

CITIZEN KANE

by

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and

Orson Welles

PROLOGUE

FADE IN:

EXT. XANADU - FAINT DAWN - 1940 (MINIATURE)

Window, very small in the distance, illuminated.

All around this is an almost totally black screen. Now, as the camera moves slowly towards the window which is almost a postage stamp in the frame, other forms appear; barbed wire, cyclone fencing, and now, looming up against an early morning sky, enormous iron grille work. Camera travels up what is now shown to be a gateway of gigantic proportions and holds on the top of it - a huge initial "K" showing darker and darker against the dawn sky. Through this and beyond we see the fairy-tale mountaintop of Xanadu, the great castle a silhouette as its summit, the little window a distant accent in the darkness.

DISSOLVE:

A SERIES OF SET-UPS, EACH CLOSER TO THE GREAT WINDOW, ALL TELLING SOMETHING OF:

The literally incredible domain of CHARLES FOSTER KANE.

Its right flank resting for nearly forty miles on the Gulf Coast, it truly extends in all directions farther than the eye can see. Designed by nature to be almost completely bare and flat - it was, as will develop, practically all marshland when Kane acquired and changed its face - it is now pleasantly uneven, with its fair share of rolling hills and one very good-sized mountain, all man-made. Almost all the land is improved, either through cultivation for farming purposes or through careful landscaping, in the shape of parks and lakes. The castle dominates itself, an enormous pile, compounded of several genuine castles, of European origin, of varying architecture - dominates the scene, from the very peak of the mountain.

DISSOLVE:

GOLF LINKS (MINIATURE)

Past which we move. The greens are straggly and overgrown, the fairways wild with tropical weeds, the links unused and not seriously tended for a long time.

DISSOLVE OUT:

DISSOLVE IN:

WHAT WAS ONCE A GOOD-SIZED ZOO (MINIATURE)

Of the Hagenbeck type. All that now remains, with one exception, are the individual plots, surrounded by moats, on which the animals are kept, free and yet safe from each other and the landscape at large. (Signs on several of the plots indicate that here there were once tigers, lions, girrafes.)

DISSOLVE:

THE MONKEY TERRACE (MINIATURE)

In the foreground, a great obscene ape is outlined against the dawn murk. He is scratching himself slowly, thoughtfully, looking out across the estates of Charles Foster Kane, to the distant light glowing in the castle on the hill.

DISSOLVE:

THE ALLIGATOR PIT (MINIATURE)

The idiot pile of sleepy dragons. Reflected in the muddy water - the lighted window.

THE LAGOON (MINIATURE)

The boat landing sags. An old newspaper floats on the surface of the water - a copy of the New York Enquirer." As it moves across the frame, it discloses again the reflection of the window in the castle, closer than before.

THE GREAT SWIMMING POOL (MINIATURE)

It is empty. A newspaper blows across the cracked floor of the tank.

DISSOLVE:

THE COTTAGES (MINIATURE)

In the shadows, literally the shadows, of the castle. As we move by, we see that their doors and windows are boarded up and locked, with heavy bars as further protection and sealing.

DISSOLVE OUT:

DISSOLVE IN:

A DRAWBRIDGE (MINIATURE)

Over a wide moat, now stagnant and choked with weeds. We move across it and through a huge solid gateway into a formal garden, perhaps thirty yards wide and one hundred yards deep, which extends right up to the very wall of the castle. The landscaping surrounding it has been sloppy and casual for a long time, but this particular garden has been kept up in perfect shape. As the camera makes its way through it, towards the lighted window of the castle, there are revealed rare and exotic blooms of all kinds. The dominating note is one of almost exaggerated tropical lushness, hanging limp and despairing. Moss, moss, moss. Ankor Wat, the night the last King died.

DISSOLVE:

THE WINDOW (MINIATURE)

Camera moves in until the frame of the window fills the frame of the screen. Suddenly, the light within goes out. This stops the action of the camera and cuts the music which has been accompanying the sequence. In the glass

panes of the window, we see reflected the ripe, dreary landscape of Mr. Kane's estate behind and the dawn sky.

DISSOLVE:

INT. KANE'S BEDROOM - FAINT DAWN - 1940

A very long shot of Kane's enormous bed, silhouetted against the enormous window.

DISSOLVE:

INT. KANE'S BEDROOM - FAINT DAWN - 1940

A snow scene. An incredible one. Big, impossible flakes of snow, a too picturesque farmhouse and a snow man. The jingling of sleigh bells in the musical score now makes an ironic reference to Indian Temple bells - the music freezes -

KANE'S OLD OLD VOICE

Rosebud...

The camera pulls back, showing the whole scene to be contained in one of those glass balls which are sold in novelty stores all over the world. A hand - Kane's hand, which has been holding the ball, relaxes. The ball falls out of his hand and bounds down two carpeted steps leading to the bed, the camera following. The ball falls off the last step onto the marble floor where it breaks, the fragments glittering in the first rays of the morning sun. This ray cuts an angular pattern across the floor, suddenly crossed with a thousand bars of light as the blinds are pulled across the window.

The foot of Kane's bed. The camera very close. Outlined against the shuttered window, we can see a form - the form of a nurse, as she pulls the sheet up over his head. The camera follows this action up the length of the bed and arrives at the face after the sheet has covered it.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. OF A MOTION PICTURE PROJECTION ROOM

On the screen as the camera moves in are the words:

MAIN TITLE

Stirring, brassy music is heard on the soundtrack (which, of course, sounds more like a soundtrack than ours.)

The screen in the projection room fills our screen as the second title appears:

CREDITS

NOTE: Here follows a typical news digest short, one of the regular monthly or bi-monthly features, based on public events or personalities. These are distinguished from ordinary newsreels and short subjects in that they have a fully developed editorial or storyline. Some of the more obvious characteristics of the "March of Time," for example, as well as other documentary shorts, will be combined to give an authentic impression of this now familiar type of short subject. As is the accepted procedure in these short subjects, a narrator is used as well as explanatory titles.

FADE OUT:

NEWS DIGEST

NARRATOR

Legendary was the Xanadu where Kubla
Kahn decreed his stately pleasure
dome -

(with quotes in his
voice)

"Where twice five miles of fertile
ground, with walls and towers were
girdled 'round."

(dropping the quotes)

Today, almost as legendary is
Florida's XANADU - world's largest
private pleasure ground. Here, on the
deserts of the Gulf Coast, a private
mountain was commissioned,

successfully built for its landlord.
 Here in a private valley, as in the
 Coleridge poem, "blossoms many an
 incense-bearing tree." Verily, "a
 miracle of rare device."

U.S.A.

