COLUMBO

MAKE ME A PERFECT MURDER

by

Robert Blees
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CAST

COLUMBO

KAY FREESTONE

VALERIE KIRK
MARK MACANDREWS
WALTER MUIRHEAD
FRANK FLANAGAN
LUTHER
JOHATHAN
WENDY
SERGEANT BURKE
PRODUCER
AL STALEY
PETE COCKRUM
AMES
CHUCK
MADGE
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
ANGELA

DELIVERY MAN
PARKING LOT GUARD
TECHNICIAN

CLERK
SECURITY GUARD
DUBBING CAPTAIN
WRITER'S VOICE

ROARK (FILM)
COLUMBO

MAKE ME A PERFECT MURDER

SETS

INTERIORS

DUBBING ROOM
CNC LOBBY
ELEVATOR
KAY'S OFFICE
MARK'S RECEPTION OFFICE
MARK'S OFFICE
MARK'S BEDROOM
KAY'S LIVING ROOM
NETWORK PROJECTION ROOM
JONATHAN'S OFFICE
GREEN ROOM
CORRIDORS
PROJECTION BOOTH
STAIRWELLS
FILM SHIPPING
MARK'S DRESSING ROOM
VIDEO STAGE
VIDEO CONTROL BOOTH
DRESSING ROOM
VENICE HOUSE
  LIVING ROOM
  KITCHEN
PLANETARIUM
REMOTE TRUCK

HOTEL ROOM (FILM)

EXTERIORS

CNC NETWORK EXECUTIVE
  PARKING LOT
BEACH
  MARK'S HOUSE
KAY'S APARTMENT
KAY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX
VENICE CANAL AREA
CNC BUILDING
DEsertED ROAD

NEW YORK STREET AND
ALLEY (FILM)
NOTE: The two-hour film under Kay Freestone's supervision is titled "THE PROFESSIONAL," and deals with a man of some intelligence -- named Roark -- who accepts assignments which are in some countries illegal. Parts of this film we will see in a dubbing room and in projection rooms.

This original footage will be shot and the few pages of that script are appended.
FADE IN

1 INT. DUBBING ROOM - TOWARD SCREEN

We are immediately ensnared by film within our film, a *cinema noire* production fashioned from bleak angles and threatening shadows.

It is late at night. A lone car comes down a New York street and parks by the mouth of a trash can alley. This is all seen in black and white -- a dupe print, actually -- with scratches and blips, cue marks for music and effects.

We shall shortly discover our camera to be attendant upon a dubbing session. Music is tautly suspenseful and rather loud.

Roark, the Professional, parks the car. Closer angle now: his face glazed and resolved, he takes a .22 from a shoulder holster, a silencer from the glove compartment, screws on the silencer and gets out. He moves guardedly into the alley. As all this occurs:

KAY'S VOICE
Music's too big.

The music immediately moderates.

PRODUCER'S VOICE
(re Roark's car)
That a car or a tank?

Car effect moderates as:

2 CLOSE ON DUBBING CONSOLE

Three pairs of hands on pots and switches; cue sheets marked up. The hands find appropriate levels for music and effects.

3 TOWARD SCREEN - WIDER ANGLE

to reveal the film and our ambience -- the footage counter clicking off -- the gun-and-silencer business on the screen -- and a siren, to which Roark reacts, heard in the deep distance.
REVERSE TOWARD DUBBING PANEL, ET AL

Two executives are in the room with the three-man dubbing crew, all backlit by the projector. Seated in front of the panel is the Producer; the second executive, silhouetted behind the panel, pacing back and forth, constantly in motion, eyes riveted on the screen, is Kay Freestone. She is clever and attractive, feminine and tough, successful and striving, and, above all, knowledgeable: a film child sprung to womanhood.

KAY

The siren....

PRODUCER

(to Dubbing Captain)

If that’s a siren, let’s hear it.

DUBBING CAPTAIN’S VOICE

Looking for it....

SHOTS AT CONSOLE

Hands opening slider pots -- a sudden onslaught on horns -- the car becomes a tank again -- order restored and there is the siren at appropriate level.

ANGLE FEATURING KAY

KAY

Once we’re in the alley, I just want the pulse track on the music.

(watches a moment)

Let’s take it from the top again.

(to Producer)

Okay with you, John?

PRODUCER

Everything’s okay with me. I’m just the producer.

(to dubbing crew)

From the top, fellas.

ANGLE ON CONSOLE

punching up some more buttons.
and the film running backwards, the sound gibberish until the volumes are decreased.

KAY - THE PRODUCER - THE CREW

PRODUCER
(carefully pleasant)
You're a busy lady, Kay. Why don't you get out of the grease pits and let me dub the film.

KAY
Because you studio guys get to have all the fun.

She moves to the panel, begins to massage the shoulder muscles of the Dubbing Captain as:

KAY
(still to the Producer)
Now over at the network, all we get to do is pay for these pictures and try to let you know what we want -- and how we want it.
(to captain)
How's that for a massage?
(to Producer)
Anything wrong with keeping you informed, John?

PRODUCER
(swallowed)
No.

KAY
I can't hear you, John.

PRODUCER
I said whatever's fair.

KAY
(eyes on the screen again)
From the top.

And the picture is running again -- music, effects, and all.
EXT. CNC NETWORK EXECUTIVE PARKING LOT - DAY
A Guard waves Kay through. She parks in her own slot and
crosses toward lobby entrance.

INT. CNC LOBBY - DAY
CNC logos dominate the handsome lobby. A receptionist, Angela,
watches Kay breeze in.

ANGELA
Afternoon, Miss Freestone.

KAY
Hi, Angela. How'd your brother do
on the bar exams?

ANGELA
(crossed fingers)
One more day.

Kay has stopped to dip into a crystal jar brimming with
miniature candy bars. She comes up with a chocolate and, as
she strides to the elevators, neatly rips the paper off.

ANGELA
How do you eat those things and
keep that figure?

KAY
(without
stopping)
Meditate it off.

She gets into an elevator, hits the button for a top floor.

INT. ELEVATOR - KAY
A frosted glass ceiling shields the fluorescents. Kay care-
fully restores the untouched chocolate to its wrapper and
deposits it into an ash tray.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING AT ELEVATORS - DAY
Elevator doors open and Kay steps into a lush corridor. The
secretaries' desks are in the corridor (except for the
"corner suite" at the far end). Kay strides to her own office;
outside it, her secretary, Wendy, stands with the telephone
log as soon as she spots Kay. Routinely, Kay hands Wendy her
jacket in exchange for the log. They go into her office.
INT. KAY'S OFFICE

Kay's office is attractive and definitely executive. We note an Emmy well displayed.

WENDY
How's the picture look?

KAY
Getting better. Like pulling teeth.

Kay puts down her purse, checks the phone list. Nothing that can't wait. She hands it back as she heads out of the office again.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - KAY

crossing toward Mark MacAndrews' suite.

INT. MARK MacANDREWS RECEPTION OFFICE - KAY AND MADGE

This corner suite is presided over by Madge, a woman in her fifties and of the old school. She is typing. A mail boy exits as Kay comes in.

KAY
Peace.

Peace.

MADGE
He in?

KAY
(nods)

MADGE
Meeting.

Kay flips her nails on the door to the inner office and opens it.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - DAY

Very posh, very comfortable. We note a door -- ajar -- which leads to a dressing room/washroom. A handsome sideboard holds three crystal pitchers filled with grape juice, orange juice and lemonade. During what follows, Kay will familiarly cross and get herself a glass of lemonade.

CONTINUED
Mark, attractively bespectacled, is seated on the couch; the adjacent coffee table is stacked with scripts and papers. Mark handles his VIP authority with practiced ease. He is talking with an aide, Ames, and a bookish young man, on whose lap is an open binder with complicated charts. At Kay's entrance, they exchange greetings and continue with:

MARK
Let me worry about New York. What's Clay Gardner really going to cost us? You feel out his agent?

AMES
You want a price on Clay Gardner? His agent smiles and smiles. When you're ready, he'll be ready with a figure.

Mark pushes his glasses up on his forehead as he addresses Kay.

MARK
See the final dub?

KAY
Don't we wish. At that studio -- another three days.

MARK
Can I just show it to the New York bunch and will I want to?

KAY
Yes you can show 'The Professional' and yes you'll want to. How's that for a blunt answer?

MARK
(to others)
You heard that -- Kay Freestone guarantees us a forty share.
(stands, glasses down)
Okay, friends, thank you much.

The men start to leave; Kay drains her drink, starts out also.

KAY
Jonathan -- want to bring me up to date?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED - 2

JONATHAN
I ran the network demographics on
the six Clay Gardner movies. Believe
it or not, his appeal is strongest
males eighteen to thirty-four,
right where we need it....

They are out the door. Mark stretches; he is tired. He takes
up a script as his intercom buzzes. He picks up the phone.

MARK
Yes, Madge.

MADGE'S VOICE
Mr. Flanagan from New York on three.

MARK
Thanks.

Continuing to stand, he hits the proper button and glances
instinctively at his watch. There are electronic clicks.

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
Hello? Mark?

Mark's relationship with Flanagan is excellent; his voice is
warmer than with Kay or the others.

MARK
Hello, Frank, how's that great New
York weather?

INT. SKYSCRAPER OFFICE - DAY - FLANAGAN

Frank Flanagan is young and slim. Perfectly groomed. Perfect
manners. He speaks into the phone in a corner of his imposing
office. Through the window behind him we see that it is
snowing.

FLANAGAN
How do you think? It's still snowing.

INTERCUTS

MARK
I hate to tell you, I went sailing
yesterday....

FLANAGAN
Well, keep a little sunshine for us.
We'll definitely be out Tuesday.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

MARK
I'll be ready for you.

FLANAGAN
Mark -- how tough would it be to
give up sailing in the winter?

Mark stiffens, drops into his desk chair.

MARK
What've you got in mind?

FLANAGAN
New York.

ON MARK

MARK
(a beat)
For how long?

FLANAGAN' VOICE
Long as you want. Forever.

Mark slides his glasses up on his forehead.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - ESTABLISHING MARK'S HOUSE

and a beautiful day.

EXT. MARK'S HOUSE - TERRACE - DAY

Mark wears shorts, a casual top, is barefoot. He is engaged
in making a pitcher of bullshots -- and singing:

MARK
'Hate California
It's cold and it's damp --- '

He takes the tray to a table on the terrace, placing it beside
the Sunday Los Angeles Times (the comic section tells us it is
Sunday) and a copy of the Sunday New York Times. Also on the
tray is a small jeweler's box. Mark opens it and takes out a
set of car keys on a gold chain. He tosses them in the air,
then drops them out of frame. Turning toward the interior of
the house:

MARK
Hey! You want these waffles and
sausage and pancakes or not?
INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Bright and delightful, this bedroom, and the bed unmade. Coming from the bathroom we see the (wet) legs only of a girl hastily drying herself and dropping the towel, going to a huge closet, sliding back the door to reveal men's clothes, and then -- much less obvious -- a few hangers with women's casual clothes.

ON TERRACE - MARK

seated on a lounge, he sips his drink and reads the New York times. From behind, the girl's arms encircle his waist and she kisses his ear.

THE GIRL

Happy Sunday.

The voice and widening angle reveal Kay Freestone. Mark turns and kisses her lightly -- and surveys her appreciatively. She tastes her bullshot. Great.

MARK

Saturday wasn't too shabby.

She smiles, fishes up the comic section and hands it to him.

KAY

Read me the funnies.

He takes the comics and sails them away, drops the New York Times too. Then:

MARK

Frank Flanagan called. I got New York.

Kay stares at him blankly.

KAY

Creative affairs?

MARK

The whole damn network.

With a whoop of sheer, blissful exuberance she piles on top of him.

KAY

We did it, we did it, we did it!!

When do we leave?

CONTINUED
24 CONTINUED

MARK
(evenly)
I want you to stay here, Kay.

She is surprised, puzzled -- then she gets it. She embraces him, kisses him....

KAY
Your job?! Oh baby, I know I can handle the Coast for you. You'll never be sorry.

She can't see his face, but realizes after a time that he offers no response of any kind. The ground is slipping away. She pulls back, looks at him.

KAY
You are giving me the job?

At his silence, she rises from the lounge, backs to the terrace railing.

KAY
What's going on here? The boss? Flanagan?
(at his non-committal gesture)
A supersalesman like you can't sell Frank Flanagan on me? Just tell him there's this broad, been with the network four and a half years, started at Revue, reader, cutter, producer -- only one human frailty, she has a yen for this guy who'll be 3,000 miles away, but they've been incredibly discreet, nobody even suspects....

Her voice trails off as she realizes she isn't cutting any ice.

KAY
Hey.

MARK
I can't give you the West Coast, babe -- you're not ready yet.

KAY
Well, now. I had the funny idea I'd earned something....

CONTINUED
MARK
At what you do, you are the very best of all. But you don't make decisions, Kay. You make guesses. There's a difference. Guesses aren't good enough. You'll learn.

