

This film is called

**THE LAST DAYS OF NIGHT**

It was written by

**GRAHAM MOORE**

Based on his novel

It's produced by

**NORA GROSSMAN & IDO OSTROWSKY**

And this draft is dated

**4/12/16**

"Don't you understand that Steve doesn't know anything about technology? He's just a super salesman... He doesn't know anything about engineering, and 99% of what he says and thinks is wrong."

— Bill Gates

"People don't know what they want until you show it to them."

—Steve Jobs

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) FINANCIAL DISTRICT - MANHATTAN - MAY 11, 1888**

A SEA OF YOUNG PROFESSIONAL MEN CONDUCT THEIR MORNING MARCH DOWN BROADWAY.

They look nearly identical: Perfectly parted hair, black coats, wing collared shirts, long black ties. Some have moustaches, a few boast mutton-chop beards.

On the street, HORSE-DRAWN HANSOMS clatter downtown.

TROLLEY CARS zip crosstown past chatting SOCIAL SECRETARIES in bright dresses. MESSENGERS scurry through the din of chirping NEWSBOYS.

ADVERTISEMENTS on the street proclaim the newest marvels of the age: "BRILL SHAVING CREAM!" "BAYER COCAINE!" "AMERICA'S FIRST WORLD'S FAIR - IN CHICAGO!"

Only a few days ago, the newspapers revealed that Jacob Astor had become officially richer than the Queen of England. These streets are bursting with a wealth never before seen in human history. These people came here to get it.

From amongst the bustle, we pick out one face. Walking quickly. Just one of these confident young men on his way up in this new world...

... His name is PAUL CRAVATH - 26, a preacher's son whose ambition and smarts combined to lead him away from his family's Nashville farm. He has worked for everything he has; and he doesn't even have much.

As Paul gets closer to us, we notice - though he doesn't - a WORKMAN high on a ladder in the background, fiddling with a string of BLACK CABLES that criss-cross in the air.

These are ELECTRICAL CABLES, they're brand new, and they've gotten tangled in the wind.

The Workman struggles to untangle them...

... Paul gets closer...

... As behind him the Workman grapples with the wires...

... Paul's face almost fills the frame as suddenly...

... The Workman slips, grasping one hand on each of the wires for support... Making a connection...

... And in an instant the Workman BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

Paul TURNS: Good Lord in heaven.

200 OTHER PEOPLE ON THE STREET turn as well to see:

The FLAMES SET FIRE TO THE WORKMAN'S CLOTHES —

— Which are incinerated as the poor man TUMBLES FORWARD —

— His arms WRAPPED in the wires, which hold him aloft —

— His roasting body assumes the position of Jesus on the cross —

— As a BLUE ELECTRICAL FIRE SHOOTS from his mouth.

ON PAUL: He has never in his life seen anything like this.

ON THE CROWD: They haven't either. It's TOTAL FUCKING PANDEMONIUM.

Children SCREAM, pedestrians FLEE, horses SPOOK, hansoms CAREEN into one another.

Paul can only stare as the Workman's body literally MELTS before his eyes —

— The man's blood SPRAYING OUT into the terrified crowd.

In the PANICKED STAMPEDE: A YOUNG WOMAN is PUSHED by the mob. She is AGNES HUNTINGTON — 24, high-society elegant, possessed of the easy cynicism that comes from packing too much life into too few years.

In the riot, Agnes Huntington TUMBLES to the dirt...

... Stray BLOOD sprays her Doucet frock...

... A pair of SCARED HORSES rear up on their haunches...

... And the WHEELS of their carriage threaten to TRAMPLE Agnes.

ON PAUL: The sight of the woman in danger breaks the spell of his shock and he DIVES towards her —

— Trying to YANK her out of the way of the wheels —

— But the horses are CHAOTIC, WILD, and keep dragging the wheels toward Agnes —

— Paul looks up as the CARRIAGE DRIVER leaps from his post, letting the horses have their way —

— So instinctively, Paul JUMPS UP TOWARDS THE HORSES —

— And expertly UNHOOKS THEIR REINS —

— As Agnes ROLLS AWAY —

— The horses TEAR OFF into the distance —

— And Paul and Agnes are left PANTING in the dirt.

Slowly they stand, still points in the chaos. Trying to process what in the hell just happened.

The BELLS from a HORSE-DRAWN FIRE ENGINE clang as a fleet of RED-HATTED FIREMEN arrive to bring order to all of this.

ON THE FIREMEN: Staring dumbfounded at the hellfire blooming from the workman's corpse.

ON PAUL AND AGNES: They have just seen a horror together the likes of which almost no human being has ever witnessed...

... So what do you even say?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Are you all right, Miss?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(nods)  
How did you know how to do that?  
With the horses?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm not from around here.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(re: his accent)  
I can tell.  
(beat)  
Was that... electricity?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I've never seen it up close before.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
It's a terror.

PAUL CRAVATH  
People love it.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Any of these people?

Paul can't say much to that, can he?

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
... Thank you. For helping me.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm glad you're safe. Paul Cravath.  
Esquire.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
"Esquire?"

PAUL CRAVATH  
Yes?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
It's just an old-fashioned word.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Well where I come from -

But before he can finish something OCCURS TO HIM.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
- SHIT.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Pardon?

PAUL CRAVATH  
What color was the man's uniform?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
...What?

PAUL CRAVATH  
The man who burnt up? He was  
wearing a uniform. What color was  
it?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I have no idea -

To Agnes' surprise Paul abruptly RUNS OFF -

PAUL CRAVATH  
- I beg your pardon, Ma'am -

He runs to the firemen, and the SMOKING CORPSE they're trying  
to tear down.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
(re: corpse)  
Can I see the body?

FIREMAN  
You should back away, Sir.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Please. Just let me get eye-to-eye  
with him for a second.

ON PAUL: Trying to look over the fireman's shoulder at the charred corpse. It's been burnt completely black.

FIREMAN  
He doesn't have any eyes.

**INT (GASLAMPS) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN**

That night, Paul walks down the hall of his tiny, three-person law firm with his fellow junior partner CHARLES HUGHES - 30, smarmy, he dreams of running for president one day. (He actually will: In 1916 he'll lose to Woodrow Wilson.)

CHARLES HUGHES  
... And then there were two!

PAUL CRAVATH  
A man just died.

CHARLES HUGHES  
But the man who died worked for Mr. Lynch! Not our client. You're sure the uniform was green?

PAUL CRAVATH  
That's what the fireman told me. It was the most horrible thing I've ever witnessed.

CHARLES HUGHES  
This is fantastic.

PAUL CRAVATH  
A human soul has passed on.

CHARLES HUGHES  
So has a major corporation! Lynch built the wires that burnt that man alive. The press will chew his company to a nub. "Electrical power that's not safe to light an outhouse," that kind of thing. Lynch will be out of business in a week. Which means...?

ON PAUL: Wearily, he has to agree with Hughes' analysis.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Which means that with Lynch gone, there will be only two companies left competing to wire this country for electric light.

CHARLES HUGHES

And we represent one of them! Before it was a melee. Now it's a duel. Edison General Electric versus the Westinghouse Electric Company. Will you, for one second, just smile and acknowledge our good fortune?

Paul regards Hughes' indelicate enthusiasm. It's grotesque, but Hughes isn't wrong.

PAUL CRAVATH

... This is good news.

WALTER CARTER (O.S.)

Boys!

They both turn to see their senior partner down the hall: WALTER CARTER - 60s, attorney as artisan, he handles a case the way a master cobbler would a leather sole.

He does not look happy.

WALTER CARTER (CONT'D)

This is no time for celebration.  
There's been terrible news.

CUT TO:

**INT (GASLAMP) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - CARTER'S OFFICE**

Some minutes later, Paul and Hughes sit before Carter.

A SINGLE GASLAMP in the corner FLICKERS unhelpfully.

WALTER CARTER

(re: the lamp)

Paul, would you...?

Obediently, Paul walks over to the gaslamp and fiddles with the NOZZLE. The light BLINKS ominously.

Darkness... Light... Darkness... Light...

WALTER CARTER (CONT'D)  
Thomas Edison is suing George  
Westinghouse for patent  
infringement.

CHARLES HUGHES  
Shit.

PAUL CRAVATH

Paul's FIDDLING with the gaslamp finds success, and the room is finally coated in a dim flicker.

WALTER CARTER  
(re: papers on his desk)  
This will be filed in New York  
State Court tomorrow. A friend gave  
me warning. Edison is using his  
patent on the light bulb to ask for  
an injunction against Westinghouse.  
Forbidding the manufacture or sale  
of any such devices.

CHARLES HUGHES  
With Lynch gone, Edison is forced to compete head-to-head. So he's arguing that Westinghouse has no legal right to compete at all.

WALTER CARTER  
Why fight a duel when you can win  
before it starts?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Edison's light bulb patent is  
airtight. Famously so.

WALTER CARTER  
He's won every single suit he's  
filed on the matter. Dozens?  
Hundreds? Paul, you'll check the  
case history.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(nods)  
I don't see a path to victory for  
Westinghouse here.

CHARLES HUGHES  
I agree. We should advise our  
client to go back to the railroad  
business. Sell off his electrical  
work while it's still worth  
something, leave the field to  
Edison.

WALTER CARTER  
And now you see the true nature of  
our difficulty.

ON PAUL AND HUGHES: They don't.

With a weary sigh, Carter explains further -

WALTER CARTER (CONT'D)  
I have known George Westinghouse  
for 20 years. I have represented  
him in dozens of contract disputes;  
negotiated a hundred deals with  
suppliers on his behalf; the man is  
obstinate. And more problematic  
still - he's a man of certain  
principles. He is going to want to  
fight the injunction.

PAUL CRAVATH  
That would be a mistake. There  
could even be damages against him -  
punitive. It's not worth the risk.

WALTER CARTER  
Indeed.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Sir, you should talk him out of it.  
Explain to him that his case is  
unwinnable, and that a carefully  
choreographed retreat would be the  
prudent course of action.

WALTER CARTER  
No.  
(beat)  
You should.

ON PAUL: Pardon?

ON HUGHES: Pardon?

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Me?

WALTER CARTER  
I was impressed by your work on the  
Kuhn & Loeb suits last month.  
You've developed quite a persuasive  
way with words. We need someone to  
talk some sense into old George,  
and I was hoping you might be the  
man for the job.

PAUL CRAVATH  
You're assigning me to litigate  
Edison v. Westinghouse?

WALTER CARTER  
No. I'm assigning you to make quite  
certain that we don't have to.  
(beat)  
Unless, of course, you don't think  
you're ready?

ON PAUL: This is an amazing promotion. Even if it's only to  
talk their client out of fighting the case.

PAUL CRAVATH  
No no, Sir. I'm ready. Thank you.  
For the opportunity.

WALTER CARTER  
This will be a valuable learning  
experience for you, young man. The  
hardest part of our profession is  
not handling your opponent - it is  
managing your own client.

**INT (GASLAMPS) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - 39TH STREET**

ARMED GUARDS PATROL A SPANISH PRISON.

Well, fake guards. In a fake Spanish prison. This is a  
THEATRICAL SET on the stage of the (new) Metropolitan Opera  
House.

And bursting into action on that set is Agnes Huntington,  
SINGING the lead role as Leonore in Beethoven's only opera,  
"Fidelio."

As her song describes the daring prison break she engineers  
for her husband, we realize that Agnes is the star of the  
show.

And as she SINGS, in German no less, we can tell why.

Her song ENDS, and Agnes takes a triumphant BOW to RAPTUROUS  
APPLAUSE as we -

SMASH CUT TO:

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - DRESSING  
ROOM**

AGNES'S FACE UNDER HARSH ELECTRIC LIGHT.

She's staring into her dressing room mirror, which has, only hours before, been wired up with ELECTRIC LIGHT BULBS.

ON AGNES: Staring at the contours of her face... The lines, the shadows, the imperfections...

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(re: the lights)  
... I don't like it.

REVEAL: Behind Agnes, waiting patiently, is FANNIE HUNTINGTON – 50s, she has been Agnes' business-minded manager for nearly as long as she's been her mother.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
I didn't imagine that you would.  
You need to get used to the lights  
before they're put up on the stage.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
They cannot expect me to sing under  
these things.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
The public loves the novelty.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I don't feel safe.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
After what happened on the  
street... I understand. But these  
bulbs are top quality. The House  
Manager said they're direct from  
the laboratory of Thomas Edison  
himself.

Agnes thinks about this. Looks again at the light bulbs.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(realizing)  
Damn it, the House Manager told you  
what the autumn production is,  
didn't you?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
Well, I don't know precisely –

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
– MOTHER.

ON FANNIE: Should she tell her daughter?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
I've heard it might - possibly - be  
"Paul Jones."

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
The only female part in "Paul  
Jones" is a scullery maid.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
You know how these historical  
tragedies are - bunch of men  
ranting and raving at each other.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Because there weren't any women in  
history?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
There won't be unless I can urge  
them to mount a different  
production.

(re: lights)  
By giving the managers, and the  
audience, something in return.

ON AGNES: There is absolutely nothing she can do about this,  
is there? Play ball... Or play a scullery maid.

If only this light did not creep her out so much.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... I'd like to send a thank you to  
the man who helped me. On the  
street.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
That's polite.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Tickets, perhaps.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
I'll tell the girls upstairs.  
What's his name?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Paul Cravath.  
(beat)  
I believe he's some sort of  
attorney?

CUT TO:

**I/E (DAYLIGHT) PENNSYLVANIA LMTD - FIRST CLASS CAR - SEQUENCE**

Paul walks through a FIRST CLASS TRAIN CAR. He makes sure his jacket doesn't wrinkle as he takes his seat.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) PENN STATION PLATFORMS - PITTSBURGH - SEQUENCE**

Paul checks his jacket for wrinkles before he descends onto the platform.

He's met by a SERVANT, who leads him to...

... a PRIVATE TRAIN PLATFORM.

Only one line runs from this platform. That line runs one train. And that train consists of one car. That car is:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) GLEN AYRE - SOLE CAR - PENNSYLVANIA - SEQUENCE**

The GLEN AYRE is the 1880s version of a G5 - a private train decorated in REAL GOLDS and SILVERS.

Paul again carefully folds his jacket for the journey.

WHITE-TAILED SERVANTS serve an afternoon snack of FRESH OYSTERS that Paul doesn't eat before the Glen Ayre pulls to a stop at:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) PRIVATE STATION - HOMewood, PA - SEQUENCE**

Paul is greeted by yet another SERVANT, who loads him into a CARRIAGE.

The carriage carries him through ACRES OF MANICURED LAWNS -  
- Down a WINDING DIRT PATH and under a FOREST OF WILLOWS to -

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - SEQUENCE**

The PALATIAL WHITE BRICK VILLA that composes the nucleus of the massive Westinghouse Estate.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN HALLWAYS - SEQUENCE**

Inside, the BUTLER leads Paul down thick-carpeted corridors. As they come to a doorway, Paul prepares to enter...

... But catches the Butler's eyes drifting to something on his jacket.

Paul looks down, embarrassed to find a WHITE THREAD that somehow, despite his care, got caught there. He picks it off.

The Butler ushers Paul into -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - KITCHEN**

Paul enters the kitchen to meet his new client for the first time: GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE - 42, a Pennsylvania family man who grew up middle-class and built a burgeoning railroad business, he is more craftsman than scientist.

To Paul's surprise, Westinghouse is calmly CHOPPING VEGETABLES for a salad with his five-year-old son, GEORGE JR, and his wife MARGUERITE - 40s, seems never to have committed an inelegant act in her life.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

(to George Jr)

You see, if you slice through all the way, the onion falls apart. But if you refine your slice and then turn it -

(seeing Paul)

- Ah! You must be Walter Carter's boy. I'm George Westinghouse.

ON PAUL: This is not quite the meeting he was expecting.

Marguerite smiles at Paul politely while George Jr struggles with the onion.

PAUL CRAVATH

Paul Cravath. It's an honor, Sir.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

(to George Jr.)

That's good, that's good, now turn the onion over.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

(to George Jr)

Careful with the knife.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

(to Marguerite)

He's doing terrific.

(to George Jr)

Aren't you?

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

If he cuts himself, you're sleeping in the guest house.

ON PAUL: Feels like he's an intruder on this family moment.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
(to Paul)  
So what would you like to talk  
about?

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Sir, would it be best to  
discuss our business in private?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Anything you can say to me, you can  
say to Marguerite. She has a better  
head for the law than I ever did.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
I have a better head for cutlery as  
well, apparently.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
He's doing terrific!

George Jr triumphantly SLICES through the onion, sending  
cubes FLYING across the cutting board.

Westinghouse is clearly proud. Marguerite remains suspicious.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... I'm here to discuss Thomas  
Edison's lawsuit against you.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
How do you think we should respond?

PAUL CRAVATH  
(playing it cool)  
Well, I am of two minds. On the one  
hand, electricity could be a  
valuable business in the future. At  
the moment, the light bulb is the  
only thing it's good for, but who  
knows what sorts of devices one  
might eventually be able to power  
with it.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Sewing machines. Telephones.  
Radios.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Anything is possible. But on the  
other hand, though...  
(MORE)

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)

From a legal perspective, it is difficult to see a clear path around Edison's injunction. Around his patent.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

"Difficult?"

PAUL CRAVATH

I've been thinking of it in terms of risk versus reward. If we fight, there are great risks – punitive damages, a long, costly legal battle with an uncertain outcome. Conversely, if we take a step back – figure out a deal to sell off your electrical holdings for a tidy profit – we'd face little risk and certain reward.

(beat)

So as I said: I'm of two minds.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Gosh, I can see why this is such a tricky decision.

PAUL CRAVATH

Yes.

Westinghouse looks up at Paul.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Kid, will you stop lawyering me?

PAUL CRAVATH

... Pardon?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

"Two minds?" Please. You came here to convince me to roll over. To abandon the field of electricity and leave it to Edison.

ON PAUL: Caught. Perhaps he was not as subtle as he'd hoped.

So now it's time for total honesty.

PAUL CRAVATH

Sir, in my professional opinion, I do not believe this case can be won.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Taking this in thoughtfully.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... Marguerite and George, Jr here are my two favorite people on God's earth. And yet every single day I go down the road to my lab and toil all night with my engineers to build the best electrical device in the world. Why would I do that? What am I fighting for?

