

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A richly furnished bedroom. ESTHER fingers something from a silk pouch and throws it at JACK. He fumbles, drops it. Picks it from the floor...An INDIAN HEAD NICKEL. JACK looks at her quizzically.

ESTHER

Put it in your mouth.

JACK wipes it on his shirt first, then does so.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

That is what it tastes like. More or less.

(undressing as she speaks)

"Once upon a time", on the Black Sea--a certain Gypsy prince was given a great, great treasure to clean out the countryside of all us bad ones. We were called the "Bhuta". That was our name. And we were a damn sorry bunch. We lived in forest shit holes and mountain caves, and this Gypsy prince--shining sword, all that--burned us out of our lairs and nailed us up in sun one by one until we were nearly snuffed out, entire. But a few stout souls banded up and began to hunt the prince and when they caught up him, they strung him up. And stabbed him to death. And tortured him.

(a sawing motion)

Took his head off. And dumped his great, great treasure into the sea. But before they did, they each took one coin, so they'd never forget.

(a shrug and smile)

'Course, eventually they did forget. But it's nice to know your history.

CUT TO

By a steaming tub, ESTHER undoes JACK's shirt, removes it, folds it. A doubloon hangs from a chain on her bare neck--

ESTHER (CONT'D)

(tapping JACK's forehead)

Protect this.

(and his heart)

And this. Your weakest spots.

JACK nods, watching her, adoring.