

ALFRED HITCHCOCK AND THE MAKING OF *PSYCHO*

Screenplay by
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Based on the book by
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Original *PSYCHO* screenplay by
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Based on the novel by
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FADE IN:

EXT. WISCONSIN MARSH LAND - DUSK

Clumps of grass smolder near a patch of pines. We move across some of the embers, and see dirt being shovelled on top to extinguish them.

HENRY GEIN (O.S.)
We're just lucky it didn't reach
the trees....

EDDIE (O.S.)
Hey, we got the grass burned off,
didn't we?

We find HENRY and EDDIE GEIN shoveling out the flames. Both are in their forties. The men, in flannel shirts, are sweating and have been working hard for hours.

HENRY GEIN
It was a dumb idea, Eddie.

EDDIE
We could try and grow beans or
something out here...you're the
smart one, what do you think?
Turnips, maybe?

HENRY GEIN
Eddie, we've been over this...

Henry walks over to another flare-up near the pines. Eddie, looking hurt, looks over at the ramshackle farmhouse, then at his brother. Henry shovels furiously and finally gets the mini-blaze under control. Eddie approaches cautiously, then adds a few token shovels full of dirt.

HENRY
That wind kicks up again, we'll be
out here all night.

They work side by side. Henry won't look at his brother.

HENRY
I hear there's gonna be an aircraft
factory outside of Milwaukee...
lotta jobs come June.

EDDIE
You can't leave, Henry. She needs
both of us, she--

HENRY

Can you stop being a momma's boy
for one goddamn second... Look at
yourself, Eddie! She's got you
twisted. Can't you see that?!

Henry glares at Eddie and Eddie shrinks back. Henry feels a little guilty, but Eddie shovels some more dirt and Henry goes back to shovelling.

HENRY

I'm not trying to hurt you.
Just...Jesus, you got to live your
own life someday. She can take
care of her own goddamn self. Even
if you don't come with me now, one
day you'll meet someone, or you'll--

CLANG. He is hit by the shovel in the back of the head and goes down. Eddie slowly steps forward into frame, putting down the shovel. The look on his face isn't anger-- it's BLANK. After nodding for several seconds, he walks away.

We PAN until we find ALFRED HITCHCOCK, in his trademark Mariana custom-tailored suit. It's as if he's been watching the whole thing, standing in the smoldering field. And now he turns, looking into the camera.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Good evening. Brother has been
killing brother since Cain and
Abel, yet I, for one, did *not* see
that coming. I was as blind-sided
as poor Henry over there. The
authorities shared my naiveté, and
thus believed the young man's tale
that Henry fell and hit his head on
a stone, dying accidentally.

He smiles slightly.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Of course, if they *hadn't* believed
him, Eddie would never have had the
opportunity to commit the heinous
acts for which he became famous....
and we wouldn't have had this
movie. We'd have a movie more like
one of these....

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Clips from various films from the time are intercut with a title sequence done in the quick "Psycho" Saul Bass style.

PEYTON PLACE Lana Turner with Betty Field.

NELLIE (BETTY FIELD)

I've got a husband who's drunk all the time and a growing girl dressing and undressing in front of him and him staring at her all the time and staring at her and thinking, and staring....

CONNIE (LANA TURNER)

Oh, Nellie! We all have our problems.

THE CONQUERER, with John Wayne as Ghengis Kahn.

HUNLUN (AGNES MOREHEAD)

My son has won the world. Still he must conquer that red-headed Jezebel.

QUEEN OF OUTER SPACE

PROF. KONRAD

Perhaps this is a civilization that exists without sex.

LT. TURNER

You call that civilization?

JAILHOUSE ROCK

Elvis sings "Jailhouse Rock."

MARJORIE MORNINGSTAR with Natalie Wood.

MOTHER

Cigarettes, beer, all grown up.

MARJORIE

We might as well face it: I've gone to the dogs.

BEN-HUR with Charlton Heston.

BEN-HUR

Almost at the moment He died, I
heard Him say, "Father, forgive
them, for they know not what they
do."

A SUMMER'S PLACE with Sandra Dee.

MOLLY

Daddy, she says I bounce when I
walk. Do I? Do I?

SAY ONE FOR ME

Bing Crosby to drunk Ray Walston.

FATHER CONROY

Stop bending your elbow, and start
bending your knee.

THE ROBE

Richard Burton, in sandals, with Jean Simmons.

RICHARD BURTON

Every man makes enemies.

JEAN SIMMONS

All of your enemies seem to be
within.

RICHARD BURTON

(pointedly)

Yes.

TITLE SEQUENCE

As the dynamic introduction ends, we

CUT TO:

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEL-AIR HOME - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

QUICK CUTS: a faucet is turned on in the bath. A hand pours
a glass of CHATEAU CHEVEL BLANC '53.

We see a gleaming bathroom. Slowly panning past the open,
mirrored door, along the white tiles and glistening fixtures,
we could very well be in the Bates Motel bathroom.

At the end of the pan we surprisingly find Hitchcock soaking
in the bathtub.

Sixty, corpulent, he has a glass of wine next to him and his nudity is covered only by the copy of the LONDON TIMES he's reading. He is reserved to the point of being haughty, even in this state.

He takes a sip of wine and hears a bedroom bureau being opened. As a breeze blows through the window, the door slowly opens with a suspenseful CREAK. His eyes shift slowly toward the door, and then his head turns, cocking to get a view of the FULL-LENGTH MIRROR on the bathroom door.

IN THE MIRROR

We catch fleeting glimpses of Hitchcock's wife ALMA, also 60, razor-sharp, acerbic, and chic, standing across the bedroom, at her dresser, back to us. She has on a black half-slip and is hooking on her white bra.

She moves a little to open another drawer. She takes out NYLONS holding them up to look at them.

HITCHCOCK

He is enthralled, and when Alma moves he has to shift a little in the tub to maintain his view which makes the water lap against the sides of the tub.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alma stops when she hears the small splashes. She is neither upset nor amused, as she goes about her business, taking a skirt from the drawer.

The bedroom has TWIN BEDS. We move around them and around Alma until we can see Hitchcock staring at her in the mirror from the tub. She still isn't looking at him:

ALMA
(playfully)
Muhammad had the eyes of peeping
Toms gouged out with arrows.

Hitch sinks further down into the tub and goes back to his paper, pretending he's been reading it the whole time.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
There were no peeping Toms in
Muhammad's time, he lived in a tent--
--noticeably lacking in windows and
keyholes.

Alma steps into her frock.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Did you see this article? "The New
Masters of Suspense".... Dassin...
Hathaway...
(annoyed by the name)
Clouzet.

She goes to the mirror and puts on LIPSTICK.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Why are they constantly hunting for
a new master of suspense when they
still have me?

She unsuccessfully runs a brush through her red hair.

ALMA
You came this close to snapping up
Diabolique. If you'd made that
picture, it would have been more
than atmosphere and a few jokes.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(thinking hard)
It had more than that. It had
a...simplicity. No Cary Grant to
pretty it up, no Kim Novak to dumb
it down. It was a clean, nasty
little piece of work.

ALMA
Hitch, I don't care what the
critics said, *Vertigo* was a
marvelous picture.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
If anyone came in late and missed
the setup, they'd have likely
asked, "Why is that young blonde
thing smooching her grandfather?"

ALMA
(kidding)
Wait...you mean that *wasn't* the
story?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Jimmy Stewart, Ingrid, Cary...their
ages are catching up to them.

ALMA
You're older than any of them.

Alfred settles back in the tub thinking about it, depressed.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Old and a relic.

Alma caps the lipstick. She puts down the TOILET SEAT
(Psycho was the first movie with a toilet in it). She sits
on it, reaches down and pats his head like a child.

ALMA
Don't be maudlin. You know it
aggravates the hell out of me.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You sound just like my mother
sometimes...
(looking in her eyes)
Tell me, dear. Am I too old?

ALMA
Yes. And you always have been.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Old and let's not forget corpulent.

He waits for her to protest this, but she continues primping.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(drolly)
You always know precisely how to
hurt me, don't you?
(beat)
Where are you going?

ALMA
I'm seeing Whit for brunch later.
Why don't you come?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
We just established that I'm
corpulent.

ALMA
You'll feel better when you find a
project. Has Peggy unearthed any
decent books?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Sleeping pills with *dust jackets*.

She turns, fully dressed, insecure about her appearance.

ALMA

Well...how do I look today?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(looking at his paper)

Adequate.

Alma shakes her head, smiles and walks out.

Hitch goes to stand, but loses his balance. He grabs onto the SHOWER CURTAIN as he falls back, and wrenches the curtain from the RINGS on the rod.

THE ROD

We see the curtain fly loose and the rings spin on the rod.

HITCH

He looks up at the image of the shower curtain rings, intrigued, making a mental note. It's an image that will be in the movie, "*PSYCHO*," at which the world will soon gasp.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Alma drives the GLEAMING BLACK 1955 LINCOLN. Hitchcock, two SEALYHAM TERRIERS on his lap, sits staring up at a huge BILLBOARD they pass. It is for "THE NUN'S STORY," starring Audrey Hepburn-- she looks good and innocent. It seems to irk him.

EXT. THE PARAMOUNT GATE - DAY

The impressive icon looms large. The FIRST GUARD redirects a car away from the gate.

ANOTHER GUARD in the booth nods, and the First Guard looks up to see the huge Lincoln. The Guards snap-to as if for the arrival of royalty and open the gate. The car stops before pulling through, and the guards get a glimpse of an especially imperious looking Hitch.

FIRST GUARD

Morning, sir.

Hitchcock looks at him, waiting for more.

FIRST GUARD

(to the dogs)

Sirs.

Satisfied, Hitchcock looks ahead and Alma drives through.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

The vehicle is massive, but Alma parks it like a pro. To one side, ahead, Hitch sees a CREW following after a director as he points things out on a stage. In the other direction, there is bustle and laughter of a shoot in front of a stage.

ALMA

Somewhere there's a story just waiting for you.

She hands Hitch a fancy English lunch pail.

ALMA

This will be waiting for you, too.

He snaps it open. Inside are THREE ORANGES. He is quietly appalled.

Alma puts a gentle hand on his girth and pats. She looks at him knowingly, asking the question with her expression-- "Do you want to lose weight or just complain about it?"

He sighs. He opens the door and awkwardly pulls himself out of the car.

INT. HALLS OF PARAMOUNT - DAY

Hitchcock walks past several offices and one editing suite-- all of them are full of people bustling, hurrying, hard at work on films. Hitch pauses for a second-- everyone is too busy to even notice him.

He rounds a corner, looking left out.

Hitchcock lumbers down the hall, passing framed glamour photos of Paramount's greatest stars: Audrey Hepburn, Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and finally, a photo of Hitch.

We stay on the photo as Hitchcock passes. After a moment a pudgy hand reaches in and moves the photo a tiny bit to straighten it. The hand disappears, then Hitch slips back into frame, and purposefully makes Audrey Hepburn's photo a tiny bit crooked.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

A luxurious wood panelled office. Hitch sits behind his desk, staring out the window, receiving his morning SHAVE from THE STUDIO BARBER.

Hitch's longtime assistant, PEGGY ROBERTSON, a stern but sharp-witted British woman, forty-three, always well-dressed, sits across from him, going over potential properties.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
Fox is offering "The Diary of Anne Frank."

He throws his head back, and it makes the Barber slip with the razor. There is a tiny nick that the Barber dabs, a little upset.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
The audience would spend the entire picture waiting for Miss Frank to discover the corpse I'd hidden under the floorboards.

Peggy goes to another folder. Hitch shakes his head and the Barber pulls back in time.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
MGM wants you for Ian Fleming's "Casino Royale," with Cary Grant as James Bond. It's definitely in the style of your other pictures....

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I made that movie. It's called "North by Northwest." And "style" is just self-plagerism.

When he reaches for an orange, it nearly makes the Studio Barber slip with the razor-- there is another tiny dot of blood the Barber dabs away nervously.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I need something fresh. I'm treading water, Peggy. Everyone's on to me.

The Barber takes a deep breath and waits until Hitch starts peeling the orange, then recommences the shave.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
That's your last orange and it's only ten-thirty. What are you going to eat the rest of the day?

He motions for the Barber to hold up the mirror. The image of his face overflows the small frame. Repulsed, he stops peeling and puts the orange back on his desk.

He leans back his head and makes a hand motion for the Barber to CUT HIS THROAT.

The PRE-LAP sound of contagious and hearty LAUGHTER.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Alma is in the middle of brunch with writer WHITFIELD COOK, and they both seem tired out from laughing. Whitfield is very sophisticated and dashing like Olivier or Hitchcock star, Cary Grant. He and Alma make a handsome couple-- an older COUPLE at another table is saying so right now-- delighted that people can be so compatible. He's physically the opposite of Hitchcock, and his interaction with Alma is much more light and airy.

WHITFIELD COOK

She wouldn't speak to me for the rest of the shoot, and I swear, I never went near him...

She laughs.

WHITFIELD COOK

We had fun, didn't we?

ALMA

We always had fun working together, Whit. And Hitch loves having you around.

WHITFIELD COOK

What are you working on these days?

ALMA

Hitch is going out of his mind looking for something-- you know how unbearable he is when he doesn't have something lined up.

WHITFIELD COOK

Almost as unbearable as when he's working on something.

ALMA

(laughing)

Almost.

WHITFIELD COOK

Anyway, I wasn't asking about Hitch...what about you? What are you working on?

ALMA

I'm satisfied spending time in my garden.

WHITFIELD COOK

That's a lucky garden.

She notices his eyes stray to a HANDSOME WAITER across the room-- an indication for us that he's bisexual, something of which Alma is well aware. She clears her throat.

ALMA

How's Elizabeth? Remember? Your "wife?"

He suddenly breaks off looking at the waiter.

WHITFIELD COOK

She's happy since I promised her the dedication in my new novel.

ALMA

You know how to make a woman happy.

WHITFIELD COOK

And a man now and then.

She laughs at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GEIN FARM - 1945 - DAY

A SHOVEL breaks into the hard scrabble Wisconsin ground. Pulling back, we see it is the mild-mannered Eddie, a year after we saw him last. He wears a flannel coat, plaid flannel shirt, a hunting cap and two-days growth of beard. Behind him, a white farmhouse, large and in need of paint.

There is nothing ominous until a shrill voice yells-- harkening to *PSYCHO* when "Mother" yells for Norman.

AUGUSTA GEIN (O.S.)

Eddie?...Eddie?!!

Eddie jabs the shovel into the ground, and with no hesitation or ill-feeling, hurries into the house.

EDDIE

Coming, Ma...

INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE - 1945 - CONTINUOUS

Eddie goes inside. It is lightly cluttered and dirty.

AUGUSTA GEIN (O.S.)
Eddie! Who were you talking to?!

He heads up the stairs.

EDDIE
No one...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

We see the bathroom door is open-- it is dark and grim. Eddie walks through the door. Eddie is very dutiful-- he should not seem resentful as in Tony Perkins' portrayal. He wants to take care of his mother.

AUGUSTA GEIN (O.S.)
Was it that woman we saw at
Smith's? The little harlot?

EDDIE
I told you, ma, I wasn't with
anyone. You'll catch cold...

He takes a towel off a rack and then leaves our view for a moment.

AUGUSTA GEIN (O.S.)
My legs hurt.

EDDIE
Shhh...It's okay...I got you...

Eddie comes out of the bathroom, carrying the old woman, wrapped in towels. We cannot see her face-- and it harkens to the moment when Norman carries his mother to the fruit cellar to hide her.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

We pull back out of Hitchcock's eye-- he's reading about Eddie Gein in the paper. He takes a long drink of water.

He goes through a stack of several older papers to find something else. He's distracted for a moment as he sees people passing by his window. He moves away from their sight and peeks through the blinds-- it is nothing special, just a friendly encounter between a MAN and a WOMAN. He sips his drink as the Man puts his hand tenderly on the woman's waist.

Hitch sighs as the couple starts to walk away.

When they are out of sight, he goes back to looking through the stack of New York Times.

OUTER OFFICE - LATER

Peggy is reading through material, not finding anything when a large SHADOW starts to creep over her desk. She's not alarmed, but looks slowly up to see Hitchcock towering over her, his glass in his hand.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Is that water you're drinking or do
I need to call Alma?

It's water. He drains the glass playfully.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Anthony Boucher's column in the New
York Times this past weekend called
the book "Psycho" chillingly
effective.

