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MAR 16 1949

LORD MALETROIT'S DOOR

Photoplay in 2 reels

Author of photoplay (Under Sec. 62)  
Realm Television Productions, Inc.

Photographed by  
William Bradford

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MAR 16 1949

Production #702

MARSHALL GRANT - REALM TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS

"LORD MALETROIT'S DOOR"

Screenplay by  
CHARLES HAAS

October 4, 1948

15

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#702 - Revised - 11/17/48

A

SIRE DE MALETROIT'S DOOR

1. INT. BOOKSHOP - CLOSE SHOT - NIGHT

The BOOKSHOP MAN sits at his desk, a book open before him, his head bowed as he reads. He looks up, smiles, rubs his eyes, looks at his watch...

BOOKSHOP MAN

Well, it's that time...time for another yarn on (title of show)... Tonight I would like to tell you a story of love and high adventure: The Sire de Maletroit's Door by Robert Louis Stevenson...You know, it's an old commonplace that history repeats itself.

(grins ironically)

An unpleasant idea...considering some of the history we've been having lately...but an idea which perhaps explains why you and I feel so at home in stories of far places and long-ago times; stories which carry us off to show us ourselves - you and me and the boy up the street - as heroic figures of romance...The Sire de Maletroit's Door is one of the most famous of all such stories.

He takes out a pack of cigarettes, draws out a cigarette, leaves the pack on the desk. The CAMERA DOLLIES in on the package.

BOOKSHOP MAN

While we make ourselves comfortable for this journey into the past, let's listen to a very short story of today.

DISSOLVE TO:

(COMMERCIAL INSERTED HERE)

DISSOLVE TO:

1A INT. BOOKSHOP - CLOSE SHOT - NIGHT

The Bookshop Man leans back, dreamily blowing out a cloud of smoke.

BOOKSHOP MAN

You - and me - and the boy up the street - as figures of romance...

CONTINUED

1A CONTINUED

He leans forward, picks up the book, taps it with his hand.

BOOKSHOP MAN

The Sire de Maletroit's Door  
happened to the boy up the street -  
a French boy - five hundred years  
ago...France lay conquered - crushed  
under the armored heel of England's  
King Harry...until one day a girl  
named Joan of Arc spoke up for liberty...

He drops the book and leans back in his chair.

BOOKSHOP MAN (continued)

The boy up the street was one  
of the noble youths who adored  
Joan and fought beside her.  
His name was Denis of Beaulieu.  
Because of his faith and chivalry  
and courage, Denis found himself  
one night being pursued by an  
English guard through the dark  
streets of an enemy-occupied  
town. Hard-pressed

CONTINUED

## 1. CONTINUED:

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
and lost in the unfamiliar alleys,  
Denis sought refuge in a shadowy  
doorway, hoping the guardsmen would  
run past... Instead, they stopped to  
listen for his footsteps...

He pauses, stands up, walks forward, sits on the corner  
of the desk.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
Denis pressed himself as flat as  
he could against the door. Suddenly  
he felt the latch give way behind  
him. He slid through the lucky  
opening. The door swung closed  
again. He heard the English men-at-  
arms search and curse and march off  
with clanking armor.

DISSOLVE:

2. INT. CORRIDOR - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

A handsome youth, well-dressed, a sword at his side,  
leans against the wall next to a massive oaken door.  
The light is dim, from a distant source. Outside, the  
RATTLE OF CHAIN-MAIL on several marching men dies in the  
distance. DENIS heaves a sigh of relief, rubs his neck  
with his hands.

BOOKSHOP MAN'S VOICE  
(o.s.)  
Now Denis had at least a fighting  
chance to rejoin his friends...His  
head might not decorate an English  
gallows. But he must hurry before  
the watch roused the garrison.

Denis steps forward to re-open the door. His hand  
strikes the hard oak. There is no handle. His eager  
search of sides, top and bottom reveals only a smooth  
surface.

BOOKSHOP MAN'S VOICE  
(o.s.)  
It's always easier to get into a  
corner than out of one. Suddenly  
Denis realized his mistake. In these  
times of trouble and locked gates, no  
one left a door unbarred by accident.  
He had been trapped.

CONTINUED:

2. CONTINUED

Denis tries the edges of the door with his fingers, but the fit is too tight for a grip.

BOOKSHOP MAN'S VOICE (continued)  
...very prettily trapped...If there was no way out, there must at least be a way in.

Denis stops and looks around.

3. LONG SHOT

OVER DENIS' SHOULDER we see a dim corridor. At the end hang portieres whose folds are parted sufficiently to admit the faint glow which illuminates the corridor.

BOOKSHOP MAN'S VOICE (continued)  
Whoever or whatever waited at the end of the corridor, it could not possibly have been intended for him. There must be a mistake.

He steps forward.

4. LONG SHOT - REVERSE ANGLE

Through the half-open portieres, Denis is silhouetted at the end of the corridor. As he advances, his footsteps echo between the narrow stone walls. He approaches the drapes, the light falls on him as he pushes through them, then he stands looking around.

LORD MALETROIT'S VOICE (o.s.)  
Come in, come in. Don't stand on ceremony.

5. INT. CHAMBER - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

FROM DENIS' POINT OF VIEW a small private withdrawing room or office is seen. On the opposite wall are two narrow window embrasures, and a large carved fireplace. On each side of the fireplace are wooden, tapestried armchairs. Another door is set into the wall at CAMERA LEFT. Chandeliers of wax tapers provide the illumination.

