

THE HITCH
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. LONDON'S EAST END (CIRCA 1907) - DAY

The working class district of London near the turn of the century. An urban sprawl of brick, rooftops and smoke.

EXT. EAST END STREET - DAY

A bustle of activity -- pedestrians, carriages, merchants selling their wares, workers loading and unloading boxes as

A BLACK BIRD lands on one particular storefront window sill. Etched into the window is a MEDICAL CROSS and the words: **Dr. John Thompson.**

On the other side of the window is white-haired DR. THOMPSON (60s) and an 8 year-old boy, slightly pudgy, who goes by the name of ALFRED HITCHCOCK.

INT. DOCTOR THOMPSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Thompson puts a stethoscope to Alfred's exposed chest.

DR. THOMPSON
Breathe, dear boy.

Alfred, sitting on the examination table, takes a deep breath and exhales. Thompson smiles.

DR. THOMPSON (cont'd)
It would appear your cold is all gone.

He ruffles Alfred's hair. Alfred's mother, EMMA HITCHCOCK (mid-20s, conservatively dressed), stands in the doorway.

EMMA
We'll surely miss you, Dr. Thompson.
You're one of the few who can get Alfred
to sit still for that long.

Thompson buttons up Alfred's shirt.

ALFRED
Are you going away, doctor?

DR. THOMPSON
Yes, Alfred, I've decided to retire. My
hands aren't as steady as they used to be.

The NURSE, a striking blonde, enters.

NURSE
Doctor, your next patient is here.

Alfred is immediately entranced -- her face, hair, the contour of her body -- he can't take his eyes off her.

EMMA

Alfred!

The boy snaps back.

EMMA (cont'd)

It's not polite to stare.

DR. THOMPSON

Ah. I see the boy has a penchant for blondes, like myself.

He smiles. Winks at the nurse. Alfred blushes.

NURSE

Doctor, really. Don't be so cheeky.

DR. THOMPSON

Oh, it's harmless. Soon, Mrs. Hitchcock, I'm sure Alfred here will have to beat the lady callers away with a stick.

He puts a hand on the boy's shoulder.

EMMA

Well, not too soon, I hope.

Alfred absently turns and fixates on the BLACKBIRD on the window sill -- ANOTHER ONE lands beside it.

DR. THOMPSON

Nurse, please gather Alfred's file for Mrs. Hitchcock.

(to Emma)

And let me provide you with some references for a new physician.

He gestures to the other room.

EMMA

That would be wonderful. You know, someone in the East End would be ideal-- London is just too spread out...

Thompson follows Emma and the nurse out. Alfred lingers a moment on the window, then turns back and sees he's alone.

He jumps off the table... and trips over a black leather bag, spilling its contents everywhere.

ALFRED

Bollocks.

He kneels down and begins to re-pack the bag, but pauses at A SCRAP BOOK that has fallen open -- he sees a NEWSPAPER CLIPPING with the headline: **The Ripper Strikes Again**

Alfred flips through the book -- it is, in fact, FILLED with newspaper clippings about the Jack the Ripper murders --

HEADLINES read: **Prostitutes Mutilated in Whitechapel -- Killer Evades Capture -- Police Suspect Ripper is Physician --**

THE LAST PAGE contains a clipping that reads: **Police Close Ripper Investigation, Label Murders 'Unsolved'** -- and pinned right next to the clip is a *torn piece of white satin*.

DR. THOMPSON (O.S.)

I see you found my hobby.

Alfred leaps to his feet in a start to find Dr. Thompson looming over him.

DR. THOMPSON (cont'd)

The Jack the Ripper murders. You've no doubt heard of them.

He kneels down, now face to face with the wide-eyed boy -- he slowly puts the spilled items back in the bag.

DR. THOMPSON (cont'd)

20 years ago. Oh, did they ever capture my imagination. The newspaper stories were better than any novel, in my opinion. So vivid the descriptions. So horrific the crimes. I couldn't get enough. I clipped every article and collected them in this book.

He closes the book.

DR. THOMPSON (cont'd)

Perhaps you and I share the same fascination? Hmm. Well, I think I know just what a boy like you needs.

Alfred is frozen -- the doctor REACHES into his bag --

EMMA (O.S.)

Doctor...

They turn to find Emma in the doorway.

EMMA (cont'd)
Your nurse has been very helpful.

From his bag, Dr. Thompson produces... A SUCKER.

DR. THOMPSON
Lollipop?

He hands it to Alfred. Rubs his head. Smiles.

EXT. DR. THOMPSON'S OFFICE (EAST END STREET) - DAY

Emma leads Alfred away by the hand. The boy glances back at

THE DOCTOR'S WINDOW -- nearly A DOZEN blackbirds have now
landed on the sill. Behind them, Dr. Thompson waves to
Alfred. Slowly draws the blinds.

EMMA
Keep up, Alfred.

She drags him forward as they cross a crowded street.
Alfred, still looking back, spies A BEAT COP -- the boy
breaks from his mother's grasp --

EMMA (cont'd)
Alfred!

Alfred zigzags through the crowd -- races up to the cop.

ALFRED
Officer, officer!

BEAT COP
Well, what have we here?

ALFRED
You have to arrest Dr. Thompson. He's
Jack the Ripper.

BEAT COP
(laughs)
What's that? Jack the Ripper? Well,
we'd better get him in shackles, hadn't
we?

Alfred grabs the cop's sleeve.

ALFRED
I'm not joking. It's true. He's got a
book of pictures, and even a piece of a
dress. He's Jack the Ripper, I tell
you!

The cop yanks his arm back.

BEAT COP
Take it easy there, boyo.

ALFRED
But, don't you believe me?

BEAT COP
Well, let's see. Dr. Thompson is a
respectable man. And you're just a
silly boy.
(bends down)
So... no, lad. I don't believe you.

Alfred regards the cop with confusion. Then he kicks the
man in the shin. The cop grabs his leg --

BEAT COP (cont'd)
Son of a...! Why you...

The cop lunges for the boy -- Alfred runs -- the cop chases
him -- *Smack!* Alfred runs right into his mother's arms.

EMMA
Alfred! You had me worried sick.

BEAT COP
You better keep a keen eye on your son,
madam. Because if I ever see him again,
I'm gonna throw his ass in jail.

The cop smiles fiendishly at Alfred.

BEAT COP (cont'd)
You won't like being locked up, laddie.
Oh no. You won't like it at all.

Emma pulls Alfred in close, her eyes never leaving the cop.

EMMA
Come on, now. Let's get you home.

Mother and son hurry off down the street.

YOUNG CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
Really, Mr. Hitchcock-- you don't think
that was *the* Jack the Ripper, do you?

EXT. WARNER BROS. STUDIOS - DAY

A NECKTIE with the monogrammed initials **AH** hangs around the
neck of a now 28 year-old ALFRED HITCHCOCK ("HITCH").

He stands outside a studio hangar next to a camera on a tripod.

He looks not the famous movie director we've come to know (portly, balding, hangdog expression). No, this is a lean, only slightly rotund man with a thin moustache. He is, in fact, kind of *dashing*.

TITLES appear: **Los Angeles, California - 1927**

Hitchcock's hands are inside a black bag, where he loads a film magazine. TWO CAMERAMEN stand next to him. The older one smokes a cigarette. The younger one holds a stopwatch.

HITCH

What? Just because a copper told me he wasn't? Let me ask you this-- how does a London policeman go fishing?

The two cameramen shrug.

HITCH (cont'd)

He catches one fish, then beats it until it tells him where the others are.

They laugh.

HITCH (cont'd)

No. The so-called authorities are brutes. They couldn't see the truth if it stabbed them in the heart.

Hitch pulls the changed magazine out of the bag.

HITCH (cont'd)

How'd I do?

The young man clicks the stopwatch.

YOUNG CAMERAMAN

One minute, thirty-nine seconds.

Hitch slides the magazine into place on the camera. Flips a switch. It whirs to life.

OLD CAMERAMAN

Incredible. That's the fastest I've ever seen anyone load a film mag.

HITCH

You just have to be able to see its inner workings in your mind--
(holds up his hands)

(MORE)

HITCH (cont'd)
and let your hands take over. I find
it's a talent that also comes in handy
when having dealings with the fairer
sex.

He winks. They laugh again just as

A HANGAR DOOR marked **SCREENING ROOM** opens -- several suits
exit, including JACK WARNER (late 30s, moustache) and
MICHAEL BALCON (British, mid-30s) who smokes a pipe.

The cameramen head off down the lot. Hitch nods goodbye.

BALCON
Ah, Hitch. There you are.

The other suits disperse.

WARNER
Mr. Hitchcock. Highly amusing piece of
cinema.

HITCH
Oh? What's that?

WARNER
Why, your film, of course.

HITCH
I see. But "The Lodger" is a thriller.

WARNER
(laughs)
Of course it is.

BALCON
That is to say, there *is* a lot of
comedy in it.

HITCH
Some comedy, Michael. And it is used as
juxtaposition for the mounting reality
that the hero may indeed be a killer.

Warner's on the move -- Hitch and Balcon keep pace.

HITCH (cont'd)
You see, Mr. Warner, the film is really
about the fear we all have of the
unknown, that a seemingly nice fellow
could actually be a psychotic murderer.

WARNER
You have a light touch, Mr. Hitchcock.

Unseen by Warner, Hitch mouths *light touch?* to Balcon, who quickly shakes his head.

WARNER (cont'd)

As I said to your producer, Mr. Balcon here, we've ushered in a new age in cinema-- sound motion pictures. You may know, we just released the "Jazz Singer", and it's a sensation-- alive, vibrant, full of heart and passion. A young director with your sense of humor would thrive in this era.

The three men pass through the studio gates. A car pulls up.

HITCH

But, Mr. Warner, I am sure Michael told you. It's not a comedy we seek funding for.

WARNER

That's what I'm saying. Perhaps it should be. Good day, gentlemen.

He disappears into the car and off it goes. A couple stage hands promptly drop several film reels into the arms of the two Brits. The gates close behind them.

HITCH

Michael.

BALCON

Yes, old man?

HITCH

What just happened here?

INT. DINER - DAY (LATER)

Hitchcock, knife in hand, pounds the table with his fist.

HITCH

(loudly)

They didn't think my murder scenarios were believable?

Balcon, across from him, bristles. Glances around -- suspicious looks from the other patrons.

BALCON

Easy, dear fellow--

HITCH

The notion is simply preposterous. Why, "The Lodger" is based on the Jack the Ripper murders-- and those actually *happened*, Michael.

BALCON

I know--

HITCH

I mean, did they even *watch* the movie?

BALCON

Of course they did--

HITCH

You know, the expressionist movement in Germany hasn't caught on here. All that time I spent with Murnau and Pabst, that's what they're reacting to-- the angles, the shadows-- I mean, unbelievable murder scenarios? Poppycock.

A waitress sets plates of ham and eggs in front of the Brits.

HITCH (cont'd)

Really, what do they expect? Must I actually murder someone to prove I know how to murder someone?

Hitch dives into his meal, slicing and dicing.

BALCON

What? Oh. How droll.

HITCH

Seriously, Michael-- the bane of my existence, of any artist's for that matter, seems to be this subsistent notion that one must have lived the work for it to have the ring of authenticity.

BALCON

(ponders)

Renoir was a soldier...

HITCH

Indeed.

(beat)

Well, Warner Brothers isn't the only game in town. Who's next on the list?

BALCON

Of the major studios, you mean? I'm afraid no one, old chap. We've met with all of them.

HITCH

I see. The entirety of the American movie industry and they all think I'm a sham.

They each take a sip of their tea... *and grimace.*

BALCON

So the Americans don't yet appreciate your work. Well, what of it? Your first thriller was a smash back home. Warner was right about one thing-- *this is* a new era of cinema. An era of bold storytelling and technique, which you have in spades. They'll catch on soon enough.

HITCH

Soon enough is not soon enough, Michael.

(sighs)

Islington has promised "Blackmail" to Cutts if we don't procure financing.

Balcon stops eating.

BALCON

My word. I had no idea. Give "Blackmail" to Graham Cutts?

HITCH

I know. The man couldn't direct his way out of a paper sack. That movie is *mine*. I've been working on the script for years. Not to mention it could be the first synchronized sound film in all the UK. Why, if he gets that job...

Hitch stares out the window -- across the street is the famous GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE.

HITCH (cont'd)

(shakes his head)

...it would be the death of me. His rise would be my fall. Just a footnote in the history of motion pictures.

BALCON

Really, Hitch. Your proclivity for wallowing in wounded pride, *that* will be the death of you, not Graham Cutts.

Hitch shrugs. Surveys Balcon's plate.

HITCH

I find your eggs to be a bit... runny.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE - DAY

Hitch and Balcon stand in front of the grand theatre, regarding the MARQUEE -- in big letters, it reads: **Cecil B. DeMille's "The King of Kings"**

As Hitch stares at it, he imagines the letters morph into: **Alfred Hitchcock's "Blackmail"**

BALCON

Quite a spectacle, eh?

HITCH

Indeed. Did you know that Sid Grauman was a failed gold prospector? Turns out he was looking in the wrong place. Finally found his gold in movie theatres.

Balcon grabs Hitch's shoulder.

BALCON

Listen my friend, the studios may be finished with us, but I have several good leads on potential independent investors. We will get the money. And the picture will get made-- with you at the helm.

Hitch looks at him. Nods.

BALCON (cont'd)

That's the spirit. Mark my words: one day Alfred Hitchcock will be a name no one will be able to forget.

INT. BILTMORE HOTEL (LOBBY) - NIGHT

FRONT DESK CLERK

I'm sorry... what was the name again?

HITCH

(beat)

Hitchcock. Room 513.

FRONT DESK CLERK

One moment.

Hitch looks around. The lobby is spacious, elegant. A camera FLASHES from a nearby lounge. The clerk returns with a key.

FRONT DESK CLERK (cont'd)

There you go, sir. Will there be anything else?

HITCH

Yes. I was wondering if...

Hitch trails off as he sees

A BLONDE BOMBSHELL (mid-20s) walk right toward him. She wears a stunning evening gown that practically glows. This is STELLA REMINGTON.

STELLA

Mr. Hitchcock, is it?

Hitch is transfixed.

HITCH

Yes.

STELLA

I've been told you're a movie director.

HITCH

Yes. That's true. In England.

STELLA

I just love the British sensibility. Professionally, I've done Marlowe twice. Do you like Marlowe, Mr. Hitchcock?

HITCH

I'm not much for the theatre, I'm afraid.

STELLA

Your candor is refreshing. A lot of "yes men" in this city, I've discovered. You see, I'm in town a few days meeting with the studios.

HITCH

A daunting proposition, I can assure you.

STELLA

You just have to know how talk to them.

She seductively shifts her hips.

STELLA (cont'd)

Or not talk to them, if you catch my meaning.

HITCH

You certainly have a distinct advantage regarding the latter, miss...

STELLA

Remington. Stella Remington. From New York.

HITCH

Charmed.

He kisses her hand. She smiles. *Flash! Pop!* A PHOTOGRAPHER snaps their photo.

PHOTOGRAPHER

For the lifestyles section.

Stella blows him a kiss. Turns back to Hitch.

STELLA

What do you say, Mr. Hitchcock? Shall we have tea together? Tomorrow perhaps?

HITCH

I'd be delighted.

STELLA

I'm staying right here in the Biltmore. I'll have someone call on you after lunch. Assuming you haven't been swallowed up by an earthquake. You do know what an earthquake is, don't you?

HITCH

A lot of rumbling and shaking, I suppose.

STELLA

Absolutely. Good night, Mr. Hitchcock.

HITCH

A pleasure.

With that, she turns and sashays out the front doors. Hitch watches her go, entranced. Turns to the photographer.

HITCH (cont'd)
Who the devil is she?

PHOTOGRAPHER
Stella Remington? Up and coming
Broadway actress. Gets more attention
for her wild escapades than her acting,
if you wanna know.

HITCH
Wild escapades?

PHOTOGRAPHER
Parties, booze. That kind of thing.

HITCH
The film camera would adore her.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Yeah. She'll probably make it in the
movies. She's got something everyone
wants. You know, something special.

He heads off, leaving Hitch alone.

HITCH
Indeed.

He sulks a moment. Then notices THE CONCIERGE returning to
his desk. Makes a bee line for him.

HITCH (cont'd)
Pardon me.

CONCIERGE
Of course, sir.

HITCH
My traveling companion has turned in
for the night, and so... I was
wondering... where can a man go to get
a drink in this town? You know, a pub
of some sort.

CONCIERGE
Why, nowhere sir.

HITCH
I find that hard to believe.

CONCIERGE
It's the law. Consumption of alcohol is
illegal.

HITCH

Oh. Right. How silly of me. Well. Thank
you just the same.

Hitch heads back to the main staircase. The concierge
watches him. Shakes his head. Scribbles something on a slip
of paper. Hurries after.

CONCIERGE

Mr. Hitchcock...

He hands Hitch the paper.

CONCIERGE (cont'd)

There is... a place that may have what
you're looking for. This *may* be its
address. But we never had this
conversation.