She looks through a stack of papers next to her desk.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

(flustered)

I have the studio coverage...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Read it to me.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

(looking it over)

It's based on the real life murders
of a psychopath in rural Wisconsin,
Ed Gein. Thus the charming title.

(scanning further)

Contains sensationalized and
graphic elements of brutal
violence, voyeurism,
transvestitism, and incest.

(looking up)

The lead character dresses as his
mother, spies on women, and kills
them. The studio says it's
completely "unsuitable for film."

Hitch stares at her, thinking.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

You're kidding.

Hitchcock raises an eyebrow.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A fire flickers in the fireplace of the Bel-Air mansion. The mood is intimate...and eerie. Still wearing his suit and tie, and gulping a glass of wine, Hitchcock devours the PSYCHO NOVEL.

As soon as Alma enters at the other end of the room, Hitch, without even looking up, slides the wine glass out of her view on the table. Alma, getting some books from a bookcase, glances at Hitch.

ALMA

And how was your day?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(tilting the book down)

I'm hungry.

ALMA

If you're good, maybe you can have a grapefruit later.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

How was your meal with Mr. Cook?

ALMA

Same old Whit.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Yes, but what I wanted to know was...what did you EAT with Mr. Cook. In luscious detail.

She ignores the question.

ALMA

He gave me the galleys of his new book...maybe you could take a look at it later.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Is that why he took you to lunch?

ALMA

Of course not! You know him as well as I do; he isn't like that at all.

(beat)

Anyway, I looked it over this afternoon.

(MORE)

ALMA (CONT'D)

I have some ideas on how you can adapt it. It might be the one.

He nods in deference to her taste and interest.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Leave it on the nightstand.

He goes back to reading *Psycho*, and Alma sweeps out of the room.

He becomes quickly engaged with what he's reading. We push in on him as he pauses to imagine:

INT. EDDIE'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM

It is an immaculate but dark room and should be furnished somewhat like the *Psycho* mom's room.

Eddie puts the woman on the bed and we follow him to the dresser. He picks up a slip, perhaps lingering too long before putting it aside and getting a cotton nightgown. Out of focus, in the background, is the figure of Eddie's mother.

AUGUSTA GEIN

I don't know what I'd do without you, son...

Eddie turns and we stay on his face as he dresses her.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I don't know what I'd do without you either.

As he pulls the nightgown down, taking care to smooth out the wrinkles, he reveals her face to us for the first time. Augusta is a hard, old woman; her face contorted by a stroke.

AUGUSTA GEIN

Come into bed with me, Eddie.
Don't leave me....

He puts a small blanket over her. She looks uneasy and in pain. Still wearing his jacket and coat, he takes off his shoes and crawls up next to her in the bed. He stares at her face, but she's looking up at the ceiling, as if he isn't even there. He reaches out and takes her hand.

AUGUSTA GEIN (CONT'D)

I'm afraid of being alone...

He looks up at the ceiling, too. After a few moments:

EDDIE

Me, too...

His eyelids heavy, he closes them.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alma puts Whitfield's Galley on the night stand between the twin beds and runs her fingers over his name. She looks confident that Hitch will enjoy it, too.

She goes to the window to close the blind but stops-- the house is cornered in such a way that she has a partial view into the living room.

She sees Hitch pacing around as he reads the *Psycho* book with rapt interest. She knows the look on his face.

EXT. EDDIE GEIN'S HOUSE - 1945 - NIGHT

A crow flies past the moon and into the tree in front of Eddie's house.

INT. EDDIE'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The moon passes the window, and light is thrown on Eddie's face in bed. He is still in his coat, but his hat has fallen away from his head. He opens his eyes and stretches a little, getting his bearings. He looks next to him suddenly:

AUGUSTA GEIN

Is in the position where we last saw her except her eyes are bugged and her mouth is horrifically twisted open. There is a large wet stain beneath her where her bladder released.

Eddie draws back slowly. He is still holding her hand. He stares at her for a few moments, but she doesn't blink.

EDDIE

Ma?....

No movement. Trembling he reaches out and puts his hand on her cheek. He closes his eyes tightly.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(feebly)

Don't be afraid, ma...I'm here with you... I'm here....

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hitchcock, in pajamas, sits up in his twin bed with a tiny reading lamp over the *Psycho* book. He's riveted, near the end. Alma is half asleep in the other bed when she sees an impish smile comes to his lips and his eyes widen.

ALMA

What?

He hands over the book with the page open, then adjusts his blankets. She grabs reading glasses and sits up.

ALMA

"Mary started to scream, and then the curtains parted further and a hand appeared, holding a butcher's knife. It was the knife that, a moment later, cut off her scream...and her head."

She looks amused.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

A likeable heroine steals money, makes one wrong turn and is hacked to death, in a motel *bathroom*. Kill the film's biggest star right away. It's never been done before. Nothing in the book has ever been done before.

ALMA

It sounds like a horror movie, Hitch.

She sees something that irritates her: the corner of the Whitfield Cook manuscript protrudes from the trash can beneath the night stand.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

What if someone really good made a horror picture? They make a fortune even when they're godawful.

She's irked about him choosing *Psycho* over Whit's galley, but she can see the obsession in that far away look of his.

INT. LEW WASSERMAN'S MCA OFFICE - DAY

Hitchcock sits with LEW WASSERMAN, Hollywood deal-maker and Hitch's agent. Lew is thin, and wears thick glasses, a black suit and a razor tie.

LEW WASSERMAN
"The Widow Loved Company" is
available. If Paramount passes,
you can do it at Universal.

Hitchcock stares at him blankly. After a beat, he hands over
the book.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
"Psycho" is written by a man named
Robert Bloch. If you mention my
name as being involved in the
project, you'll drive the price up
to a hundred thousand or more.

LEW WASSERMAN
It's crap; nobody in town wants
anything to do with it. If there's
a movie there, Hitch, it's for the
drive-in crowd.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You know who goes to drive-in
pictures, Lew? Young people. All
willing to pay to have the bejesus
scared out of them.
(beat)
Some of them, more than once.

Lew suddenly realizes the wisdom of his client's proposal.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I expect you can get it for twenty.
But I want you to get it for ten.

LEW WASSERMAN
I'll get it for five.

Lew picks up the phone.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (PRE-LAP)
Audiences want something different.

CUT TO:

INT. PARAMOUNT BOARD ROOM - DAY

BARNEY BALABAN
I agree, but the truth is, Hitch,
every time you want to do something
"different"-- *The Wrong Man*, *The
Trouble with Harry*, *Vertigo* --
someone loses money.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

So we should stop trying to give them something new?

Paramount President BARNEY BALABAN is at the head of a large table. He has THREE EXECUTIVES next to him. Hitchcock sits further down the table with empty chairs on either side of him. There is a copy of the novel *PSYCHO* in front of Balaban. He is not pleased, but respectful.

BARNEY BALABAN

I'm just asking for you to meet us halfway. You'd be in post right now on "No Bail for the Judge" if you'd pulled out the rape scene.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Miss Hepburn pulled out because she was pregnant. If Mr. Ferrer had pulled out before conception, there wouldn't have been an issue.

BARNEY BALABAN

Can't you do something like "North by Northwest," but for us this time instead of on loanout to MGM?

(off his glacial stare)

Look, we don't want to alienate the audience. They want to see someone like Kim Novak and she gets paid a lot of money. That's why we keep her alive for the whole picture.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Do you know what that self-enchanted little twit said to me? "Oh, Mr. Hitchcock, you're not shooting me from my best side." I told her, "My dear, you're sitting on your best side."

One of the Executives smiles, but Barney gives him a sharp look.

BARNEY BALABAN

Novak's a gorgeous, sexy girl.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Killing the heroine in the first half hour is exactly what's going to set us apart.

BARNEY BALABAN
"The Widow Loved Company" is
available.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(imperiously)
"Psycho."

The Paramount executives seem uncomfortable.

BARNEY BALABAN
Well, you obviously have a lot of
passion for this project. Let us
talk internally and get back to
you.

Hitchcock waits, seething. Balaban is calm and keeps a
pleasant front.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Are you telling me "no?"

BARNEY BALABAN
Absolutely not. I think you know
me better than that, Hitch. I
would never say "no" to you.

Balaban doesn't say ANYTHING. There is a long silence.

We hear a pre-lap of Hitchcock straining, struggling to
breathe.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The room is dark as Hitch enters, leaving the lights off.
His eyes drift to the immense walk-in refrigerator. He goes
to it and opens the door.

The LIGHT COMES ON INSIDE the fridge as well as in Hitch's
eyes as he is met by an immense display of delicacies. His
hand trembles next to a stack of turkey drumsticks, lingers
next to an immense ham, then moves to a bowl of his wife's
fois gras.

But he catches sight of HIS REFLECTION in the chrome shelving
of the fridge and stops. His image is distorted and looks
even more massive. He backs out of the fridge, leaving the
door open, and with it, the light on.

He moves to the center island, frustrated. He grabs an
orange from a bowl and slaps it down on the counter. With
pent up frustration he draws a LARGE KNIFE from the block and
whacks violently through the orange.

INT. HITCHCOCK POOL - MORNING

We open on a table: an empty glass, an empty wine bottle, and about a dozen squeezed-out orange halves. Moving over we see Hitch, in a lounge chair, still in robe and slippers, asleep. There is a book folded open on his chest-- Joris-Karl Huysmans' decadent and influential 1884 novel: "A REBOURS."

Alma comes out on the deck, dressed to go out, and stops short when she sees her sleeping husband.

She takes the book off his chest, closes it, and looks at the cover. She holds it out for a second then lets it drop-- it makes a LOUD CLAP when it lands flat on the deck.

Hitch's eyes spring open, darting around, disoriented for only a moment. He sees Alma staring at him.

ALMA

It's almost time to go.

He pulls himself up.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I must have fallen asleep reading.

Alma tips an empty wine bottle toward him, remaining calm.

ALMA

This has a lot of calories.

He raises his chin high, walks into the house.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - MORNING

Hitch is in his suit and Alma is driving. He's hung over but pretending he isn't. She's annoyed, but pretending to be content.

She takes a short stop at a light-- a little shorter than she has to. Her husband's head is jostled forward.

She looks at him in mock apology. He rubs his temple, getting the message.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I think we should have a dinner party Sunday.

ALMA

What's the occasion?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I'm going to announce that I'm
making *Psycho*.

She is a little surprised. He stares ahead, lost in thought.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - MORNING

Peggy comes into the office carrying a load of scripts and books. She's just catching her breath when she hears quiet talking and a strange, slow GRINDING SOUND from Hitch's private office.

She goes to the door which is ajar and pushes it open. She's taken aback by what she sees:

A TOOL BAG is on Hitch's desk. A very old STUDIO MAINTENANCE MAN stands drilling a small hole into the panelling with a MANUAL BRACE HAND DRILL. Hitchcock, hands behind his back, watches.

There are several holes in the panelling. When the Maintenance Man pulls away the brace, Hitchcock puts his eye to the hole. After a moment, he leans back.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Try the one-sixteenth bit.

As the Maintenance Man changes the bit, Hitchcock glances back at the stunned Peggy; he is neither surprised nor embarrassed by her presence.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Mr. Gallagher and I are conducting
research.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
What's on the other side of that
wall?

Hitch looks through the hole.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Another eye, looking back.
(looking again)
It's brown....and it's
exceptionally angry.

EXT. HITCHCOCK GARDEN - DAY

Alma, in a gardening outfit, ATTACKS the soil with a HAND TILLER. She keeps working as a car pulls into the drive, but looks up when she hears the car door.

She brightens when she sees Whitfield Cook, looking very suave and casual next to his sporty car. He has a small paper bag in his hand.

WHITFIELD COOK
(nodding to the tiller)
Remind me not to get on your bad side.

Alma hastily brushes away dirt as she stands. She primps and inadvertently gets a small dried leaf in her hair.

ALMA
Whit....this is a pleasant surprise.

WHITFIELD COOK
I'm actually on my way around the hill to my agent's and I saw you out here. I'm glad I did.

He reaches his hand toward her face-- but it's only to pull the leaf from her hair. He holds it up and she laughs.

WHITFIELD COOK
I brought you something.

He pulls down the bag revealing a small tray of tiny purple PANSIES. She laughs and takes the tray.

ALMA
Oh, they're marvelous.

WHITFIELD COOK
A girl was selling them on the side of the road...Pansies.

She laughs, then gets on her knees to transplant them.

ALMA
I showed Hitch your galley...

WHITFIELD COOK
Oh, I told you not to....

ALMA
I'm afraid he's picked his next project. He's all fired up about an unseemly little book -- "Psycho."

WHITFIELD COOK
"Psycho?"

ALMA

He's announcing it Sunday at a dinner party, and you and Elizabeth are *both* coming this time.

WHITFIELD COOK

Wouldn't miss it, my dear.

She finishes with the flowers, pleased. He offers his hand and gallantly helps her up.

ALMA

I thought your book was excellent.
I have some ideas about it...

WHITFIELD COOK

Thanks, Alma, that means everything coming from you.

(checking his watch)

I don't want to be late-- I'm not his favorite client.

He walks to his car. He stops just before getting in.

WHITFIELD COOK

Oh-- by the way. You might want to catch the afternoon movie.

She's excited.

ALMA

Which one is it?

INT. HITCHCOCK'S STUDY - DAY(LATER)

On television-- the 1950 Hitchcock classic "Stage Fright."

The credits come up: "Screenplay by Whitfield Cook, Adaptation by Alma Reville." She's thrilled at the sight of her name with Whitfield's.

A moment and the title fades. "DIRECTED BY ALFRED HITCHCOCK" overwhelms the small screen in the largest letters yet.

It's bittersweet for Alma as she watches, eating her lunch on a tray.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY(LATER)

Hitchcock is at his desk, doodling something that we can't see. Peggy enters, eyeing the spot where the holes were drilled-- the print of the painting we'll see later in the Bates Motel now hangs there.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Peggy, summon your minions....

PEGGY ROBERTSON
My minions. Sure. And they
are...?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Get them started buying copies of
"Psycho."

PEGGY ROBERTSON
(puzzled)
Just how many do you need?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
All of them. I want every copy,
nationwide. Have them scour every
book shop, and library....
"Psycho's" my next picture, and I
don't want anyone to find out the
ending until they see it in the
theater.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
Those oranges are affecting your
brain...maybe you should try
apples.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Don't let anyone know what I'm
doing. Especially Paramount.
(beat)
Oh, and I'm having a dinner party
Sunday. Wear something blue.

Peggy waits for more, then leaves, a little shaken by the
scope of the assignment. Hitchcock keeps doodling and we
move in on:

THE PIECE OF PAPER

It is a rough storyboard for "Psycho." The first panel is a
longshot of the "Psycho house" at night. The next panel is
an interior of the house, where Norman walks to the foot of
the stairs, back to us, and looks up longingly toward his
mother's room.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE GEIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Eddie pines as he looks up the stairs. Back still to us, Eddie walks down the hall toward the light of the kitchen.

We see him take a seat at the kitchen table.

Eddie gets up and leaves our view for a moment. He returns with a SHOVEL, the same one that he used to kill his brother. He walks out the back door with it.

EXT. PLAINFIELD CEMETARY -- NIGHT

A lantern burning, Eddie is attempting to dig up the grave of his mother. He's barely scratched the surface when he hits a concrete slab. Frustrated he pounds a few times in various spots with the shovel, always hitting concrete.

He looks around-- the grave of another middle-aged woman catches his eye. He looks around then goes to the other grave-- he starts to dig and starts making easy headway.

INT. EDDIE GEIN'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

A woman's body is on the floor, wrapped in a death shroud, covered in dirt. He drags it to the empty tub, and pulls away the shroud. He lifts it to the edge and pushes it in.

He unrolls a piece of canvas revealing several KNIVES-- all the blades are different shapes and lengths. He looks in at the body, chooses a knife, leans into the tub and cuts. He turns on the water, leans back and rolls up his sleeves. He picks another knife and starts cutting again.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HITCHCOCK LIVING ROOM -- A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

A Look Magazine headline which screams: "HOUSE OF HORRORS STUNS NATION." Stark black and white photographs show the nightmarish decay of the Gein house and severed body parts. REVEAL --

Peggy and DOUGLAS ROBERTSON watching Hitch's reaction as he holds open a thick manila file and stares at the research.