CHARLES FOSTER KANE

Opening shot of great desolate expanse of Florida
 coastline (1940 - DAY)

DISSOLVE:

SERIES OF SHOTS

Showing various aspects of Xanadu, all as they might be
 photographed by an ordinary newsreel cameraman - nicely
 photographed, but not atmospheric to the extreme extent
 of the Prologue (1940).

NARRATOR

(dropping the quotes)

Here, for Xanadu's landlord, will be
 held 1940's biggest, strangest
 funeral; here this week is laid to
 rest a potent figure of our Century -
 America's Kubla Kahn - Charles Foster
 Kane. In journalism's history, other
 names are honored more than Charles
 Foster Kane's, more justly revered.
 Among publishers, second only to
 James Gordon Bennet the First: his
 dashing, expatriate son; England's
 Northcliffe and Beaverbrook;
 Chicago's Patterson and McCormick;

TITLE:

"TO FORTY-FOUR MILLION U.S. NEWS BUYERS, MORE NEWSWORTHY
 THAN THE NAMES IN HIS OWN HEADLINES, WAS KANE HIMSELF,
 GREATEST NEWSPAPER TYCOON OF THIS OR ANY OTHER
 GENERATION."

Shot of a huge, screen-filling picture of Kane. Pull back to show that it is a picture on the front page of the "Enquirer," surrounded by the reversed rules of mourning, with masthead and headlines. (1940)

DISSOLVE:

A GREAT NUMBER OF HEADLINES

Set in different types and different styles, obviously from different papers, all announcing Kane's death, all appearing over photographs of Kane himself (perhaps a fifth of the headlines are in foreign languages). An important item in connection with the headlines is that many of them - positively not all - reveal passionately conflicting opinions about Kane. Thus, they contain variously the words "patriot," "democrat," "pacifist," "war-monger," "traitor," "idealist," "American," etc.

TITLE:

"1895 TO 1940 - ALL OF THESE YEARS HE COVERED, MANY OF THESE YEARS HE WAS."

Newsreel shots of San Francisco during and after the fire, followed by shots of special trains with large streamers: "Kane Relief Organization." Over these shots superimpose the date - 1906.

Artist's painting of Foch's railroad car and peace negotiators, if actual newsreel shot unavailable. Over this shot superimpose the date - 1918.

NARRATOR

Denver's Bonfils and Sommes; New York's late, great Joseph Pulitzer; America's emperor of the news syndicate, another editorialist and landlord, the still mighty and once mightier Hearst. Great names all of them - but none of them so loved, hated, feared, so often spoken - as Charles Foster Kane. The San Francisco earthquake. First with the

news were the Kane papers. First with Relief of the Sufferers, First with the news of their Relief of the Sufferers. Kane papers scoop the world on the Armistice - publish, eight hours before competitors, complete details of the Armistice terms granted the Germans by Marshall Foch from his railroad car in the Forest of Compeigne. For forty years appeared in Kane newsprint no public issue on which Kane papers took no stand. No public man whom Kane himself did not support or denounce - often support, then denounce. Its humble beginnings, a dying dailey -

Shots with the date - 1898 (to be supplied)

Shots with the date - 1910 (to be supplied)

Shots with the date - 1922 (to be supplied)

Headlines, cartoons, contemporary newreels or stills of the following:

1. WOMAN SUFFRAGE

The celebrated newsreel shot of about 1914.

2. PROHIBITION

Breaking up of a speakeasy and such.

3. T.V.A.

4. LABOR RIOTS

Brief clips of old newreel shots of William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Stalin, Walter P. Thatcher, Al Smith, McKinley, Landon, Franklin D. Roosevelt and such. Also, recent newsreels of the elderly Kane with such

Nazis as Hitler and Goering; and England's Chamberlain and Churchill.

Shot of a ramshackle building with old-fashioned presses showing through plate glass windows and the name "Enquirer" in old-fashioned gold letters. (1892)

DISSOLVE:

NARRATOR

Kane's empire, in its glory, held dominion over thirty-seven newspapers, thirteen magazines, a radio network. An empire upon an empire. The first of grocery stores, paper mills, apartment buildings, factories, forests, ocean-liners - An empire through which for fifty years flowed, in an unending stream, the wealth of the earth's third richest gold mine... Famed in American legend is the origin of the Kane fortune... How, to boarding housekeeper Mary Kane, by a defaulting boarder, in 1868 was left the supposedly worthless deed to an abandoned mine shaft: The Colorado Lode.

The magnificent Enquirer Building of today.

1891-1911 - a map of the USA, covering the entire screen, which in animated diagram shows the Kane publications spreading from city to city. Starting from New York, miniature newboys speed madly to Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Atlanta, El Paso, etc., screaming "Wuxtry, Kane Papers, Wuxtry."

Shot of a large mine going full blast, chimneys belching smoke, trains moving in and out, etc. A large sign reads "Colorado Lode Mining Co." (1940) Sign reading; "Little Salem, CO - 25 MILES."

DISSOLVE:

AN OLD STILL SHOT

Of Little Salem as it was 70 years ago (identified by copper-plate caption beneath the still). (1870)

Shot of early tintype stills of Thomas Foster Kane and his wife, Mary, on their wedding day. A similar picture of Mary Kane some four or five years later with her little boy, Charles Foster Kane.

NARRATOR

Fifty-seven years later, before a Congressional Investigation, Walter P. Thatcher, grand old man of Wall Street, for years chief target of Kane papers' attack on "trusts," recalls a journey he made as a youth...

Shot of Capitol, in Washington D.C.

Shot of Congressional Investigating Committee (reproduction of existing J.P. Morgan newsreel). This runs silent under narration. Walter P. Thatcher is on the stand. He is flanked by his son, Walter P. Thatcher Jr., and other partners. He is being questioned by some Merry Andrew congressmen. At this moment, a baby alligator has just been placed in his lap, causing considerable confusion and embarrassment.

Newsreel close-up of Thatcher, the soundtrack of which now fades in.

THATCHER

... because of that trivial incident...

INVESTIGATOR

It is a fact, however, is it not, that in 1870, you did go to Colorado?

THATCHER

I did.

INVESTIGATOR

In connection with the Kane affairs?

THATCHER

Yes. My firm had been appointed trustees by Mrs. Kane for the fortune, which she had recently acquired. It was her wish that I should take charge of this boy, Charles Foster Kane.

NARRATOR

That same month in Union Square -

INVESTIGATOR

Is it not a fact that on that occasion, the boy personally attacked you after striking you in the stomach with a sled?

Loud laughter and confusion.

THATCHER

Mr. Chairman, I will read to this committee a prepared statement I have brought with me - and I will then refuse to answer any further questions. Mr. Johnson, please!

A young assistant hands him a sheet of paper from a briefcase.

THATCHER

(reading it)

"With full awareness of the meaning of my words and the responsibility of what I am about to say, it is my considered belief that Mr. Charles Foster Kane, in every essence of his social beliefs and by the dangerous manner in which he has persistently attacked the American traditions of private property, initiative and opportunity for advancement, is - in fact - nothing more or less than a Communist."