She stares at him in disbelief -- and then the chill, sure knowledge that he means every word of it.

KAY
Right, right. I'm already learning.

A little headshake. Then she flees from the terrace, exits into the house. Mark sits motionless for a few beats, drinks his drink.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - KAY

throws a few of her things from the closet onto the bed, takes out a wrap-around skirt and is putting it on as Mark enters. He holds his own drink, almost drained, and Kay's also -- almost untouched. He watches her gather up a few things and put on a shirt, then:

MARK
Don't make it any tougher than it is.

KAY
Oh, poor baby. Here I am worrying about me. And there's my precious Mark suffering through the awful truth. 'Farewell, my dearest -- great secret lovers and a great corporate team, but the time has come. Onward and upward. Whoop-de-doo!

She cinches a belt around the skirt and proceeds with the rest.

MARK
Kay -- in the end all we owe each other is a bit of affection. Nobody kept tabs -- so much for overtime -- double-time -- playtime....

She is putting on lipstick, and glances at him in the mirror. He doesn't miss the look.

CONTINUED
MARK
(opens his arms wide)
You want to sue me?...Shoot me?
That make you feel better?

He puts down the drinks, opens a drawer and takes out a gleaming .32 automatic.

MARK
Right through the heart. Make me a perfect murder, babe.

He tosses the gun onto the bed. Kay looks at it, then back to Mark: you son of a bitch. She starts to move past him but he blocks her way, again holding the two glasses.

MARK
Kay....

And he carefully pours Kay's drink into his own empty glass. There, in the bottom of her glass as he holds it up, are the car keys we saw on the terrace.

MARK
You were supposed to find these out there -- a new 450SL.

ANGLE ON KAY

and her dawning sense of devastation as she realizes her erstwhile lover is paying her off.

MARK

Mark deliberately allows the glass to fall and shatter on the marble-top dresser. He extracts the keys from the shards, moves to pick up Kay's discarded towel with which he dries them, his back to her, as:

MARK
It's parked by the boat. Silver -- the one you always wanted. You can drive it home. It's already in your name -- your car.

ON KAY

Her eyes close, her face laced with pain. Her hand, near the dresser top, closes on a piece of broken glass. And clenches. We see a tiny trickle of blood.
MARK'S VOICE
The license plate says 'SUPER.'
That's a comment from the management.

TWO SHOT
as Mark turns back to face her. He extends the keys.

MARK
Good-bye, Kay.

Her eyes are on his now, the pain masked. She does not take
the keys. He knows she will. He comes to her. He takes her
in his arms -- like a gentleman. She folds into them -- like
a lady.

KAY
Good-bye, Mark.

She is looking beyond him to:

KAY'S POINT OF VIEW - THE GUN
and camera zooms in on the gun on the bed.

EXT. KAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING SHOT
giving us the sense of a smashing apartment complex. Over
shot, we hear the faint, b.g. ticking of a stopwatch and:

KAY'S VOICE
(flat, precise)
You have thirty seconds to go.

INT. KAY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PANNING-
ESTABLISHING

The living room is high-ceilinged, with an open second level.
Camera is slowly revealing it to us. The faint ticking and
her voice continue:

KAY'S VOICE
You have twenty seconds.

Camera finds a coffee table laden with trade papers and scripts.
We also see an inactive stopwatch and a compact tape recorder.
The latter is the source of Kay's voice and of the b.g. ticking.
Also on the table is a small portable radio, its telescoping
FM antenna extended.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Pan continues to discover an eerie Kay huddled on the stairway to the second level, listening to her own voice.

KAY'S VOICE
You have ten seconds left.

Now she rises and comes to the coffee table as:

KAY'S VOICE
Nine seconds -- eight -- seven....

As the countdown continues, she picks up the portable radio.

KAY'S VOICE
Three -- Two -- One -- Out.

With the final word, she snaps off the radio antenna.

33 INT. NETWORK PROJECTION ROOM - TOWARD SCREEN

We see the same film as in the opening. Now, however, the picture is in color. Music is different. Dubbing is complete.

34 REVERSE ANGLE - KAY

seated in the projection room. Watching. Not really watching. Her thoughts elsewhere. Camera adjusts to reveal the Producer of the film sitting a seat away from her. He looks at Kay.

PRODUCER
Play all right for you now?

Camera returns to Kay. She does not answer. She rises abruptly.

KAY
I'll run it later.

She exits projection room.

35 INT. NETWORK CORRIDOR - DAY - KAY

as she emerges from the projection room and crosses to:

36 ELEVATOR - KAY

She presses the button. Doors open immediately and she gets in. Button. Doors close.
Almost immediately she presses the "Stop" button. The elevator stops. From her bag she removes the collapsed FM antenna. She extends it, raises it to poke at the frosted ceiling, lifts half the latch which meets its counterpart at the center line. She lets it fall back into position. She collapses the antenna.

as she crosses to exit into Jonathan's office, establishing its relationship to Mark MacAndrews' suite.

It is half the size of Kay's office. Charts, graphs, rating literature, a desk calculator, a hand calculator, a typewriter. Jonathan is busy.

KAY
Sorry, Jonathan, I'm going to need all those Clay Gardner demographics first thing in the morning.

JONATHAN
(dismayed)
Gezz, Kay, it'll take all night....

KAY
Unless you'd like to explain your troubles to Mr. Planagan, you better plan on spending the night.
(as she sails out)
Condolences, junior. Comes with the territory.

We are in a kind of informal meeting room. A buffet table holds a moderate array of cold cuts, salads and breads. Present, but still unseen, are Mark, Frank Planagan and two of his VIP aides: Al Staley and Pete Cockrum. And a welter of voices.

What we do see are hands. And plates. Helping themselves to food. One takes a little, one takes a lot, one makes a sandwich.
The plates are carried to a coffee table, a bar stool, a couch, a chair arm. And by each plate are legal-size pads, each pad scribbled with notes, some in several colors. Hands try to eat and hands scribble further notes with felt-tipped pens.
All this as:

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
Who says Clay Gardner's ready to do television?

MARK'S VOICE
At six million for the season, let's say he might be tempted.

STALEY'S VOICE
His agent take the hook yet?

MARK'S VOICE
I'm still setting it. Of course, it's up to you, Frank, you want to lay out that kind of cash.

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
What do you say, Pete?

COCKRUM'S VOICE
It nails down Sunday night. We'll still come out.

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
Once -- just once -- I'd like to sit down to a hot meal.

COCKRUM'S VOICE
You ate on the plane.

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
Planes don't count. That's toy food.

STALEY'S VOICE
Before I got to be a VP I used to dine. Now I put it between two pieces of bread. Is that hot mustard?

Camera comes up on scene, revealing our characters and their various dispositions around the room. Flanagan stands at the bar, making a drink.

Kay enters as:

FLANAGAN
We start paying six million, every actor we have'll want to renegotiate.

KAY
Mr. Flanagan -- gentlemen. As soon as you've finished your ice cream and cookies, we're going to the movies.

FLANAGAN
Thank you, Kay.

MARK
I'll see you guys in my office when you're finished.
40 CONTINUED - 2

He moves toward the door. Cockrum and Staley gather up a plate, a sandwich -- with some here-we-go-again comment.

FLANAGAN
Mark -- let's roll the dice with Clay Gardner before I change my mind.

MARK
You got it.

He is pleased. So is Kay. They exchange looks. Kay moves to take Planagan's drink.

KAY
I'll take that for you, Mr. Planagan.

Mark holds the door as the New Yorkers file out.

41 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT - TRUCKING SHOT - KAY, MARK, FLANAGAN, COCKRUM, STALEY

Planagan's trio is in the lead as they turn a corner into the projection room corridor. Mark and Kay bring up the rear.

MARK
You okay?

KAY
I'm fine.

MARK
I mean really.

KAY
I mean I'm really okay, Mark.

They reach the projection room. Mark watches them file inside, then moves on.

42 INT. SCREENING ROOM - KAY, FLANAGAN, STALEY, COCKRUM

The men settle in. Planagan takes the seat by the controls.

FLANAGAN
(to Kay)
I understand this picture is very much a Kay Freestone effort.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

KAY
You'll find little flecks of my
blood on every frame.
(gives Planagan
his drink)
Gentlemen, one thing I've learned
about programming: the material
speaks for itself. So, no sales
talk, no comments. I'll be back in
the booth. Enjoy yourselves.

The men express their thank-yous as she exits.

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - KAY

emerging from the screening room and moving to enter the
projection booth.

INT. BOOTH - KAY AND WALTER

The booth is immaculate. Walter Muirhead, the black projec-
tionist, is proud of his domain. The projectors are new and
glistening. Each is equipped with a large, digital footage
counter, red on black. The magazines are of the closed
variety: the film reels cannot be seen unless the magazine
doors are open.

As Kay enters and puts down her purse, Walter is at a desk,
working on an elaborate model of a clipper ship. He has
reached the stage of tying the scores of tiny rigging knots.

KAY
Evening, Walter.

WALTER
Hi, Kay.
(going to
projectors)
VIP time, huh?

KAY
It's murder. All nine reels here?

WALTER
(indicating reels)
Ninety minutes -- nine reels. You
watching back here again?

Kay opens the magazines, checks the film loaded in each
projector.
KAY
Walter, I wrestled this picture through that nutty studio for six months. You mess up one, single changeover and I will kill you.

Walter checks his equipment as:

WALTER
Yowsah, ma'am. The film will go through the gate at the incredible rate of ninety feet a minute. You just watch these counters. No sooner will this first reel finish up, Ma'am Freestone, when I will see two little flashes of light out there in the upper right-hand corner of your lovely picture. Then I will, with lightning speed, switch over to this projector here and not only will your big shots not know I have switched a reel, they will not even suspect anything.

Kay has listened, amused and with folded arms, to this routine.

KAY
Bravo. Now you mind if I do it myself?

WALTER
Long as you got a union card.

FLANAGAN'S VOICE
(on intercom)
Kay -- roll whenever you're ready.

Kay flips the talkback switch twice and makes an invitational gesture to Walter. He dims the house lights with a rheostat, reaches to:

DIGITAL COUNTER

The digital counter on Projector #1. Four digits. Walter flips the ratchet to make it read 0-9-0-0.

BACK TO SCENE

Walter turns on power for #1. Opens the gate. Sound up. Kay is turning up the control for sound in the booth. Main title music begins. She looks through the pcrt as Walter double-checks focus.
47
THROUGH PORT TO SCREEN

A stark main title: "THE PROFESSIONAL."

WALTER

Good luck.

She shoots him a look: these two like each other. Walter reaches to:

48
DIGITAL COUNTER FOR PROJECTOR #2

Same business: ratchets to 0-9-0-0. The counter does not move. Camera pans to counter on #1. It is moving at a rate of 90 feet a minute -- now at 0-8-7-4 and counting down.

49
BACK TO SCENE

Kay peers through the port at the best angle to spot her audience. She is just a fraction tense.

50
INT. JONATHAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - JONATHAN

He is working with his desk calculator as he checks his data. The debris of a bring-in dinner on his desk. He comes to a stopping place, reaches for a french fry, decides against it, wraps everything up and deposits it in his wastebasket. Back to work.

51
INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT - MARK

He is coming from the washroom, turns up the wall thermostat, moves to pick up a sheaf of memos on the coffee table, decides which one he wants first, stretches out, adjusts his glasses, reaches to take a beige car coat from the chair nearby, drapes it over himself like a blanket.

52
INT. EXECUTIVE CORRIDOR - NIGHT - A GUARD

making his rounds punches in, strolls down the corridor.

53
INT. SCREENING ROOM - TOWARDS EXECUTIVES

The picture continues. We hear music and sound effects.

STALEY

Frank -- you know if Standards and Practices have seen this yet?

Planagan waves him silent: It doesn't matter right now.
INT. BOOTH - CLOSE ON COUNTER

The #1 counter reads 0-0-3-9 and counting down. Camera pulls back. Walter is at the desk, working on his model. Kay is at the port. She looks to the counter, then to Walter.

KAY
Skipper....

She taps the counter.

WALTER
(gets up)
Changeover.

He comes to a port and looks with her.

THROUGH PORT TO SCREEN

The action is of Ralph oiling his pistol. Camera zooms to the upper right-hand corner for the changeover blip. It appears.

KAY'S VOICE
Flash....

INT. BOOTH

Walter opens the gate of #2, turns on sound of #2, cuts power on #1, cuts sound on #1.

ON COUNTER #2

Reaching 0-8-9-5 and counting down. Camera moves to counter #1. It has run out, reads 0-0-0-0 and is chattering there.

INT. BOOTH

Walter is opening #1 lower magazine to remove the reel and thread Reel 3.

KAY
Couldn't do better myself.

WALTER
That's a fact.

Kay ambles over to the ship model.

KAY
It's getting to look terrific.

CONTINUED
That's the one my folks come over on.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT - MARK

putts down one script and picks up another with a red cover.

