

In concert!

MR. GRIMM
Or for dinner.

HENRY
I would like that very much, thank you.

The Grimms exit, and Henry hurries to the armoire.

MATILDE (voice)
(from down the long hall)
I'll be one more minute!

HENRY
Take your time!

Out of his jacket pockets come the stolen SILVERWARE, which he returns as fast as he can. Every other second, he checks the hallway.

With the last of the forks put away, he takes from his pocket the EARRINGS he had stolen.

Hurriedly looks for a place to hide them, settles on the space between the COUCH and the SIDE-TABLE. Puts them there, and sits down on the couch.

MATILDE (voice)
Hello, Henry.

Matilde enters from the hall. Henry stands up.

HENRY
(in Portuguese)
You look very pretty.

MATILDE
(laughs a little)
Was that Japanese?

HENRY
It was Portuguese.

MATILDE
I know. And you learned that for me?

HENRY

Yes.

MATILDE

But how is that sincere? You didn't say it in the moment.

HENRY

Well...

She smiles, kisses him once on each cheek.

MATILDE

My earrings!

She goes to them, picks them up, and holds them to the light.

HENRY

They're very beautiful.

MATILDE

I thought they were lost forever.

HENRY

Always in the last place you look.

MATILDE

You're good luck. I should wear them now, don't you think? But I'd have to change my dress.

(she takes his hand)

Come to my room, and we can speak through the curtains.

EXT. L.A. STREET - NIGHT, LATER

HENRY and MATILDE walk down a colorful avenue, full of restaurants and cafés. Henry has no idea where to eat.

MATILDE

(walking in pain)

My date shoes.

HENRY

The place is close, I think.

MATILDE
You have a reservation?

HENRY
(lies)
Of course.

A MAITRE D' with a fun MOUSTACHE comes out of the restaurant just ahead of them. The VOICE of an OPERA SINGER follows him out.

MAITRE D'
(theatrical voice)
Hello, my friends! What a lovely duet!

MATILDE
(to Henry)
Is this the place?

HENRY
Yes it is.

He opens the door for them with PANACHE.

MAITRE D'
Welcome!

INT. OPERA CAFÉ - MOMENTS LATER

A busy OPERA SINGER moves about a dark, red room, serenading the tables with an ARIA. In a corner, a PIANIST accompanies her.

MAITRE D'
Right this way.

He shows HENRY and MATILDE to a booth. Just as they sit down, the singer arrives at their table, belting out a dramatic passage.

Henry has a "what have I gotten myself into" moment.

The singer moves on to the next table.

MATILDE

How did you hear of this place?

HENRY

Well...

MATILDE

I love it.

A SINGING WAITER arrives at their table with MENUS.

LATER THAT EVENING

HENRY and MATILDE dine on big plates of food with big wine glasses.

MATILDE

The study of linguistics, you see, is a scientific process to describe a very primal activity. Language is a beast, you know? Our talk is just another bird song. They say that humans sang to each other before we spoke a word.

HENRY

We sang before we spoke. I like that.

MATILDE

And so the reason why your Portuguese is so awful, my apologies, is because it is like a new instrument, to you. So learn the notes one by one. Don't listen so much as watch, very closely, how I move my tongue against the teeth and the roof of the mouth.

CLOSE ON

Matilde's lovely lips as she sounds out the following..

MATILDE

caipirinha. caip...

HENRY

Caip...

MATILDE

rinh...

HENRY

rinh...

MATILDE

na...

Henry doesn't respond. He's lost in those lips.

MATILDE (cont'd)

Are you paying attention, Henry?

HENRY

(back to earth)

What? Oh. Yes, sorry. *Caipirinha*...

MATILDE

See? That sounds much better, now.

AT THE PIANO

MAITRE D' has the microphone.

MAITRE D'

(voice)

Ladies and gentlemen... It is at this moment of the *serenade di gastronomie* that we ask one of you to take the stage, and sing a tune.

(no response from the diners)

And if no one volunteers, we force each and every one of you to come up...

MATILDE

(pointing to Henry)

Pick him! He's a musician!

MAITRE D'

(rushing to Henry)

Wonderful!

HENRY

(mortified)

I don't know any opera.

