

**SAINT JEAN**

**The Life, Loves, and Questionable Death  
of Jean Seberg**

**a play by Tom Baum**

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Characters (in order of appearance)

JEAN-LUC GODARD

OTTO PREMINGER

ROMAIN GARY

ED SEBERG

HAKIM JAMAL

AHMED HASNI

JEAN AGE 40

JEAN AGE 17 TO 32

(A dark empty space. Lights up on JEAN-LUC GODARD and OTTO PREMINGER. JEAN-LUC is wearing very dark sunglasses.)

JEAN-LUC GODARD: Otto! *Quelle surprise!* I did not expect to see you here.

OTTO PREMINGER: I felt I owed it to the girl. I hear you took some time off.

JEAN-LUC: *Ah oui*, after my motorcycle accident.

OTTO: In a coma, I heard.

JEAN-LUC: For a week. It was glorious. Nothing happening. Like early Warhol. Did I ever thank you, Otto?

OTTO: Thank me for what?

JEAN-LUC: For launching two careers.

OTTO: I know of only one, and my blood pressure never came down again.

JEAN-LUC: Ah no, you're forgetting my career. If I hadn't seen her in *Bonjour Tristesse*, I might still be reviewing for *Cahiers*.

OTTO: You exaggerate.

JEAN-LUC: They say Preminger hates flattery, so I exaggerate. Did you two really not get along? I never believe what I read, unless it's fiction.

OTTO: Every interview she gave, she disparaged me. How about you?

JEAN-LUC: Actors never like working with me. They want to be in control. Ah, look what just waltzed in.

(ROMAIN GARY has entered. He looks deathly pale.)

OTTO: Who is that?

JEAN-LUC: Romain Gary? The novelist and flying ace?

OTTO: Oh yes, we met in Paris. *The Roots of Heaven*.

JEAN-LUC: Huston botched the film, but then Huston botches everything. *Bonjour, Romain*.

ROMAIN GARY: *Bonjour*, Jean-Luc. Hello, Otto. Are we the only ones—just us directors?

OTTO: So far. (*aside to JEAN-LUC*) He was brutal to her, I hear.

JEAN-LUC: His movies are the true brutality.

ROMAIN: I can hear every word you're saying! Shall we talk about brutality? (*to OTTO*) You, Mr. "Skidoo!" you nearly burned her alive. (*to JEAN-LUC*) The most charming symbol of female liberation in the history of the world, and "Oh Belmondo, please call her a cunt." She made you look like a fucking genius, and you dropped her like a hot potato.

OTTO: Your devotion does you little credit. Who is that man?

JEAN-LUC: Where? What man?

ROMAIN: Take off your damn sunglasses, maybe you could see.

(ED SEBERG *has entered*.)

ROMAIN: *Vous avez l'air perdu. Pouvons-nous vous aider?*

ED SEBERG: Zhe nuh parlay frahn-cay.

ROMAIN: Ah, my apologies, Mr. Seberg. I'm Romain Gary.  
(*wryly*) I see you've brought one of her friends.

(HAKIM JAMAL, *a handsome black man in a lamb's-wool cap and gold earring, has entered behind ED SEBERG. Like Romain, he looks half-dead.*)

ED SEBERG: I've never seen that man in my life.

ROMAIN: (*aside*) Consider yourself lucky. Hello, Hakim.

HAKIM: Yeah, hey.

ROMAIN: I was sorry to hear what happened.

HAKIM: I could say the same for you.

ROMAIN: So tell me, Hakim: Would you do it again?

HAKIM: Sleep with your wife? Seemed worth it at the time. Yeah, I'd do it all again.

JEAN-LUC: Then you have passed Nietzsche's Test.

ED SEBERG: What test is that?

OTTO: (*lightly*) The one he failed himself. The test for syphilis.

JEAN-LUC: Otto, we are discussing philosophy. If you were told you had to re-live your life, would you shudder at the thought? That was Nietzsche's question.

OTTO: I would welcome the chance to live again.

JEAN-LUC: Every pain, every joy, every disappointment? No chance of changing anything?

OTTO: Absolutely.

JEAN-LUC: Then you are an *Übermensch*. But we knew that already.

ROMAIN: "For here there is no place that does not see you. You must change your life."

AHMED HASNI: If only one could change a life....

(*Lights up on AHMED HASNI, standing by a grave.*)

AHMED HASNI: ...we'd both have been happy. As happy as she was miserable with all of you.

ED SEBERG: I resent that, whoever you are.

ROMAIN: So do I.

AHMED: Hakim, you were certainly an exception.

HAKIM: *(to the others)* And doesn't that tell you blue-eyed devils something? *(to AHMED)* Thank you, man.

AHMED: You're entirely welcome.

HAKIM: I can't say my motives were entirely pure. I'm betting yours weren't either.

*(AHMED lays a bouquet by the headstone.)*

AHMED: *(touch of slyness)* Whose motives ever are?

*(Lights fade as the men gather around the grave. Lights up on Jean Seberg's Paris apartment. One window, a doorway to an unseen kitchen, a door to a bathroom, and a closet door with duct tape along the jamb.)*

*JEAN, age 40, enters, followed by AHMED HASNI. He's carrying two bulging grocery bags. JEAN 40 is a faded beauty, overweight, with long unwashed hair. The apartment is just as unkempt. Several paintings are visible—one or two by recognizable artists, a Mondrian or a Klee. The year is 1979. Offstage, the sound of a toilet running.)*

AHMED: Which way is the kitchen?

JEAN 40: Stop. Stay right where you are.

AHMED: What is the matter?

JEAN 40: The toilet's running.

AHMED: Yes, I hear, what of it?

JEAN 40: Well, don't you remember? I fixed it.

AHMED: How could I remember such a thing? I have never been to this apartment.

JEAN 40: Never?

AHMED: Of course not. We only met tonight.

JEAN 40: What is your name again?

AHMED: Ahmed. Ahmed Hasni.

JEAN 40: Ahmed, how much do you know about plumbing?

AHMED: Very little, I'm afraid.

JEAN 40: Here's what I did. I lifted the lid off the tank. The flapper was wedged open, I pushed it down, the tank filled up. And then everything was quiet. Somebody must have used it while I was out.

AHMED: Do you have a roommate?

JEAN 40: Not at the moment. The position's open.

*(JEAN has been running her finger along the duct tape on the closet door.)*

JEAN 40: At least they didn't get to my things.

AHMED: Who are we talking about, please?

JEAN 40: I'm a public enemy. Priority Three. "To be rounded up in case of national emergency."

AHMED: *(doubtfully)* Ah, I see. Where should I put the groceries?

JEAN 40: Kitchen's that way. The light's by the door, be careful. In case they're hiding there.

*(JEAN 40 exits into the bathroom, AHMED in the direction of the kitchen. After a moment, the toilet sound subsides. AHMED re-enters, tries the closet doorknob. It turns. JEAN 40 enters.)*

JEAN 40: No! Keep away from there. Oh God, don't tell me. Come here.

AHMED: Why, what is the matter?

JEAN 40: I said come here!

(JEAN 40 *starts to frisk* AHMED.)

AHMED: Stop, what are you doing?

JEAN 40: (*stops frisking*) Nothing, sorry, you're right. They wouldn't recruit an Algerian. The CIA yes, but not the FBI.

AHMED: Is that who you think I am, your federal police? Why would they be looking in your closet?

JEAN 40: Anything they could use against me. My diaries, my letters, my songs—

AHMED: You are a songwriter?

JEAN 40: Ahmed: Who did you think I was, when we were talking in the bar?

AHMED: A beautiful lady.

JEAN 40: Thank you for lying. J. Edgar Hoover stole my beauty. You're teasing me now, aren't you? Please tell me you recognized me.

AHMED: (*fibbing*) Yes. I was teasing.

JEAN 40: Teasing is a sign of the misery within. I need a cigarette.

AHMED: I have Ryms.

JEAN 40: Are they anything like Gauloises? Never mind, I'll have one.

(AHMED *gives* JEAN 40 *a cigarette*.)



JEAN 40: *Merci*. You're going to cook for me, Ahmed, is that how you're going to get me into bed?

AHMED: I'm going to cook for you because I love to cook.

(AHMED *lights her cigarette.*)

JEAN 40: You can stay the night if you like. I'm partial to Algerians. And Palestinians. The FBI can't stand that either. Which reminds me, I have to call John Lennon. They've been tailing him too. He's so jealous! My dossier's thicker.

AHMED: You know the Beatles?

JEAN 40: Would I say I knew John Lennon if I didn't? I'd have to be crazy, wouldn't I?

AHMED: I wasn't implying—

JEAN 40: Which would you like to see? Crazy or beautiful?

(JEAN *has been unpeeling the tape from the closet door. The closet is crammed with folders and boxes.*)

JEAN 40: This is what beautiful looks like.

(*She takes out an old glossy of herself.*)

AHMED: I do not follow the cinema as closely as I might. Are you a fan of this actress?

(*Pause.*)

JEAN 40: Ahmed—can we stop putting each other on? I had enough of that in L.A. to last a lifetime.

AHMED: (*re glossy*) I'm sorry....this is you?

JEAN 40: Yes, of course it's me.

(JEAN 40 *holds up a photo of herself as Lilith.*)

JEAN 40: Lilith. Adam's temptress. Peter Fonda's temptress. Warren Beatty's temptress. (*holds up a plaque*) My Golden Globe nomination. Tell me you believe me, or you can't stay here.

AHMED: I believe you.

JEAN 40: Then why are you smiling? A smile is just another show of teeth.

AHMED: You are this actress, no question about it.

(*JEAN stabs the lit cigarette into her arm.*)

AHMED: What are you doing? Stop. I said I believed you.

JEAN 40: What is my name?

AHMED: (*checks glossy*) Jean. Jean Seberg. This is you.

JEAN 40: (*flinging pictures here and there*) And this was me. And this. All these were me. God, if I could only warn her, I swear I'll return to the church.

AHMED: Warn who?

JEAN 40: Who else? That ignorant, gullible, fucked-up drugstore angel. Will you help me, Ahmed?

AHMED: Help you to do what?

JEAN 40: Save myself. Change my life. Keep me safe and sane and if the FBI comes knocking tell them to go fuck themselves. (*goes to window*) Will you do that for me, darling?

AHMED: (*uneasily*) To the best of my ability.

JEAN 40: Good. There's one of them now.

AHMED: (*at window*) Where? I don't see.

JEAN 40: Across the street. His back is to us.

AHMED: The man with the sandals?

JEAN 40: What, you think they all wear cop shoes? They wear berets, they have hair down to their shoulders, they carry copies of *Rolling Stone*. Oh Lord, these horrible men! Why won't they leave me alone?

*(Lights down on JEAN 40 and AHMED. Lights up on JEAN, age 17, being interviewed by OTTO PREMINGER.)*

OTTO: So where is this Marshalltown?

JEAN: It's about fifty miles from Des Moines. That's in Iowa.

OTTO: I have heard of Des Moines. What do you do there?

JEAN: I go to high school. I work in my father's pharmacy. I'm a soda jerk.

OTTO: You get along with your father?

JEAN: Yes, oh, he's wonderful. The best boss in the whole entire world. I mean, I'm sure you're wonderful too. I mean that's what I've heard.

OTTO: You're very diplomatic. What are your politics?

JEAN: My family's Republican.

OTTO: And you?

JEAN: I'm not as Republican as they are. I supported the Des Moines NAACP. To some people that means I'm a Communist.

OTTO: You support them how?

JEAN: Well, I used to go to the meetings. I donated part of my allowance. I was only 14.

OTTO: And what did your family have to say to that?

JEAN: My father has other ideas of charity. He's Lutheran.

OTTO: They are strict where you live, the Lutherans?

JEAN: Oh yes. They're always talking about Original Sin.

OTTO: There are no original sins. They've all been done to death.  
Joan of Arc was Catholic.

JEAN: I know.

OTTO: Then why aren't you wearing a cross around your neck?

