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Hitchcock

By John J. McLaughlin

You know...
there's gonna be a lot more jobs
at that factory in Milwaukee come June.
I could put in a word.
You can't leave us, Henry.
She needs us both.
Can you stop being a mama's boy
for one second?
I'm not trying to hurt you, but Jesus,
you gotta live your own life sometime.
That woman can
take care of her own god...
Oh, good evening.
Well, brother has been killing brother
since Cain and Abel...
yet even I didn't see that coming.
I was as blindsided
as poor old Henry down there.
And apparently,
the authorities shared my naiveté.
In other words,
they believed the young man's story.
That Henry fell,
hit his head on a stone...
and died of smoke asphyxiation.
On the other hand,
if they hadn't believed him...
Ed Gein would never
have had the opportunity...
to commit those heinous crimes
for which he became most famous.
And we, of course, well...
we wouldn't have our little movie,
would we?
This thing's gonna be gigantic.
I wish I had 20 percent of the take.
Does tonight's incredible reaction
surprise you, Mr. Hitchcock?
No. When I was planning
North by Northwest...
I could already hear
the screams and the laughter.
- Any questions, my dear?
- Pity.

Mr. Hitchcock,
you've directed 46 motion pictures.
You're the most famous director
in the history of the medium.
- But you're 60 years old.
Shouldn't you just quit
while you're ahead?
Muhammad had the eyes of
peeping toms gouged out with arrows.
Well, that must have been rather painful.
And talking of arrows...
did you read that little snippet from
A.H. Weiler's review
in The New York Times?
He said he found the climax
to be "overdrawn."
Well, I doubt Mr. Weiler
has had a climax in years.
"North by Northwest reminds us
of Mr. Hitchcock's earlier...
more inventive spy thrillers."
And there is an accompanying list.
"The New Masters of Suspense."
Why do they keep looking for new ones
when they still have the original?
Oh, don't be maudlin.
You know how much it aggravates me.
Just stop reading them.
You've been reading them for a week.
Tell me, my dear,
do you think I'm too old?
Yes, you're a true relic.
And lest we forget,
a notably corpulent one.
You always know precisely where
to plunge the dagger, don't you?
Right between the shoulder blades.
I learned it from your pictures.
And where, may I ask, are you off to?
I'm going to have brunch with Whit,
after I drop you off at the studio.
Would you care to join us?
We have just established that I am far too
corpulent to be seen in broad daylight.

Oh, you'll feel better
when you find a new project.
Hasn't Peggy unearthed any decent books
for you recently?
Yes, sleeping pills with dust jackets.
So, what do you think?
Very presentable.
Hurry up, dear. You're pruning.
Good morning.
Mrs. Hitchcock. Mr. Hitchcock.
Sirs.
Thank you.
There's a project out there
waiting for you, Hitch.
I promise you.
I hope so. Thank you, my dear.
Have a good day.
I need something fresh,
something different.
Without expensive stars to pretty it up.
The Diary of Anne Frank for the third time.
The audience would
spend the entire picture...
waiting for Miss Frank to discover
the corpse I'd hidden in the attic.
- Wouldn't you agree, Nunzio?
- Si.
MGM wants you for the Ian Fleming book
Casino Royale, with Cary Grant.
Definitely your style.
Doesn't she know I just made that movie?
It was called North by Northwest.
And style, my dear,
is mere self-plagiarism.
Nice, clean, nasty little piece of work.
That's what I'm looking for.
I shall see what I can find.
Yeah.
You know, Hitch always says...
that your private life is in danger of being
more entertaining than any of your plots.
Well, I'm surprised he let me have you
for the whole afternoon.
Especially looking so beautiful.

So, tell me,
what are you working on these days?
Me? Oh.
- I'm satisfied working in my garden.
- Oh!
- Well, that's one lucky garden.
You know, all this relentless sycophancy
is actually giving me indigestion.
What are you after?
I was hoping...
that you may be able to apply
your considerable pruning skills to this.
Ah...
All is finally revealed.
Whit, you are a little predictable,
you know?
The most fun I ever had
was working with you.
Anything come up, my dear?
Anything at all?
Is that water,
or do I need to call Alma?
- Do whatever you want.
Anthony Boucher says this book Psycho
by Robert Bloch...
is fiendishly entertaining.
Mmm. Sounds ghastly.
Everyone in town has already passed.
And who is everyone, pray?
Well, the story department
finished the coverage this morning.
the mass murderer from Wisconsin.
- Mmm-hmm.
- Oh, yeah.
"Graphic elements of brutal violence...
voyeurism, transvestitism and incest."
Very nice.
Not your average run-of-the-mill nutcase,
is he, dear?
You're kidding.
Peggy, this is the boy
who dug up his own mother.
Hungry?
Famished.

Well, you can have half a grapefruit later
if you're good.

Now, listen, Hitch...

Whit gave me the galleys to his
new book yesterday at lunch.

I've already got some ideas
about how we can adapt it.

It's elegant, it's sophisticated,
it's full of intrigue.

