

# THE AMBER ROOM

A European Comedy

by

**Michael Black**

“There is more than enough material to be found among the Records of Königsberg alone for a contemplated second volume”. Th. A. Fischer, **The Scots In Germany**, Edinburgh, 1902

“Capitalism running riot”, *The News of the World*

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*80% of all the world's amber comes from Kaliningrad...*

*The Amber Room* was first performed at the Old Red Lion Theatre, London, March 1998, directed by **Ken McClymont**.

At this time, Kenny Dalglish, having played for Celtic and Liverpool, and then managed Liverpool and Blackburn Rovers, was the manager of Newcastle United.

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## A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

**Michael Black** was born in 1962, and grew up in south Manchester. He was educated at York University, where he completed a degree in European Literature and History, and then went to Cambridge University, where he completed a doctorate in South African anti-apartheid literature.

His plays have been performed in London, Cardiff, Manchester, York and Edinburgh in the UK, and in Timisoara, Iasi and Bucharest abroad. They include *The Life To Come* (Edinburgh 1984, Cardiff 1985), *Pure Walking Evil* (London 1989, National Theatre of Romania 1990/91) and *The Amber Room* (London, 1998).

His play *Pure Walking Evil* is due for performance at the Questors' Theatre London, late 2003, where it had a rehearsed reading in September 2001. It also had a rehearsed reading at the Genesis Guild, New York, May 2002, and at Vox Humana, Los Angeles, Spring 2003.

*Madame Polina* also had a rehearsed reading at the Genesis Guild, New York, 2003.

Michael's play *The Minotaur*, a play about Picasso and his three mistresses set in Paris after the liberation from the Nazis in 1945/6, completed in August 2007, is to have a rehearsed reading by the Moving Parts Theatre Company, Paris, April 5<sup>th</sup> 2009.

Michael's most recently completed play, *The Lady Of The Camellias*, completed in 2009, is an adaptation of the Alexandre Dumas *filis* novel (1848).

## CHARACTERS

**General Yashin:** of the (ex-) Soviet Army. He is a large, bear like man in his late 50s, with bushy eyebrows, bearing as great a likeness to Leonid Brezhnev as is possible. He wears an army general's uniform bedecked with medals, and speaks with a heavy nicotine and vodka influenced Russian accent.

**Adriana Goodblokevskaya:** His secretary. She is pretty and tall, in her early 20s. She wears blue eye shadow (because that's the only colour available), and, unless otherwise stated, also wears dowdy, East European clothes, which, in her vain attempts to enliven them, frequently colour clash. At her desk she keeps a large collection of western travel brochures promoting the likes of Florida and Barbados. She also has several copies of *Hello* magazine, which, along with the travel brochures, she constantly reads whilst on stage but not talking. She speaks with a moderate Russian accent, but with American stressing on certain phrases, as in "have a nice day".

**Mikhail Goodblokevsky:** Her husband. In his early 40s. He has a studious, academic demeanour, and wears the threadbare tweedy clothes to match. Speaks with a moderate Russian accent that clearly aspires to RP English.

**Alan McCoist:** A Scotsman in his mid 30s. Wears a 1940s style double breasted grey suit in a shabby state. A self-taught enthusiast of all things, he talks in an educated Glaswegian accent.

**Herr Manfred Koch:** An immaculately designer dressed west German businessman in his early 40s. He is tall and handsome and speaks impeccable, almost accentless English.

**Ms. Saiko Toshida:** A Japanese businesswoman in her late 30s/early 40s. Speaks with a typical Japanese accent.

All dialogue in the script to be played in the manner of *Casablanca* is emboldened, **like this**.

# ACT ONE

*(General Yashin's office, the barracks of the Russian Army at Kaliningrad. The room is tatty and grey, and yet also conceals an ornamented past beneath the heavily stained wallpaper, for an explanation of which, read the play! There is an old filing cabinet, and a large battered desk, which belongs to General Yashin, and a smaller one, with an old manual typewriter on it, which belongs to Adriana. Both desks have old black Bakelite telephones on them. The General's desk also has a photograph of a tank in action. There is a prominent black and white picture of Lenin on the wall behind the General's desk. There is a picture of Rick's Cafe from Casablanca on the wall above Adriana's desk.*

*The room has two entrance/exits, stage left and right. In general, throughout the play, the General, Adriana and Mikhail Goodblokevsky should enter stage left and exit stage right, and visa versa for Alan McCoist, Herr Koch and Ms. Toshida. Where this is not possible, entrances and exits should simply be as various as possible.*

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*The lights go up to the sound of The Beatles' "Back In The USSR". The General is sound asleep at his desk. The music grinds to a disjointed halt, as if chewed up by tapeheads)*

ADRIANA Another day. Another grey depressing day abandoned in the middle of nowhere. *(She picks up a copy of Hello magazine and leafs through it casually)*. Will I never get out of here? Will I ever travel? When will I live a life of wealth and adventure? *(The phone rings)* Hello. Yes. Wait a minute. General. *(Shouting)* General *(she shakes him)*. General

GENERAL *(stirring)* Yes

ADRIANA It is Moscow. The Office of Military Audit

GENERAL *(Picking up his phone)* Hello. No. Sorry. He not here *(slams phone down)*. What he think I do all day? Work? Kremlin pig. It no him abandoned at edge of crumbled empire. With fleet no one want. Space rockets no one want. Troops with nothing do *(knock at the door)*. I only here for money

ADRIANA *(Adriana goes to open the door)* Hello. Can I help you? *(Enter Herr Koch)*

KOCH General Yashin?

GENERAL Big chief. That me

KOCH Good. Herr Manfred Koch. Deutsche Constructa Ostwerk

GENERAL *(They shake hands)* Hello

ADRIANA The name Koch. It rings a bell

KOCH Reputation's travel fast

ADRIANA Yes, but why?

GENERAL Sit down

KOCH I've been having a look around

GENERAL Why? You like vodka?

KOCH A small one

GENERAL *(The General pours them both large glasses of vodka)* Where you stay?

KOCH The Lenin Hotel

GENERAL No. The Peter The Great Hotel. We change name

KOCH Why not the Frederick The Great Hotel?

GENERAL Because it Peter The Great Hotel

KOCH You know Kaliningrad used to be German

GENERAL Yes

KOCH Prussian to be precise. Of course then it was called Königsburg

GENERAL Yes. But now it Russian

KOCH Must be very difficult though, cut off from the mainland so far west.  
All those independent Baltic states between you and Mother Russia

GENERAL It piece of piss. Have some more vodka *(he fills up the glass to the brim)*. You have papers?

KOCH Yes of course. Passport. With Entry Visa. A letter of introduction from the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin. Oh. And one from the President of the Deutsche Bundesbank validating Deutsche Constructa Ostwerk's credit rating. Not that we really need a credit rating. We've got a cash mountain of almost two billion Deutschemark

GENERAL What you want?

KOCH Well, we've been looking for a site on the Baltic for some time now

GENERAL What for? *(The door knocks. Adriana goes to open it)*

ADRIANA Hello. Can I help ...

TOSHIDA *(Enter Ms. Toshida)* General Yashin?

GENERAL Yes

TOSHIDA President Saiko Toshida of the Toshida Corporation. *(Her mobile phone goes off. The following speech runs simultaneously with Herr Koch's, immediately below)* Hello. Yes. How much? Too high? What's the rate of return? I want 25% p.a. and if they won't agree, I'll sell the lot. Seventy thousand's not enough. Oh. I'll take book price on that. Say eighty five, plus or minus five either way. That way we're covered if the market goes bull or bear. And that's good dealing. Forty seven? You're joking. I don't get out of bed for forty seven. Seventy eight plus or minus one and a half either way, and I want it signed by end of day. Time is money. Who's got the liquidity problem? Us or them? Exactly. Turnover? I'm interested in value added in three, not R and D. No. No. Don't trade. If that's their attitude they can try and raise with someone else. Exactly. Us, and who else? *(she switches the phone off)*

KOCH *(His mobile phone goes)* Hello. Yes. How much? Too high? What's the rate of return? I want 20% p.a. and if they won't agree, I'll sell the lot. Sixty thousand's not enough. Oh. I'll take book price on that. Say seventy five, plus or minus five either way. That way we're covered if the market goes bull or bear. And that's good dealing. Fifty five? You're kidding. I don't get out of bed for fifty five. Eighty three plus or minus one and a half either way, and I want it signed by close of trading. Time is money. Who's got the liquidity problem? Us or them? Exactly. Turnover? I'm interested in value added in three, not R and D. No. No. Don't trade. If that's their attitude they can try and raise with someone else. Exactly. Us, and who else? *(he switches the phone off)*

GENERAL Hello

ADRIANA Psycho. Is that a name or a pathological condition?

TOSHIDA It's a name. S.A.I.K.O. Saiko

ADRIANA I'm not so sure

GENERAL Mrs. Toshida

TOSHIDA Ms. Toshida. I'm no longer married

GENERAL You want some vodka? *(He finds the vodka bottle empty. Pours some of Koch's into a fresh glass. Gives it to Toshida).* You have papers?

TOSHIDA Yes. Of course. Passport. With Entry Visa. A letter of introduction from the Japanese Foreign Minister. Oh. And one the Mitsubishi Bank validating the Toshida Corporation's credit rating

GENERAL If you any good you no need credit rating. What about cash mountain?

KOCH Ms. Toshida! Herr Manfred Koch

TOSHIDA New York Trade Fair 1993

KOCH *(They shake hands)* You bid for the runway extension at JFK

TOSHIDA And you lost to the Japanese

KOCH You must be very disappointed we Germans reached Kaliningrad first

GENERAL Fuck that. We Russians been here fifty year *(there is a knock on the door. Adriana goes to open it)*

ADRIANA Hello. *(Enter Alan McCoist, with a battered suitcase.. Adriana is immediately attracted to him)* Can I help you?

ALAN Er. I'd like to see General Yashin if that's at all convenient

GENERAL You have money?

ALAN Aye. Thanks very much

GENERAL You have papers?

ALAN            There you are (*gives the General a series of dog-eared papers*). Alan  
 McCoist, cultural historian and freelance genealogist, Rutherglen,  
 Glasgow. Pleased to meet you. (*Smiles at Adriana*) Hello

ADRIANA       **Can I tell you a story? I don't know the finish yet**

ALAN            Sorry?

GENERAL       What about passport? There no passport

ALAN            No. It got nicked hitching

GENERAL       This no good I.D.

ALAN            Really. (*Takes out a card from his wallet*) Then try this

GENERAL       What is it?

