

A Treatment of Under the Volcano
by
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UNDER THE VOLCANO

A tremendous panorama of sky with clouds piled five miles high; then the great mountain chain; coming closer on the two volcanoes, Popo and Ixta; then down into the town, a terrifying view of the barranca, and finally a little procession of mourners carrying candles coming down from the cemetery past the terrace of the Casino de la Selva, where two men are seated, dressed in tennis clothes. It is just before sunset.

Now we will use, and choose from, the dialogue between Laruelle and Vigil.

I feel (as I do in other places) that a condensation is necessary, and also, here, a slight addition will help us; the scene should run something like this:

LARUELLE: (watching the procession) The Day of the Regd... And a year ago today -

VIGIL: (interrupting) ~~to get, to make, to go, to be, to be, to be~~ I meant to persuade him to go away and get de-alcoholise, but I was so sick myself that day after the ball that I suffer physical, really.

That is very bad, Jacques, for we doctors must comport ourselves like apostles. You remember, we played tennis that day too. Well, after I had looked the Consul in his garden I send a boy to see if he would come and knock my door - if drinking had not killed him already.

LARUELLE: He was at my house when you telephoned, Arturo.

VIGIL: Oh, I know. But we got so horrible drunkness that night before, that it seems to me the Consul is as sick as I am. Sickness is not only in body, but in that part used to be call: soul... Poor your friend, he spend his money on earth in such continuous tragedies.

LARUELLE: But hombre, ^{his wife returning to him...} Yvonne came back! That's what I shall never understand, she came back to the man!

VIGIL: Did you never go to the church for the bereaved here, where is the Virgin for those who have nobody then with?

LARUELLE: (he shakes his head.)

VIGIL: Nobody go there. Only those who have nobody then with... The Consul

up to the Barranca (I think)

up to the Barranca (I think)

start

Jacques

and I - we went there ~~that night that you know~~. And he prayed for her, that she might come back...

Laruelle stands up abruptly and goes to the parapet. Twilight is falling, as the last of the procession goes by the candles are more clearly seen. A storm is blowing up: vultures are blown downwind, and a sudden gust blows out the match as Laruelle tries to light a cigarette.

LARUELLE: About eight-thirty then. I might go to the ciné for an hour.

WIGIL: I will see you this night then. Hasta la vista.

LARUELLE: Hasta la vista.

(N.B. the scene may run longer than this; I am concerned with indicating the salient points that must be made.)

Laruelle is seen walking through the town, the threatening storm blowing papers in the street and ruffling the trees. He passes the Hotel Bella Vista, where we see the huge paper poster strung between two trees: HOTEL BELLA VISTA GRAN BAILE NOVIEMBRE 1939 BENEFICIO DE LA CRUZ ROJA etc. This dates it, and also of course Yvonne sees the sign dated 1938 when she arrives in the next sequence. As he reaches the square we see that a fiesta is going on and the camera pauses for a moment on a large Ferris wheel, turning and turning. Laruelle pauses in the garden of the little central square, gazing at a sign prominently displayed:

¿LE GUSTA ESTA JARDIN
QUE ES SUYO?
¡EVITE QUE SUS HIJOS LO DESTRUYAN!

LARUELLE: (To himself, translating the sign) Do you like this garden that is yours? See that your children do not destroy it!

(N.B. You, or we, may think of better ways to do these things technically; what I am principally suggesting is that certain of the symbols must be introduced right off. Particularly this sign, and its meaning, which will be repeated with varying emphasis throughout.)

*As Laruelle is walking...
Board II this
at the end*

No CLARO

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It begins to rain violently and Laruelle hurries across the square to the cinema, which is showing THE HANDS OF ORLAC, with a poster depicting the murderer's bloody hands. He is about to enter when there is a flash of lighting and all the lights go out. The theatre manager comes out.

(H.B. I am going into this next important scene in some detail, because I see it clearly and I think I have solved some technical problems, but again, you may see a much better way to do it without damage to the meaning of the book.)

BUSTAMANTE: (to Laruelle) Come and have a drink.

LARUELLE: The rainy season dies hard.

They enter a cantina abutting on the cinema, which is lit by candles stuck in bottles, and sit at a table.

LARUELLE: This film, THE HANDS OF ORLAC, surely, a year ago -

BUSTAMANTE: (interrupting) Compañero, we have not revived it, it has only returned. The other day I show my latest news, believe it, the first newsreels of the Spanish War... momentito... (He goes out and returns at once with a book, which he hands to Laruelle.) Don't know how long. Maybe two, maybe three years acqui.

LARUELLE: (turns the book over in his hands, we see that he is affected; he shuts it, and puts it on the table) Muchas gracias.

BUSTAMANTE: De nada.

LARUELLE: You know, señor, this isn't ~~my~~ book.

BUSTAMANTE: Your amigo, the Consul. (He pinches his chin and draws down an imaginary beard.) The Americano.

LARUELLE: No. He was the British Consul here.

BUSTAMANTE: But señor, we have broken diplomatic relations with England - why did he stay on then?... I think, ~~as do many~~ that he was a sort of espider.

LARUELLE: ~~Was~~ ~~was~~ a spy?

BUSTAMANTE: Si, perhaps. For often I remember him many times sitting here drinking, and often, the poor guy, he have no socks. Everyone knew him - ~~poor lonely man, abandoned by his wife~~ *went away*

LARUELLE: (interrupting) But she came back! That was the extraordinary thing, she came back!

BUSTAMANTE: ~~Si...~~ *well* But still I think he was some kind of espider. For often he was followed by some other espiders, or so it seems, and he was like a man in terror for his life. And once, I remember, he ran into the cantina El Bosque, to Senora Gregorio, shouting "Santuario!" and she hid him for a whole afternoon. And yet, if he was a spider he is one no longer. And after all, he was ray simpatico. For did I not see him, in this very bar, give all his money to a beggar taken by the police?

LARUELLE: But the Consul was not a coward! Indeed he was a very brave man, a hero, in fact, he had a megal -

BUSTAMANTE: But no, he was not a coward. But to be a coward and to be afraid for one's life are two different things. Oh no, he was not vicious, he was an hombre noble, senior. And it is excessively dangerous to be an espider in Mexico.

LARUELLE: I don't know why, but I always felt he might have been a great force for good...

The lights in the cantina flash on and off and Bustamante, murmuring excuses, goes out. Laruelle sits, studying the book: a volume of Elizabethan plays, with the Consul's name on the flyleaf. He starts to put the book down and a sheet of paper flutters out. He picks it up and opens it: it is a letter, in the Consul's handwriting, shaky and trembling.

(I have cut this letter absolutely to the bone: it may be that more will be used, finally, but that is up to ~~me~~ *the director*, I think. Also how the camera is used during the reading, I'm merely making suggestions: but I believe we should not see his face, only a lonely figure .)

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: ...light, and once again, the nightly grapple with death, the room shaking with daemonic orchestras, the snatches of fearful sleep, the voices outside the window, my name being continually repeated with scorn by imaginary parties arriving, the dark's spinets...

As he speaks we lap-dissolve to the Consul, seen from behind, half-staggering up the absolutely empty Calle Nicaragua, toward his house. It is night, perhaps one street lamp is burning.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: ...The name of this land is Hell. It is not Mexico of course but in the heart.

We see him cross his ruined garden, and enter his house.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: ...the Farolito, in Farian, where I sit now in a little room off the bar at four-thirty in the morning drinking mescal and writing this..

The Consul, alone in a little room, at a table. We see his back, the writing paper and a bottle on the table beside him.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: Today I received from my lawyer news of our divorce. This was as I invited it...

The Consul's hand reaches out for a drink.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE:...I seem to see now, between mescals, this path, and beyond it strange vistas, like visions of a new life together we might somewhere lead. I seem to see us living in some northern country, of mountains and blue water...

Perhaps at one side of the screen, beyond the bottle, a hazy vision of a cottage, between forest and sea.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: ... and I am haunted continuously by the thought of your songs, your warmth and merriment, of your simplicity and comradeship, of your abilities in a hundred ways! Do you remember the Strauss song we used to sing? "Once a year the dead live for one day. Oh, come to me again, as once in May!

The Consul, a lone figure against an eerie dawn, leaves the Farolito.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: But oh, I pray for this now, that you will come. For God's sake hear me, my defences are down, at the moment they are down - Come back, come back - I will stop drinking, anything, I am dying without you. For Christ Jesus sake Yvonne come back to me, here me, it is a cry, come back to me Yvonne, if only for a day...

Laruelle in the cantina: in the background we see the peasants who have taken refuge from the storm: their baskets, serapes, children, lit by candle light. Laruelle begins to fold up the letter, then, suddenly, he thrusts it into the candle flame and as it flares up brightly we see the people in mourning from the cemeteries. A bell rings out. Laruelle watches the letter till it burns to ashes, then goes to the door. Beyond him, in the tempestuous night, the luridous wheel of the fiesta revolves, halts, turns... and revolves backwards...

(N.B. ~~we must~~ we must use this letter here, and I feel strongly that we must hear the Consul's voice, be with him, feel him. If Laruelle reads it we lose nearly all it's dramatic value and poignancy. I feel I have now cut too much: that we should know he has letters from her which he hasn't read, because of course we are going to use her letters with tremendous effect at the end. But what we must know is the fact of the divorce, the Strauss song, the Farolito, the vision of a new life together - this is important and I'll go into it later - and finally his desperate appeal for her to come back, if only for a day.)

This opening sequence is of the greatest importance. We must convince our audience they are going to see a great film. We must set the mood: sombre, tragic, but exciting. We must set the background, and build up the entrance of our protagonist; and strike many of the chords, the symbols, that will be resolved at the end.

SEQUENCE 2:

(N.B. Now we have the 12 hours of the day, from 7 in the morning until 7 at night, and we run straight through in time to the end.)

✓ (We lap dissolve from the Ferris wheel turning backwards in the night to the same wheel, at rest, in early morning sunlight. It is too early for the fiesta to have started but the trappings are here: the empty bandstand, the merry-go-round, etc. Above the entrance to the Hotel Bella Vista is the sign: HOTEL BELLA VISTA GRAN BAILE NOVEMBRE 1938 A BENEFICIO DE LA CRUZ ROJA. LOS MEJORES ARTISTAS DEL RADIO EN ACCION NO FALTE VD. A station wagon draws up and Yvonne gets out and stands a moment, looking round the square. A taxi driver from one of the empty cabs standing nearby comes up and takes her bags. THE CONSUL'S VOICE: (from the interior of the Bella Vista bar) A corpse will be transported by express.

Yvonne, who has started toward the taxi, stops dead.