Hitch studies the paper. Pulls some cash out of his pocket.

HITCH

And I never gave you this tip.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

A WOMAN IN A BLACK DRESS leads Hitch through a bustling,
smoke-filled night club, awash in red and green hues. She
shows Hitch to a seat in front of a dapper BARTENDER.

BARTENDER

What's your poison, pal?

HITCH

Yes. Well. Do you have cognac?

BARTENDER

Sure do. It ain't cheap, though.

HITCH

I don't suppose anything here is.

BARTENDER

You got that right.

He pulls out a bottle and a glass. Pours. Hitch swirls the
drink. Downs a healthy swig. Closes his eyes. *Savors it.*

BARTENDER (cont'd)

One of those days?

HITCH

What if I told you that I don't drink?

BARTENDER

Well, guess you would have answered my question.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT (LATER)

Hitch, at the bar, tie loose, scribbles in a small, black, leather-bound NOTEBOOK. He is a bit tipsy. The bartender returns with a third glass of cognac.

BARTENDER

You know, a lot of dames here tonight.

Hitch looks up. Glances around.

HITCH

What? Oh. Yes. Quite a few.

Goes back to writing.

BARTENDER

You been scribbling in that thing all night. What are you, working on your memoirs?

HITCH

This, dear fellow, is my murder book.

BARTENDER

Murder book?

HITCH

Not like you imagine.

BARTENDER

I can imagine a lot.

HITCH

It's just ideas for murders. That is to say, for movies. You see, I make movies. Or perhaps *made* movies, as the case may be. What I'm saying is, I write down scenarios in the book, then try to perfect them.

(nods)

Yes. That's it. I'm always trying to fashion the perfect murder.

MAN (O.S.)

I could use a book like that.

Hitch turns to find

A MAN in a blue suit (mid-20s, average build), hat pulled low on his head, smoking a cigarette just a few stools down. He signals the bartender for a refill.

HITCH

In the business of murder, are you?

MAN

Aren't we all?

HITCH

I should hope not.

MAN

What I mean to say is, we all have that thought. Don't we?

HITCH

What thought?

MAN

That thought of, "Gee, wouldn't it be better if so-and-so weren't around?"

He takes a drag.

MAN (cont'd)

I mean, what did Darwin call it?
Natural selection?

HITCH

You mean murder as a means for survival.

MAN

Yes. Yes, that's it. A means for survival.

Drink in hand, he slides down toward Hitch.

MAN (cont'd)

May I?

HITCH

If you promise not to kill me.

MAN

(laughs)

A morbid way to start a conversation, wasn't it? I couldn't help but overhear.

HITCH

Well, perhaps I shouldn't be speaking of murder so loudly in a crowded speakeasy.

MAN

Yes. A lot of unsavory types in these places. Not you or I, of course. But where are my manners.

Offers his hand.

MAN (cont'd)

I'm Norman Bates.

HITCH

Alfred Hitchcock.

The two men shake.

BATES

So... do I detect a British accent? London, perhaps?

HITCH

You've been?

BATES

Oh, a time or two. My father traveled. I tagged along. He was in the shipping industry, so we made that grueling trip by boat. God bless my father, but may he bless the airplane even more.

HITCH

Perhaps, then, a toast to the Wright brothers is in order.

BATES

Here, here.

They toast. Finish their drinks. Bates signals another round.

BATES (cont'd)

Let me buy you another drink. For disturbing your work.

HITCH

No, no. I've had far too many as it is.

BATES

I insist. For the trouble. Choose to drink it or not.

Hitch relents. The drinks come.

BATES (cont'd)
Well, thanks for the chat. Safe
journeys back to merry ol'.

He starts to leave.

HITCH
I say-- Norman, is it?

BATES
Yes?

HITCH
Well... what about your murder?

BATES
My murder?

HITCH
You mentioned you could use a book like
mine.

BATES
Right. So I did.

HITCH
Perhaps you'd let me help you plan it.

BATES
Plan it?

Hitch has a twinkle in his eye.

HITCH
As an exercise. A game, if you will.
You see, I have a mind for it. The
American movie studios, they aren't
much impressed with me... but they can
go to hell. I'll prove it to you. Prove
that I can plan the perfect murder.

BATES
Oh?

HITCH
Yes.

Bates laughs.

BATES
You're serious?

HITCH
Deadly.

BATES
(shrugs)
I'm all ears.

HITCH
Grand. Please.

Hitch indicates for Bates to sit again. He does.

HITCH (cont'd)
Now... I take it you know this person.
Our intended victim.

BATES
I'd say that's fair.

HITCH
First choice of murder weapon. What
would it be?

BATES
Mr. Hitchcock, you waste no time
getting right to it.

HITCH
My friends call me Hitch.

BATES
Is that what we are? Friends?

HITCH
Come, dear fellow, out with it. If you
were committing the murder, how would
you do it?

Bates lights another cigarette. Contemplates.

BATES
How about poison? A little arsenic in a
cocktail perhaps?

Hitch swirls his cognac for effect.

HITCH
Arsenic has a very distinct smell. And
it's traceable in the blood. Most
poison is, unless you use very small
doses over a lengthy period of time.
And how long is hard to say.
(MORE)

HITCH (cont'd)
Far too inexact a method, especially if
your victim isn't someone you're with
all the time, like a spouse or a lover.

BATES
How do you know she's not?

HITCH
You wear no wedding ring.

BATES
Could be a lover.

HITCH
You're at a speakeasy by yourself. I'd
guess you're a bit of a playboy, not
keeping any one lover for too long.

BATES
My victim could be a housekeeper. A
maid of some sort.

HITCH
You fire the help, Mr. Bates-- not kill
them.

Bates smiles. Signals the bartender.

BATES
Bring the bottle.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT (EVEN LATER)

A BOTTLE of bourbon, nearly empty, sits between Hitch and
Bates, who are now at a table in the corner of the club.
Hitch writes. Bates laughs. *Both are clearly drunk.*

HITCH
You laugh, but any man can commit
murder, Bates.

BATES
Is that so?

HITCH
Of course. Take you, for instance.
You're a, what, businessman? Tell me,
what is it you do exactly?

BATES
(indicates his glass)
Mostly, a good deal of this.

HITCH

A-ha, so you are a playboy as I suspected. Now, are you familiar with the work of Dr. Sigmund Freud?

Bates takes a drink.

BATES

The German neurologist?

HITCH

Pyschoanalyst, as is now the case. But correct. He postulated that man is governed by two drives. Eros, or the drive for life: creativity, harmony, reproduction. And Thanatos, the drive for death: aggression, compulsion, destruction.

BATES

(smiles)

Sex and violence.

HITCH

Essentially.

BATES

Seems like a fine line.

HITCH

According to Freud, the pull is equally strong. Who knows what will tip the balance one way or the other.

Hitch leans in close.

HITCH (cont'd)

Why, either one of us could snap--

He snaps his fingers.

HITCH (cont'd)

Just like that. And a murderer is born.

He locks eyes with Bates. Laughs. Leans back.

HITCH (cont'd)

But it is the careful, intelligent, precise man who will get away with it. A man like yourself.

BATES

I suppose I'll take that as a compliment.

Hitch knocks back the rest of his drink. Slams the glass back down on the table.

HITCH
Would you like to know how?

BATES
Of course.

HITCH
Then invite me into your home.

BATES
My home?

HITCH
Yes. We're friends. Entertain a scenario with me.

Bates eyes him suspiciously... then smiles.

INT. BATES' HOME (STUDY) - NIGHT

A cozy study, rich with dark wood. Large curtained windows. Hitch relaxes in a chair. Bates hands him a drink.

BATES
Very well-- here we are. In my study.
I'm afraid seltzer is the strongest I
can offer you.

Hitch takes it.

HITCH
That's fine, Bates. Alcohol is not the issue. Us being here, in a place that is familiar to you, that is the issue. It implies a connection between victim and killer. Which is what the killer wants. And that's because he will strive to cast suspicion on someone else. Someone in particular.

BATES
I see. A patsy.

HITCH
Right.

BATES
But who's the victim and who's the killer in this scenario?

HITCH
Come now. That should be obvious,
Bates. May I use your bathroom?

BATES
Please.

He indicates a door in the corner of the room.

INT. BATES' BATHROOM

Hitch pulls a pair of black leather gloves out of his pocket. Puts them on. Produces A LENGTH OF ROPE. Stretches it taught.

INT. BATES' STUDY

Hitch rejoins Bates, his hands behind his back.

HITCH
Perhaps you could show me the view?

BATES
Of course. I mean, it's not much to
look at...

Bates gets up and moves to the window. Opens the curtains.
Hitch follows.

HITCH
Oak trees?

BATES
Hardly. Those two are walnut and--

Hitch swiftly pulls the rope out of his pocket and SINCHES it around Bates throat, *then pulls with all his might.*

Bates gags -- his glass goes flying -- he kicks and thrashes about -- Hitch's face is red -- he holds fast to the rope -- turns Bates so he is facing

A MIRROR on the wall -- Hitch looks into Bates' eyes as they nearly pop out of his head -- Bates claws at the rope -- coughs -- spits --

Then, Bates goes limp. Hitch breathes deeply. Stares down at the body.

HITCH
(to the body)
Murder, dear Bates, is a profoundly
emotional experience.
(MORE)

HITCH (cont'd)
But you must not be lost in the moment.
There is work still to be done.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

Hitch and Bates are *right where we left them*, back from Hitchcock's IMAGINED SCENARIO. Bates massages his throat.

BATES
Strangled. Well, that's the last time I
invite you over for a drink.

HITCH
Ah, but look how efficient it was. No
blood transfer. No screaming. Nothing
to give you away-- except the rope. But
the killer takes that with him, along
with anything else he may have touched.

BATES
What about the patsy?

HITCH
Good, Bates. This is most critical. You
bring some token with you, some item
that can be linked to him.

Hitch nods to Bates' lighter on the table.

HITCH (cont'd)
A lighter for instance. Or cigarette
case. Anything with your fall guy's
fingerprints or initials on it. Leave
this item on or near the body.

Bates lights a cigarette.

HITCH (cont'd)
You see, the police want to close the
case, and fast. They're so eager and
blind that if you give them enough
circumstantial evidence, they won't be
able to see past it.

BATES
They're fools.

HITCH
Yes. Now you're getting it.

BATES
Maybe you're right, Hitch.

Hitch goes back to writing.

HITCH

Of course, you must have an iron clad alibi. And you must burn anything that can connect you to the evil deed-- your clothes, the gloves, the rope-- and send up with the smoke any thought of being convicted for the crime.

SMOKE swirls from the tip of Bates' cigarette.

BATES

Hitch, you're either a genius or a madman.

Hitch takes hold of his glass.

HITCH

Here's hoping America will find me the former.

The two men toast as we PULL BACK to reveal the revelry of the packed speakeasy... and then we quite slowly

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. HITCHCOCK'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hitch lies sprawled on top of the bed, fully clothed, shoes and all.

HIS EYES open. He sits up, clutches his head. Winces. Notices he's still dressed. SUNLIGHT slashes across his face. He stands. Stumbles to the desk. Picks up the telephone.

HITCH

Yes, this is Alfred Hitchcock in room 513. Could you send up a spot of tea, a poached egg, and some toast...? Splendid. Oh, and perhaps some aspirin-- unless you have morphine... Yes, of course, the aspirin will do just fine... Yes, thank you.

He hangs up the phone. Turns back to the bed. Plops down face first. Buries his head under a pillow.

LATER

Hitch is still on the bed, face down. A KNOCK on the door. He stirs. Rolls over. Rises with great effort. Shuffles to the door. Opens it.

A WAITER, all smiles, is there with a cart.

WAITER
Room service.

Hitch surveys THE BREAKFAST: eggs, toast, jam, tea -- it's picture perfect. He brightens.

LATER STILL

Hitch, still in rumpled suit, sits at a small table in the corner of the room, finishing his last bite of toast. He takes a sip of tea. *He's coming back to life.*

He gets up. Yawns. Stretches. Starts to whistle. Goes to the closet. Finds a bathrobe and a towel. Enters

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

He lays the robe and towel on the counter. Looks at himself in the mirror. Grimaces. Smooths down his hair. *Notices he's missing his tie.* Thinks a moment. Shakes his head. Turns to

THE SHOWER. The curtain is drawn.

Hitch yawns. Grabs hold of the curtain. Yanks it open --

STELLA REMINGTON'S BODY lies sprawled out in the tub. *Dead.* Face white. Eyes bulging out of her head. Tongue hanging from her mouth.

Hitch gasps --

He reels backwards, pulling the shower curtain with him --

Pop-Pop-Pop! The curtain rips away from its rings --

Hitch falls -- hits the floor hard. He shuts his eyes -- *it can't be real.*

A moment later he blinks. Leans forward --

STELLA'S BODY is still there. Hitch now notices

THE NECKTIE around her throat -- the initials **AH** can be clearly seen near the point of the tie -- *HIS tie* -- and then he notices

HER HAND -- she clutches a *crumpled piece of paper* --

And then the phone RINGS. Hitch is paralyzed. It rings again. Finally, he stands on wobbly legs.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Hitch stumbles out of the bathroom in a daze. Eyes THE PHONE on the desk. Approaches as if it were a ticking bomb. Picks up the receiver. Puts it to his ear.

CONCIERGE (O.S.)

(beat)

Hello? Mr. Hitchcock? Are you there?

HITCH

Yes.

CONCIERGE (O.S.)

Mr. Hitchcock, it's me, Winston, the hotel concierge. Remember?

HITCH

Winston? Oh, yes. That's... that's right.

CONCIERGE (O.S.)

Listen, Mr. Hitchcock, I thought I should let you know, but... well, look, the police are here and... they're coming for you.

Hitch turns at the sound of FOOTSTEPS running down the hall outside his room --

HITCH

The police?

CONCIERGE (O.S.)

Yeah, I don't know. Something about a murder. Look, Mr. Hitchcock, have you... done something?

SUDDEN FURIOUS KNOCKS on the outside of Hitch's door --

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

Alfred Hitchcock!

Hitch stares at the door --

HITCH

No... it's not possible...

CONCIERGE (O.S.)

I've got to go. Goodbye Mr. Hitchcock... and good luck.

The phone goes dead. Hitch falls back against the wall --

POLICEMAN (O.S.)
 Alfred Hitchcock! This is the police!

SWEAT drips down Hitch's face -- another BARRAGE of knocks --
 -

HITCH
 No...

POLICEMAN (O.S.)
 Alfred Hitchcock!

Hitch closes his eyes tightly -- the POUNDING intensifies --
 he grabs his head --

POLICEMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Alfred Hitchcock! Open up at once or we
 are coming in!

And in that moment, *Hitch springs to life* -- he drops the
 receiver -- looks around the room -- sees A SLIDING GLASS
 DOOR.

EXT./INT. BALCONY/HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hitch steps on to the balcony. Looks down five stories to
 THE STREET below.

He suddenly gets *very dizzy* -- the street seems to recede
 away from him -- he gasps -- forces himself back from the
 railing. Turns and looks into

THE ROOM -- a JINGLE of keys -- *the door opens* -- but it is
 stopped by the chain latched on the inside.

Hitch takes a deep breath. He once again peers over the
 edge of the balcony and spies THE NEXT BALCONY below his --
how far away is it?

HITCH
 Bollocks.

Crack! Hitch wheels around as he hears THE CHAIN LOCK on
 the door splintering --

There's no time -- Hitch steps over the balcony railing --
 clutches it for dear life -- sees an ornate iron trellis
 connecting the balconies -- grabs on to it --

INSIDE, the door breaks open -- TWO UNIFORMED POLICEMAN
 burst into the room --

OUTSIDE, Hitch shimmies down the trellis... and comes face-to-face with a very surprised Michael Balcon, having tea on *his* balcony.

BALCON

Hitch! What the devil...?

Hitch steps from the trellis onto the balcony -- ABOVE HIM, the policemen peer down over the railing.

TALL COP

There he is!

Hitch sees them. They rush off.

BALCON

For god's sake, what are you doing climbing about the balcony?

HITCH

Quick. They're on their way down.

He leaps up and drags Balcon into

INT. BALCON'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

BALCON

They? Who's they?

HITCH

Listen very carefully, Michael. The police will be here any second.

BALCON

The police? But whatever on earth--

HITCH

Turn on the shower. Be there when they arrive. Pretend you didn't hear or see anything.

BALCON

I don't understand--

Hitch opens the hotel room door. Peers out.

HITCH

There is a murdered woman in my room.

BALCON

(loudly)

What? Murdered?

Hitch quiets him.

HITCH

The police will think I did it. But I... I didn't, Michael. I mean, I couldn't have. You've got to believe me. And I can't prove my innocence in jail.

Balcon pauses. Smiles.

BALCON

Is this another one of your put-ons? How rich. Reminds me of that gag in Trafalger, the one where you hoisted yourself above the--

Hitch grabs a muffin from the tea cart and shoves it in Balcon's mouth -- pushes him into the bathroom --

HITCH

Into the shower-- now!

