

**LIGHTS OUT**

Stories of the unusual

Adapted and produced by

John F. Barber

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International

Re-Imagined Radio  
Season 14, Episode 06

Final draft

## LIGHTS OUT

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Season 14, Episode 06  
Final Draft

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### Synopsis

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### Credits

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### Color Code

Yellow highlighted text = sound effect(s), either pre...  
recorded or live.

~~text example~~ = could be deleted as needed.

~~Magenta highlighted text with strike through~~ = deleted  
for episode timing

MUSIC = pre...recorded

MUSIC = bespoke, created for this episode

COLD OPEN

VOICE Lights Out!

SFX: CHIMES AGAIN ... ON FOURTH

CHIME WE HEAR

ARCH OBLER It ... is ... later ... than ... you ... think!

SFX: TWO MORE CHIMES FADE OUT

SLOWLY BEHIND

ARCH OBLER This Arch Obler bringing you another in our series of stories of the unusual. And once again we caution you, these Lights Out stories are definitely not for the timid soul. So we tell you calmly and very sincerely, if you frighten easily, turn of your radio now.

SFX: CYMBAL CRASH

THEME AND ANNOUNCER

MUSIC: RIR THEME

ANNOUNCER Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program about sound-based storytelling. With each episode we explore how dialogue, sound effects, and music can engage your listening imagination and promote storytelling. Here to tell you about THIS episode is John Barber, producer and host.

HOST OPEN 1

HOST

Hello everyone. This episode is "Lights Out." The conclusion of a three-part tribute to the radio storytelling of Wyllis Cooper.

An earlier episode sampled from Cooper's *Whitehall 1212*, a program about The Black Museum, a collection of ordinary objects housed at Scotland Yard, headquarters for London's Metropolitan Police. All these objects are touched by crime and death.

We next presented two episodes from Cooper's series *Quiet, Please*, often acclaimed as the most creative in the crowded field of thriller mysteries.

This episode focuses on *Lights Out*, "stories of the unusual."

It's an interesting episode. Stick around and listen to three classic examples.

For more information, and the episode script, visit our website, [reimaginedradio dot fm](http://reimaginedradio dot fm).

Thank's for listening as Re-Imagined Radio presents "Lights Out."

SFX: CYMBAL GONG WITH LONG TAIL

HOST OPEN 2

HOST

Wyllis Cooper created the *Lights Out* radio series in 1934. He wrote the early episodes, frequently experimenting with

stream of consciousness and internal monologue.

Lured to Hollywood to write motion picture scripts in 1936, Cooper passed the torch to Arch Obler, a young and eager writer in Chicago, Illinois.

Obler elevated the series themes of mysteries, the supernatural, and the supernormal, often highlighted with gory, horrific sound effects, and pushed the stream of consciousness and internal monologue narrative forms to the point where the pioneering work of Cooper is all but forgotten.

We feature one story from the Cooper era, "Man in the Middle." And two by Obler, "The State Executioner" and "Chicken Heart."

Let's begin with "The State Executioner," broadcast twice in the Obler era of *Lights Out*, 1937 and 1943. Here is Obler, introducing the April 17, 1943 broadcast ...

ACT #1, THE STATE EXECUTIONER

**ARCH OBLER**

~~This is Arch Obeler. Let's go back tonight to another time ... the time of King George the Third of England. But our story tonight is not of monarchy and Monarchies. It's the story of an ordinary man by the name of Samuel Jones ... who had the extraordinary profession of State Executioner.~~

VOICE

~~And now ... Lights Out ... everybody!~~

SFX: CYMBAL GONG

LIGHTS OUT  
ANNOUNCER

Tonight *Lights Out* presents another psychological drama ... a play in which the principal part is taken, not by the character himself, but by his thoughts.

The voice you are about to hear is that of the thoughts of one, Samuel Jones, the state executioner for His Majesty George the Third. He sits alone in a dismal room and these are his thoughts ...

SAMUEL

(SLIGHT MONOTONE TO GIVE IMPRESSION OF SUBCONSCIOUS SPEAKING ... FADE IN) I want to be dead ... dead ... dead ... do you feel anything when you're dead? ... are you hungry are you cold are you tired when you're dead? ... no, when I'm dead I'll have peace ... peace ... I've got to have peace ... kill myself ... yes ... bullet in my heart ... the pain ... I don't like pain ... but it can't hurt ... they say it doesn't hurt ... only hanging hurts ... I know it does... I've seen their faces when they cut them down ... purple ... black ... I've seen their faces when the masks came off and there's pain in them ... pain that twists their faces, grinds their teeth and gives them living hell until at last they die ... that's why I've got to use this pistol to kill myself ... I can't stand pain ... all I want is peace ... peace ...

SFX: CLOCK CHIMES ONCE, BACK

SAMUEL                   It's getting late ... I've got to do it quick before they get here ... I ran much faster than they did but they'll get here quick enough ... I've got to be dead when they come in through that door ... they can't bother the dead in their grave ... and I'll be dead ... dead ... deep, deep in the grave ... Why should they blame ... I only did my duty ... someone's got to be the hangman ... someone's got to ... ~~that's what he said to me that night ... that's what His Lordship said to me ... twenty years ago it was ... he said:~~

~~JAIL WARDEN           (BRISK VOICE) Samuel Jones, eh?~~

~~SAMUEL                 (NORMAL VOICE ... YOUNGER) Yes, Your Worship.~~

~~WARDEN                 What makes you think you can do this work?~~

~~SAMUEL                 I ... I just know, Your Worship.~~

~~WARDEN                 (CRUNTS)~~

~~SAMUEL                 I know all about hanging, sir ... everything there is to know!~~

~~WARDEN                 (SKEPTICALTY) Well?~~

~~SAMJEL                 Hemp rope's best, sir ... but each rope's got to be fresh and new for every job, and you've got to keep it soapstoned and always in a cool, dry place.~~

WARDEN ~~Well! You do know something about it.~~

SAMUEL ~~Yes, sir, and then there is a short drop and a long drop. The long drop's better, sir ... I know it is.~~

WARDEN ~~Eh?~~

SAMUEL ~~(IN CLOSE ... AVIDLY) It breaks their neck, sir, every time ... it breaks their neck!~~

WARDEN ~~Al right, I'll give you your chance. We're having a hanging here tomorrow and I'll let you do it. If all goes well, I'll recommend you to the Prison Board ... (FADE) if all goes well ...~~

SAMUEL ~~All did go well ... why not ... and there I was ... Executioner for His Majesty ... five guineas a broken neck ... seven hundred seventy seven hangings in twenty years ... seven hundred seventy seven broken necks ... and mine the hands that sprung the trap ... seven hundred and seventy seven times ... and now the hand's got a pistol in it ... and when they reach here ... when they knock on that door ... I'll press the trigger. And so I won't have to face them ... none of them ... seven hundred seventy seven broken necks and no one knew that I was the man who did it ... not even she knew it ... Ellen ... my own wife ... not even she ... I met her, married her and she didn't know ... until that day ... ~~infernally day ... that meddling fool ... nosing around (FADE COMPLETELY)~~~~

WOMAN (FADE IN) It's the truth I'm tellin' ya, Mrs. Jones ... as God's me judge!

MRS. JONES (RATHER CONFUSED) Oh, no, no, there must be some mistake!

WOMAN No mistake at all, Mrs. Jones, no mistake at all! Me 'usband told me ... and he never makes mistakes, not me husband!

MRS. JONES Yes. (BLANKLY) W ... what did you say?

WOMAN State Executioner! You know, your husband's ... (PAUSE) or don't you know?

MRS. JONES Please! I don't know what you're talking about!

WOMAN Look here ... don't you know what your 'usband does?

MRS. JONES You mean, the business he's in?

WOMAN Business! Aye, hangin's a business.

MRS. JONES Hangings?

WOMAN Hangings! On a rope!

MRS. JONES But ... what has Samuel to do with those?

WOMAN Mrs. Jones, are you standin' there sayin' you ... you don't know that Samuel's the hangman?

MRS. JONES (AGHAST?) You must be crazy!

WOMAN Oh! So I'm crazy, am I? Well, he's the hangman, and no mistake about it!

MR. JONES He's not!

WOMAN And I tell you ...

MRS. JONES (GOING RIGHT ON, INTENSELY) He's not, he's not. Get out of here! Get out! Get out!

WOMAN Well now, you don't have to ...

SFX: DOOR BEHIND ABOVE

WOMAN Well! Here he is! Ask him yourself!

MRS. JONES (TEARFULLY) Oh, Sam!

SAMUEL (FADE IN FAST) What's going on here? What's the matter? What is it, Ellen?

MRS. JONES (WEEPING) Oh, Sam! This woman (CONTINUES TO WEEP)

SAMUEL What about this woman? What ...

WOMAN (SMUGLY) All I've done is tell the God's truth!

MRS. JONES (INTERRUPTING) Oh, Sam, , she says ... she says ...

SAM (HOARSELY) Says what? What?

WOMAN All I said was that you were the 'angman ... as you are!

SAM (INTENSELY) Get out of here

~~WOMAN~~ ~~Now, just a minute ...~~

~~SAMUEL~~ ~~(UP, INTENSELY) Get out! (VEHEMENTLY)~~  
~~Get out!~~

~~WOMAN~~ ~~(FADE FAST) All right, I'll go ... I'll~~  
~~go!~~

~~SAM~~ ~~(UP) Say one word more about me and I'll~~  
~~kill you! You hear me? ... kill you!~~

~~SFX: DOOR CLOSING, BACK~~

~~SAM~~ ~~(BREATHING HEAVILY) Meddling fools ...~~  
~~meddling fools.~~

~~MRS. JONES~~ ~~(SHE IS NO LONGER CRYING, ... THERE IS~~  
~~AN UNDERCURRENT OF HORROR IN HER VOICE)~~  
~~Sam...~~

~~SAMUEL~~ ~~You shouldn't have talked to her! Why~~  
~~did you listen?~~

~~MRS. JONES~~ ~~Sam ...~~

~~SAMUEL~~ ~~Things like that ... it isn't good for~~  
~~me.~~

~~MRS. JONES~~ ~~Sam, it is true!~~

~~SAMUEL~~ ~~A man's got to earn his living!~~

~~MRS. JONES~~ ~~A living from killing!~~

~~SAMUEL~~ ~~You crazy? I don't kill! I don't condemn~~  
~~them!~~

~~MRS. JONES~~ ~~(HORROR IN HER VOICE) You killed them!~~

SAMUEL I tell you I'm not the judge! Aw, now, Ellen ...

