

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE

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***Strangers on a Train* (1951)**

Alfred Hitchcock

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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*, *Psycho*, *Vertigo*, and *Rear Window*, 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 Based on a 1950 novel of the same name by Patricia Highsmith, *Strangers on a Train* is a unique psychological thriller both produced and directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Hitchcock purchased the rights to the novel for a low \$7,500 by keeping out of the negotiations. He had issues finding a screenwriter and was turned down by eight writers, including notables like John Steinbeck. With only three weeks before the scheduled shooting time, Ceznzi Ormonde led a scriptwriting team composed of associate producer Barbara Keon and Alma Reville, Hitchcock's wife. They made a number of notable changes to the novel including the cigarette lighter, Miriam and Barbara's thick glasses, and the final scene on the merry-go-round. Despite problems, filming began in late 1950, and the film was released in June 1951. *Strangers on a Train* was selected by the Library of Congress for special preservation in 2021.

Background Initial response to *Strangers on a Train* was incredibly mixed. A quick search of old reviews will find seemingly every opinion one could have about this film. Modern reviews are staunchly positive, leading many Hitchcock experts to call this film ahead of its time. In several of the characters, we see both Hitchcock's standby plot devices and his experimentation that has only grown better with age. Patricia Highsmith, who wrote the original novel, first praised the film but would later criticize nearly every aspect of it. Despite some risqué political subtext and mixed reviews, *Strangers on a Train* would net almost \$2 million in box office profits and was nominated for three awards.

CINEMATIC NARRATION

In *Strangers on a Train*, we see Hitchcock's first strides toward defining the modern thriller. The film is still very much a noir, utilizing darkness and shadow often in its staging and thematics, but it also uses elements of characterization and suspense that can be found in more modern thrillers such as *Fargo*, *A Simple Plan*, or *No Country for Old Men*. Bruno, the killer in this film, anticipates the infamous Patrick Bates from *Psycho* and serves as inspiration for some notable pleasure-killing antagonists. Hitchcock's cameo in this film was directed by his daughter, Patricia. He can be seen boarding a train with a stand-up bass guitar.

SYNOPSIS

Bruno and Guy meet on a train and share lunch. There Bruno pitches a gruesome plan for them to 'swap murders,' but Guy thinks this is just a joke. Guy returns to his hometown, Metcalf, to finalize his divorce with Miriam, but she refuses to sign the papers, threatening instead to fight Guy in court. Guy calls his new love, Anne, in DC, telling her he could kill Miriam. Bruno calls Guy and learns about his failure to divorce Miriam. Thinking he's doing a favor for a friend, Bruno goes to Metcalf and kills Miriam at an

amusement park. This places Guy in trouble with the police and with Bruno, who demands that he 'return the favor' by killing Mr. Anthony or face the consequences.

Anne slowly puts together that something is wrong with Guy. Her fiancé confides in her, telling her all about Bruno's sick plot and Guy's inability to go to the police. That night, Guy sneaks into Bruno's house, hoping to tell Mr. Anthony about his son's apparent mental illness. When Guy tries to warn Mr. Anthony, he finds Bruno waiting for him instead. Bruno swears vengeance. Next day, Anne goes to Bruno's house to plead with Mrs. Anthony to stop her son, but she won't hear it. Bruno overhears Anne speaking with his mother and takes offense, saying he has a plan to get back at Guy for his missteps.

Anne tells Guy about Bruno's plans at a tennis match, and Guy plays as hard and fast as he can to make the train to Metcalf and hopefully stop Bruno. He is seen by detectives, who inform the Metcalf police. These officers follow Guy to the fairgrounds where Miriam was killed. In a final confrontation with Bruno, the police accidentally shoot the man operating the merry-go-round, causing the ride to go out of control. A worker stops it, causing a massive crash. Bruno is crushed by the remains of the ride, revealing evidence of Guy's innocence.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Guy Haines – a famous tennis player trying to divorce his wife

Bruno Antony – a rich mama's boy who despises his father

Anne Morton – the woman Guy loves and plans to marry after his divorce

Barbara Morton – Anne's younger sister

Miriam Joyce Haines – Guy's current wife

Mrs. Antony – Bruno's mother

Mr. Antony – Bruno's father, a rich business owner

Police Capt. Turley – the man in charge of the Metcalf police

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Guy Haines

Guy has recently attained fame as a tennis player. He is in the process of divorcing his wife, Miriam, as she has been unfaithful. His life is turned upside down when he mistakes Bruno's bloodlust for a joke.

Determined Guy's determination shows at several points during the film. He is upset by Miriam's refusal to sign the divorce papers, but he seems determined to resolve the situation so that he can marry Anne. He is also determined to keep Bruno from going through with his dark plans and protect those he loves, changing his tactics when Bruno's threats move towards harming the Mortons and acting to warn Mr. Anthony. Because of this, Bruno swears revenge, traveling to Metcalf to plant Guy's lighter at the scene of Miriam's murder. Guy shows his greatest determination in trying to beat Bruno to Metcalf, playing the hardest and fastest game of tennis he's ever played and winning. Afterward, he manages to narrowly escape his police watchers with a little help from Anne and Barbara. He shows great determination at the fairgrounds, too, chasing down Bruno and fighting him for the lighter on the out-of-control merry-go-round. When Bruno decides to shove a child from the ride, Guy drops to his knees to save the boy. He won't let Bruno hurt anyone else.

Brave Guy shows a lot of bravery throughout the film. Instead of talking about every little instance of this throughout the film, we'll describe his greatest act of courage. When Guy feels cornered by Bruno's murder plot, he calls Bruno up, saying he's decided to go through with the plan. Taking the Luger and Bruno's map with him, he enters the Anthony house after dark. Despite the guard dog's warning growls, Guy climbs the stairs and walks down the hall. Inside the bedroom, he tries to warn Mr. Anthony that Bruno is planning to have him killed, only to find himself face-to-face with Bruno. Guy gives up the key and the gun, which Bruno then levels at him. Without so much as breaking a sweat, Guy turns his back to the maniac and exits the house.

Naïve This doesn't come up often, but Guy seems a bit naïve. This shows mostly in his initial interactions with Bruno. He fails to see just how serious the man is about his macabre "criss-cross" murder plot. After Bruno commits Miriam's murder, Guy thinks he can just tell Bruno to stop, failing to realize yet again just how serious the maniac is about wanting his father dead or Guy to pay the price for Miriam's murder. Guy's naïveté shows in his reluctance to share his problems with Anne. While he is correct in thinking she'll accuse him of Miriam's murder somehow, he fails to factor in her intelligence and love for him. He also shows a lack of awareness in following Bruno to Metcalf, nearly playing into the police's hands when he fails to properly shake them, more worried about beating Bruno to the amusement park than being arrested.

Bruno Antony

Bruno is a rich lay about who despises his father. Afraid of being forced to work instead of just enjoying his father's wealth, Bruno hatches a plan to kill his father. He thinks that Guy is going to help him with this exchange of murders.

