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FILM STUDY EXTRACT
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**NOTES AND ANALYSIS**  
  
**NOTORIOUS**  
(U.S. — 1946)

**THE KEY SEQUENCE**  
13 minutes

**CREDITS**

Director ..... Alfred Hitchcock  
Screenplay ..... Ben Hecht, based on an idea by Hitchcock  
Photography ..... Ted Tetzlaff  
Music ..... Roy Webb  
Editor ..... Theron Warth

**CAST**

Alicia ..... Ingrid Bergman  
Devlin ..... Cary Grant  
Sebastian ..... Claude Rains

# Notes and Analysis: Marilyn Fabe

## Project Director: Willard W. Morrison

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# **NOTORIOUS: SYNOPSIS AND THEMES**

## **Plot Synopsis**

NOTORIOUS begins in the U.S. shortly after World War II. Alicia (Ingrid Bergman) is the daughter of a Nazi agent now dead. She disapproved of her father's political activities but has become notorious on her own for her fast life. She is asked by Devlin (Cary Grant), a U.S. intelligence agent, to undertake a secret mission in Brazil. Devlin and Alicia go to Rio together and fall in love, though Devlin is somewhat wary of the former playgirl.

Alicia's assignment in Rio is to establish contact with a former friend of her father, Sebastian (Claude Rains), who harbors a group of prominent Nazi refugees in his mansion. Alicia is to gain entry to the house and report to Devlin on the Nazis' activities. Sebastian, too, falls in love with Alicia and proposes marriage. She hopes Devlin will object, but when he does not she accepts the offer in order to prove her determination to carry out her mission. Ironically, her willingness to go through with the marriage strengthens Devlin's suspicion that she is nothing more than an adventuress.

As the new mistress of the Nazi household, Alicia has access to every room in the mansion except the wine cellar, to which only Sebastian has a key. Suspecting that something important is hidden there, Devlin instructs Alicia to obtain the key. Under cover of a formal reception at the mansion, Devlin and Alicia search the cellar and discover uranium ore hidden in fake wine bottles.

When Sebastian discovers that his key is missing he suspects his new wife is an American agent and, at the bidding of his mother, begins to poison her. Devlin, alarmed when he stops hearing from Alicia, forces his way into the house and discovers her critically ill. After they exchange vows of mutual love, he lifts her from the bed and carries her out the front door. Sebastian is left to make explanations to his suspicious cohorts.

## **Themes**

As Hitchcock has pointed out in an interview, the primary theme in NOTORIOUS is the conflict between love and duty.



Devlin is in love with Alicia, but his job as an intelligence agent demands that he let her marry another man. Alicia, who undertakes the mission partly to expiate her guilt for her Nazi father's treason, suffers from a similar conflict. By marrying Sebastian she loses Devlin, but only by marrying her enemy can she fulfill her political task. Even Sebastian is caught in a conflict between love and duty when, on the orders of his mother, he must poison the wife he loves.

Another major theme in NOTORIOUS is the disparity between appearance and reality. Despite her reputation for promiscuity, Alicia is now deeply in love with Devlin, but he can see in her only the superficiality suggested by her former life. At one time he mistakes her dizziness (from Sebastian's poison) for drunkenness and cynically denounces her. Hitchcock's depiction of Sebastian's mansion further suggests the deceptiveness of surface appearances. The elegance of its decor masks the viciousness of its inhabitants. Sebastian, for all his excellent manners and refined air, does not shrink from a plot to murder his wife.

In the thirteen minute extract from NOTORIOUS, appearances are always deceptive. Alicia passionately embraces Sebastian, but only to prevent him from discovering that she has just stolen his key. During the party sequence, Alicia and Devlin appear to be casual friends engaging in small talk. Actually they are lovers and co-conspirators, and their conversation is deadly serious. What appear to be bottles of vintage wine turn out to contain uranium ore. At the climax of the wine cellar episode, Devlin, who is really in love with Alicia, pretends to be in love to prevent Sebastian from suspecting that they have been spying on him. In this case even the truth is deceptive.

