



Journal of the Film/Alfred Hitchcock Special Interest Group

The MacGuffin

Issue No. 23

November 1997

ISSN 1035-9001

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NEWS

[Editor's note. There's no Editorial this time. Most of the issue is given over to articles on *Rear Window* (1954) and *Rich and Strange* (1931). I've just space here to thank our contributors, who include two noted authors and scholars, Charles Barr and Tag Gallagher. Thanks, too, to Leslie Shepard, for his invaluable letter to me about the H.G. Wells story 'Through a Window', a probable 'source' of *Rear Window*. And thanks to Bruce Christopher, who sent the answer to my question last time about a couple of near-inaudible lines in *Rich and Strange*. On the ship, Commander Gordon notes that Emily in a moment of informality has dropped the title from his name, and then he says, 'Let it stay lost. Rather good, eh? [Just plain] Gordon.' Finally, readers, apologies for the lateness of this issue. Another issue, consisting largely of readers' articles, will follow in a matter of weeks. To everyone, good viewing - Ken.]

A killing

Outback road thriller *Kiss or Kill*, which has already premiered in the US, this month won the 1997 Best Film award of the Australian Film Institute.

In addition, the film's director, Bill Bennett, scored Best Director award, and Andrew S. Gilbert, who appears in the film as a yarn-spinning cop, was voted Best Supporting Actor. The film also won awards for Best Editing and Best Sound.

Rear Window in the news

Hitchcock's 1954 masterwork *Rear Window*, starring James Stewart and Grace Kelly, seems almost 'flavour of the month' at present, and could stay that way indefinitely. In the US, the film has been selected by the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress, which places a permanent, restored copy in the National Archives. It's likely that the restoration in this case will be done by Messrs Robert Harris and James Katz, who have already restored Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) in a 70mm version. The team announced in September that *Rear Window* would be their next project. They have promised to actually 'improve' the look of the film, using a new dye-transfer process which will show added detail and sharpness.

In the book-publishing field, *Rear Window* has been involved in a minor and a major event. Just out is Stefan Sharff's 'The Art of Looking in Hitchcock's *Rear Window*' - which various reports indicate is little more insightful than the author's earlier 'Alfred Hitchcock: The High Vernacular' (1991). (A brief review is included on the New Publications page of the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' Web site.) Of much greater moment, clearly, is the publication of Donald Spoto's 'Notorious: The Life of Ingrid Bergman'. Among Spoto's revelations: that Hitchcock based the Stewart-Kelly relationship in *Rear Window* on the 1946 affair between actress Bergman and renowned war photographer Robert Capa.

The affair began in Paris but continued in America. Spoto gives full details. 'Miserably lonely' in her 'dull, affectless' marriage to a dentist she had married at 18 in Sweden, Bergman found both lover and soul mate in the adventurous, free-spirited Capa. For months the two 'managed to evade the gossips' by meeting in New York, where they 'sat in dark corners of Greenwich Village bars, sipping drinks and listening to jazz; they cuddled in the balconies of West Side movie theaters; they strolled up Fifth Avenue at four in the morning.'

But when, quite soon, Capa reluctantly made plain to Bergman that he wasn't prepared to give up his globe-trotting career and become a publicity photographer for a film studio (as she had offered to arrange), the writing was already on the wall. It was then that Ingrid confided her troubles to Hitchcock, her current director. As Hitchcock 'poured hefty drinks for them', he easily fell into the role of Dr Brulov in *Spellbound*, and even quoted from the film itself. 'Ah well,' he said with feeling, 'there is much happiness in working hard - maybe the most'.

Whether or not something of Ingrid's anguish wasn't knowingly recreated by Hitchcock in the scripts for his remaining two pictures with her - *Notorious* (1946) and *Under Capricorn* (1949) - it's now evident that he never forgot about the Bergman-Capa affair, and that in 1954 he transferred its basic poignancy to his film *Rear Window*.

Charles Barr on Hitchcock's *Rich and Strange* (1931)

It is a commonplace of Hitchcock criticism to characterise *Rich and Strange* as a film that was particularly personal to the director and his wife/collaborator, Alma Reville. Its story of a naive young married couple has evident parallels with their own; the characters' names, Fred and Emily, are suggestively close to Alfred and Alma; and they both have screenplay credits. Gene D. Phillips (in 'Alfred Hitchcock', 1984) refers to it as an 'original screenplay', following the lead of John Russell Taylor's authorised biography ('Hitch', 1978); Taylor describes it there as *a story originally conceived for the screen, with Hitchcock himself developing a 'theme' by Dale Collins*. Donald Spoto, in his much fuller biography of 1983, reads the film as 'a kind of open diary or a photo album based on the Hitchcock marriage'. His account of the couple writing the script together at home in the evenings is followed by this information in parentheses: *The credits mention an 'idea by Dale Collins', but it is impossible to identify him or his particular contribution.*

Impossible? - what nonsense. On certain occasions, which include also his account of the scripting process of *Vertigo*,¹ Spoto's apparently formidable scholarship - and clearly, some aspects of it are genuinely so - turns out to be as thin as the Princess's claim to her title in *Rich and Strange* itself. Leaving aside the resources of the Internet, which neither Taylor nor Spoto could have had access to, it doesn't need much time in a reference library to identify Dale Collins as a prolific, if now largely forgotten, novelist - more of him later - and to get a list of titles, which include, yes, one called 'Rich and Strange', published in London by George Harrap & Co in 1930.

The film announces itself as *Rich and Strange* 'by' Dale Collins. Many British films of the time used this formula, which sometimes referred to a previously published work, and sometimes not. The credits on the film itself, at least in the prints I have seen, do not refer to Collins as contributing a 'theme' (Taylor) or 'idea' (Spoto), and one assumes that these are terms used by subsequent credit-compilers who were uncertain what the 'by' indicated. Other title cards include 'adapted and directed by Alfred Hitchcock' and 'scenario by Alma Reville and Val Valentine'. What Hitchcock adapted and the others worked on was, as in the case of *Murder!* the previous year, an autonomous novel.²

Hitchcock became famous for his cavalier attitude towards source material, novels in particular. He told Truffaut, for the 1966 interview book, that 'What I do is to read a story only once, and if I like the basic idea, I just forget all about the book and create cinema'. Did the Collins novel, then, perhaps contribute no more than a basic idea? That free-adaptation strategy, however, dates back no further than *The 39 Steps*, the radical transformation of John Buchan's novel that Charles Bennett scripted for Hitchcock in 1935. It does not even apply to everything he did subsequently, and it applies not at all to his adaptation practice of the 1920s and early 1930s. *Rich and Strange* seems to me to be the closest and most faithful novel adaptation that Hitchcock ever directed. The film widely regarded as his most original and personal project of the period is revealed, ironically, as being among his least so, in terms of its conception and composition. Film and novel are so close that it even crossed my mind that the book could be a 'novelisation' of the film, of the kind that sometimes gets published simultaneously or subsequently.³ However, the divergences, modest as they are, seem too substantial to make this plausible, and the dates seem anyway to rule it out: 1930 for the book's publication, December 1931 for the first screenings of the film.

Readers may wish at this point to turn to Ken Mogg's long and perceptive account of the film in issue 22 of 'The MacGuffin'. Here is the plot synopsis with which it starts:

Fred and Emily Hill, an average young married couple who live in suburban London, inherit money and decide to take a world cruise. On board ship, the experience goes to their heads, as they each make new acquaintances. Fred ends up losing most of their inheritance when he's seduced by a fake princess. Meanwhile, Emily has become involved with the charming Commander Gordon, who is en route to his plantation in the tropics. When he disembarks at Singapore, Emily makes the painful decision not to accompany him, because she sees that Fred needs her. Re-united, the couple are driven further back together after their cargo boat is wrecked in the South China Sea. Rescued by a Chinese junk, they return home to England, having had their fill of romance and adventure.

One small quibble: in the film, they don't actually inherit money, but are simply given it by Fred's rich uncle, to whom - as the letter from him reveals - Fred has been sounding off about his wish to break out and experience Life. In the novel, the uncle *has* died, but the timing and effect of the letter are identical; and in all other respects the synopsis is as accurate

for the novel as for the film. Moreover, a high proportion of the points of theme, structure and detail that Ken goes on to discuss are already there in the novel, right down to key lines of dialogue: for instance, the lines about gas ovens and gas bill in the first scene at home (p. 18 of article), and the on-board lines between Commander Gordon and Emily (pp. 18 and 22). Not only this, but the book has provided some of the key accompanying 'shots'.

'I want more out of life - excitement - adventure - change - That kind of thing!' He gestured briefly at the mantelshelf above which hung a print of Thomas Somerscales's Off Valparaiso, with its deep blue sea and its leaning, swaying ship....

(p. 20 of novel: is this, one wonders, the very picture that we see in the film?). Later, when Commander Gordon takes Emily right up to the front end of the deck and asks her to look back - 'Care to see a liner in which we were passengers once upon a time?', which in the film becomes 'Like to see a ship we were once passengers in?' - the next paragraph provides a vivid point-of-view description to which Hitchcock's POV shot will correspond (novel, pp. 75-6).

Rather than just piling on the detail, let me now summarise the changes that do occur in the film adaptation.

(1) The film's very striking opening is not in the book; but the day-after-day monotony that it enacts has been succinctly evoked on the page in Fred's early words to Emily (p. 6): 'Nothing to show but twelve years' clerking at Wotherspoon's behind me. Nothing ahead of us except endless repetition ...'

(2) Likewise, the ending is different. In the book, they find on their return to England that a second instalment of the inheritance awaits them, enough to enable them to run 'a little bookshop in some nice town on the South Coast' (p 284); and Emily is pregnant. In the film they return to the same suburban home; her pregnancy is not stated, but its possibility is hinted at through Fred's (evidently newly-aroused) desire for a child.

(3) The casting of the two men is not fully consistent with their description on the page. The book's Commander Gordon lost an arm in wartime action; Percy Marmont has two. Nor does this account of Fred (p. 81) exactly summon up Henry Kendall:

... he was easily the most striking figure on deck - so tall and broad and strong, so much the man, so masculine for all his good looks. The years at the desk had left no trace. He might have spent them in adventure by land or sea

(though we are reminded that this is Emily's somewhat rosy-eyed view of him).

(4) Some minor bits of action are omitted, condensed, or added. The book has no equivalent of the railway station scene where the film's couple begin their journey. Conversely, its chapter 18 is dropped, a detachable set-piece where Fred drunkenly visits a Singapore brothel. And the film elides, by a direct cut from ocean and sky to taxi arriving home, some pages that deal with the mechanics of the return.

All of this seems to me to constitute no more than a fairly minimal kind of basic adjustment, appropriate to an intelligently 'faithful' adaptation from novel to film. The basic structure, and the relations between action, location and character, are carefully maintained. Without having done a precise count, I'm confident that a majority of the spoken lines are taken direct from the page, with only minor verbal adjustments (as in the Commander's lines quoted above). This is particularly notable in the climax of the story, when the shipboard romances have dissolved and Fred and Em are on their own again.

When I wrote to Ken outlining the idea for this article, the first thing he asked in reply was: 'I'm wondering whether the shipwreck and Chinese junk episodes are in the novel?'. The answer is that they are not only 'in' it, they are there in virtually every detail, visual as well as verbal. Here are three examples, all of them elements picked out in the film for admiring comment by him and/or others. (a) The dead man they find on deck: 'He sprawled across their path ... hands still clutching the air, knees drawn up. He wore blue pyjamas ... He lay still and silent; they stood still and silent' (p. 230). (b) The Chinaman from the rescuing junk, who drowns in front of them (pp. 241-2):

Impassively the people of the junk looked on. The man on the rail plunged and fell head downward, jerking and struggling, his coat flapping. A tangle of rope had snared his feet and he could not escape ... The oily water climbed and obliterated him. His hat bobbed on the surface ...

(c) The skin of the cat, pegged up by the old man on the junk after they have eaten a dish of meat with lip-smacking relish. This too is already there on the page, in what is virtually a shot by shot storyboard (p. 252).

What does all this add up to? For a start, I think the case acts as a reminder both of the lack of generosity to collaborators for which Hitchcock became notorious, and of the critical carelessness which has habitually allowed him to get away with it - how easy it is to perpetuate errors like the miscrediting of this film's genesis, when they have once been set down in print. While preparing the authorised biography, Taylor talked regularly with Hitchcock, who could so easily have put him right about Collins, but his standard line was always that, in effect, he was responsible for his own scripts; and if there was no historian, or surviving collaborator, with the will or skill to put the record straight, he was the last person to do this himself. When did Hitchcock utter a word of appreciation of his indispensable early scriptwriter, Eliot Stannard?⁴ Launder and Gilliat protested vigorously and justifiably over the case of *The Lady Vanishes*,⁵ and Bennett would go on doing likewise over his more extended input into Hitchcock's films till the end of his life,⁶ but they were committed film-industry professionals, and they outlived Hitchcock. Collins was a novelist, not a film man, and he died in 1956.

Giving due credit to the Collins book need not, on the other hand, diminish the critical estimate of Hitchcock's own achievement. He took on the book, helped adapt it, realised (in both senses of the verb) its possibilities, made it into a Hitchcock film. This is the irony; Hitchcock had no need to keep disparaging the contribution of his writers. To see that contribution clearly is to get an enhanced insight into Hitchcock's own creativity. Following this through in terms of *Rich and Strange* is outside the scope of this article, and is unnecessary in the light of 'MacGuffin' 22.

This leaves Dale Collins, author of an admirable, and very 'Hitchcockian', novel; and he turns out to be Australian. Born in Sydney, he became a journalist in Melbourne, travelled round the world in a succession of boats, and based himself in England between 1923 and 1948 before returning home. He specialised in 'sea-going romances', of which 'Rich and Strange' is by all accounts fairly typical. The first of them, 'Ordeal' (1924), was dramatised by Collins himself and staged in London the following year; a voracious theatre-goer at the time, Hitchcock may well have seen it. Collins's autobiography, 'Bright Vista', indicates that the men and their wives were at one time friends, though it is maddeningly imprecise about dates and details and says nothing at all about the film, mentioning only a conversation, a practical joke, and a social invitation.⁷ Could the story to some extent have grown out of, and become shaped by, long-term discussions between them about a possible film project, and been realised first as a novel, and then somewhat later as a film?

Such a hypothesis, unlikely as it seems in the absence of any corroborative evidence, would at least help to explain the intermittent feeling (referred to earlier) that what one is reading is a novelisation of the film. Hitchcock's interviews add to the mystery. To Truffaut, he describes a favourite scene in which Fred swims underwater between the legs of the Princess, is provocatively held there, then splutters to the surface. Truffaut tells him that he has seen two prints of the film, neither of which contains this episode, nor have I seen it - has anyone else? It is, however, there in the book, in every vivid detail (pp. 104-5). To Bogdanovich, he gave an account of

'my most devastating appearance in a picture': after the rescue the Hills meet Hitchcock in a lounge. They tell him their story, 'and I say, "No, I don't think it'll make a movie".'