MRS. JONES Don't touch me hangmen!

SAMUEL (ANGRILY) All right ... that's what I am ... hangman! Hangman!

MRS. JONES (WEEPING, MOANING) Hangman!

SAM (ANGRILY ... BUILDING UP MADLY) Yes, hangman, hangman, say it again and again! What do I care? I like being a hangman ... you hear me ... I like being a hangman!

MRS. JONES (MOANING) Oh, no!

SAM (GOING ON MADLY) Yes, and here's something more ... I like killing them!

MRS. JONES (WEEPING) Sam!

SAM I like the way they stumble when they walk up the stairs ... I like the cold whiteness of their skins when I put the noose around their necks ... I like the way everyone looks at me, watches me ... and then the crash ... and the rope stretches ... and sometimes their legs kick in the air and you hear 'em heavin' for a little air that can't get past the tightened rope around their necks!

~~MRS. JONES (CONTINUES WEEPING AND MOANING AD LIB BEHIND)~~

~~SAM When I was a boy they strung a man up from a tree just outside of a town ...~~

~~and I watched them and I saw 'im dance  
on air, and I said to myself some day  
I'll do that, too ... hang them ...  
legal ... make them dance on air 'cause  
it's the law! Well, now I'm doin' what I  
wanted ... executioner for the Crown ...  
and wailin' won't change it a bit! Now  
come here to me!~~

MRS. JONES

No! No, No, No Sam. Stay away from me!  
(IN GREAT TERROR ... ALMOST SHRIEKING)  
No! I won't stay with you! I won't,  
hangman! I won't stay with you! (FADE)  
I'll go (MOVES AWAY) I'll go away! I'll  
go away

SAM

(SEMI-MONOTONE) I thought she wouldn't  
leave me, but she did ... Ellen left me  
... I looked all over ... couldn't find  
her ... after a while I didn't care ...  
what's a woman ... I had my work ...  
hanging work ... five guineas a hangin'  
... in gold coin ... five of them ...  
five golden guineas ... I liked the  
sound of 'em ... I liked the sound of  
'em ... (COUNTING) One...

SFX: COIN CLINKING ON TABLE TOP

SAM

Two

SFX: COIN CLINKING ON TABLE TOP

SAM

Three

SFX: COIN CLINKING ON TABLE TOP

SAM

Four

SFX: COIN CLINKING ON TABLE TOP

SAM Five

SFX: COIN CLINKING ON TABLE TOP

SAM I bought a strong box and kept them there ... every hangin' meant five more ... payin' me they were for what I liked to do ... it was funny very funny ... I didn't miss her ... no ... why should I ... I had my work ... I got to be good at my work ... the courts were good, to ... they gave me plenty to do ... I tried out different ways ... I made a hangin' machine with springs and sandbags that jerked the man into the air first and then dropped him through a trap ... I tried out different ropes and different running nooses ... oh, I got to be good at it in twenty years ... real good!

SFX: CLOCK TICKING ... HOLD BEHIND FOLLOWING FOR A FEW SECONDS, THEN FADE OUT GRADUALLY.

SAM Ticking ... ticking ... stop ticking ... I hear you, you blasted clock I hear you ... what are you trying to tell me ... I know ... that there isn't much time left ...they'll be here soon ... well, let them come let them come ... I'm ready ... pistol in my hand ... I'm ready ... after their first knock on the door I won't be here to hear them ... I'll have peace and quiet ... whatever they say to me I won't hear it because I'll be dead ... and why should they say it ...

what's done is done ... seven hundred  
seventy seven of them ... it was fun  
because each died different ... seven...  
hundred seventy seven different hangings  
... it was fun I tell you fun ... fun  
some a 'moanin' ...

CONDEMNED MAN  
NUMBER ONE

(FADE IN FAST BEHIND "SOME A' MOANIN'"  
IN ABOVE ... MUMBLED HALF...INTELLIGIBLE  
MOANING WORDS OF CONDEMNED MAN BEING LED  
TO GALLOWES) (FADE BACK AFTER A FEW  
SECONDS) And some went to the gallows  
a...cryin' ...

CONVICT NUMBER  
TWO

(BEGIN TO FADE IN CRYING IN A GASPING  
SOUND AS OF A STRONG MAN BROKEN DOWN,  
BEGINNING AT "AND SOME WENT IN ABOVE ..."  
HOLD FOR A FEW SECONDS, THEN

SFX: FADE BACK AND OUT SLOWLY

SAM

But best of all I liked the one that  
went out crazy ... scared ... screamin'  
... yellin' ... wailin' ...

CONVICT NUMBER  
FOUR

(BEGIN TO FADE IN AT "CRAZY SCARED" IN  
ABOVE ... THIS MAN IS MAD WITH FEAR OF  
THE NOOSE ... FADING OUT GRADUALLY  
SCREECHING, SCREAMING)

SAM

(WHEN ALL SOUND OF THE LAST CONVICT IS  
FADED OUT) Yes, the ones that were crazy  
... scared were the best ... I liked  
them fine and five guineas just the same  
... for havin' fun five guineas ...  
(GASPS) What's that ... at the door ...  
I heard a sound ... no, I just imagined  
... no one's knocking ... if they knock,

I press the trigger ... they won't get me .... not me ... seven hundred and seventy seven at five guineas each ... coins that bit into my flesh when I grabbed 'em tight ...

SFX: MONEY CLINKING FADING IN  
BEHIND

SAM Oh, I liked the sound ... money, money, yellow money ... first I liked the hangings best, and then the money.

SAM Then I got to like them both ... watchin' eager around the courtrooms ... this trial that trial ... would they hang him would they hang her would the judge say "guilty" ... if he did it meant a hangin' and another five guineas ... oh , I watched for business ... new business ... my business ... hang them up and watch them die ... when will they knock on the door ... when? . . the pistol is heavy in my hand ... he used a pistol too they said ... Tom Allen ... I read about him in the court announcement one day while I was outside of the court room looking for new business ... hanging business ...

SFX:FILTER VOICE SLIGHTLY FOR  
BACKSTORY

SAMUEL Thomas Allen, twenty year old law student, was arrested today by the City Police on the charge of having murdered his sweetheart, Lorraine Hamilton,

nineteen year old daughter of Arvine Hamilton.

Young Allen denied the charge vigorously. He stated that the girl had sent him a letter in which she told of her intentions of committing suicide, but at a late hour Allen was unable to produce this letter. He was held without bond at the Tower. (FADE) And the charge of willful murder ... (FADE IN STARTING AT "AND THE CHARGE OF WILLFUL MURDER" IN ABOVE SPEECH)

SAMUEL

Yes, that's what it said ... he'd murdered her ... young girl ... the minute I read it I said to myself Sam Jones here's the next one . . I could hear the money clinkin' in my hand already ... and Tom Allen hangin' by his neck.

What am I thinkin' about? ... what am I? ... why don't they come and knock on the door and let me get this over with ... I need the knocking on the door to give me nerve enough to press the trigger ... this waiting ... waiting ... I waited for Tom Allen too ... I waited for them to say "guilty" to him so I could put the runnin' noose around his neck ... I waited, waited going every day to the trial ... the prosecutor for the crown said ...

PROSECUTOR

(BACK SLIGHTLY) Guilty!

SAMUEL

The young man's solicitor said ...

LAWYER (BACK SLIGHTLY) Not guilty!

SAMUEL The young man said ...

TOM (BACK EARNESTLY) I didn't do it! I tell you, I didn't do it. She did it herself, she wrote me a letter saying that she was killing herself ... she ... she wrote me a letter! (FADE) She wrote me a letter ... I tell you she wrote me a letter ...

SAMUEL Yes, that's what he said... "She wrote me a letter saying she was killing herself" ... but where was the letter ... where was the letter ... nobody knew ... couldn't find it ... and day after day sitting there in the courtroom (AVIDLY) I could see the noose coming close and close ... a few days more and he'd be dancing on air ... another five guineas in my box ... such a pity such a handsome young man ... strong young neck for my rope ... I say he didn't have a chance ... what good did it do for his solicitor to keep saying ...

~~LAWYER (ECHO CHAMBER ... BACK SLIGHTLY) I tell you, gentlemen, it is circumstantial evidence and circumstantial evidence alone which has been produced! A weird combination of circumstances have conspired to make it appear that this suicide of this unfortunate girl was a murder committed by this equally unfortunate young man. And an equally weird set of circumstances have resulted in the disappearance of this vital letter which clears Tom Allen of all~~

responsibility for Mistress Hamilton's death. In this letter the girl clearly stated that she was taking her own life by poison ... in spite of the absence of this letter surely you, as intelligent men (FADE) can tell after seeing and hearing Tom Allen's testimony that he is telling the truth, that such a letter did reach him and that he is innocent of all wrong doing ...

SFX: CUT ECHO CHAMBER

SAMUEL

But there was no letter and he didn't have a chance ... the prosecutor for the crown got up ... he said ...

PROSECUTOR

(BACK SLIGHTLY ... ECHO CHAMBER) The letter! The mysterious letter? And where, gentlemen of the jury, is this letter? To what mystical realms has it disappeared, this wondrous communication which so conveniently absolved Tom Allen for the death of that poor girl? Where, I ask again, is this letter? The young man has stated repeatedly that the letter was in his lodging and destroyed! But every inch of that lodging has been carefully examined, and yet the letter has not been found! And why hasn't it been found, gentlemen? I will tell you! It is because that letter does not exist! Lorraine Hamilton never wrote such a letter! She was murdered ... (FADE) murdered in a fit of jealous rage by this man who expects you to believe a preposterous story about a letter ... (ECHO CHAMBER OUT)

SAMUEL Yes, I sat there and I felt good because I saw that young fellow didn't have a chance ... my noose was getting closer, closer to his neck ... and then ... The Black Cap on the judge's hand ...