MAITRE D'

Then sing whatever you please. Giuseppe

can play anything. Sing the Beatles!

HENRY

I'm not a singer, man.

MAITRE D'

But the lady wants a song.
 (for all to hear)
 The lady demands a song!

CUT TO

Matilde's POV - Henry at the piano, trying songs on Giuseppe. The pianist doesn't know any of the songs Henry wants to sing. Finally, they come to a tune both know.

Giuseppe plays the opening bars of "Girl From Ipanema."

HENRY

(singing)

*Tall, and tan, and young, and lovely
 the Girl from Ipanema goes walking..*

He sings sweetly. What he lacks in talent, he makes up for in sincerity. It is new, and endearing, to see him perform without confidence.

Matilde loves this. SPARKS FLY as he sings to her.

LATER THAT NIGHT

Henry and Matilde walk hand in hand down a quiet, empty street. Henry holds Matilde's DATE SHOES in his other hand.

CUT TO:

Henry and Matilde, paused in front of her building.

HENRY goes to one knee, helps Matilde step into her shoes.

MATILDE

Thank you.

Henry stands.

MATILDE

I would invite you up for coffee;

the Grimms sleep very soundly. But the doorman is an awful man, and I know that he would tell them.

Inside the building, we see the DOORMAN behind his desk.

HENRY

That's all right. Thank you, for tonight.

MATILDE

Good night, Henry.

It's clear Matilde wants to give him a real smooch, but Henry just gives her a QUICK KISS on the cheek.

HENRY

Good night.

MATILDE

Good night.

Matilde walks to her door. He watches her go.

HENRY

Matilde.

(she turns around)

Be at your kitchen window in five minutes.

MATILDE

Why?

HENRY

Just... be there.

MATILDE

(she yawns - she's nervous)

All right, Romeo.

She walks into her building.

CUT TO

MATILDE at her kitchen window, watching Henry climb up to her. Though scared he will fall, she laughs.

He climbs with precision and grace. She falls for him as he climbs.

IN THE KITCHEN

Henry climbs in through the window, and down from the sink. They stand across from each other. He catches his breath.

IN MATILDE'S ROOM

They sit on her bed, kissing tentatively.

MATILDE

(whispers)

You're new at this, aren't you.

HENRY

No.

MATILDE

Relax...

(She puts her hand under his shirt.

Henry winces.)

Did I hurt you?

HENRY

(shakes his head)

The opposite.

MATILDE

Are you sure you are all right?

HENRY

Yeah. It's... I'm new at this.

MATILDE

You're twenty-two years old.

HENRY

I know, but... you see... I used to think, sometimes, that all I would ever be was... music.

MATILDE

(smiles)

Music?

HENRY
(embarrassed)
I ain't never said that out loud.

MATILDE
No, no. It's okay. And... until when were
you only music?

He just smiles.

She goes to her RECORD PLAYER. At soft volume, sets the
needle to the perfect SONG.

Henry stands, and, without kissing, she brings herself very
close to him.

Soon, He kisses her urgently.

They kiss passionately. She takes his shirt off. He helps
her step out of her dress. She takes his belt off, and they
laugh a bit.

Very comfortable with each other now..

EXT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE - MORNING, NEXT DAY

In the pool outside the recording studio, we see MONA and
her CHILDREN swimming with BUSTER, the dog.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

HENRY gives his ALTO SAX a workout in a particularly fast-
paced tune.

THE INTERN and ROSALINDA, Mona's mother, look on from the
dials. Both wear HEADPHONES. They SHARE A CIGARETTE.

HENRY performs with noticeably LESS RESTRAINT than before.
He's relaxed.

EXT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE - DAY, LATER

MONA swims laps.

The CHILDREN play with BUSTER in the yard.

BUSTER pricks his ears towards the pool-house.

Except for LAWRENCE, THE BAND and the INTERN run out of the studio in their UNDERPANTS.

They jump into the pool. CELEBRATION!

LAWRENCE and MAMA follow them out, fully dressed.

EDDIE gives MONA a BIG KISS.

EDDIE

It's finished! It's finished.

MONA

How did it go?

EDDIE

I finally made a record, Mona.

They kiss again.

