

MARTIN EDEN

by

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Based on Jack London's novel

MARTIN EDEN

FADE IN:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY - EARLY 1900'S

A passenger ferryboat is steaming toward harbor.

INT. FERRY DECK

Passengers play cards, read, talk etc. A ruggedly handsome young seaman in his early twenties, MARTIN EDEN, looks down over a rail into the dark churning waters of the bay.

At the same time, a gang of three shifty men drink and smoke as they survey the passengers, looking for an easy mark to prey upon.

The first scoundrel elbows one of his accomplices and nods in the direction of a well-dressed man in his late twenties (ARTHUR MORSE). ARTHUR is reading a book and has a leather travel bag on the deck under his chair.

SCOUNDREL smoothly saunters over to where Arthur is seated.

SCOUNDREL  
(politely to ARTHUR)  
Excuse me sir - familiar with the city?

ARTHUR MORSE  
Well, I should hope so. I've lived in San Francisco my entire life.

SCOUNDREL  
I was hoping you might be able to direct me.

SCOUNDREL pulls a city map from his jacket pocket and sits very close to him, unfolding it to obscure Arthur's surrounding view.

ARTHUR  
(pointing with his finger.)  
Alright then, here's where we dock, and this street here is Mason...

While the first scoundrel is distracting Arthur, the two accomplices are slowly slipping off with Arthur's bag.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
 (folding up the map)  
 ...it's only about seven or eight  
 blocks after that then...

SCOUNDREL  
 Thank you sir - appreciate your  
 trouble.

ARTHUR  
 Don't mention it - glad to help.

The two accomplices make their way to a stairwell with  
 Arthur's bag while Scoundrel walks in the opposite direction.

Arthur moves his foot to where the bag previously sat. He  
 jumps up in a panic when he discovers the bag gone.

He turns just in time to see the two men making their way  
 down to a lower deck of the ferry.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
 (jumping to his feet)  
 Hey! HEY!

Arthur runs to confront the two men in the isolated stairway.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
 (nervously)  
 C'mon now - give it back-

ACCOMPLICE #1  
 Give what back?

ARTHUR  
 That's my bag there-I don't want  
 any trouble now.

ACCOMPLICE #1  
 Well, seein' as I'm the one holdin'  
 the bag -- I say it's mine.  
 (turning to accomplice #2)  
 Wouldn't you agree?

ACCOMPLICE #2  
 It looks enough like your bag to  
 me.

The SCOUNDREL who first distracted Arthur with the city map  
 suddenly appears behind Arthur.

SCOUNDREL  
 An' I thought you was a real  
 gen'lman type. But here you are  
 givin' these boys trouble. I guess  
 you can never tell 'bout a person.

Arthur suddenly spins around.

ARTHUR

No! I guess you can't!

Scoundrel pulls a knife from inside his jacket, leans casually against the bulkhead and nonchalantly begins cleaning his nails with the blade.

SCOUNDREL

Now, it seems to me, if there are three people sayin' that ain't your bag, and you ain't agreein' to that, well--it just seems to me like we need somethin' what's called an arbitrator.

Scoundrel moves face to face with Arthur.  
Now, you look like a man who knows lot's of fancy words. So I know that you know what an arbitrator does --

Scoundrel nods a quick affirmative to his two partners. They quickly pin Arthur's arms while scoundrel puts the knife blade to his throat.

SCOUNDREL (CONT'D)

Now--you just made somethin' real simple into somethin' real complicated.

Without warning, Scoundrel is suddenly yanked back through the air by his collar, lands on his back. The knife is kicked from his hand by an unseen figure.

He's hauled up again as if by a winch.

The two startled accomplices turn and flee down the stairs and are bowled over like bowling pins by Scoundrel who is flung at their retreating figures.

The three men are brutally beaten by a formidable and shadowy figure.

Arthur stands in a recess of the hall petrified holding his breath; his eyes tightly closed as he listens to the smacks and groans.

EXT. FERRY DOCK - DAY

Passengers disembark as police and ship crew escort the three battered and cuffed scoundrels off the ferry while curious passengers and witnesses watch and whisper.

CONTINUING - BUSTLING PIER

Arthur walks alongside his rescuer, MARTIN EDEN, who's carrying a large duffel bag over his shoulder. Arthur talks excitedly.

ARTHUR

...and then he asks me what an arbiter is and POW! Like some kind of lead-fisted guardian angel there you are; right on cue! Where did you come from anyway?  
It doesn't matter! Your timing is impeccable. Tell me, do you often make a habit out of saving people?

Martin, walks silent as Arthur blabbers on-  
Why did you come to my aid?  
Did you know those men - had you been watching them all along?

Wait till my family hears about this! They'll think I made it all up!

Martin suddenly stops; looks briefly at Arthur, tips his cap and proceeds to walk in a different direction. Arthur stares after Eden for a moment and runs after him.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Wait! Hold on! Please let me thank you properly!

Arthur pulls out a billfold, he removes several bills and extends them to Martin.

Martin looks into Arthur's eyes blankly for a moment, turns and walks away again.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(insistently)

Please! Well, if you won't take my money, would you do me the honor of being my dinner guest this Sunday?

I assure you it will be quite a special treat for a sailor...

Martin throws a sharp glance at Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(sheepishly)

I mean... well, you are a seaman, are you not? I didn't mean anything disparaging by the remark and I apologize if it came off badly.

But in my humble opinion, an evening at the Morse household promises to be one that few regret.

Martin removes his cap, and scratching his head at the same time, appears somewhat intrigued by the proposition. He barely grunts.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
(smiling triumphantly)  
Martin Eden! That was the name you pitched back there wasn't it? It's true, I hardly know you... but I'm going to take that as a yes!

Arthur hands Martin a card—  
Come to this address anytime around 4:30 Mr. Eden.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
(yelling down the pier)  
You won't regret it!

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - WEALTHY RESIDENTIAL STREET - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Martin Eden, clean-shaven and wearing an ill-fitting button-on starched collar, jacket and rumpled, baggy pants, checks the calling card in his hand and ambles tentatively up to the door of the Morse home.

INT. MORSE HALL AND PARLOR

RING. A gentleman servant opens the door to Martin who appears nervously out of his element - wringing his cap.

SERVANT  
Good afternoon sir, please come in.

Martin carefully enters and looks around, clearly overwhelmed by all the fine furnishings and décor.

Martin rolls up his cap and starts to stuff it in his jacket pocket.

SERVANT (CONT'D)  
I'll watch that for you sir.

The servant taking Martin's cap.  
Let me show you to the parlor where  
You can make yourself comfortable.

He escorts Martin through the surroundings of fine china, artwork and bric-a-brac to a parlor lined with bookshelves.

An impressionist oil painting of a pilot-schooner tossed on stormy seas hangs on the wall.

SERVANT (CONT'D)

I'll let Mr. Morse know that you're  
Here, sir.

The servant leaves Martin alone in the Parlor with only the sound of a ticking clock. He walks over to the oil painting of the ship and is fixated for a moment.

He backs up slowly, while transfixed by the brush strokes, accidentally knocking over a valuable family relic.

Martin awkwardly replaces the piece and wanders towards the bookshelves.

He surveys the collection of literature, running his finger across the spines and finally lands on a book of poetry authored by Swinburne.

Martin carefully removes the volume and opens it.

MARTIN EDEN

(quietly reading aloud)

"From too much love of living  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be... "

Arthur Morse enters with his younger sister RUTH MORSE; she is about 24, blonde, well tended, a pale delicate creature.

ARTHUR

Ruth, this is Mr. Eden.

Martin closes the book with his finger between the pages.

RUTH MORSE

Please, won't you sit down, Mr.  
Eden?

Martin is transfixed by Ruth's pale, delicate beauty. He sits slowly without taking his eyes from her.

RUTH

I've been looking forward to  
Meeting you ever since my brother  
Told us. It was brave of you...

MARTIN

It was nothin'really. Anybody  
would've done the same.

He looks down at the book in his hand.  
This man Swinburne...

RUTH  
Who?

MARTIN  
Swinburne. The poet.

He mispronounced the name with a long (i) sound.

RUTH  
(correctly pronouncing)  
Oh, Swinburne.

MARTIN  
I was just reading his poetry  
When you came in.

He holds up the book.  
How do you like his poetry?

RUTH  
Well, I find him a little  
rough and indelicate --  
there are many of his poems  
that should never be read.

MARTIN  
I thought it was great.  
Well -- I mean the little I read.  
But, I guess I ain't up much on  
poetry.

RUTH  
Now Longfellow...

MARTIN  
(excitedly)  
I read 'm! "The Psalm of Life"  
"Excelsior" ... an' I guess that's  
it.

Martin realizes that he abruptly cut Ruth off.  
Excuse me, miss, for buttin' in  
that way.

I guess the real facts is that I  
don't know nothin' much about such  
things. It ain't in my class. But I  
aim to make it in my class one day.

RUTH  
I don't know that appreciating fine  
literature has all that much to do  
with class...

MARTIN  
I like books and poetry, but  
can't talk 'bout 'em like you



can. I feel like a navigator adrift  
on a strange sea without a compass.

He hesitates for a moment, looks at Ruth hopefully.  
Maybe you could help me get  
my bearin's. Maybe you can  
put me right. Maybe...

Arthur senses that Ruth is a little uncomfortable with the  
turn the conversation is taking.

ARTHUR  
I'd say it's about time for dinner.  
Our brother and mother will be  
waiting for us. Don't you think  
Ruth?

INT. MORSE DINING ROOM

All the silverware at the table overwhelms Martin. He's  
seated next to Ruth. Across the table are ARTHUR and his  
brother, NORMAN MORSE. At one end is their mother, MRS.  
MORSE. There's an empty chair were MR. MORSE usually sits.

A man is serving.

ARTHUR MORSE  
Whispering excitedly to NORMAN.  
What did I tell you!

NORMAN MORSE  
(whispering back)  
He's practically a wild animal! I  
don't believe he's ever used eating  
utensils before.

Norman selects the correct fork and makes eye contact with  
Martin as to help give him a cue. Mrs. Morse looks upon  
Martin with restrained and cool disdain.

DINNER TABLE - LATER

MRS. MORSE  
I'm sorry that Mr. Morse couldn't  
be here to meet you Mr. Eden, he's  
often away on business.

MARTIN  
It doesn't seem natural.

MRS. MORSE  
Pardon me?

MARTIN

I mean bein' called Mr. Eden.

I always figured if I had a bit more schoolin' than what I did, that people callin' me "Mr. Eden", well... it'd come more natural like.

MRS. MORSE

Well, how much schooling have you had?

Ruth shoots her mother a look indicating that she's going too far, asking a question that might embarrass Martin.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

I'm assuming you, at least, attended high school?

MARTIN

I nearly got there.

MRS. MORSE

You have never attended high school?

Ruth again looks at Mrs. Morse, pleading with her eyes to stop. Arthur and Norman also give her a wary eye.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

Grammar school?

MARTIN

I had two years to run before I left, but I was always honorably promoted.

He's eating quickly and ferociously. The servant goes to serve Martin the next course.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You can keep that. I'll bust wide open if I have another bite.

Ruth and her brothers exchange nervous glances. Norman quickly changes the subject.

NORMAN

We all thought it very brave of you to come to Arthur's rescue the way you did. Is that how you got those scrapes on your hands?

MARTIN

That's where some of the skin on my hands went, along with some of the bloodied teeth from that ferry gang.

He takes a big gulp of wine and appears to feel more relaxed.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I just come down the Coast on one of the Pacific mail steamers.

She was behind time and we worked like Hebrew slaves movin' all the mixed cargo. I guess some of the skin gets knocked off that way too.

MRS. MORSE

(with feigned interest)  
Really? I'm not surprised.

MARTIN

Now this scar here on my neck is another story. I got this in a knife fight with a crazy Mexican.

MRS. MORSE

How fascinating --

MARTIN

After gettin' the knife away from him, he tried to bite my nose off. That was a real bloody scrap --

CUT TO

The server generously ladles a crimson colored sauce over slices of angel food cake at a side serving-cart.

Mrs. Morse, visibly appalled by Martin's account of the brutal fight, looks over at the dark red sauce and shudders.

MRS. MORSE

I too, have had my fill; I think I will skip dessert this evening. Mr. Eden, thank you again for helping my son. Now if you'll excuse me.

As mother graciously flees from the dining room, Ruth, Arthur and Norman attempt for a brief moment, to suppress their collective laughter.

All at once, the three siblings succumb, and together, all bust out laughing.

Ruth gently places her hand on Martin's and pats it reassuringly. Eden looks down at her hand, then at Ruth.

He's naively befuddled at the sudden outburst of laughter and at the same time, is excited at the physical contact from such a beautiful and untouchable goddess such as Ruth.

INT. SITTING ROOM - AFTER DINNER

Ruth plays a soothing melody on the piano while Martin, Arthur and Norman, smoking cigar and pipe are gathered close by.

MARTIN

It's beautiful, Miss Morse.

Ruth smiles at Martin, nods and continues to play as Martin looks around the room.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

All of this is beautiful. I hope to rise above my class one day so as I could come to have some of these things for myself.

RUTH

(still playing softly)

Have you ever considered continuing your education, Mr. Eden? I'm currently taking English courses at the University. I believe one should always continue learning.

MARTIN

(impressed)

You're goin' to a University?

RUTH

I'm over at Berkeley twice a week. Of course, in your case, you'd need to complete your high school requirements.

MARTIN

I have to figure another way maybe. I'm out to sea an awful lot.

NORMAN

Are you sure I can't get you a cigar Martin?

MARTIN

Thanks all the same, but I'm particular to rollin' my own Mexican tobacco when I get to hankerin' for a smoke.

I wouldn't turn down another three fingers of this fancy whisky --

NORMAN

(winking)

Arthur, would you pour Mr. Eden  
another brandy.

Arthur pours into Martin's glass from a decanter. Martin  
throws back the drink in one swallow as Norman and Arthur  
exchange glances.

MARTIN

(sniffing glass)

Brandy huh? Well, if you'll just  
get me my cap back from that  
gen'l'man what let me in, I'll be  
shovin' off then.

RUTH

Excuse me. I'll get your cap Mr.  
Eden.

Ruth leaves the room. Arthur and Norman see Martin to the  
door.

NORMAN

It's been a pleasure to meet you  
Martin and I hope there's someone  
around like you, if I ever find  
myself in a scrape.

Ruth sweeps gracefully back into the room with Martin's cap  
and two books in hand.

RUTH

Since you seemed so interested in  
Swinburne's poetry -- I thought  
perhaps you'd like to borrow these  
for a time.

Here's another book by Browning,  
you might enjoy his work as well.

MARTIN

I will surely read every word of  
'em. Thank you Miss Morse.

RUTH

Keep them as long as you like.

MARTIN

Well, I surely appreciate your kind  
hospitality. Like I've been tryin'  
to say... I mean-bein' as It's out  
of my class an' all. What I mean to  
say is...

RUTH

Mr. Eden, if you enjoy the works of great poets such as Longfellow, Swinburne and Browning, then I believe our class distinctions' are much less divided than you might imagine.

Once again, Ruth lays her hand on Martin's wrist. He blushes.  
Please, call on us again Mr. Eden.

Martin looks into Ruth's eyes, swallows hard, tips his hat and lumbers away down the street as Ruth and brothers close the door behind him.

ARTHUR

Well?

NORMAN

Wow! He's like an old oyster!  
Rough, gritty and still smacking of the sea!

Ruth, peering sympathetically out the window as she watches Martin retreating down the street.

RUTH

(softly)

Yes, but somewhere, deep inside that rough shell, I believe could be the making of a very fine pearl.

EXT. OAKLAND STREET - NIGHT

A trolley car stops at the corner of run down working-class dwellings. Martin steps off the tram, walks toward a two-story building which houses a small grocery store. A sign reads, HIGGINBOTHAM'S CASH STORE.

Above the store is a small boarding flat where Martin rents a room from his brother-in-law, BERNARD HIGGINBOTHAM and his sister, GERTRUDE.

Martin removes his collar and stuffs it in his pocket.

INT. HALLWAY

Martin walks up the dark stairway and stumbles loudly against the door at the top.

INT. HIGGINBOTHAM'S FLAT - NIGHT

BERNARD HIGGINBOTHAM is sitting in a chair reading the newspaper and GERTRUDE HIGGINBOTHAM is mending a pair of pants.

BERNARD HIGGINBOTHAM

Staring at Martin with dark weasel-like eyes.  
I just had that door painted.

MARTIN

(throws down a child's  
toy)

I just tripped on this - maybe if  
you weren't such a pincher you  
might afford to burn a lamp in the  
hall.

BERNARD

Maybe I'd think about it if you'd  
quit burning gas all night reading  
those books of yours in bed.

MARTIN

(waves him off)

Good night Sis.

Martin goes into his room.

BERNARD

(to Gertrude)

He's drunk again.

GERTRUDE HIGGINBOTHAM

I'll admit, his eyes did look a  
might shiny --

BERNARD

I don't like him bein' drunk an'  
debotchin' around innocent children  
-- when's he goin' back to sea?