Newsreel of Union Square meeting, section of crowd carrying banners urging the boycott of Kane papers. A speaker is on the platform above the crowd.

SPEAKER

(fading in on soundtrack)
 - till the words "Charles Foster Kane" are a menace to every working man in this land. He is today what he has always been and always will be -
 A FASCIST!

NARRATOR

And yet another opinion - Kane's own.

Silent newsreel on a windy platform, flag-draped, in front of the magnificent Enquirer building. On platform, in full ceremonial dress, is Charles Foster Kane. He orates silently.

TITLE:

"I AM, HAVE BEEN, AND WILL BE ONLY ONE THING - AN AMERICAN." CHARLES FOSTER KANE.

Same locale, Kane shaking hands out of frame.

Another newsreel shot, much later, very brief, showing Kane, older and much fatter, very tired-looking, seated with his second wife in a nightclub. He looks lonely and unhappy in the midst of the gaiety.

NARRATOR

Twice married, twice divorced - first to a president's niece, Emily Norton - today, by her second marriage, chatelaine of the oldest of England's stately homes. Sixteen years after that - two weeks after his divorce from Emily Norton - Kane married Susan Alexander, singer, at the Town Hall in Trenton, New Jersey.

TITLE:

"FEW PRIVATE LIVES WERE MORE PUBLIC"

Period still of Emily Norton (1900).

DISSOLVE:

RECONSTRUCTED SILENT NEWSREEL

Kane, Susan, and Bernstein emerging from side doorway of City Hall into a ring of press photographers, reporters, etc. Kane looks startled, recoils for an instance, then charges down upon the photographers, laying about him with his stick, smashing whatever he can hit.

NARRATOR

For wife two, one-time opera singing Susan Alexander, Kane built Chicago's Municipal Opera House. Cost: three million dollars. Conceived for Susan Alexander Kane, half-finished before she divorced him, the still unfinished Xanadu. Cost: no man can say.

Still of architect's sketch with typically glorified "rendering" of the Chicago Municipal Opera House.

DISSOLVE:

A GLAMOROUS SHOT

Of the almost-finished Xanadu, a magnificent fairy-tale estate built on a mountain. (1920)

Then shots of its preparation. (1917)

Shots of truck after truck, train after train, flashing by with tremendous noise.

Shots of vast dredges, steamshovels.

Shot of ship standing offshore unloading its lighters.

In quick succession, shots follow each other, some reconstructed, some in miniature, some real shots (maybe from the dam projects) of building, digging, pouring concrete, etc.

NARRATOR

One hundred thousand trees, twenty thousand tons of marble, are the ingredients of Xanadu's mountain. Xanadu's livestock: the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, the beast of the field and jungle - two of each; the biggest private zoo since Noah. Contents of Kane's palace: paintings, pictures, statues, the very stones of many another palace, shipped to Florida from every corner of the earth, from other Kane houses, warehouses, where they mouldered for years. Enough for ten museums - the loot of the world.

More shots as before, only this time we see (in miniature) a large mountain - at different periods in its development - rising out of the sands.

Shots of elephants, apes, zebras, etc. being herded, unloaded, shipped, etc. in various ways.

Shots of packing cases being unloaded from ships, from trains, from trucks, with various kinds of lettering on them (Italian, Arabian, Chinese, etc.) but all consigned to Charles Foster Kane, Xanadu, Florida.

A reconstructed still of Xanadu - the main terrace. A group of persons in clothes of the period of 1917. In their midst, clearly recognizable, are Kane and Susan.

NARRATOR

Kane urged his country's entry into one war, opposed participation in another. Swung the election to one American President at least, was called another's assassin. Thus, Kane's papers might never have survived - had not the President.

TITLE:

"FROM XANADU, FOR THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, ALL KANE ENTERPRISES HAVE BEEN DIRECTED, MANY OF THE NATIONS DESTINIES SHAPED."

Shots of various authentically worded headlines of American papers since 1895.

Spanish-American War shots. (1898)

A graveyard in France of the World War and hundreds of crosses. (1919)

Old newsreels of a political campaign.

Insert of a particularly virulent headline and/or cartoon.

HEADLINE: "PRESIDENT SHOT"

NARRATOR

Kane, molder of mass opinion though he was, in all his life was never granted elective office by the voters of his country. Few U.S. news publishers have been. Few, like one-time Congressman Hearst, have ever run for any office - most know better - conclude with other political observers that one man's press has power enough for himself. But Kane papers were once strong indeed, and once the prize seemed almost his. In 1910, as Independent Candidate for governor, the best elements of the state behind him - the White House seemingly the next easy step in a lightning political career -

Night shot of crowd burning Charles Foster Kane in effigy. The dummy bears a grotesque, comic resemblance to Kane. It is tossed into the flames, which burn up -

- and then down... (1910)

FADE OUT:

TITLE:

"IN POLITICS - ALWAYS A BRIDESMAID, NEVER A BRIDE"

Newsreel shots of great crowds streaming into a building - Madison Square Garden - then shots inside the vast auditorium, at one end of which is a huge picture of Kane. (1910)

Shot of box containing the first Mrs. Kane and young Howard Kane, age five. They are acknowledging the cheers of the crowd. (Silent Shot) (1910)

Newreel shot of dignitaries on platform, with Kane, alongside of speaker's table, beaming, hand upraised to silence the crowd. (Silent Shot) (1910)

NARRATOR

Then, suddenly - less than one week before election - defeat! Shameful, ignominious - defeat that set back for twenty years the cause of reform in the U.S., forever cancelled political chances for Charles Foster Kane. Then, in the third year of the Great Depression... As to all publishers, it sometimes must - to Bennett, to Munsey and Hearst it did - a paper closes! For Kane, in four short years: collapse! Eleven Kane papers, four Kane magazines merged, more sold, scrapped -

Newreel shot - closeup of Kane delivering a speech... (1910)

The front page of a contemporary paper - a screaming headline. Twin photos of Kane and Susan. (1910)

Printed title about Depression.

Once more repeat the map of the USA 1932-1939. Suddenly, the cartoon goes into reverse, the empire begins to shrink, illustrating the narrator's words.

The door of a newspaper office with the signs: "Closed."

NARRATOR

Then four long years more - alone in his never-finished, already decaying,

pleasure palace, aloof, seldom visited, never photographed, Charles Foster Kane continued to direct his falling empire... vainly attempting to sway, as he once did, the destinies of a nation that has ceased to listen to him ... ceased to trust him...

Shots of Xanadu. (1940)

Series of shots, entirely modern, but rather jumpy and obviously bootlegged, showing Kane in a bath chair, swathed in summer rugs, being perambulated through his rose garden, a desolate figure in the sunshine. (1935)

NARRATOR

Last week, death came to sit upon the throne of America's Kubla Khan - last week, as it must to all men, death came to Charles Foster Kane.