THE CONSUL'S VOICE: But why, Fernando, why should a corpse be transported by express, do you suppose?

The taxi driver sets Yvonne's bags down.

THE TAXI DRIVER: Si, Senora. (he chuckles) Senora - El Consul. (He inclines his head toward the bar with a certain admiration.) Que hombre!

Yvonne enters the bar and stops in the doorway; we see the Consul. Still in his dress clothes, not particularly dishevelled, he is alone except for the bartender; holding a timetable in one hand, the other clasped in his short pointed beard. He is talking to the barman about the corpse when he looks up and sees Yvonne, the sun behind her, her pose half jaunty, a little diffident. Still holding the timetable he gets slowly to his feet as she comes forward.

THE CONSUL: (quietly) Good God.

Yvonne hesitates but he makes no move toward her, so she sits on a bar stool beside him. They do not kiss.

YVONNE: Surprise party. I've come back... My plane got in an hour ago, from Acapulco. Geoffrey -

THE CONSUL: Don't you love these early mornings. Have a - (offers her a cigarette)

The Consul's voice is steady but his hand is suddenly shaking as he puts down the timetable. Yvonne turns and gives the taxi driver some money.

YVONNE: Calle Nicaragua, cincuenta dos. (the taxi driver exits with her bags.)

THE CONSUL: What if I didn't live there any more? (he is shaking so violently he has to hold the bottle of whisky in both hands; he is pouring himself a drink.) Have a drink?

This is the mood in which they meet, after the year's separation and the divorce, and this mood is set by the Consul. Yvonne is frightened, but full of love, and a trembling hopeless sort of hope. They have a bit more conversation which I won't detail now, ^{she mentions the letters she "wrote till her heart broke",} and we must see the old woman from Tarasco, with her dominoes and her chicken, so we will recognize her at the end, in the Farolito.

SEQUENCE 3. The walk home from the Bella Vista.

As they come out of the bar into the square the Consul remarks that the taxis have all disappeared, and says, "shall we walk?" Before she can stop herself Yvonne asks what's happened to the car, and he replies casually that he's lost it. He has his stick, and has put on his dark glasses, and is correct, arry and navy, Consul. Yvonne is the one who is flustered.

This is a fairly long sequence and very important. I will not detail the first part: they walk through the square and down the street beside Cortez' Palace. Various small incidents occur which tell us much about the Consul, and Yvonne, as they pass the little shops and cantinas etc. Now they reach the corner of their own street, the Calle Nicaragua, and Yvonne stops suddenly, staring at a house: it is Jacques Laruelle's, and we see the

but the Consul hasn't told him of the divorce. High has been trying to sober the Consul up, but has gone off to Mexico City, however, he will be back sometime today. The reason for Yvonne's consternation at this news we may guess at this point, and it will shortly be confirmed.

---(N.B. We should see the volcanoes frequently during this walk, sometimes both, sometimes Popo alone, looming over them. Although I have not indicated it here, I think we should use the various signs IBOXI ARENA TCHALIN which they encounter, as they are used in the book, to punctuate and emphasize the conversation.)

They have now reached the broken gateway in the wall of their house. A hideous pariah dog follows them as they enter and start down the driveway.

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SEQUENCE 4 On the porch.

Yvonne and the Consul walk up the driveway through the neglected, ruined garden. The Consul speaks gently to the dog who has followed them, but it cowers away back down the drive.

THE CONSUL: The garden is a rajah mess I'm afraid. We've been virtually without a gardner at all for months. Hugh pulled up a few weeds. He cleaned out the swimming pool too... Hear it? It ought to be full today.

YVONNE: (she disengages her arm from the Consul's to lift aside a tentacle of trumpet vine growing right across the path) Oh Geoffrey! Where're my camellias?

THE CONSUL: God knows.

They stop on the porch where an old woman is standing.

THE CONSUL: Here's Concepta. Yvonne: Concepta. Concepta: Senora Firmin.

Concepta smiles and wipes her hands on her apron and shakes hands with Yvonne as the Consul notices Yvonne's three bags and a hatbox bespangled with labels.

THE CONSUL: El otro Senor? Hasn't returned yet? All right, Yvonne, I dare say you want your old room.

CONCEPTA: (she takes the bags and goes in the house) Porque no, agua caliente.

THE CONSUL: (as they enter the house) So there's hot water for you, which is a miracle!

They emerge from the house on to the patio. There is a spacious view: beyond the swimming pool the garden stretches down to the barranca, across the barranca the rolling country mounts to the two volcanoes: Popo and Ixta. Yvonne and the Consul stand for a moment on the patio without speaking, not holding hands, but with their hands just meeting. Immediately below them the pool, fed by a leaky hose, is nearly full. Concepta comes back carrying a tray, with two glasses, a soda syphon, a jarro of melting ice and a bottle containing a dull red concoction, and a bottle of Johnny Walker

THE CONSUL: Concepta knows my habits, you see... However, this is the strychnine compound Hugh produced for me. Will you have a whisky and soda?

YVONNE: Good heavens, not for me, thank you. Let me have some breakfast first.

A VOICE: (~~with a slight sound of noise~~, gabbling very rapidly) She might have said yes for once for now of course poor old chap you want horribly to get drunk all over again don't you the whole trouble being as we see it that Yvonne's long-dreamed-of coming - alas but put away the anguish my boy there's nothing in it - has in itself created the most important situation in your life save one namely the far more important situation it in turn creates of your having to have five hundred drinks in order to deal with it.

THE CONSUL: I don't feel you believe in the strychnine somehow.

The Consul pours himself a half tumbler of the strychnine and ironically puts some ice in it.

INNER VOICE OF THE CONSUL: I have resisted temptation for two and one half minutes at least my redemption is sure.

ANOTHER VOICE: (the delivery is very rapid, monotonous, hammering, and somehow ghostly and demonic) Neither do I believe in the strychnine, you'll make me cry again, you bloody fool Geoffrey Firmin, I'll kick your face in, O idiot!

FIRST VOICE: But can't you see you cabron that she is thinking that the first thing you think of after she has arrived home like this is a drink even if it is only strychnine the intrusive necessity for which and juxtaposition cancels its innocence so you might as well in the face of such hostility start now on the whisky instead of later not on the tequila where is it by the way all right all right we know where it is that would be the beginning of the end nor on the mescal which would be the end though a damned good end perhaps -

YVONNE: (laughing, or trying to) For Pete's sake have a decent drink. You don't have to drink that stuff to impress me.

The Consul has a moment of hallucination: he is embracing Yvonne passionately. Then, somewhere out of the heavens, a swan, transfixed, plunges to earth: outside the cantina El Fuerte del Sol men wait in the sunshine for the shutters to roll up with a crash of trumpets. The Consul almost falls backwards into a broken chair.

THE CONSUL: No ~~more~~, I'll stick to the old medicine, thanks.

The Consul is silent a moment, staring at Yvonne (we hear the hose dripping into the swimming pool): this is the moment he has prayed for. But the moment has gone, been lost; confused, he gropes in his trouser pockets and brings out a card:

Arturo Diaz Vigil
Medico Cirujano y Partero
Enfermedades de Niños
Indisposiciones Nerviosas
Consultas de 12 a 2 y de 4 a 7
Av. Revolucion Numero 8

THE CONSUL: (replacing the card in his pocket) Have you really come back, or have you just come to see me?

YVONNE: (merrily, with a slight note of challenge) Here I am, aren't I?

THE CONSUL: Strange... Yet it's awfully courageous of you. What if - I'm in a frightful jolly mess, you know.

YVONNE: But you look amazingly well I thought. You've no idea how well you look.

THE CONSUL: (flexing his biceps) Still strong as a horse.

YVONNE: (her face averted) How do I look?

THE CONSUL: Didn't I say? Beautiful... Brown. Brown as a berry. You've been swimming. You look as though you'd had plenty of sun.

Yvonne rises from the parapet and takes off her hat with an impatient gesture. She glances timidly toward the house, trying to gather courage to enter, then seats herself on the ~~damned~~ broken daybed, which emits a rending crash of guitar chords. The Consul watches her twist her wedding ring round her finger. Then his gaze shifts to the pool.

OK

THE CONSUL'S INNER VOICE : Might a soul bathe there and be clean or slake its drought?

(Note: the next exchange of dialogue is good but can be cut if necessary for we must not forget our pace, or let this sag.)

YVONNE: (suddenly) Your eyes, you poor darling - they've got such a glare!

THE CONSUL: A touch of the goujeers - just a touch.

YVONNE: Geoffrey, this place is a wreck.

THE CONSUL: Look here... Suppose for the sake of argument you abandon a besieged town to the enemy and then somehow or other not very long afterwards you go back to it - there's something about my analogy I don't like but never mind - suppose you do it, then you can't very well expect to invite your soul into quite the same green graces, with quite the same dear old welcome here and there, can you, eh?

YVONNE: But I didn't abandon -

THE CONSUL: Even, I wouldn't say, if that town seems to be going about its business again, though in a somewhat stricken fashion, I admit, and its trans running more or less on schedule. Eh?

They confront each other like ~~two~~ mute unspeaking forts; the Consul picks up the whisky bottle, uncorks it, smells it, and puts it down without drinking. The telephone rings and the Consul goes to the dining room to answer it; he starts to speak into the receiver, then, sweating, into the mouthpiece.

THE CONSUL: (shaking, afraid of the telephone, not listening) All right goodbye. Oh say, Tom, what was the origin of that silver rumour that appeared in the papers yesterday denied by Washington? All right. Goodbye. Yes I have, terrible. Oh, they did! Too bad. But after all they own it. Or don't they? Goodbye. They probably will. Yes, that's all right. Goodbye Goodbye! (he hangs up the wrong way.) Christ!

He returns to the patio, Yvonne is not there. He hears the water running in the bathroom. He is "safe" for a little while.

SEQUENCE 5.

While Yvonne is bathing the Consul dashes out for a quick drink at a little cantina nearby. But he stumbles, falls, and lies there, face down in the street.

THE CONSUL: (muttering to himself) Hugh, old chap, old brother, is that you, lending the old boy a hand?... Are you listening? Do I make myself clear? Clear that I've forgiven you, as I've never wholly been able to forgive Yvonne... (H.D. There is a bit more to this which we'll use in the script, but sufficient to this brief treatment is the affirmation that Hugh and Yvonne have had an affair, and though Hugh is forgiven and still loved, Yvonne is not, wholly.)

While the Consul is muttering to himself, still face down in the street, a car draws up beside him and an English voice calls out: "I say, I say, what's the matter there?" The Consul springs to his feet, sober and correct: "Nothing. Absolutely all right." The brief and witty scene which follows ~~would~~^{two} could only occur between ~~two~~ Englishmen. It is not necessary to detail it for this treatment, but from it the Consul emerges triumphant, even offering to help the other man, who drives off calling out "Bungho!"

