

**Chinatown**  
**(Step Sheet)**

**FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PURPOSES ONLY**

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C.2  
KLEINMAN  
2-5-70

CHINATOWN STEP SHEET

1. "What kinda guy do you think I am" - We meet J.J GITTES, private detective, in his office with a client, CURLY. Curly is very upset over the photographs Jake has produced documenting Curly's wife's infidelity. Jake makes an effort to temper Curly's murderous rage, and reassures him by suggesting that he can take his time paying Jake's fee.

the Court

Jake's assistants, WALSH and DUFFY, introduce him to his next client, a MRS. EVELYN MULWRAY. Mrs. Mulwray believes her husband, HOLLIS MULWRAY, the chief of the department of Water and Power, is having an affair, and she wants Jake to investigate. Jake is ambivalent, but takes the job.

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2. "Los Angeles is a desert community" - We find Jake at a public hearing concerning the construction of a new damn. Hollis Mulwray holds the unpopular opinion that the damn is unsafe, and insists that he will not build it. He alludes to a previous damn disaster built on a similiar rock formation. The hearing is suddenly interrupted by the arrival of a number of disgruntled farmers who herd their sheep into the Hall. They claim Mulwray is responsible for diverting water from their valley.

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3. "The mysterious presence of water" - Jake follows Mulwray to a dry river bed. In the distance, Jake watches as Mulwray talks to a young Mexican boy on a burrow. Mulwray jots some information down on a map. Jake follows Mulwray by car to the ocean. Mulwray remains there all day, Jake watching. After night falls, a torrent of water races down a run-off channel into the ocean. Jake follows him to another reservoir. When Mulwray leaves his car, Jake plants a pocket watch underneath his tire.

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4. "The man's got water on the brain" - In his office, Jake studies the broken watches with Walsh, and comments that Mulwray evidently spent another entire night at the reservoir. Jake and his associates have been following Mulwray for days, and the only thing that they have come up with is his passion for river beds and reservoirs.

Walsh produces evidence of another kind of encounter. He has photographs of Mulwray arguing with an older man. Jake, irritated, discounts the photographs as having no bearing on their investigation. Jake's mood brightens when he receives a phone call from Duffy who tells him that he has found Mulwray with the "other woman".

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5. "Echo Park" - Jake and Duffy, in a rowboat, snap photographs

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of Mulwray and his "paramour", also in a rowboat, enjoying the pleasures of the harbor.

We find Jake on a roof overlooking a courtyard. He continues taking pictures of Mulwray and the girl.

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6. "I'm in an honest business" - We find Jake in a barber chair, getting a shave. The fruits of his investigation are preserved on the front page of the Daily Paper. An argument ensues between Jake and another customer over the questionable ethic of Jake's profession. The barber, attempting to calm Jake down, starts to tell him a joke.

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7. "You're screwin' like a Chinamen" - In his office, we find Jake repeating the joke to Walsh and Duffy who attempt to cut him off. As Jake finishes his off color joke, a door opens behind him and we notice a striking woman standing in the doorway. The woman identifies herself as the "real" EVELYN MULWRAY, and without blinking an eye, proceeds to slap a lawsuit on Jake.

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8. "It's not a departmental matter" - Jake barges into Hollis Mulwray's office and searches it. The only thing he finds of interest is the note that Mulwray scrawled on the map the day Jake followed him to the reservoir. ROSS YELBURTON, deputy chief of the department, walks in. Yelburton, aware of the reason for Jake's visit, suggests strongly that Mulwray is not the type of man who has "affairs".

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9. "Without losing a drop" - At the elevator, Jake runs into CLAUDE MULVIHILL, an old acquaintance of his. Jake identifies Mulvihill to Yelburton as an ex-sheriff who was never known for his honesty. Yelburton knows Claude well - after all, he works for the department.

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10. "Caught with my pants down" - Jake arrives at the Mulwray estate. He is asked to wait, a door slamming in his face. Finally, he is led to the patio where he meets a Japanese gardener who is standing in the middle of a decorative pool, mumbling, "Velly bad for glass". Something in the water catches Jake's eye, but before he can give it his full attention, Evelyn Mulwray enters, fresh from a morning ride.

