

IRON JACK
(And The Curse Of The Black Diamond Of The Orient)

by
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(NOTE: FAMOUS HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES WILL BE RECREATED USING CGI.)

FADE IN.

On black and white NEWSREEL FOOTAGE playing in a packed movie theater.

ON SCREEN we see a line of men and women weaving its way out of an unemployment office and around the block.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

As 1932 draws to a close, the United States finds itself mired in the middle of a Great Depression.

TIGHT ON a man holding a sign that reads, "*Will Work For Food.*"

NARRATOR (V.O.)

However there's nothing depressing about young love, which seems to be popping up everywhere this summer.

We see the same man grab a passing woman and attempt to give her a KISS. She SLAPS him across the face.

The man rubs his cheek, smiles, and SLAPS the woman back.

He proceeds to PASSIONATELY KISS her until she SUCCUMBS to his "charms."

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Also everywhere is United States President Herbert Hoover...

CUT TO:

Hoover, seated on the porch of the White House, VIOLENTLY SPANKS a child who is bent over his lap. Seeing the camera crew, Hoover stops what he's doing and waves happily.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

When he's not educating his children through systematic kind-hearted beatings, he's busy campaigning for the upcoming election and searching for ways to help revitalize the economy. Maybe he could find some inspiration in Hollywood...

CUT TO:

A MOVIE PREMIERE

Cameras flash as celebrities walk down the red carpet. The marquee reads, "Tarzan The Ape Man."

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 ... where talking pictures are all
 the rage. And no star is shining
 brighter than Johnny Weissmuller.

As Weissmuller poses for photographs, we ANGLE ON a handsome, tuxedo-clad man stepping out of a limousine. This is JACK BELL.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 However as far as popularity goes,
 fiction writer and man about town,
 Jack Bell is Tinsel Town's top
 banana.

Seeing Bell, the group of photographers quickly abandon Weissmuller and surround the limousine.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Son of vaudeville stars Tallulah
 and Morgan Bell, Jack found his
 fame and fortune away from the
 stage and on the page. His Iron
 Jack adventure novels, loosely
 based on his own globe-trotting
 escapades, are lifting the
 country's spirit and capturing its
 imagination. Speaking of
 lifting...

As adoring fans run up and hand Jack copies of his books to sign, we...

CUT TO:

A BASKETBALL COURT

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 ... Mort Goldberg, has lifted the
 Indianapolis Jets to their first
 NBA championship with his
 innovative new move called "the
 layup"...

We ANGLE ON a 5'10" basketball player (wearing a yarmulke) awkwardly scooping the ball against the backboard and into the basket. The crowd goes wild!

NARRATOR (V.O.)

... The crowd sure does love those flashy moves. Just look at the way they're showering that immigrant family with produce.

PANNING DOWN to the front of the bleachers, we see an immigrant family being PELTED with rotten produce.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And now a word from our sponsor...

CUT TO:

AN AIRFIELD - DAY

A steely-eyed, handsome man wearing a leather aviator helmet and white scarf climbs out of the cockpit of a single prop airplane. Once again, it's author JACK BELL.

Jack lights a cigarette and takes a deep drag. Flashes a warm smile at the camera.

JACK

Whether it's climbing snow-covered mountains or crossing the seven seas, there's only one cigarette that Jack Bell smokes, Pall Mall.

Jack takes another drag of his cigarette.

JACK

Chock full of vitamins and minerals Pall Mall only uses the freshest and ripest tobacco out there. Sure 9 out of 10 doctors will tell you that Pall Malls are the healthiest cigarettes on the market today, but if you want to know the truth, it's the taste that keeps this thrill seeker coming back for more. Pall Mall, if you're looking for adventure open up a pack.

As Jack walks past a ten year-old boy he FLIPS the kid a packet of cigarettes. The boy smiles excitedly.

BOY

Thanks Iron Jack!

JACK

(winking)

Don't thank me, kid... thank Pall Mall.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Side effects may include hair growth, muscle gain, increased energy, heightened intelligence, and whiter teeth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A NEWSPAPER BOY holds up The Times with Jack on the cover.

NEWSPAPER BOY

Iron Jack And The Curse Of Captain Kid's Treasure tops the national best seller list!

On the opposite street corner, NEWSPAPER BOY #2 holds up a copy of The Post.

NEWSPAPER BOY #2

Jack Bell's latest literary treasure hunt pulls in over \$2000 world wide!

On another corner, NEWSPAPER BOY #3 holds up a copy of the Weekly World News.

NEWSPAPER BOY #3

Oriental ambassador takes urinary joke too far with President Hoover's Coca Cola.

PANNING OVER to a soup kitchen line, we go TIGHT ON two disheveled men, MEL and LOU.

LOU

If there's one person I trust in this crazy world it's Jack Bell.

MEL

He seems like a heck of a guy. A real salt of the earth type. I'm sure he's just like you and me.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSION - DAY

Sprawling grounds of manicured lawns and hedges. Fancy new cars stream into the driveway and pull up to the front door.

INT. JACK'S MANSION - NIGHT

A swinging party is taking place. Sharply dressed revelers are drinking champagne and eating caviar.

The house is beautifully pointed with lots of oak and leather. The walls are adorned with framed Iron Jack book covers and mounted animal heads, many of which are now either endangered or extinct.

Two women, MILDRED and BERNICE, wearing glittery flapper dresses sashay over to Jack, who's finishing up a cigarette while simultaneously lighting another.

BERNICE

This shin-dig is aces, JB!

MILDRED

The clam-bake of the year!

JACK

Glad you could make it, gals.
Anything you need, just ask my man-servant Mum.

Jack points to a short Peruvian man.

MILDRED

Mum? That's a funny name.

JACK

Actually, I'm not sure what his real name is. He lost his tongue in a Peruvian tribal war.

(the women cringe)

I was down researching Iron Jack And The Curse Of The Incan Gold when I happened upon him half-dead lying on the side of the road. I gave him a little food and water and in no time he was as good as new.

MILDRED

And how did he end up here?

JACK

According to jungle tribal custom, because I saved his life he became indebted to me for all eternity.

BERNICE

How droll! I want to save a little brown person and have them be my house boy.

JACK

Then you should head down to South America. They're everywhere! Anyhoo, before you leave don't forget to take one of my medical journals.

On the coffee table we see two stacks of journals.

Butter And Red Meat, Iron Jack's Tips To A Stronger Healthier Heart.

And..

Contraception Is For Sinners - A Detailed Guide To Safer Sex Using The Bell Technique, AKA "The Pull Out."

MILDRED

I didn't know you were a doctor.

JACK

The surgeon general deputized me last year.

Jack proudly pulls a badge out of his breast pocket. Sure enough, it's inscribed with the words "**Deputy Surgeon General.**"

Just then, Jack's agent, IRA GOLD, a fast-talking, frenetic ball of positive reinforcement, emerges from the study.

He holds up a print add for ***Li'l Tykes Lead Based Nursery Paint.*** It's an artist's rendering of Jack painting a nursery while smoking a cigarette.

IRA

So what do you think, Jack? Do you adore it? Do you want to take it to Lovers Lane and coerce it into having premarital intercourse?

JACK

I don't know, Ira, it kind of makes me look like a painter.

IRA

That's sort of the point, Jack.
You paint the walls with a lead-
based acrylic to keep the children
safe.

JACK

I guess. Although I think it might
be more convincing if I had a gun.
I am an adventurer, after all.

IRA

You're actually an writer.

JACK

Who goes on adventures.

IRA

You went to Acapulco last year.

JACK

Researching my novel.

IRA

(in a low whisper)
You stayed at a 4 star resort.

JACK

Point being, they need to make me
look less like a painter and more
like an writer... who goes on
adventures.

IRA

(slightly irritated)
I'll see what I can do.

Suddenly, the front door BURSTS open and POLICE CHIEF MORTON
and a crew of uniformed officers barge into the house, guns
drawn.

CHIEF MORTON

Hands in the air! You are all
under arrest for the consumption of
alcohol during a prohibition.

The party grows SILENT. There's a BEAT. And Jack and the
Chief burst out LAUGHING.

JACK

Make yourself at home, Chief.
There's heroin in the kitchen and
cocaine in the drawing room.

As the Chief holsters his weapon...

CHIEF MORTON

Thanks a million, Jack. You're the cat's pajamas.

PANNING OVER to the study, we see a group of revelers standing next to a large cage staring at an unseen animal. The group GIGGLES with glee as the "animal" thrashes about.

Jack urgently rushes over.

JACK

People, if you could, try not to feed my brother Gerald. He's on a strict diet of beef bones and chicken gizzards.

PANNING IN, we now see that Gerald is actually a HUMAN BEING!

WOMAN

What's the matter with him?

JACK

The medical term is "dyslexia." It's a form of retardation. Lucky for our parents it was diagnosed early on and they were able to cage Gerald at a young age. Surprisingly enough, it was right around that time that he began to acquire his animalistic tendencies.

MAN

Do you ever let him out?

JACK

He escaped once. Ate a whole turkey.

MAN

He caught and killed a turkey?

JACK

No, it was cooked. But it ruined Thanksgiving.

Jack points toward the drawing room.

JACK

If anyone's feeling randy, I just received a new shipment of Dutch stag films.

(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
 And they are eggs and coffee, I
 tell you. Eggs and coffee!

As Jack ushers the group toward the door, Gerald begins to make unintelligible GRUNTING sounds.

SUBTITLES READ: "I'm not an animal. I'm a human being."

CUT TO:

LATER THAT NIGHT

The house is a mess. The guests are half-conscious.

BERNICE
 (slurring)
 This shin-dig is aces, JB...

MILDRED
 (also slurring)
 The clam-bake of the year...

Jack nods and takes a sip of his martini. Looking around the room, he realizes that there's something rather depressing about the whole situation.

Chief Morton shoots a needle full of heroin into his arm and falls over, unconscious.

JACK
 Does anyone ever feel that there's
 more to life than great parties and
 swinging good times?

BERNICE
 Like what, Jack?

JACK
 Look at us, we're wearing the
 sharpest clothes, and drinking the
 finest champagne, and snorting the
 zaniest go-go powder...

CHIEF MORTON
 Here, here...

JACK
 But what are we actually achieving?
 Don't you ever just want to grab
 life by the horns and ride it like
 an untrained gypsy?

BERNICE

Not everyone can be as brave you,
Jack.

JACK

(evasively)
Right...

Just then, a large angry man STORMS into the room.

ANGRY MAN

Where the hell's my girlfriend!

He's met with blank stares and knowing SNICKERS.

The man sneers at the assemblage and sprints up the stairs to the second floor and begins to BANG on doors.

Through the picture window, we see a skinny, naked Indian man with a sheet wrapped around his waist DROPPING onto the lawn.

As the naked Indian man begins to run across the yard...

JACK

Run Gandhi, run!

Jack shakes his head and CHUCKLES.

JACK

One of these days Mahatma's gonna slow down. But until then, lock up the dames and hide the sauce! Look at the poor guy, didn't even have a chance to grab his clothes.

EXT. STREET - A MINUTE LATER

Realizing he's in the clear, Gandhi slows down and catches his breath. He fastens the sheet into a toga.

As he continues along, he gazes down at his makeshift outfit and nods in appreciation.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

A line of homeless protestors line the front gates.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - SAME TIME

President HERBERT HOOVER looks out the window at the assemblage and shakes his head in disgust.

HOOVER
Jesus, don't these people have
jobs?

Hoover's Press Secretary, JAMES MCKAY, raises a curious
eyebrow.

JAMES
Actually, sir... they don't. Which
is kind of why they're protesting.

TIGHT ON one of the protestors signs, "Hoover Stuffs His Fat
Face While The People Starve."

HOOVER
Can you believe this? These lazy
hooligans blame me for the state of
the economy.

JAMES
You are the President, sir.

HOOVER
Be that as it may, what do they
want from me?

JAMES
They want hope, sir.

HOOVER
Hope? And how exactly am I
supposed to give them that?

PANNING DOWN to Hoover's desktop, we see a newspaper article
declaring Iron Jack And The Curse Of Captain Kid's Treasure
to be the top-selling novel of all time.

HOOVER
Did you read the new Iron Jack
adventure? I hear it's something
else.

JAMES
I did sir. It was quite
entertaining.

HOOVER
The people just love that Jack
Bell, huh?

JAMES
He's a handsome fellow, that's for
sure.

HOOVER

Yes he is. But he also has that special something.

On the coffee table sits a book titled: Legendary Lost Treasures And Artifacts. The cover has an artist rendering of a large black diamond.

Hoover walks over and stares hard at the book. There's a BEAT. A knowing smile curls across his lips.

HOOVER

Out of curiosity, do you think the people are in love with Bell the man or Iron Jack the character?

JAMES

I think it's a combination of the two.

HOOVER

Hypothetically, if Bell went off to try and find a real treasure, do you think the public would support him?

JAMES

I imagine they would.

HOOVER

And do you think they'd believe he'd be successful?

James pauses as he realizes what Hoover is getting at.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(suspiciously)

You're not thinking what I think you're thinking, are you?

HOOVER

If it's hope the people want then I see no reason to stand in their way.

JAMES

But that's false hope, sir. These treasures don't actually exist.

HOOVER

Maybe not, but as long as we're raising the country's morale we're providing a valuable service.

(MORE)

HOOVER (cont'd)

If that service happens to benefit us along the way, then so be it. I mean look at the New York Yankees, they've won 8 World Championships on the back of that half-Negro, Babe Ruth. Are they breaking the league's rules? Absolutely. But the fans couldn't be happier.

JAMES

It would give your re-election campaign quite a boost.

HOOVER

(sarcastically)

You don't say...

INT. FITNESS ROOM - DAY

Jack and Ira smoke cigarettes while "vibrating strap machines" jiggle their stomachs.

JACK

What the hell does the president want from me?

IRA

Don't know. But it sounds important.

JACK

Maybe he wants to knight me.

IRA

That's usually a British thing...

JACK

(lost in thought)

Sir Jack Bell. It sounds so regal. Can you imagine the premarital sex I'd be having if I was a knight? Which isn't to say that I'm not swimming in mink already, but if I was a knight it would be a non-stop whoopee-filled wing-ding.

CUT TO:

INT. STEAM ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jack and Ira, still smoking cigarettes, are now sitting in a sauna wearing towels around their waists.

IRA
I don't think the president wants
to knight you, Jack.

JACK
Well let him know that if he
changes his mind I'm all for it.

Ira decides to let it drop.

IRA
Hey, did you hear the one about the
Italian who went to college...
(Jack shakes his head)
Neither have I!

The two LAUGH uproariously.

JACK
I got one. Why do Italians smell
so bad?
(Off Ira's shrug)
So the blind can hate them too.

More LAUGHTER and we...