JUDGE BACK SLIGHTLY ... ECHO CHAMBER) For this vicious crime against the order and security of the crown, you Thomas Allen are hereby condemned to be hanged by the neck until dead ...

YOUNG MAN (BACK ... EXCITEDLY) No, no! I didn't do it! (FADE) I didn't do it! I tell you I didn't! I'm innocent!

SAMUEL Then I had him ... all his yelling all his screaming wouldn't do any good ... I had him ... all ready for my noose ... guilty ... I wanted to go up and thank the judges ... gave me business ... hanging business, devil's business ... why don't they hurry up and get here ... I wouldn't have to think any more ... a knock on the door and I wouldn't have to think ... fingers squeeze the trigger ... finished ... peace ... I won't have to think ... I wouldn't have to think what happened then ... what happened after they said the boy was guilty ... they put him in a cell ...

SFX: DOOR CLOSSES TIGHTLY

SAMUEL Death cell ... the door shut tight.  
  
I stood and watched ... they put him in a cell ... five golden guineas in a cell ... a few more weeks and he'd be mine to

teach that dancing lesson ... on thin air ... I counted every day until they'd give him to me ... I peeked along the corridor watching his cell ... the Warden of the prison said ...

WARDEN

Well, Sam, it certainly looks as if you're going to have another customer! I suppose you heard about it ... the King refused young Allen's last appeal! He hangs in two more days ... we'll try to make his going easy as we can. I like the lad ... too bad about that letter he says the girl wrote him. Well, no use talking about it ... we've got to do our duty. Oh, by the way, you're going past the cell ... here ... here's some books of his ... his landlady sent him. Thought he might like to read them while he had the time. Take them with you, Sam, and give them to him. (FADE) It'll be his last time to read ...

SAMUEL

So I took the books along ... why not Why not ... reading wouldn't save that neck ... I started down the corridors with his books ... down the corridors toward the death cell ... something white fell out of one of his books and I picked it up ... it was a letter ... and it read ...

WOMAN'S VOICE

(WHISPERING ... IN CLOSE) Dear Tom ... I told you I was going to kill myself, and now I'm going to do it. By the time you get this, the police ought to be accusing you of murder, since undoubtedly all those people who heard

us quarrel the other night will be testifying that you killed me. That's the main reason I'm sending you this letter, so that you will have some proof that the poison they'll find in me was self-administered. Forgive me ... I'm just tired of living.

SAM

And it was her name signed to it ... hers ... that girl's ... the one they said he'd killed! This was the letter! The letter he'd been yelling about! The letter that he wanted to save his neck ... but his neck belonged to me already ... five guineas ... I stuck the letter deeper in my pocket and just waited until the night ... the warden ...

WARDEN

Well, Sam, it looks as if we're going to have to go through with it. Now I want everything done properly, and no mistake! Going to have a large visitors' gallery. Very distinguished people. Say, and that reminds me ... there's been some woman trying to see you all day. ... (FADE) Some woman ... don't know who she is, Sam ... she says she's got to see you...

SAMUEL

But I wasn't seeing any women ... not that night ... there was my work to do ... see that everything was ready ... the rope was ready ... everything perfect for a perfect hanging ... it grew later and later ... I could hear him in the death cell pleading with the minister. . . .

TOM (FADE IN ... PLEADINGLY) But you've got to help me, sir ... you've got to! You've got to get the King ... he's got to believe that ... that I didn't kill her, I didn't! On, won't anyone believe me? She wrote me a letter ... she wrote me a letter in which she said she killed herself! (FADE) She wrote me a letter, I tell you ... she wrote me a letter ...

SAMUEL Yes, a letter ... the letter was in my pocket and there it was going to stay until it was all over ... he couldn't live ... he couldn't live now ... I'd waited too long ... it had been such a long time since they'd given me a good strong neck to hang ... they couldn't cheat me now ... at last it was the hour ... they came for him in his cell ...

SFX: CELL DOOR OPENING, BACK ...  
MARCHING OF FEET, SLOWLY DOWN  
CORRIDOR, CONTINUING BEHIND.

SAMUEL They led him down the corridor ...

SFX: BACK ... WITH SOUND OF SLOWLY  
MARCHING FEET ... SOBBING.

SAMUEL And then they were marchin' him up the stairs to the gallows.

SFX: FEET CLIMBING SHORT FLIGHT OF  
WOODEN STAIRS.

SAMUEL I was waiting ... the rope was in my hand ... the boy looked up at me ... his lips moved ... he said ...

TOM (BREATHING HEAVILY ... A LITTLE DAZED) I ... I tell you I didn't do it . The letter ... the letter ...

SAMUEL Black hood over his head.

TOM (MUMBLES THROUGH HOOD) The letter ... I didn't kill her ... the letter ... (CONTINUES MUMBLING AD LIB UNTIL ...) The trap.

SFX: CRASH OF GALLOWS TRAP BEING SPRUNG ... REVERBERATING PAUSE ... THEN LOUD BEATING OF HEART, SLOWLY FADING BACK... THIS EFFECT IS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF THE HANGED BOY'S HEART SLOWLY CEASING TO BEAT.

WARDEN (BACK) This man is dead . . .

SAMUEL It was done ... "This man is dead" ... five golden guineas! The warden said.

WARDEN Good work, Sam! Broke his neck!

SAMUEL I went out into the street ... I was walking home ... I felt real good ... five golden guineas. A woman came up to me and said,

SFX: STREET NOISES, FAR BACK, CONTINUING BEHIND.

MRS. JONES (HER VOICE IS OLDER, HARSHER) Are you Sam Jones?

SAMUEL (SPEAKING, SOUNDING IMPORTANT) Yes, that's me. What d'ya want? I haven't got time. . .



MRS. JONES (IN CLOSE ... INTENSELY) Tom Allen,  
hangman ... was your son

SAM (AGHAST ... HOARSELY) No!

MRS. JONES (UP) Your son! Your son! You hear me,  
hangman? ... your son! (ALMOST  
HYSTERICALLY) You hung your son! You  
hung your son! (FADE) Your son! You hung  
your son! Your son! Your son! You hung  
your son!

SFX: BRING UP STREET SOUNDS AT  
ABOVE FADE AND HOLD UP FOR FEW  
SECONDS, THEN DOWN SLIGHTLY BEHIND.

SAMUEL (BREATHLESS NOTE IN HIS VOICE) I began  
to run ... down the street ... away from  
her ... running ... running ... a man  
stepped out of the shadows ... he  
stopped me ... I couldn't see his face  
...

MAN You killed my brother seven years ago  
this night, hangman!

SAMUEL I said no, no, leave me alone! Leave me  
alone. I kept on running! A woman  
stopped me! ...

WOMAN (IRISH) You hung my father, monster ...  
you hung my father eleven years ago! You  
hung my father. You hung my father.

SAMUEL No, no, I said no, no, let me go! Let me  
go! I kept on running! They kept on  
after me! Yelling ... screaming!

SFX: MAN AND WOMAN'S VOICE, BACK, BEGINNING AT "KEPT ON RUNNING" AD LIB CRIES SUCH AS "YOU KILLED MY FATHER!" "YOU HUNG MY BROTHER!" ETC CONTINUING BACK BEHIND FOLLOWING SPEECHES.

SAMUEL

I kept on running ... faster, faster ... new voices joined them ... I looked back ... the street was black with hundreds chasing me ... yelling screaming I'd hung their sons, and fathers, and brothers! The street was black with them I tell you ... and every one of them a kin to one of the seven hundred seventy seven that had felt my rope!

SFX: BEGIN AT "FASTER FASTER" IN ABOVE, NEW VOICES JOIN IN WITH THE FIRST TWO ACCUSING THE MAN OF HAVING HUNG A RELATIVE ... THE VOICES ARE FAR BACK MERGING INTO A CHORUS OF ACCUSATION THAT CONTINUES BEHIND THE HANGMAN'S SPEECH.

SAMUEL

Chasing me ... chasing me ... hundreds of them ... yelling screaming ... after my life ... wanting my blood ... hands outstretched like claws to catch me ... tear my flesh and scratch my eyes out ... running ... running mustn't catch me ... (UP IN HORROR) no!

SFX: SLAM OF DOOR WITH ABOVE "NO" ... BACKGROUND OF PEOPLE CHASING HIM AND STREET NOISES OUT KNIFE CLEAN WITH DOOR SLAM.

SAMUEL

(MORE CALMLY) That's the way I did it ... that's the way I did it ... slammed the door ... lost the pack of them ... everyone of them ... wives and sons and brothers of the seven hundred seventy seven ... But they'll find me ... they'll search me out ... they're searching now ... yes, they'll find me ... that's why my finger's on the pistol ... the mob won't get me ... no, the mob won't get me ... funny mob they were ... without bodies ... just heads, heads of people chasing me and yelling ... they won't get me ... no they won't ... when they find me here, when they knock upon that door, I'll kill myself and ...

SFX: KNOCKING ON DOOR, BACK, VIGOROUSLY

SAMUEL

(GASPS) Ah! They're here! Outside the door! (UP) You won't get me! Not you! Yes, I hung your sons, husbands, killed your friends and lovers, but that's not all! I hung my son! (UP MADLY) You hear me ... hung my son! For five guineas ... hung my son! (SOBS)

SFX: KNOCKING ON DOOR AGAIN ... BACK, VIGOROUSLY.

SAMUEL

(MADLY) Yes, come in, come in all of you ... and see me ... die!

SFX: PISTOL SHOT IN CLOSE ... THUD OF BODY ON FLOOR.

SFX: CYMBAL GONG.

FIRST VOICE           And ye mean to say he yelled out for you to come in and then he shot himself?

SECOND VOICE         Yes, sir, that's the God's truth! I knocked on the door ... he yelled "Come in! Come in, all of you, and see me die!" And when I opened the door ... bang! He did it!

FIRST VOICE           And what were you banging on his door for this early in the mornin'? What were you after?