LORD MALETROIT'S VOICE  
You were quick enough before. Don't hesitate now.

CONTINUED

## 5. CONTINUED:

A movement is visible in the armchair to CAMERA LEFT of the fire. By leaning forward and beckoning imperiously, a figure silhouettes itself against the flame.

LORD MALETROIT

Come in, man. When I was your age we knew only one direction - forward!

Denis walks past the Camera and over to the fireplace.

DENIS

Sir, my apologies. When I explain how I came here...

## 6. TWO SHOT

Denis stops, looking down at the man in the armchair, a thin, haughty, white-haired gentleman who sits with a sneering half-smile on his face.

LORD MALETROIT

Explain? I've been waiting for you all evening.

DENIS

Sir, I assure you --

Lord Maletroit reaches out an abrupt hand, takes Denis' arm, pulls him closer and also sideways into the light of the fire.

LORD MALETROIT

No apologies now. Move over where I can look at you.

He examines Denis from head to foot, feels the muscle of his arm as if inspecting a horse, straightens the youth's doublet, turns him a little to catch the light on his face, pats his thigh, twists the hilt of his sword to look at it. Denis claps his hand over that of the old man - who pulls his fingers slowly off the hilt and sinks back, nodding approvingly.

LORD MALETROIT

Not bad...not bad at all...Much better than I'd expected.

DENIS

Whatever you expected, sir, it couldn't have been me. Some mistake...

CONTINUED:

6. CONTINUED:

He turns to go. LORD MALETROIT  
 (sternly)  
 But it is you! There's no mistake on  
that point.

DENIS  
 It was quite by accident that --

Lord Maletroit holds up his long thin hand to interrupt  
 again.

LORD MALETROIT  
 Well, well, here you are, in any event.  
 Sit down and make yourself comfortable.

DENIS  
 (impatiently) Do you want to  
 If you'll listen to me...

LORD MALETROIT  
 Young man! At my age, one has done a  
 great deal of listening. Turn-about is  
 fair play. Forty years from now you  
 can take your turn and be as tiresome  
 as you please... Now, sit down.

DENIS  
 Sir, I haven't time. My name is Denis,  
 Lord of Beaulieu...

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)  
 And I am Lord Maletroit. Your humble  
 servant.

DENIS  
 (bowing)

And yours, sir... Believe me, I had no  
 wish to intrude on you... Purely by  
 accident, your door...

LORD MALETROIT  
 (interrupting)  
 Exactly. We old folks expect such  
 reluctance. We need little tricks  
 like the door. Especially for young  
 men who attack our honor -- having  
 none of their own.

He snickers softly. Denis' hand goes to his sword.

DENIS  
 Sir, if you're in your wits, you insult  
 me. If not, I have no time for lunatics.  
 Good night, sir.

CONTINUED:

6. CONTINUED:

He turns to go.

LORD MALETROIT  
 (harshly)  
 Sit down...  
 (more softly)  
 ...my dear nephew...

Denis whirls around, amazed.

DENIS  
 'Nephew'!

Lord Maletroit rises furiously to confront him.

LORD MALETROIT  
 Sit down, you rogue! Do you want to  
 be bound hand and foot till your  
 bones ache? Try to break out through  
 my twenty men-at-arms!

DENIS  
 You hold me as a prisoner?

LORD MALETROIT  
 I state the facts...

He moves toward one side of the fireplace, grasps a tapestry bell-pull and tugs at it once.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)  
 ...I leave the conclusions to you.

He turns to face the doorway. Denis stares at him a moment, then turns his eyes too, to watch the closed door.

7. MED. SHOT

PAST DENIS TOWARD THE DOOR. The handle is turning and slowly the door creeps open. A beautiful GIRL follows reluctantly after the swinging panel, moving with spasmodic steps as if struggling against the pull of a will stronger than her own. Her head hangs down, her eyes gaze at the floor. Just past the threshold, she hesitates. She wears a white bridal dress.

LORD MALETROIT  
 Blanche, my darling. I have brought  
 a friend to see you.

She does not move or look up.

CONTINUED:

7. CONTINUED:

The old man bends - LORD MALETROIT (Cont.) being her to  
her feet. Niece, you must be polite. Give him  
your hand...

(roughly)  
Blanche! I'm speaking to you!

Slowly, with effort, she forces herself forward. When  
she arrives in front of Denis, she drops him a deep  
curtsy, her head still bowed on her breast. As she rises,  
she holds out her hand which he takes, bowing.

DENIS  
Mademoiselle...

At the sound of his voice, her head lifts. With a half-  
gasp, half-shriek, her hand goes to her throat.

BLANCHE  
Uncle!

She whirls to face Lord Maletroit.

BLANCHE  
Uncle, this is not the man!

LORD MALETROIT  
Of course not. Naturally.

BLANCHE  
Uncle, I swear it.

LORD MALETROIT  
Too bad. Too bad you didn't tell me Denis,  
his name before - when I asked you.

She hurries over to her uncle, urgently grasps his arm.

BLANCHE  
Uncle, I swear it...I swear it, Uncle...  
(she sinks down at  
his feet)

On my bended knees I swear it. I  
never saw him till this moment. Never!  
Never! Never even set eyes on him.

Before the hard eyes of her uncle, she drops her head,  
sobbing, clasping his knees.

BLANCHE  
And I hope I never set eyes on him  
again.

CONTINUED:

7. CONTINUED:

The old man bends and loosens her grip, raising her to her feet.

LORD MALETROIT  
Come, Blanche, come. What can you expect. He's of your own choosing.

