

99. INT. NORMAN'S PARLOR - (NIGHT)

In the darkened room, lit only by the light from the office spilling in, we see Norman placing the tray on a table. Mary comes to the doorway, pauses. Norman straightens up, goes to lamp, turns on the light.

Mary is startled by the room. Even in the dimness of one lamp, the strange, extraordinary nature of the room rushes up at one. It is a room of birds. Stuffed birds, all over the room, on every available surface, one even clinging to the old-fashioned fringed shade of the lamp. The birds are of many varieties, beautiful, grand, horrible, preying. Mary stares in awe and a certain fascinated horror.

100. CLOSE UP - THE VARIOUS BIRDS101. TWO SHOT - MARY AND NORMAN

NORMAN

Please sit down. On the sofa.

As Norman goes about spreading out the bread and ham and pouring the milk, we follow Mary across the room. She studies the birds as she walks, briefly examines a bookcase stacked with books on the subject of "Taxidermy."

102. CLOSE UP - THE BOOKS ON TAXIDERM103. MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARY

She notices, too, the paintings on the wall; nudes, primarily, and many with a vaguely religious overtone. Finally Mary reaches the sofa, sits down, looks at the spread.

MARY

You're very ... kind.

NORMAN

It's all for you. I'm not hungry. Please go ahead.

Mary begins to eat, her attitude a bit tense. She takes up a small slice of ham, bites off a tiny bite, nibbles at it in the manner of one disturbed and preoccupied. Norman gazes at her, at the tiny bite she has taken, smiles and then laughs.

START HERE

NORMAN

You eat like a bird.

103. (Cont'd)

MARY

You'd know, of course.

NORMAN

Not really. I hear that expression, that one eats "like a bird," is really a falsie, I mean a falsity, because birds eat a tremendous lot.

(A pause, then explaining)

Oh, I don't know anything about birds. My hobby is stuffing things ... taxidermy. And I guess I'd just rather stuff birds because ... well, I hate the look of beasts when they're stuffed, foxes and chimps and all ... some people even stuff dogs and cats ... but I can't ... I think only birds look well stuffed because they're rather ... passive, to begin with ... most of them ...

He trails off, his exuberance failing in the rushing return of his natural hesitancy and discomfort. Mary looks at him, with some compassion, smiles.

MARY

It's a strange hobby. Curious, I mean.

NORMAN

Unccmmon, too.

MARY

I imagine so.

NORMAN

It's not as expensive as you'd think. Cheap, really. Needles, thread, sawdust ... the chemicals are all that cost anything.

(He goes quiet, looks disturbed)

MARY

A man should have a hobby.

NORMAN

It's more than a hobby ... sometimes ... a hobby is supposed to pass the time, not fill it.

103. (Cont'd)

MARY

(after a pause, softly)
Is your time so empty?

NORMAN

Oh, no!
(forcing brightness
again)

I run the office, bend the
cabins and grounds, do little
chores for mother...the ones
she allows I might be capable
of doing.

MARY

You go out...with friends?

NORMAN

Friends? Who needs friends.

(Laughs, then with
gallows humor)

A boy's best friend is his
mother.

(Stops laughing)

You've never had an empty moment
in your whole life. Have you?

MARY

Only my share.

NORMAN

Where are you going? I don't
mean to pry...

MARY

(A wistful smile)

I'm looking for a private
island.

NORMAN

What are you running away from?

MARY

(Alert)

Why do you ask that?

NORMAN

No. People never run away from
anything.

(A pause)

The rain didn't last very long.

(Turning suddenly)

You know what I think? I think
we're all in our own private
traps, clamped in them, and none
of us can ever climb out. We

103. (Cont'd)

NORMAN (Cont'd)

scratch and claw ... but only at the air, only at each other, and for all of it, we never budge an inch.

MARY

Sometimes we deliberately step into those traps.

NORMAN

I was born in mine. I don't mind it anymore.

MARY

You should ... Mind it.

NORMAN

Oh I do ... but I say I don't.
(Laughs boyishly)

MARY

(Staring at him, shaking her head softly)

If anyone ever spoke to me, the way I heard ... The way she spoke to you, I don't think I could ever laugh again.

NORMAN

(Controlled resentment)

Sometimes when she talks that way to me I'd like to ... curse her out and leave her forever!

(A rueful smile)

Or at least, defy her.

(A pause, a hopeless shrug)

But I couldn't. She's ill.

MARY

She sounded strong...

NORMAN

I mean ... ill.

(A pause)

She had to raise me all by herself after my dad died --- I was only five ... and it must have been a strain. Oh, she didn't have to go out to work or anything, Dad left us with a little something ... anyway, a few years ago ... Mother met a man. He talked her into building this motel ... He could have talked her into anything ... and when well ... It was just too much for her when he died, too ... And the way she died.

103. (Cont'd)

NORMAN (Cont'd)

Oh, it's nothing to talk
about when you're eating.

(Pauses, smiles)

Anyway, it was too much of a
loss for my Mother ... she had
nothing left.

MARY

(Critically)

Except you.

NORMAN

A son is a poor substitute
for a lover.

(Turns away as if
in distaste of the
word)

MARY

Why don't you go away?

NORMAN

To a private island, like you?

MARY

No, not like me.

NORMAN

It's too late for me. And
besides ... who'd look after
her? She'd be alone up there,
the fire would go out ... damp
and cold, like a grave. When
you love someone, you don't do
that to them, even if you hate
them. Oh, I don't hate her.
I hate ... what she's become.
I hate ... the illness.

MARY

(Slowly, carefully)

Wouldn't it be better if you
put her in ... someplace ...

She hesitates. Norman turns, slowly, looking at
her with a striking coldness.

PSYCHO

Norman
#9:01
48.

103. (Cont'd)

NORMAN

An Institution? A madhouse?
People always call a madhouse
"someplace."

(Mimicing coldly)

Put her in Someplace!

MARY

I'm sorry ... I didn't mean it
to sound uncaring ...

NORMAN

(The coldness turn-
ing to tight fury)

What do you know about caring?
Have you ever seen one of those
places? Inside? Laughing
and tears and cruel eyes studying
you ... and my mother there? Why?
Has she harmed you? She's as
harmless as ... one of these stuffed
birds.

MARY

I am sorry. I only felt ... it
seemed she was harming you. I
meant ...

NORMAN

(High fury now)

Well? You meant well? People
always mean well, they cluck
their thick tongues and shake
their heads and suggest so very
delicately that ...

The fury suddenly dies, abruptly and completely, and he
sinks back into his chair. There is a brief silence.
Mary watches the troubled man, is almost physically
pained by his anguish.

NORMAN

(Quietly)

I've suggested it myself. But
I hate to even think such a thing.
She needs me ... and it isn't ...

(Looks up with a
childlike pleading
in his eyes)

...it isn't as if she were a
maniac, a raving thing ... it's
just that ... sometimes she goes
a little mad. We all go a little
mad sometimes. Haven't you?