GERTRUDE

He was over to San Francisco  
yesterday lookin', but he didn't  
like the looks of the ship.

BERNARD

What him! Particular! It's not for  
a deck-swab like that to be puttin'  
on airs.

GERTRUDE

He did mention somethin' about a schooner sailin' out to some outlandish place if his money held out long enough.

BERNARD

If he'd jus' steady down, I'd offer him a job drivin' the wagon now that Tom's up an' quit.

GERTRUDE

Tom was a good boy.

BERNARD

If that brother of yours were worth his salt I'd get him to drive the wagon.

GERTRUDE

(emotionally)

He pays his rent just the same, and he's my brother, so as long as he's payin' his bills, you just back off him. I got feelin's even if I have been married to you for seven long years.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

O.S. Voices of Higginbotham's argument can barely be heard in next room.

Martin sits on the bed removing his shoes. He stands up removes his jacket and sees his reflection in a dingy mirror. He stares at his image for a moment; straightens the jacket. He removes his cap and runs his fingers through his hair.

He takes the collar out of his pocket and attaches it to shirt again. He stares more intently into the mirror. He smiles and looks at his teeth.

Martin opens a drawer and rummages through junk until he comes across a box in the back. He opens the box; removes a toothbrush and vigorously brushes his front teeth -- he smiles at his reflection.

Martin picks up the books that Ruth loaned him and gently kisses them.

MARTIN

(talking to himself)

Mr. Eden, it's high time you learned etiquette - And you'll start tomorrow.



INT. HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT - MORNING

Gertrude is up to her elbows in laundry suds as she toils over a washtub.

A few kids are hanging about and a boy is crying. Martin emerges from his room, digs in his pocket and gives the child a coin.

MARTIN

Now run along and get some candy.  
And make sure you get the kind that  
lasts longest.

GERTRUDE

A nickel'd 'av been enough. Just  
like you not to know the value of  
money. The boy'll eat himself sick.

MARTIN

My money'll take care of itself  
sis. An' if you weren't so busy,  
I'd give ya a big ol' kiss. On  
secon' thought, I'll kiss ya  
anyway.

Martin grabs Gertrude around the waist and kisses her.

GERTRUDE

What got in to you this morning? Go  
along now and get your breakfast.

MARTIN

Ain't hungry this morning - got to  
see to some things.

GERTRUDE

Now I know somethin's got into you -  
- when a man like you ain't  
hungry...

Martin smiles at her and goes out the door. Gertrude shakes her head and goes back to the washtub.

EXT. OAKLAND STREET - DAY

Martin walks up to building where sign reads: OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY - he enters.

INT. OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Martin looks around at all the shelves packed with wisdom. People are breezing by him purposefully. Martin appears lost.

Series of shots showing Martin in various locations of library - History, Philosophy, Literature sections.

--Martin is sitting at a table with books piled high. He's intently focused on THE BOOK OF PROPER ETIQUETTE.

LIBRARIAN  
Excuse me sir, but the library  
closes in five minutes.

MARTIN  
(startled)  
I must've lost track of time.

LIBRARIAN  
Did you find everything you were  
looking for?

MARTIN  
Yes, you got a fine library here.

LIBRARIAN  
We should be glad to see you here  
often - are you a sailor?

MARTIN  
Yes, Miss - Can I ask how you know  
that?

LIBRARIAN  
Know what?

MARTIN  
That I'm a sailor

LIBRARIAN  
I don't know - I guess sailors have  
a certain look -- same as I'd know  
a banker's look.

MARTIN  
And exactly what look might that  
be?

LIBRARIAN  
I don't know -- just a look. Not a  
bad thing. Did I offend you?

MARTIN  
No - no! I guess you're right.

LIBRARIAN  
Will you be checking any books out  
this evening?

MARTIN  
How many can I take?

INT. HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT - NIGHT

Martin struggles through the door with several bundles of books tied with rope. Bernard is going through store receipts and Gertrude is chopping vegetables.

Martin looks at his sister, half smiling, then looks at Bernard in a dismissing way, and makes for his room.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

--Martin surrounded by books on night table; he's in bed sitting up reading with gas lamp burning - closes book and picks up another.

Series of shots with Martin reading in various postures - on his stomach, side, back.

--Bernard opens door and angrily extinguishes gas lamp while Martin is reading.

MOS

BLACK

--Martin lights lamp, picks up book and continues reading.

--Bernard enters extinguishes lamp again...

BLACK

--Martin lights lamp - continues to read.

--Bernard enters in a rage waving his arms, pointing at lamp and then holding out his open palm.

--Martin puts a bill in Bernard's open palm. Bernard shakes his head and continues to hold out palm.

Martin adds another bill. Bernard stares as if to say, "won't cut it". Martin, frustratingly, places several more bills in Bernard's hand.

Bernard shoves the wad of money in his pocket, looks, disgustingly up and down at Martin, turns and leaves Martin's room. Martin slams the door behind him.

MARTIN CLEANS UP APPEARANCE SHOTS

MOS

INSERT - Open book - being read by Martin - cover reads, BEST GROOMING TIPS FOR GENTLEMAN.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

--Martin points to a hair cut style in GROOMING BOOK. Barber looks speculatively at book image, then at Martin's hair.

Hands the book back to Martin; nods at Martin reassuringly, indicate an empty chair and fastens a cloth around Martin's neck.

EXT. STREET - BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY

--Martin walks down the street; sporting a new clean cut hair style and shave. He walks past a drugstore. A nailbrush in the window catches his attention. He looks down at his rough hands.

INT. DRUGSTORE

--Martin places the nailbrush on the counter. The clerk looks at Martin's hands and indicates for him to wait. He goes under the counter. The clerk brings out a nail file and briefly demonstrates how to use it.

--Items begin to accumulate on the counter along with the brush and file. Items such as scissors, razor, cologne, tooth powder and hair tonic appear one by one.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUED

--Martin again walks down the street with all of his drugstore purchases. He spots a well-dressed couple walking out of a restaurant.

--The woman resembles Ruth in her dress and hairstyle. Martin looks; scrutinizes the gentleman who's accompanying her and observes the fine creases in the man's pants. Martin then looks down at his own baggy-kneed pants.

INT. HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT - KITCHEN - EVENING

--Martin removes an iron from the stove, spits on the hot surface and presses them to a pair of his trousers.

--Smoke is rising up around Martin's scowling face and he lifts the trousers so that a series of scorch marks can be seen.

HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT CONTINUED

The door opens and Gertrude enters the flat with her brood of kids. She's carrying some grocery bags and parcels.

GERTRUDE

What's this now! What's all this  
smoke? Ya tryin' to burn the whole  
place down, Martin?

Fuming - he throws down the scorched pants in defeat.

MARTIN

(yelling)

Sometimes I wish all Oakland would  
burn! -- An' San Francisco with  
it!!

Martin grabs his cap and storms out the door.

Gertrude shoos away the children; walks over to where Martin  
was attempting to iron. She holds up the pair of badly  
scorched pants.

She looks down into a basket and sees other casualties of  
Martin's failed ironing attempts. She shakes her head in a  
way that might say, "what am I going to do with him?"

INT. LAST CHANCE SALOON - NIGHT

There are a few customers seated at the bar and some other  
people scattered around tables talking and laughing. A group  
is singing, most are drinking and smoking. Martin enters and  
sits up at the bar rail.

The bartender, JOHNNY, turns around after pouring a draft. He  
sees Martin.

JOHNNY

Martin! Almost didn't recognize you  
You're all squeaky-clean and  
respectable like. Where ya been  
lately?

MARTIN

I been around.

JOHNNY pours a glass of beer for Martin and a shot of whiskey  
and places it on the bar in front of him.

JOHNNY

How's your money holding out?

MARTIN

I'll need to go out to sea again  
soon enough.

JOHNNY

How's Lizzie doing?

Martin hasn't taken a sip of his drink yet and is toying with his glass.

MARTIN

Who?

JOHNNY

Lizzie Connolly? She's forever asking about you.

MARTIN

She's alright, I guess.

Martin continues to spin his glass around without taking a sip.

Can I ask a question, Johnny? When a lady says you can call on her again - how long should you wait?

JOHNNY

Beginning to understand Martin's new appearance and odd demeanor.

Well if a lady invites you to call on her again, I would say it'd be better to call on her sooner than later - anytime would be fine.

MARTIN

Sooner than later, huh?

JOHNNY takes care of some customers at the other end.

Martin looks around the room and sees a drunken slob hanging on a slutty looking woman.

He looks at another man passed-out with his head down on the bar. Another couple of loud men appears on the verge of brawling.

He looks down again at his still untouched drink for a moment.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(yells to JOHNNY)

Johnny -- on second thought - jus' bring me a root beer.

Johnny takes away the beer and shot and replaces them with a root beer.

JOHNNY

She must be quite a lady!

INT. MORSE HOME PARLOR - DAY

INSERT: IMPRESSIONIST PAINTING OF SAILING SCHOONER.

Martin is transfixed once again by the wild sea in the parlor-room painting. His fingers draw close to touching the raised brush strokes when Ruth startles him.

RUTH

It seems you're quite taken with that painting, Mr. Eden. It's father's favorite - he loves the sea. Father's in the shipping business, you know.

MARTIN

I wasn't trying to touch it - that is, I might've nearly touched it - but...

RUTH

It's perfectly fine Mr. Eden. It is quite realistic -- I mean the way the artist captured the depth -- and yet, there's something very haunting about it at the same time...

Martin steps closer to her and extends the books that he'd borrowed.

MARTIN

I enjoyed them a great deal miss... I still favor that Swinburne. I mean he's a bit of a scoundrel and his words are like...

Ruth suddenly notices Martin's transformation to a gentleman.

RUTH

Martin! You look different -- I mean, you look very handsome in those clothes and that new hair cut gives you a very smart appearance!

MARTIN

I wonder if I can get some advice from you? I always liked books and read as many books as I could get my hands on...

Ruth continues to intently listen as Martin hesitates struggling to make his point.

Well, what I'm drivin' at is...

well, the first time I came into this house, I liked what I saw -- all these books and paintings and fine things.

I made up my mind that I was going to get things like this for myself someday.

RUTH

Please continue--

MARTIN

My point is - now how am I going to get it? There's more to life than boozin' and hard work an' knockin' about.

RUTH

Of course there is Martin, only...

MARTIN

Where do I take hold an' begin? I'm willin' to work my passage, you know. I'd work real hard at it day an' night.

Ruth looks at Martin with sympathy  
I don't know anybody else I could ask -- 'cept maybe Arthur. Maybe I shoulda asked him instead of you.

RUTH

What you need is to finish your education. You need to finish grammar school and then go through high school and university.

MARTIN

But that takes money -- I've taken care of myself since I was eleven. That's when my mother died.

I need to study by myself. I can do that, but if you'll only tell me where to start.

RUTH

First I should say you should begin with grammar. Your grammar is awf - not particularly good.

MARTIN

I know I use slang a lot and words you don't understand.



RUTH

It's not so much what you say, but rather, how you say it. You don't mind me being frank, do you? I don't want to hurt you.

MARTIN

Fire away - I'd sooner hear it from you than anybody.

RUTH

Well then, you say, 'You was'; it should be, 'You were'. You say, 'I seen' for 'I saw.' And you use the double negative-

MARTIN

What's the double negative?

RUTH

A double negative is-let me see-well, you say, 'Never helped nobody.' 'Never' is a negative. 'Nobody' is another negative.

'Never helped nobody' means that not helping nobody, they must have helped somebody.

MARTIN

I'll never say it again.

RUTH

There's something else. You say, 'Don't' when you shouldn't. 'Don't' is a contraction and stands for two words. Do you know them?

MARTIN

(thinking)  
Do not?

RUTH

And you use 'don't' when you mean 'does not'.

MARTIN

I guess my ear ain't had the trainin' yours has.

RUTH

(emphatically)  
There is no such word as 'ain't'. And you say, 'ben' for 'been'- 'I come' for 'I came'; and the way you chop your endings is something dreadful.

MARTIN

How do I chop?

RUTH

You don't complete the endings. 'A-n-d' spells and. You pronounce it 'an'.

I-n-g spells 'ing'. Sometimes you pronounce it 'ing' and often, you leave off the 'g'.

And then you slur by dropping initial letters and diphthongs. And another thing--

She sees that Martin is getting overwhelmed.  
Oh well, it's not necessary to go over all of them now. What you need is a good grammar reference.

MARTIN

A grammar what?

RUTH

Hold on, I'll get you one and show you how to begin.

She leaves the room and calls back (O.S).  
By the way Mr. Eden, what is booze?

MARTIN

Oh, booze - it's slang, it means whiskey an' beer - anything that makes you drunk.

She returns to the room with a large book.

RUTH

That's another thing, don't use 'you' when you are impersonal.

MARTIN

I don't get it.

RUTH

You said to me just now, "whiskey and beer - anything that makes 'you' drunk".

Martin looks puzzled.

MARTIN

Well it would, wouldn't it?

RUTH  
 (relenting in laughter)  
 Yes, I suppose it would--

Ruth sits down in a chair next to Martin and begins flipping through the grammar reference.

RUTH TEACHING AND READING TO MARTIN

Series of shots

--Ruth explaining lessons to Martin as he intently listens.

--Martin at the board erasing wrong word and replacing with correct alternate.

--Ruth and Martin picnicking in the park as Ruth reads poetry to Martin.

--Ruth playing the piano while Martin sits next to her on the bench. Mrs. Morse walks by - quietly observes the two and her face reflects cool disapproval of what she perceives to be a menacing situation.

INT. MORSE MASTERBEDROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Morse sits in front of a dressing table mirror - removing her makeup and brushing out her long blonde hair. Mr. Morse is getting undressed for bed.

MRS. MORSE  
 I don't like it one single bit!

MR. MORSE  
 Perhaps this young sailor will wake her up and arouse her interest in mankind in a more general way.

MRS. MORSE  
 Or arouse her interest more particularly in him. She's a mere child and singularly backward where men are concerned.

MR. MORSE  
 It may all be very innocent you know -- Ruth always did have a good heart. She may see this Eden as nothing more than a novelty -- a wounded animal or lost puppy.

MRS. MORSE  
 Nonsense! Anyway, lost dogs are content to be fed and sheltered.

I'm telling you this creature wants more.

MR. MORSE

I understand that she's been helping him with his English and grammar.

MRS. MORSE

Even if that were the case, it would take years to get him to speak and act like a respectable human. I don't intend Ruth to be committed to this absurd experiment any longer.

MR. MORSE

She'll no doubt get bored with this whole thing and move on --

MRS. MORSE

Why couldn't Arthur have brought home a respectable boy from the university -- a boy with a prospect and a future?

MR. MORSE

Don't forget that this man did save Arthur's skin. What would you have me do, throw him out and ask him never to see Ruth again?

Thinking for a moment, she looks at Mr. Morse intently.

MRS. MORSE

No - I have a much better idea--

INT. LAST CHANCE SALOON - NIGHT

Martin enters and sits down at the bar. JOHNNY is washing out glasses.

JOHNNY

Hey Marty - what can I get ya?

MARTIN

Ain't thirsty -- thanks.

JOHNNY

Still on the wagon, are ya?

MARTIN

Say Johnny, you hear talk of anything good sailin' out in the next few weeks?

JOHNNY

Gettin' a little short huh? Well I guess it ain't cheap keepin' up appearances and dressing up the way you've been. Been doling-out for your new lady friend, have ya?

MARTIN

Have you heard 'bout anything, or not, Johnny?

JOHNNY

The Halcyon sets sail end of the month--

MARTIN

No - ain't mixin' up with smugglers again. It's just a matter-a-time 'for the revenue cutter catches up with her.

JOHNNY

Well, there's always the mail steamer heading up Puget Sound if you're really hurtin' for cash, you could always --

MARTIN

(waving him off)

I ain't that desperate yet -- thanks just the same.

Martin starts walking towards the door.

JOHNNY

(yelling after Martin)

Hey! Lizzie's been in here a few times lookin' for you -- she's got it real bad for you, Martin.

MARTIN

Tell her I'm workin'on somethin' an' I'll catch-up with her when I get some things sorted out.

INT. HIGGINBOTHAM'S FLAT - NIGHT

Martin enters the flat. Bernard is in his usual chair with a newspaper and Gertrude is yelling at the kids to get ready for bed as she sorts through clothes.

BERNARD

You're getting' home early these days - runnin' low on boozin' money, are ya?

GERTRUDE

Now do you have to start right in on him like that? I haven't smelled liquor on his breath for weeks. I must say, you've been dressing very spiffy too Martin.

Martin half-smiles at Gertrude and then looks Bernard up-and-down scornfully without a word. Bernard returns the scornful look to Martin.

BERNARD

Hmm -- like tryin' to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear is all that is. An' it's likely the reason he's behind on his rent too - all those spiffy duds as ya call 'em.

