

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
Jason Zimmerman, MA

***Frenzy* (1972)**

Alfred Hitchcock

OVERVIEW

Director Sir Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980) is a household name and perhaps the best-known British filmmaker. With over 50 films to his credit, Hitchcock helped to shape the modern understanding of the thriller genre. His best-known films include *The Birds*, *Vertigo*, and *Psycho*, all of which have earned accolades, including preservation by the US Film Registry. In 1960, Hitchcock was inducted into the Hollywood Walk of Fame with two stars for his work in both film and television. He was also the first recipient of the BAFTA Academy Fellowship Award.

Film Hitchcock's only R-rated film, *Frenzy* was based on the 1966 novel *Goodbye Piccadilly, Farewell Leicester Square* by Arthur La Bern. Hitchcock announced the project in 1968, but filming would not begin until the summer of 1971. Despite offers from notables such as Vladimir Nabokov, Hitchcock decided to go with a fresh face, hiring Anthony Shaffer, who had only one previous screenplay to his name. Likewise, newcomers to Hollywood productions such as Barry Foster and Billie Whitelaw were cast in leading roles. Perhaps learning from his straight-man flops of the past few releases, Hitchcock pledged that the film would be produced with a comedic edge. Some of these jokes still land today and are reminiscent of the director's earlier works.

Background Critics both contemporary and modern still name *Frenzy* as Hitchcock's most sickening portrayal of murder. Rusk's crimes are often committed in full view of the camera, shocking even today's audiences with their brutality and realness: It takes some time to strangle a person to death, and simply confronting that reality often results in revulsion from viewers. Renowned film composer Henry Mancini was originally hired as the film's composer, but Ron Goodwin replaced him because Hitchcock felt the latter's light style fit the comedic feel of many of the film's key moments better. It's still possible to visit the site in London where the film was shot, however, none of the businesses—most notably the fruit market—remain in operation. With a budget of \$2 million, the box-office return was a hefty \$12.6 million, dwarfing the take of Hitchcock's two previous spy thrillers combined.

CINEMATIC NARRATION

Frenzy is a surprisingly unremarkable film among Hitchcock's work. This is not to say it is a bad film or among his weaker titles, just that he reuses many plot points and camera tricks that he's used in previous films. Many moments in the film seem like they were shot during the silent era, and different viewers feel differently about this. Some feel it is a testament to Hitchcock's strong style and skill behind the camera, while others see it as a doddering lack of originality on Hitchcock's part, the death-throes of a once-great director. One element that stands out in *Frenzy* is the use of suspenseful camera movements, pulling the viewer away from the action they *know* is coming. The film remains very entertaining to modern viewers, despite its lack of originality in storytelling and filmmaking.

SYNOPSIS

After a terrible day, having lost his job and a potentially life-changing horse bet, Richard Blaney seeks out his ex-wife, Brenda, for advice. After arguing, Blaney apologizes, and Brenda invites him to dinner. At the end of the night, she slips cash into his coat pocket, which Richard only discovers when a man tries to steal it while they sleep in a Salvation Army flophouse. The next day, Blaney's friend Bob Rusk visits Brenda's matchmaking agency. Rejected many times for his sexual sadism, Rusk is again turned away. After she sends her secretary to lunch, Rusk rapes and strangles Brenda.

Moments after Rusk leaves, Blaney arrives to talk to Brenda about the money. No one answers, so he leaves, spotted by Brenda's returning secretary. When Brenda's body is discovered, the secretary tells the police about Blaney, making him the prime suspect in the "necktie murders." Richard meets his lover Babs at a hotel. Convinced of his innocence, they seek refuge with one of Richard's former RAF mates. Blaney asks Babs to retrieve his belongings from the pub where he once lived and worked.

On her way back, Babs encounters Rusk, who invites her to his flat. There, he rapes and strangles her, hiding her body in a sack of potatoes. After disposing of the body, he realizes she grabbed his distinctive 'R' tie pin while she was being strangled. He boards the truck to retrieve it, leading to a suspenseful sequence where he hides from the driver as the truck moves across London. When Babs' body is discovered, Blaney is blamed again.

Blaney turns to Rusk for help, unknowingly entrusting the real killer. Rusk tricks Blaney, leading him to his flat and informing the police. In prison, Blaney protests his innocence and plots revenge. To escape, he injures himself. With the help of other inmates at the hospital, Blaney drugs an orderly and escapes from the hospital. Disguised in a lab coat, Blaney heads to Rusk's flat with a tire iron. Rusk is absent, but a dead woman is found with a necktie around her throat. A police inspector, expecting Blaney to seek Rusk, arrives. Just as Blaney is about to be taken into custody, Rusk returns with a large trunk to dispose of the body. Caught red-handed, Rusk is arrested.