He pulls the bathroom door closed and races into

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Hitch sees the stairwell door to his left -- starts for it, but hears FOOTSTEPS coming that way -- he reverses, begins to dash to the other end of the hall where

THE ELEVATOR CAR arrives --

He brakes -- freezes -- spins around -- notices A LAUNDRY CHUTE right across from Balcon's room -- runs back to it and

OPENS the chute -- looks into it and sees BLACKNESS careening down away from him.

HITCH

Right.

Without hesitation he steps into the chute, starts to slide... but makes it only a few feet and then *he is stuck* as

A GROUP OF COPS and HOTEL STAFF converge on the hallway from both sides.

INT. LAUNDRY CHUTE/HALLWAY (INTERCUT)

Hitch is jammed like a sardine in the laundry chute. He tries to control his breathing. Panic sets in as

THE COPS pound on Balcon's door.

TALL COP
Police! Open up!

The cops draw their guns. A beat. The door opens -- Balcon, wet hair, appears in a robe.

BALCON
My word. What's going on?

TALL COP
Where's Alfred Hitchcock?

BALCON
Hitch? Well, I suppose he's in his room. What's the meaning of this?

Squeak! HITCH suddenly slides a bit and stops --

The cops notice. Look around. *Silence.* They turn back.

SHORT COP
Sorry, mister, but we're gonna need to search your room. Please step outside.

BALCON
Search my room? I don't understand.

A couple HOTEL STAFF MEMBERS chime in.

HOTEL CLERK
You're his friend. They checked in together.

HOTEL MANAGER
Why, sure they did.

COP WITH GLASSES
Say, if you're protecting a murderer, it's gonna go down hard for you.

BALCON
Murderer? Now, see here-- I want to know what's going on, and I want to know now.

Squeak! Hitch again slides down a few feet --

Everyone now looks at THE LAUNDRY CHUTE. A couple cops step forward. Cautiously open the door. They peer inside --

HITCHCOCK, stuck about ten feet down, stares back at them.

TALL COP
Freeze! Don't move!

Hitch looks up to see at that moment A LAUNDRY BAG coming right toward him from above -- it SMACKS into him and sends him sliding down the chute --

INT. HOTEL LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

The chute empties into a large cart filled with laundry. Several hotel maids are pulling bags of clothes out of it when HITCH plummets out of the chute and into the cart.

The maids gasp, stumble back. Hitch collects himself, stands. Sees the maids and their looks of terror.

HITCH
Good day, ladies.

The maids SCREAM and begin beating Hitch with their laundry bags, all the while shouting in Spanish -- Hitch fends off their attacks and stumbles out of the cart --

He looks around -- sees a door marked EXIT -- races toward it -- throws it open --

EXT. BILTMORE HOTEL (BACK ENTRANCE) - DAY

Hitch flies through the door and comes skidding to a halt at the top of a short staircase --

30 COPS are casually standing by police cars directly in front of him.

Hitch freezes.

The cops stare at him. THE COMMANDER holds up A PHOTOGRAPH: *a close-up of Hitchcock kissing Stella Remington's hand.*

COMMANDER
It's him!

The cops rush forward -- Hitch turns and runs back into the hotel, but not before ONE of the cops FIRES his gun -- the commander grabs his hand.

COMMANDER (cont'd)
Do not fire! We take him alive.

The cops reach the back door just as it closes -- they try to pull it open -- *it's locked from the inside* --

INT. HOTEL LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Hitch runs from the exit door back through the laundry room -- of course, THE MAIDS attack him again as he hurries by -- clothes fly everywhere as Hitch dashes into

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - DAY

Hitch moves quickly, dodging cooks with knives, flaming pans, live lobsters --

A WHITE JACKET dangles off his arm from the assault by the maids. He sees EVERYONE in the kitchen is wearing white. So Hitch pulls the coat off his arm and puts it on --

INT. HOTEL LAUNDRY ROOM

The cops pound on the exit door -- a maid opens it -- they spill inside, tripping over themselves as

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN

Hitch, now in white coat, runs up to the expo station --

Hors d'oeuvres trays are on the counter. Waiters in white coats are grabbing them and moving through swinging doors. Hitch grabs one and moves into

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM

A huge ballroom filled with business men and women -- waiters hoist the trays over their heads and move through the crowd -- Hitch joins them --

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN

The cops burst into the kitchen -- the commander grabs the MAITRE D' (who is, in fact, French) --

COMMANDER

Have you seen this man?

He shows him the photograph.

MAITRE D'

I don't know. Maybe. He might be a waiter. They are serving hors d'oeuvres in the main ballroom.

The commander signals his men. They burst through the swinging doors into

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM

As the cops enter the ballroom, we PULL BACK to reveal a sea of DARK SUITED men and women, peppered by dozens of WHITE COATS with trays over their heads --

COMMANDER
(to his men)
Stop the waiters.

The cops hustle through the crowd -- they grab and turn around any white coat they see -- the waiters scramble to keep their trays balanced -- NONE of them are

HITCHCOCK, who is now on the opposite end of the ballroom -- he approaches the exit -- hands his tray to a distinguished looking man smoking a pipe.

HITCH
Compliments of the chef.

He rips off the white jacket and throws it in a trash bin as he exits into

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Hitch finds himself in the lobby near the main staircase -- he sees several policemen descending it.

He turns to the front entrance -- MORE COPS are standing by one of the doors.

He sees a NEWSPAPER on a table next to him. Grabs it. Opens it to block his face. Peeks over the top and watches

A BELLHOP coming in **from** the front doors with a cart of stacked suitcases and

ANOTHER BELLHOP going **toward** the front doors with a cart of hanging garments and hat boxes.

Hitch moves -- newspaper covering his face, he walks right toward the two bellhops and their carts --

He steps in front of the incoming cart and hides **between** the two carts as they crisscross and stop next to each other.

The bellhops exchange words just as

TWO OLDER LADIES walk by the outer side of the garment cart. They are sharing a laugh when

HITCH slips right up next to them -- *he now wears a short blonde wig and sunglasses*. He laughs as if in on the joke. Surprised, the ladies give him a look.

The bellhop begins to move the garment cart once again toward the front entrance --

Hitch sees that *it will shield him from the policemen*, so he keeps pace with it, continuing to walk near the ladies --

Hitch, the ladies and the cart all arrive at the door --

The cart stops as the police question the bellhop --

Hitch thinks quickly and opens the front door, ushering the ladies past -- blocked by the garment cart, all three of them go *unseen* by the police.

EXT. BILTMORE HOTEL (FRONT ENTRANCE) - DAY

Hitch and the ladies exit. He continues to act as if he is with them. He throws them a smile -- ONE of the ladies smiles back -- *she's being coy*.

Hitch notices they are walking toward SEVERAL pockets of policemen standing in front of the hotel --

He suddenly takes the lady who smiled at him by her arm. She gasps... then bats her eyes and *pulls him closer*. Her friend scoffs.

They walk past the police, who glance *right at them*, which is when Hitch quickly kisses the lady on the cheek, hiding his face. *It works* -- the cops ignore them as

A TAXI CAB pulls up to the curb.

Hitch kisses his escort's hand. Then opens the door of the taxi... *and gets in himself*.

The cab takes off as the two ladies watch it go. One of them smiles dreamily, the other looks on in disgust.

INT. CAB - DAY

THE CABBIE, a woman (30s) wearing glasses, looks back at him. She speaks with a slight German accent. Her name is INGRID.

INGRID
Where to, mister?

Hitch peers out the window behind him. Smiles. Slumps back.

HITCH
Uh... just drive for a bit, would you?

INGRID
As you wish.

Hitch pulls out a handkerchief. His face is pale, sweaty.

INGRID (cont'd)
(glances in mirror)
So, first time to L.A.?

HITCH
What? Oh, yes...

INGRID
Oh, well you are going to love it. The weather is beautiful. They make movies here, you know.

HITCH
So I've heard.

INGRID
My cab was in a movie once. Can you believe it? Not me, though. They paid an actor to play the driver. I did not understand. Why not use me? I am, you know, the real thing.

Hitch winces. Pulls his coat away from his shirt to reveal
A GROWING BLOOD STAIN on his side.

HITCH
You don't sound like you are from here either.

CABBIE
Aha, I am not. I am from Germany. My name is Ingrid.

HITCH
Ingrid. A lovely name. I don't want you to be alarmed, Ingrid, but it appears that I've been shot.

INGRID
I do not understand. Are you okay?

Hitch touches the wound. Begins to lose consciousness...

HITCH
I say... not very sporting...

His eyes are closing...

INGRID
(voice growing distant)
Mister, are you okay? Hey, mister...

Hitch falls to one side as we

FADE TO BLACK.

A long moment. Then

FADE UP ON:

INT. WORK ROOM - DAY

Hitch gasps. Opens his eyes.

He is in a dimly illuminated room, lying on a table. He sits up, winces. Looks down to see he is shirtless -- thick stitches close up his wound.

He turns to see A RAVEN staring at him. It is very still.

Hitch draws in a breath. He looks around the room, notices other EYES watching him in the dark. *Animal eyes*. Glimpses of the faces of A FOX, A COYOTE, AN EAGLE -- and then

A DOOR creaks open, spilling light into the room -- A SILHOUETTED FIGURE stands in the doorway. The figure's hand moves to the wall and

FLIPS on the light -- Hitch now sees he is in some sort of workroom, surrounded by STUFFED AND MOUNTED ANIMALS.

The figure in the doorway is Ingrid. No longer in cabbie get-up, she is quite bookishly attractive. She holds a teacup.

INGRID

You are awake.

HITCH

(rubs his eyes)

Where am I? Who are you?

INGRID

This is my apartment. I am Ingrid.

Remember? I drove you here in my taxi.

Hitch looks down at the wound again. Touches it. Winces.

HITCH

What did you do to me?

INGRID

That is a bullet wound. Granted, a flesh wound, but you needed to be stitched. How do you feel?

Hitch is now keenly aware of his naked torso. He sees his shirt. Hastily puts it on.

HITCH
It hurts when I move.

INGRID
The stitching is still fresh. Here--
drink this.

She hands him the tea. He hesitates... then takes it.

HITCH
You're not a doctor, are you?

INGRID
If only. No, I am a simple cab driver.
Taxidermy is my hobby.

HITCH
Taxidermy? My god, woman-- I'm still
alive and in no need of stuffing.

He gets off the table, puts on his coat.

INGRID
I can assure you my skills with needle
and thread are better than any surgeon.

HITCH
All the same, I demand you take me to a
hospital.

INGRID
As you wish. But it occurred to me that
a man who was shot, a British man no
less, would attract much attention at a
hospital. Attention that might attract
the men who were shooting at him.

Hitch ponders -- *he knows she's right.*

Ingrid begins to put away the sewing instruments she was
clearly using on Hitch.

INGRID (cont'd)
Come now, Alfred. I guarantee you still
have your vital organs intact.

Hitch carefully tucks in his shirt around the wound.

HITCH
You know who I am.

INGRID
Your passport. I checked your coat.

Hitch looks over at a standing RADIO next to her workbench.

HITCH
What have you heard on the radio?

INGRID
Aha, so you are him. The fugitive. How exciting! Will you not join me in the living room?

She exits. Hitch hesitates, then follows her.

INT. INGRID'S APARTMENT (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

Hitch walks into a spacious, modestly decorated living room, peppered with the occasional STUFFED ANIMAL.

HITCH
I don't get it. Why haven't you called the police? I'm supposed to be a murderer.

Ingrid plops down in a chair. She picks an apple from a bowl.

INGRID
Well, are you?

HITCH
I...
(long pause)
I honestly don't know. I can't remember.

INGRID
And so. When your memory returns, you will let me know, yes?

She takes a bite of the apple.

HITCH
You are a most peculiar woman. May I sit?

INGRID
Please.

Hitch sits on the sofa. Rubs his eyes again.

HITCH
I can't understand why I feel so groggy.

INGRID
It is most likely the sedative I gave
you. Did you drink an excess of alcohol?

HITCH
Unfortunately, yes.

INGRID
Then that explains it. You have been
asleep for nearly 24 hours.

HITCH
24 hours? You mean it's the next day?

INGRID
Why, sure. It is always the next day.

HITCH
I need to use your phone.

They both stand. Hitch follows Ingrid to the kitchen counter.
She pulls out the phone. He takes it and dials.

INGRID
A local call, I take it?

HITCH
My friend, Michael, at our hotel. God
knows what he must be going through.
(into phone)
Yes, could you ring the Biltmore Hotel,
please? Thank you...

INGRID
If he is your friend, then the police are
probably with him.

Hitch gives her a look -- *he hadn't thought of that.*

HITCH
Hello, yes-- could you ring Room 413
please? Thank you.

INT. BALCON'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

THE PHONE rings. Balcon, sitting at a desk, picks it up.

BALCON
Hello?

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

HITCH
Michael, it's me.

BALCON

Hitch, old man! Are you okay?

HITCH

I'm fine. A few scratches, but no less well for the wear.

BALCON

Excellent news, dear fellow. So good to hear your voice. Uh, so... where are you? I could come meet you straight away.

HITCH

Well... it's complicated. Tell me, Michael...

(he closes his eyes)

Are the police with you?

BEHIND BALCON are a dozen cops, watching him carefully.

BALCON

Uh... no, dear boy. They've gone. It's just me.

He looks at the commander, who nods.

BALCON (cont'd)

Now, where can I meet you, so we can figure this whole sordid affair out?

Hitch opens his eyes. Slumps.

HITCH

I've... got to go, Michael. Rest assured, I'm safe and sound. I'll call you back.

He hangs up.

HITCH (cont'd)

You're right. Poor chap lied to me. He was never good at it. I could literally see the police breathing down his neck.

INGRID

You closed your eyes.

HITCH

Yes. My imagination helps me discern the truth. And yet it is failing to help me see what the hell happened *to the girl!*

He pounds his fist on the counter. Ingrid steps back.

HITCH (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

INGRID
It must be agonizing. Not knowing.

HITCH
It's this man. Norman Bates. He's the one
who knows.

INGRID
Excuse me... did you say Norman Bates?

Ingrid retrieves a section of a newspaper spread out on the
coffee table.

INGRID (cont'd)
This is from today.

She hands Hitch the top page of the LIFESTYLES section.
Smack in the middle is

A PHOTOGRAPH OF NORMAN BATES -- dressed in a tuxedo, he
hands an envelope to a little girl on crutches.

THE CAPTION reads: **Noted philanthropist Norman Bates
presents a check to 8 year-old Samantha Reed for \$60,000
dollars on behalf of the Polio Research Foundation.**

HITCH
Incredible...

THE HEADLINE on the column next to the photo reads: **Bates
to Hold Charity Auction This Eve**

THE FIRST PARAGRAPH reads: **Norman Bates will be holding one
of his famous charity auctions, this one for cancer
research, tonight at 7pm at his Laurel Canyon estate.
Tickets for the gala event go for \$30 a head...**

HITCH (cont'd)
So, he's a philanthropist.

INGRID
Yes. Mr. Bates is very generous with his
money.

HITCH
Of course he is. Tell me, what does the
paper say about the murder?

He sifts through the other sections.

INGRID

Only that the suspect is still at large. A British man. But no photo, and no name.

HITCH

Intriguing. Ingrid, do you know where this is? The home of Norman Bates?

INGRID

Why, sure. You want me to take you there?

HITCH

Oh, I... I couldn't ask that of you.

INGRID

That is silly. I am a taxi driver. It is what I do.

She exits into the workroom. Hitch turns to a CUCKOO CLOCK on the wall. A real cuckoo, stuffed, sits on a protruding stick.

Ingrid returns with her coat and a man's fedora.

INGRID (cont'd)

The police will be on the roads. You will want to wear this.

Hitch takes the hat.

HITCH

Why are you helping me?

INGRID

(beat)

My father. He is the one who taught me taxidermy. You see, he lost his leg in the war. He would have surely been killed, but a British soldier dragged him to safety. I suppose it is karma that I help you.

HITCH

And what if it turns out I am a killer?

She puts on her coat.

INGRID

Then karma will find you, too.

Hitch glances again at the PHOTO of Norman Bates as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BATES' HOME - NIGHT (EARLY EVENING)

A grand estate. Cars parked out front, their drivers standing at the ready. Elegantly dressed men and women proceed through the front doors. Ingrid's car pulls up.

INSIDE THE CAR

INGRID

I could wait.

HITCH

You've done enough already. Besides...
there may be no reason for me to leave.

INGRID

(nods)

Then let me give you this.

She puts in his hand a rather thick, curved SEWING NEEDLE.

INGRID (cont'd)

And now you will always remember who
stitched you up.

Hitch laughs. Pockets the needle. Exits the car. Places the fedora on the empty passenger seat.

HITCH

Thank you, Ingrid.

INGRID

Auf wiedersehen, Alfred.

Ingrid watches Hitch make his way to the front door. She regards the fedora a moment. Then drives off.

EXT. BATES' HOME - NIGHT

Hitch approaches the front door to find THE HOUSEKEEPER, an intimidating woman in her 50s, stationed at the front door. This is MRS DANVERS. She registers his rumpled attire.