She stills her sobs, looks at Denis.

BLANCHE  
Sir, if you're a gentleman, speak the truth, I beg you. Have I ever seen you -- have you ever seen me -- before this moment?

DENIS  
Never, mademoiselle.

BLANCHE  
(to her uncle)  
You see.

DENIS  
Lord Maletroit, on my honor, I never had the pleasure of meeting your niece before.

Lord Maletroit looks from one to the other, shrugs.

LORD MALETROIT  
I'm sorry to hear it.

He takes Blanche by the hand, leads her up to Denis.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)  
But it's never too late to begin.

Blanche catches her breath, holds back.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)  
My dear, I assure you, I hardly knew your aunt before our marriage. You remember how well we got on.  
(to Denis)

These impromptu marriages can only turn out better than expected.

DENIS  
Marriage! What do you mean, my lord? Is this a madhouse?

CONTINUED:

7. CONTINUED

LORD MALETROIT

My lord of Beaulieu, since you say you do not know my niece, I will give you a couple of hours to make up for lost time...before we proceed with the ceremony.

Lord Maletroit turns on his heel and makes for the door. Blanche calls after him.

BLANCHE

Uncle, I will stab myself before I will be forced on this man!

DENIS

And before she does that, Lord Maletroit, I shall stab you.

Lord Maletroit turns. Denis half-draws his sword.

LORD MALETROIT

Then we would all be dead.

BLANCHE

I am innocent, Uncle. Except for your words, I never knew dishonor in my life.

7. CONTINUED

The old man walks slowly back toward his niece.

LORD MALETROIT

My lord of Beau-  
Blanche, if your father were I alive, he'd disown you and turn you out of doors. Out of pure gentleness, I've gone to great trouble to catch your own sweet-

Lord Maletroit turns on his heel and makes for the door. Blanche calls after him.

BLANCHE

Uncle, by all that's holy, this is not the man. I will stab myself before I will be forced on this man!

LORD MALETROIT

(thundering)

Isay it is. she does that, Lord Maletroit (more naturally) you. And if it's not, I don't care.

Lord Maletroit turns. Denis half-draws his sword. He turns sharply and strides to the door. As he opens it, he pauses, speaking with his former dry sarcasm.

Then we would all be dead.

LORD MALETROIT

Be polite to your friend. Think, Blanche, the next groom I catch for you may be less appetizing in my life.

CONTINUED

7. CONTINUED

The old man walks slowly back toward his niece.

## 7. CONTINUED:

He goes out, closing the door behind him. Denis looks at the trembling girl, then hurries to the door and turns the handle. It is locked. He shakes it hard, with no result. He looks back at Blanche.

## 8. MED. SHOT - BLANCHE

There is a moment's silence. Then she covers her face with her hands and sinks, sobbing, into the armchair left vacant by her uncle. Denis walks forward past the Camera. He looks down at her bent, humiliated form.

DENIS

Courage, mademoiselle, courage...  
There's no help in tears.

She gives no answer. Her sobbing stops, but she does not raise her face.

DENIS (Cont.)

Remember, mademoiselle: at our age, there's always the future... And if you keep sniffing like a baby or a serf, you deserve no more than you'll get.

Her head snaps up.

BLANCHE

How dare you, sir!

DENIS

That's better...I thought there was fire - under all that water.

She springs to her feet and stalks past him.

## 9. REVERSE ANGLE - TOWARD FIREPLACE

Blanche whirls to face Denis who stands in the f.g.

BLANCHE

Who are you? And how did you get here?

DENIS

Denis of Beaulieu...

He walks forward.

10. MED. SHOT

DENIS

(bows as he continues  
speaking)

... at your service, mademoiselle.  
Beyond the fact that your uncle  
trapped me -- how I got here is a  
riddle only you can answer.

BLANCHE

I?

DENIS

I only know I've been caught in a  
house full of mad people.

BLANCHE

You've answered your riddle, my  
lord.

Wearily, she covers her face with her hands.

BLANCHE (Cont.)

And how my poor mad head aches...

DENIS

If you would explain my answer to me...

Her hands leave her face. She studies his face. His  
eyes rest steady to meet hers. Finally she relaxes.

BLANCHE

Your pardon, my lord. You are right.

She turns and leans against the mantelpiece, gazes down  
into the fire. He watches her and waits.

BLANCHE (Cont.)

Three months ago, a young English  
Captain began to stand near me every  
day in church.

(looking at him)

Should I have stopped going to  
church?

DENIS

(smiling)

No, mademoiselle.

BLANCHE

(averting her head)

I have no family. Since I was a  
baby, my uncle has been father and  
mother.

CONTINUED:

10. CONTINUED:

BLANCHE (Cont.)  
(looking up at him)  
Do you think I was happy?

DENIS  
I understand.

BLANCHE  
(staring at the flames)  
I felt so glad that anyone should  
love me.

DENIS  
Anyone! With beauty like yours...

She straightens up to face him.

BLANCHE  
I've never been alone with a man  
before tonight.

DENIS  
And the Captain...?

BLANCHE  
(angrily)  
Don't you understand? I never spoke  
to him. It was in church. He passed  
me little notes, begging me to leave  
the side door unlatched, so we could  
have two words in the hallway.

DENIS  
I see... Your uncle found one of  
the notes.

BLANCHE  
Today, after church, he forced open  
my hand and took it. When he couldn't  
make me tell him the captain's name,  
he had me dressed like this.  
(she takes a step  
forward)  
Sir, I am as proud as he is. Do you  
know what I feel at being so disgraced  
before a stranger?

