GRANT
About what?

ALLEN
Porn.

GRANT
Porn?

ALLEN
Yes porn. Ol’ FRANKY smuggles this euro-trash in with his car shipments. Sometimes he buys them from other businessmen, usually at the hotel. He also pays local couples to make their own.

(pauses as he looks at the TV)
ERIC found out about it and decided he’d try and blackmail CARDEMON.

GRANT
Why are these pornos such a big deal?

The camera moves swiftly away from the two and comes to a rest on ALLEN’S DVD collection. The mighty collection contains several pornographic movies, the camera pans down to the left and a large stack of old VHS porn lies on the floor.

CUT TO:

ALLEN
You ever here of German Scheitzer?

GRANT
No, what’s that.
ALLEN
Never mind. It's illegal in this country.
(pause)
Dude, you know the tape you gave me?

GRANT
(nods)
Uh, huh.

ALLEN
It's one of them.

GRANT
What did CARDEMON do?

ALLEN
Not much. Just had a talk with JON COOK.
Got ERIC to...
   (pause)
...retire early.

GRANT
What does that mean? Where did ERIC go?

ALLEN
I dunno? Some say he still is at the
Republic-locked away in room 227. They
say-

ALLEN begins with an over dramatic voice-almost as if he is
telling a ghost story at a campfire.

ALLEN (continued)
They say he saw something so scary, so
shocking, that he never leaves the room.
GRANT
(panic creeps into his voice)
Oh, god.
(pause)
What do you think HUTCHIN’S’ll do to me?

ALLEN
Ah...don’t sweat it dude. He’ll probably talk to you...
(pause)
If he does anything at all. Think about it, he’s got as much to lose as you...if not more so.

GRANT’S worried face becomes a bit more relaxed. He sits back in the plush couch. ALLEN is enrapt with the events unfolding on the television screen. He walks smoothly to the other end of the couch...his gaze never leaves the screen. The program switches to a commercial. ALLEN’S trance is broken

ALLEN
Listen, you wanna go get some drinks?

GRANT
Don’t you have to work soon?
(pause)
You’re still on the night shift, aren’t ya’?

ALLEN
Yeah, so?

GRANT
You go to work drunk?

ALLEN looks at GRANT confused, almost as if an alien had descended from space, entered the front door, and seated himself down a ways from ALLEN on the couch.
ALLEN
Sometimes. Don’t you?

GRANT slaps his knee and stands up.

GRANT
All right, let’s go!

ALLEN smiles and turns of the TV, luckily for GRANT it was during a commercial, otherwise ALLEN might have preferred to stay until the end of wrestling. The two exit the trailer and walk out into the night air.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT-STREET-NIGHT
GRANT and ALLEN laugh as they exit a bar. ALLEN is slightly ahead of GRANT as the walk to a street behind the bar to get into their cars. It is obvious that they have been drinking, yet both seem to be in control.

ALLEN
I got three numbers tonight!

GRANT
(mockingly)
Yeah, I wonder who the lucky lady will be ALLEN?

ALLEN
(surprised)
Dude.
GRANT
 Seriously, I bet they'll just clamor
 for the chance to give you a call-
 -fighting for the attention of ALLEN,
 hotel janitor.

ALLEN
 GRANT, look!

GRANT stops when he notices the serious tone in ALLEN'S voice. The two look to see GRANT'S car in shambles. The windshield is broken, a brick sits on the front passenger seat. All four tires are slashed and the car is sitting on its rims. Someone had taken a key, or even a screwdriver and had lacerated large marks up and down the side of the car. GRANT looks at the mess that was once his car...his bottom jaw almost touches the street. ALLEN is surprised, yet we can tell that he is not very concerned. Maybe he has even seen something like this before.

ALLEN
 Oh, man...
 (pause)
 I mean...Dude. I'm sorry.

GRANT
 ALLEN, do you think this was the work of I.P. FREELY?

ALLEN
 I dunno...
 (pause)
 You better go talk to JON.
 (pause)
 I'll give you a lift.

GRANT stares after his car as he begins to walk away.

CUT TO:
EXT-JON COOK'S HOME-NIGHT
GRANT climbs out of ALLEN'S truck. He assumes ALLEN will follow, but as soon as his feet step on the pavement in front of JON COOK'S house and he closes the door. ALLEN pulls away quickly, but not forcefully from the driveway. GRANT turns to look as ALLEN drives down the street. GRANT notices that he is alone, very alone. A few crickets chirp near by, but otherwise there is no sound. GRANT swallows and walks towards the front door. He looks at the door for some time, his shoulders lower and he turns to leave. He makes it halfway to the end of the front porch, stops, turns, and heads back for the door. His shaky finger reaches for the doorbell. All of the sudden, JON COOK throws the door open, much to GRANT'S astonishment.

JON
Good...we need to talk.

JON grabs GRANT by the shoulder and pulls him inside.

CUT TO:

INT-JON COOK'S HOME-NIGHT
GRANT walks into the empty living room. He stands looking blankly at the room's décor.

JON
Have a seat.
(pause)
Are you thirsty?

GRANT
No, I'm fine.

GRANT takes a seat on the couch. His body language, crossed arms, gentle rocking, and sweaty hands give away his nervousness. Meanwhile, JON seems relaxed and calm. Yet, by the tone in his voice, we know he is serious.
JON
Listen, you are in some serious trouble.

GRANT
I didn’t know she was his step-daughter.
(pause)
I just wanted-

JON
(interrupting and surprised)
What the hell are you talking about?

GRANT says nothing. He stares at JON with an open mouth. He looks more confused and more concerned than ever.

GRANT
(with a shaky voice)
What are you talking about?

JON
CARDEMON’S package and HUTCHINS’ special room.

GRANT
Oh. What about it?
(pause)
Their business is their business. Just like you said.

JON
Apparently you left a bad impression on CONRAD tonight. He thinks you might squeal.