After quoting this, Maurice Yacowar adds that 'In the print that is available the characters do not meet their maker'.⁸ Again, has anyone seen a print in which they do? In the novel, however, they do meet Dale Collins the novelist, at the beginning and end of the voyage ('a little fat man', p. 64), and the final emphasis corresponds to Hitchcock's account of that of the film: 'the story's utterly out of the question' (p. 284).

Hitchcock had, by my reckoning, made appearances in only three of his 13 (completed) feature films prior to *Rich and Strange*, so it was not yet any kind of trademark. Perhaps the jokey 'cameo appearance' of Collins in his own book (irrespective of whether Hitchcock was ever seen on screen emulating it, or whether he even filmed it in the first place) stuck in his mind, and had an influence on his long-term film - and TV - practice. The comparison between book and novel has raised a lot of questions which, like this one, have to remain open, at least pending further research; what seems certain is that we can add the name of Dale Collins to the long list of those who have materially helped to create the 'Hitchcock' that we know.

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Notes

1. The errors in Spoto's account of the scripting of *Vertigo* are discussed in my forthcoming study of the film for the BFI Classics series. Exchanges with Dan Auiler indicate that his own imminent book on the production of the film will likewise be aiming to set the record straight.
2. *Murder!* is frequently referred to as being based on a play - 'Enter Sir John'. by Clemence Dane and Helen Simpson. This is actually a novel, published 1928, and I have found no evidence of it being dramatised; records confirm that it was

never staged in London, and reference-work entries on its joint authors list it (like its sequel 'Re-enter Sir John', 1932) as a novel only. The error (assuming it is one) is understandable, given that (a) the credits on the film are not specific, (b) Clemence Dane was better known as playwright than novelist, (c) the film is not only set in a theatrical milieu but seems in many ways 'theatrical' in form. And of course once an error gets into the records, it is easily perpetuated; even Denis Gifford ('The British Film Catalogue') and Tom Ryall ('Alfred Hitchcock and the British Cinema') state that *Murder!* comes from a play.

3. The British Library catalogue has an entry for a 1936 book, 'The Man Who Knew Too Much', described as 'Novelised by Ruth Alexander, From the Gaumont-British picture of the same name, written by Charles Bennett, etc'. The same author had in 1929 produced 'Blackmail': 'from Charles Bennett's play and all-talkie film, novelised by Ruth Alexander; illustrated with scenes from the photo play'. I've found no evidence of other early Hitchcock novelisations.

4. Stannard wrote most of Hitchcock's silent films. A massively prolific craftsman, son of a comparably prolific novelist (Henrietta Stannard, whose *nom de plume* was John Strange Winter), he seems to have disappeared without trace in the early 1930s. No remotely modern reference work that I am aware of has an entry on him. All information gratefully received, obituaries in particular.

5. See Sidney Gilliat, interviewed by Kevin MacDonald in 'Projections', book 2, edited by John Boorman and Walter Donohue.

6. Bennett is interviewed in two screenwriter-centred collections: Pat McGilligan (ed.), 'Backstory', 1986, and Lee Server (ed.), 'Screenwriter', 1987.

7. 'Bright Vista', published in London by Herbert Jenkins Ltd in 1946, is not so much an autobiography as a set of autobiographical jottings. Entries on Cuthbert Dale Collins can be found in 'The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature', and in '20th Century Authors', edited by Kunitz and Haycraft, New York 1942; for more extended critical material, see 'Australian Literature from its Beginnings to 1935', by E. Morris Miller (Melbourne, 1940), and '20 Australian Novelists', by Colin Roderick (Sydney 1947). Australian-based research could obviously uncover a lot more about Collins.

8. Maurice Yacowar, 'Hitchcock's British Films', 1977, p. 294, with quote from Peter Bogdanovich, 'The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock', booklet accompanying 1963 Hitchcock season (MoMA, New York), p 15.

Coming attractions

Leland Poague on Hitchcock and Almodóvar; Jason Rasmussen on Hitchcock and Oscar Wilde; Stephen Donatelli on *North by Northwest*; Charles L.P. Silet on 'The *Rebecca* Project' and 'Soul in Suspense'. Plus 'Letters', 'News', 'Oz-report'.

Editor Rudi Fehr interviewed by Tag Gallagher

[*Rudi Fehr began his film career in 1933 in Berlin with Kurt (Curtis) Bernhardt. He worked at Warner Bros. as an editor for sixteen years, a producer for two years, and head of post-production for twenty-two years. Since retiring from Warners in 1976 he has continued to work as an editor, notably with Francis Ford Coppola, and recently finished a film in Hungary, age 82. At Warners he worked with Alfred Hitchcock, King Vidor, Michael Curtiz, Vincent Sherman, Jean Negulesco, Curtis Bernhardt, and John Huston. His only film with Vidor was Beyond the Forest, 1949.*]

Were you on the set of *Beyond the Forest*?

No, only when I was not busy editing. I always try to keep up with the director so my first cut is ready within a week after he finishes shooting. But if I had no film to work with I spent time on the set, watching. King Vidor was a very soft-spoken man; you know, he came from Texas. He was quiet, he did it intimately. He would get up from the chair and go over and talk to the actors in a low voice. He was always very reserved, he did not yell or scream, but he was determined to have us do it his way. With Bette Davis that was not easy but he had his way all the way.

She and Jack Warner were constantly feuding. When I came on the set and she asked how Mr. Warner had liked the dailies, if I said he liked them very much, she would say, 'Well, they probably stink!' She was her own woman and she was very strong, defiant when she didn't approve of something. But Mr. Warner reserved the right to decide who should play what part in what picture. Bette Davis refused many times and refused to do the part because she didn't think it was for her. Warner was very ready to put anybody who defied him on suspension and Bette Davis didn't appreciate that.

I don't know if she threatened to quit. She was not crazy about the film script. (But she had a complete turn-around later on, after Mr. Warner sold the studio and new people started running studios. I was there when she made a speech when Jack Warner was being honored by the new regime, and she didn't mince words, she said, 'Give me Jack Warner back!' She said that loud and clear.)

***Beyond the Forest* is a very ugly picture. I confess I don't like it.**

Nobody did. The only line that made a great impression on the audience is when Bette Davis walked into her house and said, 'What a dump.' Everyone was using that one around town.

Why would Vidor make it?

I don't know. Maybe he needed the money. It's hard to say no to a picture with Bette Davis.

But he made it so ugly.

He made it ugly to explain Bette Davis's [character's] attitude in the film. She [herself] was forced into it and she was unhappy all the way through.

Did he like it?

That I don't know. He never expressed to me that he liked it or disliked it, he was just a good pro who did the job he was asked to do.

Did he rehearse the whole film first?

No, that wasn't done. Everybody read the script at home to themselves.

How much negative did he expose?

Not that much, at the most 200,000 feet which was the average. George Stevens shot one and a half million for *Giant*.

The average was about 250,000 feet for a feature.

Did Vidor sit in with you much?

No, never. I never in my entire career had a director in my cutting room, never. And they had no intention of coming. It wasn't done in those days. In those days we made sixty movies a year, and as soon as a director finished a picture he was handed another script for his next assignment. So they didn't really have time to come. And they had faith in the editors. Today it's a different story.

As an editor how did you know which take to use?

I used my own judgment—which had the best performance, which setup or angle would loan itself to tell the particular story point. It depends on the material you get from the director, the kind of story, which is the guide for the editor to give emotional reaction. It's just as important to listen as to talk, when two people talk. *Don't* stay on the guy talking, show the people listening too, because they are affected by the dialogue too. So it's all a matter of attitude. And I've been able to please every director I ever worked for.

So to what degree did a Hitchcock or a Vidor have any control over the cutting?

When I was ready to show my first cut, the director and I ran it alone in the projection room with my assistant. Then they could make any comment they wanted, and any change they requested was made the next day. With Hitchcock I was very lucky. I made *Dial M for Murder* (1954) and *I Confess* (1953) with Hitchcock. I don't think I made more than five or six changes in either of these two pictures.

He had had a storyboard, right?

I never saw it, I heard about it. I never saw one.

Would your cut have corresponded to Hitchcock's storyboard?

I don't know the storyboard.

It could have been that he planned the sequence differently than you edited it?

It could have been, yes, but he never mentioned the storyboard.

So who would decide whether a sequence played, say, in one long take or two long takes or with quite a lot of cutting?

Well, certainly when Hitchcock shot the picture he had certain things in his head. But he expects an editor to know, to realise. I read Hitchcock loud and clear and I knew his likes. I looked at many of his pictures, I was a great fan of his, and he had no problems with my editing.

And who would decide how long a take would last?

I have a good sense for timing. Before I became an editor, I studied music, I have a feeling for rhythm, a feeling for telling a story. A good editor must have that. We shot more footage on *I Confess* than on any other picture because he knew he couldn't go back to Quebec for retakes or added scenes. So I got a lot of footage, there were a lot of flashbacks and he covered the flashbacks extremely well, a lot of footage for me to choose from. And it worked.

The editor must read the director and know what he has in his mind, and I could read Mr. Hitchcock. He never told me which take to use. He never looked at any edited film until I was completely finished.

Surely you've seen all the textbooks on Hitchcock that analyze his montage and claim he composed it all on his storyboard and that everyone was simply following his plan. You're telling me the opposite of what the history books say.

All I can say is that I edited two and neither of those fell into this category. Maybe I was very lucky. We had a great relation, we went out to lunch many times, he came to your house for dinner, we became friends. It was a very sad day when he was honored by the American Film Institute. He had already Alzheimer's and he could not make a speech. He was sitting all alone.

John Ford used to brag that he never gave the editor extra footage to play with.

Well that would be very bad, if that was the case. An editor should have the freedom to put a film together the way he sees it. That's why he's hired, that's why he's getting the big dough they're getting in Hollywood these days. And they're

very important these days. They have a lot of prestige. Their credit used to be buried with eight other people; now they get their names in the newspaper advertisements.

Speaking of Ford, I watched *The Rising of the Moon* (1957) next to Jack Warner and I said I couldn't understand a word they were saying in the third chapter, because of the Irish. Someone repeated this to Ford. When I went to Mr. Ford, he was in the projection room with the editor, and I said, 'I need to talk to you about the post-production schedule.' He said, 'WHAT DID YOU SAY? I CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD YOU'RE SAYING.' So he got back at me.

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BLOOPERS

Thanks to Steven L. DeRosa for telling us of his slip last time about William Dieterle's *Jewel Robbery* (1932) - see 'Odd Spot' in 'MacGuffin' 22. The film doesn't in fact end with Kay Francis winking at the camera but with her putting a finger to her lips to 'shhh' the audience. Still, as Steven notes, the shot is identical in spirit to the last shot of Hitchcock's *Family Plot* (1976), and that's what matters.

Actually, Nandor Bokor in Hungary was prompted by our 'Odd Spot' to watch *Jewel Robbery* when it played on one of the (German) satellite channels recently. And Nandor not only found it very enjoyable, with a feel of Lubitsch to its charming sexual references, but was reminded as well of Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* (1955) and, yes, the ending of *Family Plot*.

Professor Sander Lee has sent us more information about the San Juan Bautista tower whose 'disappearance' reportedly so annoyed Hitchcock when he went back there prior to shooting *Vertigo* (1958) - see 'Letters' last time. Sander says that the San Juan Bautista National Park gave him an information sheet which states that the original tower was replaced in 1923 and that it was the replacement tower that Hitchcock had once seen. But when he returned to make *Vertigo*, he 'was surprised [says the information sheet] to find the tower had been removed in 1949 due to dry rot and termites'.

The Gioconda smile: archetypes in/of Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954)

In telling a story, one of the most successful devices for easily creating uncanny effects is to leave the reader in uncertainty whether a particular figure in the story is a human being or an automaton, and to do it in such a way that his attention is not focussed directly upon his uncertainty, so that he may not be led to go into the matter and clear it up immediately. That, as we have said, would quickly dissipate the peculiar emotional effect of the thing. E.T.A. Hoffmann has repeatedly employed this psychological artifice with success in his fantastic narratives.

- E. Jentsch, quoted in Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'"¹

The psychological truth of the situation in which the young man [in 'The Sandman' by E.T.A. Hoffmann], fixated upon his father by his castration complex, becomes incapable of loving a woman, is amply proved by numerous analyses of patients whose story, though less fantastic, is hardly less tragic than that of the student Nathanael.

- Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'"²

[Synopsis of the film. There's a heatwave in New York. Roving photographer L.B. Jefferies (James Stewart) has a broken leg, and is confined to a wheelchair in his Greenwich Village apartment. Each day, and often into the night, he relieves his boredom by gazing into his neighbours' apartments from his rear window. Sometimes, too, he receives visitors. The two main ones are his girlfriend, Lisa Fremont (Grace Kelly), a high-fashion model, and an insurance company nurse, the motherly Stella (Thelma Ritter). A third visitor is Jeff's former air force buddy, Tom Doyle (Wendell Corey), who is now a police detective.

Gradually Jeff becomes suspicious about the behaviour of the neighbour who lives directly opposite. He's a costume jewellery salesman, Lars Thorwald (Raymond Burr), whom Jeff thinks has murdered his wife. At first, no-one takes Jeff's suspicions seriously. Lisa is much more concerned with persuading him that it's time he settled down and got married - an idea he seems loathe to accept.

But one day things change. It becomes plain - after some further snooping on the neighbours through binoculars and even a telephoto lens - that Mrs Thorwald has indeed vanished, yet items like her favourite handbag and her wedding-ring remain with Thorwald in the apartment. As Jeff's leg is still in a cast, Lisa and Stella volunteer to cross the courtyard

themselves, in search of 'evidence'. Lisa even sneaks into Thorwald's apartment after he has been lured away by a decoy telephone call from Jeff.

Then things go wrong. Thorwald returns sooner than expected, and catches Lisa. Jeff makes a frantic call to the police. Lisa is saved by the police's intervention, but Thorwald now knows that Jeff has been spying on him. Moreover, the police want to charge Lisa with burglary, and they take her to the local precinct station. This gives Thorwald his chance to pay Jeff a visit ...]

ANYONE INTERESTED IN ARTS and ideas should read 'The Sandman' by German writer and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822). For one thing, it's perhaps the main influence on the celebrated film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1919).³ For another, Hoffmann's tale provides the basis of both the ballet 'Coppélia' (1870) by Léo Delibes, and parts of Jacques Offenbach's light opera 'The Tales of Hoffmann' (1881), the latter filmed by Powell and Pressburger in 1951. Freud's essay "The Uncanny" (1919), which has itself influenced many writers and filmmakers,⁴ is centred on 'The Sandman'. Lastly, it seems to me that Hoffmann's tale offers as good a gloss as any for understanding *Rear Window*.

Here's a synopsis of 'The Sandman'. The student Nathanael becomes fixated on a house opposite his own, in which dwell a Professor Spallanzani and his beautiful 'daughter' called Olympia. Watching the house through binoculars supplied by a pedlar, Coppola, who reminds Nathanael of a sinister lawyer from his childhood, Coppelius, the student quite loses interest in his regular girlfriend, Klara. One day he goes to the Professor's house and there at last encounters Olympia - who turns out to be just a life-like automaton whom Spallanzani has manufactured with help from Coppola. Comically, Nathanael's infatuation with Olympia continues. Then tragedy strikes. Spallanzani and Coppola quarrel over their 'creation', and before Nathanael's horrified eyes, dismember 'her'. Later, Nathanael seems to make up with Klara, until the fateful day when he tries to push her from a high tower. She escapes, and Nathanael throws himself down instead. He had thought he had seen the lawyer Coppelius in the street below, mocking him, and had gone mad.

