QUIZ SHOW

by

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Based on the chapter,
"Investigating the Quiz Shows,"
from Remembering America by
Richard N. Goodwin

Baltimore Pictures

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FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY
INT. DAY. MERCEDES SHOWROOM--MANHATTAN.

The luscious curves of a 1956 MERCEDES 190 coupe, lacquered red, dripping with bright showroom light. Circling:

DICK GOODWIN, late 20s, a broad Boston accent, his brains worn on his sleeve. Flush with youth and American confidence. He chews a cigar as fat as a baby's arm.

A SALESMAN circles mosquito-like.

GOODWIN
What is this, the 190?

SALESMAN
That's 17 coats of paint, hand-sanded. Seven coats of lacquer.

Goodwin leans over. Looks at the sticker price. Sighs. Leans back. Whistles low, drinks it in. 'All this can be yours'...

SALESMAN
It takes a real individualist to drive a car like this. Just out of school?

GOODWIN
Harvard Law. Couple of years. First in my class.

SALESMAN
That degree sells itself.

GOODWIN
I've been working for the government.

SALESMAN
(dischanted)
Oh.

GOODWIN
Not that it's permanent.

SALESMAN
(interested again)
Would you like to get behind the wheel, Mr. Goodman?

GOODWIN
Goodwin.

SALESMAN
Just be careful with the cigar.

(CONTINUED)
1 CONTINUED:

The Salesman opens the door. Ushers Goodwin into the car.

GOODWIN
I just think there's something wrong about working so you can drive a car.

SALESMAN
Release the clutch, if you wouldn't mind.

GOODWIN
You drive a car so that you can work. You don't work so that you can drive a car.

The Salesman leans over and starts the IGNITION.

SALESMAN
Listen to that. That's a V8.
(off gauges)
You'll note it redlines at 8000 RPM.

GOODWIN
My father to this day has never owned a car. I don't even think he has a driver's license.

SALESMAN
That's the American Dream.
(resuming)
I see you're admiring the dashboard--that's burled walnut.

GOODWIN
Is this what life has to offer?

SALESMAN
Pretty much. (thinks) This or the Porsche. (resuming) The seats are Florentine glove leather.

GOODWIN
The nicest piece of furniture I own will be in the garage.

SALESMAN
I'm going to get some paperwork, just so you can see it's more affordable than you think.
(gestures to radio)
Try the radio.
(more)

(CONTINUED)
SALESMAN (Cont’d)
The only thing that sounds better than the engine is the radio.

The Salesman EXITS. Goodwin turns on the radio. It emits a repetitive BEEP. He listens thoughtfully.

RADIO NEWSMAN (O.C.)
The Russians have beaten us into outer space. You are listening to the sound of Sputnik, a satellite launched this morning via rocket, in orbit right now directly over our heads...A sound that says...

The Salesman returns, leans in. LISTENS.

RADIO NEWSMAN (O.C.)
...all is not well with America.

SALESMAN
America doesn’t own a Mercedes.

CLICK! He pushes a button on the radio. Changes the station to MUSIC that carries over into...

CUT TO:

The door of a BANK VAULT opens...

INT. EVENING. BANK VAULT.

Flashbulbs BURST as two BANK V.P.s insert separate keys into a safe-deposit box. Pull out a BOX embossed with the title "21"

The V.P.s’ heels click smartly on the marble. REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS follow them out to the street. A thick crowd of the curious. The V.P.s climb into an ARMORED CAR.

POLICE CHERRYTOPS

flash to life. The MOTORCADE roars uptown.

CUT TO:

EXT. EVENING. STREETS.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:
COMMUTERS stream out of the subway. Anxiously check their watches. RUN to their homes...

CUT TO:

EXT. EVENING. STREETS.
A New York CABBIE flicks on his "OFF DUTY" light. Parks on the street. Runs into a bar...

CUT TO:

INT. EVENING. MOVIE THEATER.
A PROJECTIONIST snaps off a movie in mid-scene. USHERS wheel out two TELEVISION SETS...

CUT TO:

EXT. EVENING. ROCKEFELLER CENTER.
The MOTORCADE pulls up outside the RCA building. The Bank V.P.s emerge, march inside...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. HOMES.
In one living room after another, HANDS reach for knobs on televisions...FIFTY MILLION VIEWERS across the nation...

ON THE TELEVISION
JACK BARRY, late 30s. Part snake-oil salesman, part snake.

BARRY
Good evening, I'm Jack Barry.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STUDIO.
Bright with klieg lights. A studio AUDIENCE twitchy with anticipation. Ponderous CAMERAS circle a podium that bears the bold legend, "GERITOL". He is flanked behind by two plexiglas ISOLATION BOOTHs.
CONTINUED:

BARRY

Due to a series of ties, Herbert Stempel, our 41 year old ex-GI college student, must play at $3,000 a point, which means that in a few brief minutes he can either win over $100,000—the most money won on television to date—or lose everything he's won in the last eight weeks.

LISTENING BACKSTAGE

The champ: HERBIE STEMPEL, Herbert the Great, early 40s and overweight. Marine haircut and shabby suit. A Job for his generation—exiled to the Boroughs, flayed by grey-flannel insults, scourged by lowly status, grudge-laden before God.

The CHALLENGER watches as Herbie compulsively cleans his glasses.

CHALLENGER

Nervous?

HERBIE

Heh. It's only money.

BACK ON—BARRY

as the Bank V.P.'s deliver the questions, head offstage.

BARRY

Thank you, gentlemen.
(to audience)
So right now, let's meet our first two players, as Geritol, America's Number One tonic, presents '21'.

Two ESCORTS bring Herbie and the Challenger to the podium.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

The producers, DAN ENRIGHT and ALBERT FREEDMAN. Enright has the soul of a shoplifter surprised to find himself in Tiffany's. Freedman is his willing right arm—until a better shoulder comes along.

Enright snaps a SWITCH. An APPLAUSE SIGN ignites the audience...

BACK ON—BARRY

as he greets Herbie and the Challenger.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BARRY
How are you, Herb? I imagine
you're a kind of a folk hero out
there in Queens.

CUT TO:

9 INT. NIGHT. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.

White walls. White carpet. White curtains. White furniture. And
a black heart—the grouchy SPONSOR of Geritol, early 50s. "21"
on the TELEVISION. A platinum BLONDE serves him a drink.

SPONSOR
(with disgust)
Queens.

CUT TO:

10 INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Barry interviews Herbie.

BARRY
It's a nervous strain on the
family, huh? How's your wife
holding up?

HERBIE
She's fine, thank you. Thank you,
Mr. Barry, for asking.

Barry launches into the rules.

BARRY
As you know, Herb, the questions,
which have been kept in a bank
vault--

HERBIE
(interrupting him)
I might add she no longer suffers
from 'tired blood', now that I've
got her on Geritol.

CUT TO:

11 INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.

The Sponsor BOILS while he watches Herbie.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HERBIE (O.C.)
You know, Mr. Barry, while some people say that Geritol has no medical basis whatsoever, I can attest that it's a fine product.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. APARTMENT·-GREENWICH VILLAGE.

The buzz of genteel conversation. Tweeds and sherry. A BOOK PARTY in honor of THE PROFESSOR, MARK VAN DOREN, late 50s, a white-haired gent with a beatific demeanor, and his brisk, articulate wife DOROTHY, late 50s also. Stacks of their new BOOKS nearby. They greet a stream of GUESTS.

PROFESSOR #1
(shaking hands)
Professor.

THE PROFESSOR
Professor.

PROFESSOR #1
I'm sorry I'm late. You can't get a cab.

PROFESSOR #2
(greeting The Professor)
Professor.

THE PROFESSOR
Professor.

DOROTHY
Professor.

THE PROFESSOR
(to Dorothy)
Mother, where's Charlie?

ALONE IN THE DEN

Hand on chin, MESMERIZED, the blue light of a TELEVISION playing on his chiselled features:

CHARLES VAN DOREN, 30s, handsome, well-born, debonair, self-deprecating, perfect. The lithe build of a man who has never been made to run uphill. An endearing blankness—the boyish availability of a man still in search of himself.

A pretty YOUNG WOMAN, early 20s, approaches. Ignored by Charlie, she tries to start conversation.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

YOUNG WOMAN
Do you know Professor Van Doren?

CHARLIE
Oh--how rude of me. (introducing himself) I'm Charlie.
    (beat)
He's my father.

YOUNG WOMAN
I took his course at
Columbia--'Hawthorne, Original
Sin and the American
Experience'--well, as silly as
it sounds, it changed my life.

CHARLIE
Was it the Hawthorne or the sin?

YOUNG WOMAN
To be the son of that
extraordinary man!

CHARLIE
When you said that, 'Professor
Van Doren'--you know, I'm also
Professor Van Doren.

YOUNG WOMAN
Mathematics? You seem like the
mathematical type.

CHARLIE
Oh, no. Literature. Same as Dad.

YOUNG WOMAN
Really? Where do you teach?

CHARLIE
Columbia.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

MUSIC plays and the two Escorts usher Herbie and the Challenger
to the ISOLATION BOOTHS.

BARRY
Once inside the isolation booth,
norther player can see the other.
    (more)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARRY (Cont'd)
Nor can they hear anything until
I turn their studios on.
(flipping switch)
Can you hear me, Herb?

HERBIE
Yes, Mr. Barry, I sure can.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

Enright's gaze sweeps hawklike over the monitors.

ENRIGHT
Herb's too sure of himself. Turn
off the air conditioning in his
booth.

Freedman slides up a THERMOSTAT...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. NBC.

Goodwin sits on a couch--a waiting room outside the office of
the President of NBC. A huge NBC PEACOCK over his head.

A MONITOR

shows Herbie patting at his sweaty brow with a HANDKERCHIEF.
Goodwin gets up, crosses in front of the image.

BARRY (O.C.)
The first category is the American
Revolution.

A SECRETARY sits at a desk nearby. Goodwin approaches her.

GOODWIN
Do you think he might see me
before the peacock molts?

SECRETARY
Mr. Kintner apologizes, but he's
unavailable. Why don't you come
back tomorrow?.

GOODWIN
I'm sure he'd be available if my
name were Geritol.

SECRETARY
Who were you with again?

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
The United States
Congress-perhaps you've heard
of them. I spoke to Mr. Kintner
personally six weeks ago.

SECRETARY
The President of NBC never speaks
personally with anyone.

GOODWIN
The committee oversees television.
Kintner makes his speech about
television being a public trust
and I take notes. It's simply a
matter of routine.

SECRETARY
Isn't everything?

Goodwin moves away, DEFEATED. The Secretary returns to her work.
Goodwin returns, nods toward the monitor.

GOODWIN
They do that show right here?

SECRETARY
Studio 21. Tenth floor.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Herbie chews a knuckle. Looks up.

HERBIE
The American Revolution...I'll
try 11, 11 points, Mr. Barry--if
that's okay.

BARRY
Let me remind you that the
questions have been certified and
graded for difficulty by the
Encyclopedia Britannica on a scale
from one to 11--11 being the
hardest question.

HERBIE
That's right, Mr. Barry.

Barry, impressed by Herbie's daredevil bid, presses a button,
and a QUESTION CARD pops up...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARRY
(reading)
The question is in five parts.
'Every schoolboy knows about the
midnight ride of Paul Revere.
For 11 points: How many lanterns
were hung in the Old North Church?
Who rode with Paul Revere? Who
lent him his horse? Was it a mare
or a stallion? And what was the
horse's name?'

What a question! An audible GASP from the audience. Herbie
grimaces, hugs his elbows, bites his lip, scratches his head,
looks skyward for divine inspiration.

HERBIE
Would you mind, Mr. Barry... could
I take the third part last?

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S HOME.
The Sponsor broods over the TV.

HERBIE (O.C.)
The code was 'One if by land, two
if by sea. Therefore it was two
lanterns in the steeple of the
Old North Church.'

The Blonde enters with ROBERT KINTNER, 50s, a manner whipped
smooth as a meringue.

BLONDE
(announcing)
Mr. Kintner.

KINTNER
I understand you're upset,
sir... the ratings are slightly
off...

SPONSOR
The ratings are off because of
him.

He jabs a bony finger.

ON THE TELEVISION

Herbie mops his brow, struggles through the question.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HERBIE
Dawes and Prescott were the men
who rode with him.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

A sign reads "QUIET--SHOW IN PROGRESS". Goodwin stops at the
STAGE DOOR. Thinks a beat. OPENS it and enters the MEZZANINE.
Leans against the back wall. Watches the stage below:

BARRY
Was it a mare or a stallion?

HERBIE
It was a mare.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. GOODWIN HOME.

SANDRA, Goodwin's pretty shikse wife, watches from the foot of
the bed in their one-bedroom Georgetown apartment.

HERBIE (O.C.)
What's the last part again?

BARRY (O.C.)
The third part?

HERBIE (O.C.)
No--I asked for the third part
last.

BARRY (O.C.)
That's fine.

HERBIE (O.C.)
I just don't remember the last
part.

SANDRA
Who remembers the question? That's
harder than the question.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO

Goodwin looks down from the mezzanine.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARRY
What was the horse's name?

HERBIE
The horse's name was Brown Beauty.

BARRY
And finally, the man who loaned Paul Revere his horse for that fateful midnight ride?

HERBIE
Who loaned him the horse... Who loaned him the horse...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. CONTROL ROOM.

Enright and Freedman exchange a look.

HERBIE (O.C.)
... Who loaned him the horse...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. APARTMENT-GREENWICH VILLAGE.

Charlie wracks his brain, watches with the young woman.

HERBIE (O.C.)
(searching)
...Something tells me it was a clergyman... Reverend Luckbill...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.

Kintner and the scowling Sponsor watch the show.

HERBIE (O.C.)
... Reverend Larchwood... Reverend Lardbone...

KINTNER
It's not easy to find suitable contestants.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SPONSOR

Do the show on the Sabbath. Just
get rid of him.

The Sponsor exits. The Blonde arrives with Kintner's hat.

CUT TO:

23 INT. SAME TIME. ACROSS THE NATION.

Anxious VIEWERS move to the edge of their seats...Somewhere a
phone rings unanswered, a child cries unheard...A can of beer
FREEZES in mid-sip...

CUT TO:

24 INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Goodwin leaning forward in anticipation...

BARRY

Would you like more time, Herb?

Herbie curls into himself...Then POPS UP...

HERBIE

Larkin! Deacon John Larkin!

BARRY

Correct for 11 points!

IN THE MEZZANINE

Goodwin shakes his head in astonishment.

GOODWIN

How the hell did he know that?

CUT TO:

25 INT. SAME TIME. GREENWICH VILLAGE--APARTMENT.

Charlie chews his lip in awed respect.

CHARLIE

My God, he knows everything. I'd
bet even Dad wouldn't know that.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

YOUNG WOMAN

Professor Van Doren... can you imagine? He wouldn't be caught dead on one of these quiz shows!

CLOSE ON--CHARLIE

as the wheels SPIN...

CHARLIE

No. You're quite right.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Barry delivers the commercial

BARRY

Do you feel fatigued? Not having as much fun as you used to? Does life itself seem to be getting you down? The problem may be tired blood. (meaningfully) Tired blood.

IN THE ISOLATION BOOTH

The INTERCOM crackles on.

"ENRIGHT (O.C.)

Nice job, Herbie. You can relax a minute.

Herbie says. Mops under his arms with the handkerchief.

HERBIE

Christ. Again with the air conditioning.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

The phone RINGS. Freedman answers it. Turns to Enright.

FREEDMAN

It's Kintner.

CUT TO:
INT. NIGHT. TIMES SQUARE STATION.

An ebullient Herbie descends into the subway. Tonight, he’s Gene Kelly. Humming a tune, he dances down the stairs. The F train arrives, and he scoots inside.

PASSENGERS recognize him, point. Studiously nonchalant, he ignores them. Sinks down into his overcoat. And SMILES.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. FOREST HILLS.

Herbie walks through his tidy neighborhood. In his home run trot now...NEIGHBORS shake his hand, slap his back...

He climbs the stairs to his house. Across the street, a neighbor APPLAUDS from a second story window. Herbie bows elaborately, enters his house.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. HERBIE’S APARTMENT.

Herbie enters, takes off his hat.

HERBIE

The genius is home! The rich genius is home!

IN THE LIVING ROOM

TOBY STEMPBEL, late 30s, wedged heavily in an armchair. A box of Devil Dogs in her lap. She searches for a chunk of cake lost in the folds of her muumuu. Herbie enters.

HERBIE

Did you see me? Toby, wasn’t I great? Wasn’t I incredible? And that bit about Geritol--did I play them like a piano or what?

(looking in mirror)

What about my teeth--d’you think I should get my teeth capped? How’d my hair look?

TOBY

(sarcastic)

Could I take the third part last, Mr. Barry?

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
Ninety-six thousand dollars!
C'mon, dance with me, Toby. C'mon!
We're celebrating!

He pulls and hauls at her with the exertions of a deep sea fisherman. But she's having none of it.

TOBY
Stop it, Herbert.

HERBIE
(croons)
'Dancing in the dark, until the tune ends...

TOBY
I told Lester to be home by ten. He'll be here any minute.

HERBIE
Come on! A child can't see his parents dancing? Be a good wife.

TOBY
If you knew how my ankles feel you wouldn't ask.

Herbie gives up. Moves to the mirror. Starts to strip off his tie, his SUIT...

HERBIE
Why do you think your ankles hurt?
Eat some more.

TOBY
I'm retaining water, for your information.

HERBIE
You and the Grand Coulee Dam.