ALAN            What is it? It's my Glasgow School of Art library card. Designed by  
 Charles Rennie McKintosh himself. Greater proof hath no man

GENERAL       (*Scratches his head. Then stamps two pieces of paper*) Herr Koch. Mrs.  
 Toshida. You permission General Yashin go where you want (*gives  
 Toshida and Koch documents*)

TOSHIDA       Good. We will meet again tomorrow

GENERAL       Of course

KOCH            General Yashin. Auf wiedersehen

GENERAL       (*Shakes their hands*) Dacvidanya. (*Koch and Toshida exit. Adriana  
 holds open the door*)

ADRIANA       Have a nice day

GENERAL       Now. Stop give me bullshit. What you want?

ALAN            I want to see the record of births, deaths and marriages for 1724, if  
 that's at all possible

GENERAL       Why?

ALAN I'm tracking down a missing relative

GENERAL We no have 1724. We only here 1945

ALAN Aye. But the Germans were here for hundreds of years before that.  
Then it was called Königsburg

GENERAL I already have history lesson today, thank you

ALAN Then the records must be here. Somewhere

GENERAL What I say no?

ALAN I'll have my library card back please (*Alan gets up to leave*)

GENERAL Sit down. Listen. Great Patriotic War. It big mess. First Germans. Then  
RAF bomb place to fuck. Then Russians come liberate Europe. The  
records. Who knows where?

ALAN That's why I want to find them

GENERAL Stop this rubbish. I think you CIA

ALAN And this is the hunt for Red October

GENERAL You see it! And you want buy sub! We one just like it. Yours for fifty  
thousand Deutschemark

ALAN Cheque to Boris Yeltsin?

GENERAL No. Cash. To me

ALAN I've no got that much on me

GENERAL You want buy tank then?

ALAN I don't drive

GENERAL Good tank. Very good

ALAN Even so. Not me

GENERAL You agent for terrorist? Taliban? Al Quaida? Hez Bullah? We get all  
sorts

ALAN           Ninety day money back guarantee?

GENERAL       What?

ALAN           Brussels rules and regs mate. Standard practice

GENERAL       For last time. What you want?

ALAN           I told you. The record of births, deaths and marriages for 1724

ADRIANA       General. I think he tells the truth. It is too stupid otherwise

ALAN           Thanks very much love. And I need somewhere to stay as well

GENERAL       You stay here. You sleep on floor

ALAN           Aye. I'll kip anywhere

GENERAL       For thirty Deutschemark a night

ALAN           Ten

GENERAL       Twenty five

ALAN           Ten

GENERAL       Twenty

ADRIANA       Fifteen!

GENERAL       Shut up. Twenty

ALAN           A pleasure doing business with you General. Now, when can I see  
those records? (*Enter Mikhail Goodblokevsky*)

ADRIANA       General. Can I go now?

GENERAL       (*Looks at Goodblokevsky suspiciously*) Alright

ADRIANA       Did you have a good meeting?

MIKHAIL       There was a stupid argument between the Communists and the Russian  
Patriots. A dead certainty and a deader certainty. To think I dreamed of  
being Captain Kirk, and be reduced to this! (*Mikhail and Adriana exit,  
she pushing him out of the door*) Beam me up, Scotty!

ALAN Are they an item?

GENERAL Unfortunately. Mikhail Goodblokevsky. He too good be true. He  
Cosmonaut. Adriana good girl. But I no like him round

MIKHAIL *(Entering)* In my job I have always aimed high

GENERAL Get lost *(Goodblokevsky exits)*. He sniff, sniff, sniff around like tracker  
dog *(Adriana rushes in)*

ADRIANA **When we were in Paris. I had nothing. Not even hope. And then I  
met you** *(she rushes out again)*

ALAN I've never met her before. I've never been to Paris. And why the stupid  
Scandinavian accent?

GENERAL I don't know. But it happen sometime with Westerners she like.  
Kaliningrad funny place. *(Gets another bottle of vodka)* You want  
drink?

ALAN I'm on the wagon

GENERAL We hundreds wagons. One thousand Deutschemark. What you want in  
them? Mortars? Machine guns? Air to ground? Ground to air?  
"General Yashin for your military hardware". What you think for  
advert?

ALAN Needs a bit more dash

GENERAL You know much about freemarket?

ALAN Oh aye. A lifetime's personal experience mate

GENERAL Then you tell me. And I help find 1724

ALAN If you've got a tardis, I'll definitely buy that. Who are the Russian  
Patriots?

GENERAL They want bring back Tsar

ALAN           And the Commies are the Commies?

GENERAL       They want bring back Brezhnev

ALAN           Who d'you support?

GENERAL       Dynamo Tblisi. But the players. They all go Italy, Spain ...

ALAN           Kinkladze went to Manchester City

GENERAL       I know. Why? What for?

ALAN           For twenty thousand British pounds a week

GENERAL       I have trial with Spartak Moscow when young

ALAN           And I work for Kenny Dalglish

GENERAL       The master! I get Swedish TV big English football. Running off the  
ball

ALAN           Aye. But what d'you think about politics?

GENERAL       I think I get big migraine (*roar of a propeller plane landing goes  
across the stage. Everything shakes*)

ALAN           (*Shouts*) I'm not surprised. Sounds like an earthquake

GENERAL       (*Shouts*) It plane from Moscow. (*Waits for noise to subside*) Leonid.  
He like low fly joke. Have a drink

ALAN           No. I've a funny feeling General. If you and I start drinking. That'll be  
the end

GENERAL       Then let's hope it happy one. What about freemarket?

ALAN           Oh. Right. Commit to memory. One. The market is always right. Two.  
That can't possibly be true. One minute you're a raging Asian tiger  
economy, and three months later you're an economic basket case with  
an accumulated debt that's 150% of gross domestic product. Three.  
The most competitive product gains the biggest market. Four. The

opposite is true if the product is a nuclear power station - or a nuclear anything else for that matter. Five. Never forget, if you don't want a slump, don't have a boom. Six. Everyone forgets this. Seven ...

GENERAL Wait a minute. It no make sense

ALAN That's what they all say to start off with. Remember the central paradox. The very public that is facing ever more and more insecure employment prospects due to the stockmarket demand for sky high returns is the same public that invests in private pensions and insurance companies, which is what creates stockmarket investment return demands in the first place. I'll give you another lesson tomorrow.  
*(Starts unrolling his sleeping bag on the floor)* Is here alright?

GENERAL Yes. What about cash mountain?

ALAN It's just a big mountain of money that grows in the bank

GENERAL How?

ALAN That's a bit advanced for now. But you could try reading Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. A pack of lies, but very convincing ...

GENERAL A cash mountain. It what I want. And then I retire

ALAN *(Pointing to photograph on General's desk)* Who's that?

GENERAL That? That my father in tank. In Great Patriotic War. Stalingrad. And next to him. Boris Yeltzin father. He tank man too. And me tank man. And Boris tank man too. I know Boris. We serve together. And now he big chief. So I ring him. I say I stuck Kaliningrad. And whole army from Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, it retreat here. And whole fleet. And thousands troops sit on bum and get pissed. And

I say Boris. What I do? Where I put weapons? What I do troop? And I wait. But nothing come. My beautiful Red Army. It go rusty

ALAN Cheer up General. There's always tomorrow

GENERAL That what I afraid of (*finishes vodka glass. Fills it up again. Downs glass in one*). Good night. (*He exits*)

ALAN Alan McCoist. Where are you? (*He goes to sleep. Lights go down. In the semi-darkness, enter Herr Koch. He is furtive, and immediately rifles through General Yashin's desk drawers, and then the filing cabinet. Enter Toshida*)

KOCH Ah. Ms Toshida. (*He switches on a table lamp*) As punctual as ever. It was very clever the way you disguised our last meeting. What was it? The runway extension at JFK?

TOSHIDA (*Laughs*) If only they knew the truth

KOCH Shivering in a snowbound forest in Poland

TOSHIDA Yet another false lead

KOCH That's what you'd say if it wasn't

TOSHIDA You were there too. How could I be lying?

KOCH My intelligence tracked you to Bolivia. How long were you there?

TOSHIDA Long enough. But most of the Second World War survivors are dead now, and the authorities won't co-operate

KOCH Surely. At a price

TOSHIDA Of course. But could you rely on them to deliver? As for Kaliningrad, there's no hope here

KOCH And yet, by a strange coincidence, we meet again

TOSHIDA I'm here on other business

KOCH            So am I. So there should be no conflict of interests

TOSHIDA        None whatsoever

KOCH            *(Exiting)* Oh, by the way, the filing cabinet is locked *(Koch exits.*  
*Toshida rifles the filing cabinet, and the drawers of the General's desk,*  
*from which she pulls out a wallpaper scraper. She holds it up,*  
*obviously mystified, immediately dismisses its signifance, and puts it*  
*back. Then she switches off table lamp and exits. McCoist, who has*  
*been listening to the entire conversation, remains apparently*  
*comatose. A torch light appears in the doorway. Enter Mikhail*  
*Goodblokevsky and Adriana on tip toes. Goodblokevsky has a dog-*  
*eared script rolled up in his pocket. Adriana knocks over a bin full of*  
*empty vodka bottles)*

MIKHAIL        Shuuussh! *(He puts his hand over Alan's mouth. Alan starts struggling)*  
 Mr. McCoist. Not a word

ADRIANA        Be careful with him! He could be our salvation!

MIKHAIL        What do you know about the Amber Room? *(Alan keeps struggling.*  
*Adriana puts on a table lamp. Alan frees himself from Mikhail's hand)*

ALAN            The Amber what? Oh. Hello

ADRIANA        *(Whispers)* You must be quiet. If the General hears us he will suspect

ALAN            Suspect what?

MIKHAIL        Suspect what we suspect you know

ALAN            Do I suspect you want to know what you suspect I suspect you suspect  
 I know?

MIKHAIL        Yes

ALAN            Well I'm sorry. But I don't know anything

MIKHAIL But you want to, and so do we

ALAN *(Raising his voice)* I'm just trying to get some sleep!

ADRIANA Shuuussh! *(Adriana and Goodblokevsky run to each of the entrances, and check whether anyone has heard them)*

MIKHAIL Come now Mr. McCoist. The Amber Room is why you are so interested in 1724

ADRIANA It must be. They were still building it then

ALAN I've never heard of it

MIKHAIL It's still why you're so interested in 1724, believe me

ALAN Look. I'm here to try and find the birth certificate of a long lost relative. It's got nothing to do with Amber Rooms. And besides, I thought you were a Cosmonaut

MIKHAIL I was a Cosmonaut. But they've sacked me. There is no money any more

ADRIANA You must help us

ALAN I'm helping no one but myself. *(Goes towards the door)* Goodnight

MIKHAIL The Amber Room Mr. McCoist is worth maybe fifty million dollars

ALAN They sacked you! Just like that! That's terrible

ADRIANA It's brought him crashing down to earth

ALAN Have a drink

MIKHAIL No thank you. The General's vodka. It is like turpentine

ALAN *(He pours two glasses for Adriana and Mikhail)* All vodka's like turpentine

MIKHAIL True

ALAN So. The low down on the Amber Room please ...

