

THE PLAYERS

April 13, 1970.

It was only last week that you stood there at the podium of the Shrine Auditorium, swooning in the thunderous applause of you peers, as you accepted the much coveted honorary Oscar honoring your body of work in film that has spanned forty years of moviemaking. After all, some three generations of viewers have come to recognize your films as the mark of a great director and producer. In their minds and hearts you have occupied the dubious distinction as the Master of Suspense. Your own name has become the trademark for terror in households across the world. So it was not surprising that amidst the kudos and standing ovations of Academy members, you forgot to thank a number of people for their contributions to your successful career, which among other things have helped generate a sizable personal fortune.

But then altruism has never been your strong suit, any more than the phrases "congratulations" or "thank you" have ever existed in your own vocabulary. If there was generous praise to be heaped on accomplishment, you reserved it exclusively for yourself. Having worked your way from the rags of London's Soho district to the riches of Beverly Hills, you know what it means to earn respect. Unfortunately, in the process of climbing the ladder of success, you've often found it necessary to step on your competitors, and sometimes squash them, with your weighty stature, in order to get ahead. To be perfectly honest, which for you is difficult at best, you'd walk over your own mother and still get a good night's sleep. Ruthless to the bone, you have become at once the most revered yet hated man in the industry. You can, and have, ended budding film careers with a phonecall as easily as you've rocketed them to glory with a handshake.

With an army of enemies in the wings, you've tactically surrounded yourself with a staff of backstabbing and unscrupulous moneygrubbers, each of whom competes ravenously for your attention - all for a meager salary and the chance to have worked with the Master. There's Diana, your associate producer, who fields various pitches from wanna be screenwriters and then pays them paltry sums for their uncredited ideas. There's Phil, your casting agent, who ingeniously pits actors against one another in salary bidding wars. And there's Fernando, your editor, who for an under-the-table sum can guarantee that the products of competing filmmakers will look like Swiss cheese when they reach the box office.

No, you are not a nice man. Even your private life is rife with dissension, as three sets of ex-wives and obnoxious stepchildren encircle you like vultures hungrily awaiting your demise and the reading of your last will, a document whose legacy will surely spawn countless probate suits into the next century.

Of course, you are intent on living long enough to see them all starve to death. All but your loving and precious daughter Rebecca, your only seed and heir apparent, and loyal and supportive fan to the very end.

This was all true until this morning, when you received an anonymous videotape in the mail, and watched in horror as a terrifying drama began to unfold.

1. As Diana's shrieking life goes down the drain,
You can't help thinking of Marion Crane,
Whose payment for sin surely dictates,
Never to ignore PSYCHO's like Norman Bates,
'Tis revenge here that someone exacts,
But do the police have all the facts?
As the victim of Diana's treason,
You're the only suspect with a reason,
You must now find who killed your assistant,
Near there on First he's hardly distant,
He's there to meet with your ex-wife,
Where she'll soon gamble with her life,
The important thing has already been pitched,
As is the script's title that was ditched,
To investigate just follow your nose,
And to this merchant courteously disclose,
The greeting from Diana's card,
A warning you must not disregard.

2. First Diana, now your ex,
Your privileged life seems under a hex,
Was this a fired and vindictive actor,
For whom retaliation was a factor?
Or perhaps a would-be heir,
Bent on soon becoming a millionaire?

But your thoughts turn to Fernando,
Who you've been blackmailing since long ago,
For importing his precious cocaine,
On his disguised makeshift plane,
And now you must dodge his aerial attack,
But are taken quite aback,
When on a lot this pilot crashes,
For information check the ashes,
And when the prop to the left is abreast,

Remember to look NORTH BY NORTHWEST.
There are some things that come in twos,
Not the least of which are murder clues.

3. Now that your victim lies there prone,
Fatally knifed through the backbone,
It's now time for some fast talking,
For your would-be killer was just sleepwalking,
Nothing could have been absurder,
You've now DIALed M FOR MURDER,
It was certainly not in your detective's plan,
To accidentally condemn THE WRONG MAN,
South on Camino Del Mar you must escape,
To now get yourself out of this scrape,
And for an anonymous message ahead,
Drive and dial blue red black red.

4. Though you despise your spoiled stepchildren,
They'll all soon look like Tippi Hedren,
Attacked by THE BIRDS in her attic,
Pass Carmel Valley and soon a right will cure your
panic,
Down this piney road near ocean bluffs,
You can escape police handcuffs,
For your latest barroom homicide,
From which Whoopi the cop won't let you slide,
Armed with tampons she just won't quit,
But with deduction you'll surely wing it.