Eddie gets swept up, pulled under by CHUCK (the drummer), who SNUCK UP BELOW HIM like a shark.

LAWRENCE

(lights Rosalinda's cigarette)
Like children, aren't they? Happy
little children.

Rosalinda nods.

The INTERN swims up to Henry.

INTERN

(strong foreign accent, to Henry)
You are a very good.

HENRY

Thanks. Thank you.

(awkward pause between them)
Eddie! What time do we go on tonight?

EDDIE

Nine.

(Eddie swims over to him)
There's gonna be some people there
tonight, Hank. Some people I've invited.
But if you think it's too risky, you don't
have to be there.

HENRY

I'll be there. My woman is coming.

INT - GRIMM'S APARTMENT - EVENING, LATER

MRS. GRIMM, wearing a fancy BALL-GOWN, comes into Matilde's
room. MATILDE is getting ready.

MRS. GRIMM

(to Matilde)

Is this too formal?

MATILDE

Yes.

MRS. GRIMM

I had a feeling. Everything's become so
dreadfully casual.

MATILDE

You should wear it. Make a statement.

MRS. GRIMM

Oh, no. I'm too nervous. I haven't been
to a jazz concert in a decade.
When we'd go see Art Pepper, or Chet
Baker at the Lighthouse, everyone would
be in their best. It was just expected
of one, when you are seeing the best
musicians in the world..

MR. GRIMM knocks on the door.

MR. GRIMM

May I come in?

MRS. GRIMM

Yes, Dear.

He enters, wearing a TUXEDO.

MR. GRIMM
Too formal?

EXT. L.A. STREET - EVENING, CONTINUOUS

MR. TORRID at the bus-stop. He reads a NEWSPAPER.

CLOSE ON

A little blurb in the paper for the "EDWARD JONES QUINTET."

Looks down the street for the bus.

INT./EXT. AGENT'S FORD/PARKING LOT - EVENING, CONTINUOUS

AGENT dines on take-out MEXICAN FOOD.

On his lap is a NEWSPAPER and the THOMAS GUIDE.

He MAPS A ROUTE as he eats a BURRITO.

INT. JAZZ CLUB - LATER

A FULL HOUSE is present to see EDDIE'S QUINTET. This is by far the most people we have ever seen at one of their shows.

THE BAND is ready. EDDIE goes to the microphone. HENRY wears his hat CLOSE OVER HIS EYES. This obscures his fugitive face, and also makes him look really cool.

At a desirable table towards the front of the house are MATILDE and THE GRIMMS.

Behind them, half-hidden at the bar, is MR. TORRID.

EDDIE
Welcome, my worthy constituents. Tonight shall be a very special night, a celebratory night, as today we wrapped our new record... and what's it called, Lawrence?

LAWRENCE
Gentle Temper Found.

CLOSE ON

The front door of the club, and the entrance of THE AGENT...
as the SHOW BEGINS - HENRY and LAWRENCE DUET on a melody
seamlessly. The band is in good form.

BACK TO

Agent at the bar. He is just a couple stools down from Mr.
Torrid.

AGENT (at the bar)
(booze on his breath)
Whiskey, please.

BARTENDER
What kind?

AGENT
(a little too loud)
Cheap!

Mr. Torrid glares at the Agent, then RECOGNIZES him. Agent
catches his glare, then notices the missing arm.

CUT TO

Matilde and the Grimms at the table, watching Henry. They
are very pleased.

CUT TO

Mr. Torrid heading to the front door.

CUT TO

Henry's view of the audience. Sees his father hurrying to
the front door.

Surprised, Henry STUMBLES over the chorus. We've never
before seen Henry falter on the saxophone.

CUT TO

Mr. Torrid running down the alley next to the club.

CUT TO

The Agent walking towards the front doors of the club.

CUT TO

Mr. Torrid, at the rear of the club, opening the back-stage doors.

CUT TO

LEONARDOO (the bassist), on-stage, fingering through a SOLO.

MR. TORRID

(voice)

Henry!

HENRY looks to his side, just off-stage. Sees his FATHER.

Joe gestures for him to come over. The AUDIENCE can't see Mr. Torrid.

He puts his saxophone on it's stand, makes a sign to Eddie, and goes off-stage to meet his father.