DENIS  
Tell me, where is your uncle?

BLANCHE  
Are you in such a hurry to complete  
my shame?... If you pull the bell-  
cord over there he'll come.

CONTINUED:

10. CONTINUED:

Denis goes over to the bell-pull.

11. FULL SHOT

He jerks the cord strongly. They stand looking at each other. The door opens and Lord Maletroit enters.

LORD MALETROIT

Well, this is an unlooked for pleasure...  
For appearances' sake, I thought you'd  
wait the two hours.

He crosses toward his niece.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)

Congratulations, my dear. Believe me,  
I hope for your future happiness.

DENIS

Lord Maletroit!

Denis comes forward. Lord Maletroit turns to face him. Blanche twists aside. The CAMERA DOLLIES IN to a TIGHT GROUP.

DENIS

Sir, your niece is as good as she is  
beautiful.

LORD MALETROIT

How lucky for her husband...But the  
family compliments can come later.  
I must ring for the priest.

Lord Maletroit brushes by Denis and goes back to the bell-pull. Denis speaks to his back.

DENIS

If her hand in marriage were  
freely offered me...

Lord Maletroit, his fingers on the bell-cord, turns back sharply.

LORD MALETROIT

If it were?  
(sarcastically)  
Young man, how freely can a hand be  
offered?

CONTINUED:

11. CONTINUED:

DENIS

Freely offered, I should be proud  
to accept it.

LORD MALETROIT

You take a lot of words, nephew, to  
say yes gracefully.

DENIS

You misunderstand, my lord. I will  
not be used as a weapon to strike at  
your niece.

Blanche gasps and turns toward him. He looks aside at her  
with a smile. After a moment, she smiles back at him.

LORD MALETROIT

'Weapon'? You young fool!...

The old man crosses to stand before them.

LORD MALETROIT

...I have done you the honor to give  
you my niece in marriage. What's all  
this talk?

DENIS

And I have the honor of refusing.

BLANCHE

You are gentle, sir. And I thank you.

LORD MALETROIT

Blanche, be quiet....I'm afraid, my  
Lord of Beaulieu, you don't quite  
understand the choice at your dis-  
posal.

He points toward the window by the fireplace.

LORD MALETROIT

Do me the favor to take a look out  
that window.

After a moment's hesitation, Denis steps to the window  
and looks out. Lord <sup>M</sup>aletroit remains in the f.g.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)

Do you see the iron ring, high up  
on the wall?

DENIS

Yes.

CONTINUED:

11. CONTINUED:

LORD MALETROIT

At the end of your two hours, should you still have the honor of refusing my niece's hand, I'll thread a rope through the ring and hang you on it.

12. CLOSE SHOT - OF DENIS

by the window. He turns, aghast.

DENIS

You are not only a madman, but a murderer.

13. GROUP SHOT

Lord Maletroit walks away. Halfway to the door, the old man faces about again.

LORD MALETROIT

It'll be no joy to me to have your relics kicking under my window. But half a loaf's better than none. If I can't cure the dishonor, at least I'll stop the scandal.

He turns to continue on his way. Denis strides after him, drawing his sword.

DENIS

Stand, sir!

Lord Maletroit turns but makes no move of defense.

LORD MALETROIT

When I was younger, it would have been a pleasure. But faithful retainers furnish strength and skill to the old. As I told you, I have twenty of them at alert in the passage.

BLANCHE

Lord Beaulieu!

Denis and the old man turn toward her. She halts in confusion, her hand fluttering to her lips.

DENIS

Mademoiselle?

CONTINUED:

13. CONTINUED

She hesitates, at a loss for words.

LORD MALETROIT  
I think my niece has something  
to tell you, my lord...

Lord Maletroit chuckles and walks to the door. Halfway  
out, he pauses and looks back.

LORD MALETROIT  
The priest is very well trained,  
my children. Just by turning a page  
or two in his book, he can marry a  
man - or bury him.

He exits, closing the door. Denis and the girl watch  
him go, then look at each other without a word.

DISSOLVE TO:

13A. INT. BOOKSHOP - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

The Bookshop Man, a lit cigarette in one hand, closes his  
book and puts it aside.

BOOKSHOP MAN  
Denis and Blanche...  
(puffing his cigarette)  
...over the years I've grown to  
love these two high-hearted  
youngsters faced with their  
fateful choice. I hate to hurry  
through their story only to leave  
them again. So I'm just as happy  
to keep you waiting for a moment  
before I tell you how it all came  
out.

He puffs his cigarette, blows a cloud of smoke INTO THE  
LENS and smiles with a teasing twinkle in his eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

(COMMERCIAL INSERTED HERE)

DISSOLVE TO:

14. INT. BOOKSHOP - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

The Bookshop Man sits at his desk playing with two little  
figures -- a man and a woman -- each mounted on a tiny  
iron bar. He looks up.

CONTINUED

14. CONTINUED

BOOKSHOP MAN

You know, these stories I tell  
you are old friends of mine,  
So old that while I tell them,  
many things cross my mind. Just  
now as we spoke of Denis and  
Blanche, I thought to myself  
that however high a man's spirit  
may soar, his feet still remain  
tangled in the laws of nature.

(he holds up the  
tiny figures)

At lunch today, I bought these  
toys for a little boy I know.

15. CLOSE UP - THE TWO LITTLE FIGURES

in his hand.