JEAN: Because I knew all the other girls would be wearing one.

OTTO: Very good, I like that. Do you have a boyfriend?

JEAN: (*flirting*) Why would you want to know that?

OTTO: Any actress I work with, she must be focused completely on  
the director. A sweetheart, yes or no?

JEAN: (*still flirting*) Not currently. Why?

OTTO: No plans to marry?

JEAN: No one's asked me yet. And I wouldn't accept. I don't want  
a conventional life.

OTTO: You're saying that to please me.

JEAN: I hope it does.

(OTTO'S *secretary* has entered.)

OTTO: What is it? I'm conducting an interview.

(*It's* JEAN 40.)

JEAN 40: You're running late, Mr. Preminger. There are a dozen  
young women still out there, and we only have the room until five  
o'clock.

OTTO: We have the room for as long as I say we have the room.

(JEAN 40 *heads out, stopping to speak to JEAN.*)

JEAN 40: He's a notorious bully. Hang in there.

(JEAN 40 *exits.*)

OTTO: What did my secretary say to you?

JEAN: (*uncertainly*) Did she say something? (*hint of seductiveness*)  
I was focused completely on you.

OTTO: I think you're something of a flirt. How would you describe your looks?

JEAN: People say I'm pretty. I'm not sure I agree with them.

OTTO: Well, you already look like a boy, which is what Shaw intended. He was a secret homosexual. Or perhaps asexual—let's give him the benefit of the doubt. The whole movie will be on your shoulders, do you think you can handle that?

JEAN: I'd love to try.

OTTO: So far, I feel you've been putting on an act. The small-town girl eager for the limelight.

JEAN: Joan was a small-town girl.

OTTO: But headstrong. Unrelenting. Ingrid Bergman couldn't project those qualities. And you think you can do better than Bergman?

JEAN: I didn't say that.

OTTO: Then you can't be in my picture.

JEAN: Please...Mr. Preminger...give me another chance to read.

OTTO: I've seen enough. Now you can leave.

(OTTO *stares hits a button on the phone.*)

JEAN: (*pluckily*) It was a privilege to meet you. Thank you for the opportunity.

(JEAN starts out as JEAN 40 appears at the door.)

OTTO: Get me what's-his-name—the casting agent.

JEAN 40: Yes, Mr. Preminger. (*to JEAN*) Don't let him break you.

JEAN: (*startled*) What did you say?

JEAN 40: And keep your legs crossed.

(JEAN exits in confusion.)

JEAN 40: (*to OTTO*) Lionel's on one.

(OTTO picks up the phone. JEAN 40 exits.)

OTTO: We can all relax, I've found her. Of the 3,000 semi-virgins you sent me, she is the least bad choice. Her name is Seberg. I don't like the name, it has a Jewish connotation, but to change it would not be in the spirit of the search. We'll announce her on the Sullivan show—who have they got booked for a month from this Sunday?... Jack Paar, all right, who else?... Well, make sure she goes on before the chimps. Offer two-fifty a week, twenty-five hundred by the seventh year.... You heard me, a seven-year contract. She has a crush on her father, which is perfect for *Bonjour Tristesse*. I want to make many pictures with this bon-bon of a girl. Let's hope she doesn't melt in the heat.

(*Lights down on OTTO. Lights up on JEAN 40 and AHMED in Jean's Paris apartment. The floor is now strewn with Jean's photos and mementoes. AHMED is studying a glossy. JEAN 40 is sitting at a table, writing a letter. She's wearing glasses with thick lenses.*)

AHMED: (*over*) This man Preminger—he is Jewish? He reminds me of a Nazi.

JEAN 40: He's a Jewish Nazi. You never saw *Stalag 17*? He played a sadistic German commandant, and believe me it wasn't a stretch. The poor man had a yen for me.

AHMED: Did he ever—

JEAN 40: Never.

AHMED: Well then, how do you know?

JEAN 40: He was like Hitchcock with his blondes. Torture, but don't touch. I'm terrified the Israelis will follow in his goosesteeps. Identification with the Nazi aggressor.

AHMED: I'm sorry, I don't understand—

JEAN 40: You've never read Freud? Romain Gary, he filled me full of Freud.

AHMED: Romain Gary? Freud? I'm not familiar with these names.

JEAN 40: There's no psychoanalysis in Algeria? Oh well, there wasn't much in Iowa either. One shrink for the whole fucking state.

(AHMED *holds up another glossy.*)

AHMED: This is you with who?

JEAN 40: Clint Eastwood. Really, Ahmed, if we're going to open a restaurant together, you're going to have to bone up on American pop culture.

AHMED: A restaurant?

JEAN 40: Didn't you say you love to cook?

AHMED: Yes, but I never expected—

JEAN 40: You thought you were just going to fuck me?

AHMED: I am so amazed. I had no such idea.

JEAN 40: Liar. In the bar last night you talked of nothing but the restaurant. Now stop going through my garbage, I need to concentrate on this letter.

AHMED: To whom are you writing?

JEAN 40: André Malraux. Would you please not look over my shoulder? Makes me very nervous.

AHMED: Malraux I have heard of. Why are you writing him?

JEAN 40: Oh, we've been pen pals for years. I'm soliciting his opinion about World War Three. What we can do to prevent it.

AHMED: Malraux won't live to see World War Three.

JEAN 40: Are you serious? America, the Russians, all the ridiculous paranoia on both sides?

AHMED: André Malraux is already dead.

JEAN 40: Impossible.

AHMED: Three years ago.

JEAN 40: You're mistaken.

AHMED: I will take you to the *Panthéon* and show you. That's where his ashes are buried.

JEAN 40: Is this a mind fuck? Please stop.

AHMED: It is not a mind fuck. You need to settle down.

JEAN 40: You mean settle down with you. Careful, you'll have the FBI for company. (*at window*) Oh God.

AHMED: Come away from the window.

JEAN 40: No, look. Haven't we seen that man before?

AHMED: I don't see anyone. You're agitating yourself again.

(JEAN 40 *hears something. A knock on the door.*)

AHMED: What? What is it?



JEAN 40: You didn't hear that?

AHMED: I didn't hear anything.

JEAN 40: Are you sure no one knocked?

AHMED: There is no man across the street and there is no one at the door. Sit down, forget André Malraux, I'm going to prepare a meal for both of us.

JEAN 40: What are we having? I'm not feeling that hungry.

AHMED: Cauliflower with dorsal sauce...salad with anchovies and eggs...and an Algerian charlotte.

*(Pause.)*

JEAN 40: I think I'm falling in love with you.

*(More knocking.)*

JEAN 40: There it is again.

AHMED: Please calm yourself! I beg you.

*(More knocking.)*

OTTO PREMINGER: *(over)* Open this door!

JEAN 40: Don't let them in.

*(AHMED puts his arms around JEAN 40 to calm her.)*

AHMED: Please...there is no FBI. There is only me.

OTTO: *(over)* Did you hear me? Jean? I said open up.

*(Lights down AHMED soothing JEAN 40. Lights up on JEAN's dressing room. JEAN is wearing sackcloth. Her Joan of Arc armor hangs on the wall of the dressing room. The knocking continues.)*

OTTO: (*other side of door*) If you persist in this behavior, I will have the locks removed.

(JEAN *unlocks the door.*)

OTTO: Why didn't you answer the door?

JEAN: I was preparing.

OTTO: I was afraid of that. How are you feeling about this scene?

JEAN: I'm going to my death, how do you think I'm feeling?

OTTO: They've just lit the fire. Show me the look on your face.

(JEAN *attempts a look of suppressed fear.*)

OTTO: No. I don't want you to be frightened. I want you to trust in God.

JEAN: I think Joan had her doubts about God.

OTTO: Never.

JEAN: Then she was stronger than Jesus.

OTTO: Because she had Jesus in her heart. Do you have the lines?

JEAN: Of course, yes, I've never not known my lines.

OTTO: "You wicked girl: if your counsel were of God would He not deliver you?"

JEAN: "His ways are not your ways. He wills that I go through the fire to His bosom; for I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live among you—"

OTTO: No! If I wanted Diana Lynn, I would have hired Diana Lynn. You know what it means, the Passion of Jesus? You are about to be burned at the stake.

JEAN: "His ways are not your ways. He wills that I go through the fire to His bosom—"

OTTO: You know the mistake you made? I asked you not to hire a coach and you defied me.

*(JEAN is fighting back tears.)*

OTTO: No. No tears. Strength. Indomitability. Ach, look who I'm arguing with. You're like a tweety-bird made of ice. Just keep a straight face, that's all I ask of you.

JEAN: You're the cruelest man I've ever known.

OTTO: Then you've lived a very sheltered life.

JEAN: That armor on the wall, have you any idea what it weighs? No, you couldn't care less what your actors go through. Every time you say "Action" I feel like I'm about to be shot!

OTTO: That's better. Defiance, that's the feeling. Now say the words this way: "I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live among you. That is my last word to you."

JEAN: *(German accent)* "...You are not fit dot I should live amonk you. Dot is my last vord to you."

OTTO: Finally, a sense of humor. We will now do the scene.

*(OTTO starts out as JEAN 40 enters.)*

OTTO: What do you want?

JEAN 40: She's expected in makeup.

OTTO: Tell Tony I want her pale. Virginal. Not a trace of paint. How many times do I have to say it?

*(OTTO exits. JEAN starts out.)*

JEAN 40: Don't go out there.

*(JEAN doesn't seem to hear.)*

JEAN 40: Jean, did you hear me? It's a suicidal act!

*(JEAN turns briefly at the door, hearing JEAN 40 for the first time.)*

JEAN: *(numbly)* No...it's martyrdom. There's a difference.

JEAN 40: Never mind the fine distinctions. Tell them to double-check the gas jets.

OTTO: *(off)* Jean! I'm waiting!

JEAN: He hates to be kept waiting.

JEAN 40: To hell with what he hates. Do you want to have scars for the rest of your life?

JEAN: I can't afford to antagonize him.

JEAN 40: When are you going to learn to fight back?

JEAN: Didn't you hear? I made fun of his accent.

JEAN 40: And he loved you for it. And you melted. That's the only currency you know, to flirt your way into their hearts.

OTTO: *(off)* Jean, for the love of God!

JEAN: I have to go.

*(JEAN hurries off.)*

JEAN 40: *(calls after)* You poor little fool! You're too good to live!

*(Blackout.)*

OTTO: *(off)* Action!

*(A crackle of fire. Panicked shouts and screams. Lights up on JEAN entering her dressing room. Her sackcloth is singed. Her midsection is burned. She's in extreme pain.)*

JEAN: My God, did you know that was going to happen? You did, didn't you?

OTTO: Don't be ridiculous. Special effects is not my department.

JEAN: They're all your departments! Oh God, look at me, I'm blistering!

OTTO: Calm down. We will get you medical attention.

JEAN: You just stood there! You didn't even say cut.

OTTO: And now there's no need for a second take. The footage will be fantastic. You will be forgiven the rest of the movie.

JEAN: I'm not going out there again.

OTTO: Oh you certainly will. We have three more pages to get through today. Otherwise, I'm giving *Bonjour Tristesse* to Audrey Hepburn, and you will be returning on the first plane to Marshalltown.

JEAN: I wish I'd never left.

OTTO: You never say anything you mean. I wonder why.

(JEAN 40 *has entered.*)

JEAN 40: (*aside*) Tell him to go fuck himself.

JEAN: Go fuck yourself, Otto. And I mean that.

(*Pause.*)

OTTO: Are you saying you're finished for the day?

JEAN: Yes, *mein Führer*. That's exactly what I'm saying.

(OTTO *stands there, nonplussed for once. Exits.*)

JEAN 40: See there? You stopped him in his tracks. Now doesn't that feel better?

JEAN: Right now it does.

JEAN 40: No qualifiers please.

JEAN: He'll only take it out on me later.

JEAN 40: Stop thinking like that! If you're scared to offend people, you'll never get anywhere in this world.

JEAN: I've already gone further than I ever dreamed.

JEAN 40: (*going*) Dream bigger.