Lazy/Greedy While it doesn't show in the effort he puts into killing Miriam and trying to frame Guy, Bruno is shown to be quite lazy. He rises late in the day and lounges around his father's mansion most of the day. He is also greedy, violently upset by his father's reluctance to hand over the family fortune to him unless he finds work and proves himself. The combination of these traits leads him to plan the murder of his father simply so that he doesn't have to go to school or find a job. Bruno's sometimes contradictory behavior shows us that when properly motivated, the slothful can put incredible effort into avoiding work.

Intelligent Like many of Hitchcock's best antagonists, Bruno is frighteningly intelligent. He knows too much about Guy and his life, having followed his exploits in the papers. His plan for swapping murders is deranged but quite smart: two strangers committing murders for each other would make it incredibly difficult for the police to properly investigate. While it does have the one flaw that each would be suspect for the murder of their loved one, if they could maintain their innocence through ignorance, the case would grow cold so long as the police found no evidence that they knew one another. Bruno is also emotionally and socially intelligent, able to surmise how best to interact with someone simply by talking to them for a minute. He is also a master of manipulation because of this, forcing Guy into an almost impossible situation when he threatens to frame him for Miriam's murder. When Guy makes the sudden decision to go through with Bruno's plan, Bruno hides in his father's room and overhears Guy's attempts to foil his plans. Despite his intellect, Bruno is criminally insane, and the combination of nerves and Guy's persistence to stop him makes sure his end is a tragic one.

Deranged Bruno shows many traits that mark him as possibly psychopathic and sociopathic. He openly hates his father simply because the man will not let him mooch off of his fortune, asking that he work. Bruno finds this so unacceptable that he plots to kill him. Because of his flamboyant attitude, others like Guy and his mother don't take his threats and plots seriously, but Bruno wants to kill, seemingly just for the pleasure of it (if his killing of Miriam is taken as an example). He seems to have enjoyed killing her so much that simply seeing someone who resembles her—such as Barbara—causes him to go into some sort of trance where he reenacts the killing. Bruno's deranged nature comes to the fore when Guy refuses to help him murder his father. He seems to lash out at everyone within reach on the merry-go-round when it goes out of control, shoving a young boy off his horse and grinning madly when he stomps on Guy's fingers, trying to send him flying.

Anne Morton

Anne is the eldest daughter of Senator Morton. She is in love with Guy and plans to marry him after his divorce. She begins honing in on Guy's strange behavior and lies, bringing the macabre conspiracy to the surface.

Observant Anne is shown to be incredibly observant compared to other characters in this film. She is quick to notice Guy's strange behavior around Bruno, even in their first interaction on screen. That same night, she notices Bruno's unique tie pin which reads 'Bruno.' She notes the pin again during one of Guy's

tennis matches when Bruno appears and introduces himself as a friend of a couple her father knows. Because she is so observant, she is quickly able to piece together her hunches and form an opinion of Guy's troubles. While her initial hunch that Guy enlisted Bruno to kill Miriam is wrong, she is able to align what Guy tells her with what she's seen over the last few days and begins helping Guy.

Loyal Anne is incredibly loyal to Guy. Even though she has her doubts, accusing him of murdering Miriam during her confrontation with him after her father's party, Anne quickly comes to support Guy in his attempts to prove his innocence. Anne goes as far as to reach out to Mrs. Anthony in the hopes that she can see reason and speak to her son. Even when this backfires and Bruno tells her lies about Guy, she refuses to believe him and reports what he says back to Guy. She risks scandal by helping him to escape from his police escort after his big tennis match. Despite all the troubles and lies, Anne waits up to hear from Guy, fretting by the phone until he calls with the good news: the terror they went through is over.

Helpful Anne proves to be very helpful throughout the film, especially when it comes to Guy. One of her first on-screen actions is to warn Guy that her father may want to discuss the future of their relationship so that he won't be caught off guard. Likewise, she goes out of her way to speak to Mrs. Anthony when she learns about Bruno's plan to force Guy into murder or frame him for Miriam's murder. During Guy's tennis match, Anne gives Barbara money to bribe a taxi driver to wait for Guy so that he can escape. She also has Barbara leave him a pair of trousers in the cab so that he won't look so out of place in his tennis shorts. One of Anne's final acts in the film is showing up in Metcalf with a change of clothes for Guy and accompanying him back to DC so that they can begin their new lives together.

THEMES

Love Love and loss of love are major themes in *Strangers on a Train*. Miriam and Guy had to share love at some point to get married, but for an unstated reason, Miriam saw fit to sleep around while Guy was on his tennis tours. While planning their divorce, Guy has fallen in love with another woman, Anne, and hopes to marry her. Anne loves Guy deeply, shown not just in the devotion engraved on his cigarette lighter but in her loyalty. Her whole family seems to love Guy. Even Anne's father goes out of the way to make sure Guy is alright when the news of Miriam's death hits the papers, only complaining a little bit about possible scandals. Barbara seems to love Guy, as well, going out of her way to help him whenever possible and telling Anne that she's jealous that Anne has found someone who may be willing to kill for her. Guy and Anne's love beats Bruno's attempts to manipulate Anne when he fails to convince her that Guy had planned Miriam's murder himself. In the film's final scenes, we see the Mortons celebrating Guy's victory over Bruno, as Anne holds Guy tight while they return to DC after stopping Bruno's plot at the fairgrounds.

Crime Crime is a surprisingly minor theme of this psychological thriller, but an important one, nonetheless. We see criminal behavior mostly through Bruno's experiences. Conspiracy to commit murder is the first crime we see in the film, although Guy isn't aware that he has been drawn into such a scheme. The next crime is that of Miriam's murder. Bruno seems to take sick joy in killing Guy's unfaithful wife, so much so that he begins reenacting the murder whenever he sees Barbara, who bears a resemblance to Miriam. Guy refuses to commit murder for Bruno, choosing to uphold the law and his morals. Bruno, in turn, decides that he will frame Guy for the murder or take him down by naming him as an accomplice. The police decide they're going to take Guy in for questioning. This forces Guy to flee from the detectives responsible for observing him. In the end, Bruno's behavior at the fairground, his possession of Guy's stolen lighter, and a positive identification by an amusement park worker leads to the dismissal of all suspicion around Guy.

Investigation Investigation appears in several different forms in *Strangers on a Train*. While it doesn't happen on screen, Bruno seems to know an awful lot about Guy and his life. This makes Guy very uncomfortable, but he writes it off as Bruno being an over-enthusiastic sports fan. Distinctly different from other Hitchcock thrillers, the protagonist, Guy, never seems to investigate, often acting without all the information. His fiancé, Anne, seems to be the more investigative of the pair. Her initial supposition after confronting Guy is that he hired Bruno to kill Miriam, but after listening to Guy's explanations, she comes to believe him. In an attempt to help him, she goes to Mrs. Anthony in the hopes she can speak to Bruno

and get him to stop pestering Guy. During this visit, she overhears some of Bruno's ideas about how to get back at Guy, reporting his plans back to Guy. The police investigate heavily into Guy, missing several opportunities to find the true killer until the end of the film.