CONTINUED

15. CONTINUED:

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
They're tiny magnets. And the  
natural laws that rule them remind  
me of Denis and Blanche.

He places them on the desk before him, facing to the  
left, one in each hand. The CAMERA PANS DOWN.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
Imagine that the iron north pole of  
each is made up of proud chivalry.

He brings them together, lifts his hands, and they jump  
apart.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
See how they drive one another apart...  
And if they turn and look the other  
way...

His hands grasp the magnets and turn the figures around.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
...At their south poles, courtesy  
meets gentle courtesy...

He approaches one to the other, releases them, and they  
spring back.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
...and again they fly apart.

He turns the magnets face-to-face.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
Only by luck, or by my turning  
them around - will chivalry and  
courtesy ever meet face to face...

He releases them and they fly together.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
...and pull one to the other.

16. MED. SHOT

The Bookshop Man leans back from his desk.

BOOKSHOP MAN (Cont.)  
There sit Blanche and Denis -- two  
strangers -- two young strangers  
with warm hearts -- alone together  
for the first time in their lives...

DISSOLVE:

17. INT. CHAMBER - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

Blanche sits pensive in the f.g., head against the back of the chair, watching Denis who stands in the b.g., looking out of the window.

BOOKSHOP MAN'S VOICE  
 ...each meeting pride with pride...  
 chivalry with chivalry...and  
 courtesy with gentle courtesy...

Blanche is biting her lips, coming to some resolve. She leans forward.

BLANCHE  
 My lord.

Denis turns his head.

DENIS  
 Mademoiselle?

BLANCHE  
 My lord, I...I...

He walks toward her; as he approaches, she stands and backs away. He stops, hurt.

DENIS  
 You were saying...

BLANCHE  
 You are too young...

DENIS  
 I am a soldier.

Blanche clasps her hands in distress.

BLANCHE  
 I mean...too young to die...

DENIS  
 Death's not graduation from the Sorbonne, mademoiselle. There are no age limits.

She clasps and unclasps her hands in great distress.

BLANCHE  
 My lord, you're being no help to me at all.

He is taken aback for a moment. Then he bows coldly and returns to look out of the window. She moves forward as if to go after him, and stops.

CONTINUED:

17. CONTINUED

BLANCHE

My lord.

He turns his head politely.

DENIS

Mademoiselle?

She steps forward in a rush.

18. TWO SHOT

as she comes up to him, putting her hand on his arm.

BLANCHE

You shall not die.

DENIS

True. The soul is immortal.  
I've been comforting myself with  
that idea.

BLANCHE

You're too young to die. Too  
young and full of life. You  
shall marry me and go free.

DENIS

You seem to think I stand in  
much fear of death.

BLANCHE

It's not that. It's for my  
sake. I couldn't bear to have  
you killed for a petty point  
of honor.

DENIS

(shocked)

Mademoiselle! What else is worth  
dying for?

Their eyes lock for a brief moment, then she turns and  
hurries away.

19. FULL SHOT

as she crosses the fireplace toward the bell-pull.

DENIS

(sharply)

Stop. Don't touch the cord!

CONTINUED

19. CONTINUED:

She whirls, and he moves toward her.

DENIS

It takes two to make a marriage...  
You may be too generous to refuse  
your pity -- but I'm too proud  
to accept it.

20. TWO SHOT

Her eyes flash with anger.

BLANCHE

Too proud for me!

DENIS

Not I. In a moment of noble feeling,  
I think you forget what you owe your  
own honor.

Her eyes, tears welling up, drop slowly before his.

BLANCHE

I too have my pride.

(looking up)

If you went back on your word now,  
I'd no more marry you than my uncle's  
groom.

She turns away, her kerchief at her eyes.

21. FULL SHOT

Blanche slowly walks to her uncle's chair, slowly sits  
down in it, head bowed. Denis watches her. He walks  
over beside her, reaches out as if to stroke her hair,  
withdraws his hand without touching her, gazes at the  
locked door, then around the room. Suddenly, he walks  
forward toward the Camera.

22. INT. CORRIDOR - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

From the CHAMBER side of the portieres, Denis walks past  
and through them into the corridor where he stands, one  
hand on the parted curtain.

23. LONG SHOT

PAST DENIS' HEAD, down the dim corridor, the closed door  
brings the view abruptly to an end.

24. INT. CHAMBER - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

Denis stands between the portieres, staring down the corridor. His hand comes to rest on the hilt of his sword. He looks down, fondles the hilt, on an impulse, draws it from the scabbard.

25. CLOSE UP - SWORD

as Denis' fingers lovingly caress the sharp steel of the blade.

26. CLOSE SHOT - DENIS

he looks down at the sword, then slowly returns it to its sheath. Then he looks over toward Blanche.

27. LONG SHOT

Blanche sits with the firelight flickering over her. She has leaned her head back against the chair.

28. MED. SHOT

Denis watches her.

29. LONG SHOT - OF BLANCHE

Denis moves PAST THE CAMERA over to her side.

30. CLOSE SHOT - OF BLANCHE, FROM DENIS' POINT OF VIEW

Her head lies back, exposing her graceful throat. Her eyes are closed in weariness, her lips moist, half-parted. Now and then a tiny sob catches at her breath.

DENIS

Mademoiselle...

She opens her eyes without moving.

DENIS

If what I said hurt you, I'm  
sorry... It was for your sake,  
not mine.

She looks at him, and slowly a trembling smile softens the expression of her face.

CONTINUED

30. CONTINUED:

DENIS

You have a beautiful smile, mademoiselle...

