

ABC Presents

THE AVENGERS

"THE GILDED CAGE"

Transmission Dialogue Script
12th November 1997

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JINGLE: IN

TITLE CARD:

"LOGO"
A B C
PRESENTS

JINGLE: OUT

TITLE MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD:

T H E
A V E N G E R S

TITLE MUSIC: OUT

FX:

CATHERINE: You'll never build those up to ground level.

STEED: That accounts for the armoured trucks etc, up top.

CATHERINE: Yes. It's a consignment for the night flight to Zurich.

STEED: Pretty cool down here.

CATHERINE: Air-conditioning. It's maintained at a steady sixty. Ready?

STEED: Lead on.

FX:

FX: FOOTSTEPS

MUSIC: IN

CATHERINE: This is for the first of a pair of doors. You stand in front of this panel and the operator inside can see you.

GROVES (O.S.): All right, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: I'm bringing Mr Steed in with me.

GROVES (O.S.): Righty-ho.

CATHERINE: Now our pictures have been recorded on film just in case.

FX:

STEED: Smart.

FX:

CATHERINE: This is another check.

STEED: Why?

CATHERINE: In case someone slips in behind me.

MUSIC: OUT

STEED: I see.

CATHERINE: (CALLS) Mr Groves.

GROVES (O.S.): Okay, Mrs Gale.

FX:

STEED: WHISTLES

STEED: How much is it all worth?

CATHERINE: Like to guess?

STEED: Huh, couldn't even begin.

CATHERINE: Three million pound.

STEED: It's really ...

CATHERINE: Be careful, it's heavy.

STEED: Yeah ... How many men will it take to remove the lot?

CATHERINE: Six.

STEED: Are you sure?

CATHERINE: Positive. I've got it all planned.

MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD:

T H E
G I L D E D
C A G E

MUSIC: OUT

FLEMING: There's a Mr Steed to see you, sir.

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

FLEMING (Cont): Show him in? (PAUSE) Very good, sir.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED: Thank you.

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

STEED (Cont): Mr Spagge, it's very kind of you to see me.
(PAUSE) Charming place you've got here.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED (Cont): That's good. Mrs Spagge?

SPAGGE: Sit down, Mr Speed.

STEED: Steed. Thank you very much.

FX:

STEED: SIGHS

STEED (Cont): Throat?

SPAGGE: Heart. Angina.

STEED: I'm sorry.

SPAGGE: Amyl Nitrite. You, er, crush it in a
handkerchief and sniff. It's a last
resort.

STEED: Interesting.

SPAGGE: Is it? I find other people's illnesses a
bore.

STEED: I've got a proposition for you.

FX:

STEED (Cont): Do you want me to go on?

SPAGGE: When I don't say anything, it means go on.
When I've heard enough you'll be in no
doubt.

STEED: It's a robbery. Large one. Very large. Gold - three to four million pounds worth. I need someone to help me. Somebody to do the job really.

FX:

STEED (Cont): I can line it all up and see that everybody knows what they've got to do, perfectly easily. I have a contact - she's a woman. She's a member of the bullion company. She has free access to the vaults, it's a sitting duck. Ha!

STEED (Cont): Only the actual robbery, that's why I need you. To effect the introductions. Before that, of course, er, we'll come to some financial arrangement. Three million! Well, that'd keep anybody happy, wouldn't it? She's a Mrs Gale. Employed by the company a long time, er, years in fact ...

SPAGGE: Er, Mr Speed, would you p ...

STEED: Steed.

SPAGGE: The bell.

STEED: Of course. Yeah.

FX:

BELL: RINGS

FX: FOOTSTEPS

FLEMING: You rang, sir.

SPAGGE: Show him out, Fleming.

FLEMING: This way, sir.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED: You're not interested? What's wrong? It's a sitting duck.

SPAGGE: Just one thing wrong, Mr Steed.

STEED: What's that?

SPAGGE: You're fifteen years too late.

FX:

CATHERINE (V.O.
- THRU TAPE):

Gold is virtually untraceable.

CATHERINE (THRU
TAPE):

Sovereigns have no serial numbers and although gold bars have mint marks stamped on them, mint marks, it's only a few seconds work to shave them off. Because gold, and currencies backed by gold, are the foundation of international credit, we can only tell what the strength of the pound is by knowing the amount of backing we have behind our currency.

CATHERINE:

Enter the Chancellor.

CATHERINE (THRU
TAPE):

The United States has the greatest gold reserves in the world. Approximately five thousand seven hundred and ten million pounds worth. More than half of this is at Fort Knox. The gold is in standard mint bars.

FX:

STEED:

How much do bars weigh?

CATHERINE:

Oh, Steed, no-one's ever going to ask me that.

STEED:

You know what they'll ask?

CATHERINE:

Four hundred troy ounces, and they measure six and three-quarters by three and a half by one and three-quarter inches.

STEED:

Value?

CATHERINE:

Five thousand pounds. And at Fort Knox there are eight hundred thousand of them, weighing eight thousand, eight hundred tonnes. Satisfied?

STEED:

Yes.

CATHERINE:

You're becoming a proper slave-driver.

STEED:

I've got my whip upon the kitchen table.

STEED: CLAPS

CATHERINE (THRU
TAPE):

(INDISTINGUISHABLE) ... in 1946 ...

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED: SIGHS

CATHERINE (THRU TAPE): ... was to restrict gold imports throughout the Indian sub-continent and so raise the price of gold to exactly double it's level on the free market. Exactly double.

CATHERINE: The Bretton Wood's monetary agreement pegged the price of gold to thirty-five American dollars per ounce. Thirty-five dollars. So with one fell swoop the Indian government issued an unwritten invitation ...

FX:

STEED: Very smart.

FX:

CATHERINE: ... issued an unwritten invitation to every gold smuggler in the business. End of tape two. Where have you been?

STEED: Been to see Spagge.