Mental Illness While this plays out mostly through Bruno's warped beliefs and actions, mental illness is a very important theme in *Strangers on a Train*. Without this element, Bruno's actions are merely that of a mustache-twirling stereotype. This portrayal of insanity may be somewhat inaccurate or sensationalized at times, but it does add many thrills to the film. Because he is allowed to do as he wishes by his doting mother, he comes to despise his father, who asks that he work and not cause problems like hit-and-run accidents. Bruno's mother, too, shows some signs of mental illness, having an unhealthy preoccupation with making her son happy and with her paintings. Her behavior seems rude at some times and simply strange at others because of her mental issues. Bruno's mental health comes into question for the first time when the sight of Barbara in her thick plastic glasses causes the merry-go-round's calliope to begin playing in his mind. This motif continues throughout the film, coming back into reality when he fights with Guy on the out-of-control merry-go-round. His final moments are driven either by sheer spite for Guy, who wouldn't help him with his murder swap scheme, or by his warped sense of reality: he may believe his own lies.

Marriage Marriage plays a big role in this film. The initial conflict that results in Miriam's murder begins when she refuses to divorce Guy. She wants his newfound wealth from his tennis victories and is willing to make his life a legal hell to do so. Guy loves Anne and wishes to marry her. He expresses his violent anger to her over the phone, and Bruno then infers his marital problems in a phone conversation a few hours later. To "help" Guy with his problems with Miriam, Bruno murders her in the hopes that Guy will swap murders, getting rid of his "father problem" for him. Guy sees Miriam's murder as a threat to his future marriage with Anne, and rightly so. Her senator father would probably disown Guy instead of face the bad press that would come with his murder conviction. Despite the social and physical risks, Anne shows her love for Guy by helping him to stop Bruno. At the film's end, we see them making doe eyes at each other and holding hands. It's clear they plan to marry, and soon.

Class Class is a small but obvious theme in *Strangers on a Train*. There are few lower-class people present in the film, mostly those who work at the fairgrounds and a handful of servants in the Anthony and Morton households. The focus of the film is on the upper-class characters, specifically Bruno, Guy, and Anne. Unlike some of Hitchcock's other thrillers dealing with the rich and famous, here the stakes are more than scandal and embarrassment. Bruno is willing and able to kill those Guy loves and seeks to frame him for Miriam's murder. It is an interesting departure from the likes of *Rich and Strange* or *Under Capricorn*, where the threat mostly exist in social spaces or the threat of embarrassing news stories.

Hatred/Anger Anger and hatred play out in some interesting ways throughout *Strangers on a Train*. We first get a taste of Bruno's hatred when he describes his father on the train. "He *hates* me," he says emphatically, going on to explain that he wants to murder the man who raised him just because he was told to get a job and stop causing trouble. As a sort of foil to Bruno's hatred, Guy's anger toward Miriam has a much more understandable cause. Not only is Miriam unfaithful and carrying another man's child, she refuses to divorce Guy; she thinks she can take his small, newfound fortune if she manages to convince a court that the baby is his and he's abandoning them. He tells Anne that he's so angry that he could kill Miriam. While his anger is extreme, the viewer can relate to the situation and see his reasoning. Bruno picks up on this anger, traveling to Metcalf to do Guy a "favor" by killing Miriam. We see some hatred of Miriam arise in Bruno, but we're never conclusively told its source. Does he hate women in general, or is it the unfaithful nature of a mother that drives the mama's boy over the edge? His warped perspectives matter little when it becomes apparent that his hatred of Miriam has transferred to Barbara since they look similar, both being short, dark-haired, and wearing thick glasses. Bruno's hatred for Guy erupts quickly when he tries to tell Mr. Anthony about his son's behavior. Bruno swears revenge, plotting to place Guy's lighter at the scene of Miriam's murder. We see Bruno's hatred boil over on the runaway merry-go-round. When a child annoys him, he tries to push the boy from the ride, and then he takes sadistic glee in stomping on Guy's toes as he clings to the spinning ride for dear life. Unlike Guy, his anger and hatred make little sense, mostly being based in self-centered desires and a lack of respect for others and a lack of sanity.

Greed Both Bruno and Miriam show their greedy sides. When Guy returns to Metcalf, Miriam demands that he pay for her divorce lawyer. He gives her several large bills, impressing Miriam. While she doesn't respect Guy, she decides to use his newfound tennis fame to enrich herself by forcing him to either stay in a relationship or engage in a costly legal battle to take as much as she can. Bruno's greed is a small but potent point in the film. The sole reason he hates his father is that he's been told to find a job instead of freeloading off the family fortune. He is so greedy—and mentally unstable—that he thinks killing his father to be the easiest solution.

SCENES

Train Station- A taxi pulls to a halt in front of a train station. The camera pans down, focusing on the modest luggage an attendant pulls from inside the cab and the shoes and trousers of the cab's occupant. The flashy black and white brogues he wears clash with the worn nature of his luggage. Another cab pulls up and is met by an attendant. Likewise, the camera focuses on the man's feet, giving us a glimpse of his more modest dress and the tennis rackets he carries with him. Jaunty music grows louder as the camera watches one man's feet walking, then the other. It's as if they're on a collision course. The camera appears on the front of the train as it rolls away from the station, watching the tracks vanish beneath it. Inside the passenger car, the fashionable brogues march steadily up the corridor. The man wearing them finds a seat, crossing his legs. The other shoes make their way up the corridor from the opposite direction. That man finds a seat opposite the brogues, awkwardly kicking the other man accidentally as he crosses his legs.



"Beg your pardon"- The man with the modest clothes apologizes for kicking the other man's feet before turning his attention to his magazine. The richly dressed man leans forward, his face betraying recognition. "I beg your pardon," he says, "but aren't you Guy Haines?" Guy grins awkwardly while the other man lists some of his recent tennis victories. "I certainly admire people who do things," the richly-dressed man says before introducing himself as 'Bruno,' showing Guy the gleaming tie pin that bears his name, a gift from his mother. Despite claiming that he "doesn't talk much," Bruno strikes up an involved conversation about fame. He embarrasses Guy when the conversation shifts from sports fame to his personal life: Guy's lighter bears the inscription "from A to G," and Bruno correctly guesses that the 'A' stands for 'Anne Morton,' a senator's daughter. Bruno sees the discomfort he's causing Guy and offers an apology, saying, "There I go again. Too friendly. I meet someone I like and open my yap too wide. I'm sorry..."



Drinks- Guy remains seated by Bruno while he flags down a waiter, ordering two scotch and water. “Only kind of doubles I play,” he jokes before Guy says he doesn’t drink much. “When’s the wedding?” Guy asks persistently. “You and Anne Norton? It was in the papers.” “Well, it shouldn’t have been,” Guy says with a hint of anger, “Unless they legalized bigamy overnight.” Bruno grins, “I have a theory about that... I’d like to tell you about it someday. But right now I suppose divorce is still the simplest operation.” The drinks arrive, and, after a bit more conversation about his upcoming divorce, Guy changes his mind and takes one of the drinks. “Drink up,” says Bruno, “and we’ll have lunch sent to my compartment.” Guy says he’d rather eat in the dining car, but a waiter reports that there will be no room for at least half an hour. Bruno insists that Guy eat with him in his compartment before toasting to “the next Mrs. Haines.”



