

THE MAN WHO WAS  
THURSDAY

Screenplay  
By Martin Olson

Based on the novel  
G.K. Chesterton

Draft 2

Mad Chance Productions

THE MAN WHO WAS THURSDAY

FADE IN:

EXT. SAFFRON PARK, LONDON - WINTER - SUNSET

A circle of ragged rooftops frame an extraordinary, bloody sunset. TILT DOWN to an elegant city park lined with barren trees. A light drift of snow falls, melting the moment it hits the ground.

CAPTION: Saffron Park, London - 1899

CLOSE - A PARK GAS LAMP

A buzzing HUMMING BIRD is caught inside the lamp. A HAND appears, opens the lamp door and the bird darts away. WIDEN to reveal that the hand belongs to an old ONE-ARMED LAMPLIGHTER on a step ladder who turns on the gas and ignites the lamp. PAN past him to --

ANGLE ON PARK

Now the setting sun bathes the scene in a strange, blue-red luminescence. Odd, colorfully dressed, Fellini-like people mull about, as if for a party. Strings of fat Chinese lanterns crisscross the green. Tables with refreshments and stacks of books are set up. A bonfire is lit. We HEAR the VOICE of a peculiar but refined gentleman, our NARRATOR:

NARRATOR V.O.

This might be called a detective story, except that it contains no real detectives and no real clues. Instead, we may call it a mystery. And it begins here. 1899, to be precise, a week before the old century gives way to the new. Saffron Park is known as an artist colony, although it must be said that it never produced any art.

More people appear. Their makeup and hairstyles are overdone and stylized, making the entire scene resemble a vivid dream.

NARRATOR V.0.

But even though the people are  
not artists, they are themselves  
works of art.

ANGLE ON A FLAMBOYANT POET

with a striking appearance; a blood-red suit, his chin  
protruding from a perfectly-coifed oval of flaming red hair. He  
takes a book from a table and begins dramatically (and to us,  
inaudibly) addressing a group of ladies.

NARRATOR V.0.

The young man with the long, fiery  
hair and the impudent face is not  
really a poet, but surely he is a poem.

PAN to an OLD ECCENTRIC with a wild beard and a white hat,  
reading Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* to passersby.

NARRATOR V.0.

And this venerable old humbug is  
not really a fore-runner of psychoanalysis,  
but he is undoubtedly the cause of  
psychoanalysis in others.

PAN to a BLIND LUNATIC waving a Bible like a sword and  
haranguing passersby with a frenzied doomsday speech.

NARRATOR V.0.

And the tremulous orator with the  
vacuous eyes is not really blind,  
but rather a visionary.

The dream-like sunset darkens. Lamps in the surrounding  
brownstones flicker on. More people appear with parasols,  
sipping drinks, talking and laughing.

NARRATOR V.0.

For tonight is Poets' Night, when  
madmen, fools and geniuses alike  
spout their bombastic theories  
to amuse the crowd, and when the  
big Chinese lanterns glow in the  
dwarfish trees like some fierce  
and monstrous fruit.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE BLIND LUNATIC

begins blindly grabbing people to make them listen.

BLIND LUNATIC

Listen to me! There are demons and  
angels among us, grappling for  
control of the souls of mankind!

A POLICEMAN frees a man from the lunatic's grasp.

BLIND LUNATIC (CONT'D)

Beware! This is the battlefield  
between heaven and hell! I can smell  
them! I can taste them! They are  
here among us now!

The Policeman pushes him on his way. PAN through the crowd to  
the flamboyant, red-haired POET who by now has gathered a crowd  
around him. The poet is LUCIAN GREGORY -- 20, conceited,  
melodramatic, gesturing with a walking stick, drinking freely  
from a glass of wine as we fade in on his speech:

GREGORY

...And with the twentieth century  
a mere whisper away, a single  
poetic word distills the quintessence  
of our dying century. That word  
is chaos. Yes, I am an anarchist,  
a bomb-thrower.

The ladies TITTER, amused at his brashness. A crowd gathers.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

And why an anarchist? Because  
human order destroys nature.  
It shackles the earth with unnatural  
laws. As a poet, I insist that  
true art is devoid of all law.  
That true poetry is true disorder.

The crowd CHUCKLES. A crisp male VOICE cuts loudly through the  
murmur of the crowd.

VOICE

Sir, I disagree.

The crowd HUSHES and parts -- as GABRIEL SYME, 20, oddly

handsome, steps forward.

SYME

If chaos is fundamental, then it  
is fundamentally meaningless. Chaos  
can have no meaning without order.

The crowd MURMUR in agreement.

ANGLE ON A BEAUTIFUL GIRL

with shock red-hair. This is MARIANNE GREGORY, 25. She watches  
Syme with more than casual interest.

BACK TO SCENE

SYME (CONT'D)

Indeed, order is meaning. The  
universe exists because order  
transforms the chaotic shards of  
space into cyclic movement, creating  
from chaos beauty, symmetry and truth.

The crowd lightly APPLAUD this challenge and widen their circle  
to allow Gregory and Syme to face each other. Gregory smirks.

GREGORY

Symmetry? True art trashes symmetry.  
Art is anarchy! The mad bomber, for  
example, is the supreme artist.  
He blows the head off an otherwise  
mundane policeman, transforming  
his boring skull into a thrilling  
poem of gore with a whistle still  
clamped between its teeth.

The crowd giggles at this bombast. Gregory gulps down his wine,  
slightly drunk as he gestures at Syme.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Compare that transformed policeman  
to this soporific saint of symmetry,  
whose "poems" are undoubtably as  
exciting as a bloody train schedule.

The crowd chuckles. Syme bows and smiles at Gregory.

SYME

Thank you, sir, for making my point.  
For when a train hisses to a halt  
on schedule, it triumphs over chaos.  
The rare, strange thing is to reach the  
station precisely on time; the dull,  
artless, obvious thing is to miss it.

Scattered APPLAUSE.

SYME (CONT'D)

No, take your mere books of verse.  
Let me read a rail-way time-table --  
a fantastic poem praising the triumph  
of order over chaos!

Rousing APPLAUSE.

GREGORY

Sir, I should be hanged if Order  
and Regularity are not the hallmarks  
of one thing only -- utter boredom.

SYME

Sir, do you believe in throwing bombs?

GREGORY

I do.

SYME

Then perhaps you should be hanged.

More triumphant APPLAUSE. Gregory is flustered.

GREGORY

Do you expect me to try to  
revolutionize all of society  
here in the park?

SYME

No, I don't. But if you were  
serious about anarchy, that's  
exactly what you would do.

Gregory's eyes flash with ferocity; he begins to tremble.

GREGORY

Are you accusing me, sir,

of not being serious about  
throwing bombs? Are you?

He seems on the verge of violence. The crowd MURMURS  
uncomfortably.

SYME

I beg your pardon?

GREGORY

Do you insult the very core  
of my belief? Are you rash  
enough to call me a liar  
to my bloody face?

With this, Gregory SMASHES his glass at Syme's feet and jabs his  
stick into Syme's chest. Syme grabs the end of the stick and  
pushes it away. An awkward beat - as the crowd MURMURS in  
shock.

ANGLE ON MARIANNE breaking in. She curls her arm around Syme's  
and casts an angry look at Gregory.

MARIANNE

I think perhaps it's time for some  
refreshments...

(to Gregory)

I see you're already full. Your  
foot is still in your mouth.

The crowd LAUGHS as she quickly escorts Syme towards the  
refreshment table. Furious, Gregory turns and storms off.

ANGLE ON MARIANNE AND SYME

strolling through the park arm in arm. A barbershop quartet  
begins SINGING on the green.

SYME

It was kind of you to intercede,  
Miss...?

MARIANNE

Marianne Gregory. Sister to the  
bomb-thrower.

Syme raises his eyebrows.

SYME

I see. I am Gabriel Syme.

MARIANNE

Well, Mr. Syme, you've just experienced my brother at his best and at his worst. There is no in-between with our family. Including myself.

SYME

At the moment, I believe I am experiencing your best.

MARIANNE

Thank you. But I too have my worst side.

SYME

That would be interesting to experience as well.

They reach the refreshment table. Syme pours her a glass of punch. She begins to flirt boldly with him.

MARIANNE

Mr. Syme ... do you find this throng to be as dull as I do?

SYME

No. But I do find them a throng.

MARIANNE

Then perhaps, Mr. Syme, we could find someplace to be throngless.

SYME

Perhaps. I'm afraid I don't know this park very well.

MARIANNE

I do.

She leads him away from the crowd.

EXT. GARDEN - NIGHT

They are seated in a secluded corner, boxed in by tall hedges.

MARIANNE

Mr. Syme, poets such as you  
and my brother, do they often  
mean what they say precisely?  
Or is it merely so many words?

SYME

That depends. If you mean about  
your brother throwing bombs...

MARIANNE

That is what I mean.

SYME

Well, if he really planned to  
dynamite the queen, wouldn't he  
refrain from bellowing it in  
the park?

MARIANNE

(laughs)

Of course. I've been imagining the  
worst. My brother is so impulsive.

(looks into his eyes)

But so am I.

CLOSE - INTERCUTTING MARIANNE/SYME

She stares at him intensely, the sexual tension increasing.  
But something strange is happening to Syme; we see it in his  
face. MYSTERIOUS MUSIC as he stares back at her.

SYME

Did you just feel something...?

MARIANNE

(whisper)

I will if you want me to...

CLOSE - HER FINGERTIPS GENTLY TOUCH HIS KNEE

CLOSE - MARIANNE AND SYME

She parts her lips in an unmistakable invitation. A man  
hypnotized, Syme slowly, hesitantly, inches forward.

CLOSER - THE KISS

(For the purposes of a later scene, the long beat before they

finally KISS should be teased and paced slowly, building to an intense moment when their lips finally touch.)

He kisses her with extreme tenderness. They slightly part, staring at each other. Ever-so-slowly, they kiss again, even more gently, their lips barely touching. It is surprising how innocently she responds, after being so overtly sexual.

Again, they kiss. He becomes more ardent. Now she responds hungrily, her fingers coursing through his hair. And here begins one of the most sensual kisses in film history.

At its most intense sexual peak - A HAND ENTERS THE SHOT, wrenching them apart.

ANOTHER ANGLE

It is Gregory, her brother, on his face a look of death.

GREGORY

(to Syme)

A word with you. If you don't mind.

Marianne tries to hold her temper.

MARIANNE

I mind, Gregory.

GREGORY

Then I must insist.

She sighs and shrugs at Syme. They look at each other for a beat, amused, disappointed.

MARIANNE

Another time, Mr. Syme.

SYME

Yes. Another time.

She rises and leaves. Gregory and Syme are alone.

GREGORY

Come with me.

He leads Syme into the street & WHISTLES for a passing hansom. The cab stops.

GREGORY  
(to driver)  
Alewife Public House on Chiswick  
bank.

They get in.

INT. CAB - MOVING - NIGHT

They are seated opposite each other.

GREGORY  
Mr. Syme, I'm afraid your insult  
this evening is too shocking to  
be wiped out by a mere apology.  
There is only one way to satisfy me.  
And that is to prove you wrong.

SYME  
About what?

GREGORY  
That as an anarchist, I am  
not utterly serious.

EXT. ALEWIFE PUBLIC HOUSE - NIGHT

They get out. Gregory pays and the cab drives off. They stand  
in front of a rustic bar with much drunken ballyhoo going on  
inside.

GREGORY  
I must now ask you to swear  
not to reveal what I am  
about to show you, especially  
not to the police. If you  
swear, I promise you in  
return --

Gregory pauses for dramatic effect.

SYME  
You promise what?

GREGORY  
I promise a very lively  
evening...

Syme has had enough, but tries to remain playful.

SYME

Your offer, Gregory, is far too idiotic to be declined. You say that a poet is always an anarchist. I disagree. But I hope that he is always a gentleman. So I solemnly swear that I will not report anything of this, whatever it is, to the police.

GREGORY

Agreed.

He opens the pub door for Syme, unleashing from inside a roar of drunken laughter. They enter.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

ON A PLATE OF STEAMING OYSTERS being set down on a table.

ON GREGORY AND SYME seated alone amid a dozen empty beer bottles. STILTED ANGLES suggest drunkenness. Gregory checks his watch.

GREGORY

We have a few moments, Syme, so let's enjoy ourselves, before --

He's interrupted as the BARKEEP approaches Gregory and gestures darkly towards the bar.

ANGLE ON BAR

A Policeman has strolled in, checking out the scene.

BACK TO SCENE

BARMAN

(sotto; to Gregory)  
It's almost seven. I'll take

you in the back door.

Gregory nods. The barman yanks a curtain around their table, closing them in.

GREGORY  
(to Syme)  
It is time.

SYME  
For what?

GREGORY  
To lose your argument. Grab  
your glass.

ANGLE ON BARMAN

at the bar. One eye on the policeman, he pulls a hidden lever.

ANGLE ON SYME AND GREGORY

Slowly, their table and chairs begin to creak and revolve. Gregory lights a fat cigar and smiles smugly at Syme's puzzled reaction. Syme grabs his glass and clutches the sides of the table as it revolves as if the floor is unscrewing.

SYME  
What the devil - !

GREGORY  
Relax, old fellow, just our  
little escape hatch.

All at once, their chairs collapse and they shoot down through the floor.

FOLLOWING THEM: We HEAR Gregory LAUGHING as we RATTLE down a kind of roaring chute and spill out onto the floor of --

INT. UNDERGROUND ANTEROOM - NIGHT

Gregory jumps up. A red subterranean haze eerily fills the room.

GREGORY  
This way, if you please.

He leads Syme through a low, vaulted passageway. At the end is

an enormous crimson lantern glowing over a small iron door. Gregory raps at the door with his stick five times, slowly. A muffled VOICE from behind it:

VOICE

Watchword.

GREGORY

Mr. Gilbert Keith.

The heavy door CREAKS open. They pass a small, cloaked man reading a paper on a stool, who nods as they enter --

A TUNNEL - made up of rifles and revolvers, closely packed and strangely interlocked to form the passageway.

GREGORY

Forgive the formality. We have reason to be very strict here.

SYME

Don't apologize, Gregory. I know your passion for law and order.

STILTED ANGLES as Syme follows him, amazed, through snaking passages, suggesting a vast network of conspiracy. The passages end at a black curtain. They pass through it and into --

INT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A dark, spherical steel chamber. In the center is a circular table with twelve chairs. Covering the walls and ceiling are rows of dark spheres. Syme squints his eyes as Gregory lights a lamp hanging over the table, revealing that the spheres are steel bombs.

SYME

My God, are those explosives?

Gregory chuckles. He throws himself expansively onto a chair.

GREGORY

Yes, but don't worry, Syme. They are not active. That is, not yet. Please sit down.

Syme sits in amazement.

GREGORY

My dear Syme, you have said I was not a serious anarchist. Does this strike you as being serious?

SYME

Indeed. But if you are an anarchist, what is this really all about? Your idea is to abolish all government?

GREGORY

It is. Capitalism and communism are fine on paper, but in the real world they merely lead to the rich dictating what is right and wrong. We want to abolish the need for Right and Wrong.

SYME

I hope you will not stop there. What about up and down and in and out?

GREGORY (icily)

Does this seem like a joke to you?

SYME

No. But after taking this trouble to barricade yourselves in the bowels of the earth, why parade your whole secret out in the park by screaming anarchy?

Gregory grins, hands Syme a cigar, lights it.

GREGORY

The answer is simple. I told you I was a serious anarchist, and you did not believe me. Nor do they believe me.

SYME

I see.

GREGORY

When I first joined the Council, I went to meet the President, the genius of the movement. I asked him the best way to avoid being arrested as an anarchist. And he said, "Dress up as an anarchist, fool!" I took his advice, preached bloody murder to those women day and night, and by God, they let me push their baby carriages.

SYME

Your President?

GREGORY

Yes. Sunday. The Council has seven members, each named after a day of the week. It is curious our argument should occur tonight. The gentleman known as Thursday died last night, and there is a meeting tonight to elect his successor.

Gregory strides about the room, fondling the bombs sensually.

GREGORY

Syme, as you have given me your word you would tell nobody, I will confide something else to you.

(checks his pocket watch)

In about ten minutes, we shall have a formal election. And I thought it would be fitting for you to see the result.

(smiles modestly)

For it is almost a certainty that I am to be the new Thursday.

SYME

My dear fellow, I congratulate you.

GREGORY

As a matter of fact, everything is ready here for my appointment...

He opens a black cabinet and removes objects which he places on the table: A walking stick, which Syme examines and finds is a sword-stick; a Colt revolver; a flask of brandy; and a black, red-lined cape. Gregory flings the cape over his shoulders.

GREGORY

Once the election is over, I shall snatch up these things and step down that hall which opens on the river. There a steam-tug already awaits me. I will then be the new, official Thursday.

Gregory removes the cloak and puts the things back. Syme stands with a grim look on his face.

SYME

Gregory... I gave you my word. Would you kindly give me, for my own safety, a promise of the same kind?

GREGORY

A promise?

SYME

I swore on my honor that I would not tell your secret to the police. Will you swear that you will not tell the anarchists my secret?

GREGORY

(amused)

Your secret...?

SYME

Yes. Will you swear?

Gregory sits, amused.

GREGORY

Very well. I solemnly swear not to tell the anarchists anything you tell me.

In the distant hallway, FIVE KNOCKS echo ominously into the chamber.

SYME

Gregory, you and I have more  
in common than you think. I  
too am in disguise.

Muffled VOICES in the tunnel repeat the password "Mr. Gilbert Keith". We HEAR the door open, and FOOTSTEPS begin echoing through the passage.

GREGORY

Disguise?  
(chuckles)  
You mean, you are not, as I  
suspected, a true poet?

SYME

No.

GREGORY

Then what are you?

SYME

A police detective.

Gregory's face transforms into black death. A beat. Then - he wrenches open the cabinet like a wild beast, grabs the Colt revolver and aims it at Syme. Syme holds up a polite hand.

SYME

I'm unarmed.

Gregory's hand trembles with the gun as the FOOTSTEPS grow louder.

GREGORY

Don't bloody move.

SYME

Put it away. Now. I can't  
tell the police you're an anarchist.  
You can't tell the anarchists I'm  
a policeman. Your advantage,  
however, is that in a moment I'll  
be surrounded by assassins.

Put it down.

Gregory thinks for a moment as the FOOTSTEPS grow louder still. He slowly puts the pistol down, staring at Syme as if he were a sea monster.

Now -- the black curtains part and the mob of ANARCHISTS enter. There are ten of them, dressed in black. A little man with a goatee and glasses, COMRADE BUTTONS, bustles forward to Gregory with papers in his hand. Buttons squints at Syme.

BUTTONS

Comrade Gregory, I presume this man is a delegate?

Gregory, taken by surprise, hems and haws:

GREGORY

Ah, his, his name is Syme, and --

SYME

(interrupts, shakes  
Buttons' hand)

Comrade, I'm glad to see your security makes it impossible for anyone to attend who is not a delegate.

BUTTONS

What branch do you represent?