You mean the book,

or Mr. Whitfield Cook?

This could be the one, Hitch.

I'll read it later.

There are calories in that, you know?

Ma?

Aren't you cold?

No need to be afraid, Ma.

Oh, God.

- I just want you to read this little bit here.

It takes place in the motel bathroom.

"Mary started to scream.

"And then the curtains parted farther...

and a hand appeared,

holding a butcher's knife."

"It was the knife that, a moment later,
cut off her scream..."

"and her head."

Charming.

Doris Day should do it as a musical.

That is nothing but low-budget,

horror movie claptrap.

really good made a horror picture?

Just think of the shock value.

Killing off your leading lady

halfway through.

I mean, you are intrigued,

are you not, my dear?

Admit it.

Actually, I think it's a huge mistake.

You shouldn't wait till halfway through.

Kill her off after 30 minutes.

Well.

Peggy, I want you to

summon your minions.

Minions?
Certainly. And who might they be?
Get them started
by buying copies of Psycho.
How many do you need?
All of them. Every copy, nationwide.
Scour every bookshop, every library.
And I mean everywhere.
Psycho is going to be my next movie,
and I don't want
anyone to know the ending...
until they see it in the theater.
Look at that.
Are you sure about this?
It's just so unlike you.
That is exactly the point, my dear.
- Ladies and gentlemen of the press.
Good afternoon.
I see you've all been devouring
the article on Mr. Ed Gein.
Violent chap...
and the real-life inspiration
behind Psycho.
All of us
harbor dark recesses of violence...
and horror.
Fascinating, isn't it?
When the Wisconsin Police Department
raided Mr. Gein's farm...
they opened the door, and voil.
They discovered 10 female heads
with the tops sawn off.
Pass these around, would you?
And have a look.
- Masks of human skin...
a pair of lips on a draw string
for a window shade.
Oh, yes, and a jar containing
human noses and other...
Is this really going to be your next
picture, Mr. Hitchcock?
Well, that is my intention. Yes, Madam.
My only wish is that Ed Gein...
looks a little more like William Holden

instead of Elmer Fudd.
Oh, by the way, try the finger sandwiches.
They're real fingers.
Now, don't pretend you're not upset
he hasn't read it.
I'm not. I'm a big boy, I can take it.
Well, I loved it.
It must have been great fun to research.
Do you really think he will read it?
- Ah...
Speak of the devil. Hitch...
I ran all over town trying to find a copy
of Psycho, but I simply cannot find one.
I wonder how that could have happened.
Yeah.
Don't stop looking on my behalf.
Hitch, I think you should come.
I've seen happier faces
on a school bus going over a cliff.
But they can't stop looking, can they?
Audiences want to be shocked, Barney.
They want something differensp-wAPOind a new
Every time you want to do
something different...
like The Wrong Man or Vertigo...
someone loses money.
So, we should stop trying
to give them something new?
You owe Paramount
one last picture, Hitch.
Now, can't you do something like
North by Northwest...
but for us this time,
instead of for MGM?
Psycho.
No one respects the name "Hi:41,672
I promise you.
Are you telling me "no," Barney?
I think you know me
better than that, Hitch.
You know what his family did
before they built those movie palaces?
Ran a grocery store.
My father ran a grocery store.

Exactly, that's what I'm saying.
He should show some respect.
They think I've lost my touch, Lew.
My association with television
has cheapened me.
Are you referring
to that deal I got you...
where Bristol-Myers pays you \$29,000
an episode, and you own the negative?
That's my kind of cheap.
They just want the same thing
over and over and over.
They've put me in a coffin,
and now they're nailing down the lid.
Hitch, as your agent...
I will never let that happen.
How much do you think
you can make this picture for?
\$800,000, give or take.
You're home early.
Oh!
It's lovely, actually.
Oh!
You know, I'm disappointed
you didn't give Whit's book a chance.
And what about Whit? Is he disappointed?
No, he knows you well enough.
Time for a new one, anyway.
Well, you better enjoy the pool, my dear,
while you can.
We might not have it much longer.
Why?
Paramount refuses to finance the movie.
Oh, Hitch, I'm so sorry.
Lew can't find the money.
At least, not fast enough.
Well, why not wait?
No.
We're just going
to have to go it alone, old girl.
Finance it ourselves.
Well, are we going to have to sell
the whole house, or just the pool?
I just want to do the film.

I'm going to ask you this once,
and I'll never mention it again.
Why this one, Hitch?
It's not just because
so many people are saying "no," is it?
Do you remember the fun we had
when we started out all those years ago?
We didn't have any money then, did we?
We didn't have any time, either.
But we took risks, do you remember?
We experimented.
We invented new ways
of making pictures...
because we had to.
I just want to feel...
that kind of... freedom again.
Like we used to, you know?
We are about to propose
a restructured deal for Psycho.
I'm listening.
We finance it.
Independently.
Hitch waives his directorial fee...
Paramount only distributes it...
in exchange for 40% of the profits.
But what exactly
is Paramount distributing?
Is this still a picture about a queer
killing people in his mother's dress?
is the reputation of Alfred Hitchcock.
Barney...
it's very simple.
This is Mister Hitchcock's next film.
Are you in, or are you out?
Fine.
We'll take that deal...
if you can get the money.
We already have the money, Barney.
Who do I make it out to?
If this picture fails, Alma...
we'll be in for a long,
humiliating bout of crow-eating.
It will be splendid.
Are you sure?