SECOND VOICE         After? After nothin'! I was lookin' for McDonald ... lives next house ... I just knocked on the wrong door.

SFX: CYMBAL GONG

HOST                   That was "The State Executioner" an episode of *Lights Out* written by Arch Obler, who took over from series creator, Wyllis Cooper, in 1936. Like Cooper, Obler used internal monologue, the thoughts inside the heads of his characters, to move his narratives along. "The State Executioner" is a great example.

SFX: CYMBAL GONG

OR?

**MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME FOR BREAK**

**LISTENING BREAK #1**

HOST                   This is John Barber. Thank you for listening to Re-Imagined Radio.

\*\*\* KAAD tag

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KAAD-LP, 103.5 FM, Sonora, California,  
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**MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME, FADE UNDER  
AND OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING**

ACT #2, CHICKEN HEART

HOST

Next is perhaps THE *Lights Out* classic,  
"Chicken Heart." Written and introduced

by Arch Obler, "Chicken Heart" was inspired by a newspaper article about scientists keeping a chicken heart alive after being removed from the chicken.

Obler's "Chicken Heart" was first heard in 1937. And repeated in 1938 and 1942. Apparently, no recordings were made of these live broadcasts. So, while the story and script survive, we have no record of how the original broadcasts sounded.

In 1962, Obler released seven abridged tales on a record album, *Drop Dead! An Exercise in Horror*.

This iteration of "Chicken Heart," not quite eight minutes long, was included. Obler introduces this iteration of "Chicken Heart." Let's listen ...

SFX: GREAT CRASH OF CYMBAL GONG.  
AND THEN ANOTHER.

ARCH OBLER

~~No short hairs rising? Then permit me to try you with the science fiction type. With all these Sputniks and satellites circling our Earth, and with all this competitive fission and fusion going on, science fiction is the very latest. And we are trying to bring you the very latest.~~ Do you remember some time ago, in an eastern scientific institution, they kept a piece of heart alive for weeks on end? Well ... I got to thinking ... what if that heart began to grow ... and grow ... and grow ... and grow.

SFX: DEEP CYMBALGONG, AS IT  
RESONATES, CROSS FADE TO A  
TELEPHONE DIALING. AS THE REPORTER  
BEGINS TALKING, FADE IN POLICE  
SIRENS AND STREET WALLAH BEHIND.

LEWIS

Hello? Hello, operator, give me Mr. Regan, fast. (PAUSE) Hello, Mr. Regan, this is Lewis. Listen, get me a rewrite man. The things still growing. No Chief, I tell you, the corridor is filled with living, crawling flesh. No. No! NO! I'm not drunk. I'm telling you the truth. That little piece of flesh has grown until now it's jamming that building. All inside the space of an hour. You've got to believe me. It's the greatest news story of the generation and here you argue with me. (SHOUTING) I tell you it's the truth. You've got to believe me!

SFX: CROSSFADE TO

DR. ALBERTS

... must believe me, I tell you the only hope is to burn the building to the ground at once.

FIRE CHIEF

Now wait a minute, Doc, wait a minute, take it easy.

DR. ALBERTS

I tell you burn it to the ground, burn.

FIRE CHIEF

And I tell you, take it easy, I sent in a call. Well, don't you understand.

DR. ALBERTS

For some reason, I cannot even imagine, this tissue is doubling in size every hour. Do you know what that means?

~~In another hour it will be twice the size it is now, and long before that it will break open the building with the force of its pressure, and then it will be free in the street. Do you hear me? Free in the street. And then those, those tentacles of protoplasm stretching out to feed on anything they can reach.~~

~~LEWIS~~

~~What's happening?~~

~~FIRE CHIEF~~

~~(TERRIFIED) The building! See the walls? Cracking! I warned you, I warned you!~~

~~SFX: EXTERIOR. THE BUILDING BREAKS APART AND CRASHES TO THE GROUND.~~

~~DR. ALBERTS~~

~~I tried to warn them ...~~

~~SFX: HEARTBEAT BEGINS, CONTINUES~~

~~DR. ALBERTS~~

~~... but now it's just too late. The heart is free.~~

~~SFX: CROSSFADE HEARTBEAT TO GENERAL WALLAH OF EMERGENCY MEETING~~

~~MAYOR~~

~~Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen, come to order, please, gentlemen, please! Quiet, quiet, please, please! Please, now, as Mayor, no one realizes more than I do the necessity of immediate action in curbing this unspeakable, unbelievable emergency, and I assure you that I ...~~

~~MAN IN CROWD~~

~~Ahh, cut the speeches, Mac, that blasted thing is spreading like a forest fire!~~

~~VOICES IN THE CROWD~~ ~~Call the governor ... Get the National Guard out! ... Do something!~~

SFX: INTERIOR. EMERGENCY MEETING.  
VOICES CONTINUE SHOUTING UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

MAYOR ~~Wait, wait, wait, please, wait!~~ Here is Dr. Albert from the Research Institute, let him speak! Step out here, Doctor, got to do something.

VOICES IN CROWD Do something. Let's see what he says.

DR. ALBERTS (SOMBER) Gentlemen, it was in my institute this horror began, and if you give me a chance, perhaps I can stop it.

MAYOR What is it, Doctor? Tell us first what that monster really is.

DR. ALBERTS Yes, yes, I will tell you ... that great ever-growing mass of flesh, it is, or it was, a chicken heart.

~~MAYOR~~ ~~Chicken heart? Are you crazy, man?~~

~~VOICES IN CROWD~~ ~~Chicken heart!? ... He's crazy! ... Chicken heart is crazy! ... Chicken heart! Yeah... (CONTINUE UNDER THE FOLLOWING)~~

~~DR. ALBERTS~~ ~~(SHOUTING TO BE HEARD OVER THE CROWD)~~  
~~Yes, yes, chicken heart, I tell you, chicken heart! Listen to me, you fools!~~

~~VOICES IN CROWD~~ ~~Let's get somebody up there that knows what they're talking about.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. CROWD GOES SILENT  
WAITING FOR DR. ALBERTS TO SPEAK.

DR. ALBERTS

(BECOMING MORE AND MORE FRANTIC AS HE SPEAKS THROUGH HIS POINTS OF EXPLANATION) ~~I tell you that mass of flesh was a chicken heart,~~ the tissue of which, for some reason, is undergoing constant, rapid, accelerating growth.

With every passing hour its growth is doubling.

~~Do you know what that means? If it is now one block in size, within 30 hours that cannibal flesh will have increased in size to one square block to the 30th power.~~

In 30 hours every inch of this whole city will be crushed under that moving flesh.

Within 60 hours it will have covered the entire state.

Within two weeks the entire United States.

You ask for the National Guard, I say call out the entire army, blast this thing off the earth!

SFX: CROSS FADE TO EXTERIOR, SITE  
OF BUILDING RECENTLY DESTROYED BY  
CHICKEN HEART. SIRENS IN THE  
BACKGROUND. AND BEATING OF CHICKEN  
HEART.

**CAPTAIN** All ready, Chief, pumpers are ready, all hoses coupled up. We'll flood that thing with water from all angles.

**FIRE CHIEF** All right, here's the signal.

SFX: EXTERIOR. SINGLE GUNSHOT.

**CAPTAIN** (SHOUTING) All right! Open 'em up, full blast!

SFX: EXTERIOR. WATER RUSHES FROM HIGH PRESSURE HOSES.

**CAPTAIN** Chief, look out, that flesh is reaching out!

**VOICES IN CROWD** Look out. Get back, everybody, everybody back!

SFX: EXTERIOR. WATER HOSES RECEDE TO BACKGROUND. HEARTBEAT BECOMES MORE PRONOUNCED.

**DR. ALBERTS** The fools, what good is water? I told them, the only hope is artillery. Bombs.

SFX: CROSSFADE TO EMERGENCY BROADCAST. MORSE CODE TELEGRAPH IN BACKGROUND.

**RADIO VOICE** (FILTERED BY RADIO) All National Guardsmen report to your armories. All National Guardsmen report to your armories.

(FADING) General mobilization order.

SFX: CROSSFADE TO EXTERIOR  
ARTILLERY POSITION. SIRENS AND  
FRANTIC CROWD WALLAH IN BACKGROUND.

ARTILLERY                    Battery in position, sir.  
PERSONNEL

ARTILLERY                    (FILTERED BY RADIO) Commence firing on  
COMMAND                    the hour.

ARTILLERY                    Yes, sir.  
PERSONNEL

ARTILLERY                    Ten, five, zero. Commence firing!  
COMMAND

ARTILLERY                    Fire!  
PERSONNEL

SFX: EXTERIOR. MASSIVE OUTPOURING  
OF ARTILLERY. SIRENS CONTINUE IN  
BACKGROUND. BOTH FADE OUT SLOWLY  
UNDER THE FOLLOWING. HEARTBEAT  
REMAINS STEADY.

DR. ALBERTS                Useless. It has grown too large, and it  
                                 grows too quickly. The flesh is already  
                                 engulfing the guns. They came too late.

SFX: ARTILLERY AND SIRENS FADE OUT.  
HEARTBEAT REMAINS STEADY IN THE  
SILENCE.

SFX: CROSSFADE TO INTERIOR OF  
AIRPLANE FLYING ABOVE CITY. THE  
ENGINE IS HEARD FROM INSIDE THE  
CABIN. FADE DOWN AND CONTINUE UNDER  
THE FOLLOWING.

LEWIS                    You all right now, Dr. Alberts?

DR. ALBERTS            Yes, yeah, yes, I'm all right, Mr. Lewis. I'm all right.

LEWIS                    Well, I sure am glad I located you. I stalled as long as I could, another ten minutes, and we couldn't have taken off. That blasted protoplasm, or whatever it is, was sucking at the wheels by the time we left the ground.

DR. ALBERTS            Yes, yes, I saw.

LEWIS                    5,000 feet. Well, we'll cruise around up here for a few minutes and then head west.

DR. ALBERTS            It will do no good.

LEWIS                    (EMPHATIC) You can't mean it. It ... it must stop growing sometime, it must.