MRS. DANVERS

Your name, sir?

HITCH

I'm afraid I'm not on your list.

MRS. DANVERS

Then I'm very sorry. All tickets to
tonight's event have been purchased.

HITCH

If you would be so kind as to tell Mr. Bates that Hitch is here. He'll know who I am.

MRS. DANVERS

I'm sorry, but Mr. Bates is very busy attending to official guests.

HITCH

I assure you. He will want to see me.

Mrs. Danvers eyes him curiously.

MRS. DANVERS

Very well. Follow me.

INT. BATES' HOME (FOYER) - NIGHT

Hitch follows her into a large, classically decorated foyer.

MRS. DANVERS

Wait here.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Danvers makes her way through a crowded ballroom to an IMPECCABLY DRESSED Norman Bates -- coat and tails, white gloves, baton. He holds court with some guests.

INT. FOYER

Meanwhile, TWO WOMEN enter the foyer where Hitch waits. He turns and quickly pretends to admire a painting... and overhears their conversation.

JANE

Really? The Mount Lee properties?

MARGARET

Oh yes.

JANE

But I heard they were all spoken for.

MARGARET

Apparently not.

JANE

And he's actually putting one up for grabs in the auction?

MARGARET

Well. That's the rumor anyway.

JANE

To think. Why, we could get it for a song. Harold and I. Relatively speaking, of course...

MARGARET

Of course...

The women drift out of the room. Hitch turns to find the housekeeper approaching.

MRS. DANVERS

Mr. Bates will receive you now. This way.

INT. BALLROOM

Mrs. Danvers leads Hitch into the grand ballroom just as Norman begins clinking his glass. The room grows silent.

BATES

Thank you all for coming.

He gestures to a portrait of a distinguished but stern-looking man on the wall.

BATES (cont'd)

Forty years ago, my father, Joseph Patrick Bates, had a dream.

BATES (cont'd)

It started with a half-sunken tugboat in the Los Angeles harbor, and ended with a fleet of ships that traverse the world. As for that tugboat? I believe my father sold it to the Colonel here for a case of whiskey.

The COLONEL (70s, gaunt) gives him a salute.

COLONEL

Actually, it was Scotch.

The room laughs.

BATES

I stand corrected. Well... my dream is a simple one, but not an easy one. It is to save lives.

His eyes fall on Hitch.

BATES (cont'd)
As you all know, my mother, Rebecca
Bates, died of cancer, far too young.

He gestures to a portrait of a luminous dark-haired woman.

BATES (cont'd)
I was just a lad, so I could not save
her. But hopefully now, with your
generous help, I can save other mothers,
whose sons have just as hopeful of
dreams. Thank you.

The room applauds. Hitch makes his way toward Bates, who
speaks with TWO GUESTS: MRS. GALWAY (60s and proper) and
PETER WILKES (40s and not).

MRS. GALWAY
...well I would never have guessed.

BATES
Looks are deceiving, Mrs. Galway.

HITCH
(joining the group)
Indeed they are.

Hitch and Bates lock eyes.

BATES
Ah, yes. Mister...

Hitch glances to a nearby vase with ROSES in it.

HITCH
Thorn...hill. Roger Thornhill.

BATES
Right. Mr. Thornhill. So good of you to
make it. I figured you would have been...
predisposed.

HITCH
Oh, I was. But, in the end, I figured I'd
get what I want if I sought you out.

BATES
Of course. But where are my manners? Mr.
Thornhill, this is Mrs. Galway and Peter
Wilkes.

They all shake hands.

MRS. GALWAY
Charmed, Mr. Thornhill.

BATES
You might find this interesting, Mr. Thornhill, but Peter used to be on the police force. He's now just a lowly private investigator.

WILKES
Lowly, my eye. Divorce is big business these days.

Wilkes gives Hitch a hard stare.

WILKES (cont'd)
What line of work you in, Mr. Thornhill?

HITCH
Or, er, you know... secrets and lies, that sort of thing.

BATES
What he means is, Mr. Thornhill's a businessman, like myself.

They all smile.

HITCH
Yes. And I hate to be gauche, but I'd really like to discuss that project with you. In private.

BATES
You sure you don't want to discuss it in front of all my friends?

HITCH
I can't see how they'd find it interesting.

BATES
You'd be surprised.

Hitch smiles, shifts uncomfortably.

BATES (cont'd)
Well, then. To my study.
(to the others)
If you'll excuse me.

Bates leads Hitch away up a winding staircase. Wilkes leans into Mrs. Galway.

WILKES

Do you know that man? Thornhill?

MRS. GALWAY

I can't say I do. British from the sound of it.

WILKES

Yes. Yes he was, wasn't he?

His eyes follow Hitch as he disappears down a hallway.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

The two men enter. Bates' demeanor *immediately* changes -- he is worried, frantic. He grabs Hitch by the arm.

BATES

Hitch, are you mad? What the devil are you doing here?

Hitch pulls away.

HITCH

What am I doing here? A woman was murdered in my hotel room.

BATES

You don't think I know that? It's all over the news. Give me one good reason why I don't call the police right now.

HITCH

Because I didn't do it. I couldn't have.

BATES

Are you saying you don't remember?

HITCH

That's exactly what I'm saying.

Bates goes to his desk. Gets a cigarette. Lights it hastily.

BATES

Look. I like you Hitch. Which is why I'll give you a head start before I call the police. I'll say you called me earlier today with a business proposition. Came here and tried to shake me down.

He gestures to an open window.

BATES (cont'd)
When I refused, you escaped off the balcony. It's your only chance.

HITCH
But why? Why would I kill Stella Remington? It doesn't make sense. I barely knew her.

BATES
I don't know. It's like you said-- you probably just snapped. Maybe you were jealous of her success.

HITCH
What success? She'd just come to town. She was just getting started.

BATES
Well how the hell am I supposed to know?

He moves to the window -- looks out.

BATES (cont'd)
(calmer)
All I know is that when I dropped you off at your hotel, she was still very much alive-- but the next day, she was strangled in your bathtub.

He turns back to Hitch.

BATES (cont'd)
I'm sorry, Hitch. There can really be only one explanation.

Hitch stares at Bates. Takes a deep breath. Slumps down in a chair. Buries his head in his hands.

HITCH
(beat)
How do you know she was still alive?

BATES
What?

Hitch looks up.

HITCH
You said she was still very much alive when you dropped me off. How do you know that?

BATES

Well, I don't know-- I assume she was alive.

HITCH

Did you actually see her at the hotel?

BATES

No, I didn't see her. What difference does it make?

Hitch stands.

HITCH

You miscalculated, Bates. You should have told the truth. But, as I suspected, a liar is a liar.

BATES

What are you getting at?

HITCH

You *did* see her. On her way into the hotel. When you dropped me off. Not only that, you lit her cigarette. The memory came back to me just now when I saw you light yours.

Hitch slowly approaches Bates...

HITCH (cont'd)

You must have told her to come to my room after she changed clothes. We'd all talk about, I don't know, a movie project of mine that was just right for her. And then I bet you took me up to my room by the service elevator, so no one would see you with me.

He gets closer...

HITCH (cont'd)

Stella shows up, but I'd already passed out, hadn't I? And that's when you strangle her with my necktie-- *murder her in cold blood*. You then rip a page from my notebook, an item that never leaves my pocket but that I now realize I've been missing since that night, and you close her dead hand around it. A page that conveniently has written on it the details of the perfect murder scenario, *in my handwriting*.

Hitch, seething, is now almost nose-to-nose with Bates.

HITCH (cont'd)
You killed her, Bates. You.

The two men are still. Then... *Bates smiles.*

BATES
Well, what a situation we have here. Two men, in a house full of guests. One, an accused murderer, on the run. The other, a respected member of the community. Just who do you think they'll believe?

HITCH
They'll believe you, of course.

BATES
That's right. They'll believe me.

He goes around behind his desk.

BATES (cont'd)
I do like you, Hitch. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have been able to rid myself of her once and for all.

He puts his hand on the phone.

BATES (cont'd)
I'll give you a one minute head start.

HITCH
You can make your call, Bates. But first tell me why. You owe it to me.

He takes a step forward.

HITCH (cont'd)
Why did you need to be rid of Stella Remington?

Bates pauses. Takes his hand off the phone.

BATES
Because she is the real heir to the Bates fortune.

INT. BALLROOM

Peter Wilkes talks to a pretty redhead. He glances at the vase of roses. Pauses. *Something clicks.* He looks up the staircase into the dark hallway.

WILKES

Would you excuse me?

He leaves the woman and heads up the steps...

INT. STUDY

Bates calmly lights a cigarette.

BATES

It's a matter of public record that I was an adopted child. But Stella... she was the real deal.

Bates turns to a glass display of ships.

BATES (cont'd)

You see, my father wouldn't dare leave his legacy to a daughter, but that's all my mother could give him. So when Stella was born, he had her switched for a boy. Me. She was given up for adoption, and the hospital staff was paid to keep quiet. And just like that, she never existed.

HITCH

Except that she did exist. Which wouldn't be a problem unless...

(beat)

She knew. She knew who she was.

Bates turns back.

BATES

My mother never destroyed the birth certificate. In fact, before she died, she mailed it to Stella and told her everything.

HITCH

(putting it together)

But Stella didn't care about your estate. It wasn't money she craved-- it was fame, wasn't it? A career in movies. So she, what... blackmailed you?

BATES

To introduce her to people. To fund her lifestyle of excess. To show that she had power, that she could bring all of this down *just like that*.

He pounds his fist on the desk.

BATES (cont'd)

Well. I found the birth certificate and I destroyed it. And then I destroyed her. And now you'll take the fall. Because I have the power, Hitch. And you gave it to me.

Just then, WILKES enters the room --

Hitch and Bates freeze.

BATES (cont'd)

Peter. Uh... your timing is impeccable.

Wilkes surveys the two men. Takes a step toward Hitch.

WILKES

Hitchcock. They held your name out of the papers, but my friends on the force told me what it was. British, and with a thin moustache.

BATES

He was trying to shake me down, Peter. Wanted money to get out of town. I didn't know who he was. The man's clearly insane.

Wilkes turns to Bates.

WILKES

"I destroyed her. And now you'll take the fall." That's what you said. Just now. Isn't it, Norman?

Hitch's whole body goes limp.

HITCH

Thank god.

BATES

(laughs)

Okay. I see. You obviously misheard.

WILKES

Perhaps. But why don't you both come with me? I'm sure I can get us a room down at the station.

Bates shakes his head. Sighs.

BATES

Now, Peter, I can explain...

WILKES

Explain it to me in the car. Mr.
Hitchcock, you can stop running--

Bates brings his hand up from below the desk -- *he is holding a gun* -- HE FIRES --

Hitch gasps as WILKES is hit center chest, blood exploding from the wound -- his body whips around -- he falls into HITCH'S ARMS --

INT. BALLROOM

The guests look up at the sound of the gun shot -- several men rush up the stairs --

INT. STUDY

Wilkes slumps to the floor. Hitch watches in frozen horror -
-

BATES (O.S.)

Hitch!

Hitch looks over just as Bates throws

THE GUN at him -- Hitch shields his face -- the gun hits him in the chest and falls to the floor --

Bates removes his white gloves and shoves them in his pocket just as THE MEN burst into the room --

BATES (cont'd)

He shot Peter Wilkes!

The men see Hitch -- see the gun on the floor -- they all dive for it -- Hitch gets there first -- aims it at them --

THICK MAN

Easy fella.

HITCH

You've got it wrong...

THIN MAN

Just put down the gun, mister...
(over his shoulder)
Somebody call the police!

Hitch backs toward the open window --

HITCH

Stay back!

He hesitates, then dives through it, landing on

EXT. BATES'S HOME (BALCONY) - NIGHT

Hitch is on a balcony at the side of the house. He leaps up and runs across to A SPIRAL IRON STAIRCASE -- descends the staircase and hits the ground running.

INT. STUDY

More guests enter the room. They huddle over Wilkes' body.

Bates moves to the window. He peers out. *A look of worry washes over his face...*

EXT. BATES' HOME (BACKYARD) - NIGHT

Hitch moves swiftly, looking behind him, sticking closely to the shrubbery that frames the side of the house -- he reaches the driveway just as

A CAR screeches to a halt inches from hitting him. INGRID sticks her head out of the window.

INGRID

Get in!

Hitch ducks into the back of the taxi -- it drives off just as A GROUP OF MEN spill into the backyard.

INT. INGRID'S TAXI - NIGHT

Hitch watches the men in the backyard fan out behind them.

HITCH

You came back.

INGRID

It did not seem right to leave you. Are you hurt? I heard the shot.

HITCH

Not me. Another man. Ingrid, I owe my life to you a second time now.

INGRID

Then you are not a killer.

HITCH

No. It's Bates. I have to think...

Ingrid reaches into the glovebox and offers him an --

INGRID

Apple?

HITCH

For god's sakes, woman-- the police now think I killed two people, I narrowly escaped that madman's house, and you're offering me a stupid apple?

A beat. He takes the apple and eats it voraciously.

INGRID

Now then. You are a man wrongly accused of murder. How do we prove you are innocent?

HITCH

(devouring the apple)

Bates and Stella are related, but there is no proof. And yet, I must find it.

INGRID

Okay. How do we do that?

HITCH

You keep saying "we". Ingrid, I can't involve you in this anymore. It's too dangerous.

Ingrid glares at him in the mirror. She speaks sternly, but passionately.

INGRID

Listen up, Alfred. There is still blood on the seat where you first got into my taxi. Your blood, quite literally, was on my hands. So I am involved. Deeply involved. And you must give me the courtesy to remain involved until you are safe.

Hitch is taken aback by her vulnerability.

HITCH

I see. Very well, then.

INGRID

I... care about what happens to you.

HITCH

Yes. I get that. And so it is that "we" need to find proof. Proof that Stella is connected to Bates.

INGRID
(thinks)
Perhaps she told someone.

HITCH
Yes. Yes, perhaps she confided in
someone, someone she knew well. If we
could find such a person, I might have a
chance.

INGRID
Well. There will certainly be people she
knew at her funeral. We could go to it.

HITCH
Wait a minute-- her funeral is going to
be here, in Los Angeles?

INGRID
Why, sure. I just heard on the radio.
They said although she lived in New York
City, she grew up as a child in LA. Her
mother still lives here. And so, the
service will be tomorrow morning.

HITCH
Ingrid, you're a genius.

Hitch takes one last bite of the apple.

INGRID
No. *We* are a genius.

The taxi drives off into the night as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD MEMORIAL PARK CEMETARY - DAY

Hitch, wearing the fedora and dark sunglasses, approaches
the entrance to the cemetery. Ingrid is by his side.

They walk right past a few paparazzi taking photographs,
held at bay by SEVERAL POLICEMEN --

Hitch pulls the hat tighter over his face -- he keeps
moving, but ONE PHOTOGRAPHER in particular gives him an
extra look -- *the man who took the photo of Hitch and
Stella.*

Hitch and Ingrid stop short of a group of mourners by the
grave. He trains in on the front row of seats and sees A
WOMAN IN A VEIL dabbing her eyes.

HITCH
(whispers)
That must be Stella's adopted mother.
I'm going to try and talk to her.

INGRID
Be careful.

Ingrid hangs back as Hitch begins to make his way toward Stella's mother. He politely zigzags his way through a few mourners, gets closer to her, just as

A PRIEST steps in front of him.

PRIEST
Thank you all for coming. Although it
may not be easy, we are here today not
to mourn, but to celebrate life. The
life of Stella Remington.

Hitch sighs impatiently. He now takes a moment to survey the other mourners, maybe 30 in total -- many different FACES, men and women, but none registering much sadness.

He takes off his sunglasses. Continues to scan the crowd -- watching, examining -- then his attention is drawn to three distinct scenes just beyond the funeral service:

TWO GRAVE DIGGERS work on another plot --

A MAN AND TWO CHILDREN put flowers on a tombstone --

And A WOMAN (head scarf, sunglasses) watches the funeral from afar -- not too far, but decidedly outside the group.

Hitch pauses. He lingers on the woman --

She keeps her distance.

He slowly circles around the outside of the crowd -- squints to get a good look at her --

The woman now notices Hitch moving toward her -- she turns away --

Hitch walks directly toward her -- she realizes -- moves away from him -- he walks faster -- *she walks faster* -- and then Hitch is *right there*, behind her --

He grabs her arm -- spins her around -- gasps --

She removes her sunglasses -- while her hair is brunette,
THE WOMAN'S FACE is that of Stella Remington.

HITCH
My God.

WOMAN IN SCARF
What do you want?

HITCH
Stella?

WOMAN IN SCARF
Of course not. I'm her sister.

HITCH
Sister?

POLICEMAN (O.S.)
Hey! Stop!

TWO POLICEMEN run toward them from the funeral -- behind the cops, pointing at Hitch, is THE PHOTOGRAPHER.

Hitch grabs the woman's arm --

HITCH
Let's go.

