SCENE: AN APARTMENT IN HOLLYWOOD.
HELEN FINCH WHO IS SITTING IN A CHAIR-THEIR BACK TO
AUDIENCE-IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE
TO SEE WHAT SHE IS DOING. LUCIA ADDRESSING HER
IN DRAMATIC TONES AND WITH SMILING GESTURES.

LUCIA: There is nothing more to be said, Mrs. Bromfield. I
love your husband. He says he loves me. So far as I
am concerned, that ends the matter. You see I
don't believe that a marriage gives a woman the
right to own a man body and soul-to make his
life a hell on earth. (M.BREAKS OFF) No, that
won't do. Cross it out. What was that last scene number?

MISS FINCH: (IN A FLAT VOICE) Two hundred and forty. A close-up
at the door, where Zork enters and faces Mrs.
Bromfield.

LUCIA: (SHAKING HER HEAD AND HALF SPEAKING TO HERSELF)
Um-no. Cut out the close-up and make it a two-shot
with a moving camera.

FINCH: (WRITING) Two-shot--moving camera.

LUCIA: (GLOOMILY) It's heavy as lead. And dull as ditchwater.
Better try the smart sophistication gag. That's
going over pretty well just now. So we meet at last,
Mrs. Bromfield. You've come to ask me to give you
back your husband—return him like a pound of borrowed butter. Sounds like a conundrum, doesn't it? "Why is a husband like a pound of butter?"

MISS FINCH: I don't know Miss Lee. Is there an answer?

LUCIA: The answer is: It's rotten.

MISS FINCH: The answer is: It's ro---- Hadn't I better say "rancid" MissLee?

LUCIA: No, no, no. I mean the scene. Cut tit all out.

MISS FINCH: (BRIGHTLY) Yes, Miss Lee.

LUCIA: Why can't I write it? Why can't I? Don't I look reasonably intelligent?

MISS FINCH: Beg pardon Miss Lee, are you asking or dictating?

LUCIA: I'm doing a jeremiad. I'm job with all his boils.

MISS FINCH: (STARTLED) Oh.

LUCIA: I've worked on that scene for three days and three nights. You're the fourth secretary I've worn out. And still I can't get it.

MISS FINCH: Perhaps if you took a nice little nap.

LUCIA: Nap. With the studio howling like a pack of wolves? Listen Miss Finch, they're planning to shoot this scene in the morning. They're paying a star five
thousand a week just to mouth my words. If I don't get this done, my lifeless body will be found at the spot marked "X" in the photograph.

MISS FINCH: (HELPLESSLY) What photograph?

LUCIA: NEVER mind, just forget I said it.

MISS FINCH: (BRIGHTLY) It sounds very nice to me the way the scene is dictated now.

LUCIA: Nice? Nice? That's what it is--too dammed nice. You can't put that stuff over any more, not with the modern audience. It's got to have a new twist. Something unexpected. Something that will leave'em gasping. (DESPAIRINGLY) And they certainly won't--well what does she answer? For the love of Lulu, what can she answer that's new?

MISS FINCH: (INSPIRED) I know. Suppose she isn't going to give him up, just the way you have it here. She's going to hang on to him. The wife is leaving with a broken heart when a little boy runs in. No. Her little girl. She says "Mother" when is dear Daddy coming home?"

LUCIA: Don't. Just don't. I can't bear it.
MISS FINCH: 1. Sorry. I thought it would be nice.

LUCIA: 2. (DANGEROUSLY) Miss Finch, do you mind not using
that word "nice". Not until we get through with
this picture? I'm a little overwrought.

MISS FINCH: 7. Yes--yes, of course. Wouldn't you like me to fix
you a nice cup of coffee?

LUCIA: 10. OH.

MISS FINCH: 12. (ANSWERS PHONE) Hello--Yes. Yes, this is Miss Lee's
apt. Just a minute, I'll see. It's the studio
calling. A Mr. Benson.

LUCIA: 16. That's my director. Tell him I'm sick--got smallpox.
Tell him I've gone to China.

MISS FINCH: 19. Miss Lee says she's got smallpox and gone to China.


MISS FINCH: 23. I--I really can't repeat it.

LUCIA: 25. Here, give that thing to me. --And so are you.

