

Name _____

Period _____



STRANGERS ON A TRAIN (1951)

Directed by: Alfred Hitchcock

The story: What do you get when you combine a harmless conversation about the "perfect" murder, with the harsh reality of actually seeing it come true? What you have when these two elements evolve is one of Alfred Hitchcock's greatest thrillers...***Strangers on a Train.***

Strangers on a Train begins innocently enough when tennis pro Guy Haynes (played by Farley Granger) meets a complete stranger named Bruno Anthony (Robert Walker) on a train. During small talk, Bruno jokes around about how an "exchange" murder between two complete strangers would be the murder no one could solve. After all, how could they find the murderer when he is a total and complete stranger with absolutely no connection whatsoever to the murdered victim? Bruno also jokes around about how he could kill Guy's wife, and Guy could kill Bruno's father. Guy leaves the train feeling that this stranger he just met is a little strange, but thinks nothing of it...until Guy's wife is dead and Bruno wants him to finish the deal! The result is sheer terror and suspense!

Main Characters:

Guy Haynes: Tennis Star, Husband of Miriam.

Bruno Anthony: Psychopath, very wealthy.

Ann Morton: Guy's love interest, daughter of a U.S. Senator

Barbara Morton: Sister of Ann Morton (played by Hitchcock's real daughter)

Miriam Haines: Guy's Wife

Notes:

Academy Award nominated for Best Cinematography, 1951.

Hitchcock stated that the "man under the carrousel" stunt was the most dangerous he had ever done and that he would never attempt it again.

Robert Walker (Bruno Anthony) had a nervous breakdown and died immediately after the release of this film.

"Reading a Movie":

"Reading a movie" is like reading a book. When you read a book, you look for words that support the author's main idea. When you read a movie, you are looking at the types of shots that support the director's main idea. Every shot MEANS something, and the way every shot is framed contributes to the director's overall vision.

Find an example of each in the film, and briefly describe what you see. The first one is done for you.

1. **Aerial Shot:** *High angle shot of Bruno sitting at the bus stop waiting for Miriam.*
2. **Cutaway:**
3. **Close Up:**
4. **Pan:**
5. **Tilt:**

6. **Dolly Shot:**
7. **Extreme Close Up:**
8. **Zoom Shot:**
9. **Extreme Long Shot:**
10. **Establishing Shot:**
11. **Follow Shot:**
12. **Point of View Shot (POV):**
13. **Medium Shot:**
14. **Over the Shoulder Shot:**
15. **Rule of Thirds Composition:**

16. Locate at least two scenes where Hitchcock uses SPLIT EDITS. Briefly describe the scene and why you think Hitchcock used split edits for the scene.

17. a) At the tennis match, what is interesting or unique about the way that Hitchcock films the audience watching the game?

b) Why do you think he does this?

18. Hitchcock sometimes places evil characters on the left side of the screen, and good or dominant characters on the right side of the screen. A) What are two scenes in which this occurs?

B) Why do you think he does this?

19. Give two examples of where shadows are used to show the true nature of a character.

20. What do you notice about the speed and pacing of the editing (the cuts between shots) in the scene that cuts between Guy's tennis match and Bruno's return to the scene? What effect does this editing have?