

CHARLIE

*A new show, created by*

*Kiera Chaplin*

*Story by*

*Louis J. Guerra and Kiera Chaplin*

"In the beginning"

PILOT Episode, #1-01

by

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TEASER

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CORSIER-SUR-VEVEY CEMETERY, VAUD,  
SWITZERLAND - NIGHT

"March 1, 1978."

It's raining hard. Through the downpour of rain we see we are behind the backs of grave diggers, shovels in hand. One digs more furiously than the other. Off to the side are large heavy duty plastic bags. The Bulgarian takes a breather, and stops digging. Subtitled in Polish and Bulgarian.

POLISH MECHANIC  
(in Polish)  
You find it? Anything yet?

The other grave digger shakes his head "no."

POLISH MECHANIC (CONT'D)  
Well then hurry up! Work! You want  
to do this or not?

BULGARIAN MECHANIC  
(not understanding, in  
Bulgarian)  
What? In Bulgarian!

The Bulgarian throws dirt and digs again. They both dig and throw dirt yet again. Then once more, until we hear a THUD. The two look at each other.

POLISH MECHANIC  
Gantscho! That's it! Clear the  
dirt!

They both get on their hands and knees and furiously start to clear the dirt around the edges of the grave cover.

BULGARIAN MECHANIC  
Roman, how much do you think?

POLISH MECHANIC  
(almost to himself)  
Ohhhh, she will pay a lot for this!

BULGARIAN MECHANIC  
What? In Bulgarian!

POLISH MECHANIC  
(In Polish still)  
I said a lot! Half a million!

BULGARIAN MECHANIC  
(understanding now)  
Half a million! Roman! We are rich!

Both laugh as they finish clearing the edges. Roman then goes to the side of the coffin. He looks at his partner in crime.

POLISH MECHANIC  
To make sure.

Gantscho nods. Roman then, with some difficulty, opens the latch of the coffin. He then swings the coffin cover upright as LIGHTNING flashes across the sky, a ROAR OF THUNDER accompanying it.

INT. SMALL THEATER, NEW YORK - DAY

"NEW YORK. PRESENT DAY."

A thunderous applause from a small group of people, all sitting. "The Amy Winehouse Foundation" banner hangs across the stage towards the back. Mr. Mitch Winehouse stands at a podium. Behind him sit three others, including Kiera Chaplin, 30, actress and model. They also applaud. Off to the side stands a female moderator.

MR. WINEHOUSE  
Thank you so much. I know some of you are parents of victims, loved ones of children who don't feel they have a way out. Whatever we can do, to keep the lines of communication open between fathers and their daughters, mothers and their sons, peers among peers alike, will reduce and hopefully one day eliminate the abuse of drugs. Through communication, those who feel compelled to abuse drugs, much like my own talented daughter suffered, they will realize there is another way. Thank you again.

There is more applause, as the moderator steps forward.

MODERATOR  
Mr. Winehouse, we thank you. We applaud you- and your board- who have taken their time today to continue to raise funds for all those who suffer from the effects of drug abuse.  
(MORE)

MODERATOR (CONT'D)  
We thank our audience. There will  
be a reception just outside to  
follow.

A reporter stands up. Other reporters and patrons turn to  
him.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
Ma'am if I may? Name's Richard  
Millings. I just have one more  
question.

MODERATOR  
(what could this be  
about?)  
Alright. One more.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
It's for Kiera.

All eyes on Kiera now, as she stands up to take the podium.

RICHARD MILLINGS (CONT'D)  
Forgive my intrusion, but I'm  
curious how you became involved as  
an Ambassador to the foundation.

KIERA  
It's no intrusion as all. I met  
Mr. Winehouse at a function similar  
to this and he asked me to  
participate. Being a huge fan of  
Amy Winehouse, I absolutely wanted  
to.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
I... see.. But what I wanted to  
know is, why did he ask you?

Mr. Winehouse steps up.

KIERA  
(challenging back)  
I'm sorry... who do you write for?

RICHARD MILLINGS  
Should it matter?

Mr. Winehouse steps in now.

MR. WINEHOUSE

Sir, I asked Kiera because as she said, we met at a function and while she is a big fan of my daughter's, I am huge fan of her grandfathers. Is that a problem?

RICHARD MILLINGS

(smiling)

That's all I wanted to know. I meant no harm. Thank you.

MODERATOR

(stepping forward)

Please join on the atrium level for a reception.

Kiera and Richard do a bit of a smiling stare down now as the crowd begins to break up. Mr. Winehouse pats Kiera's back.

MR. WINEHOUSE

Sorry about that. I don't know what brought that on.

KIERA

No problem. There's bound to be one in every crowd.

INT. RECEPTION - DAY

At the bar, as drinks are poured, Kiera converses with a female patron. She pauses as the woman wraps her arms about her and her husband takes a picture. Kiera then signs the back of a napkin. As she does so, a voice from behind.

RICHARD MILLINGS

Sorry if you thought my question was out of line, Kiera.

KIERA

(not turning around,  
signing the napkin)

Why would I think that?

She hands the autographed cocktail napkin back to the woman.

RICHARD MILLINGS

My story is not so much on your wonderful foundation, but on the groups of people who make up-

REPORTER (CONT'D)

The board of directors for that group.

KIERA

The board of directors for that group.

REPORTER

Exactly.

KIERA

Yes, I'm aware. Insight magazine.  
One of your... cronies tried to pin  
me down at my last photo shoot.  
And as I told her, I'm actually  
only an Ambassador.

RICHARD MILLINGS

Cronies? English word, yes? Maria  
told me. Apparently you two didn't  
have such a nice exchange. Almost  
a cat fight.

KIERA

It's Greek.

Kiera starts to walk away towards another group of people.  
Richard follows.

RICHARD MILLINGS

(Greek? You Sure?)

Greek? You know, Kiera, maybe if  
you gave Maria the time of day I  
wouldn't be here right now.

KIERA

(stopping, looking Richard  
in the eye now)

Maybe if I thought "Insight" was  
above parading around at charitable  
functions looking for a story when  
there isn't one, I'd give you the  
time of day.

RICHARD MILLINGS

You don't think there's a story  
here?

KIERA

About our board of directors? No.  
Do you think we are embezzling or  
something? Or you suspect us of  
some other grand scandal?

RICHARD MILLINGS

So defensive.  
(pausing)

RICHARD MILLINGS (CONT'D)

It's a classic move. One person tries to move you in a different direction to deflect you off of themselves, there is usually a story to be had.

KIERA

The only story here, Richard, is that you are trying to instigate one by questioning how and why I serve as an Ambassador to a small but worthwhile and charitable organization. And Mr. Winehouse already told you.

RICHARD MILLINGS

And that would be because of your celebrity status?

KIERA

(smiling, coming in close)  
Why don't you ask him? If I can help the foundation by using my name, wouldn't that be a good thing to do?

RICHARD MILLINGS

Now was that so hard, Ms. Chaplin? You know a good story can be had too... Grand daughter, yes?

Kiera is a bit hesitant now. Perhaps his intentions are good.

KIERA

... yes. So?

RICHARD MILLINGS

I'm not necessarily out to say you shouldn't be on the board, or an Ambassador, but let's face it, you ARE on it because of who you are. The grand daughter of a great film maker.

KIERA

Yes, he was. And yes, I am. And yes, we do help people.

And now she walks away.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
I know you do. So did he. And  
that's a story. May I ask you  
about that?... I'm a huge Charlie  
fan.

KIERA  
That's nice.

But she keeps walking away.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
"And so Kiera Chaplin walked away  
from me, ashamed to be an  
Ambassador! Only willing to use her  
name when it suits her!"