He throws the suit jacket in a ball on the floor. Starts to strip off the pants. Toby stands, bends to pick the jacket up. Dusts it off...

HERBIE
You don't get it, do you? I go out on the street and everybody knows me. Everybody loves me—me—me—Herbie Stempel. And they love me for the same reason they used to hate me. Because I'm the guy who knows everything.

(CONTINUED)
TOBY
Do you know how much it's gonna cost to get this suit dry-cleaned?

HERBIE
Things are going to change around here, boy.

Herbie throws the pants on the floor. In his SHORTS now...

TOBY
(dusting suit)
Look at this. My father paid good money for this suit.

HERBIE
He wore it to his own wake!

TOBY
You make it sound like it was the suit that killed him.

HERBIE
You know why Enright likes that suit? You know why he personally picked that suit out of my closet? Because it makes me look like a schmuck. 'The poor ex-GI' with the hand-me-down suit and the walk-up apartment.

The PHONE RINGS...Toby goes to answer it.

TOBY
You should worship the ground I walk on, all my family's done for you.

HERBIE
You want to be worshipped, go to India and moo.

TOBY
I married a man who couldn't hold onto a dollar if he swallowed it.
(to phone)
Hello? Yeah, hi, Mom.

HERBIE
Cock-a-doodle-doo, baby--I'm not the putz you married.

(CONTINUED)
TOBY
(to phone)
That's Herbie. He's in one of his moods. (listens) Of course I watched the show.

HERBIE
Get off the phone--Steve Allen might call. Eisenhower might call. You think I'm kidding?

TOBY
She wants to know why you only went for eight on the movies.

HERBIE
Because my real area of expertise is pain-in-the-ass in-laws.

TOBY
(to phone)
I know everybody's watching. (listens) I know it's a lot of money.

HERBIE
Hang up the phone. Hang it--would you please hang up the phone?

TOBY
(to phone)
I gotta go. He says Eisenhower's gonna call. I'll call you tomorrow.

She hangs up.

HERBIE
Just sit. Sit with me. What is it with you?

He sits on the couch. She sits next to him.

TOBY
You better put some clothes on. You'll catch cold.

HERBIE
Toby, listen. Don't you see what this means for us?

TOBY
You gonna leave me, Herbie?

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
No, I'm not gonna leave you. Don't you understand? It's a revolution! For us. Everything—all of this. We don't need your mother and her money anymore—you can tell her where to get off after 38 years.

TOBY
You should hear all of a sudden how nice she's being.

HERBIE
(gestures to television)
That box is the biggest thing since Gutenberg invented the printing press, and I'm the biggest thing on it. Don't you see? I could be on this show forever.

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. NBC--INTERVIEW ROOM.

Pegboard and cheap furniture. Charlie sits opposite a RESEARCHER who TESTS him from a list of questions. There's a MIRROR in the wall behind them.

RESEARCHER
(reading from card)
'Because of a disagreement with his commanding general, Ulysses S. Grant was virtually placed under arrest for a brief time early in 1862. Who was the commanding general of the Union Army at that time?'

CHARLIE
Oh, I know that! Halleck. General H.W. Halleck.

RESEARCHER
That's correct.

Charlie nervously rubs his sweaty palms on his knees. Tries to lean over to peek at the Researcher's tally.

WATCHING HIM

through a ONE-WAY MIRROR: Freedman. A PAGE passes through.

(CONTINUED)
30 CONTINUED:

FREEDMAN
Who's that?

PAGE
(off roster)
Charles Van Doren.

FREEDMAN
Van Doren like Van Doren Van Doren? He wants to be on 'Tic Tac Dough'?

The Page shrugs. Freedman licks his chops...

FREEDMAN
Let me borrow this a second.

He grabs Charlie's file. Runs out.

CUT TO:

31 INT. HALLWAY.

Freedman runs with the file, virtually singing...

FREEDMAN
I've got him...I've got the guy...This is the guy...I've got the guy...

CUT TO:

32 INT. DAY. ENRIGHT'S OFFICE

A spectacular 50th floor aerie with Art Deco furniture. Enright gazes out at his view. Turns as Freedman arrives.

FREEDMAN
I've got the guy.

CUT TO:

33 INT. LATER. ENRIGHT'S OFFICE.

Enright appraises Charlie like a cattle rancher eyeballing a prize bull. Freedman can barely contain himself.

CHARLIE
...Well, originally I was going to be a concert pianist.
(more)

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE (Cont'd)
And I was really quite good, but when the day was done, no Horowitz. So I decided to be an actor. Or a philosopher--I studied the Great Books at St. John's. I realized I'd never really excel at either of those, so I turned to astrophysics. But of course all the great physicists made their discoveries before the age of 25. That just wasn't in the cards. So I went to the West Bank and wrote a novel, about a parricide--

FREEDMAN
Excuse me?

CHARLIE
A boy who kills his father. My Dad liked it quite a lot, actually. But it's not like he equated it to Hawthorne or anything. It just seemed--do you know that Johnson remark, 'the epidemical conspiracy for the destruction of paper'? I mean, you could fill Yankee Stadium with all the mediocre novelists in the world, and--

ENRIGHT
Could I ask you a personal question? How much do they pay you up at Columbia?

CHARLIE
Eighty-six dollars a week.

ENRIGHT
Do you know how much the average stockbroker is paid? Do you have any idea what Bozo the Clown makes?

CHARLIE
Well, we can't all be Bozo the Clown.

ENRIGHT
I'm not questioning your choice of profession--not at all.

(more)

(CONTINUED)
ENRIGHT (Cont'd)
I'm questioning the values of a society that pays somebody like you—what was it?

FREEDMAN
Eighty-six dollars a week.

ENRIGHT
Eighty-six dollars a week, and meanwhile Sputnik's up there right now beep-beep-beeping over our heads.

CHARLIE
I have to admit, Mr. Enright, it's a national problem.

ENRIGHT
I understand you came down here to try out for 'Tic Tac Dough'.

CHARLIE
Well, my friends say I have a good mind for this sort of thing—I'd been planning a trip to Italy, and—

ENRIGHT
How would you like to be on '21'?

CHARLIE
'21'?

FREEDMAN
Dan produces both shows.

ENRIGHT
You're young, clean-cut...from a prominent family. You're exactly what this country needs. Kids would run to do their homework so they could be like Charles Van Doren.

CHARLIE
It's just—what about Herbert Stempel?

ENRIGHT
I love Herbie. People don't like him. Kids don't look up to him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

FREEDMAN
If you were a kid, would you want to grow up and be a fat, annoying Jewish guy with a sidewall haircut?

CHARLIE
I wanted to be Joe DiMaggio.

FREEDMAN
Especially after he held out for the hundred grand.

ENRIGHT
That’s what this country needs. An intellectual Joe DiMaggio, with the money and the women and all from this (tapping his head) instead of a bat and ball.

CHARLIE
All that aside—well, honestly, I don’t think I can beat him. ‘Tic Tac Dough’ seemed more feasible.

Enright thinks a beat. Gazes out the window.

ENRIGHT
What if we were to put you on the show—put you on ‘21’ this Wednesday—and ask you questions you know? Say, the questions you already answered correctly on your test this morning?

CHARLIE
What do you mean? I thought the questions were in a bank vault.

ENRIGHT
Forget about that. I’m just thinking out loud.

CHARLIE
Seriously?

ENRIGHT
You want to win, don’t you?

CHARLIE
I think I’d really rather try to beat him honestly.

(CONTINUED)
FREEDMAN
What's dishonest? It's not like we'd be giving you the answers.

CHARLIE
I don't see the difference.

FREEDMAN
We ask you a question, you know the answer. Just because we know you know, you still know.

ENRIGHT
It's not like putting me on the show, or Al, and pretending I'm some intellectual. You've put in the time, years of study and erudition.

CHARLIE
(wondering)
I'm just trying to imagine, what would Kant think of this?

FREEDMAN
I really don't think he'd have a problem with it.

ENRIGHT
Nobody would ever have to know. Just us three. Think of what you'd accomplish for the cause of education.

CHARLIE
It just doesn't seem right. I'd have to say no.

ENRIGHT
Just an idea.

An awkward beat as they all look at each other.

CHARLIE
Was that part of the test?

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HALLWAY.

Enright and Freedman usher Charlie to the elevator.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ENRIGHT
Wednesday, Professor. Say around
2 p.m. for the run-through.

CHARLIE
It'll be, I assume—that is, not
the way we discussed before.
Aboveboard.

FREEDMAN
So pure it floats.

ENRIGHT
You're on your own.

CHARLIE
Thank you. Well, a pleasure to
meet you both. Goodbye.

He exits into the elevator. Enright turns to Freedman.

ENRIGHT
Get me those questions.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. TOOTS SHOR'S.

Herbie watches a competing quiz show at a crowded bar, TOOTS
SHOR, the celebrated proprietor, beside him.

ON THE TELEVISION

an EMCEE asks a question.

EMCEE (O.C.)
(reading)
'Surgeon, soldier, sailor, spy,
dreamed Thurber's great creation.
Though Walter's life was mighty
dry, he had imagination'. Name
that story.

BACK ON--THE BAR

as Toots shakes his head in dismay, whistles low.

HERBIE
'The Secret Life of Walter Mitty'.

Toots looks over at Herbie, doubletakes as he recognizes him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ON THE TELEVISION

as the Contestant flounders and the bell RINGS.

   EMCEE (O.C.)
You don’t know? (buzzer) ‘The
Secret Life of Walter Mitty’.
According to the rules of ‘Dotto’,
the 10 dots you asked for will
now be connected in your
Opponent’s picture...

An ARTIST works at a large easel--a CARICATURE forming...

BACK ON--THE BAR

as Toots nudges Herbie.

   TOOTS
      Excuse me--are you Herbert
      Stempel?

   HERBIE
      Yes. I am.

   TOOTS
      (shaking hands)
      Holy Toledo. Toots Shor.
      (to man alongside)
   Lookit--Herb Stempel. From
   television. The guy that knows
   everything.

THE MAN ALONGSIDE

turns from his drink. Offers his hand. It’s JOE LOUIS.

   HERBIE
      Oh. Hiya, champ.

   TOOTS
      (off Herbie)
      This guy’s the Joe Louis of
      brains.

Enright ARRIVES, taps Herbie on the shoulder.

   ENRIGHT
      Sorry I’m late.

Herbie digs to pay for his drink. Toots waves him off.

   (CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

TOOTS
On the arm. You need anything—it's my jennt.

CUT TO:

36 INT. LATER. RESTAURANT.

Herbie and Enright chew pleasurable through thick steaks. Enright offers up a venerable Bordeaux.

ENRIGHT
More wine, Herb?

HERBIE
Thank you, Dan. Why not?

Enright pours the wine.

ENRIGHT
You've earned it. How's that steak?

HERBIE
Nothing like a fine piece of meat.

ENRIGHT
You know, it's a hell of a thing. I'm looking at the thing today--you know, the Trendex ratings--

HERBIE
Yeah?

ENRIGHT
Well, it's the damnedest thing. You've plateaued.

HERBIE
I've plateaued? What does that mean?

ENRIGHT
The ratings have plateaued.

HERBIE
You just told me the other day the ratings were up.

ENRIGHT
They were up. And now they've plateaued.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
'Plateaued'--what kind of word is that? You mean people don't like me any more?

ENRIGHT
It's not you per se, it's just--well, regrettably, the viewing public is fickle.

HERBIE
Maybe I should get my teeth capped.

ENRIGHT
I don't think that's the answer.

HERBIE
You know what I think it is? I think people are tired of that whole 'GI college student' thing. Frankly, I'm tired of it myself. And that disgusting suit... I mean, that's gotta be half of it--

ENRIGHT
It's not you, Herb. It's just the nature of the show. They've already seen you win. They're bored with it.

HERBIE
What are you saying? You think they want me to lose?

ENRIGHT
Don't you think that's natural?

HERBIE
You're panicking. The ratings'll come around. This is temporary. (gestures inside) Look at Joe Louis. Joe Louis was the champ for twelve years. Nobody ever wanted Joe Louis to lose.

ENRIGHT
I'm saying just think about it. Think about the little people.

HERBIE
Little people and big money.

(CONTINUED)
ENRIGHT
Think about all you've done for the cause of education.

HERBIE
The cause of education? I waited 41 years for this! Now I'm supposed to take a dive for the fucking cause of education?

ENRIGHT
I thought we had a relationship, Herb. I'm asking you for your help.

HERBIE
Fine. Just let me play it honestly.

A WAITER walks by.

ENRIGHT
Will you please keep your voice down?

HERBIE
You don't think I could do it? Go ahead. Give me a number.

Enright rolls his eyes. Herbie stops a WAITER.

"HERBIE
(to Waiter)
Give me a number. A random number.

WAITER
23.

ENRIGHT
You're making a spectacle of yourself.

The Waiter continues on.

HERBIE
23. Beethoven was 23 when he composed his first piano sonata. In 1921 Jack Bentley set the record for batting average by a pitcher, hitting .427. There are 23 chromosomes in the human egg. Also the human sperm. 23rd President of the United States? Benjamin Harrison.

(CONTINUED)
ENRIGHT

Herb-

HERBIE
Asian countries along the 23rd parallel of southern latitude--Australia, Tonga, French Polynesia--

ENRIGHT
Don't start believing your own bullshit. You wouldn't know the name of Paul Revere's horse if he took a crap on your lawn.

HERBIE
She.

ENRIGHT
What?

HERBIE
It was a mare, remember?

ENRIGHT
The point is I helped you and now you owe me. You lose when I tell you to lose.

HERBIE
But why now?

ENRIGHT
It's an arrangement--it's always been an arrangement.

HERBIE
If you made me lose before, if you made me lose right from the beginning, that I'd understand--that'd be my whole fucking life. But why now?

ENRIGHT
Nothing lives forever.

HERBIE
Producers and viruses live forever.

(continued)
ENRIGHT
Look at the big picture. It's not like television is going to go away, you know. Think about the future.

HERBIE
The future? What are you talking about, the future? I mean, specifically.

ENRIGHT
If I knew, I'd write horoscopes for a living.
(to the Waiter)
Check?

HERBIE
You mean like a panel show?

ENRIGHT
Haven't I taken care of you? Haven't I been like a Dutch uncle to you?

HERBIE
Down to the wooden shoes.

ENRIGHT
Just trust me.

The Waiter brings the check. Enright goes over it.

HERBIE
You know, I could be terrific on one of those panel shows. Witty, off-the-cuff. Sort of a Bill Cullen thing.

ENRIGHT
The last category is movies. We're gonna ask you what won the Academy Award for 1955. You don't know it.

HERBIE
(sagging)
Oh, no. Oh, no. Don't do that.

ENRIGHT
You blank. You don't remember it.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
I saw 'Marty' three times! How can I lose on 'Marty'? The Best Picture from a year ago and I don't know it?

ENRIGHT
That's the whole point.

HERBIE
It's not enough to take my championship away--you have to zetz me in front of the entire country!

ENRIGHT
Someone of your intellect and it's such a simple question--don't you see the drama of that?

HERBIE
But 'Marty'? I'm begging you, Dan. Something else. Let me lose on a physics question.

Herbie gets on his knees.

ENRIGHT
Herb, will you get off the floor?

HERBIE
Please. Not 'Marty'. It's too humiliating.

Enright hands a FIFTY to the Waiter. Looks down at Herbie.

ENRIGHT
For 96 grand, Herb, you can afford to be humiliated.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. GOODWIN APARTMENT--WASHINGTON, D.C.

A one bedroom in Georgetown. SANDRA, 20s, Goodwin's pretty shikse wife, does a crossword puzzle while she watches TV in bed. Goodwin enters, a huge CIGAR smoldering in his mouth.

SANDRA
No cigar in the bedroom.

Goodwin retreats into the hallway.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

GOODWIN
(muttering)
No cigar in the bedroom. We allow a television in the bedroom but there’s no cigar in the bedroom.

IN THE HALLWAY

Goodwin sits, taps an ash into his pants cuff.

SANDRA
(from inside)
How was your day?

GOODWIN
Fine.

SANDRA
That bad?

GOODWIN
Today the Chairman asked me to write a speech for him, to deliver to the Kiwanis Club of Fayetteville, Arkansas.

SANDRA
You’re good at that.

GOODWIN
It’s supposed to be an investigative committee.

SANDRA
It’s 1957, Dick. What are you gonna investigate?

ON THE TELEVISION

an ad for Geritol.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
Do you feel fatigued in the afternoon? Not having as much fun as you used to?

BACK ON--GOODWIN

puffing his cigar in the hallway...

SANDRA
(from inside)
What ever happened with that Wall Street job?

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
Money isn’t everything, you know.

SANDRA
I’m not the one who came back from
New York with a Mercedes
catalogue.

GOODWIN
I just had this idea I was gonna
do something with my life.

SANDRA
It’s a job, Dick. It’s not sex.

GOODWIN
That degree was supposed to be
a ticket to something different.
This isn’t different. This is a
different way of being the same.

IN THE BEDROOM
Sandra watches the television. Goodwin enters.

SANDRA
You ever hear of Charles Van
Doren?

GOODWIN
Van Doren like Van Doren Van
Doren?

SANDRA
He’s going to be on a quiz show.

ON THE TELEVISION
an ANNOUNCER delivers a PROMO.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...he’s a professor at Columbia
University in the fabled Ivy
League. And he’ll be the new
challenger this week on ‘21’!

CUT TO:

38 INT. NIGHT. HERBIE’S APARTMENT.
Herbie watches the same promo in his living room. His
10-year-old son LESTER, a pint-sized Herbie complete with
glasses, sits next to him.