The moral issues raised in NOTORIOUS are anything but clear-cut. This is partly because Sebastian, the villain, is portrayed sympathetically. According to Hitchcock, his love for Alicia is more genuine than Devlin's. Ironically, the man who loves and trusts Alicia the most is the one she betrays. With a heroine who is both dutiful (to her country) and treacherous (to her husband) and a villain who many find more sympathetic than the hero, NOTORIOUS is a strangely disconcerting film.

## THE EXTRACT

### Plot Synopsis of the Extract

On the night of a large party at Sebastian's mansion, Alicia steals the key to the wine cellar from Sebastian's key ring. When Devlin arrives at the party she slips him the key and directs him to the wine cellar in the basement of the house. As he is examining a wine list, he accidentally knocks over a bottle which smashes to the floor. It contains not wine but mineral ore which he later discovers to be uranium. Meanwhile, Sebastian is on his way to the wine cellar with Joseph, the wine steward, to replenish the supply of champagne for the party. As they descend the basement stairs they glimpse Devlin and Alicia leaving. Devlin begins to embrace Alicia passionately so that Sebastian will think they are in the basement to make love. He then confesses to Sebastian that he loves Alicia and hastily retreats from the party. Later, when Sebastian returns for the wine, he notices his key is missing. His expression reveals that he suspects Alicia is betraying him in more ways than he thought.

### Plot Construction of the Extract

The action in the extract is constructed so that the audience is kept constantly anxious and uncertain about the outcome of each segment of the plot. As one crisis is resolved, a new and greater crisis is generated by that very resolution.

At the beginning of the extract, we fear that Alicia will fail to obtain the key before Sebastian comes into the room. But once she has the key her situation becomes more dangerous for her — Sebastian may discover the key in her hand. When that danger passes, she is still faced with the task of slipping the key to Devlin under Sebastian's watchful eye. This accomplished, a new threat is immediately posed: the

champagne may run out and, as a result, Sebastian will notice his key is missing. When Devlin accidentally penetrates the secret of the wine cellar, the situation becomes more desperate than ever — how can Devlin eradicate all traces of the broken bottle before Sebastian (who is on his way) arrives at the cellar? Devlin manages a fast cleanup and apparently throws Sebastian off the track by confessing his love for Alicia, but then Hitchcock cuts to Sebastian returning to the cellar. At this moment we feel the accumulated danger of all of the immediately preceding crises.

### **A Note for “The Plausibles”**

Hitchcock deprecatingly refers to critics who demand that his plots work logically as “the plausibles.” To Hitchcock it is not important that a series of events make strict logical sense; what matters is that the events be visually exciting and emotionally affecting.

In the wine cellar sequence a “plausible” might well object that the device that generates most of the suspense — the threat that the champagne will run out and that Sebastian will go to the wine cellar for more — logically makes little sense. Sebastian, a man of the world, should know that champagne must be served chilled. Since there is no evidence of champagne on ice in the wine cellar, Sebastian has no plausible reason for going there. We don’t question his errand, however, because we are so intensely caught up in the drama. Moreover, since party-goers find champagne especially difficult to refuse, the accelerated shrinkage in the number of bottles is emotionally convincing.

In addition, the sight of silver trays laden with glasses brimful of sparkling wine and the sound of popping corks, images that normally evoke a mood of carefree celebration, in this context signal possible doom for the protagonists. Such ironies are typical of Hitchcock and work to give an absurd, nightmarish quality to his films. If the Scotch were running out instead of the champagne, the sequence would lose most of its dramatic impact.

A final note on the extract: Hitchcock, who makes a brief appearance in each of his films, appears in the extract as one of Sebastian’s guests. As might be expected, he is seen gulping a glass of champagne.



### EDITING

#### Hitchcock's Style

Peter Bogdanovich writes: "Through the power of his consummate technique, [Hitchcock] directs not actors, but the audience." While everyone knows what it feels like to experience a Hitchcock film, there are few concrete discussions of what constitutes his unique style. Hitchcock, sounding like V. I. Pudovkin in *Film Technique*, gives the following account of his art:

. . . you gradually build up the psychological situation, piece by piece, using the camera to emphasize first one detail, then another. The point is to draw the audience right inside the situation instead of leaving them to watch it from outside, from a distance. And you can do this only by breaking the action up into details and cutting from one to the other, so that each detail is forced in turn on the attention of the audience and reveals its psychological meaning. If you played the whole scene straight through, and simply made a photographic record of it with the camera always in one position, you would lose your power over the audience.<sup>1</sup>

The thirteen minute extract from *NOTORIOUS* was chosen because it provides an excellent illustration of Hitchcock's complex editing patterns which relentlessly draw the audience into the action and generate an almost unbearable suspense.