CHARACTERS

Richard Blaney – A former bartender blamed for the necktie murders

Bob Rusk – The owner of a London fruit market who acts on his sadistic psychosexual urges *Babs*

Milligan – Barmaid at The Globe, Richard's lover

Brenda Blaney – Richard's ex-wife, owner of a matchmaking agency in London

Felix Forsythe – Manager of The Globe

Chief Inspector Timothy Oxford – Chief inspector of Scotland Yard

Mrs. Oxford – Oxford's wife

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Mr. Blaney

Blaney is a down-on-his-luck former RAF pilot. Driven to outbursts and a lover of booze, he often finds himself at odds with his employers, leading to his unfair dismissal from his job at the beginning of the film. Because of his attitude, many easily suspect him of being the necktie killer.

Spontaneous Blaney has a problem with forethought. While he's not dishonest and pays at the end of the day, he does take drinks on the clock while working as a barman. This results in him being fired unfairly for stealing. Instead of being reasonable and allowing Babs to speak in his defense, Blaney throws his change at the bar and storms off. His spontaneity allows him to escape from the police at the hotel, but it also lands him in their custody when he trusts the wrong man. Rusk, having turned him in, becomes the focus of Blaney's anger, leading to a spontaneous and almost comically successful attempt at revenge. Understanding Blaney's attitudes, the chief inspector rushes to Rusk's flat to stop Blaney, and in doing so catches Rusk red-handed. In a strange way, Blaney's spontaneous nature proves his innocence.

Angry Blaney has some obvious anger issues. We see this right off the bat when he argues with the manager of The Globe, his place of work. Blaney doesn't talk about his predicament when being fired, instead yelling about it and pelting the bar with coins in a temper tantrum. Blaney's anger is so intense, he leads the secretary at the Blaney Bureau to believe he is a physically violent man when he can't contain his shouts and hits the desk. In reality, he just has anger problems and is in the middle of a very bad day. His anger marks him as a potential suspect when the secretary fingers him as the prime suspect to police

and once again when he has to be dragged to the holding cells by force, swearing violent revenge against Rusk.

Dishonest Blaney has a problem with honesty. He often lies to keep up appearances, such as telling Rusk he doesn't need money or that he won money on a horse, or when he lies to Babs about where he found the twenty pounds. His dishonesty is a mechanism for avoiding embarrassment, but it feeds into the anger he feels. Because he can't be honest about simple things (like his ex-wife giving him some money to help him out), he can't be honest with himself about the source of his problems. He seems to blame everyone else for his woes when his biggest problems are drinking too much too often and anger, predicaments only he can address. His dishonesty lands him in trouble when he has to explain himself to the people who offer him shelter halfway through the film. The lies he and his ex-wife stated on their divorce papers make him look far more violent than he is. These lies help land Blaney in jail for murder, all because he didn't want to wait for the proper proceedings for a divorce.

Bob Rusk

Bob Rusk is, to all appearances, the charming owner of a flourishing produce market. Under the surface, however, he is a violent sexual sadist. His desires lead him to rape and kill several women over the course of the film.

Planner Rusk seems to have everything planned out. The only times things don't seem to go to plan are when Babs manages to grab his monograph tie pin before she is strangled to death and when the chief inspector is in his flat at the end of the film. Beyond that, Rusk seems practically unstoppable, killing almost at will because of his planning abilities. His most devious plan, to betray Blaney to the police, almost lets him get away with murder, but in a twist, it leads the chief inspector right to his flat when Blaney tries to enact his revenge. Even when his plans go wrong, such as with the tie pin, he is able to quickly formulate and enact a new plan. This trait makes Rusk a particularly apt foe.

Witty Rusk takes extra time to appear witty, often throwing humorous barbs into conversation. As a narcissist, he wants to be the center of attention and often uses his wit to do just that. His charming demeanor helps him to cover his sadistic sexual desires and rage with a society that shuns people like him. His wit also helps him to come up with plans on the fly, such as when he betrays Blaney to the police. This is a smart thing for him to do as the killer since it throws the police off his scent and makes him look like a good citizen.