(continuation)
HERBIE
I'm such a **schmuck**. (to Lester)
Your father's a **schmuck**.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
Will Herbert Stempel become the first man to win over $100,000 on television?

HERBIE
No, Herbert Stempel won't win over $100,000. Herbert Stempel is going to take a dive!

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...Tune in Wednesday and watch the best of CCNY take on the best of the Ivy League--this week on '21'!

HERBIE
Tune in and watch Herb Stempel get fed to the Columbia Lions.
Tune in and watch Charles Van Doren eat his first kosher meal, this week on '21'!

Sounds of the front door unlocking...Toby enters in her coat.

TOBY
What are you doing, keeping Lester up like this?

HERBIE
The child has to learn. The child has to learn the depths that humanity can sink to.

She takes Lester by the hand, leads him out.

LESTER
He wouldn't let me practice my drums.

TOBY
You're going to give him your ulcer. Let him grow up with his own ulcer.

They exit. Herbie stares at the television.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
(to himself)

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. VAN DOREN OFFICE--COLUMBIA.

The Professor reads in their tiny book-cluttered office they share. Charlie noisily loads his briefcase. The Professor doesn’t notice. Charlie moves to the door. Then turns.

CHARLIE
Have you ever watched one of those quiz shows on television?

THE PROFESSOR
You know we don’t own a television, Charlie.

CHARLIE
I just thought you might have seen one somewhere. 'The $64,000 Question', or '21'?

THE PROFESSOR
For $64,000 I hope they ask you the meaning of life.

CHARLIE
(defensive)
It's like a competition.

THE PROFESSOR
You know--I don’t think I know a single person who’s ever seen one!

CHARLIE
I’ve been told 50 million people watch those shows.

THE PROFESSOR
Well, then, I suppose we’ve become a nation of proctors. They turn on the television and watch a quiz?

(CONTINUED)
39 CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
You know, apparently these shows have done a lot to enhance the image of intellectuals in this country, motivate schoolchildren--

THE PROFESSOR
I'm sure they're harmless.
(changes the subject)
You know, the Tates are in town, we're meeting them for dinner. Would you like to join us?

CHARLIE
No. I have, uh...an appointment with destiny.

THE PROFESSOR
(winks)
Give her a kiss for me.

CHARLIE
(winks)
I will.

CUT TO:

40 INT. NIGHT. STUDIO.

Barry rehearses while a DIRECTOR counts off...

BARRY
(different readings)
'Good evening, I'm Jack Barry.'
'Good evening, I'm Jack Barry'.
'Good evening, I'm Jack Barry'.

The Director signals.

BARRY
Good evening, I'm Jack Barry.

CUT TO:

41 INT. NIGHT. STEMPHEL APARTMENT.

Toby eats oranges, drops the peels into a paper sack...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...Returning with $96,000, from
Forest Hills, New York, Mr.
Herbert Stempel...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.
The Sponsor and Kintner watch in the all-white space.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...and from New York City,
Professor Charles Van Doren...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.
Barry interviews Charlie. Herbie fidgets alongside.

BARRY
Professor, are you in any way
related to Mark Van Doren, the
famous writer?

CHARLIE
He's my father, Jack. Dorothy Van
Doren, the author of the recent
'The Country Wife', is my mother,
and Carl Van Doren, the biographer
of Benjamin Franklin, was my
uncle.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM
Freedman leans in to a pensive Enright. Whispers.

FREEDMAN
Herbie's acting funny. You sure
he's on board?

BACK ON--BARRY
as he turns to Herbie.

BARRY
Herb, you have a chance tonight
to win over $100,000—not bad for
an ex-GI college student.

(CONTINUED)
43 CONTINUED:

HERBIE
Honestly, Mr. Barry, I feel that—win or lose—I've already shown exactly what it takes for a man in this country to rise above his circumstances.

BARRY
Only in America.

CUT TO:

44 INT. SAME TIME. GOODWIN HOME.

The Goodwins eat Chinese food out of cartons, watch Charlie on the TV.

SANDRA
Look at him. He's dreamy.

GOODWIN
'Dreamy'? The man is a college professor.

SANDRA
You know I like brainy guys.

GOODWIN
You never said Herbert Stempel was dreamy.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

A condensation of the game as Charlie and Herbie, lip-biting and brow-mopping, bat the lead back and forth.

HERBIE
...Andrew Johnson of Tennessee.

CUT TO:

CHARLIE
...I guess, I guess that Atahualpa was the leader of the Incas at the time of the conquest...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
...therefore the Virgin Islands
must be Columbus's second
voyage...

CUT TO:

CHARLIE
...The Daily News...wouldn't that
be Patterson, Joseph Patterson?

CUT TO:

HERBIE
...If I could take that third part
last...

CUT TO:

CHARLIE
...I'd like to take the third part
last, if I might...

CUT TO:

BARRY
Correct, Herb, for 8 points!

CUT TO:

BARRY
Professor, that's incorrect, and
you're back to five.

CUT TO:

HERBIE
...Anne of Cleves...

CUT TO:

CHARLIE
...Anne Boleyn...

CUT TO:

HERBIE
...Catherine Howard...

CUT TO:

(Continued)
CONTINUED:  (2)

CHARLIE
...Catherine of Aragon...

CUT TO:

HERBIE
...he divorced her...

CUT TO:

CHARLIE
...he beheaded her...

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. STUDIO.
Barry launches into a question.

BARRY
Herb Stempel, you lead at this point by 18 to 11. The category is movies. How many points do you want to try for?

HERBIE
I'll try three, three points.

BARRY
Which would give you 21 points if you guess right, and you will be the winner again.

Barry hits a button. The question pops up.

BARRY
(reads)
Which motion picture won the Academy Award for 1955?

IN THE BOOTH
Herbie sweats it out...Twists at his handkerchief...

HERBIE
1955...Academy Award...Best Picture. Hmmm...You know, I don't remember.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM
Enright and Freedman watch, TENSE...A STAGEHAND leans against a wall.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

STAGEHAND

'Marty'.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. HERBIE'S APARTMENT.

Toby stops eating.

BARRY (O.C.)
Would you like to take some time?

HERBIE (O.C.)
I don't remember. 1955--that was just last year...Best Picture...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Barry taps the card.

BARRY
Are you sure you wouldn't like to guess at it?

HERBIE
It's the oddest thing--I just don't remember.

BARRY
Otherwise I'll have to call it wrong.

HERBIE
Wait!

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.

The Sponsor scowls.

KINTNER
Christ.

CUT TO:
49  INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Herbie searches the skies for inspiration. Then SAGS.

BARRY

Herb?

HERBIE

Best Picture... No. I just don't remember.

(helplessly)

'Mister Roberts'?

BARRY

No, I'm sorry. The answer is 'Marty'.

HERBIE

'Marty'!

BARRY

(sorrowful)

'Marty'.

CUT TO:

50  INT. NIGHT. GOODWIN HOME.

Goodwin stares dumbfounded at the TV.

GOODWIN

Jeez. What an easy question.

CUT TO:

51  INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.

Barry turns to Charlie.

BARRY

And now for you, Professor... the category is the Civil War.

CHARLIE

That's an awful big subject. Hmmm. Well, I'll try for 10 points, Jack.

BARRY

Which will bring you to 21, and you will be the new champion.

(continued)
CONTINUED:

HERBIE

in his silent booth, frozen out, presses his face against the plexiglas—trying to get a look at Van Doren...

CLOSE ON—CHARLIE

as Barry reads the question.

BARRY

(reading)

'Because of a disagreement with his commanding general, Ulysses S. Grant was virtually placed under arrest for a brief time early in 1862. Who was the commanding general of the Union Army at that time?'

It's the SAME QUESTION he was asked in his test...Trapped in the isolation booth...What can he do?

BARRY

Tough question.

CHARLIE

It's just so oddly familiar...

BARRY

Would you like some more time?

CHARLIE

Whatever you can spare.

SUSPENSE MUSIC

blares...A rising scale out of a horror movie...

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

Enright and Freedman watch, fists clenched in anticipation...

BACK ON—CHARLIE

The eyes of the audience bearing down on him...Till the music ends.

BARRY

Do you know the name?

CHARLIE

Oh, yes, uh— I know his name. Halleck. General H.W. Halleck.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BARRY
That's correct! You are our new champion with $20,000!

IN THE ISOLATION BOOTH
Charlie mops his brow. Amazed and appalled.

CHARLIE
(sotto)
That son of a bitch.

CLOSE ON--ENRIGHT
as he watches Charlie. SMILES. Shakes his head in admiration.

ENRIGHT
That son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STUDIO.
Barry slides into his oily conclusion.

BARRY
Herb, I just want to say, by golly, you've had a tremendous run here. We may have a lot of contestants in the future...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. STEMPEL APARTMENT.
The phone RINGS unanswered. Toby crumples the bag of orange peels into the trash can. Exits the apartment.

BARRY (O.C.)
...I doubt that anybody will ever display the knowledge, the fighting spirit, and the courage that you have on this program...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.
The Sponsor watches with Kintner.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARRY (O.C.)
And Professor Van Doren, you'll be here to face a new challenger next week on '21'!

SPONSOR
I like him. He's like a young Ronald Reagan.

KINTNER
(eagerly)
With brains.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STUDIO.

Charlie stands by the elevator with Enright and Freedman. CREW MEMBERS and PAGES pass by, congratulate him. Herbie moves anonymously up the hallway from the deep background...

CHARLIE
God, I'm as exhausted as if I played five sets of tennis.

NBC PAGE #1
Some tough questions tonight.

CHARLIE
Oh, not really.

FREEDMAN
Charlie, you're a natural.

CREW MEMBER #1
See you next week, Professor.

CHARLIE
Ugh! I don't even want to think about it!
(to Enright)
Gosh, my brain is numb!

THE ELEVATOR ARRIVES

with a light and a bell. Herbie and some of the crew members climb inside. Freedman holds the door for Charlie.

ENRIGHT
Go home, have a martini. We'll talk in the morning.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
I'm going to... I'm just going to
take the stairs, if that's okay.

The others climb into the elevator.

HERBIE'S EYES

fill with RESENTMENT...watching Charlie as the doors CLOSE...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STAIRWELL.

Charlie RUNS down the fire stairs, muttering to himself. Flight
after flight... His shoes landing with a clanging THUNK! THUNK!
THUNK! ...

CHARLIE

What was I supposed to do, lose
on a question I knew? Pretend I
didn't know the answer? That would
be just as dishonest...

STAIRS IN A TORRENT

As he rushes down pell-mell... His breath chugs heavily, his hair
flaps over his forehead...

CHARLIE

... I suppose I could've said
something. Like what? God-- I
can't even imagine. The
embarrassment. The publicity...

JUMPING

Skipping three stairs... four stairs...

CHARLIE

... After all, it's for the good
of the country. Besides, I've
worked hard. I deserve twenty
thousand dollars as much as
anybody.

HE STOPS

Panting, chasing his breath-- as if he'd run up all those stairs.
Awed by the number he's just uttered.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
My God... twenty thousand dollars!

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Next week's show. Charlie divines the answer.

CHARLIE
'Age of Innocence'.

BARRY
Correct for ten points!

CHILDREN gather in front of a family TV set.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
Could that be Samuel Tilden?

BARRY (O.C.)
Once again, Charlie, you are our champion!

Charlie sits in a Morningside Heights coffee shop and reads his morning paper. Turns and sees a crowd of students watching through the window. They APPLAUD. He shyly toasts them with his cup of coffee. Turns, pleased and ashamed, back to his paper.

The following week--the opening of the show. The beautiful escort brings Charlie and CHALLENGER #1 out.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...returning with $36,000...

Charlie in a PREP ROOM. Freedman asks him a question.

FREEDMAN
(reading)
Who were the three heavyweight champions who preceded Joe Louis?

CHARLIE
Let's see... Braddock. Baer, Max Baer... Hmm... Hmm!

FREEDMAN
Primo Carnera.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
You're not supposed to do that.
You can't use that.

FREEDMAN
I gotta sit here all day? What
the hell's the difference?

--NUNS pray while Charlie searches for the answer.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
My goodness... Could it be--I'm
going to guess Primo Carnera.

BARRY (O.C.)
You have 21!

The Nuns bless themselves, offer thanks to God.

--Charlie tours an empty Greenwich Village TOWNHOUSE.

REALTOR
It's the only townhouse available
on Washington Square. They're firm
at $14,000.

CHARLIE
I'll take it.

--The week after... Charlie comes out with CHALLENGER #2.

ANNOUNCER
...Returning, with $54,000...

--The week after... Sandra and Goodwin watch at home... Charlie
comes out with CHALLENGER #3.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...returning with $69,500, from
New York, N.Y., Professor Charles
Van Doren!

--The Sponsor and Kintner watch in the all-white apartment.

KINTNER
Fifty million people tuning in
week after week just to watch a
man win, what--$10,000? Imagine
if they could watch you.

The Sponsor shoots him a withering look...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

-SPINNING HEADLINES:

Business Section: 'GERITOL SALES DOUBLE IN '56' (with a photo of the Sponsor)

Variety: 'BARRY/ENRIGHT SELL TO NBC FOR $2 MILLION'

Cosmopolitan: 'CHARLES VAN DOREN--BRAINS, LOOKS AND AVAILABLE'

Saturday Review: 'VAN DOREN: AMERICA'S ANSWER TO SPUTNIK'

Life: 'THE SMARTEST MAN IN THE WORLD'

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. VAN DOREN HOME--CORNWALL HOLLOW, CONNECTICUT.

Worn chintz and Christmas decorations. Dorothy darns socks. The Professor opens the front door. Smiles.

THE PROFESSOR
If it isn't 'The Smartest Man in the World'.

REVERSE ANGLE

It's Charlie, straining to carry a huge CARTON...

DOROTHY
Charlie! What a surprise!

CHARLIE
Hello, Mother. (to father) Since when do you read Life Magazine?

THE PROFESSOR
Trilling told me about it.

CHARLIE
Since when does Trilling read Life Magazine?

THE PROFESSOR
I think he saw it at the doctor's office.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
I can't even eat dinner in a
restaurant anymore. People follow
me inside to discover what kind
of 'brain food' I eat.
(to Dorothy)
Mother, do you have a scissors
or something?

She goes to the kitchen to find a scissors...

CHARLIE
There's a girl at NBC now whose
sole job it is to answer my mail.
This week alone I got fifty
proposals of marriage.

THE PROFESSOR
Well, maybe you should accept one
of them.

DOROTHY
Oh, don't be an old fool.

THE PROFESSOR
Well, why not? He's 33 years old.
Jesus Christ had a girlfriend at
33.

Dorothy returns with the scissors, hands them to Charlie. He
sets about opening the carton...

DOROTHY
Some gold-digger whose only
qualification for marriage is an
ability to lick a postage stamp.

CHARLIE
I'm sure they're all very nice
girls.

THE PROFESSOR
(glare at Dorothy)
In that case, maybe I should
appear on a quiz show.

CHARLIE
The money, meanwhile--no one knows
what to do with it. I mean,
everyone knows what to do with
it. I'm besieged by stockbrokers.
Stockbrokers and single women.

(CONTINUED)
THE PROFESSOR
Why don't you just put it in the bank?

CHARLIE
It's not that simple.

THE PROFESSOR
That's what I've always done with my prize money.

CHARLIE
It's just--you don't understand Dad. It gets very complicated at this level--there are all sorts of tax implications--

THE PROFESSOR
I think I can understand the concept of taxes.

CHARLIE
Will you just listen to me, Dad? I'm not sure that I understand it, and it's my money.

DOROTHY
How much money is it, anyway?

THE PROFESSOR
Charlie, you're talking to me like I'm some sort of country bumpkin--or some flibbertigibbet with his head in the clouds--

CHARLIE
Well, you have to admit it's not your strong suit.

THE PROFESSOR
Believe me, if you have a practical bone in your body, it comes from the Van Dorens.

DOROTHY
Ha!

Charlie finishes with the carton. Turns to them.

CHARLIE
Ready? Voila!

The sides of the carton fall down, revealing

(CONTINUED)
A BRAND-NEW TELEVISION

set like a jewel in a beautiful cabinet. The wood matches the wood of the room. Charlie kneels to plug it in. Turns it on.

DOROTHY
This is wonderful! Now we can watch you on that show of yours!

THE PROFESSOR
We were supposed to watch it the other night at the Thurbers'.

DOROTHY
Even Thurber has a television. And he's blind.

THE PROFESSOR
Somehow we got sidetracked onto something or other.

They all admire the TV.

DOROTHY
Charlie...How much have you made on that show?

THE PROFESSOR
This ceaseless fretting about money. 'How frugal is the Chariot? That bears the human soul'.

DOROTHY
Maybe you should take the frugal Chariot to the supermarket and see what chopped meat costs.

THE PROFESSOR
Would you like a sherry, Charlie?

The Professor exits to the kitchen.

DOROTHY
It's a simple question.

CHARLIE
It's not important.

DOROTHY
I'm going to feel like a fool if it comes up in conversation and I'm the only one who doesn't know.

(Continued)
The Professor returns, hands a SHERRY to Charlie.

DOROTHY
(to Charlie)
Well?

THE PROFESSOR
Well, what? (getting it) Are you still on about the money?

CHARLIE
$106,000.

The Professor is dumbstruck--more money than he's earned in ten years.

DOROTHY
In that case, we could also use a dishwasher.

The Professor shoots Dorothy a scathing look. The phone RINGS...Dorothy moves to the kitchen to answer it.

THE PROFESSOR
So, Charlie, what do you make of this latest nonsense of Norman Mailer's?

DOROTHY
(from inside)
Professor, it's someone for you from Time Magazine.