Lunch- The scene fades to Bruno and Guy seated in a compartment, speaking over their meal. Bruno reclines luxuriously on the bench, talking about his troubles, namely staying in college and finding a job, concluding that he’s just a bum. “Who said you were?” Guy asks reassuringly. Bruno’s face becomes haunted and lively when he answers, “My father. He *hates* me. With all the money he’s got, he thinks I ought to catch the A5 bus every morning and work my way up selling paint or something!” Guy tries to change the conversation, but Bruno continues, talking about how he hates his father. “I get so sore at him sometimes I want to kill him!” Guy laughs this off as a joke, grinning and saying, “I don’t think you, know what you mean.”



Morbid thoughts- Realizing his companion’s discomfort, Bruno shifts the conversation: “I’ve got a theory that you should do everything before you die.” He describes the types of risky behaviors and adventures he likes to go on before comparing himself to Guy, saying he’s smart for “marrying the boss’ daughter.” Guy is upset by this. Then Bruno tries to assure Guy he meant no insult. “Remember, Guy, I’m your friend. I like you! I’d do anything for you.” After confirming that Guy’s wife’s name is Miriam, Bruno brings up a fiendish plan: he’ll kill Guy’s wife, and Guy will kill his father. “We do talk the same language, don’t we,” Bruno grins when Guy acts confused. Guy thinks this is all a strange joke, thanking Bruno for lunch before the train stops at his hometown, Metcalf. Bruno notices Guy’s lighter sitting on the table and decides to keep it for himself.



Metcalf- Guy steps off the train. “Hiya, Bill,” he says to a man with a goods wagon outside the station who enthusiastically greets him. Bill takes Guy’s luggage for safekeeping before the young man briskly walks into town. Outside a music shop, Guy stops and peers through the window. The camera glances at Guy’s troubled face before he steps inside. The cashier finishes helping a woman at the counter before laying eyes on Guy. She gives him a sad smile and bids him hello. “You’re looking well, Miriam,” Guy says, unable to hide his spite entirely. He gets down to business, asking when he’s going to meet her lawyer. She teases him, but when the conversation becomes more personal, Miriam asks Guy to join her in a listening booth nearby.



Private conversation- “Now this is cozier,” Miriam says flirtatiously. “Sort of like old times, isn’t it, Guy?” Guy pulls the door shut, all but sneering as he says, “Skip it, Miriam. It’s pretty late to start flirting with a discarded husband. Especially when you’re going to have another man’s baby.” Miriam asks for money, saying, “Lawyers are expensive” and referencing the divorce. Guy hands her several large bills and Miriam smiles madly. “If I’d known what all that tennis nonsense of yours was going to lead to, I wouldn’t have run out on you.” Guy is confused, and Miriam clarifies, “I’m not getting a divorce.” Guy explodes, yelling at her, Miriam responds with a smirk and tells him she’ll lie in court to get her way. The fight escalates to the point that a store manager asks Guy to leave because the store is “no place for a family quarrel”.



Call to Anne- In a phone booth, Guy calls Anne in Washington to give her the bad news. “No, everything didn’t go smoothly,” he says through clenched teeth. “She doesn’t want the divorce.” “It’s unbelievable!” Anne says, standing in the parlor of her father’s house. “I know how you must feel... But you sound so savage, Guy!” “Sure, I sound savage,” Guy replies, “I *feel* savage! I could break her neck!” A train passes through the station at high speed, making a cacophony that neither Guy nor Anne can hear over. “I said that I could strangle her!” Guy shouts over the din.



Manicure- A dramatic cord sounds as a pair of hands fade into view, clutched in a pose that mimes strangulation. “I do wish you’d keep your hands quiet,” Mrs. Anthony says while the camera pulls back. She’s giving her son, Bruno, a manicure. “You’re so restless lately,” she comments, both of them admiring her handiwork. Mrs. Anthony looks at her son with a worried expression, asking if he’s been taking his vitamins. He comments that he had to buy a new bottle yesterday. “You have that look, dear. I always can tell,” Mrs. Anthony says. “I do hope you’ve forgotten about that silly little plan of yours... About blowing up the White House.” Bruno makes playful and crazed expressions, assuring his mother he was only kidding. Mrs. Anthony laughs at her son’s bizarre humor before saying he should shave before his father gets home. Bruno pounds his fist on the table, shaking the manicure tools and startling Mrs. Anthony. “I’m sick and tired of bowing and scraping to the king,” Bruno says with fire in his eyes.



Painting- To placate her son, Mrs. Anthony suggests they take a look at her new painting. Bruno rises lackadaisically and walks with his mother to the nearby parlor, and the camera follows them at a leisurely pace. “I do wish you’d take up painting,” Mrs. Anthony says while they walk. “Such a soothing pastime.” She smiles proudly, watching as her son looks over her artwork. Playful music plucks out off-beat notes before Bruno begins laughing uncontrollably. “Oh, Mother,” he says when he calms down, “you’re wonderful! That’s the old boy, alright! That’s Father!” The camera jumps to look at a grotesque expressionist portrait as dramatic music stings. “Is it?” Mrs. Anthony asks. “I was trying to paint St. Francis.”



Long distance call- A butler appears in the doorway and tells Bruno, “They’re ready with your call to Southampton.” A man opens the front door and enters the home behind the butler. Bruno crosses the room to answer the phone. The man, his father, asks him to come into the parlor for a family meeting. “Sorry, Father. Long distance,” Bruno spits. He answers the phone, and the camera finds Guy seated in a locker room. He doesn’t seem to remember Bruno at first, but he recalls after a bit of talk about Miriam and the divorce. In the background of Bruno’s shot, his mother and father argue. Pauses in the phone conversation allow us to hear snippets about a hit-and-run Bruno has committed. Guy hangs up and Bruno looks around with a strange expression, overhearing that his father may have him put in prison or committed to an institution.



Bus- Sometime later, Bruno exits the train at Metcalf station in a smart but inconspicuous suit. He meanders to a phone booth and looks up Miriam in the phonebook. Later that night, the camera looks down on Bruno from a street lamp while he smokes a cigar on a bus stop bench. He watches the house across the street intently. Soon, a woman comes out, followed by two men. They laugh boisterously and playfully while running to the bus. Bruno boards silently behind them. The bus pulls to a stop and everyone piles out quickly. Bruno stands at the bus stop while the bus pulls away to reveal a large neon sign reading “Crafts 20 Big Shows.”



Fair- Calliope music, excited fairgoers, and banter from fair game attendants creates a bouquet of sound while Bruno enters the fairgrounds. He stalks Miriam, slowly standing closer and closer as she enjoys her date with the two men. She takes notice briefly but seems to think nothing of it. She even seems impressed when Bruno manages to ring the hammer swing bell. He follows her and her dates onto the merry-go-round, watching as she giggles and sings along with the song playing on the calliope.