Over tea, Mrs. Mulwray startles Jake by suggesting that she is willing to drop the lawsuit. Jake, in turn, startles her by insisting that he doesn't want to drop it, since whoever set up her husband set him up too. Under the circumstances, Jake continues, he must talk to her husband as soon as possible. Evelyn suggests that Jake try the Oak Pass reservoir, since her husband frequently spends his lunch hour there.

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11. "Lost in the flood" - At the Oak Pass reservoir, Jake fakes his way past the guards only to find that he has arrived at the scene of a murder. The victim is Hollis Mulwray, an apparent

drowning victim, and although the idea of murder is not discussed, the presence of Escobar, a detective from Homicide and an old crony of Jake's from the Chinatown days, suggests the strong possibility of foul play.

5 12. "Gittes with two t's" - At the Police Station, Mrs. Mulwray identifies her husband's body. She is extremely nervous, and under Escobar's insistent questioning, she lies, claiming that it was she who hired Jake. Jake goes along with her, and helps her get past a crowd of reporters.

Outside in the parking lot, Mrs. Mulwray tells Jake that she'll send him a check to make it official that she has hired him.

9 13. "Only in L.A." - At the morgue, Jake arrives to take another look at Mulwray. He chats with MORTY, the mortician, who offhandedly mentions another drowning victim, a local bum who created a home for himself at the bottom of the Los Angeles river bed. Jake pursues the matter, since it is common knowledge that the Los Angeles river bed is dry as a bone. Morty is insistent - "We got water out of him. He drowned."

1 1/2 14. "It only comes at night" - Jake arrives at the scene of the old bum's demise. It was here too that Mulwray had his initial meeting with the Mexican boy. The boy returns, and this time Jake speaks with him. The boy tells Jake that every night the water comes to a different part of the river.

3 15. "You're a very nosey fellow" - That night, Jake returns to the Oak Park Reservoir. He climbs over a chain link fence and slips down into a run off channel when a torrent of water suddenly comes rushing through, catching Jake by surprise and pinning him up against the fence. Jake pulls himself out of the channel only to run into Mulvihill and his "midget" com-patriot. The "midget" slits Jake's nose open, suggesting strongly that Jake drop the investigation.

3 16. "They're the kinda guys have dinner with the judge" - Jake, a bandage masking the middle third of his face, is sitting at his desk, feeling a bit put upon. Duffy and Walsh feel that Jake is in over his head, but Jake insists that he wants the big shots who must be behind it all. They are interrupted by a call from IDA SESSIONS - the phony Mrs. Mulwray. She is worried about her possible involvement in the murder. Jake wants to know who hired her. She suggests that he look in the Obit column of the morning paper for more information.

6 17. "It's difficult for me" - At the Brown Derby, Jake and Evelyn meet for lunch. Jake acknowledges that the check he has received is generous, but that her cooperation in regards to his investigation is not. Evelyn suggests gently that she

is having an affair, and doesn't wish to complicate matters unnecessarily by having it made public knowledge.

18. "I like breathing through it" - In the parking lot outside the restaurant, Jake finally lets Evelyn feel the brunt of his anger. He tells her that her husband was murdered. He explains that somebody is dumping the city's water supply into the ocean, and that Hollis knew who and why. Whoever it was is also responsible for having slit Jake's nose. Jake likes his nose, he likes breathing through it, and he still thinks Mrs. Mulwray is hiding something.

19. "Out to lunch" - Jake returns to Yelburton's office. Yelburton's secretary rather gruffly insists that Yelburton is "in conference". Jake, undaunted, amicably replies that he'll wait, patience being his forte. Silence isn't however, and he proceeds to rattle the secretary by asking her a number of seemingly innocent questions regarding the photographs on the wall. Although annoyed, the secretary fills Jake in on the background and history of the two men figured in the photographs - Hollis Mulwray and Noah Cross. At one time they jointly owned the water department - the water department became public when Mr. Mulwray insisted that the water should belong to the people. Jake recognizes Noah Cross as the man arguing with Mulwray in his own photographs taken earlier by Walsh. The secretary, strained to the breaking point by Jake's persistent questioning, finally gets up, disappears into Yelburton's office, and reappears with the information that Mr. Yelburton will see Jake.