Of the movie? Not at all.

But of you, unquestionably.

Joe Stefano. Good to meet you.

- Sit down.

- I'm sorry I was late.

My shrink session went overtime.

- I see him every day. It's still not enough.

I thought it was only director's assistants
who needed psychiatrists.

Not writers.

Do you see a shrink, Mister Hitchcock?

I have to confess, Mister Stefano...

it boggles my brain just trying to imagine...

what on earth you and your shrink
could possibly talk about every day.

Just the usual.

Sex, rage, my mother.

- Good morning.

- Good morning, sir.

Let me have a look at you.

You know, the only thing worse
than a visit to the dentist...
is a visit to the censor.

Whatever you do, Hitch,
don't lose your temper.

- See you later.

- Good luck.

- Thank you.

will absolutely not permit you
to show a knife
penetrating a woman's flesh.

I assure you, Geoffrey...

my murders are always models
of taste and discretion.

Is there any improper suggestion
of nudity...

in this murder scene in the shower?

She won't be nude,
she'll be wearing a shower cap.

Hmm...

We might accept a shot
from outside the bathroom window...
of Marion in silhouette,
above the shoulders...

provided that the glass is frosted.
Thank you.
this scene with a toilet.
Well, it is completely necessary
to show the toilet...
because Marion Crane
attempts to flush evidence down it.
Remnants of which are later discovered
by her sister.
These remnants, you understand,
are clues to her vanishing.
No American movie has ever found it
necessary to show a toilet...
let alone to flush one.
Well, perhaps we ought to shoot the film
in France.
Use a bidet instead.
Mister Hitchcock...
if this office denies you a seal...
and we're certainly heading
in that direction...
your movie will not be released
in a single theater in this country.
Will you be making jokes then?
resents me.
I make them millions of dollars...
and every year I sit at those
dreadful award show dinners...
waiting for someone just to say...
"You're good."
They take sadistic pleasure
in denying me that one little moment.
Deeply, Ed.
Deeply.
I'm sorry, but...
I'm just not used to this...
process.
It's just that more and more,
I've been having these...
impulses.
Strong ones.
Here.
The Lazar office tells me
he's crazy to work with you.

Well, tell Swifty Lazar he should not have overexposed his client on television.

Unlike some we could mention.

Anthony Perkins.

Oh.

Think of the duality he could bring to the role of Norman.

The rage lurking beneath that little boy grin...

the winsome charm he uses

You're not suggesting Mister Perkins is...

Mmm-hmm.

What?

I like your office.

I can't count how many times

I've seen Strangers on a Train.

And Rope.

Well, Norman Bates is the logical extension of those two characters in that movie.

Appealing, sensitive...

suffering the terrible burden of being forced to pretend to be something he is not.

Well, I'm sick of all this romantic crap the studios keep shoving me into.

But my only worry is...

Well, playing Norman might cut too close to home.

How so?

Uh...

When I was younger...

I was incredibly close to my mother.

So close that I remember

wishing my father would drop dead.

And when I was five, he did just that.

He keeled over from a heart attack.

You see, I've been guilty my whole life, Mister Hitchcock.

You know,

I'm getting blisters just watching you.

Oh, stop complaining.

A bit of fresh air

and exercise will do you good.

I'm going to have a drink.

No, you're not.

You're going to finish that hedge.
You've got to go all the way around there,
all the way around there.

- That's impossible. I can't do that.

- Yes, you can.

You know, I was thinking...
if I could get Grace Kelly
to play the girl...
they'd let me get away with murder.

Well, you can't. She's a princess now,
which makes her
permanently unattainable.
And all the more desirable.

How about Deborah Kerr?
Lew mentioned her.

No, she's too Scottish.

How about Janet Leigh?
I know she's normally the good girl,
but she was awfully good in Touch of Evil.
You remember how
you always used to remark
on her figure at the Wasserman's parties?
Yeah.

Good evening.

Hello. Lovely to see you.

- Charmed.

- Hi.

- Hello, Janet. How are you?

- Wonderful to see you.

Well, my dear,
you're looking very beautiful.

Thank you.

Very beautiful.

Of course, the real secret of Mrs. Simpson's
appeal to the Duke of Windsor...
was that she could make a toothpick
feel like a cigar.

I've been so immersed in preparing to play
Marion, I'd almost forgotten how to laugh.

- Oh, really?

- Yes.

Well, now you must try
the banana shortcake.

Oh, no, nothing for me, thank you.

I'm watching my figure.

Yes, you're not the only one.

We're fine, thank you.

George, bring her the banana shortcake.

In fact, make that two large portions.