- MIKHAIL The Amber Room was a present of Frederick William of Prussia to Peter the Great of Russia ...
- ADRIANA In 1716
- MIKHAIL ... in 1716 to celebrate a strategic alliance between them against ...
- ADRIANA ... Denmark and England.
- MIKHAIL ... Denmark and England. It was fantastically beautiful and widely known as the ...
- ADRIANA ... Eighth Wonder of the world.
- MIKHAIL ... Eighth Wonder of the World. It was the largest work of art ever made out of amber, weighing some six tons, and it took a team of craftsmen ten years to carve it, here, in what was then the old Prussian town of ...
- ALAN ... Königsburg!
- MIKHAIL ... Königsburg. During its construction, no expense was spared, and the Amber Room was backed entirely in gold leaf for extra radiance ...
- ADRIANA **When we were in Paris**
- ALAN Why d'you keep saying that?
- ADRIANA **Can I tell you a story? I don't know the finish yet**
- ALAN Then why start? (*Adriana rushes out in tears*) That's the third time she's done that
- MIKHAIL I'm sorry. I was hoping this wouldn't happen. My wife is younger than me. Maybe too much younger
- ALAN No she's not
- MIKHAIL Thank you. She has a pathological fascination with Western culture that is retarding her. She feels everything in the East is inferior.

Unfortunately, this is increasingly common amongst the young since glasnost. They don't have enough self-respect. But until she has lived her western fantasy role, there is no way this will change

ALAN What's the fantasy? To buy the Amber Room?

MIKHAIL Buy it? How can anyone buy it? No one knows where it is. No. The fantasy is for her to be Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca*, and for you to be Humphrey Bogart

ALAN Wait a minute. Your wife's amateur dramatics are nothing to do with me

MIKHAIL Oh yes they are

ALAN Oh no they're not

MIKHAIL Oh yes they are

ALAN Oh no they're not. Go back to your Space Station

MIKHAIL Then your chance of the Amber Room - not to mention 50 million dollars - has gone forever

ALAN Wait. I'm dubious, but intrigued. Tell me more

MIKHAIL Adriana is frequently hysterical, as you can see. Confronted with the object of her fantasy, if that object refuses to act the role she requires, her life stops making sense. Fantasy and reality clash within her, and she becomes incapable of all coherent action. If you refuse her, she will be ruined for life. And so will I. I overwhelmed her when we met. She loves me but wishes to leave. To stay with me she must reaffirm her freedom to go. To cure ourselves of the cliché we must submerge ourselves in the cliché. And in this case the cliché is *Casablanca*

ALAN Are you very, very bright, or just plain stupid?

- MIKHAIL     You will co-operate?
- ALAN         That depends on what you know about the Amber Room. What happened next?
- MIKHAIL     For more than two hundred years, the Amber Room graced the Catharine Summer Palace of the Tsars in Pushkin, outside St. Petersburg. And then came the Second World War ...
- ALAN         And then what?
- MIKHAIL     Please. We don't have much time. *Casablanca* ...
- ALAN         OK. But I've only seen it the once. Remind me of the plot
- MIKHAIL     Rick Blaine runs a cafe in Casablanca, a city technically independent, but hardly so in practice, being surrounded by the Nazi held territories of north Africa. It is an enclave city, like Kaliningrad. It is full of people running from war, or from love, or both. And, like Kaliningrad, it is a trap. Everyone wants to leave, but very few can. Rick has come to escape his past in Paris, to escape the memory of a woman who left him. But when Ilse Lund turns up the memory arrives with her. And she is with a man Rick does not know, one Victor Lazslo. In many respects he is the most interesting character, but also the least convincing. A Czech, is Victor merely a resistance leader, or some kind of protean symbol of world democracy? In fact, none of the characters in *Casablanca* are psychologically credible, as any one who has read Umberto Eco's essay *Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage* will surely know
- ALAN         Get on with it

MIKHAIL That's it for now. I'll tell you more as we go along. In the meantime, here's the script

ALAN (*He takes it*) How do I know you know anything worth knowing about the Amber Room?

MIKHAIL Why d'you think the General dislikes me?

ALAN I've a few conditions. No white tuxedos. And no pianos playing that bloody song because I hate it. And definitely no Nazis. I've enough on my plate already

MIKHAIL Perfect. Because you can't use the exact script anyway

ALAN Why not?

MIKHAIL It's still in copyright (*Mikhail exits*)

ALAN Wait! How d'you play Humphrey Bogart when you don't drink and you don't smoke? (*Light comes through the window. Morning*)

GENERAL (*Entering, singing "Cos we are living in a material world, and I am a material General"*) Dobroye utro Alan. As you English say. Tomorrow different mug of tea. You sleep good?

ALAN Great. Look. General. I'm not English. I'm Scottish

GENERAL Oh shit. You oppressed minority. Another one!

ALAN What?

GENERAL Too many oppesed minority. Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Georgians, Ukrainians, Azerbaijanis. And all hate Russians. I sick of it. I give you bed. Why you hate me?

ALAN I don't hate you. As a matter of fact I quite like you

GENERAL You do?

ALAN Yes. I think you're a nice bloke. For a Russian

GENERAL He like me! No one say that so long. In Afghanistan, no one say "I like you suppress my people". I like you too Alan (*he kisses him on both cheeks*). I very happy. Have a vodka. (*The phone rings*) Hello. Yes I have them. I meet you Peter The Great Hotel. Same place Lenin Hotel. At back. One hour. Good (*puts phone down. Pours himself the vodka*). I make deal. I sell five tank to Serbian. (*Holds up his glass*) Here's to cash mountain

ALAN Aye. Great

GENERAL So. Freemarket. Lesson two

ALAN Right. Never let rank hypocrisy get in the way of political advantage. For example, at exactly the same time Reagan and Thatcher were stamping on unions in the west, they were championing free trade unions in Poland!

GENERAL Solidarnosc!

ALAN If only. Welcome to the calumnific cathedral of capitalism! If you don't believe in it you've got no chance, but believing in it beggars belief itself! Never forget the product's the bottom line. And always remember the customer is always right

GENERAL How?

ALAN Because you're trying to sell something to him. So you've got to cajole. Be polite. For example. I walk in a shop. What do you say?

GENERAL What you want?

ALAN No! You say "hello sir. Isn't it a nice day"

GENERAL But it lousy day

ALAN And I say "two plus two is five". And you say?

GENERAL You thick bastard

ALAN No! You say "of course sir. What can I do for you?"

GENERAL What about cash mountain?

ALAN You've got to sell something first. In fact, you've got to sell a lot first.  
Or asset strip a lot. Ask Lord Hanson

GENERAL (*Enter Koch*) Herr Koch. Hello. What is two plus two?

KOCH Four

GENERAL Of course sir. What can I do for you?

KOCH A great deal hopefully. Of course, it's early days yet, but I looked  
round the old dry dock at Baltjisk, and the possibilities are endless

GENERAL You want to buy subs? Whole fleet. Big discount

KOCH Submarines aren't really our line. Although I suppose we could use one  
as a tourist curio

GENERAL There no tourists Kaliningrad

KOCH General, what you need is a free economic zone

ALAN Wait a minute. Who for?

GENERAL Shut up. Customer always right

KOCH You see, what the entrepreneur wants is a free ride. Hand. Get rid of  
the red tape. Let the spirit of enterprise free, and in five years time, this  
place will be transformed

GENERAL For what?

ALAN For rich Germans

KOCH Königsburg is German

GENERAL (*Thumping table*) Kaliningrad Russian. In Great Patriotic War. We  
twenty million dead. This reward

ALAN            So what were Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia for?

GENERAL       More reward

KOCH           Well General? Give us the free economic zone, and then we can start seriously talking

GENERAL       We talk now

KOCH           But not seriously. As soon as we get the big OK, you'll be the first to know. And you'll just love it!

GENERAL       I need Moscow

KOCH           Of course. As long as it takes. Just make sure it's quick. After all, there's always Danzig

GENERAL       Gdansk

KOCH           Yes. Danzig. The Poles are crying out for this kind of opportunity  
*(Koch exits)*

GENERAL       Have a nice day. Free economic zone. What is it?

ALAN           It's a kind of superannuated freemarket. Business park. *(Enter Adriana, late for work, and looking flustered. The General looks sternly at his watch)* Tax haven

GENERAL       Big cash mountain. Adriana. Get Moscow *(Adriana tries to ring Moscow. The General's phone rings at the same time)*. Yashin. Zdravstvoetye. What want? Mig 21, 23, 25? Twenty one, twenty three, twenty five thousand dollars. Roubles? You need truck. Of course *(Adriana loses her line. Redials frustratedly)* Yes. You fly away. Cash. Who count plane? I count. But I no count. I big memory problem.  
*(Mikhail enters. The General puts phone down abruptly)*

- MIKHAIL Rick Blaine is a very complex part. He is a man whose pursuit of self-interest is constantly at odds with his sympathy for the underdog. Are you sure you can handle it?
- GENERAL What you want?
- MIKHAIL You will sign my exit visa for the plane please
- GENERAL No. How many times no? Where you want go
- MIKHAIL Cape Canaveral. I want to enlist my services with NASA and fly in the space shuttle. It is the way forward, and my right as a Russian citizen
- GENERAL Right? What right? This Kaliningrad. It all wrong (*Adriana starts crying. General pours a glass. Adriana drinks it quickly. Immediately pours and drinks another one. Enter Toshida. To Goodblokevsky*) Piss off (*Toshida starts to exit*) No. Mrs. Toshida. Not you ...
- TOSHIDA ... Ms. Toshida
- GENERAL Ms. Toshida. Wait. Hello. What I do you for? Please. Sit down
- ADRIANA General. I have Moscow
- MIKHAIL I have no job. Why do you keep me here?
- GENERAL Goodblokevsky. Piss off. (*Mikhail exits. General picks up the phone*) Hello. Sergei. I want free economic haven
- ALAN Zone
- GENERAL Zone. Yes. Hello. (*The phone goes dead*) Hello. Telephone pig
- TOSHIDA A free economic zone?
- GENERAL Things move Kaliningrad
- TOSHIDA Five years tax free status at the minimum. Ten would be better. After all, the capital costs of mining are very high
- GENERAL Mining?