Cruel We see Rusk's cruelty firsthand for an uncomfortable amount of time. Without dwelling on the rape and murder of Mrs. Blaney for too long, we can clearly see the sadistic pleasure he gets not just from the ultimate killing, but also from toying with his prey. He wants to hear her beg and plead before he gets his way. His cruelty shows up again when he misleads Babs into thinking she can stay the night at his 'empty' flat, getting her alone before attacking and killing her. In another act of cruelty, Rusk betrays Blaney with a very similar trick, getting the fugitive into his flat before informing the police.

Chief Inspector Oxford

The chief inspector is a complex man. On the one hand, he is introspective and intelligent. On the other, he cannot tell his wife that he doesn't like her versions of haute cuisine for fear of offending her, instead speaking about her to his co-workers behind her back. His dualities make him a skilled investigator, able to get into the mind of a killer while also keeping critical secrets from those he is investigating.

Hasty This trait plays out in different ways throughout the film. We see it first in his voracious appetite, starving himself at night to please his wife's curious obsession with European cooking. He shoves the meals he eats at work into his face with incredible haste. His hasty attitude extends to the investigation of Mrs. Blaney's murder, settling on the easy choice rather than doing all the work to prove Blaney is, without a reasonable doubt, the same man who has committed several similar rapes and murders. While his haste leads him in the wrong direction at first, it eventually serves the Chief Investigator well. Because

he rushes to catch Blaney before he can attempt revenge against Rusk, he catches Rusk in the act of moving a corpse.

Thoughtful It's in the second half of the film that we see this trait most in the chief inspector. Struck by the outbursts Blaney makes at his trial, the chief inspector thinks long and hard about the claims and finds some validity in them. The law, however, requires proof. Thinking back, he takes a photograph of Rusk to several witnesses he's already interviewed, having them positively identify Rusk and mapping his movements over the past few days. During his "gourmet" dinner with his wife, he discusses the investigation in depth, showing us more of his thought process. The Inspector's thoughtful attitude allows him to understand Blaney enough to try and stop him once Blaney escapes from prison to get his revenge on Rusk.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In what ways does *Frenzy* resemble some of Hitchcock's earlier thrillers?

How would you describe the way Hitchcock builds suspense in this film?

How does the on-screen presence of murder and nudity in *Frenzy* differ from other Hitchcock films, such as *Psycho*?

Did you notice any holes in the plot or inconsistencies in characterization?

PLOT

"It's a woman"- The film's opening credits roll over footage of the Thames captured from a helicopter. From this vantage, we see a group of people gathered by the quayside, listening to a man speak. He boasts of their environmental efforts to restore the Thames while the onlookers take photographs and clap. "Look!" a man shouts suddenly, interrupting the proceedings. Something large and pale drifts through the water toward the riverside below the group. "It's a woman!" a woman cries as the shape of a nude woman floating face down becomes clear. The speech forgotten, all the journalists and onlookers push their way to get a glimpse while a nearby police officer walks down to the river to investigate. "She's been strangled," a journalist remarks. "Another necktie murder."



Pub- From a shot of the dead woman with a tie around her neck, the scene jumps to a man tying his necktie around his neck in preparation for his daily work. He soon walks down a set of stairs and into a pub where he serves as the barman. He pours himself a double shot of liquor and begins drinking when the pub's manager emerges from a nearby office. "Cheers, squadron leader," he says sarcastically. "It may come as something of a surprise to you, Blaney, but in this pub we sell liquor, we don't give it away. Still less do we expect our employees to steal it." Blaney defends himself, saying that he always pays for his drinks, but the manager won't hear it, telling him he's fired. The barmaid appears, asking what's going on before defending Blaney, confirming that he always pays for the drinks he takes. "Just keep out of this, Babs," the bar manager says before telling Blaney to get out. Blaney obliges, paying for his final drink by showering the bar with whatever coins were in his pocket. Babs follows him out, giving him a goodbye



Gossip with the sergeant- Blaney makes his way to an outdoor fruit market where he meets his friend Bob Rusk, the owner. "I was just coming over for a quick one!" Rusk says before Blaney tells him he's been fired. Rusk offers his support both financially and in finding a job, but Blaney turns him down, saying he'll figure something out. He does give Blaney a box of grapes as a gift before giving him a tip on a good horse to bet on that afternoon in the hopes of improving his friend's luck. "Good morning, Mr. Rusk," a policeman says, interrupting their conversation. Rusk turns his attention to the sergeant, asking him what news he's heard. They gossip for a moment about the necktie murders. Rusk turns to introduce Blaney to



