

Here's looking at you, kid



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accidental

“Movies made under the studio system were accumulations of accidents, and *Casablanca* was no exception. (...) A classic movie is the biggest accident of all. A thousand things have to fit together.”¹

“It was an accident, of course, that *Casablanca* blended a theme and half a dozen actors, an old song and a script full of cynical lines and moral certainty, into 102 minutes that have settled into the American psyche. But every movie is a creature built from accidents and blind choices –a mechanical monster constructed of camera angles, chemistry between actors, too little money or too much, and a thousand unintended moments.”²

“If history is viewed as a series of accidents that become fact, then the history of Warner Bros. Production No. 410 is a series of lucky accidents that brought together the perfect script, director and stars to create the definitive romantic thriller.”³

“If any Hollywood movie exemplifies the ‘genius of the system,’ it is surely *Casablanca* – a film whose success was founded on almost as many types of skill as varieties of luck.”⁴

Going over the making-
of
of the film
they all seem to agree: *Casablanca* was
“a mosaic of fortune – good
and bad.”⁵
“*But it all worked.* There’s a lot of serendipity here.”⁶ And
it ended up being “the happiest
of happy accidents”⁷.

¹ Harmetz (1992 B: 267 – 268).

² Harmetz (1992 A: 6).

³ Miller (1992: 10).

⁴ Hoberman (1992: 269).

⁵ Harmetz (1992 A: 7).

⁶ Julius Epstein. En Lebo (1992: 13).

⁷ Film critic Andrew Harris, quoted in Harmetz (1992 A: 75).

For instance, MGM wouldn't buy the play,
they thought 5,000 dollars was too much⁸,
but if they had,
well,
they might have produced some Metro-Goldwin-Merde⁹,
a Technicolor
turd.

For instance, Warner Brothers scheduled it
first
as a *B* movie, I want you guys to make this one fast
and cheap.¹⁰

For instance,
composer Max Steiner "hated"¹¹ 'As Time Goes By',
and hadn't Ingrid Bergman already had her hair cut short
to interpret María in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*
the scenes around the song might have been reshot¹²,
and Ilsa would have hummed for Sam a different tune.

For instance, what
if Ronald Reagan and Ann Sheridan had played the parts
of Rick
and Ilsa
instead?¹³

of course, in our script a lot of things have been accidental:
my believing I was a new
widow,
(which marked me as available

⁸ Harmetz (1992 A: 8).

⁹ Dorothy Parker, *Not Much Fun: The Lost Poems of Dorothy Parker*.

¹⁰ Brown (1992: 9).

¹¹ Producer Hal Wallis, quoted in Lebo (1992: 180).

¹² Harmetz (1992 A: 7).

¹³ "The first publicity on *Casablanca* was planted in the *Hollywood Reporter* on January 5, 1942: 'Ann Sheridan and Ronald Reagan co-star for the third time in Warner's *Casablanca*, with Dennis Morgan also coming in for top billing.'" Harmetz (1992 A: 72 – 73).

again, and brought out, nature's a naughty bitch, the heat,
I would ramble the streets of Paris like a doe in season),
my husband's unexpected
secondcoming
(and sick, too, so I had to nurse him back into his heroic role),
our following the "refugee trail" ("Paris
to Marseilles,
across the Mediterranean to Oran,
then by train,
or auto,
or foot,
across the rim of Africa
to Casablanca"),
and coming into Rick's Café and bitter
(after)life
(but there were only two "gin joints" in town,
and,
as the title of the play advertised
and Captain Renault actually said in the picture,
"everybody comes to Rick's")

now "brush up your Shakespeare", *à la* Cole Porter, let
the upstart crow from Stratford-upon-Avon's idiots (aren't we
all?)
snore their lines
on cue,
comment, like an off-stage discordant chorus,
aside,
on our actions,
indeed, "never
Fortune
has play'd a subtler game"¹⁴,
and sure, we can't (how
could
we?)
"outrun the heavens"¹⁵,

¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, V, IV, 112 – 113.