Jake puts Yelburton at ease, then smacks him with an accusation. He claims Yelburton is conspiring with the men who killed Mulwray. Yelburton proclaims Jake mad, then softens his tone to explain that the department is secretly diverting water to the Northwest valley to irrigate farm land. He says the water that Jake has seen cascading into the sea is simply runoff. Jake doesn't believe him.

20. "You've already got one going, Mrs. Mulwray" - Jake returns to his office to find Evelyn waiting for him. She wants Jake to find her husband's killer. She's extremely jumpy, and becomes even more so when Jake asks her if Noah Cross is her father. She replies that he is, and in response to Jake's queries, tells him that her husband and her father had a falling out when the damn Noah had talked Hollis into building collapsed, killing hundreds. She claims that the two never spoke to one another again. She and Jake make his employment official.

21. "Just find the girl, Mr. Gits" - Jake visits NOAH CROSS at his club, the ALBACORE. They sit down to a meal of fish, and Cross, aware of the fact that his daughter Evelyn is employing Jake, implies that Jake might be taking advantage of his bereaved

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*Scaplane - background on Evelyn + Noah Cross info from scaplane pilot on Jake's way to Albacore*

daughter's unstable condition. Jake is indignant over this suggestion, but Cross placates Jake by offering to hire him. Cross' interest is in finding the girl Hollis was involved with; he explains that his concern for the girl's safety grows out of his immense respect for Hollis' memory. When Jake mentions the photographs he has of Cross and Mulwray arguing, Cross shortcircuits the discussion by restating his objective - "Just find the girl, Mr. Gits".

2 **22.** "This isn't a lending library" - Jake, at the office of PUBLIC RECORDS, steals a page from the register. The page documents the sale to new owners of most of the land in the Northwest valley.

5 **23.** "You dumb Oakie, you don't know anything" - Jake, driving through the withering orange groves in the Northwest valley, suddenly has his windshield shattered by a bullet. Finding himself trapped by a group of farmers, he cracks up his car. The farmers pull him roughly out of the car. It becomes apparent that the farmers think that Jake has been sent by the Water Department to sabotage their wells. Jake tries to explain that he too is an enemy of the Water Department, and that he has been hired by Evelyn Mulwray to investigate it, but he loses his temper in the ensuing argument and one of the farmers knocks him cold.

1 **24.** "Got to worrying about you" - Jake regains consciousness on the farmer's porch. The farmers have called Evelyn. They leave in her car, Evelyn driving.

1 **25.** "Jasper Lamar Crabb" - In the car, we find Jake convinced that greed is at the bottom of it all. Reading aloud the list of the new landowners, he finds that the name Jasper Lamar Crabb is familiar, and then locates it in the obituary column that Ida Sessions had recommended as a source of information. Mr. Crabb had resided at the Marr Vista Inn, an old folks home, until his death. The date of Crabb's land purchase follows the date of his death.

7 **26.** "Dad's lost control" - At the Marr Vista Inn, Jake and Evelyn, acting as man and wife, bluff their way in, convincing the supervisor that they are interested in a home for "Dad". On the activities board, they find all the names of the new "landowners" listed as residents of the home. Jake approaches one of the new "landowners", an elderly woman named EMMA DILL, and asks her if she knows about her recent fortunes in real estate. It is quite evident that Emma does not have the slightest idea of what Jake is talking about. Jake, noticing the quilt that Emma is working on, asks about the Albacore Club's emblem clearly evident in the material. Emma explains that her son is

a member, and that the club frequently donates material to them. The supervisor, now quite aware of Jake's true intentions, comes up from behind them and ushers them from the room.

At the door stands Mulvihill. Jake, aware of what is about to happen, asks Mulvihill if Evelyn can be excused. Mulvihill, always the gentleman, obliges, and Jake, using Evelyn's departure as a distraction, gets the jump on Mulvihill and beats him senseless. Mulvihill disposed of, Jake makes his way outside only to find the "midget" and another man approaching him. Before they can reach him, Evelyn drives up in the car and Jake's escape is made. They drive off into the night.

27. "Maid's night out" - Jake and Evelyn return to Evelyn's deserted house. Evelyn tries to find out about Jake's background as a cop in Chinatown, but Jake is more interested in finding some peroxide for his bandaged nose.