Tunnel of Love- Miriam and her dates jog away from the merry-go-round and buy tickets for a small electric boat ride. Bruno follows silently, stopping to buy a bag of popcorn before getting into his boat and following Miriam into the tunnel of love. The merry-go-round's calliope fades as the boats enter the tunnel. Silhouettes on the wall show Bruno's boat gaining ominously on Miriam and her dates. All is hauntingly quiet for a moment when Miriam screams. But soon she emerges unharmed, one of her dates tickling her. Bruno is right on their tail.

“Is your name Miriam?”- Miriam’s date pulls their electric boat onto the shore of Mystic Isle and they run off into the darkness, giggling. Moments later, Bruno pulls his boat up and disembarks, calmly following the sound of Miriam’s laughter. The camera finds Miriam after she seems to lose her two dates behind a bush and she looks shocked off to her left. She smiles when a gloved hand uses a cigarette lighter to produce a flame. The man holding it asks, “Is your name Miriam?” “Yes,” she says, beginning to ask a question when Bruno steps into shot and begins strangling her. Her glasses fall to the ground. The camera shows the murder in their reflection.



Bruno’s escape-The merry-go-round’s calliope seems to play louder as Bruno lowers Miriam’s corpse to the ground and Miriam’s dates begin calling her name in the distance. In a strange panic, Bruno picks up her fallen glasses and Guy’s lighter. He leaves the island quickly just as Miriam’s dates discover her. Their cries can be heard from across the small lake, and people begin clamoring on the dock. Bruno elbows through them, catching the attention of the boat ride’s attendant while making his escape. Otherwise, no one seems to notice him. Outside the fairgrounds, Bruno helps a blind man safely cross the street before looking down at his watch.



DC- In the observation car of a commuter train, Guy checks the time on his watch. A man sits further down the car, drunkenly singing Bill Grogan’s Goat. He stops singing abruptly and asks Guy, “What’s your opinion?” “You’ll never make the Metropolitan,” Guy jokes, trying to turn his attention to his magazine. The man interrupts Guy’s privacy, introducing himself as Collins, a professor from Delaware Tech on vacation. The scene changes to a long shot of Washington DC’s streets in moonlight where a taxi glints as it rolls to a stop, the capitol dome illuminated in the background. Guy steps out, recognizable in the shadows only by his tennis rackets, pays the cabbie and approaches the house.



Figure in the alley- Before he can make it inside, a voice calls from a nearby alley: "Guy." Guy looks around, startled. He puts down his things and squints at the darkness in the alleyway. A man leans into the light, beckoning with his hand, "Over here, Guy." Cautiously, Guy crosses the street to meet whoever is calling to him, the camera watching him at a strange angle. "Hello, Guy," says Bruno. "I've brought you a little present." Guy is confused by Bruno's sudden appearance at this time of night. "What's this all about?" Guy asks as he takes an object from Bruno's hand.



Miriam's glasses- He looks down, recognizing the object as Miriam's glasses, one of the lenses smashed. "It was very quick, Guy," Bruno says, proud of his handiwork. "You maniac!" Guy shouts when he realizes what's happened. "But, Guy, you wanted it!" Bruno says emphatically. "We planned it on the train together." Guy threatens to call the police, but Bruno says he'd tell the police it was a planned hit, landing them both in prison unless Guy agrees to kill Mr. Anthony.

Police- The phone begins ringing in Guy's house. "Someone has some news for you, Guy," Bruno says smugly. A police car rolls to a stop in front of Guy's house and Guy steps back into the shadows with Bruno. They watch an officer peek into Guy's home and ring the bell. Unable to contact him. They leave quickly. "You've got me acting like a criminal," Guy moans to Bruno. Bruno ignores Guy's complaints and quickly informs Guy about his plan that Guy should murder his father: he's bought a Luger from a pawn shop in California and has the time and place picked out when Mr. Anthony will be alone. Guy refuses to listen, storming across the street and entering his house. Bruno follows trying to convince him, but Guy draws a clear boundary, saying, "I never saw you before and I never want to see you again!" Inside the house, Guy answers the phone. It's Anne on the other end.



Anne's house- Outside another house, Guy rings a bell. Anne opens the door and lets him in, pulling him into a passionate kiss. She leads him into another room. "I wonder if you know how much I love you," she says. Guy reacts with a smile, saying it's his place to say that to her. "I wanted you to know before... Before we go into the living room. Father wants to see you," she says nervously. Senator Morton and Anne's sister, Barbara, are there to meet him. The Senator is the one to break the news, and Guy acts as shocked as he can. They then inform him that the police want to speak to him.



Alibi- "She was strangled," Anne says, remembering what Guy said just the day before on the phone. Barbara describes the crime scene and evidence while she pours Guy a drink, her father chastising her for her morbid interest in crime. Barbara retorts that Guy has the motive, and he agrees. The question comes out: Where was Guy at 9:30? "I was on the train from New York to Washington," he says plainly, telling them about the drunken professor who talked to him. Guy apologizes for the media attention his wife's murder will bring the Mortons, but the senator assures him: "Never lose sleep over accusations, unless they can be proven, of course." Barbara and her father leave to give the young couple some privacy. Barbara sticks her head back into the room for a moment to tell her sister, "I still think it would be wonderful to have a man love you so much he'd kill for you."



"Forget you ever said it"- Alone at last, Anne and Guy hold each other. Anne's nerves surface in a wave of relief: "I told myself over and over I was being silly, but there was one horrible moment tonight when the news came through. I kept remembering what you shouted on the telephone from Metcalf." Guy begins to say the words, but Anne interrupts him with a kiss. "Don't even say it. Forget you ever said it," she says before they kiss again, and romantic music swells.



Police statement- A policeman clacks away at a typewriter, and the camera rises to find Guy entering the building. "Captain Turley's expecting me," he says, standing nervously for a moment before being led into a nearby office. The police captain rises to greet Guy. "I know you're a busy man, so I won't detain you any longer than necessary," Turley says when he sits back down. He says they've managed to locate Professor Campbell and another officer leads him into the room. Guy is relieved, but Campbell was drinking so much the night before, he can't remember Guy. With no one able to confirm his alibi, Guy remains the number one suspect in his wife's murder.



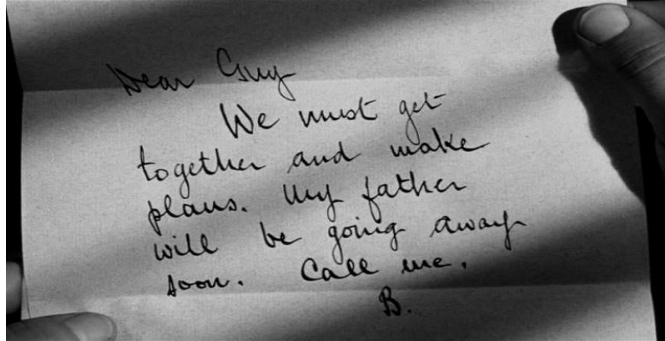
Next move- Sometime later, Guy enters the parlor at the Morton house. They're all happy to see him, asking how things went with the Metcalf police. "When an alibi's full of bourbon," Guy says, frustrated, "it can't stand up." Anne and Barbra are shocked that naming a stranger who was on the train wasn't enough to prove Guy was on the train at the same time. The senator asks Guy, "What's your next move?" "Whatever it is," Guy says defeatedly, "the police will know about it. They gave me a present." He leads the Mortons to the window and points out a man outside, saying, "My guardian angel." Guy moves back to a seat and frets about being observed. He says he should lay low at the Morton's house, but they encourage him to carry on as normal. A call comes for Guy. It's Bruno, pestering him again. Guy hangs up the phone quickly and violently, telling the concerned Mortons that it was just a wrong number.