¹⁵ William Shakespeare, *Segunda Parte de El rey Enrique VI*, V, II, 73.

for “ourselves
we
do
not
owe”¹⁶

but the Bard’s “spirits” contradict each other,
and this one bragged that “men
at some time
are masters of their fates...”,
and yeah, Cassius was right as well, “the fault, dear [Richard],
is not in our stars,
but in ourselves”¹⁷,
that we fucked (that we fucked
up)

for
we
willed
it
all,
didn’t
we,
our Paris affair,
and our scene upstairs, in your apartment over the Café
(during the soft dissolve in Howard Koch’s
draft,
which the Hollywood censors erased)

(and
yeah,
we are,
or used to be,
“terrible
people”,

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Noche de reyes*, I, V, 314.

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Julio César*, I, II, 138 – 140.

even though someone wrote that truth too
off
the script),
and also the righteous,
self-sacrificing endings we devised,
first, in Paris, I stood you up at the Gare de Lyon, ditched
you,
and then you did “the thinking for both of us” in Casablanca,
sent me
off
on that plane to Lisbon
and America
and married purgatory

but then the word “accidental” comes from *ad cadere*,
falling,
and perhaps it was so in that first we stumbled
onto love and blissful
fornication
and then out of allthatjazz

“Here’s looking at you, kid.”

they were, this first time, in Rick’s apartment in Paris,
he had opened a bottle of champagne, served
two glasses,
asked her who are you
really,
and what were you before, she
said, we said
no questions,
here’s looking at you, kid,
he said
then,
and they drank

now they are in that “small café in the Montmartre”,
La Belle Aurore, Sam
is playing *As Time Goes By*,
Rick gets three glasses, a bottle of champagne,
walks over to the piano beach,
where Ilsa has been
stranded,
pours,
exchanges with Sam a few bitter wisecracks about the
oncoming nazi occupation,
looks at Ilsa,
says,
Here’s looking at you, kid,
a loudspeaker, in the street,
growls in German, Ilsa,
“very distraught”,
nags him,
kissmekissmeasifitwerethelasttime

it's her second time up the stairs,
in Rick's room above his saloon,
they have made up (they have made
out),
“there is a bottle of champagne on the table
and two half-filled glasses”,
Rick has been watching “the revolving beacon light at the
airport from his window”, Ilse
tells her dubious story,
says oh I don't know what's right any longer says
you'll have to think for both of us for all of us,
Rick says, all right I will, Here's
looking
at you,
kid

they are at the airport, the script gets Laszlo
off
a moment,
so they can have this little scene
apart,
this
sad
aside,
but what about us,
we'll always have Paris, blah
blah
blah,
Here's
looking
at you,
kid

here's looking at you, it is
some old pub talk, also poker
slang
(*la* Bergman was learning the game on the set,
played with her hairdresser and her English coach, hairpins
as chips,
Bogart found it funny, taught her some hampa voc,
used the line
first
that afternoon of July 3,
they were back at *La Belle Aurore*
“for some retakes”,
the Epsteins liked it)

here's looking at you, kid,
tough guys, of course, can't say a plain
iloveyou,
their male-
ness
might recoil,
but this silly toast
would do
instead,
and does
indeed

the endearing salutation serves, see?, as a token, here, of their
foreplay,
here, of the tired,
sweet
aftermath

here's looking at you,
kid,
says Rick,
and puts on, with that, his sugardaddy
act,
dons
the mask
(the hat)
of papa

the fact that the last time Rick says here's looking at you kid,
at the Casablanca airport,
there's no champagne,
no glasses,
makes
it
a dry
toast,
signalling bad luck
and failure

here's looking at *you*, kid, it is Rick's clumsy,
anxious
way
of trying to appropriate Ilsa (his rights over her were,
alas,
questionable)

here's *looking*

at you,

kid,

Rick is trying to *record* Ilsa in his memory,

so that he will still be able to blubber,

on the smelly beach of his drunken stupors, I

remember

everything,

iremembereverything

what about the play

and what about
the play,
for we two were meant
first
to fret
and strut
upon a stage

our “year-long affair” started in 1934, some silly
spring-
break, well
before the war,
no epic scope about it