SYME

I should hardly call it a branch. I should call it rather a root.

BUTTONS

What do you mean?

SYME

(thinking fast)

The fact is, the truth is... I am a Sabbatarian. A bloody Sabbatarian, if you will. I have been specially sent here to observe the election.

Buttons drops his papers which scatter across the table. A flicker of fear ripples over the faces of the group.

BUTTONS  
Sent here by Sunday?

SYME  
Of course.

BUTTONS  
I see, I see. I'm sure you'll  
find everything in order.  
(to men)  
Comrades, please take your seats.

The men (save Buttons) sit. Gregory casts a moody glance at Syme as Buttons gathers up his papers.

BUTTONS  
Our meeting tonight is important,  
and as the boat now awaits our  
decision, it must be brief. We  
lament the sad decease of our  
comrade Thursday. Now we must  
select his replacement.

The round-faced BARMAN we saw upstairs, now in a suit, pipes up.

BARMAN  
I move that Comrade Gregory be  
elected Thursday.

BUTTONS  
Does anyone second?

Another seconds.

BUTTONS  
Very well. Before we put the  
matter to a vote, I call on  
Comrade Gregory.

Gregory arises to a rumble of APPLAUSE. His face is deadly pale. He casts a furtive glance at Syme, takes a deep breath and begins:

GREGORY  
Comrades... the only thing in  
the universe which never changes  
is Eternal Change, Chaos, the fundamental  
Anarchy underlying All. Anarchy is

therefore Truth. It is therefore the very thing mankind needs thrust upon it!

APPLAUSE. He moves slowly around table as he continues:

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Yet our beliefs have been slandered.  
People have been convinced that  
we are a plague of murderers.

He stops behind Symes, now mysteriously:

GREGORY

But if, by some incredible fluke,  
there were here tonight a man who  
wished us harm, and if I had the  
chance to sway him to our cause,  
I would ask him this: When the  
early Christians were forced  
underground, like us, what reputation  
had they in the streets above? Indeed,  
We seem as unholy as those Christians,  
because we are really as harmless!  
We seem as mad as those Christians...  
because we are really as meek!

The anarchists, who throughout this have APPLAUDED his points, have applauded less towards the end, now eyeing him with a confused MURMUR.

WITHERSPOON, a small man with a pointed beard, pipes up in a high, squeaky voice:

WITHERSPOON

Meek?! We are not "meek"!

GREGORY

Comrade Witherspoon, these remarks  
are directed at a hypothetical  
disbeliever in our cause. By  
"meek", I mean that we are as  
merciful as the early Christians  
were merciful. Yet this did not  
prevent their being accused of the  
abomination of eating human flesh!

WITHERSPOON

(puzzled)  
But, is eating human flesh an  
'abomination'?

The others MURMUR, favoring Witherspoon. Flustered, Gregory  
plunges on:

GREGORY  
Since modern society, at least, is  
founded upon love and mutual respect --

WITHERSPOON  
Love?! What are you saying! Down  
with love!

The others MURMUR louder agreement.

GREGORY  
(angrily grinding his teeth)  
-- is founded upon mutual respect,  
our duty is to free each man from the  
laws which forbid him to respect  
others and to behave as he alone  
sees fit to achieve happiness!  
These things I say to such a man,  
comrades, to sway him and others  
to our cause, if I am elected as  
a member of this august body!

Gregory sits. There is a weak spatter of APPLAUSE. Comrade  
Witherspoon moves restlessly in his seat, muttering angrily.  
Buttons rises.

BUTTONS  
Does anyone oppose the election  
of Comrade Gregory?

All eyes turn to Witherspoon. Witherspoon wriggles unhappily in  
his chair, unwilling to challenge the nomination.

BUTTONS  
Very well. I move that --

A clear VOICE crisply interrupts.

VOICE O.S.  
Sir, I disagree.

The anarchists turn as one towards the speaker, Syme, who rises from his chair. Startled, Buttons sits down. Syme begins, in a booming voice:

SYME

Comrades!\_\_

They jump slightly in their chairs.

SYME (CONT'D)

Have we come underground like rats in order to listen to talk like this? This is talk we might listen to while eating buns at a Sunday School picnic! Do we line these walls with weapons and bar the

(CONTINUED)

SYME (CONT'D)

door with death lest anyone should hear Comrade Gregory tell us, "Be good, little boys, and you shall be happy"?! There was not a word in Comrade Gregory's speech to which a senile spinster would not have listened with pleasure!

THE ANARCHISTS

Hear, hear!

SYME

But I am not a senile spinster!

(rising CHEER)

And I did not listen with pleasure!

(renewed CHEERS)

And any man who is easily compared to a whimpering old woman is not fit to be elected Thursday.

("Hear, hear!")

Comrade Gregory has told us that we are not the enemies of society. But I say, we are the enemies of society, for society is the enemy of humanity!

("Hear, hear!")

Comrade Gregory has told us that we are not murderers. There I agree. We are not murderers -- we are executioners!

The anarchists CHEER and APPLAUD. Gregory, who has been listening with increasing outrage, hisses a denunciation that all can hear:

GREGORY

You damnable hypocrite!

SYME

And now, Comrade Gregory accuses me of hypocrisy. But he knows that I am doing nothing but my duty. I do not mince words. I say that Comrade Gregory is unfit to be Thursday. We do not want the Supreme Council infected with maudlin mercy! This is no time for ceremonial politeness. I set myself against Comrade Gregory as I would against all the governments of Europe, because a true anarchist has forgotten all modesty!

The group CHEER.

SYME (CONT'D)

I am not a man at all! I am a cause!  
(more CHEERS)

And I say that rather than have Gregory and his milk-toast mumblings on the Supreme Council, I would offer myself for election!

His last words are drowned out with a deafening cataract of APPLAUSE. Gregory springs to his feet, frothing at the mouth.

GREGORY

Stop! Stop, you blasted madmen!

But Syme raises his voice above Gregory's.

SYME

And furthermore, I do not go to the Council to rebut that slander that calls us murderers! I go to earn it!

The anarchists' CHEERS and APPLAUSE drown out Gregory who sits, fuming. Witherspoon jumps up excitedly:

WITHERSPOON

I move, as an amendment, that Comrade Syme be appointed to the post!

GREGORY

Listen to me! You must stop this at once! It is all merely a --

Buttons rises, ignoring Gregory.

BUTTONS

Does anyone second the amendment?

The round-faced Barman raises his hand and stands.

BARMAN

I second the nomination of Comrade Syme.

At this betrayal, Gregory again bolts to his feet.

GREGORY

Please, comrades! What I am about to say may sound stark, raving mad -- but I am not a madman!

WITHERSPOON

Oh, bother! Someone grab an axe and shut him up!

GREGORY

Listen to me, but do not ask me to explain! Call it an insane command, but act on it! Kill me, but obey me! Do not elect this man!

Syme arches his eyebrows at Gregory:

SYME

Comrade Gregory...commands?

WITHERSPOON

Yes, Gregory, who are you to "command" us? You are not Sunday!

BIG ANARCHIST

Nor Thursday!

Button stands.

BUTTONS

Who is in favor of Comrade  
Syme's election to the post of  
Thursday on the General Council?

A ROAR as every hand thrusts skyward.

BUTTONS

Motion carried. Congratulations,  
Comrade Syme!

The group spring to their feet, shaking Syme's hand in an excited goggling. Dark looks are cast at Gregory, who collapses trembling into his chair, his face as pale as death. Gregory stands, pushes his way to Syme and whispers fiercely to him.

GREGORY

(sotto)

You are a despicable devil.  
You trapped me!

SYME

(sotto)

You trapped me first, by making  
me swear to secrecy. I did what  
I had to do. Our beliefs are  
diametrically opposed. There  
is nothing possible between us.  
Except honor -- and death.

With that whispered to Gregory, Syme throws the great cloak over his shoulder and picks up the sword-stick, the gun and the flask. Buttons bustles up to him, handing him an envelope.

BUTTONS

The boat is ready. Here is a  
note with our seal confirming  
your election. Be good enough  
to step this way.

Buttons leads Syme and the others down an iron-bound passage-way. Gregory follows feverishly at their heels. At the end of the hall, Buttons opens a door, revealing --

EXT. MOONLIT BANK OF A RIVER - NIGHT

On the blue and silver river is docked a small steam tug boat. A thuggish captain in black waits at the ramp. Buttons talks with the pilot as the anarchists talk quietly with one another. Apart from the others, Syme turns to Gregory.

SYME

(sotto)

You are a man of honor. You have kept your word and were true to your other promise.

GREGORY

What promise?

SYME

For a very lively evening.

Syme turns to Buttons who gestures hurriedly. Syme boards the launch and the pilot pushes off. From the bow, Syme salutes the men with the brandy flask, taking a drink as the steamboat slides silently off into the night.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - LONDON - DAY

A TALL MYSTERIOUS MAN in a great coat enters the cafe garden, brushing by one of the outdoor tables.

Seated at the table, sipping tea and poring unhappily over a stack of papers, is a younger Gabriel Syme, now looking unkempt and disheveled.

CAPTION: ONE YEAR EARLIER

As we MOVE IN on Syme reading through his papers, the NARRATOR intones:

NARRATOR V.O.

Gabriel Syme was not a detective pretending to be a poet. He was really a poet pretending to be a detective. His normal dislike for lawlessness had been reinforced by a striking incident. It began when he'd decided to catalogue

his quaint collection of literary  
correspondence...

CLOSE - SYME'S PAPERS

As he goes through the stack, we see REJECTION SLIPS from numerous literary magazines which begin: "*We are sorry to inform you...*"; "*We are unable to accept your material at this time...*"; "*Thank you for your submission which does not fit our present needs...*"

ANGLE ON SYME

He stops reading and rubs his eyes exhaustedly. At the next table, a young woman drinks tea with her five-year old son. The boy -- wearing a white shirt, white shorts with suspenders and a feathered Swiss hat -- is secretly feeding his biscuit under the table to a small mongrel dog. The boy catches Syme's eye and puts a conspiratorial finger to his lips. His Mother wouldn't approve. Syme smiles and winks.

The Tall Man in the great coat brushes by Syme's table as he leaves the cafe.

Syme takes a sip of his tea as a brave sparrow lights on the table next to his plate. Syme throws him a crumb and watches him eat greedily. Birds CHATTER in the trees as the sun emerges from behind a cloud. Syme shoves aside his papers and visibly relaxes. He tosses the bird another crumb, shakes his head, and sighs.

A beat.

Now -- a MASSIVE EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH THE CAFE with obscene violence. It blows over the tables, throwing Syme into the air like a twisted puppet. Syme tumbles onto the street, covering his head from the rain of exploding debris. He looks up, his mouth bleeding, and peers dazedly through the thick smoke and fire.

The Young Mother, her face bloody, is kneeling and crying over her son, clutching his limp lifeless body in her arms. Stunned and staggering towards her, Syme trips over something in the road. He looks down.

It is the small mongrel dog, whimpering. Although offscreen, we see clear indications that its body has been ripped apart. Trembling, Syme kneels to pat the dog. It whines, howls in

hideous pain, its terrified eyes turned to Syme for help. Dazed and half-mad with horror, Syme grabs a wooden club from the rubble and wildly draws it over his head.

ANGLE ON SYME'S FACE

Turning his eyes away from the horror of what he must do, he SMASHES the club violently down. O.S. we hear the dog CRY OUT, once. Clamping his eyes shut, he drops the club and staggers away amid the SCREAMS and WAILING of the wounded around him. Through the smoke, he spots something sobering in the distance...

HIS POV

A block away, the Tall Man in the great coat is staring back at the grisly scene -- and smiling.

BACK TO SCENE. The truth dawns on Syme. He points at the man.

SYME  
You! You there!

He runs towards him. The bearded man turns and runs.

SYME (CONT'D)  
Stop that man! Stop him!

Syme chases him down a side street. At the corner he stops and spins about wildly. The man is gone. The horror of the scene comes back to him. Alone in the street, he leans against a brick wall and begins weeping uncontrollably.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

We SEE Syme through the office window. He is inside arguing violently with an old newspaper editor. Syme slams some papers on the desk and storms out into the street.

Inside, the editor throws Syme's papers into the trash, goes to the window and watches Syme's departure with morbid curiosity. Over this, we HEAR:

NARRATOR V.O.  
After that, Syme took a turn for the worse. His mind burning with the memory of the child and the

dog, his memory began to fade, forgetting even where he lived, as he began a fanatical one-man campaign, warning mankind of the scourge of anarchy.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WATERFRONT - A RED SUNSET

Syme, now looking shabby, dirty and ragged, paces by the railing, his jaw clenching and unclenching. He spits into the sea and takes a long nip from a flask.

NARRATOR V.O.

But it was no use. The bombings continued. As he bitterly brooded upon his obsession, he was the very image of the anarchists upon whom he had vowed revenge. Perhaps this was why a certain policeman eyed him with unusual interest...

A POLICEMAN slowly approaches Syme. In a thick cockney accent:

POLICEMAN

Good evening, sir.

Syme spins around and sizes up the officer with contempt.

SYME

A good evening, is it? You fellows would call the end of the world a good evening. Look at that bloody sunset on the river. If it were real human blood, you'd still be standing here as smug as ever, looking for some poor, harmless tramp to rub his runny nose in the dirt!

The Policeman gives Syme the once-over, then speaks calmly:

POLICEMAN

You're absolutely right, sir. I tell you I am sometimes sick of my trade when I see how we policemen senselessly wage a

perpetual war not on the real enemies of our society, but on your ordinary class of ignorant, and desperate citizens.

SYME

(taken aback)

You are...?

POLICEMAN

Most emphatically. However, it may encourage you to know that

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

I am not alone in this opinion, for a new department has been formed recently in Scotland Yard by a celebrated detective. He has proved that an intellectual conspiracy will soon threaten the very existence of civilization, and has organized a special, elite corps of policemen, policemen who are also philosophers.

SYME

Philosophers...?

POLICEMAN

Correct. We philosophical policemen deny the snobbish assumption that the poor and uneducated are dangerous-- We say that the dangerous criminal is the rich, philosophical criminal. Compared to him, burglars or bigamists are essentially moral and my heart weeps for them.

SYME

It does...?

POLICEMAN

Yes sir. Burglars, for example, respect property. They merely wish the property to become their own, that they may more perfectly respect it. But philosophers wish to destroy the very concept

of possession. Similarly, bigamists respect marriage, or they would not bother to marry with such frequency. Philosophers, however, despise the very concept of marriage.

SYME

You amaze me. And what about murderers?

POLICEMAN

Contrary to popular opinion, murderers have the highest respect for human life. They simply wish to better respect their own by ridding themselves of lives they consider worthless. But philosophers hate life itself, their own as much as anybody else's.

Syme, enthralled, starts walking in step with the Policeman.

SYME

I begin to understand... The common criminal thinks that if only a certain obstacle be removed -- say, a wealthy uncle -- he is then prepared to happily accept the universe and to sincerely praise God. He's a reformer, not an anarchist. He wishes to cleanse the edifice, not destroy it. But the evil philosopher is not trying to alter things, but to annihilate them!

POLICEMAN

Precisely. They have two objects; to destroy humanity, and to destroy themselves. That's why they throw bombs instead of firing pistols. If their bomb has not killed the king, they are not disappointed as long as it kills somebody. These high-priests of death are the express target of our special force.

Syme stops him excitedly, now completely rejuvenated.

SYME

Constable, I ask you this  
with utter sincerity and complete  
conviction: is it possible for  
a poor man such as myself to  
join your special force?

The Policeman looks at Syme with new respect.

POLICEMAN

As a matter of fact, sir, there  
is a vacancy in the force at this  
very moment. I know this as I  
happen to be in the confidence  
of the chief detective of whom  
I have spoken.

SYME

Take me to him.

The Policeman ponders for a brief moment.

POLICEMAN

Very well.

The Policeman begins walking briskly. Grabbing his hat, Syme excitedly follows.

INT. SCOTLAND YARD - DAY

Dazed, Syme is led by the Policeman to a room. The Policeman ushers him in, then leaves.

INT. ROOM - DAY

There is one chair in the middle of the room. The room is bare save a large mirror built into one wall. Next to the mirror is a small speaking tube of polished brass. Syme sits, looking about uncomfortably. A SHARP VOICE blurts from the speaking tube.

VOICE

Are you the new recruit?

Syme, seeing himself in the mirror, clears his throat nervously.

SYME  
Well, I, uh, I'm --

VOICE  
Speak up!

SYME  
Yes. Yes, I am.

A beat.

VOICE  
All right. You are engaged.

Syme is thunderstruck.

SYME  
What?

VOICE  
I said you are engaged!

SYME  
But, I, I really have no experience.

VOICE  
No one has any experience in the  
battle of Armageddon.

SYME  
But I really am somewhat -- unfit --

VOICE  
Are you willing?

SYME  
Yes...

VOICE  
Then you are fit.

SYME  
Well, I don't know any profession in  
which willingness is the final test.

VOICE  
I do. Martyrdom. I am condemning  
you to death. Good day.

Stunned, Syme stares at himself in the mirror.

SERIES OF QUICK DISSOLVES OVER NARRATOR:

- Syme in another room, having his hair and beard trimmed by a fat police barber, is handed a large, rectangular box.
- Syme alone in a police locker, opens the box and pulls out his "uniform": a summer suit of light blue-gray, a bowler hat, and a yellow flower in the buttonhole (the same suit he wears at the start of the film).
- Syme in his uniform at the philosopher-policeman's desk. Syme is being issued a SMALL BLUE CARD. The main printing on it reads: "SPECIAL FORCES - SCOTLAND YARD".

Over these DISSOLVES, we HEAR:

NARRATOR V.O.

And so, Gabriel Syme became a member of the elite special force of Scotland Yard. He was immediately washed, dried and trimmed, and given an official undercover uniform. Finally, he was issued a small, blue identification card and instructed to investigate the rumor that anarchists had infiltrated the artistic colony of Saffron Park.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

EXT. ANARCHISTS' STEAM-LAUNCH - RIVER - DAWN

We are back with Syme in the present. The tugboat, miles up the river, silently lands at a small dock as dawn breaks over the still river. Syme takes a nip from his flask of brandy and disembarks the tug. The pilot turns the tug around without a word, leaving Syme alone on the dock. Over this, we HEAR:

NARRATOR V.O.

And now, to his amazement, Syme found himself close to the heart of the evil itself, and felt all at once the whole fate of humanity resting upon his shoulders.

EXT. CHARING CROSS EMBANKMENT - DAWN

Syme climbs the stairs to the top of the bank. Above him, a MELANCHOLY MAN is leaning over the parapet and looking out across the river. He is well-dressed in a silk hat, frock coat and with a red flower in his button hole, and a triangular beard at the point of his otherwise clean-shaven chin. His gloomy face has a distinct touch of evil.

Syme spots him at once, but the man seems not to notice him. Syme ascends the steps to the parapet and stands next to the strange man, who still ignores him. Unsure of what he should do, Syme removes the note from Buttons confirming his election and awkwardly puts it before the man's face.