Thank you.

Now, tell me, my dear, how else have you prepared for the part of Marion Crane?

Well, I've written an entire history for her...

which seems a little silly, I know,

but it really does help.

It doesn't sound silly at all.

No?

Why don't you tell us

one of her deepest secrets?

Well, she leads a double life.

At the Lowery office,

she wears Tweed perfume.

But when she's with Sam...

she recklessly breaks out

her most expensive bottle.

My Sin, by Lanvin.

- My Sin?

- Yes.

Good Lord.

I do have a concern or two.

Well, I'm an actress, of course,
but I'm first a wife and a mother.

And I'm just curious to know...

how are you going to shoot

this shower scene?

Yes, you and the Shurlock Office.

It's only that, well, from here up,
I'm not exactly boyish, so...

Allow me to set your mind at rest,
my dear.

I will be shooting short bits of film
from various angles.

Cut together, the montage will only
suggest nudity, suggest violence.

Nothing will actually be shown.

But of course,

having you in the shower...

will make it all that more, well...

titillating.

Will you excuse me?

Alma!

- Dear, how lovely to see you.

- Oh, hello, Lillian.

You're looking a little pale.

Well, it's no wonder, with that thing
your husband's working on now.

You can't possibly approve.

Why are you letting him
do something so tasteless?

Don't upset yourself, darling.

It's only a bloody movie.

you made Vera Miles play the sister.

Well, I've still got her under contract.

May as well get something out of her.

don't you think?

and had it imported from Paris.

The old man really is unhappy with me,
isn't he?

Wait until you see the undergarments
he has picked out for you.

Okay, well, I am just going to have
to keep telling myself...

"One more picture,
and I am free as a bird."

Hmm.

So, I've made a list of places
where we can tighten our belts.

Huh?

We could all learn the art of self-restraint,
couldn't we, Alfred?

"Gardeners once a week?

"Weekends off for the driver"?

No, that's impossible.

We'll have to find other places to cut.

There aren't any other places.

And there will be no more shipments
flown in from Maxim's of Paris.

We can't afford it.

The foie gras at Chasen's
is more than adequate.

But those geese are from Barstow,
not from Marseille.

Yes.

Well, we all have to make our sacrifices
for the greater good. Don't we, Alfred?
I'll go get the knives.

Ed.

Am I making a terrible mistake?

What if it's another Vertigo?

You just get the first take under your belt,
you'll be fine.

Are you decent, my dear?

Good morning.

Good morning. Am I all right?

- Perfect. Good.

- Wow.

- Morning.

- Morning.

I want to thank you once again
for this opportunity, Mister Hitchcock.

You may call me Hitch, hold the "cock."

Well, look at you two,
America's favorite boy and girl next door.

Yes, and we're about to move
to a whole new neighborhood.

Morning, Janet.

Good morning, Tony.

- Good morning, Vera.

- Thanks for the wardrobe, Hitch.

Do you approve?

You're the genius.

One thing, though.

My script, it's missing its last ten pages.

Everyone's script is missing ten pages
until Alma finishes the revisions.

You're just in time for the oath.

The what?

The oath.

I want you all to raise your right hands.

That includes you, Vera Miles.

- I do solemnly promise...

- ...that I will not divulge...

...the plot, nor the many
secrets of Psycho...

- ...to friends, relatives...

- ...trade reporters...

...nor to the outgoing President,
Dwight D. Eisenhower.
Thank you all very much.
All right, come on, you two.
Let's get started.
I wanted to talk about Marion's arrival
at the Bates Motel.
Here we are, Norman's inner sanctum.
Now, Hitch...
explain to me
why I'm watching Marion undress.
I feel I should take offense at that.
Perhaps Norman secretly watched
his mother preparing for her nightly bath.
Yes, maybe there was a transom
over the bathroom door.
Yeah, which he could access
by climbing on a chair.
So long as he was stealthy.
A boy's first glimpse of a naked woman
is usually his mother.
Hmm.
So, I'm reliving the past...
repeating a ritual with Marion.
Well, don't ask me.
I'm just a man hiding in the corner
with my camera, watching.
My camera will tell you the truth,
the absolute truth.
Hitch, I have a question.
Why is the hole so much larger
on this side?
All the better to see with, my dear.
From the greatest possible angle.
And cut.
If you ask me,
the credits should read...
"Screenplay by Joseph Stefano
and Alma Reville."
Well, the people who matter know.
Hmm...
Alma, you always know the answer.
Is this really going to work?
See you tomorrow.