She tries to break away --

WOMAN IN SCARF
Get your hands off me!

Hitch struggles to pull her along -- he looks back and sees THE COPS getting closer -- so he pulls out THE GUN -- sticks it in her side --

HITCH
I said move!

She gasps -- he yanks her -- they take off running -- Hitch's hat flies off his head --

Ingrid now sees the commotion.

INGRID
Alfred? *Alfred!*

Hitch looks back at her, but she is getting farther away, and the cops are getting closer --

There's no going back.

The cops chase Hitch and the woman through the cemetery, dodging tombstones left and right --

Hitch forces the woman to veer directly toward THE CHILDREN whom he'd noticed before --

HITCH

If you want to live, you'll jump when I say jump.

WOMAN

What?

As the cops close in, Hitch and the woman run right by the kids -- Hitch SNATCHES a bouquet of flowers from the little girl's hand --

He now pulls the woman straight for THE GRAVE DIGGERS he saw earlier --

Hitch looks back, then tosses the bouquet behind him --

HITCH

Jump!

He and the woman LEAP into the air -- they FLY between the grave diggers and OVER the hole in the ground --

THE FLOWERS smack the lead cop in the face -- he slows, flailing his harms as

THE SECOND COP runs right into him and

BOTH men go plummeting into the open grave.

Hitch watches the cops struggle to get out of the hole -- smiles -- nudges the woman to pick up the pace just as they

SMASH into a THIRD COP who appears suddenly from behind a mausoleum --

THE GUN flies out of Hitch's hand -- he and the woman CRASH to the ground. The third cop pulls out *his* gun.

THIRD COP

Alright. The party's over. Get up.

The fleeing couple reluctantly comply.

THIRD COP (cont'd)

You're under arrest. Don't make any sudden movements.

He pulls out handcuffs. Turns Hitch around.

WOMAN IN SCARF

Thank God, officer. This man's a maniac. Why, I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't come along.

He slaps a cuff on Hitch.

WOMAN IN SCARF (cont'd)

Do you know that he pointed a gun at me? Here, in the middle of a cemetery? With all these--

The cop turns the woman around.

WOMAN IN SCARF (cont'd)

Wait a minute-- what are you doing?

He puts the other cuff on *her*.

WOMAN IN SCARF (cont'd)

How dare you? I'm not the criminal here. This man attacked me.

THIRD COP

All that may be true, but until we sort this out, you're both coming with me.

WOMAN IN SCARF

Are you mad? Take this thing off me at once.

The cop turns to his partners climbing out of the grave --

THIRD COP

Hey Charlie! Over here. I got 'em.

The woman angrily gives the cop a swift kick in the rear -- he stumbles into a headstone, doubles over and falls.

The woman immediately gasps -- *did I do that?*

Hitch needs no other cue -- he grabs her by the arm and takes off running again --

They speed around to the other side of the mausoleum where the woman abruptly HALTS, snapping Hitch back.

WOMAN IN SCARF

Just stop! If you think I'm going one more step with you, you're crazy.

Hitch grabs her by the shoulders, pulls her close.

HITCH

Now you listen to me! Just because I don't have the gun anymore doesn't mean I won't hesitate to snap your neck and drag your limp corpse behind me. Do you hear? Now move!

The woman recoils -- *she believes him* -- he pulls her away --
-

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

They bolt out of the cemetery and find themselves at a busy intersection. There, A STREET CAR is heading off.

Hitch yanks the woman and they race toward the street car, jumping on to it just before it picks up speed.

INT. STREET CAR - DAY

It's a full trolley, but Hitch notices two open seats and forces the woman to sit. He grabs her chained wrist. A shake of his head to make sure she understands.

They sit in strained silence as Hitch surveys the faces of the other passengers. A few stare back -- *do they know?*

The trolley STOPS. Some kind of commotion. Hitch peers through the crowd of standing passengers --

TWO NEW COPS just got on board -- they are clearly searching.

The woman in the scarf bristles as the cops make their way back -- she draws in a breath as if to speak --

Right then, the trolley starts up again and LURCHES forward -- the standing passengers stumble into each other -- *Hitch acts* -- he grabs the woman's hand and pulls her up --

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The couple jumps from the moving trolley -- not looking back, they disappear into the hustle of pedestrian traffic as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (LATER)

Hitch, glancing over his shoulder, marches down the sidewalk of a shop-lined street, his companion in tow.

He sees something ahead. Stops abruptly.

HITCH

There.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Hitch drags the woman into the front door of a dingy building with a sign outside that simply says **MOTEL**.

INT. MOTEL (LOBBY) - DAY

A young, clean-cut MOTEL CLERK (shirt and tie) sits at the front desk, reading a book.

The couple enters -- Hitch quickly hides the handcuffs.

MOTEL CLERK

May I help you?

HITCH

Yes. My fiance and I would like a room for the night.

MOTEL CLERK

Oh. Yes. Well, I can tell you that we have a variety of very nice rooms. Real nice. Even a love and romance suite. It comes with a sofa, a breakfast nook, bath robes--

HITCH

(impatiently)

We'll take the cheapest room you've got.

The motel clerk looks snubbed. Hitch softens.

HITCH (cont'd)

Trying to save money so my darling and I can take a trip. You know, a proper vacation. Isn't that right, dear?

He looks right at her. She doesn't speak. Unseen by the clerk, he squeezes her hand *tightly*. She forces a smile.

WOMAN IN SCARF

Yes. I just can't wait to get away.

The clerk eyes them both suspiciously, then produces a key.

MOTEL CLERK

Room 39. Second floor up the stairs. Be two dollars for the night, ten dollars if you want it for the week.

HITCH

One night will be fine. Darling, won't you pay the man? You do have all the money.

She glares at him. He squeezes her hand again.

WOMAN IN SCARF

Of course, *dear*.

Using her free hand she opens her purse and fishes around for the cash. Slaps it on the counter. Hitch snatches the key.

HITCH

You've been most helpful.

They make a beeline for the stairs. The clerk watches them go. *He frowns...*

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hitch ushers the woman into the room. Shuts the door and locks it. Turns on a lamp. He goes to the window to draw the curtain just as the woman

GRABS the lamp and swings it at him --

Hitch sees it at the last minute and snatches her arm before the thing can reach his head --

HITCH

What the devil? Put that down--

They struggle -- he wrestles her to the bed -- ends up on top, forces her to drop the lamp -- she thrashes about --

HITCH (cont'd)

Stop it-- stop it, I say! Now listen to me-- just listen to me for a minute--

He manages to pin her arms to the bed.

HITCH (cont'd)

I'm not going to hurt you. I promise.

WOMAN IN SCARF

You said you would you kill me.

HITCH

I know what I said. That was just to get you to cooperate. Give me a chance to explain.

She stops moving. Looks at him.

HITCH (cont'd)
My name is Alfred Hitchcock. I'm a
British movie director, and I'm the man
the police think killed your sister--
only I didn't do it, I'm being framed
by a man named Norman Bates. That's the
truth.

He regards her a moment. She's quiet. Then she begins
THRASHING again. Hitch fights to contain her. She YELPS --
he covers her mouth with his hand.

HITCH (cont'd)
Have you not heard a word I said? My
god, woman. And in case you haven't
forgotten, we're decidedly joined at
the wrist. So for better or worse,
you're stuck with me. You're stuck with
me so you better get used to it.
(sighs)
Now, nod "yes" if you understand.

She yells at him, her words muffled by his hand. He shakes
his head.

HITCH (cont'd)
I said, nod "yes" if you understand.

She stops. Looks at him. Nods her head. He takes his hand
away from her mouth. She says nothing.

HITCH (cont'd)
That's better.

They both get back to their feet.

WOMAN IN SCARF
If you're as innocent as you claim,
then why are you running? That's the
move of a guilty man.

HITCH
The evidence against me is
overwhelming. I'll be hanging from a
noose by dawn if I turn myself in.

He indicates the window.

HITCH (cont'd)
Do you mind?

She shrugs. They go to the window. Hitch draws the curtain. He picks up the lamp. Puts it back on the table.

WOMAN IN SCARF
I'd like to have a cigarette.

HITCH
I don't smoke.

WOMAN IN SCARF
In my purse.

He nods. She picks her purse off the floor. Finds a cigarette case. Pulls one out. Lights it. Hitch watches her.

WOMAN IN SCARF (cont'd)
What?

HITCH
The resemblance is uncanny.

WOMAN IN SCARF
It should be.

HITCH
I was under the impression that Stella didn't have a sister.

WOMAN IN SCARF
I only found out recently. That's why I came to the funeral. Apparently, we were adopted by two different families. Now, please-- can we find a way out of these things?

Hitch looks around the room. Spies some wire coat hangers in an open closet. He grabs one.

HITCH
So, if you're Stella's sister, that means... that means there wasn't one child born to Rebecca Bates-- there were *two*.
(realizes)
My God-- you're heir to a fortune.

He goes to work on the cuffs.

WOMAN IN SCARF
Mr. Hitchens, is it?

HITCH
Hitchcock.

WOMAN IN SCARF

You don't understand. My name is Catherine. Catherine Hartwell. I work in a dress shop in Santa Monica and sometimes as an extra in Hollywood movies, where I usually play bar maids or flapper girls. I have a tiny little apartment with a leaky kitchen faucet and two neighbors who argue in Russian. I read dime store novels and take walks on the beach. I'm nobody. Certainly no heir to a fortune.

HITCH

Miss Hartwell, it is you who don't understand. How did you find out you were Stella's sister?

CATHERINE

She wrote me. Told me our real mother had told her about both of us. Said she wanted me to know.

HITCH

Yes. That your mother was Rebecca Bates.

Again, no reaction from Catherine.

HITCH (cont'd)

You really don't know what I'm talking about, do you?

CATHERINE

Should I?

HITCH

(thinks)

Tell me, did Stella provide you with proof? Proof of who you really are?

CATHERINE

No. I mean, she said she had a birth certificate, *my* birth certificate, but wanted to meet me in person first.

HITCH

And did that happen?

CATHERINE

It was going to. Today. But then she was...

HITCH
Murdered. By Bates.

He gives up on the hanger. Points to the bedpost. They go to it. Hitch positions the handcuff chain on the point of the post. Takes off his shoe.

HITCH (cont'd)
Bates must have found *both* birth certificates. That means he knows about you.

He begins WHACKING the chain with the heel of his shoe.

HITCH (cont'd)
Of course that means you're in grave danger. It's only a matter of time before he finds you.

CATHERINE
Well then, don't you see? We *must* go to the police.

HITCH
We can't. Without the birth certificate we have no proof. To them, you're just a look-alike with an outrageous story. But to Bates, you're a loose end.

Whack! He pounds on the chain.

CATHERINE
I don't really know why I should believe any of this. Perhaps you're the killer and you're plotting to do *me* in.

HITCH
My dear, if I were the killer, why would I bring you to a motel in the middle of the city? Why, I could have led us to any number of remote places that would have more easily facilitated your demise.

CATHERINE
How ghastly!

HITCH
Perhaps. But you have to admit it's true.

CATHERINE
(thinks)
Doesn't mean you're not guilty of
something.

Hitch gives up on the shoe -- no use.

HITCH
The only thing I'm guilty of is pride.
Foolish, foolish pride.

He sighs. Sits back on the floor. Rubs his eyes. Catherine
watches him. She takes his handcuffed hand.

CATHERINE
Let me see.

She runs her fingers over his palm.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Hmm. I guess these don't feel like the
hands of a murderer. Far too soft.

HITCH
You know from experience?

CATHERINE
No. But you know how they say the eyes
are the windows to one's soul? Well, I
say it's the hand.

She puts his hand to her face.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Yours is warm, but not wet. Strong, but
not rough. You have a gentle touch.
Even when you grabbed me it was with
care. You wanted to be forceful, but
not bruise me. I'm not sure a killer
would have given that a second thought.

HITCH
Then you believe me.

CATHERINE
I just... wonder why are we here,
handcuffed together, like this, if you
haven't done anything wrong?

He sighs. Regards her face. *Realizes something.*

HITCH

Of course. You are a loose end. Which means we can set a trap for the real killer, Bates, and clear my name in the process.

CATHERINE

You want to use me as bait? You're mad.

HITCH

Trust me. You would never be in real danger. And we could catch your sister's murderer once and for all. Don't you want to see justice done?

She stares at him. Contemplates.

HITCH (cont'd)

Miss Hartwell. Catherine. Will you help me? Help Stella?

She shakes her handcuffed wrist.

CATHERINE

Slow down. One thing at a time.

A SUDDEN KNOCK at the door -- Hitch and Catherine freeze. They slowly stand up. Wait.

MOTEL CLERK (O.S.)

It's Clarence, from the front desk. You forgot to sign the register.

Hitch exhales, relieved.

HITCH

Yes. One minute!

He puts back on his shoe. Pulls Catherine close to hide the handcuffs. They move to the door. He unlocks and opens it --

HITCH (cont'd)

Sorry. Didn't mean to--

The clerk points a SHOTGUN at them.

MOTEL CLERK

Let's see those handcuffs.

The couple slowly raises their chained arms.

MOTEL CLERK (cont'd)
I knew it. Just like the radio said.
Two fugitives, a man and a woman,
chained together. Looks like it's my
lucky day.

HITCH
Just take it easy...

CATHERINE
The whole thing's a mistake. We're
innocent.

MOTEL CLERK
We'll see what the police have to say
after I collect my reward.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(from down the hall)
Clarence! Where's my coffee?

MOTEL CLERK
Not now, mother!

He turns his head for just a second -- immediately, Hitch
grabs the barrel of the gun with his free hand -- the clerk
tries to pull it back --

MOTEL CLERK (cont'd)
What are you doing?

HITCH
Catherine, the gun!

She quickly grabs the barrel herself, helping Hitch point
it *at the handcuff chain* --

MOTEL CLERK
Give it to me!

He yanks and accidentally FIRES -- *Boom!* The gun BLASTS the
handcuffs apart, EXPLODES the floorboards in the bedroom,
and ROCKETS the clerk back down the staircase.

Hitch and Catherine, free from their bond, race down the
stairs, leap over the fallen clerk and out the front door.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

They hit the street and look opposite ways, then turn back
and look at each other. Hitch waits. *Catherine does not
make a move.* He holds out his hand --

She takes it. Together, they race off down the street.

CATHERINE
So, what's this plan of yours?

HITCH
How would you like to go to the cinema?

INT. BATES' HOME (FOYER) - DAY

Bates strolls through the foyer, reading the newspaper.

HITCH (V.O.)
First, I'll need to send two messages.
One is a phone call to Norman Bates.

THE PHONE rings. Bates answers it.

BATES
Hello?

HITCH (V.O.)
I'll tell him that I found Stella's
sister. At first, he won't believe me.
But I'll be convincing. I'll have
details. He'll know it's true.

We SEE Bates talk into the phone, but we DO NOT HEAR it --
his expression changes from incredulous to worried.

HITCH (V.O.)
I'll say you're no good to me without the
birth certificate. But what I do need is
cash. Cash to leave town forever. I'll
sound... desperate.

Bates sits down. Takes out a pen. Begins to scribble on a
notepad by the phone.

HITCH (V.O.) (cont'd)
I'll make him a deal-- the girl in
exchange for ten thousand dollars.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Hitch is on the phone inside A TELEPHONE BOX.

HITCH
There is a seven o'clock showing of
"The King of Kings" at Grauman's
Chinese Theatre. You are to meet me in
the lobby just before the intermission
at 8:30. I'll be with the girl. Like
her sister, she's a bit of an actress,
and I've told her I represent a very
powerful movie producer-- you.

INT. BATES' HOME

Bates looks at the notepad -- it reads: **Stella's sister -
8:30 - Grauman's - \$10,000**

BATES

And you're sure she believed you?

EXT. PARK (TELEPHONE BOX)

HITCH

Of course. This is Hollywood, isn't it?
She'll go with you willingly, stars in
her eyes. You simply hand me a
briefcase with the money and walk away
with the girl. Plenty of witnesses in
case you decide to get clever-- so
don't.

BATES (O.S.)

That's quite a plan, Hitch. A girl's
life for money. I didn't think you had
it in you.

HITCH

Survival of the fittest, Norman. Goodbye.

He hangs up. Steps out of the box. Catherine is waiting.

HITCH (cont'd)

He bought it. Perhaps *I* should have
been an actor.

CATHERINE

Okay. So now we contact your friend?

HITCH

That's right. Michael Balcon.

INT. BILTMORE HOTEL (LOBBY) - DAY

Balcon walks up to the front desk.

HITCH (V.O.)

Hotel reception will let him know there's
a message waiting for him.

The clerk hands him a NOTE -- it reads: **Meet me in the lobby
of Grauman's Theatre at 8:30 tonight. Hitch**

HITCH (V.O.)

Fortunately for us, the police will be
following his every move.

Balcon looks around. Pockets the note. Hurries away as TWO PLAIN-CLOTHES COPS watch him from the nearby lounge. They go to the front desk. Exchange words with the clerk.