(*JEAN 40 is gone. Lights down on the dressing room as music rises—the Dave Brubeck Quartet, a Paul Desmond solo. Lights up on Jean's Paris apartment. JEAN 40 and AHMED are seated on the floor, surrounded by Jean's memorabilia.*)

JEAN 40: —Audrey Hepburn? With a father fixation on David Niven? I knew he was bluffing. I said, you can stick *Bonjour Tristesse* up your flabby Nazi ass.

AHMED: And what did he say to that?

JEAN 40: He went red in the face and sent me flowers. Listen to that, isn't that gorgeous? The saxophone, that's Paul Desmond.

AHMED: You were a fan of this musician?

JEAN 40: The feeling was mutual.

AHMED: Ah, I see.

JEAN 40: For several months. This is the bracelet he gave me.

AHMED: It's really none of my business.

JEAN 40: (*shows him a photo*) And this is my father.

AHMED: Truly? I don't see a resemblance.

JEAN 40: I don't look like my mother either. Nothing in common. With either of them. They were both so white.

AHMED: Well, they couldn't help that, could they. You have a lovely art collection, is it worth anything?

JEAN 40: It's my principal asset, why?

AHMED: Just curious. A beautiful woman should have a beautiful collection.

JEAN 40: If only I'd felt beautiful.

AHMED: Every woman I've ever known says that—especially the beautiful ones. If the act of conception is sublime...that's when beauty happens.

JEAN 40: (*studying photo*) I can't picture my parents together. Not sublimely.

AHMED: No one can picture his parents in the act of love.

JEAN 40: Black people can.

AHMED: Ah, you think so.

JEAN 40: If they lived in a small enough apartment. That's why they're always saying "motherfucker." (*re photo*) My father loved me in his fashion. He just never forgave me.

AHMED: Forgave you for what?

JEAN 40: What does any father never forgive? Marrying someone different from himself. Why did you ask about my art collection, are you planning on stealing it? Don't worry, we're going to do wonderful things together. But first, my darling, you have to fuck me.

(*Lights down on JEAN 40 on AHMED as they start to make love. Lights up on ED SEBERG.*)

ED SEBERG: Jean? Hurry, dear, the guests are starting to grumble.

JEAN: (*off*) Hold your horses, I'm coming!

(JEAN *enters in a wedding dress.*)

ED SEBERG: Well. You're certainly worth the wait.

JEAN: Oh Daddy, aren't you sweet. I've missed you.

ED SEBERG: We've missed you too, Jean. We're so glad you decided to come home for this.

JEAN: François was desperate to meet the family. Isn't he handsome? I can't tell you how helpful he's been to me. He got me out of my contract with Preminger.

ED SEBERG: Maybe I shouldn't say this, Jean...

JEAN: What? You know you can say anything to me.

ED SEBERG: I think he might be an opportunist.

JEAN: Oh, Daddy, are you jealous? Don't be jealous. I still love you to pieces.

ED SEBERG: Why would I be jealous of François? We only want what's best for you.

JEAN: (*affectionately*) I'll settle for your approval.

ED SEBERG: Well, you certainly have that. Didn't you look at your present?

(*He picks up a ribbon-decorated scrapbook from an end table.*),

JEAN: What's this?

ED SEBERG: It's all the articles about you.

JEAN: Daddy, that's so adorable!

ED SEBERG: I keep a copy on the table next to my chair.



(JEAN *leafs through, stops at a clipping.*)

JEAN: (*reads*) “Actress Seberg, with the advantage of youth and the disadvantage of inexperience, is drastically miscast.” (*turns page*) “Miss Seberg, in her second film, proves she’s still an amateur actress...” (*turns page*) “Shaw’s Joan is a chunk of hard bread, dipped in the red wine of battle and devoured by the ravenous angels. Actress Seberg, by physique and disposition, is the sort of honey bun that drugstore desperadoes like to nibble with their milkshakes...” (*turns page*) “Jean Seberg should go back to the Iowa high school where Otto Preminger found her.”

ED SEBERG: Maybe I didn’t read them carefully enough.

JEAN: Have you any idea how much those hurt? I wanted to throw myself under a bus.

ED SEBERG: I don’t like it when you talk like that.

JEAN: Then it’s good we live seven hours apart, because I talk like that all the time. Did you actually see the movies, Daddy? Or just the savage reviews?

ED SEBERG: We saw *Saint Joan*. The other one didn’t play here. Was it good?

JEAN: It was better than *Saint Joan*. (*leafing through scrapbook*) Where’s that *Bonjour Tristesse* review? The one from François?

ED SEBERG: François is a movie critic? I thought he was only a playboy.

JEAN: Not my François. His name is Truffaut and he loved me in the movie.

(JEAN *closes the scrapbook and recites from memory:*)

JEAN: “When Jean Seberg is on the screen, you can’t look at anything else....Her every movement is graceful, her every glance is precise....with her short blond hair on a pharaoh’s skull, wide-open blue eyes with a glint of boyish malice, she carries the entire movie on her tiny shoulders...*Bonjour Tristesse* is Otto Preminger’s love poem to Jean Seberg.”

ED SEBERG: Is this other François a friend of yours? He's not very observant.

JEAN: What do you mean?

ED SEBERG: Your eyes aren't blue.

JEAN: Oh gosh.

ED SEBERG: Well, they're not.

JEAN: Daddy, why are you being so ornery? Do you have any idea how hard I've worked the last three years? To earn at least one positive review? Can't you tell from my voice?

ED SEBERG: You always had a lovely voice.

JEAN: My voice was tinny and shrill and I worked hours and hours to lower it. Who's being unobservant now?

ED SEBERG: Is this how you talked to Mr. Preminger? Then no wonder you split up.

JEAN: Split up?!

ED SEBERG: This columnist said you were going to marry him.

JEAN: And you believe what Louella Parsons says.

ED SEBERG: Jeannie....it was in the *Des Moines Register*. You really don't have to hide things from us.

(JEAN 40 *has entered, smartly dressed.*)

JEAN 40: You know what to tell him.

JEAN: (to ED SEBERG) *Va te faire foutre, Papa.*

JEAN 40: Attagirl. (to ED SEBERG) Everyone's seated, Mr. Seberg. Would you please take your place in the back hall?

ED SEBERG: Yes, I'm coming. What did you just say to me?

JEAN: Daddy, I promise you don't want to know.

*(Pause. ED SEBERG exits.)*

JEAN: *(to herself)* Why did I say that. I shouldn't have said that.  
Oh God, my throat's closing up.

JEAN 40: Well...it's not too late to call this whole thing off.

JEAN: Excuse me?

JEAN 40: It won't last, you won't be faithful, and everyone will say you exploited this well-connected Frenchman.

JEAN: What?!

JEAN 40: Marry a pediatrician. Or a carpenter. Preferably African or Middle Eastern. And stay away from Europeans. Especially artists.

JEAN: Get out! You have a nerve!

JEAN 40: And you, my sweet, are still a silly little girl.

*(JEAN 40 exits. Lights down on JEAN in her wedding dress. Lights up on Jean's Paris apartment. JEAN 40 and AHMED are under sheets, having just made love.)*

AHMED: It was all right? You look so sad.

JEAN 40: It was everything I expected.

AHMED: Ah, that is not the comment I was hoping for.

JEAN 40: You closed your eyes, you were picturing the girl in the glossies. I've seen that ruse too many times.

AHMED: I employed no such ruse.

JEAN 40: Don't get huffy. I'm used to having this effect on men.  
You know why men call blondes dumb?

AHMED: I cannot imagine. In Algeria they're prized.

JEAN 40: Because we make them feel dumb. They're always wondering, are we real? What color is our pubic hair? Right away they start thinking with their dicks.

*(She picks up a glossy of herself, puts on her thick-lensed glasses.)*

JEAN 40: Was this the Jean Seberg you were picturing?

AHMED: I was picturing you. In the flesh. What are we going to call this restaurant of ours?

JEAN 40: What restaurant?

AHMED: Jean. We have talked about this.

JEAN 40: Is that the only reason you're here, to squeeze blood out of a stone?

AHMED: Of course not. *(pause)* How about Seberg's?

JEAN 40: The FBI would blow it up. *(re picture; fondly)* Do you know where this was taken?

AHMED: No, where?

JEAN 40: On the Champs-Élysées.

AHMED: You sold newspapers on the Champs-Élysées?

JEAN 40: Ahmed. It's a movie still. It's as famous as that picture of Jimmy Dean.

AHMED: Is he another movie star? Was he one of your lovers?

JEAN 40: He was a doomed prince from Indiana and no, that's one pleasure I missed.

(JEAN 40 has gone over to the open closet; she holds a T-shirt with the New York Herald Tribune logo in front of her chest.)

JEAN 40: But I was the princess of the Champs-Élysées...

(Sudden burst of flashbulbs. Lights up on JEAN and JEAN-LUC GODARD, fleeing photographers as they enter a cafe. JEAN-LUC is wearing very dark glasses.)

PHOTOGRAPHERS (off; variously; overlapping) *Un de plus, Jean... Ici, Jean... Guardate qui, Jean... Schauen Sie hier, Jean... Souriez, Jean!*

JEAN: (to JEAN-LUC) Come on, give me a smile at least. Aren't you just a teeny bit excited?

JEAN-LUC: *C'est un malentendu.*

JEAN: You're incurable, Jean-Luc.

JEAN-LUC: A serious movie makes money, it is the result of a misunderstanding.

(They seat themselves at a café table.)

JEAN: You're just embarrassed by your success.

JEAN-LUC: As you were by your failures. *C'est la même chose.*

JEAN: *Dis-mois, Jean-Luc. Pourquoi avez-vous jamais me regarder?*

JEAN-LUC: Speak English. Your French is charming, *mais terrible.*

JEAN: I said, why didn't you ever look at me? Not once, the whole time we were shooting. You're not looking at me now. Is that why you wear sunglasses, so we can't tell what you're thinking?

JEAN-LUC: *Précisément.* You have found my secret.

JEAN: Are you mad I wouldn't get naked for you?

JEAN-LUC: Ah no. It would have limited the American release.

JEAN: Then why did you keep begging me? I think maybe you had a little crush, *n'est-ce pas?*

JEAN-LUC: I was asking the impossible. That's how you manage American girls.

JEAN: Oh, what Hollywood movie told you that?

JEAN-LUC: That's how Otto managed you.

JEAN: He froze me, that's what Otto did to me.

JEAN-LUC: Exactly. *San vie. Catatonique.* That's what attracted me to you.

JEAN: But you couldn't break me either. Tell me, are we going to work together again?

JEAN-LUC: No, I'm working with Karina.

JEAN: I'm so relieved. You can't imagine.

JEAN-LUC: What if Preminger asks you to work with him again?

JEAN: Oh please. I'd sooner drown myself in the Seine.

JEAN-LUC: No, Preminger is a genius. I love how he paraphrases reality. He would make a good novelist...as Sam Fuller would make a good politician...I love the aquatic movement of his camera...

JEAN: (*signaling for check*) Check please?

JEAN-LUC: We have not ordered yet.

JEAN: It's a joke, Jean-Luc.

(*A waitress has come over with a pad—JEAN 40. JEAN waves her off.*)

JEAN: Sorry, I didn't want you. I was making fun of him.

JEAN 40: Good, he deserves it. I'll be back.

(JEAN 40 *exits as* OTTO PREMINGER *enters.*)

JEAN-LUC: Otto! I was hoping you'd show up. *Asseyez-vous.*

OTTO: (*sits*) Hello, Jean-Luc. Jean. Congratulations on your success. Both of you.

JEAN-LUC: She owes it all to you. *Bonjour Tristesse* was an inspiration. I could have taken your last shot, cut to her on the Champs-Élysées and put up a title, Three Years Later.

OTTO: A lot can happen in three years. (*to JEAN*) Your husband François, he drives a hard bargain.

JEAN: You didn't want me, Otto. You used me like Kleenex and threw me away.

