

Act One - Scene One

(We begin in darkness when suddenly perfect lighting illuminates KARIA DAVEN, a beautiful young actress in her twenties.)

(We are witnessing the final moments of her 1950 screen test. KARLA is confident, assured, charming.)

(TWO MALE VOICES address her from off)

FIRST MALE VOICE. Perfect.

SECOND MALE VOICE. Tail Slate.

(An ASSISTANT rushes in and holds an upside-down movie slate in front of KARLA's face.)

ASSISTANT. Karla Daven! Screen Test! Take One!

(The ASSISTANT claps the slate and exits.)

FIRST MALE VOICE. Hold on. Keep it rolling.

KARLA. What's next, gentlemen?

SECOND MALE VOICE. We don't have to do the scene a second time, that's for sure.

(KARLA smiles at the vote of approval.)

FIRST MALE VOICE. Recite something for us.

SECOND MALE VOICE. Yeah. A little Shakespeare.

(There is laughter from the unseen voices.)

KARLA. Don't laugh. I was Desdemona up in Pasadena last Spring. "Men's natures wrangle with inferior things, though great ones are their object. For let our finger ache, and it endures our other healthful members to that sense of pain. Nay, we must — "

(An interruption from the voices.)

FIRST MALE VOICE. Great, Karla, now turn right. We want to check out your profile.

(KARLA turns her formidable physique, but then playfully looks back towards the voices in the dark.)

KARLA. How's this?

FIRST MALE VOICE. That's fine, doll, but turn your face to the right, too.

(KARLA smiles, obeying the simple request.)

SECOND MALE VOICE. *(admiringly)* What a side view.

KARLA. *(loving it)* Fresh.

SECOND MALE VOICE. Camera's heading for a run-out.

FIRST MALE VOICE. Okay. Let's wrap this up. Karla, give us a kiss, you know, right to the camera. Play a little.

(What a show KARLA gives. In the tilt of her head, the seductiveness of her bedroom eyes, the pucker of her lips, there is enough sex appeal to set several thousand movie screens on fire.)

KARLA. How's that? Should I do it again?

(The voices in the dark are silent with admiration.)

(There are several bright flashes of light and then Black out.)

(In the darkness)