates with Alma, but she
is adamant. He checks the bags and they board the train.

EXT. COASTLINE AND MOUNTAINS - DAY

The train creeps along an arid landscape, approaching Cerbère
at sunset.

INT. CERBÈRE RAILROAD STATION - NIGHT

Passengers line up before the frontier police to show their
travel documents. Varian's charges are excited and nervous.

He takes all their passports and goes into the police office with them. Shortly Varian returns.

VARIAN

We will have to stay over in town while they are making a decision.

EXT. RAILROAD STATION - DAY

The Werfels and the Manns sit at a café table having breakfast. Varian returns from the police office looking grim.

VARIAN

The supervisor said No, because you don't have exit visas. But the commissaire said you ought to go over the hill.

They look up at the steep hill under a hot sun.

ALMA WERFEL

Werfel's too fat, and Heinrich Mann is too old for such a hike.

VARIAN

If you think you can make it, I'd advise you to go over the hill today. We don't know what will happen tomorrow.

Heinrich Mann, Golo Mann and Alma Werfel nod their heads in agreement. But Franz Werfel and Mrs. Mann look dubious.

FRANZ WERFEL

Today is Friday, the Thirteenth. (quavering) It's an unlucky day. Don't you think we'd better wait until tomorrow?

ALMA WERFEL

(emphatic) *Das ist Unsinn, Franz!*
(That's nonsense!)

Werfel looks up at the hill and gives a heavy sigh.

MRS. MANN

Hor' mal, Heinrich. Herr Fry ist einer nette junger Mann, aber vielleicht ist er ein Spion.
(Listen, Heinrich. Mr. Fry is a nice young man, but perhaps he is a spy.)

VARIAN

Verzeihung, Frau Mann. Aber vielleicht wissen Sie nicht dass ich Deutsch verstehe.
(Excuse me, Mrs. Mann. But perhaps you don't know that I understand German.)

She widens her mouth in astonishment and lapses into silence.

VARIAN

I'll go through with the luggage and you can meet me in Port-Bou. Herr Mann, show me your papers.

Heinrich Mann hands him his papers and Varian tears them up.

VARIAN (cont'd)

You will be Mr. and Mrs. Heinrich Ludwig. Get rid of everything with the name Mann on it.

HEINRICH MANN

We are obliged to act like real criminals.

Varian hands out packs of Gauloises and Gitanes.

VARIAN

If you get into any trouble with the police, give them these cigarettes. I understand it generally works in Spain.

Hermant walks up to the table, disguised as a vine laborer in a coarse shirt, pants and espadrilles. Varian smiles at him.

HERMANT

Do you need a local guide?

VARIAN

Si, Senor--

HERMANT

Garcia.

VARIAN

If you would be kind enough to conduct my friends to Port-Bou, there will be a good tip in it for you.

HERMANT

I'm going that way anyway, myself. No tip is necessary.

EXT. CERBÈRE - DAY

Long shot of a steep, rough field. Varian in the foreground watches the six climb the hill, making their way along a stone wall. Hermant is supporting Franz Werfel and Golo is helping his uncle. The women hike sturdily. They disappear in the shade of olive trees.

EXT. RAILROAD STATION - DAY

Varian checks 17 pieces of luggage. A bored inspector waves him onto the train.

EXT. PORT-BOU RAILROAD STATION - NIGHT

Varian supervises the luggage being carted off to a hotel. He approaches a frontier police officer.

VARIAN

Have you seen anything of a fat man and a stout woman, an elderly man with stooping gait and a limp, a middle-aged woman with blonde hair and a young man with jet-black hair?

POLICE OFFICER

No, no such people have come through today.

Varian paces the railroad platform. He sees a friendly little porter with red hair.

VARIAN

Buenos tardes, amigo. Can you find my friends for me?

PORTER

Go up to the sentry box on the motor highway and see if they know anything.

Varian gives him a tip and walks uphill past bombed dwellings and onto the barren, sun-parched hillside back of town.

EXT. PORT-BOU SENTRY BOX - NIGHT

Varian approaches the sentry and gives him cigarettes.

VARIAN

Have you seen anything of five travelers? A fat man and a stout woman, an elderly man with a limp, a blonde woman of middle age, and a young man with black hair?

The sentry looks at him with a dull expression.

VARIAN

Look here, I'm worried about some people who came over the hill from Cerbère this morning. Are you sure you haven't seen them?

The sentry leads Varian into the sentry box and gestures for him to sit down.

INT. SENTRY BOX - NIGHT

Varian sits waiting, looking out the window and smoking a cigarette. The sentry returns.

SENTRY

Your friends are at the railroad station. I've just telephoned down. They're waiting for you there.

Relieved, Varian gives the sentry several packs of cigarettes and shakes his hand.

EXT. PORT-BOU - NIGHT

Varian runs back to the railroad station. He sees the Werfels and Manns sitting on a bench. They jump up and everyone hugs everyone.

INT. LOBBY OF THE HOTEL SPLENDIDE - DAY

Lena and Miriam enter the lobby, followed by six French plainclothesmen. Lena pulls Miriam toward the elevator.

LENA

Vichy has ordered the arrest of Walter Mehring. I told the detectives Mehring was too sick to be moved but they still insist that we produce him. Can you talk to them?

MIRIAM

Okay. Get in touch with Harry Bingham, ask him to come in a hurry. I'll talk to the police and keep them occupied.

Lena takes the elevator and Miriam turns to face six plainclothesmen. She marches over to confront them like an enraged lioness protecting her cub. Hermant's pep talk has transformed her into a staunch advocate for her clients.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

We are looking for Walter Mehring.

MIRIAM

Bonjour, I am Miriam Davenport, the General Secretary of the Centre. I hope you are aware of the international renown of our desperately ill poet, the concern for his welfare of influential men and women in the United States, not the least of whom is Mrs. Roosevelt. She takes a personal interest in Mister Mehring's health and well-being. Should anything happen to this sick man while you are moving him, it would be the worst possible publicity for France. If you value America's feelings of good will toward your suffering country, you would be well-advised to leave Mr. Mehring in peace.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

Our superior has given us firm instructions, Madame. We have no authority to change our orders. You will surrender on demand all refugees of the greater Reich.

Miriam sees Harry Bingham approaching and concludes her speech.

MIRIAM

And *messieurs*, if you have any doubt about the truth of my statements, you have only to look over there, where the American Consul is carefully observing the scene, so great is his interest in the outcome!

She waves to Harry Bingham, who makes his way across the lobby toward her. The police huddle and one breaks away.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

We will telephone to our chief.

He goes to a phone booth and returns.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

If you can get a new doctor's certificate for Monsieur Mehring, we will leave him free.

INT. VARIAN'S ROOM AT HOTEL SPLENDIDE, SEPTEMBER - DAY

Walter Mehring lies in bed shaking like a leaf. Miriam leans over the desk while Lena types a cable.

LENA

What will we cable Varian?

MIRIAM

How's this sound? "Baby has passed crisis but other children quarantined."

Lena takes the cable out of the typewriter, folding it.

MIRIAM

I'll hold the fort while you send it.

Lena nods and departs.

INT. SPLENDIDE CORRIDOR - DAY

Lena walks past Nazi stormtroopers in the hallway. She smiles and they stare after her.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Lena, Miriam, Oppy, Hermant, Walter Mehring. Varian comes in with a paper sack and empties it onto the desk: 24 cakes of soap.

VARIAN

(to Lena) Here's your soap.

LENA

(overjoyed) Oh, *merci! Merci!*

Everyone crowds around and she gives them each a cake of soap, hoarding the rest of the treasure for herself.

VARIAN

(to Miriam) I have an assignment for you. Get Mehring some clothes. He's such a ragamuffin, no wonder he attracts the attention of the police. Take him shopping and make sure he's dressed like a gent.

Walter Mehring makes a face and wags his head in mockery. Hermant overhears Varian and concludes his interview, coming over to Varian and Miriam.

HERMANT

Can I come with you? I need a new suit.

Miriam shrugs and nods. She, Walter and Hermant depart.

INT. HABERDASHER - DAY

In the best shop in town, Miriam picks a suit off the rack and holds it up in front of Walter Mehring, but he shakes his head. Folding his arms, he stubbornly refuses to try it on. She holds up a shirt and tie, and again he shakes his head. He finds a knit brown polo shirt that he holds up, and she throws up her hands in exasperation. She hands him a sport jacket, grey flannel trousers, a belt and shoes, and steers him toward the dressing room. Mehring emerges in the new clothes, already looking askew and disheveled, but happy. He preens in front of the full-length mirror.

Hermant comes out of dressing room looking spiffy in a tweed suit.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Varian and Lena in his office. Varian reads a cable.

VARIAN

It's from the Emergency Rescue Committee. (reads) "We order you to return to New York. You have overstepped your mandate and are working on your own in a way we judge too unorthodox."

Upset and angry, he rants with bitter sarcasm.

VARIAN (cont'd)

Those imbeciles! I refuse to go until they find a successor as good as me, as dedicated as me. I'm irreplaceable. This is no routine job. It's a hard office job, and it's going to get harder, until the war is over.

Lena looks up at him with admiration, nodding her head.

VARIAN (cont'd)

And the maddening thing is that I get neither cooperation nor understanding from those boobs in New York. Good people will be interned if I leave, as those blithering idiots ordered me to do. Are those imbeciles interested in rescuing European culture before it's too late? If only it were a real committee, instead of a bunch of peters!

Lena laughs at his vehemence.

VARIAN (cont'd)

Lena, take a letter.

She takes out her dictation pad.

VARIAN (cont'd)

"I will return only if you send a replacement. Otherwise my leaving would condemn dozens of refugees to
(more)

VARIAN (cont'd)
severe privation, arrest and
death." No, make it a cable.

Lena rolls a cable form into the typewriter.

VARIAN (cont'd)
"Situation refugees desperate
enough even with all the help and
protection I can give them. Will be
infinitely worse if I leave before
substitute arrives."

The telephone rings. Varian answers.

VARIAN
Yes, Mr. Fullerton? All right.
I'll be there this afternoon.

LENA
Varian, I was thinking, I should
head out for the border.

VARIAN
(distracted) All right.

INT. FULLERTON'S OFFICE AT CONSULATE, SEPTEMBER - DAY

The two men sit facing each other across a large mahogany desk.
Hugh Fullerton reaches over the desk to hand Varian a cable.