Erect, restored, the Consul glides back down the Calle Nicaragua.

SEQUENCE 6. Yvonne's bedroom.

The Consul, brushing off the dust and smoothing his hair, crosses the porch and enters Yvonne's bedroom. She is in bed, wearing a nightgown, and eating some breakfast. I shall not now detail this scene, which depends to a great extent on how ~~it~~^{the director} wishes to handle it. After some conversation, in which Yvonne fails to persuade the Consul to leave Mexico, to go away, with ~~her~~ he attempts to make love to her, and he fails.

I think during the first part of the scene we should contrast the whisky bottle, seen through the open doorway on the porch, with Yvonne

lying on the bed. And also his vision of the cantina at the moment of his unsuccessful attempt to possess Yvonne. In fact, we're going to have to use the camera in all sorts of imaginative and experimental ways throughout, but though we may suggest ideas and so on, this is up to ^{the director} ~~the director~~ and his cameraman.

SEQUENCE 7.

This scene is very brief but important. He has both visual and auditory hallucinations, and they are important.

The Consul, now in absolute anguish, emerges from Yvonne's room on to the porch; he is so beside himself he hardly knows what he's doing and he pours a glass of whisky and one of strychnine, puts them both on the parapet and sits down, looking at the glasses.

A VOICE: Have you forgotten the letters Geoffrey Firmin the letters she wrote till her heart broke why do you sit there trembling why do you not go back to her now she will understand why do you think she is weeping it is not for that alone the letters my boy the letters you never answered you didn't you did then where is your reply but have never really read where are they now Geoffrey Firmin lost or left somewhere even we do not know where...

The Consul takes a sip of whisky, then has a visual hallucination: he sees a dead man, lying flat on his back beside the swimming pool with a scabrero over his face. It vanishes, but something else seems to be behind his back, at his elbow, peering over his shoulder. Then that is gone too.

The Consul is talking to himself: nothing unusual in a drunken man, God knows, "I shall sober up. I am straightening out. I am tapering off. What am I talking about. Even I know I am being fatuous." etc. Now he hypocritically takes a sip of strychnine and lies back in his chair.

THE CONSUL: The will of Man is unconquerable. Even God cannot conquer it.

We see Lopo and Ixta, clear and beautiful on the horizon, and overhead the vultures, circling, waiting. Then the Consul "falls asleep with a crash."

SEQUENCE 8. The meeting of Hugh and Yvonne in the garden.

This is brief but highly dramatic, since we now know what the situation is between them, and we know that while Yvonne is prepared to meet Hugh, he is not ^{prepared to see her.} This opens with Hugh, in his cowboy clothes and Stetson hat, coming up the driveway toward the house, ^{he is reading a telegram.} He has almost stumbled into a deep pothole when he looks up and sees Yvonne. We could use our camera very effectively with the series of images which express his astonishment: the horse half stopped over the hurdle, the diver, the guillotine, the hanged man falling, the wheel, the piston, poised -

Yvonne is wearing slacks and weeding the garden; seeing Hugh she stands,
YVONNE: Hallo, Hugh. Geoffrey said you were here. How nice to see you again.

HUGH: How absolutely something or other. When did you get here?

They shake hands, and Hugh drops her hand as if carelessly, but he is trying to rise to the occasion.

YVONNE: Just a little while ago.

He has absent-mindedly handed Yvonne the telegram; she asks about it and he says it's the last one he'll send, that he's quit newspaper work. Meanwhile he is buttoning his shirt and putting ^{he was carrying over his shoulder.} on a tweed jacket. Yvonne recognizes this as an old one of Geoffrey's; she returns the telegram which he puts in the jacket pocket. Because of the mechanics of the plot this telegram is important and must be planted here. We do not have to read it of course but must see enough to recognize it when it turns up in the Farolito, for Hugh returns the jacket and the Consul later wears it. We hear the Consul snoring on the porch, and in a sort of mutual embarrassment they quickly decide to take a walk. We must handle this scene as it is in the book, with just the right touch of lightness and irony floating over the drama underneath.

SEQUENCE 9. The walk.

Hugh and Yvonne emerge from the driveway to the Calle Nicaragua and

turn away from the town: we see the countryside ahead with hills rolling up to the volcanoes. (N.B. we must see the volcanoes frequently during this scene and the next.) As they approach the bridge across the barranca a billy goat standing nearby charges them, and there is a dramatic moment when Yvonne is in Hugh's arms: then he twists her abruptly away, and they walk on. Now they are on the bridge and we must see the barranca in all its appalling depth. There is a short exchange of dialogue concerning Hugh's possible return to Spain, and the Civil War: Hugh evades a direct answer and says he's sailing on a ship out of Vera Cruz, going back to sea as a quartermaster. (N.B. He is going to Spain, and we'll cope with this in the shaving scene with the Consul shortly.) Then they see the horses in the field ahead and decide to ride.

SEQUENCE 10: The horseback ride.

We must see the policemen on the watchtower, hear the target practice, but in the main this should have a lyrical quality, a beauty of countryside and trees and streams and clouds and fields. But ⁺ think we must somehow indicate that this could not be more ironic. Hugh thinks: "and it is all a bloody lie, we have fallen inevitably into it, it is as if upon this one day in the year... we have been allowed a glimpse of what never was at all, of what never can be since brotherhood was betrayed - the image of our happiness. And yet I do not expect, ever in my life, to be happier than I am now. No peace I shall ever find but will be poisoned as these moments are poisoned - " perhaps we can turn some of this into dialogue.

They come to an odd brewery, with a few tables outside, and stop for a drink, which is handed up to them on horseback. Hugh drinks, then suddenly speaks.

HUGH: Yvonne, do you mind if I ask you straight out if you are divorced from Geoff or not?

Yvonne chokes on her beer and her horse gives a small forward lurch.

HUGH: Do you mean to go back to him? Or have you already gone back?
Forgive my being so blunt, but I feel in a horribly false position. - I'd like to know what the situation is.

YVONNE: (not looking at Hugh) So would I.

HUGH: Then you don't know whether you have divorced him or not?

YVONNE: Oh, I've - divorced him. (she is unhappy)

HUGH: But you don't know whether you've gone back to him or not?

YVONNE: Yes. No... Yes. I've gone back to him all right all right.

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They agree that it would be better if Hugh were to leave at once, and ride on slowly. Yvonne rather tentatively tells Hugh of her plan, or hope, to get the Consul away somewhere, perhaps on a farm, perhaps to Canada. Hugh sees the delusive fallacy of this but also as it strikes him as comical, he jests and laughs at her idea, goading her into a flash of anger. She urges her horse into a brief wild canter, but the terrain is too rough: Hugh catches her and they halt together. He is contrite, and more out of pity for her than in any belief it will work, he encourages her, and envisions for her a cottage between forest and sea, in Canada. He ends the sequence on a vague, delusive note of hope, with Yvonne and Hugh, wind in their faces, ~~going~~ ^{sizing} out over the countryside toward the volcanoes (and Parian) behind which storm clouds are beginning to gather.

(N.B. One important thing which runs like a fine thread through the story is the hope of a new life together somewhere in the North, which is mentioned by the Consul in his letter to Yvonne, picked up by Senora Gregorio in her scene, again by the Consul and Yvonne in the bull-throwing scene, and by Hugh here. I have to explain what this really meant to Malcolm was actually some life after death together, for he was a religious man and believed in survival, etc. Also it is a universal dream of pastoral escape to the lost Eden. The reasons the symbols for this are what they are here is because the only place in the world, or the first place at least, where

he found happiness was our cabin by the sea in Canada. (see The Forest Path to the Spring.) And I think we must suggest this idea rather as he did, for we must not lose the religious significance of the book or we lose a great deal. Catholics have told me it is the only great Christian novel since Pilgrim's Progress. (Of course others see it differently: some as a mystique, the Consul as a black magician, the Cabbala, etc. and they are absolutely right too.) But the fall of man, the knowledge of evil, the eviction from the garden, etc. etc. are all profound religious symbols as well as relating to the great myths of Western culture and we mustn't lose sight of this.

In these early scenes, as the characters are meeting, the situation between them developing with hints of its many cross-currents, nuances, and implications, we will find it necessary to the plot to "plant" certain objects and ideas; but it is equally essential for us to become deeply involved with the people themselves, to care deeply about what happens to them, and though we shortly recognize the absolute inevitability of their doom, we must hope, right to the end, for something, something to save them.)

SEQUENCE 11. The Consul in the garden.

The Consul has awakened and is suffering from acute hangover and fairly acute D.T.'s which, in the ensuing scene take both audible and visible forms.

We see him, still in his dress clothes, now dishevelled, staggering, almost running down through the ruined garden. He has a conversation with his demonic voices; they lead him to a tequila bottle he has hidden behind a bush. Shaking, almost unable to do so, he drinks from the bottle. Hearing another voice sharply telling him to stop drinking, to put the bottle down, he turns round and sees, on the path in front of him, a broken twig become a snake and wriggle away. Then the pariah dog appears suddenly, and is gone. He hides the bottle in the bushes again.

Now the voices cease, he feels better, though he is sweating profusely,

he walks quietly down toward the fence that separates his garden from the little public garden beyond. He sees the sign ?LE CUSTA ESTA JARDIN? and stops dead. In his state of drunkenness and desperate guilt he takes this sign personally and mistranslates it, speaking aloud.

THE CONSUL: You like this garden? Why is it yours? We evict those who destroy!

After a moment of profound stunned agony he turns back to the tequila bottle and drinks again. He mutters to himself.

THE CONSUL: We evict those who destroy!...Well, perhaps it doesn't mean quite that... I may have translated it wrongly... Still...

He sees his next door neighbour, Mr. Quincey, watering his garden, and wanting someone to talk to now, he starts down the path again, carefully avoiding the public garden. He sees a figure in the path in deepest mourning, head bowed in anguish: it disappears. The barranca cuts off one corner of his garden and he stops and peeps down into it.

THE CONSUL: Ah, the frightful cleft, the eternal horror of opposites - Thou mighty gulf, insatiate cormorant, deride me not, though I seem petulant to fall into thy chops.