TOSHIDA Yes. We want to develop the Kaliningrad amber reserves. 80% of the world's supply, all in one place. But we'd need Russian government guarantees to stamp out the blackmarket

GENERAL Blackmarket! I spit on it. *(Enter Koch)* No Moscow. I try

KOCH Of course we'd need an exclusive deal. All subcontracting done through us. And no concessions to our competitors

GENERAL But it freemarket

KOCH Exactly *(puts document on General's desk)*. Sign here

ALAN No way

GENERAL Sign here for what?

KOCH It's still under wraps. But it'll put you right up there. Paris in the west, Königsburg in the east

GENERAL It big shit

KOCH The biggest

GENERAL I want BMW

KOCH Fine

ADRIANA *(Reading from an advert in Hello)* The BMW 5 series. 24 valves, central locking, Z axle traction control, ABS, and a CAT

GENERAL I don't want a cat

ADRIANA You've got to have a CAT. They're standard

KOCH Catalytic converter. It takes pollutants out of the exhaust

GENERAL *(Pointing to Adriana's advert)* You get me one like that?

KOCH Not a problem. It's an exclusive deal then?

GENERAL I speak Mrs. Toshida

KOCH Oh. Hello again. I didn't notice you were here

- GENERAL *(Ushering Koch to the door)* Please
- KOCH Just a tourist visit is it?
- TOSHIDA What are you planning Koch?
- KOCH Hotels, yachting marinas ...
- TOSHIDA With reserved sun lounges?
- KOCH Auf weidersehen *(Koch exits)*
- TOSHIDA Service industries can be very unreliable. There's no export potential. They just suck in imports. But something like mining. If you control the world's supply, you can fix your own price. Much more stable. And it's all exports
- GENERAL I need Moscow
- TOSHIDA Yes. I know
- GENERAL A BMW. With a CAT. I lie down at exhaust, and breathe fresh air!
- TOSHIDA Excuse me. I'll get you a Lexus. GS400SE. 0 to 60 in six seconds. Leather upholstery, head lamp washers, computerised air conditioning and satellite navigation. I'll have the contracts drawn up immediately
- GENERAL Yes. Dacvidanya
- ADRIANA *(Shows Toshida to the door)* Missing you already *(Toshida exits)*
- GENERAL *(The phone rings)* Hello. Mig. What Mig? Good Mig. Yes Mig. Big Mig. Your Mig. Deal. *(Puts phone down)* I go see man about Mig
- ALAN General. What about my records? *(The General exits. To Adriana)* I've got a few things to do myself *(he starts to exit)*
- ADRIANA *(Pushing him back to centre stage)* You made a deal
- ALAN **I was wondering if you'd changed**
- ADRIANA **The last time we met was ...**

ALAN           **Was *La Belle Aurore***

ADRIANA       **The day the Germans marched into Paris**

ALAN           I said no Nazis

ADRIANA       They're in the plot

ALAN           **They wore grey. You wore blue.** Then we'll change it

ADRIANA       **Yes. I remember the dress**

ALAN           **Why d'you have to turn up in Kaliningrad? There are other places**

ADRIANA       **I didn't know you were here**

ALAN           **How long did we have together?**

ADRIANA       **I didn't count the days**

ALAN           **Well I did. But it's the last one that keeps coming back. Some poor sucker standing at the station in the rain with a comical look on his face because he don't know where his guts just got lost. Maybe some dame took off with them. D'you come here to tell me why?**

ADRIANA       **Can I tell you a story? I don't know the finish yet**

ALAN           **Sure. Go ahead and tell it. I got all year. How long have you got?**

ADRIANA       **It's about a girl who came to Paris from her home in Trondheim. At a dinner party she met a man, a very brave man about whom she had heard the whole of her life. He showed her a whole new beautiful world full of knowledge and philosophy and ideas. She looked up to him. Worshipped him. She had feelings she thought were love**

ALAN           **Well it sure is cute. You wanna hear my story? As a matter of fact I got a lot of stories. And they all begin the same way. "Mister, I**

**met a guy when I was a kid''. Not that funny huh? Well I ain't laughing at yours either**

ADRIANA **The Rick I knew in Paris would understand. But I don't know the Rick who looks at me with such hatred. We never knew each other. We only ever wanted to. If we leave it that way maybe we will remember Paris and not Kaliningrad** *(she leaves. Enter the General)*

ALAN **(Pause) Of all the barracks in all the arms dumps in all the world, and she has to walk into yours**

GENERAL She walk in every day. She work here. So what?

ALAN You sold your Mig?

GENERAL I sell three Mig. I rich. Have a drink *(he pours himself a large vodka)*

ALAN No thanks

GENERAL Cheers *(he downs the vodka and pours another one)*. I rich at last!

ALAN Why won't you give Goodblokevsky an exit visa?

GENERAL Goodblokevsky. Badblokevsky. I no care

ALAN It wouldn't have anything to do with Amber Rooms would it?

GENERAL I no give shit exit visa, Goodblokevsky, Mig, tank, Amber Room, nothing no more. How you know about this?

ALAN Common knowledge

GENERAL It big dream for idiots. I no give shit. I fifty thousand dollars. I go home

ALAN Fifty thousand? That's not as much as you think it is

GENERAL It fortune! You jealous. Dacvidanya Kaliningrad. I no give shit with you no more neither

ALAN           Freemarket lesson three General

GENERAL       Fuck freemarket

ALAN           Maximise your profit margin. You're selling your hardware too cheap,  
because you've only got a niche market

GENERAL       I go home Siberia. I retire

ALAN           With the small volume of sales you've got, you need to market  
exclusively. You've no got the critical mass to go cheap and cheerful

GENERAL       I very cheerful. I go home Siberia. I miss permafrost. I miss the winters  
where you no see sun for four month

ALAN           What about inflation?

GENERAL       I fifty thousand dollars Alan. No rouble rubbish

ALAN           Even so

GENERAL       I buy dacha. With sauna. And MTV. (*He dances whilst he sings; "That  
ain't working, that way do it, play guitar on MTV, that ain't working  
..."*)

ALAN           General. As your impromptu financial adviser, under the Financial  
Services Act 1987 it's my responsibility to make sure you don't do  
anything stupid. If you want to retire, you need to sell more, or sell the  
same amount for more. And whilst you're about it, you can tell me the  
real reason you don't like Goodblokevsky

GENERAL       He tell lies about me

ALAN           What sort of lies?

GENERAL       Weapons. Blackmarket

ALAN           Shocking

GENERAL Honest pig. Cosmonauts the big heros. But now he sacked he want write book corruption tall places. Book about me. With KGB he at Gulag, but with Yeltsin he free. So I try be nice. I say "Look, Goodblokevsky, I want break your bones. But maybe I won't. This blackmarket. General Yashin copyright. You shoot mouth. All General do it. And then what point book? This way only me". I miss KGB. You knew where you stood. But I more miss Siberia. My hometown of Verkoyansk. It is the coldest town in world. I am so proud of it

ADRIANA (*Entering*) I hate you. I hate you. You make a cash mountain for yourself, but you make Mikhail stay here like a prisoner. All he wants to do is fly in a plane! Seventeen years a Cosmonaut and he never even left the ground!

GENERAL Shut up and get Moscow

ADRIANA And I am stuck here too

GENERAL Get Moscow. We make deal for amber and fuck knows what, but it's big

ALAN General

GENERAL Get Moscow (*Adriana starts dialling*)

ALAN You're not thinking straight

GENERAL I make big deal. Get critic mass like you want

ALAN You'll get ripped off

GENERAL No. Others. Not me

ADRIANA I have Moscow (*the General picks up the phone*)

GENERAL Hello. Sergei

ADRIANA *(Presses down the phone receiver switch to disconnect the General)*  
 You can only speak with Moscow if you give Mikhail the exit visa

GENERAL Listen. I retire. Ask next General *(starts redialling number)*

ADRIANA And I want an exit visa for me as well. To New York

ALAN New York? Why d'you want to go to New York?

ADRIANA Money. A chauffeur. A stretched limousine and an apartment on the  
 57th floor of the Empire State

ALAN What?!

KOCH *(Entering)* You have Moscow?

GENERAL I try *(starts dialling)*

KOCH Don't let me down General. We've nearly clinched it

GENERAL *(On phone)* Hello. Sergei. We make deal. Free economic zone. Yes? I  
 get BMW. And you get Lexus! Hello. Hello *(phone goes dead)*

KOCH Never mind. I have the contract right here General, and they'll just love  
 it *(Alan goes to pick up the contract. Koch puts his hand on it to stop  
 him)*. Paris and Königsburg. The two new cultural capitals of Europe

GENERAL Paris and Kaliningrad? It good. I sign

ALAN What about Moscow?

GENERAL I go Moscow. Fly plane myself. They like this

TOSHIDA *(Entering)* Herr Koch

GENERAL Japanese get amber. We make big buck

KOCH Oh no. We still need it exclusive

GENERAL You exclusive together. I sign with you. I sign with you. I give you  
 office both in corridor. *(Hugs both Toshida and Koch)* General Yashin  
 happy *(takes contract from Toshida)*. This amber contract?

TOSHIDA Yes

GENERAL Good

KOCH You're making a big mistake

GENERAL I sign for BMW here (*he signs*). I sign for amber mining here

ALAN Wait a moment. What's that bit?

TOSHIDA That? That's nothing. It just says whatever we find on the mine lands  
we keep

ALAN Treasure trove?

TOSHIDA If you like

GENERAL I no sign! You no want amber mining. You want rights for Amber  
Room!

ALAN Is that what this is all about?

TOSHIDA Why do you want to know? Who do you work for?

ALAN I work for myself. And all I want is the record of births, deaths and  
marriages for 1724, which I might add General, is proving just as  
elusive as an exit visa

GENERAL This bull and cock story. I no believe it never. You want Amber Room  
too

ALAN I don't

GENERAL Then why you want records?

TOSHIDA Who are you working for?

ALAN No one owns me pal

TOSHIDA The Amber Room is too big for one man. You must work for someone

ALAN You tell me who I work for, and I'll tell you where the Amber Room is

GENERAL So. You know

ALAN No. I don't know. And I don't work for anyone

KOCH Gentleman. This conversation is a waste of time. No one knows where the Amber Room is. And if they do, it is German

GENERAL It Russian. The Germans steal it

KOCH Who made it?