THE PROFESSOR
Time Magazine? What could that be about?

ON THE TELEVISION

as the Professor reaches for the knob, snaps it OFF.

CUT TO:

58

INT. LATER THAT WEEK. NBC--RECEPTION AREA.

THE COVER OF TIME

with Charlie's portrait and the caption, "CHARLES VAN DOREN," as the glossy SMACKS rhythmically against someone's knee...A metronome of impatience...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

WIDER

Herbie among the hopefuls in Enright's waiting room. He wears a sharkskin suit and a LOUD NECKTIE. CONTESTANT #1 turns to CONTESTANT #2, nods toward Herbie.

CONTESTANT #1
(aside)
Isn't that--what's his name? The guy that lost to Van Doren?

Enright's Secretary approaches Herbie.

SECRETARY
Mr. Enright will see you now.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. ENRIGHT'S OFFICE.

Herbie enters with the copy of Time.

HERBIE
Did you see this? Did you?

ENRIGHT
Herb, you should've called.

HERBIE
..(reading)
'He combines the erudition of a Renaissance man with the nerves of a riverboat gambler...'
Remember how he snubbed me after the show?

ENRIGHT
He didn't snub you.

HERBIE
He refused to even ride in the elevator with me! (resuming) 'He has become a "friend" in 50 million homes, whose weekly visits the whole family eagerly anticipates'--do you believe this shit?

ENRIGHT
That's the press--you know how they exaggerate.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
That should be me on the cover of *Time*! Charles Van Doren—he wouldn't know the answer to a doorbell if you didn't give it to him.

ENRIGHT
What do you want me to tell you, Herb? Life is unfair.

HERBIE
Life is unfair to me. Life isn't unfair to Charles Van Doren. It's like a joke. 'What do you give the man who has everything?' $106,000.

ENRIGHT
It's not like I never put a dollar in your pocket.

HERBIE
I was a 'friend', too, in 50 million homes. Now I'm a 'friend' in a walkup in Queens.
(beat)
Besides, it's gone.

ENRIGHT
What do you mean, it's gone? The money's gone?

HERBIE
I mean invested. It's invested. It's tied up.

ENRIGHT
Have you spoken to your broker?

HERBIE
He's not a broker. He's more of...ah...a bookmaker.

ENRIGHT
You gave your money to a bookie?

HERBIE
Seed money. He's down in Florida right now. According to him it's the next growth area.

(continued)
ENRIGHT
You invested your money with a
bookie who has since left the
state.

HERBIE
The point is you promised me a
panel show.

ENRIGHT
I said I would do what I could.
I put your name on a list.

HERBIE
I lost 12 pounds, you know. Did
you tell them I lost 12 pounds?

ENRIGHT
I submitted a list of 45 names--

HERBIE
What about this tie? This is the
kind of tie that looks best in
black-and-white, right?

ENRIGHT
Well, it'll certainly improve it.

HERBIE
Twelve pounds. That'll make a big
difference on camera.

ENRIGHT
Herb, listen. I put you on a list.
45 names--they rejected three.
You were one of them.

HERBIE
Who were the others?

ENRIGHT
They turned out to be Communists.

HERBIE
Out of 45 names they rejected me
and two Communists?

ENRIGHT
There'll be other shows.

HERBIE
I need that money, Dan! I need
that panel show!
(more)

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE (Cont'd)
That big blond putz is on the cover of Time and I can't even make the top fucking 42 for a fucking panel show?

ENRIGHT
Let me give you the name of my analyst. Have him send the bills to me. It might be helpful to have someone to talk to.

HERBIE
I'll tell you who I'm going to talk to. I'm going to the D.A. And the newspapers.

ENRIGHT
That wouldn't be smart.

HERBIE
I've been smart 42 years and look where it's gotten me--I'm going to be dumb for a change. I'm gonna tell the world that '21' is nothing but a fraud.

ENRIGHT
Who are you blowing the whistle on? You got the answers yourself.

HERBIE
I'm bringing you down with me, you lousy lying prick--you and Charles Van fucking Doren.

ENRIGHT
Go ahead. You know what? Nobody will believe you.

HERBIE
You just became part of television history, pal.
(mimics announcer)
'The fix is in--this week on "21"'.

ENRIGHT
And even if anybody did believe you, they wouldn't give you the satisfaction.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

HERBIE
The cover of Time...his mug shot'll be on the cover of Time!

Herbie SLAMS out of the office as Freedman enters. Enright sighs, rubs his forehead.

ENRIGHT
Shit.

FREEDMAN
What happened?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MORNING. GOODWIN KITCHEN.

Goodwin reads the New York Times. Sandra watches the Today Show.

SANDRA
(off television)
Look at the arm on this guy. The Senators could use this guy.

ON THE TELEVISION

An angry Latin American demonstrator winds up, HURLS a stone at the motorcade of Vice President NIXON and his wife.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...The demonstrators stoned and spat on the Nixons as they proceeded via motorcade through Caracas...Now back to Dave Garroway and the Today Show in New York.

DAVE GARROWAY, the jovial host, shakes his head. He turns to his co-host, J. FRED MUGGS. A chimpanzee. He SQUAWKS.

GARROWAY (O.C.)
That's what I'm thinking. Can you imagine that kind of thing happening here?

Goodwin turns back to his paper. An item catches his eye. The wheels start to SPIN...

GOODWIN
You know what a presentment is?

SANDRA
It's on the tip of my tongue.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

GOODWIN
It's a formal statement from a
grand jury. They make a
presentment to announce publicly
what the grand jury found out.

SANDRA
So?

GOODWIN
So it doesn't make any sense that
a judge would seal it.

Goodwin points to a small HEADLINE on an inside page.

PRESENTMENT SEALED IN TV NETWORK INQUIRY

Sandra looks at the article.

SANDRA
What did they find out?

GOODWIN
That's what I'm saying. What did
they find out?

Excited, he gulps at his coffee. Kisses his wife and RUNS.

GOODWIN
Don't wait up for me.

Sandra looks at the paper. Then up as the screen door SLAMS.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. NEW YORK SUPREME COURT.

The messy democracy of a New York courtroom. A BAILIFF calls the
court to order.

BAILIFF
The Supreme Court of the State
of New York is now in session.

JUDGE SCHWEITZER, 50s, a grumpy clubhouse pol, looks at the
day's docket...Reddens with RAGE as Goodwin stands.

GOODWIN
Your honor, I represent the
Subcommittee on Legislative
Oversight of the--

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SCHWEITZER
Did Herbert Stempel send you?

GOODWIN
Herbert Stempel? As I understand it, this case involves network television, which falls under the committee’s jurisdiction—

SCHWEITZER
You tell your friend Stempel that that presentment lies in a deep cold grave, and the only way he’s going to get his hands on it is to join it there. Now you get out of here, or I’m going to hold you in contempt!

The Judge nods to the burly Bailiff, who heads toward Goodwin. Goodwin gathers his papers, scrambles out.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. KINTNER’S OFFICE.

Kintner enters as his Secretary answers the phone.

SECRETARY
It’s Judge Schweitzer.

Kintner stops in his tracks. Stares at the blinking phone.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING. STEMPEL HOME.

Goodwin rings the doorbell again. Herbie answers.

GOODWIN
Mr. Stempel? My name is Richard Goodwin, I’m a lawyer with the Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight of the United States Congress.

HERBIE
Yeah?

GOODWIN
Did you recently testify before the grand jury?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HERBIE

Yeah?

GOODWIN

Well, I'd like to talk to you about it.

Herbie blinks. He can't believe it.

HERBIE

Gee, uh. Ha! Finally! Finally!
Come in. What's your name,
Goodwin?

(calling inside)

Hey, Toby, get dressed, willya?
There's somebody here from
Congress!

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HERBIE'S APARTMENT.

They enter the living room. Toby watches the TV. Sounds of
Herbie's son Lester DRUMMING wildly inside.

HERBIE

I knew it was just a matter of
time. This is my wife, Toby.
This is Mr. Goodwin, he's an
investigator from the United
States Congress.

TOBY

Pleased to meet you.

HERBIE

Mrs. Rubber Crutch here thinks
I should've kept my mouth shut.

TOBY

1957 and I still believe in
miracles.

She gets up. Heads toward the kitchen....

HERBIE

If you're not big enough to admit
you're wrong, honey, who is.

TOBY

(to Goodwin)
You want a cup of coffee? I
already got a pot on.

(Continued)
GOODWIN
Yes, please.

She exits into the hallway.

HERBIE
(after her)
And bring some rugalach—if there
are any left.
(to Goodwin)
I love my wife, but it's like
living with a plague of locusts.

Goodwin sits, opens up a legal pad on his lap.

HERBIE
Did you talk to Van Doren?

GOODWIN
Charles Van Doren?

HERBIE
If Charles Van Doren told them
what I told them, you think this
grand jury thing would be
squashed?

GOODWIN
Quashed.

HERBIE
Quashed?

GOODWIN
Not squashed. Quashed.

HERBIE
Not in a million years, quashed,
okay?

GOODWIN
Charles Van Doren also spoke to
the grand jury?

HERBIE
Of course not. Him they would have
to listen to. The man's name is
open, sesame.

Toby returns with a pot of coffee and a plate of rugalach.

TOBY
So, Mr. Goodwin—you gonna be able
to help my husband?

(Continued)
HERBIE
Have a rugalach.

GOODWIN
No, thank you.

HERBIE
Come on! You don't look like you have a weight problem.
(calling inside)
Lester! Willya knock it off for ten minutes!
(with rugalach)
They don't have this in Washington.

GOODWIN
No, thank you.

HERBIE
It's a Jewish delicacy. You don't know what you're missing.

GOODWIN
I'm quite familiar with rugalach, thank you.

Herbie realizes that Goodwin is Jewish...

HERBIE
Oh, really?

TOBY
Did Herbie tell you he went to the newspapers? Not one would print his story.

HERBIE
Being a voice alone in the wilderness, you know, that's one thing. Being a voice alone in Forest Hills, that's quite another.

TOBY
Seventeen newspapers in the City of New York.

HERBIE
If Charles Van Doren went to the papers--can you imagine the headlines? 'Van Doren Blows Whistle on Quiz Fix'.
GOODWIN
Wait a minute—what do you mean, 'fix'?

HERBIE
Fix.
(shouting)
Lester!

TOBY
Do you play a musical instrument, Mr. Goodwin?

HERBIE
You're not supposed to ask him questions. He's here to ask me questions.

GOODWIN
I just want to get this straight—'21' is fixed?

HERBIE
You're so naive. Of course it's fixed! It's a fix, it's all a fix. A set-up.

GOODWIN
That's unbelievable.

HERBIE
Do you think that big blond putz would be on the show 13 weeks without somebody spoon-feeding him the answers?

Herbie tears into the rugalach.

GOODWIN
You're saying Charles Van Doren is given the answers in advance?

HERBIE
They made me take a dive—did you know that? 'Marty'. They told me I had 'plateaued'—that the ratings had 'plateaued'.

TOBY
A sinking ship and the rats stayed.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
Would they tell me to take a dive
and not give him the answers?
It's not logical.

GOODWIN
Then it's purely inferential.

HERBIE
There's nothing inferential about
it. You think they'd give me the
answers, who didn't even need the
answers, and not give the Big Goy
the answers?

GOODWIN
They gave you the answers?

SURPRISED, Toby shoots him a look--this is the first she's heard
of it. An awkward PAUSE, filled with the sound of Lester's
drumming...

HERBIE
Would you please go inside and
tell Gene Krupa to take five?

Toby gets up, goes inside. Herbie resumes.

GOODWIN
Herb--why would you admit that
they gave you the answers?

HERBIE
Exactly. Exactly. That's the
difference between me and Charles
Van Doren--I admit it. I have
my morality.

GOODWIN
I want to get this straight--they
made you take a dive after giving
you the answers.

HERBIE
I just wanted the money--frankly,
to get out from under the
financial thumb, as it were, of
my in-laws. I didn't put myself
up to the world as the Crown
Prince of Education. I didn't
parade myself on the cover of
Time. That's why you have to nail
him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:  (5)

GOODWIN
This isn't McCarthyism.

HERBIE
Listen--think about what
McCarthyism did for McCarthy.

GOODWIN
I'm not here to nail anyone.

HERBIE
I'm just saying--don't make
necessarily the mistakes that I
might have made in life. Think
about your career. You nail Van
Doren, kid, it'll be bigger than
Sputnik. It'd be like Sputnik
crashing--like a big blond Sputnik
crashing right on his fucking
head.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. COLUMBIA CAMPUS.

STUDENTS greet Charlie as he strides across campus. A man in his
element. Then he notices Goodwin following him. Starts to hurry.
Looks over his shoulder. Still being followed...

GOODWIN
Professor Van Doren!

Charlie at a trot now...Goodwin runs after him.

CHARLIE DASHES
at a dead run across the Quad. Goodwin picks up the pursuit.

CHARLIE DUCKS
into the library, hustling through as STUDENTS greet him.

HIDE AND SEEK
behind a large CARD CATALOGUE. Goodwin hurries by. Charlie
peeks. Sneaks down a hallway. Stops at the elevator. Snoops
on the button as he looks around furtively.

CHARLIE
Darn.

Goodwin looks around. Backtracks down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)
TURNS THE CORNER

sees Charlie, hiding his face with his newspaper, pressing urgently on the elevator button. Runs up to him.

GOODWIN
Professor Van Doren! Excuse me--my name is Richard Goodwin. I'm a lawyer with--

CHARLIE
Oh. Thank God! Excuse me--I thought you were a stockbroker.

GOODWIN
A lawyer's bad enough. Professor--

CHARLIE
Nobody without acne gets to call me Professor. Call me Charlie.

GOODWIN
Do you have a minute?

CHARLIE
Sure. We can go up to my office, if this elevator ever gets here.

Charlie punches the button again.

CHARLIE
You know, you look like someone I know. Now isn't that funny? I've forgotten his name.

GOODWIN
My mother says I look like Tony Curtis.

CHARLIE
No, that's not it...

The elevator arrives. Charlie gestures for Goodwin to enter first. Then suddenly stops him.

CHARLIE
Stempel! Remember him? That's who you look like--Herbert Stempel!

CUT TO:
They move up the hallway past a sign hand-scrulled by students:

"THIS WAY TO WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN"

CHARLIE
...I almost became a lawyer. But
there's only nine seats on the
Supreme Court, after all,
and...where'd you go to law school?

Charlie unlocks his office, gestures for Goodwin to enter.

GOODWIN
Harvard. I was first in my class.

CHARLIE
Good for you. Did you know
Professor Byse at all?

GOODWIN
He taught me Contracts.

CHARLIE
He taught me my backhand. That's
him up there with Dad and
Roosevelt.

Goodwin inspects the MEMORABILIA on the mantle: Mark Van Doren
with Clark Byse and FDR. Mark Van Doren and Hemingway. The
National Book Award. The Pulitzer Prize.

CHARLIE
So, you must be happy to flee Our
Nation's Capital.

GOODWIN
Then you've spent some time there.

CHARLIE
Washington? Washington's a town
where for excitement they go to
Baltimore.

GOODWIN
Let me ask you--have you heard
anything about these allegations
that '21' was rigged?

CHARLIE
Rigged?

GOODWIN
Fixed. (CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
What an odd idea... I don't even know how you'd go about it.

GOODWIN
So you've never noticed anything suspect about the show?

CHARLIE
Its popularity is, I suppose, suspect.

GOODWIN
Herbert Stempel says that during his reign on '21' he was given the answers.

CHARLIE
Herbert Stempel? I'd've thought they got the answers from him.

GOODWIN
He also says he was made to take a dive in his contest with you.

CHARLIE
I'd hate to think I won anything but fairly.

GOODWIN
You've never been asked to do anything improper?

CHARLIE
Oh, Lord, no.

GOODWIN
Because if you were, you know, they'd just be using you for your name. You'd be a victim as much as anyone.

CHARLIE
Frankly, I wish they would. I'd love to take a dive and get back to normal life.

THE DOOR OPENS
and The Professor enters.

THE PROFESSOR
Oh. Hello, Charlie. Am I interrupting?

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
Dick, this is my father, Mark Van Doren. This is Dick Goldwyn.

GOODWIN
Goodwin. It’s an honor, sir.

THE PROFESSOR
Goodwin—what a wonderful name! 'Good.' 'Win'. All of America is in that name.

CHARLIE
Did you happen to see the show last night?

THE PROFESSOR
It was on last night? I’m sorry, Charlie, I--

CHARLIE
It’s nothing, it’s just—there was a question about Hawthorne. I thought you’d get a kick out of it.

THE PROFESSOR
I completely forgot.

Goodwin gets up to leave. Hands Charlie a card.

GOODWIN
I’m at the Gramercy Park—you can reach me there till Tuesday.

Charlie walks Goodwin to the door.

CHARLIE
Are you a card player, Dick? We have a regular game Saturday nights, we’re looking for someone to fill in.

GOODWIN
I don’t know that I’m a card player. I’ve played cards before.

CHARLIE
The address is—actually, why don’t we drive up together? I’ll pick you up around 7:30.

(CONTINUED)
THE PROFESSOR
Dick, if you look around the table
and can't tell who the sucker
is--it's you.

They all share a big laugh.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. STREET.

Charlie talks on a PAY PHONE on Broadway, tearing at his hair
and looking around furtively.

CHARLIE
...I simply can't have this. He
was questioning me!

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
Calm down. His wife probably
wanted an autograph.

CHARLIE
Congress investigates Communists.
Congress investigates mobsters.
Those are not our people.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
Look on the bright side--you'll
be on national television.