HITCH (V.O.) (cont'd)
When he shows up at eight thirty, he'll
be bringing the calvary with him.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE - DAY (EARLY EVENING)

A large crowd waits in line at the theatre's box office.

HITCH (V.O.)
Bates will be caught red-handed,
trading the money for the girl-- you.
And he'll have no plausible
explanation.

A HUGE POSTER at the front doors exclaims: **Cecil B. Demille's Epic "The King of Kings" - It's The Greatest Story Ever Told! Now Showing! 7pm Nightly!**

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - DAY (EARLY EVENING)

Hitch and Catherine sit on a bench in the corner, away from the crowd. Catherine holds a box of popcorn.

CATHERINE
More?

HITCH
Yes. I've almost got it.

She takes a handful of heavily-buttered popcorn and rubs it on Hitch's still-handcuffed WRIST -- finally, he wrenches himself free.

HITCH (cont'd)
(rubs his wrist)
Thank god. Remind me to ask for smaller
hands in the next life.

She smiles and hands him her already-freed shackle. He deposits both of them in a nearby trash bin.

CATHERINE
I'm nervous, Hitch.

He takes her hand. Rubs her sore, red wrist.

HITCH
Me too. But I'll be by your side every
step of the way.

CATHERINE

(looks off)

I wish I could have known her. Stella. I don't know. I always knew I wasn't alone. That there was someone out there like me. Just had a sense of it. You know?

Hitch stops rubbing her hand. He just holds it.

HITCH

You don't have to go through with this.

CATHERINE

(takes a breath)

No. I want to. For her. To make things right again in the universe.

She looks at him. Smiles. Then gives him a kiss on the cheek.

HITCH

What was that for?

CATHERINE

For luck.

He looks into her eyes. It's a heightened moment. *Electric*. And suddenly he grabs her and kisses her on the lips. She does not resist. They break.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

What was *that* for?

HITCH

Something entirely different.

Above them, THE CLOCK on the wall shows **6:15**, and then we

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

THE CLOCK, as its hands are at **8:25**.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE - NIGHT

There is no longer a crowd. All is quiet. And then

TWO PEOPLE slowly approach the entrance -- A BOY in a beret, holding the hand of A WOMAN *whose face we never see*.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

The woman hands two tickets to the usher. They continue toward the doors of the theatre itself. They pause.

The woman puts her hand on the boy's head. He smiles. Then she turns and walks out the nearby EXIT door.

INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

The boy enters the packed cinema -- he sees the gigantic silver screen -- under it, A LIVE ORCHESTRA provides the score -- he heads down the side aisle, passes

HITCH AND CATHERINE sitting at the very back -- Hitch glances at the boy, but the boy continues on to

AN EMPTY SEAT on the aisle mid-theatre. He sits. Looks up to THE SCREEN: *Jesus and the apostles at the Last Supper*. The MUSIC ominously swells...

Hitch and Catherine look at each other -- *it's time*.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY

They emerge from the theatre into the empty lobby.

BATES walks out of the shadows at the opposite end. Hat pulled low over his face. Wearing gloves. Briefcase in hand.

The two parties make eye contact. They meet in the middle of the lobby. Words are exchanged, but all we HEAR is the orchestra. Hitch introduces Catherine to Bates. He eyes

THE CLOCK: it's straight up **8:30**.

Bates takes Catherine's hand. She goes with him. He hands the briefcase to Hitch. Hitch tries to open it -- but it's stuck.

And then MICHAEL BALCON enters the lobby. Hitch sees him. So does Bates, who pulls Catherine quickly to the theatre doors as the orchestra builds to a crashing CRESCENDO --

INT. THEATRE

The boy in the beret looks at his watch. He stands up. Cups his hands over his mouth --

BOY WITH BERET
Fire! Fire!

The audience stirs --

INT. THEATRE LOBBY

Hitch realizes something is wrong -- he starts after Bates just as DOZENS of cops enter the lobby behind Balcon --

INT. THEATRE

The boy points to the RED EXIT door by the stage -- light from the screen flickers off it -- it creates an illusion --

BOY WITH BERET

Fire! Fire!

Someone SCREAMS -- panic ensues -- the audience is on their feet -- they spill into the aisles, racing toward the lobby --

INT. THEATRE LOBBY

Bates and Catherine disappear *into* the theatre just as a flood of people burst *out* of it --

HITCH

Catherine!

He drops the briefcase, suddenly fighting the crowd as he chases Bates --

THE COPS try to converge on Hitch, but the panicked crowd pushes *them* back as well --

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE - NIGHT

A mass exodus of screaming patrons explode through the doors and out into the night.

INT. THEATRE

Chaos -- people fight desperately to get to the lobby -- all the while, THE MOVIE still plays: *Judas approaches Jesus in the garden* --

Hitch enters, fighting his way through the crowd -- he sees Catherine -- Bates yanks her toward the RED EXIT door --

CATHERINE

Hitch!

And then she and Bates disappear through the exit.

HITCH

No!

Hitch doubles his efforts -- breaks from the crowd -- approaches the exit, but is met by a group of COPS who suddenly appear at the door --

Hitch brakes, pivots, narrowly avoids their grasp -- sees MORE COPS entering from the lobby --

He turns and leaps onto the stage under the screen, races across to find himself surrounded -- finally, the cops GRAB him and wrestle him down --

Hitch cries out as THE MOVIE flickers behind him: *Pilate's guards put Jesus in chains* -- and then we

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A COP forces Hitchcock into a chair at a table in a windowless room. He is dirty and disheveled.

He looks up to see A STOCKY MAN (50s, thick moustache, rolled up sleeves) sitting in front of him. This is CHIEF OF POLICE JAMES DAVI.

Behind him are a couple other plain-clothes detectives and A MAN IN A TWEED SUIT who stands in the corner, hidden in shadow. He smokes a cigar.

Davi pulls a manila folder out of his briefcase. Opens it. Speaks in a very civil tone.

DAVI

For the record, my name is Chief of Police James Davi. Now then... other than whether you prefer the gallows or the firing squad, what do you have to say for yourself, Mr. Hitchcock?

Hitch clears his throat.

HITCH

Inspector--

DAVI

Chief of Police.

HITCH

(beat)

Chief, I don't know how many times I can say it, or how more clearly, but I did not commit these murders. Meanwhile, the man who did is free, and he intends to kill again.

DAVI

Your efforts to implicate one of this town's finest citizens are not only deluded, Mr. Hitchcock, but are in no way supported by the facts.

He proceeds to pull pieces of evidence in plastic bags out of his briefcase: *The necktie. The murder notes. The gun.*

DAVI (cont'd)

We have enough evidence to hang you three times over.

HITCH

Well, since you've already bypassed the judicial system and made your ruling, why bother to even talk with me at all?

Davi SLAMS his fist down on the table.

DAVI

Because you killed a police officer!

He takes a deep breath. Regains the civil tone.

DAVI (cont'd)

A *former* police officer. And rest assured, Mr. Hitchcock, you will receive a fair trial.

He leans in -- means this to be heard only by Hitch.

DAVI (cont'd)

But if it were up to me, we'd hang you from a hook in the ceiling, cover you in rabbit's blood, and let the dogs have their way with you.

He smiles. Leans back in his chair.

DAVI (cont'd)

Now then. These days, the department wants to be extra solid on motive. We've been illuminated to a particular technique called...

(looks at his notes)
psychological profiling. It's very new. Personally, I don't know Eve from Adam when it comes to this stuff. But the University happened to have a guest lecturer in town who agreed to come down and give us his analysis. Perhaps you've heard of him.

(MORE)

DAVI (cont'd)
 (over his shoulder)
 Doctor Freud?

THE MAN smoking in the corner comes out of the shadows -- smartly dressed in tweed, sporting a shock-white goatee, it is a 70 year-old DR. SIGMUND FREUD.

Hitch looks at the man in amazement.

HITCH
 You're Sigmund Freud.

FREUD
 And you're Mr. Alfred Hitchcock.
 Filmmaker. Son of a grocer. *Guten tag*.
 G. W. Pabst speaks highly of you.

He takes out a handkerchief and coughs violently into it.
 Continues smoking.

FREUD (cont'd)
 They say I have cancer. A nuisance to be sure. It has the effect of making the abyss that Nietzsche was so concerned with that much blacker. Tell me, Mr. Hitchcock... what do you see when you stare into the abyss?

Freud locks eyes with Hitch. Takes another puff.

HITCH
 Doctor Freud. If anyone can set these men straight, it's you. I obviously did not commit these crimes.

FREUD
 We shall see, dear boy. We shall see.

Freud begins to walk around the table.

FREUD (cont'd)
 Now then... you are from London, England. Your working class roots suggest a man who has struggled all his life to get what he wants. And what does he want? Fame? Money? Women? No. I say it is *control*.

Freud stops, pauses, puffs.

FREUD (cont'd)
 You are about to lose your job-- oh yes, I know. And no one in America will help you.

(MORE)

FREUD (cont'd)

Help you to make your movies about murder and obsession.

(to the room)

Personally, I would see such films. But that is me.

(back to Hitch)

It is my opinion that these lurid tales reflect your own repressed psyche. Dreams of murder often represent a fear of authority. Tell me, were you made to feel inferior by your parents? The Catholic church?

(leans in close)

The police?

HITCH

Hardly makes me a murderer.

FREUD

Ah, but it is the powder keg for murder, *herr Hitchcock*. All that is needed is--

He strikes a match.

FREUD (cont'd)

A spark.

(relights his cigar)

Stella Remington was that spark. She's about to make her own big break into the American movies. She has everything that you don't. She has control.

HITCH

Dr. Freud, with all due respect, I don't think you understand--

FREUD

What I understand is that you snapped--

He snaps his fingers.

FREUD (cont'd)

And set free the killer inside you. You embraced the *Thanatos*.

(to the room)

That is my theory about the drive that pulls us toward death and destruction. It is pretty fascinating.

(back to Hitch)

In the cold-blooded calculation and execution of murder, you finally found your control.

He taps the bag with the murder notes.

FREUD (cont'd)
Didn't you?

HITCH
This is preposterous. It's Bates--
Bates, I tell you. He approached me at
the speakeasy. Then he took my imagined
scenario and used it to kill Stella.

Davi leans forward. He shakes his head.

DAVI
Mr. Bates has an ironclad alibi that
evening. His housekeeper has already
confirmed that he was at home all
night.

HITCH
Well then, she's lying!

Freud crouches down. Gets very close to Hitch's face.

FREUD
Such an elaborate delusion you've
created. An identical twin? A
scandalous family secret? A
hypothetical murder proposed in casual
conversation, only to become not-so
hypothetical? Oh, what movies these
tall tales would make. If only there
wasn't such a fine line between
genius... and madness.

Freud gently clutches the top of Hitchcock's head. He
closes his eyes. A beat. He gasps. Nods as if
understanding. Opens his eyes. Stands.

FREUD (cont'd)
(to the room)
Well, my time is up. I must get back to
the University. Time is money. And
money is the sexual love you have for
your mother.

He pauses. No response.

FREUD (cont'd)
That was a little joke.
(to Davi)
Anyway, you have my analysis.

He stops at the door.

FREUD (cont'd)
The pleasure... has been all mine.

Takes another puff off his cigar. And with that, he's gone.

DAVI
Remarkable.

Hitch is sunk in his chair. He stares off, defeated.

DAVI (cont'd)
Now then. As to the woman you've been
running all over town with... Catherine
Hartwell, is it? Tell us-- where is she
now? Hiding out? She *is* your
accomplice, isn't she? Come now,
Hitchcock-- there's no reason to
protect her anymore.

Hitch closes his eyes.

HITCH
(under his breath)
I've killed her.

Davi leans forward.

DAVI
What was that you said?

Hitch rubs his eyes. Shakes his head. Looks back up to
Davi.

HITCH
Nothing. I have nothing more to say.

Davi nods. Stands.

DAVI
Get this man out of my sight.

INT. POLICE STATION (HALLWAY) - NIGHT

Police officers escort a sullen Hitch down a corridor. At
the end of the hall, Norman Bates shakes hands with a
detective.

Hitch sees Bates -- *he snaps* -- lunges at him --

HITCH
Where is she? What have you done with
her?

The cops restrain him --

HITCH (cont'd)
Can't you see? He's going to kill her--
you have to stop him!

Hitch struggles -- he glances down at BATES' SHOES -- *there is mud on them* --

Bates ever so slightly *smiles*.

HITCH (cont'd)
I'll get you, Bates! I'll get for you
this! *I'll get you for this!*

The cops drag Hitch, kicking and screaming like a maniac, through the door at the end of the hall.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT (LATER)

Hitch stands in front of an open jail cell. A GUARD waits behind him.

GUARD
Arms up.

Hitch raises his arms. The guard pats him down.

GUARD (cont'd)
Alright. Get in there.

He pushes Hitch into the cell -- Hitch falls hard to the cement floor. *Clang!* The guard slams the cell door shut. Puts his key in the LOCK and turns it.

GUARD (cont'd)
Pleasant dreams, sunshine.

The guard walks away.

Hitch sits up. Rubs his knees. Looks around the cell.

He sees a dingy cot, a sink, a toilet with no seat. Watches a cockroach scurry into the corner.

He looks dejected. Scared. *Like a little boy.*

That's when THE BEAT COP from his youth appears before him. Crouches down. Smiles at him fiendishly.

BEAT COP
You won't like being locked up, laddie.
Oh no. You won't like it at all.

And then he is gone. *Just a ghostly memory.*

Hitch shakes his head. Stands. Goes to the cell door. Puts his hands on the bars. Peers out --

HE SEES that he is in a hall with half a dozen cells on one side. His cell is at one end. At the other end is the only exit. The guard sits at a desk beside it, reading a magazine.

Hitch goes to the sink. Turns it on. Splashes water on his face. Reaches for a towel -- but there isn't one.

So he rubs his hands on his pants. Feels around in the pockets of his jacket. *And stops abruptly.*

Slowly, carefully, he removes his hand and opens it -- in his palm is the

THICK, CURVED SEWING NEEDLE Ingrid gave him.

HITCH
I'll be damned.

A bit of life comes back to him. He looks around the cell. Thinks. And then his eyes fall on

THE LOCK on the door.

He quietly moves to the bars. Peers out again --

THE GUARD is still buried in his magazine.

Carefully, Hitch gets down on his knees. Stares at the lock right in front of him. He slips his hand through the bars. Turns his wrist. Feels for the keyhole.

With steady nerves, he inserts the needle --

ANGLE ON Hitch's cell from the guard's desk: Hitch's hand can clearly be seen protruding from the cell -- *the guard does not notice.*

Hitch focuses on the lock -- and then, *as if he had x-ray vision*, he SEES the internal mechanism of the lock float in space in front of him -- rods, cogs, tumblers --

Hitch begins to work the lock with the needle --

He watches the THREE-DIMENSIONAL mirage of the lock components as they turn, shift, drop --

Click! Hitch gasps --

The door starts to swing free --

He grabs it and pulls it back just as

THE GUARD looks up again.

GUARD

What's going on down there?

Hitch gets to his feet, keeping both hands on the bars so as to hold the door shut.

HITCH

Er, nothing. That is to say, can you come here?

GUARD

This is not a hotel. I don't want to hear another word.

HITCH

Really. I need your help. I'm sick.

The guard throws the magazine down. Gets up and goes to Hitch's cell.

GUARD

I swear to god, this had better be real.

Hitch holds the bars as if he were going to vomit.

HITCH

Oh, it's real.

As quick and hard as he can, Hitch shoves the door open -- it hits the guard square in the head -- he slams back into the wall, hits his head *again*, and knocks himself out cold.

HITCH (cont'd)

Pleasant dreams, sunshine.

MINUTES LATER

Hitch, now dressed in the guard's uniform, drags the unconscious guard into the cell and locks him in.

He pulls the guard's cap down low over his eyes. Heads to the door. Exits into

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Hitch walks casually but quickly past a row of other cells. He turns a corner and finds himself in

THE BUSTLING MAIN ARTERY of the station.

He hurries through. Nods to other cops along the way -- incredibly, they barely pay him any attention -- until

A HAND grabs him on the shoulder, stops him in his tracks. He spins around --

A YOUNG PATROLMAN looks him dead in the eye.

PATROLMAN

Excuse me.

Hitch swallows -- prepares to run --

PATROLMAN (cont'd)

Where's Sargent Remak's office? It's my first day.

Hitch does his best American accent.

HITCH

Uh, right. Down the hall. Third door.

PATROLMAN

Thanks.

He salutes. Hitch salutes back. The patrolman hurries off.

Hitch sighs. He turns back to the precinct lobby. Makes a bee line for the front doors.

And just like that, Hitch *walks right out* of the station and disappears into the night.

LATER

EXT. TAXI STATION - NIGHT

Cabbies enter and exit their taxis which are parked outside an open garage.

INT. TAXI STATION - NIGHT

Inside the garage, the drivers drink, chat, play cards -- INGRID is at one such card table.

INGRID

Gin.

Moans as the other cabbies throw down their hands.

MAX (O.S.)

Hey Ingrid...