INT. JONATHAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - JONATHAN

working with the calculator, he makes a mistake and starts again.

THE GUARD

making his rounds. Punches in. Dullsville.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - TOWARD THE SCREEN

"The Professional" continues to run: A trash can rolls toward the mouth of the alley, comes to a stop -- headlights from a car parked at the alley's mouth flash on -- sound of car door open and close -- a silhouetted figure appears, proceeding toward us down the alley.

And now we see Roark on a fire escape, gun braced against his forearm, tracking the figure.

REVERSE ANGLE

COCKRUM

Not exactly the family hour, is it?

INT. BOOTH - KAY AND WALTER

Kay gazes out of the port. Her hand rests casually by the counter for machine #1 which is projecting. She glances at Walter, busy with his model. She looks back to the counter.

CLOSER SHOT - #1 COUNTER

Running down, it reads 0-5-4-1. She ratchets it to 0-2-4-1 and counting. Angle widens as Kay looks around.

KAY

Walter -- where're are the other reels?

WALTER

What reels?
KAY
The screen tests I ordered. For 'Broad Land.' Flanagan might want to see them.

WALTER
(getting up)
Somebody goofed. They must still be down in shipping....

KAY
Better get them. Four reels.

Walter glances at the counter.

WALTER
There's a changeover coming up -- about two minutes.

KAY
I'll take care of the changeover. Just get the tests, will you, Walter?

Walter hurries out. Kay snaps a glance through a port, quickly opens the #1 projector magazine, then grabs a white editor's glove from the neat bundle on the splicing bench. Now she snatches up her purse, snaps it open.

CLOSER ON PURSE
We see the tape recorder with its umbilical earplug. Also nestled there is Mark's .32 automatic.

KAY
places the plug in her ear, looks anxiously through the port.

As Kay watches, there is an intense music cue -- pure Bernie Herrmann strident strings. On this cue, Kay punches the tape recorder. We hear the remote stopwatch ticking and:

KAY'S VOICE
(filtered)
You have four minutes.

She hurries out of the booth.

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT - KAY
She moves rapidly down the corridor.
INT. SCREENING ROOM - TOWARD EXECUTIVES
(The music cue continues.) Cockrum whispers something to Flanagan.

INT. CORRIDOR - KAY
hurrying to a stairway door.

KAY'S VOICE
You have three minutes and forty seconds.

INT. STAIRWELL - KAY
ascends the stairway.

INT. LONG CORRIDOR - KAY - TRUCKING SHOT
as she moves down the long corridor, draws on the editor's glove.

KAY'S VOICE
You have three minutes and thirty seconds.

INT. FILM SHIPPING - WALTER AND CLERK
in the bowels of the building. A Clerk, wearing a cutter's glove, slams a couple of film cans on a counter, turns to pick up two others. Walter checks his pocket watch.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - NIGHT - KAY
as she enters from an adjacent corridor, proceeds toward Mark's suite. Lighting is low-keyed. We are aware of the open door to Jonathan's office, and the sound of his typewriter.

KAY'S VOICE
You have two minutes and forty seconds.

INT. MARK'S RECEPTION OFFICE - NIGHT - KAY
entering silently, closing the door behind her. The office is buttoned up for the night. The door to Mark's office is cracked open.
reading on the couch as we saw him last. Thoughtful for a moment, he pushes his glasses up on his forehead, then becomes aware of the door opening. Camera angles to reveal Kay, her right hand hidden. He reacts with surprise.

MARK
Kay? Finished already?

KAY
Yes. Finished.

She continues walking, extends the gun, fires.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - ANGLE ON #2 COUNTER

and the roar of the machine. The counter counts to 0-0-0-0 and chatters there. The projector is still projecting.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT - CLOSE ANGLE - HIS SCRIPT

A hole has been blasted through the script. It falls on his lifeless body.

INT. JONATHAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - JONATHAN ON PHONE

He is on the phone, frozen by the sound of the shot. Then:

JONATHAN
(to phone)
Honey, something happened ---

He drops the phone and runs out.

INT. MARK'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - KAY

coming toward us from the office proper -- through the dressing room -- exiting through an avoid-the-visitors door as:

KAY'S VOICE
You have two minutes and ten seconds.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - NIGHT - KAY

Still holding the gun, Kay emerges into a different section of the executive wing.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Shooting past Mark's body on the couch, deathly still, as Jonathan bursts in, reacts.
INT. EXECUTIVE WING - AT ELEVATOR BANK - NIGHT

There are two open, blocked elevators, one with plastic bags of trash, the other with heavy cleaning equipment. In the latter, Kay grabs a broom and lifts the frosted ceiling hatch through which she now tosses the gun.

It hits atop the elevator somewhere, not down the shaft but safely out of sight.

She lowers the panel, replaces the broom, moves out of the elevator to exit into an immediate stairway.

KAY'S VOICE
You have one minute and forty seconds.

INT. STAIRWELL - KAY
moving quickly down the stairway.

INT. APPROACH TO SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR AT STAIRWELL DOOR - NIGHT

The door is cautiously pushed open, revealing Kay -- and her reaction as she sees:

KAY'S POINT OF VIEW - SECURITY GUARD

The Security Guard, sidling from the screening room corridor, is attracted by a magazine in a trash basket, a girlie magazine as it turns out.

KAY'S VOICE
You have one minute to go.

KAY
watching -- frozen.

SECURITY GUARD

He checks the centerfold, turns the magazine this way and that way.

KAY
and the countdown:

KAY'S VOICE
You have fifty seconds.
SECURITY GUARD

Finally he returns the magazine to the trash basket, crosses safely out of view and hearing.

KAY

KAY'S VOICE
You have forty seconds.

Kay moves toward the screening room corridor.

INT. SCREENING ROOM

The executives rapt on the film.

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT - KAY

moving quickly, quickly....

KAY'S VOICE
You have twenty seconds.

And a long way to go to the projection booth at the far end of the corridor.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - TOWARD SCREEN

On the screen, Roark lies on a bed in a dingy hotel room, fully clothed, his pistol beside him. The phone is ringing, ringing. His eyes are open, thoughtful. He does not move.

Camera zooms to the screen's upper right corner. The first changeover cue blazes.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR PROJECTION BOOTH - KAY

rushing into the booth as:

KAY'S VOICE
You have ten seconds left.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - KAY

entering.

KAY'S VOICE
Nine seconds -- eight -- seven....

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Her countdown continues as she rushes to a port, sees in the open magazine of projection #1 that the film has all but run out, sees through the port:

KAY'S POINT OF VIEW TO SCREEN

and camera zooming to the second changeover cue.

INT. BOOTH - KAY

The countdown is abruptly truncated with a few seconds to go as she flings purse and earpiece aside and:

FLASH CUTS - KAY'S HANDS

playing the controls like Paderewski: #2 power on, open #2 gate, #2 sound on #1 sound off, close #1 gate, #1 power off.

She looks through the port: all okay. Now she responds to the sound of the door opening, whirls to see Walter not yet appeared but nudging the door with his knee in order to carry in his load of reels.

The glove! Swiftly she strips it off, throws it aside. And Walter makes his full entrance, sets the film down.

WALTER
 Make the changeover okay?

KAY
 (flexing her fingers)
 Like a champion.

Walter joins her at the port, looks out to see:

WALTER'S POINT OF VIEW - TO SCREEN

"The Professional:" Roark sits on the bed in the hotel -- touches the pistol -- strokes it. He picks it up, caresses his cheek -- feels the barrel -- its tactile smoothness. Then the barrel slides toward his mouth.

BACK TO WALTER

snapping his head aside in revulsion as a shot crashes from the projection booth speaker.

WALTER
 How long they going to keep putting that stuff on television?

CONTINUED
Angle widens to include Kay as Walter disapprovingly goes to his ship model.

    KAY
    That stuff comes out of character, Walter.

    WALTER
    Well, they can keep it.

    PLANAGAN'S VOICE
    (filtered over intercom)
    Kay, you'd better come in here, please.

Kay looks puzzled, flips the intercom switch for:

    KAY
    Be right out.

She looks at Walter, shrugs, exits.

ON WALTER

Curious, he moves to the port.

WALTER'S POINT OF VIEW THROUGH PORT

"The Professional" continues with fancy shots of Roark’s dangling hand, his foot twisted on the bed, an extreme closeup of that hand again.

These images fall upon a stunned Jonathan standing -- the executives standing and distraught -- Kay entering from the corridor. Planagan speaks to her and we see her horrified reaction. The men hurry out. Kay hesitates, goes to the intercom.

    KAY'S VOICE
    (filtered on intercom)
    That's all the movie for tonight, Walter.

Camera adjusts to include Walter. What the hell happened? He turns off the projector, then automatically reaches to:

DIGITAL FOOTAGE COUNTERS

Walter ratchets them both to 0-0-0-0.
EXT. CNC EXECUTIVE PARKING LOT - DAY

as Kay parks and enters the building. There are several police cars in the lot -- and Columbo's car. Over this:

GUARD'S VOICE
What a shock about Mr. MacAndrews.

KAY'S VOICE
Yes, frightening.

ANGELA'S VOICE
How does a thing like that happen?

KAY'S VOICE
I know, it's insane.

MADGE'S VOICE
I can't believe it about Mark.

KAY'S VOICE
Nobody can.

INT. EXECUTIVE CORRIDOR - DAY - KAY

As Kay comes from the elevator, she notices strange men -- police -- coming and going. Wendy is doing something about morning coffee as Kay approaches.

WENDY
Kay, I'm so terribly shocked and sorry....

KAY
We're all sorry, Wendy, and he'd be the first to say there's nothing disrespectful in just doing our jobs.

(holds out hand
for phone log)

What've we got?

WENDY
They asked for you in Mark's office
-- soon as you came in?

Their eyes meet; Kay goes.

INT. MADGE'S OFFICE - DAY - MADGE

Madge is showing a detective Mark's telephone log as Kay enters. A technician with a fingerprint kit comes from Mark's office.

CONTINUED
107 CONTINUED
MADGE
Kay....

KAY
Steady, luv.

Kay goes into Mark's office.

108 INT. MARK'S OFFICE - AT DOOR - DAY - KAY

and her immediate shock as she sees:

109 KAY'S POINT OF VIEW

A figure in a beige coat is stretched out on the couch, the bullet-punctured script shielding the face. A puff of smoke rises slowly from behind the script -- which is lowered to reveal Lieutenant Columbo, cum cigar. Mark's glasses are propped on his forehead.

He sees Kay, immediately rises and goes to her solicitously.

COLUMBO
Good morning, ma'am. I'm Lieutenant Columbo. Homicide? And you're Miss Freestone?

KAY
Yes, Lieutenant.

COLUMBO
(the couch)
No disrespect intended, ma'am, but that's where Mr. MacAndrews was lying -- just like that. When he was shot, that is.

KAY
Is there any way I can help, Lieutenant?

He remembers the glasses on his head, takes them off, holds them at arm's length, roams the room as he peers curiously through them.

COLUMBO
Well, there is ma'am. I understand you worked very closely with the victim.

KAY
I was his executive assistant.
COLUMBO
Yes, ma'am. And would you agree these are his glasses?

KAY
(a bit startled)
They look like them, yes....

Columbo returns to stand by the couch, again peering through the glasses, shifting them from arm's length to close up and back again.

COLUMBO
Then would you mind coming through that door, ma'am?

KAY
Excuse me?

COLUMBO
If you'd just come back through the door, please.

Uneasily, Kay follows instructions. Columbo gazes at her through the shifting glasses, then abruptly:

COLUMBO
Stop right there, ma'am!

She freezes. Columbo advances on her, the glasses a foot from his eyes.

COLUMBO
Now if you'll just hold out your hand, Miss Freestone....

KAY
Where?

COLUMBO
As if you were holding a pistol, ma'am -- pointed at the couch.

Slowly Kay extends her arm.

COLUMBO
(satisfied)
Thank you, ma'am. My father wore glasses just like these ---

He places the glasses in his raincoat pocket, begins searching through all his pockets as:
COLUMBO

-- when I was a youngster. I used
to like to put them on -- act like
a grownup. There was one thing I
wanted to ask you about Mr. MacAndrews,
ma'am, some item on his desk -- I'll
come across it. My mother used to
grab the glasses right off of me.
'That's bad for your eyes,' she'd
say.

He gives up his body search, starts prowling the room again.
He takes another look at that bullet-riddled script.

COLUMBO

Those days, everything was bad for
your eyes. Not wearing mittens was
bad for your eyes -- wearing rubbers
in the house, that'd strike you blind
on the spot.

KAY

Lieutenant, if there's nothing else....

Sergeant Burke comes to the door, looks curiously at Kay, then:

BURKE

I've got twelve men searching,
Lieutenant. That enough?

COLUMBO

As many as you can get, Sergeant.
(to Kay)
The weapon hasn't been found, ma'am.
We think it might still be on the
premises.

She murmurs a vague "Oh?" Burke gives her another look.
Columbo is searching his pockets again.