Hello, stranger.
Where have you been hiding?
Oh, God.
- I've been finishing the revisions on...
- Psycho.
Mmm-hmm.
And how is the old boy?
He is in a state of unbridled ecstasy
now that he's back on the set.
And you? How are you?
Well, I've got 2,000 words to do
for Reader's Digest...
on what it's like to be married to a man
obsessed by murder.
Alma, you deserve a break.
Let's drive up to Santa Barbara.
We'll have Emilio fry up those juicy steaks
that we love so much, at El Encanto.
we're ready for you on set.
Mister Hitchcock?
Was there a long line
at the supermarket?
No, actually.
I'm home earlier than I expected.
Mmm.
Would you like a cocktail?
No.
And you shouldn't have one either.
That hasn't been washed yet.
I don't care.
Oh, I was filming all day today
with John Gavin.
He's a good-looking chap.
But, really, plywood is more expressive.
I think his love scene
with Janet Leigh...
may be the most horrifying thing
in the movie.
Even your friend, Mister Whitfield Cook
would be better in the scene.
Why don't you tell him yourself?
I'm sure he'd be very flattered.
You know, my dear...
maybe I was a bit too dismissive...

about your friend Whitfield's book.
Perhaps he and Elizabeth
could come over this weekend...
and walk me through it, as they say.
Lovely woman, Elizabeth.
Well, I was hoping
you could come to the set tomorrow.
Yes. Well, I'll see how
my day shapes up.
Yes.
with it, don't you? But you can't.
You think they can't tell,
but they can.
They know.
You can feel that noose tighten
around that breakable little neck.
You could return the money secretly,
but what would that prove? It's too late.
Poor Marion Crane, always so tight,
so respectable, so prim and so proper.
Perfect, untouchable,
unsullied Miss Crane.
Daddy's perfect little angel.
And now they all know those dirty little
secrets you've been hiding so long.
Messy, sticky, little lunchtime trysts...
with that oh-so-handsome failure
Mister Samuel Loomis.
They'll smirk, they'll gossip
and they'll whisper.
Even your boss, strait-laced,
hatchet-faced Mister George Lowery...
why even he can smell the rancid,
pungent scent of sex all over you!
All right, circle that and print it.
Let's get this thing fixed once and for all.
I'm sick and tired of it. Come on.
Why is it breaking down all the time?
Okay, what's it going to take to reset?
Come in.
I thought you could use
a little pick-me-up.
- You're so sweet. Thank you.
- Not at all.

- Here, have a seat.

- Thanks.

I can't imagine your husband would be too pleased with what just happened.

Well, you know...

with Tony and the kids, you'd be surprised what comes out of their mouths sometimes.

You haven't spoken to him much about your personal life, have you?

- Hitch?

- Mmm-hmm.

No. Not really.

I would keep it that way if I were you.

Why?

Well, it starts with him wanting to choose your hairstyle. Then, he wants to choose your clothes... and your friends, and how many children you should have.

You know that poor, tortured soul Jimmy Stewart played in Vertigo?

Hmm.

That's Hitch.

Only younger, slimmer and better-looking.

Well, I don't know.

Compared to Orson Welles, he's a sweetheart.

He's always watching.

- Yeah?

- How long is this going to take?

- Give me five minutes.

- Get a move on, I haven't got all day.

Why does it keep burning out all the time?

Just get it fixed.

So what's the hold-up?

- It's still engaged.

- All right, give it to me, I'll try it.

- Here, I've dialed.

- Hitch.

I'm stuck on Lila's first scene.

I don't know how strongly I should confront Sam and the detective...

Darling, just fake it. Fake it.
You know how to do that. Act.
Where are my revisions?
Come on, does it really require two men
to carry a light stand?
Hilton!
I'll take care of
it right away, Mr. Hitchcock.
It makes all the difference
when the money's
coming out of your own pocket, doesn't it?
I'll make reservations for 1:30.
Whit. What would I do without you?
Until then, bye-bye.
Bye.
Whit? What did you forget now?
Whit?
Whit?
- Mister Hitchcock, sir, please.
- No, no.
Every press outlet is dying for photos.
If we could just get one photo...
Get off my set! I'll have security...
Get off my set. Just go.
Get rid of this man. He's a bloody pest.
Get him off the set, now.
- Are you okay? You've gone very pale.
- I told you to get away.
Stop following me around like a puppy dog
and get me a drink.
- It's not even three!
- Then give me the key to the cabinet.
Hello, Hitch. How's the picture?
I'm hearing interesting things.
It's a miracle anyone can hear anything...
above the noise coming from
Geoffrey Shurlock's office.
You know, I shouldn't be in a position
of just hearing things, Hitch.
- It's time you showed me some footage.
- Why?
To see if you're making a picture
Paramount can actually release.
As you well know...

my contract guarantees me final cut.
Your contract also says...
Paramount isn't required to distribute
any film that could
cause us embarrassment.
Unlike the last five Martin and Lewis films
you're all so proud of.
I demand to see some footage!
Hitch!
You show me some damn footage now!
Hitch!
You have no idea how wonderful it is
not to have to look after someone.
I mean, even if it's just for two hours.
So, where are we going, Whit?
You haven't told me.
I have a little surprise.
Ooh.
Where's your driver?
I have been asking myself
the same thing.
Well, I can give you a ride
if you'd like.
- Mmm-hmm.
What are these things?
I keep looking at them, what are they?
Candy corn. Girls love them.
Candy corn.
I nicked them from Tony's dressing room.
- Oh.
- Mmm-hmm.
Very nice.
I thought you only liked
those Fauchon chocolates.
Well, needs must when the devil drives,
my dear.
Luckily, I'm driving.
- Thank God for that.
with his leading ladies.
It's just that this time it feels like
he's using them against me.
Well, I suppose he's like any great artist.
Impossible to live with,
but worth the effort.