CATHERINE: Oh, really.

STEED: JP Spagge.

CATHERINE: Good old JP.

STEED: You don't know him?

CATHERINE: No.

STEED: Before your time.

CATHERINE: It's a little late for flattery.

STEED: He called himself a crime-broker.

CATHERINE: What does he mean by that?

STEED: He's a sort of entrepreneur of crime. If you wanted to commit a robbery and didn't know how to go about it, you went to see him. For a cut of the cake he fixed it all up for you.

FX: WINE CORK

STEED (Cont): He has a dossier on all the criminals in the country. After that he'd get rid of the stuff for you, for another cut.

CATHERINE: Naturally.

STEED: 'Dropping the poppy', as they say.

CATHERINE: Nice little racket.

STEED: Do you remember the Bloomfontain diamonds robbery?

CATHERINE: Oh, yes, granny used to talk about it.

STEED: Well, Spagge was in his element then. Five years, he was King of the Underworld.

CATHERINE: What's he done since?

STEED: He's hung up his gloves. Or so he likes you to believe.

CATHERINE: But you don't?

STEED: No.

CATHERINE: Has he ever done time?

STEED: Once and only once.

CATHERINE: He must be good.

STEED: Yeah, he is.

CATHERINE: Or was.

STEED: Oh, like a lot of retired people he's itching to get back into harness. Any of the well planned ones ...

FX:

STEED (Cont): ... those could be him. That latest airport do, the great train robbery, just about his mark.

CATHERINE: What was his reaction to you?

STEED: He didn't want to know. He said I was fifteen years too late.

CATHERINE: (SIGHS) Oh, well, that's that then.

STEED: SIGHS

CATHERINE (Cont): Who do we try next?

STEED: Nobody.

CATHERINE: What do you mean?

STEED: It's got to be Spagge. He's the one we're after.

CATHERINE: What if he doesn't bite?

STEED: I can't believe that while he's got blood in his veins, he'll resist three million pounds in gold. He'll bite.

FX:

SPAGGE: Well?

FLEMING: Sir?

SPAGGE: Oh, no quiz games, Fleming. The subject is Steed. Get on.

FLEMING: The bowler, custom-made, Hemmings and Ford, St James. Beautifully blocked. Not a penny under ten guineas. The umbrella, Bolton and Son, sixty-three model. Slightly weighted handle, perfect balance, just right for a man of his height.

FX:

FLEMING (Cont): And the suit. It's a dream. Cut by an artist, possibly Frith Brothers. Definitely Saville Row, sixty-five guineas, seventy-five.

SPAGGE: Was he carrying a gun?

FLEMING: A gun? In a suit like that, sir, he couldn't have carried another fountain pen.

SPAGGE: Get on.

FLEMING: The shirt. South sea silk, made to measure, ten guineas. Impeccably cut. The cuff-links, Cabochon crystal. Exquisite.

SPAGGE: Reminds me, I've lost a button.

FLEMING: Very good, sir. Charcoal grey silk hose. Shoes, hand-made. Teale of St James. Slightly antiqued but polished like mahogany, uppers and ways. Significant that.

SPAGGE: What of?

FLEMING: Excellent valet service.

FX:

FLEMING (Cont): And sir, the Sargent miniature in the hall.

SPAGGE: What about it?

FLEMING: He recognised it.

SPAGGE: And that's good, is it?

FLEMING: Good. It's excellent. A gentleman of obvious quality.

SPAGGE: Shut up! I want to know about the man, not about the tailor's dummy.

FLEMING: If I might say so, sir, a more fitting companion than some of our more recent acquaintances.

SPAGGE: I do believe you're a snob, Fleming.

FLEMING: Naturally, sir, that's what I'm paid for.

SPAGGE: Leave me alone.

FX:

FLEMING: Russian or China today, sir?

SPAGGE: China. Slice of lime.

FLEMING: Very good, sir.

FX:

MUSIC: IN/OUT

FX:

CATHERINE: So at Bretton Woods they had this monetary agreement, pegging the price of gold at what? D'you remember? Thirty-five American dollars an ounce. There's no point telling you anything, is there? You don't concentrate, you just sit there grinning at me.

STEED: Any news?

CATHERINE: No.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED: No calls?

CATHERINE: No.

STEED: I'm beginning to think you're right about Spagge.

CATHERINE: Old JP doesn't seem to be showing much enthusiasm, does he?

STEED: We'll give him another day. How about the gold cramming?

CATHERINE: It's fine. I only hope it's not a waste of time.

FX:

STEED: Never. Think how few pawnbrokers have had your training.

STEED: CHUCKLES

FX:

STEED (Cont): Oh, d'you find your purse?

CATHERINE: No, I went back to the boot shop. They hadn't seen it.

STEED: Well, someone will return it.

FX:

STEED (Cont): How did you find the fellow from Scotland Yard?

CATHERINE: Inspector Grant? He certainly knows his gold. It was very good practice for me.

DOORBELL: RINGS

STEED: He's apparently the most knowledgeable fellow in the country.

CATHERINE: Hmm?

FX:/DOOR: OPENS

STEED (Cont): Hello?

MANLEY: Good afternoon, sir, Mr John Steed?

STEED: That's me.

MANLEY: Er, Superintendent Manley, sir, er, Scotland Yard.

STEED: Oh, come in Superintendant.

MANLEY: Sergeant Westwood.

STEED: Sergeant.

WESTWOOD: Morning, sir.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

WESTWOOD: Thank you.

MANLEY: Thank you, sir. Sorry to have troubled you, sir.

STEED: Oh, it's no trouble.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED (Cont): I'd like you to meet a friend of mine, Mrs Gale. These are two gentlemen from Scotland Yard.

MANLEY: Is that, er, Mrs Catherine Gale of 14 Primrose Hill?

CATHERINE: That's right.

MANLEY: It's Mrs Gale we're looking for actually, sir.