DR. ALBERTS            Look at it down there, the gray blanket of evil covering everything. See how the roads are black with men and women and their children running for their lives. See how the protoplasmic gray reaches out and engulfs them. See how ...

LEWIS                    Stop it, stop talking like that, we'll get away. The government, they'll send bombing planes, poison gas.

DR. ALBERTS            No hope. Listen to me, Lewis. You remember only a handful of days ago you asked me my prophecy of the end of the Earth? You remember my answer, oh, such a scholarly prophecy, cessation of Earth

rotation, mighty-sounding astronomical theories.

(BECOMING MORE EMOTIONAL) But now this is reality, Lewis. The end has come for humanity, not in the red of atomic fusion, not in the glory of interstellar combustion, not in the peace of white, cold silence, but with that, that creeping, grasping flesh below us.

(LEWIS SOBBING) It is a joke, hey, Lewis, a great joke, the joke of the cosmos, the end of mankind.

LEWIS (EMOTIONAL, UNBELIEVING) Why?

DR. ALBERTS Because of a chicken's heart.

LEWIS (FRANTIC) No, no, we won't die, I can't die. I'll find a safe landing somewhere, I'll find a place.

SFX: INTERIOR. THE AIRPLANE ENGINE STOPS.

LEWIS (PANICKED) The motor, it's cut out! We're in a spin, I can't get out of it!

SFX: INTERIOR OF AIRPLANE CABIN. THE SPINNING, WHINING SOUND OF AN AIRPLANE FALLING, OUT OF CONTROL.

DR. ALBERTS I told you, doomed.

LEWIS (MORE AND MORE FRANTIC) No, no!

DR. ALBERTS All mankind, doomed.

LEWIS

No! We're falling right into it, into  
the heart! (PROLONGED SCREAM OF TERROR)

SFX: CROSSFADE FALLING AIRPLANE TO  
SINGLE RESONATING GONG. HEARTBEAT  
CONTINUES UNDER.

SFX: CYMBAL GONG.

HOST

You're listening to Re-Imagined Radio.  
Our episode is "Lights Out," part three  
of our tribute to radio writer Wyllis  
Cooper.

We just listened to samples from  
"Chicken Heart," often called one of the  
most famous radio dramas ever.

Next, let's listen to "Man in the  
Middle." Written by Wyllis Cooper, and  
first broadcast March 6, 1935, under the  
title "After Five O'Clock," it's an  
excellent example of Cooper's  
experiments with stream of  
consciousness, and internal monologue.

Arch Obler retitled the episode "The Man  
in the Middle" and included it in his  
limited series revivals of *Lights Out*,  
1942 to 1947. This is the August 25,  
1945 iteration, broadcast via the Armed  
Forces Radio Service.

ACT #3, MAN IN THE MIDDLE

SFX: EIGHT SLOW CHIMES ... WIND  
STARTS TO HOWL ON FOURTH CHIME ...  
THEN ALL OUT ... GONG!

JOHN (THINKS TO HIMSELF, IN AN UNHAPPY MONOTONE) I wish I didn't have to stay here and work all day. I wish I could take a vacation and go to Bermuda or Nassau or Florida or somewhere. The grass is green in Bermuda. Green grass in March and the sky is blue instead of all gray the sun is shining. I wish I was in Bermuda. I'm so tired and worried. Wish I had a big office with a nice davenport in it, so I could lie down and sleep whenever I wanted to. I won't get to to bed until all hours tonight.

SFX: INTERIOR. OFFICE DOOR OPENS

JOHN (THINKS) Here comes Patricia.

SFX: PATRICIA'S STEPS IN ... DOOR SHUTS ... PATRICIA'S STEPS TO JOHN BEHIND...

JOHN (THINKS) Pretty girl. Patricia's a pretty girl. If Lucille knew about Patricia, she'd probably divorce me. I wouldn't like that very well. I wouldn't like it at all.

PATRICIA (SEXY) I brought in those letters, Johnny. The ones about the stamping machines.

JOHN (SPEAKS OUT LOUD, FRIENDLY) Oh, thanks, honey. (THINKS) You've got too much lipstick on. I suppose I've got to kiss you.

PATRICIA (BREATHLESS, BEING KISSED) Oh, don't, Johnny.

JOHN (THINKS) That's the old stuff. If I didn't kiss you, you'd probably get sore. You're all right, Patricia, but I wish you wouldn't... I don't know what I wish. I like to kiss you, but I don't like to have you expecting it all the time.

(SPEAKS, LIGHTLY) Aw, come on. Give me just one little kiss, Pat. Come on.

PATRICIA Oh, Johnny. Please.

JOHN (CHUCKLES, SPEAKS) Come on, sweetheart. (PAUSE FOR KISS, THEN THINKS) Now, I suppose I've got lipstick all over me. Patricia, you've got too much perfume on and you know how I hate the stuff. And that green dress. I give you money to buy new clothes and you wear that dreadful green thing all the time.

(SPEAKS, SWEETLY) Love me a little, Patsy?

PATRICIA (SIGHS) I love you, Johnny. I do love you ... darling.

JOHN (THINKS) Well, that's all right. Only don't love me too much, baby. If Lucille finds it out, she'll tear your hair out. She's tough, Lucille is. The time she slapped that Flynn gal at the club ...

PATRICIA Johnny, stop. You've got to get those letters signed. Go ahead and sign 'em.

JOHN (SPEAKS, LIGHTLY) Oh, ho, there's no rush about the letters.

(THINKS, GRIM) But there is a rush about them ... they've got to get off in the air mail.

PATRICIA There is, too. They've got to go air mail to the coast tonight and I've got to get them ready for Harold to take to the post office. Now, you start signing 'em while I fix my face.

JOHN (CHUCKLES, SPEAKS) Aw, Pat!

PATRICIA Go ahead.

JOHN (THINKS, ADMIRING) Smart girl. She'd like to neck, but she knows her business. She's all right. Yes, sir, she's all right.

SFX: SIGNS AND SHUFFLES LETTERS  
UNDER FOLLOWING

JOHN (THINKS AS HE SIGNS) John R. Phillips. John R. Phillips. John R. Phillips. John R. Phillips. Phillips, Phillips ... I've got a funny name, Phillips. Nice signature. Wonder what a handwriting expert would say about it. Wish I could go to the coast along with these letters. Fly to the coast.

PATRICIA I'll come in after five o'clock, shall I, Johnny?

JOHN (SPEAKS, DISTRACTED) Uh, huh?

PATRICIA I'll come in after five o'clock.

JOHN (SPEAKS) Oh, swell. You bet.

(THINKS, UNHAPPY) I wish you wouldn't come in after five o'clock. I get tired of this business, Patricia. I wish I could go down to the bar at five o'clock and have a drink. I'd have a Manhattan. And maybe I'd have another. And then I'd catch the 5:19 and go home and have dinner and read the paper and go to bed early.

(SPEAKS, MATTER...OF...FACT) Well, they're all finished, darling.

PATRICIA Aw, that's a good boy. You get one more kiss now for doing your work so nicely.

JOHN (CHUCKLES, SPEAKS) Thank you, Patsy ... you sweet girl.

(THINKS, UNHAPPY MONOTONE) I wish I was in Bermuda. I wish I didn't have to stay here. That perfume smells awful; I don't like it. I hope nobody opens the door suddenly. Hurry up, take the letters and go away. If Lucille should open that door and look in here, she'd scratch your eyes out, Patricia. Hurry up and get this kissing over with.

PATRICIA (BREATHLESS, COMING OUT OF A KISS) Oh, you're so sweet, Johnny.

JOHN (CHUCKLES, SPEAKS) You're pretty sweet yourself, Patsy.

(THINKS, DISGUSTED) Stop calling me "Johnny" ... stop it. Don't call me "Johnny."

"Phillips" is bad enough. "Johnny, Johnny" ... it sounds like a ten... year...old kid. Go on, take the letters and get out. Please, Patricia.

PATRICIA (FADING) See you after five o'clock, darling.

JOHN (SPEAKS, PLEASANTLY) Okay, darling.

SFX: OFFICE DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS AS PATRICIA EXITS

JOHN (THINKS) Wonder what time it is. I wish Patricia would leave me alone. I can't get any work done today. I wish I'd gone to bed early last night. I wish I could go to bed early tonight. There's that silly bridge party. I hate bridge. I wish I could play bridge real good so I could win a lot of money. How much money can you win playing bridge? I could go to Bermuda if I could play bridge good enough to make a lot of money at it.

SFX: PHONE RINGS

JOHN (THINKS) Why do people have to call me up on the telephone? I suppose it's somebody I don't want to talk to. Somebody I owe money to. Maybe it's Lucille. Maybe it's Keene Crockett. Maybe it's Frank Loughran. Maybe it's...

SFX: RECEIVER UP

JOHN

(SPEAKS) Hello?

(THINKS) It's Lucille. What's she calling me up for?

(SPEAKS) Oh, hello, dear.

(THINKS) I wonder if she suspects anything about Patricia. I wonder if she...

(SPEAKS) Well, where have you been?

(THINKS) She never comes downtown suddenly like this.

(SPEAKS) Oh? Is that so? Well, how was the show?

(THINKS) You're a nice girl, Lucille. I like you. I love you, Lucille. I love you better than Patricia.

(SPEAKS) All right. What time?

(THINKS) If she comes up here to the office and runs into Patricia...

(SPEAKS) Half past five?

(THINKS) That'll give me time enough.

(LAUGHS, SPEAKS) I'll meet you, dear. Uh, where'll you be?

(THINKS) That's better. I can get out of the office. Too bad for you, Patricia.

(SPEAKS) All right, honey. Half past five at Creon Bar. ... Okay.

(CHUCKLES) Goodbye, darling.

SFX: RECEIVER DOWN

JOHN (THINKS) Still have time to neck with Patricia a few minutes before I go. That's all right. Yes, sir, that's all right. Be just too bad if Lucille came here. She wouldn't come here, though. She hasn't been in the office in six months. Or is it seven months? Six or seven months. She always calls up.

SFX: DOOR OPENS ... TOM'S STEPS IN

JOHN (THINKS) Who's this guy?

