

"Freddie Ziegler"

ACT ONE

EXT. BEAUTIFUL MOVIE PALACE - RED CARPET - FEW MINUTES LATER

Tom finds Austrian director FREDDIE ZIEGLER (30s), handsome, mischievous smile. (Note: he has an accent, but his English is excellent.) Freddie's taking into the grand premiere.

7/20

I
START →

TOM

Long way from Austria, my friend.

FREDDIE

You have no idea. This premiere...

TOM

We pulled out all the stops, Freddie, because this picture deserves it. And that's not just me talking.

Tom pulls out a copy of VARIETY and reads from it...

~~TOM (CONT'D)~~

~~"'Axis Powers,' the first movie Ziegler has directed for Paradise Pictures, is a grand slam. The studio should seize the Austrian's passport until he's ensured its place among the top shops in town."~~

FREDDIE

You Americans sure know how to make a guy feel welcome.

TOM

It's time to call the missus.

FREDDIE

Let's not spoil all the fun.

(then, realizing)

Wait, are you saying... you're actually making "Heart of Darkness"?

TOM

Just found out. And it's we, not just me.

FREDDIE

I don't know, Tom. Universal approached me about "The Killers," based on the Hemingway story. It's an easy story to adapt.

Paradise Pictures
Pilot

1/3

(CONTINUED)

TOM

It's a paycheck, Freddie. I've got a classic novel for you to tackle.

FREDDIE

One that Orson Welles, the boy wonder himself, wasn't crazy enough to make. Tom, you should go after Curtiz or Fleming --

TOM

You're the only guy I know who can do this the way it's meant to be done. Don't tell me you're scared to take a risk.

FREDDIE

Of course not. It's just...

TOM

The best projects are high-wire acts. There's always a chance you're gonna fall. But if you manage to make it all the way to the other side? You'll be a legend. They'll write your name in the sky.

FREDDIE

A legend, huh?

Just then, Freddie's "MILITARY ESCORT" (20) approaches. She's Mexican-American and cute. New to town. She extends an arm.

CUTE GIRL

Mr. Ziegler? I'm supposed to escort you into the theater now.

Freddie's pleasantly surprised. A beat. Tom says to him...

TOM

Freddie... you and me, we'll walk this tight rope together.

FREDDIE

Okay, Tom, you really want my passport?

(a beat, and then)

It's yours.

And as Freddie and the Cute Girl walk into the theater...

STOP

2/3

WYATT

I'm pretty good with where we are.

She smiles, but then drops it as she sees... FREDDIE ZIEGLER exiting the Studio Hospital, cuts and bruises on his face.

LUCIANA

Wyatt, why don't we go back to --

But Wyatt is distracted by Freddie Ziegler, one of his idols.

WYATT

Mr. Ziegler, Wyatt Osborne. Don't wanna bug you, sir, but wanted to say congratulations on "Heart of Darkness."

FREDDIE

Thank you, young man.

WYATT

What happened to your face, if you don't mind me asking?

FREDDIE

Oh, just a little accident. They happen from time to time.
(a beat, to Luciana)
Look who it is... it's you.

WYATT

You two know each other?

LUCIANA

I escorted Mr. Ziegler at the premiere the other night.
(a painful beat, and then)
So... you're still directing the new movie?

FREDDIE

Now, why would that have changed since we last saw each other?
(winks at Wyatt)
You're a lucky young man.

Freddie walks off. Wyatt watches him go, grinning, oblivious.

WYATT

Freddie Ziegler, huh? He's gonna be one of the greats. Hey, let's head to props, I can show you how --

II
START →

← STOP