Psychosexual diagnosis- Blaney makes his way into a pub to try and find a new job. There, he overhears a pair of posh men gossiping about the killing. They go into graphic detail about the probable psychosexual urges the necktie killer must possess, joking darkly about the killings despite some obvious discomfort of those around them. "On the surface," one of the gentlemen says, "in casual conversation they appear as ordinary, likable adult fellows. But emotionally they remain as dangerous children, who may revert to primitive, subhuman conduct at any moment." After his drink at the pub and overhearing the men at the bar, Blaney wanders down the road where he's spotted by Rusk who informs him that his horse has won, and the odds were 20 to 1. Blaney pretends that he placed his bet, but after they part, he bumps on the grapes Rusk gifted him earlier.



The Blaney Bureau- Dramatic music plays while Blaney makes his way to a building with a sign out front that says "The Blaney Bureau: Friendship and Marriage." On his way up the stairs, he encounters a happy new couple exiting the matchmaker's office and eavesdrops on their comic conversation before entering the office and introducing himself to the new secretary. She is obviously upset by Blaney's boisterous behavior, but conducts herself professionally nonetheless, informing Mrs. Blaney that he's there to see her. In the office, Blaney kisses his ex-wife on the cheek and greets her warmly. After a few minutes, he becomes irritable, yelling at Brenda about his misfortune and her good fortune. Mrs. Blaney sends the secretary to lunch early before speaking with her ex-husband in private. Before the secretary leaves, she overhears Mr. Blaney yell about violence and slam his hand down on Brenda's desk.



"Bad day, that's all" - Eventually, Brenda gets up to comfort Mr. Blaney, but he brushes her off. "Oh, but we are bitter today," she comments. "I'm sorry," Mr. Blaney apologizes. "I've had a bad day, that's all. I lost my job." He tells her about being fired and not having money to put on Rusk's winning horse before musing, "These things always go in threes. I wonder what the rest of the day has in store." "Dinner with me," Mrs. Blaney says, "I hope." Mr. Blaney tries to say no, but she insists, saying she'll pay and writing down the address for him.



Dinner- "Thanks for a lovely evening," Mr. Blaney says to his ex-wife in a bustling restaurant. They've finished their coffees and are awaiting apéritifs. "A damn sight better than the leftovers at The Globe..." "You ought to get married again, Richard," Mrs. Blaney says. "You ought to know I'm no good at it," he quips back. "Ten years. It was a good job you got out when you did." Mrs. Blaney says that she's had good luck with her business, and Mr. Blaney gets angry, accusing her of belittling him and his poor luck. He starts yelling his complaints about his life, and eventually, Mrs. Blaney tries to quiet him. He refuses to quiet down, yelling louder to embarrass her as their apéritifs arrive.



Sleeping rough- Clutching his brandy, he begins insulting her, but he doesn't finish as he grips his brandy glass so tightly it shatters in his hand. Shocked to his senses by the pain, he apologizes, and they leave, spending a little time together at Mrs. Blaney's apartment afterward. Mr. Blaney spends the night at a Salvation Army flophouse, where he discovers Mrs. Blaney slipped some cash into his jacket pocket of the night.



Mr. Robinson- Sometime the next day, Mrs. Blaney touches up her makeup in her office. Bob Rusk barges into her office and closes the door behind him, giving Mrs. Blaney a funny look. "It's you again, Mr. Robinson," Mrs. Blaney says, unable to hide her displeasure. She tells him he'll have to see her secretary to make an appointment when Rusk tells her he specifically waited for her to be alone: "You're the one I wanted to see." Mrs. Blaney insists there's nothing she can do to help him, reminding him that she doesn't run an escort service for sexual sadists. In an outburst that startles Mrs. Blaney, Rusk flamboyantly flips through her files, demanding to know what makes him different, what makes him an imperfect match for any woman. Eventually, Rusk admits to his infatuation with Mrs. Blaney. "You're my type of woman," he says in a gentle voice. "Don't be ridiculous," Mrs. Blaney replies, but Rusk pushes on, veiled sexual comment.



Gripped by fear- "I've just remembered a call I've got to make," Mrs. Blaney says, barely holding fear from her voice. Rusk puts his thumb on the receiver, saying, "There's no reason to call the police." "What made you think I was going to call the police?" Mrs. Blaney says, still feigning calm. "Just intuition, I suppose," Rusk replies with a hauntingly friendly grin. He then sits on her desk and presses her to join him for lunch. As a diversionary tactic, she accepts and asks to go wash her hands when Rusk tackles her and begins to assault her.