Freud interprets the tale as follows. Coppelius, Spallanzani, and Coppola, as well as Nathanael's real father (who figures early in the story) are all father-figures - either 'good' or 'bad'.⁵ In turn, they're all associated by Nathanael with the figure from nursery-lore, the Sandman, who is said to bring sleep, as though he had thrown sand in children's eyes. Consequently, they're all potentially 'castrating' figures.⁶ Coppelius, in particular, because once long ago he'd laid hands on Nathanael, seems to the student a baleful figure, in whom is vested a power over people's eyesight and even their very lives.

The automaton or doll, Olympia, is readily explained by Freud. She 'can be nothing else than a materialization of Nathanael's feminine attitude towards his father in his infancy. ... Olympia is, as it were, a dissociated complex of Nathanael's which confronts him as a person, and Nathanael's enslavement to this complex is expressed in his senseless obsessive love for Olympia. We may with justice call love of this kind narcissistic ...'.⁷ I assume that Olympia's 'dismemberment' - which is like the fulfilment of the threat made to the young Nathanael by Coppelius - allows the student a temporary respite from his father-fixation (though at a deeper level it does nothing of the kind). Hence he feels free to return to the sensible Klara who all along has refused to have anything to do with the 'mystical nonsense' about Coppelius that Nathanael had confided to her.

I'll refer below to at least one 'uncanny' moment in *Rear Window*, namely, the arrival of Thorwald at Jeff's apartment. But first let's note that Hitchcock was thoroughly acquainted with Hoffmann's writings. Donald Spoto records that Hitchcock's library in England contained several editions of Hoffmann, including some in the original German, and suggests that Hoffmann helped teach the director 'the technique of blending humour and horror, interweaving closely the nightmare world with the everyday world ...'.⁸ This fits with what Michael Dirda writes of Hoffmann: that perhaps his 'chief contribution to the supernatural story was his grounding of the fantastic in a local habitation and a name ... the possibility that the horrific or fantastic might happen next door. Or even closer.'⁹ About the theme of the automaton in several of Hoffmann's tales, Dirda says that it suggests how humans themselves are but 'slightly more complex dolls, manipulated by forces beyond their control'.¹⁰ cf Will

I'd make one criticism of Freud's essay on "The 'Uncanny'". It's this. At the head of the present article is what seems to me an eminently sensible insight by Freud's colleague, Jentsch, concerning a way in which a writer may create 'uncanny' effects. But Freud himself quotes the Jentsch passage in order to largely dismiss it, in favour of what he calls his own more 'psychologically truthful' explanation, involving 'the idea of being robbed of one's eyes', i.e., the castration complex.¹¹ I'd prefer to say that both explanations are valid. For when we turn to *Rear Window* we may find that both apply equally well. When Thorwald finally comes to Jeff's apartment, he indeed poses a threat to the eyes of the hero. As

if fighting fire with fire, Jeff at that moment must shield his own eyes while trying to ward off his assailant by firing photographic flashbulbs at him. But equally, Thorwald's entrance into Jeff's room raises a question that has been latent all along: is this shambling figure an ordinary man or something else, perhaps indeed some kind of 'automaton'? And the answer the film gives is surely ... both.

* * *

Bogdanovich: In Rear Window Kelly seems the dominant partner in the relationship.

Hitchcock: Yes, rather. She's a typical, active New Yorker. There are many of those women in New York, more like men, some of them.

B.: Did you feel at the end that Stewart and Kelly would eventually get together, or would it be a pretty dismal relationship?

H.: Oh, I don't know - I never bothered about that very much. I would doubt it myself. He'd be off on some job, you know.

B.: He doesn't really get excited about her until she gets involved with him in the adventure of the

H.: Well, that's when the mother instinct comes out in him - anxiety for her.

- Peter Bogdanovich, 'Who the devil made it'¹²

Initially, Jeff in *Rear Window* is passive and isolated, his condition matching what someone has called the cinema spectator's 'relative narcissism'.¹³ And, to judge from what Hitchcock told Peter Bogdanovich, not much has changed for Jeff at the film's end. The 'pessimism' of this seems to me akin to that of 'The Sandman'. Still, what I mainly want to do in this article is to present *Rear Window* in a wide context, less as some recondite allegory of the unconscious and more as the satisfying and *achieved* piece of entertainment-filmmaking it surely is. The nuance of 'the uncanny' is only a part of it.

To put that a different way: it isn't so much the Freudian 'meaning' of *Rear Window* that's interesting, it's more the range of satisfactions the film offers us. For a start, then, here are the works that I see as the most basic 'sources' of *Rear Window*.

- 'It Had To Be Murder'/'Rear Window' (1942) by 'William Irish'/Cornell Woolrich (and behind it, 'Through a Window', 1894, by H.G. Wells - see below). Woolrich's 40-page story, set in New York, was the basis of John Michael Hayes's screenplay. Nonetheless, there are differences, including the story's fewer characters (e.g., those of Lisa and Stella).
- 'Coppélia' by Léo Delibes. Ballet derived from Hoffmann's 'The Sandman', but with some interesting revisions. The heroine, Swanilda, lives opposite the house of the mysterious Dr Coppélius, a toymaker, who seems to have a strange relationship with his female co-tenant, Coppélia. Swanilda's sweetheart, Franz, becomes enamoured of Coppélia, whom he watches from afar. Swanilda becomes jealous. Eventually both she and Franz separately break into the toymaker's house while he is out - but the toymaker returns sooner than expected ...
- 'Miss Lonelyhearts' (1933) by Nathanael West. Well-regarded short novel by the author of 'The Day of the Locust', with something of Cornell Woolrich's tales of urban pain and desperation about it. The title-character is a male journalist, a bachelor, who lives alone in New York in a room he calls a 'dismal swamp'. Largely ignoring his fiancée, Betty, he decides one day to reach out and give personal help to the suffering people whose letters fill his column - and pays a high price.
- 'The Daughter of Time' (1951) by Josephine Tey. Widely praised on its first publication, and ever since, as a classic detective story, it features Tey's regular detective, the unmarried Chief Inspector Alan Grant, and his chic, professional-actress friend, Marta Hallard - both of whom figure in earlier Tey stories such as 'A Shilling for Candles' (1936), filmed by Hitchcock as *Young and Innocent* (1937). But on this occasion a bored Grant is confined to a hospital bed after an accident, from which he proceeds to 'solve' the 500-year-old murder-mystery of the Princes in the Tower ...

As I say, I see the above four or five works (together with 'The Sandman') as the most basic 'sources' of *Rear Window*, and I'd be surprised if Hitchcock and Hayes, between them, were not acquainted with all of them. For instance, we know that Hitchcock liked to keep up with what was being published in the crime and thriller fiction field, and few things are more likely than that he had read reviews and synopses of Josephine Tey's 'Daughter of Time', if not the actual book.¹⁴ I'll say more about each of these works later in this article. I'll also refer to still another basic 'source' which I didn't list above only because its influence on *Rear Window* is, in a sense, so nebulous. And that's 'Mona Lisa' - the painting and its 'mythology'.

Further, there are second-order 'sources' and/or analogues. A knowledge of these, too, helps us to see Hitchcock's film for the satisfying work it is. Here's an example. While *Rear Window* was in production, its studio, Paramount, released Byron Haskin's *The Naked Jungle* (1954) in which a theme or subtext is a man's reluctance to consummate his relationship with a 'perfect' woman. The seemingly impotent hero, a plantation owner in South America, is played by Charlton Heston; his attractive mail-order bride is played by Eleanor Parker. Based on Carl Stephenson's unremittingly suspenseful short story, 'Leiningen Versus the Ants', the film's main problem is its first half, which is quite boring. Only when an army of flesh-eating soldier ants arrives, and Parker joins Heston in trying to repel them, does the film liven up. Critic Danny Peary makes a fair comment when he says of the ants that they 'rescue the plodding picture'.¹⁵

Well, there's scarcely any such problem about *Rear Window*. Jeff's own 'impotence' (hinted at more than once, and symbolised by his plaster-encased leg), and Lisa's alleged 'perfection' (but she admits to wishing that she 'could be creative') are played against each other for all they're worth. In this, Stella acts as a kind of interested spectator/referee, whose *natural* bias is in favour of Lisa! What Stella calls her 'common sense' prompts her to tell Jeff that he should get married immediately. But now notice how complicated the situation in fact is. For a start, as regards Stella, her 'homespun philosophy', à la the 'Readers' Digest', is gently mocked - she knows no better! Next, it's made clear from the outset that Jeff is no ordinary photo-journalist: his boss at 'Life' magazine (or perhaps 'Look') regards him as 'my best photographer', and clearly Jeff's job gives him as good an illusion of being 'free' as anyone has a right to expect. However, he's now sunk in what he calls 'this swamp of boredom'. His phrase is echoed in two of the stories I've cited above¹⁶ and in Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' (1678; 1684) with its Slough of Despond - note that we'll consider the 'archetypal' later. Moreover, when Lisa describes Jeff on assignment as being 'like a tourist on an endless vacation', I think she's being petty! Far from being a trenchant criticism of Jeff, her remark shows a certain incomprehension and/or envy (perhaps even 'penis-envy') on her part; it's one more sign that she *isn't* perfect! At any rate, no more than he is! Also, when Jeff tells her that she herself has 'this whole town in the palm of [her] hand', her response is the just slightly ungracious, 'not quite, it seems'.

In short, I consider Lisa another in the line of frustrated, would-be *mothers* who figure in Hitchcock's work from *The Pleasure Garden* (1925) onwards:¹⁷ she wants to make a homebody of Jeff so that he can sire her a child. In Hitchcockian ~~words~~ her lack of 'creativity' equals her lack of applied motherhood. And one basic clash the film sets up - in order, finally, to evade it - involves the perennial question of where the highest freedom, and the highest good, may lie. For the Catholic artist Hitchcock, he isn't prepared to rule out certain forms of sexual sublimation as the answer, even seeing this represented, I fancy, in Jeff's vocation as one of the world's top photographers (based on Robert Capa) - which in turn serves as a possible metaphor for Hitchcock's own practice of his art. At the film's finish, when Jeff ends up with *two* broken legs, and *two* plaster casts, everything suggests that he may be about to marry Lisa and thereby *doubly* compromise himself!

Now, if the above analysis sounds to the reader to be lacking in, well, humour, let me hasten to add my agreement! If we're indeed going to appreciate the range of satisfactions that *Rear Window* offers us, humour is a dimension that must be considered. I want to do that next, before picking up again the thread of 'mothering' that runs just below the film's surface, a counterpart to the emphasis on father-figures.

* * *

Clown:

Who knows the art of pleasant self-expression
Need not resent the popular decree;
He thrives on widespread appreciation,
And moves the mass more certainly.
So be exemplary in every fashion,
Give reign to many-throated fantasy,
To reason, thought, and sentiment, and passion -
But, mark it well, not without foolery!

- J.W. von Goethe, 'Faust', First Part, The Prelude in the Theatre

When I interviewed John Michael Hayes in 1975, we spoke about what he had given Hitchcock. Hayes singled out the quality of 'warmth'. He had always felt that Hitchcock was basically a 'cold' director; here he cited such films as *The Paradine Case* (1947) and *Under Capricorn* (1949). But as early as possible in *Rear Window*, he'd put in several gags. The idea was to break down the unconscious 'hostility' that members of an audience invariably feel towards both each other and the film.¹⁸ So the first arrival of Stella at Jeff's apartment is a coup. Her opening remark, ticking Jeff off from the doorway for being a Peeping Tom, rivets our attention. Moments later, she recalls the time she'd predicted the stock

market crash in '29: 'When General Motors has to go to the bathroom ten times a day, the whole country's ready to let go.' That's the sort of line that wins over your audience, Hayes said - and got no argument from me.

Still, it's clear that Hitchcock was equal to the occasion! Throughout the film you feel its marvellous sensuousness, starting with the two initial pans around the courtyard, each coming to rest on Jeff's perspiring face as he sleeps beside his open window. After the first such pan, a cut-in of a thermometer in Jeff's room shows the temperature to be 94° Fahrenheit. This constitutes a likely reference to another film of a Woolrich novella - Ted Tetzlaff's *The Window* (1949) - as well as to the popular Ealing comedy, *Passport to Pimlico* (Henry Cornelius, 1949). Like *Rear Window*, both those films are set during summer heatwaves of 94°! And the palpableness of this other kind of 'warmth' helps Hitchcock's film greatly: more than a plot-device explaining why everyone has their windows open, the heatwave functions as a metaphor for shared crisis, and as a leitmotiv with variations. When rain arrives in the early hours of the morning, Hitchcock catches exactly its summer quality. The rain is but a brief shower, heavy enough to drive the couple sleeping on their fire-escape back indoors in an undignified scramble, yet gentle enough not to dissuade the salesman Thorwald from his several mysterious trips to and from his apartment, carrying a suitcase. Later in the morning, the rhythms of the courtyard are back to normal, as if nothing untoward has happened ...

Hitchcock's sense of these rhythms is acute. Hayes wrote the situations and the gags, but the director's own *good humour* responds creatively to every nuance. The rhythms of the scenes with the shapely ballet dancer, 'Miss Torso', are a special highlight. (Significantly, they support some of *Rear Window*'s extra-film references, such as one to Leonard Bernstein's ballet, 'Fancy Free', and others, surely, to Delibes's 'Coppélia' - to which I'm coming.) So here's the crux of the matter. I'd say that *Rear Window* represents a watershed in Hitchcock's career, along with his entry into television the following year. He seems to have absorbed much from working with both Hayes and with James Allardice, the latter being the man who wrote the wonderfully loopy and sardonic lead-ins and lead-outs for Hitchcock's television shows. Observers have said that no matter how outlandish those Allardice spots were, without batting an eye Hitchcock would agree to do them - things like appearing as a scarecrow or playing a mop-haired drummer who resembled Ringo Starr.¹⁹ Not for nothing have I suggested in past 'MacGuffins' that Hitchcock seemed to have the quality that Keats called 'negative capability', i.e., of being able to fully enter into someone else's identity or role!²⁰ It was, I think, an aspect of his special genius, and one which he exercised when he could. Mind you, there was a related aspect of his genius, but one not quite so appealing.

Hitchcock, as I say, learnt much from Hayes and Allardice, but it's not as if he'd lacked all warmth and humour before he worked with them! A 1930s film like *Young and Innocent* gives the lie to any such notion. But for some reason the mid-1950s sees the emergence in Hitchcock's work of what I would call a 'motherly' dimension; possibly it has something to do with the fact of Patricia Hitchcock's having recently left home to get married. This new dimension has its own 'good' and 'bad' aspects. In a 1963 interview, Hitchcock implied that humour in his films was the equivalent of the reassuring smile a mother gives a frightened child.²¹ There you have the 'good' mother. On the other hand, consider the case of another famous artist who had a definite 'feminine' streak to his make-up, Goethe. Camille Paglia sees in Goethe's 'vulnerability to mother and nature' the source of his 'imperious mastery of knowledge and other men'.²² So Goethe wasn't just 'The Clown', he was also 'The Director' and 'The Poet'.²³ And I think Hitchcock's make-up was similar, thus helping to explain why *Rear Window* is so satisfying. Hitchcock could by 'negative capability' assimilate himself to others, including both his characters and his audiences. That's basically 'The Poet' in him. At the same time, he could, by 'imperious mastery', impose his will on other people, again including us. That's 'The Director' in him. (There's a leavening touch of 'The Clown' in *both* roles, though.) And underneath it all, deep in Hitchcock's psyche, was what I'm calling the 'mother', both 'good' and 'bad', but always a source of reassurance for him, who in turn might pass on that reassurance to us, watching his films ...