1. In Albert J. LaValley's *Focus on Hitchcock* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 35.

Hitchcock knows that to create suspense he must first involve the audience in the action. No matter how dangerous a situation he presents to us, unless he makes us feel part of it, we will experience little vicarious excitement. Hitchcock could have shown the following action — Alicia removing the key from Sebastian's key ring — in one shot; instead he divides the action up into twelve shots:

1. Long shot of Alicia framed by the door leading from the bedroom to Sebastian's dressing room. She walks toward the camera until she is framed in a medium close shot. Her eyes gaze intently off frame left.
2. What she sees: a partially closed door off Sebastian's dressing room that leads to the bathroom. Sebastian's shadow can be seen moving on the door. He appears to be shaving or combing his hair in preparation for the party. To the left of the door is his dressing table.
3. Medium close-up of Alicia still gazing frame left. Her eyes turn downward and she glances toward frame right.
4. As in 2. The camera moves closer to reveal the object of Alicia's gaze, Sebastian's key ring with the key to the wine cellar.
5. Long shot of Alicia, the dressing table with the key ring in the foreground. She begins walking toward the desk looking anxiously toward the door and then back to the desk. As she is about to grasp the key ring she looks up toward the bathroom door.
6. A closer shot of the door with Sebastian's shadow still moving on it.
7. As in 5. Alicia is about to pick up the key ring.
8. Close-up of Alicia looking in the direction of the bathroom door. She looks down again.
9. Close-up of Alicia's hands holding the key ring. She removes the wine cellar key.
10. As in 8, a close-up of Alicia looking toward the bathroom door.
11. The bathroom door, as in 6.



12. Medium long shot of Alicia. She turns away from the dressing table and, her back to the camera, returns to the bedroom.

By breaking the action into short fragments, Hitchcock can photograph each element of the action from the most suitable and effective camera position, thereby increasing the dramatic intensity of the scene. Of the twelve shots in the sequence, four (1, 5, 7, 12) are long or medium shots which function to establish or re-establish the larger context of the action. The majority are close-ups (of faces or details) and subjective shots (in which the viewer sees the action from the point of view of the character), sometimes both.

A close-up tends to increase the audience's empathy with a character; the more clearly we perceive the expressions on a character's face, the more we tend to identify with the emotions indicated by these facial expressions. A subjective shot involves the audience in a different and perhaps even more binding way. Through subjective shots the audience "becomes" the actor; we are suddenly propelled inside the drama instead of watching it objectively from the outside. Since our point of view is that of the character's, we more readily identify with the character's vulnerability and in some cases even with his guilt.

Five of the eleven shots in the sequence are subjective (2, 4, 6, 9, 11). Shot 6 is particularly effective. In 5 we have seen Alicia move closer to the desk and hence closer to the bathroom door. In 6 the door (seen from her point of view) appears larger, reflecting her closer proximity. The shadow on the door, originally ominous, appears even more threatening from the closer vantage, a perfect visual embodiment of her increased danger.

At the climactic moment of the sequence, when Alicia removes the key from the ring, Hitchcock photographs the action from Alicia's point of view (9). This shot is preceded and followed by close-ups of Alicia's face (8 and 10). Through the combination of the close-ups and the subjective shot,

Hitchcock deeply engages the viewer in Alicia's fear and perhaps her guilt.

In the remaining portion of the extract, Hitchcock's numerous close-ups and subjective shots continue to place the viewer inside the action. Especially notable are the shots of the ever dwindling supplies of champagne when seen from Devlin's or Alicia's point of view; their anxiety becomes ours. Similarly, throughout the party sequence, we alternately see first Sebastian watching Alicia from Alicia's point of view and then Devlin and Alicia directly from Sebastian's point of view. These shots convey a sense of claustrophobia; Alicia and Devlin cannot escape the confines of Sebastian's threatening presence to become safely lost in the crowd.