GRANT
(exploding)
I didn’t even know it was German Shnitzel.
(pause)
Christ, how I could I get mixed up in-
JON
GRANT, CONRAD is one of the most paranoid Germans I have ever met.
(pauses and lowers his voice)
He’s not a man to be messed with.

GRANT
(exhales & drops his head in his hands)
I never...I would never rat on anybody.
(pause)
Honest.

JON
What did you mean when you referred to HUTCHIN’S and his daughter?

GRANT
I just asked her out. I didn’t even know she was related to I.P.-STAN.

JON
And the room?

GRANT
I met her parents tonight. I also saw this room that looked like the cover of a porn tape that everybody seems to be giving me.

JON
I see. You shouldn’t get involved with these people, GRANT.
(pause)
How long have I known you?

GRANT
About ten years.
JON
Ten years. I have helped you when no one else would. I wouldn’t give you advice that would hurt you.

GRANT
I know, JON. But, you must to believe me. I don’t want to bother anybody. I don’t even want to be involved. You know you can trust me.

(pause)
Hey, why don’t you talk to these guys for me. Tell them I’m a good guy, I can play ball.

JON
I don’t know, GRANT.

GRANT
Please, they’ll listen to you.

JON
All right...I’ll do it. In the mean time you should lay low.

(stands)
Take a vacation, relax a little.

GRANT
(stands too)
What about ANGIE?

JON
ANGIE HUTCHINS?

GRANT nods.

JON
Stay away.
GRANT
Ok, ok. Thanks JON.

GRANT is noticeably saddened by the advice. His shoulders are slumped as he exits JON COOK'S home. JON puts his hand on his shoulder on the way out.

JON
You mustn't tell anybody anything. Do you understand?

GRANT
Yes, JON. Thanks JON.

JON
Good night, GRANT. I'll call you in the morning.

GRANT exits the house and walks down the sidewalk. JON looks after GRANT for just a moment before he closes the door. A smile crosses his face. It is not an evil smile, it is a smile that a father gives to his son after he has just scared him...hoping he learns a lesson.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT-GRANT'S APT-MORNING
GRANT wakens with the light of day. He has not slept. He lies in his bed, staring at the ceiling. Birds begin to chip indicating that morning has officially come. GRANT looks haggard. He needs a shave, a shower, and some real sleep. He stares and ponders. A phone call breaks the silence.

GRANT
JON.
ANGIE (split-screen)
No, GRANT this is ANGIE.

GRANT
(disappointed)
Oh.

ANGIE
I know what you’ve been up too, you sick pervert.

GRANT
What...what are you talking about.

ANGIE
You know, the porn business.
(pause)
STAN told me that you’re a part of some ring at the hotel.

GRANT
No, no. It’s not me. It’s him.

ANGIE
C’mon GRANT, I don’t believe you.
(pause)
I was beginning to like you, a lot.

GRANT
No listen! I’ll prove it too you.

ANGIE
Prove what?

GRANT
I’ll prove that I’m not involved.
(pause)
I need a favor.
ANGIE
What?

GRANT
Can I borrow your car?

FADE OUT

EXT-CARDEMON MOTORS-DAY
GRANT climbs out of the car and walks towards the entrance of the lavish CARDEMON MOTORS' sales floor.

GRANT (to employee)
I need to speak with MR. CARDEMON.

EMPLOYEE
Business or personal?

GRANT
Both, get him.

The EMPLOYEE looks pissed and walks off into a side hallway. GRANT stops and looks around a bit. The EMPLOYEE returns in a few minutes and walks briskly up to GRANT.

EMPLOYEE
FRANCISCO CARDEMON will see you now.

CUT TO:

INT-CARDEMON'S OFFICE-DAY
GRANT opens the door to an unexpected surprise. Seated before him are CARDEMON, CONRAD PRICE, and his old friend MATT. GRANT is reluctant to move much further into the room, but does so shyly. CARDEMON stares uncomfortably at GRANT.
MATT
Hello, GRANT.

GRANT
What are you doing here?

MATT
I am a thpethial interpreter between MR. CARDEMON and CONRAD PRITH. I help thethe guyth do buthineth.

CARDEMON
(his eyes still fixed on GRANT)
What brings you to my office?

MATT
Wath Ihnen in thein Büro bringt?\(^1\)

GRANT
I thought he could speak English?
(motions towards CONRAD)

MATT
He can, but he' th terrible at it ath you might have guethed. Pluth it maketh the dealth go much fathter.

GRANT
(looks at everyone)
I want help from MR. CARDEMON.

MATT
Bewilligung braucht etwath Hilfe.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Was Ihnen in sein Büro bringt?
\(^2\) Bewilligung braucht etwas Hilfe.
CARDEMON
What is it?

CONRAD
Was ist es, dass Sie wollen?

MATT
What ith it that you want.

GRANT
I want to expose the scandalous matters behind STAN HUTCHINS.

MATT
Er will HUTCHIN’TH Pornographie-Geschäft ausstellen.¹

CONRAD looks at GRANT and then looks at CARDEMON. CARDEMON looks at GRANT, smiles and sits down.

CARDEMON
Our operations would be uncovered in the process.
(CARDEMON nods towards Conrad)

MATT
But that would exthpothe them-
Wait-he’th thpeaking englith?
(pause)
I’m getting confuthed.

GRANT
I just want enough information to discredit him at the University.

¹Er will HUTCHIN’S Pornographie-Geschäft ausstellen.
CARDEMON
And if we refuse?

GRANT
I'll contact the media about your little black market of German schwitzel.  
(pause)
I want him, not you.

MATT
Deutthche thcheithze.⁴

CONRAD
Geben Sie ihm überhaupt er will.

MATT
Give him what he wanths.  
(pause)
Thith ith confuthing.

CARDEMON
What is it exactly that you want?