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

A train whistle... A conductor calling out, "All Aboard"... A
train engine chugging down the tracks... A map of the country
and a dotted line indicating their travel progress all the
way to Washington DC.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Jack and Ira stand before President Hoover and James McKay.

HOOVER
First off, Jack, let me just say
that I am a big fan of your work.
You are a true American hero.

JACK
(humbly)
It's what I do, but not who I am.

HOOVER
Jack, I'm not gonna beat around the
bush, I need your help.

JACK

Whatever you want, sir, I'm here
for you.

(to Ira)

He knows my fee, right?

Jack LAUGHS at his lame joke. Hoover nods at James who hands Jack the book of Legendary Treasures which is open to a chapter on THE BLACK DIAMOND OF THE ORIENT.

JAMES

Have you ever heard of the Black
Diamond Of The Orient?

JACK

Sure. It's like the chink version
of the Holy Grail.

JAMES

Legend has it that the diamond was
given to princess Xi Ling Chang by
Genghis Khan 1206 AD as a token of
his affection.

FLASHBACK TO:

A REENACTMENT

Black and white, grainy, silent film footage. **It's apparent the Chinese are actually Caucasian actors in makeup.**

-- Khan gives a tennis ball-sized black diamond to the Princess, and professes his love. There's a BEAT. And the Princess is joined by a handsome young man. The two proceed to LAUGH insultingly at the offering.

JAMES (V.O.)

Unfortunately, Princess Chang was
in love with another and the gift
was refused.

-- Khan, with tears in his eyes, curses the diamond as lightning FLASHES and thunder ROARS.

JAMES (V.O.)

With his heart broken and ego
shattered, Khan cursed the diamond
and swore vengeance on all of
humanity. Of course we all know
what happened next...

-- Khan and his forces rob and pillage with a reckless, albeit comical, abandon.

BACK TO -- PRESENT DAY

JAMES

As for the diamond, it disappeared shortly after Khan's death. Rumors of its location surfaced over the years, but with no real proof.

JACK

A black diamond? Must be worth thousands, huh?

HOOVER

Millions even. Now what would you say if I told you the government has solid leads on the diamond's whereabouts?

JACK

I'd say you tell me where it is and I'll split the profits 50-50.

Hoover and James exchange a knowing look.

HOOVER

What if we tell you where it is, you go retrieve it, and we use the sale of the stone to pull the country out of its Depression?

JACK

I like my idea better.

Jack begins to LAUGH, but quickly realizes that the President isn't joking.

JACK

You're serious?

HOOVER

We're quite confident that the information that's been given to us is the real deal. You'd be doing the country a valuable service.

JACK

Why me?

HOOVER

Because hunting treasure is what Iron Jack does.

Jack nods in understanding.

JACK
And where exactly do you believe
the diamond is?

JAMES
Africa. Egypt to be exact.

HOOVER
Look at it more as a paid vacation.
You'll be traveling first class all
the way. And we'll be sending
along a reporter to chronicle your
journey.

JAMES
Just think of the press.

HOOVER
Jack Bell Saves The Country.

JAMES
You'll be a national hero.

JACK
I thought I already was.

HOOVER
A legend even...

Jack looks to Ira who shrugs. It honestly sounds like a
pretty good gig.

IRA
And when would he be leaving?

JAMES
As soon as possible.

HOOVER
(imploringly)
What do you say, Jack? The country
needs you.

IRA
It could help with sales.

There's a BEAT as Jack considers the request. He looks down
at the artist rendering of the diamond... Looks to Hoover...
To James... To Ira... Back to the artist rendering.

JACK

I appreciate the offer, Mr. President, I really do, but unfortunately I'm quite busy right now. I've just been hired to teach a course on *Wild Western Adventure Writing And The Role Of The Injun* at UCLA. Plus I've decided to take up tennis. But good luck.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

As Jack, Ira and Mum get into a limousine, we PAN UP to the window of the Oval Office.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - SAME TIME

Hoover watches as the limousine drives off.

JAMES

It was a good idea. Nix that, it was a great idea.

HOOVER

Exactly. Which is why that smug son of a bitch is going whether he wants to or not.

INT. UCLA OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

As Jack approaches to door to his office, he notices a handyman removing his nameplate from the door.

The door opens and out walks the DEAN, wearing a monocle and smoking a pipe. Seeing Jack, he flashes a nervous smile.

DEAN

Jack... What are you doing here?

JACK

Isn't today the first day of class?

DEAN

(anxiously)

You didn't receive my telegraph?

Just then, a handsome, bearded young man in his early-30s emerges from the office. It's Ernest Hemingway.

ERNEST

Are you sure I can't share this office with someone else? It seems awfully big for just one person.

DEAN

Jack, this is Ernest Hemingway. He just arrived in town from Key West, Florida.

Ernest smiles excitedly and extends his hand.

ERNEST

Jack Bell? Wow! Big fan. Huge. Can I just tell you that if it wasn't for you and the Iron Jack Adventures I wouldn't be here today. Big inspiration. Huge.

Jack shrugs coolly.

JACK

Glad to be of service, guy. But the real question is what are you doing in my office?

As we PAN OVER to the handyman replacing Jack's nameplate with Hemingway's, the answer is obvious.

INT. JACK'S MANSION - DAY

Ira looks on as Jack paces back and forth, venting his frustration.

JACK

I was born to teach this class! I've graphically described the killing of over 600 Indians in my novels. Not to mention my limo driver ran over a drunken Navajo last year in Santa Barbara.

IRA

You're preaching to the choir, Jack. But there's nothing we can do now.

JACK

You just watch, this Hemingway guy's a tomato can. He'll tarnish the good name of fiction writers everywhere.

Just then, the doorbell RINGS.

JACK
Who the hell could that be?

Jack goes over and opens the door, revealing four men in grey suits carrying briefcases. One of the men, DEWEY TIMLIN, holds up an ID card.

TIMLIN
Dewey Timlin, IRS. May we come in?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S STUDY - AN HOUR LATER

Stacks of files and receipts are now scattered across the floor. The IRS agents are packing up their belongings.

JACK
I hate to make you repeat yourself, guy, but I still don't understand what the problem is.

TIMLIN
The problem, Mr. Bell, is that you haven't paid your income tax in the last five years.

JACK
(unfazed)
And?

TIMLIN
And that's a felony.

JACK
And?

TIMLIN
And all US citizens are required by law to pay income tax. It's actually very straight forward.

JACK
(blankly)
But I'm a celebrity.

Off of Timlin's exasperated look, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S DRIVEWAY- TEN MINUTES LATER

As the IRS agents drive off, Jack shouts after them:

JACK

This country was built on
inequality, and by forcing me to
pay income tax you are mocking the
hopes and dreams of our founding
fathers! Mocking them, I tell you!
Mocking them!

INT. DEN - DAY

Jack sits on the couch reading dog-eared copy of Iron Jack
And The Curse Of The Incan Gold, a pitcher of martinis in
front of him. He's clearly drunk. And depressed.

As his eyes start to close, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

A DREAM SEQUENCE

Iron Jack (played by Jack) is surrounded by a group of
Mexican banditos. Each of the banditos holds a gun in one
hand and a tequila bottle in the other. The leader of the
gang, PABLO, steps forward.

PABLO

It looks like the end of the road
for you, Senor Iron Yack.

JACK

I hate to burst your bubble, Pablo,
but if you think you and your
Drunken Pachuco Boys are going to
stop me from returning Cleopatra's
Ruby to the National Museum, you've
got another thing coming.

As one of the banditos reaches for his gun, Jack pulls out
his sword, lighting quick, and flicks the pistol out of the
man's hand.

JACK

We'll call that a warning...

PANNING ACROSS the henchmen's faces, we see them exchanging
anxious and menacing looks. You can feel the tension.

Just then, we hear a horse NAY. Jack DRAWS his gun and
proceeds to SHOOT each of the Mexican men in the heart,
killing them instantly!!!

Jack holsters his weapon and surveys his handwork. He
solemnly picks up a bottle of tequila and pours it onto
Pablo's corpse.

JACK
Adios amigo.

As a dog begins to BARK off in the distance...

JACK awakes only to find himself back in his house, the open book on his lap.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Jack sits at the bar, clearly smashed. He slurs:

JACK
... I banged 'em all. You name
'em, I did 'em. Garbo? On a park
bench in Santa Monica. Gracie
Allen? With Burns watching. Faye
Wray? In the Carnegie Hall men's
room... In the tushie...

As Jack begins to simulate intercourse with his hands, Ira enters the bar. He walks over and takes a seat beside Jack.

JACK
Well if it isn't the world's worst
business manager/agent/lawyer. You
come to steal the rest of my money?

IRA
Lighten up, JB. I have some good
news.

Jack holds up his drink.

JACK
Congratulations. You deserve it.

IRA
No, I mean for you.

JACK
Me?

IRA
Hoover has agreed to pardon you.

Jack's face light's up.

JACK
Really? That's amazing! Let's
have a drink. Two martinis, Patty.
And my friend will have the same.

IRA

There is one small catch...

And we...

CUT TO:

EXT. THEATER - DAY

The marquee reads, "World Famous Tallulah Bell Stars In
"Catherine The Great: A Woman And Her Horse."

INT. THEATER - DAY

Jack sits with his mother, TALLULAH BELL, a striking woman in her mid-50s, who's getting into costume. In the BG we see a man being fitted for an anatomically correct horse costume.

TALLULAH

... So you're going on a vacation to Africa?

JACK

It's not a vacation, mother. It's a treasure hunt.

TALLULAH

Your father once performed Macbeth for a group of Negro school children in Harlem. They were very well behaved.

JACK

So you think I should go?

TALLULAH (CONT'D)

If it wasn't for the color of their skin, you would've thought they were Caucasian. Or at least Greek.

JACK

I'm serious mother.

TALLULAH

As am I. This could be good for you. You've spent your entire life writing about adventures, it's high time you went on one yourself.

JACK

So that's a yes?

TALLULAH

This may be your only opportunity
to not just write the hero, but to
be the hero...

Tallulah smiles politely.

TALLULAH (CONT'D)

Then again, what do I know? I'm
54. I should've died years ago.

EXT. JACK'S MANSION - DAY

Mum loads luggage into the back of a limousine.

INT. JACK'S STUDY - SAME TIME

Jack stands before his caged brother, Gerald.

JACK

... They've got me by the short and
curlies, little brother. If I
don't find this diamond, they could
put me in jail and we could lose
everything. But don't you worry,
pal, I'm gonna make you proud.

Jack smiles warmly.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'll be gone for a few weeks, so I
need you to stay strong for me.
Can you do that? Can you do that
for your big un-retarded brother?

Gerald lets out a low moan. The subtitle reads... **"I hate
you more than life itself. I just want to die."**

Jack smiles obliviously.

JACK

I know, pal, I love you too.
(to the housekeeper)
Give him an extra serving of fish
heads tonight. It should soften
the blow...

EXT. WASHINGTON TIMES - DAY

Establishing.

INT. WASHINGTON TIMES - SAME TIME

An attractive woman, NORMA MADSEN, stands before the paper's editor, FRANK WINTERS.

NORMA
(furious)
Africa? You're sending me to
Africa?

FRANK
I don't know what the problem is,
Norma, this is the opportunity of a
lifetime. The story of the
century.

NORMA
Does this have anything to do with
last week's editorial?

PANNING DOWN, we see a newspaper article headlined, "**Non-Consensual Sex In The Workplace, Is It Fair To Women?**"

Frank forces an uncomfortable smile.

FRANK
(lacking conviction)
Don't be ridiculous. I... I loved
that piece.

NORMA
(obstinately)
What if I told you I think the Iron
Jack books are mindless drivel?
They're chauvinistic, misogynistic,
and racist. There's not an ounce of
intellectual substance to them.

FRANK
I'd say you're entitled to your
opinion, but the rest of the
country disagrees with you.

Norma SIGHS, exasperated. It's a fight she's going to lose.

NORMA
Fine. You win. I'll go, but I
won't enjoy myself. And I can't
promise you that what I write will
be flattering.

Frank smiles appreciatively.

FRANK

That'a girl.
 (points to his lap)
 Now how about you come over here
 and give the old Model-T a test
 drive?

Norma frowns at the thought, but doesn't respond.

FRANK

(chuckling)
 Don't make me fire you...

Norma nods, resigned, and begins to unbutton her blouse.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Hoover and James stare down at a map of Africa. Standing beside them is a humorless, barrel-chested man with a granite jaw, TOBY ROLAND.

James points to the various locations that are marked on the map, all famous landmarks.

JAMES

... In Morocco, you'll be stopping in Casablanca, Tangier, and Fez before moving on to Egypt. As long as you get Bell and the reporter to the rendezvous points, we'll take care of the rest.

TOBY

Mr. Hoover, I am a 6th level marksman, a 3-time Golden Gloves champion, and the proud owner of 37 confirmed Kraut kills in the last World War. Getting a pretty-boy novelist to a couple of photo ops is going to be a walk in the park.

HOOVER

Just keep him alive. At least until the election.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A paperboy holds up a copy of The Times. Calls out:

PAPER BOY

Iron Jack off to find the Black Diamond Of The Orient to end the Great Depression!

Across the street, paperboy #2 holds up a copy of The Post.

PAPER BOY #2

President casts literary legend to
save the country!

Another paperboy holds up the Weekly World News.

PAPER BOY #3

King of France bans deodorant due
to health concerns!

We ANGLE ON the soup kitchen line, where Lou and Mel are
watching the paperboys.

LOU

We might be starving but at least
we have Jack Bell out there
fighting for us.

MEL

That Hoover is a genius. If there's
one man who can save us all it's
Iron Jack Bell.

EXT. ROME, ITALY - DAY

Establishing on Mussolini's castle headquarters.

INT. CASTLE, WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

Mussolini stands before a table of military advisors. He
holds up a copy of The Times with Jack on the cover.

He SLAMS the paper against the table.

MUSSOLINI

The gluttonous Americans think they
own the globe and all of its
riches. But the time has come to
show the world that Mother Italy is
also entitled to her piece of the
prosperity pie.

ADVISOR

But how?

Mussolini shoots the advisor an icy stare.

MUSSOLINI

Did you just ask how?

The advisor nods sheepishly.

MUSSOLINI

By beating this Jack Bell to the diamond, we will show the world that the land of pasta and chianti is also a land of great determination and strength!

Mussolini pulls out a gun and SHOTS the advisor in the forehead, killing him instantly.

MUSSOLINI

Any other questions?

One of the more decorated officers, GENERAL GIUSEPPE LOPRIMO, stands and salutes Mussolini.

GIUSEPPE

Do not worry, Il Duce. I will find the gem for mother Italy and allow her to become the super power she was always destined to be.

INT. CRUISE SHIP - DAY

Jack boards the vessel as Mum trails behind him carrying his 17 bags of luggage.

JACK

... If you could take the bags up to my cabin and run a hot bath, I'd be in your debt forever. Not like you are to me, but I would definitely appreciate it. Also, see if you can track down a little morphine. I have the worst headache.

