

AN ANDALUSIAN DOG

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PROLOGUE

Once Upon a Time...

A balcony at night.

A man is sharpening a razor by the balcony. The man looks at the sky through the window-panes and sees...

A light cloud moving toward the full moon.

Then a young woman's head, her eyes wide open. A razor blade moves toward one of the eyes.

The light cloud passes now across the moon.

The razor blade cuts through the eye of the young woman, slicing it.

End of Prologue.

EIGHT YEARS LATER

A deserted street. It is raining.

A character dressed in a dark-gray suit appears riding a bicycle. His head, back and loins are adorned in ruffles of white linen. A rectangular box with black and white diagonal stripes is secured to his chest by straps. The character pedals mechanically without holding the handlebars, with his hands resting on his knees.

The character is seen from the back down to the thighs in a medium shot, superimposed lengthwise on the street down which he is cycling with his back to the camera.

The character moves toward the camera until the striped box is seen in a close-up.

An ordinary room on the third floor on the same street. A young girl wearing a brightly colored dress is sitting in the middle of the room attentively reading a book. Suddenly she comes out of her reading with a start, listens with curiosity, freeing herself of the book by throwing it on a nearby couch. The book stays open with a reproduction of Vermeer's *The Lacemaker* on one of the pages facing up. The young woman is convinced now that something is in the offing: she, gets up, and, half turning, walks in quick steps toward the window.

The character we have mentioned before has just at this very moment stopped, below on the street. Without offering the least resistance, out of inertia, he lets himself come down with the bicycle into the gutter, in the midst of a mud heap.

Looking enraged and resentful, the young woman hurries down the stairs and out to the street.

Close-up of the character sprawling on the ground, expressionless, his position identical to that at the moment of his fall.

The young woman comes out of the house, and, throwing herself on the cyclist, she frantically kisses him on the mouth, the eyes and the nose. The rain gets heavier to the extent of blotting out the preceding scene.

Dissolve to the box whose diagonal stripes are superimposed on those of the rain. Hands equipped with a little key open the box, pulling out a tie wrapped in tissue paper. It must be taken into account that the rain, the box, the tissue paper and the tie should all exhibit these diagonal stripes, with their sizes alone varying.

The same room.

Standing by the bed, the young woman is looking at the clothing articles that had been worn by the character -- ruffles, box, and the stiff collar with the plain dark tie -- all laid out as though they were worn by a person lying on the bed. The young woman finally decides to pick up the collar, removing the plain tie in order to replace it with the striped one which she has just taken out of the box. She puts it back in the same place, and then sits down by the bed in the posture of a person watching over the dead.

(Note: The bed, that is to say, the bedspread and the pillow, are slightly ruffled and depressed as if a human body were really lying there.)

The woman is aware that someone is standing behind her and turns around to see who it is. Without the least surprise, she sees the character who now is without any of his former accessory articles, looking very attentively at something in his right hand. His great absorption betrays quite a great deal of anxiety.

The woman approaches and looks in turn at what he has in his hand. Close-up of the hand, the middle of which is teeming with ants swarming out of a black hole. None of these falls off.

Dissolve to the armpit hair of a young woman sprawled on the sand of a sunny beach. Dissolve to a sea urchin whose spines ripple slightly. Dissolve to the head of another young woman in a powerful overhead shot framed by an iris. The iris opens to reveal the young woman surrounded by a throng of people who are trying to break through a police barrier.

At the center of this circle, the young woman, holding a stick, attempts to pick up a severed hand with painted fingernails that is lying on the ground. A policeman comes up to her, sharply reprimanding her; he bends down and picks up the hand which he carefully wraps up and puts in the box that was carried by the cyclist. He hands it all to the young woman, saluting her in a military fashion while she thanks him.

As the policeman hands her the box, she must appear to be carried away by an extraordinary emotion that isolates her completely from everything around her. It is as though she were enthralled by the echoes of distant religious music; perhaps music she heard in her earliest childhood.