ON MELANCHOLY MAN

reading the note. The man slowly smiles. But it a weird, disturbing smile, as if one side of his face is paralyzed. The "smile" lasts for a moment, then his face resumes its sinister expression. He limply points up the road.

MELANCHOLY MAN

If we walk up towards Leicester Square,  
we shall be just in time for breakfast.  
Sunday always insists on an early  
breakfast. Have you had any sleep?

SYME

No.

MELANCHOLY MAN

Nor have I. I shall try to get  
to bed after breakfast.

The man turns and begins walking down the empty street. Syme follows.

MELANCHOLY MAN

Of course, the Secretary of your  
branch has filled you in, except  
for the latest notion of our  
President, for his notions grow  
like a tropical forest. Take,  
for example, his notion of concealing  
ourselves by not concealing ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

MELANCHOLY MAN (CON'T)

Originally, of course, we met  
underground, as does your branch.  
But I really think his huge brain's

gone a little mad. For now we  
flaunt ourselves before the public.  
We have our meetings, but, well,  
you'll find out soon enough.

With this, they emerge out into --

EXT. LEICESTER SQUARE - MORNING

At the corner of the Square is a quiet hotel. On the second story facing them is a large French window. Outside this window, overhanging the Square, is a large balcony containing a dining table. A strange group of SIX MEN are seated around it and gesticulating with great animation. They are all well-dressed and boisterous.

As Syme draws nearer, he notices AN USUALLY HUGE MAN seated with his back facing them -- a great mountain of a man in a sparkling white suit. From behind, his large, white-haired head looks larger than any head should be. The MAN is so vast, it almost looks as if he were entertaining five children over a toy tea set. Syme and his guide reach the hotel. A French waiter appears and smiles.

WAITER

The gentlemen are up there, sare.  
They do talk and they do laugh at  
what they talk. They do say they  
will throw bombs at ze king.

Giggling, the waiter leaves. Syme follows his guide up the stairs.

MOVE IN ON SYME - CLIMBING THE STAIRS

A sense of strangeness pervades his climb, as the SOUNDS of the breakfast party echo surreally through his head.

NARRATOR V.O.

It was a moment of destiny for  
Gabriel Syme. As he climbed, he  
had the sense of drawing nearer and  
nearer to the Headquarters of Hell.  
And this sense became overpowering as  
he drew nearer to the great President...

EXT. BALCONY - MORNING

The Melancholy Man appears at the windows, followed by Syme.  
The group turn towards them.

MELANCHOLY MAN

Gentlemen, this is Mr. Syme, our  
newly elected Thursday. Allow  
me to introduce --

PAN TABLE FROM GUEST TO GUEST

MELANCHOLY MAN

-- Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday,  
Saturday, and our President, Sunday.  
I myself am Sunday's secretary, and  
known as Monday.

The group's appearance is striking and ominous:

- TUESDAY, a Mr. Gogol, whose head sprang out of his suit in a wild tossle of bushy hair and beard.
- WEDNESDAY, the Marquis de St. Eustache, a dandy with a large hook nose, a black beard cut square and a French accent.
- FRIDAY, a Professor de Worms, the oldest-looking, with scabrous, decaying skin and a thinning gray beard.
- SATURDAY, a Dr. Bull, short, demonic-looking, with a cleanshaven face, wearing ominous circular wire-rimmed sunglasses.
- SUNDAY, their freakish, gigantic President, with thick, shock-white hair and intense eyes that penetrate your skull.

The seated men ad-lib terse greetings to Syme. The Melancholy Man pulls out two chairs and he and Syme sit. The group immediately resume their conversation, ignoring Syme. Suddenly they are interrupted by a VOICE yelling faintly across the square.

THEIR POV - THE SAME BLIND LUNATIC

(from the opening scene) stands on a crate across the square. His eyes are yellow and vacuous, his voice distant but crisp through the cold air.

BLIND LUNATIC

I say these are the end times! When  
cherubim and satanic imps spit into  
each other's faces! I feel their fire!  
It chars my very soul! Angels and  
demons unmasking each other! Unmasking  
the Almighty Himself! Revealing the

terrifying face of the twentieth century!

BACK TO SCENE. The President and the men chuckle at the lunatic, then turn back to resume their conversation. Sunday's deep voice fills the air, gentle, yet edged with unmistakable evil.

SUNDAY

As I was saying, gentlemen, Tuesday cannot seem to grasp the idea. He insists on behaving like a melodramatic stage conspirator.

GOGOL (thick accent)

I yam not good at concealment because I yam not ashamed of our great cause!

BULL

No, because you're a great ass.

GOGOL

I said I yam not good at deception!

SUNDAY

Right, my boy, right. You aren't bloody good at anything.

Throughout this speech, Sunday casts suspicious glances towards Syme. Syme nervously drops his eyes to his plate of eggs.

SUNDAY

Anything, that is, except our business, which presently concerns bombs and kings.

(serves scrambled eggs  
to the conspirators)

Our goal is to mash them together, much like these scrambled fetuses. In two days, gentlemen, the Czar is to meet the French President in Paris. At the meeting, both shall explode in an exquisite rainbow of gore, and to that end, the Marquis, our faithful Wednesday, is to transport the bomb mechanism.

Throughout the conversation, Sunday eats with the appetite of twenty men and continues to watch Syme suspiciously.

THE MARQUIS

I have often wondered whether it wouldn't be better for me to do it with a knife. It would be a new emotion to get a knife into a French President and wriggle it around.

THE SECRETARY

A bomb is our best method. It is a perfect symbol for us, the symbol of expansion. It destroys because it broadens; just as thoughts yearn for destruction when they are broadened. My brain feels like a bomb and it must expand! A man's brain must expand, if it is to destroy the universe!

THE MARQUIS

I don't want the universe destroyed just yet. I still have a lot of beastly things to do before I die. I thought of one in bed just last night.

DR. BULL

Interesting. I performed one in bed just last night.

The men laugh. Professor de Worms stirs and loudly croaks:

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Do not forget, gentlemen. The most beastly thing we can do is to allow the human race itself to continue.

SECRETARY

Gentlemen, we are wandering from the point.

(to Sunday)

Are you certain that Wednesday here is competent enough in the science of killing to be entrusted with an assignment of such --

The Marquis (Wednesday) slams his hand on the table, draws his jeweled knife and puts the point to the Secretary's throat.

THE MARQUIS

Competent?! Perhaps Ms. Secretary is correct! Perhaps I am incompetent in the science of killing. But I am an expert in the art of killing. My ancestors were heroes in the crusades, warriors, Knight Templars, secret assassins! For centuries we've ferociously ripped the throats of insouciant fools who even vaguely slander our family name...

The Secretary CHUCKLES contemptuously at the knife poised at his throat. He hisses at the Marquis with an ugly smile.

THE SECRETARY

Then demonstrate, monsieur. Kill me.

Enraged, the Marquis grips the knife and is about to kill him -- when he stops, and CHUCKLES. The Marquis withdraws his blade.

THE MARQUIS

I shall demonstrate. But my knife shall sacrifice its thirst for your  
(CONTINUED)

THE MARQUIS (CONT'D)

throat due to the incomprehensible honor which our leader shows you in making you his secretary. Still, once drawn, the knife of St. Eustache must taste flesh...

(looks across street, smiles)

...shall we say, his?

He points. All heads at the table turn to see a POLICEMAN across the square rousting the blind lunatic and pushing him off down the street.

SUNDAY

(casually as he eats)

I presume you mean the policeman. Jolly good, kill him, Wednesday, why don't you. And hurry back.

THE MARQUIS (rising)

A pleasure.

He swoops down the stairs.

THEIR POV - WATCHING FROM THE BALCONY TABLE

as the Marquis crosses the street. They watch him tap the policeman on the shoulder and gesture for him to follow him into the alley (directly across from the balcony).

INTERCUT SYME trying to hide his horror as he watches

THEIR POV - ALLEY ACROSS STREET

The curious policeman follows the Marquis into the alley. The Marquis violently covers the policeman's mouth, draws his blade and, with inhuman viciousness and brutally, repeatedly stabs him in the side. (Although the street is fairly busy with pedestrians and carriages, the angle is such that only the table of Anarchists witness the murder.)

Dropping the body into a trash can, the Marquis bows to the men. To Syme's horror, the anarchists politely APPLAUD as if they've just seen a child's piano recital. The Marquis dashes back across the street as the men chuckle and casually eat their breakfast.

BACK TO SCENE. The Marquis appears back at the table, sits and resumes eating. Syme secretly shudders, trying to act casual. The Secretary is unimpressed.

THE SECRETARY

Killing a policeman is merely mundane.  
If we are to trust you to assassinate  
a head of Europe, I would like to  
have more assurance than the mere --

A DARK SHADOW slowly eclipses the entire table. They turn to see the President slowly standing, his huge girth blocking the morning sun.

SUNDAY

(quietly)

I assure you, gentlemen and Mr.  
Secretary, that the Marquis is  
the man to carry out our present  
plan. But before we continue  
with specifics, let us go in to  
my private room. I have something  
private to say.

Sunday locks eyes with Syme as the men stand, Syme last. Syme's face is sweating as he follows them hesitantly into the hotel.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Sunday enters, holding the door open for them, and locking it shut after them. There is a long table with chairs, a baby grand piano and a large trunk. As they sit, Gogol gesticulates sarcastically:

GOGOL

Zso! Zso! You zay you nod 'ide.  
You zay you show himselves. Iss  
all nuzzink! Ven you vant talk big  
talk, you run into dees teensy box!

Sunday chuckles in a fatherly way.

SUNDAY

You have everything backwards, Gogol.  
When once they hear us blathering  
on the balcony they will not care  
where we go afterwards. If we'd  
come here first, the whole staff  
would be at the keyhole. You don't  
seem to understand mankind.

GOGOL

(jumps up)

I die for zem! And I slay zare  
oppressors. I vud smite ze tyrant  
in ze open market place!

SUNDAY

That's lovely, Gogol. And now  
may I ask you to control your  
beautiful sentiments, and sit down.

He rises and slowly leans over the table; in a hushed voice:

SUNDAY

Comrades... a situation has arisen  
so simple and shocking that we  
must refrain at this time from  
discussing the assassination.  
Instead, details concerning the  
modus operandi will be left in  
the able hands of our Marquis,  
who may if he wishes confer with  
Comrade Saturday, who has so

successfully created horrific deaths by bomb in the past. But in this company, we must say nothing more.

The men stare at each other in confusion. Sunday leans forward ominously.

SUNDAY

There is only one possible motive for forbidding free speech at this festival of freedom.

The Secretary's face trembles with disbelief.

SECRETARY

But - that cannot be! We have all here been elected by --

Sunday strikes the table.

SUNDAY

Think! Anything, gentlemen, can be. Especially when it is thought that it cannot. There is, in fact, a traitor at this table.

ANGLE ON SYME

inching his hand under his cloak towards his revolver.

BACK TO SCENE

SUNDAY

I will waste no more words. The scoundrel's name -

Syme grasps his hidden gun and is about to rise...

SUNDAY

-- is Comrade Gogol!

Gogol springs wildly to his feet, a pistol in each hand. The Secretary, the Marquis and Dr. Bull instantly grab him and throw him violently onto the table. Even the ancient Professor hisses and grabs a contemptuous fistful of Gogol's hair.

ANGLE ON SYME

his mind racing as he releases his hold on his gun.

BACK TO SCENE

SUNDAY

Release him and sit down!

The men release Gogol, leaving him lying awkwardly on his back on the table. Sunday looms over Gogol and speaks quietly, with a smile of death.

SUNDAY

Would you kindly put your hand  
in your upper waistcoat pocket  
and show me what you have there?

Gogol puts two fingers into his pocket and withdraws a SMALL BLUE CARD. Sunday snatches it away and slowly reads it.

SUNDAY

"Special Forces - Scotland Yard".

Chuckling Sunday rips it up, puts it in his mouth & eats it. He then rips off Gogol's false beard and wig, reveal the face of a young man.

SUNDAY

I gather that you fully understand  
your position.

Gogol sits up on the table, sighs - and in a clear, Cockney accent:

GOGOL

Right oh! I see it's a fair cop.  
I knew you had me pegged, Sunday,  
but as for these bloody gits -

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

(trembling with rage)

Why, you sniveling insect! We  
shall skin you alive!

SUNDAY

A not unfitting image, since he  
has been half-skinned already.

(to Gogol)

You can imagine how amused I've been  
by your imaginative performance.

As he talks, he powerfully rips a piano wire from the guts of the piano.

SUNDAY

But now you will serve as a quaint illustration in cause and effect for your comrades. Would you be so kind as to pull that trunk into the water closet and wait inside?

Gogol, his face leaden, slides off the table and slowly pulls the trunk into the bathroom. Sunday proffers the piano wire to the Secretary with a ghastly smile.

SUNDAY

Monday?

SECRETARY

I'm honored.

The Secretary takes the wire and stretches it tightly between his fists. Then he follows Gogol inside and closes the door behind them. The anarchists eye each other numbly. From inside the bathroom, there is the sound of a struggle. Gogol chokes, gags and cries out in a muffled voice.

GOGOL O.S.

No! No!

We hear bones CRUNCHING and the THUD of a body on the floor. A beat. The door opens and the Secretary pulls the trunk out. Sunday lifts it in his huge arms and sets it on the table.

SUNDAY

The Secretary and I shall take this parcel with us. But know this, gentlemen. It would annoy us for just about two and a half minutes if you and your loved ones, whose addresses are on record, are slowly boiled in sewage. Therefore, listen carefully. If any of you tell the police or any human soul about us we shall have that two and a half minutes of discomfort.

(yawns)

Saturday will send the Marquis to the appointment we spoke of. Breakfast here next Sunday.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

(rises, disturbed)

Sir, since the spy has been purged,  
I move that we discuss the assassination  
fully between us all, to insure that --

SUNDAY

(interrupts with a roar;)

Stop braying such bloody drivel!  
You didn't want to be overheard  
by a spy, did you? How do you  
know you aren't being overheard now?

Sunday SNAPS shut his pocket watch and scornfully moves across  
the room. Opening the door, he turns and scans their faces,  
ending with Syme:

SUNDAY

Good day, gentlemen. And mind the  
stairs.

EXT. HOTEL - LIGHTLY SNOWING - DAY

The conspirators exit the building and go their separate ways,  
nodding cautious farewells in silence. Syme, exiting last, puts  
on his top hat and cape, then makes his way alone down the  
street through the drifting snow.

EXT. CLOTHES SHOP - SNOWING - DAY

The snow is now falling heavily. Syme stops for a moment in the  
shop doorway to brush snow from his hat and shoulders. Looking  
up, he is surprised to see old Professor De Worms a few yards  
away at the picture window, staring motionlessly at the dress  
shop dummy. Not wanting to meet with the old man, Syme turns  
away and briskly starts walking in the other direction.

EXT. SOHO RESTAURANT - SNOWING - DAY

Syme pauses in front of the restaurant, then enters.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

He is finishing a glass of beer and a cigar. As he does so he  
slowly turns his small blue card over and over in his hand. Now  
he pays the waiter, rises and suddenly freezes as he sees  
something: At the table by the door sits the Professor de

Worms, motionless, staring at a small glass of steaming milk.

Irritated, Syme flings his cloak about his shoulders and hurries past the Professor to the exit.

EXT. RESTAURANT - SNOWING - DAY

He walks to the corner, then turns, muttering to himself.

SYME

Can that old corpse be following me?

He snorts at the idea and briskly continues on down the street.

SYME (CONT'D)

If Sunday sent someone, it certainly  
wouldn't be that lame fool.

He quickly vanishes around a corner.

EXT. TEA SHOP - HEAVY SNOW - DAY

The snow falls more heavily as Syme jogs down the street, holding onto his hat. He takes shelter in the little shop.

INT. TEA SHOP - DAY

He sits as he calls to the waiter.

SYME

Black coffee, please.

The BELL on the shop door sounds and he looks up. Professor de Worms hobbles heavily into the shop and slowly sits without looking at Syme. He croaks to the waiter:

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

A glass of heated milk.

Astonished, Syme's stick falls from his hands. The Professor does not look up. Furious, Syme snatches up his stick and runs out the door, almost knocking over the waiter bringing his coffee.

EXT. TEA SHOP - HEAVY SNOW - DAY

He rushes wildly into the street and sees an omnibus rattling by.

FOLLOWING HIM

as he breaks into a violent run of a hundred yards, jumps up onto the splashboard, pauses to pant, then climbs the stairs to the upper level as the bus rushes on.

INT. OMNIBUS - MOVING - DAY

He sits shakily - and immediately hears a loud ASTHMATIC BREATHING and COUGHING coming from the stairs. He turns. Professor De Worms hobbles slowly up the steps and sits at the other end of the car, not looking at Syme. Syme springs to his feet and whispers fiercely:

SYME  
Impossible...!

Horrified, he bounds past the old man and down the stairs.

EXT. OMNIBUS - SNOWING - LATE DAY

Syme leaps from the moving bus and collides with two men in the street, knocking them down. He quickly helps them up, nervously brushes them off, then dashed off like a madman. FOLLOWING HIM as the sky darkens. He hurries down crooked lanes, glancing over his shoulder but seeing nothing, his face blinded by the snow.

ANGLE ON LUDGATE CIRCUS

He runs out into the vast empty Square, now covered in inches of snow, and stops, out of breath. He listens. In the silence, he hears the PROFESSOR'S COUGHING and WHEEZING through the wall of snow. Trembling, he spins around to face his pursuer. Professor de Worms emerges slowly from the alley, still hobbling on his cane, moving like a palsied snail. It's impossible. Symes feels he is going mad.

SYME  
Get away from me, you bloody devil!

As if in a nightmare, Syme turns and runs at full speed across the empty Square. Thirty yards behind him, the corpse-like Professor emerges into the Square, sees Syme, and suddenly breaks into long, swinging, powerful strides after him. It is a bizarre sight.

SYME'S POV - OVER HIS SHOULDER

He sees the black figure of the ancient demon bearing

relentlessly down on him, and SCREAMS in terror.

SYME

God help me!

Syme breaks away past the Square towards the icy river. Down by the docks, he turns three corners randomly, seeing no one behind him. He almost passes a filthy pub, grinds to halt and explodes through the doors.

INT. PUB - LATE DAY

He hurtles via momentum up against the bar, which is peppered with foreign sailors and aged whores. Panting breathlessly, he sits at a corner table.

BARTENDER

Need a drink, Guv'nor?

SYME

Yes, yes, a whiskey, please.

As the bartender pours out his glass, the door to the bar slowly opens. Syme watches with horror as Professor de Worms, still shuffling like a decomposed mummy, enters and sits at Syme's table, directly facing Syme.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Barkeep... a glass of heated milk.

Syme, still panting, watches the Professor tensely as the Bartender brings them their drinks. The old man sips his milk without looking at Syme. Syme downs his drink in one gulp.

SYME

Another whiskey!

The bartender brings him another and leaves. Syme takes a big gulp and looks up to see the Professor staring directly at him.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Are you a policeman?

SYME

What?!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I said, are you a policeman?

Syme laughs nervously.