Kiera stops and turns.

KIERA  
There's no truth to that.

Richard pauses, comes forward.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
Well maybe I'm trying to convince  
you to just tell me about him.

KIERA  
Maybe you're just being an ass.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
Give me fifteen minutes... I'm not  
the bad guy here.

Kiera considers.

KIERA  
(now intrigued)  
Well you have done nothing so far  
to be the good guy... Just so you  
know.

RICHARD MILLINGS  
I'm here to write a good story,  
Kiera. Fifteen minutes.

KIERA  
Ten.

He stares at her, grateful. He nods in agreement. Ten minutes  
it is.

DISSOLVE TO:

## OPENING CREDITS

A montage of Charlie Chaplin and the characters who will be playing in his life, and this series.

We see clips of his films as well, but as our end credits will reveal, a short film will be played so that our audiences will further be educated and entertained by the world of Chaplin.

Here, in black and white, with some morphing into color images, still photos of characters shall include: each of his four wives - Mildred Harris, Lita Grey, Paulette Goddard, and Oona O'Neill. Also featured are his first love, Hetty Kelly, his brother Sydney, his half brother Spencer, and his mother Hannah.

The open title sequence will show those he interacts with professionally: Mack Sennett, Douglas Fairbanks, DW Griffith, Mabel Normand, and Hedda Hopper.

We see the following quote of Chaplin's, broken up in pieces and in the background behind the titles. As Charlie had so many inspirational quotes, there may be a DIFFERENT one each episode. For our pilot:

"A tramp, a gentleman, a poet, a dreamer, a lonely fellow, always hopeful of romance and adventure"

ACT ONE

"LOS ANGELES, 1936"

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

We are deep behind a man who is addressing a gaggle of reporters in the lobby of a movie theater. The poster reads "Charlie Chaplin's 'Modern Times'. Also listed on the poster is his co-star (and third wife) Paulette Goddard. Flash cameras are going off everywhere.

As we slowly DOLLY IN, the reporters ask their questions. We don't yet know who they are asking, as he we come behind our hero, CHARLIE CHAPLIN. He is 47.

REPORTER

Did you ever expect opening night to be a sell out, Mr. Chaplin?

CHARLIE

One can never predict the actions of so many others. But I am delighted.

REPORTER TWO

This may be your biggest success yet, Sir. You've finally ventured into the talkies!

CHARLIE

Yes, that was a big step for the tramp, wasn't it?

Some laughter at first, then the group of reporters shout questions, but one voice rings louder than the others.

HEDDA HOPPER

Charlie! Charlie!

Charlie looks at the woman.

HEDDA HOPPER (CONT'D)

The role of Hannah? Easy casting in Paulette Goddard?

CHARLIE

Considering the fact that she's my wife... very easy.

More laughter.

HEDDA HOPPER

So who else read for it?

The crowd is silent for a moment. And now Charlie turns to his brother, SYDNEY, who is also present.

CHARLIE  
(to his brother)  
Sydney, who is this?

Everyone laughs, because everyone knows who Hedda Hopper is.

SYDNEY  
(playing along, whispering  
so others can hear)  
I'd run if I were you, Charlie.  
It's Hedda Hopper. Sadistic gossip  
columnist.

A few more laughs from the crowd.

CHARLIE  
Sadistic. I must remember that word  
for my next film. Perhaps build a  
character around her. Do you think  
that would work well?

SYDNEY  
Not a bad idea, Charlie.

Charlie looks at her.

CHARLIE  
She did a magnificent job, don't  
you think, ma'am?

HEDDA HOPPER  
For a wife. How many were at the  
casting session?

The others start to murmur at the comment, even look at Hedda with disdain. Charlie ignores her.

REPORTER TWO  
Mr. Chaplin, this is your first  
picture with sound. A bit behind  
the times?

CHARLIE  
I don't know that our pictures need  
to talk. Why, when we can convey  
the message so well visually?

The crowd stirs.

REPORTER TWO

How do you feel the audience will  
react to your film?

CHARLIE

(referring to the audience  
filing out of the  
theater, very happy)  
It seems they already are.

And now cheers erupt as the emerging audience sees Charlie  
and applauds. Hedda is not pleased, staring at Charlie with  
an annoyed fervor. She writes in her black book.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Thank you everyone. Thank you for  
watching.

Charlie turns to walk out with his brother Sydney, stopping  
to sign a few autographs along the way.

REPORTER THREE

Charlie! Charlie, could you give  
us a moment to talk about The  
Little Tramp?

Charlie is hesitant.

SYDNEY

Of course he can!

Charlie looks at Sydney, knows its good for publicity.

CHARLIE

Of course. What would you like to  
know?

REPORTER THREE

How did it start, where did it come  
from? Is it true that the barber  
in "Modern Times" is a variation of  
The Little Tramp?

REPORTER FOUR

No, I understand that your "barber"  
was to give The Little Tramp a  
break?

REPORTER

Is it true you sent a copy of this  
movie to the Furor himself?

Hetta takes note of this question as well. Charlie looks to  
Sydney who gives him an encouraging nod.

CHARLIE  
 (ignoring the latter  
 question)  
 The Little Tramp is not the barber  
 at all. The Little Tramps voice is  
 in his movements, and not his  
 mouth. He began a long time ago.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LONDON - OAKLEY STREET - DAY

"1894". Visually, shot in Sepia tones.

We dolly back to reveal YOUNG CHARLIE, 5, walking with his older brother, YOUNG SYDNEY, 8, and their mother, HANNAH, past camera on the cobble stone Oakley Street. Charlie is holding his mother's hand.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
 (ignoring the latter  
 question)  
 The Little Tramp is not the barber  
 at all. The Little Tramp began a  
 long time ago.

HANNAH  
 Look at that drunk, boys.

The boys look at a homeless man sitting on the side of the road. A cardboard sign asks for food. Hannah starts to imitate him, walking a bit drunk and stumbling along. Sydney and Charlie laugh a bit, but also a bit embarrassed in that their mother has no shame. Charlie stares at his mother, then at the man. He's in his mid 50s, skinny, hair greying but bald on top. Charlie notices the man's way too baggy pants.

CUT TO:

*IMAGERY SHOT*

*Black and white. Close up of Charlie Chaplin, as an adult, particularly of the way too baggy pants, the cane bending.*

EXT. LONDON- OAKLEY STREET - DAY

Resume. Hannah is in mid-act, imitating the homeless man not far from where he is. He doesn't notice as she is low key about it but puts on a display for her children.

HANNAH  
 A six-pence for a meal, please?  
 May i stay the night? I have no  
 place.

(MORE)

HANNAH (CONT'D)  
 How about I hold a sign like this  
 for three hours straight and hope  
 that someone throws a coin in my  
 direction? I'll fetch it like a  
 good little puppy.. Maybe I should  
 just get a real job?! A shirt for a  
 friendly chat?

The boys laugh, Sydney more so. Charlie is unsure and looks  
 back at the man, a bit in sympathy. He's conflicted.

HANNAH (CONT'D)  
 (coming out of her act)  
 Well, we will never be like that I  
 promise you.

Hannah coughs.

YOUNG SYDNEY (8)  
 What do you mean, mum? Be like  
 that?

HANNAH  
 (coughing again)  
 I mean we must always provide for  
 each other, Sydney. I provide for  
 you now, and one day when I'm old  
 and grey I hope my sons will  
 provide for me.

YOUNG SYDNEY (8)  
 Of course, mum.

Charlie is still staring at the homeless man but finally  
 turns his attention back to his mother as the distance  
 between them grows.