Unconsciously, as she watches him, her hand touches her hair, smoothing it into place off her forehead.

DENIS (Cont.)

Will you do me a service?

Her hand pauses.

31. TWO SHOT

DENIS

Make my last hour go pleasantly. Let me sit with you like a friend, instead of an intruder.

BLANCHE

That's harder than you think, my lord. I never had a friend.

He leans over her, smiling warmly.

DENIS

Until now...Now, you have one.

She hesitates, finally smiles back at him. He stands up, crosses to the other armchair, and drags it over by hers.

BLANCHE

Is there anything else I can do to help you?...I could write your family...

Denis moves the chair up to hers.

32. TWO SHOT - ANOTHER ANGLE

as he sits down next to her.

DENIS

I'm not much better off than you in that respect... My mother is married again and has young ones to care for. My brother will inherit the estate - and care little for the source of his good luck.

CONTINUED:

32. CONTINUED

BLANCHE

You're being kind, my lord.  
You'd make me think you're  
giving up nothing.

DENIS

Everything, my dear. Everything!  
(enthusiastically)  
In the last year the world has  
flowered for me.

BLANCHE

I see...  
(looking away)  
If you give me her name, I will  
send her a letter.

Suddenly his expression changes; he looks down, then  
rises.

33. MED. SHOT

Denis moodily crosses to the fire.

DENIS

A hundred years ago her name  
was France. I've lived to  
drive out these English and  
give her that name again.

BLANCHE

And such a dream has made the  
world flower?

DENIS

That -- and a girl.

BLANCHE

Is she beautiful?

He comes over to her, TOWARD THE CAMERA.

DENIS

Did you ever hear of Joan of Arc?

BLANCHE

The witch of Orleans? Who  
hasn't?

DENIS

No witch. An angel from  
heaven.

CONTINUED

33. CONTINUED:

He sits down, speaking eagerly.

DENIS (Cont.)  
You should have seen her riding into Orleans -- on a man's battle-charger with her hair flying -- We followed the gold of her hair, not the king's lilies.

BLANCHE  
Then you are in love.

DENIS  
All the beauty of France is in her eyes. And I am a Frenchman...or have been since I met the Maid.  
(looking away)  
And here it ends... No, mademoiselle, I have neither family nor friends to send messages to.

He rises again and crosses to the fire. She rises and goes to him, laying her hand on his arm.

BLANCHE  
Polite games aren't meant for a time like this. I've never known anyone so noble as you.

He turns to her, smiling.

DENIS  
Thank you, mademoiselle. With those words in my ears, I'll pretend I'm dying in battle to the sound of Joan's bugles -- instead of here in a mousetrap with my own squeaking.

BLANCHE  
(eagerly, her hand on his)  
Is Joan the only woman in the world?

LORD MALETROIT'S VOICE  
(o.s.)  
That's better, my children. Much better.

34. FULL SHOT

TOWARD THE DOOR, PAST THE TWO IN THE F.G. Lord Maletroit stands in the open door, carrying a small tray with glasses, a bottle of wine and some biscuits on it. He

CONTINUED:

34. CONTINUED:

closes the door, and comes forward, setting the tray on a table by his armchair, next to a chessboard on which the chessmen are already arranged in position.

LORD MALETROIT

I see you've rearranged the furniture. It does my heart good.

(setting down the tray)

After all, what is true love but two empty chairs side by side while the occupants continue the conversation elsewhere...

(coming to them)

I've brought some wine to warm your hearts. I'm glad it won't be needed.

DENIS

Your lordship mistakes.

LORD MALETROIT

Still so proud. Very well, then drink the wine. Much may happen in half an hour.

He goes to pour the wine into the glasses.

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)

I knew a lord bishop once who figured how long it took Eve to bite the apple.

(snapping his fingers)

Like that!...And the world turned over.

(motioning toward the full glasses)

I leave you to drink to tomorrow, my children. And to a happy life.

Denis steps forward to take a glass.

DENIS

I'll drink to a happier life, my lord...

(raising the glass)

-- for me in heaven -- and for your niece on earth.

He drains the glass and bends to set it down.

LORD MALETROIT

Drink to her in heaven too, sir. For where you go, she goes...whatever your choice.

CONTINUED:

34. CONTINUED:

Denis jerks upright fiercely.

DENIS  
You would not dare!

LORD MALETROIT  
(proudly)  
I dare anything! The hour you die,  
my niece goes to a nunnery.

DENIS  
You'd force her?

LORD MALETROIT  
I? It's you who force her. Less  
pride and more tenderness of heart...

Blanche steps forward, interrupting.

BLANCHE  
Uncle, you shame me!...

The two men look at her.

35. REVERSE ANGLE - THREE SHOT  
TOWARD BLANCHE, who lowers her voice, abashed.

BLANCHE  
Besides, his heart is given... He  
loves the Maid of Orleans.

LORD MALETROIT  
Joan the witch? Oh, so that's it.  
Well, I can't fight witchcraft.

DENIS  
No witchcraft, my lord. Unless  
bringing dead France to life and  
driving out English tyrants is  
witchery.

LORD MALETROIT  
Nephew, if you live beyond your half-  
hour, I'll argue wars and politics  
with you... Meanwhile, general,  
concentrate on this battle of your  
own.

He moves away.

36. MED. SHOT

The old man walks toward the door.

LORD MALETROIT

In twenty minutes you will have lost...  
and Blanche will have lost...

He turns again by the door.