SYME

A policeman? Whatever made you think I was a policeman?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

The process was simple enough. I watched you closely, and you looked like a policeman.

Syme finishes the rest of his whiskey and slams down the glass. near hysteria.

SYME

Is that so! Well, why must I be a policeman? Why not a postman? Or a fireman? Or a bloody space man?

The old man strikes his palsied hand passionately on the rickety table, and shrieks in a high, crazy voice:

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Did you hear me ask a plain question, you paltering spy? Are you or are you not a policeman?

SYME

No!

The Professor leans across the table, his ancient face creasing with rage.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Are you quite sure? Do you swear it? You are really an anarchist, a dynamiter? Above all, you are not in any sense a detective?

Hovering over Syme like an insane wasp, the old man puts a shaking hand to his ear, waiting for an answer. Syme trembles slightly.

SYME

I said I am not a policeman.

The Professor falls back into his chair, and sighs.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

That's a pity.  
(slowly sips his milk)  
Because I am.

The Professor carefully lays A SMALL BLUE CARD on the table.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
And I arrest you by the authority of  
Scotland Yard.

A beat. Syme stares at him in shock. Then -- Syme whips out his own BLUE CARD, flings it onto the table, and throws his head back with LOUD LAUGHTER. The lowlife at the bar turn to eye Syme suspiciously.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(whispers fiercely)  
Pull yourself together, you fool!  
(to bartender)  
Barkeep! Two whiskeys!

Syme stares at him with happy curiosity.

SYME  
I understand now... you're not an  
old man at all...

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
It's a rather elaborate make-up. As to  
whether I'm an old man, it depends  
on your point of view. I was thirty-  
six last Spring, when I joined the  
Special Force.

SYME  
You were interviewed at Scotland Yard?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Yes, through a magician's one-way glass.

The bartender delivers the whiskeys and goes back to the bar.  
The Professor lifts his glass and drinks lustily.

SYME  
Did you know that Gogol was one of us?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
No. Did you?

SYME

No. I thought the President was talking about me. I had my hand on my revolver the whole time.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

And I thought he was talking about me. I was shaking in my boots! So was Gogol, evidently.

SYME

There were three of us there. Three out of seven is a fighting number! If only I had known!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

And if you'd known, then what? If we were three hundred we could still have done nothing.

SYME

Why on earth not?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Because, my dear Thursday, do you really think three hundred could stop someone like Sunday?

SYME

Are you really so afraid of one man?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

(deadly earnest)

Yes, I am. You don't know him.

Syme finishes his drink and throws on his hat and cloak.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Where are you going?

SYME

To prevent a bombing in Paris. Will you join me, old man?

The Professor gulps down his drink and rises.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Of course, young man. And I know  
just where we should begin.

They head for the door.

SYME

Where?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

With Sunday's favorite assassin  
...Dr. Bull.

They exit.

EXT. STREET - SNOWING - NIGHT

They talk as they walk briskly. Still acting like an old man,  
the Professor squints at a scrap of paper.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Sunday gave me his address. It's  
five blocks east. If you see a  
cabbie, grab his collar.

SYME

Would you mind dropping the "old man" bit?  
It's beginning to grate on my nerves.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

(still in character; embarrassed)  
I, uh, I can't... Even when I'm bursting  
inside with boyish merriment, I've  
acted paralytic for so long that I  
can't seem to stop. It's pathological,  
I'm afraid. Even when I'm alone with  
a licentious woman, in a state of  
semi-nudity, I still find myself  
mewling like a gibbering idiot.

SYME

That's all right. I'm like that  
with women all the time.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I suppose I should see a Freudian  
about it when this nightmare is over.  
(suddenly)

Do you play the piano?

SYME

I can pick out a tune. Why?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Listen to me, Thursday. You and I are about to attempt something as dangerous as trying to steal the Crown Jewels. We are trying to steal a secret from a very sharp, very wicked man. There is no one on the Council as formidable as that little grinning fellow in goggles.

SYME

And you think this monster will be soothed if I play chopsticks?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Don't be an ass. I mentioned the piano because it indicates quick and agile fingers. It would be to our advantage to have a code of signals between us. Do you know Morse's telegraphic code?

SYME

As a matter of fact, I was a champion key operator at school.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Excellent! There!

(points down street)

That's his flat on the left. We must stand close together so that we can secretly communicate.

As they walk, Syme is struck with a strange thought. He stares at the surrounding buildings as if remembering them from a dream.

SYME

Strange... I seem to know this place...

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

What?

SYME

This street. I know it.

(remembers; in shock)

My God... This is where I was brought up as a child. I haven't thought of this place in years! That building up ahead, that was where the orphanage used to be.

(points)

My room was up there, the second window on the left!

The Professor looks up and stares at the building. He stops in his tracks.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I'll be damned...! Syme, did you just say that you were raised in an orphanage here? The Granville Orphanage?

SYME

Yes!

The Professor eyes the building with mounting shock and confusion.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

This is a bizarre, a most unlikely coincidence. I was raised in the same bloody orphanage. And mine was the second window on the left...!

SYME

You must be mistaken.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

No. You must be. The Granville Orphanage, you say?

SYME

Yes. Run by Mr. Wottley, a red-faced drunkard with one of his earlobes --

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

-- ripped off by a rottweiller. We called him "One Ear" Wottley.

SYME

Yes! Old One-ear! Incredible!

Mine was Bed 39, in the corner  
by the -

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
-- by the window. God help us.  
I too was in Bed 39.

SYME  
What?! But that's simply- ! That is,  
how could you have been--? What I  
mean to say is, are you absolutely,  
positively certain that --

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Do you think I could forget that  
filthy stinking bed or that old sot  
One-Ear and his bloody beatings?!

Syme tries to think clearly.

SYME  
You must be mistaken -- or you were  
hypnotized or - or --

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Or you were. Or perhaps we've both  
gone utterly stark raving mad.

They stare at each other, dumbfounded. The Professor checks the  
address and points to the same window.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Even more preposterous, it appears that  
Dr. Bull is now sleeping in our old bed...  
Come. Let's meet the devil face to face.

He strides off down the street. Shaken, Syme follows. The  
Professor opens the outer door to the old brownstone.

INT. BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - NIGHT

As they enter:

SYME  
Are you sure we should  
burst in on him? If he suspects  
and tells Sunday, after what  
happened to Gogol --

The Professor suddenly stares at him without moving.

CLOSE - THE PROFESSOR DE WORMS' FINGERS

tapping out code on Syme's back (which is SUBTITLED).  
INTERCUTTING SYME'S FACE as he mentally decodes the message:

SUBTITLE

We must take any advantage we  
can with that devil. Trust me.  
Follow my lead.

BACK TO SCENE. Syme nods and taps out on the Professor's back:

SUBTITLE

Lead on. Be careful.

They begin climbing the stairs.

INT. BROWNSTONE - DR. BULL'S LANDING - NIGHT

The Professor KNOCKS on Bull's door.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Dr. Bull? It's Professor de Worms  
and Mr. Syme.

A long beat as they listen nervously. Then, a sharp, cold voice:

DR. BULL O.S.

(through door)  
Come in, gentlemen.

INT. BULL'S FLAT - NIGHT

They enter and close the door behind them. Dr. Bull, sitting at a writing desk, smiles mysteriously. With his circular black glasses on, his smile looks cold, monstrous, satanic. Without speaking, Dr. Bull rises and sets out two chairs for them. They sit. Dr. Bull sits facing them, still smiling his demonic smile, and lights a cigarette. The Professor clears his throat.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I'm sorry to disturb you so late, comrade.  
You have no doubt made all the arrangements  
for the Paris affair?

Dr. Bull doesn't answer. His horrific smile broadens as he stares at them.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Uh, well, the fact is, Thursday and I have information of an urgent nature concerning our Paris venture...

The Professor pauses, waiting for Dr. Bull to comment. Bull merely smiles. The Professor resumes, babbling nervously:

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Uh, and this information is of such urgency that we would advise you to revise your plans, or if it is too late for that, to send someone to intercept them, uh, for reasons which would take more time to recount than we can afford, uh, if it is still possible, that is, if you can make the Marquis postpone his engagement. During this confused speech, we see:

CLOSE - HIS FINGERS TAPPING SYME'S BACK/INTERCUTTING SYME MENTALLY DECODING

SUBTITLE

The devil's sucked me dry. Take over!

BACK TO SCENE. as Syme quickly jumps in:

SYME

Dr. Bull, the fact is, I chanced to meet a detective in a pub who mistook me for a respectable person. He was drinking excessively, and bragging about his police work, when unexpectedly he revealed that a certain Marquis was going to be arrested in France on suspicious attempted murder.

Syme pauses for Bull to comment; but again Bull merely stares.

SYME

Therefore we rushed here to inform you of this attack.

As Syme smiles nervously, we see:

CLOSE - SYME'S FINGERS TAPPING on the Professor's back,  
INTERCUTTING the Professor:

SYME SUBTITLE  
I have an idea.

The Professor TAPS back:

PROF. SUBTITLE  
Thank God.

SYME SUBTITLE  
I'm going to tell him we're police.

BACK TO SCENE. Decoding in shock, the Professor, forgetting  
himself, yells --

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
What?  
(embarrassed)  
Uh, what is your plan, Dr. Bull?

Dr. Bull sucks luxuriously on his black cheroot cigarette,  
smiling, but saying nothing. The Professor, sweating profusely,  
tries to smile back.

CLOSE - INTERCUTTING THE PROFESSOR AND SYME TAPPING TO EACH  
OTHER:

PROF. SUBTITLE  
Say nothing you idiot.

SYME SUBTITLE  
I'm arresting him.

PROF. SUBTITLE  
Fool. Shut up.

SYME SUBTITLE  
Pardon. Didn't catch that.

PROF. SUBTITLE  
Go to hell.

SYME SUBTITLE  
With pleasure.

BACK TO SCENE. Syme leans towards Dr. Bull, and in a voice oddly precise yet polite:

SYME  
Dr. Bull... before we continue,  
would you do me a small favor?  
Would you be so kind as to take  
off your spectacles?

The Professor swings round in his seat and stares at Syme in confusion. Syme glares at the Doctor and his voice takes on a harder edge:

SYME  
I'll ask you again, Dr. Bull.  
Please remove your spectacles.

A tense beat as they all stare at each other. Then - Dr. Bull stands slowly, still smiling, and slowly reaches for his glasses.

CLOSE - BULL'S FACE

Just as his hand removes his spectacles, WE INSTANTLY CUT AWAY WITHOUT REVEALING HIS FACE, FOLLOWING THE GLASSES in his hand falling to his side.

REACTION SHOTS - SYME AND PROFESSOR DE WORMS Both GASP.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
My God.

SYME  
Why, you're-- you're-- you're  
a boy!

ANGLE ON DR. BULL

without glasses, still smiling. But in his eyes is a gentleness and youthfulness that make the smile now look utterly harmless. Incredibly, he has utterly transformed into a sweet, gangly teenage boy.

BACK TO SCENE

SYME  
This must be a joke! You can't  
be Sunday's chief assassin!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(shakily)  
Syme, shut up!

SYME  
Just look at his face for God's  
sake!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Syme! I warn you - Uh, Doctor,  
forgive Thursday! He's under  
heavy medication --

SYME  
Young man, I am a police officer.  
And I arrest you by the authority  
of Scotland Yard.

Syme pulls out his gun and places his blue card on the table. Exasperated, the Professor fumes for a beat-- then loyally throws his card down next to Syme's. A beat. Now, for the first time we hear Bull's child-like voice:

DR. BULL  
I'm awfully glad to see you chaps.  
(shows them small blue card)  
The chief detective at the Yard told  
me that someone would contact me.

(CONTINUED)

DR. BULL (CONT'D)  
I'm just glad you're in time. We  
must leave for France immediately.  
(grabs his coat in a rush  
and starts buttoning it up)  
I had no choice but to send the Marquis  
off tonight. If I'd refused, my cover  
would've been shot, as well as my  
chest, I dare say.

Shocked, the Professor collapses in his chair, clutching his heart like an old man.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
My God! My heart! I can't take  
any more!

SYME  
Don't be a twit. You're thirty-six.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(snapping out of it)  
Oh. Oh, yes. Right.

He bounces to his feet.

SYME  
Well, this is absurd! If my  
arithmetic is correct, there were  
more damned police on the damned  
Council than anyone else!

Bull quickly finishes dressing and ushers them to the door.

BULL  
Sunday confided to me privately  
and in very murderous tones that  
there were, in all, four infiltrators  
on our council.

SYME  
So the devil knows!

BULL  
Yes, he knows. The question is,  
does he know which of us is which?  
I thought at first that he suspected me.  
Perhaps he does. But at least we now  
know who we four are, and we know we  
have a fighting chance.

SYME  
We might have taken them. We were  
four against three.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Not really. We were all four against  
only one.

BULL (rising)  
We must hurry. We must catch the  
boat to Calais if we are to stop the  
Marquis by tomorrow morning. We  
can sleep along the way.

Syme stops him.

SYME

Wait. There is something else.  
It's about this room...

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Yes... this room. It's strange, but  
Syme and I seem to know this place, somehow...

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC RISES as Syme and the Professor take in the  
room, the walls, the ceiling, the window...

BULL  
Odd you should mention it. This  
building used to be --

SYME  
The Granville Orphanage.

BULL  
Why, yes. I chose this flat  
for sentimental reasons. This  
was the same room I was raised  
in as a child.

Syme and the Professor freeze in amazement.

SYME  
Which bed was yours?

BULL  
(puzzled)  
It was right over there. Bed 39.

Syme and the Professor look at each other as if they have walked  
into a nightmare. And perhaps they have.

EXT. FERRY BOAT CROSSING THE CHANNEL - THE DECK - THICK FOG -  
NIGHT

Muted FOG HORNS in the distance. The three are seated on deck  
chairs, smoking cigars, wrapped in blankets. Bull has his  
sunglasses on.

BULL  
But this is impossible. We must  
be mad.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
One policeman dead. The other

three mad. That's jolly good.  
We're doomed before we begin.

SYME  
Perhaps only madmen have a  
chance of defeating Sunday. Surely  
he's mad as well.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Mad, mad, mad! We cannot all have  
precisely the same madness, you  
fools! We've obviously all been  
mesmerized! But how?

SYME  
If anyone could mesmerize us, it's  
Sunday. To stop us from interfering.

BULL  
Then he must know what we really are.

A beat of silence as they eye each other, disturbed at this  
realization.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FERRY - DECK - NIGHT - LATER

The Professor is asleep as Syme and Bull talk.

SYME  
So, fresh out of public school,  
they brought you into Scotland Yard?

BULL  
My uncle's a mucky-muck there. I  
told them I wanted special duty.

SYME  
So they tossed you into a room  
to talk to a mirror.

BULL  
Yes. I spoke to some old josser  
through a tube for security.  
Special Forces and all that.  
It was he who suggested I wear  
smoked glasses for the job.

SYME

You'd think they'd at least  
let us know there were others  
on the Council.

The Professor grumbles in his sleep, half-listening.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

That's bureaucracy for you. Bloody  
idiots.

BULL

Well, imagine my predicament. I  
almost burst my spleen when Sunday  
suddenly put me in charge of the  
assassinations. I had to send that  
beast, the Marquis, over with the  
bomb, because whenever I tried  
to slip out of it, I'd see the  
President somewhere, smiling out  
of the window of a club or taking  
off his hat to me from the top of an  
omnibus. I'll tell you, that fellow  
has sold himself to the devil; he  
can be in six places at once.

SYME

So you sent the Marquis off. Are  
you sure we'll have time to catch him?

BULL

Yes, I've timed it all out. He'll  
still be in Calais for breakfast.  
We must stop him immediately.

SYME

Theoretically, I must drown  
myself immediately. I'm afraid  
I did something quite idiotic.  
I promised a poor fellow on my  
word of honor not to tell the  
police.

BULL

You tool? I'm in the same bloody  
boat! I gave my word to that  
damned Secretary -- the one  
who smiles upside down, the  
most pathetic being I've ever

met. I can't break my word  
to a man like that.

The Professor stirs again, listening in disgust.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Now I know you're both mad! Have  
you forgotten that these men are  
assassins?! They have no sense  
of honor!

BULL

I made a promise to a broken man.  
Breaking that promise would be  
like whipping a leper. Call me  
a boy, but that's how I feel and  
there's the jolly end of it.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Then while you two defend the honor  
of the enemies of Mankind, I'll  
be blowing twenty police whistles  
as soon as we hit shore.

SYME

I'm afraid I can't let you do that.

BULL

Nor I.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

(mutters)  
Nincompoops...!

SYME

(troubled)  
And as for this psychological  
problem concerning our memories  
of the orphanage and so on --

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Let's not confuse ourselves any  
more than we have to! If we're mad,  
we're jolly well mad! Good night,  
gentlemen. I'll see you both  
tomorrow -- in hell.

He pulls the blanket up over his face. The others pull their

blankets around them and try to sleep.

EXT. CALAIS STREETS - MORNING

The three are talking as they walk briskly towards a cafe.

SYME

The situation is this: we must somehow keep the Marquis from getting the train to Paris this morning. We agree that we cannot tell the police.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

You two fools agree! I'll have both your badges for this!

SYME

After this, they're yours.

BULL

Perhaps we can have him detained on some trivial charge...

SYME

No, then we'd have to appear as his accusers and we'd be exposed.

BULL

We might try to kidnap him and lock him up somewhere; but that's doubtful. He's famous in Calais and has rich friends around him constantly.

ON SYME

SYME

I may have an interesting idea.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFÈ - MORNING

The three approach a café. Bull points inconspicuously at --

AN CAFÈ TABLE

The Marquis is seated with two solemn Frenchmen wearing frock-coats and silk hats. One of them, COL. DUCROIX, 65, wears the red rosette of the Legion of Honor. The Marquis, his face and hawk nose powdered daintily, is dressed like a Bohemian dandy, a Prince on holiday.

BACK TO SCENE. Syme, Bull and the Professor sit at a table. A waiter appears, pours them champagne, then leaves.

BULL  
(to Syme)  
You said you had a plan?

SYME  
Yes.  
(gulps down his drink)  
My family, the Symes are first mentioned in the fourteen century. But there is a tradition that one of them rode behind Bruce at Bannockburn.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
What's that to do with anything?

SYME  
(gulps down drink)  
The fact is, since 1350, our genealogy is quite clear and spotless.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Must you drink at a time like this?

SYME  
(unperturbed)  
Our family bearings, are: "argent, chevron gules charged with three cross crosslets of the field".  
Our motto varies.

BULL  
(mutters)  
He's gone off his bleedin' head...

SYME  
My remarks and actions are painfully practical. The Marquis' family tree is also very ancient. He cannot deny that he and I are both gentleman. But I propose to put the matter of my social position to a practical test.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(sneers)  
And how do you propose to do that?

Syme smiles, rises and gulps down his fresh drink.

SYME

By becoming light-headed enough to  
get up the nerve to cause, shall  
we say, a little scene...

He smiles again and moves gracefully over to the Marquis' table  
as they watch him, wide-eyed.