You're my type"- Mrs. Blaney begs him to stop, but he pushes her into a chair. Mrs. Blaney kicks him away and makes a run for the door, but Rusk grabs her leg and sends her tumbling painfully to the floor. Rusk then puts her back in the chair and pins her down with his body while she begs for him to take her money and leave. "It's you I want," he replies between heavy breaths. "You're my type." In a long, sickening sequence, Rusk rapes Mrs. Blaney. When he's finished, he wraps his tie around her neck and, in another sickeningly long sequence, pulls the ends until Mrs. Blaney is still, and her tongue hangs out of her mouth. He then leaves the agency.



Call to Barbara- As Rusk disappears into the crowds of London's busy streets, Mr. Blaney comes walking up a nearby alley and enters the agency, looking to get in touch with his ex-wife. When no one answers the door, he decides to leave. Just as he exits, Mrs. Blaney's secretary returns from her lunch break, catching a glimpse of Mr. Blaney hurrying down a nearby alley. The music and all other sounds stop when the secretary disappears into the building, and after a few tense moments, she shrieks, having discovered Mrs. Blaney's body. In a phone booth, Mr. Blaney calls The Globe and asks for Babs. The manager tries to argue with him, but Babs takes the phone. Blaney asks Babs to grab his belongings and meet him later that afternoon. Babs, smiling, reminds him that it's her half-day, and agrees to meet him at



Witness testimony- Back at the Blaney Bureau, cops swarm around the office, taking pictures. Another few officers stand around the secretary, asking her about her day. She says she had been out to lunch at a pub only a few minutes' walk away. The questioning is interrupted by the arrival of an inspector, who asks for a quick rundown of the crime and the victim. After a quick look at the body, the inspector begins taking the secretary's statement, learning that she saw Mr. Blaney exit the building just before she arrived. The secretary breaks into tears for a moment before she tells the police about the row she overheard the day before. Afterward, she gives a startlingly detailed description of Blaney, noting his



Taxi ride- Somewhere along London's streets, Mr. Blaney smokes a cigarette when a black taxi cab comes to a screeching halt in front of him. Babs waves to him excitedly, and he jogs across the street to enter the cab, telling the driver to head to the Coburg Hotel. Babs asks where Blaney has been, and he replies, "I allowed myself to be pampered at a Salvation Army Hostel." He complains of the smell it left on his clothes. Babs wonders where he got the money to afford a hotel, and Blaney tells her that he just collected on an old debt. She accepts this explanation with a kiss but recoils at the stench coming from his jacket.



Coburg Hotel- The taxi rolls to a stop in front of the Coburg and Mr. Blaney pays the driver before grabbing his suitcase and entering with Babs. Inside, Blaney tells the woman at reception that he'd like a room with a double bed before giving a false name and taking Babs upstairs. The porter who accompanies them praises the quality of the room. Inside, Blaney begins stripping immediately, handing all his foul-smelling clothes to the porter with the request that they be laundered. Later that night, Babs and Blaney lay in bed. Babs stirs and stands, putting on her stockings before walking quickly to the bathroom. Slid beneath the door to the hotel room is a newspaper bearing the headline "Another Necktie Murder," illuminated by the moonlight.



Suspect description- "Oh dear," the porter says to himself, reading an identical paper at the front desk. "Take a look at this!" he calls to the woman who works reception. "Oh, that poor woman," she says, but the porter sticks his finger into the paper. "It's the jacket I'm talkin' about," he says emphatically. "See what it says?" The clothes described match what Mr. Blaney gave to the porter to be laundered. "Don't you see?" the porter says, "He's the necktie murderer, and we've got him upstairs at this very minute!" The porter calls the police, waiting for them to arrive before leading them upstairs to the room where Blaney and Babs are staying. Despite the quick response, Blaney and Babs are gone, having read the newspaper that was slid under their door. The police officers run to the open window and look out, seeing no one on the fire escape or the street below.



Escape- In a park somewhere, Blaney sits next to Babs on a bench. He looks very out of place in his hotel-provided pajamas. Mr. Blaney asks her if she thinks he could have raped and murdered his ex-wife. Babs expresses some doubts, but Blaney is able to explain away each one, especially the final nail in the coffin: Blaney only owns two ties. How could he go around murdering half a dozen women and not have been constantly replacing his ties? Babs tells him to go to the police, but he says they'd never believe him, nor would the jury he would likely face. Suddenly, a man shouts Blaney's name. Blaney and Babs grab each other's hands and run off, but they stop when the man shouts, "Dicko!" From a nearby high-rise building, a woman watches from a balcony with a stern look on her face. From her vantage, we watch the man shake hands with Blaney and Babs. After a few moments of conversation, he points at the building before walking toward it with them.