PAUL CRAVATH

... I don't know, Sir.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Then let me show you.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) WORLD'S FAIR GROUNDS - CHICAGO - SEQUENCE**

600 ACRES OF MUD extend across the South Side of Chicago.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (V.O.)

The United States of America has just won the right to host its first World's Fair. The century's greatest showcase of human technological achievement will not be in Paris. It will not be in London. It will be in Chicago.

Amidst all that mud, a construction project larger than the pyramids of Egypt is already under way. A HUNDRED SKELETAL WOODEN STRUCTURES rise up from the wet ground.

It's as if someone is building 100 Taj Mahals next door to a pig sty. (That's also literally what's happening, as the city's oldest slaughterhouse is only a half mile away.)

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (V.O.)

Daniel Burnham is designing a city of white marble. George Ferris is building some great big wheel that I'm told will be larger than the Eiffel Tower.

We see THOUSANDS OF WORKMEN digging a grand LAGOON in the center of the grounds.

The construction of the world's first FERRIS WHEEL is just beginning — the spokes haven't been attached yet.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (V.O.)  
The fair grounds will be wired for  
the newest wonder of the century:  
electricity.

We see the workmen raising ELECTRICAL POLES - but there are  
no wires on them. Not yet.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (V.O.)  
All told, the Fair Committee  
estimates that 25 million people  
will pour through those gates. For  
most of them, it will be their  
first time seeing electric lights.  
The question is, whose light will  
they see?

CUT TO:

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - LABORATORY**

A MURKY BLACKNESS.

Suddenly, an ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB BURSTS TO LIFE...

... REVEAL: Paul stands with Westinghouse in the latter's  
laboratory "testing room".

A SINGLE LIGHT BULB SHINES A DIM GREENISH GLOW from a table  
in the room's center. Paul struggles to get accustomed to the  
unsettling light.

PAUL CRAVATH  
That's Edison's light bulb?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Dim. Displeasing. And it won't last  
more than a few days. It's just  
shoddy. Now, my bulb, on the other  
hand...

Westinghouse UNSCREWS Edison's crappy light bulb from the  
socket and replaces it with his own...

... Westinghouse's bulbs COATS the room in a BEAUTIFUL, CLEAN  
ORANGE LIGHT.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
A masterpiece of design and  
manufacture. Mine lasts four times  
as long and provides twice the  
illumination.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(can't deny it)  
It's beautiful.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
I did not steal Edison's design. I improved upon it. Tremendously. He's embarrassed. I'm only a railroad man. I made my fortune on air brakes and wheel pistons; he made his on telegraphs and telephones. Yet here I am, engineering the pants off of him from Pittsburgh.

(beat)  
And mine is safer, too. One of my workmen isn't going to immolate on Broadway.

ON PAUL: Hoping no one else has to suffer what he saw that man suffer the other morning.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
If we compete on even terrain, I will win. So Edison has enlisted the legal system to prevent me from competing at all.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I know that the law can sometimes seem unfair -

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
- "May the best work win."  
Shouldn't that be what this country is all about?

PAUL CRAVATH  
The law doesn't say "best." The law says "first."

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
And you wonder why people hate lawyers.

ON PAUL: It's hard to argue with that.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
Round One of bidding to light the World's Fair commences in a month. We are going to submit a bid, and it is going to be better, cheaper, and safer than Edison's.

(beat)  
(MORE)

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)

I am asking you - imploring you -  
to go to court and defend my right  
to build something wonderful.

ON PAUL: Deeply moved by Westinghouse's idealism... But this case is impossible.

Isn't it?

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - PAUL'S OFFICE**

Paul works at his desk, carefully examining two different LIGHT BULB DESIGNS - Edison's and Westinghouse's. They're similar... But the different shapes are apparent even to a layman's eye.

He's interrupted by the arrival of:

CHARLES HUGHES

... Well? How'd it go with Westinghouse? Did you convince him not to go to court?

PAUL CRAVATH

I wouldn't quite say that.

ON HUGHES: Seeing a flash of earnestness across Paul's face.

CHARLES HUGHES

... Oh dear God don't tell me you're falling for that kindly old scientist routine. Paul.

PAUL CRAVATH

Did you know that Westinghouse is right? I had a consultant look at it - his light bulbs really are safer.

CHARLES HUGHES

Look, I forgot which low-country backwater you grew up in -

PAUL CRAVATH

- I'm from Tennessee -

CHARLES HUGHES

- But you cannot be this naive. If Westinghouse is sued into bankruptcy, it won't just ruin your career - it'll ruin mine. I'm supposed to handle his taxes next year!

PAUL CRAVATH

I've always been moved by your kind  
and selfless heart.

CHARLES HUGHES

This is exactly what Carter was  
afraid of.

PAUL CRAVATH

What are you talking about?

CHARLES HUGHES

Why do you think he assigned you to  
the case?

(off Paul's look)

Because he had a hunch that  
Westinghouse would do something  
crazy - like fighting Edison - and  
he wanted to make sure the ensuing  
disaster did not fall on his  
record.

PAUL CRAVATH

Carter thought I was ready.

CHARLES HUGHES

If this goes to court, Westinghouse  
is going to get demolished. Carter  
will need someone to blame. Who do  
you think that's going to be?

ON PAUL: Carter wouldn't do that to him... Would he?

CHARLES HUGHES (CONT'D)

... There is an unimaginable sum of  
money on the line here. Do not be  
an idiot.

PAUL CRAVATH

Westinghouse doesn't care about the  
money. This is personal for him.

CHARLES HUGHES

You're his lawyer. So it better not  
get personal for you.

ON PAUL: Thinking. But before he can respond, there's a KNOCK  
at the door.

Both men turn to see Paul's SECRETARY, bearing a telegram.

SECRETARY

I figured I should hand this to you  
straight away.

(MORE)

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

(beat)

It's from Thomas Edison.

Paul and Hughes share a look: "Holy shit."

Paul takes the telegram, opens it -

ON THE TELEGRAM: "Mr. Cravath - My office - Midnight - Much to discuss - T Edison"

ON PAUL AND HUGHES: What the hell is Edison up to?

**EXT (STARLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - 120 BROADWAY - LATER**

Paul exits his office building into the dim night. The streets are lit by prehistoric COAL LAMP - barely twenty feet of cobblestones are exposed in any direction.

Paul HAILS A PASSING TWO-HORSE HANSOM -

**I/E (STARLIGHT) HANSOM - TRAVELLING UP BROADWAY - CONTINUOUS**  
- Which, after Paul boards, clatters uptown.

PAUL CRAVATH  
65 Fifth Avenue, please.

The CABBIE turns around.

CABBIE  
You're going to see The Wizard?

Paul gives a look: He hates it when people call Edison that.

The Cabbie grasps the reins and the men ride past the quiet canyons of Houston Street -

- Between the FASHIONABLE ROW HOUSES OF 14TH STREET -  
- All dim by the light of coal-gas and a sliver of moon -  
- Until the horses pull around a corner and SUDDENLY:

A BRIGHT HEAVEN GLITTERS BEFORE THEM ON FIFTH AVENUE.

Fifth Avenue is lit by ELECTRIC ARC LAMPS, which makes it many times brighter than the surrounding blocks.

Both Paul and his Cabbie BLINK. It's as if they're driving from the 19th century into the 20th.

Paul looks ahead to -

**EXT (STARLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - 65 FIFTH AVE**

65 FIFTH AVE is a six story building bathed in electric light that bursts from the windows on the top floor. This building is both literally and figuratively the source of this shimmering, crystalline future.

There are TWO GUARDS outside the building. They display their REMINGTON PISTOLS at their waists, and then gesture at Paul to be similarly forthcoming.

Paul opens his coat, showing that he's unarmed.

Satisfied, the Guards pass Paul to Edison's right-hand AIDE:

AIDE  
Mr. Edison is expecting you.

The Aide ushers Paul through the glass doors -

**INT (GASLAMP) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - CONTINUOUS**

- And up the polished marble staircase -

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - CORNER OFFICE**

- And into the CORNER OFFICE from which this business is run.

Paul BLINKS: Along the walls is an ARRAY OF ELECTRIC LIGHT BULBS, dozens of them formed into the shape of a single word:

**E                    D                    I                    S                    O                    N**

Paul is frozen under the lights.

THOMAS EDISON (O.S.)  
Hello.

Paul turns to see:

THOMAS EDISON - 41, he was homeless as a teenager and made his first million by the time he was 30. His is not a position that one attains through a lack of drive or willpower.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)  
My name is Thomas Edison.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(re: light bulb display)  
I can see that.

THOMAS EDISON  
It's for the World's Fair. I  
thought it might be helpful, after  
I light it up, to let the public  
know under whose bulbs they frolic.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Paul Cravath. Esquire.

THOMAS EDISON  
You're Walter Carter's apprentice.

PAUL CRAVATH  
His junior partner.

ON EDISON: "Ooooh. Fancy."

THOMAS EDISON  
One of my attorneys said he taught  
you. In law school.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Mr. Lowrey. Yes.

THOMAS EDISON  
He said you were quite the student.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm flattered.

THOMAS EDISON  
He said you graduated first in your  
class.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I did.

THOMAS EDISON  
18 months ago.

PAUL CRAVATH  
...

THOMAS EDISON  
And now you're Walter Carter's ...  
"junior partner." You must be very  
ambitious, young man.

PAUL CRAVATH

I cannot imagine seeming ambitious  
- or young - to someone who  
registered his first patent by 21  
and made his first million by 30.

THOMAS EDISON

Well at least our respect is  
mutual.

PAUL CRAVATH

... How may I help you tonight, Mr.  
Edison?

THOMAS EDISON

So yesterday, my man was in  
Chicago, taking some measurements  
of the fair grounds. And do you  
know what my man said? He said that  
he saw one of George Westinghouse's  
engineers on the grounds as well.  
At first I figured, well, perhaps  
the fellow is just excited about  
the Ferris Wheel. But then I had a  
wild thought: What if Westinghouse  
is actually going to fight my  
injunction? Because that would be a  
tragedy.

PAUL CRAVATH

We're leaving our options open.

THOMAS EDISON

Your "options"?

PAUL CRAVATH

It is my job, as counsel to Mr.  
Westinghouse, to present him with  
as many options as possible.

THOMAS EDISON

May I present you with another  
"option"?

PAUL CRAVATH

Of course.

THOMAS EDISON

Great. If you'd like, I have the  
option of bankrupting your foolish  
client, ruining your fledgling  
firm, and ending your once-  
promising career before you ever  
make it into a courtroom.

PAUL CRAVATH  
 ... Are you threatening me?

THOMAS EDISON  
 Oh, young man. I don't have to  
 threaten you.  
 (turns)  
 Do you like the view?

Edison gestures to the windows: Outside, Manhattan's SKYLINE simmers in a glow of burning oil.

At the far edge, Paul can make out the STATUE OF LIBERTY, just visible all the way from Bedloe's island. The TORCH shines bright: It's lit with electrical light.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)  
 We've been having trouble with the  
 Pearl Street station recently. Some  
 instabilities.

Edison RUNS HIS FINGERS across the desk to a BLACK BUTTON at the far edge....

... Edison TAPS THE BLACK BUTTON...

... And suddenly the TORCH ATOP THE STATUE OF LIBERTY GOES DARK.

ON PAUL: Starring, stunned, at the black space where he used to be able to see the Statue.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)  
 Gas was such a predictable thing.  
 You take a heap of coal. You heat  
 it, filter it, pressurize it,  
 strike a match, and... voila.  
 Electricity is trickier. So many  
 different kinds of filaments,  
 casings, vacuums. And yet the old  
 system of power crumbles into  
 obsolescence. Do you know, the  
 police tell me that when my lights  
 go up in a public space, all manner  
 of horrid violence decreases? Men's  
 working days are no longer bound by  
 the setting sun. Factories double  
 their production. Midnight and noon  
 grow indistinct. The nighttime of  
 our ancestors is ending. Electric  
 light is the future. The man who  
 controls it will not simply make an  
 unimaginable fortune. He will not  
 simply dictate politics.

(MORE)

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)

He won't merely control Wall  
Street, or Washington, or the  
newspapers... No no no. The man who  
controls electricity will control  
the very moon in the sky.

And with that, Thomas Edison PRESSES his black button again  
and THE STATUE'S TORCH BURST BACK TO LIFE.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)

If you think you can stop me, I  
invite you to try. But you'll have  
to do it in the dark.

**EXT (STARLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - 65 FIFTH AVE**

A few minutes later, Paul EXITS the front door of Edison  
General Electric.

He takes a quiet breath of spring air. Above him, the  
starlight of the gods. Behind him, the man-made light of  
Thomas Edison.

ON PAUL: He is about to go head-to-head against one of the  
most powerful men in the world.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN**

A pair of DELIVERY MEN truck BOX after BOX of papers into  
Paul's office.

Paul watches with Carter and Hughes as their offices are  
packed floor-to-ceiling with dozens of boxes of documents.

WALTER CARTER

... 310 lawsuits.

CHARLES HUGHES

312.

(off his look)

Rhode Island and Maine suits are in  
the corner.

WALTER CARTER

Thomas Edison is suing every  
Westinghouse partner. Every local  
company he's ever done business  
with.

CHARLES HUGHES

Or *might* do business with.

WALTER CARTER

Edison is no longer just trying to block Westinghouse from selling lights to the World's Fair. Now he's trying to put him out of business entirely.

(to Paul)

I assigned you to make sure we did not have to litigate a losing case. Now you've managed to get us litigating 310 of them.

CHARLES HUGHES

312.

PAUL CRAVATH

Our client has requested a vigorous defense.

WALTER CARTER

You're about to vigorously defend him into bankruptcy.

PAUL CRAVATH

What Edison is doing is fundamentally unfair. Edison can own his specific design of a light bulb, but nobody should be able to own the *idea* of a light bulb. This goes right back to the Constitution – patents were established to defend the rights of outsider geniuses and to foster innovation. Not to stifle it. What Edison is attempting is a perversion of the law.

WALTER CARTER

... I sincerely hope your argument in court is better than that.

ON PAUL: Frustrated, but this is still his boss.

But they're interrupted by the arrival of Paul's Secretary:

SECRETARY

(to Paul)

A visitor for you.

WALTER CARTER

Christ. Who is Edison suing now?

SECRETARY

I don't think she's here about Mr.  
Edison.

ON THE MEN: "She?"

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

It's Miss Agnes Huntington.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - PAUL'S OFFICE**

A minute later, Paul leads Agnes into his office.

Embarrassed about the mess, he tries to find her a place to sit -

- There's not much he can do.

She graciously doesn't seem to mind.

PAUL CRAVATH

... I apologize for not recognizing  
you. On the street.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Would you have behaved any less  
gallantly if you had?

PAUL CRAVATH

I'd at least have had the manners  
to get your name.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

If you'd recognized me, you  
wouldn't have needed to.

ON PAUL: She's got him there. And she's witty about it.

PAUL CRAVATH

How may I be of service to you,  
Miss Huntington?

AGNES HUNTINGTON

First, I wanted to offer you these.  
(removes tickets from her  
purse)

Tickets to the Metropolitan Opera.  
To say thank you.

PAUL CRAVATH

There's no need.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

There is. And a pair of orchestra seats doesn't even begin to cover it.

(beat)

And second... Well I've found myself lately in need of a lawyer.

PAUL CRAVATH

A lawyer?

AGNES HUNTINGTON

You are one, right? "Esquire", and all that.

PAUL CRAVATH

Yes.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

(removes papers as well)

My contract with the opera house. I was wondering if you could look over it for me. The owners - you know, JP Morgan and his friends - want to mount a new production in the autumn - one in which I might not play a part. Are they able to cancel my contract so easily?

Paul looks at the contracts in her hand - and at the tickets she's placed on his desk.

ON PAUL: Making a surprisingly serious decision.

PAUL CRAVATH

... I'm sorry, Miss. I'm afraid I cannot be of assistance.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Pardon?

PAUL CRAVATH

It's just this case... Edison v. Westinghouse. I cannot be distracted from it. I hope you understand. May I recommend another attorney?

ON AGNES: Is Paul actually saying no to her? When was the last time someone said no to her?

She stands, somewhat offended.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
That's quite all right, Mr.  
Cravath. I'll find my own attorney,  
thank you.

And with that, she leaves.

ON PAUL: Watching her go. Pissed at himself for having to do this. And yet these are the sacrifices required of him, are they not?

Charles Hughes pops his head in the doorway:

CHARLES HUGHES  
... Did you just turn down Agnes Huntington?

PAUL CRAVATH  
(re: boxes in the hall)  
I don't exactly have an excess of time right now.

CHARLES HUGHES  
Do you have any idea how much seats at the Met cost?  
(beat)  
Can I have your tickets?

PAUL CRAVATH  
This case is the only thing that matters right now. All right? I have to find a way to win.

ON HUGHES: And how the hell are you going to do that?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COURT HOUSE - LOWER MANHATTAN**

Paul enters a lower Manhattan court house, winding through the halls to find -

- The COURT CLERK behind his desk.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm here to file a lawsuit, please.

COURT CLERK  
All right...  
(taking out paperwork)  
... And who are you suing, Sir?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm suing Thomas Edison.

Off of the clerk's shocked face we -

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON ESTATE - MENLO PARK, NJ**

A MESSENGER scurries from Edison's austere MANSION - it has 23 separate fireplaces - to his massive "R & D" LABORATORY, just down the road.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON LABORATORY - MENLO PARK - CONTINUOUS**

The Messenger, clutching a telegram, enters the laboratory, moving past the ROWS of ENGINEERS -

- To Edison's OFFICE in the rear.

The Messenger enters, delivering the telegram to Edison's attorney, GROSVENOR LOWREY - 50s, one of the most esteemed *eminence grisé* in the New York legal community.

Lowrey reads it and nods before turning back to his client.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
... Confirmation from London. My God, I'll say this kid is a smart one.

THOMAS EDISON  
You cannot be serious.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
I can. Mr. Cravath's technique here is ingenious. He's bought Sawyer & Man's *British* light bulb patents, and is using them to counter-sue you in *American* court. Their patent predates yours, so he now claims that your light bulbs infringe on *his* patent.

THOMAS EDISON  
Sawyer & Man's design doesn't even work.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Which places us in the unenviable position of having to explain that to judges in both New York and London.