DISSOLVE:

CABINET PHOTOGRAPH (FULL SCREEN)

Of Kane as an old, old man. This image remains constant on the screen (as camera pulls back, taking in the interior of a dark projection room.

INT. PROJECTION ROOM - DAY - 1940

A fairly large one, with a long throw to the screen. It is dark.

The image of Kane as an old man remains constant on the screen as camera pulls back, slowly taking in and registering Projection Room. This action occurs, however, only after the first few lines of encuring dialogue have been spoken. The shadows of the men speaking appear as they rise from their chairs - black against the image of Kane's face on the screen.

NOTE: These are the editors of a "News Digest" short, and of the Rawlston magazines. All his enterprises are

represented in the projection room, and Rawlston himself, that great man, is present also and will shortly speak up.

During the entire course of this scene, nobody's face is really seen. Sections of their bodies are picked out by a table light, a silhouette is thrown on the screen, and their faces and bodies are themselves thrown into silhouette against the brilliant slanting rays of light from the projection room.

A Third Man is on the telephone. We see a corner of his head and the phone.

THIRD MAN

(at phone)

Stand by. I'll tell you if we want to run it again.

(hangs up)

THOMPSON'S VOICE

Well?

A short pause.

A MAN'S VOICE

It's a tough thing to do in a newsreel. Seventy years of a man's life -

Murmur of highly salaried assent at this. Rawlston walks toward camera and out of the picture. Others are rising. Camera during all of this, apparently does its best to follow action and pick up faces, but fails. Actually, all set-ups are to be planned very carefully to exclude the element of personality from this scene; which is expressed entirely by voices, shadows, silhouettes and the big, bright image of Kane himself on the screen.

A VOICE

See what Arthur Ellis wrote about him in the American review?

THIRD MAN

I read it.

THE VOICE

(its owner is already
 leaning across the table,
 holding a piece of paper
 under the desk light and
 reading from it)

Listen: Kane is dead. He contributed
 to the journalism of his day - the
 talent of a mountebank, the morals of
 a bootlegger, and the manners of a
 pasha. He and his kind have almost
 succeeded in transforming a once
 noble profession into a seven percent
 security - no longer secure.

ANOTHER VOICE

That's what Arthur Ellis is writing
 now. Thirty years ago, when Kane gave
 him his chance to clean up Detroit
 and Chicago and St. Louis, Kane was
 the greatest guy in the world. If you
 ask me -

ANOTHER VOICE

Charles Foster Kane was a...

Then observations are made almost simultaneous.

RAWLSTON'S VOICE

Just a minute!

Camera moves to take in his bulk outlined against the
 glow from the projection room.

RAWLSTON

What were Kane's last words?

A silence greets this.

RAWLSTON

What were the last words he said on
 earth? Thompson, you've made us a
 good short, but it needs character -

SOMEBODY'S VOICE

Motivation -

RAWLSTON

That's it - motivation. What made Kane what he was? And, for that matter, what was he? What we've just seen are the outlines of a career - what's behind the career? What's the man? Was he good or bad? Strong or foolish? Tragic or silly? Why did he do all those things? What was he after?

(then, appreciating his point)

Maybe he told us on his death bed.

THOMPSON

Yes, and maybe he didn't.

RAWLSTON

Ask the question anyway, Thompson! Build the picture around the question, even if you can't answer it.

THOMPSON

I know, but -

RAWLSTON

(riding over him like any other producer)

All we saw on that screen was a big American -

A VOICE

One of the biggest.

RAWLSTON

(without pausing for this)

But how is he different from Ford? Or Hearst for that matter? Or Rockefeller - or John Doe?

A VOICE

I know people worked for Kane will tell you - not only in the newspaper business - look how he raised salaries. You don't want to forget -

ANOTHER VOICE

You take his labor record alone, they ought to hang him up like a dog.

RAWLSTON

I tell you, Thompson - a man's dying words -

SOMEBODY'S VOICE

What were they?

Silence.

SOMEBODY'S VOICE

(hesitant)

Yes, Mr. Rawlston, what were Kane's dying words?

RAWLSTON

(with disgust)

Rosebud!

A little ripple of laughter at this, which is promptly silenced by Rawlston.

RAWLSTON

That's right.

A VOICE

Tough guy, huh?

(derisively)

Dies calling for Rosebud!

RAWLSTON

Here's a man who might have been President. He's been loved and hated and talked about as much as any man in our time - but when he comes to die, he's got something on his mind called "Rosebud." What does that mean?

ANOTHER VOICE

A racehorse he bet on once, probably, that didn't come in - Rosebud!

RAWLSTON

All right. But what was the race?

There is a short silence.

RAWLSTON

Thompson!

THOMPSON

Yes, sir.

RAWLSTON

Hold this thing up for a week. Two weeks if you have to...

THOMPSON

(feebly)

But don't you think if we release it now - he's only been dead four days - it might be better than if -

RAWLSTON

(decisively)

Nothing is ever better than finding out what makes people tick. Go after the people that knew Kane well. That manager of his - the little guy, Bernstein, those two wives, all the people who knew him, had worked for him, who loved him, who hated his guts -

(pauses)

I don't mean go through the City Directory, of course -

The Third Man gives a hearty "yes-man" laugh.

THOMPSON

I'll get to it right away, Mr. Rawlston.

RAWLSTON

(rising)

Good!

The camera from behind him, outlines his back against Kane's picture on the screen.

RAWLSTON'S VOICE
(continued)

It'll probably turn out to be a very
simple thing...

FADE OUT:

NOTE: Now begins the story proper - the search by Thompson for the facts about Kane - his researches ... his interviews with the people who knew Kane.

It is important to remember always that only at the very end of the story is Thompson himself a personality. Until then, throughout the picture, we photograph only Thompson's back, shoulders, or his shadow - sometimes we only record his voice. He is not until the final scene a "character". He is the personification of the search for the truth about Charles Foster Kane. He is the investigator.

FADE IN:

EXT. CHEAP CABARET - "EL RANCHO" - ATLANTIC CITY - NIGHT
- 1940 (MINIATURE) - RAIN

The first image to register is a sign:

" 'EL RANCHO' "
FLOOR SHOW
SUSAN ALEXANDER KANE

TWICE NIGHTLY"

These words, spelled out in neon, glow out of the darkness at the end of the fade out. Then there is lightning which reveals a squalid roof-top on which the sign stands. Thunder again, and faintly the sound of music from within. A light glows from a skylight. The camera moves to this and closes in. Through the splashes of rain, we see through the skylight down into the interior of the cabaret. Directly below us at a table sits the lone figure of a woman, drinking by herself.