Mr. Torrid WRAPS HIM UP with his one arm - love and worry at the same time.

MR. TORRID

What the hell are you doing?

HENRY

I've got an alias.

MR. TORRID

A man came to our house for you, and I think I saw him out there.

HENRY

He's here?

MR. TORRID

I'm not positive. But I think he's...

HENRY

Is he there or isn't he, pop?

MR. TORRID

(thinks a little)

I don't know. They all sort of look the same, from a distance.

HENRY

What does he have on?

MR. TORRID

A black suit. He's by the bar.

Henry sneaks a glance out to the crowd.

HENRY

There's eight white dudes by the bar with black suits on, pop!

MR. TORRID

Let me look.

Sneaks a glance. He doesn't see him.

MR. TORRID

I don't know. But that don't mean we shouldn't get you the hell out of here.

HENRY

I can't do that, pop.

MR. TORRID

Eddie would understand.

HENRY

My woman is here.

MR. TORRID

You got a woman?

HENRY

Yeah.

MR. TORRID

Where is she?

HENRY

With the rich white people at the front table.

Mr. Torrid looks out..

His POV - MATILDE at the table, locking eyes with him. She is curious what Henry is up to.

MR. TORRID

Damn, son!

HENRY

My life's gone crazy, pop! It's way too much, but I can't stop.

MR. TORRID

You're *living*, Henry.

HENRY

(smiles)

And I found *Live at Billy Berg's*.

(pause)

I found your record, pops.

(pause)

I'll bring it over. Tomorrow.

MR. TORRID

(very moved, but hiding it.)

Be careful.

EDDIE

(looking back to Henry, as he plays)

Hey, Jericho! You only play on your own tunes, now?

Henry gives his dad a quick hug, heads back on stage.

Eddie WINKS at Mr. Torrid.

BEHIND THE CLUB

MR. TORRID comes out the backstage door. Heads to the alley.

STOPS DEAD IN HIS TRACKS.

The AGENT has been waiting for him in the alley.

AGENT

Please don't look at me like that.

(no response)

I don't mean Henry any harm, Mr. Torrid.

(no response)

Believe me.

MR. TORRID

Then why are you here?

AGENT

My girlfriend dumped me and it's Saturday Night.

MR. TORRID

Boy, that's so much bullshit.

AGENT

No. I'm not going to look for them anymore. I decided to do a very poor job at my job, from now on.

MR. TORRID

You're drunk.

AGENT

(he nods)

But believe me. I'm not finding anyone else.

(no response)

Some I found, at the beginning, had the option to enlist, instead of jail. A few of them went. And two of them are dead.

(Joe comes nearer to him)

And last week...someone I found...they sent him to San Quentin. His first night there, someone hurt him real bad. And, the next morning, they found him in his cell. He'd hung himself.

(starts crying)

And it's my fault... I killed him, Mr. Torrid... he was nineteen years old and I murdered

him, and he hadn't done anything wrong.

(Joe puts his hand on his shoulder)

Henry can't go there. He's such a great player. And I won't let that happen. I promise.

(Agent gathers himself. Takes a CARD from his wallet)

This is my card. I wrote down my home number, and you have my office, correct? If Henry's in trouble, please call me. I can do a lot for him.

MR. TORRID

Thank you.

They shake hands, and the agent walks away quickly.

INT. CLUB - LATER

THE BAND closes their set with a LIVELY FINALE. The diverse crowd is totally behind these guys. MATILDE and THE GRIMMS are beaming from the table. MR. TORRID stands at the bar.

They finish to RAUCOUS APPLAUSE.

AFTER THE SHOW

The concert has become a lively PARTY.

AT THE BAR

HENRY and MR. TORRID are talking.

HENRY

So, I guess it wasn't him. Otherwise, I'd be on a chopper by now, don't you think?

Mr. Torrid hesitates for only a moment.

MR. TORRID

That don't mean you're off the hook! You're crazy to think you can...

HENRY

Relax, pop.

MR. TORRID

Relax? You better not tell your Mama
to relax. She'll take you down.

HENRY

(putting his arm around his dad)
Come on. Let's go meet my lady.