Toby Roland walks over and extends his hand.

TOBY

Jack Bell, Toby Roland, Bureau Of Intelligence. I'll be your guide for the mission.

The two shake.

JACK

Pleasure to meet you, Toby. Although I'm not sure I actually need a guide. If you've ever read any of my novels you'd know that I have a nose for treasure.

Jack points to his nose and LAUGHS.

JACK (CONT'D)
Get it? Like a Jewish person?

NORMA (O.S.)
... I told you I can carry my own
goddamn bag, thank you very much!

PANNING OVER, we see Norma pulling her suitcase out of the hands of an embarrassed attendant.

Jack smiles knowingly.

JACK
Feisty...
(to Toby)
You know what that means in bed,
right? It means she would be
feisty. Which is a good thing. A
very good thing.

Jack walks over to Norma and smiles brightly.

JACK
Ma'am, I would just like to commend
you on your independent spirit. I
think it's a brave choice you're
making to carry your own bags. And
I applaud you for it.

Norma studies Jack curiously, surprised by the sincerity of the comment.

NORMA
Thank you, Mr...

JACK
Bell. Jack Bell.

NORMA
Yes, I know.

JACK
Well then you should also know that
even though I'm a world famous
wordsmith, I believe all people,
whether they be man, woman, or
Irish, have the right to carry
their own luggage.

Norma nods appreciatively.

NORMA
As a woman I appreciate your
support, Mr. Bell.

Norma extends her hand and smiles.

NORMA

Norma Madsen. I'm with The Times.
I've been assigned to cover your
expedition.

Jack shakes his head, bemused.

JACK

A female newspaper reporter? Well
I guess I have seen it all!

(beat)

Just kidding. But not really.
Seriously though, if you want to
learn more about my career, or my
personal thoughts on the human
filth we call the Irish, I'd love
to continue this interview over
dinner.

Off Norma's look of apprehension, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS:

Of Jack droning on about his life as Norma jots down notes.

-- AT A BLACK TIE DINNER

JACK

... The thing that separates me
from other celebrities is my humble
nature. I don't write novels for
the publicity or the money, I do it
for the people.

-- TANNING BY THE SWIMMING POOL

JACK (CONT'D)

... I guess you could say I'm a
people person. Which is why I love
to travel. I truly do enjoy
learning about different cultures.
Take the French for example. I
don't know a lot about them,
outside of the fact they eat feces
and have sexual relations with
stray dogs...

-- GETTING A SHAVE AT THE BARBER SHOP

JACK (CONT'D)

... But I don't hold that against them. I'll still let them shine my shoes or mow my lawn any day of the week. Because when it comes down to it, they're just like you and I, albeit with worse breath and jittery house pets.

-- PLAYING SHUFFLE BOARD ON THE LIDO DECK

JACK

The point is, I'm open to new things. It's like when talkies first came out and everyone was up in arms saying, "Who wants to hear actors talk when you can read dialogue and watch emotive facial expressions?" But as it turned out, people don't go to the movies to read, they go so they don't have to.

Just then, a small gypsy woman comes running down the walkway being chased by one of the ship's officers.

OFFICER

Stowaway! Stowaway!

As the woman runs past Jack, he holds out his arm and CLOTHES-LINES her, KNOCKING her head-over-heels..

As the woman tries to stand, Jack PUNCHES her in the face, knocking her out cold!

JACK (CONT'D)

(to Norma)

If you want to call me a hero, that's your prerogative. But just remember, I'm an American first and foremost.

As Jack is surrounded by well-wishers, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS

-- Norma's editor, Frank, reads her article titled, "*Jack Bell: World's Greatest Writer... Or Jackass?*" It's accompanied by action photos of Jack on the cruise ship.

It's obvious Frank is not happy with the product.

-- After a few small tweaks the article is released, now titled, "*Jack Bell: World's Greatest Writer... Or Hero?*"

INT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

James holds up the article, which coincides with the new polls showing Hoover to be pulling ahead of FDR.

JAMES

Looks like things are progressing quite nicely, sir.

Hoover raises a glass of scotch for a toast.

HOOVER

To another four years.

Off the CLINKING of glasses, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. CASABLANCA DOCKS - DAY

Jack and the group exit the ocean liner.

JACK

... So, in summation, for me, 1928 will always be the year of penicillin. Or as I like to call it "Clap-Away"!

Jack pauses and gazes around at the port in awe.

JACK

Casablanca. What a magnificent city. So full of life and energy.

(It should be noted, every location from here on out should be filmed on a sound stage. The movie should feel and look like it was shot in 1932. In Hollywood.)

NORMA

Out of curiosity, Jack, are you concerned at all about the curse that surrounds the Black Diamond?

JACK

Curse?

NORMA

It's rumored that every man who has ever searched for the stone has met an untimely demise and brought tragedy and misfortune to those around him.

JACK

That is ridiculous.

Just then Jack BUMPS into a young Arab child who's wearing a head-wrap and eating an ice cream cone. The cone DROPS to the ground, and the child turns and glares at Jack.

Jack smiles innocently and points to a passing HASIDIC MAN to deflect the blame.

We see a tour guide motioning to the boy's mother.

TOUR GUIDE

Mrs. Arafat, your taxi is waiting.

The boy's mother takes his hand and begins to drag him away.

MOTHER

Come little, Yasser. We must go now.

Yasser continues to glare at the Hasidic man. WE CAN SEE THE HATRED BUILDING.

As Jack CHUCKLES at his fine handiwork, we...

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Jack poses for a photograph with a group of bellhops.

TOBY

We're meeting with one of our contacts, a camel herder from Marrakesh, at 07:00. So why don't we reconvene here in an hour?

JACK

Sure thing, Ace. In the mean time, I think I might take a little stroll to stretch the old stems.

(to Norma)

Care to join me?

(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
I still haven't told you about the
time I punched Harry Houdini in the
stomach and killed him.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jack walks along with Norma and Mum.

JACK
... At the end of the day, it was a
silly accident. I apologized to
his widow and we all moved on.
Well, not Harry. But Wilhelmina
and I did have a bit of a fling for
a few weeks.

NORMA
(sarcastically)
That's a charming story, Jack. You
should be proud.

JACK
I am.

Norma rolls her eyes. She glances down at her watch.

NORMA
We should probably be getting back
to the hotel.

JACK
Feel free to run along, sweet-
cheeks, but Mum and I need to take
a load off, and the concierge told
me just the place.

CUT TO:

INT. OPIUM DEN - DAY

Filled with catatonic smokers. Jack sits on a couch puffing
on a large hookah filled with opium. Mum and Norma sit
across from him, anxious and bored.

JACK
If I've said it once I've said it a
thousand times, there is nothing
that relaxes a man more than a
pipeful of Auntie Emma.

NORMA

You do know that there are those out there who feel that opium might not be as healthy for you as most doctors would have you believe.

JACK

Thanks for the warning, bright eyes, but I think I'll stick to medical science when it comes to my narcotic use.

Jack takes a big puff of the pipe and leans back in his seat. His eyes glaze over.

JACK

That's the stuff.

Jack brings his hand up to his face and proceeds to wave it back and forth. He begins to GIGGLE. Slowly his CHUCKLES build into UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER.

JACK

This might just be the funniest thing I have ever seen! And that includes the time I saw the Burping Macgillicuddy Sisters at the Arclight.

FLASHBACK TO:

THE MCGILLIGUTTY SISTERS ACT

Two overweight woman wearing red and white checkered dresses BURP to "Sweet Georgia Brown." The audience is in hysterics.

BACK TO -- THE OPIUM DEN

JACK

I wonder if the Black Diamond Of The Orient tastes like chocolate.

From a nearby couch, an elderly Egyptian man wearing a white linen suit and fedora, MORENO, calls out:

MORENO

Did you just mention the Black Diamond of The Orient?

JACK

You've heard of it?

Moreno studies Jack, a faint recognition registering in his eyes.

MORENO
Do I know you? You look familiar.

JACK
I have that kind of face.

MORENO
A familiar face or a face that I
know?

JACK
It's possible both.

A waiter comes over and Jack holds up three fingers.

JACK
Give me three fingers of corn and a
tin roof back.

MORENO
Tin roof?

JACK
Another name for water, friend.
Because it's on the house.

Jack extends his hand.

JACK
The name's Bell. Jack Bell.

MORENO
Like the American author?

JACK
Take out the like and you're on the
money, Sonny.

Realizing Jack's identity, Moreno nods in acknowledgement.

MORENO
Are you a gambling man, Mr. Bell?

JACK
Depends on what's at stake.

MORENO
How about inside information on the
black diamond's whereabouts?

Moreno smiles mischievously.

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME TIME

Toby sits with a short Arab man, AGENT LILLEY.

LILLEY
(in a British accent)
Do you want me to use a local
accent to make it sound more
authentic?

TOBY
I don't think it matters. The man
is a world class idiot.

Lilley nods. There's a BEAT.

LILLEY
The President's going all out on
this one, huh?

TOBY
You don't know the half of it.
We're talking 8 cities and 27
rendezvous points. The schedule is
planned down to the second.

Lilley checks his watch.

LILLEY
And you're sure he's coming...
here?

TOBY
You know how it is with these
celebrity types. Always running
fashionably late.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Dimly lit and filled with sweaty men exchanging handfuls of
cash. In the center of the room is a table and two chairs.

Jack raises a curious eyebrow.

JACK
So what's the name of the game?

MORENO
Roulette.

JACK
I don't see a wheel.

MORENO
It's the Russian kind.

Jack now notices a gun sitting in the middle of the table.

JACK
And who's playing?

Moreno's gaze turns to Mum. He smiles sadistically.

MORENO
Man servants. Mine against yours.

JACK
And if I win, you'll give me all
the information you have on the
whereabouts of the Black Diamond?

Moreno nods. Jack looks to Mum and winks confidently. Mum
stares back blankly, unsure of what's being negotiated.

MORENO
And if I win... I get your watch.
I've been admiring it all evening.

Norma walks up and grabs Jack's arm, aghast.

NORMA
This is absurd. You can't risk
Mum's life over this!

Jack calmly leads Norma away from Moreno. He whispers:

JACK
Relax toots. I wrote a similar
scene in Iron Jack And The Search
For Captain Kid's Treasure. And at
the end of the day Jack ended up
with both the girl and the ghost
pirate gold.

NORMA
(incredulous)
You're insane.

JACK
Like a fox.

NORMA
That doesn't make any sense.

JACK
All I'm saying is there's a fine
line between genius and insanity
and it's one I walk every day.

As we TRACK around the faces of the crowd, we HOLD ON a familiar one -- General Giuseppe LoPrimo. The general watches Jack intently, studying his every move.

Jack puts his arm around Mum's shoulder and leads him over to the table.

JACK
Alright, pal, let's give these
people a show.

Mum stares at Jack with a look of utter confusion. Staring down at the gun, we see his eyes go wide with terror. He now gets it!

Moreno walks up to the table and places a bullet into the chamber of the pistol. Gives the cylinder a SPIN. He gazes around the room and calls out:

MORENO
One bullet! One shot! One kill!

The crowd SCREAMS with delight. Moreno lays the gun in front of Mum. Jack walks over and picks up the pistol.

JACK
You don't mind if I inspect the
weapon first, do you?

Before Moreno can answer... BAM! The weapon DISCHARGES, shooting Moreno's servant in the forehead, killing him instantly!

JACK
(sheepishly)
My bad... So what does that count
as? A foul?

MORENO
Not to worry. Accidents happen.
Luckily I have more than one man
servant.

Moreno SNAPS his fingers and another servant obediently runs over and takes the place of his fallen comrade.

Moreno again chambers a single bullet and gives the cylinder a demonstrative SPIN. He hands the gun to Jack.

MORENO
For your inspection.

JACK
That's alright, I trust...

BAM! Again the weapon DISCHARGES! Shooting Moreno's new man-servant in the forehead, killing him instantly!

JACK

Seriously, not my fault. It's got a bit of a hair-trigger.

MORENO

(irritated)

Let's try this one more time.

Moreno SNAPS his fingers and another one of his servants runs up to the table.

Again Moreno chambers a single bullet and gives the cylinder a SPIN. This time he places the gun directly into Mum's hand. Mum nervously raises the gun to his temple.

Jack smiles confidently, apparently unaware of the danger involved, and gives him the thumbs-up.

Mum grits his teeth and pulls the trigger. CLICK.

The crowd GROANS their displeasure.

Moreno's man-servant is up next. He raises the pistol to his own temple. His eyes bulging with terror. BAM! The pistol goes off, killing the poor man instantly.

JACK

(excitedly)

That's what I'm talking about!

As Moreno's man-servant slumps over the table, a burgundy pool of blood forms around his head.

Mum breaths a deep SIGH of relief, and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. MORENO'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Establishing on a huge Moroccan mansion. Armed guards patrol the entrance.

INT. COMPOUND - SAME TIME

A small cocktail party is taking place. The crowd is an eccentric group of international types.

We ANGLE ON Jack, Norma and Mum standing with a distinguished looking man in a stylish safari outfit.

JACK

... Between you, me and the two walls, I don't like the blacks. If it were up to me I'd keep them separate from all the others.

PANNING DOWN, we now see that Jack is actually referring to BLACK JELLY BEANS, which he's removing from a candy dish.

Moreno calls out from across the room:

MORENO

Right this way, Mr. Bell.

Jack gives the man in the safari outfit a pat on the back.

JACK

Take care, pal. And have a safe trip back to South Africa.

Jack, Norma, and Mum follow Moreno into...

THE STUDY - CONTINUOUS

JACK

I like your friend. What does he do again?

MORENO

He's an advisor to the South African Prime Minister. Very influential.

PANNING around the room, we now see that (like Jack's house) it is decorated with mounted animal heads.

MORENO

Personally I find nothing more exhilarating than putting a bullet into the brain of a wild beast.

And we ANGLE ON a mounted HUMAN HEAD.

NORMA

It's a shame they couldn't do the same to you.

MORENO

Feisty!

JACK

That's exactly what I said.

NORMA

So tell me Mr. Moreno, is it true
that the diamond is cursed?

JACK

Don't be ridiculous.

MORENO

Actually, the young woman is
correct. Death and despair are
believed to follow those who follow
the diamond.

JACK

Well let's hope that trend doesn't
continue. Am I right? High five!

Jack holds up his hand. Moreno studies him confused.

JACK

It's a new term I made up. As a
congratulatory gesture I slap hands
with my friends. Five being the
number of fingers that touch. It's
quicker than a handshake and seems
more manly as well.

Moreno nods. He gently PRESSES his hand against Jack's,
which comes across as being EXTREMELY GAY.

JACK

We'll work on it. So, the diamond,
what do you know? A bet's a bet.