FULLERTON
From the State Department.

VARIAN
(reads aloud) Must request you
return immediately, not only in view
of our understanding but also of
local developments.

Masking his emotions, Varian raises his chin and breezily
addresses Fullerton.

VARIAN

Oh, I'm quite prepared to leave if I have to.

Inwardly seething, he convinces Fullerton he doesn't care.

VARIAN (cont'd)

Is this coming from...Vichy, at all?

FULLERTON

Yes, as a matter of fact, foreign governments are pressing the U.S. to request your recall.

Varian stands up.

VARIAN

As soon as a replacement arrives, I'll be happy to take my leave.

FULLERTON

Thank you, Mr. Fry.

EXT. AMERICAN CONSULATE - DAY

Once outside the building, Varian pounds his fist into his other hand.

VARIAN

The hell I will.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Varian sits moping in his office alone, looking at the silent typewriter where Lena used to sit. He heaves a sigh, ruffles some papers.

Enter Lena, looking cheerful and bright as ever.

LENA

Quelle dommage! I was not able to escape after all. The Spaniards aren't admitting any Polish people
(more)

LENA (cont'd)

today. The Gestapo was in Cerbere. Herr Himmler is having a party in Madrid. So the Spaniards sent me back, so here I am.

She sits down at the typewriter, ready to start work.

VARIAN

Oh Lena, I'm so sorry. (but he's smiling)

INT. RESTAURANT, OCTOBER - NIGHT

The staff is having a party to celebrate Varian's birthday. Varian, Hermant, Oppy, Miriam, Lena, Walter Mehring and others sit at a banquet table. A bouquet of huge dahlias stands in the center. Varian acts giddy and joyous, surrounded by wine bottles of select vintage. A waiter picks up the dinner dishes. Varian takes off his tie and collar, stretches out on the banquet seat and rests his head in Miriam's lap and his feet in Lena's. The French waiter looks askance. Miriam plays along with the screwball comedy.

MIRIAM

(to Varian) Mary Jayne is looking to rent a villa outside town. We're going this weekend. Want to come?

Varian's eyes light up at the prospect of getting out of the hotel.

VARIAN

I'd like to, but my schedule looks a bit hectic. You go. Rent us a nice cottage. I trust your judgment.

MIRIAM

I'm glad. My clients André Breton and Victor Serge will go in on it with us.

She strokes his hair and puckers her lips in an air kiss.

HERMANT

(to Varian) A villa outside town?
Not a good idea. We won't be able to
contact you.

VARIAN

Yeah, that's the plan.

Hermant looks leery.

MIRIAM

(to Mary Jayne) Can Varian move in
with you? He's so over-worked. He
needs the relaxation more than
anyone.

Mary Jayne looks dubious. Miriam continues stroking Varian's
hair and he smiles, closing his eyes.

EXT. VILLA AIR-BEL, OCTOBER 1940 - DAY

In front of the chateau or stone villa are five windows across
each of three floors. From the terrace, across the valley,
a view of the Mediterranean sea. Large, old plane trees shade
the terrace. A double flight of stone steps leads down to a
formal garden on the right and a fish pond on the left. The
flower garden has parterres of lavender and rosemary.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL KITCHEN, NOVEMBER 1940 - DAY

In a breakfast nook sit two women in dresses and two men in
once-fine, but now shabby, jackets and trousers. They are
André Breton and his wife Jacqueline Lamba, Victor Serge and
his girlfriend Laurette. The men are middle-aged and the women
are in their early thirties. Victor uncorks a bottle of red
wine and they all extend their glasses for a pour. The women
stand up. Laurette sips her wine while Jacqueline tunes in
a shortwave radio.

ANDRÉ

Thank you for recommending us for
this place, Victor.

VICTOR

I knew you weren't happy in that
fleabag hotel.

ANDRÉ

This place is fantastic.

VICTOR

A bit rundown, but any port in a
storm.

ANDRÉ

Did you see the greenhouse?

VICTOR

No, I was putting my books away. The
library is well-stocked, if you like
the classics.

ANDRÉ

(with a smile) I can write here.

VICTOR

I can write anywhere, I have found.
Even in a cell.

The sound of static as Jacqueline dials in a station.

ANDRÉ

What are you ladies doing?

JACQUELINE

We are looking for some music.

VICTOR

Great, another reason to arrest us.

LAURETTE

It's only a shortwave.

VICTOR

If we're caught listening to BBC.

LAURETTE

Not BBC, Boston jazz. (softly,
teasing) Oh Victor, you're always on
the lookout for prowlers, the
Sûreté, the lodging house patrol,
the Gestapo, the Falangist police.

She rumples his grey hair. Instrumental music comes on.
Jacqueline reaches for André.

JACQUELINE

Dance with me.

ANDRÉ

All right, "Bastille Day". (to
Victor) That's what our friends call
her.

He gets up and dances with Jacqueline while Laurette pulls
a reluctant Victor up to dance.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

That was "*Nuages*" performed by
Django Reinhardt's Quintet de Hot
Club. And now Count Basie's "*April
in Paris.*"

The two couples dance. Soon they are singing along, playing
and laughing.

JACQUELINE AND LAURETTE

(singing) "*April in Paris,
chestnuts in blossom, holiday
tables under the trees...*"

A scream is heard. Victor rushes to turn down the radio and
throws a dish towel over it. Housekeeper Madame Nouguet comes
in.

MADAME NOUGUET

I was cleaning the bathroom and
there is a scorpion in the tub.

They all laugh. The gloom lifts from Victor's face and he looks
years younger.

ANDRÉ

I will capture it.

He marches forth to do battle and soon returns.

ANDRÉ

You are safe, Madame. I have flung
the scorpion out the window.

They laugh and Jacqueline sets up the radio. The couples
resume dancing. Madame Nouguet looks at André with melting
affection.

MADAME NOUGUET

(smiles warmly) Thank you, Monsieur
André.

INT. VICHY OFFICE OF HUGO GEISSLER, NOVEMBER - DAY

GEISSLER

(on telephone) That is correct.
Remove Mayor Azema from his office
at Banyuls. We have information he's
been helping people escape over the
border to Spain. Replace him with
Paul Morét. He will put a stop to it.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL - DAY

In the dining Room, a heavy, carved chestnut sideboard holds
three bottles of wine and a tray of wine glasses and water
glasses. A large, carved chestnut table. Embossed
leatherette wallpaper, big stone fireplace with a feeble
fire. Enter housekeeper and cook, Madame Nouguet. She carries
a folded tablecloth and a vase of dried lavender sprigs.
Unfurling the French country tablecloth, she covers the table
and places the bouquet of lavender in the center. She sets
out a candelabra and lights six candles. Exit Madame Nouguet.
Enter André Breton carrying a large glass jar. He places the
jar containing three praying mantises on the table. Exit
André.

Enter Madame Nouguet and places a small table in the corner.
She picks up a feather duster and dusts the small chairs. She

sees the jar of insects, picks it up, turning it with a look of revulsion, sets it back down. She takes plates and bowls from the sideboard and sets them on the table, peers closely at jar of insects, and gives a huge start. Closeup of jar: One mantis is eating another. She sets out plates with a bowl on each and sets the small table with two plates and two bowls.

Exit Madame Nouguet. She returns with small vase, places small bouquet of lavender on children's table. Exit Mme. Nouguet. She returns with a pitcher of milk and two glasses which she places on the children's table. She picks up the feather duster and goes around the corners of the room for some last-minute cleaning.

MADAME NOUGUET

(to herself) Good thing for our cow.
They haven't found her yet.

Hearing someone coming, Madame Nouguet tosses the duster under a chair and exits. Enter Jacqueline, carrying an easel. She wears mirror bits pinned in her hair, red nail polish on fingers and toes, and a necklace of tiger teeth. The easel has three legs and a long, flat tray full of art supplies. She sets it up near the window, opens the tray and takes out a pen and pastels. She pins a card to the easel and stares out the window, draws a circle. Not happy with the roundness, she takes a wine glass and traces a perfect circle. She draws drops spinning off of it. Enter Varian Fry, gives a visible start at the savage appearance of Jacqueline. He looks over the table setting and stares curiously at the jar of insects. He smiles, pours a glass of wine for everyone and takes a sip.

Enter Madame Nouguet carrying a pot of soup in potholders, places it on a trivet on the sideboard, ladles soup into each bowl and sets them on the plates. She places a breadboard and crusty French bread on the sideboard. She stares at Jacqueline, who is oblivious, with a questioning look. Enter children, Pierre, a boy of 3 and Aube, a girl of 5. Madame Nouguet tears them off pieces of bread. Pierre and Aube sit at small table and drink milk, dunk bread in soup.

Jacqueline continues to refine her ink drawing, oblivious to her daughter Aube and everyone else, as she works on her "tarot" card. She applies red paint with a brush, turning the drops into blood. Enter Miriam and Mary Jayne. Miriam makes eyes at Varian, who toasts her with his wine. Mary Jayne barely

tolerates him, but Miriam looks smitten with the quiet scholar.

MARY JAYNE
(to Madame Nouguet) What's for dinner?

MADAME NOUGUET
C'est ça. (This is it.)

MARY JAYNE
Bread and soup?

MADAME NOUGUET
And wine. Plenty of wine.

Mary Jayne looks in her purse, takes out franc notes.

MARY JAYNE
Get us something for an entree. Can you make *filet du turbot farci*, or *grosse duxelle un peu noir*?

MADAME NOUGUET
We don't have any of that, mademoiselle. But the wine list is superb.

MARY JAYNE
What do we have?

MADAME NOUGUET
Rutabagas, potatoes and onions.

Mary Jayne looks ruefully at the soup, sticks out her tongue.

MADAME NOUGUET
Perhaps madame is used to better. Tomorrow I will try again at the market.

Miriam looks in her purse.

MIRIAM
Here are some ration coupons.

Madame Nouguet takes the ration coupons.

MADAME NOUGUET

Merci. (to the others) I will need
all of your ration coupons.

They give her some coupons. Exit Madame Nouguet.

Enter Danny Bénédite and his wife Theo, André Breton, Victor Serge and Laurette. As they are getting seated, André picks up the feather duster, looks at Jacqueline's easel and sticks the duster in a metal ring, transforming the easel into a creature with a feather tail.