He disappears behind some bushes and emerges walking slowly, calmly, even nonchalantly: but we see his open fly. He is now at the part of his garden that borders on his neighbours. Mr. Quincey's garden is immaculate: sweeping lawns, flower beds, etc. and Quincey himself is grey-haired, fit, sober. They have a brief conversation during which the Consul is airy, imaginative, witty, and Quincey is coldly factual and contemptuous. Finally, feeling ill, the Consul closes his eyes (or we use the blurring out and in we will use in the next sequence) and when he opens them Quincey has gone and Dr. Vigil is approaching him, up Quincey's garden. They have a brief but meaningful conversation, the Consul invites the doctor up to his

house for a drink. Then the Consul drifts (perhaps we should use briefly the weirdly beautiful vision he has here, leading into a vision of the Farolito, in Parian,) back up the garden toward the porch, where we see Yvonne and Hugh.

(N.B. If we feel we are losing pace here we can cut the scene with Quincey, for actually it contributes little to the plot; For this reason I have not detailed it, but it is thematic, and it tells us much about the Consul. However - if we do cut this scene he could look back up the garden after peering into the barranca and see Yvonne and Hugh on the porch and proceed from there.)

SEQUENCE 12 On the porch.

(Note: I think we should carry this straight forward in time and not have the Consul remembering it in the bathroom. But he is in bad shape at this point and I am suggesting a technique whereby from time to time the scene and the voices blur and fade and when we resume a minute, or several minutes have elapsed which the Consul has lost.)

Yvonne and Hugh on the porch (in the patio of course) the Consul approaching from the garden.

YVONNE: (to Hugh) - but suppose he's absolutely adamant. Suppose he simply won't go.

THE CONSUL: (gaily, waving his hand) Hi there, Suchiquetal! Hi there, Hugh, you old snake in the grass!

He crosses the porch, smiling at Yvonne, shaking hands with Hugh. He goes to the icebox and takes out a cold bottle of beer.

HUGH: (opening the beer for the Consul) Geoff, I have to go back to the City today -

THE CONSUL: Nonsense. You can't go back today. (He is suddenly authoritative, Consular) There's only the one bus, the one you came on, and it's already gone back. And the only train doesn't leave till 11:45 tonight.

The scene blurs, and when the image reforms Dr. Vigil is there, talking to Hugh. Yvonne has disappeared and the Consul is at the icebox for another bottle of beer.

DR. VIGIL: Oh, I was so terrible sick this morning I needed to be holding myself to the street windows. (To the Consul, as he returns) Please forgive my stupid comport last night: oh, I have done a lot of stupid things everywhere these last few days but (raising his glass of whiskey) I will never drink more. I will need two full days of sleeping to recover myself.

(Yvonne returns and Vigil gives the whole show away, raising his glass to

the Consul) Salud. I hope you are not as sick as I am. You were so perfectamente borracho last night I think you must have killed yourself with drinking. I think even to send a boy after you this morning to knock your door, and find if drinking have not killed you already.

The scene blurs again and when we come back in focus Yvonne and Hugh are swimming in the pool, Dr. Vigil and the Consul stand beside the parapet.

DR. VIGIL: Absolutamente.

THE CONSUL: I have another enemy round the back you can't see. A sunflower. I know it watches me and I know it hates me.

DR. VIGIL: Exactamente. Very possible it might be hating you a little less if you would stop from drinking tequila.

THE CONSUL: Yes, but I'm only drinking beer this morning, as you can see for yourself.

DR. VIGIL: Si, hombre.

THE CONSUL: There are a thousand aspects of this infernal beauty I was talking about, each with its peculiar tortures, each jealous as a woman of all stimulation save its own.

DR. VIGIL: Naturalmente. But I think if you are very serious about your progression al ratos you may take a longer journey even than this proposed one to Tomalin. (The Consul puts his beer glass down beside the strychnine.) We too, unless we contain with ourselves never to drink no more. I think, mi amigo, sickness is not only in body but in that part used to be called, soul.

THE CONSUL: Soul?

Once more the scene blurs and reforms. Yvonne is walking around on tiptoe, the doctor regarding her with admiration.

DR. VIGIL: Senora Firvin, I am really disappointed though you cannot come with me to Ouanajuato.

The Consul and Yvonne almost exchange a look of humor, understanding,

then she dives into the pool again.

DR. VIGIL: (to the Consul) Guanajuato, the streets. How can you resist the names of the streets? Street of Kisses. Street of Singing Frogs. The Street of the Little Head. Is not that revolting?

THE CONSUL: Repellent. Isn't Guanajuato the place they bury everybody standing up? (He has a moment of energy and calls down to Hugh at the pool) Tomalin's quite near Parian, Hugh, we might even go on there. (to the doctor) Perhaps you might come too. I left my favorite pipe in Parian. Which I might get back, with luck. In the Farolito.

DR. VIGIL: Whooo, es un inferno!

YOUNG: (lifting the corner of her bathing cap over her ear, mockly) Not a bullfight?

THE CONSUL: No, a bullthrowing. If you're not too tired?

There is a sudden detonation that shakes the house and sends birds skidding panic-stricken over the garden, puffs of smoke are drifting high over the hills, three vultures come tearing through the trees as the echoes of gunfire sweep back over the house.

DR. VIGIL Target practice. In the Sierra Madre.

The clock strikes twelve inside the house.

THE CONSUL: Ah, that the dream of dark magician in his visioned cave, even while his hand - that's the bit I like - shakes in its last decay, were the true end of this so lovely world. Jesus. Do you know, compañero, I sometimes have the feeling that it's actually sinking, like Atlantis, beneath my feet.

DR. VIGIL: Si, that is tequila. But hombre, now that your esposa has come back -

Now we have a visual blur, during which Dr. Vigil's face appears and reappears, and he is saying over and over again, "But hombre, now that your esposa has come back - " Then, suddenly, all is clear and the doctor is going

DR. VIGIL: (at the door,) I did not need to be inquisitive to be knowing you might have wished my advice. No, hombre, as I say last night, I am not so interested in monies, I am very much interested in insanes. (he bows)
H asta la vista.

HUGH AND YVONNE FROM THE POOL: Adios. Muchas gracias. Thank you so much. Sorry we couldn't come. Have a good time.

THE CONSUL: Hasta la vista.

say the least. The Consul knows this, though Hugh does not directly admit it. I see how to do this briefly in dialogue. Next point: while Hugh is shaving the Consul and helping him to dress we should see the Consul's books, the ones on the Cabbala, Haute Magie, etc. There is some amusing stuff they read from the newspaper we can use, which will bring us to the most important point. This is that the Fascist Union Militar, who are not the "real" police but are associated with them through the Inspector General and the Jefe de Jardineros, are a dangerous group, and their base is in Parian. Next point: Hugh returns the Consul's borrowed jacket, with the telegram in the pocket (though of course they do not discover it) which is used against the Consul in the final sequence in the Farolito. The Consul puts the jacket on. And I think we can end this sequence effectively with the Consul's remarks (Hugh has been looking at a book on Demonology)

"Erekiá, the one who tears asunder; and they who shriek with a long drawn cry: Apelki, the misleaders or turners aside; and those who attack their prey with a tremulous motion...the flesh inclothed and the evil questioners ...All these at one time or another have visited my bed," as they move out on to the porch where Yvonne is waiting for them, and ~~we~~ set off for Tomalin. The Consul is now clean, dressed and shaved, his beard trimmed, he seems fairly sober and looks a figure of complete respectability, with his cane and his dark glasses.

SEQUENCE 15. On the Calle Nicaragua.

This sequence is short, it covers their leaving the house, their walk up the Calle Nicaragua (down which the Consul and Yvonne walked that morning). We see the scorpion, the boy driving cows, the goats with tinkling bells, the signs BOX! AGENA TOMALIN. Then a plane sails low overhead just as Jacques Laruelle appears, stepping out of a side road to suddenly confront them. He, of course, is astonished and shaken to see Yvonne, but recovers

himself. The Consul introduces Hugh and Laruelle, then, as Laruelle takes Yvonne's arm and they walk ahead, he says aside to Hugh:

THE CONSUL: I really think you two ought to get together. You have something in common.

Laruelle invites them to his house for a drink: they have plenty of time, their bus for Tomalin does not leave until 2:30, over an hour hence. Hugh is puzzled, Laruelle is flustered, beneath his poise, Yvonne is unhappy and flustered: only the Consul is totally in command.

We end this sequence with the delightful little postman (I won't detail it here) and the belated card from Yvonne to the Consul. The Consul reads the card, "Darling, why did I leave? Why did you let me?" etc. and hands the card to Hugh, murmuring, "Strange..."

SEQUENCE 16. Laruelle's house.

This is a long and important sequence, which I have roughly broken down into scenes. One reason it is important is because this is the only time in the whole day that the Consul makes an effort to stop drinking, however half-hearted and dubious it may be, we must follow him closely through this.

SCENE 1. Outside Laruelle's house. I do not consider it necessary to follow Malcolm's description of this house: it has no "meaning," it was simply an odd house that amused him, so he used it. The house must have the necessary towers, balconies, etc. and of course the inscription *NO SE PUEDE VIVIR SIN AÑAR* on the outside wall, which we see clearly as the group approaches the house and enters.

SCENE 2. We pick them up inside the house, emerging from a stairway into a tower room, with a balcony and an opposite door leading to another stairway to the roof. The balcony looks on the town, the roof at the barranca and

and the volcanoes. Yvonne and the Consul go out on the balcony, Hugh to the roof, and Laruelle downstairs to make drinks.

SCENE 3. Yvonne and the Consul on the balcony; beyond them we see the fair: the wheel, the flying machines, etc. This should be a moving scene, deeply felt. Yvonne quietly and tenderly appeals to the Consul: "But I'm back. Can't you see it? We're here together again, it's us. Can't you see that?" She is almost crying. For a moment it seems there is a chance for them to be reconciled, and we should pray that they will be (knowing all the time they won't of course). But the fact that they are in Laruelle's house, the scene of Yvonne's unfaithfulness, is too much for the Consul and he cannot forgive her. Feeling her postcard in his pocket, in a moment of passionate jealousy, he leaves her abruptly.

SCENE 4. Laruelle's bedroom. The Consul enters and stands for a moment staring at the bed. There are pictures on the walls, Goyas and Riviéras, and among them a new picture the Consul hasn't seen before: Los Borrachones, which we must see clearly, the drunkards tumbling into hell, the sober rising to heaven, ridiculous and terrifying at once. The Consul laughs, a trifle shakily, and calls out to Hugh on the roof (we probably need a brief look at Hugh on the roof staring through binoculars) who replies Hé's looking through binoculars and has Parian in pretty good focus. This brings the Consul another vision of the Farolito, in Parian: eerie, beautiful, terrifying. Then he glances back at Yvonne, standing alone on the balcony.

THE CONSUL: (to himself, quietly but passionately) How can I be faithful to Yvonne and the Farolito both? - Christ, oh pharos of the world, how, and with what blind faith, can I find my way back, fight my way back, now...