BY THE EXIT

EDDIE talks to a RECORD EXECUTIVE.

EDDIE

Well the album itself is nearly wrapped,
but at the moment we're still evaluating
potential representation.

EXECUTIVE

By all means, explore every opportunity.
But, may I ask, who else have you spoken
to? It's a small world, you know.

EDDIE

Oh, you know, we've talked to... people.
Various people. A grab-bag of people,
really.

EXECUTIVE

I see. Is it too late to give you my card?

AT THE TABLE

HENRY introduces MR. TORRID to MATILDE and the GRIMMS.

MR. GRIMM

(stands to shake Joe's hand)
A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Torrid.

HENRY

My Father's one of the great piano players.

MRS. GRIMM

Did you ever play at The Lighthouse?

MR. TORRID

(bends to kiss Matilde's hand)
A very long time ago.

MRS. GRIMM

I thought Henry looked familiar. You were so handsome at that piano...

MR. GRIMM

You know I tickle the ivories myself, Joe...

Henry takes Matilde aside.

MATILDE

Why did they call you Jericho Morton?
(she takes off his hat)
And why do you wear this silly hat?

HENRY

I'm a performer, darlin'.
(he kisses her)
Let me take you to the samba,
tomorrow.

MATILDE

Maybe it's still open now.

HENRY

I'd go... but I need to run an errand for
my father.

EDDIE

(voice - so all the place can hear)
HEY, EVERYBODY! DRINKS ON ME!

MONA sprints to him, GRIPS HER HANDS over his mouth.

Eddie wrests the hands away, sees they belong to his wife,
and KISSES her. One of those great, joyous kisses.

INT./EXT. AGENT'S BUICK, L.A. STREET - NIGHT, LATER

The Agent drives alone on a road. We haven't seen him look
this relaxed, this AT PEACE with himself.

He passes a BUS-STOP. Sees HENRY at the bus-stop.

EXT. BUS-STOP - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

HENRY makes eye-contact with THE AGENT as he passes in his car.

He sees his BUS APPROACHING.

EXT. BEL-AIR STREET - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER

HENRY walks to JOSEPH'S Driveway.

CUT TO

a FLASHBACK: Joseph waiting outside his house, next to a SUITCASE.

JOSEPH
(to the band)
You're lucky my driver's late!

BACK TO

The present. Henry at the TULIP BED. The WINDOW he noticed was open, earlier, is STILL AJAR. He climbs in through the open window.

INT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight through the wall-size windows illuminates Henry before a WALL OF RECORDS. There must be a thousand records on these shelves. He scans the wall with his hands and eyes.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM

Sleeps BUSTER (the dog) on the floor. His ears prick up a little, but eyes stay shut.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Henry is on his knees, going through a stack of records.

CLOSE ON

A Charlie Parker record in his hands.

HENRY
(whispers)

Wow.

Back to the pile... and he FINDS IT...

The ALBUM in his hands: *LIVE AT BILLY BERG'S*...

HENRY
Pop.

Right behind the album is a SECOND COPY. He sets one of the copies aside, then takes up the stack of records and puts it neatly back into place on the shelf.

He picks up his Dad's album, takes two steps to the way out, then pauses.

Henry's POV - the HI-FI STEREO - with HEADPHONES next to it. He's got to hear this record a.s.a.p.

Sneaks to the STEREO, opens it. Plugs in the headphones, and, with reverence, places the record on the turntable.

IN THE BEDROOM

Buster's ears prick up again. His eyes open, and he looks up to the bed.

Buster's POV - JOSEPH and the INTERN sleeping soundly.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Henry kneels before the turntable, headphones on.

IN HENRY'S IMAGINATION

He is at his father's concert.

Henry's POV - MR. TORRID (young and dual-limbed) at the piano. He plays with PASSION.

CHARLIE PARKER (alto saxophone)
Mr. Joe Torrid on the piano!

The standing room only crowd erupts. Pure Joy.

IN THE BEDROOM

Buster is up. He BARKS, nose to the closed door.

Joseph and the Intern stir.

IN HENRY'S IMAGINATION

Mr. Torrid continues to devour the piano. Charlie Parker, impressed, tries to keep up on the saxophone.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Henry, headphones on, is unaware of Joseph's presence behind him in the silent room. Joseph brandishes a REVOLVER.