STEED: Oh, why?

FX:

MANLEY: Sorry to be so formal about this, sir. Mrs Catherine Gale, it's my duty to arrest you on the charge of the willful murder of Mr John Spagge, at approximately ten AM this morning.

MANLEY (V.O.): It's my further duty to inform you that anything you say may be taken down and used as evidence.

FX:

STEED: May I see that, please?

MANLEY: Yes, it was issued about forty minutes ago, sir.

CATHERINE: But I don't know this man Spagge.

MANLEY: We had an excellent description of you, madam, from his butler. But not only that, in your excitement, you left your purse behind.

CATHERINE (V.O.): My purse? But I lost it.

MANLEY (V.O.): We found it.

CATHERINE (V.O.): I, I dropped it somewhere this morning.

MANLEY (V.O.): In Spagge's conservatory?

WESTWOOD: Did you report it?

CATHERINE: No.

MANLEY: Why not?

CATHERINE: I, I thought I'd left it in a shop. Are you sure it's mine?

WESTWOOD: Contents - four pound sixteen and nine. An address card and a repair ticket in your name for a pair of leather boots to be re-heeled.

STEED: Superintendent, I think there must be some mistake.

MANLEY: I don't think so, sir.

CATHERINE: But I don't know this JP Spagge. I've never even met him.

MANLEY: How did you know his initial are JP? I said his name was John.

STEED: I can explain that.

MANLEY: Not just now, sir. (TO CATHERINE) Mrs Gale, I must ask you to come along with us.

STEED: May I come along, too?

MANLEY: Later if you don't mind, sir.

STEED: Very well.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

DOOR: OPENS

FX: FOOTSTEPS

STEED: Hey, don't worry. I'll make a couple of phone calls and fix everything.

CATHERINE: I hope so.

MUSIC: IN THRU FX:

MANLEY: Thank you for your co-operation, Sir.

STEED: Superintendent?

MANLEY: Yes, sir.

STEED: What happened to Spagge?

MANLEY: He was shot. Twenty-five Beretta. Ladies' gun, if I've ever seen one.

MUSIC: OUT

MUSIC: IN

WARDRESS: Feel any better dear?

MUSIC: OUT

CATHERINE: GROANS

WARDRESS (Cont): Hmm. You'll soon pull out of it.

CATHERINE: GROANS

CATHERINE: Where am I?

WARDRESS: Holloway.

CATHERINE: Holloway? (GROANS) Have I been drugged?

WARDRESS: Yes. Oh, the MO gave you a shot of something after ... well afterwards. Calm you down.

CATHERINE: Could I have a drink, please?

WARDRESS: Yes.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

WARDRESS (Cont): It's them drugs, dear, dries your mouth right up, don't it? Had my appendix out once, couldn't spit sixpence.

FX: WATER

WARDRESS (Cont): Chateau Holloway.

CATHERINE: Thank you.

FX:

CATHERINE (Cont): How long have I been here?

WARDRESS: Oh, I couldn't really say, dear. Haven't been on this one long.

CATHERINE: What day is it?

WARDRESS: Tuesday.

CATHERINE: Tuesday.

FX:

CATHERINE (Cont): Well, well, why am I here?

WARDRESS: Well, you should know. I don't. 'Ere you're not the baby strangler, are you?

CATHERINE: Baby strangler?

WARDRESS: Oh, no. No, you don't look the sort. The bomb on the airliner ... oh, no, they topped her last week.

FX:

CATHERINE: Spagge.

WARDRESS: Oh, him. Oh, of course, I read about it in the paper. What was it now? Crime passionel, hmm, get away with that in France they say.

CATHERINE: When's the trial?

WARDRESS: Trial? You're a bit late, love.

CATHERINE: What happened?

WARDRESS: They found you guilty.

CATHERINE: Guilty?

WARDRESS: Yes. This is the condemned cell. It's a one way ticket from here.

MUSIC: IN

MUSIC: OUT

TITLE MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD: (Lower)

T H E
A V E N G E R S

END OF ACT ONE

TITLE MUSIC: OUT

TITLE MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD: (Lower)

T H E
A V E N G E R S

ACT TWO

TITLE MUSIC: OUT

CATHERINE: How is it I don't remember anything about the trial?

WARDRESS: Mmm, search me. It can happen. 'Ere, crown that one, will you? Soon as you hear the word 'guilty' the mind breaks down. Don't know why, but it does happen.

CATHERINE: I can remember being arrested. I can remember getting into the police car. A Superintendent Manley. Oh! Then it's a complete blank.

WARDRESS: Mmm. Perhaps, just as well. (PAUSE) Who's this Steed you spoke about?

CATHERINE: Steed. He's a friend of mine. How do you know about him?

WARDRESS: Well, you mentioned his name once or twice.

FX:

CATHERINE: GROANS

WARDRESS (Cont): Why did you do him in?

CATHERINE: Who, Spagge?

WARDRESS: Were there others?

CATHERINE: But I didn't kill him.

WARDRESS: Oh, it's a bit late to say that now, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: But I've always said it. I didn't kill him.

WARDRESS: Well, according to them, you did.

FX:

CATHERINE: How can I go through a whole trial and not remember anything?

FX: KNOCK AT DOOR

WARDRESS: This'll be the chaplain, dear. See you later.

DOOR: OPENS

FX: FOOTSTEPS

DOOR: CLOSES

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Hello, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: Padre.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Looks as though I've inherited a winning position.

CATHERINE: I wouldn't be surprised.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Five thousand miles and I wind up as chaplain to a women's prison. There are many ways of serving God.

CATHERINE: Padre.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Yes?

CATHERINE: I don't know what I'm doing here. I didn't murder that man Spagge. I don't remember any trial.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Perhaps I can help you fill in the pieces. There was a trial, of that you'll have to take my word.

CATHERINE: Could I see some newspapers?