TOSHIDA If the Japanese own the amber mines, it is ours

GENERAL I no sign. You get deal for amber mine. It good deal. But I no sell Amber Room for one hundred million dollars

KOCH What we're planning makes that look like pocket money

TOSHIDA (*To General*) You know where it is. If you didn't know you wouldn't care

GENERAL No. Ask him. He knows with his stupid records

ALAN I do not. I'd never even heard of the Amber Room until I came here. It's not what I'm after

TOSHIDA That's what you'd say if it was

ALAN D'you realise how stupid that argument is?

ADRIANA Then why are you here?

ALAN (*Pause*) I'm here because Immanuel Kant was born, lived, worked and died here. In the ancient Prussian university town of Königsburg he sat down and wrote *The Critique of Pure Reason*, which judging by the way you lot carry on you could all do with reading. Sod riches! To hell with a life of leisure! I came here because I want to see Immanuel Kant's birth certificate, which was registered with the city authorities in 1724. And why do I want to see it? Because, Herr Koch, doubtless you and most other people think Immanuel Kant was a German. Well I'm

here to prove something quite contrary, something which fundamentally alters the previously presumed intellectual contributions of the great nations. I'm here to prove that Immanuel Kant was Scottish

## **INTERVAL**

## ACT TWO

*(Morning. The General's office continued. Alan gets out of his sleeping bed. He is wearing tartan boxer shorts and an "Braveheart" T-shirt. He takes out some bread from his suitcase, and puts it in a toaster on top of the filing cabinet. He finds his wash bag, and exits)*

ADRIANA *(Entering)* Men! I am surrounded by cretinous men! I'm sick of envy, I'm sick of greed. I'm sick of being leered at by taxi drivers who earn more than men who have trained half their lives to go to the stars. I'm sick of going home to a dingy flat every night filled with Mikhail's dead dream models of space rockets and I'm sick to death of staring half the night away looking at a photograph of Yuri Gagarin and a dog called Laika! The race for the moon! We lost it! The race for Mars! Never happened. And "the Mir Space Station holds the record for the longest continuous orbit". So what? Have you ever thought how smelly it must be! All that B.O. and boiled cabbage! I mean you can't exactly open a window! What a miracle. Man's big dream is just a hell in the sky! *(Enter McCoist, still cleaning his teeth)* Men! They have no dreams, only ambitions. The world is round but they keep flying off the planet in straight lines!

ALAN Adriana. What's your problem?

ADRIANA What's yours?

ALAN           How to re-establish the ethical base of social democracy without appealing to a discredited Marxist inheritance. How to embrace the dynamism of the market without becoming its slave. How to stop Celtic winning the League again. Those are my problems

ADRIANA       Your problem is you think Immanuel Kant is Scottish

ALAN           Well he is

ADRIANA       Rubbish. I took you for a man of honour. But you talk this drivel

ALAN           Drivel? Then why did he write to the Bishop of Oslo on 26th May 1764 celebrating his Scottish ancestry? And why his early fascination with the works of David Hume?

TOSHIDA       *(Entering hurriedly)* Mr. McCoist. I know who you are working for

ALAN           You do?

TOSHIDA       Yes. And I want to make a deal with him. He's obviously a very smart man

ALAN           He is. Aye. Who is he?

GENERAL       Mr. DalGLISH

ALAN           Oh. *(Pause)* Damn! How d'you find out? He'll kill me

TOSHIDA       Not when he knows how much we'll pay for a partnership

ALAN           Ms. Toshida. Listen. He's very single minded

TOSHIDA       So am I. Where does he work? London? Frankfurt?

ALAN           New ...

TOSHIDA       ... York?

ALAN           No. Er. Newcastle

TOSHIDA       Is it a secret?

ALAN           Sort of. Does alot of sensitive R and D. Wee bit difficult with the  
press. Taciturn

TOSHIDA       What's the address?

ALAN           St. James' Park. Big industrial estate. But the training ... the really  
sensitive stuff goes on at Maiden Castle. No members of the public  
allowed

TOSHIDA       Will he be there?

ALAN           Should be

TOSHIDA       I must ring him

ALAN           Either that, or he's playing golf with Alan Hansen

TOSHIDA       Sorry?

ALAN           Nothing (*Adriana holds the door open*)

ADRIANA       Have a nice day (*Toshida exits*)

ALAN           And she thinks she's so smart ...

ADRIANA       Kant is not a very Scottish name

ALAN           That's because everyone in Scotland called Kant moved to Germany  
(*enter the General with a some bottles of water*). General. Why did you  
tell Toshida that I work for Kenny Dalglish?

GENERAL       You said you did. And I need the money

ALAN           I thought you'd retired

GENERAL       Not any more. (*He starts watering down his vodka bottles*) They put  
prices up. One thousand percent. Overnight. I no get dacha. I no go  
Siberia

ALAN           How much did she give you?

GENERAL       A thousand dollars

ALAN           *(Holds his hands out)* 500

GENERAL       It's not much

ALAN           The joke's on me

GENERAL       It on her. Now I know Toshida want Amber Room for sure. And she think you know where is

ALAN           I think Goodblokevsky knows where it is

ADRIANA       You think Immanuel Kant is Scottish *(she exits)*

ALAN           500 and I'll tell you how to rebuild your fortune

GENERAL       I no need it. I still got Koch. He make Kaliningrad Paris and make me big chief. With BMW

ALAN           Is that right?

GENERAL       That right

ALAN           So why the fun and games with Toshida?

GENERAL       You think I say "no" she go away?

ALAN           But what do I do?

GENERAL       Ask Kenny

ALAN           What?

GENERAL       Run off ball. FA Cup Final. 1986 when Soviet Union still shit scare world. *(The General describes the following on his desk using bottles, glasses etc. to represent the goalposts, the players etc.)* Whelan right midfield. With ball. Dalglish run right to left edge penalty box. Defender follow. Yes? Whelan think pass. Dalglish run that way. Defender follow that way. Whelan pass ball in big hole here. Rush run in big hole. Rush shoot. 3-1!

ALAN           League and Cup double sir, that'll do nicely

GENERAL Dalglish make goal but stand by corner flag. Toshida. You cross  
double her

ALAN 500

GENERAL (*Enter Koch*) Manfred. My friend! We make deal yet?

KOCH We do indeed. It gives me the greatest possible pleasure to announce  
probably the biggest entertainment deal of all time. And it's going to  
happen right here

GENERAL Good. What is it?

KOCH (*Putting on Mickey Mouse ears*) PrussoDisney! Florida, California,  
Paris and ... Königsburg!

ALAN Oh my God. Mickey Mouse with jackboots

GENERAL PrussoDisney?!

KOCH I only got the go ahead from LA minutes ago

GENERAL So. I think I get BMW. But I get Yogi Bear costume instead

ALAN Wise up General. Yogi Bear lives in Jellystone Park with Booboo.  
That's Hanna Barbara

KOCH This is quality. You'll love it! To the future!

GENERAL (*They shake hands*) To the past

KOCH They're faxing the contract through right now. Don't go away (*he exits*)

GENERAL Where he think I go?

ALAN Could be worse General. He could be planning to mass produce day-  
glo busts of Lenin

GENERAL That be better. I like Lenin. I always like Lenin. There nothing wrong  
Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov and never was not. This insult

ALAN 500

GENERAL *(Giving him the money)* 470. The rent

ALAN 480. The rent *(the General gives Alan the other 10 dollars)*. Let's face it General. You've screwed up badly

GENERAL In warehouse we lots chemicals to repel NATO aggressor. I will dump them on site

ALAN I think that's a wee bit vindictive

GENERAL I fucking big vindictive. He think I no dignity?

ALAN So what? You've got a cash mountain to rebuild General

GENERAL How?

ALAN Sell it exclusive. None of this bargain basement garbage. Quality merchandise at a quality price. "The Mig 23. The only aircraft to match an F15 at 60,000 feet. The T54. The only tank in the world that can take out a Challenger ..."

MIKHAIL *(Entering)* PrussoDisney. Is it true? And on the site of the new launchpad!

GENERAL Tell me where Amber Room is, and I tell you

MIKHAIL What sort of an answer is that?

GENERAL I go meet Serbian. Rebuild business. "General Yashin ..."

ALAN/GENERAL *(together)* "... Quality merchandise at a quality price"

ALAN And come back with my records! *(General exits)*

MIKHAIL How can you encourage him?

ALAN Keeps him out of trouble

MIKHAIL I must follow him

ALAN Wait a minute. What happened to the Amber Room during ... *(Mikhail follows the General's exit)*

TOSHIDA *(Entering hurriedly)* Mr. McCoist

ALAN Did you speak to Mr. Dalglish then?

TOSHIDA I spoke to his secretary

ALAN What did she say?

TOSHIDA She said he was still training

ALAN Oh. Thursday. Of course. I'll let you into a secret. Wizard of high finance though Mr. Dalglish is, he's never actually finished his accountancy exams, and Thursday's his day at Newcastle tech. Ring back later

TOSHIDA Yes. I will *(exits as Adriana enters. She holds the door for her)*

ADRIANA Missing you already *(Adriana stands at the door. She is dressed as Ingrid Bergman in the market scene in Casablanca; cream dress with a plain horizontally striped blouse and a large cream wide brimmed hat. She rushes across to Alan and gives him a drink and a cigarette. He coughs. Then she resumes her act. Silence)*

ALAN **Well, I was expecting you. But not quite so soon. Did you run out on me because you knew what it would be like? Constantly hunted by people dumb enough to believe Immanuel Kant's a German?**

ADRIANA **Rick. We loved each other once**

ALAN **Cut it sugar. You'd say anything now to get what you want**

ADRIANA **You want to feel sorry for yourself don't you. There's so much at stake and all you can think of is your own feelings. You don't give a damn. One woman has hurt you and now you'll take your revenge on the rest of the world. You're a coward. And weak. No.**

**Oh Rick. You're our last hope. If Mikhail doesn't get that exit visa, he will die in Kaliningrad**

- ALAN No he won't. He'll just get a bit pissed off
- ADRIANA If he stays here long enough he'll die here
- ALAN Won't we all. **It's a good spot for it**
- ADRIANA **Alright. I tried to reason with you** (*pulls a gun on him*)
- ALAN Adriana. Steady
- ADRIANA I've only got one life. **I want the exit visa**
- ALAN The General's got them
- ADRIANA You must get one for Mikhail
- ALAN How can I do that if you shoot me first?
- ADRIANA **Don't force me Rick**
- ALAN (*Pause. Then walks towards the gun*) **Go ahead. You'll be doing me a favour**
- ADRIANA (*She puts the gun down*) **Oh Rick. I tried to tell myself we were finished. I thought we'd never see each other again.** (*She turns to him and cries*) **The day you left Paris. If you knew what I went through. If you knew how much I love you** (*they embrace, about to kiss passionately. Enter Goodblokevsky*)
- MIKHAIL Alan ...
- ALAN You bastard. This whole side show's just an elaborate way of you getting the exit visa you otherwise can't get. Because if I'm playing Humphrey Bogart, I've got to get you an exit visa, because Bogey's not the kind of guy who takes no for an answer. Meanwhile, the only thing

in it for me is I get to kiss your wife, at which point you walk in and ruin it

MIKHAIL The Amber Room is in it for you

ALAN So where is it?