Laruelle is coming up the stairs, and the Consul suddenly takes Yvonne's postcard from his pocket and slips it under the pillow on the bed.

SCENE 5. Now, briefly, the four of them on the roof. Yvonne, trying desperately to get away, out of the house, suggests that Hugh should see something of the fiesta before they go to Tonalin. The Consul agrees, but says

despite Yvonne's pleading look that he'll meet them at the bus terminal. Hugh and Yvonne leave, Laruelle sees them out, leaving the Consul alone on the roof. He has come to a sort of half decision to stop drinking, and has not touched the drink given him. The others have barely tasted theirs, the cocktail shaker is not empty. The Consul stares at all these drinks and we feel his effort not to drink, his will holding, somehow.

THE CONSUL: Horror. Yet I will not give in. Whatever I do, it shall be deliberately. The will of man is unconquerable. Eat? I should eat.

He eats half a canape. Laruelle returns and upbraids him:

LARUELLE: Have you gone mad? Am I to understand that your wife has come back to you, something I have seen you praying and howling for under the table... And that you treat her indifferently as this, and still continue only to care where the next drink's coming from?

The Consul picks up his drink, snalls it, and puts it down. The phone rings and Laruelle goes downstairs to answer it. Still without drinking the Consul follows him.

SCENE 6. Laruelle's bedroom. It was Dr. Vigil who had telephoned: Vigil, the symbol of help. The dialogue is excellent here but I won't detail it now. The Consul closes his eyes, hearing again Vigil's voice, "But now that your esposa has come back.. " he opens his eyes to see Laruelle, naked, under the shower. The sight of Laruelle's naked body is an abominable impact and brings him trembling to his feet. But the thought of Vigil is still with him and he actually makes one desperate abortive try.

SCENE 7. In the tower room. The telephone is in a niche, and the Consul enters, sweating profusely, and shaking all over. He finds the telephone book and opens it: names, numbers start out at him, he turns the leaves, sweat splashes on the page. He has taken the receiver off the hook without knowing it, or knowing what number he wants, he holds the receiver the wrong way up, speaking into it, then into the mouth-hole, back into the receiver,

shaking, shouting, "Que quieres? Who do you want... God!" He hangs up and runs for the stairway.

SCENE 8. On the roof. The Consul rushes up onto the roof in a frenzy, shaking, and drinks everything in sight. He hears music. Then three hundred head of cattle, dead, frozen stiff in the postures of the living, spring up on the slope below the house: vanish.

SCENE 9. The tower room. The Consul comes quietly back downstairs, sits down and picks up a book: Cocteau's La Machine Infernale, and is reading calmly when Laruelle enters, resplendent in white flannels. The Consul picks up his dark glasses and cane, Laruelle his tennis racquet and they leave the house together.

SCENE 10. Outside the house. They leave and briefly, without emphasis, we see the sign: NO SE HUNDE VIVIR SIN AMAR.

SEQUENCE 17. The Fiesta

The Consul and Laruelle walk toward the zocalo; we can use the dialogue in the book, with cuts, but it is not necessary to detail it here. The important thing in this scene is to plant the horse, with the number 7 branded on its rump, the saddle bags chinking, and the gay Indian, singing to himself, who waves at them and gallops away. Also they are retracing part of the route taken by Yvonne and the Consul earlier, and we see the little shops passed by them, that morning.

Then the two men are in the square, where the tumult is terrific, the midday sun blazing on the various rides, the music, the people. We should have the newsboy shouting "Es inevitable la muerte del Papa." Then the huge carousel, whirling. It stops and directly opposite the Consul is a crude but somehow moving picture of two lovers reclining by a river. The Consul stands, staring at the picture, Laruelle moves on.

THE CONSUL: (to himself) Yvonne, where are you, my darling? Darling...

(he raises his head, looking round him with a ghost of trembling joy)
She is here! Wake up, she has come back! Sweetheart, darling, I love you!
(He looks round with what is almost a resolution to find her, to take her
home and try again) Raise your head, act, before it is too late!

But it is too late. The carroussel spins and the lovers go whirling away.
The Consul's head falls on his breast, and the scene darkens as though a
cloud had come over the sun.

The Consul joins Laruelle at a little sidewalk cafe. I will not detail
their dialogue here, we will cut it sharply from the book, but it has many
ironic and tragic undertones. The Consul is drinking tequila and it is im-
portant that he says here that tequila doesn't matter, but if he should ever
drink mescal again that would be the end, for him. Laruelle is haranguing
the Consul again and the scene ends with a peculiar blurring of their voices.
The voice starts out as that of Laruelle, but as the scene blurs out and in
again the voice becomes that of the Consul, talking to himself, Laruelle
has gone.

LARUELLE: To say nothing of what you lose, lose, lose, are losing, man...
You deceive yourself. For instance that you're drowning your sorrows ...
Because of Yvonne and me. But Yvonne knows. And so do I. And so do you...

THE CONSUL: That Yvonne wouldn't have been aware. If you hadn't been so
drunk all the time. To know what she was doing. Or care. And what's more.
The same thing is bound to happen again you fool it will happen again if you
don't pull yourself together. I can see the handwriting on the wall.

The Consul now realises he is alone and staring straight at the sign:
LE GUSTA ESTA JARDIN?

He gets up and hurries away, staggering, very drunk, followed by a
group of yelling children. He sees Yvonne and Hugh at a shooting gallery,
and not wanting to be seen by them in his present state of drunkenness, he
sneaks away. He eludes the children momentarily and staggers past the
closed British Consulate. Now he comes upon the huge loop-the-loop:

IBRAVA ATTRACCION! 10c MAQUINA INFERNAL. The children have spotted him again and to avoid them he gets aboard the machine.

Swung violently, lifted upside down to its highest point, things keep falling from his pockets at every sickening plunge: notecase, pipe, keys, dark glasses, papers, etc. Finally he feels a kind of fierce delight: Let it go! Let everything go, everything that gave him purpose or identity.

He is out of the machine with the world spinning round him: he can hardly stand up. People are laughing but strangely enough the children are returning his possessions - but among them no passport. He inquires about his passport of a child who shakes her head, no: well, he must have left it at home. Catching sight of Hugh and Yvonne again he hurries away. Suddenly he feels cold sober, and glancing at his watch he makes straight for El Bosque.

(The little scene that follows has no important bearing on the mechanics of the plot, yet I feel it is important, if only because it shows the Consul's sweetness and tenderness toward the poor old woman, Senora Gregorio. Also it provides a moment of quiet after the blaze and tumult of the fiesta.)

The Consul enters El Bosque - not so much a cantina as a Mexican relative of the English "Jug and Bottle." It is dark and cool and we see along the walls the huge wine barrels and we follow his gaze: jerez, habanero, catalan, parras, zarzamora, etc. There is no one else there and he calls out, "Senora Gregorio." She enters, a little old woman in a shabby black dress. It is obvious they know each other, and their conversation seems familiar to them both: they've said it before. I'll detail a bit of it here.

SEÑORA GREGORIO: So it is. You must take it as it come. It can't be helped.

THE CONSUL: No, it can't be helped.

SEÑORA GREGORIO: If you har your wife you would lost all things in that love.

THE CONSUL: Si.

SEÑORA GREGORIO: S o it is. If your mind is occupied with all things, then

you never lose your mind. Your minds, your life - your everything in it. Once when I was a girl I never used to think I live like I laugh now. This - (she glances contemptuously round the dark room) was never in my mind. Life changes, you know, you can never drink of it.

THE CONSUL: (gently) Not "drink of it", Senora Gregorio, you mean "think of it."

SENORA GREGORIO: (nodding) Never drink of it. Oh well, a kernice life among kernice people, and now what?

She stumbles off into the back room and the Consul notices a starving parish dog, which begins to bow and scrape before him.

THE CONSUL: Dispense usted, por Dios. (Then, stooping toward it he whispers) For God sees how timid and beautiful you really are, and the thoughts of hope that go with you like little white birds - (he suddenly stands up and declaims to the dog) Yet this day, pichicho, shalt thou be with me in -

The dog hops away in terror and slinks under the door.

Senora Gregorio returns and takes the Consul's hand and holds it.

SENORA GREGORIO: I think I see you with your esposa again soon. I see you laughing together in some kernice place where you laugh. Far away, where all these troubles you har now will har - Adios.

They say their goodbyes and the Consul pushes out cautiously through the jalousie doors. He sees Dr. Vigil, in tennis clothes, and now it is significant that he does not try to speak to Vigil, he hides from him, crouching behind the door until the doctor is out of sight.

THE NEWSBOY'S VOICE: Es inevitable la muerte del Papa.

SEQUENCE 18. On the bus.

This sequence breaks down into four main scenes. It presents no technical difficulties but I'll briefly outline the scenes and the important things to remember.

SCENE 1. On the bus.

The bus plunges downhill through the town. Hugh is reading a newspaper and we see the headlines about the war in Spain, the Battle of the Ebro. We see a poster for the film Los Manos de Orlac, with bloody hands. We pass Vigil's office and see his sign on the door. Going slowly through an old square we see, in front of a little church, a man wearing a devil-mask, and again, without emphasis, the sign LE GUSTA ESTA JARDIN. We cross a bridge over the barranca and see its horrendous drop, and a dead dog right down at the bottom. Above we see the sky, and Popocatepetl, pure and beautiful. At the tavern El Amor Des Amores, the pelado, wearing two hats and a crucifix round his neck, seemingly very drunk, gets aboard. We'll need to put Hugh's reflections about the word "pelado" into dialog ue briefly, something like this:

THE CONSUL: (noticing Hugh watching the man) A pelado.

HUGH: He's hardly a shoeless illiterate.

THE CONSUL: The word has many more meanings than that. Literally it is the peeled one. But one does not have to be rich to prey on the very poor. - It finally means just thief, or exploiter, or even one who makes a show of himself.

The bus passes the Casino de la Solva and we see Laruelle and Vigil playing tennis, then we are whizzing along the open highway: we see the man, lying by the side of the road, apparently asleep, his hat over his eyes.

SCENE 2: By the road.

Hugh taps the driver on the shoulder, the bus stops and backs up. Hugh, the Consul, Yvonne, the pelado and ^{some} ~~the~~ male passengers get out of the bus. Then Yvonne turns back with a nervous cry. When Hugh and the Consul arrive the pelado is swarin; gently over the recumbent man, dressed in the white, loco

garments of the Indian. He is lying on his back, with his arms stretched out toward a wayside cross; there is not much blood, save on one side of his hat. But his chest is heaving like a spent swimmer's, and one fist is clenching and unclenching in the dust. The man is obviously dying. Hugh makes an attempt to help him, or try to, but he is stopped. It seems that it is against the law to touch him. Hugh and the Consul argue this: the other passengers keep up a background chorus in Spanish: was it robbery? or murder? someone should go for the police. but obviously someone has gone; a telephone? Dr. Figueroa? An honore noble. a taxi? No, they are on strike; but there was a rumor - etc. The Consul knows nothing can be done but he is so anguished by the whole situation he is almost angry. Then the pelado leans forward swiftly and remove's the Indian's hat. They all lean over, seeing the cruel wound on the side of his head, and they catch a glimpse of a few pesos and centavos, placed neatly under the man's collar; then the pelado replaces the hat and stands up, making a hopeless gesture.