ANDRÉ

There, Jacqueline. Your easel has
come to life.

JACQUELINE

(smiles) You're tiresome, André.

ANDRÉ

Come and eat, my darling.

She comes up for air, sees her daughter as if for the first time.

DANNY

Burgundy. The only good wine.

He sips wine and kisses the neck of his wife, Englishwoman Theodora.

DANNY

Try it, Theo.

Theo sips wine. Miriam tries the wine and coughs. She sits down next to Varian.

DANNY

Isn't that right, Varian?

VARIAN

I like Riesling.

DANNY

Bah! Burgundy is the only good wine,
and the only good woman is mine.
Later we'll sing "*Passant par
Paris*". There's a piano in the
parlor.

Varian nods, glancing at Mary Jayne and Miriam, the strange
artist by the window, and the insects.

ANDRÉ

So Jacko, what are you painting
there?

She recoils at the nickname. Her parents had wanted a son.

JACQUELINE

What does it look like?

ANDRÉ

A playing card. Is this a new game?

Jacqueline adds detail to her ink drawing of a waterwheel
spewing blood. She paints more blood drops.

ANDRÉ

Make a whole deck. We'll call it the
Jeu de Marseilles.

Jacqueline sits down across from him, wiping her hands on the
tablecloth.

JACQUELINE

I'd give anything for some
turpentine.

VARIAN

Try the wine.

Miriam laughs and coughs. Danny looks offended.

JACQUELINE

(wryly) I meant to get my fingers
clean.

VARIAN

(under his breath) "Out, out, damned spot."

DANNY

(teasing his friend) So Victor, what do you do when you're not being a communist agitator?

VICTOR

I'm a social democrat. Stalin's agents are after me and I spend most of my time evading them.

DANNY

(teasing) And André, what do you do when you're not founding surrealism?

ANDRÉ

(distracted) Fetch my writing things, will you, Jacqueline?

JACQUELINE

Can't you see I'm busy?

DANNY

As for Varian, who knows what he and Beamish get up to with illegal this and that. You're all at risk.

VARIAN

So are you, Danny. For a French national, the punishment would be prison.

DANNY

Pshaw! Marshal Petain will never catch me.

THEO

(with English accent) Danny, this doesn't make for good dinner conversation.

VICTOR

(gesturing toward Varian) The United States is so reactionary, they grant visas in a manner so criminally stingy, we could die waiting. That's what we should call this place: Chateau Espère-Visa.

ANDRÉ

Yes, let's change the sign.

VICTOR

If it weren't for Varian Fry, a good number of refugees would have no choice but to jump into the sea.

MIRIAM

Here, here!

She raises her glass and they all toast to Varian, who smiles.

ANDRÉ

(to his daughter) Aube, will you please fetch Papa's writing things? I want to write a poem about your dear mama.

Aube gets up from children's table. Exit Aube. She returns with a notebook and pen, which she gives to André.

ANDRÉ

Merci.

He starts writing rapidly and seems to slip into a trance. After a few moments, he shakes himself and looks at what he wrote, reading aloud:

*Ma femme a la chevelure de feu de bois
aux pensées d'éclairs de chaleur
a la taille de sablier
ma femme à la taille de loutre
entre les dents du tigre
ma femme à la bouches de cocarde
et de bouquet d'etoiles
de dernier grandeur...*

(Subtitles)

My wife whose hair is a forest fire
Her thoughts that are hot lightning
Her hourglass waist
My wife with the waist of an otter
in the teeth of a tiger
My wife with the mouth of a cockade
and a bouquet of stars of
the greatest magnitude...)

MARY JAYNE

(lets out a sigh and exclaims) What
a great poem!

MIRIAM

(wiping her eyes) If you never write
anything else, that will be one for
the books.

He dashes off more lines and sits over the poem.

ANDRÉ

It's "*L'Union libre*". What do you
think of it, Jacko?

Jacqueline looks annoyed.

JACQUELINE

You have iconized me. I must check
my pulse.

Varian and Miriam laugh.

MIRIAM

The wheels are turning.

ANDRÉ

When you're trapped, you learn to
savor the small triumphs.

He stares at the two surviving mantises.

VARIAN

Where would you rather be?

ANDRÉ

France, the way it used to be.

DANNY

And will be!

Toasts with wine.

JACQUELINE

(to André) Then why don't you let
them go?

André opens the jar and releases the mantises. One mantis stands and spreads its wings. The children gather around, fascinated. André admires its triangular head and stick-like body, leaf-green.

AUBE

Watch out, it will bite you!

ANDRÉ

Only a pinch.

PIERRE

Give it a fly to eat.

The mantises walk around like pets.

ANDRÉ

You see, they're making love and the
female is eating her lover's head.

JACQUELINE

I'm hungry enough to eat yours.

The very proper Theo covers her son's ears and glares at Jacqueline. Aube takes a sketchpad from her mother's easel.

AUBE

Papa, draw me a rooster.

André dashes off a drawing in pastel, a red cockerel with bright tail feathers. Aube takes the drawing and holds it up to the wall. Enter Madame Nouguet, to clear away. She looks fondly at André and his little girl.

ANDRÉ

Do you have a thumbtack, Madame?

MADAME NOUGUET

No, Monsieur André, but I have a pin.

She gives him a pin and André hangs up the drawing. On his way out, Danny scrawls on it: "Le terrible crétin de Pétain."

DANNY

Come on, let's sing.

André looks at his poem with satisfaction and follows Danny.

ANDRÉ

Tomorrow we will hunt for game.

VARIAN

With what, our pistols?

ANDRÉ

Pistols at ten paces, deer!

JACQUELINE

(sotto voce) Let me get to New York,
then it's over.

MIRIAM

And the women will gather firewood.

MARY JAYNE

We've reverted to hunters and
gatherers.

JACQUELINE

And Madame Nouguet will hunt for
rutabagas.

ANDRÉ

And Sunday we'll invite our friends
and have an art show.

MIRIAM

Just a small, discreet art show while we're hiding from the Vichy spies.

VARIAN

They're artists, Miriam. That's what they do.

MIRIAM

I was just hoping we could keep our hideout a secret longer than one day. Do you have a place to sleep tonight?

VARIAN

Do you have an extra blanket?

MIRIAM

No, but you can borrow my rabbit fur coat.

VARIAN

I'd look funny in that.

MIRIAM

I mean to sleep under, silly.

Sounds of PIANO MUSIC and men singing "Passant par Paris", a spirited marching song. Exeunt Varian and Miriam. Madame Nouguet retrieves her feather duster, stares at Jacqueline's painting wide-eyed. Seeing the jar open on the table, she looks around nervously for the mantis.

DISSOLVE

INT. THE BRETONS' BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

Aube is lying in a trundle bed, looking at a picture book. She has one arm around a bedraggled teddy bear. Jacqueline in night clothes brushes out her hair. André in a robe is pacing around the room. They bicker quietly.

JACQUELINE

I'm tired of you co-opting my art.
Stop iconizing me, using me for your
inspiration.

ANDRÉ

But the others liked my poem.

JACQUELINE

Like when Paul Eluard introduced
Dora Maar to Picasso, she was a
talented photographer. Now she's
only known for his portrait of her.
And I don't want to be your next
"Nadja."

She hisses the name.

ANDRÉ

Nadja was just an actress.

JACQUELINE

Merde, she was Nancy Cunard. You
slept with her too.

ANDRÉ

I swear I didn't! She was with Louis
Aragon. I simply find inspiration
from dreams, and beautiful women.

JACQUELINE

I'm an artist, too, not just
something for you to look at. Hands
off my art supplies.

ANDRÉ

This is why I wanted a housewife.

JACQUELINE

When we get to New York, maybe you'll
find one.

They raise their voices and become strident as the quarrel
heats up. Aube pulls the covers over her head.

ANDRÉ

Maybe you'll find a man who caters
to your every whim.

JACQUELINE

A man who treats me as an equal - that
would be refreshing. Room to
breathe!

ANDRÉ

Oh darling, let's not fight. Come to
bed.

Jacqueline kisses Aube, then André.

JACQUELINE

Bonne nuit.

André kisses Jacqueline, then Aube.

ANDRÉ

Bonne nuit.

They switch off the lamp. Sound of kissing and canoodling.
After a while...

ANDRÉ

But finish the deck, Jacqueline. It
will give us a new game to play while
we're waiting.

DISSOLVE

EXT. GURS CONCENTRATION CAMP, NOVEMBER - DAY

Charlie Fawcett walks along the barbed wire fence with a
priest in tow. Charlie carries a marriage license and a pen.
The women inside the fence sit around, listless. They are
dirty, thin and shabby, their hair hacked off. None of them
shows a spark of life.

PRIEST

Are you sure your fiancée is in here?
What's her name?

CHARLIE

(gruff) I'll know her when I see her.

A young woman follows along the fence. Charlie stops at the corner and turns. She slips up behind him and tugs on his jacket. He turns around to see a dirty urchin with cropped hair. She has large green eyes which plead silently as she reaches out a hand through the barbed wire. Charlie takes her hand.

CHARLIE

Darling! (whispers) Play along.
(raising his voice) At last I've found you. Sign here and we can get married.

He holds the license out and she reads his name and signs hers below. Charlie reads it.

LILLIAN

(Hungarian accent) Oh Charlie, how I have missed you.

CHARLIE

I've missed you too, Lillian.
Father, do the honors.

The priest reads an abbreviated ceremony and Charlie kisses his bride through the fence. He pays the priest, who fills out a certificate, hands it to Charlie and walks away.

CHARLIE

Come to the gate, Lillian. We're going to get you out of here.

She runs beside him to the front where the commandant looks over the marriage certificate and releases Lillian. She tags along with Charlie.

CHARLIE

OK, Lillian, you're free to go.

LILLIAN

What? Where am I going to go?

CHARLIE

I'll take you to the city. I know of
a boarding house.

LILLIAN

Oh thank you, Charlie.

She sings a happy little tune.

INT. CHAGALL'S COTTAGE IN GORDES, NOVEMBER - DAY

A big kitchen table, wicker chairs, a folding screen, a coal stove. Madame Chagall places food and wine on the table. On the other side of the room, two easels hold large paintings. Marc Chagall in wrinkled pants and dark shirt, mixes up oils and daubs at a painting of a cow, a moon, and flowers.