In the bathroom, Evelyn attends to Jake. He peers into her eyes and asks about a black spot in her right iris. She explains it as a flaw, a kind of birthmark. Jake kisses her.

Jake and Evelyn are in bed. Again Evelyn asks about Chinatown. This time Jake relents, and tells her that while there, he tried to help a woman, but ended up hurting her instead.

The phone rings. Evelyn answers it and it is obvious that the call has a disturbing effect on her. She tells Jake that she has to leave, but won't tell him where she's going. Before leaving, she feels it necessary to tell him that the Albacore Club is her father's club. Jake replies that he knows, he's been there, he's seen her father. Evelyn becomes extremely nervous and is suddenly embarrassed by her nakedness. She suggests to Jake that her father is crazy, and may have killed Hollis. She asks that Jake remain at the house. She wants him there when she returns. She enters the shower.

Jake goes outside to Evelyn's car. He breaks the red glass which covers the right tail light.

28. "You've got your husband's girl tied up in there" - Jake follows Evelyn to a house in another part of town. Through a window he sees Evelyn talking to her Chinese butler and then administering an injection to Hollis' "paramour".

When Evelyn returns to her car, Jake is waiting inside. He threatens to take Evelyn to Escobar if she doesn't come clean. Evelyn claims the girl is her sister and has just learned of Hollis' death. Jake thinks Evelyn is the murderer and the girl is a witness. Evelyn replies that she loved and respected Hollis, and that she is only trying to keep the whole story of Hollis' affair out of the public eye.

Though Evelyn wants Jake to return with her to her house, Jake leaves alone.

29. "She begged me to call" - Jake, at his office, tries to sleep but is interrupted twice by the phone. Both times it is a male voice claiming to be speaking for Ida Sessions. Ida, the voice claims, wants to see Jake. He is given her home address.

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30. "Salt water" - Jake arrives at Ida Sessions house and finds her dead. Escobar and his men are in the house waiting for him. They called him when they found his phone number scrawled on the wall beside the phone. Escobar has a theory. He believes Ida hired Jake under the instructions of Mrs. Mulwray. He thinks Mrs. Mulwray wanted to set up her husband, and that she killed him, making it look like a suicide. Jake found out, and is now being paid to keep his mouth shut. Jake wants to know what makes Escobar think Mulwray was murdered. Escobar replies that they found salt water in Mulwray's lungs. Jake makes Escobar's theory sound ridiculous, and offers to take Escobar to the ocean. Escobar hesitates. Jake goads him into making a decision. He might learn the truth, Jake tells him.

31. "Irresponsible accusations" - Jake, accompanied by Escobar and his men, returns to the site, near the ocean, of the original runoff. To Jake's dismay, the runoff channel is completely dry.

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One of Escobar's men, having talked with Yelburton, approaches them with Yelburton's contention that Gittes' has been making irresponsible accusations. In response to this, Escobar tells Jake to have Evelyn Mulwray in his office within the next two hours.

32. "Mrs. Mulwray no home" - Jake arrives at Evelyn's house and finds the furniture covered with sheets. Evelyn is gone. He goes out to the patio where the Japanese gardener is once again fiddling around the pool. He nods at Jake, this time telling him, "Salt water velly bad for glass". Jake stops, remembering that he had seen something in the pool. He turns to the pool - on the bottom lies a pair of glasses. J

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Jake call ~~Woman~~ Dean Cross

33. "She's my daughter...she's my sister" - Jake shows up at the house where he saw Hollis' girl. Pushing past Evelyn's Chinese butler, Jake finds Evelyn, but it is the girl he wants to see. Evelyn won't allow it. Jake calls Escobar, telling him where he is, and suggesting that he come over. He then presents Evelyn with both the broken glasses and his theory - Evelyn killed Hollis. She pushes him. He fell. Perhaps it was an accident. He hit his head. The girl saw it happen. She's a witness. Evelyn replies that the girl has nothing to do with it. Jake wants to know who she is, telling Evelyn he knows she doesn't have a sister. Evelyn claims that the girl is her daughter. Jake slaps her. Evelyn explains that the girl is her daughter and her sister, the offspring of her and her father.