YOUNG CHARLIE (5)  
 You don't need providing for,  
 momma.

HANNAH  
 Now maybe. The good Lord allows me  
 to provide

YOUNG SYDNEY (8)  
 With your song and dance?

HANNAH  
 (coughing more)  
 With my song and dance, yes.

YOUNG CHARLIE (5)  
 You ok, momma? What's wrong?

HANNAH  
I'm fine, Charlie. Just coming down  
with something I think.

The threesome walk on and down the cobblestone street.

INT. MOVIE THEATER

Resume. 1936.

CHARLIE  
I'm sorry... I went off on a very  
long tangent.

The reporters laugh.

SYDNEY  
(covering, a bit  
embarrassed)  
When it comes to mum he gets a bit  
lost. We both do I suppose.

CHARLIE  
Seeing my mother perform an act  
about the homeless man, both amused  
and depressed me... But it did give  
me my very glimpse into the tramp.

REPORTER TWO  
That was the beginning?

CHARLIE  
The Little Tramp is a performance  
piece. I had to learn to perform  
first. That man was surely not  
performing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CANTEEN THEATER, ALDERSHOT, ENGLAND- NIGHT

Establishing. The Canteen Theater. A few drunk soldiers  
stumble out. They pass a few going in. Cheers. They laugh  
at each other.

INT. THE CANTEEN THEATER, ALDERSHOT, ENGLAND, - NIGHT

In the wings, which is in itself a bit crowded, the theater  
manager walks past Hannah. She coughs again.

CANTEEN MANAGER  
You're on next. And what's with  
the coughing. They didn't pay to  
hear a woman cough! Understood.

Hannah nods.

CANTEEN MANAGER (CONT'D)  
This is it, Hannah. Second chance!  
I don't need cat calls to the  
manager's office all week long  
after one woman can't do her due!

HANNAH  
You never told me that?

CANTEEN MANAGER  
(not violently, just  
matter of fact)  
If you can't perform, get off the  
stage. I can't lose my audience.

He leaves her. Hannah nods. She takes a glass of water then  
kneels down next to Charlie, who is watching. Various  
stagehands bustle in the back ground.

HANNAH  
(under her breath)  
Your audience.  
(and then to her son)  
For good luck.

Charlie kisses each cheek, then smiles. Charlie looks out  
into the audience. He sees a packed house of mostly soldiers,  
in uniform, all there to get their mind off of reality. They  
want decent entertainment. They ruefully applaud now as a  
fellow soldier leaves the stage, telling his last joke.

MANAGER  
Ladies... and gentlemen. Please  
welcome our very own... Hannah  
Chaplin.

A few loud claps and cheers. Hannah comes out on stage,  
handing Charlie her cup of water just before. She nods to  
the Orchestra in the pit. They begin playing, and Hannah  
begins singing. She coughs one last time, and clears her  
throat.

HANNAH  
Jack Jones well and known to  
everybody. Round about the market,  
don't yer see, I've no fault to  
find with Jack at all...

Hannah coughs again, and tries to pick up the song.

HANNAH (CONT'D)  
Not when 'e's as 'e used to be.

Her voice becomes rasp, even a whisper. The cat calls from the audience begin. Hannah continues though.

HANNAH (CONT'D)  
But since... 'e's had the buillion  
left him...

But by now she can hardly be heard, and the soldiers are booing her off the stage. The orchestra stops and the Manager comes out trying to make peace with the audience.

SOLDIER  
I paid for this?

SOLDIER TWO  
Give us our money back!!!

A lot of cheers from the audience now.

SOLDIER THREE  
Throw that whore in the trash!

More laughter from the audience. Hannah is almost in tears now. Charlie sees something is wrong but doesn't quite understand it all. As the manager whisks Hannah off stage:

CANTEEN MANAGER  
Why I let you perform. You're done  
here! Listen to them!

The manager looks at Charlie. Hannah protests.

CANTEEN MANAGER (CONT'D)  
I should let him sing it! He knows  
it better than you!

Hannah stares at her son, then back at the manager.

HANNAH  
(softly)  
Let him.

CANTEEN MANAGER  
What? Speak up!

HANNAH  
Yes, yes, let him! He can do it.

YOUNG CHARLIE (5)  
Momma?

CANTEEN MANAGER  
You know the song kid?

Charlie looks up, nodding that he does.

CANTEEN MANAGER (CONT'D)  
 Alright. Come.

The manager walks back out on stage to more booing. He puts his hand up to shush the audience. A banana peel is thrown at him, to which he catches against his body. He makes light of it.

CANTEEN MANAGER (CONT'D)  
 (improvising)  
 Ladies and gentlemen. We had to  
 show you the worst...

He glances at Hannah staring in the wings.

CANTEEN MANAGER (CONT'D)  
 (then back to Charlie)  
 So you would know the best! Ladies  
 and gentlemen, Master Charlie  
 Chaplin!

The crowd claps, lightly, but still laughing and mocking. The manager signals to the conductor to start from the beginning. He looks up at Charlie and begins the song again. Charlie looks to his mother. She nods in approval, and he then stares out at the audience.

And right on his cue, he comes in, singing beautifully:

YOUNG CHARLIE (5)  
 Jack Jones well and known to  
 everybody. Round about the market,  
 don't yer see, I've no fault to  
 find with Jack at all. Not when  
 'e's as 'e used to be. But since  
 'e's had the buillion left him 'E  
 has altered for the worst. For to  
 see the way he treats his old pals  
 fills me with nothing but disgust.

And now a soldier cheers and throws coins on stage. Charlie smiles at this and keeps it up.

YOUNG CHARLIE (5) (CONT'D)  
 Each Sunday morning he reads the  
 telegraph Once he was contented  
 with the Star.

And now a few soldiers start to sing with him. More money is thrown on the stage. The manager is delighted and Hannah can't believe it! Charlie then stops singing. The audience goes quiet.

YOUNG CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
One moment please everyone. I will  
now pick up all this money and then  
continue!

The place erupts with laughter and appreciation! More coins  
are thrown on the stage and the manager comes out to help  
Charlie. He pulls out his hanker chief and gathers coins. As  
he gathers a handkerchief full of coins, he starts to walk  
off.

YOUNG CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Hey! You are not going to keep that  
are you, mister?

The place erupts again at Charlie's comment! Charlie watches  
as the manager hands the coins to Hannah, then returns to the  
stage and signals the conductor to continue.

YOUNG CHARLIE (5) (CONT'D)  
You may continue, conductor. Since  
Jack Jones has come into a little  
bit of cash, Well, 'e don't know  
where 'e are.  
(and now talking at the  
song's conclusion)  
Is everyone having a nice night?

There is plenty of applause.

YOUNG CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about my mum. She's a bit  
under the weather. But at least  
you don't have to listen to her  
every night at home like I do.

The audience is besides themselves!

YOUNG CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
It's true. It goes like this:  
Riley Riley, that's the boy to  
beguile ye, Riley Riley, that's the  
boy for me. In all the Army great  
and small, There's non so trim and  
neat As the noble Sergeant Riley Of  
the gallant Eighty-eight!

And during this, Charlie makes his voice crack like his  
mothers. The audience roars with laughter again!

Who IS this kid?!

As more money is thrown on stage, Hannah comes out, and then more applause. As money hits the stage... was it all an act on Hannah's part?

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT TWO

EXT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICES - DAY

"1911"

We hear the sounds of grunting, and then relief. The streets are nothing but a dirt road, dusty. This is Hollywood of old.. Just beginning. We see a few stage hands, carpenters and grips as they might be called today, traversing a lot and carrying wood beams.