TWO SERVERS, dressed all in blue, offer BLUE MARTINIS on blue trays to delighted DINNER PARTY GUESTS. TWO FEMALE SERVERS, also blue, carry trays of assorted blue-dyed Hors D'Oeuvres.

There are a couple of GOSSIP COLUMNISTS, including a Hedda Hopper type, taking little notes as they talk to the guests.

The Guests mill around and a PIANO TRIO, all in blue, plays "Blue Tango" as Hitch studies a picture of Gein's terrifyingly impassive face.

Through a shuttered window to the kitchen, Hitchcock can see Alma, hard at work preparing food in the kitchen.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 Couldn't he have looked more like
 William Holden and less like Elmer
 Fudd?

DOUGLAS
 Hitch? Why is the food blue?

Hitchcock is distracted-- Whitfield Cook and wife ELIZABETH have arrived and are greeting Alma in the kitchen. Hitchcock snags a Blue martini from a tray.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 (to Peggy)
 We'll talk about casting tomorrow.
 Also, I need research detailing a
 typical unmarried thirty-year-old
 secretary from Phoenix, Arizona.

As soon as Hitch sees Elizabeth leave the kitchen, Whitfield and Alma get closer. Whitfield innocently whispers something in Alma's ear and Alma laughs.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 (continuing)
 Her monthly rent, what she wears,
 reads, what perfume she uses...

DOUGLAS
 ...how she deals with a demanding
 boss when she's trying to relax on
 her weekends off...

Peggy shoots Doug a look. But Hitchcock is looking at the kitchen. Alma CLOSES THE SHUTTERS and blocks his view. Hitch drifts away, toward the kitchen. Douglas shrugs questioningly.

PEGGY
 That's just Hitch.

DOUGLAS
 That why the food's blue? "It's
 just Hitch?"

She jabs him in the ribs with her elbow.

CROSSING THE ROOM

Hitch has his eyes on the kitchen ahead, but is waylaid by Lew who puts an arm around him and holds up his blue canape for them both to look at. It is a Hitchcock-picture standard moment-- a character needing to get someplace being held by someone who wants to chat.

LEW WASSERMAN

Hitch, what the hell is wrong with this? This is *not* supposed to be this color.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The same food in the same colors gets tiresome.

Hitch manages to extricate himself and heads for the kitchen. Smiling and bowing slightly as he passes Elizabeth.

INT. HITCHCOCK KITCHEN -- (SIMULTANEOUS)

Alma continues working at the stove as Whitfield leans against the counter, staring at her with a slight smile. Although the shutters are closed, the door is open.

WHITFIELD COOK

If we were writing this moment for a Hitchcock picture, what would two characters like us, married to other people, be saying right now?

ALMA

Hitch would have us start with some off-handed patter about cooking, then move on to a dazzling exchange of double entendres.

Suddenly, over Whitfield's shoulder, she sees Hitch looming in the doorway.

Whitfield notes the tiny change in her eyes, a slight tightening and he turns. He is not at all surprised or upset to see Hitch.

WHITFIELD COOK

Speak of the devil.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I'm often mistaken for him.

ALMA

Hitch sometimes gets his mail.

Whitfield offers his hand and Hitchcock shakes it.

WHITFIELD COOK

What's this "Psycho" project,
Hitch? When Alma told me about it,
I ran all over town looking for the
book, couldn't find a single copy.

Hitch is pleased.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Come along, Whit. I'm about to try
out the plot on my unsuspecting
guests.

He pats Whitfield's back, ushering him out. She goes back to
her intensely busy cooking.

INT. HITCHCOCK LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Hitch holds court with a circle of guests including Whit,
Peggy and Doug, Lew and EDIE Wasserman, and the rapt Gossip
Columnists. In a nearby chair, a well-dressed DOWAGER.

As Hitchcock spins his web, he pays special attention to the
reactions of his Sealyham terriers who are at his feet.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

...and as the girl begins
disrobing, we cut to a close-up of
Norman Bates watching her through a
hole he's drilled in the wall for
just such an occasion.

Hitch grins as the dogs wag their tails.

DOWAGER

If you ask me, this story sounds
sordid and depraved.

The guests are quietly disturbed at the outrageous conduct of
the Dowager, awaiting an outburst from Hitch who eyes the
woman with contempt.

With the same repugnance she has for the story, the Dowager
waves off some blue hors d'oeuvres from a Server.

DOWAGER

Get those away.

LEW WASSERMAN

What happens next, Hitch?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The girl, now wearing a flimsy robe, decides to return the stolen money.

Hitch notes that the dogs look bored. He pats their heads.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Geoffrey and Stanley always tell me when the plot's gone limp. They want me to get the girl in the shower as soon as possible.

Everyone laughs except the Dowager.

DOWAGER

And just whom do you expect to see this display of carnality, Mr. Hitchcock? The reprobates you might attract are hopefully all locked away in penitentiaries.

The guests are shocked. The Piano Trio stops playing-- they watch. Lew rises to Hitch's defense, but Hitchcock hold up his hand to stop him.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Not all people of taste are in prison, madam...
(to his friends)
Yet.

The friends laugh, then stop as the Dowager mutters:

DOWAGER

If you ask me, it's contemptuous and vulgar.

Hitchcock looks down his nose at her. The amused guests await a witty comeback, but then:

BUTLER

Dinner is served.

The Dowager is the first to sweep off toward the dining room. The Guests linger with Hitchcock, still in shock. Only Whitfield looks a little skeptical. Lew is especially upset.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Who is that dreadful woman?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I believe she came with Lew.

LEW WASSERMAN

What?! No, no. I know her from
somewhere but...

(quietly)

If I didn't know she'd passed away,
I'd have sworn she was your mother.

Hitchcock raises an eyebrow and lumbers toward the dining room.

INT. GRAND HITCHCOCK DINING ROOM -- (LATER)

Hitch sits at the head of the table on which stand magnificent centerpieces of BRIGHT BLUE Hyssop flowers. The Dowager and the Wassermans sit next to Hitch. Lew eyes the Dowager carefully.

At the other end of the table: Alma, seated next to Whit, his wife, and Peggy. At a signal from Hitchcock, SERVERS in perfect unison lift the dinner plates.

On every plate, the Denver SOLE is BRIGHT BLUE! The vegetables and potatoes are also BRIGHT BLUE! As a server pours BLUE SAUCE over Hitch's fish -- It is beautiful and Hitch takes pride in the reactions.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

It's *all* blue!

LEW WASSERMAN

Totally original...

WHITFIELD COOK

It's funny...this actually reminds
me of something.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Since I'm about to embark on such a
unique project, I thought I'd
prepare food that could exist only
in my imagination.

Whitfield Cook glances at Alma.

WHITFIELD COOK

Who knew he could cook?

It's said with such charm, he gets a laugh from the table, including Alma, and Hitch is forced to smile along.

WHITFIELD COOK

I got it. "A Rebours." That's the
inspiration....

People start to eat except the Dowager who is repulsed.

DOWAGER

Well, if you ask me--

DOUGLAS

(to Whitfield)

What's "A Rebours"?

WHITFIELD COOK

A French novel from the 1800's.

You know it, right Hitch?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

No.

Alma looks at Hitch-- having seen him with the book not long ago.

WHITFIELD COOK

This decadent nobleman, bored with everything, likes to shock people; has a party, except it's black. All the food is black. Black bread, black olives, caviar...

DOUGLAS

I missed that one.

Douglas gets a laugh. Whitfield eats.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Blue is much more pleasant.

DOWAGER

Well...If you ask me--

But she's cut off by Whitfield at the other end of the table, now clearly the center of attention, eclipsing both Hitch and the Dowager. Whit laughs, trying to swallow his food.

WHITFIELD COOK

Wait, wait. I almost forgot the best part. It's actually a *funeral* feast, but no one's dead!... He has it in honor of his own impotence.

Laughter goes up around the table except for Alma who slowly turns from Whit to look at Hitch at the other end of the table. Hitch stares back at her-- he isn't laughing either.

Her expression softens for him-- not in pity, but commiseration. Everyone's having such a good time, no one sees the moment pass between them.

DOUGLAS

I definitely missed that one.

More laughter.

DOWAGER

If you ask me, your perverted taste
in food is as tainted as your taste
in subject matter for your--

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(bellowing)

I didn't ask you. You'll eat what
I serve, you miserable crone, or
I'll break your wretched neck!

His anger sends a shockwave through the gathering-- every person at the table is suddenly quiet. The Servers stop in mid-motion. The dogs watch in stillness-- one whimpers.

The Dowager looks frightened. Her eyes well with tears.

Hitch, realizing he's completely lost it for a second, tries to recover with a wry smile. Alma comes to his rescue.

ALMA

Okay, Hitch, it's time to let them
in on your little prank.

Hitch pauses then pats the Dowager's hand sheepishly.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Miss Chartwell is here at my
behest. I hired her through
central casting.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

It was all a jest?

Lew smacks the table.

LEW WASSERMAN

Son of a bitch! I knew I
recognized you! You've been in
pictures since the silents.

The guests laugh, totally surprised. Peggy, laughing, starts to applaud and everyone else follows.

The Dowager stands and gives a very theatrical bow. She extends her arm, presenting Hitchcock, but he doesn't bow.

DOWAGER

You should do more acting, Mr. Hitchcock, than just walking through your films-- I genuinely thought you were angry!

The company laughs. Hitch smiles. Alma shakes her head.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE (V.O.)

They think I've lost my touch.

EXT. HITCHCOCK GROUNDS -- DUSK

Hitch and Lew Wasserman smoke after-dinner cigars as they walk toward the garden.

LEW WASSERMAN

Who?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The movie business. My association with television has done me in.

LEW WASSERMAN

(laughing)

You mean the deal I put together where Bristol-Meyers pays a hundred and twenty-nine grand per half hour episode, and gives complete ownership to you after the first run? The association that made you an incredibly wealthy man? That association?

Hitch's curiosity is piqued by the totally out of place bunch of PANSIES in the front of the garden.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I feel like I'm losing control of everything.....

LEW WASSERMAN

Look, Hitch, don't worry. We're getting this picture made. It might kill both of us, but we're doing it.

INT. PARAMOUNT BOARD ROOM -- DAY

The tight-faced EXECUTIVES in drab suits watch Hitchcock and Lew closely. Hitch's silence is tight and angry.

LEW WASSERMAN

Gentlemen, we're about to propose a restructured deal that ought to make you very happy, and very rich.
(a dramatic beat)
Hitch waves his directing fee.

BARNEY BALABAN

In exchange for...?

LEW WASSERMAN

Sixty percent of the profits from "Psycho." Paramount distributes, we finance it independently.

BARNEY BALABAN

Interesting. But tell us, what exactly is Paramount distributing? Is this picture still about a queer who kills people while wearing his mother's dresses?

LEW WASSERMAN

(bristling)
What this picture is about is the reputation of Alfred Hitchcock. Name anyone with a bigger talent or a better track record.

BARNEY BALABAN

No one respects the name Hitchcock more than Paramount. But even very smart, talented men sometimes back the wrong horse.

LEW WASSERMAN

With all due respect, Barney, I'll try not to gloat when those words come back to bite you in the ass.

EXT. UNIVERSAL BACKLOT -- DAY (LATER)

With a limo purring in the background, Lew leads Hitchcock across the high, wooded hills behind the studio. Spread below them are the barn-like soundstages and the village sets from many a war and Frankenstein movie.

LEW WASSERMAN

That cocksucker Balaban. You know what his family did before they built those movie palaces? Ran a grocery store.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

My father ran a grocery store.

LEW WASSERMAN

That's what I'm saying. He should have some goddamn empathy.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

If you brought me here thinking you could dispose of me by pushing me off the mountain, I assure you -- I'll scream all the way down.

LEW WASSERMAN

I brought you here to tell you what you're going to do.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(pause)

It's not "The Widow Loves Company?"

LEW WASSERMAN (CONT'D)

Within weeks, my agency is buying Universal. I structured the deal so that I'm going to run everything.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

By everything do you mean "Frances the Mule" and Ma and Pa Kettle?

LEW WASSERMAN

You don't have to tell me that Universal has been strictly poverty row. But that's yesterday's news. We're going to make multi-picture deals with the biggest talent.

Lew turns to his most valuable client.

LEW WASSERMAN (CONT'D)

I want you at Universal, Hitch.

Hitchcock looks intrigued.

LEW WASSERMAN

You're going to make "Psycho" here.
We've got the stages-- you've
already got your TV crew here.
You'll hire my client James
Cavanaugh as your screenwriter,
you'll bring in "Psycho" at bare
bones -- less than a million --
we'll let Paramount sweat the
promotion and advertising. Then,
we'll tell them to fuck themselves
as they hand over sixty percent.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I can make this movie for \$800,000.
But where do we scare up the money?

Lew grins.

EXT. HITCHCOCK POOL (LATER THAT AFTERNOON)

A contemplative Hitchcock takes in some sun wearing his
business suit and tie. He watches as Alma, wearing a navy
swimsuit by Jansen, does her afternoon exercise in the pool.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Doing laps for the two of us, I
hope, my dear?

She gets out and towels off.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Is Whit coming by tonight?

ALMA

He's writing. By the way, I'm
disappointed you didn't give his
book a chance.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Is he?

ALMA

He knows you.

She puts down the towel and sits next to him.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Enjoy the pool now. We might not
have it for that much longer.

Alma looks at him, concerned.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)
Paramount won't make "Psycho."
(a beat)
We're going to have to finance the
whole shebang ourselves.

Silence. Then --

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You look very serious, Miss
Reville. That worries me.

ALMA
A maniac murders and mutilates at
least two women. Why do you need
to glorify it on film?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
It's only a movie....I'm an artist;
I have to challenge myself.

ALMA
But why this? Why do you have to
make this one?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(erupting)
I have to make this one because
they keep telling me I can't!

Alma stares at him, seeing he's in pain. Hitch is
embarrassed by his display of emotion.

She is calm and unruffled. She smiles slightly.

ALMA
Do we have to sell the entire
house, or just the pool?

He looks at her, deeply gratified by her faith and devotion.

INT. HITCHCOCK LIVING ROOM -- SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

We PULL BACK from a title on a manuscript: "Psycho,"
Screenplay by JAMES CAVANAUGH, to find Hitch reading it, in a
chair by the fire. He puffs on a cigar.

His expression changes very little as he closes the script,
then tosses it into the fire, frustrated. Cavanaugh's byline
ignites and quickly turns to ash.

EXT. PARAMOUNT GROUNDS - DAY

Hitch walks to his office with Lew.

LEW WASSERMAN

Cavanaugh was a bad choice, I had a bad feeling from the get-go, but I promise you, Joe Stefano is a perfect fit. Never wrote a script, watched a "Playhouse 90," said, "I can do that," wrote it, sold it within two weeks. He has the youth and vitality you need for this picture.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

If he's part of that humorless "Playhouse 90" crowd...I pass.

LEW WASSERMAN

Do me a favor? You pass? Talk to Stefano before you pass.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

Hitchcock checks his watch. He glowers as he stares at the clock and the empty chair across from his desk.

In the outer office, brash screenwriter Joseph Stefano rushes in. He's in his 30's, Italian, with a street-fighting air about him. Peggy gets up to block his path.

JOSEPH STEFANO

Joe Stefano...

PEGGY ROBERTSON

You're late.

He walks past her, into Hitchcock's office. Peggy follows.

JOSEPH STEFANO

Sorry about that, the session with my shrink ran over.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

You're seeing a psychiatrist? I thought only directors did that.

JOSEPH STEFANO

Oh yeah, several times a week. Nice to meet you, Mr. Hitchcock.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
What on earth do you talk about
several times a week?

JOSEPH STEFANO
Oh, sex, rage, my mother. The
usual.

Hitch looks at Peggy, intrigued. Stefano sits down in a
chair across from the great director. A beat, then --

JOSEPH STEFANO
So, "Psycho." The book needs a
helluva lot of work to be a
Hitchcock picture. I was hoping
for Cary Grant, spies, sex,
sophisticated dialogue. I don't
want to see a movie about a creepy
old man, and I sure as hell don't
want to write one.

Hitchcock is amused and finds Stefano refreshing.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I agree. Tony Perkins owes
Paramount a picture and he's
already agreed to do the movie
without seeing the script.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARY HOGAN'S BAR - 1954 - EVENING

Eddie runs into IRENE HILL, 40's, who is carrying a few
groceries.