CHAGALL

I got your letter and I wanted to
tell you, I'm in no danger.

VARIAN

It's a real honor to see you at work.
What a shame if your art were lost
to the world.

CHAGALL

(shrugs) How lost? I'm a naturalized
French citizen.

VARIAN

But you and madame are Jewish and the
French have passed laws. They could
turn you over to the Germans.
Confiscate your property and do away
with you.

Chagall ignores him, concentrating fiercely on the petal of
a flower.

CHAGALL

(angry) But what do you have to
offer? I do not want to go to the
United States. The big cities, all
(more)

CHAGALL

concrete and skyscrapers. I like my little cottage. Are there cows in America?

VARIAN

Yes, there are cows. It isn't all cities. We have countryside too.

Chagall looks relieved. He and his wife exchange a glance.

CHAGALL

Maybe, we will talk.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN, NOVEMBER 1940 - DAY

Miriam, Mary Jayne and Walter Mehring are interviewing refugees. Oppy sits in back, working on the books. Through the open door of Varian's office, Lena can be seen typing up reports. Hermant comes in and goes to Varian's office.

INT. VARIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Varian stands up and stretches, beckons to Hermant and closes the door.

VARIAN

I've got Danny going around to all the concentration camps and writing a report. We're going to Vichy.

HERMANT

That's a bad idea, Varian. Please don't go there.

VARIAN

I'm going to confront them.

Hermant shakes his head. Lena looks troubled but soon recovers her usual vivacious smile.

LENA

I'll help you, Varian. I'll go to Vichy too.

INT. VICHY HOTEL, NOVEMBER - DAY

Varian and Lena in a small resort hotel room. Lena unwraps a precious sliver of soap and washes her hands and face at the sink.

LENA

(shivers) Brrrr. Cold water only.

VARIAN

I applied for a Spanish transit visa so I could go home if I had to. Spain denied it. (sarcastic) Really, travel in Europe is so difficult these days.

She dries her face with a linen towel and smiles at him.

VARIAN

Now I can't leave. Too bad.

He hands her papers.

VARIAN

Here's Danny's report on concentration camps.

She sits on the bed and puts the typewriter on her lap.

LENA

D'accord (Okay). So many! I'll type it up. Can we get any heat in here?

VARIAN

This little electric heater is all there is.

Lena shakes her hands out to warm up her fingers, spins in a piece of paper and starts typing.

VARIAN

Get it mimeographed. Enough copies for every official and ambassador.

Lena smiles.

INT. VICHY MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR - DAY

Varian sits down across from Dr. Limousin and hands him a copy of Danny's report. Dr. Limousin flings it on the corner of his desk.

DR. LIMOUSIN

What is wrong with our concentration camps? The occupying authorities felicitate us on them. May I ask what you find wrong with them?

VARIAN

There's no toilet paper or sanitary supplies. People are starving, and there's no medical care. They have wooden barracks with dirt floors. No windows, light or heat. People are dying. Three hundred mortalities a month in Gurs.

DR. LIMOUSIN

(coldly) What would you have me do?

VARIAN

Show mercy. Release the sick and young from the camps. It's not natural for children to be imprisoned behind barbed wire. It's so dirty they get eczema. Insects, rats and other animals are running rampant. No description can exaggerate the horrors of the camps. Edgar Allen Poe could not make them worse than they are.

INT. VICHY MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR - DAY

In the next room, Hugo Geissler listens in on a speaker. He smiles cynically at Varian Fry's vehement pleas.

GEISSLER

Good enough treatment for enemies of the Reich!

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN - DAY

Miriam comes by the office dressed in a coat and hat, holding a suitcase. Charlie Fawcett holds the door for her. She walks up to Varian and he stands up to embrace her.

MIRIAM

Adieu, I hate to leave you.

VARIAN

Take care of yourself. We'll miss you.

INT. CENTRE AMERICAN - NIGHT

The staff is closing up the office as Captain Dubois comes in and walks up to Varian.

CAPTAIN DUBOIS

May I speak with you? It's a matter of some urgency involving your doorman.

VARIAN

Charlie? He's a nice, crazy youngster. What did you do, Charlie?

Charlie walks over to Varian.

CAPTAIN DUBOIS

For one thing, he married six different women to get them out of camps.

Lena stares at Charlie with open mouth, then smiles.

VARIAN

(widens his eyes in admiration) Wow, Charlie, I didn't know you had it in you.

CHARLIE

It was the least a gentleman could do.

CAPTAIN DUBOIS

Also aided in the escape of British airmen.

They all clam up. After a beat, Charlie nods his head resignedly, shuffles his feet.

CHARLIE

Okay, guess I'll be leaving tomorrow.

CAPTAIN DUBOIS

No, you leave tonight, because I'm coming at six o'clock tomorrow morning to arrest you. Have a pleasant evening.

Captain Dubois gives a little salute and departs. Charlie recovers himself and gives a lazy, Southern grin.

LENA

Before you go, Charlie, get that uniform dyed. It stands out too much.

VARIAN

(to Lena) I'll see you tomorrow
Lena.

LENA

(nods) Goodbye, Shar-lee.

She kisses Charlie on the cheek and departs with a little wave of her fingers. Left alone in the room, Varian takes a volume of Carlyle off the shelf and opens it to a certain page where secret reports are typed on strips of onion skin.

VARIAN

Since you're going, you can smuggle out messages. Get that plaster head you were working on.

Charlie picks up a sculptured head off a shelf. He looks at the seam where a compartment was hollowed out for secret reports. He takes a cup and mixes up a little plaster of Paris. Varian rolls up the messages to go into the plaster head.

Charlie takes his trumpet out of its case and pulls open the third valve.

CHARLIE

There's room in here too.

VARIAN

This is the secret report listing the principal Spanish republican refugees hiding in France and urging visas for them.

Charlie stuffs the report into the valve and tightens it with a cloth-wrapped wrench.

CHARLIE

Now what can I play...

He picks up the trumpet, and plays a simple tune on the two valves left working.

VARIAN

When you go to Barcelona, go to the British Embassy. Ask for the Charge d'Affaires. Tell him we have British soldiers here and we're trying to get them by boat to Gibraltar. Godspeed.

Varian clasps him around the shoulders.

INT. AIR-BEL DINING ROOM - NIGHT

It's raining and rainwater pours down the wall, loosening a sheet of wallpaper which peels off and falls over. Madame Nouguet places a pan under a stream of water. She takes a loaf of bread and a scale and cuts the bread into equal sized portions, weighing each piece and putting it on a small plate. She then takes a jar of Postum and spoons some into each cup. Victor, Laurette, Danny, Theo, André, Jacqueline and the children crowd around and fall ravenously upon the food rations.

DANNY

I saw some snails on the garden wall.

ANDRÉ

(smiles) In the morning we will hunt
for escargo.

INT. MARSEILLE CAFÉ - NIGHT

Hermant and Varian come into the café where Captain Dubois is having a drink with friends. As the two sit down for a late supper, Dubois comes over to their table.

DUBOIS

Bon soir, comment ça va? May I speak
to you a minute?

Varian stands up and they walk slowly toward the front of the café.

DUBOIS

(in a soft voice) Do you know the
consul of Siam?

VARIAN

Yes, why?

DUBOIS

Ever have any dealings with him?

VARIAN

No, I've met him and talked about his
possibilities, but I haven't tried
them. Why?

DUBOIS

We're going to raid him tomorrow and
I wouldn't want you to have any
trouble. They expect to find the
evidence to get you with.

VARIAN

Thanks for the tip.

They shake hands.

DUBOIS

Alors, bon soir et bonne chance.

VARIAN

Bon soir.

Dubois departs and Varian returns to the table.

VARIAN

Beamish, we can't use Siam visas any more.

Hermant snaps his fingers.

HERMANT

Just like that. Our days are numbered.

VARIAN

We have to redouble our efforts.

HERMANT

Everybody with visas, we send the F route. And the British by boat to Gibraltar.

EXT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Hermant, Varian, Lena and Oppy work with refugees.

HERMANT

(to Varian) Since the Marshal is visiting Marseille, I'm leaving town. I always make it a practice to clear out when the head of a fascist state comes to town. I know from long experience what happens.

VARIAN

Where will you go?

HERMANT

To the frontier, to look for new escape routes.

EXT. LISBON OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

Charlie Fawcett strolls along the street, stops to look at a poster outside the Theatre Trinidad: "LILLIAN FAWCETT SINGS OPERA."

CHARLIE

(to himself) Is that my Lillian?
That can't be her. Maybe a distant
cousin?

INT. THEATRE TRINIDAD - NIGHT

Charlie in the audience watches the beautiful opera singer perform an aria. The audience is enthralled with her and Charlie enjoys the music. Afterward he goes backstage.

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Lillian opens the door. The dressing room is full of flowers and she is gorgeous, her hair long, eyes lustrous, dressed in a glamorous gown. Seeing Charlie, she lets out a scream.

LILLIAN

Charlie!

She throws her arms around him.

LILLIAN (cont'd)

How can I thank you for saving my
life!

They embrace and kiss.

CHARLIE

I didn't even recognize you! You
sure do clean up nice!

LILLIAN

Tomorrow I take the train to Oporto.
Would you like to come with me? We
can finally have our honeymoon.

CHARLIE

Darling, I sure would like that.

EXT. VILLA AIR BEL TERRACE, DECEMBER - DAY

Varian and Danny stand on the branches of a large plane tree, hanging artwork. Dressed in a white sheepskin coat, Max Ernst stands on the ground, directing them how to hang his canvases. At a long table, Jacqueline, Laurette, Victor, Theo, Wifredo Lam, Walter Mehring, and Mary Jayne sit doing art projects. Wine bottles stand on the table along with magazines, scissors, paint and ink. The artists talk gaily and laugh as they create collages, paper cut-outs, ink drawings. André comes out of the house and sees Max Ernst: instant repulsion between the two.

ANDRÉ

(mockingly) Loplop.

MAX

(coldly) Loplop is my private phantom.

ANDRÉ

How can you face me after joining Paul Eluard's faction?

André sits down at the end of the table next to Wifredo Lam, and starts cutting out pictures from a magazine.

MAX

(dashes a cartoon bird in the corner of a drawing) Paul rescued me from the camp. Just because he doesn't subscribe to your stupid rules--

ANDRÉ

He betrayed the ideals of surrealism.