you had been, Rick, when I met you back in Paris,
a well-heeled lawyer, married
to the daughter of some mogul,
and a father of two children,
and I knew all about it, you told me while we were making
out
that first time,
hiding on the roof of that hotel,
after the party, we
had been dancing,
I was
a kept
dame,
my ridiculous *uncle* (you would characterize him
as “that perfumed thing that called itself
a man”)
paid for the “beauty
and chic”
which you fancied then,

but *that part* I hadn't told you, how
could I?,
and when you saw us walking into *La Belle Aurore* you broke
down

it had been, I say in the play, of our story
so far,
up to my coming with Victor into that "tawdry café" in
Casablanca
and spending the night upstairs in your apartment,
and saying to each other, in the morning, all those ugly things,
it had been, I say, "a fairy tale
with a nasty ending",
but the definition stands, applies
as well
to the whole affair,
just look at you, look
at me, we've made
a mess
of it,
haven't we

in black-and-white

what does black-and-white
do
to a movie?
it fixes
it
off
reality,
it turns it into a *story*, into something made
up,
into an artifact which, because it marks itself as make-
believe,
can better tell us
what
we
are,
all the things
we've
lost

Casablanca could only be shot (can only be
seen)
in black-and-white

producer Hal Wallis was “anxious to get real blacks
and whites
with the walls and the background in shadow,
and dim,
sketchy
lighting”¹⁸,

¹⁸ Lebo (1992: 142).

and harassed Arthur Edeson,
“the Little Napoleon” of Warner Brothers, “kind of a weak
sister”,
who wept,
but complied¹⁹, did
a good job, which won him an Oscar nomination,
his third

television mogul Ted Turner bought Warner Bro’s
pre-1950
films,
he had a tacky dream, to colorize
all those oldies,
premiere them on his TV channel,
then pimp
them
out
for syndication and home-video release,
his painted
lot
lizards

this idiotic Ceasar paraded *Casablanca*
thus made
up
on his TBS SuperStation on November 9, 1988²⁰,
like another Cleopatra “i’ the posture of a whore”²¹

¹⁹ Francis Scheid, editor de sonido. Citado en Harmetz (1992: 136).

²⁰ Miller (1992: 186).

²¹ William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V, Scene II, 220.

Ilsa: ...*Let's see, the last time we met...*

Rick: *It was 'La Belle Aurore'.*

Ilsa: *How nice. You remembered. But of course, that was the day the Germans marched into Paris.*

Rick: *Not an easy day to forget.*

Ilsa: *No.*

Rick: *I remember every detail. The Germans wore gray, you wore blue.*

Ilsa: *Yes. I put that dress away. When the Germans march out, I'll wear it again.*

(and still the blue Ilsa wore at the *La Belle Aurore*
scene

ought to stand out in a movie which could only be shot
in black-and-white,

so I would tamper with the film, clumsily
color

her dress

at the Paris café

in the flash-

back

scenes)

we'll always have
what

we'll always have Paris, you said, and
yet,
all we could bank on, and swear
by,
was what the flashback scenes told, growing
out of your cigarette smoke,
Sam's astimegoesby being drowned first in *La Marseillaise* (no
lyrics
this time,
thankgod)
as you drive us along the boulevard in a convertible, with the
top
rolled
down,
leaving the *Arc de Triomphe* behind,
the March dissolving into some mellow tune when we reach
the countryside,
"the car, of course, was
stagebound,
the environs of Paris a back projection",
and "the spring breeze" ruffling our hair "provided by an off-
camera fan"²²,
now we're on a boat excursion,
on the Seine, I
have this cute woollen French-style cap on,
you've bought some peunuts from the vendor,
take one out of the packet, throw
it
at
me,
like I'm some kind of circus seal,

²² Lebo (1992: 140).