LUCIA: 26. Hello, Jack. Well--If you'd really like to know
what I've done--I've torn up the last forty pages. Yes,
the end, where the wife comes to Zora. No, I haven't
anything to give you. All I've got is a pain in the
head. [SARCASTICALLY] Yes, I'm aware you intend to
2 shoot it first thing in the morning. Listen if you
3 try to come up here, I'll sick the dog on you.
4 No, that won't do. Sure it's good—but it has been
5 done too often. This one's got to be new. It's
6 got to be different. Not the same old tripe. Well
7 what would your wife say if she saw you out with that
8 dizzy blond? Oh she did? Well what did she say?
9 Huh? I can't use that. You know I can't—the censors
10 won't let me. Yes, I'll keep right on. If I don't
11 get it you can take me up off the pavement in the
12 morning with a blotting paper. What? All right,
13 come around and we'll step off the roof together.
14 Bye-bye. [HANGS UP]
15
16 Miss Finch try taking in washing. Try running a
17 mangle. But, take my advice: whatever you do, don't
18 try writing picture scenarios for a living.
19
20 MISS FINCH: [SERIOUSLY] Oh I wouldn't mind. They say some get paid
21 as much as a thousand dollars a week.
22
23 LUCIA: Um—one hundred for what we do and nine hundred for
24 what we put up with. [HER VOICE ALTERS TO A PLEADING
25 TONE] Don't ask me to give him up. Don't I can't
26 bear it.
27
28 MISS FINCH: Are you dictating now?
LUCIA: Go on, take it. I can't give him up. I can't.

You're his wife, but what have you done for him?

Nothing. Nothing. You've taken with both hands.

But I, I have given him everything. I have asked for nothing. Good Lord, what rot.

(STALKS FURIOUSLY AROUND ROOM)

Where'd we leave off?

MISS FINCH: Good Lord, what rot.


[INSERT: DOORBELL STILL RINGS]

MISS FINCH: But, Miss Lee—

LUCIA: Sh-h-h. (DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN) He's gone. (SHE CATCHES MISS FINCH'S EYE) Not a bill collector just a man.

I don't want to see.

MISS FINCH: The director?

LUCIA: No, another man.

MISS FINCH: (ELOQUENTLY KNOWING) Oh.

LUCIA: No. he's not. He'd just like to be.

What did I dictate last?

MISS FINCH: I can't give him up. I can't. You're his wife but what have you done for him. Nothing. Nothing. You've taken with both hands. But I have given him
LUCIA: Did I honestly say that?

MISS FINCH: Yes Miss Lee.

LUCIA: You wouldn't lie to me, would you?

Then it's got me. I knew it would.

MISS FINCH: What? What's got you where?

LUCIA: Softening of the brain.

( RAP ON THE WINDOW PANE)

MISS FINCH: Wh—what's that?

LUCIA: Waldo. He's climbed up the fire-escape—the nitwit. Go away. I don't want to talk to you. I wrote you I wouldn't. (SHE LISTENS)No, get down this minute or you'll break your neck—and I hope you do.

But not under my window.

Wait a minute—I've got something of yours.

( GETS ROBE, PAJAMAS AND SLIPPERS)

I want you to take these right out of here. He's gone. The raving lunatic. Imagine, he brought these up the other night with him. The insect.

If he doesn't stay away from here I'll get a Flit gun. I'll tell his wife.
Miss FINCH: Is he married?

LUCIA: All little popinjays with retreating chins and thin hair are married. Somebody always loves 'em.

Waldo writes poetry and plays. We had to do a picture together, and just because I was decent to him he thought—Oh, well let's forget it. Where did I leave off?

MISS FINCH: Don't ask me to give him up.

LUCIA: Cut it. Wear it out. Oh Lord, for something new.

Something new. Ma-amy (JOLLY BRIGHT)

MISS FINCH: Are you dictating now?

LUCIA: No I can't dictate until I have an idea. And I never expect to have another. Not if I live to be a hundred. (SHE IS SHOUTING)

MISS FINCH: But—

LUCIA: Sorry. It's not your fault. Tell you what. You've been working hard. May have to work all night. Better go into my room and try to get a little rest. I'll block out those speeches on the typewriter, or the dictaphone.

MISS FINCH: But really Miss Lee,

MISS FINCH: 4. Oh but I couldn't----

LUCIA: 5. (WITH Mock SEVERITY) Do--as--I--say.

MISS FINCH: 7. But really---

LUCIA: 9. Now off with you, I'll call you when I need you.

MISS FINCH: 11. ALL right.

LUCIA: 15. (INTO MICHEW O F PHONE) Scene number two hundred and forty. Sequence number 6. Two-shot--Zora and Mrs. Bromfield. Zora--slowly and sadly--So you have come at last, Mrs. Bromfield? I've been waiting for the day when we two should meet--only, I didn't think it would be like this--two mourners at the grave of a dead love.----Oh good grief

DOORBELL RINGS AND SELINA ENTERS

SELINA: 23. Miss Lee I came to--

LUCIA: 25. You go right back to the studio and tell them it's no use bothering me, then I'm anything ready I'll send it down.
SELINA: 1. But I'm not from the studio, I'm Waldo's wife.