As we push in to the building we are:

INT. MACK SENNETT'S EDITORIAL SUITE - DAY

It's dark, unlit, but rays of sunlight fill the room. Dust rises off the floor. On one side huge editing reels with film dangling off sit waiting to be put to use. Behind a desk sits MACK SENNETT, a large boisterous man, about 30. He looks up in relief, and then finally looks down.

MABEL NORMAND, sixteen and beautiful, finishes up her task. She looks up and smiles deviously.

A knock at the door.

MACK SENNETT  
Who is it? What?

ASSISTANT  
(opening the door)  
Sir, we found him.

He has paperwork in a folder in his hand.

MACK SENNETT  
Can't you see I'm doing something?  
Get out!

The assistant quickly closes the door. Mabel starts to get up now, fixing her hair and dress.

EXT. MACK SENNETT'S EDITORIAL SUITE - DAY

Continuous. The Assistant outside the door now.

ASSISTANT  
Sir you asked for this!

MACK SENNETT  
What in God's name are you talking about?

ASSISTANT  
Chaffin Sir. He's in Philadelphia  
now with his troupe. And I hear  
he's a hoot! They leave again  
though to tour-

Mack opens the door and grabs the envelope, then slams it  
back in his assistant's face.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)  
In two days...

INT. MACK SENNETT'S EDITORIAL SUITE - DAY

Mack opens the folder and looks at the paperwork. Inside is a  
picture of Charlie Chaplin. He holds it up.

MACK SENNETT  
(looking at the picture)  
That's him.

MABEL NORMAND  
Who?

MACK SENNETT  
Charlie. Charlie Chaffin. Or  
whatever his name is. He's known  
on the vaudeville circuit.

MABEL NORMAND  
And we are meeting him why?

MACK SENNETT  
Because I think he belongs in  
pictures! Find the right comedian  
there's a lot of dough to be made,  
Mabel.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THEATER, PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT

On stage. Mack Sennet's voiceover continues as we see a  
Chaplin performance for the first time. Charlie is playing  
off of STAN JEFFERSON doing a schtick. Behind Stan is a  
beautiful woman he seems to be protecting. He has a smoking  
cigar in his mouth. An orchestra plays comical music in the  
pit below.

[NOTE: Stan Jefferson would later go on to be Stan Laurel of  
Laurel and Hardy. We may yet see him again]

Charlie takes Stan's glasses and reverses them, upside down, puts them back on himself, then takes his smoking cigar and sticks it the wrong way in his mouth. He looks at the audience, realizes his error, and screams! The audience is hysterical! He does a backwards roll to a table with a pitcher of water on it, and ignoring the glasses, drinks right from the pitcher. Of course, water spills all over his shirt, tie, and pants.

Charlie then takes large steps back to his co-star, and promptly replaces the cigar, now soaked with water, back in Stan's mouth. He fixes his bow tie and his glasses.

Stan takes Charlie's top hat and promptly punches a hole through it. He pulls back his bow tie and "snaps" it back to place, causing Charlie to do another backwards flip roll, where he lands on his back. And during all of this:

MACK SENNETT (V.O.)

People want funny! I saw him on Broadway. This says he's in Philly now. The man moves. He was the only one who was hysterical. I can't remember a time where I laughed harder. I met him backstage afterwards, and I told him if I ever made it big I'd hire him in a heartbeat.

INT. MACK SENNETT'S EDITORIAL SUITE - DAY

Resume.

MABEL NORMAND

(putting her hand on  
Mack's chest)

And now you have, darling.

Mack kisses his girl, then puts the picture down and moves to the editing table, turning the lights in the room on. Reveal four separate reels hanging with film stock on each of them, waiting to be spliced. Sennett's next few flickers.

MACK SENNETT

What? Says you. Not this town. These rat asses don't appreciate good talent when they've got it.

MABEL NORMAND

(looking at the photo, to  
herself)

I don't see what the big deal is. Don't I know. So when's casting for your next flicker?

MACK SENNETT

(laughing)

You're always so concerned. Don't you worry, my leading lady. There will always be a part for Mabel Normand.

Mabel comes over to him, puts her hand on his shoulder.

MABEL NORMAND

You are sweet, dear.

Mack turns around.

MACK SENNETT

And you... are Mabel.

They kiss again.

EXT. LAW OFFICES KESSEL & BAUMAN - MORNING

New York City. "Turn of the century" streets. 24 Longace Building Broadway. Charlie Chaplin walks down the street looking at the addresses. In his hand is a folder. He finds the building and enters. He enters the stairwell and begins to walk up.

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE LAW OFFICES - MORNING

Charlie walks down the hallway, his telegram in hand. It's dark, not very well lit. A single window at the end allows the morning light in. He looks up at several door frames until he comes to:

INT. LAW OFFICES KESSEL & BAUMAN - DAY

Charlie enters and comes upon the receptionist. She is young, about seventeen. Charlie stares at her

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you?

There is no answer. We see a CU of the Receptionist's lips, her eyes, her cheekbones, her jaw line. Charlie's heartbeat increases, his breath quickens.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

(repeating herself)

Sir. May I help you? SIR?

CHARLIE

(snapping out of it,  
producing a telegram)

Ah Yes, I...

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 received a telegram while I was in  
 Philadelphia. I think its for me.  
 Is there a Mr. Kessel and Bauman  
 here looking for a-

RECEPTIONIST  
 Mr. Chaffin?. Yes there is..  
 Please have a seat. Mr. Kessel will  
 be right with you.

CHARLIE  
 (to himself)  
 Chaplin. Thank you.

He sits in the waiting area and has just relaxed himself when  
 a door opens and a very large burly man exits, yelling. He is  
 HOWARD THURBERRY, businessman, and he uses a cane that he  
 presses too hard into the ground. It practically bends too  
 much in the middle, under all his weight.

HOWARD THURBERRY  
 (yelling back into the  
 open door way)  
 I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY SAY! I WON'T  
 PAY A DIME MORE FOR THAT PROPERTY  
 AND THEY CAN RAISE IT ALL THEY  
 WANT.

Mr. Thurberry turns and looks at Charlie. Charlie stares at  
 him.

CUT TO:

*IMAGERY SHOT - FREEZE FRAME ON A DIAGONAL, SUPERIMPOSED ON  
 THE PREVIOUS IMAGERY SHOT.*

*Black and white. Close up of Charlie Chaplin, particularly of  
 the Cane, the cane bending under the heavy man's weight.*

INT. LAW OFFICES KESSEL & BAUMAN - DAY

Resume. Thurberry stares back at Charlie, then back into the  
 office.

HOWARD THURBERRY  
 AND YOU CAN TELL HIM I SAID SO...  
 GOOD DAY YOU PUSS ASSES!!

He walks out, leaning on his cane the entire way out. After  
 the door closes, the Receptionist looks to Charlie.

RECEPTIONIST  
 Mr. Kessel will see you now, Mr.  
 Chaffin.

CHARLIE  
Chaplin, miss. The last name is  
Chaplin.

RECEPTIONIST  
I'm so sorry, Mr. Chaplin. Mr.  
Kessel will see you now.

Charlie gets up, looks once more at the receptionist, smiles.  
She got it right. He silently walks in. As the door closes,  
we see the plaque on the door: MR. CHARLES KESSEL, ATTORNEY.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE, HOLLYWOOD

It's actually a set piece, where a few carpenters are putting  
up the frame of small back drop.

We are behind a suited man, who crosses in front and examines  
the piece. He is a tall, looks serious, stern, and in a bit  
of a foul mood.

TALL MAN  
Now how big are those beams?

One construction person looks to the next.

TALL MAN (CONT'D)  
Well? Who's in charge here?