5. Remember that pair, Phillip and Brandon,
Their murderous work was ingeniously random,
Just go off and kill a guest,
And at your dinner party lay him to rest,
In front of all, but none to see,
Both hosts chattering nervously,
With good piano playing you are blessed,
Just don't let Phillip get it off his chest,
Or Mr. Caddell will sniff the stink,
Right where the guests eat and drink,
I think it's time for La Jolla caffeine,

Where strange goings-on were recently seen,
There might for Phil be left some hope,
If you can help him escape THE ROPE.

6. With your staff now dead, the picture is clear,
That it is personal murder that you must fear,
But before it's you that he does snipe,
Your present girlfriend looks awful ripe,
Her familiar appearance has you quite perturbed,
She's a dead ringer for another, who was disturbed,
Now in this mission you must not fail,
The 5 south will take you up an old town trail,
There the options may well confuse,
Tailor your way to decipher his ruse,
And up the steps you should not slow,
Though you may suffer from VERTIGO.

7. You're left no choice but to surrender,
And to this psycho money tender,
In the last boxcar is your rendezvous,
But time passes without a clue,
Distraught you start drinking whiskey doubles,
And with a drunk start spilling your troubles,
And in inebriated reverie,
You exchange murders with him, hypothetically,
Wouldn't it be nice, you ask this gent,
If that detective met with an accident,
As part of the trade, you would shoot his dad,
Who is driving him stark raving mad,
Two STRANGERS ON A TRAIN with a common joke,
It wasn't 'til later that alone you awoke,
You pass the Cuyamaca exit around the last bend,
At the curve near where ivy and vines descend,
There you must discretely snatch the leaves,
And learn more about the web this madman weaves,
If the answer's not on the vine,
Then in the tunnel you can shine,
A flashlight upon the passing left wall,
Keep your hands inside or them you'll maul,
But if still your killer's traces are too obscure,
From character Hugo's end the truth will inure.
Do not go on to number eight,
Until you hook this second bait,
And under a Republican mastodon in the front,
An animal does snort and grunt.

8. The "Hugo" that died on your runaway ride,
Was another cheap little homicide,
Hired by your nemesis to lay a trap,
In which you fell, you gullible sap!
For though a dead detective a case can't make,
On all those dead bodies left in your wake,
The cop's boating accident carries your mark,
On the LIFEBOAT from which this schizoid did disembark,
His escape was clean and you'll soon be arrested,
A southern shortcut on Park is suggested,
And a righteous turn at the alphabet,
To a shoreline search you won't regret,
In the shade of a Far East ship,
Is the place where you'll get a grip.
9. Your monogrammed lighter you've now retrieved,
A disgruntled writer's is finally deceived,
But a FAMILY PLOT is in the making,
A relative of yours he's intent on baking,
Much like the Shoebridge's fiery fate,
Their son Eddie was such an ingrate,
Your fortune will give you the go ahead,
To this psychic your chant must be read.
10. The "coup de grace" Bates will soon deliver,
This prospect makes you shake and shiver,
For little REBECCA is vacationing at,
Your oceanfront Mexican habitat,
Insure yourself, and then dash,
To save her from this fate of ash,
Just south of this quaint Mexican town,
Be patient and careful, its seventy miles down,
And when you enter Mona Lisa's gate,
To a place of arson navigate,
Where Norman's blazer should be parked,

In flames your home will soon be sparked,
And think of your movie about a peeping Jimmy,
To its title you should then shimmy,
Now that you've fallen completely from Grace,
Redemption there you can finally embrace.

HOTLINE: (213) 507 - 0837

Little Clues

1. Tape:

(Shot of a young businesswoman carrying a briefcase as she unlocks a hotel room door and enters)

(Shot from inside hotel room as she comes in, and dumps a stack of scripts and papers on bed) (Pan to a picture on the wall behind which an eye peeps surreptitiously) (Woman, resting on

bed, stretches among the pile of papers and then looks toward wall where eye has now disappeared behind painting) (Woman kicks off her highheeled shoes, and plays playback tape from her answering machine)