LUCAI: 2. His wife?

SELINA: 3. Yes.

LUCAI: 4. Oh--a--sit down won't you?

SELINA: 5. Thank you.

LUCAI: 6. Will you have a cigarette?

SELINA: 7. Don't smoke. Thank you just the same.

LUCAI: 8. Wine? Coffee?

SELINA: 9. (SHAKING HER HEAD) Don't drink either. Not even coffee.

LUCAI: 10. Keeps me awake. Besides, it don't agree with my stomach.

SELINA: 11. (DISCOVERS AND TRIES TO CONCEAL PAJAMAS) What a shame.

LUCAI: 12. You don't mind if I----

SELINA: 13. No I don't mind. I've got real broadminded since I came here to Hollywood. This place kind of loosens a woman up.

LUCAI: 14. (KICKS SLIPPERS UNDER CHAIR) Yes I've noticed that.
SELINA: I suppose you're wondering why I am here tonight.

LUCIA: No. To tell you the truth I was just wondering what you were going to say first.

SELINA: Well, Miss Lee, I don't know what to say. It's kind of difficult to know how a wife ought to talk when she—well—under the circumstances.

LUCIA: Are you telling me. Never mind, just a little joke I have with the director of my next picture.

SELINA: Maldo says you're full of jokes. He thinks you have a wonderful sense of humor. It just seems like I haven't got any. I never can see the point of his jokes and laugh the way he says you do.

LUCIA: Well you see I'd met them so many times before.

SELINA: Met what?

LUCIA: Maldo's jokes.

SELINA: Oh (REMINISCENTLY) we used to have a joke book once, but we left it back in Greenapple.

LUCIA: Did you say "Greenapple"?

SELINA: (HUMOROUS) Greenapple, Vermont.
SELINA: Up in the northwest corner. 'Tisn't marked on most maps. Didn't Waldo tell you?

LUCIA: No, he didn't mention Greenapple. He said you came from New York.

SELINA: Well—we came via New York. We stopped off so's Waldo could see his play. I mean the one that got produced, "Lust in the Lichens". It's a kind of poetical play. He wrote it after he saw that kind of a poetical play where a boy strangles his grandmother because he's in love with her.

LUCIA: Peculiar way of showing it.

SELINA: I always felt that way too. Waldo says it's terribly advanced. So's his play. It's been playing a long time in New York. Perhaps you saw it?

LUCIA: No, but I heard about it.

SELINA: Just seems like I've never heard about anything else. But lots of people want to see it. That's how we happened to come to Hollywood. (GLANCES AT TYPEWRITER) Am I keeping you from your work?

LUCIA: No—no. Matter of fact I was hoping I'd get some help from you.

SELINA: I don't believe I'd be any help.
aldo won't ever let me help him—except bringing him coffee, looking up words in the dictionary, and thinking up rhymes. Things like that. When he wants real inspiration he goes outside.

LUCIA: I believe he mentioned that.

SELINA: Probably he would. He thought you wrote awfully inspiring. Lots more than the others.

LUCIA: (TRUMPETANTLY) Ah-ha, so that's the track you're going to take.

SELINA: Tack?

LUCIA: Your line. Your method. You're going to break my heart by telling me that other women have inspired aldo.

SELINA: But of course, lots of 'em have. One of 'em inspired him right straight through a five-act play-in-blank verse too. Then there was that blond choir singer in Greenapple. And the youngest Plimpton girl. And that little actress in New York who wanted a part—

SELINA: PHONE

LUCIA: in his play, and—-

SELINA: (TELEPHONE RINGS)

LUCIA: 'Scuse me. (SWEDISH ACCENT) Ullo. Yass. Dim bane Miss Boolly in Lee's apartment. Ay Tink not. She iss oud. She hass gone to Kamchatka. Yass Kamchatka. (VOICE CHANGES)

SELINA: Oh, hello Jack. Can't you leave a fellow alone five
minutes? No-no—it's not ready yet. I thought I had a lead—but it petered out. Same old stuff we did in "Reno Reckless". You know wife comes-tells girl about husband's other affairs. Yeah, pretty stale. If anything breaks I'll let you know. (TURNS BACK TO SELINA) As you were saying—

SELINA:

I was just telling you how Waldo had been inspired by lots of women, here and there.

LUCIA:

And did you get rid of them by using the same brilliant method you're using on me?

SELINA:

Oh, I haven't used any method on you—yet.

LUCIA:

Uh?