COLUMBO

I know there was something on his
desk -- Sergeant Burke, this is
Miss Freestone. She was Mr. MacAndrews'
executive assistant.

KAY

Sergeant.

BURKE

I think you're wanted in your office,
ma'am. Something about Mr. Flanagan.
Thank you.
(to Columbo)
Lieutenant, there's something I think you should see. Would you mind?

COLUMBO
Certainly, ma'am.
(exits with her, as)
Keep searching, Sergeant.

using Kay's visitor's phone. He is very tired and deeply troubled.

FLANAGAN
(to phone)
We lost a hell of a lot more than manpower...no, nobody knows anything yet....

Kay enters -- with Columbo.

FLANAGAN
(to phone)
I'll be staying over until we can put the pieces together...my best to Lucy.

He hangs up and rises, masking his weariness.

FLANAGAN
Kay -- I hope I didn't take you away.
(to Columbo)
Your men have everything they need, Lieutenant?

Kay goes to her desk and digs a file folder out of a drawer as Columbo looks around the room and is immediately attracted by the Emmy. He goes to examine it as:

COLUMBO
Well, sir, it's all very confusing. There were only so many people in the building last night -- you and your people -- Miss Freestone and the projectionist -- the young man working next door. And every single one of them's accounted for.
COLUMBO (Cont'd)
With your terrific security and all, nobody else could have got in or out. So the question is: who shot Mr. MacAndrews?

Kay, at the desk, holds the file folder.

KAY
That's why I want you to look at these, Lieutenant.

But Columbo is intent on the Emmy. Planagan glances at the folder.

COLUMBO
(vastly impressed)
Miss Freestone, you personally won this Emmy yourself?

PLANAGAN
Indeed she did, Lieutenant.

COLUMBO
(reads inscription)
'For Best Documentary Production....'

He sets down the statuette and moves to take the file from Kay as:

COLUMBO
Well, you certainly must be a very clever woman, ma'am.

PLANAGAN
That's why she's with us.

Very clever.

KAY
Let's say I work like an ox. Please sit here, Lieutenant.

She indicates her desk chair.

COLUMBO
Thank you, ma'am.

He sits to inspect the contents of the file. Very comfortable indeed. Very nice, the executive telephone with its platoon of buttons. He lights a cigar.

Kay turns to Planagan.
KAY AND FLANAGAN

FLANAGAN
Kay, under the circumstances, I'm going to ask something of you. We'd like you to help us out -- take over all of Mark's duties -- for the time being anyway.

AT DESK - COLUMBO

He glances up from the file, eyes going to Kay.

KAY AND FLANAGAN

Kay's face is carefully composed.

KAY
Of course, Mr. Planagan -- anything I can do.

FLANAGAN
(glance at watch)
I knew we could count on you. You can lock up Clay Gardner for the Proud Land.

He touches her shoulder, starts to exit.

KAY
Mr. Planagan -- I'll need your guidance -- about the 'The Professional' -- the picture last night.

His face is quite inscrutable as his eyes meet hers.

FLANAGAN
I think we'd better talk about that some other time.

He goes. Kay holds for an uncertain moment.

COLUMBO'S VOICE
I call it weird, ma'am.

COLUMBO
rising and going to Kay as:

All these crazy crank letters -- you ever tell the police about these threats?

CONTINUED
As a matter of fact, I did. You'll notice the network gets blamed for whatever's going: communism, fascism, atheism, abortion, violence, sex -- take your pick. Up, down and in the middle. It all comes out the same: support decency or I'll kill you. Signed in blood. It occurred to me ---

--- that one of these nuts slipped in here and shot Mr. MacAndrews?

He hands the file back to Kay who returns to the desk with it as:

There've been other attempts -- twice on Mr. Flanagan.

Oh, I don't think so, ma'am. Not in this case. You see, Mr. MacAndrews recognized his murderer. He had to know the person who shot him.

Kay stares at him for a beat.

That's hard to believe.

From his pocket Columbo extracts Mark's glasses.

It's these eye glasses, ma'am. They were up here like this, on his forehead, when he was shot -- when the murderer came in. Now, the victim must've known exactly who that was -- or he certainly would have pushed the glasses down, like this.

(glasses off)
Because with this type correction, ma'am, this is the only way Mr. MacAndrews could really see his killer. If the killer was a stranger, that is. Which he ---

CONTINUED
COLUMBO (Cont'd)
(to the door)
-- couldn't have been. But I'll
keep your theory in mind, Miss Freestone.
Thank you very much, ma'am.

And he is gone.

ON KAY

The perspicacity of Lieutenant Columbo has given her a great
deal to think about. Still, she picks up the phone, buzzes
her secretary.

KAY
(to phone)
Wendy, tell Madge I'll be taking
care of Mr. MacAndrews' appointments
-- until further notice.

She hangs up. And thinks. And thinks.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - CLOSE SHOT - FILM FOOTAGE COUNTER

The digital counter is counting down to zero. The roar of
the projector. Camera angles to discover Columbo and Walter:
Walter watching through the port, his hands on the switches;
Columbo dividing his attention between the counter and the
port.

Walter springs into action, making a virtuoso changeover as:

WALTER
See the flash?

And the changeover is completed. Columbo taps the counter
which stands chattering at 0-0-0-0.

COLUMBO
I would say, Mr. Muirhead, sir,
you did that like a real artist.

WALTER
You want to see art? That's art.

He indicates the model. Columbo is digging out his miniscule
notebook as he crosses to the ship with Walter.

COLUMBO
Isn't that remarkable? You did all
this yourself?
He busies himself with the model as Columbo leafs back and forth through his notebook, drifts back toward the projectors.

COLUMBO
I used to build model airplanes when I was a kid. I'd start 'em but I could never get one finished without wrecking it.

(the right page)
Miss Freestone, she made the change-over last night when you went out for 'The Broad Land' screen tests?

WALTER
About two minutes after I left. I checked the counter.

Columbo looks at the counter.

COLUMBO
Well, Mr. Flanagan and those other people out there last night -- that makes them witnesses that Miss Freestone was right here about the time of the murder.

(through the notebook again; moodily)
The young man, Jonathan, he was on the phone -- his girl friend heard the shot; and you were down in Film Shipping. That seems to take care of everybody.

.he stares glumly

at the notebook)
I feel like I just wrecked another model airplane.

Replacing the notebook in his pocket, he sees something on the floor, bends to pick it up: a smudged, white, editor's glove.

COLUMBO
(curiously)
Did Miss Freestone make the splice, too?

WALTER
(baffled)
What splice?
COLUMBO
You mean the film didn't break, sir? Isn't this one of those film editor's gloves?

WALTER
She could've fixed the film if anything happened. But nothing happened to the film.
(indicates pile of white gloves)
I use the gloves because of the glue.

Walter raises a hand: he is wearing a glove. Using a toothpick, he extracts a tiny dab of glue from a tube and applies it to one of the knots.

COLUMBO
Well, that'll be all for now, sir.

Columbo is laying the glove aside and exiting. He turns back to Walter with the glove.

COLUMBO
Would it be asking too much, sir, if I took one of these gloves for my nephew?

WALTER
Help yourself.

COLUMBO
(he does so)
Fifteen years old and he sold all his stereo stuff to make eight millimeter movies. I was his age, the neighborhood had heroes like DiMaggio, Rizzuto. You know who he's got up on his wall? Francis Ford Coppola.

He pockets the glove and is exiting as he almost bumps into Kay at the door.

COLUMBO
Excuse me, ma'am.

KAY
Sorry, Lieutenant. Walter, you can send those tests back to Shipping.

CONTINUED
Walter starts to answer but Columbo slices in.

COLUMBO
Oh, the tests already got back to Shipping, ma'am. I talked to the gentleman in charge.

Kay looks at this ubiquitous fellow.

KAY
Fine, then.

She exits; Columbo goes with her. Walter moves to his projectors.

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - DAY - TRUCKING SHOT - COLUMBO AND KAY

Kay moves purposefully; Columbo keeps up with her.

COLUMBO
I know that Mr. MacAndrews was an important executive, ma'am. And I know CNC is a big television network. But I don't have any idea what he did all day -- and all night, from what I've seen around here.

KAY
I really can't speak for his nights, Lieutenant.

COLUMBO
I didn't mean to imply, ma'am.

She casts him an amused look.

KAY
His days were like mine. We mostly run a fire department.

COLUMBO
Fire, ma'am?

KAY
Fires, Lieutenant. We put out fires.

INT. NETWORK - VIDEO STAGE - ESTABLISHING

Video cameras are lining up for super variety show on the vast stage. The area which commands our attention is an
impressionistic USO set, circa 1942. Red, white and blue motif. Some costumed dancers (servicemen and USO girls) and some dancers in rehearsal togs are standing in the lineup. Other dancers lounging in b.g.

Contiguous to the main staging area are several flats on which the name "Valerie" flourishes repetitively.

A crane, ridden by the director, Luther, is lining up a shot. We hear:

LUTHER
Left -- down a foot. All right, that's the angle for the third position.

INT. STAGE - AT ENTRANCE - KAY AND COLUMBO

as they enter and Kay is immediately swept up by an A.D. named Chuck (he carries a clipboard) who has been waiting for her. As they move from Columbo, past the flats:

CHUCK
We already lost two hours.

KAY
Where is she?

CHUCK
Luther'll tell you.

Kay turns to call back to Columbo:

KAY
I'll be busy for a while, Lieutenant. (an encompassing gesture) Help yourself.

ON COLUMBO

COLUMBO
(calling)
Don't worry about me, ma'am.

Someone o.s. shushes him.

COLUMBO
Excuse me, sir.

He looks around, begins to wander, stops and looks up toward:
COLUMBO'S POINT OF VIEW
to the control booth.

KAY AND CHUCK

The A.D. is bringing Kay to the crane as we hear:

LUTHER'S VOICE
I'll check this later in the booth.

CHUCK
(calling up)
Luther?

Slowly the crane arms down, bringing Luther into shot. He is youngish, bearded, a little hippie in dress, vastly intelligent, quietly direct. He looks at Kay as:

LUTHER
Thanks, Chuck.

Chuck goes.

KAY
Where are we?

LUTHER
Replace her, Kay.

KAY
(stunned)
Valerie?

LUTHER
She isn't going to make it -- not a live show. Not in this world.

KAY
Why?

LUTHER
I can still bring in Janie Clarke. Same arrangements -- same key -- same staging.

KAY
(dismissing this)
We're on the air tomorrow night! Why? What happened?

Luther calmly ticks off the following on his fingers:

CONTINUED
LUTHER
She's terrified, she's hysterical, she's falling apart; she can't understand this isn't an MGM sound stage twenty years ago, she hates the staging, she hates the cameras and she hates me.

(end of tally)
You I don't know about. A few times a day she gets a nice rush of competence for ten minutes; then she remembers it's a live show, bites another dancer on the leg and hides in her dressing room. Aside from all that, her work's lousy.

KAY
Where is she?

LUTHER
(indicating)
Dressing room.

Kay starts away, turns for:

KAY
Luther -- is she on anything?

Luther makes a hand gesture as if to say: on that, leave me out.

INT. VIDEO CONTROL BOOTH - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - MONITOR SCREEN

On the screen we see Kay moving o.s.

COLUMBO'S VOICE
You mean it's going to be live TV---

Camera pulls back to reveal Columbo and a Technical Director standing in the booth. The monitors show silent ad lib stuff on the stage.

COLUMBO
-- just like it used to be?

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
A little better, Lieutenant -- we hope.

(indicates director's chair)
That's where the director'll sit.
Here -- sit down.
Columbo sits in the director's place; the Technical Director sits at his own panel, taps it.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Technical director's desk.

Columbo surveys the array of monitors.

COLUMBO
All those screens for one show?

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
(pointing; explaining)
Main monitor -- that shows what's going on the air. Preview monitor: what the director wants to come up next. Those are what the four cameras see. I do the switching.

He demonstrates: moves the preview to the on-the-air monitor; switches in a new preview.

COLUMBO
(marvelling)
All these beautiful machines -- all these buttons to push. I know it costs millions and everybody works very hard. But --
(an impish grin)
-- I'll tell you the truth, it looks like fun.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
(conspiratorially)
It is, Lieutenant. But I'll never admit it in court.

COLUMBO
And Miss Freestone -- she knows all about all this, too?

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
(a bit sourly)
I'll tell you about that. If there's one thing worse than a television lady who thinks she knows everything, it's a television lady who knows everything.

For punctuation, he punches a distinctive main power button. The monitors go dead. Columbo looks at him, puffs thoughtfully on his cigar.
INT. AT DRESSING ROOM DOOR - DAY

Valerie Kirk's name is on the door. Kay is knocking -- has been knocking.

KAY
Valerie? -- Val! It's Kay.

