



# Casablanca

Sequence Seven



# Tension

- ✱ Capt Renault and Strasser are vying for power in Casablanca
- ✱ Capt. Renault clearly resents Strasser's attempt to tell him how to do his job
- ✱ Strasser sits easily in the chair and treats Capt. Renault with condescension. He flicks cigarette ash on the floor, showing his lack of respect for the office and - by extension - the Prefect of Police.
- ✱ Renault puts him in his place by mentioning that he was with the Americans 'when they blundered into Berlin in 1918'
- ✱ Strasser's suggestion that Laszlo be followed is unnecessary. Renault has seen to it already



# Veiled Threats

- ✱ Laszlo and Ilsa arrive just as Annina and Jan are being told that they cannot have an exit visa. This reinforces the idea that it is extremely difficult to escape Casablanca.
- ✱ Renault is charming and makes small talk, but the other three are tense, and the atmosphere is charged with hostility.
- ✱ Strasser is as unpleasant as always and makes no attempt to be courteous. He is arrogant and supremely confident that Laszlo will not escape.
- ✱ Capt. Renault supports Strasser, but seems to view the matter far more lightly than do the others.
- ✱ Strasser and Renault are stereotypically German and French, respectively



- ✱ The tension mounts as Strasser makes his offer. He will allow Laszlo to leave if he gives him the names of the resistance leaders throughout Europe.
- ✱ Laszlo's courage and selflessness is seen as he defies Strasser and says that he didn't reveal the names when being tortured in a concentration camp, and won't do so now.
- ✱ The camera stays on Laszlo for a long time as he passionately expresses his views about the resistance. In a stirring speech, he says that for every leader killed, 'hundreds, thousands would rise to take our places'.
- ✱ Strasser says that nobody could replace Laszlo, and makes a veiled threat, telling the other man that something 'unfortunate could happen to you while you were trying to escape'.



- ✱ The tension between Laszlo and Strasser is shown by the unwavering eye contact between the two.
- ✱ At Strasser's threat, Laszlo turns to Capt. Renault to ask for reassurance that his safety is guaranteed while he is in 'unoccupied France'.
- ✱ Renault's answer is not reassuring. He says he will do as much as it is in his power to do.
- ✱ Renault maintains a certain air of cynical and amused detachment, sitting apart from the others and busying himself with a document.



# Lost Chance?

- ✱ Capt. Renault is a shrewd man who, despite appearances, is acutely aware of all that is going on.
- ✱ He brings up the matter of Ugarte, and dangles him before Laszlo and Ilsa, knowing full well that they are hoping he will give them the letters of transit.
- ✱ Strasser gloatingly tells Laszlo that Ugarte is dead.
- ✱ Ilsa, who has been nervous and unhappy throughout the scene and has sat stiffly, with eyes downcast, gasps at this news.
- ✱ Capt. Renault is facetious about Ugarte's death, saying that he hasn't decided yet if he committed suicide or died trying to escape.



# Light Relief

- ✱ Ilsa and Laszlo leave, and Capt. Renault says they will try the black market next in their quest for an exit visa.
- ✱ After the tension of this scene, the mood is lightened by Capt. Renault's pleasure at hearing that there has been another problem with a visa.
- ✱ 'Show her in!' he says happily, straightening his tie as he looks in the mirror.
- ✱ Capt. Renault has won again.
- ✱ Humour is tinged with knowledge that life in Casablanca is cheap and that the vulnerable - particularly women - are open to exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous men.



# The Blue Parrot

- \* Men on the street discuss Signor Ferrari: he is a powerful man in the black market.
- \* The Blue Parrot is a seedier establishment than Rick's.
- \* We see Jan and Annina leaving, having failed to get a visa. Capt. Renault is their last hope.
- \* We are reminded once again how difficult it is to escape Casablanca, and how desperate people are.
- \* Rick calls into the Blue Parrot to collect his shipment, remarking that Ferrari always leaves him short.
- \* Ferrari is unapologetic and is clearly only interested in profit.



# 'Fat Hypocrite'

- ✱ There is a clear contrast between Rick and Ferrari, not just in looks, but in moral standing.
- ✱ Ferrari feigns regret over Ugarte's death, but Rick sees right through him and knows he only wants the letters of transit.
- ✱ Rick says he has left his cafe so Capt. Renault's men can search it.
- ✱ Rick appears confident and in control.
- ✱ Ferrari tries to induce him to join him in the black market, but Rick refuses. He has moral standards, but Ferrari does not.
- ✱ A few notes of 'As Time Goes By' interrupt the Moroccan music just as Rick spots Ilsa outside in the market.
- ✱ Laszlo enters as Rick leaves. Capt. Renault was right again: Laszlo is trying the black market.



# Misunderstanding

- \* Rick approaches Ilsa and tries to take up the conversation of the night before.
- \* This time, it is Ilsa who is cold and distant. She has been badly hurt by Rick's refusal to listen and by the hatred in his eyes.
- \* The vendor shows that Rick is a respected businessman: he lowers his prices dramatically when he sees him with Ilsa.
- \* Ilsa tells the eager vendor that she is not interested, but she may also be saying that to Rick as he tries in vain to straighten matters out.
- \* Rick still does not understand why she left him, and incorrectly assumes she was put off by the thought of a life on the run. Ilsa already lives this sort of life with Laszlo.
- \* Rick says he is settled now, but Ilsa does not respond.
- \* Rick insults Ilsa again by saying she will eventually lie to Laszlo and leave him for Rick.
- \* Ilsa tells him that Laszlo is her husband, and was even when she was with Rick in Paris.
- \* She leaves, and Rick is left dumbfounded.



# Love and Loyalty

- ✱ Laszlo appears unable to escape Casablanca.
- ✱ Ferrari says that it would be impossible to get him out as the Germans are determined to keep him there.
- ✱ There is a chance of a visa for Ilsa, but she will not leave her husband. She reminds him that he did not leave her when he could have.
- ✱ Laszlo shows a more human and affectionate side to his rather stiff character than we have seen to date. He professes his love for Ilsa in tender tones.
- ✱ Despite his protestations of love, Laszlo still appears far less emotional than Rick. He may be more correct in his manner and more gentlemanly in his treatment of Ilsa, but he does not even hold her hand when he tells her how much he loves her.
- ✱ We see Laszlo less as a fully fleshed-out character than a symbol of heroism and nobility.



# A Moment of Selflessness

- ✱ Surprising even himself, Ferrari advises Laszlo and Ilsa to talk to Rick.
- ✱ They leave, and Ferrari swats a fly on the table. This reinforces our view of his establishment as a rather grubby place compared to the suave elegance of Rick's, and it reasserts the impression of Ferrari as a rather unpleasant character.