39. CLOSEUP - BLANCHE

LORD MALETROIT (Cont.)

...and I -- I too will have lost.  
Will the English matter then?

He goes out and closes the door.

37. MED. SHOT

Denis and Blanche gaze after him. They look at each other. She steps toward him.

BLANCHE

I haven't done the service you asked,  
have I? -- to pass your hour pleasantly.

DENIS

Never mind. Older heads than ours  
have found it easier to die than to  
be happy.

BLANCHE

I can understand that.

She toys with the ivory chessmen set out on the table.

BLANCHE

Will you have more wine, my lord?

DENIS

No, thanks...

He reaches over and idly moves the white queen's pawn  
forward two spaces.

DENIS

Do you play the royal game?

BLANCHE

Chess? My uncle has taught me.

DENIS

It's a favorite of mine.

He fingers the pieces.

// CONTINUED:

## 38. CLOSEUP - CHESSBOARD

DENIS' HANDS are busy with the chessmen.

DENIS  
Knights...and bishops...and  
kings...and castles...

## 39. CLOSEUP - BLANCHE

as she watches his hands and then his face.

DENIS (Cont.)  
...and all the shifting luck of  
men in a battle.

## 40. CLOSEUP - DENIS

as he looks at the chessmen.

BLANCHE (Cont.)  
(o.s.)  
There's no place in your game for  
ladies, is there, my lord?

Denis looks up.

DENIS  
You forget the queen.

## 41. TWO SHOT

BLANCHE  
Not I. I thought you did.

She sits down in the armchair. Denis picks up the queen,  
fondles it.

DENIS  
Without her, the field is lost.

He sits as well, motioning with his hand.

DENIS  
Your move, mademoiselle.

She moves her (black) queen's pawn to meet his. He  
stares at the chessboard. She watches him. Finally,  
he reaches out and moves his queen one space forward.

BLANCHE  
You mistake, my lord.

CONTINUED:

41. CONTINUED.

DENIS  
How so?

42. TWO SHOT  
BLANCHE  
The queen...

She leans forward to touch his queen. the edge of the board.

42. CLOSEUP - CHESSBOARD  
Her HAND moves the queen back into place.

BLANCHE  
(o.s.)  
She mustn't go first. You'll lose her.

Her hand goes to the queen's knight.

BLANCHE (Cont.)  
(o.s.)  
The knight leads. For protection.

She moves the knight out. Denis sits back, watching her. He gestures toward the board.

DENIS  
(o.s.)  
Not in my game. The lady goes forward first.

His hand comes out to cover hers. He lifts her hand and the knight, shifts both back, still holding them. His other hand comes in to remove the queen ahead.

BLANCHE  
(o.s.)  
She is vulnerable, my lord.  
He slips her hand off the knight to clasp it in his own.

43. FULL SHOT  
DENIS  
(o.s.)  
The knight will follow closely to guard her. Watch and see.

43. CLOSEUP - BLANCHE

She looks at him, lips half-apart. Then her eyes go to her hand. She draws it back.

CONTINUED:

43. CONTINUED:

She whirls, holding BLANCHE  
point down As you will, sir...

44. TWO SHOT

as their hands part, hers staying on the edge of the board.

BLANCHE (Cont.)  
...You think only of Joan of Arc.  
Other ladies go less proudly than  
your Maid of Orleans.

DENIS  
Joan was out of my mind for the  
first time in a year...  
He reaches forward to take her hand and look at it.

DENIS (Cont.)  
I was only thinking what pleasure  
comes from small hands.

She withdraws her hand. Denis sits back, watching her.  
He gestures toward the board.

DENIS  
Your move.

BLANCHE  
Sometimes when the lady tries to  
lead, the knight's too busy guarding  
his own pride.

DENIS  
Your move, mademoiselle.

Suddenly she leans forward, snatches the poniard from  
his belt, springs to her feet and crosses to the bell-  
pull.

45. FULL SHOT - TOWARD BLANCHE

Her hand is on the cord as Denis springs to his feet  
and cries out.

DENIS  
Blanche! Stop!

He releases her, looks out the window. CONTINUED:

45. CONTINUED:

She whirls, holding the poniard poised in the air, its point toward her own breast.

BLANCHE  
Don't take a step.

He freezes where he stands.

BLANCHE  
You tell me your lady must go first...  
(proudly)  
If I die confessing the English  
captain's name, my uncle will have  
to set you free.

Quick as a flash, he picks up a glass from the tray and hurls it at her lifted hand, knocking the dagger away and smashing against the wall. She turns and bends down to pick up the poinard, but he has already reached her side and pulled her away.

46. TWO SHOT

as she struggles in his grasp.

DENIS  
Blanche...Blanche... You can't give  
me back my life. I've lost all of  
it to you these two hours past.

She turns on him.

BLANCHE  
How many French knights do you  
think there are, my lord, who've  
been asked in marriage by a lady  
and refused?

DENIS  
No true knight could accept an offer  
made out of pity.

BLANCHE  
It's a small love...

She looks away.

BLANCHE  
...that sticks at a little pride.

He releases her, looks out the window.

CONTINUED:

46. CONTINUED

DENIS  
Great enough to die for.

She puts her hand on his arm.

BLANCHE  
But not to make life flower...  
like your dreams?

47. CLOSE UP - DENIS

His heart is in his eyes as he looks at her.

48. CLOSE UP - BLANCHE

Her look silently begs him to say the right words.

DENIS (o.s.)  
I love you better than Joan...  
or France...or the world.

