

**SHOT ANALYSIS: ALL MAN**

FAR FROM HEAVEN

Directed by Todd Haynes

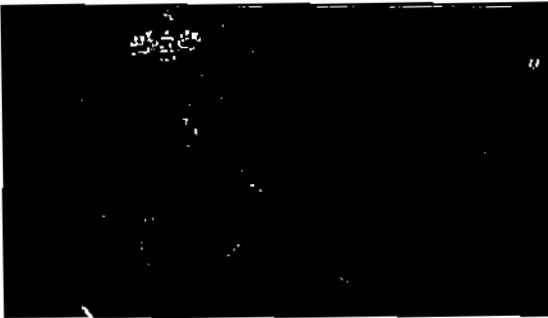
By April Frame

## Shot Analysis

Aspect Ratio: 1.85 : 1

Start Frame:

End Frame:



Duration: 2 minutes, 52 seconds, 15 frames

**Shot size:** The shot starts out with a full shot of Cathy as she enters the living room. Through subject movement and rather kinetic camera work the shot size changes substantially throughout the shot. As the camera follows Cathy's movement into the living room Frank emerges in the foreground. Here we are introduced to an establishing two shot composition where Frank is shot in a loose medium shot and Cathy remains in a full shot behind him. Then as Cathy moves toward the camera into the foreground and the camera tilts up we see a much tighter medium shot of Cathy alone. This is followed by yet another camera/character movement to a medium two shot of Cathy and Frank as they embrace. Finally, we see a loose close up of the

pair as they collapse onto the sofa and the camera tilts down with their movements.

**Sound:** Initially this scene has no background music. The shot is silent with the exception of the soft chirp of crickets, the ruffling of Cathy's skirt and her footsteps on the hardwood floor. This is a sharp contrast to the loud boisterous noises of the prior dinner party shot, where everyone is talking and laughing in lighthearted voices. The near silence in the beginning of the scene gives a lonelier, empty feel to the shot. Even when dialogue is used by Cathy, she speaks in a quite, none-confrontational voice that doesn't fill the emptiness but instead emphasizes it. As Cathy turns and suddenly finds her husband standing ominously behind her, the music begins dramatically with strong notes that indicate intense feelings. Whether these feelings are of danger or passion is unclear to the viewer. As the music continues it progresses to a seemingly romantic melody and then to an increasingly louder and more rapid score that conveys tension and urgency. Although Frank's character has no actual dialogue in this shot, his feelings are translated through music. As the director Todd Haynes suggests, "Music fills in where language fails us." This is essential in a melodrama set in the 1950's, where the stiff speech and social structures of the time limit the character's ability to communicate.

*Good*

**Contrast Dominant:** The contrast dominant varies several times within the shot. In the beginning Cathy is the most striking image in the frame. In her rich burgundy dress against the warmly lit backlight of the hallway lamp she stands out dramatically as she ascends the steps into the shadowy living room. However as she moves into the deep shadows of the moonlit living room Frank appears on the lower right-hand corner of the frame. Our eyes are drawn to the distinguished outline of Frank, and more notably his chair, which creates harsh diagonally lit lines in an otherwise dark foreground. The backlight that falls on Frank and his chair is an orange interior light that comes presumably from the adjacent room. This light contrasts strongly with the bold periwinkle blue "moonlight" that fills almost the entire living room. As Cathy moves into the light of the bar and begins to speak, our attention shifts back to her. The sequins on her dress, her golden hair and the martini glasses she's carrying all reflect the light of the warm interior background light. Then as she moves past Frank and toward the camera our eyes follow her movement through the shadows and into the cold blue moonlight. The moonlight from the window illuminates her in a way that separates her from the background, and as Cathy turns and the camera pans, our eyes are drawn to Frank's luminous figure standing behind her. The moonlight on his face and white shirt

uncomfortable to watch. The discomfort is apparent throughout the rest of the shot, manifested by the clash of two emotionally very distant people invading each other's physically intimate space.

**Camera Movement:** There is lots of camera movement in this shot, most of it catering subjectively to Cathy's character. The camera starts the scene panning from left to right, following Cathy as she enters her dark living room. The camera pauses as Cathy stops to address Frank. Here we have a moment to focus on Frank and his silent indifferent gaze. After Cathy drops off her empty martini glasses and meekly praises their dinner party, the camera continues to follow her movement to the window. This movement appears to combine a pan with a dolly pull back and a tilt up, however the slight movement around the edges of the frame indicate that this could be the work of a skilled steadicam. The way the camera specifically follows Cathy's movements influences the audience ability to relate to her. The effects of the camera movement allow us to be more sympathetic to her than to Frank, even though both are dealing with the pains of social oppression. Thus, in this shot she is the protagonist and Frank is the antagonist, when in truth, society is the enemy and not each other. This is also illustrated when the camera pans abruptly left to Frank, who surprises both Cathy and the viewer with his menacing presence. Then as the two

embrace and move to the sofa the camera does not glide the same way it did with Cathy's thoughtful stroll to the window, but is instead uneven and inconsistent. This depicts the conflict between Frank's sexual identity and his attempt to conform to social acceptance.