She knocks again. Sound of door being unlocked from inside. Then nothing. Kay tries the door. It opens. She goes in.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY - KAY AND VALERIE KIRK

Kay enters. We meet Valerie Kirk. Not nearly as bad as Kay feared. She leans against a makeup table, filing her nails, facing Kay. She appears tired but well in control of herself. Her makeup has wilted a bit. Whatever problems she has, she puts the best face on them. She wears a rehearsal outfit.

Wardrobe changes hang from a pipe rack. Illumination is low-keyed: only a lamp or two.

VALERIE
Whose side you on?

KAY
Whose do you think?

VALERIE
Prove it.

KAY
You can keep my apartment key.

Valerie grins.

VALERIE
Give me a hug.

Kay moves to her and they embrace -- a strong hug from Kay, giving her strength and security to an old friend.

VALERIE
Oh, boy. I thought you'd never get here.

She moves to sit on the couch, legs folded camp-fire style. She puts a cigarette in her mouth, looks around for a match. Kay lights it for her with a lighter from her purse. There is a Mark Cross knitting bag on the couch. All this as:

VALERIE
Luther get over his shit yet?
Kay leans back against a small desk, eyeing her.

**KAY**

How about yours?

**VALERIE**

Big deal. I tried to tell that genius where my key light works. And the roof fell in. Wheeee! Big man from New York.

**KAY**

Luther's very good. He's done live shows before. He'll make you look like a million.

**VALERIE**

(eyes down)

A million years old, you mean.

**KAY**

Is that how you feel?

**VALERIE**

(eyes flicking up to Kay)

You want your key back?

Again Kay searches her face.

**KAY**

Are you clean, Val?

**VALERIE**

Oh, for God's sake!

She stands, moves to snap on the lights.

**VALERIE**

Look at me!

(she moves to the desk)

I look like a junky? No pills, no booze, no sniff, no smoke.

(she looks at her cigarette)

Except these damn things.

She turns, her back to Kay, and jams the cigarette into an ash tray. Compassionately, Kay touches her shoulders.

**CONTINUED**
You look at me, babe.

Valerie still does not turn.

(gently)
How scared are you?

Slowly now, Valerie turns to face her. There are tears in her eyes, on her cheeks.

I'm terrified, hon. I can't do it -- I don't know how to do it anymore....

Kay puts her arms around her, holds her.

I don't know what there is to do -- just sing and dance and be funny in front of forty million people.

(choked)
Kay....

I'd do it myself if I only had the time.

This provokes a spluttered laugh. Kay, still holding her, brings her to the couch.

Kay rocks her like a child.

Poor Val -- frightened fo every movie, scared when you won the Oscar, panicked in New York and London and Las Vegas. And smasho! Another scared hit.

This is different....

Kay pulls away from her.
KAY
Oh, hell, tell me about it! Scared comes with the territory. Why do you think I made this deal? You think I needed some rock-star kid who's tell me she can do it live with one hand tied behind her back? When are you going to grow up? The scareder you are, the better you get. And I'm getting bored, kiddo.

All of this is shaking Valerie's confidence in her own incompetence. She reaches for a tissue, dabs at her eyes as:

VALERIE
Honest, Kay? You wouldn't kid an old pal?

KAY
Sure I would. I made it all up.

She takes the tissue from Valerie and gently strokes it over her eyes. Camera presses for a tight two as:

KAY
What really happened, you bombed out on your first picture and married a fireman in Zanesville, Ohio.

And another laugh from Valerie.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - LUTHER, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, COLUMBO, ET AL

A full crew is at the panel. Columbo watches from behind Luther.

The monitors give us the business on the stage, including the crane shot.

LUTHER
We'll take four after the crane shot.

Now the Technical Director notices something on the crane camera monitor. He indicates:

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Luther -- look at this.
Luther looks to the monitor and sees Kay and Valerie coming into position. Valerie looks terrific.

LUTHER
I'll take it.
(to talkback)
Bring two down on Kay and Valerie.

The Technical Director switches the crane shot to the on-the-air monitor as the camera cranes down for a two shot of the women. As the Technical Director turns to Columbo and indicates:

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Valerie Kirk.

Columbo leans in between the director and the Technical Director, eyes on Valerie, very impressed.

COLUMBO
Wait'll I tell Mrs. Columbo.

VALERIE
(through booth speaker; direct to camera)
Hey, boss, you need a willing worker? What are we waiting for?

Luther looks at the Technical Director.

LUTHER
I don't believe it.
(to talkback)
What are you waiting for? Let's go to work.

Valerie crosses off the monitor. Kay looks directly at us.

KAY
(through booth speaker)
Anything else, maestro?

LUTHER
(to talkback)
How about walking on water?

She gives him a toodle-oo finger wave and vanishes. Luther looks at Columbo.
CONTINUED - 2

LUTHER
(unconvinced)
I still don't believe it.

He rises and exits booth. Columbo's hand lingers for a moment over one of those delectable switches. He thinks better of it and goes.

EXT. VENICE CANAL AREA - NIGHT - KAY - HER CAR

Kay's car parks by one of the canal bridges in an area of dilapidated houses.

She emerges, stands for a beat looking o.s., then crosses over the bridge.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KAY

as she comes to a tiny, paint-scarred house, vintage early twenties. Some of the windows are boarded up; others are broken. It is obviously deserted. A sign says "For Sale." She stops, eyes scanning it all, face impassive.

She approaches the front door, stands motionless for a moment. She touches the handle -- presses. Locked? Stuck? She puts her shoulder to the door. It yields reluctantly. Again a hesitation. She goes in.

INT. VENICE HOUSE - NIGHT - KAY

as she enters the scrap of living room. Illumination by moonlight. There has been a certain amount of vandalism. Torn pieces of ceiling hang down into frame. No furniture except a broken chair and a battered lamp shade on the floor.

Kay surveys all this, hands thrust into her coat pockets, revolving slowly. She picks up the lamp shade. sets it on the chair, moves through to:

INT. VENICE HOUSE - KITCHEN AREA - NIGHT - KAY

Kay enters what was once the kitchen. A bare light bulb hangs into frame. She tries the wall switch. No electricity. She really didn't expect any. There is an old table and a single chair, total value: 85¢. A kitchen door leads to exterior.

Kay sits in the chair, hands folded on the table. She is rapt, living for an instant in another time.

CONTINUED
She is startled by a sound at the door. Someone is there, trying to get in. She rises. The door squeaks inward. Lieutenant Columbo looks around the edge.

COLUMBO
Miss Freestone -- ma'am?

KAY
(relieved)
You frightened me.

She sinks back into the chair. Columbo comes in.

TWO SHOT - KAY AND COLUMBO

COLUMBO
I'm sorry, ma'am. Your secretary said I'd find you here.

He looks around curiously.

KAY
I lived here once, Lieutenant. My mother raised three of us in this house -- for a while.

Columbo sticks his head into the living room.

COLUMBO
If you don't mind my asking, ma'am, why do you come here?

He comes back to her.

KAY
I don't 'come here,' Lieutenant. It's my first return, as a matter of fact.

(a beat)
Nothing sends you scurrying back to your roots like somebody else's death.

COLUMBO
Oh. I thought, ma'am, now that you've got that new, important job -- you might've paid a visit to think about how far you've come. Excuse me -- I'll just get that other chair.

He exits into the living room.
CLOSE ON KAY

Her eyes troubled by this man's presence. How much does he know? What does he want?

Camera angles to include him as he returns with the chair. He sits opposite her as:

COLUMBO
May I join you, ma'am?

KAY
Shall we dine my moonlight, Lieutenant?

COLUMBO
(placeing a cigar in his mouth)
That would be very nice, Miss Freestone.

KAY
Everything's so small. I knew it wasn't much, but I didn't remember it this tiny. Four of us crammed in here. Nobody ever got to -- just be alone.

Columbo is about to light his cigar with a match.

COLUMBO
May I, ma'am?

KAY
Please.

He does. The cigar supplies a pleasant glow in the dark.

COLUMBO
A few years ago, I took Mrs. Columbo on a trip back to the house where I grew up. It looked all shrunken. I had five brothers and a sister, Miss Freestone. It was really terrific. There was always somebody for company. We never got lonely.

A pause -- she looks at him.

KAY
Lieutenant Columbo, I think you're a very special man.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

KAY (Cont'd)

(she stands)

I also think I've had enough of my olden times.

Columbo also rises. They cross to:

INT. VENICE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - COLUMBO AND KAY

as they come from the kitchen.

KAY

Was there any particular reason you wanted to see me tonight?

Columbo stops, starts going through his pockets again.

COLUMBO

How do you like that? I almost forgot again -- that item on the victim's desk....

He produces a folded slip of paper from a desk note pad.

COLUMBO

It was a slip of paper. Like a note he made. I thought you might be able to help us with this.

He strikes a match to illuminate the note and gives it to her.

COLUMBO

You see? There's the capital letter K -- and the numbers four, five and a zero....

INSERT THE MATCH-ILLUMINATED NOTE

It bears the legend "From the Desk of Mark MacAndrews."
Written boldly with a felt-tipped pen is:

K
450

Columbo's finger points as:

COLUMBO'S VOICE

K four-fifty. Does that mean anything to you, ma'am?
She studies the note.

**KAY**

No -- nothing at all.

He blows out the match.

**COLUMBO**
The four-fifty part, I thought that might have been referring to an automobile, like a Mercedes 450. And the letter K -- well, Kay is your name, ma'am.

**KAY**

In this case the K must just be a K. I'm sorry.

She hands him back the note.

**COLUMBO**

Well, we'll be checking around with the dealers, ma'am.

He opens the front door for her.

**EXT. VENICE BRIDGE LOCATION - NIGHT - KAY - HER CAR**

The driver's door is open. Kay is slipping behind the wheel.

**COLUMBO'S VOICE**

You know, Miss Freestone, I'm a very happily married man.

Camera angles to reveal Columbo holding the car door. His own car is parked nearby.

**COLUMBO**

So I guess it's all right for me to say this: I think you're a very remarkable person.

**KAY**

That's nice to hear.

**COLUMBO**

I mean I've got an idea now what a high pressure business you're in -- and the way you're so competent with all your problems. Like with Valerie Kirk today.
CONTINUED

KAY
We ask for all those pressures, Lieutenant. We beg for them. I'm sure you live in your own pressure cooker.

He takes out another cigar as:

COLUMBO
Oh, nothing like yours, ma'am. In homicide we don't have to keep racing the clock like you television people. (he lights the cigar)
We just keep plugging away. As long as it takes. And we usually get there. Good night, ma'am. Drive carefully.

He closes her door, moves to his own car.

COLUMBO AND CAR
He starts up and drives off.

INT. KAY'S CAR - KAY
She looks after him. He has given her something else to think about.

EXT. CNC BUILDING - DAY
Another day at the network.

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - DAY - COLUMBO AND SERGEANT BURKE
They are moving away from us down the corridor, engrossed in murmured conversation. They pass Walter Muirhead's projection booth. Now Columbo stops and turns, looks back at the booth.

COLUMBO
You go ahead, Sergeant.

Burke continues. Columbo comes back, opens the door and sticks his head into the booth. We hear the roar of the projector.
A projector is running. Walter is tying his rigging knots. Columbo is at the door.

COLUMBO
Mr. Muirhead?

WALTER
(a welcoming wave)
Come on in, Lieutenant.

Columbo goes to him at the desk.

COLUMBO
I just wanted to say I dropped that glove off for my nephew. He figures it'll improve his editing a hundred per cent.

WALTER
Tell him he ought to be an actor.
(indicating a tiny knot)
Want to hold this?

Columbo does so. Walter carefully trims it as:

WALTER
You hear what Planagan's paying Clay Gardner for 'The Broad Land?'

So much for the knot.

COLUMBO
I wouldn't know about that, sir.

WALTER
Got any opinions about violence on television?

COLUMBO
Well, I usually work nights.

WALTER
The other night, I come back here from Shipping, the first thing I see is a guy blowing his brains out. You think that's right?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

It's a rhetorical question. Walter glances over at the footage counter.

WALTER
   Change coming up.

He crosses to the port between the projectors. So does Columbo.

AT PORT - PROJECTORS, ET AL

Walter checks counter and screen.

COLUMBO
   You know, it's crazy, Mr. Muirhead, but since I've been around here I
   think I'm getting to be a button freak. Buttons and switches. You
   don't suppose I could try making one of those changeovers?

Walter grins, cranes to look out the port at the audience.

WALTER
   Why not? It's only a writer in there looking at an old movie.
   (indicates the switches and their order)
   One, two, three four -- one -- two.
   Like that.
   (again)
   Green, two -- three, red -- four -- one -- two.

Columbo mimics his movements, trying to nail it down.

COLUMBO
   One, two, three, four -- one -- two.

He turns to watch the counter.

WALTER
   Forget the counter -- watch for the second flash.

He indicates the screen. Both are looking out, waiting for:

Go!

CONTINUED
Columbo hits the switches with delight. But suddenly he is all thumbs.

COLUMBO
One, two, three, four -- what happened?