SELINA:

Mostly I don't have to do anything. Waldo does it himself. 'Cepting that youngest Flimpton girl. She was a stickler. I had to kind of help him with that.

LUCIA:

I'll bet you did.

SELINA:

I suppose you're wondering why I hang on.

LUCIA:

No. I think I can tell you. Because of your child. Because of the little golden-haired cherub that toddles into the room in her nightie and asks: "When is Daddy coming home?"
SELINA: Oh, did Waldo tell you about her?

LUCIA: No, I must have dreamed it.

SELINA: He doesn't usually say anything about Angelica, he thinks children aren't romantic. Anyhow, that isn't why I go on putting up with him.

LUCIA: No?

SELINA: No. It's because Pa has sixteen cows.

LUCIA: (STARTLED) What?

SELINA: Sixteen cows—and you have to get up at four to milk them. Winters it's awfully cold in Vermont. I'd rather put up with Waldo.

LUCIA: (TO HERSELF) Lovely? Lovely.

SELINA: Ruh?

LUCIA: It's perfect. But I can't use it. Never mind. Haven't you any other reason for hanging on to your husband?

SELINA: Well of course I kinda like him. When he comes back from being inspired he's real sweet.

LUCIA: (SOFTLY) Yes.
SELINA: It don’t take him more’n two or three weeks to get sick and tired, then he’s all right for three-four months again. He don’t drink, and he don’t smoke, and he don’t swear—’cept when he’s writing one of those new-fangled plays. I guess my cross isn’t any harder to bear than most women’s.

LUCIA: Look here, my dear. I’m sorry. It doesn’t matter what I’m sorry about. You wouldn’t understand. But it’s time I told you—you’re all wrong. I haven’t been playing around with your husband. I don’t give a damn about him. For more than a week I’ve been refusing to do so much as talk to him.

SELINA: (LUGUBRIously) I know. That’s what I came to see you about. I been waiting six weeks for him to get sick of being inspired. Then your letter came yesterday. I opened it, and saw what the trouble was. You won’t have anything to do with him—so he don’t have a chance to get tired of you. He don’t sleep, and he don’t eat, and he can’t get ahead with his writing. I’ve got to do something about it.

LUCIA: (BREATHELESSly) You—you mean—you actually came up here to protest because I won’t fall in love with your husband?

SELINA: Well—if you want to put it that way, yes.
LUCIA: (GIVES A SHOUT OF JOY) Gorgeous, gorgeous. I'd never have thought of it.

SELINA: Mind, I'm not saying I blame you. I guess there's lots of women Waldo wouldn't appeal to. 'Specially if they don't like poetry 'n' tenor singing.

LUCIA: (MAKING NOTES) Go on--oh, do go on.

SELINA: And being with him every day at the studio, I can see you might have got pretty tired of hearing about his asthma and his play--

LUCIA: Don't stop.

SELINA: (OPENING HER BAG) I'm not a mite bitter. And I want you to understand there isn't any malice about what I'm going to do. #3

LUCIA: (CHEERFULLY) What is it you're going to do?

SELINA: (BRINGS PISTOL FROM BAG) Shoot you.

LUCIA: (GIVES A MUFFLED SCREAM) You--you mean you're going to kill me?

SELINA: (DEEPLY INJURED) Oh no Miss Lee. I wouldn't think of such a thing. I'm just going to shoot you a little.

LUCIA: (GULPING) Where?
SELINA: 1
(POINTING GUN AWKWARDLY) Where would you rather?

LUCIA: 3
Huh?

SELINA: 5
Where would you rather? It doesn't make a particle of difference to me—but I think the shoulder's best.
It would kind of look as though I was aiming at your heart. And it won't show unless you wear low-necked dresses.

LUCIA: 10
Bu-but—if you know I don't care anything about your husband, why do you want to shoot me? #2

SELINA: 12
So's he'll get cured of you. Waldo's kind of romantic.
There's bound to be lots of headlines in the papers.
"Wife Shoots Scenario Writer." "Duel Over poet's love".
things like that. It'll make you look kind of ridiculous and Waldo'll feel awfully important. He always does. Why, when I get through one of these shooting spells he stays home nights sometimes six months at a stretch.

LUCIA: 21
You mean you've done it before?

SELINA: 23
Oh, lots of times. I told you about the youngest Flimpton girl. I only meant to hit her in the arm. But she was the squirmiest thing. If she hadn't tried to wriggle away she wouldn't have come so near to getting killed.
Lucia: 1. But, really--

Selina: 3. That's better--if you stand square on like that I think I can aim at the second button on the right side. Let me see, which is your right side? Oh, it's there. That's where I made my mistake with the youngest Plimpton girl—I aimed left when I meant right. Besides I was excited and my hand got shaky. It's kind of shaky now.