By now the driver, impatient, has started blowing his horn. Hugh and the Consul walk over to the Indian's horse, ~~stuttering~~ meekly cropping the hedge. Hugh says he and Yvonne saw this horse at the fiesta, and the Consul agrees, he saw it too - but then it had saddle bags.

But ^{the} bus, hooting, is about to leave without them as two cars whizz past with the sign DICHATICO on their licence plates. Finally the police arrive; but they are not the "real" police, they are the Union Militar chaps and the Consul yanks Hugh aboard the bus before he can get involved in an argument "These chaps are dangerous," the Consul says, with them. The bus thunders on down the highway.

All this must be absolutely real and vivid, yet one must feel the symbolic irony of the plight of Man in this scene.

SCENE 3. Inside the bus again.

They are all rather shaken and silent but the Consul nudges Hugh and nods to the pelado, who has stolen the Indian's money and is openly clutching it

in his bloodstained hands, smiling round as if for approval at his cleverness. The bus lurches on, a church looms up, we are in Tomalin.

SCENE 11. Tomalin.

The Consul, Yvonne and Hugh stand outside a cantina, Todos Contentos Y Yo Tambien. The bus driver and the pelado enter the cantina together. The Consul points at the sign and says, "Everybody happy, including me."

In the sky above we see the vultures, waiting.

SEQUENCE 19. The Arena Tomalin.

I think we should precede the sequence in the Arena with a very brief scene in front of Las Novedades. The little man standing in the doorway tells them, "No, it is imposeeibly to phone Dr. Figueroa, because the doctor has gone to Xutepec." "Forward to the bloody arena then," the Consul says savagely. Yvonne starts to cry, then stops herself.

Then we are in the Arena, with its background of color, amusement, casual cruelty and boredom. I shall not try to describe a Mexican bull-throwing: the various minor incidents of the peanut wagon, the children, etc. depend greatly upon the location and choice of ^{the director} ~~the scene~~.

But after a bit of opening "color" or whatever, Hugh becomes disgusted with the amateurish performance, suddenly leaves the grandstand where they are sitting, and rides the bull himself. The Consul and Yvonne leap to their feet, Yvonne frightened, the Consul frightened and angry; but they see that Hugh knows what he's doing, is in fact putting on an excellent performance, and they sit down again. (N.B. Hugh's riding the bull is of course in one way a show-off, mock heroics engendered by the exacerbations and frustrations of the day. It is also of deeper significance, though I doubt if we should even try to get it across: what is meant is that Hugh rides the beast and conquers it, whereas the Consul, in the end, looses the beast to kill his love, having become an instrument of destruction for them both.)

Now we come to one of the most important scenes in the book, brief though it is, for it is the only real "love scene", the only real moment of hope - and the last one. And in this scene we must be convinced of the love between them, feel with them, and passionately hope that somehow, somehow, they can be redeemed. I'll detail some of it.

Yvonne and the Consul are now "alone" for a moment, surrounded as they are by hundreds of people, and she moves a little closer to him. She ~~sees~~ catches sight of a pair of young Americans, lovers, or on their honeymoon, and she has a vision of Hugh's idea of a cottage between forest and sea, a new life they might lead together. Perhaps this is even the same house the Consul has envisioned, seen from a different angle. She speaks to the Consul endearingly, and he turns to her at once: he looks at her piteously, then puts his arm around her with great tenderness, and leans his head against her like a child. I think we should use all of the dialogue on these two pages, but I will just give the end of it here.

YVONNE: Darling... This isn't just escaping, I mean, let's start again really, Geoffrey, really and cleanly somewhere. It could be like a rebirth.

THE CONSUL: Yes. Yes it could.

YVONNE: I think I know, I've got it all clear in my mind at last. Oh Geoffrey, at last I think I have.

THE CONSUL: Yes, I think I know too.

YVONNE: Darling...

THE CONSUL: Yvonne?

YVONNE: Yes, darling?

THE CONSUL: I've fallen down, you know... somewhat.

YVONNE: Never mind, darling.

THE CONSUL:Yvonne?

YVONNE: Yes?

THE CONSUL: I love you...Yvonne?

YVONNE: Oh, I love you too!

THE CONSUL: My dear one... My sweetheart.

YVONNE: Oh Geoffrey. We could be happy, we could -

THE CONSUL: Yes... We could.

Perhaps once more, briefly, a vision of the little house, waiting - There is a sudden roar of applause, and an accelerated clangour of guitars: Hugh and the bull are tussling in the centre of the arena, then for a moment they are veiled in dust as the bull makes his last charge for the fence. But Hugh has beaten him, and the bull, played out, is lying in the dust. Hugh walks away calmly, bowing to the cheering throng, he vaults over the fence and disappears.

Yvonne and the Consul are standing and she takes his arm again and tries, hurriedly to speak to him, "Geoffrey, I don't expect you to - " But the Consul is drinking from a bottle of habanero, then he starts abruptly out of the grandstand and Yvonne follows. Then the three of them are walking down the street as the Consul says, "Forward to the Salon Ofelia!"

I am suggesting a brief bit of effective camera work here, subject of course to Bunuel's approval. Yvonne has a last beautiful vision of the little house by the sea: but right in the middle of it is a tiny figure of a woman having hysterics, jerking like a puppet and beating her fists on the ground.

As they pass the TODOS CONTENTOS Y YO TAMBIEN they see an old lame Indian, carrying a yet older and more decrepit Indian on his back: he is carrying both their burdens, the irrevocable burden of the past.

SEQUENCE 20. The Salon Ofelia.

This is also a long and important sequence and I'll tentatively break it down into scenes, but much of the technique must be worked out in the final script.

SCENE 1. The bar.

The Consul is standing in a dark little bar, Cervantes, the owner, with his fighting cock under his arm, serves him. The Consul says, almost absent-mindedly, "Mescal," but this is important. Through the open doorway the sunlight is flashing on a swimming pool with a waterfall pouring into it. Gazing into the light he has a vision of terrible trains, swaying, rushing, driving straight through his brain. "A corpse will be transported by express," he says. Yvonne and Hugh appear by the pool laughing and joking together. The Consul turns away from the sight of them and sees Cervantes beckoning him from a curtained doorway.

SCENE 2. Cervantes' bedroom.

The Consul and Cervantes are obviously acquainted. Cervantes is a proud, shabby little man with a shade over one eye and wearing a beautiful sombrero. He wishes to show the Consul his rack of rusty rifles and his books, in his small bedroom. But the Consul sees, in one corner, a tiny porcelain Virgin, with a lamp burning in front of it; he remembers briefly having gone with Vigil to the church the previous night. Now he prays to this virgin.

THE CONSUL: Please let Yvonne have her dream of a new life with me - please let me believe it is not all an abominable self-deception... Let me make her happy, deliver me from this dreadful tyranny of self. I have sunk low; let me sink lower still, that I may know the truth... Give me back my purity, the knowledge of the mysteries, that I have betrayed and lost... Let me be true, lonely, that I may honestly pray. Let us be happy again somewhere, if it's only together, if it's only out of this terrible world... Destroy the world!

SCENE 3. The bar

The Consul returns to the bar and drinks another mescal. Yvonne and Hugh, in little dressing boxes just beyond the wall, are joking about climbing Lopo.

SCENE 4. The dining room of the Salon Ofelia.

The Consul, drinkless, innocent, is waiting for them at a table. He can use some of the jokes about the menu here, they are laughing as they order their dinner.

Then Yvonne reaches out and takes the Consul's hand across the table and their eyes meet in a long long look of love and longing. But a mist seems to come between them, and the Consul sees only bottles bottles bottles, and glasses glasses, toppling and crashing, bottles smashing, cast aside, falling with a thud on the ground in parks, under benches, beds, cinema seats, bottles hidden in drawers, tossed into the sea - and himself scrabbling among them. He sits absolutely still, his face desperate. The wind whines and whacks around the restaurant: a storm is rising in the distance. Once more, time has passed; Hugh is arguing with Yvonne about the horse with the number seven on its rump, the saddle bags, etc. The Consul gets up abruptly and goes out. (N.B. I doubt if we can have him sitting in the toilet, as in the book, but it doesn't matter, we can have him go to the bar again.)

SCENE 5. The bar.

This scene will have to be detailed in the script, but it is a swift counterpoint: Yvonne and Hugh have passed from facts to a political and even philosophical view of the events of the day, the Consul, alone in the bar, again hears his demonic voices against the other's conversation. The voices restate the themes, and this must build swiftly and dramatically.

SCENE 6. The dining room.

The Consul rejoins Hugh and Yvonne at the table, his mood completely changed, he is now aggressive, contemptuous, angry and cruel. He insults Yvonne with calculated viciousness that finally brings Hugh to his feet.

(The scene is to be detailed in the script, but it is a swift counterpoint.)

(I will not detail the dialogue of the quarrel here, it's not essential, but it builds perfectly to its horrid climax. We must hear the wind from time to time, and perhaps ^{see} Cervantes, going in and out with his fighting cock. We must be very careful of Yvonne here where she is now so obviously falsely and cruelly accused: she must not feel sorry for herself here, or anywhere else, or we're done for.)

HUGH: Don't be a bloody swine, Geoffrey.

THE CONSUL: Stay where you bloody are! Of course I see the romantic predicament you two are in. But even if Hugh makes the most of it again, it won't be long before he finds out he's only one of the hundred or so other ninety-hammers with gills like codfish and veins like racehorses - prime as goats all of them, hot as monkeys, salt as wolves in pride! No, one will be enough -

A glass falls to the floor and is smashed.

THE CONSUL: What an uncommon time you two must have had, paddling palms and playing bobbies and titties all day under cover of saving me - Jesus. Poor little defenceless me - I hadn't thought of that. But you see, it's perfectly logical what it comes down to: I've got my own piddling little fight for freedom on my hands. True, I've been tempted to talk peace. I've been beguiled by your offers of a sober and non-alcoholic paradise. At least I suppose that's what you've been working round to all day. But now I've made up my melodramatic little mind, what's left of it, just enough to make up... that far from wanting it, thank you very much, I choose, I choose -

For the Consul, matter becomes disjunct: the doorknob is standing out from the door, a curtain floats in to strangle him. The clock ticks very loudly: half past five. He more or less regains his senses.