THOMAS EDISON

If Cravath is so clever then perhaps I should hire him to represent me.

ON LOWREY: He's just going to swallow that insult.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

... That won't be necessary. He's stalling for time, but it won't work and he knows it.

THOMAS EDISON

This needs to be handled before bidding begins on the fair.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

It will be.

THOMAS EDISON

I told you that the lawsuit alone would not be sufficient to eliminate Westinghouse.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Sir, we agreed upon this course of action. It is going to take a little time, but I assure you that Westinghouse will back down and you will win the fair. You just need to be patient.

ON EDISON: "Patience" is not exactly a virtue he's known for.

But before he can respond they're interrupted by -

DASH EDISON (O.S.)

God damn you.

Both men TURN at the arrival of DASH EDISON - 20, inherited all of his father's moxie but little of his genius.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

I'll leave you two alone.

THOMAS EDISON

Stay.

(to Dash)

Our appointment is not until five.

DASH EDISON

You cannot schedule appointments  
with me like I am one of your  
goddamned employees.

THOMAS EDISON

If you're so keen on being a  
businessman, then I will treat you  
like a businessman.

DASH EDISON

You are treating me like your  
competitors: You're suing me.

THOMAS EDISON

Mr. Lowrey. Will you explain the  
situation to Mr. Edison?

Lowrey looks back and forth between his client and his  
client's son: It is his task to be the voice of reason.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

... Your father isn't suing you.  
Precisely. He is simply trying to  
block your deal with the Morris  
Chemical Company.

DASH EDISON

I sold them my ideas.

THOMAS EDISON

They did not pay you for your  
ideas. They paid you for your name.

DASH EDISON

They've renamed the company in my  
honor!

THOMAS EDISON

They've put the word "Edison" in  
the title so that their sales will  
triple.

DASH EDISON

You think I have no value to anyone  
except as your son.

THOMAS EDISON

I think that you are in possession  
of a very pricey surname. And it is  
not yours to sell.

DASH EDISON

It's our family name.

THOMAS EDISON

I gave it to you. And I have  
instructed Mr. Lowrey to take it  
back.

Dash looks between his father and Lowrey. He cannot believe  
what is happening.

DASH EDISON

... You're suing your only son for  
your name back?

THOMAS EDISON

The only thing a man has in this  
world is his name, do you  
understand? It's high time that you  
earned yours.

Dash doesn't even know what else to say, and STORMS OFF.

ON LOWREY: Handling difficult clients, like Edison, is why he  
gets paid the big bucks.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC CO FACTORY -  
PENNSYLVANIA**

The GRINDING of great big MACHINES reverberate through  
Westinghouse's massive factory. AIR BRAKES, WHEELS,  
PISTONS... It's all manufactured right here in the most  
efficient, modern factory in the country.

REVEAL: Westinghouse is making one of his frequent  
inspections of the place - his eyes dart to little details,  
checking for imperfections.

Paul follows close behind.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... Sawyer & Man's bulbs don't even  
work.

PAUL CRAVATH

I know. But they were first.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Kind of impressed.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Huh. So your counter-suit will be successful?

PAUL CRAVATH

No. The American courts will eventually realize the British patent is bad. But if Edison can use the legal system to bog us down, we can do the same thing to him. The counter-suit will buy us time.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Time for...?

PAUL CRAVATH

Time for you to light the World's Fair. And time for me to build 312 defenses against 312 other lawsuits.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

It sounds like we both need an army.

PAUL CRAVATH

Unfortunately, one cannot conscript people in an army of lawyers.

Westinghouse takes a good long look at Paul.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... Do you know what size poppet valve to use on a twelve-inch brake cylinder?

PAUL CRAVATH

Can't say I do.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Can't say I do either. But Bill does.

(gestures to a factory foreman)

You see Jim, over there?

(points)

He knows more about air reservoirs than any man alive. Ron is a wiz with frame levers.

ON PAUL: Failing to see Westinghouse's point.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)

Being the president of this company does not mean being the top expert on every facet of our work. It means knowing enough to hire people who know a lot more than I do. This company is a team.

PAUL CRAVATH

The law is not like a locomotive. You cannot manufacture legal work in a factory.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Why?

Paul is about to answer...

... When he stops. He doesn't have an answer, does he?

Off of Paul's thoughtful expression we -

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL - 47TH STREET - SEQUENCE**

Paul walks across the blocks-wide 47th STREET CAMPUS of his alma mater - Columbia University Law School. (They won't move uptown for five more years.)

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - SEQUENCE**

A few minutes later, he stands at the back of a LAW SCHOOL auditorium, where a GROUP OF STUDENTS are engaged in a MOCK TRIAL.

Paul is joined by their PROFESSOR, with whom Paul is still friendly. They're quiet as they watch the students argue.

ON PAUL: Less than two years ago, he was one of them.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - LATER**

After the debate is over, only FIVE STUDENTS have been chosen to stay behind with Paul and the Professor.

They sit in the front row as Paul addresses them:

PAUL CRAVATH

... What I am proposing is a hierarchical system of legal work.  
(MORE)

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
You will report to me, and I'll report to Mr. Carter. Think of it like one of Mr. Westinghouse's factories: If he has an industrial system for producing mass quantities of electrical work, why can't we have an industrial system for performing legal work?

LAW STUDENT #1  
(confused)  
Because a legal brief is nothing like a steel wire?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Who's to say? We are facing an unprecedented legal assault. No one man can fight it. But a *system*... With all of your help...

The Students all think: What Paul is proposing is unheard of. (But this structure will eventually be the foundation of all modern law firms.)

LAW STUDENT #2  
So we'd be attorneys?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Not exactly. You won't have your licenses yet.

LAW STUDENT #3  
So we'd be clerks?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Not exactly. You'll be performing highly skilled legal work.

LAW STUDENT #4  
So we'd at least be paid well?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Not exactly.  
(beat)  
Think of yourselves as.... "Associate attorneys." Somewhere between lawyers and clerks, on the floor of a legal factory.

The Students look to their Professor, who seems encouraging.

LAW STUDENT #1  
... What's in it for us, then?

PROFESSOR

In a year, Mr. Cravath will promote  
whichever one of you does the best  
work to junior partner at his firm.

(beat)

But only one of you.

The Law Students look at each other competitively as we -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN -  
SEQUENCE**

The five Law Students move into Paul's office, which now becomes their (increasingly cramped) bullpen.

Carter, Hughes and Paul watch them move in. This is the craziest thing the older lawyers have ever seen.

WALTER CARTER

(to Paul)

... "Associate attorneys?"

PAUL CRAVATH

Yes.

WALTER CARTER

And who is going to pay for all of  
this?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - LABORATORY**

At his laboratory desk, George Westinghouse looks at a BILL for legal services.

His scowl indicates that the numbers involved are not small.

REVEAL: Paul stands before him. Behind are ROWS of identical workstations, at which DOZENS OF ENGINEERS work on projects assigned to them by the boss. On every desk are the tell-tale TUBES and WIRE COILS of 19th century science.

It's as if Dr. Frankenstein's laboratory has been converted into the Google campus.

PAUL CRAVATH

... I know that it's expensive, but if the associates are successful in their task, their salaries will more than pay for themselves.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

And their task is...?

PAUL CRAVATH

Simple: To find a flaw in Edison's patent.

(beat)

The only way to win - in all of those lawsuits - is to prove that his patent is invalid. That there is some mistake there, somewhere, that makes it worthless.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

You think that if enough men devote enough hours to going through the documents, they can find some bullshit technicality on which to blow up the most valuable patent in America?

PAUL CRAVATH

And you wonder why people hate lawyers.

Westinghouse smiles. Paul is becoming quite the attorney, isn't he?

Westinghouse checks his watch.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... You missed the last train back.

PAUL CRAVATH

I'll find a hotel in Pittsburgh.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

If my wife finds out I sent you to Pittsburgh for dinner she'll have my hide. Dinner is in an hour.

(looks Paul over)

I'll have the Butler find you an appropriate jacket.

## INT (GASLAMPS) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - DINING ROOM

The table is set for 18: George and Marguerite Westinghouse, a handful of top company EXECUTIVES (and their WIVES), plus a few PITTSBURGH GENTRY...

... And of course, Paul.

He stares at the ARRAY OF GOLD CUTLERY before him on the dining table: Over a dozen forks and knives, of intricately differentiated sizes and shapes.

ON PAUL: What the hell is it all for?

Marguerite Westinghouse notices how out-of-place Paul is, and gestures to the correct utensils for his benefit.

He gives her a grateful nod.

RICH PITTSBURGH WOMAN  
... It's the Metropolitan Opera's  
first show under electric lights!  
Can we go?

RICH PITTSBURGH MAN  
The lights are Edison's. So: No.

POLITE LAUGHTER around the room.

COMPANY EXECUTIVE  
It was JP Morgan's idea, I'm told.  
As owner of both Edison General  
Electric and the Met, he can use  
his right hand to buy from his  
left.

RICH PITTSBURGH MAN  
I'll bet the World's Fair will be  
thrilled to provide their audience  
with the same bulbs that the Met  
provides theirs.

RICH PITTSBURGH WOMAN  
George, are you going? To see the  
lights?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
(dismissive)  
What do I want with New York?

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
I've tried to get George to go to  
Manhattan once. He didn't make it  
past Philadelphia.

Everyone LAUGHS. Westinghouse pretends to be offended, for comedic effect, before winking at Marguerite.

RICH PITTSBURGH WOMAN  
It's impossible to find tickets  
anyway. And I've heard Agnes  
Huntington has been a terror to the  
stagehands.

PAUL CRAVATH  
She's seemed quite lovely to me.

Everyone turns: What?

RICH PITTSBURGH WOMAN  
You know Agnes Huntington?

PAUL CRAVATH  
We've met.  
(beat)  
Briefly.  
(beat)  
Some time back. She seemed very  
polite.

ON THE GUESTS: Extremely impressed with the social calibre of Westinghouse's young lawyer.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
(to Paul)  
Well then if I were you, I'd go see  
the lights. And tell your friend  
that we say hello, while you're at  
it.

ON PAUL: The attorney of George Westinghouse does belong at the Metropolitan Opera... Doesn't he?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) HABERDASHERY - LOWER EAST SIDE - SEQUENCE**

Paul is fitted for a proper NEW SUIT. There will be no further need to borrow from Westinghouse.

PAUL CRAVATH (V.O.)  
"Dear Miss Huntington -"

**INT (GASLAMP) PAUL'S APARTMENT - 50TH STREET - SEQUENCE**

In his humble ONE-BEDROOM apartment, Paul dresses in WHITE TIE for an evening out.

PAUL CRAVATH (V.O.)

"If you could find it in your heart  
to pardon the belated nature of  
this reply, I would be most honored  
to join you at the opera."

Almost every inch of his tiny apartment is covered in LEGAL DOCUMENTS, which he has to wade through on his way out.

**I/E (STARLIGHT) HANSOM - TRAVELLING ACROSS MIDTOWN - SEQUENCE**

Paul takes a HANSOM through LONGACRE SQUARE (later renamed "Times Square"), the headquarters of all the big carriage companies and a square half-mile of thieves, prostitutes, and other low-end entertainments.

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM**

Agnes RECEIVES Paul's letter, along with the CONTRACTS she'd given him.

He's NOTED up the contracts dutifully.

ON AGNES: "Okay then..."

AGNES HUNTINGTON (V.O.)

"Dear Mr. Cravath - Of course the  
invitation still stands..."

**EXT (STARLIGHT) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - 39TH ST - SEQUENCE**

Paul arrives outside the Metropolitan Opera House. Signs announce the importance of the evening's show:

"FIRST PERFORMANCE UNDER EDISON'S ELECTRIC LIGHT!"

Paul looks up at the sign, and at the HUNDRED IMPECCABLY DRESSED RICH PEOPLE going in...

ON PAUL: Well he's sure made it, hasn't he?

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - STAGE**

Paul watches the empty stage from his orchestra seat.

ON THE STAGE: Lit only by a long line of CANDLES, a SOLITARY FIGURE walks out onto the stage. It's too dim to see his face...

... But suddenly the fleet of ELECTRIC LIGHTS at the side of the stage BLOOM TO LIFE...

... The crowd "oohs" and "ahhhs"...

.... And we see the man's face:

It's Thomas Edison.

Paul shifts uncomfortably in his seat.

THOMAS EDISON

Ladies and gentlemen! Thank you.

Thank you. Please.

(quieting the applause)

You know, I have this nickname.

"The Wizard." It is undeserved. For the true wizard behind all that you behold sadly cannot join us tonight: I'm afraid that JP Morgan is in Paris on business. And if I knew what business JP Morgan was conducting, well, then I might be as wealthy as he!

Gentle laughter from the crowd.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)

But Mr. Morgan has built all that you see around you. I have merely lit it up so you can get a better look.

APPLAUSE from the crowd.

ON PAUL: Well, if he's going to pick his enemies, at least he's picked the most powerful ones on the planet.

The curtains close...

... And then reopen to REVEAL:

Agnes Huntington, dressed as a SPANISH COUNTESS, begins her show.

Paul watches, rapt, as Agnes ENTHRALLS the crowd with her performance.

Paul is far from the most cultured viewer in the audience, but even he can tell why she is quickly becoming the most heralded young singer of her generation.

## INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) MET OPERA HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM

After the show, Paul migrates down to the subterranean dressing rooms, where various members of the CAST and CREW MINGLE with the SWELLS.

Paul enters Agnes' room to find her and Fannie enjoying champagne with various DIGNITARIES.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Miss Huntington. That was marvelous.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Thank you. And thank you for looking over my contracts - seems the Met can do with me as they like, according to your analysis.

PAUL CRAVATH  
After a performance such as that one, I can't imagine the Met doing anything other than putting you front and center on the stage.

ON AGNES: Flattered... But knows her position is more fragile than it would appear.

Fannie Huntington approaches, curious about who her daughter is talking to.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
(to Paul)  
Are you an admirer of the opera?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(off Paul's inquiring look)  
Meet my mother. Fannie Huntington.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Ma'am. I'm an admirer of any opera that your daughter is in.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
Which has been your favorite?

PAUL CRAVATH  
This one.  
(caught)  
I haven't seen any others.

Agnes smiles.

Fannie shrugs, then walks off to speak to someone more important.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
... Your mother is...

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... Protective.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Of you?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Of the position that we've earned.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Is this what you came to New York  
for?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
This is what everyone comes to New  
York for.

ON PAUL: He can't deny it. But it provokes a troubling thought.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... I can't get the image out of my  
head.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(knows exactly what he  
means)  
The burning man. The nightmares  
haven't stopped.

PAUL CRAVATH  
So we have one thing in common.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
What?

PAUL CRAVATH  
We have the same nightmares.

A charged moment between the two of them.

It's interrupted by the arrival of an impeccably high-class  
MAN named -

HENRY JAYNE  
(to Agnes)  
Brava! Brava!

He leans in and KISSES Agnes' hand.

HENRY JAYNE (CONT'D)  
(to Paul)  
Do we know each other? Henry Jayne.

ON PAUL: Recognizing his name. Especially his surname.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I know you by reputation alone, Mr.  
Jayne. I'm Paul Cravath.

ON HENRY: Does not recognize the name. Certainly not the surname.

HENRY JAYNE  
I'm afraid I don't have the  
pleasure of knowing your reputation  
yet, Mr... Cravath, you said?

Jayne takes Agnes' arm in his. Clearly, he's been calling on her for some time.

ON PAUL: How could he have been so stupid as to not have known that Agnes would be entwined with someone like Jayne?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Mr. Cravath is the attorney I told  
you about.

HENRY JAYNE  
Oh yes! You know my family is  
always in need of another good  
attorney. If you'd like some more  
work.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Kind of you to offer.

HENRY JAYNE  
(to Agnes)  
Dearest, the gang is headed to the  
Player's for a nightcap. You'll  
come?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(to Henry)  
As long as they have champagne.  
(to Paul)  
Will you join us?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'm afraid I have to get back to  
the office.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Pity.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Good night.

Paul SLINKS AWAY, almost rudely, as quickly as possible.

ON AGNES: Watching him retreat, realizing his embarrassment.

**INT (GASLAMP) PAUL'S APARTMENT - 50TH STREET**

Some minutes later, Paul bursts into his apartment. He's pissed at himself for being so stupid as to ever think Agnes might be interested in him.

Paul turns on the single gaslamp in the corner. Looks around at his cramped apartment; at the stacks of daunting, impossible legal work in front of him.

He takes off his stiff, uncomfortable BOW TIE.

Pours himself a WHISKEY as he settles in to work through the night.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN**

The next morning, Paul enters his office building, rather bleary-eyed from the night before -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - CONTINUOUS**

- But the very second he steps foot in the office he's met by an angry, blue-collar BUSINESSMAN who has clearly been waiting for Paul's arrival.

The businessman's name is:

CHARLES COFFIN  
... Oh, so you do make it into the office every now and again, do you?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Pardon, who are you?

CHARLES COFFIN  
I've sent you six letters.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Mr. ... Green?

CHARLES COFFIN

*Mr. Coffin.* Massachusetts. Green is  
your local man in Connecticut.  
Though I spoke with him yesterday  
and he's just as furious as I am.

ON PAUL: Realizing who this is. Feeling terrible.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Why don't you join me in my  
office, Mr. Coffin, so we can  
discuss how I can help you?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - PAUL'S OFFICE**

Moments later, Paul takes a seat behind his desk.

Coffin declines the offer for a chair.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Edison is trying to scare you.

CHARLES COFFIN

He's doing a good job of it.

PAUL CRAVATH

He has sued 311 other companies,  
just like yours, in order to get us  
to back down and give him the fair.  
But we have a strategy for fighting  
this.

CHARLES COFFIN

You're going to play David to  
Edison's Goliath?

PAUL CRAVATH

David won.

CHARLES COFFIN

Goliath didn't have lawyers.

Coffin examines Paul's framed LAW SCHOOL DIPLOMA on the wall.

CHARLES COFFIN (CONT'D)

(re: diploma)

Columbia University?

PAUL CRAVATH

Yes.

CHARLES COFFIN

My boy is about your age. I always wanted to send him to a school like that.

PAUL CRAVATH

It's a good school.