MAX

That was years ago. How can you hold a grudge?

ANDRÉ

Keep it up, Ernst. You don't know
what it is to have ideals.

Wifredo Lam is drawing ink designs which attract André's admiration. Wifredo pulls out a chair and Max sits down. He takes cardboard, magazine clippings, glue and ink, creating a collage. Each artist concentrates on his or her work, intense and competitive. Max depicts a man carrying a suitcase with a woman's arm strapped to the side. Varian walks up to the table and studies the artistic creations.

VARIAN

(to Max) That's a nightmare image.

MAX

I need to emigrate. You know I
escaped from the Gestapo.

VARIAN

I'll help you get the documents you
need.

André stands up and goes up and down the table, admiring the various creations.

ANDRÉ

(to Wifredo) I love your ink
drawings.

WIFREDO

Gracias.

ANDRÉ

I'm working on a poem in which love
undergoes transformation and
becomes a sun, signifier of hope.
Can you illustrate it for me with
your little personages?

WIFREDO

Si, I would be happy to.

Fired up, he fills up his pen and starts a new drawing.

ANDRÉ

(to Max) Whose arm is that on your baggage?

MAX

My wife in Germany. She is a Jew and I might have to remarry her to get her out.

ANDRÉ

Your wife in Germany? What about Leonora?

MAX

(angry) She's safe in Spain. Don't you think I miss her?

He looks at Leonora's painting he hung in a tree.

ANDRÉ

Safe? She had a mental breakdown and was committed. So you took up with Peggy Guggenheim, the rich American. Will she be wife number four?

MAX

(fuming, stands up) How'd you like a green paintbrush up yours?

Walter Mehring sits agog, writing down the dialog. Laurette nudges Victor, who comes between the two antagonists.

VICTOR

Come now, old friends, let's sit and have a drink together and toast to...Paris.

Max walks out and Varian follows, trying to calm him down.

MAX

I've got to get out, now.

VARIAN

If you just wait a few days, we'll get you a visa.

MAX

I don't have a few days! Peggy knows a man who can smuggle me out.

VARIAN

In that case, good luck. See you in New York.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Varian checks his watch and it reads 10 o'clock. Hearing a soft knock, he opens the door to Lena, lets her in and closes the door.

LENA

Mille pardons but I have been arrested this morning and that is why I am *tellement en retard*.

VARIAN

Arrested? What do you mean?

LENA

Oui, arrested. There are enormous *râfles* going on in town.

VARIAN

Take a letter.

She picks up her notepad and pencil and he begins to dictate.

VARIAN

To Hugh Fullerton, consul general:
Vichy has imprisoned thousands of stateless people in concentration camps. The United States should issue a new passport that provides diplomatic protection--

A tap on the door. He opens it to see the housekeeper.

MADAME NOUGUET

Excuse me, *monsieur*, but the police are downstairs.

VARIAN

Let's finish this letter.

LENA

A vôtre service.

The voice of Theo can be heard shouting.

THEO

(voice off) Police! Police!

Victor Serge appears in the door, shoving clean linen into a valise.

VICTOR SERGE

The police insist that everyone in the house assemble in the grand hall at once.

Victor returns to his bedroom. Varian glances around the room. He throws his address book into the fireplace and watches it burn. He takes his secret account sheets and burns them, too. Then he and Lena go downstairs.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL GRAND HALL - DAY

A *commissaire* (police officer) and three plainclothesmen stand watching the inhabitants: Madame Nouguet, Mary Jayne, Laurette, Jacqueline and Aube, Theo and Pierre. André sits in an armchair in the corner. Victor clutches a valise packed for an overnight bag. Varian and Lena join the crowd, standing next to Victor.

VICTOR

(under his breath, to Varian) When they arrest you for a few hours, it means a few weeks.

COMMISSAIRE

(loudly, to Mme. Nouguet) *Alors*, is that all?

MADAME NOUGUET

(soft but superior) Yes sir, that is all.

COMMISSAIRE
(to the plainclothesmen) *Alors, procédez!*

VARIAN
Proceed to what?

COMMISSAIRE
To search the house, of course!

VARIAN
May I ask by what authority you expect to search this house?

COMMISSAIRE
(bellows) We have the authority! Don't you worry yourself about that.

VARIAN
I should nevertheless like to see it.

COMMISSAIRE
(sneers) Oh, so you want to make trouble, do you?

VARIAN
(slowly and precisely) Not at all, but I wish to insist upon my rights, and the rights of my friends. We have nothing to hide, but we will not submit to a search unless you have written orders to conduct one.

The commissaire produces a soiled and folded paper from an inner pocket.

COMMISSAIRE
(with mock courtesy) *Voilà, monsieur.*

Varian takes the paper and unfolds it. Victor and Lena look over his shoulders as he reads an order from the Prefect to the Chief of Police, authorizing him to search all premises "suspected of communist activity."

VARIAN

This order doesn't apply to us. You have no right to search these premises.

COMMISSAIRE

(bawls) That's where you're wrong. These premises are suspected of communist activity and I intend to search the house from top to bottom.

VARIAN

(in a cold rage) We protest and reserve all rights.

COMMISSAIRE

Tell it to the judge. (barks)
Proceed!

A blond plainclothesman sits down at round table in the center of the room and produces a sheaf of paper, on which he writes their names, one page per family group. The commissaire picks his nose. André Breton sits in an armchair in the corner.

ANDRÉ

Formidable!

VARIAN

(in a low, controlled voice) We protest and reserve all rights.

Turning to Victor Serge, the commissaire gives him a cool once-over.

COMMISSAIRE

Monsieur Serge, or should I say
Monsieur Kibalchich?

Victor opens his mouth to answer, but Varian interrupts.

VARIAN

We protest and reserve all rights.

André jumps up from the armchair and paces across the floor.

ANDRÉ

*Invraisemblable! Grottesque.
Extravagant!*

Victor Serge sits in an armchair and leafs through a book. Resigned, he puts on a calm demeanor to hint to the others to calm down. Laurette sits down stiffly beside him. Theo and Jacqueline try to control the children, who are running around, screaming as they express the tension in the room. Madame Nouguet sits in a corner chair.

COMMISSAIRE

You will each be interrogated separately. Monsieur Kibalchich, you first. Bring your...wife.

Victor Serge and Laurette go upstairs with the plainclothesman.

VARIAN

We protest and reserve all rights.

The plainclothesman returns with Victor and Laurette. The plainclothesman places a typewriter and a pearl-handled revolver on the table.

COMMISSAIRE

Eh bien, here is something already. Continue. You next, Monsieur Breton and family.

ANDRÉ

Incroyable!

André, Jacqueline and Aube ascend the stairs, followed by a plainclothesman. Everyone waits tensely. Varian remembers something. His face lights up and he bites his lower lip.

VARIAN

May I use the bathroom?

The commissaire hesitates, then waves a plainclothesman to accompany Varian upstairs.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY

Varian sounds out the plainclothesman.

VARIAN

Your boss seems a little rough. I wish he'd take it easy. He's got the women and children frightened out of their wits.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

I know. He's always like that. A natural bully.

They come to the door of the toilet. Varian goes inside and closes the door. The plainclothesman waits outside.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, UPSTAIRS TOILET - DAY

Varian waits a moment, then pulls the chain. He waits until the water stops running, then comes outside.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY

VARIAN

(to the plainclothesman) I just have to get a handkerchief. I'll be right back.

The plainclothesman stays in the corridor.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

All right. Take your time.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Varian enters the bedroom, leaving the door open. He finds a false passport and throws it on top of the armoire. Then he opens a bureau drawer and takes out a handkerchief. Blowing his nose, he comes out of the room.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

All right now?

VARIAN

Yes, thanks.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL GRAND HALL - DAY

The Bretons are back in the grand hall. A large service revolver is on the table next to the pearl-handled one.

COMMISSAIRE

What are you doing with a revolver?

ANDRÉ

I was a medical officer, authorized to carry it.

COMMISSAIRE

Mary Jayne Gold, you are next.

Mary Jayne goes upstairs with a plainclothesman.

MADAME NOUGUET

May I go to the kitchen and make coffee?

COMMISSAIRE

(absently) Yes, go. (waves)

Commissaire goes into the dining room, followed by Victor Serge and Laurette, André, Jacqueline and Aube. Only the blond detective at the center table remains in the grand hall with Varian and Lena. Varian sits down next to Lena.

VARIAN

(whispering to Lena) Engage that guy in a conversation. I want a chance to go through my pockets.

LENA

(whispering) *Entendu*. But when you finish, I want a chance to go through my pocketbook.

VARIAN

(whispering) All right, I'll do what I can.

Lena walks over to the table in the center of the room.

LENA

(to the plainclothesman) That's a nice suit you're wearing. These days it's so hard to find anything to wear. Do you mind telling me where you bought it?

Flattered, the plainclothesman smiles at the pretty red-head.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

(beaming) You like it?

LENA

Oh yes, it's beautiful. Such nice material, such good taste.

Varian is emptying his pockets into the fire in the green tile stove.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

I have my own tailor.

LENA

You must be rich.

Plainclothesman blushes and his face turns red.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

Oh no, he's not expensive at all.

LENA

Won't you write out his name and address for me?

She leans over the desk and he is flustered. Varian is still emptying his pockets and burning the incriminating papers. Mary Jayne peeks in from the dining room and sees him. The plainclothesman bends down over the table and begins writing on a slip of paper. Varian picks up a log and pushes it into the stove. Smiling from ear-to-ear, the plainclothesman hands Lena a slip of paper.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

Voilà, mademoiselle.

LENA

Oh, thank you. You are so kind.

Lena comes back to the chair next to Varian's.

LENA

(in a whisper) Did you get enough time?

VARIAN

(in a whisper) Yes, thanks a million. You did fine.

LENA

Maintenant, it's your turn.

Varian walks up to the blond plainclothesman.

VARIAN

How long do you think this will last?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

I don't know.

VARIAN

What do you think he is going to do?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

Take you all down to the *Evêché*.

VARIAN

The police station? Why?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

For control of your situations.

Lena empties her pocketbook and takes out some papers, throwing them into the green tile stove. Varian turns in time to see her poking the fire.

VARIAN

How will we get down?

The plainclothesman gets up from his chair and leads Varian to the window. They look out the window at a police van and car. Sound: STOVE DOOR CLANKS SHUT. The commissaire returns with a surrealist drawing in his hand.