IRENE HILL
Eddie, I heard about your mother.
I'm so sorry. Whenever you want to
come up for a home-cooked meal...

EDDIE
Well...thanks, Mrs. Hill.

IRENE HILL
Irene.

She physically reminds him of his mother and he's titillated.
He smiles awkwardly, lowers his head and goes in the bar.

INT. MARY HOGAN'S BAR - NIGHT(LATER)

It is a grim, empty, small town bar. Eddie, with a men's pulp magazine, is trying to talk to large-framed, middle-aged owner Mary Hogan.

EDDIE

I bet you didn't know when they
bury someone in winter up here
they, can't dig very deep cause the
ground's frozen.

THREE MANLY MEN, including middle-aged FRANK WORDEN, in hunting clothes with rifles poke fun of Eddie amongst themselves. Eddie tries to ignore them.

EDDIE

They pour concrete over the coffin
so the dogs can't get to 'em.

MARY HOGAN

(uncomfortable)

I didn't know that, Eddie.

EDDIE

Only the one's buried in winter.
Like my mother.

FRANK WORDEN

Got to work on that pick-up line,
Romeo. See you tomorrow, Mary...

Eddie shrugs. The men laugh on their way out at him.

EDDIE

Hey...ah...Mary, I've been thinking
of something.

MARY HOGAN

Can't it wait? I'm closing up.

EDDIE

Maybe we could go ice skating
sometime.

MARY HOGAN

(surprised)

I can't skate.

EDDIE

Neither can I...so I thought we
could hold on to each other so we
don't fall.

Mary forces a laugh.

EDDIE

I sent away for this pamphlet, "How
to talk to Women."

She is unsettled as he looks her in the eye and smiles.

MARY HOGAN

You should get your money back.

EDDIE

That's the kind of thing my mother
would say...

MARY HOGAN

Seriously...I need to be getting
home or I'll--

Eddie reaches in his pocket, takes out a small .22 handgun,
and shoots. Mary falls in a heap next to the bar.

Eddie, distraught, takes a deep breath and goes to her. He
starts to drag the hulking Mary by the ankles toward the
door. Eddie FREEZES as Tony Perkins enters, dressed in
clothes identical to Eddie's!

TONY PERKINS

Sorry...this is awkward, but, I'm
replacing you. Mr. Hitchcock wants
to go younger.

Eddie is stunned. As Perkins drags the murder victim out of
the bar by the ankles, we

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

As before.

JOSEPH STEFANO

I approve.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

You approve?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The typewriter's over here. Give
me a sample-- try the scene between
the girl and her lover in bed at
the Phoenix hotel?

JOSEPH STEFANO

Do you have a copy of the book?

Peggy looks over to a storage closet. There are thousands of copies of the book stacked floor to ceiling, inside and out.

CUT TO:

INT. HITCHCOCK'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hitch hovers expectantly as Alma goes over Stefano's pages. Alma takes out a pencil and makes a note on a page-- one of many. Hitch winces and looks concerned.

She goes back to reading with great concentration. She smiles at something in the pages; this makes Hitchcock smile. She raises an eyebrow; Hitch follows suit.

She puts the pages down and nods slowly.

ALMA

Hire him.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe is waiting, a little more nervously. This time he stands when Hitchcock enters. Peggy, nearby, notices the new humility to Joe's demeanor.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Madame Hitchcock has approved.

Let's get to work.

He walks him toward the typewriter, but Stefano stops.

JOSEPH STEFANO

I wanted to tell you, I went to a screening of "Vertigo" last night.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Where?

JOSEPH STEFANO

Here. Peggy arranged it.

Hitch exchanges a look with Peggy. She's satisfied.

JOSEPH STEFANO

I know it didn't do well, and the critics hated it...but I think it's a beautiful picture. It's an honor to work with a true artist, Mr. Hitchcock.

After a pause:

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
It's Hitch.

TYPWRITTEN PAGE

We see the keys type "PSYCHO," by Joseph Stefano.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MOTION PICTURE CODE REVIEW OFFICE - DAY

...Stefano's crisp TITLE PAGE is swiftly turned by JUNE, a stern woman with her hair tied back. She sits with two middle-aged MEN, in chairs in front of a long table. Hitchcock is seated across from them, his script closed in his lap. He looks annoyed as pages are frantically turned.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I assure you, all of my murders are models of taste and discretion.

JUNE
You can't have a knife going into a woman.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Of course, it's only "suggested."

JUNE
Is there nudity in this scene, page forty?

The members race to page forty. Hitchcock sighs and turns to the page in his script. He glances at it.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
No.

JUNE
"Marion Crane steps into the shower and feels the water caress every inch of her body."

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
She's an American woman in the bath. She can't possibly be nude. She's wearing a shower cap.

JUNE
You need to cut this scene.

He looks at her, seething. She makes a note on the sheet.

JUNE

Or, we'd accept a shot from outside the frosted glass of the bathroom window, Marion in silhouette above the shoulders, and the suggestive sound of the shower.

Hitch stares at her in disbelief. She returns to the script.

JUNE

The..."toilet."

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Marion flushes evidence that's later found by the boyfriend, it's completely necessary.

JUNE

No American movie has ever found it "necessary" to show a...toilet.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Why?

JUNE

It isn't something people need to see.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

What if I have it take place in France and use a bidet?

The Other Censor laughs, but stops with a glare from June. She doesn't find Hitch funny and looks at him with contempt.

JUNE

Do you find this process amusing? If you are denied a seal from this office, and we're certainly heading in that direction, your movie will not be released in this country. I don't think you'll be laughing then, will you, Mr. Hitchcock?

Hitch looks ready to burst into a tirade, and the other board members are frightened that he will, but he holds his tongue.

She glares at him for another moment, and he waits, tight-lipped. She returns her attention to the script.

JUNE
 Let's go all the way back...Page
 two...

We hear the flurry of script pages.

EXT. HITCHCOCK GARDEN -- DAY

Alma, in classic gardening attire, is on her knees deadheading roses. Hitch, in blue serge shorts with his shirt sleeves rolled up, pulls weeds from around his beloved dahlias and tosses them in a basket. Their Sealyham terriers frolic as Peggy, in sunglasses, lounges in a chair in the sun, looking through a notebook.

PEGGY
 Lana Turner?

ALMA
 Too expensive.

PEGGY
 Hope Lange?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 (frustrated)
 I need a blonde who looks like a
 saint in public, but in the bedroom
 is a wanton hussy.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
 Is that what every man wants?

ALMA
 (muttering)
 That's what Hitch wants.

He looks sharply at Alma, but she concentrates on her gardening and he goes back to his weeding.

PEGGY
 (tentative)
 Deborah Kerr?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 She's...*Scottish*.

ALMA
 Tony Curtis' wife. We met her at
 the Wasserman's Christmas party.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 Janet Leigh?

Hitch, intrigued, takes notice again of the small group of pansies. He mindlessly yanks them up by the roots and tosses them in the basket with the other weeds.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Very colorful weeds...

Alma looks at Hitch to see if he's done this on purpose but he seems oblivious. She glances at the torn flowers in the basket. She goes back to her roses.

PEGGY
She is on the cover of every
magazine these days...

ALMA
And she has the best figure in
town.

Alma SNIPS a faded American Beauty and tosses it into the basket next to the mangled pansies.

EXT. CHASEN'S -- DAY

Hitchcock leads JANET LEIGH in by the arm. Her knockout figure is accentuated by a simple cashmere sweater and skirt. Alma is two steps behind carrying a large portfolio.

He gallantly opens the door for her, but enters ahead of Alma. He reaches back, still holding the door open for her. She gives him a droll look.

INT. CHASEN'S -- DAY (LATER)

Hitch is doting on Janet, and Alma takes it in. Hitchcock whispers something ribald in Janet's ear, she laughs.

JANET LEIGH
You know, I've been so immersed in
preparing to play Marion that I'd
almost forgotten how to laugh.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
How have you prepared?

Janet hesitates, then gets a small DIARY out of her purse.

JANET LEIGH
I've written a complete history for
her... it seems silly, but it helps
me.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Tell us one of her deepest secrets.

JANET LEIGH
She leads a double life. For instance, when she works at the Lowery office, she wears Tweed perfume. But, whenever she and Sam are together, she becomes more sensual, almost reckless, and breaks out her one expensive bottle of perfume.

He looks at her quizzically.

JANET LEIGH
"My Sin" by Lanvin.

Impressed, Hitch slides closer to look at the diary, turning his back on Alma and carelessly blocking her view.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You're a model of preparation. Now if only I could afford you...

JANET LEIGH
I told my agent the money doesn't matter. I'd do anything for the privilege of working for Alfred Hitchcock.

Hitch leans back with satisfaction.

JANET LEIGH
But I have to be honest -- I do have some concerns about the shower sequence.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You and the MPAA.

JANET LEIGH
It's just...I'm a mother, and my breasts...well, they're too large.

ALMA
I don't even think Hitch noticed.

Alma abruptly UNZIPS the portfolio for Hitch. He takes it and shows Janet the shower sequence storyboards by Saul Bass.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
We will shoot quick bits of film
from various angles to suggest the
nudity and violence.

Janet is bowled over by the boards.

JANET LEIGH
Such detail. It's chilling even on
paper.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
And having you in the shower will
make it all the more -- how shall I
say it? Tit-illating.

Janet laughs at his schoolboy delivery. Alma rises with
dignity.

ALMA
Pardon me...

We follow Alma through the crowded restaurant as she heads to
the ladies' lounge.

INT. LADIES' ROOM

Alma looks in the mirror. Not pleased with her reflection,
she tries pulling back her cheeks.

She sees another reflection in a mirror behind her and turns,
curious.

FULL LENGTH MIRROR

Alma is transformed into a Hitchcock blonde. She's in a
beautiful Edith Head gown, her skin is velvet perfection, her
hair blonde and impeccable.

Alma stares at the technicolor creature she's become, and
laughs sardonically at her flight of fancy.

ALMA
Oh, come off it, old girl.

GLORIA STEWART, 40's, Jimmy Stewart's wife, snaps Alma out of
her reverie, joining her at the sink, putting on lipstick.

GLORIA STEWART
Alma, you look a little pale.

ALMA

How does Jimmy like working with
Preminger?

GLORIA STEWART

I'm sure he'd rather be working
with Hitch....but not on that God
awful "Psycho." Why are you
letting him do something so vulgar?
It's all anyone's talking about.
You can't possibly approve.

Alma bristles behind a tight smile.

ALMA

Don't get yourself upset, Gloria.
It's only a movie.

Alma walks out on Gloria. Gloria hesitates a moment, then
returns to applying her lipstick.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S KITCHEN - THAT NIGHT

Alma, calm and cool, is chopping food deftly. Hitchcock
enters, a drink in his hand. Alma seems distant.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Coming upstairs?

ALMA

Soon as I'm finished...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Did you get a chance to look at
Joe's new draft?

His eyes drift to what she's preparing.

ALMA

I marked it for revisions. I wrote
a few scenes to replace the one's I
cut-- it's next to your bed. It's
getting there.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(stunned)

Is that your...fois gras?

ALMA

I've really had a hankering.

She tastes some off her index finger. She gets a cracker and spreads some on, eating it. It's like eating in front of a dog and she turns away.

ALMA

If you hadn't eaten so much at
Chasen's I might have given you a
taste.

He moves his hand toward the bowl, but she draws it away.
His face tightens.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(dryly)

All men are potential murderers.

BERNICE WORDEN (V.O.)

Interested in buying a gun, Eddie?

CUT TO:

INT. WORDEN'S HARDWARE STORE - DAY

From EDDIE'S POV: A shaky hand loads a .22 shell into a rifle. The price tag is dangling from it.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Not really, Bernice.

The rifle rises and Bernice Worden is looking down the barrel, behind the counter of her small time hardware store. Eddie fires, and Bernice collapses in a heap.

INT. EDDIE GEIN'S HOUSE - DAY

From the otherwise empty living room, we hear clunking, then move over to catch a glimpse of Eddie, distraught, as he drags Bernice Worden's body, feet-first up the stairs. The clunking is from her head on the steps, which is wrapped in her dress.

BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eddie approaches the shower curtain, then throws it open (like Bates does in the motel). He pushes Bernice into the tub. He pulls the dress off her head and drops it on the floor. He turns on the water in the tub and leaves the room.

After a moment Bernice's fingers CLUTCH suddenly to the end of the tub!

STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Eddie lumbers up the stairs with knives rolled in canvas.

BATHROOM

Eddie walks in and stops. His jaw falls. Bernice is gone! The water mixes with her blood as it goes down the drain.

UPSTAIRS LANDING

It's quiet, then Eddie bursts out of the bathroom. He stops and slowly turns, looking for his missing victim.

EDDIE GEIN

Bernice? Bernice...I'm sorry....

He sees a wet footprint at the top of the stairs. He agonizes before he takes out one of his knives, trying to see where she might be hiding down in the living room.

HIS FEET

As he's about to take the first step, a hand thrusts out of the shadows and grabs one of his ankles.

EDDIE

He crashes about halfway down the stairs, lands face down in an awkward position and is motionless.

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

Bernice Worden crawls out of her hiding place in the shadows, and looks down the stairs at her motionless captor.

She struggles to her feet. She has a bullet wound at the base of her skull-- but the bleeding has stopped, and it is mostly covered by her hair. She is in her bra and girdle.

The only way out is past Eddie's motionless body on the stairs. She gathers her courage, then starts down.

FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS

Bernice makes it several steps past Eddie when he suddenly springs up with the knife and leaps on her back!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hitchcock bolts upright in bed, disoriented, face covered in sweat, breathing heavily. Alma, in her bed, turns on the light.

ALMA

You okay?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Am I making a mistake?

ALMA

Bad dream?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Answer me...

ALMA

Hitch...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Am I making a mistake?

Alma doesn't say anything but doesn't look guilty about her silence. It greatly increases Hitchcock's anxiety.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It's going to turn into *Vertigo*.

ALMA

Let's hope so.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I *read* the reviews. I *heard* what they said to my face. I *eavesdropped* on what they whispered behind my back. The worst--I see how they look at me.

He whips the blankets off the bed and throws his legs over the side of the bed. Alma is calm.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I can't pull it off...Not this time. I don't know why I couldn't just stop when everyone told me to. I can't do this one.

Alma gets out of her bed, gathers his blankets and puts them back on his bed. She sits next to him and pats the perspiration from his head.

ALMA

Tomorrow's the first day of the shoot. It's just nerves.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The art department budget's spent; and costumes of course.... Between that, the second unit material we already shot, the salaries I'll have to pay out-- If I cancel, we'll be down less than a quarter of a million.

ALMA

Hitchy...you're not fooling me. You have no intention of stopping.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Even with all the script work you did....I know you've never believed in the project.

Alma stares at him, waiting for his eyes to meet hers.

ALMA

You believe in it. And I believe in you.

He is comforted. She takes his hand. He gives it a squeeze and nods his thanks to her. She puts him back in bed and covers him. She goes back to her bed. Hitchcock settles back.

ALMA

Once you get the first take under your belt you'll be fine. And I'll be right there at your side...

She turns off the light. There is silence for a few moments.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

If it's all right, I don't want you to come tomorrow.

Silence again. Alma is stunned. Hitch is in his bed, looking tormented at the ceiling.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

For a few days, until we're up and running. I need to tackle this on my own.

He looks over. He can't see her face in the dark.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You understand?

A few moments of silence.

ALMA
Of course I do. Whatever you want.

Though she's unconvincing, Hitch is satisfied. He takes a deep breath and closes his eyes to go back to sleep.

EXT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - MORNING

Alma drives Hitch to Universal. The tension in the car is hard to detect, but they both look ahead.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
What will you be doing today?

She smiles slightly and it unnerves him a little.

Alma pulls in through the gate and to a stop. The car idles.

ALMA
I'll call Peggy this afternoon to
make sure you stuck to your diet.

Hitch waits for more but Alma stares complacently ahead. He gets out of the car. Alma turns the car around.

She glances in the mirror and sees him still standing there, watching the car until it's out of sight.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - 1959

Quick images of the "PSYCHO" set in lockdown. Production starts today and the whole studio is rabid with curiosity. A sign posted on a soundstage reads, "PRODUCTION 9401. ABSOLUTELY NO VISITORS!" It only makes passersby-- TOURISTS, REPORTERS, AND WORKERS-- more curious.