Hide out- Inside the apartment, the woman paces while the shouting man leads Babs and Blaney to the apartment. "Hetty," the man says, after mentioning their Air Force days, "you remember Dicko, don't you?" "Of course," the woman says, smiling. "Come in." After the introductions are made, Hetty asks after Mrs. Blaney, and Mr. Blaney says that she's dead. The pretenses disappear as the smile fades from Hetty's face: "Yes... and you killed her!" Mr. Blaney's former mate tries to defend him, saying Blaney has explained the situation, but Hetty is incensed and refuses to let him stay. She brings up that the Blaneys divorced because of Mr. Blaney's "extreme cruelty." Blaney explains this too, saying that it was the quickest way to get the divorce both of them desired, so he took the strike on his record to not be tied up in the courts for years. Hetty asks why he won't go to the police, but the others defend him, saying the police would never believe the story. Hetty says she'll have nothing to do with harboring a fugitive, and that if Blaney stays she doesn't know anything about it. Then, she leaves to go shopping. Blaney's RAF mate tells Babs he can get her a new job, and Blaney tells her to get her things from The Globe.



Scotland Yard- Inside Scotland Yard, the chief inspector eats greedily from a plate loaded with breakfast foods. Between forkfuls of egg and sausage, he takes bites from a stack of buttered bread on a nearby plate. His co-worker leans in and asks if he's enjoying his meal. The chief inspector begins complaining about his wife's newfound obsession with 'haute cuisine' and being starved each evening, unable to stomach what she serves. A young officer enters with a lab report showing traces of the same face powder found on Mrs. Blaney's purse and on the hotel bill signed by Blaney. While this seems circumstantial (the lady at the hotel's front desk could use the same powder), the chief inspector says it's a nail in the coffin for Blaney. They discuss sexual depravity, drawing connections between the rapes and Blaney's divorce report.



Phone tip- The phone rings, and the chief inspector answers, putting down his knife and fork for the first time in minutes. It's The Globe's manager, and he's interested in informing on his former employee. "Are you quite certain it's the same man?" the Inspector asks. The Globe's manager mentions that his barmaid, Babs, has been gone all night with Blaney and that he considers her to be in danger. After getting a description of Babs, the Inspector tells the manager that she was "alive at 8 o'clock this morning." The manager begins to complain about Babs not showing up for work, but the inspector cuts him off, telling him to keep an eye out for her as she'll likely return for her things "if she's still alive."



Scolding- The Globe's manager makes his way back behind the bar where Rusk sits discussing the woes of the potato business with another patron. Throughout the conversation, the manager looks at the people coming into the pub, expecting Babs to walk in at any moment. When she does, he moves to block her from walking upstairs. "Where do you think you've been?" he scolds her. "You took a hell of a chance, spending the night with a murderer." "How do you know what I did?" Babs quips, trying to move back upstairs. The manager tells her he was so worried that he even called the police, and they're sending over an officer to talk to her. Eventually, she storms off after telling him, "You can stuff your rotten job right up your jacksie!" Outside the pub, Rusk asks if she has somewhere to stay, offering his flat for the time being, claiming that he'll be away on vacation. They walk through the streets to his produce business, discussing the possibility.



"Keep your little secret"- After Babs agrees to Rusk's proposal, Rusk leads Babs through his business and toward his apartment, discussing her plans for the next few days. She claims she'll be leaving to stay with her sister in Southall, but Rusk doesn't buy it, asking, "Leaving your boyfriend in the lurch a bit, aren't you?" "He has to make up his own mind," Babs says, pretending she hasn't been in contact with Mr. Blaney. Eventually, Rusk comes right out and asks where Blaney is, but Babs says she promised not to tell. "Alright," Rusk says. "Keep your little secret." They finally make it to his flat, and he leads her upstairs, unlocking the door for her. "You're my type of woman," Rusk says with a smile while locking the door. The camera backs down the stairs and into the street.