ANGLE ON THE MARQUIS' TABLE

Syme steps up, interrupting their conversation by his presence.  
Syme bows graciously. The Marquis is puzzled, but polite.

THE MARQUIS

Ah. yes, you are Mr. Syme, I think...

SYME

Indeed. And you are the Marquis  
de Saint Eustache. Permit me, sir,  
to squeeze the juice from your  
beautiful, gigantic nose.

Syme reaches his hand towards the Marquis' nose. The Marquis  
starts backwards, falling over in his chair. The two Frenchmen  
grab Syme by the shoulders, holding him back as the Marquis gets  
up. Syme pushes them away with a dignified air.

SYME

I am within my rights, gentlemen!  
This man has insulted me!

Ducroix, the man with the Legion of Honor, is incredulous.

DUCROIX

Insulted you? When?

SYME

Why, just now. He insulted my mother.

MAN 2

Insulted your Mother? I heard nothing  
about anyone's mother.

SYME

Well, anyhow, he insulted my aunt.

DUCROIX

But how can the Marquis have insulted your aunt, just now? He was sitting here with us all morning.

SYME

Ah. it was what he said!

THE MARQUIS

I said nothing at all, sir! Except something critical about the band. I only said that I liked Wagner played well.

Syme eyes the Marquis indignantly.

SYME

There it is, you see! My aunt played Wagner badly. It was a painful subject. We were always being insulted about it.

DUCROIX

This seems most extraordinary...

SYME

I assure you, sir, that the whole of your conversation was simply packed with sinister allusions to my aunt's weakness!

MAN 2

(sinisterly)

Yes? Rather it seems to me that you are simply seeking a pretext to insult our friend the Marquis!

SYME

By George! What a clever chap you are! But if that were so, why would I need a pretext when the Marquis has such a sweet, salacious smell-sniffer, such a vast, vacuous vestry of viscous nose-fluid, such a cavernous, corn-cob continent in the sea of his face, overflowing with a black nest of nose-hairs! Yes! It is a nostril-fancier's delight! A snot-lover's nozzle of mystery!

The Marquis SLAPS Syme's face, hard, with his glove.

THE MARQUIS

By God, if you seek a fight with me, seek no longer! These gentlemen will I hope act for me.

(they nod grimly)

I have three hours before I must leave on urgent business. I am ready to fight Immediately, unless you are a coward, as well as a buffoon.

Syme smiles and bows graciously.

SYME

Marquis, your action is worthy of your fame and blood. Permit me to consult for a moment with the gentlemen in whose hands I place myself.

Syme strides back to his table to face the gaping faces of Bull and the Professor. He leans over the table, speaking rapidly in low tones.

SYME

(sotto)

I have done it. He will fight me. Now listen carefully, there is no time for argument. You are my seconds; everything must come from you. He has to catch the Paris train in three hours. You must insist, and insist absolutely, on the duel beginning in two and a half

(CONTINUED)

SYME (CONT'D)

hours. If you are firm, he will choose a field close to the train station. He takes me for a drunken fool he can kill in plenty of time to catch his train.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Is he correct?

SYME

Very likely.

EXT. FIELD BY TRAIN STATION - DAY

It is a gorgeous meadowland lush with wild-flowers. A half-mile away is the train track and the station; two miles in the distance is the sea.

The Marquis and Colonel Ducroix wade solemnly through the knee-high grass from one direction, Syme, Bull and the Professor approach them from the other. Ducroix approaches Bull with great politeness.

DUCROIX

The play terminates at the first  
blood. Agreed?

Bull looks at Syme.

BULL

Ah, first, we insist that both combatants  
undergo a brief medical check-up performed  
by myself subsequent to play, and --

The Marquis slashes the grass with his walking stick and yells out darkly:

THE MARQUIS

Peste! No! Let us stop this talk  
talk talk and begin!

Syme checks his watch and whispers to Bull and the Professor (standing near him).

SYME

His train leaves in twenty minutes.  
The old boy's getting rattled.

Ducroix, carrying the weapons case, kneels in the center of the field and withdraws a pair of twin swords which gleam in the morning sunlight. Ducroix offers one to the Marquis, who snatches it without ceremony. He gives the other to Syme. Stalling for time, Syme begins bending the sword every which-way in a ridiculous, ad-libbed ritual. He wastes as much time as possible, swinging the sword in a dozen different improvised "exercises", as if limbering up. Syme's "exercises" become so absurdly elaborate that even Bull and the Professor exchange impatient stares. The Marquis is at last enraged.

THE MARQUIS

Stop! Stop this insane donkey-dancing  
you stupid fool! Let us take our

positions at once!

SYME

(stops, deadly serious)

Without these ingenious series of exercises, my dear Marquis, passed on in my lineage since the Axion Crusades, I should tend to slash and hack you up at once! These expert movements display a subtler form of swordsmanship, a form which has dazzled the greatest swordsmen on both continents!

THE MARQUIS

(sneers)

I see, I see now. You are merely a jabbering coward. You are stalling out of terror. You know you are doomed.

SYME

We shall see, sir, who is a coward.  
Dr. Bull, remove my vestitures.

Ducroix and Bull remove the Marquis' & Syme's coats & vests. The two principals face each other. Ducroix raises a handkerchief, holds it suspensefully, then throws it to the ground.

DUCROIX

Engage!

Syme and the Marquis touch blades, and we begin --

THE SWORD-FIGHT:

Syme and the Marquis begin an off-beat, choreographed duel in the field. The Marquis is an excellent swordsman, but Syme, using unorthodox moves, somehow holds his own. As the fight continues with increasing excitement, our NARRATOR speaks:

NARRATOR V.O.

And so began the duel to the death.  
Syme felt like a man who had dreamed  
all night of falling off a cliff,  
and had woke up on the morning when

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR V.O. (CONT'D)

he was to be hanged. For as soon as he felt the two tongues of steel touch, vibrating like two living things, he knew at once that his enemy was a terrible fighter, and that his last hour was near.

The Marquis SLASHES Syme's wrist. As the Marquis presses him even harder, Syme wraps a handkerchief around the wound & knots it with his teeth. Syme, keeping his eye on the empty railroad track, manages to defend himself successfully, using every ounce of his concentration and will-power. The Marquis, always on the attack, is getting tired, frustrated and impatient.

SFX: DISTANT HOOT OF THE TRAIN WHISTLE The Marquis spins about for an instant. No train in sight yet. He spins back, out of breath:

THE MARQUIS

Fight me, you cowardly wretch!

SYME

You call this a "fight"? You are the very image of my blind grandmother feebly swatting flies!

The Marquis attacks with renewed fury. But they seem a strangely even match: the Marquis' superior swordsmanship is counterbalanced by his enormous output of energy; Syme has simply been blocking each violent thrust or dancing clumsily out of the way, saving his strength. Both out of breath:

THE MARQUIS

I shall puncture your belly and you shall squeal like a pricked hog.

SYME

I doubt it. Unless you fall on my belly nose-first.

SFX: CLOSER TRAIN WHISTLE. Hearing the RISING ROAR of the train, the Marquis suddenly fights harder.

THE MARQUIS

I must kill you now. I have an appointment.

The Marquis instantly forces Syme backwards. Syme trips over some roots, falls with his back over a tree stump, and tries to fight off the Marquis horizontally. Syme hisses valiantly:

SYME

You shall miss your appointment.

The Marquis LAUGHS sadistically and SLAMS his foot over Syme's neck, pinning him to the tree stump. He is about to finish him off when --

SFX: LOUD TRAIN WHISTLE. The Marquis snaps his head around to see the train ROARING towards the station. As the man turns, Syme jack-knives the Marquis' foot up into the air, flipping him over onto the ground. The Marquis jumps up, out of breath, nervously eyeing the approaching train. Syme jumps forward clumsily to begin an attack, when the Marquis spits and throws down his sword in utter disgust.

THE MARQUIS

Merde! Stop! Stop! And listen to me, fool!

Syme lowers his sword, panting.

THE MARQUIS

I regret that I must betray my honor  
and - and apologize! We are fighting  
because you wanted to twist my nose.

(leans his face, trembling  
with shame towards Syme)

Twist it! Twist it and be done with it!

DR. BULL

I protest. This is most irregular.

DUCROIX

I believe weapons may be changed  
at the request of one of the combatants,  
but one's nose is hardly a weapon.

The train GRINDS to a halt with SQUEALING brakes.

THE MARQUIS

(still offering his nose)  
Come, come, Mr. Syme! Let us end  
this foolish duel at once!

DR. BULL

Marquis, I must insist that --

Syme, eyeing the train, holds up his hand to silence Bull. He steps forward two paces, firmly wraps his fingers around the Marquis' proffered nose -- and twists.

ANGLE ON THE SECONDS

They GASP in amazement at --

BACK TO SCENE. The Marquis' nose has come off in Syme's hand. A beat as Syme takes in the imbecilic scene. The Marquis breaks the silence in a loud, cheerful voice:

THE MARQUIS

Colonel Ducroix, do accept a left eyebrow, with my compliments!

He gravely tears off his thick eyebrow and politely offers it to Ducroix. Ducroix is speechless with rage.

DUCROIX

If I had known that I was acting for a -- a ridiculous poltroon - !

The Marquis begins quickly ripping his beard and shoulder padding off and tossing it in the air.

THE MARQUIS

So it must seem! You are mistaken, but I have no time to explain! Gentlemen, I bid you adieu!

He dashes past them towards the woods at the edge of the field. The Professor, the closest, dives through the air with amazing agility -- and tackles the Marquis to the ground. The others are over him in a second as the Marquis struggles to his feet.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

You're not going anywhere.

The Marquis's face turns red with anger.

THE MARQUIS

Why you great, fat, blasted blear-eyed, blundering, thundering, brainless, God-forsaken, doddering, damned fool! You great, silly,

pink-faced, tow-headed turnip!

SYME

You're not getting on that train.

THE MARQUIS

Getting on?! And why the infernal blazes should I want to get on the train?!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

We know everything. You are going to Paris to play shuttle cock with a bomb.

The Marquis is amazed and furious.

THE MARQUIS

What...?!

He tears off his wig and whips it to the ground.

THE MARQUIS

Have you all got softening of the brain, that you don't realize what I am? I wasn't worried about catching the damned train. I was worried about the train catching me!

A BEAT OF CONFUSED GLANCES ALL AROUND, ending on --

SYME

I regret to inform you that your remarks convey no meaning to us. What do you bloody mean, the train would catch you?!

THE MARQUIS

I mean that because of you twits, Sunday has us now in the palm of his hand.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

"Us"? And who is "us"?

In answer, the Marquis rips off the rest of his face and scalp, revealing a blond, red-faced young man.

THE MARQUIS

The police, of course! I am Inspector Ratcliffe of Scotland Yard. I have

my card here somewhere --

He rifles through his pockets. The Professor gestures wearily.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Oh, don't show us. We've got enough to paper Westminster Abbey! But this is impossible! We saw you slit that policeman's throat in the square!

THE MARQUIS/RATCLIFFE

That was staged with a fellow officer and a few blood capsules. Sunday and his secretary suspected me for months. I had to prove myself in an irrefutable fashion.

Shaking his head, Bull steps forward to address Ducroix.

DR. BULL

Sir, our apologies. An army of anarchists are hunting us like hares.

DUCROIX

Anarchists?

DR. BULL

Yes, a wealthy and fanatical group of murderers who wish to destroy mankind like vermin.

SYME

By God! This means that every man on that Council, except Sunday and his bloody Secretary, are detectives! What does all this mean?

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

It means that Sunday and his secretary tricked his most deadly enemies into joining a sham council. That way he kept us busy chasing each other.

RATCLIFFE

Precisely. One hour ago I received a wire that Sunday and the real council led an attack on Paris this morning, using their vast wealth to seize the

telegraphy lines and transport stations  
-- while we idiots were running after  
each other like a string of sausages!

SYME

So...! This nightmare suddenly makes  
sense? Except for our insanelly parallel  
childhood memories. And except for  
one other thing. Why were you so  
worried about the train?

RATCLIFF

Sunday knew the Professor would  
chase you in London, and that you  
would fight me here. Now that he's  
seized the Continent, I knew that  
his sense of the absurd would make  
him come here - to laugh in our  
bloody faces before he kills us.

Syme peers over Ratcliffe's shoulder.

SYME

My God. You're right. He's coming.  
With an army of men.

They all turn and squint.

THEIR POV - A MILE AWAY

A mass of men are jumping off the train and marching towards  
them.

BACK TO SCENE

RATCLIFFE

It was a habit of the late Marquis to  
carry a pair of opera glasses...

He takes out a leather case, removes the opera glasses and peers  
through them towards the station. The others squint at the  
distantly approaching army.

DR. BULL

But he has so many men! Surely some  
of them must be just ordinary tourists.

Ratcliffe sees something startling through the lens.

RATCLIFFE

Do ordinary tourists wear black masks  
half-way down the face?

Shocked, Syme grabs the opera glass, peers through them, then lowers them, his face frozen with disbelief. He slowly looks again.

POV - GLASSES

About A HUNDRED ANGRY-LOOKING MEN are marching towards them. Two leaders are wearing BLACK FACE-MASKS exposing only their mouths. The POV latches onto the lead masked man. who has a triangular beard, & smiles a smile that twists, one side up, one side down.

BACK TO SCENE. Syme lowers the glasses and sighs with relief.

SYME

At least the President isn't with them.  
They're following the Secretary.

BULL

Of course Sunday isn't with them. He's likely riding in triumph through Paris, or sitting on the ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral.

SYME

This is incredible. How could he raise such a vast secret army so quickly?

RATCLIFFE

Enough of this talk. If anyone prefers not to die, I'd advise him to follow me.

He turns with a sense of urgency and runs into the thick woods. The others give a quick glance at the approaching men and scramble after him.

INT. DARK, THICK FOREST - DAY

The forest is thick and black. Sunlight is almost totally blocked out by the canopy of trees. Here and there, shock-white shafts of dusty light explode across their faces. Syme catches up to Ratcliffe.

SYME

May I ask where on earth we're going?

RATCLIFFE

We must get down through the town of Lancy to the sea. I think there's a police station by the cliff.

SYME

Do you really understand all this? Could he have brainwashed the poor into following him?

RATCLIFFE

His followers are not the poor. The poor man needs a decent government. The rich man doesn't. The poor object to being governed badly; the rich object to being governed at all.

SYME

And Sunday is rich.

RATCLIFFE

Obscenely. His right-hand men are South African and American millionaires; through them he's seized the communications systems.

DR. BULL

(pointing)

Look!

They've come to an open space of sunlight. A FRENCH PEASANT is cutting wood with a hatchet and throwing the pieces into his horse-drawn cart.

SYME

I've got money on me. Let's offer him to give us a lift. We'd leave those men in the dust.

DUCROIX

You do not know my people. He would never agree unless you bargain with him. Allow me.

Ducroix introduces himself to the peasant in French. (FRENCH DIALOGUE TO COME.) The two begin haggling in French over the price. Syme, Bull and the Professor hear FOOTSTEPS in the distance, MEN MURMURING, CRACKING BRANCHES and CRACKLING LEAVES.

DR. BULL  
Colonel, they're coming!

Ducroix shushes him and continues to haggle leisurely. Finally they agree on a price. Syme nervously hands Ducroix his wad of bills. Ducroix pays the man, who signals them to hop on. They quickly pile into the woodfilled cart. The peasant takes his time lighting his pipe as they watch nervously.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Will you ask the bloody fool to hurry?!

The peasant hears this and grins devilishly. Then - he CRACKS his reins at the horse and the cart barrels down the hill at top speed. The detectives are thrown violently about the cart, holding on for dear life as the peasant chuckles and puffs his pipe, driving the horse on even faster. To a rush of MUSIC, the cart tears up and down the hilly forest road. As the road leaves the dark forest,

INTERCUTTING SYME looking back through the opera glasses.

THROUGH OPERA GLASSES: Their enemies ARE rising in mass over the crest of a first hill. The men are now running, pursuing them relentlessly.

BACK TO SCENE. The cart barrels to the top of the hill, where the detectives see a ridiculously STEEP WHITE ROAD dropping down in front of them towards a SEASIDE VILLAGE. The peasant chuckles at his passengers, and then WHIPS the horse straight down the cliff road. The men SCREAM in comic terror at this mad Frenchman as they tumble about wildly in the ramshackle cart. At the bottom of the long hill the driver pulls the horse to a sharp halt. Dr. Bull tumbles right out of the cart and onto --

EXT. "LE SOLEIL D'OR" INN - LATE DAY

Bull rolls up against an OLD INKEEPER's feet and tips his hat.

BULL  
Bonjour. Uh, sorry, old chap.

He gets up. Ducroix jumps out and throws his arms around the old man like an old friend. They speak in French (FRENCH DIALOGUE TO COME). Ducroix pulls the old man aside and they speak in low, urgent tones, Ducroix gesturing to the four detectives, still badly shaken by the ride. Ducroix tries to pay the old man, but the man refuses and hobbles around to the back of the Inn.

DUCROIX

He refuses to take our money.

The detectives hear their pursuers approaching. The old man reappears with five white horses, which he offers to the five men. Ducroix hugs the old man and they get on the horses. They gallop down towards the village by the sea, beneath a purple, foreboding sunset. As they reach the bottom, a half-mile from town, Ducroix yells:

DUCROIX

Four out of the five rich men in this town are swindlers. I suppose the proportion is equal all over the world. The fifth is a friend of mine, who can help us.

Syme hears something strange.

SYME

What's that noise?

They stop their horses for a moment and listen. SFX: The faint vibration and RUMBLE of DISTANT HORSES approaching.

SYME

It's an army of horses! Where could they have got horses?

The Colonel darkens, deeply disturbed, thinking the unthinkable.

DUCROIX

The only place within twenty miles is my friend's inn, the Soleil d'Or. Which makes it even more necessary for us to visit my friend Renard.

He swings his horse around and gallops off. The others follow.

EXT. THE VILLAGE OF LANCY - SUNSET

Ducroix quickly leads them through the maze of streets. They reach an elegant house and dismount. Ducroix rings the BELL.

DR. RENARD, 60, a beaming, brown-haired man with glasses, answers the door. Ducroix hugs Renard and pulls him aside to talk in French. Renard poo-poo's the panic and says in English:

RENARD  
There is no "anarchist uprising"!  
It's inconceivable!

Ducroix gestures at something behind Renard.

DUCROIX  
See for yourself.

They all turn to see -

THEIR POV - THE ENEMY - DUSK

Sweeping over the top of the hill comes a curve of black cavalry THUNDERING towards them.

ANGLE ON LEAD RIDER

It is the Secretary, grinning his weird grin below his ghastly mask, still faraway, but flying far ahead of his men, urging his horse to go faster, faster.

BACK TO SCENE. Renard is leading them to the garage. He opens the doors, revealing three motor cars.

INT. GARAGE - TWILIGHT

Dr. Renard gets in one car. Dr. Bull turns the starter crank, but the motor won't turn over. They try again. It won't start.