She looks up -- *gasps* -- MAX, a portly cab driver, stands at the garage entrance next to Hitch, who still wears the guard's uniform.

MAX (cont'd)
This guy says he knows you. I picked him
up on fifth. He didn't have any money.
Told me you'd vouch for him.

Ingrid stands. She hurries over.

INGRID
Yes, yes of course. I know him. Put it on
my tab, would you Max?

MAX
Yeah, yeah...

He saunters off. Ingrid regards Hitch in disbelief.

INGRID
Oh, Alfred.

She hugs him.

HITCH
Ingrid. I need your help.

INGRID
Yes. Of course. Over here.

She leads him over to a bench, out of earshot of the other
drivers. Sits him down.

INGRID (cont'd)
Are you okay? When I heard they captured
the fugitive, I knew they meant you. My
heart just sank. But...

She looks him over.

INGRID (cont'd)
I do not understand. Why are you not in
jail? And what are these clothes you are
wearing?

HITCH
It's a long story. What matters is that I
need to borrow your taxi. Bates is still
free, and he's going to kill again. A
woman. Her life is danger.

INGRID
The woman from the funeral?

HITCH
Yes.

INGRID
Who is she?

HITCH
The link between Bates and Stella.

Ingrid takes his hand.

INGRID
Alfred, listen to me. I do not know what has happened to you since this morning, and it is clear you are still in trouble. But... maybe the time for adventure is over. Maybe you should let the police do their job.

They both watch as A POLICE CAR drives toward the garage. Hitch tenses... but then the car drives on by.

HITCH
Trust me-- I'm in this mess because the police have done their job. And done it poorly.

INGRID
Alfred...

HITCH
And is that all this is to you? Just some kind of excursion? Something out of the ordinary to pass the time in between driving taxis and stuffing birds?

INGRID
No. Of course not. I did not mean it that way.

He grabs her arm roughly.

HITCH
Then you must help me-- help me before it's too late.

INGRID
Alfred! You are hurting me.

Some of the other cabbies look over. He lets her go.

HITCH
I'm... I'm sorry.

He stands and walks to the entrance of the garage. Ingrid follows. Puts a hand on his shoulder.

HITCH (cont'd)
It's just... I'm responsible. Don't you see? If she dies, then there will be blood on *my* hands. I couldn't live with that. I won't live that.

INGRID
This woman. There is... something more, yes?

HITCH
(beat)
Yes.

INGRID
Are you in love with her?

He turns to her.

HITCH
Maybe I'm in love with the idea of her. She is... one side of a two-headed coin. Innocence and light, bound to the other side, which is darkness and death.

Ingrid slumps.

INGRID
What a load of stuffing.

Hitch takes her arm again -- this time gently.

HITCH
I know that you care about me, Ingrid. And if you care about me, the you have to care about her safety. Please. Help me find her.

He touches her face.

HITCH (cont'd)
Remember, we are a genius. Yes?

She smiles. Nods.

INGRID
Yes.

HITCH
Okay. Okay then...

He looks around. Sees A MAP of Los Angeles on the wall.

HITCH (cont'd)

Here.

He leads her over to the wall.

HITCH (cont'd)

He must have her somewhere not far from the police station. Where is it?

She taps the map.

INGRID

And he would not take her to his house.

HITCH

That's right. But he does need someplace where he could control the environment, make murder look like an accident.

INGRID

Norman Bates knows many people. He can get into many places.

HITCH

I see your point.

(beat)

Mud. He had mud on his shoes. At the station. I saw him there, not more than two hours ago.

INGRID

Well... it has not rained in Los Angeles in weeks. The ground is dry as a bone.

HITCH

Yes, but you'd find mud near water.

INGRID

Or if you dug.

HITCH

Like in a cemetery.

INGRID

Or a construction site.

Hitch freezes -- *something registers.*

HITCH

Construction site? Why did you say that?

INGRID

It is because Bates is not just in the shipping industry. He is a land developer, too.

HITCH

Land developer? Wait a minute...

FLASH

We are now in Hitch's memory, back AT BATES' CHARITY AUCTION, where Hitch waits in the foyer -- he pretends to look at a painting as two women cross behind him --

JANE

Really? The Mount Lee properties?

MARGARET

Oh yes.

JANE

And he's actually putting one up for grabs in the auction?

BACK TO SCENE

HITCH

Mount Lee. Where is that?

INGRID

Mount Lee? Why it is... come, you can see for yourself.

She takes his hand and leads him out to the curb.

EXT. TAXI STATION

Ingrid turns the corner and points -- THE HOLLYWOODLAND SIGN looms like a beacon on the hillside due north of them.

HITCH

My god. That's it. That's where he's got her.

He turns to Ingrid.

HITCH (cont'd)

I've got to get up there.

INGRID

Then I will drive you.

HITCH

No. I'm sorry, Ingrid. It's far too dangerous. You've done more than enough already. More, in fact, than you will ever know.

She nods. Opens his hand. Puts her keys in his palm.

INGRID

(points)

My car is that one.

HITCH

Thank you, Ingrid.

She kisses him on the cheek. He races to her car.

INGRID

Alfred!

Hitch stops.

INGRID (cont'd)

You will be careful, yes?

HITCH

My dear woman, why on Earth would I want to do that?

He smiles and opens the door to the taxi as we

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT LEE (AERIAL VIEW) - NIGHT

The taxi winds its way up toward the Hollywoodland sign.

EXT. MOUNT LEE DEVELOPMENT - NIGHT

Hitch kills the lights and stops just shy of the top of the hill, right before A SIGN that reads: **Mount Lee Villas, Coming Soon** -- and A SMALLER SIGN that says: **No Trespassing**.

He quietly exits the car.

Before him is a construction area of pits, lumber, mud. The shells of several bungalows have already been erected.

EXT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Hitch moves in darkness through the treacherous construction area -- he approaches one of the half-finished bungalows.

He pauses -- sees something on the ground -- stoops over to retrieve A WOMAN'S SCARF -- *Catherine's* -- he pockets it.

Nearby, he spies a metal rod. Picks it up -- hefts it -- creeps up to the bungalow --

There's movement inside. He crouches -- peeks in the window by the front door --

In the moonlight, he sees Norman Bates -- then, the glint of A LARGE KITCHEN KNIFE in his hand -- Bates disappears down a hallway.

Hitch goes to the door -- turns the handle very slowly -- gently pushes it open --

INT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT

The bungalow is indeed an empty shell. Hitch tiptoes into the living room and turns toward the hallway. He grips the rod tightly. Moves carefully. Sees

A DOORWAY at the end of the hall -- catches a glimpse of Bates, his back to Hitch -- *this is his chance* -- he raises the rod -- picks up the pace -- gets closer -- closer --

Click! A GUN is cocked and appears out of an unseen doorway -- it presses itself against Hitch's temple.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Drop it, Mr. Hitchcock.

Hitch freezes -- drops the rod with a *Clang!*

MRS. DANVERS, Bates' housekeeper, steps out of a half-finished bathroom, holding the gun.

MRS. DANVERS
Move.

She ushers him down the hall.

INT. BUNGALOW BEDROOM

Hitch enters, prodded by the gun. Bates brandishes the knife.

BATES
Alfred Hitchcock. You never cease to amaze me.

HITCH
Where's Catherine?

BATES
I'll ask the questions, Hitch.

He beckons to Mrs. Danvers.

BATES (cont'd)
Thank you, nana. You were right. You've
made an exceptional look-out.

He takes the gun from her. Sticks the knife in the back of his pants. Beside him, on the floor, are A STACK of Stella Remington headshots -- they've all been slashed by the knife.

BATES (cont'd)
So, how did you ever manage to escape
from the Los Angeles Police Department?

Hitch does not respond. Bates points the gun at him.

BATES (cont'd)
Be a good sport.

HITCH
It's as we both agreed. The police are
fools.

Bates eyes him cautiously... then lowers the gun.

BATES
Well then, I must say-- this is going
to work out even better than planned.
For you see, I have my patsy once
again.

HITCH
So Catherine's still alive?

BATES
Why, yes, Hitch. In fact, I was just
laying out the final pieces of evidence
to her "suicidal psychosis".

He indicates the headshots.

BATES (cont'd)
Seems Catherine was obsessed with
Stella. So much so that she plotted to
kill her-- plotted with you, her
newfound psycho lover.

Bates produces a letter from his pocket.

BATES (cont'd)
 Why, it's all in this letter that she wrote. But with you here...
 (crumples the note)
 It damn near writes itself.

HITCH
 And Mrs. Danvers? Your alibi this whole time.

BATES
 You mean nana?

He crosses to her -- kisses her on the head.

BATES (cont'd)
 Of course. She raised me, Hitch. My mother was never the same after the switching of the babies. She grew despondent, pining for the daughters who were no longer hers. She was useless.

HITCH
 (to Mrs. Danvers)
 You were in charge of switching the children, weren't you?

MRS. DANVERS
 Yes. Norman and I were bonded in that moment. You could never understand it. I raised him as if he were my own son. I would do anything for him.

BATES
 That's true. She even let me borrow her little nephew for that unfortunate incident at the Chinese theatre.

HITCH
 (realizes)
 The boy in the beret...

FLASH

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- IN THE LOBBY of the Chinese Theatre -- *it is MRS. DANVERS holding the boy's hand...*
- IN THE THEATRE, Hitch sees the boy walk down the aisle...
- The boy yells "Fire!"...

- The boy races toward the RED EXIT sign...
- OUTSIDE THE THEATRE, in the alley, Mrs. Danvers waits in a car as the boy jumps in...

BACK TO SCENE

HITCH (cont'd)
You'll never get away with this, Bates.
You think you're covering all your
tracks, but someone will piece it
together. Even without facts or
witnesses, someone will see that it
doesn't quite add up.

Bates seems to think about this -- approaches Hitch.

BATES
You know, you're right again, Hitch.

And then he turns and FIRES the gun -- *Mrs. Danvers
clutches her stomach* -- blood spills from the bullet wound -
- she looks at Norman in utter shock --

BATES (cont'd)
There. One less witness.

Mrs. Danvers reaches out her hand to Bates -- then
collapses to the floor.

HITCH
You bastard!

He races to the fallen woman -- checks her pulse.

HITCH (cont'd)
She's dead. *You son of a bitch, she's
dead!*

Bates signals with the gun for Hitch to get up.

BATES
No time for tears, Hitch. She was a
sweet woman. Seems *your* murders are
just piling up, aren't they?

Bates can see the rage in Hitch's eyes.

BATES (cont'd)
Good. You want to kill me. You'd do it
to, if you had the chance. I knew you
had the soul of a murderer. And without
you, mine would never have come alive.

HITCH
I'm nothing like you.

BATES
We'll see. Time to go meet your final victim.

He indicates THE DOOR at the back of the bedroom. Hitch, seething, does not move. *Bates explodes* -- points the gun right at Hitch's head.

BATES (cont'd)
Do as I say!

EXT. BUNGALOW (BACK YARD) - NIGHT

Bates pushes Hitch out the back door of the bungalow. They walk across a vast yard, mostly dirt and shrubs, leading to AN OVERLOOK of the city.

BATES
Drink in that night air, Hitch. It's alive, vibrant, filled with endless possibilities. I think you'd have really liked Los Angeles. Perfect for men with dark obsessions, like us.

HITCH
You're mad.

BATES
No, Hitch-- I'm free. You set me free. You and your blueprint for the perfect murder. Oh, that reminds me. Stop.

Bates reaches into his pocket.

BATES (cont'd)
Here.

Hitch turns around. Bates produces something wrapped in a handkerchief. Hands it to Hitch.

BATES (cont'd)
Go on. It won't kill you.

Hitch takes it. Removes the handkerchief to discover HIS MURDER NOTEBOOK.

BATES (cont'd)
I was holding on to it for insurance. But it's fitting that you have it back. Call it a going away present.

Hitch pockets the book.

BATES (cont'd)
You should take in the view. It's
magnificent from here.

Bates gestures. Hitch looks -- below him, on the side of the hill, is the back of THE HOLLYWOODLAND SIGN.

Hitch squints -- there's movement at the top of the LETTER D in the word "LAND" -- *it's Catherine, bound and gagged.*

HITCH
Catherine.

BATES
Get going, Hitch.

Bates indicates the path that leads down to the sign. With a nudge, Hitch starts the descent.

EXT. HOLLYWOODLAND SIGN - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

The two men arrive at the base of the sign near the last "D". Bates signals to the ladder.

BATES
Go on. Climb.

HITCH
I'm... afraid of heights.

BATES
Are you more afraid of bullets?

Hitch breathes deeply. The letter looms nearly 50 feet up, braced by multi-tiered scaffolding on the backside. Hitch begins his ascent -- Bates follows, gun in hand.

ON THE LADDER

The two men climb upward -- Hitch looks DOWN -- the ground seems to get farther and farther away -- he closes his eyes -- *don't panic* --

BATES (cont'd)
Keep moving, Hitch. Catherine's getting
lonely.

Hitch takes a deep breath -- grips the ladder tightly -- opens his eyes and climbs on.

TOP LEDGE

Hitch steps off the ladder -- the ledge is very narrow, nearly 40 feet long. At the center of it, tied to an upright post, is Catherine.

Bates appears behind Hitch.

BATES (cont'd)

Go on.

The ledge has no railing -- it is exposed on both sides.

HITCH

This is madness, Bates.

BATES

Be careful-- even a modest crosswind could send you tumbling into infamy.

He aims the gun at Hitch. Leans back against the ladder.

BATES (cont'd)

Go to her. I'll stay here, if you don't mind.

Hitch walks carefully toward Catherine -- the massive letter sways every so slightly -- *he stumbles* -- flails his arms -- catches his balance -- *steady* --

Finally, he's there. He grabs the upright post for dear life. Catherine is tied to it. He removes her gag.

HITCH

Catherine-- are you okay?

She gasps, tears running down her face.

CATHERINE

Oh, thank god you're here! I'm so scared, Hitch-- I don't want to die!

HITCH

Everything's going to be alright.

Bates yells to be heard --

BATES

Alright, Hitch. Enough of the tearful reunion. Untie her from the post.

Hitch crouches down and loosens Catherine from the post. Her hands are bound as well -- he unties them.

BATES (cont'd)

Excellent. Now stand her up.

HITCH
Can you stand?

CATHERINE
I think so.

HITCH
I'll steady you.

Hitch braces Catherine as she stands herself up. She clings to Hitch for balance.

HITCH (cont'd)
I'm so sorry, Catherine. This is all my fault.

BATES
It's time, Hitch.

CATHERINE
What does he mean?

BATES
What are you waiting for? Throw her off the ledge.

CATHERINE
(gasps)
Hitch, you wouldn't!

Hitch looks down to see nothing but dirt, rocks and shrubs sloping dramatically away from them.

HITCH
I won't do it.

BATES
You'll do it, Hitch, or I'll shoot you.

HITCH
You'll shoot me anyway.

BATES
Not true, Hitch. If you can prove that you'll do anything to survive, like me, then you deserve to live. There will be no need to kill you. We'll be one and the same, you and I. Slaves to no one. In total control of our destinies.

Hitch looks at Catherine -- pure terror on her face.

BATES (cont'd)

(beat)

Otherwise, I shoot you in the head,
then throw her off myself. The horror
of your murders finally caught up with
you, and so you took your own life with
this gun. Fitting for a movie director
to die at the symbol of his own broken
dreams.

Bates cocks the gun again.

BATES (cont'd)

What's it going to be, Hitch?

Hitch stares down at his hands -- turns to Catherine --
whispers in her ear -- her face goes white --

CATHERINE

Dear God, no... no, don't do it!

HITCH

For better or worse, you're stuck with
me.

CATHERINE

No!

And then he pushes her off the ledge.

SLOW MOTION

Hitch still holds THE ROPE that bound Catherine's wrists --
as he pushes her, *he thrusts one end of it into her hand* --

She screams -- falling backwards, she wraps the rope around
her wrist *like a shackle* --

Hitch LEAPS off the *other* side of the ledge, wrapping the
other end of the rope around *his* wrist --

They fall at nearly the same time, plummeting opposite each
other until THE ROPE they hold between them SNAPS TAUT
against the ledge, causing them to

JERK to a stop and swing inward --

They collide together in the open space of the "D", let go
of the rope and DROP HARD onto the next ledge down --

Bates screams -- he goes to fire the gun but the SHOCK WAVE
of Hitch and Catherine's fall RATTLES the top ledge and
Bates loses his balance -- the gun falls from his grasp --

As it falls, the gun CLANKS off the side of the scaffolding and goes off -- the bullet just misses Catherine -- she screams, rolls and falls down to the next ledge with a THUD.

Bates, Hitch and Catherine are now all on separate ledges, one above each other.

RESUME NORMAL SPEED

Hitch sits up. Winces. Rolls over -- sees Catherine lying prone on the ledge below.

HITCH
Catherine! Are you okay?

No answer.

HITCH (cont'd)
Catherine?

She slowly turns over.

CATHERINE
I'm alright.

HITCH
Stay there. I'll be right down.

CATHERINE
Hitch!