In 'MacGuffin' 19, we printed Hitchcock's remark that he'd been lucky enough to have a very placid mother.²⁴ Then, in 'MacGuffin' 21, in writing of the Hitchcock/Hayes film *The Trouble With Harry* (1956), I cited D.W. Winnicott's psychoanalytic notion of 'the "quiet" mother' who provides a sense of continuity that is growth-conducive.²⁵ Crucially, Donald Spoto gives plenty of evidence for Hitchcock's emotional closeness to his mother - so great a closeness, in fact, that at least one commentator has drawn a parallel in this respect with Cornell Woolrich, a homosexual.²⁶ But perhaps a truer illustration of what's involved in Hitchcock's case is provided by the character Dr Brulov in *Spellbound* (1945). In 'MacGuffin' 15, I said of Brulov (Michael Chekov) that he's an exemplum for the too one-sided Ballyntine (Gregory Peck). If the latter has still to abandon a certain 'Oedipal' position, involving a false or anti-social notion of individual 'perfection', by contrast his mentor has arrived at a mature detachment allowing him to both channel his more 'masculine' aggressive impulses and draw on his 'feminine' side. Brulov is something of a male mother, what Paglia calls a 'Teiresias' figure.²⁷

This is all rather complicated, so a further illustration should help. A famous scene from *Spellbound* is the one in which Ballyntine descends a staircase clutching an open razor, then heads menacingly towards Brulov. The scene is *obviously*

'Oedipal', but what I most want to note is the opposition of razor and (a glass of) milk - Brulov talks his patient into drinking milk that he has secretly laced with bromides. In essence, what we have here is 'masculinity' subdued by 'femininity'! More specifically, the would-be still-'virile' psychiatrist, Brulov, performs a symbolic (as well as pragmatic) act that saves the day for all concerned. Ballyntine is rescued for a redemptive inward journey involving his dreams and their subsequent analysis, while Brulov has protected himself without losing face (or his life). Note that Brulov is *Spellbound*'s 'good' father-figure, as opposed to its 'bad' father-figure, Dr Murchison (Leo G. Carroll).

Importantly, there's a similar moment to *Spellbound*'s at the end of *Rear Window*. Once Lisa, now wearing a 'unisex' combination of jeans and a shirt, sees that Jeff is asleep - and presumably dreaming - she puts down the book 'Beyond the High Himalyas', with its 'masculine' title, and resumes reading 'Harper's Bazaar', which she obviously prefers. Being the smart woman she is, she has learnt how to have her cake and eat it. *And* she has finally got her man, it may seem.

With its good humour, this ending is very satisfying. Nonetheless, to judge from what Hitchcock told Bogdanovich, he himself didn't set much store by it! It's an *ambiguous* ending. The satisfaction it offers us comes from its balancing and rounding-off, as in a ledger, what has gone before, rather than from what may come after.

We can now see something of the film's general pattern. Jeff is a reasonably virile, very successful photo-journalist, whom we're told is based on Robert Capa (1913-54).²⁸ Lisa is essentially a feminine, very successful fashion model, based on actress Ingrid Bergman plus several details that Hayes provided about his wife's profession, that of a high-style fashion photographer's model.²⁹ (Note: Capa and Bergman had a short-lived affair in 1946, which was observed by Hitchcock.) But the film gives Lisa an additional quality, one of ruthlessness, seen when she insists on replacing Jeff's wooden cigarette box with a silver one on which she's had his initials engraved. *Hitchcock felt that Lisa's character had a strong 'masculine' component. Equally, it's fair to say that Jeff has been temporarily 'feminised' by his motor-track accident, and that this has stirred in him castration-anxieties centred on the 'bad' father-figure over the way, Thorwald.*

Also, though Jeff spends the early part of the film complaining to his boss about how bored he is, and to Stella about how annoyingly 'perfect' he finds Lisa - implying that Lisa further threatens his tenuous sense of his own 'perfect' maleness - the situation quickly changes. *Some crossing-over (literal and metaphoric) takes place. By the time that Lisa has entered Thorwald's apartment, thereby showing an adventurous spirit that Jeff hadn't known about ('perfect' being a relative term!), he has started to feel a new depth of affection and concern for her. Hence Hitchcock's remark about Jeff that 'the mother instinct comes out in him'. Lisa, for her part, has become less purely calculating and ruthless, and more spontaneous and instinctive. The emergence of the 'mother' in her is signalled when, in the later part of the film, she chooses to wear a floral dress, one which isn't high-fashion, and nowhere is her 'motherliness' more to be seen than when she cradles Jeff's head in her lap after his fall out the window, the dress filling the screen almost like a field of flowers.*

* * *

After his legs were set, they carried Bailey into the study and put him on a couch before the open window. There he lay, a live - even a feverish man down to the loins, and below that a double-barrelled mummy swathed in white wrappings. He tried to read, even tried to write a little, but most of the time he looked out of the window.

- H.G. Wells, 'Through a Window'³⁰

He heard the door open, but did not stir himself to look. He had turned his face to the wall, literally and metaphorically.

He heard someone come across to his bed, and closed his eyes against possible conversation. ...

He opened an eye and squinted up at her. She had evidently bent over to see if he was asleep, and was now standing in an irresolute way - if anything Marta did could be said to be irresolute - with her attention on the heap of all too obviously virgin publications on the table. In one arm she was carrying two new books, and in the other a great sheaf of white lilac.

- Josephine Tey, 'The Daughter of Time'³¹

In the previous section, I suggested that Hitchcock plays the male mother (and 'good' father) apropos *Rear Window*, and that's a reason why the film is so *psychologically* satisfying. No part of us feels rebuffed. But I also had in mind Hitchcock's 'motherly' concern simply to look after us, to see that we have a good time, and perhaps to teach us a lesson. 'Everybody will go home contented' (as a line in 'Faust' says).³² It's interesting to note in this respect a seeming play-on-words in the film itself: Jeff tries to excuse his voyeurism to Stella, and to an imaginary judge, by pleading, 'I love my neighbours like a father'; and Stella anticipates the judge's strict ruling, 'Congratulations - you just gave birth to three years in Dannemora.'

This is decidedly ambiguous. The primary suggestion is one of incest or rape, with Jeff's neighbours the (female) victim. The point is psychologically astute, yet the wording manages to imply, further, that Jeff might more 'properly' have loved his neighbours as a *mother*. Given what I've been saying about Hitchcock's relation to his audience, I find this revealing.

I once drew attention (following a hint from Robert Kapsis, commenting on Hitchcock's fondness for 'dressing up' on television) to how Hitchcock in his TV lead-ins and lead-outs was often like a respectable English parent admonishing a slightly wayward American child - and playing *both* roles himself (a boy in knickerbockers, say).³³ The fact is that Hitchcock as artist, like Hitchcock as presenter, could be a remarkably self-contained, even an 'androgynous', figure.

Now, we've noted Jeff's and the cinema spectator's 'relative narcissism', which is certainly a form of 'self-containment'. Is it significant that Jeff himself isn't heard to admit wrong-doing even when both Stella and Lisa criticise his 'aggressive' spying on his neighbours?

In other words, does Jeff feel that he *already* loves his neighbours like a mother as well as like a father? Here I want to invoke Freud again: this time, his essay on Leonardo da Vinci. Freud saw in the painter of the 'Mona Lisa' a case of both 'narcissism' and of 'ideal [sublimated] homosexuality'.³⁴ A key passage in Freud's essay reads:

*The core of his nature, and the secret of it, would appear to be that after his curiosity had been activated in infancy in the service of sexual interests he succeeded in sublimating the greater part of his libido into an urge for research.*³⁵

Of course, full marks to Professor Freud for telling us why Leonardo *isn't* 'the Italian Faust'.³⁶ Leonardo's particular quest for mastery and knowledge doesn't readily translate 'back into an enjoyment of life'.³⁷ (Nonetheless, both he and Goethe do share some distinctly 'feminine' traits.)

Well, I've already said that Jeff may be something of a Hitchcock surrogate in the film, though I'll suggest below that he isn't the only one. Also, I think it's true to say that if Jeff *starts out* resembling Hitchcock (as well as the film spectator), he becomes still *more* like Hitchcock later. Which brings us back to Hitchcock's 'mother', to whom the director would often turn for 'reassurance'. I think Freud would agree that this betrays in Hitchcock a form of narcissism, something which in an adult needs to be constantly 'validated'. 'He thrives on widespread appreciation', as the Clown says in 'Faust'.

As just noted, too, 'feminine' individuals like Goethe and Leonardo were driven to acquire mastery and knowledge, and this is precisely a trait in *Hitchcock* which I associate with the 'mother'. In this section, I want to consider Hitchcock's intimate knowledge of his own art and craft, of various other arts, and of things like famous murder cases, the details of which he kept at his fingertips. In other words, this section is specifically about the 'sources' of *Rear Window*. It's also about what I'll call the 'archetypal'.

Hayes told me of how Hollywood tended to treat its screenwriters badly; for instance, on location he once found himself staying in a second-rate hotel, some distance from where the rest of the film's company was quartered. He seemed keen to list for me just how much in the *Rear Window* script was his invention. For instance, he mentioned the idea of the flashbulbs. This was impressive, though I couldn't help thinking of how the 'clues' to that scene are already in the Woolrich story (where the 'flash' of a gunshot preludes what Jeff calls a 'camera-finish'). Nor could I overlook how neatly the scene fits Hitchcock's 'windmills in Holland, chocolate factories in Switzerland' story-logic: thus, if the hero of your story is a photographer, you naturally must make his camera and accessories play a part in the action ...

What I'm saying is this. Without taking anything away from Hayes's great skills of characterisation and dialogue, which in *Rear Window* includes some breathtaking double entendres, it seems to me that Hitchcock kept control. From listening to Hayes, and from reading interviews with someone like Samuel Taylor,³⁸ I'd say that Hitchcock may have been as expert at 'directing' his screenwriters as he was at 'directing' audiences. Then there's a related matter. I've little doubt that Hitchcock himself could have arrived at the sort of story-situations that Hayes wrote for him because I believe that the number of these is quite finite - and that Hitchcock knew this. For instance, you can find precedents for the climax of *Rear Window* in both the H.G. Wells story I've mentioned (which I suspect Woolrich and Hitchcock had both read) and in the movie *The Window* (where again the protagonist is confronted by the enraged man he's been spying on, and, to escape, must plunge to the ground). In the case of Wells's 'Through a Window', not flashbulbs but medicine bottles serve as its invalid hero's weapon of defence against his attacker. Yet the 'logic' is the same as in Hitchcock's film. Then, too, the plots of all these works feature a last-minute intervention by a third party, who thereby may be said to save the hero's life.

Hayes told me that both Lisa and Stella were invented by him, the Woolrich novella having effectively *no* female characters except the ill-fated Mrs Thorwald. Nonetheless, I'm sure that Hitchcock's initial instructions to his screenwriter*

would have included one about the necessity of giving their story a female lead. Also, Lisa in *Rear Window* has much in common with Marta Hallard in 'The Daughter of Time'; Stella, as we'll see, has several 'precedents' as well. There are even similar bits of business given to all these characters. I've quoted an example at the head of this section. Equally, there's a passage in 'Miss Lonelyhearts' where Betty, her arms full of bundles, tiptoes into Miss Lonelyhearts' room, believing him to be asleep.³⁹

Perhaps, who knows, Marta Hallard's profession of actress may have been what prompted Hitchcock to base Lisa on actress Ingrid Bergman? (Which raises the further question, if Hayes invented Lisa, at what stage did Hitchcock suggest making the Lisa-Jeff relationship parallel that of Bergman-Capa?) But let's now turn to the case of Stella.

Stella is a marvellous supporting character, quite possibly written with actress Thelma Ritter already in mind to play her. Yet both 'Through a Window' and 'The Daughter of Time' offer precedents. In Wells's story, each time Bailey's charlady, Mrs Green, arrives with one of his meals, she catches him gazing out the window at the passing parade on the Thames; invariably, too, he's clapping or calling out softly 'Encore!' as if what he sees is all a show for his own

As the story nears its climax, it's Mrs Green who, having narrowly avoided the Malay seaman who has run amok, arrives in Bailey's room breathless, anxious to tell him about the menace that may still be nearby ...

In 'The Daughter of Time', the character who most anticipates Stella is Grant's own charlady, the no-nonsense Mrs Tinker, who regularly visits him in hospital. Here's how we meet her:

The door opened and Mrs Tinker's homely face appeared in the aperture surmounted by her still more homely and historic hat. Mrs Tinker had worn the same hat since first she began to 'do' for Grant, and he could not imagine her in any other. That she did possess another one he knew, because it went with something she referred to as 'me blue'. (Chapter I)

Mrs Tinker's 'homely' face and hat anticipate Stella's, all right. (Just think, for instance, of the latter's unstylish headpiece.) Hayes's script describes Stella as a 'husky, unhandsome, dark-haired woman'; it makes a feature of her black bag (in the film, puce), which 'is worn, and looks as if it belongs more to a fighter than a nurse'.⁴⁰ Then, too, in 'The Daughter of Time', Mrs Tinker's friendliness with Marta Hallard, centred on their common charge, Grant, matches the bond in *Rear Window* between Stella and Lisa. Towards the end of the film, the two women talk of voting Jeff in, which sounds suspiciously like a conspiracy to make him the homebody that he's resisted being all along!

Grant in 'The Daughter of Time' has a couple of male buddies. There's Sergeant Williams, a police colleague of long standing, and there's the young American historian, Brent Carradine, whose specialised knowledge Grant draws on in his attempt to solve the murder of the Princes in the Tower. Thus these two individuals, between them, provide a counterpart of *Rear Window*'s Tom Doyle, originally a buddy of Jeff's in the air force and now a detective, who literally does some of Jeff's leg-work by obtaining background on Thorwald.⁴¹ Note that Grant's bond with his Sergeant is particularly tight - it anticipates the working-relationship in Hitchcock's *Frenzy* (1972) between Inspector Oxford and Sergeant Spearman - and thereby invigorates the Tey novel. Yet John Michael Hayes, you feel, goes one better by leavening the Jeff-Doyle buddiness with scepticism on Doyle's part concerning Thorwald's being a murderer; the script extracts both humour and drama from this.