DISSOLVE:

INT. "EL RANCO" CABARET - NIGHT - 1940

Medium shot of the same woman as before, finishing the drink she started to take above. It is Susie. The music, of course, is now very loud. Thompson, his back to the camera, moves into the picture in the close foreground. A Captain appears behind Susie, speaking across her to Thompson.

THE CAPTAIN

(a Greek)

This is Mr. Thompson, Miss Alexander.

Susan looks up into Thompson's face. She is fifty, trying to look much younger, cheaply blonded, in a cheap, enormously generous evening dress. Blinking up into Thompson's face, she throws a crink into ther mouth. Her eyes, which she thinks is keeping commandingly on his, are bleared and watery.

SUSAN

(to the Captain)

I want another drink, John.

Low thunder from outside.

THE CAPTAIN

(seeing his chance)

Right away. Will you have something, Mr. Thompson?

THOMPSON

(staring to sit down)

I'll have a highball.

SUSAN

(so insisently as to
make Thompson change his
mind and stand up again)

Who told you you could sit down here?

THOMPSON

Oh! I thought maybe we could have a drink together?

SUSAN

Think again!

There is an awkward pause as Thompson looks from her to the Captain.

SUSAN

Why don't you people let me alone?
I'm minding my own business. You mind
yours.

THOMPSON

If you'd just let me talk to you for
a little while, Miss Alexander. All I
want to ask you...

SUSAN

Get out of here!
(almost hysterical)
Get out! Get out!

Thompson looks at the Captain, who shrugs his shoulders.

THOMPSON

I'm sorry. Maybe some other time -

If he thought he would get a response from Susan, who thinks she is looking at him steelily, he realizes his error. He nods and walks off, following the Captain out the door.

THE CAPTAIN

She's just not talking to anybody
from the newspapers, Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON

I'm not from a newspaper exactly, I -

They have come upon a waiter standing in front of a booth.

THE CAPTAIN

(to the waiter)
Get her another highball.

THE WAITER

Another double?

THE CAPTAIN

(after a moment,
pityingly)

Yes.

They walk to the door.

THOMPSON

She's plastered, isn't she?

THE CAPTAIN

She'll snap out of it. Why, until he died, she'd just as soon talk about Mr. Kane as about anybody. Sooner.

THOMPSON

I'll come down in a week or so and see her again. Say, you might be able to help me. When she used to talk about Kane - did she ever happen to say anything - about Rosebud?

THE CAPTAIN

Rosebud?

Thompson has just handed him a bill. The Captain pockets it.

THE CAPTAIN

Thank you, sir. As a matter of fact, yesterday afternoon, when it was in all the papers - I asked her. She never heard of Rosebud.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. THATCHER MEMORIAL LIBRARY - DAY - 1940

An excruciatingly noble interpretation of Mr. Thatcher himself executed in expensive marble. He is shown seated on one of those improbable Edwin Booth chairs and is looking down, his stone eyes fixed on the camera.

We move down off of this, showing the impressive pedestal on which the monument is founded. The words, "Walter

Parks Thatcher" are prominently and elegantly engraved thereon. Immediately below the inscription we encounter, in a medium shot, the person of Bertha Anderson, an elderly, manish spinster, seated behind her desk. Thompson, his hat in his hand, is standing before her. Bertha is on the phone.

BERTHA

(into phone)

Yes. I'll take him in now.

(hangs up and looks at
Thompson)

The directors of the Thatcher Library have asked me to remind you again of the condition under which you may inspect certain portions of Mr. Thatcher's unpublished memoirs. Under no circumstances are direct quotations from his manuscript to be used by you.

THOMPSON

That's all right.

BERTHA

You may come with me.

Without watching whether he is following her or not, she rises and starts towards a distant and imposingly framed door. Thompson, with a bit of a sigh, follows.

DISSOLVE OUT:

DISSOLVE IN:

INT. THE VAULT ROOM - THATCHER MEMORIAL LIBRARY - DAY -
1940

A room with all the warmth and charm of Napoleon's tomb.

As we dissolve in, the door opens in and we see past Thompson's shoulders the length of the room. Everything very plain, very much made out of marble and very gloomy. Illumination from a skylight above adds to the general air of expensive and classical despair. The floor is marble, and there is a gigantic, mahogany table in the

center of everything. Beyond this is to be seen, sunk in the marble wall at the far end of the room, the safe from which a guard, in a khaki uniform, with a revolver holster at his hip, is extracting the journal of Walter P. Thatcher. He brings it to Bertha as if he were the guardian of a bullion shipment. During this, Bertha has been speaking.

BERTHA

(to the guard)

Pages eighty-three to one hundred and forty-two, Jennings.

GUARD

Yes, Miss Anderson.

BERTHA

(to Thompson)

You will confine yourself, it is our understanding, to the chapter dealing with Mr. Kane.

THOMPSON

That's all I'm interested in.

The guard has, by this time, delivered the precious journal. Bertha places it reverently on the table before Thompson.

BERTHA

You will be required to leave this room at four-thirty promptly.

She leaves. Thompson starts to light a cigarette. The guard shakes his head. With a sigh, Thompson bends over to read the manuscript. Camera moves down over his shoulder onto page of manuscript.

Manuscript, neatly and precisely written:

"CHARLES FOSTER KANE

WHEN THESE LINES APPEAR IN PRINT, FIFTY YEARS AFTER MY DEATH, I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE WHOLE WORLD WILL AGREE WITH MY OPINION OF CHARLES FOSTER KANE, ASSUMING THAT HE IS NOT THEN COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN, WHICH I REGARD AS EXTREMELY LIKELY. A GOOD DEAL OF NONSENSE HAS APPEARED

ABOUT MY FIRST MEETING WITH KANE, WHEN HE WAS SIX YEARS OLD... THE FACTS ARE SIMPLE. IN THE WINTER OF 1870..."

The camera has not held on the entire page. It has been following the words with the same action that the eye does the reading. On the last words, the white page of the paper

DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

The white of a great field of snow, seen from the angle of a parlor window.

In the same position of the last word in above Insert, appears the tiny figure of Charles Foster Kane, aged five (almost like an animated cartoon). He is in the act of throwing a snowball at the camera. It sails toward us and over our heads, out of scene.

Reverse angle - on the house featuring a large sign reading:

"MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE
HIGH CLASS MEALS AND LODGING
INQUIRE WITHIN"

Charles Kane's snowball hits the sign.

INT. PARLOR - MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Camera is angling through the window, but the window-frame is not cut into scene. We see only the field of snow again, same angle as in previous scene. Charles is manufacturing another snowball. Now -

Camera pulls back, the frame of the window appearing, and we are inside the parlor of the boardinghouse. Mrs. Kane, aged about 28, is looking out towards her son. Just as we take her in she speaks:

MRS. KANE
(calling out)
Be careful, Charles!