CHARLES COFFIN

Thanks to you, I won't be able to afford it.

PAUL CRAVATH

...

CHARLES COFFIN

All you rich, New York lawyers... You don't care about people like us, do you?

PAUL CRAVATH

I'm not the man you think I am.

CHARLES COFFIN

The second I saw that suit you're wearing, I knew exactly what kind of man you were.

ON PAUL: He just bought this suit last week. And he was so proud of being able to afford it.

CHARLES COFFIN (CONT'D)

My father started my business, did you know that? It's a solid company. We render copper. I was the one who landed us the deal with Westinghouse — to supply his devices with copper wiring. Assemble them locally. God, I was so proud. And now I'm being sued for everything I have — and much more — by Thomas Edison.

PAUL CRAVATH

... I swear to you, you will not lose your company.

CHARLES COFFIN

I am not some sort of chess piece on your big expensive board, do you understand? There are families on the line here. Mine. Hundreds of others. And we are all depending on you.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - ASSOCIATES BULLPEN**

Minutes later, Paul BURSTS into the cramped conference room that's become his associate attorneys' bullpen.

PAUL CRAVATH  
No one is going home until we figure out how to invalidate Edison's patent. What do you have?

ON THE ASSOCIATES: Not much.

CUT TO:

**INT (GASLAMP) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - ASSOCIATES BULLPEN**

Late that night, Paul and his associates are still at it. True to his word, no one appears to be going home any time soon.

They're each looking through separate piles of documents, without much success.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1  
(reading from an old magazine)

"And that's when I made my great discovery. Perhaps the greatest discovery of this century or the next: the light from a strip of glowing hot carbonized platinum lit up the entire room."

(beat)

Edison is so modest in his interviews.

All the men keep reading, when one of the associates notices something:

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #3  
... The filament isn't made of carbonized platinum.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1  
Edison told the reporter from the Herald that it was platinum.

PAUL CRAVATH  
("Both of you shut up")  
Saying the wrong thing to a reporter is not against the law.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #2

I have an interview from a few years later where he says the right filament anyway. Look: Bamboo. He just mis-spoke.

PAUL CRAVATH

Edison's filaments are made of cotton.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #2

Here he says it's bamboo.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1

Here he says it's platinum.

PAUL CRAVATH

(holding up patent)

Edison's patent is less than two pages long, and I have read it at least 1000 times. I know every word of this thing. The filament is not platinum or bamboo. It is cotton. If you want to be attorneys, you have to pay attention to the details, all right?

The associates look down at their respective papers again. Paul is... wrong.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #3

We are... In this interview, from before the bulb was released, he says platinum. In that interview a year later, he says bamboo.

PAUL CRAVATH

What the - what are you saying?

Paul gets up to look - but the associates are right.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)

The patent itself says cotton.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #3

Christ.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1

(not getting it)

But lying to a reporter isn't against the law. Right?

ON PAUL: His mind racing. Putting together what this means.

PAUL CRAVATH

Right.

(beat)

But what if Edison didn't lie to the reporter? What if he lied on the patent?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - STUDY**

Paul and his senior partner, Carter, meet with George Westinghouse.

Westinghouse looks over the PAPERS Paul is showing him.

PAUL CRAVATH

September, 1878. Hundreds of scientists all over the world are racing to make a working incandescent light bulb.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Including me.

PAUL CRAVATH

But then, one day... Thomas Edison announces to the press that he's done it. He demonstrates a glass-enclosed vacuum in which glows a *platinum* filament. The stock of all the big gas companies plummets 30% in two days. All of his opponents quit.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Not me.

PAUL CRAVATH

But then, curiously, Edison doesn't file for the patent for almost a year. And when he does, it uses... A *cotton* filament. And then *another* year later, the first light bulb rolls out of his factory, in which glows... A *bamboo* filament.

(beat)

Edison was only first because the light bulb that he patented *didn't* actually work.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

How did I miss this?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Everyone did. And if I can get him  
to admit that in court...

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
In court?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I want to bring this to trial. To  
confront Edison on the witness  
stand.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: You want to go to court now?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Bids for the World's Fair are due  
in mere weeks. Why not wait? The  
fair is finally within reach.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Because if I can get Edison to  
admit the discrepancy then his  
patent will not be worth the paper  
that it's printed on. The lawsuit  
will be over, and you and he may  
duke it out over the fair as you  
always should have: On scientific  
merit alone.

WALTER CARTER  
But a newspaper interview is not  
admissible in court. This only  
works if you can get Edison to  
admit that the bulb on his patent  
didn't fully work. He has to admit  
it out loud.

PAUL CRAVATH  
So I'll have to get him to admit  
it.

WALTER CARTER  
If you go to trial and lose, then  
Mr. Westinghouse's bid won't even  
be accepted.

PAUL CRAVATH  
It's worth the risk.

Westinghouse looks back and forth between Paul and Carter.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
(to Paul)  
The day I met you, you told me you  
thought winning was impossible.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I was wrong.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
What changed your mind?

PAUL CRAVATH  
... The day I met you, you were  
willing to stake your name on a  
principle. Something bigger than  
all of us. Something bigger than  
the fair. Now I am too.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Pride at his young attorney's commitment to  
their cause.

ON CARTER: He did not realize that Paul and Westinghouse  
would bring out such idealism in one another – and he doesn't  
like it.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
All right. Let's go to court.  
(he stands)  
Oh, Mr. Cravath?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Yes, Sir?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Edison sure better admit it out  
loud.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COURT HOUSE - LOWER MANHATTAN**

Paul stands in front of the New York State courthouse in  
Lower Manhattan. Ready for the show down. He's trying to calm  
his nerves.

Charles Hughes approaches.

CHARLES HUGHES  
It's really important to me that  
you don't screw up today.

ON PAUL: No matter what, he can at least count on Charles  
Hughes to be Charles Hughes.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... It's important to a lot of  
other people too.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COURTROOM - LOWER MANHATTAN - LATER**

Paul shuffles his papers at the DEFENSE TABLE.

Grosvenor Lowrey passes by Paul on the way to the PLAINTIFF'S TABLE:

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
... Paul Cravath. You've made it  
very far since my first-year  
introduction to contracts course.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Thank you.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
Whatever happens - you should be  
proud. If you ever find yourself in  
need of a job, my firm is always  
hiring.

ON LOWREY: A kind smile, to further rattle our young lawyer.

ON PAUL: It's not going to work.

They both take their seats, before STANDING AGAIN as the JUDGE enters.

JUDGE  
Good morning. Mr. Cravath, I  
believe we're ready for you to call  
your first witness.

PAUL CRAVATH  
The defense calls Thomas Edison.

And with that, the rear doors of the court room open and Thomas Edison ENTERS, led by one of Lowrey's apprentices.

Edison passes by Paul, giving him a little WINK.

Paul just nods resolutely as Edison takes the stand.

ON PAUL CRAVATH AND THOMAS EDISON: Two expert verbal duelist, ready to joust.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
What was the first thing you  
invented, Mr. Edison?

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
Objection, Your Honor. Relevance.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Mr. Edison's process of invention  
is the very thing we're here to  
discuss. I for one would like to  
hear a bit more about it.

JUDGE  
Let's hear a bit more.

THOMAS EDISON  
It was a... Well it was called an  
automatic repeater.

PAUL CRAVATH  
And when was this?

THOMAS EDISON  
Is George Westinghouse claiming  
that he invented that now too?

Paul gives him a look.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Your Honor, I'll ask -

THOMAS EDISON  
- The year was 1865. I was a  
butcher boy in Port Huron, selling  
candy on the rails. Found odd jobs,  
here and there. Things that needed  
fixing. I've always had a way with  
machines.

PAUL CRAVATH  
So it would appear.

THOMAS EDISON  
I would overhear the chatter of the  
Western Union men at the stations.  
"If only we could relay the  
signals." But then they wouldn't do  
anything about it. I did. I fiddled  
until I'd built a device that  
worked.

PAUL CRAVATH  
And then you sold the patent to  
Gold & Stock. For \$200.

THOMAS EDISON  
Is that a question?

PAUL CRAVATH

By the time you were 22, you'd made  
it all the way to New York.

THOMAS EDISON

And by 30 I lived in a mansion on  
Fifth Avenue.

(beat)

You'll be 30 soon, won't you?

PAUL CRAVATH

... Was your process on the light  
bulb similar to the one you've just  
described?

THOMAS EDISON

For a hundred years people had been  
trying to make functional, safe  
indoor light. It was a problem that  
no one could solve. Until me.

PAUL CRAVATH

What about Sawyer & Man? Their  
patent predates yours by a few  
years.

THOMAS EDISON

But their device wasn't complete.  
It was a suggestion of a thing, not  
the thing itself.

PAUL CRAVATH

For instance, the Sawyer & Man  
claim did not specify a type of  
filament?

THOMAS EDISON

Oh my! That's very technical. Yes.  
The Sawyer & Man patent suggests,  
among its vagaries, that there  
should be some sort of carbonized  
filament. But it doesn't go further  
on that point, or on many others.

PAUL CRAVATH

And then on your patent claim, you  
did specify a filament, didn't you?

THOMAS EDISON

I'm sure.

PAUL CRAVATH

And what was that filament?

THOMAS EDISON  
You must have the claim on you.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I hoped you would tell me.

THOMAS EDISON  
You'll be disappointed: I'm not  
sure I remember.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I'll help: Your application says it  
was a cotton filament.

Paul presents Edison's PATENT APPLICATION to the Judge, who receives it from him.

THOMAS EDISON  
Very well.

PAUL CRAVATH  
So it was a cotton filament that  
finally, after years of trying,  
made the lamp work?

THOMAS EDISON  
Apparently so.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Are you sure? Because you gave an  
interview with the New York Herald  
in which you said it was made of  
platinum.

THOMAS EDISON  
I give so many interviews.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
And, Your Honor, those interviews  
are not admissible.

JUDGE  
That's correct.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(to Edison)  
Is there platinum in the bulbs that  
you currently ship to your  
customers?

THOMAS EDISON  
Are you in the market for a light  
bulb?

PAUL CRAVATH

If I go to an Edison shop and purchase one, will I find a platinum filament at the center? Or might it be bamboo?

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Objection.

JUDGE

Grounds?

GROSVENOR LOWREY

(straining)

... Relevance?

JUDGE

The witness will answer.

THOMAS EDISON

I couldn't say.

PAUL CRAVATH

(to Edison)

Cotton, platinum, or bamboo? Which one actually works?

THOMAS EDISON

Does it matter?

PAUL CRAVATH

If you were the man to finally make a working filament, then which was the filament that finally worked?

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Objection. Asked and answered.

PAUL CRAVATH

— Not answered, your honor —

THOMAS EDISON

— I'm happy to continue —

GROSVENOR LOWREY

— There is no need —

PAUL CRAVATH

— Cotton, platinum, or bamboo?

JUDGE

— Sustained. Mr. Edison, you don't need to answer —

PAUL CRAVATH

— You're the best inventor in America? Tell me what you invented.

THOMAS EDISON

I'd like to answer this —

GROSVENOR LOWREY

— Thomas, not another word —

PAUL CRAVATH

The bulb didn't work, did it?

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Judge, Mr. Cravath is trying to get my client to —

THOMAS EDISON

— Mr. Cravath is trying to get me to admit that the filament specified on my patent didn't work.

Silence.

ON PAUL: Holy shit. Did Edison just say that out loud?

PAUL CRAVATH

... Can you repeat that, Mr. Edison?

THOMAS EDISON

There were three different filaments. Only the last one worked, but that wasn't the one I put on the patent.

ON PAUL: He just won the largest patent suit in American history.

All eyes are on him. He's too stunned to breathe.

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)

Are you pleased, Mr. Cravath?

PAUL CRAVATH

... Yes. Thank you. Mr. Edison.  
(to Judge)  
The witness is excused.

THOMAS EDISON

You know, there were even more than three.

Everyone turns to look back at Edison: What is happening?

PAUL CRAVATH

More?

THOMAS EDISON

There were 10,000 different  
filaments.

PAUL CRAVATH

Pardon?

THOMAS EDISON

You have never understood what it  
is that I do for a living. Your  
Honor, may I explain?

ON PAUL: What is Edison doing?

JUDGE

The witness is entitled to fully  
answer Mr. Cravath's question.

THOMAS EDISON

I create things that did not exist  
before. How? Well, I survey all the  
designs that have been tried. I see  
what has fallen short. I spot the  
cracks and I set my men to paving  
them. Science is not the hand of  
God reaching down to press the  
pointed finger. It's drudgery. It  
is trying 10,000 different shapes  
of bulb. Then trying 10,000  
different air fillings. Then, yes,  
10,000 different filaments. It is  
realizing that those are the three  
components that matter and then  
trying 10,000 times 10,000 times  
10,000 combinations until one of  
them lights up. And then selling  
this to a public who never thought  
such a thing was possible. Of that,  
I am guilty as sin: I sold the  
light bulb. Is there any part of  
you that believes that without me  
Americans would have electric light  
in their homes? Of course not.  
George Westinghouse can tweak his  
needling details. But perfecting  
the steps is hardly any good if  
you've failed to make it to the  
dance. I hired the band, I booked  
the hall. I advertised the show.  
And you hate me because my name is  
on the poster.

(MORE)

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)

If the word 'invention' is to maintain even a semblance of rational sense, then it must be said that the light bulb was my invention. It is my patent. Every single bulb. Every last filament. And to the mute ingratitudo with which you've greeted my gift I will say only one last thing.

(beat)

You're welcome.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COURT HOUSE - LOWER MANHATTAN - LATER**

Paul stands outside the court house, trying to make sense of what Edison just said.

He's approached by Carter and Hughes, each wearing ashen faces.

PAUL CRAVATH

... He admitted that it didn't work.

CHARLES HUGHES

It doesn't matter.

PAUL CRAVATH

I got him to admit it.

CHARLES HUGHES

And it doesn't matter.

PAUL CRAVATH

I did it. I did everything -

CHARLES HUGHES

- *Paul*. It doesn't matter.

PAUL CRAVATH

The Judge will not go for Edison's argument.

WALTER CARTER

The decision just came in.

(hands Paul documents)

You lost.

Paul looks down at the papers: He can't believe it.

PAUL CRAVATH

He's ruled that not only is Westinghouse forbidden from making electric lights, but so is everyone. Everywhere.

(looks up)

Thomas Edison owns the entire concept of electric light, as presently understood.

CHARLES HUGHES

The punitive damages are even worse.

Paul is dumbfounded by the numbers he sees.

PAUL CRAVATH

"\$2 million?"

WALTER CARTER

Westinghouse's electrical holdings are now worthless, so he'll have to sell off his railroad holdings to cover the damages. Maybe the house.

PAUL CRAVATH

How could the Judge do this?

Carter and Hughes share a look: Should they tell him?

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)

What?

CHARLES HUGHES

We never looked into the Judge.

PAUL CRAVATH

Why would we look into Judge Reynolds?

WALTER CARTER

Because Judge Reynolds has presided over at least 25 previous cases involving JP Morgan's companies.

CHARLES HUGHES

25 cases that we were able to find this morning, at least.

WALTER CARTER

And he has ruled against JP Morgan precisely zero times.

ON PAUL: This hits him like brass knuckles to the gut.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Morgan bribed the Judge?

WALTER CARTER  
Paul - Morgan didn't have to.  
They're members of the same clubs.  
They sip port at the same exclusive  
tables. This is New York.

Paul's world is crashing down around him.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I gave Westinghouse my word. Mr.  
Coffin. I told them I could do  
this.

For the first time, Carter looks at him with genuine  
kindness.

WALTER CARTER  
Look, if there's anyone who would  
want to blame you, it's me. And I'm  
the one telling you: It's not your  
fault. This was never a fair fight.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) HUNTINGTON HOUSE - NO 4 GRAMERCY PARK**

CLOSE ON: The front page of the New York times. The headline  
reads:

"EDISON PREVAILS IN LEGAL SHOWDOWN - His bid expected to win  
contract for the World's Fair"

REVEAL: Agnes is in her sitting room, looking over the  
morning's paper. She sees Paul's name in the article.

ON AGNES: This must be the most crushing loss of Paul's life.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON (O.S.)  
I have some good news.

Agnes looks up to see her mother entering.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
You got the part.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
What part?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
"Paul Jones."

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
There's no part for me in "Paul  
Jones."

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
There is now. You're going to play  
Paul Jones.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
What?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
The theater will restage it as a  
comedy. What a hoot! Don't you  
think?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I can play the lead if I play a  
man?

Fannie leans in and HUGS her daughter. Fannie is thrilled;  
Agnes is strangely subdued.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
... You're welcome, by the way.  
Though I'm not the person you  
should be thanking.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I'll thank the director.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
Not who I meant.  
(off Agnes' look)  
I cannot imagine that Henry Jayne  
failed to put in a helpful word.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You don't think they've hired me  
because of my abilities?

FANNIE HUNTINGTON  
I think that every little bit  
helps.

Fannie registers Agnes' distinct lack of total enthusiasm,  
and is annoyed.

FANNIE HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
... You are soon to be the lead in  
the autumn show at the Metropolitan  
Opera.

(MORE)

FANNIE HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)

You are soon to be proposed to — I should hope — by the only son of one of this country's wealthiest families. What precisely is the matter?

Agnes looks down at the newspaper: At Paul's name among the losers.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

... Nothing, mother. Nothing at all.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON ESTATE - DINING ROOM**

Edison takes his breakfast alone in his massive dining room. He's reading the morning papers when Grosvenor Lowrey enters.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

... It's a fine day, Sir.

THOMAS EDISON

I should say so.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Our man in Chicago says that Westinghouse obeyed the court's ruling and didn't submit a bid for the fair. So in —  
(checks pocketwatch)  
— About three hours, bidding will close, and that will be that.

ON EDISON: Not really the type to give his employees a pat on the back for a job well done.

THOMAS EDISON

... Is there a reason that you're still standing there?

ON LOWREY: His client can't even be pleasant in victory.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Thank you for trusting me to fight this in court, Sir. I knew that we'd have the law on our side. Congratulations on the fair.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) WORLD'S FAIR GROUNDS - CHICAGO**

The fair grounds have advanced considerably since last we saw them: A few of the GRAND BUILDINGS, each the size of a museum, have been completed.