and I catch it,
laugh,
and all this time we don't say a thing,
Curtiz dropped the dialogue,
it is a (stammering) silent film within a talky, made out of two
short
dumb
shows,
now we are in your apartment, you
ask
me,
whoareyoureally, and-
what-
were-
you-
before, whatdidyoudoandwhatdidyouthink, huh?,
and I say, wesaidnoquestions,
and you come up with the here's-
looking-
at-
you-
kid
phrase,
now we're dancing "inside a swank Paris café", now
it's my apartment,
now
we're sitting in a café,
reading the paper, glossing over the bad news, the Nazi Army
just outside the city,
and now we are in *La Belle Aurore*,
our
last
date,
the *Gare de Lyon* scene I can only guess about

so
this
is
all
we'll-always-have,
we don't even know how we met, how
we played the scenes leading to our first kiss,
how long it took us to reach what you yankees fans call home
base,
but then that happened off the script,
so it doesn't really count,
or does it?

how little we know (how little
it matters)

they knew

“so

very

little”

about each other,

hadn’t they said ‘no

questions’?

they were already splashing about in their affair,

dancing in Ilsa’s apartment,

when she told him that there had been another “man” in her

life

(but he’s dead, he’s

dead),

only

on their last date,

at the *La Belle Aurore* café,

did they learn

that

“say”,

ten years before this, before

Paris,

he had been “looking for a job”, and she

had

had

her

bite

fixed

that was all, and that

was

fine

with them

then

but then Ilsa failed to join him at the *Gare de Lyon*,
had left a note saying I cannot go with you or ever see you again
blah

blah,
so now,
in Casablanca,
in his surly mood,
Rick can only draw on this shallow well,
the maybe-
not-
thoroughly-
defunct
man,
her orthodontic records

specimens of kisses in *Casablanca*

Rick and Ilsa swap spit
and snot (tongue
fuck)
several times
on screen,
both in the flash-back scenes, in Paris,
and in Casablanca, in his room upstairs,
at the *Café Americain*; Victor Laszlo
only kisses his wife twice, on the cheek,
apprehensively reaching mormon
second
base,
a fastidious,
limp,
telling
peck

“Walk up a flight. I’ll be expecting you.”²³

on the stage

in the play,
sitting at that odd table
(Strasser frowns, Rinaldo
leers,
Victor Laszlo grimaces)
the vinegary guy who has given his name to this joint in
Casablanca
and Mrs. Laszlo
recall their last time
together,
in Paris,
at *La Belle Aurore*,
and Rick manages, with a donjuanish trick,
to slip his apartment key to his old flame

the curtains draw with the café almost empty,
there’s only Rick, and Sam “the Rabbit”,
at the piano,
playing “it” reluctantly for his boss

it’s Act 2, Scene 1, “the next morning”,
and Rick “comes down from his apartment,
soon followed by Lois,
who is dressed in the same clothes she wore the night before”,
signalling,
of course,
her having slept over,
and they say some bitter things to each other,
in what the dame calls “a nasty ending”
to their “fairy tale”²⁴

²³ Rick’s words to Ilsa in the movie.

²⁴ Willer (1993: 213 – 214).

the studio shopped the play around, to see if it
would
do,
Aeneas MacKenzie and Wally Kline were among the first
writers on the lot to take it apart²⁵,
and warned,
in their memos,
of some “highly censorable situations,
relationships,
and implications”
which must be “removed”²⁶,
and one was,
of course,
that between-the-acts, off-
stage scene
upstairs

²⁵ Wally Kline. In Lebo (1992: 42).

²⁶ Wally Kline. In Lebo (1992: 42).

the Code

the Production Code was put together while fingering rosary
beads,
among hailmaries,
had the Legion of Decency minding it,
and was captained by Presbyterian elder Will Hays²⁷

the Hays Office became a holy fort,
their sanctimonious tight-assed cavalrymen protecting “the
institution of marriage
and the home”,
abhorred fornication²⁸
and dirt,
motel rooms,
meandmrsjones stories (that sort of love must never,
never
“be presented
as [...] beautiful”)²⁹

²⁷ Harmetz (1992: 162).

²⁸ Harmetz (1992: 39).