The *Rear Window* courtyard, with Jeff's apartment situated directly opposite Thorwald's (almost as if one were mirroring the other), might be said to combine settings of the Woolrich story and Delibes's 'Coppélia' respectively. In the story, the apartment directly opposite Jeff's is that of a young couple who are seldom at home (the Thorwalds' apartment is further along, in a separate building). In the ballet, Swanilda's house and Dr Coppélius's house are located at opposite sides of the stage. Something that Delibes, but not Woolrich, may be thought of as giving the film concerns the crucial matter of characters who eventually cross the courtyard in order to break into the apartment of the sinister figure who lives over the way. In 'Coppélia', the two lovers who have become estranged (Swanilda, Franz) cross the courtyard separately, but are brought together by their mutual danger. In *Rear Window*, Lisa alone breaks into Thorwald's apartment while Jeff must stay behind and look on, but the final outcome is the same as in the ballet: the lovers are reconciled.

'Coppélia' has its own equivalent for the apartment-dwellers in *Rear Window*: a highlight of the ballet is a *Mazurka* performed by the villagers. Incidentally, maybe this is what helped prompt Hitchcock and Hayes to set their film in Greenwich Village, New York! Certainly the presence in the ballet of the various villagers lends the work an extra dimension; you think of what Hitchcock told Truffaut, that the apartments in the film necessarily comprise 'a real index of individual behaviour ... a small universe'. Also, just as the film has its coda in which the several apartment-dwellers are shown returning to some sort of happy normality, so the ballet ends with what is mainly a *divertissement*, a succession of joyful dances performed in the village square by all and sundry, including a brilliant *pas de deux* for Swanilda and Franz.

Next, a word about Nathanael West's 'Miss Lonelyhearts'. It's likely that Hayes and/or Hitchcock had read it, given that a character in the film is actually called 'Miss Lonely Hearts' (note the script's spelling, though). Moreover, the structural parallels with *Rear Window* are striking. I've indicated above how West's short novel features an ironic theme of 'neighbourliness': New York during the Depression is portrayed as a fragmented, every-man-for-himself jungle, something which finally prompts the would-be Christ-like hero, the journalist Miss Lonelyhearts, to make personal contact with some of the people who have written to him seeking help, but whose lives he has never really known ...

But his attempt to reach out to others, which approximates what Stella in *Rear Window* calls our need once in a while to get outside our houses and look in, has a fatal result. A cripple called Doyle comes to the journalist's room and shoots him. The cripple is the aggrieved husband of the woman whose letter to Miss Lonelyhearts had prompted his change of heart, and outlook, in the first place.

West's apparent 'pessimism' is echoed in *Rear Window*. For instance, it's significant that Miss Lonelyhearts is a disaffected journalist (his difference from the more zealous Jeff isn't as great as it may seem). A running critique of the popular media and how they feed the public 'puerile' dreams⁴² is striking. As we'll see, *Rear Window* makes several ambiguous references to 'dreaming', including Jeff's own.

But West implies how, if we would only realise it, there's a bigger picture. Miss Lonelyhearts knows that there's *also* 'the Christ dream', and that he's capable of dreaming that, too. Only, in his present isolated state, ever since his boyhood in fact, he has never quite got over feeling intimidated by 'this Christ business', precisely because it stirs in him 'something secret and enormously powerful'. Though '[h]e had played with this thing, [he] ... had never allowed it to come alive'.⁴³ I want to show below how *Rear Window* has a related theme, whereby beyond gender differences there's a reality, a true 'neighbourliness', which often finds its best expression in works of art, perhaps *including* the popular ones.

~~It would add that West's story is far from humourless, though even the humour has a bitter taste. Just consider the misogynistic and other implications of this sentence describing Mrs Doyle's attempt to excite the hero:~~

~~When she went to the radio to tune in a jazz orchestra, she waved her behind at him like a flag.⁴⁴~~

Sound familiar? Softened, and lent Hitchcock's 'art of pleasant self-expression', there's indeed one such moment in *Rear Window*! But I'd have to say that *all* similar moments in the film are more mellow and benign than almost anything in West's downbeat story.

Hitchcock's new-found warmth and concern (with Hayes's help) are exactly what I'm talking about here. He told Truffaut that his 'batteries were well-charged' at the time, and I'm sure no-one doubts that the experience of working with Grace Kelly and James Stewart had a lot to do with it. For all the reasons I've suggested, then, Hitch was now more laid back, and his work showed a new openness to the 'archetypal' which is so often a hallmark of creativity. The male mother emerged in him. To conclude this section, I'll just indicate some more 'borrowings' by *Rear Window*, and how in almost every case the filmmakers embraced the material in apt, even ingenious, ways.

In the 1940s, Hitchcock almost certainly heard Lucille Fletcher's hugely popular radio play, 'Sorry, Wrong Number' (1943), and watched Anatole Litvak's 1948 film version (with Wendell Corey in a supporting role). The situation of bedridden, neurotic wife, and henpecked husband who is driven to murder, seems the very model for the Thorwalds in *Rear Window*. (Perhaps Lucille Fletcher had Woolrich's story in mind when she originally wrote her play, which is itself set in New York.) The play's climax, in which the wife waits alone in her darkened house for the hired killer sent by her husband, strongly resembles the climax of Hitchcock's film. Then, too, in certain matters of detail, Litvak's film anticipates Hitchcock's. Here I'm thinking of the use of a tracking and panning camera peering around a room to provide the audience with information about that room's inhabitant.

I've just said that one 'model' for the Thorwalds may be found in the radio play and the film of 'Sorry, Wrong Number'. But, equally, Hitchcock would have recognised a similarity to the real-life murder case of Major Armstrong and his wife in the 1920s, in which the Major poisoned his nagging wife and then went off with a younger woman.⁴⁵ The case had several fictional re-tellings, such as the novel 'Malice Aforethought' (1931) by 'Francis Iles'/Anthony Berkeley. Hitchcock had adapted that novel for American radio in 1946.⁴⁶ Then there was a still more famous re-telling, a short story by Aldous Huxley, called 'The Gioconda Smile' (1922). The story is so-named because of its twist-ending in which the murderer proves to be the husband's mistress whom he had spurned; when he's convicted of the killing, and executed, she doesn't intervene - just smiles. A film version was called *A Woman's Vengeance* (Zoltan Korda, 1947), and starred Charles Boyer and Jessica Tandy.⁴⁷

Further, *Rear Window* alludes to two other famous murder cases: the Crippen case (in which the murderer kept his wife's jewellery, and was caught because his mistress was eventually seen wearing it) and the Patrick Mahon case (Mahon murdered a woman and then dismembered her body, for a time keeping the head in a hat-box). And what about the name 'Thorwald'? That comes from the Woolrich story, but in turn may allude to the oppressive husband, Torwald Helmer, in Ibsen's play 'A Doll's House' (1879).⁴⁸ Woolrich's story explicitly likens its apartment-dwellers to inhabitants of 'a doll house with its rear wall sliced away'. Naturally, too, you think of 'Coppélia', with its doll-maker villain, Dr Coppélius ...

The depiction of Thorwald in *Rear Window* is said to be based on Hitchcock's former producer, David O. Selznick. Hitchcock gave Raymond Burr bits of business that he remembered: a certain way of holding a telephone, a certain manner of smoking a cigarette.⁴⁹ But I've always thought that Burr's performance owed at least as much to Albert Dekker's portrayal of the mad scientist in *Dr Cyclops* (Ernest B. Schoedsack, 1940). That film, about a shambling Frankenstein- or Dr Moreau-like figure whose eyesight (virility?) is failing him, was a hit in its day, and almost certainly would have been seen at the time by Hitchcock. (One of the film's supporting roles was played by Charles Halton, who the same year had a small part in *Foreign Correspondent*.) Dekker's character is often shown adjusting his glasses, or removing them before ~~the top of his nose~~. The fact that Dr Cyclops has found a way to miniaturise living creatures, including humans, puts him in a not-dissimilar category to the lawyer Coppélius, with his sinister alchemical experiments, in Hoffmann's 'The Sandman'; also, of course, he's another doll-maker ...⁵⁰

The director of *Dr Cyclops* had already made his most famous film, *King Kong* (1933). That fact may remind us of how the flashbulbs climax of *Rear Window* resembles the moment when another shambling creature, Kong, terrified by the popping of news photographers' flashbulbs, bursts his chains and heads for the would-be freedom at the top of the Empire State Building.⁵¹ Note that in the case of all the various figures I've just invoked - the mad scientist, the larger-than-life creature from a more primitive age, the tormented wife-killer - a degree of audience sympathy attaches itself to him, not unmixed with fascinated horror. You could easily say that there's something 'uncanny' about these figures, so unlike yet also like ourselves.

Finally, let me cite a 1990 article, "Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* as Critical Allegory", by George E. Toles, which suggests that 'Thorwald's crime has an almost Orphic power'.⁵² I'll come to what Toles means, but first I'd like to make an assertion of my own that the spirit of Orpheus, the legendary poet who could move even inanimate things by his music, does indeed preside over *Rear Window*. Orpheus was the great uniter or *re-uniter*. Moreover, it seems to me that Hitchcock's 'motherly' aspect does perform an Orphic role in this film. That's why the idea Hitchcock described to Truffaut, of having the composer-character's efforts culminate in the performance of a completed song during the coda, is so apt: we see, and experience, at this moment the triumph of 'neighbourliness', even as we hear the strains of 'Mona Lisa' ringing around the film's courtyard. The scene is very satisfying in its literal 'completeness', even though we sense that it can't possibly last ...

Orpheus, an essentially Apollonian figure, was killed and *dismembered* by the Maenads, with whom he'd often consorted, and who, being female, were Dionysian figures. But it's said that his head went on singing for a time afterwards. Now, in the dismemberment of Mrs Thorwald in *Rear Window*, I see perhaps just one specific classical allusion - to the slaying and beheading of the Gorgon, Medusa! - yet I think we may also sense here a *parody* of the sort of 'sacrifice' that an artist, such as Orpheus, may be called on to make, for the sake of both his art and his community. How does this fit with George Toles's comment that 'Thorwald's crime has an almost Orphic power'?

Toles means, firstly, that all these city-dwellers in their separate apartments (or compartments) lead essentially dingy, alienated lives; to give the idea, he cites some of the imagery of T.S. Eliot's 'Preludes' and 'Morning at the Window'.⁵³ (For my part, I'm reminded of West's 'Miss Lonelyhearts', plus the echo of Eliot's 'The Waste Land' at the start of *North by Northwest*.)⁵⁴ Next, he thinks that what 'provides a hidden agenda for all the aimless energy exhibited by ... this non-community' is - rage. (Which accords with, for example, the 'quiet desperation' shown by Fred, an office-worker and suburbanite, early in the 1931 Hitchcock film *Rich and Strange*.)⁵⁵ Thus Thorwald's dismemberment of his wife's body becomes 'a correlative for visual fragmentation' and a general frenzy; and '[t]he scattered remnants issuing from his murderous rage might be said to *re-constitute* the life of the building'.⁵⁶

I find this idea compelling. For one thing, it helps to explain the audience's mixture of sympathy and *fascinated* horror when Thorwald materialises in Jeff's room: Thorwald is *our* neighbour, too! And, as noted, he's also a father-figure, albeit a 'bad' one, and we *all* have fathers, don't we? In turn, I'd evoke a further bit of mythology: in *Spellbound*, the 'bad' father-figure, Dr Murchison, resembles fertility myth's aging 'King of the Wood', someone who must be forced to 'abdicate' for the general good of the community ...⁵⁷

Summing up. Yes, Thorwald's crime 'has an almost Orphic power'. His murdered wife is a scapegoat for the general rage that lurks behind each façade - though she herself, in her (feigned?) invalidism, had made no noticeable effort to be more 'neighbourly'. But then, you could say the same about Jeff, another invalid. As a voyeur, he is *in the neighbourhood*, but hardly a part of it. Especially at first, he quite literally fancies himself free, and wants to keep things that way. He's still a narcissist. Yet, by the same token, he's essentially no different from everybody else. I find it significant that, at one point, when Jeff speculates out loud that Thorwald is apparently going to leave his wife, Lisa says 'I don't care'. And that, at the end, we hear Stella make the reflex remark that she 'wants no part of' Mrs Thorwald.

Nonetheless, the spirit of Orpheus finally prevails after Thorwald himself has become *another* scapegoat. Significantly, the latter might almost have been Jeff. Now, I've suggested that Jeff, a photographer, is a surrogate for Hitchcock. But there's at least one other person who also fits that role, and that's the composer/songwriter. The evolution of his composition, 'Mona Lisa', corresponds to the unfolding of the film on the screen, which in turn corresponds to the maturing of Jeff and Lisa's relationship. And it's in the composer's apartment that we see Hitchcock make his 'cameo' appearance, winding a clock - note the emphasis again on winding and *unwinding*. If, arguably, there's something of all of the film's characters in Hitchcock, no less is there something of Hitchcock in all of those characters! My point - but it's really Hitchcock's - is that in this film, or just beyond it, he is present, like a sympathetic god, like a male mother, like Orpheus.⁵⁸

It's high time we considered the film's 'Mona Lisa' subtext, and then, by way of an overview, the matter of 'the uncanny' with which this article began.

* * *

Mothers can be fatal to their sons. It is against the mother that men have erected their towering edifices of politics and sky-cult [which would 'transcend' nature]. She is Medusa in whom Freud sees the castrating and castrated female pubes. ... But the danger of the femme fatale is that she will stay, still, placid, and paralyzing. Her remaining is a daemonic burden, the ubiquity of Walter Pater's Mona Lisa, who smothers history. She is a thorny symbol of the perversity of sex. She will stick.

- Camille Paglia, 'Sexual Personae'⁵⁹

Grant had been dozing, more at peace with the world than he had been for some time; history was, as Matron had pointed out, an excellent way of acquiring a sense of perspective.