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) I'm sorry, Mrs Gale, that's against regulations. Proof does not have to be tangible, believe me. "According to your faith be done to you", Matthew nine ...

CATHERINE: Mark.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) You're right, Mark.

CATHERINE: Why was I supposed to have murdered him? What was the motive?

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) There was talk of a robbery. You and an accomplice needed Spagge's assistance. They were the rough details as I remember them. Who was this accomplice, Steed? You mentioned his name a lot.

CATHERINE: Hasn't he done anything to get me out of here?

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Does he have influential friends? Contacts in the right places? The police perhaps?

CATHERINE: Not that I know of.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Who is Steed? What does he do?

FX:

CATHERINE: I don't know him that well. He's a man about town. Seems to have lots of money and does precious little for it.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Was the robbery his idea?

CATHERINE: Yes. I work for a bull ... I worked for a bullion firm. I was responsible for seeing that gold reserves were maintained at a certain level, and for seeing that demands could be met. We devised this plan for robbing the vaults.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Perhaps he'll go ahead without you. Maybe one should do something about it.

CATHERINE: I don't think so.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

CATHERINE (Cont): I was the only one who had access to the vaults.

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) I see.

FX:

CATHERINE: Padre?

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Yes?

CATHERINE: How much longer?

BENHAM: (AS PADRE) Eleven more days. (PAUSE) Is there anything else you would like to tell me? (PAUSE) Very well. I'll see you again tomorrow.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

MUSIC: IN

DOOR: OPENS/CLOSES

FX:

MUSIC: OUT

FLEMING: Mr Steed. How are you, sir?

STEED: Where's Spagge?

FLEMING: Sir, if this is a joke it's in extremely poor taste.

STEED: You can stop fooling. Where is he?

FLEMING: Mr. Spagge is no longer with us. I should've thought that you of all people would have known that.

STEED: I don't believe you.

FLEMING: The bullet, a point two-five, went through the heart and right lung emerging at the right thoracic wall at the level of the ninth rib, in the middle auxiliary line. Resulting in massive haemorrhage. In laymen's terms, sir, he was shot.

STEED: I don't believe a word of it.

FLEMING: You're welcome to look under the dust-cover, sir, if you think he's hiding, but I do assure you, not here.

FX:

FLEMING: GRUNTS

STEED: You'll be in that chair permanently if you don't answer my questions.

MUSIC: IN

FX:

WARDER: Mrs Gale to see the Governor.

WARDRESS: Oh, right oh.

FX:

WARDRESS (Cont): Come on, this is us.

FX

CATHERINE: What's it all about?

WARDRESS: Oh, you don't ask questions of the Governor. Oh, smarten yourself up.

CATHERINE: In these?

WARDRESS: Don't argue.

DOOR: OPENS/CLOSES

FX:

FX: KNOCK AT DOOR

MUSIC: OUT

BENHAM (O.S.): Come in.

DOOR: OPENS/CLOSES

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM: Welcome aboard, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: Where am I?

BENHAM: A chair for Mrs Gale. You wanted to meet some boys who could help hoist your bullion. Here we are. Clean, safe and certified.

FX: LAUGHTER

CATHERINE: So I didn't kill Spagge.

FX: CHAIR

CATHERINE (Cont): And the trial? And the death cell?

BENHAM: All phoney. Beasts, aren't we?

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM (Cont): A drink for Mrs Gale. She looks practically nude.

CATHERINE: But why?

BENHAM: We wanted to know who we were dealing with. We gave you enough rope to hang yourself six times over, now we figure we'll have a closer look, see if you're on the square.

CATHERINE: Thank you.

BENHAM: Now introductions. Manley and Westwood, you have already met. Two of the best men currently not working for Scotland Yard.

FX: LAUGHTER

MANLEY: How do you do, once again?

BENHAM: That long streak of nothing, that's Peterson. (PAUSE) Fatso Barker. (PAUSE) Gruber. (PAUSE) And Hammond, he's the one cleaning out the condemned cell.

CATHERINE: D'you make a habit of using it?

BENHAM: Oh no. It was a hasty conversion. Used to be the laundry room. We are men of many parts you know, Mrs Gale. And I'm Abe Benham. Abe for Abraham as in Lincoln.

WESTWOOD: How's the drink, Mrs Gale?

FX:

CATHERINE: Fine, thank you.

MANLEY: I admire the way you took it. I think I'd have gone off my nut.

FX: LAUGHTER

CATHERINE: I admire the way you did it. Who was the wardress?

WESTWOOD: My sister. She's an actress. She used to be in rep.

CATHERINE: Nice performance. What happened in the car?

FX: LAUGHTER

WESTWOOD: You remember the bag of sweets? I took one and then I offered them to you?

CATHERINE: That was it.

MANLEY: Then we gave you an injection.

FX: LAUGHTER

MANLEY: I read a little medicine, once. I'm a great reader.

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM: We must get some of Mrs Gale's clothes.

CATHERINE: Thank you. This prison garb is a bit depressing.

BENHAM: We've never had the pleasure. Tell Peterson what you want and he'll fix it. Would you like a tub before we get down to business?

CATHERINE: Please.

BENHAM: Show Mrs Gale where everything lives, will you?

PETERSON: Sure.

GRUBER: I'll take your glass.

DOOR: OPENS

CATHERINE: Oh, thank you.

FX:

BENHAM: If you don't see it in the window, just ask.

CATHERINE: Right.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

DOOR: CLOSES

BENHAM: Fetch Hammond. Tell him he can finish up later.

FX:

BENHAM: For the record I repeat what I said earlier. I'm no do-right-daddy, but while she's here she gets VIP treatment, understood.

MANLEY: Yes, all right.

FX: CHATTER

BENHAM: I don't aim to influence anyone's decision, but one thing she is, she's cool.

MANLEY: Yeah. I still don't understand why she didn't crack.