MARTIN

You always get your money, don't you! I jus' need a little time to find a ship --

BERNARD

Like you're too proud to take just any old ship - it's got to be suitable enough...

MARTIN

I'd just as soon be a galley slave 'en be under your roof a day longer-

BERNARD

What's stoppin' ya then! Get out so's I can find a respectable replacement that knows to pay on time and doesn't squander all their earnin's on booze an' whores!

Martin rolls up his sleeves and makes a move toward Bernard. Gertrude steps in front of Martin.

GERTRUDE

I can't stand it anymore - Both of you stop! There's children in the next room an ya think they can sleep with you two hollerin' and...

The phone rings and interrupts Gertrude's scolding. She answers.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

Higginbotham's. Yes, it is -- yes, he does -- hold on just a moment...

Gertrude covers the receiver and holds the phone out toward Martin.

It's for you - A lady...

Then glaring sternly at Bernard

A REAL Lady --

Martin takes the phone from Gertrude and waves her away.

INT. MORSE PARLOR - SAME TIME

RUTH (INTERCUT)

...and Norman has these tickets to this lecture -- well, you see, something's come up. I was wondering, perhaps you would like to come along in his place?

... Splendid! Then we'd love to have you for dinner after the lecture; you see, father is home and he's been so wanting to meet you.

He's quite anxious to meet you and would like to thank you personally for rescuing Arthur.

MARTIN

I'll be by around two o'clock on Sunday to get you.

Martin hangs up the phone, ignores Gertrude and Bernard and retreats to his room. Bernard and Gertrude stare blankly at each other.

EXT. UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - DAY

People exit the campus hall, mostly students and faculty. Martin and Ruth break off from the crowd walking slowly and discussing the lecture.

MARTIN

All that stuff that fellow was saying sure makes a body think.

RUTH

How do you mean?

MARTIN

Well, I mean all that stuff about Darwin and his evolve-ution science.

RUTH

Evolution. Some refer to it as merely a theory, but the most brilliant scientific minds today are in general agreement that life forms have adapted and transformed over many millions of years into the advanced and complex living world that exists all around us today.

MARTIN

It's like I always skimmed over the surface of such things without philosophizing much about 'em.

RUTH

The word is philosophizing.

MARTIN

Take birds -- I always figured they just came to be natural flying machines and never gave much more thought about 'em.

RUTH

Yes, evolution today is no longer a theory; the only question remaining is the method. I believe that there are laws in the universe, an order. What do you think Mr. Eden?

MARTIN

Well, like I said, I never gave it much thought, but the way everything works together it seems right that there is some kind of organizing behind it.

I once knew a sailor that put together a tiny ship inside of a bottle. Do you think it's like that?

RUTH

What do you mean?

MARTIN

Well, what I guess I mean is, if you put all the pieces of that tiny ship in the bottle, you could shake those pieces around for years and never get a tiny ship out of it.

Someone has to organize all the pieces together very carefully.



RUTH

You mean, like God? Well now we're entering into theological waters. That is, some would say that evolution is directed by intelligence far beyond any human comprehension.

Of course, we can't completely rule out the possibility that everything came together by random --

Suddenly a young woman, LIZZIE CONNOLLY, yells out from somewhere behind Martin and Ruth. LIZZIE is attractive and accompanied by giggly friend; both are common, working-class types, decked-out in cheap, gaudy finery.

LIZZIE CONNOLLY

Marty? Is that you? Where the hell ya been hidin'? I been over at Johnny's nearly every night lookin' for ya.

Wow! Look at you Marty! You look like a proper gent! Don't he, Annie?

Martin and Ruth stop; Martin is embarrassed.

MARTIN

Oh, Lizzie, uh how ya been? I've been meanin' to see you. I've been busy these days. Besides, I'm on the wagon.

LIZZIE

(looking Ruth over)

So I see -- don't believe we've had the pleasure Miss--

Martin hesitates and stutters.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Well Marty, aren't you goin' to introduce us to your lady friend?

MARTIN

(faltering)

Huh? Oh a--

RUTH

(extending her hand  
graciously)

Nice to meet you - my name is Ruth Morse.

LIZZIE

Lizzie Connolly an' this here's Annie - pleased to make your acquaintance. My that's a lovely dress, Miss. Well...

...I guess I'll be seein' you around then. Don't be a stranger, Martin.

MARTIN

I'll talk to you real soon, Lizzie. I promise.

LIZZIE

You always know where to find me love--

The girls walk down the street giggling and looking back again at the unlikely couple, Martin and Ruth. Martin shuts his eyes as if to wish himself away to another place.

RUTH

What a pretty girl.

MARTIN

I guess it's all a matter of taste -- I don't think she's particularly pretty.

RUTH

Her eyes are beautiful and her features are quite striking.

MARTIN

Do you think so?

RUTH

Do I think so? Mr. Eden, if that girl had the proper opportunity to dress, and if she were taught how to carry herself, you would be fairly dazzled by her and so would all men.

MARTIN

She'd have to be taught how to speak, too. She speaks as bad as I used to, when you first met me.

RUTH

Your speech has improved quite a bit since then, I must say. And your appearance -- you're like a different man.

(beat)

You really are determined to change your station, aren't you?

MARTIN

I know I've got a ways to go yet,  
but I know with a little more  
time...

RUTH

Martin--

Martin turns to her and they both stop walking.

RUTH (CONT'D)

I want you to know that I'm very  
proud of you. Very proud.

MARTIN

(barely concealing  
excitement)

Thank you.

They begin strolling again and she casually slips her hand around his crooked elbow. Martin takes notice of the gesture, walks noticeably more confident, and smiles to himself. They walk on.

INT. MORSE HALL - AFTERNOON

Ruth and Martin enter the home laughing. They are greeted by a servant who takes their hats and coats.

SERVANT

Everyone is just now sitting down  
for dinner.

RUTH

Oh good - I feared we might be  
late. We'll join them directly--

INT. MORSE DINING ROOM

Ruth and Martin enter the dining room where the family is just about to seat themselves for dinner. They find Mr. And Mrs. Morse, Arthur and Norman. Norman has brought an old friend with him, a young and attractive bearded man, WILL OLNEY. They stand and greet them.

MR. MORSE

Mr. Eden, it is so nice to finally  
meet you. It seems you're something  
of a hero around the Morse home.

MARTIN

I just happened to be in the right  
place at the proper time is all.

MR. MORSE

Well you could've just stood by --  
I'm sure many others would not have  
involved themselves at all.

Arthur and Norman approach Martin with WILL OLNEY, shake his hand greeting him enthusiastically while Mrs. Morse remains seated.

NORMAN

Mr. Eden, I'd like you to meet a  
friend of mine -- Will Olney, this  
is Martin Eden.

WILL OLNEY

My pleasure, Mr. Eden; I've heard  
so much about you. So, you took on  
a whole gang - gave 'em a good  
thrashing while poor Arthur here  
just cowered in the corner.

ARTHUR

And how nice of you to keep  
refreshing us all on the details,  
Will.

RUTH

So good to see you again, Will. How  
have you been?

WILL

Things are great and getting better  
now that you're here.

(winking)

You know I only accepted this  
invitation because I heard you'd be  
here, Ruth.

Ruth allows the comment to roll off her back, as Martin closely observes Will and Ruth to see if he can discern anything deeper than a friendship between the two.

Mrs. Morse's grin of triumph is almost undetectable.

MRS. MORSE

Well, why doesn't everyone take  
their seats so we can eat.

Martin approaches the same place he had taken next to Ruth on his first visit to dinner.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

Oh, Mr. Eden, would you mind  
sitting next to Arthur this  
evening.

Martin, feels embarrassed by his presumption to seat himself next to Ruth and politely complies with Mrs. Morse's new arrangement.

He sits across the table from Ruth. As the dinner is being served, his eyes dart between Ruth and Will as they talk and laugh (MOS).

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING - LATER

Dinner is finished and the entire Morse family is still seated at the dinner table. Martin, Will and Ruth discuss education and culture over dessert and coffee...

WILL

... Oh yes, I know you call it general culture - but it doesn't matter what you study if it's general culture you want.

You can study French or German, even Latin or Greek for that matter. It will never be of any practical use to you. It will be culture, though.

RUTH

But you speak of culture as though it should be a means to something. Culture is the end in itself.

Everyone at the table listens and contemplates the debate as they continue with coffee and dessert.

WILL

But that is not what Martin wants...

RUTH

How do you know what Martin wants?

WILL

What do you want Martin?

Everyone at the table shifts their attention to Martin, who suddenly feels uneasy being put under the spotlight.

RUTH

Yes, Martin - what do you want? That will settle it.

MARTIN

(faltering)  
Well... yes, I want culture...

RUTH  
There, you see!

WILL  
Rot, and you know it! Martin is  
after career, not culture. It's  
just that in his case, culture is  
incidental to career. And why?

ARTHUR  
Yes, why?

NORMAN  
Please, do enlighten us Will.

WILL  
Because he isn't rolling in  
wealth...

RUTH MORSE  
Oh, this is absurd --

WILL  
What good is our education, yours  
mine, Arthur's and Norman's. We're  
all saturated in general culture -  
and if our daddies all went broke  
tomorrow, what would we do?

The best you could do Ruth, would  
be a country school teacher or a  
music teacher in a girl's boarding-  
school.

RUTH  
And pray what would you do, Will?

WILL  
Not a blessed thing. My point is,  
Martin is not seeking culture -  
he's trying to get somewhere to do  
something.

You'll marry one day and I'll have  
nothing to do but keep track of the  
lawyers and agents who'll take care  
of the money my father's going to  
leave me...

You leave Martin alone, Ruth. He  
knows what's best for himself. Look  
what he's accomplished already.

MARTIN  
(assertively to Will)  
Anything I accomplished is because  
of Ruth and what she did for me.

Maybe it's you who should leave her  
alone --

Everyone looks at Martin and there's an awkward moment of  
silence in the room.

MR. MORSE

How about we move this discussion  
to the sitting room - over a warm  
brandy.

MRS. MORSE

An excellent proposal. Ruth, why  
don't we let these boys resume  
their talk over a brandy. You can  
catch up in due time for the  
summation.

RUTH

Of course, I'll help clear some of  
this mess.

Mrs. Morse shoots her husband a knowing glance and then nods  
in the direction of Martin.

MR. MORSE

Er, Mr. Eden - I'd like to have a  
word with you in private if I may.  
Why don't we talk in my study.

Arthur, Norman and Will chat away as they head off to the  
parlor.

ARTHUR

Don't keep him too long father. I'm  
afraid Will is just warming up and  
we might need Martin to give him a  
thrashing before the night's  
through.

Martin follows Mr. Morse out of the dining room, leaving Ruth  
and Mrs. Morse alone to extinguish candles and collect  
napkins and cups.

RUTH

What do you suppose father wants to  
talk to Martin about?

MRS. MORSE

I believe your father mentioned  
something about a job that he  
thought Martin might be well suited  
for.

RUTH

That would be a wonderful break for Martin! It could change the whole course of his life!

MRS. MORSE

(smiling to herself)

Yes... I suppose it could --

INT. MR. MORSE'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

This is a typical study with a writing desk a globe of the earth. The walls are lined with books. There are oil paintings of seascapes and miniature ship models. Mr. Morse gestures to a couch against the wall opposite his desk where Martin takes a seat.

Mr. Morse opens a cabinet and takes out a bottle of liquor and two glasses. He begins pouring.

MARTIN

None for me, sir -- thanks just the same. Don't let it stop you though--

MR. MORSE

Don't worry. It won't.

Morse pours himself a glass and sits down at his desk.

There was an office boy who worked for me. His name was Butler. Mr. Butler was eager to work, and worked as no other office boy ever worked before. He was never late or sick. In fact, he always made sure that he was at the office early every morning.

He always used his time efficiently, and every spare moment he had was devoted to study. He studied bookkeeping and typewriting. He paid for lessons in shorthand by dictating at night to a court reporter who needed practice.

MARTIN

I'm not sure that I...

MR. MORSE

This Mr. Butler soon became a clerk and made himself invaluable to me. I recognized that such an individual was bound to succeed.

It was on my recommendation that he went to law school.



After graduation, I took him back as a junior partner. He's a great and honest man and he's refused the United States Senate several times now.

Mr. Morse looks at his glass and downs the last of his drink.

MR. MORSE (CONT'D)

Such a man is a great inspiration to us all. It shows us that a man with ambition may rise superior to his environment.

MARTIN

Mr. Butler sounds like a great man, but if your point is that I should...

MR. MORSE

My point, Mr. Eden, is that I believe you have displayed ambition and fortitude similar to that of Mr. Butler's. All you need now is an opportunity.

MARTIN

I don't think schooling for me is...

MR. MORSE

Opportunity can take many forms and can appear in unlikely places.

MARTIN

Do you see something for me, the same as you saw something for this office boy, Butler?

MR. MORSE

Many times our achievements are tied to those things that we already know well.

MARTIN

Sir? You don't mean sailin'!

MR. MORSE

I'm talking about more than being a deck hand on some cargo ship.

MARTIN

But that's what I know --

MR. MORSE

Then it's high time you challenged yourself. I run a very large; very successful shipping business.

In just over a week, one of my ships, the Sophia Sutherland, is leaving San Francisco on a treasure hunting expedition to the Solomon Islands.

Morse points to the islands on the globe.

MARTIN

I've been lookin' for a ship, but I was thinkin' of bein' out for more like six weeks, maybe, eight.

MR. MORSE

Sophia will be out for closer to eight months, perhaps a year if there's treasure to be found. But again, here's opportunity. This would also afford you time for your self-improvement project.

MARTIN

Treasure hunting, huh?

Mr. Morse grabs a slip of paper from his desk and quickly scribbles out a figure. He slides the paper across the desk. Martin gets up from his seat and takes the paper. His brow raises as he reads the figure.

MR. MORSE

Of course, if there's treasure to be found that figure will increase considerably.

MARTIN

I'd like to think about this. It's just that a year...

MR. MORSE

You won't have long to think - I'll give you two days to decide.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin and Mr. Morse approach the rest of the family who are all gathered in the sitting room. Martin stops abruptly as he sees Ruth and Will Olney sitting, laughing and looking very cozy together. Both are oblivious of Martin's approach.

MARTIN  
(to Mr. Morse)  
Sir? About your offer. I made my  
mind up -- I'll be aboard your ship  
when she sails out next week.

INT. SITTING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Martin and Will have gone home and Mr. And Mrs. Morse have retired for the night leaving Ruth, Arthur and Norman in the sitting room alone.

Ruth is playing a gentle melody on the piano, and the boys are playing checkers.

RUTH  
Did you think Martin was acting  
rather strangely this evening?

ARTHUR  
Perhaps our friend, Will, was too  
much for him.

NORMAN  
Yes, I've come to appreciate him as  
of late in much smaller doses...

RUTH  
You don't suppose that Martin had a  
problem with Will, do you?

NORMAN  
You mean like something akin to  
jealousy perhaps?

RUTH  
Jealousy?

NORMAN  
Dear sis, you're not actually going  
to sit there pretending that you  
haven't noticed...

RUTH  
Noticed what?

NORMAN  
The fact that Mr. Eden has romantic  
inclinations toward you --

RUTH  
Well, it did occur to me that  
perhaps there could be...

ARTHUR  
...and you toward him?

Both Arthur and Norman exchange knowing glances and begin laughing.

RUTH  
That's absurd! I'm merely tutoring  
him as a friend.

ARTHUR  
Why Norm, I believe she blushes.

Ruth abruptly stops playing the piano and rises to leave.

RUTH  
You're both acting like silly  
school boys -- I'm tired - good  
night --

She makes her way toward the door. Norman nudges Arthur playfully in a manner that says, "This will get her."

NORMAN  
Well, I guess it won't matter to  
her then that Martin is sailing off  
for almost a year.

Ruth stops in her tracks and turns slowly toward the boys.

RUTH  
What are you talking about... a  
year?

ARTHUR  
Yes, it seems our dear Mr. Eden has  
accepted an offer from father and  
signed on to the Sophia -- She sets  
sail for the South Seas in a couple  
of days.

Ruth can't mask the fact that she's heartbroken. Her eyes begin to moisten.

RUTH  
(very softly)  
I see...

Ruth quietly exits the sitting room. Both Arthur and Norman realize that they may have gone too far and appear to feel badly about hurting their sister like this.

HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT - DAY

Gertrude stirs something in a pot on the stove and Bernard sips coffee and reads a paper at the table while the kids eat breakfast.

Martin comes out from his room with a packed duffel. He has several books bundled together. The Higginbothams all stare at him as Martin throws some money on the table in front of Bernard.

MARTIN

That's most of it -- you'll get the rest when I get back.

GERTRUDE

How long?

MARTIN

Next year -- spring, maybe.

BERNARD

You'll pay alright -- but don't expect me to hold that room for you.

Martin pats the kids on the head, kisses Gertrude on the cheek, and makes for the door.

MARTIN

Time to move on -- I don't need your lousy room no more.