GRANT
Information and evidence.

MATT
Informathion und Beweithe.⁵

CARDEMON
Fine.  
(pause)
Go to STAN’S house tonight around 11 p.m.

⁴Deutsche scheitze.  
⁵Information und Beweise.
GRANT
Why?

CARDEMON
Just do it. Bring a Polaroid camera.

GRANT nods and gets up to go.

GRANT
One more question.

CARDEMON raises an eyebrow.

GRANT
What exactly was in the briefcase?

CARDEMON
The remains of ERIC.
(laughs)
Now get outta here.

CROSS FADE

INT-HUTCHIN'S HOME-NIGHT
GRANT and ANGIE approach the door to her parents’ house. GRANT has a camera dangling from his neck and ANGIE, arms crossed, trails a little behind.

ANGIE
Are you sure this is necessary. Wednesday night’s their Bridge night. I haven’t been here at this time since I started college.

GRANT turns towards ANGIE.
GRANT

Listen. I don’t want to lose you. I really like you. Once you see what happening, you’ll believe me.
(pause)
Your step dad’s the pervert not me.

STAN and ANGIE enter the house. The house appears empty. The only sound emanates from one of the back bedrooms. It is obviously music. ANGIE looks confused.

ANGIE

I thought they played bridge.

GRANT

Follow me.

GRANT enters the hallway and walks towards the room he entered the other night. The music is growing louder.

ANGIE

(confused)
That’s Dads’ private study.

GRANT throws open the door and immediately starts taking pictures. ANGIE gasps and falls back against the door. In the corner, JUDY is standing wearing a leather-clad suit—a zipper is closed over her mouth, hiding her face. STAN HUTCHINS sits in the corner adjusting something on the video camera. He is surprised at the intrusion.

GRANT

Ha. I got you.

STAN

Oh, shit.

ANGIE starts to cry.
JUDY
(muffled)
ANGIE darwing. Pleaf, come here to mumma.

JUDY unzips the zipper covering her mouth.

JUDY
ANGIE, darling. Please come here to mommy.

ANGIE looks horrified.

STAN
It’s not what it looks like.

All four individuals look at each other and reflect on the stupidity of the last statement. STAN walks towards the camera and turns it off. He then crosses the room, dressed in his leather chaps, red scarf, and cowboy hat, to turn off the stereo.

GRANT
We’ve got some decisions to make.

STAN
What is it that you want.

JUDY
Angie, please baby, come to mommy.

ANGIE
No. Mother! Look at what you’re wearing.
STAN
What do you want from me?
(pause)
I can transfer you to any school you want.
I can make sure you graduate from anywhere.
(pause)
Do you want some money?
(pause)
What the hell do you want.

JUDY
Please STAN, try to calm down.
(pause)
Come here and untie this arm. I’m sure we can come to some arrangement.

GRANT
I just want some money.

STAN
and...

GRANT
I wanna date ANGIE.
(pause)
Tell her that I’m not involved with...
(pause)
this.
(GRANT motions towards JUDY)

STAN says nothing and glowers at GRANT and then at ANGIE.

GRANT
Tell her or I’ll take these pictures to our lovely paper, or the police.
(pause)
Smile.
GRANT aims the camera at JUDY. JUDY adjusts her hair, wanting to look her best. GRANT takes another picture of JUDY who winces at the flash.

STAN

Ok, ok.
(pause)
So, it’s come to this. My own stepdaughter bribing me.

ANGIE

Shut-up. You people are sick.
(pause)
Is this what you do instead of playing Bridge?

STAN extends a leather hand and gives GRANT a check.

STAN

Take this. Get out.

GRANT

Let’s go.
(pause)
Good by.

JUDY

ANGIE darling, come here.

ANGIE and GRANT exit through the door.

CUT TO:
EXT-ANGIE’S CAR-EVENING
GRANT climbs into the passenger seat as ANGIE pulls out of the drive. He flips through each of the photographs with a smirk on his face.

    ANGIE
    Where do you want to go?

    GRANT
    Anywhere but here.

GRANT looks at the check and turns to face ANGIE. ANGIE smiles back. GRANT tears the check up and throws it out the window.

    GRANT
    Anywhere but here.

The camera pans out of the car and above it. The car blends in with other cars until it is lost on the busy night street.

    The End
The Republic: Shooting Script

Chris Flook
1. **INT-HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT**

   **-FADE IN-**

   -Begin with a CU of GRANT'S legs as he storms up the stairs.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -WS of GRANT climbing the stairs (from floor POV). Pull back as GRANT reaches the door.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -MS over GRANT’S shoulder of STAN.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -MS of GRANT in room.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -CU over GRANT’S shoulder of bathroom door.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -MS of GRANT from left side.

   **-CUT TO-**

   -CU of STAN.

   **-FADE OUT-**
2. **INT-BILL’S FOOD GROCERY-MORNING**

- **FADE IN**-
  -Begin with an extreme aerial WS of the city.

- **ZOOM into a**-
  -MS that establishes the small confines of the office, then-

- **CUT TO**-
  -MS and CU shots of GRANT and BOSS as they speak in turn.

- **CUT TO**-
  -WS of GRANT getting into his car.

- **CUT TO**-
  -CU of GRANT starting car.

- **CUT TO**-
  -MS of muffler falling off.

- **FADE OUT**-

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**SCENE 2: BILL’S GROCERY OFFICE**
3. **INT-SMALL LOCAL BAR-AFTERNOON**

- **FADE IN**-
  -Begin with an EXT WS of bar to establish scene.

- **FADE INTO**-
  -MS from behind GRANT.

- **CUT TO**-
  -CU of GRANT'S face.

- **CUT TO**-
  -MS of MATT. GRANT’S POV.

- **CUT TO**-
  -Assemblage of MS and CU of the two as they speak.

