

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
 Damn.

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 forget 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
duelists, 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 admissable.

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 ingratitude 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 apologized. 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 habitated
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
Ummm. 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 bares 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.