- Josephine Tey, 'The Daughter of Time'⁶⁰

In *Vertigo* (1958), Hitchcock invests Madeleine (Kim Novak) with traits of 'archetypal' women in legend and fiction: for example, several of Madeleine's actions seem derived from those of Marguerite Gautier in 'La Dame aux Camélias', by Alexandre Dumas *fil.*, a work often called 'one of the greatest love stories of all time'.⁶¹ In giving *Rear Window* a veritable theme-song called 'Mona Lisa' (reprised from the 1950 Mitchell Leisen film *Captain Carey, USA*),⁶² Hitchcock seems already to have been attempting something similar: he wanted the film's Lisa to share the ambience of Leonardo da Vinci's 'La Gioconda', a work which for 500 years has been variously interpreted, often in contradictory terms, yet is generally agreed to show 'the very essence of femininity'.⁶³

That's the first thing to say. The second thing is this. Just as *Vertigo* carries a further ambience, that of a dream (at one stage, a nightmare), so too does *Rear Window*. Like Grant in 'The Daughter of Time', Jeff constantly dozes; indeed, the film begins and ends with his dozing - and dreaming. For the watching audience, this exerts what Charles Barr calls a 'hypnagogic' effect whereby we share a character's mind-state and its 'rhythms'.⁶⁴ Of course, the film's soundtrack has rhythms of its own. These are provided mainly by popular songs. But now note: several of the songs' lyrics themselves refer to dreaming. In an excellent article, "Film as Dream: Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*", Robert J. Benton notes how behind our final view of Jeff asleep may be heard the film's theme-song, whose words at this point are '... if I'm dreaming may I never wake ...'.⁶⁵ But there have been other instances. One involves our initial view of Miss Lonely Hearts, followed by glimpses of several of the other apartment-dwellers: on a radio somewhere, Bing Crosby croons, 'To see you is to love you./And I see you everywhere/ ... In the same old dream tonight.'⁶⁶

Miss Lonely Hearts figures in a similar moment later. We watch her prepare to go out and then cross the street to the cafe opposite, where she sits at a table. She's obviously hoping to be picked up. We hear a female vocalist sing of 'waiting for my true love to appear'. The song's lyrics also refer to how '... I dream many dreams ... until just one dream remains ...'. Perhaps there's a prolepsis here of the end of the film where, as I've said, Jeff and Lisa seem reconciled,⁶⁷ and Miss Lonely Hearts and the neighbouring composer have met and seem taken with each other.

p. 22: 'if I'm dreaming,
I hope I never wake', etc → Sⁿ ←

Life as a dream. That's exactly how various thinkers (e.g., Calderón, Novalis, Schopenhauer) have found it, of course. But I'd say that in *Rear Window* Hitchcock intends also the more commonplace notion: to dream is to *escape* for a time from life's trials. In the process, secondary gains may be had. Yes, Jeff is now dreaming again at the end, but perhaps that dreaming has acquired for him a new depth, not unrelated to his encounter with the mother-side of himself, which Lisa comes to incarnate. Hence, perhaps, her watching over him here! Moreover, let's recall how often in Hitchcock, after a character has been given some indication of an emptiness in himself, he may be spurred to take a new direction. The most frequent symbol of that emptiness is an open space, and the new direction taken by the character may involve him in an inward journey, if he's up to it.⁶⁸ Let's consider more exactly what happens in *Rear Window*.

I've said that neither Lisa nor Jeff is 'perfect', perhaps not even for each other. Ironically that's because ~~each is dedicated~~ to a career, Jeff especially, and therefore one-sided. Stella, bless her heart, knows that being perfect isn't everything: when she married her husband, Myles, they were 'both maladjusted misfits', and they have happily remained so ever since. Still, there are other considerations. The film asks, for example, whatever happened to the saying, 'love thy neighbour'? And what exactly constitutes being 'neighbourly'? Perhaps a stimulus here was the recent award-winning short film by Canada's Norman McLaren, *Neighbours* (1952). In any event, Hitchcock's answer once again seems to involve 'motherliness' in the sense that I've been suggesting. He says, in effect, that we should all try to be more like him, the artist! By contrast, Jeff initially feels no true involvement with his neighbours. In his narcissistic state, he wants to stay *itinerant* and as quickly as possible to clamber out of the 'swamp of boredom' into which he's been parachuted. It's as if he still believes himself to be flying on an endless series of reconnaissance missions with Doyle. He resents being 'grounded', and sees it negatively, almost as 'a slur on [his] manhood' - here I'm quoting from *Psycho* (1960) because the imagery of stagnation indeed anticipates that of the unfortunate Norman Bates.

But of course now Jeff has a new 'buddy', Lisa. The film details how his allegiance finally shifts, until he seems to have embarked on quite a different mission to before, this one for life. Thus all the talk in the film about 'feminine intuition' has had its point. Jeff had first been content to leave that sort of thing to Lisa, no doubt seeing it as of much use to him as the interest in women's fashions he'd momentarily feigned. But following Lisa's comment about how strange it is that Mrs Thorwald should apparently go away without taking things like her favourite handbag, Jeff's attitude changes. Lisa sees her chance:

Lisa: I'll trade you - my feminine intuition for a bed for the night.

Jeff (smiling): I'll go along with that.

By the time Doyle shows up and expresses scepticism about 'women's intuitions' - likening them to fairy tales - Jeff is ready to resent his attitude. Whereupon, Lisa pointedly goes and stands beside Jeff. At this moment, we first hear the words of 'Mona Lisa', coming from the composer's apartment. It's as if 'femininity' were celebrating its new triumph. (Mind you, a reader of 'The Gioconda Smile' may be reminded of how Janet Spence, the mistress, was someone else who had felt empowered by her 'woman's intuition' ...) ⁶⁹

Make no mistake, the film is right behind Lisa, emotionally. From here to the end, the element of *feeling* is pronounced. No longer is ratiocination - the solving of a puzzle as in a detective story (a form Hitchcock disliked) - what is uppermost. The episode of the strangled dog now follows. I believe it crucial to the meaning of *Rear Window*. Against all of the film's subjective (or narcissistic) logic to this point, the camera moves *outside* Jeff's apartment to give us a near-comprehensive view of the entire courtyard. The sequence brings to their respective windows nearly all of the film's 'neighbours', and only Thorwald remains incurious. And during the speech on 'neighbourliness' by the distraught woman who had owned the dog, we finally get to meet in close-up both Miss Torso and Miss Lonely Hearts. Neither is strikingly beautiful, but that's exactly as it should be, I think. In giving each of them low-angle shots to themselves, shots *not* representing Jeff's angle of vision, the film reminds us that these people, no less than the main characters, are human beings, not mere dolls or figments in someone's private fantasy. They have their own lives to lead. A similar point was made in *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), and if it isn't unambiguous, well, that's something to be considered shortly. But for now, let's simply note that just as the speech in *Shadow of a Doubt* about 'human beings' was spoken by a woman, young Charlie, and concerned the women the film calls 'merry widows', so the speech on 'neighbourliness' in *Rear Window* is given by one woman and the sequence puts especial emphasis on two *other* women ...

I'm saying categorically that the last twenty minutes or so of *Rear Window* have a 'feminine' emphasis. Let's go back to *Spellbound*. There, too, the male character, who has been relatively passive throughout (in his case, with amnesia), is asked to find new dimensions *within* himself; meanwhile, the female character, who had been 'frozen' in a certain professional stereotype, becomes the 'real woman' we've always known her to be. In *Rear Window*, every fibre of Lisa's body, in its floral dress, swings into action when she crosses the courtyard to Thorwald's apartment where she finds the symbolic wedding-ring that she's effectively always sought. Also, just as the male mother, Brulov, presides in a benign

way over the last part of *Spellbound*, so I'd say that the 'motherly' Hitchcock and his main surrogate, the composer/songwriter, preside at the end of *Rear Window*.

Nonetheless, Jeff should be seen as the film's hero. By that remark, I intend the traditional sense of 'hero', someone whose deeds enable the ordinary people of the story to overcome adversity and to proceed with their lives in a meaningful way. Basically, Jeff's story in *Rear Window* is everybody's, only 'writ large'. What his story both expresses and facilitates is, indeed, consciousness of 'life'. Consider in this respect such things as the 'rage' we noticed before, to which Thorwald gives *murderous* expression; and the piece of sculpture, called 'Hunger', that we see being fashioned by the (amateur?) woman sculptor who wears a hearing-aid (as does an aging gentleman in *North by Northwest*). Both the rage and the hunger are for what Fred in *Rich and Strange* calls 'more life'. Overall, the film seems to imply how in raising one's consciousness, in not being an invalid or a cripple, one may find or intuit the true meaning of 'neighbourliness'.⁷⁰ Also, consider the very emptiness and hollowness of the film's courtyard - the courtyard which Lisa eventually crosses on Jeff's behalf. As noted, it's only when the Hitchcock hero finally encounters and admits the emptiness in *himself*, that he has spent so much of his time denying, that his healing can begin. I see the process occurring in *Spellbound* when the heroine accompanies the hero to the icy summit of Gabriel Valley, and pleads with him to 'remember' ...

Further, consider the use by *Rear Window*'s soundtrack of 'Fancy Free' in an early sequence showing the various apartment-dwellers setting about their daily routines. The general idea appears to come from Woolrich's story, whose people 'were all bound in ... the tightest straitjacket any jailer ever devised, though they all thought themselves free'. Woolrich means that these people are all bound by habit. Jeff, who has always fancied himself free, but whose accident had triggered his 'castration anxiety', inadvertently becomes his neighbours' liberator - for a time, at least.⁷¹ Yet probably he was never really free himself. His was an *immature* notion of freedom, a *boyish* notion. When Lisa lays on a lobster dinner from the Twenty-One Club, right in Jeff's apartment, the symbolism is identical to that in *Spellbound*, which has its ~~own~~ *Twenty-One Club*.⁷² Lisa's message to Jeff is that he's a big boy now (à la *Vertigo*) and that it's time to grow up.

But even here lurk ambiguities. Carl, the puffy-faced Twenty-One Club waiter in his scarlet jacket, is one *more* doll-like figure and, as well, a representative of the artificial high-society world of Lisa's that Jeff appears to *want no part of*. Jeff's main interest is in his job as a gifted photo-journalist, a one-in-a-million job which involves him, to some degree, in the lives and suffering of real people the world over. *And there's some validity in this attitude of Jeff's*. By the same token, the film reminds us (à la Schopenhauer, and others) that people are basically the same everywhere, and gives Lisa a remark to that effect. It's almost as if Carl were a test-case, a bit like the wealthy 'merry widows' so despised by Uncle Charlie in *Shadow of a Doubt*, and defended as 'human beings' by his niece, young Charlie.

Most audiences, agreeing with Stella in this, probably want to tell Jeff that it's time he got 'a life' - meaning that he should immediately marry Lisa, who so obviously loves him. And I've suggested how the film implies that this might be a 'neighbourly' thing for him to do, and how there's much wisdom in his taking this (for him) new direction. But, speaking of neighbourliness, and of wisdom, consider next that there's always been more than one way of looking at such matters. Norman McLaren's *Neighbours*, which has connotations of the Cold War, reaches no conclusions except that perhaps, after all, 'good fences make good neighbours'. Likewise, to change example, interpretations of the figure in Leonardo's 'Mona Lisa' have always differed widely. Let's ponder those. Perhaps the most positive interpretation is that of certain Jungian analysts, who see the 'Mona Lisa' as embodying the highest form of *anima* - even higher than that represented by either Faust's Helen (whom I once invoked re Madeleine in *Vertigo*) or the Virgin Mary.⁷³ According to M.-L. von Franz, the most developed form of *anima* 'is symbolized by Sapienta, wisdom transcending even the most holy and the most pure. ... (In the psychic development of modern man this stage is rarely reached. The Mona Lisa comes nearest to such a wisdom anima.)'⁷⁴

The Jungian term *anima* refers, of course, to 'the woman within', and to the possibility of a man's achieving wholeness. The main thrust of the present article is that *Rear Window* was 'directed' by Hitchcock with that possibility in view. Nonetheless, 'wholeness' isn't everything! I suspect that a part of Hitchcock held Schopenhauer's view that there's 'always something essentially one-sided about genius', and felt that his own case showed that! Certainly Walter Pater (1839-1894), a famous exponent of 'art for art's sake', saw the 'Mona Lisa' in quite a *sinister* light. Now, if it's the 'smothering' effect of the mother that we're talking about when we invoke Pater,⁷⁵ then surely we must recall the ending of the very next film that Hitchcock made, *To Catch a Thief* (1955), again scripted by Hayes. That film ends on a sinister note indeed, when the Grace Kelly character, Frances, tells her new husband, John (Cary Grant), that she'll be bringing her mother with her to visit, indefinitely it seems.

Next, consider again *Rear Window*'s final scene, and the business of Lisa's choice of reading-matter. By appearing to read 'Beyond the High Himalayas', Lisa seems to indicate that she's prepared 'go along with' Jeff's right to continue his

Note, by the way, that his room is full of mementos of the places he's visited. Those mementos are both 'Oriental' and 'Occidental' (or Third World). For instance, on a wall are what I take to be African fertility symbols, whose ambiguous presence fits the general ambiguity we're discussing here.

But then Lisa takes up 'Harper's Bazaar' instead. That's no Middle Eastern bazaar! In fact, the film has already established that the journal represents one of Lisa's employers right in New York. She seems bent on keeping one foot in that camp, at least. Even more likely, she's still set on making a homebody of Jeff, thereby maybe weakening - or smothering - his creative spirit.

Was Hitchcock perhaps being pathological in giving his film such suggestiveness? I'd say: very possibly! But then, you often hear it said that artists are prone to 'abnormality'. I recall the gay Somerset Maugham's dictum that 'only the artist, and maybe the criminal, can make his own life'. In turn, I'm reminded of Camille Paglia's endorsement of that sentiment and the whole Western tradition of 'sky-cult', i.e., sublimation. In a passage I omitted from the quotation about the femme fatale that heads this section, Paglia calls the male homosexual perhaps 'the most valorous' of the Apollonian figures who would defeat Dionysian nature and become 'one of the great forgers of absolutist western identity'.⁷⁶ But I also think of the dandified Uncle Charlie in *Shadow of a Doubt*. His embittered, pathological campaign against 'merry widows' - women who have symbolically killed their husbands, it may seem, in order to make 'merry' by themselves - is a parody of an artist's quest for creative freedom. These dowagers represent a form of what Paglia calls 'female narcissism',⁷⁷ and Uncle Charlie's killing of them is a 'love-hate' thing, one born of a mixture of frustration and envy. Frustration: because like certain other characters in Hitchcock - notably the villain Brandon in *Rope* (1948) - he would like to have been more creative. Envy: because the dowagers in their very 'narcissism' represent the condition, noted by Freud and others, for one kind of creativity - though again only in a parodic way.⁷⁸

But I've suggested that Hitchcock is closer to Goethe than to (the 'ideal' homosexual) Leonardo, meaning one who is capable of 'an enjoyment of life' and who, in his wisdom, gives 'pleasant self-expression' to a vision that may finally transcend paradox. So what remains to be said here of Hitchcock's vision?

* * *

The infantile conflict between actual impotence and dreams of omnipotence is also the basic theme of the universal history of mankind.

- Norman O. Brown, 'Life Against Death'⁷⁹

We've seen that *Rear Window* evokes the Orpheus myth in the way a fragmented, *un-neighbourly* group of citizens becomes 'harmonised'. (In this respect, the film isn't at all like, say, 'Miss Lonelyhearts', which at best leaves such matters hanging.) The metaphor here concerns the power of art itself. Jeff's neighbours, as you might expect of Greenwich Village, include a very high percentage of 'artists' or aspirants to art: a composer, a dancer, a sculptor, a singer who is heard but never seen, and a siffleuse (the lady whose dog is killed) - and then there's Jeff himself, a photographer. Further, we've noted how Orpheus in the myth is killed and dismembered by the Maenads, though for a time afterwards his severed head goes on singing. I've suggested that the killing and dismemberment of Mrs Thorwald in the film is like a 'sacrifice' which *parodies* the higher sacrifice that the true artist may be called on to make on behalf of his community. That 'true artist' in the film - or just outside - may be Hitchcock himself.

Now, given that Orpheus is an Apollonian figure (dedicated to the pursuit of what Paglia calls 'sky-cult'), and the Maenads are Dionysian figures, it's possible to see how the Orpheus myth bears out Paglia's point that the Dionysian/Chthonian, i.e., nature, always triumphs in the end, at least in this physical world governed by sex and procreation. Paglia understandably sees the Great Mother as presiding over all. And because in *Rear Window* the 'Mona Lisa' theme likewise seems to 'triumph' at the film's close, we may easily detect there a similar general 'pessimism' to Paglia's. Art is all very well - and has its immortal masterpieces - but is still nearly always subordinate to nature and its Great Mother.