(char)
That's a joke, Charlie.

CHARLIE
You gave Herbert Stempel the
answers? You never told me that!

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
It never came up.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
You said I could never beat him
without getting the answers.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
I said you'd advance the cause
of education. Was I right?

CHARLIE (O.C.)
Why is he doing this? He's only
implicating himself!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

A PASSERBY

recognizes Charlie. Points at him.

PASSERBY

Hey! It's Charles Van Doren!

Charlie tries to hide in the phone booth.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)

Think about the future. Do you know how many calls I get from the network about you?

CHARLIE

You don't understand. I have a name.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)

That's what I'm telling you.

CHARLIE

I am Charles Van Doren.

ON THE PASSERBY

as others CROWD around him, stop to gawk.

PASSERBY

Look--Charles Van Doren! Hey, Professor--you calling Information? 'He's calling 411 for Information.

BACK ON--CHARLIE

as he struggles. Flashs a phony smile to the GAWKERS.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)

I have something that's gonna make Herbie go away. I guarantee it. Just don't say anything.

CHARLIE

(flustered)

I have to--I have to go.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)

Did you say anything?

CHARLIE

CONTINUED: (2)

Charlie hangs up. Turns. The crowd starts to cheer. Charlie smiles a phony smile, HURRIES from the applause...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. HOTEL--FRONT DESK.

The CONCIERGE hands Goodwin his key and a NOTE.

CONCIERGE
Good night, Mr. Goodwin.

Goodwin OPENS the note. The letterhead, CHARLES VAN DOREN. Scrawled beneath:

It was a pleasure to meet you.
--CVD

From the shadows a WAITING MAN emerges...Goodwin looks up.

WAITING MAN
You Goodwin?

GOODWIN
Yeah?

The Waiting Man wheels a CAMERA to his eye. Aims.

FLASH!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. HOTEL.

Goodwin smokes a cigar in bed, cradles the PHONE on his shoulder. Sandra does the crossword at home in Georgetown.

GOODWIN
What if I told you '21' was rigged?

SANDRA
'21' is like wrestling?

GOODWIN
That's what that grand jury was about. Herbert Stempel admits that they gave him the answers in advance.

(CONTINUED)
SANDRA
That's unbelievable.

GOODWIN
And when they wanted him to lose, they made him take a dive.

SANDRA
What about Van Doren?

GOODWIN
I met him today. Him and his father. It turns out--

SANDRA
Did you ask him if he's getting the answers?

GOODWIN
Of course I asked him. You're not listening.

SANDRA
I'm sorry.

GOODWIN
It turns out Clark Byse is an old family friend.

SANDRA
Who?

GOODWIN
My old Contracts professor at Harvard.

SANDRA
It doesn't make sense that you'd make one guy take a dive and not give the other guy the answers.

GOODWIN
You sound like Stempel.

SANDRA
What makes you think Van Doren didn't get the answers?

GOODWIN
Sandra--why would somebody like Charles Van Doren jeopardize everything he has for a quiz show?
SANDRA
Those good-looking guys are always bullshit artists.

GOODWIN
Do you have any idea what I'm onto here? I'm going after some of the biggest institutions in the country! Me, Dick Goodwin--the former bard of the Fayetteville Kiwanis--

SANDRA
You smoking in the bed?

Goodwin draws deep. Grins ear to ear.

GOODWIN
I'm having the time of my life.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STEMPPEL APARTMENT.

Herbie brushes his teeth in the bathroom. Inside, Toby turns down the bed.

TOBY
You never told me you got the answers, Herb.

HERBIE
Of course they gave me the answers. I mean, not very many answers. I'm sure I mentioned it.

TOBY
It's not a thing you 'mention'. What else did you do that you didn't 'mention'?

HERBIE
What, are you gonna start on me, too? The man came here, he sat in our kitchen and he said, 'How'd you like to make $25,000'? I don't know any man in America who'd turn that down.

TOBY
That's not the point.

Herbie enters the bedroom, brandishing his toothbrush. (CONTINUED)
HERBIE
Let me tell you about honest. You know what my father used to tell me? 'Work hard and you'll get ahead'. Was that honest? Look at Geritol—'Geritol cures tired blood'—and I'm the one who's supposed to be ashamed.

TOBY
You never said you were getting the answers.

HERBIE
Let them believe whatever they want. What do I care? What do I care if a bunch of saps—

TOBY
(right back)
I was one of the saps, Herbert.

CLOSE ON HERBIE
For the first time, he realizes what he did to his wife.

CUT TO:

71 INT. MORNING. "21" SET.
The set is dark. Goodwin climbs into an isolation booth. Puts on a set of headphones. Looks out through the plexiglas, out at the empty seats, the podium where Barry stands...

GOODWIN
Well, gee, Jack. Hmmm. Ty Cobb, for starters. (beat) Would Honus Wagner be the next? (beat) Most base hits...Something makes me want to say Tris Speaker—

An NBC PAGE knocks at the door, startling Goodwin.

NBC PAGE
Mr. Enright will see you now.

CUT TO:

72 INT. DAY. ENRIGHT'S OFFICE.
Goodwin enters. An angry Enright confronts him.

(CONTINUED)
ENRIGHT
Did you see the paper this morning?

He hands him the Daily News. A large PHOTOGRAPH of Goodwin--snapped last night at the hotel--beneath the headline:

CONGRESS PROBES QUIZ FIX

ENRIGHT
I will not have my show--what we've accomplished for the cause of education--slandered like this in the tabloids.

GOODWIN
I assure you, I had nothing to do with this.

ENRIGHT
Fix? The questions on '21' are certified by the Encyclopedia Britannica! They're kept under lock and key in a bank vault!

GOODWIN
Notwithstanding the bank vault, Mr. Enright, Herbert Stempel swears the show is rigged.

ENRIGHT
It would take a real individualist to believe Herb Stempel. Does he have any concrete evidence? Does it make any sense that a man would implicate himself like this?

GOODWIN
Well, I've only just--

ENRIGHT
It's not even logical. Do you know how the show works? If I made him take a dive, I'd have to give the answers to Charles Van Doren.

GOODWIN
Not necessarily.

ENRIGHT
Charles Van Doren! With his background? I think if you even suggested a scheme like that he'd punch you in the nose.
GOODWIN
With my nose he could hardly miss.

ENRIGHT
Mr. Goodwin, I'd rather not share
this with anyone, but it seems
like there's no other way.

A TAPE RECORDER
Sits on the coffee table. Enright hits "PLAY".

HERBIE (O.C.)
I need that money, Dan! I need
that panel show! That big blond
putz is on the cover of Time and
I can't even make the top fucking
42 for a fucking panel show?

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
I think it's important that you
see an analyst, Herb, for the
intensive psychiatric care we both
know you need.

HERBIE (O.C.)
I'm going to the D.A. And the
newspapers. I'm gonna tell the
world that '21' is nothing but
a fraud.

ENRIGHT (O.C.)
This is a crude blackmail attempt
that will never succeed. You know
that I've always been scrupulously
honest with you.

HERBIE (O.C.)
I'm bringing you down with me,
you lousy lying prick--you and
Charles Van fucking Doren.

Enright stops the tape. Shakes his head...

GOODWIN
I don't understand--he needed
money?

ENRIGHT
Gambling. And that's the least
of it. I trust you'll keep this
between us--given Herb's medical
condition...

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
Medical condition?

Enright goes to his desk. Opens the top drawer, returns with a sheaf of BILLS. Goodwin examines them.

ENRIGHT
I’ve been paying his psychiatrist’s bills. A man like Herb, no longer in the public eye—television’s like a monkey on his back. Needless to say, I feel responsible.

GOODWIN
Five sessions a week?

ENRIGHT
Well, it’s not so bad that he needs to be institutionalized...

Enright ushers Goodwin to the door.

ENRIGHT
My theory, Dick, is that Herb is so angry with himself for losing, so guilt-ridden, that he has projected that enormous guilt onto the person of Charles Van Doren—blames him for his downfall. Whereas the real downfall of Herbert Stempel has always been, regrettably... Herbert Stempel.

GOODWIN
Do you worry about Van Doren? Someday when he’s not in the public eye—

ENRIGHT
He’s far less neurotic than Herbie.

CUT TO:

73 INT. DAY. PSYCHIATRIST’S OFFICE.

An ANALYST sits in a cool, dimly-lit room. Charlie lies on the couch alongside him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
...I keep having this dream. I open up my billfold, and there's a $20 bill there. And I take it out, and close the billfold, and when I open the billfold again, there's another $20 bill. And it's pleasurable at first. But then I want it to stop, and I can't. Do you have any idea what that might mean?

(a long beat)
You sound just like my father.

CUT TO:

EXT. EVENING. STEMPEL APARTMENT.

Goodwin rings the bell. Toby answers, WORRY on her brow.

GOODWIN
Hello. Is Herb around? (reacting)
What's the matter?

Lester emerges from the shadows. With a vivid BLACK EYE.

CUT TO:

EXT. EVENING. FOREST HILLS.

Herbie RAGES outside a neighbor's home. A CROWD gathered around him.

HERBIE
Come on, you son of a bitch! Take responsibility for your degenerate son.

The NEIGHBOR, a brute in an undershirt, appears at the upstairs window. Scratches under his arm.

NEIGHBOR
Drop dead.

He slams the window shut.

HERBIE
'Drop dead'. That's very articulate. (gesturing) Darwin disapproved, ladies and gentlemen!

The window opens. The Neighbor leans out.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

NEIGHBOR
(sneering)
'Marty!' 'Marty'!

GOODWIN

fights through the crowd. Herbie hustles up to the doorbell. Leans on it. Hustles back down and resumes his siege.

HERBIE
You think you can just move into this neighborhood and launch a pogrom?

GOODWIN
Herb, what happened?

HERBIE
What? (sees Goodwin) Hey! You know who's here? The United States Congress is here!

GOODWIN
Would you tell me what happened?

HERBIE
Get up there. Subpoena him, that son of a bitch.

Herbie shoves Goodwin toward the door.

THE WINDOW OPENS

and the Neighbor emerges again.

HERBIE
Say hello to the United States Congress, putz.

NEIGHBOR
Listen, asshole, you have--

HIS TOUPEE

as it falls off, lands softly. Herbie runs, GRABS it.

HERBIE
Rapunzel!

NEIGHBOR
Leave that alone!

HERBIE
Come down and get it.

(CONTINUED)
Herbie plants the toupee firmly on his own head.

THE NEIGHBOR DISAPPEARS

from the window...Heading down...Herbie turns to Goodwin.

HERBIE

Wait'll he discovers the wrath
of the American people as
delivered by their elected
representatives.

GOODWIN

What happened to Lester?

HERBIE

Did you see? Did you see what his
son did to my son?

THE DOOR OPENS

and the Neighbor emerges.

NEIGHBOR

Gimme it back.

HERBIE

His son called my son a kike,
okay? I don't have to take that.
In my own neighborhood?

NEIGHBOR

My son takes it back. I'm calling
you a kike.

HERBIE

A kike? You who couldn't spell
kike are calling me kike?

NEIGHBOR

I call and am calling you kike.

HERBIE

(to Goodwin)
Go ahead. Subpoena him.

GOODWIN

Will you please stop?

HERBIE

Subpoena him! Go ahead!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Herbie shoves Goodwin toward the Neighbor. The Neighbor shoves him back. Goodwin staggers, regains his balance. The Neighbor grabs at the toupee. A tug of war...

HERBIE
Do you know who this is?

NEIGHBOR
Another fucking kike.

Goodwin rears... Balls his fist...

SMACKS THE NEIGHBOR

The Neighbor staggers back... Then VOLLEYS back with a left hook... Herbie jumps him. Others jump in...

A MELEE

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STEMPEL APARTMENT--KITCHEN.

Morose, Goodwin holds an icebag on his head. Elated, Herbie holds a steak on his eye.

HERBIE
That was some shot you gave him. I can even forgive you for not giving him the subpoena.

GOODWIN
(ironic)
I'm glad I could help out.

HERBIE
Did you see that one I gave him? That hook?

GOODWIN
I may have missed it.

HERBIE
You think he has maybe some ringing in his ear? He'll be answering the phone for a week. (gesturing) 'Hello?' 'Hello?' Guys like you and me-- he's never seen guys like you and me.

GOODWIN
Herb... I spoke to Dan Enright.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
That's a big waste of time. When are you gonna talk to Van Doren? You owe me, you know. Who do you think tipped the Daily News?

Goodwin starts to say something. Decides against it.

HERBIE
Enright--what, did he play that tape for you? He tried to scare me off with that, that prick. Listen to me--like I'm shocked. If the man had one ounce of ethics they'd throw him out of the producer's union.

GOODWIN
He implied that he might leak it to the press.

HERBIE
That'd be just like him--to wait till I'm forgotten and then smear me back into the public eye.

GOODWIN
Is there anyone who can corroborate your story? Any concrete evidence?

HERBIE
Just talk to Van Doren. WASPs--they can't even help it, they're congenital liars. Ask Van Doren what day it is and he'll lie to you just for practice.

GOODWIN
This isn't about Van Doren, Herb.

HERBIE
You think it isn't, but it is. Trust me. Go. Enough with the ice. Go up to Columbia--I'm sure he's there right now. Go!

Herbie grabs the ice bag out of Goodwin's hand, throws it in the sink. PULLS him by the shirt up out of his chair. Goodwin BLOWS. Knocks Herbie's hand away.

GOODWIN
Cut it out! Stop. Just stop.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

HERBIE
Don’t think I don’t see what you’re doing. You’re going to build this great case against me. A pile of evidence, an army of witnesses—yes, indeed, Herb Stempel got the answers. And meanwhile you and Van Doren are off giving each other the secret Ivy League handshake.

GOODWIN
You didn’t say those things?

HERBIE
I fell for the same bullshit, okay? I thought I had some stake in the system.

GOODWIN
He’s not paying your psychiatrist’s bills?

HERBIE
Wait a minute—who do you believe here?

GOODWIN
I believe you, Herb. But frankly, you’re a lousy witness.

Herbie, deflated, looks out the window...

HERBIE
It’s gonna change, you know. Magnetism. What’s attractive. What’s sexy. What’s ‘in’. You think I’m wrong? I’m never wrong—that’s my curse. Every movie, every magazine, it’s gonna be short, annoying Jewish guys with big noses and a lot of hair on their backs. And Italians. You think I’m kidding? Guys like you and me—we’re just ahead of our time.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. NBC.

Freedman hands Charlie a MANILA ENVELOPE with the answers.

(CONTINUED)
FREEDMAN
Here you go, Professor.

CHARLIE
I was thinking, Al--if it's okay--I was thinking that I'd prefer it from now on if you just give me the questions. And then I could look up the answers on my own.

FREEDMAN
Just give you the questions.

CHARLIE
Then I look up the answers myself. It's, don't you think--well, less egregious?

Freedman takes the envelope back.

FREEDMAN
Took the words right out of my mouth.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HALLWAY--NBC.

Charlie heads down the hall. Runs into Goodwin as he emerges from a STORAGE ROOM, his arms laden with BOXES--filled with KINESCOPES and files. Two JANITORS follow with more boxes.

CHARLIE
Oh, hi, Dick.

GOODWIN
Charlie. (off boxes) Nothing like a subpoena.

Goodwin continues down the hall. Charlie broods a beat.

CHARLIE
(after him)
Hey! See you tomorrow!

CUT TO:
INT. LATER. HOTEL ROOM.

Goodwin watches a KINESCOPE on the wall. An old "21" episode. A 16mm PROJECTOR whirs on a table. File boxes and film cans piled around the room.

GOODWIN
They want me to think Herbie's crazy. He's no more crazy than my Uncle Harold.

SANDRA
Your Uncle Harold's crazy, Dick. He made a pass at me at our wedding.

GOODWIN
Then why is it? Why is it I still believe him?

SANDRA
I know what your mother would say.

GOODWIN
What?

SANDRA
You take after your Uncle Harold.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HOTEL ROOM.

A tired Goodwin boxes a KINESCOPE. Threads a new one through the projector. Snaps it ON.

ON THE WALL

as the projector clickety-clacks and Goodwin adjusts the focus--Stempel faces JAMES SNODGRASS, a Greenwich Village ARTIST in his late 20s. Barry introduces him.

BARRY (O.C.)
And James Snodgrass--you're an artist by profession?

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
That's right, Jack. A painter.

BARRY (O.C.)
Well, fellows--what do you say? Let's play '21'!

(CONTINUED)
as he pours himself a cup of coffee. Boxes of FILES stacked around the room.

ON THE WALL

as Barry launches into his first question.

BARRY (O.C.)
Jim, I'll read you lines from four
of America's greatest poets.
First, 'I hear America
singing--the very carols I hear'.

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
That would be Walt Whitman.

BARRY (O.C.)
That's right. Second: 'I shot an
arrow in the air...'

GOODWIN WATCHES

rubs his tired eyes. Pours himself more COFFEE.

BARRY (O.C.)
Finally, 'Hope is the thing with
feathers--that perches in the
soul'.

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
'Hope is the thing with
feathers--that perches in the
soul'.

BARRY (O.C.)
Would you like more time?

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
No. That's Emily Dickinson.

BARRY (O.C.)
I'm... (doubletake) Emily
Dickinson?

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
She's one of my favorite poets.

ANGLE ON--GOODWIN

as he sees the doubletake. Sits up and takes notice.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:  (2)

BARRY (O.C.)
Ho! Well, yes! All right, Jim--you
couldn't get off to a better
start--

Goodwin fumbles with the projector. REWINDS the film.

ON THE WALL

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
Emily Dickinson.