good

**Camera Angle:** The Camera begins at a slightly high angle. We can see more floor than ceiling. We are looking slightly down at Frank and are almost at eye level with Cathy. This angle manipulates the viewer's perception. It insinuates that Cathy is at our level and therefore we feel connected to her. On the other hand, we are looking down at Frank, thus suggesting he is inferior to us because he's an angry drunk. When Cathy moves toward the window the Camera moves back and tilts up creating a very low angle shot that shows a lot of the ceiling above Cathy's head. This strongly induces a feeling of claustrophobia for the audience. The weight of the ceiling seems to be coming down on Cathy, trapping her, just as society has trapped her in a loveless marriage. This low angle also increases the impact of Frank. The high angle emphasizes Frank's threatening figure and indicates his overbearing superiority over Cathy. As they move to the sofa the angle changes once again to a high angle and the audience looks down on the pair suggesting disapproval of this seemingly artificial gesture of passion.

**Lens Used:** A wide angle lens is used for this shot. Character

proximity is an important element in the emotional impact of this shot. Thus, with the talents and props at varying distances from the camera, as well as considerable movement within the frame, it is important to work with a wide angle lens to achieve the depth perception essential to this shot.

**Depth of Field:** The depth of field is considerably deep as the shot was shot with a wide angle lens. As the camera pulls back with Cathy's movement toward the window the lights in the background do become a bit out of focus, but there is still a considerably deep field of focus between them and the camera. Once again deep focus is necessary because the characters' position in relation to each other and the camera is so vital in this shot. Deep focus also adds to the over all feel of the set. This set was meticulously constructed to represent the home of the perfect 1950's family. All the architecture, furniture, textures, and props are important details that can only be captured in their entirety with deep focus.

**Lighting:** The lighting in this shot is low key. The shot is an interior night shot that mixes pools of the dominant periwinkle blue "moonlight" from the windows with pools of warm interior light sources like a lamp in the hallway or the light over the bar. The contrast between two primary colors of light creates a visually interesting composition, as well as establishing more depth to the set. The blue lighting from the windows also adds

an extra dimension to the scene by using shadows to create the illusion of shadows cast from blinds and window frames. These shadows makes the light source more believable and adds texture to the blue light. Like film noir lighting the interior lights seem to outline the characters while the cold blue light allows us to see them in a softer illuminating light. The lighting in this shot plays a pivotal role in our interpretation of the characters and their conflict. Cathy comes from the warm light in the hallway indicating that she is of good moral standing, while we find Frank hiding in the shadows, making him seem dark and sinister. As Cathy moves into the moonlight, the soft lighting at first feels romantic as she gazes out the window and then quickly moves to a dark and eerie feel when Frank appears from out of the shadows. In short, the lighting in this shot is a key part of telling the story.

**Color usage:** The color in this scene is determined almost entirely by the light pallet. All the colors that are bathed in the moonlight take on the cool blue hue. In contrast, the colors that are lit by the interior lights are on the other side of the color spectrum including pinks, reds, oranges and yellow. The colors reflect the different themes of the film. The blue represents tension and isolation of the individual, and the warm colors represent the superficial world of social acceptance. In the beginning of the scene Cathy comes from the socially

acceptable warm colors of the hallway and Frank is sitting alone, as the deviant in the blue light. Cathy's dress is a deep burgundy color that indicates sexuality and passion, but as she moves into the moonlight the dress becomes saturated with blue like the rest of the surroundings, indicating that in Frank's mind she is not a sexual being. As the scene continues they both move into stronger blue light, increasing that feeling of tension and desperation. This shot is part of a scene where these two characters are more honest and truthful with each other than they are in any other scene in the movie. Our eyes are drawn to the different color pallets through a series of camera/character movements. It adds great depth and visual interest to the film.