We have the sense that there is no longer any picture on the screen. And from the talkback speaker comes the testy voice of the writer:

WRITER'S VOICE
For Pete's sake, Walter! What are you playing at in there?

Columbo is already backing toward the door. Walter is staring at him in a very strange way.

COLUMBO
Excuse me, sir -- sorry, excuse me....

INT. SCREENING ROOM CORRIDOR - AT PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY -

COLUMBO
As he emerges, two of the network executives, Ames and Cockrum, pass by.

AMES
Lieutenant.

Their attention is drawn as Sergeant Burke enters purposefully and nails Columbo.

BURKE
Lieutenant, can I talk to you?

COLUMBO
Certainly, Sergeant.

Burke starts to address Columbo, becomes aware of the executive's presence.

BURKE
(indicating
Walter's booth)
Can we go in here, sir?

COLUMBO
I'd rather not, Sergeant.
Burke shields his mouth with his hand, looks again at Amos and Cockrum, whispers to Columbo who nods, looks back at the network execs. They decide to move on -- they look back at Columbo; Columbo looks at them -- Sergeant Burke looks at them. They keep going.

EXT. MARK'S HOUSE - DAY

to include the ocean and the house.

INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - DAY - COLUMBO

The drapes are drawn. One sliver of brightness backlights a motionless Columbo and the smoke from his cigar. He is poised in thought. Now he moves around the room, looks at this, looks at that.

The room has been restored to order. The bed is made. At the door, Columbo takes one last look, is about to exit when his eye is caught by:

ANGLE TO CARPET

The shaft of light gleams on something lying on the carpet under the marble table top.

COLUMBO

He moves to pick it up: a shard of broken glass. The doorbell chimes. Columbo ponders the shard, lays it on the table top, moves to:

INT. MARK'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - DAY - COLUMBO

Columbo descends the stairs and goes to open the front door. A cleaning-and-laundry Delivery Man is revealed. He holds a few hanged articles of clothing sheathed in a clear plastic bag.

DELIVERY MAN

MacAndrews.

(he hands
Columbo the
cleaning)
Anything to go?
CONTINUED

COLUMBO

No. Nothing to go, sir.

The Delivery Man goes. Columbo closes the door. The cleaning includes a brass-buttoned, navy blazer and a couple of pairs of slacks.

Columbo carries them to the stairs, sees a wall hook and hangs them there. He is about to go back upstairs when he freezes, whirls, stares at the cleaning, moves back to it. With a single, vicious stroke of his hand he rips off the plastic.

INT. KAY'S OFFICE - DAY - KAY

She is speaking forcefully into the phone, signing letters, sifting through some memos, trashing the ones that are of no significance. Her bank of phone lights keeps flickering with calls. Phones ring o.s.

Wendy enters -- controlled panic.

WENDY

Kay, Luther's on one. You have to talk to him!

WENDY

It's about Valerie....

Kay cuts Benjamin off with a button -- stares at Wendy -- takes line one. Wendy returns to her office through:

KAY

I heard your promises last night and the night before: out of the Planetarium by midnight. What do you think you're making up there?...I know it's difficult location, Benjamin. You picked it, not me...

(holds up her hand palm outward to Wendy)

What it is, is it's a simple, ninety-minute melodrama. Now you get it on tape tonight, Benjamin, or I'm coming up there and personally pull the plug!

152 INT. NETWORK STAGE - AT PHONE - LUTHER

He speaks into a stage phone.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

LUTHER
Gone is gone. Up the chimney.
Nobody's seen her since we finished
the dress on the USO number.

(glance at watch)
We're on the air in three hours and
twenty minutes.

BACK TO KAY

KAY
(to phone)
Did she leave the building? Who
checked the guards?

Wendy appears in the doorway....

WENDY
Kay....

Kay looks at her, covers the phone.

WENDY
She left the building.

(a beat)
She's at your place.

(indicates Kay's
phone bank)
Line four.

KAY
(to phone)
Call you back, Luther.

(she hits
line four)
Valerie?...Valerie!

(she rattles the
cradle; to Wendy)
She's gone.

WENDY
(to her own
desk)
I'll get her back.

But Kay is already on her feet, racing to grab her coat and
out the door.

KAY
I'll get her back.

Camera comes down on the phone bank. Lights are blinking;
o.s. phones are ringing.
EXT. ENTRANCE TO KAY'S APARTMENT - DAY - KAY

Kay rushes to the door. In her anxiety she fumbles the key in the lock, finally gets it open and thrusts inside.

INT. KAY'S APARTMENT - DAY - KAY

as she enters, flings her bag aside.

KAY
(calling)
Valerie...?

Even as Kay calls out Valerie's name, the word drains itself of energy. Her gaze, frozen in shock, goes to the upper level.

POINT OF VIEW TO UPPER LEVEL - VALERIE

Valerie holds to the railing, singing -- trying to sing -- a 40's standard. She wears the tight, satiny briefs and mesh stockings of her costume. The blouse or sweater she wears over her upper body is her own wardrobe. Her makeup is exaggerated and smeared: grotesque. Her hair is disarrayed. Some sort of headpiece from the show has fallen about her neck and shoulders.

Her motions are spaced-out and dreamlike -- like her thoughts, hooked together in a chain of secret, self-satisfying logic. Inside she is dancing a spinning, airy little dance, and tries to give it physical embodiment. The result, again, is grotesque.

Camera zooms in.

BACK TO KAY

KAY
Oh, God....

VALERIE

She becomes aware of Kay, teeters against the railing and looks down to:

POINT OF VIEW - DOWN ANGLE - TO KAY

still riveted.
ON VALERIE

peering down, consciously focusing.

VALERIE
You called, madam?

She tries to make a virtuoso bow, again looks down to Kay.

VALERIE
Call me madam.

(then)
But never call me late for dinner.

She giggles.

ANGLE ON KAY

She breaks from her position, runs up the stairs.

SECOND LEVEL - VALERIE

She is dancing again, singing again. Kay comes to her.

KAY
Val! -- Oh, Val....

Kay reaches out to her. Suddenly Valerie is congealed suspicion, snatching herself away.

VALERIE
Don't touch me! I don't want to!

She is past Kay to the stairs, desperate to get down.

VALERIE ON STAIRWAY

Have to do the show. Going to do the show. Luther's scared. (looking back to Kay)
Luther's so scared... (going down again)
Wait for Valerie. Valerie's going to do it live....

She falls, tumbling down the last few steps.
ON KAY

As Kay watches, the tension begins to drain out of her -- a visible sagging. Why struggle? It is all quite hopeless.

ON VALERIE

She rubs her thigh, looks back at Kay.

VALERIE
(a real question)
Kay?
(then)
Please....

UPPER LEVEL - KAY

KAY

Sure. Please.

POINT OF VIEW - DOWN ANGLE - TO VALERIE

VALERIE

I hurt myself.

KAY

Me, too, kiddo. Me, too.

She comes back down the stairs.

VALERIE

For a moment she has the attitude of a whipped dog as Kay comes into shot. Then:

VALERIE
(almost a shriek)
I told you I couldn't do it!
(almost a whisper)
Wouldn't listen.
(eyes closed)
Nobody listens.

Her eyes reopen, her gaze sly now as:

VALERIE
They listen when I sing....
CONTINUED

She starts the song again. It peters away as Kay moves to pick up an object in the middle of the living room floor: Valerie's knitting bag. Kay goes through it.

VL

watching. She pulls herself up on the lower stairs, face pressed against the vertical support bars: imprisoned.

K

She finds and throws down a couple of empty pill vials, some capsules, two glassine bags.

ANGLE ON BOTH

Kay looks at Valerie.

VALERIE

Give me a hug?

KAY

No more hugs. We're fresh out of hugs.

She goes to the phone.

VALERIE

Her face still pressed against the bars.


AT PHONE - KAY

She stands distraught for a moment, gets control, dials.

VALERIE

She hears the dialing and Kay's voice:

KAY'S VOICE

Mr. Ames, please...Kay Freestone, I want him right away...Charlie,
KAY'S VOICE (Cont'd)
Valerie Kirk's at my apartment.
She won't make the show tonight....

AT PHONE - KAY

KAY
(to phone)
It doesn't matter why -- not right now. Just control yourself...We'll put in a picture, what else have we got...Run 'The Professional' -- it's the right length...I got it made, didn't I?
(she looks at Valerie)
We'll tell the press she fell down some stairs and hurt her leg.

She hangs up, holds a beat, crosses back to Valerie. Latter's eyes stare up at her.

VALERIE
What did you do?

KAY
What all good girls do. The best I can.

She sits down on the stairs.

TWO SHOT

KAY
Come on -- give us a hug.

Valeries folds into her. Kay's arm encircles her. Valerie's eyes close. She is dreamy again.

VALERIE
I did it to you, didn't I, Kay? I really did it....

KAY
It doesn't matter. It's just a show, kiddo. I've got a million of them.

And camera cranes back for a high shot of the two women huddled on the stairs.
EXT. KAY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT - COLUMBO'S CAR

as Columbo's car drives up, parks.

INT. COLUMBO'S CAR - COLUMBO

He checks his appearance in the rear view mirror, scrubs his hair, adjusts the mirror. It falls off. He tosses it in the back seat and gets out.

COLUMBO

He crosses to enter the complex.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO KAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - DOOR CHIME BUTTON

Columbo's hand, holding a cigar, presses the button. Chimes. Angle widens to include Columbo and Kay as she opens the door.

She has changed to an evening-alone outfit. Her hair is loose, her attitude a bit wan.

COLUMBO

Excuse me, ma'am, I was just on my way home and I said to myself: I have to stop by and wish Miss Freestone the very best of luck on that Valerie Kirk show tonight. I know how hard you worked on it.

She scrutinizes him, not without a certain sense of amusement at his earnestness.

KAY

Are you sure you don't have another question for me, Lieutenant?

COLUMBO

Well, maybe one, ma'am.

KAY

(a beat)

Come in.

She stands aside to admit him.

INT. KAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - KAY AND COLUMBO

Columbo looks around. Kay is crossing to ascend the stairs.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

COLUMBO
Well, this is certainly a very beautiful place. Just what I expected for you, ma'am.

KAY
There isn't going to be any Valerie Kirk show, Lieutenant. Sorry about that.

He looks up to her.

COLUMBO
Excuse me, ma'am?

Kay is closing off the bedroom as:

KAY
She's had a kind of breakdown. She's sleeping in there.

Kay returns to the living room level as:

COLUMBO
But the show was supposed to be live, ma'am -- what do you do in an emergency like that?

KAY
Run a movie -- one that I supervised.

She goes to a bar.

COLUMBO
This wouldn't be your movie you ran for Mr. Flanagan the other night? 'The Professional?'

KAY
It would, Lieutenant. May I give you a drink?

COLUMBO
No thank you, ma'am. Oh, I certainly would like to see that picture.

Kay crosses to switch on her television. The immediate picture is a football game or some such. No sound. She picks up a remote control.

KAY
Then join me, Lieutenant. We'll see it together.
COLUMBO
(pleased)
You're sure it's not an intrusion, ma'am?

Kay enters shot with her own unfinished drink, flops gratefully onto the couch.

KAY
No.
(she runs her hand through her hair, looks at him)
After what happened to Mark, a policeman's always welcome. Now what about that question?

COLUMBO
It's just that the night Mr. MacAndrews was murdered, you sent the projectionist to Film Shipping -- to get those screen tests for 'The Broad Land' -- to show Mr. Flanagan? But what I don't understand, ma'am, Mr. Flanagan had already approved Clay Gardner to star in that series. And that's what you wanted, Miss Freestone -- as a matter of fact, it was your idea. So I had to ask myself, ma'am, I had to say: why would you send out the projectionist? -- and why would you want to show Mr. Flanagan some more screen tests? You see the problem, ma'am?

KAY
I was simply following Mr. MacAndrews instructions.

COLUMBO
Written instructions, Miss Freestone?

KAY
Verbal instructions, Lieutenant.

She glances at the TV, clicks the remote. We hear the main title score of "The Professional." Columbo looks at the screen.
ANGLE ON TV
"The Professional" -- main title.

COLUMBO
He turns off a couch-side lamp, settles in, lights a cigar as:

COLUMBO
Well, this is certainly a treat, ma'am. It certainly is.

He swings his feet up on an ottoman.

INT. KAY'S OFFICE - DAY - ANGLE ON JONATHAN
Jonathan sits on the couch, sifts through some carbon
flimsies on the coffee table. There is a window behind him.
He is enshrouded by the glare.

JONATHAN
New York -- average six rating,
nine share. Los Angeles -- a
little worse. You want the numbers?

KAY AND JONATHAN
Kay is at her desk.

KAY
No, and I don't want a hat pin in
my ear, either.

JONATHAN
We'll get the nationals in a few
days.

He gathers up his papers and rises.

KAY
So much for bad news. What've you
got that's good?

Crossing to the door, Jonathan indicates his papers.

JONATHAN
Not so bad for a picture without any
promotion -- nothing in the television
guides.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Kay massages her temples.