EXT. THE ROAD - TWILIGHT

STILTED ANGLE ON THE SECRETARY still far ahead of the others, WHIPPING his horse onward. He begins racing down the street towards Renard's house.

INT. GARAGE - TWILIGHT

A blanket of fog rolls towards them as they push the car out

into the driveway and try unsuccessfully to start it up. Syme throws open the engine cover.

SYME

My family owned one once. Let me try something...

DR. BULL

It's now or never! I hear horses!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I hear only one horse...

DR. BULL (listening)

You're right...

Renard appears carrying an unlit lantern and four old cavalry swords.

RENARD

Take these. The car has no light.

The Professor puts the lamp in the back seat as Syme adjusts a spark plug.

SYME

I've got it! Turn the crank!

Bull powerfully turns the crank. The engine fires up briefly, spluttering and shaking - then dies.

SYME

Damn! Try it again! Quickly!

Bull cranks it again, as --

THE SECRETARY ON HORSEBACK rounds the far end of the street, riding maniacally towards them through the mist, his black mask flapping nightmarishly.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

My God... It's the Secretary!  
Everyone! Get in the car!

As they pile in, the Secretary cleaves through the eerie mist before them like a satanic prince. He pulls his horse to a halt in front of the RUMBLING car, blocking their way, aims a pistol at them and screams with a triumphant, twisted grin.

THE SECRETARY

You are finished, traitors!

Just then -- Syme pulls the choke on the dash, and the car LEAPS POWERFULLY FORWARD into the street with EXPLOSIONS of SMOKE and FIRE. The Secretary's horse NEIGHS in terror and throws the Secretary into the air. His gun FIRES wildly as he lands on the hood of the moving cart Renard, who has stayed behind, yells after them.

RENARD

Go now! Hurry! Others are coming!

Syme opens the throttle and the car ROARS down the street. The Secretary almost tumbles off, but dives into the drivers' seat. Syme and the Secretary wrestle viciously for control of the wheel. Dr. Bull punches the Secretary hard in the face and pushes him out of the car. They SCREECH around a corner, as the Secretary staggers to his feet in the mist.

THE SECRETARY

(his voice echoing)

Fools! There is no escape!

INT. MOTOR CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

They race forward, Syme driving. A crescent Moon peeks through the mist. They pass through town, lights pop on in the houses.

DR. BULL

These lights make me feel a bit more cheerful.

RATCLIFFE

The only light I want are those at the police station. Where is it?

DUCROIX

A mile down the next road, by the sea.

The car turns and they ROAR through the town Square. The Professor HEARS something.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

What's that noise?

SYME

Probably the horses.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

No. Listen.

Just as Syme slows the car to listen, they see -

ANGLE ON STREET BEHIND THEM

At the other end, we catch a glimpse of TWO MOTOR CARS filled with masked men, ROARING through the intersection and disappearing around a corner. Following them are men on horses and a mob carrying torches.

BACK TO SCENE

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Renard's other cars! Blast him!

DUCROIX

This is absurd! Dr. Renard would never give them his cars!

SHOTS RINGS OUT, whizzing by their heads. A torch-bearing MOB appears at the far end of the street, approaching them through the mist.

RATCLIFFE

They're shooting at us, I'd speculate.

SYME

Hold on.

Syme floors it. The car ROARS off down a labyrinth of dark side-streets. Then they pull over and cover the lantern. They hear the MOB RUMBLE past on the next block. Ducroix points down the road to lights at the edge of town.

DUCROIX

There! Those red and white lamps are the Gendarmerie. We have to circle back through the Square to get there.

Syme quickly U-turns and turns onto a road shadowed by tall buildings. Ratcliffe stands and peers ahead through the mist.

RATCLIFFE

We'll never get there.

DR. BULL

Why not?

RATCLIFFE

There are two rows of armed men blocking the Square. I can see them from here.

(he sits and lights a cigarette)  
The anarchists have enlisted the town against us. I can only wallow in the exquisite comfort of my own exactitude.

Syme pulls over on a sidestreet that runs steeply down to the sea.

THEIR POV: As the mist parts briefly, they see another MOB with lanterns and torches standing in the Square ahead.

BACK TO SCENE

DR. BULL

I swear this is a mistake! That must be a - a sham fight or the mayor's birthday or something. Plain people in a place like this walk about with dynamite in their pockets! Get on a bit, Syme, and let's get a look at them.

Syme crawls the car a hundred yards further and pulls over in darkness. Bull looks through the opera glasses and emits a high crow of LAUGHTER.

DR. BULL

Why, you silly mugs! What did I tell you! That crowd is as law-abiding as a cow!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

How do you know?

DR. BULL

(hands him the glasses)  
Look who's leading them!

POV - GLASSES: Dr. Renard stands in one of his cars, holding a lantern and a pistol.

BACK TO SCENE

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Why, it's Renard.

DUCROIX

What a fool I've been. Of course,  
the dear old boy has turned out  
to help us.

Dr. Bull, bubbling over with laughter, jumps out of the car and runs up the lane towards the Square.

DR. BULL  
Dr. Renard! Dr. Renard!

ANGLE ON RENARD

seeing Dr. Bull. A strange look crosses Renard's face.

RENARD  
It's them!

He raises his pistol at Bull and FIRES twice.

BACK TO SCENE. One shot HISSES through Bull's hat, just above his scalp. With a YELP of disbelief, he dives back into the car.

BULL  
Drive, you idiot!

Syme floors it and SQUEALS a U-turn. The entire Mob chases them, Renard driving in front. As they drive:

RATCLIFFE  
Well, Dr. Bull? What do you think now?

DR. BULL  
I think that I am strapped in a small padded cell in Hanwell.

Ducroix stands, as if he's made a decision, and opens the door.

DUCROIX  
I'm getting to the bottom of this.  
Syme stops the car, nervously eyeing the approaching mob as Ducroix gets out.

DUCROIX  
This must be a joke. If you knew Renard as I do -- I'm going to face them. Drive away.

The Colonel turns and strides nobly towards the approaching mob.

The excited Dr. Renard raises his pistol again, but recognizing Ducroix, he hesitates, an angry look on his face. They are too close. Syme drives off slowly as they watch Ducroix.

THEIR POV: Through the mist, they see the Colonel come face to face with Renard. The two begin arguing and gesturing vehemently. Renard spits on the ground at Ducroix's feet.

BACK TO SCENE

SYME

Renard is off his head. He's suspect anyway. He's bloody rich.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I vote we drive bang through the thick of them. We may all be killed, but we'll take a few of them with us.

DR. BULL

No, I won't have it! I still think the poor chaps must be making a mistake. Give the Colonel a chance.

SYME

Shall we go back, then?

RATCLIFFE

No. Why not drive ahead and chat with another one of our old friends...?

Ahead, appearing nightmarishly through the mist, is an irregular body of horsemen galloping towards them. Leading them is the OLD INN-KEEPER, his eyes blazing as he sees them in the car.

SYME

That's it them!

With shattering violence, Syme swings the car off the road and down a steep dirt road to the sea, ROARING towards it like a man prepared to die.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

What are you doing!?

SYME

Taking a last stand.

The car is virtually torn apart as they speed down the bumpy dirt road, fenders flying off, the engine GRINDING and smoking.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
My heart! The world is insane!

BULL  
(yelling)  
No! We're mad! This is all in our minds!

SYME  
There's no denying that, my friend.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(covering his face)  
What are we going to do?

The rattling wheel suddenly comes off in Syme's hands. As the car ROARS on, he looks ahead with scientific detachment.

SYME  
At this moment, we are going to  
smash into a lamp post.

The next instant - SMASH! The car hits a lamp post and the four men are thrown into the air and onto --

EXT. THE BEACH - NIGHT

They tumble onto the sandy dunes and get up, dusting themselves off. Bull points above.

DR. BULL  
Look!

THEIR POV - FAR ABOVE

At the crest of the rocky path, the horsemen led by the Innkeeper spot them, dismount and run down the steep incline after them.

BACK TO SCENE

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(pointing)  
And over there!

THEIR POV - THE FAR BEACH: An angry, yelling MOB with torches and lanterns are two hundred yards off and running towards them.

BACK TO SCENE: Syme runs to the wrecked car, snatches a sword and puts it between his teeth. He sticks two other swords under his armpits, a fourth in his left hand and the lantern in his right.

SYME

Come on!

He throws them each a sword and runs towards the shore. Cursing, the others catch up to Syme, who takes the steel out of his mouth as they run:

SYME

We only have one chance. The police station. But they've got us trapped here.

(points ahead)

A breakwater runs out to sea over there. We could defend it until the Gendarmie turn out against the mob. Follow me!

They rush after him through the darkness onto a breakwater, consisting of rocks heaped up in a curve in the water. When they reach the very end, their backs to the open sea, they turn, out of breath, and face the town.

THEIR POV - NIGHT-TIME VISTA OF TOWN: The entire village is in an uproar: several dark, swelling mobs with clubs rumble through the streets above, heading for the beach. The mobs are dotted with hundreds of torches and lanterns, illuminating fiery faces gleaming with hatred.

BACK TO SCENE. Syme lights the lantern and raises it, the sword in his other hand.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Even if the police come now, they can do nothing to stop this mob.

DR. BULL

Nonsense. There must be at least one man left in this town who is still human.

Ratcliffe points disgustedly.

RATCLIFFE

And there he is.

THEIR POV - THE BEACH: Leading a brigade of marchers is a man holding high a lantern to see. We see his face clearly: it is the French peasant who gave them a lift.

BACK TO SCENE

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
(beginning to sob)  
That tears it. We are the last of  
mankind...!

Bull points excitedly.

DR. BULL  
Look! The police are stopping them.  
Thank God. They're unslinging their carbines.

THEIR POV - THE BEACH: A squad of armed Gendarmes push through the crowd and form a line.

BACK TO SCENE

RATCLIFFE  
Yes. And they are aiming at us.

Immediately there is a distant CRACKLE OF MUSKETRY, and bullets RICCOCHET like fiery hailstones against the rocks at their feet. Syme hastily closes the lantern shutters. The Professor repeatedly slaps his forehead.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
My brains! My bloody synapses have  
stopped firing!

DR. BULL  
I am lounging in a padded cell.

RATCLIFFE  
What does it matter who is sane or  
insane? We shall all soon be dead.

SYME  
It is hopeless, then.

Ratcliffe shrugs and puffs on his cigarette.

RATCLIFFE  
Oddly enough... there is one insane  
hope in my mind. That Chief Goddard

will somehow arrive and explain this mess.

SYME

Who?

RATCLIFFE

Our chief at Scotland Yard. I've never met him, but I know he's been stalking Sunday across the Continent.

Syme shakes his head haplessly.

SYME

That's bloody worthless to us now.

The crowd's SHOUTING begins rising above the ROAR of the sea.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF TOWNSPEOPLE -- Scores of black figures run into the sea towards them. But the sea is rough and they retreat for shore. Their lanterns illuminate their faces as they confer on the attack: it is the masked Secretary talking to Colonel Ducroix, who now holds a pistol.

BACK TO SCENE

DR. BULL

Ducroix?! It makes no sense!  
He's our friend!

SYME

Not any more.

Ducroix FIRES at them. Bullets SPARK and CHATTER off the rocks. They scramble to the edge of the reef, literally trapped like rats. GUNFIRE strafes them. They're trapped. Syme has had enough.

SYME

Well, gentlemen! Since they've turned against us, it's time to turn against them! Come on!

He smiles grimly and strides swiftly down the jetty towards the mob, his sword raised in one hand, the lantern in the other.

Colonel Ducroix, seeing him approach, immediately aims and FIRES. The SHOT strikes Syme's sword, SNAPPING it at the hilt. Syme stares in shock at the broken sword. Then fury rushes to his face, and he races at top speed towards Ducroix, SCREAMING

and swinging the lantern wildly over his head. He stops ten feet from the mob.

SYME

Rot in hell you bloody traitors!

Syme whips the lantern around on its chain like a bolo. It hits Ducroix brutally on the head and he goes down. The crowd halts. Syme lifts the lantern, illuminating the masked Secretary and the gathering mob, and cries in a terrible voice.

SYME

Do you see this lantern? And the flame inside? Better men than you twisted this metal into light! Made the street you walk on! Made the threads you wear! You bastards make nothing! You only destroy! You may destroy the world, but not this lantern and others like it! It shall go where your empire of apes will never find it!

Syme STRIKES the Secretary with it once, hard. The Secretary staggers. The crowd is momentarily stunned. Syme whirls the lantern twice around his head and sends it flying out to sea, flaring in the sky like a blazing rocket and vanishing into the mist. Syme spins around and yells to his men.

SYME

Your swords! Let us charge these dogs! For our time has come to die!

The three beaten detectives, moving as one with raised swords, charge the mob with a wild CRY. Syme snatches a bludgeon from a fisherman, flinging the man to the ground. The masked Secretary, holding his bashed head, raises his hand and yells with a voice of thunder:

THE SECRETARY

Stop! All of you! I order you to stop!

The detectives and the mob turn towards him. The Secretary rips the mask from his face. In the lamp light, his face registers astonishment.

THE SECRETARY

Some mistake has been made. Mr. Syme, from what you've said, I hardly think you understand your position. I arrest you in the name of the law.

Syme drops his club.

SYME

Of the law...?

THE SECRETARY

Of course, of the law. I am a detective from Scotland Yard.

He removes a SMALL BLUE CARD from his pocket.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

And what do you bloody think we are?

THE SECRETARY

I know as a fact that you are members of the Supreme Anarchist Council. Disguised as one of you, I --

SYME

Then why the masks?

THE SECRETARY

To approach you in the field as fellow conspirators.

SYME

But - but - hasn't Sunday's army taken Paris?!

THE SECRETARY

Taken Paris? Sunday's army? At this moment Sunday is at the vaudeville theater. I bought the tickets myself. I came here secretly to stop the assassination!

Dr. Bull tosses his sword into the sea.

DR. BULL

There was never any Supreme Anarchist Council! We were a lot of silly policemen!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

But Gogol! You murdered him!

THE SECRETARY

He's alive as far as I know. I told him to fake a scream and then locked the ninny up in the trunk. Later when I went to let him out, he'd already kicked the lid open and escaped.

DR. BULL

And all of these nice people here!  
(gestures to crowd)  
We're not the dynamiters! We're the police! The bleedin' police!

Giggling with exhaustion, he rips up his blue card, and throws the pieces over the sea of people who stare back in confusion.

DR. BULL

I knew I couldn't be wrong! Vulgar people always do the honest thing! And I am now going ashore to the vulgar tap house to do the honest thing -- to stand a vulgar drink to every bloody man here!

He strides, beaming, through the crowd. MURMURING, the people part, letting him through.

SYME

Someone help me with the Colonel.

Syme and some men help lift poor Ducroix, who is moaning and holding his head.

THE SECRETARY

Listen, everyone! We're police!  
Go back! It's a mistake! A mistake!

Others call back the announcement in French, and the crowd begins slowly shuffling back into town.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CALAIS FERRY - MORNING

The five detectives (SYME, PROFESSOR DE WORMS, DR. BULL, RATCLIFFE & THE SECRETARY) are escorted to the dock by Colonel Ducroix, a bloody bandage around his head. They shake Ducroix's hand and board the boat for Dover. The boat chugs off as the Colonel waves with his bandaged head. MUSIC and NARRATION over this:

NARRATOR V.0.

The next morning, the five detectives, weary and utterly confounded by their adventure, crossed the channel, bound for Dover. But a mountain of a mystery still loomed before them -- what did it all mean?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HANSOM CAB - MOVING NIGHT

The five are in the cab, discussing (unheard by us) the adventure with puzzled expressions.

NARRATOR V.0.

If none of them were what they pretended to be, then what was Sunday? If he had not seized the world, then what on earth had he been up to...?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PICADILLY CIRCUS HOTEL - NIGHT

One by one, the detectives exit the cab and enter the hotel.

NARRATOR V.0.

The Secretary reminded them that tomorrow morning was their scheduled meeting with Sunday. They would confront him together and ask him -- well, they weren't sure what they should ask him.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

All the detectives except Dr. Bull are seated, drinking brandy. Ratcliffe is pacing gloomily as he drinks.

SYME

Well... I suppose we could simply ask him who he is. But there's

something strange about all of this...

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Yes, Syme and I encountered a rather  
incredible mystery upon meeting Dr. Bull.

SYME

Yes. Strange... We all three have  
the same memory about growing up  
in an orphanage on Devon Street.

Ratcliffe freezes.

RATCLIFFE

On Devon Street...?

The Secretary has a strange look on his face.

THE SECRETARY

The Granville Orphanage...?

He and Ratcliffe stare at Syme. The Professor sighs.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Don't tell me. That's where you  
were brought up.

RATCLIFFE

By old one-ear! On the Second floor!

THE SECRETARY

So was I! In Bed, uh --

SYME AND DE WORMS

(wearily)

Bed 39.

The Secretary and Ratcliffe gape at them in astonished.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Oh, bother. This is getting monotonous.  
We've clearly been mesmerized by  
that fat-headed devil!

RATCLIFFE

You may be right. I had a strange  
feeling whenever he looked at me.  
I could barely tear my eyes away.

His pupils were like magnets.

THE SECRETARY

That's true enough. And he was always secretly staring at me. It nearly drove me mad.

SYME

You! He was always staring at me. I was sure he knew.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

That's odd. Every time I looked, he was burning holes in my forehead. It gave me the willies.

There is a clamour of GIGGLING and WHISPERING outside the apartment door. Then - Dr. Bull bursts in, drunk, holding an unopened bottle of champagne and beaming a boyish grin.

DR. BULL

Greetings, nervous nellies! You'll never guess what happened. I was at one end of the bar and who do you think was at the other end, staring at me?

SYME

(bolts to his feet)

You mean, Sunday was --

DR. BULL

No, no, no, no, no! We've become great mates! I've got him here!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Got whom here?

He goes into the hall and pulls forward the young man who had disguised himself as Gogol. He is also drunk, but nervous to see them again. Dr. Bull closes the door behind him.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Gogol! Our original spy!

SYME

Don't worry, lad. We are all spies.

GOGOL  
Dr. Bull told me!

DR. BULL  
And Gogol told me something  
quaint. He was raised in the  
bloody Granville booby hatch,  
like the rest of us boobs!

GOGOL  
What does all this mean?

DR. BULL  
It means we crack open another  
bottle.

He pops open the bottle which explodes with foam.

EXT. LEICESTER SQUARE - MORNING

It is a crisp, lovely spring morning. Sounds of distant BIRDS  
twittering and distant babies CRYING.

Syme, Professor de Worms, Dr. Bull (wearing his dark glasses),  
Ratcliffe, the Secretary and Gogol turn a corner to the Square.  
They are all dressed impeccably, and march slowly across the  
Square towards the hotel.

In the distance, they see Sunday sitting alone on the little  
balcony, his enormous back facing them. Sunday is holding a  
newspaper to his vast face, engrossed in reading.

The men whisper as they walk together:

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
There he is, as big as life.

THE SECRETARY  
That's well said.

DR. BULL  
This is cheerful. We are six men  
going to ask one man what he means.