Lincoln Memorial- A long shot of the Lincoln Memorial cuts to a tight shot of Guy walking shoulder to shoulder with his 'guardian angel,' Detective Hennessy. The officer smiles, saying he's looking forward to seeing the Forest Hills tennis tournament. "You mean we'll be going there together?" Guy says flatly. Hennessy assures Guy that "this thing will be all cleared up" before the match, asking if he'll go professional. "When I'm through with tennis, I'm going into politics," Guy responds. Hennessy responds, but dramatic music makes it difficult to hear him. Guy has spotted Bruno watching him from the Memorial steps. "Let's take this cab," Guy interrupts the officer, pushing him towards a nearby car. "It's getting late." Suspenseful music plays as Bruno watches from the distance. The taxi pulls away.



Letter- Guy steps out of his bedroom the next morning. He finds a letter on the floor by his door and picks it up. Inside is a note from Bruno: "We must get together and make plans." Guy balls up the letter in his fist, looking to throw it away. He thinks better of this, lighting a match and destroying the evidence.



Pestering- "We'd better be getting back," Anne says as she and Guy round a large marble pillar in a museum rotunda. Guy speaks about how their being together still feels "scandalous," but he's interrupted by Bruno calling for him. Guy excuses himself and walks over to Bruno. "Will you stop pestering me," he whispers harshly. Bruno complains that Guy is "spoiling everything," and Guy tells him about Detective Hennessy's surveillance. Anne notices Bruno's distinctive tie pin from a distance. Bruno tries to keep the conversation centered on killing his father or friendly banter about Anne, but Guy tells him to get lost and leave him alone. Bruno then returns to Anne and leads her away, claiming that Bruno was "just some tennis fan." The next day, Guy receives another letter. This one contains a key and a diagram of Bruno's house.



Tennis- A crowd in bleachers silently watches a doubles tennis match. Guy approaches, greeting his teammate before sitting. His eyes watch the crowd following the ball back and forth in synchronicity. The camera zooms in on a single stationary man: Bruno stares right at Guy. Guy looks concerned, watching as Bruno gets up and leaves. He's so distracted he almost doesn't hear his tennis partner ask if he's ready. After his doubles match, Guy marches up the stairs to see Bruno speaking with Anne and some of the Mortons' influential friends. When Bruno introduces himself to Guy, acting as if they've never met, Anne notices Bruno's tie pin, but she keeps quiet. Barbara calls Guy aside, telling him some grizzly story about an axe murder Detective Hennessy helped to solve when she notices Bruno and moves to introduce herself. Bruno's face falls into a look of hate as he stares at Barbara's glasses. Calliope music plays and he hears his own voice asking, "Is your name Miriam." The reflection of the lighter shines in the



Luger- Later that night, a man unwraps a package. The paper is ripped away to reveal a Luger. The camera pulls up, showing Guy's face as he stands in stunned silence. Dramatic music plays as the doorbell rings. Guy quickly stows the pistol in a nearby drawer before answering the door. It's Hennessy. Guy lets him in but says he can't stay too long. Guy is going to the Mortons' party, and afterward, the young tennis player will need all the sleep he can get for the upcoming tournament. Hennessy strikes up a conversation about the officer who will replace him in a few hours, lighting a cigarette. Guy keeps his cool before they leave together.



Party- The scene opens with Anne grimacing in a party dress. The camera pulls back, revealing her father and other DC socialites chatting together happily while Anne glances around the room nervously. A small smile graces her face when she sees Barbara across the room. Her sister offers to get Guy a drink, but Anne's smile fades quickly; Bruno has entered the room. Anne watches the man approach her fiancé and partake in an angry conversation. Bruno suddenly locks eyes with her and crosses the room to greet her. "This is Mr. Anthony, Father," Anne says dryly. Bruno takes the senator aside and tells him some lunacy about "life force" and psychic abilities. "I don't remember inviting that young man," Senator Morton says to his daughter. "Who is he?" "A friend of the Darvilles," Anne says, her face filled with concern. "Unusual personality..." the senator mutters. Barbara returns with Guy's drink and is shocked to see Bruno introducing himself to more DC elite. He corners a judge in a macabre conversation about sentencing men to death.



Subject of Murder- When the judge leaves the conversation, a woman nearby mentions that Bruno seems "very interested in the subject of murder." "No more than anyone else," Bruno smiles, taking a seat near her. "Everyone has somebody they'd like to put away." He talks about common phrases used during disputes between couples, causing the woman to giggle boisterously. He asks her how she would perform a murder. She and another partygoer share their ideas for perfect murders, but Bruno rejects



An example- “Simple, silent, and quick,” Bruno says, moving his hands emphatically. “Let me show you what I mean.” The giggling woman offers her neck and Bruno leans in, telling her to try and cry out when he nods his head, adding, “I bet you can’t do it.” The woman smiles brightly while Bruno presses his hands against her neck, squeezing tighter and tighter. The nod never comes. Bruno lays eyes on Barbara, her thick glasses triggering the memory of Miriam’s murder. Calliope music plays loudly as Bruno stares, choking the life from the woman. “Help! Help!” the other woman cries as she tries to pry Bruno’s hands from her friend’s throat. Bruno passes out, causing a scene and releasing the woman from his grasp.



“A bit weird”- Bruno is carried upstairs while others tend to the strangled woman. She sobs heavily. Barbara stands at the edge of the scene looking frightened and ill. Upstairs, Guy and Senator Morton discuss Bruno. “I thought he was a bit weird when he arrived,” the senator says, asking who he is. Guy says he hardly knows him, and the senator asks him to show him out when he comes to. Bruno starts to get up after the senator leaves the room, but Guy shoves him back down. Bruno asks what happened and Guy calls him a maniac, telling Bruno yet again to leave him alone. “But, Guy,” Bruno says, rising, “I like you!” Guy punches Bruno between the eyes. When he recovers, Bruno looks at Guy with dangerous eyes: “You shouldn’t have done that, Guy.” Guy quickly helps Bruno put himself together and shows him the door.



“He looked at me”- Barbara watches Bruno leave, a shocked expression still on her face. Anne comes down the stairs and sees her, putting her hands on her sister’s shoulders. “What’s the matter, Barbara?” Anne asks. “Did you see it happen?” “He looked at me,” Barbara says, tears spilling from her eyes. “His hands were on her throat, but... Anne, he was strangling *me*.” Anne is shocked, asking, “How do you mean.” “He was looking at her first,” Barbara replies. “Then he looked over at me. He went into a sort of trance. He looked horrible! He thought he was murdering me.” She removes her glasses to wipe away her tears when the camera and Anne’s eyes follow them. An orchestra plays the calliope tune while the camera rests on the thick plastic frames. Anne asks where Guy is and then heads outside to speak with him.