Did you know, before we got together,
I was his boss?
He had to work his way up to Assistant
Director before he dared ask me out.
- Really?
- Mmm-hmm.
Huh.
You see that house over there?
- Yes.
- What do you think of it?
It's lovely, isn't it?
What a great position.
It's mine.
I just talked to Elizabeth,
she didn't say anything about it.
She doesn't know anything about it.
Nobody does.
Do you want to see it?
Well, thank you, my dear.
Any time.
- Can I keep these?
- Absolutely.
- Would you like one?
All right, well, thank you.
- Hitch?
- What?
What really did happen
with you and Vera?
Oh...
Vera.
See, she was going to play the lead
in Vertigo.
And two weeks before filming,
she told me she was pregnant, and...
I was going to make her into a star...
but she chose the life
of a housewife instead.
Why do they do it, I wonder?
Why do they always betray me?
Oh!
Very bohemian.
I just leased it for the off season.
A place to get away from the wife, kids,
and write.

Whit, I hope you don't have
the wrong idea.
If you were serious
about helping me adapt my book...
I thought that this might make
the perfect...
hideaway.
Relax.
Naughty boys, calm down.
Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you...
I read your treatment of that story, the...
Taxi to... Where was it, dear?
Dubrovnik.
That's it. Dubrovnik, yeah.
Well, would you care to hear my opinion?
Well, yes, naturally.
Right-o then.
Well, my dear,
there's no other way of saying it, is there?
But it's, you know, stillborn.
How so?
First of all,
the plot's a bit of a muddle, isn't it?
And some of those jokes are awfully like
the ones we did so much better...
hundreds of years ago
in *The Lady Vanishes*.
Also, your villain is rather weak,
I'm afraid.
Well, it's very weak, in fact.
But I think the big failure...
is the relationship
between the heroine and the hero...
you see?
Probably, if you weren't so smitten
with your friend Whitfield Cook...
you'd be able to see that, wouldn't you?
But then I suppose women
never really care to face the truth...
when their hearts are involved, do they?
How would you know what really goes on
between a man and a woman?
My God, what a bloody mess.
Bloody mess.

More! More!
Come on!
No!
More anger!
All right, cut! Cut, cut!
For God's sake!
Will someone get me
a proper stunt double?
Now, give me the knife!
Like this!
Ungovernable rage!
Homicidal violence!
Cut! Cut and print.
We've got it.
Not now, Ed.
It's really not the time.
You just can't keep the stuff
bottled up.
God!
Hitch, are you all right?
Can you hear me?
Alma...
What if Bridget and Constantine
get into the cab at the same time?
No, what if they try and get in
at exactly the same time?
Yes.
What do you mean exactly?
I mean they both reach for the cab door
at exactly the same time.
- They quickly touch.
- Yes.
We start on the hands...
- we pan up to the eyes and...
Oh, that feels better already.
Are you going to get that?
What?
you have to get this sequence shot today.
What's the hold-up?
and it looks terrible.
It has to be a high angle.
You'll tip off the big surprise.
Just get the process shot.
to the camera crane if he's waving his arms?

Why don't you just push Arbogast
from the top of the stairs?

Bloody idiots, they are.

- What are you doing?

- No more phone calls.

- No, but I've got to...

- You're burning up.

Yeah, burning up our money.

That's what we're doing.

We're two days behind

and I'm stuck in this bloody bed.

- Where do you think you're going?

- I've got to go to the set.

- We can't lose another day.

- You stay in bed!

I'll deal with it.

I'd hate to take you away
from your writing partner.

- You stay under the blankets, Alfred.

- Mrs. Hitchcock.

- Morning.

Where's Mister Hitchcock?

Well, don't stop work because of me.

I'm only here as one of the two people
paying your salaries.

- What's the scene number?

- 173.

- Storyboards?

- Here.

All right, put Martin in the chair,
turn the camera around to face him.

We'll shoot the fall
against a rear screen.

And Jack, that lens should be a 35.

Well, David, you know

how Paramount loves Jerry Lewis...

but this one is right up your alley,
and I would consider...

Barney?

Alma!

You know David Kirkpatrick.

- Hello.

- Hello.