COMMISSAIRE

(yells at the plainclothesman)
What's going on here?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

(jumps nervously) Nothing.

He hurries back to his seat at the table. The commissaire hands him the drawing.

COMMISSAIRE

Enter this! Revolutionary
propaganda.

ANDRÉ

It's just a rooster I drew for my
daughter.

COMMISSAIRE

(reads) "the terrible cretin
Petain."

Varian hides a smile.

ANDRÉ

I told you, the word is "*putain*".
It is a comment by a friend on a
friend. It does not concern the
Marshal.

COMMISSAIRE

(shouts) And the cock? The cock is
France, isn't it?

ANDRÉ

(weakly) That's debatable.

COMMISSAIRE

Revolutionary propaganda! Enter it!

ANDRÉ

Unbelievable.

He returns to his chair.

COMMISSAIRE

Monsieur Fry, come with me.

Varian and the commissaire go upstairs.

INT. VILLA AIR-BEL, VARIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

The commissaire gathers up all the papers on the desk and stuffs them into Varian's briefcase. Then he picks up the portable typewriter and carries it triumphantly downstairs. Varian brings the briefcase.

COMMISSAIRE

Documents in foreign languages.
Probably revolutionary propaganda.
Enter them.

The plainclothesman catalogs the papers. SOUND: a commotion outside. Commissaire rushes out, followed by two plainclothesmen. Through the open door, voice of commissaire can be heard shouting.

COMMISSAIRE

Arrest him, I tell you! Arrest him!
Don't let him get away!

A scuffle at the door and Danny Bénédite enters, led by both arms by two policemen.

COMMISSAIRE

(to Danny) Ah, Monsieur Ungemach,
the anarchist.

DANNY

I prefer my French name.

Danny starts to protest, but the commissaire raises his hand.

COMMISSAIRE

I forbid you to speak.

Madame Nouguet comes in with a tray of ersatz coffee (made from acorns), and dry slices of bread.

MADAME NOUGUET

(apologetically) It's all there is.
(to the commissaire) As I was
prevented from going to market,
there is nothing in the house to eat.

The commissaire ignores her as he gathers up the typewriters, documents and revolvers. Victor Serge has bread and coffee and offers some to Laurette. She nibbles a piece and sips coffee.

COMMISSAIRE

Get ready to leave.

VARIAN

The children are a little young to
be taken to the police station.

COMMISSAIRE

(oily) It will only be for a short
time. You will all be back before
nightfall. A mere formality.

VARIAN

But please, the children and their
mothers and the housekeeper, leave
them here.

COMMISSAIRE

(putting on a polite demeanor) All
right. (to Varian) There is
absolutely nothing against you. No
suspicion of any sort. But you would
oblige me by accompanying the
(more)

COMMISSAIRE (cont'd)
 others, merely as a witness. You
 will be able to return within an
 hour. I give you my word of honor.

Victor rolls his eyes and throws some bread into his valise.

EXT. VILLA AIR-BEL GRAVEL DRIVE - DAY

The inhabitants all climb into the back of the police van.
A plainclothesman hands Varian his briefcase.

INT. EVÊCHÉ 2ND FLOOR ROOM- DAY

A school-room is crowded with citizens of Marseille, many indignant to be arrested. They include bankers, respectable matrons, a waiter, refugees, a cross-section. Varian, Lena, Victor, Laurette, André, Danny and Mary Jayne sit at school desks, waiting to be questioned. A gendarme guards them all. Varian opens his briefcase and he and Lena go through the papers. They come across a manuscript by André Breton, a political discourse hand-written in bright green ink. Lena stuffs it into her blouse.

 LENA
 (to the gendarme) May I please go to
 le petit endroit?

He waves her permission. She goes, and comes back smiling.

 LENA
 (to Varian) The oeuvre exists no
 more.

The commissaire comes bounding into the room.

 COMMISSAIRE
 (shouts at Varian) What are you
 doing with that briefcase?

 VARIAN
 (handing it to him) You forgot it at
 the house, and I thought you might
 want it.

Scowling, the commissaire snatches the briefcase from him.

INT. EVÊCHÉ, 2ND FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

The prisoners are slumped in their seats, some lying on the floor or standing by the window. Mary Jayne comes back from the office and sits with the others.

MARY JAYNE

They only asked me to sign a list of
what was found in my room.

A newspaper boy comes in and several people buy a newspaper.

ANDRÉ

Garçon, can you go to a bistro and
get us some wine and sandwiches?

He hands the boy some francs and the boy goes outside. After a while he returns with food and drink. The captives fall upon the sandwiches ravenously. A waiter among the captives pulls corks and they drink wine from the bottles.

INT. EVÊCHÉ, 2ND FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

The prisoners are restless and angry, grumbling and cursing.

VARIAN

Gendarme!

The gendarme comes over to him.

VARIAN

Can't we see the commissaire?

GENDARME

He went home hours ago. He'll be back
tomorrow.

ANDRÉ

Merde alors!

LENA

Ils ne faut pas exagérer.

EXT. EVÊCHÉ COURTYARD - NIGHT

The prisoners emerge from a stairway and climb into a waiting van.

INT. POLICE VAN - NIGHT

Varian sits down next to a detective.

VARIAN

Where are they taking us now?

Detective shrugs.

DETECTIVE

To the harbor.

VARIAN

(indignant) This is an outrage! I am an American citizen. I demand to speak with my consul.

DETECTIVE

I'm afraid there isn't a thing I can do about that.

VARIAN

What can I do, then?

DETECTIVE

Nothing, I'm afraid.

EXT. QUAYS OF MARSEILLE - NIGHT

The police wagon drives along the quay of the modern port, turns down a dock and draws up alongside a ship. The tall, forbidding hull reads "S.S. Sinaia."

GENDARME

Out of the van!

The prisoners climb out of the van and guards conduct them up ship's ladder to the main deck. When all are on board, the detectives return to the quay and drive off in the van.

EXT. S.S. SINAIIA - NIGHT

Varian and the others stand in a milling crowd of confused prisoners. A gendarme stands at the companionway.

GENDARME

Women, come this way to the third
class cabins. Men, go below to the
bunks in the hold.

Mary Jayne, Laurette and Lena go with the women, Varian,
Danny, Victor and André go with the men.

INT. HOLD OF THE S.S. SINAIIA - NIGHT

Varian looks appalled as he pulls over a burlap bag stuffed with dirty straw and a thin blanket. He looks out of the open hatch cover at the stars, brushing dirt off of himself and scratching an itch. In the corner some Spaniards are playing guitar out of tune and singing a sad flamenco.

INT. HOLD OF THE S.S. SINAIIA - DAY

Varian wakes up. Squinting, takes his eyeglasses out of his pocket and puts them on. Morning light streams through the hatch-cover. He has straw in his hair and his suit looks rumpled. Danny and André stir on their burlap sacks. Victor is sitting up, reading a book as he gnaws a piece of bread. Gendarme calls down the companionway.

GENDARME

Count off by ten! Each group elect
a leader to go the galley.

Varian, Danny, Victor, and six others elect André their leader and he goes aloft, soon returning with half a loaf of black bread and a tin pail of light-brown liquid.

Time lapse. The sun crawls overhead, throwing short shadows. The prisoners talk amongst themselves.

BUSINESSMAN

My friends and I came from Nice to see the parade. We took a room at the Hotel du Louvre et de la Paix, and were arrested within an hour!

SYRIAN

My brother and I were examined in a café and we passed. Then we walked outside and saw a police van. Someone said, "There are two places left. Get in."

GENDARME

Lunch! Leaders to the galley.

André goes up, followed by Varian.

GENDARME

Stop, you!

VARIAN

(calm and determined) I demand to speak to the American consul.

GENDARME

I have strict orders not to let you communicate with anyone on shore under any circumstances.

Varian controls his anger but he is fuming. André returns with beef, lentils, bread and wine. The businessmen, Syrians and others take their share. Varian gnaws on a piece of beef, spitting it out in disgust.

VARIAN

It's frozen in the middle.

Victor holds out his hand and Varian gives him the rest of the slice of meat. The sun creeps across the hatch, throwing longer shadows. One by one, the prisoners climb the companionway and range out on deck.

EXT. DECK OF THE S.S. SINAIIA - NIGHT

Dutch, Danish, German and French prisoners walk around and grumble about how they were picked up. Varian sees Mary Jayne sitting along the gunwale, talking to other Americans, all surprised and indignant. They are eating lentil soup, and Mary Jayne stares into her soup, disgusted.

MARY JAYNE

Are those maggots?

VICTOR

No, just sprouted lentils. You should eat all you can.

MARY JAYNE

Ugh. You eat it.

She hands Victor the tin bowl and he drinks it down.

GENDARME

Go below!

The prisoners file back down the companionway to the dark hold, portholes closed and hatch-cover secured.

INT. HOLD OF THE S.S. SINAIIA - DAY

Varian and Victor lie on their burlap sacks.

VICTOR

Now they'll probably set sail for Africa. A concentration camp in the desert.

Sound of whistles blowing in the harbor.

VARIAN

Why aren't we moving?

Time lapse.

INT. HOLD OF THE S.S. SINAI - DAY

GENDARME

Leaders to the galley! The rest of
you, out on deck for exercise.

Varian finishes writing a note and wraps it around a ten-franc piece.

EXT. DECK OF THE S.S. SINAI - DAY

André, Varian, Victor, Danny, Mary Jayne, Laurette and Lena cluster near the rail. When the gendarme turns his back, Varian tosses the note onto the dock. A boy picks it up and runs away.

Time lapse. Varian glances at his watch which reads 6 o'clock.

Gendarme hands him a white paper sack. Varian opens it as the others gather around.

DANNY

What is it?

VARIAN

Ham sandwiches!

He hands them out.

DANNY

Who's it from?

Varian pulls a card out of the bag.

VARIAN

(smiles wryly) Compliments of Hugh
Fullerton, consul general.

MARY JAYNE

Why doesn't Fullerton get us
released?

INT. HOLD OF THE S.S. SINAI A - DAY

Victor lies on his burlap sack, reading a book. Taking it all in stride, Varian lies on his sack, staring up at the hatch-cover, where sunset streaks the sky. André sits on the edge of a metal bunk.

VARIAN

What are you reading?