²⁹ Harmetz (1992: 163).

the May 21 draft

RICK: (...) [*Victor is*] *in love with People, but I'm in love with you.*

ILSA: [Looks at him with tear-dimmed eyes. In a whisper.] *I wish you weren't. I wish I weren't in love with you.* [He takes her in his arms and kisses her. It is a long kiss. When they finally disengage, Ilsa looks up at him. Tenderly.] *We're still terrible people.* [They kiss again.] FADE OUT³⁰

oh yes, they were, Ilsa
and Rick,
indeed
“terrible people”,
and that *fade out* was an invitation, a window
of cozy opportunities
which they wouldn't (how could they?)
miss

³⁰ From the May 21 draft of the script. In Miller (1993: 121).

Joe Breen's instructions

Joseph Ignatius Breen, call-me-“Joe”,
the Production Code Administration chief,
thought the Hollywood world
rotten,
populated with drunkards,
jews,
pagans,
pervs

Breen's staff examined the May 21st script and found it
disturbing,
suggested “replacing
the fade on page 135
with a dissolve,
and shooting the succeeding scene without any sign of a bed
or couch,
or anything whatever suggestive of a sex affair”, “otherwise
it could not be approved”³¹

³¹ Letter to Warner Brothers dated June 18th, 1942. In Lebo (1992: 105).

okeyed

the scene was shot on July 27th following the P. C. A.
instructions, not a hint
of “a bed
or couch” in the apartment,
and a *dissolve*
instead of the *fade*

thus “corrected”, *Casablanca*
was able to earn Production Code Certificate of Approval
8457,
and the Hays Office files summed up the movie’s
moral downs
and ups
with “‘Much Drinking’,
a little gambling,
two killings
and no illicit sex”³²

³² Harnetz (1992: 164):

inside the *dissolve*

so
ok,
he sees now, there had been
some misunderstanding,
and they make up, and kiss, and there's
the *dissolve*,
and Rick is standing by the half-open French windows,
a cigarette in his hand,
watching "the revolving beacon light at the airport
from his window", gives Ilsa
the cue,
and then?,
and she, sitting on the two-seater sofa (not
a proper couch),
will resume her story³³

yes,
the *dissolve* seems to have worked, it is
prophylactic,
leaves little room for them to do much,
some clumsy, nervous coitus seems very unlikely,
just look at them,
her hairdo untouched, her blouse
unruffled,
his hair oiled back,
not a wrinkle in his white jacket,
his bow-tie perfectly balanced on his buttoned-up shirt

we know, though, that Ilsa's story-telling has gone on
unhurriedly,
there's "a bottle of champagne on the table
and two half-filled glasses",

³³ From the final script.

and when Rick calls good old Carl up (he
is downstairs with Victor Laszlo,
they are hiding from the German police),
and he finds Ilsa,
and is told,
“in a low voice”,
to “take Miss Lund
home”,
we somehow see through the fat man’s spectacles, don’t we?

Miss Lund

as she enters the café with Victor Laszlo the script introduces
her as his “companion”,
and warns its readers,
the guys who have to turn it into a movie,
that she must thereafter be “known
as Miss Ilsa Lund”,
thus
burying
her current marital status
under three layers,
for both the title
and her maiden name
label her as unmarried,
and by marking her off as Laszlo’s “companion”
one sees Ilsa as a kind of bed-
and-
board
employee

Laszlo himself, obedient
to the script,
will then “present” her to Captain Renault, and to all of us,
as “Miss Ilsa Lund”

Rick has called good old Carl
up,
from the balcony railing,
“at the top of the stairs, the fat waiter sees
Ilsa”,
standing inside the apartment, Rick says,
“in a low voice”,
“I want you to take *Miss Lund* home”, it is
on purpose

(deliberately)
(willfully)
that he uses that title, with her daddy's
surname,
clumsily trying to conceal
(to cancel?)
the fact that she is married to Victor Laszlo, the hero
downstairs,
at the bar

the end (The End) is near,
and Rick "takes the letters of transit out of his pocket",
"hands them" to Captain Renault, orders him
then
to "fill in the names", to "make it
even more official",
and says "quietly", "and the names are
Mr. and Mrs. *Victor Laszlo*",
somehow,
by phrasing it like that, he is giving
away
the bride,
confirming the marriage, saying,
hey,
this is who you will be from now on, what

bogus landscape of final scene

“At the airport, the outline of the transport plane is barely visible.”