But there's another myth that we should consider. It tells of how Perseus slew the Gorgon Medusa, using a burnished shield as a mirror in order to avoid gazing directly on her baleful visage. Afterwards, Perseus cut off Medusa's head with a sickle. Film theorist Siegfried Kracauer sees in this myth a metaphor for cinema itself, which shows us truths that we couldn't face directly,⁸⁰ but notice how the myth fits *Rear Window* particularly well. Mrs Thorwald is the beheaded Gorgon, representative of what Paglia calls 'the castrating and castrated' mother (whom Paglia explicitly likens to both Medusa and Walter Pater's 'Mona Lisa'). In a sense, the film is about her, and in watching it we may perhaps be freed for a time from her fell power. On the other hand, she seems about to be 'reincarnated' in Lisa Fremont ...

Robert J. Benton has indeed likened Mrs Thorwald to the Castrating Woman. He notes:

*She apparently feigns illness (or exaggerates and uses her real illness) to reduce her husband to a servant and to refuse to have sex with him (implied in the first scene in which we see her); and when he telephones his girlfriend she eavesdrops, and then, rather than getting angry, she ridicules him.*⁸⁰

Benton explains 'Jeff's fascination with her mutilation' by noting how Jeff fears that Lisa will 'dis-member' him, too.⁸¹ This accords with Freud's note, in his essay on "The 'Uncanny'", that '[d]ismembered limbs, a severed head ... have something peculiarly uncanny about them'; they indicate 'proximity to the castration complex'.⁸²

We've come rather more than full-circle from the note on Hoffmann's 'The Sandman' with which we began. As I see the matter, Jeff in *Rear Window* is like the student Nathanael in 'The Sandman' because both fear 'castration' by father-figures (Thorwald, Coppelius), and both are rendered 'impotent' by that fear. They both become fixated on the father-figure who lives directly over the way (in 'The Sandman', that's Coppelius's associate, Spallanzani), and on his relation to his wife or 'daughter' (Mrs Thorwald, Olympia). So preoccupied do both Jeff and Nathanael become with 'looking', that both resort to the use of binoculars. The latter is at once a symbol of castration-anxiety (fear of being castrated = fear of being blinded) and a talisman against what is feared. In their state of absorption or 'dreaming' (note the very title of 'The Sandman'), both Jeff and Nathanael are indulging in a form of 'narcissism', i.e., Mrs Thorwald and Olympia are mother-figures with whom the 'regressed' Jeff and Nathanael respectively are 'in love' (I explain this below). Thus both Jeff and Nathanael are cast as potential rivals of their respective fathers.

But a related way of describing both *Rear Window* and 'The Sandman' is to say that they re-enact the 'primal scene'. Just as Jeff hinges on the question that Jeff asks Thorwald in a note, 'What have you done with her?' (given enormous emphasis by a downward crane-shot), so 'The Sandman' harks back to events Nathanael half-remembers from his childhood, in which he'd been sent to bed early by his mother because Coppelius was coming. We're told that the 'clandestine alchemical experiments' that Coppelius and Nathanael's father performed at such times 'were bound to displease' Nathanael's mother. In other words, in both cases an adult's act of snooping serves to re-enact the time when as a child he'd seen or heard his father doing something at night that had 'pained' his mother (or so the child had thought). This is the 'primal scene' which is inextricably linked to the Oedipal phase of a child's development.⁸⁴ Quite rightly, Benton notes that Jeff's interest in Mrs Thorwald's fate has a lot to do with whether she 'really has been "mutilated," that is, castrated'.⁸⁵ Thus Mrs Thorwald, whom we've just seen to be the Castrating Woman, is also the the *Castrated* Woman!

I've several times referred to 'narcissism'. Freud sees Nathanael's fixation on Spallanzi's household as reactivating the student's 'feminine attitude towards his father in infancy'; and he notes that Hoffmann's own family had been deserted by the father when Hoffmann was just three years old.⁸⁶ Likewise, Freud says of Leonardo da Vinci that his life and work showed strong marks of narcissism and mother-identification:⁸⁷ '[h]is illegitimate birth [had] deprived him of his father's influence until perhaps his fifth year, and left him open to the tender seductions of a mother whose only solace he was'.⁸⁸ What I'm suggesting about Jeff in *Rear Window* is that his confinement to a wheel-chair has made *him* feel 'feminised' in a decidedly Oedipal, or pre-Oedipal, way; hence his readiness to become fixated on Thorwald's relation to his wife. Moreover, Jeff naturally soon begins to feel in 'competition' with this father-figure. Note that Mrs Thorwald is something of a look-alike for Lisa (and vice versa), implying how easy it is for Jeff to transfer part of his fixation onto her, too. However, towards the end of the film, Lisa re-asserts her own warm, lively femininity and at the same time shows by her actions that *she* at any rate hasn't been 'castrated' - thereby in every sense helping to undo the Thorwalds' power over Jeff. At the film's end, Jeff is free to establish his own flesh-and-blood relationship to a wife and 'mother-figure'⁸⁹ by getting married himself, though for reasons already discussed he may come to regret it. After all, two broken legs implies a man *twice*-'castrated'!

But now note: the interregnum that prevails with the overthrow of Thorwald represents the best of two worlds - neither too masculine nor yet too feminine, and thus perhaps something that only art or a perfect marriage can bestow! Its main emblem in a Hitchcock film may be the 'motherly' (as well as 'fatherly') presence of Hitchcock himself, who invariably makes a cameo appearance as a palpable reminder to us that he's in control. So in this film it's *Hitchcock* who finally defeats both the 'castrating' father-figure on the one hand, and the all-too-fecund, too-earthly Great Mother on the other hand, at least for now. I think again of Goethe, another highly creative individual who had a close relation with his mother,⁹⁰ and whose work is designed to offer a satisfying completeness. Also, in placing weight on (feminine) intuition and more 'life', Hitchcock and his film may recall the work of the vitalist philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941), who saw intuition as a form of creative *re*-remembering ...⁹¹

I've suggested that Freud's notion of 'the uncanny' throws considerable light on Jeff's 'impotent' condition. Even so, in the film that condition is ambiguous: is it 'caused' by Jeff's recent regression to a stage of 'relative narcissism' (echoing

the film spectator's), or did it pre-exist his injury? The answer would seem to be: a bit of both. Stella says that *she's* not shy (*she's* 'been looked at before'), but you have to wonder about Jeff, for all his intrepid dashing around the world's trouble-spots! Suitably, the very symbol of Jeff's impotence, viz, his plaster-enclosed leg often sticking straight out in front of him, is ambiguous, too. But perhaps, for a photographer whose art involves a degree of sublimation, and personal 'sacrifice', such ambiguity is just what we should expect.

In any case, there's a truly universal meaning for Jeff's condition. As Norman O. Brown says, we are all *born* 'impotent' and then spend our lives 'dreaming' of overcoming our predicament (that is, when we're not effectively denying it or ~~ignoring it~~). That's the essence of *Vertigo*, where again the James Stewart character must come to terms with a personal weakness that's been with him all along.⁹² Though the theme receives its most tragic and devastating expression in that film, the 'archetypal' content is nonetheless also strong in *Rear Window*.

Finally, speaking of archetypal content, let's recall the particular criticism that I made of Freud at the start of this article, where I suggested that psychology - at least in a narrow Freudian sense - isn't the sole basis of 'the uncanny'. Take the shambling figure of Lars Thorwald in *Rear Window*. We've seen that he has 'predecessors' in various works: the toymaker in 'Coppélia',⁹³ the scientist who shrinks animals and finally people in *Dr Cyclops*, the creature in *King Kong*, the Malay seaman who runs amok in 'Through a Window', the cripple in 'Miss Lonelyhearts', and perhaps even the historical villain, Henry VII, in 'The Daughter of Time'. A point of interest about these figures is that *either* they seek to get the better of life and/or history (Dr Coppélius, Dr Cyclops, Henry VII) *or* they are driven to take a step which shows that life has become rather too much for them (Kong, the Malay seaman, the cripple). But Thorwald partakes of both types: driven beyond endurance by his wife's nagging, etc., he murders her, then makes a bid for happiness by cunningly disposing of her body and making arrangements to leave town with his mistress. (Precedents here include the real-life Major Armstrong and his fictional equivalents such as the husbands in 'Malice Aforethought' and 'The Gioconda Smile'.)

A comment by crime-fiction authority and author H.R.F. Keating about 'The Daughter of Time' applies to virtually all of the works just mentioned. He notes that Josephine Tey faced a problem common to writers of whodunnits everywhere: the need to tell a story in an ongoing way. Keating writes: 'It needs really only one starburst of inspiration by the detective to see how the murder was done and to end the book. So great pains must be taken to spin out the situation ...'.⁹⁴ He compliments Tey for 'adroitly delaying the facts Grant needs to build up his case against Henry VII'.

To the extent that Freud's colleague Jentsch makes a practically identical point about the mechanics of Hoffmann's tales - see the quote that heads the present article - it might seem that he has mistaken the 'uncanny' for mere delay/suspense. After all, nobody is suggesting that 'The Daughter of Time' is an 'uncanny' work. To better see what I mean, replace Jentsch's phrase 'a human being or an automaton' with the phrase 'a murderer'. Fairly clearly, the resultant text describes all manner of whodunnits, plus *Rear Window*.

Okay, but now put back the word 'automaton'. And, for the sake of argument, consider again how Thorwald partakes of all those crazy and/or crazed figures who shamble and/or lunge their way through the works mentioned - even though *not* all of them (e.g., the Malay, the cripple) are noticeably father-figures in the sense specified by Freud in his essay on "The 'Uncanny'". Also, recall Michael Dirda's remark about how so many of Hoffmann's tales show people who are little more than 'complex dolls, manipulated by forces beyond their control'. Well, in keeping with the other ambiguities of *Rear Window*, it seems to me that Hitchcock tells us that *all* of the apartment-dwellers, male and female, who live over the way from Jeff's own apartment, are both human beings and have something doll-like about them.⁹⁵ In a sense, they're *all* automatons. And Lars Thorwald is one such, besides being the castrating-figure that Freud would point to. In short, I'm suggesting that though Freud's theory of 'the uncanny' certainly fits *Rear Window*, it doesn't exhaustively explain the film's uncanniness - let alone its rich and satisfying power to entertain us.

For instance, there's a whole 'archetypal' dimension to the film that perhaps has less of the father, and more of the mother, about it. The warmer, more embracing Hitchcock of *Rear Window* wears an ambiguous Gioconda smile, but a smile nonetheless.

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cf S. Freud - Terry (1919)

Notes

1. Quoted in S. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), in *The Pelican Freud Library*, Vol. 14 (1985), pp. 347-48.
2. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", p. 354n. Note my amended spelling of 'Nathanael', which is the version I'm most familiar with from reading editions of Hoffmann. Freud's text has 'Nathaniel' throughout.

3. For example, the sinister lawyer Coppelius in Hoffmann's tale seems the antecedent of Caligari himself. (However, the *physical appearance* of Caligari was modelled on a photograph of the philosopher Schopenhauer - see 'MacGuffin' 2, p. 5.) **Certainly Hoffmann exerted a deep influence on German Expressionist cinema generally. In this respect, note Lotte Eisner's comments on '[t]he demoniac bourgeois' in 'The Haunted Screen' (English translation, 1969), pp. 106-09.**
4. There was even a British-Canadian film actually called *The Uncanny* (1977). Very relevant to the present article is this remark by S.S. Prawer in her excellent book (reviewed in 'MacGuffin' 2) called 'Caligari's Children: The Film as Tale of Terror' (1980), in its chapter on "The Uncanny": 'It would have been surprising if film-makers in search of fantastic *frissons* had neglected the help which they felt Freudians could give them in their exploration of the personal, and Jungians in their exploration of the "collective", unconscious.' (p. 124)
5. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", pp. 353-54n.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Donald Spoto, 'The Life of Alfred Hitchcock' (1983), p. 71.
9. M.D., "Hoffmann", in Jack Sullivan (ed.), 'The Penguin Encyclopedia of Horror and the Supernatural' (1986), p. 204.
10. M.D., "Hoffmann", p. 205.
11. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", p. 351.
12. P. Bogdanovich, 'Who the devil made it' (1997), pp. 522-23.
13. Robert Stam and Roberta Pearson, "Hitchcock's *Rear Window*: Reflexivity and the Critique of Voyeurism" (originally 1983), reprinted in M. Deutelbaum and L. Poague (eds), 'A Hitchcock Reader' (1986), pp. 193-206, at p. 197.
14. For a well-documented account of how Hitchcock knew about another top British crime-fiction writer of the 1940s and 1950s, 'Edmund Crispin'/Bruce Montgomery, whose work he 'plagiarised' on at least two occasions, see Richard Valley, "The Trouble With Hitchcock: *Stage Fright* and *Strangers on a Train* Investigated", in 'Scarlet Street' 21, Winter 1996, pp. 61-65. And for information on Hitchcock's familiarity with H.G. Wells and his work (the latter in a complete set of first editions which Hitchcock owned), see Spoto, *passim*. Note that Wells's 'Through a Window' was first included in a book when it appeared in 'The Stolen Bacillus and Other Incidents', 1894. Hitchcock knew Wells personally. To read a memorable account of the time Hitchcock accompanied Wells on a train trip from London to Brighton, see John McCarty's "Postscript" to the book he co-authored with Brian Kelleher, 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents' (1985), p. 331.
15. D. Peary, "*Naked Jungle, The*", in 'Guide for the Film Fanatic' (1986), p. 291.
16. In Woolrich's story, Jeffries (note spelling) says that he's 'stewing in a vacuum of total idleness'.
17. See 'MacGuffin' 22, pp. 19-20.
18. Compare what Hayes says on this matter to Richard Valley in 'Scarlet Street' 21, p. 92. (The interview, on pp. 90-94, 97, is called "The Hayes Office"; it was concluded in 'Scarlet Street' 22.) Also, compare what I say in the present article about the spectator's - and Jeff's - initial 'relative narcissism'. My contention is that the film sets out to give us at least a glimpse of the true meaning of 'neighbourliness', and that 'good humour' is very much a part of what's involved in breaking down our resistance.
19. Norman Lloyd, quoted in McCarty & Kelleher, p. 39. Lloyd repeated this point in a recent interview for the 'Los Angeles Times'.
20. I think that I originally suggested this in connection with Hitchcock's ability to enter imaginatively into certain of his characters, including his villains (who might be either gay or straight). But I see plenty of additional evidence for such 'negative capability' on Hitchcock's part, starting with the mentioned TV lead-ins and lead-outs. Even Hitchcock's facility at 'forging' other people's signatures (see 'MacGuffin' 22, p. 16) might be cited, I think. Also, I'm aware of Hitchcock's great closeness to animals. At least twice in his career, he had the misfortune to see an animal run over while he was working at the studio. Both times, he was reportedly upset for days afterwards.
21. See 'MacGuffin' 22, p. 12. Worth mentioning, too, may be Hitchcock's Catholicism, with its emphasis on the Virgin Mary and qualities like compassion and caring.
22. C. Paglia, 'Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson' (1991), p. 258. Paglia adds that Goethe actually *feared* to come near to his mother because of her 'too strong a personality ... lest he be reabsorbed into her gravitational field and returned to childhood dependency.' And on the related matter of how most of Goethe's relations with women ended in sexual renunciation, Paglia tells us that '[h]eterosexuality for men will always carry the danger of loss of identity'. I talk about these things in the text.
23. These are the participants in the three-way dialogue in 'Faust', First Part, The Prelude in the Theatre.
24. 'MacGuffin' 19, p. 19.
25. 'MacGuffin' 21, p. 19 and *passim*.
26. See Jean Sered, "The Dark Side", in 'Armchair Detective' 22, No. 2, Spring 1989, pp. 116-135, and especially the section "Marriage, Sex and Oedipus Rex", pp. 120-23. (The article is concluded in 'Armchair Detective' 22, No. 3.) As Sered puts the matter, both Hitchcock and Woolrich 'were dominated by their mothers for far too long - Woolrich, in fact, exclusively and all his life, until his mother's death when he was in his fifties' (p. 120). My point concerning Hitchcock would be that he both drew on his emotional closeness to his mother and more or less knowingly reacted against it, producing the two **aspects of his filmmaking that** I've described as 'negative capability' and 'imperious mastery'.