BARRY (O.C.)
I'm... (doubletake) Emily
Dickinson?

BACK ON--GOODWIN

Excited now, he rewinds the film again.

ON THE WALL

BARRY (O.C.)
I'm... (doubletake) Emily
Dickinson?

SNODGRASS (O.C.)
She's one of my favorite poets.

Goodwin grabs the phone. Dials "Information".

GOODWIN
I need an address for a James
Snodgrass. Try Greenwich Village.

BARRY (O.C.)
Ho! Well, yes! All right,
Jim--you're off to a veritable
flying start, and we'll get back
to you after this word about
another of our fine products.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT EVENING. CAR.

Goodwin and Charlie zoom up Park Avenue, top down, hair whipping
in the summer wind.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
Guys like you and me, Dick--the way American society is today--it's so hard to find a way to stand out. Nothing seems to be enough. The irony is, I sometimes think a volume of Keats and a room full of freshmen is all I really need.

Charlie drives a beat. Then turns to Goodwin with a smile.

CHARLIE
So what do you think of the car?

WIDER

revealing Charlie's brand-new RED MERCEDES 190--the one Goodwin saw earlier. A traffic light turns RED as Charlie BLASTS through it...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT.

CASH

as it's thrown into the middle of a table. A thunderhead of tobacco smoke. Goodwin plays SEVEN-CARD STUD with Charlie and four well-bred WASP buddies: FRED, GENE, JACK, and TREY.

GENE
...Fold.

TREY
Fold.

GOODWIN
(to Trey)
Nice home you have here.

CHARLIE
(aside)
We don't say 'home'--we say 'house'.

FRED
Bet five.

GOODWIN
Raise a dollar.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
You’d better watch out, Fred.
Dick’s one of the brightest young
lawyers down in Washington.

FRED
Great. All my money already goes
to Washington.

JACK
I’m out.

FRED
Taxes—it’s nothing but organized
theft.

GOODWIN
(correcting him)
Property.

FRED
What?

GOODWIN
‘Property is theft’—I believe
that’s the locus classicus. From
Proudhon.

CHARLIE
(to Fred)
I warned you.

GENE
Great. Another one.

The betting concludes...Jack deals the next round...

JACK
(looks at cards)
What’re you working on there,
Charlie?

Charlie looks at his cards, smiles.

CHARLIE
Raise five dollars.

Goodwin and Charlie lock gazes. Goodwin throws in another five.
Fred thinks, throws in another five.

FRED
I’d love to know what you have
under there, Charlie.

(Continued)
Jack deals another round...

CHARLIE
The truth has its price.

FRED
Everything has its price.

TREY
So where'd you prep, Dick?

Silence. They all look at Goodwin. He STAMMERS...

CHARLIE
Dick's up here on a witchhunt.
He thinks '21' is fixed, and I'm getting the answers beforehand.

GOODWIN
Are you?

Everyone starts to laugh.

GENE
Try him.

TREY
(mimics Charlie)
I'll take nine, nine points.

GENE
Name the first five Vice Presidents.

CHARLIE

GENE
Which face cards are in profile? Without looking.

CHARLIE
Jack of Spades. King of Diamonds. And Jack of Hearts.

TREY
Who's the King of Belgium?

FRED
Joseph Belgium.

(Continued)
CHARLIE
It's Baudouin. King Baudouin.

GENE
Bo who?

CHARLIE
B-A-U-D-O-U-I-N.

GOODWIN
The night Lincoln was shot—who was the doctor at his deathbed, who embalmed him, and who was the detective on the case?

JACK
Could we have a card game here? It's bad enough my wife makes me watch this bullshit.

CHARLIE
The detective was Clarvoe, John Alexander Clarvoe...James Hall was the doctor. And he was embalmed—who embalmed him? Cattell, Henry or Harry—Henry Cattell embalmed him.

FRED
And then he got murdered with estate taxes.

GENE
I'm impressed. You're not impressed?

Charlie smiles at Goodwin. Takes out his wallet. Pulls out a FIFTY-DOLLAR BILL. Slides it onto the table.

FRED
(folding)
Now I'm impressed.

GENE
Go ahead. Dick—call him.

Goodwin looks at Charlie. Looks at the fifty.

CHARLIE
What do you say, Dick?

Goodwin thinks a beat. Folds up his cards.

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
Too rich for my blood.

JACK
Try Geritol.

TREY
Sandwich time.

Everyone heads to the kitchen, leaving Goodwin and Charlie. Fred slaps Goodwin on the back.

FRED
(to Goodwin)
'Property is theft'...maybe we should investigate you.

Charlie smiles enigmatically as he rakes in the money... Goodwin looks Charlie in the eye.

GOODWIN
I know you're lying.

CHARLIE
'Bluffing', Dick--the term is 'bluffing'.

GOODWIN
Charlie...I know you're lying.

They exchange a long look.

CHARLIE
I'm sorry you feel that way, Dick.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. HOTEL.

Goodwin talks on the phone to Sandra.

GOODWIN
I hope you're satisfied.

SANDRA
I thought you had something.

GOODWIN
He knows I have something, and he still denied it. Now what does that tell you?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SANDRA
What?

GOODWIN
Stempel got the answers because they were trying to create Van Doren. Then they got the real Van Doren. Stempel is Frankenstein.

SANDRA
It just doesn’t make any sense.

GOODWIN
That’s the last poker game I get invited to.

CUT TO:

EXT. LATER THAT WEEK. RCA BUILDING.

The frantic AUDIENCE throngs toward the doors, held by struggling USHERS. Goodwin fights toward the door...

USHER #1
The hell with it--let ‘em in.

The Ushers drop the ropes...The crowd SURGES forward, carrying Goodwin along...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. "21" SET.

An atmosphere ELECTRIC with anticipation. TECHNICIANS adjust lights, test microphones. The ORCHESTRA tunes up.

VIVIENNE NEARING, 30s, the attractive CHALLENGER, sits nervously tearing a Kleenex. Barry approaches.

BARRY
Mrs. Nearing? I’m Jack Barry.
Welcome aboard.

She jumps up. The pieces of Kleenex SCATTER. Barry kneels to pick them up. A MAKE-UP ARTIST approaches Mrs. Nearing.

MAKE-UP ARTIST
You’re a little shiny on the monitor, ma’am.

(CONTINUED)
While the Make-Up Artist dabs with a powder puff, Barry looks up Mrs. Nearing's skirt.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. CONTROL ROOM.

Appalled, Enright watches Barry on the MONITOR. Charlie paces. Freedman leans back on a swivel chair.

FREEDMAN
...He's bluffing.

CHARLIE
'I know you're lying'. Those were his words.

FREEDMAN
I grew up with guys like him. He's a *noodzh*.

CHARLIE
He may be a *noodzh*, but he was also first in his class at Harvard Law School.

Freedman dismisses this with a masturbating gesture.

CHARLIE
Will you please stop that?

ENRIGHT
Charlie, you have to look at this analytically. We know he's spoken to Stempel. At best he's found another contestant who's told him a similar story.

CHARLIE
How many people did you give the answers to?

ENRIGHT
That's not the point.

CHARLIE
I want to know. Did anybody play this game straight?

ENRIGHT
We have 17 contestants who swore their innocence to the grand jury.

(continued)
ENRIGHT (Cont'd)
If they change that story, they'd go to jail for perjury.

CHARLIE
Maybe I should just tell the truth.

ENRIGHT
You'll set back education in this country 50 years! Do you want that blood on your hands?

CHARLIE
I just had no idea it would go this far.

ENRIGHT
Charlie, the only people who can implicate you directly are all in this room. Think about that.

FREEDMAN
Thank you, Dan. (to Charlie) You think that noozh is gonna get me to talk?

CHARLIE
No. I suppose you're right.

FREEDMAN
They could kill me, I wouldn't talk. They could submit me to any kind of torture...ah...ah...

CHARLIE
(helpfully)
The rack.

FREEDMAN
They could put me on the rack.

CHARLIE
The Iron Maiden.

FREEDMAN
Whatever.

CHARLIE
The bastinado. The capucha. Boiling in oil. Running the gauntlet...

(CONTINUED)
FREEDMAN
I'm not telling them a fucking thing. Correct me, Dan, if I'm wrong.

ENRIGHT
You're Charles Van Doren. Remember that. It's their word against yours.

FREEDMAN
They took a vote in this country--they'd put you on the dollar bill.

CHARLIE
Oh great.

ENRIGHT

FREEDMAN
Plus what did you do wrong? Everybody knows the magician don't saw the lady in half.

CHARLIE
It's hardly the same thing.

FREEDMAN
It's entertainment.

CHARLIE
I am a college professor!

A KNOCK, and an NBC PAGE enters.

NBC PAGE
They need the professor in makeup.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. BAR.

Herbie watches '21' with two BARFLIES.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
...returning with $143,000, from New York City, Charles Van Doren!

(CONTINUED)
89 INT. SAME TIME. '21' SET.

Barry asks the first question.

BARry (reading)
At the same time as the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese also attacked these three Pacific Islands. Name them.

MRS. NEARING
Midway, Wake, and Guam.

BARry
Correct for eight points!

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

Freedman triggers the "APPLAUSE" sign. An NBC PAGE ushers Goodwin inside.

NBC PAGE
Mr. Enright?

ENRIGHT
Can't this wait?

GOODWIN
I don't think so.

Enright gives his headphones to Freedman. Leads Goodwin out.

CUT TO:

90 INT. NIGHT. VAN DOREN HOME--CORNWALL.

Dorothy wrings her hands beside her bored husband.

BARRY (O.C.)
...the P-40, the P-47, the P-51, the B-24, the B-25 and the B-26. Give me the nicknames that the Air Force gave to these planes.

DOROTHY
Why, that's much harder than the question they asked that woman--and hers was ten points. Do you know the names of those planes?

THE PROFESSOR
Of course not.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DOROTHY
Who would know the names of those planes? He's not the Secretary of Defense.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. ENRIGHT'S OFFICE.
Enright gestures to a seat, closes the door.

ENRIGHT
Mr. Goodwin, you're a very disruptive young man.

GOODWIN
Do you remember James Snodgrass? He was a contestant on your show.

ENRIGHT
A bohemian type, wasn't he? Al digs these people up. I don't know where he finds them.

GOODWIN
'Hope is the thing with feathers. That perches in the soul...'

ENRIGHT
Thanks for the fortune--where's the cookie?

GOODWIN
That's the first line of a poem by Emily Dickinson. You told James Snodgrass to identify the author, incorrectly, as Ralph Waldo Emerson.

ENRIGHT
Mr. Goodwin--between Herb and now the ravings of this Greenwich Village beatnik--

GOODWIN
He's a beatnik? Why? Because he's not Charles Van Doren?

ENRIGHT
You're damn right he's not Charles Van Doren.

(more)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARFLY #1
I got one for you. Name the guy that lost to Van Doren.

BARFLY #2
Gee. I don't remember. Who the hell was that?

ON THE TELEVISION
as the show begins...

BARRY (O.C.)
Well, Charlie, what do you think of Mrs. Nearing?

CHARLIE (O.C.)
She's quite terrifying.

BARRY (O.C.)
Quite a bean inside that pretty head, huh?

BACK ON--HERBIE
as he starts to THRILL...

HERBIE
(to himself)
Goodwin got something. He's taking a dive.

Herbie hustles to a PHONE BOOTH in back. Dials.

HERBIE
(to phone)
I have a bet for you.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. '21' SET.
Freedman and Enright watch Charlie on the monitors.

FREEDMAN
You don't think Charlie'd--you don't think he'd blow the whole thing, do you?

FREEDMAN
Get Garroway.

CUT TO:
ENRIGHT (Cont'd)
(resuming) Without a single shred of concrete evidence—these unsubstantiated crackpot allegations—

Goodwin reaches into his jacket pocket. Pulls out AN ENVELOPE

GOODWIN
Inside this envelope are all the questions James Snodgrass was asked on '21'. What's odd is that he appeared on the show on May 13th. And he mailed this letter to himself on May 11th. Registered mail. Now I'd say that's pretty goddam concrete.

Enright draws on his cigarette.

ENRIGHT
I don't suppose you'd be interested in your own panel show.

Goodwin gets up. Moves to the door.

GOODWIN
Think about testifying against the network.

ENRIGHT
What about Van Doren? You don't have anything on Van Doren.

GOODWIN
It's over, Dan.

ENRIGHT
Never underestimate the American public.

CUT TO:

92 INT. LATER. '21' SET.

Barry talks to camera.

BARRY
...As we enter our final round, Mrs.

(continued)
CONTINUED:

BARRY (Cont'd)
Nearing leads by a score of 20
to 16. It is the moment of truth,
as it were, for Professor Charles
Van Doren...

IN THE ISOLATION BOOTH

Charlie alone with the sound of his own breathing, his pulse
loud in his ears...

BACK ON--BARRY

as he continues...

BARRY (O.C.)
...after a record-breaking 14
weeks...

INSIDE THE BOOTH

Charlie looks out from his plexiglas cage. His watch
TICKING...His heart pounds louder...WHAM! WHAM! WHAM!

BACK ON--BARRY

as he hits a button...

BARRY
Mrs. Nearing?

MRS. NEARING

Yes?

BARRY
We're going to let you listen in
on this last round.

INSIDE THE BOOTH

as the noise in Charlie's head CRESCENDoes, breath roaring, his
heartbeat like tympani...The Intercom CRACKLES on.

BARRY
The category is royalty.

CHARLIE
Royalty. Well, let's see. I'll
take five, five points. That would
get me to 21.

IN THE BALCONY

Goodwin arrives. Takes his seat in the audience...

(CONTINUED)
BARRY
(reading)
Name the Kings of the following countries: Norway, Sweden, Belgium, and Iraq.

CHARLIE
Could I take the third part last?

MRS. NEARING
listens nervously in her booth...

CHARLIE
Norway, that would be Haakon, King Haakon.

BARRY
That's right.

CHARLIE
Sweden--that's Gustavus.

BARRY
The King of Iraq?

CHARLIE
I believe that's his grandfather who's portrayed in that wonderful book, 'The Seven Pillars of Wisdom'. (beat) Faisal! King Faisal.

BARRY
And Belgium?

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

FAMILIES crowd anxiously around the TV...NUNS tug at their rosaries...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. MOVIE THEATER.

People on the edge of their seats...

CUT TO:
INT. SAME TIME. PARK AVENUE.
Charlie's buddies and their wives, frozen in anticipation...

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. GOODWIN HOME.
Sandra eats Chinese food on the bed. Lifting a shrimp to her mouth with her chopsticks, she FREEZES...

CUT TO:

EXT. SAME TIME. OFFICIAL BUILDING
A sign reads: "CONSULATE OF BELGIUM"

INSIDE
The STAFF of the Belgian consulate crowd around a small TV...

CHARLIE (O.C.)
Belgium...Belgium...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. CONTROL ROOM.
A pensive Enright returns. Freedman stares at the monitors.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
It seems like an easy one...

BARRY (O.C.)
Would you like more time?

CHARLIE (O.C.)
If I could, please.

FREEDMAN
That son of a bitch--he's gonna dump it.

The "suspense" music BUILDS...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. SPONSOR'S APARTMENT.
The Sponsor and Kintner look at each other...

CUT TO:
100 INT. SAME TIME. BAR.
Herbie watches at the bar, EDGY...

CUT TO:

101 INT. NIGHT. '21' SET.
Charlie tucked inside himself...Looks up.
GOODWIN
watches from the balcony...

CHARLIE
Leopold?

BARRY
No. I'm sorry. It's Baudouin, King Baudouin.
The audience GASPS. Charlie folds--like he's been gutshot...
CLOSE ON--CHARLIE
his face turned away from the audience. As he SMILES.
CLOSE ON--GOODWIN
Now he knows...

CUT TO:

102 INT. SAME TIME. SPONSOR'S HOME.
The Sponsor turns to Kintner.

SPONSOR
How the hell did that happen?

CUT TO:

103 INT. SAME TIME. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT.
Trey turns to the others.

TREY
How could he miss that? Remember?
I asked him that the other night--at the poker game.

CUT TO:
INT. SAME TIME. VAN DOREN HOME.

BARRY (O.C.)
Mrs. Nearing, you are our new champion with $8,000!

Dorothy, crestfallen, turns off the TV. Turns to The Professor. Who's sound ASLEEP. She NUDGES him awake.

THE PROFESSOR
What? What happened?

DOROTHY
Charlie lost.

THE PROFESSOR
Oh. (beat) What was the question?

DOROTHY
Who's the King of Belgium.

The Professor gets up.

THE PROFESSOR
Who cares who the King of Belgium is besides the Queen of Belgium?

DOROTHY
That isn't the point.

THE PROFESSOR
Some overbred bore with a Hapsburg lip. You want a glass of milk?

DOROTHY
Mark Van Doren--

THE PROFESSOR
Mother, please--it's a quiz show. It's not as if it were something that really mattered.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. '21' SET.

As Mrs. Nearing and Charlie approach the lectern, Barry notices someone in the audience.

BARRY
Ho! Who is that over there in our studio audience?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

A SPOTLIGHT

sweeps over the audience. Lands on DAVE GARROWAY.

BARRY
Is that Dave Garroway? Dave
Garroway of the NBC Today Show,
ladies and gentlemen!

Charlie, PUZZLED, looks out toward the audience.

THE APPLAUSE SIGN

spurs a cheer as Garroway bounces up onto the stage...Shakes
hands with Barry and Charlie...