THATCHER'S VOICE

Mrs. Kane -

MRS. KANE

(calling out the window
almost on top of this)

Pull your muffler around your neck,
Charles -

But Charles, deliriously happy in the snow, is oblivious to this and is running away. Mrs. Kane turns into camera and we see her face - a strong face, worn and kind.

THATCHER'S VOICE

I think we'll have to tell him now -

Camera now pulls back further, showing Thatcher standing before a table on which is his stove-pipe hat and an imposing multiplicity of official-looking documents. He is 26 and, as might be expected, a very stuffy young man, already very expensive and conservative looking, even in Colorado.

MRS. KANE

I'll sign those papers -

KANE SR.

You people seem to forget that I'm
the boy's father.

At the sound of Kane Sr.'s voice, both have turned to him and the camera pulls back still further, taking him in.

Kane Sr., who is the assistant curator in a livery stable, has been groomed as elegantly as is likely for this meeting ever since daybreak.

From outside the window can be heard faintly the wild and cheerful cries of the boy, blissfully cavorting in the snow.

MRS. KANE

It's going to be done exactly the way
I've told Mr. Thatcher -

KANE SR.

If I want to, I can go to court. A father has a right to -

THATCHER

(annoyed)

Mr. Kane, the certificates that Mr. Graves left here are made out to Mrs. Kane, in her name. Hers to do with as she pleases -

KANE SR.

Well, I don't hold with signing my boy away to any bank as guardian just because -

MRS. KANE

(quietly)

I want you to stop all this nonsense, Jim.

THATCHER

The Bank's decision in all matters concerning his education, his place of residence and similar subjects will be final.

(clears his throat)

KANE SR.

The idea of a bank being the guardian

-

Mrs. Kane has met his eye. Her triumph over him finds expression in his failure to finish his sentence.

MRS. KANE

(even more quietly)

I want you to stop all this nonsense, Jim.

THATCHER

We will assume full management of the Colorado Lode - of which you, Mrs. Kane, are the sole owner.

Kane Sr. opens his mouth once or twice, as if to say something, but chokes down his opinion.

MRS. KANE

(has been reading past
Thatcher's shoulder as he
talked)

Where do I sign, Mr. Thatcher?

THATCHER

Right here, Mrs. Kane.

KANE SR.

(sulkily)

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Mrs. Kane lifts the quill pen.

KANE SR.

Mary, I'm asking you for the last
time - anyon'd think I hadn't been a
good husband and a -

Mrs. Kane looks at him slowly. He stops his speech.

THATCHER

The sum of fifty thousand dollars a
year is to be paid to yourself and
Mr. Kane as long as you both live,
and thereafter the survivor -

Mrs. Kane puts pen to the paper and signs.

KANE SR.

Well, let's hope it's all for the
best.

MRS. KANE

It is. Go on, Mr. Thatcher -

Mrs. Kane, listening to Thatcher, of course has had her
other ear bent in the direction of the boy's voice.
Thatcher is aware both of the boy's voice, which is
counter to his own, and of Mrs. Kane's divided attention.
As he pauses, Kane Sr. genteelly walks over to close the
window.

EXT. MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Kane Jr., seen from Kane Sr.'s position at the window. He is advancing on the snowman, snowballs in his hands, dropping to one knee the better to confound his adversary.

KANE

If the rebels want a fight boys,
let's give it to 'em!

He throws two snowballs, missing widely, and gets up and advances another five feet before getting on his knees again.

KANE

The terms are unconditional
surrender. Up and at 'em! The Union
forever!

INT. PARLOR - MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Kane Sr. closes the window.

THATCHER

(over the boy's voice)

Everything else - the principal as
well as all monies earned - is to be
administered by the bank in trust for
your son, Charles Foster Kane, until
his twenty-fifth birthday, at which
time he is to come into complete
possession.

Mrs. Kane rises and goes to the window.

MRS. KANE

Go on, Mr. Thatcher.

Thatcher continues as she opens the window. His voice, as before, is heard with overtones of the boy's.

EXT. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Kane Jr., seen from Mrs. Kane's position at the window. He is now within ten feet of the snowman, with one snowball left which he is holding back in his right hand.

KANE

You can't lick Andy Jackson! Old
Hickory, that's me!

He fires his snowball, well wide of the mark and falls flat on his stomach, starting to crawl carefully toward the snowman.

THATCHER'S VOICE

It's nearly five, Mrs. Kane, don't
you think I'd better meet the boy -

INT. PARLOR - MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Mrs. Kane at the window. Thatcher is now standing at her side.

MRS. KANE

I've got his trunk all packed -
(she chokes a little)
I've it packed for a couple of weeks
-

She can't say anymore. She starts for the hall door. Kane Sr., ill at ease, has no idea of how to comfort her.

THATCHER

I've arranged for a tutor to meet us
in Chicago. I'd have brought him
along with me, but you were so
anxious to keep everything secret -

He stops as he realizes that Mrs. Kane has paid no attention to him and, having opened the door, is already well into the hall that leads to the side door of the house. He takes a look at Kane Sr., tightens his lips and follows Mrs. Kane. Kane, shoulders thrown back like one who bears defeat bravely, follows him.

EXT. MRS. KANE'S BOARDINGHOUSE - DAY - 1870

Kane, in the snow-covered field. With the snowman between him and the house, he is holding the sled in his hand, just about to make the little run that prefaces a belly-

flop. The Kane house, in the background, is a dilapidated, shabby, two-story frame building, with a wooden outhouse. Kane looks up as he sees the single file procession, Mrs. Kane at its head, coming toward him.

KANE

H'ya, Mom.

Mrs. Kane smiles.

KANE

(gesturing at the
snowman)

See, Mom? I took the pipe out of his mouth. If it keeps on snowin', maybe I'll make some teeth and -

MRS. KANE

You better come inside, son. You and I have got to get you all ready for -
for -

THATCHER

Charles, my name is Mr. Thatcher -

MRS. KANE

This is Mr. Thatcher, Charles.

THATCHER

How do you do, Charles?

KANE SR.

He comes from the east.

KANE

Hello. Hello, Pop.

KANE SR.

Hello, Charlie!

MRS. KANE

Mr. Thatcher is going to take you on a trip with him tonight, Charles. You'll be leaving on Number Ten.

KANE SR.

That's the train with all the lights.

KANE

You goin', Mom?

THATCHER

Your mother won't be going right
away, Charles -

KANE

Where'm I going?

KANE SR.

You're going to see Chicago and New
York - and Washington, maybe... Isn't
he, Mr. Thatcher?

THATCHER

(heartily)

He certainly is. I wish I were a
little boy and going to make a trip
like that for the first time.

KANE

Why aren't you comin' with us, Mom?

