

CASABLANCA

ALTERNATE ENDING

"This Time, We Both Get on That Plane"

Based on characters created by
Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein, and Howard Koch

From the play "Everybody Comes to Rick's"
by Murray Burnett and Joan Alison

Alternate ending written by Claude
at the request of Ronald Gruner

EXT. CASABLANCA AIRFIELD — NIGHT — FOG

The propellers of the Lisbon-bound plane spin lazily in the mist. VICTOR LASZLO stands near the boarding stairs, coat collar turned up against the damp. RICK BLAINE holds two letters of transit. ILSA LUND stands between the two men, her eyes glistening. CAPTAIN LOUIS RENAULT watches from a discreet distance, smoking.

RICK

(to Victor)

You're going to need these letters of transit. Both of them have your name now — yours, and a colleague of your choosing from the underground. There's a man named Berger. He's good. He'll carry the fight beside you.

VICTOR

(stunned)

Richard... what are you saying?

RICK

I'm saying the cause needs you, Victor. It's always needed you. But it doesn't need me. And it doesn't need Ilsa. You were the leader before she came along, and you'll be the leader after.

VICTOR

(quietly, looking at Ilsa)

I have suspected... for some time... that her heart was never fully mine to keep.

Ilsa steps forward, tears streaming.

ILSA

Victor, what you have done for the world — what you will do — is greater than any one love. You are the bravest man I have ever known. But I cannot be brave in the way you need me to be. Not anymore.

VICTOR

(with painful dignity)

I asked you once, in the dark of a prison cell, to survive for me. Now I ask you to live – for yourself.

He takes her hand, kisses it gently, then releases it. He accepts the letters of transit from Rick.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Take care of her, Blaine. Or I will find you, even from across an ocean.

RICK

(the ghost of a smile)

I wouldn't expect anything less.

Victor turns and climbs the stairs to the plane. He does not look back. The door closes behind him.

Rick and Ilsa stand together in the fog. She looks up at him, trembling.

ILSA

Richard... are you sure? You had everything arranged. The noble gesture. The beautiful speech. You were going to send me away and break both our hearts, weren't you?

RICK

(softly)

I had it all planned out. Every word. How the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans. How you belonged with Victor. How I'd walk off into the fog like some kind of hero.

ILSA

What changed?

RICK

(looking at her)

I got tired of being noble, Ilsa. Nobility is for monuments. I'd rather be a fool – a living, breathing fool who wakes up next to you.

She buries her face against his chest. He wraps his arms around her.

RICK (CONT'D)

Besides... I've been noble exactly once in my life. It was in Paris, when I let you go. And it nearly killed me.

CAPTAIN RENAULT approaches, buttoning his coat against the damp.

RENAULT

Well, well. This is not how I expected the evening to end. I had mentally composed a very moving report about your self-sacrifice, Rick. Now I'll have to tear it up.

RICK

Sorry to spoil your paperwork, Louis.

RENAULT

On the contrary. Paperwork bores me. Romance, however...

He gestures grandly.

RENAULT (CONT'D)

...romance is French.

A SECOND PLANE is heard taxiing in the distance - a smaller charter. Its lights cut through the fog.

RENAULT (CONT'D)

It so happens that a certain Free French pilot owes me a considerable gambling debt. He departs tonight for Brazzaville by way of Lisbon. I believe two seats could be arranged - in exchange for forgetting what he owes me.

RICK

Louis, I'm beginning to think you're a sentimentalist.

RENAULT

And I am beginning to think you are a romantic. We are both ruined men.

Rick takes Ilsa's hand. Together they walk toward the charter plane, silhouettes dissolving into the silver fog. Renault watches them go, then picks up a bottle of Vichy water from a nearby crate, regards it with contempt, and drops it in a bin.

RENAULT (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Round up the usual suspects.

He lights a cigarette, turns up his collar, and walks off alone into the mist - smiling.

FADE TO BLACK.

"La Marseillaise" swells - then softens into "As Time Goes By" as the credits roll.

THE END