“Orderly: *East runway. Visibility: one and a half miles. Light ground fog. Depth of fog: approximately 500...*”

Enter

Chorus, a glee

club

of two,

assistant director Lee Katz

& John Beckham, the Props Master, ah

sure, we

“fogged

in

the set

not so much to give it an atmosphere

but because we had to conceal the fact that everything was so phony”

for what-with-the-war-and-all

all

location

shooting

had been forbidden along the West Coast,

and you were only allowed to photograph grounded,

maimed aircrafts (their propellers

removed),

hence

we built the airport hangar on Warner Bros. Stage 1,

and knocked together, for the so-

called

“transport plane”,

a mockup,

scaled-

down

ship,

“a pretty bad cutout”,
a profile
in
depth,
“made out of plywood and maybe some balsa”
which was supposed “to match” a real one we had “borrowed
from Lockheed” before,
and,
to make the fake aeroplane look bigger, and “give
it
a forced perspective”,
we hired “a bunch of midgets to portray the mechanics”³⁴

Exit

Chorus. Enter

Ilsa. It was our final scene, we
were to say, last night we said,
but Richard, no,
no,
I,
but
what
about
us,
we’ll-always-have-Paris, here’s
looking
at
you,
kid,
and all the time a pea soup was muddying the pretend
airdrome,
and a crew of Lilliputians crawled around the toy plane
that would take me away from Casablanca, and off
Casablanca

³⁴ Quoted in Harmetz (1992: 105 – 106; 237).

Ceiling: unlimited

*Orderly: East runway. Visibility: one and a half miles. Light ground fog.
Depth of fog: approximately 500. Ceiling: unlimited.*

“ceiling:
unlimited”: so
the Orderly
croaked,
an indifferent forecaster,
calling the weather expected for the Lisbon plane, yet
there was a very low roof for my allotted part in the afterdamp
of the movie,
and it was bound to hit it,
and crash

the mess of getting out of the car at the airport



“At the airport, the outline of the transport plane is barely visible.”

Orderly: *Hello, radio tower? Lisbon plane taking off in ten minutes. East runway. Visibility: one and a half miles. Light ground fog. Depth of fog: approximately 500. Ceiling: unlimited.*

He hangs up, and crosses to the car that has just pulled up. Renault gets out, closely followed by Rick, hand in pocket, still covering Renault with a gun. Laszlo and Ilsa come from the rear of the car.”³⁵

July 17. On Warner Bros.

Stage 1.

the morning was “proceeding smoothly”. Bit player

Jean De Briac

okeyed to the radio tower the visibility conditions for take-off, they did some glass-shots,

and then, just

before lunch,

the business of the arrival of the car at the airport came up.

³⁵ From the Script.

While the orderly reads the report Edeson's camera picks the vehicle through a window,
as it gets to the front of the hangar.
Captain Renault is driving his car,
with Rick pointing his gun at him from the passenger seat;
at the back, husband-
and-
wife. Claude Reins
had to stop the car at a fixed mark; then
they would all pile out, hit
their individual spots,
dish out their lines. It all "required
a complex set up". It
flopped. And
flopped.

"...For one reason or another, each take went awry –Rains missed the car's stop point, passengers exited clumsily, doors were slammed at the wrong moment, or dialogue was garbled..."

Only after "eight
lengthy
takes"
could they get it
right.³⁶

It was as if the characters, reluctant to go
on
with their parts,
to play that dumb last scene which would wreck their several
lots,
were trying to baffle the actors embodying
them, and made them
stumble,
in a sort of jittery slapstick.

³⁶ Lebo (1992: 165 - 168).

Captain Renault's several roles here

“At the airport, the outline of the transport plane is barely visible.

Orderly: *Hello, radio tower? Lisbon plane taking off in ten minutes. East runway. Visibility: one and a half miles. Light ground fog. Depth of fog: approximately 500. Ceiling: unlimited.*

He hangs up, and crosses to the car that has just pulled up. Renault gets out, closely followed by Rick, hand in pocket, still covering Renault with a gun. Laszlo and Ilsa come from the rear of the car.