You've reached the home of Diana Hogsbreath. I'm either lunching at Spago's, getting my hair done at the Bel Air, or filming at the studio. Beep me, or leave me a message . . . unless you're another bumbling wanna be screenwriter with a cockamamie pitch in which case I suggest you take two cyanide pills and never call me again, you worthless leeches. "BEEP" Hi, Ms. Hogsbreath, sorry uhm for calling, uhmm but I think I've got a great plot scenario that will knock em dead . . . at the theatres. Imagine a sort of young impressionable uhhm innkeeper who is uhhm a creative genius . . . we'll say he like to write mainly anyway . . . uhmm he has hobbies and all.. he like taxidermy you know stuffing dead animals mostly birds so he's a little off . . . see . . . but he writes really good stories and he shows them to someone and that person likes his ideas and says he'll make it . . . you know a story into a movie and it'll make millions and then the writer will be rich and famous . . . oh, he's got this mother too . . . but she's ill and well . . . anyway so this other guy steals her I mean his story uhh their story and they don't so much as see a dime of it and so the mother she dies . . . ohh it's an awful uhhm death . . . and he . . . at the funeral . . . there are alot of flowers .. flowers all over her grave. . . well, he's angry, and . . . so there's a satanic force that causes him to do some pretty terrible things but in the end the producer, who has this daughter, she's you know young and uhhm pretty but . . . (other voice) she's a cheap little whore . . .but they well they burn to death in this fire at his house on the coast. Well, there. Sort of a cross between All About Eve and Rosemary's Baby. What do you think, uhhm, Diana?

(Woman shakes her head and turns off tape player. Reaches for hotel phone and dials it)

Into phone:

Phil . . .? Yeah babe. Look I'm holed up in some motel off the freeway. No, I've got the scripts. No, Alfred doesn't know I have them. Well, screw him. He doesn't own me, Phil! Now I've got the material and I'm gonna run with it, babe. I've had it with being ordered around by that pompous bastard. That morbid maniac screwed me, and I'll screw him. What goes around comes around... Yeah, I'll call you in a few days when I get to New York. O.K. Babe. . . Ohh, and babe, don't forget to feed my piranha! (Slams down phone, massages temples) A knock at the door is heard. (Eye is seen again peeping through painting)

Yeah, who is it? (Voice responds: Delivery, ma'am)

What at this time of the night? She approaches and looks

through peephole in door, and then, apparently satisfied, opens door) A flower is handed to her in a container. She asks if there's a card. She opens the card and looks quizzically, repeating to herself " A rose is a rose is a rose, from which divine vengeance flows..." "Who sent this . . ? She looks amused, whispers "Phil", and closes the door absentmindedly behind her, leaving it somewhat ajar. She takes the rose with her on the bed where she starts to peruse scripts. She mutters to herself:

\$500,000 for this! Hah hah! (picks up another) \$200,000 for this shit! \$123,000 for this unfilmable epic! Every dime I made that bastard went into this pile of unproducibile garbage! Guy couldn't write if his life depended on it! Looks at fourth script. Sees title (but camera doesn't). Hah, a sequel!! Gee that sure is creative! Throws it in corner of room. Shaking head: Alfred make a sequel? Does a chicken have lips? (Phone rings. She picks it up) Marion? No there's no Marion here. Looks exasperated. Rubs temples again. Takes the rose into the bathroom. Turns on bathwater.

Eye returns to the hole.

She undresses, removing a pair of red panties. She gets in shower and enjoys the water coming down on her face from the spout. The hotel room door opens slowly. Camera follows the path of this person as we observe his feet enter the bathroom. As she showers we can see his silhouette behind shower curtain.

He pushes curtain to the side. She screams. He stabs her repeatedly with a butcher knife. She stands, leaning against wall, breathing rapidly, bleeding. She tries to reach for the rose in its container, but grasping the shower curtain, she falls on the bathroom floor, and dies, eyes open and staring. Close-up of eyes as the camera turns a 360 dig. angle and then shoots to the drain emptying with blood in it. The camera then focuses in on the fallen rose and then follows the killer's path as he grabs the red panties and leaves; camera comes to rest on the titled page of the screenplay thrown in the corner which displays the word FRENZY Part II.

2. In fake "panties" rose at Flower Frenzy

Your ex became a shrink just after the divorce,
She left your temper tantrums without remorse,
In a clever scheme you're now entangled,
For your ex has just been strangled,
With a necktie from behind,

By a mental patient most unkind,
They say that life imitates art,
Especially in matters of the heart,
Who, with you in mind, these streets does roam,
With more sinister plots so close to home?
Diana's panties offer you a boon,
Of another trap just south of San Elijo Lagoon,
There you can wait idly in a cropfield,
For your riddled fate the sky to yield.

