

Titanic II

a screenplay by
James David Walley

INT. CHARLOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The camera pans over a series of old black-and-white photos of the Titanic hanging on the walls.

It dissolves to what look like dark rolling waves. Pulling back, we see that we are looking at coffee in a cup held by CHARLOTTE, an intense woman in her late teens or early twenties. She wears "artistic" clothing, along with a sapphire necklace.

Sitting on the table in front of her are more books about the Titanic (including ones about the film), and ads and brochures for "Titanic: Brought Back From The Abyss," an artifact exhibit, as well as an expensive-looking 35mm still camera.

Setting down the coffee cup, Charlotte picks up the camera and places it in a fully-stocked camera case. She gets up, holding the bag, and heads for the door.

Just as she is about to reach the door, the telephone rings. She stops.

CHARLOTTE'S VOICE ON MACHINE (O.S.)

Hi. This is Charlotte. I'm not in right now, so please leave a message.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Charlotte? This is your mother calling.

Hearing her mother's voice, Charlotte turns back toward the door and opens it.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Your father and I wanted to know if you received the quarterly check from the trust fund for...whatever it is you're doing now.

The door closes. The Charlotte's voice on answering machine keeps playing to an empty apartment.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Really, is it so hard to give us a call every now and then? I know, we're the old stuck-in-the-muds that don't understand anything at all about you, but we deserve that much...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MUSEUM LOBBY - DAY

Charlotte, holding her camera case, waits in a line with OTHER TOURISTS as she approaches the ticket booth. She steps up to the booth, manned by an officious TICKET TAKER.

CHARLOTTE

(pulling out her wallet)
One, please.

TICKET TAKER

I'm sorry, ma'am. You can't bring that equipment into the exhibit with you.

CHARLOTTE

Why, that's ridiculous. I've seen plenty of people take cameras in with them.

TICKET TAKER

You've seen people take in snapshot cameras, ma'am. We allow that. We don't allow professional photographers.

CHARLOTTE

What on earth makes you think I'm professional?

TICKET TAKER

Ma'am, no tourists come in with that much equipment. You've got several thousand dollars of stuff there. You're not just using it to take snapshots for the folks back home.

TOM, a man about Charlotte's age in a janitor's uniform, has been moving cartons at the entrance to the exhibit. He hears the commotion and starts watching from a distance.

CHARLOTTE

Would it make a difference if I told you I was a student?

TICKET TAKER

(shakes head)

I'm sorry, ma'am. Those are the rules. You're either going to have to check your equipment here or go get written permission from our manager to photograph the exhibit.

CHARLOTTE

Very well. May I speak to your manager?

TICKET TAKER

He'd be at lunch now, ma'am. He should be back around two. If you don't mind waiting...

The ticket taker gestures at the line behind Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

Fine, fine...

She walks off, shaking her head. Tom watches her leave.

EXT. MUSEUM COURTYARD - DAY

Charlotte sits on a park bench, eating a salad.

Behind her, Tom leans against a concrete railing, watching her.

A pause.

TOM

Hey...

Charlotte turns and sees him.

CHARLOTTE

Do I know you?

TOM

I saw what happened back at the exhibit. I'm sorry.

(pause)

That guy's a real hardass with everyone.

CHARLOTTE

Oh. It's all right.

She goes back to her lunch.

TOM

(offering his hand)

I'm Tom.

Charlotte turns back to him, but doesn't take his hand.

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte.

She goes back to her lunch. After a few moments, Tom wanders over and sits down across from her. She ignores him.

TOM
(noticing her necklace)
Hey, what's that you've got there?
The Pituitary Gland of the Ocean?

CHARLOTTE
(looking up momentarily)
Very funny.

TOM
Is that thing real? Look, lady, you
better be careful wearing something
like that. People get mugged around
here all the time.

CHARLOTTE
I can take care of myself.

Once again, she goes back to her lunch.

TOM
So, how many times did you go see
it?

CHARLOTTE
Excuse me?

TOM
You know what I mean.
(mimicking)
"Oh, Jack, I'm flying!"

She tries to ignore him.

TOM (CONT'D)
Did you go ten times?