SFX: DOOR SHUTS

JOHN (THINKS) His face is familiar. What's he doing here? Who is he? Who are ya, fella? What do you want in my office? How did you get in?

(SPEAKS) Well, young man. Did you want to see me?

TOM (FROM OFF) Are you John Phillips?

JOHN (SPEAKS) Yes.

SFX: TOM'S STEPS APPROACH BEHIND...

JOHN (THINKS) Who are ya? The face is familiar. I don't know who you are. How did you get in here?

TOM (IN CLOSE) I'm Patricia's brother.

JOHN (THINKS, TENSE) Patricia's brother? Now, what's he going to do? He can't do anything. He doesn't know anything about Patricia, and me. He doesn't know. I didn't do anything.

(SPEAKS, INGRATIATING) You're ... Patricia's brother? Well, I ...

TOM I came here to tell ya that I want you to let her alone!

JOHN (THINKS) Now I'm in for it. He's a big fellow. He'll probably beat me up and my name'll be in the paper.

(SPEAKS, LIGHTLY) I'm ... (CHUCKLES) I'm afraid I don't understand, young man. I ...

TOM You understand all right, Mr. Phillips. I want you to let her alone.

JOHN (THINKS) If he starts to hit me, I'll stab him with this paper knife. He could beat me.

(SPEAKS, AWKWARD) Well, this is, uh... I mean, Patricia is... Well, what do you mean?

(THINKS) I'm talking like a fool. I never could keep my head when I'm scared. He thinks I'm a fool. I am a fool.

TOM                    You're ... married, aren't you, Mr. Phillips?

JOHN                    (THINKS) He knows all about me. He'll beat me up and he'll tell Lucille and...

                          (SPEAKS, PLEASANTLY) Well, yes, I'm married. Er, what about it?

                          (THINKS) I'll pick up the paper knife.

TOM                    I don't want any married men running around with my sister. And I'm man enough to stop it. Is that plain?

JOHN                    (THINKS) Why, who do you think you are? You think you're going to talk to me like that? You don't know that I've got a gun in my desk.

                          (SPEAKS) Well, I, uh... (CHUCKLES NERVOUSLY) Well, you see, this is, er... This is all very innocent, you know. Patricia and I... Well, we...

TOM                    I know.

JOHN                    (THINKS) Talking like a fool, like a fool, like a fool.

TOM                    I'm just warning you, Mr. Phillips. I won't warn ya again. Just let me say this. I was welterweight champion of my brigade in the army. So ... take my advice and let Patricia alone.

JOHN                    (THINKS) You'd better not make a pass at me. I'd shoot you. I'd kill you. I'm not going to be beaten up.

(SPEAKS, AWKWARDLY) Well, I, er... Of course, I, er... I'm sorry, I...

(THINKS) Talking like a fool, a fool, a fool.

TOM That's all. Don't forget.

SFX: TOM'S STEPS TO DOOR, WHICH  
OPENS AND SLAMS SHUTS AS HE EXITS

JOHN (THINKS) There isn't anything wrong between Patricia and me. There isn't anything wrong. I've just kissed her a few times. She's a nice girl. I wouldn't harm her. She likes me. We're perfectly innocent. He could beat me up without half trying. I'd kill him, though. I'd have to kill him. It would be self... defense. It would be. Of course it would. They wouldn't do anything to me. Why, you young punk, you've got a lot of nerve coming into my office like that and threatening me. I could have you arrested. I could call up Chief Ostrom and have you put in jail for threatening me. I'm John R. Phillips. Phillips. I know what I'll do.

SFX: PHONE RECEIVER UP ... DIALS  
BEHIND...

JOHN (THINKS) Coming into my office and threatening me ... when I haven't done a thing.

(SPEAKS, PLEASANTLY) Hello? Patricia?

(THINKS) Her brother. What do you know about that? Her brother. I didn't know she had a brother.

(SPEAKS) Uh, Patricia, did you, uh...?

(CHUCKLES) Uh, did you see the visitor I just had?

(THINKS) Probably didn't see him. She wouldn't have let him come in.

(SPEAKS) Ahh ... Your brother.

(THINKS) Didn't know anything about it. I knew she didn't.

(SPEAKS) Well, he came in to tell me to, um ... (CHUCKLES) ... to let you alone.

(THINKS) I should have hit him. If I'd've hit him, he'd've prob'ly killed me.

(SPEAKS) No. No, I'm not kidding. He came in here and told me if I didn't let you alone, he'd ... (CHUCKLES) ... he'd beat me up.

(THINKS) He could do it, too. Only not if I got the gun first. I'd kill him. Sure, I'd kill him. Wonder what it's like to kill somebody. I wonder.

(SPEAKS) Well, I ... just thought you'd like to know.

(THINKS) Never had anything like this happen to me in all my life. Notoriety.

(SPEAKS) Well, never mind. Do you love me?

(THINKS) I'm an idiot for keeping on with her. I'll get myself in a jam that I can't get out of.

(SPEAKS) Okay. After five o'clock.

(THINKS) After five o'clock. After five o'clock, he'll probably be waiting for her outside or maybe he'll come up here. I have to get away quick, too, so I can meet Lucille after five o'clock. After five o'clock. After five o'clock.

SFX: GONG! ... THEN, CLOCK  
WESTMINSTER MELODY PRELUDE BEFORE  
CHIMING FIVE O'CLOCK

JOHN

(THINKS) Five o'clock. Seems so long till five o'clock. Another day finished. I wish Patricia would hurry. I have to get away. I can't make Lucille wait. She'll be suspicious. I wish she wasn't so suspicious always. I wonder if that brother of Patricia's is still outside. I wish she'd come in.

SFX: DOOR OPENS AND PATRICIA'S  
STEPS IN ... DOOR SHUTS AND  
PATRICIA'S STEPS APPROACH BEHIND...

JOHN

(THINKS) Here she comes now. What do I see in her? She's beautiful, but I'd hate to be married to her.

(SPEAKS) Hello, Patsy.

(THINKS) The way she eats ice cream. She licks it off the spoon. It makes me sick.

PATRICIA (WORRIED) Oh, Johnny! What in the world did Tom say?

JOHN (THINKS) He said plenty. He scared me to death.

(SPEAKS) Tom? Who ... who's Tom? Oh ...

(LIGHTLY) Oh, your brother. Why, er...

Why, he said, uh, I had to let you alone. That's all.

PATRICIA He did? Oh, Johnny! Did he threaten you?

JOHN (SPEAKS) Well, he warned me that he'd been welterweight champion of the, er, of something or other.

(THINKS) He said he was welterweight champion of his brigade. How big is a brigade?

PATRICIA Oh, Johnny, he's terrible. He'd beat a man just awfully ... just because the man spoke to me in the streetcar.

JOHN (THINKS) Well, he won't beat me ... not if I can get to my gun. I guess I'll carry the gun with me in my pocket.

(SPEAKS, CAREFULLY) Well, uh, do you want me to let you alone, darling?

PATRICIA (HOW COULD YOU ASK THAT?) Oh, Johnny.

JOHN (THINKS) I wish you'd say yes. I wish you'd say, "Yes, let me alone forever." I wish you'd...

(SPEAKS) Well , Patsy?

PATRICIA (STARTS CRYING) Oh... Oh, Johnny.  
(CONTINUES TO WEEP UNDER THE FOLLOWING...)

JOHN (THINKS, DISGUSTED) Cut out that bawling. You look terrible when you bawl. Your face is all screwed up. You make a terrible face. Cut it out. You look terrible.

(SPEAKS, SOOTHING) Don't cry, sweetheart. Please don't cry, honey.

(THINKS, DISGUSTED) Bawling like a kid. Making awful faces. Your mouth open. Looks awful. Women look terrible when they bawl. I wish I'd never seen you. Patricia, stop bawling.

(SPEAKS, SOOTHING) Don't cry, honey. It's all right. I ... I guess I'd better let you alone, Patricia, after all. I've ... I've got no business loving you and ... going on this way, I ... Well, I'm ... just a fool, I guess. I ...

(THINKS) That's a good line. Only trouble is, it makes her bawl even more. Will you pipe down? Will you stop that? Shut up. Stop bawling, Patricia. If your brother comes in here now ...

PATRICIA (DURING ABOVE, HER WEEPING HAS GROWN LOUDER) John, I love you so. I ... I can't give you up.

JOHN (THINKS) That's just fine. Only, baby, you'd better give me up 'cause it's going to get me in a jam. I know it is.

(SPEAKS, SOOTHING) There, there, Patsy darling. Stop crying now and kiss me. Come on. Kiss me.

PATRICIA (STOPS WEEPING, LOVINGLY) Oh, Johnny.

JOHN (THINKS) Why do I do these dumb things? Why don't I say, "Go on, get out, let me alone"? I don't want to get beaten up. I don't care about you, Patricia. I really love Lucille. But you're pretty nice and you kiss nice. Only you're getting lipstick all over me.

PATRICIA Oh, Johnny, please... Please don't give me up, will you, Johnny? I love you, Johnny.

JOHN (SPEAKS) Oh, darling.

(THINKS, DISGUSTED) "Johnny, Johnny," I wish you'd stop calling me "Johnny." I wish you'd go. I have to go and meet Lucille.

PATRICIA If Tom beat you up, I don't know what I'll do, Johnny.

JOHN (SPEAKS, REASSURING) He won't beat me up, sweetheart. Don't you worry. Now kiss me.

(THINKS) I hope he won't beat me up. I guess I can ease out of this somehow. I don't know how, but I'll ease out of it. Patricia, you're all right, but I'm not going to play around with any girl with a tough brother, no sir. Not me.

(SPEAKS) Kiss me again, Patsy darling. I love you.

(THINKS) Now, why did I say I love her? I'm crazy, I'm a fool. I didn't mean to say that. I didn't want to say "I love you." I don't love you. You're nice, but I don't love you. I don't. I love Lucille. Lucille is probably waiting for me right now.

PATRICIA (RELIEVED) Oh, Johnny. I love you, too.

JOHN (THINKS) A fine mess now. I don't love you. I kinda feel sorry for ya, but I don't love you. I don't love you, Patricia. It would be a terrible thing being married to you. And the next thing, you'll start talking about divorcing Lucille and I won't, I won't; I love Lucille.