Moreno withdraws a tattered and weathered map out of a desk
drawer. He hands it to Jack.

JACK

Looks old.
(sniffs it)
Smells old. Musty.

MORENO

It was found in the anal cavity of
a diamond smuggler...

Jack GAGS at the thought and drops the map to the desk.

MORENO (CONT'D)

... as he was being prepared for
roasting. You see human flesh is
considered a delicacy among many of
the local tribes.

(MORE)

MORENO (CONT'D)

What's remarkable about this map is that the man who was in possession of it was once missing a foot. However when he was captured, both were there. He claims that the diamond has magical healing powers.

JACK

(sarcastically)

I thought all who came into contact with the diamond met a tragic end.

MORENO

You're forgetting that he was eventually eaten by a tribe of savages.

JACK

Right. Well as long as you believe him, that's good enough for me. Up high!

Jack holds up his hand for another high-five. Moreno again presses his hand against Jack's in a gentle and EXTREMELY GAY manner.

JACK (CONT'D)

We definitely need to work on that.

We slowly PAN IN on the map, revealing a river labeled NILE leading to a waterfall labeled BLUE NILE FALLS in Ethiopia.

In front of the falls is a rainbow. At the base of the rainbow is an indecipherable character, which would appear to be the home of the treasure.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Jack, Mum and Norma board a train just as the WHISTLE blows.

As the train begins to pull away from the station, we see Toby running down the platform.

TOBY

Jack, please, be reasonable. What if this man is sending you on a wild goose chase?

JACK

(stoically)

It's a risk we have to take. The country is counting on us.

Toby stops in his tracks.

TOBY
 (sotto)
 This isn't happening.

As Toby breaks into a sprint after the moving train, we...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Hoover and James, **both smoking**, stroll through a cancer ward shaking hands and posing for pictures with the terminal patients. James reads Toby's telegraph out loud:

JAMES
 ... Jack has changed the
 itinerary... Stop... We're heading
 for the Blue Nile Falls... Stop...
 Jack is going to get all of us
 killed... Stop... The man is a
 moron... Stop.

Hoover takes a drag of his cigarette.

HOOVER
 What the hell is this idiot doing?

JAMES
 His job, sir.

HOOVER
 His job is to go to the rendezvous
 points and have his picture taken
 standing next to famous landmarks.
 He's ruining our entire plan.

Hoover stops to pose next to a man with a huge tumor growing out of the side of his throat. Smoke from Hoover's cigarette causes the man to COUGH violently.

JAMES
 Actually, sir, as far as Jack is
 concerned, his job is to find the
 diamond.

HOOVER
 (irritated)
 But there is no diamond. It's just
 a stupid legend.

JAMES
 Therein lies the rub, sir. Therein
 lies the rub.

INT. DINING CAR - NIGHT

Jack sits with Norma finishing up a steak dinner.

JACK

... I'm telling you, doll-face,
Alaska is the bees-knees. You can't
fire your rifle without hitting a
bald eagle and there are baby seals
for the clubbin' as far as the eye
can see. It's a nature lover's
paradise if there ever was one.

Norma shakes her head disapprovingly.

NORMA

I got news for you Mr. Bell, you're
living in the past. This is 1932.
We don't club seals for fun
anymore. We club them for dog
food.

Jack LAUGHS defensively.

JACK

Living in the past? For your
information, sweet-cheeks, I'm
probably the most forward thinking
man you've ever met.

NORMA

Oh really?

JACK

Really. I believe that Chinaman
make the best launderers and that
women should be treated as equals
in the secretarial work force. I'm
the one who made calling Negroes
"Dark Continent Americans"
fashionable. And I have never
clubbed a baby seal that didn't
deserve clubbin' in my entire life!

There's a BEAT as Jack catches his breath.

JACK

Wow! That was exhilarating. You
feeling it?

NORMA

What?

JACK

The spark. Between us. Maybe we should, uh, you know...

Jack raises his eyebrows suggestively.

NORMA

Good night, Mr. Bell.

JACK

You sure? It could be an earth shattering experience. History would indicate that there's a 28% chance. I'm just sayin'.

No response.

JACK (CONT'D)

If it's your reputation you're worried about, I'll have you know that I am very discreet when it comes to matters of the heart. For example, I have never told anyone that Bette Davis has a superfluous nipple. Or that Amelia Earhart likes to rub her genitals against the back of a couch before consummation.

Just then, a dark, handsome man who has been watching the two from the end of the bar steps forward. It's General Giuseppe LoPrimo. Giuseppe steps between Jack and Norma.

GIUSEPPE

Signore, can't you see that the young lady wishes to be left alone.

JACK

Are you talking to me?

GIUSEPPE

I am merely pointing out that as a gentleman you should respect a woman's wishes.

JACK

And as an Italian, which I'm guessing you are by your swarthy complexion and autistic-sounding accent, you should be aware that your odor is rather off-putting.

GIUSEPPE

You are the writer Jack Bell, are you not?

JACK

That's right. You a fan?

GIUSEPPE

In my country, heroes don't write about courage and bravery, they possess it.

JACK

(obtusely)

Is that a yes?

There's a BEAT, and Jack finally gets the hint.

JACK

Whatever.

(to Norma)

I will see you in the morning. And if you have a change of heart, my offer still stands.

Jack sneers at Giuseppe and exits the car. Giuseppe approaches Norma and smiles warmly.

GIUSEPPE

Excuse me, bellissima, is this seat taken?

Norma shakes her head, mesmerized by the Giuseppe's dashing good looks.

GIUSEPPE

I hope I did not offend your boyfriend.

NORMA

(quickly)

Oh he's not my boyfriend.

GIUSEPPE

I am glad. Because such a beautiful woman does not deserve to be with a man who uses such ugly words.

Norma blushes, flattered.

GIUSEPPE

May I buy you a glass of wine?

INT. JACK'S CABIN - NIGHT

Mum prepares Jack's bed for him as Jack changes into his sleeping gown and cap.

JACK

I really think she's beginning to come around. I can feel the connection between us.

Mum rolls his eyes.

JACK

What impresses me most is that she's not one of those women that falls for a slick line and a handsome face.

BACK TO -- THE DINING CAR

Giuseppe recites Italian poetry while Norma ogles him with puppy dog eyes.

GIUSEPPE

Et l'ora, e'l punto,
e'l bel paese, e'l loco
ov'io fui giunto
da'duo begli occhi che
legato m'anno...

Norma tries to speak, but words escape her.

NORMA

That was...

GIUSEPPE

Just a little something I wrote this morning. The composition of poetry is one of my hobbies.

NORMA (CONT'D)

... beautiful.

GIUSEPPE

You are too kind. But speaking of beautiful, what brings a woman such as yourself to this wild untamed continent?

BACK TO -- JACK'S CABIN.

JACK

Yep, she's a real tough cookie. But trustworthy.

(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
The kind of broad who knows when to
keep her mouth shut... and when to
keep it open!

Jack holds his hand up for a high-five, but Mum doesn't
oblige.

JACK
No? Come on. Just a little one?

Mum shakes his head.

JACK
I have to be honest, this is an
awkward position to be in. It's
like my hand has been left hanging
in the air with no other hand to
slap. Very uncomfortable.

BACK TO -- THE DINING CAR

Norma is now three sheets to the wind and beginning to slur.

NORMA
... I seriously doubt the map is
real. I mean what are the odds,
right? And all this mumbo jumbo
about magical healing powers.
What's up with that?

GIUSEPPE
And you say that the diamond is
located next to a rainbow?

NORMA
See what I mean? Ridiculous,
right? More wine, handsome?

GIUSEPPE
I probably shouldn't.

NORMA
Oh come on, don't be such a prude.
Just one more little glassy-wassy.

GIUSEPPE
I should really be getting to bed.

NORMA
Is that an invite? Just kidding!
But seriously, is that an invite?

BACK TO -- JACK'S CABIN

JACK

Between me and you, she's the perfect woman. Brains, looks, bosom. She's the total package. Although she could stand to put on a few pounds. I like a little meat on my ladies. Not like that Houdini broomstick. It was like copulating with a rake.

Jack blows out the lantern.

JACK

Good night, pal.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A paperboy holds up a copy of The Times.

PAPER BOY

Iron Jack strays off course!

Another paper boy holds up The Post.

PAPER BOY #2

Does the anal map have the answer!?

Another with the Weekly World News.

PAPER BOY #3

House pets proven to be high in protein!

And we PAN OVER the soup kitchen line, on Lou and Mel, listening to the paper boys.

MEL

I'm not gonna lie, I'm a little nervous about this change of plans. In fact I'm so nervous I've lost my appetite.

LOU

I could actually go for a sandwich. But I too am nervous about Jack's sudden change in itinerary.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Hoover stands with James reading the various publications.

He points to an article showing him to be falling behind FDR in the polls.

HOOVER

Did you see this? I'm trailing a goddamn cripple in the polls.

JAMES

Mr. Roosevelt is a beloved political figure.

HOOVER

The man relieves himself in his pants.

JAMES

Be that as it may, he's also a formidable opponent.

HOOVER

Who relieves himself in his pants.

JAMES

Yes, we've established that. But I wouldn't use that as the primary focus of your campaign.

HOOVER

If Jack Bell costs me the election, there will be hell to pay, that I guarantee.

As Hoover pours himself a heaping glass of scotch, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STEAMBOAT - DAY

Slowly cruising down the Nile.

Jack reclines in a hammock sipping from a canteen of water. Norma relaxes on a bench reading a Gertrude Stein novel.

JACK

Ain't this the life?

NORMA

It is peaceful.

JACK

And relaxing.

We ANGLE ON to Toby reading a telegram from Hoover.

"Get Bell back on track now... STOP... Or don't bother returning to the states... STOP... Hoover... Stop."

Toby crumples up the telegram and looks over at Jack, fire in his eyes.

Jack leans over to Norma and WHISPERS:

JACK

By the way, what's the deal with the little German guy?

PANNING OVER, we see a short, well-dressed man intently gazing at the tree line through a pair of binoculars.

NORMA

Apparently, he's a politician who's into bird watching.

While we can't see the man's face, there is something familiar about him.

EXT. STEAMBOAT DECK - DUSK

The boat is anchored for the evening. Jack emerges from the wheelhouse dressed in a formfitting bathing suit, complete with shoulder straps and a leather belt.

JACK

Anyone up for a dip?

Jack FLEXES his muscles and points to the water. He smiles at Norma.

JACK

How about you, hot stuff? You look like you need to cool off.

CAPTAIN

I wouldn't swim here, Mr. Bell.

JACK

Don't worry about me, Cappy. I was a lifeguard for two summers at the Cony Island Water Pavilion. I'm used to a little current.

Jack CHUCKLES and DIVES in. He surfaces and yells out:

JACK

Oh yeah!

CAPTAIN
Seriously, Mr. Jack, the water, it
has... creatures.

Jack casts a nervous glance around the surface of the water.

JACK
(anxiously)
What kind of creatures?

CAPTAIN
Aqua Ticks. Microscopic parasites.

JACK
(relieved)
Oh. You scared me for a second.

CAPTAIN
You should be fine as long as you
don't urinate.

Jack nervously looks down into the water, a look of concern
and guilt painted across his face.

JACK
Why can't I urinate?

CAPTAIN
Because they'll swim into the
stream and lodge themselves in
your...

JACK
Ow!

NORMA
What is it?

JACK
Ow! Jesus!

Jack violently THRASHES about.

JACK
I think something just swam into my
pee-hole!

CAPTAIN
You didn't urinate did you?

There's a BEAT. Jack flashes a guilty smile.

JACK

For argument sake, let's say I that did. Just a squirt. What do these aqua ticks do?

CAPTAIN

Nest and lay eggs.

Jack's eyes go wide with FEAR.

JACK

(alarmed)

Holy crap! There's a parasite laying eggs inside of my penis!

NORMA

If I had a nickel for every time I heard that expression...

Jack quickly swims back to the boat and climbs on board. He begins to roll about on the deck, violently rubbing and scratching his crotch.

JACK

Get it out of me! Get it out of my penis! Now!

CAPTAIN

It's not that easy.

JACK

What do you mean? Ow! It stings! It stings so bad inside of my penis!

CAPTAIN

The only way to dislodge it is to put the opening into something even warmer than their nest.

JACK

Like what?

CAPTAIN

A flame...

JACK

You want me to put my penis into fire?

CAPTAIN

(gravely)

It's your only option.

JACK
(horrified)
Don't say that! Please tell me
you're joking!

The captain begins to LAUGH.

CAPTAIN
I'm just joking.

JACK
(suspiciously)
You are? Or are you just saying
that because I told you to, and I
still have to put my penis into a
fire?

CAPTAIN
No. A cup of warm milk should
suffice.

JACK
A cup of warm milk?.

The captain nods. Jack studies the captain suspiciously.

JACK
You're not winding me up are you?
I mean just so you can say you got
Jack Bell to put is his penis into
a warm cup of milk?

CAPTAIN
(confused)
And why would I want to do that?

JACK
Hey, I don't know why people do the
things they do, but I do know that
there are quite a few people who
would get a kick out of hearing
that Iron Jack Bell was tricked
into putting his penis into a warm
cup of milk. Quite a few.

Suddenly, Jack HOWLS in agony.

JACK
Jesus Christ! Give me some goddamn
milk!

EXT. RIVER BOAT - NIGHT

The crew sits on deck eating dinner. Jack chats with the German politician, who we still never see directly.

JACK

... As I was saying, Dolph, in politics these days you have to shake things up a bit. Push the envelope. If you never expand your horizons, you'll always have the same sunsets.

Norma, trying to keep a straight face, calls out:

NORMA

Jack, can you please pass the milk?

We hear a few muted CHUCKLES. Jack looks up, irritated.

JACK

And what's that supposed to mean?

NORMA

That I want some milk and I need you to pass it to me.

More stifled LAUGHTER. Jack glares at the crew.

TOBY

That reminds me, I had an uncle who once owned a dairy farm.

More SNICKERS.

CAPTAIN

Good for bones. That's what they say.

As the table breaks into a fit of hysterical LAUGHTER, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

A MONTAGE

Of their journey down the Nile.

-- Jack fishes off the back of the boat and reels in a HUGE PYTHON that causes complete and utter chaos on board.

-- Jack pours himself a glass of milk and the crew breaks into a fit of hysterical LAUGHTER.

-- Jack goes for a swim and emerges from the water covered in leeches.

-- Jack pours himself another glass of milk and again the crew breaks into a fit of hysterical LAUGHTER.

EXT. RIVERBED - DAY

Jack and Norma gather fruit and vegetables along the side of the river.

JACK

I'd like to apologize for the way some of the crew has been acting. They're not accustomed to being around celebrities and it shows.

Norma rolls her eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)

The only reason I mention it is I feel we might've gotten off on the wrong foot. You've seen me at my worst, and for that I'd like to apologize.

