



Mr Dodge, Mr Hitchcock, and the French Riviera: The story behind To Catch a Thief

Jean Buchanan

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Jewel-thievery, car-chases and romance on the French Riviera

Alfred Hitchcock's Oscar-winning film *To Catch a Thief* brought together Hollywood's two most glamorous stars, Grace Kelly and Cary Grant, in the most glamorous place on earth, the French Riviera. It is a tale of jewel-thievery, intrigue, false identity, covert investigation and, most of all, romance. Kelly and Grant strike sparks off each other to a backdrop of sophisticated living and glorious scenery.

This iconic and much-loved film was based on a novel by the American thriller- and travel-writer David Dodge. He took his inspiration from real-life events in the South of France, when he was briefly suspected of being a daring cat-burglar and lifting jewellery worth \$250,000 from the palatial establishment next door to his small rented villa.

Once the real thief was behind bars, Dodge wrote at breakneck speed.

Alfred Hitchcock snapped up the film rights before publication, visualising his two favourite stars in the lead roles. Hitchcock worked with his screenwriter, John Michael Hayes, to produce the film-script which would take Hollywood's finest to the South of France. *Mr Dodge, Mr Hitchcock and the French Riviera* tells the true story of the events behind the novel and the film *To Catch a Thief*.

About the author

Jean Buchanan is a British scriptwriter who has been mildly obsessed with the film *To Catch a Thief* ever since she first visited the South of France. She read the novel, dramatised it for BBC Radio, and researched and presented a tie-in programme about finding the villa where Dodge and his family lived. She has also written children's sitcoms for British television and worked for Oxford Dictionaries of Quotations. A Scot brought up in Wales, she read English at St Hilda's College, Oxford, and lives just outside Oxford with her husband, a theoretical physicist. Her career trajectory includes organising conferences, making marmalade, and selling gents' ties in the poshest department store in Wales.

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