KAY
All right. Onward. Thank you, Jonathan.

As Jonathan opens the door to exit, Kay calls:

KAY
Wendy, you still on Planagan?

Wendy enters with a pile of scripts. She arranges them on Kay's desk as:

WENDY
He's been out all day. I'll keep trying.

Kay sifts through the scripts as:

KAY
What about the Planetarium company? What time they wrap it up last night?

WENDY
They didn't.

Kay's head snaps up.

KAY
Get me that genius Benjamin!

She slams down a script. Hard.

EXT. CNC BUILDING - NIGHT

Still plenty of lights on.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

shooting across his desk toward the door. The office is devoid of all signs of occupancy. The door opens. Kay enters. She wears a topcoat, carries her bag -- the same bag she had when she first tested the elevator ceiling with the broken antenna rod.

She leaves the door open, advances pensively into the room, looks around, ends up by the desk. It is a super desk.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

There cannot be another desk like this in the world. It is the accoutrement of power. She touches it.

Madge, who was MacAndrews' secretary, appears in the doorway. For a few beats Kay is oblivious to her presence. Then:

MADGE

Kay.

Kay's eyes go to the secretary.

MADGE

Can I help you?

KAY

(a beat)

Yes. I'll be moving in here. Tomorrow.

She crosses to the door.

AT THE DOOR - MADGE AND KAY

Madge is a little tense: her job is at stake.

MADGE

Will you want me? -- Or are you keeping Wendy?

A hesitation, then:

KAY

I'll need you both.

She exits.

INT. AT EXECUTIVE WING ELEVATORS - NIGHT - KAY

The sense of a few people still working. Kay comes to the elevators, presses a button, fumbles in her purse for something. The other elevator(s) is already blocked: Cleaning people are moving out their equipment.

She reacts to:

COLUMBO'S VOICE

Miss Freestone, ma'am....

He comes cheerfully into shot.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

COLUMBO
What a lucky break for me, ma'am.
I thought you'd be gone for the night.

KAY
You caught me on my way to the
Planetarium. Care to look at the stars, Lieutenant?

COLUMBO
Well, maybe some other time, ma'am.

Elevator doors open. They enter.

INT. ELEVATOR - COLUMBO AND KAY

Columbo lays his finger on the lobby button.

COLUMBO
All the way down, ma'am?

KAY
All the way down.

He presses the button. The doors close. Columbo is lighting his cigar. Kay flicks a glance at the ceiling hatch and reacts to:

ANGLE TO FROSTED ELEVATOR CEILING HATCH

There, backlit atop the frosted ceiling, is the hard silhouette of the gun.

COLUMBO'S VOICE
Miss Freestone, I've got to tell you I'm very troubled ---

INT. ELEVATOR - KAY AND COLUMBO

COLUMBO
-- and I guess a little disappointed.
(glances at cigar)
Oh, I shouldn't do this in the elevator, ma'am.

Kay has composed her face as well as she can. She tries to adjust her thoughts, moves to the corner of the elevator which forces Columbo's back to the gun.

CONTINUED
KAY
Excuse me, Lieutenant?

COLUMBO
Disappointed in you, ma'am. You
gave me to believe you and Mr.
MacAndrews, you were like friendly
colleagues.

KAY
I don't understand....

COLUMBO
Well, ma'am, I was at his house
yesterday -- the beach house. And
some cleaning was returned. A
blazer -- a couple pair of very
nice slacks....

KAY
Lieutenant, if this is going to be
an inventory of Mark's wardrobe....

COLUMBO
It's the blazer, ma'am. You see,
the buttons were on the wrong side.

(he indicates
on himself)
For a man's jacket, that is. What
it was, it was a woman's blazer.
With a tailor's label in it, Miss
Freestone. We checked on it. That
jacket was made for you, ma'am.

Kay stares at him.

KAY
I see. You're very observant.

COLUMBO
Well, ma'am, since you were sending
out your cleaning from Mr. MacAndrews'
house, I could only assume....
INT. CNC LOBBY - AT ELEVATORS - NIGHT

Elevator doors open. Kay and Columbo emerge. The doors will close behind them.

KAY
Lieutenant, the corporation being what it is, Mark and I didn't think it would be very discreet to advertise our relationship. Can you understand that?

COLUMBO
(chastizing)
Oh, yes, ma'am. I understand that, all right. But you shouldn't have hid it from the police. You might've been able to tell us things. Now we'll have to talk about all that when you have some time. You see, ma'am?

KAY
I apologize, Lieutenant.

Columbo starts away.

COLUMBO
Coming, ma'am?

KAY
No, I -- I forgot my script.

ON KAY

COLUMBO'S VOICE
All right, then. Good night, ma'am.

His footsteps fade off. Kay faces the elevator, pushes the button. The doors open. She goes in.

INT. ELEVATOR - KAY

Another button. Doors close. She looks upward. Camera goes to the gun on the ceiling hatch.

INSERT - STOP BUTTON

Kay's hand pushes the Stop button.
ON KAY

The elevator stops. With trembling fingers she opens her bag and takes out the broken antenna. She extends it, raises it toward the ceiling.

ELEVATOR CEILING HATCH - UP ANGLE SHOT - THE GUN SILHOUETTE - KAY

The ceiling hatch, as indicated earlier, hinges on both sides with a center line dividing it into two sections. For purposes of description, we shall say that the gun is close to the middle of the right side panel.

Kay presses the antenna tip against the left side panel.

INSERT - ANTENNA - LEFT SIDE PANEL

The antenna forces the panel to hinge up.

KAY

Anxiety quickens her breathing. She strains upward.

INSERT - ANTENNA - LEFT SIDE PANEL

The panel rising -- and, with a click, springing into a locked position. The gun on the right side panel is now accessible.

KAY

She bends the end of the antenna into a hook, extends it through the open, left side panel -- toward the gun on the right.

INSERT

The hook cannot quite reach the gun.

KAY

Face glazed with perspiration, driven by panic, she tries again.

UP ANGLE - KAY - THE CEILING HATCH - THE GUN

shooting up past Kay, the hooked-end antenna creeping toward the gun.
The hook closer -- closer -- touching the gun. But instead of hooking it, the antenna nudges the gun a little farther away.

straining to increase her reach -- trying again.

This time the gun is hooked. Slowly it is drawn toward the edge. The hook slips free. Contact is broken.

A gasping whimper. She tries again.

The hook snaring the gun again -- drawing it to the edge of the panel -- closer -- closer -- almost over the edge -- and it falls.

catching the falling gun. Camera comes up on her face. For an instant she is unable to move. She thrusts the gun into her bag, presses the elevator button.

Elevator doors open. Kay carries a script as she emerges and crosses through the lobby, her heels clicking crisply, an executive calling it a day. A security guard sits at the receptionist post. She says good night to him.

The parking lot is well illuminated. Kay goes toward her car, is suddenly frozen. Camera shows us what she sees: A silver Mercedes 450SL, gleaming new, parked next to her own car. Her gaze goes to the license plate.

Zoom to license plate. The plate says: "SUPER."
rapt, suddenly cold. She hears footsteps.

VOICE
Miss Freestone....

A Parking Lot Guard comes into shot. He indicates the Mercedes.

PARKING LOT GUARD
A guy from the agency left it. I was supposed to give you these.

He extends his hand, dangles a set of car keys.

KAY
(a Abruptly)
I don't know anything about it.

She moves swiftly to get into her car, starts the engine, snaps on the headlights, jerks it into gear and drives off.

The Guard watches her. What the hell is he supposed to do with the keys.

A drive past, going fast.

She drives distraughtly.

The headlights of Kay's car approach. The car stops by camera. The passenger door is thrust open and we see Kay. She takes the gun from her bag, leans out, throws the gun past camera.

The gun is thrown into the slot of a run-off drain. We hear a splash -- the sound of the car door slamming -- the car driving off. Camera angles up to watch it go.

to establish a video shooting company at work. The concept is"
that preparation for exterior shooting is beginning here while interior work is being completed.

Arks are firing up, seething into the darkness. Some of the light swing to reveal the company's vehicles. We also catch a glimpse of Kay's parked car.

CLOSER SHOT - ARC LIGHT

springing alive and swinging its beam across camera which trucks now to reveal electricians moving other lights into position. Dolly shot continues and discovers the vastness of a remote video truck.

Its door is open; steps lead to the ground. Within, we see Kay and two other men at a transverse bench and table. Scripts are open. Her companions eye each other as she flips through a script, Xing out whole sections with a felt-tipped pen.

KAY

This -- and this -- and these two pages.

(she rips them out of the script)

Out. It only hurts a minute, boys. They'll never miss what they don't know.

(as she descends steps)

Now you're back on tonight's schedule, anyway.

The two men examine the damage as Kay crosses off.

ANGLE TOWARD PLANETARIUM - NIGHT - MOVING SHOT - KAY

The Planetarium is ablaze with light. Kay moves past a commissary truck where some of the crew are already lined up for dinner break.

An o.s. car approaches, the glare of its headlights finding Kay. She stops, peers toward the headlights.

ANGLE ON ROLLS ROYCE

The headlights go out and we see that the car is a Rolls Royce.

CONTINUED
Frank Flanagan emerges.

PLANAGAN
Kay -- got a minute for me?

ON KAY

KAY
(a beat)
Of course, Mr. Flanagan.

She goes to:

EXT. AT ROLLS ROYCE - KAY AND PLANAGAN

Flanagan is coming around to open the passenger door.

PLANAGAN
All right if we sit here?

KAY
(flashing a smile)
Need you ask?

She gets into the Rolls.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - NIGHT - KAY AND PLANAGAN

as Kay gets in. Flanagan closes the door and comes around to sit behind the wheel. Outside, lights will continue to strike up and to occasionally flash across them.

PLANAGAN
I wanted to discuss some of the difficulties you've been having.

KAY
(a beat)
Valerie Kirk?

PLANAGAN
I understand she's a personal friend.

KAY
That's true.
FLANAGAN
I also understand her director tried
to warn you about Valerie's incom-
petence.

KAY
That's true, too.

A delicate wave of Flanagan's hand.

FLANAGAN
We'll put that aside. It was on
your decision that 'The Professional'
replaced Valerie's show. I'm sure
you know the ratings were very poor.

KAY
Under the circumstances....

FLANAGAN
(slicing in)
You created the circumstances.
Nobody knows better than you that
'The Professional' cost us one
million, six hundred thousand
dollars, including a second run.
You wasted the first one -- you
threw away a very valuable film.

Panic is beginning to flicker in Kay. She fights it off.

KAY
I was under the impression you
didn't like it very much....

FLANAGAN
(sharply)
You had no right to make an assumption
about what I like!
(patrician
again)
We'll put that aside, too. I've
been told you've decided to move
into Mark's office tomorrow.

KAY
Why not? I'll be needing more
space -- the office goes with the
job....

Flanagan looks at her directly.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED - 2

FLANAGAN
But you don't, Kay.

KAY
Mr. Planagan....

FLANAGAN
Nobody told you your present duties are permanent. I also question your taste in leaping so quickly behind a dead man's desk.

KAY
I seem to have made quite a hit.

FLANAGAN
(nods)
All in all.
(then)
Take your time about looking for another position. Let's say you'll leave officially the end of the month? I'll try to consult you about the press release.

Okay. She thinks she can handle this. It is all getting away from her but she thinks she can.

FLANAGAN
Do you expect hysterics?

KAY
I hope not.

FLANAGAN
I'm as tough as you are. I'll live through it. You'll want me back.

KAY
I hope so.

Kay abruptly thrusts the door open and leaves the car.

EXT. PLANETARIUM - NIGHT - KAY - THE ROLLS ROYCE

The headlights flash on. The car drives away. For all of Kay's bravado, she is badly shaken. She turns to go somewhere. Where? She starts back in the direction of the remote truck. The crew streams toward the commissary truck. She moves blindly through them.
EXT. PLANETARIUM - ANOTHER AREA - PLANAGAN'S CAR - COLUMBO'S CAR

Columbo's car drives in, passing Planagan's Rolls as it drives out. Camera follows Columbo's car to:

EXT. NEAR PLANETARIUM ENTRANCE - COLUMBO'S CAR - COLUMBO

gets out of his car. Looks around. Very impressed.

EXT. REMOTE TRUCK - KAY

The door is still open. No one is around. Kay hesitates at the threshold, enters the truck, pulls the door shut.

INT. REMOTE TRUCK - NIGHT - KAY

as she enters the video control section of the remote truck. Monitors, control panel, and crew chairs extend longitudinally along one wall of the truck. We see Kay's bag already on the panel. Also some packs of cigarettes, a tobacco pouch, some candy bars, scripts, pens, pencils.

Kay sits blankly. She massages her temples. She has to think. On the silent monitors, we see four camera angles of the Planetarium pendulum swinging slowly in its pit.

EXT. PLANETARIUM ENTRANCE - NIGHT - COLUMBO AND TECHNICIAN

A Technician is emerging as Columbo comes to the entrance.