Lucia: 10. For heaven's sake--


Lucia: 14. Wait!

Selina: 16. Now don't you get nervous—I'll rest it on something. Stay right where you are. (ENRELS ON CHAIR) No, this isn't quite high enough.

Lucia: 20. (AGONIZED) Listen I'll do anything, anything--

Selina: 22. All you got to do is to keep still. (LIFTS CUSHION FROM CHAIR AND DISCOVERS PAJAMAS)

Lucia: 25. Oh----

Selina: 27. What's this? Why? (HOLDS THEM UP) They're Waldo's.
LUCIA: (WAVeringly) Y-e-es.

SELINA: What are they doing here?

LUCIA: He left them the last time—

SELINA: You mean I've been mistaken about you and Aldo?

LUCIA: (SUDDENLY SEEING A OUT) Yes, Absolutely. He—he comes to see me constantly. He's here practically all of the time. Night and day.

SELINA: Why didn't you tell me? Seems funny—perhaps it's only a trick. (CALLING TOWARD DOOR AND SPEAKS IN A VOICE TONE)

LUCIA: Don't you move. (LOOKS IN BEDROOM) He's there all right. Lying on your bed. I recognize the bathrobe.

SELINA: Now you know.

LUCIA: You ought ot have told me right out, Miss Lee. I'd hate to have wasted that shooting. Can't do it too often without its getting commonplace.

LUCIA: I can see that.

SELINA: (TUCKS PISTOL IN BAG) It won't be long now. I'll just go on home and leave you.

LUCIA: Thanks for not shooting me.
SELINA: (STRAIGHTENING HER HAT) You're welcome. Sure there's no hard feeling?  

LUCIA: Not a bit. Quite the contrary. (SELINA PREPARES TO LEAVE)

SELINA: If I'd only know Waldo was in there--

(MISS FINCH COMES IN WEARING THE BATHROBE)

MISS FINCH: Miss Lee, that crazy man you wouldn't talk to earlier this evening is throwing pebbles at the window.  
(SEES SELINA AND STARTS TO BACK OUT.)

LUCIA: I-I beg your pardon. I wouldn't have said anything---

LUCIA: (DESPAIRINGLY) Never mind, never mind, you've said it.

SELINA: (AS LIGHT DAWNS) You mean that wasn't Waldo?  
(HAND GOES TOWARD HER HANDBAG)

LUCIA: Look out, she has a gun in that bag.

LUCIA: I got it away from her. Miss Finch----Miss Finch----Miss Finch---please come back. It's all right.

MISS FINCH: (OFF STAGE) No.

LUCIA: But I need you. I've got that last scene. I want to dictate it.
MISS FINCH: (FAR AWAY) No. No.

LUCIA: Please, I'll pay you double. I've got to get that scene down on paper.

(SELINA REAPPEARS AND TAKES UP THE STENOGRAPHER'S PAD AND PENCIL; THEN GOES TO CHAIR

SELINA: (IN A CRISP BUSINESSLIKE VOICE) I'll take it down Miss Lee.

LUCIA: OH.

SELINA: I'd really like the job. You see, I live next door—and can't help hearing through the walls. I thought perhaps if I gave you a good scene you'd give me the job.

LUCIA: You—you aren't Baldo's wife?

SELINA: No; but I typed for him for two days—God help me.

The scene was Two Hundred and Forty. A two shot where the wife enters and is faced by Zora.

LUCIA: (REALIZING THE TRUTH) You darling, you angel.

(DICTATING) The wife enters. She is a meek, repressed creature.

SELINA: # with mouse-colored hair and a nasal voice.

LUCIA: # She wears a dowdy hat and carries a handbag. (TELEPHONES

RINGS) Hello, Hello Jack. Yes. Yes. I've got it. I follow HER — DOLLY
I've got it. The most gorgeous - the most perfect ending. 

Listen. The wife comes in. She hasn't come to shoot 

Eora because she's having an affair with the husband. 

She's coming to shoot her because she won't. Get that? 

Because she won't. What, what? (SLOWLY) You say the 

women in the audience won't stand for it? Of course they will 

they'll love it. Well look here -- wait a minute. 

(SHE PUTS DOWN RECEIVER AND SPEAKS TO THE 

WOMEN IN THE AUDIENCE) 

What do you think about it? And you? And you? 

END 

APPLAUSE 

#1 - 

MUSIC UP
Title: "Perfect Ending"
Dir: Fran Harris
Date: Oct. 26, 1944