27. In my article on *Spellbound* in 'MacGuffin' 15, I suggested that Brulov becomes more of the detached 'male mother' (or 'male wife') as the film advances, thus bearing out what he'd told Ballyntine, that 'any husband of Constance is a husband of mine, so to speak'. Another instance of the male mother, closer to Paglia's conception of him as a 'Teiresias' figure, is, I suggest in 'MacGuffin' 15, the blind Philip Martin in *Saboteur* (1942). See especially p. 21, n.15. Also, see Paglia, pp. 45-46.
28. The claim that the Jeff-Lisa relationship was based on Robert Capa's affair with Ingrid Bergman is made by Donald Spoto in 'Notorious: The Life of Ingrid Bergman' (1997). The affair itself has long been known about. For instance, it's mentioned in passing in Charles Higham and Roy Moseley's 'Cary Grant: The Lonely Heart' (1990), p. 216.
29. 'Scarlet Street', 21, p. 92.
30. This is the opening sentence of Wells's story. I'm immensely grateful to Leslie Shepard for drawing the story to my attention.
31. J. Tey, 'The Daughter of Time' (1951), Chapter I.
32. Spoken by The Director. See 'Faust', First Part, The Prelude in the Theatre.
33. K. Mogg, review of R. Kapsis, 'Hitchcock: The Making of a Reputation' (1992), in the 'Hitchcock Annual', 1993 edition, p. 104.
34. S. Freud, 'Leonardo da Vinci: A Memory of His Childhood' (1910; English translation 1957; Ark paperback edition 1984), pp. 48, 28.
35. Ibid., p. 28.
36. Ibid., p. 22.
37. Ibid.
38. The interview with Samuel Taylor I'm thinking of is the one in Dan Auiler's forthcoming 'Hitchcock's *Vertigo*: The Making of a Classic' (St Martin's Press), in which Taylor refers to Hitchcock's 'influence over the screenplay, without ~~us~~ ever talking about it [directly]'.
~~us~~
39. See the chapter called "Miss Lonelyhearts in the dismal swamp".
40. John Michael Hayes, 'Rear Window', Final White Script, December 1, 1953 (unpublished studio script), p. 14.
41. I find it intriguing that while *Rear Window* is about solving a murder across a physical distance, i.e., the film's courtyard, 'The Daughter of Time' is about solving a (double-) murder across a distance in time ...
42. See especially the chapter called "Miss Lonelyhearts returns".
43. See the chapter "Miss Lonelyhearts and the lamb".
44. "Miss Lonelyhearts pays a visit".
45. See K.M.M., "Murder in a Small Town", 'MacGuffin' 17, pp. 10-13.
46. The air-date is sometimes given as 1945, but internal evidence in the program suggests to me that 1946 is more likely. For more on Hitchcock's interest in Iles's story, see Martin Grams, Jr, "Murder and *Suspense*: Hitchcock's Established Reputation", located on the Alfred Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' Web site.
47. For more on 'The Gioconda Smile', a work clearly pertinent to the ambivalence shown by *Rear Window* to its 'perfect' woman, (Mona) Lisa, see K.M.M., op. cit., pp. 11-12.
48. Compare Robert J. Benton, "Film As Dream: Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*", in 'The Psychoanalytic Review', Vol. 71, No. 3, 1984, p. 485.
49. John Belton, "Dexterity in a Void: The Formalist Esthetics of Alfred Hitchcock", 'Cineaste', Vol. X, No. 3, Summer 1980, p. 11.
50. As I say in the text, Dr Cyclops is a Frankenstein-like figure. Literary writers and scholars have often drawn parallels between Mary Shelley's Dr Frankenstein and E.T.A. Hoffmann's Dr Coppelius, with his alchemical experiments.
51. Compare Stam & Pearson, p. 201, who note that when Thorwald comes to Jeff's apartment, he 'becomes the ambulatory embodiment of filmic displeasure. King Kong is unchained and attacking the audience.'
52. G.E. Toles, "Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* as Critical Allegory", in 'boundary 2', 16, No. 2-3, Winter-Spring 1990, p. 228.
53. Ibid.
54. On the echo of 'The Waste Land' at the start of *North by Northwest*, see 'MacGuffin' 20, p. 23, n. 22.
55. See 'MacGuffin' 22, p. 18.
56. Toles, p. 228.
57. See 'MacGuffin' 15, p. 9.
58. I've been suggesting that Hitchcock's 'citing' of so many earlier works shows in him a new depth and receptivity to the 'archetypal' (the latter discussed in the next section); in other words, it shows in him a richer, warmer dimension, which I associate with the 'mother'. Of course, I haven't exhausted here all of *Rear Window*'s 'citations'. A couple more come to mind. The elaborate set surely has few precedents, and certainly not as regards matters of lighting. (Here, see Arthur Gavin, "*Rear Window*", in 'American Cinematographer', 35, No. 2, February 1954, pp. 76-78, 97; this article also has useful information about Hitchcock's rationale for the lenses he used.) ~~But I think Richard Day's splendid set for *Dead End* (William Wyler, 1937) should be mentioned. Interestingly, both Wyler's and Hitchcock's films begin at dawn as the ~~sun rises to begin the day~~. As for the very effective business in *Rear Window* involving Thorwald's cigarette glowing in~~

his darkened apartment, I've suggested elsewhere a couple of possible precedents: the play 'Rope' (1929) by Patrick Hamilton, and the novel and play of 'Bulldog Drummond' (1920) by 'Sapper'.

59. Paglia, pp. 14-15.

60. Tey, Chapter I.

61. On Marguerite Gautier, see my article on *Vertigo* in 'MacGuffin' 11, p. 13; for the 'archetypal' in *Vertigo*, see the same article, passim (pp. 7-22); and for more on such matters, including the 'eternal feminine', see my article on *Vertigo* in 'MacGuffin' 17, passim (pp. 14-26).

62. *Captain Carey, USA* is partly set in Italy, and the song 'Mona Lisa' serves in the plot as an Italian partisans' warning. It won an Academy Award for its writers, Jay Livingston and Ray Evans.

63. Angelo Conti, quoted in Freud, 'Leonardo da Vinci', p. 59.

64. See C. Barr, "Hypnagogic Structures: Hitchcock's British Period", 'MacGuffin' 6, pp. 3-6, passim. The article, retitled "Hitchcock's British Films Revisited", is reprinted in revised form in Andrew Higson (ed.), 'Dissolving Views: Key Writings on British Cinema' (1996).

65. Benton, p. 483.

66. At one point during this, Jeff silently toasts Miss Lonely Hearts who is herself toasting ... her phantom lover. **noteworthy how, in the course of the film, nearly all of the main characters are shown drinking.** The effect is to stress their common humanity and, yes, their shared dreaming.

67. Asleep in his wheelchair, Jeff is no longer facing out the window as if he'd just been 'window-shopping'. So here's another indication of his finding, with Lisa, new depths within himself. A relevant article is Sander H. Lee, "Escape and commitment in Hitchcock's *Rear Window*", in 'Post Script', 7, No. 2, Winter 1988, pp 18-28. (Another article by Professor Lee is on the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' Web site.)

68. Three such films seem to me to be *Spellbound*, *North by Northwest*, and *Torn Curtain* (1966). The potential turning-point for Michael Armstrong (Paul Newman) in *Torn Curtain* comes in the Berlin Museum sequence, with its art-and-mandala-symbolism. Jeff in *Rear Window* has his direct encounter with 'emptiness' when he's thrust out his window into space by Thorwald ...

69. The husband in 'The Gioconda Smile' makes the mistake of underestimating the depth of the quite sensitive and still virginal Janet Spence's feelings for him. 'Only a woman's intuition ...', he muses at one point. He eventually goes off (before his arrest) with the relatively uncomplicated Doris, another local girl ...

70. I'm reminded of how, when Hitchcock's *Frenzy* came out in 1972, the director pointed out proudly to interviewers how much 'life' he had instilled into that film. On the matter of Jeff as 'hero', note that I'm saying that he functions that way in the film, though the *unsung* (?) hero may well be Hitchcock himself.

71. Toles, p. 229, notes how 'utterly contrived' the *Rear Window* coda is, obviously by intention. The effect of it is to both reassure and to raise doubts ...

72. See 'MacGuffin' 15, p. 15. On the same page is a consideration of the film's theme of 'impossible' perfection.

73. See Carl G. Jung (ed.), 'Man and His Symbols' (1964), p. 185. My comparison of Madeleine to Helen of Troy, again with Jungian connotations, occurs in my *Vertigo* article in 'MacGuffin' 17.

74. Ibid, pp. 185-86.

75. See the Paglia quote at the head of this section.

76. Paglia, pp. 14-15.

77. Ibid, p. 14.

78. I'll say more in the text about the conditions of creativity. But a general observation about Hitchcock's films is this. Almost invariably, the films' endings appear to endorse the triumph of 'life', that which isn't sterile, over everything else. But it's always ambiguous. Thus in *North by Northwest* the relatively instinctive, all-American hero and heroine, Roger and Eve, defeat the elegant, cultured foreigner, Vandamm, who is given shadings of bisexuality and exotic, Oriental art. The implication is that anyway the loser has had, and has given, a good run for his money. Likewise at the end of *Shadow of a Doubt*, decent and quite pretty young Charlie will marry her nice but ordinary (and flappy-eared!) detective-boyfriend, thus seeing the triumph of wholesome American values over the forces of darkness and sterility represented *respectively* by Uncle Charlie and his 'merry widow' victims. Which is a nagging ending, when we recall Uncle Charlie's almost *crusading* zeal against his victims, and we bear in mind those victims' status as 'human beings' which young Charlie defined for us ...

79. N.O. Brown, 'Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History' (1959), Chapter III.

80. S. Kracauer, 'Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality' (1960), p. 305.

81. Benton, p. 490.

82. Ibid.

83. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", p. 366.

84. See Barbara Odabashian, "The Unspeakable Crime in Hitchcock's *Rear Window*", in the 'Hitchcock Annual', 1993 edition, pp. 3-11, passim.

85. Benton, p. 487.

86. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'", p. 354n.

87. Freud, 'Leonardo da Vinci', p. 48.

88. Ibid., p. 82.

89. In *Rich and Strange*, Fred's wife Emily says that 'a wife is more than half a mother' ...

90. Freud's essay on Leonardo refers explicitly (p. 32n) to 'Goethe's close relation with his mother'.

91. Compare Benton, p. 497, who draws from *Rear Window* the lesson that we need to reconstruct life's 'continuous flow' by means of 'an active process of re-remembering'. But Benton doesn't explicitly invoke Bergson. For the latter, see an excellent short introduction by Robert C. Solomon, 'Continental Philosophy since 1750' (1988), pp. 107-10. Solomon likens Bergson's notion of a 'vital force' to Schopenhauer's concept of Will (though he notes that Bergson, an optimist, believed in progress). He shows how Bergson put emphasis on intuition, memory, and creativity as providing us with the means to understand 'life' and to directly experience 'freedom'. Compare also my article on *The Trouble With Harry* in 'MacGuffin' 21, especially some of my comments on Sam, the film's artist-figure.

92. Scottie's infinitely symbolic 'vertigo' first manifests itself when he's on the rooftop at the start. 'Boy,' he says to Midge later, 'what a moment to find out I had it.' I comment on the expressionism of this in 'MacGuffin' 11, p. 20.

93. I recently watched a modernised Danish-French TV production of Delibes's ballet, and was intrigued to note that Coppélius had been made a *photographer* who has a darkroom in his apartment ...

94. H.R.F. Keating, 'Crime and Mystery: The 100 Best Books' (1987), pp. 99-100.

95. Hitchcock's film is saying that we're all both doll-like and yet individual human beings, which seems very much the rationale of how the arrival of Thorwald at Jeff's apartment is filmed. We hear him slowly ascend the stairs in the building's stairwell (compare Nathanael's childhood memory in 'The Sandman' of Coppélius's 'clumping up the stairs with a rather heavy, slow step'), and then watch him appear, dimly back-lit, as a menacing figure in Jeff's doorway. But his first words, 'What do you want of me?', show him to be a frightened, as much as a frightening, person. (*Rear Window*'s dual view of human beings seems to me to accord perfectly with Schopenhauer's two-pronged emphasis on how we all partake of both Will and Representation.)

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ODD SPOT: WHY REAR WINDOW IS SO POPULAR IN JAPAN?

The Japanese, wrote American anthropologist Ruth Benedict in her influential 'The Chrysanthemum and the Sword' (1946), exhibit a culture of shame and not of guilt. What she meant may be seen in this message posted on the Internet by one Bill Sakovich in November 1996, concerning *Rear Window*.

'I live in Japan. [Untoward] behaviour in this country is not discouraged by a Christian sense of morality, as was often the case in the West, but by a sense of shame, and the knowledge that people are watching you. In other words, you can do it if you can get away with it. This is due partly to conditions in urban areas, in which individuals have much less personal space than they do in the US.

'I live in a less congested area, but even still, the lady across the street blatantly goes out of her way to look out the window at the comings and goings of the neighbourhood - much to the neighbourhood's displeasure.

'Need I say it - *Rear Window* is *extremely* popular in Japan. Indeed, it may have been the first Hitchcock movie released on Laser Disc here (it definitely was one of the first).'

[Thanks to Freda Freiberg for advice concerning this 'Odd Spot'. Freda suggests that Yasujiro Ozu's *Ohayu/Good Morning* (1959) shows some of the intense neighbour-consciousness that exists in Japan.]

'The MacGuffin' is indexed by the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAPF), Brussels, and in 'Film Literature Index', New York. This issue printed by TS Press, Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia. Publication authorised by Australian Mensa. Opinions expressed herein are those of individuals, unless otherwise indicated. Mensa as a body has no opinions. Anyone may write for or subscribe to 'The MacGuffin'. Correspondence, etc. should reach the Editor, Ken Mogg, at 177 Simpson Street, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002, Australia. Our email address is <muffin@labyrinth.net.au>, and we're on the World Wide Web at <<http://www.labyrinth.net.au/~muffin>>.