JOSEPH

(to Henry's back)

Put your hands up, mutha fucka.

(no response.)

Hey!

(no response.)

I SAID PUT CHO HANDS UP!

Henry turns quickly.

GUNSHOT!

Henry falls to the floor. Joseph goes to him.

JOSEPH

(recognizes)

Henry? Fuck! Henry!

INT. TORRID FAMILY CAR - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER

MR. TORRID drives. MRS. TORRID is in the front seat.

MRS. TORRID

Left! Turn Left!

EXT. JOSEPH'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Joseph's BENTLEY sprints down the driveway and makes a hairpin left turn onto the street.

INT. EDDIE'S FORD - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Eddie drives at a FURIOUS PACE.

He slaps the dash, like a jockey whipping a racehorse.

INT./ EXT. JOSEPH'S BENTLEY / HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT,
MINUTES LATER

JOSEPH drives. In the backseat are the INTERN and HENRY. His ankle rests on Joseph's shoulder, his head in the intern's lap.

Joseph slams on the brakes in front of the E.R. entrance.

INT. HOSPITAL, HENRY'S ROOM - NIGHT, LATER

HENRY is asleep in the hospital bed, his leg ELEVATED. MRS. TORRID and EDDIE look on. Out the window we see JOSEPH and MR. TORRID talking to a DOCTOR.

LUCINDA

He's with you *four* days...

EDDIE

I'm so sorry, Lucinda...

LUCINDA

And he's a burglar, now! *Four* days!

EDDIE

I had no idea he was going over there...

LUCINDA

You know who you are? Judas!

EDDIE

Judas?

LUCINDA

Judas!

IN THE HALLWAY

DOCTOR

(to Joseph)

I don't care if you're not pressing charges. There was gunfire involved. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a phone call to make.

JOSEPH

Don't make that call, Doc.

Eddie comes out of the hospital room, listens in.

DOCTOR

If you show up in your Bentley with a bloody young man sprawled out in your backseat, with a bullet in his leg, the police need to know about it. It's the policy.

EDDIE

Fuck that policy, man.

DOCTOR

Fuck the policy?

EDDIE

Don't be a *policy* man!

(gets in his face)

Don't be a huddle mouse, man!

DOCTOR

Don't fuck with me! I've been at this fucking hospital since Thursday!

AGENT

Doctor Nicholas.

Lost in the fray, the entrance of the AGENT went unnoticed.

DOCTOR

What?

AGENT

Good evening.

DOCTOR
Who the fuck are you? Are you with them?

AGENT
Not exactly.
(he shows him his I.D.)
Tell me about Mr. Morton. My connection
here says he was shot once above the knee.

DOCTOR
(reverent after seeing his i.d.)
That's correct.

AGENT
Will he live?

DOCTOR
Yes.

AGENT
Please tell me you haven't called the
police.

DOCTOR
Not yet, but what I've been telling
these gentlemen is that...

AGENT
Excuse me, Doctor, but may I speak to
you in confidence?

DOCTOR
By all means...

AGENT
Walk with me...

AGENT and DOCTOR head east down the hall.

EDDIE
Did you see his I.D.?

MR. TORRID
Shut up, Eddie.

MR. TORRID taps on Henry's window.

IN HENRY'S ROOM

MRS. TORRID is at the window.

MRS. TORRID
(to Mr. Torrid, through the glass)
Was that him?

MR. TORRID
He came.

MRS. TORRID
And he's here to help?

MR. TORRID
He promised.

HENRY
(suddenly awake)
He's here to help?

MRS. TORRID
(surprised)
Henry?

IN THE HALLWAY

The Doctor walks back to Joseph and Eddie. Agent follows at a distance.

DOCTOR
(whispers, to the men)
I respect the secrecy of what you all are doing, but we could have saved ourselves a lot of stress had you said something about it earlier.

Doctor goes into Henry's room.

AGENT
Can we take a walk, Mr. Torrid?

Agent and Mr. Torrid walk west down the hall.

EDDIE

What the hell was he talking about?

JOSEPH
(worried he will blow this)
Let's have a cigarette, Eddie.