'Gourmet' dinner- Sometime after dark, The chief inspector enters his home. He greets his wife who tells him she'll bring his dinner right out. "What's new in the case?" she asks him, brimming with curiosity. "Any sensational breaks?" "No," the Inspector says, sipping at a glass of whiskey. "I'll be glad when we get Mr. Richard Blaney inside, though." As they discuss his lack of luck in the investigation, she serves him a bowl of suspicious-looking soup, filled with baby octopus and unidentifiable fish. While stealthily putting portions of his soup back into the serving dish, he tells his wife they believe Blaney to be the culprit and outlines his understanding of the evidence. The Inspector's wife brings out the second course: "Caille aux raisins... Quail with grapes." The Inspector can barely hide his displeasure with such a small serving, but he begins eating away. During this time, the Inspector's wife outlines what she believes to be happening: Someone else is committing the murders. The Inspector chastises her gently before musing, "We've got



Something forgotten- In the dark of night, as quietly as possible, Rusk exits his apartment building dressed as a workman with something loaded onto a mover's dolly. He walks across the street to the fruit market where several trucks are lined up, loaded, and ready to be driven to their early-morning destinations. He loads a suspiciously heavy sack of potatoes into the rear of one of the trucks before stowing the dolly, removing his disguise, and walking back to his apartment. Back in his flat, he throws himself upon the couch and pours a glass of liquor in a celebration of the completion of his task. While picking his teeth some moments later, he realizes that his trademark tie pin is missing, realizing that Babs must have grabbed hold of it in her struggle while he strangled her earlier that day. Rusk quickly makes his way back to the parked truck, climbing into the back and trying to find Babs' hands among all the potatoes. While he searches, a driver appears, climbing into the truck's cab and maneuvering onto one of London's roads.

Spilled load- Trapped on the speeding truck and desperate to find the evidence that would tie him to Babs' murder, Rusk continues trying to remove Babs from the potato sack as quietly as he can, struggling as her rigid corpse seems to kick him repeatedly. The driver seems oblivious to anything, whistling a jaunty tune. Finally, Rusk manages to unearth Babs' clenched fists, but a bump in the road sends him flying into the air and a sack of potatoes hurtling out of the back of the cab. A carload of men shouts as they barely dodge the spilled sack of potatoes, and they manage to flag down the driver, telling him he's spilled a load. The driver stops and closes the tailgate, Rusk hiding by lying still underneath another bag. The truck begins moving again, and Rusk starts to struggle with Babs' fingers. They're locked around the tie pin because of rigor mortis. One by one, he breaks her fingers, eventually retrieving the pin. When the truck driver stops for a cup of coffee at a roadside café, Rusk sneaks out of the back of the truck and



“Do you see what I see?”- Back on the road, a police patrol notices the trucker’s load isn’t properly secured and attempts to pull him over. He brakes hard, causing the bag containing Babs to go tumbling to the ground. The police begin interrogating the driver.



Kicked out- “Wake up!” Hetty says to Blaney. “Get out!” Blaney is confused, stirred from a deep slumber. She accuses him of murdering Babs. “Get out of here!” she repeats. “I’d call the police myself if I knew how to without getting involved.” Blaney’s former RAF mate enters the room, telling him what he’s just heard over the radio about Babs. He then defends Blaney to his wife, saying there’s no way Blaney could have been in two places at once to commit the murder. The police believe Babs had been dead for at



Alibi- Hetty says she still doesn’t believe that Blaney isn’t the murderer, but her husband says, “We didn’t go to bed ‘til 11:00, and Dick was here with us then. They can’t be eight hours adrift!” He turns his attention to Blaney: “You’re in the clear! We can give you an alibi!” Hetty begins arguing with him anew, saying they’ll put him in jail for harboring a fugitive, but he refuses to back down: “We know he didn’t kill her. We must tell them he was with us.” Hetty keeps arguing, saying, “What is certain, if you go to the police, they will probably charge you with accessory after the fact.” The prospect of jail and missing his vacation seems to turn Hetty’s husband. “You’re my only alibi!” Blaney cries before growing angry and shouting.



The long way around- Police cars swarm around Rusk's fruit market. Inside, Rusk discusses the case with The Globe's manager. The manager gossips about having to fire Blaney for stealing before talking about the trauma of having to identify Babs down at Scotland Yard: "She wasn't a pretty sight, I can tell you." After The Globe's manager leaves, Rusk makes his way into the back, where he is surprised to see Blaney hiding among the stacks of crates. After conversing with him for a few minutes, Rusk convinces Blaney to stealthily make his way to his flat across the street, where he will harbor his old friend, and they split up. Posing as a worker to keep the police from noticing him, Blaney makes his way into the apartment. There, Blaney is welcomed by Rusk, who quickly leaves after asking Blaney to keep away from the windows. Blaney begins to relax, but not for long. The police quickly raid the flat and take him into custody. On his way to the police car, Blaney kicks and screams, blaming Rusk. Rusk, meanwhile,



Court- In a room somewhere in Scotland Yard, Mr. Blaney is informed of the accusations against him by the chief inspector. He reminds Blaney of his right to remain silent before the chief inspector begins going through his bags, finding some of Babs' items among his own. "It's Rusk!" Blaney cries out, only to be detained by a pair of detectives. A hard cut takes us to the hallway just outside a courtroom. The glass door opens to let a barrister pass, then closes, muffling the court proceedings.