BENHAM: Must have a clear conscience. You should try it sometime.

FX: LAUGHTER

FX: CHATTER

BENHAM: You can finish off her place later.

FX:

BENHAM (Cont): You've all met her. You all know vaguely what the deal is. You've heard Spagge's version.

MANLEY: But he's an old man, Abe, how do we know we can trust him?

BENHAM: We know the risks. Anyhow, It's up to you. You vote on it. In. Out. The majority takes it.

FX:

BENHAM: Any questions?

HAMMOND: If she knows the first thing about gold, I'll be very surprised.

WESTWOOD: Well, I for one, Hammond, won't be surprised. I think she's as talented as she looks, believe me.

BENHAM: That should satisfy everybody.

MANLEY: Yeah, well, we're wasting time. Let's vote.

BENHAM: Agreed.

FX:

BENHAM (Cont): If the 'ins' have it, we go right ahead.
If the 'outs', hmm, she goes back home on
the next bus.

FX:

BENHAM: Out. In. In. Out.

MAN: Sounds like a boat race.

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM: In ... Out. Wouldn't you know. Three each
and no liberals.

FX: LAUGHTER

MANLEY: Well, what happens now, Abe?

WESTWOOD: It's up to you, Abe, you'll have to vote.

FX:

BENHAM: I call enough of the shots around here!

FX:

BENHAM (Cont): Try this on your pianos. Since we're all
divided on this, then it seems pretty silly
for me to vote right off the top. One way
or the other it would be unfair to half of
you. So what do you say? I sound her out
some more? Size up her scheme, and then
decide?

MANLEY: Good idea.

WESTWOOD: Yeah, yeah. That's okay by me, Abe.

BEHNAM: The rest of you?

GRUBER: Yeah.

HAMMOND: Yeah.

PETERSON: Yeah.

BENHAM: Right. This time tomorrow, we're either in
business or we ain't.

MUSIC: IN

FX: FOOTSTEPS

MUSIC: OUT THRU FOLLOWING DIALOGUE

STEED: You're in fine shape for someone who's been dead for nearly a week.

SPAGGE: Ah, you've brought the things.

STEED: Small suitcase. Should be everything she needs. Where is she by the way?

SPAGGE: She's safe.

STEED: That wasn't the question.

SPAGGE: She's staying with friends.

STEED: What friends?

SPAGGE: Bullion friends.

STEED: When do I get to see her?

SPAGGE: You don't.

STEED: Huh, I don't, eh?

SPAGGE: Not at all.

FX:

STEED: Why not.

SPAGGE: Their idea.

STEED: What are they trying to do, cut me out? We haven't got a written agreement, we haven't any agreement. There's been no agreement between Mrs Gale and myself.

SPAGGE: Trust her.

STEED: I don't go much on this.

SPAGGE: You don't have to.

STEED: Look, it was my idea in the first place.

SPAGGE: Of course, but then there's no patent on ideas.

STEED: I could queer their pitches.

SPAGGE: Oh, quite easily.

STEED: What happens now?

SPAGGE: They plan the robbery, they carry it out. Nothing for us to worry about, is there?

STEED: Apparently not.

SPAGGE: Let yourself out - Fleming's indisposed.

STEED: Well, you'd better get him to talk more readily. Be more amenable.

SPAGGE: He isn't paid to be amenable.

STEED: In that case, he'll go on being indisposed.

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

STEED (Cont): Who was she?

SPAGGE: That was Marianne. Exquisite creature. (TO PORTRAIT) Very expensive though, weren't you? Cost me a lot, seven years to be exact.

STEED: She shopped you?

SPAGGE: That's right, she shopped me. A frail thing - "Thy name is woman".

FX:

BENHAM: Don't move. How long have you been in gold?

CATHERINE: Years.

BENHAM: Where does Mr Gale come into the picture?

CATHERINE: He's dead.

BENHAM: I'm sorry. (PAUSE) Have you ... around gold.

CATHERINE: Very heavy.

BENHAM: They tell me that each bar is worth about ... what is it? Three thousand pounds?

CATHERINE: Five thousand.

BENHAM: As much as that? Don't move. I never understood why they didn't use something else instead of gold.

CATHERINE: Such as?

BENHAM: Silver.

CATHERINE: It would take too much. The current price of silver is nine and threepence an ounce, the highest since 1920. Gold is twelve pounds ten an ounce. That answer your question?

BENHAM: All the way. So you'd need about twenty-five times as much?

CATHERINE: Exactly.

BENHAM: Where is all the gold in the world?

CATHERINE: Mainly in America.

BENHAM: Fort Knox?

CATHERINE: Also the Federal Mint in Washington. And the Federal Reserve Bank, New York City.

BENHAM: You know what it's all about, don't you?

CATHERINE: The acquaintance isn't personal enough ... yet.

BENHAM: Yet? What sort of percentage deal did you have in mind, Mrs Gale?

CATHERINE: Fifty-fifty. Fifty percent for me and my partner. Fifty percent for you and yours.

BENHAM: And Spagge?

CATHERINE: You pay him.

BENHAM: Reasonable.

CATHERINE: That was what I had in mind.

BENHAM: Sorry, I don't follow.

CATHERINE: That little charade in the death cell.

BENHAM: What about it?

CATHERINE: It's gonna cost you.

BENHAM: Why?

CATHERINE: You've had your little joke, now it's my turn. Five percent. A hundred and fifty thousand. Jokes on me come expensive.

BENHAM: You're crazy.

CATHERINE: Take it or leave it.

BENHAM: We didn't even say we'd do the job.

CATHERINE: Keep me posted.

BENHAM: Wait! (PAUSE) You're a smooth operator, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: It's a pity it took you so long to find out.

BENHAM: D'you always drive with a foot on the boards?

CATHERINE: Always.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

BENHAM: Forty-five, fifty-five, and you pay Spagge.

CATHERINE: No.

BENHAM: All right. We'll argue a little.