NORMA

There's no need.

JACK

Yes, there is. I can be an idiot sometimes. I know that. And I regret if I've done anything to offend you.

NORMA

I appreciate your concern, but I'm a big girl.

JACK

Not big enough if you ask me.

NORMA

What?

JACK

Nothing.

Suddenly, Jack stops in his tracks.

JACK'S POV: Sitting in front of them is a giant, silver-back gorilla chewing on fallen branches.

Jack puts his finger to his lips.

JACK

Shhhh.

The gorilla GROWLS menacingly.

NORMA

(whispering)

What should we do?

Jack studies the gorilla intently. After a moment, a knowing grin spreads across his lips.

JACK

(confidently)

Not to worry, toots. My mother was once involved in a similar situation in "Broadway Betty And The Wacky Gorilla."

FLASHBACK TO:

A SCENE FROM THE MOVIE

Jack's mother, Tallulah, and a man in a gorilla suit perform a charming little tap dance number, complete with high kicks and jazz hands.

TALLULAH

(singing)

Everybody loves to tap,
White, Irish, Chink or Black
They all love that tap-tap-tap
Tall-short-thin-or fat-fat-fat.
Broadway Betty and her dancing feet
Can even tame a jungle beast.

BACK TO -- PRESENT DAY

Jack slowly walks up to the animal and... **STARTS TO TAP DANCE!!!** The gorilla looks at Jack confused.

NORMA

(nervously)

What are you doing?

JACK

Tap dancing.

Jack continues his soft-shoe routine.

NORMA

I'm not sure that's such a good idea.

JACK

Have you even seen a talking picture in the last two years? Tap dancing is the answer to all of life's problems.

As Jack continues to dance, a pleasant smile spreads across the gorilla's face. He couldn't look more harmless.

NORMA

(surprised)

I think it's working.

JACK

Of course it's working...
(begins to sing)
Everybody loves to tap,
White, Irish...

Suddenly, the gorilla pounces on Jack!!!

SLAMS JACK TO THE GROUND LIKE A RAG DOLL... PUNCHES JACK IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD... JUMPS ON HIS SPINE... SMASHES JACK'S HEAD AGAINST A ROCK.

JACK

AH! HELP ME! THE BEAST IS
CRUSHING MY SKULL! I CAN FEEL THE
CRANIAL PLATES SPLINTERING AND THE
SPLINTERS GOING INTO MY BRAIN!

NORMA

Just relax.

JACK

HOW CAN I RELAX! THIS IS THE WORST
PAIN ANY HUMAN COULD EVER
EXPERIENCE! WHY IS THIS HAPPENING!
I WAS ONLY TAP DANCING! I... WAS...
ONLY... TAP DANCING!

As the gorilla begins to WAIL on Jack's face, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. STEAMBOAT DECK - DAY

Jack ices down his bruises while the crew looks on, once again amused by his misfortune.

JACK
 (annoyed)
 If you think this is funny, then
 you all have some real growing up
 to do.

Just then, we hear the sound of another STEAM ENGINE off in the distance.

Toby pulls out a pair of binoculars.

TOBY'S POV: A steamboat can be seen approaching at a high rate of speed. On the deck stands General LoPrimo and his Italian henchmen, guns raised.

Toby lowers the binoculars, confused.

TOBY
 I don't believe it...

NORMA
 What?

TOBY
 It's General Giuseppe LoPrimo.

JACK
 Who?

TOBY
 Mussolini's right-hand man. What
 the hell could he be doing here?

Norma flashes a guilty smile and shrugs obliviously.

TOBY
 Unless...

JACK
 What?

TOBY
 Unless they too are after the
 stone? But... that's ridiculous.

As the Italian's boat draws closer, Jack now sees that LoPrimo is the man who insulted him on the train.

JACK
 (sotto)
 So we meet again...

As Toby and the captain load their guns, Jack nods his approval.

JACK

I like the way you guys think.
Scare 'em with roscoes and send 'em
packin' before things get hairy.

As the boat draws closer, Jack yells out:

JACK

If you dirty wops don't hightail it
out of here, we're gonna fill you
full of daylight and send you home
in a Chicago overcoat.

Jack WINKS at Toby just as a GUNSHOT rings out SHATTERING the
wheelhouse window behind Jack's head.

JACK

Jesus H. Christ! Those little
pizza tossers just shot at us!

Another shot DISINTEGRATES the lantern above the wheelhouse
door.

Toby and the captain FIRE back. The situation quickly
devolves into an all out FIRE FIGHT.

Toby is HIT in the shoulder and FLIPS over the side of the
boat.

Norma quickly grabs a rescue line and throws it to him.

The captain is also HIT. He drops to the ground, dead.

As the Italian boat closes in, Jack picks up the captain's
pistol and takes aim.

NORMA

Forget them. Get the wheel!

JACK

I'm on it!

As Jack starts for the wheel, he accidentally trips and
falls, dropping the gun to the deck. BAM! The pistol
discharges and the bullet SEVERES Toby's rescue line.

JACK

(sheepishly)
Whoops.

Toby is now on his own floating down the river.

The formerly unseen German politician/birdwatcher emerges from the steamboat's cabin. We now see that it's none other than... ADOLPH HITLER!

HITLER
 Vat is happening?

Just then, the boat RAMS a submerged log and Hitler is THROWN overboard.

As the current sucks him below the surface, Jack grabs a life preserver and tosses it to the drowning man.

It's a PERFECT THROW, and lands directly in Hitler's hand!

There's a BEAT. And Hitler resurfaces, HIS LIFE SAVED!

Up ahead we see a fork in the river approaching fast.

NORMA
 Which way?

JACK
 The left. Water always flows calmer toward the left. Has to do with the moon and the angle of the sun. I wrote about it in Iron Jack And The Curse Of Confederate Silver.

Jack gives the boat everything the engine has. Slowly but surely they begin to pull away from the Italians.

NORMA
 I think we're losing them.

In the BG we see the Italian boat slowing down and heading to the right of the fork.

NORMA
 They're turning!

JACK
 They probably realized who they were dealing with.

NORMA
 (slightly concerned)
 Are you sure we're going the right way?

JACK

As sure as I am there will never be
a better professional basketball
player than Mort Goldberg...

CUT TO:

AN HOUR LATER

The boat is now being THRASHED ABOUT IN CLASS 4 RAPIDS. Jack
CLINGS to the wheel, trying desperately to hold it steady.

JACK

NOT TO WORRY! THIS WILL END SOON
ENOUGH!

The boat continues to be BATTERED by the waves.

Back and forth its TOSSED for what seems like an eternity.

Finally, after what could be hours, the rapids begin to
dissipate.

Jack turns to Norma and smiles proudly.

JACK

I can't believe you doubted me.
Typical. No one ever wants to
believe that celebrities are
brilliant intellectuals whose views
on everything from world politics
to global temperature changes
matter, but I'm here to tell you
that they do. Big time.

NORMA

What's that sound?

The two strain their ears and listen.

JACK

Not sure. Although if I had to
guess, I'd say it's the leaves of a
rubber tree plant, otherwise known
as the ficus elastica, blowing in
the wind.

As the camera PULLS UP for a CRANE SHOT, we now see that the
boat is heading straight for... **THE BLUE NILE FALLS!**

And over the falls the boat goes!

Mum, Jack and Norma bail out and HURTLE toward the CHURNING
foam of the falls!

The three disappear below the rushing waters.

The BOAT lands on a collection of jagged rocks and is SMASHED into kindling.

There's a BEAT... and Mum SURFACES. Norma is up next.

No sign of Jack. Mum realizes what has to be done and reluctantly dives below the surface. A few seconds later he emerges with Jack who's GASPING for breath.

NORMA

You stupid son of a...

JACK

Don't worry about me, I'm OK. How about you two?

The three swim to shore and FLOP down on the rocks, exhausted. Norma is absolutely furious.

NORMA

You could've gotten us killed!

JACK

Have you ever noticed that you're always harping on the negative? You seem to be forgetting that we eluded the Italians and found the waterfall. Which, if I'm not mistaken, was our ultimate goal. Not to mention, I saved that guy Hitler's life, which has to count for something.

Norma stands, revealing that her waterlogged dress is now almost completely transparent.

NORMA

(sarcastically)

I guess now all we have to do is find the rainbow and our mission is complete.

As Jack stares at Norma, his jaw drops.

NORMA

What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?

Jack points to Norma's glistening thighs.

NORMA

What? My baby maker? You men are all the same. One track minds. It's absolutely pathetic.

JACK'S POV: Between Norma's legs we see the base of a RAINBOW!!!

NORMA

You know what, I'm tired of fending off your juvenile advances. If you want to ride the pony express then hop on board, cowboy!

Awkward SILENCE.

JACK

I... uh... Actually... if you could just hold that thought...

Jack continues to point behind her, but Norma fails to realize his intent.

NORMA

(defensively)

No I will not hold that thought. Women have been told to hold their thoughts throughout the ages, but the world is changing. We are just as capable as men and just as....

Glancing over her shoulder, Norma now sees the rainbow created by waterfall's ethereal mist.

NORMA

Is that it?

Jack shrugs. It sure as hell looks like it.

The three quickly make their way over to the waterfall's edge. Jack studies the cascading wall of water, trying to figure out what's next.

NORMA

After you.

Jack nods and step into the stream of water, disappearing from view. Norma looks to Mum, motions for him to follow. Mum SIGHS and does as he's told. Norma brings up the rear.

INT. WATERFALL CAVE - CONTINUOUS

As the three peer around the cave, Jack's gaze settles on a pile of branches stacked in the corner of the grotto.

Norma sees it as well.

Jack walks over and kneels down. He clears away the branches, revealing an old treasure chest inscribed with Asian characters.

Norma shakes her head in disbelief.

NORMA
I don't believe it.

Jack smiles confidently.

JACK
Ladies and gentlemen, may I present
you, the Black Diamond Of The
Orient...

Jack opens the chest revealing... a second part of the map. Which now points them towards Mount Kilimanjaro.

Jack's confident grin quickly fades. And the hunt continues.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

Norma studies the map while Jack and Mum collect supplies that have washed up on shore.

NORMA
According to the map, we're not far
from Lake Tana. I'd say a two day
hike at the most.

JACK
What's at Lake Tana?

NORMA
Civilization. Transportation back
to Cairo. Our mission is over,
Jack. In case you've forgotten,
our guide is probably dead.

There's a BEAT, as Jack considers his options. There don't appear to be many.

NORMA
Jack, you're a fiction writer.
This is the real deal. Lives are
at stake, not to mention the
country's financial future. Let's
face it, you're not cut out for
this type of thing. None of us
are.

Jack realizes she may be right, but his ego is not about to let her win. Jack's eyes narrow.

JACK

You don't know me at all, do you?

NORMA

I think I have a pretty good idea of who you are.

JACK

Oh really? Well then what's my favorite color?

NORMA

Blue.

JACK

Lucky guess. What about food?

NORMA

Fiddlehead ferns.

JACK

That could be anyone. How about my birthday?

NORMA

Jack, it's over. Let it go.

JACK

Over? This isn't over. Not by a long shot. Because when I make a commitment, I make a promise. And when I make a promise I make a pledge. And when I make a pledge...

NORMA

You take an oath?

JACK

Now you're getting it. There are a lot of people back home counting on us, and I'm not about to let 'em down now. If you want to tag along with Mum and I, feel free. But we're not heading back until we have the diamond. And that is a guarantee!

As Jack starts to BUSHWACK up the side of the mountain, we see a thin smile creeping across Norma's lips. She's impressed by Jack's newfound dedication and resolve.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A newspaper boy holds up a copy of The Times.

NEWSPAPER BOY
Iron Jack loses life as the
depression ends...

Another newspaper boy holds up The Post.

NEWSPAPER BOY #2
Legendary author perishes as
economy rebounds...

While another newspaper boy holds up the Weekly World News.

NEWSPAPER BOY #3
Philip Morris invents filtered
cigarettes for homosexuals....

PANNING OVER to the soup kitchen line, we see a new sign,
DEPRESSION ENDING SPECIAL: ALL THE SOUP YOU CAN EAT.

Mel and Lou shake their heads sadly.

MEL
Without Jack Bell around to
stimulate my appetite, I don't
think I'll ever eat again.

LOU
You know who I blame? Herbert
Hoover. If it wasn't for Hoover,
Jack Bell would still be writing
novels and the world would still be
full of joy and happiness.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

"Hoover Kills Worlds Greatest Author", accompanied by cartoon
of Hoover pushing Jack over the Blue Nile Falls.

**"Iron Jack's Death The Final Nail In Hoover's Re-election
Coffin"**, accompanied by a cartoon of Jack being nailed into
the side of coffin containing Hoover.

"FDR Rolls Over Hoover", accompanied by a cartoon of Hoover
pinned beneath FDR's wheelchair.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Hoover looks on as movers load boxes of his belongings into the back of a large truck.

HOOVER

I can't believe I gambled the election on a crappy fiction writer.

JAMES

Don't take it personally, sir. It was a good plan. Nix that, a great plan.

HOOVER

You're an idiot.

EXT. DESERT TRADING POST - DAY

Norma and Mum load up camels with supplies.

Jack walks out of the post with his arm around a familiar face... Yankee legend, LOU GEHRIG, dressed in Safari gear.

JACK

... I was looking over at your safari and I had to do a double take. Gehrig? In the middle of the Serengeti? What are the odds? I guess the Yanks must've given you quite a raise this year, huh?

Jack tosses a canister of oil to Norma.

JACK

Here you go sweetheart, a little olive oil for sun protection.

Just then, a LOCAL MAN runs by chasing a small monkey-like creature with a stick. Jack and Lou watch with amusement as the man tries unsuccessfully to swat the elusive animal.

JACK

Take it easy, fella. He's just a harmless little rascal.

The animal SCURRIES up Jack's side and onto his shoulder. It begins to LICK his cheek. Jack GIGGLES with delight.

JACK

See what I mean.

LOCAL MAN

(cautiously)

Be very careful, mister. The sun squirrel carries many strange and sometimes deadly diseases.

Jack picks up the squirrel and gently pets its belly. The squirrel makes an adorable COOING SOUND.

JACK

Don't be ridiculous. He's as cute as a button.

Jack tosses the squirrel to Gehrig.

JACK

Here you go, Lou, a little souvenir to take back to New York. I'll bet you dollars to donuts the Babe doesn't have one.

LOU

Ow. I think it just bit me.

Jack ignores the comment and points to Norma.

JACK

All right, gang, let's get a move on it.

(to Gehrig)

Gehrig, always a pleasure. We'll have to throw a few back at Dempsey's the next time I hit the Apple.

Gehrig grimaces in pain as he rubs his arm where the animal bit him.

JUMP CUT TO:

MINUTES LATER

Jack, Norma, and Mum (now on camelback) head off into the desert as group of local tribal children run behind them GIGGLING and SCREAMING. Jack waves over his shoulder...