Still no response.

TOM (CONT'D)
Fifteen?

CHARLOTTE

Stop it!

TOM

Twenty?

CHARLOTTE

No!

(pause)

Not...that much.

TOM

I don't get it. Did you think if you saw it often enough, the ending would change, and they'd live happily ever after?

CHARLOTTE

No.

TOM

Then what was it?

CHARLOTTE

You wouldn't understand.

TOM

Try me. 'Cause from where I sit, taking a disaster where fifteen hundred people die, and turning it into a teen romance...

CHARLOTTE

It wasn't a teen romance...!

TOM

...is a little like doing a musical about the Holocaust.

CHARLOTTE

It wasn't like that at all.

(pause)

It was a really...beautiful story.

She notices Tom smirking at this.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Well, it was!

(pause)

About someone who wasn't what everyone wanted her to be.

(pause)

And then someone came along and showed her that she was right to be who she was...that she was special, and that he loved her, and wanted to set her free. Even enough to give his life up for hers.

A pause.

TOM

(shakes his head)

Geez, remind me to stay far out of the way the next time you need someone to show you how special you are.

(pause)

Look...the exhibit closes at five today. I'm supposed to be locking up.

Charlotte looks up at him.

TOM (CONT'D)

If you want to get in to take pictures without getting hassled about it...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE TO MUSEUM - DAY

Tom opens the back door and sticks his head out. He beckons to Charlotte, who is seated by some trees on the lawn behind the museum. She gets to her feet.

INT. MUSEUM GALLERY - DAY

A close-up shot of a weatherbeaten teacup sitting in a display case. Charlotte, using an elaborate assortment of camera equipment, takes a picture of it.

TOM (O.S.)
Did you get that?

CHARLOTTE
Just a minute.

Charlotte moves on to another case holding a porcelain box. She takes another picture.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
O.K. I got it.

TOM (O.S.)
Now, this is what everyone comes here to see.

She follows the direction of his voice.

INT. HULL ROOM - DAY

A large piece of riveted sheet metal hangs from the ceiling. Charlotte stares at it in wonder.

TOM
Salvagers cut this piece off the hull a couple of years ago.

CHARLOTTE
It's...amazing.

She starts setting up her equipment. Tom beckons her inside the velvet rope in front of the hull.

TOM

Come on in.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, I couldn't do that.

TOM

Don't worry about it. Come on.

He unhooks the rope for her.

TOM (CONT'D)

I mean, it's not like there's anyone else here watching us.

INT. CORNER OF HULL ROOM - DAY

A quick shot of a security camera mounted in an upper corner of the room.

INT. HULL ROOM - DAY

Charlotte is setting up her camera to take a shot along the edge of the hull. Tom watches her.

TOM

You know, you'd get a lot more of a picture if you moved back and to your right.

CHARLOTTE

No. This is the way I want it.

She looks into the viewfinder.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

The surface is wonderful. It's like a landscape from a different planet.

She takes the picture, then starts to set up the equipment for another shot. Tom looks at his watch and shakes his head.

TOM

Boy, if you take this much time when you photograph people, I feel sorry for them.

CHARLOTTE

Don't worry.

(pause)

I don't take pictures of people.

TOM

Oh? Why not?

CHARLOTTE

(shrugs)

It's too much bother getting people's permission.

She goes back to setting up the shot.

TOM

So...take a picture of me.

She looks up.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'll give you permission right now.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, no...I couldn't.

TOM

I mean it. Right here.

CHARLOTTE

No, I really can't.

TOM

Oh, come on. No restrictions. I'll sign anything you want.

CHARLOTTE

No!

TOM

But why not?

CHARLOTTE

I just don't...want to. That's all.

She finishes taking her photograph, and gets ready to do another setup.

TOM

Well, then, why don't you let me take one of you?

CHARLOTTE

What?

TOM

If you're not going to, I might as well.

Charlotte hesitates for a moment.

TOM (CONT'D)

Come on, just give me the camera.

Almost as if against her better judgement, she hands it to him.

TOM (CONT'D)

(indicating the hull)

O.K., go back over there.