Martin looks appreciatively at Gertrude.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I'll see you when I get back - I'll give you the back-pay I owe and something extra for the children.

GERTRUDE

Now go and give your uncle Martin a big hug.

The kids all run to Martin and hug him.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

-- You be careful now, and keep on with your learnin' so you can make good one day.

BERNARD

(under his breath)

Make good -- right!

Gertrude glares sharply at Bernard. Martin looks around the flat briefly as if to take a final snapshot memory of this closing chapter of his life. He turns and leaves the flat without another word.

GERTRUDE

(softly)

God keep you dear brother --

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO SHIPPING DOCKS - DAY

The ship dock bustles with sailors and other passengers, people and workers. A large three masted sailing schooner loads crew and supplies for a long voyage. On the bow of the ship reads SOPHIA SUTHERLAND.

EXT. SOPHIA SUTHERLAND'S UPPER DECK - CONTINUOUS

Martin looks out from the rail at the distant view of the California coastline on the horizon. His hair is tussled in the wind. He looks down into the turbulent waters below.

After being captivated by the waters for a time, he flashes back to the parlor and the first time he laid eyes on Ruth.

FLASHBACK

He surveys the collection of literature and finally lands on a book of poetry authored by Swinburne.

Martin carefully removes the volume and opens it.

MARTIN EDEN

(quietly reading aloud)

"From too much love of living  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be... "

Arthur Morse enters with his younger sister RUTH MORSE; she is about 24, blonde, well tended, a pale delicate creature.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. OPEN SEA - SOPHIA SUTHERLAND - NIGHT

INT. SOPHIA SUTHERLAND'S SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Some of the crew settle into their wooden bunks for the night. Martin is reading by lantern-light when another crew mate, JACK (LONDON), a handsome man, muscular and weathered, about Martin's age, with dark matted hair enters the quarters. JACK makes his way to a nearby bunk, removes his shoes, cap and jacket.

JACK briefly makes eye contact with Martin and nods in acknowledgement. JACK then settles into his bunk, removes a bound journal and pencil from a leather case and begins to feverishly write without giving Martin a second glance. Martin can't help but stare at the newcomer as he scrawls madly.

JACK stops writing briefly to light a cigarette. He takes a deep drag and begins writing more and flipping pages in his journal. Martin continues to stare at the stranger as if trying to piece together some connection with the man.

JACK stops writing to take another long drag on his cigarette. He looks up briefly to see Martin is still staring at him.

JACK  
Do I know you?

Martin stares.

JACK (CONT'D)  
(holding out a cigarette)  
Care for one?

MARTIN  
Can I ask what you're writing?

JACK  
At the moment -- just some notes  
that are swimming around in my  
head. Maybe one day some of it'll  
make its way into a story.

MARTIN  
You're a writer.

Jack nods.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
And you're writing about this  
voyage?

JACK  
I write about many things -- mostly  
things I know about. I write a lot  
about the sea, I guess... I've  
written about the gold fields of  
the North and the South Sea  
Islands... people I meet... social  
stuff.

MARTIN  
You sell these stories?

JACK  
I sold a lot of work. But I have  
just as much, or more that hasn't  
sold. Not to mention the sleepless  
nights thinking and crafting.

Martin looks contemplatively for a moment, extinguishes his lantern and lays back in his bunk thinking as he stares into space.

MARTIN  
You must've had lots of schoolin'  
to write like you do.

JACK  
No.

MARTIN  
No?

JACK  
Like I told you... I just write.

Martin stares again for a long moment as wheels in his mind appear to be spinning. He's in deep contemplation.

MARTIN  
Good night Mister -- Uh...

JACK  
Call me Jack.

Martin closes his eyes to go to sleep. Jack looks up at Martin, smiles ever-so-slightly, dies out his cigarette and continues to write.

INT. SOPHIA SUTHERLAND'S SLEEPING QUARTERS - MORNING

The men sleep soundly in their berths; some are snoring loudly. Martin stirs. He slowly opens his eyes, rolls over and groggily sits up rubbing the last bit of sleep from his eyes.

He looks around to find the rest of the crew sound asleep. Martin looks over at the bunk where Jack was just before he fell asleep and sees that he's gone.

EXT. SOPHIA SUTHERLAND'S UPPER DECK - CONTINUOUS

Martin emerges from the lower deck into the early morning breeze. The sun is just rising, and the sea is calm.

Martin spots Jack smoking, looking out to sea with journal, pencil and a cup of coffee in hand. Martin slowly approaches Jack.

MARTIN  
I was down for the mornin' watch

Jack continues staring out to sea.



JACK  
Best part of the day, isn't it?

MARTIN  
... Like you're the only soul left  
in the world...

Martin pulls a cigarette from his pocket and lights it. Both men continue to gaze out to sea silently for a moment. Jack turns to Martin and looks as though he's reading his mind.

JACK  
Say, can I get your opinion on  
something?

Martin nods. Jack opens his journal and passes it to Martin, pointing to a place with his finger.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Read what I wrote here, and tell me  
what you think. And be honest!

Martin takes the journal from Jack and begins to read.

MARTIN  
(reading quietly to  
himself)  
"Many are the motives which drive  
men into setting foot on the thorny  
paths of literature; and among  
these impelling forces may be  
chiefly noted ambition."

Martin pauses and looks at Jack.

JACK  
Go on...

MARTIN  
"Ambition is a very vague term. Let  
us get right down to the root of  
the matter, strip off all foolish  
fancies and cunning deceits and  
resolve the word into something  
more definite.

Martin pauses and turns the page.  
Ambition for what? For Fame? For  
notice? For an audience? For power?  
For a living? Indeed, for what?"

JACK  
Well? What do you think?

Martin considers for a moment --

MARTIN

For Love.

JACK

Love! Yes - perhaps I shall add that one. It's an article I'm titling, FIRST AID TO RISING AUTHORS.

MARTIN

It's good writing!

JACK

And what makes it so good?

MARTIN

I don't know -- I guess it's real.

JACK

I only asked your opinion because I saw that you brought all those books with you to read. Not too often you see a sailor reading books of that sort.

MARTIN

I'm tryin' to improve my class - and now that I got almost a year to read and study...

JACK

For love?

MARTIN

What?

JACK

You're improving your self for love?

MARTIN

Well... the truth being -- there was a lady...

Martin looks out to sea again.  
A very beautiful lady...

JACK

I'm sorry, but I don't believe I got your name?

MARTIN

Martin Eden.

JACK

Well Mr. Eden...

Martin suddenly looks at Jack.  
Something wrong?

MARTIN  
That's what they called me -- what  
SHE used to call me.... Mr. Eden.

JACK  
Martin, have you ever thought about  
writing yourself? I mean, it's a  
very good way to improve your  
station.

MARTIN  
I don't know...

JACK  
Have you tried your hand at it?

MARTIN  
Well... it's just -- you see, I  
never had formal education and...

JACK  
What would you say if I told you  
that I left school when I was 14  
years old.

MARTIN  
You?

JACK  
Not because I wanted to, but  
because I had to work. You don't  
need to be well educated to write.  
You do read, which is enough to  
give you a grasp of language and  
basic sentence structure.

Write what you already know --  
write about the sea, about that  
goddess of yours.

Just make sure whatever you write  
is honest. Real. Raw!

Of course, much of what you'll  
churn out will be useless. Some  
will be good. Some will be very  
good. And once in a while you'll  
write something that will be great!  
Profound even.

It's at that moment when you  
realize that you are a writer.

MARTIN  
 (quietly)  
 And she'll love me...

JACK  
 I have to warn you, Martin. If you do this, do it for yourself -- not for her, not for anybody. Once you're there. There's no turning back. Once you're a writer, it's deep, often dark. And it's forever. Do you understand?

Martin goes up to the ship's rail and looks out to the sea entranced.

MARTIN  
 (quietly to himself)  
 Deep ...dark and forever.

Martin is once again transfixed by the deep waters of the sea below.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY

Ruth transfixed by the waters, too, as she stares out from shore into the bay. She gazes at the sailing schooners with longing, empty eyes as if waiting for a ship she might recognize.

Will Olney startles her as he appears with two ice cream cones. He hands one of the cones to Ruth.

RUTH  
 Thank you.

She continues looking out to sea, holding the cone.

WILL  
 You know they tend to get messy if you don't eat them quickly. Ruth?

RUTH  
 Yes, I'm sorry, Will -- I was just wondering about -- oh, never mind.

She begins to eat some ice cream and then shivers with a chill.

WILL  
 ...you were wondering?

RUTH

-- About my sweater, I can feel the chill. The fog's approaching. I didn't think we'd be out so long and I've forgot my sweater -- that's all.

Will looks at her as if considering. He puts his arm around her and she suddenly tenses. He notices her reaction - removes his jacket instead, and drapes it over her shoulders.

WILL

Is that better?

Ruth realizes how foolish Will must feel and looks at him apologetically.

RUTH

I'm sorry Will --

WILL

I believe you're right... about the chill, I mean...

RUTH

Will...

He throws the remainder of his ice cream away and stares out to sea along with Ruth. Both are silent for a time.

WILL

Look at 'em... all those ships. They need to get in before the fog, you know.

Ruth is silent.

WILL (CONT'D)

Those sailors know what they're doing alright. Yep, once they set to a course they stay that course no matter what. They always make their way home.

Will looks over to see that Ruth's ice cream is beginning to drip down her fingers. She doesn't notice herself.

WILL (CONT'D)

Your ice cream is melting... c'mon, I'll take you home now.

Ruth looks down at her melting ice cream and then again, sympathetically at Will with eyes misty. A foghorn sounds somewhere in the distance.

EXT. SOPHIA SUTHERLAND - DOCKED ON ISLAND - DAY

SUPER: SOLOMON ISLANDS, GUADALCANAL

Martin's in his bunk writing. Some crewmen come down the stairway into the quarters. They're throwing down their gear and grumbling amongst themselves.

FIRST SHIPMATE

Well, I never got me hopes up for no treasure anyhow.

SECOND SHIPMATE

The wages are good enough. It'll keep me on land for awhile -- I knew a mate, did find him some treasure once.

Would a kept'm set for all his days, too. But his bad luck, he got the fever an' it killed'm before he could buy a round of drink to celebrate.

Some more crew mates come down and Jack is with them. Jack sees Martin writing in his bunk.

JACK

(to Martin)

That's it, then. We ship out in the morning. I'm staying behind when we get to Australia. Well, you ain't going home completely treasureless, Martin.

Eight months gave you the time to finish your grammar lessons, learn twenty new words a day and write some stories. You know, Martin, you're a changed man. I can see it...

Jack nods in the direction of a group of men.

JACK (CONT'D)

...and so can they. Nobody could ever tell by the way you speak and write that you haven't a degree from college.

MARTIN

Maybe that's why they don't talk to me the same.

JACK

You're not actually part of their world anymore.

But just wait until you get back to California. You'll see all kinds of doors opening for you. Trust me on that.

MARTIN

I don't know, Jack...

JACK

Oh, you know how it is when you're away so long from home. You'll be fine once you get back and see that young princess of yours.

Jack looks closer at the pages Martin's been writing.

JACK (CONT'D)

You've been working on that one for a while... mind if I have a look?

Martin hands a stack of pages over to Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)

THE SEA LYRICS. Nice title.

Jack continues reading intently.

JACK (CONT'D)

Nice work... very nice work!

Jack sits on his bunk slowly while continuing to read...

LATER

Jack is laying back in his bunk and turns the last page. Martin looks at him in anticipation.

MARTIN

Well...?

JACK

Pretty good stuff, Martin. I mean it's rough around the edges, but you do have a way with words. And quite a unique perspective...

MARTIN

Do you really think --

JACK

Listen, Martin. The first thing you do when you get back to San Francisco is buy yourself a typewriter.

Learn the keyboard and start getting some of these stories circulating. Don't quit and for heaven's sake, keep on writing, Writing, writing.

A thousand words a day if you can. I guarantee, one day everybody will know the name, MARTIN EDEN.

INT. MORSE HOME PARLOR - DAY

Mr. Morse is peering out of the window to the street below, where he can see Ruth and Martin mounting bicycles and peddling off down the street together. Mrs. Morse is sitting in a chair with a book.

MR. MORSE

(releasing the curtain)

Well, so much for that old notion, out of sight, out of mind. Though I dare say there's something to be said about absence making the heart grow --

MRS. MORSE

Stop! This Eden's been gone nearly a year, and the first thing he does upon his return is come ringing at our door.

MR. MORSE

No - the first thing he did was buy a new suit, bicycle and typewriting machine --

MRS. MORSE

Typewriter?

MR. MORSE

Yes, according to Ruth, he's somehow gotten this insane notion in his head that he's now destined to become the next Kipling.

MRS. MORSE

And what sort of things will he write about, pray tell? How to take advantage of a family and infiltrate a happy home?

MR. MORSE

I must say, his speech and vocabulary have vastly improved since we last saw him. If I didn't know where he came from, I'd almost think him --



MRS. MORSE

He's a parrot and a con-artist - nothing more. And now I see he's getting to you the same way he's flimflammed Ruth and the boys.

MR. MORSE

Still, I must say that I haven't seen Ruth this happy in months. Did you notice she started playing the piano again?

MRS. MORSE

And this Mr. Eden is playing you like a bow fiddle. Hear me well and mark my words. If she continues to see this man, there is only heartache and hurt in store for Ruth.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - DAY

Ruth and Martin sit in the park with their bicycles nearby.

RUTH

Oh Martin, I've missed your company dreadfully. But you certainly took advantage of every spare moment. Your grammar is impeccable!

MARTIN

It was difficult - I thought of you often. I have another surprise for you. I've made up my mind what I'm going to do with my future...

Martin removes a bundle of pages from a satchel and hands them to Ruth.

CUT TO:

RUTH

(turning the last page)  
How dreadful! It's horrible - unutterably horrible!

MARTIN

It is life - and life is not always beautiful --

RUTH

But why couldn't the poor woman -- oh it's degrading! It is not nice! It is nasty!

We know there are nasty things in this world, but that's no reason --

MARTIN

Is that all you could see - is there anything else...

RUTH

You have strength - but it's untutored strength...

MARTIN

-- like a bull in a china shop?

RUTH

Yes. And you must develop discrimination - consult taste, fineness and tone.

MARTIN

So other than that, you liked it?

Ruth looks at him as if to say he's completely lost it.

RUTH

I followed the story well enough, but it was confused - too wordy. You clog the action by introducing so much extraneous material --

MARTIN

But did you like it? And please, be frank.

Ruth folds her hands closes her eyes and takes a deep breath and is silent for a time.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I got two score of stories just like it circulating to magazines all over the country. Thanks for being so frank with me!

Martin gets up and brushes himself off, preparing to mount his bike. Ruth, still sitting upright, opens her eyes and falls back on the grass as if she fainted from exhaustion.

HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT - KITCHEN - DAY

Martin has just finished reading one of his stories to his sister, Gertrude. Her eyes glisten with pride.

GERTRUDE

Ain't it grand, you writin' those sort of things.

MARTIN

Yes, yes, but the story - how did you like it!

GERTRUDE

Just grand! And thrillin' too! I was all worked up.

MARTIN

And...

GERTRUDE

But say, Mart. How did it end? Did that young man who spoke so highfalutin' get her?

MARTIN

Well that's to be inferred...

Gertrude stares at him blankly.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's like you, as the reader -- well, your mind will naturally fill in those details.

GERTRUDE

Well I like a good yarn, but I ain't never been much for mind-readin'. Why can't you just say how it's supposed to end then?

MARTIN

You always did like a happy ending, sis.

GERTRUDE

If you did sell it. How much can ya get for a story like that?

MARTIN

Oh, a hundred dollars, maybe.

GERTRUDE

My! I hope ya do sell it!

MARTIN

I wrote it in two days. That's more than fifty dollars a day. Well, I best be going before Bernard gets home.

Martin pulls out some bills and puts them in Gertrude's hands closing her fingers around them.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Here's the rest of the back rent that I owe, and there's something extra for the kids too.

GERTRUDE

Thank you, Mart. Do you have a place to stay? You look awful skinny...

MARTIN

MARIA, the Portuguese widow over on Slade street rents me a room.

GERTRUDE

MARIA SILVA with those ten little scrappers?

MARTIN

Seven. And I'm helping her out a little with her laundering business while I think about my writing. She takes in wash for the neighbors to earn money. It makes me feel good that I can ease her burden some.

GERTRUDE

Martin. You ain't gettin' any ideas about her like...

MARTIN

Gertrude! Maria's nearly twice my age with a brood of seven. And I'm now a respectable, soon-to-be famous author.

GERTRUDE

I ain't met anybody famous that had so little meat on their bones as you.

Martin gives her a kiss on the cheek.

MARTIN

Don't worry about me, sis, I can't think of a time in my life when I was happier.

MONTAGE - MARTIN'S WRITING WEEKS

-- Martin typing away on the keyboard - DAY.

--INSERT Keys typing out the words, THE TREASURE HUNTERS.

--Martin typing - NIGHT.