### Editing Techniques to Generate Suspense

In an interview with François Truffaut, Hitchcock defines "suspense" by contrasting it with "surprise."

We are now having a very innocent little chat. Let us suppose that there is a bomb underneath this table between us. Nothing happens, and then all of a sudden, "Boom!" There is an explosion. The public is *surprised*, but prior to this surprise, it has seen an absolutely ordinary scene, of no special consequence. Now, let us take a *suspense* situation. The bomb is underneath the table and the public *knows* it, probably because they have seen the anarchist place it there. . . . The audience is longing to warn the characters on the screen: "you shouldn't be talking about such trivial matters. There's a bomb beneath you and it's about to explode!"

In the first case we have given the public fifteen seconds of *surprise* at the moment of the explosion. In

the second case we have provided them with fifteen minutes of *suspense*. The conclusion is that whenever possible the public must be informed.<sup>1</sup>

Although Hitchcock generates an atmosphere of tension throughout the extract, there is no suspense (by Hitchcock's definition of the term) until Alicia and Devlin are together in the wine cellar. As Alicia stands guard at the door, Hitchcock cuts from her anxious face to Joseph serving champagne to the guests. Joseph notices that only five bottles of champagne remain. Then there is a cut back to Devlin, who is exploring the wine cellar. The cross-cutting between the cellar and the party upstairs creates classic Hitchcock suspense; the audience is informed of something the characters do not know — that the supply of champagne is rapidly diminishing and that Sebastian may come for more at any minute. (Alicia and Devlin, of course, fear that the supply may run out, but they are not aware the threat has become real.)

### Fragmenting An Action for Dramatic Emphasis

When the wine bottle falls off the shelf, instead of recording the action in one shot, Hitchcock uses three. In the first shot the bottle is seen from below as it teeters over the edge, giving it a particularly menacing aspect. In the second shot we see the shadow of the falling bottle streak across Devlin's face. This allows the viewer to see simultaneously the catastrophic event and the protagonist's stunned reaction to it. The third shot is a close-up of Devlin's foot as the bottle crashes to the floor around it. By dividing up the action into three separate dramatic shots Hitchcock greatly increases the impact of the event. Moreover, the extremely rapid alternation of shots, each lasting only a fraction of a second, in itself startles and disorients the viewer.

1. Quoted from François Truffaut's *Hitchcock* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967) p. 52.

## Editing Techniques to Compress Time

As Hitchcock is well aware, the relation between real time and filmic time is completely arbitrary. The director often compresses time according to the dramatic necessity of the plot. The extract begins shortly before the party and ends as the last guests depart, a time span of at least several hours. The running time of the extract, however, is only thirteen minutes. We do not have the impression that large segments of time have been deleted, however, thanks to Hitchcock's skillful cutting.

The first major time ellipsis in the extract takes place between the last shot in the bedroom and the shot that marks the beginning of the party. The second takes place between the shot of Sebastian standing in the wine cellar musing over the loss of his key and the shot of the last guests leaving the party. We are not disconcerted by these leaps in time because Hitchcock has smoothed them over by dissolves, conventional devices for indicating time ellipses. (In a dissolve, as the old image disappears, the new image appears and, for a short time, the two images are superimposed on the screen.) In the first instance, the carpet in the bedroom on which Alicia drops the key dissolves into the chandelier which appears in the first shot of the party sequence. In the second instance, the figure of Sebastian standing in the cellar is dissolved into the shot of the last guests departing. These dissolves not only signal the elimination of time between sequences of action, they have a dramatic function. Through them we are told visually that the events at the end of the previous sequence will make an imprint on the action to follow.

Hitchcock also eliminates unnecessary time *within* sequences, but he does this so smoothly that the audience is hardly aware of the ellipsis. For example, after Alicia announces to a group of guests that she will ask the orchestra to play Brazilian music, there is a cut to Devlin standing outside the garden door. Moments later (five seconds, to be exact) Alicia can be seen through the garden door descending the cellar stairs on her way to join Sebastian. The actual time it



would take for Alicia to speak with the orchestra and make her way to Devlin would be far greater, but Hitchcock has eliminated it so as not to slow down the pace of the action.