THE CONSUL: Hell. (He throws a twenty peso note on the table) Because I like it. (He almost runs out the door.)

SCENE 7. Outside the Salon Ofelia.

The Consul stands for a moment outside the open window, watching the

almost paralysed tableau at the table, with Cervantes in the background.
THE CONSUL: (calling through the window) I like it. I love hell. I can't wait to get back there. In fact I'm running, I'm almost back there already.

He starts to run in the middle of this speech, calling back over his shoulder, running, limping, but not quite serious.

He stops. Nobody has come after him and this half frightens, half pleases him. His heart is pounding as he gazes at the forest, directly ahead.

THE CONSUL: Parian...The Farolito!

As he starts forward we see, ahead of him, over the forest, the volcanoes towering into a lowering sky.

In attempting to compress a book like Under the Volcano to fifty odd pages all that can be done is to outline the bones of the plot, provide an attack, and make a few suggestions concerning themes, etc. But much of its incomparable richness can be retained in the final script, and the film itself. And this is particularly true of the final scenes in the Farolito: it is impossible to even suggest what they will finally be like, as the drama mounts to its ~~end~~ climax.

But now we have arrived at the final sequences I think we should remind ourselves that this book is, actually, about Original Sin and the Fall of Man. The Consul is of course a Faustian character, (Marguerite borne upward toward the stars, Yvonne ditto end of Chapter XI, the Consul plunging into hell, etc.) and he embodies the destructiveness and the self-destructiveness of Man, from Adam down to "Do you like this garden that is yours? See that your children do not destroy it!" - All too terrifyingly applicable to the present day. This is the main theme and we must not forget it, but it is also a poignant love story, along with various other things.

Now as to our technique and immediate problems here: since we are working in a different medium from the novel we must use that medium. The last two chapters are actually simultaneous in time, Yvonne and the Consul die at almost the same moment. Therefore we must (never mind saying it's old hat, D. W. Griffith ride to the rescue) cut back and forth between the two, carrying our story forward in time, keeping an eye on the clock, speeding up the pace. I am now presenting you with two alternative endings, one I much prefer, but I daresay what you lose on the swings you gain on the roundabouts, and anyway, it is finally up to ^{the director} ~~you~~. Until these last sequences there was a possible (not really possible) hope for the Consul. Now he is committed to destruction, we watch his doom approach and only question the form it will take. When the Union Militar chaps enter (always

remembering the Chief of Gardens) we know; it only remains to know how.

One last reminder to us all: Malcolm was an English writer, in the great classical tradition of English literature. The plot of the book is as tightly and expertly constructed as a Shakespearean plot, and if we tamper with any part of its essential structure we are in trouble. But Malcolm was also a great experimenter, and on this solid foundation of plot we can experiment, with out camera to replace his magnificent flights of language.

It is a matter of choosing which scenes from these last two chapters to balance against each other for the maximum effect - and this too, finally, depends on ^{the director} ~~us~~ and his cutter. We now have all the elements of the plot brought together, and we let them explode. We will use Yvonne's letters to the Consul with tremendous effect: we will hear her voice reading them in counterpoint to the inferno of the Farolito and the Consul's approaching doom, while we see her searching for him. The storm is obvious but necessary. We must see the barranca and the volcano. It is all here, and there will be no real problems in the final script.

I will outline the opening scenes roughly as I see them, merely indicate the line of action of the middle, and then give you the two endings. But the technique here is purely tentative to the final work.

FINAL SEQUENCES: From 6 to 7 o'clock.

SCENE I. The Farolito. Interior.

THE CONSUL: Mescal.

The barroom of the Farolito is deserted. The Consul looks at himself in a mirror behind the bar, sternly; his face glares back at him. He is served by the barman, A FINE FLAME, a dark, sickly-looking child of 12 or 13 who is reading a boy's magazine and eating chocolate skeletons, chocolate

funeral wagons, etc. In serving the Consul's drink he slops some on the bar. The Consul, sucking a lemon, looks round him, drawing long sighs. Over the bar is the sign HOTEL BELLA VISTA GRAN BAILE A BENEFICIO DE LA CRUZ ROJA.

A PEN FLIAS: (reading, to himself) ¡Sueltene! ¡Sueltene!

THE CONSUL: (vaguely, to himself) Save me, Save me.

Taking his drink he goes to the open window and looks out: we see the barranca just outside, a sheer sickening drop. The Consul looks down, then shivering slightly, walks to the open door.

SCENE 2. The Farolito. Exterior.

Popocatepetl towering into a stormy sky seems almost overhead. Opposite the Farolito is the barracks of the Union Militar. A clock is pointing to six. A group of soldiers talking, others at sentry duty. Through an archway we see a dungeon with wooden bars like a pigpen: inside a man is gesticulating. Occasionally a moustachioed officer swaggers past. The Consul, standing for a moment in the doorway, watches people returning from the cemeteries with their lighted candles. Two beggars arrive and take up their post outside the bar. One, legless, drags himself through the dust like a seal. The other, who has one leg, stands stiffly, proudly, against the wall. The beggar with one leg leans forward and drops a coin into the legless man's outstretched hand. A policeman leads a horse up the path and tethers it to a tree in the little garden, near the path into the forest. Turning, the Consul is confronted by the sign LE GUSTA ESTA JARDIN in the tiny garden near the barranca. He returns swiftly to the bar.

SCENE 3. Yvonne and Hugh. On a path in the forest.

A suggestion of storm in a sudden gust of wind, a wild eddying flight of birds, blown aloft. Yvonne is ahead of Hugh, walking quickly

YVONNE: You know perfectly well I won't just run away and abandon him.

HUGH: Christ Jesus! This never would have happened if I hadn't been here!

YVONNE: (with no bitterness, matter of factly) Something else would probably have happened.

SCENE 4. The Parolito. Interior.

The Consul seated at the bar. Diosdado, the owner, appears from behind the bar; he feels in his breast pocket and takes out a pipe. There are now a few other men in the bar.

THE CONSUL: ?There's my pipe. I thought I'd left it here.

DIOSDADO: (head inclined, listening) Si, si, mistair, claro. No - my ah peeper no Ingleso. Monterey peeper. You were - ah borracho one day then. No, senior?

THE CONSUL: Como no? Twice a day.

DIOSDADO: (he straightens up, giving the Consul an absolutely insulting look) You was drunk three times a day. (He turns behind the bar and rummages for something) Then you'll be going back to America now.

THE CONSUL: I - no - porque?

DIOSDADO: (he slaps a package of envelopes fastened with elastic on the bar counter.) Es suyo?

A VOICE: Where are the letters Geoffrey Firmin the letters she wrote till her heart broke here are the letters here and nowhere else these are the letters.

THE CONSUL: (he can hardly speak) Si, senior. Muchas gracias.

DIOSDADO: De nada.

The Consul sits perfectly still for a moment, staring at the letters. Then he begins to trace sideways in the spilled liquor a little map on the bar.

THE CONSUL: (indicating the map) Espana. You are Spanish, senior?

DIOSDADO: (his interest sharpens) S i, si, senior. Espanol. Espana.

THE CONSUL: These letters you gave me are from my wife, my esposa, claro? This is where we met. In Spain. You recognize it, your old home, you know Andalusia? That, up there, that's the Guadalquivir. Beyond, there, the Sierra Morena. Down there's Almeria. (he traces with his finger) Those, lying in between, are the Sierra Nevada Mountains. And there's Granada. That is the place. The very place we met. (he smiles slightly, nostalgically)

DIOSDADO: (sharply) Granada.

Diosdado gives the Consul a searching, suspicious look, and goes abruptly to the other end of the bar. Some men have entered and he speaks to them: they turn and all stare at the Consul, who, rising, takes his drink and his letters into a small adjoining room.

SCENE 5. Hugh and Yvonne, outside the Cantina El Petate.

They step out of the forest into a clearing, and here is the cantina. A clock on the wall says 5 past six. The lighted windows make the inside plainly visible, like a stage. It is occupied by the barman and two Mexicans deep in conversation. Their mouths open and shut soundlessly, they gesture. (There should be, if possible, a waterfall close by, the sound of which drowns conversation) A glance between Yvonne and Hugh and he goes inside. We see Hugh from Yvonne's viewpoint: asking questions, describing the Consul's beard. Yvonne, just for a moment, is almost hysterical; she turns away and stumbles over a wooden cage, in which crouches an eagle, which she sees clearly by a beam of light from the window. Hugh is seen having a drink with the Mexicans. With hurried trembling hands Yvonne unfastens the cage. There is a distant flash of lightning and a tearing wind in the treetops. The bird, loose, flutters to the roof, then soars into the sky. Yvonne feels a moment of triumph, watching the bird; then again the heartbreak and loss. Hugh joins her outside.

HUGH: - No, he hasn't been here at all. We might try this other place though -

Yvonne's reply is lost in the noise of the waterfall and the wind.

HUGH: - On the road -

They start off quickly into the forest again.

SCENE 6. The Parolito. Interior.

The Consul, with his packet of letters and his drink of mescal, enters a tiny room with only two or three little tables. At one table we see the Old Woman from Tarasco we saw this morning in the Bella Vista bar, with her chicken plucking among the dominoes spread out on the table. The Consul sits, takes out one of Yvonne's letters.

YVONNE'S VOICE: ... Turning I see us in a hundred places with a hundred smiles. I come into a street, and you are there. I creep at night to bed and you are waiting for me... What is a lost soul? It is one that has turned from its true path and is groping in the darkness of remembered ways -

The old woman is plucking at the Consul's sleeve, murmuring: A Few Fleas has entered with a bottle of tequila and one of mescal. The Consul nods, and the boy fills both glasses and goes out with the bottles. The old woman raises her glass and smiles her thanks. The Consul bows and picks up the letters.

YVONNE'S VOICE: - You are walking on the edge of an abyss where I may not follow. I wake to a darkness in which I must follow myself endlessly, hating the I who so eternally pursues and confronts me. If we could rise from our misery, seek each other once more, and find again the solace of each other's lips and eyes. Who is to stand between? Who can prevent?

The Consul rises suddenly, bows to the old woman, and goes back to the bar, and straight to the door, glancing out as if to look for Yvonne. He stands, looking toward the forest, while more people from the cemetery pass, and then a whole little family. A girl has come up behind him and now speaks in his ear.

THE GIRL: Quiero Maria?

The Consul, looking dazed, follows the girl through a labyrinth of rooms and passages to a patio, and her room.

Now perhaps it goes something like this, and this is my version of the end.