--INSERT Keys typing the words, THE PEARL DIVERS.

--Martin typing with little Silva kids running around him as Martin is pulling his hair in concentration.

--Martin opening cupboard which is nearly empty.

--INSERT keys tapping out the words, THE WINE OF LIFE.

--The little Silva kids playing with the typewriter as Martin sleeps. Papers are scattered everywhere. Martin wakes to find the typewriter keys all jammed together and type ribbon in a tangle.

--INSERT keys typing the words, LOVE CYCLE.

--Martin opens the cupboard - empty.

INSERT keys typing the words, THE POT.

--Martin sleeps with a line and bell going across to the typewriting table. The Silva kids trip the alarm, also attached to Martin's wrist. He chases the kids playfully and picks two of them up as they laugh.

--MARIA SILVA comes in and sees Martin splayed out on a chair, exhausted. She brings out a large jug of cheap wine and two glasses. Martin looks to be tempted for a moment. He shakes his head, 'No', and goes back to his typing.

--Martin is holding his head in his hands. In front of him are a stack of envelopes. Next to them are a stack of papers that are briefly typed rejection slips for his stories.

--MARIA comes in with a stack of more rejections. Martin shakes his head in despair. MARIA pulls out the jug of cheap wine again and pours a glass for each of them. Martin picks up the glass, considers it for a moment and hands it back to MARIA untouched. She shrugs her shoulders and downs them both herself.

END MONTAGE

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - DAY

Martin and Ruth ride their bikes side-by-side leisurely through the beautifully landscaped park. Martin looks thin, pale and worn out. They are talking as they ride.

RUTH

...well, I think you have to look at writing as a trade, like anything else. Not that I know anything about it, of course.

I only bring common judgement to bear.

As they ride, the growing sound of a large crowd can be heard, and the sounds increase as they get nearer the action.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
You couldn't hope to be a blacksmith without spending three to five years at learning the trade.

They draw increasingly closer to the crowd and someone can be heard shouting out a speech. Cheers erupt after each statement. Ruth is still talking to Martin, but he suddenly seems interested in the commotion of the crowd.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Now writers are so much better paid than blacksmiths that there must be ever so many men who would like to write -- who try to write...

They are upon the demonstration now.

MARTIN  
(completely ignoring Ruth)  
Hold on Ruth, I want to see what this is all about.

Martin careens off the path toward the crowd who is beginning to chant something about NO MORE SLAVERY! - NO MORE SLAVERY! END OPPRESSION NOW! END OPPRESSION NOW!

The crowd looks rough. There are lots of hobos and dirty men in overcoats smoking and spitting tobacco. Martin approaches one of the onlookers.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
(to onlooker)  
Who are they?

ONLOOKER  
Socialists. You can mostly tell by the red. Now them's over yonder are Anarchists. And you can tell them by the bulging under their coats. Bottles, pipes and bricks.

Ruth rides up next to Martin who looks fascinated by the exhibition. Ruth appears frightened and tugs on Martin's sleeve.

RUTH  
Please, can we go now...

ONLOOKER

If you hang aroun' awhile, you  
might see a good brawl. That is if  
the law is slow in comin' round.  
And they mostly are --

RUTH

Martin... PLEASE!

ONLOOKER

You might think 'bout movin' back.  
This is not a place for lady's like  
her.

MARTIN

How often do they gather?

ONLOOKER

'bout once a month - never on the  
same day, though, as not to give  
the law any advantage.

Martin nods, and he and Ruth ride away as the crowd explodes  
in cheers and chants.

RUTH

You asked that man about the next  
time. Why? You wouldn't dream of...

MARTIN

I only want to hear what they are  
talking about. You shouldn't be  
there. It's true what he said -  
they're a rough bunch, them ones.

RUTH

Them ones? Listen to yourself. You  
spent only a few minutes with them  
and you're back to the old sloppy  
grammar. If my father knew that you  
took me there...

MARTIN

Perhaps your father could learn a  
thing or two from men like that!  
It's men like your father who...

Ruth looks at Martin as if she doesn't know him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(realizing he's crossed a  
line)

Ruth -- I'm sorry. Those men back  
there... they just want a fair  
shake.

If you're born into a working-class family in this day and age, you're likely to die that way. It just frightens and angers me sometimes, I guess.

MORSE SITTING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ruth enters the house and Mrs. Morse is writing letters at a desk. She sees Ruth trying to slip past her unnoticed.

MRS. MORSE

Ruth

Ruth stops in her tracks and approaches her mother who puts down her pen and looks over the top of her reading glasses.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

Be careful -- you've been seeing far too much of that man.

RUTH

His name is Martin. I know that you mean well. But it is impossible. I also know that he is not --

MRS. MORSE

-- your kind.

RUTH

I did not want to say it, but he is rough, brutal, strong -- too strong.

MRS. MORSE

He has not lived a clean life is what you mean to say.

RUTH

But I can't help it. I am interested in him dreadfully. Then, too, he is my first boyfriend. Not so much boyfriend as protégé. Perhaps both friend and protégé combined.

And yet, he also scares me. He's like some bulldog that I've taken as a plaything. He's quite angry inside.

MRS. MORSE

Why does he interest you so?



RUTH

I see much good in him, too. I know he swears and smokes and drinks. He has also fought much with his fists, and he enjoys it -- he's told me so.

MRS. MORSE

He is a sailor, and your father has told me about the lives of such men.

He has neither position nor salary. He should be doing something that would afford him the right to marry instead of paltering around with those stories of his and with childish dreams.

Ruth begins tearing up. Her mother moves to a place on a sofa and pats a spot next to her and indicates Ruth to sit.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

Martin Eden, I'm afraid, will never grow up. He will never be a money-earner. And this world is so ordered that money is necessary to happiness.

RUTH

He has not breathed a word, but even so -- I do not love him.

MRS. MORSE

I am glad of that. I should not care to see my daughter, my one daughter who is so clean and pure, love a man like that.

Mrs. Morse begins to sob.

RUTH

Mother, I told you that I do not love him.

MRS. MORSE

Yes, but I'm afraid he's come to love you.

Ruth stares, her eyes moist with tears, into those of her mother's, also wet with tears.

MASTERBEDROOM - NIGHT

MRS. MORSE

Our little girl has become a woman.

MR. MORSE

Are you telling me she's in love?

MRS. MORSE

No, but she is loved. She is awakened at last.

MR. MORSE

Then we'll have to get rid of him.

MRS. MORSE

That won't be necessary. Ruth says he hasn't sold a single story after dozens of them have circulated for months.

He'll also be getting low on money with having to make payments on that typewriting machine and rent.

MR. MORSE

He'll need to go out to sea again soon, but you know it won't be an extended voyage like the last.

He'll be back on our doorstep again before we know it. He's like one of those cats that you give a saucer of milk and they keep hanging around.

MRS. MORSE

When he comes back this time, she won't be here. I've made arrangements with Aunt Clara.

We will send her there. Besides, a year in the East with the change of climate, people ideas and everything, is just the thing she needs.

EXT. MARIA SILVA'S FLAT - OAKLAND SLUM - DAY

Martin walks up the stairs of Maria's rundown Oakland flat. He grabs a stack of envelopes out of the mailbox, sifts quickly through the stack and opens them in despair as they are all either returned stories or rejection letters from magazine editors.

EXT. MORSE FRONT DOOR - DAY

Martin rings the front door bell. After a long moment, Ruth answers the door with the look of pain in her eyes. She appears ill and shields her eyes from the outside light.

RUTH  
 (tiredly)  
 I'm sorry, Martin - I have the most  
 awful headache. I get these  
 occasionally and nothing can do it  
 any good but laying in a dark room  
 until it passes. Can you please  
 come back tomorrow.

MARTIN  
 You really don't look very well,  
 Ruth. What about headache powders?

RUTH  
 (rubbing her temples)  
 Doctor Hall won't permit me.  
 Please...

MARTIN  
 I'll check on you later then --

Martin turns to leave, he suddenly stops as though something  
 has occurred to him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Ruth --

She is about to close the door and stops.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Can I try something that might help  
 your pain? I'm not sure, of course,  
 but I'd like to try.

INT. MORSE PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

The room is dark and Ruth is lying face down on a settee.  
 Martin is kneeling next to her and massaging the base of her  
 neck. He's speaking very softly in her ear.

MARTIN  
 It's simply massage. I learned the  
 trick first from the Japanese. They  
 are masters at the art. Then I  
 learned variations from the  
 Hawaiians. They call it lomi-lomi.

Martin rubs more deeply as he brings his head closer to hers.  
 His lips nearly touching her ear.

RUTH  
 Oh, that's so good.

LATER

Thirty minutes have passed according to a nearby clock and Martin is still massaging Ruth.

RUTH  
Aren't you getting tired?

INT. MORSE HOME - EVENING

Ruth is on the phone talking to Martin. The color has come back in her cheeks and she looks radiant.

RUTH (INTERCUT)  
I slept until dinner! You cured me completely. How can I ever thank you, Martin?

MARTIN  
(thinking for a moment)  
You could go sailing with me.

EXT. LAKE MERRITT - SUNSET

Both Martin and Ruth sit in the stern of a small sloop. Martin has the tiller, the main-sheet luffing slightly. The sudden heeling of the boat causes Ruth to lay her head against Martin's chest. Martin adjusts slightly to make her more comfortable. The sky is a purple-orange wash.

He bends over swiftly, and as his lips approach -- hers fly to meet them. Then she clings to him.

RUTH  
When did you love me?

MARTIN  
From the first moment I laid eyes on you. I was mad in love with you then. And now, I'm almost a lunatic. And you - when did you first know?

RUTH  
Oh, I knew it all the time almost from the first. How did you do it? How did you make me love you?

MARTIN  
I don't know. I guess I loved you hard enough to melt a heart of stone, much less the heart of the living, breathing woman that you are.

They kiss again for a long moment.

RUTH  
What will people say?

MARTIN  
I don't know. We can find out  
easily anytime we are so minded.

RUTH  
What will mother say?

MARTIN  
Let me tell her. If I can win your  
heart, I can win anything.

RUTH  
You must be very, very good to me.  
Remember, I am only a child - a  
child who's never loved before.

MARTIN  
Nor I, we are both children  
together. We have found our first  
love in each other.

Ruth jumps up out of his arms suddenly.

RUTH  
But that's impossible! You're a  
sailor. And sailors I have heard  
are -- well...

MARTIN  
Accustomed to having a girl in  
every port? Is that what you mean?

RUTH  
Yes --

MARTIN  
But that is not love. I never knew  
a passing touch of love 'til I saw  
you that first evening at dinner.  
Do you know I was almost arrested  
when I left you that night? The  
policeman thought I was drunk.

RUTH  
But you're still a sailor --

MARTIN  
That didn't keep me from loving you  
from the first.

Ruth bursts into tears and they begin kissing again,  
passionately. They pause.

RUTH  
You know I am older than you.

MARTIN  
Hush. I'm forty years older than  
you in experience.

The sun is now well below the horizon and rosy light is  
flooding the tranquil waters around the lone boat.

MORSE HOME PARLOR - DAY

MRS. MORSE  
What has happened, Ruth?

RUTH  
You know?

MRS. MORSE  
Maybe I don't know after all. Why  
don't you tell me.

RUTH  
Martin and I are engaged.

Mrs. Morse is coldly silent.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
And I don't know how you'll ever  
forgive me, but I couldn't help it.  
You must tell father for me.

MRS. MORSE  
Why don't you tell him yourself.  
Let me talk with Mr. Eden. I will  
explain, and he will release you.

RUTH  
I don't want to be released. I love  
him, and I'm going to marry him.

MRS. MORSE  
We have other plans for you, Ruth  
dear, your father and I. Not that  
we have any man picked out for you,  
but you will marry a man in your  
own station in life. A good and  
honorable gentleman.

RUTH  
But I love Martin.

MRS. MORSE

That man has nothing but roughness and coarseness to offer you for all that is refined and delicate in you. He could never support you. We have no foolish ideas about wealth, but comfort is another matter. And you should at least marry a man who can give you that.

RUTH

Martin is trying --

MRS. MORSE

Grow up Ruth! He's a penniless smuggler, sailor, cowboy and heaven knows what else.

Ruth was silent and knew that her mother was right.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

He wastes his time over this hair-brained notion of writing, trying to accomplish what geniuses and rare men with college educations never achieve.

RUTH

I told you it was a dreadful mistake, falling in love with him. I couldn't help it. Could you help falling in love with father?

Mrs. Morse looks indignantly at Ruth and storms out of the room.

INT. MORSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

Mr. and Mrs. Morse are dining alone.

MRS. MORSE

-- It could hardly have come otherwise. This sailor has been the only man she was in touch with. She has finally awoken and lo, here is this sailor.

MR. MORSE

Let her see all she wants of him. The more she knows him, the less she'll love him, I'll wager.

Mrs. Morse paces contemplatively for a moment.

MRS. MORSE

Yes! We can give her plenty of contrast. We'll make a point of having young people at the house. Young women and men - clever men - men of her own class - gentlemen - scholars and writers.

MR. MORSE

She can gauge him by them. They will show him up soon enough for what he is.

SAN FRANCISCO STREET TROLLY - DAY

Martin and Ruth are riding the trolley together as Martin tells Ruth of his strategy.

MARTIN

I shall leave the masterpieces alone for a while and take up hack-work.

RUTH

Hack-work?

MARTIN

You know - things like, jokes, paragraphs, feature articles, humorous and society verse.

All the rot for which there seems so much demand.

RUTH

Couldn't you just get a regular position?

MARTIN

Well, then, there's always the newspaper syndicates, the short story syndicates and the Sunday supplement stuff.

RUTH

But Martin, what makes you think that --

MARTIN

I can go ahead and hammer out the stuff they want and make a pretty good salary by it. And in between the grind, I'll have time for study and to try my hand at masterpieces.



RUTH

But what good are these  
masterpieces if you can't sell  
them?

MARTIN

But I can!

RUTH

You haven't sold any yet, and  
you've been at it for months now.  
How can we get married on  
masterpieces that don't sell?

MARTIN

Then we'll get married on fluff and  
hack-work that will sell.

RUTH

How long--

MARTIN

The hack-work is only temporary.  
Give me two years. I know what I  
have in me. I'm going to get the  
best of everything in the world for  
you.

RUTH

I still think that the best thing  
for you now is to study shorthand --  
you already know typewriting - and  
go into father's office.

MARTIN

Business? I shall never succeed at  
it. It strikes me as dull, stupid  
and mercenary. I'm not adapted for  
it, and I'd never get beyond a  
clerkship.

Ruth remains silent; her disappointment apparent.

INT. SILVA FLAT - MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Martin is hunched over his typewriter tapping out more  
stories. MARIA comes in with a bowl of soup and a piece of  
bread.

MARIA SILVA

Here, Martin, you no eat right. Ifa  
I no remind you, maybe you die  
froma starvin'.

MARTIN

Thanks, Maria. Just leave it there, I'll eat when I finish these couple pages.

MARIA SILVA

You saya da same thing always - after this anda after that. Sometimes you never toucha da food. You gotta eata my friend. You could getta very sick.

Martin never glances up from his work, and Maria, in frustration, picks up his typewriter and scolds him.

MARTIN

Hey! What do you think you're doing?

MARIA SILVA

You looka me in da eyes! I not gonna leta you starve inna my place! You no eata or sleep no more - notta for weeks!

You havva no money. You pawn da bicycle, your watch anda your good clothes. I feeda you 'cause you helpa with laundry anda kids, but I nota gonna watcha you die. Understand?

MARTIN

Dear Maria. My own mother never cared so much for me.

MARIA SILVA

I notta you mother! I hava already seven kids anda milk cow. I no needa, you too.

MARTIN

Maria, what would you like to have? Now, right now, if you could get it?

Maria considers for a moment.

MARIA SILVA

Shoes alla da roun' for da childs - seven pairs shoes.

MARTIN

You shall have them. But I'm talking about a big wish. Something big that you want. Think hard --

MARIA SILVA

I lika da house - dis house, no more paya da rent.

MARTIN

You shall have it, and in short time. What else? Now think very big this time. Pretend that I am God.

MARIA SILVA

Verra big, huh?

MARTIN

Anything... fire away!

MARIA SILVA

Well den, ida like to have a milk ranch -- good milka ranch. Plenty cow, plenty land, plenty grass.

I lika to have near San Le-an, where my sister live. I sella da milka in Oakland. I maka da plentee mon. My kids ala go to school. Yes, I tink I lika da milk ranch.

MARTIN

You shall have it -- a first class milk ranch - everything complete. There will be a house to live in and a stable for the horses, and cow barns, of course. You'll have chickens, pigs, vegetables, fruit trees - the whole works!

Maria looks wistful, but at the same time skeptical.

MARIA SILVA

Well den you betta eat if you make such bigga promise like dat.

MARTIN

You don't believe me, Maria? Go and get that sour bottle of wine. We'll drink to it!

Maria smiles at the prospect of sharing her wine with Martin. She gets the bottle and two glasses.