- **FADE OUT**-
4. **INT-GRANT’S APARTMENT-MORNING**

- **FADE IN**-
  - Begin with the sound fading in before the picture.

- **CUT TO**-
  - Short montage of CUs of GRANT’S meager belongings.

- **CUT TO**-
  - MS then CU of GRANT on his chair during conversation.

- **CUT TO**-
  - WS of GRANT as the scene:

  - **FADES OUT**-
5. **INT-HOTEL DESK-NIGHT**

- **FADE IN** -
  - Begin with a WS, establishing the hotel desk.

- **FADE TO** -
  - CU of GRANT.

- **CUT TO** -
  - CU of clock.

- **LONG FADE OUT** -
6. **INT-HOTEL DESK-NIGHT**

- **FADE IN**
  - Begin with a MS of GRANT.

- **CUT TO**
  - CU of clock, then, many varied shots of clock. Montage should be quick and energetic.

- **CUT TO**
  - MS of GRANT and ALLEN.

- **CUT TO**
  - A mixture of CU and MS of the characters as they speak.

- **CUT TO**
  - SWISH PAN that moves and covers every detail of the hotel. The pan ends on the room numbers 227. The camera moves through the door.

- **CUT TO**
  - CU and MS of rooms contents.

- **CUT TO**
  - CU of ERIC’S face, then ECU of ERIC’S mouth as he speaks.

- **FADE OUT**
7. **INT-HOTEL DESK-NIGHT**

- **FADE IN-**
  - Begin with MS that includes GRANT and the couple.

- **CUT TO-**
  - Various CU and MS of characters as they speak.

- **CUT TO-**
  - Signature on the ledger.

- **CUT TO-**
  - WS of couple as they climb the stairs.

- **FADE OUT on clock-**
8. **INT-HOTEL DESK-MORNING**

-FADE IN on clock-

-Begin with steadicam shot, following JON from behind.

-CUT TO-

-MS, then CU of characters as they speak.

-CUT TO-

-CU of hotel ledger.

-CUT TO-

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![Diagram of Hotel Front Desk]

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9. **EXT-GRANT’S CAR-MORNING**

-MS of GRANT pulling a paper from the case.

-ZOOM TO-

-CU of front of paper.-

-CUT TO-

-WS over GRANT’S right shoulder of the upper floors of *The Republic*.

-FADE OUT-
10. **INT-GRANT’S APARTMENT-EARLY EVENING**

-FADE IN-

-Begin with an overhead (from ceiling) WS of GRANT’S apartment.

-CUT TO-

-SPLIT SCREEN CU of JON and GRANT as they talk on the phone.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT getting up, out of bed.

-FADE OUT-

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**SCENE 10: GRANT’S APT-BEDROOM**

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11. **EXT-REPUBLIC PARKING LOT-EARLY EVENING**

-FADE IN-

-WS of GRANT’S car as he pulls in.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT exiting car.

-CUT TO-

-GRANT walks into MS of JON. The two walk together and out of the shot to the right.

-CUT TO-
12. **INT-REPUBLIC-FRONT DESK-NIGHT**

- MS of GRANT on right side.

  **-CUT TO-**

- MS, then pull back to WS of bar.

  **-CUT TO-**

- MS of GRANT and ALLEN as they speak.

  **-CUT TO-**

- CU and MS as GRANT mentions the characters.

  **-CUT TO-**

- MS of GRANT and ALLEN.

  **-CROSS FADE-**

- MS of ALLEN peering into a peep hole.

  **-CUT TO-**

- WS of people at pool.

  **-CROSS FADE-**

- CU, zoom out to a MS and walk with woman-center of shot.

  **-CUT TO-**

- MS showing the couple on left and GRANT on the right, behind he counter.

  **-CUT TO-**

- CU of GRANT.

  **-CUT TO-**

- WS of couple climbing stairs.

  **-FADE OUT-**
13. **INT-REPUBLIC-FRONT DESK**

-FADE IN-

-Short montage of MS of couples coming to the desk.

-CUT TO-

-Series of CU's showing GRANT grabbing keys and passing keys out.

-LONG FADE OUT-

14. **INT-REPUBLIC FRONT DESK-NIGHT**

-FADE IN-

-MS of GRANT behind desk, throughout entire scene.

-CUT TO-

15. **INT-HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT**

-FADE IN-

-CU over GRANT'S shoulder of bathroom door.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT from left side.

-CUT TO-

-CU of STAN.

-FADE OUT-

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**SCENE 15: HOTEL ROOM**
16. **INT-HOTEL DINING ROOM-NIGHT**

-FADE IN-

-The camera slowly circles (full 360°) around GRANT and VICTORIA during their conversation.

-CUT TO-

SCENE 16: HOTEL DINING ROOM

17. **INT-STAN’S HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT**

-MS of STAN pacing.

-ZOOM OUT TO-

-WS of GRANT and STAN in same room.

-CUT TO-

-MS and CU of characters as they speak.

-FADE OUT-

SCENE 17: HOTEL ROOM
18. **INT-REPUBLIC FRONT DESK-MORNING**

-FADE IN-

-Begin with a WS from ceiling or balcony as JON walks into shot, he moves to the lower portion of the screen.

-CUT TO-

-Assemblage of MS and CU as characters speak.

-FADE OUT-

![Scene 18: Hotel Front Desk]

19. **MONTAGE SEGMENT-PASSAGE OF SUMMER**

-FADE IN-

-A montage of MS, CU, and WS depicting the various clientele and actions of GRANT during the summer.