JACK

... Just remember, kids, school is cool and masturbation is a sin. It'll cause you to go blind and sentence you to eternal damnation.

Norma shoots Jack a disapproving look.

JACK

I just love the little ones.
They're so pure and void of evil.
How about that Gehrig, huh? Hell
of a ball player. Do you know he
hasn't missed a game in 5 years?
The man is a picture of perfect
health.

CUT TO:

LATER THAT DAY

As the barren plains turn into desert sands, we can tell that
there's something on Norma's mind. Finally she speaks up...

NORMA

I can't believe what you said to
those children earlier.

JACK

(confused)
What?

NORMA

Filling their heads with lies.
Self-gratification does not make
you go blind, nor will it cause you
to go to hell.

Jack studies Norma with a look of disbelief.

JACK

Have you ever even been to church?

NORMA

My father was a minister.

JACK

Obviously not a very good one.

NORMA

If you must know, there are many
studies now that contend
masturbation is a natural impulse
which should be embraced rather
than repressed.

JACK

I'm guessing these so called
"studies" were done at the school
for the blind.

Jack SNICKERS at his own cleverness.

NORMA
So you're telling me you've never
pleasured yourself before?

JACK
(seriously)
Absolutely not. When someone tells
me something is a sin, I listen.

NORMA
I feel sorry for you, Jack, I
really do. Because one of these
days you're gonna open your eyes
and realize that it's a new word
with new rules. And unless you can
shake off the antiquated shackles
of the past, you're gonna get left
behind.

As Norma rides up ahead, Jack watches her, contemplating the
wisdom of her words.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Jack, Norma, and Mum are getting ready for bed.

JACK
What you were saying earlier, about
masturbation, do you really believe
that?

NORMA
I do indeed. Why?

JACK
(evasively)
No reason. Just curious. Well
good night.

NORMA
Good night.

Jack blows out the lantern. The room becomes PITCH BLACK.
For the rest of the scene, WE SEE NOTHING.

After a few moments, we hear the unmistakable sound of a
person MASTURBATING. It continues for a few seconds.

NORMA
Jack?

The MASTURBATING SOUND stops abruptly.

JACK
Yeah?

NORMA
Are you masturbating?

JACK
(innocently)
... No.

There's a BEAT. Extended silence.

NORMA
Okay. Well, good night.

JACK
Good night.

After a few moments, the sound begins again, this time faster and accompanied by low MOANS.

NORMA
Are you sure you're not
masturbating?

Again the sound immediately stops. There's a BEAT.

JACK
(breathless)
Yes. Completely sure. Well good
night.

NORMA
Good night.

Almost instantly, the sound resumes. Jack's MOANS become louder, his breathing heavier and more labored.

NORMA
Jack?

The beat-off session continues.

NORMA
(sharply)
Jack...

The session slowly winds down, finally stopping.

JACK
(winded)
What's with the 3rd degree? I'm
just trying to go to sleep.
(MORE)

JACK (cont'd)

And even if I was masturbating, you were the one who said it's a natural impulse that should be embraced.

NORMA

You're right. But we better get some rest. We have a long trip ahead of us.

JACK

Good idea.

There's a BEAT. And then more... you guessed it! This time Norma doesn't say anything and the session continues. The MOANS become louder. The BREATHING heavier.

It becomes very, very uncomfortable to listen to.

Finally Jack screams:

JACK

Oh god! Oh god! Oh god! Quaker Oates! Ahhhhhhh!

The tent is silent with the exception of Jack's PANTING. After a few moments, Jack speaks.

JACK

Norma?

NORMA

Yeah?

JACK

Remember when I said I wasn't masturbating earlier?

NORMA

Yeah.

JACK

I was lying.

NORMA

I know.

JACK

Did you also know that it gives you almost the exact same sensation as whoopee?

NORMA

Go to sleep Jack.

SILENCE.

JACK
I can still see.

NORMA
Jack...

JACK
Good night.

EXT. DESERT CAMP - DAY

Norma and Mum pack up camp as Jack looks over the map.

JACK
By my calculations, we should be no more than two days away from Kilimanjaro.

Jack puts the map down. He forces an embarrassed smile.

JACK
About last night...

NORMA
Forget about it.

JACK
No, I want to thank you. You taught me a valuable lesson. The world IS changing. And I can't close myself off to new things. Because if I do, I'll miss out on a lot of wonderful experiences.

NORMA
(uncomfortably)
Seriously, Jack, let's just drop it.

JACK
Consider it dropped. But be aware, last night... you helped a blind man to see.
(awkward silence)
Anyhoo, before we commence on our journey, if you would excuse me for a moment, nature calls.

Jack gazes around at his desert surroundings. As one might expect, in the middle of the desert there's not a lot of privacy

JACK

(sotto)

Now how are we going to do this?

Jack starts walking toward a giant sand dune. After about 50 feet he stops and looks over his shoulder. He sees Norma and Mum looking back.

Jack shrugs and continues walking. After another 50 feet he stops and looks back. He's still in view and appears rather conflicted.

Norma calls out:

NORMA

We won't look, if that's what
you're worried about.

Jack ignores the comment and trudges up the side of the enormous dune, its summit at least a quarter mile away.

PANNING OVER to the ridge of another dune, we see Giuseppe and his henchmen watching Jack through binoculars.

GIUSEPPE

How pathetic. The brave American
is pee shy. And we all know there
is only one reason for a man to be
pee shy...

As Giuseppe and his henchmen SNICKER at the thought, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Jack, standing alone on the other side of the dune, finishes up his urination. He gives a shake and ZIPS up.

As we PAN AROUND, we quickly realize that Jack has actually crested the dune for privacy. There is NO ONE around.

EXT. DESERT CAMP - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Jack returns to find Mum hog-tied and Norma and the map missing! Jack rushes over and unties Mum's restraints.

JACK

Let me guess, Norma tied you up and
stole the map so she could have the
treasure all to herself?

Mum stares at Jack with a look of disbelief. He shakes his head, but Jack continues on...

JACK

Greed is a powerful emotion, my friend. It can make even the most loyal of companions turn on their closest of friends. Then again, I always suspected that she was in this for the money. It's the eyes. They're windows to the soul. And looking into her eyes were like looking into the soul of...

Mum SLAPS Jack in the face! There's a BEAT. And Jack nods in understanding.

JACK

The Italians took Norma and the map? That's even worse! Which way did they go?

EXT. ITALIAN CAMP - NIGHT

A large canvas tent is set up next to a campfire. Giuseppe, sipping on a glass of wine, sits with Norma whose hands are bound together.

GIUSEPPE

Bellisima, I apologize for the less than pleasant accommodations, but it's just a precaution. You understand, right?

NORMA

Jack was right about you Italians. You do have an offensive odor.

GIUSEPPE

It's actually a musk. Elevated levels of testosterone.

EXT. NEARBY SAND DUNE - SAME TIME

Jack and Mum quietly look on from the cover of darkness

JACK

Not to worry, Mum, I know exactly what needs to be done. This is Iron Jack's forte, the galloping rescue. We'll be in and out before they know what hit 'em. You just follow my lead...

Mum furrows his brow, concerned.

BACK TO -- THE CAMPFIRE

GIUSEPPE

I wonder where your Iron Jack is now. Still trying to muster the courage to make piss, maybe?

NORMA

Don't you worry about Jack, he'll be here soon enough. And when he comes, there's gonna be hell to pay, that I guarantee.

GIUSEPPE

(confused)

Are you sure about that? Because he seems rather inept. And I'm not being petty. I honestly believe that.

Just then, we hear a loud "YA", and Jack comes GALLOPING in on camelback from out of the darkness!

JACK

Like the wind, Mum! Like the wind!

Jack skillfully leaps over the campfire. As the Italians rush to get their weapon, Jack makes another pass through the camp and holds out his hand to Norma.

JACK

Next stop, Times Square...

Norma reaches up and grabs hold of Jack's hand. It looks as if Jack has saved the day! However...

As he tries to SWING Norma up onto the camel, he loses his balance and TOPPLES off of his mount. He lands hard on top of Norma. THUNK!

Giuseppe and his soldiers quickly surround the two.

GIUSEPPE

(snidely)

I'm confused, do I pay hell now or must I wait?

Just then...

Mum comes GALLOPING out of the shadows!

With a dexterous swipe of his machete, he SEVERS the tent pole line, causing the canopy to fall onto Giuseppe and his men.

Mum reaches down and, in one swift motion, grabs BOTH Jack and Norma and SWINGS them onto the back of his camel!

JACK

Good one, old chap! Just like we planned.

As the three gallop off into the darkness, the other camels following, we see Giuseppe emerging from beneath the fallen tent. His eyes burning with hatred.

GIUSEPPE

You might've won this battle, Signori Jack, but the war still rages...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Jack, Mum, and Norma slowly ride across desert sands.

NORMA

If I didn't get the chance to thank you last night, I really appreciate what you and Mum did. It was very brave.

JACK

(shrugging)

Rescuing damsels in distress is what Iron Jack does. Then again, it's a shame my saddle came loose. But that's why we have backup plans, now isn't it?

The two share a brief smile. Jack looks up at the scorching sun and wipes his brow.

JACK

Man it's hot out, huh?

Jack begins to quaff down an entire canteen of water, pouring the tail end of it over his head.

NORMA

I'd go easy on the water, Jack. We only have a limited supply.

JACK

You worry too much. According to my calculations, we shouldn't be more than...

Jack studies the map with a look of confusion

JACK (CONT'D)
It's not far. Not far at all...

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS:

-- Jack continues to drink water at an alarming rate. Norma looks on concerned.

-- Much to Norma's chagrin, Jack washes his camel with a considerable amount of their remaining water.

-- Jack uses even more of their precious water to clean his socks. Norma couldn't be more irritated.

-- Finally, the group runs out of water. Norma glares at Jack, eyes like daggers.

-- The group grows weaker and weaker as they become more and more dehydrated.

-- The group is now running on fumes. Jack and Norma are barely conscious.

As the three ride along, Jack deliriously points up ahead to what appears to be a desert resort.

JACK
Civilization! I told you we were
close...

Jack proceeds to gallop toward the resort, which we now see is nothing more than a heat induced mirage.

CUT TO:

INT. CABANA - DAY -- A DREAM SEQUENCE

Jack reclines on a canopied bed, sipping a martini while reading The Bible.

There's a KNOCK on the door and Norma enters, now dressed as a sexy harem girl. She looks absolutely breathtaking.

NORMA
I hope I'm not disturbing you.

JACK
Not at all. I was just finishing
up a little light reading.

Jack puts down The Bible. Norma comes over and takes a seat on the edge of the bed.

NORMA
 Anyway, I just wanted to apologize
 for doubting you.

JACK
 Mistakes happen.

NORMA
 No, seriously, I underestimated
 you. You are a very intelligent
 and attractive man who deserves the
 utmost respect. You are wise
 beyond your years.

JACK
 I appreciate that. It takes a brave
 woman to admit when she's wrong.

Norma takes the glass from Jack's hand and sets it on the
 bedside table.

NORMA
 Let's cut the crap, JB. I want you
 and you want me. It's time to
 throw caution to the wind and let
 nature take over...

JACK
 Are you talking about?

NORMA
 That's right... premarital
 intercourse!

Norma POUNCES on Jack and begins to RIP his clothes off.

BACK TO -- REALITY

Where Jack, sunburned and shirtless, is attempting to have
 sex with the FOOT OF A CAMEL!!!

PANNING UP, we see Mum staring down at Jack with a bemused
 expression. Mum reaches down and taps Jack on the shoulder.

Jack looks up and grins coolly.

JACK
 Well hello beautiful. You want in?
 As I always say, the more the
 merrier...

JACK'S HALLUCINATING POV: Mum is another sexy harem girl.

As Jack tries to pull Mum into the sordid mess, we...

CUT TO:

A MONTAGE

Of Mum carrying Jack, who's now passed out, over the desert sands, through thick brush, across rivers and plains.

-- Mile after mile he goes as Jack sleeps soundly.

-- The sun sets, and through the night Mum goes.

-- Just before daybreak, Mum finds the camp he left Norma at and gently lays Jack next to the campfire.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - MORNING

As the first rays of sunlight appear on the horizon, Jack begins to stir. Opening his eyes, he's shocked to discover that they're camping at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro!

Jack shakes his head in disbelief. He looks over at Mum who's busy preparing breakfast.

JACK

(proudly)

Well what do you know, old friend, it looks like my instincts were right all along. Mum, you need to learn to trust me. I've got a gift. Not sure where it comes from, but it's obvious that I've been blessed by a higher power.

As Jack pours a cup of coffee, Norma awakes. YAWNS. Looking up at the majestic mountain, her eyes go wide with awe.

NORMA

Where are we?

JACK

Mount Kilimanjaro.

NORMA

But how?

JACK

(proudly)

Let's just say that Jack Bell knows a thing or two about navigating desert terrain. It's like a sixth sense. A desert terrain navigational sense.

Just then, Norma points to a magnificent ALBINO LION staring at their camp from a hundred yards away. It's beauty is mesmerizing.

NORMA
It's magnificent.

JACK
So majestic. So regal. So noble.

Jack picks up his rifle and takes aim at the animal.

NORMA
(horrified)
What are you doing?

JACK
Just using the scope to get a better...

Norma impulsively grabs Jack's arm, causing him to accidentally pull the trigger. POW!

The lion drops to the ground, **DEAD!**

JACK (CONT'D)
... look.

There's a BEAT, as Jack and Norma realize what's happened.

NORMA
I thought you were going to...

JACK
Shoot it? Why would I shoot the most beautiful creature that God ever created? Lucky for you there's no game warden around or you would be in some serious...

Just then, fifty spears DESCEND from the sky and LAND at their feet! Whoops.

JACK (CONT'D)
... trouble.

A WHIP PAN reveals that the camp is now surrounded by 100 half-dressed, tribal warriors.

NORMA
(sarcastically)
Yeah, lucky for us.

EXT. TRIBAL VILLAGE - DAY

PANNING AROUND the village, it's readily apparent that the albino lion was some sort of sacred animal. It's likeness is captured on everything from paintings to etchings to carvings.

We ANGLE ON Jack, Norm, and Mum who are now tethered to wooden stakes. The locals are laying kindling at their feet.

JACK

What are they going to do to us?

NORMA

I'm not entirely familiar with their language, but from what I can decipher, we've murdered the sacred protector of their village and they plan to do the same to us. Except with fire.

JACK

Fire? That's B.S. Being burned alive is much worse than being shot with a rifle. Much worse.

As the tribe's CHIEF approaches the three interlopers with a burning torch, it looks like the end. However...

Just then, a low AGONIZING MOAN can be heard coming from one of the huts. The chief's wife emerges, grief stricken.

The assemblage grows QUIET.