### **An Unrealistic Compression of Time**

In the sequence which occurs shortly after the breaking of the wine bottle, Hitchcock allows Devlin to accomplish a task which he could not realistically accomplish within the time given him:

98. Devlin and Alicia examine the contents of the wine bottle. Devlin tells her to find a duplicate bottle and then very coolly begins to gather a sample of the sand into an envelope.
99. Joseph at the table serving the guests. He looks over toward the remaining bottles of champagne.
100. Three bottles remain.
101. Joseph goes off to inform Sebastian.
102. Devlin trying to clean up the sand. Alicia hands him a bottle and he begins to funnel sand into it.
103. Alicia goes to watch at the door.
104. Devlin funneling the sand into the bottle.
105. Alicia tells him to hurry.
106. Devlin still funneling the sand.
107. The camera follows Joseph as he walks up to Sebastian and presumably informs him that they need more champagne.
108. Close shot of Devlin's hand whisking away the last traces of sand. The camera follows him as he stands up and begins to replace the cork on the bottle.

Somehow, in the short interval between 106 (in which a large pile of sand remains on the floor and Devlin is making almost no progress in refunneling it) and 108, about thirteen seconds, Devlin has miraculously managed to clean up all the sand. Because the viewer is so caught up in the action and, moreover, is relieved that Devlin has cleaned up the sand, we

do not reflect on the impossibility of his achievement. Hitchcock, through editing, manages to have his cake and eat it too. He places Devlin in an impossible situation, sufficiently working up the audience on his behalf, but then magically extricates him — for the moment.

### **Startling the Viewer Through Jarring Juxtapositions**

Hitchcock occasionally startles the viewer by cutting to a shot which is jarring because it is unexpected in the context he has established. For example, soon after the couple arrives at the wine cellar, while Devlin begins his search, the camera moves up to Alicia's anxious face as she stands guard at the door in the dark. This shot is immediately followed by a brightly lit shot of the table upstairs, laden with full glasses of champagne. The idea inherent in the juxtaposition of shots — the more champagne set out for the guests to drink the more precarious Alicia's situation becomes — is in itself disturbing. But Hitchcock intensifies our anxiety by shocking us with the sudden juxtaposition of darkness and light, thus intensifying our reaction to the disturbing content of the shot.

Another jarring shot occurs when Devlin and Alicia, seated together on the couch, are tensely discussing plans to search the cellar. Several times Hitchcock cuts from them to Sebastian who is seen in long shot standing across the room occasionally waving at Alicia. Unexpectedly, Hitchcock cuts to a close-up of Sebastian striding toward the camera and, by implication, toward Alicia and Devlin. The sudden close-up is disconcerting and heightens our sense of the danger implicit in Sebastian's intrusive presence.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHY: HITCHCOCK'S MOVING CAMERA***

In the extract, the camera is almost always in motion; it follows the characters when they are moving and moves toward them when they are static. Following is an analysis of the dramatic effect of camera movement in the extract.

## The Crane Shot

The most dramatic shot in NOTORIOUS is the sweeping crane shot at the beginning of the party sequence.<sup>1</sup> The shot begins high above the reception area of the mansion (Fig. 1). The camera pans from the staircase to a spectacular high-angle view of the guests as they arrive at the party. Slowly the camera descends toward Sebastian and Alicia, who are stationed near the front door greeting the guests. The camera moves closer and closer to Alicia until the shot finally ends with a close-up of the key to the forbidden cellar clutched in her hand (Fig. 2). Commenting on the purpose of the shot, Hitchcock said:

That's a statement which says, "in this crowded atmosphere there is a very vital item, the crux of everything." So taking that sentence as it is, in this crowded atmosphere, you go to the widest possible expression of that phrase and then you come down to the most vital thing — a little tiny key in the hand. That's merely the visual expression to say, "Everybody is having a good time, but they don't realize there is a big drama going on here." And that big drama epitomizes itself in a little key.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

1. A crane shot is one taken from a special device that resembles a huge mechanical arm and is capable of carrying both camera and camera man. It allows shots to be taken from great heights and can move in virtually any direction.