GARROWAY

Charlie--I'll admit this has all
happened rather suddenly,
but--you've become like a friend,
a wonderful visitor to millions
of homes all across America.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Dave. I just think I'm
going to enjoy some peace and
quiet now, and a chance to get
back to my books--

GARROWAY

We at the NBC Today Show would
like you to be our special
cultural correspondent--our
Ambassador from the land of
culture and learning to the people
and the schoolchildren of
America...

CHARLIE

Well, I hope you're not firing
the monkey.

GARROWAY

...at a salary of $50,000 a year.

He takes out a CONTRACT with a flourish. Charlie gapes at it.

FROM THE BALCONY

GOODWIN
(mutters)

Turn it down--you don't need it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BACK ON--CHARLIE

GARROWAY
It's the world's biggest classroom. Professor. Just sign
on the dotted line.

Garroway hands Charlie a pen. Charlie takes it. And SIGNS.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. BOOKIE JOINT.

The BOOKIE, tough, 40s, counts out a stack of bills.

HERBIE
Put them all the same way. So
they're facing the same way.

The Bookie glowers at Herbie. Reverses the bill. Continues...

BOOKIE
You knew something, didn't you?

HERBIE
No. It was, you know, a hunch--it
was just a hunch.

BOOKIE
Just a hunch. A $10,000 hunch.

HERBIE
Don't blame me. You want to break
somebody's legs, break Van Doren's
legs. (beat) I mean, you know,
not--maybe one leg.

The Bookie finishes counting. Hands Herbie the cash.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING. CHARLIE'S TOWNHOUSE.

Goodwin rings the doorbell. Charlie answers in a bathrobe.

GOODWIN
Hello, Charlie.

(CONTINUED)
107 CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
Oh, hello, Dick. Would you like
to come in?

CUT TO:

108 INT. MORNING. CHARLIE'S TOWNHOUSE.

Charlie and Goodwin enter the living room. No furniture. BOXES
full of books, yet to be unpacked. And a gigantic TELEVISION.

CHARLIE
Excuse the robe. Last night was
the first decent night's sleep
I've had in months.

GOODWIN
Nice place you have here.

CHARLIE
I haven't had the chance to
furnish it.

GOODWIN
(off television)
Just the essentials.

CHARLIE
God knows when I'll get to this
now, with this Today Show--did
you watch last night?

GOODWIN
Congratulations. 'The world's
biggest classroom'.

CHARLIE
Well, it's the world's biggest
something. Would you like a cup
of coffee?

Charlie goes into the kitchen.

GOODWIN
Just like Herbie.

Charlie ducks back out.

CHARLIE
Excuse me?

GOODWIN
'King Baudouin'.

(CONTINUED)
Continued:

Charlie

Oh. That. You know, apparently
the Belgian Consulate has formally
protested my ignorance.

Charlie returns to the kitchen. Makes two cups of coffee...

Goodwin

I was just thinking it's just like
Herbie. You lost on one you knew.

In the Kitchen

Charlie stops. Thinks.

Charlie

How do you like it, Dick? You seem
like a black coffee man.

Goodwin enters. Charlie hands him a cup of coffee.

Goodwin

The other night, Charlie. At the
poker game. Trey asked you to name
the King of Belgium and you nailed
it. You even spelled it right.

Charlie

Oh, dear--you know, you're right!
How could that've slipped my mind?

Goodwin

For Chrissakes, Charlie--I'm not
after you. I'm not gonna call you
to testify. I'm even glad that
a real intellectual made some
money off this crazy scheme. I
just want to hear you say it.
It didn't 'slip your mind'--you
took a dive.

Charlie takes his coffee cup. Flees into the living room.

Charlie

You people are so persistent.

Goodwin follows after him.

Goodwin

Why the hell did you do it?

Charlie

Please, Dick--I'm Charles Van
Doren, I can't--

(continued)
GOODWIN
You'll feel better. For yourself--just admit it to one other person.

Charlie looks at Goodwin.

CHARLIE
You know, Dick, the poets used to say the stag loves the hunter who kills it.

Goodwin gives up. Puts his coffee cup on the TV.

GOODWIN
Do me a favor. If anybody should ask you about the quiz shows--don't make any kind of a public statement. Don't hold a press conference. Because then I'll have to call you.

CHARLIE
Okay, Dick. Fair enough.

GOODWIN
Goodbye, Charlie.

Goodwin moves to the door. Charlie calls to him.

CHARLIE
If you ever need a place to stay when you're in New York--well, I'm all alone here.

GOODWIN
I've hunted stag, Charlie, with my uncle, up in Maine. I don't think there's much affection either way.

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. WAITING ROOM.

Goodwin sits under the peacock. Checks his watch. Gets up.

SECRETARY
Mr. Kintner apologizes, he's unavailable.

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
I'm going back to Washington today. He can reach me at the committee.

SECRETARY
He'll know what this is in reference to?

GOODWIN
Tell him to read the papers.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE
Spinning headlines:

Daily News: HOUSE SIFTS TV QUIZ FIX

World Telegram: THE $64,000 ANSWER: HOAX!

Journal American: QUIZ HEARINGS ANNOUNCED

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. STEMPPEL APARTMENT.

REPORTER #1 talks on the phone to his editor.

REPORTER #1
...Stempel. (covers phone) Is it Stempel E-L or L-E? (to phone)
I think it's E-L.

Three other REPORTERS surround Herbie. Toby pours coffee. Sounds of Lester drumming inside. The doorbell RINGS.

HERBIE
You know, it's very amusing to me that all you bums are knocking on my door now. I gave you this story six months ago.

REPORTER #2
Mrs. Stempel, you have any baby pictures of Herb we could use?

The doorbell rings again. Toby EXITS toward the door...

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

REPORTER #1
(to Herbie)
Do you think you could ask the kid to stop for five minutes?

HERBIE
Why don’t you interview him?
Lester, L-E-S-T-E-R. It’s a good human interest angle.

REPORTER #4
How’d all this start?

HERBIE
I was babysitting for my son. Enright came to see me. He sat right in that kitchen and he said, ‘How’d you like to make $25,000?’ And I said, ‘Who wouldn’t?’

Toby returns with REPORTER #5.

REPORTER #5
How’s it feel to be the center of all this attention?

REPORTER #2
Get in line.

REPORTER #4
(reading)
‘How’d you like to make $25,000?’ And you said, ‘Who wouldn’t?’

Toby senses the mood changing...

TOBY
I’m gonna go look for the baby pictures.

She exits.

HERBIE
In retrospect... I mean, look at Van Doren... I should’ve held out for a lot more.

REPORTER #4
What does Van Doren have to do with it? You prostituted your name, your intellectual ability, for money.

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
You're missing the story.

REPORTER #4
You pulled a con job on the American people.

HERBIE

REPORTER #2
Can you prove it?

HERBIE
I don't have to prove it anymore. That goddam pious hypocrite—let's see him lie to the United States Congress.

REPORTER #5
I just spoke to the committee. They're not calling him.

CUT TO:

111 EXT. SAME TIME. GOODWIN HOME.

Goodwin reads the paper. Sandra moves around the kitchen.

SANDRA
You're gonna do a quiz show hearing without Charles Van Doren?

GOODWIN
Van Doren's story is the same as Herbie's, the same as Snodgrass.

SANDRA
He admits it?

GOODWIN
I'm saying even if he admits it, he doesn't add anything.

SANDRA
What'll you do when he makes a statement proclaiming his innocence?

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
He’s not going to do that.

SANDRA
You’re going to look like a jerk.

GOODWIN
Why would he do that? I told him to keep his mouth shut.

SANDRA
I still don’t know why he’s not going to testify.

GOODWIN
I just told you why. The hearings are circumscribed by legislative purpose. The legislative purpose is to reform television, not to reform Charles Van Doren.

SANDRA
Don’t patronize me.

GOODWIN
I wouldn’t patronize you if you’d pay attention. It’s the same as the Barenblatt and Sweezy cases, when I was at The Court.

SANDRA
If you don’t want to answer, just don’t answer. Don’t give me a lot of legal bullshit.

GOODWIN
I don’t see any need to drag the man into the spotlight and ridicule him.

SANDRA
You’re dragging Herb Stempel into the spotlight.

GOODWIN
Herbie doesn’t need to be dragged into the spotlight, believe me.

SANDRA
Nobody forced Van Doren to go in front of 50 million people either.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

GOODWIN
At least he has the good sense to keep his mouth shut.

SANDRA
Good sense or good breeding?

GOODWIN
Oh, for crying out loud. He made a mistake.

SANDRA
You know, Dick, you’re ten times the guy Charles Van Doren is, ten times the brain, ten times the human being, and meanwhile you’re the one bending over backwards for him. You’re like the Uncle Tom of the Jews.

GOODWIN
I’m glad it’s so easy for you to destroy a man’s life. I’ll keep it in mind.

SANDRA
Quiz show hearings without Van Doren—it’s like doing ‘Hamlet’ without Hamlet.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. LE CIRQUE.

Charlie arrives with his parents in tow. The MAITRE D’ fawns all over Charlie.

MAITRE D’
Welcome, Professor Van Doren!
(to Waiter)
Professor Van Doren’s table.  
(to The Professor)
Yes?

THE PROFESSOR
I’m also Professor Van Doren.

CHARLIE
Three tonight.

The Professor scowls as the Maitre D’ ushers them inside.

CUT TO:
INT. LATER. LE CIRQUE.

Charlie, Dorothy and The Professor sit over their meal.

DOROTHY
Look at your plate,
Charlie—you’re hardly eating.
It’s as bad as when you were on
that quiz show. You’d come over
for dinner and just push a pea
around your plate.

THE PROFESSOR
Maybe it was your cooking.

DOROTHY
‘How ill white hairs become a fool
and jester!’

CHARLIE
Henry IV Part 2.

THE PROFESSOR
‘O curse of marriage! That we can
call these delicate creatures
ours’.

CHARLIE
Othello.

Dorothy cuts off a piece of veal from her plate. Gestures to the
Professor.

DOROTHY
Take some of this veal, Professor.
I can’t finish this.
(resuming)
Not that we saw you that often.
I don’t think we had dinner
together three times in all the
months you were on that show.

CHARLIE
‘Uneasy lies the head that wears
the crown’.

THE PROFESSOR
‘Some rise by sin, and some by
virtue fall’.

CHARLIE
Measure for Measure. ‘What! must
I hold a candle to my shames?’

THE PROFESSOR
The Merchant of Venice.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
Mother, pass the pepper.

THE PROFESSOR
'O! what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!'

CHARLIE
_Much Ado About Nothing._ 'I am a man more sinned against than sinning'.

THE PROFESSOR
_Lear._ 'The wheel is come full circle'.

CHARLIE
Also _Lear._ 'What's gone and what's past help/ Should be past grief'.

THE PROFESSOR
_The Winter's Tale._

DOROTHY
Is something going on?

CHARLIE
It's just a game, Mother.

DOROTHY
Oh! Professor! Did you remember to give Charlie that letter?

THE PROFESSOR
Oh, yes. You got a letter sent to you up in Cornwall—it was addressed to Professor Van Doren, I opened it by mistake.

The Professor pulls out an envelope. Hands it to Charlie.

DOROTHY
It's probably another one of those mash notes. Read it aloud.

THE PROFESSOR
It's personal.

DOROTHY
Especially if it's personal.

As Charlie reads, he starts to TREMBLE with rage...

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
(reads aloud)
Dear Professor Van Doren, I am a great admirer of yours. The only way you will be able to live with yourself is to admit what you did—openly, clearly, and truly—as painful as that might be. You must remember that you are a Van Doren. Signed, A Friend.

DOROTHY
Admit what? What’s he talking about?

CHARLIE
(to the Professor)
You wrote this, didn’t you?

THE PROFESSOR
(blank)
It was in the mail.

CHARLIE
If you have something to say to me, why don’t you just say it, goddamit!

DOROTHY
Charlie!

CHARLIE
Why don’t you admit what you’re really thinking—that you’re thrilled!

THE PROFESSOR
I will not sit here while you make a scene in front of your mother.

CHARLIE
Oh, come off it, Dad.

THE PROFESSOR
I don’t know what you’re talking about, Charlie—it was in the mailbox!

CHARLIE
(right back)
There’s no goddam postmark!

(CONTINUED)
Charlie storms out. Patrons and waiters gape at him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STEMPPEL APARTMENT.

In the bedroom, Toby packs a bag for Herbie. He sits on the radiator, broods out the window, through the curtains.

TOBY
How long are you gonna be gone?
Just overnight?

HERBIE
Pack me two nights just in case.
After I tell my story--you never know--Eisenhower might want to see me.

She lays neckties out on the bed.

TOBY
Which suit do you want?

HERBIE
The sharkskin. Not that tie--the television tie.

TOBY
You sure you're doing the right thing?

HERBIE
Of course I'm doing the right thing.

TOBY
I just hope everyone doesn't hate you.

HERBIE
They're not gonna hate me.

TOBY
Herbie, you're gonna go up there in front of 50 million people and tell them they're so stupid they could watch that show week after week and never for a second think you were pulling something on them.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HERBIE
They're not gonna hate me—I'm telling the truth!

TOBY
I'm your wife that loves you and I feel like a jerk.

HERBIE
What am I supposed to do—am I supposed to just take it and take it and take it? They made me lose on 'Marty'. I'm supposed to take it.

TOBY
I just don't know what you're gonna accomplish.

HERBIE
I'll tell you what. I'm going down to Washington and if I do nothing else I will convince them that Herbert Stempel knows what won the goddam Academy Award for Best goddam Picture of 1955.

Toby returns to packing the bags.

TOBY
Where'd you go with the car today?

HERBIE
Connecticut. I had to drop something off.

115 EXT. MORNING. RCA BUILDING.

A MOB OF REPORTERS

crowd outside, jostle against the NBC SECURITY GUARDS barring the doors. PHOTOGRAPHERS load their cameras.

116 INT. SAME TIME. STAGE.

Charlie wraps up his segment.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
..."Beauty is truth, truth
beauty--that is all Ye know on.
earth, and all ye need to know".

WIDER

Garroway sits with J. Fred Muggs, who SQUAWKS, scratches.

GARROWAY
Thank you, Charles Van Doren, for
those timeless sentiments. Now
for a word from Ex-Lax.

Charlie tears off his lavolier, heads for the wings.

CUT TO:

INT. RCA BUILDING--HALLWAY.

Charlie goes to see Freedman. His SECRETARY on the phone.

SECRETARY
Mr. Freedman's office. Would you
hold?
(punching button)
I'm sorry, he's unavailable...
(covering phone)
Mr. Van Doren--

CHARLIE
Where's Al? Is he in?

Before she can stop him, he opens the door.

INSIDE FREEDMAN'S OFFICE

No photos. No papers. CLEANED OUT. The window is opened, and the
curtain blows EERILY... The Secretary follows inside.

SECRETARY
He's gone, Mr. Van Doren, he's--

CHARLIE
What do you mean, gone? He's gone
home?

SECRETARY
He's gone to Mexico.

Charlie blinks. He leans out the window...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE'S POV

The crowd of REPORTERS outside...He turns to the Secretary.

CHARLIE

Is there a back way out?

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. RCA BUILDING.

Charlie looks furtively up the back hallway. Climbs into a SERVICE ELEVATOR, rides down. Suddenly, it STOPS. Charlie hits the button. Then again. Like a Morse key now...Then

THE DOORS OPEN

A man climbs in...It's Kintner.

KINTNER

Charlie, I'm the President of NBC.

I think it's time we met.

He presses a button. They ride down. Kintner hands him a sheet of PAPER. Charlie reads it.

KINTNER

Our legal department prepared this for you. You declare your complete innocence of any wrongdoing.

CHARLIE

(pointing)

There's a split infinitive here in the second paragraph.

KINTNER

Television is a public trust.

We can't afford to have even a hint of scandal in our company.

CHARLIE

It's just that...well, Dick Goodwin, he suggested...

KINTNER

Who?

CHARLIE

Dick Goodwin. With the Committee. He suggested that I not say anything.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KINTNER
This is a time when we all need to pull together. Haven’t we been good to you, Charlie?

CHARLIE
Oh, absolutely. It’s just that—

KINTNER
You wouldn’t want your family to think you’re involved in this whole mess, would you?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ROOM.

CONGRESSMEN arrayed in a long arc, like a football team bearing down after the kickoff. Opposite them: Herbie sits, nervous, at the witness table. From the counsel table, Goodwin gives him a reassuring look.

CHAIRMAN
For the record, will you state your name?

HERBIE
Herbert M. Stempel.

CHAIRMAN
Will you give your address?

HERBIE
105-15 56th Road, Forest Hills 75, New York.

CHAIRMAN
Were you one of the contestants in the program referred to as ‘21’?

HERBIE
I was, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN
At what time?

HERBIE
I participated from October 17, 1956, to December 5, 1956.

(CONTINUED)
CHAIRMAN
And during that time were you ever furnished with the answers in advance?

HERBIE
Generally, I would receive the questions and answers on Tuesday, typed up.

CHAIRMAN
And the show aired when?

HERBIE
Wednesday. We'd have a sort of rehearsal on Wednesday afternoon.

CONGRESSMAN #1
A rehearsal?

HERBIE
There was a great deal of histrionics involved, for the show to proceed the way Mr. Enright planned it.

CONGRESSMAN #1
Mr. Stempel, what do you mean by 'rehearsal'?

HERBIE
Well, for example, he told me how to breathe heavily into the microphone, and sigh, such as this. (Herbie sighs) He taught me how to stutter and say, in a plaintive voice, 'I will take nine, nine points'.

CHAIRMAN
So it was all choreographed.

HERBIE
How to bite my lip. How to mop my brow--he told me specifically not to smear my brow, but rather to pat for optimum effect. Of course I'm shivering the whole time because they turned off the air conditioning.