COLUMBO

Excuse me, I'm looking for Miss Freestone....

TECHNICIAN

Search me. We're on dinner break.

He goes off. Columbo goes inside.

INT. PLANETARIUM ROTUNDA - NIGHT - COLUMBO

as he enters the central rotunda area and looks around. Four video cameras have been placed for four varied angles, all bearing on the pendulum pit. The cameras have been left hot. Some bulb-framed makeup tables have been set up in one of the adjoining corridors. Props appropriate to the thriller under production are at hand. Also a couple of mike booms.
Columbo calls down one of the corridors. His voice reverberates.

COLUMBO
Miss Freestone?

No reply. He wanders to take up a position by the pendulum pit, calls again toward the other corridors.

COLUMBO
Miss Freestone?

INT. REMOTE TRUCK - ANGLE ON A MONITOR - COLUMBO

Columbo's video image is seen on one of the monitors. His voice comes to us through a speaker.

COLUMBO
(calling)
Miss Freestone, ma'am? Are you here?

Camera adjusts to include Kay and the bank of six monitors, each carrying one of the four possible angles on Columbo at the pendulum pit.

Kay's nerves are collapsing. She cannot handle Columbo now, cannot deal with his probing and questioning and multiplicity of images. She speaks into the talkback mike, her voice strained and disjointed.

KAY
Lieutenant, please forgive me, I'm -- very busy -- we have some problems -- where I am ---

INT. ROTUNDA - COLUMBO

Kay's voice comes to him through a speaker.

KAY'S VOICE
-- too many to speak now.

Columbo looks around, confused at first, then delighted by these circumstances.

COLUMBO
(projecting)
Oh, I get it, ma'am. The cameras. You're in the control place. You can see me on those television screens.
COLUMBO
Am I right, ma'am?

KAY
(growing more
frantic)
Can we talk some other time?
Tomorrow -- the office ---

No, she is thinking badly; not the office -- not there --
not anymore....

KAY
...No, I'll call you ---

KAY'S VOICE
I definitely promise to call you,
Lieutenant....

COLUMBO
Well, it's very important that we
talk tonight, ma'am.

KAY'S VOICE
It's impossible....

COLUMBO
I'm afraid I have to insist, ma'am.

COLUMBO
I really have to do that.

KAY
I can't accept that...I can't
speak now!

She reaches to strike at several of the legion of switches,
to erase his images, to erase his voice.

hitting switches -- confused and increasingly panicked.
Columbo's voice continues:
CONTINUED

COLUMBO
Please bear with me, ma'am. It's about the car -- the 450SL -- the silver one ---

INTERCUTS - COLUMBO'S VIDEO IMAGES

Camera intercutting and panning between Columbo's various video images.

COLUMBO
-- registered in your name -- the one Mr. MacAndrews bought. That's very puzzling ma'am. And some other things ---

ON KAY

her hands fumbling desperately at the switches, dials, buttons, sliders, seeking the combination that will rid herself of him.

COLUMBO
-- Miss Freestone. There's your picture I saw last night -- 'The Professional' ---

INTERCUTS - COLUMBO'S VIDEO IMAGES

Again, intercutting and panning. The images are replicating now, becoming four images on one screen, eight on another, more and more on each screen.

Cameras are zooming in and out, emphasizing his mouth, eyes, images flowing from the side, the front, from a high angle. His voice becomes hollow, louder, more reverberated.

COLUMBO
-- and how there's this connection with whoever murdered Mr. MacAndrews. Because there is a connection ma'am. I'm pretty sure of that. I'm afraid it's necessary, Miss Freestone. I understand the pressures you're under, but there's these things that have to be talked about tonight.
KAY AND COLUMBO'S IMAGES

Her hands flail at the array of controls. Columbo's images erase and reappear in a succession of convoluted wipes.

COLUMBO
I don't want to talk to you like this, Miss Freestone. I know how you feel -- but it's hard without being able to see you....

Finally the images are disappearing, one by one. The screens become blank. His voice is gone.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KAY

She sinks back in the chair. In the silence. Her hands at her temples again. Think. Work. Is there anything left to do with the script? She pulls a script toward her, picks up a pen, starts to analyze, abruptly throws the pen aside and rises, turns. She trips over a chair, lunges toward the truck exit.

INT. REMOTE TRUCK AT EXIT - KAY

wrenching the door open and reacting to:

POINT OF VIEW DOWN ANGLE SHOT - COLUMBO

standing at the base of the steps.

COLUMBO
Ma'am?

He ascends toward us.

INT. REMOTE TRUCK - KAY

She turns back toward the control panel area, going o.s. Columbo enters and follows her.

INT. REMOTE TRUCK - CONTROL PANEL AREA - COLUMBO

comes into the control area, stops. Camera pulls back to include Kay. She is sitting at the panel. She works a series of switches. The images return to the monitors: The pendulum swinging in its pit. This as:

CONTINUED
KAY
I told you. I have work to do.
The show.
  (she reaches for
  script and pen)
The script needs work....

COLUMBO
  (gently)
Ma'am.

He comes toward her for:

TWO SHOT - COLUMBO AND KAY

She is looking up at him now, incredibly vulnerable, no
longer prevaricating about "work" -- oddly soothed by the
gentleness of his voice, his manner.

COLUMBO
This new job you've got -- would
you have had it, ma'am, if Mr.
MacAndrews hadn't been murdered?

She searches his face. How much does he know? Then:

KAY
No. I don't think so.

COLUMBO
I don't think so either, ma'am.
It was all right with Mr. Planagan,
but not with Mr. MacAndrews. Is
that why he bought you the car,
ma'am? -- A sort of parting gift --
considering your relationship --
like he was getting rid of you,
ma'am?

Kay takes her handbag. She stands.

KAY
This is all very personal.
Lieutenant. I'm not sure you
have the right....

COLUMBO
Oh, I have the right, Miss Freestone.
But I understand your feelings.
Please keep bearing with me, ma'am.
Please sit down.

CONTINUED
Kay sinks back into her chair.

**KAY**
You were saying something about my picture....

**COLUMBO**
Yes, ma'am. 'The Professional.'

He is searching his pockets again, looking for his notebook which he will consult through:

**COLUMBO**
When I watched the movie with you last night, I noticed something very peculiar, ma'am. So I had the projectionist run it for me again. That scene where the man in the hotel room shot himself -- that happened right at the beginning of a reel, ma'am. At the very beginning. I could tell that from the little changeover flashes -- up there in the top right corner?

He shows her on one of the monitors.

**KAY**
Yes, Lieutenant. They're called cue blips....

**COLUMBO**
Well, that suicide scene, ma'am, that's what the projectionist saw right after he came back with the screen tests. So that's when you had to have made the changeover, ma'am -- right before he got back -- not two minutes earlier, the way he thought.

Kay meets his eyes directly.

**KAY**
I'm afraid you're mistaken, Lieutenant. Walter checked the footage counter before he left....

**COLUMBO**
Well, you must've fooled him, ma'am. What I think, I think you changed the footage counter, so it would
put you in the projection booth at the time of the murder. But really, ma'am, you had time enough to leave the booth and go to Mr. MacAndrews' office. Just enough time, because when you rushed back to make the changeover, you dropped this glove.

From his raincoat pocket he extracts the white editor's glove, encased now in a plastic bag. He drops it on the panel.

COLUMBO
The lab says it has bits of glue on it. And powder burns, Miss Freestone.

Kay takes her time -- places her finger tips together, continues to try to extricate herself from the net.

KAY
(a beat)
I don't think you could really make a case against Walter.

COLUMBO
No, ma'am.

He picks up the glove to pocket it. His attention is taken by the oscillating pendulum on the monitors.

COLUMBO
That big pendulum, Miss Freestone. The way it swings like that, back and forth, forever -- knocking down those little markers. They say that proves the earth is turning under it. I never could understand that. Can you?

Kay stares at the monitors, grateful for the respite.

KAY
No.

From his coat pocket Columbo brings a .32 automatic handgun.

COLUMBO
And then there's the gun, ma'am.
Kay slowly looks at Columbo, at the gun, at Columbo again.

**COLUMBO**

Mr. MacAndrews' gun. The gun that killed him. The one you hid in the elevator, Miss Freestone. Our people found this this afternoon.

(a beat)

Then we put one like it back on top of the elevator, ma'am. Where you could see it. That was the gun you found tonight. And got rid of. But this one -- this is the gun you murdered him with.

**KAY**

(small)

I see.

**COLUMBO**

I'm sure you do, ma'am.

And so the thing is over. Kay looks at one of the chocolate bars on the panel. She reaches for it numbly, starts to unwrap it as:

**KAY**

It's very odd Lieutenant. All I can think of now -- it doesn't matter anymore how many of these things I eat.

(she looks up at him)

Will you be taking me?

**COLUMBO**

We'll drive into town, ma'am.

After that....

**KAY**

I think I know what'll happen after that, Lieutenant.

(she carefully rewraps the bar)

I'll fight. I'll survive.

(tosses the candy back on the panel)

I might even win.

**COLUMBO**

Yes, ma'am.
He stands back as she rises and moves past him. Columbo looks at the panel.

COLUMBO
Shouldn't we turn that off?

KAY
It doesn't matter.

COLUMBO
Oh, yes, ma'am. Power shortage.

ANGLE ON COLUMBO
as he moves back to the panel.

COLUMBO
I think I know what button it is.

Like a child playing with his first train, he pushes the button which he saw the Technical Director push the other day. The monitors go blank. Simultaneously, we see a changeover blip in the upper right corner of our film. Frame freezes. Camera zooms to the frozen blip and holds for credits.

FADE OUT

THE END
ADDENDA

The following is a compilation of the film materials -- shots, stock, titles, cue blips -- necessary for "The Professional."

I

(to be utilized as POINT OF VIEW from the projection booth and to be burned into the TV screen in Kay's apartment)

A. EXT. INTERCUTS - AN INDUSTRIAL CITY - ESTABLISHING DAY AND NIGHT - STOCK

Steel mills -- thrusting smoke stacks -- flame and grime -- oppressive and repellant. Over this, the main title is superimposed: "The Professional."

II

(to be utilized in the dubbing room as a black-and-white dupe, and in the network screening room as a balanced print)

B. EXT. NEW YORK STREET - NIGHT - ROARK'S CAR - ROARK

The car drives in, parks so that its headlights shine into an alley.

C. INT. ROARK'S CAR - NIGHT - ROARK

He is tieless -- glazed with perspiration -- a heat-struck night. From a shoulder holster he takes a distinctive gun. He flips on a dashboard light, carefully checks the weapon, extinguishes the light, slips the gun into the pocket of his wilted seersucker jacket. He gets out of the car.

D. EXT. AT ALLEY - ROARK

as he emerges. O.s., a siren is heard. He reacts to it, tensing. The siren fades off. He goes into the alley.
E. INT. ASH CAN ALLEY - NIGHT - HIGH SHOT - ROARK

as he enters the headlight-lit alley, his shadow thrusting before him. Litter, trash guns, obscure back entrances, fire escape.

Roark moves down the alley -- checks -- calls out:

ROARK
Marius....

He continues.

F. ANOTHER ANGLE - ROARK

His eyes going o.s. -- suddenly, frozen by:

G. ROARK'S POINT OF VIEW - LOW POSITION SHOT

On the surface of the alley, a man's hand extends from a trio of trash barrels.

H. BACK TO ROARK

He takes out his gun, goes to the barrels, shifts one, kneels. A body is exposed. He examines it -- rises -- kicks violently at the shifted barrel. It topples and rolls with a hellish clatter.

Sound of a window being slammed.

I. CLOSE SHOT - ROARK

Eyes flickering to the window.

J. UP ANGLE POINT OF VIEW - TO THE WINDOW

An illuminated window. The light goes out.

K. LOW ANGLE - ROARK

backing, then running toward the headlights of his car.
III

(to be utilized as POINT OF VIEW
from projection booth as Kay watches
Walter make his first changeover;
note that changeover blips will be
required at end of sequence)

L.

INT. SHABBY HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - DISASSEMBLED GUN -
ROARK

The hotel room is $4.00 a night. A sink in the room.
The red-green, on-off flash of a sign somewhere
outside the window. Roark, shirtless, kneels by the
bed. A lamp has been tipped to illuminate his
stripped gun.

Carefully, lovingly, he cleans and oils the parts.

IV

(to be utilized when Kay returns from
the murder and makes the changeover;
note that cue blips will be required)

M.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - AT SINK - ROARK

He washes his face at the sink. A phone is ringing.

N.

CLOSE SHOT - THE PHONE

ringing.

O.

BACK TO ROARK

He continues to wash.

V

(to be utilized when Walter returns
to the projection booth with the
test footage)
INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - AT BED - ROARK

He lies on the unmade bed. The gun lies on the pillow next to him. He reaches for it, strokes it, brings it to his cheek, caresses himself with the weapon, feels the tactile smoothness of the barrel. The barrel slides toward his mouth.