At the moment two others cross behind him into the lot,  
LILLIAN GISH, 17, and DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, 28.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
D.W.!

It's D.W. Griffith, 36, who has been demanding answers.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
I asked who is in charge?

CONSTRUCTION COORDINATOR  
I am sir.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
How big are the beams?

CONSTRUCTION COORDINATOR  
The beams are 8 feet.

D.W. GRIFFITH

Well they need to be 12. How the hell you think I am going to get any light in there from the inside with eight foot beams? Come on, man!

CONSTRUCTION COORDINATOR

The blue print says 8 feet, Mr. Griffith.

D.W. GRIFFITH

Then the blue print is wrong. Tell Harry twelve feet! I want to be able to fit my dick in there, for Christ's sake!

LILLIAN GISH

Mr. Griffith, we caught your flicker last night

D.W. GRIFFITH

Eight foot beams. Christ.  
(finally, acknowledging  
his company)  
And?

LILLIAN GISH

We thought it was fabulous!

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

A real hoot, D.W! This will put you more on the map than any other.

D.W. GRIFFITH

(walking from them)  
'Smile of a Child' is good. I'm releasing 'Primal Call' next week. That will be better. Where the hell is Sennett? I need to talk to him.

LILLIAN GISH

Mr. Griffith, I'd be honored to perform for you again.

D.W. GRIFFITH

I know you would sweetheart, and you shall. Both of you.

He stops and turns.

D.W. GRIFFITH (CONT'D)

I'm writing a longer piece now.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
A longer piece?

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Deserves a a longer story. So do I.  
Not just ten minutes.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
Really? Excellent. What's it  
called?

D.W. GRIFFITH  
I've no idea. "A Nation's Birth",  
I'm thinking.

LILLIAN GISH  
Oooo, Catchy.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
I'll like it better when I have  
financing. These things don't grow  
on trees, Douglas, now do they?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
No, sir they do not. Not mine  
anyway. Every time I look in my  
yard there's nothing. How about  
you, Lillian?

LILLIAN GISH  
My money tree is bare, gentlemen.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Well somebody get me Sennett. His  
tree is ripe!

Lillian can't help but laugh a bit as the threesome walk  
away.

INT. MR. KESSEL'S OFFICE

We are behind MR. CHARLES KESSEL, late 50s, looking at  
Charlie, who is seated, a bit anxious. Behind him is a large,  
nicely framed poster, Keystone Comedy Film Company. Mr.  
Kessel is direct.

CHARLES KESSEL  
If Sennett thinks you are good,  
Chaffin.. Or Chaplin is it?

He looks down at a piece of paper.

CHARLIE  
Yes, Sir. Charlie Chaplin.

CHARLES KESSEL

So it is.. Why the hell does this thing say 'Chaffin?'

(calling out)

Barbara!

CHARLIE

She knows, Sir. I think they had trouble remembering my name. An educated guess.

CHARLES KESSEL

That's Sennett for you. Anyway, if Sennet thinks you are good, then you must be. So I'm prepared to offer you a very generous sum of one hundred and fifty dollars. You will contract to appear in three films a week.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THEATER, PHILADELPHIA - BACK STAGE

Charlie in his costume from before. Stan Jefferson changing out of his. The audience has gone home. Stage hands are racking props back on their shelves. As Charlie starts to undress an assistant comes through the dressing room with envelopes.

STAGE HAND

HAWKINS, Theodore!

A man takes the envelope.

STAGE HAND (CONT'D)

Sober up, will you Bergman?  
Jefferson, Stan! Chaplin, Charlie!

Jefferson and Charlie take theirs.

STAN JEFFERSON

Must you say our names in reverse order? This isn't the military. And you know who we are.

STAGE HAND

Nice work tonight gentlemen. A gift from Mr. Fred Karno.

Charlie looks inside his envelope, pulls out his wage note.

STAN JEFFERSON

A gift? I ought swat you one for that we worked our bums off for this.

STAGE HAND

Lawrence, Richard!

CU of Charlie's pay chack: Pay to the order of Mr. Charles Chaplin. Seventy five dollars and no cents.

STAN JEFFERSON

You tell Freddie there the only gift here is our raw talent.

STAGE HAND

McIntosh, Arthur!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MR. KESSEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Resume. Mr. Kessel continues.

CHARLES KESSEL

If you accept, we'd like to get you out to at the end of your current tour.

CHARLIE

Mr. Kessel I appreciate your kind offer and I am interested... but I must ask for two hundred a week.

CHARLES KESSEL

Two hundred? Charlie I don't think Mabel is even getting that. Well maybe Mabel is. But I think you should reconsider.

CHARLIE

Mr. Kessel, I know Mr. Sennett would find me to be invaluable to the company, and my work is always at 150%, so he will be getting an extra 50% effort for free. For nothing.

The two stare at each other. Then Kessel cracks up.

CHARLES KESSEL

Well they always said you were a comic.

(MORE)

CHARLES KESSEL (CONT'D)  
I'll talk to Sennett, but  
ultimately I have to leave that up  
to him, and we will be in touch.

Kessel stands and the two shake hands.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT

The train pulls to a stop. Charlie steps off, walks through the station. As he hits the streets, he sees a pair of very pretty girls, about fifteen or sixteen, crossing on the other side. They give him a quick glance but pay him no heed. Charlie seems to not be able to take his eyes off of them. When one girl looks up a second time, Charlie quickly stares ahead. His thoughts are interrupted by:

HAWKINS  
Charlie!

He's clearly buzzed and enjoying himself.

CHARLIE  
Tom.

HAWKINS  
Caught you looking!

Charlie is for the moment embarrassed.

HAWKINS (CONT'D)  
Ah, I'm kidding, Charlie. Look but  
don't touch, right? Hahahaha.

CHARLIE  
(laughing)  
Well observations of our  
surroundings helps build the  
characters we play.

Hawkins laughs. He comes up to Charlie now.

HAWKINS  
Good one, Charlie. Character is  
what we all need, yes?  
(patting Charlie on the  
chest)  
We were wondering if you were going  
to make the departure tomorrow.  
How was NY? Your get your  
inheritance? Rich aunt die?

CHARLIE  
They gave me the entire estate.

HAWKINS  
Her entire estate?

CHARLIE  
(laughing)  
Yes, a grand total of two hundred dollars.

HAWKINS  
I'll take free money wherever I can find it. Well, I'm off.

CHARLIE  
Where to?

HAWKINS  
The pub, Charlie, the pub. I'm only half drunk! Can't you tell? And remember, no touching!

Hawkins leaves, laughing, and goes on his way. Charlie looks once more at the girls who are almost out of eye range now, then, heads across the street.

INT. CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Charlie opens the door, turns on the light, puts down his keys, and looks around. He takes a deep breath. He sees on the desk a half written letter. He picks it up, and as he looks at the letter, it begins to write as he speaks.

CHARLIE V.O.  
My dear Sydney... where are you? I must confess I wish you were here. I have you to thank for this wonderful work with Mr. Karno, and you to thank for my consistent loneliness... How are you? Are you ever coming here? How is mother?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE STREATHAM EMPIRE, 1908 - LONDON

"1908". Sepia tones. Charlie, nineteen years old, dressed as a comedy drunk with a big red nose, is backstage, watching a group of girls dancing. They are from "Bert Coult's Yankee-Doodle Girls." As we dissolve, the music from this dance troupe rises. Charlie's V.O. to his brother continues.

CHARLIE V.O.  
Today I was offered one hundred fifty dollars to work for a Mr. Sennett, in Los Angeles.  
(MORE)

CHARLIE V.O. (CONT'D)

A generous offer no doubt, but I am prepared to hold out for two hundred.