SFX: DOOR SLOWLY OPENS

JOHN (THINKS) The door's opening. Who is it? It's ... It's Lucille.

SFX: LUCILLE'S SLOW STEPS IN

LUCILLE (OFF, UNSURPRISED, IRONIC) Well ... !

PATRICIA (GASPS)

SFX: DOOR SHUTS

LUCILLE (OFF) A very pretty little tableau indeed.

SFX: LUCILLE'S SLOW STEPS TO JOHN BEHIND...

JOHN (THINKS) Now, I'm in a fix. What'll I do? I can't explain to Lucille that I don't love Patricia, I can't. What will I do? Oh, God help me. Please, God, help me. Help me get out of this. Help ...

LUCILLE (ICILY) Who is this woman, John?

JOHN (THINKS) The way she said "woman"!

(SPEAKS, AN AWKWARD INTRODUCTION) Why, er ... Why, Miss, er, er, er, Miss Parmelee, er, Mrs. Phillips.

(THINKS) I'm a fool. Introducing them as though they were at a party. Fool.

LUCILLE Perhaps you can explain what this is all about, John?

JOHN (SPEAKS) Well, uh, Lucille, er ... Well, you see, uh, I ... Miss Parmelee and ...

PATRICIA I ... I think I can explain, Mrs. Phillips.

LUCILLE Well?

PATRICIA I ... (EXHALES, SIMPLY) I love Johnny. That's all.

JOHN (THINKS) She said she loves me. Now what can I do? Lucille ... believe me, please ... I don't love her. I don't. Oh, God, please help me out of this.

LUCILLE How very interesting. And Johnny loves you, I take it?

JOHN (THINKS) No, I don't. No, I don't. No, I don't love her. I love you, Lucille.

PATRICIA Yes. He loves me, too.

JOHN (THINKS) I do not. I do not love you. I love Lucille.

LUCILLE Is this true, John?

JOHN (SPEAKS) I, er ... I ... Yes. I ... love her, Lucille.

(THINKS) I do not, I do not. I lied. I'm a fool. Why did I say that?

LUCILLE You really love this ... this little tramp, John?

PATRICIA (OFFENDED) Who are you calling a tramp? You can't ...

LUCILLE I called you a tramp, young woman.

PATRICIA Well, I'll scratch your eyes out!

SFX: NOISY CATFIGHT ... THEN IN BG

JOHN (THINKS) Now, they're fighting. Oh, Lucille ... I hate her, Lucille. She got me into this mess. Oh, stop!

(SPEAKS) Stop it! Lucille! Patricia!  
Stop it! Stop it, I say!

SFX: CATFIGHT ENDS

JOHN (SPEAKS) Now, stop this, both of you!  
Lucille! Let go of her, Patricia.

PATRICIA (SOBS)

JOHN (SPEAKS) Now, sit down here, both of  
you. Won't do either of you any good to  
act...

PATRICIA John, my dress is all torn.

JOHN (THINKS) That dreadful green dress. I'm  
glad it's torn. Lucille beat you up  
pretty well. Lucille's a good scrapper.  
Nice work, Lucille.

(SPEAKS, SOOTHING) It's all right,  
darling. Now, now, sit down here.

(THINKS) "Darling" ... I'm a fool. I  
don't love you. I don't, I don't.

LUCILLE I'm sorry I lost my temper, Miss  
Parmelee. I'm sorry.

PATRICIA (SAVAGE) I hate you.

JOHN (THINKS) You shut up. Don't you talk to  
Lucille that way.

(SPEAKS, TRIES TO BE REASONABLE) Now,  
Patricia, darling, please ...

PATRICIA Oh, John, I...

LUCILLE John, how long has this been going on?

PATRICIA (PROUD) It's been going on for a long time. We love each other.

JOHN (THINKS) We do not. She just thinks she loves me and I don't love her at all. I don't, Lucille. I don't.

LUCILLE Oh, I see.

JOHN (THINKS) No, you don't see, Lucille. You don't see.

LUCILLE I suppose you want me to divorce John, then, so ... you and he can be married?

JOHN (THINKS) Oh, Lucille, don't divorce me. What'll I do without you? What'll I do? Please, Lucille. Don't divorce me. Why, I love you, Lucille. We love each other.

LUCILLE Is that right, miss?

PATRICIA Yes, that's right.

JOHN (THINKS) Don't listen to her, Lucille. Don't listen to her, please. Don't listen to her, Lucille. I don't want to marry her.

LUCILLE What do you think, John?

JOHN (THINKS) I don't want a divorce, Lucille. I don't want anything but you. Oh, no, Lucille. Please, Lucille. Don't...

(SPEAKS) I, er, well, it's ... it's up to you, Lucille.

(THINKS) Why did I say that? Why did I ...? No, no, don't divorce me, Lucille. I can't live without you. I'll die, Lucille. I'll die without you. If I could only explain ...

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

JOHN (THINKS) Who's that? I bet it's her brother. I knew he'd come up here. Oh, why did this have to happen to me? Oh, go away. Please go away.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

LUCILLE You'd better go to the door, John.

JOHN (THINKS) I can't go to the door, Lucille. I can't. Oh, Lucille. I love you.

SFX: JOHN'S RELUCTANT FOOTSTEPS TO DOOR, DOOR OPENS

TOM Is Patricia here?

JOHN (THINKS) I knew he'd come. I knew it. Now, he's going to start all over again. What can I do? What can I do? (SPEAKS, AWKWARD) Yes. Uh, she's here. Uh, come in.

SFX: TOM'S STEPS IN ... DOOR SHUTS ... TOM'S STEPS TO PATRICIA BEHIND...

TOM Patricia? I've come to take you home.

JOHN (THINKS) If she'll only go with him. If she'll just go with him and go away from here.

PATRICIA (DEFIANT) I won't go with you, Tom.

JOHN (THINKS) Go with him, Patricia, and never come back.

LUCILLE And who is this, may I ask?

TOM I'm Patricia's brother. I don't know who you are.

LUCILLE I ... I'm Mrs. Phillips.

TOM (SPEAKS INDECIPHERABLY TO LUCILLE BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) Now he'll tell her that he came up here to warn me this afternoon. It'll be worse than ever. Oh, why did this have to happen to me? Oh, why? Why? Why did it?

TOM You seem to have stepped in on a very pleasant little scene, Mrs. Phillips. You have my sympathy.

LUCILLE Thank you. You knew about this, I take it?

TOM Yes. Come on, Patricia.

LUCILLE I think Patricia prefers to remain here.

JOHN (THINKS) Oh, Lucille. Please, Lucille, don't. I love you, Lucille. Let him take her. Go on. Get out. Get out, both of you. Get out.

TOM Patricia. We're getting out of this. We're going home.

PATRICIA No, I'm going to stay right here. You can't make me go, Tom.

JOHN (THINKS) Yes, you can. You're her brother. Make her go. I'll go crazy, I'll go crazy, I know I will. I can't stand this. I can't. Oh, please, make her go.

TOM Mrs. Phillips, I ... I'm sorry. My sister... (SPEAKS INDECIPHERABLY TO LUCILLE BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) Go on, take her. Make her go with you. Make her go. Make her go. Please take her away. Please do. Lucille, make him take her away. Make him take her.

LUCILLE (SYMPATHETIC) I know. It's all right. Only ... it seems to be rather complicated.

TOM (INSISTS) Come on, Patricia.

PATRICIA You let me alone.

JOHN (THINKS) I won't, I won't do it. Take her away. Make her go with you. Go on.

(SPEAKS, AWKWARD) Uh, let her alone, uh, Tom.

TOM                   Phillips, I don't know why I don't beat you within an inch of your worthless life.

JOHN                   (THINKS) You make a move, I'll get the pistol out of the desk and kill you. I'll kill you ... all of you. You and your sister and Lucille and myself. I'll kill you all.

LUCILLE               (REASONABLE) Tom, I don't think that would do a great deal of good.

TOM                   No, I ... I suppose it wouldn't.

LUCILLE               Well, John, we might as well talk this out. No use going insane ... as we did a few moments ago. There must be a way out. Sit down.

JOHN                   (THINKS) Oh, Lucille, if I could only explain to you, if I could only tell you but you wouldn't believe me, I can't tell you.

PATRICIA              I don't think there's anything to talk about. You'll simply have to divorce him.

JOHN                   (THINKS) No, no, no, Lucille, don't listen to her. I don't want to marry her, I don't want her.

LUCILLE               Sit down, John.

JOHN (THINKS) Oh, Lucille, you've always helped me. Please, get me out of this. Please, Lucille. I love you. Please get me out of it. Dear God, please help Lucille get me out of this, please, God.

LUCILLE Now, Miss, uh ... Parmelee, is it? You're sure you want John badly enough to take him away from me?

PATRICIA AND LUCILLE (ARGUE INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) She can't have me, Lucille. She can't have me. If you divorce me, Lucille, I'll kill myself. I will. I'll die. I can't live without you, Lucille. Oh, Lucille, you know me so well. You love me, Lucille. This girl is nothing to me. Lucille, don't forget me. Lucille, don't forget how we loved each other all the time in school.

PATRICIA (INSISTS) I'm perfectly sure. You've got to divorce him.

PATRICIA AND LUCILLE (ARGUE INDECIPHERABLY IN BACKGROUND...)

JOHN (THINKS) You won't let me go, Lucille. You won't just throw me away. I wish I had a cigarette. Where are the cigarettes? They're in the desk drawer.

SFX: DESK DRAWER OPENS

JOHN (THINKS) Cigarettes. (SEES SOMETHING) Oh. There's the pistol. Lucille, if you throw me away, if you divorce me, you'll

kill me. I'll take the pistol and blow my brains out.

SFX: DRAWER SHUTS

JOHN (THINKS) I wonder what it feels like to blow my brains out, I wonder. I'll find out if you let me go, Lucille. I'll kill myself. I will, I will.