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All Evelyn wants is to live with the girl, free from her father. Jake helps her arrange her escape. He wants her to go to her butler's house, an address in Chinatown. Evelyn goes upstairs to pack, stopping just long enough to tell Jake that the glasses he's shown her did not belong to her husband. The glasses are bi-focals. Hollis did not wear bi-focals.

Evelyn brings her daughter, Katherine, downstairs to meet Jake.

Jake watches Evelyn leave as he calls Duffy and Walsh, telling them that if Escobar doesn't bust him, he will meet them at the Chinatown address.

34. "It looks like she flew the coop." - Escobar arrives. Gittes tells him that Evelyn might be in San Pedro at her maid's house. He offers Escobar the address but Escobar suggests they all go together.

35. "You never learn, do ya Jake?" - Gittes and Escobar pull up in front of a house in San Pedro. Escobar, remembering what happened to Jake long ago in Chinatown, grants Jake a minute alone with Evelyn. Jake enters the house.

1/2 36. "Curly, do me a favor." - The house Jake has entered belongs to Curly, Jake's client in the opening scene. Curly is in the midst of a family dinner, served by his wife, who wears one hell of a shiner. Jake learns that Curly's pick-up truck is in the back alley. He pushes Curly out the back door.

1/2 37. "You're sure this is alright, Mr. Gittes?" - Jake and Curly make a deal. For cash and the money Curly owes Jake, Curly will take Evelyn and her daughter to his boat and then on to Mexico.

38. "I've got the girl, Mr. Cross." - We find Jake and Curly in front of Evelyn's house, her things packed in Curly's pick-up. Jake gives Curly the Chinatown address.

5 Inside the house, Jake calls Noah Cross, Evelyn's father. He tells him that he's got the girl. Cross promises to be at Evelyn's house within the hour.

Jake meets Cross on the patio. He lets Cross know that he's aware of Cross's "water project". Jake asks him how he intends to make money out of it. Cross says the valley will be incorporated into the city. Once the dam is built, the valley will be worth a fortune. But Jake is confused. Cross must already have millions - why has he done this? Cross answers simply, "The future, Mr. Gits. The future."

Jake confronts Cross with the glasses, and the fact that Mulwray's lungs were filled with salt water. The glasses belong to Cross. Jake figures Cross killed Mulwray when Mulwray uncovered Albacore's water scam.

Cross doesn't try to convince Jake otherwise. He doesn't have to - Mulvihill, his head swathed in bandages, steps out of the shadows, a gun in hand.

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Cross asks where the girl is. Jake says, "With her mother." Mulvihill puts the gun to Jake's head. Cross orders Jake to take them to the girl.

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39. "C'mon Jake, it's Chinatown." - Jake and his two guests arrive in Chinatown. Jake is immediately relieved to find Duffy and Walsh but they raise their hands, revealing that they have been handcuffed to one another. Escobar steps up, informing Jake that he too is under arrest. Jake seems pleased. He introduces Cross, trying to explain what Cross has done but Escobar shuts him up and Cross moves in on Escobar for the kill, charm oozing, wallet bulging.

By now, Evelyn has come out of the house. She is getting into her car with Katherine. Cross goes to them, clumsily introducing himself to Katherine as her grandfather. Evelyn pulls a gun on him, demanding that he back off, but he keeps coming on.

Jake yells to Evelyn to leave it to the police. She retorts that her father owns the police. She shoots Cross, wounding him, and starts to drive off.

Escobar fires a warning shot and then takes a bead on the car. Jake, handcuffed to Escobar's assistant, Shorty, leaps forward, knocking Escobar's arm. Then Shorty leaps forward, his gun drawn. Dragging Jake with him, he shoots at the car.

In the distance, the car slows. The horn blows. A girl screams. Men begin moving to the car as if in a dream. They break into a run. At the car they find Evelyn dead, shot through the back of the head. The bullet has found its way through her right eye. Her daughter is screaming, her dress stained with Evelyn's blood. Cross puts his hand over her eyes.

Jake stares. He seems immobile, incapable of further thought or action. Escobar lets everyone go. "C'mon Jake, it's Chinatown," Duffy says as he and Walsh help Jake down the street. Jake, barely nodding, turns away.

- THE END -