MIKHAIL I don't know. But I was hoping that you ...

ALAN (*Grabs Goodblokevsky by the collar and pins him to the desk*) Exactly.

You've stitched me up

MIKHAIL It's not like that

ALAN What is it like then?

MIKHAIL Adriana. Help me

ADRIANA Help you! You've ruined my big scene! You and your dreams of space flight have ruined my life! And for what?

ALAN (*holding Adriana away from Goodblokevsky*) Start talking. What happened to the Amber Room during the war?

MIKHAIL In the war, the Russians and the Germans looted hundreds of thousands of works of art from each other, and the Amber Room was the Germans' greatest prize. Hitler planned to make it the show case of his Museum of World Culture had he won the war. When the Germans occupied Pushkin, Count Sommes Laubach ...

ALAN Who?

MIKHAIL ... A Prussian count with a degree in art history going under the title of 'Art Protection Officer', took one look at the Amber Room and decreed it must be transported west for 'safety'

ADRIANA (*Bored, she's heard it all before*) It took six men 36 hours to dismantle it, and it was packed into 28 crates

ALAN           And?

MIKHAIL       And that is the last we know for sure. The Germans brought the Amber Room back to Königsburg and put it on display in the old castle ...

ADRIANA       ... Which the Russians later razed to the ground

MIKHAIL       ... But after that it is all speculation. Did the Amber Room melt during RAF bombing raids? Or did the Germans somehow ship it out? Or was it transported south by rail to be buried in some Bavarian forest? Or is it still here in Königsburg ...

ALAN           Oh, so if I just happen to see a hundred million dollars worth of ornamented amber lying about, I'm supposed to tell you

MIKHAIL       No. The point is the General has never let anyone look at the historical records of the old town. And if he lets you look, maybe you can find out more. An obsession with Immanuel Kant is the perfect cover

ADRIANA       If the Nazis buried it before their retreat, there must be a record somewhere

ALAN           Is that the whole story?

MIKHAIL       Yes

ADRIANA       No. There is said to be a curse of the Amber Room. Several people who have looked for it have been found dead in mysterious circumstances

MIKHAIL       Will you help us?

ALAN           On one condition

MIKHAIL       Your cut if we find it?

ALAN           No. You piss off pronto. I've got a hero to play (*he pushes Goodblokevsky out of the door*)

- ADRIANA *(Falling into Alan's arms)* **Is that a cannon firing, or is it my heart pounding? *(They kiss passionately)* Oh Rick. The day you and I were to leave Paris. I wanted to tell you, but I knew you'd never leave Paris without me. Well, you know the rest**
- ALAN **It's still a story without a finish**
- ADRIANA **No it's not. I know I'll never have the strength to leave you again**
- ALAN **And Mikhail?**
- ADRIANA **You will help him, won't you. You'll see he gets the exit visa. Then he'll have his plane flight. All that he lives for**
- ALAN **All except one. He won't have you**
- ADRIANA Take me to America Alan. Don't leave me to see my dreams die in this poverty and chaos. I want to drive down Broadway in an open top Cadillac, go shopping with Paris Hilton, take a private jet to L.A. *(she raises her hand as if accepting a dance)* and have dinner with Daniel Craig
- GENERAL *(Entering with box of records)* It work Alan! I speak Serbian. He want same price Croatian. But I say, "listen, this no shit gear. You want best, you pay best". And he do. He buy five tanks at five time price. They work too
- ALAN Great
- GENERAL So I bring you present. The records *(puts them on the table)*
- ALAN Magic General
- GENERAL I sorry I mistrust you with Amber Room
- ALAN Don't mention it

GENERAL Adriana. Get Moscow (*she starts dialling*). Alan honest man. Not like that traitor you married to (*Adriana puts the phone down*)

ALAN Pack it in General

ADRIANA Mikhail?! A traitor?

GENERAL He want betray me. I Soviet General!

ALAN Goodblokevsky's alright. And you're going to give him an exit visa

GENERAL Of course

ALAN I knew you'd come round

GENERAL And my name is Joseph Stalin. (*To Adriana*) If you no get Moscow you no get no visa neither (*Adriana starts to redial*). With new business Alan I get mega cash mountain. I sell real big shit

ADRIANA Moscow (*holds out phone*)

GENERAL (*Takes phone*) Spy planes. Aircraft carriers. Space rockets. The entire Baltic nuclear submarine fleet ...

ALAN Don't get greedy

GENERAL Hello. Sergei. How is little Olga?

ALAN Rapid expansion's got problems all of it's own

GENERAL It no problem. I ring Saddam Hussein. (*Enter Koch, with rolled up papers. General puts phone down*)

KOCH General Yashin (*shakes hands*). Mr. McCoist (*shakes hands. Adriana holds her hand out but he brushes it aside and starts unrolling the plans on her desk*). Now things are really moving. The contract, and the plans

GENERAL I need Moscow

KOCH But before ...

GENERAL I no go now. I stay. *(To Adriana)* Get Moscow

ADRIANA *(Adriana starts dialling again, with an exasperated sigh)* It's never like this for Office Angels

KOCH There's nothing wrong is there? I mean, my career's riding on this

GENERAL *(Bear-hugging Koch)* Don't worry. Be happy. Mickey. Pluto. Goofy. Snow White. I all give work permit

KOCH Good. Well, instead of looking at the plans here, perhaps I could take you around the site

GENERAL Of course

KOCH It might be a half built launchpad now, but by the time we've finished with it ...

GENERAL PrussoDisney. We make more famous than Deutschmark Uber Alles *(General and Koch exit)*

ALAN Right sweetheart. So. You don't believe Immanuel Kant was Scottish? Well watch this *(starts looking through the records)*. Klopstock, Klausen, Klinsmann? Keterving. Jungen. No Kant. Oh damn. This is no good. He's got the wrong ones. This is from the 1940s, not the 1720s

ADRIANA Maybe they're at the back

ALAN *(Checks)* No. They're all wrong

ADRIANA Maybe they were destroyed

ALAN Damn. Piss. Bollocks

ADRIANA *(Pause)* Alan. I love you. If you want me to believe Immanuel Kant was Scottish, I will

ALAN Oh. Wait a minute. What's this? (*Takes out one document*) And there's a map as well (*takes out another*). "On the Whereabouts of the Amber Room. A sworn affidavit by A. ..." (*shows the document to Adriana*)  
What's that say?

ADRIANA Hitler

ALAN Oh Christ! Adolf! The crazed loon himself

ADRIANA We've found it!

ALAN Riches! (*They start hugging each other and dancing round the room*).  
Riches!

ADRIANA God is a Russian after all

ALAN No he's not. He's a Scotland supporter

ADRIANA What if it's a fake?

ALAN We'll sell it to *The Sunday Times*

ADRIANA (*Taking the document*) It's not a fake. Look, above Hitler, the name Koch. I knew I knew that name. Eric Koch was Gauleiter of Königsburg during the war, and had personal responsibility for the Amber Room until the middle of 1945

ALAN Until after it went missing?

ADRIANA Precisely

ALAN What's the odds our friend Manfred is one of Eric's relatives? And we've got what he's looking for

ADRIANA I remember now. Eric Koch was interrogated by the KGB and only died a few years ago. His dying words were "Where lies my treasure, there lies the Amber Room"

ALAN           Then we must be in business. If Koch's not telling the truth, then who is?

ADRIANA       *(Starting to exit)* I must tell Mikhail. *(She exits. Toshida runs in carrying her mobile phone. Alan hides the documents)*

TOSHIDA       I have Mr. Dalglish's secretary on the phone right now Mr. McCoist. She says she doesn't know you from Adam

ALAN           I am Adam!

TOSHIDA       Your name is Alan

ALAN           No. Adam! *(Takes the phone)* Hello. Suzie. Adam here. Have we got our wires crossed? Listen. Tell Kenny to forget about Lytham St. Annes. It's not about land values around golf courses any more. He's playing off six when he could be playing scratch. It's all about the Amber Room, and I know where it is. Now Ms. Toshida's prepared to put up 50% of the excavation costs as a gesture of good will towards archeological research, simply because she's about to become sole trader for all the amber in Königsburg, and we're talking 80% of the world's supplies here. So there's a natural synergy to the deal. The markets'll love it. It'll make de Beers look like Ratners. All Kenny has to do is fax a partnership agreement to Ms. Saiko Toshida at the Lenin Hotel ...

TOSHIDA       ... the Peter the Great Hotel ...

ALAN           Sorry, the Peter the Great Hotel, and we're in business. What? You know how Kenny trusts me Suzie. We take the Amber Room round the world, Ms. Toshida's 50% covering our losses before we've even polished the bloody thing. And the Toshida Corporation have their

name on all our publicity material, thereby advertising their amber holdings at the same time. Simple, neat and totally cynical. We can't lose. OK Suzie. Hang on (*he gives the phone back to Toshida*)

TOSHIDA Hello. Hello. The line's dead

ALAN Efficient that girl. She's already at that fax machine

TOSHIDA (*Seeing box of records*) Are these the documents for the Amber Room?

ALAN Er. No. They're rubbish. Kant's private papers. Well what are you waiting for? Go and get that fax (*he starts to exit*)

TOSHIDA Where are you going?

ALAN To check a map reference (*he exits*)

TOSHIDA Now I know why we build better cars. Business is never like this in Tokyo (*she starts looking through the records. Enter Koch and the General*)

KOCH You see how perfectly suited the site is. Sleeping Beauty's Castle to the East, Fantasia to the West with the Emerald City in the middle. And all linked to the train station by the Yellow Brick Road

GENERAL There still problems

KOCH Of course there are problems! How do we foster the enterprise culture in people used to being little more than machines? How do we deal with the pollution, the loss of dignity inflicted by seventy years of Communism?

GENERAL Listen to me

KOCH How do you deal with an economy where people thought putting interest rates down suppressed inflation?!

GENERAL Please. Listen

KOCH           How do I sell this to the Bundesbank?

GENERAL       Fuck it

KOCH           How do we teach the staff to be polite, look smart and be on time?  
How do we build attractive, air-conditioned hotels that today's tourist  
demands?