-LONG CROSS FADE ON SUN AS IT SETS-

20. **INT-REPUBLIC’S FRONT DESK-EARLY EVENING**

-FADE IN-

-CU of money in GRANT’S hands-

-ZOOM OUT TO-

-MS of GRANT and WILLIAMS-
-PAN WITH-
-MS of WILLIAMS ON STAIRS-
-CUT TO-
-CU of GRANT’S last line-
-FADE OUT-

21. INT-CLASSROOM-MIDAFTE RNOON

-FADE IN-
-WS of classroom from back-
-CUT TO-
-CU of GRANT sleeping.
-ZOOM OUT TO-
-MS of GRANT and ANGIE-
-CUT TO-
-CU of GRANT writing notes-
-CUT TO-

SCENE 21: CLASSROOM
22. **EXT-OUTSIDE OF CAMPUS BUILDING-AFTERNOON**

- WS of GRANT and ANGIE on street.
  - ZOOM TO-
  - MS of couple as they begin to speak.
  - CUT TO-

- Alternate shots of MS and CU as the characters speak their lines.

  - CUT TO-
  - MS of couple from behind as the scene ends
  - FADE OUT

23. **INT-REPUBLIC’S FRONT DESK-EVENING**

  - FADE IN-
  - MS of GRANT behind desk as customers come and go.

  - ZOOM TO-

  - CU of CONRAD as he enters

  - CUT TO-

  - Alternate shots of CU and MS of characters as they speak. When CONRAD yells, immediately cut to WS of empty lobby as the sound echoes.

  - CUT TO-

  - CU of briefcase as it is mentioned.

  - CUT TO-

  - WS as CONRAD leaves.

  - CUT TO-

  - CU of GRANT as he says his final line.

  - CLOCK WIPE-

  - MS of CARDEMON as he enters-
-CUT TO-
-CU of bodyguards-

-Alternate shots of CU and MS of characters as they speak.

- C U T TO-
-CU of briefcase as it is mentioned.

- C U T TO-
-WS as CARDEMON leaves.

- C U T TO-
-CU of GRANT as he says his final line.

-FADE OUT-

24. INT-RESTAURANT DINING-MORNING

-FADE IN-
-Alternate CU of each speaker as they deliver their lines.

- C U T TO-
-MS as the scene ends.

-FADE OUT-

SCENE 24: RESTAURANT
25. INT-HUTCHINS' HOME-NIGHT

-FADE IN-

-MS from behind GRANT’S shoulder of the door.

-CUT TO-

-PAN of room from GRANT’S POV. Camera stops on WS of STAN in the corner.

-CUT TO-

-MS and CU as characters deliver their lines.

-CUT TO-

-CU steadicam following behind GRANT as he heads to the bathroom.

-CUT TO-

-WS of porn room-then a series of MS, CU, and WS of room and characters.

-CUT TO-

-CU of German sign-

-WS as GRANT moves towards the front door.

-CUT TO-
26. **INT-GRANT’S CAR-NIGHT**
   -CU of GRANT’S face-
   -CUT TO-

27. **EXT/INT-ALLEN’S TRAILER-NIGHT**
   -Begin with a WS to establish GRANT pulling up to trailer, from the roof.
   -CUT TO-
   -MS of ALLEN watching TV-
   -PAN WITH-
   -ALLEN as he moves towards the door-
   -CUT TO-
   -CU of GRANT outside door-
   -CUT TO-
   -MS of GRANT as he enters trailer.
   -CUT TO-
   -Slow PAN as the camera reveals the contents of the room, GRANT’S POV.
   -CUT TO-
   -Assemblage of CU, MS, and WS of GRANT and ALLEN as they deliver their lines.
   -SWISH PAN TO-
   -MS of porn collection.
   -ZOOM DOWN-
   -Over the collection.
   -CUT TO-
   - Assemblage of CU, MS, and WS of GRANT and ALLEN as they deliver their lines.

   -FADE OUT ON GRANT AND ALLEN EXITING THE TRAILER-
28. **EXT-STREET-NIGHT**

-FADE IN-

-Camera trucks back keeping GRANT and ALLEN in a MS.

-CUT TO-

-CU of damaged car.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT’S reaction.

-CUT TO-

29. **EXT-JON COOK’S HOME-NIGHT**

-MS as GRANT gets out of ALLEN’S truck.

-CUT TO-

-MS steadicam as we follow in front of GRANT as he approaches door.

-CUT TO-

-MS of JON opening door, GRANT’S POV.

-CUT TO-
30. **INT-JON COOK’S HOME-NIGHT**

-MS establishes the two characters in JON’S living room.

-**CUT TO**-

-Series of CU and MS as the characters deliver their lines.

-**CUT TO**-

-MS as JON walks GRANT to the door.

-**FADE OUT ON JON’S FACE**-

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**SCENE 30: JON COOK’S HOUSE**
31. **INT-GRANT’S APT-MORNING**

-WS establishes that GRANT is lying on his bed.

-**CUT TO**-

-SPLIT-SCREEN MS of GRANT and ANGIE as they deliver their lines.

-**CUT TO**-

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**SCENE 31: GRANT’S APT—BEDROOM**
32. EXT-CARDEMON MOTORS-DAY

-WS of car entering car dealership.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT and ANGIE exiting the car.

-CUT TO-

-MS, truck backwards keeping GRANT and ANGIE in a MS.

-CUT TO-

-WS of GRANT and ANGIE from employee’s POV.

-CUT TO-

-CU of GRANT and ANGIE delivering their lines.

-CUT TO-
33. **INT-CARDEMON’S OFFICE-DAY**

-A series of MS, CU, and WS of characters as they deliver their lines.

-CROSS FADE through GRANT’S STORY-

-Continue the series of MS, CU, and WS of characters as they deliver their lines.

-CUT TO-

-MS of GRANT and ANGIE as they stand to leave.

-CROSS FADE TO-

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34. **INT-HUTCHIN’S HOME-NIGHT**

-MS of back of couple.

-ZOOM OUT TO REVEAL-

-MS of GRANT and ANGIE as they enter the room.

-CUT TO-

-Assemblage of MS and CU as characters deliver their lines.

-CUT TO-

-CU of checkbook as STAN writes checks-

-CUT TO-

-MS of mother every time she asks for ANGIE.