Sentence-Unable to contain his curiosity, a nearby guard pushes the door open a crack to hear the judge speak the verdict: "... Blaney, you have been found guilty of a terrible crime... I only tell you that you must entertain no expectation or hope that you will escape the consequences of it." After he is sentenced to no less than 25 years in prison, Blaney begins kicking and screaming, giving the guards a hard time as they drag him away to the holding cells beneath the courthouse. "Rusk did it!" he shouts for all to hear. "I told out and kill you, you bastard."



Rusk under investigation- Blaney's outburst seems to have created uncertainty in the chief inspector. He sits alone in the courtroom, Blaney's words playing again and again in his head. The next day, a car drives around London. Inside, the chief inspector begins investigating Rusk's fruit market, starting with getting a mug shot of Rusk. He shows the picture to Mrs. Blaney's secretary, and she tells the Inspector that "Mr. William Robinson" had been a frequent patron despite "certain peculiarities" that made him a bad fit for their matchmaking agency. After explaining the nature and behavior of men with such sexual proclivities, the secretary asks the chief inspector if he has a reason for investigating "Robinson." He says "Confidential."



Ambulance- Blaney is being led around the prison by two guards when he spies an opportunity. Neither of his guards is paying very close attention, so he sprints a few steps to his right, hurling himself down a long metal stairway and landing in an unconscious heap at the bottom, blood dripping from his head. "Get the doctor, quick!" one of the prison guards says before we see an ambulance darting across London, its attendants and orderlies remove a stretcher containing Blaney.



Pig's foot- "I told you it wasn't Blaney, didn't I," the chief inspector's wife gloats from the kitchen. "Do you think it's Rusk, dear?" the chief inspector asks while she brings dinner to the table. "Anyone can see that," she says. "He knew both Mrs. Blaney and that Barbara what's-her-name." She begins talking about intuition and her husband asks if her intuition can sense what he wants for dinner. "Steak and a baked potato," she says. "But you're getting *pied de porc a la mod de Caens*." "It looks like a pig's foot!" the chief inspector cries. "That's what it is," his wife responds proudly before asking when they'll arrest Rusk. "When I have the proof I need," the Inspector responds, sawing away at his trotter. "It takes longer than intuition," he goes on to say he hopes to have the proof quickly, mentioning the strange state of Babs' body when it was found: Who would try to unpack a hidden corpse and break its fingers unless they realized it was holding something incriminating? As if on cue, an officer interrupts his unpleasant dinner



Revenge- With the help of his fellow inmates at the hospital, Blaney drugs their guard and escapes by donning a lab coat and acting casually. He steals a car from the nearby lot and drives across the city. The phone rings at the chief inspector's house, and he answers, alarmed to hear that Blaney has escaped, but he leaves, confident he knows where Blaney will be headed. Meanwhile, Blaney parks his stolen car just down the road from Rusk's flat, walking quickly to the building with a tire iron hidden under his long lab coat. Carefully, he creeps up the stairs and into Rusk's flat, shaking with rage. Finding the door unlocked, he enters and stalks towards the blonde figure lying in the bed. With three solid strikes, he begins his revenge but is startled when he realizes it is another woman Rusk has murdered.



Caught red-handed- Suddenly, the chief inspector barges through the door and sees Blaney standing over the body. "No!" Blaney begins, "It's not-" A loud thumping interrupts his thought. The inspector holds up a hand to silence him and closes the door, standing just behind it as the thumping grows closer and closer. Grunting and straining, Rusk barrels into the flat with a large, heavy trunk in tow. He turns to see Blaney and begins to speak when the chief inspector pushes the door closed. "Mr. Rusk," the Inspector says calmly, "You're not wearing your tie." Rusk stammers for a moment, looking from the Inspector to Blaney. Unable to speak in his defense, he simply raises his hands, allowing the trunk to fall to the floor with a heavy thud.