She points up --

Hitch turns -- BATES lunges madly at him with THE KNIFE -- he catches Bates' wrist, stopping the blade right above his chest --

Bates is now on top, red-faced, crazed, driving the knife forward --

Hitch cries out as the blade pierces his shirt -- Bates relaxes *for the briefest of seconds*, and that's when Hitch pivots toward the knife hand, CRUSHING it against the ledge --

Bates yells and lets go of the knife -- it falls off the ledge out of sight --

The two men continue to struggle -- Hitch manages to kick Bates back, gets up and turns -- but before he can get even two steps Bates tackles him -- turns him over and

PUNCHES Hitch squarely in the jaw -- Hitch is dazed -- Bates grabs his throat -- Hitch claws at his hands, tries to pull them off but *Bates is choking the life out of him.*

BATES

How does it feel, Hitch? Knowing you are about to die?

Hitch goes limp as Bates suddenly TENSES -- he gasps, bolts upright -- his face contorts as

CATHERINE yanks THE KITCHEN KNIFE out of his back --

CATHERINE

How *does* it feel, you sick bastard??

She screams and plunges the knife in again -- and again -- *and again* --

Finally, she steps back. Bates slowly gets to his feet. He turns to her, the knife sticking out of his back. He reaches for it -- finds it -- *yanks it free* --

Hitch regains consciousness -- props himself up to see BATES take a wobbly step toward Catherine -- dumbfounded, she staggers back --

Bates coughs up blood -- he smiles --

BATES

You...

Then his body jerks. His eyes go wide. And with that, he

FALLS down the front of the sign -- a look of peace on his face as he CRASHES to the rugged earth below.

Catherine rushes to Hitch. Helps him up.

CATHERINE

Steady... breathe slowly... that's it.

Hitch rubs his neck. She looks at him -- touches the wound on his chest -- *okay?* He nods. She nods back. They look down to see Bates' fallen body.

HITCH

I think I prefer jail. How was your evening?

CATHERINE

(smiles)

I'll tell you when we get off this thing.

HITCH
Good god, yes.

They help each other to the ladder -- then Catherine stops suddenly. She looks around. *Confusion on her face.*

HITCH (cont'd)
What is it?

CATHERINE
Listen.

Hitch stands still. He hears... *absolutely nothing.*

HITCH
My word. It's so quiet.

CATHERINE
Too quiet.

And then they hear something -- they look down the hill to see A BLACK CLOUD swooping up toward them -- it is alive -- SCREECHING -- and then suddenly it is upon them --

Not a cloud but hundreds of swarming BIRDS -- *black birds* --

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Hitch!

HITCH
Cover your face!

The birds are all around them, whooshing past -- some smash right into them -- others peck at their bodies -- Catherine screams -- Hitch frantically tries to swat them away, but

THE ENTIRE HILLSIDE is engulfed by the birds --

Hitch and Catherine crouch down, pressed together, protecting each other's face -- the birds are relentless -- and then in a flash *they are gone.*

A beat. The couple slowly stands. They watch as the massive dark cloud of birds flies over the hill and into the night.

HITCH (cont'd)
What the hell was that?

CATHERINE
I... I don't know. Something must have startled them.

HITCH
Like what?

At that moment, they notice that the letter is noticeably swaying -- and then a LOW RUMBLING sound -- and then the letter is VIBRATING -- then the rumbling is more INTENSE --

CATHERINE

Oh my god.

The giant "D" is now literally ROCKING back and forth -- Hitch and Catherine grab hold -- the metal scaffolding begins to BOW --

CATHERINE (cont'd)

Earthquake!

THE GROUND beneath the letter begins to crack --

HITCH

We've got to get down.

CATHERINE

There's no time... run!

HITCH

Run?

Catherine tears off down the ledge, toward the letter "N" --

HITCH (cont'd)

Bollocks.

He takes off after her as THE GROUND begins to cave in --

CATHERINE

(yelling back)

We have to jump!

HITCH

Jump? Are you mad?

And with that Catherine hits the end of the ledge and LEAPS across the gap to the letter "N", landing on the ledge feet first and tumbling --

Hitch is right behind her, leaping into the air just as

THE "D" SINKS and falls, crumbling down the side of the hill.

Hitch hits the ledge of the "N" at chest level -- he grabs hold wildly, trying not to fall, and with a mighty effort pulls himself up.

The "N" starts to CRACK -- Hitch and Catherine share a look --

CATHERINE
Keep going!

And then they're off again -- they race down the ledge and HURL themselves across to the LETTER "A", barely making it as the "N" collapses.

They run to the edge of the wobbly letter "A", but this time they stop -- the "L" is simply too far away.

HITCH
We'll never make it.

CATHERINE
You're right-- now we *must* go down.
Hurry!

They shimmy down the ladder as fast as they can, the earth beneath the "A" starting to sink --

HITCH
Faster!

CATHERINE
I can't!

They're halfway down, but the "A" is falling --

Hitch stops at the next ledge, yanks Catherine off the ladder, and together they leap into the air as the "A" tumbles over --

They both hit the ground hard, just above where the "A" had been -- Hitch grabs his leg and cries out in pain -- and then everything is QUIET.

They turn back to survey the damage -- there is A GIANT PIT in place of the three fallen letters.

HITCH
Is that it? Is it over?

CATHERINE
I think so.

But not a moment later, the letter "L" CRACKS, buckles and tumbles into the pit.

ANGLE ON the famous landmark from the front -- the sign on the hill now simply proclaims HOLLYWOOD as we

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. POLICE PRECINCT (LOBBY) - DAY

THE FRONT PAGE of the Los Angeles Times reads: **Norman Bates Murdered Stella Remington** -- and below it: **British Suspect Cleared of All Charges**

The paper is in the hands of a freshly laundered Alfred Hitchcock, who sits in a wheelchair with one leg up in a cast. He regards the news with a big smile.

Next to him sits a sullen-looking Michael Balcon.

HITCH

At least they kept our names out of it.

BALCON

That's the arrangement I made with the police. I agreed to help them as long as they didn't give your name to the press.

HITCH

You were looking out for me.

BALCON

I gave you up is what I did.

He regards Balcon's demeanor.

HITCH

Come now, old man. Cheer up. A spot of tea on the way to the airport should do the trick.

BALCON

You never cease to amaze, dear fellow. Presented with the reality of your near-death and our impending joblessness, you're practically dancing a jig.

HITCH

One should be ecstatic to merely be alive and taking in breaths, Michael. And besides... there's more to life than motion pictures.

Balcon looks at him incredulously.

BALCON

More to life than motion pictures? Who the devil am I talking to?

Just then, Chief Davi and A MAN IN A SUIT enter the lobby. They approach the two Brits.

DAVI
Thank you gentlemen for stopping by.

HITCH
Chief Davi.

DAVI
I understand you're leaving town today.

HITCH
With great enthusiasm.

DAVI
Yes, well...

He regards the man in the suit.

DAVI (cont'd)
The city owes you an apology, and a
debt of gratitude.
(beat)
I personally owe you an apology, Mr.
Hitchcock.

HITCH
That's okay, Chief.

He gestures to Davi to lean in close to him.

HITCH (cont'd)
You didn't have all the facts, and you
jumped to conclusions. I wouldn't have
expected anything else.

Hitch smiles. Davi clearly holds his tongue.

DAVI
Er, right. This is Mr. MacGuffin. He's
the solicitor for the Bates' estate.

MACGUFFIN
Gentlemen. As you can imagine, things
are in a bit of turmoil. His will is
being sorted out, and the board members
may try to seize some of his holdings.

HITCH
And Miss Hartwell's claim?

MACGUFFIN
Miss Hartwell?

HITCH

Yes. Will you be able to validate her claim as the real heir to the estate?

MacGuffin shoots a confused look at Davi.

MACGUFFIN

Mr. Hitchcock, Miss Hartwell has made no such claim.

HITCH

(befuddled)

Oh. I see.

MACGUFFIN

Look, the point of all this is that we-- the city and the executors of Mr. Bates properties-- fully support the immediate exacting of one of his requests.

MacGuffin opens his briefcase and retrieves an envelope.

MACGUFFIN (cont'd)

This was found in Mr. Bates study.

He hands the envelope to Hitch.

MACGUFFIN (cont'd)

Inside is a notarized and legally binding letter, indicating that upon Mr. Bates death the sum of one hundred thousand dollars should be paid to a one Alfred Hitchcock.

Hitch and Balcon are floored.

BALCON

I'm sorry... did you say one hundred thousand dollars?

MACGUFFIN

It's a certified check.

Hitch tears opens the envelope -- pulls out the letter and THE CHECK -- it is indeed \$100,000. On the line marked PURPOSE are the words: **Charles Darwin.**

MACGUFFIN (cont'd)

Well, that's all I have. If you gentlemen will excuse me.

He shakes the hands of the two stunned Brits.

MACGUFFIN (cont'd)
Congratulations.

He heads off.

DAVI
So. All's well that ends well, eh?
(beat)
Yes. Anyway, I, too, need to be going.
Got a city to repair. I wish you both a
safe flight home.

Hitch and Balcon nod in unison. Davi holds a moment, as if
wanting to say more -- then he's gone.

HITCH
Incredible.

BALCON
Hitch... the check is dated the day
after the murder. He made it out after
he had already tried to frame you. Why
would he do that?

HITCH
To haunt me, Michael. Me and my work.

He holds up the check.

HITCH (cont'd)
If we use this, it's not I who wins.
It's Bates. From beyond the grave.

BALCON
Positively diabolical.
(beat)
We are going to use it... aren't we,
Hitch?

Hitch stares off. Contemplates. Then *sees something in particular*. He smiles.

HITCH
Wait here a moment, Michael, would you?

Balcon starts to speak as Hitch wheels himself off.

At the other end of the lobby is a smartly dressed
CATHERINE HARTWELL, talking to a policeman. They shake
hands and part. She sees Hitch approach.

HITCH (cont'd)
Miss Hartwell. You look well.

CATHERINE

Hitch! I was hoping I'd get to see you before you left.

She leans down and kisses him on the cheek.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

How's your leg?

HITCH

Broken. But I can travel. In fact, we're off to the airport right now.

CATHERINE

You know, Los Angeles isn't going to be the same without you.

HITCH

Of course not. Fewer murders, for one.

She smiles.

HITCH (cont'd)

I suspect I'll be back. And what about you?

CATHERINE

Oh, back to my boring, routine, simply wonderful everyday life.

(beat)

You're wondering why I don't go after Norman Bates' fortune.

HITCH

It would change everything for you.

CATHERINE

But's that just it, Hitch-- everything's already changed. And it's so much better than it was.

HITCH

How do you mean?

CATHERINE

I mean, I've found myself again.

HITCH

Oh?

CATHERINE

I think sometimes people... get lost. I know I did. I think it's because I always wanted to be an actress.

(MORE)

CATHERINE (cont'd)

And not just any actress-- I wanted to be the *best*.

HITCH

Really? I thought acting was just part-time for you. Bar maids and flappers, you said.

CATHERINE

Oh, no, Hitch. Not at all. It was my life. My passion.

She gets close to him.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

Can I share something with you? *I just wasn't that good*. That was a hard thing to face, Hitch. Self doubt becomes self loathing... and ultimately, self destruction.

HITCH

I... don't understand.

She starts to circle around him.

CATHERINE

Oh, it just got to be such a black pit of despair... the booze, the drugs, the endless parade of hanger-ons and hangovers. There was no way out. I mean, for a while I thought money might be the answer. So it was perfect when I learned the truth about who I was. Let me tell you, I shook down Norman for quite a bit of cash. I'm not proud of it, mind you. And all it did was make things worse.

Hitch's face is ghost white.

HITCH

Catherine...

CATHERINE

No, silly--

She puts her lips to his ear.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

Stella.

Hitch gasps.

Catherine's face MORPHS into that of Stella's -- blonde hair, dark sunglasses -- and we are now in her

FLASHBACK

EXT./INT. CATHERINE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- Stella stands in the hallway in front of the apartment door. Catherine opens it. The two women regard each other.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (cont'd)
Meeting Catherine is what changed my life. I contacted her when I first arrived in LA. It... really was like looking in a mirror.

- Stella takes off her sunglasses to reveal fatigue circles under her eyes. The two women embrace. They enter Catherine's apartment.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (cont'd)
Except that she was glowing, so content and happy with her ordinary, regular life. And here I was-- beaten, worn out.

- The two women sit on a sofa, talking and laughing.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (cont'd)
We spent the whole day catching up, sharing with each other every little detail. Which is when the idea hit me.

- They are now sitting side by side at a vanity in front of a mirror -- they look straight into it.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

- The exact same image, only now the two women are in bath robes, wet towels wrapped around their hair.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (cont'd)
I wanted to know what it was like just to be normal again... and she wanted to know what it was like to be somebody special.

- They remove the towels to reveal *each woman now has the opposite hair color*. They look at each other and giggle.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (cont'd)
 All it took was a little bit of
 coaching. Because in the end, Hitch,
 people aren't that observant.

INT. BILTMORE HOTEL - NIGHT

- The night of the murder. Hitch stands at the front desk,
 retrieving his key. He turns to find Stella Remington,
actually Catherine, walking right toward him.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
 They simply see what you want them to
 see.

BACK TO SCENE

CATHERINE (cont'd)
 Norman took her, Hitch. I don't know if
 I'll ever be able to forgive myself,
 because he meant to take me.
 (beat)
 But they say in death there is birth,
 and I've been reborn. As her.

She straightens the lapels of his coat.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
 In a way, he saved my life. And how can
 I not be eternally grateful for that?

She smiles. Hitch is in a daze.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
 Goodbye, Hitch.

And with that, she puts on the same pair of dark sunglasses
 and heads for the front doors.

Hitch watches her go, then finally *snaps out of it*. He
 wheels after her --

HITCH
 Wait...

Balcon sees Hitch heading for the doors --

BALCON
 Hitch? Hitch?

Catherine is walking out of the station -- Hitch speeds up -
 -

HITCH

Wait!

Balcon grabs their suitcases and races after --

BALCON

Hitch!

Hitch reaches the front doors and pushes them open --

EXT. LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

He bursts out onto the front steps and looks around --
Catherine is nowhere to be seen. Balcon nearly runs into
the wheelchair from behind, huffing and puffing.

BALCON

I say, old boy, a little heads up would
be nice.

HITCH

What? Oh... yes.

BALCON

Was that the girl, Hitch?

HITCH

Yes. That was her.

BALCON

Quite beguiling.

HITCH

Indeed.

On the steps of the police station, the two men survey the
bustle of ordinary Los Angeles life before them as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

A contemplative Hitchcock stares out the window -- white
fluffy clouds all around. Open on the tray table in front
of him is HIS NOTEBOOK --

A variety of words are scribbled on the page: **Norman Bates,**
identical twins, wrongly accused, falling, chased by
police, obsessive desire, madness, strangulation, birds...

WOMAN (O.S.)

Mr. Hitchcock?

Hitch closes his notebook. Looks up.

A YOUNG BLONDE WOMAN is staring down at him. She smiles.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Do you need anything else?

Hitch stares at her, entranced. Then

A PAIR OF HANDS wrap themselves around her neck -- A
MOUSTACHED MAN steps up behind her --

MAN
Come here.

He begins groping her forcefully -- she gasps, struggles to
break free, screams, but he

SPINS her around, grips her tightly, tears at her clothing -
- she paws at him to no avail -- then she reaches out to

A CART behind the man -- sees A SHARP KNIFE -- manages to
grab it and, as the man begins choking her, PLUNGES it into
his back -- and again -- and again --

The man slumps to the floor -- the frazzled woman stands
over him with the knife, a stunned, crazed look on her face
--

HITCH (O.S.)
Cut!

We PULL BACK to find ourselves

INT. ISLINGTON STUDIOS (LONDON) - DAY

Hitch sits in a director's chair holding a small megaphone.
The film's cast and crew regard him silently, including a
SOUND MAN working a large reel-to-reel recorder.

HITCH
How was it?

CINEMATOGRAPHER
Good for picture.

SOUND MIXER
Good for sound.

They wait silently for Hitch's direction.

HITCH
(finally)
Fine. Print it.

The crew begins setting up for the next shot. The camera assistant writes a new take number on a clapboard marked: **Blackmail.**

Michael Balcon appears, smoking a pipe.

BALCON
Brutal scene, old boy. It might not
make the cut.

HITCH
Of course it will make the cut,
Michael. Haven't you heard?

Hitch's eyes linger on the blonde actress sauntering across the set.

HITCH (cont'd)
I'm Alfred Hitchcock.

The two men smile. Balcon walks off.

Hitch watches him go... *and then his smile fades.* He stares off. And as stagehands move the lights, Hitch's face becomes bathed in DARKNESS.

We PULL BACK from this image, Hitchcock's profile in silhouette, framed against the bright walls of the set, the bustle of the film crew all around him.

And then we simply

FADE OUT.

THE END

* *If you can*, imagine that the iconic Alfred Hitchcock theme song, "Funeral March of a Marionette," CRESCENDOS as the credits roll.