He's working with Jerry Lewis,

developing a new picture...
so he's free to help if you need it.
That won't be necessary.
But you're nearly three days behind.
Yes, well, we can manage.
Alma, we both know
what kind of film this is.
Now, the smart thing to do
would be to help Hitch finish it.
Thank you for your concern, Barney...
but on a Hitchcock picture,
there is only one director.
No need to gawp.
A man like you
missing the vital clue like that.
What do you mean?
My mother always said...
if you want to do a job...
do it right.
Check the floor.
Closer.
Do you still think
they're just writing together?
What are you going to do about it?
Oh, Mrs. Hitchcock.
I know Hitch isn't feeling very well,
so I got him a little something.
Oh! How kind! Thank you very much.
Candy corn.
Well, he's always been
very considerate with me...
and I haven't always had that
from my directors.
Janet, I'd just like to say that...
you've been very professional.
It hasn't gone unappreciated.
Thank you.
Lovely seeing you.
You too.
May I turn that down?
Well, you'll be pleased to know
that order has been restored.
And a thank you would be nice.
We're still two days behind,

and \$60,000 over budget.
Well, I've canceled the wrap party.
That'll save us \$2,000 right there...
and you won't be tempted
by any champagne and cake.
Beware, all men are potential murderers.
And for good reason.
All right, what's this all about?
Spending a lot of time at the beach?
Yes.
Yes, it's where Whit and I are writing.
He's rented a place.
Hardly the ideal situation
to avoid distractions.
Actually, it's very conducive
to creative collaboration.
I've already told you
that treatment's a waste of time.
Didn't they say the same thing
about Psycho?
Are you and Whit having an affair?
Oh, don't be absurd!
He's working on something new,
he just needs a little help, that's all.
Oh, what a coincidence.
I'm working on something new
and I could use a little help, too!
What do you think I've been doing?
Why are you spending all the hours of day
and night with that
talentless mummy's boy?
Because it's fun!
I'm under extraordinary pressures
on this picture...
and the least you could do
is give me your full support!
Full support?
We've mortgaged our house!
And might I remind you, I have weighed in
on every aspect of this film so far...
as I have done on every film you've made
in the last three decades.
The first time you show the film,
it will be my notes that you want.

I celebrate with you when the reviews
are good, I cry for you when they are bad.
I host your parties...
and I put up with those fantasy romances
with your leading ladies.
And when you're out promoting this film
around the world...
I will be there beside
or, rather, slightly behind you...
smiling endlessly for the press,
even though I'm ready to drop.
And being gracious to people
who look through me as if I were invisible...
or elbow me aside,
because all they can see...
is the great and glorious genius,
Alfred Hitchcock.
And now, for the first time in years...
I dare to work on something that isn't
an Alfred Hitchcock production...
and I'm met with accusations
and criticisms?
The work I am doing with Whit
gives me pleasure and purpose...
and it takes
absolutely nothing away from you!
Consider this a reminder.
I am your wife, Alma Reville...
not one of those contract blondes
you badger and torment...
with your oh-so-specific directions.
Why didn't you stay with me?
I would have made you as big a star
as Grace Kelly.
Well, unlike Grace Kelly,
I can pick up my own dry-cleaning.
I've got a family, Hitch, a home.
That blonde woman of mystery
you're always after?
She's a fantasy.
She doesn't exist.
There was a time
when I thought I understood you.
Understood women.

Alma!
I thought you were coming
later this afternoon.
I thought you rented this place
so we could write.
I did.
You're not going to say anything,
are you?
Don't worry, I won't tell Elizabeth.
I mean to Hitch.
Alma...
we can't all be geniuses.
You're incredibly talented.
After all, we want him to read the script
with an open mind, don't we?
I wouldn't worry about that, Whit.
Arbogast said he'd call as soon
as he spoke with Mrs. Bates.
That was yesterday evening.
Norman's mother up at the motel?
He rang me right
after she called out to him.
your detective must be a few cups in.
Mrs. Bates died of strychnine poison
more than ten years ago.
was black and blue...
I just shut the door...
make the world go away.
Don't you ever get lonely out here?
I can always talk to my mother.
That's strange.
I think we've found his hiding place!
That's my mother's room.
- That's my mother's room.
You can't go in there!
Don't go in my mother's room!
Hitch!
- So, what's the verdict?
Let's just say it was a four-letter review,
and it wasn't "good."
Screw him!
It's too late for Paramount to back out,
no matter what Balaban says.
You know, the other route is to recut it

as a two-parter for the TV series.
Because of the budget
and the Hitchcock name,
we stand a good chance of breaking even.
Look, I made Jimmy Stewart a millionaire
on Winchester '73.
And that was a dog.
At least I could sit through your picture.
More importantly...
what does Alma think?
- I was afraid you'd try to blame yourself.
- I'm not talking of blame.
Lee, how can you make plans
when you're so confused?
writing for Colbert.
How was the beach?
Cold and miserable.
Just like Barney Balaban's face.
- Goodbye.
Poor old Whit.
He isn't worth a damn
when he's not working with you.
Neither am I.
I couldn't pull off the picture this time.
It just sits there.
Refusing to come to life.
Well, there's no other way of saying it,
is there?
It's stillborn.
I let you down, my love.
You deserve better.
I better go and feed
Geoffrey and Stanley.
Come on, boys.
Come on.
Good boys.
I don't think I can stand us both
being maudlin.
That tiresome little Hitchcock imitation
I've been helping Whit finish is done.
You know, there's only one solution
to all this.
That we get back to work together.
The fact is,