Their curiosity satisfied, the bystanders begin to disperse in all directions.

This scene will have been seen by the characters whom we have left in the room on the third floor. They are seen through the window panes of the balcony from which may be seen the end of the scene described above. When the policeman hands the box over to the young woman, the two characters on the balcony appear to also be overcome to the point of tears by the same emotion. Their heads sway as though following the rhythm of this impalpable music.

The man looks at the young woman and makes a gesture as though he were saying: "Did you see? Hadn't I told you so?" She looks down again at the young woman on the street who is now all alone and, as if pinned down to the spot, in a state of utter restraint. Cars pass all around her at breathtaking speeds. Suddenly she is run over by one of the cars and is left there horribly mutilated.

It is then that, with the decisiveness of a man fully knowing his rights, the man goes over to his companion, and, having gazed lasciviously straight into her eyes, he grabs her breasts through her dress. Close-up of the lustful hands over the breasts. These are bared as the dress disappears. A terrible expression of almost mortal anguish spreads over the man's face, and a blood-streaked dribble runs out of his mouth dripping on the young woman's bare breasts.

The breasts disappear to be transformed into thighs which the man continues to palpate. His expression has changed. His eyes sparkle with malice and lust. His wide open mouth now closes down as if tightened up by a sphincter.

The young woman moves back toward the middle of the room, followed by the man who is still in the same posture.

Suddenly, she makes a forceful motion, breaking his hold on her, freeing herself from his amorous advances.

The man's mouth tightens with anger.

She realizes that a disagreeable or violent scene is about to take place. She moves back, step by step, until she reaches the corner of the room, where she takes up a position behind a small table.

Assuming the gestures of the melodrama villain, the man looks around for something or other. He sees at his feet the end of a rope and picks it up with his right hand. His left hand gropes about too and gets hold of an identical rope.

Glued to the wall the young woman watches with horror her attacker's stratagem.

The latter advances toward her dragging with great effort that which is attached behind to the ropes.

We see passing before our eyes on the screen: first, a cork, then a melon, then two Brothers of Christian Schools, and finally two magnificent grand pianos. The pianos are loaded with the rotting carcasses of two donkeys, their feet, tails, hindquarters and excrement spilling out of the piano-cases. As one of the pianos passes in front of the camera lens, a large donkey's head is seen pressing the keyboard.

Pulling with great difficulty this burden, the man desperately strains toward the young woman, knocking over chairs, tables, a floor lamp, etc., etc. The donkey's hindquarters get caught in everything. A lamp hanging from the ceiling is jostled by a stripped bone, and continues rocking until the end of the scene.

When the man is about to reach the young woman, she dodges him with a leap and escapes. Her attacker lets go of the ropes and begins pursuing her. The young woman opens a communicating door and vanishes into the next room, but not quickly enough to be able to lock the door behind her. The man's hand having made it past the joint, is held captive, caught at the wrist.

Inside the other room, pressing the door harder and harder, the young woman looks at the hand which wrenches in pain in slow motion as the ants reappear and swarm over the door.

Right away, she turns her head toward the middle of the new room, which is identical to the previous one, but on which the lighting confers a different look; the young woman sees...

A man sprawled on the bed who is the one and the same man whose hand is still caught in the door.

Wearing the ruffles with the box resting on his chest he does not make the least movement but lies there, his eyes wide open, his superstitious expression seeming to say: "Something really extraordinary is now about to happen!"

ABOUT THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

A new character is seen from the back on the landing; he has just stopped by the entrance door to the apartment. He rings the bell of the apartment where the events are taking place. We don't see the bell nor the electric hammer, but in their place, over the door, there are two holes through which pass two hands shaking a silver cocktail shaker. Their action is instantaneous, as in ordinary films when a doorbell button is being pressed.

The man lying on the bed gives a start.

The young woman goes and opens the door.

The newcomer goes directly to the bed and imperiously orders the man to get up. The man complies so grudgingly that the other is obliged to grab him by the ruffles and force him to his feet.