GENERAL       Hotels same world over. It just Kaliningrad lights no work. (*Sees  
Toshida reading records*) Mrs. Toshida. Dobroye utro. Don't tell me.  
You think Immanuel Kant Japanese?! They for Mr. McCoist (*takes  
them away*)

KOCH           (*To Toshida*) Still here I see?

GENERAL       You want something. You pay

TOSHIDA       So. PrussoDisney is it? It's good, but it's not good enough to stop the  
Japanese!

KOCH           I think it is

TOSHIDA       And Immanuel Kant fought in the second World War, did he?

GENERAL       What?

TOSHIDA       Look at the records

GENERAL       (*Checks them*) 1940s! But this all wrong

TOSHIDA       General Yashin. I demand to sign the amber contract immediately

GENERAL       I tell you. You no get Amber Room

TOSHIDA       Yes. I know. Just for the mines

GENERAL       Really? You see my way?

TOSHIDA       Absolutely (*Toshida gives him the contract*)

KOCH           I'm sorry. There's a conflict of interests here. You can't have  
PrussoDisney and mining in the same place!

- GENERAL Why not? Where work seven dwarfs? (*He signs*)
- KOCH Ms. Toshida. This is a serious breach of business ethics. I don't expect the General to understand, but I'm sure you do
- TOSHIDA Herr Koch. You under-estimate me at your peril. My husband thought he had a 51% controlling stake in the business, and ran off with my very own blonde, nubile, Caucasian secretary thinking he was home and dry. But by a complex and dazzling series of overnight equity switchbacks and loan transfers I outwitted him, and he woke up the next morning sexually satisfied but in the possession of nothing more tangible than the lease on a Tokyo penthouse he could no longer afford. No one has defeated me since
- KOCH Ms. Toshida. You under-estimate me at your peril. My brother thought he had a 60:40 controlling stake in the business and ran off with my wife, a former Miss Bavaria, thinking he was home without paying for the ride. But by a devilish series of dawn raids in the oil spot markets and using other financial instruments simply too complicated and deftly played for him to understand or comprehend, I outwitted him, and he awoke the next morning in the possession of nothing more tangible than my wife's vast credit card bill and various items of bondage gear I wasn't previously aware she possessed. No one has defeated me since
- GENERAL Please. Both of you. Relax (*He pours Toshida and himself a vodka*)  
The Russians. The Germans. The Japanese. We old friends! (*Toshida and the General both drink the vodkas and grimace*)
- GENERAL Inflation. I water it down

KOCH            Look General. This is going to be the biggest thing to hit the East since Genghis Khan. So I want PrussoDisney ratified with Moscow. Now. And I'm not talking about that permanent absentee Sergei. I want Yeltsin

GENERAL        OK. I know Boris. I ring *(he picks up the phone and starts dialling. Enter Goodblokevsky)* Get out

MIKHAIL        Where's Alan?

TOSHIDA        Mr. McCoist has gone to check a map reference

MIKHAIL        So it's true then. *(Pours a glass of the General's vodka. Drinks it in one. Spits it out)* At last! *(He exits)*

GENERAL        Map reference? You find Amber Room with McCoist?

TOSHIDA        Perhaps

GENERAL        I no sign *(Alan enters, pacing across the room)*

ALAN            Ninety five ...

TOSHIDA        It's too late *(takes back the signed contract)*

ALAN            Ninety six. Ninety seven. Ninety eight. *(To Koch)* Excuse me. Ninety nine. One hundred *(arrives at General's desk)*

GENERAL        Alan. You find Amber Room?

ALAN            That's right General

GENERAL        Where is it?

ALAN            Sorry. Me and Ms. Toshida. We've got ourselves a deal

TOSHIDA        With a very powerful third party

ALAN            *(Shaking hands with Toshida)* Put it there sweetheart. I can see it now. "The Amber Room Experience. Come and see life in Russia in the good old days before the Commies took over. When peasants ate

gateau and drank champagne for tea. (*Expensive tour guide voice*) The Amber Room represents typical peasant accommodation of the 18th century"

GENERAL I no allow it

ALAN Finders keepers General. (*Looking at Koch and Toshida*) Why the daggers drawn?

KOCH I'm not leaving this room until the General confirms PrussoDisney with Yeltsin

TOSHIDA Then I'm not leaving either

ALAN (*To Koch*) Your fax machine's whirring away down the corridor (*Koch exits hurriedly*). So's yours (*exit Toshida*)

GENERAL You steal Amber Room with Japanese. How you look at me?

ALAN Of course I haven't. I'm tightly marked. But she's no got the ball. And I'll slip her when it suits me

GENERAL My heart for minute. It go bang bang

ALAN Aye. But there's no need. I made a deal with Goodblokevsky instead

GENERAL What!

ALAN No. But I will do if you don't give him an exit visa

GENERAL Never

ALAN Oh. And by the way, those records are the wrong ones

GENERAL You get map Amber Room. They right one

ALAN Tempt me not with index linked millions. Immanuel Kant's the man for me. (*Points to the records*) And they're two centuries too late

GENERAL They only records we have

ALAN You sure?

GENERAL Yes

ALAN Bang goes my cover story for the *Scots Genealogical Quarterly*

GENERAL You no get nothing Amber Room?

ALAN No. It's a wind up. The only thing I've got is a big headache

GENERAL (*Holds up bottle of diluted vodka*) Me too (*enter Koch, shouting from down the corridor. Alan dives under the desk*)

KOCH McCoist! McCoist! Where is Mr. McCoist?

GENERAL I no know

KOCH There was no fax. I'll kill the Scottish bastard (*he exits*)

ALAN (*Emerging from under desk*) Can you keep a secret?

GENERAL When I go Afghanistan. I no tell Pentagon

ALAN Very wise

GENERAL We go hush, hush. Over New Year. Because CIA switch tracking satellite off for the holiday. Thick bastards

ALAN Anyway. Adriana. She's the headache. She thinks she's in a Humphrey Bogart movie. And now I'm in it too. It's her husband's idea

GENERAL Goodblokevsky! He want watch you fuck her?

ALAN No. The movie. *Casablanca*. It's a menage à trois

GENERAL You both want fuck her?

ALAN No! And I'm supposed to play the jilted lover. And all because Adriana's got this fantasy about being Ingrid Bergman. And I'm falling in love with her. Really. And at the end I've got to give a big speech saying "go with him", but I can't. It'll all come out "stay with me"

- GENERAL *(The phone rings)* Hello. Yes. What? No! It quality. I no drop price.  
You go where else? Where else? Only General Yashin. What! Wait a  
minute *(covers phone receiver)*
- ALAN What's the matter?
- GENERAL It Serbian. He say no deal. He say he get better deal Caucasus
- ALAN Stick to your guns
- GENERAL It tanks
- GENERAL *(On phone)* Same price. What! It not possible! Hello. Hello *(the phone goes dead)*. In Caucasus. He say they new Colonel. Like big, big  
Maxwell. He say he lose thousand tanks. All for sale. He sell South  
America, Africans, Chinese. Even tourist
- ALAN You've a severe case of uncompetitive contraband
- GENERAL How he lose thousand tank? What I do now?
- ALAN Computerise. Slash the dividend. Hire management consultants
- GENERAL Will it work?
- ALAN No. But at least you'll go bankrupt knowing you tried your best
- GENERAL It's the Mafia. How I compete with Mafia? It never like this with  
Brezhnev
- MIKHAIL *(Entering)* Alan. Congratulations
- ALAN Aye. Thirty seven today! And listen to this Mikhail. There's a Colonel  
in the Caucasus making the General's operation look small time
- GENERAL It not fair
- ALAN They're flooding the market
- GENERAL And it my idea!

ALAN           *(Aside to Goodblokevsky)* The Amber Room is under the General's desk. There's a trap door

GENERAL       The Mafia. They more tanks. They more Migs. They more everything

ALAN           Boy, could you expose that if you were in Moscow

GENERAL       Yes! You hero witness of people

ALAN           Publish and be damned

GENERAL       This corruption. I spit on it

MIKHAIL       I will write about all corruption

ALAN           No. You'll write about the Mafia corruption in the Caucasus. That's all. That way you get an exit visa

GENERAL       Yes. Of course. Why you no ask sooner?

MIKHAIL       What are you going to do about PrussoDisney?

GENERAL       *(Banging on the desk)* What I do my business?

ALAN           It's Donald Ducked General. Forget it. Come on. Shake on it

MIKHAIL       What if the Mafia kill me?

GENERAL       Then you die the hero!

ALAN           Which is better than dying a redundant cosmonaut

MIKHAIL       OK *(shakes hands with the General)*

GENERAL       To the truth!

MIKHAIL       Pravda

KOCH           *(Entering. To Alan)* You. I've been looking ...

ALAN           Sit down man. Where's your sense of humour?

GENERAL       *(Picking up phone)* No Boris. I try

KOCH           Then try again

GENERAL       Of course *(enter Toshida)*

TOSHIDA Mr. McCoist. There is no fax

ALAN It's these old phone lines. Patience

TOSHIDA Yes. But I have Mr. Dalglish on phone

ALAN You do! Oh shit

TOSHIDA Yes. He's ringing back in half an hour. See you then! (*Toshida exits*)

GENERAL (*Once more on the phone*) The phones. I try

KOCH Then try harder

MIKHAIL In half an hour Alan, the plane leaves for Moscow

KOCH You don't seem to understand General

GENERAL Hello. Hello. Sergei?

KOCH Sergei!

GENERAL I need get Sergei get Boris

KOCH Listen you pissed up Communist fossil! We're doing you a favour.  
German money, German expertise. Without us, you're nothing

GENERAL (*Still on the phone*) Hello. Hello. I let it ring (*puts the phone on the table*). But there something else

KOCH Use your initiative man

GENERAL I no find it. I need Boris

KOCH Unthinking submission to dictators. Typical Russian trait

ALAN Russian trait?

GENERAL Come with me

KOCH Where are we going?

GENERAL I show you the something else (*the General and Koch exit*)

ALAN What d'you know! Come on (*Mikhail and Alan move the desk. Alan opens the trap door. Mikhail prepares to go down*) Good luck

MIKHAIL One small step for man

ALAN And one giant bank account for me (*Mikhail goes down. Re-enter the General. Alan tries to hide the trap door*)

GENERAL Why has my desk moved? What are you doing?

ALAN Minding my own business

GENERAL You stand by corner flag. Don't think I no know. (*Picks up phone*)  
Hello. Sergei. You go now. You no no need no be there no more. Give my love to Red Square (*puts the phone down, starts to exit*)

ALAN General! What about the exit visas?!