A man is being escorted out of the stage by a GUARD.

MAN
Come on....What's the big secret?

GUARD
Orders of Mr. Hitchcock.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

VERA MILES, head buried in the shooting script, in her frumpy wardrobe, walks toward Hitchcock who is getting into his director's chair.

VERA MILES
"Thanks" for the wardrobe. You
really hate me, don't you?

Hitchcock stares blankly ahead.

VERA MILES
Why don't I have the last ten pages
of the script?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
No one does.

JOSEPH STEFANO
Except me.

Vera looks up. She's surprised to see Hitch surrounded by his CREW which is filled with dozens of men dressed in suits and black ties, just like the director. Stefano stands smugly on one side of Hitch, and Lew stands on the other. There is an air of formality on the set.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You're just in time for the oath,
Vera.

VERA MILES
The what?

Hitch raises his right hand, and the crew follows his lead.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I give my solemn promise...

CREW
I give my solemn promise...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Not to divulge one word of the
story...

CREW
Not to divulge one word of the
story.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
To friends, relatives, trade
reporters or columnists.

CREW
To friends, relatives, trade
reporters and columnists.

Hitchcock nods his approval, and the Crew hops to it.
Stefano eyes the dumbfounded Vera with suspicion, and edges
closer to Hitch.

JOSEPH STEFANO
(quietly)
She didn't take the oath.

Annoyed, Vera turns and walks off.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Vera...?

VERA MILES
I don't think so, Hitch.

He smiles, enjoying her spirit. He turns and watches the
crew working on his setup. He looks a little paranoid--
everywhere he looks, people seem to be taking their time.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
It doesn't take two of them to
carry that light stand...

LEW WASSERMAN
You okay, Hitch? You're soaked.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
The oranges make me perspire.

LEW WASSERMAN
A little different watching them
work when you're writing the
checks.

Lew sees the chair that says "Alma Reville" is empty.

LEW WASSERMAN
What's keeping Alma?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
She's not coming.

LEW WASSERMAN
You're kidding me. Why?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Nerves.

LEW WASSERMAN

Alma?!

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DEN - DAY

Alma's finger turns the dial (meant to resemble the dial on a phone) on an address file which sits atop Whitfield Cook's manuscript. It makes the lid of the file pop open to the letter "C." She unclips her earring and dials the phone.

We can hear it RINGING THROUGH THE RECEIVER. It rings and rings and finally she hangs up. She slowly shakes her head and clips her earring back on.

She closes the address book and puts it back.

She walks over to her typewriter with a handful of *PSYCHO* scene pages when the PHONE, looming large in the foreground, starts to ring.

Alma freezes. She lets it ring-- when it seems like she won't pick it up at all, she suddenly snatches it up, deftly unclipping her earring.

ALMA

Whit?

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Hitchcock stands next to the catering table, is holding the phone, and he tries not to look surprised.

ALMA (OVER PHONE)

Whit, is that you?

Hitch slips his finger over the button of the phone and quietly puts it back on the cradle. His eyes drift to the magnificent array of puff pastries as he stands thinking.

Peggy walks over with a clipboard.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

They're ready, Hitch.

She sees his grim expression.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

You okay?

He raises his chin and walks imperiously past her.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CAR SCENE - DAY(LATER)

Hitchcock, unsettled by Alma's call, stares intently through heavy lids. We only see him, not what he's directing.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 Maybe you should turn around and go
 home, pretend it never happened...
 but what's waiting there? You
 can't go back. It's too late.
 You've dug your own grave, haven't
 you, dear?...

As he continues, we pull back and see:

THE REARVIEW DRIVING SET

Janet is in the driver seat of a partial car, which is rocked by stage hands. The camera and Hitchcock are right in front of her. Behind her, moving roads are projected and a half a dozen people are there to make sure it's right.

Electricians, off to the side, turn mounted headlights on a board so the light drags across her worried face.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 (continued)
 Surely you'll lose the man you
 love....

The REAR SCREEN projection film breaks and a frame burns. Technicians yell and hustle around. Hitch look frustrated.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 Cut.

EXT. HITCHCOCK GARDEN - DAY

Alma works in the garden. She hears a car approach and then a horn. She turns with a smile-- but it is only a TEENAGE BOY in a car, hitting on TWO TEENAGE GIRLS on the sidewalk.

TONY PERKINS (PRE-LAP)
 I want to thank you for this
 opportunity, Mr. Hitchcock.

INT. NORMAN'S PARLOR SET -- DAY

Tony stands with Hitchcock.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 It's just Hitch, Tony. Hold the
 cock.

Tony is amused but disarmed. But Janet approaches and Hitchcock smoothly segues into an introduction.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (PRE-LAP)
Tony, Janet. Janet, Tony.

To Tony's surprise, Janet gives him an introductory kiss.

JANET LEIGH
I love that Hit Parade song of
your's, Tony. "Moonlight Swim"? I
sing it to my two daughters as a
lullaby all the time.

TONY PERKINS
(a little pained)
That's so sweet of you.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Look at you two. America's favorite
boy and girl next door....

TONY PERKINS
And we're about to move to a whole
new neighborhood.

Hitch gently moves the two in front of a painting used to cover the peephole in the scene, a picture of a woman being raped by two men, SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS, while others watch.

TONY PERKINS
"Susannah and the Elders," isn't
it?

Hitch is a little annoyed that Tony knows the painting.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You can know that, but your
character cannot.

TONY PERKINS
(to Janet)
The elders spy on Susannah bathing,
then they gang rape her....It's a
story from the bible.

JANET LEIGH
I must have missed that week of
Sunday school.

TONY PERKINS
Now, why am I watching her undress?

JANET LEIGH

(playfully)

I feel like I should take offense
at that.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It's really about watching your own
mother. Perhaps Norman secretly
watched his mother preparing for
her bath each night when he was a
boy. I remember my childhood home
had a small transom over the door
to the bath one could access with a
chair if one was quiet.

Janet seems a little puzzled.

TONY PERKINS

So, I'm not seeing...Marion?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Of course you're seeing her, but
the first glimpse any boy gets of a
nude woman is of his mother. By
seeing this woman in her place, in
a way you're betraying that sacred
trust.

JANET LEIGH

The spying...does it excite him to
the point where what he really
wants to do is rape Marion?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

No. He's impotent. But he has a
large...knife.

The moment lays there for a beat, then--

TONY PERKINS

Why is there a gaping hole on this
side and then a tiny hole.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

You want to be able to see through
the hole at the greatest possible
angle in case she walks out of
view...If your eye is two inches
further back, the angle would be
cut down. Try it.

Tony presses his face to the hole. We see what's on the
other side-- just stage hands moving flats around.

TONY PERKINS
God...you really research these
things, don't you?...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(a beat)
Yes.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DEN - DAY

Hitchcock walks in and looks around carefully, as if he's sure he's being watched. At the typewriter, there are pages of the final *Psycho* sequence that Alma is rewriting. He looks pleased at this.

Not so pleased is he with Alma's earring still next to the phone directory and Whit's manuscript.

Hitchcock HEARS the front door open and shut-- like a Hitchcock movie, it makes him move faster. He leans over the desk and opens a file drawer. From the back of the drawer he removes a stack of files revealing a hidden file laying flat beneath them.

ALMA (O.S.)
Hitch?

HITCHCOCK HOUSE

Alma has a couple of bags of groceries; oranges stick out the top of one of the bags. It becomes another mini-suspense moment-- Hitch doesn't answer her. She knows he's home but isn't sure where or why he isn't answering.

She hears some RUSTLING in the den and is surprised. We follow her to the kitchen; she puts the bags down then, still in Hitchcock movie style, moves cautiously toward the den.

She hears more rustling. She hesitates outside the partially closed door, listening. When she finally opens the door, Hitch is standing there, surreptitiously blocking the door.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Was there a line at the market?

ALMA
No. Actually, I'm back sooner than
I expected.

He nods and walks past her, out of the room. She is about to leave when she sees the CORNER OF A MANILLA FOLDER that caught in the file drawer when it was closed.

It's sitting there in front of her, such an obvious "clue."
She thinks about it but doesn't approach.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (O.S.)
Cocktail?

Alma turns, leaving the den and the "clue" untouched.

ALMA
No, and you shouldn't either.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the dark, both Hitchcock and Alma, in their separate beds,
are staring sleeplessly at the ceiling. There is friction
between them, even though it sounds very low key:

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Maybe you'll come to the set
tomorrow?

ALMA
I'll see how my day shapes up.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
What did you do with yourself
today?

ALMA
I puttered around the garden.

There is a pause.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Did you talk to Whit?

Alma's radar activates with the question.

ALMA
I meant to, but I never got the
chance.
(pause)
What made you ask?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
On the set today with that hollow
tree John Gavin. I don't know
which will be more horrifying. The
shower scene, or his love scene.

Alma laughs a little.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It made me think, he's not even as attractive as my good friend, Whitfield Cook; nor as suave, certainly not as intelligent.

ALMA

You should tell Whit. He'd be flattered.

He arches an eyebrow.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I was too dismissive about his new book. Maybe he and Elizabeth can come over this weekend and he could walk me through it.

She ruminates.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Lovely woman, Elizabeth.

ALMA

When you look like Cary Grant you get the beautiful blonde. You should know that-- it happens in all your movies.

Hitch purses his lips.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - MORNING

Alma drives Hitchcock. She stops the car at Universal and hands him his lunch pail.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

This would be as good a day as any for you to come on set.

ALMA

No, but I thought I'd stop in on Peggy.

Hitchcock hesitates then gets out of the car. Alma pulls around and parks.

INT. JANET LEIGH'S DRESSING ROOM

Vera Miles is sitting with Janet Leigh who is having shoes tried on her by COSTUMER RITA RIGGS.

JANET LEIGH

But I already told him I wouldn't
do it--

VERA MILES

He makes people change into what he
wants. That's his style.

JANET LEIGH

Vera...no, no....

VERA MILES

He *is* the Jimmy Stewart part in
Vertigo...

Janet is about to say something but Vera holds up her hand.

On the wall through the open door, outside the room, they see
ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S DISTINCT SHADOW PROFILE creep closer.

The women look at each other.

The shadow lingers then recedes. It is like a creepy ghost
story, and Vera doesn't make it easier for Janet, as she does
a sing-song whisper like a campfire ghost story:

VERA MILES

He's always watching you.

Janet is about to disagree, but she's STARTLED, jumping a
little, as a voice booms from offstage:

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Mrs. Leigh, on the set in five...

Janet laughs at herself. Vera and the Rita laugh along with
her.

INT. HITCHCOCK UNIVERSAL OFFICE

Alma strides in to find Peggy puzzling over a wall chart
shooting schedule.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Hitch wants to shave another day
off the schedule.

ALMA

Make him shoot an extra hour on
your last three days and eliminate
the wrap party.

(MORE)

ALMA (CONT'D)

Hitch has a miserable time at those parties and that way, he won't be tempted by cake and champagne.

Peggy, excited, changes the chart.

ALMA

That just saved forty thousand dollars.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

(quietly)

Why haven't you been around? Is everything okay?

ALMA

You know what it's like.

(handing over pages)

Here's my rewrite of the big reveal at the end.

Peggy glances over the pages.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

If you ask me the credits ought to read "Screenplay by Joseph Stefano and Alma Reville."

Alma takes a beat.

ALMA

Nonsense.

Alma walks out.

INT. BATES MOTEL - BATHROOM SET - MORNING

Hitchcock sits in his director's chair, smoking a big cigar. On one side is Saul Bass and his story boards. Sitting next to him on the other side, legs crossed, is a woman, NAKED, who looks like Janet-- the NAKED STAND-IN. She casually leafs through a magazine, not TRYING to conceal anything.

The Crew completely ignores the Stand-in.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Napa Valley...is your family in the wine business?...

Janet Leigh walks over in a robe, shocked that the stand-in is completely bare and flaunting it. Hitchcock, oblivious to the nudity but enthralled by his wine conversation, ignores Janet. Janet looks at the revised storyboards and is upset.

STAND-IN

Not my parents, but my Uncle Carlo,
tests the soil for a few vineyards.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Which ones...

JANET LEIGH

Hitch...you changed the
storyboards...

STAND-IN

Bogle, Mumm--

JANET LEIGH

We discussed this already...I won't
take off my clothes.

Hitchcock looks at Saul and Janet for a few beats, then turns
to the Stand-in, more interested in wine.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Marked improvement since fifty-
four. Is it the soil?

STAND-IN

It's a lot of things...the
rainfall...pollution...

JANET LEIGH

I can't be nude.

SAUL BASS

We have to have those shots,
they're key--

The Stand-in returns to her magazine. Hitch turns to Janet
and takes her hand, giving her his full attention.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

What Mr. Bass means is those panels
represent less than a blink of an
eye in screen time. And your stand-
in will take on whatever you can't.

Janet is a little taken aback by the idea of a Stand-in.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(to Saul)

Add a shot of the drain, too, with
her blood circling down.

Thinking, Janet walks off.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - MORNING

Alma drives up to her house. She looks behind her, acting as if she thinks she's being followed. She shakes her head at having such paranoid thoughts.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Alma walks in, looks around, then makes a beeline for the den.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DEN - CONTINUOUS

The file that was left poking out of the file drawer looms in the foreground as Alma enters. She thinks about it, then can't resist.

She opens the drawer and sees the sloppily placed folder. It is stuffed with 8x10's.

She puts the file on the desk and opens it.

Inside are pictures of BLONDES, spanning over thirty-years. Some of them are actresses we would know from various Hitchcock movies. Many are actresses we've never seen-- long-since-failed and forgotten starlets. Each one is posed in a similar fashion and wears the same gown.

We move in on Alma's eyes. Each photo gets turned over a little more roughly than the last. It is hard to say if the anger is coming from seeing the photos, or the thought that he left them so purposely for her to find.

She puts the photos back in the folder. She grabs the phone and dials. We move around to the back of her head as she waits for the answer. She sounds like her normal self.

ALMA

Whit?...It's Alma. I need someone
who knows how to listen.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

A view of the coast and the snaking road. We find Whitfield Cook's Mercedes, top down. Alma, wearing a kerchief on her head and white-rimmed sunglasses, throws back her head, laughing. Whitfield, in true Hitchcock male star style, has the perfect amount of wind blowing through his hair, and a suave, detached coolness. They both nearly have to yell to be heard over the wind.

ALMA

He's just so involved in this movie, I think it affects his nature.

WHITFIELD COOK

He's like any great artist...Hard to live with but worth the effort.

They drive and she enjoys the scenery.

ALMA

I'm only ever in a car when I'm driving Hitch. It's nice not to have to take care of someone, even if it's just for an hour.

(beat)

You haven't told me where we're going?

WHITFIELD COOK

You'll see....

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

Light reflected from the dailies flickers on Hitchcock's mortified face. Hitchcock is rubbing his eyes when Lew comes into the room, and moves down the row toward him. Peggy is next to him making notes.

Lew looks around-- the only other person in the room is Hitch's cameraman. He does not look happy either.

LEW WASSERMAN

Where are the Paramount execs?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I forbade them to come.

Lew is a little surprised, then shrugs.

LEW WASSERMAN

Fuck 'em, right? It's your picture, not the studio's.

Lew looks from Hitch's face, to the screen, back to Hitch. Lew looks at Peggy who signals that Hitch is taking it badly.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

There were holiday decorations on the streets of Phoenix for the rear screens, and no money to reshoot.

LEW WASSERMAN

(beat)

Christmas pictures always do well.

Hitchcock isn't amused.

EXT. UNIVERSAL OFFICE - DAY(LATER)

Hitchcock, looking drained, taps his shoe impatiently, waiting to be picked up. A car pulls up and costumer Rita Riggs rolls down a window.

RITA RIGGS

Need a ride?

Hitchcock looks at the car with alarm -- it is a Volkswagen Beetle. Hitch ponders, then with great effort inches his massive frame into the car. The Beetle sags noticeably.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY (LATER)

The car continues to comically sag.

RITA RIGGS (PRE-LAP)

You all right, Mr. Hitchcock?

INT. VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Adolf Hitler drew the design for this car on Ferdinand Porsche's cocktail napkin in a Berlin beergarden.

Hitchcock is uncomfortable, but oddly thrilled that PASSENGERS in passing cars do doubletakes as they see the esteemed director in the sagging Beetle.