Connections- When Anne gets outside, Guy is slamming Bruno's door shut. He jogs over to her, taking her hands. "You didn't meet him for the first time the other day, did you, Guy?" Anne asks. Guy asks for clarification, and Anne continues, "Did you notice how he stared at Barbara that day?" Guy awkwardly stammers and Anne interrupts him, saying, "He stared at Barbara the same way tonight—while his hands were around Mrs. Cunningham's throat." Guy is speechless. "What did Miriam look like?" Anne asks, catching Guy off guard. Guy responds vaguely, and Anne presses, "She wore glasses, didn't she? She looked something like Barbara, didn't she? How did you get him to do it? He killed Miriam, didn't he." Guy quickly explains the entire situation, saying that Bruno is a maniac and that he'll say they planned Miriam's murder together if he goes to the police. Anne seems to trust Guy, wishing there was a way to help him. Guy insists that no one else get involved before they go inside.



"Get this thing over with"- In his apartment later that night, Guy picks up the phone and dials a number. "Bruno?" he asks when the line connects. "I've decided to do what you want... How about tonight? I want to get this thing over with." Suspenseful music plays while Guy pulls the Luger out of its hiding spot. After seeing the detective pacing on the street below, Guy sneaks out of the back and down the fire escape. He walks to an opulent house in the moonlight, the camera angle becoming more off-kilter as each new shot follows him to the front door. Looking around, he uses Bruno's key to open the door and step inside.

Guard dog- The mansion is dark inside. Using a small flashlight, Guy looks at Bruno's directions to his father's room before stepping further inside the house. Dramatic music plays when the camera rises, spotting a pointed-eared guard dog standing on the landing of the stairs. Guy looks up to see the dog growling at him. Containing his fear, he walks slowly up the stairs, and the dog seems to calm. It licks Guy's hand, allowing him to pass. Ever so slowly, Guy continues up the stairs and down the corridor, eventually finding the second door on the right, Mr. Anthony's bedroom. Guy pulls the pistol from his jacket pocket and enters.

Bedroom- Dramatic music swells while the camera follows Guy across the room. He sees a figure in the bed and softly says, "Mr. Anthony?" The figure rises, facing Guy. "Don't be alarmed, but I must talk to you about your son. About Bruno." The light snaps on revealing Bruno lying in the bed in his tuxedo: "Yes, Mr. Haines?" Guy looks shocked. Then Bruno sits, telling Guy his father isn't home. "I was about to tell you that over the phone, but you came to such a sudden decision. I wonder why?" Guy tells him this was his plan all along. He wanted to "make a little social call" to tell Mr. Anthony about his "lunatic son." Bruno asks if Guy has no intention of going through with their "criss-cross." "No intention whatsoever," Guy says. "I never had." Bruno holds his hand out for the key, and Guy returns it before throwing the Luger onto the bed. He then begs Bruno to see a mental health specialist, but Bruno ignores him.



Egress- "I don't like to be double-crossed," Bruno says, rising from his chair and grabbing the pistol from the bed. "I have a murder on my conscience, but it's not my murder, Mr. Haines—It's yours!" He threatens Guy with the pistol, visibly struggling to control his urge to kill. Guy says, "It seems we have nothing further to discuss." A tense scene plays out as Guy tries to calmly leave the house and Bruno follows him, the gun following each of Guy's steps down the hall and the stairs. Dramatic orchestral music plays. At the bottom of the stairs, Guy looks up at Bruno who stands with the pistol on the landing. "Don't worry," says Bruno, "I'm not going to shoot you, Mr. Haines. It might disturb Mother." Guy stares up in stunned silence. "I'm a very clever fellow," Bruno says, proudly. "I'll think up something better than that. Much better." Guy walks out the door without another word.



Mrs. Anthony- The next morning, the camera finds Anne seated with Mrs. Anthony in a parlor of the Anthony mansion. "Now, Miss Morton, really," Mrs. Anthony says, "I know Bruno has been in some very awful scrapes, but nothing is so ridiculous as a murder." Anne pleads with Mrs. Anthony to take her seriously, saying that "just one word" from her to her son would end the problem. Since Bruno didn't confess to murdering Miriam, Mrs. Anthony simply dismisses Anne and stands to see her out. Instead of seeing her out, she gets distracted by her paintings and wanders away after an awkward chuckle.



Lies- “Oh Miss Morton,” Bruno calls from across the room, dressed in a silken bed robe. “I’m afraid that mother wasn’t very much help, was she?” He crosses the room, standing behind Anne and selecting a cigar from a humidor, explaining that Guy has made him very angry. “He’s been leading you up a garden path, I’m afraid,” Bruno continues, looking down at Guy’s lighter before using it to light his cigar. He claims that Guy committed the murder and that Bruno went back to retrieve his precious lighter. Anne can’t contain her emotions and begins to cry. Bruno offers an apology before disappearing into another room, saying that he has an appointment.



Bruno’s plan- The camera finds its way into a tennis stadium. It finally lands on Anne seated at a cafe table. She informs Guy about her talk with Bruno. Guy says Bruno is planning on going to Metcalf to plant his lighter at the scene of the crime. Anne says he’ll have to leave immediately to beat Bruno to Metcalf, but Guy disagrees. It would be easier for him to win the game as quickly as possible and then ditch his trailing detective in the post-game rush. Anne finds the plan risky but agrees to help Guy as best she can.



“Let him have his game”- Two detectives stand outside the fence surrounding the tennis courts. “If Turley said to pick him up for questioning, let’s pick him up!” says one. “Let him have his game first,” Hennessy says in reply. The other detective complains about how unusual the circumstances are when Guy approaches with Anne. Hennessy smiles at him and wishes him luck. Inside the tennis court, Guy gives Anne her final instructions. Anne rushes to an empty seat by Barbara where she whispers to her. Guy begins his first set, playing as hard and fast as he can, taking his opponent off guard. The crowd celebrates when he wins the first set within a minute.



Second set- Bruno leaves his mansion wearing an outfit similar to the one he committed the murder in. He says, "Union Station," to the cabbie sitting in the drive before the taxi speeds off. Back at the tennis court, a radio announcer comments on Guy's sudden change in tactics, saying he's normally a slow, conservative player. Barbra and Anne watch nervously as the match begins. Across town, Bruno lights a cigarette in the back of the cab. The match continues, and Bruno lights another cigarette in the observation car of a train. Guy grins on the tennis court as he's able to pull off another quick victory. "If he wins this next set," Anne says to Barbara, "you'd better have everything ready." She gives her sister a ten-dollar bill to reserve a cab for Guy, and she leaves, flagging down a taxi before returning to the tennis court.



Third set- After a strong start, Guy begins to slow. A montage of his opponent striking the ball crosses the screen before the announcer comments that he spoke too soon: it looks as though Mr. Reynolds is about to win this game. After a bit more play, he does win. Guy wanders off the court, staring up at the official clock and grimacing. Winning so quickly won't be as easy as he hoped. He finishes his paper cup of water and throws it to the ground in frustration.