-QUICK ZOOM TO-

-ANGIE’S face as she realizes what is going on.
-CUT TO-
-CU of GRANT-
-CUT TO-
-MS of GRANT as he accepts the check.
-CUT TO-
-CU of STAN'S face-
-CUT TO-
-MS of GRANT ushering ANGIE out the door-
-CUT TO-

35. **EXT-ANGIE'S CAR-NIGHT**

-MS of GRANT and ANGIE getting in the car.

-CUT TO-

-Alternating CU shots as ANGELA and GRANT deliver their lines.

-CUT TO-

-CU as GRANT throws torn check out the window.

-FADE TO-

-MS of car, zoom slowly out to reveal that the car is one of many.

**FADE to CREDITS**
GLOSSARY

-CLOCK WIPE: A transition in editing where one scene gives way to another as an invisible clock hand changes one image to the other.

-CU: Close Up.

-MONTAGE: Short sequence that blends music, various shots, with various subject matter.

-MS: Medium Shot.

-POV: Point of View. Camera acts as characters sight

-STEADICAM: Mobile camera mount that allows hand-held movement without the jarring motion.

-SWISH PAN: Camera moves swiftly between two scenes. The transition is a blur of the middle images.

-TRUCK: Mounted camera moves forwards, backwards, to the left, or to the right...usually on a track or cart.

-WS: Wide Shot
The Republic: An Endeavor at Comical Scriptwriting

Honors Thesis Paper (HONRS 499)

Christopher A. Flook

May, 2003
I decided to write a screenplay for my thesis because of the importance I place on art, specifically film. The motion picture is an artistic form of expression. It is unique because the medium blends sight and sound with dramatic storytelling. A movie will often intermingle a variety of themes and ideas. I hope that I have achieved this blend in my screenplay. The themes and issues covered in *The Republic* are, with any luck, good examples of how a writer will reproduce realistic topics in a fictional world. This is how art reflects life. *The Republic* is an attempt to scrutinize the lives of small town people. In addition, the screenplay is my endeavor to illustrate how these individuals treat taboo elements of traditional society. Most importantly, I want people to laugh. I hope this exercise in writing will provide a humorous interpretation of reality. The film theorist Siegfried Kracauer said it best, "The traditional arts exist to transform life...but cinema exists most profoundly and most essentially when it presents life as is. The other arts exhaust their subject matter in the creative process; cinema tends on the contrary to expose its matter."¹

Kracauer was attempting to mount film under the auspice of art. Yet, art is one of the most difficult subjects to define clearly. Art has liberal boundaries in respect to its clarity. How does one truly define what art is? Furthermore, what mediums are best utilized for the expression of art? The motion picture’s claim as a medium of the artistic world has often been contested, at least in the United States. In the United States, film was considered an exclusively commercial venture as early as 1915 and not an artistic form of expression, “A 1915 Supreme Court ruling...had decided...that movies were a novelty...conducted solely for profit, not “speech” at all.”² This notion lasted until the 1950s. The “*The Miracle* decision” of 1952 changed all of that. Some American audiences contested an Italian film, *The Miracle*, due to its supposed sacrilegious characteristics. The case reached, “the Supreme Court which ruled that

¹ Flook 2
the term “sacrilegious” had no clear meaning and that films could no more be suppressed than any other forum for public debate.” Motion pictures were finally reached the status of an artistic form of expression in the United States. Restrictions on filmmakers were relaxed and these artists began to use the medium as never before.

Regardless, film was considered an art form the world round long before America chose to redefine the medium. Philosophers, artisans, and theorists all attempted to define the parameters of the visual medium. The variety and substance of film theories that emerged are immense. Many theorists and artists alike have provided a number of filmic explanations to help delineate motion pictures. However, there exist two main interpretations of film. One consists of the films realistic components while they other is based on a film’s construction and form. These two core concepts are known as realism and formalism respectively.

Before we carefully examine my work, it is important to explain the differences between formalistic and realistic story telling. Both elements are contained within my screenplay. With formalism, the filmmaker takes the actuality completely out of context and introduces cinematographic devices to derive a meaning. A more concise definition follows, “Formalism. Whether practiced by an artist or a critic, the emphasis on the form, structure, and strategies of a work of art, rather than on its subject or the circumstances under which it came to be created.”

Often, formative filmmaking will place a higher emphasis on the editing of a film, as opposed to the actual photography of real events, “Eisenstein…and all formative theorists…had a tendency to place editing far above photography.” Formalism pulls the spectator out of the film and demands attention to the form or style in a film. A more recent example of a formalist

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1 Parentheses around the word “speech” are original.

2 Bold type is original.
Memento. Memento tells the story of a man who has no short-term memory. Through elaborate editing, this film is told forwards and backwards at the same time.

Realism, by way of contrast is, “a representational style that attempts to present state of affairs without distortion.” The filmmaker keeps the focus of the motion picture on the story and not on the style of the editing, lighting, sound, etc. Andre Bazin, a realist film theorist, further developed the ideas of filmic realism. He believed that film was different from traditional art forms because, “Cinema attains its fullest...in being the art of the real.” Other realist films include the documentary and the actuality motion pictures.

However, like all art forms, these rules are not universal. Most films are not composed entirely of realistic or formalistic elements. In fact, many films exercise a mixture of these techniques. Many filmmakers employ both realistic and formalistic elements in their films. One such director was Stanley Kubrick. His films often combine both methods. For example, in Dr. Strangelove, or How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb (1964), Kubrick goes to great lengths to make the backgrounds and props realistic. He wanted his characters to exist and operate in a realistic world. However, their actions are often not realistic portrayals. Furthermore, the editing, pace, acting, and plot were far from realistic; they consist of formalistic values. The falling atomic bomb between the legs of Slim Pickens has a plethora of formalistic countenances.