(JEAN 40 *has re-entered, with her waitress pad.*)

JEAN 40: (*to JEAN*) Don't be petulant. That only turns them on.  
(*to OTTO*) What can I bring you?

OTTO: Mineral water. *Sans gaz.*

(JEAN 40 *exits.*)

OTTO: (*to JEAN*) I made you into a professional, that's all I can be accused of. (*to JEAN-LUC*) Was she ever late for a call?

JEAN: No, it was Jean-Luc who kept disappearing.

OTTO: She thinks she can say anything to us now.

JEAN-LUC: She said she'd drown herself before she'd work with you again.

OTTO: She's completely brazen.

JEAN: That's how you manage Europeans.

(ROMAIN GARY *has entered.*)

ROMAIN: Stop baiting her, you two. (*to JEAN-LUC*) She's made your career. Sartre, Cocteau, the Americans, everybody's jumping on the *Breathless* bandwagon. Including the public.

JEAN-LUC: When a serious movie is a success—

ROMAIN: —the public has misunderstood the movie. We adore your sayings, Jean-Luc, you're the greatest aphorist since Oscar Wilde, but give this girl the respect she's due. Everyone's dressing like her, everyone's copying her hairstyle.

OTTO: And now every girl thinks she can be a movie star.

ROMAIN: Until they hear how you treat them. (*to JEAN-LUC*) She was brilliant in your film, and all you can do is vilify her.

JEAN-LUC: *Ah, je comprends. Vous êtes amoureux d'elle.*

ROMAIN: We're all in love with her, you pompous Swiss twit.

(JEAN 40 *returns, as JEAN-LUC, ROMAIN and OTTO withdraw, talking among themselves.*)

ROMAIN: *Alors...quel film vous fait ensuite?*

JEAN-LUC: *Une comédie musicale néo-réaliste.*

OTTO: (*overlaps JEAN*) *C'est une contradiction dans les termes.*

JEAN-LUC: (*overlaps JEAN*) *C'est pourquoi je fais le film...*

JEAN: (*overlaps; to JEAN 40*) A white wine cassis, please.

JEAN 40: (*overlaps*) Romain adores you, but watch out. He treats his wife like a mother. You, he'll treat like a daughter.

JEAN: *Pardon?*



JEAN 40: Beware the man who calls himself a feminist. He'll gobble you up like Red Riding Hood's grandma. But at least it's an improvement.

JEAN: An improvement?

JEAN 40: François was like a frat boy. For once Otto was right. He said you need a daddy to be in love.

JEAN: Why are telling me these things? Please get me my drink. Romain, stop talking to Jean-Luc.

ROMAIN: *Un moment, chérie.*

JEAN 40: You think you're seducing them. That's the trick they play on you.

JEAN: You talk as if you've slept with him.

JEAN 40: Does Romain make that little noise when he climaxes?  
(*imitates the noise*)

JEAN: Oh God. Are you an actress too?

JEAN 40: I was, yes. Learn from my mistakes! If you possibly can.

(JEAN 40 *exits*. JEAN *looks after her, dazed*.)

ROMAIN: Otto, I'll look forward to that Laughton movie. (*to JEAN-LUC*) Good luck with your new protégé. Now leave us alone, so we can insult you in private.

JEAN-LUC: *Au revoir*, Jean. "Don't take any wooden nickels."

(JEAN-LUC *and* OTTO *exit*.)

ROMAIN: *Quel poseur*. That scene in the bedroom with Belmondo was interminable. And a thug with a taste for Mozart...spare me. Did you see what Pauline Kael said about you?

JEAN: (*coming to*) Who's Pauline Kael?

ROMAIN: I haven't the slightest idea.

*(He takes a clipping out of his pocket.)*

ROMAIN: "As Jean Seberg plays her...and that's exquisitely...Patricia is the most terrifyingly simple muse-goddess-bitch of modern movies."

JEAN: You actually saved this for me?

ROMAIN: It's a tortured observation. But fairly near the mark.

JEAN: My father saves the bad reviews.

ROMAIN: They're threatened by your success. Here, I brought you some more of my favorites.

*(He reaches in his bag and takes out several books.)*

JEAN: Please, I'm behind as it is. I did love *Crime and Punishment*. Especially Sonya.

ROMAIN: The whore with the heart of gold. What about the Tolstoy?

JEAN: Not so much. I was repelled by Vronsky.

ROMAIN: You're supposed to be repelled. He's a dandified asshole and Anna falls for his bullshit. Tolstoy thought she deserved to die. That's why he threw her under a train.

JEAN: But Kitty lives happily ever after.

ROMAIN: Because she's faithful and chaste. You're such a marvelous reader, Jean. You actually finish every book!

JEAN: Including yours, dear master.

*(JEAN leans in to kiss him. ROMAIN pulls back.)*

ROMAIN: Be careful, *chérie*.

JEAN: Why? I want the world to know.

ROMAIN: The world includes your husband and my wife.

JEAN: François knows it's over. He's sick of being Mr. Seberg.

ROMAIN: Well, my wife still likes being Madame Gary. Do you know what she said to me after I introduced you? "That girl looks too innocent to be a homewrecker."

JEAN: Hasn't she seen *Breathless*? I'm a backstabbing cunt. So what did you say to that?

ROMAIN: I said I agreed with her.

JEAN: Well, I'm worse than a homewrecker.

ROMAIN: How?

JEAN: I was going to tell you after we had drinks.

ROMAIN: Tell me now.

JEAN: I'm a pregnant homewrecker.

ROMAIN: *Mon dieu.*

JEAN: Happy?

ROMAIN: (*not sure*) Yes. Of course. *Très très heureux.* So happy.

(JEAN 40 has entered with Jean's wine cassis.)

JEAN 40: (*to ROMAIN*) *Et que voulez-vous, monsieur?*

ROMAIN: (*still shaken*) *Un Scotch, s'il vous plaît.*

JEAN 40: *Peut-être un double?*

ROMAIN: *Oui, un double.*

JEAN: (*re her drink*) And bring me two more of these.

*(Lights down on JEAN and ROMAIN. Lights up on Jean's Paris apartment. JEAN 40 has made a pile of books and is about to set a match to the pile.)*

AHMED: Stop, stop, what are you doing?

JEAN 40: I'm setting fire to the books he gave me. This will be the first to go.

*(JEAN 40 holds up White Dog, by Romain Gary.)*

AHMED: *White Dog?* What is that?

JEAN 40: Romain's account of our life in L.A. How he quote "rescued" me from the Panthers.

*(She strikes the match, applies it to the corner of the book, then, experimentally, close to her palm. AHMED grabs the match away, douses the flames.)*

AHMED: Why are you doing this?

JEAN 40: Because...I stole Romain from an older woman.

AHMED: And for this you want to hurt yourself?

JEAN 40: He was an older man.

AHMED: Young women are drawn to older men. That is nothing to be ashamed of.

JEAN 40: I had a child by my father.

AHMED: No, what are you saying?

JEAN 40: You never heard of Freud, you wouldn't understand.

AHMED: Romain and your father? They had nothing in common.

JEAN 40: They were practically the same age!

AHMED: Was your father an aviator? A man of letters? A diplomat? Absolutely no resemblance.

JEAN 40: Then why am I such a horrible mother?

AHMED: Surely not. All those pictures of your son, you both look so happy.

JEAN 40: Most of those pictures include his nanny. For years all he spoke was Spanish.

AHMED: The more languages the better.

JEAN 40: I took care of him now and then. I soothed his first hangover. He used to love to watch me tap dance.

AHMED: He adored you. I'm sure he still does. Stop being so hard on yourself.

JEAN 40: I know. I get hypoglycemic, my mood goes through the floor.

*(JEAN 40 has gone over to a sideboard and is pouring two glasses of bourbon.)*

JEAN 40: For the sugar. Join me?

AHMED: I think sometimes you drink too much.

JEAN 40: And you should stop sounding like my father. Otherwise, we can't be in business together.

*(JEAN 40 hands AHMED his bourbon.)*

AHMED: *(pause)* I did hear of a place today. In the Arab quarter. The kitchen needs redoing. *(carefully)* We might have to put some cash down right away.

JEAN 40: How much cash?

AHMED: A few thousand.

JEAN 40: I'm not that liquid. I haven't worked in months.

AHMED: Ah, I didn't realize. *(pause)* Tell me, would I recognize any of these artists?

JEAN 40: Don't remind me.

AHMED: What?

JEAN 40: I never had Diego painted.

AHMED: Oh here you go again. Not every mother has her son's portrait painted.

JEAN 40: I could have painted him myself. I used to paint. I used to write poetry, I made a short movie I'd be ashamed to show to a blind man...I'm like the chess player who plays a hundred games simultaneously, and loses every one.

AHMED: Didn't you hear me? Stop flagellating yourself. *(pause)* Which of these paintings are famous?

JEAN 40: The Klee...the Mondrian...

AHMED: What do you suppose they'd fetch? At auction.

JEAN 40: I have no idea. Are you going to drink with me or not?

AHMED: Yes. Fine. To us. *(pause)* To our coming prosperity.

*(They click glasses. Lights down on Jean's Paris apartment. In darkness, JEAN's and ROMAIN's voices:)*

ROMAIN: *(over; angrily)* Do you know what you almost did? You almost killed a boy. How can you let a paintbrush fall fifteen yards in front of you?

*(Spotlight on JEAN.)*

JEAN: I was shaking the paint out of it, flicking it in my fingers like this.

ROMAIN: (*over*) Why did you make him go after it?

JEAN: Because he's a fool.

ROMAIN: (*over*) Well, if he's a fool, why lead him on like that?

JEAN: Because I'm mad.

*(Lights up on ROMAIN. ROMAIN has a script in his hand. They've been running lines.)*

ROMAIN: Don't throw that line away. Hit it harder.

JEAN: Will you please stop directing me?

ROMAIN: I think Lilith is starting to have regrets.

JEAN: No! No regrets. That's what makes her so lethal. Rossen wants her to be casual in this scene, not snake-pit crazy. From the top.

ROMAIN: "Do you know what you almost did? You almost killed a boy. How can you let a paintbrush fall fifteen yards in front of you?"

JEAN: No. Stop.

ROMAIN: Why? I have to show emotion, I've nearly been witness to a murder.

JEAN: I can't focus.

ROMAIN: What's distracting you now?

JEAN: Diego. I was supposed to see him next week, and now the movie's been delayed.

ROMAIN: Use that. Pretend Peter Fonda is Diego.

JEAN: How many words does he have now?

ROMAIN: Dozens.

JEAN: I can't stand it.

ROMAIN: When you point to a picture of a lion, he roars.

JEAN: All these milestones...

ROMAIN: You'll see him when the movie wraps. Let's try it again.

JEAN: Even when I'm with him, I'm somewhere else.

ROMAIN: Jean. Enough *mea culpa*. You want the real reason you're feeling so guilty? Because you haven't told your father.

JEAN: What, that he has a bastard grandson? You try telling him.

ROMAIN: Don't these benighted Lutherans read the trades?

JEAN: Of course they don't read the trades. When was it in the trades?

ROMAIN: I was joking.

JEAN: Tell you what, why don't you actually put your tongue in your cheek, that way people will be able to tell when you're joking. My parents read the *Register* and *Reader's Digest*.

ROMAIN: Don't they ever ask questions?

JEAN: You mean, when are you going to get married to that Jew from Lithuania?

(*A knock on the door.*)

JEAN: Yes, what?

JEAN 40: (*other side of door*) Miss Seberg, it's official. We're finished for the day.

JEAN: How's Robert feeling? Does he want to see me?

JEAN 40: (*other side of door*) He's resting comfortably, but no. He prefers to be alone.

JEAN: Will you please give him my love?



JEAN 40: (*other side of door*) I certainly will, Miss Seberg.

JEAN: Thank you, darling.

ROMAIN: How long is Rossen going to be laid up?

JEAN: It's touch and go.

ROMAIN: You must be giving him a hard time.

JEAN: Fuck you. I'm doing the best work of my career.

