

THE ALCHEMIST

by

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PAC Screen Workshop Scene
Film Noir

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FADE IN:

On the face of PERRY FONTAINE, an accountant deep in concentration.

PERRY (V.O.)

It was just another Tuesday afternoon, another day cooking the books for Deckard and Associates, a reputable firm with a shady reputation.

CUT TO:

A desk where a financial LEDGER is prominent amongst the tools of the accountancy trade.

PERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Deckard supplies the cash, I make it legit, no questions asked. A good accountant's like an alchemist ... we turn grime into gold. All it takes ...

CUT TO:

Perry's Face ...

We pull back a little ... Perry is stooped, focussed on something quite intently ...

PERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... is a little ...

Pull Back further and Perry, in suit and tie, addresses a golf ball with a putter ...

PERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... concentration.

He plays the shot and the golf ball races across the carpet and into a cup. Perry walks over, picks up the golf ball, rolls it to another spot in the office, follows it, lines up another putt.

PERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Any minute now a dame's gonna walk through that door ... Deckard's wife. Thinks she runs the place. Maybe she does. Amazing how a woman like that can mess with your swing.

Sure enough, as soon as he goes to putt, the door opens and there's Lorraine Deckard, all dolled up and looking a treat.

The ball scoots along the carpet and misses the cup by quite a distance.

PERRY (CONT'D)
You're early.

LORRAINE
Now, now Mister Fontaine, you
know how much I value our chats.

Perry retrieves the errant golf ball, sets up another putt.

PERRY
Your husband doesn't pay me to
chat.

LORRAINE
Clearly, seeing how much work
your short game needs.

PERRY
Do we have any business to
transact today, Mrs. Deckard?

LORRAINE
Is that what our transactions are
Mr. Fontaine, purely business?

PERRY
Can't a man take a little
pleasure from a job well done?

Lorraine eases into the room ... drifts closer towards him
...

LORRAINE
They say a little pleasure goes a
long way.

PERRY
They tend to say a lot of things
Mrs. Deckard. That's how rumours
start.

... closer still ...

LORRAINE
Rumour has it my husband is
downtown the rest of the day.

PERRY
I got the memo.

He goes to putt but Lorraine sidles up real close.

LORRAINE
Don't be like that Perry. I miss
you.

PERRY
You always seem to find the right
door.

LORRAINE
It's never locked.

She kisses him ... he responds ... but then pulls away and
hands her the putter. Perry walks around to the desk, sits
behind it. He opens a drawer, hesitates ... then fossicks
around inside, pulls out a pack of chewing gum.

PERRY
Gum?

LORRAINE
Didn't I floss?

PERRY
No, you scrub up fine ... real
fine.

She plays with the putter, feels the weight of the thing.

LORRAINE
Did you consider my proposition?

PERRY
I'm not much of a gambling man,
I'm afraid.

LORRAINE
What have you got to lose?

PERRY
You taking bets now?

She swings the putter around the office ominously.

LORRAINE
You could do a lot of damage with
a club like this.

PERRY
Only to my handicap ... and it's
called a putter.

She sits on the side of his desk ...

LORRAINE
He trusts you Perry.

PERRY
Everyone has a weakness.

... leans forward ...

LORRAINE
Do it for me?

PERRY
You stand to gain quite a bit of
money, don't you Mrs. Deckard?

LORRAINE
Know a good accountant?

PERRY
I only clean his money, I don't
take out the laundry.

LORRAINE
Take out the trash instead.

PERRY
What is it you really want
Lorraine?

LORRAINE
I don't like the straight jacket
he keeps me in.

PERRY
Pity, you look good in leather.

She sizes him up, wonders if he's man enough.

LORRAINE
(quiet)
I want you to kill the son of a
bitch.

A beat.

PERRY
He already knows.

LORRAINE
More reason to do it now.

Perry fidgets with the drawer, can't face her.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)
Don't you want to be together,
baby? Like we always planned?

He leans forward and kisses her tenderly on the lips.

PERRY

You better leave before he gets back.

LORRAINE

Is that a no?

A beat as Perry weighs up all the options.

PERRY

Give me the putter.

Lorraine smiles as she hands it over. She walks to the door, leaves triumphant.

Perry waits until she is gone ... then opens the drawer, dumps the packet of gum inside ... then pulls out an old fashioned TAPE RECORDER. He hits "Stop" then "Rewind".

He leans back in the chair, loosens his tie.

PERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yeah, he knew alright. Knew if it wasn't me it would be some other poor sap gunning for him. The divorce would be cheaper this way. After all, the one thing every loyal accountant knows is how to balance the ledger in the boss's favour ...

FADE OUT.