Two to one- Bruno hops off the train at Metcalf and wanders toward the streets. A man bumps into him, causing him to drop Guy's lighter down a nearby storm drain. Dramatic music plays before the announcer appears, saying, "The score is now two to one." Guy battles it out against Reynolds while back in Metcalf Bruno begs a city worker to remove the grate so he can retrieve the cigarette lighter. When no one helps him, Bruno gets down on his knees and puts his arm through the grate. Guy is gaining on his opponent. The scene comes back to Metcalf where Bruno is seen [accidentally?] knocking the lighter further down into the storm sewer.



Game, set, match- Guy and Reynolds hit the ball back and forth while suspenseful yet jaunty music plays. They seem very much neck and neck, but Guy manages to come out on top. "Just one more point to win the match!" the announcer says excitedly. The match continues. Back in Metcalf, Bruno reaches down into the storm drain as far as he can, gradually grasping the lighter just as Guy manages to beat Reynolds. "Game, set, match: Mr. Haines," the announcer says. Guy quickly crosses to speak with Anne, who tells him that Barbra is distracting the detective. Guy then walks out of the tennis court and finds the taxi waiting for him. In the back seat are his trousers, which he quickly puts on while the taxi drives away. Hennessy looks frustrated and embarrassed that he let his target get away while he was distracted by Barbara's flirting. He flags down a car and jumps into the back, telling the woman inside, "We're chasing a man." She responds excitedly



Station- Dramatic music strikes a harsh cord when Guy jumps out of the taxi and runs into the station. He buys a ticket, but he's not quick enough. The detectives see him. After he moves to the platform, the detectives ask the ticket seller where he is heading, and he tells them Metcalf. They decide to hold back and inform the police in Metcalf instead of arresting Guy then and there. "This is going to lead to something big," says Hennessy. Guy boards the train quickly and the scene fades out.



"What time does it get dark?"- Beneath a streetlight outside the fairgrounds, Bruno looks down at his watch. Further into the park, he asks a soda jerk, "What time does it get dark around here?" The man looks gob smacked before asking, "What's the hurry?" Guy rides in the observation car of the train to Metcalf, looking impatient. Back at the fairgrounds, a worker approaches Bruno and strikes up a conversation about the park's financial troubles since the murder. "Business went off something terrible," the man says. "Smoochers wouldn't go near the place." He leaves when Bruno sounds offended by the implications of 'smoochers.' Bruno stares in the direction of the sun as it slowly meanders toward the horizon.



Sundown- Suspenseful music plays as Guy checks his watch on the train, the sun setting just behind him. Sometime later, his train pulls into the station and he disembarks. Guy gets into a taxi and is observed by a police officer who reports his findings to a nearby squad car. The policeman in the car calls for backup, telling them to converge on the amusement park. At the fairgrounds, Bruno joins the line for the boat ride.



Recognized- Standing awkwardly in the line to pay for the boat ride, Bruno eyes the bright lamp above the kiosk. He pulls his hat so that his eyes are covered in shadow. Several officers enter the fairgrounds, leaving a man at the entrance to watch for Guy. When Guy arrives, he notices a police car and scampers into the fairgrounds without the policeman standing by the gate recognizing him, but several other officers watch him and then give chase. A pair of policemen talk to the man running the boat ride. It isn't long until Guy sees Bruno standing in line and realizes that he saw him on the night of the murder. When he moves away to inform the police, Bruno steps away, wandering and looking for an escape. Guy approaches as the calliope begins playing the song that accompanied Miriam's murder. "Hey, Bruno!" he shouts, and Bruno runs to the merry-go-round. Guy chases after him.



Runaway merry-go-round- "Hold it!" shouts one of the policemen following Guy before he draws his gun. He takes a shot at Guy but misses, striking the man operating the merry-go-round, who clutches the control as he falls to the ground, dying. The ride begins to spin at dangerous speeds, its occupants screaming first in delight and then in fear when they realize what's happened. Bruno and Guy begin fighting each other, trying to keep their footing on the spinning ride. The police gather around the ride, trying to keep onlookers away while they try to figure out how to stop the ride. "I can handle it," an old man says confidently before lying on his belly and army-crawling beneath the spinning platform.



Trampled- Bruno and Guy keep fighting. Guy manages to knock Bruno to the ground, but he doesn't stay down for long. "My little boy!" a woman cries before Bruno begins savagely beating Guy next to a boy who delights in trying to help Guy with his fight. The old man keeps crawling beneath the ride, in a slow but steady pace toward the controls at the center. Frustrated by the young boy's punches, Bruno shoves him, nearly knocking him off the ride. Guy drops to the ground to save him only to be knocked beneath the wooden horses' hooves. Bruno tries with all his might to push Guy beneath a hoof that will crush his skull, but he's unsuccessful. Guy slides away due to the force of the spinning ride, grabbing onto a bar while his legs fly out behind him. Bruno gleefully begins stomping on his fingers, trying to send Guy flying.



Emergency stop- The old man squeezes into the control compartment and sends the drive handle flying into the stop position. When he does, something fails inside the ride's mechanisms, causing it to malfunction catastrophically. The ride begins to slow, but pieces begin breaking. Horses and people and splinters of planks go flying every which way as the ride falls to pieces and eventually crashes to a halt. The crowd watching screams in a panic, rushing to find their loved ones who were on the ride. A police officer approaches with the boat ride attendant who tells the police chief that Bruno is the man they're looking for. Guy is relieved, asking where Bruno is and hoping the police will talk to him.



"Very clever fellow"- Guy finds Bruno pinned under the rubble of the merry-go-round. "Can't you get this stuff off of him?" he asks a nearby man. "We're doing the best we can until the crane comes," the man replies. Despite being at death's door, Bruno keeps up his ruse, saying the lighter is on the island. While he says he doesn't have it, when he dies, his hand opens to reveal the lighter. "Well," says Turley while he pockets the lighter, "you were right. Better keep this for the time being." The police chief invites Guy to tell him his story at his office the next morning, and Guy asks the boat ride attendant where the nearest phone is. The man directs Guy to the front of the park, asking who Bruno was. "Bruno Anthony," Guy replies while they walk into the crowd, "a very clever fellow."



Phone call- Anne jumps up to answer the phone when it rings. Her father and sister watch in anticipation. “Guy?” she asks in a scared voice, smiling when she hears his voice. “Well of course I’ll be there,” she says before hanging up. She reports that Guy will be returning tomorrow and asked for her to bring him a change of clothes. Barbara jumps up and hugs her sister, elated. The next morning, Anne and Guy sit aboard the train, holding hands and smiling at one another. Across from them, an older man with a sports magazine asks a question: “Aren’t you Guy Haines?” Guy looks at him and begins to answer before thinking better of it. He and Anne glance at each other before standing and leaving the car. The man looks confused but shrugs, returning to his magazine.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What elements of *Strangers on a Train* mark it as film *noir*?

How do emotions figure into the plot of this film? Give at least two examples.

What plot devices does *Strangers on a Train* share with other Hitchcock thrillers?

Are any of the characters in this film foils for one another?

Strangers on a Train has very little comedy compared to Hitchcock's previous film, *Stage Fright*. How does this affect the film's tone?