ROMAIN: My tongue was in my cheek, you didn't notice?

JEAN: It's Warren. He challenges everything Rossen does.

ROMAIN: Have you slept with him yet?

JEAN: Who, Warren? No, I haven't slept with Warren, and I never will.

ROMAIN: I hear he's irresistible.

JEAN: Oh that's a canard, he's an absolute prick. Rewrites all his lines, then mumbles his way through the scene, with this fatuous look of misery on his face. Nobody can stand him. Peter Fonda hired some people to beat the crap out of him at the wrap party—I just hope Rossen lives to see that. He's such a lovely man. It's all there in his script, so he lets us alone. At last, a director who doesn't act the tyrant.

ROMAIN: I suppose that's aimed at me.

JEAN: You're not a director yet.

ROMAIN: The script's nearly finished.

JEAN: Does she die in the end? This "frigid nymphomaniac"?

ROMAIN: That would be telling.

JEAN: Well, I'm sorry. Mervyn LeRoy wants me for a murder story.

ROMAIN: Why would you work for that hack?

JEAN: He's not a hack. He made *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*.

ROMAIN: Sounds mawkish.

JEAN: It's not mawkish. It's one of the most progressive pictures ever to come out of Hollywood.

ROMAIN: (*dryly*) That would account for your enthusiasm.

JEAN: And they've offered me *A Fine Madness*. With Sean Connery.

ROMAIN: You and James Bond. I don't see it.

JEAN: Romain, I need to work. In America. It's coming unglued. I want to do my part.

ROMAIN: Jean...darling...you weren't put on this earth to help others. You were put on this earth to delight them.

JEAN: It's false delight. There's too much sadness and injustice in the world.

ROMAIN: Oh Jean.

JEAN: Mock me if you want.

ROMAIN: That sadness will crush you if you let it.

JEAN: Yes, Daddy.

ROMAIN: You have sympathy at first sight. It oozes out of you like syrup, it's why we all adore you, but you don't know when to stop.

JEAN: I haven't even started. Don't try and talk me out of it, I'm staying in America.

(*Knock on door*)

JEAN: Yes?

JEAN 40: (*other side of door*) Sorry to bother you, Miss Seberg, but they sent me with the dress for the waterfall scene.

JEAN: Yes, thank you. Come in.

(*JEAN opens the door. JEAN 40 enters with the dress.*)

JEAN 40: (*to ROMAIN*) If you'll excuse us?

ROMAIN: I've seen Miss Seberg in her underclothes.

JEAN 40: I'd rather you didn't see her now.

ROMAIN: On whose authority?

JEAN: Romain, don't make trouble.

ROMAIN: No, I prefer to stay.

JEAN: Romain. I'll do your nympho picture eventually. But not if you keep acting like a stubborn schoolboy.

ROMAIN: (*lightly*) Who taught you to talk like this to people?

JEAN: (*affectionately*) You certainly didn't. Go, darling.

(*ROMAIN exits. JEAN 40 helps JEAN into the dress.*)

JEAN 40: So...you're going to Hollywood.

JEAN: My God. Were you listening at my door?

JEAN 40: You might want to leave Romain behind.

JEAN: Why?

JEAN 40: He won't approve of your house guests.

JEAN: What house guests?

JEAN 40: He'll be jealous.

JEAN: Jealous of who? Who's coming to my house?

JEAN 40: Oh God, who isn't coming. You'll be the toast of liberal Hollywood.

JEAN: I'm not sure I want that.

JEAN 40: Remember what Daddy used to say: "Don't spit it out until you taste it."

JEAN: How do you know what my father used to say?

JEAN 40: Romain will be just like Daddy. Losing his little girl, and resenting her for it.

JEAN: I've never been Romain's little girl.

JEAN 40: Teaching young women to read books? In order to get them into bed? That's tantamount to pedophilia.

(JEAN 40 *has picked up the script.*)

JEAN 40: (*casually*) "Do you know what you almost did? You almost killed a boy. How can you let a paintbrush fall fifteen yards in front of you?"

JEAN: (*dazed; casually*) "I was shaking the paint out of it, flicking it in my fingers like this."

JEAN 40: (*lays script aside*) "Why did you make him go after it?"

JEAN: "Because he's a fool."

ROMAIN: "Well, if he's a fool, why lead him on like that?"

JEAN: "Because I'm mad."

JEAN 40: Cut. Print it.

JEAN: (*stunned*) That's exactly how Rossen wants it. That's remarkable. You're a very quick study.

JEAN 40: So are you. You're marvelous. This will be your triumph. Don't let it go to waste! Build on it!

(JEAN 40 *hugs the bewildered* JEAN. *Lights down as* JEAN 40 *exits the bungalow. Lights up on* ROMAIN GARY and HAKIM JAMAL, *in Jean's Hollywood house.*)

ROMAIN: I'm sorry, she's having a long nap. She's had nothing but early calls all week.

HAKIM: Nice try, homeboy. I happen to know she's between pictures. (*calls*) Jean! I'm here!

ROMAIN: Hey. Quiet down.

HAKIM: Don't fucking tell me to quiet down.

ROMAIN: This is my house. I'll talk to you any way I please.

HAKIM: This isn't your house, you're just her gigolo. Jean's expecting me.

ROMAIN: Now listen. I'm trying to be civil.

HAKIM: Civil my ass. You Europeans, you're the worst fucking racists on the planet.

ROMAIN: All right, calm down. There's no need for name-calling.

HAKIM: You invented the word "nigger." How's that for a name?

ROMAIN: I wouldn't mind hearing your evidence for that.

HAKIM: Those crooks who settled in Georgia? That's your evidence. They needed somebody to sneer at as well as pick their cotton.

ROMAIN: Fine. Would you care to hear my theory?

(JEAN *has entered.*)

JEAN: Romain, no.

ROMAIN: Do you know why white people are repelled by black people? Or brown people? Or yellow people?

JEAN: (*to ROMAIN*) I said that's enough.

ROMAIN: They're the color of feces.

JEAN: Hakim, would you mind waiting in the family room?

HAKIM: No, let me hear this out. So how come I'm not repelled?

ROMAIN: Because your own shit doesn't stink. Only other people's.

(*Pause.*)

HAKIM: (*admiringly*) You are one crazy motherfucker.

ROMAIN: Yes, and you know why black people say "motherfucker"?

JEAN: Romain, I said stop. Hakim, please. I'll be with you in a moment.

(HAKIM *exits.*)

JEAN: What the hell is going on with you? Are you drunk?

ROMAIN: Are you planning to sleep with this man?

JEAN: You know I'm terrible with plans.

ROMAIN: Don't be flip. What is it you see in these people? What have they ever done for anyone?

JEAN: Countless things.

ROMAIN: Name one.

JEAN: He started a Montessori school... photography classes for ghetto kids...never mind, I don't need to defend Hakim to you.

ROMAIN: Because everything he does is utterly benign.

JEAN: No, the Panthers are anything but benign, thank God.

ROMAIN: And what good has that done anybody?

JEAN: Are you kidding? The free breakfasts, the health clinics, the legal aid, the fight against police brutality?

ROMAIN: I'm acquainted with the propaganda.

JEAN: It's not propaganda, it's the truth. Black people are hassled everywhere they go. It's like being against child rape, and the Panthers are vilified for it.

ROMAIN: That's not why they're vilified. It's all that kill-the-pigs nonsense...the black berets...the Little Red Books...snarling at the camera, dangling their AK-47s....

JEAN: They have a Constitutional right to bear arms, same as anybody else. There's a bull's-eye on all their backs.

ROMAIN: And on yours. And on mine.

JEAN: Don't flatter yourself. You're not their friend.

ROMAIN: See how long they stay your friends. This Hakim fellow is a starfucker. Do you know what the Panther high command call him? The Lone Ranger. He's only in it for himself.

JEAN: Who told you that?

ROMAIN: I have my sources. If you won't look out for yourself, I have to.

JEAN: Don't worry, my eyes are open to everything. Which is more than I can say for you.

(JEAN 40 *has entered.*)

JEAN 40: Diego's ready for his story.

JEAN: Tell him I'll be in soon.

ROMAIN: Don't bother. Entertain your honored guest. I'll read Diego his story.

*(ROMAIN exits. JEAN 40 tidies up whatever needs tidying up.)*

JEAN 40: Don't listen to him. It's a wonderful thing you're doing.

JEAN: *(surprised)* Thank you for saying that.

JEAN 40: He wants the girl he took under his wing. Sweet and reasonable.

JEAN: I'll settle for reasonable.

JEAN 40: What about Hakim's wife? Are you being reasonable there?

JEAN: I told her I have no designs on her husband. I took her and their kids to Disneyland.

JEAN 40: Well, watch out. The more you believe in what you're doing, the more guilty you're apt to feel.

JEAN: I used to believe in my career.

JEAN 40: And why not. You've had wonderful success. But you felt guilty for making all that money.

JEAN: Which I'm finally putting to good use.

JEAN 40: We live in hope. I'll go get Hakim, then see Diego to sleep.

*(JEAN 40 exits. JEAN stares after her. HAKIM enters. They talk in lowered voices.)*

JEAN: I'm sorry about that. I didn't expect Romain to be home.

*(JEAN takes two checks out of her pocket.)*

JEAN: This is for the organization...and this is for a bus for the Montessori School...



(HAKIM looks at the figure on the checks.)

HAKIM: Who does your books? Maybe you should be paying me in cash.

JEAN: Romain will never see those checks. Don't get paranoid.

HAKIM: Hey, from now on? We're both paranoids with enemies. Hakim Jamal is "armed and dangerous and partial to white women." The feds are fixing to do to me what those Muslims did to Malcolm. And your husband, he'll do everything to alienate the brothers, and that includes writing lies about your life together.

JEAN: (*lightly*) Maybe you'll fight a duel over me.

HAKIM: Ain't gonna be no duel.

JEAN: He challenged Clint Eastwood.

HAKIM: I wouldn't give him the satisfaction. (*pockets checks*)

JEAN: You'll let me know what more you need?

HAKIM: (*pause*) Why are you being so good to us?

JEAN: Oh God, where to begin? Because Hoover spied on Martin Luther King.

HAKIM: Spied on him?

JEAN: And slandered him.

HAKIM: Hoover ordered him killed.

JEAN: All those black soldiers dying in Vietnam. For what? It's not your war. I'm fighting for equality.

HAKIM: Fuck equality. Equality is bourgeois bullshit. Charlie says, "You're my equal," he means, "You can ride in the front of the bus, but I still own the bus."

JEAN: You'll own the bus someday. You'll own the whole fleet.

HAKIM: Bet your sweet ass.

JEAN: And I'm not an easy mark, whatever you're thinking.

HAKIM: I never said you were. Just wondering about your finances.

JEAN: Stop worrying. I'll work in Europe, Chabrol wants me for two pictures—

HAKIM: Because if you can't handle the pressure—

JEAN: I'm telling you I can—

HAKIM: —I'll just have to rob another bank.

JEAN: Please don't joke.

HAKIM: It's no joke. I've done it.

JEAN: If anything happened to you...I wouldn't want to live.

HAKIM: Then you'd better prepare yourself. I'm talking black but I'm sleeping white, that makes me a target with my own people.

JEAN: Then your people are worse than my husband.

HAKIM: Whoa, are you going racist on me now? I may have to give you up.

JEAN: Be safer for us both.

HAKIM: You don't mean that.

JEAN: Of course I don't mean it.

HAKIM: Then ditch the Frog and marry me.

JEAN: Oh God. We'd both be gunned down at the wedding.

*(Gunshot and a blackout. Lights up JEAN 40 and AHMED. The walls of Jean's Paris apartment are largely bare where several of the paintings used to be.)*

JEAN 40: What was that?

AHMED: Nothing. A backfire.

(JEAN 40 *puts on her thick-lensed glasses, goes to the window.*)

JEAN 40: He's been there all night.

AHMED: Why would he shoot a gun into the air?

