



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 his father. Guy leaves the train feeling that this stranger he just met is a little strange, but thinks nothing of it...until his wife is dead and Bruno wants him to finish the deal! The result is sheer terror and suspense!

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 carousel" 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.

Find an example of each in the film, and briefly describe what you see.

- 1. Aerial Shot:**
- 2. Bust Shot:**
- 3. Close Up:**
- 4. Pan:**
- 5. Tilt:**
- 6. Dolly Shot:**
- 7. Truck Shot:**
- 8. Zoom Shot:**
- 9. Dissolve:**
- 10. Establishing Shot:**
- 11. Long Shot:**
- 12. Medium Shot:**
- 13. Over the Shoulder Shot:**
- 14. Rule of Thirds Shot:**
- 15. At the tennis match, what is significant about the way that Hitchcock films the audience watching the game?**
- 16. 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?**
- 17. Give two examples of where shadows are used to highlight the true nature of a character.**
- 18. What do you notice about the speed and pacing of the editing in the scene that cuts between Guy's tennis match and Bruno's return to the scene? What effect does this editing have?**