SYME  
I think it is a bit queerer than that.  
I think it is six men going to ask  
one man what they mean.

ANGLE ON HOTEL STAIRWAY

They reach the stairway to the balcony. Syme goes in the lead up the stairs.

ANGLE ON BALCONY

The men appear simultaneously at the French window. They slowly step out onto the balcony & into the broad morning sunlight. Sunday still has the newspaper in front of his face. The headline: "MAD ELEPHANT INJURES ZOOKEEPER". Syme clears his throat. Sunday lowers the newspaper and beams a huge, white smile.

SUNDAY

Delightful! So pleased to see you all intact. What an exquisite day it is. Is the Czar dead?

The melancholy Secretary draws himself up to his full height, and in a dignified outburst:

THE SECRETARY

Mr. President, we have no more time for your bloody nonsense! We have come to know what all this means. Who are you? What are you? Why did you get us all here? Are you a half-witted man playing the conspirator, or are you a clever man playing the fool? Answer me, I tell you.

Sunday smiles warmly.

SUNDAY

Sit, gentlemen.

They awkwardly sit. He speaks with surprising gentleness.

SUNDAY

Candidates, gentlemen, are only required to answer eight out of the seventeen questions on the paper. As far as I can make out, you want me to tell you what I am, and what you are, and what a table is, and

what this Council is, and what this world is for all I know. Well, I will go so far as to rend the veil of one mystery. If you want to know what you are... you are a set of highly evolved young jackasses.

Syme leans forwards, fire in his eyes.

SYME

And you. What are you?

SUNDAY

(roars)

I? What am I?

He rises majestically to his incredible height, width and breadth.

SUNDAY

(louder roar)

You want to know what I am, do you?  
I am a big white man in a big white  
suit just the way you children have  
doodled me for centuries! But more  
importantly, I am a man who keeps  
his appointments. I have a party  
to attend...

(snaps open his pocket watch)

...in one hour.

(snaps it shut)

And you're all invited.

Then, unexpectedly, in an impossibly dexterous move for one so huge, Sunday quickly swings himself up and over the edge of the balcony. Yet before he drops, he pulls himself up again as on a horizontal bar, and thrusts his great chin over the balcony's edge.

SUNDAY

(deadpan)

By the bye, one other thing about  
who I am. I'm also the man behind  
the mirror, who made you all policemen.

With that, he falls from the balcony and disappears. Syme is the first to come to his senses.

SYME

After him!

The detectives, utterly thunderstruck, jack-knife to their feet confusedly. Syme, rushes to the balcony in time to see Sunday jumping into a hansom-cab at the corner of Alahambra. Syme impulsively leaps over the balcony.

ANGLE ON SQUARE

He lands awkwardly between two baby carriages being pushed by nannies. Jostling the carriages as he scrambles to his feet, the babies in both side burst into SCREAMS of terror. Syme mumbles apologies and dashes off.

Sunday's cab disappears around a corner.  
Bull appears at Syme's side and they instantly spring into another cab.

SYME

(to driver)  
Follow that cab ahead!

Their cab dashes off, just as the other detective rush into the Square, wildly signaling cabs. The Professor and Ratcliffe get into a second cab, and the Secretary and Gogol in a third. All three cabs fly off in pursuit.

As Syme's cab begins to catch up with Sunday's cab, Syme sticks his head out of his window and yells.

SYME  
Stop, thief!

Sunday's driver hears this and slows down. Sunday leans out.

SUNDAY  
Faster, sir! Increase speed!

DRIVER  
(suspicious)  
What's all this talk about a thief?

Sunday, leaning out far, smiles sweetly, then seizes the buggy-whip and jerks it violently out of the driver's hand. Then, still hanging half-way out, Sunday lashes the horse's rear and roars:

SUNDAY  
Faster, I say!

The horse storms off down the street, Sunday absurdly driving from the window as the driver protests feebly. The other three cabs careen after them at break-neck speed. Taking side streets, the four cabs whirl past square after square. Sunday flings a ball of paper expertly at Syme, then turns forwards again.

Syme catches the ball

DR. BULL  
What is it?

SYME  
I have no idea...

Syme slips back into the cab.

INT. CAB - MOVING - DAY

He uncrumples it. They find two notes, one addressed to Syme, the other to Dr. Bull. Bull snatches his and reads it:

DR. BULL

"This is a dog, this is a r-at.  
This is a frog, this is a rat,  
Run, dog, mew, cat, jump, frog,  
gnaw, rat."

(incredulous)

What the - ? What does yours say?

SYME

(reading)

"As sovereigns are anointed  
by the priesthood,  
So pigs to lead the populace  
are greased good."

They exchange dumbfounded stares, then are jerked sideways against the side as the cab takes an extremely sharp corner.

EXT. THE CABS IN PURSUIT - MOVING - DAY

Sunday's cab takes a wild corner and finds the road ahead blocked by a fire engine, roaring out of a station, its bells CLANGING. As the fire engine passes close to Sunday's cab, Sunday jumps onto the end of the it. The fireman at the rear begins yelling at Sunday, who mimes he can't hear because of the CLANGING BELL.

SYME AND BULL round the corner and see the fire engine roaring past them. Syme double-takes as he sees Sunday waving happily from the end of the truck. Syme screams and points like a madman:

SYME

He's there! Turn around!

The three cabmen whip their horses around. Ratcliffe's cab takes the lead, catching up to the fire engine.

Sunday turns towards the staring Ratcliffe, smiles, and performs a strange, Hawaiian-like dance for him. Then -- Sunday expertly flings a note at Ratcliffe, which sticks via air currents to his spluttering face. Ratcliffe collapses with it into his cab.

INT. RATCLIFFE'S CAB - MOVING - DAY

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
What are you doing?

RATCLIFFE  
It's a note from Sunday...  
(rips it open and reads:)  
"Material things I know, or feel, or see;  
All else is immaterial to me."  
(ripping it up furiously)  
It's a bloody pun!

EXT. FIRE ENGINE - MOVING - DAY

The fire truck rapidly continues on its mission, CLANGING into a tree-filled lane. As it passes a long, fenced-in parcel of land, Sunday suddenly leaps from the truck. He lands deftly in a tree directly over the high, vine-covered fence.

EXT. THE ROAD BEHIND - DAY

The three other cabs appear not far behind. The detectives, hanging excitedly out their windows, peer ahead after the fire engine. Syme points vehemently towards the tree:

SYME  
Up there, stop! Stop the carriage!

They all look up and see Sunday nimbly hop down onto the top of the fence, do a colorful flip like a circus performer, and disappear over the other side.

The three cabs grind to a halt and the detectives jump out. Syme, in the lead, dashes for the fence and furiously climbs up it. He reaches the top and straddles it as the others reach the bottom and begin climbing it:

GOGOL  
Is this the old devil's house?

SECRETARY  
It must be. I heard he has a house  
in North London.

SYME  
Do you hear that? People moaning  
and hissing! I'm going to take a look...

Syme jumps down on --

THE OTHER SIDE -- He finds himself in the back of a green, obscured immediately ahead by rows of bushes. All at once, he is startled by a HOARSE SCREAMING, half-human, half-animal, terrifying in its strangeness. The other detectives drop down next to him and stand frozen, listening.

SYME

Well, if there is a hole in there  
that leads to hell, I'm going in  
after him!

Syme bolts through the thick shrubs. The others follow.

ANGLE ON OTHER SIDE OF SHRUBS

They emerge onto a neat gravel path and another row of shrubs.

DR. BULL

Why, you asses! It's the back  
end of a zoo!

He points behind the shrubs to a tall cage sticking up, filled with monkeys. From the other side, two UNIFORMED MEN run down the path towards them.

GUARD 1

Has it come this way?

SYME

Has what?

GUARD 1

The elephant! An elephant has gone  
mad and run away!

GUARD 2

He's run away with a poor old  
gentleman with white hair!

SYME

Was the old gentleman fat?

GUARD 1

Why, yes! You know the poor fellow?

A THUNDERING NOISE rises up, and exploding through the shrubs and heading away from them is a huge gray elephant, moving quickly. Perched atop his neck is Sunday, goading the animal on to a furious speed.

GUARD 1

Stop him! He's at the gate!

GUARD 2

No, he's through the gate!

The guards and the detectives run to the gate. They are blocked by a terrified crowd YELLING and pointing at the escaped elephant, now careening down Albany Street through traffic. The detectives push through the crowd to the street and pile into two cabs, three in each.

SYME

(to lead driver)

After the bloody elephant!

The two cabs race after the beast. This time Sunday does not turn around, but urges the monster to go faster, cleaving through crowds of cabs and amazed pedestrians. The cabs follow the elephant onto a side street. Here Sunday tosses another crumpled ball into the air, and it lands on the drivers' seat of the first carriage

INT. CAB - MOVING - DAY

Syme uncrumples the note and hands it to Gogol.

SYME

It's addressed to you.

Gogol squints his eyes, reading the crumpled printing with difficulty:

GOGOL

(reading)

"Once there was a peppered cat  
Who tormented a mousey  
She pulled him by his twirly tail  
All about the housey."

(shocked, to Syme)

He's lost his bleedin' mind...!

EXT. STREET - DAY

The elephant turns several corners, outstripping the three cabs.

The driver of Syme's cab barrels to a T-intersection and slows down, no elephant in sight in either direction. Syme, his head out the window, points to an enormous crowd a few blocks away.

SYME

That way! Towards the Fairgrounds!

The driver takes off, followed by the other cabs.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

At the gates they are blocked by a MURMURING crowd. In the midst of them is the elephant, heaving and shuddering with exhaustion. But no Sunday. The detectives exit their cabs and rush to a GUARD holding the elephant. A crowd blocks them from entering the gate.

SYME

(to guard)

Where did the old gentleman go?

GUARD

'E ran off through the gates.

(puzzled)

An odd duck, that one. Asked me to 'old his 'orse, and gave me this note, addressed to -

(reads falteringly:)

"the secretary of the supreme an-arch, er, an - arch -"

The Secretary impatiently snatches it from him and rips it open.

SECRETARY

(reading with a sneer)

"There was a young woman from Crewe  
Whose lim'ricks would end at line two."

The Secretary suddenly stops reading.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Go on.

The Secretary furiously rips up the note.

SECRETARY

Go on? That's bloody it!

SYME

Look! It's him!

Syme is pointing, dumbfounded, up into the air over the Fairgrounds. They all turn to see -

ANGLE ON A HOT AIR BALLOON

unexpectedly rising above the grounds. Inside, Sunday waves his hat to the crowd.

BACK TO SCENE

SECRETARY

Ten thousand devils! He's escaping!

The balloon is suddenly blown in their direction and floats serenely over the gate.

DR. BULL

Shoot the blackguard down!

Syme takes out his pistol and shoots three shots into the balloon. The crowd GASPS and women SCREAM. But high in the air, the balloon moves away, unaffected.

RATCLIFFE

Put it away, Syme! That's like  
stabbing a whale with sewing needles!

Sunday waves pleasantly, and tosses down another ball of paper at the detectives as the balloon disappears over the trees. The paper ball bounces off the Professor's hat and into his shakey hands.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

It's for me!

(opens it and slowly reads:)

"Higglety- pigglety, hoppity-hops,  
The doggie runs, the doggie stops,  
Bigglety- wigglety, wogglety --"

SYME

Never mind that, you idiot! Back  
in the cabs! The blasted thing must  
come down somewhere!

They make a mad dash for the cabs.

SYME (to driver)  
After that balloon!

They jump in and the cabs race off around the corner.

SERIES OF BRIEF SHOTS - THE CABS CHASING THE BALLOON

The drivers do their best to try to find roads that follow the balloon's bee-line path. They race out of London and into the countryside, their eyes glued to the skies in pursuit. Finally, the cabs jerk to a stop at the side of a field bordering a vast forest. The detectives jump out just in time to see the balloon drift merrily over the forest.

RATCLIFFE  
We'll have to go on foot! Come on!

Syme pays the drivers and they all dash off through the field.

SERIES OF SHOTS - CHASING THE BALLOON ON FOOT

They sprint through the ploughed fields and break through a black thicket of thorny bushes. Too late to turn back, they recklessly blaze through the thicket, CURSING as they rip their hats, jackets and pants to ragged shreds. Breaking through the thorns, they wade through a disgusting field of mud, CURSING louder as they splash their clothes and faces with muck. Sopping out of the mud, they run panting through a field covered with dandelions and milkweed spores, CURSING and SNEEZING as the drifting white pollen sticks to their muddy clothes, making them look like huge, gawky birds.

They keep catching brief glimpses of the balloon just ahead, making them struggle on, exhausted. Finally, they reach a beautiful field of grasses and flowers, and stop to catch their breath. As they do, they catch a tantalizing glimpse of the top of the balloon moving quickly over the next crest of trees.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
We're still close, so let's slow down  
a bit! My heart cannot take the pace!

They continue on at a slower jog, watching the balloon rise again over the next ridge. As they walk, panting:

SYME  
Actually, it's quite beautiful...

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

I wish the beastly gas-bag would burst!

DR. BULL

I hope not. I wouldn't want him hurt, somehow...

SECRETARY

What?! Bull, you don't believe Sunday's malarkey that he hired us at Scotland Yard, do you!?  
The man is a proven liar.

DR. BULL

I don't understand a word about him being at Scotland Yard. It seems to make everything -- nonsense. But aside from sense, something's been happening to me. It began this morning, when I woke. I've been remembering things... Strange things...

They've reached a clear pond at the end of the field. Syme stops and turns to Bull, interested.

SYME

What sorts of things, Doctor? You mean about the orphanage?

Out of breath, the others stop to listen.

DR. BULL

No. I mean before that. Today, for the first time, I thought I could remember when I was an infant. I can see it now, actually, quite clearly.

RATCLIFFE

See what? You mummy's tit?

SYME

I know what you're getting at, Doctor. You've been remembering your father.

DR. BULL

Yes! How did you know?...  
(eyes Syme strangely)  
Syme, you mean, you too...?

Syme doesn't answer. He kneels down at the edge of the pond and washes the muck from his face. The others also wash themselves. Syme looks away as if in a reverie.

SYME  
Shall I tell them? It might help  
them to remember.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
What the deuces are you blithering  
about? Remember what? What about  
your father?

SYME  
I've been having these intense  
memory flashes as well. Of my dear  
father. Smiling down at me as  
an infant. I've never been able  
to remember my real father before...  
(to Bull)  
It's Sunday, isn't it.

Bull nods, sighs and chuckles at the utter madness of it. A sound comes from Gogol. They turn and see that he is quietly weeping.

GOGOL  
I - I thought I was mad! I can see  
him so clearly in my mind. My father...  
Sunday... singing me to sleep...

The men are thunderstruck. Syme looks at them, intensely inquisitive. Ratcliffe stares at Syme, purses his lips and slowly nods his head. He too remembers. Disturbed, the Professor leans against a tree. Syme makes eye contact with him. The Professor lowers his eyes and look away, embarrassed and irritated.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Yes, damn it! I remember! I remember!  
(snorts impatiently)  
Now that's quite enough of this stupid  
rubbish. Hurry up, now! This way!

The Professor bounds over a stone wall and the others, drying their faces with their sleeves, quickly follow.

ON SYME catching up to him and continuing persistently, his eyes wide, his voice intense.

SYME

It isn't rubbish, you know. There's something strange about this; about Sunday and what this all means. He's our father and our enemy at the same time. Our creator and our destroyer. When I see his huge back, I'm sure his face is monstrous. But when I see his jolly face beaming in the sunlight, I know the back is only a - a joke!

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Syme, listen to yourself. You're exhausted and hysterical.

Syme, not hearing him, is like a man seeing a vision.

SYME

But that's it. The back is a joke. We only know the back of things. We see everything from behind, and it looks mechanical and brutish...

(points excitedly)

That is not a tree, but the back of a tree! Everything is stooping and hiding its real face! If only we could somehow get around front and--

DR. BULL

(screams, pointing)

Look, there! He's coming down!

They break through a wall of brush, and see the huge balloon ahead. The balloon is rapidly sinking straight down, disappearing behind the trees. With a burst of MUSIC, the men dash over a stone wall and into the woods with renewed gusto.

EXT. A BEAUTIFUL, DEEP GREEN LAWN - SUNSET

The six detectives break through the forest and run out onto a strange, richly colored lawn. Another SUNSET of rainbow-colored, pastel clouds bathes the scene in mysterious, dusty light - giving it a dream-like quality, as in the opening of the film. Soft, S MUSIC begins. Syme is struck by a strange feeling.

SYME

(hushed)

Where are we? What is this place...?

The balloon is lying on its side, rippling in the gentle breeze like a sleeping beast. The basket is empty. The Professor is still panting.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

The bastard's run off again!

GOGOL

Someone's coming...

From a path behind the balloon, an ancient BLIND PAGE approaches. He is dressed in a violet and green antique Page's costume, and using a long, bejeweled scepter as a walking stick. He stops before them and bows respectfully. We recognize him -- it is the BLIND LUNATIC from the opening of the film, his voice now refined.

BLIND PAGE

Gentlemen, my master has a carriage waiting for you in the road just by.

SYME

Who is your master?

BLIND PAGE

I was told you knew his name.

A beat as they exchange glances.

SECRETARY

Where is this carriage?

BLIND PAGE

It has been waiting only a few moments. My master has only just come home.

SYME

(firmly)  
Take us to him.

The man leads them down a path filled with dusty light.

ANGLE ON ROAD

They come out at the side of an immaculately clean, golden road. Waiting there in a line are SIX CARRIAGES, bedecked with gold, silver and jewels. Alongside each carriage are ranks of splendidly-dressed servants - all having a certain stateliness, as if they were ambassadors of a great king.

ON THE SIX DETECTIVES looking like tattered tramps, utterly bewildered.

SYME  
If this is a dream, we may as well  
enjoy it.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS  
Yes. Before it becomes a nightmare.

Each detective is led to his own carriage. As they crawl in, the servants draw swords in solemn salute, as if the rumpled detectives were noble lords.

INT. SYME'S CARRIAGE - MOVING - SUNSET

He gets into a plush, gold-leaf seat, shimmering with jewels. A crystal goblet and a snifter of brandy await him on a wooden holder. He grins mysteriously and pours himself a glass. The carriage begins moving gently down the road.

EXT. SYME'S CARRIAGE - MOVING - SUNSET

He sticks his head out. The road ahead scintillates with dusty shafts of light from the dream-like sunset. They pass great stone gates and climb a hill lined with strange, flowering trees.

INTERCUTTING the other detectives staring out their carriage windows in exhausted bewilderment.

NARRATOR V.O.  
The six men from Scotland Yard had  
been subjected to an adventure wrought  
with mortal danger; now that they were  
suddenly cradled in a luxurious fantasy,

it stunned them more than any terror of the past two days. And as they drew nearer, the impossible feeling grew stronger that they were approaching their own home, but a home which they could only approach in their dreams.

EXT. A MAGNIFICENT ESTATE - SUNSET

The six carriages stop before a vast white mansion. The servants open all their carriage doors simultaneously. The detectives hop out, looking up at the huge mansion.