Hitchcock tries to move but is wedged against the dash and the roof of the car. He struggles.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

And now I truly appreciate just how diabolical a madman Mr. Hitler was.

RITA RIGGS

Did you know him?

Insulted, Hitchcock does a slow turn to face Rita, who is flustered.

RITA RIGGS

I mean, you were contemporaries...
And "A.H." -- you have the same
initials.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I never met Aldof Hitler, but
Aldous Huxley and I share a set of
monogrammed bath towels.

She reaches back behind the seat, fumbling and not looking at
the road. Hitch's eyes widen as they swerve slightly.

RITA RIGGS

Hungry?

She comes out with a pint of strawberries. Hitch takes one.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Have you ever had French Alpine
strawberries, Miss Riggs? One of
life's great pleasures.

RITA RIGGS

I've never been out of the country.

He eats the strawberry, surprised how good it is. He savors
it. She eats one too, making sounds of delight.

RITA RIGGS

Doesn't Alma always drive you home?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(beat)
Not always.

He grabs a few more strawberries.

INT. HITCHCOCK ENTRANCE - EARLY EVENING

Hitch, having trouble walking, enters. We see the Volkswagen
pulling away, and Rita gives a distinctive horn toot.
Hitchcock waves his thanks, then closes the door, holding his
back.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Hello?

The house is eerily empty. Hitchcock is nervous.

HITCHCOCK'S DEN

Hitchcock walks in and sees the photo folder out.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(calling out)
Dearest?

No answer. Hitchcock takes the folders out of the back of the file drawer, puts his photo file back in its hiding place, and replaces the other folders. He looks guilty and very alone.

EXT. SANTA BARBARA BEACH - SUNSET

Alma and Whit sit out on the sand watching the sunset. It is pleasant and friendly-- not at all romantic.

WHITFIELD COOK
You sure you don't want to tell me
what's bothering you?

ALMA
(shrugging)
Hitch has always used his
obsessions to fuel his art. I just
don't like it when he uses them
against me.

The water nearly comes up to her feet.

ALMA
I could get used to this.

WHITFIELD COOK
What do you think of that cottage?

He nods to a little beach house up the way.

ALMA
Could use a coat of paint. Why?

WHITFIELD COOK
It's mine.

Her mouth opens in surprise. He smiles suavely. She gets up and starts running toward the house gleefully. He chases.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

It is old, falling apart, with functional furnishings that have been there for years. Alma rushes in, and looks around.

ALMA
I just saw Elizabeth; why didn't
she tell me?

WHITFIELD COOK
She doesn't know about it.

ALMA
When did you buy it?

WHITFIELD COOK
I'm just leasing it during the off-season. Place to get away from the wife and kid and write.

(beat)
You might find *that* room interesting.

Alma looks-- the door is partially open and she sees a double bed.

ALMA
Oh, no, Whit...I hope you don't have the wrong idea...I would never...

He shakes his head and nods her forward. She walks to the door and pushes it open. The first thing she sees is an awe inspiring view of the ocean. On the DECK outside the bedroom, two large TYPEWRITERS are set up at a table facing the ocean.

Alma looks back at Whit as he walks closer, entranced by the soothing sound of the pounding waves.

WHITFIELD COOK
If you were serious about helping me adapt my book, I thought it would be the perfect hideaway.

She lets it sink in for a moment, then, excited, goes out to the deck. He goes out with her. They sit at different spots and begin to work, starting a heated discussion on where the screenplay should start.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hitch, restless in bed, hears a noise. He closes his eyes when Alma walks in the room.

She goes in the bathroom and turns the light on. He watches from bed as she takes off her clothes and leaves them on the floor, quickly pulling on a nightgown.

Hitch closes his eyes again when the bathroom light switches off.

Alma walks out, stops at the foot of his bed and looks at him. She's not completely sure that he's actually awake, but she suspects.

She goes to her bed and gets in. After a few moments, Hitchcock gets up, goes into the bathroom.

BATHROOM

Hitchcock closes the door and puts on the light. He looks at himself in the mirror. He tries to calm himself, but it's useless.

He looks down at her clothes, then picks them up. He goes through the pockets-- empty. He goes over the surfaces, looking for clues.

He picks up her trousers and is surprised as a PILE OF SAND falls from the cuff onto the bathroom counter. He checks the cuff-- even more sand. He mutters to himself as he pushes the sand together to check the size of the pile.

His mind races. He catches a glimpse of something-- Eddie is staring blankly at him from the mirror--it looks like Eddie is right over his shoulder!

He turns to see if Eddie is behind him-- no one is there. And when he turns back to the mirror, the killer is gone.

Hitchcock opens the medicine cabinet mirror that he just saw Eddie in and takes out an amber tinted BOTTLE OF BAYER ASPIRIN. He dumps the tablets into the toilet and flushes them. Very carefully, he sweeps the BEACH SAND into the aspirin bottle. He caps the bottle, puts it in his robe pocket, then tidies up and shuts off the light.

INT. PSYCHO SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

There is a table full of KNIVES. Hitchcock's hand lingers over one, then grabs a different, more savage looking one.

He turns as a SHEET is removed to reveal a disturbingly lifelike prosthetic FEMALE TORSO. Hitchcock PLUNGES the knife in, disappointed by the ridiculous geyser of FAKE BLOOD. MAKE-UP MEN JACK BARRON and ROBERT DAWN await his reaction. He wipes his hand with a handkerchief.

INT. WARDROBE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Janet eats an alpine strawberry from a large box as Rita molds MOLESKIN to Janet's breasts. Janet MOANS in delight.

RITA RIGGS
 They're French Alpine Strawberries.
 Mr. Hitchcock sent me a whole crate
 just for driving him home.

JANET LEIGH
 He is *such* an angel, isn't he?

Rita smiles unconvincingly as she adjusts the moleskins.

JANET LEIGH
 And you're sure these moleskins
 will stay on?

RITA RIGGS
 Mr. Hitchcock promised.

Neither woman looks absolutely sure, but they continue with uneasy faith in what they're doing.

JANET LEIGH
 They'd better...I can't let a stand-
 in get all my screen time.
 (looking in the mirror)
 And I'm gonna be in that shower all
 week.

One of the moleskins drops to the floor and Janet barely covers herself in time. Rita and Janet look at each other.

INT. BATES MOTEL - BATHROOM MONTAGE

We follow the mole skin as Janet steps into the shower. During the MONTAGE, there is no Bernard Hermann music. Most shots show the camera crew and the variety of camera set-ups.

It is a slow start. There is shot after shot of Janet, in the shower, struggling to keep the mole skin on. Hitch is frustrated with her.

ANOTHER DAY

A make-up person squirts BOSCO CHOCOLATE SYRUP onto Janet to simulate blood. She is cold, and tired.

ANOTHER DAY

We see Hitchcock in his directors chair. He has the BAYER'S ASPIRIN BOTTLE in his hand, and dumps the sand into his palm. He looks up and sees EDDIE, mingling with crew, staring at Hitch approvingly.

Hitch puts the sand away and steps to the NORMAN STAND-IN who holds the knife. (We no longer see Eddie.)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
More violent...remember, you are
possessed with a homicidal rage;
let it arouse you.

Janet and Rita aren't at all pleased to hear this.

Shots of STABBING and SLASHING resume. As Hitch becomes more pleased with the outcome, Janet becomes more upset by the process.

Janet is having trouble. She's been doing this scene a week straight. The knife comes at her-- she can no longer hold onto the moleskin. She's naked in the shower, being stabbed again and again.

Between takes, Janet is confused, crying and shivering.

Hitchcock casually points the crew to the next camera set-up.

We see Janet's footwork as fake blood runs down her legs. We see the moleskin in the bottom of the tub, but Janet is still fighting off the knife, continuing the scene.

Stabbing through the water. Plunging into her stomach.

Hitchcock gets into the stabbing-- flinching his encouragement, mesmerized. Finally, Janet's Marion DIES a grisly death. She grabs onto the SHOWER CURTAIN.

The curtain flies loose and the rings spin. Janet falls, slumped over the tub, her buttocks exposed, her eyes open.

Hitchcock watches. The crew waits.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Thank you, Miss Leigh. Onto the
next scene, boys.

The crew erupts with applause. Rita rushes over and covers Janet with a robe. Janet looks up for her director's approval, but Hitchcock is already walking away. Janet is alone.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Alma enjoys a roast in some sort of sauce, with potatoes and asparagus covered in cheese. Hitchcock clicks his fork loudly as he eats salad.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - DAY

Hitchcock walks briskly, followed by Peggy and a P.R. FLACK.

P.R. FLACK
Please, the national and
international outlets are driving
me crazy for photos...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(overlapping)
The more we frustrate them, the
more their anticipation will build.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
(overlapping)
The production code people called
again about a screening time...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
The more we frustrate them, the
more their interest will wane.

Peggy and the Flack look at each other as Hitchcock enters:

INT. MAKE-UP TRAILER - DAY

Hitch enters and motions for Jack and Robert to demonstrate their next display. It's a model of the corpse head--it's much more cartoonish than the one finally used-- it has blackened skin, bugged eyes, and hair standing on end.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
More frightening, but simple. It's
in the script.

JACK BARRON
We didn't show you the best part.

Jack flips a switch on a large motor connected to the model. There is a GRINDING NOISE, then WORMS slowly ooze from false flesh and eye sockets.

Hitch glances in the mirror behind them and sees the specter of Eddie glowering unhappily at the contraption.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
She'd be impeccably preserved.
Show some respect.

Hitchcock charges out of the office. (Eddie is no longer in the mirror). Jack and Robert continue looking at the oozing worms for a few beats.

ROBERT DAWN
So..."no" on the maggots?

INT. HITCHCOCK'S TRAILER

Hitchcock grabs his phone.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Maxim's of London.

A CREW MEMBER raps on the door, looking through the window beseechingly. Hitchcock heartlessly lowers the blind.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Yes, this is Mr. Hitchcock, in
Hollywood, California. I need two
pounds of foie gras couriered to
me...today.

EXT. HITCHCOCK'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A CHAUFFEUR drives up in a Lincoln. He gets out and holds the door, helping Hitchcock get out. He then hands Hitch a shopping bag with MAXIM printed on it.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DEN - CONTINUOUS

We hear the DOGS barking and howling as the front door opens and Hitchcock comes in. He pets them.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (O.S.)
Down...down...good little men...

We hear movement as Hitch looks around the house. At the same time we slowly move toward a stack of papers on the desk.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (O.S.)
Alma?

After a few moments he comes into the den. Just then we see the title page on the stack of papers: TAXI TO DUBROVNIK.
SCREENPLAY BY WHITFIELD COOK & ALMA REVILLE.

A moment later Hitchcock's hand comes down on the page. We pan up to see his tightening expression.

He shakes, then he TEARS THE SCRIPT TO BITS, flinging it around the room.

EXT. HITCHCOCK'S HOUSE - NIGHT(LATER)

Alma drives up and parks. She walks to the house. She pauses a moment when she hears THE RITE OF SPRING playing.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The dogs jump up and down as Alma enters the house. Hitchcock is sitting in an overstuffed chair, in pants, shirt and a robe, enjoying fois gras, wine, and cheese.

Alma glances at him. The music is blasting from the den.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

What a surprise. You haven't been home much the last two weeks.

ALMA

May I turn that down, please?

He shrugs slightly. Alma walks to the den.

DEN

Alma turns off the music then hesitates when she sees her script pages torn and tossed all over the room. She is calm.

ALMA

Somebody didn't care for my script.

LIVING ROOM

Alma walks out, ready to have it out.

ALMA

It was only a carbon, but still...

Hitchcock thrusts his hand over the table and holds it there a moment, building suspense, finally revealing the Bayer Aspirin bottle. Alma waits calmly.

Hitch opens the bottle and lets the SAND HE FOUND IN ALMA'S CLOTHES run out slowly into a heap on the table. He puts down the bottle and stares at Alma, looking for a reaction.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Spending a lot of time at the beach?

ALMA

I was writing.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Is that all?

ALMA
Yes. And you *know* it is. But even
that's too much for you.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
A script by Alma and Whit. God
forbid I deprive the world of the
next "Under Capricorn."

He's finally pushed the right button. She stalks over to
him, glowering.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You know what kind of pressure I'm
under with this picture yet you do
everything in your power to derail
me.

ALMA
May I remind you, besides doing
countless rewrites on *your* script,
I will be in the editing room
alongside you, day and night. I'll
listen to every scoring session
with you. When you preview the
film, it will be my notes you want
first, and when you're out
promoting it, I will stand slightly
behind you, smiling for the press,
even when I'm ready to drop, being
gracious to people who look through
me as if I were invisible because
all they can see is you.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You left that script for me to find
on purpose. You wanted to hurt me.

ALMA
You want me to really hurt you?

She snatches his fois gras --he reaches desperately for the
bowl but she throws it on the floor! He's devastated as the
dogs rush over and lap it up.

ALMA
At least I didn't leave a folder
with photos of *my* sexual obsessions
for you to find.
(she walks to the stairs)
(MORE)

ALMA (CONT'D)
 I don't look like those women; I
 don't dress like them, I don't act
 like them. I'll never be one of
 your blondes!

Alma charges up the stairs and we hear the door SLAM.

EXT. HITCHCOCK POOL - CONTINUOUS

A light comes on and Hitchcock sadly leaves the house. He sits in the lounge chair with a glass. In the background, in the house, the dogs finish off the fois gras.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 And I'll never look like Whitfield
 Cook.

Hitch looks over and sees Eddie, on another lounge chair in the shadows. Eddie raises a glass to Hitchcock. Hitchcock hesitates, then raises his glass and drinks silently with his film's subject.

EXT. PLAINFIELD CEMETARY - 1957 - DAY

There is SNOW FALLING and some on the ground. We pan slowly across the graves and find AUGUSTA GEIN'S HEADSTONE. A little further and we find Eddie, weeping, torn by guilt.

EDDIE
 Help me. I can't...stop.

We pull back to reveal Hitchcock standing next to him. Hitch puts his hand comfortingly on Eddie's shoulder.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HITCHCOCK POOL - SUNRISE

Alma comes out the back to let the dogs out and sees Hitch in the lounge chair-- he's dreaming about Eddie. She's irritated to see him there.

ALMA
 Hitch?...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
 (delirious)
 Can't...stop....

She walks to him and looks very worried when she sees him. His eyes open, but they look glassy. Her mothering instinct overcomes her vexation and she feels his brow.

ALMA
You're burning up.

INT. PSYCHO HOUSE SET - STAIRCASE - DAY

It's the familiar set manned by the movie crew, a crane above the set. Things are in disarray. Tony stands with Saul Bass and MARTIN BALSAM. Peggy, on the phone, walks over toward them, pulling the wire.

TONY PERKINS
I know it would cost a lot to shut
down for a few days, but--

SAUL BASS
It's my storyboard-- I'm the one
who directed the shower scene....

Peggy recoils as she stands in front of Saul with the phone. She holds it out to him.

PEGGY ROBERTSON
Mr. Hitchcock wants to talk to you.

SAUL BASS
Did he...hear me...?

Peggy thrusts the phone at him and walks away.

SAUL BASS
Hey, Hitch....we all miss you.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hitch has the flu and has taken to his bed along with storyboards and script pages. He has the phone receiver pressed to his ear. Alma comes in with SOUP on a tray.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I don't want these shots you have
in the boards. You don't get
killed for walking up stairs--
don't shoot it as if that's what he
expects to happen....

He hangs up the phone.

ALMA
Tell me.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
It's hard not being there, and
we're already days behind schedule.

ALMA

There's something else.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Last week I overheard Joe Stefano saying *Psycho* had nothing to do with Bloch's book, nothing to do with me, that it's *all* his script. Now I just heard Saul Bass saying something similar about his own contributions...

Hitch swings his legs off the bed.

ALMA

Be happy they're fighting for credit. If it was going badly, they'd be *blaming* you instead...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I've got to get over there....

ALMA

Back in bed with you.

(beat)

I'll go.

Hitch is surprised but pleased.

ALMA

Under the blankets. Right now.

He gets back down and she arranges his blankets. She puts the tray on his bed.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(contritely)

I don't want to take you away from your writing partner...

ALMA

(kindly)

Eat your soup.

He is genuinely grateful. She silently arranges his blanket, plumps his pillows, gets her handbag and kerchief and leaves.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Alma, all business, drives the large car. She reaches the Universal gate and is waved through.