PATRICIA AND (STOP ARGUING)  
LUCILLE

TOM Mrs. Phillips? Patricia's too young to know exactly what she does want. She's a flighty kid. She doesn't really love your husband. He's just ... Well, fascinating to her because ... Well, he's a successful businessman and...  
(CONTINUES INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) "Successful businessman"? If this gets into the papers, I won't be a "successful businessman," I'll be a fool. I am a fool! A fool. Oh, why did this have to happen to me? It can't happen to me. It's a dream.

PATRICIA I don't care what Tom says about me, Mrs. Phillips. He thinks I'm just a baby, but I'm old enough to know my own mind! (CONTINUES INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) You're a fool, too, Patricia. We're all fools. Fools. I don't want you. Oh, Lucille, look at me. Lucille,

please look at me. I love you, Lucille.  
If you'll just look at me, you'll know I  
love you. Please, Lucille.

LUCILLE                    John isn't the easiest person in the  
                                 world to get along with, young woman.  
                                 (CONTINUES INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND  
                                 JOHN...)

JOHN                        (THINKS) You got along with me, Lucille.  
                                 I know I'm hard to get along with, I'm  
                                 crazy and I'm a fool, but you love me.  
                                 You loved me enough to fight over me.  
                                 You got along with me. You're the wisest  
                                 person in the world. You love me,  
                                 Lucille.

PATRICIA                   I don't care! I love him and I'm going  
                                 to marry him!

PATRICIA AND             (ARGUE INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN...)  
LUCILLE

JOHN                        (THINKS) No, you're not. If Lucille  
                                 won't have me, I'll ... I'll ... I'll  
                                 kill myself. I'll kill myself with the  
                                 pistol that's right here in the desk  
                                 drawer. I will. I will.

LUCILLE                   Well, let's ask John about it. John, do  
                                 you...? Do you really and truly love  
                                 this girl?

JOHN                        (THINKS) No, no, no, I don't love her,  
                                 Lucille. I don't love her. I don't, I  
                                 say, Lucille. I love you, you, you, you.

LUCILLE                   John?

JOHN (SPEAKS, AWKWARD) I, er ... I ...

PATRICIA Of course you love me, Johnny darling.

JOHN (SPEAKS) Why, yes. I ...

(THINKS) I said it again. Something's wrong in my head. I can't think. I don't know what it is. I guess I'm going crazy. Oh, what have I done? I've lost you, Lucille. I've lost you, dearest.

(SPEAKS) Lucille, I ... I ...

(THINKS) I can't talk. I'm crazy. My head is all wrong. I don't know what's the matter with me. Lucille, if you could only see my thoughts, if you only could know how I love you. I can't stand this. I can't, I can't.

TOM This is all very painful, Mrs. Phillips.  
(CONTINUES INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN ...)

JOHN (THINKS) If you'd only take your sister and take her away from here and let me talk to Lucille, I could make Lucille understand. Oh, Lucille, don't look at me like that. Lucille, if you'd only come over here to me, and put your hand on my shoulder, everything would be all right. You'd understand.

(SPEAKS) Patricia, I ... I ...

PATRICIA Oh, Johnny, darling.

TOM Sit down, Patricia.

JOHN (THINKS) That's right, make her sit down. She's a fool, she's a fool. Oh, what am I going to do? What can I do? What, Lucille dearest, what?

LUCILLE Miss Parmelee, I ... I love John a great deal. (CONTINUES INDECIPHERABLY BEHIND JOHN...)

JOHN (THINKS) Oh, Lucille. You do love me. You love me. You don't want to lose me. I know what you're thinking. Lucille, you won't give me up, because you love me. You want me to be happy. Oh, Lucille, I've never been good enough for you. You're the most wonderful woman in the world. I love you, Lucille, I love you.

LUCILLE But I ... I'm afraid I love him a great deal yet.

JOHN (THINKS) Lucille. Lucille, darling. Why can't we end all this business and go home? We're going to play bridge tonight. Come on, let's play bridge. It's like a play. Take Patricia out of here, Tom. Take her away.

PATRICIA I know, I'm sorry. I can't help loving him, Mrs. Phillips. It's terrible, I know, but ... I do love him.

JOHN (THINKS) Oh, God. Oh, God. What will I do? What can I do?

LUCILLE (GENTLY) I know, my dear. (RESIGNED) Well, John, I suppose we could see Carl

Beldie about the divorce. I'm ... I'm sorry it had to be this way.

JOHN

(SPEAKS) Lucille...

(THINKS) Lucille, you can't do this, you can't. You can't, you can't. You're not going to let me go. You're not going to divorce me.

(SPEAKS) Lucille, I ... I ...

(THINKS) Lucille, I'll kill myself. The gun is right here in the drawer. I'll shoot myself. I've got to, Lucille. I won't let you go. No, no, no, I won't, Lucille.

(SPEAKS, VOICE WAVERS) Lucille, I ... I ...

(THINKS) I'll kill myself, Lucille. Oh, Lucille, don't you see? I love you.

SFX: DRAWER OPENS ... SCRAPE OF GUN AS IT'S RAISED

JOHN

(THINKS) It's no use. The gun is here. I'm afraid to. I'm afraid to die. But I can't go on living without you. I can't. I can't.

TOM

Put down that gun!

JOHN

(THINKS) No, no, I won't, Tom. Goodbye, Lucille, goodbye.

SFX: GUNSHOT!

PATRICIA (SCREAMS)

LUCILLE (GASPS)

SFX: BODY FALLS TO FLOOR

JOHN (THINKS) I've done it. I don't feel any different. Blood. All over.

(AFTER A PAUSE, REALIZES, SPEAKS, FILTERED VOICE) I'm dead. I'm dead.

(DESPAIRINGLY) Oh, Lucille. Lucille. I love you, Lucille. I'll love you always, Lucille.

PATRICIA (WEEPS) Oh, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny!  
(GASPS, THEN ANGRILY, TO LUCILLE) You! You!

TOM Patricia! Pat! No!

PATRICIA (HYSTERICAL) He did it because of you, Mrs. Phillips!

SFX: GUNSHOT!

JOHN (AFTER A PAUSE, FILTERED, LOVINGLY) Oh, Lucille. Where did you come from, Lucille? Oh, I love you.

LUCILLE (FILTERED, TENDERLY) I know you love me, John. I love you. That's why I had to give you up. I love you, John. I love you.

JOHN (FILTERED, HAPPY) We'll always be together. Won't we, Lucille?

PATRICIA (IN DESPAIR) Oh, Johnny... Johnny, I can't go on without you. (WEEPS) Oh, Johnny darling. Johnny ... Johnny ...

TOM Pat. Pat, please. (URGENTLY) No, Pat, don't!

PATRICIA Goodbye, Tom, I'm ... I'm sorry it's such a mess.

SFX: GUNSHOT!

TOM Pat!

JOHN (FILTERED, GENUINELY) Lucille, I love you ... love you, love you. I will never love anybody but you.

PATRICIA (FILTERED, DREAMILY) Johnny? I'm here. I'm with you, Johnny. I love you. I love you!

JOHN (FILTERED) Oh, no! Patricia! (IN DESPAIR) Lucille? Where are you, Lucille? Now I've got to start all over again! All over again. Over again. (FADES)

SFX: CYMBAL GONG!

JOHN (MUMBLES IN HIS SLEEP) Over again.

LUCILLE John? John, dear? Aren't you going to wake up?

JOHN (AWAKENS) What? Hey ... where am I?

LUCILLE (CHUCKLES) You're in bed, darling.

JOHN (CONFUSED) Huh?

LUCILLE Where'd you think you were?

JOHN Oh. Ooh, I don't know. I ... guess I was dreaming. (URGENTLY) Is it ... is it really you, Lucille? You're ... you're really here? There's ... there's nobody with ya?

LUCILLE (LAUGHS, AMUSED) Of course not, silly. Who in the world would be with me? Hurry up now and get dressed. I'll have your breakfast ready.

JOHN Oh, yeah ... (CHUCKLES) ... breakfast.

LUCILLE Scrambled eggs and bacon, too. Oh, don't you go back to sleep now. You'll be an hour late getting to the office as it is.

JOHN (CHUCKLES)

SFX: DOOR OPENS ... LUCILLE'S STEPS AWAY

LUCILLE (EXITING) I'll see you downstairs, dear.

JOHN (CHUCKLES) All right, honey.

SFX: DOOR SHUTS

JOHN (TO HIMSELF) Whew! Oh, boy. What a dream.

SFX: RECEIVER UP ... DIALS PHONE

JOHN

Hello, uh, this is John Phillips. Will you connect me with my secretary, please? (PAUSE, CLEARS THROAT) Hello, Patricia? Uh, this is Mr. Phillips. ... No. Not "Johnny" ... MISTER Phillips. I won't be down to the office today, but in the meantime ... I want you to go to the cashier and get your check! You're FIRED!

SFX: CYMBAL GONG!

HOST

That was "The Man in the Middle," originally written by Wyllis Cooper and reprised by Arch Obler. It's an excellent example of Cooper's use of internal monologue as a narrative device. Obler does a fine job of elaborating on this technique.

MUSIC: RIR THEME FOR BREAK

LISTENING BREAK #2

HOST

This is Re-Imagined Radio, a program about radio theatre and sound based storytelling.

More information about listening opportunities, including our YouTube channel and podcast is available at our website ... reimagedradio DOT fm SLASH Listen.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, THEN

DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

HOST CREDITS

HOST

Episodes of Re-Imagined Radio are produced in collaboration with The Electronic Literature Lab at Washington State University Vancouver, and are broadcast and streamed by partner radio stations around the country.

Our production team includes Marc Rose, Holly Slocum, Evan Leyden, Rylan Eisenhower, and Caitlyn Kruger-L'Esperance.

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I'm John Barber, producer and host. It's been a pleasure sharing this episode, with you. Thank you for listening.

**MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK  
UNDER THE FOLLOWING**

ANNOUNCER CLOSE

**ANNOUNCER**

**This is a production of Re...Imagined Radio. To learn more, visit our website, reimagedradio (all one word, no punctuation) DOT fm.**

Please join us for another episode of Re-Imagined Radio as we continue our exploration of sound-based storytelling.

**MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, AND TO END.**