As Charlotte walks up to the hull, Tom climbs around the display right behind it.

He looks her over through the viewfinder.

TOM (CONT'D)

O.K. That's great. Now, touch it.

CHARLOTTE

What???

TOM

Go ahead. Use your right hand. Let your fingers brush against the surface.

CHARLOTTE

I can't do that!

TOM

Of course you can! It's metal, for God's sake. It's not going to disintegrate.

CHARLOTTE

But..

TOM

Go ahead! Look, I can't hold this pose for much longer.

Charlotte slowly reaches out and touches the hull. A look of something alarmingly close to religious awe crosses her face. The camera's shutter clicks.

INT. BACK ENTRANCE TO MUSEUM - DAY

Charlotte, camera case in hand, stands at the closed door, facing Tom.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know how I can ever thank you for this.

TOM

Hey, don't worry about it. I was
happy to help.

She opens the door, resting her back against it. She reaches
out to Tom and takes his hand.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you.

After maybe a moment too long, she releases his hand and
turns off into the late afternoon. Tom watches her go.

INT. EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Tom walks over to a locker and opens it. As he begins
stripping off his uniform, we notice a worn backpack and
bedroll sitting on the floor of his locker.

EXT. MUSEUM COURTYARD - DAY

Charlotte walks away, smiling to herself.

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE TO MUSEUM - NIGHT

Tom steps out of the entrance, looking much more scruffy
with worn clothes and the backpack and bedroll.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

In the faint red safety light, we see Charlotte at work,
immersing exposed prints in a tray of developing solution.

EXT. COVERED PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Tom walks up the ramp to an almost-vacant upper level.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

Charlotte pulls several prints of the artifacts she
photographed out of the washing tray, setting them down on a

screen. She pulls out the photo she took of the hull and sets it down.

EXT. COVERED PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Tom finds a secluded space, shakes off his backpack, and starts to set out his bedroll.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

Charlotte pulls another print out of the wash -- the photograph Tom took of her.

EXT. COVERED PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Tom, lying on his bedroll, trying to sleep. He pulls his jacket tighter around himself.

INT. DARKROOM - NIGHT

Charlotte stares at the picture of her. It is quite striking.

EXT. COVERED PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Tom shivers. He looks sad and miserable.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Charlotte sits by her desk, staring at the photograph Tom took of her.

The phone rings. She answers it.

CHARLOTTE

Hello?

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hello, Charlotte. I left a message yesterday afternoon. I don't know...

CHARLOTTE

Oh, that's right.

(pause)

I was out late and didn't want to wake you when I got back. I got the check two days ago.

She picks it up off the desk.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I have it in my hand right now.
Thank you.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Charlotte, I just heard that the Carlson boy is back in town from law school. His parents are holding a cocktail reception for him next weekend.

(pause)

It would be nice if you could attend...

CHARLOTTE

I don't believe this...

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE

Mother, stop trying to set me up.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Oh, don't be ridiculous. I just thought you'd be interested in seeing how one of your friends is doing.

CHARLOTTE

He was never my "friend," mother. I went out with him twice, remember? There was nothing there.

A pause.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

I'm sure there wasn't, dear. After all, he was too conscientious, too responsible, too normal for...

CHARLOTTE

Mother, what is your point?

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Well, we...your father and I...think it's time you came back home.

CHARLOTTE

We've gone over this before, mother. I'm not moving back there. I have a life here.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

A life? I see...apparently, for you, a life means doing nothing worthwhile, not having any friends, being dependent on your family, so you can take those snapshots of yours...

CHARLOTTE

That's enough, mother...

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Charlotte, you may have forgotten it, but that trust fund doesn't become yours until you're twenty-five. Until then, it's our responsibility to make sure that money is being used wisely. We've been talking about this for some time, and we've decided that it's time you did something useful in your life.

CHARLOTTE

I'm doing something useful now.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Useful? Going to that fly-by-night art institute, or whatever they call it?

(pause)

Anyway, your father and I have decided against any more disbursements until you've shown you can use the money responsibly.

(pause)

You're free to do whatever you want, of course. But don't expect us to pay for it.