2. Quoted in Peter Bogdanovich's *The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock* (New York: Doubleday, 1963), p. 27.

We might ask: could Hitchcock have achieved the same effect if he had merely cut from the high-angle shot on the reception room to the key in Alicia's hand? The answer is, emphatically, no. By having the camera slowly move from the larger context of the party to the close-up of the key in one continual shot, Hitchcock emphasizes that within the same spatial continuum there are two different levels of reality. On the surface there is only the elegant party in the grand mansion. From the point of view of Devlin and Alicia, however, the party is important only as an opportunity to discover what Sebastian and his Nazi friends are keeping in the wine cellar. The crane shot concretely links one level of reality to the other, greatly enhancing the drama of the scene.

## Tracking Up to Static Objects or People

At the beginning of the extract, the camera slowly tracks toward Sebastian's dressing table, revealing to the audience that on it lies the key to the wine cellar, identifiable by the initials UNICA (which in Spanish means "the only one"). The slow movement toward the key, of course, underlines its importance to the plot. But the camera movement also lends an air of mystery or danger to the key, an effect which is furthered by the enigmatic mood music that accompanies the shot.

As Alicia keeps watch at the cellar door, the camera moves to a close-up of her face. Here, the camera movement allows us more time to observe her anxiety, and thus increases our identification with her. Moreover the slow movement forward in itself adds to the tenseness of the atmosphere.

As Devlin is hurriedly leaving the party, Sebastian's mother stops him; she asks why he is leaving so early. Throughout this conversation the camera moves forward slowly toward them. After Devlin gives his weak explanation and leaves, the camera continues its forward movement until the mother's face is in medium close-up. This signifies that she does not respond to Devlin's explanation casually: something about him is suspicious.



## Following Characters in Motion

Immediately after Alicia has stolen the key off the desk and before she can dispose of it safely, Sebastian approaches her with his hands extended. The camera, framing only his extended hands, follows him until we see his hands grasp hers. At this point the camera moves in closer to frame Alicia's clenched fist. Here the camera movement functions to draw out our fear that Sebastian will discover Alicia's theft of the key.

At one point in the party sequence, when Sebastian moves toward Alicia and Devlin, the camera tracks backward with him. As a result, we do not know exactly where he is in relation to the couple; we only see him relentlessly moving forward. The camera movement makes his approach seem all the more intrusive and threatening.

### Camera Movement to Create Atmosphere

It is impossible to analyze every camera movement in terms of a specific dramatic purpose. Often Hitchcock will move his camera simply to make a shot more interesting and dynamic in a way that defies analysis. In general, we might say that the graceful camera movements throughout the party sequence, at times seeming almost choreographed to the background music (especially during the crane shot at the beginning of the sequence), endow the narrative with an illusive, dream-like quality. Ironically, the pleasant surface only intensifies the potential nightmare that lurks beneath it.

## SOUND

In the extract, Hitchcock enhances the visual elements through a combination of commentative sound, actual sound, and, of course, dialogue.

## Commentative Sound

Karel Reisz in *The Technique of Film Editing* defines commentative sound as "sound whose source is neither visible on the screen nor has been implied to be present in the action." It is "sound which is artificially added for dramatic effect."<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the extract, as the camera tracks up to Sebastian's key ring on the desk, the movement is accompanied by "suspense" music which endows the keys with a frightening, eerie quality. This music is commentative — the director's comment or warning to the audience that Alicia is undertaking a dangerous mission.

## Actual Sound

Actual sound, according to Reisz's definition, is "sound whose source is visible on the screen or whose source is *implied* to be present by the action of the film."<sup>2</sup> The music that plays intermittently throughout the party sequence is actual sound. To escape Sebastian's eye, Alicia announces that she is going to tell the orchestra to play Brazilian music: soon after, as she and Devlin meet at the wine cellar, the waltzes stop and Latin music begins. Hence, although we never *see* an orchestra playing, Hitchcock implies that one is present and responsive to the wishes of the mistress of the house. The music is also made to seem a natural part of the scene because it is carefully blended or mixed with the voices of the guests. By creating the illusion that the music is played by an orchestra actually present at the party, Hitchcock adds an extra air of grandeur and wealth to Sebastian's mansion.