INT. NORMAN BATES HOUSE - DAY

The set is in turmoil, there is an argument going on between crew members, and some people are just sitting around. Peggy, in the middle of things, is getting a little frustrated with the attitude of the crew.

Saul Bass is in the director's chair, and is having a heated exchange with the Cameraman, who has had enough of Saul.

Then Alma steps in the door, and everything stops.

Peggy looks relieved, as does the Cameraman.

Saul Bass forces a smile, then slinks off the set. Every crew member, all men in suits, comes to attention as she passes. It's the effect of the school principal coming into class after the substitute has lost control.

ALMA

Don't stop work because of me. I'm
only paying your salaries.

The crew members suddenly start busting their asses. Alma takes a seat like a queen in Hitch's DIRECTOR'S chair. You can tell as her eyes dart around the set that she ISN'T MISSING A THING. Peggy comes and stands next to her.

ALMA

Scene?

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Seventy-four.

ALMA

Storyboards?

Peggy hands them to Alma. She glances over them efficiently, then watches as the AD sets the actors. Peggy looks at Alma and mouths: "THANK YOU" for bringing chaos back to order.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

We see Alma, alone, looking sure of herself and determined, striding down the hall. She stops in front of a door, knocks and enters.

INT. SAUL BASS'S OFFICE - DAY

It is a small office with a couple of drawing boards and stacks of storyboards everywhere. Saul, working, is surprised and stands when Alma enters. She's all business.

SAUL BASS

Alma? To what do I owe the pleasure?

ALMA

If you come on set again, you will stay in the background.

He looks stunned, but not apologetic.

ALMA

Hitch is a genius with you, Mr. Bass, and he's a genius without you. I know he's not one to spread credit; but I'm not one to stand by and let you take it.

SAUL BASS

Alma, let me explain what you might have heard...

ALMA

We all contribute. But there's one director.

He's about to argue, but Alma's glare tells him he's not going to win. He shrugs, lowers his head and nods.

CUT TO:

INT. HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

The bell rings over the door, as Frank Worden, the man we saw teasing Eddie at the bar, enters.

FRANK WORDEN

Hey mom, back for a spell...Mom?

He is surprised when he notices the CASH REGISTER IS GONE-- He sees a spot of blood, then grows alarmed as he sees a streak of blood leading to the door. Frank grabs the phone.

FRANK WORDEN

Art? Get over to the store. Something happened to my mother....Wait...

Frank sees a hand-written receipt, crumbled and left on the floor next to the rifle. He opens the receipt and sees the name: EDDIE GEIN, 2 gallons antifreeze, \$2.00.

FRANK WORDEN

Jesus. It's Eddie Gein.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Whitfield Cook is staring out at the ocean when he hears a car pulling toward the house. He's surprised to see Alma and runs over to open the door gallantly.

WHITFIELD COOK
I wasn't expecting you...

ALMA
I like surprising people...

She bends and picks up a handful of sand, looking at it.

WHITFIELD COOK
Hitch feeling better, I take it?

ALMA
Back to his old self. I think he's only really happy when he's behind the camera.

WHITFIELD COOK
It's probably the only place left in his life where he feels like he's in complete control.
(beat)
I can't feel sorry for him. Most of us never get to have that feeling at all.

She looks at the sand in her hand sadly, then lets it trickle away into the breeze.

WHITFIELD COOK
Let's go write...

Whitfield leads her into the house to write.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DRESSING ROOM AREA - DAY

Hitchcock walks Janet Leigh toward her dressing room.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
It was more than a pleasure having you here, and I shall miss you terribly.

JANET LEIGH
It was my pleasure, Hitch...

She steps inside and SCREAMS for her life!

DRESSING ROOM

The "Mother" prototype is sitting facing her! Much better than the original, Hitch's notes to the make-up men have made it fantastically scary. Crew members come running as Hitchcock steps morbidly into the doorway.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It's only Mrs. Bates. Since you're finished, I told her she could have your dressing room.

The crew, so concerned a moment before, laughs.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I think she's wearing one of your brassieres.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR SET - DAY

We can see the camera and Hitchcock sitting in his chair, in full control.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Easy....easy...something's here, you can feel it....

Vera walks cautiously down the stairs, looking around. He points to the rocking chair where "mother" sits, back to us.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It's her. Now you can get your questions answered...

INT. IRENE HILL'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Eddie sits on the living room couch, sipping coffee from a mug. Irene Hill (a character we met previously outside Mary Hogan's bar) brings out a large cake with an even larger KNIFE, and sets it in front of him. Her two BOYS, seven and twelve, are running around the living room wildly.

Eddie stares at the knife, then slowly looks to Irene's throat.

IRENE HILL

I'm gonna keep my eyes open for the right woman for you. You just ask Mary Carter-- I'm a pretty good matchmaker.

Eddie looks at her, a flash in his eyes. He glances at a large CAKE KNIFE next to the cake. It glints invitingly.

He reaches over and picks up the knife, looking at it-- it all seems innocent to Irene, like he's about to cut the cake.

EDDIE

You know, Irene, a woman like you
is all a man would ever--

Eddie stops, mesmerized as he looks out the window and sees FLASHING LIGHTS approaching the house.

EXT. IRENE HILL'S HOUSE - EVENING

SHERIFF ART SCHLEY and A DEPUTY get out of the car. The Sheriff immediately wanders to Eddie's car and glances inside. Irene comes out.

IRENE HILL

What's going on, Art?

Eddie loafs out of the house, pulling on his hunting hat. He hesitates, embarrassed, then joins Art and the Deputy.

EDDIE

Thanks for the pork chops, Mrs.
Hill....

INT. FRUIT CELLAR SET

Vera puts her hand on "Mother's" and the corpse turns around. We see her frightening skin-covered skull.

Vera screams and moves back, hitting the dangling LIGHT BULB which swings back and forth, in and out of frame.

We end on the light bulb swinging back and forth in front of Hitchcock's own face as he watches with passionate intensity.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE GEIN'S HOUSE - A LITTLE LATER

Eddie squints as he is brought into a bright light. LARGE LAMPS, like MOVIE lights, have been set up and run by a generator-- Eddie had no electricity. In fact, the whole scene is reminiscent of the crew activity on the *Psycho* film. One OFFICER is filming with a 16mm BELL & HOWELL.

Trash and newspapers are piled everywhere. There is grime and dark stains on the cabinets and counters. At the sink-- KNIVES of various shapes and sizes.

On the counter are boxes filled with fingers, and preserved vaginas. There are TWO SEVERED HANDS, FOLDED IN PRAYER.

Twelve OFFICERS and MEDICAL EXAMINER EMPLOYEES, scattered about the room, stop their search and look at Eddie.

ART SCHLEY

We found Bernice's body, dressed
out like a deer; we found her
heart. I don't mean to sound flip,
but where's her goddamned head?

A CAPTAIN calls down from the landing where an OFFICER is taking a crowbar to the boards nailed up in front of his mother's room.

CAPTAIN SCHOEPHOERSTER

I think we got his hiding spot.

Eddie, seeing what they're doing, suddenly shows emotion as he completely freaks out!

EDDIE GEIN

No! No!

He breaks free and makes a dash for the stairs. A moment later he is pinned face down on the stairs (on the spot where he attacked Bernice) by Art and the Deputy. Art cuffs his hands behind his back, and the Deputy hauls him to his feet.

The last of the boards are pried away.

EDDIE GEIN

You can not go in there!

CAPTAIN SCHOEPHOERSTER

What are we going to find?! How
many victims are in here!

EDDIE GEIN

(overlapping)

No! Stop him! No!

They stand Eddie before the door, and throw it open. The cops are stunned by what they see-- no bodies, no gore, no litter or newspapers or trash like in the rest of the house. Just a neat, perfectly preserved room, with the bed made.

EDDIE GEIN

That's...my...mother's...room!!

(whispering)

I miss her...

He collapses to his knees, blubbering and moaning in anguish. The cops glance at each other.

At that moment, the Sheriff looks like he feels sorry for him, and gives Eddie's shoulder an awkward pat.

INT. SECURE CELL SET - DAY

The cell door is closed on Tony, not in character, as he is led in by makeup and costume people. He laughs and talks quietly with them. He sits in a chair against the wall and the make-up bib is taken away. The blanket is arranged.

The crew becomes silently reverential. This is the last scene, an important one. You could hear a pin drop.

As the crew moves away, Tony goes into the "Norman Bates as Mother" character, staring out blankly.

Hitchcock steps close to Perkins-- we do not see the camera or the crew, only Perkins staring and Hitchcock, reading from a script in his OWN voice, not a false woman's voice.

The camera tracks in-- but unlike the movie, which tracks in on Norman, we track in on Hitchcock.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

"It's sad when a mother has to speak the words that condemn her son. But I couldn't allow them to believe that I would commit murder. They'll put him away now, as I should have, years ago. He was always bad. And in the end he attempted to tell them I killed those girls and that man. As if I could do anything except just sit and stare, like one of his stuffed birds. They know I can't even move a finger. And I won't. I'll just sit here and be quiet....just in case they do suspect me."

He stops, looking at Tony as he shifts his eyes around crazily.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

"They're probably watching me. Let them. Let them see what kind of a person I am."

(to Tony)

A fly just landed on your hand.

Tony looks slowly down at his hand.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(continuing)

"I'm not even going to swat that fly. I hope they are watching, they'll see; they'll see and they'll know and they'll say, 'Why she wouldn't even harm a fly.'"

Tony looks up and smiles as "Mother."

PSYCHO FOOTAGE

We see a piece of the shower scene, but without any of the music or sound effects that make it so powerful.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

The footage is not going over well-- the reaction is flat as we move across the faces of the few viewers.

Lew sits with Barney Balaban and two executives. Barney checks his watch out of boredom.

June and two other Censors look appalled.

Bernard Herman is sitting in the back row with Alma, and he's making notes. She has her poker face on, but she glances back at Hitchcock who is pacing around, beside himself by the projection room door.

INT. OUTSIDE SCREENING ROOM

Hitchcock, depressed, is joined by Alma and Hermann.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

It's hopeless...

BERNARD HERMANN

What Alma and I talked about is really going to play.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I don't want music in the shower...

BERNARD HERMANN

Alma said she'd change your mind.

Hitch looks at Alma. Bernard Herman leaves and June and the two censors come out.

JUNE

You're going to have to cut the nudity.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
What nudity? It was suggested.

ALMA
A woman of Janet Leigh's stature
would never take off her clothes.

OTHER CENSOR
But I did see a knife hitting her.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
No. We didn't do a shot like that.

JUNE
I'd stake my reputation on it.
We're denying your seal.

Hitchcock is livid, but holds his tongue.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I'll go over it frame by frame and
set up another screening for you.

June and the Censors walk away, talking amongst themselves,
as Lew comes out involved in a quiet but intense discussion
with the bored Barney Balaban.

ALMA
There was nudity.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Her breasts are very large, dear,
it was hard *not* to show them.

ALMA
And there was a knife plunging into
her stomach.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I actually shot it pulling out, but
showed the footage backwards.

ALMA
You'll have to cut the frame where
she blinks when she's dead.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
We've seen the footage a thousand
times. She doesn't blink.

Barney stops in front of Hitch. To show his dismay, he looks
him in the eye and shakes his head. The project is doomed.

Barney leaves and Lew stays behind with Alma and Hitch.

LEW WASSERMAN

It's too late for Balaban to back out no matter what he says.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

All that work...

LEW WASSERMAN

Two choices-- Plan A: book New York, then open nationally in thousands of theaters at the same time a week later.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

What's the point of that, Lew?

LEW WASSERMAN

It won't let word of mouth bury us. Because of the low budget, you might have a chance at breaking even. Or Plan B. Recut it as a two-parter for the TV series.

Hitchcock seems devastated by the harsh realism.

ALMA

That's not showing much faith.

LEW WASSERMAN

Faith is for preachers and oddballs.

ALMA

You can't scare people by looking at them and saying, "boo." They have to anticipate it. That's what the music and sound effects are going to *make* this film, they're going to let the audience know they're *going to be* scared.

Her enthusiasm isn't contagious. She checks her watch.

ALMA

We finished earlier than I thought. I'm going to run...

She nods, then heads for the door. Hitchcock watches sadly, knowing where she's headed. Lew doesn't pick up on what's passed between the couple.

LEW WASSERMAN

I made Jimmy Stewart rich on
"Winchester 73," and that was
complete shit. At least I could
sit through this.

INT. EDITING ROOM - DAY

The EDITOR runs the scene a frame at a time through a
Moviola. Hitchcock watches over his shoulder with Peggy. He
stops on Janet, face against the floor, blinking.

EDITOR

I'll be damned...she blinked.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(deeply impressed)

There's no one like Alma.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Maybe you should tell her sometime.

Hitchcock thinks about it, dismayed, but returns his
attention to the moviola.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Alma, full of anticipation, walks over from car across the
sand. She goes up the steps to the entrance to the deck.

She sees the typewriters and paper out but suddenly stops.
In the bedroom, through the window, she sees Whitfield Cook.
He's making love to a young man--it is the Waiter Whit had
his eye on in the restaurant.

Alma and Whit's eyes meet. Whit is horrified at being
caught..

Alma ducks her head, wheels around and walks toward her car.

ALMA'S CAR

Alma opens the door, but Whit is running out of his house,
buttoning trousers, shirtless and shoeless.

WHITFIELD COOK

Alma...I thought you weren't coming
until tonight...

ALMA

And I thought you rented this place
so we could write.

WHITFIELD COOK
I did. I swear-- this just
happened.

She gets in her car. He puts his hand desperately on the car door.

WHITFIELD COOK
You won't say anything, will you?

ALMA
Don't worry. I won't tell
Elizabeth.

WHITFIELD COOK
I mean to Hitch.

Alma tries to hide what a punch to the gut this is.

ALMA
Is that the only reason I've been
writing this with you?

WHITFIELD COOK
Alma-- you're incredibly talented.
(smiling feebly)
But, afterall...we want him to read
"Taxi to Dubrovnik" with an open
mind.

ALMA
(beat)
I wouldn't worry about that, Whit.

She pulls slowly away and drives off. He watches anxiously, then deflates, knowing he's fucked everything up.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S DEN - DAY

Tight on the television. Titles from a 1950 melodrama:
"SECRET HEART," written by WHITFIELD COOK.

Alma watches alone, sniffing before the movie even starts.

She hears the front door and Hitchcock greeting the dogs.
She tries to stop herself from crying.

After a few moments Hitchcock enters. He looks at her, and down at the tissue in her hand.

He takes a seat next to her and silently starts watching along with her.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Secret Heart?

Alma nods, trying not to burst into tears. Hitchcock stares at the television screen.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
I didn't pull it off this time. I should have stuck to the movies I know how to make. It was too late to try anything different.

Alma doesn't look at him.

ALMA
You're right.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
What do you mean, "I'm right?"
What kind of thing is that to say?

ALMA
Don't get cross with me. I was *agreeing* with you.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Here I am at my lowest hour, I'm tired, I'm beaten, I'm about to lose our investment...and you're agreeing with me. Well, I find that quite disagreeable.

ALMA
Then go down to the editing room and get to work. That's where your genius is, Hitch. Making all the tiny pieces work as one. You may not be the easiest man to live with, but you know how to cut a goddam picture.

He glances at her. She continues watching the screen.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Only if you're there with me.

She shrugs slightly. He turns back to the screen. A beat, then softly:

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Whit isn't worth a damn unless he's working with you.
(MORE)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Neither am I.

Hitchcock reaches over and takes her hand. In this moment, it's enough. The couple silently watch the love story.

CUT TO:

INT. EDITING ROOM - DAY

WE BEGIN A MONTAGE...Hitch and Alma in action. Film hangs everywhere in bins around three upright moviolas; FOUR ASSISTANTS are working but not fast enough for either of them.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I thought I told you to cut away to the shower head...

ALMA

Take thirty frames off the head....

(next Moviola)

No, no, the second take, the light is better on his hands...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

More cuts. The minute I lose one person I've lost the whole audience....

The Editor rushes in with several reels of magnetic stock.

EDITOR

Transfer of Mr. Hermann's rough score...

INT. SOUND RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Peggy watches as Hitchcock raises a large knife and plunges it into an ORANGE with a large microphone next to it. Alma, listening on headphones with a Technician, shakes her head, disapproving.