SYME  
Quite the digs.

The Blind Page opens the mansion's two magnificent oak doors.

BLIND PAGE  
Refreshments are provided for you  
in your rooms.

The detectives shrug and enter.

INT. MANSION - SUNSET

They enter a fabulous, high ceiled hall like a vast museum archway. A line of six VALETS, each dressed in a different bright color, stand at attention.

BLIND PAGE  
Your valets will show you the way.

A VALET dressed in bright blue bows to Syme and gestures for him to follow. The others are led away by their pages.

Syme's Valet leads him up a stairway and to a bedroom door.

INT. SYME'S ROOM - SUNSET

Syme enters a magnificent suite of apartments. He steps up to a golden-framed full-length mirror by the bed. In the mirror he sees his own absurd appearance: blood running down his mouth, his hair sticking out like straw, his muddy clothes torn into long wavering tatters. Syme bursts out laughing at himself.

VALET  
I have put out your clothes, sir.

SYME

Clothes! I have no clothes, except these.

He lifts two long strips of his coat in a mock festoon, and twirls like a clownish ballet dancer.

VALET

My master asks me to say that there is a fancy dress ball tonight in the courtyard. He desires you to dress as Thursday, sir.

The valet lifts off an ottoman a long, peacock-blue-green robe with a flowing collar. On the front is emblazoned a large golden sun, surrounded by flaming stars and crescents. At the side is a sheathed sword.

SYME

Dress as Thursday. Forgive me, but how is that get-up supposed to make me look like "Thursday"?

VALET

Biblical symbology, sir. In Genesis, the 4th day corresponds to the creation of the sun and moon. There is burgundy and some cold pheasant, sir, which my master hopes will hold you until the ball, which begins shortly.

The valet slips out the door. Syme holds the costume up under his chin and looks in the mirror.

INT. MANSION - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The doors to Syme's room burst open, and Syme strides into the hall, looking royal and magnificent in his Thursday costume. Seeing himself in a hall mirror, he playfully flings the folds of the robe across his shoulder in a kingly gesture, and struts down the hallway.

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS he meets the Secretary, wearing a "Monday" costume: a starless black robe with a strip of pure white emanating from the neck, like a shaft of light.

SYME

Well, Monday. That's the creation

of light out of darkness, isn't it?

SECRETARY

Yes. Symbolical twaddle, I'm afraid.  
But serviceable in a pinch.

SYME

(looking over balustrade)  
There's Ratcliffe. What a prancing  
trio we make.

(calling down)  
I say, Ratcliffe! Or should I call  
you Marquis!

They look down and see Ratcliffe standing in the grand foyer.

RATCLIFFE

You may as well call me Wednesday.

With cynical humor, he displays the front of his robe, which  
shows a green tangle of trees and twining plants.

RATCLIFFE

I take it everyone is in disguise  
in this bloody madhouse.

From outside, they HEAR FAINT MUSIC and the old Blind Page's  
MUFFLED VOICE speaking through a megaphone.

BLIND PAGE O.C.

(in the distance)  
Ladies and gentlemen, I present  
the noble lord... Saturday.

They hear muffled CHEERS and APPLAUSE. Descending the stairs:

SECRETARY

That would be Dr. Bull. I suppose it's  
time we got to the bottom of this.

They join Ratcliffe, who gestures towards a narrow red carpet  
leading off through the house.

RATCLIFFE

After you.

They follow Syme down the long carpet as they HEAR:

BLIND PAGE O.C.  
Ladies and gentlemen, I present the  
honorable... Tuesday.

More distant CHEERS as they follow the carpet down a long hall.

BLIND PAGE O.C.  
(getting louder)  
Ladies and gentlemen, I present  
the venerable... Friday.

More CHEERING.

SYME  
(as they walk)  
I find this all so familiar somehow.  
As if we've done this before, a  
thousand times.

The hallway turns. At the end of it is a large open door,  
flanked by servants standing at attention. Through the door  
they hear the MUSIC and merriment. Syme pauses and turns to the  
others.

SYME  
Well... the party awaits us.

He straightens his tunic and slowly steps through the door.

EXT. THE COURTYARD LANDING - NIGHT

Syme walks out onto a marble porch, overlooking a magnificent  
courted garden, full of torches and bonfires, eerily  
illuminating a vast carnival of COSTUMED REVELERS

INTERCUTTING SYME, amazed by the vast, dream-like tableau.

At the foot of the wide marble stairs, there is an elegant  
ORCHESTRA playing the magnificent "Sleepers Awake" by Bach. To  
Syme's right, on a marble oval set in the lawn, SEVEN GREAT  
CHAIRS stand behind a crescent-shaped banquet table. On each  
chair is a planetary symbol signifying one of the seven days.  
The empty central chair shows the Sun.

ON TABLE: Professor de Worms is just seating himself in the  
Friday chair; Gogol, already seated, is nonchalantly pouring  
himself a tumbler of steaming punch; Dr. Bull, also seated, is  
tapping his feet to the music, and gives Syme a jolly little  
wave. All three are wearing beautifully bizarre symbolical

costumes.

The OLD BLIND PAGE stands at the top of the porch stairs, holding a brass megaphone to his mouth. He waits for Professor de Worms to settle into his seat, then turns and bows graciously at Syme.

BLIND PAGE

Ladies and gentlemen, I present  
the beneficent... Thursday.

A TRUMPET FANFARE overlaps the Bach melody as two Guards raise their blazing swords over Syme's head. Not knowing what to do, Syme awkwardly bows to the crowd. The revelers break into enthusiastic CHEERS -- clashing cups, shaking torches, and flinging feathered hats into the air. Syme descends the stairway in a bumbling daze and walks to the table. Sitting in Thursday's chair, he whispers in amazement to Dr. Bull:

SYME

What in God's name is all of this?  
And where is Sunday?

DR. BULL

(giddy)

He could be noodling in his knickers  
for all I know!

BLIND PAGE O.C.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present  
his excellency... Monday.

Another FANFARE and the party-goers CHEER with renewed vigor. Overhearing, Gogol raises his glass to Syme.

GOGOL

Thursday, why not enjoy yourself!  
This is the only time the likes of us'll  
ever be invited to a bash like this!

SYME

But look at us... Are we inside some  
sort of bizarre dream?

The Professor pats the table and gives Syme a macabre grin.

PROFESSOR DE WORMS

Syme ... I've suddenly realized something.

All of this is real. It is everything  
that went on before that is the dream.

SLOWLY MOVE IN ON SYME

looking out over the party with a mystified expression. The  
CHEERS for Monday -- and the subsequent introduction of  
Wednesday -- echo faintly in the b.g. Over all this, we HEAR our  
Narrator:

NARRATOR V.0.

Against every axiom of his intellect,  
Syme knew instinctively that Professor  
de Worms was absolutely right...

INTERCUTTING SYME/SYME'S POV as the revelers begin a wild DANCE.  
At increasingly STILTED ANGLES, he watches couples prancing  
merrily towards him, wearing weirdly-evocative costumes:

- a HOT-AIR BALLOON dancing with an ELEPHANT;
- a FIRE TRUCK dancing with a giant LANTERN;
- a MOTOR CAR dancing with a HORSE;
- huge OPERA GLASSES dancing with a STEAM LOCOMOTIVE;
- an enormous FALSE NOSE dancing with a TUG-BOAT;
- a sinister BOMB dancing with a GAS LAMP (and trapped  
inside its glass is a large, mechanical HUMMING BIRD).

Over this:

NARRATOR V.0.

...For although everything around  
him had the texture of a peculiarly  
vivid dream, underlying it all was  
the unshakable knowledge that this  
moment was more real than anything  
he had ever experienced before.

BACK TO SCENE

After being introduced during this reverie, Ratcliffe is just  
taking his seat across from Thursday. Between them is Sunday's  
chair, conspicuously empty. The orchestra triumphantly  
concludes "Sleepers Awake", ending the dance. The crowd of  
dancers CHEER and APPLAUD loudly. Dr. Bull applauds and  
WHISTLES madly as if he were at a sporting event.

INTERCUTTING SYME AND CROWD

as the ocean of human faces before him takes on a frightful and

beautiful alteration. It is as if heaven itself has opened up somewhere behind them. The crowd HUSHES to silence, and Syme HEARS slow FOOTSTEPS approaching from behind.

ANGLE ON SUNDAY

appearing next to him with a lit candle in a brass holder. He stands in front of his central chair and overlooks the crowd, dressed in a sparkling white suit, a white carnation in his lapel. The crowd watches him intently, waiting for him to speak. It is absolutely silent as he looks out over the sea of faces.

SUNDAY

Our guests have kept their appointment.  
Now is the time, if you remember,  
when we seven must be left alone.

Sunday gives a little flick of the finger to the orchestra leader which says, "Get lost." The musicians stand and begin a quiet but merry vaudeville melody, continuing to play as they lead the revelers into the mansion.

ON SUNDAY

As the crowd magically disperses, Sunday pours himself some wine and eases back into his chair with a pleasant sigh.

PAN THE GROUNDS. The mansion doors shut. Muffled MUSIC continues faintly in the b.g. The sound of CRICKETS rises from the wood. The bonfires magically fade to embers.

INTERCUTTING SUNDAY/THE DETECTIVES

Sunday looks up and the men follow his gaze to --

THE STARS

in the moonless night, gleaming more and more intensely as we watch. Over this image, Sunday's gentle, powerful voice whispers playfully:

SUNDAY O.C.

Who am I? Why am I here? Is there  
some other? These are the three  
maudlin thoughts of this creaking  
universe, within which we live  
and move and have our being.

ANGLE ON SUNDAY

He stands and talks as he moves around the table, pouring wine into their goblets.

SUNDAY

We will drink wine tonight inside the universe, and remember. We have loved each other so sadly, have fought each other so fiercely, and for so long. I seem to remember centuries of heroic war, in which you were always heroes epic on epic, Iliad on Iliad, and you always brothers in arms. Whether it was but recently - for time is nothing - or at the beginning of the world, I sent you out to war. I sat in the darkness, where there is not any created thing, and to you I was only an inner voice, commanding valor and an unnatural virtue. You often heard the voice in the dark. But more often than not, you denied it.

(shrugs)

But, then again, so would I. What idiot wants a nagging voice in his head all day?

He stares into space and sips his wine.

INTERCUT DETECTIVES

There is a silence as they exchange baffled looks. Then Monday the Secretary speaks up for all of them, in a harsh, no-nonsense voice:

SECRETARY

Sir, none of us here have the slightest idea of what you're talking about. Now who and what are you?

Sunday pours himself some wine and drinks.

SUNDAY

I am the Sabbath. The day of rest.

SECRETARY

Well, I for one am not restful.  
If you were the man at Scotland  
Yard, how could you also be  
Sunday, his enemy?

RATCLIFFE

Yes, it's ridiculous that you  
should have been on both sides  
fighting yourself.

SUNDAY

Ridiculous? Of course it's  
ridiculous! You don't know all  
I had to do merely to prepare  
your tiny bird-brains. Otherwise  
they'd explode at this moment.  
So much fancy foot-work, and  
for what? Merely to rip the logic  
and reason out of your cerebellums,  
so that you could attend our  
little unreasonable reunion party.

SYME

Where are we, Sunday? What is  
this place?

SUNDAY

It's where you've always been.  
Sitting inside the universe,  
thinking you can somehow get out.

THE SECRETARY

Would you mind speaking plainly?

SUNDAY

You have not physically traveled  
anywhere, baboons. But the quality  
of your perception, due to a healthy  
dose of illogical concepts, has  
been, shall we say, boosted to an  
immense frequency.

He whimsically smiles as he pours Syme and Monday more wine.

SUNDAY

You are still on earth, but you are in its frequency which you quaintly call "Paradise".

RATCLIFFE

Sunday, do you take us for a pack of simpletons?

Sunday looks at Ratcliffe's red, furious face - and bursts out in a booming belly-laugh that says, "Of course I do!" He tries to stop, but sees Ratcliffe fuming and begins howling all over again. His laughter is infectious. Syme, Bull and Gogol cannot help joining in. The Professor scowls, chuckles, then begins cackling like an old man. The Secretary and Ratcliffe remain stern.

RATCLIFFE

It's funny, is it?

SUNDAY

(giggling, out of breath)  
Oh, forgive me, lads. It's just that when I saw your sleeping faces --

RATCLIFFE

Sleeping? What are you on about?  
(strikes table)  
Does this look like I'm asleep?

A beat. Sunday closes his eyes and sighs, not unkindly. His face takes on a look of great intelligence.

SUNDAY

Gentlemen, that is why you are here. It is time for you all to wake up. You are the part of us that is yet asleep, bamboozled into thinking that everything matters, hypnotized by matter itself.

He gesture to the heavens.

SUNDAY

But none of it exists except for the meaning you give to it.

He slowly circles the table again, pouring each of them more

wine.

SUNDAY

Do you remember now? The plans we made? If we split into pieces, each one conscious, and erased the memory, we knew that we would be forced to take the hard road home. For if you knew the truth from the outset, would you bother to work so hard to do anything? Ha! I wouldn't!

INTERCUTTING each man watching, with growing amazement, as Sunday continues:

SUNDAY

(raises his hands)

Who am I? Why am I here? Is there some other? ... Since there was no other, rather than go mad, we agreed to split up and play at good and evil simultaneously, so that we could experience everything possible before becoming whole again.

(pours another glass for each of them as he continues)

Every hundred years we meet. To check up on each other, tell a few jokes, compare notes, get sloshed, that sort of thing.

He picks up the lit candle and the bottle. As he walks behind each, he pours out the last of the wine into their goblets.

SUNDAY

And every hundred years, gentlemen, as we reach the bottom of the last bottle, I ask you all the same question.

He pauses and sips his drink, as if waiting for something. Syme speaks up.

SYME

What question?

Sunday eyes them all whimsically, then raises one eyebrow.

SUNDAY

(intense whisper)

Shall we continue with...

(gestures to stars)

...this? Or do you want to  
go back?

Bull, his mouth full of wine, spits up in surprise.

DR. BULL

Go back? What do you mean, go back!

SUNDAY

I'm not forcing you. It  
has to be your own decision.

(intense whisper)

Do you want to go back?

He sits in his chair. The men look tensely at each other.

SUNDAY

The choice, gentlemen, is yours.  
Take your time, take your time,  
there's absolutely no rush.

Sunday immediately drums his fingers against the table, humming  
tunelessly, checking his pocket watch impatiently.

INTERCUTTING THE MEN. The men exchange uncomfortable glances as  
they each decide. One by one, they turn to Syme and slowly nod.  
Before our eyes, Syme becomes their unspoken spokesmen.

Syme clears his throat nervously and speaks up in as noble a  
voice as he can muster.

SYME

Sir?

Sunday bolts upright in his chair in sarcastic mock suspense.

SUNDAY

Yes, yes?

SYME

We've decided...we've decided  
to go back.

Sunday snaps his watch shut, suddenly all business.

SUNDAY

I knew you'd say that. Shall we  
have our cake?

Sunday claps his hands like a sultan. A SMALL BOY, followed by a DOG, walks onto the dais carrying a huge cake. On the cake are twenty thick, lit candles spluttering like sticks of dynamite. The boy -- wearing white shirt and shorts, suspenders and a feathered Swiss hat -- sets the cake on the table by Syme.

ON SYME

He recognizes the boy and the dog in shock. They were the ones he saw killed in the outdoor cafe.

SYME

But... but you're dead!

ON BOY AND DOG

BOY (casually)

No one dies, you twit.

The boy sneaks a fingerful of frosting, gives it to the dog and they run off.

ON SUNDAY

He has moved to the inside of the table's crescent and stands in the center. SLOWLY MOVE IN. As he speaks, the night sky behind him slowly transforms; the stars gleam and twinkle with unparalleled intensity.

SUNDAY

As we agreed, I have done my part  
to prod you awake.

The garden behind him begins glowing with unearthly, rich, luminous colors.

INTERCUTTING Syme reacting that something strange is happening.

SUNDAY

Now that we have conferred, let  
us erase your memories and return,

refreshed, to your magnificent  
madhouse...

The colors behind him begin slowly swirling in a growing  
whirlpool of light and shadow. The vortex is centered behind  
Sunday's head.

INTERCUTTING THE DETECTIVES WATCHING

The stars themselves attach onto this whirlpool and begin  
revolving in the sky behind him, as if the entire universe is  
dissolving before their eyes into a hypnotic spiral.

INTERCUTTING SUNDAY:

SUNDAY

...returning to a moment of  
your choice before our adventure  
began... I'd suggest a moment  
when you felt closest to the  
real reality, to help you settle  
back in... an intense moment  
the reality of which you'd  
have to be an idiot to deny.

Behind him, the spinning vortex of the universe spins faster,  
creating dazzling colors which cast Sunday in silhouette.

SUNDAY (CONT'D)

Farewell, my boy-detectives!  
Until one hundred years hence!  
And don't forget to remember to  
forget!...Forget!... FORGET!

THE DYNAMITE CANDLES on the cake EXPLODE!

MIND-BLOWING COLORS shatter the screen as a SHRIEK of ELECTRONIC  
SOUNDS twist through the soundtrack, slowly intensifying into an  
exhalatory HISSING. The screen violently implodes to --

SHOCK WHITE

burning and eclipsing everything.

CLOSE - SYME

his eyes watching in awe, his face reflecting the cascade of  
lights and white smoke. A HAZE OF LUMINOUS, SHIFTING MISTS

slowly obscure his face until it is no longer visible. During this:

NARRATOR V.O.

The world, or what was left of it, dissolved before Syme's eyes. Syme and the others were to be sent back. Back to the one moment which made the world seem real to each of them. For it was in their best interest that the ridiculous earth seemed the only sensible reality. For Syme and his band of stupefied brothers, the formless universe slowly congealed into a single intense moment in time, a moment which made everything matter...

VERY SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE MARIANNE GREGORY

Her face in SOFT-FOCUS magically emerges out of the mists. She is looking as if she is in love and wants to be kissed. A faint BARBERSHOP QUARTET is heard in the b.g. We recognize the locale:

EXT. SAFFRON PARK GARDEN - NIGHT

Behind her is the secluded corner of the Garden, illuminated by Chinese lanterns. We recognize this same shot from the beginning scene of the film. Syme and Marianne are sitting again alone in the garden, about to kiss.

ANGLE ON SYME

staring back at her, his face a shifting canvas of thoughts and emotions.

SYME

Did you just...feel something...?

ANGLE ON MARIANNE

MARIANNE

(sensuously)

I will if you want me to...

ANGLE ON SYME AND MARIANNE

There is a moment of eye contact, filled with gentle, intense yearning. He slowly, slowly inches forward. They move closer with an extremely gentle, but overwhelming, desire.

CLOSE - THEIR LIPS

The instant before their trembling lips finally touch --  
the shot FREEZES. Hold.

MUSIC IN: "Sleepers Awake" by Bach. CREDITS ROLL over  
the frozen kiss.

As the MUSIC and CREDITS continue, their eternal kiss forever  
an instant away, we slowly --

FADE OUT