MRS. KANE

We have to stay here, Charles.

KANE SR.

You're going to live with Mr.
Thatcher from now on, Charlie! You're
going to be rich. Your Ma figures -
that is, er - she and I have decided
that this isn't the place for you to
grow up in. You'll probably be the
richest man in America someday and
you ought to -

MRS. KANE

You won't be lonely, Charles...

THATCHER

We're going to have a lot of good
times together, Charles... Really we
are.

Kane stares at him.

THATCHER

Come on, Charles. Let's shake hands.

(extends his hand.

Charles continues to look
at him)

Now, now! I'm not as frightening as
all that! Let's shake, what do you
say?

He reaches out for Charles's hand. Without a word,
Charles hits him in the stomach with the sled. Thatcher
stumbles back a few feet, gasping.

THATCHER

(with a sickly grin)

You almost hurt me, Charles.

(moves towards him)

Sleds aren't to hit people with.
Sleds are to - to sleigh on. When we
get to New York, Charles, we'll get
you a sled that will -

He's near enough to try to put a hand on Kane's shoulder.
As he does, Kane kicks him in the ankle.

MRS. KANE

Charles!

He throws himself on her, his arms around her. Slowly
Mrs. Kane puts her arms around him.

KANE

(frightened)

Mom! Mom!

MRS. KANE

It's all right, Charles, it's all
right.

Thatcher is looking on indignantly, occasionally bending
over to rub his ankle.

KANE SR.

Sorry, Mr. Thatcher! What the kid
needs is a good thrashing!

MRS. KANE
That's what you think, is it, Jim?

KANE SR.
Yes.

Mrs. Kane looks slowly at Mr. Kane.

MRS. KANE
(slowly)
That's why he's going to be brought
up where you can't get at him.

DISSOLVE:

1870 - NIGHT (STOCK OR MINIATURE)

Old-fashioned railroad wheels underneath a sleeper,
spinning along the track.

DISSOLVE:

INT. TRAIN - OLD-FASHIONED DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT - 1870

Thatcher, with a look of mingled exasperation, annoyance,
sympathy and inability to handle the situation, is
standing alongside a berth, looking at Kane. Kane, his
face in the pillow, is crying with heartbreaking sobs.

KANE
Mom! Mom!

DISSOLVE OUT:

THE WHITE PAGE OF THE THATCHER MANUSCRIPT

We pick up the words:

"HE WAS, I REPEAT, A COMMON ADVENTURER, SPOILED,
UNSCRUPULOUS, IRRESPONSIBLE."

The words are followed by printed headline on "Enquirer"
copy (as in following scene).

INT. ENQUIRER CITY ROOM - DAY - 1898

CLOSEUP on printed headline which reads:

"ENEMY ARMADA OFF JERSEY COAST"

Camera pulls back to reveal Thatcher holding the "Enquirer" copy, on which we read the headline. He is standing near the editorial round table around which a section of the staff, including Reilly, Leland and Kane are eating lunch.

THATCHER

(coldly)

Is that really your idea of how to run a newspaper?

KANE

I don't know how to run a newspaper, Mr. Thatcher. I just try everything I can think of.

THATCHER

(reading headline of paper he is still holding)

"Enemy Armada Off Jersey Coast." You know you haven't the slightest proof that this - this armada - is off the Jersey Coast.

KANE

Can you prove it isn't?

Bernstein has come into the picture. He has a cable in his hand. He stops when he sees Thatcher.

KANE

Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Thatcher -

BERNSTEIN

How are you, Mr. Thatcher?

THATCHER

How do you do? -

BERNSTEIN

We just had a wire from Cuba, Mr.

Kane -

(stops, embarrassed)

KANE

That's all right. We have no secrets from our readers. Mr. Thatcher is one of our most devoted readers, Mr. Bernstein. He knows what's wrong with every issue since I've taken charge. What's the cable?

BERNSTEIN

(reading)

The food is marvelous in Cuba the senoritas are beautiful stop I could send you prose poems of palm trees and sunrises and tropical colors blending in far off landscapes but don't feel right in spending your money for this stop there's no war in Cuba regards Wheeler.

THATCHER

You see! There hasn't been a true word -

KANE

I think we'll have to send our friend Wheeler a cable, Mr. Bernstein. Of course, we'll have to make it shorter than his, because he's working on an expense account and we're not. Let me see -

(snaps his fingers)

Mike!

MIKE

(a fairly tough customer prepares to take dictation, his mouth still full of food)

Go ahead, Mr. Kane.

KANE

Dear Wheeler -

(pauses a moment)
You provide the prose poems - I'll
provide the war.

Laughter from the boys and girls at the table.

BERNSTEIN
That's fine, Mr. Kane.

KANE
I rather like it myself. Send it
right away.

MIKE
Right away.

BERNSTEIN
Right away.

Mike and Bernstein leave. Kane looks up, grinning at Thatcher, who is bursting with indignation but controls himself. After a moment of indecision, he decides to make one last try.

THATCHER
I came to see you, Charles, about
your - about the Enquirer's campaign
against the Metropolitan Transfer
Company.

KANE
Won't you step into my office, Mr.
Thatcher?

They cross the City Room together.

THATCHER
I think I should remind you, Charles,
of a fact you seem to have forgotten.
You are yourself one of the largest
individual stockholders.

INT. KANE'S OFFICE - DAY - 1898

Kane holds the door open for Thatcher. They come in together.

KANE

Mr. Thatcher, isn't everything I've been saying in the Enquirer about the traction trust absolutely true?

THATCHER

(angrily)

They're all part of your general attack - your senseless attack - on everything and everybody who's got more than ten cents in his pocket. They're -

KANE

The trouble is, Mr. Thatcher, you don't realize you're talking to two people.

Kane moves around behind his desk. Thatcher doesn't understand, looks at him.

KANE

As Charles Foster Kane, who has eighty-two thousand, six hundred and thirty-one shares of Metropolitan Transfer - you see, I do have a rough idea of my holdings - I sympathize with you. Charles Foster Kane is a dangerous scoundrel, his paper should be run out of town and a committee should be formed to boycott him. You may, if you can form such a committee, put me down for a contribution of one thousand dollars.

THATCHER

(angrily)

Charles, my time is too valuable for me -

KANE

On the other hand -

(his manner becomes serious)

I am the publisher of the Enquirer. As such, it is my duty - I'll let you

in on a little secret, it is also my pleasure - to see to it that decent, hard-working people of this city are not robbed blind by a group of money-mad pirates because, God help them, they have no one to look after their interests! I'll let you in on another little secret, Mr. Thatcher. I think I'm the man to do it. You see, I have money and property -

Thatcher doesn't understand him.

KANE

If I don't defend the interests of the underprivileged, somebody else will - maybe somebody without any money or any property and that would be too bad.