And then one of the girls in the troupe slips, and a few others giggle. One, HETTY KELLY, looks up and catches Charlie's eye.

CHARLIE V.O. (CONT'D)

You taught me to do that yes, Sydney? Perhaps you can come here and secure it for me, and I could pay you ten percent?! Have you seen or heard from Hetty at all? I often wonder how she is?

The girls come off the stage to applause, and Hetty Kelly comes right up to Charlie.

HETTY KELLY

Hold this please.

She presents him with a mirror. He is clearly taken aback by her beauty.

CHARLIE AT 19

I've been holding this mirror for three nights now. How about we meet this Sunday and talk some?

HETTY KELLY

Talk some? HA! I don't even know what you look like without the red nose!

CHARLIE AT 19

My nose is not quite this red, I hope, and I'm not quite as decrepit as I look... and to prove it I'll bring a photo of myself tomorrow night!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN, 1914 - DAY

CU of Chaplin's face, particularly his nose. Charlie Chaplin is asleep. On his lap, a letter from Mr. Charles Kessel, in large print, so that we can read it as the country side passes by:

"Dear Mr. Chaplin,

In response to your request for a salary of two hundred dollars a week, we are prepared to pay you the sum of one hundred fifty dollars a week for the first three months and one hundred seventy-five dollars for the remaining nine. Employment shall commence with the termination of your Sullivan and Considine tour. We hope you will accept our offer, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

MACK SENNETT"

EXT. SPEEDING TRAIN - DAY

The train crosses America's undeveloped country side, as Chaplin makes his way out west.

ACT THREE

INT. STUDIO OFFICES - DAY

D.W. Griffith sits with Four Studio executives, listening as each of them flips through pages of a script he's written.

STUDIO EXECUTIVE ONE

It's an interesting premise, D.W.  
But aside from the content, which I  
also have a problem with, I'm not  
sure the audience is prepared to  
sit in a theater for an hour.

D.W. GRIFFITH

It would be over an hour, Howard,  
and the content?

STUDIO EXECUTIVE TWO

(laughing)

Over an hour? Well who the hell is  
going to sit in some darkened  
theater - on his ASS - for over an  
hour while watching some flicker?  
How funny can something be after  
ten minutes?

STUDIO EXECUTIVE ONE

Look at Sennet's films...

D.W. GRIFFITH

Sennet? I hired him!

STUDIO EXECUTIVE ONE

Exactly. The man is rolling in cash  
on ten minutes shorts. It's all  
you need.

And with that, the Studio Exec tosses the script on the table  
next to them. It's title: "Birth of a Nation"

STUDIO EXECUTIVE TWO

Something a little shorter, and  
maybe a little more... well  
rounded, and you've got us in the  
bag.

He smiles an obnoxious smile. D.W. stands up.

D.W. GRIFFITH

Gentlemen.

D.W. Griffith shows himself out. Waiting outside in the  
hallway are:

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE STUDIO OFFICES - DAY

MARY PICKFORD, 19, and Douglas Fairbanks pace enthusiastically.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
Well? How did it go?

D.W. Griffith walks past them, irritated. They follow him.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Thought I was going to slug all  
four of them with one swing.

MARY PICKFORD  
What happened?

D.W. GRIFFITH  
What happened? Those idiots don't  
know when they have something.  
They only want the status quo,  
nothing new. Only what already  
exists. Can you believe they told  
me to emulate Sennet?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
Mack?!

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Sennet! Of all the nerve. I need  
to be doing his 5 minute crap?!  
(to Mary)  
Where is he anyway?

By now they have exited the offices and we see we are:

EXT. STUDIO BACK LOT, LOS ANGELES

The beginnings of Hollywood. The threesome continue their chat but dull it to whispers now, as we see a film crew in production in front of them, rehearsing a scene with three actors doing its own walk and talk in the same direction.

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| MARY PICKFORD                 | D.W. GRIFFITH"               |
| Well, I saw him this morning. | "Give me something new" I    |
| He's at a show and has a      | give them something new and  |
| dinner meeting right after.   | they want the same old crap! |

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Well, I need to talk to him. Make  
him finance this.. And if he won't,  
I should start my own company and  
do it myself.

MARY PICKFORD  
That's a wonderful idea!

D.W. is distracted by the fact that he is walking behind and in the same direction as the actors rehearsing the scene. He does an about face and goes the other way. Mary and Douglas follow.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
This way. Who's this dinner meeting with?

MARY PICKFORD  
Some comic.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
(stopping)  
Comic?

MARY PICKFORD  
An actor actually. Charlie Chaplin.  
He's from a vaudeville troupe.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
(continuing to walk)  
Never heard of him.

MARY PICKFORD  
Mack hired him. I think he starts tomorrow.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Aren't there enough comedians in this town?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
One on every corner it seems.

D.W. GRIFFITH  
Well tell Sennet I need a meeting with him. Blasted fatboy is impossible to reach. You think he'd be asleep 24/7.

INT. MACK SENNET'S HOME - NIGHT

We are under the covers, with Mack Sennet, who is naked save for his skimpy underwear. And suddenly we hear a very loud moan and what must be a huge orgasm.

MABEL NORMAND  
Oh Mack don't stop! That's wonderful! Oh god.. Oh God! OHHHHH  
GOODDDDDDD!!!!!!

Outside the covers, Mack pokes his head out, gives her a few moments. He's clearly been performing fellatio on his rising star.

MACK SENNETT  
Wonderful, darling?

MABEL NORMAND  
Wonderful, Mack. Sensational.

Mack cuddles up next to Mabel, gives her a few kisses, and then caresses her.

MACK SENNETT  
We should clean up. We must get going, Mabel. We have a show and the dinner to get to.

MABEL NORMAND  
Are we meeting him?

MACK SENNETT  
After the show, yes.

MABEL NORMAND  
What is it you see in him, Mack?  
He's just another comic, if even that.

MACK SENNETT  
(getting out of bed now)  
If there is one thing I have my dear, it's an eye. For timing, for talent.. For money. Just like I did with you! You're a real money-maker!

She throws a pillow at him.

INT. HOTEL, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Looking out at the night sky, Charlie is not quite himself. He's introverted, a bit unsure. He holds in his hand a letter. He's already read it, but looks at it again. He picks it up, and he scans down two thirds of the way down the letter.

SYDNEY (V.O.)  
I shall do every thing I can for her, but I'm afraid the best thing is to leave her where she is, Charlie. She is not well.  
(MORE)

SYDNEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I visited her about 2 months ago  
when last in London, and she talked  
only about two things.

INT. INSTITUTION - DAY

There is a nurses aide assisting Charlie's mother, Hannah, as she walks down the hallway. They seem to be walking in a zig zag form to avoid the lines in the tile on the floor. The whole process seems very exhausting. Sydney walks ahead, but backwards, watching his mother in sadness.

SYDNEY (V.O.)  
The first is the cracks in the  
floor. Mum believes if you step on  
one, the floor will open up and you  
might be swallowed by it. I tried  
to demonstrate...

Sydney pleads with his mother, and indicates for her to watch him. He steps on the floor crack and his mother screams in horror! The nurses aide scolds Sydney for doing that. Sydney pays no heed, but is saddened by the whole process.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM

Close on a photo of Hannah, Charlie, and Sydney as boys. Happier times. With them is also their father (Charlie's father, Charles Chaplin, Sr) There is an "X" through his face on the photo. Hannah seems not to notice as we pull back and we see her smiling lovingly at the photo, talking to Sydney.