The lagoon has been FILLED WITH WATER.

As HUNDREDS of workers SPRAY PAINT the newly finished buildings in a pristine white, we find -

- A 50-year-old MAN we've never met before RACING across the grounds. His name is LEMUELL SERRELL.

Serrell holds a large PACKAGE under his arm as he runs through the construction -

- Past the CANALS spreading out from the lagoon -
- Past the spider-web-like Ferris Wheel -
- Before sprinting into the massive TENT at the very center -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WORLD'S FAIR GROUNDS - CENTER TENT -  
CONTINUOUS**

- And brushing past various ASSISTANTS -

ASSISTANT  
Sir? Pardon me? SIR?!?! You can't -

- The mysterious Lemuell Serrell arrives straight at -
- THE BACK ROOM OF THE TENT:

Inside, the FAIR COMMITTEE - a dozen older men - is deliberating.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
(breathless)  
Is this the Fair Committee?

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
This area is restricted.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
(re: package)  
I'm carrying a bid to light your fair.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
Bidding has closed.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
I believe bidding ends at noon.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
Yes.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
(re: pocket watch)  
I have 11:58, gentlemen.

The Fair Committee members look at their watches.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
... Please tell George Westinghouse  
that we're very sorry, but the  
courts have ruled that we cannot  
accept his bid.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
I don't represent George  
Westinghouse.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - STUDY**

George Westinghouse sits in his armchair, staring at a  
TELEGRAM.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: He cannot believe what he's reading.  
He doesn't even look up as Paul enters.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(mournfully)  
Sir. I'm here to take  
responsibility for what's happened.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Can't take his eyes off the telegram.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
This is my fault. If you'd like to  
fire me, you'll be well within your  
rights.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Kid...

PAUL CRAVATH  
Wait. If you will keep me on, I'd  
like to offer to handle the  
bankruptcy filings. Free of charge.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

- Kid -

PAUL CRAVATH

- It's the least I can do.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

*Paul.* There's a second bid to light  
the World's Fair.

PAUL CRAVATH

What? From who?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Someone named... "Nikola Tesla"?

ON PAUL AND WESTINGHOUSE: Who in the hell is Nikola Tesla?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - CORNER OFFICE**

Grosvenor Lowrey and Edison look over a similar telegram with  
similar confusion.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

... Who in the hell is Nikola  
Tesla?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - ASSOCIATES BULLPEN**

Charles Hughes bursts into the associate attorneys' bullpen  
just as the men are finally getting their coats to leave.

CHARLES HUGHES

Nobody goes home until you get me  
an answer to one question.

(holds up telegram)

Who in the fuck is Nikola Tesla?

As the associates wearily take their coats off for another  
long night we -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WORLD'S FAIR GROUNDS - TENT - SEQUENCE**

The members of the Fair Committee examine the new bid.

Their expressions reveal more than a little incredulity.

FAIR COMMITTEE MEMBER  
(to Serrell)  
... Scientifically speaking, what  
Mr. Tesla is proposing is simply  
not possible.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
He assures me that it is.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
Before we can accept his bid, we're  
going to require proof that this -  
device - is real.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - HALLWAYS - SEQUENCE**

Edison leads Lowrey down the halls of E.G.E.

THOMAS EDISON  
He's putting on a demonstration?

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
Their experts say that what he has  
proposed is... experimental.

Lowrey shows Edison a sheet of TELEGRAMS.

GROSVENOR LOWREY (CONT'D)  
This is all scientific mumbo jumbo  
to me, I'm afraid.

ON EDISON: Reading... And what he's reading is batshit crazy.

THOMAS EDISON  
... *Alternating current?*

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
What is "alternating current?"

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - 47TH ST - SEQUENCE**

Westinghouse leads Paul across Columbia University's  
tastefully manicured lawns.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... I don't get it.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Damn it, do you understand any  
science at all?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Honestly? No.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: A large sigh before he begins to explain -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - HALLWAYS - SEQUENCE**

Back to Edison and Lowrey:

THOMAS EDISON  
There are two fundamentally  
different kinds of current:  
Alternating and direct. Every  
electrical device that you have  
ever seen - my bulbs,  
Westinghouse's bulbs - runs on D/C.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - 47TH ST -  
SEQUENCE**

Back to Paul and Westinghouse:

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Now, "alternating current" - A/C -  
was actually discovered earlier. It  
transmits energy more efficiently.  
It travels greater distances. It is  
far more powerful.

PAUL CRAVATH  
So why don't people use it?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - HALLWAYS - SEQUENCE**

Back to Edison and Lowrey:

THOMAS EDISON

Because A/C doesn't work. It's  
wild, chaotic. You can't do  
anything with it.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

What if you could?

THOMAS EDISON

You can't.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

What if Tesla did?

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - 47TH ST -  
SEQUENCE**

Back to Paul and Westinghouse:

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Then he could build a system of  
electric power - from generator to  
light bulb - that would be  
fundamentally new. As unlike my  
system - or Edison's - as a  
motorcar is to a horse-and-buggy.

PAUL CRAVATH

(getting it)

Edison's patent only applies to  
D/C. It wouldn't apply to an A/C  
system.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - HALLWAYS - SEQUENCE**

Back to Edison and Lowrey:

GROSVENOR LOWREY

A/C would make our legal win  
irrelevant.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - 47TH ST -  
SEQUENCE**

Back to Paul and Westinghouse:

PAUL CRAVATH  
A/C would make our legal loss  
irrelevant.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
If Tesla's device actually works,  
then Edison and I will no longer be  
duking it out to see which of us is  
the best scientist in America.  
We'll be squabbling over who comes  
in a distant second.

Westinghouse and Paul enter the ENGINEERING BUILDING, passing  
by a SIGN:

"NIKOLA TESLA DEMONSTRATES THE NEWEST WONDER OF THE WORLD"  
"ONE NIGHT ONLY"

PAUL CRAVATH  
(to himself)  
... Deus ex Tesla.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - ENGINEERING HALL**

A few minutes later, Paul and Westinghouse take their seats  
in a massive LECTURE HALL amid 200 other ENGINEERS,  
PROFESSORS, JOURNALISTS, etc.

Paul and Westinghouse are near the front...

... As are Edison and Lowrey.

On the STAGE at the front of the room, Lemuell Serrell steps  
out in front of the closed CURTAIN.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
Gentlemen of the Fair Committee,  
thank you for travelling all the  
way to New York.

Serrell gestures to the Fair Committee in the front row.

LEMUELL SERRELL (CONT'D)  
My client has decided to make a  
rare public appearance in your  
honor. Without further ado, let me  
present... Nikola Tesla.

Serrell steps off the stage, and the CURTAINS OPEN, to  
reveal...

... Nothing.

The stage is empty.

MURMURS from the crowd.

Until a head pokes out from one side of the curtain...

... And, tentatively, out steps a 6'6" Serbian man with jet-black hair perfectly parted in the center.

Nikola Tesla offers a REALLY WEIRD LITTLE ONE-HANDED HALF-WAVE TO THE CROWD.

ON PAUL: "This is the strangest person on earth."

ON WESTINGHOUSE: "Seriously, this is the strangest person on earth."

NIKOLA TESLA  
(thick Serbian accent)  
... Goodbye.

Tesla turns and walks BACK BEHIND THE CURTAIN.

The stage is empty.

ON THE AUDIENCE: "What. The. Fuck...?"

ON WESTINGHOUSE AND PAUL:

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
There is absolutely no way that  
that man has designed a functional  
alternating current.

ON THE STAGE:

But just then, Tesla returns pushing TWO METAL CARTS.

On one cart is an ELECTRICAL GENERATOR. On the other is a long, TUBULAR LIGHT BULB.

NIKOLA TESLA  
I am apologize. The subject on  
which I speak at your invitation is  
an alternate system of power  
electrical: Current in alternation.  
(beat)  
An alternate system of alternate  
current.

In the pause that follows, it becomes apparent that Tesla thinks this is a joke. Maybe a pun? It's really hard to tell.

ON TESLA: Realizing that no one has a clue what he's saying.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
It is perhaps not a strength I  
boast to speak as mellifluous like  
Mr. Thomas Edison.

Tesla gives Edison his strange little half-wave thing.

ON EDISON: He waves back, almost amused.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
Nor do I manufacture prodigious  
machines like Mr. George  
Westinghouse.

Tesla gestures to Westinghouse.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: He... Smiles? Maybe? He guesses?

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
My strengths are habituated  
elsewhere.

Tesla TURNS ON THE GENERATOR...

... And suddenly the LONG TUBULAR LIGHT BULB BLOOMS TO LIFE.

The NEON LIGHT that comes out of it is unlike anything anyone  
has ever seen.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
Explanations will benefit.

Tesla turns around begins SCRIBBLING INCOMPREHENSIBLE  
EQUATIONS on the CHALK BOARD behind him.

ON THE CROWD: Between the devices and the equations, the  
assembled engineers are overwhelmed. They're frantically  
trying to take notes, to figure out how this is possible...

ON PAUL AND WESTINGHOUSE:

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... That man just designed a  
functional alternating current.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - ENGINEERING HALL - LATER**

Some minutes later, the hall has been cleared of spectators,  
leaving only:

Westinghouse & Paul, Edison & Lowrey, Tesla & Serrell, plus the Fair Committee. The nation's three best inventors, their three lawyers, and the judges of who will light America.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR

... The Committee is satisfied by Mr. Tesla's demonstration. Your bid to light the fair with A/C will advance to a second round of competition, along with Mr. Edison's D/C bid.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Pardon, Sirs, but we have a legal objection.

LEMUELL SERRELL

Are you serious? Westinghouse's lawyer might let you get away with that nonsense, but I will not.

ON PAUL: He kind of deserves that.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

The Fair's rules state that the bidder must be physically capable of manufacturing his proposed system.

NIKOLA TESLA

I have only momentarily demonstrated my functionings.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Manufacture, Mr. Tesla. You have no company behind you. No factories. No employees — draftsmen, metalworkers, welders. The Fair opens in six months. Who is going to build it? You?

Everyone looks at Tesla.

NIKOLA TESLA

... I am adept with the screwdriver's turn.

ON SERRELL: Shit.

Lowrey turns back to the Fair Committee:

GROSVENOR LOWREY

My point exactly.

The Fair Committee exchanges some WHISPERS.

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR  
It seems Mr. Lowrey is correct. Mr.  
Tesla's bid to light the fair is  
invalid -

PAUL CRAVATH  
- WAIT.

Everyone turns to look at Paul.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
George Westinghouse would like to  
add his name to Tesla's bid.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: "I would?"

THOMAS EDISON  
Mr. Westinghouse is not permitted  
to build electric lights.

PAUL CRAVATH  
We're not going to build ours.  
(re: Tesla)  
We're going to build his.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: "We are?"

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
We have a small army of engineers  
and craftsmen. A flotilla of  
factories. Tesla has the patents on  
this A/C lighting system.  
(to Serrell)  
You did register the patents,  
didn't you?

ON SERRELL: "Do I look fucking stupid?"

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
Right. So then we'd like to join  
our bids. Mr. Westinghouse and Mr.  
Tesla will compete together against  
Mr. Edison.

ON EDISON AND LOWREY: Whispering frantically. Trying to  
figure out a defense against this...

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
... Sirs, Westinghouse and Tesla  
cannot just... Work together.

PAUL CRAVATH

Why not?

ON LOWREY: He can't think of a reason why not.

ON THE COMMITTEE: Neither can they.

ON WESTINGHOUSE AND PAUL:

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

You want me to partner with... *Him*?

PAUL CRAVATH

If you have a better idea, I'd love to hear it.

ON THE FAIR COMMITTEE:

FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Committee will accept this arrangement. Provided that Mr. Tesla has no objections?

All eyes turn to Tesla. What's he going to say?

ON TESLA: Thinking very hard about something...

NIKOLA TESLA

(to Committee Chair)

... Your shirt possesses nine buttons.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - ENGINEERING HALL**

As all of the men leave the building, Edison approaches Paul and Westinghouse.

THOMAS EDISON

Rescued from the jaws of death by a lunatic.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Pity that you can't hide behind your attorneys any longer. You'll have to face me on the field of pure ideas.

THOMAS EDISON

Ideas? Yours weren't good enough so you've resorted to buying his. My second-hand slop.

(off their look)

You didn't know?

(MORE)

THOMAS EDISON (CONT'D)  
Tesla used to work in my lab. A  
draftsman. 3rd class. He showed me  
his A/C designs and begged me to  
buy them. I fired him instead.

Edison gives Tesla another WEIRD LITTLE WAVE.

Tesla, across the steps, WAVES BACK.

Edison isn't lying: They really do know each other.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... A/C is more powerful than D/C.

THOMAS EDISON  
You say more powerful. I say more  
dangerous. Don't you know, men are  
dying on the streets from this  
stuff!

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
I would never put my name on a  
product that hurt people.

Edison shrugs.

THOMAS EDISON  
I guess the public will decide.

Edison walks away with a slight smile, leaving Paul and Westinghouse to ponder this statement.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) LEMUELL SERRELL'S OFFICE - WALL STREET**

A few days later, Paul waits outside an office building in the financial district, reading a newspaper.

ON THE HEADLINE: "AGNES HUNTINGTON TO PLAY 'PAUL JONES'"

ON PAUL: Thinking fondly - wistfully - about a woman he can only admire from afar.

LEMUELL SERRELL (O.S.)  
... I've been wondering: What did  
it feel like to lose the largest  
patent suit in history?

Paul looks up to find Lemuell Serrell standing before him.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I've had better days. And thanks to  
your client, I'm hopeful for better  
ones still.

LEMUELL SERRELL

Yes, I got the sales agreement from  
your "associates"...

Serrell leads Paul into the OFFICE BUILDING:

LEMUELL SERRELL (CONT'D)

... I'm sorry, but I cannot sell  
Tesla's patents to you.

PAUL CRAVATH

The only way to compete against  
Edison is if we work together.

LEMUELL SERRELL

Agreed. Which is why I will  
consider licensing them.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) LEMUELL SERRELL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

A minute later, Paul sits across from Serrell in his office.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Something tells me that this  
"licensing" arrangement will entail  
a considerable royalty for Tesla.

LEMUELL SERRELL

My client worked for Thomas Edison  
for two years. At \$17 per week. How  
many millions do you think Edison  
made off of his ideas? I will not  
let him be taken advantage of  
again.

PAUL CRAVATH

George Westinghouse is not Thomas  
Edison.

LEMUELL SERRELL

Right right, because you're the  
good guys? Money doesn't matter to  
you, it's only about principle?

PAUL CRAVATH

We would never take advantage of  
a...

(trying not to say  
"lunatic")

... Character such as Tesla.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
Forgive me for wanting that in  
writing.

Serrell slides a CONTRACT across the desk to Paul.

Paul looks down at it. The numbers involved are not cheap.

PAUL CRAVATH  
For someone decrying the influence  
of money, you're sure asking for a  
lot it.

LEMUELL SERRELL  
He's not crazy, you know. He's  
just... Unique. Like his ideas.

ON PAUL: And his ideas are revolutionary. But this is still a  
holy ton of cash.

LEMUELL SERRELL (CONT'D)  
... So. Do we have a deal or not?

CUT TO:

**INT (GASLAMPS) DELMONICO'S RESTAURANT - MANHATTAN**

SHOT: THREE GLASSES OF MONTRACHET CLINK TOGETHER.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (O.S.)  
Congratulations, Mr. Tesla.

REVEAL: A few nights later, Paul and Westinghouse have taken  
Tesla out to a celebratory dinner at Delmonico's - the most  
elegant and exclusive restaurant in New York.

WHITE-COATED WAITERS flit about, seeing to their every need.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Welcome to our side. I trust you'll  
find it considerably more pleasant  
than Edison's.

Paul and Westinghouse sip their wine...

... Only Tesla leaves his untouched.

Paul notices, but doesn't comment.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
(to Tesla)  
Have you been to Pittsburgh before?

NIKOLA TESLA  
I haven't.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Greatest city in America.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(gonna ignore that one)  
We were hoping you'd join Mr.  
Westinghouse there for a time. To  
help his team assemble their bid  
for the second round.

NIKOLA TESLA  
Ah. Oh. Yes... Well. Negative.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Pardon?

NIKOLA TESLA  
I have answered no. These  
incandescents... They are bygone  
news.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Incandescent light is the newest  
frontier in science.

Tesla scoffs.

NIKOLA TESLA  
They were five years historical. We  
must give to the public the very  
newest.  
(conspiratorially)  
I nomenclatured it "neon."

ON PAUL AND WESTINGHOUSE: What on earth is a "neon?"

Just then, an expert team of WAITERS slides plates of *Lobster a la Newberg* in front of the men. Steam blossoms off the buttery crustaceans.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
(to the waiter)  
Pardon. How many centimeters?

WAITER  
Sir?

NIKOLA TESLA  
This plate. How many centimeters?

The Waiter looks to Paul for help, but finds none.

WAITER  
 (to Tesla)  
 Centimeters, Sir?

NIKOLA TESLA  
 (measuring with his  
 fingers)  
 35 centimeters? Yes. And four  
 centimeters deep. That is 140 cubic  
 centimeters of your broth, minus of  
 course that dispositioned by the  
 tail...  
 (more measuring)  
 ... So only 104 cubic centimeters.  
 Apologies I cannot be ingesting.

The Waiter politely removes Tesla's plate from the table.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
 (explaining)  
 It is the unevenness, that is what  
 makes difficulty in calculation.

PAUL CRAVATH  
 You can only eat the lobster once  
 you've accurately measured its  
 cubic dimensions?

NIKOLA TESLA  
 No no, of course not. I can only  
 ingest a dinner the cubic volume of  
 which adds to a number divisible by  
 three.

Westinghouse looks to Paul: "This is the genius who got A/C  
 to work?"

Paul returns the look: "Give him a chance."

But just then, Paul sees someone walking through the  
 restaurant -

- It's Agnes Huntington.

She's with a group of FRIENDS, including Henry Jayne.

Flush with embarrassment over their last meeting, Paul turns  
 his head away from her as she passes near their table.

Westinghouse and Tesla both clock Paul's reaction (but don't  
 see her face.)

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
 ... Do you know that woman?

PAUL CRAVATH  
No.