All of these definitions of form and content manifest themselves during the production and post-production process of filmmaking. However, an exceptional filmmaker will plan these things long before the first camera starts shooting. This is where the significance of the screenplay performs a crucial role, “For undergirding each project in the onrushing flood lies a script, and someone must of necessity conceive and write it.” This is another reason why I
chose to write a film instead of manufacturing a motion picture for my Honors Thesis. It is necessary to lay a solid foundation with the screenplay before a filmmaker decides to build upon it. I wanted to create this solid foundation as my thesis. Furthermore, this is why *The Republic* in an exercise in writing. It blends a variety of techniques and styles.

However, the writer must act as a director while composing his or her work, writing a screenplay demands that the screenwriter must think visually. Each scene must have the ability to be shot and produced on film, not just in the minds eye, “A screenplay is a film unfolding on paper. A story told for the screen. A story to be seen. And, like all drama, told in scenes.”

The more down-to-earth the chronicle is, the easier it will be to shoot. This is not to say that the tale must be plain and mind numbing. Quite the contrary, an exciting screenplay can be based on simple elements. Not every film needs computer-generated characters and elaborated scenery. The excitement can develop squarely from the story.

*The Republic* establishes itself on a just such an uncomplicated topic. In short, *The Republic* is about one young man’s struggle to make it in the world. The story begins with Grant Connolly being fired, yet again, from another job. A chance encounter with an old friend yields a new occupation as night desk clerk at the local hotel, *The Republic*. Once there, Grant learns that the establishment is a hotbed for the seedy antics of the town’s local elite. Over time, Grant becomes a trusted member of the hotel staff. During one evening, Grant helps a university administrator take care of some personal issues. In exchange, Grant receives a free ride to the school. Another chance encounter brings Grant and Angie together. Angie is the stepdaughter of the university administrator whom Grant had assisted. The result is a series of unpleasant, yet funny confrontations between Grant, the father, and other members of the town’s elite.

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1 Italics are original.
Yet, *The Republic* began as a serious venture. The above premise can easily be converted into a serious drama, or as I found out, a wild comedy. I was able, under the careful tutelage of Dr. Lee Papa, to develop the screenplay as a comedy. This was not my original suggestion. I had intended the film to be a serious illustration of small town corruption, as if I really knew what that meant. The original concept was written as follows:

The story follows a young man named Grant. After finding out that his girlfriend is pregnant, Grant is forced to take a second job. The job will help pay some of the bills. He applies and gets a job at a local hotel in town. He soon discovers that the hotel is a hotbed for the local elite. Many local prominent people bring their secret, lurid lifestyles with them.

Grant learns of one local banker’s affair with a young woman. Grant decides to blackmail him and earn some income a little faster. The banker, a member of the town’s high society, with innumerable resources (private and public), does not fall for Grant’s scheme. He refuses to comply with Grant’s machination. Grant soon finds his life terrorized by the banker. He has no idea what kind of man he is dealing with and what kind of trouble that he has created for himself. Grant finds himself faced with a difficult decision: his happiness or his girlfriend’s.

This premise is simply too negative and dramatic to unfold successfully on screen. This version would have been more or less a battle between Grant and the banker. If I had written the screenplay from this angle, I would not have been able to create a superior comedy. The script probably would have developed into an overly dramatic film, full of simplistic language and a lackluster message. Yet, by reducing the serious nature of the tale, I was able to create a unique
perspective from the same basic idea. This perspective was comedy, a humorous angle on the story.

The basic subject of *The Republic* is essentially the same between both accounts. This kind of mixed interpretation is true with many forms of literature. Often, different stories will develop from the same idea:

... *comedy is a perspective.* Another way of stating the same point is to say that nothing is inherently funny or sad, humorous or tragic. It all depends on how you choose to look at it. The story of lovers who face family obstacles in getting together is the formula for romantic comedy... But it is also the plot of Shakespeare’s tragic *Romeo and Juliet* and many of the sad headlines in our daily newspapers.$^{12}$

I decided to make Grant’s situation less desperate. Instead of being forced to find supplemental employment because of pregnancy, Grant must find a job simply because he needs a paycheck. This helps Grant’s development as a comical character. Grant acts out of a logic of wondering greed as opposed to dire necessity. In addition, he is the protagonist of the film, the indispensable character of any story. Although *The Republic* is intended to be told from an objective viewpoint, the story is essentially told from Grant’s point of view. Grant is in every scene of the screenplay. He drives the story and subsequently will drive the film. However, we can see the other character’s point of view, including Grant’s antagonist Stan Hutchins. Both acquire different notions, thus different points of view on the same developments, “Hero will have a different attitude towards topic than Villain.”$^{13}$ In my story, the two most opposing characters become the antagonist and protagonist in *The Republic*.

$^3$ Italics are original.
Grant is not a traditional protagonist. He does not become a proactive protagonist, “Proactive protagonists make things happen…Reactive protagonists don’t move the story. They do what other people suggest. Things happen to them.” Grant personifies the reactive protagonist. All of his actions and decisions derive from other’s instigations. He finds a job only because of his friend. He takes the advantage of going back to school because the opportunity smacks him upside the head. In a way, making Grant a reactive protagonist makes him a character to be pitied. His lackluster performance in life reflects his nature as a human being. We can laugh at him at the same time as sympathizing with him. At the end of the screenplay, Grant becomes proactive when he is faced with the loss of Angie. He confronts the villain of the story to show that he is not involved with the town’s sleazy pornographic industry.

This battle of the wills is only one important theme in *The Republic*. I incorporated other themes as well. Many of the characters are dissolute people, despite their public personas. Therefore, themes of immorality and hypocrisy recur throughout the screenplay. Some characters, such as Cardemon, are wealthy and prominent businessmen. Yet, these same individuals make a hobby of selling disreputable black market merchandise. Alternatively, a university administrator, known for having a respected and moral family, visits a prostitute often during his night activities and participates in the creation of pornographic material.