Silence is also used for dramatic effect. When Devlin knocks over the bottle, the music stops, as if the orchestra were on a break. Against a background of silence, the sound of

1. Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar, *The Technique of Film Editing* (New York: Hastings House, 1972), p. 398.

2. *Ibid*, p. 397.

the couple's clumsy efforts to clean up becomes magnified, increasing the tenseness of the situation. Not until the tension of the sequence is (apparently) resolved does the music commence, almost like a sigh of relief.

### Dialogue

Hitchcock always takes delight in counterpointing the dialogue spoken by his characters with images that add new dimensions of meaning to the words. For example, at the beginning of the first sequence, as Sebastian rambles on about Devlin, we do not see him speaking but see only his shadow on the door as it appears from Alicia's point of view. The sound of his voice also flows over shots of Alicia as she moves closer to his desk. The juxtaposition of dialogue and image is ironic: even as Sebastian lightly talks of Devlin, we see his wife secretly taking the wine cellar key to give to his rival.

During the party sequence when Alicia and Devlin are seated together, we have an example of meaningful counterpoint between word and image. Their facial expressions suggest that they are making frivolous small talk, but they are actually trying to evolve a plan for searching the cellar.

Finally, by placing Alicia at the height of her anxiety and confusion among party guests who speak French, Hitchcock alienates his American viewers from Sebastian's friends and brings them to a closer identification with Alicia. Here the conversation of the guests is probably as meaningless to Alicia (whether or not she speaks French) as it is to most of the American audience.

## APPENDIX

### RECOMMENDED READINGS

Albert J. LaValley makes some perceptive comments on NOTORIOUS in his introduction to *Focus on Hitchcock* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972). The film is also mentioned numerous times throughout the volume, which is a collection of Hitchcock's writings, interviews with Hitchcock, and critical essays on Hitchcock. It contains an excellent annotated bibliography.

The following books, combinations of interviews with Hitchcock and commentaries on his films, include sections on NOTORIOUS. François Truffaut's *Hitchcock: A Definitive Study of Alfred Hitchcock* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967) contains a long section on NOTORIOUS which Truffaut claims is "truly my favorite Hitchcock picture . . . the very quintessence of Hitchcock." Truffaut's book contains interesting sidelights on many Hitchcock films, but is not a definitive study. In Peter Bogdanovich's *The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963), the brief section on NOTORIOUS contains comments by Hitchcock on the love-duty theme of the film, the long tracking shot in which Bergman and Grant remain in an embrace while they walk across the room to the telephone (not in the extract), and the crane shot at the beginning of the party sequence (in the extract).

Finally, *Hitchcock's Films* by Robin Wood (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1969) contains no mention of NOTORIOUS but has a good introduction to Hitchcock's art and contains close studies of eight Hitchcock films.



## **Suggested Extracts for Comparison**

### **THE CRIME OF MONSIEUR LANGE**

#### *The Courtyard Sequence*

In contrast to Hitchcock's complex editing patterns that regularly break up the temporal and spatial unity of his scenes, Renoir employs techniques that preserve spatial and temporal unity: long takes as opposed to a succession of short shots; camera movement that serves to maintain the spatial unity of a scene; deep focus (so that characters on different spatial planes can interact within one shot); a predominance of medium shots rather than close-ups; and editing that does not call attention to itself. These features of Renoir's style are discussed in detail in the *Notes and Analysis* accompanying the extract. A juxtaposition of the two extracts dramatically demonstrates the opposing film styles.

### **MOTHER**

#### *The Prison Sequence*

Hitchcock's theory of film editing quoted on page 10 is strikingly similar to Pudovkin's (see *Notes and Analysis* to *The Prison Sequence* from MOTHER). In this light, a comparison of the editing styles in the two extracts is interesting.

### **SPELLBOUND**

#### *The Razor Sequence*

The extract provides further examples of Hitchcock's style and technique.