Instead of trying one of the melons, Hitch tries another ORANGE, stabbing it viciously several times.

ALMA

Try one of the melons.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I'm not--

(stab)

Done--

(MORE)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

(stab)

With the oranges.

Hitch stabs the orange one more time, then gathers his wits. He stabs a cabasa melon and the Alma gives the thumbs up.

INT. EDITING ROOM - NIGHT

Hitch and Alma are seated at a moviola and feverishly recutting the shower scene, working with balletic grace.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - DAY

Hitchcock, in a black rain coat, holds an umbrella over his head with one hand, and a headset to one ear with the other. Next to him are Alma and Peggy, in raincoats, and the sound TECHNICIAN, in a poncho, who holds out a microphone.

Hitch looks dissatisfied. Pulling back slowly we see he's under a rain tower hooked to a WATER TANK. We can barely hear him over the sound of the rain.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Harder.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

(in disbelief)

Harder?!

ALMA

(yelling upwards)

Harder!

The GRIP on the Water Truck looks incredulous, then turns the valve all the way-- it comes off in his hand.

The rain teems even HARDER around Hitch. He listens on the headphone, and finally nods that he's satisfied.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Now *that's* rain.

He offers the headphone to Alma, energized.

INT. SOUND RECORDING BOOTH - DAY

Hitch, delighted, is with PAUL JASMIN, a friend of Tony's. Jasmin, in awe of the director, changes his vocal performance as Mother as instructions fly at him fast and furious.

PAUL JASMIN

Norman. What do you think you're doing? Don't you touch me, don't.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Too wheedling. I need scary.

PAUL JASMIN
Norman! What do you think you're doing?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
You still sound like my grandmother. You're not bringing out a tray of cookies. You're a strident, frightening, scolding, contemptuous shrew.

PAUL JASMIN
(screeching viscerally)
Norman!!

Hitch is thrown back a little by the yell and smiles slowly, satisfied, as THE MONTAGE ENDS.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

A whole different atmosphere at this screening which includes, along with technical crew and spouses, Jasmin, Tony, Janet, Vera, Joe Stefano, Saul Bass, Peggy, HERMANN and, of course, Alma. The audience finds it gripping, and Hitch watches faces more than the screen.

NORMAN'S MOTHER (V.O. - ON SCREEN)
Norman!

Jasmin leans over and whispers to Alma.

PAUL JASMIN
It sounds like my voice, but not really...

ALMA
Hitch spliced your voice together with two actresses...to confuse the audience. You all have different words in each sentence.

Paul is amazed and sits back, thinking.

BACK ON THE SCREEN: the shower scene, now with the terrifying Hermann score. Different members of the audience lean forward in rapt anticipation; just when the waiting seems unbearable, Janet is stabbed! Everyone comes out of their seats six inches.

Janet SCREAMS in the audience.

Hitch is satisfied. Alma pats his hand.

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT(LATER)

Hitch is surrounded by people gushing at him. Alma stands a couple of steps behind Hitch, silently enjoying the triumph.

JANET LEIGH

I *believed* that the knife went into me!

TONY PERKINS

I don't know how you made me so sympathetic...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

This will be the one you'll always be remembered for.

Tony isn't sure how he feels about this.

INT. MOTION PICTURE CODE REVIEW OFFICE - DAY

The Censors sit across from Hitchcock.

JUNE

Mr. Danforth no longer sees the nudity, now he sees the stabbing. Mr. Kramer no longer sees the stabbing...or the nudity.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

And you?

She hesitates, and he leans forward.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Trust me.

June heaves a frustrated sigh. Hitch leans in as far as he can. He looks very uncomfortable with what he has to say:

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Have I told you how much I respect what you do?

She stares at him skeptically. He keeps his poker face.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S UNIVERSAL OFFICE - DAY

Hitch sweeps in.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
We have our seal. Take a memo...

Peggy, flustered, whips out her steno pad.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
We're writing a book on how to sell
Psycho.

INT. PRINTING PRESS -- DAY

BOOKLETS make the rounds on a conveyor-like contraption. As the booklets are bound by swift-moving WORKERS, we see the cover: "The Care and Handling of Psycho By Alfred Hitchcock."

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
Tip One for Theatre Owners: I
suggest the hiring of Pinkerton
guards to enforce admission
policies...

EXT. NEW YORK THEATRE -- FLASH FORWARD

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S PSYCHO on a movie palace marquee. PAN down to a LARGE CROWD on a hot summer day, excitedly filing in.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
These men of the law will not only
handle lines and crowds admirably,
but can also help your cashier
explain my policy when the doors
are closed.

Suddenly GUARDS step forward and block patrons from entering.

INT. NEW YORK THEATRE -- FLASH FORWARD

A MANAGER hangs an enormous CLOCK in the lobby.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
While perusing the additionally
enclosed publicity kit, please note
order forms for large lobby clocks
to remind audiences of the starting
times for the movie.

The manager grins, satisfied.

EXT. NEW YORK THEATRE -- FLASH FORWARD

Hitch's voice booms from large erected speakers.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
The manager of this theatre has
been instructed, at the risk of his
life, not to admit to the theatre
any persons after the picture
starts.

We PAN DOWN the line of sweating PATRONS broiling in the sun.
The line goes on for blocks and despite the wait, most of
them grin, enjoying Hitch's sense of showmanship.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
Any spurious attempts to enter by
side doors...

INT. HOLLYWOOD RECORDING BOOTH -- PRESENT

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
...fire escapes or ventilating
shafts will be met by force.

Hitch lays down the track into a large microphone.

ALMA
Try it with more gravity, darling.

Hitch nods.

INT. PARAMOUNT BOARD ROOM -- DAY

Barney Balaban reads "The Care and Handling of Psycho" aloud
to his assembled board.

BARNEY
"Experience has shown that it
enhances the dignity and importance
of Psycho to close your house
curtains over the screen after the
end-titles of the picture, and keep
the theatre dark for 1/2 minute."

INT. NEW YORK THEATRE -- FLASH FORWARD

The crowd sits stunned in the dark.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S VOICE
"During these 30 seconds of stygian
blackness, the suspense of Psycho
is indelibly engraved in the mind
of the audience..."

INT. BOARD ROOM -- DAY

Barney finishes reading aloud from the booklet.

BARNEY

"Never, never, never will I permit Psycho to be followed by a short subject or newsreel. Sincerely, Alfred Hitchcock."

Barney closes the book. Silence. Then --

BOARD MEMBER

Barney -- what the hell's he doing? This campaign will cost us a fortune. He won't even show it to critics.

BARNEY

It's better that way; I almost nodded off at a screening.

(beat)

At the end of the day, it's a minor Hitchcock movie. One week, and it'll be gone. Like a bad dream.

EXT. NEW YORK BROADWAY MOVIE THEATRE -- NIGHT

WHOOSH. Massive KLIEG LIGHTS are turned on to illuminate a MARQUEE which reads, "PSYCHO WORLD PREMIERE!"

INT. TOWN CAR - NIGHT

Neon blinks vulgarly, courtesy of Times Square, 1960. Hitch, silent, clearly nervous is in his trademark suit. Alma, next to him in a lavish gown and white elbow-length gloves, takes his hand. They drive on in silence.

INT. NEW YORK THEATRE - NIGHT

The opening night CROWD watches Norman putting the car in the swamp. We hear NERVOUS TITTERS from the audience.

INT. BACK OF THE THEATER - CONTINUOUS

We move down from the projection beam and find Hitchcock, in the back of the theater, standing next to Alma. We do not see any audience members, we only hear them laugh. Hitchcock seems confused by the laughter.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(whispering)

Why are they laughing?

Alma doesn't find it a cause for a concern, and pats his shoulder lightly to put him at ease. More laughter.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Hitch, Alma and Peggy are on their way out. There are still SCREAMS in the theatre as the show continues.

PEGGY ROBERTSON

Here's a bit of good news. Walt Disney announced he won't let his children see "Psycho." That'll boost the box office.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Peggy...I probably haven't done this in too long. Thank you for all your hard work.

She is stunned but pleased, and so is Alma. Peggy stays behind as Hitch moves through the doors and Alma follows.

EXT. THEATER - CONTINUOUS

A mob, waiting to get in, sees Hitchcock and goes crazy. Flashbulbs pop. Alma is falling behind Hitch.

WOMAN WAITING ON LINE

Mr. Hitchcock, how does it end?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I'm sworn to secrecy.

He gets a laugh. Hitch is next to a Pinkerton GUARD.

GUARD

Mr. Hitchcock, what do I do if my wife won't take a shower after she sees your movie.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Have her dry-cleaned.

More laughter from the crowd. Alma watches from a few feet back. The reporters run after Hitch as he tries to leave and the people on line rush for autographs.

Hitch stops and sees an incredible sight. A LINE OF PEOPLE SNAKES AROUND FOUR CITY BLOCKS!

It's a PHENOMENON.

Hitchcock gestures for Alma to take her place next to him instead of behind him, and share the moment. She appreciates it.

ALMA
It's the biggest hit of your
career, Hitch.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(beat)
Our career, Alma.

They look at each other, then get in the limo and drive away.

INT. THE PLAZA HOTEL - THE NEXT DAY

The suite is filled with dozens of large flower arrangements, fruit baskets, and congratulatory banners. Alma sits at the table going through a large stack of telegrams. Hitchcock is looking at newspapers.

ALMA
Here's one from Jimmy,
"Congratulations on the sold-out
shows...you've outdone them all."

She opens another. "CONGRATULATIONS, ALMA. LOVE, WHIT."

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(reading)
A minor work...an episode of his
television program padded to two
hours.

He notices she's stopped opening telegrams.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Who's that one from?

ALMA
(beat)
Whit. He tips his hat.

She puts it aside and opens the next.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
(reading)
Bosley Crowther in the Times, "A
blot on an honorable career..."

ALMA
Who cares what critics say? People
are going crazy for it.
(MORE)

ALMA (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Congratulations, Hitch, well deserved!" Barney Balaban and your friends at Paramount Pictures.

He goes to the window and stares out, irritated.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Trouble with Harry got fewer laughs and that was a comedy.

ALMA

It's nervous laughter. They're terrified.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I think the appearance of the nun at the end of *Vertigo* is more harrowing than anything in this.

ALMA

Hitch, why can't you just be satisfied?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

To me...the film is like a vintage from a poor year...it's like that Cabernet we had in Nice last summer. Not terrible but--

ALMA

You've given them wine your whole career, but this one isn't *wine*, Hitch. Don't you see?

He is confused.

ALMA

(pleased)

It's beer.

The very notion seems to cut him.

ALMA

Here's one from Lew Wasserman.
"What will you do for an encore?"

She finds it amusing, but Hitchcock starts to think and is mortified.

INT. CENTRAL STATE HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

It is a cozy, nicely lit dining room. Several non-violent INMATES are eating at different round tables around the room.

An ATTENDANT is watching, and an ORDERLY mops the floor.
(Note: There are NO female patients nor staff members.)

Eddie is at a table with two other patients, including a soft spoken older man, CHET. Eddie is heavier, his hair is whiter, and he is much more at ease than we've ever seen. On his plate: BLUE-blueberry pie and ORANGE SLICES.

EDDIE

Blue-blueberry pie. I love the way
he puts the food coloring in the
crust, makes the whole thing blue.

ORDERLY

(to the Attendant)
Guess what I'm doing this weekend?

ATTENDANT

What?

ORDERLY

Claudine and I are driving to
Chicago, staying with her folks,
and we're all seeing that movie,
"*Psycho*."

The Attendant knows the connection, but the Orderly DOESN'T know Eddie was the inspiration for *Psycho*, and NEITHER DOES EDDIE! He doesn't seem to pay attention to the conversation.

ATTENDANT

(shaking his head)
Clive...

ORDERLY

No, really, you heard about it?
They say it's the scariest thing
anyone's ever seen....can't wait.

ATTENDANT

Yeah.
(glancing at Eddie)
Want me to tell you how it ends?

ORDERLY

Do not reveal the secret-- haven't
you seen the ads? How do you know
how it ends anyway?--

The Attendant pulls Orderly aside, and whispers to him, nodding toward Eddie. The Orderly's jaw drops! It is the coolest thing he's ever heard and he looks at Eddie like he's a celebrity. Meanwhile, Eddie yawns, content.

EDDIE

The pie's even better than the
chicken ala king!

The Orderly takes a piece of pie from an empty spot at
another table and puts it in front of Eddie.

ORDERLY

Have another piece, Eddie.

EDDIE

(surprised and touched)

Well that's....Thanks a lot, Clive.

Orderly looks at him in awe. The Attendant, finding it
amusing, guides his friend away to talk about Eddie.

CHET

You really like it here, don't you?

EDDIE

It's like I took a bottle of pop
and shook it all up. It was
spraying all over and I couldn't
stop it. This place is like a
cork. This is a good place.

CHET

I think you're the happiest guy
I've ever known. How you do it?

EDDIE

I tell you. You live your life,
and it's hard sometimes...
unbearable, almost. Here's the
secret, Chet; the big secret no one
else knows or wants to tell...

(leaning closer,
whispering)

There is a God. And he's so big
and powerful, he doesn't always
know you're there. It's not his
fault; it's not yours. He's God,
and you're nothing more than a
speck in all he's made.

(he eats pie, savoring it)

But if you can get his
attention...and he sees your
suffering...he'll take care of you.

He takes a long drink of milk. He is content.

EDDIE

My mother used to tell me-- She
passed away, God bless her...the
one thing God truly loves and
understands...is suffering.

(thinking)

After all, he invented it.

Eddie takes one more bite of blue-blueberry pie.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. HITCHCOCK ROSE GARDEN -- SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

Alma is tending her garden. Hitch walks up, in his suit.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Good news. Tomorrow we leave on a
worldwide publicity campaign to
promote the picture. London,
Munich, Berlin, Frankfurt, and
Paris.

ALMA

I don't have the clothes...

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

I'm buying you several new frocks
on every stop.

She gets up off her knees.

ALMA

It sounds like we'll be gone for
weeks. What about your next
project, you'll go crazy if you're
away from work that long.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

The next picture is going to be a
problem.

ALMA

(concerned)

Why's that?

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Casting the female lead. I've
realized I'll never be able to find
a Hitchcock blonde who is as
beautiful as my wife.

ALMA

You do realize I've waited all my
life to hear you say that.

He smiles slyly.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

And M'dam...that's why they call me
"The Master of Suspense."

He walks away from her and she turns away to fill up a
watering can. He turns and looks into the camera.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Of course, I could never suspect my
wife of infidelity, nor would she
tolerate such outlandish behavior
on my part. What you've just
witnessed is the result of several
poorly recalled rumors being woven
into a tapestry of lies, with no
forethought, solely for your
entertainment. Like "Psycho," it
was only a "moo-vie."

(beat)

By the way, any viewers, including
professional critics, drawing a
correlation between the dessert
served at Mr. Gein's mental ward
and the fare served at my blue
soiree, will find themselves in
deep and especially hot water with
my attorneys. Now if you'll excuse
me, I must begin the exhaustive
search for my next project.
Goodnight.

He walks back toward the house. We FADE TO:

TITLE OVER BLACK: MANY CRITICS WHO PANNED *PSYCHO*, INCLUDING
BOSLEY CROWTHER, LATER REVISED THEIR OPINIONS AND CITED IT AS
ONE OF THE BEST FILMS EVER MADE.

FADE TO:

THE FILM MADE FIFTEEN MILLION ITS FIRST YEAR AND COST
HITCHCOCK JUST OVER 800,000. ALTHOUGH IT MADE HIM VERY
WEALTHY, HE WAS AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN ITS PHENOMENAL SUCCESS.

FADE TO:

EDDIE GEIN LIVED IN COMFORT IN MENTAL INSTITUTIONS UNTIL HIS PEACEFUL DEATH IN 1984.

FADE TO:

AFTER YEARS OF SEARCHING, HITCHCOCK'S NEXT PROJECT WAS *THE BIRDS*. HE DIED AT HOME IN BEL-AIR IN 1980, ALMA AT HIS SIDE. ALMA HITCHCOCK DIED TWO YEARS LATER.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK NEVER WON AN ACADEMY AWARD. IN 1979, HE ACCEPTED THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE'S LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. HE DEDICATED THE PRIZE TO HIS WIFE.

"I SHARE MY AWARD," HE SAID, "AS I HAVE MY LIFE, WITH ALMA."

FADE OUT...