NIKOLA TESLA  
Your wish is not to be viewed by  
this woman?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I promise you, I don't know her.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (O.S.)  
Paul Cravath!

To Paul's further embarrassment, she approaches their table.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Hello.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I knew you were Mr. Westinghouse's  
attorney, but I didn't know that  
you were also his friend.

Westinghouse looks instantly impressed as he recognizes her.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Your reputation precedes you, Miss  
Huntington. I've long been an  
admirer of the opera.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Then you'll have to accompany Mr.  
Cravath the next time he attends.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
And when will that be?

ON PAUL: He just wants this conversation to be over.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I've been rather busy.

NIKOLA TESLA  
(to Agnes)  
You chant in the opera?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... You're Nikola Tesla!

NIKOLA TESLA  
How are you knowing?

AGNES HUNTINGTON

The papers have been abuzz about  
you. They say you'll be the man to  
light the World's Fair.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)

My friends would love to make your  
acquaintance.

NIKOLA TESLA

Mine?

Agnes looks to the front door, where her friends are just  
leaving. Henry Jayne MOTIONS for her to join.

Agnes looks back at Tesla and Paul.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

... Would you gentlemen like to  
come to a party?

CUT TO:

**EXT (GASLAMPS) GRAMERCY PARK - MANHATTAN**

Paul and Agnes walk across the gaslit chiaroscuro of GRAMERCY  
PARK at night.

Tesla walks a few paces ahead with Henry Jayne and Agnes'  
other friends. Jayne in particular seems fascinated by Tesla.

He turns back to make eye contact with Agnes: "Can you  
believe this loon?"

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Rarely are the rumors in New York  
understated. But in the case of Mr.  
Tesla...

PAUL CRAVATH

... He is not from our world. So  
thank you for showing him a touch  
of yours.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

I'm sorry about the last time we  
met. I should have mentioned Henry  
Jayne.

PAUL CRAVATH

There was no need.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I didn't mean to offend you.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I wasn't offended.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You ran out of the opera house that  
night because you just had to get  
back to your legal briefs?

PAUL CRAVATH  
...

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
It's not what you think. Between  
myself and Henry.

PAUL CRAVATH  
He isn't courting you?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
He is.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Well then. You could hardly do  
better.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I'm sure I can "do" as I like.

ON PAUL: This conversation could be going better.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
You don't have to come to the  
party.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Westinghouse went home and someone  
should look after Tesla. Will your  
party be particular raucous?

As Agnes' determines how best to answer we -

CUT TO:

INT (CANDLES) THE PLAYERS CLUB - NO 16 GRAMERCY PARK

THE BEST PARTY OF 1888.

An evening at the Player's Club is not one of Mrs. Astor's impeccably elegant white-tailed affairs - this is the most fashionable collection of ARTISTS, ACTORS, SINGERS, DANCERS and MUSICIANS in the nation. It's raucous, crowded, thick with smoke and booze.

As Agnes leads Paul and Tesla inside, they both stare.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... Welcome to the Player's Club.

NIKOLA TESLA  
What are they to play?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Nothing, actually. It was founded  
by Edwin Booth.  
(off Paul's look)  
His older brother John Wilkes  
sullied the Booth name pretty  
badly. When he murdered the - well  
you know. So Edwin created this and  
invited every popular artist,  
actor, entertainer, and singer to  
dance away the stain.

PAUL CRAVATH  
To win back his riches.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
This is New York: Money is just the  
means.

PAUL CRAVATH  
What's the end?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Status.

**A SEQUENCE:**

- Agnes says hello to EVERYONE. EVERYONE knows her; she knows everyone.
- Tesla is ENCIRCLED by a group of on-lookers, who've all caught wind of his reputation. Jayne introduces Tesla around like he's showing off a new puppy. Tesla DELIGHTS the crowd with tales of what he'll display at the World's Fair: "Telephones without wires!" "Neon lights!" "Spectrographs!"
- Paul has never seen this much champagne in his life. He finds he likes the taste.

— Agnes begins to sing the popular tune "Where Did You Get That Hat?" with the musicians in the corner — it's fun.

All of the partygoers turn to stare, including Paul.

As he watches her, entranced, he's approached by:

NIKOLA TESLA  
Men from the newspapers have  
requested interviews.

PAUL CRAVATH  
You're the newest hit in town.

NIKOLA TESLA  
I have never before been so hit.

Tesla tries a sip of champagne for what might be the first time.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
Do you think they will feature  
champagne at the World's Fair?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Something tells me that if we win  
the World's Fair, we can get you as  
much champagne as you like.

NIKOLA TESLA  
I have not said to you thanks. But  
I have never wanted anything so  
much as to bring my lights to your  
fair. It means a wide world to me.  
And to my Eliza.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Oh! Is Eliza your... sister?

NIKOLA TESLA  
My pet pigeon.

ON PAUL: Yes. Of course Tesla has a pet pigeon.

Agnes' song comes to a close. In the APPLAUSE, Tesla makes eye contact with Henry Jayne.

HENRY JAYNE  
Nikola! Come come, you must meet  
Edwin.

Tesla goes off to meet more of Jayne's friends.

Paul watches as the stylish guests LAUGH at every word out of Tesla's mouth...

PARTY GUEST  
Do tell me more about these  
telephones of yours!

NIKOLA TESLA  
Not a wire betwixt them -

PARTY GUEST #2  
- Your accent is so fascinating.  
Where on earth are you from?

NIKOLA TESLA  
A town nomenclatured Smiljan -

PARTY GUEST #3  
- Are you and Westinghouse really  
going to light up the World's Fair?  
Can you get me a ticket to the  
opening?

ON PAUL: The contented smile fading as more unsettling  
thoughts take over. The way these people are laughing at  
Tesla... They way he's clearly enjoying their attention...

Paul suddenly walks out to -

**EXT (GASLAPS) GRAMERCY PARK - CONTINUOUS**

Paul takes a breath of fresh air in the cool evening.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (O.S.)  
You don't like the party?

Paul turns to see Agnes in the doorway.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
Perhaps it was the guests.

PAUL CRAVATH  
They're going to devour Tesla  
alive.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
He seems to enjoy being the meal.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Maybe he's a nut. Or maybe he just  
wants us to think he is.  
(MORE)

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
But either way it's all a great  
laugh to those people as long as  
they think he's won the fair - and  
if he loses, they'll toss him aside  
just as easily.

She studies him for a moment.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You have a secret, Cravath.

PAUL CRAVATH  
What's that?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You play the very image of the  
ambitious young striver. Only deep  
down, you're just a good country  
boy, aren't you?

Paul thinks about how to respond to this.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... My father is a travelling  
preacher. Congregationalist. Kind,  
generous, devoted his whole life to  
justice for the poor. He is the  
most infernally sainted man I have  
ever known. And do you know where  
my father lives?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Nashville?

PAUL CRAVATH  
In a three-room shack ten miles  
outside of Nashville. He's the most  
goodly man on Earth and he never  
had two nickels to rub together to  
make a third. I wanted more. I came  
here because I believed that if I  
did honorable work well, I would  
get ahead. Is that so wrong?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
It's not.

PAUL CRAVATH  
My father disagrees.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Perhaps he hasn't met many saintly  
rich men.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Perhaps I have.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
(re: Player's Club)  
*In there?*

PAUL CRAVATH  
George Westinghouse didn't need to  
sell his soul to make his fortune.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You may be the only person who's  
ever been made more idealistic by  
New York.

PAUL CRAVATH  
You think I'm naive because I  
wasn't born into your pricey  
cynicism.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I think I earned every bit of it.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Perhaps I just feel sea sick on  
these waters because I didn't learn  
to swim in an ocean of champagne.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Where do you think I learned to  
swim?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Montauk? Connecticut? Don't tell me  
- Greenwich?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Kalamazoo, Michigan.

ON PAUL: "Wait, what?"

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)  
My mother dusted China in the  
houses of every rich family from St  
Louis to Boston so she could buy us  
two tickets to Paris. I swept  
stages at the Bijou until they let  
me sing for the first time. You  
think I'm going back? Absolutely  
not. You can have your money. Booth  
can have his status. Edison and  
Westinghouse can run the world  
while Tesla invents a future one.

(MORE)

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)

But the stage is mine. Singing is the only thing I have ever loved to do and if you think I will apologize about having to drink at the right parties or feign thrill at the right jokes to get here, well... Then perhaps we had less in common than I believed.

PAUL CRAVATH

What do you think we have in common?

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Neither of us came here to lose.

ON PAUL: Unsure how to respond, as they both listen in silence to the SOUNDS OF THE PARTY from inside.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) WORLD'S FAIR GROUNDS - CHICAGO**

As a HARSH WINTER descends on Chicago, the structures of the fair are more complete, despite the construction challenges...

... HORSES are freezing on the icy ground...

... So are many of the WORKMEN...

... But still they press on, under the watchful eyes of the Fair Committee...

... ANGLE: We notice MISSING GAPS between the structures, empty holes where the electrical components should be as this image -

TRANSFORMS TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - STUDY**

CLOSE ON: A HAND-DRAWN MAP of the fair grounds.

But filling in a gap at the center is a rectangle marked GENERATOR - and then lines delineating WIRES extend outwards to every building.

PAUL CRAVATH (O.S.)

It's amazing.

REVEAL: Paul looks at Westinghouse's BID while the inventor stands behind him, proud of his work.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
You're only using one generator?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Because A/C is more powerful than  
D/C, it can be made to travel  
greater distances. So unlike  
Edison, we don't have to install a  
generator in every building.  
Instead, one in the center, to  
which each structure is linked.

PAUL CRAVATH  
That's how you've been able to  
lower the price of your bid so  
much?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
To build things of high quality and  
low cost. This has always been the  
goal.

PAUL CRAVATH  
As long as it's lower cost than  
Edison.

Westinghouse regards Paul's competitive zeal.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... You want to see something even  
better?

Paul nods and Westinghouse removes from his desk a SECOND SET  
of MAPS. He lays them out so Paul can see them.

PAUL CRAVATH  
What are these?

ON THE MAPS: They're not of the Fair...

... These are MAPS OF AMERICA.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
The same principle can be applied  
to towns as well. Cities. States.

Paul looks closely at the maps: Prospective townships have  
been marked with BLUE DOTS. Elmira, NY. Telluride, CO.  
Redlands, CA.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
No longer will we have to wire  
houses one-by-one. Instead...  
Networks.

Paul stares at the world's first map for the electrification of the United States.

PAUL CRAVATH  
From the kernel of Tesla's idea,  
you've built...

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Networks of power. Networks of current. Whole communities linked together by our cables. Everyone in it together.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Sir, this is... This is a wonder.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: All in a day's work.

Just then they are interrupted by a Westinghouse Electric Company EXECUTIVE bearing a telegram.

EXECUTIVE  
(re: telegram)  
Word from our man in Chicago.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
And?

EXECUTIVE  
The second round of bidding isn't officially over yet. So this is all tentative.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
But?

EXECUTIVE  
I'm just saying, a grain of salt.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
But?

EXECUTIVE  
Unofficially, Edison's bid is coming in at three times your price.

ON WESTINGHOUSE AND PAUL: Holy shit.

EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)  
Unless the Fair Committee wants to overpay for an inferior product, the fair is yours.

## INT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) JAYNE MANSION - DINING ROOM

BLACKNESS, over which we hear only GIGGLING until -

- CLICK: An ELECTRIC LIGHT bursts to life, revealing a dozen APPLAUDING GUESTS at Henry Jayne's dining table. The company is as elegant as the surrounding: NY STATE SENATOR RICHMOND, his WIFE, assorted other POLITICIANS and REAL ESTATE HEIRS... And of course Agnes Huntington.

HURRAYS all around.

HENRY JAYNE  
It's everything Edison said it  
would be, isn't it?

STATE SENATOR'S WIFE  
Is it safe?

HENRY JAYNE  
Of course! When Edison's men  
installed the generator downstairs,  
they said that -

- But the light begins to FLICKER. As if there is some sort of electrical problem...

HENRY JAYNE (CONT'D)  
(to a SERVANT)  
Check the generator, will you?

SERVANT  
Yes, Sir.  
(beat)  
Check it for what?

ON HENRY: He has absolutely no idea how any of this works.

As the light seems to STABILIZE, the guests take their seats.

HENRY JAYNE  
Let's hope he gets the kinks worked  
out before the World's Fair.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I think Misters Tesla and  
Westinghouse will be the ones to  
light the Fair, if the papers are  
to be believed.

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND  
(playful)  
I wouldn't put your money on  
Westinghouse just yet.

HENRY JAYNE

Are you headed back to Albany for  
the winter?

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND

Such is my great calling at the  
State Senate: To see that we spend  
less time in Albany.

LAUGHTER.

HENRY JAYNE

The Sattin family has a place -

AGNES HUNTINGTON

(to Senator Richmond,  
serious)

- Why don't you think Westinghouse  
will win the fair?

ON JAYNE: That was a bit abrupt, wasn't it?

AGNES HUNTINGTON (CONT'D)

It sounds like our friend in the  
State Senate knows something we  
don't.

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND

It comes with the position.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

It's not a part of your position to  
regale our table with a good story?

Senator Richmond looks at Jayne: What's gotten into Agnes?

ON JAYNE: What *has* gotten into Agnes?

HENRY JAYNE

Agnes has taken a very active  
interest in this  
Edison/Westinghouse business of  
late.

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND

(relenting)

Edison's men have spent their  
summer treating us to more steak  
dinners than seems healthy.

As he continues we -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - LABORATORY - SEQUENCE**

George Westinghouse and his huge TEAM OF ENGINEERS pore over endless DRAFTS of their bid - making it more efficient, more inexpensive. More useful.

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND (V.O.)  
Edison is asking the New York State  
Legislature to ban the use of A/C.

From his own section of the laboratory, Nikola Tesla presents them with his contribution: A NEON BULB to run on the new system.

Tesla is too resistant to authority to work within Westinghouse's team, but he'll work alongside them.

AGNES HUNTINGTON (V.O.)  
(to Senator Richmond)  
How can he do that?

STATE SENATOR RICHMOND (V.O.)  
By making the public so afraid of  
A/C's supposed dangers that they  
demand it be forbidden by law.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC-CORNER OFFICE-  
SEQUENCE**

Edison and his BUSINESSMEN work with a team of DRAFTSMEN to draw up their own great work - ADVERTISEMENTS for their system.

And all the ads feature one word in big letters: "EDISON"

AGNES HUNTINGTON (V.O.)  
He's already written editorials  
about how dangerous it is. What  
more can he do?

Edison is interrupted by a DRAFTSMAN, who shows him a design of a new machine: It's a CHAIR.

Why would Edison design a *chair*?

**INT (GASLAMP) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - PAUL'S OFFICE**

Paul looks up from his work to find Agnes bursting through the door, having come right from dinner at Henry Jayne's.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

You need to talk to Westinghouse right now. I know what Edison is doing.

PAUL CRAVATH

Agnes... It's all right. We've almost won.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

No. You've almost lost.

CUT TO:

**INT (GASLAMPS) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - KITCHEN**

Late the following night, Paul and Agnes sit with George Westinghouse in his kitchen.

They're showing him a SKETCH.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... What the hell is this?

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Edison calls it an "electric chair."

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Why would you make that? It'd kill somebody.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

That's exactly why he wants to make it.

PAUL CRAVATH

Thomas Edison has petitioned the State Legislature to abandon the noose. And to begin executing prisoners with this.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Why would Edison want his technology used to kill people?

PAUL CRAVATH

He didn't ask the legislature to use *his* technology.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

(getting it)

... Oh my good God.

PAUL CRAVATH

He's going to make your A/C system  
the official current of death.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

The Fair Committee will never allow  
the current that New York uses to  
kill people to be the current that  
flows above their patrons.

PAUL CRAVATH

Your technology is better. So  
Edison is going to see that it's  
banned.

**INT (GASLAMPS) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY**

An hour later, Paul and Agnes walk down the hall towards  
separate guest rooms on the second floor.

They pause in front of their respective rooms.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Thank you. For what you've done  
for me. For us. It must have been  
difficult for you to come so  
quickly.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

It was the right thing to do. I'd  
have done it for anyone.

ON PAUL: Is he chastened by that? Or emboldened because she's  
here with him?

Another charged moment between them. They're alone...

... If Paul leaned in and kissed her, no one would know...

... Does she want him to? ...

... But he can't.

Paul turns and enters his bedroom.

ON AGNES: Simultaneously wishes he'd kissed her but is  
grateful that he didn't.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) COURTROOM - BUFFALO, NY**

Paul argues in the courtroom of JUDGE DAY.

Grosvenor Lowrey is at the opposing table.

PAUL CRAVATH

... Your Honor, even if the State has the right to electrocute a prisoner with alternating current, it lacks the equipment to do so. My client has never sold an A/C generator to the State of New York.

JUDGE DAY

Cannot the State simply purchase one of Mr. Westinghouse's generators from one of the many New Yorkers who owns one?

PAUL CRAVATH

Actually, it cannot.

(produces a set of documents)

These are the bills-of-sale that my client makes with of its customers. As you'll see, the language of this contract - which I wrote myself - clearly states that the customer is forbidden from selling the device to a third party. If anyone were to sell their A/C system to the State without my client's approval, they'd be in violation of their agreement to operate the unit in question.

Judge Day looks over the contracts: Paul is right.

JUDGE DAY

It appears that Mr. Cravath is correct.

Paul relishes a rare and all-too-precious moment of victory.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Very well. Unless, of course, we already owned one of Mr. Westinghouse's generators. Legally. And we donated it to the State.

PAUL CRAVATH

We've never sold you an A/C system.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Indeed. The same cannot be said, however, for all of your local partners.

A man stands up from the audience...

... It's CHARLES COFFIN, the Massachusetts businessman who Paul had met with early on.

Coffin walks to the front of the courtroom -

- And over to Lowrey's table.

CHARLES COFFIN  
(to Paul)  
Sorry, Kid. Goliath pays better.

**INT (GASLAMPS) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - BEDROOM**

George and Marguerite Westinghouse get ready for bed.

As is their routine, she sits in her MAKE-UP CHAIR while he helps her to remove the POWDER from her face.

It's sweet, familiar. They've been through a lot together.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Wait, you're going to have to remind me who he is again. Charles Coffin?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
He runs a small copper company -  
you know what? It doesn't matter.  
The first execution isn't till next week.  
Perhaps we can find a buyer for -

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
- George.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
What?