VICTOR

"My Life in the Gulag." I wrote it myself.

VARIAN

Can I read it?

VICTOR

It's not done yet.

VARIAN

(to André) Have you ever been arrested before?

ANDRÉ

Oui, twenty five times. There was the time in Paris when we staged a Dada protest at the theatre. We ate spaghetti and shouted down the actors.

VARIAN

Twenty five times! Anything else you'd like to tell me?

EXT. DECK OF THE S.S. SINAI A - DAY

Mary Jayne comes over to Varian and seizes his hand, tucking her arm under his.

MARY JAYNE

I sent a note to the captain. He's invited us to his cabin.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN OF THE S.S. SINAIA - DAY

The captain invites Varian and Mary Jayne to sit down. Cabin boy stands in attendance. Varian acts like he has almost forgotten what it's like to sit in a chair.

CAPTAIN

I regret your inconvenience.

VARIAN

(shooting his cuffs) I once crossed the Atlantic on your ship.

CAPTAIN

I am sorry you have to see it again under such different circumstances. The administration has hired my ship as a prison, and I don't know how long you will be held. (to cabin boy) Bring beer for my guests.

Cabin boy returns with glasses of beer on a tray.

CABIN BOY

Monsieur le Consul des Etats-Unis is waiting below.

CAPTAIN

(impressed) Bring him up at once.

Cabin boy exits and returns with Harry Bingham. Harry shakes hands with Varian, Mary Jayne and the captain. Warming up, the captain unlocks a cabinet and takes out cognac and four glasses.

CAPTAIN

(cordial, toasting them) *Voilà, messieurs, dame. À votre santé.*

HARRY BINGHAM

I called the Prefecture to find out why you were being held. But all the officials were out with the Marshal. I had to fight with the police to get on the boat. Tomorrow Petain will be
(more)

HARRY BINGHAM (cont'd)
on his way back to Vichy and things
should return to normal. Seven
thousand people were arrested for
his visit. I'll get you released.

EXT. DECK OF THE S.S. SINAI - DAY

Detectives with dossiers begin calling the names of the
prisoners and releasing them. Varian and Lena, André, Mary
Jayne, Laurette and Victor walk down the gangplank and along
the quay to the trolley.

VARIAN
Has anyone seen Danny?

VICTOR
They're still holding him.

LENA
I'll go see Captain Dubois.

She walks up a street decorated with flags and bunting and
littered with confetti and trash left behind by the crowds.
Fascist guards swagger about with white armbands of the *Garde
Petain*.

INT. OFFICE OF CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS, DECEMBER - DAY

Varian sits at his desk. Lena comes in with Danny.

LENA
I found Dubois in his office on the
Promenade de la Plage. He seemed
annoyed that we had been in trouble
and asked why we didn't contact him
at once, so he could have us
released. I told him we weren't
allowed to send a message and he
swore! "What dumb beasts those guys
are." Oh, and he asked me about
Charlie. I told him Charlie left for
Lisbon and he said, "Good. They
wanted me to arrest him."

Varian and Danny exchange a glance.

VARIAN

(smiles) So the arrest, how droll!

DANNY

But it flushed people out of hiding.
People disappeared.

VARIAN

(somber) The gloves are off.
Berlin is more and more involved and
I must step up my efforts.

Detectives enter the office, show their badges and confront Varian. Lena busies herself with filing.

VARIAN

What do you want?

GENDARME

We are looking for the one who calls
himself Hermant.

VARIAN

Monsieur Hermant resigned weeks
ago. I have no idea where he is at
present.

GENDARME

There are serious charges against
him. He's a dirty de Gaullist.

VARIAN

Well, I'll let you know if I ever see
him.

Detectives depart. Varian, Danny and Lena exchange a glance.

INT. AIR-BEL GRAND HALL - NIGHT

Mary Jayne enters the house and sees light coming from under the dining room door. Voices are speaking low in British accents. Varian comes out of the dining room and closes the door behind him.

VARIAN

Any chance of finding a bit of food
in the pantry? My guests are hungry.

Mary Jayne draws her breath in to make a snappy retort, but seeing the look on his face, she remains silent. The muffled English voices continue.

INT. AIR-BEL KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary Jayne finds wine, stale bread and sausage. She makes up a tray and uncorks the wine.

INT. AIR-BEL GRAND HALL - NIGHT

Varian takes the tray and the wine, returning to the dining room. He doesn't let her see inside and closes the door.

INT. AIR-BEL DINING ROOM - DAY

Varian meets Mary Jayne as they arrive for bread and "coffee". They are alone.

MARY JAYNE

Were those British officers?

VARIAN

Don't tell anyone but, yes they
were. The sausage was good.

MARY JAYNE

Don't tell anyone, but it was horse.

INT. CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS, DECEMBER 16 - DAY

Monday morning, Hermant walks into the office and Varian rushes up to him.

VARIAN

You're a wanted man.

Hermant stares out the window. Then he turns to Varian and smiles. They clasp arms and Hermant departs.

INT. MARSEILLE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

British airman Captain Fitch, Varian and Jacques sit around a stone-topped table in the back room. Captain Fitch is dressed in a leather jacket and he keeps to the shadows.

FITCH

If we can send British soldiers and airmen to Africa, they can make their way to Gibraltar.

JACQUES

To smuggle British soldiers onto ships for Algiers and Casablanca, I need three to eight thousand francs per passenger, depending on the length of voyage and the risks involved. I will provide them with crew cards and clothes. They can jump ship as they pass Gibraltar.

VARIAN

We'll give them false identity cards. As long as they speak French or keep quiet, they'll be all right.

FITCH

Agreed.

He and Varian toast with cognac, but Jacques only drinks bicarbonate of soda.

EXT. AIR-BEL - DAY

Jacqueline swings upside down from a trapeze hanging from a plane tree. She is smiling, dressed only in a sweater and slacks. Behind her, snow blankets the park.

ANDRÉ

Come Jacqueline, we need to gather firewood.

She remains hanging upside down, smiling at him. Theo and Danny come out with their coats on.

THEO

(to Jacqueline) Pierre is sick. It's too cold for him, poor child.

Jacqueline spins gracefully out of the trapeze and drops to the ground. They set off walking.

JACQUELINE

I saw some dead trees over there yesterday.

INT. CONSUL'S OFFICE, - DAY

Hugh Fullerton on the telephone.

FULLERTON

Good morning, Captain du Porzic. On behalf of my office here, I have a request. Get rid of Fry...What do you mean, you can't get anything on him? He's up to his neck in funny business.

INT. CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS, JANUARY 1941 - DAY

Varian, Oppy, Lena, Walter Mehring, Breitscheid and Hilferding are sitting and standing around the office.

OPPY

There's a steamer sailing for Martinique on February 4th and I plan to be on it.

Walter Mehring listens intently.

BREITSCHIED

We have French exit visas and we plan to sail too.

OPPY

I'll reserve you three places on the *Winnipeg* for February 18th.

BREITSCHIED

Two cabins, please.

OPPY

All they have are bunks in the between-deck dormitory. I'll give you the tickets tomorrow.

Hilferding looks elated, but Breitscheid looks insulted.

BREITSCHIED

We don't travel in steerage. I won't consider the dormitory for my wife.

VARIAN

I don't think you realize the danger you are in here.

BREITSCHIED

Hitler wouldn't dare to extradite us. Good afternoon, gentlemen.

Hilferding follows him, but turns to Oppy.

HILFERDING

Reserve me a place on the *Winnipeg*, please.

WALTER MEHRING

Me too!

OPPY

(nods) I'll try.

EXT. VICHY POLICE STATION - DAY

Officers of the surete hustle Breitscheid and Hilferding out of the police station to two black cars with Paris license plates parked at the curb.

BREITSCHIED

Are we being handed over to the
Germans?

OFFICER OF SURETE

You are to be extradited.

Surprised, they show courage.

BREITSCHIED

(to Hilferding) There is no hope
left. The only goal now is
surrender.

Hilferding nods sadly, looking around at his last glimpse of
freedom. Police place Breitscheid in one car and Hilferding
in another. The cars pull away.

INT. FULLERTON'S OFFICE AT CONSULATE, FEBRUARY 2 - DAY

Varian enters the office. Fullerton doesn't stand up.

VARIAN

Good morning, Mr. Fullerton. I'm
here to renew my passport.

He hands Fullerton his passport. Fullerton snatches it from
him.

FULLERTON

(cold as ice) It cannot be renewed
unless you agree to leave at once.
I'll be keeping this. If you do not
leave France voluntarily, Vichy
will arrest and expel you.

VARIAN

I am not concerned for my safety, and
I do not in the least mind resisting
the pressure of the French
authorities.

FULLERTON

(half to himself) I told him you
wouldn't scare.

Varian prepares to depart.

FULLERTON

Why do you have so many Jews on your staff?

VARIAN

Only half of them are Jewish.

FULLERTON

I think you make a mistake to have so many.

Varian stares at him, perplexed, then walks out.

EXT. AMERICAN CONSULATE - DAY

Varian walks to the trolley in a crowd of refugees. He is now one of them.

INT. FULLERTON'S OFFICE AT CONSULATE - DAY

FULLERTON

(to Harry Bingham) Yes, I want to stop the imports. Inform everyone our quotas are closed.

BINGHAM

But sir, they are not closed.

FULLERTON

I say they are.

EXT. AIR-BEL FISHPOND, MARCH - DAY

Varian and Danny wade in the pond, catching carp and goldfish. Jacqueline and Aube stand on the bank, watching with hunger in their eyes. Victor stands next to a bench where Laurette sits. Madame Nouguet comes down the steps with a basket to collect the fish.

EXT. VIEUX PORT, MARCH 24 - DAY

Varian, Lena, Wilfredo Lam, Victor Serge, André Breton, Jacqueline and Aube stand on the dock where the steamer *Capitaine Paul LeMerle* is tied up. Varian shakes hands with the men and pats Aube on the head.

VARIAN

I'm happy to see you get out.

VICTOR

I feel no joy at going. I would a thousand times rather have stayed in Europe, with its invaded nations, its gutted France, how one clings to it! I have a faint inkling of what is essential: that we have not lost after all, that we have lost only for the moment.

VARIAN

We haven't lost, Victor. *Bon voyage!*

The Bretons, Wilfredo and Victor walk up the ramp. Guards with pistols and mean tempers keep the passengers separate from the well-wishers. The crew casts off the lines and the ship steams away. A girl leans over the rail, dropping red roses in the water. Varian watches until the ship disappears from view.