MARIA SILVA

Da wine itsa home-made. Maybe you bettah eata some food first.

MARTIN

Nonsense! Here's to your milk ranch!

They drink and the wine is stronger than Martin expected. He winces and contorts his face. Maria looks at him with concern. Both Martin and Maria laugh.

SILVA FLAT - MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

One of the Silva girls opens the door to look in on Martin and screams as he suddenly opens his eyes. He is sweaty and unshaven, his hair is matted, and his eyes crazy with fever. Maria comes rushing into the room. She feels his forehead.

MARTIN  
(shivering)  
I'm sick Maria -- very sick. Do you know what it is?

MARIA  
You be alright in two, three days, maybe.

MONTAGE - MARTIN FEVER - BED

--Martin is sweating and shaking profusely  
--Martin vomiting in bucket  
--Maria putting cool cloth on Martin's head  
--Martin tossing convulsively  
--Maria bringing Martin liquids to drink

END MONTAGE

Martin is delirious. Maria comes in to replace the towel on his forehead when he grabs her by the wrist.

MARTIN  
(weak with gratitude)  
Maria, you getta da milka ranch, all righta, I promise.

MARIA  
Rest -- you gonna be alright soon.

Martin closes his eyes and sighs deeply.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Martin is sitting at the kitchen table eating a piece of toast. He is unshaven, mussed and very weak, but clearly on the mend. A few of the older kids are helping Maria with laundry in nearby tubs.

MARTIN

What does it profit a man to write  
a whole library and lose his own  
life?

Martin takes another bite of toast and throws it down on the plate. He looks over at a stack of envelopes piling up on a shelf.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Those mine?

Maria wipes the laundry suds from her hands and brings him the stack of envelopes. He starts going through them and throwing them under the table one by one without opening them.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I don't even have to open 'em  
anymore. I can smell rejection all  
over them. This is no place for me.  
No more writing for me. For me it  
will be the counting house and  
ledger. The monthly salary and the  
little place with Ruth.

He continues sorting through the envelopes when he comes across one that is different looking and smaller than the others. He rips it open and tries to read it.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

My eyes hurt. Maria would you mind--

MARIA

Teresa, she go to school - she can  
read.

Maria hands the letter to her daughter, TERESA who's nine.

TERESA

(reading slowly)

We are pleased to inform you that  
your story THE WHIRLPOOL, is one  
for which we would very much like  
to have serial rights. We offer  
you...

MARTIN

What magazine is that? Here, let me  
see that--

Martin snatches the letter from the girl. He could now see to read.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

They are offering forty dollars!  
They said they need to make some  
alterations, but they love the  
original idea! Quick - get me a pen  
and paper, Teresa.

He scribbles something quickly on a sheet stuffs it into an  
envelope and scrawls something on the front.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Quick! Run this to the letter box!  
Do you know what this means? I can  
get my best clothes and bicycle out  
of hock! And just when I thought  
the battle was lost!

MARIA

You make good story! Maybe you  
write more now?

MARTIN

Yes! Of course I write more! Lots  
more! Oh, I must get word to Ruth!

MORSE HOME PARLOR - DAY

Ruth enters the room where Arthur is reading a book.

RUTH

Martin says he's been quite ill and  
that he will see me in ten days  
when he can get his best clothes  
out of hock. Come Arthur.

ARTHUR

Come where?

RUTH

I can't wait ten days. We're going  
to that Slade Street slum in West  
Oakland.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN - DAY

Maria and kids are in the kitchen. She's doing laundry. An  
older girl irons. Another child reads to a sibling. They hear  
the sound of a horse and carriage coming down their street.

They run to the window and look out as it stops in front of  
their place. They all rush to the window to see other  
neighborhood kids beginning to surround the carriage. They  
can see from the window a finely dressed woman and gentleman,  
Ruth and Arthur, step down and approach the entrance to their  
building.

## MARTIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A KNOCK on Martin's door and Maria barges in.

MARIA  
She's here!

MARTIN  
I heard some excitement - who's here?

MARIA  
Her! Ruth! Ruth and another man.

MARTIN  
Ruth? Here! Now!

MARIA  
We herea da noise of the carriage.  
We never getta da carriages here  
only weddings anda funeral. We rush  
to see, and theres a fine lady and  
man comin up righta now.

Maria quickly shuts Martin's door and runs to greet her guests now at the door of her flat.

Martin looks around in a panic and starts throwing papers and clothes under his bed. He desperately attempts to straighten up as he can hear the voices of Ruth and Arthur in the kitchen speaking (OS) to Maria.

Maria knocks again on Martin's door.

MARTIN  
(nervously)  
Come in.

Ruth and Arthur enter and look around the room, visibly appalled at the squalid conditions.

ARTHUR  
Martin! Good to see you, friend. I understand you've been quite ill lately. Glad to hear that you're on the mend. Norman sends his regards.

MARTIN  
(shaking his hand)  
Arthur!

Ruth rushes to hug Martin. They hold the embrace and Arthur begins to feel he's intruding.

ARTHUR

Well, I best see to the carriage before the neighborhood urchins take off with it. You must come over to the house again soon.

MARTIN

I'll see you very soon, Arthur, just as quick as I can get my stuff out of hock.

RUTH

Arthur, I won't be very long.

Arthur excuses himself and leaves Ruth and Martin alone. Ruth sits in the only chair available next to the bed.

RUTH (CONT'D)

How good to see you again, Martin.

She feels his four-day growth of beard with the palm of her hand.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Do you realize I've never seen you unshaven before? And what's that wretched smell?

MARTIN

What kind of smell?

RUTH

A stale sickish smell.

MARTIN

All I smell is stale tobacco smoke.

RUTH

That's it. It's terrible. Why do you smoke so much?

MARTIN

I don't know, except I smoke more than usual when I'm lonely.

RUTH

It's an awful habit, and it smells to heaven.

MARTIN

That's the fault of the tobacco. Once I get that forty dollars, I'll use a brand that's less offensive.

RUTH

But how long will that last?



MARTIN

Oh, that's just the beginning. Wait until I get my stride - then watch my smoke.

RUTH

You smoke enough as it is - a living volcano. You're a perfect disgrace Martin dear. You know you are. Please stop. For my sake? It's no good to be a slave to anything, least of all, a drug.

MARTIN

I shall always be your slave.

RUTH

In that case, I will begin issuing commands. Thou shall not omit to shave every day. Look how you have scratched my cheek.

MARTIN

Come here you!

Martin grabs her and pulls her into the bed. They laugh and caress.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF SILVA FLAT - CONTINUOUS

Arthur Morse is still sitting in the carriage looking extremely bored. There is a flock of kids surrounding the carriage. Some little girls are throwing flowers at him and giggling.

MORSE HOME - GREAT ROOM - EVENING

A cocktail party is taking place with some of Ruth's cousins, college professors, bankers, musicians, politicians. Attendees are all well-dressed in appropriate elegance for the occasion: jackets and ties, evening gowns...

Mr. and Mrs. Morse hope to see Martin fail among this company of scholars and intellectuals. To their dismay, Martin is more than holding-his-own.

MONTAGE - MARTIN MINGLING WITH SOCIETY ELITES

--Martin laughing and endearing himself to a group of women.

--Martin in deep conversation with professors.

--Martin telling a story while a small group around him appear riveted by what he's saying.

--There is one mysterious sickly-looking older man who listens and watches Martin in action, but does not engage. He is RUSS BRISSENDEN.

END MONTAGE

MR. MORSE  
(whispering to Mrs. Morse)  
I believe our little demonstration  
is failing.

He nods over to where Martin is deeply engaging in a conversation with a PROFESSOR CALDWELL. Mrs. Morse gets Ruth's attention and discreetly calls her away from her brothers and cousins.

MRS. MORSE  
Isn't that your English Professor  
from last semester? Mr. Eden seems  
to be having quite a lively  
dialogue with him. You don't  
suppose he's talking too much shop,  
do you?

Ruth looks seriously concerned.

RUTH  
Yes, well, perhaps I'll say hello -  
I didn't see PROFESSOR CALDWELL  
arrive. Excuse me.

Ruth makes a beeline towards Martin and PROFESSOR CALDWELL.

MRS. MORSE  
(to Mr. Morse)  
The evening is yet young - I think  
I'll find another champagne.

Martin and PROFESSOR CALDWELL are in deep discussion.

MARTIN  
... I'll tell you where you are  
wrong, or rather, what weakens your  
judgement. You lack biology. What I  
mean is the real interpretative  
biology. From the laboratory test  
tube, all the way up to the widest  
aesthetic and sociological  
generalizations.

Ruth walks up and looks appalled that Martin is debating with this great man of learning.

CALDWELL  
(dubiously)  
I scarcely follow you.

MARTIN

Then I'll try to explain...

Ruth's parents are looking on from a safe distance.

MRS. MORSE

(to Mr. Morse)

Ruth is nervous. I can see it in her posture, even from here.

MR. MORSE

So the evening may not be a complete loss after all.

Martin and CALDWELL are still conversing.

MARTIN

... Leave out the biological factor, the very stuff out of which has been spun the fabric of all the arts, the warp and the woof of all human actions and achievements.

PROFESSOR CALDWELL is silent. He stares at Martin for a long moment. He narrows his eyes on Martin. While Ruth holds her breath, her parents are relishing in the moment where they feel Martin Eden is about to be crushed.

MR. MORSE

I think this party was an inspired idea. Oh, there's CHARLEY HAPGOOD. Why don't we say hello.

MRS. MORSE

Yes, let's. It appears everything is going splendidly.

PROFESSOR CALDWELL, still studying Martin, finally speaks.

CALDWELL

Do you know I've had that same criticism passed on me once before -  
- by a very great man, a scientist and evolutionist, Joseph Le Conte.

But he is dead, and I thought to remain undetected; and now, you come along and expose me. Le Conte was right, and so are you, at least to an extent.

Ruth expels a huge sigh of relief. The mysterious RUSS BRISSENDEN is still observing from a safe, but close enough vantage, to hear what's being said.

RUTH  
 Professor Caldwell. I saw you over here talking to Mr. Eden, and I wanted to say hello.

CALDWELL  
 Why, Miss Morse, what a nice party your family has put together. I usually find this kind of thing dull. But tonight has been quite a refreshing change from the usual.

RUTH  
 Why, thank you, Professor, I'm so glad to hear that you're enjoying yourself.

She turns to Martin.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
 Can I see you for a moment, Martin?

MARTIN  
 Please excuse me Professor --

CALDWELL  
 Very nice talking to you, Mr Eden -- most enlightening.

Ruth gently pulls Martin aside and they begin walking slowly across the floor. RUSS BRISSENDEN follows stealthily in their wake.

RUTH  
 You shouldn't have monopolized Professor Caldwell that way. There may be others who want to talk with him.

MARTIN  
 My mistake. Do you know, he is the brightest, most intellectual man I have ever talked with.

RUTH  
 He's an exception.

MARTIN  
 I should say so --

Martin's eyes dart around the room.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Who do you want me to talk to next?

RUTH  
Come on, let's just get away from here.

MARTIN  
And go where?

RUTH  
Anywhere but here... I feel like I'm suffocating.

Martin is intrigued by Ruth's invitation to hold their own private party elsewhere.

MARTIN  
You leave first. I'll grab our jackets and meet you in the back by the garden wall so we don't draw attention.

MORSE HALL AND PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Martin has jackets in his arms and is walking toward the front hall. He spots Ruth's parents and her brother, Norman, with a man, CHARLEY HAPGOOD. Martin stops abruptly and turns to go the other direction when Mrs. Morse spots him. The mysterious RUSS BRISSENDEN is still lurking close by.

MRS. MORSE  
Oh, Mr. Eden - you weren't going to leave us so early, were you?

MARTIN  
I was just going to take some fresh air.

MRS. MORSE  
Well, come here for a moment and meet our guest, MR. HAPGOOD.

Martin turns reluctantly and greets the Morse's new guest.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)  
CHARLEY HAPGOOD, this is Martin Eden.

MARTIN  
Hapgood. Ah, yes. I've heard your campaign speech.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD  
Really! And what did you think?

MARTIN

You'll make the governor's chair soon enough, even the U.S. Senate if it's your hope.

MRS. MORSE

Oh, what makes you think so, Mr. Eden?

MARTIN

Because his speech was so cleverly stupid and unoriginal. And also so convincing that the leaders cannot help but regard him as safe and sure.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD

I won't stand here and be bullied by a --

MARTIN

You hate and fear the socialists -- but why?

The Morses are controlled, but secretly pleased, at Martin's sudden attack on Hapgood.

MRS. MORSE

You do realize you are insulting one of our dearest friends in our own home.

MARTIN

It's nothing personal. Oh, he's no more stupid than the average Republican, or average Democrat, for that matter.

MR. MORSE

Now you call him stupid! And incidentally, I'm a Republican. Pray how do you classify me?

MARTIN

Oh, you are merely an unconscious henchman.

MR. MORSE

Henchman?

MARTIN

You do corporation work. You get your livelihood from the masters of society, and whoever feeds a man is that man's master. Yes, you are a henchman.

You are concerned in advancing the interests of the aggregations of the capital you serve.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD

Why, you talk like a scoundrelly socialist!

MARTIN

You fear and hate socialists, when you know neither them nor their doctrines.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD

And how would you know so much about their doctrines, unless you frequent socialist meetings?

MARTIN

Certainly, just as spies frequent hostile camps. How else are you to learn about the enemy? Besides, I enjoy myself at their meetings.

They are great fighters. And right or wrong, they have read the books. Yes, I've been to a half a dozen of their meetings, but that doesn't make me a socialist any more than listening to so many of your long-winded orations makes me a Republican.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD

Well, any fool can still see that you incline that way.

MARTIN

I am an individualist. I believe the race is to the swift, the battle to the strong. Individualism is the hereditary and eternal foe of socialism.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD

Well, it's obvious this conversation will accomplish little for either of us. You, Eden, are an idealistic and misguided fool.

MARTIN

A cheap judgement - Nietzsche was right. I won't bother to tell you who Nietzsche was, but he was right. The world belongs to the strong - to those who are noble and do not wallow in the swine-trough of trade and exchange.

But it's no fault of yours, Mr. Hapgood, it is just a phase of the contemptible ignorance of the times.

CHARLEY HAPGOOD looks Martin up and down with a sneer and then walks off. Martin looks and sees that Ruth has been standing nearby listening to his attack on Hapgood. Ruth grabs her jacket from Martin and runs off.

Norman looks to Martin as if about to say something, shakes his head disapprovingly and runs after Ruth. Martin puts on his jacket and leaves. Mrs. Morse looks coolly at her husband and raises an eyebrow. Brissenden smiles to himself.

MONTAGE - MARTIN WORKING

--Martin typing out the words, THE CRADLE OF BEAUTY.

--Martin typing out the words, THE WONDER DREAMERS.

--Martin typing out the words, PHILOSOPHY OF ILLUSION.

--Martin typing out the words, STARDUST.

--Martin going through the mail and finding only rejections.

--Martin walking into the pawn shop and giving the dealer his bicycle, clothes and pocket watch again.

--Martin opening his cupboard to find it very near to empty.

END MONTAGE

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

GROCERY CLERK

I'm sorry, Martin. No more can giva you credit. You owe too much mon. You pay me something. You be alright again.

Martin walks out and heads down the street. He walks aimlessly through the streets of Oakland. Where he encounters his sister, Gertrude, by chance as she waits for a trolley car.

GERTRUDE

Martin - Is that you? Oh my, but you look haggard. Are you eating at all?

Martin doesn't answer her. The Telegraph street car comes and the doors open. Gertrude makes a move to board and sees that Martin has no intention of boarding the trolley.



GERTRUDE (CONT'D)  
Ain't you comin'?

MARTIN  
I'm walking -- exercise, you know.

GERTRUDE  
I'll go along with you for a few blocks, then. Mebbe it'll do me some good as I ain't been feelin' too spry lately.

MARTIN  
Are you sure? I can see you are moving a little slower than usual.

GERTRUDE  
Why don't you come out to the house tomorrow. Bernard will be gone.

Martin shakes his head in refusal.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)  
You ain't got a penny to your name. You ain't walkin' for exercise, are you?

MARTIN  
I sold a story to the HORNET for fifteen dollars. If I can just get a ticket for a ferry. I can go collect my money.

Gertrude digs in her satchel and puts a bill into Martin's hand.

GERTRUDE  
Here ya go, Martin. I guess I forgot your last birthday. That's real good you're selling your stories. How many ya sold now?

MARTIN  
Three so far. Two of them haven't paid me. One was worth forty dollars.

GERTRUDE  
All that work, Martin. Maybe ya should consider gettin' a job, or goin' back out to sea again for a time.

MARTIN  
Nobody has faith in me, Gertrude, except myself. I've done good work already, plenty of it.

GERTRUDE  
How do you know it's good?

MARTIN  
Because it's better than ninety-nine percent of what's published in the magazines.

GERTRUDE  
I wish you'd listen to reason, Martin.