Scene 7. Yvonne and Hugh in the forest again, walking swiftly.

Scene 8. The girl's room in the Farolito. This scene must be handled carefully but it can be excellent. Finally thunder blows the door open: it is over: the Consul has reached his climax almost without pleasure. The Consul stops in the mingitorio and his voices yammer and shriek at him for a moment. He sees Dr. Vigil's card pinned on the wall: this time without hope, it is pure irony.

Scene 9. Yvonne and Hugh on the porch of the Restaurant El Popo. This too can be a good scene, but I won't detail it here. They find an old bill of the Consul's which Hugh pays, and he also buys a guitar, from a man in the bar, and a flashlight. They leave the restaurant and enter the forest.

Scene 10. Outside the Farolito. The Consul appears in the doorway and notices the horse. He goes over to it: recognizes it, the number seven on its rump. There is a rumble of thunder and the animal whinneys, shivering with fear. A policeman (or rather a Union Militar man) comes up to the Consul, obviously suspicious and sinister. He herds the Consul back into the Farolito.

Scene 11. Inside the Farolito, at the bar. The uproar and din ~~has~~ ~~increased, and is becoming~~ are growing. There are more "policemen" now, and three in particular whom we find are the Chief of Municipality, the Chief of Rostrams, and, most importantly, the Chief of Gardens, who stands apart, greatly respected by the others. We must be aware of him in the background during this scene, though he takes no part as the other two question and heckle the Consul in a way both jovial and sinister. We must feel the threat, and that it is serious. Then the two policemen cross the room and consult with the Chief of Gardens and ~~then~~ begin to telephone. We do not

hear their conversation, only see it in the background. ~~the~~ Other people crowd around the Consul, the pimp on one side, the sailor on the other. Now we counterpoint their fantastic ludicrous conversation with Yvonne's voice, as the Consul is reading her letters and these two are clutching at him, talking to him and across him. We end Yvonne's letters with her voice saying, "If you let anything happen to yourself you will be hurting my flesh and mind. I am in your hands now. Save - " The Consul abruptly puts the letters in his pocket.

Scene 12. A brief scene of Yvonne and Hugh on the forest path. Wind and thunder and occasional lightning, and twilight deepening.

Scene 13. The Farolito, the bar. The noise is now terrific. A man playing a fiddle manages to approach the Consul and whisper a warning in his ear. The Old Woman also creeps in and warns him, "No good for you. Bad place. We kill ten old men. Varanos!" But the Consul, though to some extent recognizing his danger, is beyond taking any action to save himself, and hoping Yvonne will arrive to save him he keeps glancing at the door. Now the two policemen return from the telephone and start to question him again. They take all his papers from his jacket, including Yvonne's letters. He has no passports, but Hugh's telegram is there, signed Firmin, and also a card, identifying Hugh as a member of the FEDERACION ANARQUISTA IBERICA. The Consul, in a drunken perversion, is claiming to be William Blackstone, a writer on economics. Now I'll detail the last few scenes roughly.

SCENE 14.

THE CHIEF OF POLICE: (shouting) Where your papers? What for you have no papers? Where your passports? What need for you to make disguise?

The Chief of Gardens silently holds out to the Consul the card:
FEDERACION ANARQUISTA IBERICA. SR. HUGO FIRMIN.

THE CONSUL: No comprendo. (He takes the card and turns it over.)
Blackstone's my name. I am a writer, not an anarchist.

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS: Wridor? You antichrista. And Juden. (He flips through Yvonne's letters.) Chingar. What for you tell lies. It say here too - your name is Firmin.

He looks at the Consul's watch (which he has taken too) and scratches himself fiercely between the thighs. Then he takes ten pesos from the Consul's notecase and throws it on the bar. He winks at Diosdado and puts the Consul's things in his own pocket.

THE CHIEF OF GARDENS: (quietly, in good English) I am afraid you must come to prison.

The Chief of Municipality rolls his hips obscenely and seizes the Consul's arm. The Consul shakes himself loose and reaches his hand across the bar to Diosdado, who strikes it away.

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS: What for you lie? You say your name is Black. No is Black. (he shoves the Consul backwards toward the door) You say you are a wridor. (He shoves the Consul again) You no are a wridor, you are a spider, and we shoota the spiders in Mejico. (He shoves again.)

The people in the bar, scenting trouble, are leaving. A woman clutches her baby to her breast, terrified. The pariah dogs run around the barroom, barking. The Chief of Rostrums seizes the Consul by the coat: someone else seizes him from behind; struggling, he is dragged toward the door. The Chief of Gardens appears and the Consul shakes himself free. He strikes the Chief of Gardens straight between the eyes.

THE CONSUL: (shouting) Give me those letters back! (a blast from the radio someone has turned up, then thunder, down the voices for a moment) You poxboxes. You coxboxes. You killed that Indian. You tried to kill him and make it look like an accident, you're all in it. Then more of you came and took his horse. Give me my papers back!

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS: Papers. Cabron. You har no papers.

In the ensuing melee the Consul strikes out at and perhaps hits the

Chiefs of Municipality, Rostrums and Gardens. But now everyone left in the bar joins in to kick him, beat him, and drag him toward the door. The Consul seizes a machete lying on a table just inside the door as he is pushed through it.

SCENE 15. Exterior of the Farolito.

The Consul has shaken himself loose again and is brandishing the machete wildly as he stumbles backwards into the road by the little garden.

THE CONSUL: Give me back those letters! Only the poor, only through God, only the people you wipe your feet on, the poor in spirit, old men carrying their fathers, and philosophers weeping in the dust. Don Quixote - (he is still brandishing the machete. A few people stand back, watching. The Consul is talking wildly, raving.) If you'd only stop interfering, stop walking in your sleep, stop sleeping with my wife - only the beggars and the accursed. (He stumbles over a tussock of grass and falls, dropping the machete.) You stole that horse!

The Chief of Rostrums is looking down at him, the Chief of Gardens stands by, silent, grimly rubbing his cheek.

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS: Norteamericano, eh? You Jew. What the hell you think you do around here? You polado, eh? It no good for your health. I shoot de twenty people. We have found out - on the telephone - is it right? - you are a criminal.

The Consul rises to his feet and staggers to the horse, fumbling swiftly, he looses it in sheer defiance and rage. The horse rears, neighing, and plunges into the forest as lightning and thunder crash around the street.

SCENE 16. Yvonne and Hugh in the forest. Thunder and lightning. We see a sign with a pointing hand: A FAREAN. Yvonne is walking ahead, Hugh behind her, playing his guitar and singing softly. Yvonne stops before a

huge moss-covered bole. A mildewed ladder mounts against the near side of it. Yvonne climbs the ladder and stands on top.

YVONNE: Mind you don't get off the path here, Hugh, it's sort of tricky. There's a ladder up this side but you have to jump down off the other.

HUGH: Jump then, I must have got off your path.

YVONNE: Here I am, over here.

Wind sweeps through the trees, lightning and thunder close at hand. A pounding of hooves and a protracted neigh is heard just ahead. Yvonne, frightened, calls out to Hugh and tries to go back down the ladder, but she slips and pitches forward on to the ground. Trying to rise, she sees the horse plunging sideways: sees its every detail, the number seven, the saddle sliding from its back. She screams, and the animal turns toward her and upon her. A n instant of lightning: the sky, the trees, the rearing horse, and then the hooves come down upon her, trampling.

SCENE 17. Outside the Farolito.

The Consul is standing at bay, the others closing in on him.

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS I blow you wide open from your knees up.

He grasps the Consul by the collar; the Chief of Gardens nods gravely, the Chief of Rostrums draws his pistol and waves aside some onlookers.

THE CHIEF OF ROSTRUMS: I blow you wide open from your knees up, you cabron, you pelado.

THE CONSUL: (quietly) No, I wouldn't do that. That's a Colt '17, isn't it? It throws a lot of steel shavings.

The Chief of Rostrums pushes the Consul back out of the light from the doorway, takes two steps forward and fires. The Consul reels back, as lightning flashes he sees Popocatepetl, lit by high lightning in the twilight, thunder roars. The Chief fires twice more, spaced, deliberate. The Consul falls on one knee, then with a groan, flat on his face in the grass.

THE CONSUL: Christ, this is a dingy way to die...

A bell peals out, rain begins to fall softly.

The Consul is dying: he sees shapes vaguely hovering around him, the old fiddler, one of the beggars, someone is trying to pick his pocket. The Consul has a dying vision of violence, the whole world erupting, bursting into black spouts of villages and cities catapulted into space, a pandemonium of ten million burning bodies, and himself falling - falling -

One of the policeman drags the Consul's dying body over to the barranca, and pitches him over the edge. We see his body falling into the abyss. He screams. Somebody, half laughing, throws a dead pariah dog after him down the ravine. We see the sign in the little garden, beside the barranca:

¿LE GUSTA ESTA JARDIN
QUE ES SUYO?

¡EVITE QUE SUS HIJOS LO DESTROYAN!

And now a reverse of the opening shot: from the barrance we ascend: we see the volcanoes, their peaks pure and clear in the evening light above the storm, the great mountain chain, and then a tremendous panorama of sky, with clouds piled five miles high.

ALTERNATE ENDING

(N.B. The main reason I object to this is that Yvonne's death becomes purely accidental and therefore without meaning and not dramatically valid. On the other hand it does enable you to play the whole of the Consul's last half hour of his life and the inferno of the Farolito uninterrupted.)

This is identical with the first version until Scene 10 (p. 51.)

SCENE 10: The Farolito. Exterior.

The Consul appears in the doorway and notices the horse. He goes over to it: recognizes it, the number seven on its rump. There is a rumble of thunder and the animal whinnys, shivering with fear. The Consul is examining the bridle and the way it is tied, remembering the horse by the side of the road in sequence 18. A policeman (Union Militar) appears suddenly beside him.

THE POLICEMAN: ¿Que hacen aqui? (he speaks sharply.)

THE CONSUL: Nada. (He puts his hand out) Amigo.

THE POLICEMAN: (ignoring the Consul's hand) Americano, eh?

He starts to grab the bridle from the Consul's hand, the Consul angrily pushes him aside and they tussel briefly with the bridle. The Consul is affronted by this insulting return to his gesture of friendship and he manages to turn the horse loose.

THE CONSUL: It's not your horse - it belongs to that Indian -

There is another flash of lightning and thunder and the horse, loose, rears, neighing, and plunges into the forest. The Policeman angrily herds the Consul into the Farolito.

Now we play Yvonne's death scene as outlined in Scene 16. Then back to the Farolito, Scene 11, and straight through to the end, cutting out of course the cuts to Yvonne, who is now dead.