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE  
Find a buyer for a company that manufactures a murder machine that will soon be banned across the country? By next week A/C won't be worth a dime. Just stop.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
I owe \$2 million in damages. If I can't sell the company then the next thing to sell will be -

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

- The house?  
(off his surprise)  
I spoke to the accountants. It's  
all right.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

Selling our home is all right?

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

... Do you remember when we met?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

You know, honestly, I met so many  
young women in those days...

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

Ha. Ha. There was a gleeful irony  
to meeting the world's foremost  
designer of railroad parts on a  
train.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

We were travelling third class. I  
wasn't the foremost anything just  
yet.

MARGUERITE WESTINGHOUSE

My point exactly. I didn't mind  
being poor.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: His wife - not to mention his son - are  
simply too good for him. They deserve better.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

... I did.

**INT (GASLAMP) PAUL'S APARTMENT - 50TH STREET**

Paul wades through the enormous stacks of legal documents  
that cover every surface of his apartment when he hears a  
KNOCK at the door.

He answers it to find...

... George Westinghouse.

Paul is embarrassed at Westinghouse seeing where he lives.

PAUL CRAVATH

Sir. There's port somewhere. Maybe-

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

- I don't care what you have to do.  
I don't care what it takes. But  
this execution cannot happen.

PAUL CRAVATH

I tried appealing on constitutional  
grounds. Cruel and unusual  
punishment. But unfortunately the  
court won't -

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

- If this execution happens, I will  
not simply lose the fair. I'll have  
gambled away everything I own on  
banned, worthless technology. I am  
unwilling to sell off the roof over  
my family's head. Do you  
understand?

PAUL CRAVATH

The only person who can call off  
the execution now is Edison. And  
there is nothing we can offer him  
that -

Paul stops. Realizes something.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

What?

PAUL CRAVATH

There is exactly one thing we can  
offer Edison that he wants.

(beat)

But you're really not going to like  
it.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) EDISON GENERAL ELECTRIC - CORNER OFFICE**

An AIDE leads Paul into Thomas Edison's corner office.

Edison has been expecting him.

THOMAS EDISON

Paul Cravath! I feel as if we never  
see each other anymore. How have  
you been?

PAUL CRAVATH

Call off the execution.

THOMAS EDISON

There is nothing in the world you  
could offer that would convince me  
to do that.

PAUL CRAVATH

Are you sure?

Paul takes out an ENVELOPE and places it on the desk.

ON EDISON: Paul has piqued his curiosity.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)

... That's a letter to the Fair  
Committee. George Westinghouse's  
signature is already on it.

THOMAS EDISON

What does it say?

PAUL CRAVATH

It's not sealed.

Edison opens the letter...

... And as he reads his eyes go wide.

THOMAS EDISON

You're rescinding your bid to light  
the World's Fair?

PAUL CRAVATH

All you have to do is put that  
letter in the mail and we're done.  
The fair is yours.

THOMAS EDISON

The fair will be mine anyway.

PAUL CRAVATH

Probably. But why risk it? Make  
this deal and you won't need to  
bother going through with the  
execution. You'll have nothing more  
to gain by bankrupting  
Westinghouse. You want to win?  
Here. You win.

ON EDISON: He doesn't like making deals with his enemies. But  
Paul is literally offering him *something* for essentially  
*nothing*...

Edison takes the letter.

THOMAS EDISON  
Pleasure doing business with you,  
Kid.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) DOWNTOWN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING - MANHATTAN**

Paul arrives at a crummy looking INDUSTRIAL BUILDING: A five-story sweat-shop of SEAMSTRESSES and who-knows-what else.

Paul CHECKS the address against a piece of paper: Yup, this is the place.

He enters -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) TESLA'S LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul climbs the steps to the fourth floor, where a doorway leads him to -

- TESLA'S NEW MANHATTAN LABORATORY. As rundown as the outside is, the inside is marvelous - pristine, well-appointed, stocked with EVERY KIND OF ELECTRICAL AND SCIENTIFIC GIZMO IMAGINABLE.

Tesla looks up from his WORKSTATION, happy to see Paul. He is the only person here.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) TESLA'S LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER**

As Tesla shows him around the lab, Paul takes it all in.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Is this what you've built with  
your royalties?

NIKOLA TESLA  
A palace of my own inventions. No  
company. No business. Purely my  
thoughts birthed to life.

ON PAUL: It's remarkable. And lonely.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I've come to tell you that we've  
rescinded our bid for the World's  
Fair.

NIKOLA TESLA  
Why would you do that?

PAUL CRAVATH

Because in exchange, Edison has  
agreed to call off the execution.  
Your alternating current won't be  
banned, and you can keep working on  
all of these machines.

NIKOLA TESLA

No. No. No. No. No.

PAUL CRAVATH

This is rotten news, but at least  
this way you can -

NIKOLA TESLA

- NO. Undo what you have done. Re-  
submit, please.

PAUL CRAVATH

The fair rules are quite clear.  
It's done.

NIKOLA TESLA

This bid had not been yours to  
rescind.

PAUL CRAVATH

It was ours. And I made a decision  
that was in all of our best  
interests.

NIKOLA TESLA

... You have never for one moment  
understood myself. For why I have  
done all of this.

PAUL CRAVATH

Nikola, believe it or not but I'm  
your friend. I did this for you.

Tesla looks at Paul as if he is the most detestable,  
conniving bastard in the world.

NIKOLA TESLA

Why do you believe I first bid,  
after you had lost?

(off Paul's look)

I arrived on your stone shore with  
no items of possession. An  
immigrant on your island. Can you  
imagine what it would be to have my  
name upon the World's Fair? My  
mother in Serbia. My father. My  
sisters. They would see this.

(MORE)

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
That I have travelled to America,  
that I have left them, for  
*something*.

PAUL CRAVATH  
You never told me.

NIKOLA TESLA  
You never asked.

ON PAUL: This is a punch to the gut.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
I have watched the way you regarded  
me at the Player's Club. As if I am  
some infant naif. No. The richest  
of Mannhattaners were knowing that  
an immigrant was to build for them  
what Thomas Edison had not. You  
believe myself crazy because I  
verbalize in an odd manner? I have  
this accent, so I am but a joke to  
you? With nothing I have done what  
your great men could not. And now,  
thanks to your lawyering, no person  
will ever know.

ON PAUL: He thought he was helping Tesla... And now Tesla  
hates him for it.

NIKOLA TESLA (CONT'D)  
Get out, Mr. Paul Cravath. And  
never pass before myself again.

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHT) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM**

Agnes finishes putting on her manly SAILOR'S COSTUME and  
looks at herself in the mirror.

Sure enough, she looks just like Paul Jones...

ON AGNES: Is this what the public wants?

HENRY JAYNE (O.S.)  
Well hello gorgeous.

She turns to find Henry Jayne in the doorway, bearing  
FLOWERS.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You like it?

HENRY JAYNE

I'd give you a kiss but I think  
that might be illegal.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Thank you.

HENRY JAYNE

Are roses bad luck before a show?  
Someone told me that once.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

I don't mean for the roses.

(beat)

It means a lot to me that you'd  
support my singing. Not every man  
in New York would.

ON JAYNE: He really does care for her.

HENRY JAYNE

Well it's the autumn show at the  
Met, for Christ's sake. I didn't  
want you to miss out on this just  
because there weren't lady sailors  
in the Revolutionary War.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

I bet I'd be rather handy on a  
boat, actually.

HENRY JAYNE

I love to hear you sing. And it's  
quite a triumph to bow out on top.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

... "Bow out?"

HENRY JAYNE

Not to be presumptuous... But if  
our respective mothers get their  
way and we are engaged...

(beat)

... Well Agnes, it's not as if you  
can perform when we're married.

AGNES HUNTINGTON

Why would I have to stop singing if  
we were married?

ON JAYNE: Is she really this naive about how the world works?

HENRY JAYNE

... Agnes Huntington is a great star of the New York Stage. Agnes Jayne, on the other hand... Well my family couldn't bear it.

ON AGNES: Has she sung her way to the top of New York society only to be forced by that same society to stop singing?

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - PAUL'S OFFICE**

Charles Hughes walks into Paul's office at dawn, the morning paper under his arm and a pale look on his face.

Hughes sees Paul asleep at his desk. Paul clearly didn't go home the night before.

As Hughes COUGHS, Paul wakes up.

CHARLES HUGHES

There's news about the execution.

PAUL CRAVATH

Yes, I know. Edison agreed to call it off.

CHARLES HUGHES

Is that what he told you?

Hughes shows Paul the newspaper. The headline:

"FIRST EXECUTION WITH ALTERNATING CURRENT TOMORROW"

CHARLES HUGHES (CONT'D)

I'd say the headline should read "Edison lied", but that's not exactly news, is it?

ON PAUL: If there is any possible way he could have fucked this up worse, he doesn't know about it.

CUT TO:

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) AUBURN STATE PRISON - UPSTATE NEW YORK**

At 6am the next day, a CROWD has gathered outside the PRISON GATES for the execution.

As Paul pushes through, a REPORTER tries to get close.

REPORTER

Mr. Cravath! Care to comment?

PAUL CRAVATH

John, this an execution, and you should be ashamed of yourself for covering it like a ball game. So no: I don't have a comment.

Paul just brushes him off as he enters -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) AUBURN STATE PRISON - EXECUTION CHAMBER**

A basement room has been outfitted for the world's first execution by electric chair.

Two dozen seats for various LAWYERS, JOURNALISTS, PHYSICIANS, the WARDEN, Judge Day and Edison's attorney Grosvenor Lowrey.

Paul sits as far away from Lowrey as possible as they face the OAK CHAIR in the center of the room. LEATHER STRAPS. WIRES running up the sides, which come from the ceiling. A BELL in the corner lets the warden communicate with the EXECUTIONERS who will OPERATE THE GENERATOR from a faraway room.

The PRISONER is led to his seat. He's wearing a three-piece suit of a lovely summer grey.

The guards STRAP the Prisoner into the chair. They attach ELECTRODES to his back, cutting holes in his shirt to do so.

They're about to attach a LEATHER HEADPIECE around his skull when the warden offers the Prisoner an opportunity for any last words.

PRISONER

Gentlemen. I wish you all good luck. I know where I am headed and I know that it is a good place. I can only hope the same will be true of you.

The warden shakes his head.

Paul watches as the guards fit the headpiece onto the Prisoner's skull, sliding a wet sponge into his mouth.

He will be unable to scream.

WARDEN

All right then.

The Warden RINGS A BELL -

- IN A DISTANT ROOM: EXECUTIONERS turn the CRANK of a Westinghouse A/C generator —
- And Paul braces himself as 1000 volts of A/C FLOW THROUGH THE BODY OF THE PRISONER.

The Prisoner SHIVERS —

- His muscles TIGHTEN —
- His hands FLUTTER, trying to escape —
- But the straps HOLD FIRM —
- As the Prisoner's index finger CURLS IN ON ITSELF —
- Drawing BLOOD from his palm —
- Until, blessedly, it's OVER.

The warden again RINGS THE BELL, the distant executioners stop turning the crank, and the Prisoner's body SLUMPS.

Paul looks to Lowrey, who SHUDDERS: Thank God that's all.

Paul stands: Some air would feel good about now.

But just then...

... He hears a FAINT NOISE.

Everyone looks: The NOISE is coming from the Prisoner.

PHYSICIAN IN AUDIENCE  
Oh dear God... He's still alive!

White froth BURBLES from the Prisoner's mouth as he tries to breath, but finds his lungs too burnt to use.

The warden quickly takes control:

WARDEN  
Sit! Everyone! Be seated!

He rings the bell furiously —

- The executioners, confused, turn the crank again —
- And another 1000 VOLTS OF A/C FIRE THROUGH THE PRISONER.

Burning. Frying. Sizzling.

Paul can smell the Prisoner from where he's sitting.

The warden rings the bell to stop it -

- The current ceases -

- But this time the Prisoner HEAVES against his restraints.

Whatever pain he must be in must be unbearable.

PHYSICIAN IN AUDIENCE  
Stop it! This is horrible.

But the warden ignores the cries of protest and tries a third time -

- Ringing the bell, sending the current through the Prisoner-

- Who now begins to BURN ALIVE:

The sponge in his mouth starts to fry, like chicken blackening in a pan.

Wisps of smoke rise from the Prisoner's hair.

It takes FOUR HORRIBLE TRIES TO KILL THE PRISONER -

- Over the growing protests from everyone assembled -

- And to the increasing dismay of Lowrey -

- As the poor man's eyes turn black -

- And blood pours from the wound in his hand -

- And at long last the same BLUE HELLFIRE that Paul saw above Broadway those fateful months before BURSTS from his mouth, incinerating his skull.

Fucking pandemonium as EVERYONE FLEES.

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) AUBURN STATE PRISON - YARD - MOMENTS LATER**

The men BURST into the morning sunshine.

Paul immediately VOMITS into the dirt. This is the most horrific thing he has ever - or will ever - witness.

Behind him, the various physicians TALK animatedly, trying to figure out what the hell just happened.

The reporters SCRIBBLE in their notebooks, hoping to take down each gruesome detail.

ON PAUL: Sick to his stomach... Covered in dirt... Staring at his shirt sleeve, which he notices is streaked with BLOOD...

... When suddenly Paul realizes something.

He jumps to his feet and approaches the reporter from before:

PAUL CRAVATH  
(to Reporter)  
John! You know what, I *would* like to comment. This is an important event and I for one am grateful to you for covering it. It's been proven beyond a reasonable doubt: A/C isn't too deadly. It's too *safe*.

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHT) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM**

Agnes enters her dressing room after the night's show to find Paul waiting for her.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
What are you doing here?  
(beat)  
And who even let you in?

PAUL CRAVATH  
"Edison lied." The headlines finally say it.

He shows her the evening PAPER.

ON THE HEADLINE: "A/C TOO SAFE TO KILL - Edison's misstatements under scrutiny"

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... And he killed a man in the process.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Did he lie about A/C's dangers? Or was he just mistaken? This is an opportunity.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
For what?

PAUL CRAVATH  
... I'm working on that.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You already rescinded your bid for  
the fair.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Yes. And once a bid is rescinded,  
that's it.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
So there's only one remaining bid,  
and it has Edison's name on it.

PAUL CRAVATH  
If Edison's name is —

Paul stops. He is in the middle of the thinking up the most important idea of his life.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
— His name... *Shit...* Edison's name  
has to be on the bid...

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
What are you mumbling about?

PAUL CRAVATH  
We're going to submit a new bid.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You just said you couldn't.

PAUL CRAVATH  
A joint bid.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You already submitted a joint bid  
with Tesla.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Not a joint bid with Tesla. A joint  
bid with *Edison*.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) WESTINGHOUSE ESTATE - MAIN VILLA - STUDY**

Paul has just presented his plan to Westinghouse.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... This is either the most genius,  
or the most idiotic idea I have  
ever heard.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
I'm genuinely having a hard time  
figuring out which.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I can't do this without your  
signing off. Literally. There are  
going to be a lot of documents. And  
we'll need Tesla's signature as  
well.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Ponders... It's a lot to take in...

ON PAUL: He needs his client's okay... Will he go for it?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Is Tesla still cross with you?

PAUL CRAVATH  
He hasn't responded to my letters.  
Any of them.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Then I'll talk to him.  
(beat)  
You're a good man, Paul. And he  
should know what you're doing for  
him. What you're doing for all of  
us.

PAUL CRAVATH  
(touched)  
Thank you.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
But before I can explain it to him,  
you're going to have to explain it  
again to me.

As Paul begins to do just that we -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN**

Paul works to get his fellow attorneys - Carter, Hughes, and the Associates - on board as well.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Think of it as a take-over.

WALTER CARTER  
They will not just let you "take  
over" Edison General Electric.

PAUL CRAVATH

It's a... "hostile takeover." But if it works, then Westinghouse will effectively control Edison's company.

WALTER CARTER

If it doesn't, than Edison will most certainly own Westinghouse's.

PAUL CRAVATH

Final bids are due in 6 days. This is our last stand, and time is short. Are you a part of this or not?

ON CARTER: Not sure...

WALTER CARTER

Young man -

CHARLES HUGHES

- I say we do it.

All eyes turn to Hughes. Paul is genuinely touched that Hughes has his back.

CHARLES HUGHES (CONT'D)

(to Carter)

Worst case, we can still blame it all on Paul.

ON PAUL: "Oh for fuck's sake."

WALTER CARTER

... Very well.

CHARLES HUGHES

What's our next step?

PAUL CRAVATH

(to the Associates)

Whichever one of you figures out where Charles Coffin is in the next 12 hours becomes a partner.

ON THE ASSOCIATES: 3... 2... 1...

They BURST into action as we -

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT - PLATFORMS**

Paul RACES across GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT - a massive dome of glass and iron beneath which DOZENS OF TRAINS pull to a screeching stop and bellow plumes of coal smoke.

Paul runs as fast as he can down the platform -

- Towards a TRAIN which has just STARTED MOVING -

- Paul JUMPS onto the train as it PULLS AWAY from Grand Central -

**INT (DAYLIGHT) TRAIN - FIRST CLASS CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Paul runs through the train -

- Enters the FIRST CLASS CAR -

- And PLOPS DOWN in a seat.

REVEAL: The man in the seat next to him is Charles Coffin.

CHARLES COFFIN

... Can't say I was expecting to  
see you again.

PAUL CRAVATH

I need your help.

CHARLES COFFIN

Why on earth would *you* come to *me*  
for help?

PAUL CRAVATH

Because you, Sir, are the most  
duplicitous, greedy, two-faced son  
of a bitch I have ever met in my  
life. And I am going to make you  
the most powerful corporate  
executive in America.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) GROSVENOR LOWREY'S OFFICE - MANHATTAN**

Meanwhile, Walter Carter is having a similarly unexpected conversation with Edison's attorney, Grosvenor Lowrey.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

... What's to stop me from walking  
into the next room and telegraphing  
your plan to my client?

WALTER CARTER

Because your client isn't Thomas  
Edison. It's his company.

GROSVENOR LOWREY

Thomas Edison *is* his company.

WALTER CARTER

No. He's not.

Carter hands Lowrey a set of DOCUMENTS.