She calls out to the chief, who reluctantly lowers the torch.

The two have a heated exchange.

JACK

What are they saying?

NORMA

Something about an evil spirit and their son. It sounds like he's quite ill.

This gives Jack an idea.

JACK

Ill huh?

As a sly smile creeps across Jack's lips, we...

CUT TO:

INT. HUT - MINUTES LATER

Jack, holding a knife, stands over the prince, who's sweating and shaking profusely. The chief points to Jack.

CHIEF

Doctor?

JACK

The next best thing... writer. You see I once wrote an essay on the health benefits of mercury for the Royal Journal Of Medicine. And while I've technically never been to medical school, I have been deputized by the Surgeon General.

Jack pulls out his deputy badge for emphasis.

As the prince begins to GROAN, Jack returns his focus on the business at hand.

JACK

(sotto)

Now where should I make this incision?

Jack impulsively plunges the knife into the prince's abdomen and BLOOD BEGINS TO SPURT into the air.

JACK

Whoops...

CHIEF

Whoops?

JACK

Not to worry. I just need to make another cut... here...

Jack plunges the blade into the prince's stomach. This time, BLOOD SPURTS all over Jack's face.

JACK

Just relax. This is completely normal. I know exactly what went wrong. If I make one more incision here...

Another incision causes blood to SPURT across the room like a sprinkler system. And we...

JUMP CUT TO:

MINUTES LATER

The prince is now violently convulsing on his cot.

Jack, Norma, and Mum are being tied up, once again, and dragged toward the pyre.

NORMA
Any other bright ideas?

JACK
Maybe you should tell him I once sang a duet with Al Jolson at a Fight Against Polio fund raiser. Let him know that I even wore a black face. If he's interested, I still know the routine.

NORMA
Not sure that's a wise decision.

Suddenly, Jack's eyes light up as inspiration strikes.

JACK
The diamond! Moreno said it had magical healing powers.

NORMA
He also said human flesh tasted like quail.

JACK
Can you think of a better alternative?

Norma realizes Jack might have a point. She calls out to the chief in their native tongue and the crowd goes silent.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Jack and Mum prepare to head up the mountain. Norma is being held as collateral.

JACK
Don't you worry about a thing, doll-face, we'll be back with the diamond before you can say Iron Jack and The Curse Of Captain Kid's Treasure. Which, by the way, The Times called a "literary thrill ride that will keep you on the edge of your seat..."

NORMA

Are you promoting your latest novel?

JACK

You never know where Pulitzer voters might be vacationing.

There's a BEAT, as we PAN OVER to the assemblage of half-naked tribe members. As expected -- NO PULITZER VOTERS.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Jacks energetically bounds up the mountain path as Mum, who's carrying ALL of the equipment, tries to keep up.

JACK

There's something about mountain air that just fills you with energy and life. If we keep up this pace, we'll make it to the summit by nightfall. Come on pal. You're dragging here. No pain, no gain.

Off in the distance, we see a plane flying by, the Italian flag painted on its side.

CUT TO:

THREE HOURS LATER

Jack is now breathing heavily and sweating profusely. He's desperately trying to keep up with Mum.

JACK

The air... so thin... Feeling... so dizzy...

Jack sits down and lights a cigarette.

JACK

Break time... I need... to replenish... lung... power...

CUT TO:

MUM NOW CARRYING JACK AND THEIR EQUIPMENT

JACK

... I appreciate this, Mum. I really do. And you know perfectly well that I would be doing the same for you if the roles were reversed.

Mum ignores the comment and forges ahead.

CUT TO:

THE SUMMIT

Winds howling. Snow swirling. Jack and Mum stand before the mouth of a cave.

Jack holds up the treasure map, revealing this is clearly the place they were looking for.

JACK

One of us should head inside to scout things out. You may as well take this one, I mean with my bum lungs and all.

Mum SIGHS. He takes a lantern and heads toward the entrance of the cave. As he nears the opening, we see a pair of yellow eyes peering out of the shadows.

There's a loud GROWL. Just then, a set of claws VIOLENTLY LASH out from within the darkness, barely missing Mum's face. Mum slowly backs away from the cave.

JACK

Just as I suspected, a snow leopard den.

Mum stares hard at Jack as if to say, "*WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU MEAN, JUST AS I SUSPECTED?!!!*"

JACK

This is gonna require teamwork, pal. The old one-two. You up for it?

Off Mum's look of dread, we...

CUT TO:

MINUTES LATER

Jack ties pieces of RAW MEAT onto the back of Mum's jacket.

JACK

All right, amigo, here's the plan: you'll lure the cat out of its lair and I'll sneak in, grab the diamond, and we'll blow this clambake like a call girl in a balloon store. What do you say?

Mum stares at Jack with a look of impending doom.

JACK

Good luck old friend, and Godspeed.

Jack gives Mum a pat on the back and sends him toward the cave. Mum takes a deep breath and enters the darkness.

There's a BEAT. Jack looks on intently.

After a few seconds, we hear a vicious feline GROWL and Mum comes SPRINTING out of the cave followed by the snow leopard.

The leopard LEAPS into the air and LANDS on Mum's back, TACKLING him to the ground.

As Mum tries to fend off the ferocious beast, Jack give him the thumbs up.

JACK

That's a boy, Mum! Give him the old what for! A little of the old razzle-dazzle!

And Jack enters the cave.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Jack lights a lantern and slowly forays into the darkness.

As he moves deeper and deeper into the cavern we begin to see tribal markings etched on the wall. The etchings all have ominous and forboding implications. They depict decapitation, impalement, and immolation.

Continuing on, we begin to see bones, many appearing to be human, littering the cave's floor.

Without paying attention, Jack steps on a hidden trip wire.

A GIANT BLADE swings down, just missing Jack's head.

Jack quickens his pace.

Finally, he reaches what appears to be a dead end. There's nothing but a rock wall in front of him.

Jack gazes around the room, a look of bewilderment painted across his face.

Spying a stalagmite, Jack grins knowingly.

JACK

Of course! By pulling the concealed lever the secret door will open revealing the hidden passage. It's just like in Iron Jack And The Curse Of The Gold Mine's Gold.

Jack confidently attempts to pull the tip of the stalagmite, but nothing happens. He tries again. Still nothing.

JACK

That's odd.

Jack tries KICKING the stalagmite. Nothing. One more kick, this time harder. Again nothing. The next kick BREAKS off the tip of the rock and it falls to the ground. THUD.

Jack picks up the piece of broken rock and studies it, confused. It suddenly dawns on him that there might not be a hidden lever after all. We can see his frustration building.

JACK

Come on! You have to be here! Because if you're not, then the prince is going to die, and Norma is going to die, and Mum and I are going to... Actually, I guess Mum and I could just take a different route down the mountain and avoid the village all together...

Jack takes a moment to consider the possibility.

JACK (CONT'D)

My point being, we've come this far, can't you just help us out. Just give me a little hint as to where you might be. Just a tiny one.

There's a BEAT. Jack waits for an answer to his prayer, but nothing arrives. He shakes his fists in anger.

JACK

Damn you legendary ancient artifact which may or may not actually exist! Damn you straight to hell!

Jack throws the piece of broken stalagmite against the ice-covered wall. SMASH! The ice SHATTERS revealing a formerly unseen stone knob. It's clearly something important.

Jack walks up and studies the knob. Presses it.

Just then, an unseen trapdoor OPENS beneath Jack's feet. He DROPS down onto an ice chute and begins to TUMBLE into the darkness!

JACK

Ahhhh!

Down he goes, SCREAMING like a little girl. He lands with a THUD on a hard stone floor.

Jack lights a match, illuminating the room which he now sees is filled with the frozen remains of a dozen or so former treasure hunters.

Again Jack SCREAMS like a little girl, this time even more high-pitched.

When he finally stops, he sees a wooden pedestal on which sits a neatly folded silk scarf. There appears to be something wrapped inside.

Could it be? Jack hurries over and excitedly unwraps the scarf, revealing... The Black Diamond Of The Orient!!!

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Jack emerges to find the snow leopard curled up at Mum's feet, gnawing on a piece of steak.

JACK

Awww, isn't that adorable. You've made a friend. Let me guess, you pacified the kitty cat with a little of the old soft shoe?

Mum puts his finger to his lips, but Jack ignores the warning and walks up to the leopard... and begins to tap dance.

Softly singing:

JACK

Everybody loves to tap,
White, Irish...

Suddenly, the snow leopard POUNCES, sinking it's teeth into Jack's neck. Jack howls:

JACK

AHHH! THE BEAST IS EATING MY
THROAT! HE'S CRUSHING MY TRACHEA!
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING! I WAS ONLY
TAPPING! I... WAS... ONLY...
TAPPING!!!

As the leopard continues to MAUL Jack, we...

CUT TO:

INT. ROYAL HUT - DAY

Jack and Mum come running into the hut, breathless. Jack proudly holds out the scarf containing the diamond.

JACK
Get the prince ready. We've found
the...

Jack stops in his tracks.

JACK (CONT'D)
... diamond.

PANNING OVER, we now see that Giuseppe and his Italian henchmen are standing in the corner of the of the room, guns drawn. Giuseppe shakes his head in disbelief.

GIUSEPPE
You actually did it. I'm...
shocked. Amazed even. You
actually found it. Unbelievable.

Giuseppe walks up and grabs the scarf from Jack's hand.

JACK
What are you doing?

GIUSEPPE
Taking the diamond back to mother
Italy and General Mussolini.

Giuseppe SNAPS his fingers and his henchmen follow him out of the hut. Jack and Norma rush after them.

EXT. HUT - CONTINUOUS

JACK
But what about the prince?

GIUSEPPE
What about him?

JACK
The diamond can save him. It's his
only chance.

Giuseppe considers the request, and smiles apologetically.

GIUSEPPE

I wish I could, really, but if I let you use the diamond to heal the prince, then I'd have to let everyone use the diamond.

JACK

But there is no one else. Just the prince.

GIUSEPPE

Maybe now. But when word gets out... You know how it is. Anyway, we have to be getting back to Italy. But if you're ever in Rome, definitely stop by. I'm sure General Mussolini would like to thank you for your efforts.

We hear the WHIR of a plane propeller beginning to spin. A few seconds later, a large twin-prop comes RUMBLING out from behind the huts.

Giuseppe runs over and climbs aboard. He smiles and waves.

GIUSEPPE

Ciao.

Jack and Norma watch as the aircraft speeds across the plain and ascends into the cloudless, blue sky.

INT. HUT - DAY

Norma and Mum pack up their belongings while Jack sits in the corner pouting.

JACK

This is not the way things were supposed to end. We were the ones who found the diamond. We're the heroes. It's just not fair.

We ANGLE ON a folded piece of paper falling out of one of the bags Norma is packing.

Norma picks it up, revealing it to be a telegram from Hoover to Toby:

"We need more photographs of Bell in front of famous landmarks... STOP... As long as the pictures keep coming and he and the reporter believe the mission is real, we're golden... STOP... Keep up the good work. H. Hoover..."

JACK
What do you have there?

Norma quickly places the telegram behind her back.

NORMA
(evasively)
Nothing.

JACK
Oh really? Then why are you hiding
it behind your back like it
possesses an important secret?

Before Norma can answer, Jack rips the telegram from her grasp. Begins to read:

JACK
"We need more photographs of Bell
in front of famous landmarks. As
long as the pictures keep coming
and he and the reporter believe the
mission is real..."

Jack reads the rest in silence.

NORMA
Jack...

As the reality of the situation hits Jack like a ton of bricks, we can see the devastation on his face.

JACK
(in a daze)
This was all a lie...
(beat)
An elaborate publicity stunt to
promote a fictional endeavor. Kind
of like my career...
(beat)
The irony. So cruel...

NORMA
What are you talking about?

JACK
I'm a fraud. I've never done any
of the things I write about. It
was just a hook my agent came up
with to sell more books. But then
it caught on, and before we knew
it, the whole Iron Jack persona-
thing sort of took on a life of its
own.

Jack's shoulder's slump. His despair palpable. Norma gently pats him on the back.

NORMA

Hey, Jack... You're forgetting that you accomplished what none of them ever thought you would. You found the diamond, and that's something they can never take away from you.

Jack shrugs indifferently.

NORMA

Not only that, you found it on your own terms. No help from the government at all. It was just you and your misguided instincts.

Jack looks up, his confidence slowly returning.

JACK

You think?

NORMA

I know. I was there.

Jack nods proudly. He stands up straight and sticks out his chest.

JACK

You're absolutely right. It WAS my misguided instincts that found the diamond...

(becoming more animated)

Well you know what? Finding the diamond isn't enough. Iron Jack sees his missions through to the end, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

NORMA

We are?

JACK

It's not about the glory anymore. It's about right and wrong. And as long as there's still time to save the prince's life, we're not giving up...

Jack narrows his eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)

I swore years ago I would never return to that hellish land of winos and dandies, but sometimes in life you have to go back on your word. Especially when doing so will benefit you in the future. So pack up your corkscrews and your male perfume, because we are going to Italy!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ITALIAN AIRFIELD - DAY

Norma and Mum step out of an idling transport plane onto the tarmac.

INT. PLANE - SAME TIME

Jack smiles warmly at the pilot.

JACK

Amelia, you're a lifesaver. I can't thank you enough for the lift. And good luck with that 'round the world thing. I know you're gonna do great.

As the pilot turns around, we now see that it's none other than AMELIA EARHART. She points to Norma and smiles.

AMELIA

She's a keeper, Jack.

JACK

Don't I know it. Let's hope I can hang on to her better than I did to you.

As Jack goes to exit the plane, we go TIGHT ON his jacket getting caught on an small electrical device.

As Jack hops down onto the tarmac, the device is dislodged from the circuitry and remains attached to Jack's coat.

EXT. TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

Jack walks over to Norma and Mum. They watch as Amelia turns the plane around and prepares for takeoff.

NORMA

That Amelia Earhart is one nice woman.

As the plane heads down the runway, we go TIGHT ON the **ELECTRICAL DEVICE** hanging from the back of Jack's coat.

JACK
The nicest.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROME - NIGHT

Jack, Mum and Norma walk down a busy pedestrian thoroughfare.

JACK
Welcome to Rome, the land of
effeminately dressed men and
mustachioed women.

Norma raises a curious eyebrow.

NORMA
I'm not sure I follow your Italian
stereotyping, Jack. Everyone
appears fairly normal to me.

JACK
Appears is the key word. You see
Italians aren't so much people as
they are beasts. Savage, blood-
thirsty, voluptuary beasts.

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

As the three approach the castle, we now see that Norma is wearing a fake mustache.

NORMA
This is ridiculous, Jack.

JACK
Maybe so, but it's a risk we have
to take.

As the three near the castle's guards.

NORMA
What now?

JACK
Not to worry, I did extensive
research on the Italian dialect for
my first novel, Welcome To Goombah
Town. It never sold, but it got me
an agent.