In addition to hypocritical and immoral themes, I also attempted to integrate a theme of innocence. Grant, in a sense, is innocent when he is first introduced to the corrupt world of the town’s privileged few. Yet, he has no problem adjusting into the new world in which he found. In fact, he attempts to operate successfully in it, despite that fact that he finds the other’s behavior to be in the wrong. Therefore, Grant is an innocent that ingratiates the evil underworld and finally attempts to seek vengeance against it, “Fish out of water. This plot-very common in
comedy—is one which the character or characters have to deal with an environment that is not what they are used to.”

I also employed a variety of humorous techniques to make The Republic more enjoyable. First, I utilized the technique of repetition. For example, several characters keep calling Grant a moron, “If it’s funny once, it will be funny again, especially with slight variations.” Each time Grant is called a moron the audience is reminded of Grant’s weakness and shortcomings.

Allen’s character represents another comic technique of inversion. Throughout the early part of the screenplay, Allen’s depiction is not favorable. His disheveled facade indicates that he is down trodden. However, we learn that Allen is independently wealthy and contradicts any previously held notions, “Inversion...Turns most things or situations upside down or inside out, and through inversion, you have laughs.” Allen’s character is meant as a comic diversion throughout the screenplay.

These devices, characteristics, and themes help to form a classification for the screenplay. This categorization requires a deeper definition than simply “comedy.” The Republic best represents a dramatic comedy with absurd elements. I wanted to avoid the gloomy end of the comic spectrum, the dark comedy. The Republic, if executed differently, could have been made effortlessly into a dark comedy.

Dark comedies, such as Natural Born Killers, often celebrate death as a joke. They make the serious funny. Natural Born Killers follows a young couple, Mickey and Mallory, as they go on a spree of killing and robbery, just for the fun of it. The movie celebrates death and Oliver Stone has a major point to get across; American people will glorify anything; even the most sinister of acts. Several scenes in the movie illustrate Stone’s objective by showing the fame and
notoriety of this modern Bonnie and Clyde. Oliver Stone’s attentions on stylistic elements (i.e. camera work and presentation of character history) are characteristics of the dark comedy.\textsuperscript{18}

Now think of the film \textit{Harold and Maude}. \textit{Harold and Maude} also makes death and dying a humorous building block. The movie follows the young Harold as he develops a relationship with a seventy-nine year old woman.\textsuperscript{19} Both films parody the seriousness of life and death. In addition, both films drastically use the film medium in a formalistic fashion. They play with time and space.

I wanted to keep away from this approach because it can be excessively solemn. Many elements in \textit{The Republic} are serious in nature. Therefore, I wanted to incorporate some wildly humorous elements in order to down play this seriousness. Yet, the reader is not beleaguered by the inherent evils of the characters. However, the audience is overwhelmed when watching the activities of Mickey and Mallory in \textit{Natural Born Killers}.

On the other hand, I also wanted to shy away from making \textit{The Republic} a complete comical joke. I did not want to write another \textit{Dumb and Dumber}. This Farley brother’s film “is a no-brainer… [it] asks nothing of our emotions or involvement beyond laughter.”\textsuperscript{20} I wanted the characters in \textit{The Republic} to engage and operate in a realistic world. Likewise, I wanted the characters to respond as real people would respond, with the fear and arrogance that we all have. In \textit{Dumb and Dumber} the characters seem to be in surreal America and behave unrealistically.\textsuperscript{21}

These distinctions are not meant as a way to place \textit{The Republic} in a precise comedy genre. Instead, they are intended to demonstrate the many forms of the comic genre. This also helps to explain the nature of the screenplay in its relationship with other comedy genres. In a small way, I wanted \textit{The Republic} to be a culmination of many comedic elements. During my four years at Ball State University, I have studied a variety of comedies. Each of them from \textit{The}
Canterbury Tales to Tartuffe to The Simpson’s attempt to entertain the audience. They are humorous endeavors to examine life from a comical point of view.

Finally, I must address the inclusion of pornography. The private and underground porn industry is a personal hobby for many of the characters. Initially, I had envisioned Cardemon, Hutchins, and Price as cocaine addicts. Their vice was originally the over-use of drugs. Yet, as I began writing, I realized this was a far too heavy topic. I needed something that was still deplorable, yet was something that was not completely heinous in nature. The solution was pornography. To have the President involved in a private and illegal pornographic industry renders him an immoral character as well as an evil one.

In conclusion, I hope that The Republic offers a unique and humorous view into reality. The screenplay is not an attempted to recreate the real world. However, The Republic is a look into the lives of individuals who choose to live an immoral life behind a mask of moral piety. It is an attempt to show that all people are guilty of personal and private hypocrisies. The Republic is also a culmination of four years of study that has included comedy literature, films, and plays. Comedy, like drama, is an essential element to art. It is present in the visual arts as well as in the literary world. I hope that my creation is well placed and accepted into this world of comedy.
Endnotes

1 Andrew, Dudley; *The Major Film Theories: An Introduction.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), page 108.

2 Mast, Gerald; & Kawin, Bruce; *A Short History of the Movies, 8th Edition.* (New York: Longman, 2003), page 298.

3 Ibid.


5 Andrew, Dudley; *The Major Film Theories: An Introduction.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), page 94.

6 Nolan, Christopher (director/writer); *Momento.* (2001).


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9 Kubrick, Stanley (director); *Dr. Strangelove, or How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb* (1964).


11 Hunter-Johnson, Claudia; *Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect.* (Boston: Focal Press, 2000), page 33.


14 Lazarus, Tom; *Secrets of Film Writing.* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2001), page 102.


16 Ibid., page 26.

17 Ibid.

18 Stone, Oliver (director); *Natural Born Killers.* (1994).

19 Ashby, Hal (director); *Harold and Maude.* (1972).

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