JEAN 40: Oh God, he's going, he saw us looking. He looked exactly like that FBI man on the plane.

AHMED: What FBI man?

JEAN 40: Sitting right across from me. In First Class! I was so nervous, I kept ordering champagne. He was watching me the whole time, taking notes. I told the stewardess the plane was being hijacked.

AHMED: For a joke?

JEAN 40: No. It was. They were using the plane for immoral purposes.

AHMED: (*doubtfully*) Ah, I see.

JEAN 40: Their whole world is slipping away, these law-and-order men. What you and I are doing, until ten years ago it was illegal in America.

AHMED: But we're in Paris. They like seeing us together.

JEAN 40: Hoover doesn't. To him sex between the races is a capital offense. (*at window*) Look, there he is again!

AHMED: Jean...that is not the same man.

JEAN 40: How do you know?

AHMED: Shall I go down there and ask what he is doing?

JEAN 40: No, I need you here. I need you with me. I'll need you to help raise our child.

AHMED: It's a lovely thought. Come away from the window.

JEAN 40: You're right, what am I saying. They won't let me have your child.

AHMED: It is not up to them.

JEAN 40: Never in a million fucking years.

*(Blackout. Lights up on JEAN and HAKIM JAMAL in a Paris hotel room. They're in bed. JEAN is pouring herself a drink from a champagne bottle at the bedside.)*

JEAN: So where should we eat tonight?

HAKIM: I'm happy with room service.

JEAN: *(picks up phone, hits a button; to HAKIM)* What do you want?

HAKIM: I wouldn't say no to a steak.

JEAN: *(into phone)* Allô. *Je voudrais deux steaks...**(to HAKIM)* How do you like your steak?

HAKIM: Rare.

JEAN: *(into phone)* *Une des steaks saignants, l'autre moyenne rare...* *(to HAKIM)* French fries? Salad? *(HAKIM nods)* *Des pommes frites, deux salades vertes ..... une bouteille de Bordeaux ... Vous choisissez. Je vous remercie.* *(hangs up)* And after dinner let's go for a walk. It's such a balmy night, and I love holding hands and nothing to fear from anybody.

HAKIM: Yeah, it's good to dream.

JEAN: Don't call it a dream. You're the love of my life and it's happening.

HAKIM: Tell that to the FBI.

JEAN: They don't care about me anymore. Out of sight, out of mind.

HAKIM: Well, there's still a bounty on my ass. I'm gonna grab me a shower.

(HAKIM *starts out.*)

JEAN: Hakim? If they do anything to you, I'm buying back those guns and learn how to shoot.

HAKIM: (*indulgently*) Right on, sister.

(HAKIM *exits as JEAN 40 enters, wheeling a room-service cart.*)

JEAN: Wow, that was fast.

JEAN 40: Oh, we knew exactly what you wanted. Where shall I—

JEAN: (*puzzled*) Anywhere. Over there.

(JEAN 40 *unfolds the cart and lays out the meal.*)

JEAN 40: You know, you're quite the talk of the hotel. You and your friend.

JEAN: (*startled*) I'm sorry if you disapprove.

JEAN 40: Don't misunderstand. I'm all for sexual freedom. The powers-that-be have other ideas.

JEAN: I've dealt with the powers-that-be. That's all behind me.

JEAN 40: Then why did they search your luggage at the airport?

JEAN: I'm a Hollywood star, they're looking for drugs.

JEAN 40: They're looking for guns. There's a dossier on you everywhere...Switzerland...Italy... Morocco...every FBI office has your picture, labeled "sex pervert," courtesy of J. Edgar Hoover. He's out to ruin you, and you're playing right into his hands.

JEAN: Oh, that's absurd.

JEAN 40: That kill-whitey speech your friend made last night? The French were offended, and you, you sat there with stars in your eyes. You give the man money, to you that means he can do no wrong.

JEAN: I'm not just a bank, OK?

JEAN 40: Well, no. Bankers don't usually sleep with their clients.

JEAN: I run meetings. I give speeches. You know the greatest compliment I ever got? The Panther wives told me I should have been black.

JEAN 40: Hoover agrees with them. That's why he'll poison your cats, plant guns in your hotel rooms, try to drive you crazy.

JEAN: He's wasting his time. I'm already crazy.

*(JEAN reaches for the champagne bottle by the bed.)*

JEAN 40: No. That's what they want you to think. *(takes bottle away)* This is what's fucking you up. On top of all that Nembutal. Oh don't look at me in that tone of voice. Guests have no secrets from the help. Sign please.

*(JEAN, shaken, signs the room service bill. JEAN 40 exits as HAKIM enters, a towel around his waist.)*

HAKIM: Who were you talking to?

JEAN: No one. Room service. *(pause)* You shouldn't have talked that way last night.

HAKIM: What way?

JEAN: All that militancy. The French are on your side. They don't like to be harangued.

HAKIM: Last night it got you wet. What happened?

JEAN: Nothing. Forget it. I'm feeling a little confused right now.

HAKIM: Maybe lay off the grape juice for a while. I can be your Malcolm. He took the needle out of my arm. Come here.

JEAN: Food's getting cold.

(HAKIM *sits down beside her. Kisses her.*)

HAKIM: Sweeter than wine.

(*Lights down as they start to make love. Lights up on ROMAIN, reading from the L.A. Times.*)

ROMAIN: (*over*) “Let us call her Miss A, because she’s the current ‘A’ topic among the ‘ins’ of international show business circles. She is beautiful and she is blonde. Miss A came to Hollywood some years ago with the tantalizing flavor of a basket of fresh-picked berries. The critics picked at her acting debut...”

(*Lights up on JEAN. She’s several months pregnant.*)

JEAN: That faithless bitch. I always took her calls.

ROMAIN: “...and in time a handsome European picked her as his wife.”

JEAN: Why is Joyce Haber kissing your ass?

ROMAIN: “After they married, Miss A lived in semi-retirement from the U.S. movie scene. But recently she burst forth as the star of a multimillion-dollar musical.”

JEAN: Please, she wouldn’t dare mention Clint.

ROMAIN: “Meanwhile, the outgoing Miss A was pursuing a number of free-spirited causes, among them the black revolution...”

JEAN: Oh here we go.

ROMAIN: “She lived what she believed, which raised a few Establishment eyebrows...And now, according to all those really ‘in’ sources, Topic A is that Miss A is expecting. Papa’s said to be a rather prominent Black Panther.”

JEAN: It’s always half-wrong, isn’t it.

ROMAIN: Half wrong?

JEAN: Everything you read about yourself.

ROMAIN: Which half is wrong?

JEAN: Semi-retirement? I've never retired.

ROMAIN: And the rest of it is accurate?

JEAN: I know exactly how this happened. I was talking on the phone with one of the Panthers. We were flirting, the feds were listening. That's who they think it is.

ROMAIN: So who was it?

JEAN: It's not important.

ROMAIN: Was it Clint?

JEAN: Don't be silly. We were careful.

ROMAIN: Otto?

JEAN: I always thought Otto was impotent. Or celibate. Like Hitler.

ROMAIN: Well, it's not Jean-Luc. He is impotent. Ever since that motorcycle accident.

JEAN: I never slept with Jean-Luc.

ROMAIN: So maybe it's mine after all.

JEAN: Yes, your sperm is so powerful it lived inside me for two whole years.

ROMAIN: Do you want to tell me who it was or don't you?

JEAN: Will you promise to keep your temper?

ROMAIN: I knew it. It was Hakim.

JEAN: No, it wasn't Hakim, it wasn't any Panther.

ROMAIN: Carlos Fuentes?



JEAN: You're getting warmer.

ROMAIN: Christ...was it that fellow in Durango, when you did *Macho Callahan*?

JEAN: Carlos Navarra. Your spies do keep you informed.

ROMAIN: Another left-wing phony. Dark-skinned?

JEAN: What has his skin color to do with anything? No more than Montalban. Or Lamas. Or Gilbert Roland.

ROMAIN: Then we'll say the child is mine. "The fruit of our reconciliation."

JEAN: Shouldn't we wait to see—

ROMAIN: See what? You just said Navarra was light-skinned.

JEAN: That's no guarantee of his genetics. Why are we even talking like this? We're letting these sick bastards rule our lives.

ROMAIN: There's always the alternative.

JEAN: What alternative? (*realizes*) No. I can't. I won't. Don't ever mention it again.

ROMAIN: I'd support you. Every minute of the way.

JEAN: I said no. I don't want Diego to be an only child. And I'm not going to marry you again, so put that out of your mind. Gossip columns come and go. Nothing's going to come of this.

ROMAIN: (*pause*) Well, I'm sorry, but it already has.

JEAN: What do you mean?

ROMAIN: Will you promise to calm down?

JEAN: Just tell me.

ROMAIN: *Newsweek* has already picked it up.

(Pause.)

JEAN: What are they saying?

ROMAIN: They're saying the father is a black activist. All they did was parrot Joyce Haber. In the world of journalism, this counts as two sources.

JEAN: Every paper in America will run the story. My father will see it. He'll probably blame the Panthers.

ROMAIN: Yes he will.

JEAN: This is hideous. We'll sue Hoover.

ROMAIN: You can't sue the FBI. I'll publish an indictment of in *France-Soir*. Then we sue the hell out *Newsweek*.

JEAN: For how much?

ROMAIN: Six figures at least. Which you will not be donating to the Panthers.

JEAN: Why not?

ROMAIN: Jean.

JEAN: It's my money.

ROMAIN: Do you want to dispel these suspicions or confirm them? The Panther nonsense is finished. We will turn this to account. Get your career back on track.

JEAN: And how do you plan to do that?

ROMAIN: I'll direct you in another movie.

JEAN: Romain, sometimes you make me want to scream.

(*Blackout. In darkness, a cry of agony.*)

JEAN: (*over*) [cry of pain]

JEAN 40: (*over*) Push, Jean! Breathe! Push!

*(Lights up on JEAN in hospital garb. ROMAIN is at her bedside. JEAN is in a daze.)*

JEAN: Are those Panthers gone?

ROMAIN: What Panthers?

JEAN: Those black men in leather. They planted a gun under my pillow.

ROMAIN: Shh, quiet, there was nobody here. *(picks up pillow)*  
See? No gun. You were delirious.

JEAN: Was I drugged?

ROMAIN: Of course they gave you drugs. You had a Caesarean.

JEAN: Oh God, then tell me. Girl or boy?

ROMAIN: A girl.

JEAN: All her fingers and toes?

ROMAIN: Yes.

JEAN: Light-skinned?

ROMAIN: Yes, she's light-skinned.

JEAN: How much does she weigh?

ROMAIN: Less than four pounds.

JEAN: She'll gain. My milk is good. Can I see her?

ROMAIN: Not now.

JEAN: Please ask them to bring her here.

ROMAIN: They can't do that.

JEAN: Right, she's being incubated, I'm not thinking straight.  
Where are you going? Don't turn your back on me.

ROMAIN: I'm going to ask the doctor to come in.

JEAN: Why?

ROMAIN: I'll be right back.

JEAN: I don't want the doctor, I want you to tell me. Say it. Say what you know.

*(Pause.)*

ROMAIN: God has taken care of it.

*(Pause.)*

JEAN: Since when do you talk about God? Oh Jesus.

ROMAIN: Shh. Lie back.

JEAN: Oh no.

ROMAIN: They did all they could.

JEAN: Nina!

*(Pause. JEAN squirms out of ROMAIN's grasp.)*

JEAN: Give me that phone.

ROMAIN: No. You've had a shock, you need to rest.

JEAN: Give me that phone or I'm going out that window!

*(JEAN winces in pain as she reaches for the phone.)*

JEAN: Hand me my bag.

ROMAIN: What are you doing?

*(JEAN lunges for her bag, rummages through.)*

JEAN: Oh God, where is it?

ROMAIN: What are you looking for?

(JEAN *finds her address book, starts dialing.*)

ROMAIN: Stop. Who are you calling?

JEAN: (*into phone*) California. USA. Los Angeles...Right, thank you, got it.  
(*hangs up, redials a longer number*)

ROMAIN: Who are you calling in Los Angeles?