*insightful*

**Screen Graphics / Composition:** The composition in this shot change<sup>s</sup> continuously with the camera actor's movement. It begins with the screen weighted to the left with Cathy's figure moving into the left third of the screen. The weight then shifts to the right when Frank enters into the bottom right third of the frame. The weight swings to the middle as Cathy moves to the bar and then once again moves to the right as Cathy confronts the camera on the right third of the frame. It settles in the middle for the tight medium shot of Cathy and then moves further back on the z axis for the couple's embrace. This is followed by a shift in the weight of the two figures to the bottom of the

screen as they are lowering onto the couch. The graphic structure of this shot impact the way we view the characters. The arm chairs and table in the foreground create a slightly skewed lead line across the bottom third of the frame, while the bar creates a similar horizontal plane of interest on the top third of the frame. Placing the characters in between these lines emphasizes the distance and separation between them as well as allowing the viewer's eye to move smoothly through the frame. As Cathy approaches the window a sweeping rooster figurine gives additional depth to the foreground. It also causes our eyes to move down the tail and curve up into Cathy's illuminated gown and face. The ceiling beams make convenient framing for the couple as they embrace, and also illustrate the feeling that they are trapped in a small uncomfortable space from which they cannot break free.

**Editing Style:** This shot is a very long A - roll shot in a breakthrough scene in the film. The shot itself is the beginning of a sequence of rather long shots that really focus on the performances of the actors. This is very important because this is one of the only scenes in the movie where these two characters momentarily break free of the restricting mold that governs their everyday picture perfect lifestyle. The shot begins with a cross fade from people walking from left to right across the screen at the party to Cathy walking into the living

room from left to right alone. This fade indicates that time has passed since the party scene and this shot is set later that night. The shot ends with a straight cut from Cathy and Frank engaged in a passionate embrace to a shot with a different angle of the same action, thus staying consistent with real time.

**Time:** Editing from the previous shot to this shot condenses time. However, through out the shot we remain in real time. Additionally, the next cut does not alter the passage of time.

**Subtext:** All of the elements of this shot create a visual collaboration that illustrates the main theme of the film which is the conflict between the individual and society. The intentional contrast in color, light, movement, and sound all signify the oppressed individual attempting to break free of the boundaries of social acceptance. The different aspects of this shot also depict how the characters are trapped within social standards and within their own fears. All of this turmoil is beautifully conveyed throughout this single shot.

*your*

**SHOT 2 ANALYSIS**

**START FRAME**

**END FRAME**



**Duration:** 13 seconds 15 frames

**Shot Size:** This shot begins with both characters lying in a passionate embrace on the sofa. Their bodies are horizontal to the frame, so it's difficult to describe the shot size until they sit up and we realize it's a loose medium shot of the couple. Cathy, who is sitting closer to the camera, is shot in a loose medium, while Frank is shot in a medium full.

**Sound:** This shot starts out with a refrain of a series of notes. With each repetition the notes are increased in pitch and strength, building the intensity of the scene. Then Frank breaks down, and we realize that something is terribly wrong. The music punctuates this with four consecutive shrill notes that are the loudest and highest frequency yet. As Frank recoils away from his wife and drops his head into his hands there is a final low, full note that expresses his shame and desperation. As we move to the end of the shot the music begins softly again with a low and melancholy tune. The dialogue is particularly revealing. After initially kissing his wife, he begins to sob and then whispers gruffly, "Oh Jesus." At this point we realize something is not right. As he pulls away from Cathy his voice gets louder. His voice is not directional, he is not yelling at Cathy, but instead seems to scolding himself for his own

failure. Cathy's voice, on the other hand, is soft and caring. She is obviously concerned for him.

**Contrast dominant:** Initially the contrast dominant of the shot is Frank's dark figure framed by the blue light of the window and Cathy's moonlit hair and arm. When Frank sits up and pulls away he is once again the dominant. His figure against the warm hall-lit background is the darkest part of the frame. The contrast is increased by the bright blue highlights that surround him. Cathy's moonlit figure on the left side of the screen, and the moonlit lamp shade on the right third of the screen seem to trap Frank's dark shape from either side. These contrasts pull you into the depth of the frame, allowing the eye to move along the z axis. Although Frank's figure is the darkest contrast in the frame it should be noted that Cathy's movement from the shadow of the lower left third to the highlighted foreground draws a substantial amount of attention to her character.

**Character Movement:** In this shot, Frank and Cathy exchange the dominant position in the frame. Initially, Frank is much more commanding of the viewers attention. His figure seems to overtake Cathy and all we can see is a few highlights on her hair. The movement of Frank's character at this point is forced and contained. However, the tone of the scene quickly changes from passion to despair, as Frank breaks free from his wife's

embrace and moves purposefully away from her in an abrupt and angry manner. As Cathy sits up and moves toward Frank to comfort him, her moonlit figure becomes the more prominent position on the screen. Cathy's movements are slow and tender as she tries to comfort him, but her touch only makes Frank shrink further away from her as well as from the viewer. He cannot face her or us with his true feelings exposed.