SYDNEY (V.O.)  
And second... is you, brother. She  
keeps asking when you are coming to  
visit. I explained to her you were  
in the states, and she said you  
must be doing some very important  
work. Is that true, Charlie? I  
believe it is.

EXT. STREET OF LOS ANGELES, OUTSIDE RESTAURANT

Charlie walks down the block and into a restaurant for his meeting.

SYDNEY (V.O.)  
Because I told her indeed you were.  
I received your current address. I  
don't know what the states have in  
store for me, but you never know  
when I may walk in. Cheers, little  
brother. - Sydney

Charlie enters the restaurant now.

INT. ITALIAN RESTURANT

Charlie approaches the hostess stand.

HOSTESS  
May I help you?

But his attention is distracted. He's staring at the backside of a young waitress who is serving food to another table.

HOSTSS  
Sir?

CHARLIE  
Oh.. Im sorry. .The names -

MACK SENNETT  
CHAPLIN!

And right behind him is Mack Sennet.

MACK SENNETT (CONT'D)  
I knew it was you. Spitting image of the prints I've seen. You beat me to my own restaurant. How are you, Charlie? Mack Sennet. And this is our leading lady-

MABEL NORMAND  
And director

MACK SENNETT  
... yes, and director.. But leading lady, nonetheless, Mabel Normand.

CHARLIE  
A pleasure to meet you, Sir. Ms. Normand.

MACK SENNETT  
Please... call her Mabel.

MABEL NORMAND  
(right back at him)  
And Mack!

MACK SENNETT  
Michelle, our usual table.

HOSTSS  
Of course, Mr. Sennet, right this way.

The threesome is seated at the table.

HOSTSS (CONT'D)

Thomas is off today, Mr. Sennet, so  
Maria will be your server.

Maria comes over with menus. We see it's the young lady  
Charlie was staring at earlier.

MACK SENNETT

Michelle, as long as the steak  
isn't chewy...

The hostess, Mabel, and Mack share a laugh. Charlie just  
stares as they are seated. Maria hands Charlie a menu and  
politely smiles back. He looks at the wine list with the  
years listed. The year of a wine, "1898," dissolves into:

INT. OFFICE (1953)

"1953." On a typewriter, we see a pair of female hands  
typing, and speaking as she types. These words appear on our  
screens too.

HEDDA HOPPER

*While the following aide the  
Russians, it is our American  
responsibility to expose communists  
who threaten our freedom here at  
home. And not all of them are  
American...*

INT. OFFICE (2013)

At a laptop, another pair of hands types. These are a pair of  
male hands, and we will find they belong to the reporter at  
the beginning of our story.

RICHARD MILLINGS

(reading as he types)

And while many were accused as  
communists in the era of  
McCarthyism, not all of them were.  
In fact, some making a life for  
themselves living in America, were  
not American citizens at all, yet  
paid homage to this great country  
through their charitable works,  
through their service, and through  
their love of the United States.  
One of them... was Charlie Chaplin.

We pull out now to reveal Richard Millings, reporter for  
Insight Magazine. He looks up for consideration.

Pull out further to reveal Kiera Chaplin sitting there, listening. She smiles, nodding in approval.

RICHARD MILLINGS (CONT'D)

See? I told you I could be a good  
guy too.

He smiles back at her.

INT. ITALIAN RESTURANT

Their food almost finished, Mack Sennett shovels a last bit of chocolate cake in his mouth.

MABEL NORMAND

Well I can't eat another bite. How  
about you Charlie?

Charlie is playing with salt and pepper shakers, doing a bit of routine with them, a dance where the pepper takes the salt and flips it upside down. Mabel watches in amusement. He then picks up the utensils, the used napkin and does an entire "ensemble" routine, creating characters out of kitchen items. At the end of this routine, each "item" takes its own bow.

CHARLIE

I can't eat another bite either. It  
seems even if I wanted to, my  
"ensemble" wouldn't let me.

MABEL NORMAND

(both amused and now  
impressed, warming up)

Well, Mack, perhaps Mr. Chaplin is  
worth the one hundred fifteen  
dollars a week you are paying him.

MACK SENNETT

(as he eats more,  
eyeballing, Chaplin - say  
nothing)

Every penny. Well judging from  
the... pleasant conversation we  
have had I am sure you two will get  
along splendidly.

Charlie and Mabel regard each other. Then Maria comes over and produces the check. She finally speaks, in an innocent, sweet, sixteen year old voice.

MARIA (WAITRESS)

It was a pleasure serving all of  
you. Please... Come again.

Charlie stares at her, his eyes unflinching.

MACK SENNETT

(producing his billfold)

We will! Mabel, remind me to bill  
this dinner to Keystone Studios...  
Charlie, we will start up first but  
we will see you tomorrow, say 8AM,  
with all of your perfect comic  
timing!

CHARLIE

Yes you will, Mr. Sennet.

The threesome heads out and Charlie tips his hat to Maria one  
last time.

ACT FOUR

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS, OUTSIDE KEYSTONE STUDIOS - DAY

8AM. Charlie approaches Keystone Studios. From across the street, as he reaches the street corner, he looks and sees a short film in progress. Mack sits in a chair watching the action.

A cinematographer looks up at the sun and gives instructions to a few men to move the camera.

Charlie watches. Then he spots Mabel, giving a talk to her actors. Then we hear:

MABEL NORMAND  
Roll it, Danny.

And after a beat.

MABEL NORMAND (CONT'D)  
And... action!

And then Mabel's characters start to play off of one another. Suddenly Mabel walks in and plays along with them. Charlie watches. So, she is acting in it too.

Suddenly the threesome of actors crosses the street, towards Charlie! The cameraman is walking backwards and blocks the casts' view of him. He doesn't know what to do. He has a fit of panic, and inexplicably, decides to leave.

EXT. ITALIAN RESTURANT - DAY

It's early morning still, and Charlie is walking down the street, now having not shown up for work. He seems to wander around, without direction, and lonely.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS, OUTSIDE KEYSTONE STUDIOS - DAY

As the players continue their routine, the camera moving for different set ups, Mack looks at his watch. 10:30A. Where the hell is he?

EXT. ITALIAN RESTURANT - DAY

Noon. We come off a large outside town clock. Charlie stands across the street. The restaurant opens up for lunch. And then she comes outside, our waitress from the night before. Maria. She places a sandwich board outside, and then in chalk starts to write the evening's specials. Charlie watches. Maria leans from one side to other as she opens up the board, kind of hobbling a bit like a penguin as she struggles with the heavy board.

Charlie smiles at this in amusement, and then does a little imitation of her as he crosses the street to her.

*IMAGERY SHOT - FREEZE FRAME ON A DIAGONAL, SUPERIMPOSED ON THE PREVIOUS IMAGERY SHOTS.*

*Black and white. Close up of Charlie Chaplin, as an adult, particularly on his penguin style stance, his hobble of a walk the way to baggy pants, the cane bending.*

As he is half way across the street, a car comes. He stops and Maria turns, seeing him. Her view of him is blocked by the car as he hobbles across, and once the car passes, Charlie is walking normally again towards her. She smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS, OUTSIDE KEYSTONE STUDIOS - DAY

A final routine from the actors. One falls over the other one. It's not very funny, and Sennett is only mildly amused. He looks at his watch again.

MABEL NORMAND

Cut it!

MACK SENNETT

Alright folks, that's lunch.

A stagehand calls out.

STAGE HAND TWO

Lunch everybody! Lunch.

The team starts to break down some gear and head inside an adjacent office building.

MABEL NORMAND

(walking up to Mack)

So where's our new hero?

MACK SENNETT

(more upset with Chaplin  
but annoyed with Mabel  
too)

Why do you hate him so much?