CATHERINE: No.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

BENHAM: Okay, it's on. You know, Mrs Gale, I think I'm gonna enjoy this job.

CATHERINE: Yeah. I think you are.

BENHAM: LAUGHS

FX:

DOOR: OPENS/CLOSES

WESTWOOD: WHISTLES

MANLEY: GRUNTS

HAMMOND: What's that?

MANLEY: Mrs Gale's suitcase.

FX:

MANLEY (Cont): You get on with your housework, Daisy.

FX:/LAUGHTER

HAMMOND: Shut up, you.

FX:

WESTWOOD: Anything, Jack?

MANLEY: No, looks genuine. What about you?

WESTWOOD: No, nothing yet.

MANLEY: Okay. Put her things back in there nice and tidy, and leave it on the bed.

MAN: Right.

MANLEY: And, er, don't you get trying them on either.

FX:/LAUGHTER

FX:

WESTWOOD: Out of it!

FX:

FX: FOOTSTEPS

CATHERINE: What's all this out here?

BENHAM: A mason's yard.

CATHERINE: Oh, so sculpture's is your real business?

BENHAM: That's right. It's also a convenient way of disposing of things. A bronze of Napoleon lined with gold, you know the sort of thing. Strictly 'object d'art'.

CATHERINE/BENHAM: LAUGH

CATHERINE: Strictly.

BENHAM: Yeah.

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

CATHERINE: You know, there's only one thing that's worrying me ... I'm supposed to be on three weeks holiday.

BENHAM: All right.

CATHERINE: So if they don't hear from me, they'll get suspicious. I always write.

BENHAM: What sort of things do you mean? Postcards?

CATHERINE: Yes. Missing you, wish you were here, weather fine. That sort of thing.

BENHAM: Who do you send them to?

CATHERINE: A couple of colleagues at central office.

BENHAM: I'll have to read them first.

CATHERINE: Fair enough.

BENHAM: Where are you supposed to be on this vacation?

CATHERINE: Bournemouth.

FX:

BENHAM: Look more the Costa del Sol type to me.

CATHERINE: That comes after the robbery.

BENHAM: All right. You'll have your cards.

CATHERINE: Thank you.

FX:

STEED: (INTO PHONE) Yes, I'm holding on. (PAUSE) Oh, Inspector Grant - Steed. (PAUSE) Thank you very much for the postcards. (PAUSE - LAUGHS) You do, eh? I'm thinking of retiring there myself. (PAUSE) We've got it all fixed for Tuesday. Six men. (PAUSE) Yes, I thought you would. See you. Bye.

FX: REPLACES RECEIVER

MUSIC: IN

FX:

FLEMING: CLEARS HIS THROAT

MUSIC: OUT

FX:

SPAGGE: One of your conversational moods, Fleming?

FLEMING: No, sir. But I would like to say something.

SPAGGE: What are you waiting for? Written permission?

FLEMING: It's about Mr Steed, sir.

SPAGGE: Straight to the point.

FLEMING: He's working with the police.

FX:

SPAGGE: Proof?

FLEMING: He's been talking with Inspector Grant of Scotland Yard, sir.

SPAGGE: How do you know?

FLEMING: I took the liberty of having his telephone instrument tapped, sir.

SPAGGE: Very anti-social of you.

FLEMING: Yes, sir, but then I'm afraid Mr Steed has gone down somewhat in my estimation, sir.

SPAGGE: Very well, Fleming. We'll take the necessary action.

FLEMING: Sir.

DOOR: OPENS

BENHAM: Is there anything you want, Mrs Gale?

CATHERINE: No thanks, Abe.

BENHAM: Goodnight, then.

CATHERINE: Goodnight.

FX:/DOOR: CLOSES

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

MUSIC: IN

CHURCH BELLS: CHIME

TELEPHONE: RINGS

MUSIC: OUT THRU FOLLOWING DIALOGUE

STEED: (INTO PHONE) Hello? Hello?

STEED (O.S.): (INTO PHONE) Hello?

MANLEY: (INTO PHONE) Goodnight, Mr Steed.

FX: GUNSHOT

DOG: WHINES

TITLE MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD: (Lower)

T H E
A V E N G E R S

END OF ACT TWO

TITLE MUSIC: OUT

TITLE MUSIC: IN

TITLE CARD: (Lower)

T H E
A V E N G E R S

ACT THREE

TITLE MUSIC: OUT

FX: CHATTER/LAUGHTER

FX:

BENHAM: Art Lovers ... fellow artists, Mrs Gale.

FX: APPLAUSE

BENHAM (Cont): This is the moment we have looked forward to for longer than I care to admit. I think you can all guess how I feel.

HAMMOND: Show us, Abe, show us.

BENHAM: Bear with me friend. I understand how you feel, but bear with me.

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM (Cont): This is a moment of pride and humility. Suddenly I begin to feel quite modest.

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM (Cont): Friends, I give you my latest offering. It's called quite simply 'Gold Vault'.

FX: LAUGHTER/APPLAUSE

FX: B.G. CHATTER

MANLEY: Best thing you ever done, Abe. Gets you right, er, here.

FX:/LAUGHTER

BENHAM: Do you think they'll accept it and hang it in the Academy?

MANLEY: They'll be a hanging all right, Abe, if they catch you.

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM: Oh, cut the comedy, boys. Mrs Gale, the floor is all yours. The walls too if need be.

FX: APPLAUSE/B.G. CHATTER

MANLEY: Go on, Mrs Gale!

CATHERINE: Gentlemen, and others present.

FX: LAUGHTER/SHOUTS

CATHERINE (Cont): In these vaults is two to three million pounds worth of gold.

BENHAM: We shall need one of your specialist prong trucks, the cross-country time.

GRUBER: Right.