**Character Proxemics:** The two characters begin this shot within intimate range of each other and personal range of the camera. However, when Frank realizes his inability to control his sexual nature and be aroused by his wife, he pulls away from her and the viewer, along the z axis. This puts him at a personal range of Cathy and a social distance from the camera. Even in this proximity he is clearly uncomfortable and shrinks away from Cathy as she tries to enter his intimate space to comfort him.

**Camera Movement:** The camera movement starts with a stagnant shot of the two in an embrace and pans to the right with a slight tilt up as Frank gets up and moves away from Cathy to the right third of the screen. It settles down as Frank sinks onto the other side of the sofa. The movement around the edges of the frame once again indicates a steady cam. Since the camera is now following Frank's movements, we are momentarily directed to sympathize with him.

**Camera Angle:** The angle in this shot begins at eye level. This

allows us to be within personal, almost intimate range of the couple during their awkward embrace and the beginning of Frank's emotional breakdown. The angle then becomes a slight low angle as Frank gets up and moves away from his wife. This slight low angle emphasizes the drama and the emotion of Frank's actions.

**Lens used:** The lens used is a wide angle lens. This was important because much of the subject movement is along the z axis. The wide angle lens allows both characters to remain in focus. This is particularly important because action of Frank's emotional and physical withdrawal away from his wife and the audience is a crucial element to this shot.

**Depth of Field:** Due to the wide angle lens used the depth of field is deep. We can see everything from Cathy's billowing dress in the foreground to the staircase in the background of the shot.

**Lighting:** The lighting in this shot is low key. The key light on the subjects is the blue moonlight pouring through the window. There is also light in the hallway in the background, presumably from the chandelier and wall candles. The soft warm interior light in the background adds depth to the scene and a sharp contrast against the blue moonlight that floods the foreground. This contrast between the two light sources isolates the characters. The warm light source again seems to represent their social identity, the people they are when

everyone is watching. However, now they are trapped in the blue moonlight - they are alone and this is when they express who they truly are. In this shot, it seems as though Frank is torn between the two identities. He is disgusted by his true self, thus, he is turning away from the blue light. At the same time, is trapped, unable to enter the light of social acceptance.

**Color usage:** The main color contrast in this shot is between the blue of the moonlight and the warm orange tones of the interior. They split the frame diagonally from the top right corner to the bottom left. Again, these colors seem to indicate conflicting feeling between internal desires and what is conventionally appropriate.

**Screen Graphics/composition:** The weight of this shot begins in the left lower third corner of the screen, and then moves the center as the two characters sit up from their embrace. The back of the sofa creates a leading line for the eye along the x axis in the center of the frame. As the camera moves, the back of the sofa also becomes a path for the eye to follow along the z axis, as the couch now runs diagonally on the horizontal plain between the x and z axis. This draws our eye into the scene and accents Frank's movement away from the foreground. The curve of the railing on the stair case also draws our eye into the background along the z axis. The dividing grate between the living room and the hallway on the left side is made up of

connecting circles. This induces the feeling of being trapped in a cage, which is symbolic of the way Frank is feeling about his sexuality.

**Editing Style:** This is an A-roll shot focused on the performance. The transitions in and out of this shot are straight cuts, nothing flash that would ruin the pace or distract from the emotion of the scene.

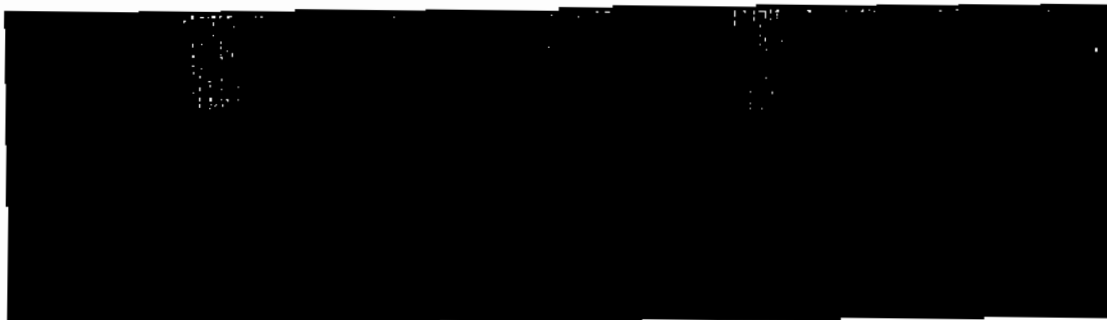
**Time:** This shot is shot in real time.

**Subtext:** The principle priority in this shot was to establish the emotional and physical distance between Frank and Cathy. This was portrayed through character movement, depth of field, and lighting, color themes.

### SHOT 3 ANALYSIS:

**Start Frame:**

**End Frame:**



**Duration:** 24 seconds, 2 frames

**Shot Size:** This shot is shot entirely medium full.

**Sound:** The sound begins with the soft melancholy soundtrack of deep bass tones that ended the last shot. It continues through a few seconds of the dialogue, and then begins to build in strength and volume as more instruments join in. As the music grows louder, Frank becomes more agitated with his wife's attempts to comfort him. This causes a mounting anticipation in the viewer as the increasing intensity indicates something's about to happen. Frank's voice is ruff, angry and disheartened, as he can barely get his words out. Cathy's voice, on the other hand, is sweet and sympathetic. Still, her voice gets louder and more pleading in efforts to convince her husband of her devotion and love for him.

**Contrast Dominant:** The contrast dominant in this shot is Cathy. Both characters are dark, almost silhouettes, against the bright blue curtains of the window. However, Frank seems to be sinking into the shadows on the lower right side, while Cathy is more prominent in the middle, with the moonlight outlining her from all sides. The dark curtain on the upper left third, also creates a clear contrast with the moonlit curtains. This dark area draws the eye in from the left side and into the two shadowy figures.

**Character movement:** The movement in this shot is mostly subtle. For the majority of this shot Frank is inching away from Cathy toward the right side of the frame. His body language, as he

turns away from her, makes it clear that he doesn't want her help. Determined, Cathy is inching toward him in a failing effort to console him. Unfortunately, it seems the more Cathy tries to comfort her husband, the more angry and withdrawn he becomes. Despite his request for her to let go, Cathy refuses to relinquish her hold on Frank. This built up tension finally explodes when Frank turns and strikes Cathy. This movement is sudden, and completely opposite of Frank's prior confined body movements. It takes both Cathy and the audience by surprise.

**Character Proxemics:** Throughout this shot Cathy and Frank remain in intimate proximity, although it is clear that Frank wants nothing more than to distance himself from his wife. The way Cathy closes in on the reluctant Frank seems to corner him in the lower left side of the frame. The two characters remain at a social distance from the camera. This distance is important to the viewer so that we may see the full impact of their body language in reaction to each other. As Frank cowers away from Cathy, her figure bombards him with femininity. As director Todd Haynes describes it, "Her breast seems to be plunging toward him like a voluptuous torpedo." Her flowing skirts behind her and her leaning attentive posture toward him screams sexuality. Nevertheless he is completely unable to find her attractive. In fact his body language is that of repulsion.

**Camera movement:** The frame of this shot remains the same.

**Camera Angle:** The camera remains at eye level. This allows us view the shot objectively.

**Lens used:** The Lens is once again wide angle. The flowers in the foreground, although a bit soft, are still in relative focus, as are the curtains in the background. This again establishes depth and a sense of the environment of these characters. The flowers remind us we are still in a "normal" house hold. Depicting the conflicting elements of the characters' surroundings, like the warm pastel flowers against the cold blue moonlight, help to express their inner emotional conflict. A wide angle lens is essential to capture these aspects.

**Depth of Field:** The shot is shot in deep focus.

**Lighting:** The lighting in this shot is low key, almost completely blue moonlight. This light cast dark shadows all over the frame, giving it a sense of eerie loneliness and a heavy feeling of despair.

**Color Usage:** In this shot the interior lights from behind the camera illuminate Cathy's dress and show its deep burgundy red color against the blue background. This warm color further illustrates Cathy as a sexual entity, but its effects are entirely lost to her husband. Frank is instead turned away toward the bluest part of the frame on the far right side.

**Screen Graphics:** The curtains in the background have a busy

*gone!*

vertical pattern on them that seems to be raining confusion down on the two subjects. Also the graphics vertical lines of the curtains and the clean horizontal lines of the sofa are a drastic contrast to Cathy's curvy figure. The line of the sofa draws the eye from left to right into the scene and through the characters.

**Editing Style:** Both the in and out transitions of this shot are straight cuts. The shot begins with a transition to a generally still shot. The shot then ends with a cut on motion as Frank moves to strike Cathy.

**Time:** The shot is shot in real time.

**Subtext:** The purpose of the shot is to emphasize the lack of connection between these two characters. The blue light isolates them from the rest of society and also divides each other. Their movements and body language suggest two completely different frames of mind. They are on the same sofa physically but worlds apart emotionally.

#### SHOT 4 ANALYSIS

Start Frame:

End Frame



**Duration:** 16 seconds, 15 frames

**Shot Size:** The shot size starts at a loose medium of both Cathy and Frank, but as the characters and camera move, it changes to a tighter medium of Cathy and a medium full of Frank.

**Sound:** This shot begins with a cut to action where Frank has lost his temper and strikes Cathy. We hear his sharp yell, "Stop it" and the sound of his hand hitting Cathy's face. Cathy lets out a yelp, but it seems more from shock than from pain. As Frank finishes his strike, the music bursts into three dramatic notes. These overpowering notes make it clear to the audience that this is an important turning point in the film. The music quickly turns softer and lower, fading back into the melody heard earlier in the scene. This parallels Frank's dissipating anger, as he almost immediately realizes the terrible mistake he has made. Frank's voice changes drastically from angry to apologetic. He sounds genuinely sorry and caring as he tries to comfort his wife. Cathy's voice, on the other hand, is forced and controlled as she tries to maintain her composure.

**Contrast Dominant:** Frank's figure remains the contrast dominant throughout this shot. Initially his white shirt in the moonlight against his black tux and his fast, violent movements draw our eye to him. Although Cathy is seated closer to the

audience in the frame, Frank is centered in the middle, making him the center of attention. His figure is also very dark against the interior hall light in the background, this effect also draws our eye to him.

**Character Movement:** The most impacting movement in the frame is in the very beginning when Frank angrily hits Cathy across the face. He then stands up menacingly in the middle of the screen, but almost immediately realizes what he has done and crouches over Cathy attempting to help her. Adversely, Cathy, after being thrown back from the blow, withdraws into the lower left corner of the screen. Her movements are guarded and restrained. She keeps her face hidden as if she doesn't want to reveal what she's really feeling to anyone. As her husband reaches out to comfort her, her closed body language rejects him. She is turned away from Frank, as well as the audience, as if she can trust no one. She is alone and in pain.

**Character Proxemics:** In this shot the roles are reversed. After hitting his wife Frank backs away to personal distance, but quickly tries to move back into her intimate space. Unfortunately, as she was unable to comfort him in his sexual confusion, he is equally unable to comfort her as a "beaten" wife. It is very evident that his advance into intimate distance is uninvited. Within this shot, Cathy remains in personal distance from the camera. Frank is also within

personal distance of the camera, with the exception of the a momentary step back into public distance after he hits Cathy. This gives us a chance to judge his horrendous act.

**Camera Movement:** The camera movement involves a combination of a tilt up and a pan to the right. The movement is not entirely smooth and, judging by the edges, it was shot with a steady cam. The camera movement was motivated by character movement.

**Camera Angle:** The shot begins with the characters at eye level. As Frank gets up and steps back the camera moves with him tilting to a low angle shot. We see ceiling and lights above Franks head. This gives the impression that there is a heaviness above him, as if all his guilt is about to come crashing down on him. This angle also makes Frank seem more threatening. It pushes Cathy lower in the frame, as if to illustrate her weakness.

**Lens Used:** Wide angle lens. (Reasons, refer to shot 2)

**Depth of Field:** Deep focus. (Reasons, refer to shot 2)

**Lighting:** The lighting is low key. Lighting in this shot is used to divide the characters from each other and their surroundings. After Frank and the camera move, the shot becomes two contrasting pools of light which creates three depths of field. The background interior lighting, with ceiling lights, wall lights and chandeliers surround Franks dark figure. Frank is mid-ground, and he seems to fall in a shadow between interior

light and moonlight. As if he's trying to be a part of them both, this is symbolic of the life he's leading as a married gay man. In the foreground, illuminated with blue moon light we find Cathy. Her hair and sequined dress have strong highlights that separates her from her shadowy husband as well as the warm background - again emphasizing she is alone.

**Color Usage:** Like the lighting color is used to separate the characters. Warm yellowish orange in the background, dark shadowy black for Frank and bright blue depicting Cathy in the foreground.

**Screen and Graphic Composition:** The composition is very similar to shot 2. However, with the movement of the camera the subjects are now placed more in the middle, lower half of the screen. The ceiling over their heads seems to be pushing down on them from the top of the frame. The staircase also becomes more prevalent, creating a strong lead line from the upper right third of the frame to the center.

**Editing Style:** This shot is the shortest shot yet in this scene. This shot is the climax of the scene, its important to keep that emotional momentum throughout the rest of the scene. A shorter shot keeps the viewers attention and doesn't diffuse the scene. It's an A-roll shot, one of the most important in the movie. Both in and out transitions are straight cuts. The first is cut on a dramatic action while the second is more

subtle.

**Time:** This shot is shot in real time.

**Subtext:** This shot is the turning point in the film. When Frank strikes Cathy the audience realizes that the film does not have a happy ending in store for this couple. The marriage is past repair. From this point on it is clear this film is specifically about Cathy, and not about them as a couple. This breaking point is illustrated using dramatic color and lighting schemes to depict the division of the two characters. The extravagant orchestra music also marks the importance of this shot.

**SHOT 5 ANALYSIS:**

**Start Frame:**

**End Frame:**



**Duration:** 16 seconds, 17 frames

**Shot Size:** The shot begins with a medium full of Cathy and Frank. As Frank moves back with the camera, Cathy becomes a full shot and Frank, although we can't see his face, remains in

a loose medium.

**Sound:** The music in this shot is very understated; a deep sad melody that adds to the despair of the scene but does not distract from the actors' performances. The interesting thing in this shot is the dialogue between the two characters. So much is said in so few words. Cathy requests, ice, immediately falling into her practical housewife role. Her voice is shaky but decisive. It is clear that she is unable to express her feelings at hand. Frank repeats the word "ice" in a way that, although we cannot see his face, lets us know he is shocked by his wife's reaction. He then backs away toward the right third of the frame. He says one word, "Cathy," in a pleading voice. Before he can say anything else, she replies, "I know." In these two words her voice and tone explain that she knows he's sorry, but she can't handle discussing it at that moment.

**Contrast Dominant:** In the beginning of the shot Frank is the contrast dominant, as he is the darkest figure against the bright blue curtains. Later, as Frank moves away from Cathy to the far right of the frame, the contrast dominant shifts to Cathy's graceful silhouette against the moonlit curtains. The shadows and highlights of Cathy's dress and hair are the most dramatic in the frame. The soft curvy lines of her figure stand out against the uniform lines of the sofa and curtains. Then as the camera pulls further away, the circular table in the center

lower third of the screen becomes the most prominent object. Its warm pastel colors contrast with the dark blue shadowy light in the rest of the room. In the frame the table is located between Cathy and Frank, this contrast further manifests the division of the two characters.

**Character Movement:** The most significant character movement is Frank backing away from his wife, leaving her alone in the frame. He is physically and emotionally distancing himself from her, and finally turns away completely. On the contrary, Cathy's movement remains stagnant, her face covered. Her body language, although not kinetic, tells us she's distraught and in pain.

**Camera movement:** The camera movement of this shot is a dolly pull back. We start with a medium full of both characters in the frame and pull back with Frank as he backs away from his wife. This is a very effective shot because it really shows how devastatingly isolated Cathy is in her situation. She has no one to turn to. Her husband and even the audience is leaving her. She is alone in that growing pool of cold blue light, almost as though she's drowning in it.

**Camera Angle:** Although the camera movements parallel Frank's movements away from Cathy, the camera angle remains at her eye level. We can't even see Frank's face. This shot is about Cathy and our sympathy for her. It doesn't allow us to relate

to Frank. He's not the one we're suppose to feel sorry for. We are meant to focus on Cathy, and the camera angle illustrates this.

**Lens used:** Once again the distance and separation between these two talents is vital. Thus a wide angle lens is used.

**Depth of Field:** Deep focus.

**Lighting:** This shot is almost entirely shot in a blue pool of light with the exception of an interior light on the upper left third of the frame. This is important because the blue light represents deviance and segregation, and this is when Cathy feels the most like an outsider. She not acceptable to society as the beaten wife of a gay man, and she is not acceptable to her own husband as he is unable to find her sexually attractive. As the frame fills with more and more blue light, we understand more fully that she is utterly alone.

**Color Usage:** The color in this shot is dictated almost entirely by the bright blue light of the window. There are two splashes from the other side of the color wheel in the warm interior lights on the upper left third of the frame, and as the shot continues, the emerging brightly colored flower bouquet in the lower center. These contrasting colors are delicate and not overpowering, they just give us the slightest sense of her surroundings without taking away from the effect of the blue moon light.

**Screen Graphics and Composition:** The composition of this shot foreshadows the rest of the movie. As Frank backs away from his wife, she finds herself trapped. She is trapped in between the dark lines of the curtain on the left third of the frame and by Frank's dark figure on the right third of the screen. As the camera moves further back, she is also trapped by the bouquet of flowers. With these lines and images surrounding her, it symbolizes the aspects in her life that enclose her. She did not leave the room when Frank hit her, it is he that ends up fleeing. This mirrors her unhappy marriage. She is helpless to fix her broken marriage. At the same time she is unable to leave it because of social standards and their blemish free reputation. It is not until Frank decides to leave her, later in the film, that she is allowed to be free. Just as in this shot, it is not until Frank turns and leaves the frame that her figure is finally freed.

**Editing Style:** This is an A-roll shot. The in and out transitions are straight cuts, and the out cut is cut on the action of Frank turning away from Cathy.

**Time:** This shot is shot in real time.

**Subtext:** This shot further increases our interest in Cathy and her feelings. This connection between Cathy and the audience is executed by keeping the camera at her eye level and using camera

movement and light/color to indicate her inner emotions. This shot also influences the way we view Frank. He is not only unable to comfort his wife but also gives up trying. Instead, he flees the frame without ever showing his face to the audience, thus insinuating he is not only a deficient husband but also a coward.

### SHOT 6 ANALYSIS

Start Frame:

End Frame:



**Duration:** 12 seconds, 3 frames

**Shot Size:** The shot size is a Medium shot of Cathy and a full shot of Frank exiting.

**Sound:** The music consist<sup>s</sup> of the same soft, doleful melody from the last shot. We also hear Franks footsteps as he flees the frame. Cathy let's out a sniffle and a small sigh, that she seems to have been holding in. This sniffle is one of the only direct indicator in the scene that she has in fact been on the verge of tears.

**Contrast Dominant:** The contrast dominant in this shot is the chandelier in the background of the upper right third.. Its bright orange light is a beacon against the left blue side of the frame. From the Chandelier the eye moves to the bright blue lamp in the center of the frame, it emerges from the shadows as graphic solid highlight that stands out against the more subtle moonlit items in the room. The lamp is like a stepping stone to Cathy's wavy moonlit blue hair that stands out in the foreground drawing our focus to the most important image in the frame.

**Character Movement:** The most dramatic movement in this shot is Frank's dash out of the left side of the frame. He's running directly away from the camera on the x axis, as if he's not only trying to escape her but anyone else who may be watching. This emphasizes his shame. On a more discreet note Cathy does not move until Frank has left the room. However, once Frank has exited she raises her head and lets out a sigh, allowing the audience to finally get a glimpse of her stunned, stressed expression.

**Character Proxemics:** Cathy remains at personal distance with the camera, indicating our interest is in her, not her husband. Frank on the other hand moves further away from both his wife and the camera. He moves into public distance and finally out of the frame. This distances from the camera make Cathy subjective and Frank much more objective.

**Camera Movement:** There is only the slightest tilt down and to the left in the very beginning of the shot. This is the only movement of the frame in the shot and it is used to subtly shift the viewers focus to Cathy and her reactions.

**Camera Angle:** The camera angle remains at eye level with Cathy.

**Lens Used:** Although the camera position is similar to the end of shot 4, Cathy has moved closer. The focus has been pulled. It is more telephoto because the frame is slightly narrower, and Cathy is almost in intimate space with the camera. The lens is focused specifically on Cathy. She is the only clear figure in the frame.

**Depth of Field:** The depth of field is shallow; Cathy is the only image in the frame that is in good focus.

**Lighting:** (refer to shot 4)

**Color Usage:** (refer to shot 4)

**Screen Graphics / Composition:** The left side of the screen is full of sharp graphic lines, like the angles of the couch, and the vertical white columns that surround Cathy. On the other hand the right side of the frame is softer with curvy flowing lines like the sweeping diagonal line of the staircase railing on the top left and the circular blue table in the lower right third. Cathy is located on the left side of the screen. Her figure seems out of place among the harsh lines. She is visually out of her element, and this parallels her emotional

discomfort. The weight of this frame lies very much within Cathy, as her shadowy figure dominates a large portion of the frame.

**Editing Style:** This is also an A - roll shot. The transition to begin this shot is a cut on Frank's action as he runs away from Cathy. The end is a cross fade to the next scene where Cathy is looking at herself in the mirror. This is a short shot. It makes a point to focus on Cathy and then quickly moves on, maintaining the momentum of the final image into the next scene.

**Time:** This shot is shot in real time, but the final transition, a cross fade, indicates the passing of time.

**Subtext:** This shot is about Cathy. The closeness of the camera along with the shallow focus makes her the most important part of the frame. This is the moment just before she pulls herself together where she is the most vulnerable. This is captured in her movement as she lifts her head from her hands and we see her face for the first time since Frank struck her. She was unable to reveal her face while her husband was still in the frame.

This physically illustrates their emotional separation as well as their inability to communicate.

**SCENE SUMMARY:** The scene is about conflict. The emotional conflict within the Characters, the conflict of a their

deteriorating marriage, and the conflict between social image and true identity. The 1950's where not a time when deviance was discussed or recognized. Staying true to the time period, Haynes expresses conflict through music, lighting, color, camera/character movement and composition instead of dialogue. The challenge of conveying emotion with out words is addressed by using these elements to create a mood and tone instead of spelling it out for the audience. I love this, this film acknowledges the audiences intelligence which is often overlooked by or taken for granted. This scene is full of compelling performances, bold lighting/color, dramatic music and strategic camera movement. These aspects are so effective that spoken explanation is rendered unnecessary, and they make the scene itself extremely powerful.

April:  
This is, of course, a wonderful analysis of your perceptible comments on light, color and composition captured exactly what Haynes is going for. This silent emotional language is the stuff of great directors. I hope you can incorporate some of what you have seen here into your own work.

GOOD WORK!

A

I'd like a copy for the archives.  
Please.