MABEL NORMAND

I don't hate him, Mack.

MACK SENNETT

Well the way you treated him last  
night it was like he was second  
fiddle.

MABEL NORMAND  
Well he doesn't need to come in  
here taking over, does he?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
Who's taking over?

Mack and Mabel turn around. Douglas has arrived.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)  
Am I in time for lunch?

MABEL NORMAND  
Just.

MACK SENNETT  
It seems Mabel here doesn't want  
our new addition to be a new  
addition.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
And that would be?

MACK SENNETT  
Charlie Chaplin.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
Ah! Where is the chap?

MABEL NORMAND  
He didn't show. That's why I'm  
annoyed. Look at the stress it's  
putting Mack through. He was  
supposed to be in three scenes  
today.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
It's almost 1230.

MABEL NORMAND  
Exactly.

MACK SENNETT  
I don't know but I have mind to go  
right to his place and find out.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
No. You stay here, and I'll go for  
you.

MACK SENNETT  
You? Why you?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Well imagine his surprise when Douglas Fairbanks walks in and says, "Where the hell you been, Chap?!"

MACK SENNETT

Very kind of you Douglass, but Im his boss. I'll take care of it.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Allow me, Mack. Besides, DW needs you.

MACK SENNETT

Christ, what the hell does he want now?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Money. Says he's been looking for you for days, but you know how moody DW is. Mary was going to come but I insisted.

Douglas smiles wildly, his usually charming self.

MACK SENNETT

Fine. You go find Chaplin.  
(to Mabel)  
You go eat lunch. I'll go to DW.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Splendid.

INT. CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S HOME, COSIER, SWITZERLAND, 1978 - DAY

"1978" Manoir de Ban. A knock on the door. A wait staff opens the grand door. Once opened, we see a grand view with orchards and a large terrace with magnificent trees framing the view of the mountains and the lake in the distance.

At the door are two officers of the law. In swiss with English subtitles.

DETECTIVER ONE

Is Mrs. Chaplin at home?

But Oona O'Neill, Charlie fourth wife, has already arrived at the door.

OONA O'NEILL

Detectives. Come in.

The two enter. She leads them into a library on one side of the foyer. There at the end of the library is a grand picture of Charlie Chaplin posed completely in full dress as The Little Tramp, a compilation of all the Imagery Shots we have seen. Next to that is a fur coat hanging on display (note: we will later come to see this as the coat that Oona used to carry a million dollars cash back to Switzerland from the states)

DETECTIVE ONE

Ma'am. We understand you have received a phone call.

OONA O'NEILL

I have.

DETECTIVE TWO

Was it a ransom demand for your husband's body, Ma'am?

OONA O'NEILL

(incredibly down to earth)

I hate "ma'am". Oona, please. And your names?

DETECTIVE ONE

Oona. I'm Christoph. This is Tebes.

OONA O'NEILL

Nice to meet you both.

DETECTIVE TWO

You as well. Can you tell us-

OONA O'NEILL

(interrupting)

Yes, there was a ransom demand. Preposterous! Six hundred thousand dollars for his body. Six hundred!

DETECTIVE ONE

What are you thinking, ma'am....

(catching himself, a bit uncomfortable with how down to earth she is)

Oona. What do you think?

OONA O'NEILL

Well, I certainly won't pay it!

She takes a moment and looks up at the photo of her late husband on the wall.

OONA O'NEILL (CONT'D)  
Charlie himself would think it  
ridiculous to pay such an amount  
for a dead body!

There is a pause between teh two detectives.

OONA O'NEILL (CONT'D)  
Gentlemen, Charlie and I have been  
living here since 1952, since we  
left our beloved home in the United  
States when Charlie was wrongly  
accused.

DETECTIVE TWO  
Accused?

OONA O'NEILL  
Of communism. Or at least of being  
a sympathizer. I came here with all  
of our life savings. And if you  
think he would have me spend six  
hundred thousand of it to put his  
corpse back in the ground-

DETECTIVE ONE  
(getting it)  
Ms. O'Neill, we'd like permission  
to monitor your phones. When they  
call again, we may at least be able  
to tell where they are calling  
from, and apprehend them that way.

OONA O'NEILL  
(at first hesitant)  
Yes, of course.

EXT. STREET OF LOS ANGELES, CHARLIE'S APARTMENT

Douglas Fairbanks walks down the street, staring at a piece  
of paper. Then he arrives at the appointed place. As he  
walks down the path towards the front door, another man does  
the same thing.

This gentleman carries a suitcase and an over the shoulder  
bag as well. It's Sydney. As he heads down the same path,  
he sees Douglas Fairbanks, but doesn't quite recognize him.

Douglas holds open the front door for him.

SYDNEY  
Thank you.

Douglas nods. Sydney gets a closer look, then realizes who he is.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I think we are going to the same place.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

You do? Well, I'm just a visitor. I'm

SYDNEY

Douglas Fairbanks.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Why yes.

SYDNEY

Love your movies, sir.

The two start to ascend the staircase one flight up.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Well, thank you. That is much appreciated, Sir. And where is it you think I'm headed.

SYDNEY

To see my brother, I expect?

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Your brother?

SYDNEY

Why else would Douglas Fairbanks be in this place? Other than to see Charlie Chaplin, or course.

Douglas smiles. How right you are.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Sydney Chaplin. Charlie's manager. Pleasure.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

The pleasure is mine, Sir.

They reach the hallway.

SYDNEY

Well I'm sorry Mister Fairbanks, you are welcome to come in but Charlie started his new project today. He won't be around for a few hours I'm sure.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

That's actually why I'm here. He didn't show.

SYDNEY

Didn't show? Well that's odd. He was supposed to start work for a Mr. Sennet.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Yes, I'm here for Mr. Sennet. And of course I wanted the pleasure of introducing myself to him as well.

SYDNEY

He says it's room 207.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Indeed. Must be his lucky number

The two smile. They come to the door. Sydney gets there first, and searches the door frame on top.

SYDNEY

He told me he'd leave a key on top. He doesn't expect me till late, but there were no delays so... here it is. I thought I'd -

And Sydney puts the key in the lock.

INT. CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sydney opens the door and both he and Douglas Fairbanks walk in. Their eyes go a bit wide at the sight.

SYDNEY

- surprise him.

And we reveal that right on the living room couch, Charlie is fucking the sixteen year old waitress from the Italian restaurant. Charlie doesn't notice them at first.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Charlie?!

Charlie finally stops, his hand in the cookie jar. Douglas leaves Sydney at the door and goes right up to a buck naked Chaplin.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS  
(embarrassed but in his  
usual style, amused)  
Charlie Chaplin. It's a pleasure  
to finally meet you! I've heard so  
much about you.

SMASH CUT TO:

BLACK.

I am what I am: An individual, unique, and different, with a lined history of ancestral promptings and urgings, a history of dreams, desires, and social experiences, all of which I am the sum total.

UNDER THE ABOVE QUOTE, TWO IMAGES FADE IN, ONE ON THE LEFT, THE OTHER ON THE RIGHT.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN, THE MAN, ON THE LEFT - AND -  
CHARLIE CHAPLIN, THE LITTLE TRAMP, ON THE RIGHT.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE BACK IN TO:

- CHARLIE CHAPLIN, 1889 - 1977

FADE OUT.

END CREDITS IMMEDIATELY BEGIN OVER A CLIP OF ONE OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S SHORT, SILENT FILMS. THE NAME OF THE FILM AND ITS YEAR OF RELEASED ARE ALSO SUPER IMPOSED OVER THE FILM ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE SCREEN AS THE CREDITS ROLL ON THE RIGHT.

THE END.