ON LOWREY: Reading them carefully. Will he go for it? Or will  
he rat Carter and Paul out to Edison?

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) HOTEL NEW YORKER - 42ND STREET**

A BELLBOY leads George Westinghouse up the stairs in a ratty,  
run-down hotel.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: This is not somewhere one wants to end up.

The bellboy takes Westinghouse to a room, and Westinghouse  
KNOCKS on the door.

The door opens to reveal...

... Nikola Tesla.

He seems rather worse for wear.

**INT (DAYLIGHT) HOTEL NEW YORKER - TESLA'S ROOM - MOMENTS  
LATER**

Tesla shows Westinghouse around his messy, single-occupancy  
hotel room.

NIKOLA TESLA

... I have enlisted all of the  
money you have sent to me for my  
laboratory. I have not... Well I am  
not so in need of personal  
lavishness.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
You live here alone?

NIKOLA TESLA  
Oh no! I am here staying with  
Eliza.

Tesla shows Westinghouse ELIZA, his PET PIGEON, in a cage.

Tesla feeds the pigeon lovingly – she is his best friend and only companion.

ON WESTINGHOUSE: This poor guy really is losing it.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Look, I want to clean up this  
business between you and Paul. He  
told me that you were upset about  
the fair. That you wanted your  
lights to shine above it. Well, if  
you sign these, you will.

From his coat, Westinghouse removes a BLUE FOLDER OF DOCUMENTS.

ON TESLA: Face brightening. Is that really possible?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
And these.

He removes a SECOND SET OF DOCUMENTS, in a RED FOLDER.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
As with many of Paul's plans, it's  
rather complicated...

CUT TO:

**INT (GASLAMPS) CARTER, HUGHES & CRAVATH - MANHATTAN**

Charles Hughes works with the Associate Attorneys to craft a MOUNTAIN OF CONTRACTS.

Hughes looks over the shoulder of Associate Attorney #1, checking his work.

CHARLES HUGHES  
No. That's all wrong.

The Associate is about to object when –

PAUL CRAVATH (O.S.)  
Whatever Charles tells you, do it.

They all turn to see Paul in the doorway.

CHARLES HUGHES  
(to Paul)  
How'd it go with Coffin?

PAUL CRAVATH  
(nodding)  
We only need one more person to agree. The whole plan hinges on him.

CHARLES HUGHES  
The man who owns Edison's company.

PAUL CRAVATH  
And about half of New York.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1  
Ummmm. Doesn't Thomas Edison own his company?

PAUL CRAVATH  
That's the whole point. He doesn't.  
(beat)  
JP Morgan does.

ON THE ASSOCIATES: Holy shit.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY #1  
But... Mr. Cravath... How are you going to get a face-to-face meeting with the most powerful man in the world?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Your question really should be, "how am I going to get a face-to-face meeting with the most powerful man in the world... Without Edison finding out?"

CUT TO:

**EXT (STARLIGHT) METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE - 39TH STREET**

Manhattan is ALIGHT on NEW YEAR'S EVE, only minutes before the arrival of 1890.

Paul shivers in the cold outside the rear entrance until the door opens to REVEAL...

... Agnes.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Quick! Get in!

Agnes lets Paul in and they -

**INT (GASLAMPS) MET OPERA HOUSE - HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS**

- Walk quickly through the subterranean hallways.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Is Morgan inside?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Yes. You should have a few minutes  
until -

- But they are suddenly intercepted by...

... GROSVENOR LOWREY.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
Stop right there.

ON PAUL: Fuck. Lowrey ratted them out.

Paul's mind is frantically working on another plan when -

GROSVENOR LOWREY (CONT'D)  
Thomas Edison is here.

PAUL CRAVATH  
What?

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
He arrived with Morgan. You have to  
turn back, try another time.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
This is our only chance to get face-  
to-face with Morgan. It's now or  
never.

GROSVENOR LOWREY  
Paul, if Edison sees you, there is  
nothing I can do to stop him from  
wrecking your entire scheme.

ON PAUL: Should he risk it? Or turn back?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... I might have an idea.

All eyes are on Agnes as she leads Paul into -

## INT (ELECTRIC LIGHT) MET OPERA HOUSE - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

THE GLITZIEST HIGH-SOCIETY PARTY OF 1889: The seats have been removed from the auditorium, allowing the THOUSAND GUESTS to DANCE freely across the great domed room. STRINGS OF ELECTRIC LIGHTS hang from the balconies. A FORTY-PERSON ORCHESTRA plays a spirited waltz.

And the GUESTS... Rainbow-draped, diamond-jeweled, extravagantly buoyant décolletage.

The sight takes Paul's breath away for a moment, until he spies...

... Thomas Edison. Talking to a COTERIE OF MEN at one side of the dance floor.

Agnes sees Edison, and then points elsewhere, at the back of a man we assume to be JP MORGAN.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Do you know how to waltz?

PAUL CRAVATH  
What?

She takes his left hand in her right. Then places his right firmly on her waist...

... And begins to TWIRL.

It takes Paul a moment to realize that Agnes is LEADING HIM IN A WALTZ ACROSS THE DANCE FLOOR.

As Paul struggles to keep up, he can feel her warm breath on his neck. Feels the tightening muscles on her back.

He tries to avoid eye contact as he dances. Trying to avoid the way he feels about her, this woman he cannot have, this love who will soon be engaged to another man, when...

... Agnes leans in and KISSES PAUL.

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
... But what about Jayne?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
We had different dreams. You and I... We have the same nightmares.  
(beat)  
Are you ready?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Ready for -

And suddenly, she releases her grip on Paul —  
 — Who stumbles as the dance comes to a stop —  
 — And she dives right into Morgan and his group:

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
 Happy New Year!

Paul, stunned from the kiss, watches from a distance as Agnes MAKES CONVERSATION WITH THE MEN.

They are lambs to her wolf. He's not even sure quite how she does it — he can't make out what they're saying — but she manages to talk with the group such that Morgan is excluded from the conversation.

Paul watches Morgan become bored by the chatting and drift away from the group...

... And head towards the MEN'S REST ROOM.

This is Paul's chance.

He gives one last look to Agnes.

ON AGNES: "Go get 'em."

Paul follows Morgan into —

**INT (ELECTRIC LIGHT) MET OPERA HOUSE - MEN'S REST ROOM**

— Paul enters behind Morgan...  
 ... And then SHUTS the door behind them.

He BOLTS it closed.

Morgan turns at the sound and we are finally face-to-face with: JP MORGAN, 50s, the richest man in the world.

JP MORGAN  
 .. You know, I used to keep a pistol on me. I'm going to give my security people hell about convincing me not to carry it.

PAUL CRAVATH  
 My name is Paul Cravath. I am an attorney.

JP MORGAN  
 Your parents must be so proud.

PAUL CRAVATH  
I represent George Westinghouse.

JP MORGAN  
Oh. Maybe not so proud then. I'm  
going to leave.

Morgan steps towards the door -

- But Paul blocks his path.

JP MORGAN (CONT'D)  
You have five seconds to get the  
fuck out of my way before I have my  
men put your body in the East  
River.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Thomas Edison is costing you money.

JP MORGAN  
You're costing me money.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Let's build a licensing arrangement  
between our companies.

JP MORGAN  
Are you drunk?

PAUL CRAVATH  
One bid for the World's Fair. One  
system. Our current. Your bulbs. We  
do the manufacturing. You get a  
royalty. Both companies are more  
profitable.

ON MORGAN: This is... Nuts... Isn't it?

JP MORGAN  
Thomas will never in a million  
years partner with you.

PAUL CRAVATH  
Great. Because I don't want to  
partner with him. I want to partner  
with you.  
(beat)  
Fire Edison. Replace him with a  
proven corporate executive who we  
can trust to zealously pursue only  
the bottom line.

JP MORGAN  
You have a guy in mind?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Charles Coffin.  
(off Morgan's look)  
You install Coffin at the helm of EGE. He makes the partnership deal with Westinghouse. Together, we eliminate the burden on consumers of having to choose between our incompatible products. Let's stop trusting our futures to a fickle public and an unpredictable free market. Let's put the control back where it belongs: In the boardroom.

ON MORGAN: Thinking about what Paul is suggesting. Playing out all the angles. All the implications.

Is he going for it?

Morgan reaches into his pocket and removes a CIGAR. Lights it. Blows SMOKE across the room.

From outside, we hear the SOUNDS of the partygoers: "3... 2... 1... HAPPY NEW YEAR!" Yelling and applause.

JP MORGAN  
(re: the noise)  
... 1890. Did you ever think you'd live to see it?

**EXT (DAYLIGHT) WALL STREET - MANHATTAN**

A few days later, the sun rises over Wall Street.

The boulevard is already busy, even at dawn. The American dream is being bought and sold a million times a day by the ambitious men running back and forth across the street.

And right at the corner, at the literal cornerstone of American capitalism, sits:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) JP MORGAN'S OFFICE - WALL STREET**

Morgan's office is thick with cigar smoke. He sits behind his enormous desk, taking in his visitors.

REVEAL: George Westinghouse. Walter Carter. Charles Hughes.  
Grosvenor Lowrey. Charles Coffin...

... And Paul Cravath.

They all look exhausted – no one has slept much in the past few days.

In a quiet moment, the FINAL CONTRACTS ARE SIGNED.

Paul stares at the signatures. A few pen strokes just sealed the future of American industry, science, law... And light.

Westinghouse SHAKES Paul's hand.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... Very well done, young man.

ON PAUL: This is the proudest moment of his life.

ON HUGHES AND CARTER: "Shit. The kid actually pulled it off."

ON LOWREY AND COFFIN: "Edison got what he deserved."

ON MORGAN: It's impossible to tell as he puffs at his cigar.

But suddenly the door bursts open, revealing –

– THOMAS EDISON.

His face is ashen as he looks around the room at these men – his enemies, his friends, his partners – who have all conspired to betray him.

JP MORGAN  
... Let's not have a scene.

ON EDISON: This is the worst moment of his life.

THOMAS EDISON  
Just tell me the part about the  
company name isn't true.

JP MORGAN  
That part was my idea. I didn't  
want the name "Edison" hanging over  
the company like a spectre.  
"General Electric." It's snappier.

THOMAS EDISON  
You took my name away?

JP MORGAN  
Thomas... It's business.

ON EDISON: Looking at the resolute faces of these men one by one... Preparing to launch into another of his bellicose speeches...

The men all brace for it as Edison opens his mouth...

THOMAS EDISON

...

But he has nothing left.

Instead Edison just SLINKS AWAY. Out the door. Humbled. Humiliated. Defeated.

ON PAUL: At least Goliath had the courtesy to fall with a grand thud when David slew him.

CUT TO:

**EXT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) THE WORLD'S FAIR - CHICAGO - MONTHS LATER**

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PATRONS pour through the gates of the World's Fair: An unprecedented 600 ACRE, 200 BUILDING celebration of American technological achievement.

The people flowing through these gates are mostly from small towns - they've never seen a building over 3 stories. This fair has an 8.5 million cubic foot art museum and a 265 foot Ferris Wheel. (The world's first, actually. George Ferris is scurrying around somewhere making sure it works.)

Before the fair closes, 27 million people will attend. For most of them, this is their first experience of electric lights. And these lights, as we can see, have one name on them:

W E S T I N G H O U S E

At the very center, a GRAND TENT displays the *next* generation of electrical devices. Emblazoned across it, in bold NEON LETTERING, is another name:

T E S L A

Yet throughout the fair, the name "Edison" is nowhere to be found.

ON THE PUBLIC: OOOHING and AAAAHING as they walk under electric lights for the first time.

AT THE GATES:

A STAGE has been assembled, before which thousands of people await remarks to commemorate the grand opening. Families. Children enjoying a new novelty called "cotton candy."

BACK STAGE:

Paul and Agnes peek out between the WOOD BOARDS at the PUBLIC.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... I dunno, do you think they're excited enough?

Before Paul can respond to her joke they're interrupted by —

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
Damn it! Where's my speech?

PAUL CRAVATH  
Sir?

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
10,000 people out there and I can't find my speech!

PAUL CRAVATH  
It must be around somewhere.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
If it was around here, I'd be holding it, now wouldn't I?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Have you checked the carriage?

ON WESTINGHOUSE: Shit. He did not.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
... I'll be right back.  
(calling O/S)  
Marguerite! The carriage!

Paul and Agnes watch Westinghouse go.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
He really does hate public appearances.

PAUL CRAVATH  
He just gets nervous.  
(removes the SPEECH from his coat)  
That's why he wrote out his speech by hand.  
(MORE)

PAUL CRAVATH (CONT'D)  
(off Agnes' shocked look)  
He left it at the hotel.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
You are such a scoundrel!

PAUL CRAVATH  
What do you expect? I'm a lawyer.

She LAUGHS, but her expression changes as she sees someone in the distance.

Paul turns to see what she's looking at:

Nikola Tesla, preparing a NEON TUBE for a display.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
... You haven't spoken to him yet?

PAUL CRAVATH  
I don't know what to... Do you think he's forgiven me?

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
I suppose there's only one way to find out.

(beat)  
I'm going to get Marguerite in on your little joke. No one will find this funnier than she will.

(re: Tesla)  
Good luck.

Agnes walks off to find George and Marguerite Westinghouse.

Paul slowly approaches Tesla.

PAUL CRAVATH  
... I've been walking the grounds all day, and everywhere I turn, I see your name. In neon, no less.

Tesla looks up at him...

... And SMILES.

NIKOLA TESLA  
It is pleasing to visage you, Mr. Paul Cravath, Esquire.

PAUL CRAVATH  
It's good to see you too.

NIKOLA TESLA  
I am indebted.

PAUL CRAVATH  
No. I'm the one who's indebted.  
Thank you for your faith in me.

NIKOLA TESLA  
When Mr. George Westinghouse told  
me of your difficulty with my  
royalty, I knew that granting them  
to you was the only correct route.

ON PAUL: Wait... What?

PAUL CRAVATH  
... Royalty? What are you talking  
about?

NIKOLA TESLA  
I gave all of my royalties to Mr.  
George Westinghouse.

CUT TO:

**INT (DAYLIGHT) HOTEL NEW YORKER - TESLA'S ROOM - FLASHBACK**

We return to the scene of Westinghouse enlisting Tesla's support in the coup against Edison.

This is the part we *didn't* see.

Westinghouse hands Tesla the SECOND SET OF DOCUMENTS. The RED FOLDER.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE  
I'll be straight with you. You and I are visionaries. But Paul is an imbecile. And thanks to him, I owe \$2 million that I don't have. The only way to keep me afloat is if you give up that expensive royalty we're paying you. For the good of the team. So we can light the World's Fair.

Tesla nods. Lighting the fair is all he's ever wanted.

NIKOLA TESLA (V.O.)  
(to Paul)  
It was only money. What is that,  
compared to what we have done?

Tesla happily SIGNS THE PAPERS Westinghouse gives him, oblivious to the fact that he's signing over all of his future earnings. Millions and millions of dollars.

PAUL CRAVATH (V.O.)  
Without that royalty, you'll have no income. No lab. No - damn it, where was your attorney?

CUT BACK TO:

**EXT (ELECTRIC LIGHTS) THE WORLD'S FAIR - CHICAGO**

Back to Paul and Nikola in the present.

NIKOLA TESLA  
Mr. George Westinghouse said I did not have requirement for one. You were looking after me. I have always had trust for you, Mr. Paul Cravath, Esquire.

ON PAUL: His whole world just turned upside down.

PAUL CRAVATH  
No, Nikola... George lied to you. He tricked you. He just wanted the money. He stole your -

NIKOLA TESLA  
(seeing something O/S)  
- Pardon! I must be examining the generators.

Paul watches, helpless, as Tesla WALKS AWAY.

Paul stands there shocked, stunned, hurt, trying to process what he's just learned when -

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (O.S.)  
After all this time, you're nothing but a liar and a thief.

Paul turns to find his client behind him, wearing a stern expression...

... Which breaks into a smile.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
The speech! Agnes told me about your joke. Very funny.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
Is everything all right? You look  
pale.

ON PAUL: How can he even begin to express the betrayal?  
Instinctively, he just hands Westinghouse the speech.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
Thank you. Now, shall we go make  
something wonderful?

Paul can't even move his lips as Westinghouse ASCENDS ONTO THE STAGE...

... And the crowd bursts into WILD APPLAUSE.

Paul stands at the side of the stage, swirling with white-hot rage and cool-blue heartbreak.

IN THE DISTANCE: Paul can see Nikola Tesla walking away from the stage, into the dim dark background with his machines.

ON PAUL: Westinghouse is no better than Edison. He might even be worse.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
(to the crowd)  
Thank you! Thank you! Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you. I cannot take credit for doing all of this alone - but I will.

LAUGHTER from the crowd.

GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE (CONT'D)  
But seriously, this is not about me. It's about America. Tonight, together, we are all laying the foundation for the future of this country. And folks - the future of America is bright.

Paul just stares when Agnes approaches from behind. She puts her arm around him affectionately.

Paul doesn't know what to say - how he can even tell her...

... Agnes, unaware, looks up at the HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LIGHT BULBS that hang over their heads.

AGNES HUNTINGTON  
Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?

ON PAUL: A dark stain in the center of a fantastic landscape.

TEXT ON SCREEN: After the fair, Nikola Tesla launched a series of new ventures. All of them were financial failures. He died penniless in his single room at the Hotel New Yorker.

TEXT ON SCREEN: George Westinghouse's A/C system became the national standard for power in the United States. Tesla never saw a cent of the profits. The Westinghouse Electrical Company is currently part of a large conglomerate containing Viacom and CBS.

ON PAUL: He got the girl... He won the war... And look what he's become a part of to do it.

TEXT ON SCREEN: Thomas Edison moved back to New Jersey, where he went on to invent both phonographs and motion pictures. He fought two more standards wars over those systems, first with Victrola and then with the Warner Brothers. Edison lost both.

TEXT ON SCREEN: Paul Cravath and Agnes Huntington married in 1892. Their daughter was born three years later. The hierarchical "Cravath System" stands as the foundation of all major law firms, including the one that even today bears Paul's name. It is the oldest and most prestigious firm in New York.

ON PAUL: Does he still believe in America anymore?

Does anyone?

**CUT TO BLACK.**