MARTIN  
I promise you, Gertrude, I'll pay this fiver back a hundred times over. Mark my words!

A trolley car pulls up. She kisses Martin on the cheek.

GERTRUDE  
Come over for dinner sometime. I can send one of the kids over to let you know when Bernard is away.

She gets on the trolley, and Martin watches it pull away.

INT. HORNET NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL OFFICE - DAY

A clean-shaven strapping young ex-college-type is at a desk in a sparsely furnished office where Martin is talking.

YOUNG EDITOR  
... So you're trying to tell me that you never got the check for THE PERI AND THE PEARL poem that we printed four weeks ago?

MARTIN  
Yes, that's correct. I'm Martin Eden, and this is the piece.

Martin shows the YOUNG EDITOR a copy of his article.

YOUNG EDITOR  
Hold on there for a minute, and let me check with my associates.

The man gets up slowly, eyeing Martin as if to size him up physically and goes into a back room.

INT. HORNET OFFICE - STAIRWAY TO STREET - CONTINUOUS

(OS) Behind a frosted-glass door which reads, HORNET NEWS, the sound of breaking furniture, punching and grunts could be heard.

Suddenly, the door flings open and Martin comes flying down a flight of stairs. Two more young football player types step out at the top of the landing with the YOUNG EDITOR and laugh at Martin, who's just gathering himself together.

YOUNG EDITOR  
(laughing)  
Come again, Mr. Eden. Glad to see you any time.

MARTIN  
(brushing himself off)  
Phew! You fellows prize-fighters or what?

YOUNG EDITOR  
I must say, Mr. Eden, that for a poet you can go some yourself. You've got a pretty respectable right cross there. You wanna go out for a beer and talk about it?

MARTIN  
Another time maybe.

EXT. MORSE FRONT DOOR

Martin rings he bell. Ruth answers and quickly steps out on the porch whispering to Martin.

RUTH  
What are you doing here! Mother and Father are against you more than ever now. My you look awful! What --

MARTIN  
I was merely being honest. This is who I am.

RUTH  
Father doesn't like your radical views. And he thinks you are lazy, though I know you are not.

MARTIN  
You want me to go to work?

RUTH  
Yes. I've asserted myself and father has agreed --

MARTIN  
Have you lost faith in me?

RUTH  
In your writing, yes.

MARTIN

Do you think that literature is not at all my vocation?

RUTH

I don't think you were made to write. Forgive me dear, but I think I know a little more about literature than you do.

MARTIN

Yes, you are a Bachelor of Arts and you ought to know, but remember a year ago, I asked for two years and I have yet another year to run.

RUTH

It's just that mother and father--

MARTIN

But you love me?

RUTH

I do! I do!

MARTIN

And I love you, not them, and nothing they do can hurt me.

RUTH

You better leave now, Martin

MARTIN

You must trust love, Ruth, and the next time you see me - it will be when I have good reason to call.

They kiss briefly, and Martin goes on his way while Ruth watches him.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - EVENING

Martin is at his small desk tapping away at his typewriter. Maria knocks and opens the door to excitedly announce another visitor. It is the mysterious RUSS BRISSENDEN a small old man with pale skin and sunken features.

RUSS BRISSENDEN

Martin Eden - a pleasure. RUSS BRISSENDEN. The Morses told me where you lived.

He pulls a bottle of scotch from his pocket and a book that he throws down in front of Eden.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)  
 There's a book by a poet. Read it  
 and keep it. Say, you needn't tell  
 me that you haven't tackled poetry.  
 Let me see it.

MARTIN  
 I'll make a bundle and you can take  
 it home with you--

RUSS BRISSENDEN  
 I knew you were a brilliant man  
 from the moment I heard you  
 sparring with Caldwell. And your  
 diatribe with that pompous-ass  
 Hapgood was priceless!

Brissenden offers Martin a drink from his bottle and Martin  
 waves it off.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)  
 You're much too good to palter with  
 magazines. Let beauty be your end!  
 Leave fame and coin alone.

Sign away on a ship tomorrow and go  
 back to your sea! You are so young,  
 Martin boy, so young, but you will  
 scorch your gauze wings. You have  
 already done so.

Martin is smiling at this odd little man as he rambles  
 endlessly, swigging his scotch frequently.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)  
 The bourgeois cities will kill you.  
 Look at the den of traitors where I  
 first saw you. One can't keep his  
 sanity in such an atmosphere.  
 Though it helps to laden it with  
 scotch and hashish.

Brissenden looks down at Martin's poem, THE LOVE CYCLE. He  
 starts mumbling to himself as he quickly reads through the  
 text.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)  
 You wrote this to her - that pale,  
 shriveled, female thing!

Martin suddenly grabs Russ by the throat and begins to choke  
 him with one hand. Brissenden just stares at Eden, fearlessly  
 and devilishly. Martin flings him onto the bed and Russ,  
 sputters and coughs.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)  
 You'd have made me eternally your  
 debtor had you shaken out the  
 flame.

MARTIN  
 I'm sorry - hope I didn't hurt you.

RUSS BRISSENDEN  
 Ah, you young Greek! Well, well -  
 it is you who must pay for that  
 strength.

MARTIN  
 What do you mean?

RUSS BRISSENDEN  
 What under heaven do you want with  
 the daughter of a bourgeois? You  
 want the blazing butterflies, not  
 the little gray moths. Oh, you will  
 grow tired of them - all the female  
 things, if you are unlucky enough  
 to live.

MARTIN  
 What are you trying --

RUSS BRISSENDEN  
 But you won't live. You won't go  
 back to your ships and sea;  
 therefore, you'll hang around these  
 pest-holes of cities until your  
 bones are rotten and then you'll  
 die.

Farewell, my young Greek. I shall  
 return when I have thoroughly sated  
 myself with your eloquent prose.

Russ leaves abruptly. Martin looks out the window and watches  
 Brissenden briskly making his way down the street. Martin  
 shakes his head, looks at the book of poetry that Russ left,  
 shrugs and begins reading it.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - WEEKS LATER

Russ Brissenden bursts into Martin's room.

RUSS BRISSENDEN  
 Oh the weeks I've had, lost in your  
 brilliance! I read them over and  
 over many times over! I shall never  
 write again! I am a dauber in clay.  
 This is something more than genius,  
 it transcends genius!

MARTIN

Mr. Briss--

RUSS BRISSENDEN

Let me give you some advice. I read THE SHAME OF THE SUN, not twice, but three times - when this book is published, it will make a great hit!

MARTIN

And your next advice is to submit it to the magazines as a serial?

RUSS BRISSENDEN

By all means no -- offer it to the first class houses. Martin Eden will be famous, and not the least of his fame will rest upon that work.

RUSS BRISSENDEN (CONT'D)

Let's celebrate! First we drink - then I have a little surprise for you, Martin.

MARTIN

Let's invite Maria for a nip, then. She'll be so tickled. She's forever trying to get me to drink with her. Be careful with her home-made wine... it's awful!

EXT. OAKLAND STREET - NIGHT

Russ Brissenden leads Martin through the dark streets of Oakland, a whiskey glass in his hand, his large overcoat flapping around him. He points to a social hall that is lit up and men can be seen entering. A few groups of men are smoking, drinking, spitting and hanging around the entrance of the hall.

RUSS

Come on! Now you're going to see the real dirt! I have to see you in action at the local. One of the few places around where you can still speak your mind without getting your head bashed in, or too bashed in, I should say.

MARTIN

What do I want with socialism?

INT. SOCIAL HALL - CONTINUOUS

RUSS

Outsiders are allowed five minute speeches. Get up and spout, man! Tell them why you don't want socialism. Slam Nietzsche into them.

MARTIN

I can't figure why you, of all men, are a socialist, Russ. You detest the crowd.

Martin points to Russ's whiskey glass.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Socialism doesn't seem to save you.

RUSS

The past is the past and anyone who says that history repeats itself is a fool liar. Of course I don't like the crowd, but what's a poor chap to do? Now go on and get up there before I get too drunk to enjoy the show.

Martin smiles and pats Russ on the back as he makes his way to the front of the crowd. He begins his speech in a low, unsure voice.

MARTIN

My name is Martin Eden. I come before you today, not as a socialist, but as an Individualist...

The crowd is electric and men begin to yell out from the crowd.

CROWD VOICES:

--Talk to us, man!

--Speak up!

--Louder!

--He's a Nietzsche disciple!

By the end of Martin's speech, He is confident, passionate and loud.



MARTIN

... Remember, I am enunciating  
biology and not sentimental ethics.  
No state of slaves can stand --

RUSS

(yelling out from the  
back)  
How about the United States!

Russ is doing a little jig, and is all smiles as he helps to incite and excite the mob of socialists.

LATER

As Martin is speaking, a flash pan ignites as a photographer gets a picture of Martin raising a defiant fist. A reporter is scrawling madly across a tablet.

REPORTER

(to photographer)  
Got it? Nice!

LATER

MARTIN

(ending his speech)  
... No sooner can a slave society  
be organized than deterioration  
sets in. It's easy for you to talk  
of annulling the law of  
development, but where is the new  
law of development that will  
maintain your strength? Formulate  
it! Is it already formulated? Then  
state it!... Thank you.

Martin goes back to take his seat with Russ amidst an uproar of voices. Some voices could be heard requesting the chairman to extend Martin's time. Others were clamoring for a chance to rebut Martin's remarks.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Martin is having a cup of coffee while looking over a story and making edits. Russ Brissenden barges in with a newspaper.

RUSS

Have you seen THE CUB today?

He unfolds the paper to show Martin the front page. The photo of Martin speaking to the crowd of socialists is featured with a story.

RUSS (CONT'D)

Apparently you are now the most notorious leader of the Oakland socialists.

MARTIN

(reading the copy)

But this is a complete fabrication. I didn't say this! Either this reporter was drunk or criminally malicious.

Martin tosses the paper in the garbage and sits on the bed silently for a time. He is apparently worried about the smear cast against him.

RUSS

Oh, what do you care? Surely you don't desire the approval of the bourgeois swine who reads this garbage?

MARTIN

It's very likely to make my relations with Ruth's family very awkward. Her father always contended I was a socialist and this miserable stuff will only clinch his beliefs.

RUSS

Too late now, I guess --

MORSE FRONT DOOR - DAY

(MOS) Martin rings the door bell. A servant answers but refuses to let Martin enter.

Martin comes back another day and is refused entry again. He pleads with the servant to no avail.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Martin tries the phone, but is likewise screened by a servant and refused.

MONTAGE

--Martin goes into the green grocer and is told to leave.

GROCERY CLERK

You no come in my place again! You traitor to your own country!

--Martin walks down the street to his flat and the neighborhood kids who only weeks before were surrounding Ruth's carriage are yelling insults to him.

STREET KIDS

--Hobo!  
 --Bum!  
 --Red shirt!  
 --Traitor!

One boy hits Martin with a tomato and they all run.

END MONTAGE

INT. HIGGINBOTHAM FLAT HALL - DAY

Martin goes to see his sister, Gertrude, at her flat above HIGGINBOTHAM'S CASH STORE.

Martin knocks on the door. One of his nieces opens the door and she goes to get her mother.

GERTRUDE

Have ya completely lost your mind now! Bernard's downstairs, and he's furious with you! Why, Martin? Tell me why you did it?

MARTIN

I swear, it's all a big mistake --

Bernard enters the hallway from below and sees Martin at the door of his flat.

BERNAND

You! Get out! Never come near my family again!

MARTIN

I just wanted to let Gertrude know that --

BERNAND

Are you deaf, man! Get out before I have the law here!

GERTRUDE

Martin, please...

BERNAND

You know they sent a reporter over here?

Martin remains silent.

BERNAND (CONT'D)

I told 'em that you were a bum. I told them how I offered you a job, and you refused to work --

GERTRUDE

Martin, why don't you just leave and go find a job somewhere until things settle down.

MARTIN

I didn't mean to get the family dragged into this thing.

Martin walks off slowly... sadly.

EXT. JUST UP THE STREET FROM MORSE HOME - DAY

Martin waits down the street on a stoop for Ruth to emerge from her house. Finally, he spots Ruth coming down the steps with Norman. They are talking and walking when they suddenly see Martin and they freeze. They then attempt to ignore Martin. He steps in their way.

NORMAN

If you interfere with my sister I'll call an officer. She does not wish to speak with you.

MARTIN

Call an officer if you like. I'm going to talk to Ruth.

He turns pleadingly to Ruth.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I need to have it from your own lips. Is this all of your own free will?

RUTH

It is. You have disgraced me so that I'm ashamed to see my friends. They are all talking about me and my family. I never wish to see you again.

MARTIN

Friends! Gossip! Newspapers! Surely such things are not stronger than love!

NORMAN

You see, she doesn't want to have anything more to do with you.

MARTIN

Than I can only believe that you  
never loved me.

Martin walks down the street completely devastated. Ruth makes a motion to call after him, and Norman takes her arm.

SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN

Maria is ironing. A huge pile of clothes are beside the board and she looks as haggard as Martin. Martin walks into his room. He comes out into the kitchen immediately.

MARTIN

(panicked)  
Where is it?

MARIA

A man come and took it away. Said  
you were three months back on da  
payments.

MARTIN

Martin begins breaking down. Maria looks at him with pity and embraces him like a mother comforting a hurt child. Martin can barely be heard as his head is on her shoulder.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I've lost everything, Maria...  
Ruth... family... friends... money  
and now I don't even have my  
writing.

MARIA

I know, I know, they take you  
writing machine, Martin Eden, they  
be better to rip outa you heart.

Martin heaves in Marias embrace as he sobs and laments his loss.

MONTAGE - MARTIN DEPRESSED

--Martin walking along the bay

--Martin walking in the park

--Martin walking past the OAKLAND LIBRARY

--Martin looking in the window of a store and seeing a  
typewriter on display.

--Martin watching two young lovers in a sailboat as the sunset  
begins to paint the horizon crimson.

--Martin walks by THE LAST CHANCE SALOON. He passes by at first, pauses for a moment and enters.

END MONTAGE

INT. LAST CHANCE SALOON - EVENING

Martin sits down in his usual spot. Johnny, the owner comes over.

JOHNNY  
Marty? You okay? You don't look so hot. Can I get you something?

MARTIN  
If you did, I couldn't pay you for it.

JOHNNY  
No worries. You always have credit here. What would you like?

MARTIN  
Whiskey?

JOHNNY  
Coming up.

Johnny puts a glass of whiskey in front of Martin and also a pint of beer.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
And there's a little something to wash it down with.

MARTIN  
I'll pay you soon as I can, Johnny.

JOHNNY  
I know you will. And if ya don't...  
(he shrugs)  
Hey, look who's here! If she don't put a smile on your face, I don't know what will?

The door of the pub opens and LIZZIE CONNOLLY enters with her friend. Lizzie sees Martin right away and lights up.

LIZZIE CONNOLLY  
(to her friend)  
Go and get our table, and I'll catch up with you.

Lizzie goes and gives Martin a hug that lasts longer than he expected.

MARTIN

You look real good Lizzie.

LIZZIE

Well, you don't. Do you need some money? You got somewhere to stay?

MARTIN

Since when did you have any money?

LIZZIE

I don't, but I'd give you the little I do got when I work the cannery. I mean if you really needed it.

He looks at her as his heart completely melts.

MARTIN

Oh Lizzie, you're really special. How did I never see that over the years?

LIZZIE

Say, what happened to your pretty lady friend?

MARTIN

That was a long time ago... it seems like a thousand years now. You know she said that you were very beautiful.

LIZZIE

Go on. You know that ain't true. A lady like that has no place passing judgement on the likes of me.

MARTIN

You know that you're very beautiful, Lizzie.

LIZZIE

I'm proud to be your friend, Marty. I'd do anything for you.

MARTIN

You are a great, noble woman. It is I who should be proud to know you. And I am. You are a ray of light to me in a very dark world.

LIZZIE

(taking his hands in hers)  
Why don't we get married, Marty?  
You could do anything with me.

You could throw me in the mud and walk on me. An' you're the only man in the world that can.

MARTIN

And it's just because of that why I'm not going to. You are so big and generous that you challenge me to equal generousness. I'm sorry I came here today and met you.

Lizzie looks down at the floor dejectedly. Martin puts his hand underneath her chin and lifts her head so that their eyes once again meet.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Look Lizzie, I can't begin to tell you how much I admire and respect you. You are magnificently good. But what's the use of words? Yet there's something I'd like to do. You've had a hard life and I hope one day that I can make it easy for you.

LIZZIE

I don't understand --

MARTIN

I hope to get hold of some money someday soon. Lots of it.

Lizzie is shaking her head, no.

LIZZIE

But I don't want --

MARTIN

I'd like to turn it over to you. There must be something you want -- to go to school or business college. I can fix it for you. Anything you want. Just name it. I can fix it for you.

Lizzie's friend calls her from across the room.

GIRL FRIEND

C'mon Lizzie -- bring him too, if ya want.

LIZZIE

Let's don't talk about that now. I gotta go -- c'mon I'll buy you another beer.