IN HENRY'S ROOM

DOCTOR
(to Henry)
If you were ever gonna' be shot, you'd
want to get it where you got it, Mr.
Morton. You should be on crutches by
tomorrow.

MRS. TORRID
(elated)
My baby!

CLOSE ON

Eddie rapping the window-pane. He waves to Henry, who waves
back. A moment of great FRIENDSHIP. Joseph has to pull
Eddie away from the window.

DOCTOR
(whispers to Henry)
And I wanted to tell you... even though
you may not be fighting out there in
Saigon, or Ho Chi Minh, I think the work
that you are doing *here* is every bit as
heroic.

HENRY
I don't know what to say.

IN THE HALLWAY

AGENT
(whispers to Mr. Torrid)
So the Doctor believes Henry is neck-deep
undercover in the Black Panther Party.

MR. TORRID
Is that right?

AGENT

The dude's so wired, he ate it right up. But that was lucky. Don't take this the wrong way, Mr. Torrid, but your son was not that hard to find.

MR. TORRID
I'm aware of that.

AGENT
So I need to get him off my list. Off everyone's list. Now, clerically, things are a mess at the office. I've realized I'm the only one, really, who gives a damn about Henry's case.

MR. TORRID
Did you say... off the list?

AGENT
I'm going to try. No. The hell with try. Yes. I am going to get Henry off the list.

MR. TORRID
Off the list. Free.

AGENT
Yes.

MR. TORRID
(shaking his hand)
Why are you doing this, man?

AGENT
It's been a long time since I was proud of myself. I miss that feeling. Take care, Mr. Torrid.

Agent walks to the exit, hiding a smile. He does a little SKIP as he walks through the doors.

OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL

Eddie and Joseph smoke as the Agent comes out the doors.

EDDIE
(to AGENT)
Hey...

Joseph slaps Eddie on the back. Agent tips his cap to them as he passes.

EDDIE
(to Agent)
I still have an alto man?

AGENT
(stops walking)
You never did. Frankie Gutierrez has him.
And he says you're trying to steal him.

EDDIE
Frankie? That skinny little shit don't
know a piano from his...

IN HENRY'S ROOM

Mr. and Mrs. Torrid CELEBRATE with their son.

MRS. TORRID
(to Henry)
I'll have your meatloaf, your potatoes,
your ribs... Should I invite Grandma? It's
up to you.

HENRY
Sure... but... I was gonna' tell you... I've
got a date tomorrow night.

MRS. TORRID
You got your leg hung up in the air
and you're making dates?

HENRY
No... I asked her out before I got shot.

MR. TORRID
Is it the one I met?

HENRY
Yeah. Her name's Matilde, Mama. I think
you'd like her.

MRS. TORRID
I just figured, if a boy's been sent to

the *emergency room*, maybe he should stay home for a while, with his...

HENRY

I'm almost twenty-three, Mama.

MR. TORRID

Let the man be, Lucinda.

EXT. L.A. STREET - DUSK, THE NEXT DAY

HENRY, on CRUTCHES, steps off a city BUS, and heads down the street, in a hurry. The crutches slow him down more than he'd prefer.

INT. MATILDE'S APARTMENT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

MATILDE, in a lovely dress, sits in the lobby, reading a magazine. She Looks at her WATCH. Looks at the DOORMAN. He's staring at her.

She stands.

OUTSIDE MATILDE'S BUILDING

Henry approaches.

The lobby door OPENS, and MATILDE leans out, sees Henry on his crutches.

MATILDE

Henry!

She takes off her HEELS and runs to him.

MATILDE

(stops in front of him, puts her hands over his)

What happened?

HENRY

I fell.

MATILDE

You *fell*?

HENRY

Hard.

MATILDE

Oh, no...

HENRY

But I'll be fine... don't you worry.

She gives him a quick kiss.

MATILDE

But I hope you don't think you're still taking me to the samba.

HENRY

I don't know... I thought we could take it slow...

MATILDE

You want to take it slow?

HENRY

I've gotta start somewhere.

MATILDE

Since when have you ever taken it slow?

He kisses her with PASSION.

One of his crutches falls, but she supports him, kissing him as a city BUS passes.

THE END