JEAN: (*into phone*) Yes, hello, is Joyce there?...It's Jean Seberg, would you please get her for me?...Yes, I'll hold, for about two seconds.

ROMAIN: You don't want to do this. Hang up.

JEAN: (*into phone*) Joyce, hi, how are you?...Oh, I'm doing fine, thank you... I'm in Geneva....So beautiful.... I wanted to make sure of your address, because I'm sending you a little present....Well, I'm always thinking of you, but Joyce, be very careful, it's very light and it's very fragile. Oh listen, I might as well spoil the surprise, it's a premature baby! Her name is Nina Hart Gary. You can keep her in a jar in your office, it'll remind you of the pain you inflict on people every single day of your life...I'm perfectly serious, have you ever known me to anything but straight with you?...You know, on second thought, maybe I'll bury her at home, in Marshalltown, and don't you dare scoop anyone on that, or I'll tell the world you've been an accessory to murder. Oh wait, never mind, you're already named in the lawsuit, you and *Newsweek* and all you detestable people...No, don't hang up yet—you'll want to hear this, this is what you live for. I'm having photos taken at the mortuary, and Joyce, I want you to take a very close look. She's light-skinned, so she couldn't possibly be the child of a Panther....So tell me, who at the FBI gave you the story?... What do you mean, your editor, you know the feds made me Priority Three... Well, thank you, darling, you used to call me a terrible actress. Goodbye, love.

(JEAN *slams down the phone.*)

ROMAIN: You know she'll take you at your word.

JEAN: I meant every word I said.

ROMAIN: Burying a dead child in your hometown cemetery? With photos of the corpse?

JEAN: You don't have to come to the funeral.

ROMAIN: Not if it's going to be a scandal.

JEAN: I'll tell you what's a scandal. Your film career.

ROMAIN: Yes, I thought we'd get around to that.

JEAN: You think because you're a tyrant like Preminger that makes you a director.

ROMAIN: Jean...please...we've both been through hell these last few months. Can we spare each other for five minutes?

JEAN: At least Preminger had talent.

ROMAIN: Christ, she never listens.

JEAN: You never even thought of being a director before you met me. Now you want to be like all the greats, Antonioni, Godard, Fellini with their girlfriends and wives, you all cast them as whores and make them do sex scenes while you watch from behind the camera, crouching over your erections, is there anything more ridiculous? And silly me, I let myself be humiliated. I must have wanted to be punished. For what? Loving my father? Where are you going?

ROMAIN: I'll get you something to help you sleep.

JEAN: I don't want to sleep. I want to stick it to those bastards.

ROMAIN: Let's not talk about this now.

JEAN: And don't worry, no matter how much we settle for, I'm not giving anything more to the Panthers. I've made a new list.

ROMAIN: Jean, please.

JEAN: Cesar Chavez. And the Appalachian poor.

ROMAIN: Cesar Chavez is not getting your money.

JEAN: Try and stop me.

ROMAIN: The lawsuit has already been settled.

JEAN: What? Why on earth didn't you say so?

ROMAIN: Because of the state you're in.

JEAN: How much did we get?

*(Pause.)*

ROMAIN: Eleven thousand dollars.

*(Pause.)*

JEAN: You sadist.

ROMAIN: I'll show you the documents.

JEAN: Eleven thousand dollars.

ROMAIN: That's right.

JEAN: You withheld this from me.

ROMAIN: Because you were hysterical.

JEAN: That means they win, doesn't it? All the money we spent on legal fees.

ROMAIN: That's the whole point of civil litigation...to extract money from the litigants and turn it over to the lawyers.

JEAN: Then why the hell did we sue them?

ROMAIN: We were both angry. And they deserved to hang.

JEAN: Oh God. Those fucking assholes!

*(JEAN 40 rushes in, dressed as a nurse.)*

JEAN 40: *(to ROMAIN)* Monsieur Gary, it's time for you to leave. Mademoiselle Seberg needs to rest.

ROMAIN: Give her something to calm her down.

JEAN 40: I will see to all her needs. *Allez.*

*(ROMAIN exits. JEAN 40 administers the sedative.)*

JEAN 40: OK, listen to me. Put Nina out of your mind. That's where she belongs.

JEAN: How can I. I can't.

JEAN 40: And for God's sake don't go public with it.

JEAN: They killed my child! These foes of abortion!

JEAN 40: Do you want this to haunt you forever?

JEAN: I want them to pay for what they did.

JEAN 40: You'll only hurt yourself. Leave it alone. Now sleep.

*(JEAN nods off. Lights down on the hospital room.)*

MINISTER'S VOICE *(on tape)*: ...Let us commend Nina Hart Gary to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer. Into your hands, oh merciful savior, we deliver your servant Nina Hart Gary...

*(Lights up on JEAN and ED SEBERG. JEAN is pouring herself a stiff drink.)*

ED SEBERG: It's so nice to see you again, Jean. How long are you planning to stay?

JEAN: Forever.

ED SEBERG: No, seriously.

JEAN: I'm perfectly serious. I'm moving back to Marshalltown.

ED SEBERG: Alone, or with your son and his nanny?



JEAN: (*uneasily*) Diego goes to school in Europe. I'm not going to interfere with that.

ED SEBERG: What about your career?

JEAN: Have you been following my career?

ED SEBERG: We see what comes here. We saw *Paint Your Wagon*.

JEAN: Yes, the movie that killed the Hollywood musical. "I talk to the trees..." What a travesty.

ED SEBERG: Well, you sang beautifully, even if Clint Eastwood didn't.

JEAN: Daddy...that wasn't me. They had to dub me.

ED SEBERG: Well there, you see? We're always giving you the benefit of the doubt. We liked seeing you in *Airport*.

JEAN: Oh please. Nobody liked me in *Airport*.

ED SEBERG: Still...it's always been your life, the movies....

JEAN: I can't get a decent script! The FBI talked to every studio. I've been blacklisted.

ED SEBERG: Well...but you don't have to worry about the FBI anymore.

JEAN: What are you talking about?

ED SEBERG: All those lies in the paper. About the baby being black. They no longer use derogatory information.

JEAN: You really believe that?

ED SEBERG: They're out of that business forever. It was in the *Register*.

JEAN: Daddy, they're still lying. They lie for a living. They're evil men and they're out to destroy any woman who defies their sick moral codes.

ED SEBERG: Shh. Don't get so excited.

JEAN: Right, don't get excited, suppress your feelings, stay calm and submissive and reverent and demure. Let men have their way, because men always know better.

ED SEBERG: Oh Jean.

JEAN: What? It's true.

ED SEBERG: This feminism of yours—

JEAN: What about it?

ED SEBERG: It belongs in Hollywood, not Marshalltown.

JEAN: Marshalltown will just have to get used to my feminism. I'm going to buy a farm here and breed cattle.

ED SEBERG: Oh I see. And who's going to run this farm?

JEAN: I'll find people. And I'm buying a house.

ED SEBERG: Why do you need a house? (*doubtfully*) If you're going to live on a farm.

JEAN: It's for the black athletes at Marshalltown College.

ED SEBERG: You won't be very popular.

JEAN: I'm used to public abuse.

ED SEBERG: They'll trash it.

JEAN: I'll have guards posted on the lawn.

ED SEBERG: That's not what I meant.

JEAN: You meant...the black people will trash the place? Oh God. Well, what did I expect.

ED SEBERG: That's not fair. We always indulged you. Every little whim. All those dogs and cats you brought home.

JEAN: Great, now you're comparing them to animals.

ED SEBERG: And that time you gave your vacation money to a black woman on the bus.

JEAN: Oh, and how you lectured me about it.

ED SEBERG: You don't teach self-reliance by giving people money. That's the lesson we tried to teach you.

JEAN: Well, it's not the lesson I learned, thank God.

ED SEBERG: What have these Negroes ever done for you? Except land you in the papers and make your life a misery—

*(ED SEBERG breaks off as JEAN 40 enters.)*

JEAN 40: I'm sorry, am I interrupting?

JEAN: No, it's fine. We're finished. Where are we?

JEAN 40: I have good news and good news. That house on South Center, the half-timbered one? It's available, and they need to move it ASAP.

JEAN: Fantastic. Daddy, any other advice?

ED SEBERG: *(to JEAN)* No. I'll leave you to your plans.

*(ED SEBERG exits.)*

JEAN: What's the other good news?

JEAN 40: François Truffaut is trying to reach you.

JEAN: OK, I knew that.

JEAN 40: He wants you for a movie.

JEAN: *Day for Night*. I know all about it.

JEAN 40: Then why haven't you answered his calls?

JEAN: I've been to this dance already.

JEAN 40: He called you the best actress in Europe.

JEAN: Then why didn't he give me *Fahrenheit 451*? He promised me the part, then he cast Julie Christie.

JEAN 40: Well, he wants you now. And it's going to win the Oscar.

JEAN: How can you possibly know that?

JEAN 40: It's Hollywood's favorite genre—a movie about movies. They can't wait to kiss Truffaut's ass. But we have to move fast. He'll give the part to Jackie Bisset if you don't call him in the next two days.

JEAN: What's the role?

JEAN 40: Made to order. She cheats on her husband and has a nervous breakdown.

(JEAN *falls silent*.)

JEAN 40: Are you going to call Truffaut or not?

JEAN: Make the deal for the South Center house. Whatever they're asking.

(JEAN *downs her drink, starts to pour another*. JEAN 40 *stops her*.)

JEAN 40: How much Valium have you gobbled in the last twelve hours?

JEAN: I haven't been counting.

JEAN 40: You realize what day this is?

JEAN: Of course I do.

JEAN 40: 365 days. To the hour.

JEAN: Leave me the fuck alone. Jackie Bisset is a better choice.

JEAN 40: She's a blank.

JEAN: She's a blank, but she's better for the story. No one expects her to go to pieces. Me, they'd be counting on it.

JEAN 40: Put the bottle away and call Truffaut.

*(Defiantly, JEAN bubbles back the bottle. JEAN 40 tries to stop her. JEAN shoves her away.)*

JEAN: I said get the fuck out.

*(JEAN grabs JEAN 40 by the arm and shoves her out the door. Pours herself another drink. Lights fade. Sound of an ambulance siren, blending with the sound of the Minister's voice:)*

MINISTER'S VOICE: *(on tape)* ...Receive Nina Hart Gary into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light...

*(Lights up JEAN 40 and AHMED in Jean's Paris apartment. JEAN 40 is eating from a box of chocolates, listening to the tape recording of the funeral.)*

AHMED: In your religion, your miscarried daughter lives in heaven?

JEAN 40: I suppose that's what the Lutherans would say.

AHMED: But as what?

JEAN 40: As nothing. As a consecrated lump of flesh. It's not my religion, it's my family's religion, and it's utterly grotesque.

AHMED: Then why this grotesque ceremony?

JEAN 40: I needed to close the books.

(JEAN *turns up the volume.*)

MINISTER'S VOICE: (*on tape*) ...Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation—

(AHMED *stops the tape.*)

AHMED: Jean. This isn't closing the books.

(JEAN 40 *pops another chocolate.*)

JEAN 40: (*dreamily*) Do you know who sent me this box of chocolates?

AHMED: Who?

JEAN 40: Fidel Castro.

AHMED: Jean...my love...stop dreaming. We need to talk about the restaurant. Jean? Did you hear what I said?

JEAN 40: Castro sent those chocolates by special courier.

AHMED: Jean. Come back to me.

JEAN 40'S VOICE: (*over*) Come back, Jean.

(*Lights up on JEAN. She's in hospital garb, wearing paper slippers, lying on a couch.*)

JEAN 40: (*over*) Are you there? Are you listening?

JEAN: Yes, every word.

JEAN 40: (*over*) What did I just say?

JEAN: You said I did for Nina what I failed to do for Diego. Fine.