Thatcher glares at him, unable to answer. Kane starts to dance.

KANE

Do you know how to tap, Mr. Thatcher? You ought to learn -
(humming quietly, he continues to dance)

Thatcher puts on his hat.

THATCHER

I happened to see your consolidated statement yesterday, Charles. Could I not suggest to you that it is unwise for you to continue this philanthropic enterprise -
(sneeringly)
This Enquirer - that is costing you one million dollars a year?

KANE

You're right. We did lose a million dollars last year.

Thatcher thinks maybe the point has registered.

KANE

We expect to lost a million next
year, too. You know, Mr. Thatcher -
(starts tapping quietly)
at the rate of a million a year -
we'll have to close this place in
sixty years.

DISSOLVE:

INT. THE VAULT ROOM - THATCHER MEMORIAL LIBRARY - DAY

Thompson - at the desk. With a gesture of annoyance, he
is closing the manuscript.

Camera arcs quickly around from over his shoulder to hold
on door behind him, missing his face as he rises and
turns to confront Miss Anderson, who has come into the
room to shoo him out. Very prominent on this wall is an
over-sized oil painting of Thatcher in the best Union
League Club renaissance style.

MISS ANDERSON

You have enjoyed a very rare
privilege, young man. Did you find
what you were looking for?

THOMPSON

No. Tell me something, Miss Anderson.
You're not Rosebud, are you?

MISS ANDERSON

What?

THOMPSON

I didn't think you were. Well, thanks
for the use of the hall.

He puts his hat on his head and starts out, lighting a
cigarette as he goes. Miss Anderson, scandalized, watches
him.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. BERNSTEIN'S OFFICE - ENQUIRER SKYSCRAPER - DAY -
1940

Closeup of a still of Kane, aged about sixty-five. Camera pulls back, showing it is a framed photograph on the wall. Over the picture are crossed American flags. Under it sits Bernstein, back of his desk. Bernstein, always an undersized Jew, now seems even smaller than in his youth. He is bald as an egg, spry, with remarkably intense eyes. As camera continues to travel back, the back of Thompson's head and his shoulders come into the picture.

BERNSTEIN

(wryly)

Who's a busy man? Me? I'm Chairman of the Board. I got nothing but time...
What do you want to know?

THOMPSON

(still explaining)

Well, Mr. Bernstein, you were with Mr. Kane from the very beginning -

BERNSTEIN

From before the beginning, young fellow. And now it's after the end.

(turns to Thompson)

Anything you want to know about him -
about the paper -

THOMPSON

- We thought maybe, if we can find out what he meant by that last word -
as he was dying -

BERNSTEIN

That Rosebud? Maybe some girl? There were a lot of them back in the early days, and -

THOMPSON

Not some girl he knew casually and then remembered after fifty years, on his death bed -

BERNSTEIN

You're pretty young, Mr. -

(remembers the name)

Mr. Thompson. A fellow will remember things you wouldn't think he'd remember. You take me. One day, back in 1896, I was crossing over to Jersey on a ferry and as we pulled out, there was another ferry pulling in -

(slowly)

- and on it, there was a girl waiting to get off. A white dress she had on - and she was carrying a white pastel - and I only saw her for one second and she didn't see me at all - but I'll bet a month hasn't gone by since that I haven't thought of that girl.

(triumphantly)

See what I mean?

(smiles)

Well, so what are you doing about this "Rosebud," Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON

I'm calling on people who knew Mr. Kane. I'm calling on you.

BERNSTEIN

Who else you been to see?

THOMPSON

Well, I went down to Atlantic City -

BERNSTEIN

Susie? I called her myself the day after he died. I thought maybe somebody ought to...

(sadly)

She couldn't even come to the 'phone.

THOMPSON

You know why? She was so -

BERNSTEIN

Sure, sure.

THOMPSON

I'm going back there.

BERNSTEIN

Who else did you see?

THOMPSON

Nobody else, but I've been through that stuff of Walter Thatcher's. That journal of his -

BERNSTEIN

Thatcher! That man was the biggest darn fool I ever met -

THOMPSON

He made an awful lot of money.

BERNSTEIN

It's not trick to make an awful lot of money if all you want is to make a lot of money.

(his eyes get reflective)

Thatcher!

Bernstein looks out of the window and keeps on looking, seeming to see something as he talks.

BERNSTEIN

He never knew there was anything in the world but money. That kind of fellow you can fool every day in the week - and twice on Sundays!

(reflectively)

The time he came to Rome for Mr. Kane's twenty-fifth birthday... You know, when Mr. Kane got control of his own money... Such a fool like Thatcher - I tell you, nobody's business!

DISSOLVE OUT:

DISSOLVE IN:

INT. BERNSTEIN'S OFFICE - DAY - 1940

Bernstein speaking to Thompson.

BERNSTEIN

He knew what he wanted, Mr. Kane did, and he got it! Thatcher never did figure him out. He was hard to figure sometimes, even for me. Mr. Kane was a genius like he said. He had that funny sense of humor. Sometimes even I didn't get the joke. Like that night the opera house of his opened in Chicago... You know, the opera house he built for Susie, she should be an opera singer...

(indicates with a little wave of his hand what he thinks of that; sighing)

That was years later, of course - 1914 it was. Mrs. Kane took the leading part in the opera, and she was terrible. But nobody had the nerve to say so - not even the critics. Mr. Kane was a big man in those days. But this one fellow, this friend of his, Branford Leland -

He leaves the sentence up in the air, as we

DISSOLVE:

INT. CITY ROOM - CHICAGO ENQUIRER - NIGHT - 1914

It is late. The room is almost empty. Nobody is at work at the desks. Bernstein, fifty, is waiting anxiously with a little group of Kane's hirelings, most of them in evening dress with overcoats and hats. Eveybody is tense and expectant.

CITY EDITOR

(turns to a young hireling; quietly)

What about Branford Leland? Has he got in his copy?

HIRELING

Not yet.

BERNSTEIN
Go in and ask him to hurry.

CITY EDITOR
Well, why don't you, Mr. Bernstein?
You know Mr. Leland.

BERNSTEIN
(looks at him for a
moment; then slowly)
I might make him nervous.

CITY EDITOR
(after a pause)
You and Leland and Mr. Kane - you
were great friends back in the old
days, I understand.

BERNSTEIN
(with a smile)
That's right. They called us the
"Three Musketeers."

Somebody behind Bernstein has trouble concealing his
laughter. The City Editor speaks quickly to cover the
situation.

CITY EDITOR
He's a great guy - Leland.
(another little pause)
Why'd he ever leave New York?

BERNSTEIN
(he isn't saying)
That's a long story.

ANOTHER HIRELING
(a tactless one)
Wasn't there some sort of quarrel
between -

BERNSTEIN
(quickly)
I had nothing to do with it.
(then, somberly)