CATHERINE: The vaults are situated beneath a large, remote country house on the Kent Sussex border. Few people know either of its existence or its location. That's why no-one's ever tried to rob it before. Access to the vaults proper, and by that I mean the gold depository here, is impossible unless the guard knows and recognises you. He knows me.

BARKER: I'll bet you he does.

MANLEY: I'll fetch you ... !

FX: SHOUTS

WESTWOOD: Come on! Both of you!

BENHAM: There's a lady on the floor.

CATHERINE: Once inside the depository, I shall overpower the guard and operate these twin doors, so giving you free access to the gold. Besides the man who operates these doors, the vaults are guarded by four other men based here, in the guardroom. They're armed and they maintain constant radio contact with the local police and the company staff above ground.

WESTWOOD: Oh, that's great! So how do we get in?

BENHAM: Er, we, we, have devoted a lot of thought to this. The vaults are air-conditioned, that's the only weakness.

WESTWOOD: Only?

BENHAM: Yes.

CATHERINE: The construction is of stressed granite, steel-lined throughout. It's made up as follows: seven hundred cubic feet of granite, hundred and forty cubic yards of concrete, twenty-one tons of reinforcing steel, and fourteen tons of structural steel.

FX: WHISTLE

BENHAM: Right, so, come to the air-conditioning.

CATHERINE: Yes. Well, here, you see, is where the fresh air comes in, these gratings here. You'll see they're spaced at frequent intervals. The plant supplying the vaults is behind the house.

BENHAM: And get this, unguarded except for a single clasp lock on a wooden door, with screws this big in the hinges.

PETERSON: It's a piece of cake.

BENHAM: Cake!

CATHERINE: Our intention is to feed in a certain gas with the air, and so put the guards out of action.

MANLEY: An air-conditioned 'Mickey Finn', huh?

FX: CHATTER

BENHAM: Right! Right!

WESTWOOD: Wait a minute! Wait a minute! It doesn't kill, does it?

BENHAM: Knock them out for an hour.

HAMMOND: Hey, hold your horses. If it knocks them out, how come it won't knock us out?

FX: CHATTER

WESTWOOD: Yeah.

CATHERINE: He's got a point.

HAMMOND: Huh, Christmas already?

BENHAM: Open it!

FX:

CHATTER: CONTINUES

MANLEY: When are we gonna do it, Abe?

BENHAM: All in good time, Jack. (TO CATHERINE)
Look, finish the briefing. Finish the briefing.

MANLEY: Oh, come on, Abe, tell us.

BENHAM: So keen, it's touching. You'd think you've never seen criminaldom before.

FX: LAUGHTER

CATHERINE: Twelve o'clock, Tuesday.

FX: CHATTER

BENHAM: Correction. Twelve o'clock, Monday.

CATHERINE: But you said Tuesday.

BENHAM: My horoscope - had to be Monday. Doesn't change anything does it?

CATHERINE: I hope not.

MUSIC: IN

MUSIC: OUT

FLEMING: Very sad about Mr Steed, sir.

SPAGGE: Very.

FLEMING: Seldom known a man with such exquisite taste. Perhaps we ought to send a floral tribute, sir?

SPAGGE: I think not, Fleming.

FLEMING: Surely a small one, sir, unsigned?

SPAGGE: Unsigned ones can be traced too.

FLEMING: But then, if one shortens a fellow mortal's span, it seems the least one can do. Thirty bob in exchange for forty years.

FX:

FLEMING (Cont): I'd still like to know how he recognised the Sargent miniature. Most discerning taste.

SPAGGE: Perhaps taste didn't come into it.

FLEMING: Sir?

SPAGGE: Perhaps he just read the signature in the bottom left hand corner.

FLEMING: Oh, no, sir, no. He was above that. A gentleman with frailties admittedly but, a gentleman nonetheless. (PAUSE) Anything else, sir?

SPAGGE: Dinner!

FX: FOOTSTEPS

FX:

MANLEY: How much longer, Abe?

BENHAM: What's the time?

MANLEY: Five to.

BENHAM: You didn't look.

MANLEY: I didn't have to. I've got a watch ticking in my head.

BENHAM: That could be dangerous. Relax, boys, relax. "Youths and maids enjoy today for not ye know tomorrow". (TO CATHERINE) How are you feeling, Mrs Gale?

CATHERINE: Never better.

FX

BENHAM: Right, it looks fine, I'll finish it later. You think this is a good day for a robbery?

CATHERINE: I thought your horoscope was favourable?

BENHAM: Of course. All right, boys, empty your pockets.

PETERSON: We're away!

FX:/LAUGHTER/CHATTER

BENHAM (Cont): Eyes down for a full house.

FX:

PETERSON (O.S.): Keep your eyes off my money.

FX:

WESTWOOD (O.S.): You'll have plenty more ...

FX:

MUSIC: IN

FX:

GROVES (O.S.): Hello, Mrs Gale. Back already?

CATHERINE: Yes, I couldn't stay away any longer.

GROVES (O.S.): (LAUGHS) Good holiday?

CATHERINE: Fine, thank you.

FX:/COUGHING

FX:

FX:

MUSIC: OUT/IN

CATHERINE: Hurry, we've only got twenty minutes.

FX:

MUSIC: OUT THRU TELEPHONE: RINGS

CATHERINE: (INTO PHONE) Hello? (PAUSE) No, it's Mrs Gale, temporary relief. (PAUSE) Ah, yes, Mr Faith. (PAUSE) Right, we'll expect them at three.

FX: REPLACES RECEIVER

CATHERINE: It's all right. It's only routine.

FX:

MUSIC: IN

FX:

MUSIC: OUT

FX:

FX: GRUNTS

FX:/CHATTER

BENHAM: (GRUNTS) My doctor's orders were that I should have lots and lots of money ...

FX: LAUGHTER

BENHAM (Cont): ... preferably gold. If not, I would get dull and listless, lose weight.

CATHERINE: I shouldn't think you'd ever need to see a doctor again.