There is the SOUND of an opening door. She looks away.

49. LONG SHOT - DAWN

Lord Maletroit stands waiting in the open doorway.

50. TWO SHOT - DAWN

The girl and youth watch him. Blanche looks at Denis.

BLANCHE  
(whispering)  
Denis...the priest...just by  
turning a page in his book...

She hesitates.

DENIS  
...he can marry a man, or...

She puts her hand over his lips.

BLANCHE  
No "or"...He can marry a man  
who loves to the woman who loves  
him.

They smile tenderly and he takes her in his arms.

DISSOLVE TO:

51. INT. BOOKSHOP - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

The Bookshop Man is leaning back in his chair, the book in his hands.

BOOKSHOP MAN

After all, that's not really the end of the story...only the beginning...

(he leans forward, his elbows on the desk)

And I've always thought that of all the heroes and heroines in the stories I love, Blanche and Denis - with courage, and courtesy, and honor - had a better chance than most...to live happily ever after.

He rises and goes to replace the book on its shelf.

DISSOLVE TO:

(COMMERCIAL TO FOLLOW)

"SIRE DE MALETROIT'S DOOR"

TAG

INT. BOOKSHOP - CLOSE SHOT - NIGHT

The Bookshop Man closes the book, and leaning forward places it on the table before him, caressing it and gazing at it fondly. He looks up.

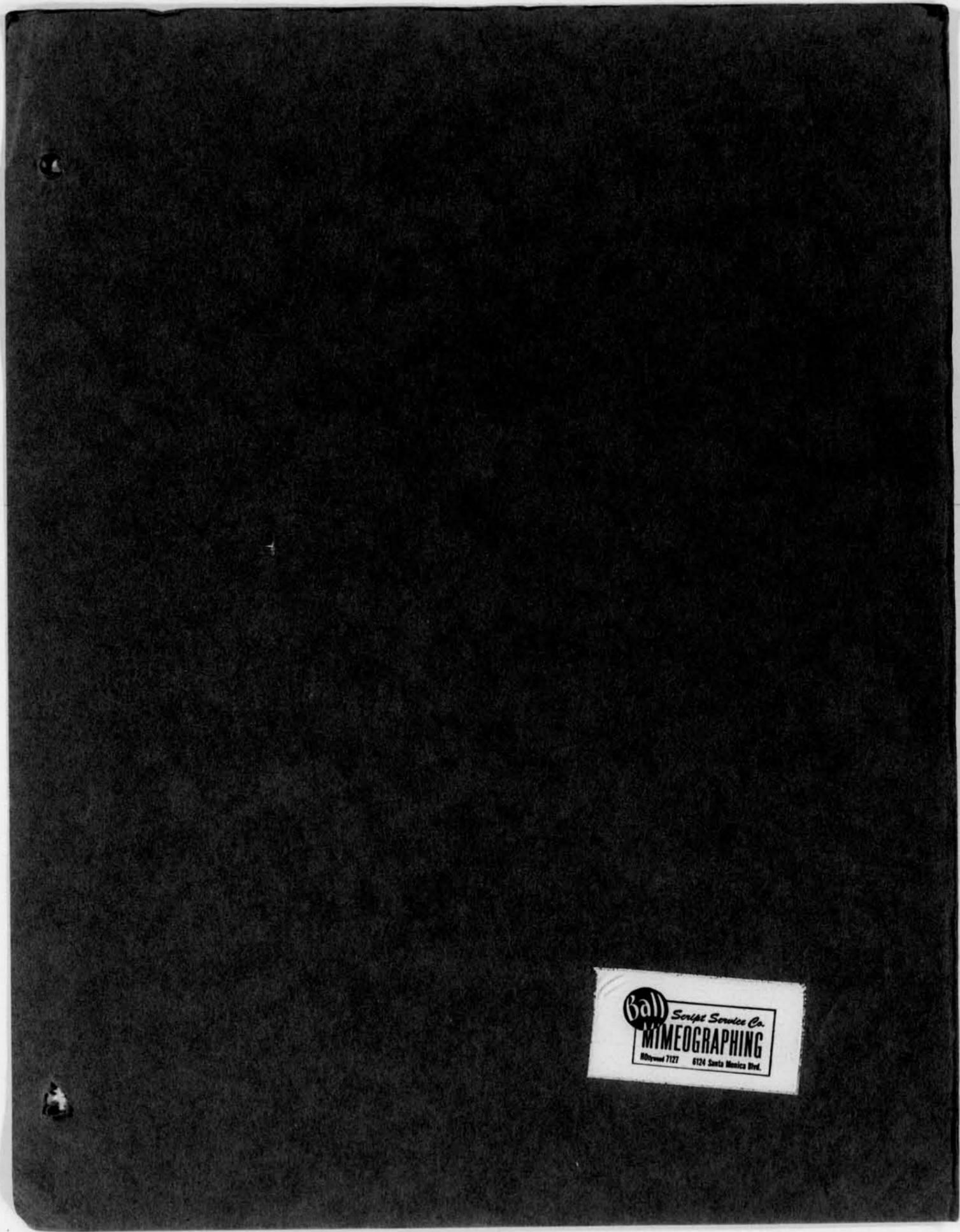
BOOKSHOP MAN

Next week I'll tell you a story -  
a very famous story - about a  
man with no heart....and a girl  
with no fear.

As he smiles and starts to light up a cigarette, CAMERA  
STARTS PULLING BACK.

DISSOLVE TO:

(END CREDITS)



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