Having torn off the ruffles one by one, the newcomer throws them out of the window. The box follows the same route and so do the straps which the man tries in vain to save from the catastrophe. And this leads the newcomer to punish the man by making him go and stand with his face to one of the walls.

The newcomer will have done all this with his back completely turned to the camera. He turns around now for the first time in order to go and look for something on the other side of the room.

The sub-title says:

SIXTEEN YEARS BEFORE

At this point the photography becomes hazy. The newcomer moves in slow motion and we see that his features are identical to those of the other; they are one and the same person, but for the fact that the newcomer looks younger and more doleful, as the other must have been years before.

The newcomer goes toward the back of the room with the camera tracking back and keeping him in medium close-up.

The school desk toward which our individual is heading enters the frame. There are two books on the school desk, as well as various school objects, whose position and moral meaning are to be carefully determined.

The newcomer picks up the two books and turns to go and join the other man. At this point everything goes back to normal, the fuzziness and slow motion having disappeared.

Having come up to the man, the newcomer directs him to hold out his arms in a cruciform position, places a book in each hand, and orders him to remain so as a punishment.

The punished character's expression has now become keen and treacherous. He turns to face the newcomer. The books he has been holding turn into revolvers.

The newcomer looks at him with tenderness, an expression that becomes more pronounced with each passing moment.

The other, threatening the newcomer with his guns and forcing him to put his hands up, does not heed the latter's compliance and fires both revolvers at him. Medium close-up of the newcomer falling down fatally wounded, his features contorted in agony (the photography's fuzziness is resumed and the newcomer's fall is in slow motion, in a way that is more pronounced than previously).

We see in the distance the wounded man falling; this, however, happens no longer inside the room but in a park. Seated next to him is a motionless woman with bare shoulders, who is seen from behind leaning slightly forward. As he falls the wounded man attempts to seize and stroke her shoulders; one of his hands is turned shaking toward himself; the other brushes against the skin of the naked shoulders. Finally he falls to the ground.

View from afar. A few passers-by and several park-keepers rush over to help. They pick him up in their arms and bear him away through the woods.

Let the passionate lame man play a role here.

And we are back at the same room. A door, the one in which the hand had been caught, now opens slowly. The young woman we already know appears. She closes the door behind her and stares very attentively at the wall against which the murderer had stood.

The man is no longer there. The wall is bare, without any furniture or decoration. The young woman makes a gesture of vexation and impatience.

The wall is seen again; in the middle of it there is a small black spot.

Seen much closer, this small spot appears to be a death's head moth.

Close-up of the moth.

The death's head on the moth's wings fills the whole screen.

The man who was wearing ruffles comes suddenly into view in a medium shot bringing his hand swiftly to his mouth as though he were losing his teeth.

The young woman looks at him disdainfully.

When the man takes away his hand, we see that his mouth has disappeared.

The young woman seems to be saying to him: "Well, and what next?" and then she touches up her lips with a lipstick.

We see again the man's head. Hair begins to sprout where his mouth had been.

Having caught sight of this, the young woman stifles a cry and swiftly examines her armpit which is completely depilated. She scornfully sticks out her tongue at him, throws a shawl over her shoulders, and, opening the door near her, goes into the adjacent room which is a wide beach.

A third character is waiting for her near the water's edge. They greet each other very amiably, and meander together down the waterline.

A shot of their legs and the waves breaking at their feet.

The camera follows them in a dolly shot. The waves gently wash ashore at their feet, first, the straps, then the striped box followed by the ruffles, and finally the bicycle. This shot continues a moment longer without anything else being washed ashore.

They continue their walk on the beach, little by little fading from view, while in the sky appear the words:

IN THE SPRING

Everything has changed.

We see now a desert without end. We see the man and the young woman in the center, sunk in sand up to their chests, blinded, their clothes in tatters, devoured by the sun and by swarms of insects.

THE END