BENHAM: Ah, Jack, see that they get the rest stashed away okay, will you?

MANLEY: Sure!

BENHAM: And burn the gas masks in the burners.

MANLEY: Right!

BENHAM: A nonsense game. I forgot the only proper time to drink to success is after the job.

FX:

CATHERINE: There's a lot to be said for that.

FX:

BENHAM: Here's to you.

CATHERINE: Thank you.

FX:/DOOR CLOSES

FX: FOOTSTEPS

BENHAM: You didn't mind me changing the day of the raid, did you?

CATHERINE: No, why should I?

BENHAM: Thought you looked a mite peeved.

CATHERINE: LAUGHS

CATHERINE: Not at all.

BENHAM: Didn't upset your plans any?

CATHERINE: Of course not. There's your proof.

BENHAM: Yeah.

FX: FOOTSTEPS

BENHAM (Cont): Of course, you can't ever go back there, can you?

CATHERINE: Who wants to?

BENHAM: So why send the postcards?

CATHERINE: Sorry, I don't follow you.

BENHAM: Mrs Gale, you've been the smart apple around here too long. You knew you wouldn't be able to go back there, so I repeat, why send the postcards?

CATHERINE: You're right. I needn't have bothered. Why did you let me?

BENHAM: When the cards were posted I didn't know how the scheme was gonna work.

CATHERINE: There's your answer. Neither did I.

BENHAM: Mrs Gale, look at it from my point of view. A strange lady comes in out of the unknown.

CATHERINE: You're making it sound very dramatic.

BENHAM: Mrs Gale, when someone puts you onto three million, it is dramatic. Very dramatic. Anyway, here she comes with this twenty-four carat scheme for robbing the end of the rainbow. All worked out to the last full stop. And there she goes sending postcards to people she'll never see again. Wouldn't you be suspicious?

CATHERINE: I would, I agree. But do you know what I'd do?

BENHAM: Tell me.

CATHERINE: I'd put on my thinking cap and I'd come to the conclusion there was no harm in keeping everybody sweet till after the robbery. And then I'd look at the gold, all three million pounds worth, and I'd stop being suspicious.

BENHAM: You're a cool one, Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: So you said before.

FX:

DOOR: OPENS/CLOSES

FX: FOOTSTEPS

FX:

BENHAM: What are your plans now?

CATHERINE: I've got a flight booked to ... (SIGHS) ... let's just leave it at that, shall we?

BENHAM: They'll be watching all the airports.

CATHERINE: Not in Southern Ireland.

BENHAM: How do you get there?

CATHERINE: There's this fisherman in Anglesey who owes me a big favour.

BENHAM: You've read up on your extradition laws?

CATHERINE: I'm an authority.

FX:

FX:/FOOTSTEPS

BENHAM: (CALLS) J P!

SPAGGE: So this is Mrs Gale?

BENHAM: Yes. The raid went like a dream.

SPAGGE: Yes, so I understand ...

BENHAM: (STAMMERS) You, you, you should have seen her.

SPAGGE: Kill her.

BENHAM: What?

SPAGGE: You heard me.

BENHAM: Why? What's the reason?

SPAGGE: Steed was in with the police.

BENHAM: That's why you wanted the date changed.

SPAGGE: Now don't waste time.

BENHAM: JP you can't order ... suddenly order someone's death just like it was ice-cream in a restaurant.

SPAGGE: Why not?

BENHAM: I don't care if Steed was playing footsie with the law, I tell you the raid went like a dream. Would it have done if she was in with the badges?

CATHERINE: I'd like to hear your answer to that, Mr Spagge.

SPAGGE: Fleming?

FLEMING: Oh no, sir, not me.

BENHAM: What proof do you have?

SPAGGE: Inspector Grant.

BENHAM: Grant? What about him?

SPAGGE: Thought that would make you sit up. Steed was in touch with him, we tapped his phone. He'd give a lot to know where you were, Abe, and the older you get, the more likely you are to talk. (PAUSE) So they say.

FX:

BENHAM: I'm sorry, Mrs Gale, but I did have my suspicions.

FX:

CATHERINE: If you ever do that Padre act again ...

BENHAM: Yes?

CATHERINE: It was Matthew nine.

BENHAM: I knew it.

FX:

MUSIC: IN

GRUBER: Careful, boys.

FX:/GROAN

FX:/GUNFIRE

FX: GROANS

STEED: Good evening, gentlemen.

FX:/FIGHTING

FX: FIGHT/GROANS

MUSIC: OUT

FX:

SPAGGE: Damn it! Fleming?! Can't see a thing with these damn windows.

FX:

SPAGGE: Mrs Gale.

CATHERINE: We meet again, Mr Spagge.

SPAGGE: (SHOUTS) Flem ...!

STEED: Sorry I couldn't be here sooner. I was writing recommendations for a new bullet-proof window. Ponsonbys of Jermyn Street, they do a good window.

SPAGGE: Very smart work, Mr Steed. I congratulate you.

STEED: Glad you approve.

SPAGGE: Hardly the word I'd have chosen. Should have known, all that gold ... too good to be true.

STEED: I thought it might tempt you.

SPAGGE: Wouldn't have done. Not in my prime, never.

FX:

SPAGGE (Cont): Steed? Steed, I'm too old to go to prison.
My, my heart wouldn't stand it. (SHOUTS)
Fleming! Where's Fleming?

CATHERINE: I think he's resigned.

SPAGGE: Don't you let him get away. Steed. He's an
accessory, you can nail him for that.

STEED: He's also a very good butler. I've a soft
spot for a fellow who knows the difference
between, er, south sea silk and drip-dry.
I could find a niche for him.

CATHERINE: Don't be long.

STEED: What's the hurry?

CATHERINE: There's a reward.

STEED: There is?

CATHERINE: Ten per cent.

TITLE MUSIC: IN

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TITLE MUSIC: OUT

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