

REEL ONE

INSERT: RENATA MILLER IN PRIVATE SECRETARY, BERLIN, 1931.  
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USHER I'm sorry, the entrance is on this side, sir,

AMBIANCE (LOBBY OF THE THEATER).

WOMAN I haven't got a seat. Someone's sitting in my seat.

USHER I'm very sorry Madam but this ticket's for a different film.

WOMAN Oh, but I paid...

AMBIANCE (WAITING ROOM).  
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AMBIANCE

HELLWEG Excuse me, is this the press reception? I would like to speak with Miss Miller.

REPORTER I Yes, so would the rest of us.

REPORTER 2 Would you give us your opinion of the new star, Mr. De Cassian.

DE CASSIAN She's an angel. She was nervous, of course, after all it's her first film.

REPORTER 3 What is she like? I haven't seen a picture of her.

REPORTER 4 They really push the newcomers these days. Her first film not even out yet, and already she's Garbo.  
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AMBIANCE RECEPTION

JULIE Yes, the film isn't even out yet and were hounded by the press.

FAT MAN You look charming, my dear. Perfectly charming.

CRITIC Private secretary marries her millionaire boss, and goes from rags to riches.

FAT MAN I'm so glad to be here.

CRITIC           Isn't that a little hackneyed, Mister Gunzel?

GUNZEL           Why not wait until you see the film before you criticize, or have you already written your review?

CRITIC           I've seen it a hundred times; the cotton candy formula. Life is a bed of roses.

GUNZEL           Well, for your information I married my secretary ten years ago and I can tell you that's been anything but a bed of roses. Ah, Julie, we were just talking about you.

JULIE           Were you?

GUNZEL           Has anyone heard from Renata?

JULIE           No.

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FURST           Where is she?

MAN 1st         I told you you'd have trouble with that girl.

FURST           Oh, shut up. What's the matter with this Renata Miller is she out of her mind? This reception cost me a couple of thousand and she doesn't even bother to show up.

JULIE           Yes, I know, but I just spoke to her about a half an hour ago, and she said she was going to be here. She just got stage fright, she's terribly shy and sensitive. If you have any idea at all what that is.

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JULIE           Gloria's sensitive, too.

FURST           Gloria! I could've had Gloria in this picture, but no, your husband has to experiment with some "little unknown".

JULIE           She'll be a star!; just wait and see?

FURST           Her a star? She's boring; she is lifeless. She has no..

MAN 1st         No personality.

FURST           No matter what he says he's always completely wrong. She has no personality, d'you understand, and not only that, she's scared to death. In every one of her close ups, you can see that she's shaking like chocolate pudding. Now I'm shaking, too - for my millions.

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DR. SIMON           Excellent! You can give me a whole case of this, Matthew.

MATTHEW            But that's nothing. I'd like you to try something special, Mr. Simon. A really rare vintage.

RENATE             Have you got a light?

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RENATE             Oh, excuse me, I thought the owner...

DR. SIMON           No, the owner went to the cellar for a second.

RENATE             Thank you.

DR. SIMON           Don't worry, Matthew has lots of glasses. Say, you know what I always drink when I'm in that kind of mood?

RENATE             I'm not in any mood.

DR. SIMON           I mean the November mood, cold and windy. I always have a glass or two of Burgundy. A rich red glowing Burgundy. Won't you have one with me?

RENATE             Yes, I believe I will.

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DR. SIMON           Matthew.

MATTHEW            Yes?

DR. SIMON           Bring us a bottle of Burgundy and two glasses, would you please.

MATTHEW            Coming right up.

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DR. SIMON           Aha, thank you.

RENATE             You're quite right, of course, I'm in a low mood. But I already feel a lot better.

DR. SIMON           There, you see: To your health.

MRS. MATTHEW       Heavens! The weather is getting worse every year. I don't know how we'll last through another winter.

DR. SIMON           That's the owner's wife.

RENATE             You must be thinking that I'm a real neurotic. I sit

alone in this out-of-the way bar. I jump when the door opens. I knock over a glass and I'm wearing the wrong shoes for this weather. Why do you suppose I'm acting this way?

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DR. SIMON Oh, that's not hard to figure out, when a lovely woman like you is concerned. You had a quarrel with one of your admirers.

RENATE Oh, and what about?

DR. SIMON He's very jealous; and with good reason. You were sitting with him at a restaurant and you were flirting outrageously with a tall dark man at the next table.

RENATE Then what?

DR. SIMON He was seething with jealousy, and the last thing he wanted to do was show it. So suddenly, he was shouting at you for another reason.

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RENATE Really? And what was he saying?

DR. SIMON All kinds of things. "You're making a fool of me, what's everyone going to think? You're wearing the wrong shoes for this weather."

RENATE (LAUGHS).

DR. SIMON And that sounds like a very good exit speech for me. On the other hand, since you admitted that you're feeling depressed, I don't want to leave you alone, unless you want me to. And yet, on the third hand, I certainly wouldn't want to force you into sharing my company. Complicated situation, isn't it?

RENATE Yes, very complicated.

DR. SIMON Well then, to solve it, - why don't you just have dinner with me.

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RENATE Well I've another proposal to make.

DR. SIMON Yes?

RENATE Only perhaps you don't enjoy going to the movies.

DR. SIMON With you, I would enjoy the worst film ever made.  
What would you like to see?

RENATE I was thinking of that film across the street.  
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DR. SIMON "Private Secretary". I've heard about it. An unknown  
is playing the lead.

RENATE Yes, an unknown.

DR. SIMON And that's you.  
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END OF REEL ONE  
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