GENERAL In the desk (*throws Alan the keys*)

ALAN Your signature

GENERAL Forge it (*he exits*)

ALAN (*Shouting down trap door*) Can you see anything?

MIKHAIL Yes. A big steel door

ALAN Brilliant (*Alan starts to unlock the desk drawer*)

TOSHIDA (*Entering hurriedly*) Mr. McCoist! Mr. Dalglish says he's not interested!

ALAN (*Filling in the exit visas*) He's not! Shocking. Typical bloody Scot.  
Talks a good argument, never the bollocks to back it up

TOSHIDA Why have you wasted my time? What has this been about?

ALAN Football

TOSHIDA Football?

ALAN Football

TOSHIDA Arsène Wenger! Grampus Eight!

ALAN            Kenny DalGLISH darling. The master. (*Shouting down the hole*) Can you open it?

MIKHAIL        Yes

TOSHIDA        It is the Amber Room! You've double crossed me

ALAN            Saiko. Rose bud. I've only got one thing left to say to you. Newcastle United 10, Japan Inc., Nil. Now piss off (*Toshida attacks him with karate. They exit. Enter General and Koch. The General is in a chemical warfare suit with the helmet visa up, holding a meter for reading chemical contamination in one hand, and a chemical detoxicant kit in the other*)

KOCH            I don't believe it. You're lying

GENERAL        You see yourself

KOCH            There must be some mistake

GENERAL        Listen. Whole site big chemical soup mess. Mickey Mouse. He get anthrax

KOCH            Why didn't you tell me before?

GENERAL        You no listen

KOCH            But you'll listen to my lawyers. You must have known about this for years

*(Re-enter Alan and Toshida from opposite side, she round Alan's neck)*

GENERAL        I only find evidence when look for Kant record

KOCH            You're responsible for this mess, and I'll make you pay

GENERAL        The Germans do it. 1945 when run like hell

KOCH            I don't believe you

- GENERAL Nazi pigs. (*Checks Koch with chemical contamination meter*) You read high. I help
- TOSHIDA Allow me (*Toshida sprays Koch. Then she threatens Alan*)
- ALAN Get off
- MIKHAIL (*From down the hole of the trap door*) One thing worries me. Are we being fair to the Germans? After all, the Germans not only gave us Nazism. They also gave us Martin Luther, Hieronymous Bosch, Karl Marx, Michael Schumacher, Marlene Dietrich, Steffi Graf and Europe's most successful World Cup football team
- ALAN So it's there?
- MIKHAIL (*Enter Adriana carrying two suitcases, and dressed as Ingrid Bergman in the airport scene in Casablanca; a discreet woman's suit with a banded hat cocked backwards in an optimistic manner*) Legally and morally, the Amber Room is Russian. But the Germans did build it. Maybe we should give them a cut
- KOCH Yes. As compensation for all the time I've wasted
- ALAN So it is there?
- MIKHAIL No. It obviously was here. But it's gone
- ALAN Oh God. The abject futility of human endeavour!
- KOCH The time. The money. The share price
- ADRIANA (*Checking Koch with the chemical contamination meter*) You're still reading high (*she drenches him*)
- KOCH What am I going to say to Walt Junior?
- TOSHIDA What am I going to say to my brokers?
- KOCH There will never be another deal like this

ALAN I'm disappointed in you. OK, so PrussoDisney's a dodo. But look at me. A life time spend ruining my eyes in dimly lit libraries and dusky attics, all to prove that Immanuel Kant was Scottish. And what have I got? Nothing. And do I care? Yes. But I'll no buckle to such a fickle wind. Because I know Immanuel Kant was a Scotsman. The whole fucking planet thinks I'm wrong, but so what? I owe it to Kant to keep believing. And, on the off chance he might be a German after all, so do you. So get back out there Kaiser. And start again

KOCH I'd give anything to be in Frankfurt

TOSHIDA Or Tokyo. We've been conned

KOCH Who cares? Who are these people? No ones

GENERAL I General Yashin of Union of Soviet Socialist Republic Red Army.

*(Starts singing Soviet national anthem "Indivisible union of free republics, United together by mother Russia ...")*

TOSHIDA Mr. McCoist. I am not leaving without compensation

KOCH Neither am I *(Adriana fires her gun into the air. Plaster falls from the ceiling. The General stops singing)*

KOCH/TOSHIDA We're going. We're going

ADRIANA *(Holding the door for them)* Enjoy *(Koch and Toshida exit)*

GENERAL *(Picking up the chemical detoxicant kit)* Wait. You still need this *(he exits after them)*

ALAN *(Pause)* **Here's the exit visas. In the names of Mr. and Mrs. Goodblokevsky**

ADRIANA **But Rick. Why my name?**

ALAN **Because you're getting on that plane**

ADRIANA No! I'm going to America with you. Fuck Ingrid Bergman

ALAN Don't get tricky with me now

ADRIANA No Western woman would be pushed around like this. I'll do what I want

ALAN Stick to your lines. *(To Mikhail)* And you. Wait outside. You're not supposed to hear the next bit

MIKHAIL But it's my favourite scene!

ALAN Move! *(Mikhail picks up a suitcase and goes outside. The noise of aircraft engines starting up. Alan looks at his watch)* Oh shit

ADRIANA **But this afternoon ...**

ALAN **This afternoon we said a great many things. You said I was to do the thinking for both of us. Well ...**

ADRIANA But this is 1998! She wouldn't say that any more

ALAN **You're getting on that plane with Goodblokevsky where you belong**

ADRIANA No. I want to go with you

ALAN Look precious, I'm trying to do the decent thing here and you're not making it easy. Because I fancy the arse off you. But so does he, and he's a good man, and you're part of his cause. And people with causes they believe in are very rare. The things you say you want. New York. Daniel Craig. It's a fantasy

ADRIANA I'll settle for less. A mortgage I can't afford, a Dixons charge card and a job in telesales

ALAN You'd no be happy. **Inside of us we both know you belong with Mikhail. If that plane leaves the ground and you're not on it you'll**

**regret it. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow but soon and for the rest of your life. So pick up your suitcase and get on that plane**

ADRIANA **OK**

ALAN What made you change your mind?

ADRIANA You said it so well

ALAN I played Romeo in the school play. Well go on then. *(She picks up the other suitcase)* Oh. Wait a minute. **We'll always have Paris. We didn't have. We lost it. Until I came to Kaliningrad**

ADRIANA **And I said I'd never leave you**

ALAN **And you never will. Ilse, I'm no good at being noble but it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people don't stack up to a hill of beans in this crazy, mixed up world.** Sorry. I should have said that earlier

ADRIANA **Goodbye Rick**

ALAN **Goodbye.** Adriana *(She starts to exit, staggering under the weight of her bags. Alan takes the picture of Rick's Cafe off the wall and gives it to her, and she piles it on top of one of her suitcases, before deciding to hold it in her mouth. Alan has to open the door for her. She exits. Enter the General opposite, wearing the chemical warfare suit, minus helmet and gloves, and his army cap)*

GENERAL She go with him?

ALAN Unfortunately *(the roar of the plane gets louder as it taxis)* What have I done?

GENERAL It no matter. You meet again in *The Big Sleep*

ALAN No. That's Lauren Bacall

- GENERAL And you complain? (*Roar of the plane as it takes off and flies over the stage, as in Act One*) **Here is looking at you.** (*Pause*) **Kid**
- ALAN She was loopy, but I really liked her. General. You didn't really contaminate ...
- GENERAL Of course not. I no Cold War thug. (*Points to chemical contamination meter*) The machine typical Russian. It doesn't work. It wanky (*he throws it in the bin*)
- ALAN (*Pause*) If we'd found the Amber Room, you would have been in ...
- GENERAL Too fucking right. Bur cheer up. I have one last nosy. And look what find. The birth certificate
- ALAN What? (*Takes it. Looks upwards*) Thank you. (*Reads it*) Or maybe not
- GENERAL What the matter?
- ALAN It says here the immortal Immanuel's father was secretary to the local Communist Party. In 1724? And the signature's in Russian
- GENERAL Oh no. It under Brezhnev. They like tidy past of famous comrades. Make all history the history of glorious Communism. Make history run in straight line
- ALAN But history's not like that. It's full of squiggles. And more U turns than a decade of speeches by the Labour Party in the pursuit of regaining power. (*Pause*) It's ruined my life's work
- GENERAL So what? Glasnost. It ruin mine. (*Laughs*) But, we meet Mrs. Yen and Mr. Deutschemark. And we say "fuck off"
- ALAN Aye. Think of what we've achieved. Poverty

- GENERAL Maybe not. You know, there one last thing Amber Room. When the Germans get to Catharine Palace, 1941, we Russians wallpaper over it to hide it
- ALAN Wallpaper over it? Really?
- GENERAL Really. It no fool no one long, but, I think it too stupid to try twice ...
- ALAN Is it? *(He starts to look around the room, noticing the wallpaper concealed ornamentation for the first time)* Is it? Never under-estimate the possibilities of post-modern irony. It's got to be somewhere, and it's certainly not down that hole. Get me a wallpaper scraper
- GENERAL There's one in the desk. Just in case *(the General gives it to him)*
- ALAN Have you suspected this all along? *(He starts scraping off the wallpaper from the rear wall of the General's office ...)*
- GENERAL Anything?
- ALAN Wait a minute. *(He rubs the exposed surface with his hand)*. I need a solvent
- GENERAL *(Giving Alan a vodka bottle)* Here
- ALAN *(Alan pours some vodka on the wall and rubs again. The colour amber radiates anew!)* Look at that! If that's not amber, then Robbie Burns is Abyssinian. My God man, riches at last!
- GENERAL Cooking with gas
- ALAN Why didn't you say something before?
- GENERAL There too many people. This way it only you and me
- ALAN And to think we've been standing in the middle of it all along! It's one mega big cash mountain! Gi-normous
- GENERAL I guess lucky

ALAN            Lucky? You're a genius (*Alan kisses the General*)...

GENERAL        I think I buy me a football team

ALAN            I think I buy me a drink

GENERAL        It on me. Russky Standart export Russian vodka, the full strength (*he pours two glasses, taking a new bottle from a bottom drawer of his desk*)

ALAN            What are we going to do with it?

GENERAL        We're going to drink it!

ALAN            No! (*Gesturing all around*) This!

GENERAL        We're going to sell it

ALAN            Who too?

GENERAL        To highest bidder. To Koch, to Toshida. Why not? I ring them on the mobiles. Now we in control

ALAN            Of course. (*They stand arm in arm, and start to exit*) You know General, I think this could be the start of a beautiful new friendship ... (*the lights go down to The Beatles' "Revolution" - the electric version, not the version on "The White Album"*)

**THE END**