VARIAN

(to Lena) Cable the committee:
"Bretons en route Martinique."

She nods and they walk away from the dock, strolling along the water's edge. Graffiti on a wall shows a cross of Lorraine, a symbol of the French resistance.

LENA

I have something to tell you. I have booked passage on a sleeper car to Madrid.

VARIAN

(smiles sadly, hardly able to speak)
I'm happy to see you escape.

They embrace and kiss on both cheeks twice.

VARIAN

(bluffing good cheer) See you in New York.

INT. MARSEILLE RESTAURANT, MARCH - NIGHT

Varian is having dinner with Marc Chagall and Madame Bella Chagall. The sparse food is served on small plates.

CHAGALL

I will do as you suggest and go to the United States.

VARIAN

Fantastic! Crate up your artwork and ship it to Madrid as household goods.

Sirens sound. The manager draws blackout curtains, puts out the lights and sets a candle under the central table. Air-raid wardens blow whistles in the street. Varian leaves money on the table.

EXT. MARSEILLE STREET - NIGHT

Varian runs with one arm around Marc Chagall and the other around Bella Chagall, protecting them. In the darkness, drone of airplane propellers can be heard. People hurry toward a building marked ABRI and the three follow the crowd. Searchlights criss-cross the sky.

INT. GARE NOAILLES - NIGHT

Varian and the Chagalls huddle with others in the train station. Wardens blow whistles and shout.

VOICE OF WARDEN

Lumière! Lumière là-bas!

Near the stairs, someone blows out a candle. The distant thud of bombs is heard and sharp reports of flak from anti-aircraft

guns. Finally the all-clear sounds. Varian and the Chagalls head up the stairs.

CHAGALL

(to Varian) As I said, I will go to the United States.

VARIAN

(nods) You've made the right decision. I'm sure you'll like it there.

INT. PREFECTURE, APRIL - DAY

Intendant Rodellec du Porzic struts around his new office, looks out the big windows at the view, sits at his desk and spins the chair, looks in the drawers. He is an aristocratic, former naval officer, very satisfied with himself. He presses the speaker button.

DU PORZIC

Send in Dubois.

Enter Captain Dubois, who comes to attention and salutes.

DU PORZIC

Bonjour, Dubois. As you know, I have been promoted to intendant of the whole region--

DUBOIS

Yes, congratulations.

DU PORZIC

--and it is my regrettable task to inform you that you have been reassigned.

DUBOIS

Where?

DU PORZIC

(draws himself up and gloats)
Morocco.

He gives a sly, satisfied smile, lowering his eyes. Dubois looks sick, but controls his expression.

DUBOIS

Will that be all?

Du Porzic dismisses him with a wave. Dubois gives a curt bow and departs.

DU PORZIC

(on telephone) Round up all the Jews.

INT. CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - DAY

Varian Fry in his office, on telephone.

VARIAN

Do you know what you've done, Captain du Porzic? Marc Chagall is world famous. You can't hold him in jail. If you don't release him within half an hour, I'll call the New York Times and you'll have an international scandal on your hands.

INT. VICHY MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR - DAY

Hugo Geissler on telephone.

GEISSLER

Yes, Captain du Porzic. We do attach great importance to public opinion. We don't want a scandal. Let Chagall go but impound his art work. It is my duty to impound all private and public art treasures. (hangs up with a scowl) You haven't heard the end of this, Fry.

EXT. CERBERE CUSTOMS HALL, MAY 1 - DAY

The French station master motions to Max Ernst for his papers. Max hands them over. He has a roll of oil paintings under his arm.

STATION MASTER

You have no French exit visa.

Max shakes his head.

What's in there?

Max unrolls the paintings and spreads them out on a table. The station master looks impressed at his work done in decalomania: landscapes of blotted gouache, diluted oils pressed between white canvas to form fantastic canyons and trees.

STATION MASTER

You have talent. Let's hang these up and have a look at them.

With a hammer and nails, Max and the station master mount the paintings for an impromptu exhibit.

STATION MASTER

What do you call this one?

MAX

"Epiphany."

STATION MASTER

I admire talent. Thank you for showing us your work. You may take them with you.

Station master pulls out the nails and Max stacks up his paintings and rolls them up.

STATION MASTER

The train on Track 4 goes back to Marseille. On Track 2 is the train to Madrid. Make sure you don't get on the wrong train.

He gives Max a knowing look and Max gives a slight smile.

EXT. CERBERE TRAIN STATION, MAY 7 - DAY

Varian on the platform waves goodbye to the Chagalls as they ride across the border into Spain.

INT. CONSULATE, MAY 11 - DAY

Hugh Fullerton sits at his desk. Harry Bingham comes in.

HARRY BINGHAM

You wanted to see me?

FULLERTON

Yes. It seems you have been recalled.

BINGHAM

(stunned) Recalled?

Fullerton shoves a cable across the desk and Harry Bingham reads it.

BINGHAM

They're sending me to Lisbon. Any idea why?

FULLERTON

Because of the work you did saving refugees and cooperating with Fry. Goodbye, Bingham.

Harry Bingham gives him a narrow look and departs. Fullerton picks up a sheaf of paper and packs it into an envelope, addresses the envelope and scrawls a note.

FULLERTON

(mutters) To the American Embassy, Vichy. Here's some more "Fryana" for you. We think he's helping British airmen escape. That's a capital offense.

INT. PREFECT OF POLICE, AUGUST - DAY

Captain Rodellec du Porzic sits at his desk in front of a big, bright window. Varian Fry stands across from him, squinting in the light, his expression determined. Captain du Porzic examines his dossier.

DU PORZIC

You have caused my good friend the Consul-General of the United States much annoyance.

VARIAN

I guess the Consul can take care of his own problems.

DU PORZIC

My friend the Consul-General tells me that your government and the American committee you represent have both asked you to return to the United States.

VARIAN

There's some mistake. My instructions are to stay.

DU PORZIC

When are you leaving France?

VARIAN

(calm) I have no definite plans.

DU PORZIC

Unless you leave France of your own free will, I shall be obliged to arrest you.

VARIAN

I see. Can you give me a little time to arrange my affairs and get someone from America to take my place before I go? I'm willing to go, since you insist, but I want to make sure the committee will go on.

DU PORZIC

Why are you so much interested in your committee?

VARIAN

Because it is the only hope of many of the refugees.

DU PORZIC

I see. How much time do you need?

VARIAN

I'll cable New York today.

DU PORZIC

That will be satisfactory.

Varian stands up to leave, then turns back to ask one more question.

VARIAN

Tell me, frankly, why are you so much opposed to me?

DU PORZIC

Because you have protected Jews and anti-Nazis.

Varian takes in his words, raises his chin as they hit home, nods, and departs.

INT. CENTRE AMÉRICAIN DE SECOURS - NIGHT

Two young detectives enter the office and seize Varian, showing him an arrest order signed by du Porzic.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Varian wakes up in an anteroom, unshaven but happy. He slept on a table. He rises to a sitting position, and stretches, smiling broadly, content with his efforts. Police arrive.

DETECTIVE

You can pick up your things and leave
on the first train to Madrid.

VARIAN

Thank you, you're very kind.

DETECTIVE

I hope you don't hold it against us.

VARIAN

Not at all. I still love your
magnificent country and hope to
return some day.

DETECTIVE

(joking) Just not too soon.

INT. NEW YORK BALLROOM OCTOBER 1942

A sign reads "First Papers of Surrealism". André Breton circulates among art patrons. A string installation by Marcel Duchamp takes up most of the room. The web of twine stretches up to the chandelier and obstructs the sculpture and paintings, causing everyone to struggle through its toils. André sees Max Ernst approaching, his hair dyed blue.

ANDRÉ

(smiles) I see you're back to
normal.

MAX

(flips him off) *Je m'en fou!*

André shrugs, continues welcoming people into the show. Varian comes into the ballroom, with Miriam on one arm and Lena on the other. André strides over to greet them, clasping hands and kissing everyone on both cheeks.

ANDRÉ

So good to see you again. What do you
think of our exhibition?

VARIAN

(with a bemused smile) It's...
fantastic!

Miriam and Lena go to circulate among the artists. Max Ernst beckons Lena over and hands her a small oil painting.

MAX

Will you give this to Varian for me.

Lena smiles and nods. Max disappears into the crowd. Varian sees Hermant approaching, and smiles. The two men clasp arms and Hermant pounds Varian on the back.

HERMANT

You made it! How was it?

VARIAN

(raising his eyebrows, gathers his
thoughts and smiles) It was a
breeze.

EXT. SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA, NOVEMBER 1942 - DAY

At a roadhouse on the coast, the Werfels and Manns have dinner. Golo Mann stands in the foyer buying a postcard. He writes, "Dear Mr. Fry, On the second anniversary of my freedom, I write to thank you. I will be forever grateful, Golo Mann."
Sound: A SPORTS CAR PULLING UP IN THE GRAVEL. Glimpse of a shiny new Packard roadster. Walter Mehring comes in, looking prosperous in a new polo shirt and sunglasses.

WALTER

(stretches luxuriantly) Ahh! Life
is good.

GOLO

Walter Baby!

WALTER

Guten Tag, Golo.

GOLO

Come and join us for dinner.

Walter looks into the dining room to see the Werfels and Heinrich Mann and his wife. Heinrich Mann, dressed in shabby clothes, looks sad and broke. With cocky self-assurance, Walter follows Golo to the table. The Werfels and Manns draw themselves up when they see the proletarian cabaret poet.

WALTER

Hello, Herr Werfel, Frau Werfel,
Herr Mann, Frau Mann.

They all mumble a greeting.

HEINRICH MANN

(to Walter) We hear you are a success
in Hollywood.

WALTER

(smiles) It pays the bills. (to
Franz Werfel) You can write for the
movies too.

WERFEL

Do you think they'd like my novel?

WALTER

Oh yeah, congratulations on your
best-seller. Are you kidding,
they'd love it. "Song of
Bernadette," why not? Well, *auf
Wiedersehen*.

He beats a retreat. Sound: SPORTS CAR ENGINE. The Werfels and Manns glance out the window to see Walter Mehring tooling down the coastal highway.

FADE TO BLACK