Rick [indicating the orderly]. *Louis, have your man go with Mr. Laszlo and take care of his luggage.*

Renault [bows ironically]. *Certainly, Rick. Anything you say.* [to Orderly] *Find Mr. Laszlo's luggage and put it on the plane.*

Orderly. *Yes, sir. This way, please.*

The orderly escorts Laszlo off in the direction of the plane.”

Captain Renault does
here,
in this particular scene,
several tasks: true,
it would have felt cozier,
having Rick and Ilsa deliver their famous lines,
lastnightwesaid,
we'llalwayshaveparis,
aside,
but it was okay, even
convenient,
to have the gendarme around, listening
in, looking on,
nominally filling in the names on the letters of transit, “Mr.
and Mrs.

Victor Laszlo”,

for in this scene he serves,
first,
as procurer,
staging the exiting of the husband,
and plays, within-
the-
play, both
us
the peeping toms
and jeans
and the Chorus,
well*i*wasright*youare*sentimentalist,

everything is
(not)
in order

Laszlo: *Everything is in order?*

Rick: *All except one thing.*

The husband had gone
off,
following the orderly, ostensibly
to leave the luggage on the plane,
in fact letting the *innamorati* have their sappy little scene; now
he has come back,
asks,
everythingisinorder?

allexceptonething, says
Rick,
but he's wrong,
everything is out-
of-
order,
disjointed,
for hasn't he told Captain Renault to write "Mr.
and Mrs.
Victor Laszlo"'s names
on the letters of transit?

the phantom kiss

“...Outside, Laszlo is paying the cabdriver. Ilsa is walking toward the entrance.

Laszlo [to the cabdriver]: *Here.*

Inside, Rick opens the door. Isa rushes in. Her intensity reveals the strain she is under.

Ilsa: *Richard, Victor thinks I'm leaving with him. Haven't you told him?*

Rick: *No, not yet.*

Ilsa: *But it's all right, isn't it? You were able to arrange everything?*

Rick: *Everything is quite all right.*

Ilsa: *Oh, Rick!*

She looks at him with a vaguely questioning look.

Rick: *We'll tell him at the airport. The less time to think, the easier for all of us. Please trust me.*

Ilsa: *Yes, I will.*

Laszlo comes in.”

on July 9, 1942, Producer Hal Wallis wrote a memo to Curtiz,
he had been seeing the dailies the night before,
and there was “one thing” he wanted him to shoot,
hadn't we talked about it?, Ilsa
has come into the Café,
they haven't got much time left,
will have to scramble a few lines up while Laszlo pays the
cabdriver,
brings
in
the luggage,
all clear?,
yeah,
oh Rick, she says, and “at that point”,
remember?,

this is where I was getting at,
Rick was “to look at Ilsa a moment and then
kiss
her
so the audience will realize later that this was his goodbye”

but mid-July was crazy on the set, and Humphrey
objected,
so “Rick’s kiss never made it into the movie”³⁷

why wouldn’t Bogart kiss
Bergman
here?

for one thing, they
would have had to rush it, and check,
at the same time,
if Laszlo was coming,
it would have come up as ungainly,
clumsy, all
thumbs; for another,
he might chicken
out
(of his heroic feat); also
it was part of the tough-guy act he was trying to put on

so instead of that last kiss, we only had words
(words
words)
to gloss over

³⁷ Harnetz (1992: 29 – 30).

“Round up the usual suspects.”

“Round up the usual suspects.” Thus
Captain Renault saved your ass. And yet
weren’t
we
the-usual-suspects,
the adulterous cats on the run, rounded
up
at the cul-de-sac of our movie,
and bagged?
Wasn’t
I
put
away, sent
across the ocean, via
Lisbon,
to serve a life sentence as the (not so) good wife,
leaving me to pork
down
memory
lane?
And didn’t they frame you, force
you
to play the free-lance war hero, contented
in that all-
male-
world,
instead of my undercover cuckmaster?

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