CHAIRMAN
Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

GOODWIN
Mr. Chairman, with your permission, we might at this point view a portion of '21' taken from the program of the night of December 5.

CHAIRMAN
Whenever you're ready.

Goodwin signals a TECHNICIAN. A projector ROLLS....

ON THE SCREEN

the Stempel/Van Doren contest...And it's as Herbie described it, to the letter...He sighs. He says plaintively, 'Nine, nine points'. The gallery starts to TITTER....

FROM THE WITNESS TABLE

Herbie, warming to the gallery, provides commentary.

HERBIE
There. There's the lip biting.

CHAIRMAN
Yes, we see.

LAUGHTER from the gallery.

HERBIE
Finally I was told to open my eyes and with a dazzling smile give the answer and explode when Jack Barry said, 'That is right'.

ON THE SCREEN

Herbie opens his eyes. Smiles.

HERBIE (O.C.)
His paper was the Emporia Gazette.

BARRY (O.C.)
That is right!

Herbie explodes.

BACK ON--HERBIE

thoroughly pleased, as the gallery laughs out loud...

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
I don't know where he got it all--some article on mass psychology he read in Esquire.

ON THE SCREEN
Barry and the cameras turn to Charlie...

HERBIE
Here. Watch Van Doren. He's even better at it than I am.

CONGRESSMAN #3
Mr. Stempel, are you suggesting that Charles Van Doren also received the answers?

HERBIE
Of course he got the answers! (off kinescope)
Look at him. You see? With the brow. Patting--not smearing.

CONGRESSMAN #3
Mr. Stempel, do you have any direct knowledge that Charles Van Doren received the answers?

Goodwin tries to signal Herbie. But Herbie's intent on the kinescope...

HERBIE
What? No, I mean--look at him! It's the same thing!

CONGRESSMAN #3
Did you rehearse together?

HERBIE
Well, it wouldn't make much sense for me to take a dive and not fix Van Doren.

CONGRESSMAN #4
Mr. Stempel, have you ever received any psychiatric treatment of any kind?

REPORTER #1 runs in. Leans close to REPORTER #2. They both run out. Herbie, distracted, turns back to Congressman #4.

HERBIE
Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)
CONGRESSMAN #4
Five sessions a week— that's pretty extensive, isn't it?

HERBIE
I believe we can all use a little help at various times in our lives.

CONGRESSMAN #4
Is it possible that any of your testimony is motivated by animosity toward Mr. Enright?

REPORTER #3 runs in. Whispers to REPORTER #4. Who leans over, explains to REPORTER #5.

REPORTER #4
(whisper)
Van Doren made a statement.

They all RUN from the chamber. Herbie notices them as the Congressmen bear down...

CONGRESSMAN #4
Mr. Stempel?

HERBIE
I don't feel that he lived up to his agreements. I think he promised certain things just to shut me up--

CONGRESSMAN #4
So you resent the hell out of him. Are those your feelings?

HERBIE
I'm here to tell the truth. Those are my feelings. What's your feeling?

A BUZZ builds in the hall. More reporters jump up, run outside. Staffers whisper in the ears of Congressmen...

CONGRESSMAN #4
Charles Van Doren is a professor at Columbia University. Master's degree in astrophysics. Ph.D. in literature. Hails from one of the most prominent intellectual families in the country. Isn't it just possible that you got the answers and he didn't?

(CONTINUED)
HERBIE
Of course it's possible...as a matter of classical logic...

A mad RUSH for the doors now...The Chairman gavels...Herbie, distracted, presses on...

HERBIE
--I was simply drawing your attention to an inferential proof rather than--

REPORTER #6 signals to a colleague, cries out.

REPORTER
Van Doren's made a statement!

CHAOS as the chamber empties. Herbie leans into the microphone. Taps it LOUDLY.

HERBIE
Excuse me! Excuse me! I'm making a statement!

CHAIRMAN
Adjourned till one o'clock.

The Chairman gavels. Herbie stands as the room empties...

HERBIE
This is a statement. What I'm saying is a statement. I'm telling the truth!

CUT TO:

120 INT. LATER. CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE.

The Chairman, enraged, a TELEGRAM in hand, circles Goodwin.

CHAIRMAN
Who the hell is Charles Van Doren? What is he, somebody on television?

GOODWIN
You don't know?

(CONTINUED)
All I know is in the last hour
I’ve received over 200 telegrams
from Fayetteville asking me why
I’m persecuting poor Charles Van
Doren and why won’t I let him
defend himself. Why isn’t he on
the schedule of witnesses?

Well, sir, if I could refer you
to the Barenblatt and Sweezy
cases—

I was his ass in that hearing
room tomorrow. Understood?

Will you tell me what he said?

(reading)
‘Mr. Van Doren has made himself
available to members of the
committee staff. He has advised
them that at no time was he
supplied any questions or answers
with respect to his appearances
on ‘21’. He was never assisted
in any form and he has no
knowledge of any assistance having
been given to any other
contestant. Signed, Charles Van
Doren.’

EXT. NIGHT. VAN DOREN HOME—CORNWALL.

Charlie at the front door. Moves to knock. Stops. Moves again.
the steps, up the gravel driveway.

The door opens behind him.

THE PROFESSOR

Charlie?

CUT TO:
INT. NIGHT. VAN DOREN HOME--CORNWALL.

Charlie sits by the fire. The Professor pours them both a Scotch, joins his son.

THE PROFESSOR
So what's the news, Charlie?

CHARLIE
Well, uh, there's--it seems there's this Congressional committee that's--they're investigating the quiz shows.

THE PROFESSOR
I read about that.

CHARLIE
I thought you might've. Anyway, they--well, it seems they want to call me. To testify.

THE PROFESSOR
Oh, I've testified before. For the National Endowment. It's nothing.

CHARLIE
I think this is a little different.

THE PROFESSOR
You'll run circles around them. It's not exactly Jefferson and Lincoln down there, you know.

CHARLIE
I'm just not sure, you know, what to tell them.

THE PROFESSOR
Just tell them the truth--you'll do fine. The real issue, Charlie, is the way this is distracting you from your teaching--this and that program in the morning, although you insist it isn't.

CHARLIE
Dad--

THE PROFESSOR
You're a good teacher. I'm not just saying it because you're my son.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE
Dad... I can't tell them the truth.

THE PROFESSOR
Why not? From what I understand, all it was was this bunch of frauds showing off an erudition they didn't really have--basically pretending to be Charles Van Doren. All you have to do is--

CHARLIE
You see, the problem, Dad, is it seems I was one of those frauds.

The Professor stares at Charlie. Unbelieving...

THE PROFESSOR
They gave you the answers?

Charlie gets up, agitated. Starts to pace...

CHARLIE
Oh, no. Not at first. At first they just asked me questions they already knew I knew the answers to. Well, we ran through those in five weeks. I still didn't want them to actually give me the answers. So I had them give me the questions. And I'd go look up the answers. Well, I didn't have the time, and finally, it just seemed silly. So--

THE PROFESSOR
They gave you the answers.

CHARLIE
What was I going to do at that point? Disillusion the whole goddam country?

THE PROFESSOR
They gave you $129,000 to answer questions they knew you knew. Now that's inflation.

CHARLIE
(angry)
You're not being very helpful.

(CONTINUED)
THE PROFESSOR
(angry back)
I’m sorry. I’m an old man. It’s just all very hard for me to comprehend.

CHARLIE
It’s television, Dad. It’s just... television.

THE PROFESSOR
For what? What was it? Was it the money?

CHARLIE
No, it was... I don’t know.

THE PROFESSOR
It was a goddam quiz show, Charlie.

CHARLIE
‘An ill-favoured thing, sir...’

THE PROFESSOR
This is no time to play games.

CHARLIE
(savagely)
... but mine own'. It was mine.

THE PROFESSOR
(right back)
Your name is mine.

The two turn away from each other. Embarrassed by the expression of feeling. Hurt by the truth.

THE PROFESSOR
I’m sorry, Charlie.

CHARLIE
No, I’m sorry. I’m just sorry you’ll be dragged into all this.

THE PROFESSOR
I’ll come with you down to Washington.

CHARLIE
You really don’t--

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

THE PROFESSOR
I won’t hear a word about it.
(with sympathy)
My God, son--what are you going
to tell that committee?

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. HEARING ROOM.

As VIPs are ushered in, Herbie strains to see through the

HERBIE
You gotta let me in. Let me in!
It’s my hearing!

COP
If you don’t have a ticket you
don’t go in.

HERBIE
What about a subpoena? Just let
me go inside and I’ll have my
close friend the Chairman write
me a subpoena.

The Cop backs Herbie off with his NIGHTSTICK...

HERBIE
Okay. Okay! Enough! (mutters)
Asshole.

He wanders off down the hall. Turns a corner and SEES
something...Hides behind the corner. Looks again.

HERBIE’S POV

Charlie, sitting in a shaft of sunlight, alone on the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. CHAIRMAN’S OFFICE.

Goodwin sits behind closed doors, alone with a WITNESS.

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
...The Chairman’s instructions are to get you up there as promptly as possible and for the questions to take no longer than 15 minutes. He wants you to receive all questions in advance and for me to thank you for the courtesy of attending this hearing.

Goodwin hands over the questions.

REVERSE ANGLE

as Kintner takes the pages, looks them over.

GOODWIN
You knew all along, didn’t you?

KINTNER
Young man, I am the President of the National Broadcasting Company. Our number one show, a show worth literally millions of dollars, that beat ‘I Love Lucy’ in the ratings...The idea that I wouldn’t know every detail of that show’s operation—frankly, it’s insulting.

(ironic)
I never, never imagined they’d tamper with the honesty of that program.

GOODWIN
And they’ll let you off the hook.

KINTNER
(off papers)
This doesn’t seem like a grueling line of inquiry, does it? You’re the only one I’m worried about. And you don’t have anything.

GOODWIN
I have Dan Enright.

KINTNER
Dan Enright wants a future in television. The public has a short memory. But corporations never forget.

(CONTINUED)
GOODWIN
He’s not that stupid. He knows
he’s through.

KINTNER
It might take five years, ten
years. But he’ll be back. NBC
goes on. Geritol goes on.
(beat)
Makes you wonder what you’ve
accomplished, doesn’t it?

GOODWIN
Don’t worry—I’m just starting.

KINTNER
Even the quiz shows’ll be back.
They don’t have to be fixed—you
could accomplish the same thing
just making the questions easier.
That’s what Dan never understood.
Herb Stempel, Van Doren—Dan went
nuts trying to find people like
that. But our audience wasn’t
turning in to watch some display
of intellectual ability. They just
wanted to watch the money.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. HEARING ROOM.

Goodwin hurries in behind the Congressmen. Leans over to the
Chairman, whispers. The Chairman excuses a WITNESS.

CHAIRMAN
The witness is excused. The
committee calls Charles Van Doren.

PANDEMONIUM! PHOTOGRAPHERS press in...FLASH! FLASH! FLASH! as
Charlie enters, The Professor by his side. In the hubbub, Herbie
sneaks in, squeezes into the back of the room...

The Professor takes a seat in the gallery. Charlie sits at the
witness table. The room quiets.

CHAIRMAN
Will you state your name?

CHARLIE
Charles Van Doren.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN
Will you give your address?

CHARLIE
11 Washington Square, New York City.

CHAIRMAN
Do you solemnly swear the testimony you give to this committee to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

CHARLIE
I do.

ANGLE ON...GOODWIN

as sits at the counsel table. Glances over toward the side aisle...DOUBLETAKES.

GOODWIN POV

as Herbie CRAWLS on his hands and knees up the aisle, trying to get a better view...

CHAIRMAN
I am advised that you have a statement which you would prefer to read at the outset?

CHARLIE
Yes, sir. May I ask first, sir, if I may have a glass of water. I'm sorry to bother you.

A PAGE brings Charlie a glass of water. With glee, Herbie watches his nemesis squirm...

CHAIRMAN
You may proceed.

CHARLIE
I would give almost anything I have to reverse the course of my life in the last year. The past doesn't change for anyone. But at least I can learn from the past. I've learned a lot about life.

(more)

(CONTINUED)
CHARLIE (Cont'd)
I've learned a lot about myself, and about the responsibilities any man has to his fellow men. I've learned a lot about good and evil...they're not always what they appear to be. I was involved, deeply involved, in a deception. I have deceived my friends, and I had millions of them. In a sense, I was like a child who refuses to admit a fact in the hope that it will go away. Of course, it did not go away. There was one way out, and that was simply to tell the truth. I finally realized what I should have known before, that the truth is always the best way, indeed it is the only way, to promote and protect faith, the only thing with which a man can live. That is why I am here today.

A long SILENCE...Goodwin sits and watches, stunned...Herbie in his moment of VINDICATION. And then...

CHAIRMAN
Mr. Van Doren, I want to compliment you for that statement.

CHARLIE
Thank you, sir.

CONGRESSMAN #1
Mr. Van Doren, I would like to join with the chairman in commending you for the soul-searching fortitude that is displayed in your statement.

CHARLIE
Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

CONGRESSMAN #3
Mr. Van Doren, I just want to add my kudos. I have listened to many witnesses in both civil and criminal matters, and yours is the most soul-searching confession I think I have heard in a long time.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

CHARLIE
Well, thank you, sir.

And then CONGRESSMAN #4, a curmudgeonly public servant, breaks in.

CONGRESSMAN #4
Mr. Van Doren, I'm also from New York. Another part of New York. I am happy that you made the statement, but I cannot agree with most of my colleagues. I don't think an adult of your intelligence ought to be commended for simply, at long last, telling the truth.

Suddenly, the gallery bursts into loud APPLAUSE... Goodwin looks up into the eyes of an angry MOB... Charlie like a trapped animal...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HALLWAY.

A FRENZY of REPORTERS presses in on Charlie and his Dad.

REPORTER #1
How do you feel, Charlie?

CHARLIE
Relieved.

REPORTER #2
Professor, did you know you've been fired by NBC?

REPORTER #3
Professor Van Doren, are you proud of your son?

THE PROFESSOR
I've always been proud of Charlie.

REPORTER #4
Are you proud of what he did?

THE PROFESSOR
What's important is that Charlie can get back now to his teaching.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

REPORTER #4
The Columbia trustees met this morning. They voted to ask for Charlie's resignation.

The Professor blanches. He and Charlie exchange a look. Then an ANGRY MAN approaches...

ANGRY MAN
You son of a bitch!

SMACK! as he punches Charlie in the eye. Charlie staggers back. The Reporters restrain the Angry Man...

HERBIE'S POV
as he watches this. Backs away from the crowd--like he's seen something for the first time.

REPORTER #5
Hey, Herbie, how about a picture--you and Van Doren?

HERBIE
No. Not now. (off Van Doren) Christ--look at the guy.

REPORTER #5
Come on. The two of you.

HERBIE
You know what the problem with you bums is? You never leave a guy alone unless you're leaving him alone.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. HOTEL ROOM.

A man packs a SUITCASE on a hotel bed.

ON THE TELEVISION

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER conducts a press conference.

REPORTER #1 (O.C.)
Sir, either as President or a TV viewer, do you have any strong feelings on rigged quiz shows?

Laughter from the press corps.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EISENHOWER (O.C.)
I think this was, if it was done, it's a terrible thing to do to the American public.

WATCHING

while he packs: The Professor. Cold with rage.

THE PROFESSOR
God damn you, Charlie.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. HEARING ROOM.

Enright and Freedman, aglow with his Mexico suntan, testify together. Goodwin broods at the counsel table...

CONGRESSMAN #1
...So you freely admit that you helped rig these shows?

FREEDMAN
what are these quiz shows, a public utility? I don't see why the hubbub.

CONGRESSMAN #1
So you don't think you did anything wrong?

FREEDMAN
We did one thing wrong--we were too successful.

CHAIRMAN
Mr. Enright, did the network or the sponsor ever express any approval or disapproval of any particular contestant?

ENRIGHT
Never. Not to my knowledge.

CHAIRMAN
Did they know that you were supplying the contestants with the answers?

Goodwin looks at Enright.

(CONTINUED)
ENRIGHT
(smoothly)
No, sir. They had no knowledge whatsoever.

AT THE COUNSEL TABLE

STAFFER #1 joins Goodwin.

STAFFER #1
(aside)
Congratulations on Van Doren.

GOODWIN
I thought I was gonna get television. The truth is television's gonna get us.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME TIME. CONGRESS.

The halls are deserted now. The sounds of Enright testifying inside. Charlie dabs at his tender eye with a handkerchief. Waits for the ELEVATOR. It opens.

HERBIE'S INSIDE

Charlie climbs in. The doors close. They ride down together, not saying a word.

They emerge into the sunlight. Head their separate ways, receding till they are little more than specks within the frame...

A CRAWL over this:

--Charles Van Doren went to work for the Encyclopedia Britannica. He now lives in his family's house in Cornwall Hollow, Connecticut.

--Herbert Stempel received a degree in social work from CCNY. He now works for the Department of Transportation of the City of New York.

--Richard Goodwin became a speechwriter for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He left the White House because of the Vietnam War and retired from politics after the death of Robert Kennedy. He is now a writer living in Concord, Massachusetts.

--Albert Freedman works for Penthouse magazine.

(CONTINUED)
After seventeen years in exile, Dan Enright and Jack Barry came back to television with 'The Joker's Wild'. The highly successful show ran for ten years and made them multimillionaires.

CBS, NBC, and ABC were never conclusively implicated in the quiz show scandals. In 1990 the gross revenues of the three networks totalled six billion dollars.

FADE TO BLACK: