

Melika Salihbeg Bosnawi ©

PALACE OF CRYSTAL
a screenplay

scene 1

A black screen. On the left-hand side of the screen, light delineated by the sharply delineated outline of a window slowly appears. Contrast of the blackness of the night with the brightness of the day. The dawn is filtering into the room through the window.

It awakens a delicate young girl who remains for a few moments sleepily in bed. Then she gets up and, following her daily routine goes off to the bathroom and prepares herself to go out.

Young, modern, well dressed girl with her handbag thrown casually across her shoulder. Her movements, her gait reveals a casual habitual course of events. We see her in the train with other people, then in a nursery surrounded by children, smiling. The haziness of the picture denotes the passing of a certain period of time.

The picture then becomes sharp again. The girl is on her way back to her little flat. She calls in at a supermarket, stops for a moment in front of the

displays, waves to someone. She is completely nonchalant in her actions.

It is dusk as she goes to her flat, switches on a tape recorder from which are heard the strains of Albinoni's *Adagio in G-minor**. She returns from the bathroom in her nightclothes, lies down on the bed. Then she hears footsteps emanating from the street, at first barely audible, keeping time with the tempo of the music. The footsteps become louder until they dominate all other sound, until finally they fade into the strains of Albinoni's music. This is the girl's first encounter with the footsteps.

The musical theme ends. Darkness and silence.

scene 2

A black screen. On the left-hand side of the screen, light delineated by the sharply delineated outline of a window slowly appears. Contrast of the blackness of the night with the brightness of the day. The dawn is filtering into the room through the window.

It awakens a delicate young girl who remains for a few moments sleepily in bed. Then she gets up and, following her daily routine goes off to the bathroom and prepares herself to go out. There she is in the street amidst other sleepy people. Again the blurring of the picture to depict the passage of a certain amount of time...

The picture becomes sharp again at the moment when the girl is saying good-bye to the children who are leaving the nursery accompanied by their parents. The girl returns to her flat. On the way back she has bought some flowers, a newspaper.

She goes inside. Again she switches on the tape recorder; the same music of Albinoni. She puts the flowers into a vase, leafs through the newspaper, and goes to the bathroom, lies down on the bed.

Again at first in time with the music and scarcely audible but in crescendo subsequently drawing the music, footsteps are heard from the street.

This time the girl listen to the footsteps with curiosity. She raises herself onto one elbow but lies down again just as the footsteps fade and are finally lost in the final notes of the musical theme.

Darkness and silence.

scene 3

A black screen. On the left-hand side of the screen, light delineated by the sharply delineated outline of a window slowly appears. Contrast of the blackness of the night with the brightness of the day. The dawn is filtering into the room through the window.

The girl wakes up in a state of barely noticeable unease. her preparations for going out, her departure for work in the nursery and her return from work last only for a few short hazy sequences, which again suggest the lapse of a certain period of time. The picture becomes sharp again just as the girl is entering her flat.

The same actions with the tape recorder, the same musical theme, the same preparations for bed, only now with a somewhat obvious impatience. She lies on the bed, this time in tense expectation. The footsteps, which appear during the same musical sequences as in the earlier scenes, clearly disturb her.

End of the musical theme. Darkness and silence.

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scene 9

A black screen. On the left-hand side of the screen, light delineated by the sharply delineated outline of a window slowly appears. Contrast of the blackness of the night with the brightness of the day. The dawn is filtering into the room through the window.

It awakens the girl whose face wears an expression of relief. She remains lying there for a moment longer contemplating the chair at the end of the bed upon which is lying the jacket position like a butterfly larva. The girls gets up calmly, prepares herself to go out.

She is in the street, heading in a different direction than the usual one. She approaches a building, which, judging by the uniformed men going in and out, might be identified as a police station. The girl stops near to it, stands still for a moment, and then boards a bus, which has halted there.

We see her among the other people with a calm and clearly defined expression on her face. She gets off the bus and walks up to a building surrounded by gardens and a wire fence. Along its corridors can be heard only the sound of the

girl's footsteps, somewhat harsher although with the same rhythm as in previous scenes.

From the people that the camera meets in the corridors, it is clear that this is a mental hospital. In one corner, on the edge of a chair, a girl with a blank expression is rocking from side to side in rhythmical movements. In front of a window in a long hospital gown a man with his back towards us. He is gently caressing the shadow of a tree on the windowpane, scarcely touching it.

The girl stops in front of a door to the left, having noticed a moment before a metal plaque with the inscription `Doctor`. Just as a sound of her footsteps dies away and her hand moves in the gesture of knocking on the door, from inside is heard the familiar sound of the Albinoni's theme music.

The girl flinches, and while she is listening to the familiar music, an expression of revelation passes over her face. In front of the door she calmly places the familiar jacket which she has been carrying over her arm and moves away down the corridor, whose long dark perspectives are only now visible to us.

At first her footsteps merge with the music in the now familiar way. But then they completely absorb the musical background, echoing alone in the depths of the dark corridor at the end of

which a small point of light is beginning to appear and grows larger as the girl approaches.

As the light increasingly illuminates her form, seen from behind, until it completely envelops her in its brilliance, her footsteps slowly recede into the distance, and text is displayed on the screen:

In the name of God, The All Compassionate, The Merciful

So when she came, it was said: Is your throne like this? She said: It is as it were the same; and we were given the knowledge before it, and we were submissive. And what she worshipped besides God prevented her, surely she was of an unbelieving people. It was said to her: Enter the palace; but when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water, and bared her legs. He said: Surely it is a palace made smooth with crystal. She said: My Lord! surely I have been unjust to myself, and I submit with Sulaymân to Allâh, Lord of the worlds.

(Qur'ân, an-Naml, 42, 43, 44)

F i n e

PALACE OF CRYSTAL

Synopsis

A film-essay

(illusiono-clastic procedure)

1st scene:

- a) broad daylight: emphasised exterior
- b) music (footsteps)
- c) indifference

2nd scene:

- a) second part of the day is emphasised
- b) music (footsteps)
- c) curiosity

3rd scene:

- a) day depicted in its entirety
- b) footsteps (music)
- c) unease

4th scene:

- a) exterior emphasised, appearance of youth, as the youth leaves jacket on chair
- b) music-footsteps
- c) happiness

5th scene:

- a) whole day at quickening tempo, appearance of youth, jacket on chair
- b) music-footsteps
- c) doubt

6th scene:

- a) virtual overlap of beginning and end of day:
black spot - white spot - colour spot, overturning
of chair, appearance of youth, jacket on chair
- b) music-footsteps
- c) despair

7th & 8th scene:

- a) whole day in its repellent dullness, offset by
the excited desperate appearance of the girl, exit
of the girl into ext., appearance of different man,
jacket on girl's arm.
- b) music-footsteps
- c) worry, calming

9th scene:

- a) austere interior of hospital
- b) footsteps-music.....music-footsteps
- c) revelation.....submission

n o t e s :

* a musical theme:

Albinoni's Adagio in G-minor was occasionally present at the moment of the nuisance of the idea. The author's steps and Albinoni's tact had perfectly embraced each other. Still, it would no doubt be better to compose a special music for the film.

** main character:

Jacket (cocoon of larva, garment of reality, illusion)

*** dramatics:

Reduced to the character of the girl, psychological milieu of her character as metaphor for perception \ comprehension \ cognition. Relationship of the youth and the girl, absolutely desexualised, functions as a symbol of the universal couple \ sky-earth.

**** scenery:

The intentional dramatic austerity of everything but the relief of the girl's face may be enhanced scenically by a snowy winter landscape outside and a completely modern but cold interior.

***** sound effects:

During the sequences in which the theme music or the footsteps are lacking, the background sound may consist of atonal music, which should suggest the absence of sound rather than its presence.