CHARLOTTE

Fine, mother. I'll take care of myself from now on. As a matter of fact, I'll give you a head start.

She tears the check in half.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Hear that? I'm free of you now.

She rips the pieces again and again.

MOTHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Charlotte...that's not what...

CHARLOTTE

It's all over, mother. Good bye.

Charlotte hangs up the phone. She looks over the photographs on the desk.

The phone rings again. Charlotte reaches behind the telephone to disconnect the cord. The ringing stops.

She leans back in her chair, the faintest beginnings of a smile playing on her face as she goes back to looking at her photographs.

EXT. STREET BY CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Charlotte emerges from the building, camera case over her shoulder, portfolio case under her arm.

As she walks along, she notices a vacant lot covered with wildflowers. She quickly picks enough of them to make a small bouquet, then walks down the road.

INT. MUSEUM LOBBY - DAY

Charlotte is waiting in line once again. She approaches the ticket taker at the booth.

CHARLOTTE

Excuse me? I'm looking for a worker here by the name of Tom. Could you let him know there's someone waiting for him?

TICKET TAKER

Oh, I'm sorry, ma'am. Tom doesn't work here anymore.

CHARLOTTE

What? He was just here yesterday.

TICKET TAKER

That's right. And he got terminated this morning. I don't know what happened. Sorry.

Charlotte turns and walks away, leaving the flowers on the ticket counter.

EXT. PARK BEHIND MUSEUM - DAY

Charlotte, wandering aimlessly through the museum grounds. As she cross the lawn, she stops suddenly, seeing Tom sitting by one of the trees, his backpack and bedroll beside him.

She approaches him. He looks up.

TOM

Hi.

CHARLOTTE

What happened?

She sits next to him.

TOM

(shakes his head)

I forgot about the stupid security cameras.

CHARLOTTE

The security...you mean this happened because of last night?

Tom responds with an indeterminate hand gesture.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Oh, Tom. I'm so sorry.

TOM

Don't be. Sweeping floors isn't my idea of a lifelong career. It's just as well.

CHARLOTTE

What are you going to do now?

TOM

(shrugs)

I don't know.

(he reclines on the
grass, staring up at
the trees)

Get out of this place before the
rainy season starts, that's for sure.

(pause)

I'll probably head down south.
There's always lots of work in L.A.
And Mexico's a pretty cool place.
They treat us as aliens a lot better
than we do to them here. I was down
there for the winter a couple of
years ago, and slept out on the
beaches every night. It might be
worth going back.

A pause.

CHARLOTTE

Can I come with you?

TOM

What???

(chuckling)

Oh, right. Sure.

CHARLOTTE

I'm serious.

TOM

Look, I'm sorry to break it to you,
but I don't think my limo can carry
an extra passenger. Besides, you
hardly know me.

Charlotte hands Tom the photograph he took of her.

CHARLOTTE

I know you well enough to know that no one's ever taken a picture of me like that before.

(pause)

Anyone who could capture that has something special about them.

He gives her a very puzzled look.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Anyway, I'm pretty much on my own now, too.

TOM

What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE

Oh, I broke things off with my family. I'm going to be living my own life from now on.

An uncomfortable pause.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

What is it?

TOM

I don't know. It's just...are you sure you want to do that?

CHARLOTTE

Of course.

(pause)

Don't you think I can?

TOM

Look, Charlotte, I'd love to be in a situation where I didn't have to worry about things, where I could

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

let other people take care of me.
But I've never had that choice. You
do.

CHARLOTTE

That's right. I do, and I've made
it.

TOM

I just don't think you know how tough
surviving can be. A lot of times,
you have to do things you hate, even
things you'd be ashamed to do, just
to get by.

CHARLOTTE

Don't patronize me. I'm not as
sheltered as you think.

TOM

Really? Well, let's see. You're a
photographer who's afraid to take
pictures of people even when they
ask you to...

A pause.

CHARLOTTE

O.K., then.

She gets to her feet.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Get up.

TOM

What is it?

CHARLOTTE

Get up. I'm going to take your picture.

TOM

(grinning)

What?

CHARLOTTE

You think I can't do it? Come on.