3. At 2591 PCH - bar with cropduster and dummy

in plane

A man does wait up in the wings,
Ready to pounce when your phone rings,
His shaded view does afford,
Opportunity for discord.

in phone under dummy's T-shirt

When you reached to find who had just phoned,
You could've sworn an old scene was cloned,
Feeling behind you this evil presence,
Some "self-defense" you did dispense,
For rather than be a sitting duck,
Into his spine some scissors you stuck.

4. In FAX at Clone Systems

To: The Players

My dear friend you've gone astray,
By killing off mistaken prey,
I'm still around and having fun,
But my mission's not yet done,
For you'll soon be made to pay,
For all those you did betray.
By receiving their applause,
Many grudges you did cause,

With an Oscar speech so self-
congratulatory,
And filching other people's glory,
A slow and deadly end will be assured,
For the grief we've all endured.

In your films you did cameos,
Now what a trick to juxtapose,
Your films' cold suspenseful fear,
Will be the reality you hold dear,
Of your own medicine its time for a
dose,
To the edge now I shall bring you
close,
If your stepchildren's lives you'll
want to preserve,
They're on a field trip at the Torrey
Pines State Reserve,
Where I'll happily unleash my feathered
friend,
Upon some young flesh it shall descend,
And there'll be nothing left to
discuss,
Except some weathered teenaged carcass.
My raptors can be visited at the
station,
Where they practice their vocation.

6. In body in treasure chest at Bernini's on Fay

He's found one more method with which to deceive,
With all parts of the murder rope that you retrieve,
Each segment when laid out represents a letter,
Hurry up or he'll go you one better,
The longer the blue marks the slower the curve,
Find a calm spot for the wind will surely unnerve,
The murdering piece will end your word,
Unscramble the rest and you'll be assured,
Of the place behind which your honey's at risk,
There with some fishstring her body you'll whisk,
She's past the rack that's on your right,
And through the portal she'll soon be in sight.

7. In barbie doll on roof of Mission

My dear producer, with all your gall,
Your naivete does appall,
I'm not Norman, but awful close,
His character was less bellicose,
His mother he was, and I'm now he,
For being reported to that committee,
You told Congress I was a communist,
My writing career they soon did blacklist,
You told them that to escape our contract,
For writing PSYCHO you betrayed our pact,
It's now time for you to atone,
But at Balboa Park I'll throw you a bone,
There we might just bury the hatchet,
Ten times my salary might just match it,
5 South to the Pershing ramp you should asportate,
And then three lefts soon negotiate,
The zoo parking lot's a good place to steer,
To a train ride that's very near.

7. a) i. On ivy and vine off traintracks after
Cuyamaca and on left tunnel wall

MERRY GO ROUND

RED DRAGON HORSE

M E R R Y G O R O U N D

R E D D R A G O N H O R S E

- b). In red dragon horse's mouth on merry go round

The detective's accident was no surprise,
Her yacht Medea " Hugo " did capsize,
He planted your lighter there before your duel,
Where on a quick go round he died like a fool,
Tucked in the cover of his portside getaway boat,
The damning evidence remains afloat.

8. Tucked in cover of lifeboat on Medea

Though he's now miffed at your success,
Ancient wrongs he's still bent to redress,
He's tampered with the cabbie's brakes,
This runaway taxi gives you the shakes,
And if this tactic doesn't work,
His grand finale he will not shirk,
Luckyly you run out of gas,

At a 5th Street downtown impasse,
Madame Blanche will predict his scheme,
At 507 her crystal ball is supreme.
And don't forget the chant for your guide,
It's tucked on the other side.

9. In cab

" The Chant" to the Psychic

Diana, Fernando and conniving old Phil,
My nemesis did quickly kill,
And my girlfriend and ex-wife,
Each did violently lose their life,
Their henpecking wasn't nearly as bad,
As the raptor's beak my stepkids had,
And then there was the death of that detective,
A frame-up could have been effective,
What could the psycho have left in store,
With his taste for gruesome gore?

(When you go to the insurance place,
make sure to tell him you're with the rally.)

With psychic at 507 5th St.

You've been put through the ringer, my poor 'ol chap,
If you weren't such a heel, it would be a bum rap,
But if you're ready to repent,
To Oscar Padilla you should be sent,
There I predict you'll find the way,

To avert one ominous doomsday,
I'll add that I fear for your daughter,
The evil man has seduced and caught her,
Lest your enemy play out his ire,
Save her from this smoldering fire.

10. Rear window at house at Mona Lisa with match

The avenging angel you did dispatch,
Before he lit his lethal match,
Your precious Rebecca you've saved from the brink,
I think it's time to have that drink!!