I rather like living in this house.
So I suggest, for everyone's sake,
we start whipping Psycho into shape.
You may not be
the easiest man to live with...
but you do know how to cut a picture
better than anyone else.
Except for you.
The second take,
the light is much better on the hands.
Only cut back to Janet
once her car's already moving.
Cut it tighter.
Oh, you imp. You've got nudity in there!
Well, her breasts were rather large.
It was a challenge not to show them.
You'll have to cut those
six or seven frames...
where she blinks
after she's supposed to be dead.
Alma, we've viewed the film
a thousand times.
She does not blink.
How's it going in there?
Swimmingly.
Well, everyone's saying
it's like a dog with fleas.
I do not want music
over the shower murder scene.
But what Alma and I talked about
is really going to play.
Bernie, this is not Vertigo.
It's not a romantic movie!
The images must work on their own.
Yes, but you can't scare people
just by going "boo."
All right, you do it then.
You know best.
Hitch, they have to anticipate it.
Just take a step back!
Well, thank God we have Cinderfella
for the holidays.
unbelievable music. Just listen.
What do you think?

I think I'll never have a shower again.
It's getting there.
I distinctly saw
both the stabbing and the nudity.
What you think you're seeing is purely
informed by the power of suggestion.
I assure you,
once you view the final version...
with Mister Herrmann's
lovely, lyrical score...
A lyrical score
is not going to change my opinion.
We're denying your seal.
Geoffrey, would you mind
if we had a word in private, please?
Thank you.
Now, look here...
I have a modest proposal to make.
If you're willing to leave
the shower sequence as it is...
I will reshoot the opening love scene
to your exact specifications.
In fact, I would welcome
your personal supervision on the set.
To my specifications?
Well, of course, my dear fellow.
If only audiences
could fully comprehend...
how tirelessly you work
to help us entertain them...
while protecting them
from filth and indecency, well...
He's been harassing you
since you announced this project...
you invite him to the set,
and he doesn't even show up.
I mean, what did you tell him?
That I respected him deeply.
Ladies and gentlemen, that is a wrap.
Thank you all very much.
Thank you, John. Thank you, Janet.
I thought we were reshooting the scene.
The charade is over.
- Thank you.

See? I wasn't that much of a monster
to work with, was I?
Not at all.
And I hope
I was sufficiently loyal to the cause.
Worthy of a Purple Heart, my dear.
I told Mrs. Bates
she could use your dressing room.
- That's splendid. Splendid.
- Yes.
Thank you.
Thank you.
We have the seal
from the Shurlock office.
So now, we'll lead the lambs
to the slaughter.
Paramount confirmed they're only opening
the movie in two theaters,
as we suspected.
And no premiere.
If we don't get word of mouth,
we're dead.
Then, we'd better get started.
Peggy, take a memo.
We're going to write a manual
on how to sell Psycho.
My first instruction
to theater owners...
hire Pinkerton guards to strictly enforce
our unique admission policies.
There may be riots here tonight.
is so terrifying and unique...
the guards can help you deal
with customers who run amuck.
Post our special lobby clocks...
...to remind audiences
of the starting times for Psycho.
of this fine motion picture theater...
has been advised not to allow
anyone to enter the theater...
once Psycho begins.
Now, should you be so foolish
as to attempt to slip in...
by a side entrance, a fire escape

or through a skylight...
you will be ejected by brute force.
More playful, darling.
the sheer, unrelenting shock...
and suspense of Psycho...
right after the closing title,
"The End"...

we strongly recommend
that you close your house curtains...
over the screen for a full 30 seconds.
By doing so...
the horror of Psycho
will be indelibly etched...
in the mind and heart of your audience.
Sincerely and emphatically...
Alfred Hitchcock.

Well, at least
there are some people here, Hitch.
We've roped off some seats for you.
All right. You go on ahead.
- Oh, are you sure?
- Yes, I'll be with you in a moment.
I'm just going to check the prints,
you go on.
All right, darling.
We'll save you a seat.
All right, go on.
- This way, Mister Hitchcock.
- Mmm-hmm.

I just got off the phone with Balaban.
He said, "Congratulations."
"A well-deserved triumph,
as we always knew."
- "As we always knew."
Does this mean
I can take the weekend off now?
Yes, dear, and thank you so much.
Where's Alma?
Go on.
Alma, come here.
You know, darling, this could be
the biggest success of your career.
Our career.
You know, Alma...

I will never be able to find
a Hitchcock blonde...
as beautiful as you.
I've waited 30 years
to hear you say that.
And that, my dear,
is why they call me...
The Master of Suspense.
Psycho turned out to be
one of my greatest achievements.
And Alma and I got to keep the house...
and the swimming pool.
But you know what they say
in Hollywood.
"You're only as good
as your last picture."
So, if you'll excuse me,
I had better toddle away...
to begin the exhaustive search
for my next project.
Unfortunately, I find myself,
once again...
quite bereft of any inspiration.
However...
I do hope something comes along soon.
Good evening.