Jack raises his voice:

JACK
 (in a bad Italian accent)
 I'ma so drunk ona red wine, I just
 urinated ina my trousers.

Jack walks up to one of the guards and plants a big KISS on his lips.

JACK
 I lova you, my guinea-wop brother!

Jack SMACKS the guard in the face.

JACK
 I lova you soa much!

Jack PUNCHES the guard in the jaw, knocking him out. The other guard begins to LAUGH.

JACK
 And I lova you too!

Another right-cross and the guard is down for the count.

Jack flashes a cool smile at Norma.

JACK
 I used to live next door to Gene
 Tunney. He showed me few things.

INT. CASTLE - NIGHT

Jack purposefully strides down a hallway as Norma and Mum follow closely behind.

NORMA
 Do you know where you're going?

JACK
 Years of observing the Italian race
 trying to acclimate to civilized
 society has taught me that there is
 only one thing their people find
 more valuable than money...

And we ANGLE ON a door labeled "**WINE CELLAR.**"

INT. WINE CELLAR - A MINUTE LATER

The three enter into the wine filled catacombs.

JACK (CONT'D)

You see, the Italians were originally descendents of wild boar...

NORMA

(confused)

As in pigs?

JACK

That's right. And as most farmers know, a swine's favorite food is the grape. However not just fresh sweet grapes from the vine, but rather rancid, decomposing grapes that have fallen to the ground and have begun to ferment.

Jack picks up a bottle of wine for emphasis.

JACK (CONT'D)

Which as you know, is basically all that wine is. It also explains an Italian's inability to stay sober. More importantly, this also means that their most priceless possessions are going to be kept somewhere close to... the vino.

WHIP PAN to a glass case containing the Black Diamond sitting in the center of a rack of wine.

NORMA

(stunned)

Well I'll be damned.

GIUSEPPE (O.S.)

Truer words were never spoken.

Out of the shadows steps Giuseppe.

GIUSEPPE

To come here was not a wise decision.

Giuseppe grabs a decorative dueling saber from the wall. He begins to skillfully TWIRL and SWIPE it through the air.

JACK

(coolly)

That may be so. However wisdom has never been one of my strong suits.

Jack grabs another saber from the wall and tries to emulate Giuseppe.

GIUSEPPE

You do know that there is no editor here to clean up your mistakes, Signori Jack.

JACK

That's fine by me, Jennifer. One draft is all I'm gonna need.

Giuseppe flashes a seductive smile at Norma.

GIUSEPPE

Maybe after I'm through here, I will show you what it's like to be with a real man.

JACK

(to Norma)

You do realize that this guy still lives with his mother, right?

GIUSEPPE

Mi madre is a saint!

Giuseppe LUNGES at Jack and a wild sword fight ensues. Back and forth they go...

-- Giuseppe with the THRUST. Jack with a DODGE.

-- Giuseppe with the HACK. Jack with the BLOCK.

-- Giuseppe SWINGS at the legs. Jack JUMPS into the air just over the blade.

GIUSEPPE

I have to be honest with you, I am impressed. I thought you would be less skilled with the sword.

Jack BLOCKS another blow.

JACK

Three-time captain of the Hunter College fencing team. And as long as we're all being honest, I thought Italian men had smaller vaginas.

Giuseppe takes a wild swing that SMASHES a wine rack.

GIUSEPPE

As an Italian man I find that
comment to be extremely insulting!

JACK

Then maybe Italian men are smarter
than I had previously suspected.

GIUSEPPE

Again with the insults!

Back and forth they go. Jack doing everything in his power
to fend off Giuseppe's deadly blows.

Just when it looks like Jack is about to meet his maker, Mum
grabs a sword from the wall and joins in.

The tide quickly turns.

Mum and Jack proceed to take the upper hand!

GIUSEPPE

Two on one is not a fair fight.

JACK

It's not my fault you don't have a
man-servant.

Finally, Giuseppe loses his sword. It would appear as if
Jack and Mum have emerged victorious. But Giuseppe has other
plans.

GIUSEPPE

Maybe I don't need one.

Giuseppe pulls a pistol out of his jacket. He aims at Mum.

GIUSEPPE (CONT'D)

And maybe you don't either.

In SLOW MOTION, we see Giuseppe pulling the trigger.

FLASHBACK TO:

MUM'S LIFESAVING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Playing Russian Roulette in Casablanca.
- Pulling Jack out of the water at the Blue Nile Falls.
- Rescuing Jack and Norma at the Giuseppe's desert camp.
- Carrying Jack up Kilimanjaro.

-- Luring the snow leopard out of its cave.

JACK
Noooooooooooo....

Jack DIVES in front of Mum, and the bullet HITS him squarely in the chest. Jack drops to the ground clutching his heart.

Impulsively, Norma picks up a priceless Da Vinci statue and CRACKS Giuseppe over the head, knocking him unconscious.

She rushes over to Jack's side.

NORMA
Jack, are you OK?

JACK
(weakly)
So cold. I can see a bright light.
It's beautiful.

Norma cradles Jack's head gently in her arms.

NORMA
Don't you die on us, Jack Bell!
Not now! Not after we came this
far!

Jack turns to Mum. Through thin, labored breaths he whispers:

JACK
Mum, you were more to me than a man-
servant. You were a man... who
also happened to be a servant. And
sweet Norma. I only wish we had
more time together.
(COUGHS)
It's not too late for you. Or the
prince. Take the stone and go save
that sweet kid's life. Take it.

There's a BEAT, as Norma realizes there may be another option.

NORMA
Can't we just use the stone to save
your life?

JACK
I wish there was time. But the
grim reaper has planted his supple
lips upon my own and placed his
gentle kiss of death upon my soul.

NORMA
 (confused)
 No, I'm serious. If the stone has
 magical healing powers we should...

Jack put his finger to Norma's lips.

JACK
 Shhhh. You must try and let me go.

NORMA
 I don't understand why you're
 making this so difficult.

JACK
 I had a good run. No regrets.
 Which is really all a man can ask
 for.

As Norma touches Jack's wound, we see a look of confusion
 wash across her face.

Slowly she begins to unbutton his shirt... revealing that the
 bullet didn't actually puncture Jack's skin, but is instead
 imbedded in his Surgeon General's Deputy Badge!!!

Jack looks down and forces a sheepish smile.

JACK
 Well that was lucky. It still
 hurts really bad, and I'm sure it
 will leave some kind of unsightly
 bruise.

We hear FOOTSTEPS coming down the corridor.

NORMA
 We've got to get out of here.

JACK
 I think I can make it.

Norma helps Jack to his feet.

JACK
 Ow. Very tender.

EXT. THE CASTLE'S AIRFIELD - NIGHT

Jack, Mum, and Norma are crouched behind a storage shed under
 heavy machine gun fire.

NORMA
 Now what?

Jack peers out and spots a biplane parked fifty feet away. A knowing smile spreads across his lips.

JACK

While researching Iron Jack And The Curse Of The Red Barron's Silver, I spent a day at an Air Force base in Lompoc. They even let me try out the flight simulator. I am *almost* positive I can get this bird airborne.

NORMA

What's *almost positive*? Like 99%? 98%?

JACK

Probably closer to 12. You guys ready? On the count of three. One... Two... Three...

And Jack sprints across the airfield, machine gun fire just missing him, and dives into the cockpit. There's a BEAT, as Mum and Norma consider alternative options. Unfortunately there are none.

NORMA

After you.

Mum nods, and the two dash after Jack and pile into the plane, bullets WHIZZING over their heads.

Jack intently studies the control panel.

JACK

I think this is the ignition...

Jack FLIPS a switch and the propeller begins to SPIN.

JACK

And I believe this is the rudder.

Jack FLIPS another switch and the plane's machine guns begin to FIRE, peppering a bunker of enemy soldiers with bullet holes.

JACK

Maybe this is the rudder.

Jack FLIPS another switch, and the plane begins to turn in a circle, its machine gun CUTTING DOWN everything in its path.

JACK
So all I need to do is pull this
lever back...

Jack pulls the lever and the plane begins to MOTOR down the runway. As the plane continues to accelerate, we see the end of the runway drawing near.

NORMA
Jack?

JACK
I got it.

Jack pulls the wheel back and nothing happens. He tries again. Still nothing.

NORMA
Jack?

JACK
Almost there.

The end of the runway is approaching quickly.

NORMA
Jack!

At the last possible second, Jack PULLS a lever and the plane RISES UP into the sky! Jack looks back at Norma and grins.

JACK
Piece of cake, sister.

As the plane soars above the airfield, Jack lights a victory cigarette.

JACK
Now that is smooth.

Jack takes a deep drag and tosses the cigarette overboard.

ON THE GROUND

Giuseppe rushes out of the castle and points to the anti-aircraft guns.

GIUSEPPE
Shoot him down! Now!

As the soldiers run over to the guns, we go TIGHT ON Jack's lit cigarette butt falling to the ground.

We see it heading straight for the airfield's GAS PUMPS.

As the soldiers begin to FIRE at Jack's plane, we see the cigarette land directly in a puddle of gasoline, setting it ablaze. Within seconds, the flames crawl up into the pump and...

BOOM!!!

As the airfield EXPLODES into a giant FIREBALL, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MANJARO HUT - DAY

Jack gently places the stone on the prince's stomach and takes a step back. He looks to Norma for guidance.

JACK

What now?

NORMA

I don't know.

Suddenly, the stone begins to glow and a HUSH falls over the room. The prince's body goes RIGID and his back ARCHES, forcing his chest into the air. The prince lets out a GASP!

Slowly, one of his eyes open. Then the other. He looks up at his mother and father and smiles blankly.

PRINCE

(SUBTITLED)

What happened?

The prince's mother runs over and gives him a loving embrace. A loud CHEER erupts from the villagers.

EXT. HUT - DAY

Norma smiles warmly at Jack.

NORMA

I never thought I'd say this, but you are a pretty extraordinary man, Mr. Bell.

JACK

I have my moments. And please, call me Jack.

Jack takes Norma into his arms and PLANTS a passionate kiss on her lips. She pushes him away and SLAPS him across the face.

Jack grins and SLAPS her back.

He delivers another forceful KISS until Norma eventually succumbs to his seductive "charms."

NORMA

Oh Jack...

EXT. VILLAGE CENTER - NIGHT

A celebratory feast is taking place, complete with dancers, fire jugglers, and copious amounts of food.

Norma sits with the chief and his family, including the prince, who's now the model of perfect health.

CHIEF

(SUBTITLED)

What happened to Jack?

NORMA

(SUBTITLED)

He said he had a surprise for you.

CHIEF

(SUBTITLED)

The man is full of them.

NORMA

(SUBTITLED)

Yes he is...

Just then, the sound of a ukulele is heard off in the distance. All eyes turn to see Jack stepping out of one of the huts, strumming the instrument.

And one more thing... he's now in **BLACKFACE!!!**

Jack begins to sing the Al Jolson classic... "*Mammy*":

JACK

Mammy, Mammy,
 The sun shines east,
 the sun shines west,
 I know where the sun shines best--
 Mammy, My little mammy,
 My heartstrings are tangled around
 Alabammy.
 I'm comin',
 Sorry that I made you wait.
 I'm comin',
 Hope and trust that I'm not late,
 oh oh oh Mammy,
 My little Mammy,
 I'd walk a million miles
 (MORE)

JACK (cont'd)
For one of your smiles,
My Mammy! Oh oh oh...

As Jack strikes a pose, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Mum loads up the plane as Jack hands out cigarettes to the Manjaro children.

JACK
Remember kids, you're still growing
so be sure to smoke up. Your body
needs its tobacco vitamins.

Jack turns to the chief and smiles warmly.

JACK
Chief, I just want to thank you for
your hospitality. If you and the
missus are ever in Beverly Hills,
you've always got a place to crash.

Jack motions for Norma to translate.

NORMA
(SUBTITLED)
He apologizes for any trouble he
may have caused you and hopes you
have a healthy and prosperous life.

The chief nods.

CHIEF
(SUBTITLED)
You are the strangest and least
civilized man I have ever met. But
you saved my son's life, which is
something I will never forget.

NORMA
He says it was an honor to meet you
and he hopes your paths will cross
again in the near future.

Jack gives the chief a hug.

JACK
You big softie.

NORMA
 (SUBTITLED)
 He wants you to know that he
 received a severe head injury as a
 child.

CHIEF
 (SUBTITLED)
 Makes sense.

TEN MINUTES LATER

Jack, Norma, and Mum wave to the villagers as the plane
 begins to RUMBLE down the makeshift runway.

Up into the clear African sky it soars.

As they circle high above the village, Jack turns back to
 Norma. Over the din of the engine:

JACK
 There's something I want to tell
 you. And it's hard for me to
 say...

NORMA
 There's no need. I feel the same
 way.

JACK
 I'm 1/8th Jewish. I know, I don't
 have the nose or the horns, so it's
 not readily apparent, but there's
 yid blood pumping through these here
 veins.

NORMA
 (confused)
 OK...

JACK
 There's more. My great-great-
 grandfather was... Irish!

There's a BEAT.

NORMA
 Jack, I have to be honest with you,
 I have never understood your
 irrational fear and loathing of the
 Irish.

JACK
 Really?

NORMA

Seriously, the Irish aren't that bad. I mean not like Italians or Swedes?

JACK

So you wouldn't have second thoughts about leaving me alone with the family dog?

NORMA

You said you're only 1/16, right?

Norma CHUCKLES good-naturedly. Jack begins to LAUGH as well.

NORMA

Of course, the family cat is a whole other story!

JACK

Well I do have a thing for pussy!

As Jack's LAUGHTER becomes more boisterous, Norma grows silent.

JACK

What? I was just... You know... cats... pussy...

(changing the subject)

So, uh, do you guys know anything about zeppelins? I have a friend, Hindenburg, who's looking for investors...

As the plane soars into the blue sky, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

NEWSREEL FOOTAGE

Of Jack, Norma and Mum stepping off of an ocean liner.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

... And in other news, Jack Bell returns safe and sound from the wilds of Africa. And while he might not have found the Black Diamond, he ended up with his own precious stone, Times reporter Norma Madsen... who recently became Norma Bell.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Jack and Norma, in wedding attire, emerge from the church as well-wishers shower them with rice.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

What's up next for Iron Jack is anybody's guess. But you can bet it will be something full of adventure and intrigue.

Jack and Norma wave to the crowd and step into a waiting limousine.

We see Jack's brother, Gerald, also wearing a tuxedo, being led out of the church on a chain leash. He LUNGES at the limo, but his handlers subdue him with an electric cattle prod!

As the limo starts down the street, it passes a disheveled, bearded man holding up a sign that says "Will Work For Food."

It takes a moment, but we quickly realize that this downtrodden, lost soul is none other than former United States President Herbert Hoover.

FADE OUT.