TOM

This is nuts.

CHARLOTTE

I don't care if it is. I'm going to show you.

Tom gets up.

TOM

O.K. Fine. You win. Around here?

CHARLOTTE

No. I know where I want to take it.

She reaches out and takes his hand before turning to go.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Come on!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - EVENING

The sun is setting as Charlotte leads Tom to the "scenic point" overlooking the ocean.

CHARLOTTE

Here.

Tom looks over the scene.

TOM

Look, if you're going to want me to pose and shout something about being king of the world, I'm leaving right now.

CHARLOTTE

Stop it! Just lean against the railing.

He does. He holds up his backpack.

TOM

What do you want me to do with this?

CHARLOTTE

Keep it in your hand, by your side. I want it in the picture. It's part of who you are.

She looks through the camera's viewfinder.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Now, look just off to my left. Focus on the distance.

He settles himself into the pose. She takes the picture, then a second one.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

O.K. You can put the pack down, now.

He does.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Now, try looking to your side, off over the ocean.

She moves in closer. As she is about to take another picture, a gust of wind blows his hair over his face.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. Your hair...

He makes an attempt to slick it back. Part of it blows forward again.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

It's still...

He makes another unsuccessful attempt.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Wait. Just a moment.

She comes over to him and brushes his hair away. It blows back. They both laugh quietly.

She makes another attempt to straighten his hair. This time, as she is doing so, her hand brushes his cheek. They both freeze for a moment, staring into each other's eyes. Her fingers lightly stroke his face.

As she leans toward him, they fall into a deep kiss.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The early sun is beginning to light the room. Tom and Charlotte are lying together asleep.

Tom awakens, focuses on where he is for a few moments, then stares uncomfortably out the window.

He starts to get out of bed.

Charlotte turns slightly in her sleep. Tom freezes, watching her.

After a moment, he relaxes and gets out of bed.

Pulling on his clothes, he finds himself standing by her dresser, where notices her wallet sits next to an ornate jewelry case. He stares at them, thinking.

He finally looks back to see that she is still asleep, then quickly takes her wallet and empties it of cash and credit cards. Setting it down, he opens the jewelry case and grabs the contents.

INT. CHARLOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Tom is jamming Charlotte's jewelry into his pockets as he walks toward his backpack, leaning up against a wall. He stops as he sees her camera case sitting on a chair.

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - EVENING

In his mind, Tom sees Charlotte taking his picture.

INT. CHARLOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Tom, still staring at the camera case. He quickly picks it up, throwing it over his shoulder. He continues to stuff the jewelry into his pockets, then stops as he realizes one of the items in his hand is the necklace he saw Charlotte wearing earlier.

He takes the necklace and lays it on the desk, then turns to go, pocketing the remaining items.

EXT. STREET BY CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Tom emerges from the building, wearing the backpack and carrying the camera case. He walks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Charlotte awakens. She gazes around, as if vaguely remembering the events of the night before.

CHARLOTTE

Tom...?

She snaps to full consciousness as she sees the wallet and open jewelry case sitting empty on the dresser.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Tom is hitchhiking. He wears new clothing, and carries a much nicer backpack than before. A sports car, driven by a young WOMAN, pulls up. He climbs in. The car drives off.

WOMAN (O.S.)

So, where are you going?

TOM (O.S.)

Just about anywhere. Where are you going?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Charlotte, now wearing a bathrobe, stares around the room in disbelief. As if in shock, she wanders about.

She stops as she sees her sapphire necklace sitting on the desk.

It's the last straw. She grabs it, and walks rapidly to the window. Blinking back tears, she grabs at the cord for the venetian blinds and pulls them up, then opens the window. She raises her arm as if to throw the necklace out the window.

At the last moment, she stops. She lowers her hand and stares at the necklace for a moment.

She returns to the desk, opens the drawer, carefully places the necklace in it, then softly closes the drawer.

She walks to the window. Resting her hands on the sill, she gazes out.

As she stares out the window, we become aware of the sounds of people, traffic, and the noises of urban life. The sounds increase in volume until they overwhelm the background music.

FADE TO WHITE