*(A light has come up on JEAN 40, sitting in a chair at the head of the couch where JEAN is lying. JEAN 40 is dressed in a suit and is wearing her thick glasses.)*

JEAN 40: No. Not fine. It fixed your dead child in your mind as a perpetual reproach.

JEAN: Reproach for what?

JEAN 40: For what that evil man Hoover accused you of.

JEAN: Treason?

JEAN 40: Sexual misconduct in the service of treason.

JEAN: Are you saying Hoover was right?

JEAN 40: Your conscience thinks he was right. Every year you celebrate Nina's birthday—by ending up on suicide watch. Who is that helping?

JEAN: No one.

JEAN 40: Who is it punishing?

JEAN: Myself.

JEAN 40: Do you see now why you need to change?

JEAN: "For here there is no place that does not see you. You must change your life."

JEAN 40: Poetry is no answer. Romain stuffed you with Rilke and the Russians, they only confused you. Do you know why?

JEAN: I was trying to improve myself, and he made me share his opinions.

JEAN 40: That's correct.

JEAN: I'm always trying to please men. And defy them at the same time.

JEAN 40: Was that the reason you gave money to the Panthers?

JEAN: My work with the Panthers was sincere. No matter what Romain said.

JEAN 40: Hoover thought you were sincere. Is that why you're still afraid of his minions?

JEAN: I'm afraid because they're still hounding me.

JEAN 40: Well, it's high time we put our fears aside. And stopped expecting men to save us.

JEAN: Or silence us.

JEAN 40: Too much father or not enough. There are other alternatives.

JEAN: Sometimes I wish I'd been a lesbian.

JEAN 40: No. The only woman you ever loved was yourself. But not as much as you deserved.

JEAN: Only my face in the mirror.

JEAN 40: Because that's all they saw. They envied your beauty, so they belittled your talent. When you proved your talent, they attacked your politics, they exploited your hunger for love and fame and self-respect. You took their hostility into your heart, and the hatred of every man who was threatened by your beauty, your fragility, your ambition...

*(JEAN 40's voice has been fading as the lights go down on her. JEAN has risen from the couch, spotlighted as she wanders away from JEAN 40...as spotlights come up on OTTO PREMINGER, ED SEBERG, JEAN-LUC GODARD, and HAKIM JAMAL, whose voices collide and overlap:)*

ROMAIN: I wasted years trying to help you.

ED SEBERG: There was never any insanity in our family.

JEAN-LUC: Your films with Chabrol were failures.

ED SEBERG: No alcoholism.

ROMAIN: Your innocence was emasculating.



ED SEBERG: No divorce.

HAKIM: All your affairs were mercy fucks.

ED SEBERG: No children out of wedlock.

JEAN-LUC: You rejected Truffaut.

HAKIM: You sucked up to my wife.

ED SEBERG: Those blacks defiled you.

HAKIM: You wrecked my marriage.

OTTO: Hoover was right to be suspicious.

HAKIM: We were all your gigolos.

ROMAIN: You made cuckolds of us all.

*(JEAN has taken a razor out of the pocket of her hospital gown, and is starting to cut her wrist. Blood flows. JEAN 40 walks calmly in.)*

JEAN 40: Stop. You know you don't want to do that.

*(JEAN withdraws the razor. JEAN 40 stops the flow of blood, rocks JEAN in her arms.)*

JEAN 40: You promise never to do that again?

JEAN: Yes, I promise.

JEAN 40: You're not a castrator.

JEAN: No. I know.

JEAN 40: Or a homewrecker, or psychotic, you're a masterpiece! Who has a heart as big as yours? Have you ever known anyone so generous, so brave, with such a burning need to live and love and lift people up? Why should you want to kill yourself?

JEAN: I don't. I won't. I was just playing at suicide.

JEAN 40: (*rises*) Time to stop playing. Time to grow up. Power is what you lack, power over male opinion, power to forget what you've suffered at their hands, and I promise you'll find that power! In the arms of a just and gentle man, a man who truly loves you, who doesn't want to change you or educate you or discipline you, a lover not a father, who will let you find your own way in the world. I've met the most wonderful man myself.

JEAN: Be careful he doesn't disappoint you.

JEAN 40: We're about to launch a restaurant.

JEAN: Whose idea was that?

JEAN 40: He's Algerian.

JEAN: I didn't ask his nationality.

JEAN 40: We're going to be so happy. We're going to have beautiful children.

*(The light goes down on JEAN as JEAN 40 enters her Paris apartment.)*

JEAN 40: Isn't that so, Ahmed?

AHMED: Isn't what so, my dear?

JEAN 40: Our restaurant...it's going to be a huge success?

AHMED: By God's grace, yes.

JEAN 40: What exactly did my paintings fetch?

AHMED: Enough to keep us going for a while.

*(JEAN 40 has gone over to the window and is staring out.)*

JEAN 40: Tell me the entrées again.

AHMED: Roasted barquette of eggplant...couscous brochette...lamb chops with almond tartlet...marinated squab with stuffed artichokes.

JEAN 40: I think I'll have the squab.

AHMED: Excellent choice, mademoiselle.

JEAN 40: (*suddenly*) Now. Tonight. I'm starving.

AHMED: I'll have to shop for the spices. Do you want to come with me?

JEAN 40: I'm exhausted.

AHMED: Are you sure?

JEAN 40: You go.

(*AHMED starts for the door.*)

JEAN 40: Ahmed?

AHMED: What?

JEAN 40: Should we marry before we open? Will that make the restaurant more successful?

AHMED: If that's a proposal, I accept.

JEAN 40: Maybe we should name the place after me.

AHMED: As you wish.

JEAN 40: I've never wanted to be anonymous.

AHMED: Why should you be? You're a great actress.

JEAN 40: I love you for saying that.

AHMED: You're a very loving person.

JEAN 40: Ahmed, do you realize? Until you came into my life, no man was ever really kind to me.

AHMED: Ah, that is very sad.

(*JEAN 40 takes off her glasses, sets them aside, kisses AHMED.*)

JEAN 40: I'm going to cut my hair short again for you. And lose all this flab. When the feds drove me crazy the doctors put me on Lithium. "You will gain a little weight." A little weight! Doctors are tyrants. "Do you know why you sleep with colored men?" Oh tell me, doctor, please. My Lutheran guilt? Sorry, doctor, no, you're as bad as J. Edgar. The Panthers were important people, that's why Romain hated them, that's why the FBI tried to put them out of business.

*(The lights have faded on AHMED as JEAN 40 wanders away into a spotlight.)*

JEAN 40: Hoover wants me to commit suicide. "She was a movie star and she killed herself. She must have been unhappy all her life. We were right and she was wrong..." Wrong to help the wretched of this earth? Then discredit her. Murder her child. I've been to 17 clinics. Not one could find anything wrong with my mind. I need to learn Portuguese. Study piano. Go on the stage. And I have to do something about my skin. I wish I weren't so pale. White America is doomed. They'll find ways of making babies so the FBI can't interfere. They'll gestate outside the womb. With armed guards outside the hospitals. You have to hurry, Ahmed. We're having President Carter for dinner.

*(The lights come up as JEAN enters. Ahmed is gone.)*

JEAN: You see?

JEAN 40: See what? *(calling)* Ahmed?!

JEAN: There's no Ahmed.

JEAN 40: Of course there is. How dare you.

JEAN: You're all alone. You made him up.

JEAN 40: No! He left his cigarettes here somewhere...I didn't make him up, he's real...

JEAN: Like that FBI man?

JEAN 40: Which FBI man? There were dozens of FBI men.

JEAN: The man on the plane. The man across the street.

JEAN 40: Of course they were real, all of them were real. Why else would I sell my paintings? Call the auction house, Ahmed dealt with them, I didn't.

JEAN: So in other words he's using you.

JEAN 40: What else do people do? They fall in love and they use each other.

JEAN: How do you know he even cares for you?

JEAN 40: Because he makes me happy.

JEAN: Meanwhile he's robbing you blind. You're completely deluded.

JEAN 40: Not this time.

JEAN: Please, your whole life has been a delusion. God, if I thought I'd turn out to be you, a fat sloppy paranoid drunken old broad, I'd bolt the door and slit my wrists so nobody could rescue me.

JEAN 40: Will you stop talking yourself into a grave? How many times do I have to tell you?

*(The door begins to pound.)*

AHMED: *(other side of door)* Jean? Open please.

JEAN 40: You hear that? That's him. Coming, Ahmed.

*(JEAN stops her.)*

JEAN: No! Don't go out there!

A DIFFERENT VOICE: *(other side of door)* Miss Seberg? We know you're in there.

JEAN: Miss Seberg isn't here. She's gone back to America.

AHMED: *(other side of door)* Please, Jean. These bags are heavy.

JEAN 40: Just a moment, Ahmed. *(to JEAN)* Let me go.

JEAN: No! (*to the door*) Go away! Leave me alone!

THE DIFFERENT VOICE: (*other side of door*) Open the door, Miss Seberg! Don't make us break it down!

*(Blackout. Police sirens. The sirens fade.)*

*Lights up on the deserted space the play began with. It's now clearly a cemetery—Montparnasse cemetery. Photos and film clips of the real Jean Seberg come and go on the cemetery wall. OTTO, AHMED, ROMAIN, JEAN-LUC, ED SEBERG and HAKIM are gathered around Jean Seberg's grave.)*

AHMED: I returned from the market, she wasn't there.

ROMAIN: She never came back.

OTTO: They found her Renault in an obscure Paris street.

ROMAIN: Ten days later. Her body had baked in the sun.

OTTO: She'd swallowed barbiturates.

HAKIM: Not enough to kill her.

OTTO: Her veins were full of alcohol.

AHMED: Enough to put her in a coma.

ROMAIN: And where were the liquor bottles?

AHMED: And she didn't have her glasses with her.

HAKIM: She couldn't drive without her glasses.

AHMED: There was no dust on the car.

HAKIM: Somebody cleaned off the fingerprints.

ROMAIN: The FBI poured liquor down her throat and drove her to that street. An out of the way place, to delay the post-mortem.

OTTO: There were no marks or bruises. Except those she inflicted on herself.

JEAN-LUC: That's why you cast her as a martyr.

OTTO: She was a martyr from the start. She came to me in pieces.

AHMED: She was putting the pieces together. Her head was full of plans.

OTTO: She was a born victim.

JEAN-LUC: A born suicide.

OTTO: Every year she tried to leave this earth.

JEAN-LUC: And don't forget the note to her son.

ROMAIN: Who knows when that note was written?

OTTO: "Forgive me, Diego. I can no longer live with my nerves."  
That's too deft a touch for the FBI.

ED SEBERG: She hardly ever saw her son. I don't know if she  
would have been thinking of him at the end.

OTTO: That's who you think of, your family. The people you're trying to hurt.

ED SEBERG: Why would she want to hurt us? We never stood in her way.

JEAN-LUC: She came into the world too late. She would have  
thrived in the 20s, under Pabst or Von Sternberg.

OTTO: Hollywood tossed her in the trash.

ROMAIN: She lived too long and now she's forgotten.

AHMED: No family came to her funeral.

HAKIM: I couldn't be at the funeral. I was assassinated in 1973 by  
radical black Vietnam veterans for having a white girlfriend.

ROMAIN: I was here at the gravesite. My final act of devotion.  
That December I committed suicide with a .38 revolver.

OTTO: She drove men mad.

ED SEBERG: She should never have left America.

HAKIM: She renounced America.

ED SEBERG: She loved America!

HAKIM: Not White America.

AHMED: The America to come.

ED SEBERG: She was America's Sweetheart.

JEAN-LUC: She was Europe's Sweetheart.

AHMED: America never forgave her.

ED SEBERG: She was their Dream Girl.

OTTO: She was our Nightmare.

AHMED: America will never see her like again.

*(As the lights fade on the men, music from Breathless—Mozart's Clarinet Concerto—fades up. The images of the real Jean Seberg continue to play on the walls of the cemetery, freezing on an enigmatic close-up of Jean Seberg in her heyday, side by side with one of Jean in the throes of madness. END OF PLAY.)*