MARTIN

I need to go -- take care of  
yourself, Liz.

Martin gives Lizzie a kiss. She pulls him to herself again for a long embrace and watches him leave the saloon. The door closes behind him and she watches his pathetic figure pass by the window.

LIZZIE

(quietly to herself)  
Lord love you, Martin Eden.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN - DAY

Martin enters the flat and Maria is sitting at the kitchen table, the jug of wine and a glass in front of her she is slightly drunk and misty-eyed. The family Bible is also on the table in front of her. All the kids are quietly eating soup and bread together. The mood is solemn and ceremonious.

MARIA

You drink with me, Mr. Eden.

Martin sees in her eyes that this is more an order than a request.

MARIA (CONT'D)

This is a special day in my house.

Martin gets a glass and pours it half full with Maria's special wine. He holds out his glass. Maria raises hers to clink the rim of Martin's.

MARTIN

What's the occasion?

MARTIN (CONT'D)

My husband. He die on this day two  
years ago.

Maria opens the family Bible and retrieves a pencil sketch of her husband and slides it over to Martin.

MARIA

My Manuel.

MARTIN

He must've been a very fine man.  
I'm glad I can share this moment.  
You're a special friend, Maria  
Silva. I mean you could've thrown  
me out so many times when I fell  
behind on payin...

MARIA

Shoosh! Now I done cryin'. I gotta you special somethin'.

MARTIN

Me? But why --

MARIA

Shoosh! Shoosh! You help me plenty with the wash and a iron. I take in more laundry from Boggio's boardin-a-home and make a little extra mon.

Maria goes and gets what appears to be a bundle of towels. She sets it on the table, and it's actually something heavy wrapped in a towel. Martin looks at the bundle and then at Maria curiously.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Go on... you open.

Martin pulls back the four corners of the towel. A new typewriter is sitting square in the center. His eyes well with tearful gratitude. He is speechless. He gulps.

MARTIN

Maria... I don't --

MARIA

Then don't. Every year this day, I gotta do somethin' a nice to remember my Manuel. Oh! I almost forget... that a box get delivered for you early this morn. It come by the express.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin sets the typewriter on the table. The express box is tied with a cord. He takes out his pocket knife and cuts the cord. He opens the box and half a dozen complimentary copies of his novel, THE SHAME OF THE SUN, spill out onto the bed. Martin stares at the books, showing no reaction. He finally picks up a copy.

MARTIN

(to himself)

Old Briss was right.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN

Martin walks into the kitchen where Maria is cleaning up the dinner plates.

MARTIN

I did it.

He hands one of his books to Maria.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Here, keep it, it's yours. I wrote it in the room right there, and I guess some quarts of your vegetable soup went into it, too.

MARIA

You did it, Mr. Eden! Now this a double special day. Maybe, my Manuel, he look down and say, 'He very good man! I talk to Lord and make good gift for him.'

Maria picks up the family Bible and puts THE SHAME OF THE SUN with it on a side table.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Now I keep my two best books together!

MARTIN

I have to tell old Briss. After all, he's the one who gave me the advice. He's the one that said it would happen this way.

EXT. EPHEMERA HOTEL - NIGHT

Martin walks up to the hotel with a copy of his book and an unopened bottle of scotch in hand.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY AND STAIRCASE.

Martin goes up the stairs and races back down again as the desk clerk watches. He enquires at the desk.

MARTIN

Did Mr. Brissenden leave a forwarding address?

HOTEL CLERK

Haven't you heard?

MARTIN

Heard what?

HOTEL CLERK

Why, the papers were full of it.

MARTIN

I don't read the papers.

HOTEL CLERK

He was found dead in bed. Suicide. Apparently, he was quite a sick man. He... well he shot himself through the head.

Martin is frozen for a moment. Without another word, he stumbles off into the night.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Martin sits on his bed stunned at the sudden and tragic death of his friend, and he sees the opened express box still on his bed and throws the box and books to the floor. A note falls out. He picks it up and begins reading it to himself.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN

Martin rushes into the kitchen with the note in hand and grabs Maria by her shoulders.

MARTIN

Maria, I'm going to leave you. And you're going to leave here yourself soon. You can rent this house and be a landlord yourself! I want you to send back all this laundry unwashed. Do you understand.

MARIA

But what am I going to --

MARTIN

You're going to call your brother in San Leandro and tell him to come see me tomorrow so I can set him up with a milk ranch. I'm going to get you the finest milk ranch in all the county!

MARIA

Are you alright, Mr. Eden?

MARTIN

Forget me. You're going to be alright, and your kids are going to be alright. They will all have shoes and go to high school and university.

Maria looks at Martin unsure about his condition.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 (reading the note)  
 Listen to this... PLEASE FIND  
 HERewith A CONTRACT IN DUPLICATE  
 FOR YOUR NEXT BOOK... blah blah...  
 here, ON RECEIPT OF YOUR CONTRACT  
 WE SHALL BE PLEASED TO MAKE YOU AN  
 ADVANCE ON YOUR ROYALTIES OF FIVE  
 THOUSAND DOLLARS.

MARIA  
 You really did it!

MARTIN  
 Not only that, but they want to  
 discuss a ten year contract where  
 SINGLETREE will have exclusive  
 rights for anything more I produce  
 during that time.

Martin stares as if in a catatonic state.

MARIA  
 Martin?

MARTIN  
 (softly)  
 I'm rich.

MARIA  
 You were always rich my friend.

MARTIN  
 Why is it I feel so empty, then?

MARIA  
 I think maybe you in shock still.  
 Maybe shock about our friend, Mr.  
 Briss.

MARTIN  
 Do me a big favor, Maria?

EXT. SILVA FLAT - FRONT ENTRY -DAY

Maria has Gertrude by the arm. Both women are winded and  
 running up to the flat.

GERTRUDE  
 Can't you tell me anything?

MARIA  
 Martin needs you. That's all I cana  
 say.

INT. SILVA FLAT - KITCHEN

The door flies open and Maria brings Gertrude into her kitchen where Martin is waiting.

GERTRUDE

What's this about Martin? Are you in trouble?

MARTIN

Thanks, Maria. I would've come myself, but I didn't want another row with Bernard.

GERTRUDE

That stuff in the newspapers broke him all up. I never seen him so mad. He'll be alright after a time, but you best get a job first and steady down --

MARTIN

I'm not going to get a job, and you can tell him so for me. Now sit right here.

Martin picks up a satchel and empties a hundred gold pieces in her lap in a glinting, tinkling stream.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Remember that fiver you gave me so I could get the ferry to San Francisco? Well, there it is, with ninety-nine brothers of different ages, but all the same size.

Gertrude burst into tears, and begins to moan.

GERTRUDE

My boy, my dear boy! Does this mean you come by this money honestly?

MARTIN

I earned every penny. Maybe now Mr. Higginbotham will have me over for dinner. I've got a check for him, as well. Provided he never lets you work a another day in your life. He can expand his grocery store, too, the way he's always dreamed about.

GERTRUDE

He'll have ya for dinner -- that is if he can bear to look you in the eye after how he's treated you all these years.

Gertrude hugs and kisses Martin.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO METROPOLE HOTEL - DAY

Lizzie Connolly sits alone at a table in the hotel restaurant just finishing her lunch and seated next to a window. She's dressed in a fashion befitting a much higher social class of woman and her makeup is minimal and tastefully applied. Martin is well groomed and dressed in a suit jacket, he walks up to her and they embrace.

LIZZIE  
So you're stayin' here in this  
beautiful place now?

MARTIN  
Only temporarily. I'm actually  
going out to sea again.

She looks at him as if he lost his mind.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
No not like that. I'm going to  
Tahiti in a few days on the  
MARIPOSA.

LIZZIE  
You're leaving?

MARTIN  
I need to get away for awhile. I  
feel as though this city is killing  
me. A good friend once told me that  
this might happen. You look  
wonderful, Lizzie.

LIZZIE  
I've been going to night school and  
gettin' high marks too. I want to  
change my class, just the same as  
you. I figured then maybe you'd  
marry me.

Martin is taken aback by the comment.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
Awe, I'm just teasin' you.

MARTIN  
I guess I thought very much like  
that once myself. That if I  
improved my station... oh well.

LIZZIE

Martin. I can see you're not happy. Something is terribly wrong with you.

MARTIN

I'm fine, Lizzie, really, I just need to get away and get some rest.

LIZZIE

Oh, I think you might be fine physically, but somethin' ain't right in your head. Something's wrong with your think machine, Martin.

MARTIN

Oh, I just need to get away. When I was starving, I had nobody on my side. Now that I'm a published author, people who hated me are now asking me to dinner. I haven't changed. I've always been the same Martin Eden.

LIZZIE

Miss Ruth, too?

MARTIN

Oh she's long gone, I'm afraid.

LIZZIE

She ain't that far gone --

Lizzie cocks her head towards the street. Martin looks out the window and sees Ruth with Norman and Arthur watching the hotel entrance.

The color drains from Martin's face.

MARTIN

Would you believe, even her father invited me over to their house for dinner. Her parents have never liked me from the start.

LIZZIE

Well, they're waiting for me to leave, I'm sure.

MARTIN

Please don't--

LIZZIE

You can't hide from her forever, Marty. The MARIPOSA don't go that far.



Lizzie gets up to leave and hugs Martin.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)  
 I will never live long enough to  
 thank you for all ya done for me.  
 Good bye, love. Please call me when  
 you're back home.

MARTIN  
 Bye, Lizzie.

Martin watches as the confident new Lizzie walks out of the hotel. He sees a street beggar stop her. He puts out his hand. Martin watches as Lizzie turns and walks away from the man.

Martin pays the bill and watches as Norman and Arthur hold back and Ruth slowly approaches the hotel entrance by herself. She hesitates and glances back at her brothers who motion for her to proceed forward.

Martin then sees Lizzie again coming back down the street with a paper bag. She returns to the beggar and gives him a sandwich, apple and cup of coffee. She puts her arm around him and appears to say something in his ear. He takes her hand and gives her a look of gratitude. Martin closes his eyes and expels a great sigh of relief.

HOTEL RESTAURANT -CONTINUOUS

Ruth walks up to the table where Martin is still seated. He looks up at Ruth, but shows no emotion. She takes the chair across from him where Lizzie sat just moments before.

RUTH  
 Well, aren't you glad to see me?

Martin is silent.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
 I wanted to see you. I came to tell  
 you I have been very foolish. Here,  
 I brought something for you --

Martin stares at her with tired, hurt eyes. Ruth slides a familiar looking book across the table toward Martin.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
 Mother wanted me to marry Charley  
 Hapgood.

MARTIN  
 Now I suppose she wants you to  
 marry me.

RUTH

She will not object, that much I'm certain.

MARTIN

And yet, I'm no more eligible now than I was when she broke our engagement.

Ruth winces and turns away as if stung.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I haven't changed any. I'm the same Martin Eden, though for that matter I'm a bit worse -- I smoke again. And I drink. Do you want to smell my breath? I haven't got a job. I'm not going to look for a job.

Martin gets increasingly more irritated and vocal.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Furthermore, I think Charley Hapgood is an unmitigated ass. I had dinner with him the other night, so I ought to know.

RUTH

But you didn't accept father's invitation to dinner?

MARTIN

Oh, you know about that. Who's idea was that? Your mother's?

Ruth remains silent.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I thought so. And now I suppose she has sent you.

RUTH

Oh, Martin, don't be cruel. You haven't even kissed me once.

MARTIN

Why didn't you dare it before? When I was starving? I've got the same flesh on my bones, the same ten fingers and toes. Why does everyone suddenly want me now?

It must be for something outside of me. It is for the recognition I have received and for the money I have earned and am earning.

And it is for that, for the recognition and the money, that you now want me?

RUTH  
You're breaking my heart. I'm here because I love you.

MARTIN  
Explain to me how it is that you love me now so much more than you did when your love was weak enough to deny me?

Ruth breaks down and is sobbing.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
When I was all that I am now, nobody out of my own class seemed to care for me. Get a job, everybody said.

Ruth makes a motion of dissent.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
Yes, yes, except in your case. You told me to get a position. The homely word, job, like much that I have written, offends you.

RUTH  
You spoke so often with broad charity of the fallibility and frailty of humankind. Extend that charity to me. I acted mistakenly by yielding to Mother's will. Forgive me. Please!

MARTIN  
It is easy to forgive when there is really nothing to forgive.

RUTH  
Martin, you know that I couldn't have loved you and not meant well--

MARTIN  
Your well-meaning was aimed to formalize me. To make me over into one of your own class with your class-ideals, class-values and class prejudices. You'd have destroyed me.

Martin studies her for a long moment.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

And still you do not understand,  
even now, what I am saying.

RUTH

I do not understand, but I can come  
to understand. I can still learn,  
Martin. Oh Martin! -- won't you  
please let me try?

MARTIN

It is too late.

RUTH

It is not too late. I will prove to  
you that my love has grown.

MARTIN

If you had been this way a few  
months ago, it would have been  
different.

(pause)

I am sick, very sick... how sick I  
did not realize till now.

RUTH

I can make you well. Let me please  
make you well.

MARTIN

Oh, it's not my body. Something has  
gone out of me. I have always been  
unafraid of life, but I never  
dreamed of being sated with life.  
It's as though life has so filled  
me that I am empty of any desire  
for anything.

Ruth gets up from her chair.

RUTH

(whispers softly)

I will always be waiting for you,  
Martin, if ever you get well again -

-

Martin lights a cigarette with a shaky hand and doesn't even  
watch her leave. He picks up the book that Ruth left. He  
looks at the spine. It is that poetry book by SWINBURNE.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - THE LUXURY STEAMER - MARIPOSA - DAY

The ship, MARIPOSA, is steaming towards Tahiti and is  
somewhere in the open Pacific waters.

EXT. SHIP DECK - CONTINUOUS

Martin is at the ship's rail looking down into the churning waters. He hears soft music. He looks to an upper terrace to see men in dinner jackets and women in elegant evening gowns sipping champagne. He hears familiar voices in a low area of the ship and walks over to see a group of dirty coal-stokers taking a break from their hard toil and heat in the engine room.

He walks past a glass and sees his own reflection. He stops and takes a moment as if trying to assess his place among the distant juxtapositions of these two classes within mere steps of each other.

INT. MARTIN'S SMALL STATEROOM - AFTERNOON

Martin is lying on the bed, his eyes closed. There's a knock on his cabin door. He rises and answers the door. One of the ship's staff officers is standing, dressed in starched whites with a big smile. He greets Martin.

STAFF OFFICER

Good afternoon, Mr. Eden. How are you today?

MARTIN

Fine.

STAFF OFFICER

I'm rather surprised to find you down here in steerage. We have some very nice luxury suites available. Would you care to upgrade?

MARTIN

I chose to be down here. I sleep better with the sounds of the engines.

STAFF OFFICER

Have it your way, Mr. Eden. We are here to please. If there's anything we can do to make you more comfortable don't hesitate to ask.

Martin goes to close the door.

STAFF OFFICER (CONT'D)

Oh, one more thing, Mr. Eden. Actually, this is the true purpose for my intrusion. Captain Breese would be honored if you would join him at the Captain's table during the remainder of our voyage.

Apparently, word got out that you were aboard. You will be keeping company with some very influential figures, even a Senator.

MARTIN  
(sarcastically)  
Why would I pass that up?

STAFF OFFICER  
Excellent! I'll get word to the Captain.

Martin closes the door and sighs deeply. He looks out the porthole and sees the ocean speeding past. His cabin is close to the water line. He sits on his bed. He has a few books on his side table. He picks up the book of SWINBURNE'S poetry and opens to where he first read, when he was in the Morse parlor, just before setting eyes on Ruth for the very first time.

MARTIN  
(reading to himself)  
"From too much love of living,  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be.

That no life lives forever;  
That dead men rise up never;  
That even the weariest river  
winds somewhere safe to sea."

Martin suddenly smiles. He begins laughing. He runs and opens the porthole and looks down into the froth.

EXT. MARIPOSA'S HULL. CONTINUOUS

Martin hangs by his hands from the port rim and his feet are barely skimming the rushing water. He thinks he hears his name called out. It's a vaguely familiar voice. He looks up and sees Jack, his writer friend from the SOPHIA SUTHERLAND looking down on him from an upper deck.

JACK  
I warned you, Martin.

There's no turning back. Once you're a writer... It's deep, often dark. And it's forever. Do you remember?

Martin looks down again at the water racing past his suspended feet. He looks up again. Jack is gone.

He lets himself drop into the water, and the massive hull of the MARIPOSA rushes past him like a great wall.

Martin puts his head back for a moment looking up toward the heavens. He fills his lungs with air and then swims down into the depths as far as his strength will allow.

The sound of the MARIPOSA's powerful engines can barely be heard receding in the distance.

Martin's last recollection is looking up towards the surface which seems miles away. Then a sudden expulsion of air bubbles dancing past his face... rising to the surface... forever towards the light.

FADE TO BLACK