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Applied Aesthetics

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### **Shot Breakdown: Scene 2**

For this assignment, we were instructed to conduct a shot breakdown from a classical film called *Notorious* (1954) directed by the infamous Alfred Hitchcock. For this paper, I decided to choose scene 2 where secret agent Delvin with accomplice Alicia Humberman the wine cellar during a party to find evidence of any kind to get against her husband, Alex Sebastian. I would be speaking on the first few shots within the scene, and how Hitchcock grasps the audience's attention through his own personal techniques with cinematography.

We begin in shot 1, where Delvin is filmed in a medium shot in a hip-angle position. Even though the lighting is slightly low-key, the depth of field is in deep focus in which the camera is still able to show him bending down moving the wine bottles on the shelf where it seems like he's creating a path, and placing his arm out as if he's reaching for something in the back. The background sound and also the expressions of Delvin also create this intense feeling of not wanting the character to get caught by Alicia's husband or any other guest at the party. This shot lasts up to 6 secs, which transitions to a match on action/ eye line match, which takes us to shot 2. We have the eye-line match in which we see what Delvin was reaching for in the previous scene was papers tapped on the wall, the camera in a medium close up shot captures Delvin rushing to seek through the papers to find the information he is seeking and an increase in the tempo in the background music as well to keep the audience interested and on their toes as well. This shot lasts up to 6 secs, and transitions to a new stir up into the intensity of this scene as well.

In shot 3, the camera distances itself in a medium close up shot in a slightly low key lighting of two wine bottles sitting on the shelf - before a certain action begins the background music begins to get louder to sort of sign that something is about to happen, but what is it? Well, the scene captures that while Delvin is reaching for the papers in the back of the shelf, he is also pushing the wine bottles he pathed to reach behind the counter towards the edge of the shelf. This creates a whole new edge-of-the-seat moment for not only the character, but at the same time we are expecting it to fall -yet what's keeping the audience in suspense is does he sees the bottle that's about to fall? Is he gonna grab it in time before it does risk getting caught? Hitchcock is trying to grasp that expectation, but also keeping that sense of what if's as well. This shot transitions back to shot #1 where in shot 4 but the camera is now at a distance in a hip level angel close up shot of Delvin's side view of his face, where you see him now sort of rushing looking through the papers behind the wine shelf as the background music behind to get louder and louder to create that sense of urgency of not wanting to get caught.

In shot 5, Hitchcock transitions back to the shot 3 of the match on/eyeline match where you see Delvin still looking through the paper, until it transitions to the match on the action we see in shot 4 where the wine bottle slowly begins to slide off the shelf, to then in shot 5 the camera is in a medium close up shot to capture from a low angle the wine bottle that Delvin has completely pushed off the counter. Hitchcock then transitions the shot back to the reaction of Delvin seeing the wine bottle falling off the counter in shot 6, in a close-up view of seeing his reaction to the bottle falling sort of creates that relationship of having the audience react first and seeing if the character behaves as well to the chain of reaction events that have occurred. But again with the concept of creating the expectations, but with a twist in shot 11, the camera captures Delvin in a close up shot mysteriously glancing at the broken bottle on the floor as if

there is something off-putting about it to which it cuts to an eyeline match shot of the glass in shot 12 in which Hitchcock makes the lighting slightly brighter to see from what we expected to be liquid inside the bottle to actually be sand inside of it - which creates this topic of thought as to why is there sand inside of the bottle? How does this tie into Alica's husband in question?